

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Reclassification of the Secretary to the Youth Bureau to Assistant Director for the Mt. Vernon Youth Bureau

Prepared by: Debbie Burrell-Butler, MBA — Executive Director, Mt. Vernon Youth Bureau

1. PURPOSE

This summary requests the support of the Mayor, Comptroller, Honorable City Council, and Mount Vernon Civil Service Commission to defund the title of Secretary to the Youth Bureau and create through non-competitive reclassification the title of Assistant Director for the Mt. Vernon Youth Bureau. The reclassification aligns the title, compensation, and Civil Service classification with the scope of work already being performed and the strategic needs of the Bureau.

2. CURRENT STATE

The Mt. Vernon Youth Bureau is led by an Executive Director and a Deputy Director who, together with one (1) Secretary, oversee a portfolio of nine (9) flagship programs: S.R.A.E.P., Aviation Career Program with BITTS, V.I.C.T.O.R.Y., GEM After-school, WDAY, Safe Haven After-School, Year round- Youth Employment, the YEAC, and recently added Grandpas United. These flagship programs provide an additional eight (8) specialized academies such as: the Culinary Explorer, Solar Go-Kart, EmpowerMED, SUSAs, Entrepreneurship, GEM -summer, Safe Haven Summer Camp, and Energy & Environment with ELOC which doesn't include scholarships, special events, grants research and writing, and community partnerships serving youth across the City of Mount Vernon.

The current title of Secretary to the Youth Bureau, established under a non-competitive Civil Service specification requiring a high school diploma and three years of clerical experience, no longer reflects the work performed. The incumbent routinely manages program planning, scholarship coordination, event execution, interdepartmental liaison work, and leadership coverage when the Executive Director and Deputy Director are unavailable.

3. WHY THIS CHANGE? THE NEED FOR AN ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

- **Span of Control.** The Bureau administers 9+ concurrent youth programs, multiple grant-funded contracts, bi-annual scholarship and gala event, and over 12 city-wide events. The current two-person executive structure is insufficient to maintain consistent oversight, quality assurance, and grant-reporting compliance across the Bureau's portfolio.
- **Succession & Continuity Risk.** With this change, the Youth Bureau has one operational absence away from a leadership gap. A formal Assistant Director establishes a clear line of succession and ensures continuity of services to youth and families, grant-funder communications, and municipal reporting.
- **Scope Creep / Work Already Performed.** The incumbent has, for an extended period, performed duties well beyond the Secretary classification including program planning and

execution, scholarship-program management, supervisory support, and representation of the Executive Director. The current title and salary are misaligned with the actual scope of responsibility.

- **Grant Compliance & Reporting.** As you are aware, researching and grant-writing is labor-intensive, demanding, and rewarding, but it can be very emotionally taxing and mentally exhausting. State and federal youth-services funding streams require professional-level program oversight, performance reporting, and fiscal compliance. A bachelor's-degree-credentialed Assistant Director strengthens the Bureau's competitiveness for grant renewals, new awards, and efficacy.
- **Demonstrated Community Outcomes.** Youth Bureau programs have achieved a 98% - 100% completion rate across cohorts; the Bureau routinely aids and assists partner municipalities and community-based organizations in delivering youth services and events; and the incumbent has consistently lightened the Executive Director's workload by managing, planning, coordinating, and following-up behind the scenes. Formalizing the title protects and accelerates these outcomes.

4. CIVIL SERVICE ACTION REQUESTED

Non-Competitive Reclassification. The current incumbent meets the proposed minimum qualifications (bachelor's degree plus four years of professional experience, including two years in youth programs and the supervision of youth programming and staff). Because the duties require specialized knowledge of the Bureau's programs, partners, and community relationships that cannot be practically tested by competitive examination, the position is appropriately classified as Non-Competitive.

5. FISCAL IMPACT

Funding source: New appropriation requested from the Youth Bureau operating budget (**Budget Code A7311.101**). Proposed effective date: **July 27, 2026**

Fiscal Year	Current Budgeted Salary	Proposed Salary	Incremental Request
2026 (partial — eff. 7/24/26)	\$60,000.00	\$90,500.00	\$13,435 (23 wks. at the difference of \$16.69)
2027	\$60,000.00	\$90,500.00	\$30,500.00
2028	\$60,000.00	\$90,500.00	\$30,500.00
2029	\$60,000.00	\$90,500.00	\$30,500.00
2030	\$60,000.00	\$90,500.00	\$30,500.00
5-Year Total	—	—	\$135,939.59

Position is non-union; salary is a flat rate of \$90,500 with no negotiated grade or step structure. Budget code A7311.101 (Youth Bureau Personnel Services) will house the reclassified title.

6. RECOMMENDATION

The Executive Director respectfully recommends that the Mayor, Comptroller, Honorable City Council, and Civil Service Commission approve (1) the defunding of the Secretary to the Youth Bureau title, (2) the creation and funding of the Assistant Director for the Mt. Vernon Youth Bureau title at a flat annual salary of \$90,500, and (3) the non-competitive reclassification of the incumbent into the new title effective July 27, 2026. This action will formalize work already being performed, strengthen leadership continuity, protect grant compliance, and ensure that Mount Vernon's youth continue to receive the highest-quality programming the Bureau has been delivering.

The Executive Director, Debbie Burrell-Butler, welcomes all discussion, feedback, and support as she continues to lead the Youth Bureau Department to its full potential.