



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

Agenda Date: 10/23/2018

Agenda Placement: 10A

NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: David Morrison - Director
Planning, Building and Environmental Services

REPORT BY: David Morrison, Director, Planning, Building & Environmental Servi - (707) 253-4805

SUBJECT: Process Improvements

RECOMMENDATION

County Executive Officer and Director of Planning Building and Environmental Services recommend the following:

1. Accept the results of the "Analysis of the Planning Review Process" and direct staff to implement the recommendations in the study, as modified by the Board; and
2. Direct staff to return in early 2019 with a report, and possibly a fee ordinance amendment to determine cost recovery, including annual increases based on an appropriate index.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On August 28, 2018, Alan Pennington of the Matrix Consulting Group made a presentation of their "Analysis of the Planning Review Process" to the Board of Supervisors. At that time, the Board generally indicated strong support for the recommendations included in the analysis, but expressed concern that the public had not had sufficient opportunity to review the report. As a result, the Board directed staff to make the report available to all stakeholders that had been contacted during its preparation, and to return to the Board at a later date for final consideration.

A link to the analysis was distributed to all stakeholders on August 30, 2018. In the two months since, staff has received a total of four e-mails, summarized as follows:

- | Thank you for the follow-up
- | Questions regarding clarification of the information in the August 28 staff report
- | Question regarding the web link
- | Suggestion that the planner assigned to the application, serve as the project coordinator through the public hearing and into project implementation.

At its August 28, 2018, meeting, the Board also had additional questions regarding the appropriate level of cost recovery that should be set for planning and environmental health fees, as well as which of several indices should be used in making annual fee adjustments. Staff is still researching this question and will return to the Board with its recommendations as a part of the mid-year budget in January 2019.

PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Staff report
2. Public Comment
3. Motion, second, discussion and vote on item

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact? No

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The proposed action is not a project as defined by 14 California Code of Regulations 15378 (State CEQA Guidelines) and therefore CEQA is not applicable.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

HISTORY

In early 2017, the County released a Request for Proposal to professional firms and individuals to assess and evaluate departments' work systems used in service delivery. The initial task was to evaluate the Planning Building Environmental Services Department current permitting processing systems. Analysis and recommendation for business process improvements were informed by an understanding of land development permitting policies and operational practices and current local and state regulations. Staff selected Matrix Consulting Group (Matrix) to provide recommendations for change and, if necessary, to re-engineer the existing systems and processes to meet current demands. Consideration was given to major policy and program changes, volume and complexity of workload, an assessment of staffing needs, and the implementation or modification to existing technology to support work processes. It was anticipated that the department could see an increase in administrative efficiency following the implementation of business process improvements. Since Matrix began its analysis, events occurred which required the Department to implement process improvements independent of Matrix recommendations. The 2017 Napa Fire Complex caused a significant increase in workload and required staff to review its processes. Also the addition of positions and changes to the management structure helped to implement further departmental improvements.

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ANALYSIS SUMMARY

The report highlighted key department strengths which are representative of best practices such as:

- | Staff is knowledgeable about the application and review process
- | Planning, building, and code enforcement operations are co-located in the same office suite, providing customers with one-stop services
- | Weekly project review meetings are conducted with appropriate review staff
- | A planner is assigned as a project manager
- | County Counsel staff is involved in the review process to ensure legal compliance
- | Historic application and permit data have been digitized.

A summary of the report recommendations is as follows:

1. Continue the use of electronic check-in for customers and expand technology resources in the permit center.
2. Update application checklists to include all required documentation, provide sign-offs for the applicant and staff, and only accept complete applications.
3. Pre-application meetings should include staff from all applicable review divisions and departments and not just Planning staff.
4. Weekly review meetings should focus only on reviewing applications. Staff should review applications in advance of review meetings.
5. Route new applications for comment immediately and ensure that new applications are assigned to planning staff within two days of intake.
6. Revise the comment letter template to include applicable code references, applicant comment boxes, and staff sign-off.
7. Update the PBES and Planning Division web pages to provide a more centralized depository of information, along with a diagram of the land use process.
8. Post properties that have major use permit applications (or modifications) with proper signage to better inform the public that an application has been filed.
9. Continue and expand efforts to utilize public working groups to work with PBES staff when considering changes to adopted processes, ordinances, and policies.
10. To increase dialogue between the community and Napa County, a quarterly meeting should be held between staff and development professionals, and a separate meeting held between staff and the public/special interest groups.
11. Annual staff training should focus on professional skill sets and elements related to newly adopted regulations.
12. Implement digital application submission for all PBES application types.
13. Incorporate on-going permitting software training. Utilize permitting software that allows for digital application submittal and the ability to effectively track the application process.
14. Incorporate historical parcel data and GIS data layers into the permitting software system.
15. Implement a policy working group to address emerging issue in a timely and constructive manner.
16. Develop an employee handbook that explains the roles and responsibilities of each employee. Employee guides should be used as a training tool for new staff to learn about the review process.
17. Develop and implement an employee mentoring plan to identify opportunities for staff and identify key staff members who can progress up the career ladder.

As mentioned in August, PBES staff have implemented several process improvements, including:

- | Instituted electronic sign-in for all customers, to reduce lobby waiting times;
- | Digitized all current and historic documents in an electronic archive available to the public;
- | Implemented on-line permitting for a limited number of building permits;
- | Expedited permit review to rebuild structures destroyed or damaged in the 2017 and 2018 fires;
- | Adopted a set of department procedures to ensure consistent and standardized processing; and
- | Updated the standard conditions of approval.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A link to the analysis was distributed to all stakeholders on August 30, 2018. In the two months since, staff has received a total of four e-mails, summarized as follows:

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With regards to the recommendation of assigning a planner to process an application through implementation, that is the practice currently used by PBES, whenever feasible; however it is not always possible. Several of the above recommendations will minimize any inconsistencies in project management between staff.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

A . Attachment A - Analysis of Planning Review Process

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Helene Franchi