Montgomery Planning
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

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MontgomeryPlanning.org

MCPB Date:12/8/2022
Agenda Item #5

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 1, 2022

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Tanya Stern, Acting Planning Director *TS*

FROM: Karen Warnick, Chief, Management Services *KAW*
                 Anjali Sood, Budget Manager, Management Services *AS*

SUBJECT: FY23 Budget Adjustments for the Planning Department

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:
Approval of the Request for FY23 Budget Adjustments for the Planning Department.

BACKGROUND:
All budget adjustments over $100,000 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) and between divisions as long each divisional appropriation is not exceeded by 10%. The recommended transfers do not exceed 10% in any division.

The Planning Department estimates it will have personnel savings in FY23 and is requesting to reallocate these savings to accomplish an initiative that was requested in the FY23 budget but was cut in order to meet the County Executive's recommended budget amount, another initiative that was funded in FY23 but requires additional funding to achieve its goals, and three initiatives that have come to light since the FY23 budget was prepared last fall and are critical to address this fiscal year. The Planning Department requests approval to adjust the FY23 divisional line-item budgets as shown below.

DETAILS OF BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS:
The Planning Department is seeking the Board's approval to transfer $387,000 from the Personnel Services category to Other Services & Charges:

Parking Lot Design Study - $80,000
This study was proposed in the FY23 budget and was cut to meet the County Executive's recommended budget. This study would update parking lot design standards to ensure new or rebuilt lots prioritize safety and provide convenient, accessible parking for people with disabilities, bikes, and micromobility. This study is called for in Vision Zero Action Plan (Action T 9: Parking Lot Design and Construction). The scope of the study, which would use consultant services as

well as in-house staff work, would include: 1) evaluating existing best practices, 2) evaluating Montgomery County practices, 3) proposing changes to policies/regulations/code, and 4) providing design options for safe and appealing parking lots.

Update Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines for CR and Employment Zones-$75,000
This initiative was approved in the FY23 work program and $50,000 was included in the FY23 budget. Since the beginning of FY23 (July 2022), the project scope has been refined. This has necessitated additional tasks to be performed by the consultant including providing cost estimates of the public benefits, analyzing the feasibility of development using performa models for various scenarios, benchmarking best practices for implementing incentive zoning, and providing a set of actionable recommendations for updating the policy. Staff recently received competitive bids for the full scope of work and has concluded that an additional $75,000 is needed to engage a consultant to perform all the needed tasks.

The guidelines are intended to ensure a high quality projects under the optional method of development. They enlist eligible categories for public benefits, describe expectations and outline formulas for calculating public benefit points for each category. These guidelines help ensure the balance between the additional density and height approved by the planning board and the public amenity received for that additional value. The guidelines have remained largely unchanged since their conception. Given changes in market preferences, lower demand for retail and commercial space, new building code and environmental performance requirements and evolving best practices in urban design and architecture, many of these categories need to be updated.

This overall initiative aims to achieve the following key goals:
- Review the performance of the point system since its inception in 2010 to see how we can get more impactful benefits for the community
- Align the point system with updated county priorities, including policy directive from Thrive Montgomery 2050, the Climate Action Plan and the county's Racial Equity law
- Reconfigure the point system to address current real estate and building industry trends
- Develop clear standards to effectively maximize the positive impact of public benefits and further recommendations and priorities of Sector Plans
- Identify best practices for implementing incentive zoning and recommend actionable changes to the policy while ensuring proportionality between the public benefits required, the costs of development, and planning goals.

Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) - $75,000
This critical technology tool provides ITI Cybersecurity professionals a real-time view of all security activities moving inbound and outbound through our network. It supports and provides a clean dashboard giving us a live view of possible threat detection, compliance, and security incident management through data collection and analysis using embedded artificial intelligence (AI) of security events, and a wide variety of other event and contextual data sources. In provides security incident management through the collection and analysis (both near real time and historical) of security events, and a wide variety of other event and contextual data sources. In addition, this solution provides threat intelligence, extensive compliance reporting and forensic capabilities. The cost is $150,000 with a 50/50 split with Parks. A request for funding is included in the FY24 Proposed Budget request to continue this critical work.

Adobe Licenses - $57,000
Many staff use Adobe Acrobat for managing PDFs. Some staff use Adobe Creative Cloud, which includes multiple applications to do graphics and other image-based work. A multiyear license was procured several years ago using available divisional year end funds. That initial contract has expired. The renewal cost for the new contract plus the number of licenses needed for the department have significantly increased. Funding of $57,000 in FY23 is needed for staff to continue to use this critical software. A request for funding is included in the FY24 Proposed Budget request.

Montgomery Planning and Planning Board Website Replatform - $100,000
Both the Montgomery Planning and Planning Board websites were last updated in 2016. After the FY23 proposed budget was submitted, our current vendor changed their business model to move away from website design and support and our support contract with them ends June 30, 2023.

To keep up with equitable engagement best practices, industry standards and to foster a greater user experience, the templates for the two websites need to be updated. As the county continues to grow and become more diverse, Montgomery Planning and the Planning Board must continue to adapt its tools to ensure information is equitable, inviting, and easy to access. Online tools must be provided to users to help strengthen economic competitiveness. Our websites are our most important communications tool for education, transparency and conveying the value of the work of the department. It is legally required to have as high of a level of ADA compliance as possible and present content in a way that removes barriers to participation with the planning process. This funding is requested to advance and strengthen the content management system of MontgomeryPlanning.org and MongtomeryPlanningBoard.org with a focus on user experience and ADA accessibility. The funding request is $70,000 for Montgomery Planning website and $30,000 for the Planning Board Website. Montgomery Planning will fund the update for both these websites. This is a joint project with Montgomery Parks and Montgomery Parks will fund their portion of the project.

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

Approved by the Planning Board: _____ Date: _____