



HISTORIC  
FRANKLIN  
TENNESSEE


ITEM #4  
FINANCE  
09-26-12

## MEMORANDUM

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September 4, 2012

**TO:** Board of Mayor and Aldermen

**FROM:** Eric Stuckey, City Administrator   
Vernon Gerth, Assistant City Administrator for Economic Development  
Chris Bridgewater, Director Building and Neighborhood Services

**SUBJECT:** Additional Personnel within Building and Neighborhood Services to support increased inspection services demand

### Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BOMA) with information to consider the conversion of two existing part time inspection positions (electrical inspector and building inspector) to full time and the creation of an administrative assistant position within the Department of Building and Neighborhood services (BNS).

### Background

Over the last four years, the number of inspections requested and performed has steadily increased by an average of **26%** each year. In order to manage this workload, supervisory staff within the Department of Building and Neighborhood Services has stepped in to assist with conducting inspections. The impact of shifting supervisors to meet the inspection loads has been to detract from the supervision of inspectors. Providing adequate inspector supervision helps to insure consistency among inspectors, timely problem resolution, and being available to support citizens and contractors when questions arise and guidance is requested. As a result, when supervisors are performing field inspections, our development services are negatively impacted. This current situation is not sustainable.

- By the end of this calendar year, it is anticipated that BNS will have performed 28,900 construction inspections (approx. 18,000 inspections YTD)
- This is an average of 21 inspections per day for an inspector, with a high number of 35 inspections per day when the loads are 200 or more (For example, on August 20, 2012, 236 inspections were scheduled)
- With 5 full-time inspectors and 2 part-time inspectors (calculated at 80% of one inspector), the annual number of inspections per full-time employee (FTE) is anticipated to be 4,982. This number of inspections far exceeds benchmarks established by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) most recent performance measurement reporting and Springstead Study commissioned by the City of Franklin in September 2005.

### **ICMA benchmarking statistics:**

- ICMA has operated the Center for Performance Measurement (CPM) for well over a decade. CPM collects detailed performance data in various service areas from over 200 cities and counties. Attached is a listing of participating cities and their inspection per FTE performance.
- 2010 - Average of 2,440 inspections per FTE
- 2011 - Average of 2,110 inspections per FTE



**Springstead Study dated September 22, 2005 (commissioned by the City of Franklin)**

- This study found similar communities in Tennessee conducted an average of 2,810 inspections per FTE per year.
- Recommended workload according to the ICC (International Code Council) and the ISO (Insurance Services Office)
  - Between 12 and 15 inspections per day.
  - Equivalent to between 2,700 and 3,375 inspections per employee.

The following matrix outlines supervisory personnel shifting of responsibilities within the BNS Department:

Personnel Fix to Meet Loads	Percentage of time conducting inspections	Result
<b>Building Official</b>	40%	The Building Official has had to help with inspections on 63 out of 159 work days on this calendar year, which has also reduced his effectiveness as a supervisor.
<b>Senior Electrical Inspector</b>	95%	Both Senior Inspectors are spending their time conducting inspections and are not acting in their role to address quality control issues and to conduct training to improve performance. The Senior Inspectors would normally act in a customer service role answering questions about inspections and projects.
<b>Senior Building Inspector</b>	95%	See above
<b>Director</b>	3%	3 days total spent conducting inspections year to date
<b>Plans Examiners (Split between four examiners)</b>	9%	Overtime hours accrued and increased time needed to finish plan reviews
<b>2 Part time Inspectors</b>	80%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.22 additional personnel conducting inspections</b>	This brought the average number of inspections to 3520 per FTE

**Summary**

- 4,982 inspections per FTE - Inspection load without shifting supervisory personnel to an inspection role. This is higher than almost all jurisdictions who reported their workloads.
- 3,520 inspections per FTE – Inspection load utilizing supervisors in an inspection role is still significantly higher than State and National workload averages and the inspection load recommended by ISO and ICC. This is a short term solution.
- BNS is also experiencing peak inspection loads of over 200 (high of 236) inspections at least once per week. When this occurs, in addition to both Senior Inspectors, the Building Official and one or more Plans Examiners are given an inspection schedule instead of performing their regular duties.
- Over the last 5 years, BNS has increased the level of service in many areas:
  - Allowing contractors to make appointments both online and over the phone
  - Meeting onsite with contractors to explain deficiencies
  - Walking with the contractors during the inspection, if asked
  - Availability in the office for calls and questions in the morning and afternoon



- Conducting a second inspection after a failure if the correction can be completed that day
- Quicker plan review turn-around
- The increased workloads are resulting in a decrease of the level of service for both office staff who help conduct inspections, and for inspectors in the field.

Calendar Year	Inspection Staff	Department Average Inspections per Day	Inspections per Day for each Inspector	Revenues from Permits and Plan Reviews	Revenue per Inspection
2006	7.25	171	24	\$1,840,800.00	\$ 43.06
2007	9.5	141	15	\$2,612,000.00	\$ 74.10
2008	10.25	100	10	\$3,122,800.00	\$ 124.91
2009	7.33	62	9	\$1,047,000.00	\$ 67.55
2010	6.66	66	10	\$ 744,000.00	\$ 45.09
2011	6	84	14	\$1,290,000.00	\$ 61.43
2012	5.66	120	21	*\$2,930,000.00	\$ 97.67

*\*-Anticipated Revenue for 2013 based on 7 month average projected for the last 5 months.*

**Recommendations:**

Hire one additional Building Inspector and one additional Electrical Inspector immediately. Begin by eliminating the two previously approved part-time Building and Electrical Inspection positions. Depending on development activity, consider recalling the 2 part time inspection positions or converting to full time positions in the Fiscal Year 2014 budget. Additionally, there is no Administrative Assistant assigned to Building and Neighborhood Services. The Permit Techs and their supervisor are consumed with getting customers and processing permit applications and contractor licenses. It is recommended that an Administrative Assistant be hired to take on office management duties such as managing the time clock for the department, purchasing agent duties, taking minutes for the Housing Commission and the Building and Streets Board of Appeals, assembling development activity reports, open records requests and management of the archives, and other administrative responsibilities that have been spread out amongst the existing supervisors, many of whom have been assigned field inspections.

**Options**

The Board may approve, modify or deny the recommended staffing change (conversion of two part time inspection staff to full time and the addition of an administrative assistant).

**Financial Impact**

The estimated cost of the recommended staffing change would be \$ 86,186 for the balance of FY2013. The full year cost would be \$114,914. This change will require an amendment to the BNS general fund budget. Increased staffing in this area should also decrease to some extent the need to incur additional overtime expense. The staffing change is driven by increased inspection demands which will produce additional general fund revenue to the City.

**Recommendation**

Approval of the proposed staffing change within the Department of Building and Neighborhood Services is recommended.



ICMA Benchmarks for Reporting Jurisdictions

Jurisdiction	Average Inspections per Full Time Employee in 2011
County of Prince William, VA	2058
City of Rock Hill, SC	2806
Village of Howard, WI	1135
City of Pleasant Hill, MO	287
City of Plano, TX	4899
City of Dallas, TX	4382
City of Farmer's Branch, TX	3425
City of McAllen, TX	970
Town of Bedford, MA	1764
City of Williamsburg, VA	1026
City of Alpharetta, GA	3413
City of Coral Springs, FL	1741
City of Bowling Green, KY	579
City of Dublin, OH	1285
City of Fairfield, OH	1582
City of Midland, MI	3976
City of Mankato, MN	1359
Village of Shorewood, IL	1201
County of Peoria, IL	2354
City of Kirkwood, MO	1366
City of Grandview, MO	3890
City of Kansas City, MO	1922
City of Columbia, MO	1535
City of Wichita, KS	860
City of La Vista, NE	700
City of Oklahoma City, TX	679
City of Fort Collins, CO	4693
City of Durango, CO	433
City of Casper, WY	1645
City of Phoenix, AZ	1535
City of Mesa, AZ	1417
City of Peoria, AZ	4999
County of Bernalillo, NM	1756
City of Portland, OR	2881
City of Corvallis, OR	2584
City of Sioux City, IA	3366
City of University Park, TX	3451
City of White House, TN	340
Average Inspections per FTE	2110
Percentage of Jurisdictions with More Inspections per FTE than City of Franklin (one jurisdiction)	2.63%
City of Franklin 2012	4982



**City of Franklin Annual Construction Inspections**

Calendar Year	Total Inspections	Percentage Increase
2008	11,296	Baseline
2009	15,366	36%
2010	16,311	6%
2011	20,924	28%
2012	28,900 (~20,000 YTD)*	35%*
2013	35,658*	26%*

\* Projected numbers based on the average of the last four years of data

**Effects of Hiring Additional Inspection Personnel**

# of Full Time Employees (FTE)	CY 2011 – 21000 Inspections per FTE	CY 2012 – 28900 Inspections per FTE	CY 2013 – 36000 Inspections per FTE	Comments
5 full + 2 part-time	3620	4982	6206	Without supervisory help
Current with supervisory support (5 original + 3.22 supervisory support = 8.22 calculated)		3520	4384	Unsustainable. Supervisors are unable to perform their role.
Recommended (2 new inspectors, interim rollback (+1), each supervisor conducting inspections a quarter of the time (+0.5) = 8.5 calculated)		3400	4235	Still above State and National averages, but within the comfort level of a Franklin inspector. Supervisors resume assigned duties.
Hire of 2 additional inspectors if warranted by additional development activity (10.5 calculated)			3428	If development activity continues to increase, additional inspectors may be needed.

# Staffing by Position

City of Franklin  
 2012-2013 Fiscal Year  
 Budget  
 General Fund - Building & Neighborhood  
 Services

## Personnel by Position

Position	HR	Pay	FY 2012		Unfunded	FY 2013		Unfunded
	Code	Grade	Full-Time	Part-Time		Full-Time	Part-Time	
Bldg & Neighborhood Svcs Director	1106	24	1	0	0	1	0	0
Building Official	1118	22	1	0	0	1	0	0
Zoning & Development Coordinator	1115	20	1	0	0	1	0	0
Housing Development Coordinator	1122	19	1	0	0	1	0	0
Neighborhood Resources Supervisor	1117	18	1	0	0	1	0	0
Sr Building Inspector	1111	18	1	0	0	1	0	0
Sr Building Inspector/Electrical	1111E	18	1	0	0	1	0	0
Building Inspector-Plans Ex Sr	1113	17	1	0	0	0	0	0
Building Inspector-Electrical Plans Ex Sr	1119	17	1	0	0	0	0	0
Building Inspector-Plumbing/Mech Plans Ex Sr	1107	17	1	0	0	1	0	0
Fire Code Plans Examiner	1422	17	1	0	0	1	0	0
Residential & Energy Plans Ex	TBD	17	1	0	1	1	0	1
Zoning Administrator	1114	17	1	0	0	1	0	0
Building Inspector-Electrical	1102E	16	3	0	0	0	0	0
Building Associate	1101	16	1	0	0	2	0	0
Building Inspector	1102	16	5	0	0	2	0	0
Combination Inspector, Grade 1	TBD	17?	0	0	0	3	0	0
Combination Inspector, Grade 2	TBD	18?	0	0	0	4	0	0
Signs/Design Standards Administrator	1116	14	1	0	0	1	0	0
Neighborhood Resources Coordinator	1110	12	2	0	0	2	0	0
Permit Technician	0015	12	4	0	0	4	0	0
Administrative Assistant		??	1	0	0	1	0	0
		<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

Narrative of Personnel Changes		New Position		Reclassification		
		Title	Pay Grade	From Job Title	To Job Title	Pay Grade (if reclassification creates new job title)
Residential and Energy Plans Examiner - in the coming year, the needs of this position will be met by 2 newly promoted Combination Inspector - Grade 2 personnel. Once all of the interim and temporary positions are settled, this position will be requested in future budgets.	TBD					
In lieu of hiring additional inspectors to meet a diverse inspection load, in place changes in grade will be approved for those who obtain the necessary certifications	TBD			Building/Electrical Inspector	Combination Inspector, Grade 1	17?
This grade will contain those able to perform all types (BPM and E) of building inspections and 2 different types of plan reviews. Plans Examiners will also be eligible for promotion to this grade.	TBD			Building/Electrical Inspector	Combination Inspector, Grade 2	18?
Building Inspector			16			
Electrical Inspector			16			
Administrative Assistant			XXX			

Departmental Career Development Path	Pay Grade	Requirements		
		Degree	Experience	Certifications