



Memorandum

To: Mayor Nelson and Members of the City Council

From: Daniel R. Buchholtz, MMC, Administrator, Clerk/Treasurer

Date: October 16, 2024

Subject: Transitioning Electrical Inspection and Plumbing Plan Review to City-designated Consultants

Staff recommends the City Council consider transitioning plumbing plan review and electrical inspection services from the State of Minnesota to Rum River Consulting and Nykanen Inspections, respectively. This transition is aimed at improving efficiency, enhancing customer service and expediting the construction process for residents, businesses and contractors within our community.

Currently, the State of Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) oversees plumbing plan reviews and electrical inspections for the City. These services, while adequate, often face delays due to high demand, causing bottlenecks in construction timelines. Staff has experienced this first hand during the City Hall Renovation/Expansion project.

Minnesota Statutes 326B.43, Subdivision 2, and 326B.36, Subdivision 6, permit the delegation of these responsibilities to municipalities, allowing the City to manage these services locally.

City staff recommends entering into an agreement with Rum River Consulting to handle plumbing plan reviews for public and commercial projects. This delegation would enable plumbing plan reviews to be completed in a timelier manner, cutting down review time for residents, businesses and contractors. This delegation also provides the City with a new revenue source, as the City would retain a portion of the plan review fee. Rum River Consultants have a number of clients and provide services ranging from plumbing plan reviews to serving as the designated building official. Clients include Mounds View, Circle Pines, Isanti, Columbia Heights, East Bethel, and Andover.

City staff recommends entering into an agreement with Nykanen Inspections to perform electrical inspection services. Currently, the State only conducts electrical inspections two days per week. Nykanen Inspections will be able to provide same day inspections, with some exceptions. Localizing this service will expedite construction projects and allow the City to retain part of the inspection fees. Andrew Nykanen was previously the city's electrical inspector under a contract with the State prior to the State bringing electrical inspections in-house.

Staff would like to commend Building Official Baker for taking the initiative to identify these service improvements for the residents and businesses of Spring Lake Park. Building Official Baker supports the delegation of plumbing plan review and electrical inspection services to the city.

In order to implement these recommendations, the City Council would need to take the following actions:

1. Adopt Ordinance 496, which amends City Code to permit these delegations. The ordinance also amends the City fee schedule to establish the fees for these services as the City will begin collecting them.
2. Adopt resolution approving summary publication of Ordinance 496.
3. Adopt resolution authorizing Building Official and City Administrator to execute delegation application with Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry.
4. Adopt service contract with Rum River Consulting for plumbing plan review services.
5. Adopt service contract with Nykanen Inspections for electrical inspection services.

Building Official Baker will be at the work session to answer any questions the City Council may have. The contractors will be invited to attend the work session as well.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 763-784-6491.