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MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council
From: Billy Grogan, Chief of Police
Date: March 9, 2015
Subject: Gated Community Access Control Ordinance

ITEM DESCRIPTION

This proposed ordinance requires all gated communities to install and maintain an RFID gate access device provided by the City of Dunwoody to facilitate emergency access to their gated property.

BACKGROUND

The City of Dunwoody currently has 39 gated communities. Emergency access to these communities is typically through a gate, which has a keypad affixed to it. Unfortunately, the codes change frequently and it is difficult to keep track of the correct gate code. This problem can create an unnecessary delay in accessing the gated community for first responders.

After riding out with several officers and observing this particular issue, Councilman Nall asked the department to try and identify a viable solution. Sergeant Parsons conducted extensive research into this problem and found three viable solutions.

1. The first solution provides a box that will open the gate when a police radio is clicked.
2. The second solution provides a box that will open the gate with a siren yelp.
3. The third solution provides a box that will open the gate silently with an RFID tag.

Sergeant Parsons's research found the option using the RFID access to be the superior choice. A company was located that provides a Silent Operated System/Trigger System, which provides RFID access as well as a Siren yelp back-up.

Once a solution was identified, our legal department drafted a proposed ordinance. The attached ordinance requires all gated communities pay for the installation and maintenance of an SOS/Trigger System at each of their gates. The City of Dunwoody would pay for the device itself.

We then met with the Atlanta Apartment Association to gauge the level of support we could expect from their members. The ordinance was positively received. In addition, a representative of each gated community was invited to attend an informational meeting to discuss the proposed ordinance so we could get their feedback directly. The meeting was well attended with 15 gated communities represented and there was general support for the ordinance. A suggestion was made to provide at least a 12 month period of time to have the device installed. This would give those communities who do not have the money



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budgeted for this this expenditure in this year's budget the opportunity to budget for it in next year's budget.

FUNDING

A number of the 39 gated communities have multiple gates. The cost for each device is \$599. In addition, the cost for the RFID tags on our emergency response vehicles is \$20 each. The total cost for the City of Dunwoody should not exceed \$35,000. It is estimated that the cost for installation of each device will be approximately \$500 depending on the gate configuration of each community. This cost will be paid for by each gated community.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

At this time, staff recommends the City Council approve this ordinance and allocate the necessary funds to move forward.

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 8 OF THE CITY OF
DUNWOODY CODE OF ORDINANCES BY REVISING THE
BUILDING CODE TO REQUIRE INSTALLATION OF GATE
TRIGGER SYSTEMS FOR EMERGENCY VEHICLE ACCESS TO
GATED COMMUNITIES**

WHEREAS, the City of Dunwoody is charged with preserving the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the City; and

WHEREAS, the City of Dunwoody contains numerous gated communities that require passcode or key card access and are otherwise not easily accessible for emergency vehicles such as police and fire; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council find that quick and silent access by police vehicles to gated communities would allow for better enforcement of the City, State and Federal laws, and allowing for siren-initiated access to gated communities by the fire department to improve the ability of fire and rescue to provide for the safety of the occupants of said communities in emergency situations; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council find that the SOS/Gate Trigger system that is a combination of RFID and siren access is the most appropriate system to install at all gates in a gated community to provide for silent access by police vehicles and siren access by emergency vehicles; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council find that in order to improve the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the City residing in such communities, the installation of the RFID/yelp access system is a necessary requirement.

THEREFORE, Mayor and City Council of the City of Dunwoody hereby **ORDAIN** as follows:

Section 1: Chapter 8 (Building Code) of the City of Dunwoody Code of Ordinances is hereby amended by revising Article IV ("Miscellaneous Provisions"), by adding new Section 8-90 to read as follows:

Sec. 8-90. Gate Access

(a) Definitions

- (1) *RFID* means Radio Frequency Identification and, for the purpose of this Section, refers to a mode of access to open a gate in a

- gated community utilizing radio frequency waves to activate the gate's locking mechanism and opening the gate.
- (2) *SOS* means Siren Operating Sensor and, for the purpose of this section, refers to a sensor that triggers the opening of gated access as a result of the emergency vehicle siren.
 - (3) *Emergency Vehicle* means any marked or unmarked law enforcement vehicle, fire truck, fire rescue staff vehicle, ambulance and/or ambulance staff vehicle and rescue units.
 - (4) *Gated Development* means any residential development which may be fenced and has a secured gate located at the roadway entrance to the facility, preventing free access by the public.
- (b) Each new or existing Gated Development, access to which is limited by security gate(s) which are unmanned or otherwise not physically attended by a person on a 24-hour basis shall be required to install an RFID/SOS gate access system on each roadway entrance gate to allow for silent radio frequency or siren-activated access by Emergency Vehicles.
 - (c) The cost of the RFID/SOS system shall be borne by the City of Dunwoody. The cost of installation and continuous maintenance of the system shall be the responsibility of the Gated Development.
 - (d) Existing Gated Developments shall have nine (9) months from the effective date of this Ordinance to comply with the provisions of this Section. Gated Developments developed after the effective date of this Ordinance shall comply with this Section prior to or concurrent with installation of an unmanned security gate. For the purposes of this Section, a Gated Development shall be considered an existing gated development if it has obtained construction plan approval prior to the effective date of this Ordinance.
 - (e) Failure to install the required RFID/SOS gate access system in conformance with the provisions of this Section shall be a violation of this Ordinance.
 - (f) The provisions of this Section are intended to insure minimum level of access by emergency personnel during emergencies and shall not be construed to guarantee the safety of a Gated Development during an emergency.

Section 2: This Amendment shall become effective immediately upon its adoption by the City Council, and incorporated into the Code of the City of Dunwoody, Georgia. This Amendment hereby repeals any and all conflicting ordinances and amendments.

STATE OF GEORGIA
CITY OF DUNWOODY

ORDINANCE 2015-03-XX

SO ORDAINED AND EFFECTIVE, this ____ day of _____, 2014.

Approved:

Michael G. Davis, Mayor

ATTEST:

Approved as to Form and Content:

Sharon Lowery, City Clerk
(Seal)

Cecil G. McLendon, City Attorney