

Neighborhood Improvement Program Executive Summary

December 31, 2012

Since January 2010, the Town of Garner's Neighborhood Improvement Program Initiative has tackled five areas for concentrated enforcement and support by employees of Public Works, Police, Parks and Recreation, Engineering, Planning, Inspections, Economic Development, and the Town Administration. The primary purpose of the Neighborhood Improvement Program is to re-establish ownership, pride and direction to the residents; stabilize and mitigate any issues that contribute to blight and decay in values; and create an environment that fosters self-help through the formation of Neighborhood Watch groups and/or existing homeowner associations (HOAs). Areas for program were identified based on multiple factors including number of complaints for overgrown lots/junk cars; calls to the Police Department for service; number of warrants served in a particular area; increased foreclosures; increase in zoning violations and input from the Town Council. Most of the issues are direct violations of the Town's Code of Ordinances, which can be viewed at <http://library.municode.com/index.aspx?clientId=10109>.

Success with the Neighborhood Improvement Initiative will:

- Increase property values and the tax base;
- Demonstrate to the persons in these neighborhoods that the Town listens to their concerns and wants to help;
- Demonstrate to those who have shown disinterest or disdain for Town laws or regulations that the Town is serious about enforcement and cleaning up things in these designated areas;
- Improve quality of life for people who call the neighborhoods home and deserve cleaner, safer and more attractive neighborhoods; and
- Empower Town staff to use existing resources to enhance neighborhoods.

The results of the first five areas are:

1) School Acres Initiative – started January 2010; initial work completed August 2010

Accomplishments:

- Installation of sidewalks on Broughton Street, Avery Street and Powell Drive. The total project cost was \$157,000 and was paid for using Community Development Block Grant Funds. The Town incurred an additional cost of \$30,000 for easement acquisitions.
- Abatement of four zoning violations including the following:
 - One auto repair in residential district
 - Removal of one commercial vehicle in residential zoning district
 - Abatement of one home occupation
 - Abatement of one illegal zoning use
- Abatement of 31 code violations including the following:
 - Abatement of seven solid waste violations
 - Abatement of 16 nuisance violations
 - Removal of six junk vehicles
 - Repair of two minimum housing violations
- The Police Department responded to 566 calls for service.

2) Central Garner Initiative – started August 2010; initial work completed March 2011

Accomplishments:

- Abatement of four zoning violations including the following:
 - Abatement of one nuisance violations
 - Abatement of one outdoor storage violation
 - Abatement of two zoning use violations
- Abatement 15 code enforcement violations including the following:
 - Abatement of two solid waste violations
 - Abatement of one nuisance violation

- Removal of eight junk vehicles
- Repair of four minimum housing violations
- The Police Department responded to 453 calls for service.
- Progress Energy installed 13 additional street lights as a result of the Central Garner Initiative.

3) Woodland North Initiative – Started March 2011; initial work completed October 2011

Accomplishments:

- Abatement of four zoning violations including the following:
 - Abatement of one home occupation
 - Removal of one junk vehicle
 - Abatement of one outdoor storage violation
- Abatement of 42 code violations including the following:
 - Abatement of 14 solid waste violations
 - Abatement of 15 nuisance violations
 - Removal of five junk vehicles
 - Repair of seven minimum housing violations
 - One rental registration of an identified rental house
- The Police Department responded to 1,576 calls for service.

4) Van Story/Malibu Valley Initiative – Started November 2011; initial work completed March 2012

Accomplishments:

- Abatement of 11 zoning violations including the following:
 - Removal of one commercial vehicle from residentially zoned property
 - Abatement of eight fence violations
 - Issuance of two fence permits
- Abatement of eight code violations including the following:
 - Abatement of two (2) solid waste violations
 - Removal one (1) graffiti incident
 - Removal of five junk vehicles
- The Police Department responded to 362 calls for service.
- New sidewalks on Don Miller Drive were installed to connect existing sidewalks on Timber Drive and Claymore Drive at a cost of \$54,743.
- Progress Energy replaced the decorative light fixtures on Harth Drive, McLellan Drive and Baldwin Circle with standard fiberglass poles to increase visibility.
- Van Story/Malibu Valley Neighborhood Watch was created.

5) New Rand Road Initiative – Started April 2012; initial work completed September 2012

Accomplishments:

- Abatement of 21 zoning violations including the following:
 - Abatement of one auto repair business in residential zoning district
 - Abatement of 18 fence violations (repairs to existing fences)
 - Abatement of one home occupation
 - Abatement of one illegal zoning use
- The Police Department responded to 344 calls for service.
- New Rand Road Neighborhood Watch was created.
- Bainbridge Subdivision Neighborhood Watch was created.

During these initiatives, several capital projects were identified for current and future action.

Completed capital projects are the following:

1) Cofield Alley

Cofield Alley is a 20-foot right of way maintained by the Town of Garner as an average 10-foot-wide gravel drive. It currently serves three developed properties with four other undeveloped properties. A 10-foot by 458-foot portion of Cofield Alley was paved by Mr. Pothole Pavement Restoration at a cost of \$8,275 using Public Works street maintenance funds.

2) Weston Road street lighting project

The existing lighting does not meet N.C. Department of Transportation (DOT) requirements. The estimated monthly cost for new lighting and one-time charges associated with upgrading the street lighting on Weston Road is as follows:

Proposed lighting to meet NCDOT lighting requirements:

- Install 36 28.5 Lumen Sodium Vapor lights. Approximate monthly cost is \$642.96 month.
- Install five new in-line primary or secondary poles of new lighting. Approximate one-time charge is \$7,500.
- Six new poles designated for lighting with a monthly cost of \$8.88.
- Total monthly cost is $\$642.96 + \$8.88 = \$651.84$.

Note: The installation fee is \$7,500, and the additional monthly cost for the new lighting will be approximately \$510.72. ($\$651.84 - \141.12 current bill)

Other capital needs as identified by the first five initiatives include:

- Woodland North street lighting project - \$30,000
- New Rand Road street lighting project - \$30,000
- Bainbridge Subdivision street lighting project - \$30,000
- Van Story/Malibu Valley street lighting project - \$30,000
- Woodland North sidewalk project – CDBG funded; Town’s match for easement acquisition was \$80,000

Note:

- 1) Typical zoning violations include business use in or on residential property, illegal signs, non-residential use on property, illegal outdoor storage, fence and setback issues.
- 2) Typical minimum housing code violations include broken windows, damaged siding, damaged roof, electrical and plumbing systems not working, damaged roofing and broken or inadequate heating systems.
- 3) Typical ordinance violations include, junk cars, overgrown lots and debris in the yard.