

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JULY 30, 2013

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: IMPROVING THE DELIVERY OF CITY CAPITAL PROJECTS THROUGH THE CREATION OF A NEW DEPARTMENT OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

As we work to improve the performance of the City government and better align our work with the City's Strategic Plan, I proposed in the FY 2013 budget the creation of a new Office of Project Implementation (OPI). Once the proposal was adopted by Council, staff established a director's position, formulated goals for the new office (improving interdepartmental coordination of complex projects and speeding up the delivery of those projects), and devised a new structure to meet those goals.

Tomorrow I plan to announce the creation of a City Department of Project Implementation (DPI) which will be charged with implementing City infrastructure capital projects. This new department will largely originate from the Engineering and Construction Management divisions of T&ES, and will be responsible for engineering and overseeing the construction of City-owned infrastructure (streets, sidewalks, sewers, etc.). DPI will also be responsible for coordinating the planning and implementation of certain complex, multi-departmental projects such as those in the Waterfront Plan. In the past, City departments have consistently delivered quality infrastructure projects that were on or under budget. With DPI, my goal is to shorten the delivery timetable of those projects. I believe that this reorganization can be undertaken with the same number of positions contained in the FY 2014 adopted budget. However, staffing levels may need to increase commensurate with the level of capital project increases (particularly in the sewer and transportation areas). That will be determined through the annual budget process.

The creation of DPI will also enable City staff to better focus on managing the growing portfolio of complex capital projects, new development, community outreach, and overall implementation. As many of you may know, the City has a growing list of projects, including up to \$400 million in to-be-identified sanitary sewer and storm sewer projects, which have been newly mandated by State environmental regulations and permits. My vision in creating DPI is to establish an organization with a focus on design, engineering and construction. This will also allow T&ES to further focus on transportation planning, transit planning and policy, and preliminary engineering planning, which will then be handed off to DPI for implementation. T&ES will remain

responsible for the review, permitting and oversight of the public works elements of private sector development projects such as the DSUP and building permit processes.

I will be appointing Emily Baker, currently the City Engineer and a T&ES Deputy Director, as the new Director of DPI. Emily's proven track record includes successful management of complex, multi-departmental projects such as the Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial and Witter Fields. Emily brings more than 20 years of design and engineering experience to DPI, including 13 with the City. Rich Baier will continue to build on his record of success as director of T&ES.

The structure and staffing of DPI, and a revised structure and staffing plan for T&ES, are currently being finalized. All current T&ES employees will have a comparable position in the new organizational structure.

I am excited about the possibilities that this realignment of function and service delivery presents. I am confident that Rich and Emily's leadership, along with continued support and assistance from existing T&ES staff, will provide a foundation for success.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

cc: Department and Agency Heads
City Manager's Office Senior Staff