

# Scope of Work for Business Licenses

## Shared Services Subcommittee on Building Permits and Business Licenses

Approved by the Subcommittee on June 16, 2011

### 1.1 Work Plan Objectives

---

The Shared Services Elected Officials Committee engaged a consultant to prepare recommendations related to human resources, information technology and purchasing. Subsequently the Committee determined that the next two highest priorities should be building permits and business licenses and that a subcommittee and staff should analyze and prepare recommendations for these two services.

The Shared Services Subcommittee on Building Permits and Business Licenses was appointed by the Washoe County Commission and Reno City Council. The Subcommittee includes one Reno City Council member (Sharon Zadra), two private sector representatives appointed by the Reno City Council (Denise Jacobsen and Craig Willcut), one Washoe County Commission member (John Breternitz) and two private sector members appointed by the the Washoe County Commission (Dick Bostdorf and Greg Peek). Staff support is provided by Washoe County (Dave Childs, Assistant County Manager) and the City of Reno (John Hester, Assistant City Manager).

The Subcommittee completed its work on building permits and is now focused on business licenses. The City of Sparks has worked with Reno and Washoe County in the past to coordinate business license services (e.g., Reno, Sparks and Washoe County have created a common business license application). Sparks staff (Steve Driscoll, Assistant City Manager) is participating in supporting the Subcommittee now that it is addressing business licenses.

The Subcommittee adopted the following 12 objectives for use in analysis and preparation of recommendations for business license services:

1. Save money
2. Improve service to end user
3. One stop shop/process
4. Interfaces with others outside this group
5. Mutual benefit
6. Can do together, not separately
7. Life and safety
8. Prepared for future technology
9. "Implementable"
10. Simplify process
11. Accommodate various customer "levels"
12. Certainty

## 1.2 Desired Outcomes

---

The desired outcomes of this work effort include:

1. The option for a business license customer to make one stop to obtain a multi-jurisdictional business license;
2. The option for a business license customer to apply for and receive a business license on-line;
3. Identification and modification of provisions of the Municipal and County Codes to create common licensing requirements unless a single jurisdiction explicitly identifies exceptions;
4. Creation of an interface with the state level business license process and portal proposed by the Nevada Secretary of State; and
5. Investigation, analysis and possible implementation of a regional business license that is good in all three jurisdictions.

## 1.3 Work Plan

---

The Work Plan to address the five outcomes above is comprised of seven integrated tasks (1.3.1-1.3.7). For each task the subtasks are listed as well as the deliverables, current status and projected time required for completion. All tasks will be completed by Subcommittee support staff.

### Task 1.3.1: Document Existing Shared Services

#### Subtasks:

- ◆ Single application for Reno, Sparks and Washoe County
  - Over the last two years the staff from all three jurisdictions have developed and refined a common paper application. The potential amendments to that application will be identified as part of this subtask.
- ◆ Web link to other jurisdictions' business license home pages
  - The three jurisdictions currently have web links to the State as well as each other's web pages. Enhancements that can be made to prepare for development of an on-line application will be identified as part of this subtask

### **Deliverables, Status and Time Required:**

- ◆ Deliverables: Handouts and Powerpoint presentation documenting the existing business license shared services.
- ◆ Status: These subtasks are completed. This information was presented to the Subcommittee at their May 19, 2011 meeting.
- ◆ Time Required: No additional time is required.

### **Task 1.3.2: One stop for multi-jurisdictional licensure**

#### **Subtasks:**

- ◆ Revised single application
  - Often a business is located in one jurisdiction and provides services within that and other jurisdictions. When the business is located in Reno, Sparks or unincorporated Washoe County, the objective is that the jurisdiction in which it is located will be able to issue a business license for that business to operate in that jurisdiction and to provide service in the other two jurisdictions. When the business is not located in Reno, Sparks or unincorporated Washoe County but provides services in one or more of the three jurisdictions, the objective is that any of the jurisdictions will be able to issue a business license for that business to provide services. This subtask will result in a revised single application that can be used to meet these objectives. This subtask will also include identifying a single set of support documents (e.g., State business license, County fictitious name certificate, etc.) to support the revised single application.
- ◆ Fee collection and distribution
  - There are a number of options for collecting and distributing fees. The procedure that is developed will maintain the existing fee schedules that differ by jurisdiction. Options for collection of the application (i.e., processing) fee and license fee together at the same point in the process, or separately at different points in the process will be considered. Depending on which option is preferred and how the application is processed (see Application requirements subtask below), who receives the fee and how it is distributed, if necessary, will be determined. For example, if the application fee is paid before processing and the license fee after processing, the application fee could be collected by one jurisdiction and

the license fee paid separately to each jurisdiction as those licenses are issued. This subtask will result in a procedure for collection and distribution of application and license fees.

◆ Application requirements

- Each jurisdiction generally utilizes the same information for processing application, but the method used to obtain that information varies. For example, certain jurisdictions require the applicant to provide information indicating that the proper zoning is in place while other jurisdictions determine that internally as part of the application review process. These differences are part of the reason that fees vary by jurisdiction. This subtask will determine the application requirements and changes, if any, by jurisdiction.

◆ Processing

- There are a number of options for multi-jurisdictional application processing. As a starting point the following conceptual multi-jurisdictional process has been developed for this work plan. The conceptual process includes the following steps:
  - Jurisdiction receiving new application (“home” jurisdiction) confirms that no debts are outstanding (if applicable to jurisdiction)
  - “Home” jurisdiction enters new license information into database and creates license file
  - Licenses issued:
    - “Home” jurisdiction processes and issues license for own jurisdiction
    - “Home” jurisdiction issues “temporary” license for other jurisdictions
  - Required information sent to other two jurisdictions
    - Each jurisdiction enters information into own database and creates license file with required information
    - Common information (e.g., State business license) on file with “home” jurisdiction
  - Other jurisdictions process and issue own licenses

- Renewal applications accepted by “home” or other jurisdictions and processed by each jurisdiction
- License changes (e.g., ownership, location, etc.) processed through “home” jurisdiction
  - “Home” jurisdiction collects fees for all three jurisdictions
  - “Home” jurisdiction provides changed information to other jurisdictions
- Cancelled licenses processed through “home” jurisdiction
  - “Home” jurisdiction notifies other jurisdictions

This conceptual multi-jurisdictional process will be analyzed legally, evaluated, revised and refined. At that point it will be presented to the Subcommittee for review and recommendation to the Shared Services Elected Officials Committee and the individual jurisdictions.

#### **Deliverables, Status and Time Required:**

- ◆ Deliverables: Handouts and Powerpoint presentation documenting the one stop multi-jurisdictional process; one stop multi-jurisdictional process ready for immediate implementation.
- ◆ Status: Conceptual one stop multi-jurisdictional process completed as described above. Other work on these subtasks not initiated.
- ◆ Time Required: 6 months to presentation to Subcommittee (January, 2012).

### **Task 1.3.3: On-line license application**

#### **Subtasks:**

- ◆ Common database
  - The first subtask in development of an on-line application is creation of a common database. This database will be populated when an application is received and the data will be shared by all jurisdictions.
- ◆ Revised application
  - A single application is a critical component of an on-line application process. The on-line application will allow an applicant to attach required documents (e.g., State business license, County fictitious name

certificate). Based on the selection of the type of business license desired, the on-line application will provide the required on-screen forms to be completed and define the the digital documents to be provided as attachments.

◆ On-line payment

- The on-line application will allow the applicant to pay a single combined fee on-line. The on-line payment will include the following:
  - Methodology to calculate appropriate fees based on projected gross revenues
  - Ability to base collected review and inspection fees on the type of license requested
  - Methodology for single source collection of all fees and distribution of correct fee amounts to each of the jurisdictions

◆ Processing

- After the application is submitted, depending on the type of business license, the following steps are required:
  - Approval, and in some cases inspections, by other agencies
  - Criminal history background investigation or local police records check
  - Clearance of all payments
  - Required inspections
  - Issue the license (option via e-mail or postal service)
  - If denied, appeal or refund of fees

As the business license application is processed, the status of each step and comments from reviewing agencies will be available on-line. This is similar to the on-line information currently available to building permit applicants.

**Deliverables, Status and Time Required:**

- ◆ Deliverables: On-line application
- ◆ Status: No work on these subtasks has been initiated. If existing software in one or more of the jurisdictions can not be used, additional funding will be required.

- ◆ Time Required: 15 months (January 2012 to April 2013), depending on funding

### **Task 1.3.4: Municipal and County code amendments**

#### **Subtasks:**

- ◆ Licensing requirements
  - The opportunities to make licensing requirements the same for all jurisdictions will be identified and presented to the Subcommittee. In some cases the requirements can be made the same between jurisdictions. In other cases the requirements that apply in a single jurisdiction can be removed. Examples include:
    - Requiring articles of incorporation for corporations
    - Approval of privileged licenses by elected officials only
    - Changes in fee schedules
    - Reducing the number of exclusive license types
  - Other requirements may remain different between jurisdictions simply because policy makers have chosen to make them that way, often because of the varying nature of the development and businesses between the jurisdictions. Examples include liquor stores, gaming, etc. These will also be identified and presented to the Subcommittee.

#### **Deliverables, Status and Time Required:**

- ◆ Deliverables: A list of possible code amendments to make licensing requirements the same and remove licensing requirements when only applicable in one jurisdiction, and a list of the explicit differences in requirements that can be maintained,
- ◆ Status: No work has been initiated on these subtasks.
- ◆ Time Required: 12 months (July 2012 to June 2013)

### **Task 1.3.5: Secretary of State process/portal**

#### **Subtasks:**

- ◆ Connection to Secretary of State
  - The Secretary of State has initiated the process of developing an internet portal for issuance of a State business licenses. It is also intended to accommodate a linkage between local governments and the Secretary of State's office. Consistent with this effort, Reno, Sparks and Washoe County have links to the Secretary of State's web site and provide a kiosk or separate PC for applicants to use. This will be enhanced following the development of the one stop license and expanded to include other agencies:
    - Nevada Taxation Department taxation certificate
    - Secretary of State's Office articles of incorporation
    - NDBI proof of worker's compensation
    - County Clerk fictitious name certificate

#### **Deliverables, Status and Time Required:**

- ◆ Deliverables: Enhanced web link and kiosk or PC for link to Secretary of State web page
- ◆ Status: Web links and PCs or kiosks currently available. Enhancements to be made to reflect one stop license changes.
- ◆ Time Required: 3 months (January 2012 to April 2012)

### **Task 1.3.6: Regional business license**

#### **Subtasks:**

- ◆ Investigation of regional business license approaches
  - The objective of this subtask is to determine the best approach to implementing a system in which one license can be issued that is good in all three jurisdictions. There are multiple approaches that all warrant further investigation:



- Current licensing operations, each can issue regional license
- Single licensing agency for all three jurisdictions
- Regional licenses valid only for businesses requiring licensure by and/or in more than one jurisdiction

**Deliverables, Status and Time Required:**

- ◆ Deliverables: Recommendation for the Subcommittee to review and forward to local governments.
- ◆ Status: No work has been initiated on this subtask.
- ◆ Time Required: 24 months (July 2012 to June 2014)

**Task 1.3.7: Parallel processes**

**Subtasks:**

- ◆ Examine best practices from other locations
  - As each of the proposed initiatives above is undertaken, staff will contact other jurisdictions to determine best practices.
- ◆ Form stakeholders group
  - A stakeholders group will be formed to assist in the proposed initiatives above to include:
    - Chamber(s) of Commerce (Reno, Sparks, Lake Tahoe)
    - Retail Association of Nevada
    - Nevada Taxpayers Association
    - Association of General Contractors
    - Staff
    - Others

**Deliverables, Status and Time Required:**

- ◆ Deliverables: None (input to other deliverables)
- ◆ Status: No work has been initiated on these subtasks.

- ◆ Time Required: 24 months (July 2012 to June 2014)