

Corvallis Community Development

DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT FY 2005-2006



The Community Development Department has four divisions: Administration, Housing, Planning and Development Services

Message from the Director

We are pleased to report on the activities of the Corvallis Community Development Department during fiscal year 2005-06.

Here are some highlights:

► The Development Services Division created enhancements aimed at better serving our customers. This included adding a plans examiner to provide "over the counter" review service for certain projects. Also, www.corvallispermits.com was improved to make access to permit information more user-friendly.

► The City's Rental Housing Program continued to operate very smoothly. After receiving positive feedback from tenants and landlords alike, the City Council took formal action to continue the Rental Housing Code and Program indefinitely.

► During the past year, Planning staff worked closely with historic preservation interests and the community at large to make major changes to the

Chapter 2.9 Historic Preservation regulations. This culminated in approval of Code amendments and formation of a replacement citizen body, the Historic Resources Commission. The changes are designed to clarify and streamline the historic permit process in Corvallis.

► Partnership is a theme of our work. Development Services staff formed and worked closely with a stakeholder advisory group. The Housing Division has ongoing relationships with several local organizations to plan and fund housing and human service projects. Planning staff has worked extensively with the Downtown Corvallis Association in developing the Downtown Strategic Plan. Community Development staff coordinate with many local agencies in delivering economic development and social service funding for local projects and programs.

Looking to the future, there are several important projects on the horizon including:

► Implementation of Land Development Code Updates I and III is scheduled after years of delay

due to appeals. There will be a major public outreach effort designed to communicate the substantial changes in the City's land use regulations and processes.

► The Housing Division will be an active partner with several agencies in a coalition to plan a series of supportive housing projects that will serve people with mental illness, developmental disabilities and the homeless.

► Development Services will be putting new field inspection units into action. These units will provide for electronic communication for inspectors in the field and create time and travel efficiencies and better customer service.

Community Development staff are committed to working closely with the citizens, agencies and appointed and elected officials to help achieve community goals. We appreciate the support of our many volunteers and partners and look forward to another excellent year of service.

— Ken Gibb

FY 05-06 Housing Division Activity Highlights

The Department's Housing Division invests roughly \$1.2 million each year into affordable housing projects and supportive community services using both federal and local financial resources. These resources underwrite activities carried out by the Housing Division or, more often, projects being undertaken by non-profit

agencies operating in Corvallis.

Highlights of investments that were initiated or continued during FY 05-06 included:

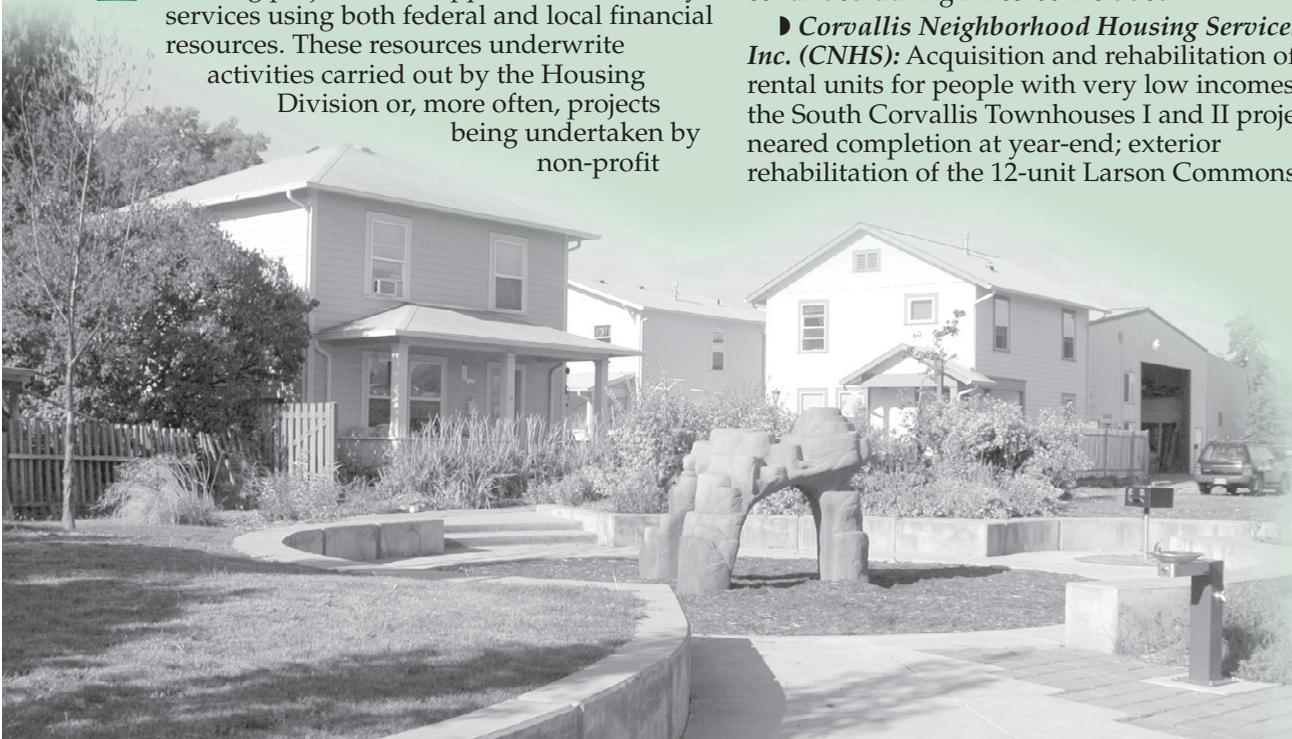
► *Corvallis Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc. (CNHS)*: Acquisition and rehabilitation of 15 rental units for people with very low incomes in the South Corvallis Townhouses I and II projects neared completion at year-end; exterior rehabilitation of the 12-unit Larson Commons

rental project reached the half-way point; and a rehab/accessibility upgrade project for the six-unit Sycamore special needs housing project got underway.

► *CNHS*: In addition to carrying out housing rehabilitation projects, CNHS also received City funding to create new housing opportunities for six low income home buyers and four disabled clients of Home Life, Inc. in its 34-unit CoHo Cohousing project.

► *Various agencies*: Just over 1,500 low, very low and extremely low income Corvallis residents received valuable services through the City's support of programs offered by agencies such as Benton Furniture Share, Community Outreach, the Circle of Hope Drop-in Center, the South Corvallis Food Bank, the Parent Enhancement Program, and the Old Mill Center for Children and Families.

The City's own housing rehabilitation and down payment assistance loan programs supported 20 low income households by providing loans to help them maintain or acquire a safe, affordable home.



Planning Division Highlights for FY 05-06

In FY 05-06, Planning Division staff received and processed applications involving approximately 64 land use actions, with many requiring a public hearing before the Planning Commission, and some requiring a public hearing before the Land Development Hearings Board. Two Planning Commission decisions were appealed to the City Council. Appeals of two previous City Council decisions (LDC Update, Phases I and III) were heard by the State Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) and resolved in the City's favor during the fiscal year.

Some of the projects approved or in process during the year include:

- Updated Historic Preservation provisions in the Land Development Code (Primarily Chapters 2.9 and 2.2)

- Processed 36 Historic Preservation Permits

- Consolidated the Land Development Code with the Phase I and Phase III Updates following LUBA and Court of Appeals reviews.

The Department is required by the State to process all land use applications within 120 days of the date that an application is deemed complete, including all local appeal processes. The Department achieved this measure for all applications during FY 05-06. The Department also achieved its goal of keeping its long range planning projects on schedule during FY 05-06.

Final Adoption of the Revised Land Development Code (Phases I and III)

In December 2000, the City Council approved the first phase of revisions to the Land Development Code (LDC-I) that were needed to bring its provisions into compliance with the City's acknowledged Comprehensive Plan. The revisions primarily addressed standards for commercial and residential development but also changed provisions for Annexations, Planned Developments, and Subdivisions. Upon approval, LDC-I was appealed to both the Oregon Court of Appeals and the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA). In 2005, the Court of Appeals dismissed the appeal before it without an opinion, affirming DLCD and LCDC's acknowledgment of the LDC-I work.

Following the dismissal at the Court of Appeals, the LUBA appeal was reinstated. The issues raised in the appellant's brief were aimed at the State's requirement that in reviewing residential developments, the City must offer an approval path based solely on "clear and objective" review criteria. After receipt of the appellant's brief, the City Attorney indicated to the City Council that LUBA would likely return the LDC-I provisions to the City to create such a clear and objective approval path and that once such changes were made by the City, the revised LDC-I package again could be appealed to LUBA and/or the Court of Appeals.

To avoid this situation, the City and the appellant arrived at a settlement which divided decisions regarding Subdivisions and Partitions into "Residential" and "Nonresidential" categories. Under the settlement, Nonresidential Subdivisions proceed through the existing processes (including review by the Planning Commission) while Residential Subdivisions are processed administratively. These administrative decisions can be appealed to the Planning Commission. Application requirements and review criteria were also modified. On May 3, 2006, LUBA remanded the approval of LDC-I to the City for adoption based on this settlement, and on July 5, 2006, the City Council approved the revisions and directed staff to prepare the revised LDC for final adoption.

In 2006, several levels of appeal were also resolved regarding Phase III of the Land Development Code Update (LDC-III). LDC-III was approved by the City Council (December 2004) and LCDC but was also appealed to both LUBA and the Court of Appeals. The LUBA

appeal was resolved in the City's favor, as was the appeal of that decision to the Court of Appeals. Though the initial Court of Appeals case was still pending, it involved virtually the same issue as those resolved with the LUBA-based appeals, and in August 2006, the City Council chose to implement LDC-III concurrently with LDC-I.

LDC-III uses clear and objective standards to protect significant natural features during development. These standards were created following a comprehensive inventory of natural

features and a balancing effort consistent with Oregon's Statewide Planning Goals. These code standards will protect the most significant natural features within the Urban Growth Boundary. Trade-offs were made in some cases so that adequate developable land remained available.

Under the provisions of LDC-III, protected features are clearly indicated on the City's Zoning and Comprehensive Plan Maps, and standards describing the different levels of protection are clearly articulated in the code. Natural features receiving protection are primarily riparian corridors (urban streams), locally-significant wetlands, oak-based vegetation communities, and floodplains, slopes, and other hazards.

Implementation of both LDC-I and LDC-III required that they be integrated into the existing Land Development Code. Following this integration, an ordinance for the approval and implementation of the revised Land Development Code will need to be considered by the City Council. This City Council review is tentatively scheduled for October 2006, with an anticipated effective date for the Code implementation of December 31, 2006. The deferred effective date will allow a concentrated training and outreach program in the interim for staff, decision makers, the general public, and the development community.

Implementation of the provisions in LDC-I and LDC-III will be the final step in the City's Periodic Review process, which was mandated by the Oregon Land Use Planning Program. Corvallis entered Periodic Review in 1996.

The Corvallis Land Development Code is available at the Planning Division Office (541) 766-6908 or accessed via the City's website at: www.ci.corvallis.or.us/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=310&Itemid=261

For further information, contact Fred Towne, Planning Division Manager at the above number or by e-mail at: fred.towne@ci.corvallis.or.us.



Committee for Citizen Involvement

The Committee for Citizen Involvement (CCI) is a volunteer citizen committee that was created to inform people and encourage more involvement in all phases of the land use planning process. In the past year, the CCI has disseminated information at da Vinci Days, in a downtown window display, and in the Adult Reference and Informational Services area of the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library. The Committee has worked with Neighborhood Associations to discuss neighborhood and community concerns and to provide information to strengthen neighborhood organizations. The CCI has prepared educational materials for citizens to help them form organizations, prepare testimony for land use public hearings, and otherwise participate in the land use planning process. The Committee also works with City departments to make the City's notices, materials, and website materials easier for citizens to use. The CCI recently initiated publishing a monthly list of major planning and construction permit requests in the Gazette-Times to inform people of pending projects in their City Council Wards.

In FY 2005-2006, the CCI began a new process for allocating Neighborhood Empowerment Grants and recommended a total of \$5,000 in six grants to neighborhood groups for organizational improvements, neighborhood physical improvements, and neighborhood livability improvements. The City Council accepted the CCI's recommendations and funded all six of the programs.

The Committee for Citizen Involvement meets on the first Thursday of every month from 7:15 to 9:30 p.m., usually in the Madison Building meeting room, located at 500 SW Madison Avenue, across the street from City Hall. Community Development provides staff support to the CCI. For further information about the CCI, contact Associate Planner Kathleen Gager or visit the Corvallis Planning Division's web site at: www.ci.corvallis.or.us/cd.



City's Historic Preservation Provisions Updated

On June 5, 2006, the City Council concluded the process of updating the City's Historic Preservation Provisions in the Land Development Code. This project primarily involved Chapter 2.9 - Historic Preservation Provisions and Chapter 2.2 - Development District Changes, and established new procedures and review criteria that provide clear decision-making tracks. The primary topics addressed include:

- Clarified Zone Change provisions regarding Historic Preservation Overlays
- Established the Historic Resources Commission (HRC) as the decision-making body for specific types of Historic Preservation Permits
- Clarified definitions for Historic Preservation Permit Exemptions and for Director-level and HRC-level Historic Preservation Permits Revised provisions for Demolition and Moving.

The new provisions are now a part of the Land Development Code and may be reviewed at the Planning Division Office (541-766-6908) or accessed via the City's website at: www.ci.corvallis.or.us/downloads/cd/ldc2-9.pdf.

The new Historic Preservation Program provides three levels of decision:

- Exemptions — A list of 24 activities for which no Historic Preservation Permit is required
- Director-level Historic Preservation Permits — A list of 15 activities that are processed administratively (at a staff-level)
- HRC-level Historic Preservation Permits — Activities that do not qualify for an Exemption or Director-level review. These activities require a public hearing before the new Historic Resources Commission.

Future meetings of the Historic Resources Commission are shown on the City calendar at: www.ci.corvallis.or.us/calendar/calendar.php. For additional information regarding the City's Historic Preservation program or Historic Preservation Permits, contact Bob Richardson at (541) 766-6908 or by e-mail at: robert.richardson@ci.corvallis.or.us

Rental Housing Program Update

Operation of the City's Rental Housing Program and its companion Rental Housing Code continued through their fourth year of operation, with both seeing increases in contact and complaint activity over prior years. Based on the continued demand for these rental housing assistance activities, the City Council decided late in the year to remove a sunset provision that would have ended them on June 30, 2006. After hearing strong support expressed by both tenants and landlords, the Council voted unanimously to continue operating the Rental Housing Program and Code indefinitely.

The Program received over 500 contacts during the year, with just over half coming from tenants, a quarter from landlords, and the remainder from neighbors, parents, or others with concerns about a rental housing issue. Of the nearly 300 tenants who contacted the Program, one third were OSU students and in most cases, were directed to resources available to them on campus.

Those contacting the Program were most often calling about non-habitability issues such as the terms of a lease, procedures for providing tenant notifications, or having deposits reimbursed after moving from a rental unit.

Nearly one third of the issues discussed were related to

the physical habitability of a rental unit, such as plumbing, electrical problems, leaky roofs, mold, or inadequate heat. In over half of such cases the City's Rental Housing Code applied, and tenants were able to

have their issues resolved with input and assistance from the City's Housing Division. When a habitability issue is not covered under the Code, Housing staff is typically still able to direct callers to other resources, either within or outside of the City organization, to find resolution.

For more information about the Corvallis Rental Housing Program and Code, or to receive assistance with a rental housing issue, please contact the Housing Division at (541) 766-6944.

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Partnership Highlight: Home Life, Inc.

Each year the Housing Division works in partnership with local non-profit agencies to provide affordable housing and other critical services to people in our community who have special physical, social or economic needs. A bright spot among these relationships during FY 05-06 was an expansion of the City's long-term partnership with Home Life, Inc., an agency dedicated to helping people with developmental disabilities enjoy active, productive and independent lives.

Over the last ten years the City has provided financial assistance to underwrite a variety of Home Life programs and activities; during FY 05-06 a total of \$43,000 was allocated to support Home Life's efforts in the areas of transitional housing and services, dental and medical services, and community inclusion programs.

Two new Home Life efforts were also awarded City funding during FY 05-06. The first is a Community

Development Block Grant in the amount of \$44,199 which is being provided to help Home Life modify and rehabilitate the Mumford House, a group living facility that is home to 12 agency clients. Also during the year, a City HOME Investment Partnerships Program grant in the amount of \$167,000 was committed to support Home Life's goal of building a four-bedroom group home in the CoHo Cohousing project, a 34-unit condominium project slated for construction during FY 06-07 on SE Crystal Lake Drive near its intersection with SE Alexander.

The Housing Division and Community Development Department appreciate the good work that Home Life, Inc. has done and continues to do to support our community members who live with severe developmental disabilities. For more information about Home Life and how you, too can support them, call (541) 753-9015, visit their Web site at www.homelifeinc.org, or e-mail them at homelife@peak.org.

New Housing Initiative Underway

During FY 05-06 staff of the City's Housing Division began meeting with representatives of the Center Against Rape & Domestic Violence, United Way of Benton County, and Corvallis Neighborhood Housing Services to plan a project that will provide supportive housing for survivors of domestic violence who are transitioning from a need for emergency shelter, but who are not yet ready to live independently. Plans call for the acquisition or construction of six to twelve units of housing during FY 06-07.

As discussions about this project progressed, others in the community were also talking about similar supportive housing projects that would serve people with a mental illness, the homeless, and people with developmental disabilities. In order to coordinate and plan for outcomes that will begin to address all of these needs, a steering

committee consisting of the agencies noted above, as well as Benton County, Community Outreach, Inc., the Cascades West Council of Governments, the Community Alliance for Diversity, Community Services Consortium and other private interests has begun meeting under the name "Corvallis/Benton County Supportive Housing Coalition."

The Coalition's work will continue through FY 06-07 and beyond. The group's ultimate goal will be to create a community plan that will stimulate and provide direction for collaboration and partnerships to strengthen the ladder of supportive services that help people move from temporary shelter to permanent housing and independence. For more information about the Coalition's goals and progress, contact the Housing Division at (541) 766-6944.

••• Development Services Division •••

For most of us, our home is our most important investment. When making home improvements, protect the safety and value of your home and family by getting the necessary permits and using licensed contractors and craftsmen.



Permits are designed to help ensure that licensed contractors do the work if the homeowner doesn't handle the job. Only Construction Contractors Board (CCB) licensed contractors, and those who carry a trade license, such as plumbers and electricians, are allowed to work legally in Oregon. The City of Corvallis Development Services Division issues permits only to contractors who are properly licensed and bonded, or to homeowners doing the work themselves.

Before beginning your project please contact Development Services (541-766-6929) to see if a permit is required. Development Services' permit staff are set up to help you through the permit process. To verify if permits have been obtained by your contractor go to www.CorvallisPermits.com and check the inspection status by searching your address.

Development Services Stakeholder Advisory Group

The Development Services Division continues to meet quarterly with the Stakeholder Advisory Group, which consists of six members representing: Bob Grant Construction, Devco Engineering, Legend Homes, Brent Jenkins Construction, and OSU. The purpose of the group is to provide input into streamlining processes and provide suggestions for improving service. Notable accomplishments include:

- Suggested ways to use technology for enhancing the

- delivery of services
- Reviewed budget and provided key input into service enhancement and fee increase package approved by City Council
- Offered suggestions for implementing new State mandated construction codes
- Provided input in overhauling major processes such as Phased Development, Deferred Submittals and Temporary Occupancy.

Erosion Control Awards

Corvallis participates in a regional awards program designed to highlight projects and contractors who excel in protecting the environment and preserving the City's stormwater infrastructure. This is achieved by integrating erosion control best management practices and reducing pollutants during construction. Thirty-nine jurisdictions throughout western Oregon and Washington participate in the regional awards program. This year's project winners from Corvallis are:

- **Residential** - Brent Jenkins Construction, new residence in Timberhill
 - **Commercial** - Skanska Construction, OSU Kelley Engineering Center
- Development Services wishes to recognize and congratulate these contractors for their efforts.

Services Enhanced

Development Services has been working on implementing several service enhancements that were approved by the City Council. Enhancements include:

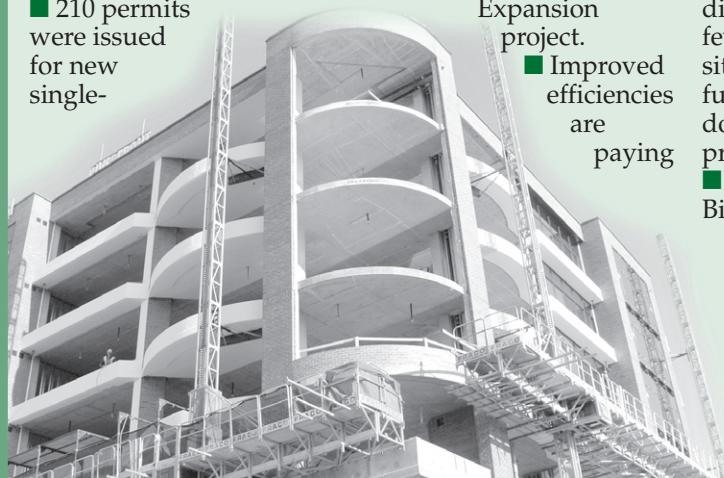
- Hired an additional plans examiner and created over-the-counter plan review processes for certain projects
- Hired an Erosion Control Inspector to administer the City's erosion control program
- Purchased field inspection software and Tablet PC's for inspectors
- Enhanced www.CorvallisPermits.com to be more user-friendly in looking-up construction permits and searching for permit information.

Development Services Factoids

- More and more people are taking advantage of the permitting and inspection process, which results in a safer community. This year Development Services issued a total of 5,506 permits - up from 4,486 the prior year.
- 210 permits were issued for new single-

- family dwellings.
- Construction inspection numbers reached an all-time high of 21,705 inspections - up from last years' high of 19,215 inspections.
- Over 700 inspections were performed on the Reser Stadium Expansion project.
- Improved efficiencies are paying

- off. Development Services was audited by the Insurance Services Organization (ISO) and received a building department rating of 2 (1 being the highest score on a 1 to 10 scale).
- Cross-trained inspectors in plumbing and electrical disciplines resulted in fewer trips to construction sites. This contributed to fuel consumption being down 8.9% from the previous year.
- Purchased two new Bio-Diesel vehicles for inspectors.
- Issued permits for the first parking garage in Corvallis below a City street.



◀ **Riverfront Renaissance Project**

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.
 - **Historic Preservation Advisory Board:** Makes recommendations regarding historic and cultural resource preservation; reviews proposed alterations to historic structures.
 - **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.
- To confirm any meeting date, time and/or location, call the Department at 766-6981.

Administration

- Ken Gibb, Department Director
 - Kathleen Matthews, Management Assistant
- Phone: 766-6981 • Fax 754-1792
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Housing

- Kent Weiss, Housing Manager
 - Terri Heine, Sr. Administrative Specialist
 - Joe DeMarzo, Housing Programs Specialist
 - Bob Loewen, Housing Programs Specialist
 - Lauren Sechrist, Grant Programs Specialist
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Planning

- Fred Towne, Planning Manager
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 - Sarah Johnson, Assistant Planner
 - Bob Richardson, Associate Planner
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Development Services

- Dan Carlson, Development Services Manager
 - Susan Hilaire, Sr. Administrative Specialist
- Permit & Plan Review Services**
- Mike Fegles, Assistant Building Official
 - Phyllis Doolittle, Administrative Specialist
 - Alicia Van Driel, Permit Technician
 - Tenille Holroyd, Permit Technician
 - Laurie Sheriff, Permit Coordinator
 - Bill Clemens, Commercial Plans Examiner
 - Paul Vinje, Commercial Plans Examiner
 - Michael O'Connor, Residential Plans Examiner
 - Jason Yaich, Associate Planner
 - Aaron Amoth, Civil Engineer I

- Inspection Services**
- Greg Hall, Inspection Services Manager
 - John Corliss, Building Inspector
 - Norm Domagala, Building Inspector
 - Steve Freiling, Building Inspector
 - Suzanne Larson, Building Inspector
 - Dave Hensley, Plumbing Inspector
 - Craig Perkins, Electrical Inspector
 - Michael Louie, Engineering Technician III

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