

STAFF REPORT
City of Lancaster

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Date: November 13, 2007

To: Mayor Hearn and City Council Members

From: James R. Williams, Public Works Director

Subject: **Proposal to Reorganize the Public Works Department**

Recommendation:

Approve the proposed reorganization of the Public Works Department from five to eight divisions.

Fiscal Impact:

No increase in overall staffing is proposed by this organization change. Small salary adjustments (expected to total less than \$5,000.00 for the balance of this fiscal year) may result from the reclassification of positions. The anticipated adjustments can be absorbed within the existing budget authorization because of other savings. Full details of the adjustments will be presented to the City Council for consideration when the results from reclassification actions are completed.

Background:

The increasing workload of the last four years has resulted in an expanded complexity and breadth of responsibility, especially in the Engineering Division of the Public Works Department. The coordination of development engineering services; the ability to oversee and direct the City's large and growing inventory of traffic control devices such as the 130 traffic signals; our increasing role in providing Lancaster's perspective and needs on regional issues such as water, wastewater, and transportation; and our ability to deliver completed new infrastructure projects through an expanding Capital Improvements Program that reflects the growth of 20,000 citizens during the last four years have been especially demanding on a small staff. This proposal to reorganize the Department is designed to improve our service delivery while also improving communication throughout the Department and the City but on a generally budget neutral basis.

The City of Lancaster has taken on new service areas that previously were not provided to its citizens (recycled water distribution) or were provided by outside agencies such as the Consolidated Sewer Maintenance District. Coordination with regional agencies for services and support has become much more demanding and time-consuming. Regulatory constraints, reporting requirements, and the need to maintain accurate records that support decisions made and policies put into place suggest that a more centralized delivery of administrative services would better serve the Department, the City, and its citizens. Growth in infrastructure needed to support the businesses and citizens of Lancaster has added significant challenge to a small field (maintenance and operations) and engineering (capital improvement program) staff that must choose the most effective but least expensive approach to service delivery. The Department

leadership must remain well-informed of progress and activities on all fronts in order to respond to the inquiries of the City Council and its constituency. Our citizens expect nothing less, but under the present organizational structure, meeting these objectives has become possible only at the expense of a willing but too-thinly-stretched management and leadership staff.

Presently, the Public Works Department consists of five divisions – including the recently created but as yet minimally-staffed Utilities Division that will oversee recycled water and sewer maintenance functions. A chart of the proposed organization and division of functional responsibilities is attached.

The proposed organization will increase the number of divisions to eight by establishing a new Administrative Services Division and splitting the current Engineering Division into three divisions (City Engineer, Traffic Engineering, and Capital Projects Engineering) as shown on the attached organization chart. The subdivisions section of the current Engineering Division would merge with the functions of the current Building & Safety Division as a new Development Engineering Division. This Development Engineering Division will provide a more cohesive focus on development activities with one section concentrating on commercial and industrial development and a second on residential development. The new Administrative Services Division is proposed to consolidate records-keeping, work reception, and budget management and oversight functions, to name a few. The proposed change also allows – without adding more positions to the Department – for the establishment of a full time Assistant Department Director who will assist to coordinate the activities of the Department and the regional engineering interests of the City. The objective is to simplify and re-focus responsibilities to provide depth among those delivering specific services while also eliminating unproductive duplication and overlap.

During the next few months, replacement position descriptions will be prepared and the Human Resources Department will conduct classification and compensation reviews for changed positions. The results of the reviews will be presented – beginning in December – to the City Council for consideration and approval.