



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
DEPARTMENT

CITY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA

NEW CITY HALL
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SACRAMENTO, CA
95814-2998

September 11, 2006

Development Oversight Commission
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

SUBJECT: Procedural Improvements for Over-the-Counter Minor Excavation Encroachment Permits

ACTION REQUESTED: Review and Comment

CONTACT PERSONS: Edward Williams, Development Engineering Manager, 808-5440
Julia McGinnis, Program Analyst, 808-7912

SUMMARY: Minor excavation encroachment permits are permits that allow individuals to do minor construction work within the City right-of-way (i.e. small repairs of sidewalk, curb, or gutter, handicap ramp installation, or removal of driveways). The Development Engineering Division, with the goal of streamlining and expediting the process, is proposing and implementing procedural improvements for those over-the-counter encroachment permits that do not require full engineered plans.

BACKGROUND: The Development Engineering Division serves as the facilitating arm for private development of public infrastructure. Its scope of work ranges from minor permits to large-scale public improvements. With regards to minor excavation encroachment permits, Development Engineering works collaboratively with several workgroups (i.e. Utilities' Engineering Services, Construction Inspection) as a processing and reviewing agency. In 2003, when Development Engineering was moved from the Public Works Department to Development Services Department, it maintained its function as the in-take/processing group for minor excavation encroachment permits, while the Department of Transportation's Construction Inspection Section remained responsible for final inspection and permit issuance.

As the respective divisions moved into different departments, the approval and issuance process



began to experience delays and inefficiencies that limited the quality of service provided to the customers. As the gatekeeper to the minor excavation encroachment permit process, processing on average one minor excavation encroachment permit a day, Development Engineering has mapped out the process and coordinated several procedural improvements to create efficiencies and eliminate unnecessary steps for a more seamless and predictable process to our customers. The changes are as follows:

Information

Issue

- With many permittees being one-time or infrequent applicants, their familiarity with the process is limited. Providing documentation such as traffic control plans or drawings resulted in delays due to revisions.

Procedural Improvement(s)

- Phase 1: Development Engineering coordinated with the Department of Transportation's (DOT) Construction Inspection Section to create standardized traffic control plans that are available on the City's website.
- Phase 2: The two groups are also in the process of creating templates that will be added to the application packet to clarify acceptable drawings of work within the right-of-way.

Timeliness

Issue

- With the reviewing agencies residing in different departments, delays in project commencement has been an ongoing complaint from customers.

Procedural Improvement(s)

- Phase 1: Development Engineering acquired a commitment to a 24-hour turnaround from the Department of Utilities on comments relating to excavation encroachment permits.
- Phase 1: DOT has also committed to streamlining the process and is now issuing permits on-site at the inspection visit.
- Phase 2: The City of Sacramento is in the process of acquiring capabilities that allow online payments via the City website. Once implemented (projected date October 2006), applicants will be able to submit a full submittal package via the internet, thereby increasing convenience to our customers.

Insurance Requirements

Issue

- Per City Code Chapter 12.12.160, excavation permit applicants are required to provide

five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in general liability. For homeowners, this would require a fee to increase coverage, which is typically three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000).

Procedural Improvement(s)

- Development Engineering has coordinated with Risk Management and the City Attorney's Office to have these requirements modified. In Phase 2 of our procedural improvements, Development Engineering will be proposing a revision of the City Code to reduce this requirement to \$300,000 for those applicants utilizing homeowner's insurance.

DOC GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: The proposed procedural improvements to over-the-counter excavation encroachment permits support the Departments Goal of having a development review process that is predictable, timely and clear, and supports the DOC goal to "Assist the City of Sacramento in becoming a development friendly city."

RECOMMENDATION APPROVED:



Edward Williams
Manager, Development Engineering Division