

Williamson County, Tennessee
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Department of
Community Development
2008 ANNUAL REPORT



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
BUILDING CODES
CODES COMPLIANCE
ENGINEERING
PLANNING
SEWAGE DISPOSAL MANAGEMENT

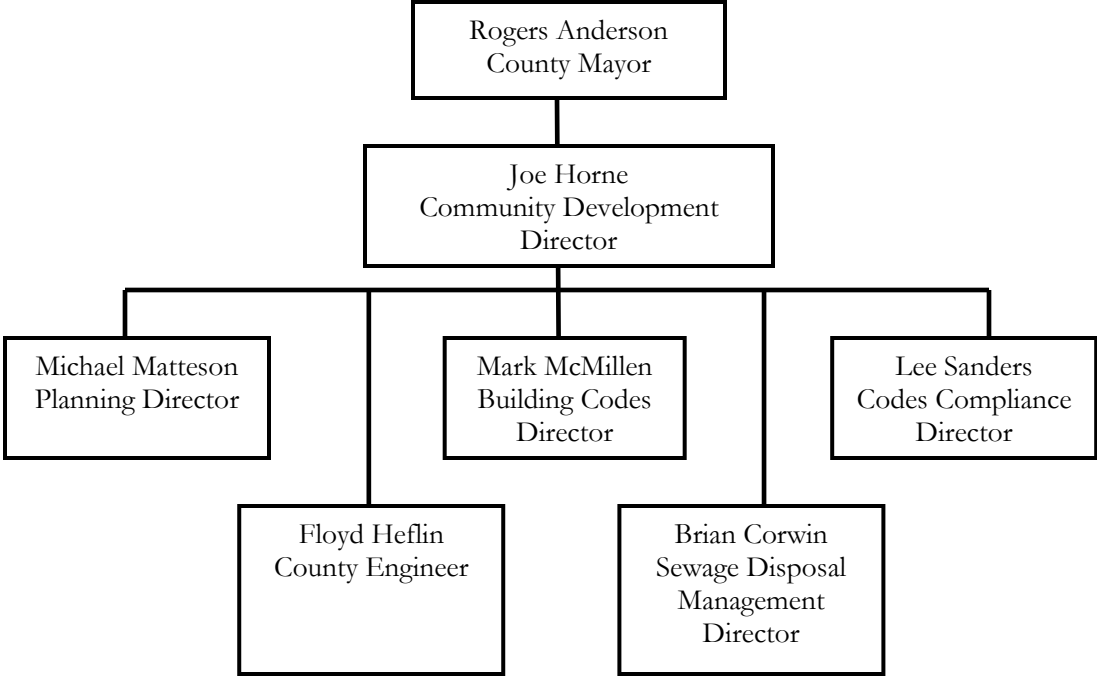
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Community Development

Introduction

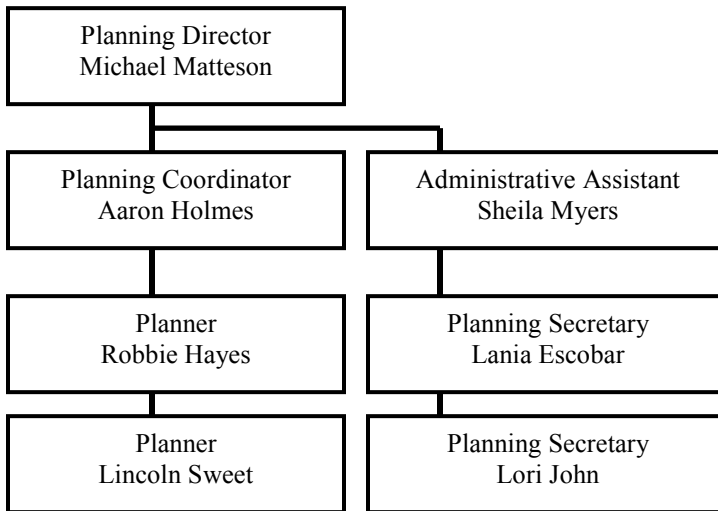


The Community Development Department provides the framework for planning and development services for the unincorporated portion of Williamson County. In a county undergoing the growth confronting Williamson County, it is important these services are integrated as much as practicable. The integration of these services allows not only for the provision of housing and related services to our community, but allows for the opportunity to monitor these markets and develop new techniques to mitigate the effects of this growth.

Planning & Zoning

Introduction

County Planning plays an integral role in maintaining the quality of development in Williamson County. This role includes assisting developers and the general public in administering the Zoning Ordinance and other regulations. This department is responsible for support of the County Board of Commissioners, the Williamson County Regional Planning Commission, the Highway Commission, and other boards that may require routine aid in administering and interpreting the Zoning Ordinance, the Subdivision Regulations and Flood Plain Regulations, and for any specific research that may arise.



The County’s Planning Department is located on the 4th floor of the Williamson County Administrative Complex along with the Building Codes, Codes Compliance, Engineering, and Sewage Disposal Management Departments. County Planning services are directed by Michael Matteson, Planning Director, who is assisted by Aaron Holmes, Robbie Hayes, and Lincoln Sweet.

Overview

The following is a summary of the activity for 2008. This data will allow the Staff, the Planning Commission, the Board of Commissioners and the general public insight into the amount of growth within the county.

Zoning Certificates

This form is the beginning of the planning process for both the general public and developers. For every inquiry, whether it be for a new home, an addition to an existing home, a swimming pool, a subdivision, or a non-residential development, a Zoning Certificate is required. This form serves two purposes. The first is to provide both the staff and the applicant with a written record of the required procedure to achieve an approval. Secondly, this written record can alleviate any misunderstandings between the staff and the applicant.

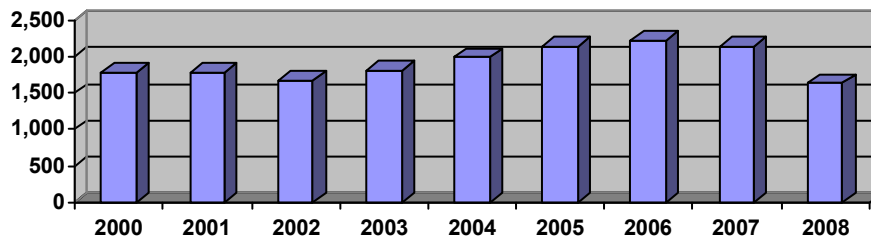
When a request for a Zoning Certificate is submitted, the staff pulls the property assessment card, confirms the zoning, the use that is currently on the property, and the floodplain status, if any. Staff will determine if the requested use can occur on the property and, if it is allowed, the applicant may proceed. In some instances, the Plans Review process is required before the staff can grant approval to a use. Plans Review provides each department, i.e. Building Codes, Codes Compliance, Engineering, Highway, Planning, and Sewage Disposal an opportunity to review the request to ensure it meets their requirements as well. In 2007, the Community Development Department incorporated workflow software, Laserfische, into the building permit process, which has aided in a more effective and efficient review of plans. This software gives the Planning Department greater coordination and flexibility with other departments during the building permit process.

As a general practice, “same day service” is the goal. However, per Section 9230 of the Zoning Ordinance, the Staff may take up to three (3) days to approve a request for a single lot development, and up to thirty (30) days for multiple lot developments. The Staff attempts to make the wait for approval as short as possible in all instances.

In 2008, the staff processed 1,636 Zoning Certificates. See Figure 1 below.

Figure 1

Zoning Certificates Issued 2000-2008



Map Amendments

There were no amendments to the zoning map made in 2008, i.e. requests to rezone property.

Text Amendments

In 2008, there were five (5) amendments to various regulations utilized by the Planning Department. Some of these amendments go hand in hand, i.e. if one regulation is amended, another might have to be amended in order to achieve the desired result.

- There were two (2) amendments to the Williamson County Zoning Ordinance.
- There was one (1) amendments to the Williamson County Subdivision Regulations.
- There were no (0) amendments to the Williamson County Stormwater Regulations.
- There was one (1) amendment to the Williamson County Wastewater Regulations.
- There was one (1) amendment to the Williamson County Planning Commission Bylaws.

Major Subdivisions

Major subdivisions are defined as those consisting of five (5) or more lots. In this category, there are not only conventional subdivisions but Resource Conservation Developments (RCDs) and Planned Resource Conservation Developments (PRCDs) as well. The following table details the activity for this year. See Table 1 below.

Table 1

	Name	Section	Lots
1	Black Hawk	3	9
2	Black Hawk	4	2
3	McMillan Farms (Re-Approval)		6
4	Rocky Fork Estates		5
5	Cartwright Close (Re-Approval)		22
6	Grove Park, Addition 1		18
7	Lasater Property		2
8	York Acres		2
9	Cascade Estates		14
10	Delta Springs		28
11	Silver Stream Farm (Re-Approval)	3	36
12	Ivan Creek		59
13	Southall Heights		4
14	Tomlin Acres		3
15	Laurel Cove	1	2
16	Laurelbrooke	11F	22
17	Reidling Acres		3
18	Temple Hills Country Club (Revised)		2
19	Bruce Property		2
20	Trey & Linda Duke Property		1
21	Chardonnay	1	2
22	Cunningham Property		2
23	Laurelbrooke (Revised)	11F	22
24	Laurelbrooke (Revised)	12B	26
25	Trace Creek Heights		5
26	Virginia Bean Property		2
27	Cartwright Close (Revised)		21
28	Lilly Lake		5
29	Silver Stream Farm	5	32
30	Sleepy Hollow Pointe		1
31	Chardonnay (Revised)	1	2
32	Chardonnay	2	44
33	Stag's Leap	2A	19

Minor Subdivisions

Minor Subdivisions consists of no more than two (2) lots. Where there are no bondable improvements required, Staff has the discretion to review and approve these plats. In 2008, Staff approved 46 Minor Subdivisions consisting of 57 lots.

Plat Revisions

Plat Revisions that contain two (2) or fewer lots are subject to review and approval by the Staff. There are many different items that may be dealt with on a revised plat, including a lot line shift. In 2008, Staff approved revisions to 58 plats.

Non-Residential Site Plans

The Planning Commission has reviewed a diverse range of non-residential site plans. In 2008, there were five (5) non-residential site plans reviewed with a total of 29,634 square feet. Table 2 outlines those plans reviewed.

Table 2

	Project Name	SF	Comments
1	Triune Baptist Church	9,685	Addition
2	Locust Ridge Primitive Baptist Church	8,449	Re-Approval
3	Tap Root Event Center	10,000	
4	Gentry's Farm	N/A	
5	Old Hope Church of Christ	1,500	Accessory

Conditional Uses

The Zoning Ordinance defines a conditional use as having some special or unique impact on the surrounding properties. Conditional uses are evaluated by the Planning Commission through the public hearing process. In 2008, the Planning Commission reviewed fourteen (14) conditional uses. Table 3 illustrates those reviewed.

Table 3

	Project Name	SF	Comments
1	Foliage Management Group	1,875	
2	Stillwater Golf Course	N/A	
3	Wildwood Studio	1,486	
4	Rainey Kirk Illustrator	800	
5	M&M Lawn Care	1,820	
6	StripeCo, LLC	600	
7	Mid-American Distributors	N/A	
8	Mid-American Distributors	N/A	
9	Young Water, LLC	500	
10	Chardonnay Amenity Center	N/A	Revised
11	Center for Living & Learning	3,500	
12	California Concepts, Inc	4,240	
13	The Footer Company	1,596	
14	Steppenwolf Productions	1,883	

Staff Level Site Plans

The Zoning Ordinance allows Site Plans for certain uses in certain Zoning Districts to be reviewed and approved by Planning Department staff, rather than by the Planning commission. Table 4 lists those Site Plans approved at the staff level.

Table 4

	Type	SF/Lots	Comments
1	Hayes & Associates Nursery		
2	Berea Church of Christ	720	Addition
3	Silver Stream Farm		Temporary Use, Sales Trailer
4	Grassland Lawncare	1,282	
5	Gardens @ Old Natchez	300	Addition
6	Triune Reality Office	4,175	
7	Mallory Valley Utility	1,900	Pumping Station
8	Milcrofton Utility	1,600	Pumping Station
9	Henpeck Market	5,000	Addition
10	Julia Stewart Nursery		
11	Trinity Elementary School	11,182	Addition
12	Flat Creek Community Center		
13	Excell Communications, Inc		
14	Community Life Fellowship		Portable Classroom
15	King's Chapel Amenity Center		
16	Cecil Lewis Park @ Trinity		Lighting
17	Now & Then Antiques		
18	Keystone, Section 3		Common Area
19	Silver Stream Farm Amenity Center		
20	Grassland Lawn Care		
21	Osburn Park		
22	Halfway Market		
23	Hatcher Family Dairy		
24	Chardonnay Amenity Center		
25	Butterfly Meadows		Rural Retreat
26	Dog Grooming Service		
27	Hillsboro Elementary School		Portables
28	Lynnwood Utility, Beech Creek		
29	Pegasus Tower		
30	Dignity, Inc.		
31	Henpeck Market		
32	Pinewood Heights Elementary	3,000	Addition
33	Page High School		Renovation

34	Allen West Dental Office		
35	Chardonay		Sales Trailer
36	Nobel Goat Farm		

Update to the Williamson County Zoning Ordinance

One of the major goals of the Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted in the fall of 2007, is to update the County’s Zoning Ordinance. In October, the Board of County Commissioners established the Zoning Ordinance Revision Steering Committee. This Committee consists of five (5) members. Commissioners Judy Hayes and Mary Brockman represent the Board of County Commissioners, John Lackey represents the Regional Planning Commission, and Tommy Murdic and Robert Ring represent the general public. After finishing the Comprehensive Plan, McBride Dale Clarion was selected to continue their work with the County by aiding in the efforts to revise the Zoning Ordinance. In November 2008, McBride Dale Clarion produced a staff review draft of the first of three modules that make up the new Zoning Ordinance. The update to the Zoning Ordinance is scheduled to be completed in late Summer 2009.

College Grove Special Area Plan

In the fall, the County began the process of developing a Special Area Plan for the College Grove Village. The Plan will articulate a vision for the future of the Village and will serve as a guide for future land use decisions. The plan will also form the basis for tailored development standards, which will help implement the vision described in the Plan. It is anticipated that the Plan will be completed in the spring of 2009.

Update to the Major Thoroughfare Plan

Planning efforts for the Nashville Area MPO’s Southwest Mobility Study, which will address current and future transportation needs in the southwest portion of the MPO region, were begun in late 2008. As a part of this larger study, the County’s Major Thoroughfare Plan will be updated. This Plan will evaluate the County’s long-range transportation needs along with the needs of portions of adjacent counties. It is anticipated that the Plan will be completed in the first quarter of 2010.

Planning Goals for 2009

The Planning Department has established a number of goals for the coming year. Chief among these goals is completing the update to the County’s Zoning Ordinance, which establishes rules and regulations related to land development in the unincorporated County. Additionally, the department will complete the College Grove Special Area Plan and will begin planning efforts for the Triune Special Area Plan. Other key planning efforts will involve updating the County’s Subdivision Regulations, its Major Thoroughfare Plan and the traffic shed methodology contained within the Zoning Ordinance.

Codes Compliance

Introduction

Codes Compliance plays an integral role in maintaining the quality of life in Williamson County, assisting developers and the general public negotiating zoning and other regulations to the mutual benefit of both. This department is responsible for support of the Board of Zoning Appeals and other boards for the routine processes of administering and interpreting the Zoning Ordinance, issuing sign permits, zoning inspections, and for specific research as the need arises. Codes Compliance is the enforcement branch of the Community Development Office.

Codes Compliance is located on the 4th floor of the Administrative Complex, along with the Building Codes, Planning and Engineering Departments. Codes Compliance activities are directed by Lee Sanders, Codes Director, who is assisted by Linda Hodges, Michelle Jackson, and Brenda Midgett.

Table 5

Board of Zoning Appeals Cases For	Total 2004	Total 2005	Total 2006	Total 2007	Total 2008
Total Agenda Items	26	23	16	26	20
Variances	14	13	9	8	8
Appeals	1	2	2	4	0
Special Uses	9	7	2	8	9
Other	1	0	2	6	3

Special Uses By Category

Table 6

Mobile Home as Temporary Residence	2	2	0	0	0
Accessory Dwelling	3	0	0	4	5
Farm Employee Housing	1	0	0	1	0
Communications Tower	2	0	0	0	0
Events of Public Interest	NA	5	2	3	3
Family or Adult Day Care	1	0	0	0	1

Board of Zoning Appeals Members for 2008

Dave Ausbrooks - Chairman

Steve Wherley - Vice Chairman

Don Crohan – Secretary/Representing the Planning Commission

Ed Jagers – Regular Member

Inspections

The Codes Compliance Department is also responsible for numerous inspections and related enforcement. Some of these inspections are based on building permit activity and some are initiated from complaints received from the public. Compliance inspectors are expected to initiate inspections of violations and non-permitted construction as they patrol the county.

Table 7

Activity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Complaints Logged	218	198	209	215	172
Complaints/ No Violation Cited	65	74	92	61	53
General Code Violations = Complaints – No violation	NA	NA	117	154	119
Cases Closed This Year	177	205	195	197	188
Signs Removed	388	341	351	123	458*
Sign Violation Notices	117	97	62	46	162*
Sign Permits	88	96	69	71	70
Overgrown Lot Cases	14	13	10	6	15
Overgrown Lot Inspections	0	0	45	18	34
Pool Permits	NA	NA	109	113	90
Pool Fence Inspections	224	299	317	375	215
Mobile Home Permits	NA	NA	27	19	11
Mobile Home Inspections	69	62	133	72	82
Junk Car Cases	36	20	18	16	28
Junk Car Inspections	NA	NA	76	62	66
Zoning Advisory Letters	27	21	16	14	32
Department Phone Calls	1710	1712	2420	2344	2038
Permits Reviewed	1343	1388	1386	912	885

* There were many signs placed in violation that were removed, but no notice was sent, either because of time limitations or inability to determine name/address of responsible party. Agreement was reached in 2008 allowing our office to administer the Williamson County Zoning Ordinance regulations in State rights-of-way. That, and the 2008 elections, resulted in a large increase in the number of unpermitted off-site signs picked up by Staff.

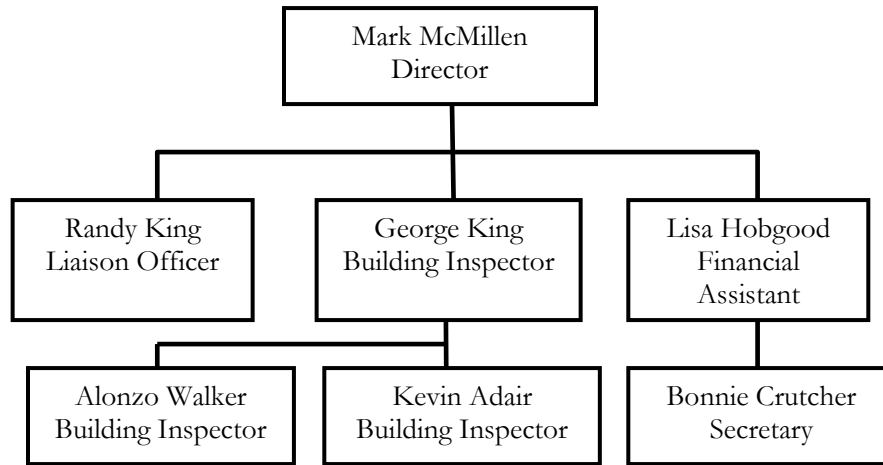
Building Codes

Introduction

Serving an integral role in the development of Williamson County, the Department of Building Codes insures that all construction within the unincorporated areas of the County meets current building codes adopted by the Board of Commissioners.

Organization

Grouped under Community Development with Codes Compliance, Engineering, Sewage Disposal Management, and Planning, the Building Codes Department is directed by Mark McMillen. He is assisted in the field by Inspectors George King, Alonzo Walker, Kevin Adair, and Randy King as a liaison between the public and other Departments. Office assistance is provided by Lisa Hobgood and Bonnie Crutcher.



Building Permits

Building permits for new single family dwellings declined drastically in the last quarter of 2008. Three of the last five months had only five or less new single family permits issued. Homebuilders are optimistic that by the second quarter of 2009 building will return to a steady growth rate. The following Table 8 shows Building Permits and valuation issued in the unincorporated area of Williamson County for the past four years. See Figures 2 and 3 below.

Table 8

Year	New SFR	Valuation	Total Permits	Valuation
2008	193	\$79M	636	\$131M
2007	322	\$157M	781	\$187M
2006	448	\$188M	865	\$221M
2005	440	\$171M	895	\$241M

Figure 2

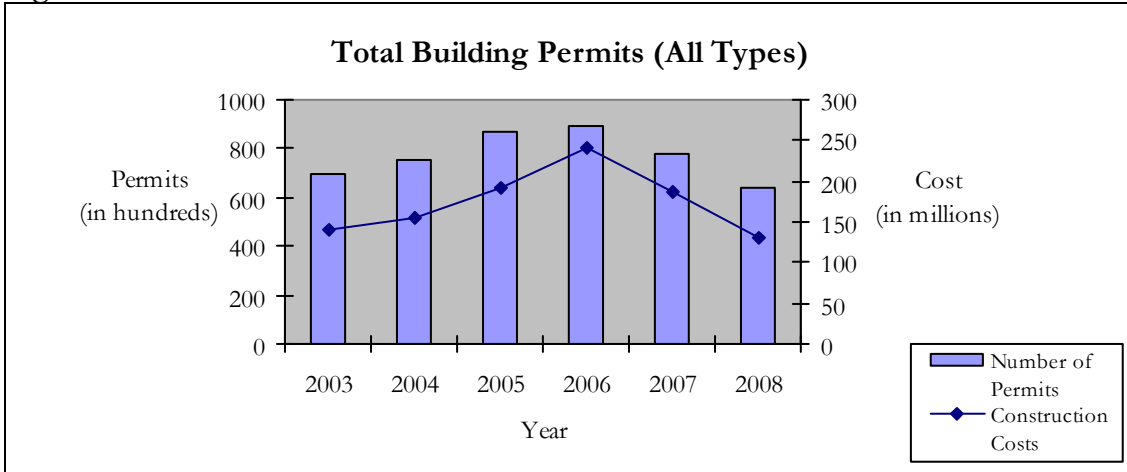
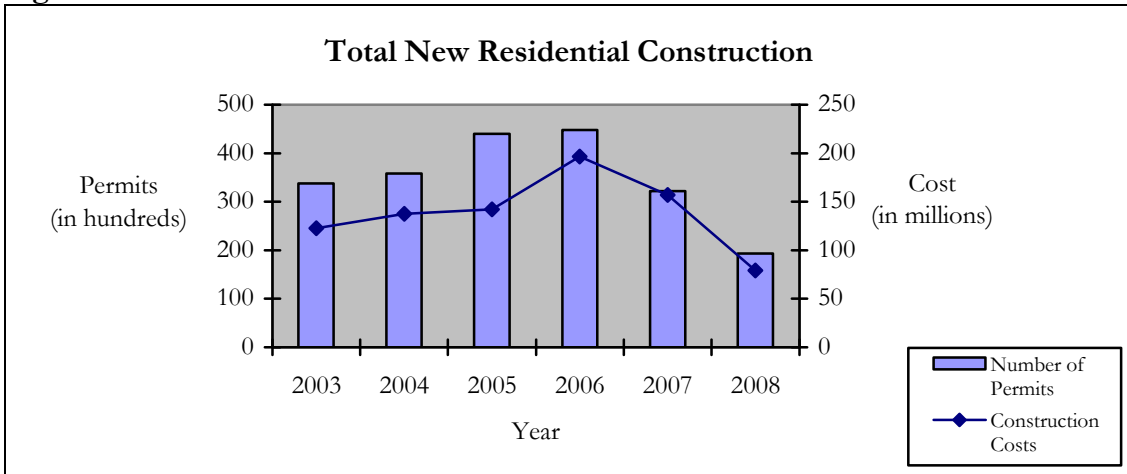


Figure 3



Adequate Facilities Tax

Officially referred to as Privilege Tax, this tax is assessed on new residential and commercial structures to offset the cost of growth on the County's infrastructure. Building Codes has the responsibility of assessing and collecting this tax for both the unincorporated area of the county as well as for the cities of Brentwood, Franklin, Nolensville, and Spring Hill. These funds, once collected, are deposited with the County Trustee.

Effective July 1, 2007, the County Board of Commissioners enacted a new "Adequate Facilities Tax" (AFT) in schools. This additional \$1.00 per square foot is devoted solely to construction of new schools and is collected on new residential structures only.

All new County residential construction is assessed at \$2.00 per square foot, including areas that may be completed at a later date. Areas not included are unfinished basements, garages, carports, porches and accessory structures. All County commercial structures under roof are computed at \$0.34 per square foot. This includes areas such as bank drive thru, covered service station islands and material storage areas. City residential construction is also assessed

at \$2.00 per square foot. The distributions of residential and commercial revenues are listed in Table 8, and Figures 4 and 5 below.

Table 8

County Residential Revenue Distribution		Commercial Revenue Distribution		City Residential Revenue Distribution	
Purpose	Amount	Purpose	Amount	Purpose	Amount
Schools*	\$0.70	Roads	\$0.30	Schools*	\$0.92
Roads	\$0.20	Fire Protection	\$0.04	Parks/Rec	\$0.08
Parks/Rec	\$0.08				
Fire Protection	\$0.02				

*Does not include \$1.00 per square foot for the new Adequate Facilities Tax (AFT).

Figure 4

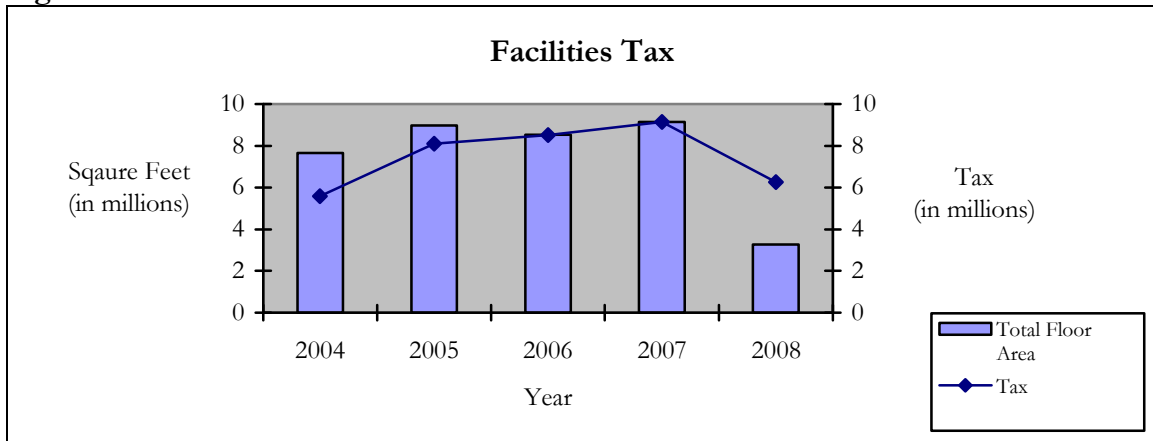
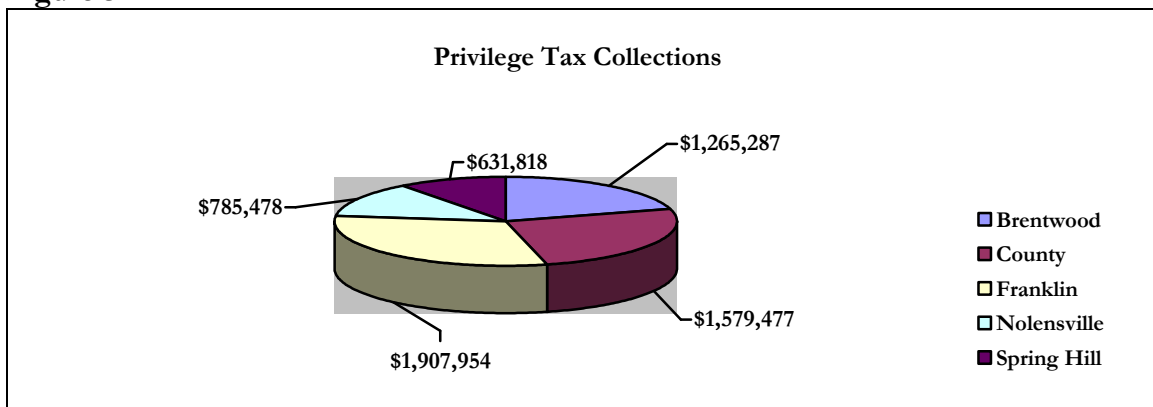


Figure 5



Goals

2009 brings new challenges in meeting new State Laws passed that require not only Building Inspectors to be certified and maintain certification hours, but Plumbing Inspectors must also be certified and maintain certification hours. The State Fire Marshal’s office has

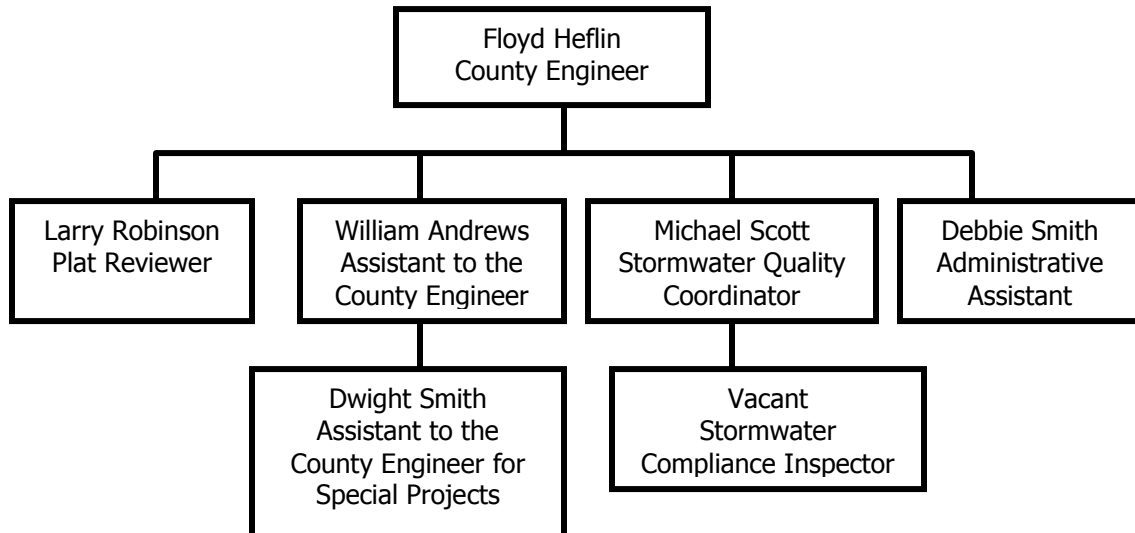
officially adopted the 2006 International Building Code for all commercial construction, including schools and churches. We will now need to start the process of adoption of the 2006 IRC in 2009.

Engineering

Introduction

County Engineering works to maintain the quality of development in Williamson County while assisting developers and the general public in interpreting development regulations and implementing associated requirements. This Department is responsible for support to the County Commission, Storm Water Appeals Board, Highway Commission, Planning Commission, and other boards for the routine processes of administering and interpreting the Storm Water Management Regulations, Subdivision Regulations, Zoning Ordinance, FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) Regulations, engineering practices, and for specific research as the need arises.

County Engineering is located in Community Development along with Building Codes, Codes Compliance, Sewage Disposal Management, and County Planning. Engineering activities are directed by Floyd Heflin, P.E., County Engineer, who is assisted by William Andrews, Dwight Smith, Michael Scott, Larry Robinson, and Debbie Smith.



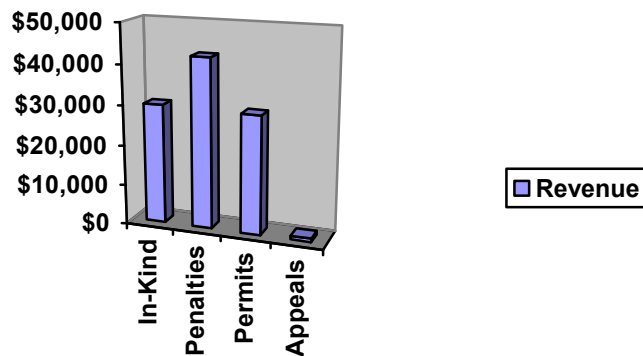
Overview

The Engineering Department is an integral part of the Community Development team. One of the main duties of the Department is to review and approve all construction plans for new development. This review now includes storm water quality requirements imposed by our Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), Division of Water Pollution Control. Delineation and platting of areas required for on-site sewage systems is also coordinated with Sewage Disposal Management. Letters of credit for approved construction projects are estimated and established. When on-site storm water detention is neither possible nor practical for these developments, funds in-lieu-of detention are estimated, levied, and placed in an account for use on community storm water management projects of greater magnitude.

Surety for public improvements is reviewed and field inspections are performed on work in progress to assess compliance.

Other responsibilities vary from coordination of infrastructure testing and outside consultants, to assisting County residents with drainage and erosion control issues. Additionally, traffic and roadway issues, floodplain management, storm water enforcement, and various engineering-related concerns are addressed daily. The Engineering Department coordinates with the Highway Department, as required, concerning new development affecting County maintained roadways. Land Disturbance permits are also issued from the Engineering Department after review and approval of grading, drainage, and erosion control plans. 2008 revenue is shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6



Surety

The Engineering Department establishes surety amounts for roads, drainage, and erosion control. Letters of credit for new development are received at the final plat stage as required by the Planning Commission. Letters of credit help insure proper performance during construction, and high infrastructure quality upon completion. Currently, the Engineering Department administers letters of credit totaling **\$9,489,000** for roads, drainage and erosion control. In 2008, **4,247** miles of roadway were released from surety and accepted by the Highway Commission and County Commission for addition to the County road system. William Andrews coordinates the assessment and review of infrastructure surety.

Land Disturbance Permits

2008 was the third full year of fee collection under the Storm Water Management Regulations that went into effect 01/01/05. Any activity disturbing more than one acre of land must provide a site specific erosion control plan and obtain a land disturbance permit. Additionally, individual lots less than one acre in size, which are part of a larger plan of development, are also regulated if the entire development disturbs more than one acre of land. During 2008, 137 permits were issued for individual lots at a cost of \$150 per permit, while 30 permits were issued for subdivisions or non-residential site plans at a cost of \$300 per permit. Total Land Disturbance Permit fees equaled **\$29,550**.

Blasting Information

Although no permit is issued by the County, applicants are required to disclose the purpose and extent of blasting activity, when the blasting will occur, and how the blasting will be supervised. Relevant safety measures required to protect the surrounding property owners from sustaining damages should also be discussed. The applicant is also required to provide this office with a certificate of insurance stating the extent of their coverage. Blasting is regulated by the State Fire Marshal's Office.

Floodplain Management

A continuing effort is being made to address and improve challenges associated with floodplain management. The Engineering Department now has a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) on staff to assist the public on a daily basis concerning floodplain inquiries. On July 18, 2007, FEMA conducted a Community Assistance Visit to assess County compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program. The visit found no violations, and cleared the way for future participation in the Community Rating System. In November 2008, the County was notified by FEMA that Williamson County had been approved as a Class 9 community under the Community Rating System. This provides a **5% discount** on flood insurance premiums paid after October 1, 2008. Finally, the County has engaged AMEC as a consultant to conduct and update flood studies on Cartwright Creek and Lynwood Branch. These studies will be completed in 2009 to help define mitigation needs and planning strategies for future activities.

Storm Water Quantity

The Zoning Ordinance and Storm Water Management Regulations require the identification and evaluation of potential storm water impacts from increased run-off associated with new development. It is often necessary for the designer to incorporate facilities that provide for the attenuation of storm water discharges to pre-development levels. Detention facilities are engineered devices that insure that the rate (and to some extent the volume) of storm water run-off is no greater after development than it was prior to proposed construction. There are occasions where detention is not advantageous at a particular site within a drainage basin. When it is determined that detention at the project site is not a suitable Best Management Practice (BMP), funds in-lieu-of detention are levied against the development, or in-kind storm water improvements are provided. When funds are collected, they are placed into an escrow account to be used on regional projects that benefit the County as a whole. Examples of areas where these funds could be utilized are summarized as follows:

- Federal cost sharing programs with the Corps of Engineers to study potential locations for regional detention facilities, flood gauges, or other storm water management facilities.
- Professional fees for verifying data, establishing floodplain information, and developing storm water management programs.
- GIS and watershed modeling

- Maintenance of existing regional storm water facilities.

In 2008, the Department of Community Development entered into an agreement with the Williamson County Parks and Recreation Department to provide \$30,000 of in-kind storm water improvements related to future recreation facilities.

Storm Water Quality and Erosion Control

Williamson County is required by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation to have a Phase II National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) MS4 permit for storm water. Requirements of the permit include controlling construction site runoff and illicit discharges. Other components involve public education, community involvement, and enforcement. While compliance is the goal of the program, \$42,350 in storm water penalties were collected during 2008.

Permit compliance is managed by Michael Scott who also coordinates the agenda of the Storm Water Appeals Board. This Board meets monthly as needed to hear appeals of the Storm Water Management Regulations. Nine appeals were heard in 2008 representing \$900 in application fees. Twelve additional appeals were processed by the County Engineer. The County has employed a consultant to develop new guidance and revise existing guidance concerning storm water quality controls. This will include a new guidance manual and computer program to be used in meeting storm water regulations. The manual and computer program will be completed in 2009.

Department Goals for 2009

It is the desire of the Engineering Department to work in a cooperative effort with other Departments, elected officials, and County residents to continue to promote and protect the health, safety, and welfare of all citizens and to enhance the environment and infrastructure of Williamson County. Specifically, we hope to improve our storm water detention requirements, complete our storm water quality guidance to supplement the regulations, and seek additional premium discounts for the residents of Williamson County under the Community Rating System.

Sewage Disposal Management

Introduction

The Department of Sewage Disposal Management is charged with the task of ensuring that the laws of Williamson County regarding the use and placement of individual, on-site subsurface sewage disposal systems (i.e., septic systems), are fairly implemented and enforced so as to protect:

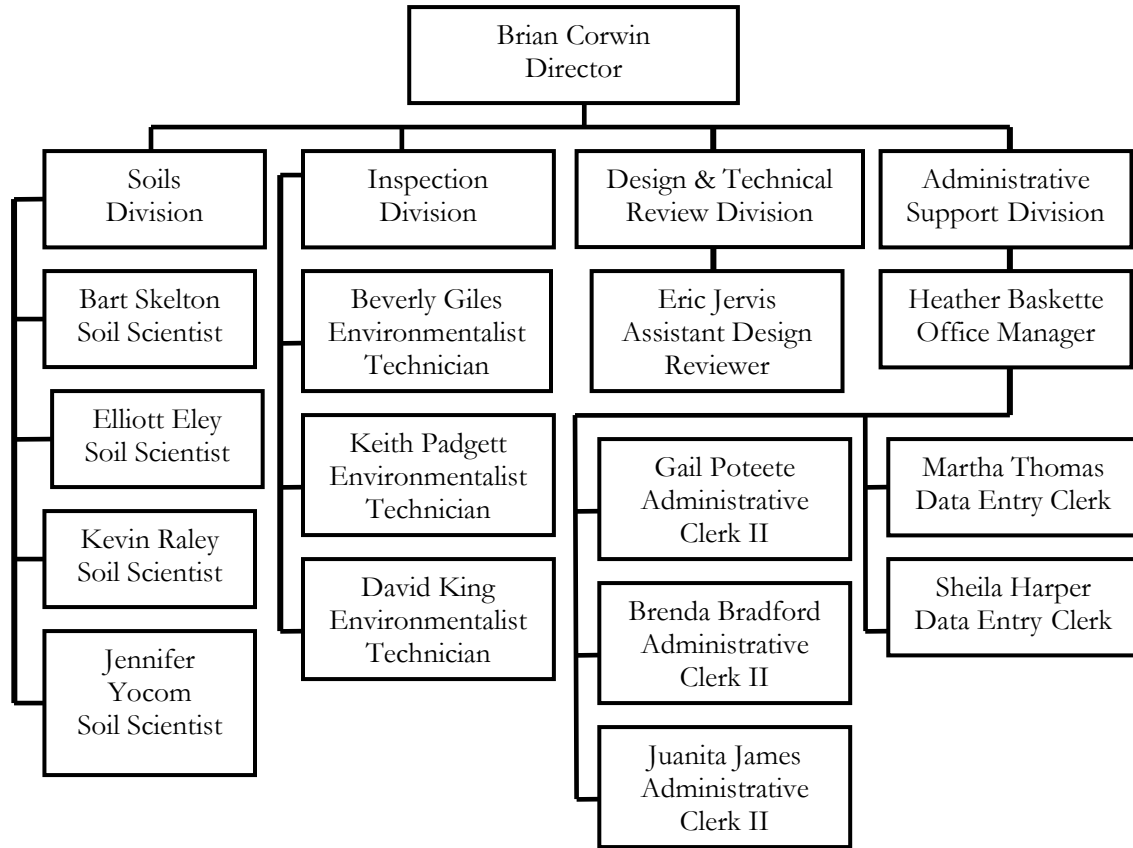
- the health and well-being of the general public;
- the irreplaceable groundwater and surface water resources of the County; and
- the quality of the environment which the citizens of the County enjoy.

The Department is empowered to regulate subsurface sewage disposal in accordance with Tennessee Code Annotated Title Sixty-Eight, Chapter Two Hundred Twenty One, Part Four. In January of 1993, pursuant to provisions outlined in said code, Williamson County chose to enter into and executed an agreement (i.e., contract) with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) to implement the provisions of this part of the state code in its area of jurisdiction. Additionally, the Department is governed by the Board of Health of Williamson County. The ten members of the Board of Health have the power to promulgate all regulations, rules and policies of the Department, and grant variances of such rules when deemed appropriate and necessary.

Williamson County Government has jurisdiction over all proposed or existing septic system installations within the boundaries of Williamson County. In addition to the lands governed by the County, this jurisdiction also includes all land areas contained within the boundaries of the incorporated cities and towns which lie within the County. Thus, the Department of Sewage Disposal Management is the agency charged with the implementation, interpretation, and enforcement of the regulations. In addition to the State of Tennessee's *Rules of the Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Groundwater Protection (TDEC-GWP); Chapter 1200-1-6: Regulations to Govern Subsurface Sewage Disposal Systems*, the County adopted its own set of rules in May, 2000. Effective in October of the same year, the *Regulations Governing On-Site Sewage Disposal Systems of the Williamson County Department of Sewage Disposal Management* are no less stringent, and in many respects are more stringent, than the state regulations.

Our office is located on the fourth floor of the Williamson County Administrative Complex in Suite 411. Brian K. Corwin is the Director and is assisted by Office Manager, Heather Baskette. The department staff is divided into four groups: Soil Scientists, Inspectors, Design Review, and Clerical.

Department Organizational Chart



Board of Health Members

The Williamson County Board of Health is composed of ten members including Chairman and County Mayor Rogers Anderson, Dr. Charlie Beauchamp, Becky Brumley, Cyndy Howes, Martin Myers, III, Dr. Gary Owen, Jeanna Roush, Dr. C.A. Stillwell, Jorja Trocino, and Dr. Joseph Willoughby.

Department Overview & Quantitative Data

In order to carry out our mission, the Department is directly involved and oversees every aspect associated with on-site subsurface sewage disposal within the County limits. This “cradle-to-grave” approach begins with the earliest phases of property development, continues through final system installation, and on throughout the life of the system. The implementation of this process encompasses much more than simply permitting systems. It involves every aspect associated with the permitting process and in essence has evolved into a form of quality control to ensure the protection of public health and the environment with regard to sewage disposal. These Departmental responsibilities and processes, and their statistics, are further explored in the following paragraphs.

Soil Assessment

Soil assessment involves the processes, practices, and techniques utilized to evaluate the soils on a parcel of land to determine whether or not those soils will support the installation of a subsurface sewage disposal system. These soil assessment methodologies include soil mapping, percolation tests, and general soil surveys. The Department's Soil Scientists manage this aspect of the program. Part of this responsibility includes the review and approval of all soil maps and percolation tests submitted by independent consultants for conformance with the regulations, as well as with accepted soil science standards

Soil Maps

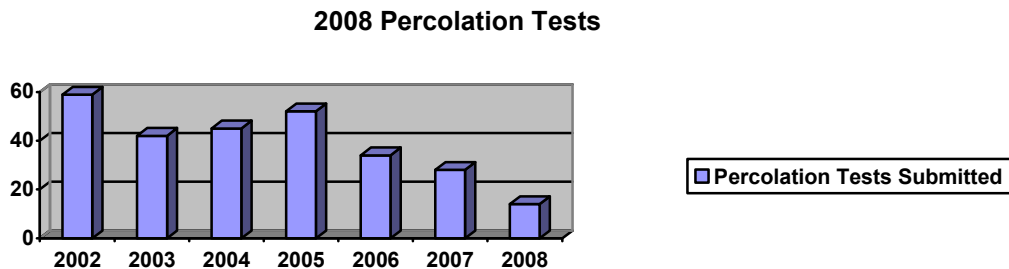
In 2008, the Department received nine applications for preliminary soil investigations. According to fees collected, the soils division completed seven soil maps totaling seven acres in 2008.

Department Soil Scientists are also responsible for on-site verification of soil maps submitted by private soil consultants. In 2008, 116 soil maps were verified by the Department.

Percolation Tests

Soil evaluation by percolation test methodology is still accepted in limited situations for property development. In 2008, 14 percolation tests were received for evaluation by the Department. As noted in Figure 7 below, the use of percolation tests is declining.

Figure 7



Property Development

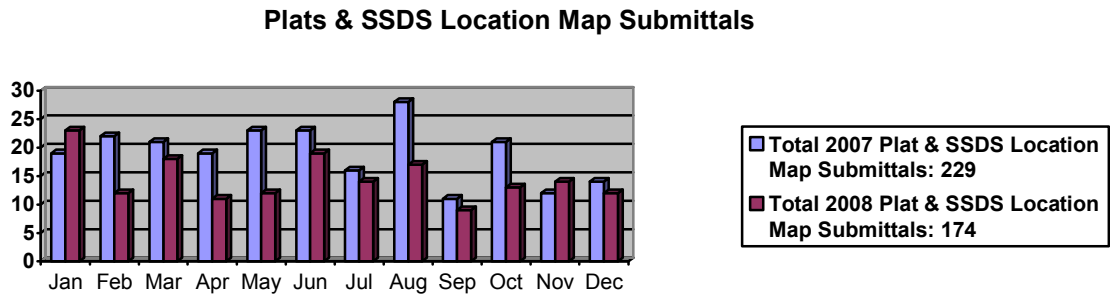
Utilizing the soil assessment information, a land parcel can then be evaluated for suitability for the use of subsurface sewage disposal systems. Department staff oversees this process for both platted and un-platted parcels of land. This involves working with independent consultants (e.g., surveyors, engineers, etc.) on everything from lot configuration, to the determination of system type, to area sizing and setback requirements, among a multitude of other things. These responsibilities include the review and approval of subdivision plats (and their revisions) for adherence to all applicable laws and regulations.

Subdivisions and SSDS Location Maps

Any proposed subdivision of land which requires the use of subsurface sewage disposal systems, or any individual lot of any size which requires location of suitable septic areas in order to be deemed build-able, must be reviewed and approved by the Department. The

resulting Subdivision Plat (which also requires concurrent review and approval by the Planning Department) or Subsurface Sewage Disposal System Location Map must be recorded in the Register of Deeds Office before septic system *Construction Permits* can be issued. Based upon processing fees of \$42,625.00 collected in 2008, the Department received and reviewed approximately 174 Final Plat and SSDS Location Map submittals depicting approximately 341 subdivision and individual lots, a reduction of 149 lots from the previous year. These statistics do not include Preliminary Plat reviews, Sketch Plan reviews, or reviews of re-submittals required to rectify errors and omissions. See Figure 8 below.

Figure 8



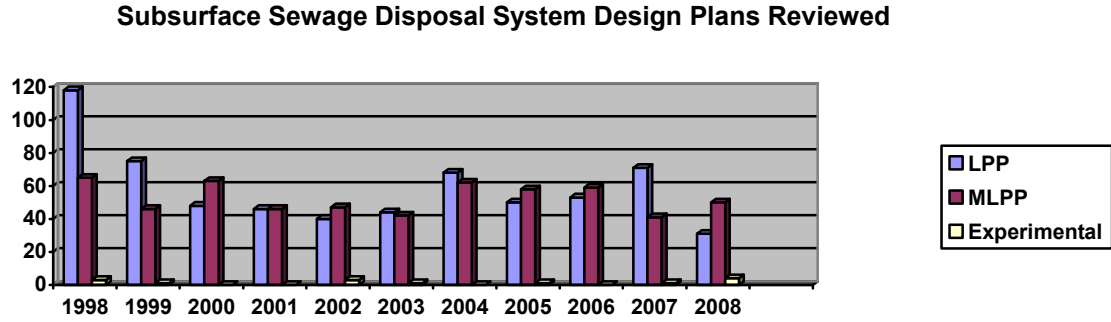
Alternative & Experimental System Designs

All alternative and experimental on-site wastewater systems are required to be designed by a licensed engineer. The Department’s design review staff oversees the review and approval of all system design plans for conformance with the regulations, as well as with accepted engineering practices and standards.

Three types of alternative systems are utilized in Williamson County: Standard Low Pressure Pipe (LPP) systems not requiring soil modification, Modified Low Pressure Pipe (MLPP) systems requiring soil modification, and Mound systems. The use of experimental systems is rare and restricted to repair purposes only, where proper soil conditions do not exist for installation of a code compliant system. Over the last eleven years, the average annual number of LPP plans versus MLPP plans reviewed by the Department has been almost equal, 58 and 53 respectively. In 2008, the overall number of design plans reviewed dropped 23.2%, from 112 in 2007 to 86 in 2008.

It is interesting to note that of the design plans reviewed in 2008, 94% required revisions and, of those, 35% required at least a second round of revisions. Each set of revised design plans had to then be re-reviewed by staff. This “revision” trend has been fairly stable over the last few years. See Figure 9 below.

Figure 9

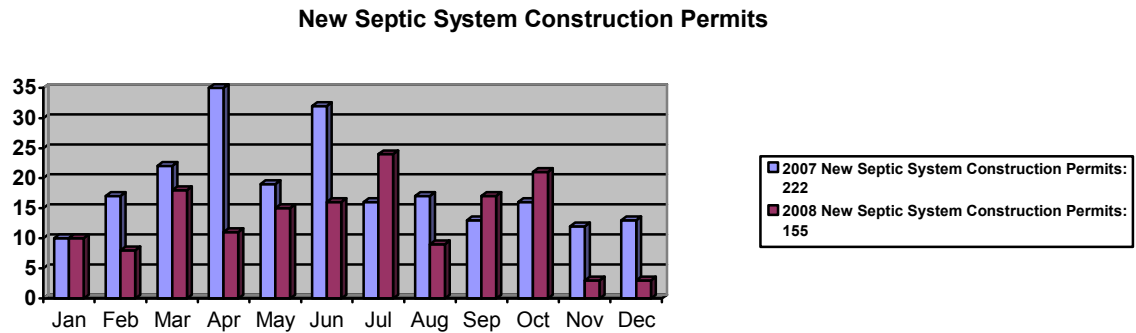


Construction Permits

The Department not only issues permits for the construction of new subsurface sewage disposal systems but, also for the upgrade or enlargement of existing systems as well as for the repair and/or replacement of malfunctioning and failing systems. In addition to the above-noted processes associated with permitting new systems, Department personnel are also involved with the evaluation of individual site plans and building floor plans to ensure that a proposed structure is in compliance with applicable rules, regulations and approvals. For existing systems that are failing and malfunctioning, the Department personnel are charged with investigating, evaluating, and prescribing remedies to fix those problems.

Anyone constructing, altering, extending, modifying, or repairing, either alternative or conventional subsurface sewage disposal systems within Williamson County, must hold a valid *Construction Permit* issued by the Department. The recipient of a permit for construction of a system (i.e., the property owner or builder) is held responsible for adhering to the construction requirements of the *Regulations*. In 2008, the Department issued a total of 155 permits for the construction of new subsurface sewage disposal systems in the County, a 30% reduction from the permits issued in 2007. See Figure 10 below.

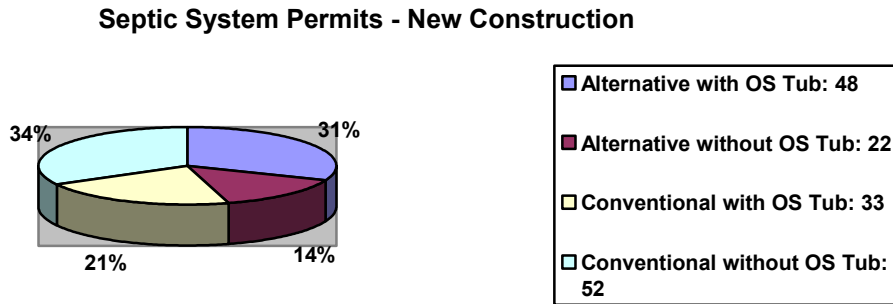
Figure 10



Through a series of steps, the department determines the type of septic system that is appropriate for use with the construction of a new structure, and for expansion or modification of an existing structure. System type is determined by the soil conditions of the property, number of bedrooms in the structure, and whether or not oversized bathing fixtures will be included in residential construction; commercial structures are evaluated by

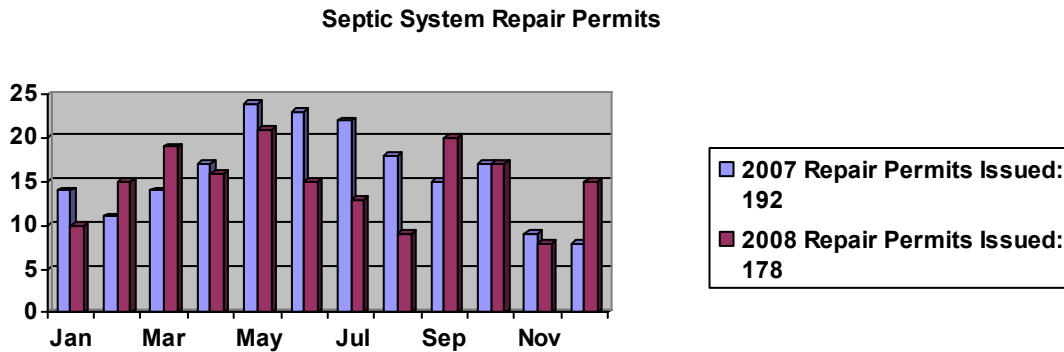
proposed use and other factors. 2008 numbers indicated a downward trend in the number of new construction permits issued for homes with oversized tubs versus those with standard sized bathing fixtures. Of the 155 new construction permits issued in 2008, 52.3 % were either conventional or alternative systems with oversized tubs versus 68.5% in 2007. Conventional permits outweighed alternative permits by 9.6%. See Figure 11 below.

Figure 11



The Department has equal authority over the repair of existing systems, which may be required for a variety of reasons including upgrading non-conforming systems due to remodels and expansions of structures, and repairing failing systems which may be a threat to public health and/or the environment. In 2008, 178 repair permits were issued versus 192 in 2007, a decrease of 7.3%.

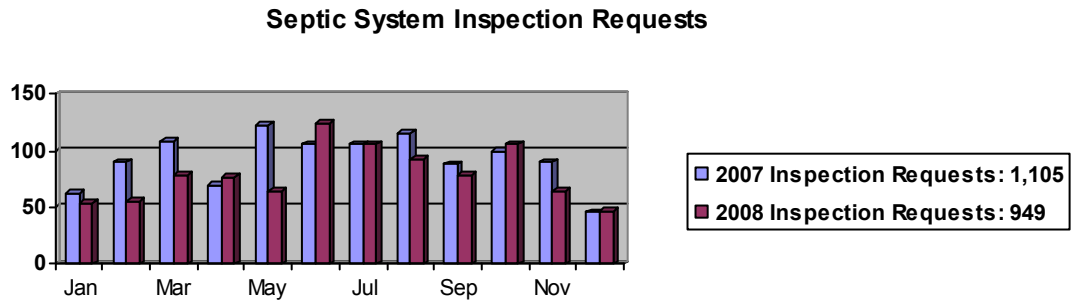
Figure 12



System Inspections

During the actual installation of new systems and the repair, modification or upgrade of existing systems, the Department’s inspection personnel oversee all construction related activities. System installations must be supervised from start to finish and the County *Regulations* detail a very rigorous inspection process at various stages throughout the installation to ensure adherence to all applicable regulations, permit details, and construction standards. The number of inspections required depends upon the complexity of the system or repair. In 2008, approximately 949 inspections were requested versus 1,105 in 2007. Thus in 2008, an average of 3.86 inspections were requested per day, a decrease of 14% from the prior year. See Figure 13 below.

Figure 13

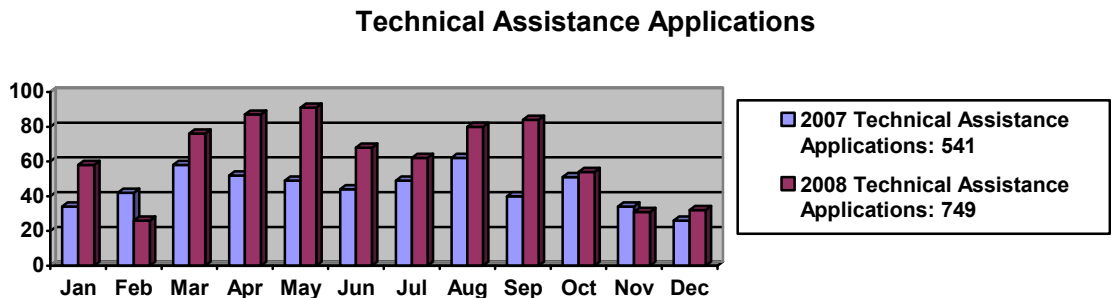


After all inspections are completed and final approval is granted to a system installation, the Department will issue a *Certificate of Completion*. In 2008, approximately 296 *Certificates of Completion* were issued by the Department. Only after issuance of such certificate may a property owner receive a *Certificate of Occupancy* for that structure from the Building Codes Department.

Other Department Services

Any modification to a property serviced by a subsurface sewage disposal system in Williamson County automatically triggers the completion of a *Technical Assistance Application* with the Department, an on-site inspection by a Department staff member, review of pertinent documentation, and approval by the Department, whether or not an actual septic permit is required. Typical modifications include projects such as swimming pools, attached or detached garages, out buildings (e.g., sheds, barns, etc.), sunrooms, patios, decks, porches, and other minor external or internal remodeling or cosmetic improvements. In 2008, the Department processed approximately 749 *Technical Assistance Applications* versus 541 in 2007, a 38.4% increase.

Figure 14



Included in the Technical Assistance group are two community services the Department provides for the convenience of the public. One of these, system recertification, has become increasingly important and numerous in the past few years because of recent state legislation placing liability on realtors, or sellers of real estate, for the misrepresentation of compatibility of a home’s size (i.e. number of bedrooms) with its septic system permit restrictions. Perhaps an indicator of the downturn in the real estate market in 2008, the Department made only 30 recertification inspections, a 67% reduction from the prior year’s 91 recertification inspections. The second service, collecting and processing water samples for

the purpose of identifying various contaminants in wells, springs and other private drinking water sources, requires the on-site collection of a sample by a Department Inspector. Processing of the specimen is completed by a state laboratory within 7-10 days, which is followed by written notification of the results to the applicant. Only three water tests were performed by the Department in 2008.

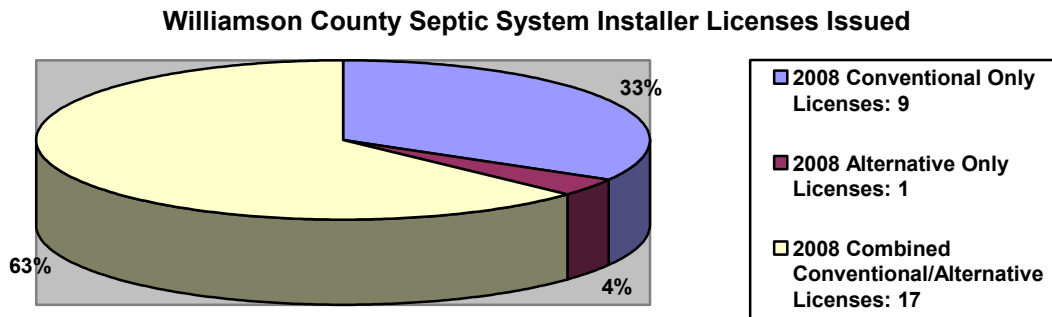
Licensing of Septic System Installers

Construction, modification, or repairs of subsurface sewage disposal systems within Williamson County may only be conducted by persons holding a valid installers license and identification card issued by the Department of Sewage Disposal Management. The Department issues three types of installer licenses: Conventional, Alternative, and Conventional and Alternative. Persons wishing to be licensed in Williamson County must:

- Obtain the corresponding licenses through the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Ground Water Protection;
- Provide a Letter of Credit or Surety Bond;
- Pay an annual license fee;
- Demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding of the Department’s *Regulations Governing On-Site Sewage Disposal Systems*; and
- Successfully complete a probationary period under the direct supervision of the Department.

Installers must renew their licenses with TDEC-GWP and the Department annually. In 2008, the Department issued 27 installer licenses, seventeen of which were Conventional and Alternative, nine Conventional only, and one Alternative only. Total installer licenses issued decreased 6.9% from the prior year total of 29 installer licenses.

Figure 15



Pumpers

The Department has regulatory authority over all septic tank pumping contractors conducting business in Williamson County. This includes the permitting of individuals allowed to conduct such operations as well as oversight to ensure the proper disposal of all collected septage. Although the Department does not require a separate County license for pumping contractors to operate in Williamson County, they are required to provide the Department with a valid copy of their state *Septic Tank Pumper Permit* issued by TDEC

Division of Ground Water Protection. Additionally, they are required to file with the Department a valid copy of their *Wastewater Discharge Permit for Wastewater Haulers* with a wastewater treatment facility approved by the TDEC Division of Water Pollution Control.

Miscellaneous

The Department also has regulatory authority over all product and technology approvals proposed for use in conjunction with on-site wastewater systems in Williamson County. Department staff reviews such proposals on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Technology Initiatives

During 2008, several exciting technology updates and improvements initiated in 2007 were continued or implemented in earnest. These changes were envisioned by the Department in an effort to improve efficiency and accuracy in data collection and record keeping, streamline our processes and procedures, and ultimately provide a superior level of services to the citizens and contractors we serve.

Laserfiche

In 2007, Sewage Disposal Management, along with all other departments under the Community Development umbrella, took part in the design, testing, and initial roll-out of *Laserfiche*, an innovative work-flow and document storage program. Stage I of the roll-out transformed the multi-departmental approval process from a bi-weekly interdepartmental meeting format to a real-time, progressive electronic review, dramatically reducing the processing time for projects from application to approval. In 2008, Department staff continued to work with the *Laserfiche* software development team towards:

- Designing electronic forms which would allow information about a parcel to be keyed at the time of collection into a shared database electronically, improving clerical efficiency and allowing instant interdepartmental access.
- Converting and transferring existing electronic database information into *Laserfiche* to preserve historical data on parcels.
- Developing procedures to begin scanning and electronically archiving newly created and existing property information into the *Laserfiche* system to reduce physical storage requirements and improve records retention and retrieve-ability.
- Developing the Department's own workflow tracking unit to track projects through its unique processes and services.

High speed, sophisticated *Laserfiche* compatible scanning equipment, which will accommodate various paper formats, was purchased in 2008, enabling the Department to move towards implementing its electronic filing, archiving, and records retention goals. In 2009, the development of an official Records Retention Policy in accordance with Williamson County Public Records Commission guidelines published in November 2005, will further define the procedures required to begin identifying, preparing, and processing qualifying documents into the *Laserfiche* archiving system.

GPS & AutoCAD

During 2008, after completing one-on-one GPS training, Department staff began utilizing global positioning system (GPS) units for various field activities. GPS is a crucial tool for professionals who make decisions on matters that are spatially related. A fundamental concept behind GPS is that spatial data can be collected and stored (in an electronic format) indefinitely. It is a system that will allow the Department to gather information in the field so that more informed management and regulatory decisions can be made in a timely fashion and with a large degree of certainty. Additionally, it will enable the Department to keep accurate electronic records of systems that are being installed, as well as where soil investigations are being performed when making suitability decisions. Since a permanent electronic record is made, when needed, these features can be reestablished so that management decisions can be made in an efficient manner.

In addition to the actual GPS units, specialized computer software is required to view and manipulate the field collected data. In 2008, the Department purchased several handheld GPS instruments, the supporting AutoCAD (Computer Aided Drafting) software, new plotting equipment, computer upgrades to run the software, and a special plotter to print the output drawings. Department staff also completed fifteen hours of AutoCAD classes over a five-week period at the Williamson County Administrative Complex, conducted by Nashville State Community College. Now, precise, detailed diagrams of septic system elements, such as tanks, field lines, curtain drains, etc., as well as locations of soil assessments, can be captured in the field by GPS devices and memorialized in electronic files.

Z-Miscellaneous Receipts

Finally, the Department completed a technological upgrade to our internal bookkeeping and accounting processes and procedures. In order to streamline current processes and increase efficiency, the Department identified and purchased *Z-Miscellaneous Receipts*, a software solution compatible with the current County accounting software. The new receipt generating software package provides the Department with its own accounting system which meets specific needs for receipting, record keeping, and report writing, and complies with auditors' security requirements. After an initial installation and modification period, clerical staff completed training in preparation for the January 2, 2009 conversion from the Paradox based receipt system to the new *Z-Miscellaneous Receipts* system.

Department Handouts

At the end of 2007, the Department committed to develop a series of written guidelines for distribution to the public. These checklists, although not necessarily all-inclusive, are intended to guide applicants through the Department's various and sometimes daunting processes required to obtain approval for modification of parcels of land serviced by subsurface sewage disposal systems. By the end of 2008, three of the checklists were completed: *Steps to Obtain a Septic Permit for New Construction*, *Steps to Obtain Approval of Construction by Technical Assistance*, and *Soil Assessment Options*. Slated for early 2009, several additional guidelines will be written for public distribution: *Steps to Obtain Approval for Commercial Property Use*, *Plat Review Process*, and *Letter of Intent Requirements* are handouts being considered. All forms should be completed and available both at the Department service counter, and on the County website in 2009.

Plat Review Process

Towards the end of 2008, in an effort to streamline and de-mystify its procedures and processes, the Department began to examine the plat review and approval process required for development of land parcels serviced by subsurface sewage disposal systems. In 2009, a new plat review policy will be published which will include guidelines for public distribution.

Public Policy Changes

In November 2008, two public policy changes were implemented by the Department. First, procedural modifications were mandated by the Tennessee General Assembly regarding the manner in which public records requests are fulfilled. Time periods for response to requests to view or copy records, fees for copies of records, and records request forms were standardized throughout all Tennessee government offices.

The second alteration in public policy, affecting all County departments, resulted from the Williamson County Board of Commissioners' adoption of the *Code of Ethics for Williamson County, Tennessee*. Among other issues, this code addressed gratuities and their acceptance specifically in great detail. Although existing Department policy regarding gratuities was already well within the guidelines of this document, a more severe policy of complete abstention of the receipt of gifts by any employee was embraced and implemented.

Changes to Regulations

2008 saw several modifications to the Department's *Regulations Governing On-Site Sewage Disposal Systems*. The first change dealt with adding a complete new subsection to the regulations dealing with non-conforming systems. Not only did this new language establish a category of legally non-conforming systems, but also set forth directions to address situations affected by said systems. Additionally, it established guidelines to help staff handle various encroachment issues encountered in the field. The other amendments to the regulations dealt with the specifics of pump and haul systems. Revised language was substituted in this particular section which effectively outlined the specific conditions where pump and haul systems may be allowed for new sources. Additionally, the previous requirement of a pump and haul system owner to execute an agreement with a utility providing ultimate treatment of the hauled waste was eliminated.

Commendations

In 2008, several Department employees reached goals, participated in activities, and received industry recognition worthy of acknowledgement.

Bart Skelton and Elliott Eley obtained Level II re-certification in Tennessee Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control. Both Soil Scientists originally obtained Level I and II certifications in 2004.

Kevin Raley served as Southeast Region Representative to the National Society of Consulting Soil Scientists Board of Directors, completing his first of a two year appointment as a member of the Board of Directors. In 2009, he will renew his status as Registered Professional Soil Scientist through the National Society of Consulting Soil Scientists, and as Certified Professional Soil Scientist and Certified Professional Soil Classifier through ARCCPACS/ASA. Mr. Raley continued to fulfill his responsibilities as Secretary of the Soil

Science Association of Tennessee. He also began the application process to obtain his Professional Geologist Registration with the State of Tennessee.

Department Director Brian K. Corwin, continued to serve as Treasurer on the Tennessee On-Site Wastewater Association (TOWA) Board of Directors. This is his ninth consecutive year serving on the TOWA board, with past positions including Secretary, President, and Regulator Representative. Mr. Corwin remained the Secretary and Treasurer for The Tennessee Section of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers, a position he has held since 1999. The Department Director received certification from the Consortium of Institutes for Decentralized Wastewater Treatment as an O&M Service Provider Trainer, and was recruited as guest lecturer by several organizations in 2008. Brian fulfilled his third stint as guest lecturer for the Florida On-Site Wastewater Association's continuing education programs for Florida septic system contractors. He returned as guest lecturer for the Career Opportunities Class at the University of Tennessee Department of Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science, a class he has taught every fall since 1998. In addition, Mr. Corwin made a presentation to the Harpeth River Watershed Association during the Heart of the Harpeth Campaign Lecture Series, regarding septic system care and maintenance and its relativity to water quality in Williamson County.

Office Manager Heather Baskette is currently enrolled in the County Officials Certificate Training Program, a comprehensive training program administered by the University of Tennessee County Technical Assistance Service. The COCTP offers comprehensive knowledge of the inner workings of county government to afford graduates a better understanding of the county as an entity, and provides specialized administrative, management, and leadership training to help them run their offices more effectively.

Department Goals for 2009

The Department of Sewage Disposal Management has established a number of goals for the upcoming year. Department management and staff will continue to evaluate the Department's internal organizational structure and to improve utilization of the technology initiatives begun previously. In addition, the Department will continue to review and update its practices and procedures and maintain its focus on providing friendly, efficient, and effective customer service. Among these efforts will be the continued development of various guidelines and handouts to aid the public through the assorted approval processes involving the Department. All of these efforts are part of an on-going process with the overall goal of streamlining not only our internal department processes, but also our shared inter-departmental Community Development processes to provide better, more efficient customer services to the general public.

Another goal for the upcoming year is to develop and implement a records retention policy. Although this sounds simple, it will actually be a monumental task. There are certain laws and regulations which must be followed with regard to the archiving and disposal of various government documents and records. Due to the ever decreasing storage space for paper records and files, coupled with the implementation of new electronic storage technology, this issue is rapidly becoming a priority.

The current Departmental *Regulations* have now been in place for over eight years. During that time only a few minor edits and revisions have been made. There are numerous areas of

the *Regulations* in need of revisions and adjustments. While some of these are minor, others may be more involved. During the coming year the Department plans to begin the process of identifying and addressing any immediate needs associated with the *Regulations* with the subsequent intentions to transform it into more of a “working” document with ongoing annual reviews and revisions. The first step in this process will be the issuance of a *Request for Qualifications* to consulting firms to conduct a thorough review and the associated outreach in order to critique the *Regulations*. It is hoped that this evaluation process will be completed by the end of the summer. After which, the actual revision process to the *Regulations* is expected to take place the following year.

Finally, in the upcoming year, the Department pledges to continue its core work of administering the County’s *Regulations Governing On-Site Sewage Disposal Systems* in a thorough and equitable manner in order to protect the health and well being of the public, the groundwater and surface water resources, and the quality of the environment of Williamson County. Additionally, the department staff will strive to improve technology, procedures, and services to ensure processing of septic system related projects is a timely and pleasant experience for its customers.