



County of Yolo

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YOLO COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

TO: Commissioner Richard Reed, Chair
and Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: David Morrison, Assistant Director
Planning and Public Works Department

DATE: April 14, 2011

SUBJECT: Draft 2011-2012 Development Services Division Budget

Recommended Action

Receive and file the annual draft budget update.

Background

Annually, for each of the past several years, staff has provided an update to the Planning Commission on the proposed Development Services Division budget for the upcoming fiscal year. The purpose is to inform the public of the anticipated resources available for the various functions and initiatives for which the Division is responsible, as well as to provide an opportunity for the Commission to provide any appropriate input.

It is important to note that this is a draft budget and has not yet been adopted by the Board of Supervisors. More importantly, the County budget situation remains highly volatile. This is due to the unresolved State budget (from which the County receives a significant portion of its funds), as well as the ongoing weak economy. As such, this budget is subject to change and will likely be revised as circumstances change. Similarly, the total projected expenditures for the 2010-11 budget year are preliminary and may change.

Analysis

The draft budget totals approximately \$2.0 million for Fiscal Year 2011-2012. Cost centers are broken out separately for planning (\$1.3 million) and building (\$0.7 million). Both cost centers and the overall budget are balanced. This represents a 13 percent decrease from the current year budget of \$2.4 million. If compared to the 2008-2009 budget, which was adopted just before the start of the recession, total expenditures/revenues have decreased 32 percent, while the number of staff has decreased 59 percent. Although much of this impact is due to the economy, the reduced budget also reflects the completion of the General Plan in 2009 (a total

cost of approximately \$3 million over six years). Notable issues regarding the draft budget include:

- Two positions that are currently vacant this past fiscal year will be eliminated: Principal Planner, and Office Support Specialist.
- All employees will be taking between 60 and 88 hours in furlough during the coming fiscal year. The amount of furlough varies, depending on the terms agreed to by each individual labor bargaining unit. As a result of the furlough, the Planning and Public Works Department will likely be closed beginning December 19, 2011, and will re-open on January 2, 2012.
- There are a total of nine authorized positions proposed for the Development Services Division (4 in building, 4 in planning, and 1 administrative support).
- With regards to expenditures, there are few areas remaining to realize significant budget savings, as follows (shown as a percentage of total budget expenditures):
 - Employee salaries and benefits account for 59.9 percent.
 - Consultant contracts account for 24.5 percent. This includes structural engineering and fire review services for the building program, as well as consultant costs associated with three anticipated Environmental Impact Reports. It also includes payments to the software company for purchase and maintenance of the new Trak-It permit system. These costs have no effect on the budget, as they are pass-through funds that are collected directly from applicants and paid directly out to vendors.
 - Internal County costs (public liability insurance; information technology support; phones, fleets, credit card services, and County Counsel support) account for 11.0 percent.
 - The remaining 4.6 percent covers overhead expenses such as Planning Commission stipends, training, building maintenance, office equipment, office supplies, mailing, publishing, printing, etc.
- The following assumptions are made with regards to revenues (shown as a percentage of total budget expenditures):
 - Fees, including building and planning permits, business licenses, technology and general plan fees, and mining revenues, accounts for 72.7 percent. Permit activities are assumed to be at the same level as this year. The projection includes a requested 8 percent increase in permit fees.
 - General fund monies represent 21.9 percent. However, as changes are made to State budget, as well as to general fund allocations among County departments, this amount is likely to decrease.
 - Grant funds account for 5.4 percent. This money was awarded to the County by the Strategic Growth Council to create a Sustainable Zoning Code that integrates smart growth standards into a form-based code.

- Consistent with previous years, the Development Division uses the following metrics illustrate the amount of activity for the current fiscal year:
 - The total number of building permits issued has dropped sharply, decreasing by 60 percent, from 1,700 last year to 600 projected this year. Minor permits, such as plumbing, electrical, reroofing, etc. continue to account for most of the permit activity.
 - The number of new homes constructed is expected to drop from 27 last year to 20 this year.
 - The number of building inspections this fiscal year is projected to be about 2,300, compared with 3,000 last year, or a decrease of 25 percent. The number of plan checks has dropped by 40 percent, from 400 last year to 240 this year. Last year, staff began to do all plan checks in-house instead of using an outside consultant.
 - The number of business licenses has remained steady at 878, a slight increase of 2 percent from last year.
 - The number of planning applications was 55 last year and is projected to be 42 this year, a decrease of 24 percent. Similar to the building program, planning applications have generally tended toward smaller and more modest projects such as lot line adjustments, Williamson Act Contract divisions and Parcel Maps. However, several recent applications have recently been received that will require the preparation of Environmental Impact Reports.

- Adopted goals for the Development Services Division for the 2010-11 fiscal year include:
 - Implementation of the work plan for the adopted county General Plan that includes: update of the eight community plans; comprehensive zoning ordinance update; and development of a TDR program.

The Capay Valley Area Plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on December 7, 2011. Work is beginning on the Clarksburg Area Plan. The comprehensive zoning ordinance is well underway, with several draft chapters completed and the Agricultural Zoning section nearly done. The Agricultural Home Cluster Ordinance was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on November 9, 2011.
 - Pursuant to Board direction initiate new Specific Plans identified in the adopted General Plan.

Due to the downturn in the economy, particularly with regards to housing, the Dunnigan, Knights Landing, and Madison Specific Plans have been indefinitely postponed.
 - Implement the economic development recommendations and permit review/tracking program.

The new building and planning permit tracking system went into effect on February 2, 2011. Other recommendations that have been implemented

include: expanded use of the Internet and printed hand-outs; improved coordination between the Development Services and Environmental Health Divisions; use of incentives such as expedited processing and fee waivers for priority projects; and adoption of more flexible zoning standards for mixed use areas, rural tourism, and signage.

- Explore the viability of a county Teeter & Receivership Program for property enforcement fees.

The Teeter and Receivership Program was evaluated for implementation. However, the program requires significant up front costs to the County, which are not feasible under the current fiscal circumstances. Instead, the Development Division has made use of County collection services to ensure timely payment of fines and fees associated with code enforcement actions.

- Develop a countywide alternative energy and green building construction ordinance.

On January 1, 2011, the new CalGreen Building Code went into effect, which established new standards for alternative energy and green building practices. Staff is currently working on modifying the State building standards to include provisions of the 2030 General Plan and the Climate Action Plan.

- Complete certification (CASP) of Building Official for ADA access compliance inspections.

The Chief Building Official was certified for CASP inspections on July 22, 2010.

- Preliminary goals for the Development Services Division in the 2011-12 fiscal year include the following (pending the outcome of final budget decisions):

- Complete the update to the Clarksburg Area Plan.
- Improve the CRS (Community Rating System) score to reduce Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) insurance rates for unincorporated land owners.
- Coordinate with SACOG (Sacramento Area Council of Governments) regarding the RHNA (Regional Needs Housing Assessment) and begin work to update the Housing Element.
- Develop a proposal to establish buffers between cities/communities, within which conservation easements could be directed to reinforce urban separation and to keep each community distinct and unique. Amend the Agricultural Mitigation ordinance to be consistent with the proposed buffers.
- Integrate the adopted HCP/NCCP (Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan) into the 2030 General Plan.
- Begin work on the Yolo Bypass Area Plan.