



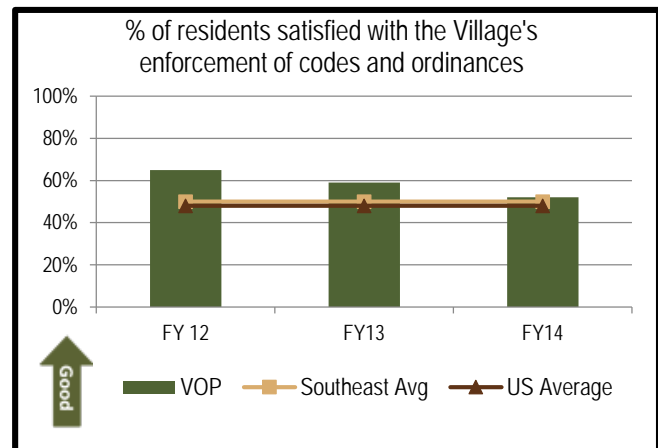
## BIRDIE Team Report – Code Enforcement Process August 11, 2015

## Executive Summary

### Opportunity Being Evaluated

This study of the “enforcement of Village codes and ordinances” was undertaken as a result of the decline in resident satisfaction ratings with the Village’s enforcement of codes and ordinances, as indicated in the annual Community Survey. In the 2012 Community Survey, 65% of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the enforcement of Village codes and ordinances, which declined to 59% in 2013. As a high performing organization, the decline in resident satisfaction from 2012 to 2013, was a clear indicator that the code enforcement process should be evaluated using the Village’s continuous improvement process, known as BIRDIE.

After the decision was made to conduct a BIRDIE on the code enforcement process, the results of the 2014 Community Survey showed a further decline in resident satisfaction to 52%. The Village’s three year satisfaction ratings of 65%, 59% and 52%, are above the southeast and US satisfaction averages of 50% and 48% respectively, but below levels acceptable to the Village. In keeping with the Village’s strategic goal to “Preserve the character of Pinehurst and the quality of neighborhoods,” the BIRDIE team was tasked with performing a comprehensive review of the Village’s code enforcement process and providing recommendations for potential improvement.



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### Overview of the Process and Data Used to Determine Recommendations

The BIRDIE team conducted a thorough review of the data on code enforcement found in the Community Surveys. The team also sought to understand the complexity of the various codes and ordinances found in the Pinehurst Municipal Code and the Pinehurst Development Ordinance. In addition, the team sought to understand the reason why residents had a high level of dissatisfaction with the enforcement of Village codes and ordinances.

A preliminary evaluation of the 2014 Community Survey data segmented by neighborhood indicated the highest level of dissatisfaction with the enforcement of Village codes and ordinances was found in the Pinehurst No. 6, Village Acres, Lake Pinehurst, and Morganton/Monticello neighborhoods. This was consistent with the number of complaints received by neighborhood over the past three years. Based on the segmented data by neighborhood and the historical complaint information, the team decided to mail a separate survey to the four neighborhoods with the highest levels of dissatisfaction with the enforcement of Village codes and ordinances. Following the mailed survey, the team posted two additional questions pertaining to code enforcement on the Village’s website as an Open Village Hall topic to solicit additional resident feedback.

Once the team analyzed the data from the surveys and historical complaint trends, the team began the process of developing and evaluating potential solutions. The team identified seven potential solutions that were evaluated using a matrix that identified the advantages, disadvantages and mitigating factors from a variety of customer/stakeholder perspectives:

1. Anonymous vs. non-anonymous complaints
2. Proactive enforcement
3. Mobile 311 technology
4. Public education
5. Collaboration between the Code Enforcement Officer, Community Appearance Commission, Public Services, and Citizen Patrol
6. Use of friendly notifications and revised notice of violations
7. Focused enforcement and education by type of violation

#### Data Used in the Evaluation:

- 2012, 2013 and 2014 Community Surveys, segmented by neighborhood
- Neighborhood surveys of Village Acres; Lake Pinehurst; Morganton/Monticello; and Pinehurst No. 6
- Open Village Hall topic on code enforcement
- Three year trend information on complaints segmented by neighborhood and type of complaint

#### ***Final BIRDIE Team Recommendations***

After evaluating each potential solution, the result was a consensus among the team that potential solutions should focus on:

1. A greater use of technology in the code enforcement process,
2. Establishing a public education campaign on Village codes and ordinances, and
3. Revising the code enforcement process to make it friendlier with consistent abatement deadlines.

Currently, our code enforcement process is a manual process that could be more efficient with the use of Mobile 311 technology. This would allow us to enhance reporting and to record violations on the VOP Intranet and website to improve communication of code violations. The team also believes that educating and informing residents and property owners of the Village's various codes and ordinances may be one of the best ways to prevent violations from occurring or reoccurring thus achieving an overall higher level of code compliance versus pursuing code enforcement and abatement. Finally, the code enforcement process should be revised to include friendly notifications prior to beginning enforcement action that has consistent abatement deadlines, which will better inform residents and property owners on Village codes and ordinances and at the same time can enhance a feeling of good will about the Village's actions.

#### Recommendations:

- A greater use of technology in the code enforcement process
- Establish a public education campaign on Village codes and ordinances,
- Revise the code enforcement process to make it friendlier with consistent abatement deadlines

## Evaluation Process

### *Description of the BIRDIE Process and Team Members*

The evaluation of the enforcement of Village codes and ordinances began with the formation of a BIRDIE team. BIRDIE is an acronym for the Village’s process used to evaluate and improve key organizational projects and processes that have a considerable ongoing staffing and financial impact.

The BIRDIE team used for this evaluation was comprised of the following members:

- Kevin B. Reed, Director of Planning & Inspections
- Clark Campbell, Village Council Member
- Bill Cambreleng, Community Appearance Commission
- Natalie Dean, Assistant Village Manager
- Earl Phipps, Police Chief
- Becky Jensen, Financial Services Assistant Director
- Angel Smith, Code Enforcement Officer

#### **BIRDIE**

- B Bring the opportunity forward
- I Investigate the opportunity
- R Review potential solutions
- D Determine the solution
- I Implement the solution
- E Evaluate the solution



The team first established its project purpose and objective related to the task assigned. Members were also educated on the BIRDIE process and reviewed the timeline for the evaluation and the current code enforcement process. A review of the current process indicated the Village has multiple codes that are located in either the Pinehurst Municipal Code or the Pinehurst Development Ordinance that are enforced by either the Code Enforcement Officer in the Planning Department, police officers in the Police Department, or employees in the Public Services Department. In addition, there are a variety of abatement deadlines that vary based on the type of regulation.

### *Five Whys Analysis*

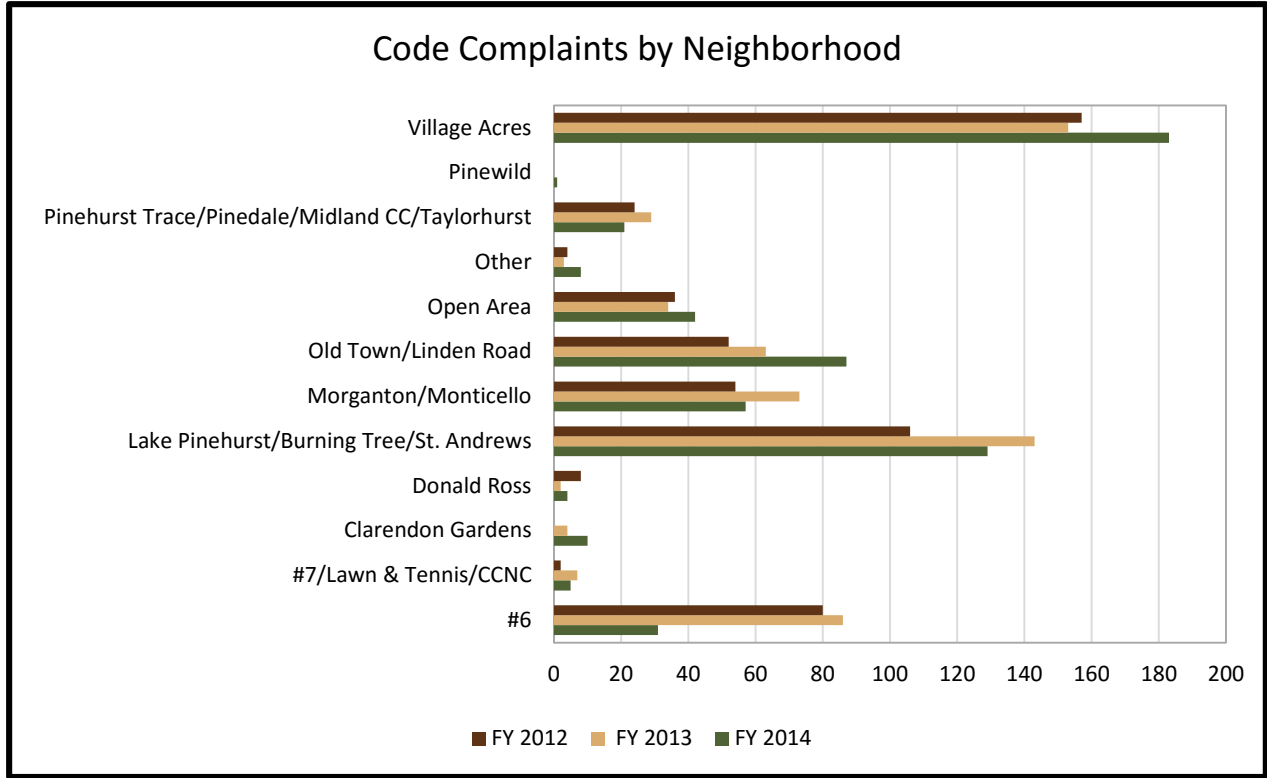
The first step in the process was to define the problem. The five whys analysis attempts to get at the root cause of a problem by asking “why is that” five times. The result is that the root cause or causes of the problem are ultimately identified. The problem identified by the team was “resident dissatisfaction with Village enforcement of codes and ordinances”. The analysis revealed that the root causes of the problem were primarily:

1. A lack of investment or use of technology in the code enforcement process, and
2. A lack of education to residents about Village codes and ordinances.

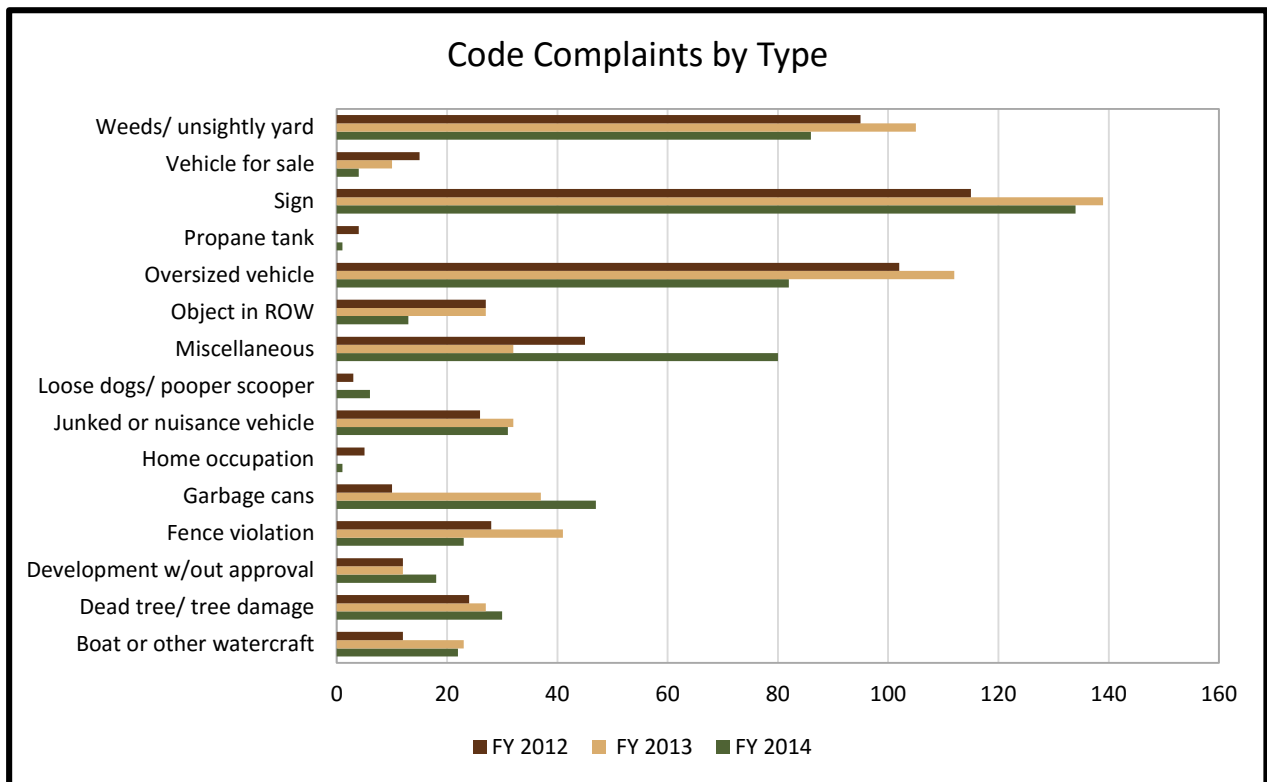
### *What the Data Told Us*

The 2012 Community Survey indicated that 65% of the respondents were satisfied with the enforcement of Village codes and ordinances, which fell to 59% in 2013 and to 52% in 2014. To gain a perspective on how this compares to the southeast and US, for these benchmarks the level of satisfaction averages 50% and 48%, respectively.

A review of the past three years of historical complaints indicated 63% of all complaints come from either Pinehurst No. 6, Lake Pinehurst, or Village Acres residents.

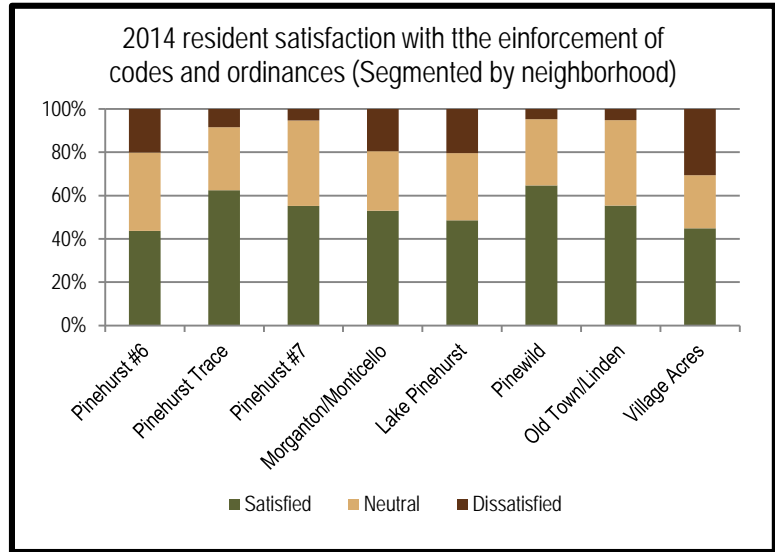


The data also indicated the top three complaints in each of the last three years are for: 1) weeds or unsightly yards, 2) signs, or 3) oversized vehicles.



The segmented data for the 2014 Community Survey indicated that the neighborhoods in the Village with the highest dissatisfaction with the enforcement of Village codes and ordinances were: Pinehurst No. 6, Village Acres, Lake Pinehurst, and Morganton/Monticello.

The BIRDIE team also researched code enforcement processes for three benchmark communities and determined that their process does not differ significantly from the Village’s process.



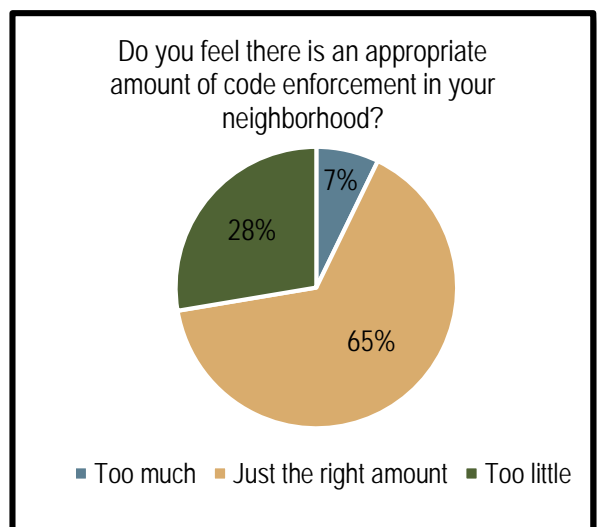
The data collected by the team revealed that an economical technology solution that could be used in code enforcement is Mobile 311, which is currently used by the Public Services Department to track complaints.

The data also revealed there are numerous potential opportunities to educate residents and others on Village codes and ordinances and they include: Village newsletter; Village website; mailing, flyers, & other printed materials; social media; new resident package; presentations to homeowners and property owners associations; Neighborhood Advisory Committee meetings; and Open Village Hall.

### Neighborhood Surveys and Open Village Hall

The team decided to target the four neighborhoods that had the greatest dissatisfaction with the enforcement of Village codes and ordinances with a neighborhood survey. Approximately 5,000 surveys were mailed and the Village received approximately 1,250 responses. The survey contained nine questions and the respondents indicated the following:

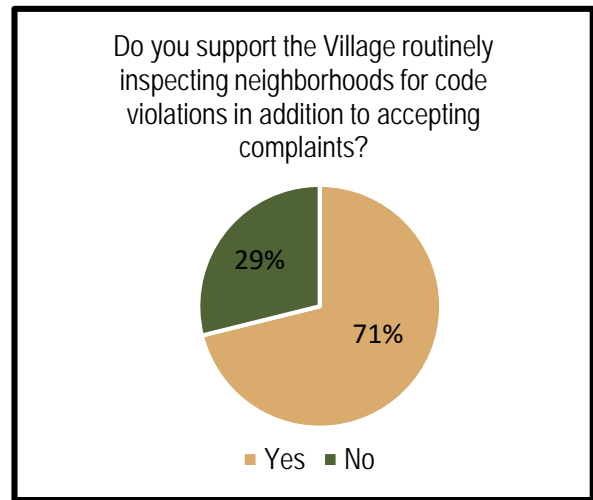
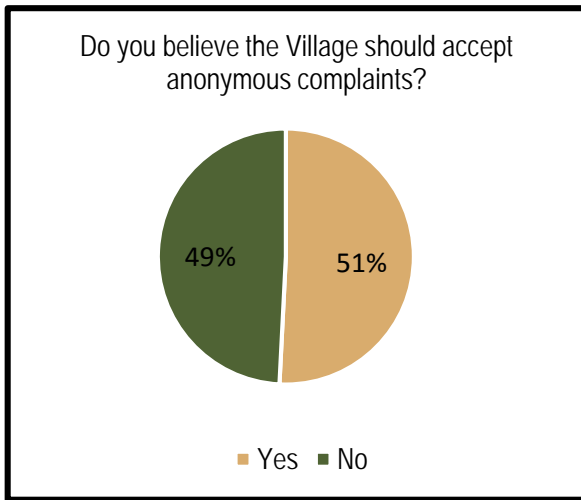
- 76% indicated they had never reported a code violation to the Village
- 65% indicated there was an appropriate amount of code enforcement in their neighborhood
- 74% indicated the Village has the appropriate amount of code regulations
- 50% indicated the Village should only respond to complaints and 50% felt the Village should routinely inspect neighborhoods for violations
- 52% indicated their satisfaction with code enforcement would improve if the Village



would communicate the status of code violations in their neighborhood (29% were unsure)

- A total of 239 respondents indicated they have had contact with the Village's Code Enforcement Officer: 83% indicated the Code Enforcement Officer was competent and professional and 89% indicated the Code Enforcement Officer was courteous

The BIRDIE Team also utilized the Open Village Hall online civic engagement tool in order to receive additional feedback from residents. Two questions were posted on Open Village Hall and 245 visited the forum and 59 provided feedback. The two questions and the results were as follows:



### ***Solutions Evaluated and Perspectives Considered***

The team identified seven potential solutions that were evaluated using a matrix that identified the advantages, disadvantages and mitigating factors from a variety of customer/stakeholder perspectives:

1. Anonymous vs. non-anonymous complaints
2. Proactive enforcement
3. Mobile 311 technology
4. Public education
5. Collaboration between the Code Enforcement Officer, Community Appearance Commission, Public Services, and Citizen Patrol
6. Use of friendly notifications and revised notice of violations
7. Focused enforcement and education by type of violation

The result was a consensus among the team that potential solutions should focus on:

1. A greater use of technology in the code enforcement process,
2. Establishing a public education campaign on Village codes and ordinances, and
3. Revising the code enforcement process to make it friendlier and establish consistent abatement deadlines

## Detailed Recommendations

The BIRDIE team concluded that the recommended solutions should focus in the areas of technology, public education and changes in the code enforcement process. The team was divided into smaller sub-teams in order to further analyze and develop implementation plans for the three recommended solutions. Once these sub-team efforts were concluded, the entire team met to discuss, evaluate and further refine the implementation plan for each of the solutions.

### *Description of recommendations*

#### **Technology Solution**

The development and implementation of Mobile 311 was the code enforcement technology solution identified as the best choice by the BIRDIE team. Mobile 311 is owned by Facility Dude. Facility Dude was created in 2007 and introduced the *software-as-a-service* (SaaS) model to healthcare, local government, clubs, and other commercial industries providing on-demand, online solutions for facilities, business and maintenance operations.

Mobile 311 is currently used by the Public Services Department and is a simple, affordable online tool to manage assets and services. It is proven to be easy to implement and use, it is available 24/7, provides instant updates and automated and custom reports. It allows communication and collaboration from anywhere using mobile, hand-held devices that interface with the VOP website and Intranet. The cost to purchase, implement and maintain Mobile 311 makes it a cost effective system solution. The estimated annual cost is \$1,310.

#### **Public Education Solution**

Public education was identified by the BIRDIE team as one of the preferred solutions. Effective code enforcement initiatives seek to achieve voluntary compliance as a means of avoiding the punitive methods of enforcement. A proactive code enforcement approach does not necessarily mean the Village must look for and pursue potential violations. Proactive can also refer to addressing issues that may become code enforcement cases or complaints before they escalate to a point of enforcement and abatement. The primary means to achieving a more proactive code enforcement approach is through education.

The team recommends developing an educational campaign that focuses on one key code enforcement area per quarter. Educating and informing the residents and property owners of the Village's various codes and ordinances may be one of the best ways to prevent violations from occurring or reoccurring thus achieving an overall higher level of code compliance versus pursuing code enforcement and abatement.

The team also proposes a number of other ways to enhance public education through communication tools and the use of multiple methods and opportunities. Creating regular speaking opportunities for staff before POAs/HOAs, the Neighborhood Advisory Committee, realtor/property management organizations and other groups on code enforcement issues and topics can enhance public education. Another tool proposed is the introduction of a regular



feature in the Village newsletter on code enforcement. A new resident package with an emphasis on Village codes and ordinances is an additional tool to reach residents, particularly those new to the Village. In addition, other printed materials such as flyers and postcards can be distributed. These educational efforts can be developed and deployed consistently in accordance with the Village’s adopted communications policy.

The primary costs to the Village for this solution will be associated with the printing and mailing of various items such as postcards, information materials for new residents, and other printed materials. The Fiscal Year 2016 budget contains \$5,000 to support the public education solution.

**Process Change Solution**

The BIRDIE team also recommends making some changes to the Village’s code enforcement process. First, the team recommends targeted reinforcement to address the most common violations that are occurring, particularly if they are seasonal related (i.e. weeds and grass in late spring and summer). This will also help to increase resident understanding of Village codes and ordinances. Secondly, the team recommends the Code Enforcement Officer begin issuing friendly notifications prior to beginning official enforcement action. This will also create an educational opportunity for property owners and residents to be better informed on Village codes and ordinances and at the same time can enhance a feeling of good will about the Village’s actions. Finally, the team recommends implementing consistent abatement deadlines to simplify the enforcement process and create a clear understanding of when compliance must be achieved prior to a fine being levied by the Village. Currently, abatement deadlines vary based on the type of complaint and the team recommends implementing a consistent 30 day deadline. There are no additional costs associated with this solution.

**Overview of Financial and Staffing Impact**

The overall cost to implement the three recommendations of the BIRDIE team are as follows:

Recommendation	Cost
Implement technology	\$ 1,310
Public education	\$ 5,000
Process changes	\$ -
<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>\$ 6,310</b>

**Benefits of Recommendations**

There are numerous benefits to the solutions recommended to increase resident satisfaction with the Village’s enforcement of codes and ordinances, as indicated below.

The benefits of the technology solution include:

- Responsiveness - intake requests and quickly respond to complaints

- Transparency - document violations, improve information sharing, and track work
- Productivity - improve efficiency of inspections and easily flag issues for follow up

The benefits of the public education solution include:

- Responsiveness – targeted reinforcement and the ability to address specific areas and problems may result in greater overall compliance
- Productivity – fewer complaints and documented violations allows for more time to address enforcement and abatement measures
- Transparency – publishing a map of code enforcement violations on website will allow for the public to be aware that a violation is being addressed by the Village
- Knowledge – educational opportunities will allow residents and property owners to have a greater understanding of Village codes and ordinances

The benefits of the process change solution include:

- Consistency – uniform and consistent deadlines for corrective action to occur will assist the Code Enforcement Officer in tracking violations and provide accurate data for performance monitoring
- Responsiveness –targeted reinforcement and the ability to address specific areas and problems may result in greater overall compliance
- Satisfaction – the introduction and use of friendly reminders prior to beginning enforcement action may lead to a higher level of satisfaction by residents regarding the enforcement of Village codes and ordinances

## Implementation Plan

The following is an implementation plan for the various components of the recommended solutions. The plan calls for the solutions to primarily meet implementation deadlines based on each quarter of the fiscal year.

<b>BIRDIE Team Recommendations: Implementation Plan</b>	
<b>September 30, 2015</b>	Install hardware and software; define and setup code enforcement criteria; train employees; conduct field tests and implement software
	Produce postcards/flyers/printed material/social media/eblasts for targeted education area (Topic: solid waste containers)
	Begin issuing friendly notifications
	Newsletter article – “Code Corner”
<b>October 31, 2015</b>	Implement consistent abatement deadline
<b>December 31, 2015</b>	Produce postcards/flyers/printed material/social media/eblasts for targeted education area (Topic: oversized vehicles)
	Develop website integration of code violation map
	Begin Quarterly targeted reinforcement
<b>March 31, 2016</b>	Produce postcards/flyers/printed material/social media/eblasts for targeted education area (Topic: signs/objects in ROW)
	Complete New Resident Packet on Code Enforcement
<b>June 30, 2016</b>	Produce postcards/flyers/printed material/social media/eblasts for targeted education area (Topic: weeds/grass)
	Speak at HOA/POA/NAC meetings