

# DEVELOPMENT AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

## Mission

*Our objective is to make the City of Clearwater the best place to work, live, and play by encouraging neighborhood involvement, empowerment and revitalization, and by guiding the future growth, development, and redevelopment of the City. We are committed to providing prompt, accurate, consistent and fair service in a friendly manner.*

*Further, we strive to consistently, fairly and impartially regulate established community standards and quality of life issues as set forth by the City's Code of Ordinances, with an emphasis on achieving voluntary code compliance through education, communication and cooperation.*

## Department Description

The Department of Development and Neighborhood Services currently consists of five main divisions, under one cost center, consisting of: Administration and Support Services, Community Response Team, Permitting/Occupational Licenses, Building, Plans Review, and Inspections, and the Neighborhood Services Division. The Neighborhood Services Division was added to the department in January 2002 and the Fire Plans Review Division, was added in the fiscal year 2003-04 budget.

<b>Department Summary</b>					
	<i>Actual</i> 2002/03	<i>Actual</i> 2003/04	<i>Budget</i> 2004/05	<i>Budget</i> 2005/06	<i>%</i> Change
Development Services	2,910,340	3,060,567	3,288,410	<b>3,522,950</b>	7.1%
Neighborhood Services	<u>221,846</u>	<u>281,446</u>	<u>297,340</u>	<b><u>314,380</u></b>	<b>5.7%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,132,186</b>	<b>3,342,013</b>	<b>3,585,750</b>	<b>3,837,330</b>	<b>7.0%</b>

<b>Department Full-Time Equivalent Positions</b>				
	<i>Actual</i> 2002/03	<i>Actual</i> 2003/04	<i>Budget</i> 2004/05	<i>Budget</i> 2005/06
Development Services	47.3	49.3	49.1	<b>53.5</b>
Neighborhood Services	<u>3.0</u>	<u>4.0</u>	<u>4.0</u>	<b><u>4.0</u></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50.3</b>	<b>53.3</b>	<b>53.1</b>	<b>57.5</b>

**Performance Measures**

<u>Measure</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
Percentage of Code compliance complaints responded to within 48 hours	85%	85%	87%
Percentage of Code issue complaints brought into voluntary compliance	98%	93%	92%
Neighborhood beautification matching grants awarded to city groups	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000

**Program Description**

The major programs in the department listed under Development Services are as follows:

Administration and Support Division - This program provides for the administrative and support services for the department. Work includes the policies and procedures, direction and support of personnel, resources and other related activities. Budgetary decisions and business plans are formulated and approved at the administrative level.

Community Standards Enforcement - The Community Response Team Code Enforcement Team is responsible for handling a myriad of complaints pertaining to the requirements of the Community Development Code and general nuisances as defined in the code of ordinances. Codes addressed are property maintenance issues such as exterior paint, landscaping, and fencing and nuisances such as abandoned vehicles, overgrown lots, debris, graffiti, and snipe signs. The code inspectors also investigate and enforce on zoning and use related regulations such as short-term rentals. The unit conducts neighborhood "sweeps" to identify code violations. The goal is to achieve compliance through voluntary and educational processes. Absent voluntary compliance, code enforcement inspectors initiate other legal actions including presentation of cases to the Municipal Code Enforcement Board or to Pinellas County's local ordinance violations (LOV) court. In fiscal year 2003/2004, of the 8,989 cases, compliance was achieved for 8,287 (92.2%) cases, and the remaining 710 (0.8%) are still active.

The program is also involved with subordinate interrelated community activities such as the annual Paint Your Heart Out Clearwater event.

Sign Inspection and Enforcement - Since 1987, the City of Clearwater has targeted sign blight. A "Sign Amortization Program" was initiated in 1992 in an effort to reduce the size and number of signs, and completed in fiscal year 2003/2004. Over 14,000 signs were inspected and brought into compliance, including 34 oversized "billboard" type signs, during the twelve-year period. The continuing goal is to enforce on illegal signage, non-permitted signage and snipe signage in order to maintain the aesthetic appearance of the city's business and vehicular corridors.

Occupational License Enforcement - This program involves the enforcement of the licensing of businesses as allowed by Florida State Statutes and required by City ordinance. Annually there are approximately 10,000 occupational licenses and registrations within the City. Licenses expire at the end of September each year and are issued throughout the year. Renewal reminders are sent out yearly on August 1st and as a result the months of August, September and October produce a high volume of activity with licensing renewals. The license inspectors conduct grid sweeps throughout the city to locate and notify unlicensed businesses of the licensing requirements.

## Program Description

In March 2002, the City adopted a residential rental compliance ordinance that requires licensing of residential rental units, including single-family residences. In conjunction with this ordinance and licensing, property owners receive an educational packet that outlines minimum housing requirements.

Building Permits/Occupational License Issuance - This program involves the administrative, technical staff and resources required for the intake of building plans and issuance of building permits for construction of all buildings. In addition to the issuance of building permits, this program also involves the issuance and renewals of about 9,000 annual occupational licenses and 1,000 registrations (for businesses located outside of the city doing business in the city) as allowed by Florida State Statutes and required by City ordinance.

Unsafe Building Abatement and Housing Code - This program involves the enforcement of the Unsafe Building Abatement Ordinance and the Minimum Housing Codes. These codes protect citizens and business owners by ensuring that residential and commercial buildings meet minimum safety and housing requirements. Staff works with owners to refurbish dilapidated structures and put them into use again. This program enhances neighborhoods by improving the housing stock and thereby appreciating property values.

Water Enforcement - This program provides for enforcement of the various water statutes and codes through aggressive enforcement activities by the inspectors. Typical violations encountered by water enforcement personnel are the illegal watering during unassigned hours and days, failure to maintain equipment to prevent the waste of water, car washing, etc.

Major Redevelopment Projects - This program includes projects to initiate and enhance the Community Development Code. The Major Developments of the City are identified as: Downtown, and Clearwater Beach. The department has continued to contribute to these programs.

Building Plans Review - This program involves the technical review of plans for construction of buildings and structures in accordance with the building code. Plans reviewers are licensed through the State of Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulations.

Building Inspections - This program provides for staff and resources required for inspections of actual construction. Inspections are done in accordance with the building code and other life and safety codes, as required by Florida State Statutes. Codes include: Building, Electrical, Plumbing, and Mechanical. The inspectors are required to be licensed through the State of Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulations in each discipline of review – mechanical, electrical, plumbing and building.

Records Retention - This program involves the mandatory maintenance of building plans, permits and other related documents for the 32,000 parcels of land in the city. The records are researched on a daily basis as a service to customers and property owners who want to review previous construction plans and obtain copies of the plans and documents that are on record. There is an aggressive microfiche project due to the high volume of records. Also, Community Response Team case files are maintained and microfilmed under this program.

Fire Plans Review – This program involves the review of construction plans for new and renovated structures to ensure compliance with Fire Codes and statutory requirements. This program addresses new construction, remodeling, and general questions raised by the public and City officials.

## DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

<b>Program Summary</b>					
	<i>Actual</i> <i>2002/03</i>	<i>Actual</i> <i>2003/04</i>	<i>Budget</i> <i>2004/05</i>	<i>Budget</i> <i>2005/06</i>	<i>%</i> <i>Change</i>
Personnel	2,230,988	2,335,509	2,527,260	<b>2,854,540</b>	<b>12.9%</b>
Operating	127,223	156,679	132,140	<b>137,260</b>	<b>3.9%</b>
Internal Services	448,646	472,319	479,110	<b>446,770</b>	<b>-6.8%</b>
Capital	8,252	-	-	-	<b>n/a</b>
Debt Service	95,231	96,060	149,900	<b>84,380</b>	<b>-43.7%</b>
Transfers	-	-	-	-	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,910,340</b>	<b>3,060,567</b>	<b>3,288,410</b>	<b>3,522,950</b>	<b>7.1%</b>
Program Full-time Equivalent Positions	47.3	49.3	49.1	<b>53.5</b>	

### Program Highlights

- ❖ The Development Services program is supported by 53.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, an increase 4.4 FTE positions from the 2004/05 budget.
- ❖ At mid year of the 2005 budget year, the .08 FTE part-time Fire Plans Examiner position was transferred to the Fire Department and the position reclassified. At the same time 2.0 FTE Fire Inspectors were added to the Fire Plans Review area, the 0.8 FTE permanent part time Building Constructor Inspector position was reinstated to a 1.0 FTE position, and 1.0 Building Construction Inspector was added to the Building Inspections area to help alleviate the backlog caused by the continued increases in building related construction activity. The result was an increase of 2.4 FTE positions at mid year.
- ❖ In addition 2.0 FTE positions are being added in the fiscal year 2005/06 budget, a Building Construction Inspector and a development review technician position. These 4.4 FTE new positions are the primary reason for the 12.9% increase in personnel costs over the 2004/05 budget.
- ❖ The operating cost category includes \$22,660 for outside contractual services associated with research, preparation, and demolition of unsafe buildings, the same level of funding as last year's approved budget.
- ❖ Internal Services reflect a 6.8% decrease due to reduced information technology charges.
- ❖ Debt service costs decrease \$65,520 in this year due to the expiration of three of the lease/purchase contracts on the Tidemark System, resulting in a 43.7 decrease from the 2004/05 budget.
- ❖ There have been no other significant changes in this program and this budget shows a 7.1% increase over the 2004/2005 budget.

## Program Description

This program was initially established in FY 2000 as part of the Planning Department, to be phased in over three years. During the first year of the program's operations, the manager and one neighborhood coordinator were hired. An additional neighborhood services coordinator position was transferred to this program in FY 2001. In FY 2002, this position was changed to a Neighborhood Services Specialist in order to add other work functions, such as Geographical Information System mapping responsibilities, to the program. In 2003, Neighborhood Services became part of the Development Services Department. In January 2003 an additional Neighborhood Services Coordinator was approved by the City Council, for a total of four full time equivalent positions in the program.

The division strives to recognize the unique quality of the City's neighborhoods, to provide associations with the tools to improve their neighborhoods, and to gain a reputation as a diverse, safe and enjoyable place to live. Efforts include co-hosting an annual neighborhood conference, coordinating "Clearwater Celebrates Neighborhoods Day", managing the neighborhoods recognition program, leading the development of neighborhood strategic plans, and overseeing a neighborhoods grants program to assist with improvements.

The Neighborhood Services Program assists neighborhoods at varied levels of their development through technical assistance, liaison with City departments for problem solving and coordination of meetings to publicize City projects and activities. The division has developed a phased approach for neighborhood planning that has targeted District 2 (neighborhoods immediately surrounding downtown, including North Greenwood and South Clearwater and East Gateway) for its initial primary focus. This district approach to neighborhood planning will be extended to the City's six other districts as the program is expanded.

There are five primary indicators involved in the program studies: Code Violations, Police Department Calls for Service reports, Police Department Crime reports, Percentage of Home Ownership Versus Rental, and Property Values. A strategic neighborhood initiatives team involving each city department that has an ongoing interest in each area, meets quarterly to share and coordinate efforts to better serve the area.

The Neighborhood Services Program is composed of four professional positions: a Division Manager, two Neighborhood Services Coordinators and one Neighborhood Services Specialist.

## NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

<b>Program Summary</b>					
	<i>Actual 2002-03</i>	<i>Actual 2003-04</i>	<i>Budget 2004-05</i>	<i>Budget 2005-06</i>	<i>% Change</i>
Personnel	163,788	200,704	214,600	<b>228,100</b>	<b>6.3%</b>
Operating	17,814	15,798	28,120	<b>32,380</b>	<b>15.1%</b>
Internal Services	15,244	31,183	24,880	<b>24,160</b>	<b>-2.9%</b>
Debt Service	-	1,051	4,740	<b>4,740</b>	<b>n/a</b>
Transfers	<u>25,000</u>	<u>32,710</u>	<u>25,000</u>	<u><b>25,000</b></u>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>221,846</b>	<b>281,446</b>	<b>297,340</b>	<b>314,380</b>	<b>5.7%</b>
Program Full-Time Equivalent Positions	3.0	4.0	4.0	<b>4.0</b>	

### Program Highlights

- ❖ The Neighborhood Services program is supported by four full-time equivalent positions, the same level as the 2004/05 budget. The 6.3% increase is due to general wage increases and the City's higher contribution per employee to the pension fund.
- ❖ Operating expenditures include an increase of \$6,000 for "Movies in the Park". This will fund three events in 2005/06, and accounts for the 15.1% increase in operating expenditures over the previous year budget.
- ❖ Internal services reflect a 2.9% decrease due to a reduction in postal services.
- ❖ The \$25,000 transfer represents funding for the neighborhood beautification grants program, the same level of funding as in the 2004/05 budget.