



CITYWIDE BUSINESS ADVOCACY TEAM

2014 REPORT

CBAT Mission

The Citywide Business Advocacy Team will provide the highest level of customer service to all Seattle businesses in support of job creation, economic diversity, and racial equity. We will work proactively and in partnership with businesses to resolve their issues in a manner that protects the public health, safety, and welfare of the city; and in a manner that meets the needs of the businesses we serve. We will track issues, identify systemic problems, and recommend regulatory and policy changes to the Mayor and City Council based on our experiences.

This report is presented by the City Business Advocacy Team and fulfills a request by Council to report to the committee overseeing the Office of Economic Development on the actions and recommendations of the team.

Background

The Citywide Business Advocacy Team (CBAT) was formalized in 2010 by way of a formal Interdepartmental Agreement that is included in this report as Attachment 1. The Team was built off an existing network of senior staff across a variety of city departments dedicated to solving complex issues related to regulating businesses. Attachment 2 identifies and provides a short bio for each of the current members of the Team.

CBAT's charge includes priority resolution of individual business cases and initiation of policy and regulatory changes in support of improved City service to businesses. Members include staff from the Office of Economic Development (OED), Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Department of Planning and Development (DPD), Seattle City Light (SCL), Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), Seattle Police Department (SPD), Seattle Fire Department (SFD), Department of Finance and Administrative Services (FAS), Department of Neighborhoods (DON), and the Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS).

CBAT Upgrades for 2014

In order to improve the function of CBAT, better capitalize on CBAT expertise, capture more information on issues that impact businesses, and expand its role of helping Seattle businesses navigate government, the CBAT members have agreed to implement the following changes in 2014:

1. *Regulatory and Policy Review* – CBAT has expanded its role to include review of City of Seattle policy and regulatory proposals that have the potential to negatively impact

businesses, with the purpose of ensuring that such impacts are properly considered. Review and discussion of these items occurs during regularly scheduled CBAT team meetings.

2. *Membership* – CBAT has increased its membership to include the Office of Arts and Culture and the Department of Neighborhoods, whose representatives have contact with specialized niches in the private sector and can refer business issues to CBAT.
3. *Better use of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Tool* – All CBAT members have had additional training on CBAT’s CRM tool, and “cheat sheets” have been created to provide step by step instructions to enter a company, enter a company contact, create a case, and respond to a case. These tools will ensure better tracking of the work we perform.
4. *Better Communication with Directors* – Quarterly, CBAT members will update respective senior management on their involvement with CBAT, success stories, and the impact CBAT issues has on their general workload.
5. *Team Meetings* – CBAT’s meeting frequency has been increased from once every two months to once per month. CBAT members will make these meetings a priority.

CBAT by the Numbers

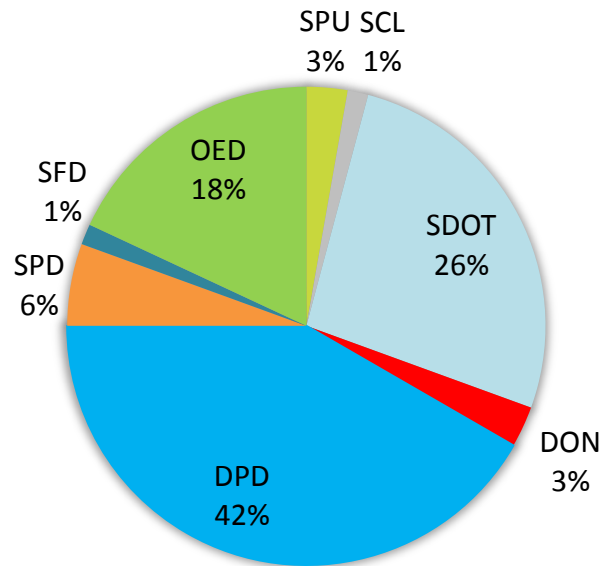
In order to measure its work and to create a memory for issues that impact Seattle businesses, CBAT creates, updates, and reviews cases in its customer relationship management tool, Executive Pulse. Cases typically include:

1. An issue that occurs when the system breaks down, meaning the issue could not be resolved using an existing process, regulation, or policy;
2. A complex issue that involves interdepartmental coordination;
3. A priority project for the Mayor, City Council, or a City agency.

The cases addressed by CBAT vary greatly by industry sector, type of request, and path to resolution. This report accounts for CBAT activity from July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2014, where CBAT assisted 72 Seattle businesses.

Exhibit 1 below shows the percentage of cases assigned to each City agency. Of the 72 cases, the majority involved DPD (42%) and SDOT (26%). Many of the cases generally relate to permitting challenges and impacts of private development and infrastructure projects. This makes sense given the staggering amount of development that is currently occurring in Seattle. It’s important to note that, while DPD and SDOT were the lead agency on the majority of issues, other City agencies were often involved in helping to resolve the cases.

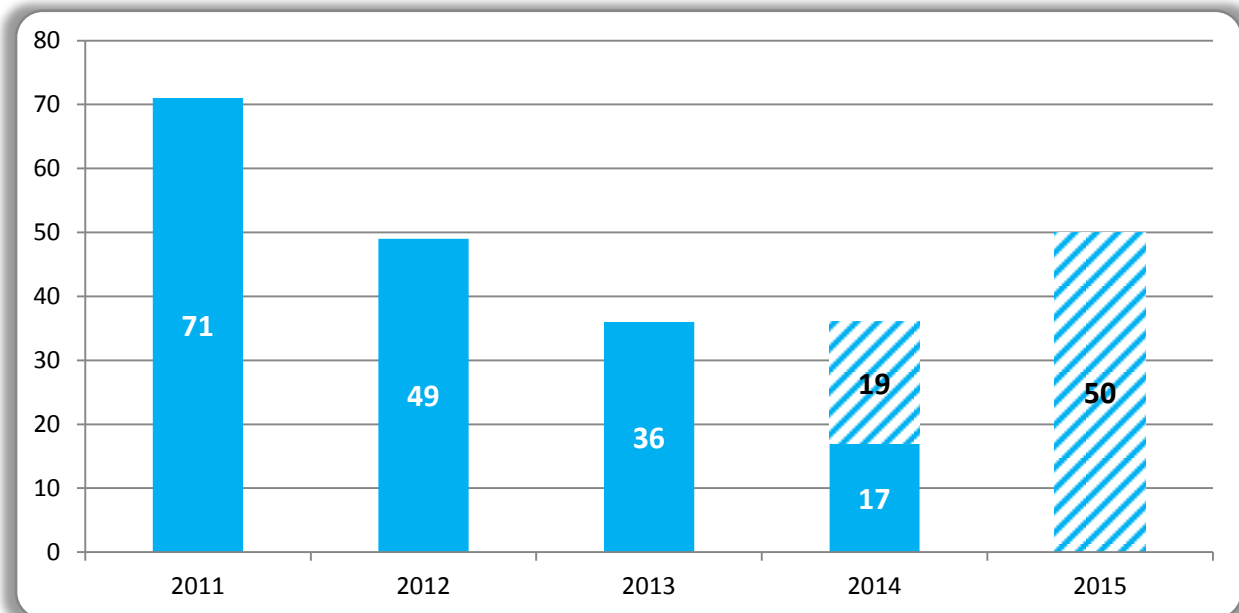
Exhibit 1: Cases by Department



Of the 72 total cases, 85% were successfully closed, 4% were unable to close, and 11% remain open. Successfully closed means the case was investigated and resolved by CBAT. Unable to close means the case was not investigated by CBAT, typically due to an unclear request or an inability to reach the customer. Open means that the case is still in progress.

In order to compare CBAT activity over time, Exhibit 2 shows the number of cases by year, with a projected 2014 total of 36 cases. Given the improvements being implemented to improve the function of CBAT, including more thorough tracking of business cases through our customer relationship management tool, we expect to record 50 or more cases in 2015.

Exhibit 2: Business Cases by Year



Success Stories

The following success stories demonstrate the variety of cases addressed by CBAT members, and the value of CBAT's service to Seattle businesses:

Danny Woo Garden

InterIm CDA obtained a City grant to repair dilapidated retaining walls at the Danny Woo Community Garden. Unfortunately, instead of allowing for an eight to ten week permit process, they assumed that this fairly complex permit would be given over the counter. CBAT member Bryan Stevens worked with InterIm, DPD staff, DON, and the International Special Review District to issue the permit in three weeks, just in time for the arrival of the AmeriCorps volunteers coming up from California to offer free labor. Approvals were granted a few days before volunteers arrived and the work commenced in June of 2014.

Boeing Company

Boeing requested a Street Use Permit to transport prototype planes along East Marginal Way in support of bidding on a multi-billion dollar contract. This request was initially declined by SDOT due to concerns about the size of the prototypes and the distance they would be transported. CBAT members from OED and SDOT arranged a meeting with Boeing to discuss options. After talking through all of the issues, Boeing developed a plan with mitigation measures that allowed SDOT to issue several street use permits. Due to CBAT's help, Boeing was able to move forward on its bid for the project.

Morningside Academy

Morningside Academy encountered some unexpected permitting delays during their move in 2013. They asked CBAT to help them determine a permitting path that would allow them to move before the start of 2013/2014 school year. Specifically, CBAT members from OED, SPU, SFD, and SDOT coordinated to have Morningside's water service plan reviewed and permitted, achieve a street use permit, have an SPU crew install the water service, and have SFD issue a temporary certificate of occupancy in six days, a process that would normally take 8 weeks.

Charlie's Produce

CBAT members from OED and SDOT worked with Charlie's Produce to develop a cost-sharing agreement between SDOT and Charlie's Produce to repair 2nd Avenue South, a critical right-of-way to Charlie's Produce operations that was full of very large potholes. The project is continuing through the summer of 2014, with an expected result that includes less wear and tear on Charlie's Produce's trucks and less pothole-filling for SDOT crews moving forward.

Access Seattle and Construction Coordination

Due to the interdepartmental nature of CBAT, SDOT and OED were able to easily form a partnership where Construction Hub coordinators partner with a Business Liaison to resolve construction related issues and integrate business concerns into street use permit conditions, set up regular stakeholder meetings with businesses impacted by construction, form partnerships between local business improvement areas (like the West Seattle Junction BIA)

and local contractors to promote neighborhoods and make wayfinding easy around construction sites, as well as mitigate parking impacts.

U-District Farmers Market

In 2013, the University Heights Center and the University Farmers Market organizations were engaged in a lease dispute regarding space for the farmers market. Resolution of the dispute involved multiple city and county agencies, including SDOT, SPU, Parks, OED, City Council, and King County Metro. CBAT helped resolve the issue by convening interested parties to identify and evaluate siting options for the farmers market, including the University Way NE right-of-way between 50th and 52nd Streets. In support of the new location, OED, DPD, and SDOT worked out a tricky “curb cut” issue so that an adjacent property owner could access its parking lot on market days, and issued a traffic control plan and permits in time so the market could open on schedule.

Crybaby Studios

ARTS’ CBAT member connected Crybaby Studios with an arts-savvy broker who helped find their new location on 2nd Avenue, which will include band rehearsal space, a music venue, and a restaurant. After the work had begun on building out the new space, CBAT members from DPD, OED, and ARTS met with Crybaby Studios to understand their request for permitting assistance. Crybaby was operating on an aggressive permitting and construction schedule, trying to open a portion of their business before they were required to start paying rent. Considering that Crybaby Studios would be an improvement to 2nd Avenue, provide additional space for artists, and was WMBE-owned business, DPD agreed to resolve a couple of key permitting issues and shorten review times.

Policy and Regulatory Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on business cases addressed by CBAT members during the past 24 months. The recommendations are intended to better support Seattle businesses without compromising City of Seattle values. If implemented, the recommendations will help to increase transparency regarding department policies and interpretations, reduce permitting and review times, better support business districts, and reduce the impact of construction projects on businesses. Implementation decisions regarding these recommendations will be made by executive and legislative leadership.

Finance and Administrative Services

Recommendation 1: To improve the process for evaluating claims against the City, Finance and Administrative Services will review its claims process, with specific attention to the time it takes to process a claim, communications related to the claims process, and specific policies that may affect how claims are processed. Several companies have expressed frustration and dissatisfaction of the City’s claims process beyond the final result of their claim request.

Seattle Department of Transportation

Recommendation 2: SDOT should continue to build out its Access Seattle Program with all possible support from the individuals and agencies that make up CBAT. The program supports business activity during periods of unprecedented growth and construction in Seattle’s urban centers. Access Seattle ensures that businesses and business organizations:

- a) Have ample notice of public and private development projects;
- b) Know how the impacts of those projects are mitigated in a coordinated manner; and
- c) Have access to resources (e.g., financing, signage, marketing, etc.) that will help minimize activity and revenue losses.

Seattle City Light, Seattle Public Utilities, Seattle Department of Transportation

Recommendation 3: In order to improve communication with businesses regarding public and private infrastructure projects that could impact their success, CBAT members and appropriate staff from SCL, SPU, SDOT, and OED will engage a process improvement expert to improve the consistency and effectiveness of notifications to businesses for planned utility outages and road closures (e.g., water, power, drive lanes, parking, and access to parking). Currently, City agencies have drastically different methods and time requirements for providing such notice. Where appropriate, the requirements and methods for notifying businesses of a planned outage should be consistent across departments and type of planned outage. In addition to providing direction to the notification process, this work will also provide a framework for addressing future policy and regulatory issues.

Summary

The Citywide Business Advocacy Team is a group of the City’s most talented problem solvers. Over the past three years, the team has resolved 165 issues and has influenced regulations and policies in support of a friendlier bureaucracy and healthier business climate.

As part of the City’s commitment to create a positive business environment, CBAT will continue to track issues, identify systemic problems, and recommend regulatory and policy changes to the Mayor and City Council based on its experiences. Support of CBAT and implementation of CBAT recommendations requires leadership from the Mayor, City Council, and City department heads. Recommendations must be prioritized and resources must be made available to make permanent and lasting improvements to systems, regulations, and policies that impact businesses.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL AGREEMENT REGARDING CITYWIDE BUSINESS ADVOCACY TEAM (March 2011)

This interdepartmental agreement is intended to explain the purpose and intent of the Citywide Business Advocacy Team and to detail the individual and department responsibilities for team participants. Active team participation is required by the Mayor from the Office of Economic Development (OED), Finance and Administrative Services (FAS), Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Department of Planning and Development (DPD), Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), Seattle City Light (SCL), Seattle Fire Department (SFD), and Seattle Police Department (SPD).

PART A. BACKGROUND

The Citywide Business Advocacy Team has existed, in one form or another, since 2003. Initially, point people from each major regulatory department were assigned to assist OED in resolving case-by-case business issues. However, due to misaligned expectations and competing job responsibilities, this group quickly gave way to an informal list of service-oriented individuals in each department who had a pre-existing working relationship with OED.

The informal model had many successes in helping individual businesses. However, a lack of consistency among team members, conflicting department missions, and an inability to recognize systemic issues required a new approach to citywide business advocacy.

In August of 2010, Mayor McGinn called for formalization of the Citywide Business Advocacy Team as part of his Seattle Jobs Plan:

Citywide Business Advocacy Team. *The City is forming a Business Advocacy Team of key staff from multiple City departments to help Seattle businesses navigate government. The advocacy team will help identify and correct systematic permitting and regulatory issues impacting Seattle businesses and develop solutions that cut across departments.*

Also in 2010, the City Council passed a Statement of Legislative Intent supporting the establishment of a Citywide Business Advocacy Team, and requiring OED to formalize the team and identify key recommendations for policy modifications and process improvements to enhance the City's responsiveness to businesses.

PART B. CITYWIDE BUSINESS ADVOCACY TEAM MISSION

The Citywide Business Advocacy Team will provide the highest level of customer service to all Seattle businesses in support of job creation, economic diversity, and racial equity. We will work proactively and in partnership with businesses to resolve their issues in a manner that protects the public health, safety, and welfare of the city; and in a manner that meets the needs of the businesses we serve. We will track issues, identify systemic problems, and recommend regulatory and policy changes to the Mayor and City Council based on our experiences.

PART C. REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Office of Economic Development will:

- a. Fund and manage Executive Pulse, a web-based business case management tool used by OED and its contracted business retention and expansion partners and the Citywide Business Advocacy Team;
- b. Provide Executive Pulse training to Citywide Business Advocacy Team members;
- c. Organize and convene monthly Citywide Business Advocacy Team meetings to discuss current cases and to identify needed regulatory and policy changes;
- d. Provide project management capacity to support successful operations of the Citywide Business Advocacy Team;
- e. Prepare an annual written report to the Mayor and Council, with input from Citywide Business Advocacy Team members. The report will include a summary of business issues addressed by the Citywide Business Advocacy Team and recommendations for regulatory and policy changes; and
- f. Prior to preparing its annual report, meet with city agency directors, superintendents, and chiefs to discuss proposed policy and regulatory changes that would directly or indirectly impact their agency.

2. City agency directors, superintendents, and chiefs will:

- a. Assign a member of their staff with appropriate experience and customer service capabilities to serve as a member of the Citywide Business Advocacy Team;
- b. Educate their staff on the importance of the Citywide Business Advocacy Team, and empower their designated team member the ability to discuss business issues directly with managers, supervisors, and staff, as appropriate, with the full authority of the agency director, superintendent, or chiefs; and
- c. Meet with their Citywide Business Advocacy Team member on a regular basis to review the status or result of business issues and to discuss potential regulatory and policy changes.

3. Citywide Business Advocacy Team members will:

- a. Provide excellent customer service to all businesses, regardless of race or socioeconomic status, including but not limited to timely communication, proactive problem solving, and business advocacy within their agency;
- b. Act as the single point of contact on Citywide Business Advocacy Team issues, taking full responsibility for resolution of the issue;
- c. Work within the team to identify systemic business issues that may require regulatory or policy changes;
- d. Communicate with team members of involved agencies prior to elevating Citywide Business Team issues to the director, council or mayoral level;

- e. Will utilize Executive Pulse as the unified business case management tool;
- f. Participate fully in monthly Citywide Business Advocacy Team meetings;
- g. Alert OED and their directors, superintendents, or chiefs immediately if the time required to perform their primary job duties and participate fully on the Citywide Business Advocacy Team becomes unmanageable;
- h. Attend at least one City Business Casual event per year as a group; and
- i. Participate in briefings to the Mayor and City Council regarding their work on the Citywide Business Advocacy Team.

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PART D. EXPIRATION OF MOA

This memorandum of agreement will not expire unless it is terminated by the Mayor.

PART E. AGREEMENT

THE undersigned hereby agree that the Office of Economic Development (OED), Finance and Administrative Services (FAS), Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Department of Planning and Development (DPD), Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), Seattle City Light (SCL), Seattle Fire Department (SFD), and Seattle Police Department (SPD) will fully participate on and support the formation and operation of the Citywide Business Advocacy Team as described above.

Signatures are on file

Stephen H. Johnson, Director
Office of Economic Development

Date _____

Fred Podesta, Director
Finance and Administrative Services

Date _____

Peter Hahn, Director
Seattle Department of Transportation

Date _____

Diane M. Sugimura, Director
Department of Planning and Development

Date _____

Ray Hoffman, Director
Seattle Public Utilities

Date _____

Jorge Carrasco, Superintendent
Seattle City Light

Date _____

Gregory Dean, Fire Chief
Seattle Fire Department

Date _____

John Diaz, Chief of Police
Seattle Police Department

Date _____

Attachment 2

CBAT ROSTER – MEET THE TEAM

The Citywide Business Advocacy Team is a group of the City's most talented problem solvers. The team includes primary members from the Office of Economic Development, Seattle Department of Transportation, Department of Planning and Development, Seattle City Light, Seattle Public Utilities, and Department of Finance and Administrative Services; and secondary members from the Department of Neighborhoods, Office of Arts and Culture, Seattle Police Department, and the Seattle Fire Department:

Office of Economic Development – Roque Deherrera

Roque Deherrera has worked for the City since 1998. He has education and work experience in the fields of economic development, real estate, and urban planning. As the City's Business Advocate, he supports businesses large and small, with a focus on Seattle's maritime and manufacturing industries.

Office of Economic Development – Karl Stickel

Karl Stickel has worked for the City since 2001. Currently the Business Policy Manager for the OED, Karl focuses on improving the City's policies and practices for the business community. He has educational and varied work experience in the fields of economics, finance and budget, and project management.

Seattle Department of Transportation – Brian de Place

Brian de Place has worked in the Street Use Division of SDOT since 2006. He currently oversees the implementation of Access Seattle, a new initiative to improve construction coordination, mobility and communications about construction impacts to businesses. He also manages right of way permitting, including utility permits, construction permits and public space management permits, which promotes and regulates a vibrant, safe, accessible, and attractive shared right of way.

Department of Planning and Development – Bryan Stevens

Bryan Stevens has been with DPD since 2001. He currently serves as Customer Service Manager and his responsibilities include responding to neighborhood concerns, business assistance, permit facilitation, and media interviews. Bryan is always looking for a flexible solution that is both reasonable and practical.

Seattle City Light – Kelly Enright

Kelly Enright is the Customer Care Director for Seattle City Light and brings nearly 30 years of electric utility experience. She is responsible for residential and commercial customer services and accounts, account executives, service engineering, technical metering, meter reading, office services, and business process improvement efforts. Kelly has a passion for customer service and is committed to improving each customer's experience.

Seattle Public Utilities – Mike Brennan

Mike Brennan has worked for the City since 1984, serving many roles within a variety of agencies responsible for Seattle's water and sewer systems. He currently serves as Plan Review Manager for SPU. Mike is able to successfully balance the needs of SPU with needs of the customer, consistently working towards win-win resolutions.

Customer Service Bureau – Cynthia Phillips

Cynthia Phillips is the Manager of CSB, where she has worked since 1989. She uses her extensive knowledge to assist employees, residents, visitors, and the business community in navigating City government. Cynthia enjoys being able to ensure that customers who contact the CSB receive excellent service and are provided with accurate, appropriate and timely responses to their inquiries, requests and complaints.

Seattle Department of Neighborhoods – James Michael Bush

James Michael Bush has worked for the City for more than 20 years. He currently manages the Outreach & Engagement and the Neighborhood District Coordinator programs for DON. His experience working with the City and community members to resolve neighborhood issues is an invaluable resource to the CBAT.

Office of Arts and Culture – Matthew Richter

Matthew Richter joined the Office of Arts & Culture in 2013 as the Cultural Space Liaison, a new position focused on creative placemaking and increasing the number of cultural square feet in Seattle. Matthew's experience as an arts entrepreneur, writer, editor, designer, furniture builder, and leader of arts organizations make him uniquely qualified for his role.

Seattle Police Department – Captain Les Liggins

Captain Les Liggins is a 27 year veteran with the Seattle Police Department. He is currently assigned as the Commander of the Narcotics Unit. He is a graduate of both the West Point Leadership Program and Senior Management in Policing (SMIP).

Seattle Fire Department – Rich Richardson

Rich Richardson began his career with Seattle Fire Department in 1998. He currently serves as Technical Code Coordinator which includes managing the Fire Code Advisory Board to develop and refine the Seattle Fire Code. Over the years, his work has often involved working with other city departments including DPD, SDOT, OED and SPU regarding approval of development projects and coordination of various code requirements.