



Department Source: Community Development - Planning

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: August 5, 2019

Re: Unified Development Code Fee Schedule Revisions (Case # 182-2019)

Executive Summary

If approved the fee schedule within the Unified Development Code would be amended to incorporate new fees for zoning review letters and application fees for Board of Adjustment submissions. The fee schedule would also be revised to add advertising costs for Board of Adjustment actions and denote that such costs are refundable.

Discussion

As part of the FY 2020 budget process, the Community Development Department has reviewed the fee schedule shown in Section 29-6.3(a)(5) of the Unified Development Code. This review identified that no fees have been formally codified within the fee schedule to off-set expenditures associated with preparation of zoning review letters and the processing of Board of Adjustment applications. The attached fee schedule amendment requests that fees, consistent with peer cities, be adopted and codified as part of the UDC fee schedule. Collection of the proposed fees will be used to off-set staff expenditures associated with these services.

The proposed fees are based upon staff's review of fee schedules from multiple peer cities (see attached spreadsheets) for the two non-codified services that the Department offers. Fee research relating to zoning review letters (aka zoning verification letters) found that fees ranged from \$50 to \$123 with an average collected fee of \$84.20. The City has, by practice, collected a fee of \$50 for preparation of such letters; however, this fee has never been formally adopted. Given the staff time engaged in preparing such letters and the average collected by our peer cities it is recommended that this fee be increased to \$75 and formally made a part of the fee schedule.

In 2017, following the adoption of the UDC, the Department assumed responsibility for the Board of Adjustment from the City Clerk's Office. Historically, no application processing fees have been collected for Board of Adjustment cases (appeals, variances, conditional uses); however, a refundable \$150 advertising fee has been collected. As can be seen within attached spreadsheet, our peer cities do collect application fees for Board of Adjustment cases. These fees are in addition to advertising costs which are not shown in the spreadsheet.

Fee research finds that collected fees ranged from \$50 to \$824 with an average collected fee of \$281.42. Given the staff time engaged in conducting research, preparing reports, and attending Board of Adjustment hearings, it is recommended that an application fee (separate from advertising) be set at \$250 for all Board of Adjustment case types.



City of Columbia

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The recommended fees are not intended to cover 100% of the costs associated with the staff's time to complete the requested services. Furthermore, given the research performed the fees are not inconsistent with our peer cities offering similar services. It is believed the fees proposed are reasonable and will assist in off-setting the Planning and Zoning Division's impact on the General Fund.

Fee comparison spreadsheets and the proposed legislation amending Section 29-6.3(a)(5) are attached for review.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: Revenue will be collected to off-set staff expenditures.

Long-Term Impact: None

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Not Applicable, Secondary Impact: Not Applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Not Applicable, Secondary Impact: Not applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Legislative History

Date	Action
8/21/17	Adopted UDC Fee Schedule (Ord. 23227)

Suggested Council Action

Adopt the proposed UDC fee schedule changes establishing a Zoning Review Letter fee of \$75 and a Board of Adjustment Application Processing fee of \$250.