

Corvallis Community Development Department



ANNUAL REPORT FY 2009-2010

Greetings,

We are pleased to provide this report to you about the activities of the Corvallis Community Development Department during the fiscal year 2009-10. You will find information about the variety of accomplishments, projects and ongoing work of Community Development staff in the areas of community planning, construction permitting and inspection, code compliance and affordable housing programs. Much of this work is done with the support of other City departments, local agencies and citizen volunteers. We thank you for your guidance and assistance.

This year I would like to highlight several areas that reflect the Community Development Department's contributions to the livability of the Corvallis community:

We continue to be involved in many partnerships within the community ranging from housing program financing to our role in managing the City's economic and social service allocation processes. These partnerships enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of important programs and projects.

We actively look for ways to upgrade our delivery of services to the citizens of Corvallis. For example, over the last year we have worked with stakeholder advisory groups and conducted customer service surveys related to planning and building services. I am pleased to report that feedback has generally been very positive and has generated good ideas for future improvements.

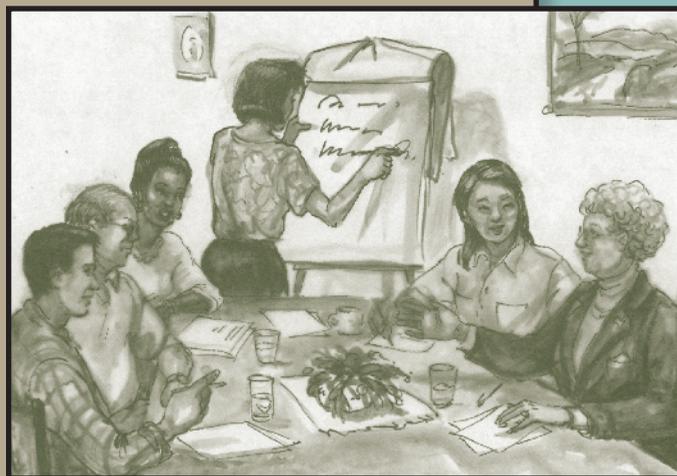
Community Development employees are valuable community contributors on a professional and personal level. We represent city government on many local and state-wide committees, task forces and professional associations; Community Development staff also dedicate their own time and expertise to help their community. Examples include leadership of youth groups, participation in the Sister Cities Association and volunteer work for the United Way of Benton County.

In the year ahead, we look forward to continuing our work on Community Development's mission to help advance the vision of the Corvallis community.

Thank you for taking time to read this report. If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to call me at 541-766-6981 or e-mail ken.gibb@ci.corvallis.or.us.

Sincerely,
Ken Gibb

Community Development Director



New FEMA Maps & Floodplain Development Permit Program



Planning Division Staff have begun work to update floodplain maps and regulations for Corvallis as a result of new requirements from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Using local topographic maps, FEMA is digitizing the federal Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for

Benton County. As a result of this work, floodplain boundaries will be different and more accurate than those on the current paper maps maintained by FEMA (some areas currently within the 100-yr. Floodplain will no longer be in it and vice-versa).

When the digitized maps are ready, FEMA will issue a formal Letter of Final Determination. Within the following six months, the City of Corvallis must complete a Land Development Code Text Amendment (LDT) to fully address the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) regulations and implement the new FEMA maps. The NFIP regulations require a floodplain Development Permit for all proposed construction and other development within the 100-yr. Floodplain.

Precisely six months after FEMA issues the Letter of Final Determination, the City of Corvallis must begin using the updated maps and regulations. Even if, prior to this date, a property owner receives a land use approval or submits a

building and/or construction permit application, the property owner will be subject to the new maps and regulations (unless the building and/or construction permit has been *issued* prior to the conclusion of the six-month period). Banks and insurance companies must also begin using the maps at that time.

Planning Division staff are currently working on these required Land Development Code and map changes. Public outreach and a public hearing process will follow. For more information please contact Senior Planner Kelly Potter at 541-766-6908 or kelly.potter@ci.corvallis.or.us.

Message from the Director



Community Partner Spotlight: SOUTH CORVALLIS FOOD BANK

The South Corvallis Food Bank (SCFB) opened its doors in January 2001 to help overcome the difficulties lower income families south of the Mary's River were having as they tried to access the community's food resources. At first, the food bank served only 20 to 25 families a month; today, food is provided to over 800 individuals in 200 families each month.

The SCFB distributes United States Department of Agriculture commodity and other food purchased with funding provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Oregon Food Bank, Linn-Benton Food Share and local donors. Food is acquired at a subsidized cost through Linn-Benton Food Share. The SCFB also distributes fresh produce from the Starker Arts Garden Education Program and from local gardeners and farms. The organization also partners with local churches and businesses to provide a consistent supply of nutritious, quality food items. A dedicated group of volunteers runs the food bank, taking in donations, accepting and picking up food deliveries, staffing the food bank during open hours, and carrying out fund raising and other activities as needed.

Since 2004, the City of Corvallis Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program has provided annual operating grants to the SCFB to cover the cost of rent for the food bank's warehouse and distribution center. As Judy Hecht, the food bank's founder and volunteer director, reflects on the City's ongoing partnership with the SCFB, she notes, "The City's support has made it possible for us to provide



food to residents of South Corvallis right here in their neighborhood, where they have easy access to it. Many of the food bank's clients come to us on foot or by bicycle and carry their groceries home, so it has been extremely important for us to provide uninterrupted service in South Corvallis. Thanks to the City's CDBG grant program, we're able to continue to work on meeting the food needs of our South Corvallis community."

The City is equally thankful for Judy Hecht and the South Corvallis Food Bank, and the important work they carry out every day. To learn more about what the SCFB is doing in the community, visit their Web site at www.southcorvallisfoodbank.org.

Housing Division Project Highlight

City-funded projects carried out by two local affordable housing developers in the same South Corvallis neighborhood deserve special mention in this year's annual report. Both projects were small in scale, but large in impact, with each creating two new affordable home ownership opportunities through creative, in-fill based development approaches.

In the first project, Benton Habitat for Humanity used financing from the City's federally-funded HOME Investment Partnerships Program to acquire two undeveloped parcels on SW Tunison Avenue. Under a model that uses volunteers to carry out construction and relies in large part on donated professional services and materials, Habitat recently completed two townhouse units that have become safe and affordable homes for a pair of Corvallis families.

The second project was actually a first for Corvallis: Carried out by Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services (WNHS) with City HOME funding support, the Leonard Knolls development on SW Leonard Street represents Corvallis' first Community Land Trust (CLT) project. Under the CLT model, homes are sold at an affordable price and remain affordable in subsequent sales because only the houses themselves are purchased. The land on which those houses sit is owned in trust, with the homeowners leasing the land from that trust on a long term basis. The two homes in WNHS's Leonard Knolls project were originally located on SW Third Street near Alexander Avenue. After an early-morning move and a few months of rehabilitation and upgrades, these older houses have become affordable homes with historic character and appeal.

The Housing Division appreciates the ongoing partnerships with Benton Habitat for Humanity and Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services. We look forward to completing many more successful projects with both agencies in the future! For more information, call the Housing Division at 541-766-6944.



The Leonard Knolls development on SW Leonard Street represents Corvallis' first Community Land Trust (CLT) project.

Recovery Act Funding Helps Low Income Corvallis Residents

Late in Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09 the City learned that an additional allocation of Community Development Block Grant program funding was awarded thanks to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2008 (ARRA). These additional resources, known as "CDBG-R" funds, brought another \$145,487 to the community to support agencies that serve low income residents, as well as to rehabilitate the homes of low income citizens.

The following table summarizes the CDBG-R funds allocated to Corvallis during FY 2009-10, and the amount of each allocation expended by year-end.

RECIPIENT/USE ALLOCATED	AMOUNT ALLOCATED	AMOUNT EXPENDED	BALANCE
Arc of Benton County housing rehabilitation grant (4 units)	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$0
Home Life group home rehab grant (2 units)	\$30,408	\$30,408	\$0
Community Outreach Inc. shelter rehab grant	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0
Center Against Rape & Domestic Violence facility rehab grant	\$10,000	\$5,870	\$4,130
Single family energy efficiency/rehab loans (2 units)	\$61,579	\$61,579	\$0
CDBG-R program administration	\$14,500	\$14,500	\$0
TOTALS	\$145,487	\$141,357	\$4,130

In providing communities with CDBG-R funding, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) stressed its desire that resources be invested quickly into qualifying activities, and that the investments result in job creation and/or job retention. As noted in the table above, \$141,357, or 97% of the City's original \$145,487 CDBG-R allocation, was expended during FY 2009-10. Using HUD's job creation/retention calculation methodology, the investments have created two full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs and retained another 1.5 FTE jobs. The City thanks its valued community partners for stepping up with worthy investment opportunities, and for facilitating six very smooth projects that have had positive impacts on the lives of so many Corvallis residents.

New Housing Loan Program

As FY 2009-10 came to an end, the Housing Division, in collaboration with the Corvallis Environmental Center and the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition's Energy Action Team, began rolling out a new community benefit low interest loan program. The

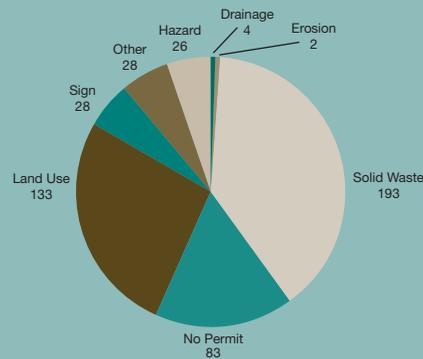
Residential Energy Efficiency Loan Program (REELP) will provide funding to qualifying Corvallis homeowners to increase the energy efficiency of their homes and in turn, reduce their monthly energy use and expenses. In this collaborative effort the Environmental Center will lead program outreach and project design efforts, and the City will provide \$200,000 in loan funding and financial oversight. The REELP program is funded by the U.S. Department of Energy through its American Recovery and Reinvestment Act-based Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program. For more information, call Housing at 541-766-6944.

Code Enforcement Program

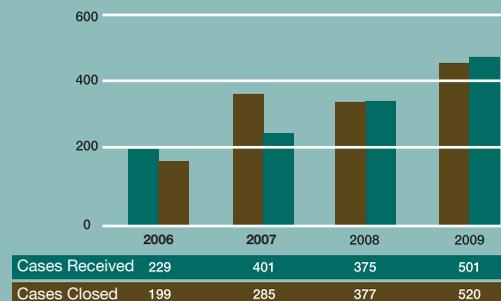
The City's Code Enforcement Program started formally in 2007 and focuses primarily on community livability issues. The program handles 43 types of citizen complaints ranging from garbage in yards to abandoned vehicles, to work without permits.

The following charts show the number and types of citizen complaints reported and processed under the Corvallis Code Enforcement Program in 2009.

CASES BY TYPE REPORTED FOR 2009



CASE ACTIVITY LEVELS



Permit Activity Remains Mixed

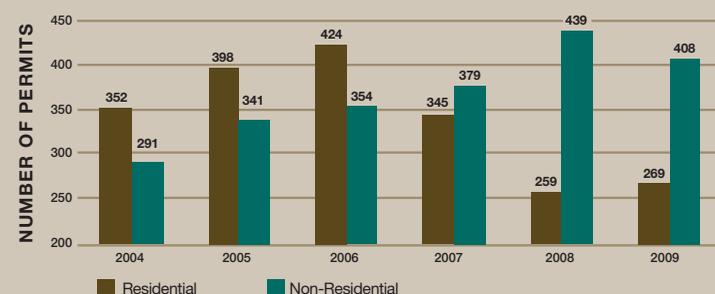
The number of permits for new homes saw a sharp decline in 2007, ending the year at roughly half of the normal level of activity. In 2008 and 2009, this number continued to fall to levels not seen since the early 1980s, finishing each year at just 34 new home permits. It is anticipated that 2010 will see roughly the same number of new home permits issued as in 2008 and 2009. A normal year yields 180 to 220 new home permits.

The total residential permit activity (including new homes, remodels and additions) is shown on the chart below. This chart is reflective of the decline in new home construction, with a majority of people investing in improving their existing homes. The chart also reflects a sharp increase in non-residential activity (business, hospital, and university related), showing that overall construction levels are relatively strong.

The Division streamlined several processes to save customers time and money. For example, in 2009 staff processed 30% of plan reviews on the same day—up from 20% in 2008. In addition, by promoting the benefits to contractors, staff saw a jump in the purchase of permits online from 21% in 2008, to 40% in 2009.

Looking ahead to 2010 and beyond, emphasis on customer service excellence and efficiencies will continue.

NUMBER OF RESIDENTIAL VS NON-RESIDENTIAL PERMITS



What Happens to My Complaint?

- Complaints are received from residents and other departments within the City via phone calls, letters, emails, and electronic forms from the City's Web site.
- Each complaint is assigned to a staff member and given a priority level. The priority levels have been established by City Council. The highest priorities typically include Life Safety/Public Health/Time Sensitive issues such as obstructed vision clearance, dangerous buildings or unsafe structural alterations and unsanitary conditions.
- Once resolved, staff contacts the concerned citizen to share the outcome.

Complaints can be directed to:

Chris Westfall, Code Enforcement Supervisor
chris.westfall@ci.corvallis.or.us • 541-766-6929

In 2009 Development Services:

- Issued 3,250 construction permits. Of these, 34 were for new homes with a combined total of more than \$8.3 million in value.
- Provided 21 pre-development conferences with developers of new commercial construction projects at no charge.
- Conducted 15,338 building safety inspections for compliance with building codes. All

inspectors are professionally certified by the International Code Council (ICC) and participate in continuing education on code changes, the use of new materials, and sustainable methods of construction.

Quick Permits Saved 667 Trips to City Hall

In April of 2007 Corvallis began offering permits online to licensed contractors for basic mechanical and electrical permits. In 2009, 667 permits were issued online—up from 349 permits in 2008. In fact, the system is now used to purchase 40% of mechanical and electrical permits—up from 21% in 2008.

The system is quick, easy and available 24/7. Local contractors appreciate the availability of this new service because it saves time and fuel, and allows instant, easy access to the most common electrical and mechanical permits. The system can be accessed by contractors online at www.CorvallisPermits.com.

Tip

Track your project online
or view your
inspection results at
www.CorvallisPermits.com

Pink Hard Hats

Building Safety is not an Accident, the theme for Building Safety Month, was promoted by Development Services and Benton County Inspection staff on Saturday, May 1.

As part of the effort to encourage building safety and safety inspections, staff volunteered their time to help kids construct bird houses at the Corvallis Farmers Market.

Kids were given a free bird house kit and a pink hard hat. Then they sat with an inspector who cautiously held the nails while kids feverishly nailed the pieces together. One parent chuckled and remarked to an inspector, "You are awfully brave."

Once completed, the birdhouses were inspected, approved, and a Certificate of Occupancy was issued. In all, nearly 100 bird houses were built.



Does my project
need a permit?

To find out, visit
www.CorvallisPermits.com

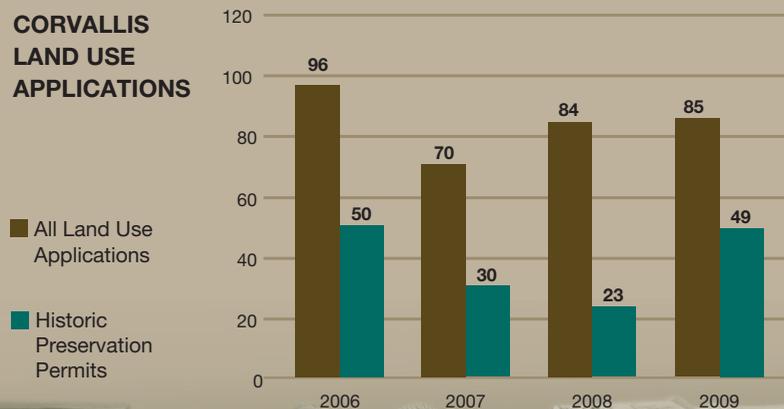


CURRENT PLANNING HIGHLIGHTS

The Current Planning work group provides staff support to the City boards and commissions that review discretionary land use proposals, as well as reviewing and preparing staff-level decisions on non-discretionary land use proposals. The discretionary reviews range from Historic Preservation Permits to Conditional Development and Planned Development Permits. To complete these reviews, staff must coordinate with applicants, City departments, other public agencies, and the general public to arrive at recommendations to the appropriate boards or commissions that adequately address review criteria. The criteria are intended to achieve the community's vision. Those recommendations are presented in written staff reports, and decisions are made by boards or commissions through a public hearing process.

Between 2006 and 2009, the average number of land use applications processed each year by the work group was 84. Of the 85 land use applications processed in 2009, 53 were historic preservation permits. Part of the reason for the high number of historic preservation permits in 2009 was because of development within the new OSU Historic District. Land use applications reviewed in 2009 include a conditional development review for the Corvallis Crossing development on the southwest corner of 9th Street and Circle Boulevard, a major planned development modification for the West Tower Addition to the Good Samaritan Hospital, and historic preservation permit reviews for the new Linus Pauling Center and Hallie Ford Center buildings on the OSU Campus.

CORVALLIS LAND USE APPLICATIONS



Corvallis Planning-Related On-line Services

Community Development Department.....	www.ci.corvallis.or.us/cd
Planning Division Home Page	www.ci.corvallis.or.us/cd/planning
Archived Documents.....	http://archive.ci.corvallis.or.us
Building Permit Info	www.corvallispermits.com
Comprehensive Plan	www.ci.corvallis.or.us/cd/compplan
Current Land Use Staff Reports	www.ci.corvallis.or.us/cd/staffreports
Historic Preservation Information	www.ci.corvallis.or.us/cd/historic
Interactive Maps & GIS	www.corvallismaps.com
Published Maps & Documents	www.ci.corvallis.or.us/cd/publications
Zoning—Land Development Code	www.ci.corvallis.or.us/cd/zoning



Community Development Boards & Commissions

Board of Appeals:

Hears appeals of decisions made by building official on construction-related issues and on rental housing standards code.

Committee for Citizen Involvement:

Facilitates citizen involvement in all phases of land use planning.

Downtown Commission

Provides policy guidance and recommendations to the City Council in the following areas: Implementation of community plans for the downtown area; public infrastructure activities; redevelopment efforts; land use matters; and public parking policies and projects.

Historic Resources Commission:

Conducts public hearings and takes action on Historic Preservation Permit applications; coordinates Historic Preservation outreach and education activities.

Housing and Community Development Commission:

Recommends policies on housing and community revitalization, affordable housing.

Planning Commission:

Conducts public hearings and takes action on land development proposals, makes recommendations regarding the Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Code, and other land use plans.

Meeting dates, times and location are listed on the City's Web calendar at www.ci.corvallis.or.us/calendar. To confirm any meeting, call the Community Development Department at 541-766-6981.

Administration

Phone: 541-766-6981
 Fax: 541-754-1792
 email: community.development@ci.corvallis.or.us

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Marci Laurent, *Management Assistant*

Housing

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 Fax: 541-766-6946
 email: housing@ci.corvallis.or.us

Kent Weiss, *Housing Manager*

Terri Heine, *Sr. Administrative Specialist*

Joe DeMarzo,
Housing Programs Specialist

Bob Loewen,
Housing Programs Specialist

Planning

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 Fax: 541-754-1792
 email: planning@ci.corvallis.or.us

Kevin Young, *Planning Manager*

Sharon Crowell,
Sr. Administrative Specialist

Joan Extrom,
Administrative Specialist

Sarah Johnson,
Associate Planner

Brian Latta, *Associate Planner*

Kelly Potter, *Senior Planner*

Bob Richardson,
Associate Planner

Jason Yaich, *Associate Planner*

Development Services

Phone: 541-766-6929
 Fax: 541-766-6936
 email: development.services@ci.corvallis.or.us

Dan Carlson,
Development Services Manager

Susan Hilaire,
Sr. Administrative Specialist

Permit & Plan Review Services

Mike Fegles,
Assistant Building Official

Phyllis Doolittle,
Administrative Specialist

Alicia VanDriel, *Permit Technician*

Tenille Holroyd, *Permit Technician*

Bill Clemens,
Commercial Plans Examiner

Paul Vinje, *Commercial Plans Examiner*

Kevin Russell, *Senior Planner*

Jared Voice, *Associate Planner*

Shannen Chapman, *Land Use Inspector*

Lisa Franklin, *Civil Engineer I*

Inspection Services

24-Hour Inspection Request Line:
 541-766-6745

Greg Hall, *Inspection Services Manager*

John Corliss, *Building Inspector*

Norm Domagala, *Building Inspector*

Suzanne Larson, *Building Inspector*

David Hensley, *Plumbing Inspector*

Frank DeWilde, *Electrical Inspector*

Jason Tachinni,
Engineering Technician III

Chris Westfall,
Code Enforcement Supervisor

