City of Austin
Austin Code Department

TO: Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Carl Smart, Director Austin Code Department

DATE: August 19, 2014

SUBJECT: Response to Resolution 20140306-023

Resolution 20140306-023 required the Austin Code Department to provide Council with written quarterly reports, develop one or more outcome-based performance measures to include in annual budget documents and draft a timetable for development and implementation of the performance measures. Find below a response and update to Resolution 20140306-023.

The Austin Code Department began to disseminate quarterly reports in FY 2013-14. In the second quarterly report (submitted April 2014), ACD began to include data that pertained to but not limited to the following activity and output based metrics:

1. The number of complaints received and the number of properties complained against.
2. The number and category of Notices of Violation (NOVs) issued. The categories may be by type of violation or by section of the code violated, but should remain consistent over time so that trends can be identified.
3. The number and category of cases where no compliance is obtained and whether those cases were referred to the Building and Standards Commission, received a citation, or received an order of abatement.
4. The geographic distribution of violations by category, broken down by Neighborhood Contact Team area, census tract, or other sector that allows Council and management an opportunity to identify areas of particular concern.
5. The number and types of licenses issued and the average time to obtain each type of license.

To date, these reports are distributed to Mayor and Council, City Management and external partners. The reports are also viewable for the general public on the Austin Code website at https://austintexas.gov/article/new-quarterly-reports.

This year, the Austin Code Department (ACD) added three new operational performance measures to the budget documents. These measures, indicated below, will assist the Department in providing a clearer picture of activity and enforcement.

- Number of Short Term Rental Issued, see *budget document page 163*
- Number of cases escalated to judicial proceedings, *see budget document page 165*
- Number of Notice of Violations Issued, *see budget document page 165*

In addition, ACD is adding four new public, operational measures in FY 2014-15. These measures will appear on ePerf, the City's online performance measures database, beginning December 1, 2014. They were made operational in order to establish a strong data collection process and tracking system before upgrading them to performance level. The new operational measures are:

- Number of Illegal Dumps Abated by ACD
- Number of Commercial Cases Investigated
- Number of Multi-Family Cases Investigated
- Number of Repeat Offenders Registered

Currently, the code enforcement industry does not have standard output based performance measures similar to the established Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) program, used by law enforcement agencies. How we operate and what we investigate in Austin, Texas does not mirror our Texas counterparts or Code Departments throughout the nation. This created a significant challenge in developing and implementation of the output based performance measures indicated in Resolution 20140306-023.

To mitigate this challenge, it would require the Department to explore internal and/or external resources to develop standard output based performance measures similar to the UCR program. Staff anticipates the project taking up to one year to complete with about 400 direct employee hours. Austin Code plans to initiate the process beginning FY 2014-15. The process will entail:
1. Building an external Code Industry stakeholder group that consists of representatives from the following agencies:
   a. Code Enforcement Association of Texas (CEAT)
   b. American Association of Code Enforcement (AACE)
   c. Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX)
   d. Code departments in other Cities
2. Partnering with local University graduate programs to assist with research.
3. Working with the City of Austin Contract Procurement Division to solicit professional services using a request for qualifications (RFQs), if needed.

Austin Code has scheduled a Code Industry Summit for September 2014 for external Code industry stakeholders throughout Texas. So far, more than ninety individuals representing more than twelve jurisdictions have indicated they will attend. At the Summit, we will begin the discussion of how the Code Industry can effectively measure performance and develop the Code Industry stakeholder group.

We anticipate launching the project in FY 2015-16. The fiscal impact will be included on future budget documents. This innovative initiative will set precedence and effect how the Code Industry nationwide reports performance measures.

For additional information or questions, feel free to contact me at (512) 974-1970.

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