

CDAB Preliminary Recommendations

First-pass suggestions to discuss in meeting on November 19, 2018

General/Misc

- Remove inoperable vehicle ordinance. An inoperable vehicle is still an inoperable vehicle, whether its covered or not. (Aaron)
- The standard for establishing a case should be “is this likely to hold up in court based on the evidence I can gather today.” (Catherine)
- Clarify HOA responsibilities relative to code enforcement; for complaints in neighborhoods with an HOA, county should only intervene with written statement from HOA stating that HOA has considered concern and refused to address it. (Catherine)
- I think the complaints need to be coded to indicate a neighbor complaint versus a code enforcer. (Cindy)
- Continue code enforcement using the current two-week timeframe for compliance, with extensions as appropriate. (Denise)
- Establish clear metrics based on number of inspections, not violations. (Denise)

Weeds/neighborhoods

- Specify in the Code which types of zoning and/or neighborhoods may be permitted more natural growth or other variances from the Code as written, if that is the intent. Otherwise, the Code should be applied uniformly as written. (Jaime)
- Define "weed" within the Code. (Jaime)
- Clarify application of parts of the code, e.g., weeds, to properties with acreage. (Denise)
- Remove the weed ordinance. It is apparent that the ordinance is NOT for fire safety, health, or rodent harborage as the NOV/letters state. It is a beautification ordinance. There is no need for it. (Aaron)

Inspection Routes

- If active enforcement is kept, prioritize a plan to ensure ALL areas of the county get EQUAL coverage with inspections. (Aaron)
- Require CDD to create and stick to a system for doing inspections throughout the county. To do this, implement a policy in which enforcement officials do not create new cases during a follow-up visit or when en route to a complaint. Conduct only the specific inspection and invest remaining time in returning to the regular, ongoing route. Exception for extreme health and safety violations observed. (Catherine)
- Establish formal inspection routes to methodically cover the entire county. (Denise)
- Establish check-back lists to revisit properties with minor infractions before issuing letters/notices. (Denise)

Enforcement priorities

- Prioritize code enforcement first on county and commercial properties, and then on personal properties. (Denise)
- Focus on: 1) commercial and/or vacant properties, 2) true health and safety issues, and 3) issues that have been persistent. Occupied residential property and potentially transient problems should be the lowest priority. (Catherine)
- Return to a complaint driven system. Saves the county over 100K/yr, and I do not see a great impact except people being upset with active enforcement. (Aaron)

Staffing/Time

- Enforcement officers currently spend multiple hours every day working at the reception desk in the office, and they do not have time to complete tasks such as evenly distributed inspections. Sharing the desk responsibilities among everyone is an excellent way to help the department work as a team, but it should not come at the expense of trained employees doing the work they were hired to do. Based on current information, it seems code compliance officers should be doing no more than three front desk shifts per week (preferably only two). This may mean employing a part-time receptionist. (Catherine)
- It also seems this department could use a few more employees so that the enforcers have the time necessary to accomplish all the different aspects of their jobs. Support staff, initially. They would also be wise to train at least one more inspector to cover vacations, illness, and being able to help cover Los Alamos. (Cindy)
- Add additional staff so that Code Enforcement Officers have more time in the field. (Jaime)

Communication

- Engage in efforts to inform the community on Code issues---weeds/invasive species, defensible space/fires, and other reasons for why Code provisions exist and are necessary to enforce (e.g., public health and safety, etc.). (Jaime)
- Implement a communication/outreach plan regarding the environment code and its enforcement, to be developed by the Board. (Denise)

Resources

- Implement County-level assistance. For example, a program similar to Homeowner's Assistance/Renovation that provides financial assistance or loans for smaller scale repair projects. Consider one weekend quarterly bulk pickup. Provide code enforcement officials the ability to order some number of free eco-station pickups per year. (Catherine)
- Consider whether it is possible to make available (on the web or elsewhere) a list of resources for property owners who are non-compliant to obtain assistance in making their property compliant (e.g., financial resources, contractors, volunteer organizations, etc.). (Jaime)