



Title: Permitting Platform and Strategic Outputs Demonstration

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Purpose:

This memo seeks to provide background and context for staff's demonstration of useful outputs from the District's new permitting platform, ElementsXS. The demonstration will not focus on core functionality of the new platform, like the process an applicant goes through to apply for a permit or staff's application review workflow. Rather, the demonstration will focus on new abilities for summarizing, analyzing and visualizing data that used to slip through cracks due to limitations with the former permitting system, which was originally developed by a former permitting intern. These data outputs will not only give District leadership a clearer picture of how the landscape is changing over time, but the insights will help shape, inform and guide the District's future work and strategy.

Background:

As part of the Strategic IT Update initiative, a team of staff (IT Team) evaluated permitting software platforms to replace the District's existing permitting system. Following review and vendor demonstrations, the District's IT Team recommended Novotx ElementsXS to the Board of Managers, who approved the acquisition and implementation on January 23, 2020.

Three key areas informed the District's permitting platform selection of ElementsXS and guided implementation priorities.

Centralized Digital Platform

The main aim of investing in a new permitting system is to modernize the District's permitting application and review workflows – replacing a paper-centric process with a digital system that streamlines the collection, review, and dissemination of data. At the core, the most important factor to modernize is establishing a centralized and standardized system as the authoritative source of all permitting data, stored in a single digital repository.

Flexible Data Capture

Tons of data are generated throughout permitting application, review, and inspection processes. Due to the rigidity of the District's former permitting system, some data was stored in disparate spreadsheets, or only paper/PDF plan sets, or information was not collected at all. A major goal was to deploy a system to not only capture data lost through the previous system, but a flexible system to adapt to future regulatory data collection needs of the District.

GIS-Centric

An overall goal of the District's Strategic IT Update is to unlock, capture and utilize the inherent spatial nature of District data. Permitting data is an intuitive example of spatial information – it describes work that occurs at a specific location. The strategy for leveraging spatial data is ensure that permitting platform integrate with MCWD's enterprise GIS.

Following Board approval in January 2020, implementation of ElementsXS began in earnest in August 2020. Priority and focus was placed on creating the data structure and the public/applicant user experience, and the system went live in April 2021. Since then, build-out and refinement have been completed on internal/staff-side workflows. In January 2022, data migration from the old permitting system into ElementsXS was completed. Currently, final items are being wrapped up and implementation is coming to an end.

Summary:

At the March 10, 2022 Board meeting, staff will illustrate key data aggregation and visualization outputs from the ElementsXS platform, including reports, dashboards and interactive maps. The demonstration will highlight:

- Data collection flexibility
- Work management
- Review and approval metrics
- Landscape change metrics
- Historic permitting data
- Data visualization capabilities

Supporting documents (list attachments): N/A