



# Work and Performance Plan FY2021 (FIN)

---

Sarah Cunningham, Finance



## SECTION 1: DEPARTMENT KEY INITIATIVES

### Key Initiative #1 -- Improve the Financial Department's operating efficiency

**Link to Strategic Business Plan:**

Yes

**Description:**

In Fiscal Year 2021, Financial Services will focus on strengthening the people and processes within the department. These efforts include aligning department roles and responsibilities to be more responsive to customer and enterprise needs; improving recruiting efforts for financial positions; developing leadership, technical, and data analytical training for all levels of the department; developing a continuous improvement plan for financial policies, processes, and procedures; and strengthening data analytics reporting and data governance.

**Rationale:**

Building internal capacity; improving financial process, policies and procedures; and improving data reporting and analytics are key to meeting the evolving needs of the County.

**Completion Date:**

June 30, 2021

**Updates/Project Milestones:**

On July 1, 2020, work will begin on the following:

Strengthen and standardize policies, procedures, and training:

- o Develop a process for regular review and update of financial and procurement policies and procedures with clear lines of authority and accountability that engages departments
- o Develop communication and training for changes, and track performance/compliance with policies
- o Work with departments to Develop and implement Service Level Agreements for Departmental Financial Services Budget and invoice processing; and Central Finance Capital Improvement Plan and Grants Management

Improve Data Reporting:

- o Partner with IT to develop at least two new Data Dashboard in FY21; roll out dashboards to ET and Department Directors as appropriate
- o Implement monthly ET and enhanced BOCC reporting of financial and economic trend information
- o Develop and implement Data Governance model for key financial and procurement data

Align Finance Resources and Strengthen key functional areas:

- o Strengthen Capital Improvement, with hiring, training, and improved processes and procedures
- o Strengthen Grants Management, with implementation of a Grants Ordinance for FY2022
- o Strengthen Payroll and benefits, with documented processes, training, and internal controls

**Outcomes/Measures:**

The Department is focused on strengthening key areas in a phased approach to maintain strong financial and support services for County missions, while building capacity to support County needs in a rapidly changing environment. We will continue work begun in FY2019 to strengthen core areas in Central Finance—including capital and debt management; grants management; accounting/payroll functions; data analytics; and process improvements.

- Develop a process and calendar for regular review of financial and procurement policies and procedures
- Roll out training and track compliance with policy updates



- Roll out at least two new dashboards
- Develop and train appropriate staff on data governance model
- Offer at least three new data analytics training opportunities to staff
- Reduce the backlog of financial reporting, reconciliations, and other key controls

**Director Comments: (Year-end)**

**Executive Team Comments: (Year-end)**



## Key Initiative #2 -- Improve communication & access to financial info. to enhance collaboration & customer experience

**Link to Strategic Business Plan:**

Yes

**Description:**

In Fiscal Year 2021, Financial Services will continue to improve its internal and external communication through the development of a Finance Department Communications Plan. In addition, the department will initiate preliminary work for revising and updating the Finance internal website (MeckWeb) and external website (MeckNC.gov) to improve the accessibility and knowledge of finance and procurement policies, procedures, forms and other documents.

**Rationale:**

Providing clear, concise, consistent, and timely communication of financial information and analysis to our customers is critical for enabling them to make smart decisions. Having up-to-date and easily accessible information on the County's internal and external websites enhances our ability to meet the ongoing needs of our customers.

**Completion Date:**

June 30, 2021

**Updates/Project Milestones:**

On July 1, 2020, work will begin on the following:

- Communications Plan: Develop and roll out an effective Finance department communications plan for critical communications within and outside of the Department (to be completed in FY2021), incorporating staff and department input.
- Improve Access to Accurate Information: Partner with Public Information and Information and Technology Services departments to revise and update the Finance internal and external websites (revisions and updates to be completed in FY22).

**Outcomes/Measures:**

The Department will continue work begun in FY19 to develop and implement a framework for communications, focusing first on building a foundation through the strengthening of internal communications and improving the accessibility of information.

- Begin the development of a Finance Communications plan
- Develop templates to provide clear and consistent messaging
- Roll out updates to MeckWeb and external websites to improve access to accurate information
- Develop training on communications

**Director Comments: (Year-end)****Executive Team Comments: (Year-end)**



## Key Initiative #3 -- Increase the Value of Procurement Services

**Link to Strategic Business Plan:**

Yes

**Description:**

In Fiscal Year 2021, Financial Services will begin implementation of procurement reforms in support of the delivery of high quality, valuable procurement services to our business partners and customers, as informed by independent evaluations and stakeholder feedback. The Department will also improve procurement policies and increase access for Minority Women and Small Business Enterprise (MWSBE) organizations.

**Rationale:**

Increase the value of the procurement function through good procurement practice and optimal use of procurement collaboration opportunities.

**Completion Date:**

June 30, 2021

**Updates/Project Milestones:**

On July 1, 2020, work will begin on the following:

- IT procurement improvements: In partnership with ITS and EPMO, implement improvements to the IT Solution Procurement process.
- Procurement redesign: Leveraging information from independent evaluations, redesign the procurement function engaging staff and stakeholders to propose a new structure for the FY2022 Budget that addresses core areas.
- Grow Government Procurement Expertise: Implement greater training with a goal to increase government procurement certifications among procurement staff to promote efficiencies and best practices.
- Increase Stakeholder engagement: Partner with other County departments to identify improvements in service delivery.
- Improve Access to Minority Women and Small Business Enterprise (MWSBE) and other minority non-profit organizations: Work with EDO and Departments to improve data on MWSBE and other non-profit organizations and implement improvements to increase access to contracting opportunities to these groups.

**Outcomes/Measures:**

The Department will evaluate the procurement function in the County to identify best practices and opportunities for improvement. We will also partner with other County departments to ensure we capture stakeholder input in shaping expectations for service delivery.

- Develop IT master agreement template, and roll out IT solution procurement improvements identified, working with key County Partners
- Develop proposed restructuring of procurement workflow that promotes greater centralization and controls, communication, and mission support as part of the procurement process, to propose in the FY2022 Budget.
- Develop a training plan for procurement staff to acquire and maintain government procurement certifications.
- Work with key partners and roll out a pilot for a procurement strategic plan for fiscal year 2022, and develop service level agreement standard turnaround times for key procurement functions with clear roles and responsibilities.
- Procure and implement an MWSBE reporting solution that incorporates subcontractor data; implement recommendations from the Griffin & Strong Study.

**Director Comments: (Year-end)****Executive Team Comments: (Year-end)**



## Key Initiative #4 -- Improve employee satisfaction and engagement

**Link to Strategic Business Plan:**

No

**Description:**

The Department will implement strategies to improve employee satisfaction and engagement by focusing on organizational learning and change management efforts.

**Rationale:**

The Financial Services Department staff play a critical role in the day to day operations and major initiatives for the County, which is experiencing dynamic growth and change. Employees are our most valuable resource in meeting these goals, and increased employee satisfaction and engagement will translate into strong customer service and added strategic value for the County. Strategies are expected to improve employee motivation and development scores on the Employee Climate Survey.

**Completion Date:**

TBD

**Updates/Project Milestones:**

Key aspects of the plan will center on leveraging increasing communication, employee voice, and engagement around what changes to make in the department to make it the BEST local government finance office, AND the BEST place to work.

Greater access to training/career paths:

- o Partner with HR for greater access to training opportunities including soft skills, leadership skills, and other career growth opportunities.
- o Division leaders identify core skills inventory for critical positions, to support IDP and staff development.

Improve workplan and feedback process for employees:

- o Improve alignment of staff workplans to overall vision and goals, through streamlined workplans and enhanced performance discussion mechanisms with supervisors and management.

Additional milestones as may result from the Organizational Reset Plan.

**Outcomes/Measures:**

- Expand training opportunities offered to staff.
- Improvement in FY2022 ECS scores and pulse results from baseline set in August.
- Roll out streamlined workplan and performance evaluation mechanism in partnership with HR.

**Director Comments: (Year-end)****Executive Team Comments: (Year-end)**



## Key Initiative #5 -- Organizational Reset Plan

**Link to Strategic Business Plan:**

No

**Description:**

The Department, working in close coordination with the ACM and HR, will roll out an Organizational Reset Plan with a focus on building communication and engaging staff in departmental improvements.

**Rationale:**

The Financial Services Department staff play a critical role in the day to day operations and major initiatives for the County, which is experiencing dynamic growth and change. Employees are our most valuable resource in meeting these goals, and increased employee satisfaction and engagement will translate into strong customer service and added strategic value for the County. Strategies are expected to improve employee motivation and development scores on the Employee Climate Survey.

**Completion Date:**

February 1, 2021

**Updates/Project Milestones:**

Beginning in July, the Department will work with the Department of Human Resources under the Guidance of Assistant County Manager Michael Bryant to launch an Organizational Reset Plan in August.

Key aspects of the plan will center on increasing communication, employee voice, and engagement around what changes to make in the department to make it the BEST local government finance office, AND the BEST place to work.

**Outcomes/Measures:**

- Successful achievement of the 3 major goals outlined in the Organizational Reset Plan
- Improvement in 2021 ECS scores and pulse results from baseline set in August
- Development of anonymous suggestion boxes, and stronger communications so that employee concerns and ideas are lifted up and addressed
- Development of an Employee Experience Team

**Director Comments: (Year-end)****Executive Team Comments: (Year-end)**



## Key Initiative #6 -- Payroll Process Mapping and Improvements

**Link to Strategic Business Plan:**

Yes

**Description:**

In conjunction with HR, work with BPM to map out and improve payroll and benefits processes and communication with HR for strong payroll processes and seamless customer experience.

**Rationale:**

The County's goal to be an employer of choice rests on strong communications and processes with HR and Payroll to support timely, accurate compensation and strong customer service. Moreover, strong communications and process are critical to ensuring strong fiscal stewardship with appropriate internal controls, and supporting proactive, data-driven management of the County's most valuable resource—its staff. The County has experienced significant change in the statutory and regulatory environment, and high turn-over in critical areas, and this effort will help document the baseline, and identify improvements to this critical function.

**Completion Date:**

TBD

**Updates/Project Milestones:**

- Restructure payroll team to add bandwidth
- Map out payroll process in conjunction with BPM and HR
- Identify and implement process, procedure, and/or communication points of improvement

**Outcomes/Measures:**

Successful accomplishment of milestones identified in Payroll Process Mapping exercise.

**Director Comments: (Year-end)****Executive Team Comments: (Year-end)**



## Key Initiative #7 -- Equity and Inclusion Initiative

**Link to Strategic Business Plan:**

Yes

**Description:**

Continue the implementation of Year One and Year Two of the County's Equity Action Plan.

**Rationale:**

To address the challenge for Mecklenburg County to become a stronger pro-equity organization, strategies must be implemented and enforced that enhance the work Mecklenburg County has already completed to promote equity and inclusion. The County has partnered with the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) to create both a racial equity training curriculum for County staff, an Equity Action Toolkit and a three-year Equity Action Plan. To continue to build the capacity of the organization, it is critical that the County continues the implementation of action items identified in the Equity Action Plan for Year One and Two.

**Completion Date:**

This is a multi-year project (FY2020-FY2022).

**Updates/Project Milestones:**

Continue FY20 Implementation Action Items of the County's Equity Action Plan that were postponed due to COVID-19:

- Rollout "Advancing Racial Equity Training" for all County employees to enhance abilities to advance racial equity.

Target: Group Two & Group 3 departments identified in the rollout plan.

- Identify performance data needs and ensure mechanisms are in place to track and collect critical data.
- Creation of department specific equity action plans.
- Provide training on Racial Equity Tool usage to County mid-senior management.

Implementation of FY21 action items for those departments with specific accountabilities.

**Outcomes/Measures:**

End of Year Reporting

**Director Comments: (Year-end)****Executive Team Comments: (Year-end)**



## Key Initiative #8 -- COVID-19 Response

**Link to Strategic Business Plan:**

No

**Description:**

The onset of COVID-19 resulted in the closure of Mecklenburg County government facilities and required many services to be transitioned to remote offerings. This unprecedented pandemic requires a flexible and nimble organization to meet the needs of County employees and the general public. Mecklenburg County will address the following priorities during the pandemic:

**Rationale:**

Mecklenburg County must respond and address the following priorities during the pandemic.

- 1) Continue to safely provide and expand county services to the public;
- 2) maintain critical county business needs through operational planning and policy, and
- 3) address community needs through the development and execution of support efforts through CARES Act funding

**Completion Date:**

This initiative is ongoing. Its completion date is dependent upon the extent of community spread of the virus and Public Health recommendations.

**Updates/Project Milestones:**

- Continue to develop county policies and procedures to address COVID-19
  - Continue to reopen county services in a safe manner
  - Foster innovation and agility in county services
  - Provide assets, technology and collaboration tools needed to safely support county operations
    - Monitor workforce engagement, needs and perspectives
- Monitor and adjust performance outcomes as appropriate
- Provide final report on CARES funding in the community
- CMO-Strategic Business Plan: Partner with the County Manager's Office to develop long-term response to COVID-19 and the impact of it in the organization and community

Note: Departments will have individual responses to these items at year-end.

**Outcomes/Measures:****Director Comments: (Year-end)****Executive Team Comments: (Year-end)**