



**Date:** August 25, 2014  
**To:** Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager  
**From:** Germaine Brewington, Director of Audit Services  
**Subject:** Code Enforcement Performance Audit (June 2014)

### **Executive Summary**

The Department of Audit Services completed the report on the Code Enforcement Performance Audit dated June 2014. The purpose of the audit was to review the Code Enforcement process for adequacy of controls and to determine if the controls were effective in performing their stated functions.

### **Background**

The Department of Neighborhood Improvement Services is responsible for enforcement of the City's ordinances: minimum housing code, weedy lot, junk and debris, unsafe building, abandoned vehicle ordinance and nonresidential code. The priority of the Code Enforcement Division is the day to day management and implementation of all quality of life activities governed by the City's ordinances and statutes. The Department's Impact Team Division assists in the City Council's goals of ensuring that citizens enjoy a city rich in aesthetic beauty with a healthy environment and sustainable, thriving neighborhoods. The primary focus for the Impact Team Division's staff is the removal of graffiti, code enforcement remediation activities, removal of illegal dumpsites and neighborhood cleanups. The Department uses the Go Enforce system to monitor and manage its cases. Authority for code enforcement is found in North Carolina General Statute 160A and the City of Durham Code of Ordinances.

### **Results in Brief**

At the time of field work, the Department management was focused on evaluating and updating their processes and procedures. An extensive quality review process was put in place to monitor code enforcement activities carried out by the Code Enforcement Operators (CEOs). This process enabled management to ensure that code enforcement investigations were performed consistently in accordance with established procedures and performed in a timely manner. It was determined that the Department's written policies and procedures were not all inclusive and case notes maintained in the Go Enforce system were not always sufficient or consistent. Investigations were not performed timely for 65% of the cases examined based on the available documentation in the Go Enforce system. The monitoring of the timeliness attribute, if continued, will over time enable the Department to improve this aspect of its investigations.

Other areas for enhancement include: 1) formalizing the training process; 2) incorporating a procedure to report to management a possible or perceived conflict of interest in the performance of these investigations; and 3) finalizing and implementing the decision to apply civil penalties on all applicable cases.

### **Issues and Analysis**

The attached report details the objectives, observations, and results of the Code Enforcement Performance Audit dated June, 2014.

### **Recommendation**

The Department of Audit Services recommends the City Council receive and accept the Code Enforcement Performance Audit dated June 2014 as presented and approved at the August 25, 2014 Audit Services Oversight Committee meeting.

Attachment