

PERMIT CENTERS

DESCRIPTION

The Department of Community Development, better known as the Permit Centers, is a convenient “one-stop shop” for residents seeking community development services including permits and applications. The Department has two locations referred to as the Permit Center-East and the Permit Center-West. The Permit Center-East has been in service since 1989. Due to the success of the eastern location, services were expanded to a western location that opened in April 2001. The Permit Centers are staffed by representatives from Building Inspections, Planning, Public Utilities, and Public Works.

OBJECTIVES

- To consistently provide quality services to all citizens and customers in a professional, accurate, and efficient manner.
- To assist the public, including private citizens, builders, developers, and engineers, with their permitting and licensing needs.
- To provide information to the public concerning requirements and regulations related to zoning and subdivisions of property, building construction, and other aspects of the development process.
- To assist the public with questions concerning the agendas and processes of the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals.
- To provide a streamlined development review process at a convenient location.
- To accurately track, monitor, and administer the costs of services to provide them in a cost-efficient manner.

FISCAL YEAR 2022 SUMMARY

Annual Fiscal Plan

Description	FY20 Actual	FY21 Original	FY22 Approved	Change 21 to 22
Personnel	\$ 1,102,071	\$ 1,066,965	\$ 1,164,068	9.1%
Operation	17,613	13,117	20,930	59.6%
Capital	948	8,372	9,372	11.9%
Sub-Total	\$ 1,120,632	\$ 1,088,454	\$ 1,194,370	9.7%
Interdepartmental Billings*	(261,736)	(293,282)	(282,826)	(3.6%)
Total Budget	\$ 858,896	\$ 795,172	\$ 911,544	14.6%
Personnel Complement	16	16	16	0

*Reflects the reimbursement of four positions (2 Public Works; 2 Public Utilities) assigned to the Permit Center, which are reflected in the Permit Centers' personnel complement.

Permit Centers

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	FY20	FY21	FY22	Change 21 to 22
Workload Measures				
Total Number of Inquiries	14,056	16,259	16,584	325
Permit Applications Received	5,248	4,453	4,542	89
Reviews Performed	7,550	10,333	10,540	207
Business Licenses Reviewed	2,424	2,250	2,295	45

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Permit Centers’ budget for FY2021-22 is \$911,544 reflecting an increase of \$116,372, or 14.6 percent, from the prior approved budget. The personnel component increased by \$97,103 or 9.1 percent reflecting employee compensation increases and rising health care costs, for a total of \$1,164,068. The operating budget increased \$7,813, restoring funding removed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The capital budget of \$9,372 increased \$1,000, or 11.9%, to account for computer equipment replacement. The remaining \$10,456 reflects less reimbursements for staff via interdepartmental transfers due to turnover in these positions.

Staff from Building Inspections, Public Works, Public Utilities, and Planning provide services in the Permit Centers and funds to pay for these functions reside in the Permit Centers’ budget. Four staff members included in the complement have their personnel expenditures reimbursed, via interdepartmental transfer, by the appropriate department related to the services furnished. Reimbursements for FY2021-22 will be from the Public Works and Public Utilities departments and the sum of these offsets, totaling \$282,826, is shown in interdepartmental billings in the operating budget.

DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

The one-stop convenience at both the East and West locations simplifies the process of obtaining permits for the customer and improves overall service levels. Services provided include processing building permits, answering inquiries regarding code regulations, zoning, water and sewer availability, and road and drainage issues. The Permit Centers were designed to make it more convenient to process and approve permits at a central location. Technology is one of the driving forces to accomplish this process using the Geographic Information System (GIS) and the Tidemark software system. When a resident or builder enters the Permit Centers, they can leave with an approved permit for additions, decks, or accessory structures.

During the COVID-19 crisis, the Permit Center staff produced more work product, and have done so at a higher efficiency, than at any time in their history. Service quality is ensured so the customer remains the priority even with major changes in how the process is completed. Year-to-date estimates project the total number of inquiries (defined as a person-to-person contact, telephone call, or email request for service) answered by Department staff will rise to 16,259 in FY2020-21. The total number of reviews performed and permits issued are also projected to increase.