



KEN BURKE, CPA

Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller
Pinellas County, FL

Clerk of the County Court • Recorder of Deeds
Clerk and Accountant of the Board of County Commissioners
Custodian of County Funds • County Auditor

Division of Inspector General

510 Bay Avenue, Clearwater, FL 33756
Telephone: (727) 464-8371 | Fax: (727) 464-8386
Fraud hotline: (727) 45FRAUD (453-7283)
www.mypinellasclerk.gov



REPORT NO. 2025-24

TO: Barry Burton, County Administrator
Department/Agency

FROM: Melissa Dondero, Inspector General/Chief Audit Executive *MD*
Division of Inspector General

DIST: The Honorable Chair and Members of the Board of County Commissioners
Ken Burke, CPA, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

SUBJECT: Follow-Up Investigation of Certificate of Occupancy Issuance

DATE: November 6, 2025

This memo serves to inform you that the Division of Inspector General completed a Follow-Up Investigation of Certificate of Occupancy Issuance. The purpose of our follow-up review was to determine the status of previous recommendations for improvement.

The purpose of the original investigation was to determine if:

1. The Respondent violated policies and procedures by directing staff to issue a certificate of occupancy prior to correcting outstanding deficiencies.

To determine the current status of our previous recommendations, we surveyed and/or interviewed management to determine the actual actions taken to implement recommendations for improvement. We performed testing to verify that management's action plans have effectively addressed the investigation findings. The extent and timing of testing were based on the significance of the findings and management's planned implementation completion date.

Our follow-up investigation was conducted in accordance with the *Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General* of the Association of Inspectors General and *The Florida Inspectors General Standards Manual* from The Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation. Accordingly, it included such tests of records and other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

Our follow-up testing was performed during the month of October 2025. The original investigative report was published on August 7, 2024.

Of the four recommendations in the original investigation report, we determined that all have been implemented. The status of each recommendation is presented in this follow-up report.

Original Report Reference

To view the original report (Report No.: 2024-11), published in the report section of our website, please use the following link:

[RPT2024-11 Investigation of Certificate of Occupancy Issuance](#)

Recommendation Implementation Status

The table below reports on the status of management’s action plans to implement the recommendations contained in the original investigation report.

FINDING	PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION	STATUS
1	<i>A Certificate Of Occupancy Was Issued Prior To Correction Of Site Deficiencies.</i>	
A	Implement a formal policy and procedures for Temporary Certificates of Occupancy (TCOs), including properly documenting the permit information in Accela.	Implemented On July 10, 2024, management implemented a TCO Policy. In October 2025, the IG reviewed a TCO issued after the policy was implemented and verified the TCO Policy was followed.
B	Ensure Public Works (PW) is notified of projects, as required, and document notification.	Implemented In July 2024, management implemented a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) For Engineering, Environmental and Public Works Inspection and Certificate of Occupancy or Certificate of Completion Clearance. The SOP requires PW to be notified of projects by email, and for the notification to be documented in Accela.
C	Ensure bonds are monitored and processed appropriately.	Implemented In July 2024, management implemented the Regulatory Services Standard Operating Procedures. The SOP clearly defines the processing, monitoring, and documenting of bonds.
D	Develop, implement, and document training to ensure all appropriate staff are educated on the policy/procedures related to TCOs.	Implemented Management provided initial training to all department managers in August 2024 and provided documentation demonstrating the training occurred. All new management is required to receive training on the TCO Policy during the onboarding process.

We appreciate the cooperation shown by the staff of County Administration and BDRS during the course of this review.

MD/JP