



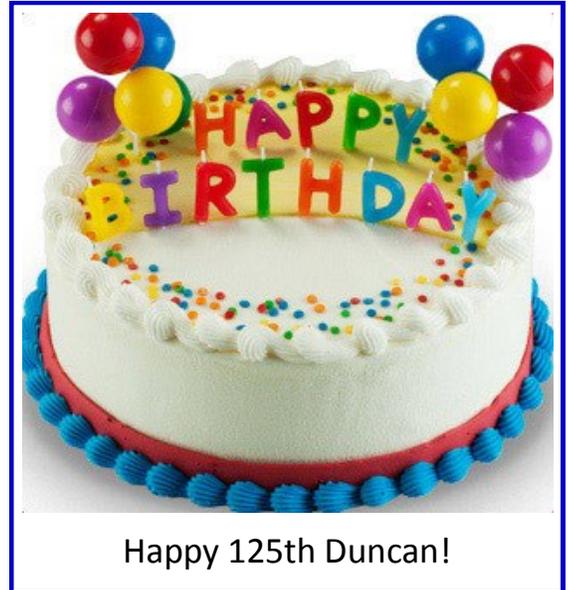
Department of Community Development City of Duncan, Oklahoma - June 2017

From the Director's Desk:

I hope everyone had a wonderful time celebrating Founder's Day this year! It was a great event and much thanks is given to those that helped put everything together. I think Duncan's 125 Birthday we extremely well!

While given thanks to those that are putting things together, a big thank you to our Chamber as they have put a lot of effort into several events that have, and will occur in our community! With the Chamber's assistance, Duncan will have a fireworks display this year on July 3rd!

Also on July 3rd, we will have the unveiling of the Courthouse Replica that will be located on the southwest corner of Main Street and 10th Street. This projects has been brought to our community by shared efforts between Main Street Duncan, DETA, and several private businesses and citizens! Our community continues to grow together with a goal of becoming the best place to live, work and play!



Electrical Inspector Needed

The Department of Community Development is currently taking applications for an Electrical Inspector. Duties of this position include, but are not limited to: performing electrical inspections, reviewing building plans and project proposals, and performing code enforcement duties. This position requires candidates to be able to secure an electrical inspectors license within two years of being hired. This position also requires candidates to maintain daily notes of inspections and activity in the event there is a need to appear in court. Strong candidates should have a background in the electrical field.

Applications are available at City Hall, 720 W. Willow Avenue. Position is open until filled. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Nate Schacht, Director of Community Development at 580-251-7715 or by email at nschacht@duncanok.gov.



Department Activity for June, 2017

During the month of June, the Department of Community sent out 120 violation notices to property owners. Of these notices sent, nearly 70% of the owners brought their property back into compliance without the Department taking any further action.

Also during the month of June, the Department issued 32 building permits and collected \$5,898.28 in permit fees. One of the larger projects that was approved this month was a renovation proposal to one of our apartment complexes here in Duncan, Oklahoma.

During June, the Department, along with the Duncan Land Development Review Committee, has been assisting several developers that are getting closer to potentially obtaining formal permits and/or approvals for larger projects that could bring additional job opportunities to our community. We look forward to continuing to assist these developers in hopes that their projects can become reality.

Main Street Duncan Planning Process

Main Street Duncan, being one of the oldest main street programs in the State of Oklahoma, has had the privilege of hosting a planning session with outside consultants to help prepare a “roadmap” that will guide future development within our main street district. These consultants, over several days, met with local community leaders, business owners, developers, and those that are passionate about the Heart of Duncan and want to see our downtown continue to be a strong representation of our community.

The consultants, on several occasions, noted that future developers to the community based their decision on coming here based on how the downtown district feels along with occupancy rates. It was shared that communities with healthy and vibrant downtowns are more likely to serve as a catalyst for future community and economic development throughout the entire city. This is why Main Street Duncan is committed in seeing the downtown district becomes a destination for citizens and visitors alike, while ensuring that the business owners are given ample opportunity to grow their businesses.

The consultants, during their presentation of findings, discussed the idea of “Animate the Space.” The consultants noted that there was a visual disconnect between the vibrancy of the inside of our business versus the street perception of the district. In other words, a visitor may not realize how special our shops really are just by looking at the outside, but given the chance to enter the business will be amazed of the quality the store really offers. It was suggested that the community and business owners work together to find ways to make the streetscape more appealing to match what is occurring inside the buildings.

ANIMATE THE SPACE

DOWNTOWN ROADMAP

What? Institute a Vibrancy Grant program

Why? There is a visual disconnect between the vibrancy of the businesses located within the buildings and the public realm outside them.

Who? MSD, DETA, City

Outcome: Vibrancy Grants will introduce the maximum amount of color, activity, and “stickability” to downtown for the least amount of money.

Another topic that was discussed was the idea of “Branding” and why creating a uniform brand, or image, that can be marketed throughout the Downtown district and the City of Duncan is important. The consultants shared that when there is a uniform brand, and components (such as shapes, colors, font type) can begin creating opportunities for relationships of destinations and amenities that are offered throughout the community. This allows visitors to our community to recognize areas as destinations and will assist in improving the quality of place throughout the City of Duncan. The image of signage, and wayfinding, below is an example of branding that the consultants put together as an example of how this can work in our community.

The consultants also provided some illustrations as to what the streetscape could look like with new signage, plantings, crosswalk improvements, and placement of flags and banners. Not only will these improvements help create a more vibrant area that people will want to visit, but will also assist in providing traffic calming amenities that will help improve the overall safety of the district. The ultimate goal is to get more people downtown to enjoy the businesses and activities that are offered, and this can only occur if those visiting do not have to worry about pedestrian and vehicle accidents.

The Department of Community Development was pleased to be asked to assist in providing information to the consultants on this project. This process could not have been accomplished without the strong leadership at Main Street Duncan. Staff believes in all that this organization is doing and we hope to assist in anyway that we can to help make our downtown district a stronger, more vibrant that citizens can enjoy and businesses can succeed.



CDBG - Small Cities Grant Project Update

The Department continues to work on collected the required survey information to submit with the CDBG Small Cities grant project. For the most part, the citizens have been very receptive of meeting staff and providing the necessary information that will help the City of Duncan focus on improvement efforts within their neighborhoods.

The Department has, and will continue to introduce ourselves to the residents and try to answer any questions that are had. In addition, the staff that has been conducting these surveys have been driving City of Duncan vehicles and are wearing their uniforms - white dress shirts with the city logo on the chest.

In addition to continuing to conduct door-to-door surveys, the Department will begin calling those residents to seek this information if they were not home when we last attempted to reach them at their door.

To date, the Department has completed 89 random surveys and our goal is to complete a total of 250 surveys. As the information continues to be provided by our gracious citizens, the Department inserts that data into a form that will be submitted to the Oklahoma Department of Commerce.

If you have any questions, or concerns about being approached by individuals requesting this information regarding the number of residents and income information, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Nate Schacht, Director of Community Development at 580-251-7715 or by email at nschacht@duncanok.gov.



Fire hydrants throughout the City of Duncan are color coded for use by the Fire Department. A black top, as illustrated in this photo, is a hydrant that has severe limitations as to how the Fire Department can utilize this infrastructure and is in need of replacement.



The Department of Community Development is working to remove several structures throughout the designated neighborhood that have fallen in such disrepair, and are abandoned, that they are no longer habitable. In fact, many of these are now attractive nuisances to the community.

Duncan Plan Commission - June Meeting

The City of Duncan Plan Commission met in June to hear a request for a lot combination, a proposed amendment to the City Code to adopt Landscape Requirements associated with new development, and an open meeting to discuss the CDBG Small Cities grant project.

Plan Commission members heard from several citizens about the proposed lot combination with a mix of those for and against the request. After hearing the thoughts of the citizens, the Plan Commission members discussed the request and voted unanimously to approve the lot combination as presented.

The Plan Commission heard from staff of the Department of Community Development regarding the proposed Landscape Ordinance. Staff noted that local developers as well as DETA have requested that the City of Duncan adopt this ordinance. Plan Commission members asked several questions and sent a favorable recommendation to City Council, which adopted the ordinance 3-1.

Plan Commission heard input from citizens regarding the CDBG application being made by the Department of Community Development. Those in attendance indicated that they were happy that the City of Duncan is looking at these neighborhoods for future improvements that will benefit the residents.

Processing Citizen Concerns for Potential Violations

The Department gets asked to investigate properties that might be in violation of the City Ordinance on a regular basis, especially as it relates to trash/debris or tall grass/weeds of neighboring properties. The Department, however, is limited on how we are able to enter a property to look for items that might be in violation of City Code. If the potential violation in question is screened by a privacy fence, the Department is not allowed to climb the fence, stand on an object outside the fenced area to see in or, enter a neighboring property that might be able to see the potential violations. These limitations are passed down from the State level in terms of how code violations can be processed.

Though the Department will drive along the public rights-of-ways, alleys, and applicable easements to see if there are holes in the screening that can be easily seen from the public areas. If this is the case, then the Department will document the deficiency in screening, and approach the property. It is important that the documentation process occurs in order to properly, and legally, process any violations that might be occurring on the subject property.

There are instances that the Department is unable to assist a concerned citizen due to screening that has limited our ability to enforce the adopted codes and ordinances for the City of Duncan. In these instances, the Department will document the complaint and try to conduct drive-by inspections on a regular basis to see if there have been any noticeable changes to the property that can be processed, or to allow a violation notice to be posted to the property.

Theft of Utilities and Violations to Residential Codes

The Department of Community Development regularly receives calls from utility providers to look into situations where theft of utilities is believed to be occurring. This includes citizens rigging up jump connectors on electrical meters, illegally turning on water valves, bypassing gas meters, and other similar acts that skirt having to pay utility bills or connection fees. These are violations that the Department takes seriously as many can result in the loss of life and/or property if not addressed.

If a property owner, or tenant, is caught stealing utilities, then a ticket with a court date will be issued. If the theft of utilities include the use of cables, hoses, or any other apparatus to take services from one property to another, these items will also be confiscated as evidence and a formal request, after the court hearing, must be presented prior to any consideration of returning these items.



An extension cord running from one house, across the street, across an alley and to another house that does not have utilities - this is classified by City Ordinance as theft of utilities and is punishable by fines and a court date.

Recently the Department has been made aware of several properties in violation of Residential codes - more specifically the minimum requirements that are necessary to inhabit a structure (water, sewer, heat, light). One such discovery just recently occurred on a property that was included in the bid packets for demolition that will be included in the CDBG Small Cities Grant that the Department is working on. A "resident" of a structure inquired why people were looking at the structure he was "living" in and upon hearing the status with the Department for demolition noted that he would contact his landlord.

This particular structure had every window boarded up, so no natural light was able to enter the structure (violation to Residential Codes) and upon review of utilities, there have been no utilities connected to this structure since 2015 and thus denying a resident of water, sewer, and heat (violations to Residential Code). These violations, but not having utilities, puts not only those residing in the structure at risk but also adjoining property owners - one must ask, "How is sewer being disposed of?" The Department enforces these items because we do not want the children of Duncan playing in raw sewage that might be dumped into the yard.

If you see something that seems suspect, such as an extension cord that runs across the road, please contact the Department immediately at 580-251-7715 and provide information about the location. We will investigate the situation and take appropriate actions to ensure that all lives and property is protected in accordance to adopted ordinances and regulations.
