2024 Supplemental Department Questions
Facilities and Fleet

Strategic Goals

1. Provide your 2024 strategic goals; how are they different from 2023? In what way, if at all, are your strategic changes demonstrated in your budget request?

   Facilities and Fleet's long-term strategic goals for success focus on advancing diversity, equity and inclusion while achieving objectives and measures in three key areas:

   1) Employee development and engagement
   2) Customer service, and
   3) High quality, efficient and sustainable delivery of products and services to the County

   The Facilities and Fleet department is an internal service provider. Our staff provide the necessary support for other County departments to meet their strategic goals. We continue to look for ways to improve our overall space utilization rates now that remote work opportunities exist. Our long-range planning and asset management efforts are designed to support departments through resilient strategies. Throughout 2023, we have continued to provide administrative and property management support to DCNR and also administrative and project management support to the Airport. Our project load grew significantly with the influx of federal ARPA funds and other grant dollars to departments. We appreciate the approval of an additional FTE for project support in 2023 and this position will be crucial to the success of advancing ARPA funded project efforts to remain on schedule.

   Our goals for 2024 are much the same as 2023, but more focus will be given to fleet electrification, furthering EV charging infrastructure, bringing the New Start Centers up to code and ready for occupancy, setting up operations and maintenance programs for the New Start Centers, progressing actions for Clean Buildings Act compliance, finishing the elections expansion project and managing space moves.

   Our budget request includes the addition of nine staff members. Six of those will be assigned to the operations and maintenance of the New Start Centers. One of those is the transition of the property position at DCNR to Facilities to initiate the consolidation of real and personal property management into one unit. One position is the transfer of the facilities staff member from the Health Department into the Facilities department. There is one additional staff member for the jail maintenance staff due to rising inmate population and need for leadership in the multiple projects currently in progress. Through strategic efforts, we have created a structural reorganization to improve our customer service and integrate initiatives which are congruent with Clean Buildings Act compliance and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions in buildings across the County.

National, state and local landscape:

1. What are the federal, state and local issues facing your work? What risks or opportunities does that create for you in 2024 and beyond? What is your plan to leverage the opportunity or mitigate the risk? What support do you need?

   We are currently benchmarking our energy use in buildings 50k square feet or more to meet energy use index targets. We are continually incorporating in our planning the Clean Energy bill requirements from House Bill 1257 with sustainable operations action planning to reduce GHG emissions and meet specific energy efficiency targets by 2026. With every funding provided, we are assessing greatest facility needs with opportunities to gain rebates and, if possible, incentives related to this legislation. It is our goal to avoid penalties from failure to comply with this new legislation. We are working in conjunction with several other counties to adopt best practices and leverage opportunities for planning and implementation. We have partnered with PUD and Stillwater Energy for grant opportunities for energy consumption reduction measures.

2. What, if any, new mandates do you have impacting your work? Are they funded or unfunded? What is the plan for accomplishing the work?

   The Washington State Clean Buildings law will impact our work for the foreseeable future and channel much of our capital improvement efforts toward energy efficiency. With our structure reorganization, we created a position, without adding an FTE, that is managing the impact of this legislation for all county buildings. This will include the development of an Energy Management Plan and Operations and Maintenance Plan for every building. There are currently 2 tiers, with tier 1 being our primary focus over the next couple of years. Tier 1 involves buildings 50k square feet or more. Tier 2 will bring additional requirements which includes all buildings 20k square feet or larger, including multifamily buildings. For the New Start Centers we will be required to report on energy benchmarks and have O&M Plans and Energy Management Plans beginning 2027. The mandates from this legislation are currently unfunded, but with a dedicated FTE, we will be able to map out a plan and what the cost impacts will be over the next few years to appropriately budget for improvements.

Programs

1. List programs, projects and services within your department funded through federal COVID/ARPA funds. What, if any, of those programs are you recommending ongoing funding for and what is the source of ongoing funding?

   Our department has no programs or services funded through COVID/ARPA money. We have been assigned as stewards of COVID/ARPA funds for other department's projects which have a facility or equipment component. The Office of Recovery and Resilience will be providing a centralized list for all ARPA projects.

2. For programs funded by COVID/ARPA funds, detail the plan to close out and/or transition those programs to an ongoing funding source in 2025 and beyond.

   For the New Start Centers, we anticipate most of 2024 to be taken up with construction work at the New Start Centers, which is slated to be funded from ARPA monies. Any subsequent work including operations and maintenance costs will transition to Human Services.

   We anticipate all other ARPA-funded projects to be fully encumbered in 2024, including the Auditor's election remodel project in Admin West. We do not anticipate additional programmatic resources for Facilities on this project. The elections project should be complete in 2024.

3. What new programs are you launching for 2024? What need or efficiency is that new program addressing? How is that program funded for sustainability? What metrics are in place to determine effectiveness?

   Our scope of facility maintenance oversight is increasing with the addition of the Health Department building and two New Start Center facilities. Great strides have been made to date with the Facilities CMMS as projected, with the stabilization of the workforce and implementation of applicable processes work will continue through the end of 2023 to ensure data is reporting correctly in our CMMS system. Concurrently in the 4th quarter of 2023, we will be implementing a QR coding inventory of all the facility maintained operating equipment. Thanks to our partners in IT and the use of the Innovation Fund, we can obtain the software and printers to produce the QR coding that our CMMS system will tie into. Our future goal will be to implement artificial intelligence (AI) in our operating systems to further advance reliability of our operating systems throughout the county facilities.

Once the QR coding is completed, when a technician scans the equipment QR code the associated work order, equipment manuals, schematics, drawings and any other pertinent information will be displayed saving time and increasing efficiency since all of the information will be at the technician's fingertips.

As a follow-on through 2024, Facilities will be looking at opportunities to implement AI wherever possible to further decrease downtime of systems with the goal of reducing cost of repairs through advanced notification processes.

On the Fleet side, our newest programs include continued fleet electrification and administration of a countywide automatic vehicle locator (AVL) program. We have met our goal of at least 25% of new passenger car and light-duty pickup truck purchases being electric and/or hybrid-electric in 2023, thanks to the seed funds approved by Council in 2022 to assist with the electrification initiative. Thank you for approving the one additional FTE for Fleet in 2023. We have been able to administer the warranty repairs and reimbursement program, reduce the backlog of bid specification writing for new replacement equipment, as well as make progress on electrical vehicles and EV charging infrastructure.

4. If different than #3, what are your areas of significant investment? What are you not doing because of that investment?

   In 2024 we will be continuing efforts to expand the Auditor's space allocation for election operations and consolidating space for SWM, PDS, HR, CI, PIO, HE, OSJ, EcoDevo, and PW as a result. Facilities gave up 900 square feet in 2022 and shrank our footprint again in 2023. We are investing considerable funds in contractor move costs which we believe we could save financial resources to the county if we brought those services in-house, especially over the next few years with moves, consolidations and reconfigurations in queue.

Internal Operations

1. What is your department doing to streamline processes or deliver services in a new way? How do your budget allocation requests play into these innovations? Are there ways which a different budget approach, e.g. several departments sharing a resource, could achieve the same or better results in a more cost-effective way?

   Streamlining resources is always taken into consideration in planning our work. Our department has made organizational restructures which enable us to streamline processes. Our multiple work units are currently sharing administrative resources. We are successfully transitioning property management files into a computerized system to facilitate better tracking and work processes which connect with other departments. We are merging property positions from two divisions for greater efficiencies and bandwidth for property management needs.

Our staff members bring innovation to the workplace every day. We constantly need to do more with less and be creative in our problem-solving approaches. Staff members have shared ways to save costs and consumption of energy through lighting controls and HVAC adjustments. We are embracing eco-friendly practices in our operations across the board. We are in tune with office design trends and the latest in workplace expectations. The way we achieve more, better, faster, is to maintain a proactive approach to maintenance, actively looking for ways to improve operations.

2. What, if any, hiring challenges are you experiencing? How is that affecting your level of service or internal operations? How are you mitigating those operational challenges and/or what is your plan for recruitment?

Our hiring challenges mimic the national trend. We are experiencing the following:
Fewer applicants – posted wage scale is not attractive or competitive
Labor/Talent shortage – jobs in the trades are not the current rage, more people want remote work or flexible work schedules, but our department's jobs are in-office/in-shop and subject to work schedules of other department operation hours.
Attracting good, qualified applicants - average percentage of qualified applications over the past year has been 50% for Facilities and 20% for Fleet.
Bridging the skills gap - candidates with very little experience take longer to bring up to speed and can make costly mistakes. The success rate beyond the probation period is low for inexperienced applicants.
Failed advertisements – we had a few failed postings with lack of qualified applicants, or qualified applicants ghosting the interview or hiring start date. We are continuously posting openings for heavy equipment/diesel mechanics. There are thousands of hits to view job postings, but few that actually apply.
Retaining Top Talent – we are losing top talent to better job offers and offers out of state. The County needs more flexible ways to reclassify positions, add challenging duties, or combine multiple trade expertise to retain top talent.
Increased competition – applicants are offered sign-on bonuses, high wages, and more flexibility.

Recruitment process – the County needs to be more creative with recruitment strategies; the traditional method of job postings and employee referrals cannot be relied upon anymore.

The effect of the above hiring challenges and vacant positions has slowed our response times and turn-around times. We have been forced to become more proactive in recruiting efforts (visiting trade schools, job boards and outreach to industry colleagues), creating targeted campaigns, using social media, and building talent pipelines for qualified candidates.

3. To help inform Council on experiences around hiring and retention, please provide a list of all vacant position titles, position codes, FTE amount (1.0, 0.5, etc.), date vacated, and date first posted. Template spreadsheet attached for convenience and conformity; if already tracking information in another format, that is acceptable as well. Please list each vacancy separately.

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	Position Title	Position Code	FTE Amount	Date Vacated	Date Posted	Comment
1	Facilities Technician III	FAC2680R	1	9/19/2023	9/22/2023	
2	Electrician III - Facilities and Fleet	FAC2593R	1	7/24/2023	7/25/2023	
3	Faciilities Technician IV	FAC2660R	1	5/21/2023	5/23/2023	
4	Sign Shop Specialist	FAC9520R	1	6/30/2022		Pending reclass to another position
5	Equipment Mechanic Auto	FAC9100R	1	6/30/2023		Pending reclass to another position
6	Equipment Mechanic Diesel	FAC9485R	1	3/3/2023	2/10/2023	
7	Equipment Mechanic Diesel	FAC9514R	1	8/3/2023	2/10/2023	
8	Equipment Mechanic Auto	FAC9480R	1	8/23/2023		Working through existing eligibility list before posting for recruitment.
9	Business Technology Analyst	FAC7478P	1	10/31/2022	2/27/2023	Project position will not be renewed in 2024.

4. What effect has the increase of inflation and/or supply chain issues had on your department? What, if any, services, or projects have you had to adjust to accommodate for this? (i.e. moving to outside contracted services, delaying of project starts and/or purchasing, redistribution of workload, etc.)

We are experiencing all the impacts from the current global supply chain crisis, including, but not limited to:
Backlogs/backorders/delays on specific materials, equipment, parts, etc.
Inflationary pressures/cost increases in supplies, materials, equipment, and parts
Workforce and labor shortages with service providers
Delays in service response
Production delays/longer material lead times
Transportation delays
Fewer contractors bidding
35-40% construction cost increases
Altered buying patterns and shorter ordering windows

We have seen a slight and random improvement in availability of some supplies and materials in the most recent months.

5. When was the last time your department implemented a fee increase? Do you have any plans to increase fees?

   Our department is an internal service provider with interfund rates. We do not anticipate an increase in 2024 for parking fees but are reviewing current market comparisons for consideration of a possible fee increase in 2025.

6. Do you have any plans to do a rate/fee study? Are your current fees established based on a full cost recovery model?

   Parking fees will be based on market conditions, the strength of events at the Arena, and in consultation with our parking contractor.

Successes

1. Take this opportunity to share one significant success in your department over this past year. What made it a success?

   Fleet Services has met our goal of at least 25% of passenger vehicles or light duty trucks being hybrid or all-electric for replacement vehicles in 2023. In cooperation with a local dealership, Fleet has been able to perform warranty repairs on certain vehicles in-house and receive reimbursement. This ensures that critical County assets are repaired in a timely manner. The trust placed in the County by the dealer and manufacturer speaks volumes about the competency and expertise of our technicians. Fleet is also implementing a QR code in all-electric vehicles which leads to “how-to” training programs.

   Facilities management staff have been examining every process, top to bottom, to maximize overall department efficiency. This process has been a success because it has brought us to where we can monitor workflow trends, track facility costs and equipment replacement schedules more accurately, and improve the customer interface for better customer service. There are new at-a-glance efficiency metrics which will assist us in realigning staff workflow and preventative maintenance schedules. This process improvement initiative is maximizing staff time and helping us coordinate project work and expenditures to further efficiency.

   We launched a property file digitizing project this year and are uploading those files into a property management system for inventory, tracking and lease management. We completed over 30,000 work requests this year department-wide and have moved and reconfigured hundreds of work stations to maximize space utilization rates.