



Department Description

The Department of Building and Zoning Services supports the safety and quality of life for residents and visitors of the City of Columbus through the implementation of the Columbus Building and Zoning Codes.

The department is organized into four distinct yet interconnected sections. Building, Zoning, Site Engineering, and Customer Service are the service areas that combine to ensure safe, quality development in the City of Columbus.

Department Mission

To ensure safe, quality development in the City of Columbus.

The **Building** section reviews plans, approves permits, and performs inspections to validate that a structure is safe to occupy. Before construction can begin, building plans must be approved to verify compliance with the State of Ohio and City of Columbus building codes. Inspections confirm that the work performed accords with the approved plans. Once the final inspection is approved, the department will issue a Certificate of Occupancy, which allows the structure to be used as intended.

The Columbus Zoning Code establishes distinct areas, or districts, throughout the city and provides specific land use and design standards for the area that lies within. The **Zoning** section reviews building permits and site plans to ensure that a project is consistent with the allowable standards for the property as set forth in the Zoning Code. Additionally, the Zoning section processes applications for rezoning and zoning variances that alter the standards for the underlying property.

The **Site Engineering** section coordinates with multiple agencies across the city to certify final site compliance before the start of a project. Because the development process can touch numerous agencies within the city, the Site Engineering section provides a single point of entry for site compliance approval. Depending on the nature of the project, a building permit cannot be issued until final site compliance is attained.

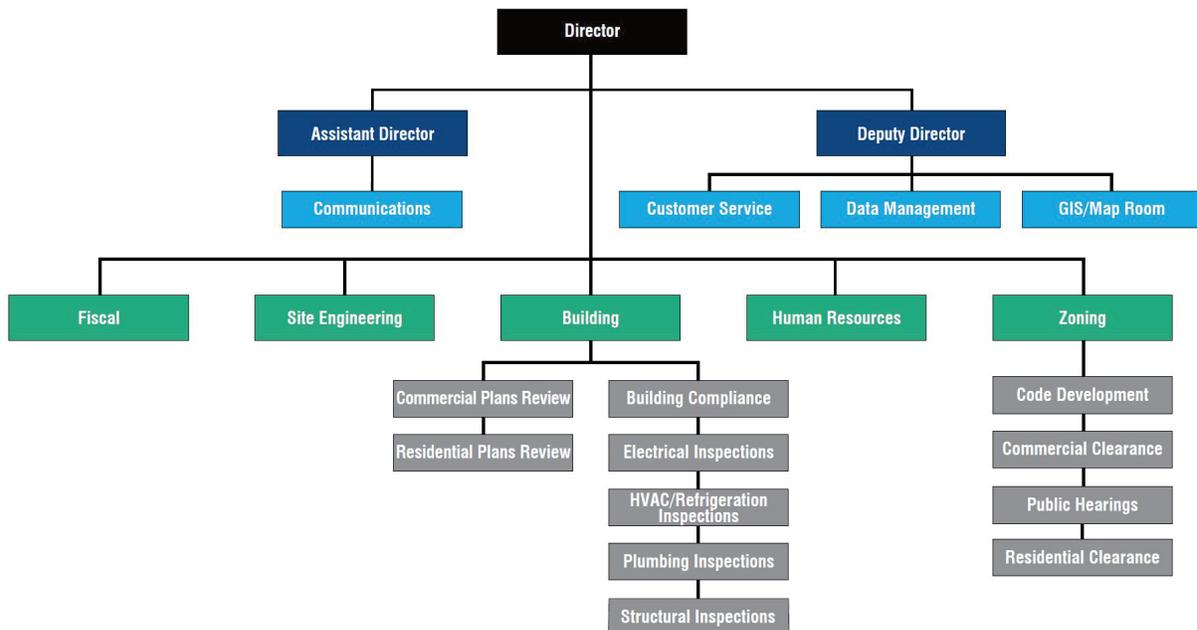
Budget Summary				
Fund	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Budget	2021 Proposed
Development Services Fund	20,451,279	22,446,679	25,033,146	23,008,744
Department Total	\$ 20,451,279	\$ 22,446,679	\$ 25,033,146	\$ 23,008,744

Building and Zoning

The **Customer Service** section accepts and processes applications, and issues permits, contractor licenses, and registrations to perform work in the City of Columbus. Contractor licensing provides qualification standards to support quality construction. The department also provides an ever increasing number of services available online. It strives to deliver excellent customer service through the adoption of innovative technologies and continuous improvement.

The Department of Building and Zoning plays an integral role in the continued growth of the City of Columbus. Permitting, licensing, zoning, and site compliance ensure that the safety and quality of life of residents are at the forefront of the development process.

Building and Zoning Services



Strategic Priorities for 2021

Neighborhoods



Enforce the Columbus Building and Zoning Codes throughout the permitting and inspection process.

Facilitate quality service and efficiency for plan submission through the preliminary plan review process, in collaboration with all departments.

Manage necessary zoning code revisions, such as definitions, residential standards, permitted uses, and deletion of antiquated terms. Maintain an up-to-date website for providing effective information to the public.

Update, educate and communicate new policies and procedures to improve the building process in the community.

Diversity and Inclusion



Continue to develop pathways for women and minorities into plans review and inspection positions.

Enhance inclusion and utilization efforts within the department's procurement process.

Sustainable Columbus



Implement Energy and Water Benchmarking to mitigate and adapt our community's changing climate to ensure a healthy and prosperous community for all our residents.

Economic Development and Affordable Housing



Partner with the construction industry in Columbus to promote safe, quality and responsive services to consultants, contractors, and residents.

Furnish outreach training on an annual basis to the industry and development community to help lessen plan review time and ease the development process.

Invest in technology to expand online permitting options, electronic plans review, and automated inspection scheduling.

Leverage existing technologies and seek new integrations to deliver a better and continuously improving customer experience.

Public Health



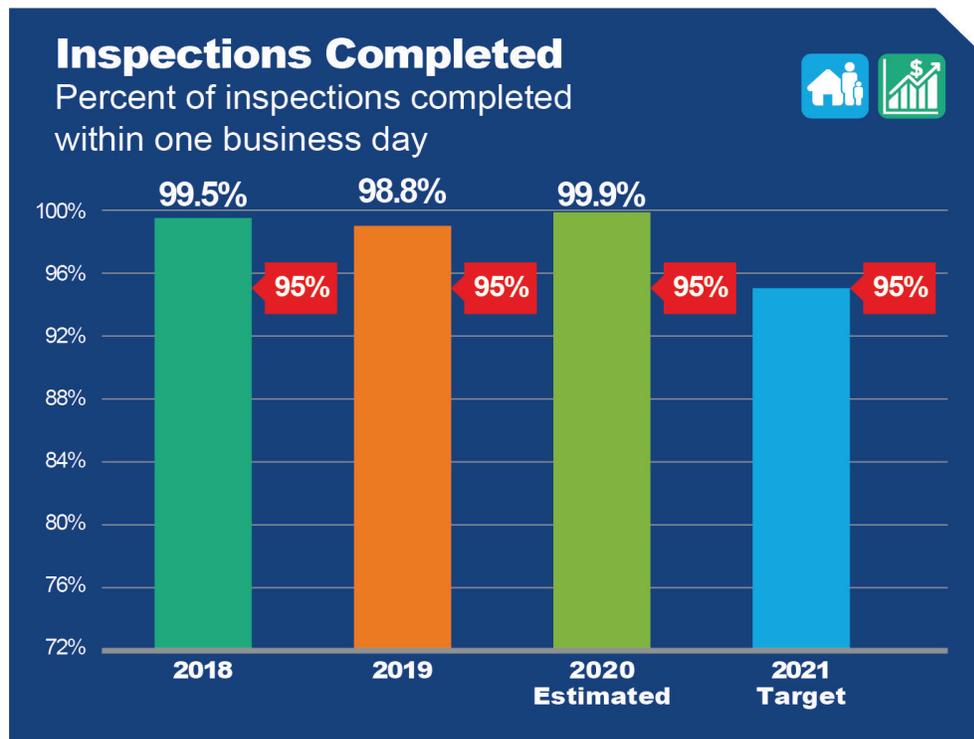
Deliver all necessary safety resources and training to employees.

2021 BUDGET NOTES

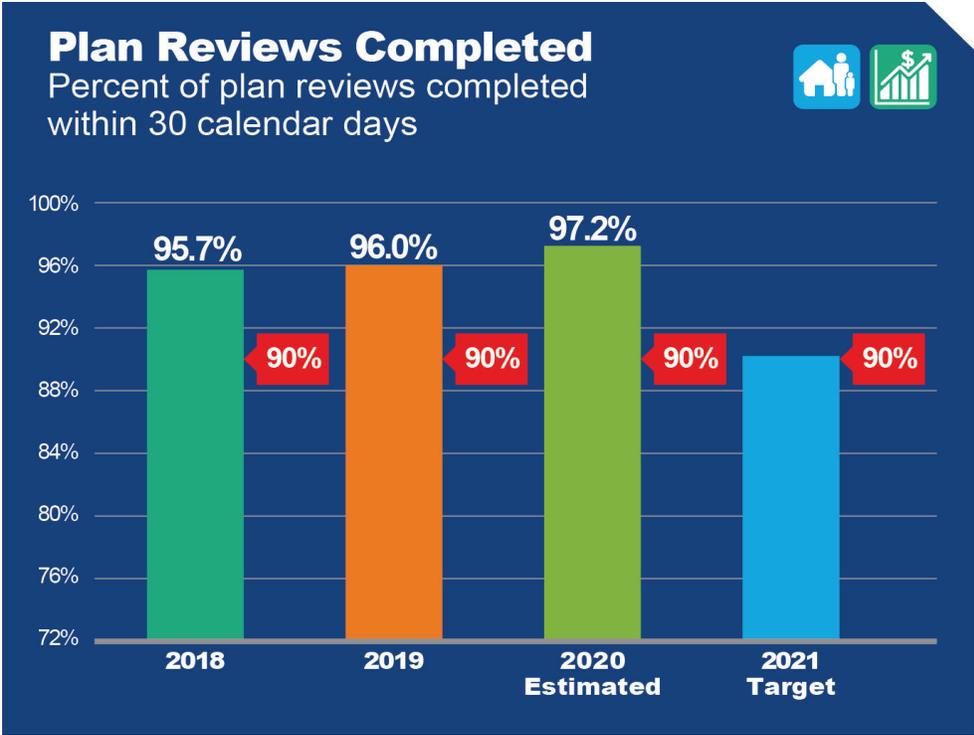
The 2021 budget of \$23 million provides continued funding for technology upgrades and enhancements associated with the Accela platform, including electronic records storage, electronic plans review and submission, and expedited plan reviews. In addition:

- The department will continue to streamline processes for customers in 2021 with online permitting and review. Currently, online permitting accounts for almost 65 percent of the department's total permit volume.
- In partnership with the Department of Technology, Building and Zoning Services plans to automate the scheduling of inspections received via phone-initiated requests in 2021.

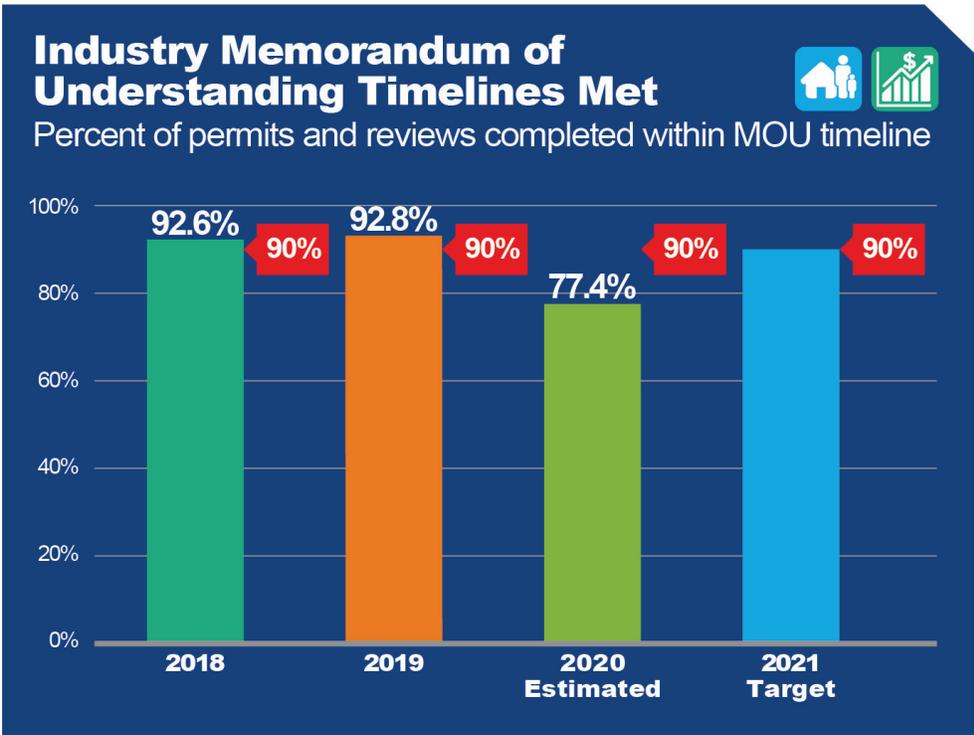
PERFORMANCE MEASURES



The department typically exceeds the 95 percent standard each year. To date this year, this standard continues to be exceeded, as nearly all inspections have been completed within one business day (99.9 percent). The department expects to continue to deliver this high level of customer service for the remainder of this year and into 2021.



Throughout 2020, the department has exceeded the set target for building plan reviews completed within 30 calendar days. To date, over 97 percent of plans have been reviewed within that timeframe. This number is especially impressive when considering that the department rapidly deployed a teleworking policy for plans examiners in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, yet has seen virtually no impact to this customer service standard. The 90 percent target will continue into 2021.



Per a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with private development stakeholders, the department has committed to meeting review and permitting timelines for private development projects, thus saving time and cost for the building industry. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has posed some challenges for the department with respect to the MOU timelines resulting in a dramatic fall in the compliance rate for this standard. The department expects to make improvements in this measure throughout the remainder of the year, and will again target 90% in 2021.

Building and Zoning

Financial Summary by Area of Expense					
Division	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Budget	2020 Projected	2021 Proposed
Building and Zoning Services					
Development Services Fund					
Personnel	\$ 16,466,121	\$ 17,628,504	\$ 19,350,827	\$ 18,651,783	\$ 17,492,337
Materials & Supplies	190,733	209,612	186,100	129,351	172,600
Services	3,482,251	4,297,180	5,142,719	4,839,847	5,270,307
Other	73,500	55,000	63,500	60,500	73,500
Capital	238,674	236,383	290,000	-	-
Transfer	-	20,000	-	-	-
Development Services Fund Subtotal	20,451,279	22,446,679	25,033,146	23,681,481	23,008,744
Department Total	\$ 20,451,279	\$ 22,446,679	\$ 25,033,146	\$ 23,681,481	\$ 23,008,744

Department Personnel Summary								
Fund	2018 Actual		2019 Actual		2020 Budget		2021 Proposed	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Development Services Fund								
Building and Zoning Services	145	11	154	10	164	17	161	9
Total	145	11	154	10	164	17	161	9

Please note: In addition to the position counts reflected above, the department's 2020 and 2021 budgets include funding for the equivalent of one full-time position for the Attorney's Office and one for the Fire Division.

Operating Budget by Program				
Program	2020 Budgeted	2020 FTEs	2021 Proposed	2021 FTEs
Administration	\$ 1,521,722	11	\$ 1,418,926	12
Building Services	11,918,287	93	10,323,262	90
Customer Service	2,204,504	18	2,140,081	18
Data Management	936,250	6	835,910	5
Engineering Services	1,264,574	10	1,208,134	9
Fiscal	276,804	2	258,774	2
Human Resources	432,892	3	419,311	3
Internal Services	3,955,719	0	4,031,407	0
Zoning Services	2,522,394	21	2,372,939	22
Department Total	\$ 25,033,146	164	\$ 23,008,744	161

For additional financial information related to the Department of Building and Zoning Services, please refer to the development services fund contained within the Special Revenue section.



2021 PROGRAM GUIDE

ADMINISTRATION

To ensure all sections of the department operate at maximum capacity to provide prompt delivery of services to the residents of Columbus.

BUILDING SERVICES

To ensure the health and safety of the residents of Columbus by reviewing plans for and inspecting residential and commercial structures.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

To provide prompt, accurate service to our customers and review and process applications for licenses and permits.

DATA MANAGEMENT

To provide leadership, direction, and support relating to data management functions for the department.

ENGINEERING SERVICES

To provide an efficient review of private development projects while ensuring compliance with city engineering and code requirements.

FISCAL

To provide leadership, direction, and support relating to fiscal functions for the department.

HUMAN RESOURCES

To provide leadership, direction, and support relating to human resources for the department.

INTERNAL SERVICES

To account for the internal service charges of the department necessary to maintain operations.

ZONING SERVICES

To review all drawings, site plans, graphic permits, lot split requests, and rezoning and variance requests presented for compliance with existing Columbus City Code and other legislated requirements.

Building and Zoning

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