




C I T Y O F
RENO
Memorandum

DATE: May 18, 2026

TO: Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Jackie Bryant, City Manager 

FROM: Lance Ferrato, Director of Licensing and Code Enforcement
Ashley Turney, Assistant City Manager

DEPT: Licensing and Code Enforcement

SUBJECT: Code Enforcement Update

This memorandum provides Council with an overview of the City's Code Enforcement operations, recent performance data, regulatory responsibilities, and ongoing initiatives. This presentation was originally scheduled for the April 22, 2026, Council meeting but was postponed due to time constraints. Staff is providing this written update to ensure Council receives these timely details while they remain relevant.

Department Overview

The Code Enforcement Department is responsible for maintaining a clean, safe, and thriving community by supporting responsible property maintenance and reducing neighborhood blight. The Department enforces RMC Chapter 8.22 (Nuisances) and RMC Chapter 14.05 (Property Maintenance Code), while applicable provisions of the NRS guide certain processes by defining what actions the City can take and how specific procedures must be followed.

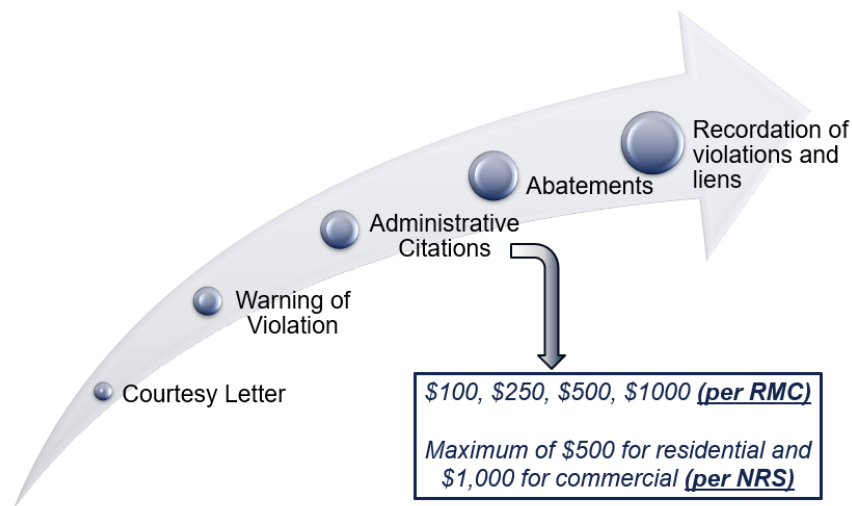
Operations are primarily complaint driven, supplemented by proactive inspections as capacity allows. A dedicated officer supports the downtown core due to higher levels of nuisance activity and repeat violations. The Department also oversees the Motel Inspection Program, which ensures life safety and habitability standards across 73 motels (3,229 rooms).

Core responsibilities include enforcing property maintenance and zoning codes; addressing vacant and abandoned structures; responding to encampments on private property; and mitigating nuisance conditions such as junk vehicles, improperly stored items visible from the

public right-of-way, and fire or building code violations. Together, this regulatory framework and operational structure ensure properties citywide remain safe, well-maintained, and compliant.

Enforcement Process

The Department uses a graduated enforcement model that emphasizes education and voluntary compliance before penalties. For certain property types, particularly abandoned commercial properties, an accelerated citation schedule now applies, initiating daily citations after day 28 until compliance is achieved or an abatement plan is in place (refer to March 5, 2026, memo to Council for more detail). Furthermore, notices to commercial properties now begin at the Warning of Violation stage to expedite compliance timelines.



Appeals

RMC establishes a clear process for appealing administrative citations, providing an impartial mechanism for property owners to contest enforcement actions. Although Code Enforcement issues the citations, the appeal process itself is administered by the City Clerk’s Office to ensure consistency and neutrality. Appeals are heard by independent Administrative Hearing Officers contracted through the Clerk, with the option for either party to elevate the matter to Municipal Court as allowed under the RMC.

From April 1, 2025, through March 31, 2026, the following occurred:

- 36 appeals filed
- 20 heard (16 continued outside of the reporting period)
- \$22,078 in fines and fees upheld
- \$11,442 dismissed (52%)

Case Trends and Citywide Statistics

To provide broader context on recent activity, the following summary highlights overall case volume, the balance between complaint-driven and proactive work, and notable improvements in case resolution timelines from the last 12 months (April 1, 2025, through March 31, 2026):

	4/1/24 – 3/31/25	4/1/25 – 3/31/26	YOY Change	% Change
Total Cases	3,616	3,969	353	9.76%
Complaint	3,149	3,339	190	6.03%
Proactive	467	630	163	34.90%
Days to Close	30.8	24.4	-6.4	-20.78%
\$ Collected	\$195,197	\$295,158	\$99,961	51.21%

Current Initiatives

The Department is actively working to strengthen service delivery, consistency, and responsiveness across several key areas:

- 1. Accela Enhancements** – The Department is currently implementing enhancements to the Accela platform to streamline officer workflows, reduce redundant processes, and improve documentation accuracy. Recent updates include:

- Record refinement
- Automated noticing
- Automated batch printing
- Improved document management workflow

These updates streamline officer workflows, reduce redundancy, and improve documentation accuracy to ensure a more efficient, predictable system for case processing and record management.

- 2. Regulatory Updates** – In December 2025, Council directed staff to advance the adoption of the 2024 International Property Maintenance Code (“IPMC”) to ensure the City’s regulatory framework reflects current best practices. Updating the IPMC supports consistent code application, clearer expectations for property owners, and alignment with modern life-safety and maintenance standards. Furthermore, as directed, staff will include bolstered downtown property standards for stronger enforcement.
- 3. Policy and Program Improvements** – To further strengthen the City’s regulatory framework and improve consistency in enforcement, the Department is advancing several targeted policy and program improvements. These efforts focus on enhancing tools for addressing persistent nuisance conditions, improving coordination with regional partners, and modernizing key enforcement programs to better support long-term compliance and community safety.

- Enhanced enforcement on abandoned nuisance commercial properties (outlined in a memorandum to Council dated March 5, 2026).
- Collaboration with the Washoe County Treasurer’s Office to develop a special assessment process for certain unpaid civil penalties involving the transfer of delinquent fees to property tax bills.
- Ongoing creation of a chronic nuisance/business license enforcement policy to address persistent violations associated with licensed businesses.
- Strengthening the Motel Inspection Program through structured scheduling, clearer documentation, and the consideration of compliance-based inspection approaches.

4. Interdepartmental Collaboration – The Department’s work relies heavily on strong partnerships across the organization. With Business Licensing and Code Enforcement now operating within the same department, staff have been able to realize meaningful synergies that improve workflow consistency, eliminate redundancies, and strengthen the connection between licensing compliance and code enforcement activity. This alignment has also allowed for practical process improvements, such as the ability to transfer uncollected code enforcement fees associated with licensed businesses directly to the business license to ensure more timely payment.

Collaboration with Development Services has been instrumental, particularly in advancing discussions to modernize and streamline the Motel Inspection Program. Because nearly every City department becomes involved at some point depending on case complexity, staff have been intentional about strengthening communication and reinforcing positive working relationships. These efforts have helped ensure efficient, coordinated responses across the organization.

5. Performance Metrics – To help illustrate the Department’s operational progress and overall service delivery, the following performance metrics highlight both the volume of work handled and the efficiency improvements achieved from Q2 through Q3, year over year:

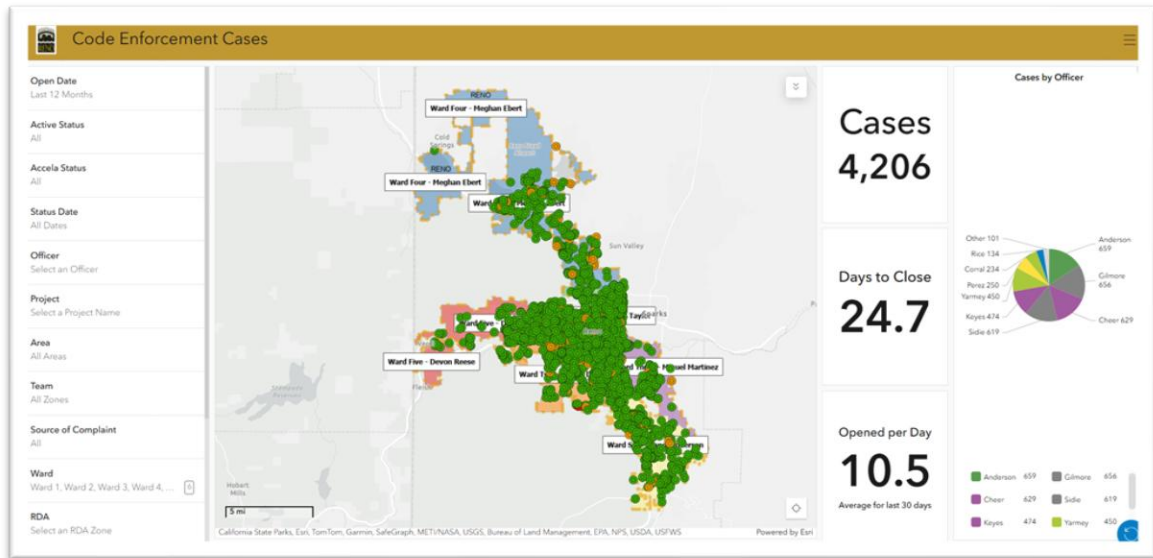
<i>Data through 5/7/2026</i>	10/1/24 - 3/31/25		10/1/25 - 3/31/26		Change
Total Cases	1554	100%	1643	100%	6%
Cases Closed	1551	99.8%	1546	94.1%	N/A ¹
Days to Close	28.1	-	19.9	-	-29%
Closed in 30 days	1073	69%	1208	74%	13%
Closed in 60 days	1343	86%	1456	89%	8%
Proactive Cases ²	252	16%	243	15%	-4%

¹ Data is incomplete as a significant number of cases are still being worked.

² Department goal is 10%.

Additionally, the team participates in four (4) weekly City Walks, supporting proactive neighborhood monitoring.

6. **Code Enforcement Dashboard** – Looking ahead, the Department is excited to enhance public transparency through the launch of a new Code Enforcement dashboard. While staff currently use an internal data dashboard to monitor performance trends, inspection activity, and case closure rates, making this information publicly accessible will provide the community with a clearer understanding of our work and its outcomes. The public-facing version is nearing completion and is expected to be available soon, offering a more user-friendly way for residents to stay informed.



Summary and Next Steps

In summary, the Department is making meaningful progress in strengthening enforcement consistency, modernizing key programs, and improving overall service delivery. Enhanced workflows, stronger interdepartmental coordination, proactive efforts, and ongoing policy development have all contributed to more efficient operations and clearer expectations for the community. Building on this momentum, the following next steps outline the priority initiatives that will guide the Department’s continued work and support long-term compliance citywide.

The Department will continue to:

- Improve Accela functionality and data reporting tools.
- Bring forward IPMC updates for Council consideration (May 20, 2026).
- Strengthen downtown enforcement and interdepartmental coordination.
- Launch a public facing dashboard for greater transparency.
- Advance policies that improve consistency and support long-term compliance citywide.
- Evaluate compliance-based motel inspection schedules and fee frameworks.