



Beyond "How Can I Help?"

Elevating the Customer and User Experience
in Municipal Service

Waste is Disrespectful

- Humanity: Waste is disrespectful to humanity because it wastes scarce resources.
- Citizens: Waste is disrespectful to citizens because it asks them to pay for processes with no value.
- Individuals: Waste is disrespectful of individuals because it asks them to do work with no value.

Denver Peak Academy

Elevated service delivery respects
people's time, money, and dignity.

Who are our customers?

- Outside individuals, businesses, & organizations that ***interact with us***
- Those who receive our services
- Those who are affected by our organization (stakeholders)
- Taxpayers, Rate Payers
- Inside departments and co-workers
- Elected Officials
- Other governmental entities or community members

What is customer service?

- The manner of treating customers in a polite and helpful way
- The part of an organization that answers customers' questions, exchanges goods that are not satisfactory, etc.
- *The way that an organization deals with customers before, during, and after a transaction, and the activities involved in providing services to customers*

It's about service delivery.

What is customer experience (CX)?

The overall perception customers have when interacting with the city. It includes: Processes, Communication, Trust, Follow-through, Wait Times.

What is user experience(UX)?

The design and usability of a specific service, system, or interaction. It includes: website navigation, software solutions, phone systems, signs, building layout.

What is elevated service delivery?

- Needs are met proactively, even before they are known
- Customers have minimal awareness of our internal complexity
- Information is clear and in plain language
- Interaction is simple, if required

Goal: Better outcomes with less effort.

Most dangerous sentence used in organizations

That's the way we've always done it

Roast Trimming

The constraint disappeared.

The habit remained.



Government “Roast Ends”

Process Waste

- Extra approvals
- Duplicate data entry
- Legacy forms

Communication Waste

- Government speak
- Compliance without clarity
- Reactive responses

Digital Waste

- Website mirrors org chart
- Too many links
- Outdated content

Polite Runaround

Resident receives two letters with slightly different information. At the bottom of both letters: “If you have questions, please come to City Hall at 123 Main Street.”

- They come to City Hall.
- Resident (holding letters): Hi. I got this letter last week, and then I got this one yesterday. They say different things. I just want to make sure I’m doing the right thing.
- Staff (pleasant): Let me take a look... Okay, yes. This one is from Planning, and this one is from Assessors.
- Resident: Right. They’re about the same property.
- Staff: They’re related, but they’re technically different departments.
- Resident: Well, it says at the bottom, “If you have questions, come here.”
- Staff: Yes, that’s our main address.
- Resident: So... this isn’t the right place?
- Staff (still kind): The Assessment Division is actually in the Oak Street building.
- Resident: Okay. Can someone there explain this?
- Staff: Yes, but the assessor is on vacation this week.
- Resident: So what do I do?
- Staff: You can come back next week when she returns, or I can give you her email.
- Resident: So I came to the address on the letter... and I still don’t have an answer?
- Staff (apologetic): I’m really sorry for the inconvenience. Have a great day!

Being nice is not the same as being helpful!

Nice	Helpful
Apologizes	Resolves with empathy
Refers	Owens
Directs	Clarifies
Gives contact info	Contact
Ends politely	Shares next steps and realistic timeline
I'm really sorry for the inconvenience. Have a great day!	I'm sorry this was confusing, here's what you can expect...



PAYMENT CHOICE OR PAYMENT IS NOT ACCEPTED

SPECIAL ASSESSMENT PAYMENT PLAN AFTER CONTRACT IS CERTIFIED AS CO

Included in this mailing is an estimated amount (quantities and costs) of the special assessment against your property or properties. A statement of the estimated amount is available at the office of the City Clerk. Once the contract is certified as complete by the Public Works Department, the final amount (quantities and costs) of the special assessment against your property or properties will be mailed to you. At that time, you will receive the paperwork to select a payment choice for the special assessment.

THE PAYMENT OPTIONS YOU WILL RECEIVE AFTER THE CONTRACT IS CERTIFIED AS COMPLETE WILL HAVE THE FOLLOWING:

PAYMENT IN FULL

If you choose this option, the City of Anywhere will then send you a statement of the assessment invoice and you must make payment prior to November 1st.

If, after making this selection, the property owner fails to make payment prior to November 1st to the City Treasurer; the entire amount will be placed on the property tax bill.

FIVE ANNUAL INSTALLMENT PAYMENTS ON PROPERTY TAX

The amount of the assessment will be placed on the property tax bill and will be paid in five (5) annual installments. A 6% interest rate will be applied to the unpaid balance per year over the five (5) year period. The assessment payment and interest will be included in each year's tax bill. The assessment balance may be paid in full at any time during the five (5) year period with interest pro-rated to the month of payment.

TEN ANNUAL INSTALLMENT PAYMENTS ON PROPERTY TAX

The amount of the assessment will be placed on the property tax bill and will be paid in ten (10) annual installments. A 6% interest rate will be applied to the unpaid balance per year over the ten (10) year period. The assessment payment and interest will be included in each year's tax bill. The assessment balance may be paid in full at any time during the ten (10) year period with interest pro-rated to the month of payment.

FIFTEEN ANNUAL INSTALLMENT PAYMENTS ON PROPERTY TAX

The amount of the assessment will be placed on the property tax bill and will be paid in fifteen (15) annual installments. A 6% interest rate will be applied to the unpaid balance per year over the fifteen (15) year period. The assessment payment and interest will be included in each year's tax bill.

May 9, 2025

Subject: **Special Assessments for Sanitary Sewer Laterals (New & Relay), Water Laterals (New and Relay), and Storm Sewer Laterals (New and Relay) Contract 25-02**

To Property Owners on:

- ▶ MADE UP STREET, from West 1st Street to West 5th Street
- ▶ WEST 9TH STREET, from 100' east of Pawnee Street to 100' west of Pawnee Street
- ▶ WEST 10TH STREET, from 100' east of Pawnee Street to 100' west of Pawnee Street
- ▶ WEST 11TH STREET, from 100' east of Pawnee Street to 100' west of Pawnee Street
- ▶ WEST 12TH STREET, from 100' east of Pawnee Street to 100' west of Pawnee Street
- ▶ WEST SOUTH PARK STREET, from 100' east of Pawnee Street to 100' west of Pawnee Street
- ▶ WEST 14TH STREET, from 100' east of Pawnee Street to 100' west of Pawnee Street
- ▶ WEST 15TH STREET, from 100' east of Pawnee Street to 100' west of Pawnee Street
- ▶ WEST 16TH STREET, from Oregon Street to 100' east of Pawnee Street

Although the Common Council approved a Vehicle Registration Fee, which eliminates the paving-related (sidewalks, driveways, and streets) reconstruction assessment, Utility-specific assessments are still required for all projects. With that, a public hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, May 27, 2025, in the Council Chambers at City Hall, to consider improvements to your street. Staff will be available from **3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 27, 2025**, in Room 405 of City Hall to answer questions about the Project and the estimated special assessment costs.

The public hearing covers the proposed improvements, which include the following: installation of sanitary sewer, water, and storm sewer laterals; and the levy of special assessments that partially cover the cost of the improvements. Assessments are not due until the Project is certified as complete at which time these charges can be paid by any one (1) of the plans as outlined by the Finance Department's information on payment plan options. Based upon the City of Anywhere's assessment policy, the assessable portions of the Project have been identified and are outlined on the attached assessment worksheet(s). The quantities and costs are estimates and will be adjusted to the actual quantity installed. Unit costs will be adjusted according to the assessment policy based on bid prices.

May 9, 2025

Dear Property Owner:

Please find enclosed the following documents for your information and review:

1. A letter of explanation from City Engineer, Donna Meagle.
2. The Initial Resolution adopted by the Anywhere Common Council, which began the process for the improvement(s) adjacent to your property.
3. Notice of Public Hearing to be held by the Anywhere Common Council on May 27, 2025 regarding assessments, which will be set with the adoption of the final resolution, also scheduled for adoption on May 27, 2025.
4. Special assessment payment plan options explaining the payment choices **after** the Contract is certified as complete - **payment choice or payment is not accepted at this time.**
5. Assessment sheet indicating properties involved in the proposed project, the property footage, price per foot and estimated total assessment to the property.

If you wish to appear before the Council before the final resolution is adopted to proceed with the construction, please refer to the "Notice of Public Hearing" enclosed.

If you have any questions in regard to the construction project in general, please contact the Public Works Engineering Division (555-123-4567).



March 9, 2025

Notice of Proposed Utility Improvements and Special Assessments - Project 25-02

Dear Property Owner,

The City of Anywhere is planning utility improvements on your street. This packet provides information related to the project. (No payment is due at this time.)

What is a special assessment?

Special assessments are charged to abutting properties for a portion of the cost of utility installation and/or replacement during a street construction or reconstruction.

Don't we have a vehicle registration fee (wheel tax) for this?

Although the City has eliminated assessments for paving work (streets, sidewalks, and driveways) through the vehicle registration fee, this does not apply to the utility-related costs.

What improvements are planned in this project?

- New and Replacement of Sanitary Sewer, Water, and Storm Sewer laterals – paid through the special assessment charges
- Street Reconstruction – paid through Vehicle Registration Fee

What streets are included?

- Made Up St, from West 1st St to West 5th St
- West 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 14th, 15th, and 16th from 50' east of Pawnee St to 50' west of Pawnee St
- West Eagleton Av, from 100' east of Pawnee St to 100' west of Pawnee St

When can I talk to staff or the Common Council about this?

If you wish to speak to the Common Council before they vote on this project, please attend the public hearing on:

Date: Tuesday, March 27, 2025

Time: 6:00 pm

Location: Council Chambers 1st Floor, City Hall, 1234 Made Up St.

Additionally, City staff will be available to answer questions prior to the public hearing from 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. in Room 405 at City Hall.

If you have questions about the project, contact the Engineering Department at 555-123-4567.

What's Next?

- Find out more by contacting the Engineering Department at 555-123-4567 or attend the public hearing at the date listed above.
- If the project is approved, you will also receive another mailing which will include a copy of the approved resolution which is required by state law.
- Sign up for progress reports on city projects by going to www.anywhere.usa.gov/projects and selecting the project number listed on page one.
- Once the project is be completed and approved by the Engineering Department you will receive the final assessment amount with a payment option.
- Payment is not due or accepted until the project is completed and certified by the Engineering Department.

What else is in this mailing?

- Assessment worksheet showing: your property frontage and the cost per foot which determined the estimated total estimated costs
- A copy of the Initial Resolution that the Common Council will vote on
- A Public Hearing [notice](#)

What are the payment options? (No payment is due or accepted at this time.)

1. Full payment after invoice sent, due by November 1.
2. Installment Plans for 5, 10, or 15 years
 - Added to your property tax bills.
 - 6% interest per year on unpaid balance
 - Early payoff accepted with prorated interest

Typical Project Timeline

Time Period	Actions
Prior to Project Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engineering determines areas in need• Capital Budget Approved
Project Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Property owners notified of intent to make an improvement, estimated cost, and public hearing date (February).• Public hearing (March).• Council approval (March).• Project work completed (Summer-Fall).
Year after Project Completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Special assessment bills sent out by Treasurer's Office (April).• Property owners have 30 days after billing to determine payment option

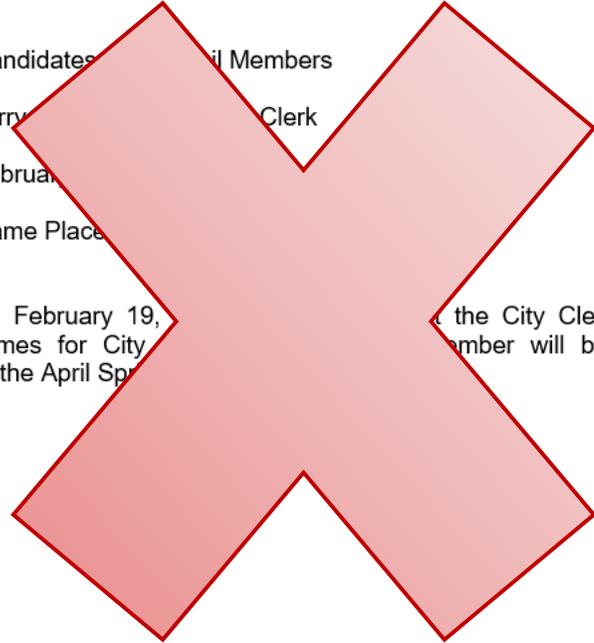
If you have questions about the project, contact the Engineering Department at 555-123-4567.



Somewhere between average and not the worst

TO: Candidates and Council Members
FROM: Jerry Gergich, City Clerk
DATE: February 22, 2024
RE: Name Placement

On Thursday, February 19, 2024, at the City Clerk's counter, candidate names for City Council member will be drawn for placement on the April 9, 2024 Spring Election Ballot.



Common Council Candidate Ballot Order Drawing

The City of Anywhere will conduct a random drawing to determine the order in which Common Council Candidates will appear on the April 9, 2024 Spring Election Ballot.

Ballot Order Drawing

Date: Thursday, February 24, 2024

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Location: City Hall — City Clerk's Counter
First Floor, 1234 Made Up Street, Anywhere, USA

Purpose: Candidate names will be drawn for placement on the April 9, 2024 Spring Election ballot.

Candidates and members of the public may attend.

If you have any questions, please contact, Jerry Gergich, Acting City Clerk at jgergich@anywhere.usa.gov

Date Issued: February 22, 2024

Adhering to statutory notice requirements isn't the same as communicating

Compliance	Communication
Meets legal requirements	Provides clear information
“it’s posted”	“it’s understood”
Protects Organization	Serves Residents
Reactive	Proactive

Website - Link Rot

404 - Page Not Found

HOME > 404 ERROR PAGE

The page you are looking for might have been moved, renamed, or may be temporarily unavailable. It is recommended that you start again from the [homepage](#).

Website – Too much information

DATA.GOV
EMPOWERING PEOPLE

Site search SEARCH ▶

HOME DATA ▾ APPS COMMUNITY METRICS OPEN DATA SITES GALLERY WHAT'S NEW

SBA SMALL BUSINESS LOANS & GRANT PROGRAM

The Loans & Grants dataset provides a collection of links to Federal, state and local financial assistance programs that help small businesses get started or expand operations. Each program is categorized into 15 dimensions, from loan type to business activity, industry group and location.

Latest Datasets

- CMS Medicare and Medicaid EHR Incentive...
- NETSTAT Report
- Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF3)
- Hearing Office Workload Data
- Hearing Office Average Processing Time...
- Hearings Held In-Person or Via Video...
- Hearing Office Dispositions Per ALJ Per Day...
- ALJ Disposition Data
- American Jobs Act: Impact Per District
- Fire Weather Outlooks

DATA AND APPS

- 390,178 [raw](#) and [geospatial](#) datasets
- 1,150 government [apps](#)
- 236 citizen-developed [apps](#)
- 85 [mobile apps](#)
- 172 [agencies and subagencies](#)
- [Suggest a dataset or app!](#)
- 2011 [Next Generation Data.gov](#) is interactive, explorable, and social.

MORE ▶

COMMUNITIES

Come explore, discuss, meet others in the same field, and develop the data and apps in the community that you care about. Join in the discussions by going to communities below that interest you.

OPENDATA SEMANTICWEB

HEALTH LAW

ENERGY OCEAN

MORE ▶

OPEN GOVERNMENT

First open source code released for the Open Government Platform delivered by the governments of India and the U.S. [Find out more](#) and then [download the code](#).

What's coming up on Data.gov? Check out [our blog](#).

MORE ▶

LEARN

SEMANTIC WEB

DEVELOPER'S CORNER

Hick–Hyman Law

- What it means: The more choices you give someone at once, the longer it takes them to decide.
- Government/workplace example (Wisconsin city context):
- If a “Services” page lists 40 links, residents may hesitate or click the wrong thing.
- It’s faster when services are grouped into a few clear categories, such as:
 - Bills & Payments
 - Permits & Licensing
 - Streets & Snow
 - Parks & Recreation
 - Public Safety

Click to open Your Government

Airport Planning	Engineering Bicycling and Walking Bids GIS Storm Water Management Street Projects	Human Resources Employment Opportunities Employee Benefits Employee Handbook and Labor Contracts Job Interest Cards	Public Works Annual Street Projects Garbage & Recycling Yardwaste Snow Removal Street Maintenance Surplus Auction Fall Leaf Pick Up
Assessment Personal Property Assessment Property Assessment Links FAQ	Finance Annual Financial and Budget Reports Tax Increment District Tourism Grant Application	Information Technology	Public Access Media Schedules Video on Demand
Attorney FAQ	Fire Wausau Fire Referendum General Information Recruitment EMS Division Fire Prevention/Inspection Division Fire Safety Fire Suppression Division Hazardous Materials Division History Honor Guard Recreational Fires	Inspections & Zoning General Permit Information Property Maintenance Permit Reports Rental Properties Zoning Ordinances	Transit How to Ride Employer Paid Commuting Long Distance Transit Advertising On The Buses Procurement Civil Rights Frequently Asked Questions
City Council Alderspersons Boards Committees Commissions Agendas, Minutes & Packets Monthly Meetings Standing Committees		Mayor History of Wausau Mayors N2N	Water & Sewer Billing Information on Lead Newsletter
Clerk Elections E-payments License Permit Registration Municipal Code Pets		Municipal Court Appearance & Pleas Conduct & Procedure Forms Traffic	
		Parks	

Lack of
buttons to
select



Board of Supervisors ▾ Departments ▾ Municipalities Employees Search

Popular Topics

[Property Tax Search](#)

[Pay Property Taxes](#)

[Election Results](#)

[Official Wood County Directory](#)

[Marriage Licenses](#)

[Copies of Birth, Death, Marriage, Divorce & Domestic Partnership Certificates](#)

[Interactive Maps & GIS Data](#)

[Septic System Triennial Program Fee](#)

[Pay Court Fines and Citations](#)

[Opioid Settlement](#)

[Parks & Forestry Recreation Areas](#)

[Surplus Property Sales](#)

2/23/2026

Powers Bluff Hills open this weekend Feb 28-March 1

Powers Bluff will be open for tubing and skiing this weekend. The hills look great! February 28 & March 1.

[View full post](#)

2/23/2026

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MEETING - CTH HH BRIDGE CROSSING OF EAST FORK HEMLOCK CREEK

Improvements to County HH over East Fork Hemlock Creek to be discussed at March 10 Meeting Planned improvements for County HH in the Town of Sherry, Wood County, will be discussed at a Public Involvement ...

[View full post](#)

2/17/2026

Legal Notice

At the regular February 17, 2026, meeting of the Wood County Board of Supervisors, the following ordinance was adopted:

Ordinance 26-2-15: To amend Wood County Ordinance #400, Speed Limits Ordinance to amend the speed limit zone on CTH B in the Town of Lincoln.

The Ordinance in its entirety can be found on the Wood County website at www.co.wood.wi.us/Departments/Clerk/Ordinances.aspx

Employment Opportunities

Wood County is accepting employment applications online through our Employment Opportunities section.

[Employment Opportunities](#)

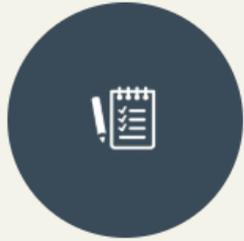
Upcoming Meetings

2/24/2026 8:00 AM
Civil Service Commission

2/25/2026 1:30 PM
Central Wisconsin Economic Development Fund Inc (Added)

2/26/2026 8:00 AM
Civil Service Commission

2/26/2026 12:15 PM
South Central Library System -



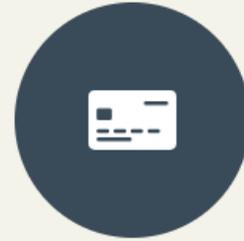
**CITY
MEETINGS**



**COMMUNITY
CALENDAR**



NEWSLETTER



**PAY YOUR
BILL**



**POLICE INFO
PORTAL**

Fitts's Law

- What it means: The closer and bigger a button/target is, the faster and easier it is to click or tap.
- On a City website (e.g., paying a utility bill or submitting a permit request), make the most-used actions like “Pay Bill,” “Report a Concern,” “Apply for Permit”:
 - Large
 - Easy to find
 - Not buried in a corner or tiny menu



A website only supports service delivery when it's kept up to date and easy to use (and ADA compliant).

WCAG 2.1 AA – Federal ADA Web Accessibility Rule

Government Compliance Deadlines:

- 📅 April 24, 2026 • Population 50,000+ residents
- 📅 April 26, 2027 • Population under 50,000 residents

 Perceivable	 Operable	 Understandable	 Robust
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alt text• Captions• 4.5:1 contrast• Zoom to 200%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keyboard access• Visible focus• No traps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plain language• Clear errors• Predictable navigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Screen reader ready• Proper headings• Labeled forms

So what do we do?

Insanity	Meh	Best
Nothing, continue to do the same thing and hope things change (or stay the same or wait things out until we can retire)	Provide better customer service, digitize our current processes	Elevate through continuous improvement

First – Lead

- Develop relationships and trust
- Ensure alignment with mission and vision
- Build a cohesive team (leadership team)
- Break down silos
- Change service delivery from being department focused to customer focused
- Define and build a culture of continuous improvement
- Play out WIFM

Define what CI means to you

Who?	What?	Where?	When?	How?
Everyone. Leaders model and support, but it is everyone's responsibility.	Commitment to constantly improving how we deliver service, reduce effort, and use public resources responsibly.	Across the organization and with those who we interact and impact.	Ongoing. Not just one and done, not when we are told to, not just during a crisis – part of our daily routine.	Continuous Improvement efforts are focused on service delivery by improving the customer and user experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• by reducing the customer effort,• eliminating unnecessary interactions,• streamlining processes,• proactively anticipating needs and questions,• using plain language,• communication for understanding.

Why?

Mission, Vision, or your “why”

Mission: The City provides goods and services in the pursuit of a safe and vibrant community.

Vision: A thriving and sustainable community offering abundant opportunities for work and life.

Pick a Process to Review

- Talk with staff about why people are regularly contacting them
- Have them document when people call or come in
- Be curious, ask questions
- Monitor feedback channels
- Have after action reviews for cyclical or new or changes processes

Review the process with a Lean tool

- Why do we have this process? Use Five Whys
- What is the root problem? Use Fishbone Diagram
- What is the current process? Map it out or at least walk through the steps
- What waste can we eliminate? Value Stream Mapping

The 5 Whys

Define the problem

Why
is it happening?

Why
is that?

Why
is that?

Why
is that?

Why
is that?

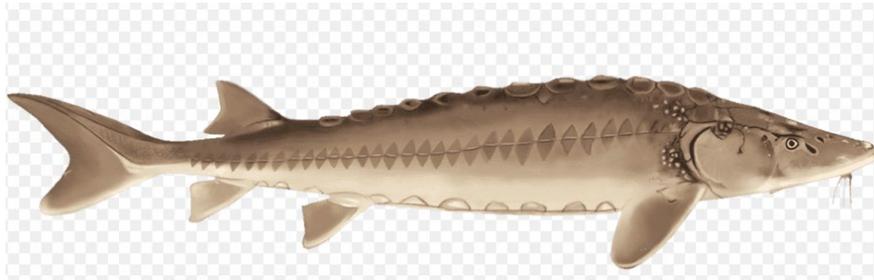
Root
Cause

Why do permits take so long to issue? – 5 Whys

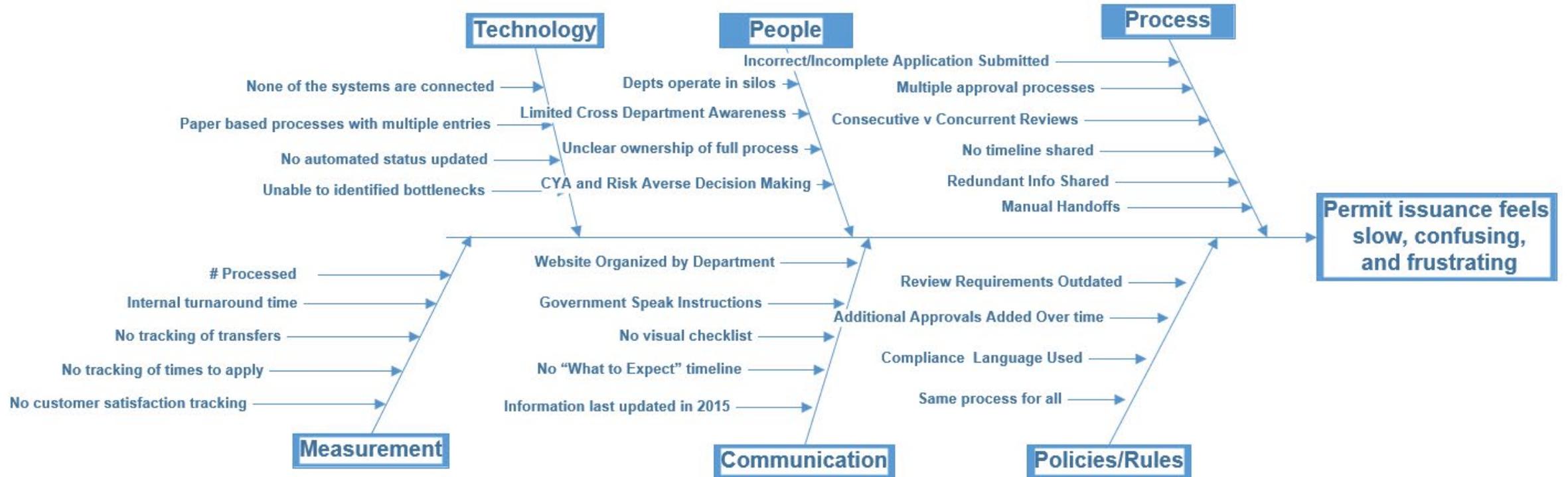
Why do they seem so slow?	Why are there multiple approvals?	Why are they done separately?	Why hasn't it changed?	Why haven't we reviewed it?
There are many departments approvals.	Each department reviews consecutively and not concurrently.	That's how the process was set up years ago. (and/or we send the original application around for all the departments to review)	We've never reviewed the full process together.	We don't have time and we are focused on what our department needs.

Fishbone Diagram

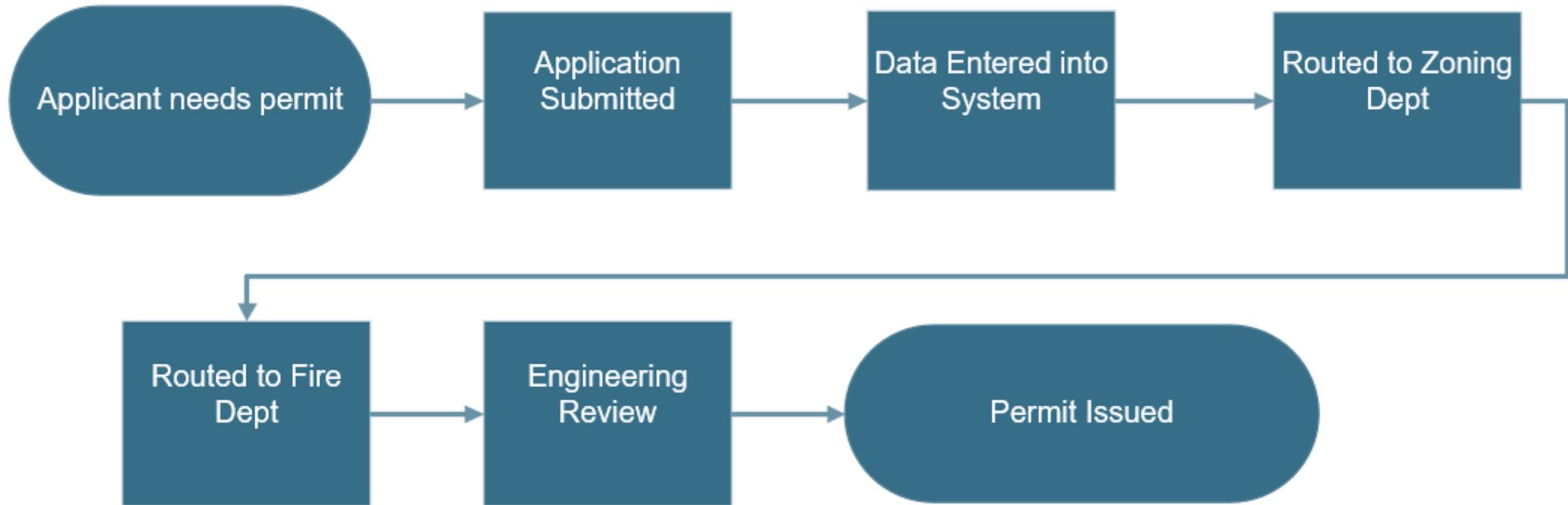
- Also known as cause and effect diagram used to identify and organize the potential root causes.
- Head: What is being reviewed.
- Spine: Line connecting the head to the categories.
- Bones: Categories of causes.
- Sub-branches: Possible causes.



Why do permits take so long to issue? Fishbone Diagram



Permit Process Map



THE 8 WASTES

DEFECTS



Efforts caused by rework, scrap & incorrect information

OVERPRODUCTION



Production that is more than needed or before it is needed

WAITING



Wasted time waiting for the next step in the process

NON-UTILIZED POTENTIAL



Not using people's talents, skills & knowledge to their full

TRANSPORT



Unnecessary movements of products & materials

INVENTORY



Excess products & material not being processed

MOTION



Unnecessary movements by people (eg. walking)

EXTRA PROCESSING

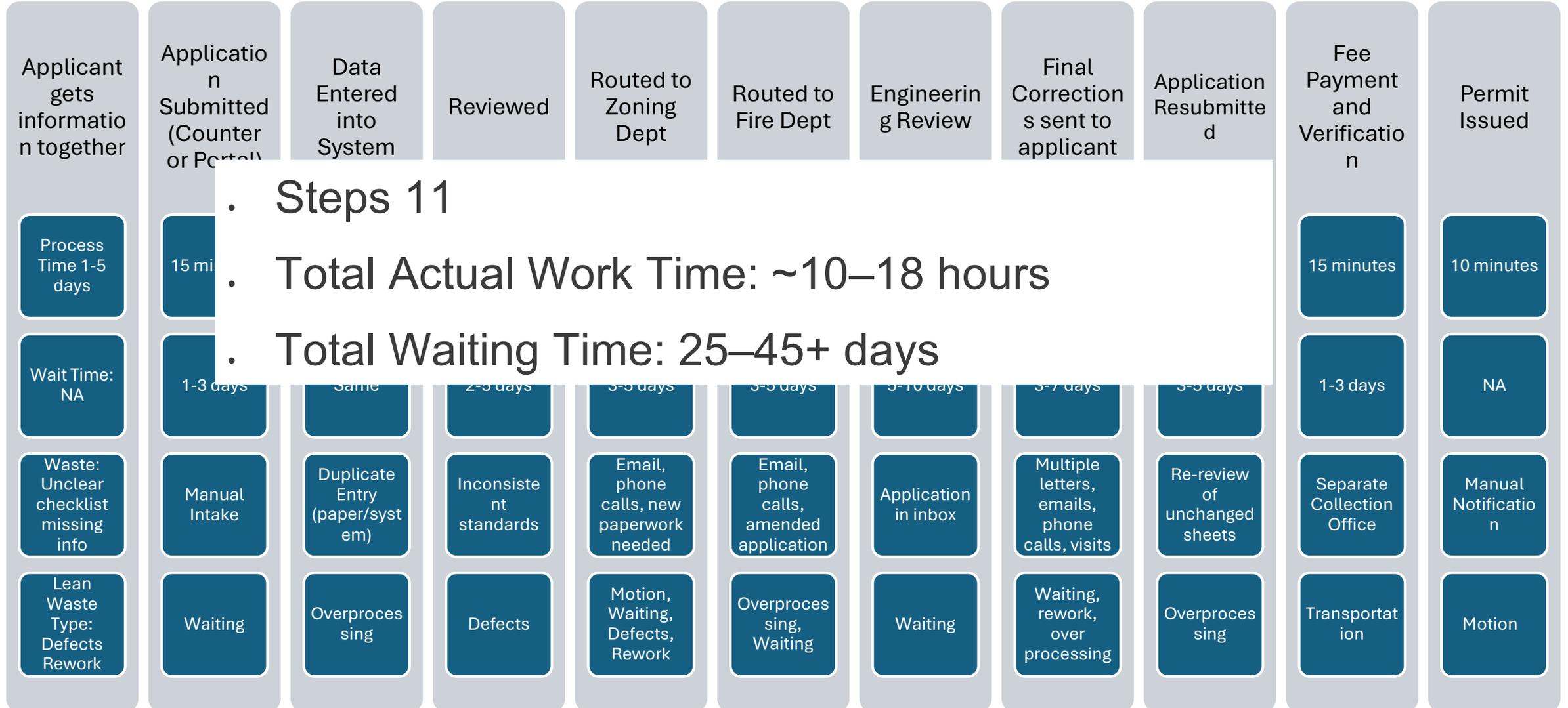


Unnecessary processing or activities in the process that do not add value

Value Stream Mapping

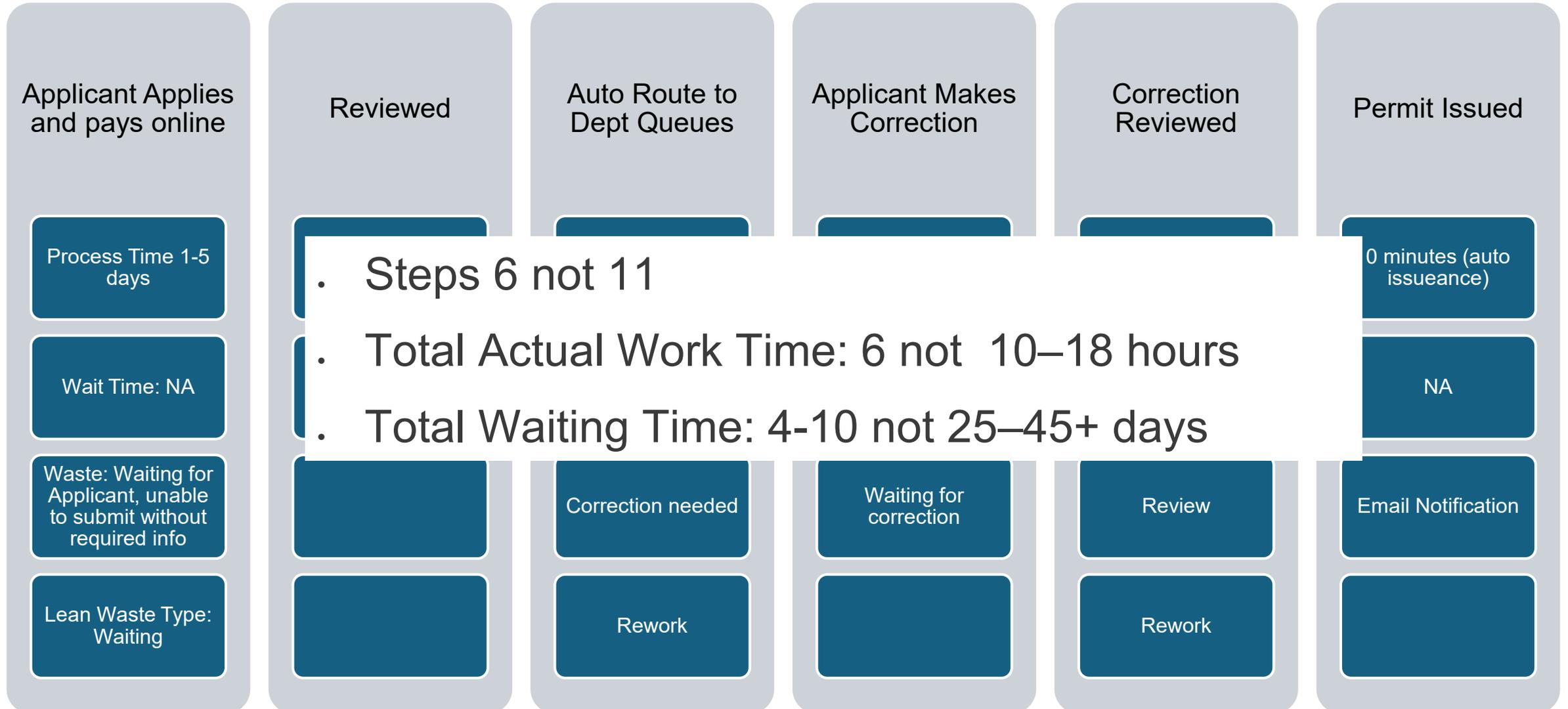
- Lean tool used to map the steps of a process that helps to identify waste, delays, and opportunities for improvement.
- Includes:
 - Process Steps
 - Process Time
 - Wait time
 - Waste Identification
 - Total Time

Permit Process – Current State



. Steps 11
 . Total Actual Work Time: ~10–18 hours
 . Total Waiting Time: 25–45+ days

Permit Process – Future State



How can we measure improvements?



Reduction in steps



Reduction in wait
time



Reduction in
repeat contacts



Increase in first-
contact resolution



ADA compliance
progress



Customer effort
score (simple 1–5
survey)

What This Means for Us

- Elevated service delivery is not about being nicer. It's about designing systems that:
 - Reduce customer effort
 - Eliminate unnecessary steps
 - Use plain language
 - Anticipate needs
 - Respect people's time and money
 - Hide internal complexity
- Waste is disrespectful.
 - If a step doesn't add value, we should question it.
 - Nice ≠ Helpful.
 - Helpful means ownership and resolution.
 - Continuous improvement is leadership work.

Start Monday



Pick one process.



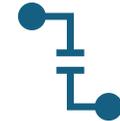
Ask: Why do people contact us about this?



Map the current steps.



Eliminate one "roast end."



Close one loop that frustrates customers.

Resources

Lean & Continuous Improvement

- Five Whys
- Fishbone (Cause & Effect)
- Value Stream Mapping
- Standard Work

Behavioral & UX Concepts

- Hick–Hyman Law
- Fitts's Law
- Plain Language Guidelines

(PlainLanguage.gov)

- WCAG 2.1 AA Accessibility Standards

Government Examples

- Denver Peak Academy (Lean in local government)
- U.S. Digital Service Playbook
- 18F Design Methods

Questions?

Contact Info: rgrill@oshkoshwi.gov

920-236-5002