

Full video to text notes:

Gresham Code Enforcement Presentation-20260204_104656-Meeting

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Hello, my name is Ryan Savage and I'm the Compliance Supervisor with the City of Gresham. I oversee our Code Compliance and Rental Housing Departments here at the City. I apologize for not being there in person tonight; however, I have created a generic slideshow just showing you what Code Compliance actually does. Then, at the end, I will address some specific concerns that your neighborhood in particular has. All right,

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slide two, there we go. All right, so Code Compliance team is part of the Community Services Division. Our role is to maintain and improve community livability by educating the public on city codes and how they apply to different situations. This, of course, includes day-to-day tasks like impounding abandoned vehicles and encouraging property owners to bring back overgrown vegetation. Our team strives to embody the city's motto of going beyond by collaboratively problem-solving with residents to help them find solutions to code violations and improve the community. So, as of today, we have one Senior Code Compliance Inspector is going to deal with more complex cases and criminal properties. They are going to deal with vehicles being lived in, RVs being lived in, in the street and on private property.

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So, just things that are a little bit more complex, maybe involving our Homeless Services team and or Gresham Police Department. We partner with both of those departments quite frequently. Also, the code team comprises half of a public utility worker. And no, it's not actually a half a person. We split that person with Homeless Services. So, the public utility worker for code, what they do for us is they will paint over any sort of graffiti that is on, you know, like electrical boxes, light poles, you know, things like that. They will also clean up trash. So, if somebody dumps, you know, a reasonable amount of trash on the sidewalk or whatever, our public utility worker will clean that up.

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If it is a lot of garbage that's dumped or bulky items like couches, stuff like that, then we actually hire a hauler to come pick that up. We also have two administrative staff on our team. Let's see, all right. So, Code Compliance's goal or role, the work we do and the process we follow for code violations. So, the majority of our work is assisting property owners and resolving general nuisance issues that are governed by the Gresham Revised Code, also known as the GRC. These include abandoned vehicles, overgrown vegetation, graffiti, debris, garbage, and junk RV parking permits. We also provide enforcement of the Gresham Community Development Code. Given the complexities of the development code, we work really closely with the city's Urban Design and Planning Department to enforce that code.

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The most common development code cases we handle involve trees and projects that require but haven't obtained a development permit. Sorry. So, one important thing to note is that the City of Gresham, Code Compliance, is all complaint-based, which means that we respond to complaints received from residents about livability concerns rather than proactively searching through neighborhoods for code violations. All right. So, our entire system is based on reports from the community. That's you guys. We obviously rely heavily on residents to inform us of issues in the neighborhood that need to be addressed. We do take phone calls, emails, and walk-ins at City Hall, but the best and most efficient way to report any concern to the city is through MyGresham. So, MyGresham is the city's online system and phone application through which can report concerns to the city.

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That goes... From anything from potholes to abandoned vehicles and anything else that the public can think of, it can all be reported through migration. The beauty of migration is that when you click on a heading like nuisance, as seen over here on the left-hand side of the screen, it brings you to a dropdown menu of options to submit under. So when you do that, it asks for necessary information specific to that type of complaint, that way staff has everything that we need right there, easily accessed. The system also automatically directs each request to the correct staff person when it is submitted, so you know your issue is being addressed as efficiently as possible. It's always helpful to attach photos if you can. This really helps us with the specifics.

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Let's see, the last numbers we had actually tallied up are from 2022, and we were at over 6,000 code compliance responses. So that's between property cases and vehicles. We do a lot of vehicle cases for sure, which we will talk about on the next slide. All right, so abandoned vehicles comprise over 70% of our cases. We have prioritized enforcement on abandoned vehicles because we understand that the response time for vehicles is much shorter and that we need to be on top of them, often responding the very next day. So upon receipt of a request and complete vehicle information, a case is created. An inspector does their first inspection to determine if the vehicle is indeed violating city code. If the violations are confirmed, the inspector will take photos and issue an impound notice explaining the violation and providing a deadline.

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That deadline is 24 to 72 hours; it just depends on the violation. So just to kind of break that down, if you have expired tags, no tags, a flat tire, a busted window with the glass still like sharp, you know, you haven't like taped over it yet or put a piece of cardboard in the window yet, but say it is freshly smashed glass on the ground, sharp pieces in the window, we can tag it. We can actually tow it immediately, but we kind of use a little discretion there with that. Anywho, so anything like that, you know, the no tags, expired tags, inoperable in any sort of way, so flat tire, wrecked, that's gonna get a 24-hour notice. 72-hour notice comes into play when you are parked somewhere other than where your car is registered.

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You have 72 hours to be parked there and then you have to move. So every year we address about 4,000 abandoned vehicle cases. So, you know, like I said, over 70% of our cases are abandoned vehicles. I think some years that's even up into the 80% range. All right, so property cases, most common is gonna be debris, garbage, and junk, overgrown vegetation, private property, parking. So that's like people parking on their lawn or having over five vehicles on their property, that kind of thing. Graffiti and then sidewalk trip hazards.

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So development code cases, the most common are gonna be any sort of tree violations, so topping a tree, cutting down a tree, or any development without a permit. Let's see, code compliance's role in that is to inspect the property, document the violations, and enforce on behalf of urban design and planning. Um, so code collaborates with the planner on duty to manage the case. A cop pod confirms the violations and provides instructions for resolving the violation. So, yeah, we, on those cases, it really consists a lot of frequent check-ins with the planner who's assigned to that case, just asking if they have any updates, like, has the property owner reached out? Are they doing a design review? Have they gotten this permit, like, where are they in the process?

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And then we ask the planner how much time we should then give them to do steps X, Y, and Z that that planning has. Placed in for, you know, put in place for them. So, tree code violation process. So, we hold tree removal companies responsible for violations. So, if a tree removal company comes in and tops your tree, we will reach out and tell them to stop topping trees in the city of Fresh and we do not allow that. And then, let's see. Yeah, so then enforcement process improvements. So, we do work with planning on just how can we improve this process of resolving these development code cases on properties. So, the code compliance process, so we get the initial complaint. We set up a case and inspector goes out.

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If they note a violation on the property, they will send out a courtesy letter. The courtesy letter gives them 14 days to correct the violation. If it's not corrected, they will receive a notice of violation. If at that point the inspector goes out and after 14 days the violation still exists, they will receive a civil penalty warning that gives them another 14 days. Are you sensing a pattern here? All right. So let's say we go out again after the civil penalty warning. The violation is still there. We will issue a civil penalty. We generally issue up to 3 civil penalties, and those come in the increments of every 14 days for the violation not being corrected.

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After that third civil penalty, we will do what is called a final notice that gets posted on the property owner's door and also gets mailed in the regular mail and then it's also sent certified mail. So then we will go out two weeks after that final notice and we will do another inspection. If the violation still exists, that case goes into enforcement decision. That is where basically I run a report to see what cases are an enforcement decision, and then I make a decision. Are we going to send another civil penalty? Are we going to abate the property, which abatement means? Basically,

like, let's say you had overgrown vegetation and you never corrected it. We sent you civil penalties, never corrected it. We posted the final notice, still didn't correct it.

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We will get a warrant signed by a judge to have a contractor come in and cut back the vegetation. The contractor then bills us, we pay the contractor, but then we place a lien on the property for that amount. There are certain cases where we cannot abate a property. So, let's say you're running a home occupation without a valid home occupation business license. I can send civil penalties all day long. However, I can't abate that because at the end of the day, people are going to do what they're going to do. I can't force my way into someone's home. I can't shut down the business for them. I can do other things to make it hard for them, or maybe there are other violations on the property, that kind of thing.

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So there are certain situations, few and far between, where we can't abate. And so then we have to make a decision, do we just close it unresolved, do we keep sending civil penalties, and most of the time it's that one. Very, very, very rarely do we close a case unresolved. It is not something we do frequently. Okay, so that takes us to the end of this slideshow. On this last slide here, you will see the Migration. This is to get online and do it. You can also add the Migration app to your smartphone; that's probably the easiest way to report anything, and you can report it while you're out, you know, in the community and see something. You can also report through that reporting number there, and you can also send us an email.

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I will say the Migration app is the most efficient and best way to report anything. Okay, so then I have put my contact information on here as well, in case you guys think of any questions. I will leave this up on the screen while I address some of the questions that were sent to me or concerns, I should say. So, I'm going to start with the easiest one first. Any vehicles that are parked facing the wrong direction, you can call those in. You have to be facing the right direction. We can tag those as a 24-hour notice. That is clear violation of city code. Then, anybody parked on a lawn in your neighborhood, that's a property case. You can report those. You can't park on the lawn.

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You can't have more than five vehicles on the property. You do have to be parked on an approved surface, but there are certain locations in your yard, in your front yard, where that can be. It gets kind of complicated to try to explain that. If you have any specific questions, feel free to call in and report it to Mike Gresham or call me and talk to me directly about it. And I'll tell you whether to report it or not. Let's see. And then it looks like there were some concerns regarding possible businesses being run from homes. That is a violation if they do not have a business license, a home-locked business license. And there are certain occupations that we do not allow home locks for, so that would be like any sort of auto-dependent business, such as auto repair, so auto repair or auto body work, auto detailing We had a recent case where somebody was tinting windows for people on the property.

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You can't do that. Anything involving automobiles, you cannot do it on your property. That should kind of address any noise and smells, that kind of thing, if we start reporting people who are doing auto work and things of that nature. It looks like there was also another concern about trailers used for like garbage dumping and hauling, landscaping, that kind of thing. So I wanted to touch on that. Any sort of like flatbed trailer, utility trailer, toy hauler, a boat with a trailer, RVs, anything that attaches to the back of a vehicle and is towed cannot be in the street. Now a trailer, let's say you're unloading fencing materials. I don't know, you can park it in the street while you're immediately loading and unloading.

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But once you're done with that, it needs to go away, go in the driveway or... taken somewhere that is not the street. RVs, just to touch on this because the slideshow didn't really touch on it. If you, as a property owner, have an RV and say you went on a trip and you brought the trailer back and you needed to park it in the street to unload it or clean it, or whatever you need to do to it, you would have to get a city-issued RV parking permit. It's all done online. It's pretty simple. They do. You need your license plate information, and then you will need your water bill number because that's how we connect that you actually live at that address.

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Then a three-day parking permit is issued at that point, which allows you to park in the street for three days with that recreational vehicle. You are allowed six of those permits per year. Eighteen days' worth of parking your RV in the street is what is written into the code. Now, we do this for multiple reasons. First of all, if everybody stored their RV in the street, it would be a wild show out there. But another thing is when we implemented this, it was a way to curb people living in RVs in the public right-of-way. It is much easier for the city of Gresham to say, no, you cannot have this RV in the street regardless of who you are. Come at it from that angle, it's just it's in city code; RVs can't be in the street, easy.

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That way, when we are dealing with some of our house's population, or they're living in their RV or whatnot, we can move them along because they can't be in the city of Gresham with it. But we did need to allow for homeowners to be able to clean and unload and stuff. That's where that came from, just a little backstory. Now, as far as condoning indefinitely parked vehicles, yes, we allow you as a property owner to park your vehicle that is registered to your address. You can park in front of your own home indefinitely. Now, there's a caveat to that. It has to have good tags, so it can't be expired. It needs to obviously have license plates on it. It has to be in good repair, so it can't be inoperable, like visually inoperable, so flat tires, wrecked, that kind of thing.

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It can't be in that condition. But if it's registered and appears operable, then yeah, you can park there indefinitely. The city is not looking at changing that anytime soon. It is a way to offset some of this. We've got a very diverse community. We have multi-generational homes, people with a lot of cars and nowhere to park them. We're not going to penalize somebody for parking a registered car at that address. We're not going to penalize them for parking in front of their own home. Now, if you park in front of your neighbor's house, you have to move every 72 hours. Or if your neighbor has a vehicle that may be registered to his or her home, and it has expired tags, they cannot park it there indefinitely.

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But yeah, there is no push to have that changed at all. I would say if this is something that you guys are really concerned about. Because it looks like it has more to do with visibility or getting the street sweepers to be able to sweep the street there and that kind of thing. So anything, so street sweepers, if you guys have an area of your street that you feel like is kind of neglected, I would call into our transportation division and tell them that your street needs to be swept and tell them that there are portions of it that haven't been swept because of cars being parked there. And several times a year, they do these sweep operations that code assist with, where they can put up no parking signs 24 hours in advance and actually close down that, well, not close it down, but make it to where nobody can park there so they can sweep.

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That would be a really good option. As far as emergency and other service vehicles, we can't tell people that parking in the street isn't allowed. So the way I'm reading this one concern is that, where'd it go, where'd it go, where'd it go, where'd it go, are unable to park or work in front of the residences they're serving. So that's going to be the case regardless of how long we allow a car to park there. It could be a car parked there for 12 hours and the fire truck comes and can't park right in front of a house. That is something that fire would have to complain about to the powers that be and get that changed. The other issues seem to mostly be with oversized vehicles parking on the street, which the city of Gresham does have.

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Anything over GVW, gross vehicle weight of over 10,000 pounds, is not allowed to be parked in the street. One way you can tell is 99% of the time, if it's over 10,000, it's going to have a yellow plate. If it has a regular Oregon license plate, 99% of the time, it is going to be under that 10,000. And if you have any questions, just call it in. We'll run the plate. DMV will tell us if it's over the limit or not, and then we can deal with it. But it does seem like a lot of the issues are with the bigger vehicles being parked there, trailers, that sort of thing. And those are violations.

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And I would definitely reach out to Mike Gresham via the app, online, or calling, whatever you choose to do, and report those issues to us because we are complaint-based. So we're not going to go drive around and look for anything; we just don't have the staffing to do that. Yeah, so I think I got everything covered. And I'm sure you guys probably have a million and one questions. So, Javon, if you could actually maybe take questions and write them

down and then maybe shoot me an email with all those questions, I can email you back and give you some answers and hopefully get some things taken care of over there in that neighborhood. But definitely utilize the Mike Gresham app, you guys. Like, it is it's great and it's easy. And we do make cases for everything and we do respond to everything. So, all right. Well, I have taken up enough of you guys' time, probably more than you anticipated. And I would like to thank you once again. I'm sorry that I can't be there in person. We just don't have the capacity to do neighborhood meetings anymore. But yeah, any questions, feel free to reach out. Thank you. Thank you, guys. And yeah, have a good day