



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Item Number: 4

Agenda Date: August 16, 2024

In Control: Governance Committee Meeting

DEPARTMENT: Public Works Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Razi Hosseini

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Improvements to the Accuracy, Effectivity, and Expediency in Construction Projects

SUMMARY:

On June 4, 2024, Councilmember Dr. Sukh Kaur issued a Council Consideration Request (CCR) requesting consideration of improvements to the accuracy, effectiveness, and expediency of construction projects.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

According to the CCR, the City of San Antonio's intercity has some of the oldest infrastructure. Capital improvement construction projects are often delayed due to unforeseen utility conflicts, further impacting the public. Some of these utility conflicts and associated issues are primarily attributed to inaccurate, outdated, or non-existent as-built documentation for utilities such as sewer, water, underground electric, gas, cable TV, telephone and fiber lines.

The CCR requests comprehensive "as-built" drawings and documentation for publicly funded capital and rehabilitated street construction projects to resolve and minimize utility conflict issues through Subsurface Utility Engineering (SUE) or other effective and accurate technologies. As-built drawings and documentation show all utility joint-bid elements, dimensions, geometry location, and associated tasks for every capital project.

As part of keeping and maintaining these records, the CCR recommends that the City of San Antonio require:

- Each utility agency to maintain accurate as-built information that includes the horizontal and vertical locations, materials, and sizes of its infrastructure within the City right-of-way. This information shall be readily available to the City and developers/contractors during the permitting process.
- On publicly funded capital projects, the City of San Antonio will be the lead agency for identifying SUE requirements related to City-funded projects. Utility agencies will be responsible for reimbursing the City for all SUE-related expenses related to their respective infrastructure.
- Utility agencies to increase design and planning efforts and consider a more robust budgeting process for Subsurface Utility Engineering (SUE) or other effective, accurate technology to ensure accuracy, expediency, and efficiency on capital projects.
- All utilities within the City right-of-way are required to comply with the above-listed requirements.

ISSUE:

As part of the design and construction of capital construction projects, the Public Works Department coordinates with all utilities to identify the locations and associated work related to their infrastructure necessary to complete City projects.

The City's Right-of-Way (ROW) Ordinance requires users within the ROW to maintain accurate maps and records of their facilities, including both vertical and horizontal locations. The City, SAWS, and CPS keep as-built records as part of joint-bid projects. Although the City does not retain records of private utilities such as cable TV, telephone and fiber lines, the ROW Ordinance does require that private utilities maintain their own maps and records of their facilities.

In response to the CCR, staff is recommending the following enhancements to improve the accuracy and efficiency of construction projects:

- As part of the City's planning and design efforts, a more robust budget for SUE (Subsurface Utility Engineering) should be included for applicable city-funded capital projects. Additionally, the City should take the lead during the design process in verifying utility locations, including potholing or other SUE-appropriate methods.
- If a utility company uses the City's ROW and does not have as-built records, the utility company should be required to reimburse the City for using SUE-appropriate methods and technologies to confirm utility locations. Similarly, if the City discovers that the as-built records provided to the City are inaccurate, the utility company should be required to

reimburse the City for SUE-appropriate methods applied and any related construction delays.

- To accurately locate existing utilities, staff recommends using SUE-appropriate methods and other available technologies, such as GPR (Ground-Penetrating Radar).

FISCAL IMPACT:

For briefing purposes only.

ALTERNATIVES:

For briefing purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Public Works Department recommends referring this CCR to Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for further review.