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## STAFF REPORT

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
**MEETING DATE:** JULY 21, 2025  
**FROM:** WILLIAM WATSON, ADMINISTRATIVE PROJECT MANAGER  
**SUBJECT:** WEED ABATEMENT ORDINANCE - ENFORCEMENT - STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

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### RECOMMENDATION:

City Council review the proposed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for enforcement of the City's Weed Abatement and Rubbish Ordinance and provide feedback as needed.

### BACKGROUND:

The City of Sutter Creek has developed a comprehensive Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to guide the enforcement of its Weed Abatement and Rubbish Ordinance. The SOP was created to ensure a consistent, transparent, and legally sound process for addressing weed and rubbish violations on private property, with a strong emphasis on public safety and fire risk mitigation.

### DISCUSSION:

The proposed SOP offers a strong framework for enforcing the City's Weed Abatement and Rubbish Ordinance, clearly outlining procedures for inspection, notification, compliance timelines, citations, City-initiated abatement, and cost recovery. It also confirms the City's authority to access properties to mitigate fire hazards and outlines associated administrative fees and fines.

As we move toward implementation, it's important to consider how closely our enforcement practices align with the ordinance itself. In some cases, we may be informally allowing more time for compliance than the ordinance specifies. If this is the case, we should determine whether to adjust the SOP to reflect current practice or work toward more consistent enforcement timelines.

Encouraging voluntary cooperation should remain a priority. Public education efforts—such as early communication, clear reminders, or neighborhood outreach—can increase compliance rates and reduce the burden of formal enforcement. These efforts could be especially effective ahead of the peak fire season.

Clarity around roles and responsibilities is also key. Implementation will likely require coordinated efforts across multiple departments, and we should identify who will be responsible for inspections, follow-ups, and enforcement actions. Ensuring adequate staffing and training will be essential to maintain consistency and efficiency.

Finally, establishing a clear timeline for when the first round of enforcement under this updated SOP will begin is critical. Setting expectations early will help support transparency and give residents time to respond proactively.

**BUDGET IMPACT:**

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with reviewing the SOP. However, enforcement of the ordinance is supported by a \$10,000 allocation in the current fiscal year. Any additional costs related to contractor services for abatement and administrative activities are expected to be recoverable through invoicing and special assessments on non-compliant parcels.

**ATTACHMENT:**

City of Sutter Creek's – Weed Abatement - Standard Operating Procedure Document

Ordinance:

[https://library.municode.com/ca/sutter\\_creek/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TIT10PUPESAMO\\_IV\\_OFAGPUDE\\_CH10.40ABWERU](https://library.municode.com/ca/sutter_creek/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT10PUPESAMO_IV_OFAGPUDE_CH10.40ABWERU)

Prior Staff Report:

<https://mccmeetingspublic.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/suttrcrkca-meet-8ecdec43240f47ca98609684e0ffdc6f/ITEM-Attachment-001-c53e4c8c6047411bad0eaa4f29902ca6.pdf>