

Department of the Building Official Program Summary

Appropriation Summary

	FY 2003-04 Actual	FY 2004-05 Amended	FY 2005-06 Proposed	FY 2005-06 Adopted	% Change
Expenditures	763,634	988,192	1,120,783	1,120,783	13.42
FTE	13	13	13	13	0.00

Department Mission

The Department of the Building Official accepts the responsibility, through the enforcement of Commonwealth of Virginia's Building codes and assigned local regulations, to be the catalyst in making Portsmouth the "City of Choice" in which to live, rear a family, visit and invest. Through a partnership with the public, employees, private agencies and groups, we will achieve this responsibility. Emphasis will be placed on the following:

Encouraging quality construction and achieve the highest Neighborhood Quality standards.

To achieve the goals of City Council, we will apply our efforts in an equal and fair manner.

Department Operational Summary

Effective November 14, 2002, this department designation, formerly known as Planning and Inspections, was changed to Building Official/Code Enforcement. This change occurred after the appointment of the new department director Lamar Brown. In April 2003, the department was reorganized and renamed The Department of the Building Official. The department will continue to 1) answer questions, 2) issue permits and clearances, 3) conduct inspections, 4) process applications 5) address complaints, and 6) generally oversee the City's property development. To improve departmental performance, the emphasis is proactive. In addition to these activities, the department has the following required unique duties:

Building Permits and Inspections (promoting Neighborhood Quality, Fiscal Strength and Economic Development)

- Enforces the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) and Fire Codes as they relate to the manner in which a building is constructed, altered, renovated, or has a change of use. To ensure it is sound and reasonably safe from structural failure, accidental fire, and other hazards.
- Enforces various regulations to ensure compliance with all accessibility guidelines. The principle purpose is to assure compliance with public health standards, and safety and welfare are met within buildings and structures.
- Determines permit applicant qualifications. To ensure compliance with the USBC, reviews all proposed construction activity within the following supporting codes: IBC, International Plumbing Code, International Mechanical Code, ICC Electric Code, International Residential Code, Model Energy Code, the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, and the ICC National Fire Prevention Code.
- For all new construction, issues certificates of use and occupancy.

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- To assure compliance with all new construction regulations, performs on site inspections. When applications are made for business licenses and/or change of use, inspects existing vacant commercial buildings.
- Before structure re-use, where the vacancy is over thirty days, performs electrical inspection.
- In the electrical, plumbing, and mechanical trades, verifies applicant tradesman certification (Journeyman or Master).
- For validity and expiration, verifies State as well as City licenses. As approved, processes all permit applications. Accepts all inspection requests, and at the inspection site, posts inspection results.
- Provides technical assistance to all City agencies pertaining to building and construction codes and regulations.
- Provides code interpretation technical assistance to private engineers, architects, contractors and homeowners.
- Determines building occupant load and use group.

Key Goals and Objectives

- Support the City's economic development initiatives.
- In partnership with residents, business people and other City departments, continue a leadership role involving the development and achievement of community quality initiatives.
- Continue to assist realization with the Vision 2005 goals and objectives and help encourage the underlying Community-participation process.
- Enforce Volume I of the Uniform Statewide Building Code, including Building, Plumbing, Mechanical, Electrical, and Amusements.
- To protect the City during and after natural disasters, assist the Fire Department in identifying and seeking solutions and mitigation activities.
- For building construction, seek upgrade of the City's ISO rating.
- In attaining its health, welfare, and safety goals at the least possible cost to Portsmouth citizens, promote and encourage Building Code enforcement critical to the success of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code's current edition.
- Continue with inspector certifications and maintain all current certifications.

Building Permits and Inspections

- In calendar year 2003, collected over \$412,558 in permit fees.
- Completed approximately 2,906 inspections.
- For design, maintenance and inspection of City buildings, structures and special functions, provided assistance to various City departments.

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- Continue to support personnel obtaining combination inspector certifications. All technical persons are currently certified in their specialties and must continue to maintain those certifications.
- Continued active membership in the Virginia Building Code Officials Association.

Departmental Performance Measures

		FY 2002-03 Actual	FY 2003-04 Adopted	FY 2004-05 Adopted
FY 2005-06 Proposed	FY 2005-06 Adopted			
572,757	572,757			
183,883	183,883	Number of site visits per inspector	1/24.7 minutes	1/30 minutes
4,688	4,688	# inspections /inspector/day	12.7	12
8,277	8,277			
351,179	351,179			
1,120,783	1,120,783			