



**Development Services
Annual Report
March 2017**

Note from the Director:

What a year of exciting opportunities! 2015-2016 have been spent with transitions to new challenges and gearing up for a full 2017. Our personnel situation has seen a lot of change with the replacement of two planners due to moves and promotions. The development services staff has totally redesigned the planning unit to become a more partnered effort with economic development and business recruitment, building construction, codes enforcement, and Community Development Block Grant coordination.

We are in the midst of the “new normal” in building construction and economic development. Building construction was highlighted by a burst of Multi-family structures. The total new apartment units permitted were 557. Another 263 apartment units are pending building permit. On the single-family home side for 2016 the average construction cost to build a new home increased nearly \$4,000, from \$249,482 to \$253,303.

Bringing in new business and encouraging the expansion of existing business has been a major focus of our department over the last year. We have seen expansions in our core industries such as Indian Path Hospital and Wellmont Hospital in the past year, as well as Eastman. Coupled with new boutiques and restaurants downtown we can now call Kingsport a 24 hour downtown! As we look toward 2017 we anticipate more retail growth in neighborhood shopping and greater increases in residential home values. This complements the city goal of increased property values.

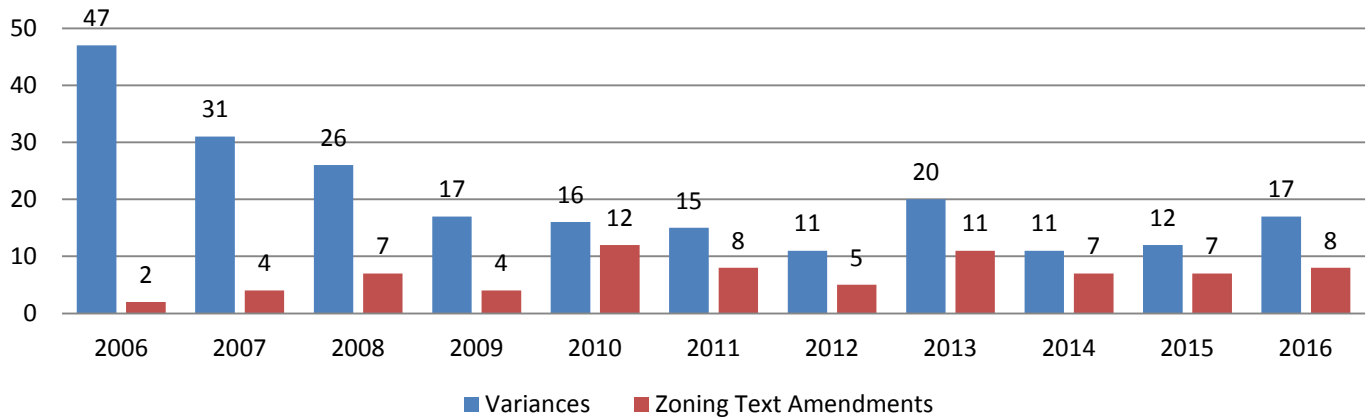


A spotlight area is the attraction of new residents and the completion of new rental housing options as well as encouraging new single family construction which will move us forward in meeting that need. Further emphasis is being given to clean up and redevelopment of blighted areas partnering our CDBG programs with local code forces and the support of Kingsport Police Department. These measures will bring obtainable quality homeownership to Kingsport citizens. Supporting these initiatives is preparation for new developments through planning and zoning with careful attention to site planning and design aesthetic.

We are ready for the next challenge!

Looking forward to an exciting 2017!!

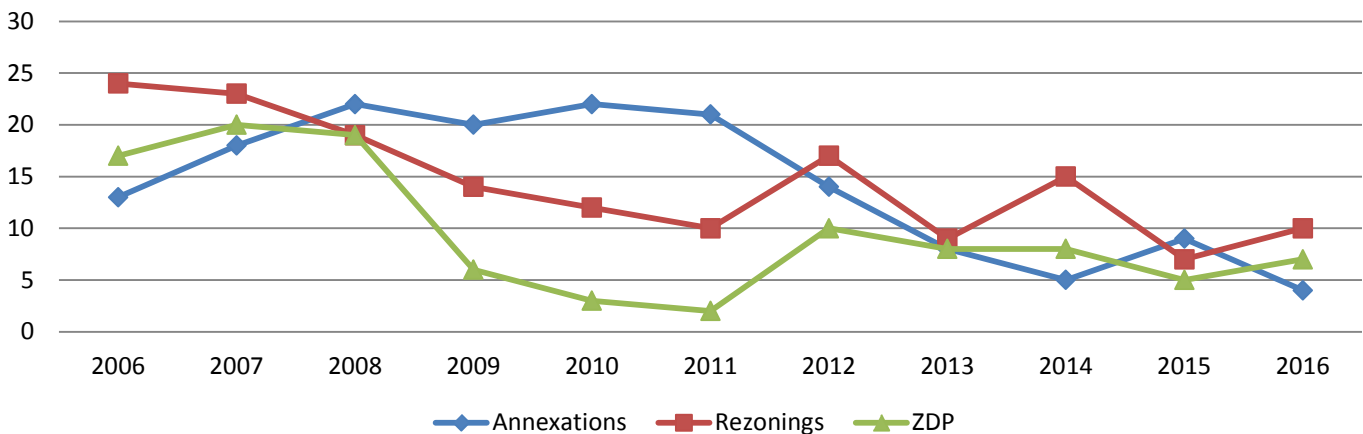
Relationship of Text Amendments to Variance Requests



Variances and Text Amendments

The majority of the current zoning code has been in place with little change since 1981. As one can see, the number of changes instituted shows that we have initiated several interim fixes over the years and have attempted to reasonably respond to development needs. Our history shows an interesting trend of the number of variance requests declining roughly proportionally to the number of changes made to the text. This indicates that although we are getting fewer requests for variances we remain vigilant to responding to the needs of the community.

Responding to Trends



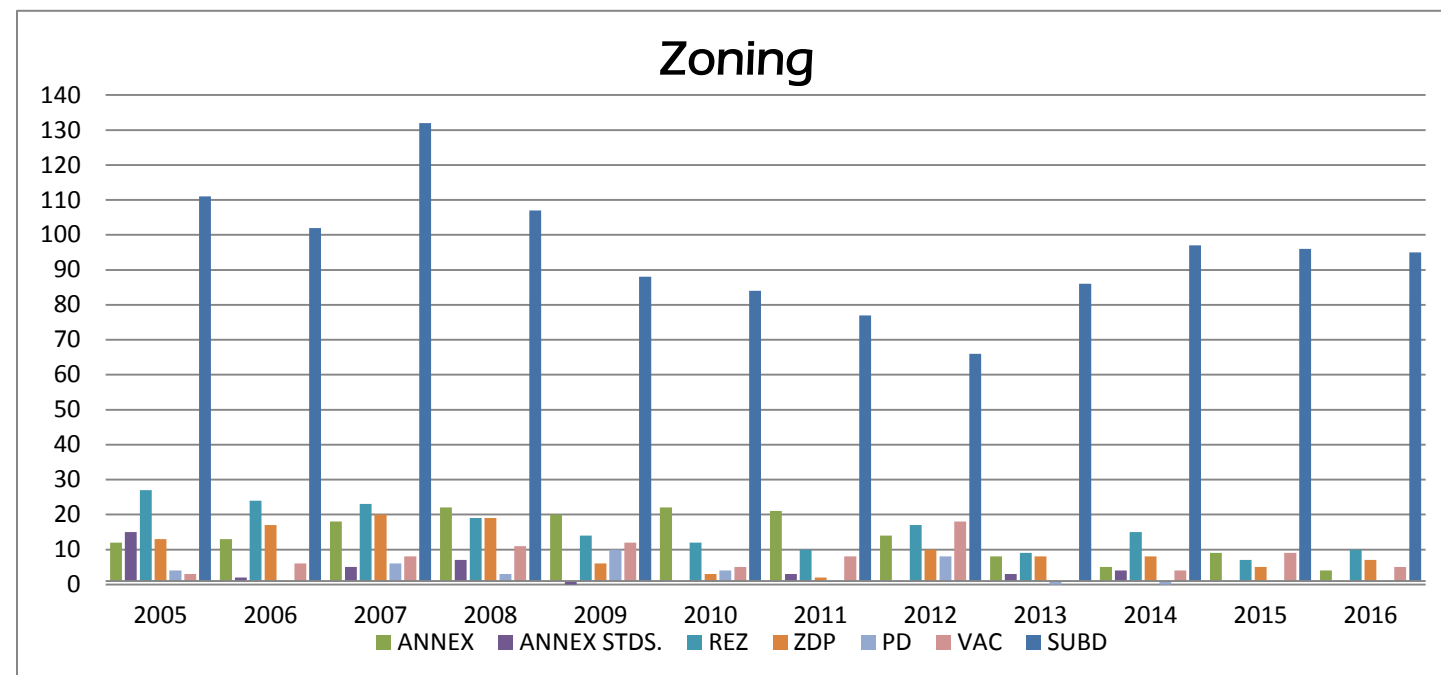
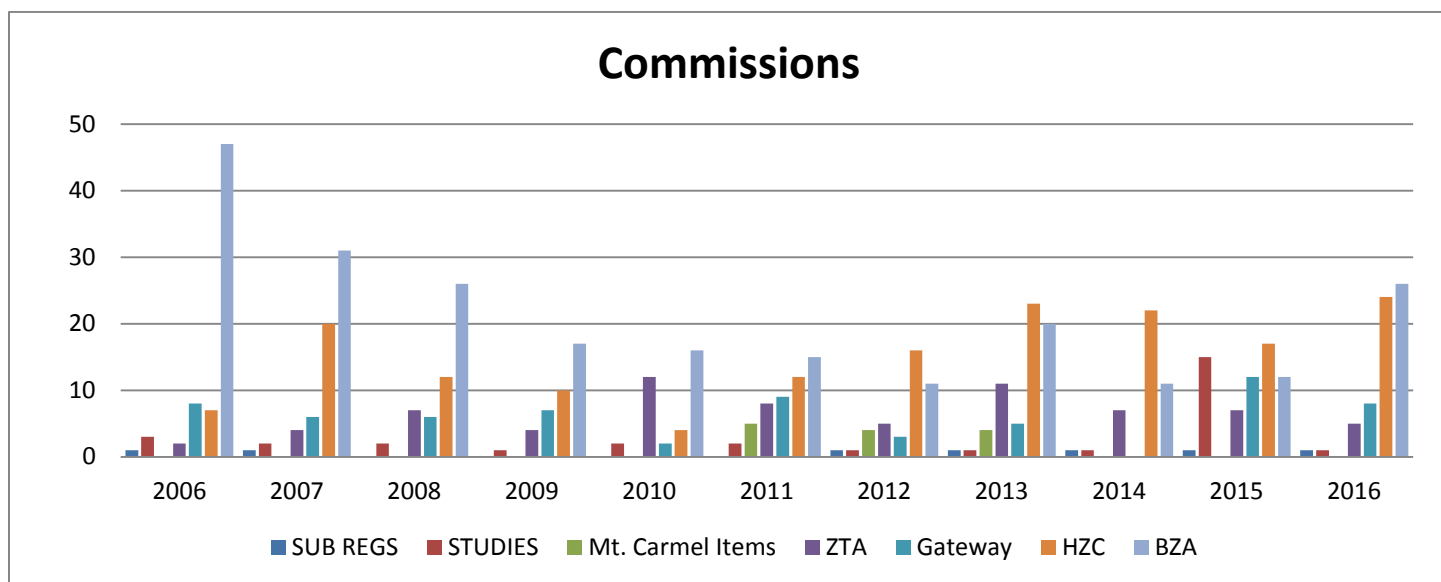
Departmental Response to Trends

This graph tracks the trends in annexations, rezonings, and zoning development plans. The department has enabled more plan reviews to be approved in-house further streamlining the development process. The Planning Department works diligently to provide a higher quality of living and a better environment for businesses.

Annual Summary

The City of Kingsport planning Division consisted of a five member staff for the fiscal year 2016-2017. The Planning Division is structured with a Development Services Director, Zoning Administrator, two planners, and a secretary. The planners take a team approach to the day to day processing of items, the delegation of which is based on a planner's skills and strengths combined with current workload.

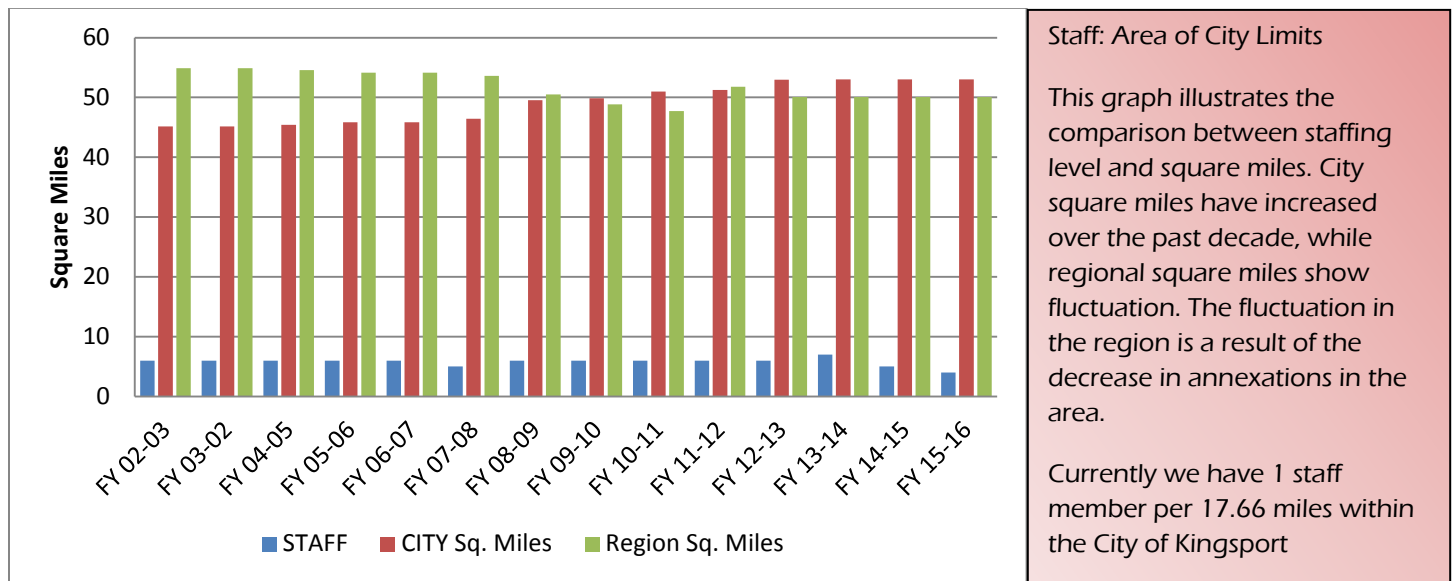
Each planner sits on a committee: Board of Zoning Appeals, Gateway, Historic Zoning and planning support for the Town of Mount Carmel. Each planner is responsible for establishing and holding meetings and providing the committee members pertinent information. The staff also mails notices to the affected public, and prepares and publishes notices as required. Along with mailings and notices published in the local newspaper, all agendas are put on the City's website for public viewing. In addition, each commission has its packet posted to the web for citizens and staff to review as their interest demands.



Staff Specialties

Our current staff consists of 3 planners, and is equipped with wide array of experiences. Current expertise includes:

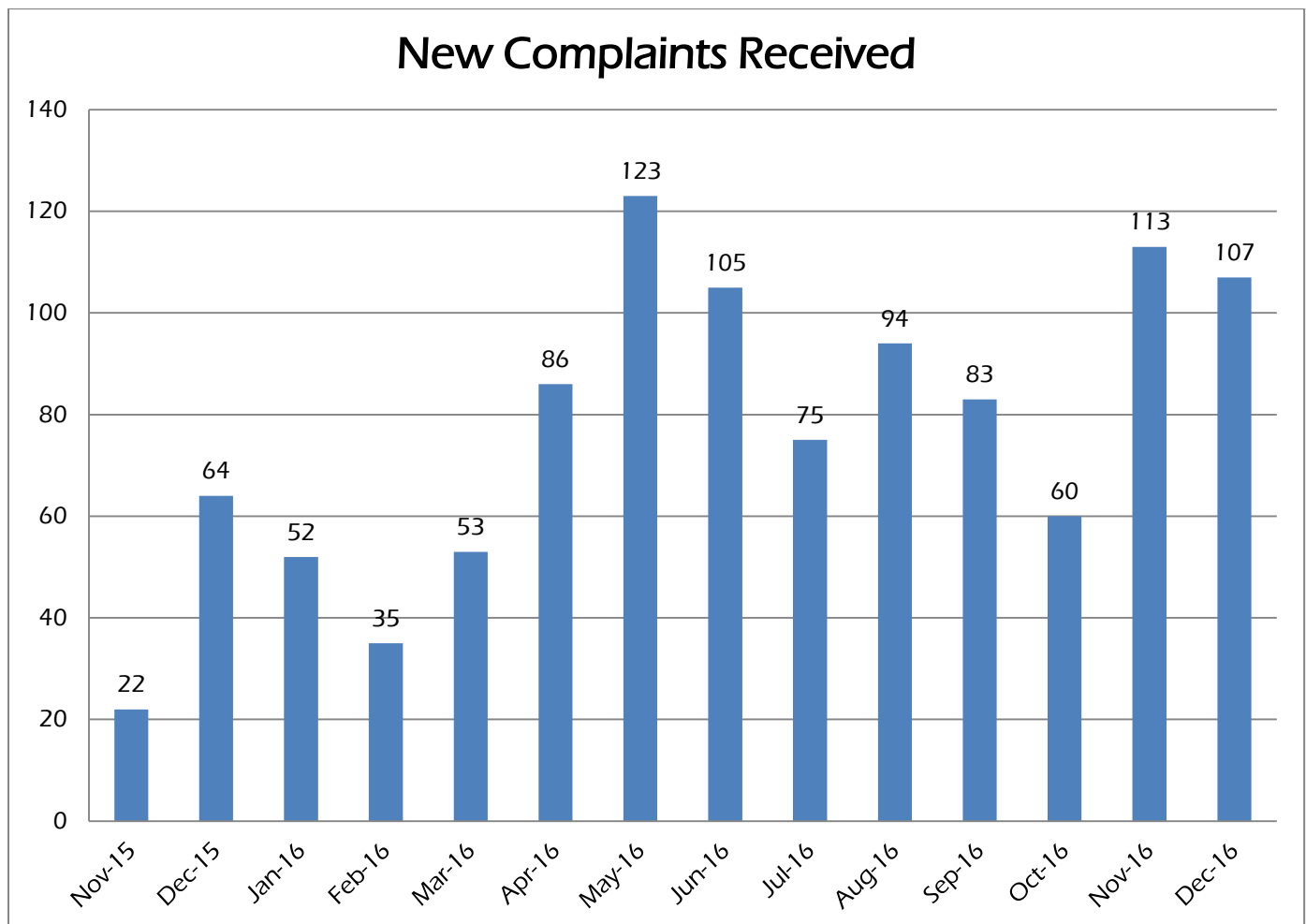
- Annexation and Public Meetings
- Subdivision and Site Planning
- Public Engagement
- Project Management
- Land Use and Code Revision
- Designated American Institute of Certified Planner (AICP) Staff Members
- A combined total of 43 years of Personnel Management and Urban Development Experience



Kingsport Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement focuses on Progressing from Reactive to Proactive Force. With external partnerships, inter-departmental coordination and current staffing capacity, code enforcement is able to address code issues in the following areas:

- *Commercial Areas*
- *Residential Areas*
- *Redevelopment Focus Areas*

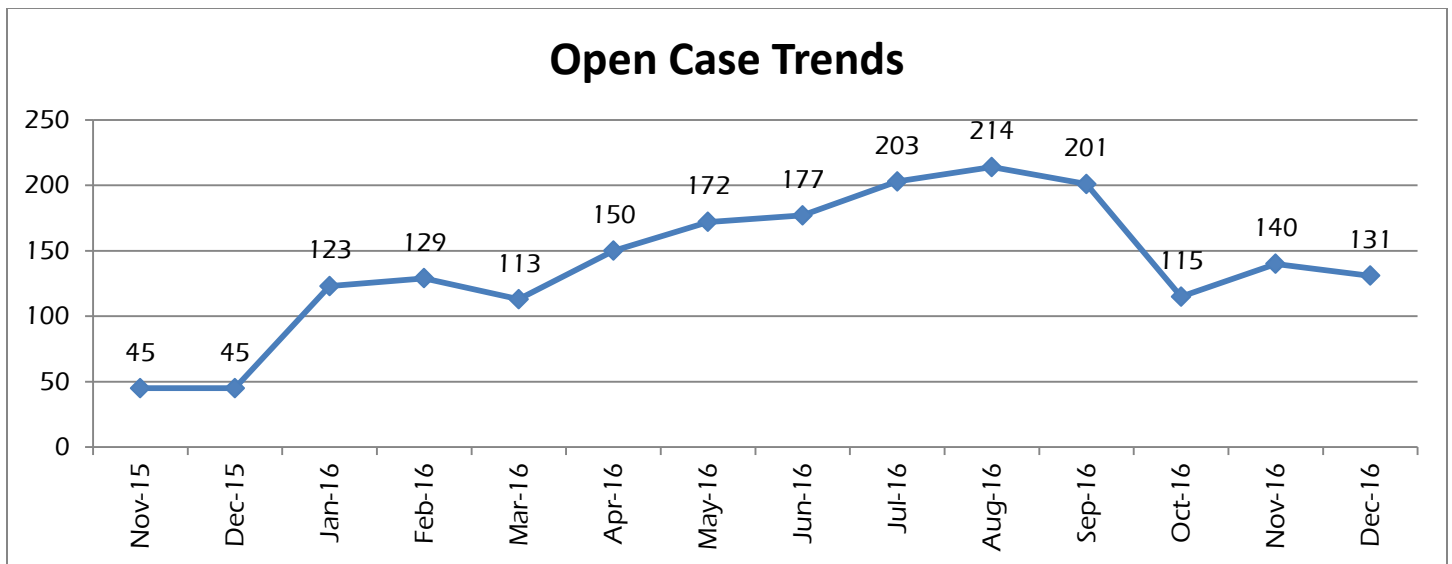


TOTAL NEW COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

January 2016 to December 2016:

1072

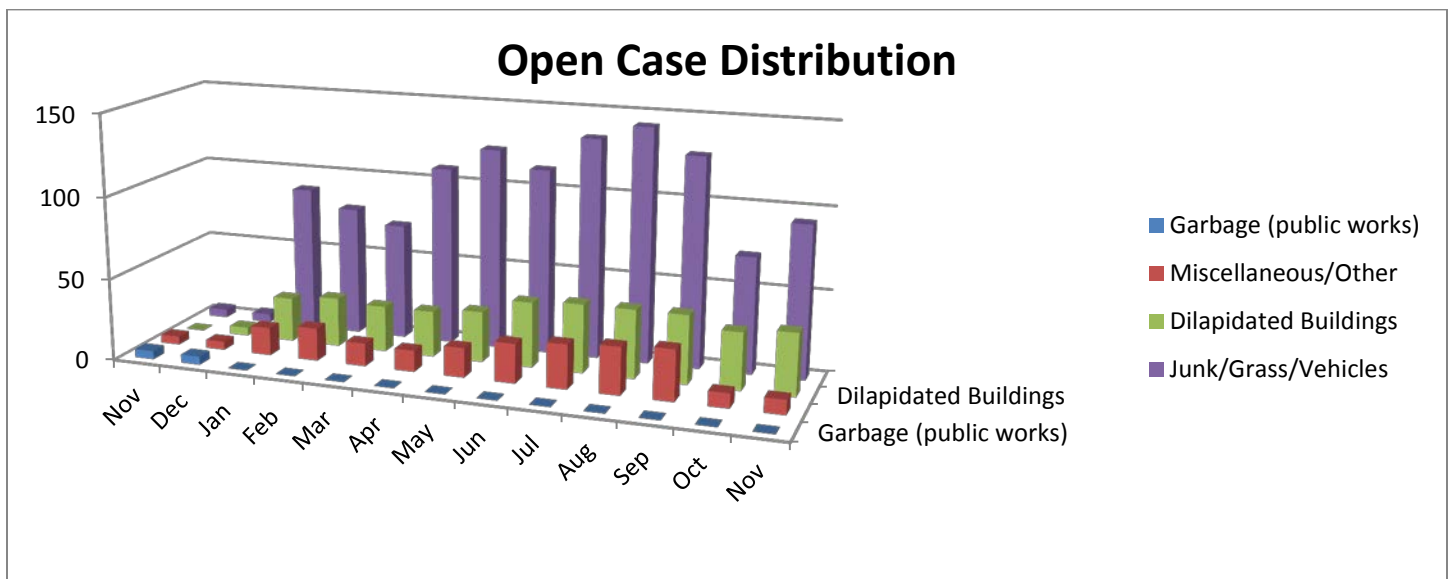
*Inspections conducted on all complaints



Total Open Cases

January 2016 – December 2016:

1737



Monthly Averages Nov 2015 to Nov 2016:

Garbage: 0

Dilapidated Buildings: 33

Miscellaneous: 17

Trash/Junk, Grass & Vehicles: 99

Total: **149**

Strategic Implementation Plan

Citizen Friendly Government

- Respectfully provide accurate and timely information to citizens.
- Provide timely notice to neighborhood groups and citizens, about developments that may impact their properties.
- Provide fair and responsible staff recommendations to the various planning committees.
- Provide data and notices in an open and accessible format for staff citizenry, and city leadership.



Qualified Municipal Workforce

- Provide opportunities for continued professional development appropriate to experience and assignments.
- Strive to hire the highest caliber employees internally and externally when openings arise.



Economic Growth, Development & Redevelopment

- Promote business/developer friendly ethic by providing streamlined approval processes
- Promote responsible, sustainable development practices through innovative regulations



Reliable, Dependable Infrastructure

- Insure high quality infrastructure is planned, permitted and installed correctly prior to dedication
- Promote development within projects that limit inefficient extension of services and provide balanced infrastructure needs and open space



Superior Quality of Life

- Reduce the effects of sprawl development through appropriate planning and land use parameters
- Promote aesthetically conscious development in key entry areas and destination points of the city
- Design policy and infrastructure to facilitate a healthy citizenship



Completed and Ongoing Projects

Owner-requested Annexation

Given the changes to annexation by the state legislature, cities in Tennessee have virtually ceased all annexation activity. However, this has not ceased families and future commercial entities requesting annexation. City staff fields many calls requesting to know the benefits and process of an annexation to determine if their property is eligible.

In order to enhance the health, safety, and welfare of the citizenry of the Kingsport Planning Region staff will consider owner-requested annexations. After conducting a thorough feasibility study to determine if the annexation case meets the criteria set forth by the Interim Annexation Policy, the City's current guiding document for annexation, staff will present the annexation case with a positive recommendation to the Planning Commission and Board of Mayor and Alderman.

Code Enforcement Program

The City of Kingsport Codes Enforcement program is thriving and is showing tremendous progress in the enforcement of property maintenance, building and zoning policies and regulations.

Networking among city departments and citizens has enhanced the efforts of the Codes Enforcement team to achieve a higher level of public education and awareness in the importance of Codes compliance. Overall improvements are being noted in neighborhoods as residents are getting more involved and encouraged by the positive effects of citizen participation and accountability. More cases continue to be closed and proactive ventures are being carried out through projects that encompass entire areas, such as the Downtown district. Measures are also in place to monitor compliance at all entry points for those coming into the city from neighboring jurisdictions. Demolitions are increasing and Codes Enforcement personnel are consulting with outside agencies and organizations to acquire vacant or abandoned lots for new housing projects. The Codes Enforcement team is in constant communication with other city departments to evaluate services, methods and resources needed to increase efficiency.

Goals are in place to step up productivity by minimizing reaction time and boosting enforcement activity. Expanded enforcement efforts will include stiffer penalties for repeat offenders and absentee landlords, as examples. New enforcement approaches for the upcoming year are also being investigated, such as the execution of Administrative Warrants to gain residential access.

Mount Carmel

The City of Kingsport provides planning services for the Town of Mount Carmel under contract. In the past year staff has assisted the Town with rezoning of property, right-of-way abandonments, variance applications and a variety of other planning related requests. Staff has also provided mapping support for the Town by updating the Zoning Map to include new rezonings and the addition of the Mount Carmel Urban Growth Boundary. Staff is present for all Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals meetings and attends the Board of Mayor and Aldermen meetings as requested.

Major Street and Road Plan

This serves to help the Kingsport Regional Planning Commission in its goal of continually developing comprehensive plan elements which serve as guidelines for the maintenance and improvement of community public facilities and infrastructure. The Major Street and Road Plan works within the framework of the subdivision regulations to look forward twenty years to base proposals for area street and highway improvements on the functional use of these facilities as well as the development and growth of the community. Work is ongoing to update the Major Street and Road Plan in cooperation with the Kingsport Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Downtown Master Plan

The Downtown Master Plan when completed will serve as guide for the future development and redevelopment of the heart of the City. The plan will bring together the many visioning and planning documents that pertain in part or in whole to downtown as well as input from downtown stakeholders and the broader community. The final product will be a plan that provides guidance for future land use and urban form, the development of public and private spaces, and transportation and other networks that link downtown internally and with the City and region. It is currently pending coordination of the summit plan.

Historic Zoning Commission

Historic Zoning serves as a method of preserving and protecting private property. Kingsport has many celebrated historic neighborhoods and commercial districts throughout the city. Staff has been working for the last several years to increase property owner awareness of the historic zoning process while also making the process significantly more applicant-friendly. This has been accomplished through the passage of by-law amendments and removing the \$50 application fee for requests that are approved in-house. Historic preservation continues to be an important aspect of the Kingsport Planning Division.

Greenbelt Access

Planning staff is considering the addition of regulatory incentives to the zoning code that enhance greenbelt accessibility. The goal of any incentive will be to both increase flexibility in site design and maximize greenbelt use. A similar regulatory change was made in 2015 to promote the installation bike racks, allowing developer to reduce automobile parking requirements in favor of a more environmentally friendly alternative.

Gateway Commission

The City takes pride in being a community in control of its future. The city affirms that the quality of the physical environment has a direct bearing on its livability and its economic prospects. Through the Gateway Review Commission, the City has forged a clear consensus about the desire and character of its environment. The commission has reviewed numerous cases in the past year, including expansion of the YMCA and new tenants for the Gateway Commerce Park.

Emergency Repair Program

CDBG funds are used to provide emergency repair to low and moderate-income families in the City. The program is available to owner-occupied residences. Repairs are limited to situations which pose an imminent issue for the safety or health of the family or individual homeowner which might include weather penetration (roof, windows, entry doors), electrical issues, plumbing issues, accessibility, etc., and typically involve addressing the most critical need for the homeowner. The City partners in various projects with the Carpenter's Helpers ministry of First Broad Street United Methodist Church, providing CDBG funding for materials to be used by the ministry's volunteers.

In some more intense situations where volunteers cannot provide needed services, the City engages local contractors.

CDBG Funded Programs

CASA for Kids, Inc. – Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) provides investigation and advocacy for abused and neglected children in Sullivan and Hawkins Counties. CASA case workers are engaged, upon request from Court, to investigate individual juvenile situations and make recommendations to the Court concerning a child's disposition. CDBG funds were allocated to CASA for these services to children within the City limits.

KHRA Learning Centers – Kingsport Housing and Redevelopment Authority operates a learning center in the Robert E. Lee Public Housing Development, with satellite services in other developments. The Lee Learning Center provides literacy tutoring, after-school enrichment programs and other outreach programs to children and adults living in or near public housing. CDBG funds were awarded to KHRA to assist in staffing and other program services.

H.O.P.E. Help Our Potential Evolve - H.O.P.E. was established in 2008 for the purpose of building future business and community leaders by offering educational opportunities that instill life skills, by advocating for multi-cultural understanding, and by promoting community service. CBDBG funds were allocated for the expansion of the Kingsport Education, Employment, and Personal Responsibility (KEEPR) program designed by youth and adult volunteers for the purpose of promoting activities such as: College tours, scholarship application workshops, resume writing, interview skills, skills training to increase employability and workshops and community service projects to build teamwork, leadership and personal skills. H.O.P.E. anticipated serving 40+ high-school students from the greater Kingsport community, engaging youth, parent, volunteers and partner organizations to remove barriers to higher education and employment for disadvantaged youth in our community.

South Central Kingsport Community Development – SCKCD was established to raise the economic, education, and social levels of the residents in the area designated as South Central Kingsport. CDBG funds were allocated to aid SCKCD in fostering and promoting community wide interest and concern for the following: educational, employment, business, and economic opportunities; sickness, poverty, crime and educational degradation lessening; racial tension, prejudice, and discrimination elimination. Activities SCKCD was able to provide for youth include: offerings during administrative teach days, pupil holidays and weekends; summer cultural enrichment activities; programs that address healthy lifestyles; leadership development, college visits and career exploration. Adult activities SCKCD was able to provide include: programs that address healthy lifestyles, activities that emphasize home and personal safety, and programs that address and celebrate diversity.

Emergency Solutions Grant

Each year, the City receives Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds from the Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA). ESG funds originate in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and are provided to the City as "pass-through" funding through THDA. ESG funds are intended to provide funding for homeless emergency shelter services as well as programs which help prevent homelessness and rapidly re-house persons and families who have recently become homeless. The City allocates its ESG entitlement funds to local shelter and homeless service agencies to provide shelter and other services. This will be the last year that the city will allocate these funds, the state award directly to agencies in the future.

Through ESG, Salvation Army provides emergency shelter services to homeless individuals and families (mothers with children). GKAD provides assistance to individuals and families to assist in preventing them from becoming homeless, as well as assistance to rapidly re-

house those who have recently experienced homelessness. IHN provides a combination of the three ESG services, specifically to families.

Retail & Restaurant Recruitment

Kingsport continues to be a strong retail sales center for the Tri-Cities region. Even with unprecedented retail growth in nearby Bristol, Kingsport displayed positive gains through 2016's first quarter. As well, Kingsport continues to retain an over 30% share of the purchases made in the Tri-Cities. January through December of 2016 Kingsport had \$1.3 Billion in retail sales. Also in 2016, Kingsport enjoyed over \$13 million in new retail and commercial redevelopment investments which represent over 81,000 square feet of new commercial space.

Kingsport is well-positioned to add several key new-to-market retailers. There are several developable retail areas within the city in desirable locations and Kingsport's retail market can support more retail and restaurants.

Job Creation and Entrepreneurship

The City of Kingsport's Economic Development staff's chief focus is on non-traditional economic development which aims to improve the quality of life for all of our citizens and visitors through restaurants, retail, etc. However, we champion several initiatives on the job creation/entrepreneurship front by partnering with NETWORKS Sullivan Partnership, KOSBE, Kingsport Chamber of Commerce, AccelNow, and Holston Business Development Center to accomplish common goals. In addition, as part of the ONEKingsport Summit, we are overseeing the planning and implementation of the Kingsport Product Creation Center that will be aimed at luring entrepreneurs from around the region to use the facility to work on their area of specialty.

Landscaping Ordinance Update

The City's landscaping ordinance guarantees improvement of the appearance of public rights-of-way, certain commercial developments and multifamily dwellings, and public property through regulation of the planting, protection and maintenance of trees, shrubs and other landscaping materials. Planning Staff is working with the City Landscaping Specialist to update the landscaping ordinance. Key features of this update include a more user-friendly format, new consideration for redeveloped property, and incentives for developers willing to go above and beyond the minimum landscaping standard.

OneKingsport

The Mayor's ONEKingsport Summit was held at the end of October 2015 launching a grassroots effort to guide the future of Kingsport. Included on the agenda were issues of Health & Wellness, Arts & Entertainment in Kingsport, Higher Education Innovation, Housing, Job Creation and Entrepreneurship, Destination City Investments, and Downtown Revitalization. The summit is expected to provide a framework for projects, programs and city activities for the next five years, built from direct contact with our citizens and city leaders.

2016 Saw a number of OneKingsport projects initialize. The summit advisory committee is meeting regularly to ensure that projects are on track, and citizens are realizing the benefits of the OneKingsport vision.

Meet Our Staff



Chanya L. Tully, AICP
Development Services
Director



Cory Shepherd
Business Development
Specialist



Page Jeffers
Executive Secretary



Mark Haga
Community Development
Manager



Melanie Adkins
Development Services Code
Enforcement Officer



Alison Fields
Administrative Assistant



Ken Weems, AICP
Zoning Administrator



Jessica Harmon
Senior Planner



Nathan Woods
Senior Planner