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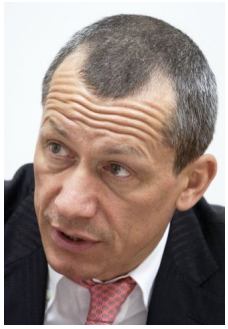
Sharonov to Leave Moscow City Hall

By Lena Smirnova

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Deputy Mayor Andrei Sharonov will leave his position after the city elections in September, Vedomosti reported Wednesday based on information from unnamed sources in federal and municipal government offices.

The outgoing deputy mayor has already received offers to become the head of Skolkovo business school and the first deputy minister of economic development, though has not publicly accepted any of the proposals.



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Andrei
Sharonov

Sharonov, speaking through his spokeswoman, declined comment about the report.

As deputy mayor Sharonov was responsible for the economics of Moscow, and was behind various initiatives to attract foreign investors to the city. He assumed the position in 2010 after stepping down as chairman of Troika Dialog investment bank.

Sharonov told The Moscow Times in June that creating a friendly environment for both foreign and domestic investment was a challenge. "It's impossible just to talk about attracting foreign investors. If you can't retain domestic investors, you are failing foreign investors as well," he said.

In the two years as deputy mayor, Sharonov is credited with reducing the steps required to obtain construction permits, speeding up the process for businesses to connect to the electricity grid and creating a center to defend entrepreneurs' rights.

Vedomosti's sources said that Sharonov decided to leave City Hall because he has started to lose his power in the structure after the head of the economic policy and development department Marina Ogloblina was dismissed in April 2012 and replaced with Maxim Reshetnikov. The department had to agree on the financing of all municipal projects and Sharonov allegedly did not work well with the new department head.

Sharonov is also said to have had ideological disagreements with Deputy Mayor Anastasia Rakova, who has a more conservative approach to dealing with entrepreneurs.

Reshetnikov, who previously worked in the Perm region administration and has little experience of working in business compared to Sharonov, is expected to bid for the soon-to-be-vacant deputy mayor position.

Skolkovo has offered Sharonov a position as general director and rector. The contract of the current rector, Andrei Volkov, expires in July.

Sharonov has also received a proposal from the Economic Development Ministry, Vedomosti reported. However, experts said that he is unlikely to accept the job because he already served in the ministry from 1997 to 2007 and returning would be seen as a backward step.

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