
TO: Board of County Commissioners

THROUGH: Howard Tipton, County Administrator
Mark Satterlee, AICP, Deputy County Administrator 

FROM: Leslie Olson, AICP, Director 

DATE: February 7, 2017

SUBJECT: Annual Report

OVERVIEW

Planning and Development Services provides professional guidance for development in unincorporated St. Lucie County. The department provides building permit review to ensure compliance with the Florida Building Code, development review and public engagement for larger or more complex development processes, economic development concierge services for both small and large businesses, and code enforcement services to ensure our community continues to strive toward the County's adopted goals and standards.

In 2016, the department saw an increase in building permits as well as an increase in interest from developers for larger projects. As a result, the Department is making plans to handle increased development activity for the coming year.

This report summarizes last year's activity and sets goals for the coming year for each Division.

<i>Division/Section</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Permitting	2-5
Code Enforcement	6-7
Economic Development	8
Planning	9-10

BUILDING AND CODE REGULATIONS DIVISION

Monica Graziani, Building and Code Regulations Manager

Carl John Peterson, CBO, Building Official

Debra Zampetti, Zoning and Permitting Supervisor

Danielle Williams, Code Enforcement Supervisor

Building Permit and Revenue Data

Building activity in 2016 showed a substantial improvement increasing 12.62% over 2015. Revenue and valuations showed dramatic increases of 27.53% and 38.36% respectively over 2015. Permitting activity for 2016 was up 91% since 2010 and has steadily increased every year.

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>% +/-</u>
• Total Permits	7409	8431	12.62%
• Total Revenue (calendar yr.)	\$ 1,658,953	\$ 2,115,607	27.53%
• Total Revenue (fiscal yr.)	\$ 1,620,705	\$ 2,073,223	27.92%
• 491 Reserve	\$ 2,183,571	\$ 1,806,837	-17.40%
• Valuations	\$98,797,297	\$136,696,935	38.36%

The 491 Reserve Fund for 2016 shows a total of \$1,806,837, a decrease of 17.40% from 2015. This figure, however, is based on a projection that is calculated at the beginning of the year. In fact, there was a net surplus of \$571,000 for the 491 Reserve that was not projected. In April, the surplus funds will be added to the reserve funds which would total (minus any expenditures) \$2,377,837. The actual increase for 2016 over 2015 is 8.89%.

Although 2016 was not a year for large commercial projects, there were three manufacturing businesses that qualified as target industry: Islamorada Beer Company, A-1 Trusses, and Pursuit Boats. Housing was much more robust in that issuance of residential permits for single family homes was up 55.5% over 2015. A total of 224 permits were issued; 28 permits were valued at over \$500,000.

Level of Service

It is the goal of Building Division to maintain a 2-3 week turnaround level of service on complex permits such as single family homes, commercial renovations, commercial buildings from receipt of application to providing comments to the customer. Occasionally, one or two plans examiners will work on Saturday to maintain level of service.

Each quarter the Division conducts a sampling of permits to help monitor the level of service – or the average amount of time it takes to process a permit. The sampling focuses on the more complex commercial and single family home permits. In 2015, a new plan’s examiner had been hired and the Division averaged 4.2 weeks per permit. In 2016, after the plan’s examiner was fully trained, the Division required two plans examiners to work Saturdays on a periodic basis to increase level of service.

2015	No of permits	Days in zoning	Days on shelf	Days in review
<i>01/01/2015-03/31/2015</i>	153	2.9	13.8	1.9
<i>04/01/2015-06/30/2015</i>	223	4.5	21.5	1.8
<i>07/01/2015-09/30/2015</i>	120	5.0	15.4	2.3
<i>10/01/2015-12/31/2015</i>	166	7.0	13.1	4.0
TOTAL PERMITS	669			
AVERAGE DAYS		5.4	16.9	2.4
TIME TO GENERATE FIRST ROUND OF COMMENTS				24.7

The table above reflects the metrics for calendar year 2015, and the two tables below provide metrics for calendar year 2016. In 2016, there were a total of 775 complex permits and the average time it took for the customer to receive the comments was 15.6 days. This was an improvement over the 669 permits and average time of 24.7 days in 2015.

2016	No of permits	Days in zoning	Days on shelf	Days in review
<i>01/01/2016-03/31/2016</i>	184	3.9	5.1	2.4
<i>04/01/2016-06/30/2016</i>	182	4.4	6.7	1.5
<i>07/01/2016-09/30/2016</i>	203	3.3	9.1	2.3
<i>10/01/2016-12/31/2016</i>	204	9.7*	13.0*	2.0*
TOTAL PERMITS	773			
AVERAGE DAYS		5.4	8.6	2.6
TIME TO GENERATE FIRST ROUND OF COMMENTS				16.6

*Numbers will continue to increase until all files are complete for the quarter.

The sampling takes into account project complexity because the time a permit is in-house can vary greatly as some permits are issued same-day, some permits are relatively simple and are issued within a few days and many are much more complex. Large commercial or residential projects can take weeks or months to review and often require multiple rounds of plan review. Also, it is not unusual

for a customer to take three or four weeks to reply to comments prior to issuance of the permit. Staff has worked to reduce review time – especially on economic development projects.

The tracking system is designed to follow a permit through each step in the review process from submittal, through zoning review, plan review, resubmittals, review by the Fire Department and approval. To identify the “bottleneck” in this process, the most important tracking metrics are how long plans wait on the shelf for the initial plan review and how long it takes to get comments back to the applicant. An “averaging report” was designed to track in-house time only. This eliminates the variable of how long it takes an applicant to respond.

The average number of inspections per month was 2162, an increase of 4.3% from 2015. There has been over a 100 % increase since 2010. Each of the five inspectors averaged 19 inspections per day in 2015. The industry standard is 10 inspections per day per full time inspector. Currently, staff is recruiting for an existing inspector position.

Level of Service: Targeted Industry Permits

In 2016, the Department began tracking turnaround time for Targeted Industry permits. Islamorada Beer Company (newly expanded into the County, renovating an existing warehouse,) A-1 Roof Trusses (office and manufacturing expansion at existing site,) and Pursuit Boats (manufacturing expansion at existing site,) all processed building permits in 2016.

For Targeted Industries, the Department tracks the entire turnaround time, (as opposed to “submittal to deficiency comments to applicant”) as the Business Navigator is tasked with both internal problem solving and communicating with the owner and representative regarding resubmittal to ensure timely response to comments for a faster project completion. Pursuit Boats is still in review, awaiting response by the contractor to deficiency comments, marked with an asterisk (*) below. Therefore, this permit reflects time from application to the date deficiency comments were returned to the contractor.

Targeted Industry Permits	Industry Type	Permit Type	Date Applied	Date Issued	Days to Issue
<i>Islamorada Beer Co.</i>	Manufacturing	Plumbing, Commercial	2/29/2016	3/4/2016	5
<i>Islamorada Beer Co.</i>	Manufacturing	Slab Only	3/2/2016	3/4/2016	2
<i>Islamorada Beer Co.</i>	Manufacturing	Commercial Renovation	3/28/2016	4/28/2016	31
<i>A-1 Roof Trusses</i>	Manufacturing	Commercial Addition	4/29/2016	7/13/2016	76
<i>Pursuit Boats</i>	Manufacturing	Building Commercial	11/23/2016	12/8/2016*	16
Average Days to Issue					26

How days are calculated: Dates reflect calendar days, including weekends and holidays. The Pursuit Boats review included the Thanksgiving holiday.

Customer Service Improvements

Every year staff continues to work on efficiency and customer service improvements. The following is a summary of changes implemented in the Building Division to improve service in 2016.

2016 Accomplishments

- **Inspection Scheduling:**
 - Implemented AM/PM scheduling for inspections to improve customer service.
 - Implemented one hour advance notice for inspector's arrival.
- **Technology:**
 - Inspectors received upgrade from flip phones to smart phones to provide more efficient communication with customers.
- **Targeted Industries:**
 - Flag 'target industry' businesses in Codeview to monitor permitting process for job creator permits to ensure expedited priority.
 - Meetings with Targeted Industry businesses following project completion for evaluation and feedback.
- **Same-Day Permits by Email:**
 - Expanded permits types accepted via email to 18 permit types.
 - Expanded permit types issued "Over the Counter"
- **Customer service education:**
 - Introduced *Helpful Hints on Inspections for Owner Builders*.
- **Level of Service:**
 - Voluntary overtime for plans examiners to work on Saturdays on a needed basis to maintain an acceptable level of service.
 - Monitor performance measures on a quarterly basis to maintain the division's level of service.
- **Surveys:** Inspectors give out customer service surveys for feedback at end of job.

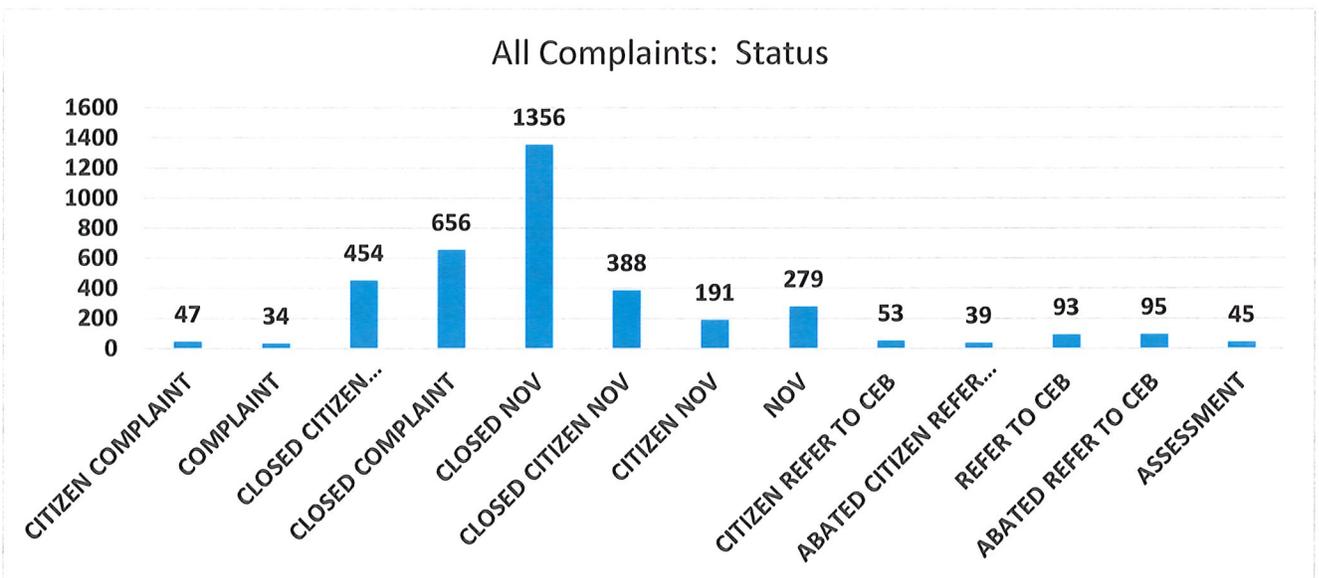
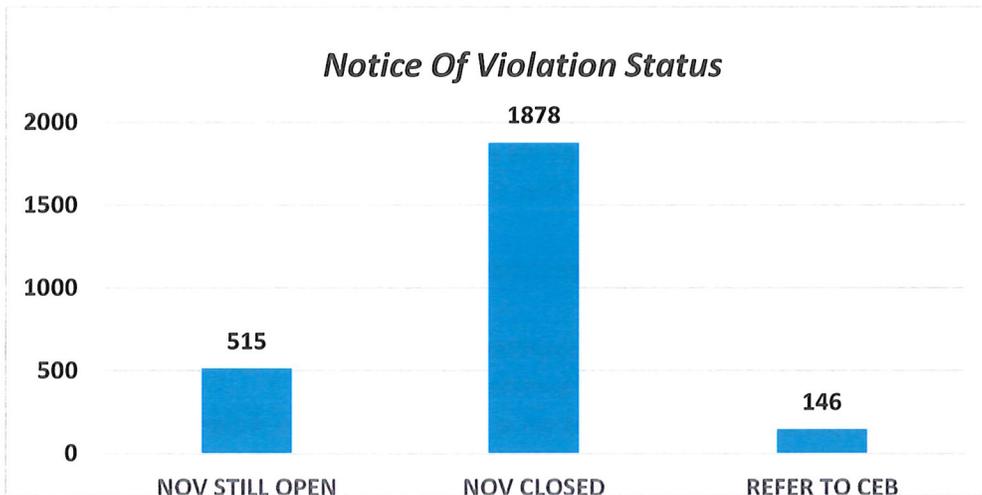
2017 Goals

- **Efficiency:**
 - Eliminate certain clerical duties of Plans Examiners, such as loading fees, consolidating revised plans as well as stamping plans by having support staff assist in these functions. These activities will be greatly reduced when e-permitting is in place.
 - Eliminate mandatory sequencing of inspections for contractors. This optimizes customer flexibility and reduces review time by the plan's examiner.
 - Place more emphasis on complete permit applications upon submittal to ensure plan review time is spent on complete permits. Front line staff will evaluate completeness.
- **Customer Service:**
 - Institute a Plans Examiner of the Day, available for consultation and fast review at the front desk
 - Expand "Helpful Hints" brochures for more FAQs
 - Hold quarterly meetings with contractors to solicit feedback on service and efficiency improvements

Code Enforcement

In 2016, 3730 cases were opened. The chart below summarizes code enforcement and contractor’s licensing activities for 2016. The data for code enforcement shows all activities for all cases generated from January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016.

<i>Complaint still open vs Complaints status closed</i>	81 open, 1110 Closed
<i>NOV's Issued vs Abated and Scheduled to the Board</i>	2539 issued, 1878 Abated, 146 Scheduled to the Board
<i>Total Cases Generated</i>	3730
<i>Case load created per Officer</i>	827



Contractor’s Licensing

	<i>New Licenses</i>	<i>Renewals</i>	<i>Complaints against Contractors</i>
2016	121	887	12

2016 Highlights:

Educational Outreach

- The Division worked with Mosquito Control by placing flyers in all of our notices that were mailed out to inform property owners on what to do to eliminate breeding areas on their properties.
- Coordinated Sea Turtle Awareness program. 100% compliance was attained during the 2016 Sea Turtle Nesting Season. This resulted in 1,500 more loggerhead nests found in St. Lucie County. Educational signage provided to City of Fort Pierce.
- The Division is working with Road & Bridge to mitigate flooding issues on Sunrise Blvd. by issuing courtesy door hangers instead of sending out the official notice of violation letter. This will grant the eleven (11) property owners additional time to repair failed culverts.
- Distributed door hangers to a White City neighborhood to repair driveway culverts. 100% compliance.
- Mailed “Swale Maintenance” to targeted neighborhoods to reduce localized flooding and increase compliance.

For the upcoming year:

- Revamp of NOV’s to make them more clear and engaging.
- Neighborhood sweep for Harmony Heights Homeowners Association scheduled for March.
- Pilot a “courtesy letter/door hanger” notice prior to issuing NOV to determine effect on timely compliance.
- Create “Helpful Hints” brochures and flyers for common violations

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Peter Jones, AIA, Business Navigator

Recruitment and Expansion Successes

St. Lucie County’s Business Navigator worked closely with the EDC, County staff and both cities to recruit growing and new businesses to St. Lucie County and its cities. Below is a list of companies who have opened for business in 2016 or began the work of entitlement for their parcels in order to locate in St. Lucie County. These new businesses are expected to hire for the new positions within the next one to two years. Any approved incentives will be remitted upon the submission of an annual report, showing required performance in wages and hiring.

BUSINESS NAME	INDUSTRY	JOB CREATION ESTIMATE	NEW/RELOCATION/ EXPANSION
A-1 ROOF TRUSS	Manufacturing	50	Expansion
ABC HOME MEDICAL SUPPLY	Technical Services	95	Relocation
AMERICAN JETS RESCUE	Technical Services	6	New Business
A-VENTURES	Distribution	7	Relocation
INDIAN RIVER BIO DIESEL	Manufacturing	47	Relocation
D&D MOBILE WELDING & FABRICATION	Manufacturing	20	Relocation
EXPERT SHUTTER SERVICES	Manufacturing	10	Expansion
ISLAMORADA BEER COMPANY	Manufacturing	25	New Location
JORGENSEN CONTRACT SERVICES	Professional Services	35	Relocation
PRECAST SPECIALTIES	Manufacturing	300	Relocation
PURSUIT BOATS	Manufacturing	30	Expansion
ROCLA RAILROAD TIES	Manufacturing	40	New Location
ROSS MIXING	Manufacturing	60	Expansion
<i>TOTAL JOBS RECRUITED</i>		725	

New Businesses and Jobs Created in Unincorporated St. Lucie County

New businesses opened and jobs created in unincorporated St. Lucie County, as tracked through the Zoning Compliance process

BUSINESS TYPE	NEW BUSINESSES	NEW JOBS
TARGETED INDUSTRY	21	182
RETAIL	41	100
SERVICE	52	165
OFFICE	31	140
<i>TOTAL</i>	145	587

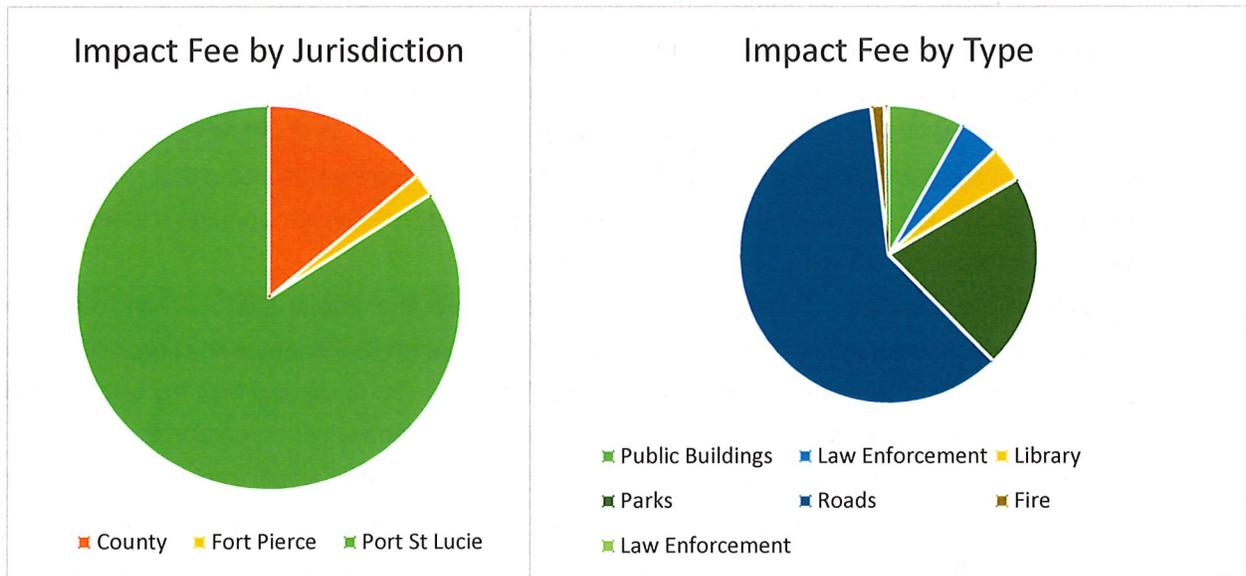
PLANNING

Bonnie Landry, AICP, Planning Manager

Impact Fees: Collected/Remitted

Fee Type	County	Fort Pierce	Port St. Lucie	Total (Fee Type)
Public Buildings	\$ 46,425.58	\$ 13,238.32	\$ 501,090.82	\$ 560,754.72
Law Enforcement	\$ 30,591.17	\$ 10,815.51	\$ 262,609.98	\$ 304,016.66
Library	\$ 23,781.00	\$ 5,235.26	\$ 232,077.12	\$ 261,093.38
Parks	\$ 168,212.00	\$ 9,499.99	\$ 1,264,260.48	\$ 1,441,972.47
Roads	\$ 556,316.05	\$ 91,191.66	\$ 3,474,193.84	\$ 4,121,701.55
Fire	\$ 100,800.12	*	*	\$ 100,800.12
Law Enforcement	\$ 30,591.17	*	*	\$30,591.17
Total (Jurisdiction)	\$ 956,717.09	\$ 129,980.74	\$ 5,734,232.24	\$ 6,821,330.07

**Remitted by jurisdiction directly to managing agency*



Road Impact Fee Fund Balance

The Roads Impact Fee fund was not significantly utilized since the building boom of the last decade. This past fiscal year, the majority of the accumulated funds have been allocated to one road widening project, (Midway Road, Selvitz to 25th Street) and one intersection widening project, (Kings Highway and Indrio Road.)

This highlights the need to identify a sustainable funding mechanism for the provision of new roadway capacity as well as ongoing maintenance.

Roads Impact Fees: Allocation for FY17

Fund Balance	\$ 19,452,282.00
Midway Road	\$ (8,053,185.00)
Kings @ Indrio	\$ (8,503,201.00)
Other Projects	\$ (360,000.00)
Remaining Balance	\$ 2,535,896.00

Customer Service

2016 Accomplishments

- **Subdivision Fast Start (Builders At-Risk) pilot program** adopted by Board. Program will expedite new construction in new subdivisions while infrastructure is completed. Program protects new home buyers and the County in the case of failure to complete.
- **Expedited Review:** Processed high-priority, complex resort PNRD and LDR Text Amendment Resort application in nine weeks, from submittal to Planning Board hearing.
- **Internships:** Provided professional planning experience to two interns, one from Florida Atlantic University and one from Indian River Community College.
- **Use Determination:** Expedited a zoning compliance from the SLC Humane Society to permit a thrift store in the Commercial, Neighborhood Zoning District. Although this use was not considered in the zoning district, staff utilized the Waivers, Deferrals and Alternatives Ordinance that allows Administrative approval. The business had a tight timeline for opening the store, and the approval was granted within seven business days.
- **Improving Public Safety:** Expedited an application from the Public Safety Department to construct a telecommunication tower to strengthen the signal for its 800 megahertz regional radio system. Located near the county line, the new tower benefits St. Lucie and Martin counties and provides more than 99% radio coverage and more efficient responses to emergencies.
- **Improving Water Quality:** Expedited an application from the Utilities Department to construct a vacuum pump station that will facilitate the removal of existing septic systems on North Hutchinson Island.

2017 Goals

- Streamline Certificate of Zoning Compliance process
- Address deficiencies in Impact Fee Credits process and tracking
- Update fee schedule and applications to eliminate superfluous requirements and improve ease of use