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FAIRFAX COUNTY IMMEDIATE RESPONSE COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

Background: During the early days of the Engineers and Surveyors Institute, starting in 1988, a standing committee of the Institute, the Immediate Response Committee (IRC) operated and was charged with the responsibility of addressing and resolving procedural and technical issues and then communicating decisions to both private and public sector professionals. The committee was comprised of Fairfax County representatives, Virginia Department of Transportation representatives, and two representatives from private practice. Issues were brought to the committee from both industry and government professionals. Once resolved, the responses of the IRC became official County/VDOT/ESI policy interpretations and were contained for reference in a notebook made available widely. On occasion, the responses of the IRC became changes to the Public Facilities Manual, letters to industry, or other official policy statement mechanisms. The IRC became an excellent collaborative opportunity for senior professionals to resolve matters to everyone's satisfaction and clarity. As more and more of the issues were resolved and codified in various publications, the need for the IRC waned.

Reconstitution: Over the years, the development pattern of Fairfax County has changed, with the last big development areas completed and a shift more into redevelopment. These changing patterns coupled with new regulatory mandates, complicated and extensive proffers associated with the entitlement process and the general increase in complexity of engineering projects in the County provide an opportunity for the IRC approach to be put back in service to assist both public and private sector professionals.

New opportunities now exist as well to assist in the process. For example, the IRC used to meet on a monthly basis, publish their results via paper product, etc. Careful use of existing technology such as web site distribution, online meetings, email communication, for example, can provide quicker responses, less time commitments and an easier dissemination of the results of an IRC.

Procedure:

1. **Administrative Support:** The ESI Staff under the direction of the Executive Director, who serves as IRC Secretary, provides the support for the work of the Immediate Response Committee as a standing committee of the Institute.
2. **Constitution of the IRC:** Representatives on the IRC are: two members from Fairfax County; two senior members from the private sector; and one member from VDOT. Other participants may be called on for specific issues as necessary, such as, Fairfax Water, Fire Marshal, etc. All representatives will have their appointments to the IRC approved by the Director of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES).
3. **Issue Identification:** It is anticipated that issues will be identified for resolution by both the private and public sectors, with more likely to be coming from private sector professionals.
 - a. **Private Sector Submitted Issues:** Any principal of a firm submitting plans in Fairfax County can provide an issue for consideration by the IRC. No further justification is necessary than the professional judgment of the principal that the issue is of appropriate importance.
 - b. **Public Sector Submitted Issues:** Similarly, the Director of Land Development Services should be able to provide an issue for consideration by the IRC. It is likely the public sector will find fewer issues to which there is not a resolution that is known, however, proposal of an issue by the Director is sufficient basis for the IRC to act. Most public sector issues will be determined by the Fairfax County internal “quick-hit” committee.
4. **Issue Submission:** Issues for consideration by the IRC should be sent via email to ebroughton@esinova.org. The minimum information necessary is:
 - a. Name and contact information of the submitting person,
 - b. A short issue description
 - c. Any document references pertinent to the issue
 - d. The date submitted
 - e. A statement of urgency (Immediate – Issue resolution is needed in five working days or less; Urgent – Issue resolution is needed within 20 working days; Routine – Issue resolution is needed but no specific time frame can be stated.
5. **Issue Confirmation:** ESI will confirm receipt of the issue submission via email and will assign a control number. The issue and its status will be posted on the ESI website.
5. **Issue Research:** ESI staff will conduct a short research effort into the issue to determine if it has already been resolved. If so, the submitter will be notified and referred to the location of the resolution information. If it appears that the issue has not been resolved, ESI will forward the issue to the IRC for their consideration.
6. **IRC Meetings:** Depending upon the urgency of the issue, ESI will establish a “face to face” meeting (preferred) or “on line” meeting to schedule the consideration of the issue(s) on the agenda. ESI will document the issue resolution in the records of the IRC proceedings.

7. Conditions of IRC Approvals: It is the intention of the Director of DPWES and the VDOT Administrator to support recommendations of the IRC. The Director/Administrator may choose to not implement any decision rendered by the IRC if it is determined that the recommendation is in conflict with County/VDOT codes, regulations or policies or not in the best interests of those organizations. Some issues may only be resolved by Fairfax County Code or PFM Amendment or Letter To Industry. The ultimate decision to resolve an issue lies with the Director of DPWES and/or VDOT Administrator.
8. IRC Resolution Dissemination: An issue will not be considered resolved until the Director of DPWES has accepted the recommendation of the IRC for implementation. ESI will publish the resolution(s) via email (to the submitter) and will post them on the ESI website. A search mechanism to enhance the ability to research past resolutions will be implemented at a later date.

Questions on these procedures should be directed to Dr. Terrance C. Ryan at ESI (703) 263-2232.

FAIRFAX COUNTY IMMEDIATE REPOSE COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

**ENGINEERS AND SURVEYORS INSTITUTE
4455 Brookfield Corporate Drive, Suite 107
Chantilly, VA, 20151
(703) 263-2232**