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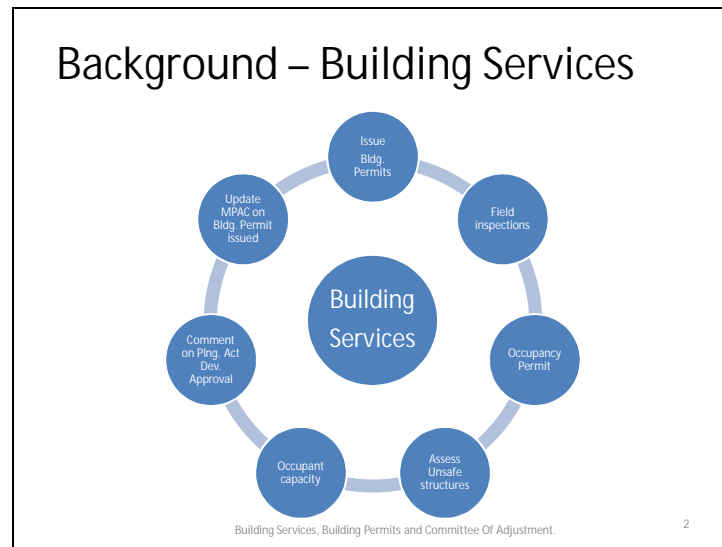


## Building Services, Committee of Adjustment and Building Permits

By: Vasu Balakrishnan, Interim Auditor General  
To: Audit Committee  
June 16, 2015.

This audit forms part of a list of eight audits identified in a work plan by the AG's Office in 2014.

Field work on this audit commenced in late December, 2014 under the new Council.





Building services provide the following services:

1. Issue Building permits,
2. Perform field inspections,
3. Issue Occupancy permits,
4. Assess unsafe structures,
5. Determine occupant capacity restrictions for restaurants and public buildings,
6. Review and comment on various Planning Act Development approvals,
7. Update MPAC, CMHC, Revenue Canada and Statistics Canada on the monthly number and value of Building permits issued.
8. Commenting on legal searches for establishing clear title for land transactions.

## Background – Committee Of Adjustment

Grants relief.....



Building Services, Building Permits and  
Committee Of Adjustment.

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Committee Of Adjustment grants relief from zoning and sign By-laws for all land and structures in CGS.

Relief is granted subject to rules and procedures specified in the Planning Act, 1990.

The members of COA are appointed by the City Council.

## Audit objective

- Assess adequacy of controls to manage key risks of COA and Building Permits,
- Assess efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery of Building and Planning Services operations and
- Identify other areas for improvement.

Building Services, Building Permits and Committee Of Adjustment.

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The objectives of the audit were to:

- Assess the adequacy of controls to manage key risks of Committee of Adjustment and Ontario Building Code permit functions,
- Review efficiency and effectiveness of operations in delivering these functions and
- Identify areas for improvement based on review of current operational practices and customer feedback received.

## Observations and Findings - Summary

1. Process improvements need to be introduced to include revised assessed value of properties on a timely basis in tax rolls for new constructions and upgrades with identified responsibility for their accuracy.
2. Information could be shared timely and meaningfully between CGS departments.
3. Multiple stand alone Information Technology (IT) systems are being used by Building services.

1. The existing processes, checks and controls need improvement to ensure timely inclusion and revision of assessed value of all categories of properties in tax rolls,
2. Information relating to building permits issued and constructions/upgrades identified by MPAC could be meaningfully shared between Tax department, Building services at CGS and MPAC,
3. Multiple information systems are being used by Building services. These systems are not integrated and need to be updated.

### Observations and Findings – Summary (Cont.)

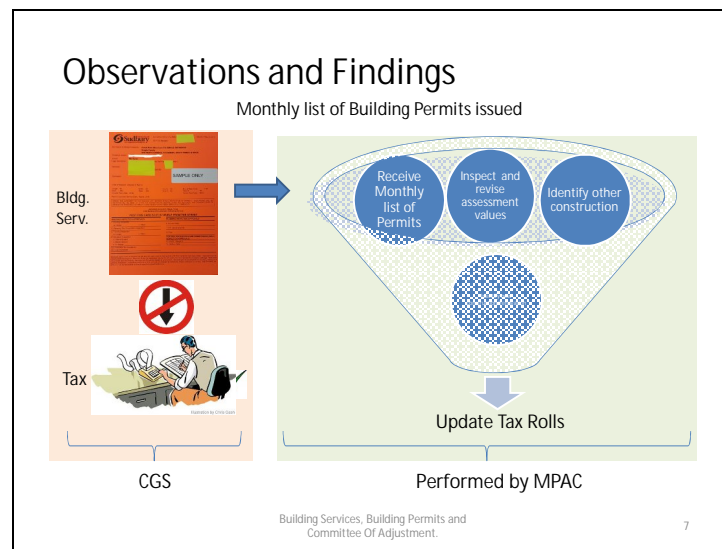
4. Complaints, concerns and issues reported and recorded in Active Citizens Request (ACRs) could be managed consistently and promptly.
5. A balanced system of equitable distribution of inspection work load needs to be developed and
6. Terms Of Reference (ToR) for Committee Of Adjustment need to be developed.

4. Complaints, concerns and issues reported in Active Citizens Request (ACR) could be managed consistently and promptly.

5. A balanced system of equitable distribution of residential property inspection work load needs to be developed.

6. Terms of Reference for Committee of Adjustment need to be developed.

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A monthly list of Building permits issued is provided to MPAC by Building services.

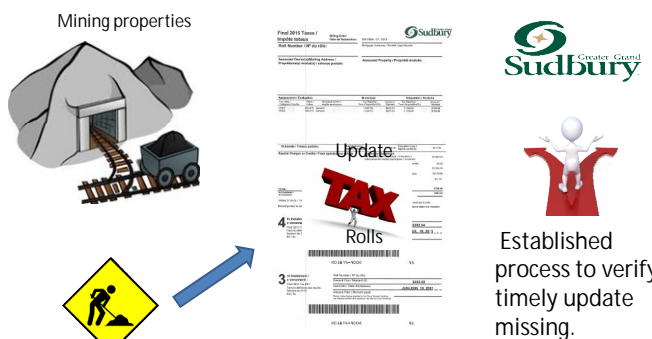
This list could be shared with CGS Tax department to verify MPAC's update to assessment rolls.

MPAC updates assessment rolls based on information from monthly list of building permits, site visits/inspection of properties and monitoring construction activities.

Constructions and upgrades to properties identified by MPAC could be shared with Building services at CGS to confirm, if the activities are in accordance with Building permit.

## Observations and Findings

Mining properties



Update  
**TAX**  
Rolls

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Established process to verify timely update missing.

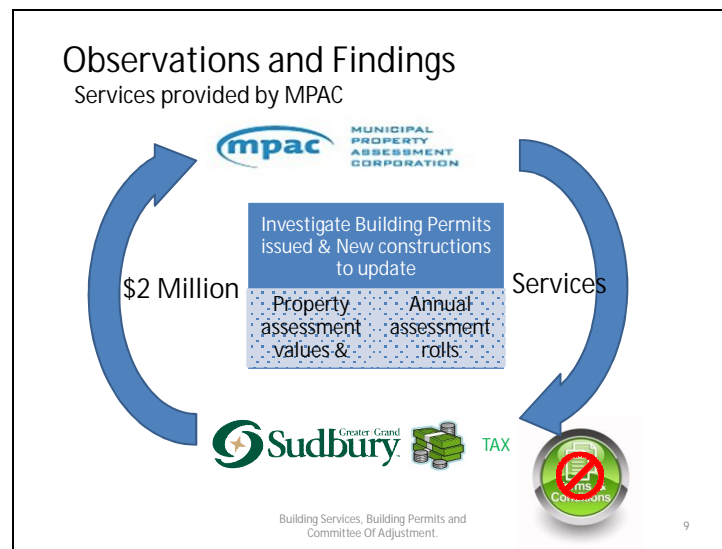
Building Services, Building Permits and Committee Of Adjustment.

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Constructions and additions to mining properties need to be monitored by Tax department to ensure timely updates to tax rolls.

An established process to verify additions has not been established.



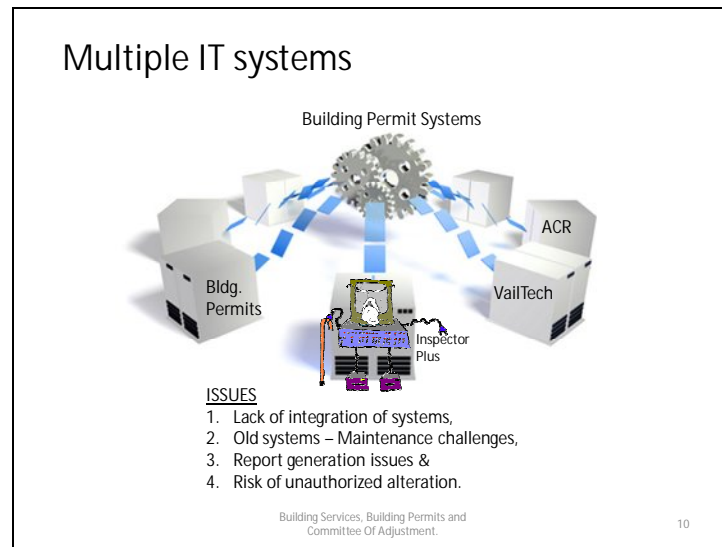


MPAC provides a range of services to CGS for fees of \$ 2 million (Appx).

These services include:

- Investigating construction activity for building permits issued and other constructions
- Determining assessment values of individual properties &
- Providing annual and supplement tax rolls.

A formal service level agreement between CGS and MPAC with defined responsibilities and time lines has not been established.



Building services relies on multiple systems for information relating to permits, inspection, customer complaints, tax payments etc.

These systems could be integrated meaningfully for easy access and reference.

Some of these systems are old with limitations on their maintenance, generation of reliable reports and common passwords used by all users.

## Active Citizens Request (ACR)



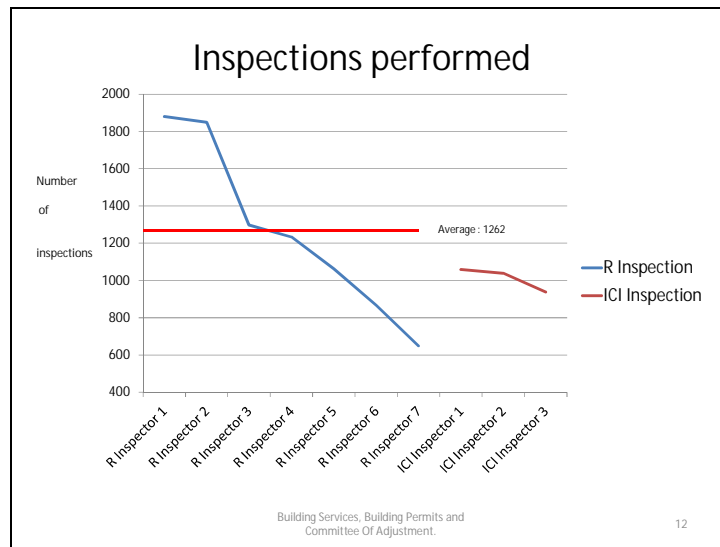
### ISSUES

1. Old orders (some pertaining to 1999) input for administrative reasons.
2. All inspectors not adopting a uniform and consistent approach for closure and disposal of assigned cases.

Old orders (some of which, pertaining to 1999) input for administrative reasons.

All inspectors are not adopting a uniform and consistent approach for closure and disposal of assigned cases.

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Two inspectors were performing a higher number of residential inspections in comparison to the annual average number (1262) of inspections.



Terms of Reference could be established for the "Committee Of Adjustment".

## Building Services, Permits and COA

Questions?