

**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

AGENDA REQUEST

TO: Board of County Commissioners
Mark McCauley, County Administrator

FROM: Brent Alfred Butler, AICP, Director, Community Development
Josh D. Peters, AICP, Deputy Director, Community Development

DATE: April 17, 2023

SUBJECT: EMERGING ISSUE: Capacity and Current Planning Permit Review Times

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

At the March 27, 2023 regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners ("BoCC"), the Department of Community Development ("DCD") identified staffing capacity as an emerging issue. Five employees had resigned to take other higher paying municipal jobs. Since then, DCD's staffing situation has further deteriorated with three additional resignations.

Beginning in mid-February, staff resigned from the following job classifications: 1) Community Development Tech II, 2) Associate Planner; 3) Assistant Planner, 4) Code Compliance Officer & Energov Lead, 5) Planning Supervisor, 6) Building & Administrative Services Manager, 7) Office Coordinator, and 8) C-PACER Specialist. Coupled with implementation of a new site development review (SDR) and permit tracking software (Energov) processes, these resignations will impact county residents. By increasing the workload of remaining staff and therefore lengthening the average time between application submittal and county review, applicants will experience a lengthier review process. Additionally, senior management is also concerned about the health and well-being of existing staff, as permittees awaiting permits become increasingly aggressive in their e-mail, telephone and in-person communications.

Unless immediate and significant steps are taken, the combined effect of these three events will lead to a sharp deterioration in permit review times, community satisfaction and staff health and well-being. DCD proposes that the Board discuss a range of proposals to address these emerging issues with the overall goal of reducing the turn-around time of existing permits and finding a pathway to speed the review and consideration of new submittals.

ANALYSIS

While the six bulleted sentences document steps that have already been taken, DCD encourages the Board to weigh other more significant actions as identified in Table 1.

- At the March 27, 2023 meeting, DCD requested that the Board approve Department of Ecology (“ECY”) funding in the amount of \$50,000 to augment the consultant with Berk Consulting, Inc. to complete the Shoreline Master Program update
- DCD discontinued work related to a \$400,000 ECY grant to accelerate sustainable growth and development in Brinnon, Washington
- On April 7, 2023, DCD drafted a Request for Proposals for On-call Consultants and sought comment from other departments, including Environmental Public Health to reduce the impact of staff resignations and ensure a timely processing and review of the Pleasant Harbor Master Planned Resort project
- On April 7, 2023, DCD reduced Customer Assistance Meetings by 50% to redirect resources toward permit completion.
- During the week of April 7, 2023, DCD’s Senior Management Team met with all discrete units within the department, including front staff, building team, and planning division to obtain internal input and ideas.
- Finalized job descriptions and begun recruitment of the positions.

TABLE 1: Measures	Dates Proposed
Proposal 1 – Permit Catch-up Closure	April 24 or May 1 start
Proposal 2 - Customer Assistance Meeting (CAM) Restructuring	Immediately
Proposal 3 - On-call Consultant Assistance	End of May 2023
Proposal 4 – Interim Controls	To Be Determined
Proposal 5 – Training Closure	Early Summer
Proposal 6 – A combination of one or more of the above	

Proposal Number 1- Permit Catch-up Closure

DCD recommends closing the office for two weeks in May, as the department sees the need to reduce interruptions and speed delivery of permits for which applications have already been submitted. Interruptions are documented as affecting productivity and quality. In fact, one compendium of studies in *Rethinking Productivity in Software Engineering* documents that the longer the interruption, the greater the length of the ‘post-interruption resumption lag’. Other studies suggest that ‘people forget what it is they were working on.’ Interruptions, however, are not always bad. For example, one study found that work breaks, such as taking a walk in nature during work hours has been shown to increase focus and creativity at work.

Proposal Number 2 – Customer Assistance Meeting (CAM) Restructuring

As stated above in the third to last bulleted topic, DCD reduced the number of CAMs by 50% effective May 2023 and temporarily assigned the Port Ludlow Lead Planner, a DCD veteran, as the staff assigned CAM planner. Based on ‘best practices’ to elevate productivity, DCD is reducing the number of long interruptions, such as CAMs, as they appear to have the greatest impact on productivity both according to the compendium of studies referenced earlier and antidotally through conversations with staff.

Proposal Number 3 – On Call Consultants

Although DCD does not desire to supplant staff with consultants, senior management realizes that staff is struggling to review permits in the times outlined by state law codified as Chapter 36.70B - Local Project Review, Revised Code of Washington. While consultants may reduce overall workload and be an essential component of reducing community wait times for permits, it is uncertain if DCD will be able to find consultants willing and able to support the county. Over the past year, there have been numerous examples where DCD and other departments were unable to secure a consultant the first time around. This occurred in the issuance of request for proposals (RFP)s for the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, Big and Little Quilcene Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan, Measurement Equivalent Residential units. Nonetheless, DCD prepared the attached on-call RFP to obtain consultants (See Attachment 1 – Request for Proposals).

Priority Number 4 – Interim Controls

In the event that DCD continues to have exceedingly long permit wait times and the Board desires to act, state law authorizes the Board to adopt an emergency ordinance. Based on the perfect storm of events, including lost capacity due to eight resignations, a new comprehensive review process known as site development review that other counties adopted more than a generation ago, and the first new database permit system in multiple generations, the permit backlog may rise to the level of establishing a finding sufficient to support a limited term moratorium. As in the past, any moratorium could include exceptions to reduce impacts on high profile, community supported projects such as the Tri-Area Sewer and affordable/homeless housing.

Priority Number 5 – Training Closure

Because of the need to ensure that new staff is properly trained, DCD proposes a closure during the early summer or late spring. The goal is to ensure that senior management and others who facilitate training are ready and available to assist, and that this training is specifically related to local codes.

FISCAL IMPACT/COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS:

DCD recognizes that all of these proposals impact the customer level of service (LOS) in the short term and will likely improve LOS more quickly than by doing nothing. DCD anticipates the following fiscal impacts.

Table 2: Cost Impact of Different Approaches	Cost
Proposal 1 – Permit Catch-up Closure	Revenue neutral
Proposal 2 - Customer Assistance Meeting (CAM) Restructuring	Increased revenue, as CAMs are a free service
Proposal 3 - On-call Consultant Assistance	Pass-through / budget appropriation necessary/ Revenue neutral
Proposal 4 – Interim Controls	Revenue neutral
Proposal 5 – Training Closure	Revenue neutral
Proposal 6 – A combination of one or more of the above	

RECOMMENDATION:

After reviewing the list of proposals, DCD recommends identifying a pathway forward that will reduce permit timelines and support staff. DCD additionally recommends review and approval of a draft press release announcing the Board's decision so that community members are aware of any closure (Attachment 2 – Draft Press Release).

REVIEWED BY:

Sarah Melancon
Sarah Melancon, Acting County Administrator

April 12, 2023
Date

Jefferson County Request for Proposals

For Planning, Building, and Environmental Services
For the Years 2023-2028



Issue Date: April 21, 2023

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1. Introduction

Jefferson County, Washington (herein referred to as “County”) is requesting proposals for on-call consultant services for the areas summarized below and further identified in the scope of services. The proposal must be submitted by a qualified firm or team of consultants as set forth in section four (4) to augment the Department of Community Development planning and permitting services.

The County requests written responses to the Request for Proposal (RFP) for selection of on-call or as-needed consultant services associated with one or more proposed departmental functions, including but not limited to:

- (1) **Master Planned Resort.** Support for planning, environmental and building services for the construction of the Pleasant Harbor Marina and Golf Resort LLP, as set forth on the county’s website [see <https://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/727/Pleasant-Harbor-Master-Planned-Resort>] and for amendments to the Port Ludlow Master Planned Resort.
- (2) **Long-Range Planning.** Conducting public outreach, and processing of amendments to the Jefferson County Code (JCC) in one or more areas, as more fully set forth in the attached agenda request.
- (3) **Site Development Review.** Review applications for consistency with JCC Chapter 18.12 – Legal Lot of Record Determination and Lot Consolidation process – and JCC Chapter 18.40, Article VII – Site Development Review Process.
- (4) **Subdivisions.** Provide current planning review services to implement the provisions of JCC Chapter 18.35 – Land Divisions and ensure consistency with Chapter 58.17 RCW, Plats – Subdivisions – Dedications.
- (5) **Type II and Type III permits.** Implement Local Project Review pursuant to Chapter 36.70B RCW for conditional uses, subject to criteria, public notice, written public comment and, at the discretion of the administrator, a public hearing procedure, if warranted, based on the project’s potential impacts, size or complexity, according to criteria in JCC [18.40.520](#); see Article VIII of Chapter [18.40](#) JCC.
- (6) **State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).** Analyze projects to reduce, minimize, eliminate and/or mitigate project impacts.
- (7) **Building Plans.** Provide plan review and inspection services to ensure compliance with the International Code Council family of regulations.
- (8) **Office of the Fire Marshal.** Develop standard procedures, plans or other related documents to implement an annual inspection of commercial properties within Jefferson County, the application of new urban wildland interface regulations, and integrate the Community Wildfire Protection Plans within these frameworks.

The County’s consultant (“Consultant”) will work under the direction of the Community Development Director, Deputy Director, or other specified staff as assigned. The Consultant will provide a range of expertise necessary to carry out the normal functions of a professional planner, environmental subject matter expert, Fire Marshal, or Chief Building Official. All services provided by the Consultant shall be performed by individuals who meet the qualifications, education, and certifications/licensing requirements for professional Planning levels of Assistant to Senior Planner.

2. Background

Jefferson County, Washington is located on the Olympic Peninsula. According to the 2020 US Census the County has approximately 33,000 inhabitants. The County seat and only incorporated city, Port Townsend, is in between the cities of Seattle, Washington, USA and Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. Jefferson County consists of three primary landforms including: 1) East Jefferson County which abuts the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Admiralty Inlet, and a natural fjord known as the Hood Canal; 2) central Jefferson County, an uninhabited area that lies within the Olympic National Park, Forest and Mountains and is a United Nations Education and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage site; and 3) western Jefferson County which abuts the Pacific Ocean and is sparsely populated. Western Jefferson County is home to all or part of two federally recognized Tribes, the Hoh (**Chalá·at: People of the Hoh River**) and the Quinault Indian Nation.

Jefferson County is governed by a Board of County Commissioners (“Board”) consisting of three elected Commissioners, each representing a district. Yearly, the Board elects one of its members as Chairperson. Other County elected officials include the Treasurer, Auditor, Assessor, Prosecutor, County Clerk, District Judge, Superior Court Judge and Sheriff. To ensure efficient and effective hearing and appeal procedures, the Board officially enacted legislation that delegates authority on a range of land use and non-land use decisions to a Jefferson County Hearing Examiner whose decisions are appealable, in many instances, to the Superior County. The regulations governing the Hearing Examiner are codified in Chapter 2.30 of the Jefferson County Code (JCC) and are accompanied by a stand-alone document, the Rules of Procedures, which prescribe the conduct and procedures of hearings, including evidentiary standards, departmental reports, discovery, motions, and post decision procedures.

3. Scope of Services

In general, the successful individual or firm is expected to provide on-call services for project entitlements, building inspections, plan review, or supplemental department staffing in one or more of the categories listed below. In your submittal, please identify the category for which you are applying to augment County permitting or services. The categories included are listed below.

3.1 CATEGORY 1– Master Planned Resorts

(1) On-call Plan Review, Inspection, Water Quality, and Environmental Planning Services

Proposers in this category will be under contract with Jefferson County for on-call planning, building and environmental services for a developer, the Pleasant Harbor Marina and Golf Resort LLP (Pleasant Harbor), whose development application is approved under RCW 36.70A.362. This provides for some limited exceptions to growth that is “urban in nature” outside of Urban Growth Areas. The exceptions include “new fully contained communities,” “master planned resorts (MPR),” “major industrial developments,” master-planned “urban industrial land banks,” and “limited areas of more intensive rural development (LAMIRDs).” Pleasant Harbor includes but is not limited to a golf course and other on-site indoor and outdoor recreational amenities, conference center, resort-related commercial uses, long-term and short-term residential units not to exceed 890 units, and open space in a fully contained development anticipated to be constructed over ten to twenty-five years in accordance with the Growth Management Act Chapter 36.70A RCW and Jefferson County Ordinance 01-0128-08.

- A. Conformance with Development Agreement. Proposer shall review and provide subject matter expertise.
- B. Plan Review and Inspections. Proposals in this category are requested from firms that could provide plan review and inspection services for up to 890 units and associated recreational structures; as of the writing of this RFP, no structures have been yet been permitted.
- C. Planning. Ensure that new home sites address onsite critical areas prevalent throughout the MPR's proposed building site.
- D. Environmental Monitoring. Establish a robust environmental monitoring program that complies with the Development Agreement.
- E. Meets with developers, engineers, property owners, contractors and other individuals to discuss, advise, explain processes and suggest improvements regarding potential projects, pre-applications, development applications, feasibility analysis, conceptual development plans and code interpretation.
- F. Analyze projects for SEPA compliance.
- G. Provide strong emphasis on the management of multiple projects and competing priorities while maintaining quality, meeting schedules and staying within budget.

3.2 CATEGORY 2 - On-call Planning Services

(2) Long-Range Planning, (3) Site Development Review, (4) Subdivisions, (5) Type II and Type III permits, (6) State Environmental Policy Act

- A. Develops and maintains good working relationships with other County departments, other jurisdictions, and the public.
- B. Analyze projects for compliance with the County's Comprehensive Plan and Jefferson County Code. Primary responsibilities are to implement Local Project Review pursuant to Chapter 36.70B RCW for Type III, and Type II projects subject to a hearing before the Hearing Examiner; provisions of Chapter 18.12 – Legal Lot of Record Determination and Lot Consolidation, Chapter 18.35 – Land Divisions. Consultant may be tasked to implement some high-profile Long-Range Planning Projects.
- C. Compiles and analyzes data on economic, social, environmental, and physical factors affecting land use including fulfillment of the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).
- D. Meets with developers, engineers, property owners, contractors and other individuals to discuss, advise, explain processes and suggest improvements regarding potential

projects, pre-applications, development applications, feasibility analysis, conceptual development plans and code interpretation.

- E. Ability to write Planning Commission and County staff reports, resolutions, ordinances, conditions of approval, and give oral presentations.
- F. Attend public hearings and community meetings as necessary.
- G. Analyze projects for SEPA compliance.
- H. Ability to review projects and provide comments within timelines specified by the Local Project Review Act, RCW 36.70B.070 – Project permit applications – Determination of completeness – Notice to applicant, as codified in the Jefferson County Code in 18.40.110.
- I. Provide strong emphasis on the management of multiple projects and competing priorities while maintaining quality, meeting schedules and staying within budget.
- J. Database entries of actions using EnerGov, our permit management software.

3.3 CATEGORY 3 - On-call Building Services

(7) Building and Inspection Services and (8) Office of the Fire Marshal

- A. Will report to Community Development Director or other staff as assigned
- B. Will work closely with office personnel
- C. Plan Review Services:
 - 1. Code review for architectural, structural, mechanical, plumbing, fuel gas, energy, accessibility, solar or other renewable energy, and fire codes.
 - 2. Inspections: Code inspections for architectural, structural, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, fuel gas, energy, accessibility, solar or other renewable energy, and fire codes.
 - 3. Ensure improvements are properly completed or bonded for, as required before granting occupancy.
- D. Must be responsive to County staff and residents:
 - 1. The time expectation is to respond within 1 business day
 - 2. Single Family Residential Plan reviews are to be completed within 5 business days
 - 3. Multifamily Residential Plan reviews are to be completed within 10 business days
 - 4. Commercial Plan reviews are to be completed within 10 business days
 - 5. Perform an inspection within 2 business days of a request

- E. Must have the ability to report permits as required by EnerGov to an online database
- F. Must submit a monthly log for services performed by the 5th of the following month. Will be paid monthly as a 1099 contract employee as an individual inspector OR via accounts payable check for a firm by the 15th of each month
- G. County may acquire contracts with multiple inspectors for the same services to ensure the availability of the requested services.
- H. Requests for work to be performed will be based on actual need in conjunction with the capabilities, experience, and availability of the consultant(s) along with the price, business location, and hours of operation. No guarantee of the actual work is implied or expressed by this solicitation. The purpose of the contract is to have a contract in place for work to be performed on an "as needed" basis.

4. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

The proposal shall clearly address all information requested herein. To achieve a uniform review process and obtain the maximum degree of comparability, proposals must be organized and contain all information as specified below:

A. **Cover Letter.** Maximum of two pages serving as an executive summary which shall include an understanding of the scope of services.

B. **Brief Company Profile.** General company information including number of employees, location of company headquarters and branch offices, number of years in business and organization, disciplines, and staffing. Describe the general qualifications of the firm as they relate to the work proposed with this RFP.

C. **Organization and Staffing.** Provide a list of the Consultant's employees and agents which the consultant anticipates assigning to this project. This list shall include a summary of the qualifications, licenses, and experience of each individual, and the professional Planning level of work to be performed by each individual. The County will retain under its agreement with the successful Consultant the right of approval of all person(s) performing under the agreement.

D. **Description and Approach.** The proposal should demonstrate the Consultant's knowledge of the needs and objective of the work proposed under this RFP.

Describe any special resources the project team may bring to the Project. Such resources and experience may include items such as special computerized drafting systems, specific recent experience working on related projects, and recent experience in the County and/or other similarly sized jurisdictions. Elaborate on why the project team stands above the competition.

E. **Subcontractors.** The bidder must provide for each subcontractor of the bidder, the scope of services to be provided by such subcontractor and a Statement of Qualifications, as outlined above, for such subcontractor.

F. **Cost Proposal.** The cost proposal shall include the hourly rate for services. Include any sub-consultant's fee schedule, if applicable. This should include hourly billable costs of each team member; Senior Planner, Associate Planner, etc. The Proposer should also identify how best to address any difference between the County's adopted fees schedule and the charges for services rendered under this contract.

G. **Résumé, Relevant Projects/Services with References.** Provide résumés of the individuals(s) from the Proposer's firm or entity that will be directly responsible for carrying out the contract, three references to include name, address, contact person and phone number of the municipality/company, length of time services were provided, and a description of the services provided.

H. **Conflicts of Interest:** The Consultant must not have a conflict of interest with regard to any other work performed by the firm for the County.

I. **Anticipated Potential Problems.** The proposal should identify and describe any anticipated potential problems, the bidder's approach to resolving these problems and any special assistance that will be requested from the County.

5. FEES AND EXPENSES

(a) The County will consider an hourly fee, a task-based fee or a flat-fee Proposal, or any combination thereof. The contract to the successful bidder, however, will contain agreed-upon maximum limit(s). Thus, each bidder is invited to provide a reasonable estimate of the maximum fee.

(b) County will agree to reimburse Consultant for its direct, reasonable and necessary expenses incurred on the project, including but not limited to the following:

- (i) Expense of reproductions, postage and handling of Drawings, Specifications and other documents, excluding reproductions for office use of Contractor;
- (ii) Expense of renderings, models and mock-ups; and
- (iii) Other items authorized by writing and in advance by Town Manager.

(c) All expenses in excess of \$750.00 per month must be approved in advance.

6. PROPOSAL DOCUMENTS

Four (4) hardcopies and one (1) digital pdf copy of the proposal documents must be submitted no later than 12:00 noon, Monday, May 8, 2023 to the Director of the Department of Community Development. Proposals must be titled "RFP On-Call Services, Attn: Community Development Director." No postmarks will be accepted.

Incomplete proposals and proposals not organized according to this RFP may be rejected. A faxed or emailed proposal will not be accepted.

7. COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT THE RFP

Telephone communications with county staff about the RFP are not permitted, however; any questions may be submitted electronically prior to

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8. SELECTION PROCESS

(a) The Proposals will be reviewed by an evaluation committee to determine which Consultants will be included in a final interview process. All firms submitting proposal will be notified in writing as to whether they are or are not selected to be interviewed. The committee will then conduct an interview with those Consultants and will rank the interviewees based on their submitted materials and performance.

(b) The evaluation committee will make determination of the firms to be included on the list of consultants, based upon the highest relative scores.

(c) The evaluation committee will consist of at least two members who have technical expertise in relevant fields or who are involved in project review at various managerial levels.

(d) The identity of members of the committee will be confidential until the interviews are held.

9. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The determination whether a Proposer is pre-qualified will be based on a combination of factors as determined to be in the best interests of the County, which include, but are not limited to the following factors:

(a) Ability of the bidder to best perform the work, as measured by qualifications, past performance, knowledge of and experience with local, state and federal standards, regulations, guidelines, criteria and laws;

(b) The bidder's responsiveness to this Request for Proposals;

(c) Quality of Proposal, including but not limited to the Bidder's planned approach to the project;

(d) Interview Presentation, e.g., whether the presentation is concise, relevant and informative.

10. PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

Each bidder should be aware that although the Washington Public Records Act, Chapter 42.56 RCW, recognizes that certain confidential trade secret information may be protected from disclosure, the

County may not be in a position to establish that the Proposal which the candidate submits is a trade secret. If a request is made for any information marked "confidential" by a bidder, the County will provide the candidate who submitted such information with reasonable notice to allow the candidate to seek protection from disclosure by a court of competent jurisdiction.

11. RELEASE OF REPORTS AND INFORMATION

Any reports, information, data, or other material given to, prepared by or assembled by the bidder as part of the work or services under these specifications shall be the property of the County and shall not be made available to any individual or organization by the bidder without the prior written approval of the Town.

12. CONTRACT DOCUMENTS

The successful Consultant will be expected to execute a Professional Services Agreement that contains the terms and conditions set forth in the form contract that is attached hereto as Exhibit A. The Consultant is reminded that any proposed change to the form contract will be considered in determining the firm's suitability for inclusion in the interview process.

13. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- (a) Proposal Costs. This request for proposals does not commit the County to pay for any costs incurred in the submission of a response or make any necessary studies or designs for the preparation thereof nor the purchase or contract for services in connection with the preparation of a submission. All costs in preparing and submitting a proposal shall be borne by the person making the proposal.
- (b) Withdrawal. A bidder may withdraw a proposal without prejudice prior to the time specified for opening by submitting a written request to the Town Manager for its withdrawal, in which event, the proposal will be returned to the bidder unopened. No proposal received after the time specified or at any place other than that stated in the "Notice Requesting Proposals" will be considered.
- (c) Retention and Use of Proposals. The County reserves the right to retain all proposals and use any idea in any proposal regardless of whether that proposal is selected. The County also reserves the right to waive non-substantial irregularities in any proposal, to reject any or all proposals, to reject or delete one part of a proposal and to accept others, except to the extent that proposals are qualified by specific limitations, and to make an award as the interest of the County may require.
- (d) Agreement. The County reserves the right to negotiate any and all terms of an agreement including length, scope of services and compensation.
- (e) Awarding Authority. An agreement with the Contractor shall not be binding unless and until it is approved and executed by the County either through the County Administrator or the Board of County Commissioners.
- (f) Competency and Responsibility. The County reserves full discretion to determine the competence and responsibility, professionally and/or financially, of bidders. Bidders will provide, in a timely manner, any and all information that the County deems necessary to make such decision.

- (g) No Award. The County may, for any reason, not award an agreement as a result of this RFP.
- (h) Execution of Contract. The bidder to whom award is made will be expected to execute a written contract with the County within twenty (20) calendar days after notice of the award has been mailed to the address given in the proposal. The substance of the contract will include the terms of this Request for Proposals and the form will be mutually acceptable to both parties.

Attachment 2 – Draft Press Release

VERSION 1 (for one-week “permit catch-up” closure now, following by one training week in summer)

Press Release: DCD Announces Limited Office Closure Effective May 1

The Department of Community Development (DCD) would like to inform the public that effective May 1, there will be a limited office closure. This decision has been made due to the recent loss of staff members, including management and supervisory positions, which has resulted in a reduction of our administrative services capacity.

DCD will be closed to the public for one week from May 1 through May 5, with the exception of a four-hour window on Wednesday, May 3, from 1:00 to 4:00 PM. Staff will continue to monitor voicemail and email, except that the emphasis will be on reviewing permit applications that are in the queue already.

To mitigate the impact of the staff loss, we are preparing to recruit for several positions, including Administrative Services Manager, Building Official/Fire Marshall, Development Code Administrator, Planning Supervisor, Associate Planner, and Code Compliance Coordinator. However, it will take time to add these new staff members to our team. To supplement our in-house review, we are proposing an RFP for professional planning services to provide on-call permit review services, especially for more complicated reviews and associated processes. During this time, we will use the opportunity to complete training for relatively new staff, put interim measures into place for department functions, and reduce our permit backlog, which has been an ongoing and deepening source of frustration for customers. It is important to note that people who apply for permits today will face lengthy and unspecified wait times for permit review. Assigning new cases to our development review team only adds to their respective piles. To catch our breath and make progress on the backlog, we are looking at a two weeks respite from new applications. We anticipate a return to normal permit review timelines, post closure.

“Furthermore, we are also closing for a week in early to mid-June in alignment with onboarding new staff. The week will be used to train the half dozen or so new staff members listed above on department processes. We understand that this may cause some inconvenience to our customers, and we apologize in advance for any disruption this may cause,” added Brent A. Butler, Director.

Finally, we have other measures in mind to implement during this period, including limiting Customer Assistance Meetings (CAMs) temporarily to Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. Customers may schedule CAMs through the DCD website: www.co.jefferson.wa.us/260/Community-Development

We appreciate your patience and understanding during this challenging time and remain committed to providing high-quality services to our community.

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VERSION 2 (for two-week “permit catch-up” closure now, following by one training week in summer)

Press Release: DCD Announces Limited Office Closure Effective April 24

The Department of Community Development (DCD) would like to inform the public that effective April 24, there will be a limited office closure. This decision has been made due to the recent loss of staff members, including management and supervisory positions, which has resulted in a reduction of our administrative services capacity.

DCD will be closed to the public for a two-week period from April 24 through May 5, with the exception of weekly four-hour window (on Wednesday, May 26 and Wednesday, May 3) from 1:00 to 4:00 PM. Staff will continue to monitor voicemail and email, except that the emphasis will be on reviewing permit applications that are in the queue already. To mitigate the impact of the staff loss, we are preparing to recruit for several positions, including Administrative Services Manager, Building Official/Fire Marshall, Development Code Administrator, Planning Supervisor, Associate Planner, and Code Compliance Coordinator. However, it will take time to add these new staff members to our team. To supplement our in-house review, we are proposing an RFP for professional planning services to provide on-call permit review services, especially for more complicated reviews and associated processes. During this time, we will use the

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