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## **BRIEFING NOTE**

### **Committee of Adjustment – 2004 Changes Budget Implications**

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#### **Issue/Background:**

At its meeting of September 23, 23, 24, and 25, 2003, City Council, within the context of a report describing the revised four district Committee of Adjustment model (original report dated August 14, 2003), requested a further report to the Planning & Transportation Committee (P & T) on budgetary and staffing implications of increasing remuneration to \$500 from \$300 and changing the starting time of the Committee to the evening.

The report back to January 8, 2004 P&T meeting (dated December 15, 2003) outlined the need for a total of \$454,000 to be added to the budget, if the amendments were adopted. The P & T Committee referred the issue of the starting times to the four Community Councils and requested a report back as soon as possible. The Planning & Transportation Committee also requested the Commissioner of Urban Development Services to submit a report as soon as possible on: moving towards a fee structure to fully recover costs; the possibility of sending notice to residents at the time of application receipt; and improving the practice of staff reports on applications received to the Committee of Adjustment. The P & T Committee dealt with these items at its February 16, 2004 meeting.

The original UDS 2004 budget submission requested \$454,000 for the financial impact of the changes to the Committee of Adjustment.

During the administrative budget review, the 2004 budget request for the Committee of Adjustment changes was reduced to \$175,000 in anticipation of the Community Council decisions on start times and the fact that any change would likely occur about six months into the year.

#### **Key Points:**

##### Committee Start Times

At their February 17, 2004 meetings, the East, North and West Community Councils decided to retain daytime start times for their Committee of Adjustment panels. The South Community Council decided to recommend that the start time of the South Committee of Adjustment panel be changed to 4 p.m.

As a result of the change to a 4 p.m. start time for the South Committee of Adjustment panel, 10 additional meetings will be required. Furthermore, additional overtime and other costs will be

incurred. To accommodate this change, it is estimated that an additional \$35,480 is required for member remuneration, overtime, meal allowance and transportation.

#### Staff Reports to the Committee of Adjustment

As reported to the February 16, 2004 P & T Committee meeting, staff are currently reporting on approximately 8% of applications submitted to the Committee of Adjustment, resulting in about 280 reports annually. In order to address the P & T Committee's concern regarding the limited number of reports, City Planning staff in the East, West and South Districts will double the number of reports generated. Furthermore, a pilot project will be undertaken in the North District whereby all applications considered to be of local interest will be reported on by the Committee of Adjustment Manager. The project will be evaluated within six months of commencement and a report will be submitted to the P & T Committee.

The implementation of the new four-district Committee of Adjustment model whereby six panels will be reduced to four panels (consistent with the four Community Councils) will result in a volume decrease of approximately 20% for the North District Committee of Adjustment. However, the volume for the South District Committee of Adjustment will increase by approximately 50%.

As a result of increasing the number of Committee of Adjustment reports, one additional staff position will be required. Due to the redistribution of volumes between the districts and the staffing impact of the 4 p.m. start time, this position will be allocated to the South District. The annual cost for this position is \$85,000, with a 2004 nine-month cost of \$63,790.

#### 2004 Budget Requirement

The total budget requirement in 2004 can be reduced from \$175,000 to \$99,270, comprised of \$35,480 for the change in start time for the South Committee of Adjustment panel and \$63,790 for one additional position in the City Planning division.

Date: March 5, 2004