Action Item
Agenda Item No. 15

Report to the Auburn City Council

City Manager's Approval

To:	Mayor and City Council Members
From:	Wilfred Wong, Community Development Director
Date:	June 13, 2011
Subject:	Review of City Operations, Community Development Department

The Issue

City Council has requested a review of all city operations. Each month a different city department will review its operations with the City Council. The Community Development Department will be describing its operations at this Council meeting.

Conclusions and Recommendations

None. This is a discussion item.

Major Laws & Statutes

Following are the major laws and statutes governing the operations of the Community Development Department (CDD):

Planning
- California Planning and Zoning Law
- California Subdivision Map Act
- California Environmental Quality Act
- Brown Act
- Auburn Municipal Code

Building
- California Code of Regulations (Building, Fire, Plumbing, Electrical, Mechanical, Residential)
- Auburn Municipal Code

Code Enforcement
- International Property Maintenance Code
- Uniform Code for Abatement of Dangerous Buildings
- Auburn Municipal Code

Background

The Community Development Department for the City of Auburn has evolved through the years. Primarily, the CDD is involved with what occurs on private property. Depending on the issue,

CDD is also involved on public property. From the vacant lot through the life of the building to demolition and reconstruction, the different functions/divisions of the CDD (Exhibit A, organization chart) regulates/manages what occurs on a lot. With that in mind one can better understand why the CDD encompasses the range of functions/divisions described in Exhibits B – G (planning, building, code enforcement, public service counter & support, affordable housing, and special projects).

Over the last twenty years the CDD has changed to provide for better accountability within one department, expand the range of public services, and respond to the fiscal constraints placed upon the city. In 1990 Building was its own department, there was no code enforcement officer, the city had not been involved with an affordable housing project, there was no business loan program, there were multiple public counters staffed by different departments, and city hall had no answer machines or centralized phone system.

One item worth discussing in more detail is the Public Service Counter & Support division (Exhibit E), which was created due to the recession in the early 1990s. Fiscal constraints at that time moved the city to consolidate clerical staff and create one public counter to handle issues pertaining to public works, planning and building. This staff also provided clerical support to other city departments as needed. Due to the current fiscal constraints just about everyone in city hall has helped to staff this function. At this time the primary back-up for this function are the building inspectors with planners providing additional support.

The Public Service Counter is an example of not only how intertwined CDD staff has become, but also how CDD staff and other city departments are working together to try to provide a consistent level of service to the public.

Analysis

CDD operations can be broken down into six functions. See Exhibits B – G for a detailed description of each.

1. Planning (Exhibit B)
2. Building (Exhibit C)
3. Code Enforcement (Exhibit D)
4. Public Service Counter & Support (Exhibit E)
5. Affordable Housing (Exhibit F)
6. Special Projects (Exhibit G)

Due to staff reductions within CDD and other departments, the type of work being done no longer can stay within traditional boundaries. Especially within building, code enforcement and special projects staff is being utilized to assist each other and other departments.

Statistics have been provided for building (Exhibit H), code enforcement (Exhibit I) and planning (Exhibit J). Building activity has declined since 2007, but has seen a minor increase in 2010. Code enforcement has seen an increase in activity since 2007. Planning entitlements has declined since 2007.

To varying degrees for each of these functions, the statistics provide only a partial picture. For example, much of what is described as "assistance to other departments" (Exhibits C, D, E and G) has no category for tracking. Also, there is a considerable amount of time spent by CDD that is customer service related that has no application or fee. Finally, the time spent on a project varies greatly and it is difficult to compare. Following are some examples:

1. Inquiries on what can be built, what type of business, research on a property, potential buyers, etc. Assistance can range from minutes to hours. Sometime site visits or meetings will be needed, which can include other departments (no statistics).
2. Working with the owner of the Gottschalks building since its closure to find a new tenant (only statistic is a building permit for the tenant improvements).
3. Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan started in 2007 and continues today. In 2009 51 hours per month of CDD staff time was needed and in 2010 68 hours per month. This does not include staff time required from other departments (noted as a project in 2007).
4. Planning projects in Auburn are all in-fill and as you know can be very controversial and time consuming. Examples of these are Auburn Bluffs subdivision/Auburn Folsom Road, Indian Hill office/Indian Hill Road, Elm Plaza/373 Elm Avenue, Tuscan Palms townhome/Electric Street, and cell tower variance on Borland Avenue (noted once when application submitted).
5. Dog ordinance amendment versus dog vaccination reporting ordinance amendment. Update of the sign ordinance versus changing public noticing requirements for projects (examples of similar projects with considerable staff time difference).
6. Code enforcement could be a courtesy letter to the demolition of a building (446 Olive Orchard).
7. Elm Plaza/373 Elm Avenue, Auburn Towers/1240 High Street, Summer Ridge Subdivision/Oakridge Way. These are projects that went through the route of trying to be sold by the owner, foreclosed on by the bank, inquiries by multiple bank representatives, and inquiries by potential buyers. These all took considerable amount of time by CDD and other city departments to resolve. The only statistic occurred at the end when a building permit was obtained to complete the projects.
8. Airport & Airport Industrial Park. Since the city is the property owner there are tasks that do not require an application and therefore not tracked. Examples of these would be lease issues, changing lots lines (Coherent buildings and Nella Oil), and reviewing city and county projects for compliance with Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.
9. First time homebuyer and housing rehabilitation programs. Did not track the number of hours to complete the grant application. For the last two months staff time totaled 50 hours. It is anticipated that approximately 55 hours of staff time per month for two years will be needed to complete this project (special project with no statistic).

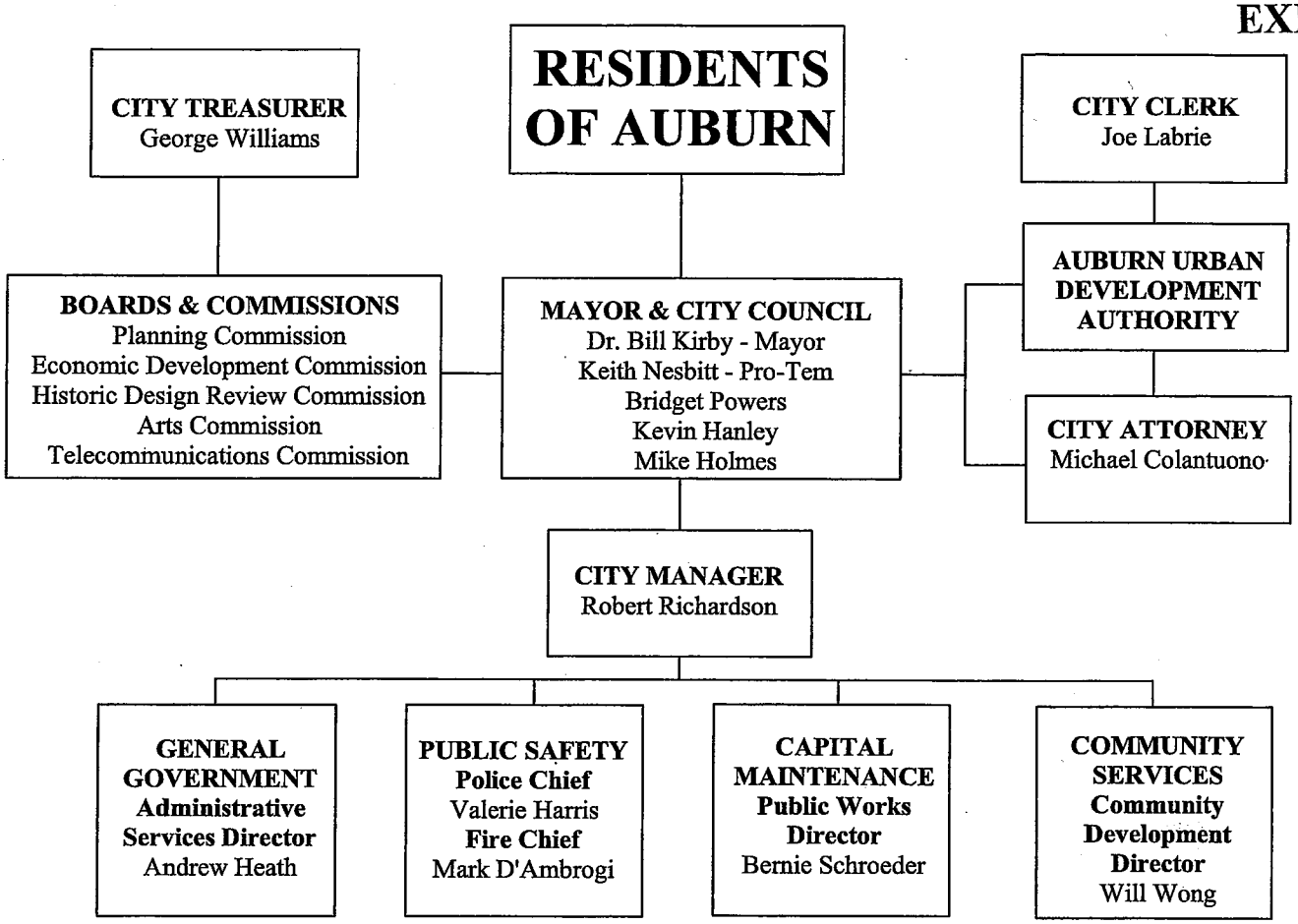
Alternatives Available to Council; Implications of Alternatives

1. Request additional information.
2. No further discussion.

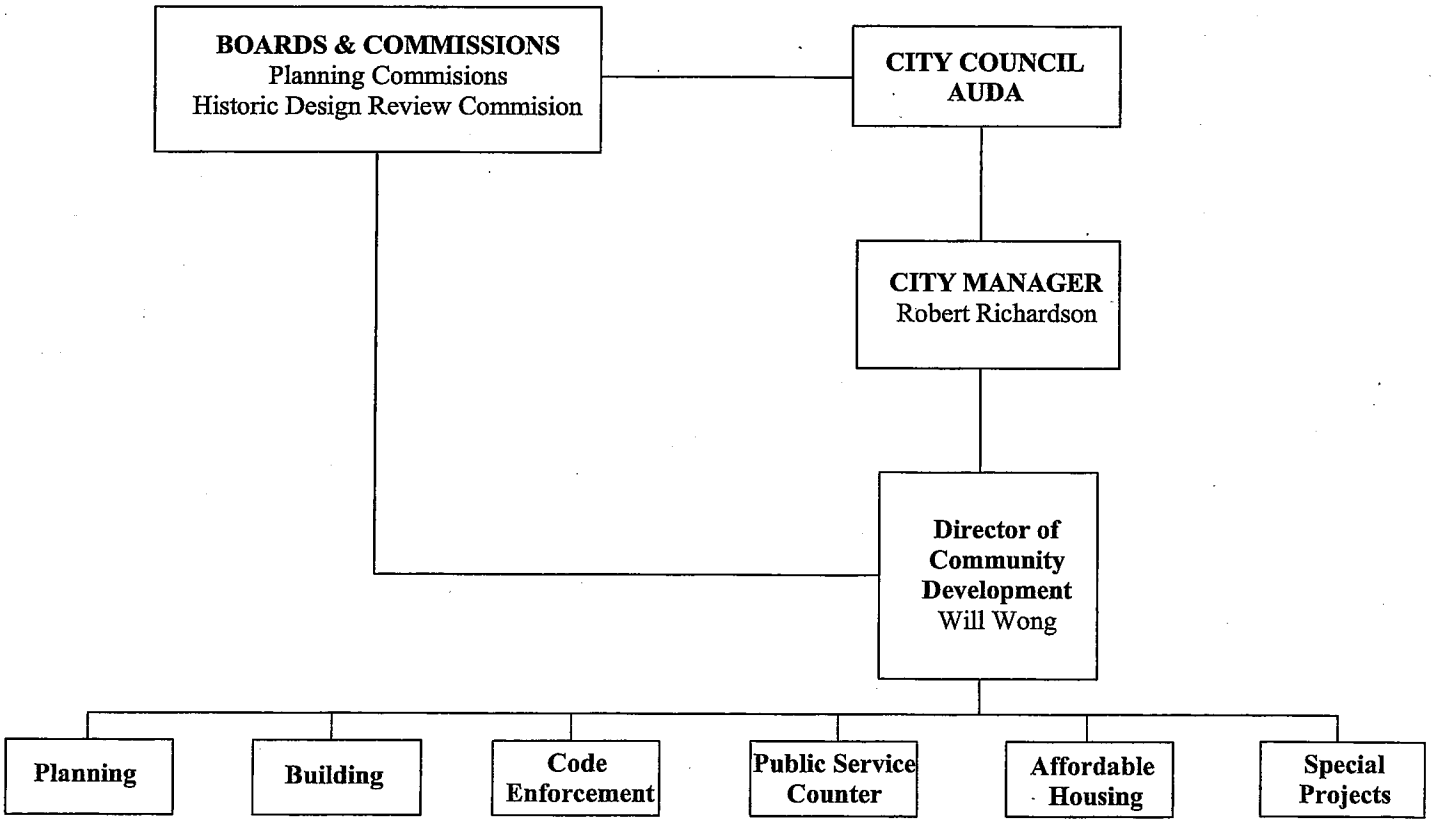
Fiscal Impact

None. Discussion item only.

EXHIBIT A



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



PLANNING

- Planning provides professional guidance and technical assistance to the City Council, City Commissions and the public. Primary staff for the Planning Commission and Historic Design Review Commission. Implements and monitors city growth and development policies; accepts, processes and analyzes development applications and recommends action on such applications to the Council, Planning Commission and Historic Design Review Committee. The department also acts on items such as administrative permits, sign permits, businesses licenses, home occupations and code enforcement.
- Current planning
  1. Administrative Permits
  2. Annexations
  3. Design Review Permits
  4. Development Agreements
  5. Historic Design Review
  6. Ordinance Amendments
  7. Pre-Development Review
  8. Sign Permits
  9. Subdivisions
  10. Tree Permits
  11. Use Permits
  12. Variances
- Long-range planning
  1. General Plan (Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Open Space/Conservation, Noise, Safety, Economic, and Historic).
  2. Housing Element.
  3. Amendments and Updating of General Plan Elements.
  4. Tracking and implementation of General Plan.
  5. Rezones.
  6. Specific Plans.
- Coordinate development with other city departments.
- Code enforcement for zoning violations.
- Home occupations.
- Business license review through the business license process (Administrative Services/Finance).

- Plan check for structures and buildings through the building permit process (Building).
- Improvement plan review through the grading permit process (Public Works).
- CEQA for Public Works and other city projects.
- Provide assistance to Airport and Airport Industrial Park
  1. Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.
  2. Airport Master Plan.
  3. Avigation Easement and Deed Notices.
  4. CEQA and NEPA.
  5. Airport Forum/Users Group.
  6. Lease Issues.
- Senior Planner and Associate Planner second back-up for Public Service Counter & Support.
- SACOG
  1. Regional Housing Needs Allocation
  2. Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

BUILDING

- Building permits. Most structures/buildings require a building permit. Few exceptions (fences under 6', 120 sq.ft accessory building, retaining wall under 4' in height, and finish work like painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops).
- Plan check for structures and buildings.
- Inspection for work covered by building permits.
- Development impact fess collected at issuance of building permit.
- Business license review through the business license process (Administrative Services/Finance).
- Improvement plan review through the grading permit process (Public Works).
- Code enforcement. Stop work order "red-tag" work without a building permit.
- With Code Enforcement Officer obtain compliance regarding substandard housing (illegal units, inadequate conditions, sanitation, etc.).
- Building Official and Building Inspector first back-up for Public Service Counter & Support.
- Provide assistance to Fire Department.
    1. Final inspections.
    2. Sprinkler inspections.
    3. Weed abatement.
    4. Inspections for day care and nursery schools.
    5. Inspections for UL300 (restaurant hood & duct fire suppression systems).
    6. Inspections for fire alarm systems.
- Provide assistance to Planning.
    1. Plan checks.
    2. Property research for projects.
    3. Development fee letter for project applicants.
    4. Field surveys (signs, parking, site pictures)
- Provide assistance to Public Works Department.
    1. Sewer audit. Review service fee to use (units, use, square footage).

- AutoCAD. Update zoning map as needed, information handouts, floor plan for 1103 High Street.
- Board of appeals for Building Code.
- Addressing for buildings. Inform city departments, agencies and post office.
- State of California quarterly reports for SMIP (Strong Motion Instrumental Program) and SB 1473 Fees (Green Building).
- Placer County.
    1. Monthly provide to Assessor's Office building permits, plan checks, plans, building finals, and monthly report of building activity.
    2. Monthly provide to County Economic Development Department monthly report of building activity.
    3. Quarterly provide to County Executive Office collection of county facilities fee.
- Residential construction activity statistics to McGraw-Hill for publication.
- Monthly report to U.S. Department of Commerce (Census Bureau).

CODE ENFORCEMENT

- Assists all departments with enforcement and citation process. If needed process can require notice & orders and warrants.
- Provides assistance to Community Development Department.
  1. Nuisances-garbage, vehicles, property maintenance.
  2. Signs.
  3. Zoning violations (home occupations, fences, illegal dwellings).
- Provides assistance to Police Department.
  1. Abandoned vehicles on public property.
  2. Abatement of vehicles on private property.
  3. Animal control (livestock/fowl permits, dangerous dogs).
  4. Transient camps.
  5. Inspection of massage establishments.
  6. Posting of private lots (trespassing, dumping, parking, skateboarding).
- Provides assistance to Building.
  1. Substandard housing (illegal units, inadequate conditions, sanitation, etc.).
  2. Inspection of massage establishments.
  3. Dangerous buildings.
  4. Stop work order "red-tag" work without building permit.
- Provides assistance to Fire Department.
  1. Inspection of massage establishments.
  2. Weed abatement for developed parcels.
  3. Fire extinguisher violations.
- Provides assistance to Finance Department.
  1. Business licenses.
- Provides assistance to Public Works Department.
  1. Right-of-way violations.
- Provides assistance to Placer County Environmental Health Department.
  1. Illegal dumping into waterways.
  2. Substandard housing (sewage).

PUBLIC SERVICE COUNTER & SUPPORT

- Main counter for public to make contact for public services. Includes development, grading, zoning, building, encroachment permits, bus schedules/passes, business licenses, signs, etc.
- Public counter for Community Development and Public Works Departments. When other departments are not available public is directed to "room 3."
- Phone system directs "0" and general assistance calls to Public Service Counter & Support staff.
- Rental of city facilities (Rose Room, Room 10, School Park Preserve, Carnegie Library, Airport).
- Coordinate issuance of street banner permits (Maple St., High St./Central Square).
- Provides assistance to Community Development Department.
    1. Process plans for plan check
    2. Issuance of minor building permits (re-roofing, minor plumbing, HVAC)
    3. Payment of bills (blue claims).
    4. Distribution of agenda packet and preparation of minutes for Planning Commission and Historic Design Review Commission.
    5. Clerical
- Provides assistance to Public Works Department.
    1. Payment of bills (blue claims).
    2. Clerical
    3. Distribution of monthly report for wastewater treatment plant.
- Provides assistance to Police Department.
    1. Secretary for Traffic Committee (distribution agenda packet, minutes).
    2. False alarm reports.
- Provides assistance to Fire Department
    1. Issuance of burn permits.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

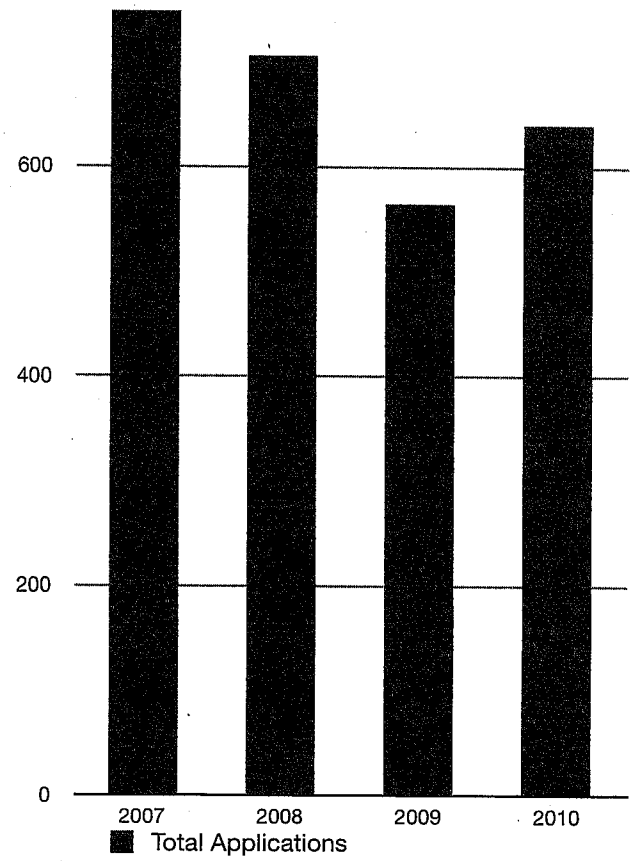
- HOME Investment Partnerships Program.
  1. First Time Homebuyer Program.
  2. Housing Rehabilitation Program.
- Annual monitoring of affordable housing projects.
- Mercy housing project – Sisters of Mercy. AUDA assistance, HUD grant, HOME grant.
- Habitat for Humanity, Palm Terrace Apartments, 610 Auburn Ravine Road (Volunteers of America).
- Funding for affordable housing (AUDA housing fund and grants).
- Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Assist City Manager with economic development and redevelopment.
  1. Expansion of AUDA project area in 2007.
  2. 1290 redevelopment implementation plans.
  3. CDBG business loan program.
  4. Purchase/sale of 215-219 Maple Street from County to OTBA in 2004.
  5. Placer County Economic Development Professionals Group.
  6. Wine Trail directional signage.
  7. State Theatre.
  8. Streetscape.
- Update of Facilities, Equipment and Programs fee.
- Develop General Plan update fee analysis and program.
- Ordinance Amendments for other city departments.
  1. Dogs.
  2. Dog vaccination reporting by veterinarians.
  3. Massage therapists.
  4. Tattoo shops.
  5. Panhandling.
  6. Taxis.
  7. False alarms.
- 2009 Parking Study and parking management.
- Evaluation of Auburn Recreation District park development impact fee nexus study.
- Sale of right-of-way to Citizens Bank (Elm Plaza).
- Outdoor seating/encroachment permit guidelines.
- Grants (School Park Preserve, State Theatre/Performing Arts Center, Boys & Girls Club).
- School Park Preserve (design, grants, development agreement, negotiations with school district).
- Film permits.
- Auburn Union Elementary School District 7-11 Committee 2008-2010.
- Policy for the sale of excess city right-of-way and city owned parcels.
- Census 2010.

Community Development Department

	Building Permit Activity			
	2007	2008	2009	2010
Alter, Add, Repair - Commercial	41	78	63	56
Alter, Add, Repair - Dwellings	273	236	145	195
Carport, Garages, Fences	16	11	5	3
Commercial	5	0	7	1
Demolition	12	11	4	1
Mechanical, Electrical & Plumbing	201	196	184	224
Multi-Family Dwelling	3	2	0	0
Plan Check	158	154	143	127
Signs	2	7	4	4
Single Family Dwelling	22	4	5	21
Swimming Pools	14	7	5	8
Total Applications	747	706	565	640
Total Inspections	2163	1506	1265	1332
Total Value	$21,301,084.75	$11,063,971.83	$16,345,056.55	$16,138,745.77
Total Permit Fees Excluding Sewer & Mitigations	$276,016.89	$178,221.94	$163,499.24	$189,366.82
Penalty	0	9	6	6



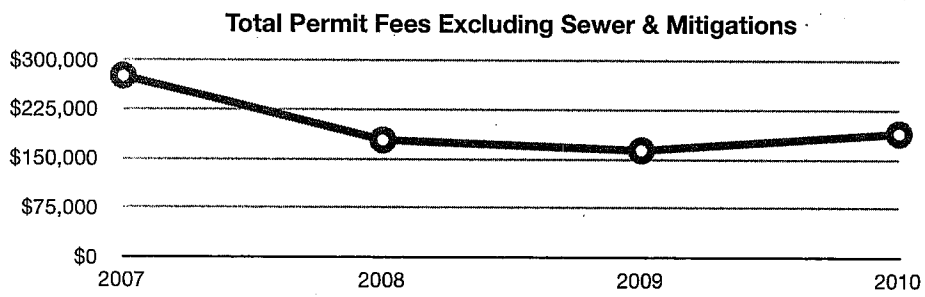


EXHIBIT H

Community Development Department

	Code Enforcement Activity			
	2007	2008	2009	2010
Business Licensing (Massage/Home Occ.)	25	25	16	23
Debris, Veg., No Garbage Service	30	35	31	22
Animal Related	0	10	12	12
Miscellaneous	4	1	4	2
Noise	3	1	1	1
Signs	14	8	13	9
Sub-Standard, Vacant Structures, Pools	13	15	24	20
Transient - Posting Property	0	8	6	2
Unfounded Complaints	2	3	12	8
Abandoned Vehicles (Private or Public)	18	16	18	14
Zoning (Outdoor Displays, Fences)	1	8	9	16
Total Investigations	110	130	146	129
Citations (Criminal, Administrative)	12	21	41	42
Citation Amounts Received	$300	$900	$1,100	$10,020
Abatements/ Warrants	1	1	0	0
Abatement/ Removal	1	0	0	0
Notice & Order	4	7	5	4
Tows	2	7	2	0

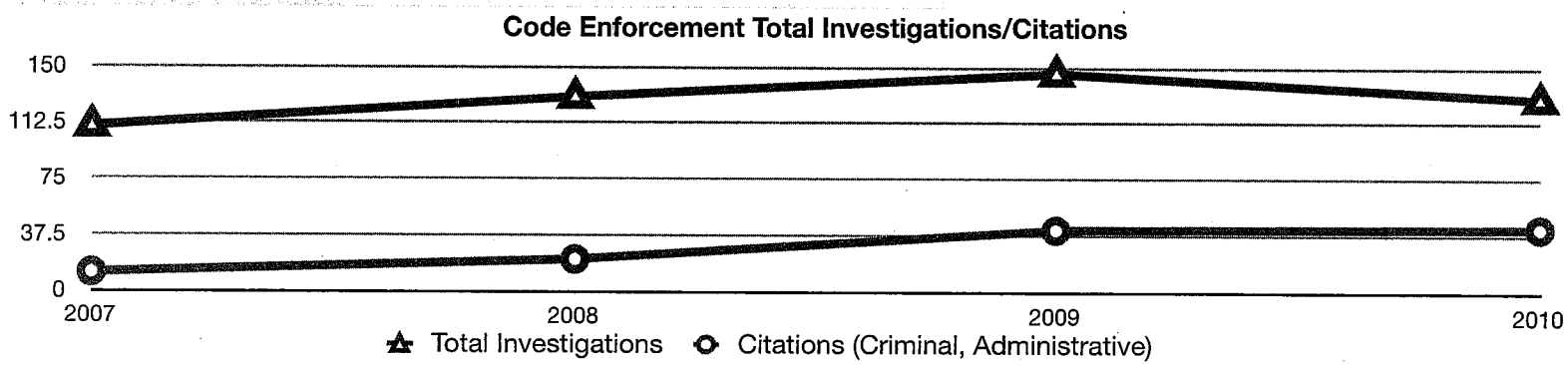
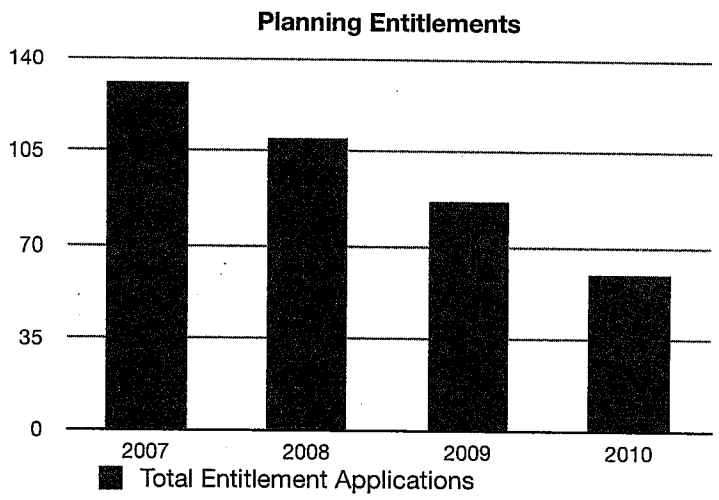


EXHIBIT I

Community Development Department

	Planning Entitlements			
	2007	2008	2009	2010
Administrative Permit	6	0	0	1
Annexation	1	0	0	0
Design Review Permit	11	10	4	2
Development Agreement	1	0	0	0
General Plan Amendment	3	2	1	0
Historic Design Review	44	39	36	21
Livestock & Fowl Permit	0	3	0	0
Lot Split	4	3	0	2
Ordinance Amendment	3	4	2	4
Pre Development	6	2	6	1
Rezone	2	1	1	0
Sign Permits	18	18	24	20
Subdivision	3	3	1	0
Tree Permit	14	10	5	3
Use Permit	6	9	3	5
Variance	9	6	4	1
Total Entitlement Applications	131	110	87	60



Community Development Department

	Admin Applications			
	2007	2008	2009	2010
BLA Review	3	5	2	2
CEQA Review for PW	3	5	1	5
Home Occupation	75	82	57	67
Planchecks	212	144	89	38
Business License Review	0	0	0	0
Total Admin Applications	293	236	149	112

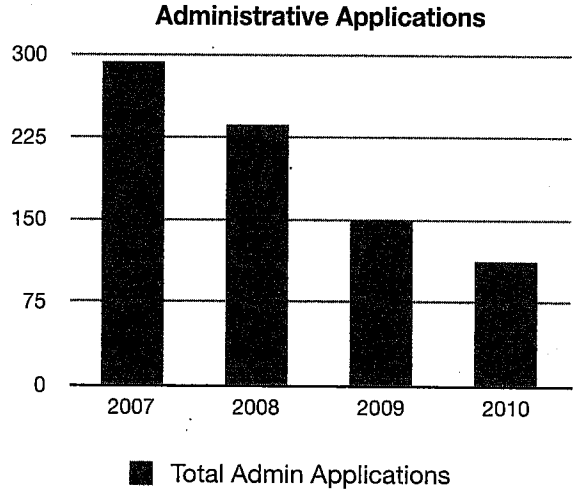


EXHIBIT J

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