

#### APWA Agency Accreditation – Its Benefits & How to Obtain It

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## Who is Farmington Hills?

- Northwest suburb of Detroit
- Incorporated in 1973
- > 34 Square Miles
- > 81,000 residents
- > 14<sup>th</sup> largest city by population in Michigan





## Who is Farmington Hills?

- 58 Miles of Major Roadways
- > 250 Miles of local, residential streets
  - Includes 22 Miles of gravel
- 450 Miles of water main
- > 328 Miles of sanitary sewer
- > 23,000 water & sewer customers
- 17 Public Facilities totaling 450,000 sq. ft.
- Annual Operating Budget of \$59M





## What is Agency Accreditation?

- Formal verifying & recognizing compliance with recommended management practices
- Voluntary
- Self-motivated approach
- Objectively evaluate, verify & recognize compliance





### Who Is Accredited?

- APWA has accredited 147 Agencies
- > 137 Agencies are currently Accredited
- 3 Agencies in Michigan
  - Farmington Hills in 2016
  - Canton Twp. in 2017
  - Wayne County in 2018

#### No DOT's have been Accredited yet!





## **Objectives of the Program**

- Improve public works performance and the provision of services
- Promote an organization's selfimprovement
- Recognize good performance
- Increase Professionalism
- Document for the future





## **Benefits of Accreditation**

- Formal recognition of well-run agencies
- A mechanism to evaluate the organization
- Provides a target for improvement
- Public Recognition of Public Works functions
- Justifying budget
- Documentation of policies
- Encourage improvement of procedures
- Raise competencies in public works
- Consistent, comprehensive practices





### **Benefits of Accreditation**

- Accreditation provides a systematic approach to preform an objective assessment by an independent entity
- Provides a visible indication that the agency complies with recommended practices





## **Guidelines Used To Accredit**

- The Public Works Management Practices Manual
- Practices identified by public works practitioners as important in providing services
- Practices are not standards
- Do not dictate how to accomplish a function or activity





# **Major Steps to Accreditation**

- APWA determines if Agency meets the eligibility criteria
- Agency conducts a Self-Assessment
- Agency makes improvements necessary to comply with all *applicable* practices
- Self-Assessment reviewed by APWA
- APWA site visit to verify compliance
  - Examines documentation
  - Meet & discuss with agency staff





#### Self Assessment

- The Manual provides a systematic method to evaluate every function of the agency
- Responsibility of each agency for establishing policies, procedures and practices
- Some practices do not apply to your agency







#### Self Assessment

- > 40 Functions (chapters), 9<sup>th</sup> edition
- First 9 Functions mandatory for all
- 568 recommended practices included in the 40 chapters
- > FH 388 practices in our self assessment.





## FH Challenges & Insights

- Time consuming, requires commitment from the top down
- MUST have a designated champion
- Identified gaps & areas for improvement
- Organized and keep good records



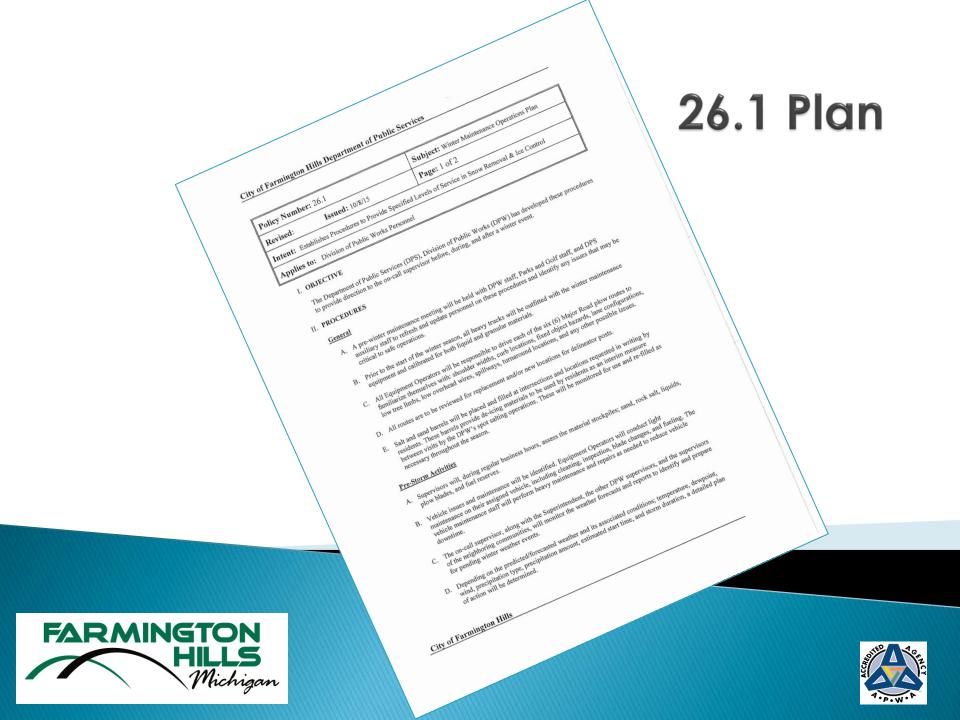


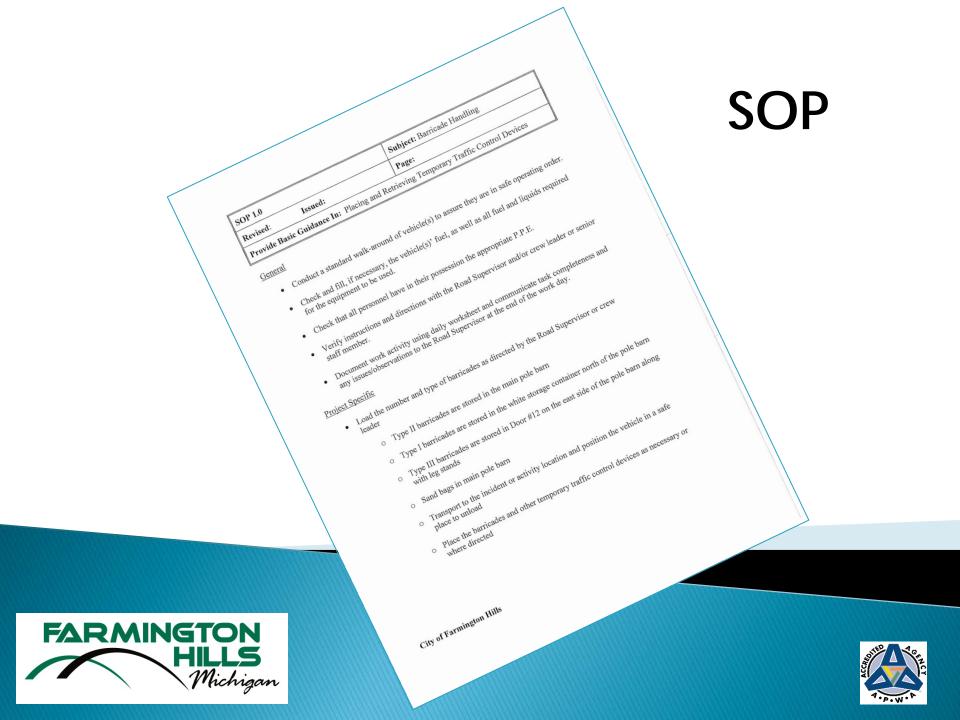
## Lessons learned/Tips

- > Develop a schedule and **STICK TO IT**!
- Meet often and do a little at a time
- Ask for help/samples
- If process becomes stagnant, inject new blood
- Involve other departments early like Finance, HR IT and Treasury
- Follow one format/template









## So How Much Does this Cost \$\$\$

- The fee is based on the agency's population and the number of functional areas included in the review
- On-site evaluation actual expenses
- Covers the cost of APWA administering the program
- Does not include agency's staff expenses





## Farmington Hills Cost \$\$\$

- \$13,400 for Accreditation
- > \$3,600 for site visit
- > 2016 Version 8 of the Manual
- > 40 total functional areas (chapters)
- CFH 27 of 40 functional areas





### FH Next Steps

- Continual Improvements
- Track Everything and keep records
- Don't stop the process....use it as a tool





#### **FH Final Results**

- Enormous sense of pride and accomplishment
- Council recognition
- Credibility with public and elected officials
- "Book of Knowledge" THE VSP





#### **Questions**?







#### Contact Info

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