



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

3430 Courthouse Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2013 Voice/Relay

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive
cball@howardcountymd.gov

www.howardcountymd.gov
FAX 410-313-3051

December 20, 2024

The Honorable Elizabeth Walsh, Chairperson
Howard County Council
3430 Courthouse Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

RE: Reorganization – Department of General Services

Dear Chairperson Walsh,

Pursuant to Section 403 of the Howard County Charter, let this letter serve as notice of my intention to submit a plan for reorganization of the Executive Branch of County Government.

Charter Requirements

Section 403 of the Howard County Charter requires the County Executive to submit to the County Council a detailed explanation of the reasons for reorganization and an evaluation of the financial impacts. The Executive Reorganization Plan must be submitted to the Council at least 120 days prior to submission of the next budget, and the legislation implementing the Plan must be introduced within 60 days of submission of the Plan to the Council.

The proposal to be submitted to the County Council will pertain to the reorganization of the Department of Public Works (DPW) to remove the Bureau of Facilities and Real Estate Services Division in order to consolidate the functions of the two under a newly established Department of General Services (DGS).

Department of General Services

We recognize the need for a holistic and strategic vision of the County's real estate, buildings and leased space in order to ensure cost-effective, efficient and responsive delivery of services. The two divisions of County government that most impact this strategy are the Bureau of Facilities (BoF) and the Real Estate Services Division (RESA), both currently housed in DPW. This Department is one of the County's largest organizations both in terms of personnel and breadth of operational responsibilities. While BoF and RESA communicate and collaborate regularly, management of these critical functions is currently siloed, and executive leadership is also responsible for oversight of engineering, solid waste, stormwater management, traffic control, sidewalks, public roads, and public water, sewer and wastewater treatment.



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

3430 Courthouse Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2013 Voice/Relay

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive
cball@howardcountymd.gov

www.howardcountymd.gov
FAX 410-313-3051

BoF is responsible for the operation, maintenance, security and custodial services at most County buildings. The Bureau also manages the design and construction of new County buildings and building renovations.

RESD is responsible for land acquisition, lease agreements, crafting of developer agreements and related legal documents in the development process, private road takeover and acceptance of private streetlights, as well as processes relating to water and sewer connections, and maintenance of sidewalks, driveway aprons and sod agreements.

In order to enhance the understanding and alignment of the County's real estate and building needs, we propose the creation of DGS that will consolidate the functions of BoF and RESD under a new Director and Deputy Director.

The creation of DGS will give visibility to a core leadership team of all County land, leases and facilities. We will improve responsiveness to key constituencies, including residents, user agencies and the legislative branch through an organization with a singular mission. We will achieve efficiency by funneling and sharing information through a dedicated department with a cabinet-level leader. This reorganization will also help the County to implement life-cycle facilities cost assessment through focused project planning.

Neighboring Jurisdictions

The following neighboring jurisdictions have an agency, separate from the Department of Public Works, that is responsible for real estate and facilities management.

Montgomery County Department of General Services
Baltimore City Department of General Services
Anne Arundel County Office of Central Services
Prince George's County Office of Central Services

We will use these models to enhance Howard County's approach to facilities and real estate management.

Organization

BoF has three functional divisions – Operations & Maintenance; Design & Construction; and General Services. The Bureau is led by a Chief and Deputy Chief. Each division also has a Chief. BoF has 72 positions, all but one (1) of whom would become part of the DGS management structure. The Operations & Maintenance Division's present staff and functions would remain the same and become the Operations & Maintenance Bureau in the envisioned reorganization.



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

3430 Courthouse Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2013 Voice/Relay

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive
cball@howardcountymd.gov

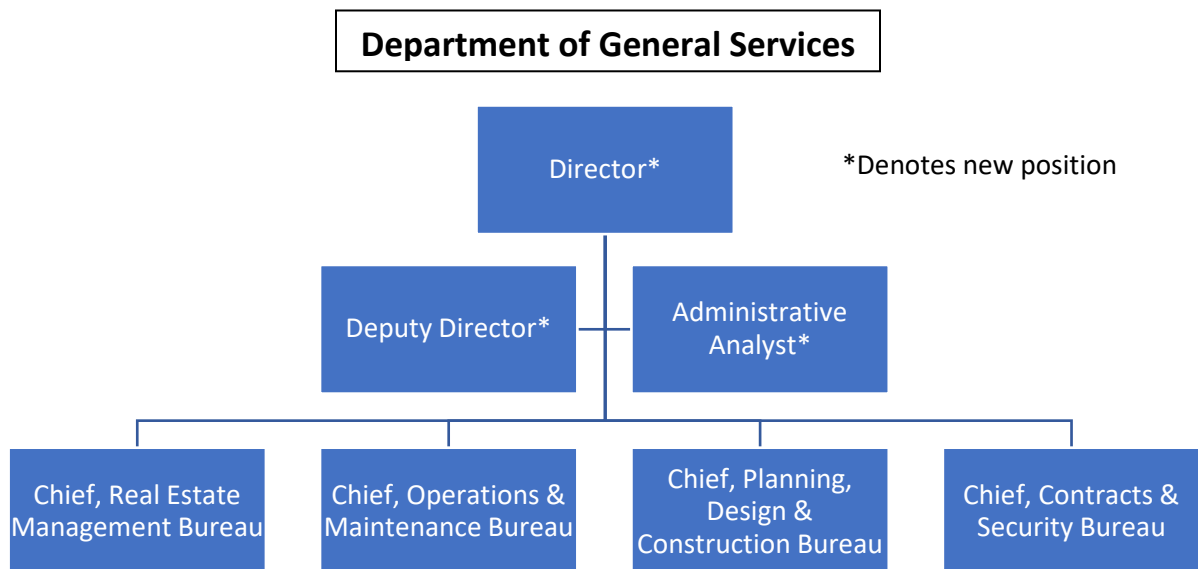
www.howardcountymd.gov
FAX 410-313-3051

The Design & Construction Division would become the Planning, Design & Construction Bureau with present staff and functions. The General Services Division will become the Contracts & Security Bureau.

There is one exception. Identification badging services and building security equipment are functions of BoF. These functions will be transferred to the Department of Technology and Communications Services (DTCS) as part of this reorganization. This will include the transfer of one (1) position to DTCS's management structure.

RESD is organized as one functional division under the leadership of one Division Chief. RESD has nine (9) positions, all of whom would become part of the DGS management structure. RESD's present staff and functions would become the new Real Estate Management Bureau within DGS.

The proposed organizational structure of DGS is:



Each DGS Division Chief will manage a team of structure and scope similar to its present-day predecessor.

Fiscal Information

The proposal is expected to create three (3) net new positions: Director and Deputy Director of General Services as well as an Administrative Analyst to support budget, human resource and clerical functions. The estimated fiscal impact of this change is approximately \$600,000 in salary and benefit costs. All new positions will be paid from the General Fund.



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

3430 Courthouse Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2013 Voice/Relay

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive
cball@howardcountymd.gov

www.howardcountymd.gov
FAX 410-313-3051

There are no immediate costs anticipated relating to relocation of staff. DGS will evaluate its space needs as an element of the Facilities Master Plan project and develop a recommendation for relocation, if needed. However, in the near term, some cost may be required to create offices for the Director and Deputy Director within available existing space. This fiscal information may be subject to change as we work through this plan.

Conclusion

Thank you, in advance, for your thoughtful consideration of this enhancement to our County's organizational structure. We look forward to working with you to advance this proposal in order to better meet the needs and objectives of residents, agencies and yourselves. I firmly believe the creation of a Department of General Services will help us ensure Howard County is the best place to live, work, play, grow, and thrive for all today and for years to come.

Sincerely,

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive

cc: Councilmember Deb Jung
Councilmember Opel Jones
Councilmember Christiana Rigby
Councilmember David Yungmann
Michelle Harrod, Council Administrator