

Department of Code Compliance

Code Compliance Operations AND 100-Day Plan Update

*Presented to the Quality of Life and
Government Services Committee*

November 26, 2007



City of Dallas

Purpose

- Overview / Background
- Typical Code processes / 3 specific examples
- 100-Day Plan Update
- What do we know?
- What actions will we take?
- Future City Council Briefings

Overview

- The Department of Code Compliance is a General Fund Department with a budget of \$26.5 million and 400 employees
- On average, 217,000 service requests are generated annually, of which, Code proactively initiates approximately 80,000
- During FY 06/07 a record high number of service requests were received totaling 345,568

Overview

- Responsible for enforcement of portions of the Dallas City Code that deals with residential, multi-tenant, commercial properties, and animal-related ordinances
- Compliance is necessary to provide the highest level of public safety and maintain property values

Overview

FY 07-08 Budget Summary

Neighborhood Services (General Code)	\$12,195,189
Multi-Tenant Program	\$ 2,773,022
Neighborhood Nuisance Program (Mow-Clean)	\$ 4,511,244
Animal Services	<u>\$ 7,030,726</u>
Total FY 07-08	\$26,510,181

Overview

Dallas City Code

- The Dallas City Code consists of 3 volumes, 46 chapters, and more than 1300 pages
- The Department of Code Compliance is responsible for 15 of those 46 chapters
- There are over 900 ordinances that govern the activities for these 15 chapters

Overview



Dallas City Code – Code Compliance

Volume I

•Chapter 7

Animal Control Ordinances

•Chapter 7A

Anti-Litter Regulations

•Chapter 15A

Temporary Political Campaign Signs

•Chapter 16

Life Hazard – Gas Leaks

•Chapter 18

Municipal Solid Waste

•Chapter 19

Unwholesome Premises (Sewage)
Scrap Tire Enforcement Program

•Chapter 27

Minimum Urban Rehabilitation & Multi-Family

•Chapter 28

Parking Oversized Vehicles in Residential Areas

Volume II

•Chapter 31

Graffiti Abatement

Lock, Take, Hide

Life Hazard - Refrigerator

•Chapter 39A

Relocation Assistance

•Chapter 40

Rat Control

•Chapter 43A

Swimming Pools

Building Number

•Chapter 47

Trailers, Trailer Parks & Tourist Camps

•Chapter 49

Water Conservation

•Chapter 50

Consumer Affairs

Volume III

•Chapter 51A

Signs

Interpretations & Definitions

Zoning Regulations

Usage Regulations

Yard Lot & Space Regulations

Fences

Screening

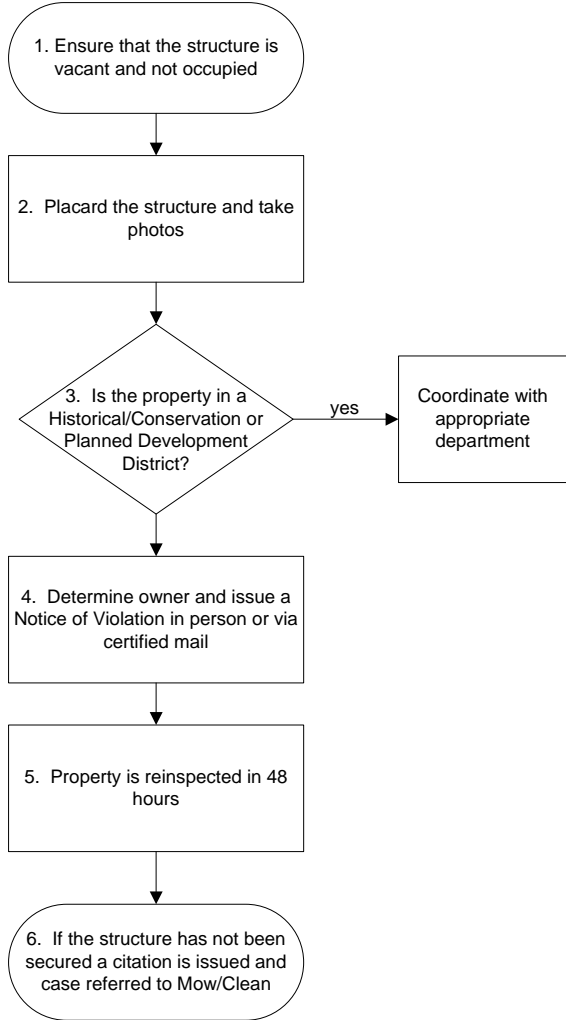
Visibility Obstructions

Typical Code Processes for 3 Specific Cases

Process Map: Boarded-Up Structures

308 N. Montclair

Case Notes

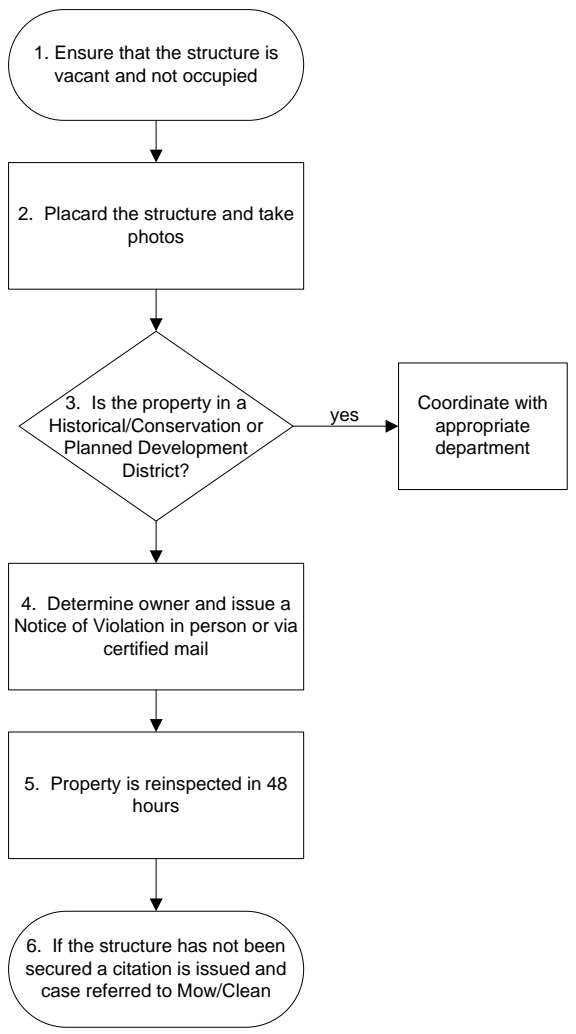


- Steps 1-5 completed
- Late 2004 – Compliance actions began; Code officer issued numerous citations on the property; property owner refused to comply with the Code or respond to citations
- Since property owner failed to comply, Mow/Clean division secured the structure, cut high weeds and attached appropriate liens
- 2005 – Property owner failed to bring structure into compliance, continued to ignore notifications and refused to respond to citations; Code continued to secure structure, cut high weeds and attach appropriate liens
- 2006 – City Attorney’s Office proceeded with a lawsuit to seek demolition of the structure; when a lawsuit is filed, enforcement activity is stopped as to not interfere with the case

Process Map: Boarded-Up Structures

308 N. Montclair, continued

Case Notes

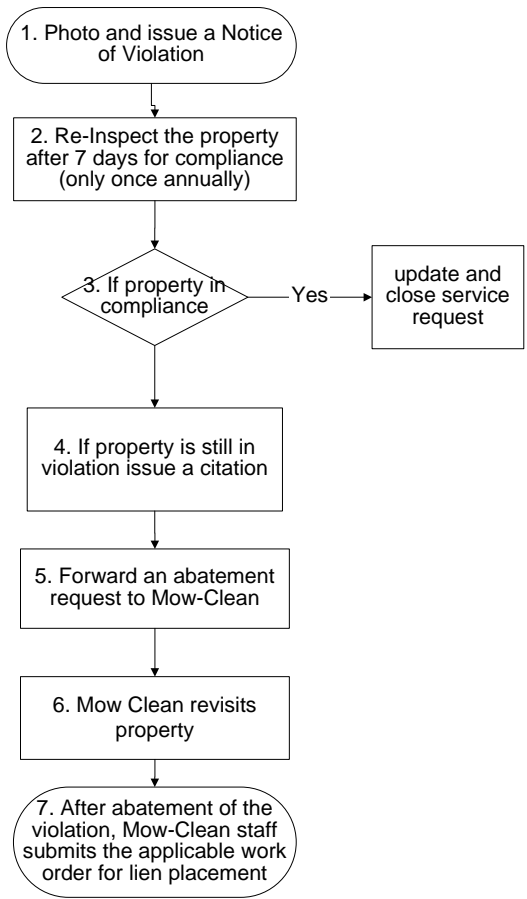


- Late 2006 – Ownership changed and Chapter 54 procedures were stopped; Code reissued the Notice of Violation to the new owner
- Early 2007 – New owner applied for Certificate of Appropriateness (CA) to begin remodeling the structure, add space and bring the structure into compliance
- The application was incomplete and the CA was not granted
- October 2007 – City Attorney began to pursue a second Chapter 54 lawsuit against the new owner

Process Map: High Weeds

3243 Hillglenn Road

Case Notes



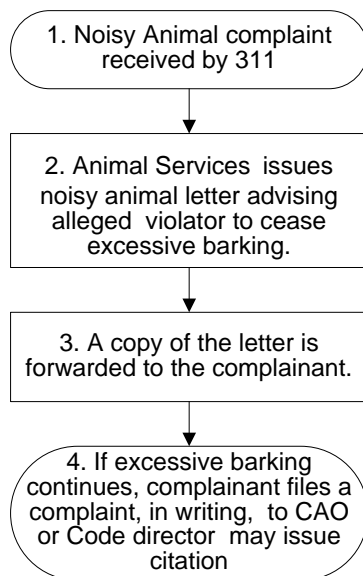
- June 2007
 - Resident submitted request to 311
 - Steps 1 – 3 completed
 - A civil citation was issued to the property owner for failure to comply
 - After the citation was issued, the property was referred to Mow/Clean division to correct the violation; the property was mowed, cleaned and a weed lien was attached (met Service Level Agreement)
- August 2007
 - Another service request was generated for high weeds at this location
 - Property referred to Mow/Clean again for clean up; an additional weed lien was placed on the property
- Currently in compliance, but Code may be dealing with problem again in growing season

Note: Once the initial Notice of Violation is issued for a property, no additional notices are required; any subsequent violations will result in immediate citation, property is referred to Mow/Clean division for clean up and a weed lien is attached.

Process Map: Noise Nuisance

3508 Oak Creek Circle

Case Notes



- Steps 1-3 completed – Neighbors reported approximately 25 dogs at the single-family residence
- Animal Services Officers have visited the residence on multiple occasions to monitor noise – no excessive noise has been recorded
- Neighbors have filed complaints to the City Attorney’s office, but complaints lacked sufficient evidence to proceed
- September 5, 2007 – Neighbor registered complaint at City Council meeting
- Environmental & Health Services visited residence to address complaints of flies/fleas and ticks, but found no violations
- Code offered to transport pets to no-kill shelter and the owner declined
- Behavior did not change - problem still exists

Code Process

- In dealing with Code violations, Code Compliance Department may follow long, complex procedures and still not solve the systemic problem
- The real solution is a holistic approach to community problem solving – not simply Code Compliance

ON SEPTEMBER 5, 2007, THE 100-DAY PLAN WAS OUTLINED TO IDENTIFY URGENT NEEDS AS LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES WERE BEING DEVELOPED.

100-DAY PLAN UPDATE: STATUS THROUGH 82 DAYS

Loose Animal Controls

- Six Special Operations Officers began patrolling areas known to have loose dogs between 6 am – 9 am. Since September 6th, 517 dogs have been picked up during the early morning hours
- Deployed five vehicles geographically to enhance rapid response – November 1, 2007 with 2 officers per vehicle who are on-site in geographic areas with high call volumes
- Schedule planning workshop for the Animal Shelter Commission to explore and develop long-term strategies to address animal control

Mow/Clean Operations

- Began a thorough business process mapping review of all mow/clean operations
- Began GIS mapping of all city-owned lots in order to create a mowing schedule
- Increased staffing for contract day-labor while evaluating the need for contracted services
- Mowed and cleaned 8,293 properties over the last 82 days (5,084 properties mowed and cleaned during the same timeframe last year)
- Amended the City Manager's budget to provide an additional \$412,052 for more significant cleaning of vacant lots (i.e., curb appeal and tree-trimming)
 - Code Compliance is in the process of acquiring these services and equipment; scheduled to go to Council in January 2008

Boarded-Up Structures

- Changed the Service Level Agreement in the 311 Customer Response Management System (CRMS) from 72 hours to 48 hours to ensure buildings are secured in a timely manner and we are meeting the new service level agreement
- Need to re-examine the recent changes to Chapter 27 - Dallas City Code – Minimum Urban Rehabilitation Standards

Initiatives/Pilot Projects

- Frazier/Dolphin Heights Initiative
- Lake Highlands Area Improvement - Volunteers in Code Pilot
- Foreclosed Properties Task Force
- Neighborhood Storefront Sign Project
- Neighborhood Partnerships

Frazier/Dolphin Heights Initiative

- Coordinate effort between City of Dallas, volunteer groups and civic organizations
- Deliver city services for an extended period of time in a concentrated way
 - November 1, 2007 – February 29, 2008 – 120 days
- Increase compliance and improve curb appeal and sustainability
- Address public service needs in this community
 - Crime
 - Code violations
 - Infrastructure needs – streets, sidewalks and housing
 - Litter, graffiti, alley maintenance
- Delivered services to 150 properties since November 1
 - Received positive feedback from citizens on our approach
 - Have removed litter from 79 sites; cut high weeds from 78 sites; secured 34 structures and picked up 20 animals

Volunteers in Code Pilot

Lake Highlands Area Improvement – Volunteers in Code Pilot

- Modeled after the Dallas Police Department's Volunteers in Patrol program
- To increase compliance, residents patrol their neighborhoods and report code violations to their neighborhood code representative
- Training class to be held January 15 and 17, 2008

Foreclosed Properties Task Force

- Identify areas where there are significant numbers of single-family homes in foreclosure
- Contact banks/lenders to offer assistance to accomplish mutual goal – neighborhood preservation
- Abate violations as related to unsecured structures;
Mow/Clean will abate and bill the lienholder
 - Liens substantially delay closing on sales

Neighborhood Storefront Sign Project

- Identify convenience stores located along selected major thoroughfares to eliminate unsightly signs, posters and placards
- Work with store owners to remove signs and visual clutter from storefront windows to enhance customer appeal
- Create enhanced sense of safety while cleaning the neighborhood
- Explore strengthening the ordinance to ensure compliance

Neighborhood Partnerships

City of Dallas Partnerships:

Clean South Dallas, Inc.

Maple Avenue Neighborhood Alliance

Allow groups to:

- identify their top 10 priorities
- improve areas based on their needs
- choose their level of involvement

What do we know?

- Ordinances, policies and procedures can be administered exactly as defined by the Code and the **problem** may not be solved
 - A holistic approach is needed to solve code problems
 - Communities must be involved in the problem solving
- Geographic accountability for Code concerns need to be strengthened
- Code officers and field personnel are not deployed geographically to respond to workload

What do we know?

- Internal procedures and the department structure should be put through the “ZIP process” for efficiency improvement
- Specific ordinances need to be reviewed/may be changed to be more effective
 - Storefront signage
 - High weed violations
 - Chapter 27 - Minimum Urban Rehabilitation Standards
 - Limiting the number of dogs per household
- An improved long-range strategy for Animal Control is needed

What immediate action will we take?

- Establish Geographic Service Delivery
 - Create five Community Code Areas and within each designate three smaller, targeted sub-areas
 - NE, NW, SE, SW, Central
 - An area manager will be responsible for delivery of general code services within the Community Code Area
 - The area manager will have a full complement of code enforcement officers, field personnel, support staff and associated equipment assigned to and officed within the area
 - Within each community code area will be three Neighborhood Code Representatives, who know both the problems and the people in the community and will work towards a solution prior to enforcement

What immediate action will we take?

- Establish Geographic Service Delivery, continued
 - This structure represents a consolidation of resources to carry out general code enforcement and mow/clean operations, located geographically within the community code area
 - The area manager will have two city-wide specialty units to call on for support
 - Multi-Tenant operations
 - Rapid Intensified Inspection Program (RIIP)
 - All area managers will conduct joint weekly accountability meetings with executive staff
- Timeline:
 - Reassignment and restructure to occur by January 1, 2008
 - Physical relocation of staff to occur by April 1, 2008

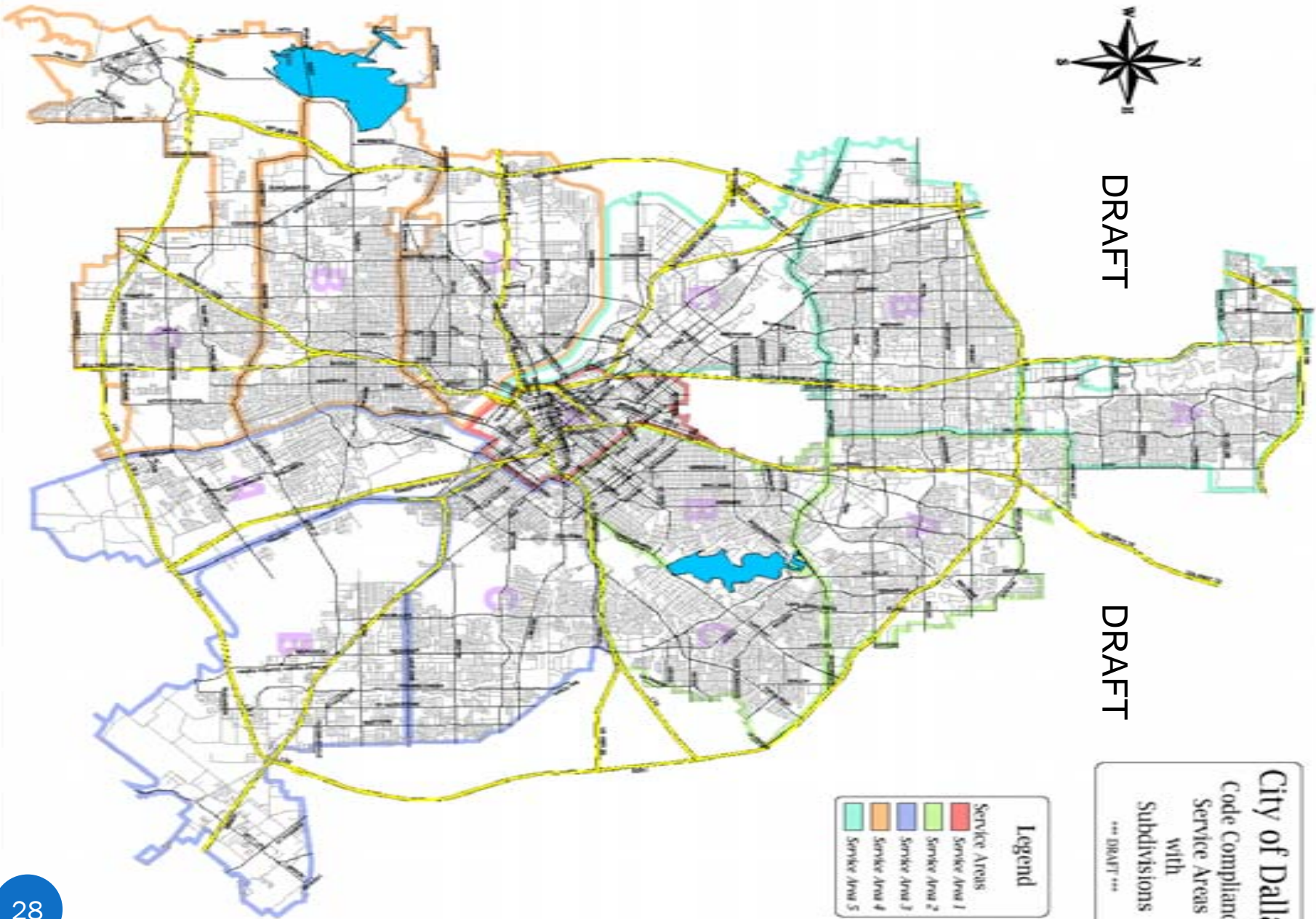


DRAFT

DRAFT

City of Dallas
Code Compliance
Service Areas
with
Subdivisions
*** DRAFT ***

- Legend**
- Service Areas
 - Service Area 1
 - Service Area 2
 - Service Area 3
 - Service Area 4
 - Service Area 5



What immediate action will we take?



- Continue to benefit from a multi-department “think-tank” to assist with problem-solving:
 - inter-departmental cooperation
 - information exchange with residents
 - referral process to other departments
 - Timeline: Monthly meetings – on-going
- Utilize newly formed ZIP Teams to process map critical code activities for improvement:
 - apartment registration/inspection process
 - development of lawsuits against chronic violators
 - abatement of litter complaints/violations
 - relocation services
 - Timeline: Results by June 2008

What immediate action will we take?



- Fast-track review of selected ordinances
 - Storefront signage
 - High weeds violations
 - Chapter 27 - Minimum Urban Rehabilitation Standards
 - Limiting the number of dogs per household
 - Timeline: To begin mid-December
- Code Compliance is included in the next group of departments to begin ISO 9001 certification process
 - Timeline:
 - Process to start January 2008
 - Certification scheduled for December 2009

Future Council Committee Briefings

- Topics to be briefed include:
 - Overview of Historic, Conservation and Planned Development districts
 - Animal Control Strategies
 - Multi-Tenant Inspection operations
 - Mow/Clean operations
 - Potential ordinance/statute changes
 - Timeline: Over the next 6 months

Next Steps

- March 1, 2008 – Progress briefing to Quality of Life and Government Services with recommendations for possible budget changes