



City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: SEPTEMBER 17, 2019
FROM: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT WARDS: ALL
SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF AN ORDINANCE TO ADD AN ADDITIONAL SIX-MONTH STREET OPENING PERMIT

ISSUE:

Adopt an Ordinance to add an additional six-month street opening permit.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council adopt an Ordinance to add an additional six-month street opening permit to support Build Riverside.

BACKGROUND:

In an effort to improve customer service and follow-up on the success of the award-winning Streamline Riverside, Community & Economic Development, Public Works, Fire, Riverside Public Utilities, and the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Departments created Build Riverside to implement measures, guidelines, and policies to improve development services and construction in the City. Staff have reached out to the development community to understand the challenges of construction projects in order to identify City processes for improvement. Having the development community as a partner, staff focused on solutions to facilitate development projects of all sizes. Build Riverside also focuses on projects in sensitive areas of the City such as schools, freeway interchanges, commercial centers, or heavily traveled arterial streets to minimize impacts to the community while ensuring a successful path forward to project completion.

DISCUSSION:

Contractors and developers indicate that the Public Works Department's 12-month street opening permit is not suited for smaller projects that are constructed within a 6-month period. As a result, contractors have requested a shorter permit time frame to improve the process to reconcile inspection service invoices and conduct bond release inspections. A 6-month street opening permit process would expedite project closeout which may reduce developer bond fees, insurance, and other project related costs.

Public Works' current practice requires construction management staff to inspect projects on a regular basis (can vary between daily or weekly, dependent on work operations) until the permit

is closed or expires. A permit or project may be closed by a developer or contractor request or closed by City staff upon permit expiration. City staff manages numerous projects and it is difficult to monitor project completion without input from the respective contractors. Therefore, if a developer’s project manager fails to inform City staff of project completion prior to permit expiration, a small project may amass unnecessary inspection services. This has resulted in some contractors receiving unanticipated inspection invoices for inspections that unbeknownst to City staff may not have been needed. In instances like these, a final invoice may not be received for months after project completion.

For example, Developer “A” pulls a 12-month street opening permit and work within the public right-of-way is completed in four months. The trigger to stop inspection activity would be: a) developer notifies City of project completion; or b) permit expiration. Assuming the developer does not notify the City immediately, inspections may continue for the remaining months or until the inspector initiates contact with the developer. In some instances, there may be work activity within the development site which may continue to trigger inspection services even though all work within the public right-of-way has been completed.

Adoption of a six month street opening permit would allow developers the option of choosing the shorter duration permit for the smaller projects. The Public Works Department is supportive of the 6-month permit as it would provide the following permit options to contractors and developers:

Table 1: Existing and Proposed Street Opening Permit Options

Type	Cost	Inspection Hours Included in the Permit Cost	Notes
1-Day	\$369.36	1	Equal to or less than 1 workday duration
12-Month	\$1,080.72	2	For larger development projects
*6-Month	\$1,080.72	2	Small to Mid-size project

* Proposed Permit

The 1-day permit is typically for short work operations within the public right-of-way. Although contractors may need to close a travel lane or sidewalk in order to facilitate work operations.

The Public Works Department recommends maintaining the same cost for the 6-month and 12-month permits as both require comparable staff time to process and each permit includes 2 hours of inspection services. The shorter permit time frame provides developers with a check point at 6 months. The advantage for the development community are savings realized through reduced bond and insurance costs and better management of inspection fees. Contractors obtaining the 6-month permit would be able to extend their permit at no cost in order to complete their respective work if needed.

If approved, the Public Works Department would track the number of 6-month permits issued and solicit feedback from the development community in order to consider changes to the fee structure, which changes would be brought before the City Council at a future date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no anticipated fiscal impact with the adoption of the 6-month street opening permit.

Prepared by: Kris Martinez, Public Works Director
 Certified as to

availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer

Approved by: Rafael Guzman, Assistant City Manager

Approved as to form: Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

Attachment: Ordinance