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AGENDA COVER MEMO

MEETING DATE: MAY 4, 2004

TO: BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

FROM: KENT HOWE, PLANNING DIRECTOR
LAND MANAGEMENT DIVISION

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: REPORT BACK ON PROCESS TIMELINES FOR
PLANNING APPLICATIONS

I. MOTION:

NO MOTION NECESSARY AS THIS IS A DISCUSSION ITEM ONLY.

II. ISSUE OR PROBLEM

On December 17, 2003, the Board was presented with a report on the processing timelines for planning applications and the Board requested a 3rd Quarter update.

III. DISCUSSION

A. BACKGROUND

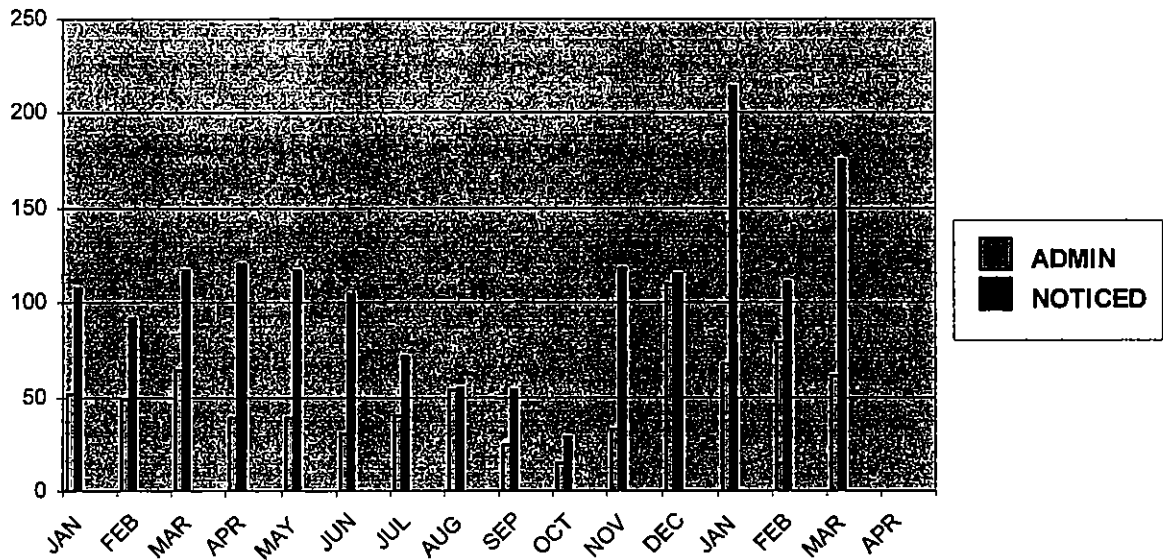
The Planning Program processes approximately 1,300 applications annually. Due to staff reductions and vacancies resulting from retirements and budget shortfall, processing applications in a timely fashion has been challenging.

B. ANALYSIS

This report is to illustrate that the Planning program is getting "caught up" on processing land use applications. Our goal is to be able to issue decisions within 30 days of acceptance of an application. There are still applications that have relatively long processing timelines, but they are on hold at the request of the applicant. Currently, the applications that are not on hold are less than 30 days in the system. At this time, all Plan Amendments and zone change applications that we have received have been scheduled for public hearing with the Lane County Planning Commission.

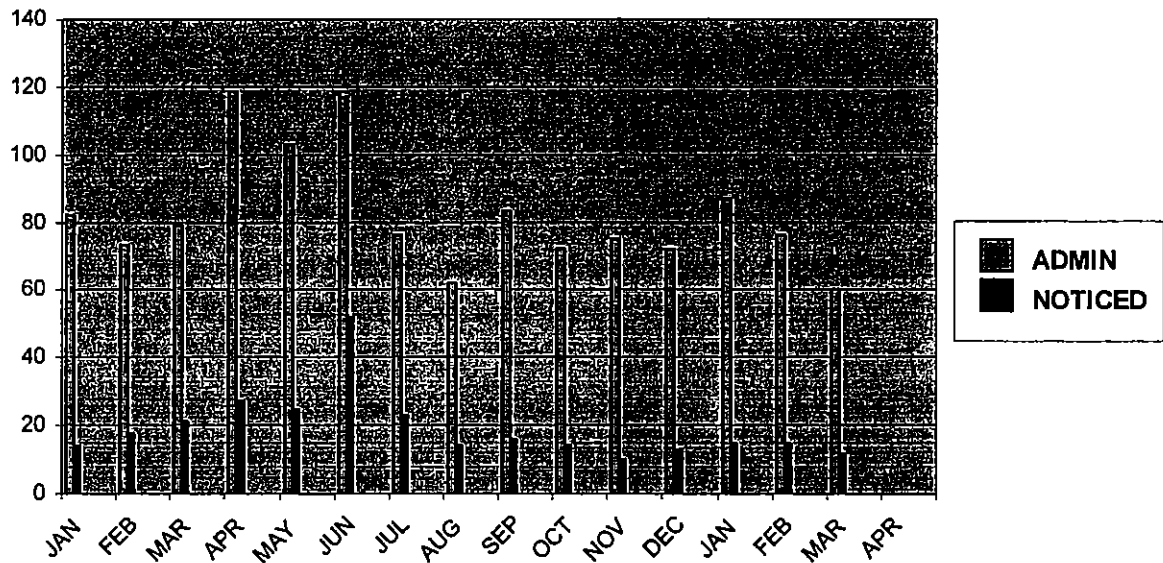
The chart on the next page illustrates the average number of days taken to process applications. Note the dramatic decrease in processing time (starting in July) once the Associate Planners were able to concentrate on processing applications. The staffing changes and shifts in work responsibilities are discussed in more detail below. With the December 1st addition of an additional Planner position, these processing time improvements should be sustainable. The increase in processing timelines in November is because that is when staff started working on the older applications whose processing had been delayed because of complexities in the requirements.

AVG. # DAYS PROCESSING 03/04

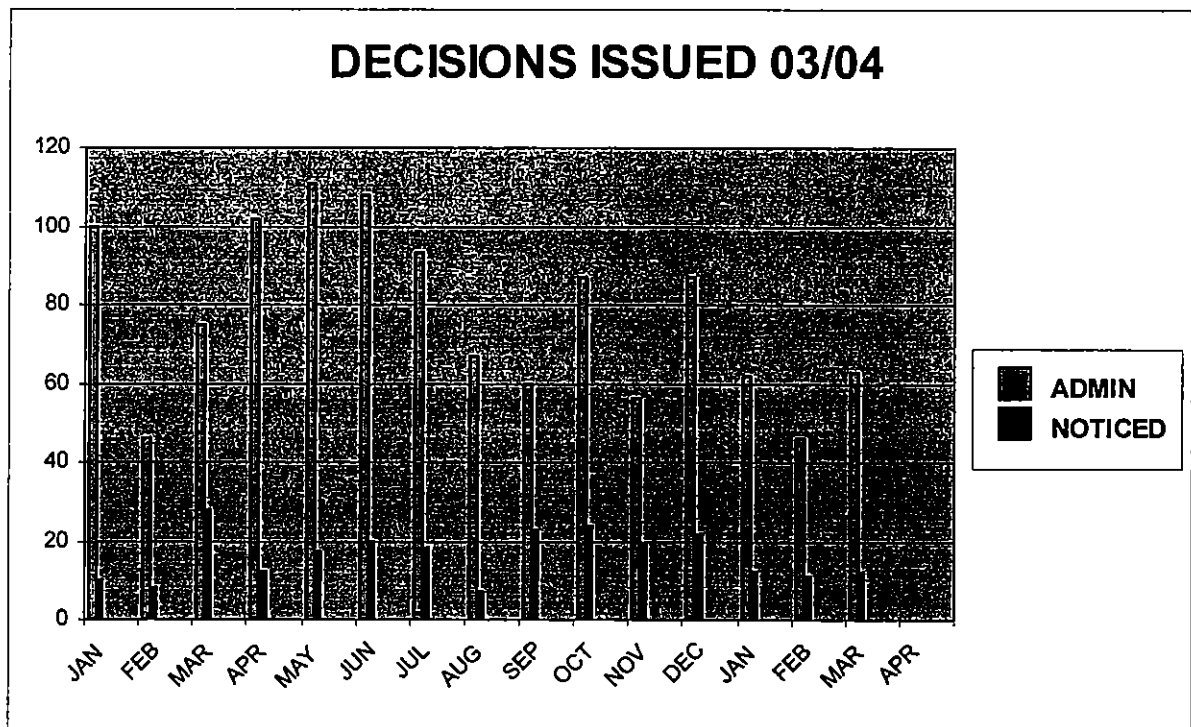


From the chart below, one can see that the number of applications received is fairly constant. The seasonal variation of the administrative applications illustrates the anticipation of the summer building season. The June spike in the noticed land use applications is a direct result of the fee increase that went into effect on July 1st.

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED 03/04



The chart below illustrates the distribution of the approximately 215 decisions issued so far this year. Again, the administrative decisions show a direct correlation with the seasonal fluctuation of applicants preparing for the summer building season. The noticed land use decisions early in the year show the result of the reduced staff resources processing land use decisions. The increase in issued decisions in March represents the benefit we gained from an extra help contract. The May/June increase is related to "borrowing" an Associate Planner from Public Works Transportation Planning. In July, the LMT position took over the information counter responsibilities and allowed the two Associate Planners to process applications. The increased production in the months of September, October and November are directly attributable to filling the LMT position at the information counter.



This winter staff conducted a rapid process improvement assessment of the planning application process, much like was done two years ago in the Rapid Process Improvement project for the planning review of building permits. The results are being seen immediately.

Since the 1st of the year, the planners have had to pick up the extra application work load of the Senior Engineering Associate that transferred to the Transportation Road Maintenance Section. During the month of March, all land use applications that were not on hold by the applicant were processed by staff working over-time in order to allow the new process to start without being encumbered by old applications.

Starting with a relatively clean slate in April, the new process requires the completeness review in the first seven days, followed by a meeting with the applicant the next week (if incomplete) and a final decision within 30 days of acceptance. Currently, each planner has approximately 50 active applications and approximately 30 applications on hold at the applicant's request.

C. ALTERNATIVE/OPTIONS

1. Informally recognize the new process which is more efficiently processing land use applications and will reduce processing timelines.
2. Take no position.

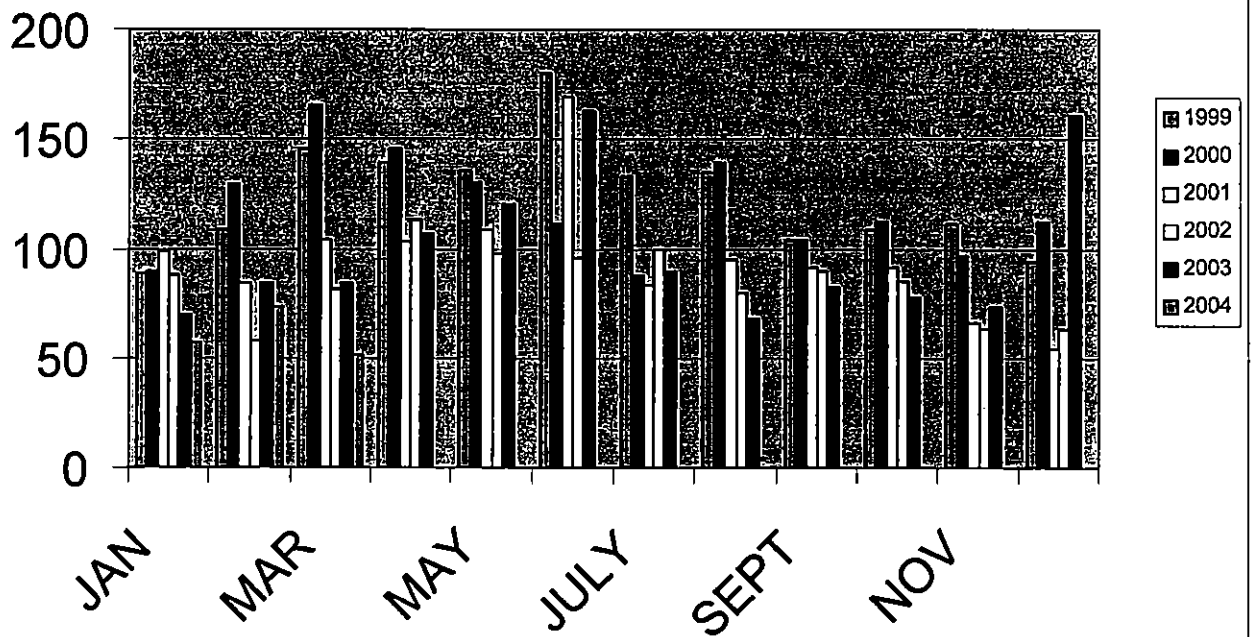
D. RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 1.

IV. ATTACHMENTS:

1. Number of Planning Actions Received
2. Number of Building Permits for Planning Review

NUMBER OF PLANNING ACTIONS RECEIVED BY MONTH FOR LAST 6 YEARS



**NUMBER OF BUILDING PERMITS FOR PLANNING REVIEW
BY MONTH FOR LAST 6 YEARS**

