



Request for City Council Committee Action From the Department of Public Works

Date: October 25, 2005
To: Honorable Sandra Colvin Roy, Chair Transportation & Public Works Committee
Subject: Traffic Request Process for Disability Zones and No Turn On Red (NTOR)

Recommendation:

- a. Authorize City Engineer to administratively install residential Disability Zones.
- b. Authorize City Engineer to administratively install/remove No Turn On Red (NTOR) signs.

Previous Directives:

- May 26, 1995 -- Council revised the Committee process and implemented use of To The Record letters
- July 11, 2005 -- Council adopted disability policy and made removal of disability zones an administrative process

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Approved by:

Klara A. Fabry, P.E., City Engineer, Director of Public Works

Presenters in Committee: Jon Wertjes

Financial Impact (Check those that apply)

- X** No financial impact - or - Action is within current department budget.
(If checked, go directly to Background/Supporting Information)
- Action requires an appropriation increase to the Capital Budget
- Action requires an appropriation increase to the Operating Budget
- Action provides increased revenue for appropriation increase
- Action requires use of contingency or reserves
- Other financial impact (Explain):
- Request provided to the Budget Office when provided to the Committee Coordinator

Background/Supporting Information

On May 20, 2005 Public Works held a study session and presented new approaches to addressing traffic services and requests. Public Works has been examining and seeking ways to efficiently provide service and reduce response time for constituent requests.

Disability Zones

The new 311 system is expected to allow Public Works to reduce the processing time for Disability Zones (parking and transfer) requests. In the past year, Public Works has processed 159 Disability Zone changes. Currently, citizens call Public Works to request the form, it is mailed, filled out, and sent back. This process takes about 2-4 days. In addition, virtually all disability zone requests are granted and the approval process can be improved. Public Works intends to modify the Disability Zone procedure as follows:

- 1) 311 takes a request over the phone and Disability Parking form is filled out (Exhibit A – Existing disability zone form)
- 2) Electronic form is submitted to Public Works for action
- 3) Public Works reviews the request and conducts any necessary field observations
- 4) Obtain approvals:
 - a) If a residential property request, Public Works will issue the necessary administrative approval, carbon copy the Council Ward office and the requestor, and then issue a work order.
 - b) If a commercial/business property request, Public Works will prepare the typical “To The Record” letter to gain Ward office approval. After the approval Public Works will carbon copy the requestor and issue a work order.
- 5) Public Works will install the signs after the Gopher State One-Call underground locates and the necessary field scheduling/mobilization have occurred (no less than 3 working days).
- 6) Public Works will continue to report the Disability Zones changes in the Quarterly Traffic Report.

The two key procedure changes are that city will no longer mail the form seeking a requestor signature and not obtain “To The Record” approvals for residential disability zones. Currently, Public Works sees no reason to obtain a signature on the request form. Also, virtually all the residential disability zones are installed. If a Ward office determines that Public Works should consider some unique circumstance, the carbon copy notice along with the underground locate time (no less than 3 working days) provides for any discussion or changes to be made prior to installation.

Overall, these changes are expected to reduce the process time by 3-7 days due to eliminating the cited mailing and approval steps allowing the public to receive improved, prompt service. In addition, Public Works will be posting both the procedure and form on the web page.

In July 2003 the City Council made the removal of Disability Zones an administrative process. Public Works recommends making the installation of Disability Zones for residential properties an administrative procedure as cited above and authorizing the City Engineer to take such action. Commercial/business Disability Zones will continue to use the “To the Record” process.

No Turn On Red (NTOR)

Public Works has researched and developed implementation guidelines to install and remove No Turn On Red (NTOR) signs throughout the City. Currently, the City has over 500 NTOR signs. Past practice has resulted in inconsistency, overuse, disregard by the traveling public, and in numerous cases no safety improvement. In addition, there are numerous locations where NTOR signs delay transit buses thus increasing their travel time.

Public Works plans to use the provisions and guidelines set forth in the white paper titled “No Turn On Red Sign Implementation Guidelines” (Exhibit B) dated October 18, 2005. The key five criteria to be used to install/remove NTOR signs are as follows:

- Sight distance is restricted that would not allow for a safe Right Turn on Red/Left Turn on Red manners
- Unique intersection geometrics such as five leg intersections, skewed angles, etc.
- Crash Analysis determines NTOR signs will reduce crashes
- School crossing needs are determined
- Other unusual /special circumstances such as LRT, unique pedestrian movements, protected turn movements, etc.

Public Works has created a draft form (Exhibit C – draft No Turn on Red Request form) that will be used by 311 and Public Works for NTOR requests. The guidelines and form will be important to give clear and consistent direction for the public and Public Works when implementing these NTOR signs. Public Works will be posting the guidelines, procedure, and form on the web page.

Similar to the previously discussed Disability Zones, Public Works intends to modify the procedures as follows:

- 1) 311 takes a request over the phone and NTOR form is filled out
- 2) Electronic form is submitted to Public Works for action
- 3) Public Works reviews the request and conducts any necessary field observations
- 4) Public Works will issue the necessary NTOR administrative approval, carbon copy the Council Ward office and requestor, and then issue a work order
- 5) Public Works will install the signs after the Gopher State One-Call underground locates and the necessary field scheduling/mobilization have occurred (no less than 3 working days)
- 6) Public Works will continue to report the NTOR changes in the Quarterly Traffic Report

The key change involves the “To The Record” approval for NTOR signs. If a Ward office determines that Public Works should consider some unique circumstance, the carbon copy notice along with the underground locate and scheduling time (no less than 3 working days) provides for any discussion or changes to be made prior to installation. In addition, Public Works expects that the clear guidelines will reduce numerous questions about when and where to implement NTOR resulting in improved response time.

Overall, these changes are expected to reduce the process time by 3-5 days due to eliminating the approval steps and the focused guidelines allowing the public to receive improved, prompt service.

Public Works recommends making the installation/removal of NTOR signs an administrative procedure as cited above and authorizing the City Engineer to take such action..

Attachments:

- Exhibit A – Existing Disability Zone form and questionnaire
- Exhibit B – No Turn On Red Sign Implementation Guidelines
- Exhibit C – Draft No Turn on Red Request form