




**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO**  
**Inter-Departmental Correspondence**  
Planning and Building Department



**DATE:** September 10, 2012  
**BOARD MEETING DATE:** September 25, 2012  
**SPECIAL NOTICE/HEARING:** N/A  
**VOTE REQUIRED:** N/A

**TO:** Honorable Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Jim Eggemeyer, Community Development Director 

**SUBJECT:** Report Back of the Status of Ordinance Revisions Regarding Fines for Code Compliance Violation

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Accept this report on the status of the Planning and Building Department's efforts to increase penalties for code violations and improve methods for issuing citations and collecting fines.

**BACKGROUND:**

In order to cover the cost of conducting code enforcement and establish meaningful penalties that discourage violations and facilitate prompt resolution, the Planning and Building Department has been working with County Counsel to develop a new code compliance ordinance. This report provides an update on the status of these efforts and an estimated timeframe for completion.

**DISCUSSION:**

The Planning and Building Department has reviewed the code enforcement provisions of other jurisdictions and drafted a new ordinance that incorporates measures that will help achieve the objectives described above. These include the ability of Code Compliance Officers to issue Administrative Citations that carry significant penalties for violators who fail to resolve violations in a timely manner or are repeat offenders.

In the process of developing this draft and determining its proper location within the County Code, it has become apparent that the new ordinance needs to be accompanied by amendments to existing regulations that either conflict with the new ordinance or could hinder its effective implementation. Staff is currently in the process of refining the full package of amendments and anticipates presenting its recommendation to the Board of Supervisors in November 2012.

In addition to making progress towards these new regulations, staff has concurrently improved its methods for applying existing enforcement tools. Specifically, the

Department has increased its use of the administrative fine provisions contained in Chapter 31.5 of the Zoning Regulations, obtained court orders to conduct inspections and demolitions, and established an account with Revenue Services that provides for the collection of penalties levied pursuant to existing and future regulations.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The new regulations will enhance the County's ability to cover the cost of conducting enforcement actions, which includes but is not limited to the cost of maintaining three code compliance officers within the Planning and Building Department. They will also improve the County's ability to resolve violations administratively, rather than through the courts, which should result in additional savings.