

Resolution

No. _____

AUTHORIZING THE COUNCIL CHAIR OR COUNTY AUDITOR TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT FOR AN ASSESSMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING'S ZONING ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

WHEREAS, on October 26, 2005, the Council awarded a contract to conduct a review, assessment, and audit of the Department of Planning ("Department") to Zucker Systems ("Consultant"); and

WHEREAS, in March 2006, the Consultant presented a report entitled "A Review and Assessment of the Department of Planning" ("Assessment") to the Maui County Council; and

WHEREAS, the Consultant's objectives were in part to "recommend a plan of action, including goals, measures of effectiveness, and timelines, to improve the operations of the Department of Planning . . . including changes to the Department's table of organization"; and

WHEREAS, in the Assessment, the Consultant noted the Department's "customers clearly show a high level of frustration and some of the worst customer responses"; and

WHEREAS, the Consultant further stated that "we also believe the (permit review) timelines are too long" and "removal of (the permit review) backlog" is required; and

WHEREAS, the Department's staff requested "good training opportunities, lots of them," while other Department staff expressed concern with colleagues "taking long lunches" and the tendency by some "to rule via intimidation and demeaning comments"; and

WHEREAS, customer surveys conducted by the Consultant noted that the length of time for permit review was unacceptable, Department staff was not responsive to or accessible for resolving issues, initial reviews were incomplete or inaccurate, and that Department staff inconsistently processed permit applications; and

WHEREAS, current Councilmembers have received complaints that suggests many of the issues identified by the Consultant in 2006 may still exist,

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especially in the Department's Zoning Administration and Enforcement Division;
and

WHEREAS, members of the public, including the design and construction community, have noted the following to current Councilmembers: Department communication specific to changes in procedures and permit application forms is deficient, extensive requirements for minor projects in Special Management Areas can be cost prohibitive, processing times for permit applications can be very lengthy, the Department's permit and plan reviewers are not responsive, Department staff can be unprofessional and sometimes rude, and permit application review is inconsistent among staff planners, now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Maui:

1. That it authorizes the Council Chair or County Auditor to execute a contract for an assessment of the Department of Planning's Zoning Administration and Enforcement Division with a scope of work focused on:
 - a. Review application and permit processing times and recommend options to reduce processing times;
 - b. Determine if staffing requirements have been achieved and maintained, especially relative to staff retention;
 - c. Assess staff morale;
 - d. Evaluate pending permit applications and provide options to reduce backlogs;
 - e. Evaluate customer service to determine whether staff is addressing inquiries on a timely basis, acting with professionalism, and resolving issues in a positive and helpful attitude;
 - f. Evaluate options for expediting the processing of minor permits; and
 - g. Assess staff knowledge and proficiency to determine if application and permit review processes are consistent with all staff planners and reviewers; and

2. That certified copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Honorable Michael P. Victorino, Mayor, County of Maui; Sananda K. Baz, Managing Director; Lance Taguchi, County Auditor; Michele Chouteau McLean, Planning Director; and Jordan Hart, Deputy Planning Director.