



Building and Zoning Fees

Department of Community
Development

February 27, 2018



Fee Comparison

- Council requested staff monitor development fees.
- Based on a comparison list of 16 localities, including 10 Virginia First Cities, four surrounding counties, and two additional localities in the Piedmont and Southwest areas of the Commonwealth.
- Staff identified 5 City services that at least half of the jurisdictions charge fees to offset staff costs.
- These “user fees” are focused on specific requests or used as deterrents for not meeting the City’s permitting requirements.



Zoning Certification Letters

- Letters are often requested by private firms, in order to guarantee that the properties are in compliance with local zoning codes for refinancing, loans and property transfers.
- Over the past year these requests have become more frequent and require more staff time.
- **Implemented by 10 of 16 localities; Average Fee - \$128**
- Average Frequency: 50 times per year
- The **proposed \$100 fee** would help the City recover the expense of staff research for the final letter and supporting documentation.



Working Without a Building Permit

- Building codes are minimum requirements to protect the safety of occupants and neighbors.
- Work without a permit currently results in a stop work order and direction to obtain a permit.
- Failure to have work inspected can result in issues with the structure and danger to residents.
- **Implemented by 8 of 16 localities; Average Fee - \$120**
- Average Frequency: 15 violations reported per year
- The **proposed \$100 fee** would help offset additional staff time to address the issues and serve as a deterrent to working without a permit.



Building Permit Re-inspection Fee

- A Notice of Violation is issued for each violation of the Building Code.
- A re-inspection fee of \$25 is charged for the third inspection of the same Building Code violation.
- **Implemented by 15 of 16 localities; Average Fee - \$50**
- Average Frequency: 30 times per year
- The **proposed increase to \$50** would be applied to cover additional staff time to re-inspect the same code violation a third time.



Temporary Certificate of Occupancy

- Temporary Certificates of Occupancy allow a building to be occupied prior to final completion of the building.
- These are special requests to assist with owner financing or to allow partial use of the building.
- Often requires a lot of staff time/coordination.
- **Implemented by 10 of 16 localities; Average Fee - \$155**
- Average Frequency: 25 times per year
- The **proposed \$150 fee** would help offset staff time associated with research, monitoring, processing bonds, etc. for this service.



Certificate of Occupancy for Existing Buildings

- Certificates of Occupancy are required for structures to certify they meet Building Code.
- For instances where a building permit is not required, staff may help determine occupancy load, use, and similar requirements.
- **Implemented by 13 of 16 localities; Average Fee - \$75**
- Average Frequency: 120 times per year
- The **proposed \$75 fee** would help offset staff costs for this service.



Staff Recommendation

Continue to provide these flexible development options at a cost per service to help offset staff time:

- zoning certification/determination letters - \$100
- working without a building permit - \$100/violation
- increase building re-inspection fees - \$25 to \$50
- temporary certificate of occupancy - \$150/30 days
- certificate of occupancy for existing structure - \$75

The proposed fees would be effective May 1st.



Outreach

- Notifications at the Customer Service Center
- Community Development website
- **“Good to Know”** Social Media Campaign
- Topic at upcoming “Code Update” session(s)



Questions?