

Purpose:

The Building Department is proposing a modification to public counter hours and staff lunch scheduling to enhance customer service, streamline internal operations, and improve permit processing timelines. The department will continue to operate with no change to staffed hours (8:00 AM–5:00 PM).

Due to consistently low customer activity between 4:00 and 5:00 PM, the Building Department has evaluated its service patterns and determined that this hour would be better utilized for internal operations. In contrast, staff have observed that many clients prefer to visit during the lunch hour, as it aligns with their break time and provides a convenient opportunity to complete errands. To better match these demonstrated customer needs, while still maintaining a full eight hours of public service each day, the department proposes closing to the public from 4:00 to 5:00 PM and instead remaining open through the lunch period, 12:00 to 1:00 PM. This adjustment ensures continued eight-hour accessibility while shifting availability to the time of highest demand.

Key Components of the Proposal

1. Maintain Public Access During Lunch (12:00–1:00 PM)

The department will remain open throughout the lunch hour by rotating staff lunches.

Benefits:

- Greater accessibility for contractors, homeowners, and design professionals
- Preserves an additional 5 hours of weekly public access (250 hours annually)
- Reduces customer frustration and improves service satisfaction

2. Rotating Staff Lunch Schedule

A staggered lunch schedule ensures continuous counter coverage without the need for additional staffing.

Benefits:

- No increase in operational cost
- Smoother customer flow throughout the day
- Improved staff flexibility, cross-coverage, and morale

3. Close the Public Counter from 4:00–5:00 PM

The counter will be closed to the public during the final hour of the day, while staff remain on-site and working.

Benefits:

- Dedicated time for plan review, permit processing, and inspection scheduling
- Improves turnaround times and reduces backlog
- Aligns with common practices in comparable jurisdictions

Overall Impact

Public

- Expanded access during a critical time of day
- More predictable and consistent service
- Faster permitting and better communication

Department

- Better workflow efficiency
- Protected time for technical work
- More balanced and reliable staffing coverage
- Provides dedicated hour that allows for consistent staff meetings

County

- Improved customer satisfaction with no increase in cost
- Supports timely development and compliance activities
- Demonstrates commitment to service improvement and operational efficiency

Summary of Hours (Proposed)

- Staffed Hours: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM (no change)
- Public Counter Open: 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM, including 12–1 PM (rotating lunches)
- Phone Hours: 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
- Public Counter Closed: 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM for internal operations