



DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTIONS &
NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

414/302-8400
414/302-8402 (Fax)

City Hall
7525 West Greenfield Avenue
West Allis, Wisconsin 53214

www.ci.west-allis.wi.us

May 2, 2011

Honorable Mayor Devine & Common Council Members
City of West Allis

RE: Proposed Reorganization of the Department of Building Inspections & Neighborhood Services

Dear Mayor Devine & Common Council Members:

I am proposing a two-fold reorganization of the Department of Building Inspections & Neighborhood Services.

- In 2011, reclassify the current job position of Plan Reviewer I to allow increased local commercial building plan reviews. The State of Wisconsin will allow a higher level of commercial building & HVAC plan review if we employ a person possessing a Professional Engineer Certification. Our current plan reviewer has now attained that status. I will reclassify the position, recognizing the higher level of education. The additional salary will be more than off-set positively by additional revenues that the City will receive for all plan reviews.
- Beginning with the 2012 Budget Year, reorganize the Department's responsibilities with the elimination of one position (Building Inspector/Zoning Inspector – retirement) and incorporate said job responsibilities to other positions in the Department and the Department of Development, Planning Division. Also, our Plumbing Inspector anticipates retiring, allowing for job review. The reorganization will in all probability result in a net financial cost reduction.

I submit the following regarding the two proposals:

- A. Proposal 1 – Increase Local Commercial Building Plan Review/Plan Reviewer I to Plan Reviewer II, Temporary Appointment.**
1. Currently, the City is designated as a "Certified City" by the State of Wisconsin to do building construction plan reviews for small building projects:
 - a. New building and additions totaling not more than 50,000 cubic feet (approximately 50 feet x 100 feet x 1 story).
 - b. Alterations affecting not more than 100,000 cubic feet (approx. 100 feet x 100 ft. of remodeled building area).
 - c. Inspections of all sized buildings regardless of size.
 2. I have applied to the State for designation as a "Second Class City" allowing plan review and inspection of all sizes and types of buildings. The designation will require the following:
 - a. Retain the services of a Professional Engineer or Architect who will perform or directly supervise plan examinations and inspections.
 - b. Provide the State with monthly reports of all projects.
 - c. Submit a portion of permit fees received (9-12%) back to the State of Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Safety & Buildings Division,
 3. The advantages to the City and our customers – property owners, business owners, architects and engineers - as a designated second class City is as follows:
 - a. **One Stop Shopping.** Currently, and excepting smaller plans, design professionals representing business and property owners must submit proposed commercial building construction and HVAC

- projects to the State for plan review, at a fee, prior to submittal to the City for a building permit. The new designation eliminates the State submittal and several weeks (time) for their review.
- b. **Cost Savings to Customers.** Plan submittal to the State requires a fee to be paid to the State. That fee will now be submitted to the City. Please note: Our Department currently also charges an additional plan review fee to review construction plans that have already been reviewed by the State for quality assurance and preparation for inspections. Our current plan review fee will be changed to reflect the substantial State review fee and the elimination of the basic local fee.
 - c. **Increased Revenue to the City.** While construction varies from year to year, the City can anticipate increased revenues exceeding the additional cost for personnel and administrative costs to manage the new delegation. A review of the most recent construction years (very low construction years) found the following potential revenues:
 - 2009 – 26 permits with \$27,400 in additional revenue to the City and over \$ 5,200 savings to the customer.
 - 2010 – 21 permits with \$24,800 in additional revenue to the City and over \$ 4,200 savings to the customer.
4. The Department's current Plan Reviewer, Ed Lisinski, has recently secured State of Wisconsin designation as a Professional Engineer (PE) allowing the City to apply for delegation as a Second Class City. The current job description as Plan Reviewer I requires updating to include the additional State designation responsibilities.
- a. **Plan Reviewer Reclassification.** The plan reviewer position is within the Union. The proposal is to reclassify the Plan Reviewer to recognize the higher-level minimum requirements necessary to perform the new duties (requires a Professional Engineer License and Bachelor's Degree). Due to the State's pending Budget Repair Bill affecting collective bargaining, the reclassification is on hold until a final decision is made by the State. Until said time, in order to recognize Mr. Lisinski for performing the higher-level duties, it is being recommended that the Assistant Director of Building Inspections salary classification be reinstated into the non-union salary ordinance and used to compensate Mr. Lisinski with out-of-classification pay. The effective date of said out-of-classification pay would be contingent upon, and effective with, the date of the State's approval of West Allis as a "Second Class City.
 - b. **Salary Adjustment.** The final approved salary for the position will be estimated to be similar to the Assistant Director of Building Inspections (a previous non-union position, but not currently filled). As state above, the new position will be paid out-of-classification pay while assuming (50%) additional lead work over department building inspectors and administration of State requirements for the new delegation. Depending on final salary review, I anticipate the additional salary cost for 2011 to be \$4,000 to \$7,000 for six months. Depending on construction permits for the balance of the year, I anticipate additional revenues under the new State delegation to be approximately \$10,000 to \$12,000. Revenue to exceed position cost is expected to be plus \$6,000 for the estimated six month period.
- B. Proposal 2 – Department Reorganization Beginning 2012.**
1. At the end of 2011, two department inspectors anticipate retirement. These retirements, with the proposed Plan Reviewer appointment change described in Proposal 1 will allow for a restructuring of the Department job descriptions and responsibilities, with an eye on creating efficiencies and cost savings for the City.
 2. Terry Tauschmann, Building Inspector I, will be retiring after over 27 years of service to the City. Inspector Tauschmann's job responsibilities are many and varied from zoning responsibilities to building inspection to complaint referral management. I propose elimination of the position by incorporation of job responsibilities to other positions within the Building Inspection Department and the Department of Development, Planning Division.
 3. I propose working with Department staff to develop a re-organization plan of building inspector and other inspector positions to consolidate Tauschmann's numerous responsibilities including, but not limited to: writing of garage, swimming pool and shed permits, mobile home permits; sign code enforcement and permits; annual sign maintenance inspections; yearly license renewals (used vehicles, liquor, second hand dealers, metal & gem dealers, mobile home parks, etc.); zoning complaints; permit zoning review/approval; business occupancy permit review/approval; property maintenance complaints; and other assigned responsibilities.
 4. I propose working with the Department of Development, Planning Division to review overlapping department responsibilities, to create better efficiencies between the department staff, for in-house workings as well as for property owners, business persons, developers and others working between departments. Areas for discussion will include, but are not limited to: Plan Commission approved site and landscaping reviews, bonding management and final inspection of projects; zoning approval of building

permits being processed; zoning review of business occupancy permits being processed and Board of Appeals zoning issues.

5. Mike Scherer, Plumbing Inspector II, will be retiring after over 31 years of service to the City. His job duties are limited by job description and State Codes regarding Plumbing Inspector requirements. The reorganization review will include this position.
6. I propose working with the department staff inspectors to develop a re-organization plan regarding overlapping of responsibilities for HVAC Permits and inspections for 1 and 2 family and other commercial permits.
7. I propose reintroducing the position of Assistant Director, with management responsibilities in anticipation of the Director's retirement in the near future.
8. I propose working with Department staff members and their union, requesting suggestions in all areas of department responsibilities to create efficiencies and cost savings for the City.
9. With Council approval of this rough concept for a re-organization plan, I will develop the 2012 budget accordingly.

Please accept this communication as conceptual. Your approval will allow me to proceed with other steps necessary to implement Proposal 1 and Proposal 2, each requiring your further and final approval.

Please feel free to contact me regarding your questions or additional re-organization suggestions.

Sincerely,



Ted Atkinson, Director
Dept. of Bldg. Insp. & Neighborhood Services
City of West Allis
phone: (414)302-8415
email: tatkinson@ci.west-allis.wi.us

cc: Paul Ziehler
John Stibal
Audrey Key