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# MEMORANDUM

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Date: June 5, 2006

To: The Honorable Chairman and Members  
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator 

Re: Creation of a Pima County Green Building Program

In line with our continuing concentration on water conservation efforts and, given the interrelationship between water consumption and energy usage, the Development Services Department ("Development Services") is proceeding with a strategy for encouraging sustainable building within Pima County. Development Services is focusing on the external application of sustainable construction through a review of opportunities in new private residential and commercial construction projects.

Opportunities also exist for the application of like standards and techniques for public facilities planned, designed, and constructed by Pima County. We also have an opportunity to address water and energy conservation in the standards employed by the Wastewater Management Department, the Regional Flood Control District, and the Department of Environmental Quality.

Since the Pima County Water Conservation Task Force has recommended that the vast majority of its proposed building-related water conservation measures be incentive-based, and since SAHBA has created a Green Building Committee which is presently looking to the jurisdictions to initiate incentives for encouraging green building, it is a logical extension to create an incentive-based program within Development Services.

Development Services is therefore proposing, as highlighted in the attached Green Building White Paper, that a Green Building Subcommittee be created within the Building Codes Committee to offer code recommendations through input from the various community and County stakeholders. The proposed Pima County Green Building Program will consider incentives including credits against permitting fees, reducing permitting turn-around times, and issuance of green building certificates. Credits against permitting fees will be absorbed within Development Services operations or within the Development Services reserve fund as required. Incentive credit amounts are yet to be determined. For commercial structures, the amount of credit will be contingent on the size of the building as well as the type of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) or other commercial certification sought for and obtained. For International Residential Code (IRC) structures, the amount of credit will be contingent on the size of the building as well as the number of points achieved on an eventual green building rating system.

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The Green Building Subcommittee will evaluate available rating systems for IRC structures to secure one that is most in alignment with the Sonoran Desert environment and, wherever possible, integrates other programs such as those available through local water and energy utilities. Certificates are to be issued for three different levels of IRC sustainable buildings based on ratings received from a formalized evaluation system. The recommendations produced by the Pima County Water Conservation Task Force and other stakeholders will also be incorporated into the program.

Once program details are developed, an amendment to the Development Services fee ordinance will be required to allow for fee-based incentives and perhaps other administrative allowances. The proposed program would be administered under an instituted County policy with appropriate procedures developed through the Development Services Department, with advisory input provided by the Building Code Committee, Green Building Subcommittee.

In the near future, we will release this proposal to the Water Conservation Task Force, the Building Code Committee and the general public to receive their input. The matter will be scheduled for an initial discussion with the Building Code Committee on June 14, 2006.

CHH/jj

Attachment

c: John Bernal, Deputy County Administrator - Public Works  
Carmine DeBonis, Development Services Director  
Yves Khawam, Building Codes Administrator, Development Services Department