



Carl Vinson Institute of Government UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Proposal for Services

CITY OF STONECREST PUBLIC WORKS SERVICES COST STUDY

May 5, 2022

A PROPOSAL TO IDENTIFY COST OF PROVIDING PUBLIC WORKS SERVICES IN THE CITY OF STONECREST

The Carl Vinson Institute of Government proposes to provide the City of Stonecrest with an analysis of the costs of providing public works services. Specifically, the City is interested in examining the costs of assuming service responsibility for street and right of way maintenance including permitting and inspection, pavement maintenance, traffic signal and sign operations and maintenance, traffic engineering, and stormwater management. This project will also include estimating revenues that the city could collect to fund these services.

Background

Currently DeKalb County provides public works services to the City of Stonecrest. The residents of the City of Stonecrest currently support part of the cost of these services through a special services district property tax.

Overall Goals

The Institute of Government's goals for this study will be to:

1. Analyze and describe to the degree possible the nature of the current service components, the current level of these service components, and associated costs of providing the services in their current configuration.
2. Provide a rough estimate of the costs of moving to city-based provision of public works services.

3. Estimate the revenues property owners in the city pay to DeKalb County to fund public works services.

The proposed study will not recommend a specific course of action with regard to changing the provision of public works services. Decisions concerning how best to organize public works services will be made by local officials.

With regard to the proposed study, it should be recognized that Institute faculty will be dependent on the cooperation of the current service provider (e.g., DeKalb County Public Works Department) and/or peer cities providing similar services. In this regard, the Institute's ability to produce a timely and actionable study will require time and effort on the part of these organizations. Institute of Government faculty will coordinate with city and county officials to ensure the development of these relationships.

Data Gathering and other Project Activities

Institute faculty, where appropriate, will employ the following data gathering techniques:

1. An examination of DCPD budgets, program descriptions, staffing, and cost accounting documents. These documents should enable an accounting of the capital (land and facilities) and major equipment contributions to the cost of the public works services and programs. It is also expected that these documents will enable the tracking of operational costs of these services. Review of peer city data, where relevant.
2. Interviews with DCPD program managers. Interview of peer city employees, if necessary.
3. Use of GIS systems and data to determine presence of road lane miles in city limits.

Local Government Responsibilities

It is expected that the city will respond to any data and interview requests in a timely manner (e.g., within 3-4 business days) and will facilitate data collection and interview scheduling with city officials should they be necessary.

If response times are not feasible because of higher priorities associated with the day to day operation of the local governments, the timetable for completion of the study may be changed.

Expected Time Frame

Contract Initiation: Once the scope of work has been approved, it typically takes two weeks on the University side to complete a legal and administrative review of the contract and to have the contract offer in the hands of local government officials.

Interviews and other Data Gathering: Completed one month from Contract Initiation.

Analysis and Report Writing: Completed in the third month from Contract Initiation.

Final Report and Presentation: Completed at the end of the third month from Contract Initiation.

These estimated completion times are subject to change based upon response time to project data requests.

Deliverables

The Institute of Government will:

1. Provide an electronic copy (.pdf file) of a final report.
2. Institute of Government faculty will be available to provide consultation on the results of the study to City officials for three months following submission of the final report.

Project Budget

The Institute of Government proposes to complete the project for a flat fee of \$16,000. However, the Institute of Government is willing to adjust the scope of work and costs accordingly to meet the client's needs. This price is valid for 120 days from the date of this proposal.

Capabilities and Project Faculty

The mission of the Institute of Government is to improve governance and the lives of people in Georgia. In carrying out this mission, the Institute can call on the wide-ranging knowledge base of the University of Georgia as well as on over 90 years of direct service experience in providing technical assistance, training, research, and policy analysis to local and state governments in Georgia. The Institute of Government is among the most highly-rated university-based organizations designed specifically to span the gap between best practices research and the existing practice of government. The proposed researchers for this project are:

Paula Sanford

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Paula Sanford is a Senior Public Service Associate who specializes in public budgeting and finance but her work spans a variety of local government issues such as public-sector retirement programs, performance measurement, and comprehensive financial and organizational reviews. Her work entails offering applied research and technical assistance for local governments and

national non-profit organizations. In addition, she provides training to local government officials in Georgia. Prior to coming to the Institute of Government, she taught public budgeting and financial management, organizational theory, and local government management at Northern Illinois University. Paula has also served as a senior budget analyst for the State of Nevada Department of Administration and as a policy advisor in the Governor's Office in the areas of natural resources, transportation, and the arts. Some of the subject areas she has published articles include public retirement reform, public budgeting and finance, organizational theory, and municipal annexation. Paula earned her Ph.D. from the University of Georgia, concentrating in public finance. She also has an MPA from American University and B.A. from California State University, San Luis Obispo.

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Lori Brill provides applied research and technical assistance to local governments in the arenas of local regulations, strategic planning, and organizational and operational reviews. Lori brings a wealth of in-depth local and state government knowledge to the Institute of Government. Lori has more than 20 years of experience providing legal, policy and research services at the local, regional and state levels. Prior to joining the Institute of Government in 2022, Lori served as a DeKalb County Senior Assistant Attorney, an Enforcement Attorney at the Georgia Secretary of State's Office, Deputy Legislative Counsel for the Georgia General Assembly and as a regional director for a telecommunications company. She has taught courses, authored papers and updated legal treatises in her areas of expertise including online media and internet law. She received her B.A. from Emory University and his J.D. from the University of Georgia School of Law.