Building Permits and Inspections Service Review

Project Update – November 2019

The Building Permits and Inspections Service Review has now completed the first phase of engagement, which was designed to understand the issues of the process in its current state.

Engagement sessions were held with members of the Regina Construction Association and the Regina and Region Homebuilders Association as well as approximately 20 independent engineers, architects and designers. In total approximately 60 individuals participated in the process. In addition, the online survey received over 125 responses.

The next step in our process, beginning the week of November 25th, is to work with stakeholders to generate new ideas and solutions for how to move forward. This will be a creative and collaborative exercise with members of the industry working alongside City staff in small, facilitated sessions. In total, approximately 30 individuals from industry in partnership with a dozen employees will take part in one of four working groups.

The input from industry through the issue identification sessions was themed and shared back with participants to ensure accuracy. In summary, the issues were clustered into the following themes:

- **Communication and awareness**: Communication about and during the permitting process is insufficient.
- **Speed and timing of delivery**: The speed of permit reviews is generally slow and not aligned to the needs of industry or building owners. Further, the timing of information requirements does not align with the industry building process.
- **Roles and relationships**: There has been an erosion of a collaborative and productive working relationship between industry and the City, coupled with an absence of effective dispute resolution mechanisms.
- **Regulatory involvement**: Inconsistency exists on the application of building code and other regulation at all stages of the process.
- **Service touchpoints and interactions**: The City’s approach to service does not meet the needs of industry. The current approach extends timelines and does not result in collaborative interaction.
- **Ownership and accountability**: Industry indicated that it was nearly impossible to manage project timelines and delivery schedules when no firm commitments for permit review timelines can be made by City staff.
- **Financial and economic competitiveness**: The quality of the permit service means the community is falling behind in investment. Negative financial impacts are felt at the project, industry and community level.