



**County Executive Office**

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**NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**BOARD AGENDA MEMO**

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**MEETING DATE:** June 10, 2025

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Alison Lehman, County Executive Officer

**SUBJECT:** Resolution to establish a revised Consolidated User Fee Schedule for County Departments and rescinding Resolution 24-298 as amended.

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**RECOMMENDATION:** Conduct the Public Hearing and adopt the resolution establishing the revised Consolidated User Fee Schedule for County Departments.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** All fees are included in each department's FY 2025-26 Proposed Budget and have been reviewed by the Budget Subcommittee.

**BACKGROUND:** California counties and other local agencies have the authority to assess fees for services, provided that said fees do not "exceed the reasonable cost of providing the service or regulatory activity for which the fee is charged, and which is not levied for general revenue purposes;" and that there are not existing statutorily specified fees for said service(s). In order to ensure that fees collected under the Consolidated User Fee Schedule for County Departments meet the legal criteria set forth in the California Constitution, Nevada County established a User Fee Review Group (UFRG) at the direction of the Board of Supervisors in 2015.

The UFRG consists of representatives from the Auditor-Controller, County Counsel and the County Executive Office, and is tasked with reviewing fee studies and proposals for reasonableness and to make recommendations to the Board for the adoption of fee schedules. The process for arriving at recommendations to the Board includes, among others, the following steps:

- Performing fee studies which analyze direct and indirect costs, productive hours, salary & benefit costs to develop hourly rates or other costs for fees
- Time studies where required to track the time it takes for each fee activity to which an hourly rate is applied
- Identifying and addressing statutory authorities and other legal concerns
- Analyzing fiscal impacts

This process ensures that the Consolidated User Fee Schedule facilitates cost recovery where appropriate without over-charging citizens but also allows for charging an amount less than the cost of delivering a service where accessibility to services is a priority and it is appropriate and desirable to do so.

To mitigate the administrative burden of this labor-intensive review process, while retaining adherence to the statutory requirement that fees not exceed the costs of providing the service for which they are imposed, in 2019 the UFRG recommended and the Board approved (RES 19-242) the incorporation of an adjustment where appropriate to certain fees by Consumer Price Index (CPI). This allows fees to increase with CPI without requiring a full fee study, as described above, for a period of three years. After the third year, each department has its baseline fees re-established to ensure that fees remain consistent with the actual cost of providing services. There are some fees identified in the fee schedules where the CPI does not apply because the fees are capped by statute and cannot be legally increased or staff has otherwise determined that the CPI is not applicable.

On June 18, 2024, per Resolution 24-298, the Board adopted the current Consolidated User Fee Schedules for County Departments. The attached Resolution proposes the following actions:

- Reaffirms the Board’s intent for the UFRG to conduct review and make recommendations related to the Consolidated User Fee Schedule
- Authorizes the UFRG to adjust statutorily defined fees as needed
- Extends the CPI adjustment authority from three years to five years from the most recently completed full fee study update
- Reauthorizes “catch up” phased increases in addition to CPI for certain Community Development Agency fees into FY 26/27, as originally authorized in RES 24-298
- Establishes a revised Consolidated User Fee Schedule as summarized in the table below, with the following notable outliers:
  - Exhibit E (Community Development Agency) includes pre-authorized “catch up” additions to CPI (per RES 24-298) as follows:
    - Agriculture: 1.63%
    - Building: 1.38%
    - Cannabis: 3.50%
    - Code: 2.82%
    - Surveyor: 0.78%
    - Env Health: 0.90%
    - Planning: 1.34%
  - Exhibit E includes various other modifications to the fee schedule as enumerated in Attachment 1

<b>Department (Exhibit letter)</b>	<b>Comprehensive Fee Update</b>	<b>CPI Adjustment (2.87%)</b>	<b>No Change</b>	<b>Most Recent Fee Study Date</b>
Animal Control (A)	X			2025
Assessor (B)		X		2022
Clerk of the Board (C)		X		2022
Clerk Recorder (D)			X	2021
CDA - All Departments (E)		X		2024
Elections (F)			X	2019

IGS – Airport, Facilities & GIS (G)			X	2023
Library (H)			X	2023
Probation (I)			X	2021
DSS Public Guardian (J)			X	2023
Public Health (K)			X	2024
Sheriff (L)	X			2025
Treasurer-Tax Collector (M)		X		2023

UFRG has reviewed the proposed fee schedules and the materials provided in support of the respective fees and determined that the fees comply with the County's standard user fee analyses and hourly rate methodology, Board directives and applicable laws. The fees are reasonably related to the costs of providing the service for which the fee will be imposed and helps the departments be more financially self-supporting to the greatest extent allowable by charging a fee equal to the actual cost of providing services.

**Initiated by:** Erin Mettler, Deputy County Executive Officer/Chief Fiscal Officer

**Approved by:** Alison Lehman, County Executive Officer