

DRE Advisory Committee Minutes

Thursday August 28th, 2025

10:00 am – 12:00 p.m.

DRE Conference Room w/Microsoft teams virtual option

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Scott Smith, Brian Calhoun, Ronald Honn, Jessica Swinchoski (virtual), Julie Shoemaker, Rhett Osko, Jennifer Cecil, Lee Tankersley.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Vice-chair Sheva Willoughby

DRE STAFF PRESENT: Kevin Walker, City Planning Director
Dan Sexton, LUR/DRE Planning Manager
Tamara Baxter, DRE Planning Supervisor
Alexander Painter, LUR Planning Supervisor
Jeff Hanenberg, Deputy Fire Marshal
Mellisa Wutzke, Senior Analyst
Kim Dodge, Senior Planning Technician
Renee Egeler, Senior Administrative Assistant

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

1. Approve Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Shoemaker to approve the June 10th 2025 minutes. Mr. Honn seconded. Member Cecil recused herself. Motion passed unanimously.

2. DRE-Planning

• Staffing updates & Introductions

Mr. Sexton provided staffing updates: DRE reorganizing, an Inspector II position has been filled and transitioned those duties from the Planner I allowing plan review to be 1-3 days.

He introduced Tamara Baxter as the new DRE Planning Supervisor, she will also provide in-person day-to-day support for DRE staff and will also support Mr. Sexton in his overall management of the DRE.

• 2026 DRE-Planning Fee Schedule

Mr. Sexton provided a draft to the 2026 DRE-Planning Fee Schedule based on anticipated budget expenditures. Most fees are unchanged; others are modest changes. We will be looking into future changes for commercial permit fees with subsequent fee audits.

Discussion with questions followed.

Mr. Sexton also shared that DRE is anticipating one-time expenditure reserve withdrawals (as needed) vs continued withdrawals to maintain buffer for salaries and unexpected expenses.

Discussion and questions followed.

The following questions were submitted by HBA requesting response:

1. Hillside Inspection Costs

If the additional inspection costs are being driven primarily by homeowner or remodeler activity, will DRE consider a more targeted approach? It seems that compliant builders may be absorbing costs created by others, and we'd like to understand how those distinctions are handled.

Mr. Sexton explained that there are 3 required inspections for HS prior to reinspect fees being assessed. Additionally, Mr. Sexton shared that the newly established "Reinspection" fee has been leverage to account for all projects that request inspections beyond the scripted inspections anticipated with the current DRE plan review fee.

2. Purpose of Fee Increases

Is this increase meant to cover a budget gap or fund future staffing needs? With added demands like the wildfire resiliency code, it feels more like a stopgap than a strategic fix. It would be helpful to know if this is part of a long-term plan or a reactive response to deeper issues.

Mr. Sexton explained the cost of expenditures and anticipated revenue are considered to avoid reserve fund draws given historic reserve fund reductions. The proposed fee adjustments are not being considered to fund future staff positions or as a funds gap measure.

3. Re-review Fees

While we understand the re-review fee structure has already been established, is there any discretion in applying these fees? For example, will additional reviews triggered by major scope changes be treated differently than those caused by new or inconsistent reviewer comments?

While DRE plan review fees are hard coded into PPRBD's permit system by permit type, DRE staff can determine if adjustment may be necessary on a case-by-case basis if the project and review scope support it. The "Re-review" fee is not applied when a subsequent review is needed to account for impact fee payments, posting assurances or if there was a reviewer error.

4. Signage Fee Increases

With the increase in signage-related fees, will there be an opportunity to review the draft sign code when it becomes available? We're assuming some of these changes are in anticipation of upcoming updates and want to make sure there's a chance for input.

Mr. Sexton responded, yes there will be opportunity to review the proposed sign code prior to it being presented to City Council at the end of year.

A motion was made by Ms. Shoemaker to support Fee Schedule. Mr. Honn seconded, Motion passed unanimously.

- **Budget updates**
 - **This item is being moved to the end of meeting.**

DRE-Fire Construction Services

- **Staffing updates**

Mr. Hanenberg introduced Renee Egeler as the new Senior Administrative Assistant.

- **Inspection/plan review turnaround times**

Mr. Hanenberg reported inspections are 2-3 days and plan review is 4 days. Staffing is right size for volume.

- **Stats**

Mr. Hanenberg shared stats for May, June & July and answered questions following discussion.

- **SWFRC status**

DFM Hanenberg provided updates on behalf of FM Cooper. They are working with IT and GIS to identify the risk map and will propose a revised map. He shared dates of implementation. There is an anticipated need for 2 positions for this task to cover additional reviews and inspections. They are still down 5 positions prior to these 2 mentioned positions.

Discussion with questions followed.

- **Evaluating fees schedule changes for 2026**

Fee schedule changes will be in place for upcoming projects, affidavits are being considered. Materials will be approved by Fire Construction, it is yet to be determined if that will take place at building permit level, development plan or prior to final inspection. We are looking for ideas and will follow up.

Discussion with questions followed.

3. Financial Update/Budget updates

Ms. Wutzke presented the Q2 2025 Financial report to members. Starting with the previous deficit, which was \$875,000, of which expenses and salaries were budgeted. Each side of DRE is improving, there was a \$154,000 draw vs the \$875,000 anticipated and the goal is to improve to the smallest amount or zero, if possible. Both sides saw more revenue than expenses.

Discussion with questions followed.

Mr. Sexton followed with budget updates reflecting on the financial report and explaining how fees are assessed, and adjustments are made at time of issuance of building permits.

Mr. Walker stated that future reports will provide more detail in addition to the improvement of the reporting since our last meeting.

Discussion with questions followed.

Meeting adjourned 11:34 a.m.