

Buildings and Inspections

Budget & Finance Committee

March 25, 2024

Agenda

- Mission Statement and Services
- FY24 Accomplishments
- Service Delivery Challenges
- FY25 Performance Goals
- Budget and FTE History

Mission Statement and Services

To protect the health, safety, and quality of life in the built environment by ensuring code compliance, eliminating blight and safety hazards; facilitating efficient development; and promoting safe housing.

- Building Permit Inspection
- License Inspection
- Commercial Courtesy Inspection
- HVAC Inspection
- Permit Intake & Issuance
- Landlord and Tenant Training
- Community Engagement & Outreach
- Contractor Registration
- Designer/Contractor Training
- Journeyman Plumber Registration
- Elevator Period Inspection
- Elevator Plan Review & New Elevator Inspections
- Commercial Reviews
- Residential Reviews
- Coordinated Site Review
- Special Event Reviews
- Plan Consultation
- HVAC Plan Review
- Zoning Support
- Plumbing Code Enforcement
- Plumbing Plan Exam and Inspection
- PMCE Complaints and Inspections
- PLAP
- Vacant (VBML, VFPR)
- Harbor
- Hazard Abatement
- RRR and RRI
- Relocation Assistance Programs
- Emergency Call Outs
- Zoning Code Enforcement
- Façade & Fire Escape Inspection
- Stabilization of Historic Buildings

FY24 Accomplishments

- **Enhanced Residential Tenant Protections:** Approval of ordinances and program implementations for 1) Permanent and Expanded Residential Rental Inspection (RRI) Program, 2) New Essential Services Program, and 3) New Landlord Responsibility Program. Implementation of these ordinances adopted by City Council in December 2023, allows the department to take a more tenant-centric view to maintain safe housing by:
 - Expanding the RRI, to ensure B&I and Law holistically ensure that a residential rental property owner's entire portfolio of units are maintained and safe once the owner has established a track record of demonstrated problems with one or more properties in 7 priority neighborhoods.
 - Providing an option for B&I to correct essential services that make a building habitable and avoid forced removal of tenants from a residential rental property.
 - Establish the minimum financial responsibilities a residential rental property owner has to tenants when vacation of a building is required
- **Modeling after B&I's original success within the Customer Service Division, Civil Service, AFSMCE, Central HR and current inspection staff agreed to new career ladder.** The ladder altered previously 3 inspector positions into 4 career steps. Its design integrates seamlessly with the B&I's state approved Inspection Training Academy, the first in Ohio. The career ladder allows B&I to hire initially a more diversified mix of competent people who previously could not because they lacked state minimum experience requirements and train them in the Inspection Academy (Inspector 1). Satisfactory academy and probation completion and passing of State Certification Exams, leads to next step (Inspector 2). Inspectors may then self-progress at their own ability, to Inspector 3 and 4 levels, with sufficient experience years and additional certifications. The department would optimally desire to see all Inspection staff obtain Inspector 4 classification, providing high levels of knowledge and service delivery.
- **City Council authorized funding of a unit of 10 inspectors and 2 assistant supervisors with a goal of tackling complex code enforcement issues.** Operating closely with the Police District liaisons and Quality of Life attorneys, the unit of experienced inspectors, will work within programs such as RRI, VBML, VFBR, as well as difficult code compliance cases to provide for consistent inspection enforcement and more efficient problem solving for problem properties within the city. As the Inspection Academy begins to fill the current 36% inspector vacancy gap, this unit will help to reduce workloads of other inspectors, allowing them to improve the timeliness of other core departmental functions.

Service Delivery Challenges

- **Challenge 1:** B&I continues to experience a lack of qualified human capital in the Plan Examination and Inspection arena. This is affecting the departments' ability to execute established performance metrics. Steps have been implemented to combat these concerns, yet recruitment efforts remain challenging.
 - Approved career ladder changes for inspectors. Previously a 3-step career ladder, there are now 4 steps in the inspection career ladder. Its design integrates seamlessly with B&I's state approved Inspection Training Academy, the first in Ohio. The career ladder allows B&I to hire initially a more diversified mix of competent people who previously could not because they lacked state minimum experience requirements and train them in the Inspection Academy. The training academy is 44 weeks. This leaves B&I with reduced staffing levels until completion, which affects service delivery.
 - Plan Examiner job specification changes – B&I created an additional job classification, the Building Plans Examiner. This position will permit B&I to hire candidates that may not be a Registered Engineer or Architect; however, they must be a certified Building Inspector with 5 years' experience in a certified non-residential Ohio building department. This will allow inspectors to move into plan examiner positions which retains employees with institutional knowledge. It also permits capacity to review plans that do not require the skill set of a Senior or Master Plans Examiner.
 - Both areas, while opening the arena, share the challenge of initial limited productivity.
- **Challenge 2:** B&I's service delivery is impacted by the current data systems in place. While the department is in transition to CAGIS EDGE, it is imperative that B&I is in a position for the complete transition in FY25. Additional hardware will be needed to ensure office & field staff are adequately operational. The Customer Service data system, particularly the phone management system, has proven to be challenging with the onboarding of department programs.
- **Challenge 3:** B&I's service delivery is impacted by lack of effective communication with the neighborhoods. Sixty percent of complaints are viable while 40% are not necessarily code violations that inspectors can act on. Educating the neighborhood on the various tools, resources, and programs that B&I offers will aid in addressing neighborhood concerns. Knowing what are quality of life complaints and other potential code violations that the Strategic Code Team can act on will enable B&I to provide more impactful service delivery, reduce time addressing non-viable complaints which will aid in improving established metrics. This will also broaden the perception of the Building Department where B&I can be viewed as an ally to the 52 neighborhoods of Cincinnati.

FY25 Performance Measures

Plan Examination

- **90% of Initial Commercial Plan Reviews will be completed in 15 business days**
- **# of commercial permits applied for**

Plan Examination

- **90% of Initial Residential Plan Reviews will be completed in 10 business days**
- **# of residential permits applied for**

PMCE - PLAP

- **90% of initial PLAP Inspections (Litter and Grass) will be completed in 2 business days of the complaint being filed**
- **# of PLAP complaints received**

PMCE Complaints & Inspections

- **90% of Non-Emergency Site Inspections are completed within 5 business days of the complaint being filed**
- **# of Non-Emergency Site Inspections completed**

PMCE – VBML, VFPR

- **90% of site inspections are completed within 5 days of complaint or registration**
- **# of site inspections completed**

Budget and FTE History

Buildings & Inspections General Fund	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Personnel Compensation	6,262,170	5,628,380	6,865,450	6,973,850	7,793,500
Fringe Benefits	2,576,740	2,140,150	2,579,290	2,427,300	2,948,200
Non-Personnel Expenses	734,440	832,400	1,156,310	2,092,170	2,669,900
General Fund Total	9,573,350	8,600,930	10,601,050	11,493,320	13,411,600

Buildings & Inspections Principal Restricted Funds	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Stormwater Management Fund 107	-	-	1,372,670	1,621,940	1,652,840
Income Tax-Infrastructure Fund 302	62,370	46,780	62,370	62,370	53,030
Hazard Abatement Fund 347	1,033,610	2,728,810	1,574,840	696,950	697,060
Principal Restricted Funds Total	1,095,980	2,775,590	3,009,880	2,381,260	2,402,930

Buildings & Inspections - FTEs by Agency	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
211 - Buildings & Inspections, Licenses & Permits	76.00	76.00	75.00	110.00	121.50
212 - Property Maintenance Code Enforcement	34.50	40.50	45.50	9.50	8.00
FTE Total	110.50	116.50	120.50	119.50	129.50

Questions?