



Administrative Report

N.1., File # 21-2054

Meeting Date: 2/9/2021

To: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

From: BRANDY FORBES, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

TITLE

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE BUILDING PLAN CHECK EXPEDITING FEE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On August 18, 2020, the City Council received a report and authorized staff to proceed with soliciting outside consulting firms to provide expedited plan check services. After an RFP process, six firms were identified and recommended for these services. A separate report on the February 9, 2021 agenda identified the recommended firms for these professional services on an "as needed" basis.

City Council is now asked to provide staff with direction on implementing the fee for expedited plan check.

BACKGROUND

At the June 16, 2020 City Council meeting adopting the FY 2020-21 budget, the City Council requested that staff prepare a report regarding the possibility of providing an expedited plan check process utilizing consultant services. This service would be intended as complementary to current staffing functions rather than in lieu.

On August 18, 2020, staff presented a report addressing the history of staffing and procedures for Building Division plan check, the current plan check fee and contract structure, and options for this potential service offering of expedited plan check. After the discussion, staff was directed to move forward with seeking the contract services.

The Community Development Department issued a Request for Proposal and Qualification on December 1, 2020. After review of submitted proposals, six firms were identified to retain on an as-needed basis. The firms were selected based on thoroughness of the proposal, firm's history and past performance, experience with typical project types in Redondo Beach, level of licensed and experienced staff, turnaround time, and cost.

As described in the report earlier on the agenda, the initial term of the agreements will be for three years at a cost not to exceed \$15,000 each firm. The cost for plan check expediting will be reflected in an associated additional plan check fee paid by the applicant. The structure of payment will be for hours worked on a set of plans.

Plan Check Expediting Fee

Staff reached out to El Segundo, Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach, and Torrance to see which municipalities may be utilizing third party Building Division plan check expediting services. Although Hermosa does not expedite, they do send out all Building Division plan check to contractors. Manhattan Beach, and El Segundo offer expedited plan check review, charging an extra 50% fee of their plan check fee. The City of Torrance charges 60% of their plan check and energy fee. Further, although Building Division plan check is expedited in these communities, Planning and other division reviews are not outsourced.

The current Redondo Beach fee schedule includes a plan check expediting fee of an additional 50% of the base plan check fee, which appears to be the industry standard. A table comparing the fee for Redondo Beach to that of Torrance is included as an attachment, as Torrance seems to be the only local municipality with a slightly higher calculation for expediting.

As noted for the other cities, Redondo Beach's expediting is only for Building Division plan check, and would not include Planning or Engineering Division plan check. However, it's typically the Building Division area of review that requires a more significant amount of time with various rounds of corrections and resubmission. The timeline of initial review and subsequent reviews is expedited, but the timeframe for the applicant to make the required revisions and resubmit would continue to be dependent on the skill and availability of the applicant's design professionals.

Should City Council wish to revise the current plan check expediting fee, direction needs to be provided to staff on the fee amount. A revised fee will require an amendment to the City's Master Fee schedule, and must be formally adopted by resolution at a future meeting.

COORDINATION

Staff consulted with outside municipalities to understand other practices and services.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fee for expedited plan check will be applied toward the consultant cost to provide the service.

APPROVED BY:

Joe Hoefgen, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

August 18, 2020 City Council Administrative Report

Comparison of Redondo Beach and Torrance plan check expediting fees