

# Council Business Meeting

January 16, 2018

**Title:** Request approval of contract addendum with Northwest Code Professionals  
**From:** Bill Molnar, Community Development Director  
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## **Summary:**

This is a request for an approval to increase the amount of an existing contract with Northwest Code Professionals (NWCP) to \$70,000 for building inspection and plan review services. The original contract was less than \$35,000 and awarded by direct appointment in accordance with AMC 2.50.120(A). The amount of the contract addendum exceeds the \$35,000 threshold for direct appointment and requires council approval.

## **Actions, Options, or Potential Motions:**

The Council, acting as the Local Contract Review Board, moves to approve the contract addendum to increase the contract amount to \$70,000.

## **Staff Recommendation:**

Staff recommends approval of the contract addendum.

## **Resource Requirements:**

The Community Development Department BN2017-19 budget includes \$35,000 for Building Division professional services. Professional services include anticipated building plan review and inspection services provided through intergovernmental agreements and private contractors such as Northwest Code Professionals. Such services are necessary from time to time to accommodate building division staff attendance of mandatory certification trainings, specialized plan review assistance and to be able to respond to increases in building permit activity. Additionally, it was anticipated that a portion of the Building Division's professional services budget would be allocated to assist in a seismic code feasibility analysis, including technical assessment and public education.

The amended contract will be increased from \$35,000 to \$70,000. The increase in the contract will be offset by approximately \$110,000 of employee wages/benefits unexpended because of turnover of staff in the Building Division.

## **Policies, Plans and Goals Supported:**

Oregon Building Code requires timely turn-around of building plan reviews and building inspection services. [ORS 455.160<sup>1</sup> Failure to provide timely inspections or plan reviews prohibited]. Additionally, Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) notes that the municipality may not engage in a pattern of conduct of failing to provide timely inspections or plan reviews without reasonable cause.

City Administrative Goals and Objectives – Ashland 2020 Strategic Plan

- Ensure compliance with all regulatory requirements.
- Ensure building and life safety on physically constrained lands.
- Provide high quality, effective, and efficient city services and governance in an accessible, collaborative, and fiscally responsible manner.

**Background and Additional Information:**

Northwest Code Professionals was established in 2000 and specializes in serving jurisdictions throughout Oregon, Washington, and Idaho with plan review and building inspections services. In addition to Ashland, Northwest Code Professionals currently offers different levels of service to Eagle Point, Rogue River, Phoenix, Jacksonville, and Josephine County.

The Community Development Department Building Division consists of four, fulltime employees, include the City’s building official, two building inspector/plan examiner positions and an administrative support staff. Three of four employees resigned from their positions over a six-month period to pursue other career opportunities. The building official position was vacant for six months (April through September, 2017) one building inspector/plan reviewer position was vacant for three months (September through November 2017), and a second inspector/plan reviewer position has been vacant for three months. Two of the three positions have since been filled, while the City is currently accepting applications for the last remaining building inspector/plan reviewer recruitment. It is anticipated that the final outstanding inspector/plans examiner position will be filled and in place by April 2018.

The City of Ashland maintains intergovernmental agreements for inspection and plan review services with Jackson County and the City of Medford. While both jurisdictions have provided assistance to Ashland’s Building Safety Division in the past, high levels of development activity in the region has resulted in limited availability from partnering jurisdictions with neither having capacity to adequately handle Ashland’s construction activity.

**Attachments:**

None.