FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 17, 2020

Development Review Process Slowed by COVID-19 and Furloughs

Staff continues to review development applications, but process will slow

The COVID-19 pandemic will cost the Unified Government more than $23-million in lost revenue during 2020 and an estimated $18-million in 2021.

The revenue shortfalls are largely caused by the sharp drop in sales and gasoline tax collections when local stay-at-home orders were put in place to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect our community's vulnerable populations.

The Unified Government has cut nearly $22-million from the 2020 budget by reducing services, deferring expenses, and borrowing from existing “rainy day” funds. But even these actions still leave a $2.5-million shortfall in 2020 and an estimated $5.6-million shortfall in 2021.

To help fill that remaining budget hole, County Administrator Doug Bach implemented a mandatory 10-day furlough program for most Unified Government employees. Furloughs began the week of June 14 and will last at least five weeks. Employees are not permitted to work overtime during furlough weeks, so customers should expect all services to be disrupted. Police Officers, Sheriff’s Deputies, Firefighters/EMS, and Public Safety Dispatchers are exempted from the mandatory furlough program.

The Development Review Committee (DRC), which many residents, visitors, and businesses rely on to provide input on commercial development, additions, occupancy changes, commercials pools, exterior renovations, and more will be affected by employee furloughs.

Those businesses and individuals currently in, or about to enter, the development review process should expect delays in processing paperwork, receiving plan review feedback, and obtaining inspections. Staff will continue to work diligently to provide these important services, but until the furlough period has ended, staffing will be limited, and services will slow in many areas. Customers should expect up to at least two additional weeks for activities like project plan review and inspections to occur.

“Providing responsive customer service is important to everyone on the Development Review, Building Inspections, Planning, and Neighborhood Resources teams, and no one is happy about furloughs slowing down this process,” said Rod Richardson, Director of Development Coordination & Customer Service Success. “We understand these delays are frustrating, and we share this frustration with those who depend on our team to help them. We ask that customers bear with us as we work through these challenging times.”
Until the furlough period passes, customers should expect some delays in the development review process, building inspections (including inspection scheduling), and planning operations. For assistance, residents, visitors, and businesses are encouraged to contact these groups directly:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>(913) 573-8664</td>
<td><a href="mailto:EDR@wycokck.org">EDR@wycokck.org</a></td>
<td>wycokck.org/Building-Inspection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Inspection</td>
<td>(913) 573-8620</td>
<td><a href="mailto:BuildingInspection@wycokck.org">BuildingInspection@wycokck.org</a></td>
<td>wycokck.org/DRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>(913) 573-5750</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Planninginfo@wycokck.org">Planninginfo@wycokck.org</a></td>
<td>wycokck.org/planning</td>
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Please note that the DRC phone will not be answered on Mondays and Tuesdays until after July 23, and the Planning email address will not be checked on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Residents or business owners with questions not related to the abovementioned departments should contact 3-1-1.

**Media Inquiries:**

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