



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
LA CROSSE

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 5, 2016

TO: La Crosse Common Council

FROM: Mayor Tim Kabat *Tim Kabat*

SUBJECT: Proposed staffing changes

Dear La Crosse Common Council members:

For your consideration and action this cycle and next month are a number of proposed staffing and committee changes contained in several pieces of legislation (#'s 16-0666 and 16-0671). Due to the timing of the operating budget process, which requires new positions to be acted on in August, I thought it appropriate to present this plan now. The goals for these proposed changes are to improve customer service, eliminate bureaucracy, increase accountability and move the organization forward.

The changes are:

1. Eliminate the Director of Public Works (DPW) position. The administrative reorganization program recommended by Reinvention, LLC in 2014 suggested a number of department mergers and staff reorganizations to improve City Hall operations. The Public Works department – by itself – is a small operation with 2.8 FTE employees, two (2) of which are managers. A review of the staffing for the Public Works, Engineering, Highway, Refuse & Recycling, and Utilities functions indicate about 107 FTE's employees with 17 FTE's considered managers. Eliminating the DPW position will improve the organization by removing a layer of management within the City's operations. In addition, modifying the organizational chart so that the City Engineer, Streets Superintendent and Utilities Manager report to the Mayor and the Board of Public Works instead of the DPW will allow for more direct action and accountability of the City's infrastructure.

A companion component to this change includes separate legislation to be introduced in August to modify the make-up of the Board of Public Works (BPW) to include the Mayor and four (4) Common Council members. The benefits of this change will enable the BPW to provide more regular consideration, direction and oversight to the departments responsible for our infrastructure. Modifying the BPW to be comprised of elected officials puts the onus on the policy makers to take the lead on addressing the backlog of street repavings, sidewalks, utilities and other capital improvement projects.

2. Reclassify the Assistant Director of Public Works position (ADPW) and relocate it to the Engineering department to serve as a Civil Engineer IV. Reclassifying the Assistant Director of Public Works in this way will add another engineer to the City's operation. This addition will be important as the Common Council has set the goal of dramatically increasing street repaving and maintenance projects, which will require more engineers to manage and oversee contracts.
3. Reclassify the Public Works Clerk Steno III position and move it to the Mayor's office to serve as the Courtesy and Information Representative (Resolution #16-0666). The benefits include improvement to our customer service with the implementation of the 789-CITY phone system to link up with our new website and MyLAX smart phone app. The Courtesy and Information Representative will become part of the Mayor's office and will staff the information desk in the lobby of City Hall providing direct contact to La Crosse's citizens and visitors – as recommended by the Reinvention, LLC study.

The budget impacts of eliminating the DPW position will reduce expenses by about \$160,000, and reclassifying the ADPW and Clerk Steno III positions will have a minimal increase of about \$10,000 – for a net difference of about \$150,000 in savings.