

CITY OF MESQUITE
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
ENGINEERING EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

October 27, 2008

1. General. The City Staff exists to provide for the health, welfare, and safety of the citizens of Mesquite and to support the City Council in executing their duties. All property owners, including developers, are to be treated with the same courtesy and respect as any other tax-paying citizen. It is the goal of the City of Mesquite to provide timely, consistent, predictable, accurate engineering guidance to encourage economic development by facilitating the smooth preparation of plans and specifications for both private and public projects. The very limited size of the City's Engineering Staff makes meeting this goal very challenging and requires the City to use consultants for nearly all design work. Due to limited Staff resources, it is imperative that developers and consultants doing business with or for the City understand these resource limitations.
2. Codes, Standards, and Requirements. Consultants doing business in the City of Mesquite, whether for a private client or the City, are expected to be familiar with all City Codes and design standards that are available on-line. For private development, City staff has expended a great deal of effort in assembling everything the developer and consultant need to be successful in the Engineering Plan Submittal Requirements that are available on-line. Developers and consultants must become familiar with these requirements. Questions posed by developers and consultants should be on how to interpret or apply these requirements, not on what these requirements are. Developers and consultants lose credibility with City Staff when they demonstrate they have not reviewed the Engineering Plan Submittal Requirements, and ultimately delay their project's completion.
3. Project Management.
 - a. For City Projects, Staff expects their prime consultants to manage all aspects of the project to ensure the timelines are met and the project delivered as scheduled. Staff expects their consultant project managers to be proactive in identifying and resolving issues. If an issue arises, Staff expects the consultant project manager to recommend a solution after developing and evaluating multiple solutions. It is not acceptable for a consultant to raise an issue and ask Staff "what do you want us to do?" without providing alternatives and a recommendation.
 - b. For private development projects, Staff expects a professional project manager from the developer's lead consultant to lead the consultant team. The project manager normally comes from the architectural or civil engineering firm. The developer's project manager is responsible for ensuring the timeline is met, submittals are complete, submittals meet published Code requirements and design guidelines, and review comments are addressed. City Staff is not resourced to provide project management services for private development and will not manage the project for the developer. Developers who attempt to manage a project without the services of a professional, dedicated project manager will most likely experience delays and cost increases in their projects.

4. Submittal Timelines.
 - a. For City Projects, the submittal timeline is that specified in the Scope of Services and is developed jointly by the Consultant and City Staff. Once the timeline is set, it is a contractual obligation. Consultants are expected to meet their submittal dates. Consultants who fail to meet their submission deadlines will be perceived as “non-responsive” and will likely get much less work (if any) from the City. Those that meet or beat their submission deadlines will likely receive more work from the City. City projects take a “back seat” to private development projects during the City review process.
 - b. For private development projects, submittals are made at the Developer or Consultant’s convenience. City Staff will check to first see if a submittal is complete per the Engineering Plan Submittal Requirements. If it is not, it will be returned unreviewed. If it is a complete engineering submittal, then City Staff will endeavor to return review comments on a first submittal within 21 calendar days of the submittal. Subsequent reviews will be performed in 10 calendar days. If a project takes more than two reviews, Staff will notify the Owner of the issues and coordinate a course of action to get the project back on schedule.
5. Communication. The primary means of communication with City Staff is email that allows for creation of a written record. Telephone calls and meetings are secondary and generally used for project kick-offs or clarifying points in emails. Letters are generally only used for documenting “official” requests, such as requesting a variance. Consultants and developers should not “drop in” on Staff without an appointment. The minimum expected frequency for project status and updates is monthly for both public and private projects but may be more or less depending on the complexity of the project. Project status updates are important to ensure something doesn’t “slip through the cracks” and should be prepared by the project manager. They also serve as a “friendly reminder” to Staff that it owes the project manager a response.
6. Review Comments. Staffs comments on plan and plat reviews come in two types – comments on Code or design guideline issues and “suggestions”. Staff expects all Code and design guideline comments to be clearly addressed in the subsequent review. If the consultant disagrees with the review comment, then resolve it with the appropriate Staff person – do not ignore the review comment. It is Staff’s responsibility to interpret and determine the intent of the Code and design guidelines.