



**City of Bellingham - Whatcom County Fire District #8 RFA Planning Committee**

**Issue Paper**

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Paper #: 4 (follow up to direction provided on September 18, 2017)

**Title:**

Internal support services

**Summary/Description of issue:**

The RFA plan needs to outline the full range of services to be provided by the RFA. This issue paper is specific to internal support services only. External services will be addressed in a separate stand-alone document.

The RFA planning committee needs to decide what internal support services will be a function of the RFA, which might remain with the city, and which might be handled with a contract for service. If there is a need to contract between the City and RFA for services, or the District and the RFA, these needs should be identified so contracts can be developed prior to the RFA's effective service date. These services include Human Resources (HR), Payroll, Finance, Facilities, Legal, Fleet (repair and replacement), and Information Technology (IT).

Currently the Bellingham Fire Department is part of the ICAP fund and the cost for this service is not recognized in the Fire Department budget. Fire District 8 operates differently. The Bellingham Fire Administration handles the payroll, HR, and finance functions for Fire District 8. Fleet repair and maintenance, as well as facilities, is handled through multiple private vendors. Additionally, the COB IT department handles the IT function and the legal function is handled by the firm Chemlik, Sitka, and Davis.

At the September 18 Planning Committee meeting, it was requested that a cost and staffing analysis be provided as well as short, medium, and long term recommendations.

For the purposes of this exercise the cost is estimated for 2019. The total estimate is approximately \$750,000 which is for the General Fund services for IT, Finance, legal, executive, and HR. These are affectionately known as ICAP and are **not** shown in the budget for General Fund departments. The sum below is less than the estimate of \$750,000 due to different breakdowns of the departments and functions. This is only an estimate and will need to be updated on 2017 Actual expenditures and changes in Fire relative to all the other departments. In addition, there is a list of the other internal



services charges that are not General Fund. The following is the billing and administration time for all services:

- Executive - \$60,000
  - Communications
  - Policy coordination
  - Governance participation (potentially include Council)
  
- Finance Department - \$120,000
  - Asset tracking – capital and theft sensitive
  - Budget development
  - Accounting – a/p, a/r, financial tracking, reporting
  - LEOFF pension board
  - Payroll and employee self service
  - Utilities
  - Audit
  - Loans
  - Financial analysis
  - Records – Archives
  
- Human Resources - \$175,000
  - Benefits Administration & enrollment
  - Civil Service Examiner
  - HR personnel support
  - Labor Negotiations
  - Recruitment assistance
  - Training
  - Investigations
  
- I.T. Department - \$300,000
  - Applications – website, staff Central internal tracking systems, support for financial apps, Trakit system (permitting and rental housing)
  - Computer replacement program
  - Desktop/Help Desk
  - GIS – addressing, parcels, buildings, CityIQ, hydrants
  - Network – backups, data center, internet, wifi, network, security
  - Software – E-mail, Office, Adobe
  - Telephones – ShoreTel, smart phones, long distance
  - Training – Lynda, Phish alert
  - CIRF
  
- Legal - \$30,000
  - Public Records
  - Risk Management
    - Property & Liability
  - Contracts, agreements, other



- Public Works Department (non GF)
  - Custodial/ Facilities maintenance - \$435,196
  - Fiber (joint interests with ITSD) - Don't currently charge for this
  - Fleet - Maintenance only - \$472,937
  - Fuel procurement - Fire Budget
  - Purchasing - \$16,023
  - Warehouse
  - Inter-departmental mail delivery – \$18,000
  - Radio - \$50,000; not charged for network
  - Security cameras and monitoring and public records - Don't charge
  - Traffic camera-related (opticom installation & maint) - Don't' charge

**Options:** The Renton plan provides some guidance on duration of contracts (attached) and could be useful in future negotiations.

Short-term (less than 1 year):

- All Legal
- All Human Resources Services
- Public Works Functions:
  - Custodial
  - Facilities maintenance
  - Fuel procurement
  - Purchasing
  - Warehouse
  - Inter-departmental mail delivery
- Finance Department
  - Asset tracking – capital and theft sensitive
  - Budget development
  - Accounting – a/p, a/r, financial tracking, reporting
  - LEOFF pension board
  - Payroll and employee self service
  - Utilities
  - Audit
  - Loans
  - Financial analysis
  - Records – Archives

Medium term (1-3 years)

- IT Department
  - Computer replacement program



- Desktop/Help Desk
- Software – E-mail, Office, Adobe
- Telephones – ShoreTel, smart phones, long distance

Long term (3+ years)

- Public Works Department
  - Fleet
  - Radio
  - Traffic camera-related (opticom installation & maint)
  - Fiber (joint interests with ITSD)
- IT Department
  - Applications – website, staff Central internal tracking systems, support for financial apps, Trakit system (permitting and rental housing)
  - GIS – addressing, parcels, buildings, CityIQ, hydrants
  - Network – backups, data center, internet, wifi, network, security
- Executive/Council
  - Governance

**Staff Recommendations and Rationale:** The above recommendation is based on the following criteria: ease of transition, impact to existing staff, and/or continuity of service. For example, the RFA could contract for legal services as soon as the RFA is formed. Conversely, maintaining a medium-to-long term relationship with the IT Department would ensure continuity among shared networks, applications, systems, etc. It's also in the City's interest to not negatively impact staffing levels and a long-term relationship with the RFA preserves city staffing levels in certain areas.

**Direction from the Planning Committee:**