

December 18, 2024

TO: Members of the Budget and Finance Committee 202402562
FROM: Sheryl M.M. Long, City Manager
SUBJECT: Ordinance – Department of City Planning and Engagement Revised Fees

Attached is an Ordinance captioned:

AUTHORIZING the Department of City Planning and Engagement (“DCPE”) to adjust fees charged for certain services for planning-related functions and in administering the Cincinnati Zoning Code to allow the DCPE to recover a higher portion of its true cost of the services provided.

The Department of City Planning and Engagement (DCPE) charges fees for certain planning- and zoning-related services in performing city planning-related functions in administering the Cincinnati Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulations. The current fees have not been adjusted since 2014 and 2015. Some fees require City Planning Commission approval while others require approval by City Council.

DCPE conducted a detailed analysis of its current fees, fees charged by other cities, the cost of staff time for each of their fees, and impact of inflation. This analysis found that the contrast with other cities was a dissimilar comparison, given that each city’s processes and application types are different. The analysis also found that the cost of staff time for each application type outweighed the revenue received from the current fee.

In order to adjust fees to better align with staff time without creating a drastic increase, most proposed fee increases are based on inflation. In most cases, the percentage of increase is between 50% and 67%. The one outlier is the Notwithstanding Ordinance (150%), which was considered appropriate to price at the same cost as a zone change.

Approval of this Ordinance will adjust the fees for Zoning Map or Text Amendments, Map Amendment to Planned Development, Planned Development Major Amendment, and Notwithstanding Ordinance. The City Planning Commission approved fee increases for Minor Subdivisions, Major Subdivisions, Final Development Plan, Mapping Services, and Copies, which will go into effect concurrent with the date the City Council-established fees go into effect.

Although the proposed fees do not fully cover the cost of staff time, the modest increases will allow the department to recoup a higher portion of its costs each year for planning and zoning services.

cc: William “Billy” Weber, Assistant City Manager
Katherine Keough-Jurs, FAICP, Director, Department of City Planning and Engagement