



To the Mayor and Members of the City Council

October 27, 2020

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SUBJECT: CLEARING ROW AND MINIMIZING LANE CLOSURES FROM CONSTRUCTION WORK

The purpose of this Informal Report is to update the City Council on current and proposed efforts to ensure City right-of-way (ROW) is cleared after construction/utility work is completed and lane closures associated with construction/utility work are minimized.

Background

The City periodically receives complaints from constituents regarding construction materials left on site long after work has been completed and prolonged traffic lane closures associated with construction work. Both negatively impact traffic resulting in unnecessary risk and nuisance to the traveling public.

Underlying Problems

Multiple departments permitting in multiple systems: When the City gets these type of complaints from the public, identification of the offending party is often difficult due to the variety of projects and contractors in City ROW. The City permits and inspects work by contractors within the ROW, whether initiated by the City, utility companies, or property owners. These permitting/inspection efforts are performed by multiple groups (involving three departments) for different types of work. The City currently utilizes multiple software systems/databases to document and issue permits.

Project delays: Sometimes citizens believe work has been completed when it actually has been delayed or prolonged in order to address other issues. There is a need to enhance communication protocols during construction to make sure the public is aware of delays when the project is still active.

Contract requirements: Private parkway and utility work are governed not only by permit requirements, but by requirements included in specific project contracts with the City. Permitting and contract documentation need to be evaluated and revised to emphasize the requirements to minimize lane closures and clear ROW at the completion of work.

Current Efforts

Permitting work of City crews: Recently, the City went live with changes to Accela to allow our internal operations crews to obtain permits. Issuing of permits to our internal crews will allow the City to better understand where and by whom work is being performed in the ROW.

Final Inspection Checklist: Last month, TPW Capital Delivery Division implemented the use of a Construction Final Inspection Checklist that contractors must complete when requesting final inspection. The checklist includes a section regarding clearing ROW, emphasizing what and when items need to be cleared from ROW at completion of work.

Consolidated permitting system: Staff has been directed to transition Street Use - Construction and other miscellaneous permits within the ROW to Accela to have a single permitting system for all of these associated permits. An initial meeting has been held with stakeholders including TPW, Development Services, Water, and Information Technology Solutions to discuss resources necessary to make this and other needed changes.



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Evaluation of Other Proposed Improvements

Other potential process improvement efforts have been identified to be evaluated, including the following:

- Mapping tool: Development of a mapping tool to identify current permit locations utilizing Accela and GIS data and a process for use by staff to better identify projects/contractors and which staff can best follow up on customer complaints to resolve issues quicker
- Improved permitting/contract requirements: Evaluation of current permitting and contract documentation to clearly state expectations/requirements for minimizing lane closures and clearance of all construction devices/materials as soon as possible on completion of work
- Potential for fines: Evaluation for potential of assessing fees/fines for contractors not clearing sites at completion of work, as well as for failure to open lanes per their permit

A follow-up Informal Report regarding progress on the above will be provided in early 2021, including proposed schedules for selected improvements.

Questions regarding this information can be directed to Michael Owen, P.E., City Engineer, Transportation and Public Works at 817-353-2630 or at michael.owen@fortworthtexas.gov.

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