

Work Group Name: Code Enforcement-Litter Control
Department Name: ONS/Code Enforcement-Litter Control
Division Name: Economic Development Division

Mission Statement: “To promote Community awareness of and encourage compliance with City Municipal Codes to enhance the quality of life and foster civic pride.”

Customer: Citizens concerned about the community

Product/Service provided: 1.) address quality of life concerns of the citizens, 2.) foster civic pride in neighborhoods, 3.) fostering business and home relocation as well as tourism efforts, 4.) viable living options for all income levels, 5.) respond to requests for service including: illegal dumps, junk vehicles, zoning violations, fire hazards, dilapidated, vacant and burned buildings, general nuisance, foster civic pride in neighborhoods, 6.) rehabilitation of buildings and the growth of the tax base, 7.) ensure compliance by citizens with the laws of the City of Spokane, 8.) refer complaints to other agencies for assistance with problems not within our scope, 9.) educate citizens on the codes and requirements of the City/County .

SWOT:

Strengths: The SMC, specifically provisions which allow abatement of the nuisance condition; dedicated staff; interagency support (Solid Waste, Neighborhood Resource Officers, Fire); external support (Neighborhood Councils, COPS Shops); resources for abatement such as the Litter Control Crew and contract services.

Weaknesses: Legal Support – Slow prosecution, limited resource to pursue civil cases; inability to stop repeat offenders; chronic nuisance properties; lack of interagency support (Regional Health, Spokane County Prosecutors Office, Spokanimal); large geographic area; codes w/out direct responsibility for administration or enforcement; lack of centralized reception to direct the public.

Opportunities: Continuing education and training for staff; relationships with the Neighborhoods Councils and COP Shops; continued pro-active enforcement activities; legislative aid in the City to work on changes in State law; working with service oriented agencies such as ESD 101; potential coordination with regional Code Enforcement Agencies; new technology – new permit system.

Threats: Citizens abusing the system with blanket complaints or retaliatory complaints; reduced funding; proposed legislation (landlord evictions); new case law (administrative warrants illegal); new responsibilities without resources; legislative tampering with the process (requests to back off on compliance issues).

Critical Success Factors: 1.) neighborhood support, 2.) interagency cooperation, 3.) legislative/Administration support for initiatives, 4.) education of the public, 5.) effective staff resources (staff that communicate well, are knowledgeable, and people oriented), 6.) by abating over 280 junk vehicles in 2006 Code Enforcement helps facilitate public health and neighborhood growth, 7.) Code enforcement maintains over 75 boarded up/abandoned houses across Spokane that would otherwise attract illicit activities and threaten public health and safety.

Department Goals:

Goal 1: Increase the efficiency of the citation process

1. Review Code Enforcement Department timelines and adopt procedures for more consistent and effective noticing and ticketing: By completed March, 2007.

Goal 2: Better communication with the public

1. Institute a web-page and domain for Code Enforcement to enable citizens' easier access to information and forms (June, 2007). Note, www.beautifyspokane.org was purchased in April, 2007. Full implementation of website targeted: By Dec, 2007.
2. Develop and deploy Citizen Response cards: completed April 2007.

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Goal 3: Regulate the distribution of complaints with existing staff resources so that case review can occur within specified time goals.

1. Institute a 'back-up' Officer which would even out case loads and would provide coverage to backfill staff on vacation and in-fill during peak season – implementation completed in March, 2007.
2. Examine officer redistricting and provide recommendations – complete by November, 2007.
3. Request for additional Code Enforcement Officers in the 2008 budget cycle.

Goal 4: Formalize department procedures for case management and that will enhance data available for management decision making.

1. Adopt a procedure for case prioritization and case closure- March 2006 and into 2009 for permit system implementation.

Goal 5: Reduce instances of scoff laws actively enforcing violations to the full extent of the law.

1. Request the dedication of an attorney and/or prosecutor to work on Code Enforcement civil and criminal cases. (Unknown timeline due to financial resources and impacts another department).
2. Civil Warrants updates and revisions: By March, 2007

