



**THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION**  
Planning Department, Montgomery County, Maryland  
8787 Georgia Avenue Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

MCPB Date: 5/28/2014  
Agenda Item # 4

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** May 21, 2015  
**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board  
**VIA:** Gwen Wright, Planning Director *GW*  
**FROM:** Karen Warnick, Chief, Management Services *Karen Warnick*  
**SUBJECT:** FY15 Budget Adjustments for the Planning Department

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Approval of the Request for FY15 Budget Adjustments for the Planning Department.

**BACKGROUND:**

All budget adjustments over \$50,000 require Planning Board approval.

The budget resolution approving the Planning Department's operating budget is appropriated at the divisional level. The Planning Board has authority to transfer appropriations between the major object codes (personnel, supplies, services, capital outlay) as long the divisional appropriation is not exceeded by 10%.

The recommended transfers do not exceed 10% in any division.

The Department requests approval to adjust the FY15 divisional line item budgets, as shown below, to accommodate specific needs of the Department in order to better position ourselves so that we have greater flexibility for next year to accommodate any unforeseen issues.

At the May 21, 2015 Planning Board meeting, the Finance Department presented the Three Month Projections which indicated that the Planning Department will have an estimated savings in FY15 of almost \$1.9M due to delays in filling vacant positions, retirements, and promotions from within. This budget adjustment request reallocates \$1,542,000 of those savings to meet the needs detailed below.

The Planning Department was successful in defending our FY16 budget and the County Council funded most of our new initiatives and critical needs. The one area that was reduced was our request for increased funding for the maintenance of the aging MRO building. This request was reduced by \$119,000. Staff is very mindful that we will be moving to a new headquarters in 2019, however, there are a variety of maintenance issues that need to be addressed now for the general maintenance of the building and the safety of our employees that are included in this budget adjustment request.

**DETAILS OF BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS:**

This request is seeking the Board's approval to transfer \$1,542,000 from the Personnel Services to Other Services & Charges (Services), Supplies & Materials (Supplies), and Capital Outlay to fund the following operational needs:

### **Consulting Services - \$146,000**

The Planning Department has a number of consulting project needs including:

- Streetscape guidelines for Bethesda, Lyttonsville, and Westbard
- Transportation modeling for Bethesda, Lyttonsville, Westbard, and Montgomery Village
- Assistance with establishing a Bike Parking Policy and a Bike Shower Design that can be applied when reviewing applications
- Shady Grove Bike Network traffic analysis
- Biennial Master Plan Monitoring Project, and
- University of Maryland contract for an intern to assist with the Rental Housing Study.

### **MRO Auditorium Upgrade including Audio Video Support - \$99,000**

Last year, the auditorium was upgraded with new monitors, projectors, backup control, lighting, and HD cameras. This request is for funding to continue the upgrade process with new microphones, rewiring the entire rack unit and a room and zone speaker system for improved audio experience both in the room and for the online audience. Any **new microphones and other equipment that is purchased will be able to be repurposed for the new headquarters building**. This request also includes the renewal of the contract for on-going video and audio support.

### **Communications Support - \$107,000**

The Planning Department requests funding to hire a contractor to conduct a comprehensive assessment of our communications tools and processes, ultimately leading to recommendations that will result in a strategic platform for the Communications Team to implement department-wide. This type of assessment was recommended by County Council staff. This contract will assist with the implementation of the communications plan, internal communication, and marketing support.

In addition, the Department is requesting funding for contractual needs for community outreach including MindMixer, a “virtual town hall” that provides a forum for communities to share ideas, discuss, and create plans for the future; Killer Tracks, which produces and licenses production music for use in film, television, advertising and interactive media; and renewing the Granicus contract which is a cloud-based, legislative content network.

### **Technology Upgrades - \$100,000**

The Planning Department has a number of information technology needs including:

- Two 80 inch interactive displays to use in conference rooms
- Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) upgrade to increase network connection speed for MRO, and
- “Microsoft Project” software licenses to enable staff to improve project management.

### **Staff Engagement and Training - \$98,000**

Recognizing the importance of staff engagement and training in attracting and retaining employees, the Department is requesting funding for various training including:

- Onsite training in Microsoft Project, GIS, Presentation Skills, and InDesign
- Training on new lighting standards
- Consultant to help facilitate Employee Development recommendations identified by staff committee in response to staff survey

### **Employee Professional Development - \$150,000**

The Department of Parks has implemented a successful leadership management training program that has graduated 3 classes in the past 3 years. The Planning Department wants to bring this type of program to Planning staff by partnering with organizations that have worked with the Department of Parks and/or other county agencies that have successfully developed management and succession planning training programs.

### **Miscellaneous Repairs to the MRO Building - \$241,400**

The Planning Department has identified several repair needs for the MRO building including:

- Repair the seals in the leaking skylights in Research area to prevent flooding during rain events.

- Repoint the deteriorating brick wall in the Technology area which is allowing water to enter the building.
- Provide heat for the print shop which used to receive waste heat from the main phone room, but changes in technology have eliminated that source of heat and additional conventional heat is needed.
- Install a running board step for our van to provide an additional step between ground and van floor to make the van easier to enter.
- Replace dirty, aging cubicle panels in the second floor areas when the carpet is replaced on that floor.
- Install LED emergency lighting fixtures to illuminate areas that currently have no egress lighting during power failures.
- Replace the Penthouse boiler that is beyond its useful life and is unreliable, requiring frequent repairs to keep it online.
- Replace the two remaining Hydrotherm Pulse boilers in main mechanical room which are beyond their useful life and parts are no longer available.
- Upgrade the energy management system to improve efficiency.
- Provide separate heating/cooling minimum air flows to offices in Functional Planning to stop over-cooling in the heating mode resulting in offices being very cold during the winter.
- Replace 12 variable air volume (VAV) boxes which are broken or failing to supply even heating and cooling.

**Replace Two Air Handlers in the MRO Building - \$300,000**

The Planning Department is requesting to replace two air handlers which were installed in 1977 and were not designed for the current occupancy level or for the heat generated by computers on every desk. As a result, the current system runs at maximum capacity on hot summer days as it struggles to maintain comfortable humidity levels. Replacing the handlers will increase energy efficiency and decrease repairs and down time.

**Replace 3 Vehicles - \$78,000**

The Planning Department is requesting to replace three vehicles that were purchased in the early 2000's and have exceeded their life cycle replacement span.

**Replace Postage Meter and Laminator - \$13,300**

The Planning Department is requesting to replace both the postage meter which is beyond its useful life and the laminator which is broken.

**Pre-Pay Debt Service on Capital Equipment Internal Service Fund (ISF) - \$209,000**

The Planning Department is requesting to pre-pay debt service on the capital equipment ISF which will result in savings in future years.

The Planning Board's approval of this transfer is requested.

Approved by the Planning Board: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_