



INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning and Community Development Committee

FROM: Nora Gierloff, DCD Director

CC: Mayor Ekberg

DATE: October 11, 2021

SUBJECT: Community Development Update

ISSUE

Update on Department of Community Development (DCD) progress in hiring and permit review.

BACKGROUND

The 2021-2022 City budget showed 28 funded full time equivalents (FTEs) for DCD and three frozen positions. Based on improving financial projections, in May the Council granted approval to unfreeze the positions and fill the Development Review Engineer early to cover an expected retirement, see the organization chart at Attachment A. Originally streamlined sales tax funding was targeted to cover this increase, but currently Tukwila's American Rescue Plan Act funds are planned to be used.

The reorganization and hiring over the last six months has resulted in the following changes:

- Max Baker taking on the Development Supervisor role (formerly Planning Supervisor);
- Nancy Eklund moving into the new Long Range Planning Manager role;
- Hiring a Code Enforcement Officer, Joseph Mose, who will be able to cover the rental housing program when Kia Shagena goes on leave in January;
- Hiring two Associate Planners, Isaac Gloor and one pending offer;
- Hiring a Senior Plans Examiner, Kevin "KC" Ellis; and
- Hiring a Development Review Engineer who has unfortunately just given notice that he will be leaving so we will need to start over on this position.

We have been unable to fill the Combination Inspector position but are still recruiting. This leaves the Department at 30 FTEs. DCD still has one vacant position, which would bring the Department's FTE total to 31. I would like to focus on filling the current set of positions, onboarding, and training that group before deciding where an additional staff person would make the most difference.

DISCUSSION

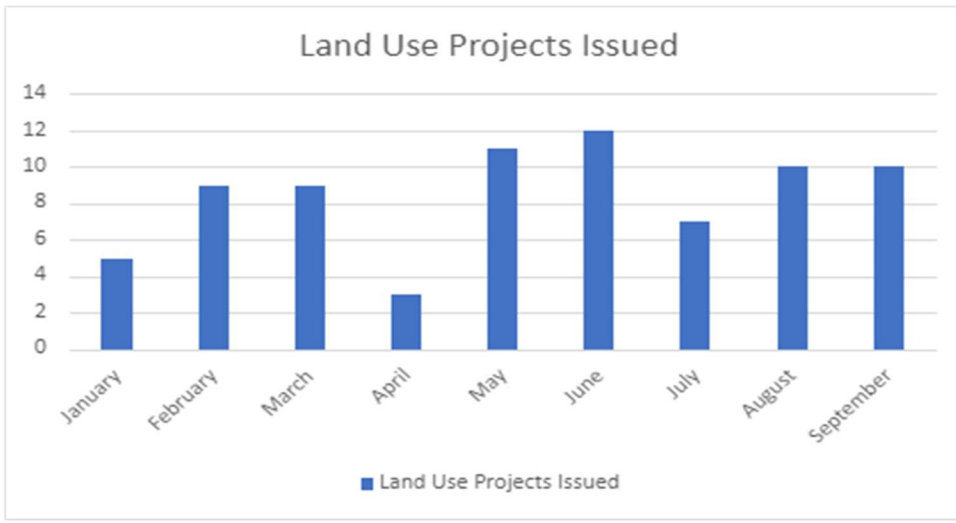
The department expenditures are on track to be slightly below the budgeted amount at the end of the year, though the different divisions are higher and lower than budgeted. It has been hard to project forward due to the substantial cash outs for retiring employees, hiring for different positions than shown in the budget, the need to bring staff in above the midpoint of the salary range, and use of consultant contracts to cover vacancies in plan review and inspection services.

The number and valuation of development permit applications continue to show a downward trend this year, see table below. DCD's YTD expenditures are \$2,362,000 while combined development and land use permit revenues are approximately \$1,700,000. In past years permit revenues have equaled or exceeded the Department budget.

Building Permit Activity
 Per Month thru August 2021



Project and Permit Issuance



We have been onboarding and training the new staff, a process that will continue with the latest hires. We should see some productivity gains as they begin to work more independently. The loss of the new development review engineer will set the engineering group back. The Building Division may need to assist with Fire plan review during the vacancy in the Fire Marshal's office which would increase their workload.

Recent Achievements

- The Transit Oriented Development Housing Action Plan has been adopted and we have joined with other South King Housing and Homelessness Partnership (SKHHP) cities on a grant to address two of the action items in the Plan. This would allow SKHHP to perform regional tracking of regulated and unregulated affordable housing.
- The small cell ordinance updating our wireless communications regulations has been adopted and we are working on streamlining the franchise permit process.
- The HB 1220 shelter/housing code changes have been adopted.
- Tukwila South residential design guidelines will return to Council with final recommended language.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Information only.

RECOMMENDATION

Information only.

