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October 6, 1993

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City Council Work Group Committee
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members In Session:

**SUBJECT: PROPOSED LEGAL SUPPORT FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD
SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

LOCATION AND COUNCIL DISTRICT:

City-wide, All Districts.

RECOMMENDATION:

Review and approve staff recommendation that, as part of the City's reorganization, commit City legal support to the Neighborhood Services Department.

CONTACT PERSON: Sharon Cardenas, City Attorney, at 264-5346

FOR COMMITTEE MEETING OF:

October 11, 1993

SUMMARY:

This report reviews the proposed inclusion of legal support provided by the City Attorney's Office to the Neighborhood Services Department.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On August 26, 1993, the City Council Work Group Committee requested that staff report back on a number of additional components for inclusion in the Neighborhood Services Department to form a more comprehensive service delivery system. Among the components identified for inclusion was legal support provided by the City Attorney's Office.

A continuing focus for the City Attorney's Office is to assist in and resolve drug abatement, nuisance abatement, and code enforcement cases with the Neighborhood Improvement Division and Police Department. In order to meet the goals of the reorganization and improve Sacramento's neighborhoods, the City Attorney's office proposes to commit at least one Deputy City Attorney, from existing staff, to advise and assist the Neighborhood Services Department. This will provide enhanced coordination and service to this critical area.

This Deputy City Attorney would work full time focusing on neighborhood improvement and code enforcement cases and related legal research and advisory services for the Neighborhood Services Department. The Deputy City Attorney committed to code enforcement is in addition to the Deputy City Attorney currently working full time on cases generated by the Housing and Dangerous Buildings Division and the POP Program.

Both Deputy City Attorneys would remain under the supervision of the City Attorney and be a part of the City Attorney's Office. Leaving these positions in the City Attorney's Office will be cost effective in that the support services and materials for these positions would not need to be duplicated in the Neighborhood Services Department. In addition, litigation back-up, if needed, would be available from the other attorneys in the City Attorney's Office.

However, recognizing the need to provide better service to community and neighborhood groups, as well as aid the Neighborhood Services Department in providing a more comprehensive delivery of services, the Deputy City Attorney would spend 20 hours a week in residence at the Neighborhood Services Department. The scheduling of those hours will be finalized, with the input of the Department, prior to January 1, 1994. Once scheduled, the hours will be posted and notice thereof given to the public. The Neighborhood Services Department will need to provide office space within the Department for the Deputy City Attorney to meet with staff and the public.

In addition to the attorney support detailed above, the City Attorney's Office will be pursuing efforts to establish linkages with the local law schools to incorporate their participation in the areas of neighborhood improvement and code enforcement. One possibility would be to work with the schools to create a clinical program in community services that would provide the law students with scholastic credit for taking part in the program. The law students would be responsible for providing intake services, preparing the necessary paperwork for administrative hearings, and drafting pleadings for cases filed with the court. We would also pursue certification for the students from the State Bar of California, which would allow them to appear in court under the direct supervision of an attorney. Another option would be to work with the law schools to obtain volunteer services for a variety of functions on an as needed basis. Prior to approaching the law schools, input from the Neighborhood Services Department on these and other options will be solicited.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The objective is to support the reorganization within existing resources and to reduce costs overall. No additional costs are foreseen with the provision of legal support to the Neighborhood Services Department.

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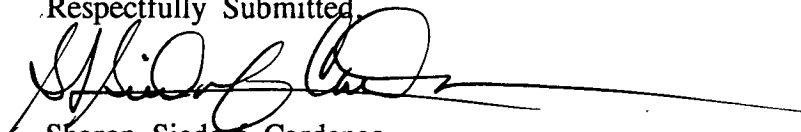
POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

This report is consistent with City Council's high priority on the City's reorganization to improve service delivery and on the health and welfare of Sacramento's neighborhoods.

MBE/WBE:

No impact.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sharon Siedorf Cardenas
City Attorney