

## Response to Questions on the FY 2006 Advertised Budget Plan

**Request By:** Supervisor Kauffman

**Question:** Please justify the three Facilities Management Department positions included in the FY 2006 budget and whether the maintenance services could be contracted out.

**Response:** From an overall perspective, the Facilities Management Department (FMD) currently outsources approximately 55 percent of the facilities maintenance and repair workload. In some cases, contract services are used exclusively for specialized requirements, such as for elevators, Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) systems, and for large pieces of equipment such as emergency generators and air conditioning chillers. In other cases, contract services are used to augment County staff when workload exceeds capabilities or in instances where specialized skills or equipment are required, such as for sewer line repairs requiring excavation. In the past ten years, FMD has successfully competed in two major facility maintenance privatization initiatives, indicating that the FMD hybrid model is both efficient and effective.

Only the three positions included in the FY 2006 Advertised Budget Plan have been added in the past five years to address the maintenance requirements associated with the construction or expansion of 37 County facilities, including the expansion of the Adult Detention Center, adding two million square feet of space to the County's space/facility inventory. This represents approximately a 35 percent increase in the facility inventory. It should be noted that while FMD has requested 24 positions for this increased workload, only three positions have been added in FY 2006. General Services Administration guidelines and a recent independent consultant evaluation both indicate the FMD maintenance and repair staffing has a shortfall of least 30 positions for the size and complexity of the County facility inventory. The three additional positions being recommended in FY 2006 are essential to try keep pace with the expanding inventory of County facilities.

The three positions recommended for FY 2006 include a General Building Maintenance Worker II, an Electronic Equipment Technician II, and a Locksmith II. The General Building Maintenance Worker II will be stationed at the South County Center to support the day to day service requests and minor repairs for that 159,000 square foot facility. This position will also support other facility requirements in the South County zone, avoiding lost productive time in travel by dispatching other FMD staff from the Fairfax City main FMD complex.

The Electronic Equipment Technician II is required to service both fire and security alarm systems throughout the County. Limited staff in this area has resulted in over 3,000 hours of system preventive maintenance left unaddressed in FY 2004 for these highly critical life safety systems. Referral of repairs to contract support will double the required expenditures due to prevailing market labor rates and would also reduce response time to restore systems to operable conditions due to the existing high demand on contract resources.

The Locksmith II is required to maintain key control for all County facilities as well as to provide repair and re-keying services to ensure adequate security for County facilities. From the security aspect, an outside locksmith company should not have access to the County master key system, or key control could be compromised. There is also a large inventory of high security locks such as at the detention facilities, police stations, and for medical supply storage areas that should be strictly maintained by County staff. In instances where contract locksmith services have been used, the contract has proven to be as much as five times more costly than with County staff and response time has also been an issue. FMD currently has three locksmiths for over 160 facilities and the staff has not been increased since 1994 despite an increase in the facility inventory of well over three million square feet in that same time period.

In summary, these three positions are required to meet day-to-day FMD facility maintenance and repair requirements. While contract services are used on a job-to-job basis, it would be impractical and inefficient to supplant these positions with contractor staff. A direct comparison of contract labor rates to mid-range salary rates for the County positions being requested indicates that the contract rates are from 25 percent higher to double the County staff rate.