

# Executive Direction and Control - Comptroller

**Priority Outcome:** Responsible Stewardship of City Resources

**Service Number:** 130

**Fiscal 2022 Recommended Budget:** \$1,881,101

## Service Description

The Office of the Comptroller provides oversight of the Department of Audits, the Department of Real Estate, the Department of Telecommunications, and the Municipal Post Office. This service provides administrative, fiscal, communications and personnel functions for itself and the departments under its supervision and is also responsible for the administrative functions and operations critical to the Board of Estimates, including weekly preparation of the BOE agenda, contractor bid openings and relevant record keeping.

## Major Budget Items

- The budget transfers a vacant Deputy City Auditor position from Service 131: Audits. The position will be reclassified in Fiscal 2022.
- Discounting the \$3.3 million increase to balance the Internal Service Fund with the General Fund appropriation for postage, the Fiscal 2022 budget recommends only a 2.2% increase over FY 21 across the agency's total expenditures, compared to a 5.3% in overall City spending, not including the \$640 million in American Rescue Plan funding.

# Audits

**Priority Outcome:** Responsible Stewardship of City Resources

**Service Number:** 131

**Fiscal 2022 Recommended Budget:** \$4,977,617

## Service Description

The DOA is the city's independent auditor dedicated to improving government accountability. Primary responsibilities include: conducting biennial performance and financial audits, including the CAFR and Single Audit; providing attestation engagements and advisory services as requested by various management; investigating allegations of fraud, waste, and abuses of city resources; reviewing various contracts, change orders, or proposals submitted by agencies to the Board of Estimates; and other special projects, as necessary.

## Major Budget Items

- The budget utilizes \$500,000 which had already been budgeted to support the biennial financial and performance audits to create 2 Auditor Manager positions and reserves the balance to contract with a technology auditing firm.
- The budget also transfers a vacant Deputy City Auditor position to Service 130: Executive Direction and Control. The position will be reclassified in Fiscal 2022.

# CY 2021 Biennial Performance Audit Plan

Agency	Area
Baltimore City Fire Department (BCFD)	Fire Watch
Department of General Services (DGS)	Building utilization rate/asset management
Department of Public Works (DPW)	Water Billing
Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD)	Vacant Properties Reporting
Department of Finance (DOF)	Paying vendors' bills within 30 days
Baltimore City Information Technology (BCIT)	Information Security
Mayor's Office of Homeless Services (MOHS)	Homeless

# Real Estate Acquisition and Management

**Priority Outcome:** Responsible Stewardship of City Resources

**Service Number:** 132

**Fiscal 2022 Recommended Budget:** \$1,007,758

## Service Description

The Department of Real Estate (DoRE) manages the City's real estate assets. DoRE is responsible for a variety of functions related to real property owned by the city, including: disposition of real property owned by the city; leasing city-owned property to agencies and other parties; acquisition of real estate for the city; reviewing of all city leases; reviewing real estate-related transactions and development proposals for city-owned real property.

The Department maintains the repository of unsold tax certificates after the annual tax sale along with a public inventory of all city-owned property and associated leases.

## Major Budget Items

- The budget reflects a request by the previous Administration, without our knowledge, to abolish one Real Estate Agent I position to upgrade the classification of Real Estate Appraiser from Grade 929 to 931.

# Department of Telecommunications

**Priority Outcome:** Responsible Stewardship of City Resources

**Service Number:** 133

**Fiscal 2022 Recommended Budget:** \$10,216,235

## **Service Description**

The Department of Telecommunications (formerly the Municipal Telephone Exchange) provides telephone services to all city agencies. Services include: managing Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP phone service) and legacy systems; supplying cell phones; providing technical support for various city call centers; and providing for the billing of these services with external vendors. Telecommunications installs and maintains all telecommunications equipment in the various Baltimore City call centers such as 311, Department of Public Works (DPW), Revenue Collection, and City Hall operators, as well as managing the City's main switchboard.

This service is funded by user charges through an Internal Service Fund.

## **Major Budget Items**

- The Fiscal 2022 recommended budget includes \$618,000 in debt service for financing the transition to a citywide VoIP telephone system.
- The transition to VoIP has resulted in \$1 million in savings in Fiscal 2022. Of these savings, \$400,000 will remain in the budget dedicated to hardware and software maintenance and \$600,000 will be reflected as a decrease in the user fee that agencies pay.

# Municipal Post Office

**Priority Outcome:** Responsible Stewardship of City Resources

**Service Number:** 136

**Fiscal 2022 Recommended Budget:** \$4,262,998

## Service Description

The Municipal Post Office (MPO) is responsible for handling the city's mail, both by operating interagency mail service and serving as an intermediary with the USPS for all mail coming to and from city agencies. The MPO provides city agencies with external mailing services, such as parking tickets, tax bills, and water bills.

This service is funded by user charges through an Internal Service Fund.

## Major Budget Items

- The Fiscal 2022 budget aligns the Municipal Post Office with best practices in budget and accounting by reflecting the cost of postage. The \$3.3 million increase serves to balance the Internal Service Fund with the General Fund appropriation for postage.
- The Fiscal 2022 recommended budget for the Municipal Post Office (MPO) maintains the current level of service and includes funding for systems that were implemented to automate presorting, bar coding, and to interface with the United States Postal Service (USPS) databases for address accuracy and validation.
- The recommended budget maintains the current level of service.

# American Rescue Plan

The Comptroller's Office is applying for American Rescue Plan funding to support unfunded initiatives.

## **Proposal 1:** Modernization initiative

**Cost:** Estimated \$1,500,000

The modernization initiative would concentrate on improving the workflow processes of two departments, Board of Estimates (Service 130) and the Department of Real Estate (Service 132).

There are three project priorities:

Digitizing two workflows - the Board of Estimates agenda and Real Estate management - completely online from inception to completion.

Establish a records digitization program for all Office documents.

## **Proposal 2:** Capital Investment

**Cost:** Estimated \$1,250,000

The Capital Investment proposal would pay for the backlog of City Real Estate needs. The needs range from dead trees on vacant lots, regular mowing, or ensuring the structural integrity of an area.

The intended outcome is two-fold: clean up issues on City owned property to activate green space, make properties more attractive for eventual disposition.