

**County of Santa Clara**  
**Board of Supervisors**  
Supervisorial District One  
Supervisor Donald F. Gage




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DATE: April 7, 2009

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM:   
Donald F. Gage  
Supervisor, District 1

SUBJECT: Referral to administration regarding an automatic two-year extension of existing grading permits, building and related permits, building site approvals or related approvals.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Direct administration to report back to the full board on the possibility of granting an automatic two-year extension of existing Building Site or related approvals and grading permits.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

Tough economic times have made it difficult for many residents of Santa Clara County to get the funding they need to finish projects for which they have gotten county approvals, such as building site approval or grading permits or other, related approvals and permits.

These approvals come with timelines, and the projects must be completed within those timelines, or, frequently, the applicant will need to apply and pay for an extension. If the extension option has been exhausted, the applicant must reapply, which could be a costly process.

I would like staff to look into whether granting an automatic extension of two years could be beneficial to our applicants and not harmful to the county. No more work would be required from the county for approvals that have already been granted, and the applicants could then hold their approvals until they were ready to build or until the automatic extension expired. If the extension expires before the applicant has been able to build, then I propose the normal process – that is, reapplication – be followed. I would also propose that staff look at an appropriate limit of this automatic extension, for instance, to those who had received these approvals in the last five years or so.

Such an action is not unprecedented. In July 2008, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed SB 1185 which extended the life of certain tentative subdivision maps. The legislation took effect immediately to aid with development applications that were set to expire and that could not be processed due to the effects of the current economic situation on the construction industry. The law extended any tentative subdivision map act that had not expired before July 15, 2008 and that would expire before Jan. 1, 2011, by 12 months.

Because of the pressure many applicants face from the current economy, I ask that staff's analysis be brought back to the full board for the Supervisors' consideration.