

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
BOARD AGENDA LETTER**



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Agenda Number: 06
Prepared on: 10/11/06
Department Name: County Executive Office
Department No.: 012
Agenda Date: 10/24/06
Placement: Admin
Estimate Time: 1 hour on 11/07/06
Continued Item: NO
If Yes, date from:

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Michael F. Brown, County Executive Officer
John Baker, Director, Planning and Development Department

STAFF CONTACT: Zandra Cholmondeley, (568-3261)
Steve Mason, Deputy Director, (568-2070)

SUBJECT: Land Use Permits, Building and Grading Permits, and Record of Survey Fee Adjustments

Recommendation(s):

- A. That the Board of Supervisors set a hearing on November 7, 2006 to consider amendments to Land Use Development and Record of Survey Fee Resolutions.
- B. That the Board of Supervisors adopt Resolutions (8) to amend Land Development Fees and the Records of Survey Fees, effective sixty (60) days following Board action, for each of the following departments:
 - 1. Parks - Exhibit A
 - 2. Fire - Exhibit B
 - 3. County Counsel - Exhibit C
 - 4. Public Works – Roads & Surveyor - Exhibit D
 - 5. Public Health, Environmental Health Division, Land Use Fee Resolution - Exhibit E
 - 6. Public Health Environmental Health Division, Liquid Waste - Exhibit F
 - 7. Public Health Environmental Health Division, Drinking Water - Exhibit G
 - 8. Pubic Health Environmental Health Division, Wells and Private Water Systems – Exhibit H
- C. Approve the establishment of a Technology Fee and adopt Resolutions (3), to adjust Land Use Permit Fees, Effective sixty (60) days following Board action:
 - 1. Planning and Development, Land Use Fee Resolution – Exhibit I
 - 2. Planning and Development, Building Permit Fee Resolution – Exhibit J
 - 3. Planning and Development, Building Grading Fee Resolution – Exhibit K

- D. Pursuant to County's California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Approve Notice of Exemptions from the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA) exemption under Public Resource Code, section 21080, subdivision (b) (8) (A) & (B) and Title 14 (California Code of Regulations), Section 15273, for each of the Fee Resolutions.
- E. Approve an annual fee adjustment linked to the CPI for the Fee Resolutions referenced in Exhibits A-K (Land Development Fees under the Mitigation Fee Act), effective July 1, 2008.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

The recommendation(s) are primarily aligned with actions required by law or by routine business necessity.

Executive Summary and Discussion:

For the past several years, individual departments have presented their land development permit fee increase requests to the Board of Supervisors. This process has not provided the Board of Supervisors the benefit of considering a comprehensive package which includes current information on the total of all of the fees assessed for each type of land use permit processed.

The recommended action, to adopt the attached Resolutions (Exhibits A – K), is intended to respond to requests by the Board of Supervisors, to have a comprehensive approach to the consideration of land use permit fees. The attached Resolutions represent all of the land use development fees charged by county departments. They do not include mitigation impact fees (Quimby and development impact (AB1600) fees). Land Development Fees may not, by statute, take effect until 60 days after adoption. The subsidy from the General Fund without this fee increase is projected to be \$7,329,488 over the next five years, see Attachment A.

In the past some departments have adjusted their fees annually to reflect cost of living increases, salary equity adjustments, and other increased business costs attributed to processing land use permit applications. Annual adjustments are consistent with the Board's fee policy, dated January 5, 1994, and the adopted Budget Principles. Some departments have not adjusted their fees for many years resulting in fees that do not provide for full cost recovery for the service provided. For this process, the County Executive Office directed every department that assesses land development permit fees, to evaluate their fees, and if appropriate, recommend revisions to your Board to update fees to current costs. A full discussion of the process is included in Attachment B.

Consistent with the fee policy, all of the fees included in the attached Resolutions have been reviewed by the County Auditor-Controller as to accounting form. Further, County Counsel has reviewed and approved the Resolutions as to form.

These fees qualify for statutory California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA) exemption under Public Resource Code, section 21080, subdivision (b) (8) (A) & (B) and Title 14 (California Code of Regulations), Section 15273.

The proposed fees will be in effect for two years. In addition, the technology fee will sunset in two years.

Costs for labor, including health insurance continue to rise. Salary and benefit costs could easily increase at an annual rate of 3.5%, equivalent to recent cost of living adjustments. Labor typically comprises most of the cost of the permit process. Using the attached Fee Resolutions A-K, the annual fee revenue is projected at \$11,933,677. To offset rising costs, permit revenues should rise to \$13,694,168 over the next five years. An annual CPI, or Consumer Price Index adjustment to Land Development Fees under the Mitigation Fee Act will help to protect the general fund by incrementally increasing such fees to offset rising costs. The adjustment would be linked to the Consumer Price Index, All Urban Consumers, Los Angeles-Anaheim-Riverside and use the percent change of that index from January to December of each year. This CPI index was chosen because it best reflects the changes in consumer prices experienced in Santa Barbara County. Other indices, such as the one published by California Department of Industrial Relations pursuant to Revenue and Taxation Code section 2212 determine the CPI for all of California, but underestimate the consumer prices for coastal urban areas such as Santa Barbara County.

CPI adjustment to Land Development Permit Fees will be effective on July 1 each year, beginning in 2008. The adjustment is not automatic, each department director will annually review revenues and expenditures to ensure that fees charged fairly reflect the cost of the services provided, prior to adjusting fees. If costs exceed the CPI in any given year, the Chief Executive Officer will provide your Board with options of how to address those costs.

Fee Collection

Planning and Development is charged with collecting the majority of land development fees, as authorized by a separate Board of Supervisors resolution, for other County departments involved in the review of land use developments. In the interest of improved public service, the Board established Planning and Development to serve as the lead department in the review of development applications and collection of initial county land development processing fees.

However, there are some land development fees collected by individual departments. For example, Public Works collects a number of fees directly such as Special Events Permits, Film Permits, etc. The Resolutions attached for your consideration include land use development fees collected by Planning and Development and those collected directly by individual Departments.

Mandates and Service Levels:

No Change

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

If adopted by the Board, the total of all of the proposed adjustment in land use and building permit fees will result in an estimated increase of \$683,406 for the remainder of FY 2006-07. The estimates are calculated based on assumptions about the actual number of permit applications received. The actual increase will depend on the number of permits applications actually processed in FY 2006-07. The total is broken down by Department as follows:

Land Development Permit Fee Fiscal Impact

Department	Adopted FY 06/07 Permit Fee Revenue	Proposed Annual Permit Fee Increase	Proposed Annualized Permit Fee Revenue ¹	Percent Increase	Last Increase
Land Use Fees					
Parks	\$5,774	\$5,626	\$11,400	97%	1996
Fire	\$288,718	\$22,330	\$311,048	8%	2004
County Counsel	\$58,219	\$17,314	\$75,533	30%	1995
Public Works- Roads	\$42,489	\$47,486	\$89,975	112%	1995
Public Works- Surveyor	\$136,750	\$25,000	\$161,750	18%	1995
Public Health	\$445,350	\$47,510	\$492,860	11%	2004
Planning & Development					
Building and Grading Permits	\$4,622,651	\$625,193	\$5,247,844	14%	2001
Planning Permits ²	\$4,966,913	\$376,000	\$5,342,913	8%	2004
	\$10,566,864	\$1,166,459	\$11,733,323	11%	
Technology Fee ³	\$0	\$200,354	\$200,354		New Fee
Total Land Use and Technology	\$10,566,864	\$1,366,813	\$11,933,677	13%	
¹ Fees become effective 60 days following Board action. Revenue for FY 2006-07 will have 6 months of increased fees. Actual FY 06-07 revenue increase is \$683,406.					
² The increased revenue is based on full offset of recent salary equity adjustments.					
³ Technology Fee – This fee will be added to Planning and Development Land Use and Building and Safety fees.					

Special Instructions:

The Clerk of the Board ensures that noticing of the hearing for the proposed fee adjustment is completed in two general circulation publications 5 and 10 days prior to the hearing, in accordance with Government Code §66016.

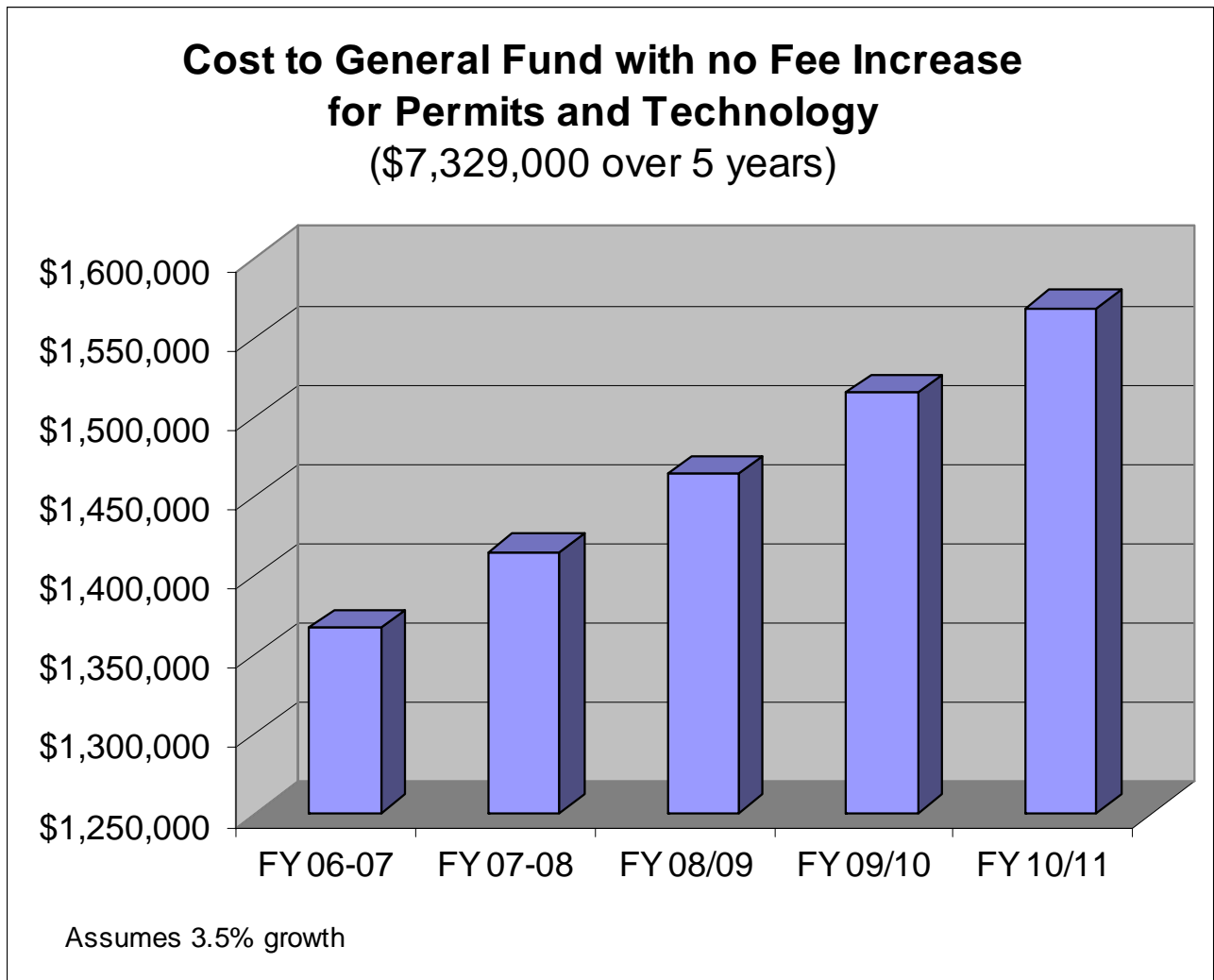
Planning and Development shall post Notice of Exemptions for each of the Resolutions in the County Planning and Development Department at least six days prior to consideration of the activity by the Board of Supervisors to comply with the County CEQA guidelines.

A copy of the Notice of Exemption for each of the Resolutions will be filed with the Clerk of the Board after project approval to begin the 35 day statute of limitations on legal challenges.

Concurrence:

Auditor-Controller – Resolution reviewed as to accounting Form
County Counsel – Resolutions approved as to Form

C: Planning and Development
Parks
Fire
County Counsel
Public Works
Public Health
APCD



Summary of Fee Changes by Department:

Following is a summary of the proposed land development permit fee changes, by Department. Prior to proposing an increase in land development permit fees, Departments were directed to implement process improvements to increase efficiency and effectiveness, and to reduce their costs. Included in this discussion is a summary of the process improvements implemented by each Department.

Planning and Development

Planning Permit Fees last updated in 2004; Annual Proposed Fee Increase = \$376,000

Consistent with Board Policy, Planning and Development has annually reviewed its fees to determine if they are consistent with current cost and has annually presented fee adjustments to the Board. Planning and Development did not increase its fees for FY 2005-06. For FY 2006-07 budget, Planning and Development proposed not to increase fees, but now needs to propose a fee increase to offset salary equity adjustments recently approved by the Board. In response to requests from stakeholders, for increased certainty in the cost of pursuing land use permits, several deposit permit types are proposed to be changed to fixed fees.

On July 18, 2006, your Board approved equity adjustments for a number of county-wide position classifications, including planners. As a result of this equity adjustment Planning and Development salary costs will rise approximately \$753,000 over the next two years. The department has carefully reviewed its budget to evaluate how to best fund this new cost. Prior to this equity increase the department proposed no fee increase, absorbing incremental increased salary costs of the past two years through streamlining processes and reallocation of resources in the department. At this time additional funding is required for these increased salaries. To recover these costs the hourly rate for all planning permits needs to rise from \$115 per hour to \$126.50 per hour, providing approximately \$376,000 of additional revenue annually.

In preparing this report P&D surveyed local planning agencies to compare fees. Our research shows there are wide variations in the hourly rate for planning permits, as well as the amount of general fund subsidy for the Development Review or Current Planning function. P&D's general fund subsidy for planning permitting is 18%, well below most other jurisdictions. Cities often subsidize permit costs to encourage economic growth. P&D's current hourly rate is below the cities of Santa Barbara, Ventura, and the Counties of San Luis Obispo and Ventura. The following table summarizes these findings.

Current Planning General Fund Subsidy Comparison with Neighboring Jurisdictions			
Jurisdiction	Hourly Rate	General Fund Subsidy	Comments
County of Ventura	\$151	24%	Entire department, hrly rate \$151, including \$18/hr long range planning
City of Ventura	\$143	73%	Includes Admin, Advance and Current Planning. Revenue is not broken down. If all revenue is attributed to current planning the general fund subsidy is 30%
City of Santa Barbara	\$140	57%	
County of San Luis Obispo	\$119	18%	
County of Santa Barbara	\$115	18%	
City of Lompoc	\$115	Did not report	
City of San Luis Obispo	\$103	Did not report	
City of Goleta	\$ 95	74%	
City of Santa Maria	\$ 95	Did not report	
City of Carpinteria	\$ 73		Revenues not tracked by function

To reduce the impact of increased rates, Planning and Development has implemented or is in the process of implementing a number of permit process improvements designed to reduce the time to review permit applications, thereby lowering the overall cost to applicants. The total impact of these process changes is estimated at 450-800 hours per year. Our process improvements also enhance services to our customers by providing information and tools regarding zoning, permit submittal requirements, active permits, maps and official documents. The following process improvements are complete or in process:

Permit Process Improvements

- Created a zoning clearance process and applied it to lots created by Tract Maps approved since 1990 and to certain lots in Orcutt in order to eliminate the need for public noticing and appeals process.
- Clarified and strengthened appeal process on a land use decisions: appellants are now required to participate in the permit process and articulate a basis for the appeal; Board of Architectural Review appeals shifted from Final to Preliminary approval, promoting earlier resolution of issues in the process before significant applicant investment in working construction drawings.
- Streamlined process for beneficial agricultural projects funded through the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Identified agricultural projects to be shifted from land use permit to zoning clearance to reduce the number of permits subject to notice and appeal processes. Reduced requirements for agricultural properties to obtain a development plan for structures in excess of 20,000 square feet.
- Begun project to reduce permit review requirements for minor development, e.g. accessory structures, minor residential additions or alterations, etc.
- Substantially completed the Zoning Ordinance Reformatting Project, combining Articles I, II, III and V, and similarly reformatting of Article IV for the inland Montecito area.
- Started project to evaluate shifting permit decision making authority to lower levels, avoiding a potentially costly hearing process.

- Provided GIS tools to staff that reduce the time necessary to create exhibits for staff reports and presentations.
- Responded to customer concerns on permit cost uncertainty, by shifting 13 deposit permit types to fixed fees.
- Provided applicants the option to subscribe to monthly email updates of permit application status.
- Started coordination improvements among departments involved in land use permitting to reduce time for receiving necessary approvals.
- Started project to assess all steps of the permitting process to simplify or eliminate unnecessary actions.

Customer Service Improvements

- Increased information available on the website and in service/process handouts. Additions include: Permit application checklist, Find My Zoning, Which Policy Applies, Online Permit Status, Monthly Applicant Emails, and all applications, forms and regulations have been reorganized for easier use.
- Implemented Virtual One Stop System at public zoning counters to enhance customer service.

Planning and Development also proposes to create three additional fee categories. Two of these, \$406 for Non-Complex 65402 review and \$120 for simple Permit Exemptions reflect lower costs as a result of process changes. The third is a deposit for the Oak Tree Permit of \$ 1,500 for Tier 4 tree removals.

All planning fee modifications are included in Exhibit I, the Planning and Development Fee Resolution.

Costs for County Counsel litigation allocated to the department in the Cost Allocation Plan are not included in the overhead calculation for Planning and Developments hourly rates. Inclusion of the litigation costs in the overhead rate is inequitable, since only a small number of permits incur these costs. Planning and Developments hourly rate does not fully recover all departmental administrative costs, only those associated with planning functions.

Building and Safety Fees last updated in 2001; Annual Proposed Fee Increase = \$625,193.

Building and Grading permits fees have not been updated since 2001. Recent overhead and labor cost increases require additional revenue. The department proposes to increase permit and plan check fees for building, electrical, mechanical, plumbing and grading permits by approximately 14%. Exhibits J and K reflect new construction valuation factors for electrical, mechanical, plumbing and grading, increasing by twenty percent.

In preparing this report P&D surveyed local building agencies to compare fees. Our research shows that the Proposed Santa Barbara County Building Division Fees will remain below the majority of neighboring jurisdictions. The following table compares fees for a 2,000 square foot single family residence.

JURISDICTION	BLDG PERMIT FEE	PLAN CHECK FEE	TOTAL FEES
City of SB	\$ 3,520.00	\$ 2,640.00	\$ 6,160.00
Ventura County	\$ 4,030.00	\$ 1,870.00	\$ 5,900.00
*San Luis Obispo City	\$ 2,005.00	\$ 1,503.75	\$ 3,508.75
*City of Santa Maria	\$ 1,481.30	\$ 1,975.06	\$ 3,456.36
Ventura City	\$ 1,770.50	\$ 1,662.50	\$ 3,433.00
SB County (Proposed)	\$ 1,620.95	\$ 1,215.71	\$ 2,836.66
Lompoc	\$ 1,710.55	\$ 1,111.86	\$ 2,822.41
San Luis Obispo County	\$ 1,516.00	\$ 993.00	\$ 2,509.00
SB County (Current)	\$ 1,424.95	\$ 1,068.71	\$ 2,493.66

* Plan check fee based on 75% of the building permit fee to obtain total permit fee costs

**Building fees for SFDs are not structured or itemized components as are other jurisdictions; fees are based on independent fee study

Parks

Fees last updated in 1996; Annual Proposed Fee Increase = \$ 5,626.00

County Parks reviews development projects to assure consistency with the adopted Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space policies, goals, and development standards of the Comprehensive and Community Plans. Parks also determines and collects the Development Mitigation or Quimby fees for each development project.

County Parks' land use fees were last reviewed and adopted by the Board in 1996. County Parks' land use fees are fixed fees. The amount of the fixed fee is calculated based on an estimated amount of time multiplied by an hourly rate. The estimated time is based on historical data of the average time spent for land use development review by specific project type. The base hourly rate is comprised of salary and benefits for the positions of Parks Planner (85%) and Parks Project Manager (15%) plus the department's overhead rate as certified by the Auditor-Controller on the Indirect Cost Rate Plan (ICRP). For FY 2006-07, Parks is proposing an hourly rate of \$75, which is an increase from the current rate of \$41. The increase is a result of increased salary and benefits and the addition of the ICRP rate.

In addition to the increased hourly rate, one fee is proposed to be increased due to the increased time required for review. For FY 2006-07, Parks is proposing to increase the estimated time for review of Development Plans from one hour to three hours. This increase is due to the scope and complexity of these types of projects. All other hours for review have remained constant since 1996.

Parks has deleted a fee section from the adopted 1996 rates for Tract Maps and Tentative Parcel Maps that allowed a subsequent fee to be collected during the initial 30 day review period on cases that required trail dedications. Parks has been able to absorb this cost into the base land use fee by standardizing the trail dedication process to a level that allows Parks to eliminate the potential additional fee.

Parks has implemented the following process improvements to enhance service to our customers:

- Established the opportunity for payment of mitigation fees at North County Parks Administration Office at Waller Park in Santa Maria
- Trained North County counter staff to serve developers and permit applicants
- Trained back-up staff to serve developers and permit applicants in the main Administrative Office in Santa Barbara

Exhibit A, attached, is the proposed update to the Parks Department fee resolution. If adopted, Parks estimates their revenue increase for FY 2006-07 will be \$5,626.

Fire

Fees last updated in 2004; Annual Proposed Fee Increase = \$ 22,330.00

The Planning and Engineering Section, within the Fire Prevention Division of Santa Barbara County Fire Department, is responsible to assure proper review occurs on new developments and that appropriate fire-safety standards are applied to all new developments within County. Fire land use permit fee increases were last adopted by the Board in October 2004.

The Fire land use permit fees are fixed fees and are calculated based on the estimated time necessary to perform an average inspection or review. The hourly rate for Fire applied for land use permit fee determination is currently \$88/hour and is proposed to be increase to \$92/hour for FY 2006-07. This is a 4.9% increase which is a result of increased salary and benefits. This fee is short of full cost recovery.

The Fire Department has implemented a number of permit process improvements designed to enhance service to our customers. These include:

- The Fire Department revised the Land Development fee structure to reflect actual time spent performing specific activities.
- The Fire Department visits every site and makes appointments with applicants to review their projects.
- The Fire Department sends registered mail to applicants with regulations (including contact information etc.) to provide specific information to each applicant.
- The Fire Department is participating in the Virtual One-Stop program to increase customer service countywide.
- The Fire Department answers questions from constituents within 24 hours or less.
- At times, the Fire Marshall or the Deputy Chief has met directly with applicants to facilitate the process.

- Fire Department Land Development inspectors all carry cell phones and pagers in order to remain accessible because they are often in the field.
- Fire Department Land Development inspectors are located in both the North and South County.

Exhibit B, attached, is the proposed update to the Fire Department fee resolution. If approved by the Board, the proposed fee revisions will be incorporated into the Fire Department's FY 2006-07 Recommended Budget as a total increase in revenue of \$22,329.

County Counsel

Fees last updated in 1995; Annual Proposed Fee Increase = \$ 17,314.00

County Counsel advises P&D staff about legal issues that arise in processing permits applications. Once the application is complete and ready for decision, County Counsel advises the decision-maker regarding permit and process requirements, and the scope of available discretion. County Counsel staff manages the land use facilitation program. The facilitation program is a process improvement that avoids or streamlines litigation by either reducing the number of contested appeals or focusing issues on appeal to the Board of Supervisors. County Counsel staff also holds weekly internal meetings to discuss land use project issues to ensure quality and consistency of advice and maintain communication with P&D staff. Further, County Counsel attends weekly new case project review meetings at Planning and Development, and as necessary, meets with Planning and Development to identify and discuss legal issues in order to reduce the risk of legal challenge to land use decisions.

The last review and update of County Counsel's land use fees was adopted by the Board in 1995. County Counsel's land use permit fees for review of development projects are fixed fees. The fixed fee is calculated based on cost recovery of estimated review time required multiplied by a per hour average. For FY 2006-07, the hourly rate County Counsel is proposing for land use permit fee determination is \$121/ hour based on current costs. The proposed fee is short of full cost recovery.

Exhibit C, attached, is the proposed update to the County Counsel fee Resolution. If approved by the Board, the proposed fee revisions will be incorporated into County Counsel's FY 2006-07 Recommended Budget as a total increase in revenue of \$17,314.

Public Works – Roads Division

Fees last updated in 1995; Annual Proposed Fee Increase = \$ 47,486.00

Public Works Development Review service is handled essentially by one staff person, plus supervision and administrative support. The Land Use Fee increases proposed are the result of an analysis performed by Maximus, Inc., a consultant specializing in this type of analysis for government agencies. These fees have not been increased since 1995.

Public Works collects fixed fees when a project requires a ministerial or discretionary permit which requires review by the Roads Division. Similar to other departments, Public Works' fixed fees are computed using the average number of hours multiplied by the Standard Salary Cost plus Non-Salary Costs. If a fixed fee is

collected for the application, applicants will not be billed for any additional costs unless the project has extraordinary requirements for proper review.

The Public Works Roads Division has implemented a number of permit process improvements designed to enhance efficiency and improve service to our customers. These include:

- The Roads Division recently completed a study performed by an outside consultant to ensure efficiency and to develop a fee structure consistent with actual time spent on each type of land use permit.
- The Roads Division has obtained the necessary equipment and is participating in the Virtual One-Stop program to increase customer service countywide.
- Staff have been made available in the new north county Public Works building. Because of the large percentage of development occurring in the Orcutt and Vandenberg Village areas, this has increased the efficiency and convenience to the majority of applicants, and has also reduced staff travel time
- Public Works staff is always available to meet with applicants and/or their representatives in the office or in the field to ensure effective communications regarding project details.
- The Roads Division website has been updated to include current information and forms.

Exhibit D, attached, is the proposed update to the Public Works fee Resolution. The Resolution includes fees collected by Planning and Development and by Public Works, Roads Division.

Public Works also assesses land use permit fees for Surveyor and Flood Control, but for FY 2006-07, they are not proposing any adjustment in fees for those divisions. As proposed, the total Land Use Fee increase is estimated to result in \$47,486 annually to fully support the single position. If approved by the Board, Public Works will include the proposed fee increase in the FY 2006-07 Recommended Budget.

Public Works – Survey Division

Record of Survey Fees last updated in 1989; Annual Proposed Fee Increase = \$25,000

The Public Works Survey Division is required by law to review Record of Survey submitted to the County Surveyors Office by private surveyors. These fees have not been increased since 1989.

The Public Works Survey Division has implemented a number of process improvements designed to enhance efficiency and improve service to our customers. These include:

- Utilizing outside contractors for subdivision map review to reduce project backlog.
- Redesigned the public service area to reduce interruptions to staff and provide better customer service to applicants.
- Implemented in-house training program.
- All record maps are now available on-line which reduces the travel time of our customers.

Exhibit D, attached, is the proposed Public Works fee resolution.

Public Health – Environmental Health Services

Fees last updated in 2004; Annual Proposed Fee Increase = \$ 47,510.00

Environmental Health Services (EHS) manages three programs related to land development: Land Use, Liquid Waste and Drinking Water. In May 2004, the Board of Supervisors adopted updated fee Resolutions which realigned Environmental Health Services (EHS) fees to cost of services based on a comprehensive cost analysis including comparison benchmark counties. In the two years following, two Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) and one inequity adjustment have resulted in increased salary and benefits. To reflect these increased costs, EHS is proposing to include a 10.5% COLA increase for 2006 for the following programs.

Land Use Program

The recommended Land Use Fee Resolution (Exhibit E) increases program revenue by an annual estimate of \$11,370 for the 122 estimated annual cases. This program will continue to utilize General Fund Contribution for the continued involvement in updates to the County's Comprehensive Plan.

The Land Use program is staffed by a Senior Environmental Health Specialist who serves as the primary liaison between Planning & Development (P&D) and EHS. This individual has a strong geology background and serves as the County's expert for onsite sewage disposal issues. The Land Use Specialist attends all Subdivision & Development Review Committee (SDRC) meetings and is readily available by telephone (or e-mail) for consultation with applicants, agents, planners and other EHS staff.

Liquid Waste

The Liquid Waste program is the second largest Environmental Health program and accounts for 13% of the Division's services. The recommended Liquid Waste Fee Resolution (Exhibit F) increases program revenue by an annual estimate of \$17,400 for the 545 estimated annual permits. The resolution continues the 'no charge' policy for a Simple Certification in which staff time is 20 minutes or less. This program will continue to utilize General Fund Contribution for the Voluntary Maintenance program and for responding to public complaints.

Drinking Water

Cost recovery for the Drinking Water program operates under three fee resolutions, two of which are Land Development-related. One covers services provided under the California Safe Drinking Water Act (Exhibit G) and the other covers services relating to water wells and private water systems (Exhibit H). Under the California Safe Drinking Water Act, EHS is the designated Local Primacy Agency for enforcement of State requirements for domestic water supply systems. The State dictates that the annual fee categories are based

on the number of service connections. The recommended Drinking Water Fee Resolutions (Exhibit G) increase program revenues by an annual estimate of \$18,740 for the 307 estimated annual permits.

EHS uses a comprehensive and fully integrated database system specifically designed for environmental health programs. This system tracks all EHS permits and staff activities, including billing for annual permits. It also includes an inventory of private sewage disposal systems in the county. System improvements are made on an ongoing basis, to address changing needs and demands.

Environmental Health Services has implemented numerous measures in all three of these programs to improve customer service and continues to seek additional efficiency improvements. These measures include:

- EHS maintains and updates its own website providing a great deal of information, assistance and access for our customers.
- Ongoing evaluation and revision of applications and other forms to make them as user-friendly as possible, including development of on-line forms.
- Future projects include increased consolidation of the land use and liquid waste programs to improve efficiency and funding to reinstate a counter technician position that was deleted due to budget cuts.

Land Use:

- All land use cases submitted to EHS receive an initial review within 48 hours of receipt (most within 24 hours).
- Recommended conditions of approval are submitted to the case planner well in advance of scheduled decision-maker hearings.
- In cooperation with other land use review agencies, participate in North County meetings of the Subdivision & Development Review Committee and the “Virtual 1-Stop” videoconference system.
- EHS Land Use Specialist has conducted several training sessions for the Planning Commission and staff members of both EHS and P&D to improve understanding of sewage disposal system design considerations.

Liquid Waste (Septic Systems):

- Established a category of “simple certification” for evaluation of septic systems involved with minor remodels. Evaluations that can readily be determined to have no impact on septic system capacity or expansion area are completed over the counter and at no charge to the property owner.
- To ensure a quick and accurate response to plan submittals, permit applications for new onsite sewage treatment systems are directed only to the more experienced members of the EHS staff or the Land Use Specialist.
- A Performance Measure has been established to ensure initial review of new system permit applications within 5 days of receipt.
- Participation in pilot project to provide EHS staff at Planning & Development to provide immediate response to customer inquiries related to wastewater treatment and disposal.
- Currently developing a rebate program to encourage regular maintenance of septic tanks in Mission Canyon (County Service Area No. 12).

- As a member of the Land Use Committee for the California Conference of Directors of Environmental Health, EHS management has been involved in the review of State regulations relating to onsite wastewater treatment systems pursuant to AB 885.
- As the custodian of State funds provided for onsite wastewater improvements, EHS has been working with sanitation districts, homeowners and other interested parties to fund engineering feasibility studies and other projects to improve wastewater treatment and disposal throughout the county.
- EHS regularly takes advantage of training opportunities to maintain a high level of technical expertise in the area of septic system design.

Water Program:

- Well permits, which require site visits, are issued no later than 5 days after receipt.
- In order to accommodate well drillers working on weekends and minimize overtime charges, EHS has allowed sanitary seal installations to be witnessed by a Registered Geologist in lieu of county staff.
- Significant improvements were recently made to the database that tracks operating permits to allow improved tracking of extensive State monitoring requirements that vary by the type of water system.
- A bi-annual newsletter is provided to operators of water systems within the County's jurisdiction.
- The Senior Environmental Health Specialist assigned to the Water program has qualified to sit for State certification exams in water treatment and distribution to be given in the next few months.

All fee resolutions include an hourly rate of \$110. It will be utilized primarily for activities that do not have a fixed fee or when staff time for plan check or inspection activities exceeds the category average. This approach allows EHS to keep standard plan check fees as low as possible. Additionally, all fee resolution categories have been rounded to the nearest \$5.

If approved by the Board, the proposed fee revisions will be incorporated into the Public Health Department's FY 2006-07 Recommended Budget for Environmental Health Services at a total increase in revenue of \$47,510.

Countywide Technology Fee

Proposed New Technology Fee, Total Proposed Fee for FY 2006-07 = \$ 200,354.00

In an effort to further improve communications and streamline the permit process, the County Executive Office is proposing to implement a new fee for technology upgrades. As proposed, the technology surcharge of 2% will be included in all building and planning permits. If approved by your Board, funds generated from this surcharge will be used to support technology for the County's land development permit process.

The permit process often involves six different county departments, often multiple divisions of these departments, as well as the Air Pollution Control district, and a number of other agencies, e.g. water districts, fire districts, schools, etc. Currently, each of these entities use disparate computer systems or none at all. Office locations are distributed across the county, requiring applicants and staff to travel to conduct permit business. This situation has led to poor communication, time delays, inadequate information for permit

applicants and reduced efficiency and effectiveness. Upgrading current systems to resolve these issues requires substantial resources that are currently not provided in any of the permitting department's budget.

The proposed technology fee will be deposited in a designation and with Board approval will be used to upgrade the County's permit management system, strengthen video conferencing capabilities such as the Virtual One Stop Project, , as well as continuing to enhance online permit services.

The proposed upgrade to the County's permit management system involves the following steps and the first year projected budget would be allocated as follows:

1. Provide access to Accela in all departments involved in the land use permit process. Accela is the current permit management system used by Planning & Development to track permits, (\$10,000).
2. Develop reports from the existing databases to proactively track and process permits as they cross departmental boundaries, (\$30,000).
3. Begin the systems analysis and implementation process for a new online permit management system that provides for online approvals by the numerous entities involved, (\$120,000.)
4. Project Management, (\$40,000).

The proposed fees include the addition of the technology surcharge of 2% or \$2.50 to the hourly rate. If approved by your Board, Planning and Development will adjust its FY 2006-07 Recommended Budget to reflect an estimated \$45,000 in revenue for the inclusion of the technology fee on land use permits.

Exhibit J, attached, is the proposed update to the Planning and Development, Building Permit Fee Resolution. Building and Safety will add the proposed technology surcharge of \$0.50/cents for each \$1,000.00 of valuation. If approved by your Board, Planning and Development will adjust its FY 2006-07 Recommended Budget to reflect an estimated increase of \$55,000 in revenue for the inclusion of the technology fee on building permits.

Air Pollution Control District

In addition to all of the County Department land use permit fees collected by Planning and Development, they collect fees for the Air Pollution Control District (APCD) for services necessary for APCD to review air quality issues related to County's issuance of land use permits.