

STAFFORD *Virginia*



2010 VACo Achievement Awards

Stafford County
Reorganization

Recognizing the Best in County Government Programs!

2010 Achievement Awards

Virginia Association of Counties



ATTN: 2010 Achievement Awards Program
Virginia Association of Counties
1207 East Main Street, Suite 300
Richmond, Va. 23219-1627
address service requested

2010 VACo Achievement Awards

Deadline: June 1, 2010

Application Form

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. Deadline: June 1, 2010.

Program Information

Locality Stafford County

Program Title Stafford County Government Re-organization

Program Category Organizational Development

Population Category 5 - 100,000+

Contact Information

Name Cathy Riddle

Title Public Information Administrator

Department Department of County Administrator

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Signature of county administrator or chief administrative officer

Name Anthony Romanello

Title County Administrator

Signature* 

*Entries without this signature will not be accepted.

Call for Entries

Locality: Stafford County, Virginia
Population: (5) 100,001 +
Department: Stafford County Administration
Program Title: Stafford County Reorganization
Category: Customer Service

Summary

Faced with a dwindling budget and decreasing revenues, Stafford County evaluated its organizational structure in an effort to develop a less costly and more efficient ways to do business. But the internal review was more than just a response to the difficult economy. Stafford wanted to prepare itself for what the community would be like once the economic crisis was over. It wanted to be ready to capitalize on the potential growth and recovery coming to the region. To that end, it eliminated positions, streamlined departments and consolidated processes. Stafford County was leaner, but smarter, and ready to move past the economic downturn.

Stafford County Government Re-organization

Introduction

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Problem

In 2009, after two years of reducing costs, streamlining operations, and multiplying resources by building partnerships throughout the organization and the community, Stafford County continued to face increased demands for service. But because of declining budgets, the County had to postpone sorely needed capital replacements, delay maintenance on facilities, equipment and vehicles, and could hire sufficient staff to handle the increase in demands for services. Finding a way to balance these needs with declining revenues and the poor economy was some of the most challenging work of the County's budget team.

Despite these challenges, Stafford continued to draw quality companies with high paying jobs that could support families. In fact, the County's track record of attracting federal jobs and companies with government contracts as well as businesses from all over the country were

reasons that Forbes.com called Stafford one of the best places in the United States to get ahead in 2008.

Staff strongly believed that this strong economic foundation, combined with Stafford's blossoming tourism industry, top-notch government services, schools, and excellent location midway between Washington D.C. and Richmond, would make Stafford an epicenter of business growth and development.

Solution

To reach that goal sooner rather than later, staff had to change the way they did business. So, the county administrator and his two deputy county administrators initiated a restructuring of the organization in February 2009 to make the County more efficient, make even better use of our resources, and prepare the organization for recovery and growth. Before the restructuring was announced to all employees, the county administrator discussed it with the Board of Supervisors and the County's Leadership Team and he had their full support.

The reorganization began with the elimination of a third deputy county administrator position. The individual who had been acting in that role (and who was previously the director of the Human Resources Department) returned to Human Resources and was put in charge of the reorganization. She also continued to serve in an executive role.

The other two deputy county administrators remained in County Administration. One was made responsible for the Planning and Zoning Department, the Utilities Department, and a newly created Public Works Department. Public Works encompassed the former Code Administration, the Office of Transportation, the County's construction staff, and stormwater employees. The director of Code Administration became the director of the Public Works Department.

The other deputy county administrator, who is also the Director of Economic Development, was placed in charge of Economic Development, Legislative Affairs and Redevelopment, the Base Realignment and Closure Commission work, the Regional Landfill, and the newly created Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities Department. This last department combined parks and recreation with the property management functions of the former Public Services Department.

The county administrator took on Human Resources, Finance and Budget, Information Technology, Public Information, the Comprehensive Services Act Office and the Department of Fire and Rescue.

Three transition teams worked out the details of the reorganization. They met from February – May 2009 and implemented the reorganization in May.

Success

Several improvements have taken place after just a year under the new organization including more localized management of transportation and other public works projects and faster project completion due to the transfer of all construction employees under the Public Works Department, which allows them to work as a single team and collaborate on projects. One area that saw marked improvement was in the collection of securities. The Department of Public Works formed a Security Workgroup to assist in resolving defaulted securities. Developers are required to submit monetary securities to complete public improvements in subdivisions such as roads, stormwater retention ponds and other erosion and sediment control projects. Over the past year, the group has resolved 83 projects, some dating back to the 1990s. The eight-member team has worked with developers in 10 subdivisions to ensure that they complete the projects, while

the County has completed two projects: Brooke Ridge and Deacon Road Estates. The County is currently holding 483 securities valued at \$101,000,000.

The restructuring has also resulted in a renewed emphasis on organizational development. The individual who was serving in the acting deputy county administrator role and returned to Human Resources is now the County's executive director of organizational development. In addition to her responsibilities managing Human Resources, she is also focusing on workforce programs, and training and development. One program that she has been concentrating on for the last year has been Stafford B.E.S.T. University, which is being designed as a year-round training/professional development program that will help all employees improve knowledge, skills and abilities and encourage on-going training and development while keeping department training costs down. Various courses have been offered to employees throughout the years, but B.E.S.T. University will be a formalized program that addresses a wide range of employees' training needs.