

**CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION:**

ITEM _____

**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA**

99-191

SYNOPSIS -

AGENDA:

Reorganization within the Community Development Department was presented and approved by the Council during the recent budget process. Inspectors from the Housing Code Enforcement Section of the Housing Conservation Division and the Neighborhood Health and Zoning Division will be combined into a single organizational unit.

MAY 3, 1999

SUBJECT:

PROPOSED JOB CLASSIFICATIONS RELATED TO CONSOLIDATION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH & ZONING INSPECTION DIVISION AND THE HOUSING CODE ENFORCEMENT SECTION OF THE HOUSING CONSERVATION DIVISION

FISCAL IMPACT -

The reorganization was received as part of the Amended Fiscal Year (FY) 1999 and Adopted FY 2000 budgets. Three additional inspectors were added as part of the MidAmerican Energy rebate and the Deputy Zoning Enforcement Officer was added to the General Fund Budget.

RECOMMENDATION -

Receive and file the proposed job classifications.

TYPE:

BACKGROUND -

RESOLUTION ORDINANCE
RECEIVE/FILE

The issue of neighborhood property maintenance has long been a matter of concern to Council Members, neighborhood leadership, and City staff. These issues are primarily addressed through the enforcement activities by staff from the Housing Code Enforcement Section of the Housing Conservation Division and Neighborhood Health and Zoning Division of the Community Development Department.

SUBMITTED BY:

**JAMES GRANT
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT**

In 1996, the Environmental Health and the Zoning Divisions were combined to create efficiencies and to reduce the duplication of effort in dealing with neighborhood property

DIRECTOR

maintenance issues. Since that time, we have made a number of changes in the City's approach to enforcement in order to streamline this process and more quickly and effectively address property violations.

In spite of this, we have a duplication of effort between the Housing Code Enforcement Section and the Neighborhood Health and Zoning Division with regard to enforcement activities directed at certain properties.

An analysis of the current organization found that the combination of these two enforcement groups will eliminate the remaining overlap in effort, provide for substantially smaller inspection territories, and allow inspectors to develop a "beat cop" approach in working with neighborhoods to address a broad spectrum of interior and exterior maintenance issues at both owner-occupied and rental properties. Four of the inspectors have already been assigned to the Neighborhood Based Service Delivery Team.

To provide for expanded support services and to expedite the processing of violations, a legal secretary has been added to the Legal Department and assigned to the new division. This position is also funded from the MidAmerican Energy rebate.

In addition, by reassigning certain non-property maintenance job functions (e.g., Board of Adjustment cases) to other divisions or departments, the newly formed division will have the ability to focus its efforts and attention more closely on neighborhood property maintenance issues.

The proposed job functions and required staff orientation necessitates the elimination of current inspector, supervisory, and administrative job classifications within the Housing Code Enforcement division and the Neighborhood Health and Zoning division. These will be replaced with the new job descriptions, which are presented as attachments to the roll call.

In addition, the Permit & Development Center will have recruitment for three transferred positions to separate the development and zoning responsibilities that the current Health and Zoning Inspectors have, and a new Deputy Zoning Enforcement Officer position has been created to supervise these inspectors and serve as the Zoning Officer.

The inspector, supervisory, and administrative positions will be filled through an interview process that will begin in May 1999 and be completed by the end of June 1999.

Human Resources and the Municipal Employees Association (MEA) have agreed that the entrance recruitment process for the new classifications would be followed. However, incumbent preferences for the new positions will be given to the Housing Conservation and the Health and Zoning Inspectors currently performing code enforcement inspections. Housing Conservation Inspectors currently performing housing assessments and inspections relative to neighborhood conservation services, weatherization, and rehabilitation activities will be given secondary preference.

Preference will be given to Neighborhood Health and Zoning Inspectors during the selection of the three Development Zoning Inspector positions. Any remaining vacancies will be filled in accordance with the terms and conditions of Chapter 400.

If during the selection process there is competition between incumbents, the selection will be made based on employee performance and ability.

In the event that an employee in one of the predecessor classifications (Neighborhood Health and Zoning Inspector/Housing Conservation Inspector) does not apply or is not appointed to one of the new classifications, such an employee will be laid off pursuant to the terms and conditions of Chapter 400 and the applicable provision of the MEA contract.

To assist in implementing this reorganization, a series of employee teams addressed a number of issues such as training needs, clerical support, office location and space needs, database management, and a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) analysis of how the division will function on a daily basis.

If Council votes to receive and file the proposed job descriptions, the recruitment for the new positions will begin immediately. The new division will begin the merging of the two inspection units by July 1, 1999.

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