

2015 Annual Report

Building Standards Division

Table of Contents

Mission and Core Values	2
Staff	3
Significant 2015 Accomplishments	4, 5
Significant Prior Accomplishments	6 - 8
2015 Business Activity Report	9 - 25
2015 Fiscal Activity Report	26 - 29



City Mission:

To partner with our community to *deliver* services, conserve resources, *protect* the quality of life, and *plan* for the future. We will endeavor to accomplish this mission in the most efficient and fiscally responsible manner possible, and in accordance to the core values listed below.

Building Standards Division Mission:

To *protect* the public from hazards incidental to the design, erection, repair, demolition or use and occupancy of all buildings or structures and to ensure the safe and sanitary maintenance of existing buildings using effective code enforcement while providing open communication, courtesy and respect.

**Citywide Core Values
supported by the Division:**

- Accountability
- Continuous Improvement,
- Concern for our Shared Environment
- Honesty & Integrity
- Respect
- Safety
- Trust

Building Standards Division Staff:

“What motivates the staff is the realization that building safety is something vital to all who work in buildings, send their kids to school or shop at the local grocery store – we often just take building safety for granted.”

Tim Monea

Chief Building Official
Floodplain Administrator

Carla Jesse

Administrative Assistant
Building Standards Division
Planning and Zoning Division

Kim Fahrni

Electrical Inspector
Commercial Building Inspector

Scott Davis

Plumbing and HVAC Inspector
Backflow Valve Program Coordinator

Mark Nussbaum

Building Inspector
Zoning Inspector

Justin Reed

Property Maintenance Inspector
Zoning Inspector

Significant 2015 Accomplishments

- Completed the Amish horse barn relocation project. During the summer the previous Amish parking area was removed leaving this community without a place to rest horses and park while conducting business. A new location was found and the Amish were brought in to participate with the City in the design and construction of the new building and parking area at Schellin Park.
- Completed new security project at City Hall and developed new access policies w/ administration.
- Managed Larwill Trailer Park clean-up project. Also assisted with the relocation of all residents to improved housing by working with the housing coalition and WMHA.
- Implemented customer service process improvements including the acceptance of credit cards for payment.
- Oversaw the progress of the backflow device testing program using a completely new on-line system. This included the development of an enforcement program for non-compliance.
- Assisted in the development of a bed bug task force and a member of the staff serves on the task force.
- Hired a new administrative assistant for the Division.
- Met with stakeholders to improve Prosecution by Wayne County prosecutor's office.
- Made a presentation on Downtown Wooster development and code issues at Annual Heritage Ohio Conference.

- Represented the mayor serving on the Community Action Wayne Medina board of directors, member of the Housing Coalition, the Housing Advisory Committee, the Main Street economic development committee, the downtown plan stakeholder committee, the comprehensive plan steering committee and the employee engagement committee.
- Assisted various building owners/tenants resolve code issues or move projects forward by working with them at the jobsite:
 - GOJO, Artiflex, Wooster City Schools (Boys and Girls Club project, safety concerns with barricading the doors during a lock down), College of Wooster (underground student recreation space so that it could be used safely again, new science center project), Spoon Market and Deli relocation project, former Hospice facility alteration, former ODOT facility, Wooster fire station #3 and WARCOG facility, Wayne County fair board with various projects, Wayne County rubber with improvements after fire damage, Village Network projects, Metro Media, Speed North America facility, Zion Lutheran Church, former Ice House building on South St., D&S Distribution former Bauer ladder facility, Haunted Orchard at Portage Rd site

Significant Prior Accomplishments

- Managed the project to transfer the administration of the City's backflow valve testing program from a paper system to an on-line system. This includes the online registration for tester certification and recording of mandatory annual tests. The City has over 1200 registered valves.
- Worked with Cleveland State University School for Professional Studies to streamline the plan review process. Used software updates and concurrent plan reviews to reduce the average review time to 21 days for complex projects.
- Began large format scanning and electronic archiving of all commercial plans since 2002.
- Developed "mutual consent" appeal process for commercial building code appeals for downtown businesses.
- Developed system of updating and coordinating all lot information and address information with the Wayne County Auditor's records. This allows accurate identification of current owners, lot/parcel information and addresses.
- During 2002-2005 initiated the discontinuance of the citywide "radio alarm box" fire alarm systems. These were unreliable and non-code compliant. This resulted in 220 commercial buildings upgrading to code compliant fire alarm systems and the City no longer monitoring fire alarm systems with outdated equipment.
- Co-managed municipal building \$1.7 million remodel project in 2002, the exterior bicentennial project in 2007 and the 2008 Schellin Park bicentennial monument project.

- Created the full-time position of Property Maintenance inspector during 2002. Created new RT District periodic inspection program during 2013/14.
- Serve on the WC Housing Coalition representing the City of Wooster since 2003.
- Ordered and/or worked with property owners on 42 structure demolitions during a 30 month period ending during 2014 with 16 using Moving Ohio Forward funds provided by the State. Served on the county-wide MOF committee.
- Serve on the Board of Directors for Community Action Wayne Medina representing the Mayor and presently serve on the executive committee and ad hoc construction committee and chair the finance committee.
- N. Buckeye St: Served on the Howey House committee that worked in the neighborhood renovating 3 houses and demolishing two houses. Assisted Habitat for Humanity with acquiring one lot for building in this neighborhood. Worked to save the “Black” century home by relocating the owner and working to secure funding for complete renovation. Initiated the replacement of sidewalks in the area and street tree trimming and replacement.
- Began partnership with the local Homebuilders Association to provide members with code updates and education.
- Elected during a statewide election to serve as a director for the Ohio Building Officials Association.

- Awarded Building Official of the Year in 2005 by the Five County Building Officials Association representing 15 counties in NE Ohio.
- Received certification from the State of Ohio for Residential Building Department and all personnel during 2010.

2015 Business Activity Report

Business Environment:

The Division maintains certification as a State Certified Building Department with Certified personnel. As such, the Division deals directly with private architects, developers, contractors, property owners and others in carrying out the mission. We also work with appointed boards such as the Design and Review Board, Board of Building and Zoning Appeals, State of Ohio Board of Building Appeals, State of Ohio Board of Building Standards and others. Also, the mission requires involvement and participation with organizations such the Wayne County Housing Authority, the Wayne County Housing Coalition, Community Action Wayne/Medina as well as various neighborhood groups and others. We address and respond to requests from the County government due to agreements to provide back-up services. Within the City we maintain a close working relationship with various divisions including Planning and Zoning, Engineering, Fire, Police, Utilities Division, PPM, Economic Development and Law.

Construction Value Comparison last 5 years:

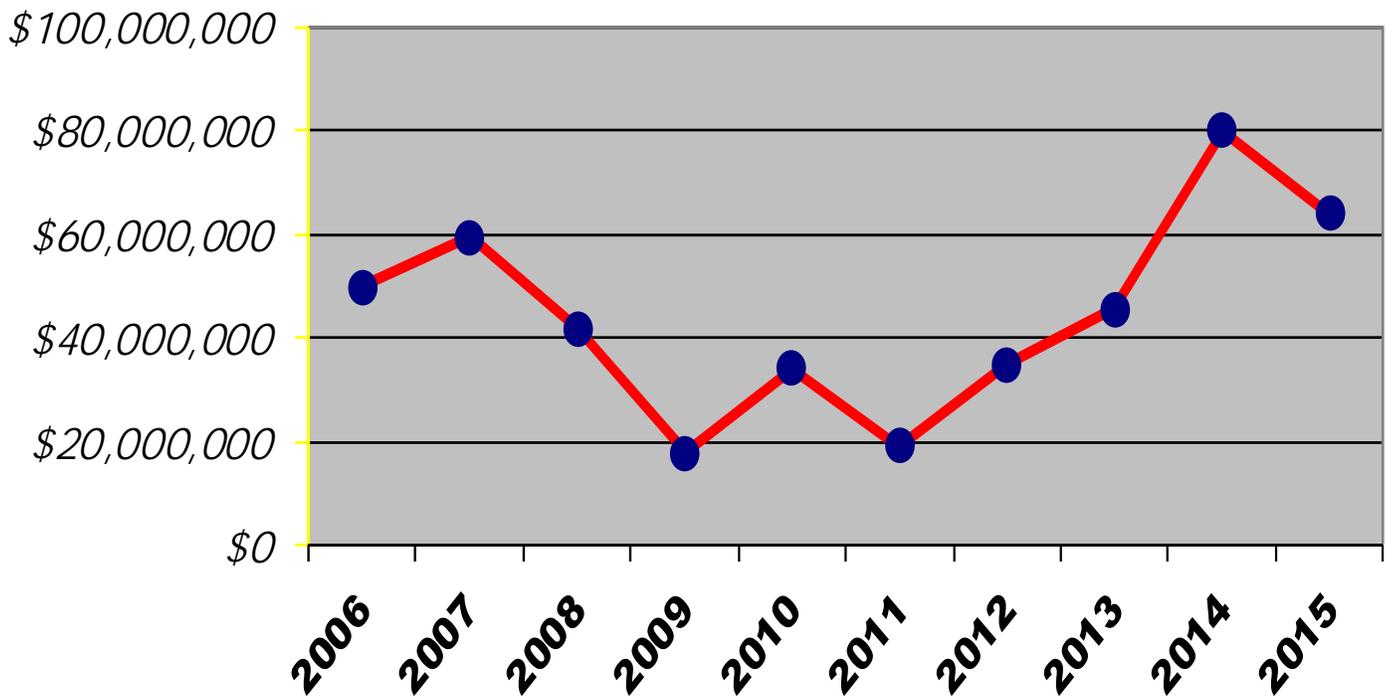
Year	Construction Value
2011	\$19,126,273
2012	\$34,933,255
2013	\$45,484,208
2014	\$80,020,000 *Daisy Brand \$40 m
2015	\$63,948,625

- *2015 construction activity up 60% over 2014 (after accounting for the Daisy Brand facility) with over \$64 million of construction value. This is the highest level of activity in the last 8 years.*
- *2014 construction statistics reveal increased activity for the City higher than in any of the previous 7 years. Daisy Brand accounted for over \$40 million of the \$80 million construction value.*
- *Since 2013 the number of permits issued has continued to increase significantly. During 2014 and 2015 the division issued over 1,450 permits each year.*
- *2016 will see permits issued for many large projects including the Wooster Community Hospital expansion, two Nursing Home/Assisted Living facilities on Smithville Western and Portage, a new City Safety Center and College of Wooster science center.*

Construction Activity Historically:

Over the years, construction in the City of Wooster has certainly had its ups and downs. Prior to 2001 construction values remained fairly constant in the \$30 - \$40 million range. The years between 2001 through 2007 saw construction activity levels peak in the City with 2005 seeing nearly double the norm with \$90 million in value. Last year we issued building permits on construction valued at \$80 million of which \$40 million was for the new Daisy facility. During 2015, activity was nearly \$64 million – a 60% increase from 2014 not accounting for the Daisy facility. The last two years saw an increase in the number of permits annually issued to 1,450 and fees earned were up over \$280,000.

Total Value of Construction Permits

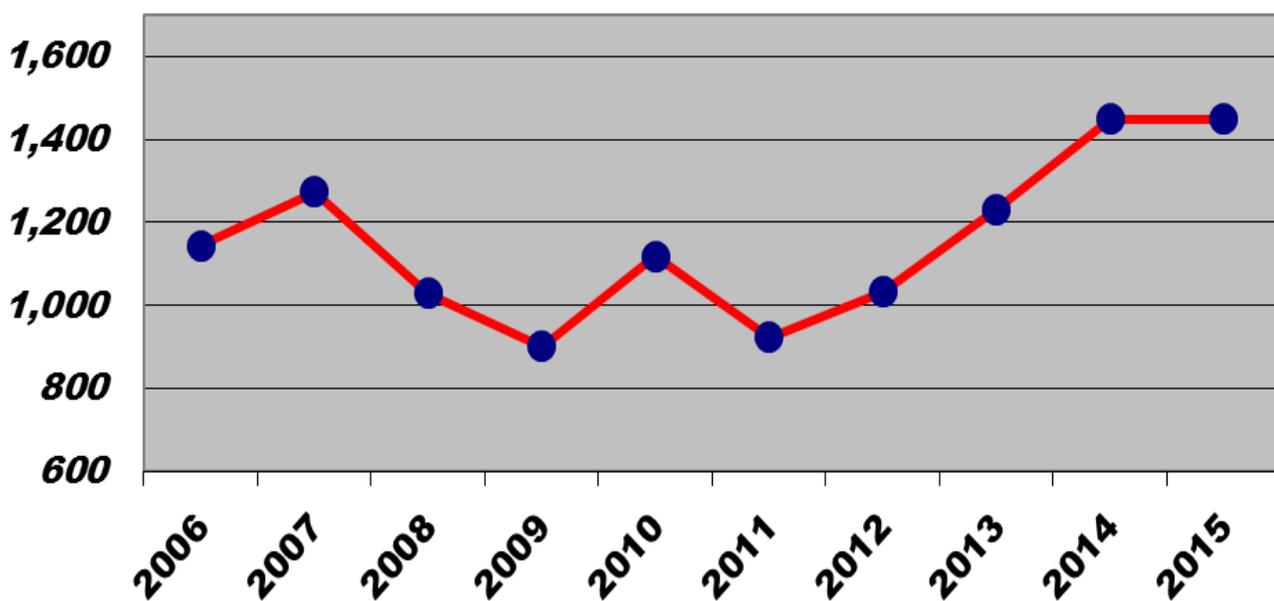


Number of Permits Processed

Another interesting trend that has become apparent is that during the years the valuation of construction peaked (2001 - 2007), the number of permits processed by the Division peaked as expected. In the other years when the activity is in the \$30 - \$40 million range, the permitting activity is in the 1,000 permits issued range. However, when the activity falls below this range (as in 2009 and 2011) the activity stays in the 1,000 permits issued range remaining very stable as shown in this table. This is indicative of the number of projects, reviews and inspections being very stable but the value of the projects being smaller. For example, smaller commercial and residential alterations, additions and repairs are performed and less new structures were built in these down years but the number of permits processed does not decline below this range

During 2015, the Division reviewed, processed and issued 1,450 permits. These 1,450 permits include residential and commercial building, electrical, plumbing, HVAC, fire sprinkler and alarm permits. Included are 135 residential zoning permits (the division issues residential zoning permits). The last two years were record highs for permit issuance and about 25% higher than any other year.

Number of Permits Processed



Top 10 projects in 2015 by estimated value

1. \$4,750,000 Wayne County Court House restoration.
2. \$2,864,000 New shopping center Burbank Rd.
3. \$1,750,000 New roof 1147 Akron Rd. Insite Wooster, LLC
4. \$1,650,000 Pallotta Ford addition/alteration
5. \$1,565,000 Counseling Center apartments
6. \$1,500,000 College of Wooster residence Hall
7. \$1,490,000 Tekfor manufacturing addition
8. \$1,200,000 LUK USA addition
9. \$1,100,000 Montessori School of Wooster
10. \$900,000 4190 Burbank Rd. Humboldt Square dialysis clinic alteration

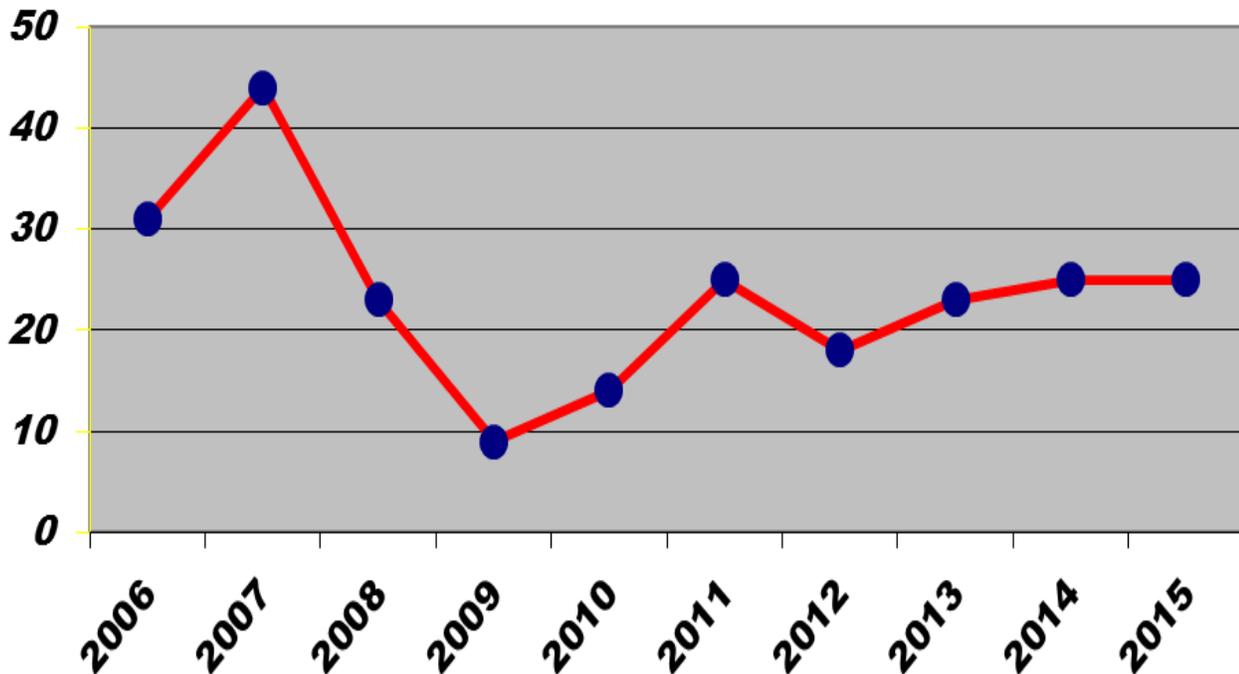
Single Family House Construction

New single-family dwelling construction was stable in 2015 with 25 new single-family dwellings. This has been about the same for the last three years.

In contrast, housing units averaged 64 units for the each of the 10 years before 2008 (1999 – 2007). This is over 3 times the average of 22 for the last 7 years (2009 – 2015). So while residential construction did mirror commercial activity in some respects, it presents a slightly different story.

Housing unit growth paralleled the growth of the North End of the City. These new subdivisions were built out at the same time as the North End developed and very few new subdivisions have been brought to the City for development. There have been only two substantial residential sub-divisions in the last 5 years: Tartan Ridge and Crooked Creek. There are some smaller developments and scattered site lots available. It appears that 20 - 25 housing units/year was the sustainable number in the City for the last several years.

Single Family Housing Units



Property Maintenance and Zoning Code Enforcement

- ascetic and quality of life issues are addressed
- relationships with neighbors are preserved
- property values are maintained

“1,636 property maintenance inspections were conducted in 2015 with 1,025 being initial inspections.”

It is clear that an effective code administration program enhances the quality of life for the residents of Wooster in many ways. To do this, the program must include effective enforcement of the maintenance and zoning codes.

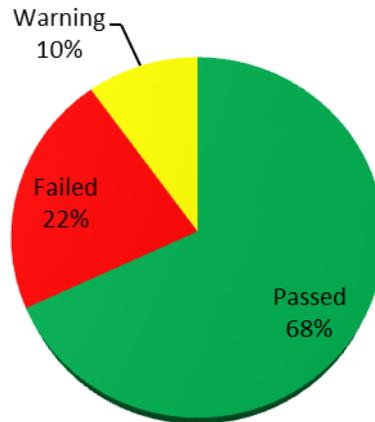
Since issues are both property maintenance and zoning code violations, a single inspector handles both types of inspections. These included: tall grass, unlicensed or inoperable vehicles, rubbish and garbage, cockroaches/bedbugs and other infestations, illegal sign complaints, line of sight issues, trash out early, and parking in lawn.

RT Periodic Inspection Program

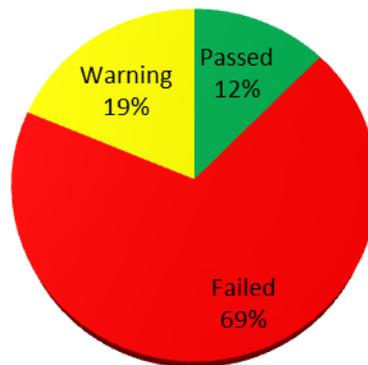
In December 2013 the City of Wooster initiated a new program of regular periodic inspections of parcels located in the R-T District (Traditional Residential). The R-T District surrounds the downtown business district and contains approximately 1,762 parcels. The majority of the homes located in this district date back to before 1935 and require increased maintenance. Inspections were performed from the right-of-way with emphasis on the exterior structure and property.

2015 saw the second year of the RT Periodic Inspection Program. This program focuses on the Traditional Residential zoning district - the residential area surrounding the downtown. Most of these houses are pre-1935 and require increased maintenance. The Division inspected every house in this district in the three years from 2013 – 2015. Inspections were performed from the right-of-way with emphasis on the exterior structure and property. Although regular periodic inspections are focused in the R-T District, the Division still responds to complaints throughout the city.

2015 R-T District Initial Periodic Inspection Results



2015 Complaint and City Initial Inspection Results



The charts above show the results of initial R-T and Complaint inspections. Public or City Initiated Complaints result in violations over 2/3's of the time. Although a periodic inspection will result in a violation only 22% of the time, they are effective in covering large areas while identifying violations that may go unreported.

Owner Occupied vs Rental Property

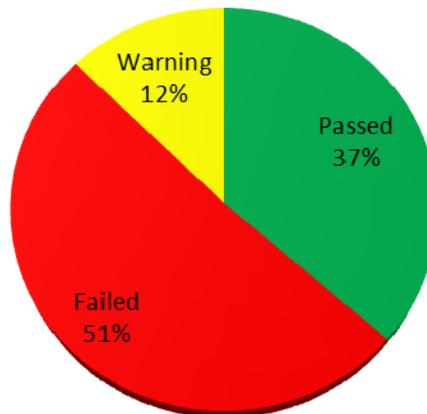
These charts display the results of initial inspections in the R-T district. The first chart shows owner occupied properties while the second shows rental properties. Approximately 60% of the properties in the R-T District are rental. **There is very little difference in condition based on ownership.**

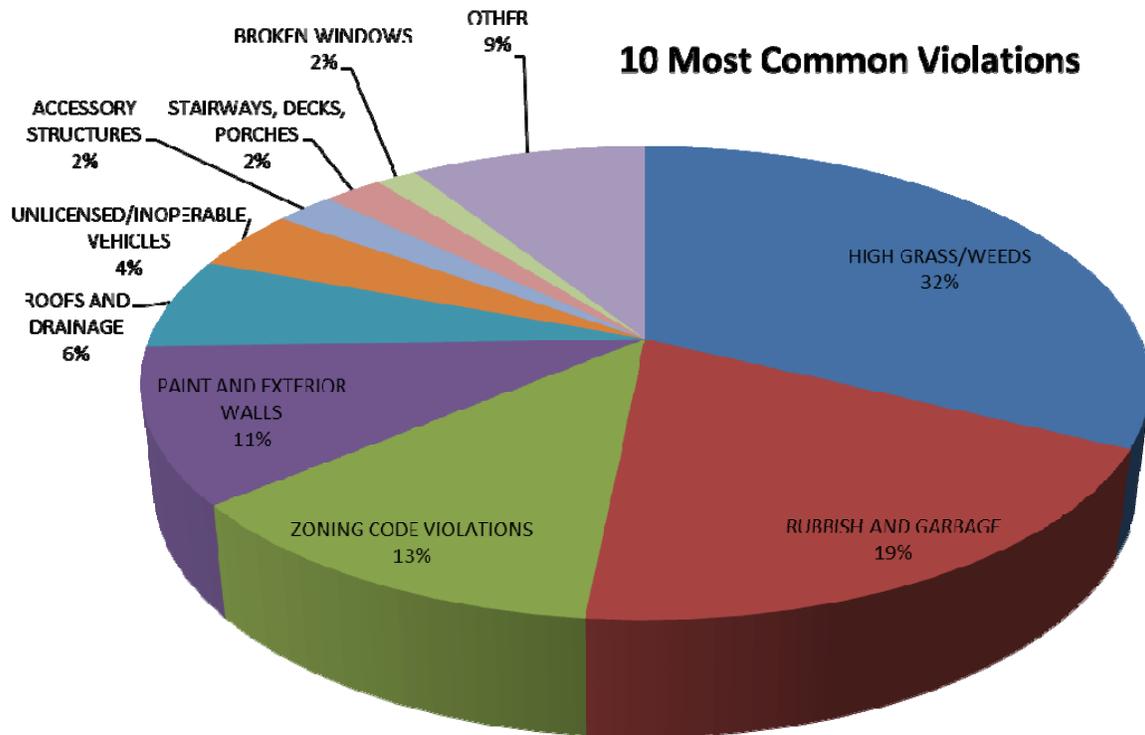
Note: Owner occupied was determined from W.C. Auditor information.

Rental Property Initial Inspection Results



Owner Occupied Initial Inspection Results





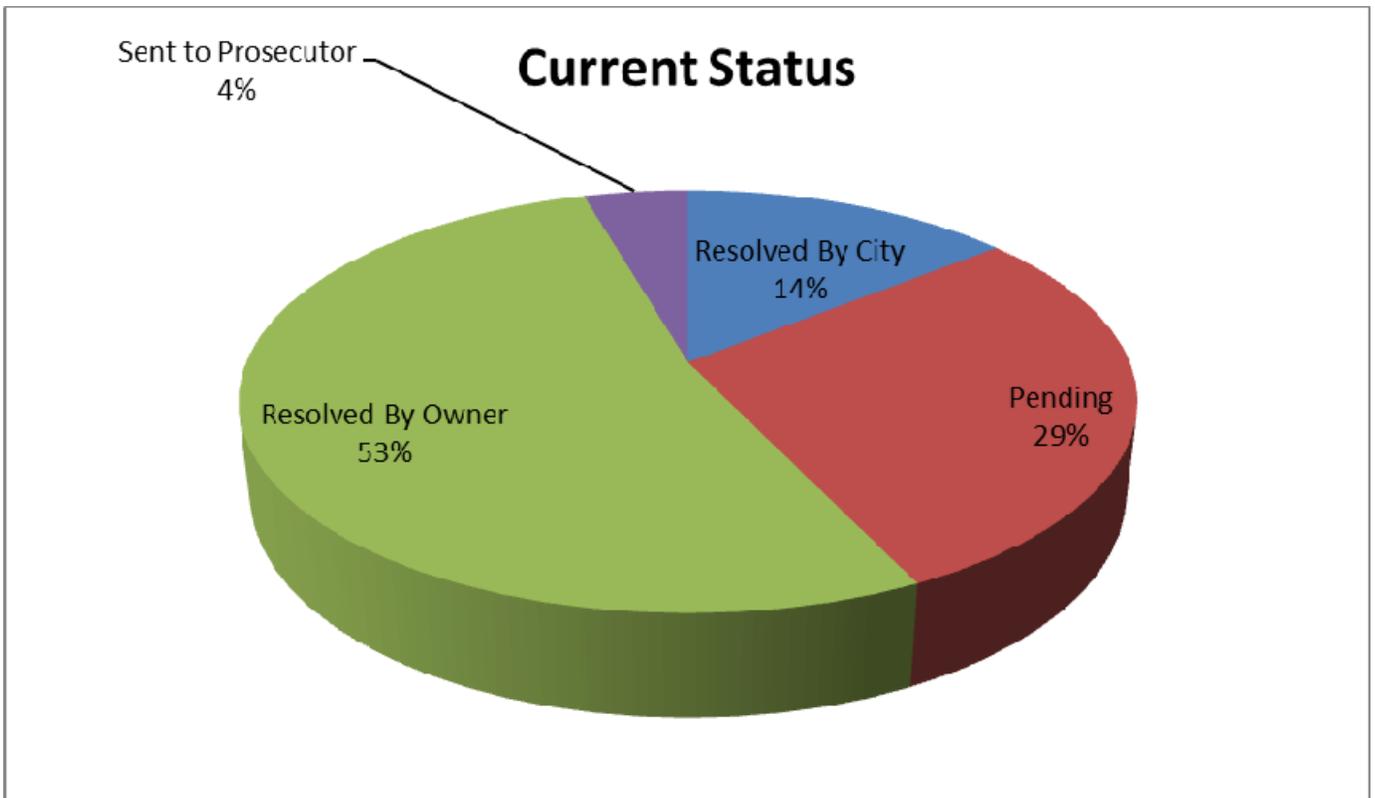
CODE VIOLATION

VIOLATIONS

HIGH GRASS/WEEDS	186
RUBBISH AND GARBAGE	111
ZONING CODE VIOLATIONS	71
PAINT AND EXTERIOR WALLS	61
ROOFS AND DRAINAGE	36
UNLICENSED/INOPERABLE VEHICLES	24
ACCESSORY STRUCTURES	13
STAIRWAYS, DECKS, PORCHES	13
BROKEN WINDOWS	9
OTHER	52

Resolution of Violations

This chart highlights the majority of violations are resolved by the property owner through voluntary compliance. 2014 saw similar results with slight reductions in violations abated by the City or sent to the Prosecutor.



Larwill Mobile Home Clean-up

There were many additional projects and demolitions performed in 2015 by the Division but most notable was the demolition and clean-up of the Larwill Mobile Home Park located at 505 W Larwill St. Due to unpaid utility bills the City of Wooster was forced to shut off the water to the park. At this time the park was in dilapidated condition and was not being maintained by the property owner. Homes were declared unfit for human habitation until the water could be restored and the property made safe and sanitary. The Courts eventually appointed a receiver and Division was able to assist in making the property safe and sanitary.



Floodplain Administration

Flooding has been a notorious cause of damage and life loss in the United States, with an average annual damage cost of \$6 billion and loss of 140 people. A flood is any collection of water on what is normally dry land. Floods can occur due to heavy rain, snow melt, or a body of water overflowing, among other causes. The people and places affected by flooding are generally located in what is referred to as the floodplain.

Since standard homeowners insurance doesn't cover flooding, the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) offers flood insurance to homeowners, renters and business owners if their community participates in the program. Participating communities agree to enforce and adopt ordinances that meet FEMA requirements to reduce the risk of flooding. In the spring of 2007, the City began participating in the National Flood Insurance Program with the adoption of the Flood Damage Reduction Ordinances. As if on cue, the City experienced a 100 year flood event in 2009 and another one in 2010. The NFIP standard for floodplain management is based on the 100-Year Flood. This is a flood event that has a 1 percent chance of occurring in any given year. A 100-Year Flood would cause great destruction, including large monetary losses and loss of lives. An even greater flood is called the 500-Year Flood, which has a 0.2 percent chance of occurring every year. The last 500-Year Flood occurred in Wayne County on July 4, 1969, causing \$17,000,000 in damages and claiming the lives of 21 people

On average, the City will issue 3 permits per year in the floodplain. Projects in the floodplain are required to build to higher standards including: dry-flood proofing, raising the elevation of the lowest floor or other flood resistant methods. By limiting activity in these areas, flood damage risks are properly managed.

During 2015, one permit for work in the floodplain was issued and the division did over 25 flood plain reviews along with assisting property owners determine the base flood elevation of their properties.

Grease Trap Installation and Maintenance

As part of the City of Wooster's Utility Divisions industrial pre-treatment program, grease trap installation and maintenance is a critical component.

The discharge of organic grease into the Sewer System has become an important issue in the City. When organic grease solidifies in the sewer mains, it entraps solids and forms a hard deposit that decreases capacity or causes a blockage, creating system overflows or backups that damage user's property. Additionally, this unnecessarily adds organic load to the treatment plant. In an effort to address this problem, our plumbing inspector enforces standards for new grease trap installation and assists the pretreatment coordinator in policing restaurant grease trap maintenance.

Backflow Valve Program

Backflow can be described as "a reversal of the normal direction of flow within a piping system" or the flow of water or other liquids, mixtures or substances into the distribution pipes of a potable water supply from any source other than the intended source of the potable water supply.

What it means to our customers is that once the potable water passes through the water meter into a facility, premise or home it is uncontaminated from other users and the backflow device will protect all other users from that water supply. While backflow and cross connections (an arrangement whereby backflow can occur) are not new they are most recently covered by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under sections 3745 – 3795 of the Ohio Administrative Code and the City's Utility Ordinances. Under these ordinances, commercial and industrial facilities are in need of an approved backflow device, also some residential site's may be required to have some sort of protection based on use (for example a residential irrigations system). A survey/plan review is done for all new water connections and may be conducted at an existing site by the Program Coordinator (Scott Davis) at his discretion. Devices may be required based on this survey.

During 2015, over 1,500 notices were sent to property owners requiring the test results for their backflow device be recorded in the City's online tracking system. The program coordinator tracks this required testing documenting successful testing of the devices.

Facilities Management

The Division acts as the facility manager for City Hall. Supervising the janitorial and service contracts for the building, providing maintenance and day to day oversight are part of the responsibilities.



Staff Development

“What motivates the staff is the realization that building safety is something vital to all who work in buildings, send their kids to school or shop at the local grocery store – we often just take building safety for granted.”

In code administration, the terrain is continually changing. New codes and standards such as the energy conservation code are adopted. In addition, new methods, materials and technologies become available.

The training and skills necessary to be a good construction inspector do not come quickly or easily. One must work very hard to gain an acceptable level of expertise in various construction related areas, and be very diligent about staying proficient. Building Division staff is expected to go beyond what is required, and to do whatever is necessary to serve the customer, provide solutions and at the same time get code compliance. What motivates the staff is the realization that building safety is something vital to all who work in buildings, send their kids to school or shop at the local grocery store – we take building safety for granted.

During 2015 the staff attended their State Educational Conferences for their respective disciplines to obtain the State mandated training. Additionally, staff receives local monthly training with their involvement in the Five County Building Officials Association, Ohio Building Officials Association, Ohio Plumbing Inspectors Organization and Ohio Electrical Inspectors Organization. This continuing education makes the difference between mediocre and excellent inspectors.

2014 Fiscal Activity Report

“The Division works hard to be fiscally conservative, accountable, and transparent while striving for continuous improvement.”

Fiscal Environment

The Building Standards Division is not an Enterprise Fund but rather funded primarily by the general fund; however, a significant part of the budget is covered by user fees (developers/contractors).

It makes sense for specific users to pay for services received, however since much of the work of the division is unrelated to construction inspection user fees cannot account for all of the Division’s expenses. For example, the division enforces the property maintenance code, some general city ordinances, the backflow valve program, safety inspections and others. These inspections should not be subsidized by developer’s fees but rather the general fund as it benefits the City as a whole.

- ***\$280,000 in fees***
- ***Fees represent 42% of budget expenses***

The general mix is: 60% user fees and 40% general fund. This mix is part of a revenue policy developed by the Division and Administration and is reviewed periodically. **In 2015 fees accounted for 42% of the operating budget. This lower percentage was due to the general fund used to clean up the Larwill Trailer Park and additional demolitions approved by Council – totaling \$161,000.**

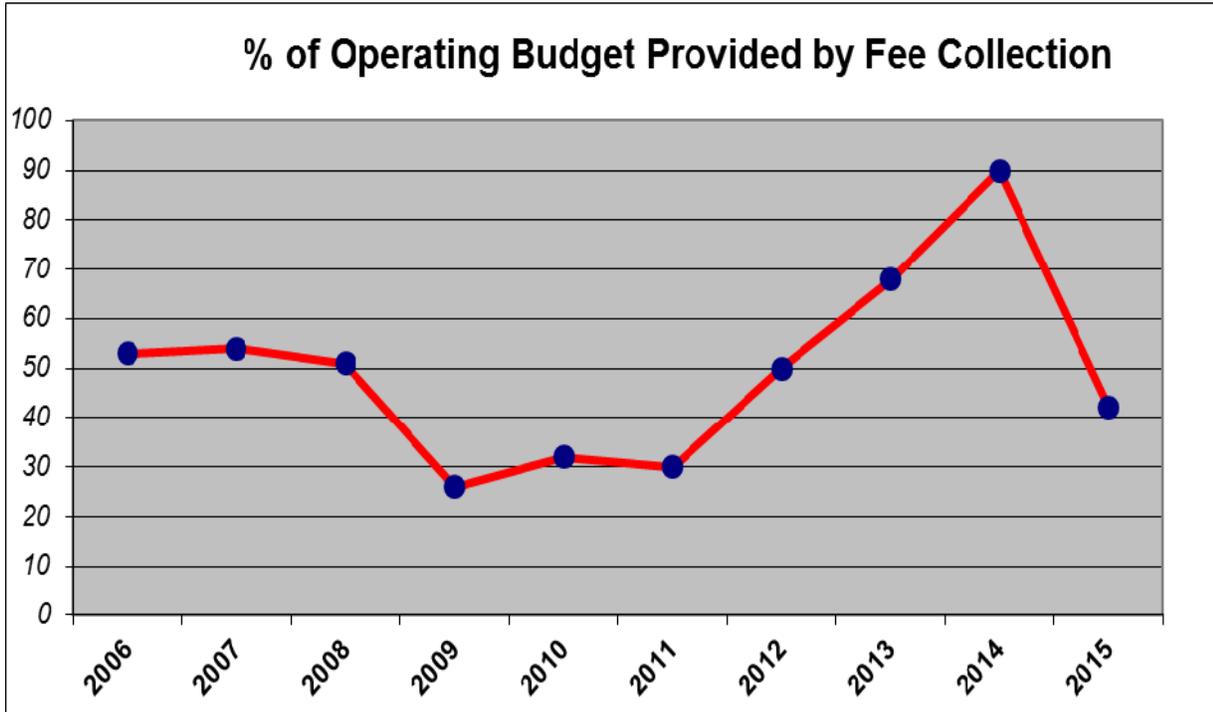
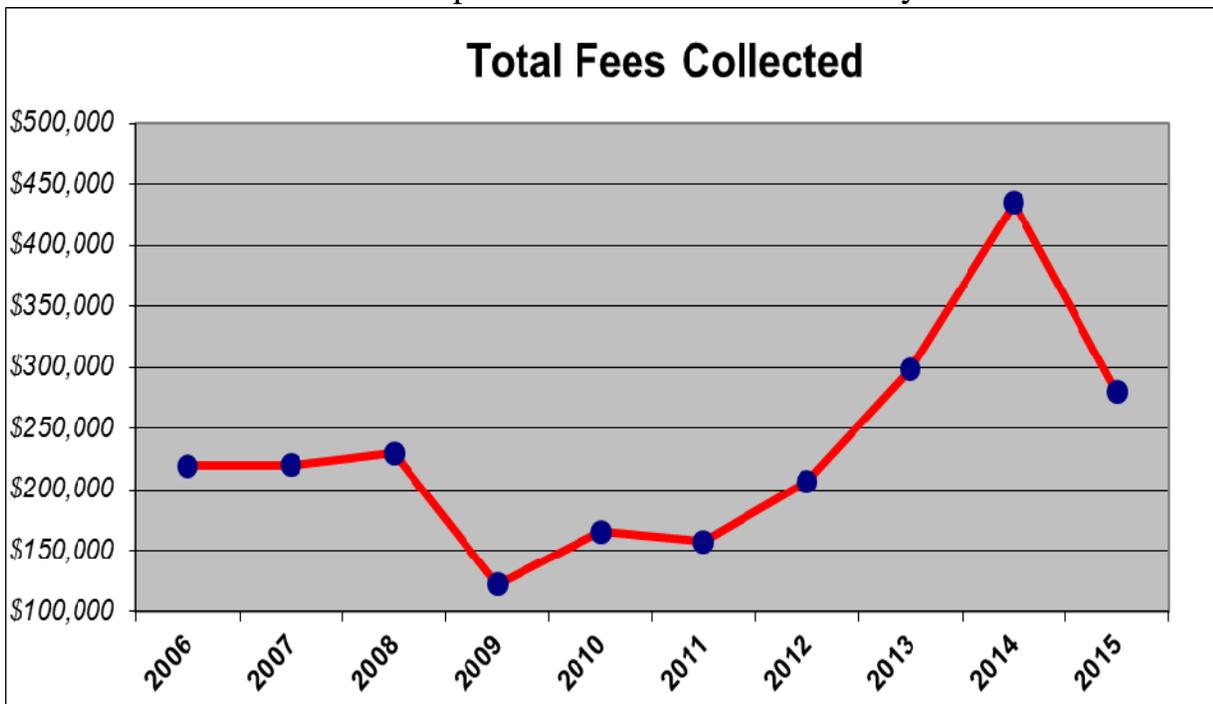


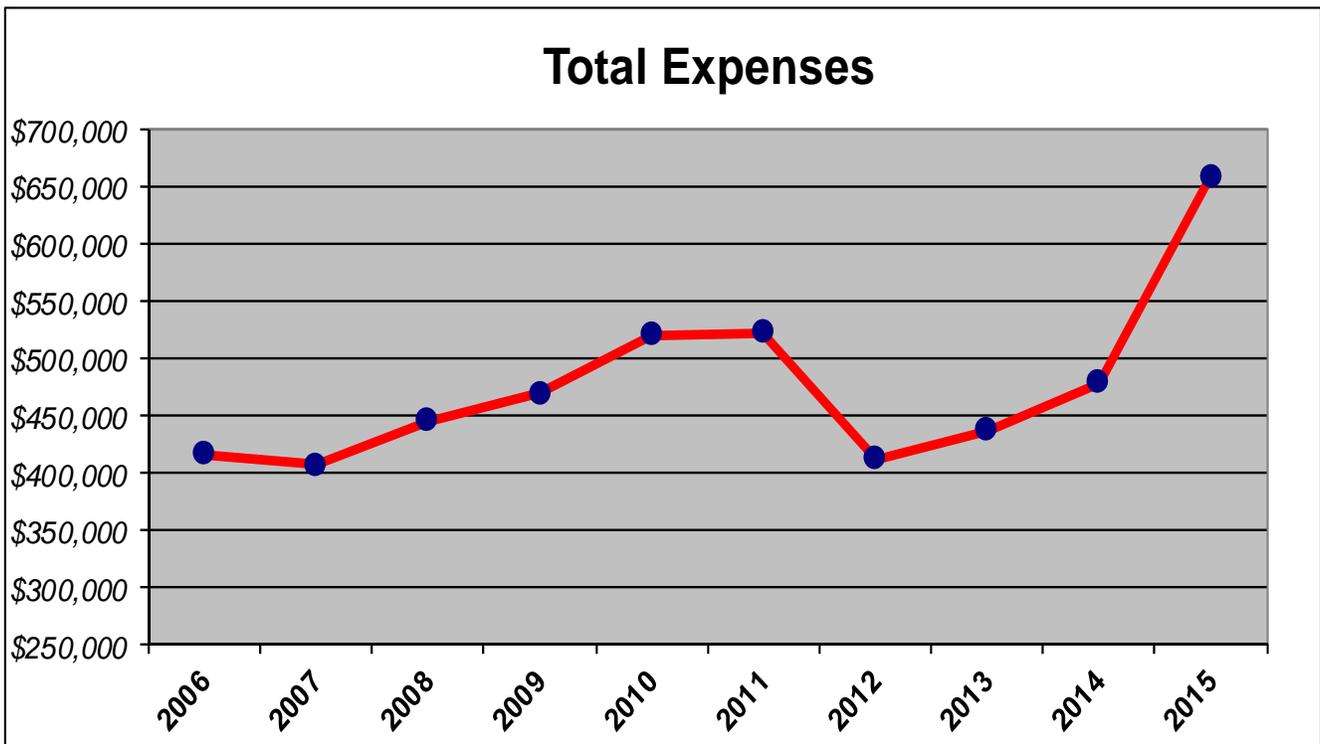
Chart reflects increase in permits sold over the last two years.



Expenses and the Budget

After averaging about \$400,000 from 2002 – 2007, expenses began an upward trend. This continued into 2009 – 2011 as the Building Standards Division and the Planning and Zoning Divisions were merged and reflected the added expenses of that Division. In 2011, one employee from the Building Standards Division was eliminated and for 2012, the Planning and Zoning Division functioned as a stand-alone division with a separate budget. This gave a more accurate picture of the expenses for the Building Standards Division. With one less employee and other cost savings measures, the expenses were back down to 2002 levels. Expenses were down to 10 year old levels in 2012 and remained in at this level during 2013 rising only slightly. With the addition of a new full-time property maintenance inspector late in 2013, this caused a slight rise in expenses. This was fully realized during 2014 as the inspector worked the entire year.

2015 saw this same level of funding with no major increase. However, expenses are increased as property maintenance abatement increases. For example, during 2015 the Larwill clean-up was over \$111,000 and another \$50,000 in demolitions was expended over the normal year. This \$161,000 is reflected in the increased expenses for the year.



“The City of Wooster Building Standards Division remains committed to our mission, and looks forward to embracing the challenges that 2016 may bring.”

Respectfully submitted by:
Tim Monea, Chief Building Official