

Factors Contributing to Delays in Building Permit Issuance in the Colombo Municipal Council Area: An Administrative Perspective

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Delays in the Sri Lankan construction sector, particularly within the Colombo Municipal Council (CMC) area, have been a persistent issue with significant adverse impacts. This study explored the factors contributing to delays in obtaining building permits within this region, building on existing literature that emphasizes the construction sector's critical role in economic development and societal well-being. Empirical data were gathered through focus group interviews and secondary data from 2018 onwards. The findings reveal substantial challenges in the building application process, primarily due to client errors and administrative constraints. Notably, between 2018 and 2023, a majority of applications exceeded the standard 14-day processing period, with 65% experiencing delays in 2023 alone. Client-related issues include a lack of awareness of building regulations and inadequate comprehension of required documents. Administrative obstacles consist of outdated inspection equipment, technological limitations in CAD submissions, and irregularities in planning committee operations. To address these issues, the study proposes several recommendations, such as public awareness campaigns, technological upgrades for online submissions, modernization of inspection equipment, continuous staff training, and optimized committee scheduling. These measures aim to mitigate delays, enhance regulatory compliance, and foster a more responsive administrative framework for effective building permit management in the CMC area.

Keywords: *constructions, Colombo Municipal Council, building permit, delay*