



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

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REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION

SUBJECT

Review Planning Program Budget and Fees for FY 2017-18

REPORT IN BRIEF

Attached is the Planning Program budget proposed for Fiscal Year (FY) 2017-2018. The full recommended budget is available online at:

<http://sunnyvale.ca.gov/Departments/Finance/BudgetDocuments.aspx>

Staff recommends that the Commission review the City Manager's Message/Letter of Transmittal. In addition, the Commission should also review the Community Development Department Narrative in Volume I, Operating Budget. This discussion includes information on past and projections of future activity.

The Planning program budget starts in Volume one (follows the department narrative). Excerpts for just the Planning Program budget are included in Attachment 1.

Boards and Commissions are asked to provide comments to the City Council on the recommended City budget where it could affect the Commission's work.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The recommendation of the Planning Commission on the budget is not subject to environmental review.

DISCUSSION

This is the second year of a two-year operating budget for the Planning Division. The structure and hours vary slightly from the current year (FY 2016-17) budget, with the inclusion of a new planner position to manage environmental review for projects and studies. The expenses are slightly higher, reflecting changes in the cost of living. In addition, the Planning Division has a supplemental project budget to provide on-call planning services to address the current high demand in development services.

Structure

The structure of the Planning Division budget has been similar for several budget cycles. The Planning budget is broken into three sections (called a Service Delivery Plan-SDP). They are: an SDP for Policy Planning, one for Development Services (also called zoning administration and current planning), and lastly an SDP for Management, Supervisory, and Administration Support Services.

Private development related activities are associated with an enterprise fund for Development Services. The Development Enterprise Fund supports all or some of the activities of the following divisions: Building, Planning, Engineering, Transportation and Traffic, Solid Waste, and Fire.

The first budget service area is Policy Planning. The primary activity affecting the Commission is

Policy Reports, the first activity-234110. These policy reports include study issues, general plan updates and similar policy activities. The entire Policy Planning SDP, and a portion of the Management, Supervisory and Administration Support SDP (about 25%), will continue to be associated with the General Fund. Policy work is mostly funded from a General Plan Maintenance Fee (GPMF) collected with the issuance of building permits. The GPMF is assessed based on 0.15% of valuation used for building permits (based on a standardized table of values), and is applied to the same projects that are subject to a Construction Tax of 0.54% of building valuation.

The second service area in the Planning program is Development Review. Planning Commission support is provided in the form of the various types of planning permits processed and zoning information provided by the Planning Division staff. Staff support to the Planning Commission is mainly associated with those permit applications requiring a Planning Commission public hearing. Support to the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) is like that of the Planning Commission, with many fewer applications requiring HPC review.

The third service area is Management, Supervisory and Administration Support Services. The activities include Management/Supervision (budget preparation, employee reviews, attendance at manager meetings, etc.) and Training. The third activity is called Administration and is for those tasks that do not easily fit into project work or the first two activities in this SDP.

As part of the proposed budget, policy projects such as the study issue for developing parking policies for downtown and for a review of increased housing for the Lawrence Station Area Plan are included.

Hours

FY 2017-2018 includes 1,760 more hours than last year, which reflects the new planner position for environmental review. FY 2017-2018 budget includes 30,750 hours.

The current fiscal year experienced continued high growth and activity and staff anticipates that next fiscal year will be as busy. If the volume of applications increases, supplemental staffing is recommended in the proposed budget to address the number and complexity of projects. The number and classification of full-time employees proposed in the FY 2017-2018 budget is increased to allow a new Senior Planner position dedicated to CEQA and environmental review concerns and a limited-term planner position to provide development services support. The distribution of the hours among the activities is generally the same as the current fiscal year. As part of application fees for private development proposals, fees are collected to cover project planner attendance at outreach meetings, study sessions and public hearings. These fees cover staff hours over and above budgeted amounts.

Staff support to the Planning and Heritage Preservation Commissions does not change. Planning Commission attendance at the annual Planning Commissioners Academy (previously known as the Planners Institute) is budgeted for 3-4 commissioners to attend. The 3-4 commissioner number is based on the average attendance of the last several years.

Non-Personnel Expenses

Most the expense for the Planning program is for staff salaries and benefits (about 85%). For non-personnel expenses the budget includes funds for advertising of public hearings, books, office supplies, postage, training, etc. There are also expenses for rent and usage of facilities, furniture, vehicles, etc.

Total Expenses

The following table shows the past and proposed Planning Program Budgets

OVERVIEW OF PLANNING PROGRAM BUDGETS

	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Proposed
General Fund	596,803	594,896	577,698	628,439	671,644
Development Enterprise Fund	1,835,431	1,844,170	2,083,944	2,244,812	2,563,075
General Services	0	0	0	89,232	95,862
TOTAL	2,432,234	2,479,066	2,661,643	2,962,482	3,330,0581

Fee Schedule

A recommended fee schedule is considered by the City Council along with the recommended budget. Copies of the Planning related fees will be provided to the Planning Commission, if available, prior to the Monday May 22, 2017 Planning Commission public hearing. Recommendations for fees are primarily changed due to general cost of living increases. A new fee type has been created for Village Center Outreach Plans as discussed in the recently adopted Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE).

PUBLIC HEARING

At the May 22, 2017 Planning Commission hearing, staff will make a short presentation to the Planning Commission on current activity levels and will be available for any questions about the budget. The Planning Commission has the option to make comments on the budget or to make a motion on the budget. The Planning Commission discussion (and motion, if there is one) will be provided to the City Council for the public hearing on the recommended budget on June 6, 2017, with adoption scheduled for June 20, 2017.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made through posting of the Planning Commission agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board and on the City's website.

RECOMMENDATION

Provide comments to the City Council or make a formal recommendation to the City Council on the Recommended FY 2017-2018 budget for the Planning Program.

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ATTACHMENTS

1. Recommended Planning Program 234 Budget

