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reading for
you!*

June 30, 2025
Volume 2, Issue 6

What's New

In land use planning

RFM Land Use Consulting

Public Participation in the Technological World

The backbone of land use planning is the opportunity for the public to participate in the decision making process. This is why City Councils, Planning Commissions, and Board of Supervisors have hearings wherein the public is noticed and invited to participate.

Before the age of the Internet, nay, the streaming age, this participation was exclusively in person. You physically had to be there to voice your concerns and input. Nowadays, one has Zoom, Go-To-Meeting, Teams and more to view meetings and voice your input. The use of these services took a dramatic leap around 2020 due to the COVID-19 shutdowns. Even though the pandemic has for all intents and purposes "gone away", the use of

streaming meetings continues in earnest.

Some questions have arisen, especially when some public meetings are held during what is considered normal working hours (between 8 am and 5 pm) of how do people participate. Most, if not all, businesses have policies in place that prohibit the use of corporate computers and Internet for anything other than work related activities. Then there's the question of time away from the job for the meeting.

So how does this affect the public participation process going forward, and how do jurisdictions address this so that they can have the public participate (as is their right), and avoid the perception of not allowing people to participate if they can't due to work.

Join me over the course of several issues as we explore this issue. If you have input on the subject, please share!



Join me on...

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Focus on a Service – Staff Planner/Contract Planner

What happens when a jurisdiction finds itself short staffed? Or is in need of short term help for a specific project but doesn't have the resources to hire a person (or persons) for a short period of time just to let the person go? What if the department is for a small jurisdiction that doesn't have the finances (or even the workload) to justify a full time planner (or two)?

That's where having a Contract Planner on hand is helpful. The CP can come in for a day, week, month or year (depending on the need) and do what's needed. This eases the stress of the

other staff, as well as the resources of the department.

Most jurisdictions, if not all, will issue what is called an RFP (Request of Proposals) for the position of Contract Planner. This allows those that provide the service to respond back, demonstrating their background and services. Think of this as an elevated form of interview for an open position.

My services are geared such that I can be a Contract Planner for one or more jurisdictions. I can come in once a week, multiple days a week, once a month or whatever the jurisdiction

Focus on a Service (cont.)



needs. I can cover what a typical employee can as needed in the Planning Department (cover the customer counter, process entitlements, work on updates to ordinances, etc.).

It does not have to be a governmental jurisdiction that I can be a contract planner for. If you're a developer (new subdivision, etc.), work in Real Estate, are a Community Organization, an Industry Association (Dairy, Winery, what have you) – I can go under

contract with your business to provide planning services, even if it is just for one project every month or two.

For those businesses that might not need my services regularly, I do provide retainer contract planning. This way, as the song goes, I can be one call away to save the day!

To Laugh, or Not to Laugh, that is the Joke...

If Apple made cars, would they still come with Windows?

Which came first? Orange the color, or Orange the fruit?

If a bar of soap fell on the shower flower, would the soap be dirty, or would the floor be clean?

Have you heard of the new sport called quiet tennis? It's like normal tennis but without the racket.

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Yes, Planners do have a sense of humor!!



Business Mixer in Oakhurst California

On June 19, 2025 I had the pleasure of attending a Business Mixer up in Oakhurst, California. For those not knowing where this is, it is located just south of Yosemite National Park along Highway 41.

The Oakhurst Chamber of Commerce, along with Sierra Tel, sponsored the Mixer where there were a handful of businesses that serve Oakhurst present. There was music, raffles and a make your own taco bar as well. The purpose of the event was to highlight businesses providing services in the area.

I personally had fun being able to talk to a number of residents, as well as the other businesses that were there, throughout the late afternoon/early evening.

One might ask why do events like this. It is a great way for the community to know what businesses are out there and what they can provide for them. There's

only so much hard copy or social media marketing can do. It is also great for businesses to be able to meet other businesses that might be able to pair up on projects, or reciprocate potential client contacts.



What types of Clients do you represent or work with?

That is a great question!!

From individual property/business owners, to corporate business owners, to community organizations, Industry Associations and even governmental agencies are my clients!

An individual property owner wants to know their zoning and what they can do on their property before they purchase (or even after they inherit it from family). I can help interpret the zoning and general plan issues. I can then help with any entitlements processing.

A business owner wants to know if they can expand their operations on the property, and if so what needs to be done. I can help navigate those issues.

For community organizations that feel

they need help being heard by the local governmental agencies, or help on a community wide project, or what have you, I am there.

Industry Associations look after their partners and members. The IA's may be the first place to look at for resources when it comes to running businesses.

For governmental agencies who may need a contract planner for a big project, or because they are short staffed for one reason or another, or if they need help interviewing potential staff, I am there to help.

No job is to big or to small.





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***Where The
Customer Comes
First***

Publications

I hope you have enjoyed this publication of RFM Land Use Consulting's newsletter! While short in nature, I hope you have found the information useful.

It is my hope to periodically publish a newsletter to keep my clients up to date with articles relating to the planning field, as well as highlight projects I feel are of note for the community.

If there are subjects of interest in the

planning field you would like to see here, please feel free to contact me with those ideas, and I will include them in future publications.

Go to www.rfmlanduseconsulting.com to subscribe to this newsletter, or click on the QR code below, it's free!

Thank you for reading!

Topics In future editions of the newsletter...

- Legal issues
- Planning theories
- Trends in planning
- Highlight of a service(s)
- Project highlights (both mine, and those in the Community)
- Public Participation in the technological world (ongoing)
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