

Sharonov Steps Down From City Hall

By [Alexander Panin](#)

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Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin **Maxim Stulov**

Deputy Moscow Mayor Andrei Sharonov, responsible for the city's economic policy, stepped down Tuesday, but all other top City Hall officials retained their positions.

The new Moscow government was announced by Mayor Sergei Sobyenin following the Sept. 8 election. The most far-fetched speculation on the subject in the media had earlier suggested that his main rival, Alexei Navalny, would be offered a position at City Hall.

Sharonov, a key member of Sobyenin's team, will become head of the Skolkovo School of Management.

"Andrei Vladimirovich has long been asking to be let free. He is leaving for Skolkovo but will remain a freelance aide for the mayor," Sobyenin said, RIA Novosti reported.

News that Sharonov might leave City Hall surfaced in July, although he did not confirm that information at the time.

“This is a new period in the history of Skolkovo, a new stage of its development,” Sharonov said Tuesday, commenting on his appointment. “There are several tasks set before the team, which include strengthening [our] own teaching staff, developing research centers and improving cooperation with government agencies.”

Sharonov’s economic policy functions will be transferred to Natalya Sergunina, who is also in charge of property and land relations.

Previously the functions of Sharonov and Sergunina overlapped, leading to red tape and slowing down the decision-making process, Sobyenin said.

During his two years in office, Sharonov was credited with reducing the time necessary for businesses to get construction permits and to connect to power grids — one of the main barriers that investors encountered before setting up a business.

He also supervised a center for defending entrepreneurs’ rights.

Sharonov has been praised by some experts as a competent economist. Prior to his work at City Hall, he was a deputy economic development minister from 2000 to 2007 and CEO of investment bank Troika Dialog from 2007 to 2010.

“This is a big loss for Sobyenin and a big gain for Sharonov’s next employer,” Dina Krylova, president of the Business Perspective foundation, told Finam FM radio prior to the latest appointment.

Sergunina is a professional lawyer with a Moscow State University degree. Before being appointed to City Hall, she worked as a deputy head of the Federal Property Management Agency.

Another change in the Moscow government announced Tuesday was the promotion of Alexei Komissarov, who was in charge of the science, industrial policy and entrepreneurship department under Sharonov.

Komissarov will retain his position but will also be ranked as a minister in the city government.

There would be no more changes, Sobyenin said, adding that over the last three years 90 percent of Moscow government officials had been replaced, Interfax reported.

Media reports said earlier that at least two other deputy mayors — Leonid Pechatnikov, who supervised social development programs, and Pyotr Biryukov, responsible for housing and utilities — might lose their positions. The frequently criticized head of the education department, Isaak Kalina, was also expected to get the ax, while the head of the culture department, Sergei Kapkov, who has been praised for his Western-style renovation of Gorky Park and other public places, was rumored to be resigning.

But experts have said Deputy Mayor Maxim Liksutov, who was in charge of transportation and road infrastructure, and Marat Khusnullin, who supervised urban development and construction, were unlikely to be replaced.

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