

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Public Works		(2) MEETING DATE August 22, 2006		(3) CONTACT/PHONE Richard Marshall Development Services Engineer (805) 781-5280	
(4) SUBJECT Submittal of Resolution Approving Update of the Public Improvement Standards (Clerk's File)					
(5) SUMMARY OF REQUEST The Department of Public Works has completed a comprehensive update of the Public Improvement Standards, which provide design and construction requirements for improvements which are conditions of approval for land use and subdivision approvals throughout the unincorporated area.					
(6) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is our recommendation that your Board adopt the attached Resolution adopting the Public Improvement Standards of the San Luis Obispo County Department of Public Works.					
(7) FUNDING SOURCE(S) Public Works Internal Service Fund		(8) CURRENT YEAR COST \$50,000		(9) ANNUAL COST N/A	
(10) BUDGETED? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> N/A					
(11) OTHER AGENCY/ADVISORY GROUP INVOLVEMENT (LIST): Planning & Building, Public Health/Environmental Health Services, General Services/Parks, California Division of Forestry/County Fire Department					
(12) WILL REQUEST REQUIRE ADDITIONAL STAFF? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, How Many? _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Term _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Contract _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Help _____					
(13) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) <input type="checkbox"/> 1st, <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd, <input type="checkbox"/> 3rd, <input type="checkbox"/> 4th, <input type="checkbox"/> 5th, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All			(14) LOCATION MAP <input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		(15) Maddy Act Appointments Signed-off by Clerk of the Board N/A
(16) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est. _____) <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Board Business (Time Est. _____)			(17) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resolutions (Orig + 4 copies) <input type="checkbox"/> Contracts (Orig + 4 copies) <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances (Orig + 4 copies) <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		
(18) NEED EXTRA EXECUTED COPIES? <input type="checkbox"/> Number: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A			(19) APPROPRIATION TRANSFER REQUIRED? <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5th's Vote Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		
(20) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) N/A			(21) W-9    N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes		(22) Agenda Item History <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A    Date _____
(23) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW  <p align="center"><i>OK Leslie Brown</i>      <i>8-22-06</i></p>					

Reference: 06AUG22-C-1

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# SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Richard Marshall, Development Services Engineer *RSM*

**VIA:** Glen Priddy, Deputy Director *GP*

**DATE:** August 22, 2006

**SUBJECT:** Update of the Public Improvement Standards (Clerk's File), All Districts

## Recommendation

It is our recommendation that your Board adopt the attached Resolution adopting the Public Improvement Standards of the Department of Public Works.

## Discussion

The Department of Public Works has completed the preparation of a comprehensive update of the Public Improvement Standards, dated August, 2006. The completed document has been approved by the ranking professional engineer within the Department, Deputy Director Glen Priddy, upon recommendation from Richard Marshall, also a professional engineer and manager of the Development Services Division, which performed the majority of the update effort.

The Standard Improvement Specifications and Drawings (the "Standards") were originally adopted by the Board of Supervisors on November 18, 1963. This document is the daily workhorse of the Public Works Department, as it provides the design and construction requirements which are referred to in conditions of approval for nearly all land use and subdivision approvals throughout the unincorporated area. Comprehensive revisions of the Standards were adopted in 1975 and 1984. Since that time, various elements of the Standards have been updated individually. Examples of the latter include the creation of, and establishment of policies for use of, the gravel road standard and the equestrian/pedestrian path standard. Other recent changes have

*B-20  
2*

addressed requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for sidewalks and curb ramps, and updated the requirements for higher-volume streets to incorporate the potential for center medians for landscaping and access management.

For several years, it has been the objective of the Public Works Department to prepare another comprehensive update of the Standards. Although individual items have been updated as they reached a level of critical need, many other topics have needed to be addressed as well. We have been handling many of these topics informally through Department policies, or through referral to other agencies' requirements, but it is desirable to bring all topics of the Standards up to date, and consolidate all current requirements in one book. Now that this comprehensive update has been completed, staff is resolved to prepare future updates on a more frequent (and therefore more efficient) annual basis.

**Book Title.** Since 1963, the Standards' complete title has been "Standard Improvement Specifications and Drawings." However, the County Standards also include a third major element: how to design the various elements of the infrastructure. With this update, we propose to simplify the title into one "umbrella" term. The attached Resolution contains language which makes the connection between existing references to the old title and the new title which is proposed with this update.

**Process.** A staff committee prepared the first draft update of the Standards, during the past year. Upon completion, a draft was prepared which was circulated to other County Departments involved in the review of land development, as well as a representative sample of local engineering and surveying firms which prepare many of the designs we review with these Standards. We received excellent comments back from the agencies and local firms, and have incorporated their suggestions, where feasible, into the final document.

**Updated Subjects.** Following is a brief list of the highlights of the update in each section:

1. Improvement Plan Preparation – Our objective is to provide clear direction to our customers, the professional design community, on our requirements for plans layout and format, as well as our overall review process.
2. Site Preparation and Earthwork – This topic has never been included in the Standards before, even though we routinely review it. This new section collects all the standard references for this topic, such as Caltrans Standard Specifications and the California Building Code, for convenient reference.
3. Roadways – We are introducing a third category of standard street improvement, to be used in commercial and industrial areas. The standard is characterized by lower design speeds which are appropriate in such environments. Also included are substantially expanded sections on the requirements for installation of landscaped center medians, and the use of recycled materials in road base.

B-20  
3

4. Road Edges – There are so many important aspects of the roadway environment which are really components of the road edges, that we have separated them into their own section. These include items which enhance neighborhood livability such as pedestrian facilities, parking facilities, bus turnouts, and community mailboxes; as well as items of importance to public safety such as sight distance, pedestrian crossings and guardrails.
5. Storm Drainage – We have improved the requirements for handling of storm runoff from developed land, in response to recent concerns about drainage and flooding throughout the unincorporated areas.
6. Water Supply – Substantial changes have been made to bring the County Standards into full compliance with current requirements for fire flow and safe drinking water.
7. Wastewater Disposal – Changes in this area deal with current health and safety requirements for proper separation of sanitary sewer lines from water supply lines, as well as current testing requirements to insure proper installation and reduce long-term maintenance costs.
8. Utilities – This section deals with “dry” utilities such as electric, phone, cable TV and gas. It collects current requirements from various sources and places them in a more convenient format.
9. Traffic Control – This is another new section of the Standards. It includes requirements for work zone traffic control, to insure the safety of both workers and the traveling public; as well as specifications for the installation of permanent traffic controls such as signs, pavement striping and traffic signals.
10. Project Completion – As with the first section, our objective is to provide clear direction to our customers about the requirements and process for completing a public improvement project.

Appendix – This area contains significant reference materials which either apply to multiple sections of the main document, or are too voluminous to appropriately fit within the main book. Highlights include policies for tree protection, crosswalk installation and clearance requirements for County rights-of-way.

Standard Construction Drawings – The drawings have all been re-drawn to make them more legible and bring them up-to-date with current requirements. They are organized in sections which correspond to the sections of the main document.

Once the Public Improvement Standards are adopted by your Board, the entire document will be made available on the internet, thus improving the convenience and usefulness for our customers.

B-20  
4

## Other Agency Involvement/Impact

The proposed update of the Standards has been reviewed by the Departments of Planning & Building, Public Health/Environmental Health Services, General Services/Parks and the California Division of Forestry/County Fire Department. The office of County Counsel reviewed the attached Resolution.

We are grateful for the thorough and valuable review provided by the following local design professionals: EDA Design Professionals, RRM Design Group, TEC Civil Engineering Consultants, Wallace Group and Westland Engineering.

## Financial Considerations

Approximately \$50,000 was spent in staff resources to update the Standards. This has been accommodated within the overhead budget for the Public Works Department Budget. It is anticipated that the revisions proposed will represent substantial savings in the future. County budgets should realize savings due to reduced maintenance costs over the life of the facilities which are constructed or installed according to the new specifications. Developers should realize savings in time and design costs due to a clearer and more comprehensive presentation of County requirements, thus reducing the number of cycles in the plancheck process.

## Results

It is the recommendation of the Public Works Department that the proposed update of the Standards will address all of the County's stated goals, as follows:

**A Safe Community.** The update of the Standards will provide for improved safety for the public utilizing the constructed roads and other infrastructure which is constructed according to these specifications.

**A Healthy Community.** A particular area of concern in this update process has been to bring County standards into compliance with the latest health-related requirements for water supply and wastewater disposal.

**A Livable Community.** The update clarifies and improves requirements for pedestrian and bicycle facilities as well as multiuse paths, tree preservation, surface and groundwater quality, landscaping requirements which enhance community aesthetics while protecting traffic safety, and many other enhancements to livability.

**A Prosperous Community.** As noted above, it is our objective that these new Standards will result in long-term savings to both County maintenance and operations budgets and to project developers.

B-20  
5

**A Well-Governed Community.** One of the objectives of this update has been to collect a variety of new federal and state requirements, current industry-standard practices and miscellaneous Department policies into one convenient and useful reference document.

Attachments: Resolution  
Public Improvement Standards (Clerk's File)

File: Surveyor – Improvement Standards

Reference: 06AUG22-C-1

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B-20  
6