

**Planning &
Development
Services**

**COUNCIL
UPDATE**



“We work together to build and maintain a community of the highest quality for present and future generations.”

January
2018

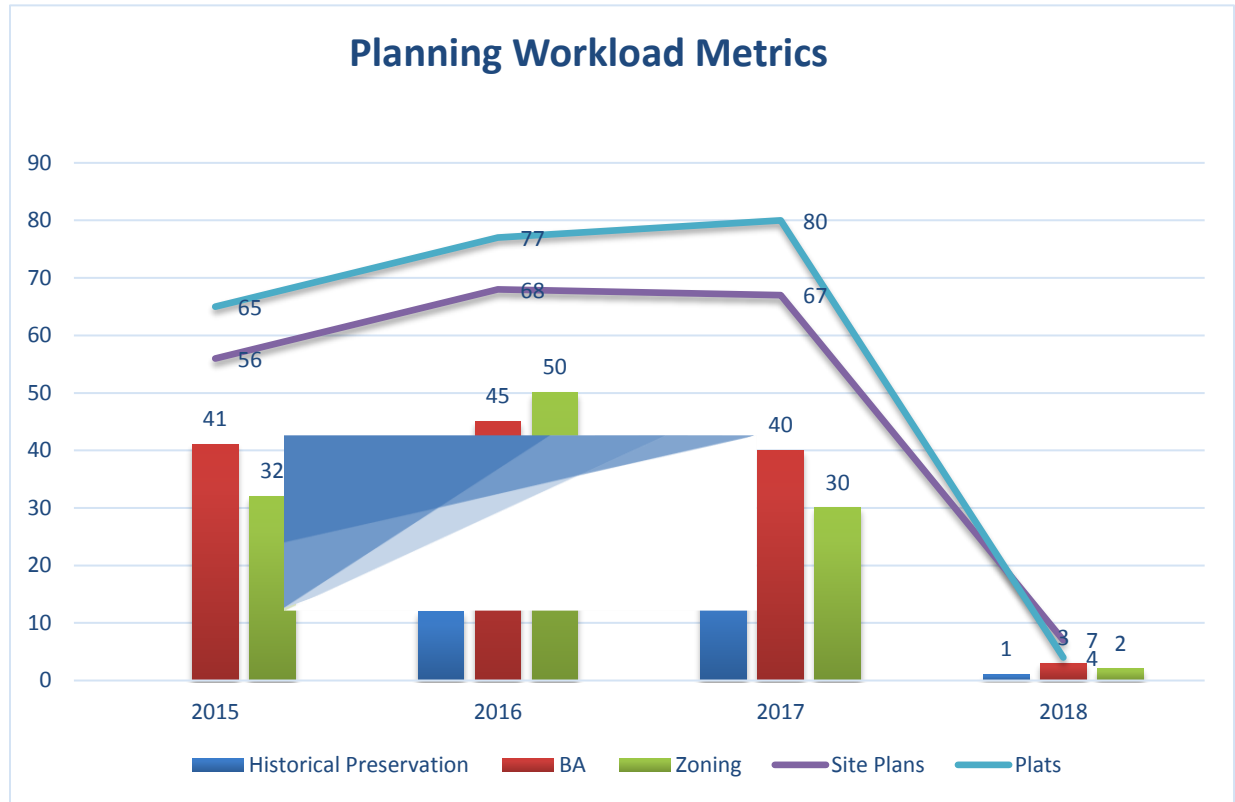


CITY OF ABILENE

PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES



Planning Services



Note: Workload metrics in the division do not currently measure work expended for thoroughfare closures, special projects in support of economic development initiatives, long-term planning projects, specialized programs or ordinance updates/rewrites.

Year-to-Date	Plat Cases	Zoning Cases	Board of Adjustment Cases	Site Plans	Landmarks Applications
2018	4	2	3	7	1



The Planning and Zoning Department serves as an information resource and as the point for coordinating development functions for the public and other City departments. The Planning staff provides expertise and policy advice to citizens and staff alike and also works to create new standards for community enhancement. The Department serves a unique role in balancing the needs of the development industry with the interests of the public. It is housed with the Building Inspection Department in the Development Service Center in order to facilitate permit processing and questions from the public.



Congratulations to **Mr. Taurus L. Freeman**, who has been named the new director for Planning & Development Services!!

CITY OF ABILENE NEWS

NEWS RELEASES FROM YOUR CITY GOVERNMENT

City of Abilene Announces Director of Planning & Development Services

Post Date: 01/25/2018 5:09 PM

The City of Abilene is pleased to announce that Taurus Freeman has been named the new Director of Planning & Development Services.

City Manager Robert Hanna announced Freeman's appointment during the City Council meeting on Thursday. "It was an easy decision to make Taurus Interim. During that time, he has done a good job and has continued to grow in confidence," said Hanna. "The development community has received him well and we are very excited to name him as permanent Director."

Taurus L. Freeman has a background in municipal and county government that spans almost 20 years in the field of community development in two states. Previously, he served as a Senior Plan Analyst for the City of Houston, and also served as the Director of Planning & Development Services for the City of Griffin, Georgia. Freeman's professional development includes: Community Development Director and Planning Manager for the City of Villa Rica, Planner I of Long-Range and Planner II of Short-Range for Henry County, and the Assistant City Planner and Housing Official for the City of Nacogdoches. Freeman has also served on a variety of board of directors in Texas and Georgia.

Freeman is a native of Lufkin, Texas. He holds a Bachelor's of Art degree in Communications and a Bachelor's in Business Administration in Management from Southern Arkansas University and holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration in Government and Policy from Grand Canyon University. Freeman also has a Certificate of Local Government Management from the University of Georgia and is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Philosophy in Public Administration from Walden University. Freeman has three children, Kameron, junior at the University of North Texas, studying Business Management; Takyra, sophomore at the University of Arkansas - Little Rock for Civil Engineering; and Tione, a sixth grader Bethel Middle School in Benton, Arkansas.

"I am extremely excited to serve the citizens of Abilene in my new capacity, and I am honored to lead the department and its talented staff," said Freeman. I look forward to working with

stakeholders across the city to strengthen our neighborhoods, further implement the Master Plan and continue to build a prosperous future for Abilene.”

Freeman will begin serving as Director of Planning & Development Services effective immediately.



Building Inspections

*The Division issued 34 permits for new single family residences, 9 commercial permits, and 26 commercial alterations in January 2018. Year-to-date single family permits are at 101, Commercial at 46, and Commercial Alterations at 61.

*REMINDER: October is the beginning of a new budget year. Numbers reflected above are as of October 1, 2017 and not based upon a calendar year.

Significant Projects:

- Heavenly Rest Sacred Music Center - 500,000
 - Dr. Lacie T. Dennis, DDS, PA - \$740,000
-

Upcoming Projects: Submitted and in Review

- Texas Department of Criminal Justice - \$1,000,000



The Building Inspections Department administers professionally-accepted standards and adopted regulations to safeguard life, safety, health, property, and public welfare of all construction-related activity within the City limits. We are responsible for the enforcement of the City’s adopted building and construction codes and ordinances.



Code Compliance

Code Compliance

Code officers inspected 263 violations, including violations for junked vehicles 64; grass & weeds 35; unsightly conditions 94; and vehicles parked in yard 58. Code officers were able to close 115 cases during January.

Condemnation/Rehabilitation

During January, 1 complaint was investigated. The Board of Building Standards (BOBS) reviewed 3 cases; 3 residential buildings were demolished by the City.



The mission of Code Compliance is to educate the public and gain citizen compliance on health, safety, and quality of life issues. The City of Abilene residents need and deserve to live in a safe and healthy environment. Code Compliance is responsible for enforcing city ordinances. The division is authorized to pursue criminal and civil remedies to abate nuisances for the purpose of maintaining a safe, sanitary, and clean city.



Office of Neighborhood Services

CDBG and HOME Programs and Projects –October-January 2018

All Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) programs and projects benefit low-to moderate-income families/ individuals. The following clients were served and projects completed.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has approved the Consolidated Annual Action Plan for the 2017/2018 fiscal year and the grant funding applications have been signed and returned to HUD. CDBG is funded in the amount of \$818,088 and HOME is funded at \$329,287.

Code Enforcement Officers (CEO) will be funded through the CDBG at \$125,000. This will include the hiring, training and certification of two (2) new code enforcement officers and will address code enforcement and neighborhood enhancement in approximately 14 Low-Moderate Income (LMI) Super Neighborhoods identified in the City of Abilene Comprehensive Plan. Items that may be addressed by the CEO are the prevention, detection, investigation and enforcement of violations of statutes and ordinances regulating public health, safety and welfare. In addition, Code Enforcement includes the maintenance and preservation of the value and appearance of residential

and commercial buildings within its boundaries. The enforcement may also focus on the community, public advertisement displays, garage sales, lawn care, environmental concerns (such as abandoned tires) and the condition and parking of motor vehicles in yards and streets as addressed in City Code and Ordinances. In January 2018, the Code Officers combined worked: Junk Vehicles-42; Unsightly conditions-137; High grass and weeds-96; mowing charges-\$1,700; Abatement-\$125.00.

The CEO Condemnation and Demolition Program is the second intercity program that will be funded through CDBG funds. This program will address Spot Slum Blight National Objective and is funded at \$150,000. This program will be operated by the City's Code Enforcement Officer to identify substandard residential structures in approximately 14 Low-Moderate Income (LMI) Super Neighborhoods identified in the City of Abilene Comprehensive Plan. In these LMI Neighborhoods the goals are having the properties rehabilitated or demolished and cleared. As of January 2018, 11 substandard houses have been identified and demolished.

Critical/Limited Repair Program, CDBG (\$222,080) is one of the most needed and popular programs. This program serves those at the 0-50% Median Family Income (MFI) level. These repairs are intended to address an urgent need such as broken sewer, gas leaks, plumbing and handicap accessibility. 36 projects have been completed year-to-date. The type of repairs that were completed were new roofs, replacement of gas lines and electrical system rewired. The need for client assistance has been extremely high in this funding cycle. Due to the many bond projects ahead of ONS projects and the estimated cost by city engineering staff exceeding the amount of funds available to spend the project was cancelled. In addition, HUD Community Planning and Development Senior Representative told ONS, the Assistant Director and the Director that HUD would rather ONS not fund any sidewalk projects because private drives and other sidewalk requirements are not an eligible project expense. Therefore, during the community meetings and public hearing in preparation of the FY 2017/2018 Action Plan, ONS staff discussed cancelling the Jeanette Street Sidewalk project. ONS did not receive any objections from the public and actually the community voiced they would rather have CDBG funds made available so the greatest amount of client homes would receive assistance. The process is taking longer due to environmental requirements and the submission of paperwork. Staff have already processed 21 contracts as of January 2018.

Mercy Clinic is proposed at (\$19,992). The Mercy Clinic offers no cost healthcare services to Abilene residents who meet the CDBG Program Income Limits. CDBG funds will purchase the following materials: 6- Examination Tables; 3-Otoscopes; 1-Hemoglobin Machine; 1-Autoclave. The equipment will be purchased and permanently installed. Remaining funds will assist with the expense of Medical Services (\$6,803.00.) YTD 692 clients have been treated.

Access to Jobs is proposed at \$45,000, Advisory Council (ONSAC) for the FY17/18 funding cycle. The purpose of this program is to enable low-income persons and persons on public assistance better access to employment or school after regular business hours. Realizing the importance of very low-income households, particularly renters and homeless persons, the City will focus its resources on assisting these families and individuals through economic development programs by providing LMI households a door-to-door service that begins at 6:15 PM and ends at

12 AM. 2,895 trips taken YTD were CDBG eligible. 54 unduplicated CDBG eligible clients Year-to-date were served.

The **First-Time Homebuyer Program** is funded by \$50,000 in HOME funds. Homebuyers must be in the 80% and below median income bracket. ONS has had 25 inquiries about the FTHB program and requirements. However, one (1) client was eligible for assistance.

The **Single-Family Rehab Program**, HOME (\$227,900) assists families that are 80% or below median income. The entire unit must meet City building code upon completion. Three houses were completed YTD 2018, and one new client is in the verification phase.

Habitat for Humanity, CHDO, HOME (\$90,500) Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) funded. One house has been completed. One house is in progress.

Happy New Year!!
2018