

Department of General Services

Agency Overview

The Department of General Services (DGS) delivers cost-effective, high quality, reliable and sustainable services by managing quality facilities, ensuring efficient fleet operations, and maintaining exemplary administrative customer service that supports Baltimore City agencies in the advancement of their goals.

In addition to the oversight and repair of City vehicles in the City's fleet, DGS is also responsible for the renovation, alteration, repair and maintenance of all City-owned buildings. Specifically, DGS's Capital Projects and Energy Major Projects Division (CPD) oversees the design and construction of capital improvements to 190 City-owned and managed facilities. As a complement to CPD's work, DGS's Facilities Maintenance Division (FMD) strives to achieve efficient operation and maintenance of City owned-buildings and to provide safe, healthy and effective work spaces that facilitate the delivery of City services.

Through the use of in-house design and construction project managers, inspectors and contract administration personnel, CPD administers and manages all aspects of capital improvements in City buildings on behalf of various user agencies, including the Baltimore City Police Department, the Baltimore City Fire Department, Courts and the Enoch Pratt Free Library. These improvements may include building infrastructure improvements (roofs, windows, HVAC, elevators) as well as agency-specific improvements that work to improve an agency's operations (floor plan renovations, etc.).





401 E. Fayette Street



Police Stations



Courts Buildings



Fire Stations

Capital Projects

DGS works on behalf of ten City agencies, including itself. DGS works with agencies to implement capital projects that are necessary to maintain building infrastructure and are vital to agency operations. DGS is responsible for capital improvements to municipal buildings, such as City Hall and the Abel Wolman building, fire and police stations, health facilities, employment/career development facilities, senior centers, and community action centers. DGS also performs capital work on buildings in the Enoch Pratt Free Library system and the Convention Center.

Many of the systems such as HVAC systems and roofs in the City's buildings have out-lived their useful life or, because of the age of the building, are non-existent (fire suppression, fire alarms). There is a significant need to upgrade, repair, or install these basic building infrastructure systems for the comfort of building tenants and to address issues of life/safety. For many buildings, the systems continue to deteriorate, risking loss of use of the building (no occupancy permitted) or danger to the personnel and public citizens using the buildings. Replacement of these basic infrastructure systems, just to maintain basic building function, is of such a cost that each project rises to the level of a capital improvement, requiring funding from the capital budget. In general, projects that deal with correcting/repairing the infrastructure of the building (structural stability, roof

replacements, etc.) are the highest priority because it is necessary to weather proof the building prior to performing interior work so that its contents are protected.

The primary funding source for DGS is city funds, typically General Obligation (GO) Bonds. On occasion, depending on the agency (*i.e.*, Health Department) or type of building (*i.e.*, a building of a historic nature), grant funding specific to the project may be available. Grants typically require matching funds from the City.

Key Challenges

The biggest challenge DGS faces in regard to its capital program is lack of adequate funding. Capital funds are typically allocated reactively (once there is a known problem) through the capital improvement program. There is an urgent need for more proactive capital improvements to prevent excessive maintenance costs and burdens. Often, maintenance is deferred due to lack of funding, ultimately costing the City more money. Because of the lack of funding to implement capital improvements, the buildings are further deteriorating, causing overall maintenance and repair costs to increase (or making replacement the only option). DGS strives to address the most urgent building infrastructure needs through the use of building condition assessments, its overall internal knowledge of a building's condition, the wants/needs of the agency using the building and the cost of the proposed work to guide its decisions in terms of prioritization of capital work. However, the biggest challenge DGS faces is that its overall capital improvement needs continue to exceed available funds.