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NEIGHBORHOODS, PLANNING &  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT

CODE ENFORCEMENT  
DIVISION

CITY OF SACRAMENTO  
CALIFORNIA

May 15, 2000

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City Council  
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

**SUBJECT: CODE ENFORCEMENT WIRELESS COMPUTER TESTING AND APPLICATION**

**LOCATION AND COUNCIL DISTRICT:** City-wide.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

This report is for information purposes regarding the current testing of wireless computing by the NSPD Code Enforcement Division.

**CONTACT PERSON:** Max B. Fernandez, Director Area 1, 264-7940

**FOR COUNCIL MEETING OF:** May 30, 2000

**SUMMARY:**

The Code Enforcement Division has been researching wireless computing applications for its field operations. As part of their search for a good product, the Code Action Team Section has been part of the City's Information Technology pilot test program of Cellular Digital Packet DATA (CDPD) and a Virtual Private Network. During this testing phase, the VPN has proven successful in providing staff with almost instantaneous access to information on cases and property ownership. This has resulted in the officers being able to spend more time in the field, since they did not need to return to the office for research. Contact with property owners and other interested parties has also been expedited.

**COMMITTEE/COMMISSION ACTION:**

None required for this report.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Code Action Team has been testing Cellular Digital Packet Data (CDPD)

transmission for the last year and currently has been using a Virtual Private Network (VPN) for the past three months. The CDPD and VPN will enhance the City's Code Enforcement in the following ways:

- First, the VPN will greatly impact the inspectors' and officers' access to information. This is the next logical step of enhancing our new case management system which has been in use the past six months. Our officers will have instantaneous information from the Integrated Information System's code data base as well as the City's GIS data base. Officers will not be required to return to the office for information, nor will they have to call staff for access to information. The Code Action Team experienced this improvement while testing the product.
- Second, staff will be able to spend more time in the field and less time in the office doing paperwork or research on their office computer. This will greatly benefit officers and inspectors as they respond to an emergency when there is no office staff available (evenings, weekends, etc.). They will be able to respond immediately to the situation without waiting for computer-supplied information at a later time. Improved access has proven to be a very important tool during the Code Action Team's testing of VPN.
- Third, the laptop computers and printers will allow the officers to process their paperwork in the field with immediate access to property owner information. For example, courtesy letters, notice and orders, etc. can be delivered personally and quickly. As a result, remediation of code violations will be expedited and case turn-around time (part of complaint backlog) will also be reduced.
- Fourth, information access will also be extended to MetroScan, GroupWise, City Utilities, and other applications used by staff in their regular job performance.
- Fifth, an added benefit along with less time spent in the office is a possible reduction in office space. Fewer in-house work stations may be required in the future.
- Sixth, this is the next logical step of Code Enforcement's technology development building on the IIS case management system. The VPN will give the case management system greater efficiency by expanding it to field use.
- Finally, wireless computing is a major step in Code Enforcement's technology development and will greatly enhance our future information management potential.

Following test completion and vendor outreach efforts, implementation and expansion to the other units of the Code Enforcement Division, i.e. the Neighborhood Code Enforcement and the Housing & Dangerous Buildings Sections, is planned for the beginning of fiscal year 2001. The City's Information Technology unit also will be making VPN available city-wide in the near future.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

Request for the purchase of laptops has been proposed in the fiscal year 2001 budget for the amount of \$132,000.

**ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

Not applicable.

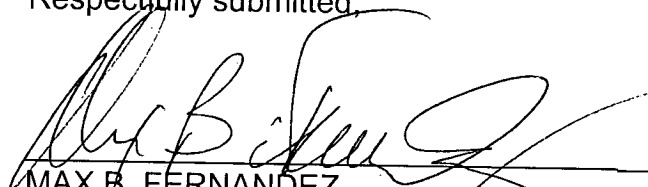
**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:**

Up-to-date computer technology is a vital tool for the City's Code Enforcement operation. Increased efficiency will have a positive impact on Code Enforcement's neighborhood revitalization and public safety efforts.

**E/SBD:**

Not applicable. Vendors will be solicited at a later date.

Respectfully submitted,



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Approved for Council Information:



ROBERT P. THOMAS  
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