

Bird Feeding Complaints

Addressing Public Nuisance Issues in Chandler

Neighborhoods Subcommittee
July 22, 2025



Agenda

- Defining the Issue
- Complaint Trends
- What Other Cities are Doing
- Enforcement Challenges
- Recommendations
- Discussion Items
- Next Steps



Goal: Equip Code Enforcement with effective tools to address community concerns while maintaining fair and enforceable standards

Defining the Issue

Common Complaints

- Property Damage: Bird droppings causing damage to homes, vehicles, and outdoor furniture
- Public Nuisance: Excessive bird populations creating unsanitary conditions
- Health Concerns: Disease transmission risks from bird droppings and debris
- Neighborhood Disputes: Conflicts between bird feeders and affected neighbors

Key Issue: Code Enforcement has no legal authority to address these complaints under current city ordinances



Complaint Trends

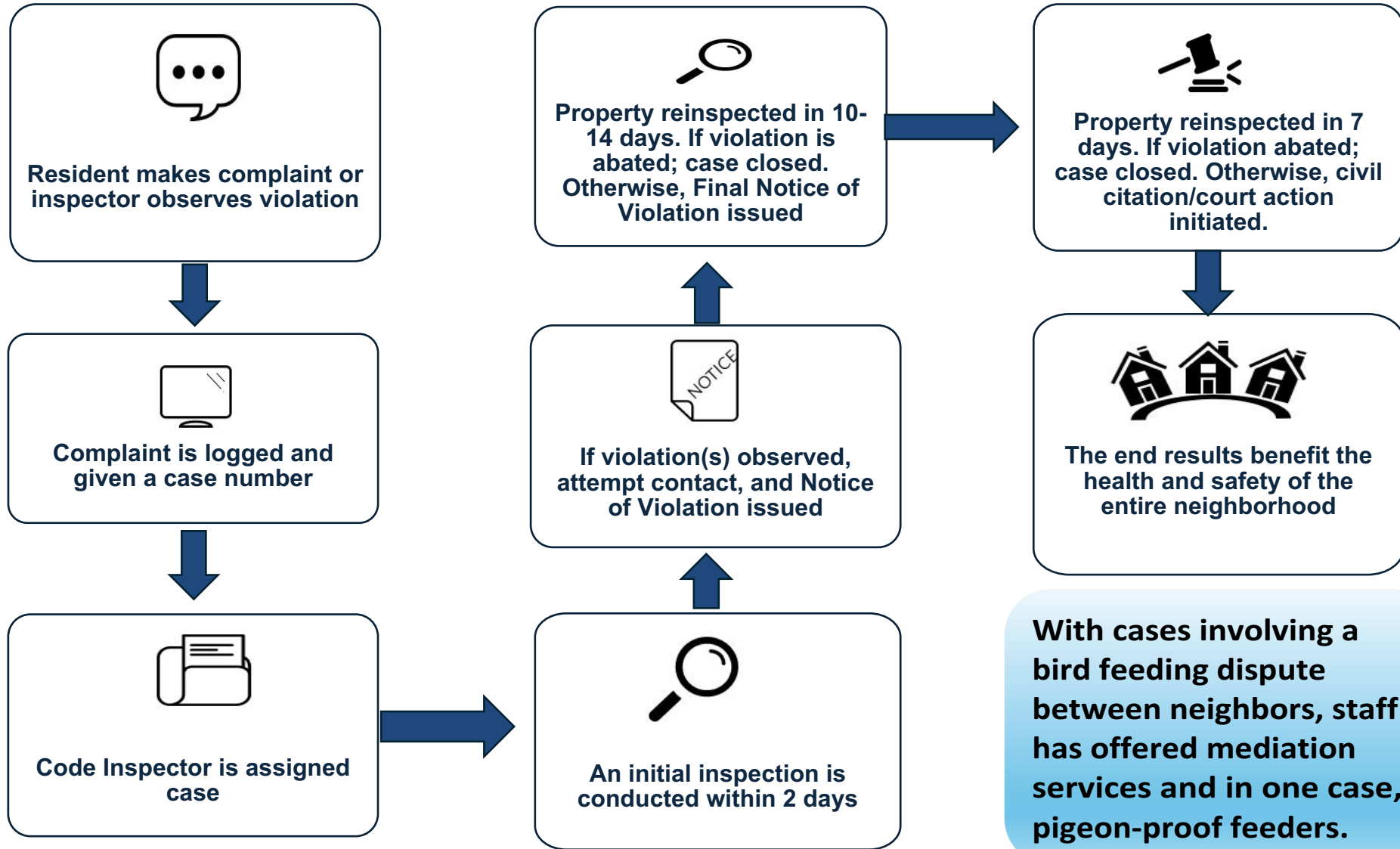
Calendar Year	Total Cases	Pigeon Specific	% of Total Cases	Bird Feeding Complaints	% of Total Cases	Total Combined Cases	% of Total Cases
2023	5221	10	.19%	3	0.06%	13	.25%
2024	5669	16	.28%	4	0.07%	20	.35%
2025 (Thru 6/25/2025)	2524	9	.36%	3	0.12%	12	.48%
Total	13414	35	.26%	10	0.07%	45	.34%

Since January of 2023 thru June 25, 2025, there have been 45 combined cases, all have been closed due to being unfounded or by voluntary compliance.

The most recent bird feeding complaint is related to all outdoor birds rather than just pigeons. The last inspection on June 24, 2025, did not result in opening a new case.



Neighborhood Preservation Division - Code Enforcement Process



What Other Cities are Doing

City	Approach	Penalties	Requirements
Gilbert	Limited to keeping of registered pigeons and a wild or feral animal feeding prohibition on Public Property only	\$259 - \$988 civil violations, criminal misdemeanor option	Resident complaint
Glendale	Addresses “annoyance” including feeding pigeons on private property and has a Pigeon-specific prohibition on Public Property only	\$50 - \$150 civil violation	Resident complaint
Mesa	Pigeon-specific prohibition	\$250-\$2,500 civil violations, criminal misdemeanor option	Resident complaint
Phoenix	Comprehensive pigeon feeding ban with penalties	\$150-\$2,500 civil violations, criminal misdemeanor option	3 witness signatures for enforcement
*Scottsdale	Addresses “public nuisance” to include “infestation” and birds are listed as part of this definition	\$250-\$750 civil violations, criminal misdemeanor option	Resident complaint
Tempe	Covers all birds	\$500-\$4,000 civil violations, criminal misdemeanor option	3 witness signatures for enforcement but can be waived

***Chandler currently has similar language about “infestations” which includes pigeons but not birds in general.**

Enforcement Challenges – Pigeon Specific

Glendale, Mesa and Phoenix:

Pros

- Preserves general bird feeding
- Graduated penalties
- Supports public health and sanitation

Cons

- Species limitation (pigeons only)
- Evidentiary complexity with mixed bird species
- Could limit enjoyment for some residents

Gilbert:

Pros

- Addresses feeding on public property
- Eliminates the need to identify species of birds on public property
- Supports public health and sanitation
- Preserves general bird feeding on private property

Cons

- Only addresses keeping of pigeons – does not speak to feeding of wild pigeons on private property (deemed civil matter)
- Could limit enjoyment for some residents

Enforcement Challenges - Wild Birds

Tempe:

Pros

- Clear and specific prohibition
- Graduated penalties
- Supports public health and sanitation
- Eliminates the need to identify species of birds - reduces misidentification

Cons

- Vagueness in language
- Enforcement ambiguity
- Administrative burden

Scottsdale:

Pros

- Supports public health and sanitation
- Eliminates the need to identify species of birds – reduces misidentification

Cons

- “Infestation” is difficult to prove
- Only addresses feeding as it relates to encouraging the infestation

State and County Approach

State:

Arizona State Law (ARS §132927)

- It's illegal across Arizona (including Maricopa County) to feed, attract, or entice wildlife, except for birds and tree squirrels
 - Violating individuals may be fined up to \$300 as a petty offense

County:

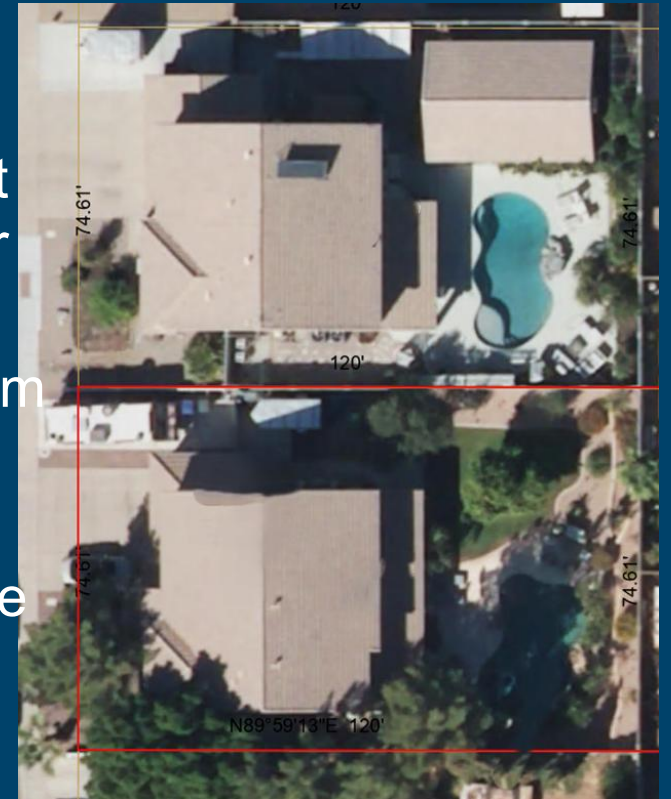
- The County does not prohibit feeding wild pigeons or birds, but it discourages it, especially if it leads to nuisance conditions
- Bird feeders are allowed, but feeders should be managed carefully—keeping seed off the ground and preventing pest attraction
- Property owners are responsible for ensuring feeding doesn't create public health nuisances (e.g., droppings, pests)



Recommendations

Proposed Action Items

- *Adopt Nuisance-Based Ordinance: Follow Tempe's model focusing on public nuisance impacts rather than specific species
- Establish Clear Penalties: Follow Chandler's current enforcement practices and penalty structure (\$250 - \$750, 2 civil citations prior to receiving a criminal citation)
- *Create Witness Requirements: Implement witness petition system for private property enforcement – define what constitutes a neighborhood problem
- Public Education: Launch awareness campaign about responsible bird feeding practices



***Items requiring additional discussion**

Discussion Items

Items to Consider:

- Distinguish between wild bird feeding and keeping domestic or captive birds, which could be treated differently*
- Determine the number of witnesses required (Phoenix and Tempe require 3 but Glendale, Mesa and Scottsdale only require 1 resident complaint for enforcement)
- Current Chandler Code Enforcement policies and procedures only requires one complaint for staff to determine if a violation of City Code exists
- Clarify the criteria for waiving the petition requirement if utilized
- Vegetation can make it difficult to attribute an excessive number of birds solely to feeding practices

***If there is a pigeon-only code:**

- **Do we provide examples or guidelines of acceptable feeders or practices (e.g., hopper feeders with weight-sensitive perches)?**
- **Do we offer education or outreach on pigeon control and alternative bird feeding techniques before issuing fines or citations?**

Next Steps

Immediate Actions

August 2025

- Draft ordinance language based on Tempe model
- Legal review and consultation

September 2025

- Stakeholder engagement planning – Discuss at Neighborhood Advisory Council Meeting
- Council Work Session

Implementation Phase

October/November 2025

- City Council adoption
- Staff training and resource allocation

December 2025

- Community education campaign



Questions?

Neighborhoods Subcommittee
July 22, 2025



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