

**CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING
300 WEST CROWELL STREET
MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA 28112
JULY 14, 2026 – 4:30 P.M.
AGENDA
www.monroenc.org**

1. Space Needs Analysis
2. Reserved Parking Program Update
3. Legislative Update
4. Code Enforcement Division Overview and Common Enforcement Violations



STAFF REPORT

TO: City Council

VIA: Mark Watson, City Manager

DATE: July 14, 2026

FROM: Lisa Hollowell, Assistant City Manager

PREPARED BY: Ryan Jones, Director of Property Management

SUBJECT: Space Needs Assessment – Final Presentation

SUMMARY STATEMENT

City Council will receive a presentation from Creech & Associates on the completed Space Needs Assessment and Facility Study. The presentation will summarize the analysis of the City's existing facilities, evaluate current and future space needs, and review the study's findings and recommendations to assist the City in planning for future facility and operational needs.

REVIEW

Space Needs Analysis

At the City Council Strategic Meeting on April 8, 2025, the Council discussed the need for a space needs analysis for City Hall and the development of a facilities master plan. Following the discussion, City Manager Mark Watson directed Staff to issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to select a consultant for the project.

The RFQ was released on April 14, 2025, and remained open until April 23, 2025. Creech and Associates previously conducted the City's 2012 space needs analysis, which led to the construction of the new Police Department, Fire Station #4, and proposed uses for new Energy Services building. Their extensive experience in the region and deep familiarity with the City's facilities further supported their selection.

Creech and Associates began work on the Space Needs Assessment and Facility Assessment with a kick off meeting on June 16th, 2025. The assessment included multiple departments and facilities

throughout the City in an effort to prioritize immediate needs and ascertain future space needs of the City.

As the study progressed, multiple facilities were identified as those that would help address more immediate space needs that exists throughout the City and, in particular, City Hall. From the information gathered from the assessment, multiple facility renovations have been completed, are in progress or identified for renovation in the near future.

Projects that have been completed or in progress during FY26 associated with the Space Needs Analysis are as follows:

- Downtown Monroe Offices – Office of Economic Development; Downtown Offices
- Sunset Park Fieldhouse – Property Management Administration
- Phase I – Winchester Ceramics – Fire Logistics
- Landscape Building – Landscape Maintenance Division of Property Management

Scheduled and budgeted FY27 projects include:

- Phase II – Winchester Ceramics - \$450,000.00
- Ellen Fitzgerald Senior Center - \$339,000.00

RECOMMENDATION

Council to receive the presentation from Creech & Associates on the completed Space Needs Assessment and City Hall Master Plan. This item is for information only, and no Council action is requested.



STAFF REPORT

TO: City Council

VIA: Mark Watson, City Manager

DATE: July 14, 2026

FROM: Jeffrey Wells, Assistant City Manager

PREPARED BY: Jeffrey Wells, Assistant City Manager

SUBJECT: Reserved Parking Program Update

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Staff will provide an update on the reserved parking lot located at the intersection of Hayne Street and E Crowell Street.

REVIEW

The first year of the reserved parking program is complete. Year two of the program is scheduled to run from July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027.

RECOMMENDATION

Item is informational only.



STAFF REPORT

TO: City Council

VIA: Mark Watson, City Manager

DATE: July 14, 2026

FROM: Lisa Hollowell, Assistant City Manager

PREPARED BY: Lisa Hollowell, Assistant City Manager

SUBJECT: Legislative Update

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The North Carolina General Assembly convened its 2026 short session on April 21, 2026, and has completed the main session of its Short Session. Staff will provide an update of legislation impacting municipalities.

REVIEW

Council will receive an update on key legislative actions affecting the City of Monroe and local governments, as well as upcoming General Assembly activities and next steps.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff is providing this legislative update to Council for informational purposes only.



STAFF REPORT

TO: City Council

VIA: Mark Watson, City Manager

DATE: July 14, 2026

FROM: Jeff Wells, Assistant City Manager

PREPARED BY: Lisa Stiwinter, Director of Planning and Development

SUBJECT: Code Enforcement Division and Common Enforcement Violations

SUMMARY STATEMENT

City Council will receive a presentation on the Code Enforcement Division, which is housed within the Planning and Development Department. The presentation will briefly review other common enforcement violations that are addressed by the Planning and Zoning Division and the Police and Engineering Departments.

REVIEW

City Council has expressed an interest in learning more about the purpose of the Code Enforcement Division, its goals and the responsibilities of its staff. This presentation will provide an overview of how code enforcement protects public health, safety, and welfare by ensuring compliance with local ordinances and property maintenance standards.

The Code Enforcement Division is housed within the Planning and Development Department and consist of six (6) Code Enforcement Officers. The Division is committed to protecting the public health, safety and welfare of the community by enforcing applicable ordinances and standards. The following outlines the Division's mission and purpose, goals and the primary job responsibilities of its Code Enforcement Officers.

Mission and Purpose: protect the public health, safety and welfare and property values, improve quality of life and beautify the City.

Goal: Receive voluntary compliance with local ordinances and property maintenance standards through building relationships with the community.

Job Responsibilities: to enforce the public health nuisance ordinance, minimum housing standards and vehicles illegal parked on an unapproved surface.

According to the Demographic & Economic Analysis Section of the NC State Budget and Management (OSBM), the City of Monroe's current population as of July 1, 2024 is 39,245. The City limits is approximately 33.36 square miles and roughly contains 17,961 properties. The City is divided into six (6) areas with each area assigned a Code Enforcement Officer that provides proactive and complaint-based enforcement. All Code Enforcement Officers are multi-trained to enforce the public health nuisance, minimum housing standards and parking in the yard ordinance.

The North Carolina General State Statute **§160A-174** titled "General ordinance-making power" provides Cities the ability to adopt an ordinance that defines, prohibits, regulates, or abates acts, omissions, or conditions that are detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of its citizens and the peace and dignity of the city, and may define and abate nuisances.

The city has adopted a Public Health Nuisance Ordinance, Minimum Housing Standards and a Parking in the Yard Ordinance that Code Enforcement has the responsibility of enforcing.

Public Health Nuisance Ordinance-Chapter 93 of the City of Monroe Code of Ordinances:

NC General State Statute §160A-193 "Abatement of Public Health Nuisance"-provides cities the authority to remove, abate or remedy everything in the city limits that is dangerous to the public health or public safety. The expense of the action shall be paid by the person in default. If the expense is not paid, it becomes a lien on the property.

Public Health Nuisance (PHN) is considered a condition or activity involving real property that amounts to an unreasonable interference with the health, safety, morals or comfort of the community.

Conditions that constitute a PHN include:

- Neglect of property
- Unauthorized accumulation of solid waste and litter
- Dilapidated conditions on premises
- Storage/use of upholstered furniture outdoors
- Uncontrolled growth of weeds or grass greater than 12 inches
- Junk and debris

Conditions that do not constitute a PHN include:

- Clothes lines
- Kids toys, picnic tables and grills

- No grass

Public Health Nuisance Enforcement Process:

- Proactive identification or complaint received
- CE Officer investigates the complaint
- Notice of Violation mailed to property owner providing seven (7) days to correct the violation
- CE reinspects the property
- If violation continues, one of the CE contractors are hired to abate the property
- Abatement cost and administration cost are invoiced to the property owner and if not paid then becomes a lien on the property

Minimum Housing Standards-Chapter 153 of the City of Monroe Code of Ordinances:

Article 12 titled “Minimum Housing Codes” of the NC General State Statutes (§160D-1201-1212)-authorizes the city to exercise its police powers to repair, close or demolish dwellings that are unfit for human habitation due to dilapidation; defects increasing the hazards of fire, accidents or other calamities; lack of ventilation, light, or sanitary facilities; or other conditions rendering the dwelling unsafe or unsanitary, or dangerous or detrimental to the health, safety, morals, or otherwise inimical to the welfare of the residents of the local government.

In 1992, the Minimum Housing Ordinance was adopted to establish minimum standards/requirements for the occupancy of all buildings used for human habitation. The ordinance was a result of the city finding dwellings that were unfit for human habitation due to the following:

- Deteriorated or dilapidated conditions
- Defects increasing the hazards for fire or accidents
- Lack, of ventilation, light or sanitary facilities
- Other conditions rendering such dwellings unsafe or unsanitary, dangerous and detrimental to the welfare of the residents.

A Minimum Housing Case is initiated by a Petition filed by a Code Enforcement Officer as a public authority or by at least five (5) residents of the city, charging that a dwelling is unfit for human habitation.

The Code Enforcement Officer shall determine that a dwelling is unfit for human habitation if he/she finds the dwelling contains one (1) major condition or seven (7) or more minor conditions.

Minimum Housing Case Process:

1. A dwelling or structure that does not meet minimum standards of maintenance, sanitation or safety is identified either by a public officer or complaint received.
2. Investigate the conditions of the dwelling or structure via an exterior inspection to determine non-compliance.
3. Receive permission from property owner, the owner's agent, a tenant, or other person legally in possession of the premises to perform an interior inspection. If permission is not granted then an administrative warrant will be required to receive entry.
4. Investigate and inspect the subject property.
5. If preliminary investigation discloses evidence of a violation of the minimum standards, the Code Enforcement Officer shall issue and serve a notice of complaint upon the owner and schedule a code enforcement hearing to discuss all violations.
6. If after the notice and hearing, the Code Enforcement Officer determines the dwelling or structure is not properly maintained, a finding of fact stating the determination and violations shall be issued and served upon the property owner or parties in interest.
7. The Code Enforcement Officer will determine the cost to repair, alter or improve the building or structure.
 - a. If the cost to repair, alter or improve the dwelling or structure does not exceed 50% of its current value, then the Code Enforcement Officer shall issue and serve a finding of fact ordering the repair, alteration or improvement of the building or to vacate and close within 90-days.
 - b. If the cost to repair, alter or improve the dwelling or structure exceeds 50% of its current value, then the Code Enforcement Officer shall issue and serve a finding of fact ordering the building or structure to be demolished and removed or repaired, altered or improved within 90-days.
8. If the owner fails to comply with the Code Enforcements finding of fact order within the 90-day timeframe, an ordinance will be brought before City Council requesting adoption of an ordinance to vacate and close or demolish and remove.
9. If City Council has adopted an ordinance requiring a dwelling or structure to be vacated and closed and the dwelling has been vacated and closed for a period of one year, City

Council may make findings that the owner has abandoned the intent to repair, alter or improve the dwelling or structure. City Council can then adopt an ordinance to either to repair or demolish and remove or demolish and remove based on the cost to repair and the current value of the building.

10. Once City Council adopts an ordinance to demolish and remove a dwelling or structure, the cost of demolition becomes a lien on the property.

Parking in the Yard Ordinance-Chapter 72.26 of the City of Monroe Code of Ordinances:

The city adopted a Parking in the Yard Ordinance in 2008 with an attempt to help beautify city neighborhoods by keeping properties in good condition, limit visual blight and protect residents' quality of life. The ordinance states the following:

- Vehicles shall be parked in an approved parking or loading space that consist of asphalt, concrete or existing gravel
- Vehicles shall not be placed or parked in the front yard or front and side yard of corner lots

Code Enforcement's operating procedure is to provide a brochure first and then a ticket in the amount of \$25.00

Other common enforcement violations that fall outside the purview of Code Enforcements job responsibilities include the following:

Planning & Zoning Division Enforcement:

- **Illegal Home Occupation-Chapter 157 of the City of Monroe Code of Ordinances**
 - The Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) allows certain business to be permitted in a residence as a home occupation if they meet certain requirements.
 - Permitted uses: personal offices; beauty/barber parlors; photography; cake making or decorating; artist or craftwork; computer consulting; teaching/tutoring; day care (no more than 5 kids); and yoga/massage instruction/therapy.
 - Prohibited uses: on-stie retail; repair, service and painting of vehicles; catering or commercial bakeries; tool, equipment, or vehicle sales or rental; veterinary clinic/hospitals, kennel or stable; physicians, dentist or chiropractor; funeral parlor; food vendors, or restaurants.

- **Signs-Chapter 157 of the City of Monroe Code of Ordinances**
 - No sign may be constructed, erected, altered, replaced or modified without a permit and shall comply with the sign requirements in the sign ordinance.
 - Prohibited signs
- **Accessory Buildings, Fences, Home Additions, Etc.-Chapter 157 of the City of Monroe Code of Ordinances**
 - All require a permit and to meet certain ordinance standards
- **Historic Tree Removal or Work in Historic District without a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) approval-Chapter 157 of the City of Monroe Code of Ordinances**

Police Department Enforcement:

- **Abandon & Junk Motor Vehicles-Chapter 90 of the City of Monroe Code of Ordinances**
 - Regulates abandon, hazardous and junk vehicles
- **Animal Control Ordinance-Chapter 91 of the City of Monroe Code of Ordinances**
 - Regulates livestock and containment of animals
 - Regulates dogs
 - Enforces the abuse of animals
- **Noise Control Ordinance-Chapter 92 of the City of Monroe Code of Ordinances**
 - Provides ordinance provisions that address loud and disturbing noises
 - Regulates particular sounds impacting residential life
 - Ordinance standards that address loud noises as a result of animals
 - Regulates motor vehicle noise
- **Stopping, Standing or Parking Restricted or Prohibited in Residential Districts-Chapter 72.45 of the City of Monroe Code of Ordinances**
 - Regulates the stopping, standing, parking or otherwise leaving unattended any of the following vehicles in residential districts to include any driveway, street, front yard or alley:
 - Commercial motor vehicle, dump truck, excursion passenger vehicle, horse trailer, property hauling vehicle, or any other type of passenger commercial vehicle that exceeds two rear axles or four tons

Engineering Department Enforcement:

- **Maintenance of Portions of Street Right-of-Way-Chapter 77.52 of the City of Monroe Code of Ordinances**

- Every owner, tenant, or occupant having control of property or lot fronting any city street or roadway in the City shall
 - Keep right-of-way between property line & edge of pavement or curblane, including sidewalk, clean and clear of all weeds and other vegetation, shall keep any grass thereon cut and keep drains and street gutters open and free from obstruction.
 - Keeps streets and sidewalks clear of overhanging limbs, bushes, shrubs, vines & other vegetation along with any obstruction which interfere with the public use of the street or sidewalk.
- Engineering Department has authority to cause the removal of any shrubbery and trees or other obstructions from street right-of-way including dedicated or recorded easements for sight distance.

- **Solid Waste-Chapter 55 of the City of Monroe Code of Ordinances**

- Yard Waste Collection:
 - Yard waste shall not be mixed with other trash, construction debris, tires, etc.
 - Yard waste such as tree limbs, cuttings and shrubbery shall be cut in lengths no greater than four (4) feet and six (6) inches in diameter. Trimmings and grass cuttings must be bagged.
- Construction Material:
 - Property owner shall dispose of debris resulting from construction, demolition or repair of buildings to include brick, stone, plumbing materials, plaster, asphalt, roofing, floor coverings, gutters, wood, and shingles.
 - Should be disposed at Union County Transfer Station
- Bulky Waste Collection (residential only):
 - Consist of discarded furniture, junk, appliances and other similar items on day of residential garbage collection.

- Bulky items must not be co-mingled with solid waste or yard waste or scattered throughout front yard. Loose items must be bagged.

During the presentation, additional information will be provided on the Code Enforcement Divisions Performance Measures, Expenditures and Revenues.

RECOMMENDATION

City Council will receive the Code Enforcement Division and Common Enforcement Violations presentation for information. No action is being requested.