

## BACKGROUND AND MISSION

NYC Business makes it easier for businesses to work with NYC government as they open, operate, and expand. The program leads interagency improvements to regulation, technology, operations, and communications so that businesses can better understand and comply with law. NYC Business especially targets small business. And by enabling compliant businesses to succeed, NYC Business also benefits workers who are employed, customers who are served, and communities that are made stronger.

See the website | [nyc.gov/business](http://nyc.gov/business)

## KEY BUSINESS SERVICES

NYC Business unifies the work of several agencies to better serve businesses and make the regulatory process easier, clearer, and faster. The following represent key services offered by the City:

NYC.Gov/Business		
One-stop website that provides information to open and operate a business, and apply for permits, licenses, and certifications		
<p><b>NYC Business Solutions</b></p> <p>A set of free services offered by NYC Small Business Services, including financing, incentives, business courses, recruitment, workforce training, and help selling to government.</p> <p><a href="http://nyc.gov/smallbiz">nyc.gov/smallbiz</a></p>	<p><b>NYC Development Hub</b></p> <p>A state-of-the-art plan review center that accelerates the approval process for construction projects through electronic submission of digital plans.</p> <p><a href="http://on.nyc.gov/hub">on.nyc.gov/hub</a></p>	<p><b>NYC Business Acceleration</b></p> <p>A team that coordinates the activities of several agencies to help businesses attain the licenses, permits, and inspections they need to open.</p> <p><a href="http://nyc.gov/nbat">nyc.gov/nbat</a></p>

## THIS QUARTER IN REVIEW

In the last 90 days, NYC Business has continued to make New York City government more effective and efficient in helping businesses open, operate, and expand. Since our last Quarterly Progress Report, we've:

- ✓ **Launched the new [NYC.gov/Business](http://nyc.gov/Business) website**, a one-stop shop for information needed to open and operate a business. The first two phases released included a "Starting a Business" page, which provides entrepreneurs with the basics on how to comply with rules when opening common business types, and the "Find a Regulation" index, showing 1,000+ permits, licenses, and regulations that business owners can search or select in a list to learn about. See the site | [nyc.gov/business](http://nyc.gov/business)
- ✓ **Published the NYC Business Guide to Avoiding Common Violations**. This 2-page guide shows how to comply with rules that account for more than 30%+ of small business violations. Business liaisons from several NYC agencies also joined together to explain the rules with more than 30 business organizations. See the guide | [on.nyc.gov/topviolations](http://on.nyc.gov/topviolations)
- ✓ **Surpassed goal for online applications**, going beyond 80% to make 83% of business-related application submissions possible online. New applications include those for NYC Taxi and Limousine drivers and vehicles.
- ✓ **Expanded assistance for new and operating businesses** through NYC Business Acceleration. The New Business Acceleration Team joined forces and merged with SBS' Business Outreach Team to offer more businesses assistance with government, services, and emergency-related issues.
- ✓ **Supported new cure periods** so businesses can correct more violations before being fined. The Mayor's Office recommended new cures that the City Council then passed into law. Curable infractions will include signage requirements for credit card use and all Fire Department violations. Cure periods will be in place by the middle of 2014. Read the law | [on.nyc.gov/newcureslaw](http://on.nyc.gov/newcureslaw)

- ✓ **Reached the highest number of businesses yet** through NYC Business Acceleration, reducing the time to open for restaurants by an estimated 70 days. Since its inception, NYC Business Acceleration has helped more than 1,700 businesses open and facilitated more than 25,000 jobs.

*Learn more about NYC Business Acceleration | [nyc.gov/NBAT](http://nyc.gov/NBAT)*

While we have accomplished much, we know we can do more to support businesses and the communities they support, and we will continue to make meaningful and measurable change. We are already working to implement further changes, including:

- **Launching additional updates to NYC.gov/Business** including the ability for businesses to search for and monitor the status of their business permit, license, and inspection transactions
- **Make more business-related applications**, payments and status checks available online
- **Further streamline applications** and approvals that involve several agencies

OVERVIEW: BUSINESS NEEDS in meeting regulation		Completed	In Progress	Page Number
	<b>LEARN AND PLAN</b>			
	Ask and answer questions about doing business in NYC		<span style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;"> </span>	3
	Anticipate regulation and understand requirements	<span style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;"> </span>		3
	<b>APPLY AND PAY</b>			
	Apply online		<span style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;"> </span>	4
	Pay online		<span style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;"> </span>	4
	Pay once, not twice	<span style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;"> </span>		4
	<b>REVIEW, INSPECT AND CORRECT</b>			
	Online scheduling and submission	<span style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;"> </span>		4
	Work with one point of contact, even across multiple agencies	<span style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;"> </span>		5
	Facilitate compliance and inspections	<span style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;"> </span>		5
	Check approval status online		<span style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;"> </span>	6
	Correct non-compliance		<span style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;"> </span>	6
	<b>OPERATE AND RENEW</b>			
	Streamline inter-agency regulations		<span style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;"> </span>	6-7
	<b>GIVE FEEDBACK</b>			
	Share feedback to new points of contact	<span style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;"> </span>		7

# BUSINESS NEEDS

in meeting regulation

GOAL

STATUS



## LEARN AND PLAN

### Ask and answer questions about doing business in NYC

#### NYC.Gov/Business

*A one-stop shop for information needed to open and operate a business.*

[nyc.gov/business](http://nyc.gov/business)

Website redesign to better meet business needs

#### In Progress

First deployment Oct 2013, with the last deployment scheduled for Feb 2014.

#### 311 for Business

*Improve at-the-ready answers to business questions and instructions for next steps.*

[nyc.gov/311](http://nyc.gov/311)

Enhance content for NYC Business Acceleration and for work related to state and federal partners.

#### Completed

#### Online Customer Service Chat

*An online customer engagement solution that leverages artificial intelligence to predict and produce accurate responses.*

Offer businesses additional ways to get real-time answers about doing business in NYC.

#### Ongoing

Pilot launched for the NYC Business Acceleration website. Dec 2013

### Anticipate and understand regulatory requirements

#### NYC Business Guide to Avoiding Common Violations

*Two-page guide explains to small business owners how to comply with the rules that are most commonly violated, saving time and money on violations.*

[on.nyc.gov/topviolations](http://on.nyc.gov/topviolations)

Improve business owner understanding of laws while being realistic about their limited time and attention.

#### Completed

#### NYC Business How-To Videos

*Online videos show business owners how to comply with regulations, especially those where a picture is worth a thousand words.*

[on.nyc.gov/howtovideos](http://on.nyc.gov/howtovideos)

Create and post a series of How-To Videos online that cover common regulatory compliance challenges.

#### Completed

6 videos available, viewed 4,000+ times to date. Dec 2013

#### NYC Checklist and Required Signs for Restaurants and Bars

*Two-page checklist collects all posting requirements from all levels of government.*

[on.nyc.gov/restaurant signs](http://on.nyc.gov/restaurant signs)

Create a checklist that gathers all posting requirements in one place.

#### Completed

Viewed 12,500+ times to date. Dec 2013

#### NYC Starter Guide for Non-English Speakers

*Two-page guides explain to entrepreneurs how to meet requirements to begin businesses in NYC, translated into other languages.*

[on.nyc.gov/tiendaminorista](http://on.nyc.gov/tiendaminorista)

Translate select guides to support entrepreneurs who do not speak English.

#### Ongoing

Spanish-language retail guide available. July 2013

#### NYC Glossary for Restaurants

*A simple reference to complex terms commonly encountered by business owners as they work with the government and licensed professionals to open their restaurant.*

[on.nyc.gov/restaurantglossary](http://on.nyc.gov/restaurantglossary)

Provide a resource for business owners to better understand regulations and requirements.

#### Completed

Sept 2013

BUSINESS NEEDS in meeting regulation	GOAL	STATUS
 <b>APPLY AND PAY</b>		
<b>Apply online</b>		
<b>Downloadable forms</b> <i>Application forms for business licenses and permits downloadable via PDF or applied for directly online.</i>	100% of business application forms available for download or online application.	<b>Completed</b>
<b>Online applications</b> <i>Online applications for business-related permits, licenses, and certifications, including for NYC Department of Health &amp; Mental Hygiene.</i>	80% of total business application volume available for submission online.	<b>In progress</b> 83% now possible online, including 9 new TLC applications. <i>Dec 2013</i>
<b>Pay online</b>		
<b>Fees for Permits, New Licenses and Operating Certifications</b> <i>Online payments for fees such as those for NYC Fire Department Inspection and Permits.</i>	Increased availability of online payments	<b>In progress</b> Online payments for NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission new driver and vehicle license applications launched. Online summons search and payment for NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission launched. <i>Dec 2013</i>
<b>Pay once, not twice</b>		
<b>Fee Relief for Business Recovery</b> <i>Sandy relief effort that waives fees required for rebuilding, recovery and operation of businesses. Fees were eligible for refund until May 31, 2013. <a href="http://nyc.gov/RBAT">nyc.gov/RBAT</a></i>	Provide relief for businesses impacted by Sandy by waiving or refunding fees associated with damage.	<b>Completed</b> 8 agencies waived 40+ types of fees <i>Apr 2013</i> 127 businesses approved for program. <i>Dec 2013</i>
 <b>REVIEW, INSPECT AND CORRECT</b>		
<b>Online scheduling and submission</b>		
<b>Pre-Operational Food Establishment Inspections</b> <i>Online scheduling for NYC Departments of Buildings, Health, and Fire Inspections for pre-operational food establishments. <a href="http://nyc.gov/NBAT">nyc.gov/NBAT</a></i>	Increase clarity and efficiency of online inspection scheduling for new restaurants.	<b>Completed</b>
<b>Fire Suppression Plan Review for Restaurants</b> <i>New online review for fire suppression for owners of new restaurants. <a href="http://nyc.gov/NBAT">nyc.gov/NBAT</a></i>	Eliminate unnecessary trips to NYC offices, complementing the existing review for many building plans and saving time and money.	<b>Completed</b> Electronic submission and review of plans available. <i>Apr 2013</i>

BUSINESS NEEDS in meeting regulation	GOAL	STATUS
<b>Work with one point of contact, even across multiple agencies</b>		
<p><b>NYC Business Acceleration</b> <i>Collaborative inter-agency team joins staff from multiple agencies to provide a streamlined suite of services to help business owners open their doors as quickly as possible.</i> <a href="http://nyc.gov/NBAT">nyc.gov/NBAT</a></p>	<p>Improve quality of services and increase number of businesses served.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b> 684 establishments opened with comprehensive services in 2013, helping create 13,189 new jobs. This quarter, 157 businesses were opened. <i>Dec 2013</i></p>
<p><b>Restoration Business Acceleration Team</b> <i>Collaborative inter-agency initiative that provides business owners with one point of contact as they identify and accomplish steps to restore and reopen their businesses.</i> <a href="http://nyc.gov/RBAT">nyc.gov/RBAT</a></p>	<p>Deploy inter-agency services for Hurricane Sandy response</p>	<p><b>Completed</b> 172 businesses have used 450+ services to date. This quarter, 11 businesses were helped. <i>Oct – Dec 2013</i></p>
<b>Facilitate compliance and inspections</b>		
<p><b>Pre-Operational Departments of Health, Buildings, and Fire Consultations</b> <i>NYC offers unopened restaurants a walk-through consultation, where NYC Departments of Health, Buildings, and Fire inspectors identify problems and tell restaurateurs how to correct them before official inspection.</i> <a href="http://on.nyc.gov/preopinspect">on.nyc.gov/preopinspect</a></p>	<p>Offer restaurateurs to correct violations before official inspection.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p>
<p><b>Coordinated Inspections</b> <i>Accelerated inspections for food-related businesses working with NYC Business Acceleration</i> <a href="http://nyc.gov/NBAT">nyc.gov/NBAT</a></p>	<p>Conduct 100% of inspections within an average of 5 days of the preferred date for the business customer.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b> The average number of days to an inspection from date scheduled remained under 5. <i>Oct – Dec 2013</i></p>
	<p>Cross-train NYC Business Acceleration inspectors to allow them to conduct inspections across agencies.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b> One appointment can cover 4 inspections across 3 agencies (NYC Departments of Consumer Affairs, Health, and Environmental Protection). <i>Jan – Mar 2013</i></p>
<p><b>Customer Service Training</b> <i>Standardized customer service curriculum and training for inspectors that increases consistency and professionalism for all inspecting agencies, and addresses specific business customer concerns.</i></p>	<p>Develop a customer service training curriculum for inspectors in 8 agencies, reaching more than 1,600 inspectors.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b> Curriculum completed <i>Dec 2012</i> 1200+ employees trained in 7 agencies to date (in the following NYC Departments: 389 in Health &amp; Mental Hygiene, 79 in Environmental Protection, in Buildings, 145 in Transportation, 239 in Sanitation, 190 in Taxi and Limousine, 116 in Fire). <i>Dec 2013</i></p>

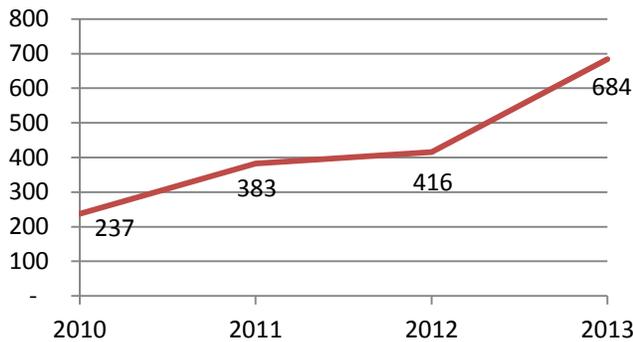
BUSINESS NEEDS in meeting regulation	GOAL	STATUS
<b>Check approval status online</b>		
<b>Online Status Checks for New Restaurants</b> <i>Restaurants working with NYC Business Acceleration can confirm the status of key processes online, inspection scheduling and approvals, request meetings with the Client Management Unit, and access FAQ's/glossary of terms.</i> <a href="http://nyc.gov/NBAT">nyc.gov/NBAT</a>	Online, self-serve status checks for pre-operational restaurants.	<b>In Progress</b> Statuses available for electronic submission of plans, and NYC Departments of Buildings, Health, and Fire results. This portal is currently being improved. <i>Dec 2013</i>
<b>Online Status Checks for Other Business Types</b> <i>Owners of businesses in other industries can confirm the status of licensing, inspections, plan review, and permitting.</i>	Online, self-serve status checks for other industries.	<b>In Progress</b> Status checks on licenses and permits through NYC Department of Consumer Affairs to be available in March 2014.
<b>Correct non-compliance</b>		
<b>Opportunities to Correct Violations</b> <i>Allow businesses a period to correct select violations before being penalized (those not involving life or safety, or other public interests of an immediate nature).</i>	Legislative proposal created with the City Council to identify opportunities for cure periods in regulations.	<b>Enacted</b> Recommendations of Mayor's Office enacted by City Council, bringing curable infractions to 15% of infractions issued. The new cure periods will go into effect in the middle of next year. <i>Dec 2013</i>
 <b>OPERATE AND RENEW</b>		
<b>Streamline inter-agency regulations</b>		
<b>Grease Interceptor Regulation Reform</b> <i>Clarified regulations on grease interceptors, especially useful for restaurants.</i>	Ensure that regulations from NYC Departments of Health and Environmental Protection agree, not conflict.	<b>Completed</b> New Building Code will be effective August 2014.
<b>Place of Assembly Certificate of Operation and Permit</b> <i>A more direct permitting process to benefit businesses serving large numbers of the public.</i>	Reduce required steps by 20%. This improves on the baseline of 9 required steps, and an estimated time to approval of 10-16 weeks.	<b>Completed</b> Local Law 2 of 2013 reduces steps by 33%, and should reduce time to renewal by 50%.
<b>Sidewalk Café Approval and Renewal</b> <i>Fewer steps, increased clarity, faster process for approval and greater protection for businesses.</i>	Simplify process to involve fewer agencies, improving on the baseline of 6 agencies in Dec 2003.	<b>Completed</b> 3 agencies involved (for most cafes).
	Reduce minimum process time by 75% of 2003 minimum, to 56 days or fewer.	<b>Completed</b> New local law should reduce process time by 60-70%, from 226 days to 90 days in total.

BUSINESS NEEDS in meeting regulation	GOAL	STATUS
<b>Fire Suppression Plan Review</b> <i>Fewer steps and fees for businesses to have their Fire Suppression plan processed and reviewed.</i>	Reduce the requirements and burden on businesses by improving efficiency of NYC Departments of Buildings and Fire plan review processes. Estimated reduction of 50% (8 days) in processing and plan review time.	<b>In progress</b> Legislation waiting action by City Council.
<b>Flexible Place of Assembly for Restaurants</b> <i>Reduce number of plans larger restaurants have to submit for approval of their space and make it easier for them to rearrange their space to meet business needs</i>	Increase flexibility in business operation and save restaurants about \$700,000 per year in reduced filing costs.	<b>In progress</b> Legislation waiting action by City Council.
 <b>GIVE FEEDBACK</b>		
<b>Share feedback to new points of contact</b>		
<b>Business Owner Bill of Rights</b> <i>Empower business owners to know the clear standards to which inspectors and other NYC employees are held, and to submit honest feedback on services.</i> <a href="http://nyc.gov/bizrights">nyc.gov/bizrights</a>	Distribute English / Spanish palm cards directly to business owners by agency inspectors.	<b>Completed</b> <i>Oct 2012</i>
<b>Public-Private Dialogue</b> <i>With the five borough Chambers of Commerce, NYC and Company, the NYC Hospitality Alliance, and the NY Restaurant Association.</i>	Public-private dialogue to generate actionable feedback.	<b>Completed</b> Engaged with citywide groups including the Partnership for New York; community based organizations within the five boroughs including Development Corporations, Chambers of Commerce, and Business Improvement Districts; industry organizations including the NYC Hospitality Alliance, the NY Restaurant Association, and the Real Estate Board of New York; and with others. <i>Oct – Dec 2013</i>
<b>Agency Liaisons to the Business Community</b> <i>Work with industry associations and business groups like the five borough chambers of commerce.</i>	New agency points-of-contact explain regulatory goals and processes to businesses, and accept feedback.	<b>Completed</b> 8 liaisons met with many organizations, including in an interagency meeting on top violations attended by 30+ organizations this past quarter. <i>Oct – Nov 2013</i>
<b>Customer Feedback Survey</b> <i>Encourage business owners to offer feedback about their customer service experience with NYC agencies.</i> <a href="http://nyc.gov/customersurvey">nyc.gov/customersurvey</a>	New online feedback survey, in English, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, and Korean.	<b>Completed</b>

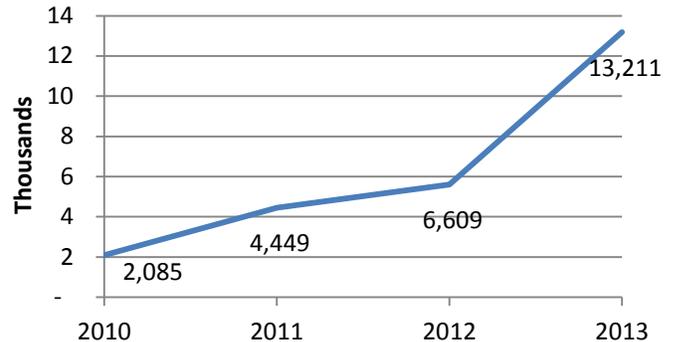
**EASIER: REDUCING FOOTWORK FOR BUSINESS OWNERS**

as they move through the regulatory process. NYC Business is making more possible online and more in-person work with a single point of contact.

**Businesses Opened with NYC Business Acceleration Each Year**

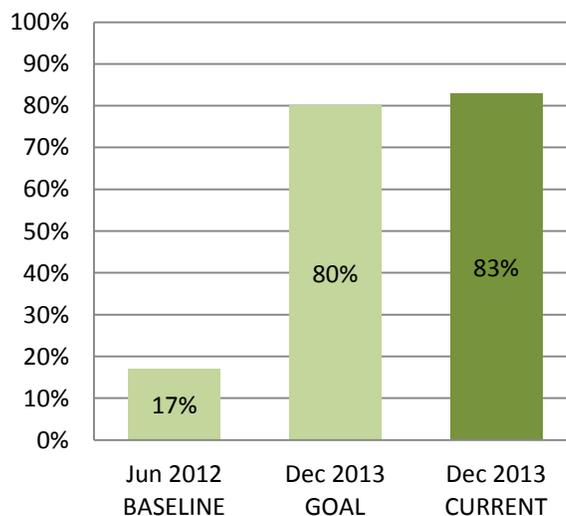


**Jobs Facilitated with NYC Business Acceleration, Each Year**



NYC Business Acceleration’s services have been accessed by increasing numbers of businesses since its inception in 2010. 2013 saw significant increases in businesses opened and jobs facilitated. These metrics reflect businesses that received comprehensive services; more than 4,100 have more have used specific services to date in 2013. Overall, NYC Business Acceleration has opened more than 1,700 establishments which have facilitated the creation more than 25,000 jobs.

**Permit and License Applications Online**



Currently, 83% of business-related permits and license applications, by volume, are available for submission online. This passes the goal of 80% by December 2013.

**CLEARER: HELPING BUSINESSES UNDERSTAND REQUIREMENTS**

by providing easy-to-understand information in one place online, that is organized around business needs.

**Number of Unique Online Visitors to NYC Business Express\***



NYC Business Express is a one-stop website that provides information needed to open and operate a business and apply for permits, licenses and certifications. In the latest quarter, the website received 57,268 visitors, which represents about a 12% increase from the same quarter last year. NYC Business Express is being folded into NYC.gov/Business – eventually the brand NYC Business Express will go away.

**Number of Completed Wizard Sessions on NYC Business Express\***



The Wizard is an online tool that creates a customized list of requirements for a business, based on answers to a series of questions. This allows users to learn about the NYC, NY State, and Federal permits, licenses, and incentives that pertain to their business.

In the latest quarter, there were 4,126 individuals who completed the wizard session, which is about a 21% increase from the same quarter last year.

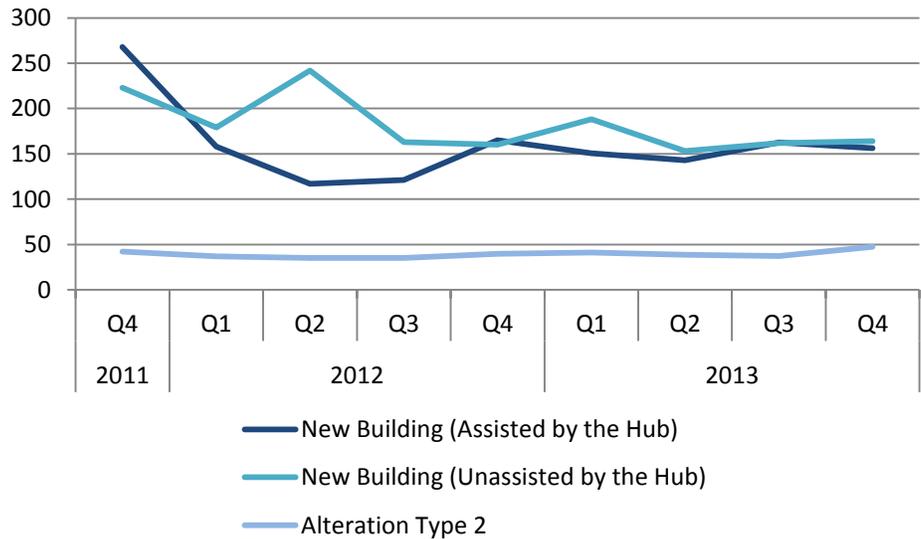
\* As part of the improvements to the NYC.gov/Business website redesign, NYC Business Express will ultimately be phased out. The services will be available from the NYC.gov/Business website, and corresponding metrics will be tracked and reported.

**FASTER: MAKING IT FASTER FOR BUSINESSES**

to meet requirements by responding quickly and reliably to business customer requests.

**Average Days to Review and Approve Building Plans**

The NYC Development Hub has accelerated plan approvals threefold by enabling professionals to submit digital plans and inspectors from six agencies to review, revise, and approve the plans together online in real time—without the business customer ever setting foot in the office.



**Average Days to Building Inspections**

For the sixth consecutive quarter, fulfillment for construction, plumbing, and electrical inspections remained below 10 days.

