



Memorandum

DATE: February 29, 2024

**TO: Bristol Ellington, City Manager
John Norris, Assistant City Manager**

FROM: Bob Crozier, Code Enforcement & Customer Response Team Supervisor

RE: 2023 Code Enforcement & Customer Response Team Annual Service Report

The Code Enforcement and Customer Response Team (CECRT) responds to and resolves inquiries, concerns, suggestions and complaints regarding City infrastructure and Code enforcement on private property. The team also serves as a referral source for City services. CECRT investigates and resolves code compliance cases that arise in the community through a process of working with and educating the responsible party, providing them direction and timeframes to correct the civil code violations, and holding the responsible party accountable to achieve compliance. CECRT strives to provide the best service possible and is always looking to continuously improve the service we provide the community.

This memo provides an overview of the work accomplished in 2023 and some of the outcomes achieved last year. It also highlights the hard work and effort of the entire Code Enforcement and Customer Response Team:

- Ryan Odegaard, Code Enforcement Officer
- Rob Staveskie, CECRT Representative
- Gina Kibler, CECRT Representative
- Susan Kelley-Morse, CECRT Administrative Assistant

Community Development Cases - Private Property Violations

Shoreline residents and other customers have many ways to engage with CECRT. This includes contacting the City's main telephone line (206.801.2700), through contacting CECRT directly, through email and via social media inquiries, and through the City's See Click Fix platform. Service request outreach can be related to issues with City infrastructure/City property and to issues on private property. When outreach occurs related to private property issues and violations, CECRT tracks and responds to these requests using the City's CommDev enterprise software.

In 2023, CECRT opened 334 Cases in CommDev for private property code violations, while closing 412 cases. The level of case closure in any given year is dependent on the complexity of cases managed and the willingness of the responsible parties to gain compliance with the noted violation(s) in their case. Some case types may be open for multiple years while the appropriate corrective actions are taken by the violators. Thus, there is not always a direct correlation between the number of cases opened and

closed within the same year. The numbers of cases opened and closed over the last five years are as follows:

Year	Number of Code Cases Opened	Number of Code Cases Closed
2019	151	101
2020	124	94
2021	225	106
2022	494	430
2023	334	412

Code Enforcement - Work Without a Permit

Of the 334 Code Enforcement cases opened in 2023, one of the largest code enforcement case types is Work Without a Permit (WWOAP). This year, CECRT opened 84 WWOAP cases. 45 of these WWOAP cases were verified and the remainder were closed as either having no violation or staff was unable to verify the violation. To resolve WWOAP cases, property owners work with the Planning and Community Development Department to obtain permits ‘after the fact’, and double fees are assessed for the applicable permitting costs per SMC 3.01. Corrective actions for WWOAP cases can range from obtaining a basic building permit, such as for adding a carport to a dwelling, to far more complex critical areas violations, which take considerably more time to process.

Other Common Types of Code Enforcement Opened in 2023

While there are many different code enforcement case types, in addition to WWOAP cases, the following three case types are some of the most common types opened. These are the numbers of cases opened in 2023 by these case types:

- Graffiti – 85 Cases
- Accumulation of Refuse – 55 Cases
- Unlicensed/Inoperable vehicles – 22 Cases

Currently Open Cases

As of February 7, 2024, there are 392 open cases in the CommDev system. 32 of these open cases have been moved into a “Filed on Title” status, where the City has failed to gain compliance, and these filings should prevent loans or sales from occurring on these properties without the code violations being addressed. As well, 18 of these open cases are currently in the “Civil Penalty” phase, where civil penalty fines (which are outlined in the Shoreline Municipal Code) are accruing weekly. Two of these 18 properties have achieved the maximum civil penalty of \$125,000 and are now lienied. An additional two more, while not reaching maximum penalties, are filed as liens to recover when the property is sold as they did gain code compliance but have not yet paid their outstanding civil penalty fees.

CityWorks Service Requests Received

As noted earlier in this report, CECRT also receives and tracks service requests annually for issues on public property or problems with publicly owned assets. These issues are managed in the CityWorks Asset Management system. In 2023, the City received 4,571 CityWorks service requests. 68% of these requests (3,148) were received through See Click Fix.

Of the 4,571 CityWorks Service Requests opened in 2023, the four largest categories of service requests are as follows:

- Unauthorized/Abandoned Vehicles – 1,042 (more information below)
- Graffiti/Vandalism – 706
- Homelessness Response for Public Property – 258 (more information below)
- Debris and Litter Removal – 178

Additionally, while CECRT is the clearing house for intake and distribution of these service requests, these requests are handled by work groups within the City’s Public Works Department, Parks Division, or handled by CECRT directly. The table below provides the breakdown of these work groups and their annual service request responsibilities over the last five years.

Year	Total Service Requests	CECRT	Parks Operations Division	Public Works Department
2019	2,828	1,513	311	969
2020	2,304	1,413	245	620
2021	4,077	2,530	395	1,172
2022	5,344	3,151	307	1,677
2023	4,571	2,502	594	1,321

Unauthorized (Abandoned) Vehicles in the Right-of-Way

As is noted above, CECRT tagged 1,042 unauthorized vehicles in the right-of-way in 2023. While this number is down from 2022, it was still a substantial workload for the team last year. Vehicles that were not moved by their owners through an initial tagging were forwarded on to the Shoreline Police for additional tagging, citation, and/or impound. Shoreline Police towed 89 vehicles from the City’s right-of-way in 2023 when no other corrective action could be achieved. The development of the Parking Enforcement Program in 2024 will be very instrumental to enhance enforcement of unauthorized vehicles in the right-of-way. The initial tagging of unauthorized vehicles, which is currently performed by the City’s two CECRT Representatives, will shift to the City’s Parking Enforcement Officers, freeing up more time for the CECRT Representatives to focus on other code enforcement and City asset issues.

Responding to Issues of Homelessness

A continuing concern within the city that CECRT addresses on an annual basis is the issue of responding to unhoused people in the community. There are a variety of problems encompassing camping or residing on public property. CECRT received and investigated 258 requests for homelessness response in 2023. This is up considerably from 168 requests in 2022 and 136 requests in 2021.

Responding to homelessness response requests often requires considerable staff time as these requests typically include posting notice at an encampment, removal of the debris left behind, and providing the unhoused person(s) with information about support services if they are interested. Each encampment found may involve several trips of staff to address the encampment. If staff is put in the position to collect personal property to store in accordance with City Policy, this can take even more time. However, this step was only necessary four times in 2023. Most often, individuals take their personal belongings and leave refuse at the encampment, which is removed as waste. Cleaning these sites is often a difficult task and is taxing on staff, but staff have continued to provide this service with a good attitude. Continued partnership with Lake City Partners and Shoreline Police has made all the difference.

When encampments are on private property, CECRT works with property owners to take corrective action to prevent further problems. This includes having the property owners secure their structures onsite, post signs and sign trespass orders through the Shoreline Police, as well as the removal of any accumulation of refuse.

Additional Information

CECRT was designed as and continues to be a problem-solving team. As can be seen in this report, CECRT takes the lead in addressing a variety of concerns in the community and works to prevent the disruption of other crews as much as possible. When issues arise that do require cross-departmental cooperation, CECRT will make a request for resources.

An inter-departmental team made up of CECRT, Shoreline Police, Community Services and the City Manager's Office meets monthly to coordinate efforts on problem areas in the city. Staff bring current, relevant information to the table to problem solve. This meeting has proven to be very effective and will continue to go forth.

CECRT's continued success is a direct result of healthy partnerships and staff dedication in making the City of Shoreline a better place to live, work, and play.