



# COUNCIL MINUTES

June 17, 2019

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Study Session in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on June 17, 2019 at 5:01 p.m.

## COUNCIL PRESENT

John Giles  
Mark Freeman  
Jennifer Duff  
Francisco Heredia  
David Luna  
Kevin Thompson  
Jeremy Whittaker

## COUNCIL ABSENT

None

## OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady  
Dee Ann Mickelsen  
Jim Smith

1. Review and discuss items on the agenda for the June 17, 2019 Regular Council meeting.

All of the items on the agenda were reviewed among Council and staff and the following was noted:

Conflict of interest: None

Items removed from the consent agenda: None

2-a Hear a presentation and discuss an update of the Love Your Neighborhood program, lessons learned, and recommended strategies for FY 19/20.

Housing and Community Development Director Liz Morales introduced Neighborhood Services Coordinator Lindsey Balinkie and Housing and Revitalization Administrator Ray Thimesch who displayed a PowerPoint presentation. **(See Attachment 1)** She thanked Senior Program Assistant Emily Greco for her work as the Project Manager.

Ms. Morales stated the Love your Neighbor (LYN) program was created as a result of Council direction to utilize federal funds to have a lasting impact in challenging neighborhoods. She pointed out staff developed a program model with a multi-faceted approach and recommended using \$417,000 of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. She expanded by saying there was a transforming neighborhoods initiative workgroup which was made up of several departments that developed a method on how to look at existing datasets used to identify neighborhoods in need. She continued by saying there were four data points developed called a blight index that was composed of code violations, crime rates, incidents of graffiti, and vacant properties. She identified the first neighborhood selected is bordered by Main Street to Broadway and Extension to Robson. She added in January 2018 a second neighborhood was added which

was from Country Club Drive to Extension and Main Street to 2<sup>nd</sup> Place. She indicated in total, the two neighborhoods were comprised of 400 single-family homes; 57% of the homes were owner occupied, and there were 278 multi-family units; and the median income for the neighborhood was \$38,000. She advised the pilot program was to engage, educate and connect residents to services to encourage pride in the neighborhoods, to ensure improvements were sustainable, and to develop leadership within neighborhoods. (See Page 2 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Morales provided examples of how City departments participated in the LYN Program: (See Page 3 of Attachment 1)

- Mesa Fire and Medical Services helped inspect and install smoke alarms.
- Police Department had a team approach handling the vacant properties and provided special enforcement on challenging properties.
- Code Compliance completed assessments on homes and businesses to provide a baseline for impacts of work that was completed.
- Transportation helped with easement projects looking at the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) related to sidewalks and street conditions.
- Utilities assessed an area for utility box repairs and violations.
- Solid Waste provided dumpster services and neighborhood clean-up.

Ms. Morales highlighted staff's recommendation to hire a third-party contractor to conduct neighborhood outreach, education, exterior renovation and rehabilitation of homes. She stated through the What Works City Initiative, Harvard Performance Lab offered to provide pro bono work providing technical assistance to develop a result-driven contract. She noted the company also helped with developing the Request for Proposal (RFP), creating the contract with measurements, defining key goals, encouraging partnerships, performance metrics, and implementing active contract management. She stated through the technical assistance, it led the City to work with Habitat for Humanity. (See Page 4 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Balinkie presented information about the engagement of residents throughout the LYN project. She stated out of the 400 single family homes, 150 had participated in events, classes and trainings held in partnership with Habitat for Humanity. She explained Habitat for Humanity assisted staff with educating residents on the application process. She noted the primary goals of this project were to increase resident's participation and address neighborhood issues such as home and yard maintenance, and removal of inoperable vehicles. She added the residents became more aware of City services after this project, and are taking pride in the transformation of their neighborhoods. (See Page 5 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Balinkie stated Code Compliance played a role in tracking the impact of the program by conducting a pre- and post-assessment of the neighborhood. She reported collectively, Code officers and Habitat for Humanity staff educated residents to familiarize them with ordinances and how to maintain their properties by offering classes or pop-up events and offered assistance in cleaning up residents' yards. She commented as a result of the program there were decreases in code issues. (See Page 6 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Balinkie explained Habitat for Humanity offered 14 hours of education to residents addressing issues like home maintenance, energy efficiency, preventing fire hazards, code ordinances, prescription drug abuse awareness, hazardous waste disposal and green living best practices.

Mr. Thimesch stated in addition to educational classes, Habitat for Humanity addressed curb appeal by helping with roofing replacements, painting, landscaping, window and door

replacement, stump removal and constructing block walls. He explained Habitat for Humanity assisted the owner of some fourplexes in building walls to hold trash barrels and landscape was upgraded. He added more landscape improvements are scheduled in the upcoming months. (See Page 8 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Thimesch commented Habitat for Humanity worked with Code enforcement and the Police Department to address the vacant and blighted structures. He pointed out one house where no CDBG funds were used and all improvements were done by the homeowner. He stated a big accomplishment was the major implementation completed on an apartment complex on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. (See Page 9 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Thimesch detailed other neighborhood projects such as a Veterans mural at the American Legion, three small libraries, yard and alley clean-ups, and curb painting. He added 142 volunteers participated from the City and 16 from Habitat for Humanity. (See page 10 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Morales explained one lesson learned has been that neighborhood engagement takes time as part of the process is building relationships and trust. She stated Habitat for Humanity provided resident support and assistance in addressing challenges and finding solutions in this partnership. She added neighborhood leadership was important in this process to ensure projects were completed and changes and improvements would be sustainable. She continued by saying Councilmember Duff has worked on implementing a neighborhood leadership program. (See Page 11 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Morales emphasized most residents value their homes and want to feel connected. She stated many things can happen leading to disrepaired properties, whether it is a lack of resources or a resident illness.

In response to a question posed by Councilmember Luna regarding whether staff will continue with the program and continue to apply for more CDBG funds, Ms. Morales stated staff wanted to wait until the surveys were completed to understand the impact. She added this can be a long-term investment if Council wants to continue to invest the CDBG funds in this manner.

In response to a question from Vice Mayor Freeman regarding whether any community groups participated, Ms. Morales responded there was interest from a variety of groups who volunteered. She added RAILMesa was helpful in providing feedback during the RFP process.

Vice Mayor Freeman thanked Habitat for Humanity for their assistance with the project and stated his support for continuing with the process.

In response to a series of questions from Councilmember Duff, Ms. Morales responded she believes the LYN program is independent from the National League of Cities campaign, but stated when the program first began there was a white paper written and referred to models and best practices on a national level. She responded by saying pre- and post-analysis of crime in the renovated areas, from 2017 to 2018 showed an increase in reports of code violations and graffiti, which was due to residents willingness to report violations. She stated regarding crime, in 2017 there were 401 incidents and 230 in 2018.

In response to a question from Councilmember Duff regarding expanding the program to other neighborhoods through engagement of best practices rather than funding, Ms. Balinkie explained the goal of the leadership program is to provide education not only through classes, but through

Nextdoor and other social media outlets to create relationships with new neighborhoods. She mentioned staff is developing a feature through Nextdoor which will provide weekly trivia about the City and ways to maintain residents' property, and resources available.

In response to a question posed by Mayor Giles regarding the next steps to ensure the program continues, Ms. Balinkie stated the neighborhood leadership program is separate from the LYN program, but there are plans to engage new leaders who have shown interest in the program. She reported staff is encouraging leaders to create block watch programs, engage in City boards, and become knowledgeable about City Council meetings.

Ms. Morales mentioned in looking forward to funding next year, staff is reviewing what worked in order to allow the program to expand to other neighborhoods and continue to educate residents on the City Code.

In response to a question from Mayor Giles regarding the sustainability of the program, Ms. Morales explained the expansion of the program can be discussed as part of the Housing Master Plan if that is the direction of the Council.

City Manager Christopher Brady commented LYN can be an effective tool in some areas, but what needs to be done first is work on the capacity building within the neighborhoods. He stated if neighborhoods are organized and come to the City asking for help, the resources will be available, but not all areas are eligible for CDBG funds. He explained the goal is to create neighborhood capacity, then have leaders work with the City on what needs to be done in the community.

In response to a question from Mayor Giles regarding the neighborhoods that lack the existing leadership, Mr. Brady responded staff will work on those areas to get them involved in the leadership program to make it successful.

Mayor Giles indicated he would like to continue the conversation during the Housing Master Plan discussion.

Mayor Giles thanked staff for the presentation.

3. Acknowledge receipt of minutes of various boards and committees.

3-a. Mesa Achieves Higher Education Taskforce meeting held on May 14, 2019.

It was moved by Vice Mayor Freeman, seconded by Councilmember Luna, that receipt of the above-listed minutes be acknowledged.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Giles-Freeman-Duff-Heredia-Luna-Thompson-Whittaker

NAYS – None

Carried unanimously.

4. Hear reports on meetings and/or conferences attended.

Mayor Giles: Fire and Police Recruit Graduation  
Funeral for Former Councilmember and Assistant Police Chief  
Michael Whalen  
Desert Southwest Conference United Methodist Church  
Ribbon cutting of Crumbl Cookie

Councilmember Luna: Attended Fire and Police Recruit Graduation

5. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Christopher Brady stated that the schedule of meetings is as follows:

Thursday, June 27, 2019, 7:30 a.m. – Cadence Community Facilities District

Thursday, June 27, 2019, 7:30 a.m. – Eastmark Community Facilities District No. 1

Thursday, June 27, 2019, 7:30 a.m. – Eastmark Community Facilities District No. 2

Thursday, June 27, 2019, 7:30 a.m. – Mesa Housing Authority Governing Board

Thursday, June 27, 2019, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

6. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

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JOHN GILES, MAYOR

ATTEST:

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DEE ANN MICKELSEN, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Study Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of June 2019. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

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DEE ANN MICKELSEN, CITY CLERK



# Love Your Neighborhood Pilot Program

Community Services Department

Liz Morales, Lindsey Balinkie, Ray Thimesch

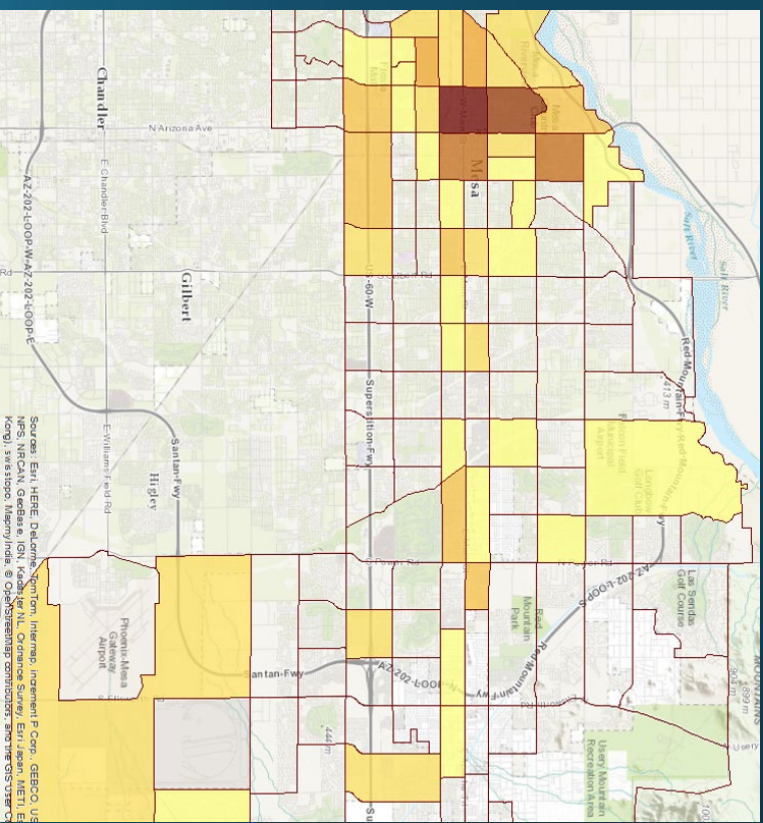
June 17, 2019

# BACKGROUND

## *Love Your Neighborhood (LYN)*

To assist and educate Mesa residents in order to:

- Beautify the neighborhood
- Develop new knowledge and resources
- Create positive changes in the neighborhood and leadership



# CITYWIDE EFFORTS

- Community Services
- Code Enforcement
- Transportation
- Solid Waste
- Police
- Fire
- Energy Resources





# WHAT WORKS CITIES INITIATIVE

## *Results Driven Contract*

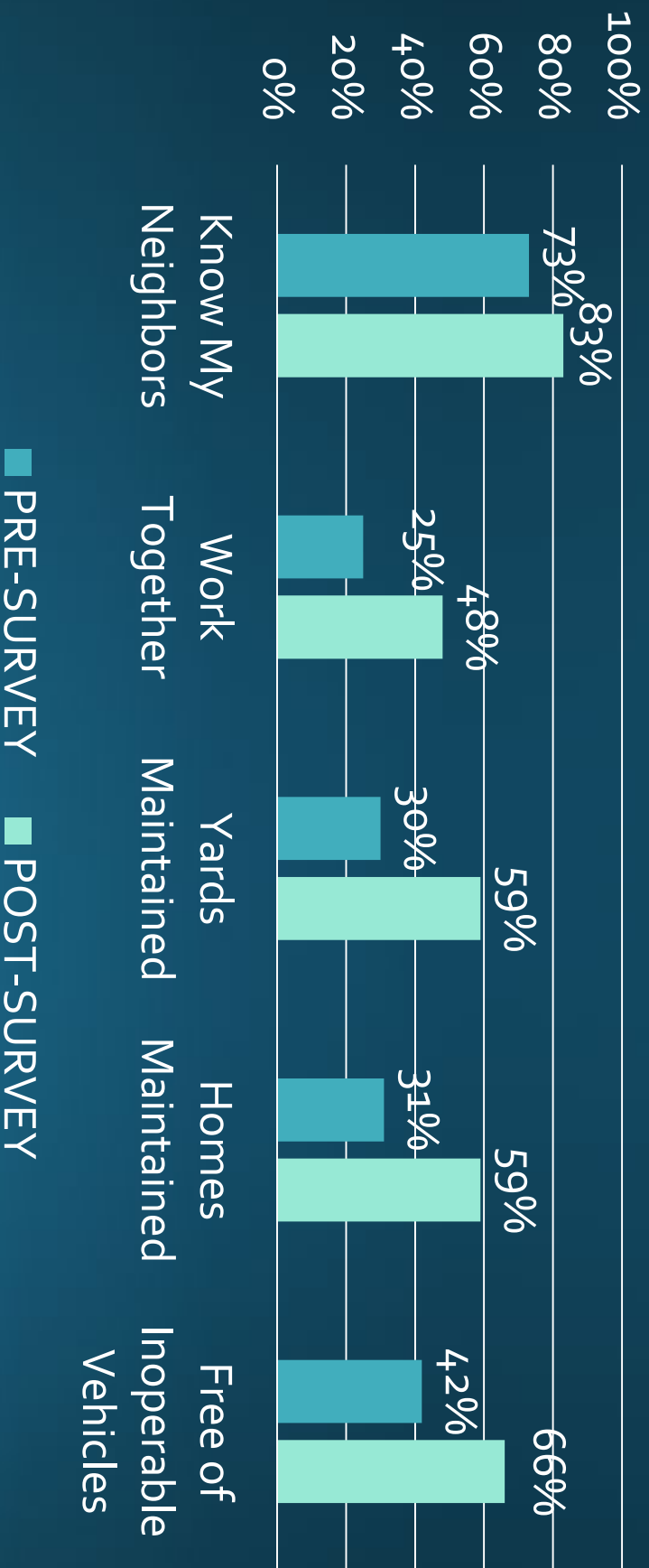
Goal to adopt results driven contracting strategies and other best practices in procurement for a vendor to implement LYNN.



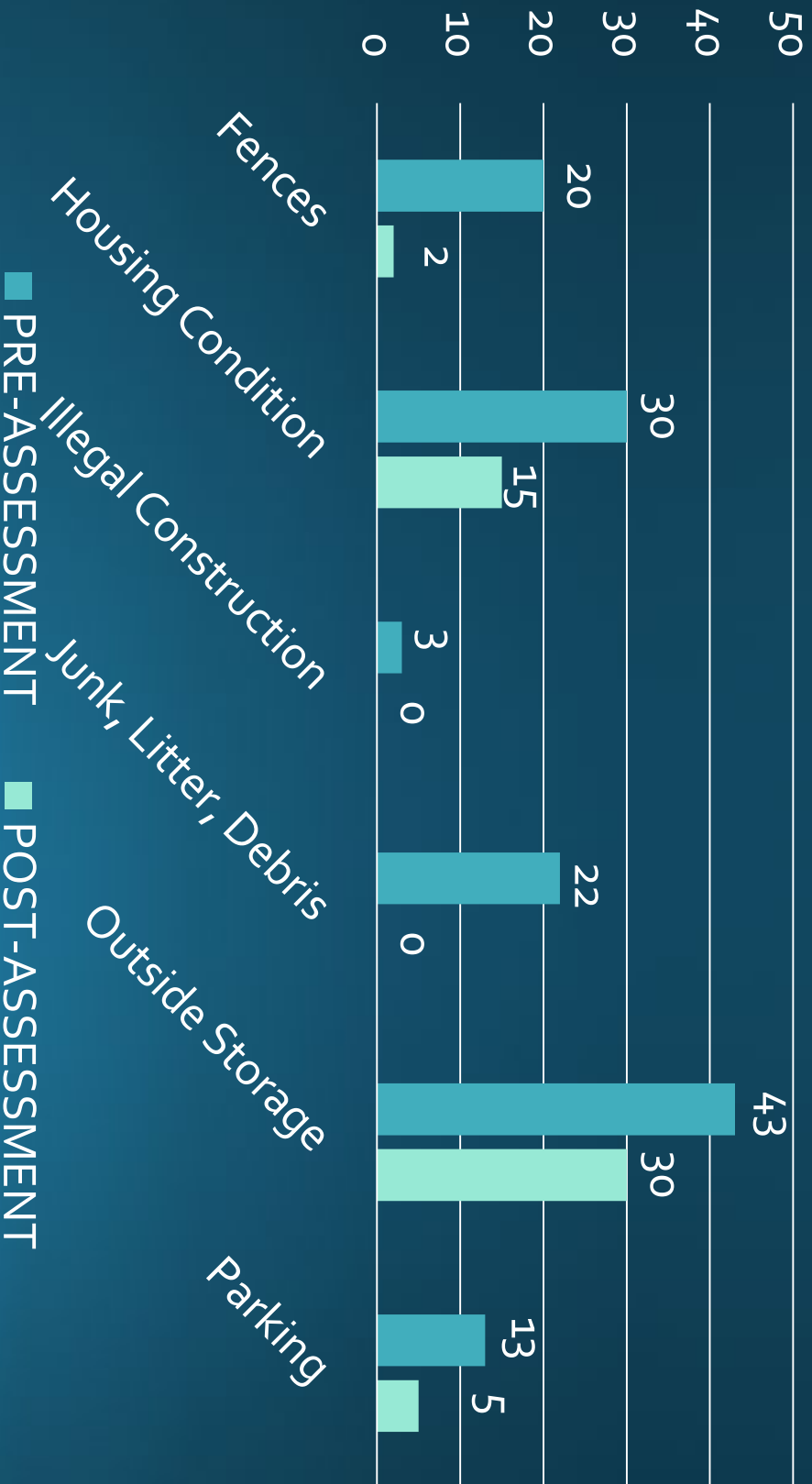
**HARVARD Kennedy School**  
Government Performance Lab



# SURVEY RESULTS



# CITY OF MESA CODE COMPLIANCE Property Assessments



# IMPLEMENTATION OF LYN Educational Events

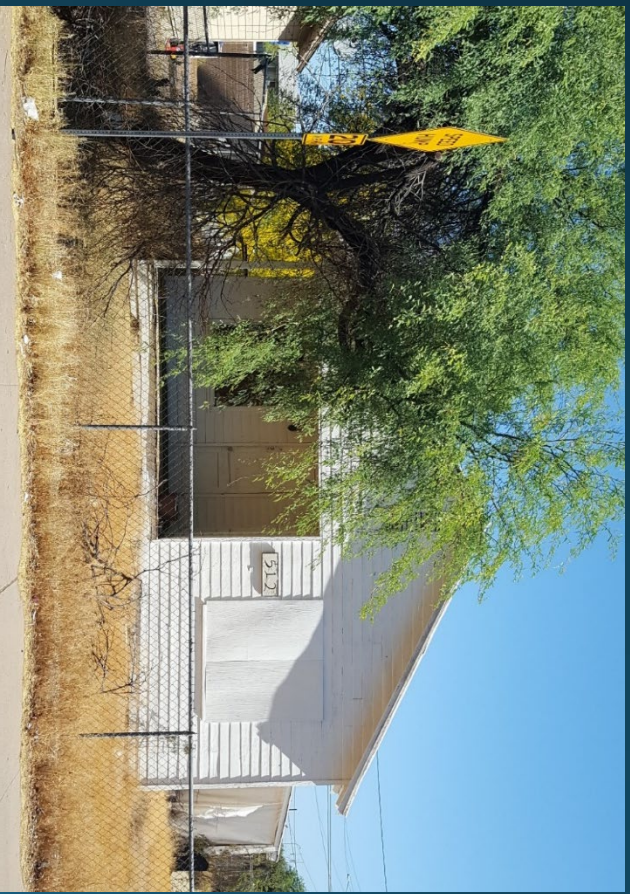


# IMPLEMENTATION OF LYN

## *Rehab Projects - Before and After*



# IMPLEMENTATION OF LYN *Neighborhood Improvements*



# IMPLEMENTATION OF LYN *Neighborhood Projects*



# LESSONS LEARNED

1. Relationships and Trust
2. Resident Support
3. HFH Partner
4. Neighborhood Leadership





# Questions?