

Building Enforcement

200 Orange Street
203-946-8046

Department Head: Daniel O'Neill doneill@newhavenct.net 203-946-8048

Additional Point Person: Same as above
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Positions:	GF- 14	CF- 2
General Fund Budget:		\$ 906,420
Capital Fund Budget:		\$225,000
Special fund Budget:		\$0

Legal Authority: Charter

[Sec. 121 to Sec. 124](#) There shall be in the City of New Haven an office of building inspection and enforcement which shall be under the management and control of a director and shall consist of the following bureaus:

Bureau of Building Inspection

Bureau of Plumbing Inspection

Bureau of Electrical Inspection

Additionally, the Connecticut State Building Code Section 103.1 requires that each town, city, borough create a building code enforcement agency; Section 103.2 requires that the chief executive officer appoint an officer to administer the building code and such officer shall be known as the building official.

Mission/Overview:

The Building Department provides a high level of professional services through the issuance of building, electrical, plumbing and mechanical permits, inspections of all phases of construction and reconstruction by enforcing City ordinance and State statutes as they pertain to the public safety and welfare. Individuals cited for working without permits are issued "stop work" orders; abandoned structures open to trespass are ordered to be secured and, when necessary, ordered to be demolished. Building and demolition permits are withheld on tax delinquent properties. An ordinance amendment requiring fines up to \$1,000 for projects that start without a valid permit has been successful in reducing the projects that are not permitted and has increased permit revenues. The Department also incorporates the Permit and License Center, which issues permits and /or licenses for rooming house, vendor, broker, parking lot

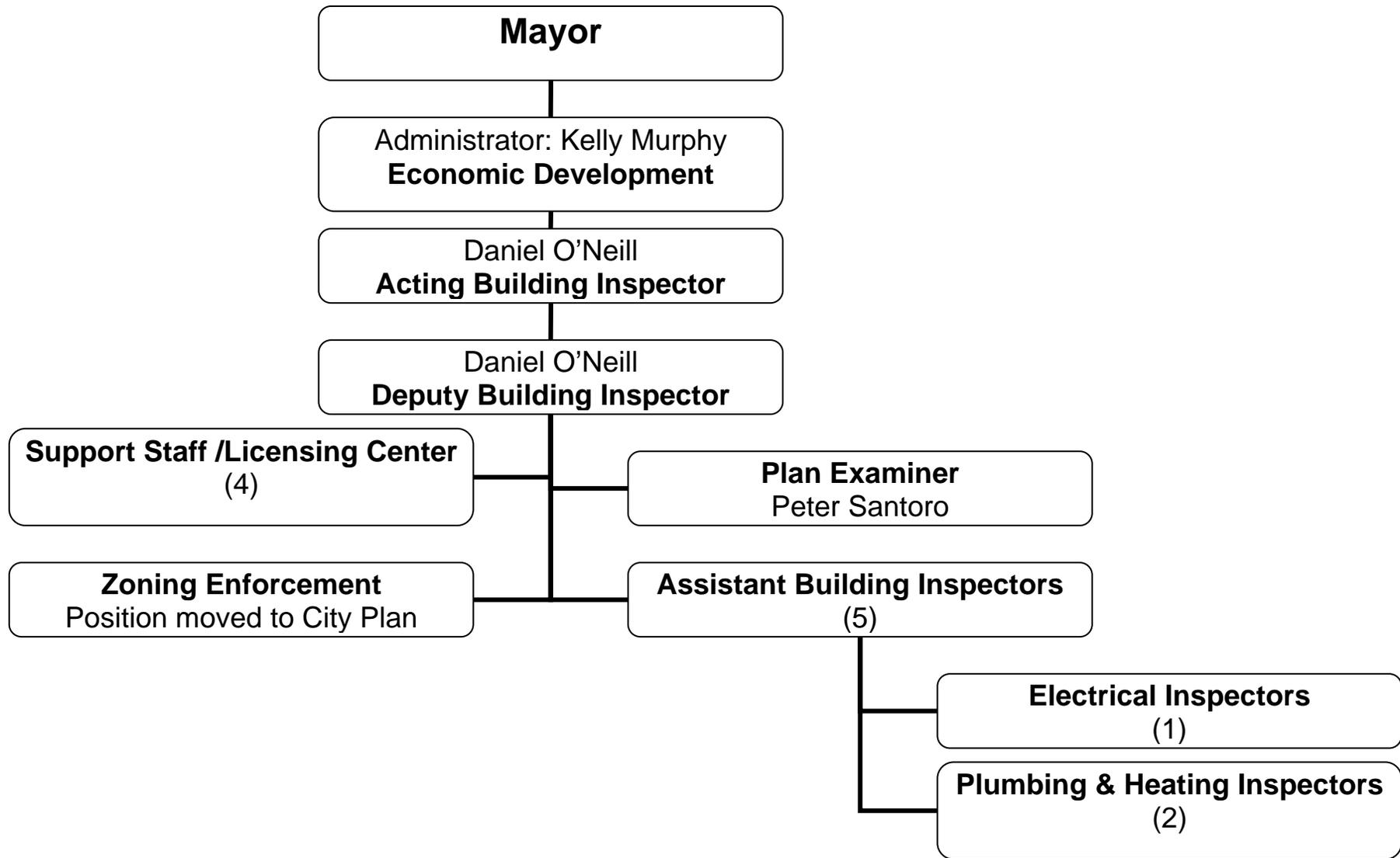
/garage, outdoor seating, street sidewalk excavations/obstructions, block parties, and public assemblies.

The Building Department staff works with L.C.I. staff to abate problem properties, Fire Department staff during emergency operations, and City Plan staff helping guide proposed projects through the permitting process.

The Department uses the View Permit Software for permit issuing and tracking, and has incorporated the use of tablets for the inspectors in the field to enable real time inspection input.

Attention Required by March 31st:

- **Pending Demos**



Budget Summary:

The most significant line item for the Building Department are salaries-\$851,820.00 out of \$906,420.00

The capital projects budgeted - \$225,000.00 is reserved for emergency demolition costs.

The Building Department generates between \$6,000,000.00 and 9,000,000.00 in revenue per fiscal year with Yale University and Yale New Haven Hospital making up about half of this figure. The city has one of the highest permit fee schedules in the state.

AGENCY ITEM	721 BUILDING & INSPECTION BUDGET	DESCRIPTION
Salaries	\$851,820	Salary for staff consisting of 15 employees
Overtime	\$7,000	Inspectors are on call 24 -hours for emergencies
Mileage	\$15,000	Reimbursement to ten inspectors for the use of their personal vehicles
Professional Meetings	\$1,000	To allow 11 inspectors to attend code seminars
General /Office Supplies	\$3,000	Covers general office supplies as needed
Books, Maps & etc.	\$1,000	Mandated, updated code books and related literature. Spent \$1,171.04 on 9/9/13 for new code books. New code to be adopted 10/13
Duplicating & photo	\$1,000	License center supplies
Printing & Binding	\$1,500	Printing supplies
Reg, Dues, & Subs.	\$1,000	Yearly membership dues and education subscriptions for 11 inspectors
Rental of Equipment	\$0	No longer funded
Maintenance Agreement	\$12,100	Yearly maintenance fee for Viewpoint (building and business license software programs
Other Contractual Services	\$12,000	Services of fordered citations delivered by the state marshals
Total	\$906,420	

Summary of Open Items:

At Present Daniel O'Neill is filling in as Acting Building Official, while at the same time continuing to fulfill his duties as Deputy Building Inspector. When a New Building Official is appointed, he will resume his regular position as Deputy Building Inspector.

Major Functions / Projects:

Permits:

The Building Department issues permits and conducts inspections on all construction activity in the City, excluding public right of way work such as roads/bridges, and also excluding work on State and Federal property. Some of the larger projects currently underway or anticipated in the near future are:

- New Yale dorms at Sachem and Prospect
- 100 College Street
- 205 Church Street
- Various Science Hill projects at Yale
- Winchester Lofts at Science Park
- Renovations to Yale-New Haven Hospital-St. Raphael Campus
- Chapel & Howe project
- College & George

Permit & License Center:

The Building Department incorporates the Permit and License Center- a one stop center issuing the following non-construction permits:

- Parking Lots/Garage License
- Vendors License
- Brokers License
- Outdoor Seating License
- Tag Sales Permit
- Auction/Auctioneers License
- Sales Permit
- Rooming House License
- Excavation License
- Sidewalk License
- Obstruction Permit
- Special Events Permit
- Amusement Permit

Abate Problems:

The Building Department works with Livable City Initiative and the Fire Marshal to abate problem properties, such as buildings chronically open to trespass, buildings in need of demolition, and buildings that contain an illegal use and occupancy. Inspections are made, orders sent if needed and depending on the response from the owner/contractor, followed up with permit being issued or referred to Corporation Counsel for legal action, or closed out with no action needed.

View Permit:

The Building Department uses an on-line permit system through the View Permit software. At this time this is for simple permits only: roofing, siding, windows, and water heaters. This enables contractors to take out these simple permits without having to come to the office.

Site Review Process:

The Building Department works close with City Plan staff to guide developers through the site plan review process. Building Department staff attends site plan review meetings twice a month to go over proposed construction projects and advises developers of potential Building Code issues before plans are finalized.

Food Service Establishments:

The Building Department works with the Health Department in certifying new food services establishments. We check our records to ensure that food service establishments are compliant and we sign-off on their licensing request.

FEMA Flood Maps:

The Building Department helps the public, design professionals, and other City Departments interpreting FEMA Flood Maps and we retain all flood map records including FEMA Elevation Certificates and FEMA- Letters of Map Amendment.

Maintain Plans:

The Building Department stores all plans and permits submitted. We have permits that go back to the 1890's and blueprints that go back to the 1920's. Our records determine the legal occupancy of all buildings in the City of New Haven. Staff assists appraisers, real estate agents and others in determining the legal occupancy of a structure.

Key Systems/Processes:

View Permit:

The Building Department has installed a permit software system called View Permit. This system allows staff to view all permits from their desktop or mobile-devices. Inspectors are able to enter inspections from the field and also check whether permits have been issued for a particular property. Various City Departments are also connected to View Permit and thus are able to review the permit records from their specific locations.

Site Plan Review:

The Building Department is a key part of the site plan review process, attending twice a month meetings and advising potential developers of possible Building Code issues before plans are finalized. Once through the site plan review meeting process the developer would bring three (3) copies of the completed plans to the Building Department where we stamp them and direct the developer where he/she needs to go for signoffs directly on the plans.

System Deficiencies/Attention Required:

Add position – assistant electrical inspector:

The City of New Haven has been operating with one electrical inspector. For a city the size of New Haven which has a large volume of electrical installations, from typical residential to extremely complex institutional and commercial, having one electrical inspector puts the city at risk. At present, the electrical inspector inspects on an as called and emergency basis. This means that many electrical installations that really should be inspected are not. For comparison purposes, the City of Bridgeport has three (3) electrical inspectors; the city of Waterbury has two (2) electrical inspectors; and the City of Stamford has two (2) electrical inspectors. Neither of these cities have the scope or complexity that New Haven has.

Archiving documents:

At present the Building Department retains all construction documents including plans submitted. We at present have started to fill up the vault on the second floor of the Hall of Records, inside the Credit Union. Once this is done (probably within five years) additional space will be needed. Attention needs to be given to acquiring some sort of digital archiving system. Budgeting for this will be challenging.

The reports function of the View permit software system is almost unusable in its present configuration. We need to urge the software contractor to upgrade the system.

Zoning Enforcement is currently divided mostly between City Plan, Livable City Initiative (LCI), This might be consolidated within one department.

Sprint is the city cell phone carrier. Our experience with sprint has shown it to be slow and prone to dropped calls and slow response times for our online real time inspection recording.