

# INSPECTION DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT - 2015

The Inspection Department is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Town's zoning, construction and property maintenance codes. These codes govern our community's property use, new and remodeled construction, existing rental property, and general exterior property maintenance. The department has 10 full-time employees that include Planning, Zoning, Building, Housing and Code Enforcement staff. All are professionally licensed or certified in their various disciplines.

The Building Division has five inspectors who are responsible for plan review, permit issuance and field inspection services for all types of residential and commercial construction. The Housing-Code Enforcement Division has two inspectors who annually inspect all rental properties accounting for over 1,200 buildings and 8,800 units. This division also proactively monitors the community for exterior property maintenance code compliance. Located within the department is the Town Planner who is responsible for coordinating the orderly growth and development in the community. The Town Planner prepares several reports under separate cover. Below are the basic responsibilities of the Inspection Department.

- Receive and distribute construction plans to the Fire, Water and Engineering departments for plan review and coordinate the distribution of the reviews to designers, contractors and owners. The office also provides field inspections during construction.
- Implements development conditions associated with project approvals. These approvals run with the life of a property and the department is responsible to ensure they are installed and maintained as approved.
- Provides complete plan reviews for all new construction as well as all commercial and multifamily remodeling. Inspectors issue the associated construction permits and provide all associated field inspections during construction through building occupancy.
- Annually inspect all rental properties for life safety hazards using the International Property Maintenance Code. Inspectors proactively regulate the exterior of commercial and residential properties year round through the enforcement of the property maintenance and zoning codes.

## **Town of Normal Adopted Building Codes**

International Building Code	International Property Maintenance Code
International Residential Code	International Energy Conservation Code
International Mechanical Code	Illinois Plumbing Code
International Fuel Gas Code	National Electric Code
International Fire Code	Illinois Accessibility Code
Municipal Zoning Code	International Existing Buildings Code

# HIGHLIGHTS



Issued 2,365 Building & M.E.P. Permits

Issued (68) 1&2 Family New Construction Permits

703 Residential Remodeling Permits

4 New Apartment Buildings adding 44 Units

Issued 74 Commercial Permits totaling \$16,434,238.00

Total Construction Valuation of \$33,795,499.00

Collected \$692,408.00 in Total Revenues

Inspected 1,235 Rental Buildings (8,838 units)

Performed 5,494 Code Enforcement Inspections

Adopted (8) 2015 International Codes

## **Inspection Department Staffing—Tenure**

Greg Troemel, Director—30 years

Sheila Elgin, Office Associate—25 Years

Scot Williams, Assistant Director—19 years

Mike Beavers, HVAC Inspector—19 years

Troy Sondgeroth, Building Inspector—16 years

Rand Veerman, Electrical Inspector—16 years

Randy Schoolcraft, Plumbing Inspector—16 years

Mercy Davison, Town Planner—15 Years

Charlie Lyden, Code Enforcement Officer—5 years

Eric Heggie, Housing Inspector—3 Years

# RESIDENTIAL

## New Construction

As anticipated we finished with a relatively light 68 new 1&2 family starts for the year. Based on late year trends and limited platting activity, developers and builders are indicating a cautious year and we anticipate another similar year in 2016 starts. Normal remains suited for future development with an ample lot inventory across nearly a dozen different subdivisions offering varying price points.

The typical home includes around 2,200 sq/ft, generally 4 bedrooms, 2.5 to 3 bathrooms, 2 or 3 car garages and finished basements. Home square footages range from 1,500 sq/ft on the smaller end to 5,000 sq/ft on the high end. While permits were issued across a variety of subdivisions, the most active addition was the Vineyards with a fairly even mix of starts across the remaining additions. Below is the 2015 breakdown of starts by subdivision addition.

<b>Building Permits</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>Valuation</b>
Single-Family Detached	71	57	\$5,982,000.00
Single-Family Attached	11	11	\$735,000.00
Residential Remodel	1172	703	\$4,618,549.00

### Permit Breakdown By Subdivision

Blackstone Trails	7	Collie Ridge	1
Vineyards	14	Park West	2
Greystone Fields	6	Villas at Mercy Creek	0
Northbridge	4	Wintergreen	2
North Fields	0	Franklin Heights	0
Heather Ridge	11	Silver Oak Estates	1
Trails on Sunset Lake	6	Evergreen Villas	3
Prairie Gardens	0	Kelley Glen	0
Pheasant Ridge	7	Others	4

## Remodeling Returns to Typical Numbers

With new construction maintaining modest numbers, remodel activity tends to increase. Remodeling numbers returned to the more typical percentage coming off a record year in 2014. Recall the late year storm in November 2013 prompted over 800 roof repairs during 2014. Overall 703 permits issued were issued for single-family remodels accounting for a more typical 67% of the total. Remodel permits tallied \$4.6 million dollars in construction value and on average each improvement was valued at \$6,800.00. The basic improvements generally include roofing, windows, decks, siding and room additions. We expect remodel numbers to remain strong in 2016.

# COMMERCIAL

## Commercial Construction Remains Steady

Total building valuation dipped to \$33 million dollars corresponding directly with reduced activity in new commercial permits, and remodeling. Locally the recovery remains slow and continues to influence commercial activity and developers are still finding it difficult and time consuming to secure financing for larger projects. Several new projects that should materialize in the new year include the second phase of the Uptown One (Hyatt Place) project, the Radisson Hotel remodel on Trader's Circle, and continued re-development of the College and Veterans Parkway property. The Main Street corridor near campus will likely see a couple smaller residential developments occur targeting student housing and the construction of a new Fire Station Headquarters building at 600 S. Main Street. Below summarizes the 2014/15 numbers in the commercial sector.

<b>Commercial Summary</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>Valuation</b>
Commercial New	9	5	\$5,337,795.00
Commercial Lease	7	2	\$682,000.00
Commercial Remodel	240	207	\$11,505,438.00
New Multi-Family	1/6	4/44	\$4,434,295.00
Non-Building Projects	23	32	\$500,4220.00

Commercial construction highlights from 2015 included the completion of the Hyatt Hotel in Uptown, Restaurants Red Robin, Chick-Fil-A, Jimmy John's, and the Buffalo Wild Wings projects. A new Dollar General on South Cottage Avenue began construction in late fall and should open to the public in March, 2016.

Remodeling tallied 207 permits and a construction valuation of \$11.5 million dollars. Multiple family remodeling remains strong and continues to be driven by off-campus housing needs, and the demands of the modern college student. During 2015 multi-family remodel permits tallied 140. Most remodels are aimed at unit amenity upgrades and building envelope improvements.

With new projects continuing to battle financing, commercial remodeling remains the alternative for existing business where the economics of building new may not be an option. 67 permits were issued for commercial remodels with a construction valuation of just over \$10 million dollars. Significant remodel projects included the Jeffrey Alan's store, Township Senior Center, Riverside Restaurant, O'Reilly Auto Parts, and several lease space buildouts focused on gaming. Remodeling will remain steady in 2016.

### **Major Permits or Remodels (N—New, R— Remodel, A— Addition)**

<i>Chick-Fil-A (N)</i>	<i>602 S. Fell 16-unit (N)</i>	<i>910—12 Hovey 12-Units (N)</i>
<i>Blaze Pizza (N)</i>	<i>Chipotle Restaurant (N)</i>	<i>O'Reilly Auto Parts (R)</i>
<i>Aqua Express (N)</i>	<i>1612 Bryan St 4-unit (N)</i>	<i>Jeffrey Alans (R)</i>
<i>Starbucks Coffee (N)</i>	<i>Beer Nuts Store (N)</i>	<i>Dollar General (N)</i>
<i>Buffalo Wild Wings (N)</i>	<i>Riverside Restaurant (R)</i>	<i>Marie's Place Gaming (R)</i>
<i>Nussbaum Offices (N)</i>	<i>Maries Place Gaming (R)</i>	<i>Wings Express Gaming (R)</i>

# HOUSING

Housing Inspection is responsible for the annual inspection of all rental Single-Family, Duplex, Apartment, Rooming House, and Multi-Use occupancies. This accounts for over 1,200 buildings and close to 8,900 total units. Properties are inspected at least once per year and select properties on multiple occasions. The inspection assures tenants, owners, and property managers that life safety elements are operational and in sound condition. Inspectors work with property managers and neighborhood organizations to help maintain a reasonable balance between the student population and permanent residents. Town and ISU staff meet on a monthly basis to discuss off-campus matters and address specific tenants or properties in a proactive manner.

The town has seen a modest resurgence of new apartment construction near the campus. The past two years the incoming ISU classes have been quite large and there is speculation the university housing will not accommodate the numbers. Four new projects began construction in 2015 that will add 44 units. These units will be ready for an August 2016 occupancy.

## Housing Inspection Summary

Classification	Buildings/Units
Apartments	963/8107
Duplex	91
Multi-Use	38/478
Rooming House	88
Single Family	51
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,231/8821</b>

**Code Enforcement**—Responded to 2,639 cases and performed 5,494 total inspections in addressing exterior property maintenance issues this past year.

Inspectors proactively monitor exterior property maintenance issues that include weed growth, trash or debris, inoperable or unlicensed vehicles, outdoor upholstered furniture, recreational, trailer and motor vehicle parking practices, animal control matters, and illegally placed signs.

The Town remains committed to enhancing community aesthetics with the ability to address concerns in a prompt manner.



*As desired, we continue to see the redevelopment of older properties close to campus. New construction at 602 S. Fell replaces a dated building with higher density and modern amenities. Occupancy Fall 2016.*

CEO Summary	Responses
Illegal Signs	901
Trash and Debris	441
Weed Growth	316
Inoperable Vehicles	104
All Others Combined	877
Combined Responses	2639
<b>Total Inspections</b>	<b>5,494</b>

# ODDS & ENDS

**Residential Emergency Repair Program**—In cooperation with PATH (Providing Access To Help) the department administers an emergency repair program for income qualified homeowners to make emergency home repairs. In general these include furnace or water heater failures, leaking roofs, sewer blockages, handicap accessibility improvements, and temporary housing. Normal is fortunate to have a limited stock of housing in need of substantial repair so requests are generally accommodated. The Town funds the program at \$30,000 per year and individual requests are capped at a maximum of \$10,000. This past year the town provided assistance to seventeen properties that included a mix of improvements.

**Historic Non-Conforming Properties Acquired**—The Town Council exercised a unique opportunity to purchase three non-conforming homes in the Old North Normal Historic District during 2015. While the practice of acquiring non-conforming homes has been idle for several years, the three chronically problematic homes became available for sale and the Town took advantage of this opportunity to terminate the non-conforming occupant load status. Two of the homes are now on the open market with sale conditions designed to promote re-investment and owner occupancy. The third property will be offered through a Request for Proposal process early in the new year. The department was involved in the process to acquire the properties and will remain involved through the eventual sales and RFP process. The ONN district has expressed its appreciation citing this as a very positive impact on the neighborhood.

## **Partnership with Habitat for Humanity**

The Town is always looking for opportunities to facilitate affordable housing in the community and Habitat for Humanity has always been a great partner. A non-conforming parking lot along Church St. and Franklin Ave. had been sitting undeveloped for the past several years and the Town took the opportunity to negotiate a purchase and subdivide the property into two buildable home lots for Habitat. Construction commenced on one of the lots last summer and the project is being done in a partnership with the ISU and IWU student chapters. Construction on the second lot will begin in the fall of 2016, and again the student chapters will participate in the construction process. Both homes will be owner occupied by Habitat for Humanity approved families.



# FEE DETAILS

<b>Fees Comparison</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Building Permit Fees	\$183,657	\$159,903	\$183,368	\$184,210	\$136,346
Building Permits	978	1078	1146	1530	1023
Const. Water Fees	\$2,513	\$2,101	\$2,788	\$2,089	\$1,982
Electrical Fees	\$51,983	\$37,785	\$48,324	\$43,745	\$38,358
Electrical Permits	324	347	409	448	378
Fire Alarm Permit Fees	\$1,050	\$500	\$550	\$550	\$600
Fire Alarm Permit	21	12	11	11	15
HVAC Fees	\$42,593	\$46,283	\$56,971	\$43,971	\$48,069
HVAC Permits	331	401	451	427	469
Plumbing Fees	\$79,559	\$52,409	\$68,488	\$73,021	\$43,312
Plumbing Permits	475	545	564	551	488
Reinspection Fees	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Sign Permit Fees	\$6,534	\$9,134	\$4,981	\$7,678	\$4,778
Sign Permits	48	50	50	62	49
Contractor License Fees	\$29,100	\$31,750	\$31,400	\$29,600	\$25,650
Housing License Fees	\$118,960	\$146,062	\$126,361	\$127,825	\$131,177
Adjudication Fees	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$350

## Building Permits Issued

<b>Type of Construction</b>	<b>No. of Permits</b>	<b>Valuation</b>
Single Family Detached	57	\$5,982,000
Single-Family Attached	11	\$735,000
Residential Remodel	703	\$4,618,549
Multi-Family Apartments	4	\$4,094,295
Multi-Use (Commercial/Apartments)	0	\$0
Commercial	7	\$6,019,795
Commercial Remodel	207	\$11,505,035
Foundations	2	\$340,000
Demolition	16	\$4,500
Pool Construction	10	\$233,425
Mobile Home	2	\$2,000
Structures Non-Buildings	4	\$260,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,023</b>	<b>\$33,795,499</b>

# COMPARISONS

Category	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Construction	\$57,612,949	\$58,650,717	\$58,366,925	\$56,990,584	\$33,795,499
Total Permits	978	1,078	1,146	1,530	1,023
Single-family Const.	\$4,348,000	\$7,590,645	\$8,562,800	\$6,912,830	\$5,982,000
Single-family Permits	37	72	78	68	57
S.F. Attached Const.	\$1,232,000	\$1,123,000	\$2,574,000	\$879,000	\$735,000
S.F. Attached Permits	12	12	34	12	11
Res. Remodel Const.	\$4,616,163	\$4,886,090	\$5,350,151	\$8,751,119	\$4,618,549
Res. Remodel Permits	703	793	812	1168	703
Accessory Structure Const.	\$78,356	\$0	\$4,500	\$0	\$0
Accessory Structure Permits	5	0	2	0	0
Apartment Const.	\$16,687,160	\$5,511,950	\$858,000	\$314,904	\$4,094,295
Apartment Permits	12	5	1	1	4
Apartment Units	236	99	7	6	44
Multi-Use (Com/Apts) Const.	\$4,645,300	\$0	\$12,900,000	\$2,495,973	\$0
Multi-Use (Com/Apts) Permits	1	0	1	1	0
Multi-Use Apt. Units	22	0	102	27	0
Commercial Const.	\$14,815,440	\$18,475,295	\$1,657,337	\$21,647,731	\$6,019,795
Commercial Permits	18	12	11	16	7
Comm. Remodel Const.	\$10,747,461	\$15,394,030	\$25,397,149	\$15,548,527	\$11,505,035
Comm. Remodel Permits	156	154	170	240	207
Demolition	\$236,349	\$3,500	\$7,000	\$5,000	\$4,500
Demolition Permits	21	10	14	12	16
Pool Construction	\$179,920	\$471,800	\$100,300	\$116,500	\$233,425
Pool Permits	10	16	7	9	10
Foundation Const.	\$0	0	765000	9000	340000
Foundation Permits	0	0	2	1	2
Move Building	0	0	0	0	0
Mobile Homes	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$0	\$2,000
Mobile Home Permits	1	2	3	0	2
Structures Non-Buildings	\$25,800	\$5,192,407	\$187,688	\$310,000	\$260,900
Other Structure Permits	2	2	11	2	4

## 5-Year Statistical Averages (2011—15)

1151 Annual Building Permits  
 \$53 Million Total Annual Construction Valuation  
 78 New One & Two Family Permits  
 835 Residential Remodeling Permits  
 13 New Commercial Construction Permits at \$950,000.00 per project  
 185 Commercial Remodeling Permits at \$85,000.00 per project  
 5 New Apartment Buildings—78 Units per year

# REVENUES

## Income Report 2015

Building Permits	\$136,346
Electrical Permits	\$38,358
Plumbing Permits	\$43,312
HVAC Permits	\$48,069
Sign Permits	\$4,778
Fire Alarm Permit	\$600
Plan Check Fees	\$28,886
Contractor License Fees	\$25,650
Housing License Fees	\$131,177
Fireplace Fees	\$1,260
Adjudication Fees	\$350
<b>Total Inspection Dept. Income</b>	<b>\$458,786</b>
BNWRD Fees	\$200,175
Water Meters	\$25,860
Construction Water	\$1,982
Curb Cuts	\$660
Fire Suppression Fees	\$2,600
Erosion Control Fees	\$2,345
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$233,622</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$692,408</b>

Permit Type	Permits 2014	Permits 2015	% + or -	Income 2014	Income 2015	% + or -
Building	1530	1023	-33.14%	\$184,210	\$136,346	-25.98%
Electrical	448	378	-15.63%	\$43,745	\$38,358	-12.31%
Plumbing	551	488	-11.43%	\$73,021	\$43,312	-40.69%
HVAC	427	469	9.84%	\$43,971	\$48,069	9.32%
Fire Alarm	11	15	36.36%	\$550	\$600	9.09%
Signs	62	49	-20.97%	\$7,678	\$4,778	-37.77%
Housing Licenses	1055	1066	1.04%	\$127,825	\$131,177	2.62%
Adjudication	0	3	100.00%	\$0	\$350	100.00%
Contractor Licenses	612	668	9.15%	\$29,600	\$25,650	-13.34%
Total	4696	4159	-11.44%	\$510,600	\$428,640	-16.05%

# INSPECTIONS

## Field Building Inspections Performed in 2015

### Building Inspections

Site	63
Footings	107
Foundations	97
Framing	432
General	81
Insulation	65
Mobile Homes	4
Occupancy	366

### Plumbing Inspections

Water Service	80
Sewer Service	149
Underground Piping	149
Rough-Ins	263
Water Heaters	33
General	8
Occupancy	212

### Electrical Inspections

Rough-Ins	324
Service Meters	177
General	21
Sign Installations	6
Occupancy	261

### Heating/Cooling Inspections

Rough-Ins	172
Gas Piping	112
General	5
Unit Replacement	128
Occupancy	152

Total Combined Inspections—3,489



# SUMMARY

Building permits returned to the more typical 5-year average with 1,023 with a good majority of these being residential remodeling. New residential dipped by 17% and we expect a year in the range of 60 to 70 starts for new 1&2 family construction in 2016. Homeowners will continue to reinvest in their existing properties, and remodeling will again account for the majority of permits issued in the new year although we anticipate total building permits to again eclipse the 1,000 mark.

Student housing needs have again sparked a bit and we continue to discuss off-campus housing demands with local developers heading into the new year. While ISU enrollment remains steady between 20-21,000 students, the trend the past two years has seen larger freshman and transfer classes. The university has acquired some additional housing near campus but will likely rely on more private development to provide housing for the incoming classes.

Overall commercial activity (new starts, lease space build-outs, and remodeling) held steady, although the more substantial projects continue to battle financing difficulties. Significant projects included several new restaurants (Chick-Fil-A, Blaze Pizza, Chipotle, Riverside Inn) the remodeled Township Senior Center, Aqua Express Carwash, Jeffrey Alans remodel, Nussbaum Office Building, O'Reilly Auto Parts, and a new Dollar General. While total construction valuation dipped to \$33 million, Normal is fortunate to maintain reasonably steady activity across the residential and commercial sectors.

**What To Expect in 2016**—While national recovery trends have improved, other local factors continue to create hurdles for the development community. Clearly the loss of Mitsubishi and a few associated businesses will impact the local economy. Looking ahead we again anticipate new construction on the Veterans Parkway and Main Street areas. We remain hopeful the 8 Traders Circle, Uptown One Phase II, Fire Station HQ, and Constitution Trail Center projects will commence early in the new year. Based on yearend discussions with the homebuilding community we expect another modest year and anticipate new starts in the range of 60-70.

Property maintenance is always a priority for the Town Council and code enforcement will continue efforts to keep Normal an attractive place to live, work or visit. Town Administration continues to monitor staffing demands and budgetary impacts. The past five years have had an impact on commercial and residential properties that often lead to maintenance issues and this remains a priority for the department. While the affected properties tend to be moving targets, town staff will continue efforts to address code issues as they arise.

The Planning, Building, Housing and Code Enforcement staff continue efforts to secure high quality well planned development, and that it is maintained in an attractive manner for the benefit of our residents and visitors.