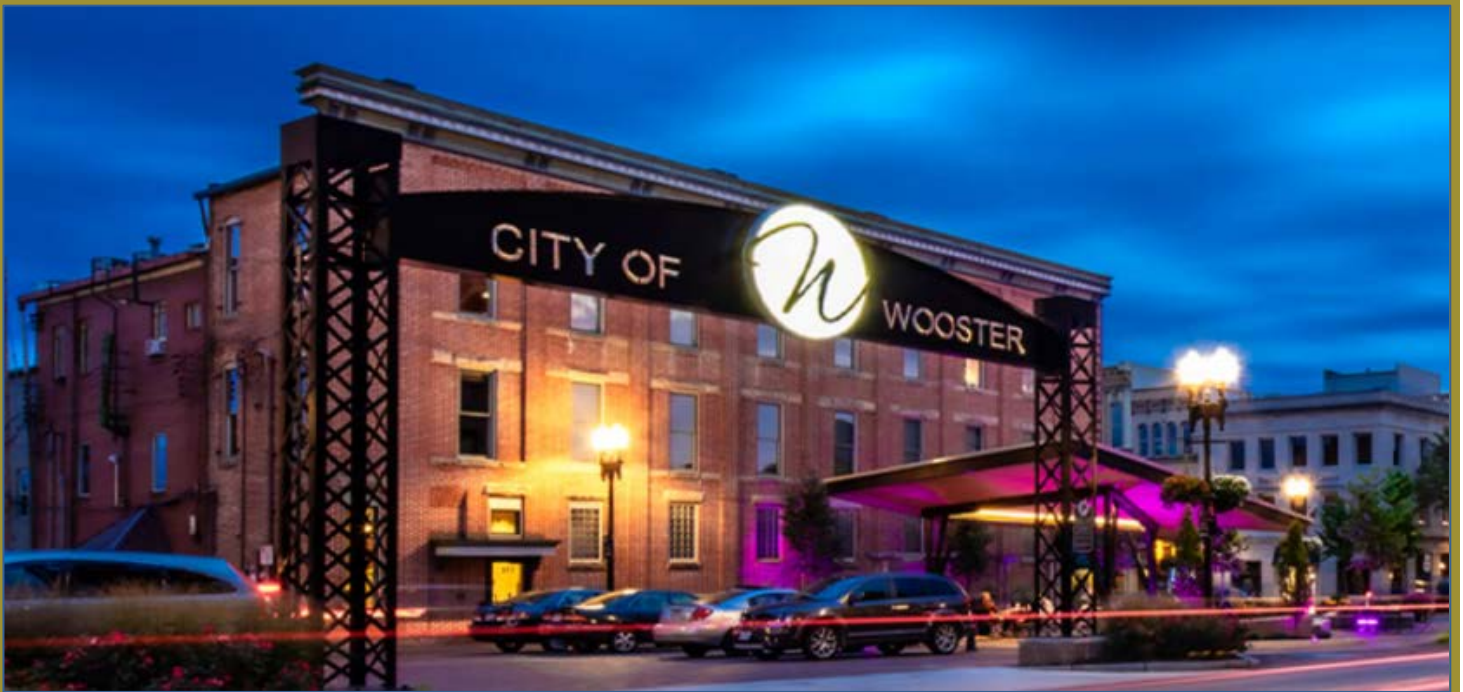


2022

Report



Building Standards Division

Message from the Chief Building Official



We spend most of our lives inside of buildings which means ensuring building safety is a key ingredient of a safe and prosperous community. Building Safety defines our purpose and we are committed to it. Staff works every day to ensure buildings are safe and code compliant, whether it's our homes, places of work, or where we shop, eat or play.

Every day, our staff interacts with citizens, business owners, developers, contractors, and more to assist each person with their specific project or question. This annual report serves to provide a summary of those interactions and explain how they add value to the community as a whole. As expected, I will provide a report of activity by the numbers. But I will also provide a brief synopsis of what these numbers mean, how they support our values, and show how we engage with our customers and stakeholders. I will also describe our staff's accomplishments, the goals we achieved and our new goals for the upcoming year.

Thank you for reading our 2022 annual report and I sincerely hope it helps you better understand our purpose and commitment to the community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tim Monea". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tim Monea, CBO
Building Standards Manager

1,512

Permits issued
Down 4% from last year but
continues trend of record activity

4,935

Total Inspections
Up 10% from last year

\$130,534,275

Value of construction in Wooster in 2022 up 25% from last year's nearly \$104 million and the highest ever recorded. 5 of the last 6 years numbers were the highest on record.

10

New Single Family Homes built up 25% from last year. This is analyzed further in the report.

1,432

Property Maintenance and Zoning Code Inspections
Down 14% from last year.

Activity Summary

- **1,512 permits** This is down 4%. However, five of the last six years had the highest permit numbers in the last 20 years. These numbers are impressive given the circumstances of the pandemic.
- **4,935 Total Inspections** Up 10% from last year. Of these, 1,432 were property maintenance or zoning code inspections.
- **The total value of permitted construction was nearly \$131 million.** This was up 25% from last year. 5 of the last 6 years have been some of the highest values on record for the last 25 years.
- In 2022, we **collected \$567,707 in fees**, up 56% from 2021 and the most ever collected in a single year. Fee collection in 5 of the last 6 years has been the highest on record and line with our revenue policy discussed further in report.
- **10 new single-family houses** were approved, and this is up 25% from last year. This is analyzed further in the report.

The top 10 projects in 2022 by value of construction

1. FedEx Distribution Old Airport Rd	\$35,950,000
2. Wooster Brush facility Daisy Way	\$20,000,000
3. Meijer Store Burbank Rd.	\$14,000,000
4. Boy's Village treatment facility	\$ 4,000,000
5. Mixed-use residential/restaurant Liberty St.	\$ 3,500,000
6. Wooster Brush warehouse alteration	\$ 3,200,000
7. Middle School alt Graustark Path	\$ 2,214,000
8. Daisy Warehouse expansion	\$ 2,100,000
9. WCH Endoscopy expansion Beall Ave.	\$ 1,350,000
10. New Panda Express restaurant Burbank Rd.	\$ 1,300,000

This total represents 66% of all construction	\$87,614,000

City of Wooster Building Standards Division Significant 2022 Accomplishments

- **Significant Accomplishments in 2022:** Our Certified Property Maintenance Inspector became certified to conduct building and electrical inspections. Our residential building inspector became certified to inspect commercial buildings. These certifications allow for more flexibility and back up.

We continued to refine our Commercial plan review process and were able to “turn around” plans in 14 calendar days.

The Chief Building Official represented the City as a member of the

Housing Coalition and homelessness ad hoc subcommittee

Sat on the City’s housing advisory committee

Represented the mayor as the board chair of Community Action Wayne/Medina (CAW/M)

Sat on the construction committee for the proposed Lyric Theater

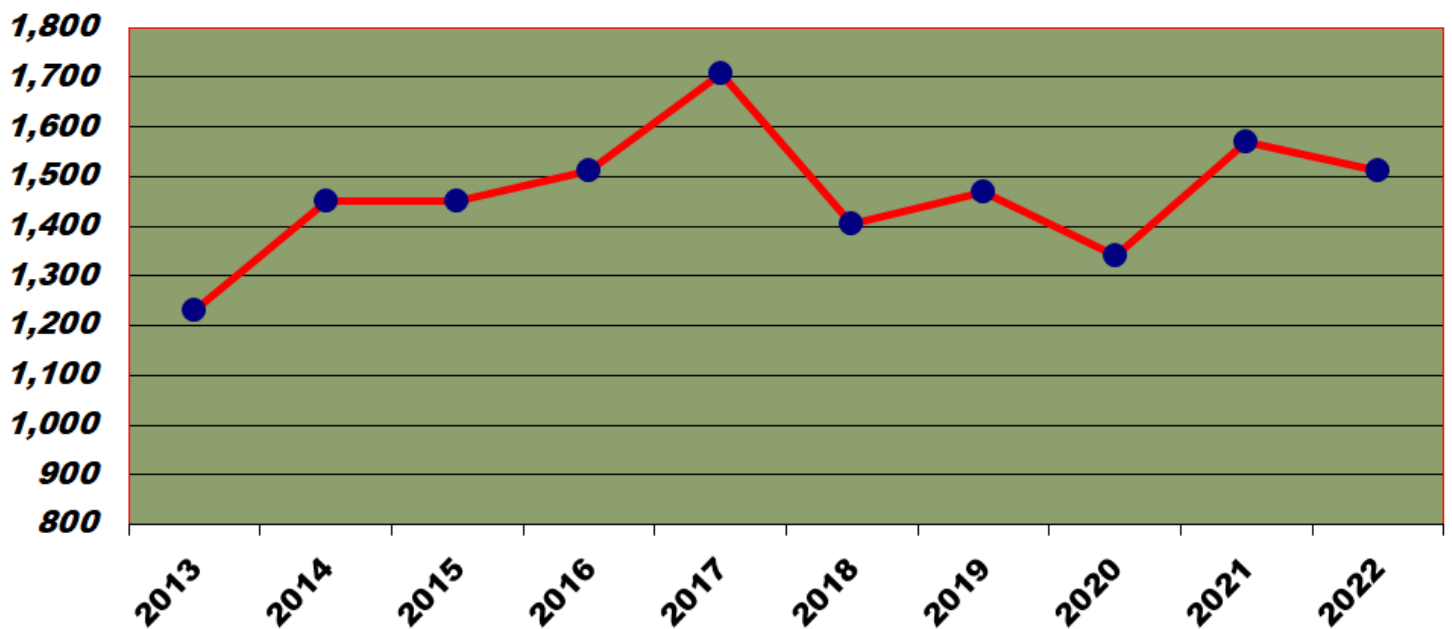
The division also continued management of the Residential Waste Contract with Kimble, managed all of the City’s off-street parking lots, and expanded the City’s downtown dumpster program with a new location. The Division also manages city hall facilities and upgraded the balance of the lighting to LED, remodeled the IT division and conference room/lunchroom and exercise room. We also began the engineering on the chiller replacement project.

This activity has been trending up for nearly 10 years.

In 2022, 1,512 permits were issued, down slightly 4% from last year. This level of activity has been fairly consistent in 9 of the last 10 years.

Total inspections were up 10% from last year as these numbers parallel the permit numbers and have also remained consistent.

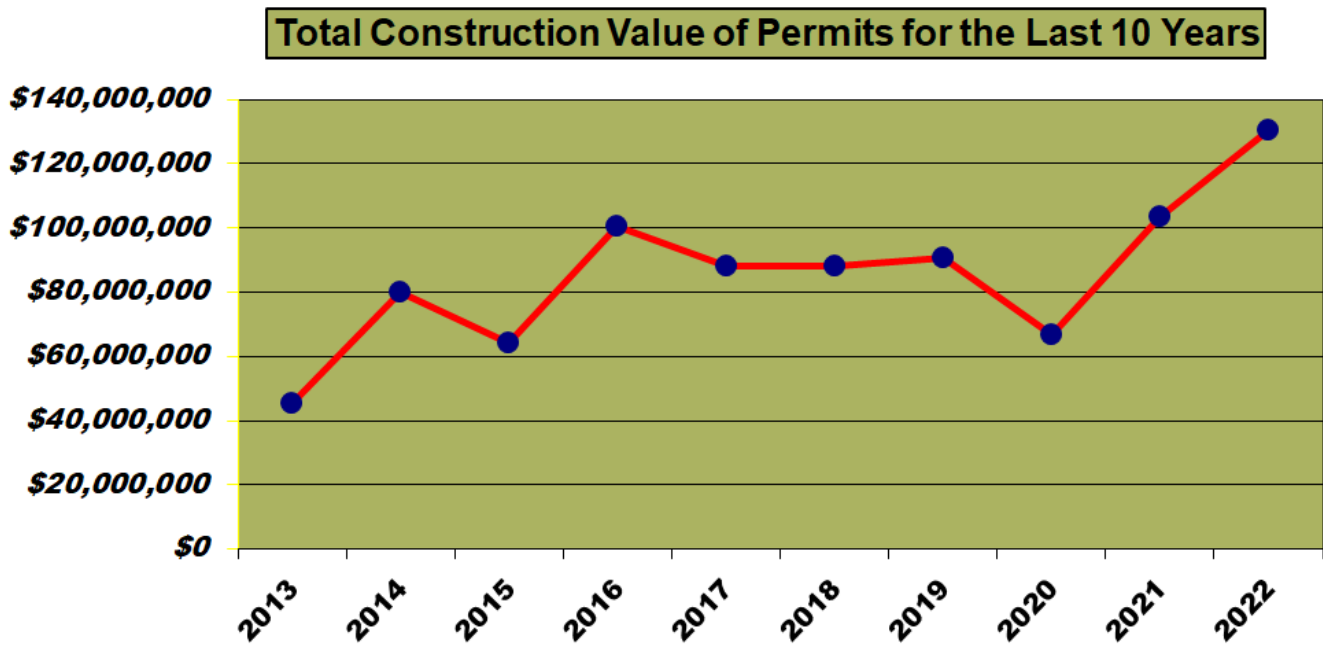
Number of Permits Issued Last 10 Years



During 2022, the Division reviewed and issued 1,512 construction permits. These permits include residential and commercial building, electrical, plumbing, HVAC, and fire sprinkler and alarm permits. Not included in the figures are residential zoning permits (the division issues residential zoning permits and these are tracked by the Planning and Zoning Division).

2022 Value of Construction

In 2022, the total value of construction was nearly \$131 million. This represented the highest value ever.

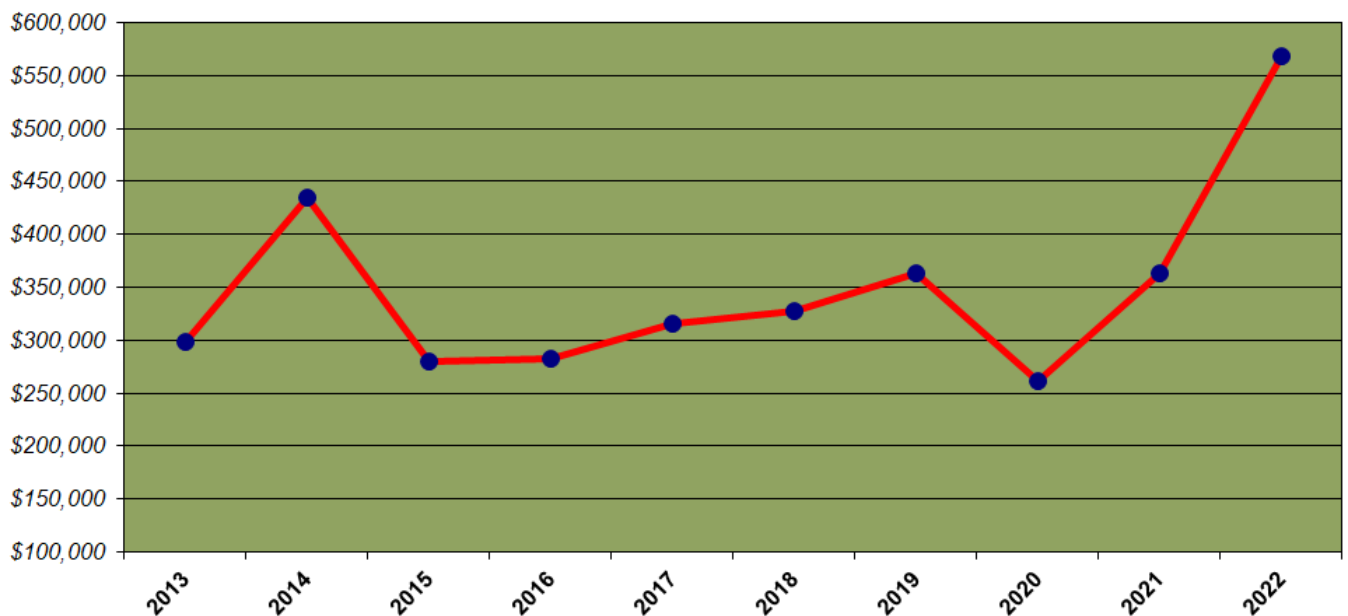


Over the last 25 years, construction in the City of Wooster has certainly had its ups and downs. Before 2001, construction values remained fairly constant in the \$30 - \$40 million range. The years between 2001 through 2007 saw construction activity levels peak in the City with 2005 seeing nearly double the norm with \$90 million in value. The housing crisis and the following years represented the low point. The last seven years were very high (6 of the top 7 years ever) and in 2016 we issued building permits on construction valued at \$100 million – a new all-time high at that time. 2019 was then the second highest year on record at \$91 million. This was topped with 2021's \$104 million as the highest on record. However, all of this was eclipsed by the nearly \$131 million in construction activity during 2022.

2022 Fee Collection Up 39% Continuing a 6 year Upward Trend.

In 2022, we collected \$567,707 in fees, up 56% from 2021. And 2021 numbers were up 39% from the previous year. Fee collection is up despite the fact that permit fees were lowered approximately 15% during 2017 due to the efficiencies of the online permitting process. We target fees to represent about 50% of budget expenses in line with our revenue policy. This is a trend that must be watched in 2023.

Permit Fees Collected in the Last 10 Years

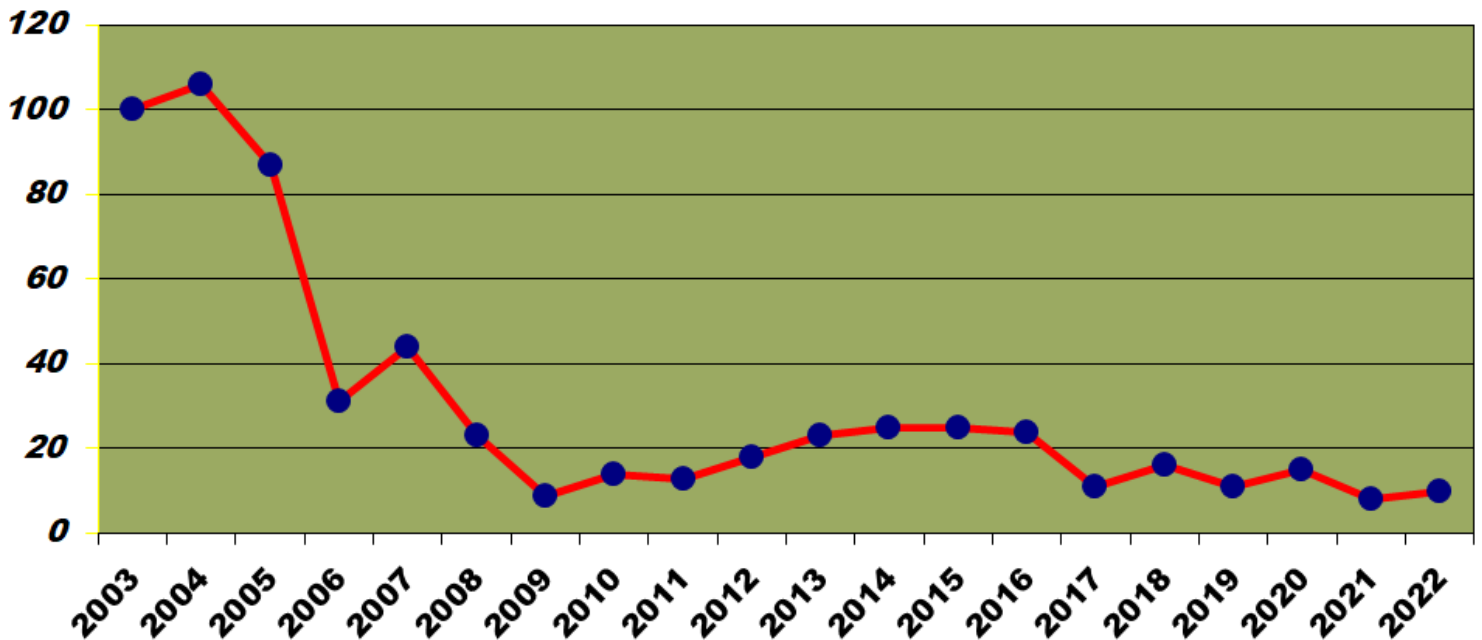


The general mix of fees is 50% user fees and 50% general fund. This mix is part of a revenue policy developed by the Division and Administration and is reviewed periodically. The policy reflects the view that fees from permits should not subsidize code enforcement and other non-development activity as this burden should be placed on the community as a whole. An increase in code enforcement activity and abatement funds such as demolition bring this percentage down, as fees are not collected for such actions. As these activities increase or as fees collection increases, adjustments to the target may be necessary.

2022 Single-Family Housing Starts up from 2021

In 2022, 10 new houses were approved, up 25% from last year. The years 2011 – 2016 saw 20 – 25 houses built each year before it dipped to a low 11 houses in 2017 and not breaking 20 houses since.

Single Family Housing Units Last 20 Years



Housing averaged 64 new dwellings for the each of the ten years from 1999 – 2007 and even topped 100 units in two of those years. Housing unit growth paralleled the growth of the North End of the City as new subdivisions were built out at the same time as the North End developed. For the years 2012 – 2016, Wooster averaged 23 new single-family houses. However, since then housing starts have not reached 20 units. In these years very few new subdivisions have been brought to the City for development. Only two residential subdivisions developed in the last several years: Tartan Ridge and Crooked Creek. In 2021 the housing industry faced unprecedented obstacles such as shortages of lumber and other supplies. The future looks bright for housing as we now have about 150 new single-family sites approved and other multi-family developments planned. One development with nearly 100 sites is now selling home sites.

2022 Property Maintenance Code Enforcement

Activity Summary

Code enforcement is some of the most challenging work we do. But it is important and satisfying because it protects public health and safety, safeguards relationships between neighbors, beautifies our neighborhoods, and preserves property values.

- We performed nearly **1,432 property maintenance and planning and zoning code inspections during 2022. This is down 14% from 2021.**
- We issued 615 **Code violations**. 87% were closed. They were closed because the owner complied, the City abated the violation, or we prosecuted the case in court. 22 cases were prosecuted in 2022.
- 77% of the violations were for high grass and weeds, excess rubbish and garbage, and unlicensed or inoperable vehicles.
- Five houses were **demolished** either by the City or by order. We have averaged 7 houses per year for the last 10 years.

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. Floods can occur due to heavy rain, snowmelt, or a body of water overflowing, among other causes. The people and places affected by flooding are 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 in 2010.

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 flood prone areas, flood damage risks are properly managed.

During 2022, the division conducted several floodplain reviews and assisted property owners determine the base flood elevation of their properties. Only a few floodplain permits were issued for projects.

2022 Goal Setting and Action Planning

Goal One: Expand the downtown waste collection program and eliminate non-compliant dumpsters from the district. *Complete with a dumpster site on East Liberty, enforcement continues.*

Goal Two: Assist the Land Bank in identifying properties to return to productive use in Wooster. *Completed as several projects moved forward.*

Goal Three: Remodel Council Chambers, IT, and Finance Division. Produce specifications for the replacement of the chillers at City Hall. *Council Room remodeling will take place in 2023. Finance Division and IT Division remodeling completed. Chiller replacement work moved to 2023.*

2023 Goal Setting and Action Planning

Goal One: Continue to expand the Downtown Waste Collection Program .

Goal Two: Evaluate fees for both building standards applications and the City's downtown waste collection program. Work out fee structures and formulas consistent with policy.

Goal Three: Remodel Council Chambers, develop bid documents and budgeting for the Chiller replacement project.

“The City of Wooster Building Standards Division staff is well trained, experienced, and committed to our mission of protecting the public and we are ready for the challenges of 2024.”

- Tim Monea Chief Building Official
 Floodplain Administrator

- Carla Jessie Administrative Assistant
 Building Standards Division
 Planning and Zoning Division

- Kim Fahrni Electrical Inspector
 Commercial Building Inspector

- Scott Davis Plumbing and HVAC Inspector
 Residential Building Inspector

- Mark Wilson Building and Zoning Inspector
 Property Maintenance Inspector

- Jeff Mills Property Maintenance Inspector
 Zoning Inspector

Respectfully submitted by:

Tim Monea, CBO
Building Standards Division Manager