



COUNTY OF ORANGE



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

ROBERT E. THOMAS HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
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SANTA ANA, CA 92702-0687

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 20, 2008

TO: Steve Danley, Performance Audit Director

FROM: Patricia C. Bates, Vice Chair, Fifth District 
Bill Campbell, Supervisor, Third District 

RE: Ad Hoc Performance Audit Request – Planning & Development Services

The Orange County Public Works/Planning & Development Services (PDS) Function is financed by the Building & Safety Special Revenue Fund 113. As such, PDS operates very similar to a business in that it funds the costs of permitting and development plan check services rendered to the public and developers through revenues it receives from fees charged to its customers.

Given the cyclical nature of the development industry, over the last several years PDS has had to make significant changes to the way it does business in order to maintain financial stability. During this time period, PDS now and again has been subject to increased scrutiny. Recently, our Board offices have received a number of constituent calls expressing concerns in a few areas. These include:

- Amount of time required to review proposed projects
- Amount charged for that review
- Customer difficulty in establishing project schedule and cost plans based on PDS review and charging practices
- PDS permit and plan check processing protocols
- Customer service issues
- Alternatives to the Time & Materials Ordinance that increase operational outputs and customer service

As a result, we are requesting that the Board of Supervisors consider directing your office to conduct a performance audit of PDS addressing the issues noted above. Not only will such an audit address the concerns raised by constituents, but it is also consistent with the

formal risk assessment completed by the Board and your office earlier this year. In that risk assessment, PDS was identified as an area for specific audit attention.

In regard to the timing of the audit, we propose that the Office of the Performance Audit Director performing the subject PDS audit after conclusion of its efforts on the Sheriff Overtime Audit and the completion of the HCA/Correctional Medical Services Audit. Adopting this time frame would result in a preliminary estimated start date of December 2008 for the PDS audit.

Please place an agenda item for the consideration of this audit on the Discussion Calendar section of the next available Board Meeting.

cc: Members, Board of Supervisors
Clerk of the Board
Tom Mauk, CEO
Bryan Speegle, Director, OC Public Works
Tim Neely, Director, OC Planning