MAYOR BALLARD CREATES OFFICE OF CODE ENFORCEMENT
Agency Designed to Support City Departments in Efforts to Make Indianapolis More Livable

INDIANAPOLIS – Mayor Greg Ballard announced today the creation of the Office of Code enforcement as part of a comprehensive effort to make the City safer and more livable. The Office is charged with strategically and efficiently enforcing environmental and other quality of life laws and maintaining a clean environment for our community.

“From the outset, I’ve been a champion of the theory that broken windows left in disrepair lead to crime,” explained Mayor Ballard. “Since the beginning of my administration, we have worked to improve our ability to help people comply with our quality of life standards and to prosecute those who refuse to comply. Now, as our public safety personnel proactively work to prevent and fight crime, we will have an entire team alongside them whose sole purpose, by focusing on civil code enforcement, is to keep our city beautiful and prevent areas from slipping into crime.”

The Office of Code Enforcement streamlines the City’s licensing, permitting, inspection, and abatement functions into one entity. Prior to the Mayor’s Executive Order creating the Office, the departments of Metropolitan Development (DMD), Parks and Recreation, Public Safety, and Public Works and the Office of Finance and Management each had related but separate, functions relating to code enforcement.

Rick Powers, who has served the City since 2001 as the Administrator of the Division of Compliance within DMD, will lead the new office.

“In the past, citizens seeking City licensing, permitting, or inspection services relied upon processes and laws embedded in several different agencies of government,” said Powers. “Creation of this new Office brings us closer to one-stop shopping for a myriad of services and provides an agency that is accountable to the Mayor, the Council, and citizens for all civil code enforcement matters.”

In the coming weeks, the Mayor will submit a proposal to the City-County Council to make the Office a permanent city department, effective with the next budget. That proposal will create a
Board of Code Enforcement made up of members of the public to oversee this new entity. Additionally, the proposal will require the department to be funded through fees charged to those who violate laws. Self-funding will free up property tax dollars to support other city services.

The Office will coordinate closely with the departments that will be transferring agencies and functions to its purview, and it will continue to work in concert with DMD, strengthening its ability to redevelop abandoned housing as its highest priority. The Office of Corporation Counsel, which doubled the size of its City Prosecutor staff in 2008, will continue to prosecute civil code violations.

The Mayor’s Executive Order is included.

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