



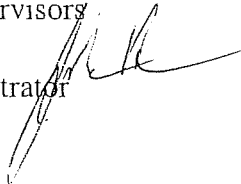
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

2009 JUN 21 PM 3:41

MEMORANDUM

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

TO: Joseph Centeno, Chairman, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

FROM: John Baker, Deputy County Administrator 

DATE: January 13, 2009

RE: Land Development Fee Resolution Hearing, January 27, 2009

During your meeting of January 6, 2009 the Board voiced concerns regarding item A-15, a request by Planning and Development to raise land use fees. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide additional detail and respond to concerns raised by the Board.

Three items were brought to my attention: 1) Why are rates impacted by retirement cost increases? 2) Is P&D raising rates due to a reduction in permit activity, and why doesn't the department keep rates flat and reduce staffing?, and 3) Why should permit applicants pay for community plan updates across the County?

Land development fees are charged to permit applicants to recover the *cost* of providing permit processing and permit review *services*. Each year Planning and Development works with the County Auditor Controller to identify and calculate costs attributable to the planning permit process. This process is similar to all County departments that charge fees for services.

1) Why are fees impacted by retirement cost increases?

Costs attributable to the planning permit process include: direct wages, employee benefits (medical insurance, Medicare, Social Security, Retirement, disability insurance), data processing and computers, communications, liability insurance, motor pool, building maintenance, office supplies, and Planning Commission and BAR member stipends.

It is the Board's policy (attached) that *costs* for services be recovered through user fees. Employee salary and benefit amounts are negotiated with labor organizations across the County and are not unique to Planning and Development. As retirement costs are attributable to the provision of permitting service they should be recovered through permit fees. The alternative is subsidize the costs of services provided to applicants through a contribution from the General Fund. The proposed fees have been reviewed

with the Auditor-Controller's office and have been verified as accurately representing the costs included in the hourly rate.

2) Why doesn't P&D reduce staffing instead of raising fees?

There is a relationship to staffing costs and the hourly rate, but a reduction in staffing does not always reduce the hourly rate. Over the past year and a half the number of planners processing permits has declined 26% and department-wide staffing has declined 24%. These staffing reductions have not reduced the hourly rate because services have not been reduced.

The hourly rate will drop when either costs or services provided by the department are reduced. If costs identified previously - salaries, insurance, retirement, etc. - decline, the rate will drop. Reducing services not directly related to processing permits will also decrease the rate. Some examples of these services include: time spent processing free or subsidized permits (appeals, agricultural preserves), support to four Architectural Review Boards and two Planning Commissions, and attendance at planning and Board hearings. Cutting staff that process permits or support planning staff does not reduce the cost to provide the service, but will slow the permit process as less staff will be available to do the work. The department actively monitors planning workload and has reduced both planning and support staff to address decreased permit applications from the public. These reductions do not, however, reduce the cost to complete an individual application.

3) Why should permit applicants pay for community plan updates across the County? The proposed General Plan maintenance fee is based on total actual staff costs for countywide General Plan maintenance efforts only. It does not include any geographically based projects (e.g., community plan updates) or special projects (i.e., the Climate Action Strategy proposed for next fiscal year). The following is a list of the required activities included in the new fee:

Annexation

- Review proposed city and special district annexations to ensure General Plan (GP) consistency
- Provide policy direction to CEO and Board of Supervisors regarding proposed annexations to maintain the County's financial health and ability to provide public services to the unincorporated area

General Plan Consistency Review

- Participation in new case review
- AB 1600 (Development Impact Fees)
- SB 18 (Native American Consultation)
- Review of new projects for GP consistency (includes affordable housing sites)
- Work with other departments to ensure that action items in approved Community Plans are implemented

Responsible Agency Review

- Coordinate interdepartmental review of other agency's environmental documents

Regional Planning/Interagency Coordination

- Participation in county-wide and inter-county task forces and advisory groups
- Coordination with cities and special districts
- Transportation planning, including coordination on RTIP
- Regional Housing Needs planning
- Coordination of census data

General Plan Annual Report

- Preparation of mandatory annual report to the legislature and State Housing and Community Development on the status of the GP and Housing Element compliance

General Maintenance Fee Breakdown	% of Total	Cost Per Hour
Annexation	3%	\$ 0.27
General Plan Consistency Review	2%	\$ 0.19
Responsible Agency Review	14%	\$ 1.41
Regional Planning/Interagency Coordination	79%	\$ 8.08
General Plan Annual Report	2%	\$ 0.24
Total	100%	\$ 10.19

Attachments

- County Fee Policy
- Breakdown of planning hourly rate

County of Santa Barbara
On-line Policies & Procedures Manual
Fees

Activated - 1/5/94

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Policy

Where allowed or mandated, the County will charge a fee for services provided at a level consistent with the criteria listed below. Departments are responsible for insuring that all legally allowed fees and charges are presented to the Board for adoption and for reviewing/adjusting as appropriate. Fees should be reviewed at least annually by departments to determine that fee levels are consistent with current cost basis and/or established current criteria.

Procedures

A. Level of Fees - user fees, licenses, permits, and other charges for service will be determined consistent with:

- public purpose served by the fee;
- costs incurred by the County to provide the service;
- restrictions of law; and
- prevailing rates charged by comparable or neighboring jurisdictions

B. Fees based on actual cost should be increased by an appropriate annual adjustment factor (e.g., cost of salary increases or other more relevant inflation factors) each year so that expensive cost analyses are required only periodically and so that massive fee increases are avoided, if possible.

Departments are responsible for periodically working with the Auditor-Controller to conduct cost analyses of services to determine their actual costs.

C. Departments are responsible for insuring that all legally allowed user fees and charges are presented to the Board for adoption.

D. Waiver/Reduction of Fees - Wherever allowed by law the Board of Supervisors may waive or reduce user fees for a specific service. All such waivers and reductions must be reaffirmed annually when the fees are adjusted.

E. New Fees - When a new fee is proposed, the Auditor-Controller's Office should be involved at the outset to assist in determining costs and charging methods.

F. Fee amendments may be accomplished by resolution; the institution of a new fee, however, may require an ordinance. Both resolutions and ordinances require approval "as to form" by County Counsel and review by the Auditor-Controller.

The following outline should generally be used when preparing Board letters requesting routine increases in departmental user fees:

A. Cover Letter

- Describe the general reason for adjusting user fees;
- Indicate any new fees or changes in the method of charging the fee;
- Indicate any major increases;
- Indicate the total revenue collected from the fees and the approximate increased revenue to be generated. Also note whether the increased revenue has been anticipated in the County budget;
- Indicate that fee determination has been reviewed by the Auditor-Controller.

B. Attachments (listing of individual fees)

- Give the title of the fee and a brief description of the service for which the fee is charged;
- List the current fee and the proposed level;
- Note the basis for calculating the fee (i.e., actual cost, legal maximum, etc.) and the reason for increasing the fee (cost-of-living, change in cost, etc.).

Authority: County Administrator Memo 82-18

Board Minute Order 11/10/81

Board Minute Order 03/08/82

Breakdown of Proposed Planning Hourly Rate	
Average hourly cost for planners (includes benefits)	\$58.10
Planner cost for time which is not directly billed	11.62
Supervision	14.58
Management	4.81
Support Staff	14.41
Total P&D Salary Cost	103.52
Cost Rate Proposal 0.35 (overhead)	36.23
Technology Fee	2.61
General Plan Fee	10.19
Proposed Hourly Rate	\$152.55

Development Review Workload Analysis- Reduced Budget Hours, 12/03/2008

Planner Workload Inventory				
	Max	Min	Avg	Median
Planner I	254	85	337	672
Planner II	733	-	558	623
Planner III	4,333	1,967	1,661	1,040
Consultant				

Inventory Required @ Budget Staffing Level		
	Positions	Inventory @ Median
Planner I	1	672
Planner II	8.5	5,296
Planner III	9.75	10,140
Total		16,108

Budget Hours /FTE **1267**

Labor/FTE to 546 6/28/2009

FY 08/09 Budgeted Staffing Profile

	FTE	Total Current Project Hours Inventory	% by Position	Annual Budget Hours	% by Position	Estimated New Hours (12 month trend) Distributed by budgeted hours avail	Estimated New Hours (24 month trend) Distributed by budgeted hours avail
Planner I/II	9.5	7,724	40%	11,980	49%	10,491	8,041
Planner III	9.75	11,496	60%	12,295	51%	10,767	8,253
Consultant		-	0%		0%	-	-
Total	19.25	19,220	100%	24,274	100%	21,257	16,294

Budgeted and Current Staffing , 12 month trend for new project hours

	FTE	Total Current Project Hours Inventory*	Projected New Project Inventory 7/08- 6/09	Project Hours Inventory - 7/08- 6/09	Budget Staffing		Actual Staffing January 2009		
					Labor thru June 2009, @ Budget staffing level	Net Inventory June 30, 2009	Actual Staffing Level	Labor thru June 2009, @ Current staffing level	Net Inventory July 09
		100.00%	100%						
Planner I/II	9.50	7,724	10,491	18,215	11,980	6,235	10.10	12,736	5,479
Planner III	9.75	11,496	10,767	22,263	12,295	9,968	8.75	11,034	11,229
Consultant		-					-		
Total	19.25	19,220	21,257	40,478	24,274	16,203	18.85	23,770	16,708

Budgeted and Current Staffing , 24 month trend for new project hours

	FTE	Total Current Project Hours Inventory*	Projected New Project Inventory to 6/09	Project Hours Inventory - 7/08- 6/09	Budget Staffing		Actual Staffing January 2009		
					Labor thru June 2009, @ Budget staffing level	Net Inventory June 30, 2009	Actual Staffing Level	Labor thru June 2009, @ Current staffing level	Net Inventory July 09
		100.00%	100%						
Planner I/II	9.50	7,724	3,471	11,195	5,185	6,010	10.10	5,513	5,682
Planner III	9.75	11,496	3,562	15,059	5,322	9,737	8.75	4,776	10,283
Consultant		-					-		
Total	19.25	19,220	7,033	26,254	10,507	15,747	18.85	10,289	15,965

Excludes Permit Compliance and SB Ranch

Listing of Planner Hours By Classification 1/16/2009

Planner	Location	Position	FTE	01/16/2009 Est Remaining Hours	12/3/08 Est Remainin g Hours	11/18/08 Est Remainin g Hours	11/11/08 Est Remainin g Hours	9/15/2008 Est Remainin g Hours	June 2008 Est Remainin g Hours
L. Bridley	South	Contract	0						129
Rodriguez	North	contractor	0						174
				-	-	-	-	-	303
bozzane		pi-p	0						0
Clark	South	PI	1	646	692	740	664	579	360
Gage	South	PI	1	576	517	524	467	446	337
gerber	North	pi	1	512	520	545	551	623	668
Ritterback	South	PI	1	797	723	873	783	715	560
Shank	South	PI	0		169	206	375	388	333
weber	North	pi	0.6	503	552	542	541	681	522
			4.60	3,034	3,173	3,430	3,381	3,432	2,780
Bradbury	South	Pll	1	834	848	1010	816	769	713
Buoni	South	Pll	0.5	664	689	734	774	534	0
charmichael	North	pii	1	448	399	396	402	512	494
Heaton	South	Pll	0		314	436	538	784	623
Hosale	South	Pll-p	0						0
Lowery	South	Pll	1	1030	759	628	1048	775	530
Mashore	South	Pll	1	674	729	706	725	557	559
Walter	South	Pll	1	930	813	861	1019	956	866.8
			5.50	4,580	4,551	4,771	5,322	4,887	3,786
Briggs	South	Pll	1	1335	1286	1180	1635	1378	646.7
Bell	South	Plll	1	1364	1447	1420	1018	1015	1013
eady	North	pii	1	823	698.3	727	820	841	610
Gibbs	South	Plll	0						765
Harris	South	Plll	1	1223	960	874	872	857	649
hayes	North	piii	0		1743	1772	1792	1821	2185
Mooney	North	Plll	0.75						
tolley	North	piii	1	959	956	919	976	913	829
trotter	North	piii	1	1966	717	749	803	960	940
Tuttle	South	Plll	1	2389	2482	2528	2525	2632	2433.4
zorovich	North	piii	1	1610	1207	1294	1302	1405	1466
			8.75	11,669	11,496	11,463	11,743	11,822	10,071
H. Allen		Pll	0						
H. Imgrund		Pll	0						
		Pll							
Total			18.85	19,283	19,220	19,664	20,446	20,141	16,940