



**Carl Vinson
Institute of Government
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

Proposal for Services

**CITY OF STONECREST
PUBLIC WORKS SERVICES COST STUDY**

November 10, 2022

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

DeKalb County currently provides public works services to the City of Stonecrest (City) which is funded through a special services district property tax imposed on the City's property owners. The Carl Vinson Institute of Government proposes to provide the City with an analysis of the costs to deliver public works services through their own personnel or by a third-party contractor. 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 proposal also includes estimating the amount of property taxes that would be necessary to fund these General Fund services.

SCOPE OF WORK:

Data will come from comparable cities and professional government associations. The following summarizes the tasks to be undertaken:

1. Use GIS systems and data to determine road lane miles within city limits.
2. Review the staffing, work load, and annual operating expenditures of public works departments from three Georgia cities. Information from these comparison cities will be used as metrics for determining the City's level of service and the "in-house" public works cost estimate. These comparison cities will be decided upon cooperatively between Institute of Government faculty and the City of Stonecrest Finance Director.

3. Review the workload and annual operating costs of public works in three Georgia cities that contract out this service. Information from the comparison cities will be used as metrics for determining the City's contracted public works cost estimate. These comparison cities will be decided upon cooperatively between Institute of Government faculty and the City of Stonecrest Finance Director.
4. Estimate the capital equipment costs necessary to directly provide public works services. This estimate would include heavy equipment such as trucks and backhoes, mowers, etc., handheld equipment, and office equipment such as furniture and computers. The inventory of included equipment will come from the comparison governments discussed under Number 1 of this proposal.
5. Estimate the infrastructure expense to build a storage structure to house public works equipment plus office space. The City will provide some basic specifications for the size of this facility, building materials, paving, etc. The estimate will not include the cost of land and assumes the building will not have plumbing.
6. The Institute will not be able to estimate the miles of sidewalk within city limits. If the city provides this information, the Institute will include cost estimates for basic sidewalk maintenance in the report, using data from the comparable governments.
7. Review property tax records from the DeKalb County Tax Commissioner in order to estimate the property tax revenues, with a corresponding millage rate, that the City would need to collect in order to provide public works services directly or through a private contractor.
8. It is assumed that revenues generated from a stormwater utility tax would pay for any infrastructure projects related to stormwater management.
9. Analyze collected data and develop operating and capital cost estimates and a property tax millage rate estimate to fully fund services to be paid from the City's General Fund. The proposed study will not recommend a specific course of action with regard to changing the provision of public works services.

DELIVERABLES:

The Institute of Government will:

1. Provide a .pdf file report that summarizes the findings from the research.

2. Institute of Government faculty will be available to provide consultation or a formal presentation on the results of the study to the City Manager and/or City Council.

PROJECT TIMELINE:

The Carl Vinson Institute of Government foresees this project beginning in January 2022 or soon after a contract is executed, whichever is later. The estimated time to complete a draft of the study is five months with an additional month to finalize the report.

Please note, any delays on the part of the City of Flowery Branch Departments in providing data that are requested by Institute of Government may result in a later completion date.

PROJECT BUDGET

The Institute of Government will provide the services outlined in this proposal including all personnel services, operating supplies, computer time, travel, etc., at cost not to exceed \$20,600. 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 95 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 researcher for this project is:

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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.