



A New Department — A New Building

Planning & Development Services (PDS) is delighted to open and begin service in a new state-of-the-art building this month.

The last day at the County Annex on Ruffin Road is Friday, September 21, and doors to the department's new facilities open to the public Tuesday, September 25. Please note we will be closed to the public Monday, September 24 to complete the move.

Here are some highlights for our customers in the new building:

- Comfortable seating in the permit center lobby, with additional seating outdoors
- A business center in the permit center lobby with workstations, basic office supplies and a copy machine for our customers and members of the public
- Free WiFi in the lobby and on the third floor
- Visitor parking on the ground floor of the parking structure next door, unmarked parking spaces in the rest of the

structure, and surface parking throughout the campus are all available

- A café in the permit center for customers
- Speakers outside and in the restrooms so customers do not miss a number called in the permit center

The new County campus also features a large hearing room with flexible



The lobby area of the new Department of Planning & Development Services— designed for customer comfort and staff efficiency

seating; large screens and cameras set for internet broadcasting; a new “Commons” cafeteria with a large variety of delicious, healthy foods and drinks; a fitness trail presented by the Department of Parks

and Recreation; and public art pieces worthy of a tour.

PDS Open House Tuesday, Sept 25, 2 - 4 p.m.

So, please join us for an open house on Tuesday, Sept. 25 from 2 - 4 p.m.

Our NEW Location

STARTING SEPTEMBER 25, OUR NEW LOCATION WILL BE IN OUR BEAUTIFUL NEW PERMIT FACILITY AT 5510 OVERLAND IN THE COUNTY OPERATIONS CENTER IN KEARNY MESA WHERE WE LOOK FORWARD TO SERVING YOU.

Find us on the web at

www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds

Also in This Issue:

FROM THE DIRECTOR	2
PDS TRAINING TO KICK OFF	2
HELP FROM THE SITE IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT	3
GOT A PHONE OR COMPUTER? WATCH PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS LIVE!	3
CAMPAIGN AGAINST ITERATIONS—IT'S THE NEW CULTURE OF PDS	4
REVIEWING MINOR L-GRADING PLANS	5

Service Hours

Monday through Friday
8:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

NEW DEPARTMENTNEW LOCATION***NEW VISION***

Board of Supervisors

- Greg Cox—Dist 1
- Dianne Jacob—Dist 2
- Pam Slater-Price—Dist 3
- Ron Roberts—Dist 4
- Bill Horn—Dist 5

County Administration

- Walt Ekard
Chief Administrative Officer
- Helen Robbins-Meyer
*Assistant Chief
Administrative Officer*
- Sarah Aghassi
*Land Use and Environment
Group Deputy Chief
Administrative Officer*

Planning & Development Services

- Mark Wardlaw
Director
- Beth Murray
Assistant Director
- Darren Gretler
Deputy Director
- Pam Elias
Chief of Code Enforcement
- Rich Grunow
Chief of Project Planning
- Rick Lantis
*LUEG Program Manager /
Chief of Land Development-
Engineering*
- Jeff Murphy
Chief of Advance Planning
- Vince Nicoletti
Chief of Support Services

How to Contact Us:

Phone: 858-694-2960
1-800-411-0017

From the Director

Welcome to our new Department of Planning and Development Services and our new facility. The PDS Team is confident that the efficient, comfortable and welcoming design of our new surroundings reflects our commitment to providing the highest level of service to the community and our customers. With this bright new beginning, all of us in PDS look forward to working with you in our new home.

Mark Wardlaw
Director

Enhancing the Skills of Our Workforce

PDS Training Program to Kick Off This Fall

The County's Strategic Plan includes a Required Discipline for Excellence to have a "Skilled, Adaptable and Diverse Workforce." As we reorganize into Planning and Development Services, we are taking stock of our employees' training needs and professional development interests. We've surveyed our team to find out what types of training would be the most beneficial and valuable. With this information, we're able to prioritize a training plan with both staff and supervisor input.

Our training program will kick off this fall.

These days there are numerous ways to be trained ranging from group trainings (large or small), to online trainings

like webinars. We're tailoring our training programs to individuals and making the trainings pertinent and relevant, designed to have the most impact possible for our customers.

Elizabeth Amstadter joined the team just a few short weeks ago as the new departmental human resources officer. We asked for her initial thoughts.

"I really see the County's Learning Management System (LMS) as an opportunity to not only develop individual training plans for our team

members, but also as a way to keep track of all the training we do," she said. "I know we'll be focused on customer service over the next year and I'm really excited to roll



out a mentor/mentee program, modeled after the Department of Human Resources' program, to our staff this fall."

Modernizing Regulations

The Site Implementation Agreement Can Help

Tracking ongoing project conditions or deferring conditions to coincide with actual project impacts has been frustrating for customers and staff, given the tools currently available.

This will change with the Site Implementation Agreement (SIA).

The SIA is a mechanism that accompanies a subdivision map application and provides more flexibility and creativity in condition writing and implementation, while maintaining a high level of transparency. For example, where we currently rely on multiple tools to track condi-

tions, the SIA provides a single location where all ongoing mitigation requirements can be located. The SIA will also be recorded on the property title so future property owners will know their ongoing obligations. Additionally, mitigation measures



previously deemed not feasible because they require implementation after the

map records (i.e. rooftop solar and other greenhouse gas mitigation measures) can be considered with the use of the SIA.

We received mostly favorable comments from various stakeholders and customers for the SIA during the public review period that ended in August. The SIA is now on target for the Board of Supervisors' consideration by this winter.

For questions or comments, please contact Joe at (858) 694-3690 or by e-mail at joseph.farace@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Assuring Quality, Consistency and Transparency

Watch Planning Commission Meetings Live

...on your iPhone or online

To improve access to information and increase transparency, the County now streams Planning Commission meetings live for iPhones and computers.



To view the hearings on an iPhone, go to iTunes and search for "AVCaptureAll Player."

You can download the application for free. Once you've downloaded the application, open it and search for San Diego County. It will allow you to view live and

archived Planning Commission hearings. Note that due to the bandwidth restrictions from commercial carriers, you will need to adjust your phone to WiFi mode.

To watch the hearings on your computer, go to the Planning and Development Services website and click on the "hearings" link near the bottom of the navigation box on the left side of the page, or use the link http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds/PC/sop/PCHearing_stream.html.

The County is dedicated to ensuring that our community members can follow along as we conduct business; and

these tools are the latest in a series of improvements to increase access and transparency. New online tools are launched on a regular basis, but this is the first smart phone application for PDS.

The San Diego County Planning Commission is made up of seven members appointed by the Board of Supervisors. It meets monthly to consider land use issues in San Diego County's unincorporated communities, from developments to policies and regulations.

For more, contact Vince at (858) 694-3075 or by e-mail at vince.nicoletti@sdcounty.ca.gov

Embracing a New Culture

Campaign Against Iterations: *A New Culture in Action*

Planning and Development Services has initiated a campaign to eliminate unnecessary iterations of permit reviews. Like most regulatory planning agencies, the department previously operated under an iterative review process. Customers would submit a set of plans and studies for staff review; staff would respond with formal letters containing several pages of corrections and comments; and the cycle would continue. This process was both inefficient and burdensome for our customers.

Staff now proactively seek ways to minimize or eliminate iteration reviews, and whenever possible, quickly bring projects to a decision. According to Don Kraft, land use/environmental planner with PDS: "Our focus on the end game has brought about changes that have been important to customers by saving them time and money. The two most important changes that I use every day are (1) using working meetings to take the place of

lengthy iterative processes so that the applicant submits revisions in days rather than months, and (2) making minor corrections and red-lining plans and studies to enable us to move forward to a decision. Our overarching goal is to bring projects to a decision in the shortest time possible."

This approach is already



Land Use / Environmental Planner Don Kraft reviews plans in the new Department of Planning and Development Services. "Our overarching goal is to bring projects to a decision in the shortest time possible."

showing results, and our customers have noticed the positive change. Ali Shapouri, a regular customer for over 20 years had this to say: "I was pleasantly surprised by my most recent permitting experience with the County. It was truly a pleasure working

with Mr. Don Kraft in submitting, processing, and the approval process of a proposed private gate that required an administrative permit. Don was very customer-friendly, informative, and available, and made the entire process expeditious and efficient. If this is the result of the new PDS approach, I for one can attest to its effectiveness."

For more information, contact Don at (858) 694-3856 or via e-mail at donald.kraft@sdcounty.ca.gov

- **Working meetings versus lengthy iterative processes enables revisions in days, not months**
- **Moving forward in decisions by making minor corrections and red-lining plans and studies**

Upcoming Dates

- Planning Commission Hearings:**
- October 5
 - October 19

- Board of Supervisors Hearings:**
- September 25 & 26
 - October 9 & 10
 - October 30 & 31

"No time like the present.."

Reducing Time and Costs

Reviewing Minor L-Grading Plans

As part of our effort to satisfy the Board’s directive to allow more self-certification, County staff reached out to industry professionals and asked what they would like us to focus on first. Their response: simplify the Minor L-Grade review process and make it similar to the review process for minor grading permits for single family homes.

Following a series of working meetings with staff and industry, a new streamlined review process was created that will function similar to the existing process for minor grading plans that are processed through the building division. This process applies to minor grading projects that do not impact public facilities or require a major Storm Water Management Plan

“...We found the process to be efficient, timely and with overall costs similar to a building division minor grading permit. We highly recommend this new, improved Minor “L” Permit process.”

**Doug Logan
Rancho Coastal Engineering and Surveying**

(SWMP). This new process is expected to expedite plan review, saving applicants time and money. We have eliminated many steps, such as the requirement for record plans.

We now also:

- Accept bond (paper) copies in lieu of a Mylar for the original
- Have a plan checklist to reduce iterations
- Allow the professional engineer to self-certify site drainage in certain cases
- And have empowered line staff with approval authority on the plans



Doug Logan from Rancho Coastal Engineering and Surveying was the first to use the new system.

He said, “Aside from a few hiccups, we found the process to be efficient, timely and with overall costs similar to a building division minor grading permit. We highly recommend this new, improved Minor “L” Permit process to any owner/applicant who does not qualify for a building division minor permit.”

We believe these improvements will reduce overall County processing costs by 20 percent. Customers will also realize reduced consultant fees because preparation and processing of record plans for these minor “L” plans will no longer be required.

Staff has ongoing meetings with industry to identify additional opportunities for improvement and expansion of self certification opportunities.

For additional information, please contact Rick at (858) 495-5484 or by e-mail at richard.lantis@sdcounty.ca.gov

