



MARCH 18, 2025

Operational Analysis for the Code Enforcement Division

OPERATIONAL REPORT

Guidehouse

outwit complexity™



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Executive Summary

Operational Analysis | Purpose & Methodology

The City is engaging Guidehouse over four tasks to conduct an operational assessment of the Code Enforcement Division to identify opportunities to streamline, prioritize, or invest in services. The focus of this report is **Task 3: Operational Analysis**

Purpose: The purpose of the Operational Analysis is to understand the Code Enforcement Division from an external perspective by exploring the experience and expectations of customers, City leadership, and Division partners, as well as seeking practices from peer cities

Objectives and Methodology:

Objective	Methodology
 Peer City Benchmarking. <i>What leading practices can San José learn from peer cities?</i>	Desktop research and in-depth interviews with the cities of Austin, Seattle, and San Diego
 City Leadership & Partner Interviews. <i>What are the expectations of City leaders and Division partners, and are they being met?</i>	Eight in-depth interviews with a cross-section of City leadership and external partners
 Customer Experience Activities. <i>What is the experience of customers?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight in-depth customer interviews • 57 customer observations • Four inspector ridealong sessions • 1,134 customer survey responses over three survey years, representing a 10-year span • Web-based and phone channel mystery shopping

Peer City Benchmarking | Key Strategies & Initiatives



Peer cities exhibited several key leading practice strategies and programmatic initiatives that San José may consider

Succession Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow experienced inspectors to substitute years of experience for education requirements to promote to leadership positions from within and retain talented staff (<i>Austin, Seattle, San Diego</i>) Have up to three tiers of inspectors supporting a Division Manager, such as Inspector A-C, Code Investigator, and Inspection Supervisor to enable upward mobility and opportunities for growth (<i>Austin</i>)
Streamlined Enforcement Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable an automatic and/or strict case prioritization process to ensure severe and high-priority cases are closed in a timely manner (<i>Austin, Seattle, San Diego</i>) Escalate to enforcement more rapidly and have less steps from complaint to enforcement – usually after first inspection if resident does not correct violation – to support an efficient case management process (<i>Austin, Seattle, San Diego</i>)
Focused Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain narrower program scope, primarily focused on building/zoning compliance to align with Code mission and help manage workload (<i>Austin, Seattle, San Diego</i>) Enable inspectors to focus on inspections through support roles such as Program Managers, Permit Technicians, and Code Review Analysts (<i>Austin, Seattle</i>)
Robust Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage community education initiatives such as public relations campaigns, hotlines, and social media activation to increase resident awareness of enforcement processes and their rights (<i>Austin, Seattle</i>) Have Engagement Manager role to focus on community and stakeholder engagement (<i>Austin</i>)
Strategic Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have Chief Strategy Officer to oversee the Corporate Strategy, Marketing & Outreach, and Community Engagement functions in Development Services Department to keep the Division grounded in the City's strategy and customer-centric culture (<i>Austin</i>) Have Legal Liaison and Strategic Advisor to advise on legal and policy issues, manage Director's rule process, and coordinate with Attorney's Office and other City departments (<i>Seattle</i>)



City Leadership & Partner Interviews | Key Takeaways

The below takeaways emerged from conversations with nine¹ key City leadership and partner stakeholders, including elected officials and leaders in organizations that work closely with the Code Enforcement Division

City Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor's Office Vice Mayor Councilmembers (2) 	Support for Change and Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motivation to support Code Enforcement in implementing changes to improve service Interest in reevaluating scope, fee structures, organizational structure, legal involvement, and case escalation
	Lenient and Inefficient Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interest in increasing penalties enforcement to support expedited case escalation timeline Dissatisfaction with slow processes and inconsistent case prioritization Frustration around cases restarting when there is inspector turnover
	Communication and Transparency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appreciation for inspectors' community involvement, which has led to positive outcomes Frustration with inconsistent communication back to complaining parties and need to leverage elected officials as mediators, and desire for a public reporting tool for updates
Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire Department Economic Development Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services Appeals Hearing Board San José Chamber of Commerce 	Major Focus on Downtown <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interest in expanding Abandoned Shopping Carts program Concern with blighted building cases downtown, especially those that have remained unresolved for months/years
	Span of Control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledgement that enforcing on private property is difficult with due process restrictions Notice an increase in compliance when traditional enforcement symbols (e.g., uniforms, badges) are present, which is highlighted when Police and Fire are present at inspections. This can lead to cooperation that inspectors do not as easily receive



Customer Experience Activities | Key Takeaways (1 of 2)

Across phone, in-person, website, and desk interactions, customers referenced concerns about case timelines and enforcement strategies but satisfaction with inspectors' engagement and community involvement

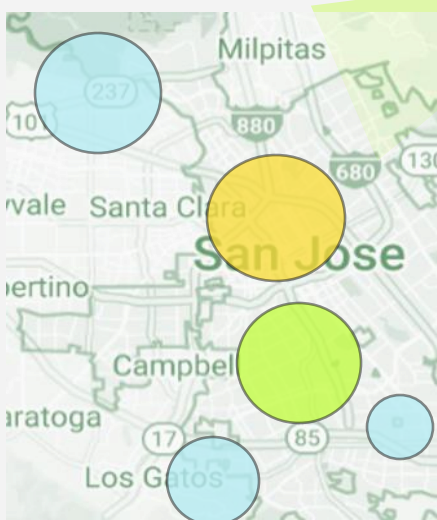
Growth Areas	Time to Close	While most individual interactions with Code Enforcement were relatively short, some customers feel that closing cases could take months or years	<p>"We have the same problems as we had ten years ago. It's frustrating...They tell me that they're trying really hard, but the burnt down building has been sitting there for three years." – Customer 6</p>
	Code's Purview	Many customers were confused by Code Enforcement's purview. Many calls received by support staff were for another Division (for example, Building & Permitting)	
	Problematic Properties	Some customers highlighted the stress of dealing with problematic long-term owners	<p>"It was just the most basic request that could have been done quickly, but it took nine months... eventually, I reached out to my City Councilmember directly. That's how I finally got my permits. I had to literally get an elected official involved." – Customer 2</p>
	Inconsistent Enforcement	Customers feel that some residents receive preferential treatment. For example, Customer 2 was frustrated with punitive enforcement for their permitting process, while a neighbor with solid waste and other safety issues received no enforcement	
Strengths	Inspectors Who Care	Many customers highlighted the strengths of individual inspectors, including their empathy, care, and effort	<p>"I can't complain about anything when their attitude is so sterling. We will work with them to get results." - Customer 5</p>
	Resolving Customer Issues	When many customers interacted with Code Enforcement, their mood often improved, attributable to staff's engagement with their problems and knowledge	



Customer Experience Activities | Key Takeaways (2 of 2)

Across four ridealongs and ten years of customer surveys, customers indicated satisfaction with the focus on customer experience and case resolution, but expressed varied regional experience and concerns about inconsistent enforcement

Ridealongs Map



Key

General Code

Multiple Housing

Special Programs (Vacant Buildings)

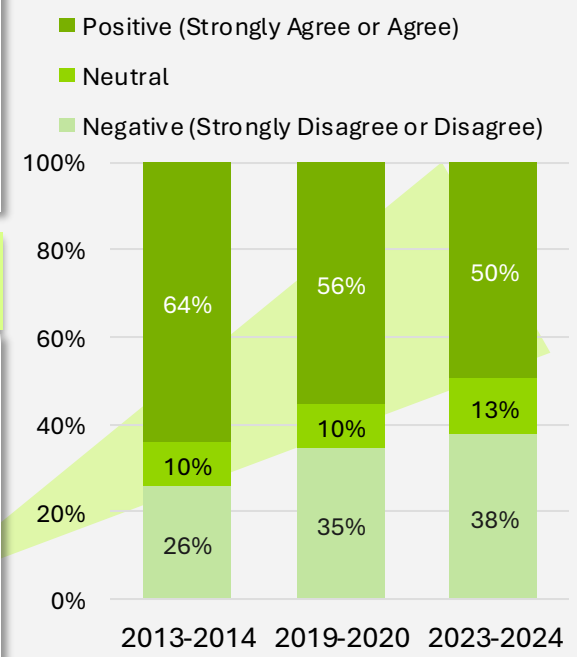
Ridealongs

- **Emphasis on Customer Experience.** Customers received a high-touch approach from inspectors, including touchpoints about their experience
- **Technological & Staffing Limitations.** Inspectors are limited by practical constraints like driving time, staffing shortages, and technological limitations. These limitations extend enforcement and inspection timelines
- **Inspector Discretion.** Inspectors can exercise their own discretion about cases, which allows for a more personalized experience. This can result in perceptions of inconsistent enforcement

Customer Experience Survey

- **Regional Variations.** Positive perceptions of the Division have increased in North San José by 20% and decreased in all other regions. Across years and regions, 66%-77% of residents stated that blight was their top concern. Zoning or Building violations were the second most common concern, in the North, Central, West, and South, whereas illegal occupancy was the second most common concern in the East
- **Service Quality.** Since 2013-2014, overall positive responses have decreased by 14%. However, most surveyed customers had positive impressions of the timeliness, courtesy, and timeliness of their inspectors in each surveyed year (70%, 61%, and 52% in each year)
- **Declines in Satisfaction.** Overall impressions of the Division remain positive or neutral, with 50% rating the Division as “excellent” or “good” in 2023-2024. However, impressions of the Division’s overall efficacy, responsiveness, and timeliness have declined in the past decade

Overall Response Distribution by Year





Peer City Benchmarking

Peer City Benchmarking | At-a-Glance



The Guidehouse Team analyzed data and interviews with three cities to identify leading practices for code enforcement operations. The selection attributes below provide context for qualifying comparisons between San José and the peer cities

		San José	San Diego	Seattle	Austin
City Attributes	State	California	California	Washington	Texas
	Population (2023)	969,655	1,388,320	755,078	979,882
	Annual City Budget (FY24-25)	\$6.1B	\$5.8B	\$8.5B	\$5.9B
	Per Capita Spend (City Budget)	\$6,291	\$4,178	\$11,257	\$6,021
	Median Household Income (2023)	\$141,565	\$104,321	\$121,984	\$91,461
	Monthly Bill Expense Per Household	\$3,695	\$3,324	\$3,049	\$2,612
	Land Area (square miles)	177.80	325.90	83.90	319.9
	Housing Units (2020)	342,037	548,934	368,308	444,426

Key

- > ~10% or more
- < ~10% or more
- Nearly Equal

Peer City Benchmarking | At-a-Glance



The Guidehouse Team analyzed data and interviews with three cities to identify leading practices for code enforcement operations. The selection attributes below provide context for qualifying comparisons between San José and the peer cities

		San José	San Diego	Seattle	Austin
Code Enforcement Division Attributes	Total Code Enforcement Budget (FY24-25)	\$13.38M	\$12.3M	\$15M	\$32.5M
	Per Capita Spend (Code Budget)	\$13	\$9	\$20	\$33
	Number of Residents Per Inspector	19,789	24,356	34,322	12,893
	Total Code Enforcement FTEs	70.5	90	60.5	116
	Total Inspectors FTEs	49	57	22	76
	Total Managers / Supervisors FTEs	11	18	9	15
	Number of Programs	16	11	6	8
	Workload Assigned by	Census Tract	Council District	Location	Location
	Case Management Application	CES	Accela	Accela	AMANDA
	Use of Tablets	-	✓	✓	✓
	Formal Succession Planning	-	✓	✓	✓
	Community Engagement Program	-	-	✓	✓



Peer City Benchmarking | Fine Structures Key Takeaways

Across three highlighted peer cities, fine/fee structures are typically scalable based on property value, size, and type to maximize equity for property owners while still aligning fines/fees to the LOE required of Code Enforcement staff

- 1 **Customizability.** All three peer cities employ some form of scalable fines/fees based on property size, type, and contractor's fees, allowing for fees to grow in accordance with the value of a property and the LOE required of inspectors.

Example 1: While San José charges a \$1,250 fine for the first violation on a development permit, Seattle's Department of Construction & Inspections (SDCI) uses a sliding scale, which includes \$274 for the first \$1,000 of a property, and the scale increases in proportion to the value of a property. This means that a property worth \$200,000,001 would pay \$534,573.

Example 2: For a 3,000 square foot building, San Diego charges a base rate of \$3,791 for plan checks and \$1,304 for inspections, plus an increment rate of \$1.30 and \$0.40 respectively. For a 50,000 square foot high rise, San Diego charges a base rate of \$9,605 for plan checks and \$8,594 for inspections, plus an increment rate of \$0.20 for each.

- 2 **Self Service and Customer Experience.** To support a positive customer experience, peer cities leverage self-service opportunities, providing documentation to help customers understand how, why, and where they must pay fines/fees.

Example: Austin's Development Services Department provides a short, user-friendly guide to fees and San Diego's Building & Land Use Division gives customers information on how to pay/calculate fees online.

- 3 **Equity and Efficiency.** Other cities use hourly and base fee rates to improve procedural efficiency by ensuring that time-consuming processes result in accordingly higher fees.

Example: Seattle's SDCI cites 'equity' as a major driving factor behind its base and hourly fee structures.

- 4 **Overall fines.** In comparison to other cities, San José's fines seem to fall within a normal range; however, its limited use of scalable, flexible fines means the City is limited in how much it can charge for more time-consuming or challenging properties.



City of San Diego Building & Land Use | Overview

The City of San Diego Building & Land Use Enforcement Division is part of the City's Development Services Department (DSD). The Building & Land Use Division investigates and enforces code violations related to land use, development regulations, building and housing codes, abandoned properties, disabled access, and noise regulations.

Key Takeaways

- **Rebranding for scope management:** Intentionally changed name from Code Compliance to Building & Land Use to prevent unrelated code programs moving to Division
- **Partnerships:** Lean into partnerships with the Police Department, Fire Department, and Parks and Recreation due to overlapping case violations. Partnership with City Attorney's Office allows them to quickly respond to tenants' needs
- **Succession planning:** Flexibility with education requirements for leadership roles in the Division to support career growth
- **Support roles:** Various coordinator roles for hearings, training, and liaising with Attorney's Office to help inspectors focus on core work

Core Programs

10 of 13 San José Programs

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| • General Code | • Massage |
| • Multiple Housing (Substandard Housing) | • Cannabis |
| • VBS | • LEA |
| • Building Code Compliance | • ADU |
| | • E3 |
| | • Soft Story (Unreinforced Masonry) |

Other programs: STRO Program

Organizational Structure

- **Total Staff:** 90 staff members, 57 of which are inspectors¹
- **Funding:** All are general fund except for LEA, which are grant funded
- **Organized by function:** Building Inspections (22 FTEs), Administration (11 FTEs), LEA (5 FTEs), Zoning Investigations I (18 FTEs), Zoning Investigations II (20 FTEs), Code Enforcement Coordination (4 FTEs), Short Term Residential Occupancy Investigations (8 FTEs), 1 Manager over Building Inspections, Admin, and LEA, 1 Deputy Director

Technology

- Inspectors can use smartphones, laptops, or tablets in the field
- Most utilize phones or laptops
- Accela for case management

Key Metrics & Processes

Enforcement Process

- Once violation is reported, may issue Notice of Violation or citation immediately for severe cases. If Responsible Party does not reach compliance: Abatement, Civil Penalties, or Judicial Remedies

Metrics

- Utilize [three-tiered prioritization system](#), with specific compliance and timelines goals for each: P1-Imminent Health and Safety Hazards (1 day), P2-Significant Violations (5 days), P3-Other Code Violations (20 days)
- Goal for P3 is to reach 90% of time, but currently ~60% of time due vacancies



City of San Diego Building & Land Use | Innovative Ideas

Innovative Ideas

Job Education/Experience Requirements

- Staff can replace educational requirements with years of experience to support staff retention and succession planning

Community Engagement

- In the aftermath of environmental disasters like floods and wildfires, Building & Land Use goes into the community to conduct outreach, support City Departments, and assist with emergency permitting

Program Scope

- The Department runs a short-term rental program

- Do not enforce on any form of blight unless it is aligned to building or zoning code violations
- Mobile Vendors program successfully moved to Police Department as a result of Building & Land Use's advocating efforts
 - Program originally assigned to Building & Land Use due to "enforcement" nature, but when Code would attempt to cite vendors, they would leave their belongings. Many mobile vendors were part of cartel or claimed they were trafficked, and due to complexity and challenges with enforcing with citations, City leaders realized it was a better fit for Police Department

Website Snapshots

Report a Short-Term Residential Occupancy (STRO) Violation

[Before you start...](#)

Estimated Resolution Time: 97 days*

The STRO Ordinance requires a license for all STROs within the City of San Diego.

This Report is for reporting non-emergency violations related to STROs in the City of San Diego. For urgent matters please contact the SDPD non-emergency line at (619)531-2000. For emergencies, dial 9-1-1.

To ensure efficient and timely review of your case provide as much information as possible in the complaint description, and both the required and optional fields.

**This estimate is calculated using data from the last 6 weeks as well as seasonal trends and staff knowledge.*

For information on the STRO ordinance, please refer to www.sandiego.gov/stro

[List of Active STRO Licenses](#)

[Map of Active STRO Licenses](#)

STRO Violation Portal

Building & Land Use Enforcement

The Building & Land Use Enforcement Division works in partnership with citizens to ensure, improve and maintain safe and desirable San Diego neighborhoods. If you believe that there is a violation near your home or business, you can:



1. Contact the Responsible Person

Most people want to be good neighbors and are cooperative once an issue is brought to their attention. The [National Conflict Resolution Center](#) at 619-238-2400 can help you effectively establish a dialog with the person responsible for the problem.

Explanation of B&LU Scope and links to other resources



City of Seattle Code Compliance | Overview

The City of Seattle Code Compliance Division lies within the Department of Construction & Inspections (SDCI). The division enforces community standards and ensures all rental housing is registered and code-compliant, and that landlords follow tenant protection regulations for Seattle's renters who make up more than half of their residents.

Key Takeaways

- **Focus on culture:** Investment in employee events and continuing education to celebrate their team's work and establish themselves as a professional organization
- **Succession planning:** Received support of City to reclassify manager positions to allow experience to substitute education - most managers worked their way up from beginning with City as inspectors
- **Strategic roles:** Have Budget/Dev System Analyst and Legal Liaison and Strategic Advisor

Core Programs

6 of 13 San José Programs

- General Code (LU, Trees, Weeds, and Shoreline)
- Multiple Housing (Rental Housing Programs)
- Vacant Buildings and Storefronts
- Building Code (Code Compliance Building)
- Illegal Dumping Enforcement
- ADU Amnesty

Organizational Structure

- **Total Staff:** 60.5 staff members, 22 of which are Inspectors¹
- **Funding:** Code Compliance roles are funding by a combination of the General Fund (~60%) and fees (~40%)
- **Organized by programs:** Rental Housing (15 FTEs), Code Compliance Operations (12.5 FTEs), Code Compliance Building (11 FTEs), Housing & Zoning (8 FTEs), LU, Trees, Weeds, and Shoreline (10 FTEs). Additional roles include: 1 Code Compliance Manager, 1 Legal Liaison and Strategic Advisor, 1 Budget/Dev Analyst, and 1 Division Director

Technology

- Tablets and laptops provided to Inspectors, with some individual discretion
- Accela for case management

Key Metrics & Processes

Enforcement Process

- Issue Notice of Violation and customers typically given 30 days to comply (sometimes less for severe cases). If customers do not comply, penalties automatically begin, and the case may be escalated to law enforcement
- Issue fewer warning notices

Case Prioritization

- Utilize 'triage' model where they prioritize closing emergency cases and high-impact situations first
- After top tier cases, aim to close middle tier cases within approximately 20 days. Tier 3 is reserved for non-emergency cases, which are deprioritized



City of Seattle Code Compliance | Innovative Ideas

Innovative Ideas

Community Engagement

- Offer website translations in 15 languages
- Provide optional video inspections to increase accessibility for customers
- Outreach Lead role for landlord and tenant education
 - Conduct landlord training several times a year, attends community events
- Interdepartmental Renting in Seattle Program – outreach and training for renters and landlords. Code Compliance hosts program hotline

Succession Planning

- Prioritize on-the-job experience over formal education to help create clearer pathways to promotion for existing inspectors, resulting in improved succession planning and higher retention rates
- Encourage inspectors to prioritize continuing education and certifications, which has laid a clear pathway to increase inspector salaries down the line
- Place continuous emphasis on the unique skills and challenges associated with Code Enforcement, including need for problem solving skills, community engagement work, and on the job experience

Community Engagement & Renter Information Snapshots

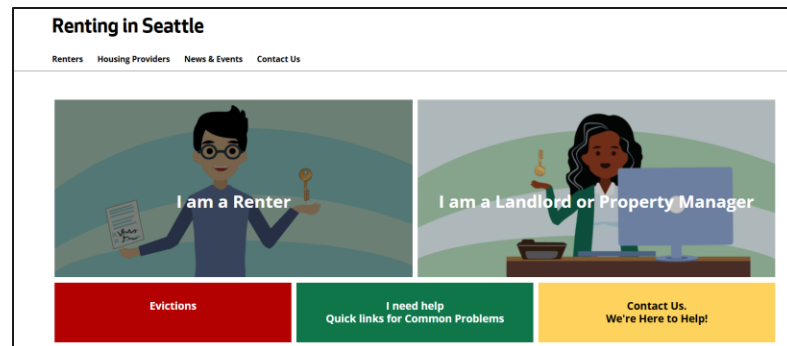
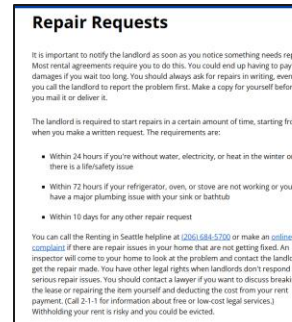


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Interactive Renters' Portal & Handbook

SDCI Introduction Video



City of Austin Code Compliance | Overview

The City of Austin Code Compliance Division is housed within the Development Services Department (DSD). It is a reactive organization, responding to reports via Austin 311. Top violations include tall weeds and grass, trash and debris/unsanitary conditions, substandard and dangerous structures, and work without a permit.

Key Takeaways

- **Staffing levels:** Have ~20 more Inspectors for a population of ~10,000 more people than San José
- **Community engagement:** Emphasis on community education around code violation complaint process, tenant rights, etc.
- **Multi-dwelling units:** Inspected through Repeat Offender Program (sole proactive program)
- **Strategy and support roles:** Chief Strategy Officer who oversees Marketing, Outreach, and Community Engagement. Staff focused on technical/admin include Permit Technicians, Revenue Analysts, and Program Specialists, and Business Process Specialist and Administrative Assistant supporting Division Manager

Core Programs

7 of 13 San José Programs

- General Code
- Multiple Housing (Repeat Offender)
- Vacant Buildings and Storefronts
- Building Code Compliance
- Illegal Dumping Enforcement
- ADU Amnesty
- E3

Other programs: *Licensing & Registration*

Organizational Structure

- **Total Staff:** 116 staff, 76 of which are inspectors/investigators¹
- **Funding:** All Code Compliance positions are funded by Austin's Clean Community Fee (garbage and electricity)
- **Organized by:** Region - Central East, Downtown, South, North Central, North (53 FTEs), and by Program - Extended Hours (9 FTEs), Illegal Dumping (5 FTEs), Repeat Offender (16 FTEs), Licensing & Registration (6 FTEs), Code Enforcement (8 FTEs), Case Review & Escalation (11 FTEs)

Technology

- Cases are generated through Austin's 311 app
- AMANDA for case management
- Techbooks and iPhones for case management

Key Metrics & Processes

Enforcement Process

- Upon confirming a violation, a Notice of Violation is provided to the property owner. If compliance is not reached upon follow-up inspection, four potential paths: License/Registration Suspension or Revocation, Building and Standards Commission, Municipal or District Court, Administrative Hearing

- All cases submitted through 311 – automatically prioritized into three tiers based on safety

Metrics

- Expected to complete at least five inspections per day
- Meet prioritization goals ~95% of time



City of Austin Code Compliance | Innovative Ideas

Innovative Ideas

Strategy and Community Engagement

- Have Department-level Chief Strategy Officer that oversees Engagement Manager and Marketing role
- Engagement Manager (stakeholder and community) role for DSD that is solely focused on external stakeholders and complex/high-visibility cases
 - These efforts are largely a result of special interest groups that have looked at Code Compliance with a critical eye and encouraged internal audits. These audits have led to positive changes in programming and strategic roles within the Division
- Marketing role that focuses on educational campaigns for residents - **YouTube channel, podcast, digital and print materials**

- **Citizen Connect tool** allows anyone to search code complaint cases on a user-friendly map

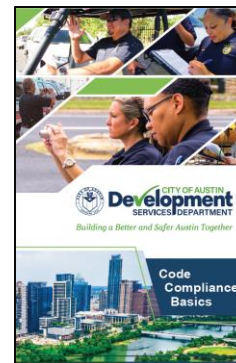
Technology

- Work with techbooks from their pickup trucks
- Take case photos with iPhone app that date/time stamps photos
- Inspectors receive notifications when inspection and compliance are due
- **Repeat Offender Program**
- Rental registration program for properties with multiple code violations. Created in response to structural failures that endangered public health and safety in multifamily residences

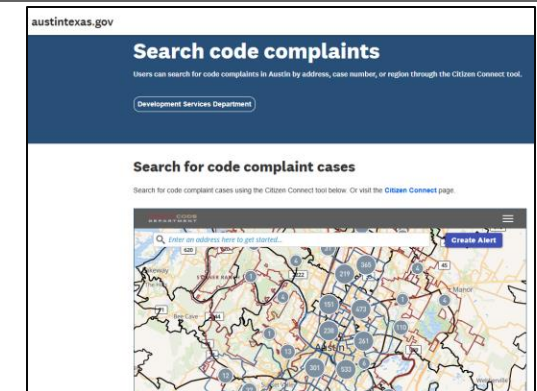
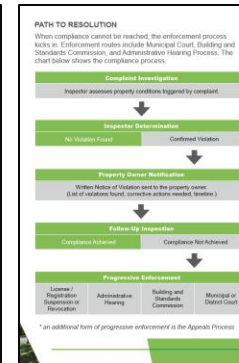
Community Engagement Snapshots



YouTube Channel & Podcast



Educational Materials



Interactive Map



City Leadership & Partner Interviews

City Leadership & Partner Interviews | Key Themes (1/3)



During eight leadership and partner interviews, stakeholders shared frustrations with Code Enforcement's services, while expressing motivation for change and improvement



Support for change and improvement initiatives. Stakeholders expressed interest in supporting Code Enforcement in improving its efficacy, citing interest in reevaluating the Division's scope, fine structures, organizational structure, legal involvement, and case escalation.

"There's no silver bullet here. The balance is that the City wants to get to compliance, not necessarily just to impose harsh penalties. The political alignment is shifting, but that's not really Code Enforcement's job exactly - **that's for the Council.** The overall experience is a mixed bag. I don't even know how the funding works in practice."

"I don't think [the Division's organizational structure] is focused on addressing the high priorities... I don't know if there is an evaluation mindset."



Frustration around inefficient and ineffective processes. Many stakeholders cited that some cases take years and repeated complaints to resolve and expressed frustration with the perceived lack of urgency and inconsistent compliance.

"If you talk to Code Enforcement, they say they are understaffed. But if you look at efficiencies in the Department – **they don't need more employees, they just need to do it more efficiently...** Inspectors don't do work that they are getting done well."

"You need to **increase your fees to hire more people...** I know we are bound by capacity, and we can't really move anything without the Legal team. The most frustrating thing is that people can really skirt the system.... It's not the case for everyone, if you're a small business owner who can't afford it, but **it's frustrating to see the people who can afford it just punt the ball down the road.**"

City Leadership & Partner Interviews | Key Themes (2/3)



During eight leadership and partner interviews, stakeholders shared frustrations with Code Enforcement's services, while expressing motivation for change and improvement



Appreciation for inspectors, but lack of organizational transparency. Several stakeholders noted that inspectors' attitudes and levels of service have improved over time, but there remains a void of communication and transparency for the public.

"Communication is frustrating for the complaining party...they are not receiving a lot of communication. Elected officials become mediators. Residents should have a dashboard to see when inspectors are going out – would be more responsive to the community."

"I think they do a really good job of giving us everything that we need [for Appeals Board]. The only thing that I have seen, is that there are cases that are lingering for years and years... Sometimes we have customers that are a little confused, maybe English isn't their first language. **So it's helpful... for inspectors to make themselves available for assistance."**



Focus on downtown blight. The Division has made progress on addressing the downtown area through the Vacant Buildings and Storefronts pilot program and collaboration with other Departments; however, stakeholders emphasize that downtown is still a major area of concern.

"When you see blighted buildings, it leads to opinions of public safety. I don't understand why things aren't escalating faster...It would be helpful to have a Council-facing system [to track egregious cases]."

"Our downtown needs to have quality buildings...But if you look at our business owners, you have property owners that can't and don't ... stand up a building... if you can't afford it, you can't get around historic preservation requirements...It's very important that property owners that are simply skirting the system should not be allowed to do so."

"[Inspector] has been great for downtown - super curious, knowledgeable, approachable, and great customer rapport. The program is up for review this year, and I would like to see it continue..."

City Leadership & Partner Interviews | Key Themes (3/3)



During eight leadership and partner interviews, stakeholders shared frustrations with Code Enforcement's services, while expressing motivation for change and improvement



Acknowledgement of span of control challenges. Some stakeholders expressed understanding and empathy for Code Enforcement, and the challenges that come along with limited control on private property. Partnerships with departments like PRNS, Fire, and Police are helpful, and these could be bolstered to help reduce these challenges.

"[There] **seems to be a little bit more pressure** when Fire goes into the field with Code Enforcement because they are uniformed. [It] gives a little more formality and pressure."

"Private land is much more difficult [to enforce on than public property] because of due process [and other restrictions]. [Our team] has a lot of empathy for Rachel and her team as we have learned more about the process and the requirements Code Enforcement must adhere to versus our department on private versus public land."

"We worked with Code Enforcement on unpermitted street vendor [enforcement] over the holiday. They were good partners, but we only had two tools to enforce. One was the County Health Department because they can confiscate food, and [the other was] Code Enforcement because they can write citations. **We learned that the administrative citations were not super effective.**"








Customer Experience Activities

Customer Experience Activities | Approach & Methodology



The Guidehouse Team conducted an analysis of 72 customer interactions, 1,134 survey data points, and two different mystery shopping channels to develop a holistic understanding of the customer experience at Code Enforcement

 Customer Interviews (8)	 Customer Observations (57)	 Ridealongs (7)	 Survey Analysis (1,134)	 Mystery Shopping
<p>In-depth 1:1 interviews with highly engaged customers in the community, identified based on the duration or nature of their relationship with the Division</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listened to live calls fielded by Support Staff and Inspector on Office Duty to understand procedures, customer issues, and how assistance is provided to customers Conducted short intercepts front desk visitors 	<p>Accompanied inspectors conducting code enforcement visits and observed customer interactions</p>	<p>Reviewed and analyzed ten years of Customer Surveys, highlighting pain points, strengths, and trend lines</p>	<p>Conducted research from the “eyes of the customer” to understand key touchpoints and pathways for common inquiries</p>
<p>Customers from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SoFA Committee ARVAC- Alum Rock Village Action Committee Mt Pleasant NA All District Leadership Grp. Valley Water Non-affiliated Customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average call duration: 4.4 min Emotion: 13 (+), 25 Neutral, 8 (-) Top Inquiry: Information Seeking Average observation duration: 5.7 minutes for desk, 14.0 minutes for intercept Emotion: 3 (+), 6 Neutral, 2(-) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspectors shadowed: General Code (2), Multiple Housing, and Special Programs # of sites visited: 16 # of customer interactions: 7 	<p>Highlighted questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where do you live? What CE issue is of greatest concern to you? Was your issue corrected? Was CED responsive and helpful? (1-5) Was staff service courteous and timely? (1-5) 	<p>Channels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Web Phone <p>Scenarios:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graffiti on private property Illegal fireworks Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

Customer Interviews | Strength Themes



During eight one-on-one customer interviews, customers expressed satisfaction with Code Enforcement's community engagement, hard work, and knowledge



Appreciation of how inspectors engage with the community. Many customers expressed gratitude for Code Enforcement's engagement with residents, often acknowledging that this community engagement came in addition to their other responsibilities.

"[Our neighborhood] tends to get ignored or forgotten by the city... One of the county supervisors approached one of my friends and said, 'If you put together a community group, I will support you.' And he did... so I saw it and I joined in 2016. Our little group has accomplished a lot of things. We are working with [different Departments] who don't always work together very well, but they **both come to our meetings, because they've gotten to know each other. So that's really great.**" – Customer 4

"Code Enforcement does as well as it can. [I know] they are reliant on other teams... **They do a great job of communicating and have fast responses and don't let them linger a long time.**" – Customer 1



Customers feel that most inspectors are hard working and knowledgeable. Most customers have a positive impression of Code Enforcement's dedication to their field and knowledge of the Municipal Code.

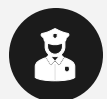
"**I can't recall any cases where their knowledge has been wanting.**" – Customer 8

"I've lived in the neighborhood for twenty-five years. It's a very close neighborhood... We have a close, tight bond. In our case, we had a house that wasn't so nice, and after a while, you can only take so much. I work full time, I have grandbabies, and taking on something full time, it's draining! But we got the community together and we got something done. **And a lot of that was Code Enforcement.**" – Customer 3

Customer Interviews | Pain Point Themes (1 of 2)



During eight one-on-one customer interviews, customers raised concerns about inconsistent enforcement, staffing shortages, delays, and recurring ‘problem properties’



Perceptions of inequitable enforcement. Many customers felt that their concerns were not being taken seriously, while members of their community were made the targets of selective enforcement for comparatively minor complaints.

“The white community, they're treated well, **but my community, it's a disaster.** Working together to clean things up, would be helpful. But today, it's rock bottom... **In my community, they'll write up misdemeanor crap, for the most trivial things.**” - Customer 7

“We are concerned about fire. We continued to report it. The city would come out and not do anything. But I'm going back to [my situation]. Look how punitive you were to me about my permit process. But over here, this is totally fine, totally normal stuff. This guy who isn't even the order, you're allowing him to obstruct the process... [It's almost like] 'I can be punitive with you because you won't fight back.' **Any other citizen would be held to different standards.**” - Customer 2



Concerns about staff shortages. Customers understood that low resources may cause enforcement delays, inefficiencies, and negative experiences. Generally, they felt that these staff shortages were most problematic in Code Enforcement, but also referenced vacancies in the Police Department, Fire Department, and Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services.

“[The] Department is working hard to address concerns we have. **I would like to see more encouragement for [Code Enforcement] employees.** The City should give [them] the tools that they need to do their job... But I am very satisfied with their attitude.” – Customer 5

“Staffing has been downsized, whether it's through retirement or through lateral moves.” – Customer 8

Customer Interviews | Pain Point Themes (2 of 2)



During eight one-on-one customer interviews, customers raised concerns about inconsistent enforcement, staffing shortages, delays, and recurring ‘problem properties’



Problem properties deepen the perception of reluctance to enforce. Customers referenced frustrations about long-standing violating properties. In addition to the hazards that these properties pose, customers felt that this represented **a reluctance to enforce on complaints**. This appeared to reduce faith in the overall system and made residents less likely to report on other violations.

"All my properties are clean, well-kept, you know, and it's frustrating, because there's lots of illegal dumping happening elsewhere... We've worked on many buildings in San José.... You do get jaded after a while. We had a meeting on blight this morning and everyone's [complaining] and I said **'I've been in these meetings before and you talk about all these problems... where's the solution? We really came away with nothing. I'm not going to waste my time.'**" – Customer 6

"There was a big undercover bust and we were told 34 people were living in that house. We had initially got them involved when there were ten, fifteen cars... fast forward years later, and now I'm making a new complaint to the new person, and nothing had changed, and that was weird. **How can there be so many years that went by and nothing had changed?**" – Customer 3



Frustrations with persistent delays. Customers expressed frustration and confusion about delays in enforcement. These customers often expressed that they had complained about the same cases for several years without any real movement.

"They've admitted that they're behind, and that they have no way of addressing 700 new cars coming into the area. It's really annoying. For one residential home, it's like 400 parking spots. There's a school there, there's a library... **that's just ridiculous.**" – Customer 4

"I can show you **cars that have there for fifteen, twenty years**... The trash I called in last night has been there for fifteen years." – Customer 7

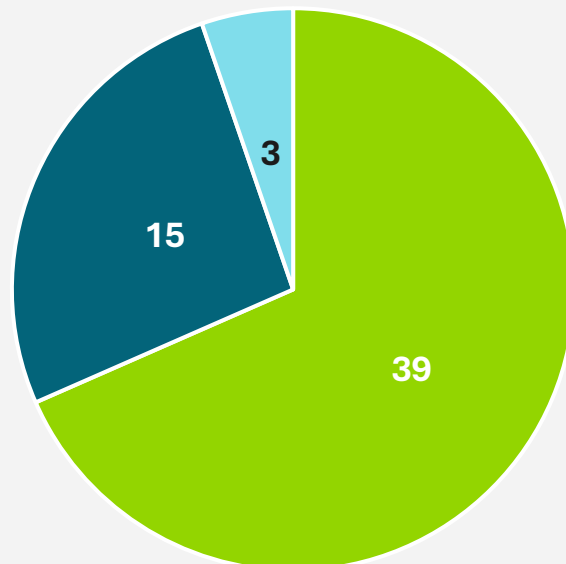
Customer Observations | Overview



The Guidehouse Team observed 57 distinct customer interactions with Code Enforcement through desk observations and phone call observations with support staff and inspectors

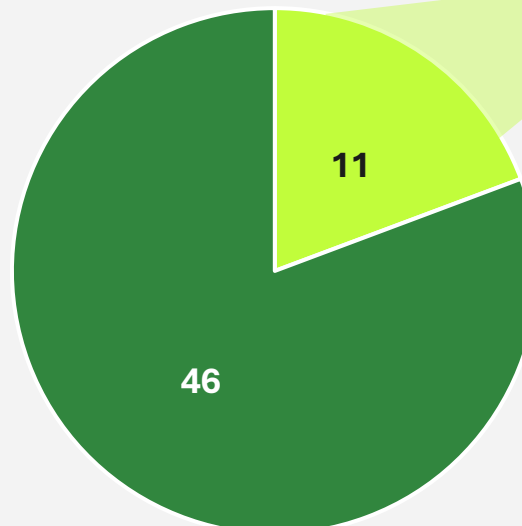
Customer's Primary Language¹

English Non-English Unclear



Customer Interaction

Desk Call



Observation Highlight

- 7 of the 11 customers who were observed during front desk support completed a follow-up interview with the Guidehouse Team
- 57% of surveyed customers had previously interacted with Code Enforcement
- 43% of surveyed customers said they were there to check in on the status of their case

“It's good for one, two, three months, but then the problem comes back, because they didn't fix the problem all the way down to the root.” – Desk 10

Customer Observations | Inquiry Purpose



58% of customers called to receive additional information, 28% called to check in on the status of their case, and 14% called to schedule an appointment or inspection



58%

Information Seeking. Most customers called to seek out information about cases, violations, or laws, often due to confusion about the website or redirections from other Divisions and organizations.

28%

Case Status. When customers checked in on their case status, 69% were the complaining party. Among responsible parties, many noted they were acting on behalf of someone else and were unsure if they were the responsible party.

14%

Scheduling. Code Enforcement support staff are currently scheduling inspections and appointments on behalf of Building & Permitting, taking time away from other key tasks.

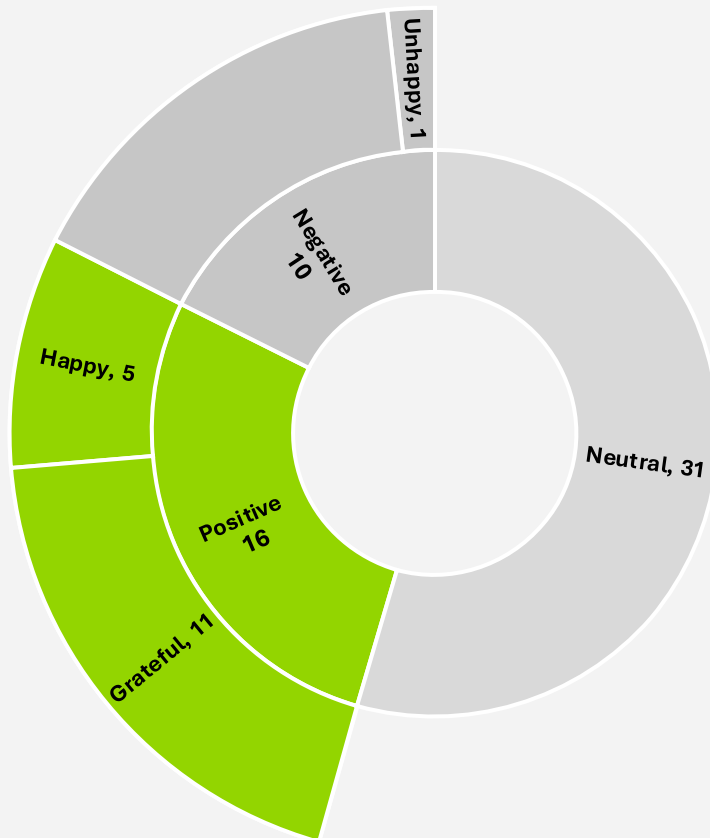
“I received a letter from the City regarding [address]. I am selling that house and the report said there was an illegal home auto repair operating there...I live in another state and I am relying on my relative to do this for me... **so do I need to do anything?**” - Call 4



Customer Observations | Positive Emotions

Customers felt positively about inspectors' empathy, engagement, and community care, often noting that they understood the staffing and resourcing stresses the Division is under

Customer Emotion



- 1 Customers' moods were often improved by interacting with inspectors.** While many customers were frustrated at the start of their calls, many appeared to have improved their mood by the end, often referencing inspectors' help as a major factor.
- 2 Gratitude and appreciation.** Even when faced with significant delays and other procedural inefficiencies, customers were grateful for their inspectors' care and follow-through. Customers emphasized their inspectors' deep understanding of the Code and their ability to build relationships with residents.

"You've provided very good information. I don't like it, but it's good information. You've been very kind and that goes a long way with me." – Call 7

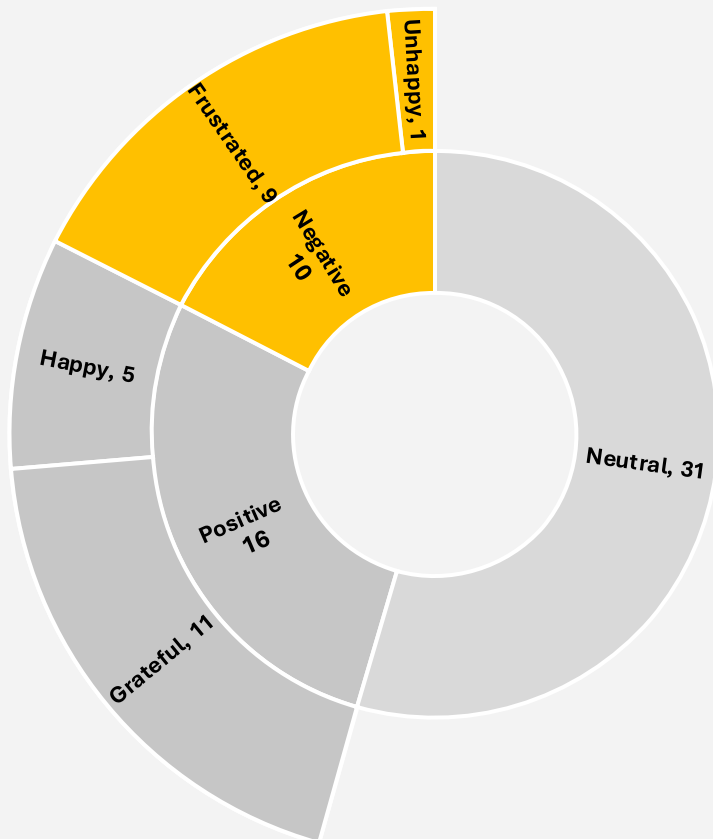
"[My inspector] is pretty good, I have no issue, [it's] impressive that he conducted the inspection by [date]. This is a plus." – Call 6



Customer Observations | Negative Emotions

When customers expressed negative emotions, they typically referenced frustration, confusion, and impatience. They often attributed these feelings to the impression that Code Enforcement had deprioritized their case

Customer Emotion



- 1 Customer confusion.** Customers frequently expressed confusion about Code Enforcement's scope, the status of their case, and their legal responsibility to act. This confusion was sometimes, but not always, resolved through conversations with inspectors.
- 2 Frustration and impatience.** Many customers expressed frustration that their cases were subject to significant wait times. For customers dealing with life and safety concerns, these lags represented a failure to prioritize and often appeared to erode overall faith in the Division.

"Why are we doing everything we can to make these people happy at the expense of tax-paying citizens?"
– Customer 2

"It's not about Code Enforcement. It's about the people who are not doing what they are supposed to do. I want you to know where we stand and we will demand action... [My inspector] is a good lady. I know she cares for the City. I don't want to point fingers... It's just frustrating." – Call 6

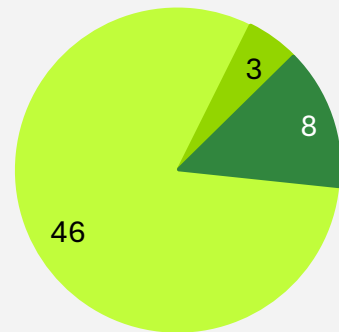


Customer Observations | Ease & Effectiveness

Most customers had an appropriate level of effort during their interactions with Code Enforcement, with 81% appearing satisfied with their interaction

Did the customer seem satisfied with the interaction?

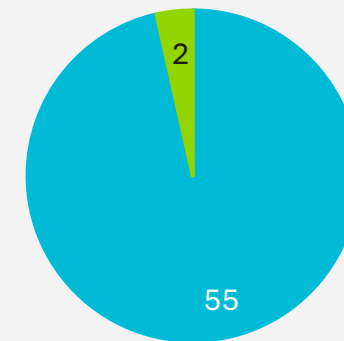
■ Yes ■ No ■ Somewhat



"I first came here two months ago, my husband was also here, but no one told him that we emailed the wrong person. I'm really, really confused. If we emailed the wrong person, why didn't they tell us? **Everyone I've talked to here, the people are very good, but the processes, they're just confusing.**" – Desk 11

Was the Level of Effort appropriate for the conversation?

■ Yes ■ No



- One-off vs. long-term interactions.** While customers were generally satisfied with their individual interactions with the Division, they had more mixed impressions of the timeline of their long-term interactions.

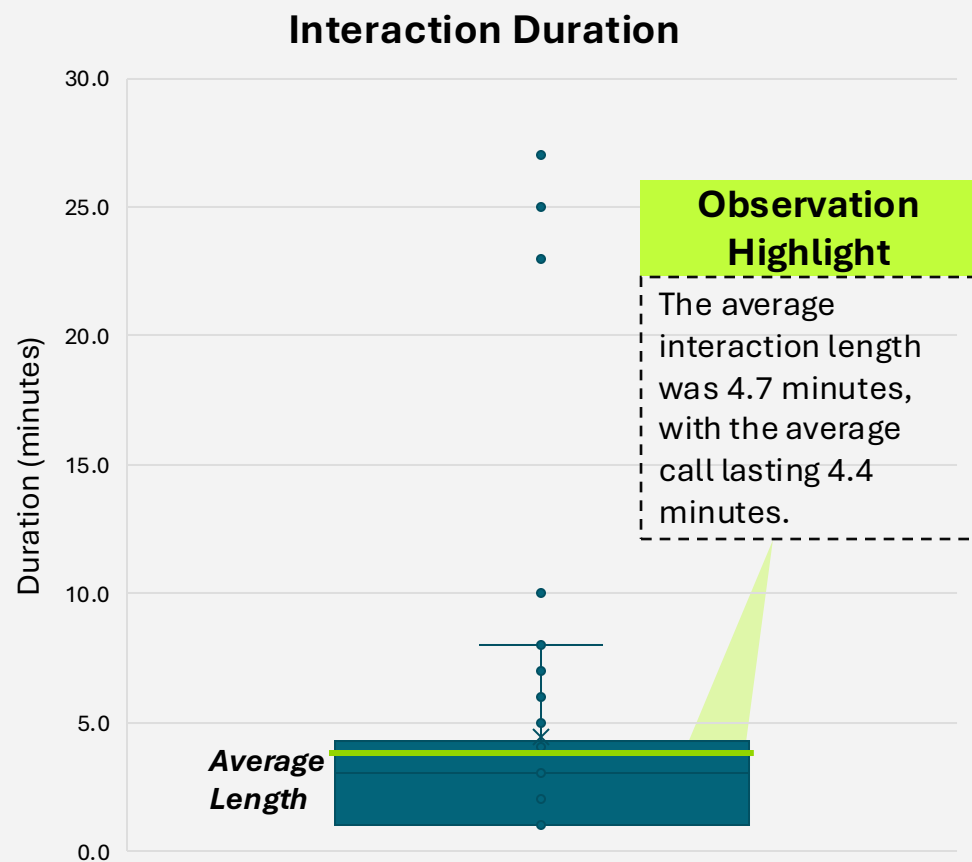
- Duration and level of effort.¹** Most customers were able to get answers to their pressing inquiries quickly, making the process more efficient and improving their experiences.

¹ "Level of Effort" is a subjective measure of how much time and energy customers expended in an interaction, where "yes" corresponds to a brief, simple, or conclusive interaction and "no" corresponds to a confusing or overly long one.

Customer Observations | Call Length & Resolution



Most interactions were resolved quickly, with an average length of approximately 4.7 minutes. Most customers received clarity on their immediate questions, but few were able to resolve the entirety of their case through a single interaction



- 1 Clarity through calling.** Most customers called to get answers to basic questions or check in on their case status. 93% of these simple inquiries were resolved through the phone, but most customers were also given next steps to advance their inquiry.
- 2 Most interactions were relatively short.** Most customer interactions were short and simple, with only 11% of interactions lasting ten minutes or more.
- 3 Resolution of cases.** In the 7% of unresolved cases, customers were not given the next steps they needed. 100% of these customers appeared frustrated by the lack of clarity.

Inquiry Resolution Status

■ Resolved ■ Not Resolved

93%

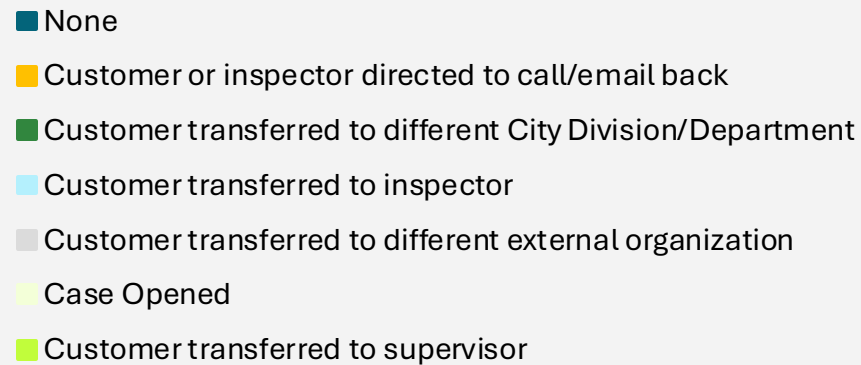
7%



Customer Observations | Next Steps & Direction

18 customers were able to resolve their main inquiry without additional next steps. For those who did receive next steps, 14 were asked to call/email back later, 13 were transferred to another Division, 4 were transferred to an inspector, 3 opened a case, 3 were referred to another organization, and 2 were transferred to a supervisor

Inquiry Next Steps



- 1 **Redirections back to Code Enforcement.** Many customers were instructed to try calling/emailing Code Enforcement at a different time, typically because the relevant inspector was busy.

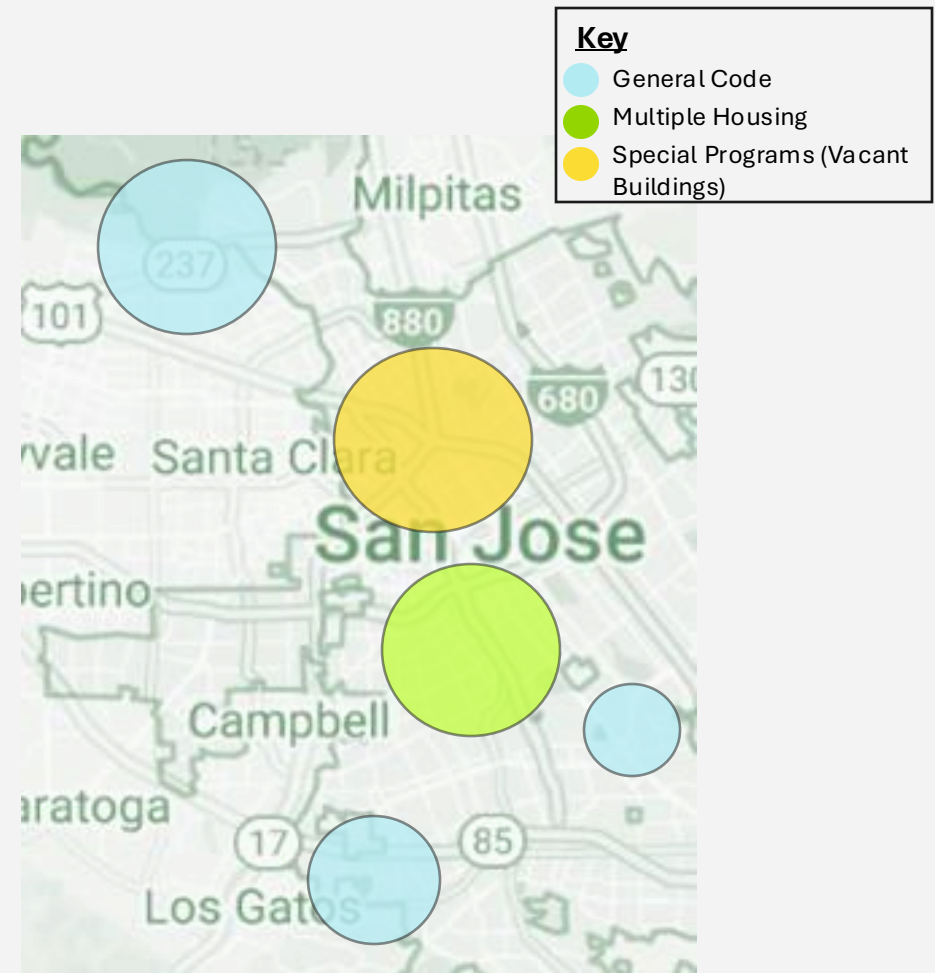
“I’ve been a squeaky wheel since October. I can only do so much and I have a day job... **I was just hoping that someone would say, ‘Yeah, I can look into it.’**” - Call 22

- 2 **Next steps and movement.** When customers were in the wrong place, Code Enforcement referred them in the right direction. While these calls were typically resolved quickly, they indicate customer confusion about Code Enforcement’s purview.

Ridealongs | Activity Overview



The Guidehouse team visited sixteen sites and observed seven customer interactions while on ridealongs with Inspectors from General Code, Multiple Housing, and Special Programs



Ridealongs | Overall & General Code Takeaways



Key takeaways emerged from ridealongs around the complexity of cases and the human aspect, communication inefficiencies, and technology barriers

Overall

- **Technology Limitations.** Inspectors do not have tablets/laptops and take handwritten notes in the field, which then are entered into CES later. Due to the shortage of electrical vehicle chargers, it is difficult to take advantage of electrical option
- **Inspector Discretion.** Inspectors have significant discretion in citing properties, follow-ups, and case escalation. Leads to inconsistencies in enforcement, timelines, and citations, which can be confusing for customers
- **Driving and Customer Interaction Time.** Driving and customer interaction times can be lengthy (i.e., up to 30-minute drive to Alviso from City Hall). Important to consider this when determining workload capacity
- **Staffing and Resource Allocation.** Other cities with similar Census numbers have lower case volumes and more inspectors

General Code

- **Resident Rapport.** Inspectors are patient and allow residents to take time to share what is happening in their lives that is causing delays in compliance. They know residents' history and work with them when they are experiencing hardships
- **Case nuances and wide scope of violations.** Cases are nuanced and violations within a single code can vary significantly - e.g., common blight violations can include inoperable vehicles on lawns, living in RVs on a business property, and excess materials in backyards. This makes it difficult to maintain consistent processes
- **Reliance on Complainants.** Inspectors rely on complainant descriptions, which can be insufficient and lead to extra research time (e.g., incorrect addresses and vague descriptions)

Ridealongs | Multiple Housing & Special Programs Takeaways

Key takeaways emerged from ridealongs around the complexity of cases and the human aspect, communication inefficiencies, and technology barriers

Multiple Housing

- **Unique Service for Community.** Offering inspections for multifamily dwellings provides tenants with more support to call and report violations. This beneficial service gives tenants recourse with unresponsive or inattentive landlords
- **Communication About Complaint Process.** No requirement for landlords to post complaint contact information; tenants learn about program through word of mouth
- **Communication Channels with Housing.** Lack of communication between Code and Housing for subsidized housing inspections may lead to inconsistencies or double work
- **Follow-up Process.** Inspectors often face delays when property managers do not address issues in a timely fashion or are not onsite during a scheduled inspection, necessitating return visits and wasting valuable time

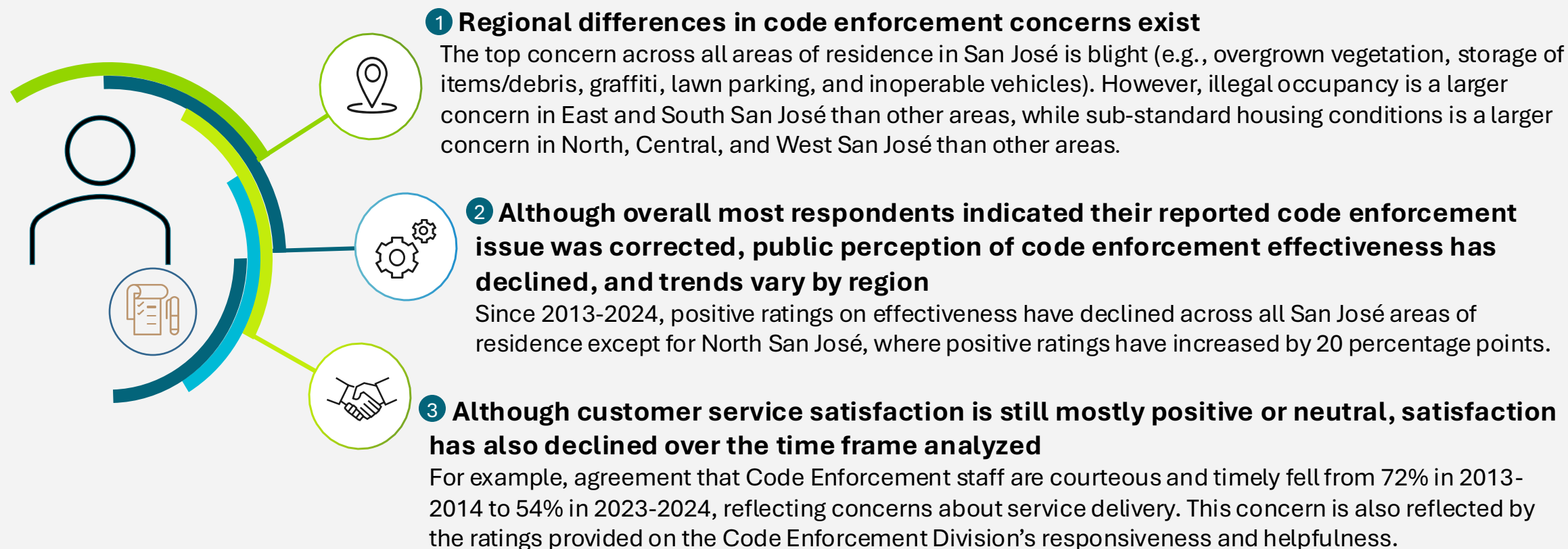
Special Programs Vacant Buildings & Storefronts

- **Proactive Approach for Downtown is Effective.** Proactive approach enables the Division to address cases more quickly, reducing number of high-visibility cases downtown
- **Temporary Nature of Some Special Programs.** Temporary/pilot programs create momentum for change that loses impact if the program does not continue/successful pilot is not implemented

Survey Analysis | Key Takeaways



The Guidehouse Team reviewed 1,134 responses from three survey years (2013-2014, 2019-2020, and 2023-2024) to identify themes and trends in residents' Code Enforcement concerns and service satisfaction



Q: Code Enforcement Issue of Most Concern (Top 3)



Across all five regions, blight was the top concern, comprising of a significant 66-77% of the reported concerns

North

1. Blight (66%)

2. Zoning or Building Violations (17%)

3. Sub-Standard Housing Conditions (10%)

Central

1. Blight (77%)

2. Zoning or Building Violations (10%)

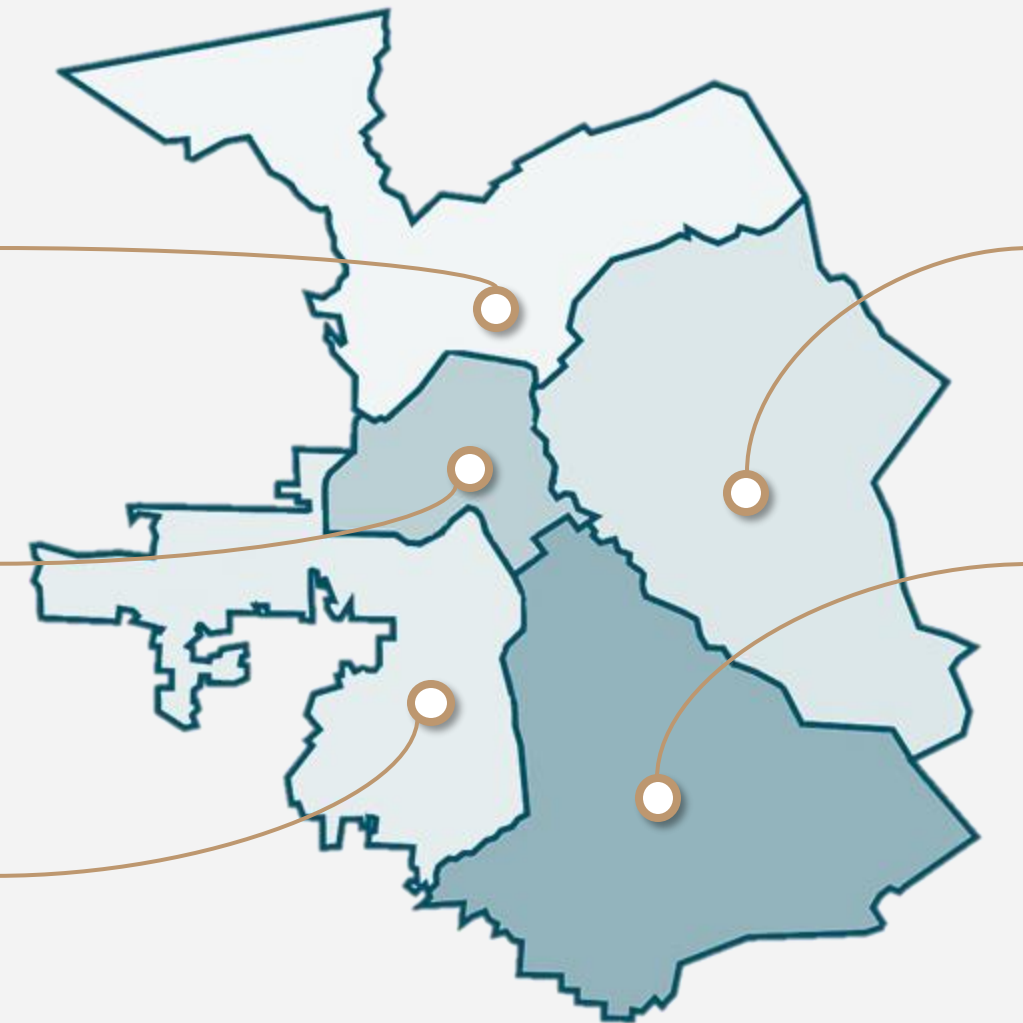
3. Sub-Standard Housing Conditions (7%)

West

1. Blight (62%)

2. Zoning or Building Violations (20%)

3. Sub-Standard Housing Conditions (9%)



East

1. Blight (70%)

2. Illegal Occupancy (13%)

3. Zoning or Building Violations (12%)

South

1. Blight (76%)

2. Zoning or Building Violations (11%)

3. Illegal Occupancy (8%)

Not a Resident

1. Sub-Standard Housing Conditions (36%)

2. Zoning or Building Violations (27%)

3. Blight (27%)

Notes:

• Self-reported data from 2024-2024 Customer Survey

• Blight: overgrown vegetation, storage of items/debris, graffiti, lawn parking, inoperable vehicles, etc.

• Zoning or Building Violations: unpermitted construction work, illegal land uses, etc.

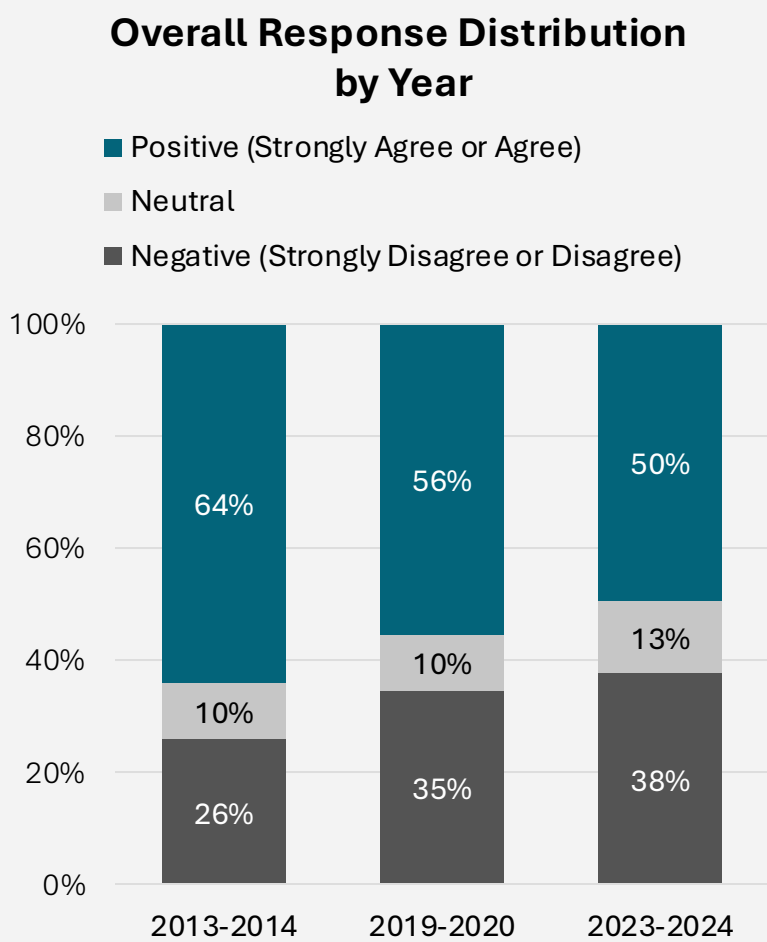
• Sub-Standard Housing Conditions: faulty plumbing, hazardous wiring, floors in disrepair, pest control, etc.

• Illegal Occupancy: unpermitted garage conversions, illegal living units, etc.

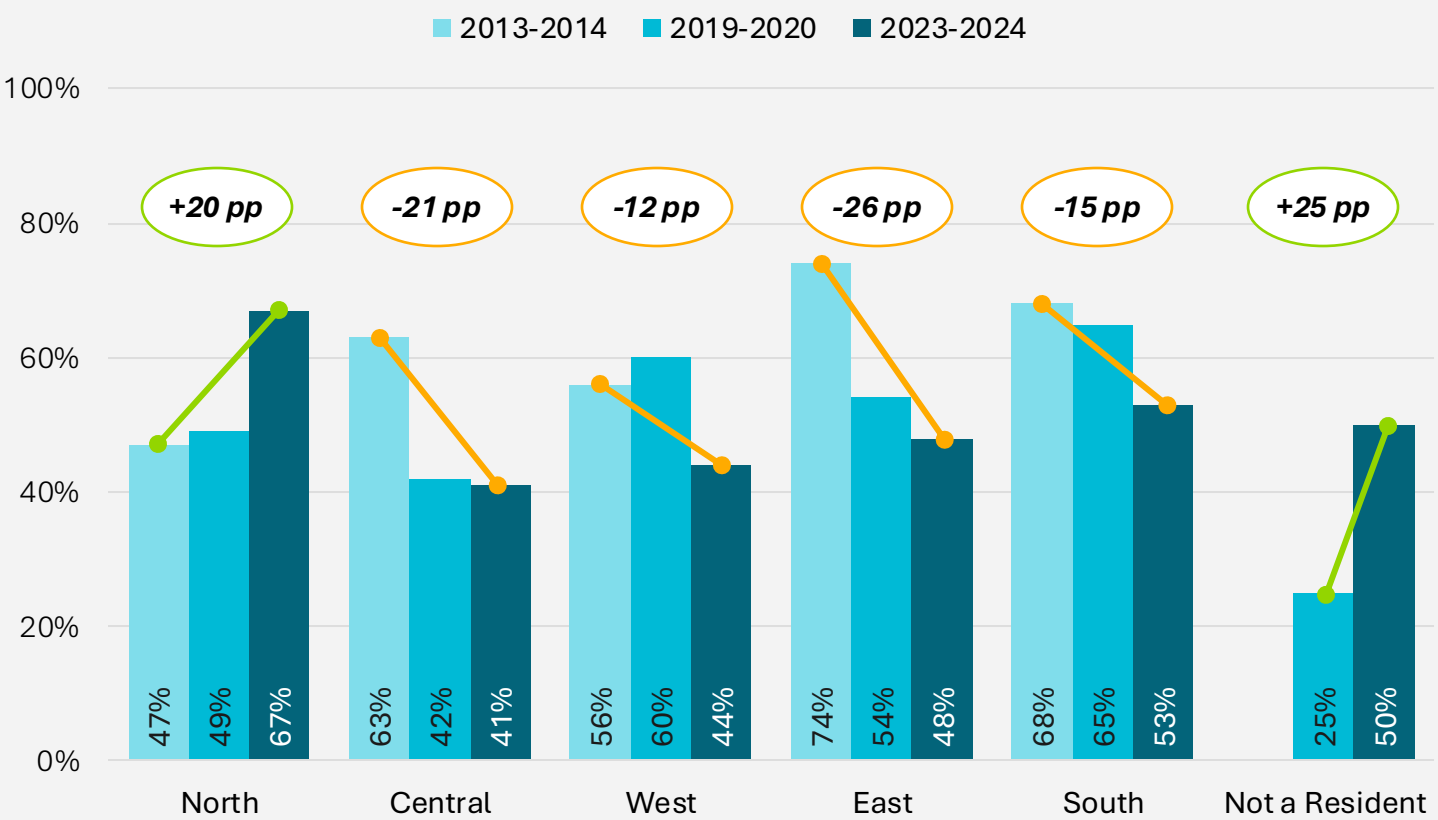
Q: The Code Enforcement issue I reported was corrected



While overall positive responses have decreased by 14 percentage points (pp) since 2013-2014, trends vary by residence area



Percent of Respondents with a Positive Response (Strongly Agree or Agree) by Year and Area of Residence in San José



Note: Percentage points (pp) is the simple difference between percentage values.

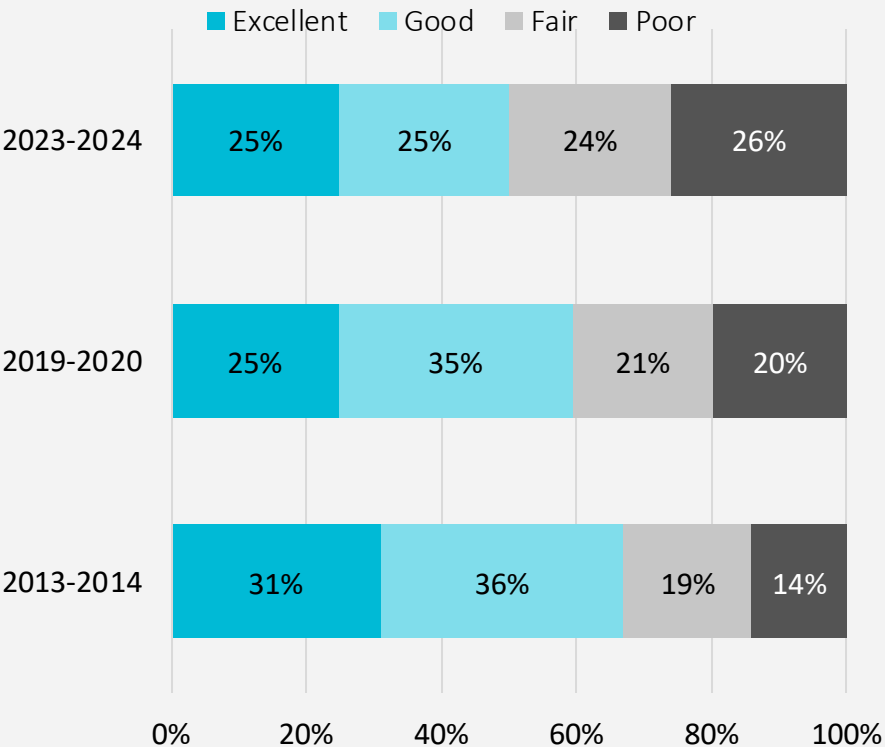
Public perception of service quality has decreased over time



A smaller share of respondents have provided favorable or positive ratings on service-related questions since 2013-2014

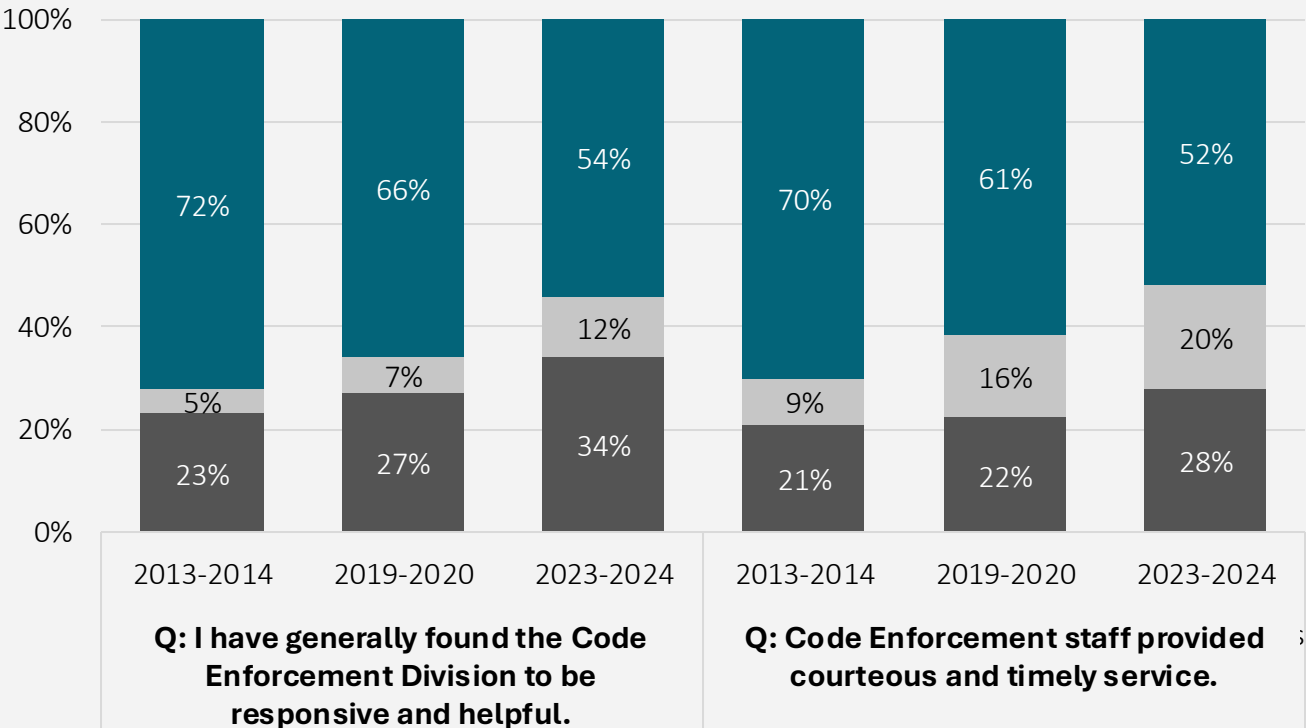
Overall Response Distribution
by Year

Q: How would you rate the overall quality of service you received from Code Enforcement?



Overall Response Distribution by Question and Year

■ Positive (Strongly Agree or Agree) ■ Neutral ■ Negative (Strongly Disagree or Disagree)





Mystery Shopping | Approach

The Guidehouse Team conducted mystery shopping for three different common scenarios to develop a high -level understanding of common customer pathways through the Code Enforcement process ¹

Purpose: Assess customer channels/touchpoints to understand customer service experiences and standards

Approach and Methodology:

- Conducted general searching/navigation across two customer service channels to inform a high-level understanding of customers’ experience in reporting common Code violations. Mystery shopping took place between 2/17 and 3/28
- Common Code violations were chosen in conversation with Division leadership. Because graffiti consistently ranks as customers’ top Code Enforcement concern², the Guidehouse Team used both customer channels to evaluate this complaint
- For each scenario and channel, the priority was to capture objective and subjective observations on duration of the interaction, ease of channel navigation, satisfaction of the issue resolution, and clarity of customer next steps
- All mystery shopping was conducted in English, but attention was paid to language access options for non-English speaking customers


Mystery Shopping Scenarios	Channels	
	Phone	Web
Scenario 1: “How can I report graffiti on a private property?”		
Scenario 2: “How can I report illegal fireworks?”		
Scenario 3: “How can I report an unpermitted Accessory Dwelling Unit?”		

¹See Appendix D for detailed information on Mystery Shopping findings
²See Customer Service Analysis section for additional details on common customer complaints

Mystery Shopping | Observations Key Takeaways




Across three common Code complaints and two evaluated channels, customers can find high-level answers to their questions and concerns, but receive limited follow-up interaction from the Division¹

**Graffiti**

Called, submitted a request through Code Enforcement’s “Request a Service” form, and researched on the website²





**Fireworks**


Used Fire Department’s “My Illegal Fireworks Report” to learn more information


**ADU**


Researched San José’s Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) policy across several official channels

Takeaways:

-  **Interactive and intuitive design.** When researching larger questions such as how to register an unpermitted ADU or report an illegal fireworks display, there were several options for customers to report violations, seek additional information, and interact with the City
-  **Clear and accessible language.** Across various websites, language used was generally clear and well-communicated. Language was accessible but detailed enough to answer commonly asked questions. Most websites offered translations to Spanish and Vietnamese
-  **Multiple pathways towards the same answer.** When searching common violations, other San José websites often appeared first. However, these websites would typically link to applicable Code Enforcement forms and policies, resulting in a streamlined process
-  **Lack of follow-through.** Calling and submitting complaints via the Code Enforcement “Request a Service Form” resulted in follow-ups from the Division within approximately three weeks, but customers are not given self-service options in the meantime

Key:  Pain Point

 Love Point

 Neutral

¹See Appendix D for detailed information on Mystery Shopping findings

²Also included information about other common violations, including Building, Development Permit, Housing, Law Parking, Solid Waste, and Vacant Building and Storefronts

Appendices

Additional information located below:

Appendix A: Peer City Research	47-58
Appendix B: City Leadership & Partner Interviews	59-60
Appendix C: Customer Observations Log	61-78
Appendix D: Mystery Shopping	79-86





Appendix A: Peer City Research

Appendix A: Peer Cities at-a-Glance

The Guidehouse Team drafted a list of potential peer cities, with a focus on key factors in blue. These numbers are based on publicly available data and may not be representative of the most up-to-date metrics

Metric	San José	★ San Diego	Los Angeles	Santa Cruz	Fresno	★ Seattle	★ Austin	Dallas	Baltimore	Philadelphia
State	California	California	California	California	California	Washington	Texas	Texas	Maryland	Pennsylvania
Land Area (Square miles)	177.80	325.90	469.00	12.70	114.70	83.90	319.9	339.7	80.90	134.18
Population (2023)	969,655	1,388,320	3,820,914	61,501	545,716	755,078	979,882	1,302,868	565,239	1,550,542
Annual Budget	\$6.1B	\$5.8B	\$12.8B	\$230M	\$1.99B	\$8.5B	\$5.9B	\$4.9B	\$4.2B	\$6.3B
Code Enforcement Budget	\$13.38M	\$12.3M	\$63.8M	\$6.2M	\$27.9M	\$15M	\$32.5M	\$44.6M	\$70.6M	\$43.2M
Per Capita Spend (Annual Budget)	\$6,049	\$4,196	\$3,283	\$3,653	\$3,687	\$11,533	\$6,134	\$3,810	\$7,171	\$3,928
Median Household Income	\$141,565	\$104,321	\$80,366	\$111,427	\$66,804	\$121,984	\$91,461	\$67,760	\$59,623	\$60,698
Monthly Bill Expense/Household	\$3,695	\$3,324	\$3,113	\$3,670	\$2,313	\$3,049	\$2,612	\$2,370	\$2,287	\$2,060
Housing Units	342,037	548,934	1,496,453	24,014	184,226	368,308	444,426	572,194	259,385	726,797
Interesting Highlight	Large scope and advanced customer dashboarding	Publishes priority case tiers on website	Redesigned website in Dec. 2024; Dashboards focused on outcomes rather than timelines	Prioritizes cases 1-4 based on importance	School Area Team – proactive enforcement	Offers video inspections	Repeat Offender program est. In 2013	Received CC Dept. of the year in 2024	Can request CE representatives at meetings; proactive enforcement program	L&I has a tiered response time

Appendix A: Peer City Comparable Programs

In scope, San José's Code Enforcement stands apart from its peers. Based on an initial review, the following programs were not the purview of peer Code Enforcement programs: Tobacco Retail License and Off-Sale Alcohol

Programs	San José	★ San Diego	Los Angeles	Santa Cruz	Fresno	★ Seattle	★ Austin	Dallas	Baltimore	Philadelphia
General Code	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Multiple Housing	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vacant buildings and storefronts	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Abandoned Shopping Carts	✓									
Building Code Compliance	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Cannabis	✓	✓								
Local Enforcement Agency	✓	✓	✓							
Fireworks	✓								✓	✓
Massage	✓	✓								
Mobile Vendors	✓						✓	✓		✓
Illegal Dumping Enforcement	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	
Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Amnesty	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
E3	✓	✓					✓			
Soft Story	✓	✓								

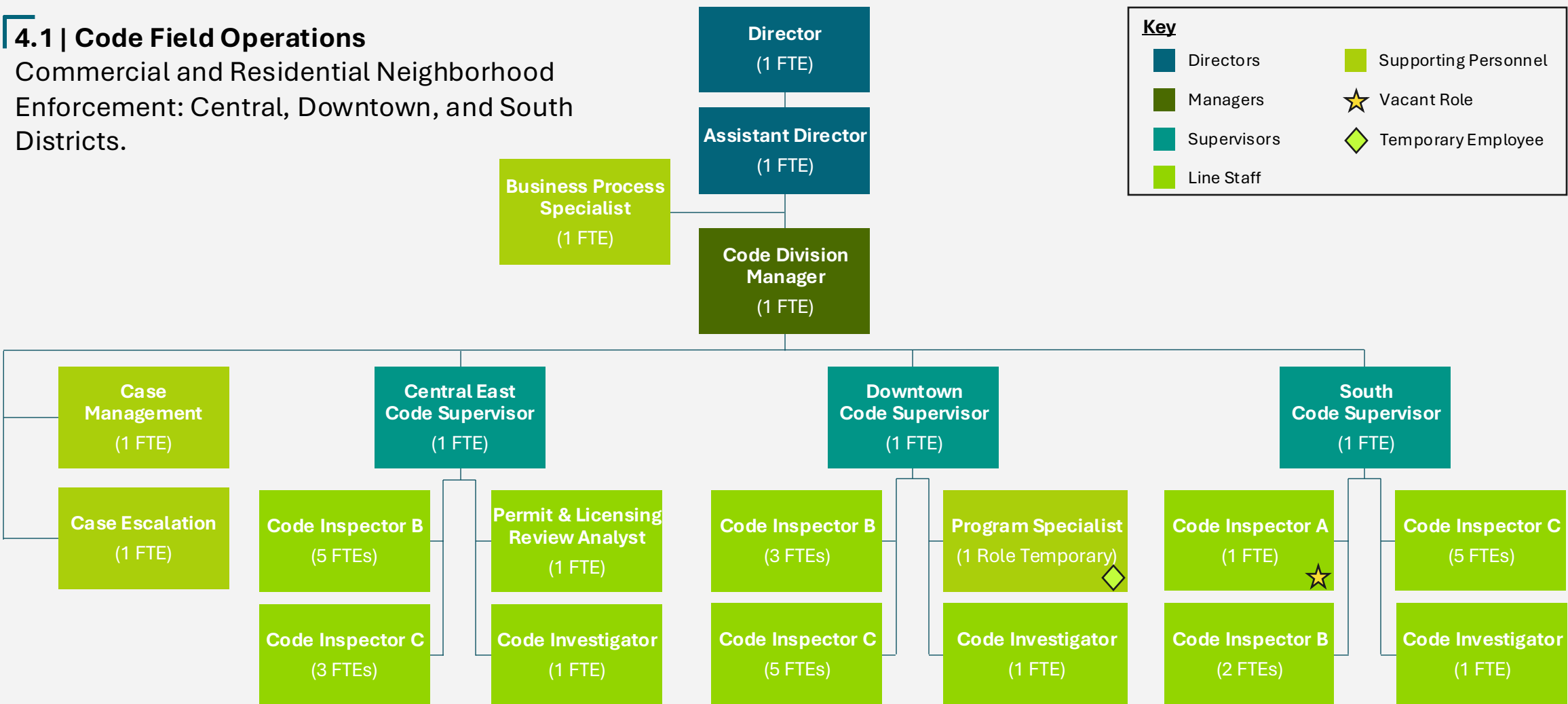
Appendix A: Seattle Code Compliance Org Chart



Appendix A: Austin DSD Code Compliance Org Chart (1 of 5)

4.1 | Code Field Operations

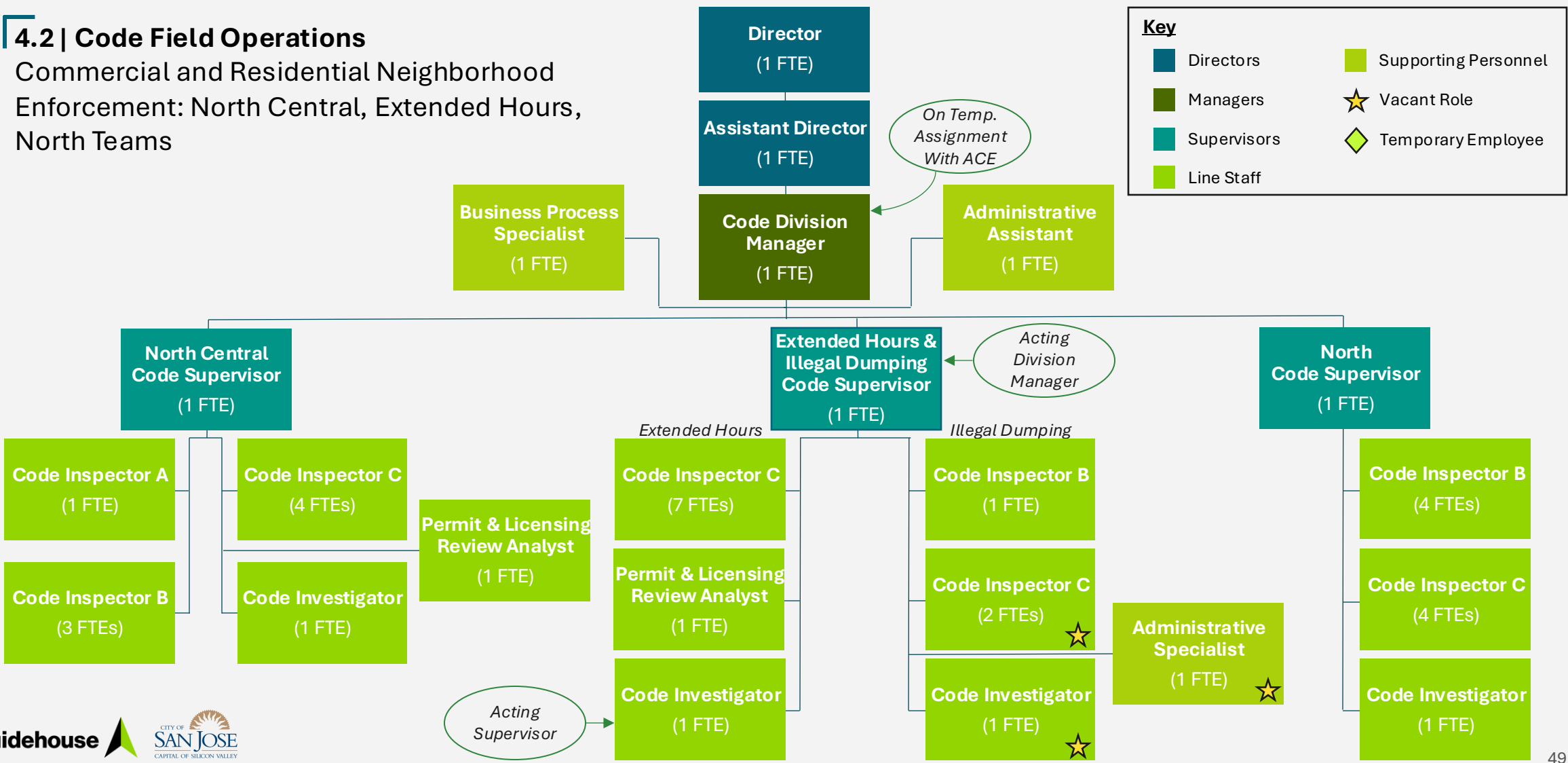
Commercial and Residential Neighborhood Enforcement: Central, Downtown, and South Districts.



Appendix A: Austin DSD Code Compliance Org Chart (2 of 5)

4.2 | Code Field Operations

Commercial and Residential Neighborhood Enforcement: North Central, Extended Hours, North Teams

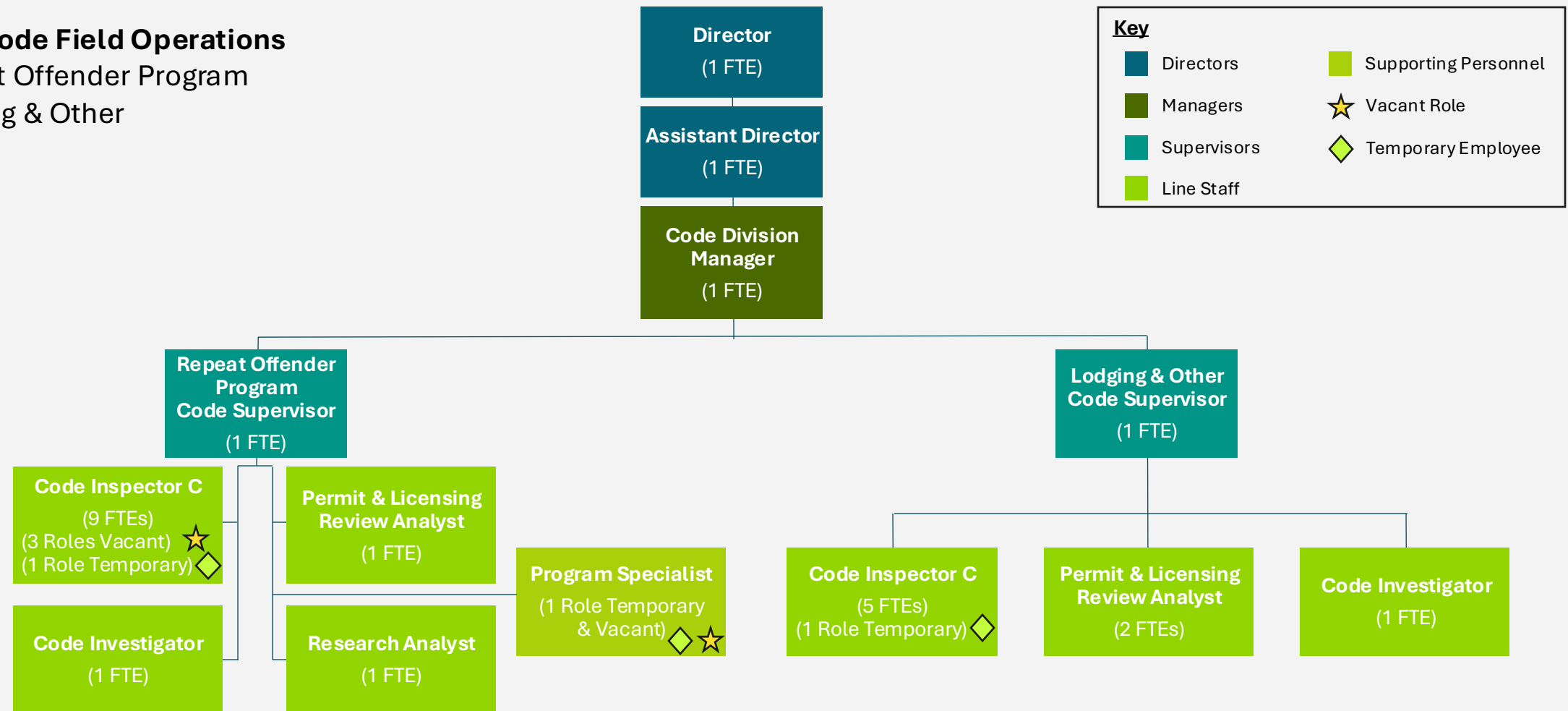


Appendix A: Austin DSD Code Compliance Org Chart (3 of 5)

5.2 | Code Field Operations

Repeat Offender Program

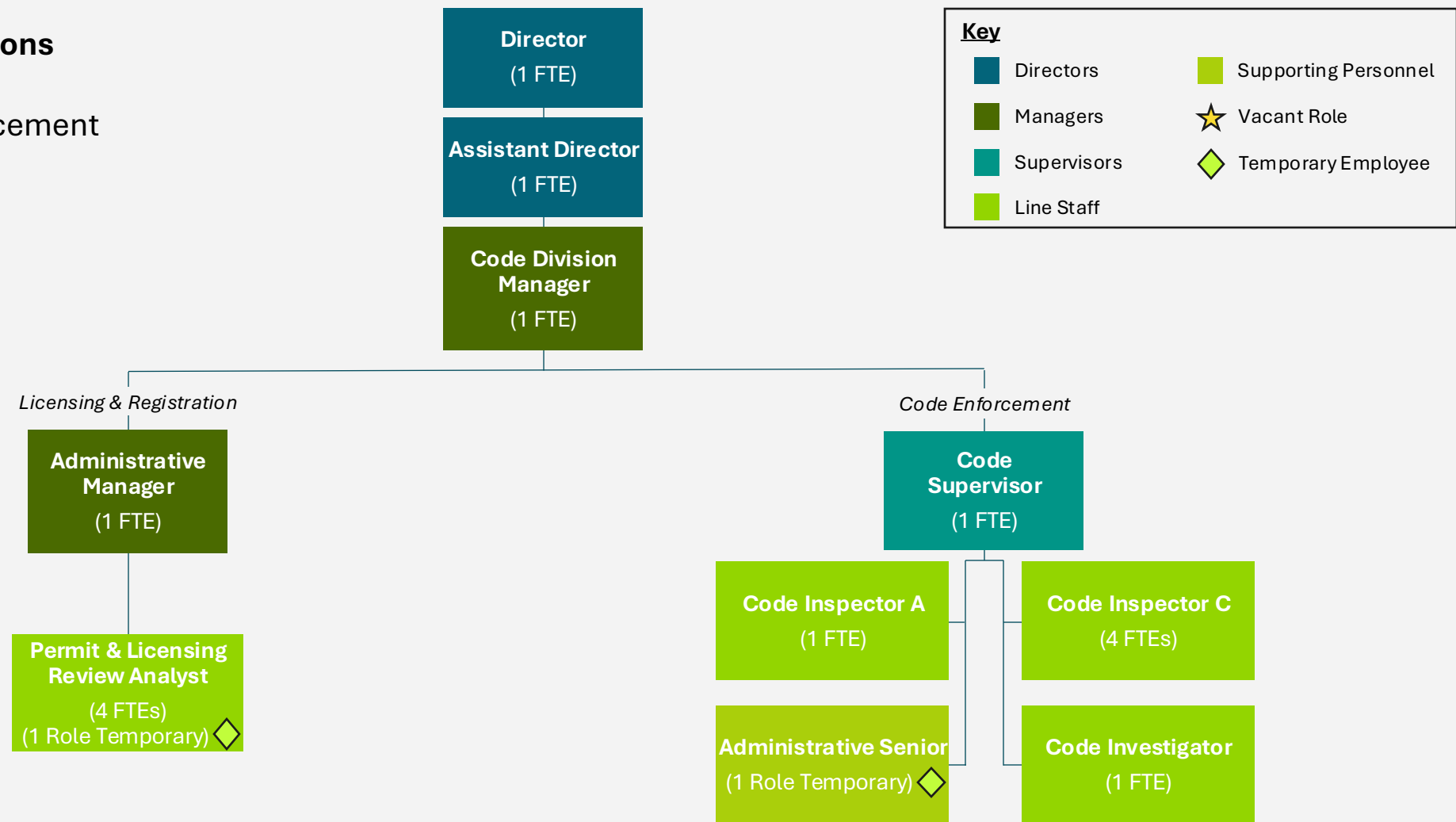
Lodging & Other



Appendix A: Austin DSD Code Compliance Org Chart (4 of 5)

5.1 | Code Field Operations

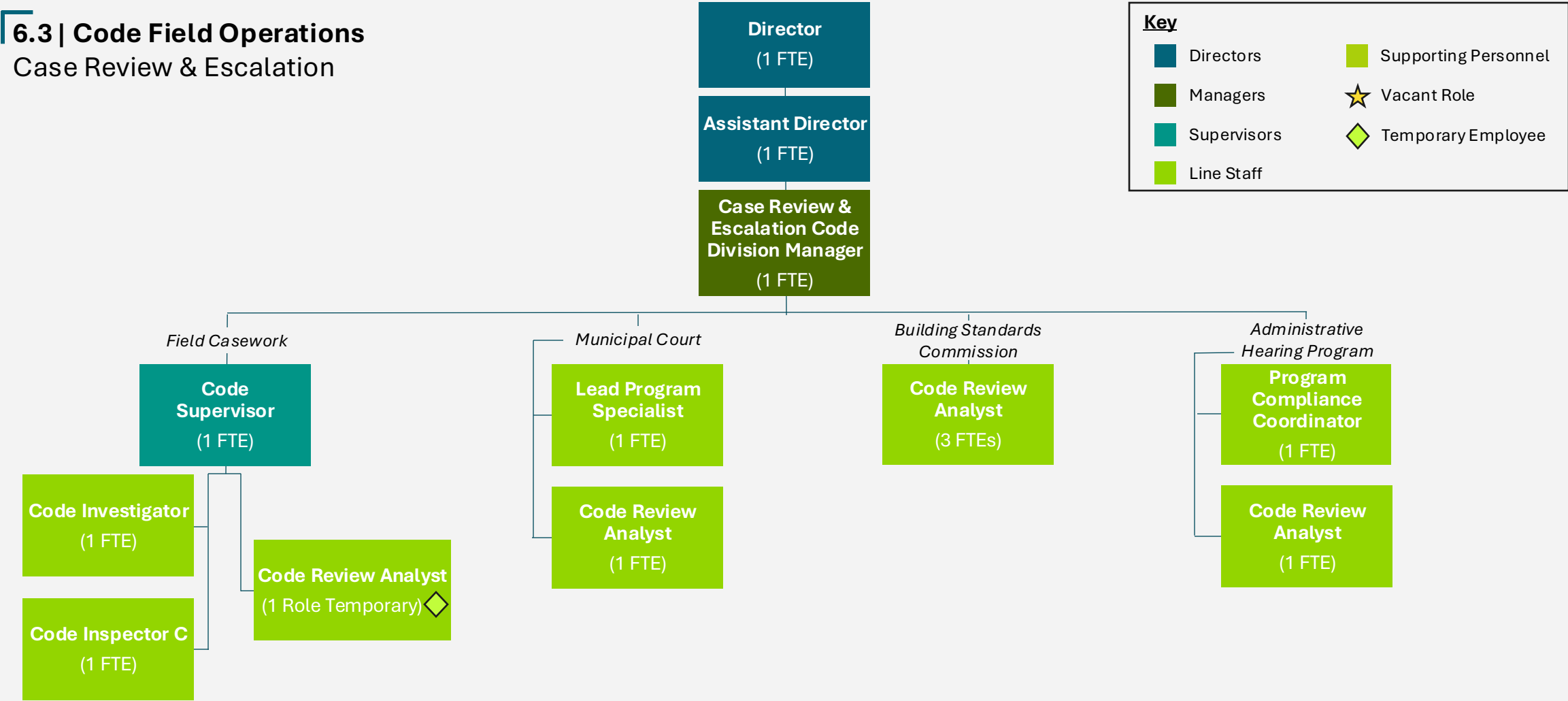
Licensing & Registration
Short-Term Rental Enforcement
Alarm Administration



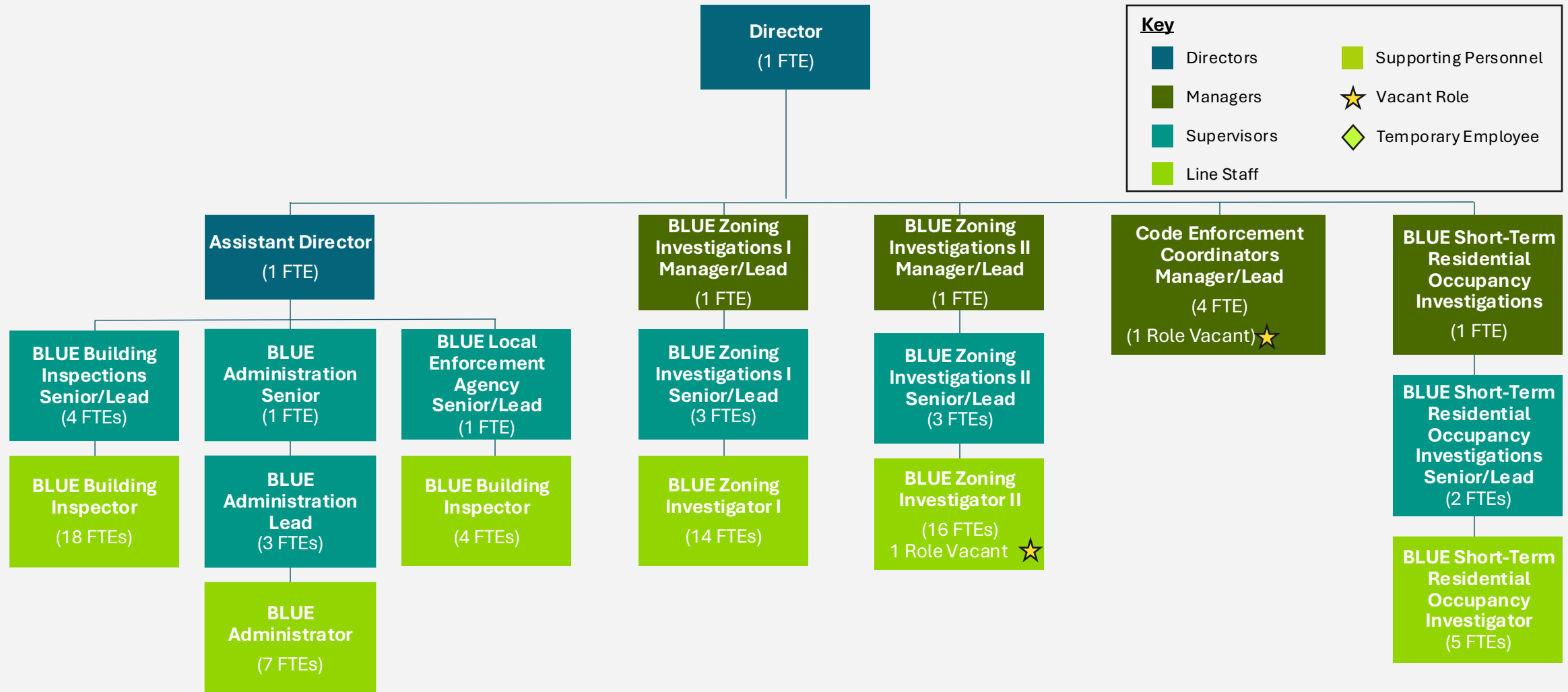
Appendix A: Austin DSD Code Compliance Org Chart (5 of 5)

6.3 | Code Field Operations

Case Review & Escalation



Appendix A: San Diego Building & Land Use



Appendix A: Peer City Research Sources (1 of 2)

Information	Source
Land Area, Number of Housing Units (2020)	https://data.census.gov/profile/
Population, Median Household Income (2023)	https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/
Monthly Bill Expense Per Household (2024)	https://www.doxo.com/w/insights/report-the-most-expensive-and-most-affordable-largest-u-s-cities-2024/
San José Budget for City and Code Enforcement (FY 24-25)	www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/115762/638659772555570000
San Diego Budget and Code Enforcement Information	www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/2024-10/iba-budget-guide-eng.pdf
	https://www.sandiego.gov/development-services/building-land-use-enforcement/priority-cases
	https://getitdone.sandiego.gov/TSWNewReport?type=STRO%20Violation
Seattle Budget and Code Enforcement Information	https://www.seattle.gov/sdci/about-us/who-we-are/code-compliance
	https://openbudget.seattle.gov/#!/year/default
	https://www.seattle.gov/rentinginseattle/renters/moving-in/renters-handbook
	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXQWx07_PKM
Austin Budget and Code Enforcement Information	https://www.austintexas.gov/news/austin-city-council-approves-fiscal-year-2024-2025-budget
	https://www.austintexas.gov/department/dsd-code-compliance
	https://www.austintexas.gov/department/code-compliance-resources
	https://www.youtube.com/@developmentservicesdepartment
	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MxOyqFNcV9I

Appendix A: Peer City Research Sources (2 of 2)

Information	Source
Baltimore Budget and Code Enforcement Information	https://dhcd.baltimorecity.gov/ce/code-enforcement FY2025-PRELIM BUDGET-FINAL 1.pdf
Dallas Budget and Code Enforcement Information	https://dallascityhall.com/departments/codecompliance/Pages/district-offices.aspx https://dallascityhall.com/departments/budget/financialtransparency/AnnualBudget/FY%202024-25%20Adopted%20Annual%20Operating%20and%20Capital%20Budget.pdf https://dallascrm.my.site.com/public/s/
Fresno Budget and Code Enforcement Information	https://www.fresno.gov/cityattorney/codeenforcement/school-area-team/ https://www.fresno.gov/cityattorney/codeenforcement/ https://www.fresno.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/FY-2025-ADOPTED-BUDGET.pdf
Los Angeles Budget and Code Enforcement Information	https://dbs.lacity.gov/ https://cao.lacity.gov/budget24-25/ProposedBudget/
Philadelphia Budget and Code Enforcement Information	https://www.phila.gov/departments/department-of-licenses-and-inspections/inspections/code-enforcement/rental-enforcement-in-philly.pdf https://www.phila.gov/media/20240829150436/budget-in-brief-FY2025-approved.pdf
Santa Cruz Budget and Code Enforcement Information	https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/home/showpublisheddocument/100559/638560511765030000 https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/government/city-departments/planning-and-community-development/code-compliance



Appendix B: City Leadership & Partner Interviews

Appendix B: External Stakeholder Conversations

#	Interviewees	Category	Role/Issue
1	Pam Foley	City Leadership	Vice Mayor
2	Emily Munguia, Mackenzie Mossing, Michael Lomio	City Leadership	Mayor Matt Mahan's Team
3	Nathan Donato-Weinstein	City Leadership	Assistant to the City Manager
4	Lucas Ramirez Kiyomi Yamamoto	City Leadership	Councilmember Pamela Campos's Team
5	Peter Ortiz	City Leadership	Councilmember
6	James Dobson	Partnership	Deputy Chief/Fire Marshall, Fire
7	Andrea Flores Shelton	Partnership	Assistant Director, PRNS
8	Karen Parsons	Partnership	Chairperson, Appeals Hearing Board
9	Leah Toeniskoetter	Partnership	President and CEO, San José Chamber of Commerce

Note: Eight additional external stakeholders were included in the customer experience analysis. More details on these external stakeholders can be found in Appendix C.



Appendix C: Customer Observations Log

Appendix C: Customer Observations Log - Calls

#	Date	Duration	Primary Language	Inquiry Category	Inquiry Subcategory	Was the inquiry resolved?	Inquiry Next Steps	Overall Emotion	Was the LOE appropriate for the inquiry?	Quote Used	Effectiveness: Did the customer seem satisfied with the interaction?
1	24-Feb	23.0	English	Information Seeking	Process	Yes	None	Positive	Yes		Yes
2	24-Feb	4.0	English	Scheduling	Inspection	Yes	None	Neutral	Yes		Yes
3	24-Feb	3.0	English	Case Status	Complaining Party	Yes	Customer or inspector directed to call/email back	Neutral	Yes		Maybe
4	24-Feb	3.0	English	Case Status	Responsible Party	Yes	None	Neutral	Yes	“I received a letter from the City regarding [address]. I am selling that house and the report said there was an illegal home auto repair operating there...I live in another state and I am relying on my relative to do this for me... so do I need to do anything?”	Yes
5	24-Feb	5.0	English	Case Status	Complaining Party	No	None	Negative	Yes		No

Appendix C: Customer Observations Log - Calls

#	Date	Duration	Primary Language	Inquiry Category	Inquiry Subcategory	Was the inquiry resolved?	Inquiry Next Steps	Overall Emotion	Was the LOE appropriate for the inquiry?	Quote Used	Effectiveness: Did the customer seem satisfied with the interaction?
6	24-Feb	27.0	English	Case Status	Complaining Party	No	Customer or inspector directed to call/email back	Negative	No	"It's not about Code Enforcement. It's about the people who are not doing what they are supposed to do. I want you to know where we stand and we will demand action... [My inspector] is a good lady. I know she cares for the City. I don't want to point fingers...It's just frustrating." AND "David is pretty good, I have no issue, very impressive that he conducted the inspection on the 30th. This is a plus."	Yes

Appendix C: Customer Observations Log - Calls

#	Date	Duration	Primary Language	Inquiry Category	Inquiry Subcategory	Was the inquiry resolved?	Inquiry Next Steps	Overall Emotion	Was the LOE appropriate for the inquiry?	Quote Used	Effectiveness: Did the customer seem satisfied with the interaction?
7	24-Feb	25.0	English	Information Seeking	Policy	Yes	None	Positive	Yes	"You've provided very good information. I don't like it, but it's good information. You've been very kind and that goes a long way with me."	Yes
8	24-Feb	7.0	English	Information Seeking	Invoice	Yes	None	Positive	Yes		Yes
9	24-Feb	2.0	English	Scheduling	Inspection	Yes	None	Neutral	Yes		Yes
10	24-Feb	1.0	English	Case Status	Complaining Party	Yes	Customer or inspector directed to call/email back	Neutral	Yes		Yes
11	25-Feb	1.0	English	Case Status	Plans	Yes	Customer transferred to different City Division or Dept.	Neutral	Yes		Yes

Appendix C: Customer Observations Log - Calls

#	Date	Duration	Primary Language	Inquiry Category	Inquiry Subcategory	Was the inquiry resolved?	Inquiry Next Steps	Overall Emotion	Was the LOE appropriate for the inquiry?	Quote Used	Effectiveness: Did the customer seem satisfied with the interaction?
12	25-Feb	10.0	English	Case Status	Complaining Party	Yes	None	Negative	Yes		Yes
13	25-Feb	6.0	Non-English	Case Status	Complaining Party	Yes	None	Negative	Yes		Yes
14	25-Feb	4.0	English	Information Seeking	Property History	Yes	Customer or inspector directed to call/email back	Positive	Yes		Yes
15	25-Feb	4.0	Non-English	Information Seeking	Property History	Yes	Customer or inspector directed to call/email back	Neutral	Yes		Yes
16	25-Feb	3.0	English	Scheduling	Inspection	Yes	None	Positive	Yes		Yes
17	25-Feb	8.0	English	Information Seeking	Inspections	Yes	None	Neutral	Yes		Yes

Appendix C: Customer Observations Log - Calls

#	Date	Duration	Primary Language	Inquiry Category	Inquiry Subcategory	Was the inquiry resolved?	Inquiry Next Steps	Overall Emotion	Was the LOE appropriate for the inquiry?	Quote Used	Effectiveness: Did the customer seem satisfied with the interaction?
18	25-Feb	1.0	English	Scheduling	Appointment	No	Customer or inspector directed to call/email back	Negative	Yes		Maybe
19	25-Feb	3.0	English	Information Seeking	Process	Yes	Customer or inspector directed to call/email back	Neutral	Yes		Maybe
20	25-Feb	3.0	English	Information Seeking	Complaint	Yes	Customer or inspector directed to call/email back	Neutral	Yes		Maybe
21	25-Feb	3.0	English	Case Status	Complaining Party	Yes	Customer or inspector directed to call/email back	Negative	Yes		No

Appendix C: Customer Observations Log - Calls

#	Date	Duration	Primary Language	Inquiry Category	Inquiry Subcategory	Was the inquiry resolved?	Inquiry Next Steps	Overall Emotion	Was the LOE appropriate for the inquiry?	Quote Used	Effectiveness: Did the customer seem satisfied with the interaction?
22	25-Feb	6.0	English	Case Status	Complaining Party	Yes	Customer transferred to different City Division or Dept.	Negative	Yes	I've been a squeaky wheel since October. I can only do so much and I have a day job... I was just hoping that someone would say, 'Yeah, I can look into it.'"	Maybe
23	25-Feb	1.0	English	Information Seeking	Permit	Yes	Customer transferred to different external organization	Positive	Yes		Yes
24	25-Feb	3.0	English	Information Seeking	Policy	Yes	Customer transferred to different City Division or Dept.	Positive	Yes		Yes
25	25-Feb	1.0	English	Information Seeking	Process	Yes	Customer transferred to different City Division or Dept.	Neutral	Yes		Yes

Appendix C: Customer Observations Log - Calls

#	Date	Duration	Primary Language	Inquiry Category	Inquiry Subcategory	Was the inquiry resolved?	Inquiry Next Steps	Overall Emotion	Was the LOE appropriate for the inquiry?	Quote Used	Effectiveness: Did the customer seem satisfied with the interaction?
26	25-Feb	1.0	English	Information Seeking	Process	Yes	Customer transferred to different City Division or Dept.	Neutral	Yes		Yes
27	25-Feb	2.0	English	Scheduling	Inspection	Yes	None	Positive	Yes		Yes
28	25-Feb	1.0	English	Information Seeking	Policy	Yes	Customer transferred to different City Division or Dept.	Positive	Yes		Yes
29	25-Feb	1.0	Non-English	Information Seeking	Policy	Yes	Customer transferred to different City Division or Dept.	Positive	Yes		Yes
30	3-Mar	2.0	English	Scheduling	Inspection	Yes	None	Neutral	Yes		Yes
31	3-Mar	3.0	English	Scheduling	Inspection	Yes	None	Neutral	Yes		Yes

Appendix C: Customer Observations Log - Calls

#	Date	Duration	Primary Language	Inquiry Category	Inquiry Subcategory	Was the inquiry resolved?	Inquiry Next Steps	Overall Emotion	Was the LOE appropriate for the inquiry?	Quote Used	Effectiveness: Did the customer seem satisfied with the interaction?
32	3-Mar	2.0	Non-English	Information Seeking	Permit	Yes	Customer transferred to different City Division or Dept.	Neutral	Yes		Yes
33	3-Mar	2.0	N/A	Information Seeking	Process	Yes	Customer transferred to Inspector	Neutral	Yes		Yes
34	3-Mar	8.0	Non-English	Case Status	Complaining Party	Yes	None	Neutral	Yes		Yes
35	3-Mar	1.0	N/A	Information Seeking	Process	Yes	Customer transferred to Inspector	Neutral	Yes		Yes
36	3-Mar	4.0	English	Information Seeking	Process	Yes	None	Positive	Yes		Yes
37	3-Mar	1.0	N/A	Information Seeking	Process	Yes	Customer transferred to Inspector	Neutral	Yes		Yes

Appendix C: Customer Observations Log - Calls

#	Date	Duration	Primary Language	Inquiry Category	Inquiry Subcategory	Was the inquiry resolved?	Inquiry Next Steps	Overall Emotion	Was the LOE appropriate for the inquiry?	Quote Used	Effectiveness: Did the customer seem satisfied with the interaction?
38	3-Mar	1.0	English	Information Seeking	Process	Yes	Customer transferred to different City Division or Dept.	Negative	Yes		Yes
39	3-Mar	2.0	English	Case Status	Complaining Party	Yes	Customer transferred to Supervisor	Neutral	Yes		Yes
40	3-Mar	2.0	Non-English	Information Seeking	Process	Yes	Customer transferred to Supervisor	Neutral	Yes		Yes
41	3-Mar	2.0	English	Information Seeking	Citation	Yes	Customer transferred to different City Division or Dept.	Neutral	Yes		Maybe
42	3-Mar	5.0	English	Information Seeking	Process	Yes	Case opened	Positive	Yes		Yes

Appendix C: Customer Observations Log - Calls

#	Date	Duration	Primary Language	Inquiry Category	Inquiry Subcategory	Was the inquiry resolved?	Inquiry Next Steps	Overall Emotion	Was the LOE appropriate for the inquiry?	Quote Used	Effectiveness: Did the customer seem satisfied with the interaction?
42	3-Mar	5.0	English	Information Seeking	Process	Yes	Case opened	Positive	Yes		Yes
43	3-Mar	1.0	English	Information seeking	Process	Yes	Customer transferred to different City Division or Dept.	Neutral	Yes		Yes
44	3-Mar	3.0	English	Information Seeking	Complaint	Yes	None	Positive	Yes		Yes
45	3-Mar	2.0	English	Information seeking	Complaint	Yes	Case opened	Neutral	Yes		Maybe
46	3-Mar	1.0	English	Information Seeking	Process	Yes	Customer transferred to different City Division or Dept.	Neutral	Yes		Yes

Appendix C: Customer Observations Log - Desk

#	Date	Duration	Primary Language	Inquiry Category	Inquiry Subcategory	Was the inquiry resolved?	Inquiry Next Steps	Overall Emotion	Was the LOE appropriate for the inquiry?	Quote Used	Effectiveness: Did the customer seem satisfied with the interaction?
1	24-Feb	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	Customer transferred to different City Division/ Dept.	Neutral	Yes		Yes
2	24-Feb	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	Customer or inspector directed to call/email back	Negative	Yes		Maybe
3	24-Feb	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	Customer or inspector directed to call/email back	Neutral	Yes		Yes
4	24-Feb	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	Customer transferred to different external organization	Neutral	Yes		Yes

Appendix C: Customer Observations Log - Desk

#	Date	Duration	Primary Language	Inquiry Category	Inquiry Subcategory	Was the inquiry resolved?	Inquiry Next Steps	Overall Emotion	Was the LOE appropriate for the inquiry?	Quote Used	Effectiveness: Did the customer seem satisfied with the interaction?
5	24-Feb	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	Customer or inspector directed to call/email back	Negative	Yes		No
6	24-Feb	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	Customer transferred to different external organization	Neutral	Yes		Yes
7	25-Feb	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	Customer or inspector directed to call/email back	Positive	Yes		Yes
8	25-Feb	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	None	Positive	Yes		Yes
9	3-Mar	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	Customer or inspector directed to call/email back	Neutral	Yes		Yes

Appendix C: Customer Observations Log - Desk

#	Date	Duration	Primary Language	Inquiry Category	Inquiry Subcategory	Was the inquiry resolved?	Inquiry Next Steps	Overall Emotion	Was the LOE appropriate for the inquiry?	Quote Used	Effectiveness: Did the customer seem satisfied with the interaction?
10	3-Mar	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	Case opened	Neutral	Yes	"It's good for one, two, three months, but then the problem comes back, because they didn't fix the problem all the way down to the root."	Yes
11	3-Mar	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	Customer transferred to inspector	Positive	No	"I first came here two months ago, my husband was also here, but no one told him that we emailed the wrong person. I'm really, really confused. If we emailed the wrong person, why didn't they tell us? Everyone I've talked to here, the people are very good, but the processes, they're just confusing."	Yes

Appendix C: Customer Log - Interviews

#	Quote #1	Quote #2	Major Themes and Insights	Recommendations	Customer Insights
1	<p>"Code Enforcement does as well as it can. [I know] they are reliant on other teams...They do a great job of communicating and have fast responses and don't let them linger a long time."</p>	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns about escalation timelines and enforcement capabilities Concerns about excess trash, illegal dumping, and encampments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased accountability Increased enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frustration with blight and solid waste in neighborhood Satisfied with response times and communication
2	<p>"We are concerned about fire. We continued to report it. The city would come out and not do anything. But I'm going back to [my situation]. Look how punitive you were to me about my permit process. But over here, this is totally fine, totally normal stuff. This guy who isn't even the order, you're allowing him to obstruct the process... [It's almost like] 'I can be punitive with you because you won't fight back.' Any other citizen would be held to different standards."</p>	<p>"It was just the most basic request that could have been done quickly, but it took nine months... eventually, I reached out to my City Councilmember directly. That's how I finally got my permits. I had to literally get an elected official involved."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frustration with slow escalation timelines Unequal treatment Desire for increased enforcement consequences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dramatic changes to the Division, particularly for enforcement processes Increased accountability for inspectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of follow-through Concern that individuals need to be politically savvy to receive attention Unequal treatment for different customers Frustration about misused funds

Appendix C: Customer Log - Interviews

#	Quote #1	Quote #2	Major Themes and Insights	Recommendations	Customer Insights
3	"I've lived in the neighborhood for twenty-five years. It's a very close neighborhood... We have a close, tight bond. In our case, we had a house that wasn't so nice, and after a while, you can only take so much. I work full time, I have grandbabies, and taking on something full time, it's draining! But we got the community together and we got something done. And a lot of that was Code Enforcement."	"There was a big undercover bust and we were told 34 people were living in that house. We had initially got them involved when there were ten, fifteen cars... fast forward years later, and now I'm making a new complaint to the new person, and nothing had changed, and that was weird. How can there be so many years that went by and nothing had changed?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustration with slow timelines, unequal enforcement and inconsistent consequences • Concerns about long-term problematic properties • Satisfaction with inspector attitudes, and interest in additional community engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved follow-up for inspectors • Quicker escalation for problem properties • More staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interacting with Code Enforcement can feel like a full-time job • Delays to enforcement • Lack of resources for evicted persons • Concern that individuals need to be politically savvy to receive attention • Excellent empathy and great experience working with inspectors
4	"They've admitted that they're behind, and that they have no way of addressing 700 new cars coming into the area. It's really annoying. For one residential home, it's like 400 parking spots. There's a school there, there's a library... that's just ridiculous."	"[Our neighborhood] tends to get ignored or forgotten by the city... One of the county supervisors approached one of my friends and said, 'If you put together a community group, I will support you.' And he did... so I saw it and I joined in 2016. Our little group has accomplished a lot of things. We are working with [different Departments] who don't always work together very well, but they both come to our meetings, because they've gotten to know each other. So that's really great."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about encampment issues • Frustration with perception of unequal treatment for less engaged citizens • Frustration with lack of solutions from the Division 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved coordination between different City Departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern that individuals need to be politically savvy to receive attention • East San José residents feel deprioritized • Encampments continue to grow larger and unregulated • Satisfaction with strong community connection and creative solutions from City Council

Appendix C: Customer Log - Interviews

#	Quote #1	Quote #2	Major Themes and Insights	Recommendations	Customer Insights
5	<p>"[The] department is working hard to address concerns we have. I would like to see more encouragement for her and her employees. The City should give her and her employees the tools that they need to do their job... But I am very satisfied with their attitude."</p>	<p>"I can't complain about anything when their attitude is so sterling. We will work with them to get results."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns about lack of staff across Police Department and Code Enforcement Division Frustration with uneven enforcement for different communities Encampment concerns Concerns about fireworks enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interest in creative and innovative thinking for fireworks enforcement, including expanding to the use of drones to catch violators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frustration that fireworks are poorly regulated and dangerous to the community Satisfaction with inspector attitude, knowledge, and involvement with the community
6	<p>"All my properties are clean, well-kept, you know, and it's frustrating, because there's lots of illegal dumping happening elsewhere. We do historical building renovation and we've worked on many buildings in San José.... You do get jaded after a while. We had a meeting on blight this morning and everyone's [complaining] and I said 'I've been in these meetings before and you talk about all these problems... where's the solution? We really came away with nothing. I'm not going to waste my time.'"</p>	<p>"We have the same problems as we had ten years ago. It's frustrating...They tell me that they're trying really hard, but the burnt down building has been sitting there for three years."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frustration with contradictory departmental philosophy Concerns about unequal enforcement and lack of progression Frustration with poor enforcement with regards to business needs Poor cross-departmental collaboration and low accountability within the City 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved department philosophy Better coordination and faster movement on problematic cases in the Downtown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor reputation amongst business community Frustrating departmental philosophy and stagnation of long-term problematic cases

Appendix C: Customer Log - Interviews

#	Quote #1	Quote #2	Major Themes and Insights	Recommendations	Customer Insights
7	"The white community, they're treated well, but my community, it's a disaster. Working together, to clean things up, would be helpful. But today, it's rock bottom... In my community, they'll write up misdemeanor crap, for the most trivial things."	"I can show you cars that have there for fifteen, twenty years... The trash I called in last night has been there for fifteen years."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustration with unequal treatment for minority communities in East San José • Poor prioritization of life safety cases • Frustration with unequal enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater enforcement and accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racially differentiated policies and enforcement • Slow enforcement for white and affluent residents
8	"I can't recall any cases where their knowledge has been wanting."	"Staffing has been downsized, whether it's through retirement or through lateral moves."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggles with managing various process due to limited staffing • Limited and lenient enforcement on violators • Delays to enforcement • Lack of staffing • Frustration that the community must take on additional tasks on a volunteer basis due to Division's limited capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reimplement the FAST Pilot program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays to enforcement, lenience, and lack of follow-up • Increases in blight • Frustration with the need to proactively report, as a member of the community • Professionalism and thoughtfulness from inspectors



Appendix D: Mystery Shopping

Scenario 1: “How do I report graffiti?”

Channel

Website 

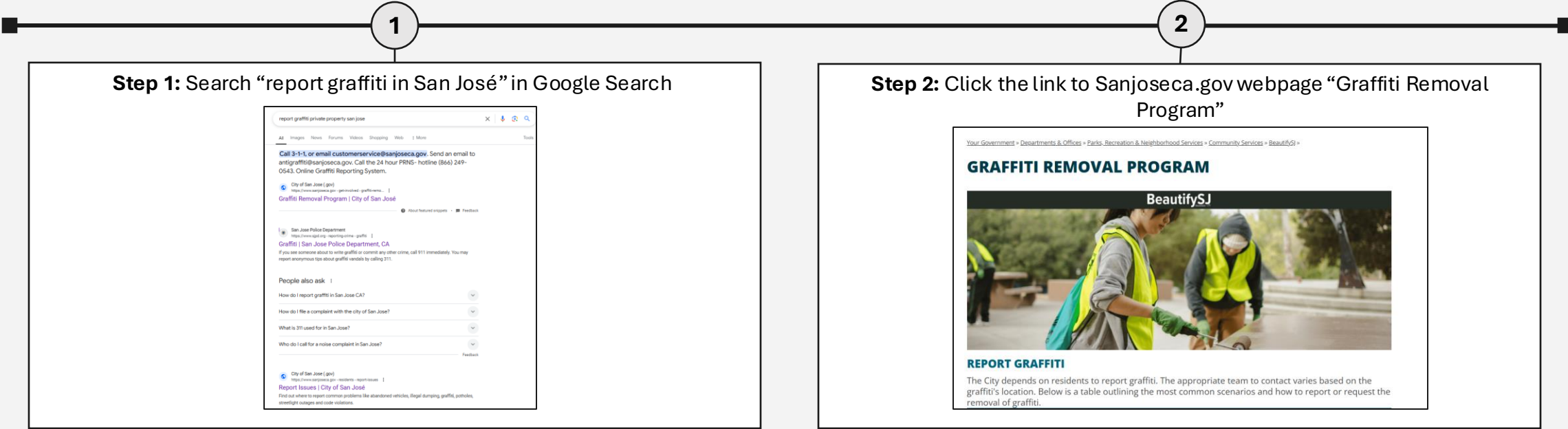
Report Process

▲

Step 1: San José government websites were the top three search results (Graffiti Removal Program, Police Department, and Report Issues for Code Violations) and all three search results linked, directly or indirectly, to Code Enforcement’s “report issue” form

■

Step 2: Click on the first link, “Beautify SJ Graffiti Removal Program”



Scenario 1: “How do I report graffiti?”

Channel

Website 

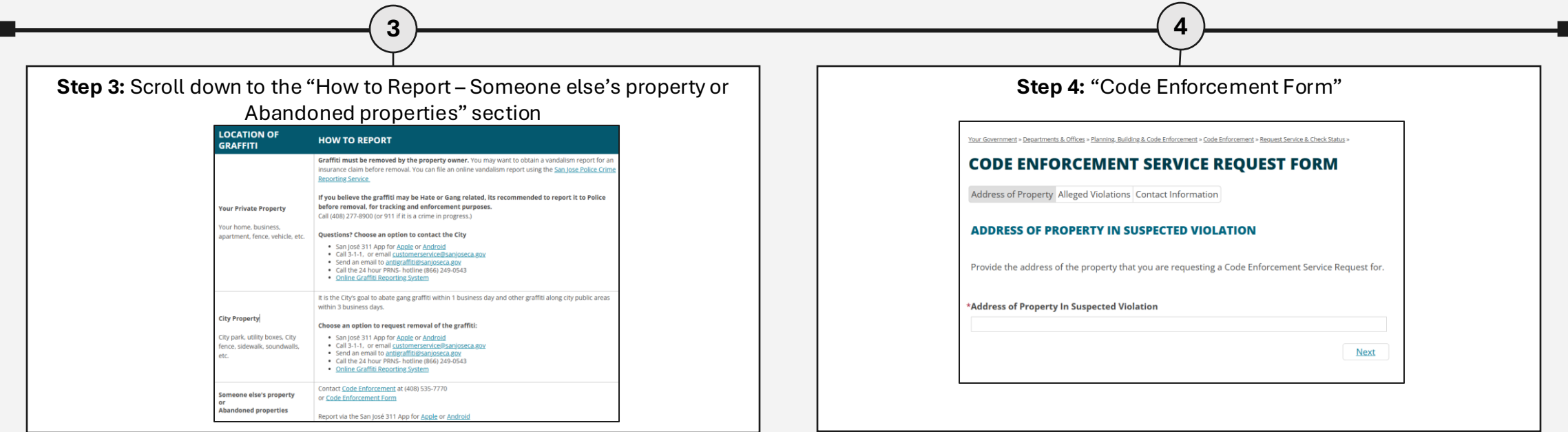
Report Process

▲ Step 3: The Anti-Graffiti webpage has large headings and clear explanations of how to report graffiti on different building types

▲ Step 3: The webpage clearly explained the different channels that customers can use to report different graffiti types

▲ Step 3: The webpage presented the three options for reporting graffiti on private properties (SJ311, phone, and online form) in a concise way with respective contact information and links

▲ Step 4: The “Code Enforcement Form” link takes the user directly to the “Code Enforcement Service Request” Form



Scenario 1: “How do I report graffiti?”

Channel

Website 

Report Process

▲ Step 5:

The fields on the “Service Request” form were straightforward and asked for only required information

■ Step 5:

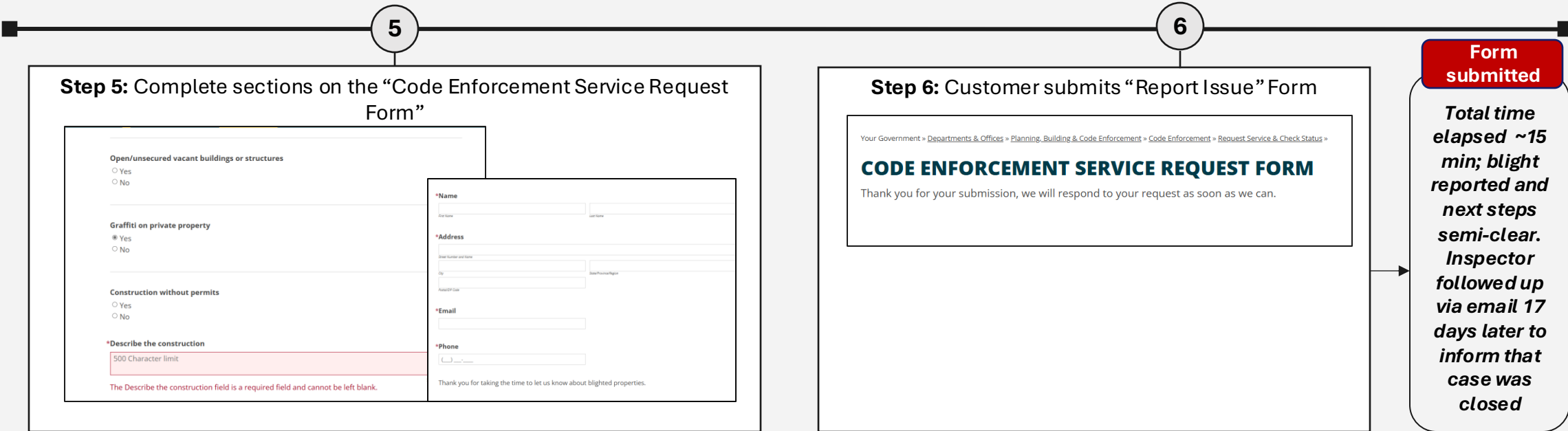
The customer must fill out all sections of the form to submit any complaint, which results in more comprehensive complaints but may also discourage some customers from completing the form

▲ Step 5:

Customers have an option to provide more information at the bottom of the form

■ Step 6:

Customers submits the form



Scenario 1: “How do I report on graffiti?”

Channel

Phone



Initial Steps

1. Received information on a sample open case from Code Enforcement Leadership
2. Dialed 408-535-7770 to reach Code Enforcement Division phone line (3/10/2025 at 2:05 PM)
3. Listened to a list of potential options and Frequently Asked Questions, pressed the appropriate option, and was on the line with a Code Enforcement representative in less than two minutes

First Call: 408-535-7770 3/10/2025

- ▲ Very fast response time; call was concluded in ~ 3 minutes
- ▼ The representative stated that an inspector would be in touch, but did not provide additional next steps or an estimated timeline
- ▲ The recorded message at the beginning of the call provided listeners with answers to a list of commonly asked questions
- ▼ The representative asked if the property was private, which customers may not know
- The representative asked for the customer name, which could be uncomfortable for some

Second Call: 408-535-7770 3/26/2025

- ▲ Very fast response time; call was concluded in ~2 minutes
- ▲ Based on the address provided, the representative could immediately identify the case and associated inspector
- ▼ The representative transferred the customer to the appropriate inspector's number, but the phone line was busy. The customer needed to record a message rather than speak to the inspector
- ▼ The representative did not provide specific next steps or tell the customer how to check their case status online

Third Call & Fourth Calls 3/26/2025 & 3/27/2025

- Inspector called customer on 3/26, but customer missed call
- ▼ The customer made two additional attempts to contact the inspector assigned to the case, but the line was busy
- ▼ Lacking additional information, the customer did not know how to check on their case online
- ▼ **Resolution:** Customer gave up

Scenario 1: “How do I report on graffiti?”

Channel

Phone and Website



Key Takeaways: reporting on graffiti across channels

- ▲ Utilizing the website was simple, effective, and clear
- ▲ Initial calls to Code Enforcement were fast, easy, and productive, with minimal wait times and a knowledgeable representative waiting to take customer calls
- Searching for information about blight on private residences yielded three top Google search results from the City of San José, all of which linked to the same Code Enforcement form
- ▼ The inspector made attempts to reach the customer via phone, but did not leave voicemails or provide additional steps
- ▼ Generally, inspectors and support staff did not provide suggestions on how to the customer could perform self service (i.e, check on their case status online)

Scenario 2: “How can I report illegal fireworks?”

Channel Website 

Initial Steps

1. Googled “report illegal fireworks San José” and clicked the Sanjoseca.gov Accessory Dwelling Units link
2. Reviewed available information about illegal fireworks, including emergency links, report dashboard, and fireworks policy
3. Clicked on “Submit as a Guest (Non-Actionable Report)” and reviewed available documentation

Strengths

- ▲ San José government websites were the top two search results (Fire Department and San José news), and both led to the same link to report illegal fireworks on the 311 App
- ▲ There is a simple user interface to provide information about firework locations, including a drag and drop pin integrated with Google Maps
- ▲ Customers are clearly informed about the difference between a logged in and guest user report, and can choose the option that best aligns with their privacy preferences and desire for enforcement

Pain Points

- ▼ To submit a report, customers must know the date, time, and address of the reported fireworks display, which may be more information than many customers have
- ▼ Customers must report firework violations in English
- ▼ When customers elect to use the ‘submit as a guest’ feature, they do not receive any follow-up information or next steps from the City

Scenario 3: “How do I report an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)?”

Channel Website 

Initial Steps

1. Googled “report ADU San José” and clicked the Sanjoseca.gov Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) link
2. Reviewed available information about ADUs, including checklist, permit process and FAQs
3. Reviewed available presentations, including “Helpful Tips for an ADU Project” and “Amazing Tiny Home on Wheels Seminar”

Strengths

- ▲ FAQs, videos, and presentations use clear and accessible language
- ▲ There are language options in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese
- ▲ The City provided presentations in a variety of different formats, including YouTube videos, checklists, permits, and PowerPoint presentations
- ▲ For customers with additional questions, an email address and phone number are featured prominently as additional sources of information

Pain Points

- ▼ Language on the checklists (for Tiny Homes on Wheels and ADU compliance) utilize more advanced and specialized language (for example: ‘egress’ rather than exit, ‘easement’, ‘demolished’)
- ▼ The page listed two synonyms for ADUs (secondary units and granny flats), but did not provide an exhaustive list of potential synonyms, potentially reducing site volume for customers who are not familiar with the technical term