

**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

AGENDA REQUEST

TO: Board of County Commissioners
Mark McCauley, Interim County Administrator

FROM: Brent Alfred Butler, Director, Community Development
Jodi Adams, Manager, Permit and Administration Division

DATE: January 10, 2022

SUBJECT: DCD Staffing and Recruitment

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

The Department of Community Development ("DCD") continues to experience resignations and, similar to other departments, difficulties in the recruitment of talented senior managers. On November 30, 2021, DCD advertised its current opening for a Planning Manager with a closing/first review scheduled December 23, 2021. Unfortunately, DCD received no applications for this position. More significantly, two planners submitted resignations within the past five weeks. One of these resignations would have been avoided if one or more of DCD's term-limited positions were permanent.

ANALYSIS

A combination of a plentiful supply of jobs, and a lack of affordability creates a perfect storm for employers, such as Jefferson County. According to recent reports in peer-reviewed journals, such as the Oxford Business Review, and statistics published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the United States had a record number of job openings in 2021; in October 2021 the number of job openings increased by 431,000 nationally. Additionally, the retention of employees is further hindered by rising housing prices that reduce the stock of affordable housing to rent or own. According to data readily available at the University of Washington's Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies, Jefferson County's affordable housing shortage has likely been exacerbated by a median home price increase of 19.2 percent as early as the first quarter of 2016 to the first quarter of 2017.

In order to stem the potential outflow of talent and to ensure that the county has other staff members readily available to handle the workload in the event staff leave to other governments where more stepwise advancement is possible, DCD proposes that the Board of County Commissioners ("BoCC") change the two two-year term limited Assistant Planner positions to permanent positions.

FISCAL IMPACT/COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS:

DCD does not anticipate any fiscal impacts in 2022 due to the robust development activity and the forecasted revenue from several large projects.

RECOMMENDATION:

DCD recommends that the General Fund transfer continue at the increased amount in 2023 and beyond to fund those two positions.

REVIEWED BY:



Mark McCauley, Interim County Administrator

Date 1/7/22