

"out card"--a simple system that places a card in the location of the removed file indicating who has the file. The Planning Division has such a system but it is often not used. To be effective, this system must be used by all employees 100% of the time. All employees must be trained to abide by the rule. Everyone on the staff needs to work on this constantly. It is recommended that: 1) all staff be instructed in the proper use of out cards; 2) management continually follow-up and communicate with staff on the importance of this function; 3) someone be assigned to periodically check offices and desks for files to determine if out cards have been used.

There is a saying in management that you "get what you inspect, not what you expect." Getting staff to follow this simple but highly effective procedure must take on an air of importance.

There also appears to be an issue in relation to what material is actually placed in a file, in what order, and so forth. While an investigation of this issue is beyond the scope of this study, it is recommended that the Planning Division conduct its own review and develop a clear office policy on filing. This issue will become more important as the department automates. For example, currently typed-copy minutes are filed in several separate locations, and additionally, the word processing diskettes are filed. It

may be possible and appropriate to eliminate one or more of the paper files for Planning Commission minutes.

12. AGRICULTURE PRESERVES

During the study the question was raised as to why the Planning Division handles agriculture preserve contracts and it was suggested that this function be moved to the Assessors office where agricultural assessments are handled. It appears that this function logically could be placed in the Planning Division, the Assessors office or for that matter, many county departments and the amount of time required would be similar. There may be some advantage to having the function in the Assessors office since this office does have to answer related questions in relation to agricultural assessment. It is recommended that the Planning Division and Assessor meet to discuss this further and submit a recommendation to the County Administrator.

13. APPLICATION FORMS AND HANDOUTS

Good application forms and handouts are an essential part of a public information program and a streamlined, efficient application process. Although the Planning Division has many forms and handouts, they require a full review. Some of the handouts are out of date, for example showing obsolete fees. For some

applications there are no forms or handouts, for example, subdivisions. The tops of all forms should be revised to correspond to needs of the new computer program. It may even be desirable to have one standard form for applications with more specific applications needs for specific types of project attached. The new recommended process will also require changes in both forms and handouts.

Good forms and handouts take considerable work and should be continually reviewed and improved. Words should be carefully chosen and even tested with the public for meaning. For example, in looking at the current use permit form the following underlined words can present problems of interpretation and might be spelled out in more detail.

"Related, necessary or concurrent projects."

"Project phasing."

"Type of construction."

"Are there special operations."

The requirements for maps or drawing submittals are also not clear. The use permit form implies that one map is required when, in fact, several are required. Each should be discussed separately. As part of the handouts, specific checklists for each application should also be used. Samples of checklists from other communities are shown in Appendix H.

In the final analysis, the best way to prepare handouts and application forms is to continually work with them and revise them as the process takes place. The biggest problem in this regard with Napa County's Planning Division is that no one is assigned responsibility for this function. For example, a draft checklist showing concerns of the Environmental Health Department was prepared in November 1986, but has yet to be implemented.

It is recommended that one or more persons be assigned the responsibility for application forms and handouts and that the forms be periodically reviewed, at least twice a year. First priority should be given to the highest volume activities, gradually completing all topics.

14. MAILINGS

The new requirement for applicants to furnish mailing labels has helped a great deal in meeting notice requirements. Many communities have taken the next step and require applicants to submit preaddressed and stamped envelopes. It is recommended that the County consider such requirements.

During the study we heard complaints about staff reports not being mailed to Planning Commissioners on a timely basis. The problem appears to rest with the post office when at times mail is routed to Oakland

thereby causing a delay. The department should meet with the post office to resolve this problem. If it cannot be resolved, it may be necessary to prepare staff reports one day earlier.

As a minor issue, a staff member pointed out to us that reports for Planning Commission binders were being hand punched in the Planning Division. Since the reports are printed by a printing service it should be possible to have sufficient copies printed on prepunched paper or, as an alternative, punched by the printing service. Although this item may seem a minor one, the staff needs to be trained and encouraged to continually look for simple ways to save time and money. It appears that this idea has already been implemented during the course of this study.

15. SIGN PERMITS

The current process is complicated and appears to produce few useful changes to signs that are approved. We recommend that this entire process be reviewed and that the review be aimed at a major streamlining, perhaps handling the entire process on a single checklist form.

16. PLANNING DIVISION OPINION ON POLICY ISSUES

We received some criticism of the department for not taking a position in staff reports on certain matters

but rather, using as a recommendation, "no action recommended, pending discussion with the commission." Although we personally feel the Board and Commission are entitled to a clear recommendation from the department, this is basically a local issue. Evidently, the issue has been discussed with the Planning Commissioners and generally most of them have no problem with the current procedure.

17. OTHER PROCEDURAL CHANGES

There are a variety of actions or permits that could lead to substantial time-saving for both applicants and staff as follows:

a. Temporary Trailers

Temporary trailers are now administratively granted for one-year time periods. However, in practice, one year is often not sufficient time and many extensions are processed and granted. We recommend that the time period be changed to 18 or 24 months.

b. Mobile Homes On Permanent Foundations

Mobile homes on permanent foundations are currently required to receive a certificate of compatibility. However, this criteria is reasonably clear and with proper guidelines or requirements this step could be eliminated.

This activity would lend itself to the simple receiving of a building permit.

c. Indoor One-Time Social Events

Indoor one-time social events currently require CPDD Director approval, however, there is some question as to whether this review is really useful or productive. Consideration should be given to removing this approval requirement.

d. Time Extensions for Non-Utilized Permits

Non-utilized permits currently require a specific action by the Planning Commission or Zoning Administrator. It is recommended that consideration be given to either granting a longer time period as part of the original permit or allowing extensions by some form of administrative review.

ORDINANCES AND POLICIES

I. ZONING ORDINANCE

1. USE PERMITS

Napa County's zoning ordinance is unusual in that few uses are allowed by right, most require a use permit. A number of people in our interviews criticized this procedure and recommended that more uses be allowed by right. This issue is a local policy issue, there is no technically "right way" to proceed. Each community is different and has different needs. Irrespective of this localized issue, there are a number of areas that the County should examine.

In order to review this issue further we prepared a matrix of the uses and zones indicating which uses are allowed by right and which by use permit (see Exhibit 16). This matrix is only partially complete in that it does not include the new Industrial Park zone (IP) nor does it include a list of the uses allowed by use permit in all zones that are included in Section 12701 of the ordinance. We recommend that the Planning Division complete an expanded comprehensive version of this matrix and conduct an analysis to spot any apparent inconsistencies in the way uses are now regulated within zones and from zone to zone.

It is also unclear as to why use permits are actually required in each instance and what criteria are used

ZONING DISTRICT ORDINANCE CHAPTER	AP	AP-E	AP-I	AW	A	CL	CN	I	PD	RS	RD	RM	RC	T
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14

RESIDENTIAL USES

Farm Labor Housing	UP	UP	UP	UP										
Family Day (large) (12413)	X			X					UP	X	X	X	X	
Family Day Care (small)	X			X					UP	X	X	X	X	
Guest Cottage (12415)	X			X					UP				X	
Mobilehome	CC			CC					CC	CC			CC	
Mobilehome Parks									UP					
Multi Family									UP			UP		
Res. Care (large)									UP			UP		
Res. Care (med.)									UP	UP	UP	UP		
Res. Care (small)	X			X					UP	X	X	X	X	
One D.U., within S.F.								UP		X				
One Single Family	X	X	X	X					UP	X	X	X	X	
Second Dwelling									UP	UP				
Second Family (12412)				X					UP	X			X	

AGRICULTURAL, RECREATIONAL AND OPEN SPACE

Agriculture	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X	
Feed Lots	UP	UP	UP	UP				UP						
Forest Prod. Processing														UP
Grazing														UP
Growing Timber														X
Harvesting Timber														X
Kennels & Vet.	UP	UP	UP	UP										UP
Mgt Fish & Wild.														UP
Mgt Watershed														UP
Outdoor Park & Rec.		UP		UP						UP	UP	UP	UP	
Proc. Ag. Products	UP	UP	UP	UP										
Recreation (limited)									UP					
Small Winery	X			X										
Stables (public)														X

COMMERCIAL

Barber & Beauty								UP	UP	UP				
Bed & Breakfast								UP	UP	UP				
Boat & Rec. Veh. Storage								UP	UP	UP				
Branch Post Office									UP	UP				
Candy Stores									UP	UP				
Card rooms (8050)								UP	UP	UP				
Child Day Care								UP	UP	UP	UP			
Commercial					UP						UP	UP		
Dry Goods & Variety									UP	UP				
Foodmarkets (28,000)									UP	UP				
Gas & Minor Auto								UP	UP	UP				
Gift & Novelty									UP	UP				
Grocery Stores (5000)								UP	UP	UP				
Hardware									UP	UP				
Health Food									UP	UP				
Ice Cream									UP	UP				
Ice Sales									UP	UP				
Laundromat									UP	UP				
Liquor Stores									UP	UP				
Meat Market									UP	UP				
Hotels (max 50)									UP	UP				
Newstands									UP	UP				
Other Retail									UP	UP				
Rest & Bars (max 100)									UP	UP				
Shoe Repair									UP	UP				
Swimming Pool									UP	UP				
Tobacco Shops									UP	UP				

INDUSTRIAL

Industrial - Plants						UP								
Industry								UP						

OTHER

Airports & Acc. Bldgs.						UP								
Airport Facility						X								
Educational Facility									UP					
Institutional Facility									UP					
Sanitary Landfills					UP									
Wind Energy	UP	UP	UP	UP				UP						UP
Utility Transmission														X/UP

X - Uses allowed without Use Permit
 UP - Uses permitted upon grant of Use Permit
 CC - Certificate of Compatibility

to either grant or deny a use permit. Where use permits are almost routinely granted, a good case can be made for writing a set of standard conditions and allowing the use by right. This would reduce costs and delays in the process. Ideally, the ordinance or accompanying guidelines should indicate the criteria to be examined by each type of use permit. Two samples from the City of Napa are shown below:

"Day Care Facilities for Children

In reviewing the use permit application for a day care facility, the Planning Commission shall take into consideration the following nonexclusive list of items:

- A. Location of site.
- B. Proximity of site to public/private school facilities.
- C. Number of public/private day care centers within neighborhood (location of existing school facilities will be considered as a part of the neighborhood definition).
- D. Existing land use within neighborhood.
- E. Type of street access and vehicular circulation site.
- F. Street frontage of lot.
- G. Size of (1) lot; (2) facility; (3) outside play area.
- H. Distance from active outside play area to adjacent parcel or structures.
- I. Parking on site spaces or nearby spaces.
- J. Exterior modifications - site; structures; playground equipment.
- K. Facility - maximum capacity allowed/proposed; hours (indoor/outdoor); number of employees (total in each shift); age of children.
- L. Comments of Fire Department.
- M. Need for one 12-month review of use permit in the case of significant opposition.

Video Game Center

In evaluating the use permit application for a video game center, the Planning Commission shall take into consideration the following:

- A. Comments from the Napa Police Department.
- B. Appropriate hours of operation.

- C. Distance of the proposed center from public/private schools.
- D. Appropriateness of bicycle parking.
- E. Potential for loitering.
- F. Distance of the proposed center from other video game centers.
- G. Appropriateness of adequate lighting for security purposes.
- H. Potential for serving alcoholic beverages.
- I. Appropriateness of annual review of use permit."

We recommend that criteria be established for all required Napa County use permits.

In conducting this study we solicited opinion on a few areas where use permits do not appear warranted based on past review experience. These areas might be candidates for removal of use permit requirements. These included home occupations, farm labor dwellings and selected commercial and industrial uses in part of the County. We recommend that each of these be reviewed for policy decision.

2. ORDINANCE UPDATE

No one person in the Planning Division has been clearly responsible for keeping the zoning ordinance current and it has tended to be a low priority item. The lack of a good ordinance, however, can cause numerous problems and confusion in the development process. We recommend that a staff person be given responsibility for keeping the ordinance current. A series of extensive revisions to the ordinance have been prepared and are pending before staff. These

appear to be very useful and should be processed at an early date.

To help citizens and the industry keep abreast of changes the ordinance should contain an update checklist similar to that shown in Appendix I. There should also be an annual update service available to the public for a fee.

A number of sections of the ordinance are evidently not now used, such as the AP-E, AP-I and RD zones. Any of these sections that are no longer useful should be removed to clarify the ordinance.

The environmental staff has indicated that a few ordinance amendments would facilitate more routine negative declarations on certain projects. These items should be reviewed on a high priority basis with recommendations forwarded to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. The advantage of this approach is obvious. Instead of handling each permit as an individual action, one action in the ordinance streamlines the process for numerous projects that follow.

3. URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Due to the rural nature of Napa County we get a distinct impression that the county decision-makers and staff have not had extensive experience in dealing

with urban development. This may have caused some of the confusion surrounding the Airport Industrial Specific Plan. Urban-type issues are also undoubtedly closely correlated to the current discussions surrounding the desirability of architectural review. It is not our role to take a position on this issue. However, we do believe the County should take an overall look at the nature and quality of development taking place, particularly in the southern part of the county. Is the County getting a better product at the end of the use permit process? The County will undoubtedly see increased pressures for more site plan review and perhaps architectural review in the future.

At a minimum, as part of the Planning Division training program, we recommend that staff be exposed to a variety of techniques and ideas being used to improve development in urban settings.

4. LANDSCAPING

The County does not have a landscape ordinance which creates problems for many permits. Staff has been working on an ordinance and this effort should be completed for early adoption.

II. SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE

The comprehensive amendment to the subdivision ordinance now pending should clarify most of the issues surrounding

the division of land. We recommend that the review of this ordinance be continued with an aim of early adoption.

There are several additional issues, however, that should be addressed as follows:

1. ACTION ON LOT SPLITS (FOUR PARCELS OR LESS)

Lot splits are currently processed by the Planning Commission. Many communities have delegated this function to staff and projects are only heard by the Planning Commission on appeal. We recommend that the County consider delegation of this function to either the Zoning Administrator or perhaps some form of signoff by both the Planning Director and Director of Public Works.

2. IMPROVEMENT PLANS

We understand that a proposal is being made to require the equivalent of improvement plans at the time of tentative map approval for vesting maps. While we are not familiar with all the local circumstances that may have led to this recommendation, it would place an unusual burden on developers and should undergo careful analysis prior to adoption.

III. POLICY MANUALS

1. OVERVIEW PHILOSOPHY

Current management theory presents two seemingly conflicting points of view in relation to policies and procedures manuals. One theory calls for more, the other less. The appropriate level undoubtedly lies somewhere in the middle and may vary from agency to agency.

A. The Argument for More

Progress in civilization is based on the discovery and correction of errors, and the writing of a history. Policies and procedures manuals and job documentation are good ways to write history. The writing of a history avoids the problem of reinventing the wheel and allows civilization to advance. Many experts suggest that our knowledge is based on only 10 percent personal experience and 90 percent on history and the knowledge of others. In the business world these are records and job documentation.

The goal of good policies and procedures and systems is to separate out the routine from the nonroutine. Once the routine is organized, management and all staff can spend time on the more important items. In reality, many problems mana-

gers spend as much as 85 percent of their time on the routine.

One of the leading managers in the United States, involved with systems development is Harold S. Hook, Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of American General Corporation of Houston. Hook is a strong believer in systems and procedures. In a recent interview in USA Today, Hook made his point this way:

"Twenty-five years ago, I designed a standard memo format. I wrote a memorandum on how to write a memorandum. When I get a stack of memorandum, they all look like they came from the same person. So, I am not reading Ernest Hemingway or F. Scott Fitzgerald. And I'm making lawyers write sentences, not paragraph sentences. If people ask, 'What is the purpose of this memo?' that eliminates about eight out of ten."

Proper manuals and job documentation can be useful in training both managers and staff. In a recent book, Super Managing, (Brown and Weiner, McGraw Hill, 1984), it is suggested:

"Who is managing whom when the clerks and secretaries have the know-how to use and access the systems and managers themselves have not been trained to do so."

Training may be one of the key and central benefits of job documentation. Many studies now suggest that office workers will need to be retrained up to eight times during their careers.

B. The Argument for Less

The arguments for less policies and procedures is based on the notion that they tend to stifle innovation. A number of the corporations studied in the best selling book, In Search of Excellence, (Peters and Waterman, Warner Books, 1982), talk about throwing out all of their policies and procedure manuals.

The point is made in a different way in Super Managing as follows:

Paperwork should, by fiat, be cut across the board. Access to the copier should be limited, or "quotas set," and all bureaucratic processes should be studied with an eye towards the elimination of, say, 25 percent of all written reporting procedures. These suggestions may sound frivolous. We are aware that many procedures are instituted as a matter of conforming to legal or regulatory requirements, but we are also aware that sometimes sweeping across the board measures are necessary to weed out the unimportant, wasteful and burdensome procedures that in every organization have long been carried out without thinking. Indeed, what we are proposing here is a sunset provision for bureaucratic managerial procedures. This may seem to run counter to the suggestions earlier that solutions need to fit the individual, but even with this sort of sweeping overhaul the possibilities for individualized adaptation and uniquely tailored solutions are plentiful."

C. The Middle Road

In reality neither extreme to this questions is appropriate for most organizations. Functions requiring a high degree of innovation require less

structure. Those functions handling a great deal of routine processes can sometimes benefit from more structure.

The most important question is not, should we have policies and procedures, but more importantly, what should they be and how should they be controlled? We suggest the following guidelines:

a. NO POLICY FOR POLICY'S SAKE.

Always ask, WHY is this necessary or useful?

b. SHORT IS BETTER THAN LONG.

It is not the quantity but the quality of information that is the essential problem of the information age.

c. KEEP CURRENT.

The problem with many policies is that they have long ago outlived their usefulness. No one remembers why they were created in the first place. Sometimes they contradict current practice and they create even more confusion. Responsibility for updating should be clear.

d. BE READY TO CHANGE.

The key to organizational effectiveness and efficiency is finding a "better way" and there is always a "better way." The organization must always be ready to challenge current policy - throw it out - change it.

2. DEPARTMENTAL HANDBOOK

Napa County is unusual for an organization its size in not having a more organized set of policy manuals. The County Administrator is correcting this situation and we highly support this direction. Policies being considered in relation to the planning function are shown in Appendix J. Once completed, these policies should be made readily available for all staff in the Planning Division.

The Planning Division has the same problem as the entire county. No centralized policy manual exists. Various policies and procedures have been written down over time, but are not centralized, in some cases are out of date, or in conflict, and most importantly, are not clearly understood by both management and the employees. The Planning Division can benefit greatly by clarifying policies and procedures. This is particularly true since a large percent of the Division's activity relates to routine procedures. As part of this study we collected those policies that we could find and they are included in Appendix K.

We recommend that the Planning Division develop an employee handbook. This would include relevant policies and other staff reference material as deemed appropriate. The table of contents of three similar handbooks being used by other planning departments are included in Appendix L.

Initially the handbook may only contain a compilation of existing departmental material. Specific policies or procedures developed in this study should be added. And finally, new policies, procedures and information should be added over time. The following guidelines for the handbook should be adopted:

a. Start It Now

If the department waits for the perfect time it may never happen. Start now on a simple basis and build over time.

b. Set Responsibility

Initially it is recommended that the Director and his secretary take the lead responsibility for the manual. As time goes on this responsibility may shift. However, the Director's secretary position may always be a good location for this responsibility. Neither the Director nor his secretary, however, should be responsible for preparing all of the material. Sections should be assigned to various staff members. This is good training, reinforces the desirability of participatory management, and uses people who have the most knowledge.

c. Keep It Current

The handbook is not useful if it is not current. It should be updated the minute any section beco-

mes outdated. The person in charge of the manual should set up a routine schedule for reviewing or assigning various sections for updating.

d. Controlled Distribution

A complete distribution list should be kept by whomever is in charge of the manual. Updates should be immediately available and distributed. Initially it may prove useful for every staff member to have a copy in order to facilitate communication and new ideas. Over time it may be appropriate to have a more limited number of manuals available for reference and for training purposes. In all cases, however, the staff needs to be informed of changes in policy or procedures.

e. Make It Recognizable

The manual needs to be an central, recognizable document. The problem today is that information is spread throughout the department, not well distributed, and sometimes inconsistent. Three ring binders of a uniform and recognizable color should be purchased.

f. Call It A Handbook

The word "handbook" should be used rather than "policy manual" to emphasize the positive, helpful aspects of the material, rather than the control aspect.

g. Format

A standard page format should be used. Some items may require no explanation. Others may require several sections such as purpose, background, policy statement and responsibility for review.

h. Computer Literate

Initially the handbook should be located in one place, on a word processing disk. This should facilitate easy updating. Eventually, as the department becomes fully computer-literate and has added computer terminals, it may be appropriate to do away with the hard copy written document and only print material as needed.

3. DESK MANUALS

Many organizations that are highly process-oriented require each person in the organization to prepare a desk manual. The manual documents the job and is used to clarify procedures, train replacements, and communicate between a manager and a subordinate. A good desk manual will contain all of the information required for a reasonably knowledgeable person to complete a particular job. A typical desk manual for a planning director's secretary is shown in Appendix M. This particular manual was prepared without a standard format. The secretary was simply asked to put down in writing everything she did as she

understood it. This was reviewed by the director, and after several edits became an operating manual. It was reviewed by the director and the secretary every six months and updated. A tab divider page was used for each section for easy reference. Another example for a clerk/ planner handling part of the planning processes is shown in Appendix N.

Normally, a desk manual should contain at least the following material:

a. Table of Contents or List of Tasks.

A task is a series of steps which form a complete unit of work; ideally each task should be given a title and a number.

b. Task Instructions.

A clear step-by-step write-up of how the employee does a specific task. Specific items should include: (1) how often and when performed; (2) who was work received from; (3) who was work sent to; (4) what is specifically done; (5) what other people in the department are involved and what do they do; (6) what forms or reference materials are used, samples to be attached; (7) what equipment is used.

It is often difficult to free an employee's time to write an entire desk manual. A more workable procedure is to set aside 15 minutes a day and work on one

task at a time. When this is completed it can be reviewed with the supervisor and placed in the desk manual. Then the next task is tackled. It is also useful to write the task description as the task is being performed. This work will not be completed unless the supervisor is fully supportive of the effort and allows the employee sufficient time for its accomplishment.

No staff person in the Planning Division has a fully operational desk manual. One secretary has an old, outof-date manual passed down from another secretary. The drafting supervisor has an excellent file folder containing much of the equivalent of a desk manual; this material could be readily put into desk manual format. The Zoning Enforcement Officer's Policies and Procedures for Planning and Zoning Compliance Manual also contain most of the ingredients for a desk manual.

The main advantage of preparing a desk manual is the way in which it forces a person to think through what he or she is doing. This process will often reveal aspects of the job that can be improved.

The completion of uniform desk manuals for the entire department would be a substantial task and could not be completed without strong central direction and time commitment. We recommend that the Planning Division

begin an experimental program with desk manuals, starting with two manuals, one by the Graphics Supervisor and a second by a clerical position that is heavily involved with the development process. After these are completed the department should expand this program department-wide.

IV. HOUSE NUMBERING

There is considerable confusion surrounding the issuance of house numbers. Although the Planning Division is issuing numbers, it has no clear authorization to do so and there is no real system. It is recommended that a special study of this problem be conducted in cooperation with the cities in the county.

CONCLUSION

The reader who has made it through all 150 pages of this report and digested the 121 recommendations may begin to wonder if this will all work, will the situation improve. We firmly believe that if the recommendations are followed and accompanied with improved management, the Planning Division will have resolved many of its problems and will provide the citizens of the County a high level of service. It will take time and patience by citizens, policy makers and staff. Change is often painful but ever necessary.

One of the delights of conducting this study has been our getting to know Napa County and its citizens better. The County is an extraordinary place to live, work and recreate. Any effort aimed at improving the planning process can have high pay-offs. We wish you well.