



## APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 3, 2019.** Please include this application form with electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico

Program Title: Fiscal Program Appraisals

Program Category: Organizational Development

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Anthony McDowell

Title: Deputy County Manager for Public Safety

Signature: *Anthony E. McDowell*

## **Program Overview**

The Henrico County Division of Fire is driven by our strategic plan and budget cycle to continuously improve with intention and purpose. The organization's guiding document is generated with involvement from all levels of the organization and community at large. The strategic plan consists of goals, objectives, and tasks, which are assigned a program manager responsible for its completion. Fiscal Program Appraisals (FPA's) help to tie these goals, objectives, and tasks to the budget, measure progress, evaluate their relevance in a constantly changing environment, and serve as a record for program accomplishments. For the program managers that complete these appraisals, it also serves as a self-assessment tool on their progress and priorities. This tool for internal stakeholders provides feedback to affect changes upon the strategic plan, appropriate funds to needed programs, and maintain a record of program accomplishments and resource needs.

## **Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality**

In a large and complex organization, the ability for all managers to keep focus on the same strategic goals requires accountability and regular appraisal. Furthermore, making sure that budget decisions mirror those goals and tasks requires feedback and consideration from all levels in the organization. In the past, we would often see that budget decisions could be made without consideration of the strategic plan or specific needs related to completing the strategic tasks and objectives as outlined. To solve these somewhat disparate but related problems required a scheduled and consistent evaluation and reporting of programs that meets the needs of budget development. Hence the creation of the Fiscal Program Appraisal with its ties to the Strategic Plan updates and the budget cycle.

### **How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria**

Fiscal Program Appraisals have made a significant impact on the ability for the Division of Fire to measure progress on the strategic plan regarding both resources and program accomplishments and setbacks. This tool ties resources and a culture of continuous improvement together to provide effective and efficient services to the community. Ultimately, they lead to a high-performing organization.

This solution, which only requires the cost of time, gives internal stakeholders the information they need to make decisions for the organization. It essentially makes everyone a part of the decision making in a way that would not be possible or efficient by means of a large meeting or workshop. Program managers have the added bonus of self-evaluation, and a feeling that their progress and needs have been formally documented and considered.

Since all organizations have a budget and most are guided by a strategic plan, this simple solution is adaptable to many organizations and may only require consideration of the timing of budgets and other strategic decision making.

### **How Program Was Carried Out**

Beginning in May 2016 and every year after, Fire Planning in coordination with the Director of Administration sends out Fiscal Program Appraisals to all program managers that are responsible for parts of the strategic plan and/or manage budgets and critical resources. The document lists specific bullet points to address.

- Date Submitted, Submitted to (executive staff member the program manager reports to), Program Title, Program manager's name.
- Description: The program manager describes the details of the program including history, current state, and existing resources.
- Appraisal: The program manager outlines the challenges and successes over the past twelve months.
- Performance Measures: This is the opportunity to show data that validates the appraisal. Most items that are listed on the strategic plan have quarterly performance measures that are maintained by the Fire Planning office. Often other data will be included that takes a longer view.
- Plan: What is the plan for the next twelve months?
- Resource Needs: Outline any supplemental resource needs.
- Policy: What policies are related to this program (directives, guidelines or manuals)?
- Recommendations: Outline any recommendations for policy, procedure, funding, personnel, etc.
- Impact Statement: Based on the last twelve months, what changes occurred and how did those changes impact this program.

The Fire Planning office works with the program managers to make sure they understand what is needed. The appraisals go to the executive staff for approval. In June of each year, the executive staff meets to revise the strategic plan based on these appraisals and other external factors. This revision is organized and led by the Captain of Fire Planning. It is driven by information obtained from the FPA's. Budgets for each program are then developed in the fall based on the results of the FPA's by the program managers and the executive staff sets funding priorities. Then the

Budget Committee meets each year beginning in November to start the process of reviewing and making recommendations on budget supplements using the respective FPA's and strategic plan to evaluate priorities. The Captain of Fire Planning is a standing member of this committee to help members understand strategic plan and FPA information. Budgets are created using a priority-based approach. The executive staff takes the budget committee recommendations to evaluate and make the final recommendations that then go to the County Manager for approval.

The program managers consist of administration and line staff that are responsible for everything from travel funding to specialized rescue teams or anything that requires a budget or resources to accomplish part of the Strategic Plan or has recurring funding. FPA's allow the internal stakeholders to provide feedback to affect changes upon the strategic plan, appropriate funds to needed programs, and maintain a record of program accomplishments and resource needs. The content of FPA's are used most broadly by the executive staff and budget committee. Program managers can use the FPA's as a self-assessment tool to evaluate progress and make sure future needs are explained and evaluated in the appropriate time frame for budgets. Finally, the County Manager and other county leaders benefit by having a proposed budget that is based on strategic goals and priorities of the organization.

### **Financing and Staffing**

There is no monetary cost to the program. The investment is in the program manager's time for program assessment and the executive staff's time in reviewing the agency's progress and needs.

### **Program Results**

This program has been highly successful, and the Division's budget allocations directly reflect specific objectives and goals. During the last budget development cycle, the executive staff reviewed the FPA's prior to internal budget requests, which allowed the executive staff to provide proactive feedback to program managers for the budget process. In turn, the program managers already had an effective assessment tool to address the organizational priorities. In fact, each program manager tied their respective operations and funding requests to particular strategic goals in their budget hearing presentations and narratives.

Budget Committee recommendations have required less change by executive staff because both are making decisions with the same priorities in mind. This has created administrative efficiency and increased the value and participation of the internal budget committee. The process of making strategic plan revisions has been significantly reduced because of a lack of resources. FPA's allow for the Fire Planning office to put together an efficient and concise review of the progress of strategic tasks. This program also provides an outlet for under resourced programs and projects to have a voice. What use to take hours and at times several meetings now takes about an hour and a half. Decisions regarding the long-term value or needs of a program can be made with the record created by the FPA's.

### **Brief Summary**

Fiscal Program Appraisals are a simple tool, appreciated by all in the organization, that facilitate getting the right information at the right time for strategic decision making. This simple and broadly adaptable tool has made a significant impact for the Division of Fire and we hope can do the same for other organizations as well.