



PLANNING AND CODE ENFORCEMENT

FISCAL YEAR END REPORT

FY 2007 – 2008

Mark R. Huber
Director

The Planning and Code Enforcement (PACE) department had a busy year in FY 2007-08. Even as the nation continues to move towards a slower economy, PACE has remained active with what could be seen as a normal level of activity. While building permit activity drifted somewhat lower, complaint activities were higher as were the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funded rehabilitation projects. Rental and fire inspection programs remained steady, while planning issues like the Main Street Corridor Redevelopment project kept planning staff busy. Meanwhile, facilities management tackled several issues with the downtown parking system, general building maintenance, new facility planning and new construction.

The following information will provide a brief description of the department's activities by division.

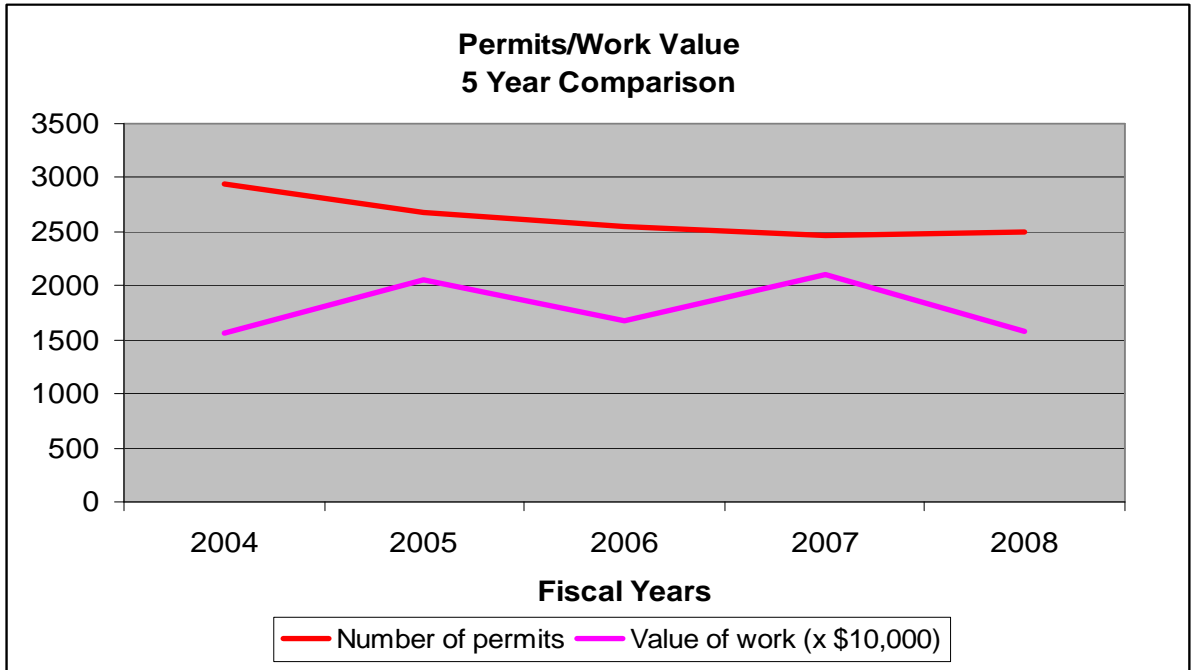
Building Safety Division

Jeff Eckhoff, Division Manager

A bright spot in this past year for the Building Safety Division was the improvement of our Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rating. Our third opportunity to be rated since the inception of the program, Building Safety has improved our rating from a five (5) to a four (4)¹. This improved rating can be used by the insurance industry as a tool that can result in lower insurance premiums for homeowners in the City.

Permit activity this past fiscal year has been a mixed bag. While the actual number of permits increased slightly there was a 25% decrease in construction valuation. However, when examining the previous five (5) years, permit numbers have been trending downward while the valuation of construction has been remaining somewhat flat. The following chart illustrates this trend.

¹ The ISO rating system is based on a scale of 1-10 with a "1" being the highest. A report providing a complete explanation of our rating has been included at the end of this report.



The next two pages (pages 3 & 4) provide a comparison of permit activity for the past two fiscal years, while page 5 provides a list of projects for the past fiscal year having construction values of at least \$1,000,000.

**Building Permit Activity
Fiscal Year 2007-08**

New Buildings	Number of Permits	Value
One Family	316	\$47,669,450
Two Family Dwellings	0	0
Multiple Family Dwellings	14 119 d.u.	\$6,382,000
Hotel/Motel	2	\$2,970,000
Rooming House	0	0
Amusement/Recreational	0	0
Church/Religious	0	0
Industrial	1	\$959,949
Parking Garage (open to Public)	0	0
Service/Repair Garage	0	0
Hospital/Institutional	0	0
Office, Banks, & Professional	10	\$12,388,377
Public Works/Utility	0	0
Educational	1	\$625,000
Mercantile	10	\$6,329,496
Other Nonresidential Buildings	52	\$1,185,559
Other Nonresidential Structures	94	\$2,042,791
 Sub Total	 500	 \$80,502,622
Mechanical Work (33%)		\$26,565,865
Total Value New Buildings		\$107,068,487
 Additions and Alterations		
Residential	1832	\$20,365,589
Nonresidential	123	\$17,149,110
Garages/Carports	39	\$385,042
Sub Total	1994	\$37,899,741
Mechanical Work (33%)		\$12,506,915
Total Value Additions & Alterations		\$50,406,656
 <u>GRAND TOTALS</u>	 <u>2494</u>	 <u>\$157,475,142</u>
 Demolitions		
Residential	30	\$278,850
All Others	34	\$519,385
Total	64	\$798,235
 Plan Reviews	 149	 Fees Collected \$69,487

**Building Permit Activity
Fiscal Year 2006-07**

New Buildings	Number of Permits	Value
One Family	350	\$57,289,865
Two Family Dwellings	3	\$258,750
Multiple Family Dwellings	8	\$3,422,660
Hotel/Motel	3	\$8,078,400
Rooming House	0	0
Amusement/Recreational	2	\$10,137,900
Church/Religious	0	0
Industrial	1	\$200,000
Parking Garage (open to Public)	1	\$15,604,900
Service/Repair Garage	0	0
Hospital/Institutional	0	0
Office, Banks, & Professional	10	\$7,504,347
Public Works/Utility	0	0
Educational	1	\$1,200,000
Mercantile	11	\$7,838,831
Other Nonresidential Buildings	49	\$95,271
Other Nonresidential Structures	117	\$13,140,255
Sub Total	556	\$124,771,179
Mechanical Work (33%)		\$41,174,789
Total Value New Buildings		\$165,945,667
 Additions and Alterations		
Residential	1730	\$22,366,169
Nonresidential	124	\$10,376,488
Garages/Carports	56	\$698,901
Sub Total	1910	\$33,441,558
Mechanical Work (33%)		\$11,035,714
Total Value Additions & Alterations		\$44,477,272
 <u>GRAND TOTALS</u>		 <u>2466</u>
		 <u>\$210,422,940</u>
 Demolitions		
Residential	23	\$142,998
All Others	43	\$164,760
Total	66	\$307,758
Plan Reviews	159	Fee Collected \$88,566

Major Construction Activity (\$1,000,000 or More)

Project	Address	Value
Illinois Agriculture Association - Asbestos Abatement and Remodeling	1701 Towanda Ave	\$1,420,000
IRS Warehouse	1201 N Mitsubishi Motorway	\$6,142,000
OSF - Chiller Addition and Sterile Processing Remodeling	2200 E Washington St	\$2,050,000
Ireland Grove Ambulatory Surgery Center	3801 Ireland Grove Road	\$1,233,000
J Buck's Restaruant	3212 E Empire St	\$1,153,000
I W U Welcome Center	1211 Park Street	\$3,446,249
Conference Center (shell only)	1402 N Towanda Ave.	\$1,000,000
Walgreens Store	1408 N. Main St.	\$1,150,000
Comfort Inn and Suites Hotel	910 Maple Hill Rd.	\$1,970,000
Grain Flo, Inc. - Grain Storage Bin	901 Roundhouse Dr.	\$1,058,600
32 Unit Apartment Building	3122 Rudder Ln.	\$1,350,000
Walgreen's Store	909 S. Main St.	\$1,850,000
Fire Station	2602 Six Points Rd.	\$2,500,000
Avanti's Italian Restaurant	3302 E Empire St.	\$1,854,000
Safe Harbor	601 W. Washington	\$1,177,967
Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District – UV Filter System	2015 W. Oakland Ave	\$2,007,835
Westminster Village – Social Center Expansion	2025 E Lincoln St.	\$1,500,000
Original Smith Printing – Addition and Remodel	2 Hardman Dr.	\$1,648,400

Code Enforcement Division

Connie Griffin, Division Manager

This division is made up of fire, property maintenance, and rental inspectors as well as our CDBG programs and activities. The code enforcement division had an eventful year. CDBG activity was considerably higher, the number of complaints received were up, while the rental program settled in to a regular routine. We do not anticipate major changes to this division's activity in the next fiscal year.

CDBG Activities

Rehabilitation projects were up substantially with the addition of a new employee who concentrated their efforts on the water service replacement and sewer ejection programs. While funded primarily through water and sewer enterprise funds we were able to split or replace 121 water services and install six (6) sewage ejection systems in this past fiscal year. Community Development Block Grant Activities also showed an increase in the number of loans processed and closed as well as the inspections that accompany these of activities. This was primarily due to a short term furnace and water heater grant program.

Activities	Fiscal Year Ending 2008	Fiscal Year Ending 2007
Work Write-Ups	93	25
Loans Approved and Contracts Singed	60	15
Progress Inspections	713	351
Loans Closed/Completed	102	25
Water Services	121	47
Sewage Ejection Systems	6	7
Number of Houses Demolished	10	2

Rental Inspections

Rental inspections have moved to a new level of activity with the changes in inspection activity related to "A" rated buildings. While the number of inspections has been reduced, this has allowed the inspectors the time to address problem properties and work on neighborhood surveys for our new Consolidated Plan and slum/blight maps; work that we have contracted out in the past.

The rental inspections program has registered 2,743 buildings with a total of 11,131 dwelling units for 2008. This is actually down by 254 units from last year. Explanations include foreclosures on several landlords with multiple buildings (buildings are empty and we are working with banks to get them reinstated); a couple of large complexes are converting to owner occupied condominiums, removing the units from the system; and finally, units not registered by landlords who are struggling with compliance (usually with pending court action by the City).

As mentioned earlier, the number of rental inspections is down substantially due to changes in the grading system placing "A" rated buildings on a five (5) year inspection cycle. We expect this to even out as buildings work their way through the system. Five hundred-twenty-five (525) rental/dwelling units were the subject of rental inspections this past fiscal year; 277 received a grade of "A"; 152 received a grade of "B"; the remainder received a grade of "C" or lower.

Code Enforcement Activity

Code enforcement has seen the number of non-duplicate complaints rise 23% from fiscal year 2007. The department received 1462 non-duplicate complaints, 76% of which were handled by code enforcement personnel. Complaints included 567 for garbage, weeds, and junk, 105 for graffiti, and 401 housing complaint (not including rental inspections). Related activities included 31 abated violations (violations physically removed by the City) and issuing 172 citations.

Fire inspections of commercial property are part of the Code Enforcement Division's responsibility. The three fire inspectors currently working for the division have completed 1269 inspections of local commercial, mercantile, and business properties. The primary reason for these inspections is to maintain the life safety standards in these properties. Verifying properly maintained fire protection systems, exiting and occupant loads are just a few of the issues these inspectors address.

Planning Division

Ken Emmons, Principle Planner

Along with the usual activities of reviewing annexation agreements, subdivision plans, and zoning text amendments the Planning Division has been actively involved with the Main

Street Corridor Study and subsequent form-based code. Other activities include the East Side Highway Corridor Study and the West Bloomington Neighborhood Revitalization Plan.

In other activities, the planning division has also reviewed 22 applications for certificates of appropriateness and 15 applications for Eugene D. Funk Jr. Historic Preservation Grants; totaling \$23,676.33. The City's Historic Preservation Board oversaw and approved distribution of these funds to help owners of these remarkable homes off-set the high cost of maintaining these structures.

Facilities Management

Bob Floyd, Facilities Manager

Responsible for maintenance and oversight of city owned facilities; help with the planning and construction of new city buildings; and manage the downtown parking facilities, this division of PACE has been active this past fiscal year. Projects in the works included revision of parking operations downtown, planning work for new facilities and overseeing a major maintenance project at the City's police building. The following is a brief synopsis of projects managed by the facilities management division.

Parking Operations

The downtown parking functions have seen a shift in operations by moving the supervision of enforcement to the traffic division of the Police Department. This realignment has allowed the police the flexibility to expand parking enforcement to areas outside the downtown and provide back-up for crossing guard operations associated with the school districts. The retirement of the parking supervisor allowed PACE an opportunity to reevaluate our manpower needs; this resulted in a realignment of supervisory duties to existing staff and replaced the position with a laborer resulting in a net savings to the department.

In related activities, a review of monthly parking procedures this year showed an excess of unassigned monthly parking spaces. By eliminating our waiting lists for monthly parking passes we were able to increase parking revenues by \$8400 annually.

Fire Station #5

Currently under construction, facilities management worked with the Fire Department and the architects to bring in the current fire station plan within the budget. We are currently

working with the construction company to ensure plans are followed and City interests are being protected.

Fleet Management Facility

Facilities Management has been working with the City's Fleet Management Department to create a facility necessary for the department to operate efficiently. The anticipated cost of implementation of the program is 3.3 million dollars. Funding is to be determined.

Police Parking Deck

A comprehensive repair to the uppermost parking level was completed this year. This included patching and replacing concrete surfaces as well as new joint materials, caulking and waterproofing. This repair was needed to extend the life of the deck as well as eliminate damage to vehicles in the lower levels.

Parking Deck Analysis

The Market Street and Snyder Garages were both evaluated this year for maintenance needs and long range capital repairs. It should be noted that the Market St. parking deck has far exceeded its useful and planned life. Built in the mid seventies, this structure has lasted well beyond its 20-25 year life expectancy. We are currently looking at options that would replace this facility in the next five years.

Facilities management is looking forward to projects this year that would include upgrades to the parking system downtown and continued work on Fire Station #6.

The Future of PACE

As in the past, Planning and Code Enforcement continues to look towards improving efficiency in the department; this year will be no different. Adding to the challenge will be the anticipated retirement of some of our staff due to the City's early retirement incentive and normal attrition. In keeping with Council direction, each position will be evaluated before hiring replacements. We are already anticipating elimination of one position. This will require evaluation of applicable duties and redistribution throughout the affected division.

Other areas to be addressed, in the future will include ways to improve inspection efficiency which could easily reduce fuel consumption and a proposal for business registration.

We have already begun the process of cost cutting and fuel efficiency by removing vehicles from our fleet by attrition and creating opportunities for auto sharing. While this can reduce vehicle costs in the department, there can be lost response efficiency or customer service if we cut too deep. We are continuing to monitor our activity and will modify as necessary.

The PACE, Police and Fire departments have begun to explore the idea of business registration. The three departments have common goals associated with this plan that would improve police and fire's ability, through our dispatch center, to contact building owners and/or managers in the event of a call for service. Additionally, this program could allow PACE an opportunity to track other life/safety information, pertinent to these businesses and buildings. At this time, management of this process would be with PACE and our existing fire inspections staff.

The Planning and Code Enforcement Department is fortunate to have an excellent staff that are experts in their fields and are willing to accept the challenges placed upon them. As in the past they will continue to provide quality service for the citizens of the City of Bloomington.

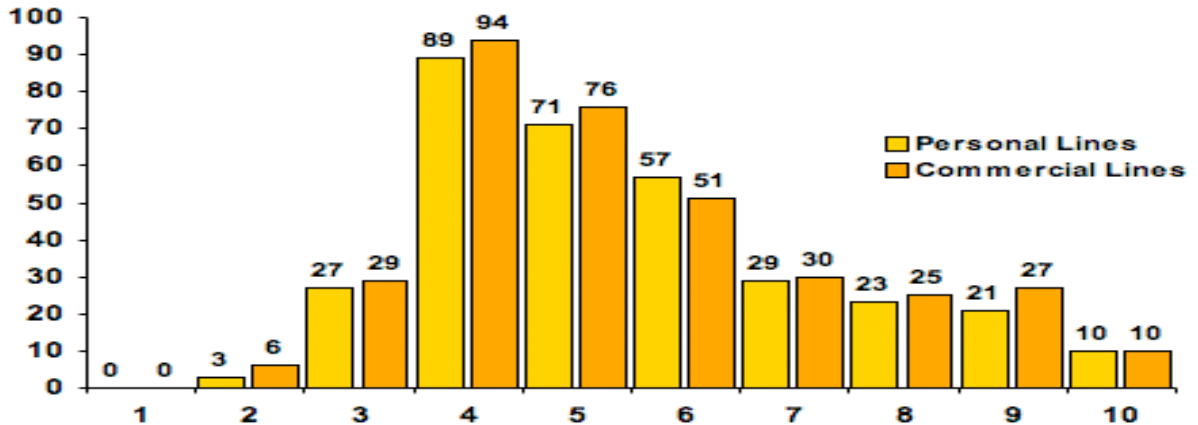
REPORT

To: Tom Hamilton, City Manager
cc: Barb Adkins, Deputy City Manager
Jeff Eckhoff, Building Safety Division Manager
From: Mark R. Huber, Director of PACE
Subject: ISO Evaluation
Date: February 25, 2008

In November, 2007, the Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO) conducted a review of Building Safety operations under their Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS™) program (see attached executive summary). Conducted approximately every five years, BCEGS™ evaluations are ISO's way of determining the effectiveness of the City's building department to review and inspect new construction and ensuring mitigation of natural hazards in construction. This information is then made available to insurance companies, should they desire to use it, for establishing insurance rates for their customers. In short, the better our evaluation, the better credit a home or business owner may be able to receive on their insurance premiums. Participation in the BCEGS™ program or the use of the information by the insurance companies is totally voluntary for both entities.

The BCEGS evaluation breaks down our activity into three basic parts: Administration of Codes, Plan Review, and Field Inspections. These are further broken down to several subsections that are individually scored. A final evaluation score is then used to provide a final classification. In our case, we scored 71.52 and 68.34 (out 100) in the commercial and residential categories respectively. As you can see in the attached carts, we fared well when compared to other national and state jurisdictions.

The good news is that the Building Safety Division of PACE improved their rating from 5 to 4 since our last evaluation in 2001. As you can see by the following chart, a rating of 4, places Bloomington in the top third of the rated cities in Illinois.



While we improved our rating from 5 to 4 I believe there is work to be, and should be, done to increase our rating to a 3. This conclusion is based on how the insurance industry uses this information. Ratings of 1-3 are given the best discounts to policy holders in our community while 4-7, 8-9, and 10 are given progressively less credit. There is no distinct advantage for us (the City) to have a rating greater than 3. While classifications higher than three are laudable, the expense to the City to achieve the highest ratings is not realistic at this time. However, there are areas where we can improve with a minimal budgetary impact that could increase the number of points earned, thereby, increasing our classification.

In the first part of our evaluation, Administration of Codes, we generally fared pretty well. We received high marks for adopting the most up to date codes in a timely manner and we don't modify them in ways that would reduce their effectiveness. The areas where there is the most room for improvement are in the training and certification of our inspectors. While we encourage certification and provide training, we could greatly increase our score if we mandated certification as a condition of employment. ISO's believes certification practices elevate the quality and consistency of code enforcement practices. Since we are in a union environment this would have to be negotiated.

In the area of plan review, our greatest improvement can be done in area of residential plan reviews. The amount of time spent and the thoroughness of our residential plan review is currently well short of what could or should be done. Current operations allow for a minimal "desk top" review with an applicant with little follow-up documentation. This is done with an eye on providing an expedited permitting process. Based on ISO standards, we would need one full time plans examiner to handle the typical workload of the department. While part of this man year might be carved out of existing staff, it would diminish the inspector time necessary to complete required inspections. Additionally, there would be the

“political” ramifications of delayed permits due to the additional time needed to complete such a review.

The final area where we can make general improvements is in the area of our field inspections themselves. Our biggest shortfall is in the area of documentation. The issue is not so much documentation as the ability to use that documentation and track our activity. This is an area we are currently working on by developing a series of check lists that will eventually be use for automated data entry.

While the Building Safety Division has shown an improvement in our ISO rating during this past evaluation, I believe we can achieve the highest rating necessary to provide the citizens of Bloomington the best opportunity to qualify for discounts on their insurance rates. While we can go a long way towards achieving the points needed with administrative and policy changes. However, while we may be able to start a more thorough residential plan review process with existing staff, this additional activity may require the addition of staff. We will continue to explore our options and the changing environment and move as directed.