

Richmond Police Department

MEMORANDUM



TO: Chief Chris Magnus
Deputy Chief Ed Medina

FROM: Tim Higaes, Code Enforcement Manager

DATE: April 8, 2009

SUBJECT: Code Enforcement Update – March 2009

- **Recruitments/staffing** - We conducted interviews in late February for our additional vacancies. We had a wonderful pool of applicants. Several candidates have been picked and they are moving forward through the process.
- **Code Enforcement Supervisor** – I am happy to report that Theresa Tingle has been offered and has accepted this position. Her knowledge and passion has been invaluable to me and she will be a very important member of our team as we work hard to develop a comprehensive Code Enforcement program.
- **Parking Enforcement** – Parking Enforcement will be joining the Code Enforcement family in July. We have proposed an additional position. This position will pay for itself through parking fines and the quarterly revenue the City receives from the County for maintaining this program.
- **Vehicle Abatement** – Vehicle Abatement will be joining the Code Enforcement family in July. Currently this job is done by a sworn Police Officer. We have proposed 2 positions to undertake the duties required of this position. These positions will be funded by fees associated with vehicle abatement and the quarterly revenue the City receives from the county for participating in the vehicle abatement program. Dave Rogowski completed training on March 27th. Alma Munguia is training until April 29th.
- **Illegal Dumping/Court Referrals** - Trisha has successfully prosecuted 2 illegal dumpers. In addition to probation and restitution, they have been ordered to perform 40 hours of community service picking up trash in Richmond. Code Enforcement will oversee the court referral program and Public Works will supervise them in the field. Parks and Recreation has also expressed interest on supervising weekend litter pick up in the parks.
- **Union Pacific RR Graffiti** - We had a meeting in March with UP representatives. Although they expressed a desire to partner with the City to address the graffiti problem; there was no viable solutions brought the table. We continue to cite and invoice UP for graffiti violations
- **Graffiti Volunteer Program** – We have partnered with Trina to assist with the enforcement element of the volunteer graffiti abatement program. We are developing policy, procedures and drafting notices.
- **Budget** – Code Enforcement has been designated as its own special fund for fiscal year 2009 – 10. I have been working with Finance to develop our budget with a focus on the foreclosure crisis and the recovery of the costs associated with the work we perform. This development will ensure accountability and allow us to track and monitor our cost recovery efforts.

- **Foreclosure Notices** – To date we have issued a total of 85 foreclosure notices. We had our first hearing in March and the hearing officer upheld the \$30,000 fine. We have 8 more hearings scheduled for April. We will be holding administrative hearings twice a month. All fees assessed through this ordinance must be put into a special Code Enforcement Fund. By law, these funds can only be used for Code Enforcement activities. The account string has already been established for this revenue. A total of ten (10) certificates of compliance have been issued.
- **Foreclosure Crisis** – Foreclosures continue to be a problem throughout the City with no end in sight. Currently there are over 2000 properties in some state of foreclosure. The challenge we face is securing these properties expeditiously to avoid the crime and vandalism that plague these vacant properties. Staff has been directed treat vacant and foreclosed properties as a HIGH PRIORITY. Police, Public Works and the community have been valuable partners in our effort to address this crisis.
- **Cost Recovery** – Code Enforcement will be sending **all** payments we receive for lien releases directly to Finance. This will add an extra layer of tracking and accountability. Additionally, Public Works and Code Enforcement will be sending our assessment lists to finance who will then send required notices to the property owners. Fees not paid will be placed on the property a lien or special assessment.
- **Mitigation Fund** – This fund has allocated 2 County Code Enforcement Officers. Much of the work they do is in North Richmond. These officers are attending our weekly staff meetings and monthly trainings. We want to ensure their enforcement is consistent with our policy and procedures. North Richmond has a lot of blight and foreclosures so these officers are a much needed addition to the team. There are funds in the mitigation fund directed to Code Enforcement. We will use these funds appropriately.
- **Redevelopment** – We continue our partnership with the Redevelopment Department. We are working together to figure out the creative and effective ways to address the foreclosure crisis. Housing Stabilization funds are available however strict federal guidelines limit the properties eligible. Redevelopment has one million dollars budgeted for Code Enforcement receivership. We are looking for properties that would be good candidates for receivership.
- **“One Block at a Time”** – The next OBAT is scheduled for May 16, 2009. It will be in the “Coronado” area. Formal announcement will go out next week.
- **Monthly Success Story** - Staff received a complaint that car parts had been dumped at Sheldon Elementary school. Staff immediately went out to investigate and found that an entire vehicle had been dismantled and dumped in close proximity to the playground. CE Officer Ewing immediately called public works. Within one hour PW dispatched a crew to the location and abated the car parts. This is an excellent example of fast action and team work.



Monthly Statistics

Code Enforcement Staff inspected five hundred and fifty-two (552) properties this month and issued two hundred twenty-one (221) notices of violations.

Forty-two (42) administrative citations were issued

Total fines for assessment this month = **\$ 33,250.00**

Staff sent out twelve (12) inspection/non-compliance notifications = **\$ 4,356.00**

Staff obtained three (4) abatement warrants and executed one (1) emergency summary of abatement.

Staff issued fifty-eight (58) foreclosure notifications and four (4) certificates of compliance.

In March we received thirty-six (36) lien release demand request. These are documentations/letters received from various realtors, brokers and/or banks requesting the removal of liens places on the parcel by the City for actual cost recovery.

Code Enforcement Officer David Rogowski sent out one hundred and ninety-seven private property vehicle abatement notices during the course of his three (3) weeks training with Officer C. Muratore.

Public Works: Private Property abatement - **9.76 Tons of debris**
Public Property Abatement - **121.47 Tons of debris**

Total cost recovery received for March 2009 = \$ 43,298.34

Total billed = \$ 38,310.00