

Summary Report
Recommending Keeping Separate
the Public Works Department and the Engineering Department
of the City of West Allis

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City Administrative Officer, Clerk/Treasurer

November 17, 2009

**Keeping Separate
the Public Works Department and the Engineering Department
of the City of West Allis**

RECOMMENDATION

It is important to remember that people make the organization work; the organization does not make the people work. The structure is not the key; the City's processes, communications, and personalities all fit together to make the organization work well. Because the City has good processes, communications, and people, the current separate structure of the City works well now. If it works well now, why change it? The current City structure of a separate Public Works Department and a separate Engineering Department should be maintained. There is no great compelling reason to change when the benefit is minimal. Further, the current, separate structure does the following:

1. Fits our organization, its history and culture.
2. Continues operational efficiencies.
3. Continues direct level of service to elected officials, departments, employees, and the public (clearer approach).
4. Does not create another level of management.
5. Continues Engineering as a separate department that serves multiple departments and their competing priorities fairly and independently.
6. A seamless transition to a new Public Works Director, although desirable, should not be the determining reason to change structure.
7. An inside/outside recruitment process has the potential to bring in new ideas and fresh approaches with the hiring of a new Public Works Director.
8. Is likely to save at least \$75,000 in the indirect reorganization of duties in the Public Works Administrative Office.

The direct benefits of a separate structure are as follows: (1) Provides for more checks and balances. (2) Provides opportunities for a diversity of opinions and alternative approaches. (3) Maintains both departments at higher level of responsibility for focused points of views.

TIMING AND OTHER RELATED DISCUSSION

As mentioned at the August 10, 2009 joint meeting of the Administration & Finance Committee and Board of Public Works, there are four decision points that the Common Council needs to make. They are (in the order shown) as follows:

1. Primary – Organizational Structure
2. Secondary – other related:
 - a. Job Description
 - b. Salary Levels
 - c. Residency vs. Perimeter Requirements
 - d. Recruitment Policies and Procedures

Organizational Structure. First and foremost, the Common Council needs to decide on the organizational structure. Everything else flows from that first decision. (It is the recommendation of this report to keep the separate structure for the Public Works Department and the Engineering Department.)

Other Related:

Job Description and Salary Ranges. Assuming the Common Council agrees that the two departments should stay separate under the existing structure, there is no change necessary for job descriptions and salary ranges; current documentation already exists for these items.

Residency/Perimeter Location Requirements. The Common Council has an opportunity to open up the possibility of an internal candidate being eligible for the Public Works Director's job recruitment by extending the perimeter location provision to Department Heads (which would necessitate doing the same for Division Heads and Deputies/Assistants). A greater than 2% salary differential could be implemented in conjunction with such a change (e.g., 3-4-5% or 4-6-8%). Under existing normal requirements, an individual has 18 months to establish residency in the City and is eligible for X-month extensions.

Recruitment. Existing ordinance, policies, and procedures specify recruitment processes. The HR Division, under guidance from the City Administrative Officer, conducts the recruitment and presents the final list of qualified candidates to the Mayor. The Mayor, with the assistance of the City Administrative Officer, makes a final selection and recommendation to the Common Council. The Common Council must approve the Mayor's appointment.

In conducting the recruitment process, succession planning and future positions and promotions are valuable to keep in mind. The City will continue to face similar challenges in the next 5-10 years as current employees retire and the City attempts to fill vacant positions. Succession planning, training, and internal promotions will all play a larger, expanding role.

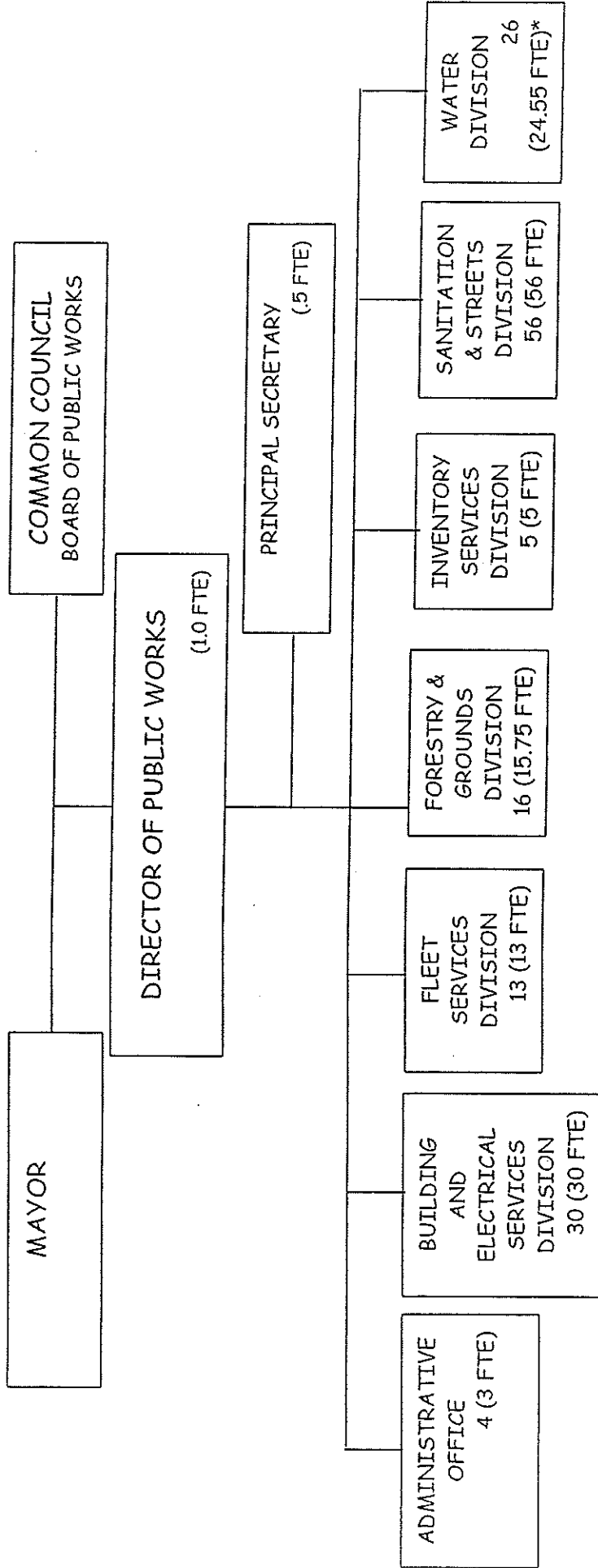
The recruitment effort for the new Director of Public Works should be run on both an internal and external basis to seek the best-qualified candidate. The HR division is fully equipped and qualified to conduct this recruitment. That effort will be challenging give the shortage of candidates looking to relocate currently (because of housing sale conditions) and due to other Public Works Director vacancies that already exist in the State. This Public Works Director recruitment also presents an opportunity for the City to further its affirmative action goals with respect to a minority and female candidates.

A few final comments on the type of candidate the City should be looking for in its new Public Works Director, including the following:

- Ability to manage projects.
- Relate well to elected officials, staff, and public.
- Posses a variety of skills (including soft, people skills).
- Have a good overall background, yet with some technical.
- Deal well with problems and emergencies.
- Good at administration, managing, motivating, supervising.
- Ability to handle multiple demands, increased productivity, and innovations.
- Good at planning, financing, and building.
- Be a mentor and encourage training.

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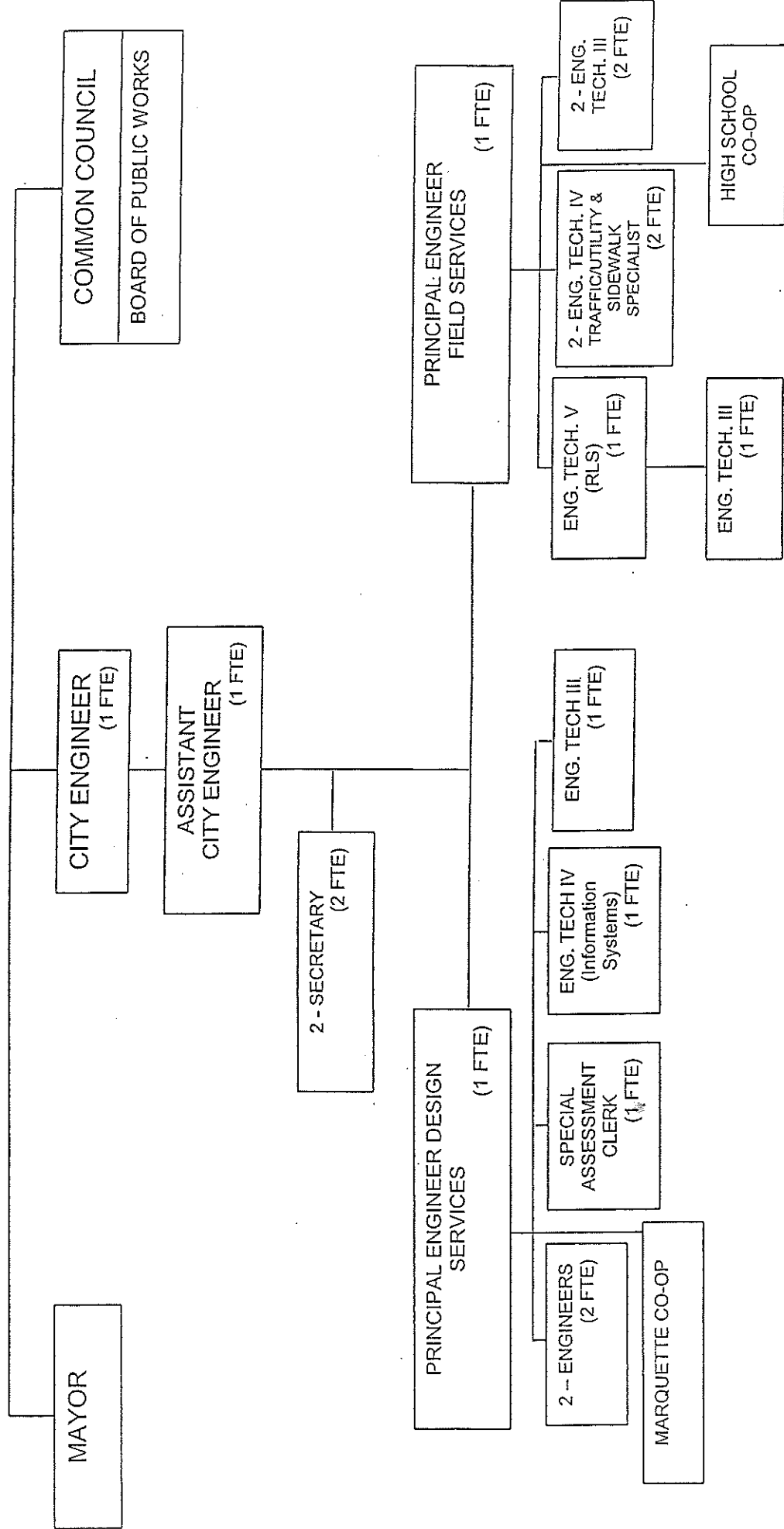
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
PUBLIC WORKS



*2.05 POSITIONS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE FINANCE DIVISION.

TOTAL POSITIONS: 152 (148.8 FTE)

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
ENGINEERING



TOTAL POSITIONS: 17 (17 FTE)