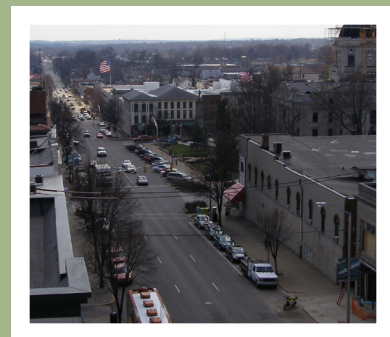




City of Bloomington, Indiana

# 2008 Annual Report

## *City of Bloomington Planning Department*







## A Message from the Director

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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 2008. This Annual Report documents the accomplishments of the department during 2008 and sets a course for continued progress in 2009.

I'd like to point out some of the department's notable accomplishments for the year (many more are detailed throughout the Report):

- An update to the Bicycle and Pedestrian and Greenways System Plan was adopted.
- The City's first Downtown Land Use Study was completed, providing a detailed analysis of nearly 600 downtown parcels.
- The department issued 827 Certificates of Zoning Compliance, including 188 for new construction, 245 for remodels or additions, and 243 for signage.
- The department processed 33 Plan Commission cases, 12 Plat Committee cases, 12 Board of Zoning Appeals cases, and 36 Hearing Officer cases.
- The department sent 424 notices of zoning violations to property owners and resolved 419 of these violations before year's end, including the collection of over \$11,000 in fines.
- Staff presented bicycle safety education and training to approximately 700 Bloomington adults and children.
- Environmental Commission staff updated the Bloomington Environmental Quality Indicators report.

The department is on track for another productive year in 2009. Despite the uncertain economy, development petitions and permits continue to flow into our office. A number of new 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 2009.

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

Andy Ruff,  
*President*  
Isabel Piedmont-Smith,  
*Vice President*  
Steve Volan,  
*Parliamentarian*  
Tim Mayer  
David Rollo  
Susan Sandberg  
Mike Satterfield  
Chris Sturbaum  
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, is a Certified League Cycling Instructor with the League of American Bicyclists. Joe Fish is 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*

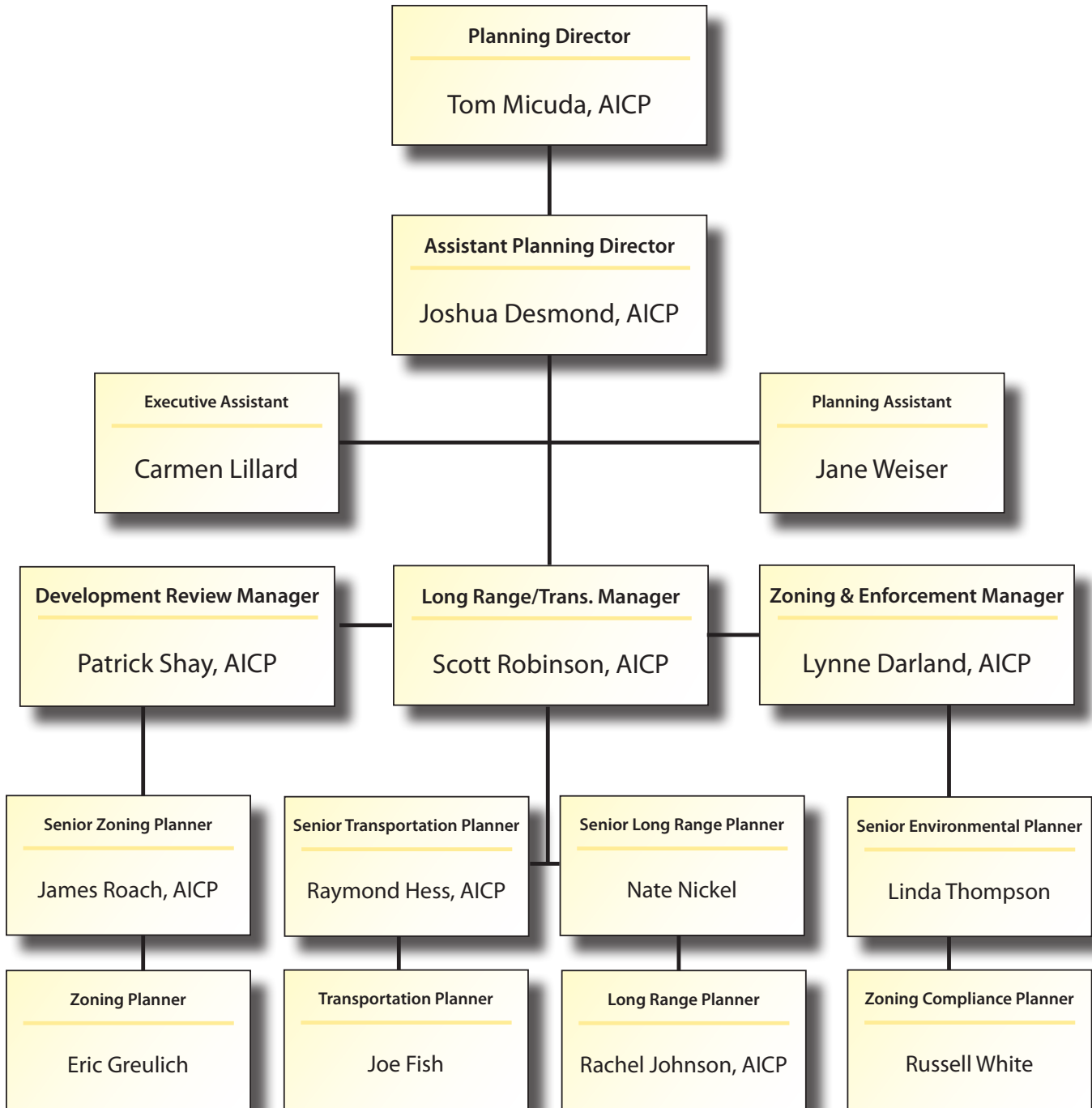
*Development Review Committee*

*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 present 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
Bill Stuebe, <i>President</i>	The Mayor
Milan Pece, <i>Vice President</i>	County Commissioners
Jack Baker	The Mayor
Scott Burgins	The Mayor
Susan Fernandes	Board of Public Works
Adrian Reid	City Engineer (ex-officio)
Joe Hoffman	Parks and Recreation
Tom Seeber	The Mayor
Isabel Piedmont-Smith	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.)

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### 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
Sue Aquila	The Mayor
Patrick Murray	Common Council
Milan Pece	Plan Commission
Tom Seeber	The Mayor
<i>Vacant</i>	The Mayor
Jenny Southern	Alternate

### 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.)

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### 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.

<b>Members</b>	<b>Appointed By</b>
Kelly Boatman, Chair	Common Council
Jacqui Bauer	Common Council
Regina DiLamore	The Mayor
Kriste Lindberg	The Mayor
Michael Litwin	The Mayor
Tom McGlasson	Common Council
Don Moore	The Mayor
Phaedra Pezzullo	Common Council
Heather Reynolds	Common Council
Erin Shane	The Mayor
Michael Tosick	Common Council



2008 PLANNING DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT

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# Programs & Activities



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



## Development Review

*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.*

### 2008 Activities and Accomplishments

#### Plan Commission

Development Review staff presented a total of 37 petitions to the Plan Commission in 2008. The Plan Commission approved 31 of these petitions and denied two petitions. The majority of these petitions (24 of 37) were requests for site plan approval. In addition, the Plan Commission heard cases concerning Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), subdivision plats, and use variances. Please see the chart on the following page for a list of the types of petitions filed in 2008. Out of the 37 total petitions filed with the Plan Commission in 2008, 22 (nearly 60%) were for projects in the Commercial Downtown (CD) zoning district.

2008 Plan Commission Cases	
Total number of petitions filed	37
Petitions approved (or a positive recommendation to BZA)	31
Petitions denied (or a negative recommendation to BZA)	2
Petitions withdrawn	2
Petitions filed in 2008 that will be heard in 2009	2

#### Plat Committee

Development Review staff presented a total of 12 cases to the Plat Committee in 2008. All 12 of these cases 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. Please see the chart on the following page for the types of petitions file in 2008.

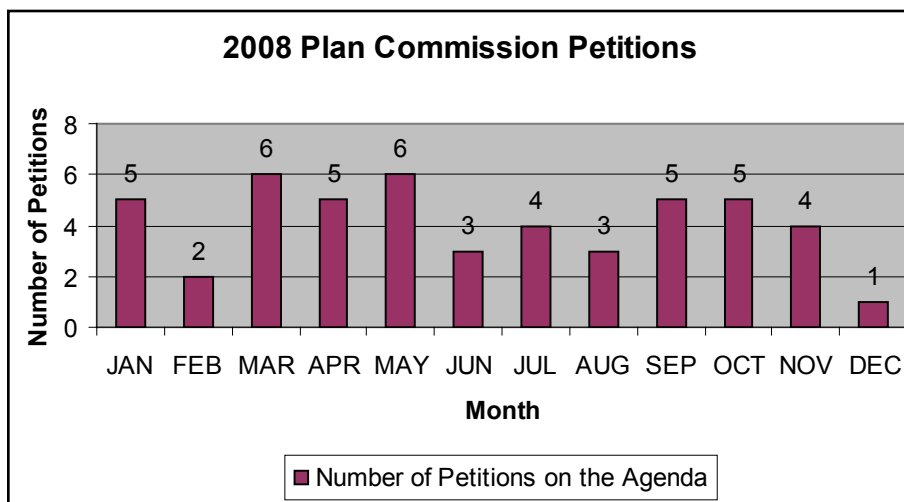
2008 Plat Committee Cases	
Total number of petitions filed	13
Petitions approved	12
Petitions denied	0
Petitions withdrawn	0
Petitions filed in 2008 that will be heard in 2009	1



## Development Review (Cont.)

Out of the 56 petitions filed for consideration by the Plan Commission and Plat Committee in 2008, the majority were for site plan approval and preliminary and final plat approvals. In addition, 6 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.

<b>Types of Petitions Filed to the Plan Commission and Plat Committee</b>	
Total number of petitions filed	56
Preliminary plan	1
Final plat approval	5
Site plan approval	24
Preliminary and final plat	9
Use variance recommendation to BZA	7
PUD amendment	2
PUD final plan	6
Rezone	1
Final plan and preliminary plat	1
Staff level review*	6



*Development Review staff presented an average of 4 petitions a month to the Plan Commission. The largest agendas were in March and May, which each had 6 petitions.*



## Development Review (Cont.)

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### Board of Zoning Appeals

The Development Review staff regularly presents cases to the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA). 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).

In 2008, 17 petitions were filed with by the Board of Zoning Appeals. Of these 17 cases, 9 were approved, 5 were withdrawn by the petitioner, and 3 were denied.

<b>2008 Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) Cases</b>	
Total number of petitions filed	17
Petitions approved by BZA	9
Petitions denied by BZA	3
Petitions withdrawn by petitioner	5

### Hearing Officer

The Hearing Officer decides on certain variance and conditional use requests. A total of 41 petitions were filed with the Hearing Officer in 2008. Of these petitions, 36 were approved, and 5 were withdrawn by the petitioner.

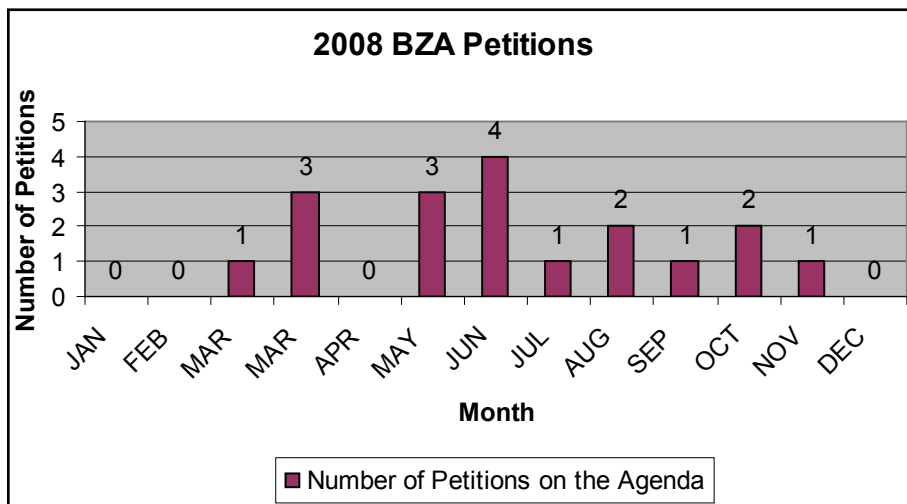
<b>2008 Hearing Officer Cases</b>	
Total number of petitions filed	41
Petitions approved by Hearing Officer	36
Petitions denied by Hearing Officer	0
Petitions withdrawn by petitioner	5



## Development Review (Cont.)

The vast majority of petitions heard by the Board of Zoning Appeals and the Hearing Officer were requests for variances from development standards. These made up nearly 75% of all petitions.

Types of Petitions Filed to the BZA and Hearing Officer in 2008	
Total number of petitions filed	58
Development standards variance, or package of variances	46
Use variance	7
Conditional use	4
Administrative appeal	1



*The Development Review staff presented an average of two petitions per Board of Zoning Appeals meeting throughout the year. The largest agenda was in June, with four cases.*



## Development Review (Cont.)

### 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 827 CZCs during 2008.

#### *Residential Building Permit Review*

Thirty-five percent of the total CZCs issued in 2008 were for single family residences. Of these 281 CZCs, 45% were for new construction, and 45% were for remodeling or additions to existing single family structures. Staff also reviewed building and remodel permit applications for attached single family residences and multifamily residential projects.

<b>Single Family Residential</b>	<b>CZCs Issued</b>
New construction	128
Remodel	60
Addition	65
Accessory Structure	27
Relocation	1

<b>Attached Single Family Residential (Duplex)</b>	<b>CZCs Issued</b>
New construction	23
Remodel	1
Addition	2

<b>Multifamily Residential (Apartments, Condominiums)</b>	<b>CZCs Issued</b>
New construction	11
Remodel	4
Accessory Structure	1





## Development Review (Cont.)

### Commercial Building Permit Review

Staff reviewed permit applications for commercial sites, including new construction and remodeling. Of the CZCs issued for commercial sites, 67% were related to remodeling of existing buildings.

Commercial	CZCs Issued
New construction	26
Remodel	99
Addition	12
Accessory structure	11

### 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 242 sign permit applications in 2008.

Signage	CZCs Issued
Permanent sign	129
Sandwich board sign	15
Temporary sign	98

### 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	45
Grading - commercial	38
Grading - multifamily residential	5
Occupancy ( <i>change in use</i> )	4
Other - remodel	1
Cell tower	4
Temporary occupancy ( <i>temporary use</i> )	17



## 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 either with written warnings, tickets, or, as a final option, legal action.*

### 2008 Activities and Accomplishments

#### Zoning Violation Notifications

Zoning enforcement staff responded to numerous inquiries or complaints from the public concerning zoning violations in 2008. As a result, staff sent 424 notifications to property owners regarding zoning violations. These included violations of environmental standards, parking on unimproved surfaces, or failure to comply with development standards (please see the chart below for a breakdown of the violations issued). Out of the total notices of violation sent in 2008, 419 were resolved before year's end. The five remaining violations should be resolved in early 2009.

<b>Unified Development Ordinance Violations (2008)</b>	<b>Number of Violations</b>	<b>Number of Violations Resolved in 2008</b>
Temporary signage without permit	115	114
Parking on unimproved surface	63	63
Permanent signage without permit	27	27
Change of use without a certificate of zoning compliance (CZC)	3	3
Illegal land use	3	3
Operation of home occupation without CZC	3	3
Failure to obtain a CZC	6	6
Failure to comply with CZC	17	17
Failure to comply with development standards	108	108
Violation of environmental standards	9	9
Parking on unimproved surface tickets	70	66
UDO violation totals	424	419

## 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 2008, thirteen cases were sent to the Legal Department. Of these, the City filed suit on two. The remainder were resolved prior to litigation.

The Planning Department issued fines totaling \$12,070 for zoning violations in 2008. By year's end, \$11,770 was collected. All fines collected go to the City's general fund. Of the cases sent to the Legal Department, \$26,081.82 in fines were issued. By year's end, \$19,927.19 had been collected. In total, the City collected \$31,697.19. The chart below breaks down the fines issued and collected by the Planning Department in 2008.

<b>Unified Development Ordinance Violations (2008)</b>	<b>Fines Issued</b>	<b>Fines Collected</b>	<b>Fines Remaining</b>
Temporary signage without permit	\$4,350.00	\$4,250.00	\$100.00
Parking on unimproved surface	\$260.00	\$260.00	\$0.00
Permanent signage without permit	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$0.00
Change of use without a certificate of zoning compliance (CZC)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Illegal land use	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Operation of home occupation without CZC	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Failure to obtain a CZC	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$0.00
Failure to comply with CZC	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$0.00
Failure to comply with development standards	\$2,700.00	\$2,700.00	\$0.00
Violation of environmental standards	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Parking on unimproved surface tickets	\$3,760.00	\$3,560.00	\$200.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$12,070.00</b>	<b>\$11,770.00</b>	<b>\$300.00</b>



## Zoning Enforcement (Cont.)

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### 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 2008, staff removed 1,554 illegal signs out from City rights-of-way. This was a considerable increase from 2007, when 1,293 illegal signs were removed.

### Billboard Inventory

Staff performed the department's annual billboard inventory to track compliance with the city's strict off-premise sign standards. Staff documented that six billboards, totaling 14 individual sign panels, were removed from the City's jurisdiction in 2008.



*Enforcement Planners inventory all billboards within the City each year.*

### 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 four Stop Work Orders in 2008. Three 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 2009 until the violation is remedied.

### Certificates of Occupancy

The City 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 Planning Department when 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 wrote 36 Final Certificates of Occupancy and 27 Temporary Certificates of Occupancy in 2008.

## 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, provides project management on City projects with environmental significance, and evaluates and implements City environmental regulations and policies.*

### 2008 Activities and Accomplishments

#### Environmental Commission Memos to Boards and Commissions

The Senior Environmental Planner works with the Environmental Commission 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 Environmental Commission (EC) regarding various petitions under review.

#### Environmental Commission Service Corps Fellow

The EC secured a Service Corps Fellow from Indiana University's School of Public and Environmental Affairs. The Fellow, Mark Lemon, worked on two important projects in 2008 under the guidance of the Environmental Commission and the Senior Environmental Planner.

#### Cost of Growth Report

In July, Lemon completed a report titled, "[An Examination of the Costs Associated with Residential Growth in Bloomington](#)." The work for this report was initiated in 2007 and was a main project for Mark Lemon. The purpose of the study was to begin to understand and quantify the costs that city government incurs in response to residential growth. The study examined the City's capital outlay projects (actual and proposed) in order to approximate the cost of providing public facilities and infrastructure for each new home that is added in the City of Bloomington. The study was modeled on the work of Fodor & Associates in a similar analysis done for the State of Washington. The report was presented to the Bloomington City Council in June.

#### Greenhouse Gas Inventory

In July, Lemon began working on a baseline inventory of Bloomington's greenhouse gas emissions. As part of this 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 will be completed and distributed in early 2009.

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

- Steering Committee
- Budget Committee
- Planning Committee
- Bloomington Environmental Quality Indicators
- Greenhouse Gas Reduction
- Education
- Green Building
- Cost of Growth/ Ecological Economics



## Environmental Planning (Cont.)

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### Environmental Commission Intern Projects

The Environmental Planning staff is provided with additional support by EC interns, who worked on several projects throughout 2008.

#### *Bloomington Environmental Quality Indicators*

Throughout the year, the EC interns continued to update information on the [Bloomington Environmental Quality Indicators Report \(BEQI\)](#). Intern Jacob Mazer provided major updates to the transportation page adding information on bicycle transportation and resolving conflicts with consumption data in the water page. The BEQI web report was also transitioned over from a stand alone website to a City webpage.

#### *Greenspace Report Update and Expansion*

Intern Trevor Hagedorn began expansion of the Environmental Commission's Green Space Report to include the entire county. He continues to work on digitizing the maps so that they can be used for a wider variety of applications.

### Environmental Planner Special Projects:

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

#### *Stormwater Regulations*

Thompson researched state and federal stormwater regulations and compared them with Bloomington's regulations. She made recommendations for amending the City's planning and utilities regulations, which would allow them to match the state and federal regulations.

#### *SWQG (Storm Water Quality Group)*

Thompson attended monthly meetings to discuss the various activities of the City, County, Ivy Tech, IU, and Ellettsville, regarding stormwater protection. The main emphasis in 2008 was promoting rain gardens.

#### *SWEET (Storm Water Environmental Education Team)*

SWEET is a committee of SWQG that focuses on environmental education. The main project during 2008 was brainstorming and moving forward with a "Green Spot" program, which will identify environmentally significant sites in Monroe County and mark them with a sign describing the green spot. "Green Spots" is planned to be launched in 2009.

#### *Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Map Update*

An update of FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Maps was accomplished in 2008. The department's Senior Environmental Planner also holds the title of Flood Manager, and therefore provided research and reports to FEMA. Due to the large flood in 2008 that inundated parts of the City, Thompson traveled to all floodplain areas and photographed them for future reference in flooding situations.

## Environmental Planning (Cont.)

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### *Team Green/Team Process*

Thompson participated with the City's Team Green to plan projects and initiatives to reduce the "environmental footprint" of City Hall. This work resulted in enhanced recycling within the Planning Department, an energy audit of City Hall, and a list of priorities and time line for future greening projects. Team Process is a newly formed committee of City employees tasked with developing more efficient, cheaper, and environmentally-conscientious methods for accomplishing tasks regularly conducted by employees. One task the team concentrated on in 2008 was to arrange a recycling program at several Parks Department facilities.

### *Natural Landscaping*

Thompson assisted Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) inspectors with determining if certain yards should be classified as "naturally landscaped". This involved site visits to identify the species of plants that were growing in the yards. The most notable activity in 2008 was the remediation of a yard that had been in long term negotiations with HAND.

### *Green Building Ordinance*

Staff researched many other communities' ordinances regarding a requirement for "green building", and assisting with draft language for Bloomington that was given to the City Council for deliberation. Currently, an audit of City-owned buildings is being conducted to evaluate when and to what extent they may need renovation.



*The environmental planner helps to promote green building techniques, such as green roofs.*



## Long Range Planning

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*The Long Range Planning staff is responsible for developing, implementing, evaluating, and revising comprehensive planning activities for the City of Bloomington. A keystone aspect of long range planning is the community comprehensive plan, or for Bloomington, 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.*

### 2008 Activities and Accomplishments

#### Downtown Land Use Study

Staff spent a significant amount of time in 2008 completing the first [Downtown Land Use Study](#). The study area includes all of the land in the City that is zoned Commercial Downtown. This district covers 200 acres and is comprised of 599 separate parcels. Staff surveyed the downtown, parcel by parcel, in order to gather the most accurate, up-to-date data on land use(s), parking, green space, and building height. In addition, staff compiled property assessment data, building square footage, properties with improvements since 2000, and historic structure information. Staff's analysis of the data provides many interesting insights into the current status of the downtown development. The Downtown Land Use Study was presented to the Plan Commission and to Downtown Bloomington, Inc., in November. Future updates to the Study will allow the department to track changes in downtown land use and anticipate future trends.



*The 2006 aerial photo shows a small portion of the 200 acres that was inventoried in the Downtown Land Use Study.*

#### City Public Facilities Report

In 2008, Long Range Planning staff began work on a study to evaluate municipal facilities and services. The study, known as the City Public Facilities Report, focuses solely on City of Bloomington departments. The goal of the study is to provide information regarding both short and long term municipal facility needs to City boards and commission members. The report is anticipated to be completed in the summer of 2009. Once completed, the document will be presented as an informational item to both the Plan Commission and City Council.



## Long Range Planning (Cont.)

### Neighborhood Plan Implementation

#### *Prospect Hill Conservation District*

Staff worked with the Prospect Hill Neighborhood to implement their Neighborhood Plan's goal of establishing a Historic Conservation District. Planning Department staff worked closely with the Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) Department and neighborhood residents to create the [Conservation District Guidelines](#). Staff supported the project through neighborhood input workshops and public information meetings and also provided the neighborhood with information regarding how zoning district regulations could be affected by a conservation district. The District was approved in April 2008.

#### *South Rogers Streetscape Project*

In the summer of 2008, the Planning Department, with assistance from the Schneider Corporation, began work on the [South Rogers Streetscape Project](#) by holding two charrettes with community members. The charrettes brought together members of the Prospect Hill Neighborhood, the McDoel Gardens Neighborhood, and surrounding businesses to explore design strategies for improving the South Rogers Street Corridor from Kirkwood Avenue to roughly Hillside Drive. The project includes streetscape design elements within the public right-of-way such as landscape features, street lighting, signage, and pedestrian and bicycle transportation improvements. These elements have been designed to create identity and a sense of place along the Rogers Street corridor. The plan, due to be completed in early 2009, will serve as a roadmap for future public and private streetscape investments along the corridor.



*Community members attended a charrette for the South Rogers Streetscape Project.*

### 2010 U.S. Census

Staff worked closely with Information & Technology Services staff and the United States Census Bureau to complete the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program. The LUCA program is a precursor to the decennial 2010 U.S. Census. It allows local governments to work with the Census Bureau to review and suggest edits on the Census Bureau's master list of addresses that are used to deliver all the official 2010 Census questionnaires. Planning staff reviewed Census Bureau addresses and field checked a large number of locations to verify information. The LUCA program was successfully completed in April 2008.



## Long Range Planning (Cont.)

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### New Department Website

The City launched a completely new and redesigned website in April, 2008. As part of this effort, Planning Department staff worked closely with the Information & Technology Services Department to design and develop the Planning Department's section of the new website. The new site has been designed from the ground up including new content and new technical and accessibility features, including enhanced maps.

### Rose-Hulman Student Projects

The Department worked with senior engineering students from Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology on a streamside restoration study of Cascades Creek through Cascades Park. The project was an academic study designed to provide the students with real world challenges and allow them to formulate realistic recommendations. The student project serves as a starting point for future community discussion about the project area. The students designed a restoration strategy that not only restores and stabilizes the creek with innovative and environmentally friendly techniques, but also incorporates pedestrian and bicycle amenities. The student recommendations will aid Planning Department staff and other City staff as future work is planned in Cascades Park.

*Rose-Hulman students inspected the status of Cascades Creek and collected information on the stream's flow and erosion problems.*



## 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.*

### 2008 Activities and Accomplishments

#### Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation and Greenways System Plan Update

In an effort to further strengthen pedestrian and bicycle transportation, the Planning Department recently completed revisions to the [Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation and Greenways System Plan](#). The revised document was then presented to the Plan Commission and the Common Council for final adoption. Originally adopted in 2001, the Plan provides a long-term vision for Bloomington's bicycle and pedestrian transportation system and focuses on strategies to implement bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the community.

The revision process focused on updating the maps of the facility network, prioritizing future projects and identifying ways to promote bicycle and pedestrian transportation. The revised Plan also includes some innovative ideas for improving bicycle and pedestrian transportation. For example, a bicycle boulevard program is identified in the revised Plan, along with a map of appropriate locations.

#### College Mall Pedestrian Accessibility Study

In 2008, Transportation Planning staff worked towards the completion of 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 is planned for completion in early 2009, and will consist 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.



*A public workshop was held to gain input on proposed revisions to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation and Greenways System Plan.*



## Transportation Planning (Cont.)

### Council Sidewalk Committee



*Planning staff uses tools, such as Pedestrian Level of Service, to help evaluate how pedestrian friendly a new project is.*

Planning staff provides technical and administrative support to the Council Sidewalk Committee. In 2008, the significance of staff's role was increased, as the Council asked staff to develop an objective project prioritization tool, using their stated criteria as the basis. Staff developed the tool, using Pedestrian Level of Service and [Walk Score](#) to objectively evaluate roughly 30 projects that had been proposed in previous years. Although the objective score was by no means the final decision making criteria, it helped the Council to focus their discussion in terms of their previously identified prioritization criteria. In 2009, staff plans to incorporate additional considerations into the prioritization scheme, such as transit and population density.

### County Alternative Transportation Coordination

Transportation planning staff worked with the County Planning, Parks, and Highways departments, as well as various citizens groups, to identify and prioritize alternative transportation projects in the County. The group has looked at a wide range of potential projects in Monroe County and prioritized them in terms of feasibility, cost, and other criteria. From the City's standpoint, transitions between the City and County are the most important aspect of these discussions.

### IU Bicycle Committee

Staff worked with officials from Indiana University to identify areas of collaboration and work toward improvements to bicycle transportation at and around I.U. Topics such as bicycle registration, bicycle maps, bicycle parking, and enforcement of traffic laws were addressed, and collaboration on these and similar issues is ongoing. The Planning Department's role is to provide information relating to City activities and to offer suggestions for making the I.U. campus more bike-friendly.

### Rose-Hulman Student Projects

The Department worked with senior engineering students from the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology on design ideas for the Indiana Avenue and Dunn Street corridors. The students developed feasible design alternatives for a new railroad crossing at the Dunn Street terminus and the Indiana Rail Road mainline tracks, addressing the mobility needs of pedestrians, bicycles, public transit service and rail freight. The project is an academic study designed to provide the students with real world challenges and allow them to formulate realistic recommendations. The student project serves as a starting point for future community discussion about the project areas.



## Transportation Planning (Cont.)

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### East/West Corridor Study Team

Planning staff participated in six meetings of the East West Corridor Study Team. The Team was created by the Chamber of Commerce as a result of their 2007 Infrastructure Task Force Report which identified east/west vehicular traffic as a burden on the community. Planning staff as well as other City officials provided updates to the Study Team on current plans for improvement to east/west thoroughfares.



## Metropolitan Planning Organization

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*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 ensure the requirements set forth by the Indiana Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration are met.*

### **2008 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 six meetings of the Policy Committee in 2008.

##### *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 2008.

##### *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 ten meetings of the Citizens Advisory Committee in 2008.

##### *Mobility Steering Committee*

The Mobility Steering Committee meets as needed to evaluate how well the area transit providers are serving the needs of the elderly, lower-income populations, and persons with disability. This committee also guides updates to the MPO's Coordinated Human Services-Public Transportation Plan. The Mobility Steering Committee met one time in 2008.

## Metropolitan Planning Organization (Cont.)

### 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 2008, as detailed below.

#### *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 2008, the Planning Department developed a grant proposal to improve infrastructure around Summit and Childs Elementary Schools. Although this proposal was unsuccessful at the state level, the process resulted in detailed recommendations for improving bicyclist and pedestrian safety at and around these schools. Staff also worked with Monroe County Community School Corporation (MCCSC) to develop an application for non-infrastructure funding at several K-8 MCCSC schools. This proposal was awarded \$75,000 and will allow MCCSC to hire a consultant to develop infrastructure recommendations to improve the safety and convenience of children walking or biking to school. Finally, the Planning Department worked with local schools to assist in the third annual International Walk to School Day.



*Children walking to school on International Walk to School Day.*

#### *Transportation Improvement Program [FY 2009-2012]*

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a short-term capital improvement plan that identifies road, trail, and transit projects that will use federal funding within the next four fiscal years. Eligible projects can generally be funded with up to 80% federal funds. The BMCMPPO was allocated approximately \$2.7 million in discretionary federal transportation construction funds in 2008. The BMCMPPO last amended the current TIP in November 2008. Money was allocated to such projects as the Rogers Street and Country Club intersection improvement and Vernal Pike reconstruction, among many other projects.



## Metropolitan Planning Organization (Cont.)

### *Unified Planning Work Program [FY 2009-2010]*

The Unified Planning Work Program ([UPWP](#)) 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. In 2008, the BMCMPPO adopted a two-year UPWP for the first time, including federal funding of approximately \$458,000. These funds helped the Planning Department foster intergovernmental coordination, manage the daily operations of the BMCMPPO, and develop and maintain core documents.

### *Highway Safety Improvement Program*

The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) was established by national transportation legislation to fund improvements to the transportation infrastructure. Specifically, the program is targeted at projects which can significantly and cost-effectively reduce hazards that cause fatal or incapacitating injuries. The BMCMPPO is responsible for administering this program consistent with federal legislation. Planning staff wrote procedures for administering over \$716,000 in HSIP funds in 2008. After adoption of the procedures by the Policy Committee, Planning staff issued a call for projects in September. The first grant under the program will be awarded in early 2009.

### *Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems Architecture*

The [ITS Architecture](#) is a plan that identifies how technology can be integrated into the transportation network to improve safety and efficiency. ITS technologies accomplish these goals by providing real-time transportation information to drivers, emergency responders, and/or maintenance crews. Examples of ITS technologies include roadside variable message signs which notify motorists of congestion or inclement weather, highway advisory radio, and traffic signal priority and preemption for emergency vehicles. The local ITS architecture was developed by BMCMPPO staff in 2008 through extensive coordination among public safety agencies, transit agencies, and departments responsible for the transportation infrastructure.

*The Complete Streets Policy aims to ensure that road projects accommodate all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians and users of mass transit.*



### *Complete Streets Policy*

BMCMPPO staff researched ways to accommodate the needs of all transportation users in response to concerns raised by the Citizens Advisory Committee about how transportation projects fell short of realizing the multi-modal priorities of the BMCMPPO. After over a year of coordination between the CAC, TAC and other local governmental officials, Planning staff was able to finalize a draft Complete Streets Policy in November. The [Complete Streets Policy](#) will ensure that local road projects programmed for federal funding by the BMCMPPO 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. It is anticipated that the final policy will be adopted by the BMCMPPO in early 2009.



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# Special Projects



PRESENTATIONS & COMMUNITY EDUCATION

UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

HOSPITAL LAND USE STUDY



## Special Projects

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### **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.

#### *Cornelius O'Brien Conference on Historic Preservation*

Downtown Bloomington played host to the Cornelius O'Brien Historic Preservation Conference in October 2008. Tom Micuda and Josh Desmond assisted with tours of key downtown redevelopment sites. Staff also created the tour maps that were distributed to conference attendees.

#### *Broad Ripple Visits Bloomington*

In July 2008, the City welcomed a group of citizens from the Broadripple neighborhood in Indianapolis. This group is working to plan for the future of Broadripple, and was interested in learning about the efforts being made in planning, sustainability, and economic development Bloomington. Josh Desmond presented an overview of local planning efforts and led a Downtown tour.

#### *MPO Conference Presentation*

Joe Fish and Raymond Hess presented "Multi-faceted Bicycle/Pedestrian Planning" at the Metropolitan Planning Organization Conference on October 8, 2008 in South Bend, IN. The presentation focused on how the Bloomington/Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization promotes alternative forms of transportation in its planning initiatives.

#### *Indiana University Guest Lectures*

Tom Micuda, Josh Desmond, Scott Robinson, Linda Thompson 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, and the School of Continuing Studies.

#### *Monroe County Board of Realtors Orientation*

The Board of Realtors conducts quarterly orientation and training sessions for new realtors. Part of this training includes presentations by City and County offices with which realtors typically interact. James Roach and Eric Greulich each presented information about planning, zoning and the Planning Department to the Board of Realtors in 2008.

#### *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.

## Special Projects (Cont.)

### *Citizens' Academy*

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

### *Indiana Recycling Coalition (IRC) Annual Conference*

Linda Thompson was an invited speaker at the IRC annual conference held in Bloomington. Thompson discussed the green building initiatives that the City is pursuing.

### *Pro Walk/Pro Bike Conference Presentation*

Joe Fish presented a poster on Pedestrian Level of Service analysis for the Pro Walk/Pro Bike conference in Seattle in September 2008.

*Transportation planners worked throughout the year to promote safe bicycle commuting to Bloomington citizens of all ages.*

### *Bicycling Safety Sensitizations*

Transportation Planners provided bicycling safety presentations to approximately 375 children and adults in 2008.

### *Road I Class*

Raymond Hess conducted three [Road I Classes](#) in 2008, with a total of 12 participants. The class is a rigorous 9 hour curriculum produced by the League of American Bicyclists teaching rules of the road, hazard avoidance, and vehicular cycling principles.

### *Commuter 101*

Transportation Planners conducted a three hour course teaching rules of the road and basic bike maintenance to 5 participants.

### *Summit Summer School Session*

Planners gave a 30 minute presentation about children bicycling safety to 200 participants.

### *SPEA Graduate Student Orientation*

Transportation Planners incorporated bicycle safety best practices into a "Need to Know" session for 75 participants.

### *Bike Light Campaign*

With the assistance of the Bloomington Police Department, Planners helped to equip cyclists at Washington St. and 2nd St. with front and rear bike lights, as well as information on basic bicycle safety.

### *Learn to Ride*

Staff helped to teach 32 children ages 4 to 10 how to ride a bike properly and important bicycle safety. The children were also fitted with helmets.





# Special Projects (Cont.)

## Newsletter

The Planning Department continued to produce the [Planning Post](#) in 2008. 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 via mail, and provided to many more interested readers in digital form. The newsletter is available online.



## Hospital Area Land Use Study

In response to community concerns about the future of Bloomington Hospital, the department conducted a study of the Medical (MD) zoning district in order to gain a better understanding of the current opportunities and constraints for development in the district. The MD district is composed of 60.78 acres and 170 separate parcels. The area includes the hospital property as well as numerous other medical uses on surrounding properties. For the project, staff surveyed each property to determine current land use. This information was then combined with Monroe County property assessor data, which includes ownership, and building square footage information for each parcel. The completed study helps to illustrate the existing conditions in the district, information that will help guide future land use decisions for the area.





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## 2009 Goals



2009 DEPARTMENT GOALS



## 2009 Department Goals

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*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 2009. The following list provides an overview of some key goals for the department.*

### ***Professional Development***

The department will continue to provide staff with opportunities for professional development, primarily through sending staff to various conferences and seminars. This will include the American Planning Association national conference, the APA-Indiana Chapter spring and fall conferences, the annual MPO Conference, Purdue Road School, and in-house “webinar” training broadcasts.

### ***Board & Commission Training***

The department will provide opportunities for board and commission members to learn more about a variety of planning topics by introducing educational sessions to regularly scheduled luncheon workshops. Special seminars on issues of significant importance may also be scheduled.

### ***UDO Amendments***

The department will present a final package of proposed UDO amendments in 2009. The amendments will deal with minor errors of language as well as more substantial regulatory and policy issues that have surfaced as the UDO has been in use since 2007. The amendments will be introduced to the Plan Commission in late Spring, with final adoption expected from the Common Council by the middle of 2009.

### ***Electronic Meeting Packet Distribution***

The department will explore the feasibility of providing meeting packets in electronic format on the City’s website. Currently, packets for the Plan Commission, BZA, and other bodies are distributed in hard-copy only. The Department will also explore the possibility of establishing an email list that notifies recipients when a new meeting packet is available online.

### ***Signage Inventories***

The department will continue to maintain and update its inventories of Billboards and Scenic/Gateway Signage. These efforts help the department understand how signage in Bloomington changes over time, particularly the rate at which billboards are removed from the planning jurisdiction.

### ***South Rogers Streetscape***

The department, in coordination with the HAND and Public Works Departments, will complete the South Rogers Streetscape study. After significant work with the consultant as well as a public input process, this project is close to completion. A final set of conceptual designs will be ready in early 2009, and will be followed by preparation of construction documents later in the year.



## 2009 Department Goals (Cont.)

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### *South Walnut Street Redevelopment Plan*

The department will initiate a study of the South Walnut Street corridor between Dodds Street and Winslow Road. This corridor, which underwent a significant road widening project in the early 1990s, is ripe for redevelopment. The corridor study will focus primarily on land use and redevelopment strategies, and may explore opportunities to improve the existing streetscape. A consultant will be secured to assist with the study.

### *New Neighborhood Plan*

The Department will initiate a new neighborhood plan process in the second half of 2009, beginning with solicitation of applications from interested neighborhoods. The City last completed a neighborhood plan in 2007, working with the Green Acres Neighborhood on the east side of the City.

### *Public Facilities Report*

The department will complete its first Public Facilities Report in mid-2009. The Growth Policies Plan directs the City to study its public services and infrastructure in order to better understand the interrelationship between those services and infrastructure and the growth of the community. In 2008, the Planning Department began collecting and analyzing pertinent data from City departments.

### *MPO Annual Documents*

The MPO will complete its required annual documents by the end of the Fiscal Year (June 30). These includes the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The MPO will also complete the latest Crash Report, providing important data that influences the implementation of safety projects within the MPO area.

### *North Campus Area Study*

The MPO, in partnership with the Public Works Department and Indiana University, will conduct the North Campus Area Study. With assistance from a consultant, the area around 10th Street through the IU campus will be studied. The result will be a series of recommendations to improve travel within the corridor for traffic, transit, bicyclists and pedestrians.

### *College Mall Area Pedestrian Accessibility Study.*

The department will complete a study of the east-side commercial area, focusing on key improvements to pedestrian accessibility. The study will provide a menu of infrastructure projects that will enhance pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access within this important community shopping node.