

Legislation Text

File #: 17-053, Version: 1

Presenter

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SUBJECT:

Public hearing and consideration of the first reading of an ordinance regarding the establishment of new fees for services provided or facilitated by the Planning and Community Development Department.

BACKGROUND / RATIONALE:

In FY 2015-16, City Council directed staff to conduct a fee study. A consultant was contracted to conduct a benchmark study and Planning and Community Development was the initial department analyzed. Recommendations included increases to some fees and creation of new fees for development services currently provided but paid for through the general fund. At the 2016 Budget Retreat, City Council directed staff to implement recommended new fees first, and that any proposals for fee increases should be examined subsequently.

The services provided but currently lacking an associated fee are development-related (see attachment). These services include requests for waivers from the City's sidewalk requirements, amendments to the adopted future land use and transportation plans, and various subdivision plat associated processes. They are driven by property owners and applicants who wish to develop their land in a manner differently than it presently exists. These requests require staff time to process, analyze, develop recommendations, and prepare detailed reports and materials for various and often multiple board, commission or City Council public hearings and considerations.

As indicated above, the study was benchmark in nature and compared the City of New Braunfels against similar size Texas municipalities as well as other cities in our local region. These recommended fees were then adjusted logically in comparison to existing local fees and actual staff time spent on each process. Staff presented these proposed fees to the development community at a meeting on September 29, 2016. After incorporating feedback, staff then briefed the Planning Commission at their meeting on November 1, 2016.

ADDRESSES A NEED/ISSUE IN A CITY PLAN OR COUNCIL PRIORITY:

✓	Yes	City Plan/Council Priority FY 2016-17 Adopted Budget and Plan of Municipal Services	One Senior Planner position is proposed to be funded by establishment of planning related fees. With increased development applications due to population growth, this additional position will allow the department to increase the speed of development-related processes meeting expectations of the development community.
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FISCAL IMPACT:

Based on the estimated number of applications, it is anticipated that these proposed fee increases could generate approximately \$60,000 per year. These funds would be used to off-set the cost of one additional position in the Planning and Community Development Department. This position would be responsible for increasing speed and consistency of development processes.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

Not applicable

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Following is a public input and presentation timeline associated with these proposed fee increases:

2015-2016:	Benchmark Study
May 2016:	City Council Budget Retreat
Aug 2016:	City Council Budget Presentation
Sept 2016:	Development Community Presentation
Nov 2016:	Planning Commission Presentation
Jan 23, 2017:	City Council Presentation
Feb 13, 2017:	City Council First Reading
Feb 27, 2017:	City Council Second Reading
April 1, 2017:	Proposed Implementation

Staff recommends approval with the above-proposed “grace period” of April 1, 2017 for implementation following approval of the second reading of the ordinance.