

ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT UPDATE

Office of Buildings Presentation

August 23, 2022



Department of

CITY PLANNING

Z

Hearing Date Time
12/3 ~~12/5~~ /2022 @ 6:00pm

Atlanta City Hall
55 Trinity Avenue
Council Chambers
Atlanta, GA 30303

Change
I-2/BL : R-S/BL TO
PO-MU/BL

Application Number
Z-20-61

Zoning Application

ZRB PUBLIC HEARING
<https://bit.ly/3f5waaE>
VIA ZOOM

Department of
CITY PLANNING

For more information
404-330-6145
atlantaga.gov

ZONING ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

RESPONSIBILITIES | PERSONNEL



ZONING ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

Responsibilities

- Complaint Inspections (Including short-term rental (STR) enforcement)
- Issuing correction notices and citations to violators
- Testifying in court hearings, BZA hearings and other legal hearings
- Conducting collaborative enforcement sweeps
- On-call after hour inspections, as needed
- Canvas and monitor assigned areas for zoning violations
- Participation in neighborhood community meetings
- Review sign applications
- Review business licenses
- Review and Issue Zoning Verification letters

ZONING ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

Personnel | Definition

A division within the Office of Buildings responsible for inspections and enforcement of all building and zoning code violations in the City of Atlanta.

The goal was to create a collective unit of enforcement personnel that work under the direct supervision of the Zoning Enforcement Manager, by combining the inspectors within the various areas (building inspections, zoning inspections, historical preservation inspections, etc.) into one team.

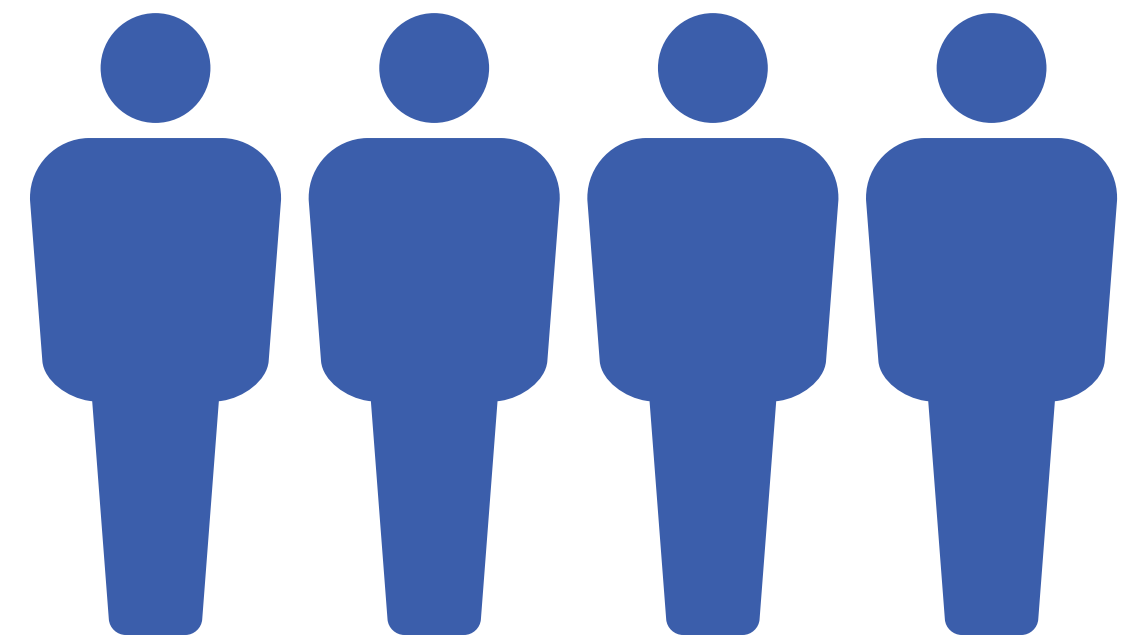
ZONING ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

Personnel | Evolution

How we started (2018-2021)

100+

Average complaints per month.



Prior to 2021, four (4) Sr. Zoning Inspectors were covering the entire City of Atlanta.

How it's going (2022)

150+

Average complaints per month.



(1) Zoning Enforcement Manager
(3) Zoning Enforcement Supervisors

(2) Zoning Enforcement Permit Technicians
(15) Sr. Zoning Enforcement Inspectors

ZONING ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

Personnel | What's next - Hiring breakdown

- (15) new Zoning Inspectors hired.
- (3) Zoning Inspector Leads hired (supervisors)
- (2) Permit Technicians hired (administrative personnel)

Pending hires

- (5) Sr. Zoning Inspector positions remain to be filled.
- (1) Lead Zoning Inspector position remains to be filled.

Extensive training for all positions in the Zoning Enforcement team is ongoing.

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT IMPROVEMENTS



BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Improvements | Recommendation #1

We recommend that the Commissioner of City Planning work with the Police Chief to transfer zoning enforcement responsibilities to Police's Code Enforcement Section.

Status/Updates

We disagree with the recommendation to transfer the zoning enforcement responsibilities to the Atlanta Police Department's Enforcement Division. This was expressed in our official response to the Audit Committee in our memo dated Nov. 2021 and supported by the APD when initially discussed. Nevertheless, instead of reiterating those reasons, we will focus on the other improvements made based on the recommendations of the City Auditor's Office.

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Improvements | Recommendation #2

We recommend that the Commissioner of City Planning route all zoning complaints to ATL311 and provide ATL311 staff with training on entering complaints in Accela.

Status/Updates

Meetings and discussions have been had with Ms. Joy Quarles, Customer Service Director ATL311, to assume this responsibility. This transition is set to officially begin on Oct. 1, 2022.

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Common Zoning Complaints

- Illegal Rooming House
- Building a structure too close to the property line
- Auto Repair Shop on residential property
- Operating retail sales from residentially zoned property
- Parking vehicles in the required yard
- Parking large commercial vehicles in residential districts or in districts where such is not allowed
- Illegal signs (portable signs, flags, banners, balloons)
- Fences or walls exceeding maximum height in residential and commercial districts

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Improvements | Recommendation #3

We recommend that the Commissioner of City Planning continue encouraging staff to participate in the city's Code Enforcement Academy to educate citizens on all the division enforcement responsibilities.

Status/Updates


The Zoning Enforcement team has been participating in the Code Enforcement Academy. We will continue to attend all community, town hall, and other public meetings upon request. Additionally, the DCP Zoning Enforcement team is scheduled to begin attending regular NPU meetings to report on zoning enforcement activities and education on an ongoing basis. Door hangers, presentations, business cards, and handouts are actively in use to notify residents of common Zoning Violations.

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Door Hangers

The door hanger implementation has been an efficient way of informing City of Atlanta residents of violations.

OFFICIAL NOTICE



DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
OFFICE OF BUILDINGS
ZONING ENFORCEMENT DIVISION
55 Trinity Avenue
3rd Floor - Suite 3800
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
Phone: (404) 330-6178
CodeBustersDCP@atlantaga.gov

CASE NO. _____

ADDRESS: _____

DATE: _____ TIME: _____ AM/PM

THIS IS TO SERVE AS AN OFFICIAL NOTICE FROM THE ZONING ENFORCEMENT DIVISION. THE PROPERTY ABOVE IS IN VIOLATION OF THE FOLLOWING CITY ORDINANCE(S). FAILURE TO COMPLY MAY RESULT IN DAILY FINES.

- WORKING WITHOUT A PERMIT / EXCEEDING SCOPE OF WORK
- ILLEGAL ROOMING HOUSE
- ILLEGAL SHORT TERM RENTAL
- ILLEGAL AUTO REPAIR
- ILLEGAL PERMITTED USES
- ILLEGAL FENCE/WALL
- HISTORIC DISTRICT ORDINANCE VIOLATIONS

OTHER: _____

OFFICER NAME: _____

OFFICER CONTACT: _____

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Improvements | Recommendation #4

We recommend that the Commissioner of City Planning update complaint information in Accela to ensure that all cases are entered and update the status of cases.

Status/Updates

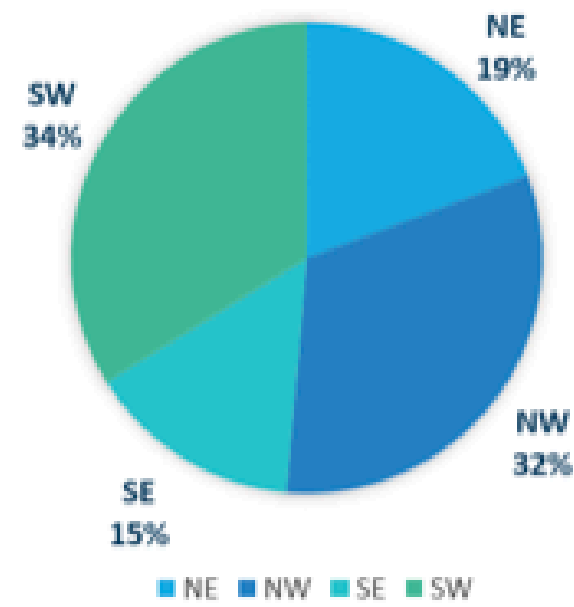
Zoning complaints are now entered into Accela by the Zoning Enforcement Permit Technicians to ensure that complaints are entered accurately, routed to the proper supervisor, and addressed within the required SLA of three (3) business days.

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Code Enforcement | Complaints Summary

FISCAL YEAR 22

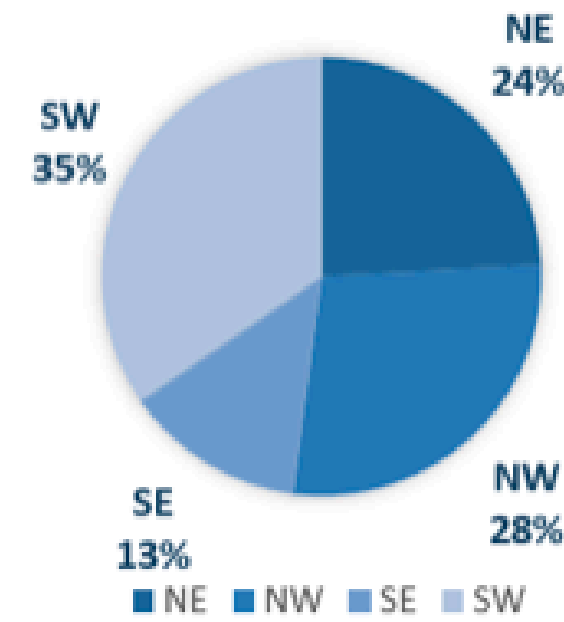
Complaints by Quadrant



Complaints by Quadrant	
NE	591
NW	983
SE	452
SW	1036
Total	3062

FISCAL YEAR 23

Complaints by Quadrant



Complaints by Quadrant	
NE	58
NW	67
SE	32
SW	83
Total	240

Service Level Agreement (Business Days): 95% on Inspections Completed within 3 business days.

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Improvements | Recommendation #5

We recommend that the Commissioner of City Planning create additional supervisor positions to ensure that complaints are properly assigned and reviewed prior to closure.

Status/Updates

Four supervisor positions were created.

Three (3) of the four (4) positions have been filled.

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Improvements | Recommendation #6

We recommend that the Commissioner of City Planning ensure that supervisors enter all information related to complaints into Accela according to established procedures.

Status/Updates

The expanded team of Zoning Inspectors are entering all information related to their findings from complaint inspections including pictures, comments, and documentation. The supervisors are conducting quality assurance checks to ensure that this is done consistently.

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Improvements | Recommendation #7

We recommend that the Commissioner of City Planning direct staff to enter the backlog of complaints into Accela and work with Police to obtain the status of each complaint referred to the department and update the status in Accela.

Status/Updates

2020 – 2021 Backlog complaints

Initial Count: 1,144

Addressed: 969 (84%)

We anticipate completing the remaining backlog (16%) by November 2022.

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Improvements | Recommendation #8

We recommend that the Commissioner of City Planning ensure that procedures for handling stop-work complaints are documented and consistently followed.

Status/Updates

The standard operational procedures (SOPs) for zoning complaints and review procedures have been updated and distributed to the Zoning Enforcement team. This is also included as a part of the ongoing training.

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Improvements | Recommendation #9

We recommend that the Commissioner of City Planning ensure that all complaints received through the Code Busters email are entered into Accela within 24 hours, consistent with the division's procedures.

Status/Updates

When a valid complaint is received by the Zoning Enforcement team, it is entered into the Accela database by the Zoning Enforcement permit technicians within 24 business hours. The case is then assigned to an inspector by a supervisor to be investigated within 72 business hours.

IF THE WORK'S NOT GOOD // IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

...WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

CODEBUSTERS



BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Improvements | Recommendation #10

We recommend that the Commissioner of City Planning develop a performance target for resolving customer complaints and track metrics for each step of the process (from the time the complaint is received until the issue is resolved) and monitor compliance with the performance targets.

Status/Updates

We are currently working with the Accela administrator on revising the workflow in Accela. This enhancement will allow the system to perform the functions necessary to record and report accurate findings. This is projected to be up and running by mid-Sept. 2022.

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Improvements | Recommendation #11

We recommend that the Commissioner of City Planning ensure that supervisors promptly assign cases to inspectors in Accela in order to meet the performance target of conducting inspections within 72 hours after the complaint is entered into the system.

Status/Updates

When a valid complaint is received by the Zoning Enforcement team, it is entered into the Accela database by the permit technicians. The case is then assigned by a supervisor to be investigated within 72 business hours.

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Improvements | Recommendation #12

We recommend that the Commissioner of City Planning ensure that complaint inspection and closure dates are consistently entered into Accela.

Status/Updates

Complaint inspections are consistently scheduled and assigned by supervisors.

Closure dates are an automated process based on inspection findings once entered into Accela. Once all determinations have been verified, including court renderings, cases are closed through this process within the required SLAs.

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Improvements | Recommendation #13

We recommend that the Commissioner of City Planning update procedures to require supervisors to review cases, at least on a spot-check bases, before they are closed in the system and ensure that the procedure is followed.

Status/Updates

Supervisors are now conducting quality assurance checks on complaint cases before they are closed. A Zoning Enforcement Quality Assurance Form has been created to assist Supervisors in this process.

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Zoning Enforcement Quality Insurance Form

Zoning Inspector Quality Assurance

DATE:

QA INSPECTION PERFORMED BY:

PERFORMED ON INSPECTOR:

TYPE OF INSPECTION:

Zoning Complaint Building Inspection / Stop Work Business License

Non-Conforming Sign Review Other:

CAP NUMBER:

ADDRESS:

INSPECTION RESULTS: 01 - No Violation Found 02 - Complied 03 - Stop Work Posted

04 - Unable to Gain Entry 05 - In research

If available, list the violations noted by the inspector:

A quality Assurance inspection was performed on the above inspector at the listed location and the recorded results appear to comply with the City of Atlanta Zoning Ordinance.

YES
 NO

The following violations may have been oversights of the inspector OR there may have been changes made after the inspection was performed.

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE:

BUILDING & ZONING ENFORCEMENT AUDIT

Improvements | Recommendation #14

We recommend the Commissioner of City Planning work with the Accela System Administrator to reduce the inspectors' access in Accela to only those permissions needed to perform their specific functions.

Status/Updates

These improvements are in progress. Regular meetings with the Accela Administrator and zoning enforcement team are taking place to address this recommendation.

Additional changes, like an improved complaint workflow better suited for Zoning Enforcement are in progress. Implementation is expected to be completed by mid-Sept. 2022.

CODEBUSTERS

Call 404.330.6178

or

Email your complaint to

CodeBustersDCP@AtlantaGa.Gov

QUESTIONS?