



**City of Eloy
Minutes
City Council Work Session Meeting
October 20, 2025 at 5:30 PM
City Council Chambers**

I. Call to Order

Mayor Andrew Sutton called the meeting to order on Monday, October 20, 2025, for the Eloy City Council Work Session on Code Enforcement at 5:32 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Present: Andrew Sutton, Mayor
Michelle Tarango, Vice Mayor
Sara Curtis, Council Member
JoAnne Galindo, Council Member
Jose Garcia, Council Member
Dan Snyder, Council Member
Michael Vodrazka, Council Member

Staff: David Malewitz, City Manager
Stephen Cooper, City Attorney
Celine Kidwell, City Clerk
Mackenzie Letcher, Assistant City Manager

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Councilmember Jose Garcia led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Unscheduled Public Appearances

There were no unscheduled public appearances.

Council Member Dan Snyder announced a benefit softball game scheduled for the following Monday, October 27, 2025, at noon, with opening ceremonies at 12:15 p.m. The event is a Stand Up for Cancer charity event featuring the Robson Ranch softball team versus the Robson Restaurant and wait staff.

V. Discussion Items

A. Code Enforcement Update

Community Development Director Dan Symer presented a comprehensive overview of the Code Enforcement program, accompanied by Code Enforcement Officers Lydia Powell and Angel Madrid.

Mayor Sutton thanked Code Enforcement Officers for their efforts in making Eloy cleaner, safer, and more appealing, acknowledging the challenging nature of their work and noting positive feedback from residents and neighboring communities. Mayor Sutton noted October as National Code Compliance Month and Code Enforcement Officer Appreciation Month.

Community Development Director Symer outlined three primary program objectives:

1. Promote Public Health and Safety
2. Enhance Neighborhood Quality and Appearance
3. Build Community Trust Through Engagement and Education

Priority of Violations Framework:

1. Immediate Threats - imminent danger to public health, safety, or welfare
2. Environmental Impacts - unauthorized use of abandoned/vacant buildings, illegal dumping, stormwater issues
3. Unauthorized Construction - building without required permits
4. Multiple Complaints, Nuisances, and Junk - repeat offenders and blight
5. Minor Property Maintenance and Zoning Issues - weeds, grasses, zoning violations
6. Other Violations - all remaining violations

Enforcement Strategies:

- **Proactive Inspections:** Routine neighborhood sweeps with the goal of visiting each neighborhood at least once weekly, prioritizing high-traffic areas, main thoroughfares, and downtown
- **Targeted Enforcement:** Coordination with Police, Fire, and Public Works for comprehensive responses on chronic problem properties
- **Complaint-Based Inspections:** Responding to community concerns
- **Community Programs:** Adopt-a-Street Clean-up, Neighborhood Property Clean-up
- **Community Education and Engagement:** National Night Out participation, educational materials, planned outreach campaigns, and workshops

Notice Process Changes:

- Eliminated third notice, reducing timeline from ten weeks to eight weeks
- Certified mail sent; if returned, proceeding directly to abatement
- Limited time extensions with up to eight weeks total
- Repeat offenders may proceed directly to citation or abatement

Program Progress:

Between January 1, 2024, and October 17, 2025:

- 2,803 violations filed
- 2,568 violations resolved
- 227 violations outstanding
- 65 cases required court assistance
- Over 5,400 inspections conducted

Success Stories: Collapsed garage on gas line, Hayden and Toltec dumping ground cleanup (property owner spent \$77,000), unauthorized construction addressed, squatter evictions, abandoned property demolitions, railroad corridor cleanup, "Blue bus" removal after 26 years, and downtown improvements.

City Property Maintenance: Staff confirmed Code Enforcement addresses city-owned vacant lots to demonstrate accountability. Councilmembers had comments, questions, and possible recommendations for the program.

Council Member Vodrazka:

- Commended officers for community knowledge, particularly during homeless counts
- Questioned landfill flyer accuracy; suggested updating to reflect current \$10 flat rate policy for residents up to 1,000 pounds with escalating fees
- Requested written code enforcement policy documentation
- Advocated for a balanced approach: aggressive enforcement for immediate threats but compassionate assistance for seniors and disabled residents
- Expressed concern for officer safety
- Raised concerns about vacant commercial properties and equal standards for businesses
- Thanked officers for their work with the homeless population

Director Symer responded that staff assist seniors and disabled residents as a standard practice. Director Symer noted state constitutional restrictions on using public funds for private purposes. Regarding vacant commercial buildings, Director Symer explained the legal limitations—the city can only ensure structural safety, but cannot force property owners to sell or develop their properties.

Council Member Snyder:

- Supported beautification recognition program to encourage residents
- Referenced the previous Christmas in April program partnership

Vice Mayor Tarango:

- Questioned timeframes for addressing new violations
- Asked about property owner liability when others dump on their property

- Suggested recognition for property owners who invest significantly in cleanup

Code Enforcement Officers Madrid and Powell explained the eight-week process, from the initial notice to abatement, with flexibility for reasonable extensions. Staff investigates dumping incidents, but ultimately, property owners are responsible for the condition of their property. Staff personally expresses appreciation to cooperative property owners, but no formal recognition letter process exists.

Council Member Curtis:

- Appreciated the prioritization framework for constituent questions
- Praised improved communication from code enforcement officers
- Requested clarification on empty lot weed requirements and alleyway maintenance responsibilities
- Suggested future brochure on proper desert landscaping
- Proposed system for volunteers to participate in desert cleanup on flexible schedules

Director Symer clarified that the current code requires all vegetation over 16 inches in height to be maintained, and trees to be trimmed to a height of 5 feet. Director Symer acknowledged the need for improved landscaping guidance and committed to developing additional educational materials in collaboration with the Public Works department. Adjacent property owners are responsible for maintaining the centerline of the alley or easement.

Council Member Garcia:

- Thanked staff for productivity improvements
- Emphasized personal responsibility and fire danger from weeds, referencing past fatalities
- Explained the historical context of reduced enforcement, allowing non-compliance habits
- Discussed liability concerns with volunteer cleanup programs
- Expressed full support for code enforcement efforts

Director Symer acknowledged the authority to address hoarding situations with the Fire Marshal.

Council Member Galindo:

- Praised visible improvements over 18 months
- Anticipated future code review and council support for necessary changes

Mayor:

- Supported dumpster program concept similar to Mesa's twice-yearly

- neighborhood program
- Thanked officers for professionalism and not responding to social media criticism
- Recognized Robeson Ranch volunteers conducting monthly cleanups
- Emphasized community-wide stake in property maintenance

City Magistrate Roger Valdez suggested that code enforcement could authorize volunteer cleanup groups to dump for free, provided they presented before-and-after photos of cleaned properties.

Director Symer confirmed this represents the most intensive court enforcement activity in seven years.

Future Plans: Community outreach with updated flyers, enhanced voluntary compliance through proactive neighborhood sweeps, reinstatement of the dumpster drop program, a long-term "Christmas in April" type program for seniors and financially limited residents, and a review of code ordinances with the City Attorney and City Magistrate.

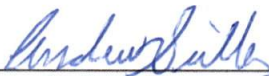
VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

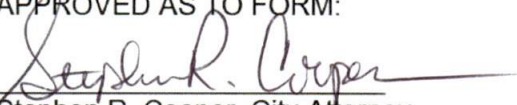
ATTEST:


Celine Kidwell, City Clerk

BY:


Andrew Sutton, Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Stephen R. Cooper, City Attorney