



Legislation Text

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To: Board of County Commissioners

Through: Bryan Weimer, Director, Public Works and Development (PWD)

Prepared By:

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Subject:

Building Contractor Licensing Program Updates

Presenter: Greg Bragdon, Building Division Manager, PWD

Purpose and Request:

Public Works and Development Department (PWD) is proposing changes to the Building Contractor Licensing Program (Resolution No. 180258). PWD staff believe these changes are needed in order to better align this program with International Code Council (ICC) requirements and to clarify and streamline other program requirements, including license duration and fees. PWD is requesting formal adoption of the revised Resolution by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). The BOCC reviewed and provided feedback on these updates at their meeting on July 5, 2022.

Background and Discussion: The Arapahoe County Building Contractor Licensing Program was implemented in 2018. This program adds value to the County by ensuring that Building Contractors operating within the unincorporated areas of Arapahoe County have all required and applicable certifications, have an appropriate level of experience to engage in the business, and carry appropriate liability insurance.

Over the past four years of working with this program, PWD staff assessed the program's effectiveness and are recommending modifications based on that assessment. The primary changes being proposed are to clarify the types of contracting work that fall into the license categories of Class A, B, C, and D. These changes will align our license types with ICC guidance and certification requirements. The clarification and re-designation of some license types will result in higher fees being required for certain licenses, which is due to the specific license type being designated to the appropriate category based on the work performed, not due to an increase in the fee itself.

Staff are recommending these re-designations to better align with ICC certification and other requirements, which we believe better meet the spirit of this program to ensure that all contractors operating in unincorporated Arapahoe County have the applicable certifications and required experience to engage in the business. Another change being proposed is to have all licenses expire one year from the date of application or renewal. This will eliminate the current requirement of all licenses expiring on December 31. Additionally, to simplify the application/renewal process, all fees paid will be for the one-year rate, which will eliminate the current requirement of pro-rating fees depending on the month of application.

PWD posted notice of the proposed changes on the PWD web site from July 11-25, 2022. We also emailed a copy of the proposed changes to all 1,249 active Contractor Licensees in our system. We invited feedback from customers on the proposed changes and received no comments. PWD staff have evaluated the current fee rates and are not recommending an increase at this time, as the current rates are sufficient to cover the costs of administering the program. Per the provisions of the resolution, PWD staff will perform another review of the fees in two years to determine whether an increase in fees should be recommended to the BOCC at that time. The proposed effective date of these changes is August 30, 2022. This aligns with the date that the new Contractor Licensing electronic application and tracking program is expected to go live in Accela. PWD and IT Department staff have been working on this project with the goal of fully integrating contractor licensing information into the Accela system to improve efficiency in tracking this information and relating it to permits being issued.

Fiscal Impact: The fiscal impact to these changes is expected to be largely budget neutral. There is no change to the fees themselves, although some license types are changing to different fee levels as noted above, and all licenses will now be charged an annual fee rather than a 1.5-year fee as is currently done in some cases. We anticipate minimal revenue changes as a result of these proposed program changes and will be monitoring it closely after it is implemented.

Alternatives: The Board may choose to do the following:

1. Approve updates as proposed.
2. Implement no changes to the Building Contractor Licensing Program; however, PWD staff do not believe that is a good alternative as the changes being recommended are needed to provide clarity and to better align with ICC guidelines.
3. Increase fees for this program; however, PWD staff do not believe that the costs of administering the program warrant a fee increase at this time.
4. Implement other changes to the program; however, PWD staff are already recommending changes to all aspects of the program that we believe are needed at this time.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

- ☒ Be fiscally sustainable
- ☒ Provide essential and mandated service
- ☒ Be community focused

Staff Recommendation: PWD staff are recommending BOCC approval of the proposed changes and adoption of the new Resolution for the Building Contractor Licensing Program.

Concurrence: County Attorney's Office concurs with PWD staff recommendation.