Planning and Building Department

The Planning and Building Department consists of the following budget units:

Building Inspection Division
- 1100 262 Building Inspections

Current Planning Division
- 1100 277 Current Planning

Advance Planning Division
- 1100 282 Advance Planning

Mission

Building an even better Humboldt through:
- Understanding our customers’ expectations
- Delivering professional and helpful service
- Timely performance of duties
- Solving problems creatively
- Being consistent and efficient
- Developing productive relationships
- Increasing residents’ participation in community development
- Positively representing the interests of our communities
Purpose

The Advance Planning Division conducts long-range planning, and develops and implements programs to accomplish planning objectives per State and federal requirements. California state law requires that each city and county adopt a general plan “for the physical development of the county or city and any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning” (California Government Code, Section 65300). The plan can be understood as an expression of a community’s values and its vision for the future, a “blueprint” for anticipated growth and development, both public and private, which forms the basis for most local government land-use decision making.

Recommended Budget

The total recommended budget for Advance Planning is $1,874,143, a decrease of 17%. This decrease is attributable to the number of housing related projects. The recommended budget includes a General Fund contribution of $271,762.

Recommended Personnel Allocation

The recommended position allocation for FY 2014-15 is 6.0 FTE with no frozen positions. During FY 2013-14 there was an increased allocation of a grant-funded Housing and Community Programs Specialist. In addition, the position changes include
dis-allocating the 1.0 frozen Geographic Information Systems Coordinator.

**Board Adopted**

The Board adopted this budget as recommended.

**Program Discussion**

The Advance Planning team prepares and updates the General Plan and Land Use and Development codes, including Community Plans, Housing Element, and Local Coastal Plans. Staff reaches out to the community for input and participation in advanced planning programs and provides public information as requested. Advance Planning maintains an online Geographical Information System (GIS) to support internal data needs and to provide a service to the general public. Advance Planning also manages a General Plan implementation grant program and conducts special studies as needed.

The Advance Planning Division will be managing five distinct program initiatives in FY 2014-15:

**General Plan Update**

The primary focus of the Advance Planning Division during FY 2014-15 will be the completion of the County’s General Plan Update. This includes the re-circulation and final adoption of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Hearing Draft General Plan. The Board of Supervisors began public hearings on the Planning Commission Hearing Draft Plan in May 2012 and is approximately three-fourths of the way through review and deliberation of the document. Final adoption of the General Plan is tentatively scheduled for October 2015.

**Housing Element Implementation**

Staff will continue to manage the Phase II Multifamily Rezoning effort and other measures to implement the newly adopted 2014 Housing Element.

**GIS and Technical Support**

The GIS program provides services to the Department, other County Departments, and the general public. The GIS Group has made the County GIS system accessible to the public through the Internet, and will focus on updating these services during FY 2014-15. The GIS program also supports the Building and Current Planning Divisions permit processing program.

**General Plan Implementation Program**

This program is responsible for preparing ordinances and Community Plan Updates necessary for General Plan update implementation. The General Plan Implementation Program also pursues grant funding opportunities to help support Advance Planning.

**Affordable Housing and Grants**

This program manages first-time homebuyer and owner-occupied rehabilitation programs. In addition, staff will manage all State of California Housing and Community Development grants and actively seek funding for implementation of the Housing Element and General Plan.
Building Inspection (1100 262)

1100- General Fund
FY 2014-15 Proposed Budget

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Licenses and Permits</td>
<td>891,334</td>
<td>905,215</td>
<td>981,321</td>
<td>940,000</td>
<td>940,000</td>
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<td>Charges for Current Services</td>
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<td>(55,621)</td>
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<td>Other Revenues</td>
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<td>656</td>
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<td><strong>Total Revenues</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,080,912</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,123,533</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,189,877</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,175,037</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,175,037</strong></td>
<td><strong>(14,840)</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditures</th>
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<tr>
<td>Salaries &amp; Employee Benefits</td>
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<td>979,606</td>
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<td>Intrafund Transfers</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenditures</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1,296,200</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,404,196</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,374,646</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,374,646</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Net Revenue (Expenditures)</strong></td>
<td>(140,003)</td>
<td>(172,667)</td>
<td>(214,320)</td>
<td>(199,609)</td>
<td>(199,609)</td>
<td>14,711</td>
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<tr>
<th>Additional Funding Support</th>
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<td>172,667</td>
<td>214,319</td>
<td>199,609</td>
<td>199,609</td>
<td>(14,710)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Additional Funding Support</strong></td>
<td><strong>140,002</strong></td>
<td><strong>172,667</strong></td>
<td><strong>214,319</strong></td>
<td><strong>199,609</strong></td>
<td><strong>199,609</strong></td>
<td><strong>(14,710)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Staffing Positions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Allocated Positions</td>
<td>17.00</td>
<td>17.00</td>
<td>17.00</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>12.00</td>
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<td>Temporary (FTE)</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>(0.25)</td>
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<td><strong>Total Staffing</strong></td>
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<td><strong>17.23</strong></td>
<td><strong>17.25</strong></td>
<td><strong>12.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>12.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>(5.25)</strong></td>
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Purpose

The Building Inspection Division is responsible for issuing building permits and performing inspections to verify compliance with mandated codes and standards. The Building Inspection Division has jurisdiction in all unincorporated areas of Humboldt County. Statutory authority is provided by the California Health and Safety Code, California Business and Professions Code, and the Administrative Code.

Recommended Budget

The recommended budget for Building Inspection is $1,374,178, a decrease of 4% due to salary reimbursement from housing grants.

The recommended budget includes a General Fund contribution of $199,609 or 15% of the total recommended budget.

Recommended Personnel Allocation

The recommended position allocation for Building Inspection is 12.0 FTE for FY 2014-15 with no frozen positions. Changes for FY 2014-15 include dis-allocating 5.0 FTE frozen positions. Funding 5.0 FTE frozen positions in upcoming fiscal years is not likely due to current budget constraints.
Board Adopted

The Board adopted this budget as recommended.

Program Discussion

The workload of the Building Inspection Division consists of four primary program areas: Inspections, Permit Processing, Plan Checking, and Public Information.

Inspections and Violations
A major function of the Building Inspection Division is field inspections. Building Inspectors perform all facets of new construction, addition and remodel inspections from the beginning to the end of the project. They interpret and enforce State of California Title 24 Codes and Standards and local ordinances.

Building Inspectors also perform Planning Division site inspections, check building plans, perform health and safety inspections, check structures for conformance with business license applications, investigate alleged violations and provide information in the field to owners, contractors and other professionals. With over 3,500 square miles in Humboldt County, inspectors average over 100 miles of driving and six inspections daily.

Permit Processing
Permit Specialists process building permit applications, interpret zoning regulations and verify completeness of applications. Permit Specialists determine and apply appropriate land use and building regulations, codes and ordinances. Permit Specialists are responsible for tracking the status of various permit applications as those applications are reviewed by other agencies and departments through a referral process. Permit Specialists meet with both the permit applicants and the general public to advise them of application requirements. Additionally, Permit Specialists are responsible for accurate calculation of permit fees, permit issuance, collection of fees and maintenance of permit records. Each Permit Specialist averages approximately 20 customer contacts per day including email, telephone and face-to-face encounters.

The Building Inspection Division also collects fees for the following departments: Environmental Health Division of the Department of Health and Human Services, the Land Use Division of the Public Works Department, and the Current Planning Division. The Building Inspection Division also collects special drainage fees on behalf of the Public Works Department, and development impact fees for McKinleyville Union School District, Hydesville Elementary School District, Pacific Union School District, Fortuna Elementary School District, Ferndale Unified School District, and Humboldt Fire District 1.

Plan Checking
Plan checking ensures that construction plans for proposed construction conform to adopted building codes and other ordinances. The Plan Checker provides written correction information and is available to discuss any correction requirements with owners, applicants, contractors and other professionals.

Commercial, industrial and some complex construction plans are outsourced to one of several private-sector firms for review.

Public Information
Public information is provided without charge to property owners, potential property buyers, realtors, and construction professionals.

Permit Reform Efforts
The Building Inspection Division continues to process permit applications using the Department’s OnTrack permit processing system. Ongoing system enhancements and improvements are made as dictated by the needs of the Division and customers to improve service.
Purpose

The Current Planning Division processes land use permit applications based on the policies of the General Plan, Community Plans, County Codes and ordinances, as well as State and federal regulations. State planning law is codified within Government Code Section 65000. The Division also implements other state and federally mandated programs including flood hazard protection, geologic and/or seismic safety, timber production zoning, administration of Williamson Act contracts, and coastal planning and permitting authority.

Recommended Budget

The recommended budget for Current Planning is $1,739,035, an increase of 4%. This includes a General Fund contribution of $1,258,145. The increase is attributable to insurance charges.

Recommended Personnel Allocation

The recommended position allocation for FY 2014-15 is 17.0 FTE with a 1.0 FTE frozen position. Changes for FY 2014-15 include dis-allocating 4.0 FTE frozen positions. Funding 4.0 FTE frozen positions in upcoming fiscal years is not likely due to current budget constraints.
Board Adopted

The Board adopted this budget as recommended.

Program Discussion

The Current Planning Division consists of three sections: Current Planning, Development Assistance, and Central Administration.

Current Planning
Current Planning’s principal work is processing land use permit applications for subdivisions, lot line adjustments, coastal development permits, special permits, and use permits. The Division also processes applicant-initiated amendments to the General Plan and Zoning text and maps. A primary function of the permit process involves support of the Planning Commission and Zoning Administrator.

The Current Planning Division also provides staff support to the Planning Commission, the Forestry Review Committee and the Williamson Act Advisory Committee. In addition, Current Planning provides public information and reviews building applications.

Code Compliance
Planning and Building Code Compliance unit responds to public complaints and helps the public identify and resolve code violations.

Development Assistance
Development Assistance is responsible for providing project facilitation services to customers, modernizing internal systems used for managing building and planning permit applications, updating and maintaining print and digital outreach materials for the public, and tracking customer satisfaction. Development Assistance also reviews business license referrals, assigns addresses and street names, and manages the code compliance unit.

From the collection of Steve Lazar.