



Office of Community Involvement



DCA and DCM CBAC

TO: Chair Deborah Kafoury and Board of County Commissioners (5) pages

FROM: Department of County Assets/Department of County Management
Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC)

DATE: April 29, 2022

SUBJECT: DCA and DCM Community Budget Advisory Committee Report & Recommendations

Dear Board of County Commissioners:

The Dept. of County Management/Dept. of County Assets Community Budget Advisory Committee members appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on the Fiscal Year 22/23 budget priorities of these two departments. The perspectives we bring come from our lived experience, professions, education and community work. This year's members' backgrounds include financial services, engineering, nonprofit work, retail and customer service, business ownership, public service, consulting and advocacy. We share common desires to give back to our community and to ensure fiscally responsible use of our tax dollars.

At Chair Kafoury's recommendation, our final report will focus on program offers that align best with our key values and principles. The DCA/DCM CBAC believes each of the items below is important to strive for; they are not in a particular order:

- acknowledging systemic racism in government institutions and working to dismantle oppressive systems founded on white supremacy
- being good stewards of public funds
- holding government institutions accountable for providing cost-effective, efficient services with measurable outcomes
- viewing budgets as moral documents and commitments to the most vulnerable members of our community
- supporting continual improvements toward County workforce equity, including employee health, safety and well-being
- supporting transparency by making information about DCA and DCM budgets accessible and understandable to the general public.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The DCA/DCM CBAC focused our review on one time only funding requests, out of target program offers, and new programs. This year, we interviewed department directors, reviewed DCA and DCM program offers, and provided our input on those that stood out in terms of cost, impact, or relative merit. We recognize that each DCA department must assess allocated fees to

(DCA and DCM) CBAC

external facing departments to fund the work of the County; however, this year we did not focus on allocated costs. This year was unusual in that the Chair did not constrain department budgets; the County was in a better position financially than recent years, thanks to federal American Rescue Plan funding and increased revenues from the business tax.

This committee recommends prioritizing the program offers that address the high workforce vacancy rate, worker safety, procurement and contracting efficiencies, disadvantaged contractor capacity building, and deferred facilities maintenance.

PROCESS:

The DCA/DCM CBAC began the year with DCA/DCM staff and management reviewing outcomes from Fiscal Year 2021/22, particularly results from programs we had recommended prioritizing last year, such as the College to County intern program, a new Human Resources communication position, hiring a digital access coordinator and three information technology upgrade projects. We were pleased to learn these programs had been implemented successfully.

To prepare for this year's meetings, CBAC members submitted questions to County leaders, asking them to describe outcomes and challenges from the current fiscal year and priorities for the coming fiscal year. The majority of the interviews occurred prior to Fiscal Year 22/23 budget submissions. The team met with the following County leaders:

- Serena Cruz, Chief Operating Officer
- Tracey Massey, DCA Director and Chief Information Officer
- Travis Graves, Deputy Chief Operating Officer
- Dan Zalkow, DCA Facilities and Property Management Director
- Estelle Norris, DCM Equity Manager
- Eric Arellano, Chief Financial Officer
- Shelly Kent, Interim HR Director
- Barry Smith, Central Purchasing Manager

EMERGING ISSUES & CHANGES:

Several themes emerged from our discussions with County leaders. We heard that COVID pandemic response continued to challenge the County's systems and workforce. Departments were in their second year of embedding Workforce Equity Strategic Plan elements into budget preparation, conducting training and looking to next turn an equity lens on developing performance measures. As some capital projects were due to wrap up, such as the Behavioral Health Resource Center, planning for others, such as the Gresham flagship library and Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge was just beginning.

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(DCA and DCM) CBAC

Other themes we heard across multiple presentations:

1. The County is experiencing a serious labor shortage - up to a 10% vacancy rate. Several program offers would respond to DCA and DCM needs to expand recruitment, engage in succession planning and improve agility and responsiveness to other departments.
2. The County is making efforts to improve racial equity in contracting, through use of the Construction Diversity Equity Fund, building capacity and outreach to businesses owned by Black, Indigenous and people of color beyond those businesses registered with the state Certification Office for Business Inclusion and Diversity.
3. COVID, delayed information technology improvements and the last several years' staffing reductions have led to slow response times in procurement and contracting. This is doubly problematic because the needs of the Joint Office of Homeless Services and other facilities projects have gone up.
4. The County has not been able to keep up with the safety needs of employees and community members, particularly around treatment centers and libraries. Property damage continues to be a challenge, though to a lesser extent than in 2020.
5. Some DCA and DCM efforts to support workforce equity are stymied for lack of staff to measure and track improvements and outcomes.

PROGRAM OFFER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The DCA/DCM CBAC recommends the following program offers as those we feel best meet the needs of the County workforce and the community. We recommend prioritizing the program offers that target the high workforce vacancy rate, worker safety, procurement and contracting efficiencies, building disadvantaged contractor capacity, and deferred facilities maintenance.

Department of County Assets Program Offers

Program Offer 78003 Workplace Security: We recommend this program center employee and community member safety rather than focusing on policing, enforcement and security.

Program Offer 78101B Business Systems Team Procurement & Contracting Positions

Program Offer 78200B Facilities Administration Position

Program Offer 78203B Facilities Client Services-Transition to Electric Powered Landscaping: CBAC supports this program offer in the interest of worker health and pollution reduction. We had some concerns about the cost of new electric equipment being borne by landscaping

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(DCA and DCM) CBAC

contractors. We also recommend a training and instruction program about the new equipment in multiple languages.

Program Offer 78233B Justice Center Bus Duct Replacement: We recognize the importance, urgency and safety aspects of this work while noting the relatively high cost. Given that the project is designed and ready to move to the construction phase, and that the City of Portland has committed to their share of the overall project costs, the CBAC recommends this expenditure.

Program Offer 78235 Walnut Park Renovation: We recommend this program offer, but with some reservations. We would like to see more assurance that current and past community members will be engaged in the decisions about how this property is ultimately used. Given the displacement of Black community members from this neighborhood, we recommend that any affordable or low-income housing prioritize Black families displaced by gentrification. We recommend strong coordination with Metro to implement these strategies and plans, particularly around housing, shelter space and homelessness services.

78301F, G, H Information Technology Replacements and Upgrades: We generally support what appear to be necessary investments in the efficiency and reliability of County software and database systems. However, we repeat our recommendation from last year that the County work to identify a stable, in-target source of funding for software and system replacements so that one-time and out-of-target funds are more available for new programs and pilot projects.

Department of County Management Program Offers

72005B Finance and Risk Management Purchasing MultCo Marketplace Contracts+ Optimization

72008B FRM Motor Vehicle Tax: We recommend this position as it would appear to bring substantial additional revenue from rental tax compliance. We also see this as a fairness issue - that compliant businesses are not subsidizing those who are not complying with their tax responsibilities.

72044B Regional Construction Workforce Diversity Funder Collaborative

72005C FRM Construction Diversity and Equity Add - Program Specialist

72017B Recruiter Training and Capacity Building

72051 Central HR - College to County Interns: This program appears to support workforce equity by better reflecting the community the County serves and provides leadership opportunities and experience to disadvantaged students.

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General Comments

In closing, we would like to note that a member of the public provided comment at two of our meetings. This was an unusual occurrence and we appreciated the community member's effort and time taken to find our agenda, contact staff to learn how to attend the meeting and prepare a detailed recommendation about digitizing all of the County's records. We note that in-target program offer #78404 - Records Management - describes the resources the County dedicates to this effort. We encourage the County to continue and, if possible, increase the pace of digitizing County records as this would increase the public's access to this information.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

The Committee would like to give special thanks to Lisa Whedon, Deb Anderson, and Matt Moline for their support, coordination, facilitation, responsiveness and enthusiasm. They were essential to the organization and scheduling of our discussions, and provided excellent perspective on all of the budget requests discussed. Additionally, we'd like to thank all of our guests/presenters for their time, informative presentations, and responsiveness to our questions.