

City of Park Ridge

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT



Annual Report for 2017

22 February 2018

Department of Community Preservation and Development
City of Park Ridge

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017

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PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION

The Department of Community Preservation and Development (CP&D) was established pursuant to Article 3, Chapter 13 of the City's Municipal Code. The mission of the department is to "provide general direction, coordination, supervision and control so as to preserve the existing character of Park Ridge as a high quality residential community." CP&D provides overall program administration and coordination for all long-range community planning, zoning and land use, building and construction activities, property transfer taxes, and environmental health and nuisance control programs. In 2017 the department assumed oversight of the City's economic development efforts and the Park Ridge Farmers' Market.

The department is organized into four divisions: administrative, building safety, environmental health, and planning and zoning.

The Administrative Division

The Administrative Division provides administrative support for all department activities. Additionally, the personnel of this division work the front counter, receiving and initializing all building permit applications and, in limited cases, issuing same-day permits. The City's property transfer tax program is also handled by the department's administrative staff.

The Building Division

The Building Division provides enforcement of the City's building codes to ensure that all construction conforms to acceptable standards of safety. This includes the processing and approval of building permit applications. The division reviews applications for compliance with the City's adopted building codes, and once a permit is issued, inspects the work to ensure compliance with the approved building plans. The division also investigates complaints regarding construction activity and, as necessary, issues stop-work orders or takes other corrective action. Occasionally the Building Division must resolve issues through the City's administrative adjudication system.

The Environmental Health Division

The Environmental Health Division provides a variety of services aimed at fostering the health and safety of citizens. The division is staffed by two state-licensed health

practitioners who advise and inspect food service establishments on health and sanitation standards.

The Environmental Health Division operates on a yearly cycle of food establishment inspections. Depending on risk category, a food establishment is inspected one, two or three times per calendar year. The rounds of food inspections are scheduled between other season fluctuations in the duties of the environmental health officers: nuisance control for grass cutting (spring); festivals, special events and the farmer's market (summer, fall), and business licensing (winter).

Additionally, the Environmental Health Division enforces the property maintenance and nuisance control regulations (which address noise, illumination, weeds, litter and refuse) of the City. This division also manages the City's animal and pest control programs, and the licensing of Park Ridge businesses.

And finally, the Environmental Health Division administers a medication and sharps disposal program. Residents may drop off medications, needles, used CFL bulbs, household batteries, and mercury thermometers at City Hall the first Thursday of every month between 8:00 am and noon.

The Planning and Zoning Division

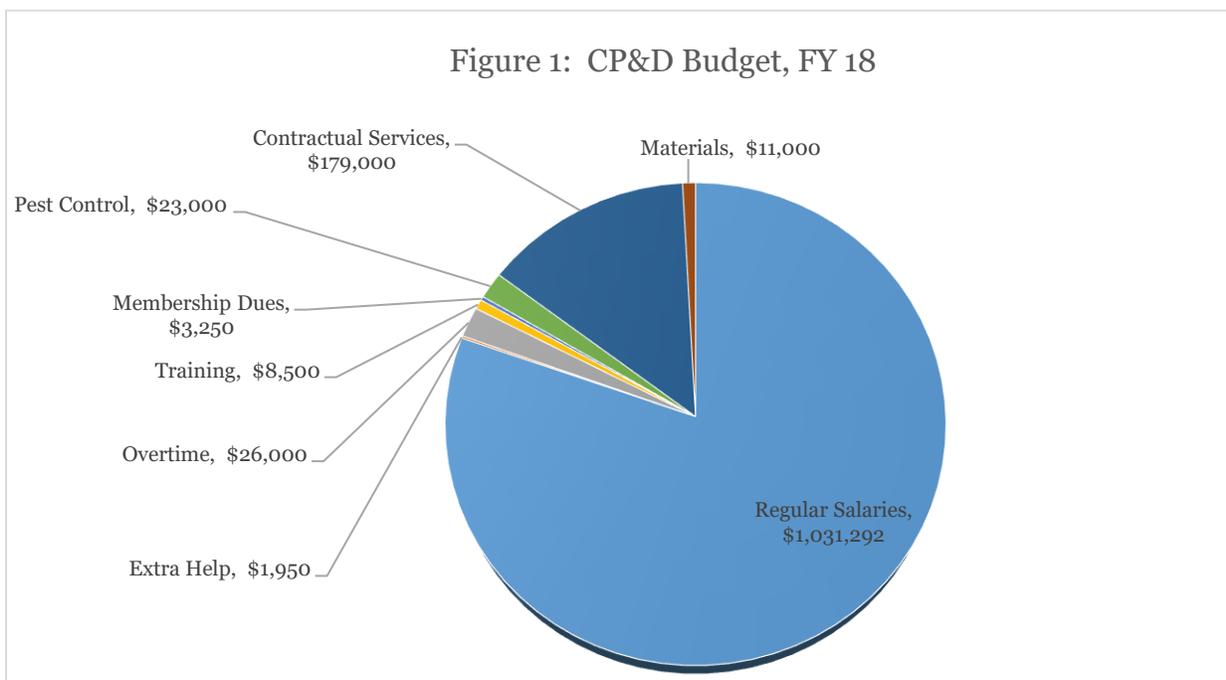
The Planning and Zoning Division regulates development within the City to facilitate the preservation of the desired character of the community. The division encourages appropriate development through the enforcement of the City's land use policies and regulations. The division is responsible for defining, maintaining, and enforcing compliance with the Zoning Ordinance and other adopted standards. Personnel in this division serve as staff liaisons to four commissions, whose membership is appointed by the City Council: the Appearance Commission, the Historic Preservation Commission, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Zoning Board of Appeals. Finally, the division serves as the point of contact for the City's economic development efforts as well as the City's point of contact for the U.S. Census Bureau.

For a list of authorized positions and their incumbents as of 31 December 2017, see **Appendix A**.

BUDGET

The City operates on a fiscal year running from 1 May through 30 April. For Fiscal Year 2018 (May 2017 through April 2018), the CP&D budget totaled \$1,273,992. This budget was substantially the same as the previous fiscal year's budget. A new emphasis on professional training and certification led to an increase in the training line item from \$5,000 to \$8,500 for the year.

The City's largest single-ticket item in the fiscal budget was for the Department's new EnerGov software, but this item was reflected in the budget for Information Technology rather than for CP&D. Total cost of the EnerGov package was approximately \$203,000. This package included software, training and other services, and consultant travel.



The budget for pest control was increased from \$13,000 to \$23,000 in October.

Contractual services are primarily for several consultants that assist with building plan review and inspections for engineering, elevators and fire safety. The \$179,000 budget for contractual services is a pass-through cost; the invoices from the contractors are added to the building permit fees.

STRATEGIC GOALS FOR CP&D

Strategic goals of the City are divided into four categories: short-term complex, short-term routine, long-term complex, and long-term routine. The Department has goals in all categories. Fiscal year 2018 (1 May 2017 through 30 April 2018) marked the first time the goals were tracked as part of the annual budget. Progress and fulfillment of these goals are reviewed quarterly by the City Council. For a summary of the Department's goals and status of work to fulfill those goals see **Appendix B**.

DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS: CHALLENGES AND CHANGES IN 2017

In 2017 the Department staff fulfilled routine tasks while tackling unique challenges as well as working on several initiatives aimed at improving customer service. These issues, challenges and changes are discussed below.

Authorized Staff Levels and Personnel Changes

Authorized staffing levels remained the same throughout the year. CP&D has fourteen full-time and two part-time positions. Additionally, the Department has two on-call, part-time inspector positions. Changes in personnel occurred throughout the year, with one-third of the staff leaving the City's employment.

In January, the acting director was hired as a full-time employee by the City.

In late winter/early spring 2017 the medical absences of two inspectors prompted the hiring of two, new part-time personnel to serve as on-call inspectors. Since the return of the employees from medical leave, these two on-call inspectors remained with the Department, filling in for both scheduled and emergency absences of the full-time inspectors on an as-needed basis.

In April, the part-time plan reviewer/inspector departed. Approximately six weeks later the full-time electrical plan reviewer/inspector departed. The near-simultaneous loss of these two personnel with related jobs allowed a re-adjustment in duties and responsibilities within the Building Division. This readjustment is illustrated in the Figure 2 on the next page. Essentially, the functions of the full- and part-time positions were switched.

The changes have provided more flexibility to the Department, i.e. the "jack-of-all trades" inspector is now available for assignment or response to complaints on a full-time, rather than part-time basis. Moreover, the new part-time plan reviewer/inspector has been able to sufficiently handle the workload—with occasional assistance from on-call personnel—for electrical permits and inspections.

Figure 2: Full- and Part-Time Inspector Re-Alignment, 2017

Status and Job Title	Main Responsibilities (Previous)	Main Responsibilities (Re-Aligned)
Part-time Plan Reviewer/Inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building permit plan review for minor projects ▪ Electrical inspections (back-up for full-time inspector) ▪ Assist with zoning review and inspections ▪ Investigation of complaints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Electrical permit plan review ▪ Electrical inspections ▪ Other inspections, e.g. fences, as needed
Full-time Plan Reviewer/Inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Electrical permit plan review ▪ Electrical inspections ▪ Other inspections as needed ▪ Investigation of complaints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building permit plan review for minor projects ▪ Inspections, general ▪ Assistance with zoning review and inspections ▪ Investigation of complaints

In June the senior Environmental Health Officer, Laura Dee, retired after twenty-nine years of service with the City. While her experience as well as demeanor and tactfulness in dealing with the public will be sorely missed, the formerly “junior” Environmental Health Officer now has ten years in the Department. He admirably filled a three-month gap between the retirement and the hiring of a replacement. Furthermore, he managed this during one of the busiest times of the year, working the Farmers Market and special events almost every weekend throughout the summer.

The new Environmental Health Officer, Bernadeta Madzryk, started with the City on September 6. She emerged from a field of very qualified candidates, and brings to Park Ridge over five years of experience as an Illinois Licensed Health Practitioner with municipal and county governments.

Three staff members departed between 16 November and 2 January: an administrative assistant, the zoning coordinator and the permit, inspections and licensing assistant. After a round of interviews with outside candidates, the Department’s part-time administrative assistant, Kerry Cwick, was hired for the full-time administrative position. She assumed full-time duties in mid-December. Her vacated part-time position as well as the other two vacant positions remained unfilled as of 31 December 2017. (Two of the three have been filled as of this writing in February 2018.)

See **Appendix A** for a list of incumbents in the Department’s authorized positions as of 31 December 2017.

New Software

The department's current software, PermitsPlus, has been used since 2000–1, and in recent years the department has considered upgrading to newer software. In early 2017 the department selected EnerGov software, a Tyler Technologies product, as the replacement for PermitsPlus. Tyler Technologies' portfolio includes Munis, which is used by the City's finance department. The selection of EnerGov was approved by the City Council in March 2017, and software implementation began with a three-day consultant visit in May 2017. This software is intended for use by not only the Department of Community Preservation and Development, but also by the finance and public works departments, both of which have significant interaction with CP&D.

The summer months were spent coordinating information technology issues between Tyler and the City. In December the second on-site consultant visit occurred. This was the start of the software "build-out," i.e. customizing the Tyler product to local regulations and procedures. An aggressive implementation schedule was agreed upon by Tyler and the Department at the close of 2017. This schedule anticipates continued build-out throughout early 2018, a large data migration from PermitsPlus to EnerGov in May 2018, training of personnel over the summer, and final data transfer and full activation of the new EnerGov software by City staff in October 2018. Following staff implementation, a digital portal to the new software system will be made available to the public. The public portal feature is anticipated to go live in January 2019. The new software will allow electronic applications of building permits and other documents, and—coupled with BlueBeam© software—the department will be capable of digital review of building plans.

Lawsuits and Complaints

In September 2016 a group of seven residents filed a lawsuit against the City, the City's Appearance Commissioners, and the developer of property at 400 Talcott (*Maheras v. the City of Park Ridge*). The suit alleged that the City's Appearance Commission improperly issued a Certificate of Approval for a proposed mixed-use building at 400 Talcott. (This project at 400 Talcott had been the subject of a previous lawsuit in 2014–2015 whereby the developer prevailed in efforts to overturn the Planning and Zoning Commission's decision to deny site plan approval of the proposal.) In response, the City filed a Motion to Dismiss, arguing that the plaintiffs

did not have standing to challenge the Appearance Commission's decision. On 24 January 2017, the judge in the case ruled, with prejudice, that the plaintiffs did not have standing and dismissed the case.

In November 2017 another group of ten residents, some of whom who had been plaintiffs in the case filed in 2016, filed a lawsuit against the City seeking revocation of the building permit for 400 Talcott (*Sloma v. the City of Park Ridge*). The City has filed a Motion to Dismiss, and a decision on the motion is pending as of this writing.

Additionally, *Solomon v. the City of Park Ridge* was concluded in the City's favor on 9 February 2017. Often referred to as "the treehouse case," this suit was filed in 2016 by owners of property on Western Avenue. The plaintiffs had sought reversal of a decision of the City's Zoning Board of Appeals which upheld a decision of the Zoning Coordinator. Subsequent to the court decision, the Department worked closely with the property owners to bring the structure into compliance with the City's zoning regulations, and the project was substantially completed by late summer.

In the fall of 2016 a resident filed a human rights complaint with the State's Department of Human Rights against the Department's director and an inspector. The complainant voluntarily withdrew his charge of discrimination following a fact-finding conference at the Illinois Department of Human Rights office in Chicago on 5 November 2017.

On 10 March 2017, a resident filed with the City an ethics complaint against the acting mayor and four Department members regarding a building code matter. Upon conclusion of the procedures for evaluating ethics complaints, it was found allegations in the Ethics Complaint did not involve or even implicate any of the ethics regulations or laws that are within the jurisdiction of an ethics complaint procedure as authorized by section 2-5-8 of the City Code of Ordinances. Instead, the allegations centered on the resident's claim that the City failed to respond to his complaints about his neighbor's shed—issues that are outside the jurisdiction of an ethics complaint. The issues involving the shed were amicably resolved.

Farmers' Market

In October the City Council amended the Article 12, Chapter 7 (Farmers' Market) and Article 12, Chapter 7 (Boards and Commissions) of the Municipal Code. The amendments were intended to maintain the Market as a public service provided by the

City and re-establish a level of City oversight that had diminished over the years. The amendments created a Farmers' Market Committee and placed it under the supervision of the Department for budgetary and procurement purposes.

The Department is already involved with the Farmers' Market, conducting inspections of the food vendors on a weekly basis. In late October the CP&D director met with leadership from the Farmers' Market Committee, the "Market Masters," to discuss various procedures and begin planning for the market's 2018 season.

New Food Code Takes Effect

Upon the Department's recommendation, the City Council adopted the new Illinois Food Code per Ordinance #2016-89 on December 19, 2016. This ordinance repealed Section 5-3-2 of the City of Park Ridge Municipal Code and replaced it with a new Section 5-3-2, i.e. adopted by reference the new State of Illinois Food Code. The adoption of a new Section 5-3-2 rendered other paragraphs and sections of Article 5 (Health) obsolete or superfluous. Additionally, certain sections of the USDA Model Food Code regarding inspections and enforcement had not been incorporated into the new Illinois Food Code. Thus, additional amendments to Article 5 of the Municipal Code were made in April 2017.

The Department's two environmental health officers offered a series of training sessions on the new code. These were held at City Hall during January 2017, and were well attended by the community's food establishments. The health officers continued the training with a round of courtesy inspections using the new regulations. By the end of the year all of Park Ridge's food establishments passed at least one inspection using the new food code.

Animal Control

The Environmental Health Division administers two related animal control programs for the City. The first is rodent control. This is done on an as-needed basis. The environmental health officers respond to complaints regarding rodents in alleys or other public areas. If their investigation indicates potential rodent problems, the department engages the services of a contractor to confirm presence of rodent issues, and to run bait-and-trap or other eradication efforts. In 2017 the environmental health officers administered three contractor-led efforts for rodent control. In addition

to the rodent contractor programs, the staff advised property owners on efforts to reduce rodent populations, such as more frequent trash removal.

The other animal control effort is a nuisance wildlife trapping program. This effort aims to control “fur-bearing mammals” such as skunks and raccoons that have become dangers to properties or people.

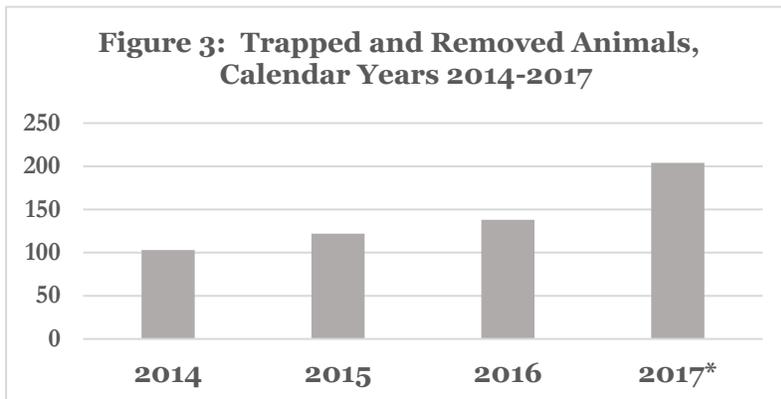
For numerous years the City has budgeted for and operated this wildlife animal trapping program at no cost to residents. Residents picked up traps at the Public Works Service Center and set them on their property. When an animal was caught in the trap, the residents called City personnel, who in turn notified the City’s wildlife control contractor (licensed by the State of Illinois) to remove the trap and animal. In accordance with Illinois law, all captured skunks were euthanized. Captured raccoons were also euthanized. The traps were then returned to the Public Works Service Center for use by other residents. At most times of the year, there was a waiting list to receive a trap. Note that in some situations the resident set their own trap and called the City for animal removal. The City then notified its contractor, and the City subsequently was invoiced for the animal removal.

Although there are seasonal fluctuations in animal trappings, the average number of animals trapped on over 2015 and 2016 was about ten to twelve animals per month. The City spent \$7,820 on the trapping program for the entire twelve months of 2016 and \$8,355 for the entire twelve months of 2015. This rate was consistent through the first months of calendar year 2017 and into the start of fiscal year 2018. However, in mid-August CP&D began to receive invoices for animal trappings at significantly higher rate. The number of invoices for animal control for the first five months of FY 18 were:

May - 18
June - 8
July - 21
August - 75
Sept - 44

During the last week of August alone, the Department received thirty-two invoices, and the heavy inflow of invoices continued through the first weeks of September. As spending on animal control was approaching its budgetary limit in mid-September, the

Department halted the trapping program. Those residents already on the waiting list were allowed to take a trap and have a trapped animal removed at City expense.



* thru mid-September 2017

The program was halted—with the intent that the halt be temporary—so that the department could request an increase in funding from City Council. In October the City Council approved an additional \$10,000 for animal control. However, during the cessation of City-funded trapping activities, the department was contacted by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). Following several amicable discussions with IDNR, it became clear that the nuisance animal trapping program, as it had evolved over time, was no longer being operated in consistency with State law or IDNR policy. To trap a fur-bearing animal, it must be a nuisance. Nuisance animals are those damaging property or posing a threat to safety of residents. The City was not requiring any justification to set a trap, or questioning whether the trap was intended for a bona fide nuisance animal. Furthermore, there were no assurances that the traps were being checked daily. Thus the animal trapping program, even after it had received a new infusion of funds from the City Council, was not revived.

A modified nuisance animal trapping program will be re-instituted in the spring of 2018. The City will no longer pay for animals trapped in non-City traps. City traps will not be dispensed to residents without confirmation that an animal is indeed causing a nuisance, e.g. damaging a house foundation, exhibiting behavior typical of a rabid animal. Animals that are “just passing through” will not be considered a nuisance, and the City will neither provide traps nor pay for animal removal in such instances.

Other options remain open to residents who wish to deal with undesired animals. The IDNR and the University of Illinois Extension have developed a website to provide residents of Illinois with information about how to coexist with wildlife, especially in urban areas. The website states: “Preventing problems with wildlife is much simpler and less aggravating than dealing with the problems after they occur. Fortunately, taking a few simple steps can help you prevent many of the most common wildlife-related problems around your home. A number of proven methods can be used to solve the problem when it cannot be prevented.” For more information, see:

<http://web.extension.illinois.edu/wildlife/about.cfm>.

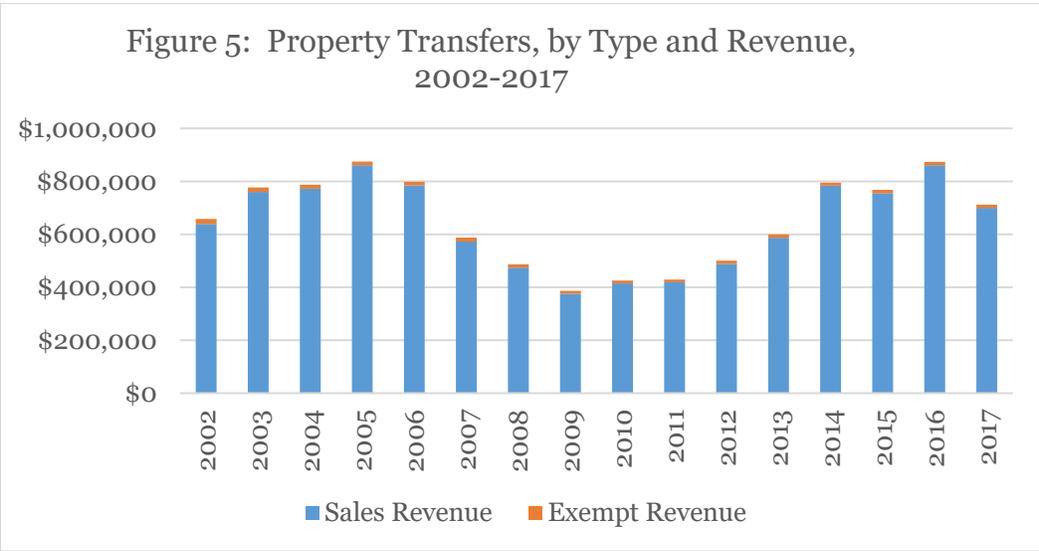
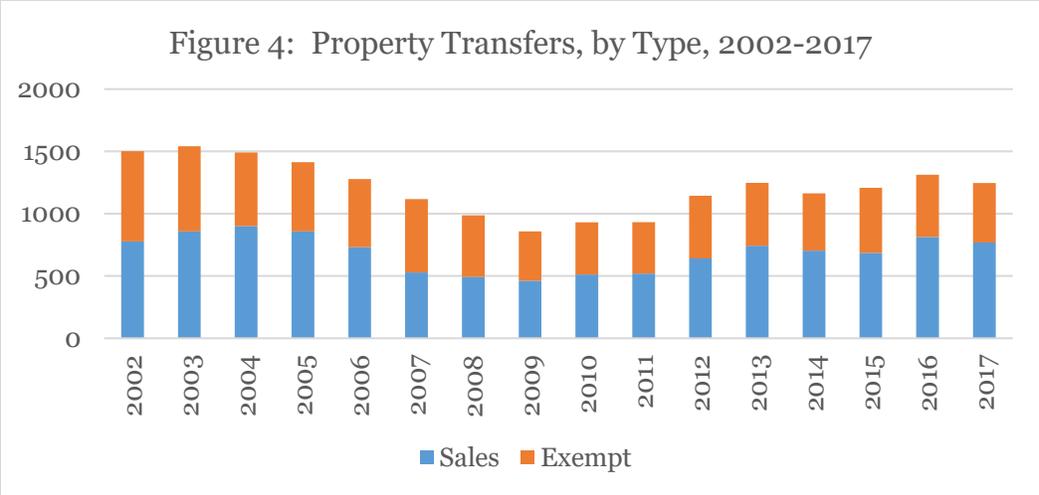
Residents may call nuisance wildlife control operators to have animals trapped and removed at their own expense. The website listed above also contains contact information for licensed operators in the region.

Additionally, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) works with communities and animal care and control agencies to develop humane and non-lethal solutions to conflicts between people and wildlife. The HSUS believes that most conflicts between wildlife and humans can be resolved by means other than trapping. See: http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/wild_neighbors/?credit=web_id250079884.

The website also offers advice on how to mitigate or reduce trouble between wild animal and suburban resident.

Property Transfer Stamps

CP&D administers property transfer stamps and fees for the City. All deeds related to property transfers in Park Ridge must receive a stamp and seal from the City before they can be recorded with Cook County. Some activities are exempt from the general fee, e.g. foreclosures, changing name on a trust, etc. A flat \$25 fee is charged for such exempt changes. The two charts below show the number of property transfer stamps issued and the revenue generated by transfer stamps. As clearly illustrated in Figures 4 and 5, property transfer activity and associated fees have rebounded since the 2007–11 economic downturn. Nevertheless, activity has not achieved the levels prior to the housing bubble.



Building Permits and Inspections

Building construction activity remained robust in 2017. The department again issued at least 2,300 building permits in the calendar year. Total permits issued for the last four years are:

- 2017 - 2,314
- 2016 - 2,300
- 2015 - 2,404
- 2014 - 2,694

Seasonal variations in permit activity over the last four years are illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Total Permits by Month, 2014-2017

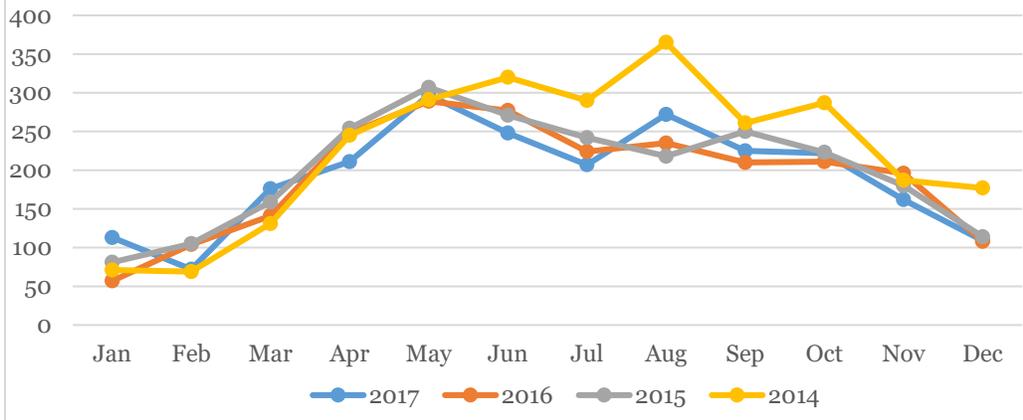


Figure 7: Permit Fees by Month, 2016-2017

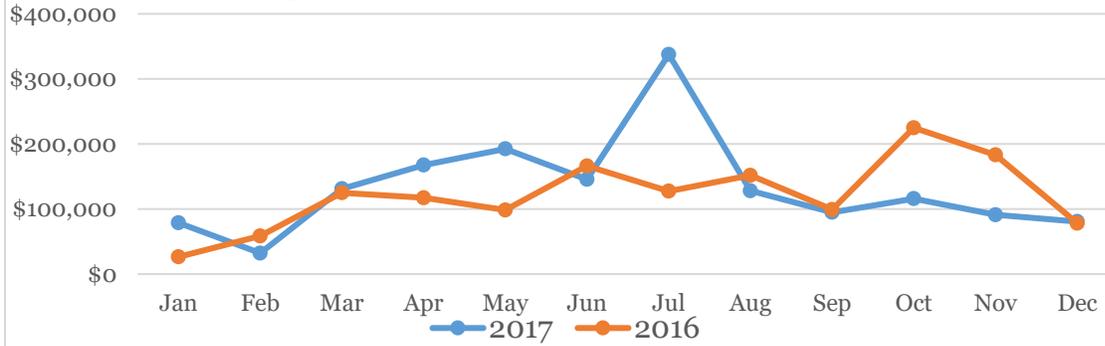
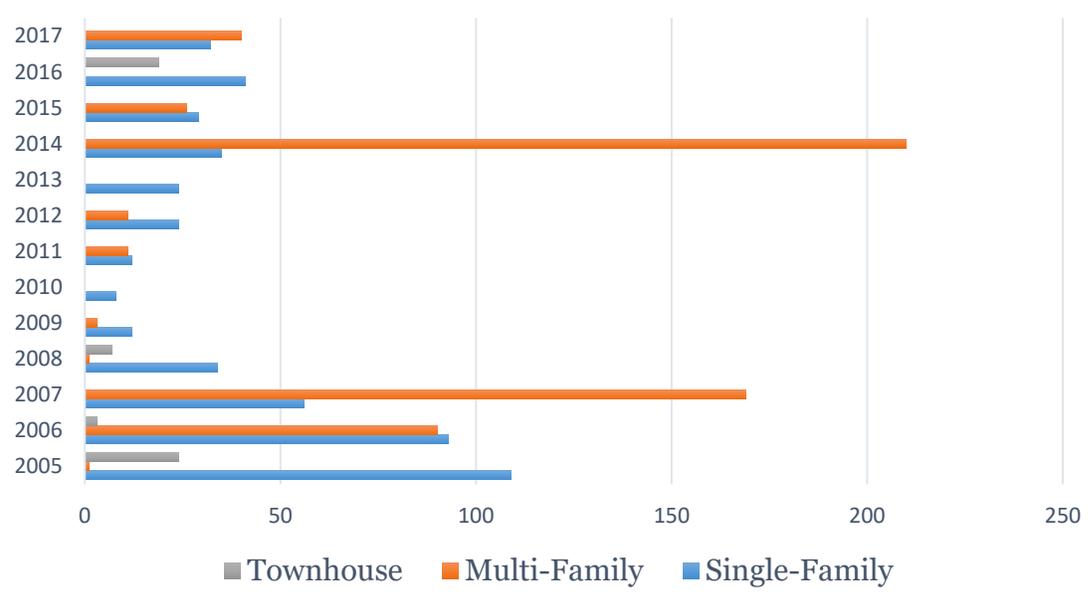


Figure 8: Permits for Dwelling Units by Type, 2005 thru 2017



While permit totals are one indication of activity level, they do not indicate the complexity of the project. For example, staff time devoted to reviewing an application for a new commercial building is more than the time devoted to an application for a shed. The City's building permit fees are based, generally, on project cost. So a more complex, costlier project will generate more in fees. Thus, total permit fees received for the year is perhaps the best indication of Department workload. While the total number of permits for 2017 remained virtually the same as for 2016, total permit fees were up by 14.6 percent, or \$139,467:

Permit fees for 2017 = \$1,580,372

Permit fees for 2016 = \$1,378,649

The department issued thirty-two permits for new single-family homes. All of these new homes are replacing existing homes that were, or will be, demolished. This teardown trend has been underway since the regional housing market began to emerge of the housing market crash in 2007-08. Forty permits for multi-family units were issued, while no permits for new townhouses were issued. Figure 7 illustrates housing permit activity by type since 2005.

Building permit approval time provides a measure of the department's efficiency and customer service. For each of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th quarters of 2017, a random sample of building permits issued in the quarter was taken and measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode) computed. In aggregate for the three quarters, the mean, or average, time from receipt of a building permit to issuance of a building permit was 9.03 *calendar* days. The median turn-around time for each of the three quarters was six *calendar* days. The mode—the most frequently occurring number in the sample—for each of the quarters was zero days, which means the permit was issued on the same day the application was received. These data indicate that, by and large, the department is issuing building permits in 1-2 work weeks. Note that the random samples included all types of permit applications, e.g. for fences, signs, sheds, commercial remodeling and new single-family homes. Obviously, the more complex the project, the longer the review time and the more likely plan revisions are required. The data are indicated in the table below.

Figure 9: Permit Approval Time in Calendar Days, by Quarter, 2017

	2 nd Qtr	3 rd Qtr	4 th Qtr	Aggregate for 2017
Sample Number	34	39	33	106
Mean Approval Time	8.67	9.46	8.90	9.03
Median Approval Time	6,7	6	6	6
Mode of Approval Time	0 (6 times)	0 (6 times)	0 (6times)	0 (18 times)

The implementation of new department software in the fall of 2018 should result in efficiencies that lead to a general reduction in building permit approval times.

Key commercial projects reviewed and/or inspected by Department in 2017

Below is a list of substantial projects reviewed or inspected by the Department in 2017. The list is not exhaustive.

- 501 Busse HWY, Assisted Living Facility
- 1775 Dempster, Lutheran General, Radiology Department Renovation
- 1925 Dempster, Lutheran General, West Parking Garage Expansion)
- 1775 Dempster, Lutheran General Children’s Hospital
- 1775 Dempster , Lutheran General, Parkside Center
- 104 Euclid, Silver’s Bar and Grill
- 9 S. Fairview, Tea Lula
- 20 S. Fairview, Phase 2
- 114 Main, IT Crepes
- 116 Main, Urban India Grill
- 123 S. Northwest Hwy, Physician’s Immediate Care
- 5 S. Prospect, Pickwick Theatre No. 5
- 622 N. Prospect, PRCC Paddle Tennis
- 2701 W. Sibley, PRPD Community Center
- 400 Talcott, Mixed-Use Building
- 600 Talcott, Mixed-Use Building
- 325 W. Touhy, Million Dollar Roundtable
- 420 W. Touhy, Reyes Steakhouse
- 424 Touhy, Bottle & Bodega

Business Licenses

The type and number of business licenses issued by the City remained relatively constant with previous years: 1,473 in 2015; 1,490 in 2016; and 1,480 in 2017.

These numbers include businesses operated out of homes (home occupations), vending machines and swimming pool operations.

**Figure 10: Business Licenses,
2017**

Category	No.	Fees (\$)
C301 Service Establishment	65	10,020
C302 Service Establishment	84	17,180
C303 Service Establishment	5	1,500
C304 Service Establishment	4	1,840
C305 Service Establishment	3	1,650
Total C3 Businesses	161	32,190
C401 Retail Sales Establishment	14	1,490
C402 Retail Sales Establishment	25	3,900
C404 Retail Sales Establishment	4	1,050
C405 Retail Sales Establishment	3	1,190
Total C4 Businesses	46	7,630
C601 Professional and Other	341	17,535
C602 Professional and Other	317	29,166
C603 Professional and Other	28	3,718
C604 Professional and Other	12	2,108
C605 Professional and Other	12	2,688
Total C6 Businesses	710	55,215
C7 Home Occupations	205	7,394
F1XX Food & Beverage Truck	9	540
Pool Pool Businesses	11	1,180
I199 Governmental and Religious	70	0
RR1 Restaurant - Risk 1	57	33,960
RR2 Restaurant - Risk 2	42	19,530
RR3 Restaurant - Risk 3	16	4,050
T501 Tobacco	16	4,050
Z102 Vending License	2	66
Z103 Vending License	135	7,260
Total Food/Tobacco	268	68,916
Total All Categories	1,480	207,025

Economic Development

In 2017 the Department assumed economic development functions for the City. Early efforts by the Department have included: revisions of various documents to the public, including a revised business start-up guide, revamping the City's economic development webpage (in progress), and encouraging pre-application meetings so staff can advise new business of potential regulatory pitfalls in their proposed projects. For more information on economic development efforts, see **Appendix B** on the department's strategic goals.

STAFF LIAISON TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

The department provides staff liaison to the following boards and commissions: the Appearance Commission, the Historic Preservation Commission, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Zoning Board of Appeals. In 2018 the Department will assume staff liaison responsibilities for the newly-created Farmers' Market Committee. All of these bodies are appointed by the mayor and are subject to various procedural and budgetary rules and constraints, including adherence to the Illinois Open Meetings Act. A brief description of each body and the nature and scope of its work in 2017 follows.

Appearance Commission

The Appearance Commission was established in 2005. This five-member body is chaired by Mr. Brian Kidd, a licensed architect. The commission reviews all new construction and exterior alteration of existing buildings (excluding accessory structures except for garages over fifteen feet in height). Its responsibilities and authority are outlined in Article 15 (Building Regulations), Chapter 7 of the Municipal Code.

The Appearance Commission and its members were defendants in a lawsuit filed in September 2016. The case was dismissed in January 2017. (See "Lawsuits and Complainants" section above.)

In 2017 the Appearance Commission considered seventy-eight applications. This total was down slightly from the eighty-nine applications reviewed in 2016. The types of applications are shown below.

Figure 11: Appearance Commission Review, By Type, 2017

Single-Family Residential, New	33
Single-Family Residential, Alteration	34
Two-Family, New	1
Garage, New (over 15 ft in height)	6
Commercial/Industrial	4
Total	78

Historic Preservation Commission

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) consists of nine members, and is chaired by Mrs. Judy Barclay. The HPC serves to preserve, enhance and restore for use those properties and areas that have special historical, architectural, community or aesthetic significance in the community, in the interest of promoting the public health, safety and general welfare of Park Ridge. Article 23 of the Municipal Code covers historic preservation and the functions of the HPC.

In 2017 the HPC again conducted its annual poster contest. Additionally, the HPC made three recommendations to the City Council regarding landmark designation, all of which were approved by City Council: Solomon Cottage, Wohlers Hall, and the Emery Cottage. An additional recommendation came at year's end. This was for an American Legion monument to World War II veterans.

Planning and Zoning Commission

The Department provides staff support to the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z). The P&Z has nine members and is chaired by Mr. Joe Baldi, an attorney. The Commission hears and reviews all applications for zoning text and map amendments, planned developments, special uses, pre-annexation agreements, subdivisions, site plans and street and alley vacations. It also makes recommendations on the adoption of or amendments to the City's Comprehensive Plan. The two most controversial issues considered by the P&Z in 2017 were: a zoning amendment to allow short-term rental units (i.e. Airbnb) in residential areas; and a planned unit development application for a townhouse/commercial office project on Higgins Road. Neither received a favorable recommendation from the P&Z, and both applications were ultimately denied by the City Council

Figure 12: P&Z Review, By Type, 2017

Planned Development	1
Site Plan	2
Special Use	7
Zoning Map Amendment (Rezoning)	3
Zoning Text Amendment	3
Total	16

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) considers applications for major and minor zoning variances. (The distinction between minor and major depends on the scope of the variance and the potential impact of the variance, if approved.) The ZBA is a seven-member board chaired by Mr. Atul Karkhanis, a licensed architect. The ZBA also hears appeals of the zoning administrator’s decisions. (The CP&D director is designated by the Zoning Ordinance as the zoning administrator.) The most controversial case heard by the ZBA in 2017 involved a request to exceed the maximum sign area for a service station sign. The ZBA recommended approval of the request, and the City Council voted to approve the variance. However, Mayor Maloney exercised his veto power. When an insufficient number of aldermen voted to overturn the mayor’s veto, and the application was thus denied.

Figure 13: Zoning Variance Applications, 2017

<i>Case #</i>	<i>Subject Address and District</i>	<i>Variance Request</i>	<i>Disposition</i>
17-08-VA	230 N Delphia R-2	To build a house on a sub-standard lot	Approved by zoning administrator
17-13-VA	1220 W Touhy B-2	- Exceed max. pole sign area - Reduce sign setback	Vetoed by mayor Approved by City Council
17-14-VA	2404 Oak Tree R-2	Relief from side-loaded garage requirement	Application withdrawn during public hearing
17-15-VA	1025 S Knight R-2	To encroach patio into a rear yard	Approved by City Council
17-19-VA	25 W Busse OS	Exceed max. light pole height	Approved by City Council

APPENDICES

Appendix A: CP&D Authorized Positions and Personnel as of 31 December 2017

Position	Status	Incumbent	Start Date w/ CP&D
Director	Full-Time	Jim Brown	Sep 2016
<i>Administrative Division</i>			
Administrative Assistant	Full-Time	Kerry Cwick	Aug 2016
Administrative Assistant	Full-Time	Josie Faraci	Apr 2016
Administrative Assistant	Part-Time	Vacant	
Permit, Inspections and Licensing Assistant	Full-Time	Jan Wolfensberger	Sep 2012
Permit, Inspections and Licensing Assistant	Full-Time	Adrienne Dulkoski*	2011
<i>Building Safety Division</i>			
Building Official	Full-Time	Steve Steffens	Mar 2016
Plan Reviewer/Inspector (Plumbing)	Full-Time	Dennis McMahon	Sep 2011
Plan Reviewer/Inspector	Full-Time	Ric Mondelli	Jun 2016
Plan Reviewer/Inspector	Full-Time	Tony Padula	Mar 2008
Plan Reviewer/Inspector	Full-Time	Peter Sandow	Jul 2017
Plan Reviewer/Inspector (Electrical)	Part-Time	Pat Laudando	Jul 2017
Inspector, Electrical, On-Call	Part-Time	Tom Sklena	Jun 2017
Inspector, Plumbing, On-Call	Part-Time	Ron Chiappe	Feb 2015
Inspector, Plumbing, On-Call	Part-Time	Mike Cusentino	Mar 2017
<i>Environmental Health Division</i>			
Environmental Health Officer	Full-Time	Bernadeta Madrzyk	Sep 2017
Environmental Health Officer	Full-Time	Tim Schwarz	Jul 2007
<i>Planning and Zoning Division</i>			
Senior Planner	Full-Time	Jon Branham	Oct 2008
Planner / Zoning Coordinator	Full-Time	Vacant	

* Last day of work for City was 2 January 2018

Appendix B: CP&D Strategic Goals and Status as of 31 December 2017

Short-Term Complex Goal (STC2)

Improve Technological Infrastructure at City Hall / Enhance Technology in All Departments

Explore building permitting technology

Implement and expand use of online technology for transactions

Move toward digital office—replace planning and development software that integrates with Finance Dept

Background

In 2000 the CP&D Department acquired and began using PermitsPlus software for the tracking of building permit applications. The software product was acquired by a new vendor and was phased it—the software is no longer supported by the company. The Department began researching new software circa 2014, with the goal of finding a product suitable to support all of the Department’s functions.

Status

In March 2017 the Department, with City Council approval, entered into an agreement with Tyler Technologies for new departmental software. This Tyler product, “EnerGov,” is used by municipalities throughout the country, and will provide a platform for the Department to integrate all of its functions into one software.

In May 2017 a two-member consultant team arrived on site to conduct a kick-off meeting for software implementation. Over the summer, staff completed some basic homework, including efforts to ensure the City’s GIS is integrated with EnerGov.

In December 2017 a Tyler consultant was on site for another three-day visit aimed at software implementation. (The software needs to be customized to Park Ridge’s unique requirements.) Such site visits and/or telephonic conferences will continue approximately every four weeks over the course of 2018. Goals for implementation are:

- May 2018 – Start data migration of information in current software to EnerGov software
- June 2018 – Staff begins testing EnerGov on limited basis. Throughout the next few months staff will refine the software and its operations. The PermitsPlus software will continue to be used.
- September/October 2018 – The final cut-over from our current software to EnerGov will occur late September/early October. The department will go live with the new software and the PermitsPlus software will no longer be used.
- January 2019 – After approximately three months of live use of EnerGov by staff, the department will go live with a “public portal” portion of the software, thus enabling residents and stakeholders to conduct much of their business with the department on line.
- April 2019 – Staff will institute electronic submission of building permit applications.

Short-Term Complex Goal (STC3)

Examine / Rethink Focus of the Community Preservation and Development Department

Examine expanding / clarifying role of economic development

Background

Over the past decade or so the City has attempted several approaches at economic development, including the addition of a full-time staff member devoted exclusively to economic development. Such efforts, however, have proved unsatisfactory.

Consider staff with primary focus (on economic development)

Status

The department drafted its own in-house “Economic Development Program Initiation” plan. The plan contains seven objectives for the department. Staff is working on all objectives.

Short-Term Routine Goal (STR3)

Improve External Customer Service to Residents

Document and guideline review and revisions for clarity

Background

Over the years the CP&D Department has created a number of documents and guidelines aimed at assisting applicants in the navigation of various permit approval processes. These are offered for land use applications, e.g. zoning variance, as well as a number of construction projects, e.g. bathroom remodel. Nearly four dozen such documents are offered to the public; they are posted on the Department’s webpage and paper copies are distributed at the counter upon request. However, many of these documents are now outdated. Furthermore, the guidelines often lacked clarity.

Ideally, these documents should educate potential applicants, not confuse them. They should be brief (many are several pages long) and easy for non-professionals or non-trade individuals to understand. The goal is to improve the permit application process by making it clear what exactly is required.

Status

In summer the Department revised the informational packet it provides to those contemplating a zoning variance. The zoning variance application was also revised. In late summer the Department began to review and revise its collection of permit approval guidelines. To date, eight guidelines have been revised and re-posted on the City’s website. An additional dozen have been drafted and are awaiting final review and posting.

Long-Term Complex Goal (LTC4)

Complete a re-write and update the City’s zoning code a. Carefully structure zoning to prevent ill-fitting structures in areas that don’t conform/aren’t similar

Develop and codify municipal zoning updates

Background

In 2007 the City completed a major revision of its zoning regulations with the adoption new City of Park Ridge Zoning Ordinance. As is typically the case, this ordinance has been amended several times since 2007. Perhaps the most major revisions came upon the recommendations of a Sign Task Force, which existed circa 2012-2104. In 2016 the Planning and Zoning Commission undertook a review of several provisions of the ordinance. This led to a couple of amendments, the most significant of which was a revised chapter on planned developments.

Status

Based on their day-to-day experiences working with the zoning regulations, CP&D staff have been compiling a list of potential amendments for the Planning and Zoning Commission to consider and address.

Long-Term Routine Goal (LTR1)

Continue to build institutional knowledge, staff depth, skills and strategy on how to “evolve” the organization for the future

Shift composition and expertise of department staff for efficiency

Background

The CP&D Department has a wide range of missions. The current job descriptions may be inadequate, and current personnel may not be ideally matched for the department’s needs and missions.

Status

Several personnel departures over 2017 provided the Department with an opportunity to evaluate the efficacy of its organization and staffing. There have been shifts in full-time/part-time personnel responsibilities which, to date, have been beneficial for the department and improved customer service. (We now have a full-time person who is our primary person for investigating complaints.) A consultant study is evaluating job descriptions. The hiring of a new zoning coordinator has allowed the department to add someone with a skill set which is more in line with department needs.

Appendix C: CP&D's Key Metrics for Calendar Year 2017

Metric	2014	2015	2016	2017
Bldg Permit Applications	3,274	2,858	2,792	2,696
Bldg Permits Issued	2,812	2,377	2,300	2,313
Bldg Permit Revenue	N/A	N/A	\$1,378,649	\$1,580,372
Bldg Inspections	N/A	8,061	6,569	8,548
Plan Reviews	5,862	6,393	8,640	7,443
Health Inspections	66	695	712	732
Property Inspections	N/A	N/A	151	105
Nuisance Inspections	N/A	N/A	1,388	760
Planning & Zoning Commission Cases	112*	121*	28	17
Zoning Board of Appeals Cases	10	8	13	5
Appearance Commission Cases	N/A	N/A	89	78
Business Licenses Issued	1,524	1,473	1,492	1,480

* Includes Appearance Commission cases