

# **Fire Prevention Inspections: Insufficient Resources Strain Code Compliance**

## Overview

- Why we did this audit
- Objectives
- Findings
- Recommendations
- Fire Department response



## Why We Did this Audit:

- Fire Chief asked the City Auditor as an impartial independent entity to identify property inspection concerns and develop achievable solutions.
- The fire prevention inspection program is critical to keeping Berkeley safe.
- When properties go uninspected and open violations remain unresolved by property owners, the City exposes the public to fire risks that could have devastating effects.



## Objectives:

1. To what extent has the Fire Department met the mandated inspection requirements?
2. How does the Fire Department manage fire inspections?
3. What challenges within the Fire Department remain in fire inspections?

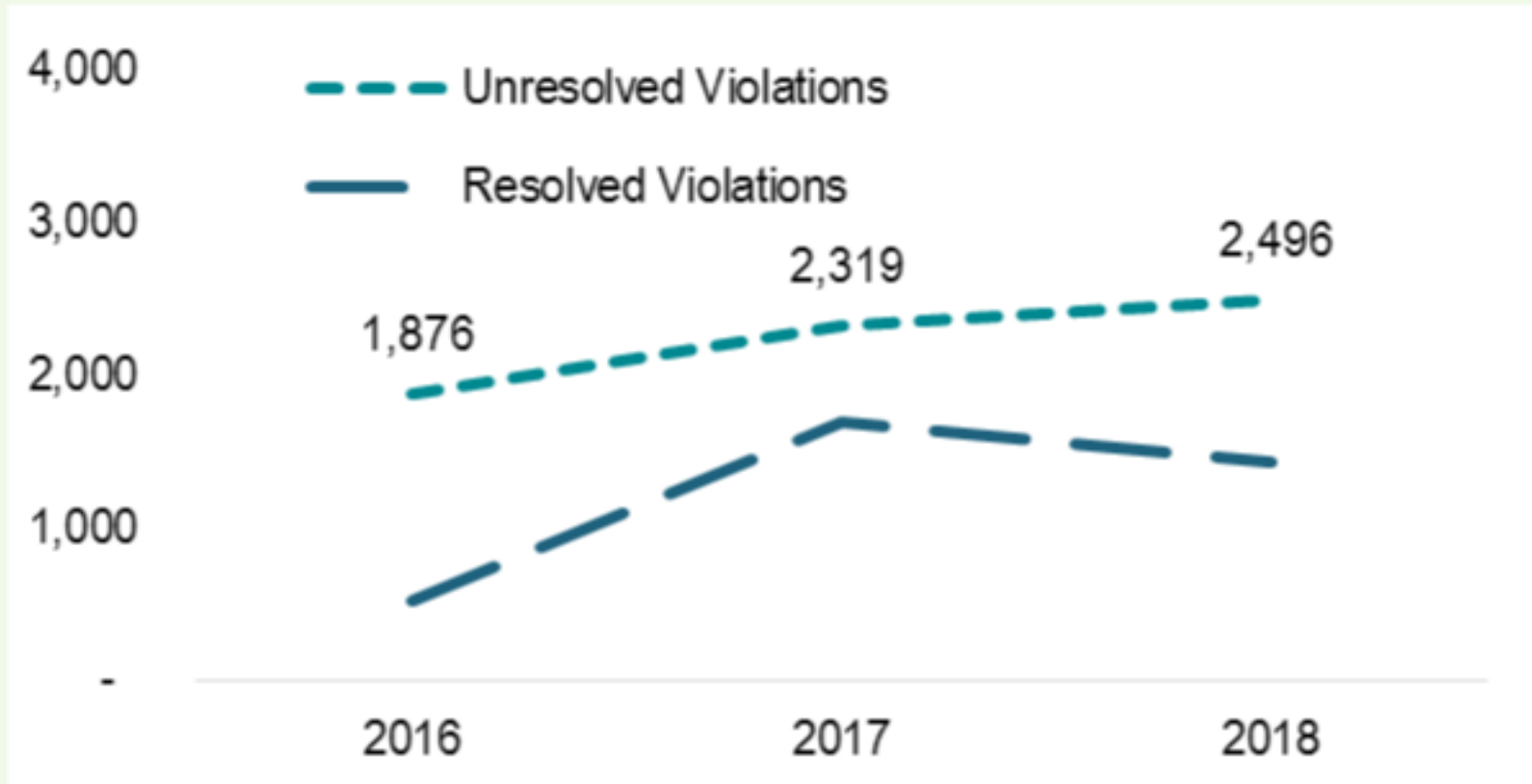


## What We Found:

- The Fire Department is not meeting inspection requirements, relies on incomplete data, and is not supporting staff enough to get inspections done.



# Finding #1: Fire is Not Meeting Inspection Mandates.



# Fire is Strained by Code Requirements and City Growth

- City mandates
- Population growth
- Development
- No increase in staffing



## Finding #2: Fire Relies on Incomplete Data.

- No complete inventory of properties requiring inspections.
- Lack of controls led to missing information.



## Finding #3: Fire Staff Need More Support.

- Not taking competing priorities and risk into account.
- Minimal internal communication about inspections.
- More hands-on training.
- Little education of property owners about inspections.
- No consistent process for enforcement.





## Recommendations

- Analyze the impact of changing the code or identify resources to meet code requirements
- Fix the database
- Perform a risk assessment, create communication plans and develop enforcement options



*We would like to thank the Fire Marshal, Fire Prevention staff, Fire Suppression staff, and the Fire Chief for their cooperation with this audit.*

