



City of Bloomington, Indiana

2009 Annual Report

City of Bloomington Planning Department





A Message from the Director

The City of Bloomington Planning Department provides a wide variety of professional community planning services to the citizens of Bloomington. Between on-going development administration duties and a variety of special studies and projects, the Department remained exceptionally busy throughout 2009. This Annual Report documents the accomplishments of the Department during 2009 and sets a course for continued progress in 2010. I'd like to point out some of the Department's notable accomplishments for the year (many more are detailed throughout the Report):

- The Department completed an update to the Unified Development Ordinance that included over 90 individual text amendments.
- The MPO adopted the first Complete Streets Policy in Indiana, which later received the Outstanding MPO Planning Project award at the 26th Annual Indiana MPO Conference.
- The Department issued 637 Certificates of Zoning Compliance, including 65 for new single family home construction, 14 for new commercial construction, and 220 permits for signage.
- The Department processed 29 Plan Commission cases, 11 Plat Committee cases, 23 Board of Zoning Appeals cases, and 18 Hearing Officer cases.
- The Department sent 409 notices of zoning violations to property owners and resolved 371 of these violations before year's end, including the collection of over \$11,000 in fines.
- Staff updated the Billboard Inventory, noting a total of 46 billboards remaining in the City's planning jurisdiction compared to 111 when the inventory was first completed in 1987.
- Environmental Commission, in cooperation with the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability, presented a Green Building Tour that highlighted local examples of green building practices and LEED-compliant projects.

The Planning Department is on track for another productive year in 2010. Despite the uncertain economy, development petitions and permits continue to flow into our office. A number of special planning projects are also on tap, as outlined later in this report. My staff and I look forward to working with our citizens, elected officials, and community partners to keep Bloomington moving forward in 2010.

Thomas B. Micuda, AICP

About This Report

This Report has been prepared for the City of Bloomington, the boards and commissions that play a role in local planning, and the following elected officials:

Mayor

Mark Krusan

Common Council

Isabel Piedmont-Smith,
President
Andy Ruff,
Vice President
Mike Satterfield,
Parliamentarian
Tim Mayer
David Rollo
Susan Sandberg
Chris Sturbaum
Steve Volan
Brad Wisler

City Clerk

Regina Moore



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Planning Department Staff Profile

The Planning Department has a total of 15 staff positions, including 13 professional planners and 2 administrative staff. The chart on the following page illustrates the current organizational structure of the Planning Department. Currently, 8 of the 13 professional planners in the Department have achieved certification from the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), a recognized mark of skills and experience in the planning profession.

Several staff members within the department have additional certifications and professional memberships in their fields of expertise. Raymond Hess, AICP, and Joe Fish are both Certified League Cycling Instructors with the League of American Bicyclists. Joe Fish is also a member of the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals. Linda Thompson is a National Wildlife Federation Habitat Steward and a member of the National Association of Environmental Professionals. Scott Robinson is a member of the Urban Land Institute.



First Row (from left): Carmen Lillard, Lynne Darland, Russell White; Second Row (from left): Patrick Shay, Tom Micuda, Linda Thompson, Jane Weiser; Third Row (from left): James Roach, Nate Nickel, Josh Desmond, Scott Robinson; Back Row (from left): Rachel Johnson, Raymond Hess, Joe Fish, Eric Greulich

The Planning Department staff provides direct support or plays a coordination role with the following boards, commissions, and organizations:

Common Council

Plan Commission

Board of Zoning Appeals

Plat Committee

Hearing Officer

Environmental Commission

Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety Commission

MPO Policy Committee

MPO Technical Advisory Committee

MPO Citizens Advisory Committee

Utilities Service Board

Downtown Bloomington, Inc.

Greenways Committee

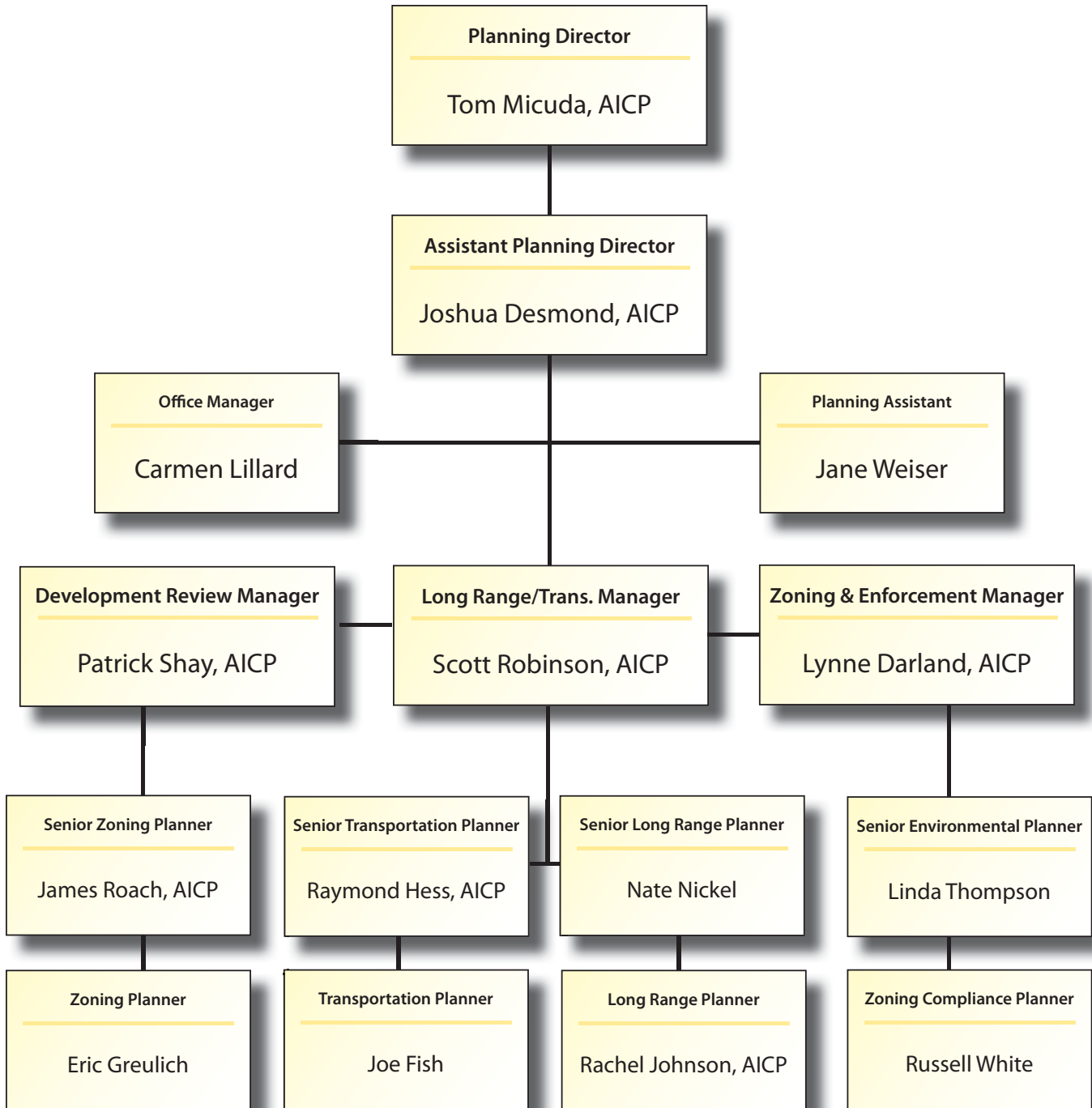
Development Review Committee

Safe Routes to School Task Force

Historic Preservation Commission



Organizational Chart





Appointed Officials

The Planning Department provides direct staff support to the Plan Commission, Plat Committee, Board of Zoning Appeals and Hearing Officer. Staff prepares detailed reports for all petitions that come before these bodies and presents those reports at public hearings. The method by which members are appointed to these boards and commissions is defined by State statute.

Plan Commission

The Plan Commission is comprised of eleven citizens appointed by various City and County elected officials. The Plan Commission makes decisions regarding land use and development through review of subdivisions and site plans. It advises the City Council on rezoning requests, planned unit developments (PUD), and amendments to the text of the Unified Development Ordinance. The Plan Commission also advises the City Council on changes to the Growth Policies Plan.

Members	Appointed By
Jack Baker, <i>President</i>	The Mayor
Milan Pece, <i>Vice President</i>	County Commissioners
Scott Burgins	The Mayor
Susan Fernandes	Board of Public Works
Adrian Reid	City Engineer (ex-officio)
Joe Hoffmann	Board of Parks Commissioners
Tom Seeber	The Mayor
Chris Smith	The Mayor
Chris Sturbaum, Council Member	Common Council
Travis Vencel	County Commissioners
Pat Williams	The Mayor

Plat Committee

The Plat Committee is a five-member committee made up of three Plan Commission members, one Planning Department staff member, and one Engineering Department staff member. The Plat Committee makes final decisions on certain subdivisions of land. The Committee was established in 1995 in order to streamline the approval process and reduce the Plan Commission's workload.

Members	Appointed By
Rick Alexander	Engineering Department
Lynne Darland, AICP	Planning Department
Adrian Reid	Plan Commission
Travis Vencel	Plan Commission
Pat Williams	Plan Commission



Appointed Officials (Cont.)

Board of Zoning Appeals

The Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) is a five-member board made up of citizens appointed by several City and County governing bodies. The Board of Zoning Appeals hears and makes final decisions on requests for variances from development standards. The Board also hears petitions and makes decisions on use variances and conditional uses.

Members	Appointed By
Milan Pece, <i>President</i>	Plan Commission
Sue Aquila, <i>Vice President</i>	The Mayor
Barre Klapper	The Mayor
Patrick Murray	Common Council
Tom Seeber	The Mayor, from the Plan Commission
Jenny Southern, <i>Alternate</i>	The Mayor

Hearing Officer

The Hearing Officer is a Planning Department staff member appointed by the Plan Commission. The Hearing Officer reviews and makes final decisions on certain conditional uses and variances from development standards. The Hearing Officer was established in 1995 to streamline the appeals process.

Hearing Officer	Appointed By
Lynne Darland, AICP	Plan Commission
Scott Robinson, AICP, <i>Alternate</i>	Plan Commission



Appointed Officials (Cont.)

Environmental Commission

The Environmental Commission (EC) is an advisory body composed of local citizens appointed by the Mayor and the Common Council, and is provided with a budget by the Planning Department. The Environmental Commission provides information and recommendations on environmental matters to the Plan Commission, City Council, other City departments and agencies, as well as to the public.

Members	Appointed By
Michael Tosick, Chair	Common Council
Jacqui Bauer, Vice Chair	Common Council
Regina DiLavore	The Mayor
Diane Henshel	The Mayor
Kriste Lindberg	The Mayor
Michael Litwin	The Mayor
Andrea Need	The Mayor
Phaedra Pezzullo	Common Council
Mary Ruhter	The Mayor
Keith Vogelsang	Common Council
<i>Vacant</i>	Common Council
<i>Vacant</i>	The Mayor

2009 PLANNING DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT

Programs & Activities



DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
ZONING ENFORCEMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING
LONG RANGE PLANNING
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION



Development Review 2009

The Development Review staff reviews all development petitions for the City of Bloomington to ensure their compliance with the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). This includes all building, signage, occupancy, and grading permits. Staff also reviews development petitions and presents them to the Plan Commission, Plat Committee, Board of Zoning Appeals, Hearing Officer, and Common Council. These petitions include subdivisions, rezoning requests, site plans, conditional uses and variances. In addition, staff serves customers daily at the office's front counter and over the phone by answering zoning and land use questions.

2009 Activities and Accomplishments

Plan Commission and Plat Committee

Development Review staff presented a total of 29 petitions to the Plan Commission in 2009. The majority of these petitions (22 of 29) were requests for site plan approval or use variance recommendations. Planning staff presented 11 cases to the Plat Committee in 2009, all of which were approved. The Plat Committee hears petitions related to preliminary and final plat approvals as well as requests for vacation of plats or parts of plats. The chart on the following page illustrates the breakdown of the types of petitions filed in 2009.



Development Review 2009 (Cont.)

Out of the 40 petitions filed for consideration by the Plan Commission and Plat Committee in 2009, the majority were for site plan approval and use variance recommendations. In addition, two petitions were filed for staff level review. These petitions were not required to go before the Plan Commission or Plat Committee, but were required to be reviewed by staff for conformity with the standards of the Unified Development Ordinance.

Types of Petitions Filed to the Plan Commission and Plat Committee	Approved	Denied	Withdrawn	Total
Preliminary plan	0	0	0	0
Final plat approval	3	0	0	3
Site plan approval	9	0	2	11
Preliminary and final plat	6	0	0	6
Use variance recommendation to BZA	8	2	1	11
PUD amendment	3	0	0	3
PUD final plan	0	0	0	0
Rezone	2	0	0	2
Final plan and preliminary plat	0	0	0	0
UDO amendments	1	0	0	1
Resolution	1	0	0	1
Time extension	2	0	0	2
Staff level review*	(2)	0	0	(2)
Total number of petitions filed	35	2**	3	40

*The two petitions filed for staff level review were not heard by the Plan Commission or Plat Committee and therefore were not included in the final total.

**One of these petitions was not technically denied, but was given “no recommendation.”



Development Review 2009 (Cont.)

Board of Zoning Appeals and Hearing Officer

The Development Review staff regularly presents cases to the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) and the Hearing Officer. The BZA hears and decides upon applications for development standard variances from the Unified Development Ordinance, conditional use permits (a land use that is permitted in a particular zoning district only if certain conditions are met), and use variance requests (a request to allow a use that is not permitted by right in a particular zoning district). The Hearing Officer has the ability to make decisions on certain variance and conditional use requests that do not require a full BZA review.

In 2009, 23 petitions were filed with the Board of Zoning Appeals. Of these 23 cases, 16 were approved, 6 were withdrawn by the petitioner, and 1 was denied.

A total of 18 petitions were filed with the Hearing Officer in 2009. Of these petitions, 17 were approved, and 1 was withdrawn by the petitioner.

The majority of petitions heard by the Board of Zoning Appeals and the Hearing Officer in 2009 were requests for variances from development standards. These made up over 50% of all petitions. Please refer to the chart below for a complete breakdown of the types of petitions filed.

Types of Petitions Filed to the BZA and Hearing Officer in 2009	Approved	Denied	Withdrawn	Total
Development standards variance, or package of variances	19	1	4	24
Use variance	5	0	2	7
Conditional use	4	0	0	4
Administrative appeal	0	0	1	1
Use Variance and Development Standards Variance	4	0	0	4
Variance from Temporary Use Standards	1	0	0	1
Total number of petitions filed	33	1	7	41



Development Review 2005-2009

Plan Commission and Plat Committee Cases

The number of petitions reviewed by Planning staff and presented to the Plan Commission grew considerably from 2005 to 2008, increasing from 9 cases to 37 cases. In 2009, in response to the weakened economic climate, the cases decreased for the first time since 2005, to a total of 29 cases. The number of Plat Committee cases in 2009 stayed relatively consistent with 2008 totals. However, the amount of cases reviewed by the Plat Committee has significantly reduced since 2005, when a total of 25 cases were reviewed.

Plan Commission Cases	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
	9	17	40	37	29
Petitions approved (or a positive recommendation to BZA)	8	16	40	33	24
Petitions denied (or a negative recommendation to BZA)	0	0	0	2	1
Petitions withdrawn	1	1	0	2	3
Petitions with no recommendation	0	0	0	0	1
Total number of petitions filed	9	17	40	37	29

Plat Committee Cases	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Petitions approved	22	15	5	12	11
Petitions denied	0	0	0	0	0
Petitions withdrawn	3	0	1	1	0
Total number of petitions filed	25	15	6	13	11



Development Review 2005-2009 (Cont.)

Board of Zoning Appeals and Hearing Officer Cases

The number of cases that Planning staff reviewed and presented to the Board of Zoning Appeals trended downward from 2005 to 2009. Conversely, the number of cases presented to the Hearing Officer has grown considerably from 25 in 2005 to 41 in 2008. However, in response to the weakened economic climate, the number of cases heard in 2009 dropped significantly, to a total of 18.

Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) Cases	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Petitions approved by BZA	21	27	18	9	16
Petitions denied by BZA	2	1	3	3	1
Petitions withdrawn by petitioner	6	3	3	5	6
Total number of petitions filed	29	31	24	17	23

Hearing Officer Cases	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Petitions approved by Hearing Officer	23	19	28	36	17
Petitions denied by Hearing Officer	0	0	0	0	0
Petitions withdrawn by petitioner	2	1	2	5	1
Total number of petitions filed	25	20	30	41	18



Development Review 2005-2009 (Cont.)

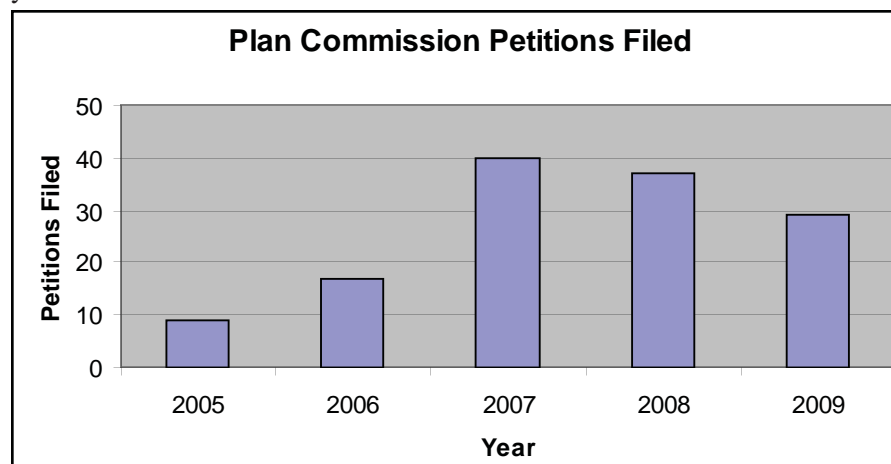
Plan Commission and Plat Committee Cases

The distribution of the types of cases filed for the Plan Commission and Plat Committee has varied significantly each year; however, site plan approvals have typically been the most common type of petition filed. This is due to the ordinance change in 2007 requiring downtown projects to be reviewed by the Plan Commission via the site plan approval process.

Types of Petitions Filed to the Plan Commission and Plat Committee	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Preliminary plan	1	0	0	1	0
Final plat approval	12	8	6	5	3
Site plan approval	0	1	18	24	11
Preliminary and final plat	13	7	2	9	6
Use variance recommendation to BZA	1	0	5	7	11
PUD amendment	1	1	4	2	3
PUD final plan	10	8	11	6	0
Rezone	0	3	1	1	2
Final plan and preliminary plat	0	6	3	1	0
UDO approval/amendments	0	1	1	0	1
GPP plan amendment/update	2	0	1	0	0
Resolution	0	0	0	0	1
Time extension	0	0	0	0	2
Staff level review*	(6)	(3)	(6)	(6)	(2)
Total number of petitions filed	40	35	52	56	40

*Petitions filed for staff level review did not go to a board or commission for approval and are not counted toward the total number of petitions filed.

The graph below illustrates the changes to the amount of petitions filed to the Plan Commission (excluding Plat Committee petitions). Petitions peaked in 2007, when the UDO was adopted, and have gradually declined in subsequent years.





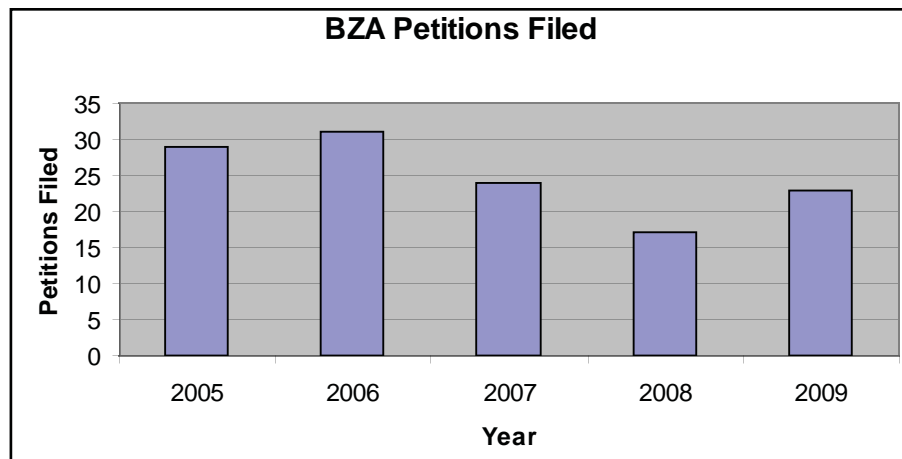
Development Review 2005-2009 (Cont.)

Board of Zoning Appeals and Hearing Officer Cases

The most common type of petition filed to the Board of Zoning Appeals or Hearing Officer is for a variance from development standards. The amount of petitions filed for a development standards variance dropped nearly in half from 2008 to 2009, thus bringing down the total number of petitions filed to its lowest in the last five years.

Types of Petitions Filed to the BZA and Hearing Officer	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Development standards variance, or package of variances	30	28	43	43	24
Use variance	9	7	2	7	7
Conditional use	12	14	5	4	4
Administrative appeal	0	0	1	1	1
Use Variance and Development Standard Variance	3	2	3	3	4
Variance from temporary use standards	0	0	0	0	1
Total number of petitions filed	54	51	54	58	41

The graph below illustrates the yearly changes to the amount of petitions filed with the Board of Zoning Appeals (excluding Hearing Officer petitions). The least amount of petitions filed for the BZA was in 2008. However, the low number of BZA cases in 2008 was offset by the large number of cases that was reviewed by the Hearing Officer that year (41).





Permit Review 2009

Permit Review

Planning staff reviews a wide variety of permit applications, ranging in type from building permits for new residential or commercial structures to temporary signage permits. Each permit application is reviewed for compliance with the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). The applicant is issued a Certificate of Zoning Compliance (CZC) if the application meets UDO standards. The department issued a total of 637 CZCs during 2009.

Residential Building Permit Review

Thirty percent of the total CZCs issued in 2009 were for single family residences. Of these 206 CZCs, 32% were for new construction (down from 45% in 2008), and 60% were for remodeling or additions to existing single family structures (up from 45% in 2008). Staff also reviewed building and remodel permit applications for attached single family residences and multifamily residential projects.

Single Family Residential	CZCs Issued
New construction	65
Remodel	71
Addition	53
Accessory Structure	17
Relocation	0

Attached Single Family Residential (Duplex)	CZCs Issued
New construction	10
Remodel	1
Addition	0

Multifamily Residential (Apartments, Condominiums)	CZCs Issued
New construction	4
Remodel	2
Accessory Structure	0



Permit Review 2009 (Cont.)

Commercial Building Permit Review

Staff reviewed permit applications for commercial sites, including new construction and remodeling. Of the CZCs issued for commercial sites, 78% were related to remodeling of existing buildings, up from 68% in 2008.

Commercial	CZCs Issued
New construction	14
Remodel	107
Addition	8
Accessory structure	8

Sign Permit Review

Within the City of Bloomington, signage is required to meet the standards set forth in the Unified Development Ordinance, and must receive a sign permit. Staff issued CZCs for 220 sign permit applications in 2009.

Signage	CZCs Issued
Permanent sign	121
Sandwich board sign	13
Temporary sign	86

Additional Permit Review

In addition to reviewing the permit applications noted previously, staff reviewed permit applications for a variety of other proposed changes to sites, including demolition of structures, grading of land, placement of cell towers and establishment of temporary uses.

Other Permits Reviewed by Staff	CZCs Issued
Demolition	19
Grading - commercial	13
Grading - multifamily residential	1
Occupancy (<i>change in use</i>)	9
Other - remodel	1
Cell tower	6
Temporary occupancy (<i>temporary use</i>)	8



Permit Review 2005-2009

Permit Review

The number of Certificates of Zoning Compliance (CZC) issued by the Planning Department gradually rose each year from 2005 (761 CZCs) to 2008 (827 CZCs). The number of CZCs issued then fell substantially in 2009 (637 CZCs).

Residential Building Permit Review

Permit applications for new construction of single family residential structures have fallen each year since 2005, with a dramatic 50% decline from 2008 to 2009. This precipitous drop corresponded with the weakest period in the economic downturn. While the number of permits receiving CZCs for additions to single family residential structures has also fallen over the last four years, the number of remodels has grown steadily.

The number of CZCs issued for new construction of attached single family residential structures significantly dropped from 2007 to 2008 and again in 2009.

Single Family Residential	CZCs Issued				
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
New construction	174	140	144	128	65
Remodel	49	49	59	60	71
Addition	80	67	67	65	53
Accessory Structure	30	28	44	27	17
Relocation	2	1	0	1	0

Attached Single Family Residential (Duplex)	CZCs Issued				
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
New construction	42	48	50	23	10
Remodel	1	1	1	1	1
Addition	1	2	1	2	0

Multifamily Residential	CZCs Issued				
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
New construction	5	9	4	11	4
Remodel	0	0	4	4	2
Addition	1	2	0	0	0
Accessory Structure	0	1	0	1	0



Permit Review 2005-2009 (Cont.)

Commercial Building Permit Review

CZCs issued for new construction of commercial buildings also declined in 2009, to nearly half as many as in 2006-2008. However, the number of CZCs issued for remodels slightly increased.

Commercial	CZCs Issued				
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
New construction	17	26	24	26	14
Remodel	67	95	103	99	107
Addition	12	11	12	12	8
Accessory structure	4	7	10	11	8

Sign Permit Review

The number and type of sign permits issued in 2009 remained relatively unchanged from previous years. The total number of permits issued was only slightly below 2008 numbers.

Signage	CZCs Issued				
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Permanent sign	111	129	118	129	121
Sandwich board sign	7	6	9	15	13
Temporary sign	57	76	79	98	86
Total sign permits issued	175	211	206	242	220



Zoning Enforcement

The Zoning Enforcement staff is charged with ensuring that properties throughout Bloomington are in compliance with the rules set forth in the Unified Development Ordinance. The zoning enforcement staff inspects development sites to address signage, landscaping, erosion control, occupancy of buildings and conditions of development approvals. They also respond to citizen complaints and inquiries, and administer enforcement actions with written warnings, tickets, or, as a final option, legal action.

2009 Activities and Accomplishments

Zoning Violation Notifications

Zoning enforcement staff responded to numerous inquiries and complaints from the public concerning zoning violations in 2009. As a result, staff sent 409 notifications to tenants and property owners regarding zoning violations. These included violations of environmental standards, parking on unimproved surfaces, and failure to comply with development standards (please see the chart below for a breakdown of the violations issued). Staff will continue work in 2010 to resolve all violations that were not yet resolved by the end of 2009.

Unified Development Ordinance Violations	Number of Violations 2008	Number of Violations Resolved in 2008	Number of Violations 2009	Number of Violations Resolved in 2009
Temporary signage without permit	115	114	116	114
Parking on unimproved surface	63	63	58	55
Permanent signage without permit	27	27	29	27
Temporary use without a permit	0	0	3	3
Change of use without a certificate of zoning compliance (CZC)	3	3	5	3
Illegal land use	3	3	4	1
Operation of home occupation without CZC	3	3	6	5
Failure to obtain a CZC	6	6	4	3
Failure to comply with CZC	17	17	11	9
Failure to comply with development standards	108	108	81	76
Violation of environmental standards	9	9	3	2
Parking on unimproved surface tickets	70	66	89	73
UDO violation totals	424	419	409	371



Zoning Enforcement (Cont.)

Fines Issued for Zoning Violations

When a property owner fails to correct a zoning violation after a Notice of Zoning Violation letter has been issued, the owner is provided with a final time frame in which to bring the site into compliance before fines are issued. If the owner still fails to correct the violation, the fines are officially issued. As a last measure, staff may forward the case to the City Legal Department for further action. In 2009, twenty cases were sent to the Legal Department. Of these, the City filed suit on seven. The remainder were resolved prior to litigation.



City Ordinance does not permit cars to be parked in grass yards. Zoning enforcement staff issue fines to property owners who fail to comply with this regulation.

The Planning Department issued fines totaling \$13,300 for zoning violations in 2009. Of the fines issued, \$11,800 were collected before year's end. All fines collected go to the City's general fund. The chart below breaks down the fines issued and collected by the Planning Department in 2009.

Unified Development Ordinance Violations	Fines Issued (2008)	Fines Collected (2008)	Fines Issued (2009)	Fines Collected (2009)
Temporary signage without permit	\$4,350.00	\$4,250.00	\$6,900.00	\$6,200.00
Parking on unimproved surface	\$260.00	\$260.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
Permanent signage without permit	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Change of use without a certificate of zoning compliance (CZC)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Illegal land use	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Operation of home occupation without CZC	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Failure to obtain a CZC	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Failure to comply with CZC	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$750.00	\$750.00
Failure to comply with development standards	\$2,700.00	\$2,700.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Violation of environmental standards	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Parking on unimproved surface tickets	\$3,760.00	\$3,760.00	\$4,550.00	\$3,750.00
TOTAL	\$12,070.00	\$11,970.00	\$13,300.00	\$11,800.00



Zoning Enforcement (Cont.)

Illegal Signage Removal

Zoning enforcement staff also worked continuously throughout the year to rid City rights-of-way of illegal temporary signage. These signs can cause safety hazards by hindering the visibility of drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists. In 2009, staff removed 1,318 illegal signs from City rights-of-way.

Billboard Inventory

Zoning enforcement staff performed its annual billboard inventory to track compliance with the City's strict off-premise sign standards. Each year, planners take note of all billboards still existing in the City and any that have been removed. This detailed inventory helps planners to keep the number of billboards in check, and prevents illegal billboards from appearing within the City's Planning jurisdiction. The inventory results found that one panel was removed from the City's jurisdiction in 2009. The Billboard tracking inventory commenced in 1987. At that time, 111 billboards were identified in the surveyed area. Currently there are 46 billboards remaining since this first survey, which now covers the City's jurisdiction and some areas now under County jurisdiction.

Stop Work Orders

Stop Work Orders are issued to sites where significant zoning violations are occurring, such as vegetation clearing that is not permitted. When a Stop Work Order is issued, all work being performed on the site must come to a halt, and no work can commence until the violation is remedied and written permission to proceed is obtained from the Planning Department. Enforcement staff issued five Stop Work Orders in 2009. Four of the stop work orders resulted in resolution of the violations and were subsequently lifted, allowing work to continue. The last stop work order remains in effect in 2010 until the violation is remedied.

Certificates of Occupancy

The Monroe County Building Department requires that a Certificate of Occupancy be obtained prior to a building or structure being occupied in order to make sure all regulations have been met and the site is safe for its inhabitants. A final Certificate of Occupancy is issued by the Building Department for a property in the City's Planning Jurisdiction only when the Planning Department has verified that all site work is complete. A Temporary Certificate of Occupancy may be issued to a site when the majority of construction is completed. This allows the owner to begin use of the site while still working to finish any remaining site requirements. For example, a temporary Certificate of Occupancy allows tenants to move into a new building before the landscaping on the site is complete. Depending on the time of year, the property owner would then be given a certain number of weeks to complete the landscaping before a Final Occupancy is issued. Staff issued to the County 33 recommendations for Temporary Occupancy and 29 recommendations for Final Occupancy in 2009.



Environmental Planning

The Environmental Planning staff reviews development proposals and enforces City ordinances to ensure environmental protection. The staff also coordinates the efforts of the Environmental Commission (EC), provides project management on City projects with environmental significance, and evaluates and implements City environmental regulations and policies.

The City's Senior Environmental Planner works with the Environmental Commission on several of its Committees. These include:

- Steering Committee
- Budget Committee
- Planning Committee
- Greenhouse Gas Reduction
- Greenhouse Gas Inventory
- Greenspace Inventory
- Lawns for Life
- Water
- Education
- Green Building
- PCBs

2009 Activities and Accomplishments

Environmental Commission Memos to Boards and Commissions

The Senior Environmental Planner works with the Environmental Commission's Planning Committee both in the office and the field to review environmental aspects of proposed development petitions. Staff prepared 21 memorandums to the Plan Commission and 3 memorandums to the Board of Zoning Appeals expressing the concerns of the EC regarding various petitions under review.

Environmental Commission Service Corps Fellow

The EC and Planning Department were aided by the work of two Service Corps Fellows from Indiana University's School of Public and Environmental Affairs. The Fellows focused their work on greenhouse gas recommendations and greenspace analysis for the City.

Greenhouse Gas Inventory

Mark Lemon created a baseline inventory of Bloomington's greenhouse gas emissions. As part of the update effort, the City has joined the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), which allows the inventory to be accomplished using software distributed by ICLEI. Lemon's report on the greenhouse gas inventory along with recommendations for reduction was completed and presented to City Council in May.

Greenspace Report Update and Expansion

Trevor Hagedorn expanded the EC's Greenspace Report to include the entire county. He digitized and created new layers to the GIS map.

Environmental Commission Intern Projects

The Environmental Planning staff is provided with additional support by an EC intern, who worked on important greenhouse gas emission strategies in 2009.

Greenhouse Gas Implementation Update Report

Sarah Batto evaluated a previous EC report that was an action plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Bloomington. The evaluation was meant to see how many suggested measures the City has started.

Environmental Planner Special Projects

The Senior Environmental Planner, Linda Thompson, also worked throughout the year on the following special projects of environmental importance.

Environmental Planning (Cont.)

Natural Landscaping

Thompson assisted Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) inspectors with determining if certain yards should be classified as “naturally landscaped,” or, conversely whether the yards were in violation of the City’s weed ordinance. This involved site visits to identify the species of plants that were growing in the yards.

Green Building Tour

The Environmental Commission and Linda Thompson, in partnership with the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability, planned and conducted a “green building” teaching tour. The tour highlighted local green building efforts exemplifying to residents and builders different ways to improve energy efficiency and environmental sustainability in buildings and homes. The sold out tour (2 buses and 30 paying participants) visited nine sites: the first LEED Gold-certified house in Indiana; EverGreen Village; S. Dunn Street; Von Lee theater; New Wings Project of MiddleWay House; a LEED house under construction; an older home with a green renovation; a straw bale house; and Upland Brewery. Media coverage occurred in: *The Herald Times*, *Louisville Courier Journal*, and the *Chicago Tribune*. Funds were given to the local chapter of the USGBC (\$100), with additional money given to the Southern Indiana Renewable Energy Network (SIREN) to sponsor their energy showdown (\$150). The tour was informative and enjoyable for those attending and plans already are underway to offer another in 2010.

Bloomington in Bloom

Linda Thompson is active in the preparations for the 2010 judged competition from “America in Bloom.” Locally, the effort is being hailed as “Bloomington in Bloom” (BiB). America in Bloom is a national organization that promotes community beautification and involvement through the use of flowers, trees, and other environmental and lifestyle enhancements, and that provides friendly competition among similar-sized towns by sending official judges to evaluate the beauty of the community. Thompson is on the BiB “Environment Effort” committee to enhance and exhibit Bloomington’s stellar environmental excellence, and is also planning to assist other City departments with landscape design and installation.

Federal Emergency Management Agency Biennial Report

Every two years communities that participate in the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) National Floodplain Insurance Program are required to provide information that allows FEMA to respond to ongoing changes that occur in the flood hazard area. As the Floodplain Administrator for the City, Linda Thompson completes the report for the City of Bloomington. Information provided includes changes to the flood hazard areas for floodplain mapping needs, a description of Bloomington’s floodplain management program, inventory of variances to our floodplain ordinance, and population data.



Planning staff help to educate on “natural landscaping” which involves promoting native plant species.



Long Range Planning

The Long Range Planning staff is responsible for developing, implementing, evaluating, and revising comprehensive planning activities for the City of Bloomington. A key aspect of long range planning is the community comprehensive plan, known in Bloomington as the Growth Policies Plan. The Growth Policies Plan defines many of the comprehensive planning activities for the Long Range Planning Division. In addition, the Division is also responsible for Neighborhood and Sub-Area Plans, Interagency Coordination (e.g. Indiana University, Monroe County), and works as liaisons on several community boards and commissions.

2009 Activities and Accomplishments

City Public Facilities Report



Staff gathered information on City facilities and services, such as those provided by the City Fire Department, to create the City Public Facilities Report.

Long Range staff continued work on a study to evaluate City of Bloomington municipal facilities and public services. The study, known as the City Facilities Report, is being conducted in response to guidance contained in the 2002 Growth Policies Plan (GPP). The purpose of this document is to provide a concise report of current and future municipal facility needs, as well as the related public service delivery aspects of those facilities (e.g. public safety responses, transit routes, water and sewer service, etc.). The departments selected for analysis are those that are typically most impacted by major land-use decisions. The goal is for members of the Plan Commission and City Council to utilize this information as a decision-making tool when evaluating major rezoning requests. This will ensure that City departments are able to continue providing their respective services at ideal delivery levels, without interruption, regardless of future increases in demand. The report can also be integrated into the City's capital improvement planning process to prepare for future facilities development.

Information on facilities and services was gained from interviews with department heads and other senior level staff members, as well as from researching the long range assessment studies, capital plans and approved budget documents that were available for each department. Additionally, detailed Geographic Information System maps were utilized to visually convey specific facility and service information. The City Facilities Report will be completed by the summer of 2010. Once completed, the document will be presented as an informational item to the Plan Commission.

2010 United States Census

The federal government is required by the Constitution to conduct a census of the United States population every ten years. Census data is utilized to determine the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives, as well as for the distribution of federal funding. Additionally, it provides a wealth of information regarding local statistics and conditions to the public. All personal information that is collected for use in the U.S. Census is confidential and is protected by law.

Long Range Planning (Cont.)

Long Range Planning staff participated in a number of activities to prepare for the 2010 Census. These efforts will help maximize the Census response rates, resulting in the most accurate and complete count of Bloomington.

Participant Statistical Areas Program (PSAP)

The PSAP provided an opportunity for local governments to review, update and delineate new census tracts, block groups and census designated places. A number of edits were made to census tracts and block groups within Bloomington in order to conform to Census Bureau guidelines. Additionally, Planning Department staff coordinated efforts with the Monroe County Planning Department for edits that overlapped the municipal boundaries. The results were presented at the Bloomington and Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meetings for public comment and review.

Local Update of Census Address (LUCA) Program

The LUCA Program allows local governments to review and edit the Master Address File (MAF) that is utilized by the Census Bureau to mail the 2010 Census forms to residential addresses. The first phase of LUCA was completed by Planning Department staff in early 2008. A total of 11,779 address edits or corrections were submitted for Bloomington. The Census Bureau completed a field canvassing effort over the summer of 2009 to verify these changes. A total of 10,183 address edits were formally accepted by the Census Bureau; a total of 1,595 addresses were not accepted. The second phase of LUCA allowed the City of Bloomington to appeal those addresses that were not accepted by the Census Bureau in the first phase.

A joint team of Planning and Information and Technology Services Department staff appealed a total of 503 addresses that were not accepted during the first phase. Most of these appeals were a result of the Census Bureau not fully accounting for the following addresses: housing sub-units (many near the Indiana University campus), large multi-family living complexes and recently constructed apartment projects, and single-family homes. The approximately 1,000 remaining addresses were not appealed due to duplicate listings, the presence of commercial land uses, or because the address no longer existed.

New Construction Program

The New Construction Program allows local governments to submit mailing addresses for residential housing units that were constructed after the LUCA field canvassing operation in the summer of 2009. This also includes housing units that are expected to be completed by April, 2010, when the Census forms will be mailed. The result is that all possible new valid residential addresses in Bloomington will receive a Census form. A joint effort between Planning, Engineering, and Information Technology Services Department staff successfully completed the New Construction Program. In total, 674 new residential addresses were submitted for Bloomington as part of the New Construction Program.



Planning staff helped the federal government make local preparations for the 2010 Census.



Long Range Planning (Cont.)

Complete Count Committee

Planning Department staff are members of the City of Bloomington-Monroe County Complete Count Committee (CCC). The CCC is a joint effort between the City and County that has the goal of improving the local response rate to the 2010 Census. The Committee is working with a wide range of local community leaders to develop and implement a locally-based outreach and awareness campaign for the 2010 Census.

SPEA Fellowship Program

The Planning Department participates in the Indiana University School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA) Fellowship Program. The goal of the Fellowships is to allow SPEA graduate students the opportunity to enhance their leadership and management skills while supporting the strategic objectives of the agency to which they are assigned. The Planning Department currently has two SPEA Fellows; one is assigned to Long Range Planning and one to the Environmental Commission. The SPEA Fellows work part-time around their class schedules and assist Planning staff with a number of research assignments and on-going projects. During 2009, the Long Range Planning SPEA Fellow worked on a number of projects for the Planning Department. These included providing policy research and comparative analysis, conducting bicycle and pedestrian counts, assisting staff with Metropolitan Planning Organization tasks, pursuing a Bicycle Friendly Community application for City Hall, and developing an interactive Google Map inventory of downtown bicycle parking.

Transportation Planning

The Transportation Planning staff works to improve the transportation system in Bloomington by planning for bicycle and pedestrian routes and new and improved roads. In providing short and long range transportation analysis, staff reviews all current development petitions to ensure that transportation needs are adequately met. The staff also assists in the development of corridor studies and roadway projects and works with Bloomington Transit to improve bus routes. Finally, the staff assists the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), an intergovernmental transportation policy group that manages transportation project funding for the Bloomington Urbanized Area. Highlights from 2009 include efforts with Bloomington Transit and their site design, a Rose Hulman Institute of Technology senior student study on SR 37 Pedestrian Bridge and Feasibility Study, and an Indiana University car sharing program.

2009 Activities and Accomplishments

College Mall Pedestrian Accessibility Study

Transportation Planning staff completed a pedestrian accessibility study for the College Mall area. The study area includes College Mall, Eastland Plaza, and the Jackson Creek Shopping Center as well as the other main commercial corridors in the area. The study will be presented to the Bloomington Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission in early 2010. It consists of a detailed inventory of existing conditions and a series of recommendations for improving the pedestrian environment within the City rights-of-way. The study uses an innovative approach to measuring how pedestrian-friendly an area is, called the Pedestrian Level of Service (Ped LOS). The Ped LOS measures how well a given stretch of road or an intersection serves pedestrians based on its physical characteristics and on the quality of the user's experience. This study marks the first time that Ped LOS has been used in Bloomington. The goal of the study is to better understand the existing conditions and travel patterns for pedestrians in the College Mall area, and provide a blueprint for making the area more pedestrian-friendly. This study will be presented to the Plan Commission in the next few months.

Council Sidewalk Committee

Planning staff provides technical and administrative support to the Council Sidewalk Committee. In 2009, the Council asked staff to incorporate a wider range of factors into its objective project prioritization tool. Staff improved upon the tool by adding proximity to transit routes and residential density into the calculation. Along with Pedestrian Level of Service and Walk Score, these factors were used to evaluate roughly 30 projects that had been proposed in previous years. The Committee finds this tool very helpful as they evaluate numerous sidewalk projects, with limited funding available. Planning staff continues to refine the measurements and explore other applications for the prioritization tool.



Pedestrians crossing College Mall Avenue often have to contend with traffic congestion. The College Mall Pedestrian Accessibility Study provides a blueprint for making the area more pedestrian friendly.



Transportation Planning (Cont.)

Bicycle and Pedestrian Counting

In 2009, Planning staff made a concerted effort to track bicycle and pedestrian facility usage. Manual and automated counts were conducted on the B-Line Trail, Kirkwood Avenue, at the Third Street & Jordan Avenue intersection, and at several other locations throughout Bloomington. In 2010, staff will enlist the help of volunteers, in order to expand the program to additional locations. A better understanding of bicycle and pedestrian volumes will help the City to identify trends and allocate resources more effectively. Additionally, the City's counts will contribute to a national effort known as the Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project.

Car Sharing Program



Car sharing is now available for use by Indiana University students and staff, as well as Bloomington residents.

Long Range and Transportation Planning staff worked with Indiana University to plan and implement a car sharing program for Bloomington citizens, University students, staff and faculty. Planning Department staff served on the University's car sharing committee, which was put together to request and review proposals for car sharing programs. Planning staff also worked with other City departments to proactively look at opportunities to expand the car sharing model to downtown locations, once the car sharing organization is prepared to add more cars to their fleet. Staff sees car sharing as an integral way to provide equitable and sustainable transportation alternatives to the community. In addition, car sharing has proven to increase transit ridership and pedestrian and bike commuting. We are proud to announce that Indiana University established a car sharing program with Zipcar in February 2009, available for use by University students, faculty and staff, as well as the Bloomington community. This is the only car sharing program in the state of Indiana.

Bloomington Transit Charrette

Planning staff participated in a multi-day site design charrette process for the new Downtown Bloomington Transit Station to be located at the southeast corner of Third Street and Walnut Street. The end of the charrette process resulted in best-case site designs and helped facilitate broader community support for the project. The transit station will seek final project approvals in 2010 and has a target completion date sometime in 2011. Staff provided their expertise drawn from City policies, ordinances, and past public involvement activities along with other participants ideas to guide project designers in developing several site plan layouts. This not only provided an opportunity for staff to share their professional opinions, but it also provided valuable experience for staff to observe a professionally facilitated charrette process.

Transportation Planning (Cont.)

State Road 37 Pedestrian Bridge Feasibility and Location Analysis

Planning staff submitted a competitive proposal for a senior engineering capstone class with the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology. Staff has utilized this program several times before and finds it a cost effective means to gain a better understanding on challenging future public improvement concepts. All of the student studies are posted on the Planning Department's website for review. All of the student projects provide details on various technical aspects that are important to consider if these concepts are implemented. The feasibility analysis is important for staff because it helps to gain an understanding of the breadth of resources needed to move these concepts into more concrete planning and design processes. Most importantly, it provides future engineers a real-world Bloomington experience – another win-win situation.

Many issues and needs surround the State Road 37 corridor; however, the difficulties that bicyclists and pedestrians face when crossing the corridor is of particular concern. Many locations for bicycle and pedestrian accessibility will be needed along the corridor, but selecting higher cost-benefit locations to implement first is critical because of limited fiscal resources. This study aims to evaluate State Road 37 crossing locations and provide recommendations on the best cost-benefit location. The study area included the railroad underpass just south of W. 3rd St. to the railroad crossing just north of Whitehall Crossing Blvd. The study was initiated in 2009 and will be finished in April 2010. Once finished, the study will provide detailed information to aid staff and officials on prioritizing State Road 37 crossing locations.



Rose-Hulman students visited the site of the State Road 37 bridge to begin their feasibility analysis for the corridor.



Metropolitan Planning Organization

The City of Bloomington Planning Department serves as the administrative body for the Bloomington/Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMCMPPO). The BMCMPPO coordinates transportation planning activities in a 57 square mile area which includes Bloomington, Ellettsville, and parts of Monroe County. The BMCMPPO transportation planning process unfolds through numerous long range and short range initiatives. The BMCMPPO must foster interagency coordination through various committees and regularly update several core documents to meet the requirements set forth by the Indiana Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration.

2009 Activities and Accomplishments

Committee Support

Pursuant to the Operational Bylaws, the Planning Department provides staff support to the BMCMPPO. As a regional planning body, the BMCMPPO is the conduit through which coordination of various transportation organizations occurs. Planning staff makes this coordination happen through the following committees:

Policy Committee

The Policy Committee approves all projects, plans, and policies of the MPO and is comprised of elected and appointed officials representing the local public agencies and stakeholders. Planning staff coordinated and facilitated seven meetings of the Policy Committee in 2009.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

The TAC provides technical review and recommendations on projects, plans and policies and is comprised of staff members representing local public agencies and stakeholders. Planning staff coordinated and facilitated nine meetings of the Technical Advisory Committee in 2009.

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

The CAC provides citizen input and recommendations on projects, plans and policies and is comprised of interested citizens. Planning staff coordinated and facilitated nine meetings of the Citizens Advisory Committee in 2008.

Planning Initiatives

As required by Federal legislation, the BMCMPPO must carry out the transportation planning process through numerous long range and short range planning initiatives. The BMCMPPO undertook a number of transportation planning initiatives during 2009, as detailed below.



The MPO hosted an Open House in December 2009 to allow Committee members and the public to mingle in a relaxed atmosphere.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (Cont.)

Transportation Improvement Program [FY 2010-2013]

The Transportation Improvement Program is a short-term capital improvement plan that identifies road, bicycle and pedestrian, and transit projects that will use federal funding within the next four fiscal years. Eligible projects can generally be funded with up to 80% of federal funds. The BMCMPPO programmed over \$85 million worth of local projects in the TIP over the next four years. The FY 2009-2012 TIP was amended three times in 2009. The FY 2010-2013 TIP, which took effect on July 1st, was adopted and amended three times in 2009. Money was allocated to such projects as the West 3rd Street expansion, the B-Line Trail, and operational costs for Bloomington Transit.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)

On February 17, 2009 President Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The ARRA legislation provides, among other things, increased funding for transportation projects. The BMCMPPO programmed \$8,025,994 worth of ARRA funding in the TIP. ARRA funded the following local projects: preventive maintenance of roads within Monroe County and Bloomington, the Jackson Creek Trail, Traffic Signal modernization, sidewalk restoration, purchase of transit vehicles and other supplies, and supplemental funding for a new downtown transit facility. A detailed listing of ARRA projects is identified in the TIP.

Unified Planning Work Program [FY 2009-2010]

The Unified Planning Work Program is an annually updated document that identifies the planning activities of the BMCMPPO, including the responsibilities of the BMCMPPO staff and any studies or educational efforts to be undertaken during the fiscal year. A federal planning grant funds 80% of the annual UPWP budget. The total budget for fiscal years 2009 and 2010 is \$961,038. These funds helped the Planning Department foster intergovernmental coordination, manage the daily operations of the BMCMPPO, and develop and maintain core documents. They also helped fund special studies like the 10th Street Mobility Study and Bloomington Transit's Transit Development Program.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

The Safe Routes To School (SRTS) program provides grant funding for projects that help to provide safe ways for children to walk to school. Grant awards are made for infrastructure improvements and educational programs. The BMCMPPO has acted as the lead facilitator in the development of local grant applications for the SRTS program. It established the SRTS Task Force in 2005 in response to a desire from residents to provide safe, non-motorized transportation options to and from area schools. Members of the SRTS Task Force include representatives of local schools, the health community, interested parents and citizens, and City and County departments. In 2009, the MPO continued to support SRTS initiatives, specifically, International Walk to School Day (October 7, 2009) and technical support for a SRTS grant application submitted to the State by MCCSC.



Phase I of the B-Line Trail was completed in 2009. The TIP shows how this project and all other federally funded transportation projects will proceed from design to construction.



2009 was the first year Binford/Rogers participated in I-Walk to School Day.



Metropolitan Planning Organization (Cont.)

Transportation Enhancement

The Transportation Enhancement (TE) program provides funding to help expand transportation choices and enhance the transportation experience through 12 eligible TE activities related to surface transportation, including pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and safety programs, scenic and historic highway programs, landscaping and scenic beautification, historic preservation, and environmental mitigation. In 2009, the BMCMPO developed local guidelines to administer the \$280,000 it is allocated by INDOT on an annual basis. The BMCMPO used these guidelines to award funding to the City of Bloomington for the University Courts historic brick street restoration project and Monroe County for Phase IIa of the Karst Farm Trail.

Complete Streets Policy

In January 2009 the BMCMPO Policy Committee adopted the Complete Streets Policy, the first of its kind in Indiana. The policy ensures that federally-funded local road projects will accommodate all users of the corridor including pedestrians, bicyclists, users of mass transit, people with disabilities, the elderly, motorists, freight providers, emergency responders, and adjacent land users. The policy was used to develop the FY 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program. The policy was awarded the “Outstanding MPO Planning Project” at the 26th Annual Indiana MPO Conference because the policy “exemplifies the principles of good, sound transportation planning.”

The 10th Street Mobility Study

The 10th Street Mobility Study is a joint effort of Indiana University, the City of Bloomington, and the BMCMPO to evaluate current and future transportation conditions for all modes of travel along the 10th Street corridor. The study will make recommendations for improvements that would address mobility issues along this important corridor. In 2009, a consultant was selected to lead the study and public workshops were held in April and September to receive input. The study is anticipated to be finished in the Spring of 2010.

IU, the City, and the BMCMPO held public workshops on the 10th Street Mobility Study in April and September to gather public input on the study area.



2009 PLANNING DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT

Special Projects



PRESENTATIONS & COMMUNITY EDUCATION
UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

Special Projects

Presentations and Community Education

Planning Department staff worked throughout the year to educate and inform the community about City Planning projects and initiatives. Staff members are frequently invited to make presentations in classrooms and at conferences.

MPO Conference Presentation

Raymond Hess gave presentations on “Bicycle Safety” and “Mobilizing a Safe Routes to School Task Force” at the Metropolitan Planning Organization Conference in October 2009 in Lafayette, IN. The “Bicycle Safety” presentation focused on the cause of bicycle crashes and preventive measures that can be taken to minimize threats to safety. The “Mobilizing a Safe Routes to School Task Force” presentation highlighted how a task force was formed in Bloomington and why it has been integral to the success of the local safe routes to school initiative.

Indiana University Guest Lectures

Tom Micuda, Josh Desmond, Scott Robinson, Linda Thompson, Raymond Hess, and Rachel Johnson all visited Indiana University classes throughout the year to discuss City Planning with students. Staff guest-lectured in classes at the School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Department of Sociology, the Kelley School of Business, the School of Health Physical Education and Recreation, the School of Education, and the School of Continuing Studies.

Indiana Bicycle Summit

Indiana held its first Bicycle Summit on October 17, 2009. Raymond Hess gave a presentation on how Bloomington became the first Bicycle Friendly Community in the State. He also highlighted ongoing efforts undertaken by the City and the community to encourage and promote cycling as a fun and viable form of transportation and recreation.

League Cycling Instructor Seminar

The City of Bloomington Planning Department hosted a League of American Bicyclists seminar for ten individuals wanting to become League Cycling Instructors. Raymond Hess (LCI #1848) assisted with the seminar and Joe Fish successfully completed the seminar resulting in the City of Bloomington having two League Cycling Instructors on staff.



The LCI seminar was an intensive 2.5 days of instruction that certified bicyclists to teach the League of American Bicyclists' curriculum

Special Projects (Cont.)

Traffic Skills 101 Bicycle Safety Class

Raymond Hess conducted a Traffic Skills 101 class to eight students in August 2009. The class is a rigorous nine-hour curriculum produced by the League of American Bicyclists teaching rules of the road, hazard avoidance, vehicular cycling principles, and other safety practices for cycling.

Commuter 101

Raymond Hess conducted a Bicycle Commuter 101 class to four students in May 2009. The three hour League of American Bicyclist course teaches rules of the road, basic bike maintenance, and other core strategies for bicycling commuting.

Learn to Ride

Raymond Hess taught a “Learn to Ride” bicycle class to ten adolescents in May 2009. The three hour class teaches basic bicycling skills and important safety lessons.

Scouts in Government Day

This event gives local Scouts the opportunity to visit City Hall and gain knowledge about city government. Planning Department staff also participated by giving an interactive presentation to the Scouts.

Citizens' Academy

Tom Micuda was a guest speaker at the Citizens' Academy, a course administered through the Bloomington Housing and Neighborhood Development Department to encourage civic involvement.

Habitat Stewards Class

Linda Thompson taught a session at the National Wildlife Federation's Habitat Stewards Class in 2009. Habitat Stewards are part of a community-based volunteer program that assists others in their area in the creation and restoration of wildlife habitat.



Traffic Skills 101 equips cyclists with the skills to ride a bike safely in traffic

Special Projects (Cont.)

Planning Post Newsletter



The Planning Department continued to produce the Planning Post in 2009. The newsletter, which is produced three times a year, recaps the Department’s latest projects, discusses recent development approvals, and provides information on City Planning in general. The free newsletter is distributed to over 100 subscribers.

This year, the Department moved to an online distribution of the Post. In addition to saving paper and postage, this new digital format allows readers to link from information presented in the newsletter to other related documents on the internet. Thus, the reader is able to easily find more in-depth background information on every article.

Peak Oil Task Force

Planning staff served as staff support to the Peak Oil Task Force, working with the Task Force to identify key activity nodes and to discuss various concerns relating to Peak Oil planning.

Vacation of Rights-of-Way

Planning staff spent considerable time reviewing and processing requests for vacation of public rights-of-way. In 2009, staff processed two right-of-way vacation requests. The first request was for a location at West Eleventh Street (Upland Brewery) to allow for future building development. The second was for a right-of-way at Walnut Grove and Tenth Street, near Indiana University.

Unified Development Ordinance Amendments

In 2009 the Planning Department completed a two-year process of amending the Unified Development Ordinance, originally adopted in February 2007. Over ninety amendments were adopted during the process, taking effect on December 7, 2009. The amendments ranged from minor corrections and clarifications to significant enhancements in certain key policy areas. Important changes were made to the Downtown design overlays, parking standards were changed from minimums to maximums in most areas, and a new “green demolition” provision was created. The updated UDO can be viewed at www.bloomington.in.gov/udo.

Electronic Packets

In the pursuit of efficiency and environmental friendliness, the Department now distributes all meeting packets in electronic format via the City’s website. This includes meeting packets for the Plan Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Plat Committee, Hearing Officer, and all MPO Committees. This method allows quicker delivery of information, more transparency for the public, and greatly reduces the use of paper in the office.

2009 PLANNING DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT

2010 Goals



2010 DEPARTMENT GOALS



2010 Department Goals

In addition to the on-going duties and activities described previously, the Planning Department intends to take on a wide variety of special projects during 2010. The following list provides an overview of some key goals for the Department.

Formula Business Ordinance

The Department will continue to develop a Formula Business Ordinance for portions of Downtown Bloomington. This effort was initiated by the Mayor in early 2009. An ordinance proposal should be before the Plan Commission and City Council by the end of 2010.

Workforce Housing Program

This is another initiative begun by the Mayor in 2009. The Department will continue to coordinate this effort with the HAND Department. Significant research and analysis was conducted in 2009, which should translate to concrete program recommendations later in 2010.

Complete the College Mall Pedestrian Accessibility Study

Significant progress was made on this study during 2009, and it will be completed in the first half of 2010. This study will provide a menu of infrastructure projects that will enhance pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access in the College Mall area. Emphasis will be placed on implementation once the report is finalized.

Complete the City Public Facilities Study

The Department has been working on the City Public Facilities Study since 2008, due largely to the comprehensive scope of the project and the fact that no such analysis has been previously conducted by the city. The study will be completed in the summer of 2010, and will provide elected officials and decision makers with a better understanding of how their planning decisions impact city facilities and services.

Complete Annual Billboard Inventory

The Department completes an inventory of all existing billboards within the City's planning jurisdiction on an annual basis. This allows the City to track the gradual removal of these structures over time. The 2010 inventory update will be completed early in the year.

Complete Annual Scenic and Gateway Sign Corridor Video Inventory

Another signage inventory that the Department maintains is a video that documents existing signage along scenic and gateway corridors throughout Bloomington. This inventory provides a baseline for tracking signage changes, which is especially helpful in enforcement cases regarding illegally installed signage. The 2010 video update will be completed early in the year.

2010 Department Goals (Cont.)

Revise Public Hearing Filing Fees

Filing fees are required for all petitions filed with the Planning Department for public hearings, such as with the Plan Commission or Board of Zoning Appeals. It has been nearly twenty years since these filing fees have been updated. Planning Staff will work with the Plan Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals to adopt a revised fee structure that better reflects the modern cost of processing these petitions.

Successfully Complete MPO Certification Process

The Bloomington/Monroe County MPO is required to function according to standards provided by Federal law, working in cooperation with local partners as well as the Indiana Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration. Every four years the MPO must go through a certification process that documents the organization, function, programs, and results of the MPO. This process ensures that all MPO operations are consistent with Federal mandates. The MPO will complete its required certification in 2010.

Re-certify Long Range Transportation Plan

The MPO must adopt a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) every 5 years, and that plan must have a time horizon of at least 20 years at the time of adoption. The MPO will re-certify its existing 2030 LRTP during 2010 in order to establish a time frame for completing a more comprehensive update over the next few years. This approach will allow time for a more thorough review of the MPO's travel demand model as well as adherence to new Federal transportation regulations as the plan is developed.

Completion of Environmental Commission's County Greenspace Trends Report

The Environmental Commission has been focused on expanding their greenspace inventory to include not only the City but all of Monroe County. In 2010, a report on greenspace trends for the entire county will be created. This will be a vital tool for understanding where the respective jurisdictions are gaining or losing key greenspace resources.

Work in Tandem with HAND to Implement Phase I of Rogers Streetscape Project

The South Rogers Streetscape conceptual design was completed in 2009. Shortly thereafter, the City received a grant to fund the replacement of streetlights in the corridor with more efficient LED streetlights. Final engineering design of the corridor is now underway, a process in which the Planning Department is collaborating with the HAND and Public Works Departments.



2010 Department Goals (Cont.)

MPO Annual Documents

The MPO will complete its required annual documents by the end of the Fiscal Year (June 30). This includes the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The MPO will also complete the 2009 Crash Report, providing important data that influences the implementation of safety projects within the MPO area. In addition, the MPO will make updates to its Public Participation Plan to enable more efficient TIP amendments, and update its guidelines for the Highway Safety Improvement Program, a funding source for safety improvements.

The 10th Street Mobility Study

A consultant was selected and the 10th Street Mobility Study was initiated during 2009. The final presentation and report detailing the findings of the study will be produced in the first half of 2010. Upon completion, the City and IU will begin coordination on procedures and funding sources for future implementation of the study's recommendations for transportation improvements within the 10th Street corridor through the IU Campus.

Professional Development

Planning Department staff will continue to develop their skills and knowledge through a variety of professional development opportunities throughout 2010. Staff will attend the American Planning Association national conference in New Orleans, the APA-Indiana Chapter spring and fall conferences, the Annual MPO Conference in Louisville, Purdue Road School, and a variety of in-house "webinar" training courses.