



Service Identification

A structured approach to defining, measuring, and aligning your department's services with the City's Strategic Plan. This workflow guides you through six essential steps to create clear, actionable service plans that demonstrate value and accountability.

How to Approach This Exercise

What this is not

This exercise is not an audit and not a staffing analysis.

What this is

The goal is to clearly define what services your department provides so leadership can understand scope, alignment, and performance expectations

How to Approach it

There are no “right” or “wrong” services — clarity and consistency matter more than perfection.

Know the Definition of a "Service"



What IS a Service

A repeatable outcome delivered to a customer that the City would notice if it stopped.

- Code Enforcement
- Inspections
- Emergency response
- Trash collection
- Customer Care
- Library programming



What is NOT a Service

Internal tasks that support operations but aren't customer-facing deliverables.

- Answering phones
- Processing payments
- Handling complaints
- Internal Meetings
- Data entry / record keeping
- General administration

You are not listing everything you do — you are defining the services your department and its programs provide to customers.

List Your Services

Start with 5–15 Services

For each service, confirm three critical elements:

01

Category

Type of service provided

02

Who receives it

Identify the customer or beneficiary

03

Whether it's mandated or discretionary

Clarify if it's required by law or policy

Pro Tips

1. If you have trouble naming services, think in **"nouns"** (deliverables) instead of **"verbs"** (activities).
 - a. For example: "Permit Issuance" not "Reviewing Applications"
2. **Internal services** (those delivered to other City departments) are still services and should be included.

Write a Plain-Language Service Description

What is Delivered

Describe the tangible outcome or result

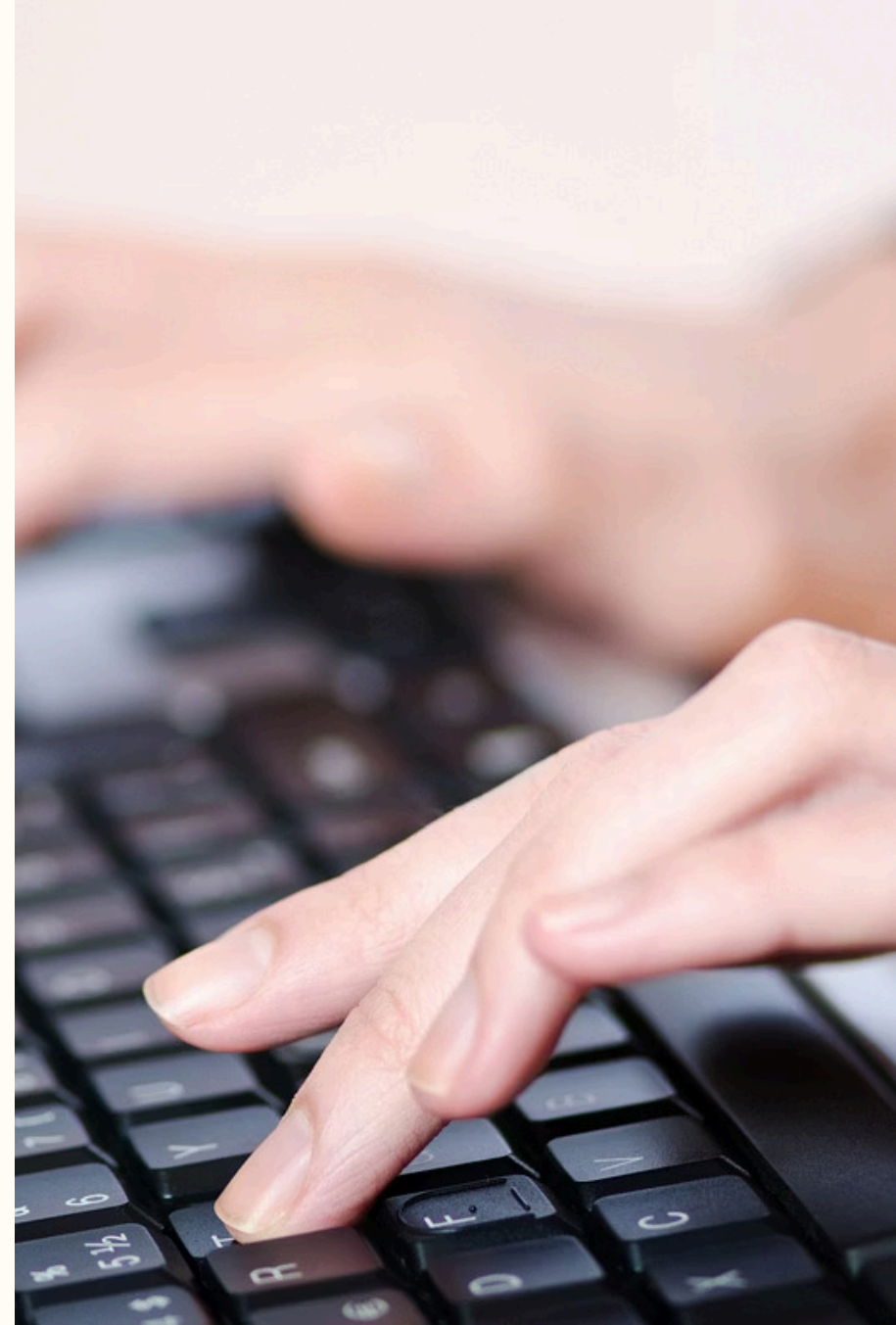
To Whom

Identify the recipient or customer group

Why it Exists

Explain the purpose or value it provides

Write like you're explaining it to a resident or Council Member. Keep it to 2–3 sentences that anyone can understand.



STEP 2

Align Each Service to the Strategic Plan

For each service, create a clear alignment path through the Strategic Plan hierarchy. This connection demonstrates how your work supports citywide priorities.



Focus Area

Select the primary strategic focus



Goal

Choose the goal within that Focus Area



Commitment

Identify the commitment within that Goal

Define Service Level Expectations

What "Good" Looks Like for this service

Service level expectations describe **how the service is delivered**, not whether it is successful.

Response Time

How quickly work is acknowledged or begins after a request

Customer requests, tickets, complaints

Completion / Turnaround Time

How long it takes to finish work once started

Permits, inspections, payments, reports

Frequency / Coverage

How often work occurs or what is covered

Collections, maintenance, patrols

Availability

When and how consistently the service is available

Infrastructure, facilities, public safety, utilities

Compliance Thresholds

Required level of legal or policy compliance

Regulatory, safety, audit services

Quality / Experience Standard

Accuracy, condition, or customer experience

Libraries, recreation, communications

Good vs. Weak Service Level Examples

Rule: A strong service level includes a **timeframe, frequency, or standard**.

"Timely responses"

"Respond to customer requests within 2 business days"

"As needed"

"Complete inspections within 5 business days of request"

"High quality service"

"Collect residential waste once per week"

If the expectation is documented in an ordinance, policy, contract, or regulation, note the source.

If not formally documented, describe the current practice to establish a baseline.

Measuring our Services with Metrics

Which pillar defines success for this service

Output

Expected volume or cadence of work

Missed collections

Inspections completed vs scheduled

Route completed

Outcome

Results or impact achieved

Lawsuits avoided

Violations cited

Fines incurred



Efficiency

Time or cost per unit of work

cost per permit

overtime hours

fuel consumption

rework labor

Quality

Correctness or compliance

Error rates

rework

customer complaints

Audit findings (non-compliance)

Most operational services choose **Output** or **Efficiency**.

Advisory, regulatory, or customer-facing services often choose **Outcome** or **Quality**.

Choose the ONE Primary Metric

How we know the service is working

This is not every metric you track. This is the *single best indicator* of whether the service is succeeding.

Pick the one that leadership would care about most if it changed.

Primary Performance Metric - “If this went wrong, what would people complain about first?”

Metric Details

Baseline — Current performance level. If unknown, leave blank

Target — Desired performance level. If unknown, leave blank

Data Readiness — Yes / Partial / No *(Partial or No is acceptable - helps prioritize improvement)*

Frequency

Daily - Safety-critical or real-time operations

Weekly - Operational workload and trends

Monthly - Routine or high-volume services

Quarterly - Strategic, planning, or compliance

Annually - Long-term or outcome-based measures

Data Source Type

Software/System - ERP, work order system

Spreadsheet - Excel, manual tracking

Paper-based records - Forms, logs

Third-party/External - Vendor, state data

Avoid vague metrics like "improve customer service" without a measurable signal.



STEP 5

Identify Major Resources

At a high level, document the key resources required to deliver each service. This is not a full cost study—just enough to understand scale and constraints.

1 — Staffing

Approximate FTE count or team size dedicated to this service

2 — Key Systems and Tools

Software, databases, or technology platforms essential to delivery

3 — Major Assets/Equipment

Vehicles, facilities, or specialized equipment required

4 — Major Contracts

Significant vendor agreements or outsourced components

STEP 6

Final Review

The Completeness Test

Before submitting your service plan, run through this quick quality check to ensure clarity:

External Understanding

Would someone outside my department understand what this service delivers and why it exists?

Clear Standards

Are service levels and metrics stated clearly with at least one measurable standard?

Strategic Alignment

Is the strategic alignment specific and clearly tied to one primary commitment?

Performance Visibility

Could leadership tell if performance is improving using this information?

A well-developed service plan creates transparency, accountability, and a shared understanding of how your department delivers value to the community.