
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: MAYOR MONICA ZOLTANSKI

SUBJECT: STAFFING FOR ADMINISTRATION

DATE: MARCH 4, 2022

I am formally requesting an additional FTE to create a Government Affairs Director position for Sandy City. The duties of the Government Affairs Director impact every level of city services. It is a crucial position because the legislative process is no longer limited to 45 days. When the legislature enabled itself into special sessions, it resulted in more special sessions each year. The creation of additional task forces and study groups all need to be engaged early to ensure local control. More and more of the work done during the state legislative session starts during the interim and Sandy City needs to have a voice in those discussions. We have also seen that our ability to obtain county, state, and federal funding for various projects relies on our lobbying efforts.

It is the priority of the Mayor and City Council to keep property taxes low for our residents. The only way to continue that path is to focus heavily on economic development and additional funding from the state and federal government. A Government Affairs Director is needed to ensure we have strong relationships and communications with our elected officials to relay the needs of the city for infrastructure, water, and economic development. The major economic projects we are anticipating in the next few years will not be successfully executed unless we can provide the necessary infrastructure. Additionally, we are seeing more and more opportunities for federal funding and the possible return of earmarks. It takes time and effort to coordinate all departments to provide the necessary information to our federal delegation so they can advocate on our behalf.

A full-time government affairs position is becoming more common among the larger cities in Utah. Currently, Salt Lake City, West Valley City, West Jordan City, South Jordan City, St. George, and others have such a position.

Adding this position will necessitate the realignment of duties of the Deputy Mayor to better support community outreach and increase civic engagement in an equitable and customer service-oriented way. This means better addressing mayoral and council priorities such as improving connectedness, emphasizing economic development, facilitating the Ambassador and Youth Council programs, delivering an ambitious town hall schedule, and addressing necessary infrastructure needs of the city among others.

Currently, we are at maximum capacity; my staff are working at over 60-hour weeks; it is unsustainable. Without additional staff we are unable to accomplish the many and varied projects and priorities set over the next four years.

Why now? We cannot wait until July. The Mayor's Office staff has shrunk dramatically: Mayor Dolan had 9, Mayor Bradburn went to 7 and then reassigned two staff members to other divisions (to address the city's growing IT security and communications needs). Due to the coronavirus pandemic, much of the communication and services from the city needed to move to an online platform to keep residents safe. **Now that we are moving to a post-pandemic level of service and the return to in-person services and outreach, we find the Mayor's Office staff resources lacking to keep up with the needs of the city.** It was fine during covid but is no longer sufficient. For example, the Neighborhood Ambassador project has yet to be launched because of a lack of capacity.

Our staff is taxed and unable to sustain the current pace, we need more capacity to move forward and accomplish town halls, economic development, etc. The need to work with stakeholders, businesses, residents, and elected officials requires deeper resources. It is even more critical now to bring community and stakeholders in sooner to get them on board and get their feedback for upcoming projects. The level of engagement that we are looking for takes more staffing, boots on the ground, and face to face discussions. This kind of outreach will yield the highest level of commitment and highest level of success.

We want to expand our efforts in economic development and address housing affordability. We need a dedicated staff member to work with developers, the state and neighboring cities to create opportunities that will work in the appropriate areas and that will appeal to our residents.