



AGENDA MEMO

6/20/2017 Agenda

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Jacob Speer, Director of Public Works

SUBJECT: Public Works pursuit of APWA Accreditation

BACKGROUND:

In 1991, the American Public Works Association (APWA) began a program allowing Public Works agencies to review their standards and policies against defined standards and policies to determine if their policies and practices are best practices. The APWA is currently accrediting agencies against its 8th edition of the Public Works Management Practices Manual. The Manual contains more than 600 recommended practices for Public Works agencies to use as guidelines for effective management and service delivery.

The APWA states the purpose of the accreditation program is “to provide a means of formally verifying and recognizing public works agencies for compliance with the recommended practices set forth in the manual”. Since its development, the APWA has accredited 117 Public Works agencies in the US and Canada.

The University Park Public Works Department seeks the support of the City Council to pursue Accreditation through the APWA. Staff is currently performing a Self-Assessment as a first comparison of the agency’s programs and policies to those established in the APWA Manual. We anticipate the Self-Assessment to be complete by October 2017, at which point we would like to apply to the APWA for Accreditation. Accreditation is typically a 1-3 year process and will require assistance from other City departments including Human Resources, Finance, Information Services, and Community Development.

The Public Works department expects to realize a number of gains from the self-assessment and accreditation process. PW staff at all levels will be involved in the review of existing policies and procedures, and this method of review will allow for the capture of extensive institutional knowledge and employee buy-in and support. The review process and guidelines in the Manual will allow the department to ensure it is providing the highest level of service to University Park residents while operating at its highest functionality and efficiency and will serve as a guide for improvements. Accredited Public Works agencies credit the process with instilling pride among the staff and community as well as increasing professionalism within the department.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff asks for City Council support of the Public Works Department as it pursues Accreditation by the American Public Works Association (APWA).