

## Alliance for Regulatory Coordination

### Recommendations to Improve DSPS Plan Review Services

June 15, 2020

Timeliness of commercial building and plumbing plan review by the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services continues to be a problem. The lack of timely plan review service is causing expensive delays in building construction. It is apparent that current plan review workload exceeds the plan review capacity of the DSPS. DSPS managers and staff have striven to improve plan review service through operational improvements. While operations have improved somewhat, significant construction delays continue due lack of DSPS plan review timeliness.

Action to improve DSPS plan review service is needed immediately to facilitate building construction and economic development throughout Wisconsin. Because the legislature is out of session until January 2021, emergency rules are the only vehicle currently available for changing the Commercial Building Code and Plumbing Code relative to state level plan review.

As outlined below, the Alliance for Regulatory Coordination has made recommendations concerning both sides of the workload / work capacity equation. The ARC has asked that the DSPS submit to the legislature a 14-day request for additional plan review position and spending authority and has recommended changes to plan review triggers found in the Commercial Building Code. In addition, the ARC has recommended changes to the way that plan review availability and timeliness are measured, to better reflect situational realities and the fulfillment of customer needs.

- On October 21, 2019, the Alliance wrote to DSPS Secretary-Designee Dawn Crim asking the Department to submit to the legislature a 14-day request for additional plan review position and spending authority. Unfortunately, around that same time, the Chairs of the Joint Committee on Finance announced they would not entertain such agency requests.
- On January 6, 2020, the Alliance sent the DSPS recommendations concerning adjusting several plan review thresholds for commercial buildings, and repealing or simplifying the statutorily required plan review participation fees charged to municipal plan review partners of the DSPS. Those recommendations included a white paper entitled: "Commercial Buildings Plan Review – Recommended Changes to Help Balance DSPS Workload / Staff Resources".
- On March 11, 2020, the Alliance attended a meeting of the Commercial Building Code Council and recommended code changes concerning plan review participation fees, as contained in the ARC white paper entitled: "Reduce Construction Costs and Delays with More Local Partners – Simplify participation fees charged to municipalities by the DSPS".
- On May 4, 2020, the Alliance sent the DSPS recommendations outlined in a white paper entitled: "Improving the Measurement of Plan Review Availability and Timeliness".

The above-mentioned correspondence, attachments and white papers accompany this document.