

Quality and Productivity Commission  
**27<sup>th</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program**  
*"Saluting County Excellence"*

**58.0**

**2013 APPLICATION**

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

**NAME OF PROJECT:** Electronic Plan Checking

**DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION:** MARCH 1, 2012  
 (MUST HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED AT LEAST ONE YEAR - ON OR BEFORE JUNE 30, 2012)

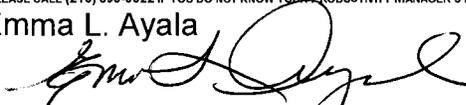
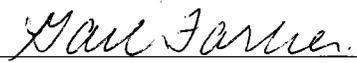
**PROJECT STATUS:**  Ongoing  One-time only

**HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT?**  Yes  No

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. Summarize the problem, solution, and benefits of the project in a clear and direct manner

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The Electronic Plan Checking project was created to implement digital plan checking services for all developer-related projects in LA County. With a staff of 29 plan checkers in LA County Public Works, creating policies and procedures that were easy to implement, providing high-quality reviews, and maintaining customer satisfaction was a major undertaking. Knowing that our customers would benefit from less printed material, faster submittals, and fewer trips to our public counter made this project exciting to undertake. We also realized that the solutions to the hurdles we would face needed to be simple. Once we understood the workflow of our plan checkers and our customers, and keeping the procedures simple so that everyone involved could implement them, our goal to perform electronic plan checking became a reality.

(1) ESTIMATED/ACTUAL ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ESTIMATED/ACTUAL ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ESTIMATED/ACTUAL ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) TOTAL ESTIMATED/ACTUAL BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$ 0	X
SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works 900 S. Fremont Ave., Alhambra CA 91803			TELEPHONE NUMBER (26) 458-4900	
PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME Anthony Nyivih Assistant Deputy Director, Land Development Division			TELEPHONE NUMBER (626) 458-4900  EMAIL anyivih@dpw.lacounty.gov	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE <small>(PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME)</small> Emma L. Ayala 		DATE 6/26/13	TELEPHONE NUMBER (626) 458-4093  EMAIL eayala@dpw.lacounty.gov	
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE Gail Farber 		DATE 6/27/13	TELEPHONE NUMBER (626) 458-4002	

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**CHALLENGE**

LA County Public Works' Land Development Division has a plan checking staff of 29 employees (and growing) and thousands of customers. The main challenge was to implement policies and procedures that were easy to implement while still providing high-quality reviews and maintaining customer satisfaction. An additional challenge was ensuring a seamless transition between the paper reviews and filing system and the new digital review and data management system.

**SOLUTION**

The solution was phased into two parts. First, it was important to understand the workflow of all the different plan checkers as well as understand what the customers were willing to do to accommodate Public Works' transition to the digital realm. Second was to implement the proposed procedures on a few plan checkers and fine-tune the procedures as necessary prior to full implementation. The solution required numerous discussions with staff and customers, then gathering information that would facilitate simple digital alternatives that achieved the same or better results.

**BENEFITS**

In line with the County's Strategic Plan of Operational Effectiveness, this project maximizes the effectiveness of the plan checking process, structure, and operations. It allows timely delivery of services provided by Land Development to its customers. This project was launched in May 2011, and has been in effect since June 2012. There was no budget set aside to do this task, and though cost savings was not the driving factor, customer service was, and both goals were achieved. The Department used the slowdown in workload, due to the current economic downturn, to create and implement these new policies and procedures. By using current staff during their "down-time," was a cost savings in itself. Also the decrease in paper files created additional floor space that can eventually be used to create more workstations. Even though it is difficult to measure the cost savings, there is a notable increase in savings and customer satisfaction to our clients. Our clients no longer need to drive in or mail in their plans for review or to pick up their review. They also do not need to print numerous copies of their plans and supporting documents, which amounts to a huge savings and customer appreciation to streamline the plan checking process. Even though the reviews of the plans take the same amount of time, whether submitted on paper or digitally, we have seen an increase in the quality of the reviews as well as a decrease in the turnaround time for plans in their final reviews. Also, digital mark-ups on plans are easier to read and understand than handwritten comments, which help eliminate confusion and reduce review turnaround time. All this has led to our customers questioning, "why can't other municipalities do the same."

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LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN (DETAIL IS REQUIRED FOR COUNTY DEPARTMENTS):

This project promotes the County's goal of Operational Effectiveness by maximizing the effectiveness of the process, structure, and operations to support timely delivery of customer-oriented and efficient public service.

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**COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFIT):** If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation.

**Cost Avoidance:** Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes.

**Cost Savings:** A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes.

**Revenue:** Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**ANNUAL= 12 MONTHS ONLY**

N/A