



Item 3a

Construction Permits:

Reducing Review Times +
Improving Speed to Market

August 13, 2024



Visit Our Website:
MIDLANDTEXAS.GOV

1



Strategic Goal Connections

Goal 1: Strong Economy with More Quality Jobs

- **1.8 Improve Speed to Market for citizens, builders, developers, and contractors:** Reduce wait times for permit review/approval and inspection process of permitted work

Goal 2: Set the Standard for a Safe and Secure City

- **2.1 Be the safest city in West Texas:** Enhance public safety programs

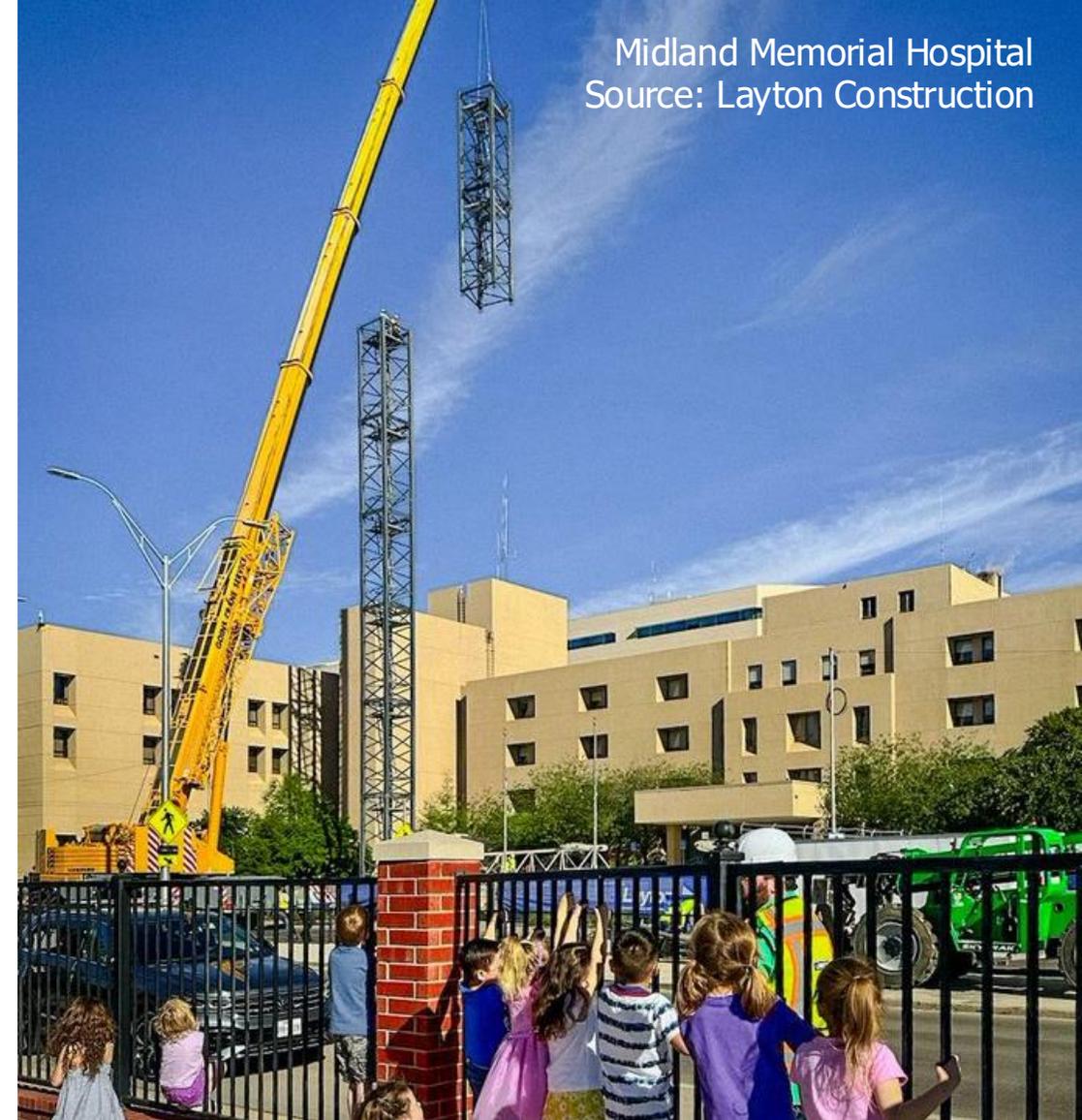
Goal 5: Provide Sound Governance & Fiscal Management

- **5.6 Deliver services timely and efficiently:** Prioritize continuous improvement

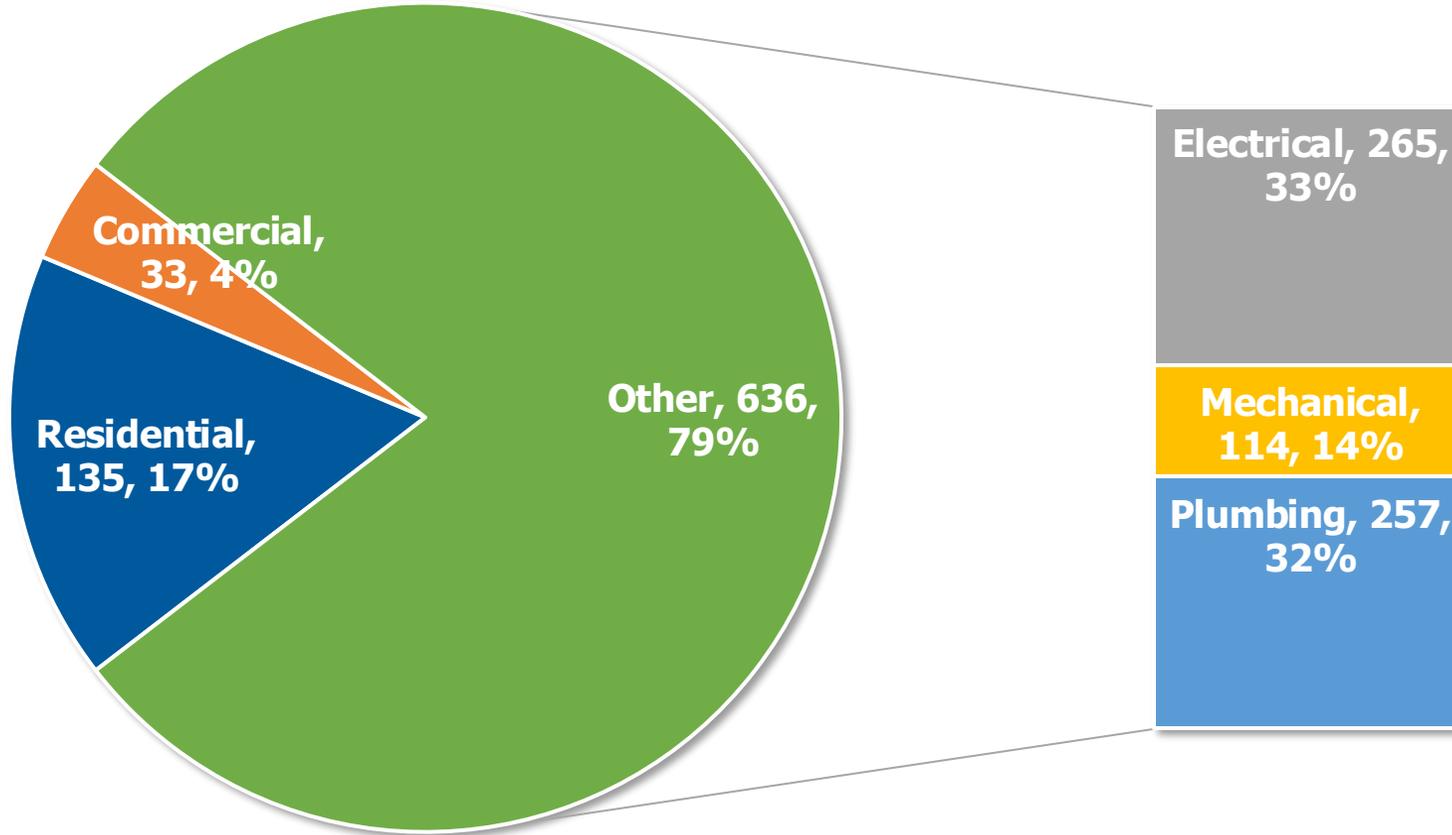


Presentation Outline

- Permit Volume Snapshot
- Trends in Review + Issue Times
- Survey Insights
- Changes Implemented + In Process
- Other Areas of Focus:
 - Code Enforcement

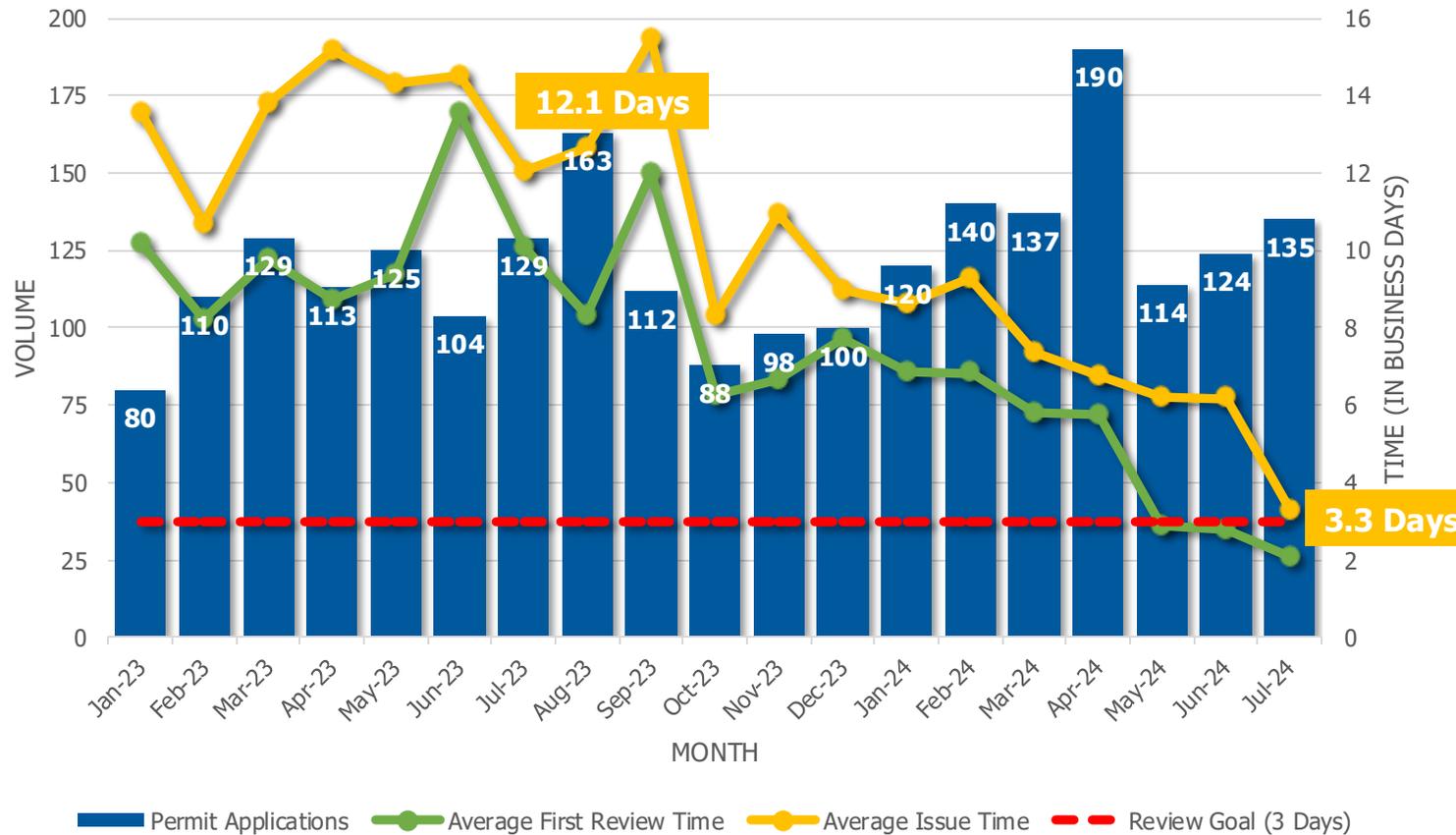


Permit Volume Snapshot – July



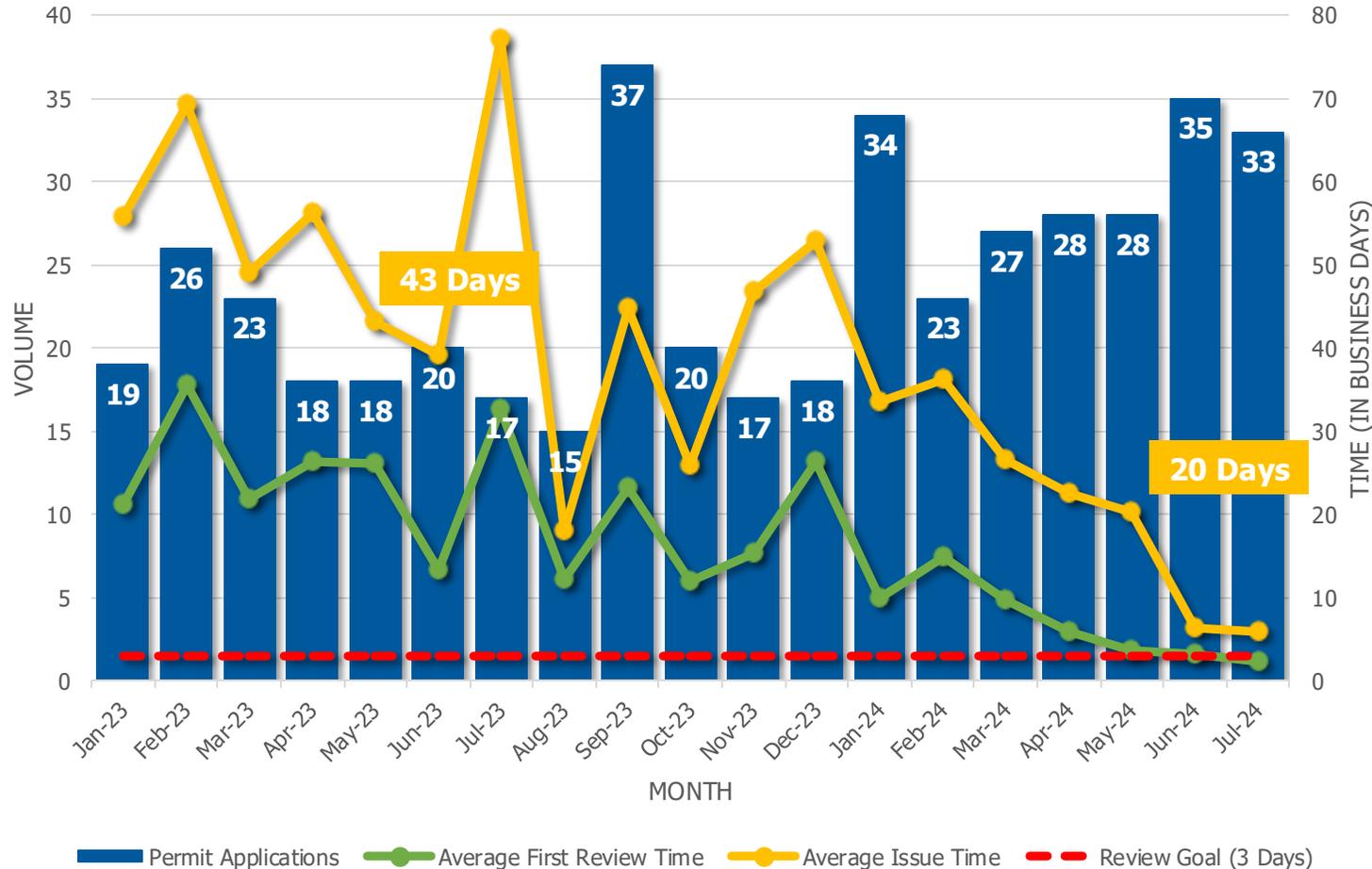
- Most permits (4 out of 5) are stand-alone trade permits, typically reviewed and issued on the same day.
- Residential permits make up 17% of applications, while commercial permits represent 4%.
- **Expediting residential + commercial permits is an important economic development strategy**

Residential Permitting



- **2024 residential permitting activity up 22%** relative to the same time last year
- Highest volume reached in over a year in April with **190 applications**
- Despite increased activity, **average issue time is decreasing**
- Average permit issuance time in July was just over **3 days**
- Representing a **75% decrease** in days to issuance relative to July 2023

Commercial Permitting



- **2024 commercial permitting activity up 48%** relative to the same time last year
- June + July saw the relatively high volumes with 30+ submissions each month
- Despite increased volumes, **time to permit issuance has consistently decreased** since December
- Average permit issuance time in May was just over **20 days**
- Representing a more than **50% decrease** in days to issuance relative to May 2023

6

*NOTE: Due to more complex review and revision process, recent months average review and issue times may change as permits submitted in those months are issued



Customer Survey - Testimonials

- **“Everyone was very professional** - Katie was great when I was in office to submit my application permit.”
- “I emailed with Tomasa Gomez this morning regarding an inspection. In the past I haven’t experienced very good customer service with a few staff members. However, Tomasa was wonderful today. **Helpful, knowledgeable, friendly-** she is doing a great job!!! We appreciate days where people like Tomasa go the extra mile to make our jobs a little easier. Thank you!!!
- “I just want to let you know that Jeremy Mills was so **helpful in walking me through the process** of getting my Building Inspections and certificate of occupancy all the ins and outs of working with the City Of Midland for the first time. I really appreciate all his help.”

Customer Survey – Insights into Opportunities for Improvement

- “**Communication is the problem**, to be specific: - When there is a major change to the submission process it needs to be communicated to everyone a few weeks prior. - When something is not submitted correctly or is not able to move forward because of a mistake made, there needs to be communication from code to the submitter to let them know that something needs to be fixed to move forward instead of giving them the impression that everything is ok, and no further action is needed.”
- “Believe that **an online portal would greatly benefit the overall process** and significantly increase efficiency for both the city and contractors. Inspection requests and results are consolidated, rather than being scattered across multiple emails. This not only streamlines communication but also ensures that important information is not missed. With the current email system, we do not always receive updates on inspections.”

Changes Implemented to Achieve Results

- **Process Improvement Manager** position created and hired to identify process inefficiencies and opportunities for automation, develop regular reporting mechanisms to track performance, develop standard operating procedures, and train staff on process improvements.*
- **Leveraging technology** in partnership with ITSD, to automate processes and improve efficiency, including, for example, the automated calculation of impact fees for new residential permits.
- **Introduction of automated reports** to offer real-time insights into workflows, enabling timely decision-making, increased efficiency, proactive problem-solving, better resource allocation, performance tracking, and data-driven insights for optimized management.

Changes Implemented to Achieve Results

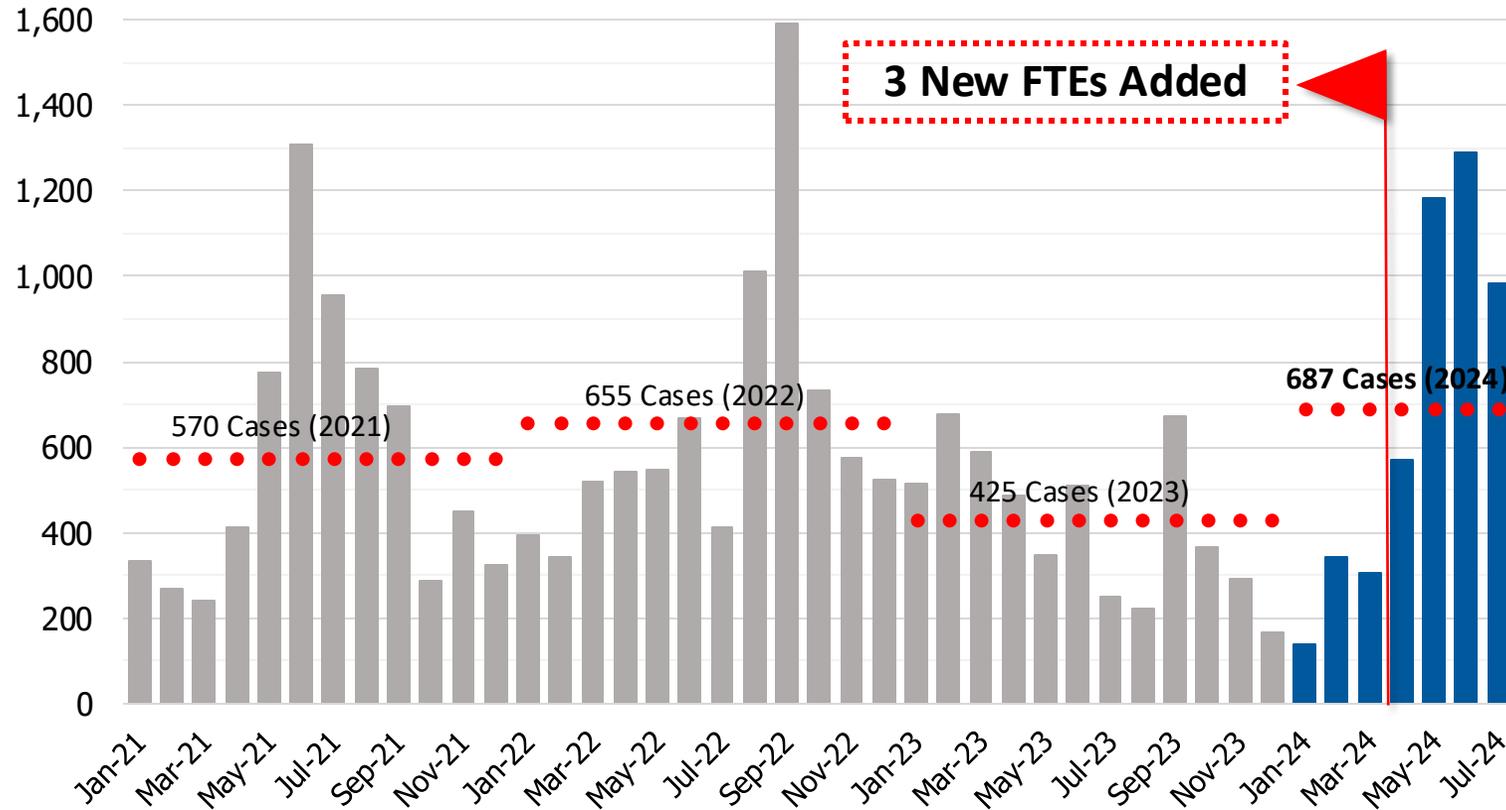
- **Customer Satisfaction Survey** deployed in April to provide insights into customer experience, identify permitting strengths and weaknesses, drive continuous improvement, and build customer relationships.
- **Reconfigured the One-Stop-Shop** to streamline permit processes, enhance customer experience, achieve cost savings, and expedite “same-day” permitting.
- **Established a position dedicated to customer service** and overseeing frontline One-Stop-Shop staff to elevate service standards and enhance the customer experience, while also serving as a backup residential plan reviewer.*
- **Introduced a second residential plan reviewer** to address rising submissions, enhance efficiency, and support succession planning by fostering career growth paths within the department.

Changes in Process

- **Development of Online Permitting Portal** to streamline the permitting process by enabling customers the ability to upload permit applications; and view and revise plans in real-time for reduced permitting timelines. Portal will also increase transparency in permitting process.
- **Development of Inspection App** to streamline the inspection scheduling process, improving the customer experience and freeing up permit technicians to focus on other permitting and licensing needs.
- **Evaluate + Improve the Inspection Process** by creating, deploying, and tracking similar reports, KPIs, and survey.
- **Evaluate + Improve the Code Enforcement Process** by creating, deploying, and tracking similar reports, KPIs, and survey

Other Focus Areas – Code Enforcement

Cases Worked



- **Data Analysis:** Identified drop in code enforcement activity
- **Industry Standards:** Recommend 1 code officer per 10k population
- **Staff Increase:** Added 3 FTEs in Q1 CY2024 (from 6 to 9)
- **Results:** 60% increase in average monthly activity, exceeding 2023, aligning with 2022 levels
- **Future Focus (FY25):** Shift to measure effectiveness + efficiency

Other Focus Areas – Code Enforcement



Process Improvement

- Abatement Process for weeds + junked lots streamlined via administrative changes

Case Application

- Vacant single-family residence with severe debris causing public health issue

Result

- Lot cleared within 30-days of notice of violation

MISSION

Deliver exceptional services and promote a high quality of life and place for **ALL** our citizens.