

Modern Governance for Citizens and Businesses: The Case of Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City's Administrative Transformation (2010 - 2020)

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Abstract. Since the 9th Congress of the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee in 2010, administrative reform has been identified as one of the three strategic breakthrough areas, playing a pivotal role in the process of building a modern, efficient, and effective urban governance model, with a focus on achieving sustainable development. This policy reflects the timely and accurate approach of the City Party Committee in the context of accelerating industrialization, modernization, and international integration. Throughout the period from the 9th to the 11th Congress, the leadership and direction of administrative reform were implemented systematically, consistently, and increasingly in-depth. Ho Chi Minh City has issued numerous specific programs, plans, and policies, clearly demonstrating the political commitment to renewing the administrative system towards democracy, transparency, and professionalism, with a focus on serving the people and businesses. As a result, many positive outcomes have been recorded, particularly in institutional reform, streamlining the apparatus, enhancing the quality of the staff, applying information technology, and improving the investment and business environment. This article focuses on clarifying the leadership role of the Party Committee of Ho Chi Minh City in the process of administrative reform during the period of 2010 - 2020. Based on the analysis of documents, resolutions, plans, and summary reports from the City People's Committee, the article evaluates the outstanding achievements, identifies existing challenges and limitations, and proposes several feasible solutions to continue advancing administrative reform in the next phase, contributing to the realization of the goal of building a modern urban government that serves and fosters development.

1. INTRODUCTION

Administrative reform is an objective requirement of every administrative system. It has become an urgent necessity that must be vigorously promoted in order to meet the demands of national development and international integration.

There have been various definitions of administrative reform. Some scholars view it as a process of change and renewal of the administrative apparatus to meet the developmental requirements of a country's socio-economic progress.

According to *The Vietnamese Encyclopedia*, administrative reform is defined as:

A process of restructuring the state administrative apparatus to meet the demands of socio-economic development, political system renewal, and state apparatus reform. It includes a system of organizations and institutions tasked with exercising executive power - namely, managing the day-to-day operations of the state and ensuring the successful implementation of the state's political missions" (Encyclopedia, 1995, p. 337).

Nguyen Huu Hai defines administrative reform as *"a deliberately planned process of transformation aimed at improving one or more elements of the state administrative system - including institutional frameworks, organizational structure, operational mechanisms, the quality of civil servants, and public finance - in order to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of administrative performance"* (Hai, 2016, pp. 56 - 57).

Beyond the aforementioned approach, some scholars argue that administrative reform does not necessarily entail a complete transformation of the entire administrative system. Instead, it may focus on specific areas and seek to improve existing shortcomings. From this perspective, administrative reform is considered.

A gradual, partial improvement process within the executive system of the state apparatus, aimed at enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of state administration; it involves reforming outdated administrative structures, institutions, and methods, while establishing new administrative regimes and mechanisms within the state administration. It also relates to reform across different areas of state governance" (Dung, 2016, p. 132).

Others view administrative reform as *"a continuous and long-term process of improvement in the field of administrative management"* (Thua, 2020, p. 14).

Based on the aforementioned approaches, "administrative reform" can be generally defined as a process of either comprehensive transformation or targeted improvement of specific components within the state administrative system, aiming to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public administration. This process is designed to meet the evolving demands of socio-economic development and to strengthen the state's governance capacity in accordance with the particular stage of national development.

In line with the major policy of the Party and the comprehensive program of administrative reform issued by the Government, the Ninth Congress of the Party Committee of Ho Chi Minh City (2010) identified one of its key goals as building a model of urban government closely linked to the formation of a modern, professional, clean, and strong administrative system. This goal not only meets the urgent requirements of the city's construction and development during the period of accelerated industrialization and modernization, but also aligns with the trend of international integration and the reform of state governance institutions towards democracy, transparency, and service.

Based on the thorough understanding of the Resolution of the Ninth Congress, the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City issued the Administrative Reform Program for the 2011 - 2020 period through Decision No. 25/2012/QĐ-UBND dated June 22, 2012. This program establishes a comprehensive system of objectives, tasks, and solutions for administrative reform, covering a wide range of areas, from institutional reform, organizational restructuring, administrative procedures, to modernization of the administration and the development of a workforce of civil servants and public employees to meet new demands. After nearly a decade of implementation, the program has contributed to positive changes in the organization and operation of the state administrative apparatus in the city, while affirming the decisive and effective leadership and management role of the Party Committee and the government of the city in the reform process.

However, there are currently not many scientific works that systematically and comprehensively study the leadership and direction of the Party Committee of Ho Chi Minh City regarding administrative reform during the 2010 - 2022 period. Therefore, analyzing and clarifying the strategic orientations, specific leadership content, and results achieved from the perspective of administrative and political science is of significant importance, not only in terms of theory but also with profound practical implications. This will contribute to improving the urban governance model towards modernization and sustainability.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Administrative reform is an important part of the comprehensive renewal of the state apparatus, aimed at improving management efficiency, effectiveness, and service to the people. In this study, the author approaches administrative reform as a systematic process, encompassing several synchronized components: institutional reform, administrative procedure reform, organizational restructuring, civil servant development, public finance, and the modernization of the administrative system.

The theoretical framework of this article is built based on scientific perspectives on the socialist rule of law state, the theory of modern public governance, and the viewpoints of the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee on constructing a democratic, professional, modern, and service-oriented administrative system. In this context, key concepts such as "administrative reform", "state management efficiency", "public governance" and "enhancing the quality of the civil servant workforce" are examined in an organic relationship with the development context of Ho Chi Minh City - a special urban area and the largest economic center in the country.

The article also inherits and applies previous research results on administrative reform during the 2010 - 2020 period, particularly the evaluations and summaries provided by the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City through documents, decisions, and thematic reports. These materials not only offer a rich practical foundation but also help establish a reference framework for analyzing the leadership role of the city's Party Committee in each area of reform.

The theoretical framework also addresses a systems-based and interdisciplinary approach to public administration research, thereby illuminating the factors influencing the effectiveness of reform: Political institutions, organizational capacity, the competency of staff, the ability to apply technology, and citizen participation.

Thus, the theoretical framework of the paper not only provides a scientific foundation for analyzing administrative reform policies but also opens up a practical approach by linking the Party's directives with the actual implementation outcomes at the local level, in this case, Ho Chi Minh City.

3. METHODS

The paper primarily employs qualitative research methods, combined with document analysis, to clarify the viewpoints, policies, and evaluate the leadership outcomes of the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee in implementing administrative reforms from 2010 to 2020. Specifically, the author analyzes the content of policy documents, resolutions, decisions, and reports from the Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee related to administrative reform efforts. Based on these materials, the paper synthesizes, compares, and evaluates the outcomes of the implementation across various aspects: institutional reform, administrative procedure reform, organizational restructuring, building and enhancing the quality of civil servants, public financial reform, and modernizing the administration. A historical method combined with analysis and synthesis is applied to clarify the formation and development of the administrative reform program in Ho Chi Minh City, while also providing an overview of the leadership role and guidance of the city's Party Committee during specific periods.

4. RESULTS

4.1. The Viewpoints and Policies of the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee and Government on administrative Reform during the Period 2010 – 2020

The IX Congress of the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee (2010) marked a significant shift in the Party's leadership thinking and direction regarding administrative reform. For the first time, administrative reform was identified as one of the six breakthrough strategic solutions for the term, reflecting a profound understanding of the central role of institutional reform in enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of public governance and building a model of modern urban government. The integration of administrative reform as a cornerstone of the City's development also demonstrates the Party Committee's long-term vision, linking administrative reform with the goal of promoting Ho Chi Minh City's role as the economic "locomotive" of the "Southern key economic region" and the nation's development process.

During the 2010 - 2015 term, administrative reform was directed towards focusing on key tasks aimed at restructuring the administrative system to be leaner and more efficient. The focus was on reorganizing and streamlining the administrative apparatus at all levels; enhancing the role, responsibility, and management capacity of the heads of agencies and units; and strengthening inspection and oversight to detect and address violations promptly. Simultaneously, the reform process was implemented comprehensively across key areas such as: Administrative procedure reform, organizational restructuring, improving the quality of civil servants, officials, and public employees, and public financial reform. All these efforts were geared towards modernizing the administration based on democratic, transparent, and accountable principles, with the motto "putting citizens and businesses at the center of service": *"Making the public disclosure of state regulations and the appointment of officials, civil servants, and public employees with the required qualifications and competence for their work a breakthrough in administrative reform"* (City, 2010).

Notably, one of the key highlights of the public administration reform during this period was the policy of publicizing state

regulations and ensuring the placement of civil servants, officials, and employees with the required qualifications and capabilities according to job positions. This approach not only served as an administrative technical solution but also marked a clear shift in governance models toward a service-oriented approach – “administrative governance for development” – which aligns with the requirements of reforming the state administrative system in the new era.

In line with the guidelines set forth by the IX Congress of the Party Committee of Ho Chi Minh City, the People's Committee of the City issued Decision No. 23/2011/QĐ-UBND to implement the Action Plan for the Administrative Reform Program, aligned with the goal of building a model of urban governance for the period 2011-2015. This document not only reflects the political commitment of the city government in actualizing the Resolution of the IX Congress but also lays the foundation for the comprehensive implementation of administrative reforms in a synchronized and modern direction. Accordingly, the People's Committee of the City mandated reforms across all key areas of the administrative system, including: Administrative procedure reforms, restructuring the administrative apparatus, improving the quality of the civil service, public financial reform, and modernization of the administrative system.

One of the notable advancements was the proactive implementation of the Project to Simplify Administrative Procedures, coupled with the promotion of information technology applications in public administration, gradually building an e-government system. At the same time, the adoption of the Quality Management System based on ISO 9001:2008 standards in the operations of state administrative agencies have contributed to enhancing transparency, effectiveness, and service quality for the public. This clearly reflects the direction of transforming the administrative model towards modernity, with citizen satisfaction as the benchmark for evaluating the quality of public governance.

In particular, after the Government issued the Comprehensive Program for Public Administrative Reform for the 2011-2020 period, the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City promptly concretized it through Decision No. 25/2012/QĐ-UBND, which issued the Administrative Reform Program for the 2011-2020 period in the city. This program clearly defines the key focuses as:

Reforming institutions and administrative procedures; building and enhancing the quality of the staff, civil servants, and public employees, with a focus on reforming the salary policy to create a genuine incentive for civil servants and public employees to perform their duties with high quality and efficiency; improving the quality of administrative services and public service delivery (City T. p., 2012, p. 5)

With a comprehensive approach closely aligned with practical realities, this program has laid an important foundation for Ho Chi Minh City to accelerate administrative reform efforts in the context of transitioning to a modern urban governance model and international integration.

The administrative reform program of Ho Chi Minh City during the 2011 - 2020 period was implemented in two phases, reflecting the strategic thinking and step-by-step approach of the urban government in modernizing the administrative system and building an effective service-oriented apparatus. In the first phase (2011 - 2015), the city focused on implementing the administrative reform program with the key goal of building a streamlined, professional, and effective urban governance model. The focus of administrative reform during this period was on reforming administrative procedures, organizational structure, personnel work, and modernizing the administrative system - core elements aimed at standardizing public governance activities in a special urban area like Ho Chi Minh city.

In the period from 2015 to 2020, as Vietnam intensified the completion of the socialist-oriented market economy institutional framework, the administrative reform program of Ho Chi Minh City expanded its scope and improved the quality of implementation in many areas. The overarching goal was to build a clean, strong administrative system at all levels, operating effectively and truly serving as a powerful tool for the Party in managing and directing socio-economic development. Among them, administrative procedure reform was identified as a breakthrough step and significant progress was made. By 2020, the level of satisfaction of citizens and businesses with administrative procedures reached over 80%, reflecting a strong transformation in the service spirit and public administration management methods.

In addition, the City placed special emphasis on the task of building a team of civil servants, public employees, and officials with a reasonable number, scientific structure, and sufficient qualities and capabilities to perform their duties. According to the set goal, by 2020, 100% of state administrative agencies in the city must complete the arrangement of staff according to job positions – a key aspect in the strategy of professionalizing public administration. At the same time, the City also implemented salary policy reforms aimed at creating motivation and encouraging real work efficiency, using work results and public satisfaction as important measures.

“Implement salary policy reforms for civil servants, public employees, and officials; ensure that the satisfaction of citizens and businesses with services provided by public service units in the fields of education, healthcare, and the services of state administrative agencies reaches over 80% by 2020” (City P. C., 2012, p. 16) .

Assessing the implementation of administrative reform tasks during the 2010-2015 term, the 10th Congress of the Party Committee of Ho Chi Minh City (2015) affirmed the significant results achieved in improving the quality and effectiveness of administrative reform work. During this period, the city took strong and synchronized steps in reforming core areas, especially administrative procedure reform, restructuring the administrative apparatus, and building and developing the team of civil servants. These efforts resulted in notable progress, improving the effectiveness of state management and the quality of public service. However, the 10th Congress also acknowledged that administrative reform during the previous term still faced issues that needed to be addressed in order to meet the increasingly higher demands in the period of integration and sustainable development.

To continue to promote the achieved results and address the existing issues, the 10th Congress of the Party Committee of Ho Chi Minh City set specific goals for the next phase. The main objective in the new term is to further enhance the effectiveness of administrative reform, build a modern, efficient, effective, streamlined urban government, and provide better service to the people. The Congress identified key tasks, including administrative procedure reform and the modernization of the administrative system as crucial breakthrough areas. At the same time, efforts to build a competent and capable cadre of civil servants must continue to ensure they possess the necessary skills, qualities, and ability to effectively perform their duties. These objectives are not only aimed at meeting the City's development requirements but also at enhancing the satisfaction of citizens and businesses with public administrative services, contributing to the overall development of the country in the new era.

Building a democratic, professional, modern, dynamic administrative system that serves the people, operates effectively and efficiently; strongly reforming administrative procedures; creating a transparent, equal, open, and convenient business environment; enhancing the city's competitiveness to attract investment and promote economic, cultural, and social development; building a team of civil servants with qualities and abilities to meet the requirements of sustainable development and international integration (Committee T. H., 2015).

To enhance the quality and effectiveness of the civil service system, and with the overarching goal of positioning Ho Chi Minh

City among the leading localities in key governance and public administration performance indicators - such as the Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI), the Provincial Competitiveness Index (PCI), and the Public Administration Reform Index (PAR-Index) - the 10th Congress of the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee (2015) outlined specific requirements and solutions. Notably, in order to achieve these objectives, the Congress emphasized the necessity of developing and implementing comprehensive and innovative models and approaches.

One of the key models proposed involves the establishment of a city - level One - Stop Administrative Center, designed to streamline administrative procedures and facilitate more efficient interactions between citizens, businesses, and the public administration system. In addition, the City plans to establish a Research and Information Analysis Center, tasked with assessing current socio-economic and urban conditions and forecasting future development trends. The insights generated by this center are expected to support evidence-based policymaking, enabling local authorities to formulate decisions that are both contextually appropriate and aligned with broader development trajectories.

Moreover, in an effort to improve communication mechanisms among different levels of government and administrative agencies, the City Party Congress also mandated the implementation of an online conferencing system connecting the municipal level with districts, wards, communes, and townships. This initiative aims to strengthen coordination and enhance coherence in leadership and administrative management. Notably, the pilot implementation of competitive examinations for the appointment of deputy department-level leaders and heads of divisions at the district level represents a significant reform. This approach not only ensures transparency and fairness in personnel management but also serves as a driving force to improve the quality of civil servants and public officials within administrative agencies.

If effectively implemented, all of these solutions will contribute to the development of a modern, streamlined, and professional public administration system - one that is capable of meeting the evolving demands of Ho Chi Minh City's development in the context of international integration and sustainable growth.

Following the 10th Congress of the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee, the Municipal Party Executive Committee promptly issued an Action Program on Administrative Reform for the 2016–2020 period. This program focused on advancing the implementation of seven core objectives aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of administrative reform. These objectives were designed not only to improve the administrative apparatus, but also to contribute to the development of a modern urban government that effectively serves both citizens and the business community.

The first objective of the Program is to implement administrative reform in alignment with the Party's resolutions and principles on building the political system, thereby ensuring consistency and coherence across state agencies. In parallel, administrative reform efforts will be intensified to develop a democratic, transparent, professional, modern, and responsive public administration. This administration will be equipped to effectively integrate scientific and technological advancements in order to enhance governance capacity and improve public service delivery.

The action Program also sets forth the objective of establishing a streamlined and efficient administrative apparatus, characterized by clear delineation of functions, duties, and responsibilities among agencies and across levels of government. Notably, the development of e-government is identified as a key priority, aligned with the characteristics of Ho Chi Minh City as a special urban model. This initiative is also intended to lay a solid foundation for the future advancement of digital government.

Another key objective is to position Ho Chi Minh City's Public Administration Reform Index (PAR Index) within the top five localities nationwide (Committee, 2016). This target not only reflects the quality and effectiveness of the City's administrative reform efforts, but also contributes to enhancing its public image and competitiveness in attracting investment and fostering economic development.

This action Program embodies the strong commitment of the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee to enhancing the operational quality of the administrative apparatus, while simultaneously responding to the demands of development in the context of international integration and the broader trend toward comprehensive administrative reform.

To institutionalize the guiding viewpoints and directives of the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee, on November 22, 2016, the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City issued Decision No. 6119/QĐ-UBND regarding the Implementation Plan for the Administrative Reform Program for the 2016 - 2020 period. This decision was grounded in the Resolution of the 10th Party Congress of the City. In the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, Decision 6119/QĐ-UBND identified the top priority of the administrative reform program as the development and implementation of a modern, streamlined, transparent, and efficient administrative system. Particularly, it emphasized the vigorous application of information technology and digital innovations in state governance and public service delivery.

To build a democratic, transparent, professional, modern, and dynamic public administration that effectively applies scientific and technological advancements—particularly information technology; with a strong focus on administrative procedure reform to ensure the greatest convenience for citizens and enterprises; thereby contributing positively to combating bureaucracy, as well as preventing and combating corruption and wastefulness. Additionally, the development of an e-government system compatible with the characteristics of a special urban entity is emphasized, with effective governance models tailored to each administrative level to ensure transparency and openness (City P. C., 2016, p. 3).

This Decision sets forth the objective of further innovating and improving the quality of administrative procedure reform, completing the institutional framework for state governance, restructuring the administrative apparatus, enhancing the capacity of public officials and civil servants, and reforming public financial management. In particular, the development of e-Government is identified as a key priority, with the aim of improving the quality of administrative services, reducing bureaucratic complexity, and strengthening transparency in public administration.

In addition, Decision No. 6119/QĐ-UBND also stipulates the need to develop mechanisms and policies that foster innovation within administrative agencies, while placing strong emphasis on the development of information technology infrastructure. This is intended to enable the city to adopt advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), big data, and the Internet of Things (IoT) in administrative reform efforts.

With this objective, Ho Chi Minh City's 2016 - 2020 administrative reform Program not only focused on enhancing the effectiveness of public administration but also laid the foundation for sustainable development in the context of digital transformation. It aimed to bring about tangible improvements and deliver better public services to citizens in the era of Industry 4.0.

In 2017, the National Assembly issued Resolution No. 54/2017/QH14 dated November 24, 2017, on piloting special mechanisms and policies for the development of Ho Chi Minh City. This Resolution was expected to serve as a key to unlocking comprehensive, timely, and context-appropriate breakthroughs in the City's development. Within this context, administrative reform has received particular attention, as it is considered a crucial factor in enhancing the effectiveness of state governance

and meeting the demands of sustainable development in the new phase.

Following the adoption of Resolution No. 54/2017/QH14, the Ho Chi Minh City People's Council issued Resolution No. 02/NQ-HDND on December 15, 2018, entitled "Administrative Reform to Enhance Public Satisfaction with Public Services in the City." This resolution not only assessed and analyzed the achievements of the administrative reform process but also identified existing limitations and shortcomings that required attention. Notably, Resolution 02/NQ-HDND emphasized that public satisfaction—among citizens, organizations, and businesses—should serve as a key indicator in evaluating the effectiveness of administrative reform efforts. Departments, agencies, and district-level People's Committees were required to implement concrete measures to improve the quality of public administrative services, thereby generating visible improvements in the reception and resolution of administrative procedures... (Council, 2018).

The implementation of Resolution No. 02/NQ-HDND within the context of Resolution No. 54/2017/QH14 marks a significant step forward in administrative reform in Ho Chi Minh City, particularly in enhancing citizen satisfaction with public services. This initiative not only meets the urgent demands of the City's development objectives but also serves as a clear testament to the transformation of state governance towards a more modern and efficient model.

In implementation of Resolution No. 02/NQ-HDND (2018), the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City issued Decision No. 5334/QĐ-UBND, outlining the Plan for the City's Administrative Reform Program for the period 2018–2020. This decision played a pivotal role in reviewing and evaluating the organization and implementation of the administrative reform program, while also clarifying the responsibilities of departments, agencies, and the People's Committees of districts in carrying out administrative reform tasks. The core objective of the plan was to ensure that by 2020, the city would comprehensively achieve the targets set by the administrative reform program. It aimed to continuously improve the quality of public administrative services and introduce substantive reforms in the operations of administrative bodies, thereby enhancing citizen and business satisfaction.

To supplement the implementation of new solutions in alignment with contemporary administrative management requirements, it is essential to strengthen the accountability of individuals, agencies, units, and especially the heads of state administrative bodies at all levels in executing administrative reform tasks. This must be closely associated with promoting the successful development of e-government, aimed at enhancing public service delivery for citizens and enterprises. (City T. P., 2019).

This Decision outlines specific measures to enhance coordination among various levels of government, ensuring clear delineation of responsibilities and functions across agencies and units. Such efforts aim to establish a solid foundation for accelerating administrative procedure reform, strengthening the capacity and effectiveness of public administrative management, and meeting the socio-economic development demands of the City in the current context.

It is evident that during the period 2010 - 2020, administrative reform was consistently identified by the Party Committee and the government of Ho Chi Minh city as one of the key strategic breakthroughs in the process of urban construction and development. Administrative reform was not only considered a fundamental component of an efficient public administration system, but also closely associated with the City's vision of becoming a civilized, modern, and culturally distinctive metropolis grounded in human compassion. The level of citizen and business satisfaction was regarded as the most critical metric for evaluating the effectiveness of administrative reform, directly reflecting the impact of such reforms on the quality of public services and the performance of administrative agencies.

The viewpoints and directives of the Party Committee and the government of Ho Chi Minh City have established a solid foundation and served as a significant driving force for the comprehensive and effective implementation of administrative reform across all levels, from the municipal authorities to grassroots agencies and departments. As a result, administrative reform has not only enhanced the efficiency of the administrative apparatus but also played a pivotal role in promoting socio-economic development, thereby reinforcing the City's position as the leading economic and social engine of the Southern Key Economic Region and the country as a whole. The City's sound leadership and comprehensive reform strategy have led to tangible improvements, affirming Ho Chi Minh City's position in the process of integration and sustainable development.

4.2. Results of Leadership in Administrative Reform Implementation in Ho Chi Minh City during the 2015 - 2020 Period

Under the close and consistent leadership of the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee, the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City promptly implemented administrative reform efforts in accordance with the Government's Master Program and the strategic orientations and directives of the Party Committee. The administrative reform process has achieved numerous positive and comprehensive results across several key domains. Specifically, in the area of institutional reform, the City has made concerted efforts to develop a transparent legal framework and administrative regulations that align with the practical demands of its socio-economic development. In terms of procedural reform, many administrative processes and procedures have been simplified, thereby creating more favorable conditions for citizens and businesses in resolving administrative affairs.

In parallel, the reform of the organizational structure of the administrative apparatus has been actively promoted, with the aim of building a streamlined, efficient system that meets the development requirements of the city. The quality of the contingent of civil servants and public employees has been significantly improved through training programs that enhance both professional competence and public service ethics, thereby contributing to greater work efficiency and increased citizen satisfaction. Substantial progress has also been made in public financial reform and the modernization of public administration, ranging from the application of information technology in administrative management to the implementation of transparent and effective public financial solutions. All of these efforts have played a crucial role in building a modern administrative system that better serves the needs of citizens and the business community.

4.3. Administrative Institutional Reform

Administrative institutional reform plays a critical role in establishing a solid legal foundation and framework to guide the operations of the administrative system. During the 2011 - 2020 period, Ho Chi Minh City achieved significant progress in this area, with notable outcomes in the formulation and promulgation of legal normative documents, legal consultancy, and the monitoring of law enforcement practices. The inspection, review, handling, and systematization of legal normative documents were carried out in a systematic and comprehensive manner, ensuring coherence, consistency, and effectiveness in state governance. The City's legal regulations and administrative directives were consistently issued in a timely fashion, not only ensuring the implementation of national-level legal documents but also aligning closely with the City's socio-economic context.

Immediately following the enactment of the 2013 Constitution, the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee, People's Council, and People's Committee - together with Party organizations at all levels, local governments, and the Vietnam Fatherland Front in the City - proactively led, directed, and coordinated the implementation and dissemination of its provisions in a timely, comprehensive, and effective manner. Central-level directives and guidelines were thoroughly adopted and adapted to align with the specific conditions and realities of the locality.

Particularly, following the enactment of key legislative frameworks such as the Law on the Organization of Local Government (2015), the Law on Promulgation of Legal Normative Documents (2015), and Resolution No. 54/2017/QH14 of the National Assembly, Ho Chi Minh City proactively formulated and issued a series of guiding and executive documents to improve its administrative institutional system. These efforts have helped establish a solid legal foundation, facilitating effective implementation of tasks by administrative units, enhancing the capacity of state governance, and advancing the goal of building a sustainable and modern urban government.

In implementing Decree No. 59/2012/ND-CP dated July 23, 2012, of the Government on monitoring the implementation of laws, the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City has proactively developed and executed annual plans for monitoring legal enforcement. These plans identify key focus areas such as enterprise support, healthcare, labor, social insurance, health insurance, and other domains that directly affect the lives of citizens and the operations of businesses. Relevant agencies and localities have actively issued documents to guide and implement the monitoring of legal enforcement in accordance with their management scope and authority. These efforts have contributed to facilitating administrative procedures and improving the efficiency of public administration.

These activities not only contribute to enhancing the effective enforcement of laws, but also serve as a foundation for evaluating the performance of institutional administrative reform at the grassroots level. At the same time, they promote the delegation of authority to agencies and localities in handling administrative procedures, thereby improving the quality of public service delivery for citizens and businesses.

Recognizing legal dissemination and education as one of the core tasks of institutional administrative reform, Ho Chi Minh City has issued and implemented numerous plans aimed at enhancing legal awareness among public officials, civil servants, government agencies, and citizens. A wide range of legal communication methods have been employed, including the use of the City's Electronic Legal Communication and Dissemination Portal (at tuyentruyenphapluat.tphcm.gov.vn), mass media outlets, official websites and social media platforms of departments and agencies, as well as the organization of online legal knowledge competitions. These initiatives have not only improved legal consciousness within the community but have also contributed significantly to the development of a transparent, modern, and efficient administrative system.

4.4. Administrative Procedure Reform

In line with the Party Committee of Ho Chi Minh City's directive to focus on administrative procedure reform in order to enhance citizen and business satisfaction, the City promulgated timely and comprehensive action plans and executive directives between 2010 and 2020 for the review and oversight of administrative procedures. These initiatives included communication strategies, training programs on administrative procedures, and various action plans aimed at improving the overall effectiveness of administrative reform across all sectors. Departments, agencies, and the People's Committees of districts and wards actively conducted reviews and simplifications of administrative procedures, thereby reducing time, cost, and effort for individuals and businesses when engaging with public administrative services.

Notably, the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City has implemented decentralization and delegated authority to departments, agencies, and district-level People's Committees in executing administrative procedures, especially in essential sectors. These include the integrated processing of applications for construction permits under the authority of the Department of Construction, where three procedures are handled simultaneously: appraisal of basic design, appraisal of technical design, and appraisal of construction drawings and issuance of construction permits. Concurrently, the city has introduced non-cash payment services in schools, SMS-based customer care services, and administrative procedure status tracking services via the shortcode 8283. Furthermore, the City has integrated the issuance of work permits for foreign workers with the provision of judicial record certificates for foreigners residing in Vietnam.

The disclosure of administrative procedures has been rigorously and comprehensively implemented by local authorities and government agencies, in accordance with the spirit of Government Decree No. 92/2017/ND-CP and Circular No. 02/2018/TT-VPCP issued by the Government Office. The primary objective of this transparency is to facilitate maximum convenience for organizations and individuals in accessing, understanding, and executing administrative procedures. This initiative contributes significantly to enhancing the effectiveness of administrative reform, improving the investment environment, and promoting the socio-economic development of the city. During the 2011–2015 period, the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City reviewed and proposed the elimination or simplification of 77 administrative procedures, including amendments and supplements to 41 procedures, the abolition of 18 procedures, and the removal of certain components from another 18 procedures... (City T. P., 2020, p. 22)

From 2016 to 2019, Ho Chi Minh City continued to review and simplify 44 administrative procedures, while simultaneously proposing that competent authorities amend and supplement legal documents related to administrative procedures. These efforts aimed to create a more favorable administrative environment for citizens and businesses, as well as to enhance the effectiveness of state administrative management.

In addition, the City has placed particular emphasis on receiving and addressing feedback and petitions from individuals and organizations regarding administrative regulations as well as the status and outcomes of administrative procedure resolution. This process has yielded many positive results, with a consistently high rate of timely responses to requests and petitions, reflecting the City's commitment to seriously and effectively improving administrative practices. These continuous efforts are part of the City's ongoing administrative reform, contributing to the development of a more service-oriented government that better serves both citizens and businesses.

Table 1: On-time resolution rate of administrative agencies in Ho Chi Minh city.

Agency	Number of cases received	On-time resolution rate
Departments, boards, and agencies of the city	24.723.018	from 97.52% to 99.93%
People's committees of districts	11.506.571	from 98,16% to 99,92% %
People's committees of communes, wards, and townships	47.783.022	from 99,97% to 99,99% %

Source: People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City. Report No. 127/BC-UBND dated July 9, 2020, *Summary of the overall program on state administrative reform for the 2011–2020 Period, with orientation for the 2021 - 2030 period in Ho Chi Minh City*, p. 24.

Continuing to effectively implement the “one-stop-shop” and “inter-agency one-stop-shop” mechanisms within the administrative system, Ho Chi Minh City has issued various plans and programs aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of administrative reform. Notably, the city has publicly announced administrative procedure resolution processes, along with assessments of the outcomes and service quality of administrative agencies as well as civil servants and public employees. In addition, the coordination regulation for resolving administrative procedures under the jurisdiction of the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City and its Chairperson has been promulgated, ensuring a synchronized and efficient workflow.

One of the key highlights during this period was the continued improvement in the implementation rate of online public services at levels 3 and 4. Government agencies and affiliated units actively adopted the receipt and delivery of administrative procedure results through public postal services, while also publicly posting the procedures for receiving and returning results related to administrative processes.

Since 2015, Ho Chi Minh City has accelerated the application of information technology in administrative procedure reform. The city has developed a Public Service Portal and an electronic one-stop-shop system, integrated with a citizen satisfaction assessment platform for administrative services. These efforts have not only reduced the time and effort required from individuals and businesses but also enhanced transparency and efficiency in public administration. In addition, the City's Public Service Portal has been integrated with the National Public Service Portal to offer 29 online public services.

The departments, agencies, and sectors of the city have implemented numerous programs and plans to promote administrative procedure reform through the application of information technology systems. Specifically, the “one-stop-shop” and “interconnected one-stop-shop” mechanisms have been applied across various sectors, including:

The “one-stop-shop” and “interconnected one-stop-shop” systems of the City's Social Insurance and State Treasury: These systems enable citizens and businesses to carry out administrative transactions related to social insurance, taxation, and public financial services quickly and conveniently. The integration of these services into information technology systems helps minimize waiting times and enhances operational efficiency.

The immigration and residence management system of the City Police: With the application of technology, this system has established effective connections among relevant authorities in the issuance of passports, visas, residence permits, and other services related to public security and order. This not only facilitates procedures for citizens but also enhances the state agencies' capacity for monitoring and control.

Through these information technology systems, the city has made significant progress in streamlining administrative procedures, reducing procedural steps, enhancing the efficiency of service delivery, and increasing satisfaction among citizens and businesses.

4.5. Administrative Apparatus and Organizational Reform

To effectively implement administrative reform in connection with the development of urban governance, Ho Chi Minh City has placed strong emphasis on reforming its administrative apparatus and organizational structure. This reform aims to align with the city's developmental goals and local conditions, while ensuring compliance with the resolutions of the Party and the Government. Specifically, major measures to restructure the administrative apparatus have been vigorously implemented, including the establishment of three agencies under the direct decision of the Prime Minister¹; 06 special administrative Management Boards²; 02 special administrative agencies³. At the same time, the Office of the National Assembly Delegation and the Office of the People's Council of the City were merged into the Office of the National Assembly Delegation and People's Council of Ho Chi Minh City.

These efforts have contributed to streamlining the administrative apparatus, improving work efficiency, reducing administrative costs, and fostering a more flexible working environment that is responsive to the City's development demands.

The city directed heads of departments, agencies, and the People's Committees of districts to review and restructure inter-agency coordination organizations, thereby reducing their number from 425 to 317 — a decrease of 108 organizations. At the same time, the City strictly implemented Resolution No. 39-NQ/TW dated April 17, 2015 of the Politburo, maintaining a stable administrative apparatus without increasing staffing levels despite the establishment of new entities, while also reducing staff annually.

The city approved the “Staff Streamlining Plan for the 2015–2021 Period,” which set the goal of reducing staffing levels by at least 10% by 2021. For public service units with revenue-generating activities, the city encouraged the transition of approximately 10% of public employees to a mechanism of autonomy and self-responsibility, while replacing salary payments from the state budget with revenues generated from such activities.

As of March 2020, the city had streamlined staffing for 771 cases and recorded 52 cases of officials who voluntarily retired early due to ineligibility for re-election or re-appointment.

During the 2011–2015 period, due to organizational restructuring and the establishment of new agencies and entities within the City, the number of personnel increased. However, from 2015 to 2020, the city strictly maintained a stable administrative apparatus, refrained from increasing staff size, and gradually reduced staffing levels each year. In 2015, the city was assigned a staffing level of 12,333 positions; by 2020, this number had decreased to 10,405, representing a reduction of 1,928 positions

¹ The Management Board of Ho Chi Minh City Export Processing and Industrial Zones, the Management Board of Ho Chi Minh City High-Tech Park, and the Food Safety Management Board (on a pilot basis).

² Management Board for Investment and Construction of the Northwest Urban Area of Ho Chi Minh City, Management Board for Investment and Construction of the New Southern Urban Area of Ho Chi Minh City, Management Board for Investment and Construction of Thu Thiem New Urban Area, Management Board of the High-Tech Agricultural Park of Ho Chi Minh City, Management Board of the Historical - Cultural - Ethnic Park, Enterprise Management Innovation Board.

³ Ho Chi Minh City Traffic Safety Committee, Committee for Overseas Vietnamese Affairs.

(Committee H. C., 2020).

Along with the restructuring of the organizational apparatus and the staff of civil servants and public employees, the city has actively proposed the promotion of decentralization across various sectors and areas of management, aiming to align with the urban development situation and enhance the effectiveness of the administrative apparatus.

In accordance with the Local Government Organization Law (2015) and Resolution No. 54/2017/QH14 of the National Assembly, the City has approved and implemented the "Proposal for delegating authority to departments, agencies, the People's Committees of districts, and the heads of departments, as well as the Presidents of People's Committees of districts" to carry out certain tasks and powers of the People's Committee of the City and the Chairman of the People's Committee of the City. This proposal contributes to enhancing the administrative reform process and meeting the development needs of the locality.

Every year, the Department of Home Affairs submits and develops a plan to inspect the organizational structure and personnel, including checking the implementation of decentralization in agencies and units to monitor the progress of decentralization efforts. In addition, the units also report on the results of organizational reform, including the decentralization process, according to the annual administrative reform inspection plan.

4.6. Building and Improving the Quality of the Staff, Civil Servants, and Public Employees

In implementing the Project "Promoting the Reform of Civil Service and Civil Servants" of the Government in the 2010 - 2020 period, the City established the Steering Committee for Promoting the Reform of Civil Service and Civil Servants in 2013 and issued Decision No. 3523/QĐ-UBND on July 1, 2013, on the implementation of the Civil Service and Civil Servants Reform Project.

Accordingly, the departments, agencies, and People's Committees of districts and communes must regularly monitor and supervise the cadre, civil servants, and public employees, particularly in terms of their work attitude and behavior towards the people and businesses. The Department of Home Affairs also conducts inspections at agencies and units to evaluate the implementation of the Code of Conduct and public service activities. The recommendations in the inspection conclusions are seriously complied with by the leadership of the Party Committees and government of the units, with corrective actions taken and lessons learned.

To improve the quality and streamline the workforce of cadres, civil servants, and public employees, the city has implemented the Job Position and Public Servant Ranking Scheme. The working group issued Plan No. 1238/KH-TCT dated August 9, 2013, aimed at determining job positions and civil servant rankings for the agencies and units in the city. Based on the Job Position Scheme approved by the Ministry of Home Affairs and the annual staffing allocation, the Party Committee's Organization Department has developed a scheme for civil servant recruitment, applicable to the entire political system in the city. This ensures the principles of competition, transparency, and fairness in evaluating applicants' capabilities, while also proposing several breakthrough solutions: Conducting computer-based exams for Foreign Languages, Information Technology, and Professional Knowledge; organizing recruitment exams for leadership and management positions at the departmental level in public administrative agencies and public service units in Ho Chi Minh City since 2015⁴.

To implement Resolution No. 54/2017/QH14 of the National Assembly, the City presented a proposal to the City People's Council on policies for attracting and developing a team of experts, scientists, as well as a proposal for attracting individuals with exceptional talents in fields where Ho Chi Minh City has demand for the period 2018–2022. In 2019, the City People's Committee issued Decision No. 17/2019/QĐ-UBND, outlining policies for attracting and developing experts, scientists, and individuals with exceptional talents in areas of demand for Ho Chi Minh City from 2019 - 2022. This policy aims to create new momentum for the development of key industries and high-tech sectors in the context of integration, positioning the City as a destination for attracting and fostering talented individuals.

To achieve the goal of improving the quality and standardization of the staff, civil servants, and public employees, the City has issued an annual plan for the training and fostering of staff, civil servants, and public employees, in accordance with the regulations of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Home Affairs. The completion rate of the annual plan has ranged from 85% to 91%. By the end of 2019, the City had organized training and fostering for 80,775 staff members, civil servants, and 281,795 public employees ... (Placeholder5). (City T. P., Report No. 127/BC-UBND dated July 9, 2020 on the Review of the Overall Program on State Administrative Reform for the 2011–2020 Period and the Orientation for the 2021–2030 Period in Ho Chi Minh City, 2020, p. 43).

In addition to training programs funded by the municipal budget, agencies and units have also collaborated with domestic and international educational institutions, organizations, and individuals to nominate personnel for participation in international courses and scholarship programs, such as Australia's Australian Development Scholarships (ADS), India's Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Program, and Japan's Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Scholarship Program.

In accordance with Decree No. 56/2015/ND-CP dated June 9, 2015, issued by the Government on the assessment and classification of public officials and civil servants, Ho Chi Minh City has annually issued specific guiding documents on the content and methodology for evaluating and classifying officials, civil servants, and public employees. The evaluation criteria have been developed to ensure quantifiability, objectivity, fairness, accuracy, and transparency, thereby improving the overall assessment process. The City has also studied and referenced evaluation models from other provinces and localities nationwide, as well as assessment methods advised by international organizations, in order to develop its own classification regulations. Additionally, since 2015, Ho Chi Minh City has implemented a software system for managing personnel records of officials, civil servants, and public employees, aiming to enhance the efficiency of data storage, record consolidation, and the processing of policies and entitlements.

4.7. Administrative Modernization

During the 2011 - 2020 period, Ho Chi Minh City implemented and promulgated numerous key mechanisms and policies to promote the development and modernization of public administration. A notable example was the issuance of the "Information and Communication Technology Development Program for the 2011 - 2015 period" and the approval of the Ho Chi Minh City Information Technology Master Plan toward 2025. In particular, in 2015, following the Government's issuance of its first resolution on e-Government, the city approved the Ho Chi Minh City e-Government Architecture. At the same time, the City also launched

⁴ As of June 2020, the city has organized recruitment exams for department-level leadership positions at the Department of Justice and the Party Committee's Department of Mass Mobilization.

the project titled “Building Ho Chi Minh City into a Smart City for the 2017 - 2020 period, with a vision toward 2025,” aiming to promote digital transformation and development from the municipal to the grassroots level, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of governance and public service delivery.

The development of a centralized database system plays a pivotal role in the modernization of public administration, enabling efficient data storage, management, and utilization while minimizing overlaps and errors. During the 2010 - 2020 period, Ho Chi Minh City implemented and launched Phase 1 of the Shared Data Warehouse at Quang Trung Software City. This data warehouse was built by integrating information from various departments and agencies to support the interconnection, sharing, and exploitation of data among the City's administrative bodies⁵. The data portal provides essential information such as a catalog of shared datasets, data structure descriptions, technical guidelines for data access, as well as methods and technical solutions for effective data utilization.

Regarding open data, the City has piloted the implementation of the Open Data Portal at the following address: <https://opendata.hochiminhcity.gov.vn>. This portal provides open datasets in key areas such as healthcare facilities, medical practice licenses, educational institutions, educational services, foreign investment projects, and public investment projects. The City's data infrastructure is built on a modern cloud computing platform and safeguarded by advanced security monitoring systems, ensuring continuous and secure operations. At the same time, the City has established a Network Operations Center (NOC) and a Security Operations Center (SOC), equipped with specialized technologies, to ensure information security for governmental agencies.

The city has also implemented the Local Government Service Platform (LGSP), which provides shared services to enable data exchange among information systems of various municipal departments and agencies. This platform also facilitates connectivity with external systems such as the National Public Service Portal, in accordance with the Vietnam e-Government Architecture Framework. As one of the leading localities in the country in applying information technology to governance and administration, the city has deployed digital signature solutions for electronic document exchanges, meeting invitations, and a paperless meeting system - enhancing efficiency and improving the quality of administrative sessions.

In addition to modernizing and applying information technology within the administrative system, the city has also intensified its efforts to leverage technology for the benefit of citizens and businesses. Specifically, the City has implemented Level 3 and Level 4 public services by conducting widespread awareness campaigns and establishing volunteer advisory groups to guide the public in using online public services at these levels across various units. At the same time, the city has introduced reductions in administrative procedure fees for services conducted via Level 3 and Level 4 online platforms, as authorized by the City People's Council.

In implementing the Government's Decree No. 61/2018/NĐ-CP on the one-stop-shop and inter-agency one-stop-shop mechanism in handling administrative procedures, the City has developed and launched the “Electronic One-Stop System” at the following address: <https://dichvucong.hochiminhcity.gov.vn>. The system allows citizens and businesses to track the processing status of administrative records. It also publicly discloses the rate of on-time and overdue case resolutions. In addition, the city provides home delivery services for administrative results through the public postal service, creating greater convenience for citizens and enterprises by eliminating the need to visit government agencies in person.

The hotline system, accessible via Call Center 1022, has also been implemented to receive public feedback and suggestions regarding technical infrastructure incidents. It is interconnected with emergency hotlines 113, 114 and 115, enabling residents to quickly reach the appropriate authorities in emergency situations and ensuring timely response from relevant agencies.

Moreover, the City issued Decision No. 4250/QĐ-UBND dated September 28, 2018, approving the E-Government Architecture of Ho Chi Minh City as a foundation for agencies and units to independently develop software and mobile-based applications. At the same time, the city has intensified the application of information technology to serve citizens and businesses through systems such as “Binh Thanh Online”, “Hoc Mon Online” the Construction Permit Application Software in District 7 and the Online Enrollment Procedure Reception System in District 1. These initiatives have contributed to enhancing administrative management efficiency and delivering public services in a timely and transparent manner.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

During the period from 2010 to 2020, administrative reform in Ho Chi Minh City achieved significant results, contributing to enhancing the effectiveness and quality of the state administrative apparatus. These reforms have improved the responsiveness of public services to the needs of citizens and businesses, thereby laying a solid foundation for the city's development. However, despite the notable achievements, the administrative reform process still faces certain limitations that require continued improvement.

Specifically, certain areas - such as the processing of administrative procedures—continue to experience delays in some cases, failing to fully meet the required timelines. The progress in formulating and promulgating legal normative documents has been slow and often does not align with the proposed schedules, thereby affecting the timeliness and effectiveness of policy implementation. Additionally, the streamlining of personnel and the restructuring of administrative agencies have proceeded at a sluggish pace, falling short of achieving a compact and efficient organizational structure.

Furthermore, the training and professional development of public officials and civil servants have not been effectively aligned with policies designed to attract high-quality human resources. This has led to a shortage of personnel capable of meeting the increasingly complex demands of administrative reform. Although multiple efforts have been made, improvements in administrative discipline, procedural compliance, and professional ethics remain limited, thereby undermining work efficiency and citizen satisfaction.

The satisfaction rate among citizens and businesses regarding the attitude of public service personnel and the quality of administrative procedures has yet to meet expectations, underscoring the need to improve service delivery. Equally important, the financial autonomy mechanism for public service units remains incomplete and inconsistent, resulting in obstacles to the effective implementation of financial policies. The salary system for public officials and civil servants also reveals significant shortcomings, failing to attract and retain high-quality personnel. Lastly, the maintenance of information technology applications in administrative reform continues to face major challenges in terms of both human resources and infrastructure, negatively affecting the efficiency of implementing modern technology programs and initiatives.

⁵ Ho Chi Minh City Open Data Portal: <https://data.hochiminhcity.gov.vn/>

These limitations call for the city to adopt more decisive and comprehensive solutions in order to further improve administrative reform, enhance the quality of public services, and better meet the demands of future development.

In the coming years, in order to build upon the achievements and address the remaining limitations in administrative reform, the Party Committee and the government of the City should focus on implementing a number of specific directions and solutions as follows:

Firstly, in the field of administrative institutional reform, the City should focus on reviewing and improving the quality of the promulgation of legal normative documents. At the same time, efforts should be strengthened in institutional development to ensure the effective implementation of Resolution No. 98/2023/QH15 on piloting specific mechanisms and policies for the development of Ho Chi Minh City, thereby laying a solid foundation for the City's sustainable growth.

Secondly, in the reform of administrative procedures, it is necessary to promptly establish a city-level One-Stop Administrative Center to facilitate better access to public services for citizens and businesses. At the same time, the city should implement strict inspection and supervision mechanisms throughout the process of receiving and handling administrative procedures, ensuring transparency and efficiency. Timely responses to feedback and complaints from individuals and enterprises regarding difficulties and obstacles in the administrative procedure process are essential to enhance public satisfaction and trust. Furthermore, it is crucial to review and simplify existing administrative procedures, while proposing amendments, supplements, or abolishment of those that are no longer practical or relevant.

Thirdly, it is essential to continue reviewing and restructuring administrative agencies under the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City in the direction of streamlining their organization in accordance with legal regulations, while enhancing operational efficiency. At the same time, the city should restructure its contingent of officials, civil servants, and public employees to reduce staffing levels, ensuring compliance with the staffing quotas assigned by the Government. This effort should aim to achieve the mandated downsizing targets, thereby improving labor productivity and the overall effectiveness of administrative agencies.

Fourthly, it is necessary to strengthen leadership, communication, and education efforts to promote administrative reform (AR) and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative apparatus in relation to the City's team of officials, civil servants, and public employees. Regular review, issuance, and adjustment of regulations related to civil service ethics are essential to foster a professional, transparent, and effective public service environment. At the same time, communication and dissemination efforts, as well as the organization of training and professional development programs, should be further promoted to raise awareness and improve the professional capacity of the City's administrative personnel. In addition, it is important to study and properly organize civil servant recruitment exams, promotion exams, and rank advancement for public employees in accordance with planned schedules and legal regulations.

Fifthly, it is essential to develop and implement information technology (IT) solutions in a synchronized and consistent manner, aligned with the E-Government Architecture of Ho Chi Minh City and the Vietnam E-Government Framework. Expanding the use of official email systems to all public officials across departments, agencies, and the People's Committees of districts, wards, and communes will enhance the efficiency of information exchange and electronic administrative transactions. At the same time, the city should improve the integrated data-sharing platform to interconnect information systems across agencies and units, thereby facilitating the exchange and exploitation of data. Finally, Ho Chi Minh City needs to continue implementing and scaling up level-3 and level-4 online public services, in combination with the document delivery and reception services provided by the City's Post Office, in order to improve the quality and efficiency of services for citizens and businesses.

These proposed solutions will make practical contributions to enhancing the effectiveness of administrative reform in the city, improving the quality of services provided to citizens and businesses, and laying a solid foundation for sustainable development in the future. These measures not only improve administrative management but also promote a transparent and efficient working environment, thereby better meeting the needs of the community and enterprises.

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