

CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

		FY 15 Actual	FY16 Actual	FY 17 Actual	FY 18 Budget	FY 19 Manager	Change FY 18-19	% Change
Conservation	\$	330,880	310,465	371,842	369,532	383,747	14,215	3.8%
Planning	\$	337,293	329,630	322,028	338,080	319,017	(19,063)	-5.6%
Inspection Services	\$	455,864	612,506	624,657	713,449	736,335	22,886	3.2%
TOTAL APPROPRIATION	\$	1,124,037	1,252,602	1,318,526	1,421,061	1,439,099	18,038	1.3%
SOURCES OF FUNDS								
Departmental Receipts	\$	89,592	143,930	119,200	77,600	93,300	15,700	20.2%
Licenses & Permits	\$	874,778	1,115,550	825,260	843,291	864,478	21,187	2.5%
Rental of Land	\$	1,330	2,998	1,758	1,000	1,000	0	0.0%
Sewer Fund	\$	0	2,000	2,000	2,000	200	(1,800)	0.0%
Water Fund	\$	20,577	22,820	22,820	21,236	24,049	2,813	13.2%
Taxation	\$	137,760	-	349,488	475,934	456,072	(19,862)	-4.2%
Total	\$	1,124,037	1,287,298	1,320,526	1,421,061	1,439,099	18,038	1.3%

This functional area supports conservation programs that protect the environment and natural resources for current and future generations of Amherst residents, creates and implements appropriate planning initiatives and regulatory mechanisms for the preservation and responsible development of the Town, and ensures the public health, safety, and welfare of citizens by administering Massachusetts General Laws and Regulations and Town Bylaws as they relate to land use and to the construction and occupancy of building and structures.

The small overall increase of 1.3% is the result of salary adjustments.

The Planning Department budget decrease is due to the retirement of a Senior Planner replaced by an Associate level Planner. Half of the salary of one of the planners will be charged to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

There are 19.23 FTE employees providing services in this functional area.

MISSION STATEMENT: To plan and manage programs and initiatives to protect the environment and natural resources of Amherst for current and future generations while providing staff support to the Conservation Commission and Agricultural Commission on issues related to wetlands, open space, and farmland preservation. The Assistant Town Manager works to coordinate projects between multiple departments and carries out special initiatives as determined by the Town Manager.

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS & CURRENT CHALLENGES

Accomplishments

- Facilitated efforts to develop solar project at the new landfill.
- Continued to develop a comprehensive Land Use Policy and Management document for use by the Conservation Commission and Department.
- Organized community events and workshops including the 8th Annual Amherst Sustainability Festival and Solarize Amherst Celebration.
- Worked with the Amherst Schools to purchase a second electric vehicle and electric charging station with funding through MASS EVIP grant program.
- Worked to implement grant funded projects secured through Green Communities competitive grant.
- Collaborated with DPW to repair a flow structure at Markert's Pond Conservation Area.
- Completed 5-year update to the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan.
- Repaired numerous bridges and improved miles of trails on Conservation land.
- Secured a \$15,000 grant for wildlife habitat enhancement projects at 3 Conservation areas.
- Continued to support and facilitate University/Town of Amherst Collaborative (UTAC) through the restructuring of the Executive Committee and increased focus on subcommittee goals and objectives.

Challenges

- Maintain the level of service that Amherst residents demand relative to the maintenance of 80 miles of trails, the use of Puffer's Pond by thousands of visitors annually, and the management of more than 5,000 acres of Conservation/Watershed land.

LONG RANGE OBJECTIVES:

- To provide support for the Town-wide Master Planning process.
- To work more closely with the Friends of Puffers Pond and other local groups to increase funding for trails and the maintenance and enhancement of Puffer's Pond.
- To complete the purchase of Agricultural Preservation Restrictions over remaining unprotected farmland.
- To integrate new conservation data into the Geographic Information System and seek ways to utilize it to help manage the Town's Conservation areas better.
- To collect and compile historical information on Town farms and natural resources.
- To complete the purchase, or other type of protection, of blocks of open space for conservation purposes.
- To maximize non-tax funding sources to assist with future land acquisition and land management.
- To work collaboratively with LSSE and other Town departments to implement the Open Space and Recreation Plan.
- To support efforts to plan for an integrated system of walking and riding trails throughout the Town.
- To link Amherst trails with those in neighboring towns.
- To support the DPW in managing the Town's watershed forests utilizing sustainable forestry practices.

CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

5171: CONSERVATION

FY 19 OBJECTIVES:

- To implement the regional BikeShare program including installation of bike stations at strategic locations in town.
- To support efforts to create a Sustainability Committee.
- To work collaboratively with the Dog Park Task Force to find a suitable site and build a dog park.
- To support work of the Amherst Center Recreation Working Group to complete an athletic field/facility Master Plan for Community Field, Amherst Regional High School, and Amherst Regional Middle School.
- To work with the Town's development partner to install solar on the new landfill.
- To work with the Conservation Commission to revise the Amherst Wetlands Protection Bylaw and Regulations to reflect recent changes in state law.
- To work with existing and new friends groups to increase fundraising efforts to support land management.
- To work closely with the Conservation Commission to complete chapters of the Conservation Land Use and Management Plan including those focused on farming, hunting, and camping.
- To begin the planning and permitting processes to dredge Puffer's Pond as a precursor to future capital requests.
- To work with the Town Manager, DPW, and the Puffer's Pond 2020 Group to address traffic flow, parking issues, and pedestrian/cyclist safety around Puffer's Pond.

SERVICE LEVELS:

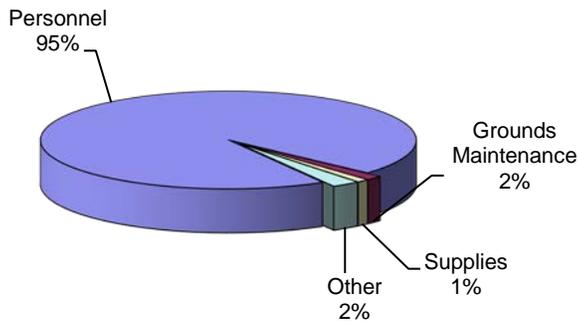
	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Conservation land acreage managed	2,100	2,140	2,140	2,150	2,165
Watershed forest acreage managed	3,380	3,380	3,380	3,380	3,380
Trail miles maintained	80	80	80	80	80
Accessible trails maintained	4	4	4	4	4
Acres Monitored – Agric. Pres. Restrictions	2,102	2,102	2,102	2,102	2,102
Acres under Conservation Restrictions	202	202	202	202	202
Acres of farmland rented out	100	100	100	100	100
Wetlands Act Notice of Intent and Determinations	27	12	51	36	30
Wetlands Act Major Cases handled	5	7	5	10	4
Emergency Certifications	3	3	5	6	6
Public requests for information & help	2,700	2,775	2,500	2,500	n/a
Bridges built or replaced	5	7	3	4	6
Volunteers	200	325	250	225	200

CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

5171: CONSERVATION

	FY 15 Actual	FY 16 Actual	FY 17 Actual	FY 18 Budget	FY 19 Manager	Change FY 18 - 19	Percent Change
Personnel Services	\$ 301,061	283,954	339,422	350,730	364,945	14,215	4.1%
Operating Expenses	\$ 29,818	25,622	31,531	18,802	18,802	0	0.0%
Capital Outlay	\$ 0	889	889	0	0	0	0.0%
TOTAL APPROPRIATION	\$ 330,880	310,465	371,842	369,532	383,747	14,215	3.8%
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION							
Employee Benefits	\$ 123,402	132,780	132,780	145,249	166,645	21,396	14.7%
Capital Appropriations	\$ 10,000	17,334	17,334	42,334	80,000	37,666	89.0%
TOTAL DEPARTMENT COST	\$ 464,282	460,579	521,956	557,115	630,392	73,277	13.2%
POSITIONS							
Full Time	2.75	2.75	2.75	3.75	3.75	0.00	
Part Time With Benefits	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	0.00	
Full Time Equivalents	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.83	4.83	0.00	

MAJOR COMPONENTS:



Personnel Services include salaries for the Director of Conservation and Development/Assistant Town Manager, a Sustainability Coordinator, and an Administrative Assistant, a Land Manager shared with the Water Fund, a part-time Wetlands Specialist, and a part-time maintenance assistant shared with the Water Fund.

Grounds maintenance provides funds for materials and supplies such as lumber, gravel, and mulch for more than 2,000 acres of Conservation Land including Puffer's Pond, Larch Hill, Amethyst Brook, and Mt. Pollux and approximately 80 miles of conservation trails throughout Town.

Supplies include tools and small equipment, gasoline, office and vehicle supplies.

SIGNIFICANT BUDGET CHANGES:

Salary changes reflect cost of steps and contracts.
Operating expenses are level funded.

MISSION STATEMENT: To protect and enhance the environmental, economic, and social quality of life in Amherst for residents and visitors. To do this by creating and implementing appropriate plans and regulations for the preservation of community resources and the orderly, rational, and sustainable development of the Town.

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS & CURRENT CHALLENGES:

Accomplishments

- Worked collaboratively with the Planning Board, developers, and citizens groups to increase the number of market rate and affordable housing units in Amherst.
- Coordinated grant applications and management in the following categories: water quality, energy efficiency, historic preservation, economic development, recreation, open space preservation, infrastructure improvements, and community development. Recent grants include \$825,000 in CDBG Mini-Entitlement funding for social services, modernization of affordable housing, and roadway improvements and state funding for design and construction at Groff Park.
- Worked with the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to maintain Amherst's status as a Mini-Entitlement CDBG Community with a grant award of \$825,000.
- Provided significant support to the Downtown Parking Working Group to implement the strategies listed in the Downtown Parking Report.
- Worked with the Select Board, Town Manager, DPW, and others to create and support a Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) to advise the Select Board about issues related to transportation.
- Provided analysis and support to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals during the review of recent development projects including handicapped accessibility at the First Congregational Church, Habitat for Humanity affordable housing units in North Amherst, a new mixed-use building on Spring Street, an 8-unit cluster subdivision in South Amherst, a 130 unit mixed-use development in North Amherst, including 20,000 square feet of commercial and retail space, reconstruction and enlargement of a burnt-out 8 unit apartment building on Belchertown Road, and a 115 unit apartment building, including 16 affordable units, on Route 9.

Challenges

- Working collaboratively with boards and committees to propose revisions to outdated sections of the Zoning Bylaw, in the form of amendments to the Bylaw, to deal with issues such as legalization of marijuana, revisions to the Official Zoning Map, and subdivision regulations.
- Developing a coordinated procedure for municipal project development, involving all departments and review boards/committees with jurisdiction, to ensure full consideration of public interests and Master Plan objectives.
- Responding to the increasing complexity of private development applications and the public permit review process.

LONG RANGE OBJECTIVES:

- To assist the Planning Board and other Town boards/committees with ongoing implementation of the Amherst Master Plan, including: proposing appropriate zoning amendments, developing plans for the downtown and village centers, supporting improvements to Town facilities, supporting economic development and housing for diverse populations, preserving open space, providing facilities for recreation, and transportation.
- To apply for and administer federal and state grants for economic development, conservation, sustainability, historic preservation, and community development.
- To work with University/Town of Amherst Collaborative (UTAC) and the 3 colleges on planning and land use issues involving housing, economic development, and culture and the arts.
- To work with the Planning Board, and others to develop amendments to the General Bylaws and Zoning Bylaw to encourage affordable housing and new market rate housing development.
- To support the Amherst Municipal Affordable Housing Trust and take other actions to preserve existing low and moderate income housing units, foster development of market rate housing, and increase the total supply to meet the needs of a diverse and growing population.
- To collaborate with DPW, Transportation Advisory Committee, and the Select Board to implement the Amherst Transportation Plan.

CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

5177: PLANNING

FY 19 OBJECTIVES:

- To continue the public planning process on design of an improved intersection and streetscape in North Amherst Village Center.
- To work on a plan for the Town Center by utilizing public forums, surveys, and other outreach efforts to collect public input and develop a vision for the future of Downtown Amherst.
- To continue to work with the Downtown Parking Working Group to implement the recommendations of the Downtown Parking Report and the inventory and analysis by consultant, Nelson\Nygaard.
- To work with the I.T. Department to complete remapping of flood prone areas and create new FEMA-approved Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) and to assist the Planning Board with a public process to establish a new flood protection zoning district.
- To continue to refine bylaws and regulations to address the challenges of legalized medical and adult-use marijuana.
- To develop plans for a CPA-funded rehabilitation and improvement project for the north end of the historic Town Common, with public input in the design process, and coordination with the DPW's plans for improvements to the Main Street parking lot.
- To complete a public process and work with a consultant to design and construct improvements to Groff Park including a spray park, new playground, and pavilion.
- To participate in the MassDOT Route 9 Corridor Study process, including improvements to the section of Route 9 from University Drive to South Pleasant Street.

SERVICE LEVELS:

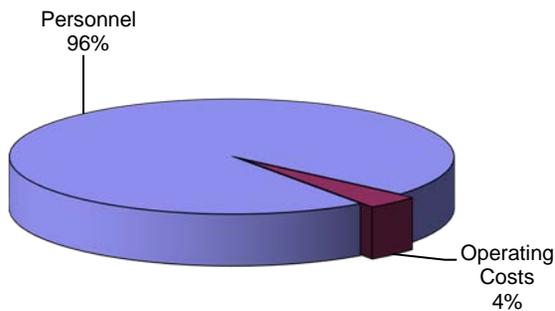
	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>
<i>Planning</i>					
Zoning/Subdivision/Regulation Amendments Worked On	17	15	8	7	14
ANR/Subdivision Plans Reviewed & Processed	15	18	11	7	17
Planning Board Special Permits	1	4	3	2	4
ZBA Special Permits Reviewed	28	41	41	27	27
Design Review Board Reviews	19	14	27	25	22
Demolition Delay Applications	5	6	15	7	22
Other Development Applications Processed (Local Historic District)	6	6	6	5	8
Planning Board Site Plan Reviews	13	20	17	27	17
Strategic Plans	2	3	3	2	4
Grant or Other Non-Town Funding Project Applications Processed/Administered	7	8	7	5	6
Contracts Administered	4	5	5	6	4
Special Planning Studies/Projects	14	2	2	7	11
Review of Other Projects	1	4	3	6	5
Committees/Boards Assisted	35	5	12	14	16
Committee & Board Meetings	163	190	178	158	174
<i>Community Development</i>					
Clients served by Human Service Agencies (through CDBG Grant)	1,487	1,658	1,653	1,405	2,350
Emergency Assistance requests (moved to Health Department)	42	62	53	71	N/A

CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

5177: PLANNING

	FY 15 Actual	FY 16 Actual	FY 17 Actual	FY 18 Budget	FY 19 Manager	Change FY 18 - 19	Percent Change
Personnel Services	\$ 321,778	319,555	307,842	325,655	306,592	(19,063)	-5.9%
Operating Expenses	\$ 15,515	10,075	14,186	12,425	12,425	0	0.0%
Capital Outlay	\$ 0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
TOTAL APPROPRIATION	\$ 337,293	329,630	322,028	338,080	319,017	(19,063)	-5.6%
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION							
Employee Benefits	\$ 133,986	166,956	153,404	153,547	177,192	23,645	15.4%
Capital Appropriations	\$ 0	20,000	20,000		58,000	58,000	0.0%
TOTAL DEPARTMENT COST	\$ 471,279	516,586	495,432	491,627	554,209	62,582	12.7%
POSITIONS							
Full Time	4.80	4.40	4.40	4.40	4.40	0.00	
Part Time With Benefits	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Full Time Equivalents	4.80	4.40	4.40	4.40	4.40	0.00	

MAJOR COMPONENTS:



Personnel Services includes salaries for a Planning Director, two senior planners (one of whom is 50% funded with CDBG and one shared 90%/10% with the Transportation Fund), an associate planner, and a permit administrator.

Operating costs include public hearing legal ads, professional development and travel, materials associated with mapping, computers, printers/copiers, and other departmental supplies.

SIGNIFICANT BUDGET CHANGES:

Personnel Services decrease is due to retirement a Senior Planner and replacement with an Associate Planner. During FY 19, the Department will again make use of CDBG funds to offset its administrative costs. Half of one of the planner positions will be funded by CDBG.

Operating expenses are level funded.

MISSION STATEMENT: To ensure the public health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants of the Town of Amherst by administering the General Laws and Regulations of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Town of Amherst Bylaws as they relate to land use and to the construction and occupancy of buildings and structures.

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS & CURRENT CHALLENGES:

Accomplishments

- Continued outreach efforts at UMass off campus housing fair, Neighborhood Resource Fair, U-Safe, and Block Party.
- Efficient joint inspection and permit application review procedures.
- Assistance and support for various land use permits including North Square Comprehensive Permit.
- Successful completion of first round of multi-family Certificate of Inspection Program.
- Continued increase in field use of technology to increase efficiency, data collection, and immediate notification.
- First steps in initiating sign enforcement following public outreach and education efforts.
- Successful renewal of the Residential Rental Property Permits.
- Assistance in developing zoning bylaw amendments.

Challenges

- Current systems lacking automation for the large numbers of licenses and permits processed by the Department.
- Upcoming adoption of the 9th Edition Building Code – Effective date January 1, 2018.
- Multiple potential large projects expected in 2018 (North Square, Aspen Heights, Spring Street) as well as completion and occupancy of large projects at UMass, Amherst College, and One East Pleasant Street.

LONG RANGE OBJECTIVES:

- To develop and implement electronic permit application system.
- To create an electronic document management system for all Conservation and Development records. This project has commenced with the scanning of all Zoning Board of Appeals historical documents, permits, and decisions. This will enable both Town staff and the public to electronically search for and view records associated with a property. The project will continue this year with scanning building/electrical/plumbing permit records.
- To improve the Inspection Services website to expand information and resources.
- To continue to provide public education of codes, regulations, and permitting procedures.

FY 19 OBJECTIVES:

- To establish a policy related to Bed and Breakfast licensing – pending state code changes.
- To assist in development of updated signage regulations.
- To begin to document and maintain a list of abandoned buildings.
- To continue to improve and advance in-field technology usage to allow staff to record inspection results in real time, document project status, and better communicate with owners, designers, and contractors.
- To continue to improve communication with various departments and strengthen joint inspection procedures and enforcement.

CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

5241: INSPECTION SERVICES

SERVICE LEVELS:	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual
PERMITS ISSUED:					
Building Permits	916	931	1,209	1,166	1,001
Electrical Permits	917	930	1,136	980	994
Gas Permits	282	314	316	273	227
Plumbing Permits	422	422	427	374	378
Mechanical		104	30	36	34
Demolition Permits	12	14	25	28	19
Certificates of Inspection	167	119	140	237	167
Certificates of Occupancy	78	35	60	53	63
Total Permits	2,794	2,869	3,343	3,147	2,983
INSPECTIONS					
Building	1,183	710	1,047	1,280	1,353
Electrical	2,283	905	1,027	1,764	1,572
Gas	422	307	300	250	212
Plumbing	701	568	508	471	441
Total Building Inspections	4,589	2,490	2,882	3,654	3,578
HEALTH					
Permits/Licenses					
Food Handling (includes Temp & Mobile)	204	185	167	152	173
Catering	15	14	12	14	15
Bakery	6	5	6	9	5
Body Arts Establishment	2	1	1	1	1
Frozen Food	5	2	3	4	5
Retail	17	20	22	32	24
Pools	15	13	17	17	13
Tanning	1	2	2	1	1
Motels/B&B's	11	10	11	9	8
Garbage/Offal	15	9	18	12	19
Septic Systems	14	15	42	15	59
Recreation Camp	38	21	28	17	14
Septic Installer	6	8	10	8	7
Wood Stove	5	18	42	54	34
Total Permits/Licenses	374	342	381	345	378
Inspections					
Food Service Establishment	300	285	192	279	295
Farmers Market	108	83	68	100	226
Temporary Food	102	94	99	126	103
Catering	10	20	10	10	40
Bakery	18	12	14	11	14
Body Arts	2	1	2	2	2
Frozen Food	9	4	2	2	10
Retail	18	22	28	30	26
Pools	28	19	14	22	22
Tanning	2	7	4	2	1
Motels/B&B's	12	10	10	0	1
Percolation Tests	13	10	14	7	7
Septic System Installation	15	15	15	12	15
Septic System – Title V	29	24	32	30	37
Recreation Camps	59	59	40	52	54
Well	2	3	1	0	5
Portable Toilets	2	0	1	3	3
Ice Rink	1	1	1	1	1
Housing Inspections			133	155	183
Total Health Inspections	729	668	680	844	1,045

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CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

5241: INSPECTION SERVICES

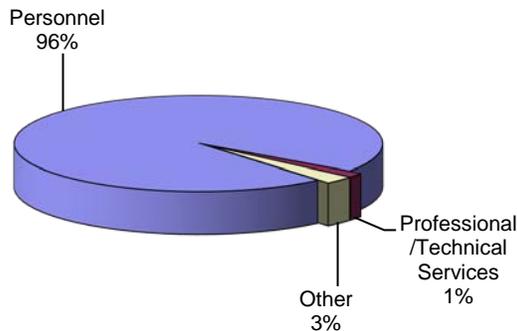
SERVICE LEVELS (cont.):	FY 13 Actual	FY 14 Actual	FY 15 Actual	FY 16 Actual	FY 17 Actual
RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PERMITTING PROGRAM					
Rental Permits		1,265	1,065	1,265	1,164*
COMPLAINTS AND VIOLATIONS					
Zoning	119	221	55	70	53
Code	72	76	193	282	386
Fines Collected by Non-Criminal Disposition	\$7,400	\$6,200	\$2,200	\$4,300	\$2,410
WEIGHTS AND MEASURES					
Inspections	53	40	47	40	37
*This figure represents total permits issued in the fiscal year. There are currently 1,430 permitted residential rental properties.					
CODES AND OTHER REGULATIONS ENFORCED: Massachusetts State Building Code 8th Ed; <i>Massachusetts State Building Code for 1 & 2 Family Dwellings 8th Edition</i> ; International Mechanical Code; International Energy Code 2009; <i>The Stretch Energy Cod</i> ;; <i>International Existing Building Code with Massachusetts Amendments</i> ; Massachusetts State Architectural Access Board Regulations; <i>Commonwealth of Massachusetts Sheet Metal Regulations</i> ; Massachusetts State Electrical Code; Commonwealth of Massachusetts Plumbing & Gas Codes; Sealer of Weights and Measures Regulations; Town of Amherst Zoning Bylaws; Conditions of Special Permits and Variances issued by the Zoning Board of Appeals, Conditions of Site Plan Review; Conditions of Design Review Board and Historical Commission; and the Town of Amherst Junk Car Bylaw; Sign Bylaw; and Portable Sign Bylaw. We also work closely with the Fire Department in regards to Chapter 148 of the Massachusetts General Laws concerning requirements for the installation of alarms and sprinkler systems, and the annual inspections required under the amendments to MGL 148 for nightclubs and similar uses.					

CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

5241: INSPECTION SERVICES

	FY 15 Actual	FY 16 Actual	FY 17 Actual	FY 18 Budget	FY 19 Manager	Change FY 18 - 19	Percent Change
Personnel Services	\$ 444,692	565,876	595,667	683,114	706,000	22,886	3.4%
Operating Expenses	\$ 11,172	44,517	27,375	28,835	28,835	0	0.0%
Capital Outlay	\$ 0	2,113	1,615	1,500	1,500	0	0.0%
TOTAL APPROPRIATION	\$ 455,864	612,506	624,657	713,449	736,335	22,886	3.2%
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION							
Employee Benefits	\$ 196,450	228,820	228,820	275,688	305,326	29,638	10.8%
Capital Appropriations	\$ 0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
TOTAL DEPARTMENT COST	\$ 652,314	841,326	853,477	989,137	1,041,661	52,524	5.3%
POSITIONS							
Full Time	8.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	
Part Time With Benefits	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Full Time Equivalents	8.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	

MAJOR COMPONENTS:



Personnel Services provide funds for the Building Commissioner, a Lead Inspector, a Building Inspector, an Electrical Inspector, a Code Enforcement Officer, a Health/Safe and Healthy Neighborhood Inspector, an Assistant Sanitarian, 3 Management Assistants and part-time or substitute plumbing, electrical, and gas inspectors.

Professional/Technical Services provides the funds for the regional sealer of weights and measures program.

SIGNIFICANT BUDGET CHANGES:

Personnel Services increase is due to steps and contracts.
Operating expenses are level funded.