File #: 170863., **Version:** 1

Department of Doing Requests to Add Staff and Budget Additional Funding for Professional Services (B)

A request to approve a change to the FY 18 budget for the Department of Doing Building Division to add personnel and increase the funding for professional services.

The Building Division is funded through an Enterprise Fund. The fund requires that fees paid by users are utilized to pay for the service provided. Building division budgets, by necessity, are generally very fluid; in times of high growth the budget increases in order to meet the needs of the customers. The City is experiencing high levels of building development. Unlike any time in the past, we have many multi-story buildings under construction, in permit review, or seeking development approval through the site plan process. Currently there are ten projects in the entitlement process that have four or more stories. We have conducted first step meetings on another six projects with plans for multi-story buildings. In addition, subdivision plats recently approved or seeking approval will create 751 residential lots.

The division has been successful in filling seven positions in the last year and both inspectors and plans examiners are cross training to gain additional certifications. Multiple certifications provide the flexibility to fill gaps in demand by allowing one employee to perform multiple inspections or plan reviews. The team has been remarkable in its commitment to meeting increasing demands. And yet, demand for service exceeds the capacity of our current staff.

The Building Division is seeking allocation of the Enterprise Fund for the following:

Approval to change all current inspector positions to Inspector IV positions. Please see attached organizational chart and budget amendment details. This change is being requested in order to facilitate the promotion of inspectors who pass the state certification test(s). In response to a critical shortage of building inspectors and plans examiners, House Bill 1021 amended Florida law to create an apprenticeship (referred to in statute as an intern) program. Staff has worked with Santa Fe College, the University of Florida, and the Alachua County School District to create a program to bring students or recent graduates into the program. The department is seeking approval to budget up to three apprentice positions. An intern position is being sought to allow the University of Florida to partner with the City to hire a doctoral student to create a software program to perform residential plan review. This is anticipated to be a four year endeavor.

Approval to allocate funds for Personnel Services. The Building Division is seeking allocation of funds to add the following six positions: Chief Plans Examiner, Inspector, Plans Examiner, Apprentice Building Inspector (2), Apprentice Plans Examiner (1), and an Intern. The Building Division is also seeking approval to allocate funds for the implementation of the re-organization the department's Strategic Customer Service area.

Approval to allocate funds for Professional Services. The Building Division requests the allocation of funds for Professional Services for the following: Tech Support Services for new Land Management software implementation, technical support for development of interactive building code using Artificial Intelligence (AI), and funding for partnership with the University of Florida to develop prototype software to use AI for

residential building plan review.

The Building Fund has a current fund balance of: $5,347,980.
The Building Division is seeking to allocate $631,622 of the fund's balance to Personnel Services and $175,000 of the fund's balance to Professional Services for a total of $806,622 to be allocated from the Building Fund to the Building Division.

The City Commission authorize amendments to the Building Division Budget for the allocation of additional funds from the building enterprise fund to increase the allocation for professional services and add up to six new positions.