

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: GABE OSBURN, ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF  
ENGINEERING SERVICES  
SUBJECT: PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
ADOPTION OF REVISED WATER, RECYCLED WATER AND  
SEWER STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATIONS AND  
DELEGATION OF APPROVAL AUTHORITY FOR FUTURE  
UPDATES TO THE BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Planning and Economic Development Department that the Council, by resolution, adopt the revised Water, Recycled Water and Sewer Standards and Specifications with an effective date 30 days from the date of adoption and delegate authority to the Board of Public Utilities to adopt future updates to the standards.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Water, Recycled Water and Sewer Standards and Specifications (standards) set forth the design polices and construction methods associated with additions and modifications to the public potable water, recycled water and sewer systems. The standards and specifications require routine updates to ensure that new installations and modifications are consistent with all regulatory requirements and are designed in a fashion that addresses long term maintenance needs. Delegating approval authority to the Board of Public Utilities will streamline the process of adopting future revisions and allow for a timelier response to identified maintenance issues or regulatory changes. The delegation of approval authority is consistent with the general policy and management authority over the water and sewer utilities granted to the Board under Section 25 of the Charter of the City of Santa Rosa.

BACKGROUND

The standards set forth the design guidelines and construction procedures that apply to all additions and modifications to the potable water, recycled water and sewer systems

ADOPTION OF REVISED WATER, RECYCLED WATER AND SEWER STANDARDS  
AND SPECIFICATIONS AND DELAGATION OF APPROVAL AUTHORITY FOR  
FUTURE UPDATES TO THE BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES  
PAGE 2 OF 4

performed under both private development and capital improvement projects. The standards are developed to maintain consistency within the specific utilities and provide a level of predictability to the construction and engineering communities that are tasked with modifying or extending the systems.

Pursuant to Santa Rosa City Code section 18-04.070, the City Council may, by resolution, adopt City standard plans and specifications.

The most recent update to the standards occurred in 2009 under City Council Resolution Number 27404. The revision included a change in potable water service sizes to ensure that appropriate volumes are being delivered to residential fire sprinkler systems and the allowance to utilize High Density Polyethylene pipe for new water services.

The 2009 update also implemented revisions to the sewer standards, with the most significant components being the requirement to install a two-way sewer cleanout and a backwater valve to help facilitate cleaning and maintenance operations.

#### PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

A standards update that included changes to all sections of the Design and Construction Standards, including water, recycled water and sewer, was brought before Council on June 3, 2014. Council voted to continue the item to the June 10, 2014 meeting due to technical difficulties associated with accessing the exhibits. Not all Council Members were able to access the digital attachments and review the specific proposal prior to the meeting. In addition, Council Members expressed a desire to see exhibits that clearly highlighted the proposed changes to the standards.

The item was placed on the June 10, 2014 Council agenda. Prior to presenting the item, staff requested a continuance to allow for additional time to complete the document formatting.

Council reviewed the item during the July 8, 2014 meeting and determined that the document should first be reviewed by the Planning Commission and the Design Review Board to uncover any potential inconsistencies with existing design criteria. The proposed revisions were not adopted.

#### ANALYSIS

Representatives from the Planning and Economic Development Department regularly meet with the Engineering Contractor's Association (ECA) and the North Coast Chapter of the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) to discuss challenges

ADOPTION OF REVISED WATER, RECYCLED WATER AND SEWER STANDARDS  
AND SPECIFICATIONS AND DELAGATION OF APPROVAL AUTHORITY FOR  
FUTURE UPDATES TO THE BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES  
PAGE 3 OF 4

associated with meeting the existing standards. ECA and ACEC have requested changes to the standards that focus on clarification of the specific requirements and, where appropriate, additional tolerances to allow for ease of construction.

The Water Department and the Planning and Economic Development Department have recognized the need to update the standards due to changes in materials and products, operation and maintenance requirements, regulatory requirements and design policies.

The proposed revisions to the standards were developed through a collaborative approach which involved input and participation from staff members in the Planning and Economic Development, Fire, and Water Departments, as well as members from ECA and ACEC.

Much of the proposed revision focuses on providing corrections to the existing language to reflect current material descriptions, department names, or industry terminology. Changes of this nature do not influence the specific requirements or the ultimate design of the improvement. A smaller percentage of the changes improve the current design and will result in a superior final product. All changes within this category have been reviewed by ECA and ACEC to uncover potential impacts on private development projects. All comments submitted by the two agencies as part of the final draft review were successfully addressed and no significant cost impacts were brought to the forefront.

The Water Department and the Planning and Economic Development Department have both identified the need to develop a program that will allow for a more routine and timelier processing of standard updates in the future. Standards will be reviewed on an annual basis and any needed changes will be aligned with industry specific code change cycles that typically adopt revisions on the first day of the calendar year. Aligning future updates with typical code change cycles will provide a level of predictability to the development community.

To support a timelier processing of future revisions, it is recommended that authority to approve standard updates be delegated to the Board of Public Utilities. Granting the authority to adopt standard revisions is consistent with Section 25 of the Charter of the City of Santa Rosa which grants the Board general policy authority and direction over the management and operation of the City's water and sewer utilities.

An additional recommendation is being presented that will allow the revised standards to go into effect 30 days from the date of adoption and only apply to new public improvement plans and encroachment permits submitted on or after the effective date. Creating a delay in the effective date and applying the revised standards to newly submitted applications avoids any redesign requirements for existing projects currently under review.

ADOPTION OF REVISED WATER, RECYCLED WATER AND SEWER STANDARDS  
AND SPECIFICATIONS AND DELAGATION OF APPROVAL AUTHORITY FOR  
FUTURE UPDATES TO THE BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES  
PAGE 4 OF 4

FISCAL IMPACT

Adoption of the revised standards will affect existing design policies, construction practices and allowable construction materials. Although the standards are typically designed to reduce long term maintenance costs associated with the water and sewer systems, the additional requirements may cause an increase in the design and construction costs associated with capital improvement projects. Additional costs will be determined through the scoping and design phases of capital projects and will be addressed through future budgetary discussions.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The revised standards, as well as the proposal to delegate approval authority and create a 30-day effective date, were presented to the Board of Public Utilities in a Study Session format on May 4, 2017. The Board further reviewed the proposal during the June 1, 2017 meeting and voted to formally recommend that Council adopt the proposed revisions to the standards, delegate approval authority to the Board for future standard updates and create an effective date 30 days from the date of adoption.

NOTIFICATION

“Not applicable.”

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Redlined Version – Draft Updated Water, Recycled Water and Sewer Standards and Specifications
- Attachment 2 - ACEC Letter of Support
- Attachment 3 - ECA Letter of Support
- Resolution/Exhibit A – Draft Updated Water, Recycled Water and Sewer Standards and Specifications

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