



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Jason Giffen, Director, Department of Planning and Building

DATE: November 15, 2010

SUBJECT: Department of Planning and Building Proposed FY 2011- 2012 Fee Schedule

On November 23, 2010, the Board of Supervisors will have a public hearing on the Proposed Fee Schedule for the Fiscal Year 2011-2012, with an effective date of July 1, 2011.

In the current economic climate, the Department of Planning and Building acknowledges that it is an undesirable time to increase fees. However, consistent with the Board of Supervisors policy to set county fees at 100% cost recovery, the Department is proposing some fee increases. There are fees the Department administers, which are not full cost recovery (e.g. appeals), but the County's goal is that the fees collected reflect the cost of processing the applicable permit.

To this end, the Department reviews fees yearly and over the past three years, many of the fees have remained unchanged. However, every five years the Department conducts a thorough review of the time and costs associated with processing all application types. The fees proposed for fiscal year beginning July 1, 2011 reflect this review.

At first glance, the fee schedule appears voluminous with 1,629 fees. This breaks down as: 1,470 building fees, 153 land use/land division fees and six related to outside jurisdictions. The reason that there are so many building fees is that our jurisdiction has a separate fee for plan review and inspection based on the size of the structure in order to reflect economy of scale for larger projects. This allows our applicants to pay only for the services required for the size of their project.

The results of the review produced some changes, a recap of the changes are below:

Land Use & Land Division Applications

Of the 153 land use or land division type fees, 49% are increasing, 22% are decreasing and 29% are not changing. While there is a wide range of increases and decreases to the fees, the weighted average fee increase is 7%. Those fees with significant increases are proposed to be phased in over three years to accommodate a gradual transition to 100% cost recovery. In looking at these permit types, the Department found that additional time is necessary to analyze and resolve technical issues such as water availability and air quality, provide a comprehensive review of the project relative to the County's General Plan, and prepare staff reports and environmental documents that contain adequate and legally defensible documentation. In addition, many projects are attracting greater public involvement than in the past.

FY11-12 Proposed Fees
Memo to Interested Parties
November 15, 2010

Building Permit Applications

Five years ago the building fees moved away from valuation based fee calculations to time in motion based fees. This review allowed the building Department to refine those calculations based on historical usage.

Of the 1,470 fees, 8% are increasing, 6% are decreasing and 86% remain unchanged. The increases primarily reflect the changes to the review requirements from the 1997 building code to the 2008 building code. One of the biggest changes is the fee structure for commercial photovoltaic projects. The Department is proposing a multi - tiered structure to better reflect the economy of scale for larger projects. While some of the fees may appear to be increasing significantly, the weighted average fee increase is 3%.

A complete copy of the County's proposed fee schedule can be found at:

<http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/archivedmeetings.htm> (Please see the agenda for the November 23, 2010 Board of Supervisors Meeting)

Should you have any specific concerns regarding the Department's proposed FY 2011-2012 Fee Schedule, please submit your concerns to Chris Macek at (805) 781-5708 or via email at cmacek@co.slo.ca.us. Depending upon the scope of your inquiry, either an email response will be provided, or a meeting set up, to discuss your concerns.