

May 10, 2017

POSSE Implementation Follow-Up Audit

Background

Permits & Licenses

Permit and license services are a core function of the City, providing essential regulatory oversight that contributes to a safe, liveable city. Permit services include those that drive economic development in the construction and business sectors such as issuance of development, building and trade permits, as well as those that affect a broad range of citizens, such as business and dog licenses, residential parking and security alarm permits.

In 2016, the City received roughly 8,300 permit applications, the second highest volume of permit applications on record, next to over 8,700 applications in 2014.

Permits & Licenses Transformation Program

The Permits & Licenses Transformation Program (P&L program) was one of the largest service transformations to date which included the implementation of POSSE. Initiated in 2010 through the Vancouver Services Review it addresses the need for a Citywide, modern approach to permit and license service delivery and replaces an aging and at-risk technology infrastructure. The P&L program budget had a budget of \$25.97 million and was completed below budget with \$3.2 million remaining.

The key expected deliverables of the P&L Program were:

1. Mitigate legacy system risk.
2. Common workflow platform across departments.
3. Introduce online permit and licenses services.
4. Introduce mobile inspections.
5. Consolidate service counters.
6. Introduce electronic development plan review.

As of June 2017, most deliverables are operational and the electronic plan review has not yet been implemented.

POSSE System

POSSE stands for Public One Stop Service application and is a work-flow management system that allows business areas to automate business processes. The system is provided by the vendor Computronix. The POSSE implementation team presented an update to council in March 2017 which reported the following:

- All permitting functions live on POSSE.
- Legacy systems, PRISM and DOMINO, decommissioned in October 2016.
- New online permitting function launched - over 60% permits online.
- Permit status online for all permit types.
- Launched mobile inspections - over 100,000 mobile cross-department inspections.

A new project to incorporate business licenses into POSSE is also under way and was not part of this audit. The IT Application group and a business liaison within Development, Buildings & Licensing are responsible for supporting POSSE.

Survey

We surveyed all 800 POSSE users with over 340 responding, 23% of respondents are in Engineering and 38% are in Development Services, Buildings and Licensing. Detailed survey results are provided in Appendix A.

Scope

The POSSE Implementation Follow-Up Audit objectives were to ensure:

- Compliance to applicable policies, procedures and the internal control framework;
- Scope was delivered on time and on budget; and
- Key functionality was implemented, is working properly and meets business needs.

The review is not designed to detect fraud. Accordingly there should be no such reliance.

Conclusion

Most key POSSE functionalities are operational but certain elements such as electronic plan review and reporting have not yet been implemented. The user survey revealed that POSSE is not meeting all business needs and improvements are required in the areas of support and enhancement process, training and communication and operating performance metrics.

The more significant findings and recommendations are:

POSSE was launched yet enhancements are needed to meet business needs

Establishing a formal POSSE enhancement management process with proper governance, clear selection criteria, cost benefit analysis and communication protocol will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of POSSE. Furthermore, performance targets for support need to be established and tracked, including response time, submission type (e-mail, phone), tickets solved per week and average resolution time.



Internal Audit Summary Report

POSSE training to focus on user needs

POSSE training is insufficient and too generic and needs to focus on the user tasks and roles to enable more efficient and effective use of the system. The POSSE online help menu is used as the key training aid and needs to be more business focused.

Management is aware of these items and is proactively working on the issues.