

Fee Schedule change proposal

Shane Pevehouse, Building Official



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BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT

Residential fees have not been updated since January, 2020.
Commercial fees have not been updated since February, 2009
Since 2022, the Building Department has almost tripled in size
without a corresponding permit fee increase to cover costs.

Current fees only fund 59% of the departments operating costs.

Of the cities queried, CODS averages 23.84% less per permit.

- Buda collects 37.89% more for a 2,000 square foot home.
- New Braunfels collects 33.67% more for a 3,000 square foot home.
- San Marcos collects 41.11% more for a 4,000 square foot home.



**Fee
Schedule
change
proposal**

Objective

Propose fee increases to fully fund the Building Department.
Propose new permit fee formulas to eliminate “guess work” for customers and improve accuracy for calculating permit fees.

Evaluation Methodology

Fully evaluate Building Department operating costs to include:
Administration and supporting staff time, fleet, facility, training, and equipment costs, and department staff salary and compensation.

Determine neighboring cities’ fees using their published fee schedule (fact checked in person) to compare their current rates against proposed fee increases.



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Observed Trends

1. Fees as a percentage of square footage being adopted in favor of bracketed fees, which we currently use.
2. $\frac{3}{4}$ of cities use a “Base Fee” model, which still requires adding all associated fees – plan review, trades, irrigation, driveway, technology, etc.
3. Plan Review Fees are incorporated into the Flat Fee or are a percentage of the Permit Fee.
4. Technology Fees are added to cover software costs.
5. $\frac{1}{2}$ of cities charge for trade permits on new construction permits, the other half include them in the Permit Fee.
6. $\frac{1}{2}$ of cities charge a Certificate of Occupancy Fee.
7. Modifying approved plans requires paying an additional Plan Review Fee.
8. One fee to cover all costs reduces the appearance of price stacking – proposed fee structure includes plan review, driveway, foundation, roof, technology, fence, C/O, etc. as one price based on conditioned space square footage.



Impacts of All inclusive fees

1. Makes forecasting permit costs easy for customers.
2. Reduces admin time required to calculate fees.
3. Reduces data entry errors.
4. Decreases customer wait times.
5. Administratively easier to manage in MGO.
6. Easier to amend annually as a percentage increase based on federal reporting of Cost of Living, ICC valuation table increases, or another metric.



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change
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City costs for permitting

Description	Costs
Direct	
Permitting Software	\$1,600/month
Tracers Investigative Software	\$100/month
Bluebeam Software	\$40/month
Administrative time for permit processing (2-4 hours for the life of the permit, including email and phone call support)	\$65-\$425
Plan Review (Building (3rd party), Planning, Lighting, Fire, Environmental Health)	\$170-\$700
Field Inspections (Building (3rd party and in-house), Lighting, Fire, Environmental Health, Public Works, Landscape, Exterior Architecture)	\$800-\$2,700
Indirect	
Facilities and Utilities	\$2,116/month
Supporting Staff (City Administrators, Legal Department, Human Resources, Finance, City Secretary, City Engineer, IT, People and Comms, Administrative Assistant/Receptionist, Public Works)	\$11,105/month
Vehicles (acquisition, fuel, preventive and corrective maintenance, equipment)	\$2,340/month
Inspection Equipment (tablets, markers, flashlights, bore scopes, tool bag w/tools, ladders, books, etc.)	\$75/month
Training and Education to maintain a certified, professional, and knowledgeable staff	\$2,000/month
Clothing	\$300/month
Salaries and Benefits	\$56,561/month
IT Equipment and Software (laptops and peripherals, desk phones, cell phones, Microsoft Office, Adobe Pro, Ring Central, City Website host)	\$1,241/month



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Schedule
change
proposal

Department Operating Costs May '24 – May '25

Category	Details of Category	
3rd Party	Costs for 3rd Party Residential and Commercial Plan Review and Inspections	\$1,146,020.00
Salary and Compensation	Salaries, Overtime, Health, Dental, Medicare, Social Security, Unemployment, and Retirement	\$735,291.00
Supporting Staff	City Administrators, Legal Department, Human Resources, Finance Department, City Secretary, City Engineer, IT, People and Communications, Administrative Assistant/Receptionist, Public Works	\$144,625.00
Vehicles	Acquisition, Fuel, Preventive and Corrective maintenance, and Equipment	\$30,420.00
IT Equipment and Software	Laptops and Peripherals, Tablets, Desk Phones, Cell Phones, Microsoft Office, Adobe Pro, Ring Central, City Website Host, MGO	\$16,133.00
Permit Fees Collected	Permit Fees collected based on report living area, covered porches, garages, and driveways. Reinspection fees and connection fees are not included	\$1,237,476.40
	Total:	-\$862,260.00

Residential Permit fees based on conditioned space only

Current fees are based on reported living space, covered porches, and garage square footage. Permit techs are not trained as Plan Reviewers and do not “fact check” applicant’s reported square footage.

Random checks showed customers under reporting by as much as 900 square feet and over reporting by more than 1,500 square feet.

Using conditioned space as the single number to determine permit fees greatly reduces errors with applicant submissions and is easily verified using the Manual J, ResCheck, and Energy Reports.

Using conditioned space to determine permit fees, we need to charge \$1.20/sqft to cover department costs.

Compounding reinspection fee phase out

Projects average 4 reinspections throughout construction.

The doubling reinspection fee accounts for the majority of reinspection fees collected (58%). Of the 4,614 reinspections between May 2024 and May 2025, 1,327 were doubled or more. The largest single reinspection fee collected for Residential was \$3,200 and \$6,400 for Commercial.

Removing the compounding effect of doubling will make budgeting more predictable.

A flat reinspection fee covers our expenses for the time to conduct the reinspection.



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Proposal 1: All inclusive @ \$1.20/sqft

Square footage of New Residential project	2,000	3,000	4,000
Permit Fee (\$1.20 per square foot - conditioned)	2,440	3660	4880
Plan Review Fee	Included	Included	Included
Elec	Included	Included	Included
Mech	Included	Included	Included
Plumb	Included	Included	Included
Irrigation	Included	Included	Included
Driveway	Included	Included	Included
Technology	Included	Included	Included
Inspection Fee (\$100)			
Certificate of Occupancy Fee	Included	Included	Included
Proposed fees	2400	3600	4800
Current fees	1697	2047	2397
Difference between current and proposed fees	703	1553	2403
Buda	2470	2970	3470
Kyle	1978	2228	2478
New Braunfels	1545	2174	2803
San Marcos	1895	2645	3395



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change
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Department Operating Costs May '24 – May '25 using proposed permit fees

Category	Details of Category	
3rd Party	Costs for 3rd Party Residential and Commercial Plan Review and Inspections	\$1,146,020.00
Salary and Compensation	Salaries, Overtime, Health, Dental, Medicare, Social Security, Unemployment, and Retirement	\$735,291.00
Supporting Staff	City Administrators, Legal Department, Human Resources, Finance Department, City Secretary, City Engineer, IT, People and Communications, Administrative Assistant/Receptionist, Public Works	\$144,625.00
Vehicles	Acquisition, Fuel, Preventive and Corrective maintenance, and Equipment	\$30,420.00
IT Equipment and Software	Laptops and Peripherals, Tablets, Desk Phones, Cell Phones, Microsoft Office, Adobe Pro, Ring Central, City Website Host, MGO	\$16,133.00
	Total:	\$2,099,737.00
Permit Fees Collected	Permit Fees collected based on report living area, covered porches, garages, and driveways. Reinspection fees and connection fees are not included	\$2,106,803.40
	Total:	+\$7,066.00



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Residential Fee schedule

Dept	Residential	FY 2025	FY 2026
Building	One- and Two-Family New Residential Permit	Varies	\$1.20/ft2
Building	Mobile/Modular Home Permit (Plus inspections for Scope of Work)	\$450	\$0.50/ft2
Building	Construction Trailer Permit (Plus inspections for Scope of Work)	N/A	\$0.50/ft2
Building	Addition/Alteration/Remodel (Plus inspections for Scope of Work)	\$120	\$1.20/ft2
Building	Accessory Building (Plus inspections for Scope of Work)	\$192	\$1.20/ft2
Building	Additional Dwelling (Plus inspections for Scope of Work)	Varies	\$1.20/ft2
Building	Stand Alone Trade Permit (Plus inspections for Scope of Work)	\$120	\$200
Building	Inspection Fee (for inspections not covered by the Residential Permit Fee)	\$100	\$100
Building	After Hours Inspection Fee	N/A	\$200
Building	Remote Virtual Inspection Fee	N/A	\$100
Building	Reinspection Fee	Varies	\$150
Building	Expired Permit Renewal Fee (Site visit inspection and plan review)	Varies	\$250
Building	Pre-Construction Meeting (only upon request and limited to 1 hour max)	N/A	\$180/hour
Building	Swimming Pool Permit	\$450	\$450
Building	Swimming Pool Review (for pools not requiring building review with certain Development Agreements)	\$75	\$100
Building	Plan reviews requiring more than 3 rounds of comments (\$50/additional review)	N/A	\$50



Fee Schedule change proposal

Residential Fee schedule

Dept	Residential	FY 2025	FY 2026
Building	Plan Review \$95/hour	N/A	\$95
Building	Plan Revision for Approved Permit (\$50/additional review)	N/A	\$50
Building	Unauthorized Occupancy	\$750	\$2,000
Building	Waiver/Variance	\$500	\$500
Building	Demolition Permit	\$100	\$250
Building	On Site Sewage Facility Permit	Varies	\$600
Building	Child/Adult Care Sanitation Permit (renewed annually)	\$200	\$300
Building	Double permit fees for project started without a permit	Varies	Varies
Building	On Site Sewage Facility Certification fee	\$200	
Building	On Site Sewage Facility Standard	\$575	
Building	On Site Sewage Facility Engineered	\$625	
Building	Amendment/Engineer adjustment to On Site Sewage Facility permit	\$250	
Building	Single family residential 1 – 1,500 ft2	\$942	
Building	Single family residential 1,500 – 10,000 ft2 \$942.00 for the first 1,500 ft2 plus \$0.35 for each additional ft2	\$942.00 +	
Building	Single family residential over 10,000 ft2 \$3,760 for the first 10,000 plus \$0.15 for each additional ft2	\$3,760.00 +	
Building	Replacement permit	\$25	
Building	Trade Registration	\$100	



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Commercial Fee proposed increase

Current Fee Schedule

Commercial and Multi-Family	FY 2025
\$1.00 - \$10,000 valuation	\$160
\$10,000.01 - \$25,000.00 valuation (\$200+ \$16.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof, to and including \$25,000.00)	Varies
\$25,000.01 - \$50,000.00 valuation (\$450+ \$12.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof, to and including \$50,000.00)	Varies
\$50,000.01 - \$100,000 valuation (\$725+ \$8.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof, to and including \$100,000.00)	Varies
\$100,000.01 - \$500,000.00 valuation (\$1,100+ \$7.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof, to and including \$500,000.00)	Varies
\$500,000.01 - \$1,000,000.00 valuation (\$3,525+ \$6.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof, to and including \$1,000,000.00)	Varies
Valuation more than \$1,000,000.00 (\$6,125+ \$4.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof \$1,000,000.00)	Varies

Proposed Fee Schedule

Commercial and Multi-Family	FY 2025	FY 2026
\$1.00 - \$10,000 valuation	\$160	\$200
\$10,000.01 - \$25,000.00 valuation (\$200+ \$17.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof, to and including \$25,000.00)	Varies	Varies
\$25,000.01 - \$50,000.00 valuation (\$455+ \$13.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof, to and including \$50,000.00)	Varies	Varies
\$50,000.01 - \$100,000 valuation (\$780+ \$9.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof, to and including \$100,000.00)	Varies	Varies
\$100,000.01 - \$500,000.00 valuation (\$1,230+ \$8.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof, to and including \$500,000.00)	Varies	Varies
\$500,000.01 - \$1,000,000.00 valuation (\$4,430+ \$7.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof, to and including \$1,000,000.00)	Varies	Varies
Valuation more than \$1,000,000.01 (\$7,930+ \$5.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof)	Varies	Varies



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Fee Schedule change proposal

ICC Building Valuation Data Table

Group (2024 International Building Code)	IA	IB	IIA	IIB	IIIA	IIIB	IV	VA	VB
A-1 Assembly, theaters, with stage	337.41	325.40	315.80	303.35	283.46	275.24	292.98	264.14	254.04
A-1 Assembly, theaters, without stage	309.77	297.76	288.16	275.71	256.07	247.85	265.35	236.75	226.65
A-2 Assembly, nightclubs	269.42	261.52	253.31	243.65	228.21	222.01	235.29	207.53	199.66
A-2 Assembly, restaurants, bars, banquet halls	268.42	260.52	251.31	242.65	226.21	221.01	234.29	205.53	198.66
A-3 Assembly, churches	314.40	302.40	292.80	280.35	260.82	252.61	269.98	241.51	231.40
A-3 Assembly, general, community halls, libraries, museums	264.03	252.03	241.42	229.98	209.33	202.12	219.61	190.01	180.91
A-4 Assembly, arenas	308.77	296.76	286.16	274.71	254.07	246.85	264.35	234.75	225.65
B Business	298.43	287.83	277.50	265.76	242.70	234.06	255.55	216.90	206.96
E Educational	282.06	272.26	263.65	252.74	235.87	223.82	244.04	206.65	200.02
F-1 Factory and industrial, moderate hazard	164.17	156.25	146.41	140.89	125.45	119.36	134.33	104.02	96.87
F-2 Factory and industrial, low hazard	163.17	155.25	146.41	139.89	125.45	118.36	133.33	104.02	95.87
H-1 High Hazard, explosives	153.17	145.25	136.41	129.89	115.76	108.67	123.33	94.33	N.P.
H234 High Hazard	153.17	145.25	136.41	129.89	115.76	108.67	123.33	94.33	86.17
H-5 HPM	298.43	287.83	277.50	265.76	242.70	234.06	255.55	216.90	206.96
I-1 Institutional, supervised environment	274.98	265.13	255.66	246.00	225.17	219.12	245.49	202.80	195.56
I-2 Institutional, hospitals	469.18	458.58	448.25	436.51	411.45	N.P.	426.30	385.65	N.P.
I-2 Institutional, nursing homes	323.68	313.08	302.75	291.01	269.45	N.P.	280.80	243.65	N.P.
I-3 Institutional, restrained	314.93	304.33	294.00	282.26	261.70	252.06	272.05	255.55	223.96
I-4 Institutional, day care facilities	274.98	265.13	255.66	246.00	225.17	219.12	245.49	202.80	195.56
M Mercantile	201.08	193.18	183.97	175.31	159.52	154.32	166.95	138.84	131.97
R-1 Residential, hotels	278.14	268.29	258.82	249.16	227.83	221.78	248.64	205.46	198.22
R-2 Residential, multiple family	232.26	222.41	212.94	203.28	183.19	177.15	202.77	160.82	153.58
R-3 Residential, one- and two-family ^d	215.90	210.16	205.11	200.73	194.02	187.11	204.78	180.41	169.09
R-4 Residential, care/assisted living facilities	274.98	265.13	255.66	246.00	225.17	219.12	245.49	202.80	195.56
S-1 Storage, moderate hazard	152.17	144.25	134.41	128.89	113.76	107.67	122.33	92.33	85.17
S-2 Storage, low hazard	151.17	143.25	134.41	127.89	113.76	106.67	121.33	92.33	84.17
U Utility, miscellaneous	117.65	110.72	103.00	98.58	87.79	82.02	93.83	69.49	66.20



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Commercial Valuation vs. Square Footage

1. Bracketed fees based on the valuation determined by the International Code Council Building Valuation Data (current model) assesses construction costs based on different Occupancy Groups and Construction Types.
2. Construction types are used to distinguish the complexity of construction and materials used.
3. Occupancy Groups Rates vary based on complexity and design -
 - An Unprotected Wood Frame Storage Building is \$84 per square foot
 - A Fire Resistant Non-combustible Theater is \$337 per square foot
4. Permit Techs use the reported valuation to determine the permit fee using the adopted Commercial and Multi-Family Construction Building Permit Fees Table. The Fire Marshal plan review is based on square footage.
5. A flat fee per square foot can result in significantly over or under charging for a permit.
6. Over charging will deter new construction.
7. Under charging doesn't cover department operating costs.



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Schedule
change
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Commercial Fee schedule

Dept	Commercial and Multi-Family	FY 2025	FY 2026
Building	Building Permit Fee - per ICC Building Valuation Data Table and fees below		
Building	\$1.00 - \$10,000 valuation	\$160	\$200
Building	\$10,000.01 - \$25,000.00 valuation (\$200+ \$17.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof, to and including \$25,000.00)	Varies	Varies
Building	\$25,000.01 - \$50,000.00 valuation (\$455+ \$13.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof, to and including \$50,000.00)	Varies	Varies
Building	\$50,000.01 - \$100,000 valuation (\$780+ \$9.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof, to and including \$100,000.00)	Varies	Varies
Building	\$100,000.01 - \$500,000.00 valuation (\$1,230+ \$8.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof, to and including \$500,000.00)	Varies	Varies
Building	\$500,000.01 - \$1,000,000.00 valuation (\$4,430+ \$7.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof, to and including \$1,000,000.00)	Varies	Varies
Building	Valuation more than \$1,000,000.00 (\$7,930+ \$5.00 for each additional \$1,000.00, or fraction thereof)	Varies	Varies
Building	Construction Trailer/Modular Building Permit	Varies	Varies
Building	Stand Alone Trade Permit	\$120	\$250
Building	Inspection Fee (for inspections not covered by the Commercial Permit Fee)	N/A	\$200
Building	After Hours Inspection Fee	N/A	\$300
Building	Remote Virtual Inspection Fee	N/A	\$150



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Fee Schedule change proposal

Commercial Fee schedule

Dept	Commercial and Multi-Family	FY 2025	FY 2026
Building	Reinspection Fee	Varies	\$250
Building	Expired Permit Renewal (Site visit inspection and plan review)	Varies	\$500
Building	Pre-Construction Meeting (only upon request and limited to 1 hour max)	\$180/hour	\$180/hour
Building	Swimming Pool Annual Inspection	\$240	\$240
Building	Plan Review requiring more than 3 rounds of comments (\$100/additional review)	N/A	\$100
Building	Plan Revisions (\$100/additional review)	N/A	\$100
Building	Certificate of Occupancy (includes plan review and 1 inspection)	\$60	\$180
Building	Unauthorized Occupancy	\$750	\$2,000
Building	Outdoor Lighting Review	N/A	\$138/hour
Building	Outdoor Lighting Inspection	N/A	\$138/hour
Building	Waiver/Variance	\$500	\$500
Building	Demolition Permit	\$200	\$400
Building	On Site Sewage Facility Permit	\$800	\$1,250
Building	Food Establishment Permit (renewed annually)	Varies	\$450
Building	Food Establishment Compliance Inspection Fee	\$200	\$200
Building	Mobile Food Unit Permit (restricted and unrestricted)	\$200	\$200
Building	Change of Name/Ownership	\$100	\$100
Building	Temp Food Event (fee per day)	\$30	\$30



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**Fee
Schedule
change
proposal**

Commercial Fee schedule

Dept	Commercial and Multi-Family	FY 2025	FY 2026
Building	Child/Adult Care, Church, School Establishment Permit (renewed annually)	Varies	\$300
Building	Double permit fees for project started without a permit	Varies	Varies
Building	Establishment Permit and Inspection late fee (every 30 days past due)	\$50	
Building	Replacement permit	\$25	
Building	Swimming Pool annual inspection (more than one reinspection)	\$120/hour	
Building	Swimming Pool design and consultation services	\$120/hour	
Building	Swimming Pool annual inspection (complaint or investigation)	\$60	
Building	On Site Sewage Facility Standard	\$575	
Building	On Site Sewage Facility Engineered	\$625	
Building	On Site Sewage Facility reinspection fee	\$200	
Building	On Site Sewage Facility Certification fee	\$200	
Building	Amendment/Engineer adjustment to On Site Sewage Facility permit	\$450	
Building	Food Establishment permit 1-15 employees	\$350	
Building	Food Establishment permit 16-30 employees	\$350	
Building	Food Establishment permit 31 or more employees	\$435	
Building	Child/Adult Care, Church, School Establishment Inspection 13-40 Children	\$200	
Building	Child/Adult Care, Church, School Establishment Inspection 41-100 Children	\$300	
Building	Child/Adult Care, Church, School Establishment Inspection 101 or more Children	\$350	



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Fee
Schedule
change
proposal

Commercial Fee schedule

Dept	Commercial and Multi-Family	FY 2025	FY 2026
Building	Child/Adult Care, Church, School Establishment Inspection 41-100 Children with food prep	\$500	
Building	Child/Adult Care, Church, School Establishment Inspection 101 or more Children with food prep	\$550	
Building	Child/Adult Care Sanitation Inspection (fewer than 13 children/adults)	\$200	
Building	Establishment Plan Review (includes 2 inspections)	\$400	
Building	Establishment Plan Review (each reinspection)	\$200	
Building	Permit reinstatement after suspension	\$200	
Building	Trade Registration	\$100	



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Schedule
change
proposal**

Sign Fee schedule

Dept	Signs	FY 2025	FY 2026
Building	Real Estate Sign (12-month permit; requires annual renewal)	\$50	\$150
Building	Real Estate - Individual Lease Units (12-month permit; requires annual renewal)	\$0	\$100
Building	Monument Sign (\$7.50/ft2)	Varies	Varies
Building	Building Sign (Wall, Fence, Awning, Hanging) (\$4.50/ft2)	Varies	Varies
Building	Banner and Temporary Sign	\$25	\$25
Building	Construction Development Sign (12-month permit; requires annual renewal)	\$50	\$150
Building	Restaurant Menu (\$7.50/ft2)	\$225	Varies
Building	Tenant Panel on Multi-unit monument (\$7.50/ft2)	\$50	Varies
Building	Master Sign Plan and Ordinance Review (does not include sign or variance fees)	\$300	\$500
Building	Impounded Sign Recovery Fee	\$25	\$25
Building	Waiver/Variance	\$150	\$500
Building	Plan Review requiring more than 3 rounds of comments (\$50/additional review)	N/A	\$50
Building	Plan Revisions (\$50/additional review)	N/A	\$50
Building	Double permit fees for project started without a permit	Varies	Varies
Building	Real Estate	\$50	
Building	Real Estate - Individual Lease Units	\$0	
Building	Residential Development - Large Monument Identification Sign	\$225	
Building	Residential Development - Small Monument Identification Sign	\$200	



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**Fee
Schedule
change
proposal**

Sign Fee schedule

Dept	Signs	FY 2025	FY 2026
Building	Construction Development Sign	\$50	
Building	Home Occupation	\$0	
Building	Residential non-commercial sign	\$0	
Building	Multi-family Residential Complex—Large Monument Sign	\$250	
Building	Multi-family Residential Complex—Small Monument Sign	\$200	
Building	Multi-family Identification Wall Sign	\$150	
Building	Multi-family Identification Hanging Sign	\$50	
Building	Manufactured Home Park Identification Monument Sign	\$250	
Building	Commercial Wall Sign	\$275	
Building	Commercial Hanging Sign	\$50	
Building	Commercial Construction Development Sign	\$50	
Building	Commercial Monument Sign—Individual Business	\$225	
Building	Commercial Awning Sign (as part of a wall sign)	\$50	
Building	Restaurant Menu	\$225	
Building	Wall Sign	\$275	
Building	Monument Identification Sign	\$250	
Building	Single Sign in a Multiunit Project	\$50	
Building	Master Sign Fee	\$100	
Building	Master Sign Plan Ordinance Fee	\$200	



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Staff Recommendation and Next Steps

- Staff recommends adopting the fee schedule as proposed with New Residential Permits being assessed at \$1.20/sq ft conditioned space.
- Staff recommends phasing out the doubling reinspection fee and replacing it with a fixed reinspection fee.
- Staff recommends adopting the new fee schedule format and all other fees as proposed.

If approved,

- Proposed changes will be implemented January 1st, 2026. Notification will be via:
 - Newspaper announcement
 - Notification on Dripping Springs Website
 - Notification on Building Department Website
 - Notification on MGO generated documents
 - Notifications posted in the lobby at City Hall and Development Services
 - Notification on Building Department Staff email signatures
 - Mass email to all builders and trades

QUESTIONS?