



# Commercial Renovation Improvements Initiative Update

January 16, 2019



1. Context
2. Project Overview
3. Actions & Next Steps



## Policy and Planning

1. Prepare area plans with “pre-zoning”
2. Review system for development charges
3. Conduct regulatory review & implement updates
4. Clarify advisory committee roles & mandates

## Process and Service Delivery

5. Implement customer service improvements
6. Enable affordable housing production priorities
7. Remove barriers for ground-oriented housing development
8. **Review commercial renovation processes**

## Organization and Industry Capacity

9. Enhance process, technology, data and reporting
10. Train and build capacity across development-related staff
11. Engage and support development industry

## Affordable Housing Expedited

- SHORT pilot
  - 900 units approved, >1,200 in the pipeline; 12 weeks to DP decision (50% reduction over normal timelines)
- Temporary modular housing
  - Expedited over 600 units; All permits issued in 4-9 weeks

## Low Density Housing Expedited

- 80% reduction (12 weeks) in approval times for landscape reviews
- Aging permit backlog reduced from >400 to <30
- 96.5% permits turned around in under 12 weeks in Q418 vs 9% in Q117
- 'Nexus Lane' ASAP pilot underway

## Improved Customer Service

- Launched Commercial Renovation Centre for small businesses (2017)
- 30% reduction in wait times at service counters (2018 vs. 2017)

## Organization and Staffing

- 42 new staff hired in 2018 with a further 43 planned to be hired in 2019
- PDS re-organization completed in 2018
- Over 230 staff trained in new development policies and procedures

# Commercial Renovations Permitting

The City issued over 2,200 commercial renovation permits in 2018.

| Type of Permit       | Related CoV Programs                                | 2018 Volumes | Expected Permit Time (wks) | Mean Actuals* (wks) |
|----------------------|---|--------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Minor Reno (BP)      | TIPS, Field Review, Enquiry Centre                  | 1,511        | 2-4                        | 5.5                 |
| Major Reno (BP)      | CP; Commercial; Mixed Use                           | 382          | 8-12                       | 8.3                 |
| Use Impact (DP + BP) | DP Board; Design Review; Neighbourhood Notification | 376          | 10-12                      | 13.6                |
| <b>TOTAL</b>         |   | <b>2,269</b> |                            |                     |

# Project Objective & Scope

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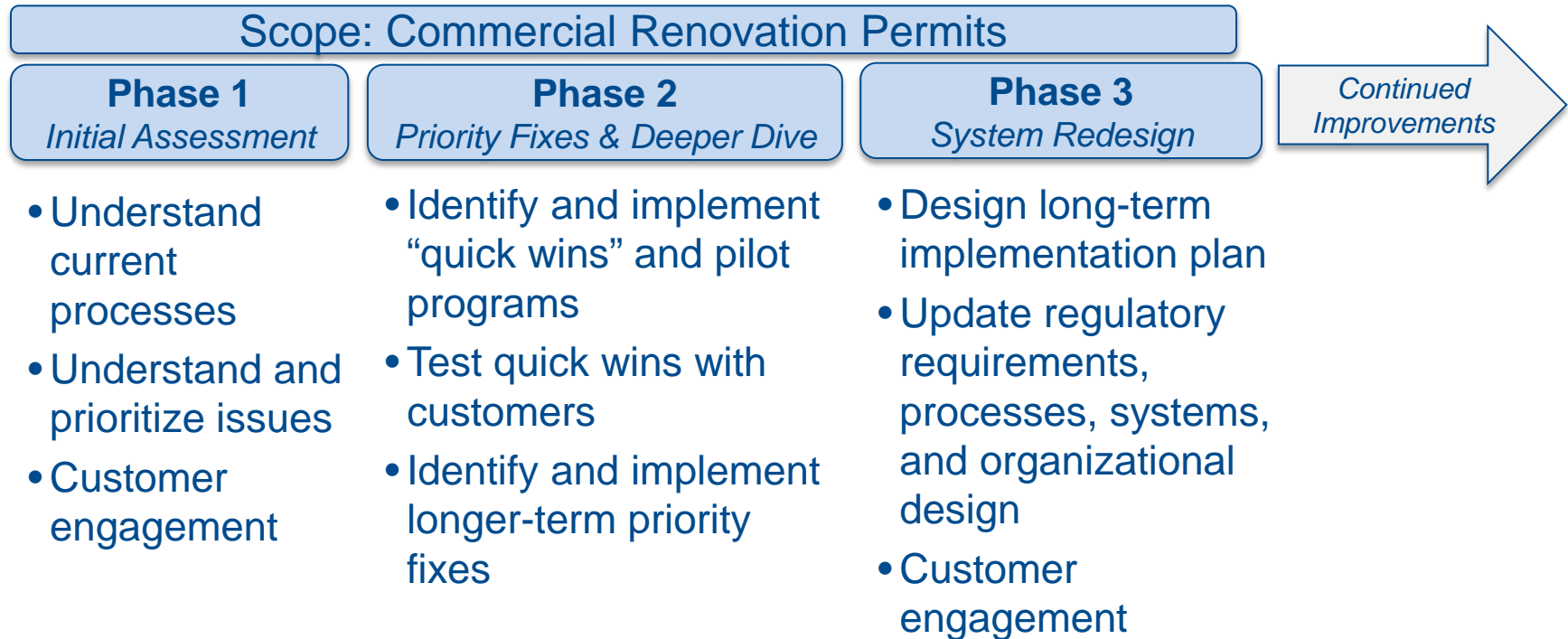
## Objective:

Evaluate the current state of commercial renovations, in partnership with industry stakeholders, and identify opportunities to increase transparency and consistency, improve service delivery, and speed-up permit times over the near- and long-term.

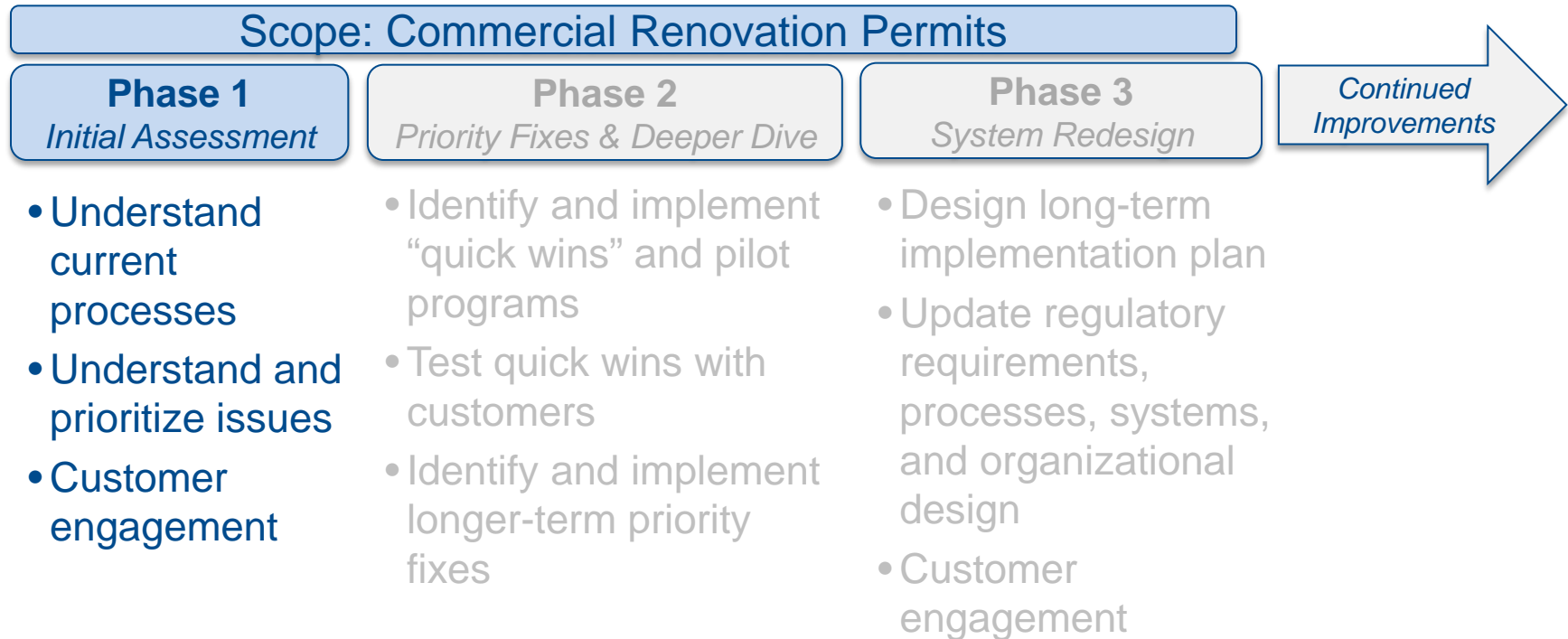
## Scope:

- Development permits
- Building permits
- Trade permits

# Key Project Activities



# Key Project Activities





## **Two focus groups**

- Small-medium sized business - 21 participants
- Commercial landlords and property managers - 16 participants

## **Stakeholder Interviews**

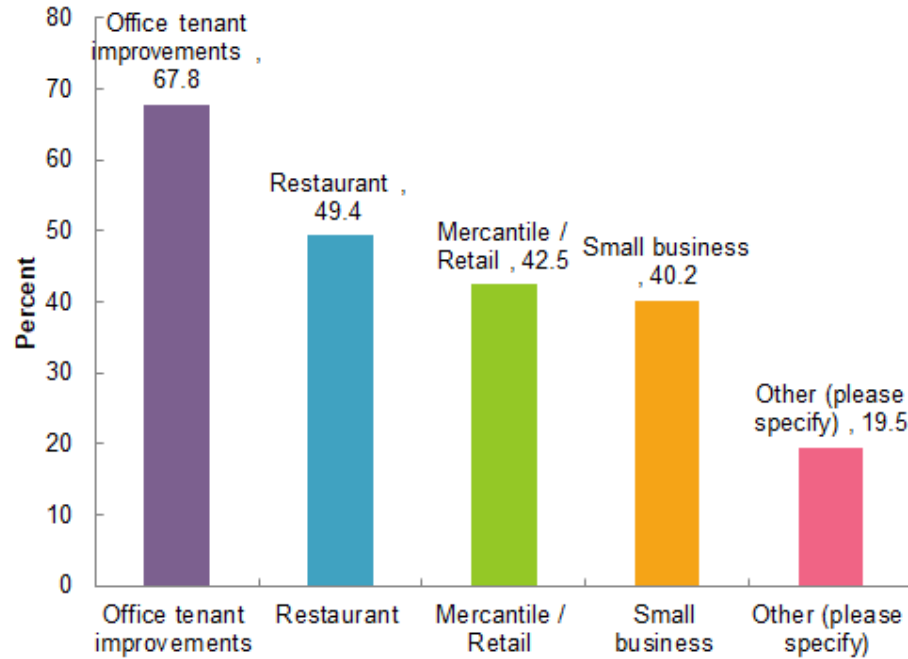
- 20+ interviews with associations and high-volume customers

## **Commercial renovations survey**

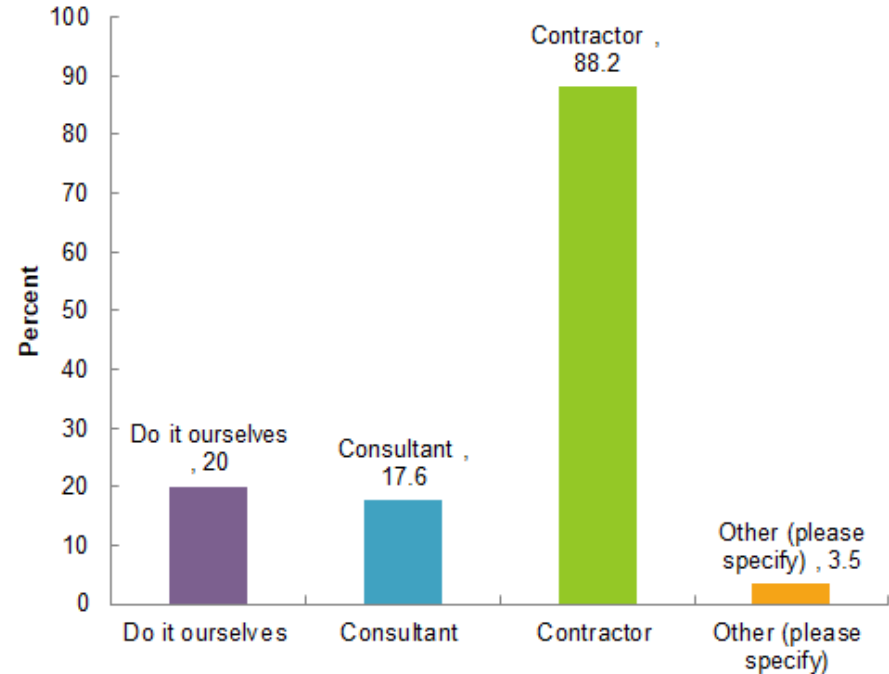
- Over 130 stakeholders, 20 CoV staff
- Hundreds of ideas for improvements, key issues, and suggestions for what is working well today

# Customer Profiles

**What types of commercial renovations do you carry out?**



**Who does your renovation work for you?**



# Customer Feedback: Issues

“Navigating the different departments can be challenging”

“Answers from staff can be inconsistent / incomplete”

“It takes too long to get a permit”



“Moving a demising wall should not trigger a major upgrade”

“Permit requirements are not always clear”

“Hard to plan with no forecast timelines on permit”

# Customer Feedback: Ideas

“Navigating the different departments can be challenging”

“Allow for online submissions”

“Have a fast track for small projects”

“Answers from staff can be inconsistent / incomplete”

“Add more staff”

“It takes too long to get a permit”

“Bring back TIPS!”

“Moving a demising wall should not trigger a major upgrade”

“Motivate staff to want to help and empower them to be able to help”

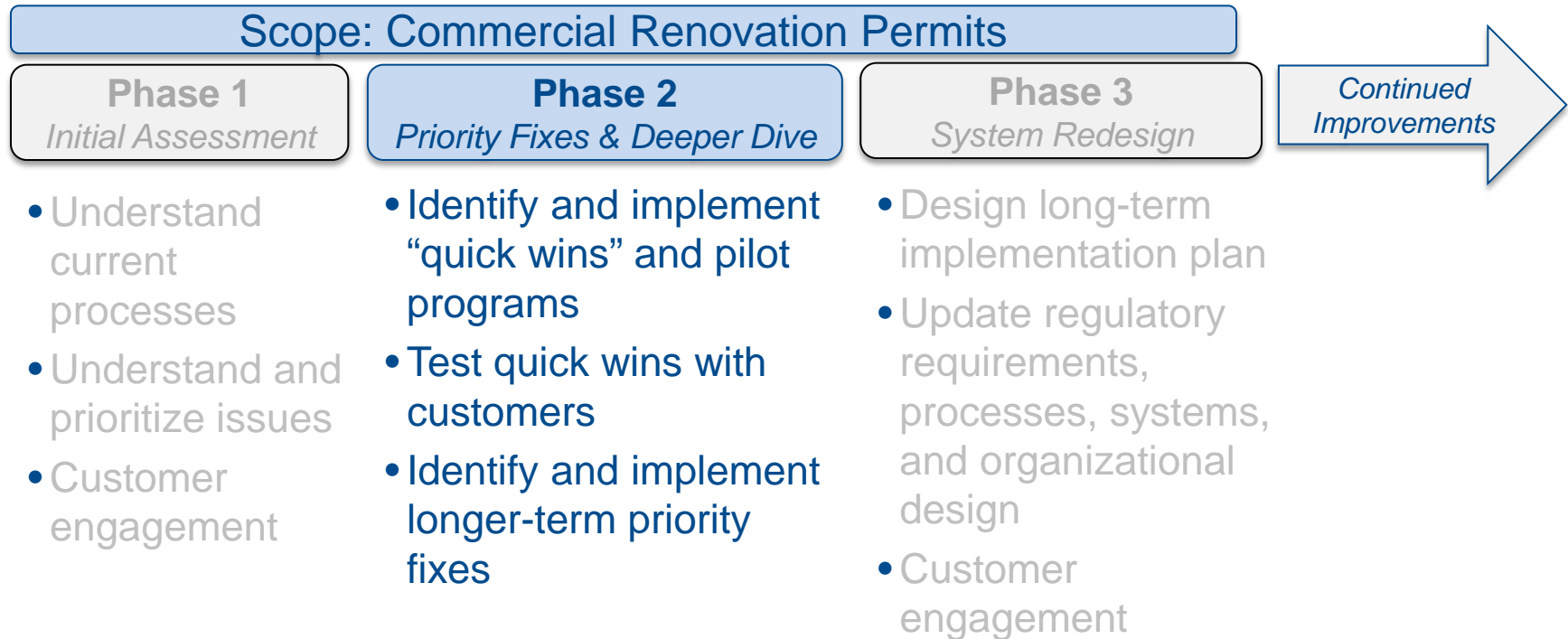
“Hard to plan with no forecast timelines on permit”

“Permit requirements are not always clear”

“Put more trust in industry professionals”



# Key Project Activities



# Key Themes to Address

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The quick wins, and pilot programs will address five key themes:

1. The application requirements, policies and processes are **complex and confusing** to both customers and staff
2. The **timelines** for permits, queuing at the Services Centre, and lack of visibility into the timing, cause significant challenges
3. Permitting delays and fees are causing a **financial burden** for businesses, especially small business
4. Perception that renovations which are minor in nature trigger requirements for extensive **building upgrades**
5. Request for more **trust in registered professionals**, and more distinction between commercial and residential permitting processes

# Near-Term Actions: Policy & Regulatory

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## Key Actions:

## Expected Timeframe

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| 1. Eliminate building upgrade trigger for demising wall                              | Q1 2019 |
| 2. Pilot: Pathway for buildings to remain eligible for rapid approval program (TIPS) | Q2 2019 |
| 3. Simplify energy requirements for small business / small renovation projects       | Q2 2019 |

# Near-Term Actions: Process & System

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| Key Actions:   | Expected Timeframe |
|--|--------------------|
| 1. Pilot: Fast track to application intake           | Q1 2019            |
| 2. Pilot: Fast track to permit for minor renovations | Q2 2019            |
| 3. Create strategy for online commercial services    | Q2 2019            |
| 4. Develop forecasting for permit completion times   | Q3 2019            |



# Near-Term Actions: Service Delivery

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| Key Actions:   | Expected Timeframe |
|--|--------------------|
| 1. Services Centre Plan Screening                    | Q1 2019            |
| 2. Pilot: Commercial Enquiry Line at Services Centre | Q1 2019            |
| 3. Expand Commercial Renovation Centre scope/team    | Q2 2019            |
| 4. Pilot: Deferred permit fees for small businesses  | Q3 2019            |
| 5. Enhance communications and engagement             | Q1 – Q4            |

# Near-Term Actions: Capacity-Building

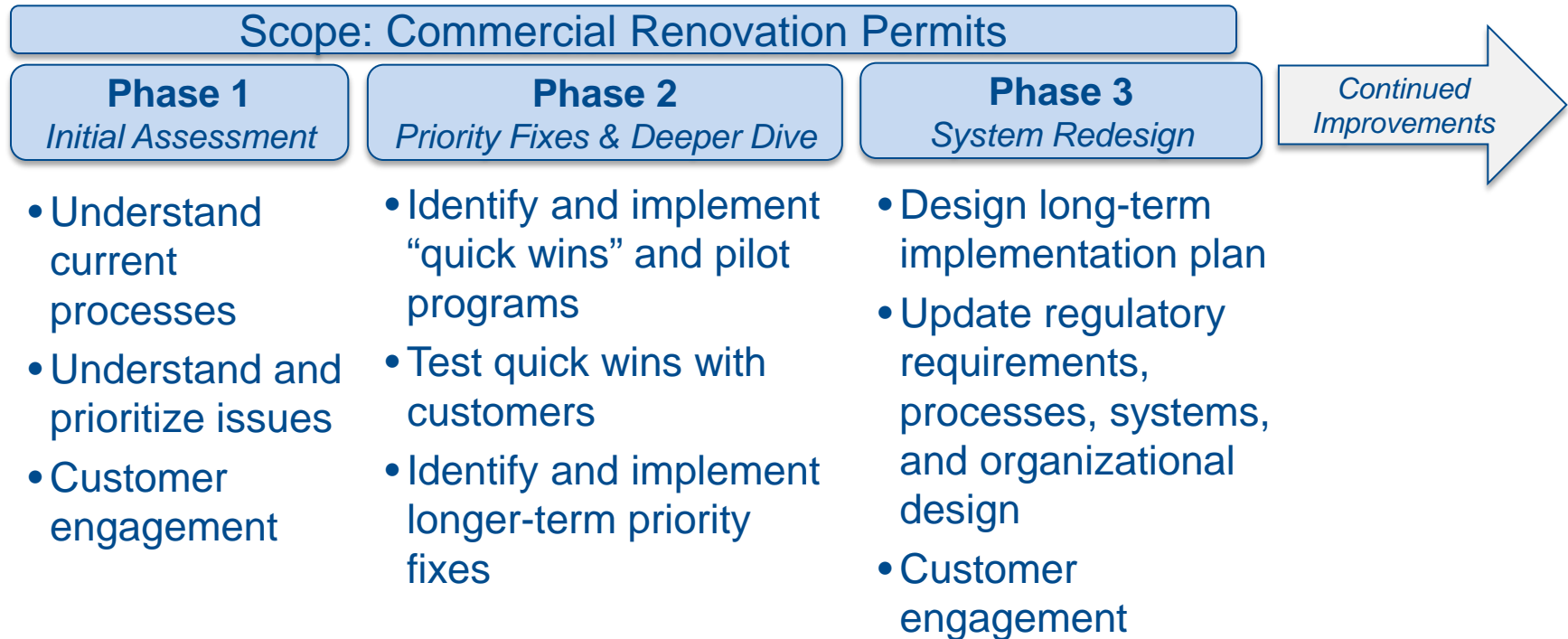
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## Key Actions:

## Expected Timeframe

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| 1. Decision matrix for staff  | Q1 2019 |
| 2. Staff training across groups                                     | Q1 2019 |
| 3. Increased staffing for Commercial Renovation Centre & Sprinklers | Q1 2019 |
| 4. Providing training to industry on most common mistakes           | Q2 2019 |
| 5. Sample plans and checklist online                                | Q2 2019 |
| 6. Zoning and Building Code Interpretation Database for staff       | Q2 2019 |

# Key Project Activities





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Thank you