

Response to Questions on the FY 2010 Advertised Budget Plan

Request By: Supervisor Herrity

Question: What are the specific duties of the Neighborhood/Community Building Coordinator? What direct benefit does this position provide to the citizens of Fairfax County? What other options are available for these functions to be performed? What are the costs of this position as well as any related overhead costs?

Response: The Neighborhood and Community Building Coordinator facilitates the Deputy County Executives' management and leadership of their direct report agencies and the agencies with which they liaison. It should be noted that this position provides support to the County Executive and all four deputies. Given the scope of responsibilities of the Office of the County Executive, the office must have the capacity to delegate broad-scope complex projects, issues and initiatives with County-wide implications or their ability to provide executive leadership to other urgent priorities is compromised and constrained. The skills needed to do such work are complex, high level and require a thorough understanding of the vision of the executive and political leadership, knowledge of operational processes across most county agencies, complexities and opportunities, historical knowledge of complex and often controversial issues and political realities. The position works closely with members of the Board of Supervisors and their staff to assist in resolving various neighborhood and community concerns.

On behalf of the Office of the County Executive, the Neighborhood Community Building Coordinator:

- Manages strategic projects, initiatives and operations that cross several deputy areas and have County wide implications. Initiatives have broad scope and complexity and are often a result of BOS direction. Five examples include:
 - Serving as the point of contact and working with County Departments to analyze and develop a strategy to assist the County in accessing various funding opportunities that relate to the American Recovery and Reinvest Act of 2009.
 - Serving as the Planning Chief for the Strike Team. In this role the incumbent provided leadership in the planning, implementation and ongoing development of a seamless code enforcement system for the residents of Fairfax County.
 - Maximize the potential and usage of the FIDO IT system to allow quicker research of problem properties
 - Develop model for cross training and certification of code enforcement inspectors. This model in its pilot stage, will allow staff to inspect and enforce codes across departments
 - Utilize feedback from community meetings to enhance the user friendliness of code enforcement services
 - Develop, implement and manage the Neighborhood Enhancement Partnership Program, which provides opportunities for homeowner, civic, and neighborhood based associations to receive small grants to implement projects in their community.
 - Develop and manage a community based, self management strategy that assist communities where individuals gather to look for work

- Provide internal leadership and management with staff for the Braddock District Revitalization Pilot Project.

Direct Benefits to Citizens

The nature of this position is one that provides direct benefits to the residents of the County, four specific examples of this include the following:

- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 – The development of a comprehensive strategy to ensure County departments are aware of the significant funding opportunities and the process for receiving and/or applying for these funds. This will directly benefit the citizens of Fairfax County by maximizing potential resources coming into the County that support various programs and services, and create jobs
- As planning chief the position researched, benchmarked and worked with the various code enforcement agencies and the Department of Information Technology to develop a web based page that allows complaints to track the status of their case. Due to the varied business practices of the departments the position provided leadership that assisted the departments in developing streamlined and consistent business practices
- The Neighborhood Enhancement Partnership Program provides small grants for neighborhood based associations to beautify or implement programs in their neighborhood. Residents benefit directly because in many cases the associations do not have the funding for these programs and this allows them to enhance their neighborhood.
- The Virginia Statewide Neighborhood Conference was coordinated by this position and provided residents of the County the opportunity to learn various leadership, community building, and greater understanding of code enforcement ordinances and take that information back to share in their neighborhood.

Other Options

The functions of this position cannot be absorbed into other agencies due to the complexity, broad scope and cross agency nature of the work. Further, agencies are experiencing cuts that require eliminating or reducing programs. They do not have the capacity to add responsibilities of this nature. Therefore, the day to day oversight, coordination and completion of the types of projects this position is responsible for would either not get done or would fall on the shoulders of the deputy county executive, preventing them from the ability to manage and lead at a more executive level.

Costs

While the position was moved to the Office of the County Executive in FY '08, the position had existed for several years and was assigned to the Department of Systems Management for Human Services. In FY'08, the position was moved to the Office of the County Executive for the critical role it plays in day to day operations and the executive level of work performed on behalf of the Office of the County Executive and to fulfill obligations in providing thorough, timely and accurate information proactively and in response to various directives by BOS. The move of this position to the CEX budget was done for business processes efficiency improvements and transparency.

The FY 2010 cost of this S-33 merit position is estimated at \$100,976.