

## **2018-2019 BUDGET QUESTION**

### ***Response to Request for Information***

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**DEPARTMENT:** Development Services

**REQUEST NO.:** 64

**REQUESTED BY:** Pool

**DATE REQUESTED:** 8/17/18

**DATE POSTED:** 8/27/18

**REQUEST:** Why was the Development Services Department ombudsperson position to assist small business not proposed to be funded in the FY 2019 budget? Also, is the availability of the ombudsperson service tied to the size of project or cost of permit?

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#### **RESPONSE:**

The Finance Team within Development Services Department (DSD) begins the annual budget proposal process by engaging division managers about resource needs in order to maintain and/or improve service delivery levels based on historical and projected workload demand. DSD also takes into consideration new resources that are required to implement or achieve Council policy direction and initiatives.

A variety of resource requests are sent to the Finance Team who then compiles the requests for a collective review by the Executive Team. Resource requests are balanced across the department by:

- Developing an appropriate mix of resourcing (full-time employees, temporary employees, overtime, and third-party contracting)
- Considering the overall fee increases needed to fund the mix of new resource requests
- Affirming the availability of office space and the ability to onboard new employees
- Conferring with division managers about efficiencies that can be achieved in order to reduce the need for new resource requests
- Affirming the new resource requests support DSD's Six Pillars of Success

The FY 2018-19 Proposed Budget does not include all resources that were requested throughout the department. The Local Business Ombudsperson Program was not included as DSD found no particular Council policy direction nor initiative that elevated the inclusion of this program among other DSD resource requests. Conversely, City Council adopted the Family Homestead Initiative in November 2017, and DSD has included a Residential Homeowner Ombudsperson Program within the FY 2018-19 Proposed Budget in order to support the Family Homestead Initiative.

Conceptually, the availability of the ombudsperson service will be tied to the size of the project for the local business and will serve smaller projects whose applicants are new to the permitting process and not versed in the complexity of regulations. City Council could provide policy direction regarding the ombudsperson service at the time it is considered for inclusion in the FY 2018-19 Proposed Budget.