Staff Report

Council Meeting Date: February 22, 2022

Subject: Standard Specifications and Design Manual Update Process

Staff Resource(s): Jade Dundas, Capital Projects Director, Ken Putnam Transportation Director

Action Requested: Adoption of amendments to Chapter 1 adding Section 1-11 to the City of Asheville's General Ordinances, amending Chapter 7 Section 7-2-5 of the City of Asheville's Unified Development Ordinance and authorization, through Resolution, for the City Engineer to approve future changes to the Standard Specifications and Details Manual ("SSDM").

Background:

- The Manual was adopted by City Council resolution on May 13, 2014.
- The manual provides detailed standards that govern the construction of projects that occur within the City's Right of Way.
- Several changes have been made to the manual since its adoption.
- The changes have been formally adopted through City Council resolution.
- As currently written, the SSDM requires that all amendments be approved by the City Council.
- The standards must be kept current with changes to building code and other changes that affect the relevance of the document.
- Allowing City staff to modify the manual through the authority of the City Engineer will ensure that it is kept up to date and ensures the greatest flexibility in responding to change.
- Future amendments will be developed through an internal work group.
- A review of proposed changes will also be evaluated by a group of local development professionals before being officially approved by the City Engineer.
- The City Code does not currently define the SSDM or explain the SSDM process.
- Since the SSDM is an important document upon which decisions related to development are made, it is recommended that the City Code be amended to include the proposed amendments to Chapter 1 and Chapter 7 of the City Code to formally add references to the SSDM.
- Several other communities in North Carolina have made similar revisions to the process for reviewing and making changes to their standards and detailed guidance documents.

Council Goal(s):

- Safety community

Committee(s):

- None

Pro(s):

- Allowing the City Engineer to authorize changes after having been reviewed by internal and external partners will allow for small changes to be made more frequently.
- Staff will not wait for large comprehensive changes to the document before seeking revisions.
- Small changes can be made incrementally ensuring that the document is kept consistent with changing standards and information.

Con(s):

- This adds an additional responsibility to the work of the City Engineer.
- Although initially there may be a number of changes to be made, this increase will not last long and will become steady over time.

Fiscal Impact:

- There is no financial impact to this change.

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt amendments to Chapter 1 adding Section 1-11 to the City of Asheville's General Ordinances, amending Chapter 7 Section 7-2-5 of the City of Asheville's Unified Development Ordinance section of the General Ordinance and authorizing , through resolution, the City Engineer to approve future changes to the Standard Specifications and Details Manual.

Attachment(s)

- Ordinances
- Resolution

ORDINANCE NO. _____

ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 1 OF THE ASHEVILLE CITY CODE TO ADD A NEW SECTION 1-11 TO INCORPORATE THE CITY'S STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS AND DETAILS MANUAL INTO THE CODE BY REFERENCE

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Asheville has the authority pursuant to Article II of the City Charter, to adopt changes to its General Ordinances; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

Section 1:

Chapter 1, General Provisions, of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Asheville is hereby amended as follows:

(a) Add new Section 1-11. Standard Specifications and Details Manual to read as follows:

Sec. 1-11. Standard Specifications and Details Manual.

(a) The City of Asheville Standard Specifications and Details Manual (Specifications) adopted by the City Council on May 13, 2014 and as may be amended from time to time, is hereby incorporated by reference into the Code of Ordinances. An official copy of the Specifications shall be kept on file in the office of the City Clerk.

b) The purpose of the Specifications is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of City citizens by regulating construction of infrastructure such that infrastructure is safe, reliable, and consistent throughout the City.

c) Modifications to the Standards may be granted through the process as specified in the Manual.

(3)The City Engineer is authorized to adopt future revisions to the Manual. Revisions will be reviewed through the process as specified in the Manual. An official copy of the Manual including any amendments will be maintained in the City Clerk's office.

Section 2: If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance is, for any reason, held to be invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance. The City Council hereby declares that it would have passed this ordinance, and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, or phrases be declared invalid.

Section 3: All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

Section 4: This ordinance will become effective upon adoption.

Read, approved and adopted this 22nd day of February, 2022.

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City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

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City Attorney

ORDINANCE NO. _____

ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 7, SECTION 7-2-5 TO INCLUDE THE STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS AND DETAILS MANUAL IN THE UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE LIST OF DEFINITIONS

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Asheville has the authority pursuant to Article II of the City Charter, to adopt changes to its General Ordinances;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

Section 1:

Chapter 7 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Asheville is hereby amended as follows:

a. Amend section 7-2-5. Definitions as follows:

(1) Add the following definitions to section 7-2-5 to read:

Standard Specifications and Details Manual means the Standard Specifications and Details Manual (herein "SSDM") that the City Council of the City of Asheville first approved and adopted on May 13, 2014. The purpose of the SSDM is to provide design standards and technical specifications for construction activities related to public safety, streets, sidewalks, water systems, storm drainage, parking lots, and similar improvements. The SSDM sets forth the City's minimum construction standards that apply to projects on both public and private property and also sets forth a process for approval of alterations or modifications to these standards. The SSDM is periodically updated by the City Engineer so that it continues to reflect generally accepted professional technical standards. An official updated copy of the SSDM is kept on file with the City Clerk and may also be viewed on the City's Development Services website.

Section 2: If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance is, for any reason, held to be invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance. The City Council hereby declares that it would have passed this ordinance, and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, or phrases be declared invalid.

Section 3: All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

Section 4: This ordinance will become effective upon adoption.

Read, approved and adopted this 22nd day of February, 2022.

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City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

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City Attorney

RESOLUTION NO. 22-_____

RESOLUTION AMENDING THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS AND DETAILS MANUAL TO AUTHORIZE ALL FUTURE REVISIONS AND UPDATES OF THE MANUAL TO BE MADE BY THE CITY ENGINEER

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Asheville previously approved a Standard Specifications and Details Manual on May 13, 2014 (Resolution 14-95), as amended on June 9, 2015, June 14, 2016 and April, 9, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Manual is to provide design guidelines and technical specifications for construction activities related to public safety, streets, sidewalks, water systems, storm drainage, parking lots and pavement structure; and

WHEREAS, the Manual sets forth the City's minimum construction standards and is applicable to projects on both public and private property; and

WHEREAS, the Manual is intended to be amended as needed to include new emerging technologies; and

WHEREAS, the Manual is intended to be periodically updated so that it continues to reflect generally accepted professional technical standards and specifications and City policies;

WHEREAS, Section 1A.07 of the Standard Specifications and Details Manual requires City Council approval of all revisions and updates to the standards and specifications based on recommendations from the City Manager or his/her designee; and

WHEREAS, it is hereby agreed that a more efficient process for ensuring that the Manual is regularly updated to reflect generally accepted professional technical standards and specifications is to delegate the authority to review and approve all revisions and updates to the standards and specifications to the City Engineer in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Manual;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

The City Council of the City of Asheville approves an amendment to Section 1A.07 of the City's Standard Specifications and Details Manual to delegate the authority to review and approve all revisions and updates of the Manual to the City Engineer.

Read, approved and adopted this the 22nd day of February, 2022.

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City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

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City Attorney