

Community Services CBAC

Office of Citizen Involvement

To: Chair Deborah Kafoury and County Board of Commissioners 2 pages
FROM: Brian Harvey, Community Services CBAC Chair
DATE: April 27, 2015
SUBJECT: DCS Citizen Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) Report & Recommendations

PROCESS

We initially met with Kim Peoples, DCS Director, who provided us with an overview of the Department of Community Services' responsibilities, structure, budget, and strategic planning efforts. Staff then oriented us to the CBAC process and we prioritized which division directors we wanted to meet with. We met with:

- ✚ Mike Oswald, Director, Animal Services
- ✚ Tim Scott, Director, Elections
- ✚ Joanna Valencia and Lindsey Nesbitt, Senior Planners, Land Use and Transportation Planning
- ✚ Brian Vincent, Director, Road and Bridge Services Divisions

Each presenter shared an overview of their division's functions and responsibilities, current budget, strategic planning goals, and any new program offers. CBAC members asked questions and requested clarification during each presentation, and found the division representatives forthcoming in their responses. Following the presentations, the CBAC discussed the merits of the various program offers and developed our recommendations.

MAJOR CHANGES

Over the last year, DCS has completed a strategic planning process that strongly influenced the preparation of budgets and program offers. The CBAC appreciates how the department purposefully used the Strategic Plan to complete the FY 16 budget. Our recommendations, below, are also informed by the current fiscal realities. The pleasant circumstance of an overall increase in the county's projected revenue offers the opportunity to consider enhancement of existing programs and development of new programs.

EMERGING ISSUES

Transportation

Our committee was asked to consider the unmet needs for roads (repairs and maintenance) and bridges (essential seismic enhancements) reflected in the county's current transportation budgets. While the Burnside Bridge has been prioritized for seismic upgrades and addressed in this budget/report because of its importance as an arterial traffic way; county staff and the committee have been frank about the real urgency for other bridges and roads. We know, and have known for some years, that current projections and actual revenues (like gas taxes) are inadequate for the planning and construction required, and that the cost to repair neglected infrastructure increases with time. We recognize an

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urgent need for stable and adequate funding and/or new funding models, and call upon leadership to advance inter-agency collaborations, grants, and special funding mechanisms to address the need.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We were impressed that the new program offers are aligned with the department's Strategic Plan. We found value in each of the proposals. Details of each of the program offers follow.

- ✚ **91000B, Director's Office Management Assistant.** The addition of a management assistant will address the loss of administrative capacity due to years of shrinking budgets. We strongly support funding this position to support implementation of the strategic plan, encourage process improvements, and move the department's equity and diversity program forward.
- ✚ **91000C, Director's Office Research and Evaluation Analyst.** This new position will provide DCS with the capacity to conduct program evaluation and research that will monitor progress and enhance operational decisions. We support this position, as it aligns with the department's strategic planning goal of improved customer service through collection and analysis of customer satisfaction data.
- ✚ **91007B, Veterinary Services Continuation.** This program will add a veterinarian and certified veterinary technician to the Animal Services veterinary team. The addition of staff has proved its merit in saving the lives of shelter animals by allowing the division to provide seven day/week services. The program was initially piloted with donations in FY 14 and funded on a One Time Only (OTO) basis in FY 15. We strongly recommend adoption of this program, which has demonstrated that it increases live releases and improves customer service. These services also support the county's equity goals by increasing access for low-income pet owners.
- ✚ **91007C, Animal Services Foster Rescue.** This OTO request follows a successful pilot of the program in FY 15 with donated funds. We strongly support this program, which increases the number of partner agencies who assist with fostering and placing shelter animals in homes. The pilot has demonstrated that the program benefits both pets and people while helping build external support for the department and contributing to the increase in the live release rate.
- ✚ **91008B, Elections Voter Education and Outreach.** We recommend funding for this project, which aligns with the department's equity strategy to work with the community in identifying and addressing barriers to voter participation.
- ✚ **91021 A&B, Land Use Planning Customer Service and Compliance.** These two program offers backfill for caseload management capacity within Land Use Planning and address issues of succession planning and workforce development. We support the department's efforts to improve customer service and take a proactive approach to code compliance verification.
- ✚ **91027, Land Use Comprehensive Plan Update.** We support this OTO request to complete the work begun in FY 15 to update and create consistency within codes and support community needs and goals.

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