



# **CITY OF WILLMAR 2007 ANNUAL REPORT**



City Attorney  
City Clerk-Treasurer  
Community Ed & Recreation  
Cultural Liaison  
Finance  
Fire  
**Planning & Development Services**  
Police  
Public Works

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**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

City Office Building  
333 SW 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Box 755  
Willmar, MN 56201

<b>DIRECTOR</b>	320-214-5184
<b>PLANNER</b>	320-214-5195
<b>BUILDING OFFICIAL</b>	320-214-5185
<b>BUILDING INSPECTION TECH</b>	320-214-5187
FAX: 320-235-4917	

April 7, 2007

The Honorable Mayor Lester J. Heitke  
and Members of the Willmar City Council

Mayor and Council Members:

Submitted for your information and consideration is the 2007 Annual Report for the Department of Planning and Development Services. This report covers the four major program areas the Department is responsible for. They are:

1. Economic/community development.
2. Planning and zoning.
3. Building inspection.
4. Rental housing inspection.

If there are any issues which you would like to discuss in more detail, please contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

**CITY OF WILLMAR**

Bruce D. Peterson, AICP  
Director of Planning & Development Services

BDP: mlb



# Personnel

## **DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**



<b>Title</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Certification</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>	
Director	Bruce D. Peterson	AICP, EDFP	(320)214-5184	bpeterson@ci.willmar.mn.us
Planner	Megan M. Sauer		(320)214-5195	msauer@ci.willmar.mn.us
Building Official	Randy L. Kardell	MNCBO	(320)214-5185	rkardell@ci.willmar.mn.us
Building Inspector	Thomas J. Rosemeier	MNCBO	(320)214-5187	trosemeier@ci.willmar.mn.us
Clerk	Megan L. Bonnema		(320)214-5186	mbonnema@ci.willmar.mn.us



<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>Physical Development/Planning</b>	<b>Code Enforcement</b>	<b>Rental Inspection</b>
Data Collection Marketing Deal Structuring Credit Analysis TIF / Tax Abatement / JOBZ	Land Use Planning Zoning Enforcement Nuisance Enforcement Site Plan Review	Building Code Mechanical Code Plumbing Code Accessibility Code Fire Code	Rental Ordinance

**Special Functions:** Lobbying and Project Management

**Works with:** Economic Development Commission, Chamber of Commerce, Willmar Area Development Corporation, Mainstreet, Willmar Design Center, Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Community Marketing Coalition, West Central Builders Association, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals.

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF ROSTER**

Bruce D. Peterson ----- *Director*  
Megan Sauer ----- *Planner*  
Randy Kardell ----- *Building Official*  
Tom Rosemeier ----- *Building Inspector*  
Megan Bonnema ----- *Clerk*

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ROSTER**

Bruce DeBlieck ----- *Chair*  
Cindy Swenson ----- *Vice-Chair*  
Ron Christianson ----- *Council Member*  
Jim Dokken ----- *Council Member*  
Bruce D. Peterson ----- *Director of Planning & Development Services*  
Michael Schmit ----- *City Administrator*

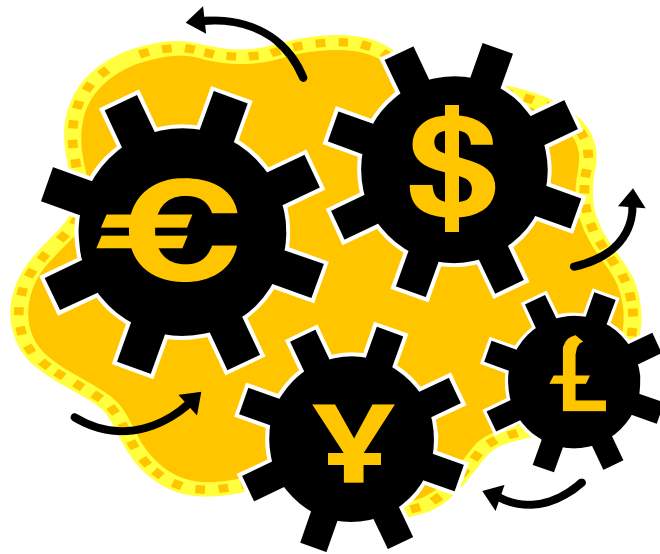
## **WILLMAR PLANNING COMMISSION ROSTER**

Audrey Nelson - Chair  
Andrew Bjur– Vice Chair  
Jay Lawton – Secretary  
Fernando Alvarado  
Carol Laumer  
Renaë Rahn  
Wayne Stoneberg  
Kent Larson  
Michael Morris

## **BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS ROSTER**

Nathan Streed - Chair  
Sherlan Baker - Vice Chair  
Woody Glanzer  
Jeff Sawyer  
Gary Thompson  
Eileen Huberty

# Economic/ Community Development



## **2007 ECONOMIC / COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

### **DEPARTMENT STAFF**

There was one change to staff in the department of Planning and Development Services for the year 2007. Megan Bonnema replaced Krista Krupa as the department clerk, as Krista transferred to the Assessing office.

Staff belongs to, and works with, a variety of local organizations such as the Design Center, Community Marketing Coalition, Builders Association, Economic Development Commission and Willmar Area Development Corporation.

Megan Sauer, City Planner, continued her service as the web maven for the Minnesota Chapter of the American Planning Association. Bruce Peterson, Department Director, serves as the representative for Southwest Minnesota on the Minnesota Chapter of the American Planning Association Board of Directors.

Staff continues to attend training and continuing educational sessions to maintain professional certifications and increase competence.

### **CONSTRUCTION REVIEW**

The total valuation of construction in the City of Willmar for the year 2007 was \$33,722,627. This represents a 20% decrease in value over the year 2006, and a 12% decrease over the ten year average. Commercial/Industrial construction values decreased by 15% over the year 2006 and showed a 23% decrease in the number of permits issued. Residential construction volume and value decreased by approximately 1/3 as compared to the year 2006. This represents a decrease of over 50% since the 2005 construction year.

Major projects for 2007 included the Welcome to Our Home senior housing project, the behavioral health hospital, Willmar Poultry addition, Vinje Church remodel, Community Christian School addition, Civic Center addition, Heffron Properties project, County maintenance building, Pizza Ranch restaurant, City t-hangar, Family Video, and Rice Hospital dental clinic.

## **BUSINESS ASSISTANCE**

City staff, in cooperation with staff from the Economic Development Commission, provides technical assistance on large projects such as the Minn West Technology Campus, industrial park projects, and the Land Mark Business Park. The businesses and developers that staff works with are typically appreciative of the assistance provided. Opportunities to provide technical assistance enable staff to have positive relationships with the business community. Staff also works with the Economic Development Commission on projects that require financial assistance. These types of assistance include the JOBZ program, tax abatement, state grant and loan programs, or tax increment financing. The City of Willmar continues to administer three active tax increment financing districts. They are Phoenix on Fifth, which is a redevelopment district; Relco Uni Systems, which is an economic development district; and Lakewood BK Properties, which is a redevelopment district.

## **COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN**

Work continued in 2007 on the drafting of a new Willmar Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The Planning Commission met numerous times to establish goals and objectives for land use policies. Staff drafted multiple sections of the plan. Mid Minnesota Development Commission was engaged at the end of 2007 to take what staff had developed and package the plan and produce maps. It is anticipated that the Comprehensive Plan will be ready for public hearings in the Spring of 2008. Although the plan is taking longer to complete than anticipated, it is expected that the plan will be a workable and valuable document to the City for years to come.

## **AIRPORT**

In 2007 there was a notable decrease in development activity at the new airport. One major exception was the construction of the City t-hangar. The City submitted a reimbursement request for airport land cost overruns relative to a grant awarded to the City in 2005 as part of the State bonding bill. The City request for reimbursement for land cost overruns was rejected by the State of Minnesota, which cited a federal provision that bond proceeds could not be used to reimburse for expenditures made in the past. This was information that had not been made known to the City when the bill was passed. An amendment to the 2005 bill is pending before the 2008 legislature. The new bill expands the types of eligible airport projects under the previous \$1.0 million grant.

## **AIRPORT REDEVELOPMENT / INDUSTRIAL PARK EXPANSION**

Staff continues to work to achieve a land release of the former Willmar airport property. Environmental review appears to be complete, but efforts continue on the part of the City to obtain a total negative declaration of historical significance.

Major transportation improvements were made at the former airport in 2007. County Road 47 was constructed between Highway 40 and Highway 12, with final work on this segment of County Road anticipated to be completed in 2008. A section of municipal street, which in the future will become Willmar Avenue, was extended across the airport from current Highway 40 to the new County Road 47. This roadway is to be surfaced in 2008, but the actual connections to County Road 47 and Willmar Avenue will occur in 2009 when the County reconstructs Willmar Avenue.

Redevelopment efforts continued with the filing of a right-of-way plat for County Road 47 and Willmar Avenue. A plat for the first phase of industrial park expansion has also been prepared that involves former airport property east of the new County Road 47. As soon as the land release is obtained, staff hopes to begin the process of selling that land for industrial development. A fair amount of interest has been received from potential buyers and a real estate firm has been retained to assist the City with sales.

## **HOUSING**

Housing construction declined significantly again from 2006-2007. Much of the decrease in new housing construction was due to an over built spec home market. As these homes are absorbed and purchased it is expected that new construction will pick up. The mortgage foreclosure crisis that grips the country has not left Willmar untouched. We are seeing more foreclosures than ever. This has a stifling impact on the housing market, but certainly makes affordable housing opportunities available which would not otherwise be there. A number of platted residential lots are available for new construction in Willmar. Many of these lots are not platted for single family housing, but were platted to accommodate cottage and twin homes. In summary, it would appear that the housing needs of the Willmar community continue to be met.

## **POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT**

It is extremely difficult to get a good estimate of the current population of the City. The State Demographer's office believes the population is declining, yet there have been gains made to the housing market over the past years. It is obvious that growth has slowed, and most estimates project the slowing of growth to continue. It is anticipated that the City's population will only increase 2-3% over the next 10 years. This is consistent with a projected 2.5% increase for total County population. During that same time period it is projected that the labor force in Kandiyohi County will increase by 1.5%. These numbers would indicate there will be an increase of population in excess of labor force, probably owing to the aging of the population and the attraction of Willmar as a retirement community.

Willmar is the fifth largest principal city in a Micropolitan Statistical Area, and is one of only ten in the State that has a population over 15,000, but is not located in a Metropolitan Statistical Area.

For the period 2004-2007, the total number of businesses in Kandiyohi County increased by approximately 6.5% and the total number of jobs increased by just over 6%. These figures out pace most of Greater Minnesota. In the midst of an economic slow down and weak job recovery, the local manufacturing industry continues to add jobs. Manufacturing is the second largest employing industry in the county, trailing health care and social assistance. From 2003-2006, total reported gross sales increased by nearly 16.5%. During that same time period, reported retail sales decreased by approximately 8%. In economic development, one of the most telling statistics for economic health is that of the average weekly wage. From 2004-2007, the average weekly wage in Kandiyohi County increased by 8.7%. This rate exceeds the growth found in most regional centers.

Currently, the unemployment rate in Kandiyohi County is approximately 5%. This rate is higher than the annual average rate because the economy is typically slower in the winter, rebounding in the spring and summer. Willmar continues to be a significant importer of labor from surrounding counties, drawing over 3,000 workers from other counties each day, behind only St. Cloud in the central region of Minnesota.

### **BUSINESS RETENTION, EXPANSION, AND RECRUITMENT**

The City of Willmar continues to participate in a very aggressive business retention, expansion, and recruitment program. This program is led by the Economic Development Commission and is a program similar to the Chamber of Commerce "Grow Minnesota" Program. These programs are excellent ways for staff and the business community to get acquainted with other businesses and to become part of a system to alert us to issues within the community. When issues are identified, both organizations are expected to refer the issues to City and EDC staff so that the issues can be addressed before they have a negative impact on any of the businesses.

### **PLANNING AND ZONING**

The year 2007 was an unusually contentious year for zoning matters. It appears that the public is looking for greater involvement in planning and land use review processes. In order for this to happen, a massive program to educate the public will be required so that the public becomes knowledgeable about the state laws and local ordinances that govern. It is important the public understand that land use decisions have a legal basis, and should not be driven by neighborhood opposition or personal opinion.

A bright spot for the year 2007 was the convening of the Mayor's Housing Task Force and the subsequent development of a number of recommendations to improve neighborhoods. Staff is working on draft amendments to ordinances and codes as the first step in making the changes recommended by the Task Force. With the adoption of these amendments and a commitment to enforcement, neighborhood aesthetic qualities should certainly improve.

### **LOOKING AHEAD**

2008 began with a number of very interesting projects and issues before the department. Significant projects include the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership residential project, the continued work to redevelop the former airport, finalizing the agreement to connect 5<sup>th</sup> Street Southeast between Willmar Avenue, and 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the completion of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Willmar remains healthy from an economic stand point. Staff will continue to work on behalf of the Council and citizens to do what it can to lead the City of Willmar in a positive direction.

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES – FEES COLLECTED**

	<b><u>Total Fees Collected</u></b>
1998	\$233,879
1999	\$223,046
2000	\$173,357
2001	\$217,064
2002	\$291,128
2003	\$570,080
2004	\$409,378
2005	\$518,129
2006	\$476,260
<b>2007</b>	<b>\$393,564</b>
<b>10 Year Total</b>	<b>\$3,505,885</b>

## WILLMAR CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY

	Number of Building Permits	Total Valuation (\$)	Commercial / Industrial Valuation (\$)	Housing Units	
				S.F.	Total
1998	323	27,298,164	19,253,451	23	58
1999	599	34,132,229	25,393,885	24	36
2000	577	15,474,996	7,294,475	14	74
2001	599	29,203,778	16,813,966	32	46
2002	669	62,334,342	47,890,584	45	113
2003	760	53,373,765	37,397,983	48	107
2004	768	34,723,014	16,812,162	57	73
2005	728	48,732,487	30,222,299	49	67
2006	693	42,379,065	30,744,047	25	45
<b>2007</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>33,722,627</b>	<b>25,941,806</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6367</b>	<b>\$381,374,467</b>	<b>\$257,764,658</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>646</b>

# Planning and Zoning



January 2008

The Honorable Mayor Lester J. Heitke  
& Members of the Willmar City Council

Mayor & Council:

The following report summarizes an active year by the Willmar Planning Commission. Article IV, Section 4.02, Subdivision 2 of the Willmar City Charter requires that the Commission submit an annual report of their activity for the past year.

The following members served in 2007: Audrey Nelsen- Chair, Andrew Bjur- Vice Chair, Jay Lawton- Secretary, Fernando Alvarado, Carol Laumer, Michael Morris, Ranae Rahn, Wayne Stoneberg, and Kent Larson.

Incorporated by reference into this report is the 2008-2012 Capital Improvements Report which was compiled for, and presented to, the City Council in the summer 2007. Addendum A (attached) summarizes Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals action on specific land use/zoning applications, i.e. conditional use permits, plan reviews, rezoning/text amendments, subdivision plats, variances/appeals, and annexations (Note this data is provided in text and graphic formats).

Meeting activity increased slightly from last year, with 25 regular meetings held in 2007. The Planning Commission is a varied, sharp group that represents the community well. This diversity of views allows for thorough review and discussion of land use issues.

Significant matters/issues before the Planning Commission in 2007 included:

1. Multiple new business plan reviews at MinnWest Technology Campus.
2. Whitney Music and Restaurant project.
3. Pizza Ranch development.
4. Family Video and two lease spaces.
5. Walgreens project.
6. Welcome to Our Home senior housing facility.
7. Earthtech Energy project.
8. Slumberland new construction.
9. Community Christian School Addition.
10. Willmar Poultry Addition.
11. Heffron Hotel/Motel extended stay remodel.
12. Parking lot expansions (1<sup>st</sup> Baptist Church, Print Master, Walts).
13. Home occupations.
14. Thirteen conditional use permits.
15. Twenty-two plan reviews.
16. Ten zoning amendments.
17. Thirteen subdivisions.
18. Three annexations.

Also, five applications for variances/appeals were reviewed by the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Land use-related matters/issues expected to come before the Commission in 2008 include:

1. Commercial/retail development in the southeastern part of town.
2. Completion of Comprehensive Plan update.
3. Capital Improvement planning.
4. Subdivision Ordinance updates.
5. Former airport redevelopment.
6. Begin Zoning Ordinance and Map update.

2008 is guaranteed to bring several development projects that will keep the Commission busy. As the City grows, there will naturally be contentious land use issues in the process. The Planning Commission will remain diligent in its project review and decision making, as well as in the planning policy recommendations it makes.

Audrey Nelsen, 2007 Chair  
Willmar Planning Commission

## Conditional Use Permit Applications

- 07-01 Leobardo Martinez, to allow a home occupation insurance center. *Approved.*
- 07-02 First Step Daycare, to operate a daycare center. *Approved.*
- 07-03 Earthtech Energy, to allow a biomass pelleting operation. *Denied, Appealed to Board of Zoning Appeals Overturned and Approved.*
- 07-04 Passion Properties, to allow the construction of a 10 unit 55 years of age and older senior assisted living facility. *Approved, request withdrawn.*
- 07-05 Barry and Sandy Evans, to allow the operation of a tea and retail shop. *Approved, request withdrawn.*
- 07-06 Community Christian School, to allow the construction of a 9,000 sq. ft., classroom and administration addition. *Approved.*
- 07-07 Kandiyohi County, to allow the construction and operation of a 16 bed Community Behavior Health Hospital. *Approved.*
- 07-08 Welcome to Our Home, to allow a senior living facility consisting of 55 units of catered living/assisted living, 20 units of memory loss and 1 extended care suite. *Approved.*
- 07-09 Dawn Skogstad, to allow a single family home planned unit development. *Denied.*
- 07-10 6600 City Parkway Building (Sterling Apartments), to allow three more total apartment units from 36 to 39. *Approved.*
- 07-11 Roy Robert Stiff, to allow a home occupation computer consulting business. *Approved.*
- 07-10 Michael and Vicki Johanneck, to allow a 12' x 12' addition onto a non-conforming existing building. *Approved.*
- 07-11 Heffron Properties, to allow a hotel/contract extended stay. *Approved.*

## Plan Reviews

- 07-01 James House, house move.

07-02 Print Masters, parking lot expansion in R-2 District.

07-03 MinnWest Technology Campus, Feedlogic Systems Inc.

07-04 MinnWest Technology Campus, Prinsco Inc.

07-05 MinnWest Technology Campus, Telemarketing.

07-06 Whitney Music, restaurant with drive-up window.

07-07 Minnesota Truck and Trailer Sales and Service.

07-08 Walt's, car wash addition relocation of vacuum area.

07-09 First Baptist Church, parking lot expansion.

07-10 Passion Properties, 5 unit 55+ Senior Housing facility.

07-11 Their house move duplex. (denied)

07-12 MinnWest Technology Campus, MTM Performance Solutions, Inc.;  
Becker and Fifth Marketing; and Becker Business Center.

07-13 MinnWest Technology Campus, R & D Lab Facility.

07-14 Faigus Group, Walgreens Drug Store.

07-15 Willmar Poultry building addition.

07-12 Their house move single family.

07-13 Johnson house move single family.

07-14 Pizza Ranch restaurant.

07-15 MinnWest Technology Campus, Famous Davis web design and  
development.

07-16 Donnerite Trucking truck wash addition.

07-17 MinnWest Technology Campus, Bollig Inc. and Anez Consulting.

07-18 Western Minnesota Legal Services office use.

## Amendments

- 07-01 Chappell Central rezoning, R-2 to I-2. *Withdrawn.*
- 07-02 First Step rezoning, G/I to R-2. *Approved.*
- 07-04 Text Amendment Section 6.L.2.; 6.M.1.c.; 6.M.2.i Ordinance No. 1060 agricultural product processing plants and automobile salvage/reduction yard.
- 07-05 City of Willmar rezoning east of Highway 40, south of Trott Ave. SW, and west of RR tracks, I-2 to I-1. *Approved.*
- 07-06 Skogstad rezoning, R-4 to R-2. *Approved.*
- 07-07 Gesch rezoning, Ag and R-2 to LB. *Approved.*
- 07-08 Donner rezoning, R-4 to LB. *Approved.*
- 07-09 Gazelka rezoning, R-2 to LB. *Denied.*
- 07-10 Martinez rezoning, R-5 to LB. *Approved.*
- 07-11 Lindstrom rezoning, R-4 to LB. *Approved.*

## Subdivision Plats

- 07-01 Kandi Mall Addition. 2 lots. *Pending.*
- 07-02 Airport Industrial Park. 34 lots. *Pending.*
- 07-03 Emerald Ponds Second Addition. 4 lots. *Final.*
- 07-04 Krupa Addition. 1 lot. *Final.*
- 07-05 Landmark Business Park. 24 lots. *Pending.*
- 07-06 Serbus Addition. 3 lots. *Pending.*
- 07-07 Hill's Westside Addition. 2 lots. *Pending.*
- 07-08 Waterview Business Park. 2 lots. *Final, but not yet recorded??*
- 07-09 West Pump Station Addition. 1 lot. *Final.*
- 07-10 Fairacre Addition. 6 lots. *Action tabled on preliminary plat by Council.*

- 07-11 ODP Addition. 1 lot. *Withdrawn prior to Council action.*
- 07-12 Westwind Estates Third Addition. 34 lots. *Pending.*
- 07-13 Sterling Apartments. 4 lots. *Final.*

### VariANCES/APPEALS

- 07-01 Family Video Movie Club request to allow a 5' rear building setback and the 6.8' front parking setback, and to deny the 3' side parking setback along the southwest property line. *Approved.*
- 07-02 Lorie Lueken request to allow a 24' rear setback for a home addition. *Approved.*
- 07-03 Earthtech Energy appeal of Planning Commission denial of conditional use permit to allow a biomass palletizing operation. *Approved.*
- 07-04 Energy Concepts request to allow a 20.28' rear setback for construction of a 10 unit 55+ senior assisted living facility. *Withdrawn.*
- 07-05 Faigus Group/Walgreens request to allow a 7 1/2' parking setback on the north side lot and a 5 1/2 ' parking setback on the south side of the lot. *Approved.*

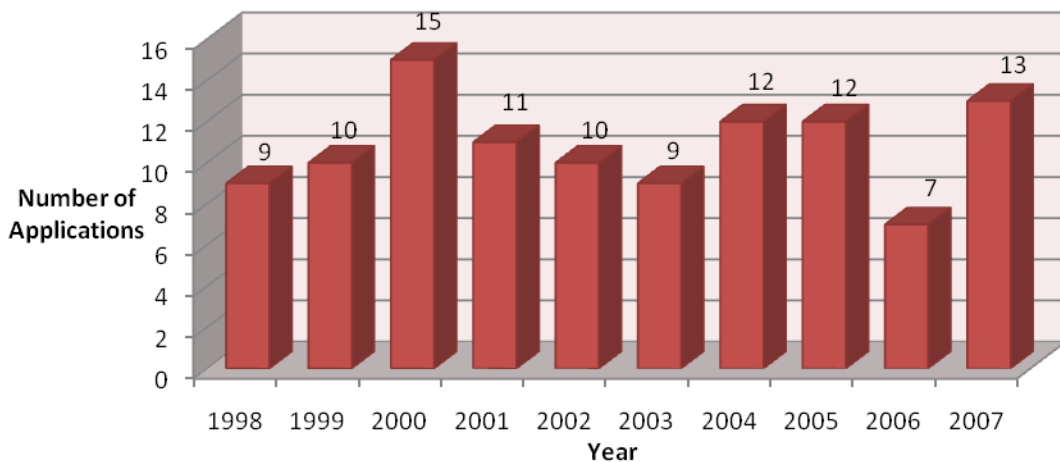
### ANNEXATIONS

- 07-01 Bredeson/Mast Orderly Annexation, for Earthtech Energy, 61.35 acres.
- 07-02 Duevel, for Welcome to Our Home Senior Living Facility, 5.76 acres.
- 07-03 Williamson, for FairAcres residential development, 12.11 acres.

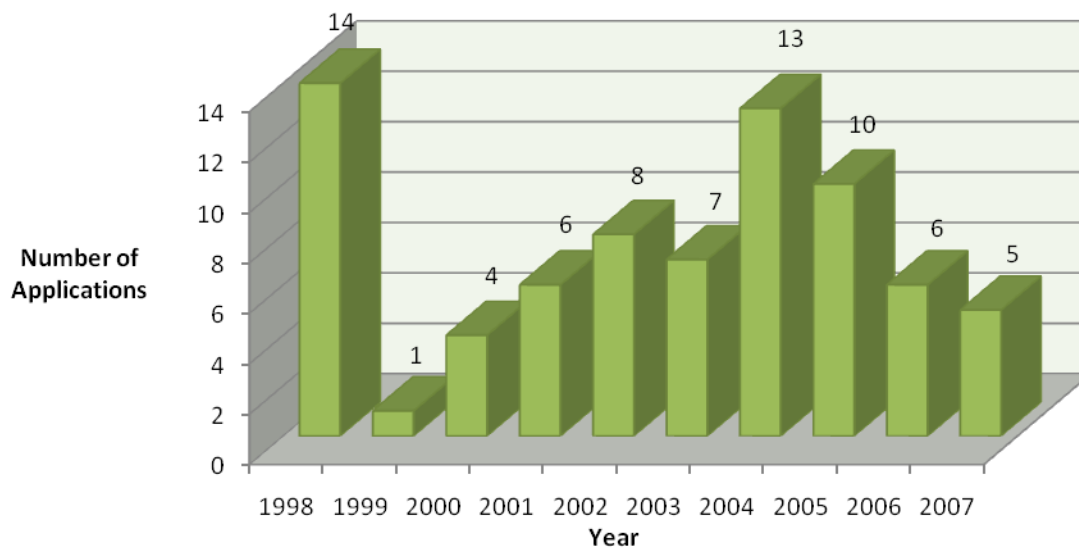
### VACATIONS

- 07-01 3<sup>rd</sup> St. SE (south of Olena, north of 11<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE), *denied.*
- 07-02 11<sup>th</sup> St. SW (south of Pacific Ave. SW north of Benson Ave. SW), *approved.*

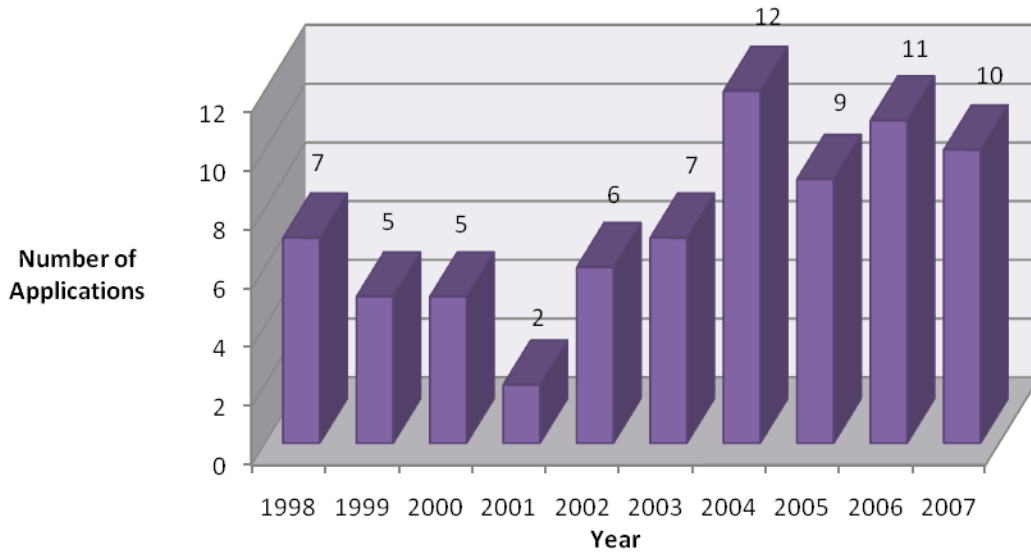
### Conditional Use Permits



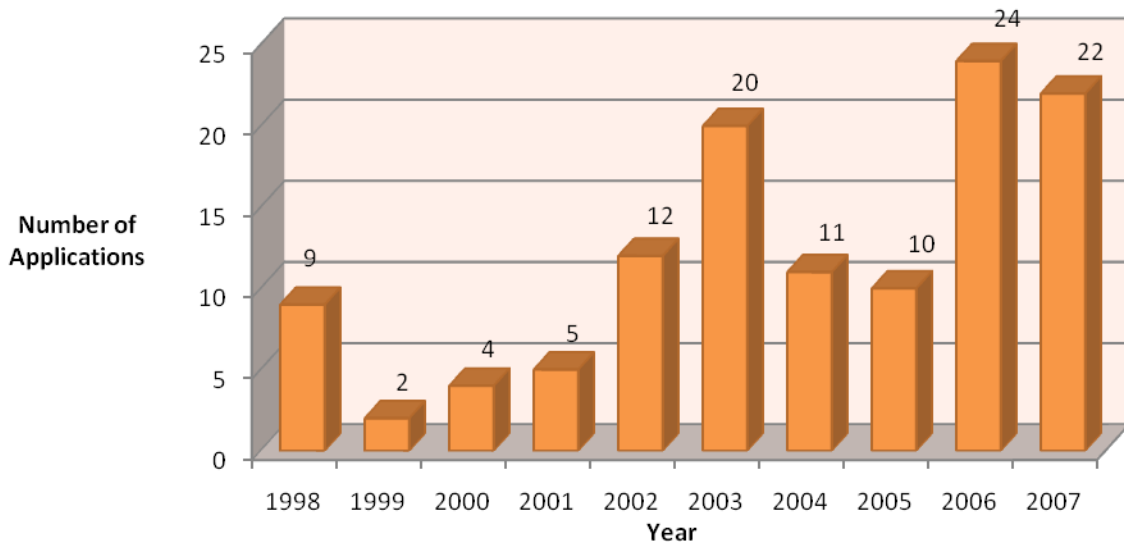
### Variances/Appeals



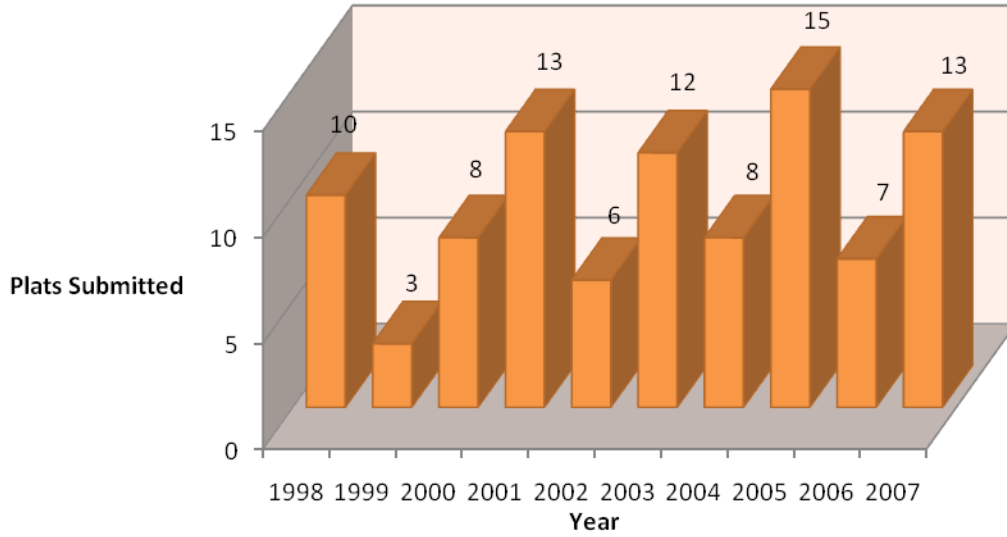
### Rezoning/Text Amendments



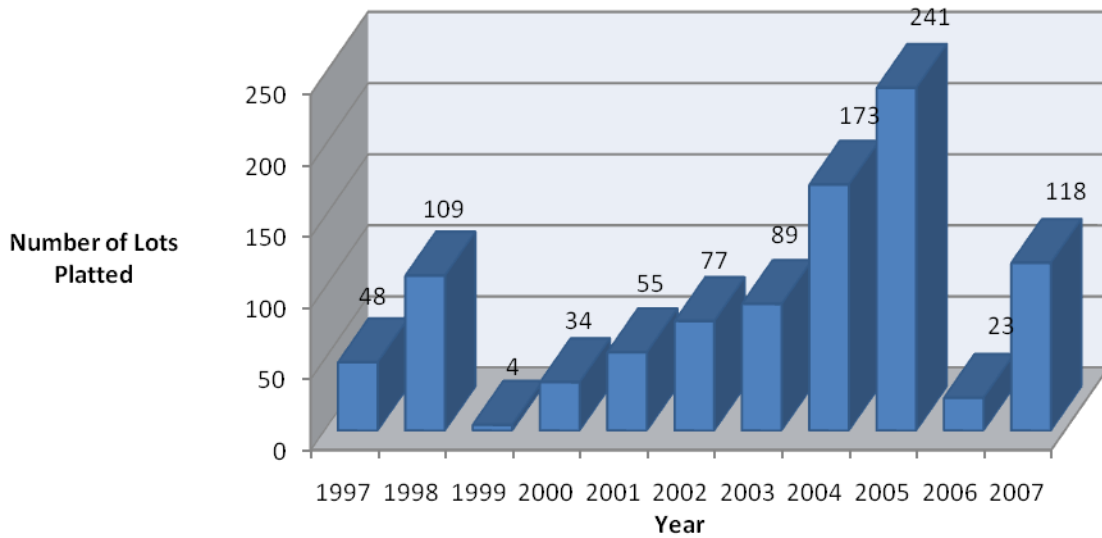
### Plan Reviews



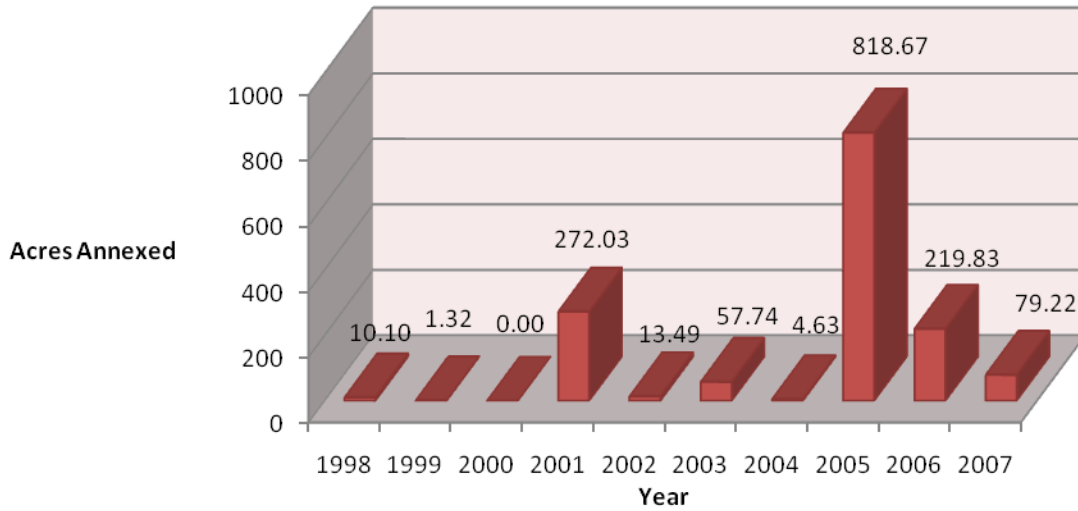
### Plat Submittals



### Lots Platted



## Annexations



Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b># of Annexations</b>	1	1	0	1	1	3	2	3	3	3
<b>Acres Annexed</b>	10.1	1.32	0	272.03	13.49	57.74	4.63	818.67	219.83	79.22

## ZONING NUISANCE COMPLAINTS

Zoning and nuisance complaints resulting in action/citations totaled 438 in 2007. Because of the amount of development activity in 2007, staff did not have a chance to be proactive and do a complete sweep of the City for the spring clean-up. However, the public is becoming more active with phoned in complaints, which shows the public wants clean neighborhoods and supports the exterior storage ordinance. Many of the complaints involved more than one violation. The most common violations are unlicensed vehicles, and garbage and furniture/appliances.

The high-visibility notice system works well, and reduces clerical time. Near 100% compliance is obtained, usually without the use of certified mail or assistance from the City Attorney.

Thanks to the Police Department and City Attorney for their help when needed.

### Complaints comparison- 2005-2007:

Type	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>
unlicensed vehicles	102	99	97
furniture/appliances	53	76	59
junk	20	34	39
garbage / waste	106	99	56
building materials	12	7	8
auto parts	15	31	14
unlicensed trailers	1	2	5
off-street parking	30	40	22
branches / leaves	8	12	9
signs	15	15	53
fences / hedges	16	2	3
building removal (unsafe)	30	0	3
miscellany / other	<u>17</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>18</u>
	<b>425</b>	453	385

A total of 438 inspections were required to achieve compliance.

Also, more and more lending companies and appraisers are requiring zoning verification documents in real estate transactions. These documents are often questionnaires simply verifying a property's zoning designation and other code compliance questions. Sometimes they are time consuming, as they are typically for older structures that require considerable research by staff. 17 of these zoning verification documents were done by staff, and this could be something that the City might want to consider requiring a fee for.

# Building Inspection



## **2007 BUILDING INSPECTION REPORT**

### **1. GENERAL**

2007 was a rollercoaster construction season. There were several “ups” in activity, but like the rollercoaster, there were also “downs”. This year construction valuations totaled \$33,722,627. This valuation would rank this year at 7<sup>th</sup> in the City of Willmar construction history. The City continues to grow and expand at a rate somewhat higher than state and national averages. A recent residential study of outstate cities places Willmar in the norm for residential construction starts when compared to similar sized cities. There were 5 permits issued on projects of \$1,000,000 or more and 19 permits issued with valuations of \$250,000 or more.

Non-residential/commercial construction has slowed somewhat. Overall, the City of Willmar continues to expand its commercial base at a rate higher than the national average. Early 2008 commercial construction activity indicates that a good season is coming.

New commercial/industrial permits totaled 13 in 2007. This represents a 67% decline compared to last year. Commercial/industrial additions/alteration permits totaled 101, representing a decrease of 5%. Churches and Schools saw a decrease of 30%, over last year's permit total. There were 7 permits issued for Churches/Schools.

In 2007, the residential home building industry weakened visibly. There are several reasons for this drop in construction activity. There is a substantial backlog of unsold homes, combined with a dismal home buyer demand due to stricter lending requirements. Single family housing development is expected to weaken further into 2008. The trends continue, even with favorable interest rates and available money. It is possible that these home starts/sales are affected by an election year and an uncertain economy. In 2007 there were 23 new single family home permits. The twin homes/duplex market saw a total of 4 new buildings. This year's residential construction activity showed a 21% decrease over last year's total. Residential additions and alterations permits totaled 407. This presents a 6% decrease over 2006. Overall, the residential construction activity is consistent with, or ahead of state and national figures.

Rice Hospital completed the Dental Outreach Clinic, and an accessible entrance project is underway. Currently, Willmar Poultry, Slumberland, Welcome to Our Home Assisted Living, Donnerite Trucking, and the Kandiyohi County 16-bed Mental Health Facility are all under construction.

The City of Willmar has adopted the new Minnesota State Building Code. The applicable fee schedules are the same as prior years, which is the 1994 Uniform Building Code, Table 5-A.

Detailed within this report is data showing major construction projects of \$250,000 valuations or more, the type and number of permits issued, departmental revenues, number of inspections conducted, and a 20-year summary of construction data.

This report is respectfully submitted by Randy L. Kardell, Willmar Building Official Minnesota State Certification. MN-1519.

2. **MAJOR BUILDING PERMITS\*(Valuations over \$250,000)**

Welcome to our Homes	\$ 8,351,700.00
Kandiyohi County Mental Health	\$ 2,898,873.00
Willmar Poultry Addition	\$ 1,668,160.00
Vinje Church Remodel	\$ 1,068,675.00
Community Christian School Addt	\$ 1,000,000.00
City of Willmar Civic Center Addt.	\$ 819,814.00
Heffron Properties Remodel	\$ 809,700.00
Kandiyohi County Maintenance Bldg	\$ 798,450.00
Pizza Ranch Restaurant	\$ 625,000.00
City of Willmar T-Hanger	\$ 596,802.00
Ridgewater College - Waterproofing	\$ 590,000.00
Family Video	\$ 463,302.00
Rice Hospital Dental Clinic	\$ 430,000.00
Chad Carlson Res	\$ 358,169.00
Kandiyohi County - Salt Storage Bldg	\$ 349,576.00
Ridgewater College - Reroof	\$ 342,000.00
Passion Properties	\$ 283,788.00
Krupa Laundry	\$ 276,418.00
Field of Dreams Properties	\$ 267,000.00
Ridgewater College House	\$ 266,019.00
Doyle Slagter Res	\$ 261,155.00
UMEC-USA Bldg Remodel	\$ 250,000.00

### 3. PERMIT BREAKDOWN

<u>A. Residential</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
One-Family	49	25	23
Two-Family/Twin Home	18	10	4
Multi-Family/Town Home	0	0	0
Apartments	0	0	0
Garages/Sheds	34	30	34
Residential Addn/Alts	483	434	407
Moved/Razed Buildings	19	26	54
Mobile Homes*	15	10	8

\*Includes mobile homes moved into City, out of City, and relocated within City.

<u>B. Commercial/Industrial</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
New Commercial	21	39	13
New Industrial	0	1	0
Additions/Alterations	84	108	101
Churches/Schools	5	10	7

<u>C. Mechanical Permits</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
(New process started 4/1/03)	273	202	161

<u>D. Plumbing Permits</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
	120	123	89

**TOTAL PERMITS** 1121 1018 **901**

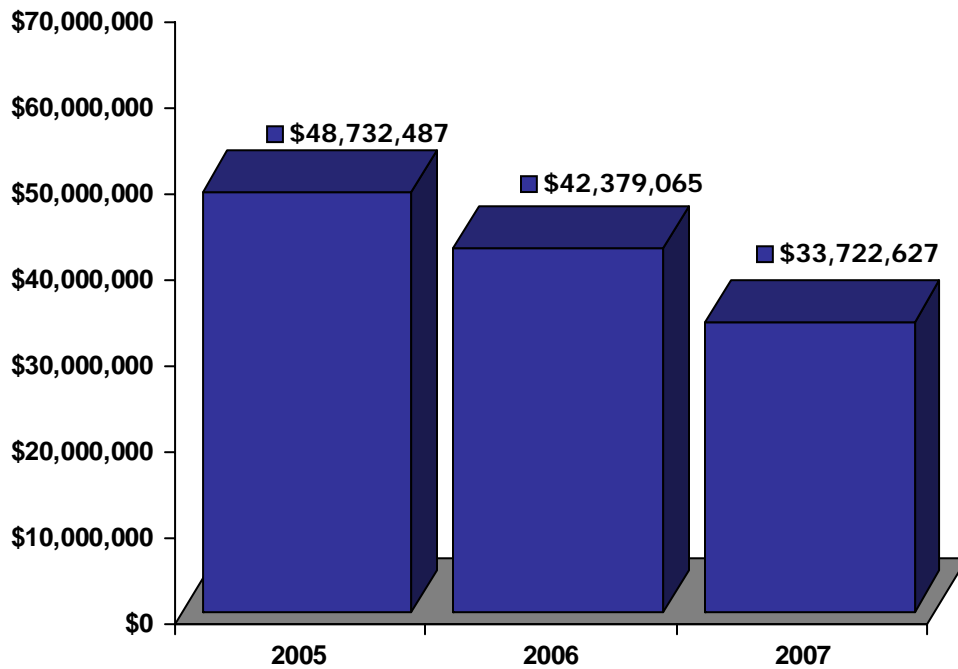
<u># of Residential Units Added</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
One-Family	49	25	23
Two-Family	18	20	8
Tri-Plex*	0	0	0
Four-Plex	0	0	0
Apartments**	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL UNITS</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>31</b>

\*\*Includes senior cooperative housing.

4. **CONSTRUCTION VALUATION**

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
New Residential	12,220,766.61	7,167,645.81	<b>4,469,552.63</b>
Garages/Sheds	477,304.22	510,780.76	<b>552,252.02</b>
Residential Addns-Alts	3,266,728.36	2,922,525.41	<b>2,759,016.76</b>
New Commercial	18,574,631.04	20,228,361.88	<b>16,458,760.43</b>
New Industrial	0	351,488.00	<b>0</b>
Comm / Ind Addns.-Alts.	11,647,667.57	10,164,196.84	<b>7,195,510.06</b>
Churches & Schools	2,545,389.00	0	<b>2,287,535.32</b>
New & Additions	0	1,034,066.18	<b>0</b>
Others	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u><b>0</b></u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$48,732,486.80</b>	<b>\$42,379,064.88</b>	<b>\$33,722,627.22</b>

The following chart compares total construction valuations for the years 2005 through 2007.



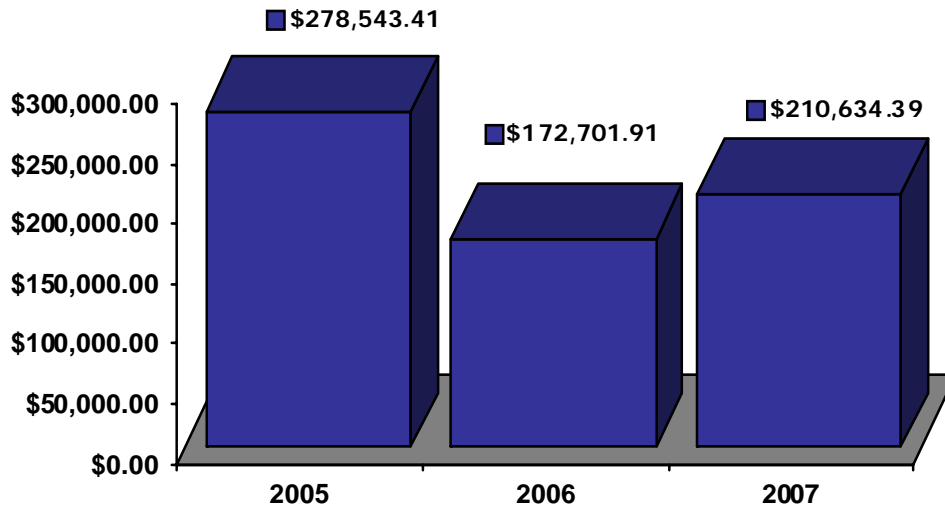
5. **PERMIT REVENUE**

<b><u>A. Building Permit Revenue</u></b>	<b><u>2005*</u></b>	<b><u>2006**</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
Permit Revenue	\$278,543.41	\$172,701.91	<b>\$210,634.39</b>
State Surcharge Collected	25,513.02	22,784.56	<b>16,861.49</b>
State Surcharge Paid	20,796.39	17,262.19	<b>13,083.97</b>
State Surcharge Retained by City	4,716.63	5,522.37	<b>3,777.52</b>
Plan Review Fees	132,484.77	114,937.55	<b>109,327.36</b>

\* Does not include \$10,336.39 in building permit fees waived by City.

\*\* Does not include \$59,387.17 in building permit fees waived by City.

The chart below compares permit revenue for the years 2005 through 2007.



<b><u>B. Mechanical Permits Revenue *</u></b>	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2006</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
Commercial	\$19,651.61	\$28,943.61	<b>\$20,674.98</b>
Residential	12,065.05	7,042.71	<b>4,940.96</b>
TOTAL	32,808.62	37,860.48	<b>26,723.67</b>

<b><u>C. Plumbing / Excavation Permit Revenue</u></b>	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2006</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
Plumbing Permits	\$15,802.50	\$12,796.00	<b>\$12,156.00</b>
Excavation Permits*	0	100.00	<b>0</b>
TOTAL	\$15,802.50	\$12,896.00	<b>\$12,156.00</b>

<u>D. Sign Permit Revenue</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
Sign Permits	\$1,785.00	\$2,290.00	<b>\$965.00</b>
Special Sign Permits	<u>1,185.00</u>	<u>680.00</u>	<u><b>2370.00</b></u>
TOTAL	\$2,970.00	\$2,970.00	<b>\$3,335.00</b>

6. **NUMBER OF INSPECTIONS**

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
Commercial	414	719	<b>475</b>
Plumbing	337	390	<b>260</b>
Mechanical	133	93	<b>249</b>
Residential	1242	700	<b>1298</b>
Zoning475	547	<b>438</b>	
Other/Garages/Sheds	74	63	<b>102</b>
Service Lines	62	26	<b>31</b>
Rental Housing	1654	1789	<b>2005</b>
Misc	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u><b>84</b></u>
TOTAL	4391	4327	<b>4858</b>

7. **SUMMARY**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Homes</u>	<u>Apt Bldgs*</u>	<u>Res Units</u>	<u>Comm/Ind</u>	<u>Total Value</u>
1988	41	1	58	12	\$16,448,880
1989	48	4	66	5	11,963,760
1990	62	2	86	14	18,156,471
1991	76	3	116	5	17,389,925
1992	87	3	139	53	29,842,500
1993	65	2	113	57	18,631,938
1994	51	1	102	95	28,220,205
1995	46	0	63	67	20,176,975
1996	56	3	154	72	23,508,965
1997	42	7	103	95	28,318,103
1998	46	0	62	97	27,298,164
1999	30	0	36	108	34,132,229
2000	38	4	74	97	15,474,995
2001	46	0	46	111	29,203,778
2002	75	1	111	94	62,335,142
2003	68	2	107	122	53,373,765
2004	73	0	73	119	34,723,015
2005	67	0	67	110	48,732,486
2006	35	0	45	158	42,379,064
<u>2007</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>121</u>	<u>33,722,627</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1079</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>1652</b>	<b>1612</b>	<b>\$594,032,987</b>

# Rental Inspection



## **2007 RENTAL HOUSING INSPECTION PROGRAM REPORT**

There was an increase in the number of rental units inspected in 2007. A total of 2005 units were inspected, compared to 1775 in 2006. However, the total number of licenses issued dropped from 246 in 2006 to 202 in 2007. This is mostly due to the increase in the number of large apartment buildings inspected in 2007.

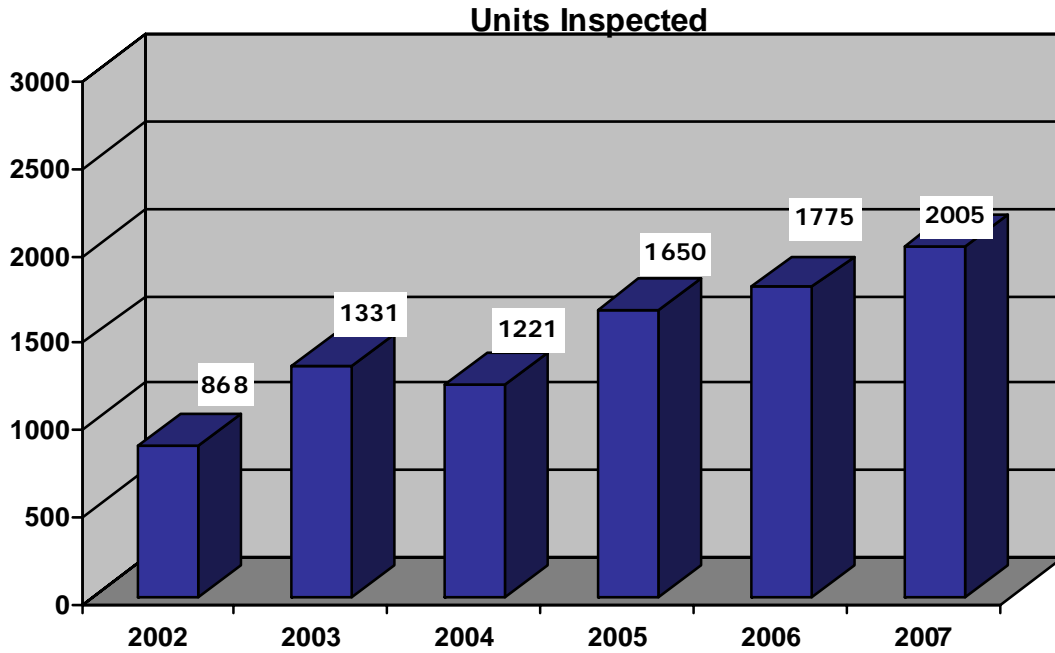
As in the past, the majority of the landlords were cooperative and for the most part keep their rental properties in fair condition. However, there are a number of property owners who continue to push the limits and do the very minimum to meet the intent of the Rental Housing Ordinance. These landlords typically have the poorest looking and maintained properties, and as a result, they tend to produce the most rental and zoning complaints.

Most landlords have a good understanding of the rental ordinance and know what to expect. By keeping their property properly maintained, the landlords require fewer corrections at their scheduled inspections and benefit by increasing the value of their property. Landlords also benefit by attracting better tenants and protecting their investments.

Tenants benefit from this program by having access to safe and sanitary housing and a higher standard of living. The City preserves its tax base and neighborhood aesthetics while protecting the safety, health and general welfare of the people in the community.

Tom Rosemeier  
Building Inspector

The charts below contrast the number of inspections conducted and licenses issued over the past six years.



### Operating Licenses Issued

