

## **Proposal to add an additional Planner to CVPDC Staff**

### **Proposal:**

The CVPDC Executive Director recommends another planner be added to meet current and expected service demand to our member jurisdictions and program partners.

The position would be hired at the beginning of the next fiscal year using reserve funds with an expectation that projects and revenues will grow over three years to fully fund the position without using reserve funds.

### **Current Staff Capacity**

As a consultant service, we depend upon contracts for services. The majority of our revenues comes from contracts, typically in the form of hourly billing. Currently most planning staff hours are contracted, leaving little staff flexibility to take on new projects. The first six months of FY19 showed staff billable hours:

- Scott Smith & Philipp Gabathuler at 100%
- Kelly Hitchcock at 93%
- Matt Perkins at 86% (time for website, communications, etc. not directly billable)

Lack of planning staff discretionary time means little to no time to fully explore grant or partnership opportunities within existing projects. At our current project/available staff hours we're limited in our ability to extend the full measure of services (e.g. grant funds, technical assistance, project development) that we could or should as a PDC.

We're in project development/contract negotiations with several jurisdictions about new jobs and contracts for services. Unfortunately current contracts allow our staff little flexibility to take on new projects. It results in some projects/services being delayed and could result in some projects being turned away.

That staff hours are at capacity isn't unexpected as we didn't replace Bob White's position. We delayed it as long as practical so we could get the new office leadership team settled in and the office finances with the Economic Development Council departure settled. The original plan was that Bob would work part time, but due to his health, he was not able to.

### **Money on the Table**

In FY18 we could not draw \$5,000 from RIDE Solutions & \$20,000 VDRPT as we did not have enough staff hours. Given the staff and project capacity, it's time to expand staffing to remain at the highest service level to our program partners.

### **Use of Reserves to pay for the New Position for up to Three Years**

Staff proposes that we invest in the organization and increase our project capacity by adding an additional planner. The new planner would work both in new project areas as well as expanding existing service contracts.

The new position is estimated to cost \$80,000 next year (\$50,000 salary, \$20,000 benefits, \$10,000 mileage, training & equipment). With the DEQ WIP II (Agenda Item 7) we can count on \$21,500 in new revenue that will help offset a portion of the position cost in year one. The goal will be to generate work to pay for the position. However, staff proposes to draw any non-billable balance from our reserves in the initial three years.

Staff has worked hard to grow the reserves over the past 15 years by making conservative spending choices and careful financial management. We've drawn from the reserves for one time projects over the years and nevertheless continued steadily to build our reserves. It's time we invested in the organization.

Our reserves are well equipped to handle this request. The PDC has reserves estimated to be over \$900,000 at the end of this fiscal year and only need in the \$600,000 range.

### **An Investment in Our Organization**

As a consultant service our greatest expense is personnel. A new position from a portion of reserves will build the organization's capacity to better respond to requests, increase grant, project, and program opportunities, increase staff/organization expertise.

No organization sits still. We have reestablished our original name and celebrating 50 years of service. We are at the point we need additional staff to move forward.

**Evaluate this every year and terminate if you feel you're not getting value for the position.**

Staff understands that we have to produce contracts and/or services to generate revenue stream. As an organization if we don't deliver the new revenue streams, employees understand that there will be reorganizational changes to bring expenditures in line with the revenue streams. If the organization doesn't deliver new grants/programs/services then the position won't stay. That's why we ask that you give this new position three years to build those grants and programs.

### **Recommended Action:**

Authorize staff to move forward with recruitment of an additional planner recognizing that some of the funds for this position may need to come from our reserves.