

MEETING DATE: 01/14/26

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Subject: Organizational Structure

Background Summary: Trout

The upcoming retirement of the City Engineer presents an opportunity to reassess the City of Charles City's organizational structure to better align departmental responsibilities, improve operational efficiency, and ensure appropriate management focus across City functions.

Historically, the City Engineer position has provided engineering expertise as well as support for community development, planning, and zoning functions. In addition, there is consistent operational overlap between these functions and code enforcement activities, which are currently managed within the Public Safety Department. Code enforcement responsibilities account for a significant portion of the Public Safety Director's time that could otherwise be dedicated to police and fire oversight.

To address these overlapping responsibilities, staff proposes the formation of a new Development Services Department. This department would consolidate community development, planning and zoning, development review, building inspections, engineering coordination, and code enforcement functions under a single department.

The proposed department would be managed by a Development Services Director reporting directly to the City Administrator. The Director would be responsible for overseeing planning and zoning activities, development review and permitting, building inspections, code enforcement, floodplain management, and related regulatory programs. The position would also provide professional guidance to City Council, boards and commissions, serve as staff liaison to the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Adjustment, and advise on short- and long-range planning efforts, including the Comprehensive Plan and Capital Improvement Program.

Establishing a Development Services Department would better align related functions, improve coordination and accountability, reduce operational strain on the Public Safety Department, and ensure consistent management of development, planning, and regulatory responsibilities. Similar department structures are utilized by many comparable cities to coordinate planning, development, engineering, and regulatory functions under a single administrative framework.

Attached for reference is a draft job description for the Development Services Director and a table illustrating the shift in duties between the current organizational structure and the proposed changes.

City of Charles City

Development Services Director

Department: Development Services

FLSA Status: Exempt

Reports To: City Administrator

Union: No

Civil Service: No

Class Summary

Performs a variety of supervisory, administrative, and professional work in the development, coordination, and implementation of community development, planning, zoning, development review, building code administration, engineering, code enforcement programs and services for the City of Charles City.

Essential Duties

1. Plans, organizes, and supervises development review, building, housing, plan check, inspection, and code compliance activities. Administers and enforces construction, zoning, housing, safety, floodplain, and maintenance codes and ordinances; oversees inspections, contractor licensing, and permitting activities; and ensures compliance with approved plans and conditions.
2. Plans, organizes, supervises, and evaluates the functions and activities of Planning and Zoning, Building Inspections, Code Enforcement, and related development services functions.
3. Directs, hires, supervises, evaluates, trains, and disciplines assigned staff; establishes work priorities and performance expectations; and fosters a professional, customer-service-oriented work environment.
4. Provides leadership and direction in the development, implementation, and maintenance of short- and long-range plans and projects, including, but not limited to, the Comprehensive Plan, zoning and subdivision regulations, annexation studies, land use plans, transportation studies, stormwater management planning, downtown redevelopment initiatives, and Capital Improvement Program coordination.
5. Supervises the evaluation of land use and development proposals for conformity with applicable City, State, and Federal laws, regulations, and adopted plans; evaluates development impacts and prepares recommendations for City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, and other boards or commissions.
6. Serves as the primary staff liaison to the Planning and Zoning Commission, Board of Adjustment, and other assigned boards or commissions. Coordinates meeting agendas

and materials, attends meetings, and provides professional staff support and recommendations.

7. Provides professional planning, development, and regulatory advice to City Council, boards, commissions, and City staff. Prepares and presents studies, reports, and recommendations; delivers public and private presentations; and supports informed decision-making.
 8. Responds to inquiries from residents, developers, contractors, and other stakeholders regarding planning, zoning, development regulations, and City policies. Resolves complex development-related issues and disputes while maintaining positive public relations.
 9. Maintains effective working relationships with City departments, consulting engineers, contractors, County, State, and Federal agencies, and professional organizations. Serves as the City's designated administrator for the Community Rating System (CRS) and floodplain management program; ensures compliance with FEMA, NFIP, and state floodplain regulations; coordinates required documentation, audits, and reporting; and oversees ADA sidewalk compliance and related regulatory programs.
 10. Oversees the development, maintenance, and accuracy of planning, zoning, and community development records, databases, maps, plats, permits, and related documentation. Coordinates the maintenance and updating of the City's Geographic Information System (GIS).
 11. Prepares and administers the department's annual operating budget; ensures activities are performed within budget; and promotes effective and efficient use of personnel, funds, materials, facilities, and time.
 12. Negotiates, coordinates, and manages professional service and consulting contracts related to development and engineering related services activities.
 13. Attends work regularly at the designated time and place and follows applicable safety rules and regulations.
 14. Performs other duties as assigned.
-

Minimum Qualifications

Education and Experience

- Graduation from high school or GED.
- Graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with a bachelor's degree in urban planning, land use planning, public administration, civil engineering, construction management, or a closely related field.
- Five (5) years of progressively responsible experience in municipal planning, community development, construction, or a related field, including supervisory or management experience.
- A master's degree in a related field may be substituted for a portion of the required experience.
- Equivalent combinations of education and experience may be considered.
- Valid driver's license or ability to obtain one prior to appointment

Certifications and Licenses (Preferred)

- Certification from the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP)
 - Ability to obtain:
 - Lead Safe Renovator-Iowa Dept of Inspect & Appeals
 - Property Maintenance & Housing Inspector (64) ICC
 - Residential Building Inspector (B1) ICC
 - Residential Electrical Inspector (EI) ICC
-

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Thorough knowledge of municipal planning, zoning, land use, development review processes and construction contract administration
 - Working knowledge of building, zoning, housing, floodplain, municipal infrastructure, and related regulatory codes
 - Ability to interpret and apply Federal, State, and local laws and regulations
 - Ability to plan, organize, and supervise the work of professional, technical, and administrative staff
 - Ability to communicate complex technical and regulatory information clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing
 - Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with elected officials, staff, consultants, developers, contractors, and the public
 - Proficiency in standard office software, permitting systems, and GIS applications
 - Ability to maintain confidentiality and exercise sound professional judgment
-

Tools and Equipment Used

Standard office equipment, personal computer and software applications, GIS systems, permitting software, telephone, and motor vehicle.

Physical Demands

Work is primarily performed in an office environment with occasional site visits to construction and development locations. Duties may include sitting, standing, walking, bending, and lifting light objects. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Work Environment

The work environment includes standard office conditions with occasional exposure to outdoor weather conditions during site inspections. Noise levels are typically quiet in the office and moderate in the field.

Disclaimer

The duties listed are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed and are not intended to be an exhaustive list. The City of Charles City reserves the right to modify this job description at any time to meet organizational needs.

COMMUNITY SERVICES OPERATIONS - CURRENT		
DUTIES	ENGINEER	PUBLIC SAFETY DIRECTOR
Review private project development plans for compliance with codes, regulations and standards, adequacy of applications for permits and compliance with approved plans.	☒	☐
Coordinates the preparation of, or develops, engineering plans and specifications, coordinates required advertising for bids, reviews construction bids and makes necessary recommendations based on lowest and best bids, competency of vendors and consultants, and the selection criteria.	☒	☐
Provides project management of, or develops, reviews and updates the sanitary sewer, water, storm drainage and street system maps, data base and comprehensive plans.	☒	☐
Maintains the engineering library, infrastructure records, and local FEMA map repository	☒	☐
Draw engineering plans and specifications for minor city projects	☒	☐
Responds to public and internal inquiries relative to engineering policies and procedures on specific projects and other information. Evaluates issues and options regarding municipal public works and makes recommendations.	☒	☐
Reviews utility permits, street use permits, franchise utility permits, etc.	☒	☐
Maintains regular contact with consulting engineers, construction project engineers, City, County, State and Federal agencies, professional and technical groups and the general public regarding division activities and services.	☒	☐
Assists in the evaluation of transportation and traffic impacts of development proposals, permits, rezones, plats, etc. Prepares traffic, utility and other studies and reports.	☒	☐
Provides input towards intersection signal and channelization design. Develops and maintains a pavement management system.	☒	☐
Coordinates sidewalk inspection, maintenance and enforcement programs including American Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance.	☒	☐
Coordinates Community Rating System (CRS) and Flood Plain Management Program	☒	☐
Monitors inter-governmental actions affecting public works.	☒	☐
Assists applicants with preparing documentation for Planning and Zoning approval	☒	☐
Attends P&Z and BOA meetings and acts as the primary point of contact for the boards	☒	☐
Updates the GIS System	☒	☐
Oversees code enforcement operations and officers	☐	☒
Responds to grievance and inquiries from the public regarding code enforcement activities	☐	☒
TOTAL	16	2

COMMUNITY SERVICES OPERATIONS - PROPOSED

DUTIES	ENGINEER	PUBLIC SAFETY DIRECTOR	DEV. SERV. DIRECTOR
Review private project development plans for compliance with codes, regulations and standards, adequacy of applications for permits and compliance with approved plans.	☐	☐	☒
Coordinates the preparation of, or develops, engineering plans and specifications, coordinates required advertising for bids, reviews construction bids and makes necessary recommendations based on lowest and best bids, competency of vendors and consultants, and the selection criteria.	☐	☐	☒
Provides project management of, or develops, reviews and updates the sanitary sewer, water, storm drainage and street system maps, data base and comprehensive plans.	☒	☐	☐
Maintains the engineering library, infrastructure records, and local FEMA map repository	☐	☐	☒
Draw engineering plans and specifications for minor city projects	☒	☐	☐
Responds to public and internal inquiries relative to engineering policies and procedures on specific projects and other information. Evaluates issues and options regarding municipal public works and makes recommendations.	☐	☐	☒
Reviews utility permits, street use permits, franchise utility permits, etc.	☐	☐	☒
Maintains regular contact with consulting engineers, construction project engineers, City, County, State and Federal agencies, professional and technical groups and the general public regarding division activities and services.	☐	☐	☒
Assists in the evaluation of transportation and traffic impacts of development proposals, permits, rezones, plats, etc. Prepares traffic, utility and other studies and reports.	☒	☐	☐
Provides input towards intersection signal and channelization design. Develops and maintains a pavement management system.	☒	☐	☐
Coordinates sidewalk inspection, maintenance and enforcement programs including American Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance.	☐	☐	☒
Coordinates Community Rating System (CRS) and Flood Plain Management Program	☐	☐	☒
Monitors inter-governmental actions affecting public works.	☐	☐	☒
Assists applicants with preparing documentation for Planning and Zoning approval	☐	☐	☒
Attends P&Z and BOA meetings and acts as the primary point of contact for the boards	☐	☐	☒
Updates the GIS System	☐	☐	☒
Oversees code enforcement operations and officers	☐	☐	☒
Responds to grievances and inquiries from the public regarding code enforcement activities	☐	☐	☒
TOTAL	4	0	14