



Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: 12/7/2021

New Business

Department: Governing Body

Presenter(s): Chairman Newman, Commissioner Edwards, Commissioner Sloan

Contact(s): Sybil Tate, Matthew Cable

Subject: Community Development Staffing and County-Owned Property Feasibility Studies

Brief Summary: At the Nov 16th Affordable Housing Subcommittee meeting, the subcommittee members voted to support moving forward a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to add three (3) new full time equivalents (FTE's) to the Community Development Division of the Planning Department.

The Community Development Division currently includes one and one-half (1.5) FTE's. One (1) additional FTE is anticipated to be filled in January, if CDBG-NR grant funds are awarded.

For the past six (6) months, the Committee has engaged in goal setting to address the significant need for affordable housing in Buncombe County. A key element to addressing affordable housing will be redeveloping county-owned property. The Committee has expressed the desire to move forward with two (2) feasibility studies (like the Ferry Road study) for county-owned properties in downtown Asheville. Without adequate Community Development staffing to develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) and manage the process, the feasibility study cannot move forward.

The Affordable Housing Subcommittee is recommending three (3) new FTE's to enable the Community Development Division to proceed with the feasibility study and carry out basic Division duties, including program oversight and compliance. The cost of three (3) new positions in mid-year FY22 (starting in January) is estimated at \$164,125.

Funding for three (3) new FTE's will allow feasibility study work to begin in July 2022, as it is anticipated to take two (2) to three (3) months to hire staff, with an additional three (3) months to onboard staff and prepare the RFP. The cost of the two feasibility studies (actual costs will not be known until vendor bids are received) will be requested as part of the FY23 budget process.

Recommended Motion & Requested Action: Approve the budget amendment creating three (3) new FTE's in the Community Development Department.