

ATTACHMENT D: Fee Study for New Design Review Fees

Date: February 24, 2026

Planning and Building Department (Dept.)

The design review ordinance provides for a new, ministerial design review process for certain project types, and also creates a new process for review and approval of exceptions to design standards. Accordingly, staff prepared this study to determine the appropriate fees for these services.

Under State law, the County can charge service fees for land development and planning services, provided the fees do not exceed the estimated reasonable costs of providing the services. Gov. Code § 66014. The Department conducted a comprehensive fee study for its fees (the Planning Service Fee Schedule), documenting estimated labor and related costs for each permit type, and the Board adopted the updated Planning Service Fee Schedule on November 19, 2024 (effective January 1, 2025; see Board of Supervisors Resolution Number 080751).

To determine appropriate fees for the new design review services, staff compared the process and work products required for the new services to existing permit processes and associated fees on the adopted Planning Service Fee Schedule. By identifying existing fees for services with comparable levels of staff effort, staff has demonstrated that the proposed fees will not exceed the estimated reasonable cost of providing these services.

In addition, prior to approving an increase in an existing fee or service charge, or adopting a new fee or service charge, the County is required to “make available to the public data indicating the amount of cost, or estimated cost, required to provide the service for which the fee or service charge is levied and the revenue sources anticipated to provide the service, including General Fund revenues.” Gov. Code § 66016. The publication of this fee study fulfills that requirement.

<i>New Review Type</i>	<i>Process and Work Products</i>	<i>Proposed New Fee</i>	<i>Comparable Existing Permit/Process and Adopted Fee</i>
Review Fees			
Ministerial Design Review Fee for New Single Family Residential Construction	Staff-Level; no referral; no noticing; no letter of decision	\$861	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Development Footprint Analysis (DFA): \$861
Ministerial Design Review Fee for New Commercial/Multiple	Staff-Level; no referral; no noticing; no letter of decision	\$861	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Development Footprint Analysis (DFA): \$861

Family Residential Construction			
Ministerial Design Review Fee for Single Family Residential Alteration and/or Addition; Detached/Attached ADUs	Staff-Level; no referral; no noticing; no letter of decision	\$646	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal Design Review Exemption: \$646 (Formal Design Review exemption requires less review but requires poster notice)
Exception Fees			
Minor Design Review Exception	Staff-Level; no referral; no noticing; letter of decision	\$861 (added to applicable review fee)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development Footprint Analysis (DFA): \$861
Major Design Review Exception (via Use Permit)	Hearing-Level; no referral; noticing; staff report; letter of decision	\$4,079 (added to applicable review fee)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Permit (\$6,041)

Summary of Design Review Fees

In addition to the new fees listed above, current design review fees will remain in effect. The following is a comprehensive list of the design review fees upon adoption of the proposed ordinance and resolution. The new fees are shown in underline; existing fees are in regular text:

- Formal Design Review Exemption: \$646
- Ministerial Design Review Fee for New Single Family Residential Construction: \$861
- Ministerial Design Review Fee for New Commercial/Multiple Family Residential Construction: \$861
- Ministerial Design Review Fee for Single Family Residential Alteration and/or Addition; Detached/Attached ADU: \$646
- Discretionary Review by Coastside Design Review Committee – New Use: \$6,041
- Discretionary Review by Coastside Design Review Committee – Major Revision or Addition to Existing Use: \$3,770
- Minor Design Review Exception: \$861 (added to applicable review fee)
- Major Design Review Exception: \$4,079 (added to applicable review fee)

Fees are subject to the annual cost adjustment and all other notes on the effective Planning Service Fee Schedule.