



MEMORANDUM

TO: Deschutes County Board of Commissioners
Nick Lelack, County Administrator

FROM: Peter Gutowsky, AICP, Director
Sherri Pinner, Senior Management Analyst

DATE: August 6, 2025

SUBJECT: Planning Division / Staffing Request

I. SUMMARY

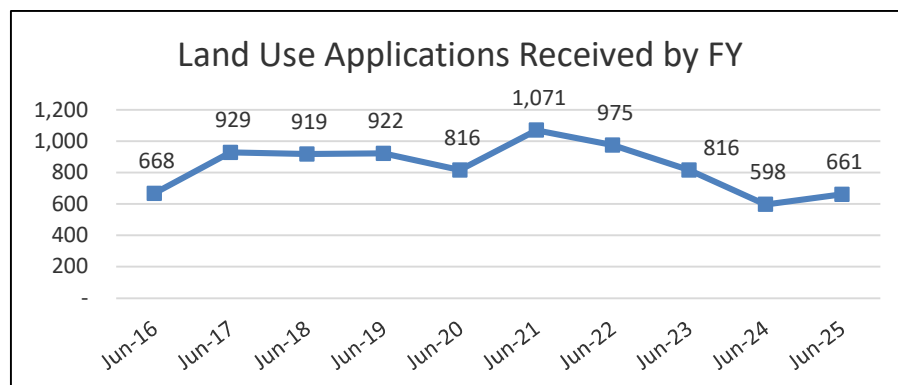
The Community Development Department (CDD) requests the addition of one (1) full-time equivalent (FTE) in the Planning Division (Current Planning Section) to assist with increases in land use applications, counter customers, email and phone inquiries. This position will also eventually assume addressing services as part of CDD's succession planning. Specifically, the Planning Division proposes to:

- Add one (1) full-time regular assistant planner to manage entry level land use applications, telephone calls, emails, walk-in customer demands and addressing.

II. PLANNING DIVISION CHALLENGES / PERMIT VOLUMES & CUSTOMER INQUIRIES

During fall 2023, CDD reduced its workforce and eliminated two (2) Assistant Planners. This decision occurred during a period of reduced land use applications. During Fiscal Year 2025, land use application volume showed an approximate 10.5% increase over the prior period, leading to more counter customers, phone inquiries as well as pre-application meetings. This occurred at a time when the Planning Division experienced staffing shortages related to family medical leave. The Planning Division is currently operating at capacity. Graph 1 illustrates land use applications submitted for the past ten (10) fiscal years.

Graph 1



III. SUCCESSION PLANNING

Looking ahead, the Planning Division is also preparing to assume addressing responsibilities from the Administrative Division. An administrative assistant is expected to retire in December 2026. CDD wants to onboard the assistant planner so there is ample time to assume addressing responsibilities prior to the planned retirement.

IV. FINANCIAL IMPACT

The total cost of the FTE is estimated at \$129,000 to cover the fully loaded annual rate (\$126,000) and computer, equipment and training (\$3,000). Funding for the position will come from existing revenues.

V. BOARD DIRECTION

- Approve or deny the addition of one (1) assistant planner.