Council Meeting of
February 28, 2006

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the City Council
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the Council:

SUBJECT: Proposed Modifications to the Organizational Structure of the Public Works Department – Engineering Division

Expenditure: $ 14,500

RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager recommends that the City Council approve the following changes to the organizational structure of the Public Works Department – Engineering Division:

1. Reallocate one vacant position of Assistant Engineer to an additional position of Associate Engineer; and

2. Reallocate one vacant position of Assistant Engineer to an additional position of Engineering Technician III.

Funding

The additional cost to reallocate these positions would be $14,500 annually and would be charged to various Public Works Capital projects included in the adopted Capital Budget.

BACKGROUND

The Public Works Department's Engineering Division is responsible for planning, budgeting, designing, and managing the construction of projects included in the City's Capital Improvement Program. These projects involve the rehabilitation and/or maintenance of the City's existing roadways and bridges; traffic signals; signs, striping, curb painting and pavement markings; storm drains, channels and retention basins; sanitary sewer and water system facilities; water reservoirs and pump stations.

As a part of the 2005-07 budget, the Division temporarily postponed the hiring of the new Deputy Public Works Director/City Engineer position and deleted one Project Manager position to help achieve cost savings. The duties of the Deputy Public Works Director/City Engineer are essential to the Public Works Department and Engineering Division. Therefore, the duties have been temporarily assigned to the Public Works Director and two engineering staff members, in addition to their existing work assignments. Furthermore, the deletion of a Project Manager position also has caused the reassignment of projects to existing engineering staff.

ANALYSIS

As a result of the additional work load and pending staff retirements during the current fiscal year, the Public Works Department is concerned with the ability to timely complete ongoing projects. Therefore, the Department has proposed the following solutions:

Reallocate one vacant Assistant Engineer position to an additional position of Associate Engineer

The Department proposes to reallocate one vacant Assistant Engineer position to an Associate Engineer position. This reallocation will allow the Department to assign two Associates to each of the four project engineering design squads, providing the necessary experience and manpower within each squad to produce and manage equal amounts of work. The reallocation will not modify the work tasks performed by each squad. It will, however, provide the additional work experience in the engineering ranks to help ensure timely completion of ongoing projects. This position also provides additional advancement opportunities for Assistant Engineers.

Reallocate one vacant Assistant Engineer position to an additional position of Engineering Technician III

The reallocation would provide additional drafting support for the Engineering Division and increase its ability to prepare design plans and specifications with existing staff. It also enables the Department to quickly prepare design plans when responding to maintenance emergencies. This past year has seen several relatively small failures to the City's drainage infrastructure that have required immediate attention. The trend is likely to continue as the older corrugated metal storm drains age and deteriorate. The backlog on most of these and other projects is the ability to create engineering plans that are part of the bid package. Additional drafting personnel will help reduce this backlog.

Overview of current and proposed position allocation – Engineering Division

The proposed organizational changes will assist the Public Works Department in its effort to timely complete ongoing capital projects. The additional cost to reallocate these positions would be charged to various Public Works capital projects and not impact the Department's operating budget. With Your Honorable Body's concurrence, the Department would anticipate making the proposed organizational changes to the Engineering Division in the third quarter of fiscal year 2005-06. The Department also will soon be seeking an additional reallocation of an additional position of an Engineering Technician III. This will, however, be brought before Council as opportunity occurs through future vacancies.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Giordano

Mary K. Giordano
Assistant City Manager

CONCUR:

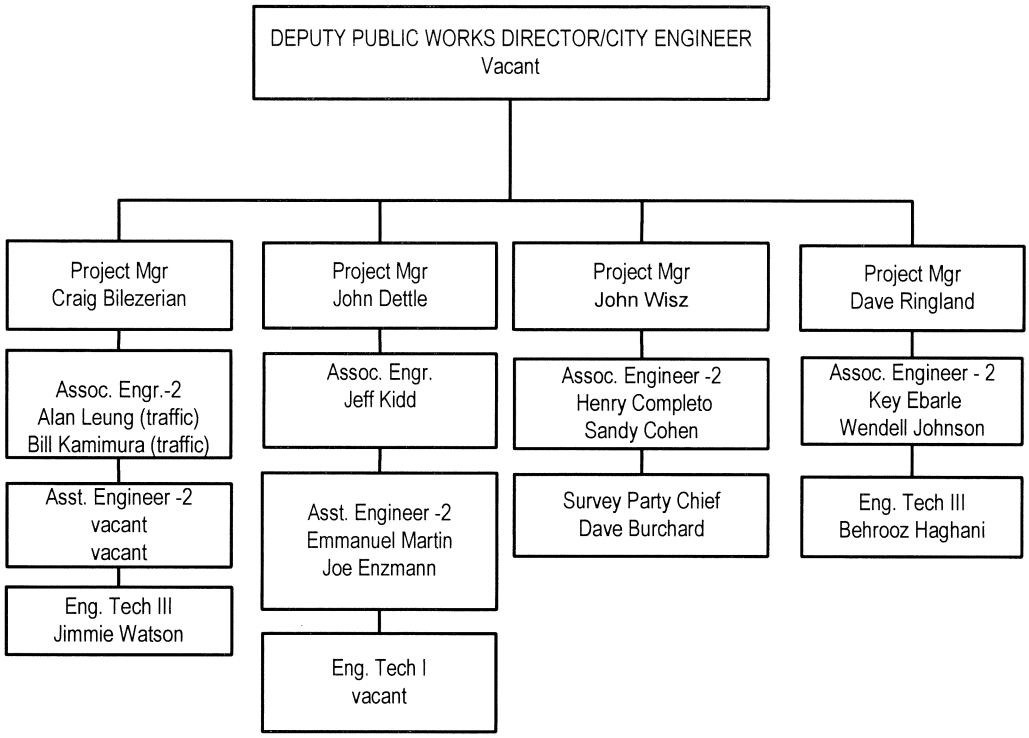
Robert J. Beste
Public Works Director

LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager

Attachment: A. Existing Engineering Division - Organization Chart
B. Proposed Engineering Division - Organization Chart

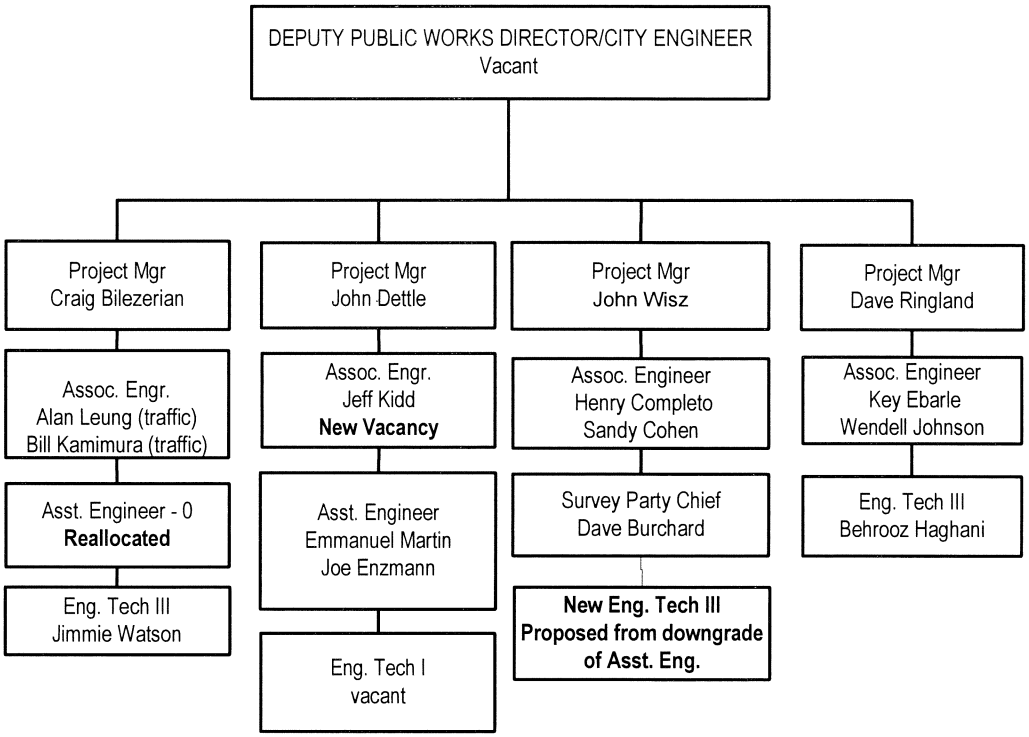
ATTACHMENT A

Existing Engineering Division



ATTACHMENT B

Proposed Engineering Division



Note: Changes are indicated by bold text