

Office of the City Manager

City of Richland Hills, Texas

Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor Bill Agan and members of the Richland Hills City Council.
From: Eric Strong, City Manager
Date: June 2, 2015
Subject: Community Development Service Delivery

Council Action: No action, discussion only

Background Information:

Staff has been evaluating how effectively we provide service delivery in the Building Inspection and Code Compliance Division. The office is responsible for several functions, including:

- Building Plan Review
- Field Inspections
- Code Compliance
- Permits
- Planning Services

These functions are handled through a combination of in-house efforts by staff and contracting out to various entities. The permit processing is handled by our permit employee. The code compliance is handled by our code officer. However, the building plan review, field inspections and planning services are all outsourced (at least partially). The building plan review and field inspections are contracted with Bureau Veritas and the planning services are handled by Freese and Nichols.

Currently, we spend \$37,000 per year on planning services and \$36,000 per year on plan review and field inspections. We also have budgeted \$30,000 for part time code compliance to supplement our full time employees efforts. In addition to this, based on the restructuring of duties of some personnel in this department, we have reduced our salary expenses by \$15,000. This totals \$118,000.

We could repurpose a portion of these funds in order to hire a full time Building Official. A Building Official could handle all of the building plan review and planning services. They could

also do a lot of the smaller (mainly residential) field inspections. Some of the more complex field inspections would still need to be handled by Bureau Veritas.

With an anticipated budget impact of \$93,000 (salary and benefits/taxes), we could make this type of transition budget neutral and be able to bring many of these responsibilities in-house. This would allow us to be more responsive to many requests and provide better customer service on many projects.

This is not an item that requires council action at this time. However, I would like feedback on whether or not this is a direction you would like to go. If so, we can move forward with hiring someone and then amend the budget to reflect the new Full Time Employee as we do budget amendments at the end of the year.

Board/Citizen Input: N/A

Financial Impact; N/A

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Attachments: N/A