



Staff Report

File #: 18-442

Version: 1

Date: 10/8/2018

Item #: 3.3 b.

TO: Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Steve Powers, City Manager

FROM: Peter Fernandez, PE

SUBJECT:

Adding Two New Full-Time Positions for Public Works Development Services Division.

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

ISSUE:

Shall Council approve the addition of one Permit Technician position (1 FTE) and one Program Coordinator position (1 FTE) to the Public Works Development Services section, effective immediately?

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the addition of one Permit Technician position (1 FTE) and one Program Coordinator position (1 FTE) to the Public Works Development Services section, effective immediately.

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND:

The Public Works Development Services Section is within the Planning and Development Division of the Public Works Department. This section is charged with processing development and construction permit applications for the Public Works Department. Application types include, but are not limited to: pre-application conferences, land use actions, building permits, franchise utility permits, and public infrastructure permits. The Development Services Section coordinates programs within the Public Works Department by collaborating with numerous subject matter experts and stakeholders throughout the community. The section also leads the City's floodplain management program and is responsible for the City's involvement with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Community Rating System.

The Development Services Section staffing levels reached a maximum of 17 staff members during the peak development workload levels in FY 2007-08. After the economic downturn during the years

following, the number of Development Services staff was reduced through a series of layoffs to six full-time staff. Since the downturn, two additional staff positions have been added to the section, for a current total of eight full-time staff.

The exiting staff levels are not adequate to meet the current development workload. Development activity has steadily increased for a number of years. Based on current workload, staff has experienced in an increased need for overtime, greater delays in processing applications, heightened risk of staff errors, and increased levels of staff turnover.

The Community Development Department's Planning Division added two full-time planner positions for FY 2018-19. In conjunction with additional staffing, the City has committed to providing shorter turn-around times for most types of land-use applications. Public Works Development Services staff provides a significant amount of analysis and recommendations for most land use application types. Because of the current staffing levels, Development Services staff is now causing delays in the land use application process. Similar delays have been experienced in building permit applications, public infrastructure construction, franchise utility construction, and other development permit types. The number of staff in the Development Services Section must increase if the City is going to meet its established deadlines for land use applications.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

1. The budget impact is \$131,766 for the remainder of FY 2018-2019. The positions will be included in the Public Works Department's proposed budget for FY 2019-2020. The budget impact for FY 2018-2019 will be met through salary savings of vacant positions within the department.
2. Historic workload levels for public works-related development applications can be best summarized by tracking permit revenues. Permit fees within the department have not recently increased beyond inflationary adjustments, so a significant increase in permit revenues reflects a comparable increase in development activity and staff workload. The table below demonstrates that development permit revenues have remained on an upward trend over the past four years, increasing by 120 percent, while staffing within the section increased only from seven to eight FTE during the same four-year time period.

**TABLE: FOUR-YEAR TRENDS IN DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIVISION FTE
AND PLAN REVIEW REVENUE**

FY	FTE Positions	Plan Review Revenue	Percent Change
14-15	7	\$435,795	N/A

15-16	7	\$586,321	35%
16-17	8	\$601,387	3%
17-18	8	\$958,277	59%
4-Year Increase	1	\$522,482	120%

3. Adding two FTE positions in the Development Services Division will increase staffing within the section to a total of 10, which is commensurate with the additional workload within the development permit program.

Robert D. Chandler, PhD, PE
Assistant Public Works Director

Attachment: None