

**Public Works and Utilities Division
ENGINEERING SERVICES**

STRATEGIC PLAN

June 15, 2007

Mission Statement: To Provide *Excellence in Engineering* and administrative support for the design and management of public works projects, both public and private.

Key Customers:

- Citizen and Visitor to Spokane
- Utility Departments (Sewer/SW, Streets, Water)
- Developers
- Economic Development Division (Primarily Planning & Building Departments)

Definition of Product/Services:

Provide the following services to key customers in the least costly and most efficient manner possible:

1. Engineering design services, construction management services, environmental services for all Public Works and Utilities capital infrastructure projects.
2. Private Development reviews/final acceptance for all plans, plats, building permits, land use changes, studies, concurrency requests, traffic, engineering plans/standards, inspections, CO reviews, etc., on behalf of the Sewer/SW, Water, Street utility departments.
3. Develop, maintain, and update Engineering Standards, Manuals, References, Policies, and Ordinances for all public works facilities:
 - Supplemental Construction Specifications
 - Standard Plans
 - Design/Drafting Standards
 - Development Standards
 - Regional Pavement Cut Policy
 - Other Engineering Related Initiatives (i.e., SW Manual, Impact Fees, etc.)
4. Maintain and Achieve all Engineering documents, records, permits, agreements, etc., related to public and private capital work in the public ROW (hard and electronic copies/databases).
5. Issue/Manage all necessary permits/activity in the public right of way (ROW) related to private development, franchise facilities, and private requests:
 - Street Vacations
 - Easements/Sidewalk Cafe

- Access Agreements
- Parcel/Address Assignment
- Obstruction Permits
- Revocable License and Permit
- Customer Service Requests, etc.

Strategic Analysis – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT):

Strengths:

- Experienced, dedicated, and professional staff
- Strong communication/teamwork
- Strong focus on customer service/contractor performance
- Proven record/ability to deliver capital projects/services
- Effectively represent utility departments in management/implementation of capital projects
- Decisions/responsibility supported/encouraged at all levels
- Effective management of infrastructure records/information
- Creativity and flexibility in dealing with conflicting needs and desired outcomes.

Weaknesses:

- Lack of electronic access to basic information/data (i.e. utilities/streets)
- Lack of dedicated real estate/right-of-way manager for Engineering
- Limited enforcement provisions for existing regulations/codes
- Lack of funding/time for employee training/development
- Conflicting policies/regulations/standards
- Duplication of design/developer reviews/inspections

Opportunities:

- Increase public/developer/contractor's trust (Consistent/Predictable Service)
- Consolidate engineering personnel for capital projects/reviews
- Create an interdepartmental "Development Team" to strengthen communication/teamwork w/Economic Development Division
- Update and develop consistent policy/standards/procedures
- Support development of new technologies in order to streamline deliverables/information (i.e. new permit system, project management software)
- Continue to develop meaningful employee recognition strategies
- Partner with Civil Service/HR/Community College's/Universities for recruitment of seasonal/new hire engineering employees and streamline processes
- Provide clear and effective communication with administration/council when decisions are elevated.

Threats:

- Unintentional misrepresentation of infrastructure availability or capacity in relation to development
- General Fund Department - increasing departmental costs exceeding revenues
- Significant increase in public/private capital work load w/o increasing resources "employee burnout"
- Incomplete development applications
- Potential increase in liabilities, lawsuits and/or increased fines/safety violations if regulations are not followed
- Lack of defined city priorities, policies and procedures may lead to significant delays and/or increased cost in projects
- Failure to follow State/Federal procedures could result in loss of city infrastructure funding and/or delegated project certification
- Lack of commitment to 6 year capital program project schedules/scope (lost work and project cost overruns)

Key Success Factors (KSF):

- Implement New Permit System
- Select/Implement New Project Management Software – requires strong MIS support for software/hardware
- Dedicated Right-of-Way Agent/Manager
- Submittal of Complete development applications/plans
- Completing update/consistency review of policies, procedures, standards

Goals and Strategies:

GOAL #1 Implement New Permit System (Mayor's priority for Economic Development) (SWOT – Opportunity/KSF)

Strategy

Support the team of key Engineering Services personnel identified to work with the MIS and Accela to develop and implement Phase 2A (Engineering Services) portion of the new permit system:

- Develop Scope
- Determine Permit Types and Work Flows
- Testing the System Once Configured
- Training of staff prior to Go-live
- Go-Live March 2008 (tentative date)

GOAL #2 Prepare and Publish a monthly narrative capital projects report (Mayor's Priority for Customer Service) (Engineering Dept. Section 3 (2.5), pg. 15-22, Bucket #2) (SWOT – Opportunity)

Strategy

- Initially utilize existing access database material to prepare and publish a monthly report. Utilize existing Engineering Services web site to post for both internal/external access.
- In conjunction with Goal #3, transition toward integrated web based project reporting by April 2008 (tentative date)

GOAL #3 Select and implement a new Project Management Software to facilitate 24-month scheduling, resource management determination, and formal analysis of completed capital projects (Mayor's Priority for Economic Development) (Engineering Dept. Section 3, pg (2.2, 2.4, 2.6) pg. 15-17, 15-21, 15-23 respectively, Bucket #2). (SWOT – KSF)

Strategy

- In cooperation with MIS determine software needs, software availability, and compatibility (including web based application).
- Convert existing data to new system and develop/customize reports as necessary.
- Provide necessary training of all staff on new system (both entry and use)
- Implement regular report schedule and capital project analysis including online accessibility of all reports/information.

GOAL #4 Complete and formally approve/adopt new Regional Stormwater Manual and Transportation Impact Fees (Mayor's Priority for Economic Development). (SWOT – Opportunity/KSF)

Strategy – Stormwater Manual

- Complete final draft development in cooperation with Spokane County and the City of Spokane Valley (Spring 07).
- Submit Final Draft for approval from the Washington State Department of Ecology and complete SEPA environmental check list (Summer 07).
- Provide public process for final review/comments (Summer 07).
- Submit final manual to City Plan Commission, PWC, and City Council for final approval and adoption (Fall 07).
- Support efforts with Spokane County and the City of the Valley to adopt the same manual (Fall 07).

Strategy – Transportation Impact Fee

- Continue External Work Group process to develop final draft ordinance as part of the public participation process.
- Complete SEPA checklist and hold public open house on final draft.
- Schedule and hold Plan Commission Workshop and Hearing on final draft ordinance.

- Submit to PWC, City Council for final adoption/implementation (Summer 2007 tentative date).

GOAL #5 Develop a formal policy and procedures before initiating the capital project design process. (Mayor's Priority for Economic Development) (Engineering Dept. Section 3 (2.3), pg 15-18, Bucket #2) (SWOT – KSF)

Strategy

- Develop policy and procedure in cooperation with Capital Programs, Utility Departments, and Neighborhood Planning.
- Include formal "Design Authorization Form" that clearly describes the scope, budget, funding sources, environmental/permitting requirements and anticipated agreed to project delivery dates.

GOAL #6 Participate in Rate Recovery Fee Study in 2007 to look at the opportunity to achieve full cost recovery in the next two to three years (Mayor's Priority for Financial Stability) (Engineering Dept. Section 3(1), pg 15-12, Bucket #1). (SWOT – Threat)

Strategy

- Assist Economic Development Division in defining scope and deliverables for the Request for Proposals (RFP).
- Participate fully in the RRF study and analysis (including acceptability to development community and comparison to other cities).
- Implementation schedule tbd.

GOAL # 7 Initiate consolidation of design and construction management engineering services (public and private sector capital projects) positions within Streets, Wastewater, and Water Departments (Mayor's Priority for Economic Development) (Engineering Dept. Section 1, pg 15-10, Buckets #3 and #5) (SWOT – Opportunity)

Strategy

- Clearly define and agree upon roles, functions, and duties between engineering services and operation/utility engineering personnel.
- Clean up and formalize design, developer services, plat/plan review, and building permit review processes in coordination with Economic Development Division and PW&U departments.
- Prioritize and develop an implementation schedule that reflects and takes into account: natural employee attrition, physical capabilities of existing facilities, costs to implement, and assurance all functions are clearly accounted for in the reorganization.
- Submit implementation schedule to administration for review and approval (Winter 2007)