

W. G. C.

**AGENDA COVER MEMO**

**MEETING DATE:** DECEMBER 17, 2003  
**TO:** BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
**FROM:** KENT HOWE, PLANNING DIRECTOR  
LAND MANAGEMENT DIVISION

**AGENDA ITEM TITLE:** REPORT BACK ON 90-DAY PROCESS TO REDUCE  
PROCESS TIMELINES FOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS

**I. MOTION:**

NO MOTION NECESSARY AS THIS IS A DISCUSSION ITEM ONLY.

**II. ISSUE OR PROBLEM**

On July 30, 2003, after the Board discussion providing direction on the priorities for the Long Range Planning Program, the Board requested a report back on the process for reducing the processing timelines for planning applications over a 90-day period.

**III. DISCUSSION**

**A. BACKGROUND**

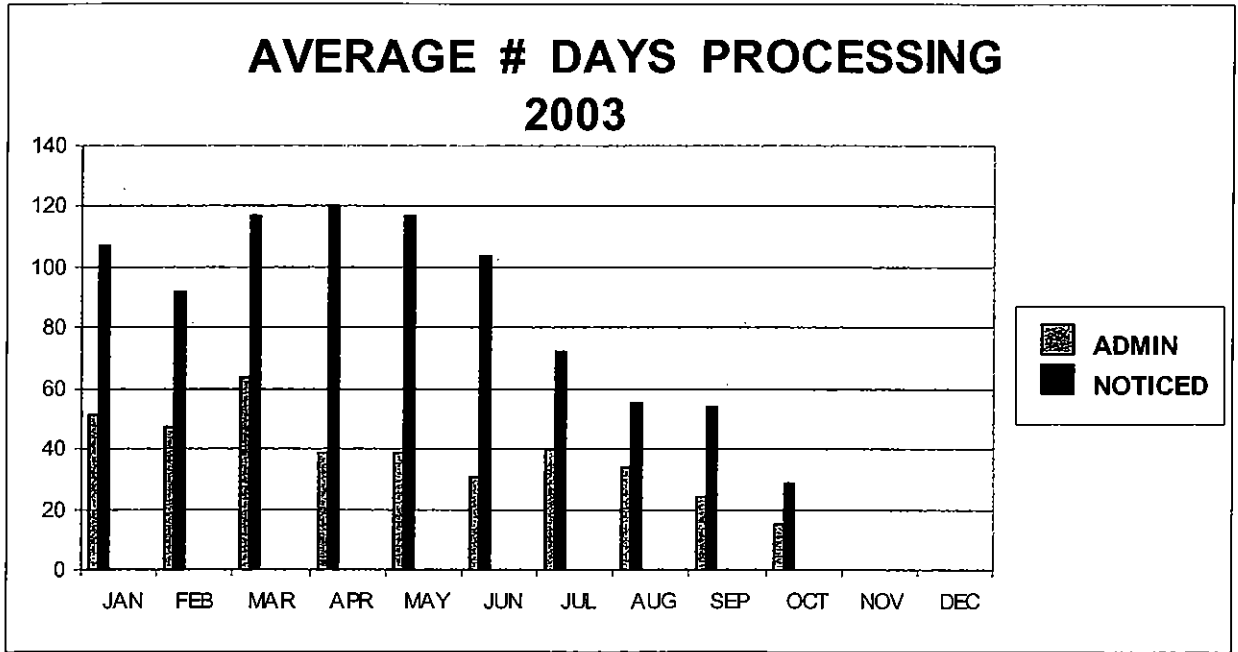
The Planning Program processed 1,325 applications in 2002. Due to staff reductions and vacancies resulting from retirements and budget shortfall, the program was down to 2 Associate Planners processing applications and they (along with one other Planner) were also responsible for staffing the public information counter from 9am to 1pm, Monday through Friday and returning general zoning question phone calls.

**B. ANALYSIS**

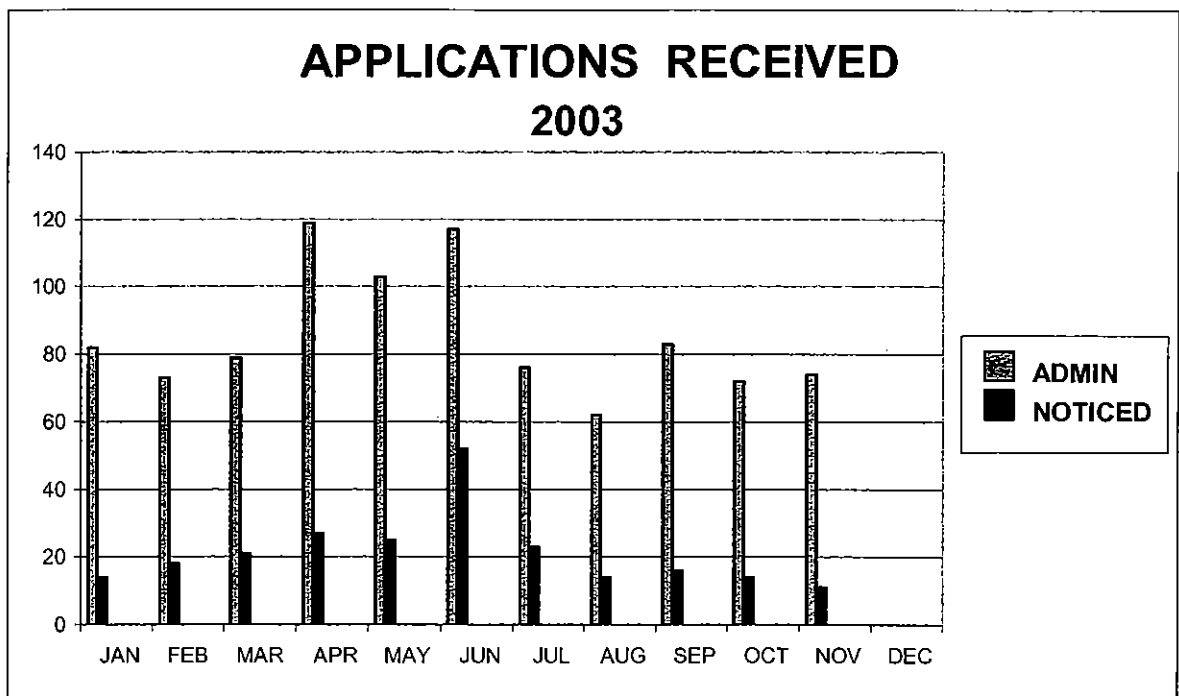
This report is to illustrate that the Planning program is getting "caught up" on processing land use applications. Our goal is to be able to issue decisions within 30 days of acceptance of an application. There are still applications that have relatively long processing timelines, but most of those are at the request of the applicant. At this time, all Plan Amendments and zone change applications that we have received have been scheduled for public hearing with the Lane County Planning Commission.

The chart on the next page illustrates the average number of days taken to process applications. Note the dramatic decrease in processing time (starting in July) once the Associate Planners were able to concentrate on processing applications. The staffing changes and shifts in work responsibilities are discussed in more detail below. With

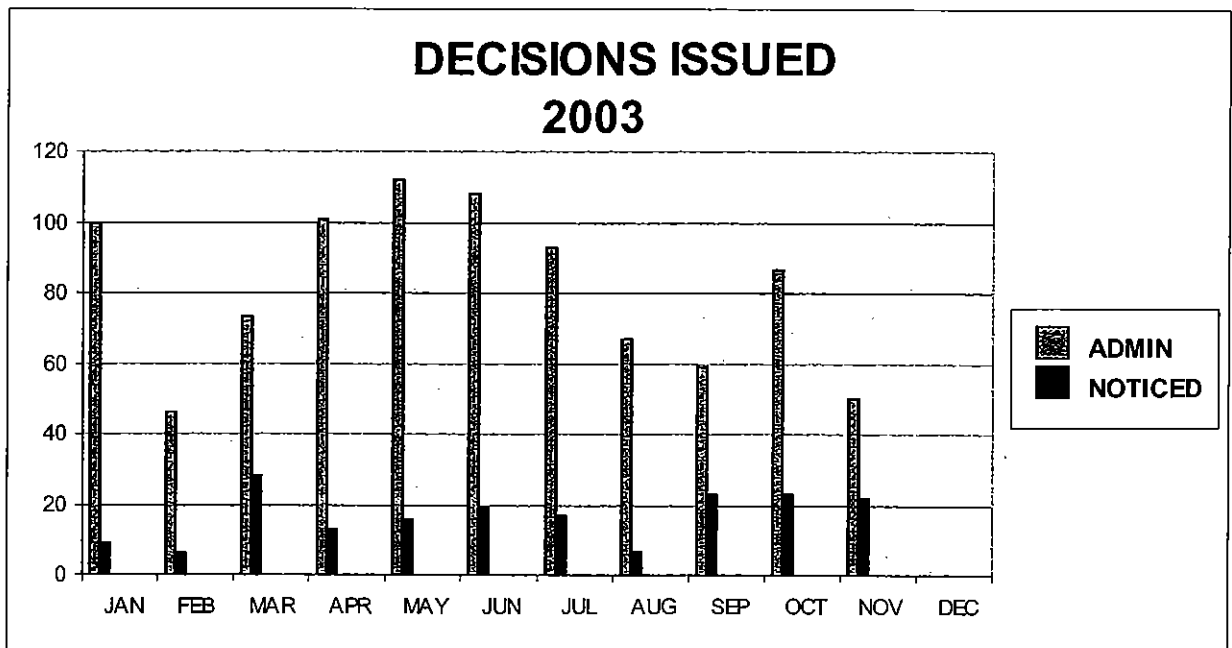
the December 1<sup>st</sup> addition of an additional Planner position, these processing time improvements should be sustainable.



From the chart below, one can see that the number of applications received is fairly constant. The seasonal variation of the administrative applications illustrates the anticipation of the summer building season. The June spike in the noticed land use applications is a direct result of the fee increase that went into effect on July 1<sup>st</sup>.



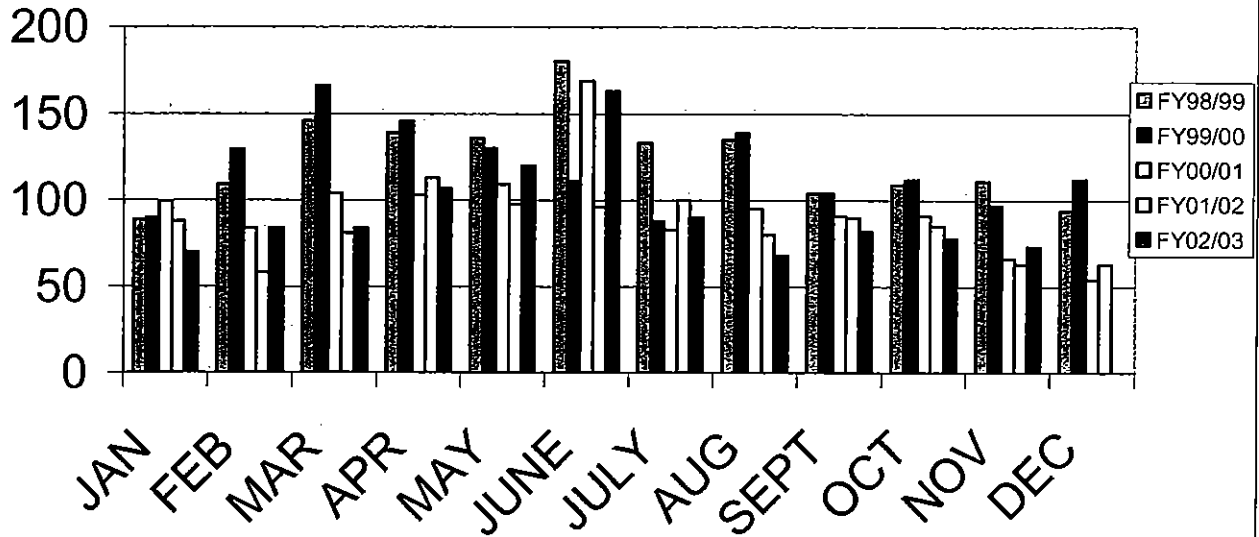
The chart below illustrates the distribution of the approximately 1,100 decisions issued so far this year. Again, the administrative decisions show a direct correlation with the seasonal fluctuation of applicants preparing for the summer building season. The noticed land use decisions early in the year show the result of the reduced staff resources processing land use decisions. The increase in issued decisions in March represents the benefit we gained from an extra help contract. The May/June increase is related to “borrowing” an Associate Planner from Public Works Transportation Planning. In July, the LMT position took over the information counter responsibilities and allowed the two Associate Planners to process applications. The increased production in the months of September, October and November are directly attributable to filling the LMT position at the information counter.



After the retirement of the Senior Planner in November 2002, the position was filled with two positions (a Planner and a Land Management Technician). Upon filling the Land Management Technician (LMT) position in June 2003, the Associate Planners were relieved of staffing the public information counter and were able to devote their resources to processing planning applications. The Planner position was delayed in being filled until December 1st because of an internal promotion of an LMT from the Administrative Section that required backfilling that position before the Planning Program could realize the additional Planner position resource. The Administrative LMT position was posted in October, interviewed in November and started on December 1, 2003. The new Planner resource will be an additional resource to process the Planning applications.

Additional process improvements to these staffing decisions are planned for this winter. We plan a review of the planning application process, much like was done

**NUMBER OF PLANNING ACTIONS RECEIVED  
BY MONTH FOR LAST 5 YEARS**



**NUMBER OF BUILDING PERMITS FOR PLANNING REVIEW  
BY MONTH FOR LAST 5 YEARS**

