

Dear Mr. Ruger,

Please find attached a document titled "Citizen Evidence Packet: Code Enforcement Audit."

I am submitting this packet to your office to be officially entered into the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting.

Additionally, I formally request that this document be distributed in its entirety to the Mayor, all members of the City Council, the City Manager, and any other applicable administrative parties prior to the meeting so they have adequate time to review the materials.

As outlined in the attached document, this packet contains timestamped evidence, verified CRM case numbers, and specific legal statutes regarding the ongoing, inconsistent enforcement of Municipal Code Section 6-2005. I will be directly referencing these exhibits during my public comments before the Council.

Please reply to confirm receipt of this email and to verify that the packet has been distributed and entered into the record.

Thank you for your time and assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Derek Rinehart

11032 Sedalia Way Commerce City, CO

Citizen Evidence Packet: Code Enforcement Audit

Part I: Official Legal and Policy Baseline

Colorado law requires most self-propelled vehicles to display one plate in front and one in the rear. It requires the front plate to be displayed horizontally in the manufacturer-designated location and prohibits covers or substances that make a plate unreadable by an automated identification system.

Commerce City's own vehicle-enforcement guidance states that vehicles which are unlicensed, inoperable, or have expired plates must be stored in a fully enclosed structure, and that temporary carports or tarps are not acceptable. The same city page defines an inoperable vehicle to include a motor vehicle or trailer that does not lawfully display a current license plate and validation sticker. It also quotes Section 6-2005, explicitly mandating the enclosed-building exception.

Part II: The \$4.5M Security Implication

Council materials for the Flock Expansion Project describe a 60-month package costing \$4,560,478, with Ordinances 2755 and 2756 advanced in March 2026 and listed again on the April 6, 2026 agenda. While Flock can still generate searchable leads through Vehicle Fingerprint, exact plate-based matching and NCIC-linked hotlist alerts depend on readable license plates. When the city fails to enforce plate visibility and allows unlicensed vehicles to remain stored in open residential driveways rather than fully enclosed structures, it degrades straightforward plate-based identification and forces the police department to rely on less precise, secondary vehicle data.

Part III: Case Exhibits and the Enforcement Loophole

The following cases demonstrate a repeated pattern of closures that are inconsistent with the legal baseline above.

Case Exhibit 1: CRM 19234643

The responding officer stated there was “no violation” while simultaneously quoting municipal code 1215, which explicitly states: “No person shall park immediately in front of a home that is not their own residence for more than five (5) hours.”

Case Exhibit 2: CRM 19310346

A complaint involving obscured and out-of-state plates was transferred, unassigned, reassigned, and then closed with a generic eTRAKiT link, providing zero documented explanation of verified compliance.

Case Exhibit 3: CRM 21336507

A plate located loosely on the front dashboard was accepted as compliance. This violates state plate-display rules, which require the front plate to be securely fastened in the manufacturer-designated location.

Case Exhibit 4: CRM 21414834

A reported vehicle was not addressed for roughly 39 hours. The case was closed when the vehicle was no longer present, effectively dismissing the ticket without addressing the underlying recurring complaint.

Case Exhibit 5: CRM 21418072

Two trucks were missing front plates. The street vehicle was passed to police, while the driveway vehicle was treated as resolved after an adhesive plate was attached to the bumper. The code ticket was marked completed despite the street truck remaining unplated.

Case Exhibit 6: CRM 21421524

A truck with an expired temporary tag and no front plate was issued a 72-hour tow notice, then moved into a driveway. The case was closed as “moved into driveway.” An open driveway is not a fully enclosed structure, making that closure rationale inconsistent with Section 6-2005 and the city’s own published vehicle-enforcement guidance.

Case Exhibit 7: CRM 21440543

This follow-up case resulted in an officer locating the vehicle and issuing a summons only after the earlier closure was challenged by the reporting party. This shows enforcement capacity exists; the issue is inconsistency.

Part IV: Conclusion and Requested Action

The pattern reflected in these cases shows that Commerce City does not lack written code; it lacks consistent application of that code. I am respectfully requesting:

1. A written directive clarifying that an open driveway does not satisfy the enclosed-structure requirement under Section 6-2005.

A sample audit of CRM closures involving vehicle plate, registration, and inoperable-vehicle complaints.

A report back to the council within 60 days summarizing how those complaints are classified and closed.

Dear Mr. Ruger,

Please include the email chain below in the official meeting record as an addendum to the Citizen Evidence Packet I submitted for tonight's City Council meeting.

This communication, received this morning from city staff, directly relates to Case Exhibit 3 (CRM 21336507) in my packet. It is relevant because it addresses the issue of an improperly mounted license plate being treated as compliance.

Please distribute this addendum to the Mayor and Council before tonight's meeting if practicable.

Thank you,

Derek Rinehart
11032 Sedalia Way

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Lugo, Diana - CE** <dlugo@c3gov.com>

Date: Mon, Apr 20, 2026, 08:00

Subject: Re: Status Update Request: Open Code Violation (Request ID: 21336507) at 17615 E 110th Way

To: Derek Rinehart <d.a.rinehart@gmail.com>

Hi Mr. Rinehart,

Thank you for taking the time to report your concerns and for providing detailed information. I apologize for the delayed response to your email. I was out of town and just got back to the office. You may have already seen the updates in the SeeClickFix ticket but I also wanted to share the info with you directly.

Unfortunately, the ticket was not formally re categorized to the Code Enforcement division when it was referred by the Police Department. Because of that, it did not enter the Code Enforcement division's assigned queue and was missed. We apologize for that administrative hiccup. I have taken steps to prevent that from happening again in the future.

An inspector went to the property to complete a site check. Upon inspection of the property, there was one vehicle parked in the driveway with a license plate that was located on the front dash. We were able to speak with the resident and inform him that his plates should be visibly displayed on both front and back all vehicles with valid registration. He allowed us to check the plates and registration and confirm that this truck has valid up to date plates.

I saw another ticket you submitted and would like to provide you with an update on that as well. Firstly, thank you for taking the time to share your concerns regarding the vacant lot located at Parcel #172309100014. I understand the seriousness of the issues you've described and want to provide clarification so there is a clear understanding of how these matters are addressed and which agencies are responsible.

The activities you've reported, specifically trespassing (including off-road vehicle use) and the discharge of firearms, are public safety and criminal matters. These fall under the jurisdiction of the Commerce City Police Department and should be reported to Dispatch at the time they are occurring. This allows officers to respond, take appropriate enforcement action, and, most importantly, document the activity through official reports and records.

While these activities are occurring on private property, that alone does not automatically place responsibility solely on Code Enforcement. Code Enforcement addresses violations of municipal code related to property conditions and land use; however, criminal activity remains under the authority of the Police Department, regardless of whether it occurs on public or private property.

With regard to your request that the property owner be required to install fencing, barriers, or "No Trespassing" signage, Code Enforcement does have the authority to require corrective actions such as temporary safeguards. However, this authority can only be exercised through a formal due process procedure and must be supported by

well-documented, verified evidence demonstrating that an ongoing public nuisance or safety hazard exists under the municipal code.

At this time, there is no verified evidence indicating that the property owner is knowingly allowing or facilitating these activities. Additionally, Code Enforcement cannot require improvements or safeguards based solely on reported concerns. In order to move forward, a documented pattern of recurring activity must first be established.

This is where coordination between departments is essential:

- The Police Department is the primary responding agency and is responsible for responding to incidents, addressing criminal violations, and generating official reports and documentation.
- Code Enforcement relies on that documentation, along with site inspections and additional observations, to determine whether conditions may meet the threshold of a public nuisance under Chapter 6 of the municipal code.
- If sufficient, verified documentation is established, Code Enforcement may then evaluate the situation through the appropriate administrative and legal framework to determine whether further action is warranted.

In short, enforcement in situations like this is a coordinated process, and it begins with proper response and documentation of the activity as it occurs.

Next Steps:

- Please continue to contact Commerce City Police Dispatch at the time incidents are occurring, as real-time reporting is critical for Police response and documentation.
- We will coordinate with the Police Department to ensure alignment and continued information sharing regarding this concern.
- We will work with the Police Department to explore outreach to the property owner and their registered agents regarding a potential “No Trespassing” designation to support enforcement efforts.
- We will follow up with Public Works to determine whether any existing barricades or temporary fencing near the lot were installed by the City, and if so, assess maintenance or possible enhancements.

· A multi-department team—including Police, Code Enforcement, Public Works, and other supporting divisions—will be visiting the area this Thursday to further assess conditions. We will notify you if there are any changes to that schedule.

We understand your concerns and share the goal of improving safety in this area. If you would like to discuss this further, we are available by phone, virtual meeting, or in person to walk through the process, applicable codes, and next steps in more detail.

Kind regards,

Diana Lugo
Code Enforcement Supervisor

dlugo@c3gov.com | M: 303-435-7370

c3gov.com

South Platte Crossing Building, Sixth Floor

City of Commerce City | [7190 Colorado Blvd. Suite 600 | Commerce City, CO 80022](https://www.commercecityco.gov)

From: Derek Rinehart <d.a.rinehart@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, April 10, 2026 11:10 AM

To: Lugo, Diana - CE <dlugo@c3gov.com>

Subject: Status Update Request: Open Code Violation (Request ID: 21336507) at 17615 E 110th Way

You don't often get email from d.a.rinehart@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Ms. Lugo,

I am writing to formally request a status update regarding an open code enforcement issue (Request ID: 21336507) located at 17615 E 110th Way, which was assigned to you by the Police Department on April 1, 2026, at 07:10 AM.

For context on the documented timeline of this issue:

March 28 (2:04 PM): I formally submitted a Traffic/Parking Complaint through the city portal regarding this residence. The report detailed the long-term storage (nearly a year) of a vehicle with an improperly displayed, out-of-state registration (Minnesota plate on the dashboard). The vehicle also actively leaks oil into the public street, creating an ongoing environmental nuisance.

April 1 (7:09 AM - 4 days later): Officer David Nickolaus responded to the ticket, stating the vehicle was "no longer on scene, referred to Code Enforcement for off street violations" (as the vehicle was simply moved off the public street and onto the property).

April 1 (7:10 AM): Officer Nickolaus officially assigned the ticket to Community Development—Diana Lugo.

It has now been over a week since this was placed on your desk, and 13 days since the initial report. The ticket remains open with no updates, and the vehicle remains out of compliance.

Could you please provide a written update answering the following:

What is the current status of Request ID 21336507?

What specific enforcement actions are being taken regarding the environmental hazard (oil leak) and the long-term storage of an improperly registered vehicle at this address? The vehicle is currently parked across the street from the address in case someone thinks it is gone, again.

I appreciate your time and your dedication to maintaining the standards of our community. I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

Derek Rinehart

[11032 Sedalia Way](#)

815-988-8033