

MCPB Date:12/22/2022
Agenda Item #5**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: December 13, 2022

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Tanya Stern, Acting Planning Director ^{TS}

FROM: Karen Warnick, Chief, Management Services ^{KW}
Anjali Sood, Budget Manager, Management Services ^{AS}

SUBJECT: FY23 Budget Transfers for the Planning Department

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of the Request for FY23 Budget Transfers for the Planning Department.

BACKGROUND:

The Land Use Article, Section 18-109, provides for budget transfers as long as the transfer does not exceed 110% of the available approved budget amounts or result in a change in the work program. Accordingly, Commission Practice 3-60, Budget Adjustments (Amendments and Transfers), allows budget transfers when they do not increase the budget by more than 10%, and such transfers are approved by the Planning Board when they exceed \$100,000. The Planning Board has authority to transfer appropriations between the major object codes (personnel, supplies, services, capital outlay) and between divisions if they meet those conditions.

FY23 BUDGET TRANSFERS REQUESTED FOR THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT:

The Planning Department's recommended transfers below **do not exceed 10% in any division and do not change the work program**. The Planning Department estimates it will have personnel savings in FY23 and is requesting to reallocate these savings to accomplish an initiative that is in the FY23 budget and work program but requires additional funding to achieve its goals, and three initiatives that are funded as part of our on-going work program and require additional funding to address situations 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 TRANSFERS:

The Planning Department is seeking the Board's approval to transfer \$307,000 from the Personnel Services category to Other Services & Charges:

Update Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines for Commercial/Residential (CR) and Employment Zones- \$75,000

This initiative was approved in the FY23 work program and \$50,000 is 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 perma 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.

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. Also, in order to achieve a higher level of ADA compliance (WCAG 2.1), it is time for a website replatform.

To keep up with equitable engagement best practices and 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 M-NCPPC. 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 the Planning Department website and \$30,000 for the Planning Board website. The Planning Department will fund the update for both

these websites. This is a joint project with Montgomery Parks.

Staff proposes to use an on-call vendor to perform this work. The Planning Department executed an Request For Proposals (RFP) in Spring 2022 for a strategic communications consultant firm. The competitively-bid RFP resulted in a contract with a communications, marketing, and web services vendor to serve as an on-call firm to assist the Planning Department with the following:

1. Communications strategies support
2. Equitable engagement support
3. Implementation support and ongoing communications support for work program items
4. Web development and support

The Planning Department worked with Central Administrative Services' Procurement team to structure the contract as a "task order" contract so that projects could be supported once funding was approved and available. Examples of the type of work and tasks that have been and can be executed from this contract include:

- Support on the development of communications strategies and engagement plans for master plans, projects and polices.
- Support for equitable engagement work to adhere with the county's Racial Equity and Social Justice Act and the Department's Equity in Planning Agenda.
- Support for content strategy, messaging and branding efforts.
- Support for ADA compliance work related to digital engagement and in-person events.
- Support for marketing and advertising for master plans and special events.
- Support for web development, support and web tools.

The scope of work for the web replatform for MontgomeryPlanning.org, MontgomeryPlanningBoard.org and MontgomeryParks.org has been submitted by our on-call vendor for \$70,000 for Montgomery Planning website and \$30,000 for the Planning Board Website. Using this existing contract will allow us to expedite the work and better serve our residents and stakeholders.

Funds dedicated to website consultation in the original contract (as a task) are not sufficient to cover the large scope of the replatforming work needed for this project. A small amount was dedicated to this task originally, but more is needed as this project would be more labor intensive.

Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) - \$75,000

Cybersecurity is a critical component of our Information Technology and Innovation (ITI) division work program. This Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) tool provides ITI cybersecurity staff 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. It 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 the Parks Department. This budget transfer request will enhance ongoing cybersecurity initiatives in FY23 by ITI, which serves both the Planning and the Parks Departments. A request for funding is included in the FY24 Proposed Budget request to continue this critical work.

Adobe Creative Cloud Licenses - \$57,000

Many staff use Adobe Acrobat for managing PDFs. These licenses are funded through the Commission-Wide Information Technology fund. Some staff use Adobe Creative Cloud, which includes multiple applications to do graphics and other image-based work. A Commission-wide multiyear license for Adobe Creative Cloud was procured several years ago and that initial contract expired in October 2022. Both the renewal cost for the new contract plus the number of licenses needed for the department have significantly increased. Central Administrative Services has procured a new multiyear contract which must be funded each year at renewal time. For FY23, funding of \$57,000 is needed for staff to continue to use this critical software. A request for funding is included in the FY24 Proposed Budget request.

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

Approved by the Planning Board: _____ Date: _____