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TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Tom Crawford, CFO  
Derek Delacourt, Community Services Area Administrator  
Karen Lancaster, Finance Director  
Howard S. Lazarus, City Administrator

SUBJECT: FY20-21 Budget: Community Services

DATE: March 15, 2019

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**Question #7:** Also on FTE's, I fully support Derek's objective of being able to provide inspections within 48 hours and appreciate his talking with customers about their preferences vis-a-vis fees and service response capability. I'm not objecting at all to the additional resources, but am always concerned when we hire full-time, permanent city employees for services where the demand for those services can (and does) fluctuate significantly because as a general rule, we don't lay off permanent employees. (I recognize Derek said he didn't see the building activity going down, but history shows us that will happen at some point). Anyway, can you please speak to the decision of hiring permanent city employees rather than perhaps hiring contract employees or even outsourcing a portion of the inspections – did we consider those alternatives? (Councilmember Lumm)

**Response:** The additional FTE's are part of an ongoing evaluation and organization of the City's Building and Rental Services Unit. I agree that at some point the volume staff and the City are experiencing will flatten or go down however, even with a significant reduction in volume the positions are supportable. Currently we do outsource a significant volume of work to private contractors and temporary employees hired by the City. In the First half FY 2019 Building and Rental has contracted for:

- 1,049 hours of plan review
- 1,180 trade inspection, (130 per month, 590 hours)
- 206 hours of administrative support
- In FY we spent more than \$256,516 on contracted plan review and inspections

In addition to the contracted services, we are currently projected to spend \$70,000 on overtime this year and are budgeting more for the next two. Even if the City experiences a slowdown all of that work can be brought in house. The proposed positions are intended to right size the unit after staff was cut to minimal levels during the recent recession. If the City experiences another major downturn difficult decisions may need to be considered however, the proposed budget purposes maintaining a full year's operating costs in fund balance to help offset that concern. Currently we have 6-8 major projects in the pipeline that when approved will continue to demand resources over the next three to four years. Staff has meet with BRAG and discussed their desire to see permit fees reduced or to increase staffing levels to provide better service, the response has been consistent that increased service is preferred. If workload decreases, some of the reductions can be accomplished through anticipated retirements that would not be replaced.

**Question #17:** On slide 25 and the budget impact sheet for the building department-construction code fund there's costs shown for 13 electric vehicles (\$271K) and 13 charging stations (\$65K). I'm assuming these are replacement vehicles (if not, please explain why the extra vehicles are necessary), but even if replacements, why are so many vehicles being replaced at once? Also, why are the purchases shown here (and not the fleet fund) and what is the basis for the cost shown (full cost, incremental cost over gas vehicle)? (Councilmember Lumm)

**Response:** They are replacement vehicles, not additional vehicles. There is a one-time cost associated with the conversion from the current vehicles to electric vehicles based on the price difference and timing of the conversion. There has not been a determination to replace all vehicles at once, they may be phased in over the course of the year or potentially multiple years. However, we want to plan for the ability to do them all in this fiscal year if it is determined there is a compelling reason to do so. All future costs will be handled in fleet.



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TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Tom Crawford, CFO  
Craig Hupy, Public Services Area Administrator  
Karen Lancaster, Finance Director  
Howard S. Lazarus, City Administrator  
Marti Praschan, Chief of Staff, Public Services

SUBJECT: FY20-21 Budget: Public Services

DATE: March 15, 2019

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**Question #22:** Regarding slide 5 on the February 25 work session presentation, can the City Administrator provide an update on sidewalk snow removal for the elderly? (Councilmember Bannister)

**Response:** The City Administrator will prepare a request for proposals to determine the feasibility of the City providing snow removal services to low income senior and/or disabled homeowners for the 2019-2020 winter season. If an acceptable proposal is received and an agreement negotiated, funding will be identified either from within the current budget or through a request to Council to amend the approved budget.