

NOKOMIS CENTER REVITALIZATION

Project: COORDINATED CODE ENFORCEMENT (UD-2)

Project Type: County and Community

Project and Background Description:

Strengthen County Code Enforcement regulations to help maintain property values and protect neighborhoods from hazardous, blighting and deteriorating influences, or conditions of unmaintained properties. Adopt an ordinance for permitting and maintaining privacy fences.

Nokomis residents have asked the County to improve code enforcement efforts in both the residential and commercial areas of the Nokomis Center. Non-maintained properties threaten the economic value of neighborhoods and the physical safety of its residents. Residents are especially concerned about deteriorating privacy fences and the presence of derelict vehicles and structures. The County's Code Enforcement program includes issuing Notices of Violation to request voluntary compliance relating to the presence of derelict cars, illegal businesses, lot clearing and setback requirement violations. The current Lot-Clearing Ordinance No. 83-82 has enforcement provisions for non-complying property owners. Code Enforcement staff can tow vehicles, remove debris and mow grass that is in violation. Recent revisions to the ordinance support code enforcement efforts, allowing County staff to request assistance from the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office to access private property for compliance. The County has also established a team of staff members to coordinate enforcement efforts. The team includes building inspectors (i.e., electrical, mechanical, plumbing), a fire inspector, a Sheriff's Office Deputy, and a code enforcement officer.

At this time, there are no requirements for permitting and maintaining privacy fences. Code Enforcement staff can ensure that privacy fences do not become a hazard if there is an accumulation of debris. The County should adopt an ordinance for the permitting and maintenance of privacy fences. The County should also investigate adopting procedures to require the demolition of unsafe structures, which can be coordinated through an abatement board and with the County's Housing Partnership Initiative Program (see Project Sheet NH-1).

Preliminary Cost Estimates: Soft cost (In-house staff)

Potential Funding Source(s): Permit Fees

Implementation Time Frame: Short to Mid Term (1 to 5 years)

Responsible Parties: Development Services Inspection Services

Steps Required to Implement:

- Institute an "Active Team Practice" to coordinate code enforcement efforts.
- Focus efforts on priority areas within Sarasota County.
- Coordinate with Office of Housing and Community Development.

Issues Requiring Further Analysis/Action:

1. Investigate opportunities for establishing an ordinance for permitting and maintaining privacy fences in Sarasota County.
2. Investigate adopting procedures to require the demolition of unsafe structures, in coordination with housing assistance programs.

