

Permits Evaluation & Recommended Tasks report

A review of the private development review process in
El Dorado County
- barriers to Economic Development?

Development Advisory Services,
David A. Storer AICP, March 25, 2008

Is the County open for business?

- Significant Taxable Sales tax leakage of \$229 million per year? (Approx. \$630k/day) Does it really matter if we increase retail sales per capita?
- Approximately 684,000 sqft of retail would generate enough taxable sales to eliminate the County's retail sales leakage
- Existing system of permit review is the perfect slow growth control and it should not be fixed...
- Certainty & speed needed

Topics

- **Permits**
 - Planning
 - Building and
 - DOT (Transportation Planning & Land Development)
- **County Government Organization**
- **Recommendations/Actions**

Permit Process - El Dorado County

Federal Law - NEPA, CWA

State Law - CEQA, Subdivision Map Act

County - General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance

Decision Makers

LAFCO

Fire Districts

Board of Supervisors

EID

Schools

CSD's

Planning Commission

Zoning Administrator

Permits - Discretionary and Ministerial

CAO

Dev. Services Dept

DOT

Environmental Management

Legal

Planning
Building
Inspections
Code Enforcement

Land Development

Air Quality

Permits

- Development Services:

Policy vs. Permits quandry

- General Plan Implementation vs. Permit issuance – getting a balance...

County 2004 General Plan

- Difficult to navigate and confusing as to its hierarchy (Goals, Policies, Objectives, Implementation Measures, Programs and Principles)
- **617 +** policies and **219** Implementation Measures
- **86/219 have a timeframe of <3 years (40%)**
- Success rate over past three years is low -16/86 (19%)
or 16/219 (7%)
- **FUNDING – est. = \$31.2 million (\$142,500 each)**

Recommendations

- Direct the preparation of an “abridged ” or “condensed” version of the 2004 plan - where the plan is re-formatted (reference/tracking system), re-organized (Goals, Policies and Objectives) and it is re-prioritized (a manageable/realistic set of Implementation Measures to be enacted over the next year or two)
- Board forms an Ad Hoc Committee with support staff to report to the Board on the prioritization of the Implementation Measures
- Example:
 - 1) Get the 2004 Housing Element adopted AND Certified by HCD (and new cycle/update)
 - 2) Zoning Ordinance
 - 3) Fast Track (expedited building permits process)
 - 4) OWMP
 - 5) INRMP

Permits

- **Planning** = 39 types (**208** in caseload)
 - Major (25) =
 - Minor (14) =
- **Building** = 67 types (2007 – **7384** permits)
- **DOT (TP&LD)** = 12 types

Project review – 299

Commercial grading – 46

Subdivisions - 188

Permits - Planning

- **Major** – (6 mos. – year +)
 - Design review
 - Development Agreements
 - General Plan Amendments
 - Ordinance Text Amendments
 - Planned Developments
 - Pre-Applications
 - Rezones
 - Special Use Permits
 - Subdivisions
 - Variances

Permits - Planning

- Minor (2 months – 6 months)
 - Boundary Line Adjustments
 - Certificate of Compliance
 - Site Plan Review
 - Tentative Subdivision Map Extensions
 - Temporary Use Permits

Permits - Planning

- Backlog: 208 discretionary projects
- Incomplete = 64
- Complete = 144
 - CEQA = Categorical Exemption = 69 (34%)
 - Negative Declaration = 130 (61%)
 - EIR = 9 (4%)

Permits - Planning

- Backlog

144 projects – 17 scheduled for action
with 12 on hold

115 projects need work to get them to hearings...if 6 mos.
= 12 PC meetings (10 items per meeting)...assumes no
new caseload. Shared among 8.5 fte's

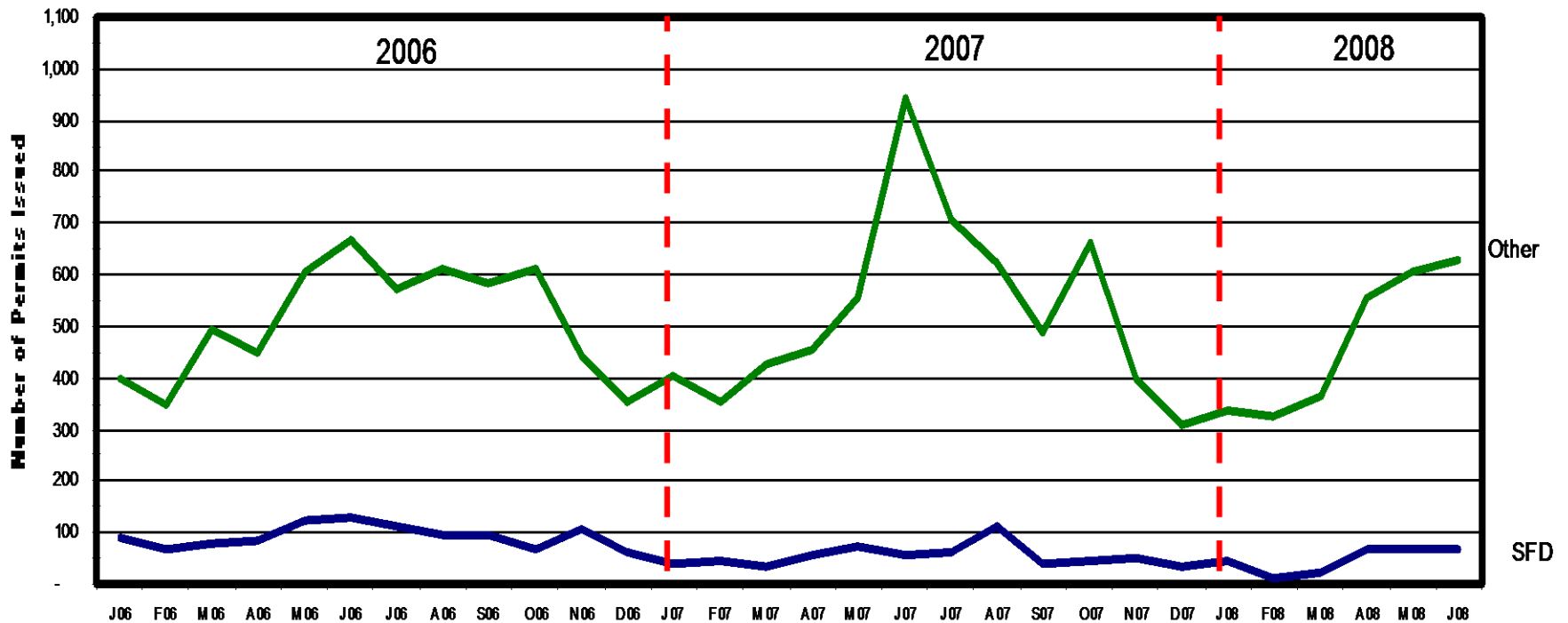
Likely to need contract staff to help backlog reduction and new caseload. Contract staff also needed to help with concurrent General Plan implementation while backlog is being worked on

Recommendations

- Tasks for new ACAO and DSD:
 - DS Dept is top heavy. Eliminate positions and re-assign others
 - Supervision of Permit Center needs restructuring.
 - Publish performance measures – few staff know of them and neither do the public. Accountability for non-performance. Consultants held to same performance measures as staff and need to be accountable.
 - Senior Planners need to be issuing permits not working the counter.
 - Training needed for new employees.
 - Training budget needed/cross-training is vital.
 - Few staffers have multi-agency experience.
 - Salaries are not competitive (e.g. Sacramento Bee “Metro” front page today)
 - Create a “Fast Track/Expedited process” for “regular” projects.
 - Advertise process: building permits are reviewed concurrently NOT sequentially – needs refining.
 - Audit of DS fees and billing rates (flat fee vs. “Time & materials/at-cost”) – during budget preparation (08-09)
- *Court offices should not be in Building “C”. It is un-inviting as a place to do business.*

Permits 2006 – 2008 YTD

Building Permit Activity * 2006 - 2008



* Non-Angora
Permit Activity

Permits - Building

<i>All</i>																
													FTE's	68	64.5	53.5
	FY 2005 - 06				FY 2006 - 07				FY 2007 - 08							
Permit Type	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	FY 05-06	FY 06-07	FY 07-08	
Single Fa	416	344	241	338	310	239	116	183	215	128	71	-	1,339	848	414	
Other Re	1,460	1,051	886	1,265	1,350	1,024	942	1,651	1,473	1,099	701	-	4,662	4,967	3,273	
Non-Res	137	96	112	121	111	145	126	120	136	142	106	-	466	502	384	
TOTAL	2,013	1,491	1,239	1,724	1,771	1,408	1,184	1,954	1,824	1,369	878	-	6,467	6,317	4,071	

Permits - Building

			2005/2006/2007/2008
	Over The Counter	Express Applications	Regular
Performance Measure	3 Days	10 Days	20 Days
# of Plans ->	895/1925/2186/160	2,131/3668/4620/256	413/521/578/27
Average	SD/SD/SD/SD	11/12/12/7	33/27/26/9
High	14/13/14/9	44/61/77/15	400/110/193/19
Low	SD/SD/SD/SD	SD/SD/SD/SD	SD/SD/SD/SD
Examples	Pump house Re-roof Electrical Electrical Service Change Electrical Meter Reset Mechanical Plumbing	Reassign to Expedite Swimming Pool and Spa Addition / Remodel Garage Pool House Storage Building Retaining Wall Tenant Improvement with no 'Use' Intensification	Single Family Dwelling Multi-Family Dwelling Barn Commercial / Industrial Tenant Improvement with 'Use' Intensification

Permits – DOT (TP&LD)

Discretionary Review (Projects)

- Boundary Line Adjustments
 - Certificate of Compliance
 - Tentative Parcel Maps
 - Planned Development Permits
 - Site Plan reviews
 - Tentative Subdivision Maps
 - Temporary Use Permits
 - Variances
 - Rezones
- Count – 299 caseload
 - High = 172
 - Low = 1
 - Average = 22

Permits – DOT (TP&LD)

commercial grading planchecks											
	1st		2nd		3rd		4th		5th		
Count	EDC	A	EDC	A	EDC	A	EDC	A	EDC	A	EDC
	46		22		14		6		3		
High	90	138	147	71	48	149	71	48			22
Low	2	0	1	0	1	19	3	2			1
Average	21	33	24	22	16	57	25	17			8
Subdivisions											
	1st		2nd		3rd		4th		5th		
Count	EDC	A	EDC	A	EDC	A	EDC	A	EDC	A	EDC
	188		94		47		18		3		
High	70	227	37	124	65	127	25	19	10		91
Low	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	9	0		2
Average	12	41	8	23	10	38	8	14	5		32

Permits – DOT (TP&LD)

- Last 14 months:

1250 Over-sized load permits (via fax)
same day

650 TIM fee calculations/collections

Organization - El Dorado County

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County Organization

- No one person is responsible for the success or failure of private development review
- Under current system, the CAO serves as the staff coordinator/link to the Board of Supervisors.
- Current structure has diffused responsibility between Dept. Heads and therefore no one person is held accountable

County Organization

- Board members go directly to staff for answers on permit issues in response to public inquiries – five CEO's running the County. Board needs to deal with policy, not day-to-day operations.
- Communication breakdown is compounded when outside agencies in the development process are involved (EID, Fire Districts, state and Fed Agencies, CSD's, etc)

Recommendations

- Re-structure/empower CAO to have hire/fire authorization over Dept. Heads. similar to CEO structure in private sector (requires Charter Amendment).
- Create real “one-stop shop” process. Better coordination needed. Have DS and DOT (TP&LD) with a Dept. Head working through the ACAO (de facto “caseworker”).
- Have Economic Development Director report directly to ACAO.
- Hire ACAO that is familiar with land development and function similar to Assistant City Manager position with responsibility over all permits along with other specified CAO duties

Actions

Should the Board concur with the findings and recommendations, the CAO can:

- 1) Prepare a budget for FY 08-09 to transfer DOT (TP&LD) to the DS Dept
- 2) Begin recruitment for an ACAO and a DS Dept Head that both have extensive land development experience
- 3) Return to the Board with a structure for an AD Hoc Committee to address General Plan implementation
- 4) Direct that the backlog be reduced with re-assignment of existing staff and use of contract staff as necessary
- 5) Return to the Board with steps necessary to amend the Charter to provide for a CEO form of government prior to convening the Charter review Committee