

**LODI CITY COUNCIL
SHIRTSLEEVE SESSION
CARNEGIE FORUM, 305 WEST PINE STREET
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2012**

A. Roll Call by City Clerk

An Informal Informational Meeting ("Shirtsleeve" Session) of the Lodi City Council was held Tuesday, September 11, 2012, commencing at 7:00 a.m.

Present: Council Member Hansen, Council Member Johnson, Mayor Pro Tempore Nakanishi, and Mayor Mounce

Absent: Council Member Katzakian

Also Present: City Manager Bartlam, City Attorney Schwabauer, and City Clerk Johl

B. Topic(s)

B-1 Overview and Prioritization of the Community Improvement Unit (PD)

Police Chief Mark Helms provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Community Improvement program. Specific topics of discussion included background, community improvement team, complaints, scope of complaints, types of complaints processed, 2011 case history, 2012 cases for six months, challenges, what is involved in a case, case photos, community improvement accomplishments, community improvement goals, code enforcement, and current case priorities.

In response to Mayor Mounce, Chief Helms stated currently the Community Improvement program is understaffed with one officer and one clerical support person and he is looking forward to bringing on one more officer, adjusting the operations of the program, and bringing back a proper recommendation for staffing in the future.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Chief Helms stated the CalGRIP funds were received through the State and will fund a part-time position to deal directly with gang-related properties. Chief Helms stated the grant will expire in December 2013.

In response to Council Member Johnson and Mayor Mounce, Chief Helms stated staff can review the options associated with vacant property ordinances through which fees can be assessed on banks for property maintenance purposes. Chief Helms stated he will provide the numbers associated with calls for vacant properties in the City as requested.

In response to Mayor Pro Tempore Nakanishi, Chief Helms stated the Community Improvement budget falls under the Police Department budget and the \$6,000 budgeted for boarding up vacant homes is insufficient.

In response to Council Member Hansen, Chief Helms stated abandoned vehicles on private property visible from the street can still be towed under existing authority.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Chief Helms stated it is challenging to operate the program with only one officer and one clerical person and they rely heavily on prioritization of cases and assistance from the Police Partners.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Chief Helms stated staff will forward the numbers associated with property liens on vacant properties as requested.

A brief discussion ensued between Mayor Mounce, Chief Helms, and Community Improvement Officer Nancy Baker regarding the Community Improvement brochure, its contents, and proactive dissemination of the brochure to the community in an effort to prevent violations before they happen.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Ms. Baker stated the administrative citation process includes the following fines: \$100 for a first violation, \$250 with \$100 administrative fine, and a \$350 with a \$500 cap fine. Ms. Baker stated there is also a lien process although the fines are generally sufficient.

In response to Council Member Hansen, Ms. Baker stated if the fines are not paid the violations are sent through the collections and lien process. She stated garage sales run as a business are handled on a complaint basis. Council Member Hansen suggested reviewing a code enforcement sweep similar to other Police Department sweeps in targeted neighborhoods.

In response to Mayor Pro Tempore Nakanishi, Mr. Bartlam stated the program dates back to 1996 and the current process is similar to the previous process prior to 2008 although the program did move from Community Development to the Police Department for management and function alignment purposes.

Mayor Mounce suggested looking into a Code Action Team program whereby a team of City and County relevant agencies educate neighborhoods on compliance and available resources.

The City Council provided general comments supporting the concept of changing the name of the program from Community Improvement to Code Enforcement if the Police Chief and department felt it would better assist with compliance.

Myrna Wetzel spoke in regard to her concerns about addressing garbage-related nuisances as a priority to control disease in the community.

C. Comments by Public on Non-Agenda Items

None.

D. Adjournment

No action was taken by the City Council. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 a.m.

ATTEST:

Randi Johl
City Clerk



**CITY OF LODI
COUNCIL COMMUNICATION**

AGENDA TITLE: Overview and Prioritization of the Community Improvement Unit
MEETING DATE: September 11, 2012 (Shirtsleeve Session)
PREPARED BY: Chief of Police

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Overview and prioritization of Community Improvement Unit.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Police Chief Mark Helms will provide an overview of the Community Improvement Unit. Presentation will include unit staffing, responsibilities and prioritization of calls for service.

FISCAL IMPACT: NA

FUNDING AVAILABLE: NA

Mark Helms
Chief of Police

MH:jb

APPROVED:

Konradt Bartlam, City Manager

LODI POLICE DEPARTMENT

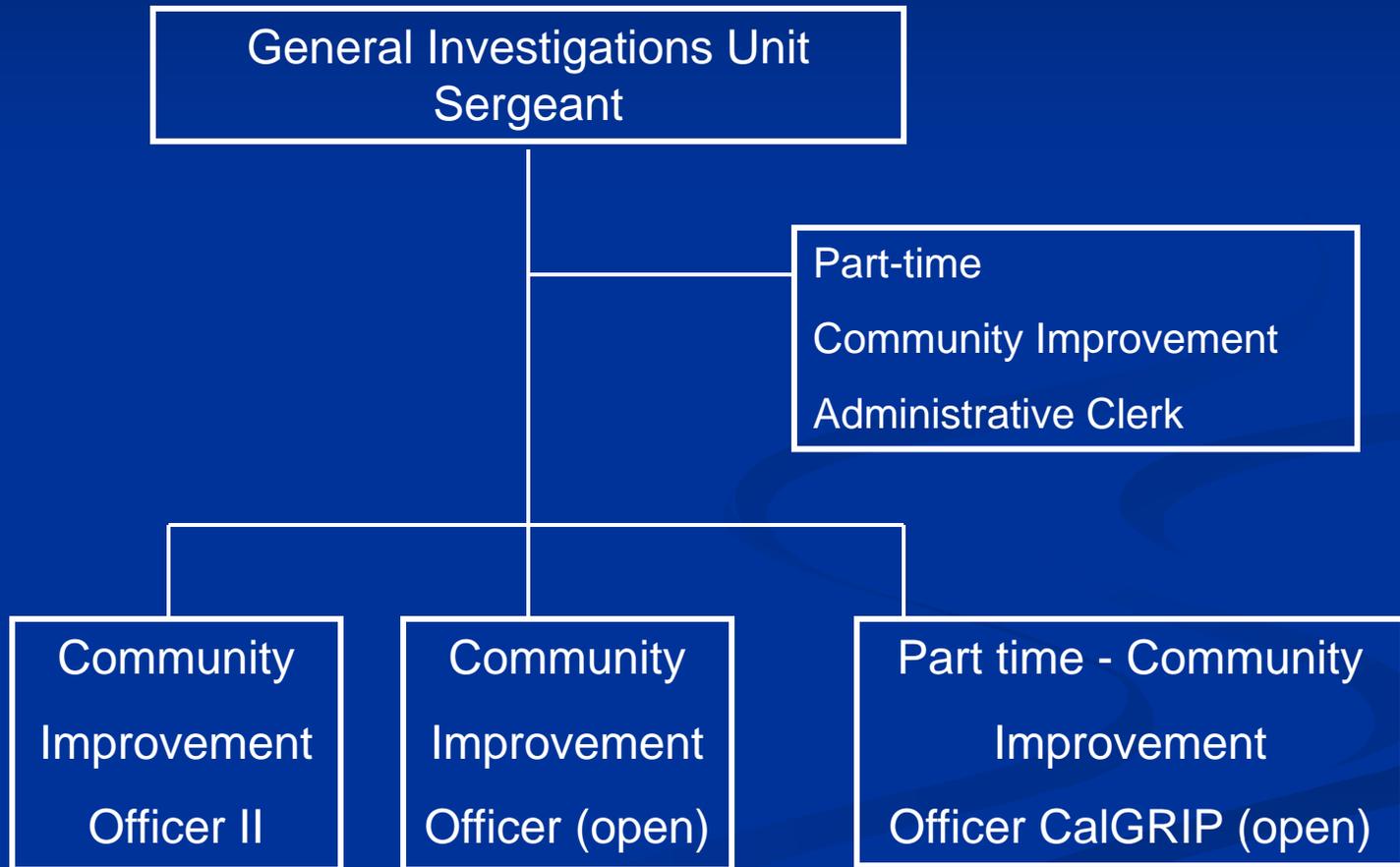
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

September 11, 2012

Background

- Transition to the Police Department from Community Development January 2008
- Part of Services Bureau
- One Community Improvement Officer position open since January, 2011
- Community Improvement Supervisor position eliminated April, 2012
- Assigned to General Investigations Unit Sergeant September, 2012

Community Improvement Team



Complaints

- Substandard Conditions & Dangerous Buildings (Health & Safety Issues)
- Nuisances
- Zoning Violations

Scope of Complaints

■ Substandard Conditions/Dangerous Buildings

Safeguard life or limb, health, property and public welfare:

- Plumbing issues, electrical hazards, no utilities
- Lack of heat as required by the Uniform Housing Code
- Vermin infestation (cockroaches, mice/rats)
- Lack of water or adequate sanitation
- Lack of proper structure and/or property maintenance
- Fire damage not repaired
- Vacant and accessible buildings, broken windows
- Structural deficiencies or damage (collapsed roof)

Types of Complaints Processed

■ Nuisances

Regulating the visible appearance of property per the Lodi Municipal Code including:

- Accumulation of junk and debris
- Garbage cans viewable from the public right-of-way
- Overgrown vegetation
- Fences that are a hazard
- Illegal dumping
- Inoperable vehicle
- Encroachments into public right-of-way, e.g. basketball hoops, signs, etc.

Types of Complaints Processed

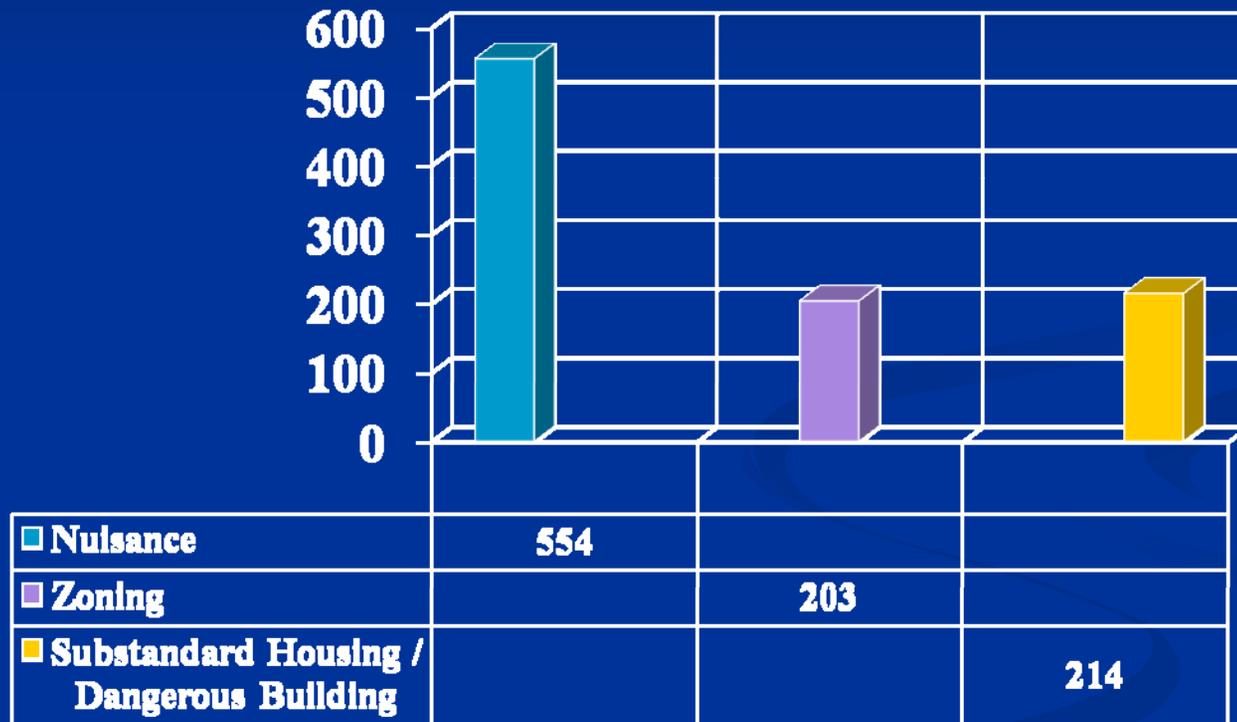
- Zoning Violations

Regulate zoning requirements per the Lodi Municipal Code:

- Home occupations
- Camping in residential areas
- Unpermitted vendors
- Portable and/or unpermitted signage
- Unpermitted accessory structures
- Unpermitted secondary living units
- Encroachment into public right-of-way (vegetation)
- Rented or purchased container storage

2011 Case History

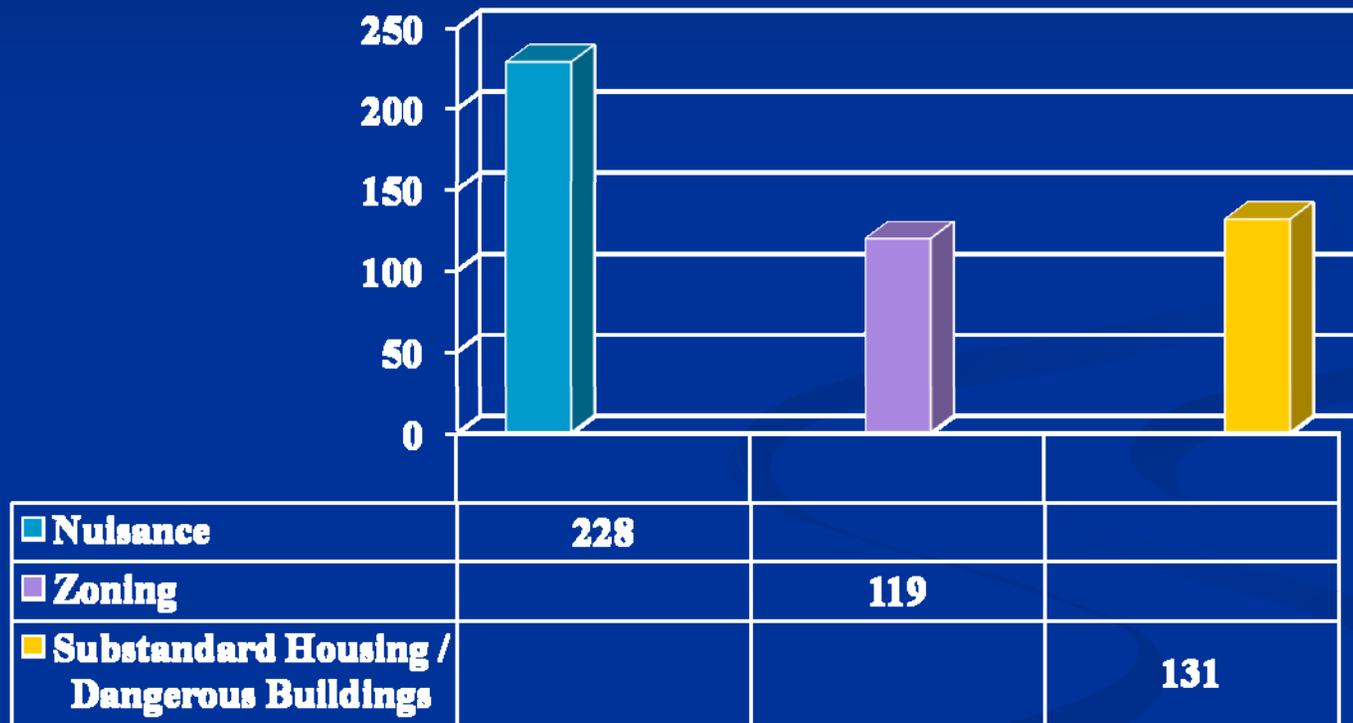
971 Cases in 2011



Cases Closed in 2011: 923

2012 Cases – 6 months

478 Cases to Date 2012



Cases Closed in first 6 months: 411

Challenges

- Code Enforcement cases have increased 35% since 2008
- Reduction in overall staffing since 2010
- Citizens' expectations frequently differ from department prioritizations
- Increasing number of board ups, property cleanup, and abatements utilizing City funds
- Unoccupied homes causing increased reports of property maintenance issues
- Delays in recovery of City funds expended on abatement

What is Involved in a Case?

- Inspect complaint for Violation
- Make contact with Home/Property Owner
- Issue Notice of Violation
- Re-Inspect property for compliance
- Violation not removed/resolved
 - Work with property owner whenever possible
 - Implement abatement process when warranted
 - And/or issue Administration Citation
 - Continue follow-up until in compliance

Case Photos

Signage



Illegal Dumping

Case Photos



Soft/Yard Parking



Vehicle Abatement



Case Photos



Substandard/Unsafe
Housing

Case Photos

Encroachment



Structure
not
Permitted

Community Improvement Accomplishments

- Community Oriented Policing Training for staff
- Web-based Code Enforcement case management software
- Computers and printers in vehicles
- Unit Brochure for city-wide distribution
- Trained all volunteers
- Attend community events

Community Improvement Accomplishments

- Expanded utilization of Police Volunteers
 - Vehicle Abatement (on street)
 - Complaint Response and Photos of property
 - Follow-up of Nuisance Complaint Compliance, i.e. garbage cans in view, debris, soft parking, etc.
 - Disabled Parking Stall Compliance Program
 - Conduct Vacant Home Checks
 - Identify areas needing immediate attention
- Now assigned to General Investigations Unit & Supervised by a Police Sergeant

Community Improvement Goals

- Hire 1 full-time and 1 part-time Community Improvement Officer
- Expand use as a crime-fighting tool
- Aggressively recover funds for abatement costs
 - Contact Property Owners regarding abatement
 - File Liens in a timely manner
- Increase public education and promote community involvement by:
 - Conducting Informational Presentations
 - Organizing Block Clean Up Events
- Review and Update Code Enforcement Ordinances

Community Improvement/ Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement Description

“Ensures the public observes city codes and ordinances”

- **Citizens uncertain about Community Improvement vs. Code Enforcement**
- **Majority of citizens request Code Enforcement**
- **Primary activity is enforcement of city codes and ordinances**
- **Industry standards recognize Code Enforcement certification training - California Association of Code Enforcement Officers**

Current Prioritization of Cases

1. Health and Safety/Substandard Housing
2. Dangerous Buildings
3. Problematic Locations/Visible Nuisances
4. Vehicle Abatement
5. Zoning
6. Other

Discussion

How Do I Report A Code Enforcement Problem?

Community Improvement operates in cooperation with the citizens. Emphasis is placed on encouraging neighborhood maintenance efforts as well as responding to complaints. The staff devotes individual attention to correct problems and to educate the public. Community Improvement relies on the assistance of the citizens of Lodi to report violations so we may work together to maintain the standard of living our community deserves. Complaints or questions are handled over the phone or in person in a professional and courteous manner. To report a violation or problem, (24 hours a day) call Community Improvement at (209) 333-6823.

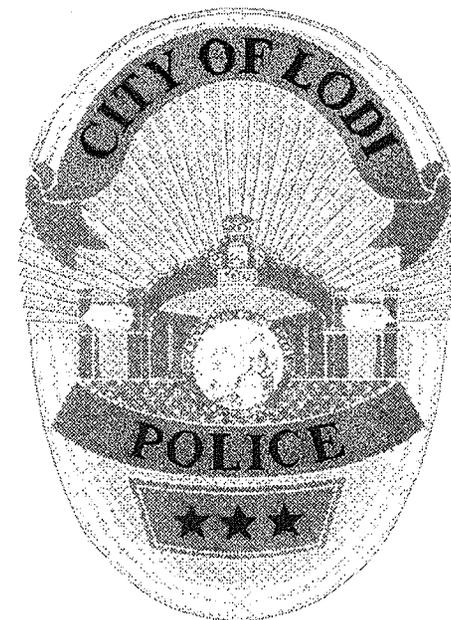
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT GOAL

Community Improvement's goal is to protect and preserve the public safety, health, welfare, and quality of life of the community in which we live and serve. This is done through enforcement of the Lodi Municipal Code, with focus on Public Nuisance and Public Safety Ordinances. By addressing violations and assisting the public in complying with the Municipal Code, Community Improvement will improve the quality of life for the entire community.

Everyone wants to live in neighborhoods that are clean, safe, economically viable, and good places to raise their children. As citizens of Lodi, we encourage you to report any situations you may think are violations. Community Improvement investigates complaints such as graffiti, illegal dumping, abandoned vehicles, trash, cars parked on lawns in front of houses, overgrown vegetation and trash containers viewable from the public right-of-way. Upon receiving a complaint an inspection is made and appropriate measures are taken in a timely, efficient manner. Priority is given to immediate health and safety violations and are handled aggressively in conjunction with other appropriate City departments.

Lodi Police Department

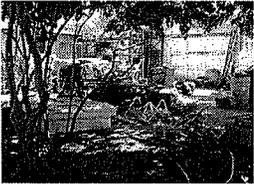
Community Improvement Unit



215 West Elm Street
Lodi, CA 95240
Phone: (209) 333-6823

Phone: 209-333-6823
Fax: 209-333-6792

What Community Improvement Can Do For You



Home cluttered with various junk and debris, violation of LMC §15.30.030

We all want to live in neighborhoods that are clean, safe, economically viable, and decent places to raise our children. As citizens of Lodi we

encourage you to report any situations you may think are violations. Community Services investigates complaints such as illegally placed signs, graffiti, illegal dumping, abandoned vehicles, trash, and cars parked on lawns in front of houses. Upon receiving a complaint an inspection is made and appropriate measures are taken in a timely, efficient manner. Priority is given to immediate health and safety violations and are handled aggressively in conjunction with the Police Department and appropriate City departments.



Top 10 Violation List

Community Improvement handles enforcement of local ordinances and State codes and regulations. The following are the most common violations for residential properties.

- Accumulation of dirt, litter or debris.
- Clothes lines or clothes hanging in front yards, or from porches, balconies or windows, provided however, that clothes lines and clothes hanging in rear yards shall be permitted.
- Accumulations of packing boxes, lumber, salvaged materials, fire wood, or similar materials in the front yard or visible from a public right-of-way;
- Attractive nuisances dangerous to children including abandoned, broken, or neglected equipment, machinery, refrigerators and freezers, hazardous or unmaintained pools, ponds, and excavations;
- Broken, discarded or dilapidated furniture, household equipment, or furnishings, or shopping carts on the exterior of the front or side yards;
- Overgrown vegetation likely to harbor rats, vermin or other nuisances dangerous to public health, safety, and welfare, or obstructing a necessary view of drivers on public streets or private drive-ways;
- Dead, diseased, decayed or hazardous trees, weeds or other vegetation constituting unsightly appearance, which is either dangerous to public health or safety, or detrimental to neighboring properties or property values;
- Vehicle parts or other articles of personal property which are abandoned or left in a state of partial construction or repair;
- Buildings which are abandoned, boarded up, partially destroyed, or left in a state of partial construction for an unreasonable period of time, and buildings which are unpainted or where the paint on the exterior of the building is mostly worn off.
- Fences in a dilapidated, partially destroyed or deteriorated condition.

Parking

Vehicles must be parked on a paved surface to be in compliance with the City of Lodi's Zoning requirements. Parking on grass or dirt is a violation.

Vehicles

Vehicles viewable from the public right-of-way must be in an operable condition.

If the vehicle is not operable, it must be removed from public view either by storing it in the garage or behind a solid fence. Be advised, registration is not the focus of determining operability.

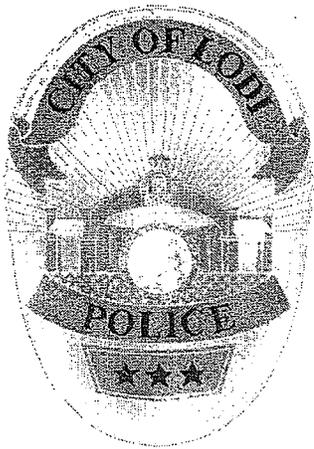
If the inoperable vehicle is not voluntarily removed, the City will tow the vehicle and must have the vehicle dismantled or destroyed. The vehicle cannot be retrieved by the owner.



Permits

Prior to adding on to your home or constructing a patio cover, phone the Build-

ing Division to verify permitting requirements. Items required to have permits are in violation of State Building Codes if constructed without the appropriate permits and inspections. Avoid penalties of up to twice the permitting fee by securing a building permit prior to construction. The Building Division can be contacted by phoning (209) 333-6714.



Lodi Police Department
215 West Elm Street
Lodi, CA 95240
(209) 333-6823 / (209) 333-6792 fax

Dear Property Owner/Tenant:

Enclosed is a brochure that explains the goals of the Community Improvement Unit (CIU) of the Lodi Police Department. The CIU is charged with enforcing various codes as they relate to property and dwelling maintenance.

Please take a moment to read the enclosed brochure. We want to ensure that all property owners and residents alike are aware of the requirements imposed not only by Lodi Municipal Code, but many state of California codes as well. These codes collectively provide tools for CIU to assist with ensuring the safety of the health and welfare of the residents as well as the viability of our neighborhoods.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to phone us directly at (209) 333-6823.

Thank you.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT UNIT

Para la versión español, por favor telefono (209) 333-6823.