

## Public Works/Engineering Organizational Review

May 29, 2012

Updated May 31, 2012

### **Scenario A: Separating Engineering from Public Works Operations**

#### Pros:

- 1) Allows a newly hired City Engineer to focus specifically on the Engineering Division.
- 2) Allows engineering to be more focused on new projects/development
- 3) Allows public works operations to be more focused on the day-to-day “routine” maintenance functions
- 4) Increased accountability and ownership on Public Works (PW) side.
- 5) Increased employee development on the Public Works side and greater sharing of knowledge; reduces risk of talent loss in the event of a resignation.
- 6) Engineering and PW Operations would function more as a self-managed team with Tim Himmer serving as the primary team-lead for Department Head meetings.
- 7) Less layers of management on both sides; creating an environment for more innovation and employee empowerment.
- 8) Budget savings would be possible if activity was low.

#### Cons:

- 1) Potential for lack of oversight; who was/is responsible for a given task.
- 2) Lack of overall public works expertise overseeing the entire process.
- 3) Need for structured communication between Engineering and Public Works.
- 4) More potential “team” conflicts that bubble to the top. Team members may need additional training on team conflict resolution.
- 5) Additional workload for others, with potential for time delays, decreased proactive work (especially on lower priorities), missed opportunities for grants, special awards, etc.
- 6) Increased potential for errors and/or omissions.
- 7) Budget savings may be non-existent if consultant labor had to be used, especially with road reconstruction effort pending.
- 8) It is recommended that an additional technical (drafts person/Inspector) be hired.

**Scenario B: Keep Public Works Director Position as is.**

Pros:

- 1) More oversight over total operation.
- 2) The City can hire an experienced public works director to oversee both areas.
- 3) Communication between engineering and public works would be enhanced.
- 4) Conflicts between division managers could be resolved at the department level relatively quickly.
- 5) More staff resource to devote to grants, legislation, special projects and road reconstruction effort.
- 6) Improved review and inspection of work product.
- 7) Additional staff time to charge back to projects.

Cons:

- 1) An external recruitment for Public Works Director is recommended. Applicant pool may be shallow given recent hiring by other cities.
- 2) An additional staff person would be involved with most development related work and more time would be spent on internal communication.
- 3) Fewer opportunities will be available for existing staff.
- 4) The organization would retain an additional layer of management that would be less flexible.
- 5) Base budget costs for engineering/public works would remain at current levels.