

Town/City Abatement/Dilapidation Process and Policy

Introduction

This policy establishes a clear process for identifying, addressing, and enforcing code violations related to property upkeep and appearance within the Town/City. It aims to maintain a safe and aesthetically pleasing environment for all residents.

Definitions:

- **Abatement/Dilapidation:** The condition of a property that fails to meet minimum standards for health, safety, and aesthetics as defined by local ordinances. This can include issues like:
 - Unmaintained structures with damaged roofs, siding, or windows.
 - Overgrown vegetation.
 - Accumulated trash or debris.
 - Inoperable vehicles on the property.
- **Notice of Violation:** A formal document issued by the Code Enforcement department informing the property owner of the violations and required actions.
- **Compliance Order:** A legal order issued by the Code Enforcement department mandating corrective actions within a specific timeframe.
- **Lien:** A legal claim placed on a property to recoup costs incurred by the Town/City for abating the violation.

Process:

1. **Complaint Intake:**
 - Complaints regarding property conditions can be submitted by residents or identified by Code Enforcement officers during routine inspections.
 - All complaints will be documented, and the property will be inspected to verify the violation.
2. **Notice of Violation:**
 - If a violation is confirmed, a Notice of Violation will be issued to the property owner with a detailed description of the issues and a timeline for corrective action.
 - The Notice will outline available resources and provide information on how to obtain permits if repairs are necessary.
3. **Compliance:**
 - The property owner is responsible for taking corrective action within the designated timeframe.

- The Code Enforcement department will offer technical assistance and referrals to qualified professionals if needed.
- 4. Re-inspection:**
 - A follow-up inspection will be conducted after the designated timeframe to verify compliance.
 - If the violation has been addressed, the case will be closed.
- 5. Non-Compliance:**
 - In the event of non-compliance, a Compliance Order will be issued, outlining a stricter deadline and potential penalties for continued violation.
- 6. Legal Action:**
 - If the Compliance Order is ignored, the Town/City may pursue legal action, which could include:
 - Fines.
 - Liens placed on the property to recover abatement costs.
 - Court-ordered repair or demolition.

Policy:

- The Town/City will prioritize code enforcement efforts to address violations posing the most significant threat to public health, safety, and property values.
- All enforcement actions will be conducted with fairness and due process, following established procedures.
- The Town/City may offer financial assistance programs or hardship waivers to eligible property owners in genuine need of help complying with the code.
- Public education campaigns will be conducted to raise awareness of property maintenance responsibilities and the importance of a well-maintained community.

Communication:

- Clear and consistent communication will be maintained with property owners throughout the abatement/dilapidation process.
- The Town/City website will provide accessible information on the abatement/dilapidation policy, ordinances, and available resources.

Review and Updates:

- This policy will be reviewed periodically and updated as needed to reflect changes in local ordinances, community needs, and best practices.

Conclusion:

By implementing a comprehensive and fair process for addressing property violations, this Town/City will promote a healthy, safe, and visually appealing environment for all residents. This policy encourages responsible property ownership and fosters community pride.