



## **Residents for Quality Neighborhoods**

P.O. Box 12604 • San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

January 7, 2011

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

Residents for Quality Neighborhoods is again appreciative of the opportunity to provide input during the City's budget process. We are acutely aware of the City's current and projected financial situation. Sandra Rowley and I participated in the Fiscal Sustainability Task Force and gained a clear understanding of the budget issues facing the City, and I can assure you that our Board of Directors took those issues seriously when discussing and deciding the actions we are recommending.

Residents for Quality Neighborhoods (RQN) began as a small group of involved citizens who initiated a process that eventually resulted in the formation of neighborhood parking districts and adoption of the City's High Occupancy Ordinance. RQN continues to represent quality of life issues that impact residents in all of our City neighborhoods. Changes to the Garage Conversion requirements and adoption of the Neighborhood Enhancement Ordinance all began through RQN input. Recent adoption of more stringent noise regulations, to include changes to the Premise list and property owners' responsibility, and the Unruly Gathering Ordinance were a direct result of our continuing efforts to address and reduce the significant number of noise calls made annually.

Our neighborhoods continue to face serious challenges with significant effects not only on residents' quality of life but also the spillover to other areas of city life – the ability to attract families and employers, the ability to maintain civic and other volunteer organizations, the ability to provide arts and entertainment, and the ability to provide conveniently located schools – just to name a few, all depend on providing a high quality of life in our neighborhoods.

Most neighborhoods in our community show symptoms of neglect – whether it simply be trash containers sitting out all week, cars parked in the yard or hanging over the sidewalk, the lack of landscape maintenance, or furniture and appliances left at the curb – or more serious issues involving code violations and blighted properties. These issues all affect the quality of life for current residents and have the same spillover effects mentioned above.

The City has depended on complaint driven enforcement to address many of these neighborhood issues. Changes to the owner/renter mix that accelerated through the mid-1980's has created an environment where complaint driven enforcement is no longer a viable means of addressing many of the issues facing neighborhoods. Proactive enforcement of City codes and ordinances are imperative if the community is to address and restore neighborhood quality of life and avoid blight throughout the City.

The passage of Measure Y held the promise of more funding for neighborhood-related issues and wellness programs contained in Housing Element Goal 7 – Neighborhood Quality. The adoption of 'neighborhood police patrols' and 'strengthening neighborhood code enforcement' as two of the City's major city goals gave residents reason to believe that neighborhood issues would finally be addressed and their quality of life would improve. Residents for Quality Neighborhoods eagerly anticipated the creation of a Neighborhood Policing Program being developed by Chief Linden to provide two 2-officer teams to patrol the neighborhoods and address many of the noise, parking and Neighborhood Enhancement Ordinance (NEO) violations that negatively impacted residents.

Unfortunately, a series of events culminating in an economic downturn that further eroded the City's economic condition all but scrapped plans for any type of Neighborhood Policing Program. However, the need for a proactive approach to neighborhood wellness did not diminish with the downturn of the City's financial condition.

Understanding the fiscal issues facing the City, RQN began researching similar communities and the approaches being used there to address the types of problems our community faces. Based on approaches used in both the City of Davis and the City of Azusa, RQN proposes that new positions be created to proactively address NEO violations and enforce Noise Ordinance provisions.

The job description and duties of the position, Neighborhood Services Specialist, would fall between Student Neighborhood Assistant Program (SNAP) personnel and a sworn police officer (see attachment) and interface with Code Enforcement. The position would be responsible for actively patrolling neighborhoods and ensuring compliance with City codes. The Neighborhood Services Specialist would also issue parking citations, NEO citations, and noise warnings and citations. Potential code violations would be forwarded to Code Enforcement.

The requirements of the position and the commensurate salary range would be less than that of the Code Enforcement position and obviously less than a sworn police officer. The position would differ from that of SNAP personnel in that Neighborhood Services Specialists would be full time or full time equivalents. Job experience, education, and training would be greater. RQN believes that a salary range between \$42,000 and \$45,500 plus benefits would be sufficient to garner qualified applicants.

RQN recommends that three full time equivalent positions be created, consisting of two full time positions and two ½ time positions primarily for evening enforcement of the noise ordinance and parking districts. Funding for the positions includes the collections of fines and forfeitures, maintaining unfilled police officer positions, and funding from rental property business licensing.

Sincerely,

Brett Cross  
RQN Chair

## **NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES SPECIALIST**

### **DESCRIPTION:**

Neighborhood Services Specialist performs a variety of duties necessary to implement and sustain neighborhood wellness. The position requires a knowledge of current laws, codes and ordinances related to party noise, neighborhood enhancement, and parking with a thorough understanding of neighborhood issues and dynamics. This position is distinguished by the use of independent judgment, the level of coordination required to interface with code enforcement and the degree of interpersonal skills required to perform successfully.

### **SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED:**

Receives general supervision and training from a police supervisor and/or manager.

### **EXAMPLES OF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Responds to complaints of party noise in residential neighborhoods.
- Issues Disturbance Advisory Cards (DAC) or Citations, as appropriate, for noise violations.
- Utilizes and interprets the noise information database.
- Coordinates with other police personnel and City Code Enforcement personnel as necessary.
- Investigates complaints of Neighborhood Enhancement Ordinance (NEO) violations and issues notices of non-compliance and/or citations as applicable.
- Issues parking citations for violations in residential parking districts.
- Issues citations for parking violations.
- Works closely with violators to assist them in finding solutions to problems.
- Establishes relationships with neighborhood organizations.

### **KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES:**

#### **KNOWLEDGE OF:**

- Geography and population distribution of the City.

--Pertinent noise, neighborhood enhancement ordinance (NEO), and parking laws, rules, and regulations.

--Basic computer skills.

--Correct English usage.

--Principles, practices, and techniques for communication with the public.

#### ABILITY TO:

--Communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

--Work independently with little supervision and exercise initiative and sound judgment.

--Maintain accurate reports and records related to duties performed and equipment used.

--Read and interpret laws and regulations.

--Follow oral and written instructions.

--Interpret and apply operational procedures and the law to field situations.

--Communicate effectively with service population in an enforcement setting.

--Explain the law to the public.

#### **EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:**

--High school diploma or GED.

--Must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age.

-- Any combination of experience and training that would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. One way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be one year experience in a law enforcement environment and with public contact.

#### **POSSESSION AND MAINTENANCE OF:**

--A valid Class "C" California Driver's License.

--Free of misdemeanor or felony convictions.