

Memorandum



DATE March 28, 2008

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT Code Compliance Operations Update

On Wednesday April 2, 2008, you will be updated on the Code Compliance Operations. Attached is the briefing material for your review prior to Wednesday's discussion.

If you have questions or need additional information, please let me know.


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Interim Assistant City Manager

c: Mary K. Suhm, City Manager
Thomas P. Perkins, Jr., City Attorney
Craig D. Kinton, City Auditor
Judge Jay E. Robinson
Ryan S. Evans, First Assistant City Manager
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David K. Cook, Chief Financial Officer
Chandra Marshall-Henson, Assistant to the City Manager, Mayor & Council Office
Deborah K. Watkins, City Secretary
Forest E. Turner, Acting Director, Code Compliance Department

Department of Code Compliance

Operations Update

Presented to the City Council

April 2, 2008

Dallas **Code** Compliance, **what it all means**
COMMUNITY



Mission: Clean, Code Compliant Neighborhoods

- City has committed to transform the way Code Compliance operates. This requires the following strategies:
 - Redeploy resources to achieve geographic service responsibility and accountability
 - Take a holistic approach working with multiple departments
 - Incorporate education and outreach
 - Change some ordinances
 - Improve processes

REDEPLOY RESOURCES TO
ACHIEVE GEOGRAPHIC
RESPONSIBILITY AND
ACCOUNTABILITY

Redeploy Resources: Achieve Geographic Responsibility/ Accountability

- Similar to DPD beat management, problem solving focus
- Personnel assigned to a specific geographic area
- Know people, places and behaviors in the community (compliant and non-compliant)
- Engage residents and all available resources to address solving problems

Redeploy Resources: Achieve Geographic Responsibility/ Accountability

- ✓ Finalized geographic service areas, identified Neighborhood Code Representatives and begin new service delivery on April 23, 2008
- ✓ Created five community code areas, within each designated three smaller, targeted sub-areas
 - Northeast (3 sub-areas)
 - Northwest (3 sub-areas)
 - Southeast (3 sub-areas)
 - Southwest (3 sub-areas)
 - Central
- ✓ An area manager will be responsible for delivery of general code services within the Community Code Area

Redeploy Resources: Achieve Geographic Responsibility/ Accountability

- Code Area Manager will have a full complement of code compliance officers, field personnel, support staff and associated equipment assigned to and located 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
- Personnel assigned to a specific area will have geographic responsibility and performance accountability
- All Code Area Managers will conduct joint weekly accountability meetings with executive staff

Redeploy Resources: Achieve Geographic Responsibility/ Accountability

- Code Area Managers will set the tone for the new community approach
 - Know people, places and behaviors in the community
 - Engage residents and all available resources to address solving problems
 - Relentless follow-up
- Neighborhood Code Representatives and Code Officers to work with residents and property owners to achieve compliance before a notice or citation is needed

TAKE A HOLISTIC APPROACH WORKING WITH MULTIPLE DEPARTMENTS

Holistic Approach: Working with Multiple Departments

- ✓ Convened a multi-department executive “think-tank” to address code concerns and develop marketing and customer service initiatives
- ✓ DPD command level officer on special assignment with Code Compliance
 - Changing how both departments operate
 - Common goal to improve teamwork and delivery of service
 - Better safety for Code
 - More information on what the other department is doing
 - Coordinate enforcement
 - Work together to solve the core community problem

Holistic Approach: Working with Multiple Departments

- Match Neighborhood Code Representatives with DPD Neighborhood Police Officers, Service Area Coordinators and Community Prosecution
 - Build relationships and area contacts at officer, supervisor, and manager levels
 - Share information, attend joint meetings and visit DPD details
 - Encourage teamwork/problem solving

Holistic Approach: Working with Multiple Departments

- Partner with Police, Fire, Streets, Sanitation, Public Works, City Attorney and Strategic Customer Services for crime watch, business organization, and other community meetings
 - Take advantage of existing customer contacts
 - Know customer agenda
 - have appropriate people attend
 - address concerns
 - work together to solve the problem
 - conduct relentless follow-up

Holistic Approach: Working with Multiple Departments

- Developing a training program for Police and other departments on how to involve Code in their enforcement efforts
 - Code capabilities and limitations
 - Code tools/violations that supplement crime strategies
 - Generate and assign Code service requests
 - Submit after hours Code requests 24/7 for life hazards
 - Code participation in after hours enforcement operations

Holistic Approach: Working with Multiple Departments

- Include DPD instructors in Code Officer training (Academy & Continuing Education)
 - Understanding of safety considerations
 - MHMR enforcement issues
 - DPD information resources

Holistic Approach: Working with Multiple Departments

- Identified top 500 of the City's worst properties
 - 230 are actual litigation cases or Chapter 54 notice has been issued
- Properties will be reviewed holistically for structural, legal and crime issues
- Properties will be continually added to maintain a “top 500” list



City of Dallas

INCORPORATE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Incorporate Education and Outreach

- ✓ Conducted training for Code Compliance Officers to improve customer service on the Historic and Conservation Districts
- ✓ Facilitated training in conjunction with Building Inspection to address inspections to ensure proper zoning uses
- ✓ Distributed educational information to residents advising them of clean neighborhood maintenance
- ✓ Educated residents concerning code compliance and its relationship to neighborhood safety
- Delivery of this training will be on-going

Example of this Approach in Action



Lake Highlands Volunteer in Code Pilot

Modeled after the Dallas Police Department's successful Volunteers in Patrol program

Conducted three extensive training sessions to educate volunteers on what to look for

Designed to increase compliance in areas with chronic code violations

Encourages residents to monitor their neighborhoods and report code violations to their neighborhood code representative

They become a new set of "eyes" in our community to assist Code officers in spotting violations

CHANGE SOME ORDINANCES

Ordinances: Some Changes Needed



- Responsible for enforcement of portions of the Dallas City Code that deals with residential, multi-tenant, commercial properties and animal-related ordinances
- The Dallas City Code consists of 3 volumes, 46 chapters, and more than 1300 pages
- Code Compliance is responsible for 14 of the 46 chapters

Ordinances: Some Changes Needed

- After careful review, it was determined that 2 chapters are better suited for enforcement by other departments; leaving a total of 12 chapters
 - Chapter 50 Consumer Protection → City Marshall's Office
 - Chapter 39A Relocation Services → Housing

Ordinances: Some Changes Needed



- High Weed and Grass – amend ordinance to lower height requirement from 12 inches to 8 inches to improve curb appeal
- Establish an annual “rolling notification” process (once per year) for high weeds and litter to eliminate repetitive notices and allows us to cite immediately
- Junk Motor Vehicles – amend ordinance to ensure seized vehicles do not return to residential areas
 - Re-initiate the procedure of crushing the seized vehicles; or
 - Sales limited to certified salvage and reclamation dealers

Ordinances: Some Changes Needed



- Possible amendments to Chapter 27 of the Dallas City Code to broaden the definition of “urban nuisance” in the context of remedying code violations
 - To be briefed by City Attorney’s Office in executive session

Ordinances: Some Changes Needed

- Storefront Signage
 - Reduce over saturated advertisements in neighborhood storefronts

Proposed revision would:

- Limit attached signs not to exceed 25% of the effective area of the façade
- Restrict the area not to exceed 25% attached to a window or glass door
- Require attached signage to be lower portion of the glass storefronts

Results:

- Enhance safety of businesses, employees and customers
- Enhance curb appeal and commercial areas
- Eliminate clutter

Ordinances: Some Changes Needed

Multi-tenant Services

- Redesign the inspection program to be more comprehensive and provide incentives for high-quality operators
 - More frequent license inspections for habitual non-compliant properties (based on license inspection score)
 - Less frequent license inspection for high quality operators
- Revamp the Safe Complex Symposium to be more useful and customer friendly
- Establish a notice provision prior to assessing fees for license inspections which provides:
 - Opportunity to Cure - \$51K revenue impact
 - Encourages investment in property instead of reoccurring fines
 - * Changes supported by the Apartment Association of Greater Dallas



IMPROVE PROCESSES:

- Community Code
- Animal Control Strategies
- Boarded-up Structures
- Mow / Clean Operations

Community Code

- Requires Code officers and citizens to partner in the course of identifying and addressing neighborhood issues
 - Focuses on code violations and prevention of community deterioration through the delivery of well planned code services
 - While including all traditional aspects of enforcement, the emphasis is on prevention, problem solving and community engagement
 - Balances reactive response to reported violations with proactive problem-solving centered on the causes of violations and disorder

Community Code

- Major impact of community approach – emphasis on compliance rather than enforcement which allows for opportunity to cure prior to issuance of citations
- Department measured by results and a new definition of success
 - Community free of code violations (like DPD crime reduction vs. enforcement statistics)
 - Emphasis on quality of life issues
- Resolve problems important to the specific neighborhood involved

Example of this Approach in Action



Education/Community Outreach Pilot Program

Targeted an area to go in and work with the community, to educate, to assess the needs and deliver services tailored for areas with chronic code violations.

Identified public service needs in this community

- Crime, code violations, excessive litter, graffiti and lack of alley maintenance by property owner
- Made door-to-door contact to assess needs through a survey and consulted with neighbors on code issues

Example of this Approach in Action



Education/Community Outreach Pilot Program

Provided assistance to residents facing physical or financial challenges

Coordinated City clean-ups, provided dumpsters and equipment and assisted with resolution of current violations where the citizen had received a citation

Provided these concentrated services without issuing notices of violation or citations

Example of this Approach in Action



Education/Community Outreach Pilot Program

What have we learned from this pilot program?

Some people will:

- comply voluntarily with the Code
- comply after education
- want to comply but can't
- comply after a citation is issued
- never comply

In order to maintain clean communities, the department will have to have the resources/approaches to address those that can't or will never comply

Animal Control

- ✓ Briefed Quality of Life and Government Services Committee on September 24, 2007 regarding “*Animal Control Strategies*”
- ✓ Opened Dallas Animal Shelter and Adoption Center on October 20, 2007
- ✓ Replaced two inadequate facilities with one state of the art “green” facility, designed to improve service delivery and community access

Animal Control

Dallas Animal Shelter



Previous Service Level

- Limited adoption facilities
- No Spay/Neuter Services
- No animal reclamation area (Lost and Found)
- High euthanasia rate
- Hours of operation
 - 10:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Monday - Friday
 - 10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. on Saturdays
 - 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. on Sundays

New Service Level

- ✓ Pet Adoption Services
 - Partner with a local personality to help champion our cause
- ✓ Animal reclamation area (Lost and Found)
- Spay/Neuter on site for animals adopted at shelter (July 2008)
- Expanded veterinary services – for spay/neuter service to the public (July 2009)
- ✓ Expanded education and outreach program
- Extended hours of operation
 - 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Monday – Friday
 - 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. on Saturdays
 - 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. on Sundays

Animal Control

- ✓ Six Special Operations Officers began patrolling, between 6am – 9am, in areas known to have loose dogs
- ✓ Since November 1, 2007, deployed five vehicles geographically to enhance rapid response in areas with high call volumes
 - September 6, 2007 – March 21, 2008, 15,630 dogs impounded and issued 282 citations (Same time last year, 10,910 dogs impounded and issued 23 citations)

Animal Control

- ✓ Continued hiring efforts to increase staffing to implement new service level
 - Currently have 85 positions (Animal Keeper and Animal Officers)
 - 21 vacant positions; positions to be filled by May 30
 - Evaluate recruitment and retention efforts

- ✓ Surveyed 9 local municipalities and 8 index cities regarding animal ordinances

<u>Local</u>		<u>Index</u>	
Arlington	Fort Worth	Baltimore	Chicago
Garland	Houston	Detroit	Indianapolis
Midland	Mesquite	New York	Phoenix
North Richland Hills	Plano	San Diego	San Francisco
University Park			

Animal Control

- ✓ Dallas Animal Shelter Advisory Commission is recommending a slate of proposed changes/additions to the Dallas City Code and various City ordinances to address animal control including:
 - Enacting mandatory spay/neuter and breeder requirements;
 - Eliminating tethering as a proper restraint unless in the presence of the owner;
 - Setting standards for outdoor dog enclosures to prevent escape and to provide dogs with adequate room and access to food, water and shelter;
 - Limiting the number of dogs and cats per household; and
 - Strengthening the dangerous dog ordinance
- These recommendations and potential budget impacts will be brought before the Quality of Life Committee for consideration on April 28, 2008

Boarded-Up Structures

- ✓ Teamed with a multi-disciplined group to address vacant office buildings in CBD
 - Implement a new inter-departmental Vacant Building Action Team that will monitor the condition of vacant buildings
 - Developed Inspection Team comprised of officers from Fire, Code and Building Inspection
 - Inspect vacant buildings on a routine basis instead of inspecting as a response to police, fire, code and other complaints
 - Requires an ordinance change to require vacant building registration and to gain access for routine interior inspections

Boarded-Up Structures

- Reinststitute the “Red Tag” placard
 - Warns of a dangerous unsanitary or unsafe structure which presents an immediate danger to the health, safety, or welfare of the public or any occupant
 - Allows DPD to write citations and remove individuals from the property which applies to anyone:
 - in the structure
 - who removes a placard
 - who permits occupancy of the structure
- Possible amendments to Chapter 27 of the Dallas City Code to broaden the definition of “urban nuisance” in the context of remedying code violations - To be briefed by City Attorney’s Office in executive session

Mow/Clean Operations

- ✓ Expedited Mow / Clean service delivery for abatement (forestry, litter and brush removal)
- ✓ Mowed and cleaned 9,943 properties over the last six months (6,066 properties same period prior year)
- ✓ Utilizing existing contracts for median mowing to include forestry (tree trimming)
- Recommend billing for Mow / Clean services prior to placing liens to encourage prompt payment

Mow/Clean Operations

Current Service Level

- Non-compliant residents after attempts to educate are subject to:
 - Notice of violation per 12-month period
 - Issuance of citation
 - Mow and Clean crew remove violation
 - Place lien immediately
 - Recurring violations result in continuous process of mowing and placement of liens

Proposed Service Level

- Non-compliant residents after attempts to educate are subject to:
 - Notice of violation per 12-month period
 - Issuance of citation
 - Mow and Clean crew removing violation
 - Billing the responsible person
 - Processing a lien on the property for unpaid bills
 - Referring the property for potential legal action

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

Critical Success Factors

- Code Compliance is a service that must be delivered, located within the neighborhoods and must promote citizen awareness and ensure geographic responsibility and accountability
- Simply issuing citations will not produce clean, code compliant neighborhoods. It requires community education and interaction and occasionally city-supported clean-up services
- More stringent ordinances encourage compliance and strengthens our position when legal action is needed



City of Dallas

FY 07/08 BUDGET IMPACT

FY 07-08 Budget Impact

FY 07-08 Budget Summary

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

FY 07-08 Budget Impact

FY 07-08 budget level cannot support the new Community Code approach:

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positioning resources in regional service centers like Streets, Library and Parks (move of equipment, reconfiguration/ make-ready of existing buildings, modular buildings) | <p>\$1.450M</p> <p>\$100K</p> | <p>One-time expense</p> <p>On-going expense</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting enhanced community outreach/education, code sweeps and clean-up efforts | <p>\$350K</p> | <p>On-going expense</p> |

What's the Outlook for FY 08-09?

- Currently developing FY 08-09 Budgeting for Outcomes bids to support this new service level:
 - Full-year funding of any recurring expenses of a Mid-Year Adjustment (if approved)
 - Possible funding for new positions and equipment
 - Possible funding for a new Court

Recommendations:

- Approve agenda item on April 23, 2008 for Mid-Year budget adjustment from Contingency Reserve to support new approach
- Consider some amendments to the Dallas City Code to support new approach
- Support revamping the Safe Complex Symposium which requires rescheduling