ADDISON

IT ALL COMES TOGETHER

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Proposed Code Enforcement Program

February 24, 2015

Why a Code Enforcement Program?

- To help create and maintain a safe and healthy environment
- To prevent physical and aesthetic deterioration of the community
- To protect property values of residents and businesses
- To reduce vandalism and deter crime
- To publish standards for compliance that are based on reasonable and consistent enforcement of state and local laws and ordinances
- To establish a framework for community involvement to resolve public nuisances

What is Code Enforcement?

- The process of preventing, inspecting, and mitigating nuisances on public and private premises relating to health, safety, and general welfare.
  - Defined by federal/state law and local ordinances

- Code enforcement does not regulate aesthetics, taste, civil disputes, or HOA violations.

Code Enforcement Program Goal

- To encourage both residential and commercial property owners to voluntarily resolve code violations on their property in order to ensure that Addison remains a community that is a clean and safe place to live, work, and play.

Which Codes and Violations are Part of a Code Enforcement Program?

- Zoning / Land Use
- Property Maintenance Standards
- Environmental codes
- Sign code
- Junk vehicles
- Building codes
- Substandard fences
- High weeds and grass
- Outside storage, trash accumulation

Which Codes and Violations are **NOT** Part of the Program?

- Abandoned vehicles (Police)
- Moving violations and parking (Police)
- Dumping - Class A (Police)
- Animal Control (Police)
- Landscaping (Parks)
- Food safety (health inspectors)
- Mold inspection and testing (3rd party)

Code Enforcement Process

- Identification
  - Complaint received or issue identified
  - Case created
  - Violation evaluated
- Voluntary compliance
  - Courtesy call to violator
  - Site visit with violator
  - Friendly letter to violator asking for compliance
- Legal process
  - Official notice sent by certified mail
  - Site re-inspection
  - Civil citation or criminal action if not corrected
  - Site re-inspection
  - Abatement of violation and filing of lien

Code Enforcement Current Practice

- Addison's current code enforcement procedure
  - No dedicated staff; decentralized; addition to regular duties
  - This is adequate to handle most complaints that are able to be resolved voluntarily
  - As Town ages, though, complaints are more numerous and complex
  - Building inspectors (2) are primary code inspection team
  - Also responsible for same-day building inspections
    - Customer service goal – same day service for requested inspection
    - Average 30 inspections each day
    - Leaves little time to conduct fair and impartial code enforcement program

Common Code Violations

- Illegal signs and lighting
  - Bandit signs
  - Banners/flags/balloons
  - Awning signs
  - Exterior lighting that changes colors
  - Skeleton lighting

Common Code Violations

- Trash Accumulation
  - No or improper screening
  - Over filling dumpster
  - Dumpster in right-of-way
  - Junk vehicles
  - Trailers / Boats etc
  - Improper screening of materials
  - Building and construction materials
  - POD and storage containers

Common Code Violations

- Substandard Fencing
  - Deteriorated fence materials
  - Leaning sections
  - Improper fencing materials
  - Canvas tarps
  - Barbed wire not to code

Common Code Violations

- Weeds and grass
  - High weeds and grass
  - Accumulation of dirt - ungraded
  - Accumulation of brush and dead trees

Common Code Violations

- Property Maintenance
  - Broken windows
  - Sign maintenance
  - Deteriorated exterior materials
  - Exposed electrical wiring
  - Deteriorated decks and balconies
  - Accumulated trash

Code Enforcement Proposal

Three pronged comprehensive program

1. Education and communication
2. Organization-wide and Community Support
3. Traditional Code Enforcement Program Enhancements

Education and Communication

1. Education and Communication
   a) Collateral materials – brochures, door hangars, etc, to educate; printed and electronic
   b) Website and smart phone apps – public access to report problems, track progress of complaint, learn about procedures
   c) Public outreach – HOA presentations, business group meetings

Organization-wide and Community Support

2. Organization-wide and Community Support
   a) Identify violations – train staff and others to recognize and report violations; would not confront property owner directly; report only
   b) Distribute collateral – staff that is routinely out of the office could distribute when appropriate
   c) Address certain violations directly – those that are always violations and do not require interaction with the property owner; signs in the right-of-way

Traditional Code Enforcement Program Enhancements

3. Traditional Code Enforcement Program Enhancements
   a) Code enforcement officer - New position

      Licensed, experienced
   b) Administrative staff - New position; answer phones, track cases, correspondence, records retention, court filings
   c) Review Ordinances – revise those that are out-dated or need additional revisions

Code Enforcement Proposal - Costs

- Salaries and benefits: $121,000
- Miscellaneous administrative program costs: $46,000
- Vehicle and maintenance costs: $32,000

- One-time: $57,000
- Recurring: $142,000

- **Total Year One Program Costs: $199,000**

Direction Needed

- How should staff proceed?
  - Continue procedures currently in place
  - Begin some elements of the proposed program
    - Training, community outreach
    - Identified issues may not be able to be addressed in a timely manner
  - Begin development of program; materials, staffing
    - Will require a mid-year budget adjustment of approximately $131,000
  - Bring forward during FY2016 budget process