

## COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Interim City Manager Alex Posada

**BY:** Interim Assistant City Manager/Director of Community Development  
Chuen Wu

**SUBJECT: Code Enforcement Annual Report 2024**

City Council will receive a presentation regarding outreach efforts and accomplishments for the 2023 calendar year, and goals for the upcoming 2024 calendar year for the Code Enforcement Division.

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### **BACKGROUND:**

Code Enforcement is a division within the Community Development Department. In July 2022, the division relocated from the City Attorney's Office to the Community Development Department. The Division currently consists of one Code Enforcement Manager, one Code Enforcement Supervisor, four Code Enforcement Officers, and one Code Enforcement Technician.

The Code Enforcement Division (CED) is responsible for the investigation of municipal code violations, including but not limited to substandard housing, zoning complaints, public nuisances, weeds, rubbish, and other neighborhood blight issues. The CED regularly communicates and works collaboratively with other departments and outside agencies to address city-wide violations and issues. CED's main goal is to preserve the integrity of public health, safety, and welfare, while also providing education to the community.

### **DISCUSSION:**

#### **I. Summary of Accomplishments and Outreach Efforts**

- Cases opened = 1,526.
- Cases closed = 1,442.
- Cases referred from other City departments = 493.
- Successfully completed the transition from the City Attorney's Office to Community Development.
- Increased efforts with the Santa Maria Police Department to address unhoused individuals on privately owned parcels.
- Assisted with the enforcement of illegal fireworks.

- Two staff participated and graduated from the City’s GROW Initiative Program.
- Collaborated with the City’s PEG Production Team to provide the first informational series, “Did You Know”, which is viewable on YouTube. Thus far, two segments have been released.
- Collaborated with Allan Hancock College and the Chamber of Commerce to provide municipal code education to the community.
- Increased collaboration efforts with the Public Health Department regarding unpermitted food vendors.

## **II. CED Tasks and Responsibilities**

- Intake and investigate service request forms received from various outlets including the public, outside agencies, and city departments; Neighborhood Connect for graffiti; and City Manager’s Office and City Council.
- Open proactive cases to reduce blight city-wide.
- The Code Enforcement Division aids most City departments:
  - Utilities Department: address violations to include, but not limited to backflow violations, illegal dumping, stormwater issues, water abuse, and water theft.
  - Planning and Building Divisions: concerning permits failing to be finalized, stop work orders, unpermitted signs, as well as other Santa Maria Municipal Code (SMMC) zoning violations.
  - Fire Department: concerning health and safety concerns and SMMC violations.
  - Police Department: concerning health and safety concerns and SMMC violations.
  - Finance Department: regarding business licenses.
  - Public Works Department: involving unpermitted work, primarily in the city rights-of-way.
  - Recreation and Parks Department: Tree-related violations; graffiti projects
- Address substandard housing to ensure homes have heat and are free of infestations, mold, and plumbing issues.
- Facilitate the City of Santa Maria Task Force monthly meetings consisting of numerous City Departments. The team collaborates to find solutions involving city-wide problematic trends.
- Conduct “Walk-n-Talks”, which provides education for both residential and commercial areas. Occasionally CED will team up with other departments including the Fire Department, Police Department, and City Rangers.
- Address unpermitted sidewalks and street vending on private property and public property.
- Inspect and permit mobile commercial car washing operations.
- Participate in various Community Outreach events such as Downtown Fridays, National Night Out, and other events as requested by outside agencies.

### III. Objectives for 2024

1. Substandard Housing

Continue outreach efforts and enforcement to address substandard housing violations.

2. Unpermitted Construction

With housing shortages being felt throughout the state and the cost of housing increases, unpermitted and in many cases unsafe construction has increased in garages, to include unpermitted additional dwelling units (ADUs). The CED intends to continue outreach efforts to provide education and enforcement. There were 94 unpermitted construction cases within this past year.

3. Neighborhood Preservation Projects

Addressing blight through neighborhood projects and the “Walk-and-Talk” program.

4. Mobile Commercial Car Wash

The CED continues to work with the Mobile Commercial Car Wash operators in obtaining Mobile Commercial Car Wash permits and many permits have already been issued. CED continues to work with the Finance Department and SMPD to enforce municipal code violations.

5. Walk-and-Talk Program

Continue outreach efforts to residential and commercial areas.

6. Unpermitted Sidewalk and Food Vendors

Continue outreach and enforcement efforts, including coordination with other City Departments and outside agencies.

7. Community Outreach Efforts

Through community events, presentations, and the CED educational video series on YouTube, “Did You Know?”.