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Staff Report

ITEM NO. 13

To: Lemoore City Council and
Lemoore Redevelopment Agency Board

From: Judy Holwell, Redevelopment Project Manager
Erika Olivis, Code Enforcement Officer

Date: August 29, 2007

Subject: Illegal Refuse Dumping/Clean-up Program

Discussion:

As you may recall, at the May 15, 2007 RDA Board meeting, Community Clean-up and Neighborhood Revitalization programs were discussed. Staff was directed to further discuss other options and possible solutions to further reduce blight and attempt to alleviate illegal dumping throughout the community. Staff met with Michael Montalbano to brainstorm various options. Listed below are some of the key topics discussed:

- Our current program, a coupon offered to Lemoore residents to take one (1) free load to Kings Waste and Recycling Authority (KWRA) works well eliminating the accumulation of trash and debris on residential properties throughout the community. The coupon is good for nine consecutive days which includes two (2) weekends. This program is limited since not all residents have the means to haul their rubbish away.
- Curbside service, which would allow residents to place unwanted rubbish, including mattresses and major appliances, on their curb, offers the most convenience to residents which results in a higher percentage of community participation. This program is very successful in Clovis. It is, however, very labor intensive and, at this time, we do not have refuse vehicles appropriate for this type of collection. A program of this nature could be contracted out. Based on approximately 6,000 households, staff estimates a cost of \$50,000 for one pick-up per year per residence and would include a coordinated effort with our street sweeper to clean up any remaining debris.
- Pick-up service, for income qualified families, elderly, or disabled persons located in the RDA project area, could be provided. The intent of this program would be to assist those residents whom do not have the means to haul the rubbish away. The program could be setup similar to our Paint Program with applications and proof of income required. Currently, local refuse companies do not offer curbside service for items not in roll-offs. If dumpsters and hauling is provided by the City,

the cost is estimated at \$60 per setup and \$32 for each KWRA dump. The total annual cost, based on 50 residents participating, is estimated at \$4,600.

- Create a volunteer program to coordinate and organize neighborhood clean-ups through churches or non-profit organizations. The program could consist of the City paying for the cost of roll-offs for a one day event, one or more times per year. The volunteers would be responsible for ensuring no prohibited items were disposed of and calling to have the roll-offs removed upon completion. The rate to haul away a roll-off is \$155 and the dump fee at KWRA is \$70 per ton for rubbish. The estimated cost of the program is \$ 6,500 per day. Volunteerism is a necessary component.
- Partner with PG&E to inform residents of programs for recycling operable refrigerators, freezers, and room air conditioners. To qualify, residents must be a current PG&E Customer and the items must be in working condition at the time of pick up. Rebates are available at \$35.00 for refrigerators or freezers and \$25 for room air conditioners. The purpose of partnering would be to reduce future blight from items left in front, side, and rear yards.
- Post signs where illegal dumping is prevalent. Currently, there are no signs posted at areas where illegal dumping has become a continuous problem. However, Section 4-1-8(A) of the Lemoore Municipal Code prohibits burning, burying, or dumping garbage and solid waste and is punishable by an infraction with a fine. To post a “No Illegal Dumping” sign at problem areas would cost approximately \$60 per sign, including labor and supplies. Areas of concern are along Idaho Ave. between 19th Ave. and Highway 41 and areas where there are KWRA recycling bins. Some potential violators may be discouraged if signs are posted.
- Create a hotline to report illegal dumping. This could be a dedicated City phone line that is immediately routed to an answering system so that messages could be left 24 hours per day. Any citizen who witnesses an illegal dumping would be encouraged to make a Citizens Arrest, which consists of signing the Police Citation. Otherwise, in order to be cited for such activity, a Police Officer must have witnessed the dumping.
- Inform residents about various community clean-up and/or donation programs sponsored by charitable organizations and churches. As information is received, it can be disseminated through the local newspaper and newsletters. Phone numbers can be listed advising residents who they can contact for such programs and to find out when the next activity will be held.
- Code Enforcement staff could attend monthly Neighborhood Watch and Apartment Manager meetings to exchange information regarding problems or improvements needed, such as illegal dumping and shopping cart abandonment.

Each program could benefit the residents of the City by further reducing blight by disposing of accumulated junk, trash, and debris. Some programs may be more effective in certain areas of the City than other programs. While programs that offer roll-off containers in specific neighborhoods and our current program, providing

residents a coupon for KWRA, are fairly cost effective and alleviate some of the accumulation of debris and trash, the Curbside Service is seen as a far superior program because of the convenience to residents and greater level of presumed participation.

In reviewing the Curbside Service Program with David Wlaschin, he pointed out that there may be some draw backs to offering such a Program. First, he agrees that this Program will probably do what it is set out to do and that is to reduce the amount of blight in the community. He is concerned however, that due to the success of the Program, the community will likely want to continue it indefinitely. He is also concerned about rubbish that may contain hazardous materials and the potential for persons outside our City Limits to drop off rubbish along the curbsides with everyone else's debris. Monitoring this would be difficult, as would trying to monitor any of the roll-off container options listed above. The main thing to keep in mind is that, even though this may increase the cost, these materials can then be disposed of properly and would reduce a potential health and safety hazard in our community.

Because the intent of studying various options is to reduce the amount of blight and improve the aesthetics of the community, staff is recommending that the Curbside Service Program be offered as a one-time trial Program next Spring. This Program would replace the coupon to KWRA. The Program would be marketed using multiple methods including publishing articles in the local newspaper, providing information in the City and Police Department newsletters, and by mentioning it on the City water bills. Staff anticipates that many large items, such as refrigerators, washers, dryers, mattresses, etc. that end up in front and side yards, will be disposed of as a result of this Program. Other methods listed above are not conducive for homeowners to haul off these large items since many residents do not have the means to transport them to KWRA or other drop-off locations.

Since approximately 44 percent of the community is in the RDA Project Area, staff recommends that the total cost of the Program be split accordingly between the City Refuse Fund and the RDA Administration Fund. Therefore, the estimated cost to the RDA would be \$22,000 and \$28,000 to the City.

As of June 30, 2007, the Refuse Fund had a balance of \$124,476. The estimated balance June 30, 2008 is 132,093. While the Refuse Fund could support a one-time trial program and possibly continue to offer it for two or three additional years, staff is concerned about the ongoing affordability of the program. If this program is successful and we see a noticeable improvement in the amount of blight in the community, we may need to examine a rate increase in the future.

Budget Impact:

The RDA Administration Fund will be impacted by approximately \$22,000. The City Refuse Fund will be impacted by approximately \$28,000.

Recommendation:

That City Council and the RDA Board direct staff to offer the community a one-time Curbside Service Program and obtain bids for such Service, the lowest of which will be accepted and split 56 percent City Refuse Fund and 44 percent RDA Administration Fund and authorize a budget adjustment for the above amounts.