

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE Inter-office Communication

DATE: 8/20/2021
TO: Marcelia Nicholson, Chair, County Board of Supervisors
FROM: Donna Brown-Martin, Director, Department of Transportation
SUBJECT: From the Director, Department of Transportation, requesting authorization to abolish 1.0 FTE Senior Financial Capital Analyst position and to create 1.0 FTE Fiscal & Budget Manager position in the Transportation Services Division
FILE TYPE: Action Report

REQUEST

The Director, Department of Transportation (MCDOT), is requesting authorization to abolish one FTE Senior Financial Capital Analyst position (Pay Grade 33JM \$64,334 to \$87,714) and to create one FTE Fiscal & Budget Manager position (Pay Grade 35M \$80,018 to \$95,368) to reflect the needs, accounting management accountability, and financial stability of the Transportation Services Division, aligning with Milwaukee County's Strategic Plan.

POLICY

Per Chapter 1.16 of the Milwaukee County Code of Ordinances, all requests for current year new positions shall be referred to the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Personnel.

BACKGROUND

Transportation Services Division currently is in dire need of the precise skill level, knowledge and management in overseeing, tracking, monitoring, auditing, and reporting of \$20+ million of capital improvement projects with a \$2 million operating budget. Experience in auditing is a critical part of Transportation Services Division's function and compliance with the several Federal and State funded grants used for planning, designing, real estate acquisition and construction of our County Trunk Highways (CTH's), bridges, traffic signals and other infrastructure improvements.

In 2019, Transportation Services Division successfully transitioned to its own Agency/Org/Division. Prior to 2019, Transportation Services Division was part of the Highway Maintenance Division. Due to the transition, it required a reorganization of the Transportation Services Division to match the needed structure to maintain its mission to provide a safe, reliable, and sustainable transportation system. After functioning as a separate Division for two years, it was determined that our current financial management was not adequate for the needs and future attainment of our mission. Hence, a review and assessment of the current financial positions by Human Resources resulted in the Fiscal & Budget Manager position being the recommended finance position for Transportation Services Division.

The Fiscal & Budget Manager position will manage, and oversee day to day budgeting, accounting, and auditing functions within the Transportation Services Division, working with the

Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) to comply with multiple Federal/State grant funding for implementing improvements for County Trunk Highways (CTH's), County bridges, County traffic signals and other associated safety improvements and oversight, including budgeting and completing the projects within the grant deadlines.

Transportation Services Division currently has 25-30 capital infrastructure improvement projects amounting to \$20+ million that have a separate Federal/State grant associated with each project. Each of the 25-30 Federal/State grants requires routine fiscal management, audit and compliance which is required to be able to be reimbursed for the Federal/State funding. Every one to two years, Transportation Services Division obtains additional Federal/State grants for new projects to continuously increase the amount of overall funding it oversees. In addition, every year Transportation Services Division is required to perform a Single Audit on these 25-30 Federal/State grants.

Although Transportation Services Division is a small team, it is made up of predominately Civil Engineers (80%) which most of the positions require a professional engineering (P.E.) license to perform the specialized services. The Fiscal & Budget Manager must manage the financials of these specialized services, including involvement in the overall project progress, schedule, and Federal/State regulations. Moreover, the mandated audit function with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and WisDOT involves frequent coordination and compliance components to the Fiscal & Budget Manager's responsibilities. It is imperative that the Fiscal & Budget Manager be able to clearly communicate and share financial reports and information to the County, governmental agencies, municipalities, and the public.

Over the past years, MCDOT as whole has struggled retaining and hiring financial staff that provide the necessary financial support needed to maintain a good financial standing and meet the County's Strategic Planning goals and objectives. It is very important for Transportation Services Division to be financially prepared and equipped to take full advantage of the upcoming funding in Federal Transportation Bill that is currently being worked on by Federal government and having the Fiscal & Budget Manager will support in this achievement.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

The new position of Fiscal & Budget Manager aligns to the Strategic Plan (3B: Enhance the County's fiscal health and sustainability) by providing greater fiscal expertise and accountability over the Divisions' finances.

RECOMMENDATION

It is the recommendation of the Department Director to approve abolishment of the Senior Financial Capital Analyst position and creation of a Fiscal & Budget Manager position.

FISCAL EFFECT

For the remainder of 2021 and in future years, savings from abolishment of the Senior Financial Analyst position will largely cover costs associated with the requested Fiscal & Budget Manager position. Remaining costs will be covered by increased Federal and State funding. No additional tax levy is anticipated to support the requested position. Net costs are included in the 2022 Recommended Budget for the department. It is expected that the Fiscal & Budget Manager position will be filled by November of 2021. An administrative transfer to increase associated State and Federal revenue is included in the request to cover the 2021 costs.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Andrea Weddle-Henning
Donna Brown-Martin

PREPARED BY:

Andrea Weddle-Henning

APPROVED BY:

Julie Esch, Deputy Director

Donna Brown-Martin
Director, Department of Transportation

ATTACHMENTS:

DAS – Performance, Strategy & Budget’s required, signed report, resolution (Word format), and signed fiscal note

cc: Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, County Board of Supervisors
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk