



City of Woodland

REPORT TO MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

DATE: January 19, 2009

SUBJECT: Ordinance Authorizing City Engineer To Create And Update
Engineering Standards For Public Infrastructure Construction

Report in Brief

Staff is proposing a change to the Municipal Code that would codify the authority of the City Engineer to create and amend Engineering Standards for public infrastructure construction. This change is consistent with past practice as evidenced by Resolution 3388, dated March 15, 1988 (see attachment) in which similar authority was granted to the City Engineer. This code change will delegate the authority to make changes an administrative function and allow for efficient processing of updates. In response to comments received at the December 1, 2009 Council meeting, staff will provide an update to the City Council when new standards are adopted.

Staff recommends that the City Council approve Ordinance No. _____ adding language to the Municipal Code to authorize the City Engineer to create and amend Engineering Standards for public infrastructure construction.

Background

The Engineering Standards enumerate requirements for civil infrastructure, such as, transportation facilities (streets, pedestrian, bicycle, signals, signs, markings, etc.), water distribution, sanitary sewer collection, storm drainage collection, landscaping (parks, greenbelts, street side, etc.). These improvements are typically maintained by the Public Works and Parks Departments. All development projects and capital improvement projects are constructed in compliance with these Engineering Standards. The Engineering Standards consist of engineering design standards, standard construction details and standard construction specifications.

Staff has been working on an update to the Engineering Standards and the document is nearly ready for distribution. The current update will be issued shortly after the adoption of this proposed ordinance. This update contains about 170 specific edits, some changes are as simple as grammar corrections or added words in sentences, to revised details, and some are more complex such as new details and complete revisions of entire sections.

The City typically provides an advanced copy of the draft to several private engineering consultants for their review and comment. Staff makes appropriate edits as a result of comments received and follow-up discussion with the respective engineering consultants. Issuing the draft standards to engineering consultants instead of developers has proven to be the more effective way of soliciting comments since the developers usually send the information to their consultants for comments. In addition, engineering consultants often work for multiple developers and/or construction companies and their feedback reflects the concerns of their clients. Staff also works with the contracting community to address requests/comments as specific issues are brought to the City's attention. As an example, staff revised standards for irrigation lines after a contractor brought to the City's attention the impracticality of the material specified in the standards and the availability of an acceptable alternative.

In response to Council comments on December 1, staff will provide a summary of the major changes in the standards to the City Council when the Standards are circulated to the engineering consultants. Staff will also provide an update to Council when major amendments are made to the standards. Updates to Council will be provided via the capital budget execution status report or other similar report that is provided to the Council. This procedure was not included in the proposed ordinance; however, staff will memorialize this procedure within the monthly reports.

Discussion

The update to the Engineering Standards is based on feedback from the City operations and maintenance staff (Public Works and Parks). It is also needed to keep consistent with industry practices, is reflective of changes in State & Federal laws and regulations, incorporates changes in design practices, improves long term maintenance reliability, addresses evolving construction techniques and expands standardization for maintenance efficiency. Some of the recent updates to the standards occurred in 2002, 2004, and 2007. Several addendums have also been issued which addressed a specific element of the standards (such as street light details).

Staff will make the complete document available on the City's website to reduce the cost of reproduction. Staff will also provide a list of all changes so that any interested party can identify the specific changes to minimize their effort in adjusting their respective design or construction practices.

Fiscal Impact

There is no specific impact to the general fund or other funds although changes in the engineering standards could increase or decrease the cost of construction within the public right of way.

Public Contact

Posting of the City Council agenda.

Alternative Courses of Action

1. Approve Ordinance No. _____ adding language to the Municipal Code to authorize the City Engineer to create and amend Engineering Standards for public infrastructure construction.
2. Direct staff to change the ordinance to include language requiring an update to Council whenever the Engineering Standards are updated or when an amendment is made to the Engineering Standards.
3. Provide alternate direction to staff regarding approval of the Engineering Standards.

Recommendation for Action

Staff recommends that the City Council approve Alternative No. 1

Prepared by: Michael Karoly
Senior Civil Engineer

Reviewed by: Brent Meyer,
Principal Civil Engineer
City Engineer

Reviewed by: Paul Siegel
Deputy Director CDD

Mark G. Deven
City Manager

Attachments: Proposed Ordinance
Resolution 3388

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WOODLAND, CALIFORNIA AUTHORIZING THE CITY ENGINEER TO ADOPT ENGINEERING STANDARDS

WHEREAS, the Woodland City Council has previously approved engineering standards; and

WHEREAS, from time to time it is necessary to adopt updates and refinements to the engineering standards, to accommodate changes in technology and design and make the City's specifications consistent with current best practices; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the City Engineer has the professional training and experience to approve and establish engineering standards; and

WHEREAS, allowing the City Engineer to approve and establish engineering standards will allow such standards to be put in place more quickly than if such standards are approved by the City Council;

NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WOODLAND DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The City Council hereby adopts the recitals and findings set forth above and in the staff report prepared in connection with this ordinance.

Section 2. Section 6-3-4 of the Woodland Municipal Code is hereby amended by deleting therefrom the definition of "Standard improvements specifications and details" and adding a definition of "engineering standards" to read as follows:

"Engineering Standards" means improvement standards for the city of Woodland as adopted by the city engineer pursuant to section 20-1-9.

Section 3. A new Section 20-1-9 of the Woodland Municipal Code is hereby adopted to read as follows:

"Sec. 20-1-9. City Engineer authority to adopt engineering standards.

(a) As used in this section, the following words and phrases shall have the following meanings:

"City Engineer" means the person holding the engineering staff position designated by the City Manager to serve as city engineer, or the person holding the position for which the duties of city engineer are included in the position's job description, or his or her designee.

"Engineering Standards" means engineering design standards, standard construction details and standard construction specifications for the improvement

and repair of public works and other improvements in the City, as well as grading on private or public property.

(b) The City Council delegates to the City Engineer the discretionary authority to create, adopt, approve or amend engineering standards. The City Engineer shall ensure that a current, correct copy of the engineering standards is on file in the City's community development department.

(c) The engineering standards adopted pursuant to this subsection shall mean the "standard specifications," "standard specifications and details" and other equivalent terms as used in this Code, unless the context requires otherwise.

Section 4. This Ordinance supersedes and voids all prior ordinances, resolutions, and other Council actions, which are inconsistent with its terms.

Section 5. Adoption of this Ordinance is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15061(b)(3)). CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. It is therefore found and declared that the delegation of authority to the City Engineer has no possibility of creating a significant effect on the environment.

Section 6. Severability. If any provision of this Ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of the Ordinance which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this Ordinance are severable. This City Council hereby declares that it would have adopted this Ordinance irrespective of the invalidity of any particular portion thereof and intends that the invalid portions should be severed and the balance of the Ordinance be enforced.

Section 7. Effective Date and Publication. The City Clerk shall certify to the adoption of this Ordinance, and the City Clerk shall cause this Ordinance to be posted or published as prescribed by law. This Ordinance shall take effect thirty (30) days following its adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2009 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Marlin H. Davies
Mayor

ATTEST:

Sue Vannucci
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Andrew J. Morris
City Attorney

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RESOLUTION NO. 3388

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WOODLAND
ADOPTING NEW STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS FOR CONSTRUCTION
WITHIN THE PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY IN THE CITY OF WOODLAND

The City Council of the City of Woodland hereby resolves as follows:

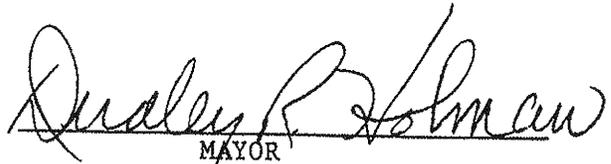
1. To delete Resolution No. 1933 adopted September 20, 1965 establishing Standard Specifications relating to work within the public right-of-way.
2. To adopt the attached Standard Specifications for any and all work within the public right-of-way in the City of Woodland.
3. To authorize the City Engineer to add sections to these specifications to govern projects or problems not contemplated by these specifications, to amend sections of the specifications to take into account new materials and/or methods, and to make corrections or clarifications as is necessary to these specifications.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 15th Day of March , 1988, by the following vote:

AYES: COUNCILMEMBERS: Ishikawa, Nofziger, Peyton, Holman

NOES: COUNCILMEMBERS: None

ABSENT: COUNCILMEMBERS: None


MAYOR

ATTEST:

 , CITY CLERK