



Legislation Text

File #: 14-0356, **Version:** 1

Ordinance No. 14-51 amending Ordinance No. 13-77 (2014 Appropriation Ordinance) for a supplemental appropriation to the Development Review Enterprise in the amount of \$119,665 for the purpose of adding two additional full-time Fire Inspector positions

From:

Peter Wysocki, Planning and Development Director, Planning & Development Department

Summary:

City staff is seeking a supplemental budget appropriation to fund two additional positions within the Development Review Enterprise - Fire: one fire inspector and one senior fire code inspector. The positions will be funded entirely by the Development Review Enterprise and no General Fund funds will be used.

Previous Council Action:

The City Council appropriates funding for the Development Review Enterprise within the City's annual budget. There have been no previous requests for supplemental funding.

Background:

The Development Review Enterprise was established by a city ordinance and has been codified in City Code Chapter 14, Article 7. The DRE was established to be a self-funded department through fees collected primarily from building permits and plan reviews. Although the DRE is a division of the Planning and Development Department, it has a separate budget and is fully funded by fees it collects. The DRE has two sections: (1) zoning/planning and (2) fire construction services. The zoning/planning section has 4 FTEs, while fire section has 6 FTEs (plus a Deputy Fire Marshal who is funded by GF.)

City Code § 14.7.102 establishes the function of the DRE as follows:

- A. Review residential, multi-family and commercial building permits to ensure compliance with the zoning and subdivision regulations;
- B. Conduct review and inspection of hillside site plans to ensure compliance with the hillside ordinance and the hillside design manual;
- C. Review sign permits to ensure compliance with the Zoning Code;
- D. Provide inspections for certificates of occupancy to ensure compliance with the approved development plan;

- E. Provide contractor and public information services on a walk in or call in basis regarding permit review, zoning and land use information;
- F. Collect and manage financial assurances associated with building permits and certificates of occupancy; and
- G. Collect and manage fees and reimbursements associated with certain land use applications filed or approved in accord with chapter 7 of this Code

It should be noted that since the implementation of the very successful “cradle-to-grave” case planner process, some of the functions are performed by General Fund funded staff within the Planning and Development Department - Land Use Review Division. Given that some of the functions are performed by General Fund employees, starting with FY 2014, the DRE “repays” the General Fund for those functions.

City Code § 14.7.105 establishes the DRE Citizen Advisory Committee (DRE CAC), which has been delegated to provide input on DRE’s business processes and fees. The DRE CAC has historically supported fees that generate sufficient revenues to fund resources necessary to provide expeditious reviews and inspections. In general the DRE CAC, HBA and ACCA support staffing increases when warranted - funded by either fee increases or by reserves; likewise, they also support reduction in staffing and fees when development and construction slows.

Financial Implications:

The requested positions already exist within the City’s compensation schedule.

Senior Fire Inspector annual salary @ 2014 mkt avg: \$69,831
Fire Inspector II annual salary @ 2014 mkt avg: \$68,426

FY 2014 fiscal impact (assuming positions start at the beginning of Q4):

Combined Salaries and Benefits:	\$44,015
Combined Operating (training, personal equip.):	\$8,818
Combined Capital (cars, office equip.):	\$66,832

FY 2015 fiscal impact to be proposed as part of the FY 2015 budget

Combined Salaries and Benefits:	\$181,343
Combined Operating (training, personal equip.):	\$3,964
Combined Capital (cars, office equip.):	\$4,426

FY projected revenue for the DRE is \$1,611,102 and projected expenses are \$1,604,823. In addition to the revenues, as of June 20, 2014, the total fund balance or reserve is \$1,429,413. The fund balance has primarily been achieved through a combination of operational efficiencies (such as reduction in Planning DRE staffing and reorganization) and strong revenues resulting from rebounding development and construction activities.

The proposed positions will be funded by the fund balance in FY 2014 and 2015. For FY 2016 fees would be evaluated and likely adjusted to fund the positions from DRE’s annual operating budget.

Staff considered increasing fees for FY 2014 and 2015; however, given the healthy fund balance - which has been accumulating with the intention to add personnel when warranted - it would be inequitable to increase the fees at this time.

Board/Commission Recommendation:

The DRE CAC supports using the fund balance for new positions to enhance customer service. No other boards or commissions are required to review DRE staffing levels or budgets.

Stakeholder Process:

The Home Builders Association of Colorado Springs (HBA) and the Affiliated Commercial Contractors Association (ACCA) support additional staffing.

Alternatives:

1. Approve the supplemental budget appropriation.
2. Not approve the supplemental budget appropriation. If not approved, the additional staff could not be hired as there are no appropriated FTEs. Maintaining a status quo will significantly impact the ability of the DRE to provide timely fire plan reviews and inspections.

Proposed Motion:

Approve the ordinance amending Ordinance No. 13-77 (2014 Appropriation Ordinance) for a supplemental appropriation to the Development Review Enterprise in the amount of \$119,665 for the purpose of adding two additional full-time Fire Inspector positions.

An ordinance increasing the expenditure appropriations of the Development Review Enterprise in the amount of \$119,665 for the purpose of adding two additional full-time fire inspector positions. The source of funds is the Development Review Enterprise available fund balance.