



**City of Dallas**

# **Building Permit Update**

**Economic Development  
Committee**

**February 1, 2021**

Kris Sweckard, Director  
Sustainable Development & Construction  
City of Dallas

# Presentation Overview



- Background/History
- Issues/Operational Concerns
- Proposed Action
- Next Steps



# Background/History



- Building Permit Overview briefed to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee on 9/21/20
  - General permitting overview, challenges faced in light of COVID-19 and other factors, quantified the backlog of permits in the “prescreen” stage for single family permits, and proposed actions to reduce the backlog
- Memo to City Council on 10/30/20
  - Update on significant reduction in backlog of SF permits in the prescreen stage, actions taken to continue improvements, and a description and timeline of longer term initiatives



# Background/History



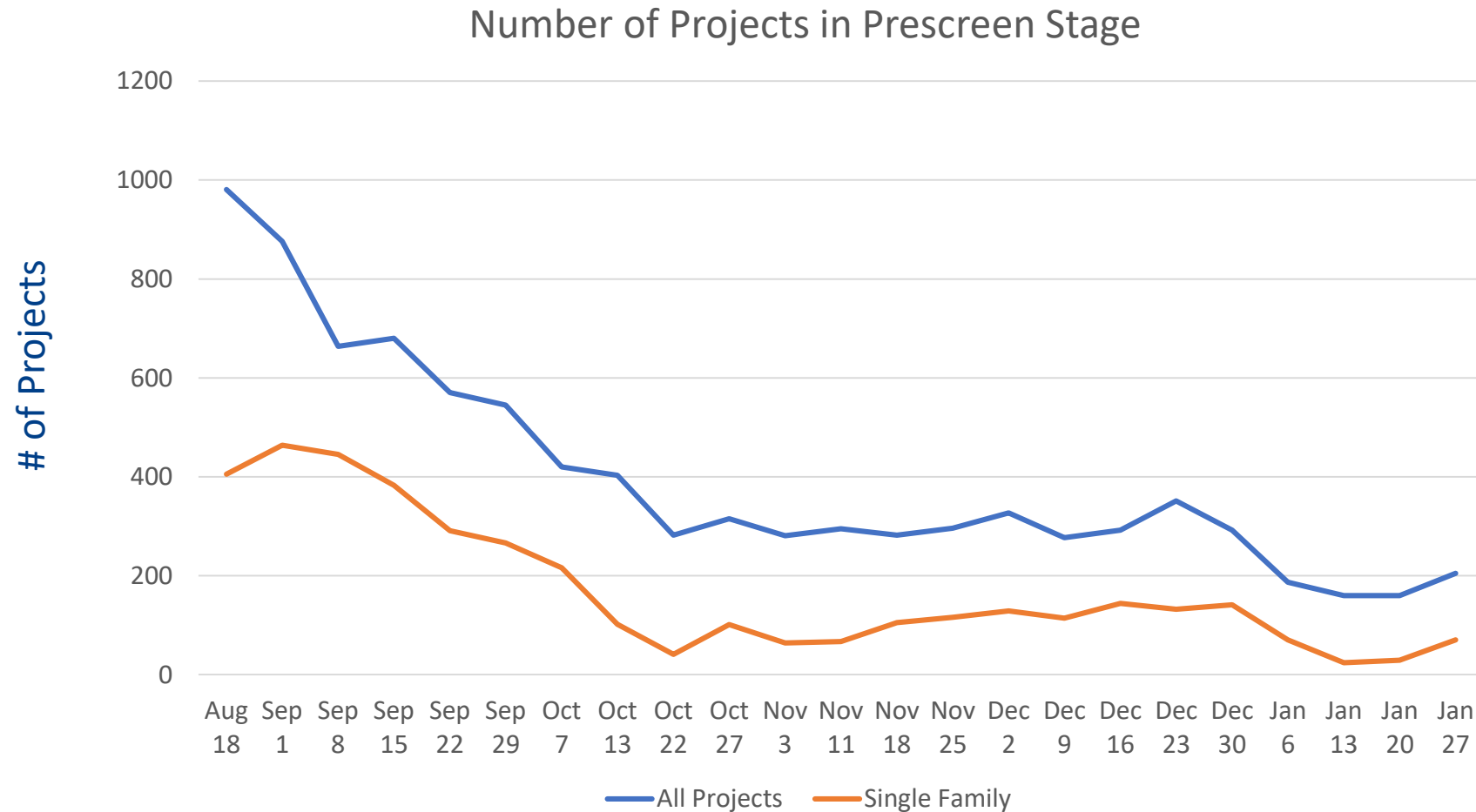
- Building Permit Update briefed to the Economic Development Committee on 12/7/21
  - Updated data, provided status of proposed actions, identified new proposed actions
- Memo to City Council on 1/5/21
  - Provided an update on the enhancements to the permitting process



# Issues/Operational Concerns



- The push to clear projects from the prescreen backlog was successful and has stabilized

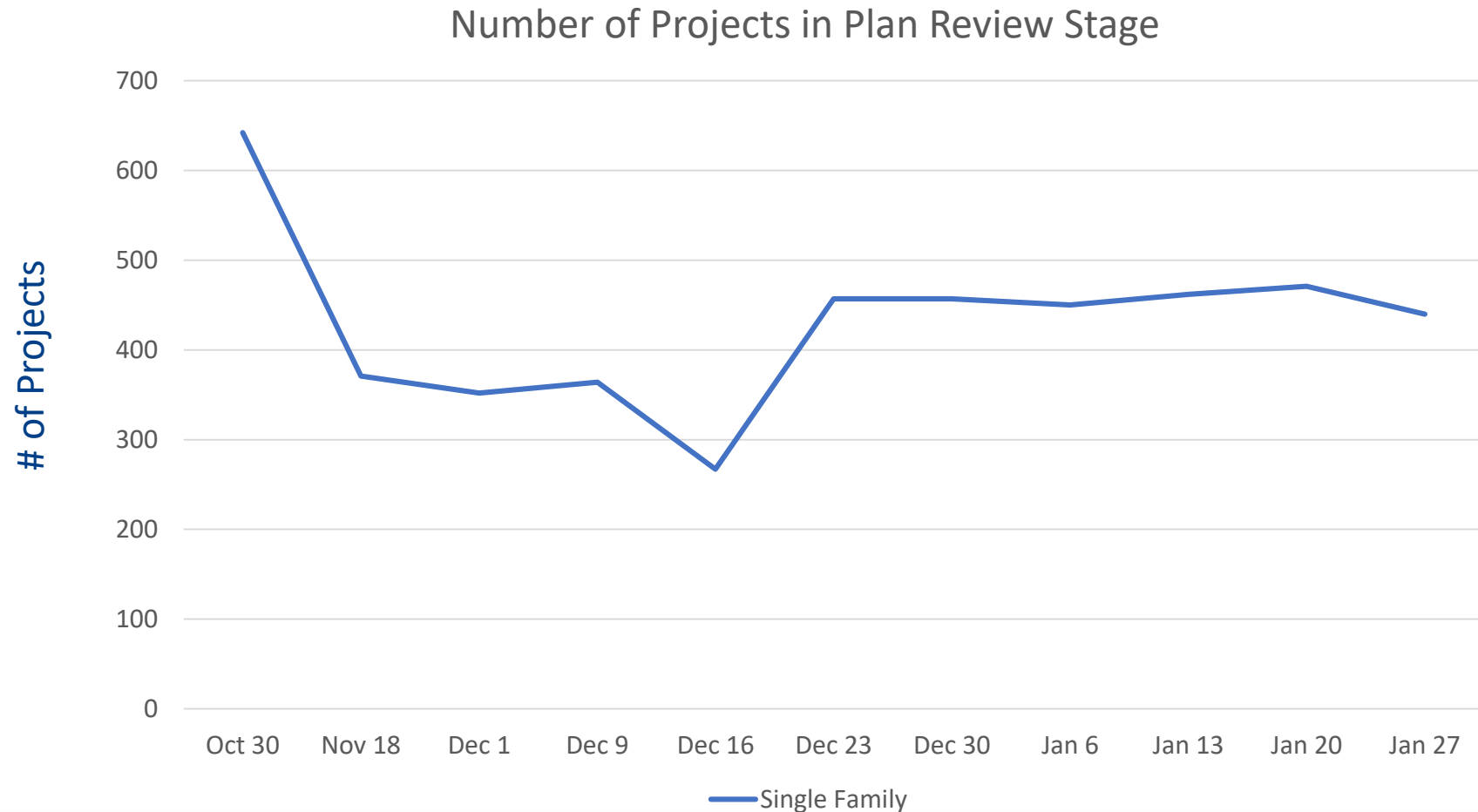




# Issues/Operational Concerns



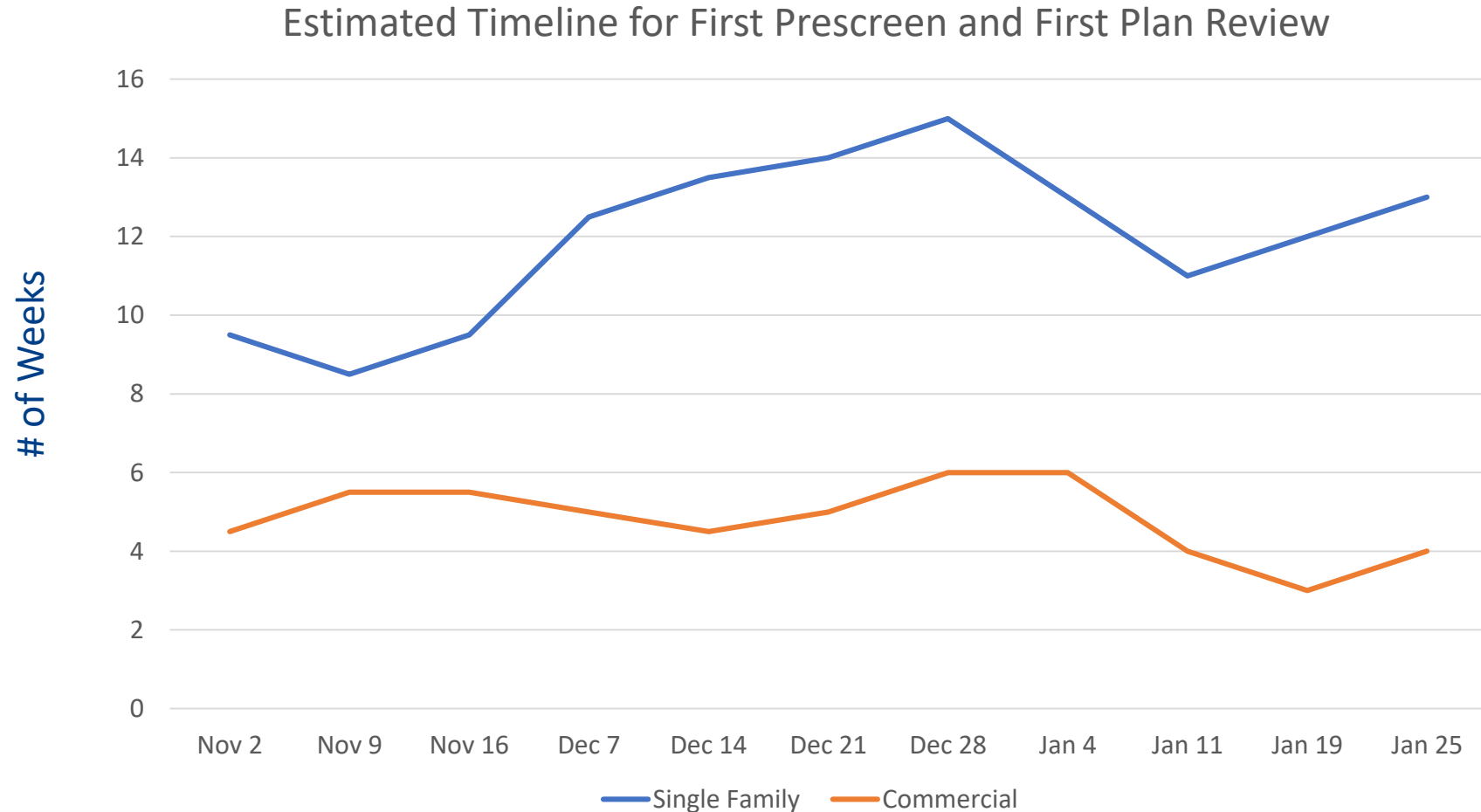
- Once those projects passed prescreen, the backlog moved to plan review, the second main stage of the process



# Issues/Operational Concerns



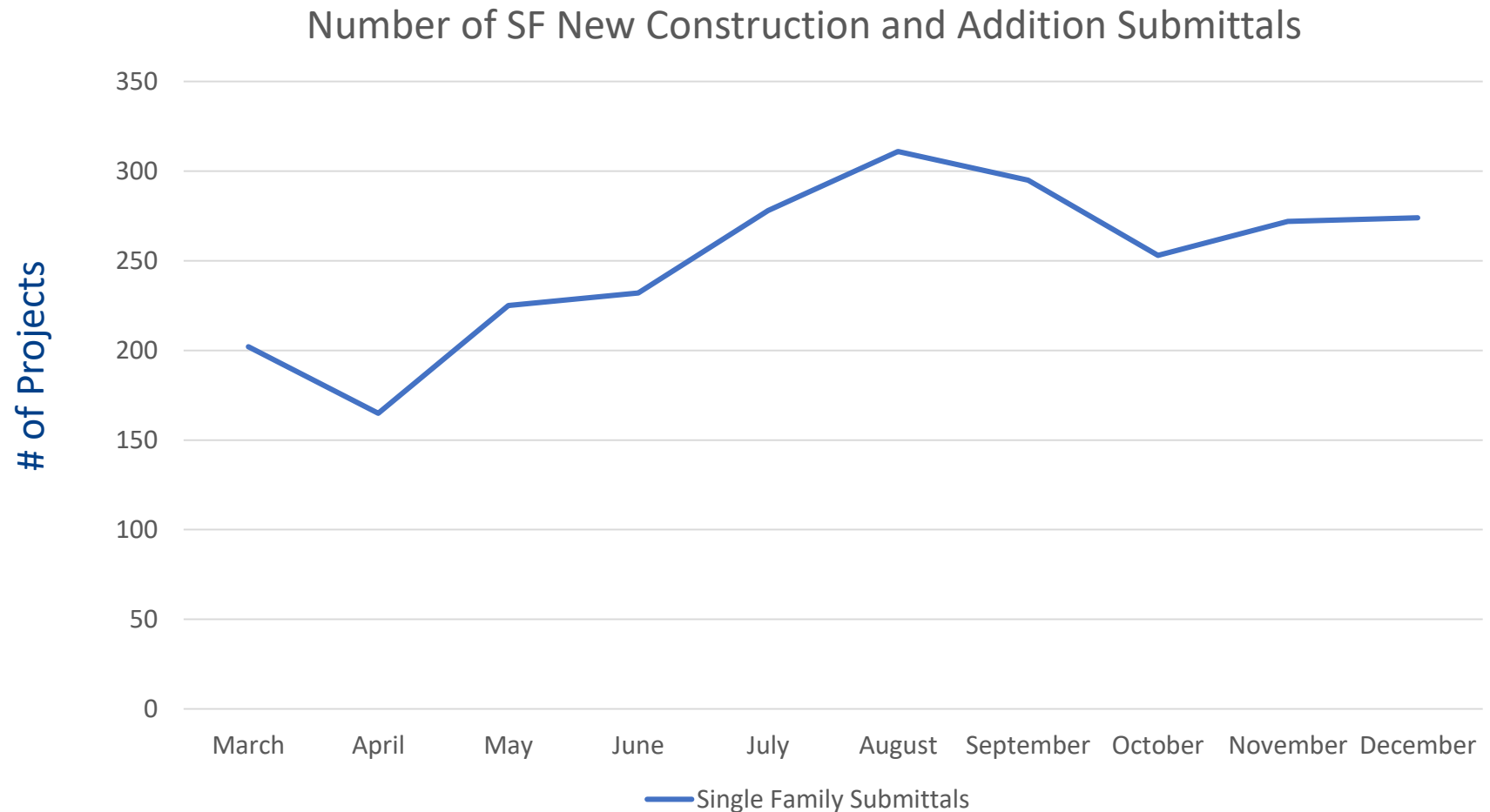
- Once those projects passed prescreen, the backlog moved to plan review, the second main stage of the process



# Issues/Operational Concerns



- After an initial decline at the onset of the pandemic, the volume of submittals quickly picked back up and has remained steady





# Previous Proposed Action



- **Complete** - Four additional staff members allocated to the pre-screen function to work through the backlog
- **Complete** - Utilizing existing Dal-Tech contract for additional resources
- **In Process** - ITS is working on improvements to actual system performance that has greatly slowed tasks both by applicants and staff due to the volume of transactions as a result of the pandemic



# Previous Proposed Action



- **Complete** - Training and reference materials have been provided and are available online both on our website and on the ProjectDox login page with instructions on how to properly submit a project
- **In Process** – Three webinars conducted by staff on January 13, January 21, and February 3 to assist applicants on how to effectively use the ProjectDox system
- **Complete** - Instructional video specific to ProjectDox added to the Building Inspection website



# Previous Proposed Action



- **Complete** – COVID-19 technology enhancements using CARES Act funding
  - Electronic submittal and review for Real Estate and Subdivision (platting)
  - Dynamic plan review for Q-Team
  - Advance ProjectDox/Posse integration
- **In Process** – Initiated hiring process for two Development Project Coordinators to provide concierge services for affordable housing projects
- **In Process** – Re-engaged exploration of opportunities for new permit center facility



# Previous Proposed Action



- **Complete** - New computers rolled out for all staff with more memory and higher processing speeds resulting in much better performance in handling the large files associated with plan review
- **Complete** - Re-assigned staff and brought in third-party staff to assist with plan review by completing other tasks necessary to coordinate our plan review system with our permitting system to help plan reviewers be able to focus on plan review
- **Complete** – Publishing current review times weekly for Commercial and Single Family permits on the Building Inspection website



# New Proposed Action

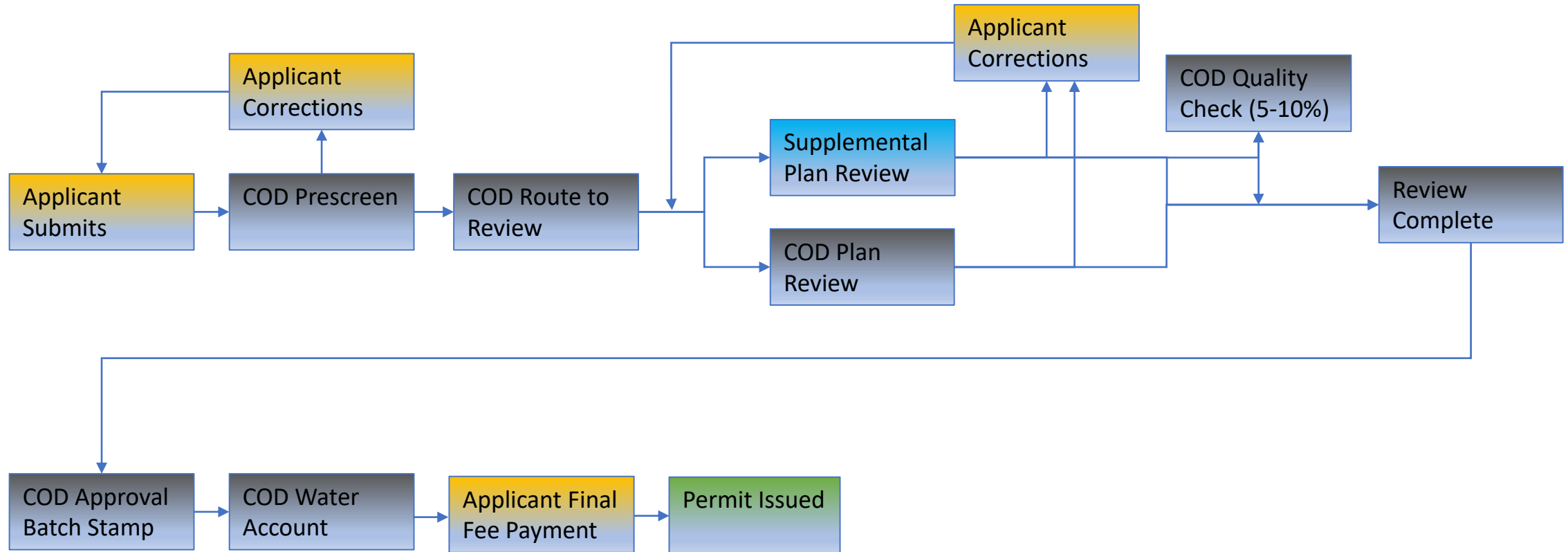


- On January 27th, Council authorized professional service contracts for third-party supplemental plan review and inspection services to assist in processing building permits and be available for inspections, if needed
  - \$5.04M total contract amount authorized, but City will only pay for services actually rendered
  - Source of funds is the Building Inspection Fund Balance (Enterprise Fund) from fees paid by applicants





# Plan Review Workflow



# Supplemental Plan Review



- Supplemental plan reviewers will work remotely
- Residential Manager and Supervisor will provide contract oversight and manage performance
- Review time of individual plans ranges from 30 to 90 minutes depending on size, complexity, and whether zoning review is included
- First review in 1 week or less after assignment
- Assignment of plans begins the week of February 1, with 100 projects to be assigned



# New Proposed Action



- Overall goal is to clear the backlog and get to a steady state of 2-3 weeks for single family new construction and addition plan reviews by the end of March 2021
  - Every effort will be made to reach that goal as soon as possible
- Continue monitoring review times for other project types as well and utilize supplemental plan reviewers as needed
- Length of contracts enable having supplemental resources available to get through the other departmental projects that will take staff time



# Proposed Action – Longer Term



- As adopted in the FY20-21 budget, a third-party Staffing and Efficiency Study to help determine appropriate staffing levels and additional opportunities for improvements
  - Scheduled for Council consideration on 2/10/21
- Very large project to replace Posse, the backbone permitting system
  - Top two solutions identified through procurement process and due diligence underway
  - Critical for reviewing the end-to-end processes and determine the long-term technology to support these processes
- Draft RFCSP submitted to Office of Procurement Services to solicit a consultant to develop a self-certification program for building permits



# Next Steps



- Continue implementing improvements outlined
- Track progress and provide periodic updates to Council







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