



REPORT TO COUNCIL

City of Sacramento

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www.CityofSacramento.org

Staff Report
August 1, 2006

Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

Title: Justice for Neighbors (JFN)

Location/Council District: All

Recommendation: Receive and file.

Contact: Liz Brenner, Neighborhood Services Interim Director Area One, 808-1406; Steve Segura, Sacramento Police Department Deputy Chief, 433-0800; Ron O'Connor, Code Enforcement Manager, 808-8163; and Gustavo Martinez, City Attorney's Office Supervising Deputy City Attorney, 808-5346.

Presenters: Cassandra Jennings, Assistant City Manager, Steve Segura, Deputy Chief, and Gustavo Martinez, Supervising Deputy City Attorney.

Departments: City Attorney's Office, Police, Utilities (Solid Waste Division), Code Enforcement and Neighborhood Services.

Organizations No: 0500 (City Attorneys Office), 2131 (Sacramento Police Department), 3141 (Solid Waste), 4651 (Code Enforcement) and 3611 (Neighborhood Services).

Description/Analysis:

Justice for Neighbors or "JFN" is a tentative concept name. Staff is open to a name change that reflects the concerted efforts of multiple City departments to achieve the worthy goals set forth below.

JFN GOALS

The guiding vision of the Mayor and City Council is that **Sacramento will be the most livable city in America.** While developing the General Plan City residents were asked to identify the important issues to be addressed in the updated General Plan. The highest ranked issue or topic was the desire for safe neighborhoods.

Based on the City Council's vision and the community's desire for safe neighborhoods JFN is being created to foster safe neighborhoods and improve coordination among residents, businesses, and City departments to address security issues and achieve safe neighborhoods.

JFN will be a multidisciplinary effort by key City departments to swiftly respond to severe nuisance complaints or issues that threaten the health and safety of the public. The JFN will avoid the routine or common nuisance complaints (e.g., inoperable vehicles) and instead focus on high profile nuisance matters with multiple complaints that have a city wide impact.

Efficiency will also be enhanced by coordinating the efforts of different City departments. In many instances multiple City departments are responding to the same complaints without maximum coordination or planning. The JFN will avoid such duplication of efforts resulting in a more effective, timely and forceful impact.

COMMITTEE TO ACHIEVE GOALS

An internal strike committee consisting of City departments will be assembled to meet on a monthly basis to identify, process, manage, resolve, and publicize the results of the most serious nuisance and security issues affecting the City.

The JFN committee will consist of management level employees from the City Attorney's Office (CAO), Sacramento Police Department (SPD), Department of Utilities, Solid Waste Division (SW), Code Enforcement Department (CE), Neighborhood Services Department (NSD) and the District Attorney's Office Community Prosecutor for downtown complaints (DA).

PROCESS

The JFN committee will meet monthly and address the following:

1. Identify problems/prioritize issues
2. Assemble appropriate and necessary resources
3. Strategize on how to attack the problem
4. Implement the plan
5. Measure progress
6. Report outcomes

IDENTIFY PROBLEMS/ PRIORITIZE ISSUES

The JFN committee will select problem properties (e.g., nuisances) and respond to complaints that originate from a variety of sources. The Neighborhood Response Team or NRT will continue to serve as the primary forum for receiving and responding to single issues or one-time occurrences submitted monthly by neighborhood leaders. In the event an NRT problem or issue elevates to a higher level, that problem or issue is then forwarded to the JFN for action.

By using the NRT for its stated purpose City staff will reduce the duplication of efforts, reduce staff attendance at multiple community meetings where the same complaint is raised, and encourage community associations to merge or consolidate their efforts to allow for a more coordinated and effective City response to resident and neighborhood association complaints.

In addition to the NRT, individual members of the JFN committee will identify and present matters to the JFN for action. The JFN will then apply a set of criteria to each complaint or matter to determine whether it merits consideration and action by the JFN. The goal is to evaluate complaints and select the most serious and difficult matters for JFN action.

The criteria will include, but not be limited to, determining whether the matter poses an imminent threat to the health and safety of the public; whether there are multiple sources lodging the same complaint (e.g., a Council member and a resident); whether the matter is politically sensitive; whether the matter is highly visible; and whether the matter will require an extraordinary expenditure of City resources to resolve. After the matter goes through the review process a very selective number of complaints will be identified and prioritized so that the JFN committee will be assured that its efforts will have the greatest impact city wide.

ASSEMBLE APPROPRIATE AND NECESSARY RESOURCES

After a matter is identified the JFN committee will determine what type of resources must be assembled to attack the problem. The matter may be resolved by one City department or it may require the JFN committee to consult with a state or federal agency to request specialized assistance as a component member of the JFN committee. For example, in a nuisance matter involving a commercial business where there are indications that the business has not paid taxes or workers compensation insurance the JFN committee could consult with the IRS, Franchise Tax Board and/or the Labor Commission to coordinate enforcement actions against the business.

STRATEGIZE

The JFN committee will create an overall strategy for the target matter and delegate the individual assignment to a team member or members. The team member(s) will discuss tactics and create and implement a plan of action to complete their assignment. The team member(s) will be accountable to the JFN committee and their tactics and plan of action will be responsive and compatible with the JFN committee's overall strategy for resolving the specific assignment.

IMPLEMENT PLAN

The JFN committee through its assigned team member(s) will implement and execute the plan. In many cases the complaint or problem will be resolved before the entire plan is completed. For example, the Police Department and the City Attorney's Office have had recent success in resolving drug abatement matters early in the abatement process by involving the CAO at the beginning of the enforcement process. Landlords,

tenants, and property owners are requested to appear at the City Attorney's Office in the presence of Problem Oriented Policing (POP) officers to explain their activities or face additional enforcement action. In many cases when landlords and property owners learn of their tenant's drug and/or social nuisance activities they promptly agree to the CAO's settlement terms and/or they themselves threaten eviction. As is shown by this example, by involving other City departments early in an enforcement plan, favorable results are achievable without requiring each department to exhaust its individual efforts.

MEASURE PROGRESS

The JFN team member(s) assigned to the matter will be accountable to the JFN committee and will report on a monthly basis to measure progress, create deadlines, and if necessary add or reduce resources.

REPORT OUTCOMES

The JFN team member(s) will report outcomes, if any, to the JFN committee on a monthly basis. Outcomes will be saved and compiled to serve as future data for annual or bi-annual reports to City Council. As cases are resolved, the next matter on the priority list is moved up for action and a new matter is opened on the JFN list.

Outcome reviews will also serve to identify more effective methods to prevent or prosecute nuisance or security matters such as proposing new ordinances or amendments. Outcome reviews of individual cases will highlight those areas where the City is currently effective and those areas where improvement is needed. These self-evaluations by multiple City departments will serve to increase the efficiency of the overall organization.

PUBLISH OUTCOMES

In many instances City departments resolve nuisance or security matters that go unnoticed. They are not reported by the media nor are they published to the City Council. Understandably, City residents and the City Council may feel that the City does not have an aggressive system for resolving neighborhood complaints.

By publishing outcomes to the City Council, neighborhood associations, and the local media City residents will learn about the City's response to their complaints and can be confident that their complaints are being addressed.

The City Council will also be able to measure the resources they are allocating to different City departments and determine whether adjustments are needed.

Policy Considerations: The coordinated response of multiple City departments is consistent with the goals and objectives of efficient City government.

August 1, 2006

Justice Fo
Environmns: None.

Financial None.

Emerging Development (ESBD): Not applicable.



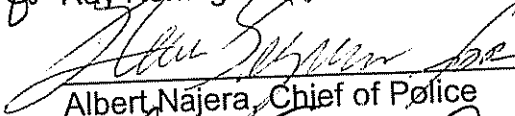
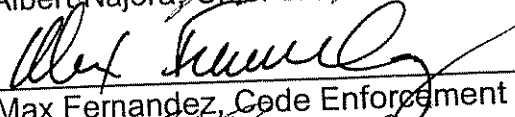
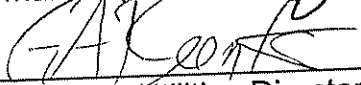
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Albert Najera, Chief of Police

Max Fernandez, Code Enforcement Director

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