

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
2006 MAY 30 PM 3:26

CITY OF OAKLAND
AGENDA REPORT

TO: Office of the City Administrator
ATTN: Deborah Edgerly
FROM: Public Works Agency
DATE: June 13, 2006

RE: **Informational Report on the Public Works Agency Being Reviewed For National Accreditation by the American Public Works Association July 16-19, 2006**

SUMMARY

The Public Works Agency (PWA) is under review for accreditation by the American Public Works Association (APWA). Accreditation would give PWA national recognition for adherence to and compliance with best practices in the realm of public works organizations.

The APWA Accreditation Program formally verifies and recognizes public works organizations throughout the nation for compliance with recommended practices established within the public works industry as set forth in the *Public Works Management Practices Manual*. The objectives of the program include:

- creating impetus for organization self improvement and stimulating the general raising of standards;
- offering a voluntary evaluation and education program rather than government regulated activity;
- recognizing good performance and providing motivation to maintain and improve performance;
- improving public works performance and the provision of services;
- increasing professionalism; and
- instilling pride among agency staff, elected officials and the local community.

PWA has conducted an in-depth self-assessment of its policies, procedures, and practices as a part of this process. Accreditation acknowledges PWA's commitment to making continuous improvement and compliance with an internationally recognized body of management practices.

FISCAL IMPACT

This is an informational report and does not include any fiscal impacts.

Item: _____
Public Works Committee
June 13, 2006

BACKGROUND

APWA is an international, professional, and educational organization of public agencies, private sector companies, and individuals dedicated to providing high quality public works goods and services. Headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri, APWA provides a forum where public works professionals can improve professional competency, increase and improve performance, and bring important public works-related topics to public attention in local, state, and federal arenas.

APWA developed an accreditation program in 1996 to enhance the effectiveness of public works organizations and competencies in the public works realm. Through its *Public Works Management Practices Manual*, APWA identifies more than five hundred (500) procedures as core competencies required for an effective public works organization.

APWA accepted PWA's application for accreditation on July 18, 2002. PWA is currently under review utilizing the 4th Edition of APWA's manual. The procedures covered in this edition are organized into 33 chapters, of which PWA is responsible for completing 29. The other four chapters pertain to practices that are not applicable to Oakland PWA such as snow removal and ice control. PWA requires managers and staff to complete documentation for each chapter of the *Public Works Management Practices Manual* as part of their regular work assignments.

KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

The APWA accreditation process is voluntary. No local, state, or federal mandates require PWA (or any other public works organization) to seek accreditation. Agencies that seek accreditation are only required to comply with organizational practices that specifically apply to their service area and needs. Waivers are granted for practices that cannot be met due to legislation, labor agreements, court orders, and/or case law.

APWA accreditation provides a systematic approach for objective assessment of PWA by an independent entity. Accreditation also provides a visible indication that the agency complies with the recommended practices established by the APWA, as published in its *Public Works Management Practices Manual*.

The benefits of conducting this self-assessment and achieving accreditation include:

- Formal recognition of being a well run agency;
- Mechanism to evaluate the organization;
- Target for improving operations;
- *Public recognition of public works function;*
- Instilling pride in personnel;
- Reducing liability;
- Lowering insurance premiums;
- Raising Oakland's public works profile nationally;
- Enhancing personnel recruitment;

- Encouraging documentation of policies;
- Encouraging improvement of procedures;
- Raising competencies in public works;
- Establishing consistent, comprehensive practices;
- Fostering interaction among personnel; and
- Encouraging employee involvement.

In the accreditation process, the APWA requires that PWA inform the full City Council of PWA's participation in both the APWA Accreditation Program and the scheduled site visit to be held on July 16 – 19, 2006. This is an informational report and as such is not usually forwarded to the full City Council. However, staff requests that this report be forwarded to the full City Council for consideration and approval for filing in order to meet the APWA requirements. In addition, PWA will host a reception for the APWA evaluation committee during their site visit in July and will invite City Council members to join us in welcoming our visitors and supporting improved business practices for public works activities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PWA conducted a self-assessment based on 29 chapters from the APWA *Public Works Management Practices Manual* as it applies to services provided in the City of Oakland. In doing so, PWA conducted a full internal evaluation of its policies, practices, and procedures for areas of strength and areas needing improvement. Utilizing the guidelines and forms as provided by the APWA, PWA has fully documented the services it provides to both internal and external customers in Oakland.

APWA will be in Oakland to conduct a full review of the services and procedures as identified by PWA, and to ensure that PWA's self-assessment is unbiased and that PWA is in compliance with the recommended practices. This review will take place beginning Sunday, July 16 and will conclude on Wednesday, July 19, 2006. PWA expects to achieve full APWA accreditation upon conclusion of the review process.

Once accredited, the City of Oakland, Public Works Agency will be the second city and third government entity to be granted accreditation in the State of California, and one of the top 40 throughout the United States.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

This report does not directly impact economic, environmental or equity issues.

DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS

This report does not directly impact disability or senior citizen access.

RECOMMENDATION AND ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff recommends that the Public Works Committee forward this informational report to the full City Council for approval and filing.

Respectfully submitted,



RAUL GODINEZ II

Director, Public Works Agency

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Stephanie Hom, Agency Administrator

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Department of Facilities and Environment

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE:



OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR