

## IDEA TEAM REPORTS

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### **Budget and Finance Idea Team, Marice Tose, *chair***

The City of Annapolis must manage its fiscal affairs so spending does not exceed revenue and the City's AA Bond rating is preserved or improved. These goals, at least in the short term, must be achieved by reducing expenses rather than through tax increases. Short-term revenue enhancements should come from infill development, redevelopment, annexations and other revenue opportunities, including increases in the state government's Capital Cities Services Reimbursements.

The Budget and Finance Idea Team recommends the following short-term initiatives to reduce City spending:

- Reduce personnel-related expenses by eliminating overtime other than in life-threatening situations; reducing the number of regular and contract City employees; and reducing fringe benefits.
- Improve information access to provide management with timely, accurate and actionable data.
- Consider making the Finance Director a Chief Financial Officer with responsibility for data compilation and reporting.
- Take immediate steps to reduce Transportation Department deficits.
- Restrict employee take-home vehicles; maintain the current Homestead tax credit; do not adopt a tax cap.

Longer-term, the Idea Team recommends that the City:

- Consolidate smaller departments to reduce cost of supervisory personnel.
- Consider combining management of Police and Fire under a Public Safety Commission.
- Consolidate vehicle and machinery maintenance and repair.
- Explore outsourcing, including information technology, transportation, and recreation center functions.
- Match one-time increases in revenue (e.g., from grants) with ongoing increases in spending.
- Maximize public/private collaboration and partnerships.
- Determine a best practice/target for the percentage of assessable tax base owned by tax-exempt entities.

**City Dock/Market House Idea Team.** Judd Legum, *chair*

The City of Annapolis should redevelop and integrate the publicly owned spaces in the historic downtown center to promote it as a vibrant civic gathering place that attracts and serves residents, visitors, and workers.

The Market House should be a high-quality public amenity that offers food products and services to residents, downtown workers, and visitors of all ages. The City Dock area should be redeveloped into a beautiful waterside park with connected public pathways to the Naval Academy seawall promenade, the Market House, and the proposed National Sailing Hall of Fame. A new public parking facility on Compromise Street should be connected to the City Dock area with a distinctive pedestrian bridge across Ego Alley.

The City Dock/Market House Idea Team recommends:

- Market House should be considered a unique public amenity not a City revenue center.
  - Explore off-site storage facility to support Market House tenants
- Coordinate redevelopment of the City Dock area
  - City Dock area should be pedestrian-oriented with waterfront parks and streetscapes rather than parking
  - County/Board of Education cooperation is needed to achieve City's vision for City Dock area
- Establish private/public commission to manage Market House and adjacent area and to make recommendations regarding redevelopment of City Dock.
- Establish a Market House Enterprise Fund to operate and maintain the Market House.

Short-terms Recommendations for the Market House:

- Affirm traditional role of Market House as defined in City Code (7.28.020)
- Keep Market House open prior to redevelopment with high-quality tenants
- Negotiate rents to encourage appropriate tenants
- Provide City assistance to publicize Market House operations and businesses
- Keep existing vendors informed of City plans for Market House redevelopment
- Proposed new Commission should have actionable plan by end of 2010 boat shows

Short-term Recommendations for City Dock:

- City should begin redevelopment planning immediately as required by existing City resolution
- Begin negotiations with County and School Board to secure planning and development rights to school parking lot
- Perform feasibility study on parking capacity and program for Green Street site
- Explore acquiring Fawcett property for inclusion in new City Dock vision plan
- Begin redesign process for City Dock after determining number of parking spaces to be removed from redevelopment area
- Solicit public input for developing City Dock Master Plan
- Explore funding sources for City Dock redevelopment

**Economic Development Idea Team.** Chuck Walsh, *chair*

The City of Annapolis needs an effective economic development entity with the ability to retain and attract business investment to expand tax revenues, increase employment opportunities, and improve the quality of life in all areas of the city. Economic development must be viewed as a “profit and loss” center rather than a budgetary “expense center.” The premise behind economic development should be that every dollar invested will yield a return on that investment to benefit the citizens of Annapolis.

Building on the findings and recommendations of the 2009 Blue Ribbon Commission and the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, the Idea Team sought an economic model that would achieve a real commitment to reversing current economic trends in the city and to expand the assessable tax base on properties in the city. The Team identified successful economic development models in cities similar to Annapolis, including Frederick, Cumberland, and Easton, and the City of Alexandria in Virginia. Alexandria provided especially helpful and relevant information on how a city like Annapolis can encourage business and job development and an increasing property tax base.

Based on its extensive research and the expertise of Team members, the Economic Development Idea Team recommends that the City of Annapolis establish a **public-private partnership structured as a 501(c)(6) Economic Development Corporation**. The EDC would be governed by a board consisting of private and public members with expertise in economic development. It would hire a staff of four economic development professionals and would be funded initially by the City at the same level currently provided in the budget for economic development activities.

Additional recommendations of the Team include:

- Promotion and Special Events should be removed from Economic Development and placed in the Office of the Mayor or some other City department or private entity.
- The Office of Minority Business Enterprise should be placed in the Office of the Mayor for greater accountability and enhanced visibility and stature.

Other short- and long-term recommendations of the Team include:

- Make the City more business friendly
- Simplify the City Code to facilitate business development
- Eliminate nonfunctioning boards and commission, transform the Economic advisory Commission, and carefully evaluate the need for costly new business studies
- Modify the City’s off-site parking waiver requirements
- Address the City’s fire protection needs
- Eliminate ground-floor retail requirements for the MX zone
- Support “grandfathering” rights when Code changes impact projects being developed
- Make better use of the expertise of the Conference and Visitors Bureau
- Combine the staffing and funding of the Downtown Annapolis Partnership and the Arts District

**Environmental Idea Team.** Chris Trumbauer, *chair*

The City of Annapolis must implement policies, procedures, and actions to protect and improve the environmental health of the City, its waterways, and the Chesapeake Bay. The City must work closely with other governmental and non-governmental agencies and volunteer organizations and educate and inspire the citizens, community institutions, and the business community about the importance of environmental stewardship.

The City of Annapolis can build on the good progress made during the last eight years in improving environmental stewardship and sustainability. The Environmental Idea Team identified the follow goals to achieve this end:

- Mitigate the effects of stormwater by implementing fully the stormwater pollution mitigation commitments and policies already adopted by the City.
- Enhance natural areas in the City.
- Increase open space within the City and increase access to these areas.
- Expand recycling with a comprehensive program that includes commercial recycling and better recycling opportunities for visitors.
- Establish a marine “no discharge zone.”
- Promote energy efficiency and climate adaptation by reducing the City government’s carbon footprint, taking steps to reduce the carbon footprint of the community at large, and preparing for potential climate impacts associated with sea level rise and storm surge.
- Use living resources restoration opportunities to maximize improvement of water quality.
- Raise watershed awareness so that environmental stewardship becomes a consideration in the everyday life of Annapolis citizens, businesses, and government.
- Strengthen volunteer coordination and involvement by instilling a consistent focus on strong and effective interface between volunteer groups and City government.
- Create clear accountability for environmental initiatives and goals within each department of City government.

The Environmental Idea Team recommends that the Administration clarify the roles and responsibilities for meeting the City’s environmental commitments and require all responsible departments to report regularly on progress meeting established goals. Since environmental program responsibilities are dispersed across multiple departments, the Team recommends that the Department of Neighborhoods and Environment be given the responsibility and authority for leading the City’s environmental initiatives.

### **Government Structure and Permitting Idea Team.** Michael Fox, *chair*

The City of Annapolis needs to restructure government to ensure fiscal responsibility while at the same time improving the efficiency and timeliness of service. The Team focused on duplication of efforts by City departments, communication between departments and divisions, and efficiency of the departments and responsiveness to the City’s citizens and customers. The Team proposes reducing the current 18 City departments to 14, with 5 reporting to the Mayor and 9 reporting to the Chief Administrative Officer.

- Reporting to the Mayor:
  - Chief Administrative Officer
  - Office of Law and City Clerk
  - Public Information
  - Economic Affairs
  - A newly defined Community Services Office
  
- Reporting to the Chief Administrative Officer:
  - Fire
  - Police
  - Finance
  - Management Information Technology
  - Human Resources
  - Parks and Recreation
  - Transportation
  - Planning and Development
  - Public Works

The Team recommends eliminating the Department of Neighborhood and Environmental Programs and the Department of Central Services, with services provided by these departments consolidated and redistributed to other departments.

The Team recommends a newly defined Planning and Development Department to streamline the permitting process and to make the system more user-friendly.

The Team suggests considering establishing the Economic Affairs Department as a public/private 501(c)(6) corporation charged with promoting economic growth.

Other recommendations of the Team include:

- Transfer the Office of Emergency Management to the Fire Department and reduce its scope to a liaison operation.
- Transfer the Harbormaster and Dock Master to the Police Department.
- Transfer the Capital Improvement Program functions to the Finance Department and create a new Real Estate Office within the Finance Department.
- Create a stand-alone Information Technology Department.
- Create an enhanced Transportation Department with oversight of parking garages and parking meters, parking enforcement, and an enhanced Transportation Planning Division.
- Consolidate all functions relating to the permitting process under the director of the Planning and Development Department with a new Permitting Division and Permit Facilitator to monitor and review the permitting process in a timely manner.
- Move the Environmental Division of DNEP to the Planning and Development Department.

The Team believes that implementation of its recommended structure of government will result in immediate cost savings to the City. It also notes that opportunities to generate additional

revenue and to trim costs may require public/private ventures or the selling and privatizing of some City assets, such as parking garages.

**Housing and Community Services Idea Team.** Sharon Brown, *chair*

The City of Annapolis must ensure safe, decent, and affordable housing that creates opportunities for resident self-sufficiency and economic independence. The City should develop new programs, partnerships, and an effective and objective evaluation systems to ensure that all available resources are identified and used effectively to enhance opportunities for all City residents in need.

To achieve these goals, the Team recommends:

- Better coordination and communication between the City and the Housing Authority of Annapolis (HACA) and with the residents of Housing Authority-owned and managed communities.
- City input into and monitoring of HACA policies and actions, including potential revision of existing 1965 agreement between the City and HACA.
- Improved communication with residents about available community programs and services.
- Improved City transportation services.
- Enhanced City police presence in subsidized communities.
- Tap into new and additional sources of funding and support for community programs and services.
- Give more attention to the needs of the four subsidized community: Admiral Oaks, Bywater Mutual Homes, Bayridge Gardens, and Woodside Gardens.
- Create a Youth Services Board consisting of young people from all City communities.
- Establish an ADA Coordinator.
- City commitment to the goal of creating a better community for all residents

**Public Safety Idea Team.** David Cordle, *chair*

While public safety issues involve many City departments, the Team focused on Fire, Police, Harbormaster, and the Office of Emergency Management. Each of these departments and offices is professionally managed and does a good job serving the needs of the community, but the Team did identify areas within each where cost savings and efficiencies could be achieved through transfers of responsibility, changes in operational responsibilities, and reassignment of duties.

The Team adopted three major recommendations:

- Transfer administrative and reporting responsibility for the Harbormasters Office from the Office of the Mayor to the Department of Recreation and Parks.

- Assign administrative and reporting responsibility for the Office of Emergency Management to the Fire Department.
- Conduct a feasibility study to evaluate the costs and benefits of merging the Fire Department with Anne Arundel County Fire Department.

The Team made several specific departmental recommendations, including:

*Annapolis Fire Department:*

- Review take-home vehicle and cell phone policies.
- Review current apparatus fleet and eliminate vehicles where possible.
- Review bomb dog program for cost effectiveness and extent of coverage.
- Provide annual employee sexual harassment and discrimination training.
- Consider citizen (volunteer) administrative office support.
- Institute hot/warm/cold emergency response policy.
- Reinstate safety inspections of commercial structures by department personnel.
- Improve procurement/purchasing procedures.
- Clean up and organize repair shop.
- Replace used 1986 ladder truck within one year.
- Evaluate overtime and take steps necessary to control costs.
- Establish and publish annual departmental goals.
- Recruit volunteer liaison to the Latino community.
- Proceed with construction of the new Eastport Fire Station.
- Initiate capital improvement program to bring all fire stations into compliance with ADA standards.

*Police Department:*

- Develop and implement cost recovery measures for City special events and other public gatherings outside the normal realm of law enforcement responsibilities.
- Improve management accountability for Department employees.
- Monitor and manage effectively overtime pay with special attention to court-required appearances by officers.
- Create position of Crime Laboratory Supervisor.
- Modify vehicle replacement program to extend in-service life of all patrol and unmarked vehicles.
- Improve outreach to minority communities.
- Require a 2 percent rather than 5 percent cut in the department's budget as part of the Mayor's across-the-board budget reduction initiative.

*Harbormasters Office:*

- Increase mooring licenses fees, ensure residency status of license holders, and limit licenses to five years if a waiting list exists.
- Investigate cost and effectiveness of "first responder" communications equipment for Harbor Patrol.

*Office of Emergency Management:*

- Authorize and define the responsibilities of the Office in the City Code.

- Audit all current public safety grants and programs, coordinate all grant applications with the Finance Department, and prepare fiscal impact reports before grant applications are submitted.

**Transportation and Parking Idea Team.** Barbara Rasin Price, *chair*

The City of Annapolis must address effectively and comprehensively the essential functions of municipal mobility: Transportation Planning; Transit Operations; Traffic Operations; and Parking Management. Currently, these essential functions are fragmented across multiple city departments and there is no central authority for ensuring that transportation is coordinated, effective, and providing the services needed by Annapolis citizens and visitors to the Capital City.

The Transportation and Parking Idea Team acknowledges that many of its recommendations have been made by various committees and task forces before, but it notes that most have not been acted upon. The Team challenges the Mayor and Council to act now to adopt an action agenda that will result in the creation of a comprehensive urban mobility system for Annapolis.

The Team highlighted four recommendations as highest priority for immediate action:

- Create a new Annapolis Department of Transportation incorporating functions of Transportation Planning, Traffic Operations, Transit Operations, and Parking Management and Enforcement. The director of the new ADOT must have appropriate professional qualifications and experience and be given the resources and authority needed to manage effectively all mobility issues facing the City.
- Most City employees with monthly parking passes in Hillman Garage should be moved to underutilized parking garages.
- The Community Transportation Association of America should be asked to provide an evaluation of Annapolis transit operations to provide guidance on changes that would save money while improving service.
- The City should lobby State and Federal officials to reestablish Annapolis as its own Metropolitan Planning Organization to increase funding opportunities.

Other Team recommendations include:

- Create a Citizen Advisory Council to address complaints from citizens about mobility and parking issues and to issue an annual report on actions taken.
- Broaden efforts to secure grants for transportation infrastructure.
- Establish an effective Board of Directors to provide oversight and guidance to the Annapolis Department of Transportation.
- Charge the new ADOT with investigating locations, costs, and benefits of a new centrally located bus facility with passenger amenities.
- Evaluate and implement if feasible a real-time bus arrival and patron information system.
- Explore whether State employee monthly passes in Gotts Court Garage can be freed up for short-term customers.

- Provide frequent and secure shuttle transportation between parking locations and the downtown area, especially during peak times for City employees.
- Explore feasibility of instituting flexible and adjustable parking rates at Park Place Garage.
- Explore including valet parking in the design of the new Hillman Garage.
- Issue RFP for a contractor to install a Parking Access and Revenue Control System for Hillman, Gotts Court, and Knighton Garages.
- Issue RFP for implementation of a real-time parking system for City garages and installation of parking availability signage.
- Restore low-cost evening parking rates at all City garages.
- Review recommendations of the Annapolis Parking Advisory Commission and implement all suggestions that will improve parking management and increase City revenue.