



**MNO Sycamore Canyon / Canyon Springs Neighborhood
July 30, 2008
United Way of the Inland Valleys**

Community Development:

Q – Can people reporting dilapidated houses receive calls from the City about what action is being taken?

A – Code Enforcement staff actively pursue calls received regarding dilapidated houses. Because of shifts in the housing market, there are numerous cases being processed. In order to follow-up on new calls Code Enforcement staff are encouraged to be out in the field. If residents have questions about pending investigations, they can either call 826-5311 (the 311 call center) or Code Enforcement at 826-5633.

Q – How actively does the City pursue mortgage holders/lenders/banks to water and maintain foreclosed homes?

A – The City has a “state of the art” municipal code section which was adopted in November of 2007 that places the responsibility for the maintenance of these properties clearly on the shoulders of the lenders. However, there are a number of issues associated with finding out which mortgage company is actually responsible for a loan, as they are sold repeatedly. Additionally, some lenders have been less responsive to citations and fines than others. The final issue is just a matter of resources- there are 13 Code Enforcement Officers citywide, and last year there were more than 65,000 cases. Given that workload, it is difficult to follow up with every vacant property citywide.

Legal:

Q – Can we stop the Press Enterprise from distributing ads in yellow plastic bags on people’s lawns and driveways? This has become a matter of litter in our neighborhood.

A – The Press Enterprise advertising circulars are delivered to homes that currently do not subscribe to the paper. The most direct way to prevent the circular from being delivered to your property is to contact the paper at 951-368-9796 and request that your address be deleted from the list. Additionally, representatives from the City have met with the representative responsible for distribution of the circulars and advised them as to the City’s littering ordinance. The representative from The Press Enterprise has assured the City that it will comply with the requirements of the Riverside Municipal Code.

Police:

Q – What is being done about the after-hour disturbances in the Sycamore Highlands Park?

A – As a means to control after-hour disturbances in Sycamore Highlands Park, security officers have been provided by Parks, Recreation and Community Services. Adding extra eyes and ears will be a tremendous help as well as a deterrent for juveniles to "hang out" in the park after hours. The City will start a "Friday night lights" program next month. On Fridays, there will be a team of six officers and a Sergeant that will provide extra patrols and enforcement of the municipal code violations that have become a nuisance to the community surrounding the park.

Q – Can we put fines on residents who play loud music throughout the day and into the night?

A – The City of Riverside has a new Party Ordinance which allows police officers to fine residents that play loud music throughout the day and night. The Riverside Police Department no longer need a signed citizen's arrest form to cite a resident who is disturbing the peace by playing loud music.

Finance:

Q – Can property taxes and/or Mello Roos taxes on houses be lowered/revised?

A – Property taxes can be lowered in the current year if the assessed value of a home is lower than it's current market value. That determination is made by the County of Riverside Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder, Larry W. Ward, as it is a County of Riverside issue. By accessing his website, www.riversideacr.com, you can obtain a copy of a form titled "Decline-in-Value Reassessment Application" (Prop. 8) (Owner's Request for Review of Property Value). According to the form, to request a review of the assessed value of your property as of January 1, 2008, you must complete and file the form application by September 1, 2008.

Mello-Roos taxes are associated with bonds issued under the Mello-Roos Community Facilities District Act of 1982. Community Facility Districts are formed and bond issues authorized two ways: either by two-thirds vote of the property owners in the district or by the developer(s) which is the usual manner. The proceeds of the tax-exempt bonds are used to finance infrastructure associated with the development. Nothing can be done to reduce these special taxes levied on the property in the district.