

Response to Questions on the FY 2019 Budget

Request By: Supervisor Herrity

Question: What is the status of the procurement to increase revenue from cellular services on county owned buildings similar to the contract the school system has successfully used to increase their cellular agreement revenue? Please provide detail of when the procurement process started, the completion date for each step in the process, the remaining steps in the process and the expected date we might begin to see additional revenue?

Response:

Since 2016 the Facilities Management Department (FMD) and Department of Information Technology (DIT) have researched the state of the telecommunications and wireless industry, regulatory issues, and new best practices regarding opportunities for revenue enhancement facilitating wireless infrastructure on county owned facilities and properties by commercial and other entities. In addition to rent revenues, new requirements developed by DIT allow the county to control a percentage of the infrastructure installed for exclusive county government-related communications infrastructure needs, thus reducing cost outlays to wireless tower and property providers as the only option for enhancing wireless mission critical communications platforms, as well as expanding future smart city technologies across the County, resulting in enhanced net financial gain. Research indicates that this new business model is feasible and desirable by both industry and municipal governments based on the recognized value of government space for wireless industry build-out, currently being done in some governments today. Additional research done by staff included site feasibility assessments to ensure that use of sites would be feasible and not cause frequency interference with other critical communications, or cause cost to the county related to maintenance and operation at the sites.

Staff also looked at other cooperative contracts that might meet both revenue and County technology requirements; however, County staff concluded that these contracts do not meet Fairfax County's IT requirements and/or business needs.

The RFP development process started in 2017, and the requirements are complete.

Next steps are to release the solicitation to market in about 45 days, with 45 days for responses and 30 days for evaluation and selection. The County cannot estimate determining or realizing additional revenues until the firm(s) contracted with conduct their own engineering, profit and loss projections, conduct the appropriate County permitting processes, and build out their facilities which is a function of the commercial firm(s) business plans.