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FROM: Ramiro A. Chavez, P.E. PgMP, Public Works Director/City Engineer
COPY: Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee;
Anna Le, Committee Staff Liaison
PRESENTER: Brennan Kidd, P.E. PTOE, Assistant Division Manager, Public Works
SUBJECT: City's Right-of-Way Design Manual Updates
DATE: October 23, 2024

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PRESENTATION TYPE:

Informational Briefing

SUMMARY:

Public Works Staff will present an overview of planned changes to the City's Right-of-Way Design Manual (Manual). The changes, which are proposed in several chapters of the Manual, will update the design guidance and requirements in the Manual to reflect current best practices for design and construction in the City's right-of-way.

BACKGROUND:

The City's Manual applies to the construction of all street and right-of-way (ROW) improvements including stormwater and wastewater construction, street lighting, traffic signalization, landscaping, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, and channelization. The Manual provides the minimum technical standards required to construct improvements within the City of Tacoma ROW and expectations for private property access to/from the ROW. The Manual is designed to be used in conjunction with other local, state, and federal rules, regulations, and design guidance as applicable to a given project or design aspect.

ISSUE:

The Manual's last significant update was completed in 2015 and released in early 2016 (with minor updates in 2018). Updates are required to reflect current best practices, and to effectively implement policies and plans that have been adopted since the last update, including Home in Tacoma, Vision Zero, and the Transportation Master Plan. Updating the Manual is also expected to support ongoing accreditation through the American Public Works Association (APWA) which has a "mid-term" review in 2025 and reaccreditation application and review in 2027. An overview of the changes was presented to the Transportation Commission in February 2024 and the Tacoma Permit Advisory Group was presented with a summary of potential changes and next steps in June 2024. Changes are proposed in each of the following chapters: Street Design, ROW/Site Permitting, Permit & Construction Plans Formatting, Tree & Vegetation Management, Stormwater/Wastewater Sewer Design, and Water System Plans Formatting.

ALTERNATIVES:

If any of the updates do not advance, the corresponding elements of the current Manual from 2016 will remain in effect.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The current updating of certain portions of the Manual is being performed under the administrative budgets of the departments involved; no additional budget is specifically allocated or required to complete this work.



RECOMMENDATION:

This is an informational briefing only. No Committee or Council decision points or actions required.