

DEPARTMENTS: Planning, Building, Health

BY: Kris Schenk  
PHONE: 742-1216

**RECOMMENDED ACTION AND JUSTIFICATION:** Authorize the Development Services Departments (Planning, Building, Health) to operate regular public hours on Mondays through Fridays. The change in hours will be effective Monday, March 30, 2009, which will provide sufficient lead time to reprogram departmental telephone and voicemail systems, to place public notices and newspaper advertisements, and to conduct community outreach efforts. (See attached memorandum.)

**BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:** The Board of Supervisors directed the establishment of restricted Monday hours for Development Services in March, 2006. This action was one of several necessary steps that the Board authorized to avoid increasing permit delays and to address processing and inspection issues during a period of extremely high permit applications and chronic staffing shortages.

**ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:** None identified.

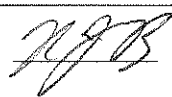
Financial Impact? ( ) Yes (x) No Current FY Cost: \$ Annual Recurring Cost: \$  
Budgeted In Current FY? ( ) Yes ( ) No ( ) Partially Funded  
Amount in Budget: \$ List Attachments, number pages consecutively  
Additional Funding Needed: \$ 1. Memorandum dated March 6, 2009 from Kris Schenk, Planning Director, Fred Lustenberger, Building Director, and Dr. Charles Mosher, Health Director

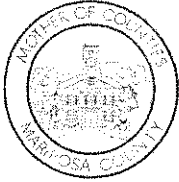
Source: \_\_\_\_\_  
Internal Transfer \_\_\_\_\_  
Unanticipated Revenue \_\_\_\_\_ 4/5's vote  
Transfer Between Funds \_\_\_\_\_ 4/5's vote  
Contingency \_\_\_\_\_ 4/5's vote  
( ) General ( ) Other \_\_\_\_\_

**CLERK'S USE ONLY:**  
Res. No.: 09-119 Ord. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Vote - Ayes: 5 Noes: \_\_\_\_\_  
Absent: \_\_\_\_\_  
Approved  
( ) Minute Order Attached ( ) No Action Necessary

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER:**  
 Requested Action Recommended  
 No Opinion  
Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The foregoing instrument is a correct copy of the original on file in this office.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Attest: MARGIE WILLIAMS, Clerk of the Board  
County of Mariposa, State of California  
By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy

CAO: 



COUNTY OF MARIPOSA  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
5100 BULLION STREET  
MARIPOSA, CALIFORNIA 95338-2039

Fred Lustenberger, Building Director  
Dr. Charles Mosher, Health Director  
Kris Schenk, Planning Director

*F. Lustenberger*  
*KAS*

## MEMORANDUM

Date: 3/17/09  
To: Board of Supervisors  
Topic: Monday Hours for Development Services Departments

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Since March of 2006, the Development Services Departments (Building, Planning and Health) have been operating with restricted public hours on Mondays. Signs at the building entrances advise visitors of the Monday closure, and incoming Building and Planning telephone lines go to voice mail boxes.

At the same time, however, front counter staff has expressly:

- kept the drop-down security doors open and regularly assisted persons who have come to the outside doors on Mondays (of which a doorbell was installed at the front door to help alert staff);
- provided service to customers from beyond the immediate Mariposa Town area and persons with urgent requests and information needs;
- routinely checked voice mail messages and responded to priority calls;
- maintained regular appointment schedules and a full load of field inspection visits on Mondays.

The Board of Supervisors authorized the reduced public walk-in hours during the height of the economic boom. The demand for development services and permits was at an unprecedented high volume, and Mariposa County faced a chronic shortage of trained staff in numerous professional disciplines. An increasing backlog of applications in Planning was threatening the ability of planners to (1) process permit requests within State-mandated time guidelines; and (2) complete critical priorities such as adoption of the General Plan.

Development services staff have been able to use the Monday hours to complete necessary research and prepare reports, keep project files, accounts and correspondence up-to-date, double check paperwork to avoid releasing incorrect information, and for staff meetings and training purposes. Departmental staff have reported that they were able to provide improved service to applicants and the public and to do their jobs better as a result of the change in office hours during an extended period of extraordinarily high demand for development services.

## **CHANGING ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

In recent months workload and staffing demands within the Development Services Departments have undergone significant shifts.

In the Building Department, permit and inspection activity has fallen by more than fifty percent since March, 2006, necessitating staff layoffs. Although these circumstances present challenges for the department, they have also allowed remaining staff to focus on projects and support tasks that have been deferred for the past several years due to consistently heavy work loads at that time.

In the Health Department, applications for permits involving septic systems, wells and land use document review have decreased, but the bulk of the Health Department work (Food Facilities, Air Pollution, Hazardous Materials, Underground Storage Tanks, Pools, Solid Waste, Vector Borne disease Control, Disease investigation, Complaint investigation) remains unchanged or busier, consistent with population growth.

In the Planning Department, the number of new discretionary permit applications has been falling, the permit backlog has been substantially reduced, and long-standing position vacancies have been filled. Some staff time can now be allocated to work on General Plan implementation, preparation of Area Plans, Williamson Act and agricultural tourism policies, and Title 17 ordinances. The department is attempting to catch up with and complete long-deferred projects and priorities.

The three departments have come to an agreement that it is no longer necessary to limit public service hours on Mondays in order to manage current and foreseeable workloads. There are times at which front counter personnel need to be assigned to other locations in order to complete reports, accounting or other priority projects, but those situations can be handled with back-up staff assignments on a case-by-case basis.

There are members of the community, especially those who are frequent users of development services, who will appreciate and benefit from a resumption of Monday-through-Friday office hours.

## **CONCLUSION**

It is requested that the Board of Supervisors direct the following actions:

1. Authorize the Development Services Departments to operate regular hours on Mondays through Fridays, except on designated holidays, effective Monday, March 30, 2009;
2. Direct Information Technology Department staff to assist with the change in Development Services hours by reprogramming telephone and voice mail systems and messages; and
3. Authorize the Development Services Departments to place public notices and newspaper advertisements, and to conduct public outreach efforts to community organizations and trade groups, to acquaint members of the public with the change in hours on Mondays.