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FROM: Linda Stewart, Director, Neighborhood & Community Services
COPY: Community Vitality and Safety Committee
PRESENTER: Keith Williams, Code Compliance Supervisor, Neighborhood & Community Services
SUBJECT: Code Compliance 2018-2019 Pilot Project Update
DATE: November 14, 2019

PRESENTATION TYPE:

Informational Briefing

SUMMARY:

In June 2018, NCS launched a pilot project primarily in Councilmanic Districts 4 and 5 where the highest number of open code cases are present. After experiencing success with the strategies implemented in 2018, the pilot project expanded to Councilmanic District 3 in March 2019. This report includes outcomes from June 2018 to July 2019.

BACKGROUND:

Pilot project outcomes:

- 1) Increase property owner and community understanding of code compliance requirements
- 2) Increase the rate and number of successful case closures
- 3) Decrease the number of reported concerns and cases opened
- 4) Maximize effective use of resources
- 5) Build community confidence in compliance efforts

Top 15 case evaluation criteria:

- Building is derelict or unfit
- Case has been open longer than two years
- Substantial overgrowth present on the property
- Habitual or repeat offender

ISSUE:

Significant lessons learned from the pilot project:

- By implementing the 'Top 15' list in the pilot project area, NCS learned that pursuing abatement or demolition is the most efficient path to achieving compliance, versus the standard approach of pursuing compliance by issuing civil penalties.
- The YARD program allows the City to develop a collaborative relationship with property owners, by offering resources to qualifying residents and successfully closing their nuisance cases without incurring costs associated with civil penalties.
- Sending Notices of Violation to banks using HB-2057 allows a new path to close nuisance cases on abandoned or foreclosed properties more quickly.



Measured outcomes:

- Cases that were closed during the second half of the pilot project (January-July 2019) closed an average of 19 days sooner than the first half of the pilot (June-December 2018).
- During the pilot project, 241 more cases were opened and closed compared to the previous year. In addition, cases were open during the pilot project an average of 15 days shorter than the prior year.

ALTERNATIVES:

This is an information briefing only.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This is an information briefing only.

RECOMMENDATION:

Based on the success of the pilot project (see Attachment A), NCS will adopt the following strategies as part of general code compliance operations:

- Continue to issue Notices of Violation to banks to notify them of their responsibility to resolve nuisance conditions on abandoned or foreclosed properties they finance (HB 2057).
- Adjust YARD program operations in order to provide more case management support to qualifying residents citywide.
- Continue to pursue receivership and/or acquisition and rehabilitation in collaboration with Community and Economic Development.

NCS will maintain and address the 'Top 15 list' in Councilmanic districts 3, 4 and 5 while the NCS Equity Initiative continues to evaluate the equity impacts of code compliance practices. Throughout 2020, NCS and contracted consultants will identify options for improving processes to ensure equity in code compliance, including approaches to violation notifications and assistance provided to owners in violation. Updates on this work will be presented to Council as improvements are identified.

**ATTACHMENT A:**

Goal	Status
<p>June 2018-Feb 2019 Close ‘Top 10’ cases within 12 months of identification (CM District 4,5)</p> <p>March 2019-July 2019 Close ‘Top 15’ cases within 12 months of identification (CM District 3,4,5)</p>	<p>Met → The ‘Top 15’ list was originally the ‘Top 10’ list. 13 cases identified have been resolved on the list.</p> <p>Cases at the following properties were closed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 232 E 72 St (District 5, on list one month)• 6243 S Montgomery St (District 5, on list two months)• 5834 S Fife St (District 5, on list three months)• 6809 East I St (District 4, on list two months)• 1834 S 92nd St (District 4, on list four months)• 5020 Portland Ave (District 4, on list four months)• 7201 East G St (District 5, on list six months)• 1431 S 43rd St (District 4, on list seven months)• 1118 E 51st St (District 4 (on list eight months)• 6841 S Prospect St (District 5, on list nine months)• 722 S 38th St (District 4, on list seven months)• 6403 Lawrence St (District 5, on list seven months)• 116 E 68th St (District 5, on list seven months)
<p>Explore receivership option allowed under RCW 7.60.25 to allow City to proactively abate property conditions on priority properties</p>	<p>Met → NCS brought TMC change recommendations for Council approval to allow the City to pursue receivership. Work is underway to determine how receivership can work in Tacoma.</p>
<p>Implement YARD program to provide vegetation removal services on properties with code violations owned by low-income elderly or disabled residents</p>	<p>Met → NCS executed a contract with Pierce County Juvenile Court to provide services to qualifying residents. Six clients have been enrolled, which resulted in closed cases without financial burden to the property owner.</p> <p>All YARD clients have also been referred to other property related supports, such as minor home repair through Rebuilding Together and Need-A-Break.</p>
<p>Utilize HB-2057 to hold banks accountable for nuisance conditions on abandoned properties and properties in the foreclosure process</p>	<p>Met → 11 properties have come into voluntary compliance and cases were closed because NCS mailed Notices of Violation to banks accountable for nuisance conditions. Prior to the implementation of HB-2057, NCS did not have an option to pursue compliance for these types of Nuisance cases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2463 S 50th St (District 3)• 848 E 47th St (District 4)• 1437 E 34th St (District 4)• 1532 S Oakes St (District 3)• 1729 E 60th St (District 4)• 3594 E L St (District 4)• 4420 N 22nd St (District 1)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 6825 E Grandview St (District 4)• 5122 N Defiance St (District 1)• 705 S L St (District 3)• 928 E 57th St (District 4)
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