

2014 Building Services Annual Report

Franklin County Economic Development & Planning



Building Services Mission

To protect the lives and safety of residents and visitors of Franklin County, preserve quality of life, and contribute to economic development.

Commissioners
Marilyn Brown, President
Paula Brooks
John O'Grady

 **Franklin County**
Where Government Works



OVERVIEW

The Building Services Division of the Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department is responsible for the unincorporated townships of Franklin County and six contract jurisdictions.

The purpose of the Building Services Division is to ensure compliance with the Ohio Residential Building Code for 1-, 2-, and 3-family dwellings.

Our services include plan examinations, new construction building inspections, building permits, electrical permits, HVAC permits, building condemnations, court testimonies, preventative inspections, complaint-based inspections, technical assistance, and consultations.

The Building Services Annual Activity Report serves as a community update on the daily activities of this office as we work to ensure building safety.

This report uses specific measures to analyze and report on the work completed by the Building Services Division for 2014. The report also highlights the growth and change our department has experienced in terms of services offered, new staff members, and ongoing initiatives.

Resources

Building Services Section

Residential Building Permits
 Franklin County Building Services Division
 614-525-3166

Community Services Section

The following services and programs are offered by the Community Development division of the Economic Development & Planning Department.

To be eligible for these services, recipients must reside in Franklin County, but outside Columbus city limits, and meet certain income eligibility guidelines.

Available services:

- Accessibility and Minor Home Repair Grants
- Urgent Repair Grants
- Home Buyer Down Payment Assistance
- Women’s Employment Services
- Nutritional Services
- Fair Housing Services
- Hearing Enhancement Services
- Employment Services for Developmentally Disabled Individuals
- Sewer Tap-In Assistance

*Cover photos provided by Homes on the Hill CDC, MORPC, and Habitat MidOhio. These homes were completed using federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program funds.

Letter from the Director



Jim Schimmer, Director
**Franklin County Economic
Development & Planning**

The Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department is pleased to present its 2014 Annual Building Services Report. More than an overview of statistics, the publication illustrates that the economy has seemingly “turned the corner” after the Great Recession. All of our indicators were up in 2014 over 2013 with cost of all construction nearly doubling from \$32.6 million to over \$60 million. These numbers are a clear indication the economy is on the mend and the building industry appears confident the trend will continue into the future.

This is also my opportunity to publically commend the hard-working and dedicated staff who make sure the residents and families of Franklin County have safe homes to live in and raise their families. Building Services staff provides timely and professional response to public complaints, issue building condemnation orders, provide in-court expert testimony, and offer technical assistance and one-on-one personal consults when needed. I am also proud of the new initiatives that have been implemented to provide better services to our townships. Through our Township Clean Sweep Program, townships have the opportunity to designate a location within its township to conduct a beautification event. The event includes the placement of a roll-off container available to citizens for the disposal of bulk items, as well as the use of a six man team of workers to clean-up public spaces. The program is offered to Townships at no cost, the Township’s lone responsibilities are to inform its citizens of the Saturday event and to provide a representative to monitor the roll-off. Although a new initiative, we are proud that two townships are in the process of coordinating clean up dates for their communities and we look forward to increased involvement in the future. Additionally, under our more established partnership with the Central Ohio Community Improvement Corporation (COCIC), we have assisted in successfully demolishing 900 units this year. These were properties that once hindered investment in these communities, but since demolished, open up new opportunities for development in our neighborhoods.

Even though things are moving in the right direction there is always room for improvement. Our department’s motto says it all – Semper Protinus. Always forward. I celebrate how we have progressed in 2014 and look forward to seeing what we are capable of accomplishing in the years ahead.



Building Services Team

Jenny Snapp, Assistant Director

Mike Kelleher, Chief Building Official

Rick Erbe, Building Inspector

Neil Fulton, Building Inspector

Bertram Walker, Building Clerk

Jurisdictions We Serve

In addition to the Townships we work with, six other jurisdictions contract with us to conduct building inspections and other essential duties.

Townships

Blendon Township
Brown Township
Clinton Township
Franklin Township
Hamilton Township
Jackson Township
Jefferson Township
Madison Township
Mifflin Township
Norwich Township
Perry Township
Plain Township

Pleasant Township
Prairie Township
Sharon Township
Truro Township
Washington Township

Villages

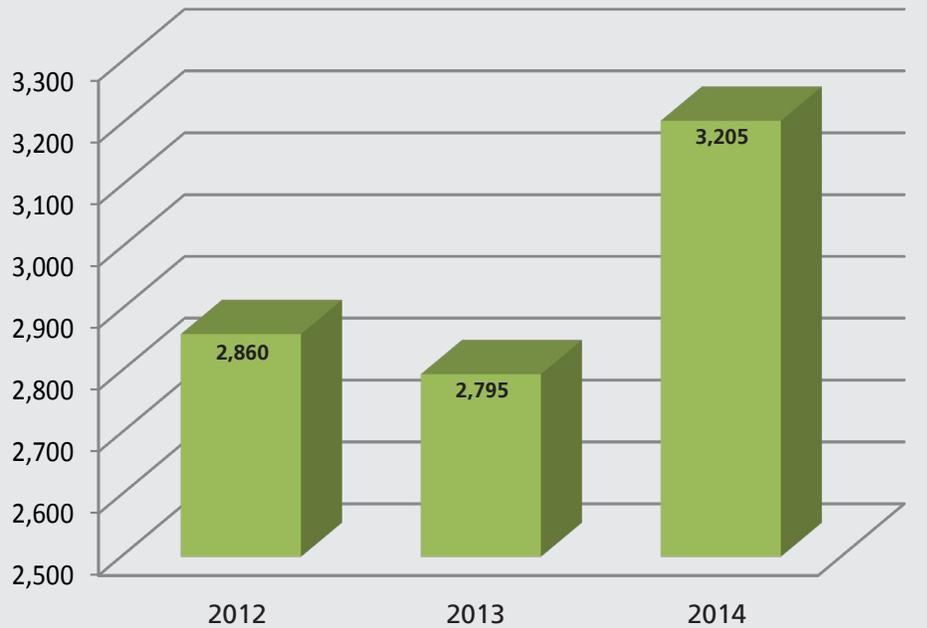
Harrisburg
Lockbourne
Minerva Park
Riverlea
Urbancrest
Valleyview

Inspections Completed

The Building Services division has adopted the 2013 Residential Building Code of the State of Ohio. This statute requires that inspections be done to ensure an acceptable level of safety, property and equipment value, and energy efficiency.

Inspections include site, foundation, footers, structural, electrical, air conditioning, ventilation, heating, insulation, windows, and doors.

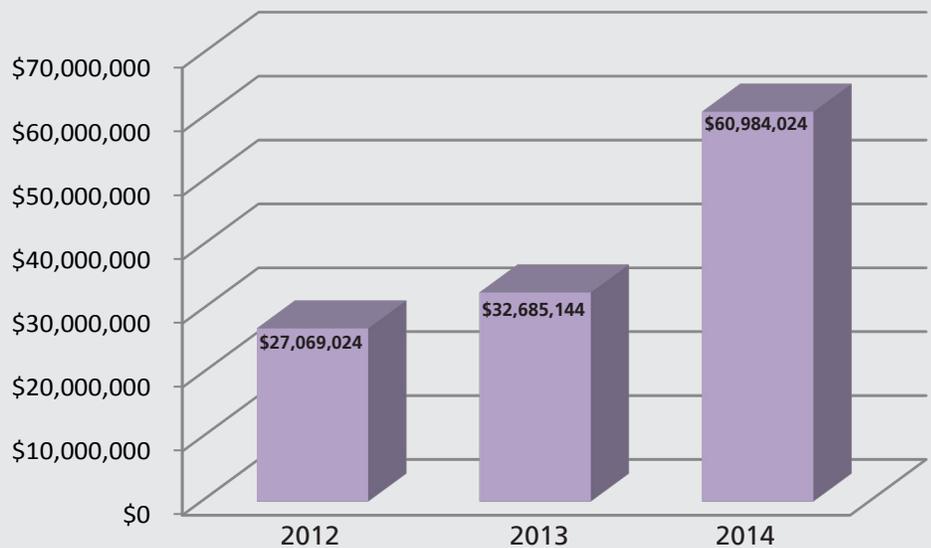
Inspections are carried out periodically throughout all construction phases until a certificate of occupancy is issued.



Estimated Cost of Construction

The estimated cost of construction is the amount of money expected to go toward construction projects for which Franklin County has issued permits. This includes new builds, reconstruction, repairs, upgrades, additions, and alterations.

The estimated cost of construction for 2014 was approximately 87% higher than in 2013 and over 100% higher than in 2012. This reflects a continued improvement in the economy over the last few years and correlates with the increase in new home permits and greater number of homeowners investing in their properties.

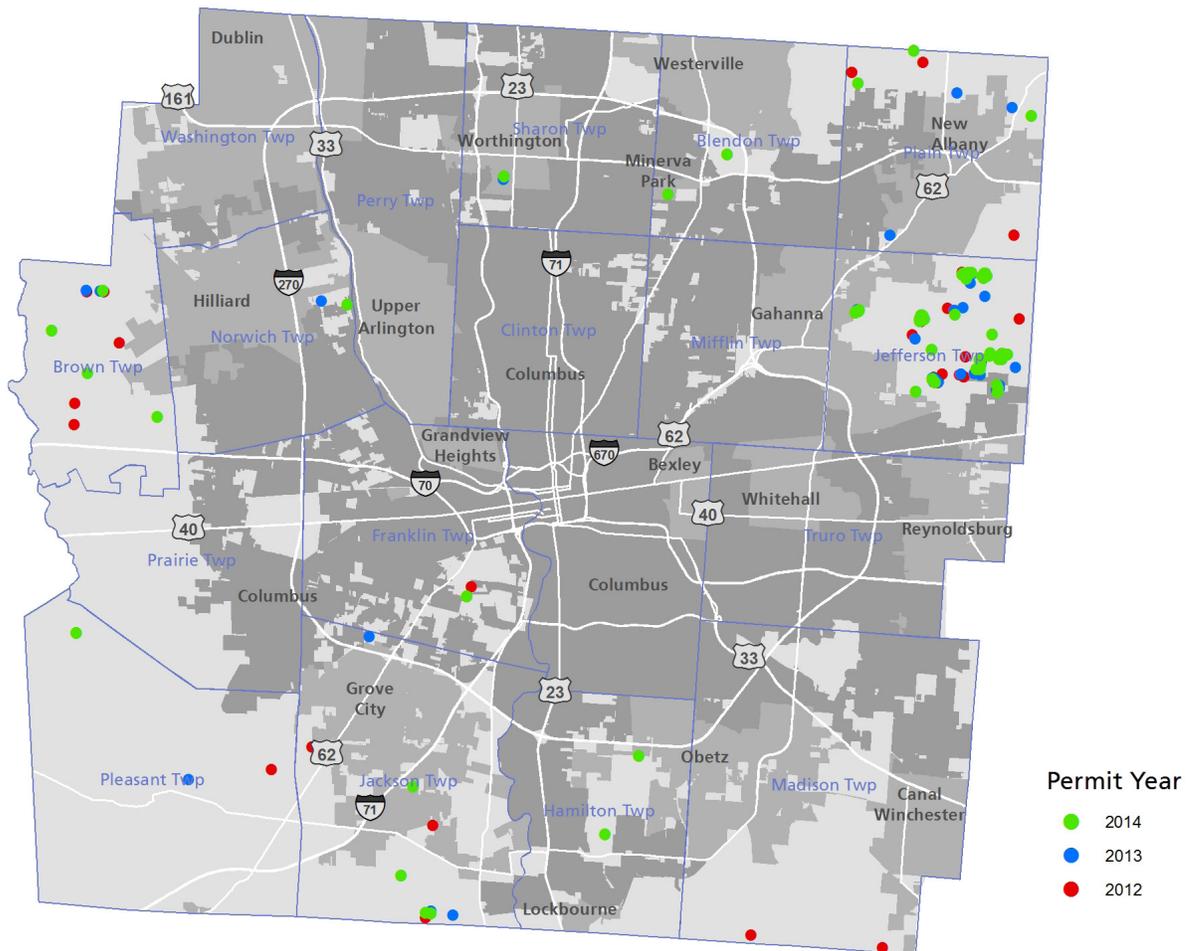
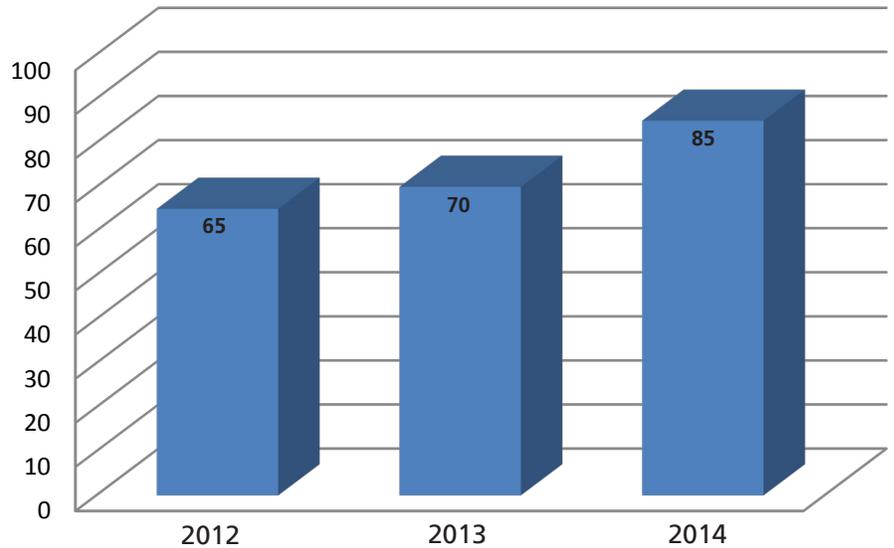


Building Permits for New Homes

The Building Services section issues permits to developers seeking to construct new homes in Franklin County townships.

Building permits for new homes are a key indicator of economic growth and stability, and are reported nationally to gauge the health of the nation's economy.

The number of permits issued for new homes in Franklin County had remained relatively stable over the previous years, but rose dramatically in 2014.



Franklin County Debuts Online Permitting Center

Franklin County Economic Development and Planning recently debuted the county's new online permit center, SmartGov. SmartGov is a software as a service (SAS) or cloud based solution to permit tracking for the county's building, zoning code enforcement, and planning departments. The software is used to file HVAC, electrical, demolition and building permits, schedule inspections, keep track of contractor registrations, and track zoning code complaints and violations.

The new Franklin County Online Permit Center is a feature of SmartGov that will allow customers to apply for permits, check their permit application status, pay permit fees by credit/debit card (VISA, Mastercard, Discover), view scheduled inspections, and review inspection activity and results online. In the future, the Franklin County Online Permit Center will provide homeowners and contractors the opportunity to file the Certificate of Zoning Compliance Application and pay application fees with a credit card. Additionally, Paladin Data Systems, the SmartGov vendor, is currently working on functionality to allow for contractors to renew registrations online, a feature the county hopes to offer by next year.

The application is a great improvement over the county's previous permit tracking software. It allows the county to collect more detailed information. The ability to access the application online from any computer makes it much more accessible and allows county inspectors to work from mobile devices in the field. The Online Permitting Center will not only make applying for and paying permit fees easier and more accessible, but it also provides a place for publishing data and reports to the public, providing better transparency.

SmartGov Manages

- Residential Zoning Compliance
- Commercial Zoning Compliance
- Variances
- Rezoning
- Appeals
- Conditional Use Cases

Registered Applicants Can

- Apply for a Building Permit
- Check the Status of their Permit Application
- View Scheduled Inspections
- Review Inspection Activity and Results



Related Links:

SmartGov website: <http://smartgovcommunity.com>

Franklin County Building Services:
<http://development.franklincountyohio.gov/building/>



Upcoming & Newsworthy

Franklin County Staff to Chair the OCCD 50th Anniversary Gala

This year a historic passage will take place: the Ohio Conference of Community Development (OCCD) turns 50! This passage represents a long journey of dedicated individuals working continuously to ensure that our communities are healthy, stable, safe and prosperous for everyone.

On July 29, 2015 individuals and elected officials from across the State will gather at the Ohio Statehouse to commemorate this passage. Planned is an evening gala and dinner, celebrating our past and honoring those who have been critical to the many successes realized.

OCCD plans to recognize Senator George Voinovich and Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur for their contributions to community development at the gala. The Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing (OCCH) will be the presenting sponsor for the gala.



2015 Ohio Building Officials Association Annual Conference

The 2015 Ohio Building Officials Association (OBOA) Conference will be held March 8-10 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Dublin, OH. OBOA offers more than 25 different classes at the conference on a wide variety of topics pertaining to building standards. The Franklin County EDP Building Services staff will attend the conference to keep up-to-date on industry best practices.

EDP Welcomes Jenny Snapp as Assistant Director



The new Assistant Director is Jenny Snapp. Jenny oversees the Planning, Building and Zoning sections of the department.

Prior to joining Franklin County, Jenny was the Director of the Logan-Union-Champaign (LUC) Regional Planning Commission for 12 years and worked for the Toledo Area Regional Growth Partnership in economic development and site selection. Jenny holds a Master's Degree in Geography and Regional Planning from the University of Toledo.

Franklin County received HUD CHDO Green NOFA Grant

Franklin County was awarded a \$250,000 grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to expand the supply of energy efficient and environmentally friendly housing that is affordable to low income families.

These energy efficient and environmentally friendly housing units are owned, developed or sponsored by eligible Community Housing Development Organization (CHDOs), using design and technology models that can be replicated.

All units received ENERGY STAR certification from an independent HOME ENERGY RATER (HER). The county used its grant award to fund Homes on the Hill Community Development Corporation, a local CHDO, to substantially rehabilitate eight units of Energy Star certified housing on Carr Street.

Franklin County ensured that Homes on the Hill met the guidelines for energy efficiency, implemented a construction waste-management plan, and gave residents an instruction manual that provided information on how to maintain the Green features of their homes. All of the homes have successfully sold.

Franklin County Board of Commissioners



Commissioner Brown
President



Commissioner Brooks



Commissioner O'Grady



Jim Schimmer, Director
Rollin Seward, Assistant Director
Jenny R. Snapp, Assistant Director

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