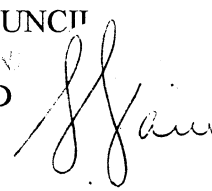



City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 14, 2005

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

THROUGH: RICHARD J. BAIER, DIRECTOR, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES 

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: REPORT ON AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOCIATION ACCREDITATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

**ISSUE:** Receipt of a report on the American Public Works Association (APWA) accreditation process undertaken by the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES), in preparation for APWA evaluation of the Department's policies and procedures for delivery of services.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council receives this report.

**BACKGROUND:** APWA accreditation is a national recognition of an agency's policies, procedures and management practices. It is a mark of professionalism that shows an agency's ongoing commitment to improvement in public works service delivery to the community.

On September 24, 2002, City Council approved Resolution #2042, authorizing T&ES to apply for APWA accreditation. The Department applied for, and was accepted into, the accreditation program. Since that time, T&ES staff has completed the self-evaluation and improvement phases of this program over the past two and a half years.

The purpose of this report is to inform City Council of the results of these two phases, which is prerequisite to a site visit and APWA evaluation of Alexandria's public works practices.

**DISCUSSION:** T&ES is committed to continual improvement in the quality of its services. The accreditation process strengthens this commitment and benefits citizens and businesses in Alexandria by providing:

- A commitment to and recognition of policies, procedures, and processes that promote effective delivery of projects and services;
- A process for conducting a needs assessment to ensure that all critical services have been addressed;
- A process for setting goals for improvement of T&ES practices, services, and facilities;
- Increased productivity and effectiveness through critical evaluation of programs and services;
- Tools for performance measurement systems, internal performance standards for operations, and management and administration functions;
- An opportunity for professional development; and
- A process for staying abreast of the latest developments in public works operations and management.

Full accreditation remains in effect for three years, and the Department will need to maintain or improve its level of compliance with accreditation standards on a continuing basis in order to maintain its accredited status in future years.

The APWA *Public Works Management Practices Manual, Fourth Edition* includes 33 areas in which public works departments should be in compliance with national standards in order to be accredited. Twenty three of these areas applied to the services delivered by T&ES to residents of the City. Among the areas for which T&ES evaluated its delivery of services were:

- Organization and strategic planning;
- Human resource management;
- Financial management;
- Communications;
- Information technology;
- Emergency management;
- Safety;
- Engineering design and mapping;
- Contract administration;
- Utility coordination;
- Solid waste management;

- Street maintenance, cleaning, and snow removal;
- Stormwater management
- Wastewater conveyance; and
- Traffic operations.

At the time of the initial assessment, T&ES already met 78 percent of the applicable APWA standards. Since that time the Department has brought itself into full or substantial compliance with all these standards. The attachment summarizes the actions that were taken to meet the levels of compliance needed to earn accreditation. One of the most visible changes that the Department has made during the self evaluation and improvement phases of the accreditation process is the consolidation of refuse collection routes and contracting the recycling function for efficiency and cost saving improvements.

Representatives of APWA will visit the City to evaluate and observe firsthand the assessment information and practices that T&ES will be submitting to them, pursuant to presentation of this report to City Council. This site visit is planned to occur during early FY 2006.

T&ES would like to acknowledge the contributions of other City agencies that had input during the self assessment and improvement phases, including the Finance Department, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Activities, the General Services Department, the Department of Planning and Zoning, the Fire and Police Departments, the City Attorney's Office, and the Alexandria Sanitation Authority.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The Department is responsible for the costs of the APWA site visit, which is budgeted at \$10,000 in the FY 2006 departmental operating budget request.

**ATTACHMENT:** Summary table of compliance level and improvements in service delivery as part of the APWA accreditation process.

**STAFF:**

Richard J. Baier, P.E., Director, T&ES  
Raymond Wiley, Division Chief, T&ES

**Level of Compliance with APWA Standards**  
*Department of Transportation and Environmental Services*

ATTACHMENT

Category	Number of Practices in Category	Number of Practices in Full Compliance	Number of Practices in Substantial Compliance	Improvements Made After Self Assessment
1 Organization and Strategic Planning	10	3	7	
2 Human Resource Management	33	21	12	Staff will attend strategic planning workshop in February; mission statements have been developed for most divisions
3 Occupied Facilities	17	0	17	
4 Finance	19	18	1	Department is drafting a policy on material inventory
5 Communications	14	6	8	
6 Information Technology and Telecommunications	13	11	2	
7 Emergency Management	17	1	16	
8 Safety	10	1	9	Safety manual has been drafted; Department is requesting funding in FY 2006 for safety measures
9 Growth Management and Redevelopment	12	10	2	Engineering Division developed a design and specification manual and permit processing manual Staff has taken contract management training
10 Engineering Design and Mapping	20	16	4	
11 Contract Administration	13	8	5	
12 Right-of-way Management	8	1	7	
13 Utility Coordination	9	7	2	
14 Solid Waste Management	5	3	2	
15 Solid Waste Collection	4	0	4	Implemented consolidated pickup routes on January 31
16 Solid Waste Recycling and Reuse	11	7	4	Outsourced recycling program for cost savings and efficiency
17 Street Maintenance	15	2	13	Street cleaning plan was developed
18 Street Cleaning	8	0	8	Implemented "Snow Tracker" system, which identifies where work is being done and chemicals being used
19 Snow Removal and Ice Control	12	12	0	Comprehensive program is to addressing major areas of inflow and infiltration; sewer mapping project was implemented
20 Stormwater and Flood Management	19	7	12	
21 Wastewater Collection and Conveyance	14	3	11	
22 Traffic Operations	35	28	7	
23 Transit Operations	11	8	3	

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