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# MEMORANDUM

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Date: August 7, 2014

To: The Honorable Chair and Members  
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator 

Re: **Process Improvement for Sewer Improvements Associated with Private Land Development**

In a recent meeting with members of the land development community in our region, we were apprised of the concern over delays associated with sanitary sewer infrastructure improvement approval processes. The processes established by the Development Services Department have been streamlined to expedite the review and approval of subdivision plats and infrastructure improvement plans related to utilities and roadways. However, sewer infrastructure improvements have continued to be reviewed and approved through separate submittals to the Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department and the Department of Environmental Quality.

In an effort to further improve our development review processes, these three departments have developed improved approaches to facilitate the processing of sewer infrastructure improvements. The attached August 6, 2014 memorandum from Chief Building Official Yves Khawam discusses the specific adjustments that have been made in consultation with the development community. Implementation of these changes is planned for September 1, 2014.

We continue to take the necessary actions and to continue to consult with the development community about our review and approval processes to ensure our processes are as responsive and efficient as practically possible. The local economy continues to experience sluggish demand for new housing and commercial and industrial land development and any actions we can take to assist with prompt processing of requests for County approvals will be taken.

CHH/mjk  
Attachment

c: John Bernal, Deputy County Administrator for Public Works  
Nanette Slusser, Assistant County Administrator for Public Works Policy  
Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Director, Development Services  
Ursula Nelson, Director, Environmental Quality  
Jackson Jenkins, Director, Regional Wastewater Reclamation  
Richard Grimaldi, Deputy Director, Environmental Quality  
Eric Wieduwilt, Deputy Director, Regional Wastewater Reclamation  
Yves Khawam, Chief Building Official, Development Services



**PIMA COUNTY**  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

**DATE:** August 6, 2014  
**TO:** John M. Bernal, Deputy County Administrator—Public Works  
**FROM:** Yves Khawam, Chief Building Official   
**SUBJECT:** Consolidation of Private Development Sewer Processes within Unincorporated Pima County

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As you are aware, the development community raised some concerns earlier this year regarding the sewer approval processes for private development in terms of review timeframes, submittal medium and integration with other County approval processes. In our efforts to be responsive to these concerns a small team from the affected departments convened in May, 2014 with the following general objectives:

- Provide single electronic submittal, approval and inspection process for all private development projects within the unincorporated County (with the exception of public water systems)
- Provide processes maximizing productivity, efficiency and customer satisfaction
- Provide processes delivering a target review turn-around time of five business days

An overall implementation plan was drafted and vetted within stakeholder meetings held on June 2<sup>nd</sup> and July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2014.

**Process consolidation**

The consolidation scope affects the following processes:

*Conceptual Approval*

RWRD Preliminary Sewer Layout and Type II Capacity approval is to be integrated into DSD Development Concept Permit and Tentative Plat instruments:

*Site Construction Approval*

RWRD Sewer Connection review for private sewers, Sewer Improvement Plan for public sewers and Type III Capacity approval is to be integrated into the DSD Site Construction Permit instrument. In addition, PDEQ successfully worked with ADEQ to assume delegation of Sewer Discharge Authorization so that County clients no longer need to seek approval from the State. Sewer DEQ Construction Authorization and Discharge Authorization will be sub-delegated to DSD for private development projects within the unincorporated County to further enhance review processing efficiencies.

*Building Permit Approval*

Clients will no longer need to provide a separate connection permit application submittal to RWRD when submitting for a building permit application. Instead, RWRD shall be notified of building permit

applications through reports and shall initialize Sewer Connection Permits, review sewer connection point, assess sewer connection fees, and notify clients of amount due which may be paid online.

#### ***Sewer Construction Permit***

The only sewer process which will not be fully integrated at this time is the Sewer Construction Permit which serves to track inspections associated with public sewer construction. Following Construction Authorization issued by DSD through the Site Construction Permit process, the contractor shall obtain a Sewer Construction Permit from RWRD. Upon RWRD approval of inspections, RWRD returns a Discharge Authorization package to DSD for review and approval. This entire internal process should be transparent to our clients and should reduce processing timeframes by weeks compared to the current process where the client needs to interface with the State.

#### **Submittal and Review Platform**

In order to facilitate integration of the sewer processes into the DSD private development ones, a shift was required from a paper-based environment to the electronic PDF-based submittal and processing platform currently employed by DSD. Submittal criteria were aligned to match those of DSD instruments and fillable PDF forms were created to facilitate client input and submittal. As a result of this effort, PDEQ and RWRD will be in a position to accept electronic submittal from clients within the incorporated County as a future phase of implementation.

#### **Process and submittal Criteria**

Web pages and County permitting systems have been updated to reflect process and submittal criteria modifications and review staff is undergoing training in processing requirements and standards.

#### **Implementation**

All components associated with sewer consolidation within DSD private development processes have been structured for implementation on September 1, 2014. Stakeholders have been updated as to the status and have voiced appreciation of our efforts. Post the implementation date, the integrated processes will be subject to the current DSD quarterly evaluation and continuous improvement program to track timeliness, quality and customer satisfaction.

Please let us know if you require additional information.

c: Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Development Services Director  
Ursula Nelson, Environmental Quality Director  
Jackson Jenkins, Regional Wastewater Reclamation Director  
Richard Grimaldi, Environmental Quality Deputy Director  
Eric Wieduwilt, Regional Wastewater Reclamation Deputy Director