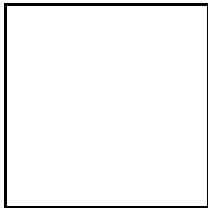


Rosie Lua

To: Carlos Flores
Subject: RE: Updated Fee Schedule - August 28, 2025 City Council Agenda

From: McGarrey, Deborah <DMcgarrey@socalgas.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 21, 2025 11:33 AM
To: Carlos Flores <cflores@palmdesert.gov>
Cc: Liao, William <WLiao@socalgas.com>; Munoz, Draykke L <DMunoz2@socalgas.com>
Subject: RE: Updated Fee Schedule - August 28, 2025 City Council Agenda



Thank you Carlos,

SoCalGas is fine with the proposed utility fees as presented.

Deborah McGarrey
Public Affairs Manager, SoCalGas
760-578-5985 cell
dmcgarrey@socalgas.com
Follow me on Twitter: [@DebMc SoCalGas](https://twitter.com/DebMc_SoCalGas)

From: Carlos Flores <cflores@palmdesert.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2025 5:04 PM
To: McGarrey, Deborah <DMcgarrey@socalgas.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Updated Fee Schedule - August 28, 2025 City Council Agenda

Hi Deborah,

The highlighted fees under #14 of the proposed fee schedule do not apply to any utility specific permits that are pulled for work in the right of way. These only apply to development project improvements. Fees that would apply to utility company permits (which includes SoCalGas) fall under #'s 15 & 16 and would be all inclusive of the permit/scope of work that they are applying for. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you.

Encroachment and Project Improvement Inspection Permits

14 **Project Improvement Permit Inspections**

a) Street Inspection Fee: On-Site and Off-Site Improvements (Includes Signing & Striping)	\$500 base fee + 2% x Valuation		N
b) Storm Drain Inspection Fee: On-Site and Off-Site Improvements	\$500 base fee + 2% x Valuation		N
c) Traffic Signal Inspection Fee	\$500 base fee + 2% x Valuation		N
d) Landscape Inspection			
i) Offsite	\$500 base fee + 2% x Valuation		N
ii) Onsite			
a) Residential (Each Lot)	\$107	Each Lot	Y
b) Non-Residential (Each Commercial or Common Area)	\$213	Each Commercial or Common Area	Y
e) Survey Monument	\$71	Per Lot	Y

15 Encroachment Permit Processing / Renew Expired Permit	\$97	each	Y
--	------	------	---

16 Encroachment Permit Inspections			
a) Curb and Gutter (per 100 LF)	\$213	per 100 LF	Y
b) Driveway Approach			
i) Residential	\$177	per approach	Y
ii) Commercial	\$354	per approach	Y
c) Excavation / Boring (per 100 LF)	\$852	per 100 LF	Y
d) Traffic Control Plan Review and Inspection (PW Only)	\$177	per day	Y
e) Utility Cut	\$177	per location	Y



Carlos Flores, AICP

Deputy Director of Development Services

City of Palm Desert

73510 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert, CA 92260

cflores@palmdesert.gov | [760.776.6478](tel:760.776.6478) | www.palmdesert.gov

[\[palmdesert.gov\]](http://palmdesert.gov)

From: McGarrey, Deborah <DMcgarrey@socalgas.com>

Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2025 3:47 PM

To: Carlos Flores <cflores@palmdesert.gov>

Subject: RE: Updated Fee Schedule - August 28, 2025 City Council Agenda

I spoke with Angelica and she stated that the fees do not apply to SoCalGas but developments. However this should be stated in the fee schedule so that everyone would understand this.

I had an unscheduled meeting yesterday that required my immediate attention. Do you think that I could receive something in writing via email for our files that states the fees that apply to SoCalGas?

That should work for us.

Deborah McGarrey

Public Affairs Manager, SoCalGas

760-578-5985 cell

dmcgarrey@socalgas.com

Follow me on Twitter: [@DebMc SoCalGas](https://twitter.com/DebMc_SoCalGas)

From: Carlos Flores <cflores@palmdesert.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2025 3:40 PM

To: McGarrey, Deborah <DMcgarrey@socalgas.com>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Updated Fee Schedule - August 28, 2025 City Council Agenda

Hi Deborah,

Were you able to connect with Angelica to discuss your pending questions? Also, did you have any update on a letter? Thanks,



2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT

Paul Mahoney,
PMA Advertising

Immediate Past President

Todd Hooks
Agua Caliente Band of
Cahuilla Indians (Ret.)

1st VICE PRESIDENT

Tom Dubose
Dubose Design Group, Inc.

SECRETARY/TREASURER

**VICE PRESIDENT
OF ASSOCIATES**

Allan Levin
Allan Levin & Associates
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Gretchen Gutierrez

DIRECTORS

Fred Bell/ *2025 PAC Chairman*
Nobell Energy Solutions
Brian Benedetti
Brian Benedetti Construction
Mark Benedetti
Mario Gonzales – Presidents Council
GHA Companies
Joe Hayes – Presidents Council (dec.)
Dave Lippert
Lippert Construction, Inc
Bruce Maize
Orr Builders
Russ Martin
Mission Springs Water
District
Deborah McGarrey
Southern California Gas Company
Alan Pace
Petra GeoSciences
Kevin Pillow
AC Houston Lumber
John Powell, Jr.
Coachella Valley Water District
Mike Rowe
Dudek Engineering
Phil Smith – Presidents Council
Sunrise Company
Alissa Vatter
Fidelity National Title
Michelle Witherspoon
MSA Consulting

August 18, 2025

City of Palm Desert
Rosie Lua
Deputy Director of Dev Services
73510 Fred Waring Drive,
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Dear Ms. Lua,

Thank you for providing the Desert Valleys Builders Association (DVBA) the opportunity to review and comment on the City of Palm Desert's *User and Regulatory Fee Study*, dated August 2025.

DVBA was brought in early in the draft review process, with an in-person and virtual meeting at City Hall. This was helpful for our understanding of the fee study data points and ultimate conclusions.

We support the "nexus" and ultimate conclusions. The phasing or stepping in off fee increases over a measured period of time makes good sense. Significant increases taken in one step could cause sticker shock and delay or stop development projects currently in motion from progressing.

The Desert Valleys Builders Association supports the City of Palm Desert's Staff recommendation to adopt the *User and Regulatory Fee Study*, with a three-step phased in *Master Fee Schedule*.

Sincerely,


James Brownyard
V.P. Legislative and Governmental Affairs

Rosie Lua

From: Ron Feiro <Ron@feiro.net>
Sent: Sunday, August 17, 2025 8:24 AM
To: Rosie Lua
Subject: City of Palm Desert Proposed Fee Increases



Rosie,

Please include this in the record for the proposed fee increase:

Honorable City Councilmembers,

I am the owner of Feiro Engineering, Inc, a Civil Engineering and Land Surveying company in the City of Palm Desert, CA. Our company has been in business since 1979 and our office has always been located within the City. We have completed over 1500 projects within the City over a 45-year span. I only briefly reviewed the City's fee study, but I would like to share a higher-level view of my experience with the City's plan review process. For 40 years, I sought out projects within the City because of the development friendly and homeowner friendly environment, helpful attitudes in Planning and Engineering Departments and efficient plan review process. However, in the last 5 years, I have witnessed a tailspin in that efficiency and now, unfortunately, only work in Palm Desert for repeat clients.

I am aware that I'm not exposed to the inner-workings of City Hall, I'm viewing this as a bit of an outsider, but I would like to share the perception of an outsider and of my clients. Until about 2020, the plan review attitude seemed to be, "How efficiently can we issue permits for this project, making sure it complies with the quality of development the City deserves?" The attitude now appears to be, "How much money can we make from this project's review, neglecting the permittee's vision, pocketbook and time frame?" (and I can cite specific examples). Palm Desert has gone from my favorite City to work with, to a dead-last tie with CVWD (and that's **bad**).

I understand the need for fees to cover costs and that it should be a goal, but the goal can be achieved substantially through efficiency as well. As one quick example, a couple years ago I had Grading Plan in review for a small parking lot. There was one small restroom and storage room proposed – those were the only structures. My plan was reviewed 4 times during entitlement review and another 4 times during construction document review. It was returned to me with comments **eight times**. The developer was a prominent businessman whose business has been located within the City as long as mine and I was mystified about the way he was treated – *his plans were in review for 17 months*. What I'm witnessing now is the quality local design professionals, the Surveyors, Engineers, Architects, Landscape Architects and Builders who have helped make the City what it has become are running like beaten dogs to other jurisdictions.

I'm hopeful that you will take a closer look at City staff and processes as part of the proposed increase. Fees are necessary but should be commensurate with efficiency and attitude. I find that people tolerate fee increases, but with those increases should come a higher quality of service. Please consider pursuing a reasonable balance.

Ron Feiro
President
Feiro Engineering, Inc.
(760) 346-8015

Subject: RE: Comments on Proposed Fee Increases to be placed in the Public Record

From: Lance O'Donnell <lance@o2arch.com>

Date: August 17, 2025 at 6:05:10 PM PDT

To: rlua@palmdesert.gov

Cc: Robert Johnson <rj@johnsoncustombuild.com>, Octavio Rocha <octavio@o2arch.com>

Subject: Comments on Proposed Fee Increases to be placed in the Public Record

Lance O'Donnell, Architect

38701 Desert Mirage Drive
Palm Desert, CA 92260

August 17, 2025

Palm Desert City Council

City of Palm Desert
73-510 Fred Waring Drive
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Subject: Comments on Proposed Fee Increases

Dear Honorable City Councilmembers,

As a longtime resident of Palm Desert and a practicing architect, I am writing to formally express my concerns regarding the proposed fee increases currently under review.

While I understand the City's need to recover the costs of providing services, I believe that any fee adjustment must be accompanied by a thorough evaluation of internal operations. The current fee study appears fundamentally incomplete, as it lacks analysis of staffing levels, reliance on consultants, and other cost-control measures that are essential to a fair and effective cost recovery strategy.

In my professional capacity, I regularly collaborate with civil engineers and interact with multiple agencies throughout the Coachella Valley. From this vantage point, I can confidently say that the City of Palm Desert ranks among the least efficient in terms of planning and land development processes. The absence of a dedicated engineering department, prolonged review timelines, and the use of underqualified consultants have created a burdensome environment for applicants and professionals alike.

Raising fees without first addressing these systemic inefficiencies risks compounding the problem. The proposed fee schedule would more than double many routine charges.

The core issue is not merely the proposed fee amounts, but the persistent lack of competent and timely review by City staff and consultants. My firm, with over 30 years of experience serving the Palm Desert community, is recognized for producing high-quality work. Yet, even the most straightforward ministerial cases routinely take four to six times longer to process in Palm Desert than in neighboring jurisdictions. Without meaningful reform, fee increases alone will not achieve the goal of 100% cost recovery. On the contrary, they risk discouraging development, undermining

trust in the City's processes, and driving professionals away from working in Palm Desert—where reasonable fees are no longer sufficient to offset the costs of prolonged reviews and arbitrary agency demands.

I support the principle of cost recovery and acknowledge that modest fee increases may be necessary. However, I urge the Council to prioritize internal improvements within the Planning and Development Departments. Addressing inefficiencies and demanding accountability will yield far greater progress toward cost recovery than simply doubling fees. With thoughtful reform, the City can move closer to its financial goals while fostering a more responsive and professional development environment.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Lance C. O'Donnell, AIA
o2 Architecture
1089 N. Palm Canyon Drive, Suite B
Palm Springs, CA 92262
lance@o2arch.com
www.o2arch.com
760.778.8165 p.



Rosie Lua

From: Benjamin Egan <began@egancivil.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2025 5:11 PM
To: Rosie Lua
Subject: City of Palm Desert Proposed Fee Increases



Rosie,

I want the following placed in the record for the proposed fee increases:

Honorable City Councilmembers,

I am the owner of Egan Civil, Inc., a small Civil Engineering company in the City of Palm Desert, CA. While I understand the need of any organization to recapture the cost of services, it is also important to attempt to control costs. For this reason, I find the fee study, and proposed fee increases, to be fundamentally flawed, for the reason that no review of staffing levels, use of consultants, or other relevant cost control information is included in the cost study,

Our firm routinely interacts with the City on development projects, and we also routinely act with other agencies in the same fashion, hence we are in unique position to observe the efficiency and productivity of those various agencies with which we interact. To this point, if asked to score all agencies in the Coachella Valley with which we interact, we would sadly have to score the City of Palm Desert as dead last in terms of working with their planning and land development staff. Over the past years, we have repeatedly found that processing any land planning or development case with the City is made very difficult due to the lack of a proper engineering department, the inexcusably slow processing times with the planning department, and the use of incompetent engineering consultants. Increasing the fees collected without any review of processes or demand for accountability will likely only result in even more onerous processes in the future with ever increasing costs. The concern is that despite the significant increase in fees, the city still will never achieve 100% cost recovery.

The proposed fee schedules will more than double many routine fees. Many of the fees represent costs that often exceed the fees we charge to prepare the documents being reviewed, a good example being minor matters such as lot line adjustments and parcel mergers. The issue with cost recovery on many of these items is not the amount of the fee collected, but that City has not retained competent and efficient staff or consultants to complete the processing and reviews in a timely and efficient manner. Our firm has a sterling reputation for producing high quality work, and yet it often takes 4 to 6 times as long to process even the simplest ministerial land development case with the City Planning Department compared to any other agency in the Coachella Valley. Increasing fees without addressing the existing underlying problems and inefficiencies will never see the goal of 100% cost recovery realized.

I certainly agree that the City likely needs to modestly increase fees to recover costs, and I agree that 100% cost recovery should be the goal. However, it is indisputable that serious inefficiencies exist within the City Planning and Development Departments. Significantly more progress can be made toward 100% cost recovery by

addressing these inefficiencies versus doubling the fees. If real efforts are made to address these inefficiencies, it is likely cost recovery can approach 100% with far more modest fee increases.

Regards,

Benjamin Daniel Egan, PE, PLS

Principal

Egan Civil, Inc.

(760) 404-7663 Office

(760) 898-1106 Cell

Mailing Address:

PO BOX 5282

La Quinta, CA 92248-5282

Physical Address:

We have moved!!!

73605 Dinah Shore Drive, Suite 1330

Palm Desert, CA 92211

began@egancivil.com

