



# COUNTY of VENTURA

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
**KIMBERLY L. PRILLHART**  
Agency Director

**Ruben Barrera, Director**  
Building and Safety Division

**Doug Leeper, Director**  
Code Compliance Division

**Charles R. Genkel, Director**  
Environmental Health Division

**Jennifer Orozco, Director**  
Operations Division

**Dave Ward, Director**  
Planning Division

February 6, 2024

Board of Supervisors  
County of Ventura  
800 South Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, CA 93009

**SUBJECT:** Adopt a Resolution Establishing Four Regular Full-time Position Allocations to Support Permitting Services and Community Engagement in the Resource Management Agency Planning and Operations Divisions.

## RECOMMENDATION:

ADOPT a resolution (Exhibit 1) establishing four regular full-time position allocations to support permitting services and community engagement in the Resource Management Agency Planning and Operations Divisions, Budget Units 2901 and 2911, respectively, effective February 4, 2024 as follows:

Class Code	Classification Title	FTE	Range	Annual Salary	Unit
00453	Agency Public Info Officer II	1.0	\$3,529.608000 - \$4,941.451200	\$91,769.81 - \$128,477.73	2901
01180	Manager-RMA ServicesII-Plnng	1.0	\$4,434.288320 - \$6,208.612400	\$115,291.50 - \$161,423.92	2911
00804	Planner II	2.0	\$2,574.475120 - \$3,600.096160	\$66,936.35 - \$93,602.50	2911

## FISCAL/ MANDATES IMPACT:

Mandatory: No  
Source of Funding: Fees and General Fund  
Funding Match Required: \$0  
Impact on Other Departments: None

For FY 2023-24, the prorated cost of these positions is approximately \$133,000 of which \$66,500 would be funded by the general fund. At this time, budgeted appropriations are sufficient to absorb costs. The total annual costs for these positions, including anticipated general salary

increase, are \$531,000 of which \$265,500 is net cost. With the general fund offset, impact to fees are minimized. The remaining costs will be allocated through the Resource Management Agency's (RMA) rates and fees for FY 2024-25 with the increase to fees estimated at less than 1% agencywide and less than 2% for planning fees, excluding other budget impacts.

<b><u>Summary of Revenues and Costs:</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2023-24</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2024-25</u></b>
Revenues:	\$ 66,500	\$ 265,500
Costs:		
Direct	\$ 133,000	\$ 531,000
Indirect-Agency/Dept.	\$ -	\$ -
Indirect-County CAP	\$ -	\$ -
Total Costs	\$ 133,000	\$ 531,000
Net Costs:	\$ 66,500	\$ 265,500
Recovered Indirect Costs:	\$ -	\$ -

<b>FY 2023-24 Budget Projection for Operations – Division 2900</b>				
	Adopted Budget	Adjusted Budget	Projected Actual	Estimated Savings/(Deficit)
Appropriations	\$ 5,079,163	\$ 5,454,877	\$ 5,454,877	\$ -
Revenue	\$ 320,170	\$ 320,710	\$ 320,710	\$ -
Net Cost	\$ 4,758,993	\$ 5,134,167	\$ 5,134,167	\$ -

<b>FY 2023-24 Budget Projection for Planning – Division 2910</b>				
	Adopted Budget	Adjusted Budget	Projected Actual	Estimated Savings/(Deficit)
Appropriations	\$ 10,415,656	\$ 11,020,601	\$ 11,020,601	\$ -
Revenue	\$ 4,371,381	\$ 4,371,381	\$ 4,371,381	\$ -
Net Cost	\$ 6,044,275	\$ 6,649,220	\$ 6,649,220	\$ -

**Strategic Plan:**

These positions adhere to the County Strategic Plan Priority – *Fiscal Responsibility and Economic Vitality* under the goal of creating a customer service-focused and business-friendly environment while stimulating entrepreneurship and industry growth. This request is in alignment with this priority as the additional staff resources can more effectively serve our local businesses and industries with their permitting needs by increasing the speed that both ministerial and discretionary permits are processed and approved in the Planning Division, as well as enhanced community and stakeholder communications and engagements for all Agency-wide programs, projects and services which will better serve our community.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **Planning Division Positions**

As part of the RMA Planning Division's (Division) efforts to realign programs into permitting and policy areas, additional staffing resources are needed to meet customer expectations for timely and efficient services. One new Manager RMA Services II Planning position is requested to manage the day-to-day public counter and assigned counter staff. The public counter is a critical function as it serves over 90% of our customers by issuing over 1,400 permits annually, and while also responding monthly to nearly 900 public counter visits, phone calls, and emails.

The Planning Counter section is currently under the purview of the Permit Administration Manager who also manages Ordinances and Implementation. Because of the daily workload of the public counter, online permits, and email and phone customer contacts, completing work on ordinance updates is frequently delayed. By creating a new manager position to focus solely on public counter operations, the existing manager role can provide more oversight to ensure ordinance(s) updates that help improve permitting steps, streamline or amend regulations based upon staff and applicant experiences, and implement these regulatory changes annually. In addition, several program areas such as the Tree Removal Permits and Tree Mitigation Fund, Lot Line Adjustments or the Land Conservation Area (LCA) would be shifted to this existing manager role to help establish more reasonable workloads on the existing Commercial & Industrial and the Residential Permitting Section Managers.

The proposed Planning Counter section is the first point of contact for members of the public and would manage online permit applications, issue Zoning Clearances, provide information on the materials required for a discretionary permit application, and answer general planning questions via telephone, email and at the counter. The public counter services also include meeting with the Discretionary Permit Coordinator who would be responsible for reviewing and accepting discretionary permit applications, and facilitating the Development Review Committee who consists of staff from various county departments (e.g., Fire, Environmental Health, Transportation, etc.) to discuss and provide early guidance to applicants regarding their project.

The new manager will focus on daily operations occurring across the Planning Counter as previously described while completing ongoing training for new staff, developing a suite of policies and procedures for transitioning to 100% electronic format in a manner that is easy for our customers while continually identifying opportunities to streamline operations. In addition to the new manager position, two new Planner II positions are requested to address the current workload of phone calls, emails, daily public counter operations, and processing of Zone Clearance permit applications submitted both from the public counter during business hours and the continuous filing of permit applications through the online portal. We have spent a significant amount of time tracking each interaction with our customers and the time that each phone call, counter visit and e-mail takes to respond and to achieve our goal of receiving/concluding direct phone call inquiries rather than responding to recorded messages. This will serve our customers more efficiently. Currently, we are rotating all of our planners who are working on discretionary permits and policy work to assist in phone calls, message return and counter duties which takes these planners away

from their duties well over 2,000 hours per year. This is not a long-term strategy if we are to keep those projects on track as well. Additionally, contract services have been used as a method to process Zone Clearances because of staff turnover during the last three fiscal years. While this partially solved immediate need, relying long term on consultant services does not invest technical background and code expertise into the Division when staff roles and needs evolve over time and for work force succession planning.

Exhibits 2 and 3 reflect the current and proposed Division's organizational charts with the new positions.

### **Community Liaison Position**

The RMA has identified a need for centralized and coordinated public outreach efforts. Over the past several years, the RMA's community engagement efforts have been incorporated into the day-to-day operations which include ensuring public materials and websites are accessible and provided in other languages, specifically Spanish. Focus groups and meetings seeking public participation are offered in person and virtually and staffed with Spanish and American Sign Language interpreters.

As new initiatives are enacted via state legislature, there is an urgent need to be equipped with resources to readily reach the public and inform them of changing laws and/or new programs and opportunities. A few of these new laws that impact the public and would need to be communicated include SB 379 electronic solar systems permitting; SB 972 sidewalk food vending; SB 879 Accessory Dwelling Units permitting as well as messaging the critical need for housing including farmworker housing. These and other changes are intended to provide more efficient pathways for permitting and business opportunities. As the regulating body, it is critical for RMA to communicate to the public the impact of these changes and how it may change the services we provide. Without a centralized position to manage these communications and public outreach, the messages may not be standardized, consistent and/or widely communicated to the target audiences. Much of these new programs are time sensitive and without a dedicated resource to shepherd the efforts, the agency potentially misses opportunities to engage stakeholders and obtain feedback and participation during program development.

This new Community Liaison position would reside in the Operations Division and would directly report to the Agency Director. Since this position would not generate revenue because of its overarching focus to engage the community and conduct agency outreach, it's proposed the position be funded 50% by the general fund. The FY 2023-24 prorated cost of the position is \$36,000 of which \$18,000 would be general fund and the balance absorbed in the agency's current year budget. The projected annual cost of the position including salary and benefits is \$143,000 with half of the cost to be included in the FY 2024-25 budget and rates and fees. Exhibits 4 and 5 reflect the current and proposed Operations Division organizational charts with the new position.

The agency is requesting that the Board approve these positions effective February 4, 2024 so that recruitments may be initiated immediately to meet workload demands.

Board of Supervisors  
February 6, 2024  
Page 5

This letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, the Auditor-Controller's Office, and County Counsel's Office. If you have any questions regarding this item, please contact me at (805) 654-2661 or via e-mail at [kim.prillhart@ventura.org](mailto:kim.prillhart@ventura.org).

  
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Kimberly L. Prillhart, Director  
Resource Management Agency

Exhibits:

- Exhibit 1 – Resolution establishing four full-time positions in the Resource Management Agency
- Exhibit 2 – Current RMA Planning Organizational Chart
- Exhibit 3 – Proposed RMA Planning Organizational Chart
- Exhibit 4 – Current RMA Operations Organizational Chart
- Exhibit 5 – Proposed RMA Operations Organizational Chart

