



Title of Agenda Item: Council Discussion and Approval of Designating Public Works as First Responders

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Date Submitted: 5-13-2024

Work Session Date: 5-20-2024

Council Meeting Date: 5-20-2024

The Public Works Department seeks Council approval to recognize and designate Public Works as First Responders. This designation is in alignment with the national observance of National Public Works Week, celebrated annually from May 19th to May 25th.

Background:

- President George W. Bush issued Presidential Policy Directive 8 (PPD-8) in 2003, officially recognizing public works as first responders.
- In 2010, Mississippi, under House Bill (HB) 664, recognized public works professionals as first responders.
- The APWA Board of Directors approved the adoption of a national “Public Works First Responder” symbol for use throughout North America in 2017.
- The US Senate passed Senate Concurrent Resolution 15 (S.Con.Res.15) in 2019, expressing support for the designation of October 28, 2019, as Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day, with public works specifically included.
- In 2022, New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu signed into law SB325, formally recognizing public works employees as first responders.
- Public works professionals are often referred to as “the silent arm of public safety,” providing vital support to emergency response partners and helping protect and restore essential services following emergencies.
- The National Incident Management System (NIMS) lists public works alongside police, fire, and public health as essential components of emergency response.

Public works professionals are often the first on the scene and the last to leave during disasters, providing critical support to other first responders. This designation would serve as an invaluable morale boost for Public Works staff and reaffirm their commitment to serving the community. Recognizing Public Works as First Responders does not

diminish the heroic acts of law enforcement or fire departments but acknowledges the specialized support Public Works provides, such as maintaining clear and safe roadways during emergency situations.

Action Requested from Council:

Council approval to officially recognize and designate Public Works as First Responders

Cost: \$

Budgeted for: _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

Financial Impact: None
