

**CITY OF PEORIA, ARIZONA
CITY MANAGER REPORT**

RCM #: 36

Date Prepared: September 8, 2008

Council Meeting Date: September 16, 2008

To: Carl Swenson, City Manager
From: Glen Van Nimwegen, Community Development Director
Subject: Foreclosure Task Force Update

On July 1, 2008, staff made a presentation to Council about the Action Plan of the multi-department Foreclosure Task Force. The team includes:

Carl Swenson	City Manager
Susan Thorpe	Deputy City Manager
Steve Burg	Senior Deputy City Attorney
Larry Rooney	Acting Fire Chief
Larry Ratcliff	Police Chief
Bill Mattingly	Public Works Director
Glen Van Nimwegen	Community Development Director
Bill Patena	Neighborhood Services Manager
Jack Stroud	Code Compliance Supervisor
Kelly Corsette	Public Information Manager
Sherine Zaya	Public Information Officer
Vicki Rios	Revenue Manager
Brian Biesemeyer	Deputy Utility Director
Art Lomeli	Operations Manager
Seth Blumen	Intern, City Manager's Office

Since the July Council update, the committee has met two times and are involved in the following activities:

- Patricia Garcia-Duarte, Director of Neighborhood Housing Services of Phoenix and leader of the Arizona Foreclosure Prevention Task Force addressed our committee and explained the statewide efforts being made to reduce the foreclosure rates.

She identified their website (<http://www.arizonaforeclosureservice.com/>) as a valuable resource for anyone who may be at risk of losing their home. She recommended the City of Peoria become involved in educating and counseling our citizens, possibly in partnership with local churches.

- The Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 will provide emergency Community Development Block Grants to local communities (\$3.9 billion available nationally) in the near future. The Department of Housing and Urban Development has yet to write the regulations on the use of the funds, though their deadline is September 28, 2008. Allocation of the funds will not occur until the end of October. Community Development staff are beginning to conceptualize possible programs, which we expect will promote purchase and rehab of foreclosed homes to be sold to qualified first time homebuyers.
- The Neighborhood Services staff were swamped with information requests over their program to increase our current first time homeownership down payment assistance funds by 50%. Channel 10 News profiled the program as a part of their July 15th broadcast. We have four foreclosed home purchases pending.
- Information on bank owned properties obtained by the Finance Department was mapped by Community Development staff. This information was sent to the Council and is now being used by Code Compliance and Police Department officers to ensure vacant homes do not become blight or crime influences on our neighborhoods.
- The partnerships created by the Task Force have already paid off. An example is when Lieutenant Dick Yost identified an abandoned home with security and safety issues as a part of the Police Department's B-4 neighborhood policing program. He contacted Code Compliance and then located the responsible party for the property to have the house secured.
- On October 25, 2008 we will roll out our retooled Neighborhood Pride program in the Braemar subdivision. Braemar is located around 71st Avenue between Peoria and Olive Avenues. This Pride project will go beyond the usual one block area and will include other foreclosed homes in the area for clean up. In February the Pride project will be focused on fifteen foreclosed properties in the Suntown neighborhood (75th to 67th Avenues between Peoria and Mountain Vista roads). This area is also the focus of the Police Department's B-4 program.
- We will be sending a flyer to HOA board members offering our assistance in organizing clean up efforts in their subdivisions. Also, because of many questions coming from financially strapped HOA's, we will tailor our HOA Academy training to address the issues of foreclosure.
- Code Compliance staff have resolved 30 of the 148 current cases that are open due to foreclosure issues.

As always, if the Council has any questions about the above activities, please let us know.