

CHESTER COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT



2025



Chair's MESSAGE



Nathan Cline, P.E., Chair

The Chester County Planning Commission is pleased to submit the annual report for the calendar year 2025.

A major highlight of 2025 was the year-long celebration of the Planning Commission's 75th Anniversary. Achievements and staff from the 1950's through 2025 were recognized, culminating in a celebration at Yellow Springs attended by past and current staff and our many planning and municipal partners.

Other highlights of 2025 under the *Landscapes3* goal areas included:

PRESERVE: Open space preservation continued with 154,970 acres, or 31.9% of the county, preserved at the start of 2025 with additional protected agricultural and conservation land added throughout the year. The fall Open Space Summit featured experts in their fields discussing the nuts and bolts of open space preservation in Chester County.

PROTECT: The Sustainability Summit & Expo was a great success this year with over 200 attendees and 40+ vendors and community organizations coming together on the West Chester University campus to learn about advancing local environmental initiatives.

APPRECIATE: The Town Tours and Village walks, now entering their 32nd year, had over 675 attendees supported by 150 local volunteers and CCPC staff. The America250PA Chester County (CC250) Commission continues to plan for program, events, and initiatives to celebrate America's 250th anniversary in 2026.

LIVE: As housing prices continued to rise in 2025, the Planning Commission worked with housing partners and the Housing Choices Committee to address affordability issues. The county's land bank initiative will hit the ground running in 2026.

PROSPER: This year's Urban Centers Forum focused on Active Transportation Plans with a deep dive into bike parks featuring presenters from the Kennett, Phoenixville, and Elverson bike parks highlighting these unique recreation facilities.

CONNECT: A resource guide and website for rural and agricultural communities were developed to address the unique transportation challenges of these landscapes. The Planning Commission was honored to receive a state-wide award recognizing its Trail Planning Series and implementation efforts at the annual APA-PA Conference.

These efforts, and many more, are highlighted in this annual report and on the Planning Commission's website, www.chescoplanning.org. On behalf of the Planning Commission Board, I would like to take a moment to thank the entire Planning Department staff for another excellent year, with a highlight being the 75th Anniversary recognition. Further, we welcomed our new Executive Director, Matthew Edmond, AICP, who has hit the ground running with new ideas and fresh perspectives. Matt and the Department's professional and dedicated staff continue to set the bar high for planning in the Philadelphia region. Here's to 75 more years of planning success in Chester County!

Respectfully,

Nathan Cline, P.E.

The Chester County Planning Commission is a nine-member advisory board appointed by the board of County Commissioners.



Roberta Consentino, Vice-Chair



Stephanie Duncan



Douglas A. Fasick, DC



Matthew Hammond, P.E.



Michael Heaberg



Molly Morrison



Andy Wright, AICP, PP, PTP



Frank Furman

Achieving the VISION



Implementing Landscapes3

Landscapes3, adopted in 2018, is the third iteration of Chester County’s award-winning comprehensive plan. It serves as the long-term strategic roadmap for the county’s 73 municipalities, balancing the pressure of being one of Pennsylvania’s fastest-growing counties with the desire to preserve its natural, agricultural, and historic character.

Development Proposals and Landscapes3

Consistency with the Landscapes Map and the planning principles in Landscapes3 is part of the Act 247 review process for subdivisions, land developments, ordinances, and plans. In 2025, 100 percent of all relevant subdivision and land development plan submissions were consistent with Landscapes3. Approximately 93 percent of proposed dwelling units were in Landscapes3 growth areas. For non-residential proposals, 88 percent of the square footage was in growth areas. For ordinance and comprehensive plan submissions in 2025, all the reviews were relevant to Landscapes3 and were also consistent with Landscapes3.

Excluding second reviews, the County Planning Commission reviewed 180 subdivision and land development plans during 2025, which was 10 percent lower than the number reviewed during 2024 (201). Excluding second reviews, the

How We **PRESERVE**

How We **LIVE**

How We **PROTECT**

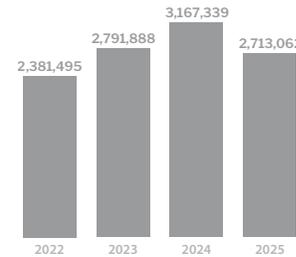
How We **PROSPER**

How We **APPRECIATE**

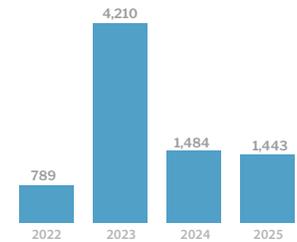
How We **CONNECT**

number of proposed residential lots/units for the entire county during the same timeframes decreased slightly, from 1,484 to 1,443. Apartment lots/units accounted for 46 percent of all proposed residential development in 2025, followed by single family (32 percent) and townhouse (17 percent). Proposed non-residential structural square footage decreased from 3,167,339 in 2024 to 2,713,062 in 2025.

Proposed Non-residential Square Footage



Proposed Lots/Units



CCPC's 75th Anniversary

The Chester County Planning Commission proudly celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2025, marking a milestone that honored the impact of thoughtful planning across Chester County. This anniversary year paid tribute to the people, partners, and transformative projects that have shaped CCPC’s work over the past seven and a half



decades. The celebration unfolded through a decade-by-decade storytelling series on social media. A special anniversary event was held at Historic Yellow Springs in October. Highlights from the celebration—including two event videos and a comprehensive timeline—are available at <https://www.chescoplanning.org/AboutUs/75thAnniversary-2025.cfm>.



Missing from the photo:
Wes Bruckno
Carrie Conwell
Elle Steinman

Open Space Preservation

At the start of 2025, 154,970 acres (31.9%) of the county was protected open space according to the Planning Commission's annual Protected Open Space Tracking (POST) system. Each year, updated information is provided to the Planning Commission by the county's Department of Parks and Preservation, land trusts, municipalities, and other preservation partners. Properties protected during 2025 ranged from the 92-acre Hacking Farm in Franklin Township to the 3.6-acre Web Preserve at Indian Run in Avondale Borough. During the year, the ongoing expansion of protection measures at the Bryn Coed Preserve in West Vincent and West Pikeland townships continued.

Open Space Summit

On November 13, 2025, CCPC hosted an Open Space Summit geared toward open space advocates in the community entitled 'How Open Space Happens in Chester County'. The hybrid event attracted residents, municipal officials, open space committee members, land trusts, and other partners. Sessions covered a wide array of topics including easements and acquisitions, municipal open space plans, referendums, open space committees, and case studies highlighting partnerships and funding strategies.

open space • farmland • nature preserves • parks • forests • scenic views

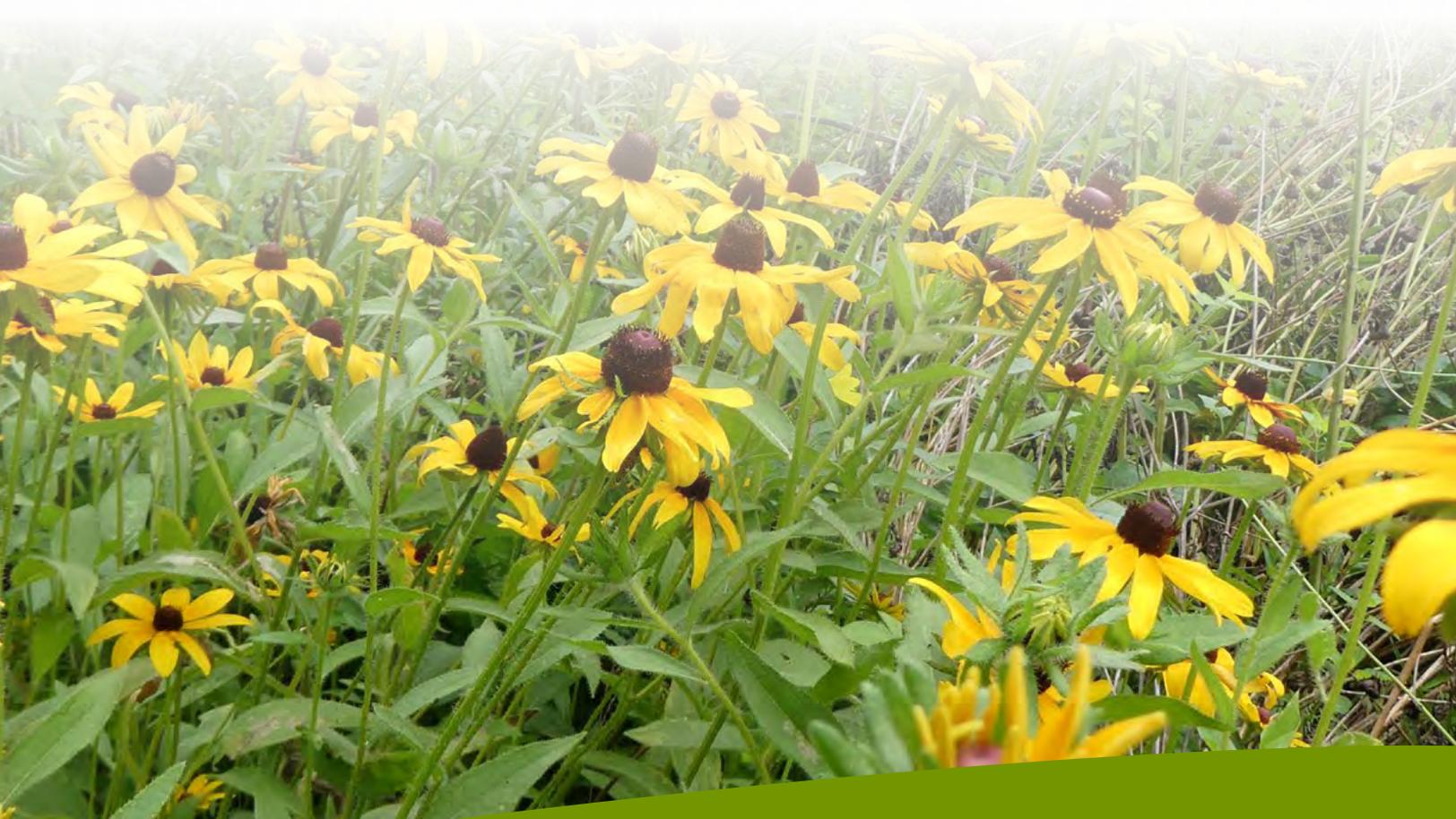
Open Space Accelerator Program

CCPC received a grant from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to develop and launch an Open Space Accelerator program, a new type of planning product that will bridge the gap between broad open space plans and implementation, resulting in actionable open space projects for municipalities. CCPC developed a framework for the Open Space Accelerator Mini-Grant Program by completing the program guidelines, application, template scope of work, and consultant RFQ. The program is anticipated to launch in 2026.

Open Space Accelerator Pilot Project

CCPC led a pilot project with North Coventry Township to test and refine the Open Space Accelerator program's scope and guidelines. The pilot project centered on the development of a Stewardship Plan for the township's Coventry Woods Preserve, and included a rapid assessment of open space resources, facilitation of a steering committee, participation in a community event, and preparation of an action-oriented stewardship plan. The plan is expected to be adopted in 2026.

31.9% of the county is protected open space



How We **PROTECT**

woodlands • streams • wetlands • soil health
• steep slopes • natural heritage areas

Sustainability Summit

In May of 2025, CCPC hosted its second Sustainability Summit. The event included a Sustainability Expo featuring over 40 local business and non-profits involved in sustainability initiatives; presentations for the general public highlighting ways individuals can tackle sustainability projects in their lives; and sustainable building tours. Over 200 people attended the event, which took place at West Chester University.

Sustainable HOAs Video Series

This past summer, CCPC highlighted sustainable landscaping projects undertaken by several local homeowner's associations (HOAs) through a video series that showcased their innovative efforts to transform their open spaces. These videos were recently released and are inspiring examples of what HOAs can do to provide practical solutions to challenges like stormwater and erosion through beautiful and ecologically beneficial efforts such as planting native vegetation, converting turf to meadows, and growing community gardens. The videos can be viewed here: <https://www.chescoplanning.org/Environmental/HOA/Videos.cfm>

Keep Chester County Beautiful municipal litter inventory and campaign sign collection

In 2025, Keep Chester County Beautiful's (KCCB) programming included a countywide municipal assessment to better understand how communities manage litter. The inventory will be used to inform future efforts to connect volunteers with litter removal and beautification projects. KCCB also partnered with the county's Facilities Department to host their second general election campaign sign collection event. This year's collection removed approximately 1,000 pounds of corrugated plastic signage, 800 pounds of plastic film, and 500 pounds of metal stakes from the waste stream by recycling them with local partners.

Sustainable Landscape Management Plan for Pocopson Complex

Planning Commission staff worked with leadership and staff at the Pocopson Home, Prison, and Youth Center to develop a plan for managing county land in a less intensive, more ecologically minded way. Improvements in the plan included solar arrays, lawn to meadow conversions, enhanced riparian buffers, and agricultural operations. The plan includes connections with Work Release Center programming and considers operational needs like staff training, volunteer engagement, and partnerships.



historic buildings • historic viewsheds • cultural landscapes • villages • historic town centers

Town Tours and Village Walks

The 2025 theme for this summer-long event was “Untold Stories”. The free walking tours kicked off with a celebration in May at the Holy Trinity Church in West Chester Borough. From June through August seven tours guided visitors through historic walks exploring the rich history of Chester County and concluded in Yellow Springs in West Pikeland Township. In total, 838 attendees participated and joined us to celebrate 31 years of Town Tours and Village Walks!

250th Commission

The Chester County America250 Commission continued encouraging support for activities, community engagement, and programming at the municipal and local level in anticipation of 2026. CCPC’s Keep Chester County Beautiful program is coordinating community service projects with the Commission.

Administration of the Commission was moved to CCPC in April 2025. Throughout the remainder of the year, the Chester County 250 website was redesigned, templates for meeting notes and agendas were updated, and communication with the Executive Committee standardized. CCPC worked with the Commissioner’s office on a concept for a Video Time Capsule to commemorate the 250th in Chester County.

Brandywine Battlefield Plan

In support of the Brandywine Battlefield region land conservation, historic resource protection, and heritage interpretation efforts, CCPC undertook a study of two combat areas – Chadds Ford area and Birmingham Road area, entitled “The Battle Ensues – Eastern Battlefield Strategic Landscapes Plan” and created a new interactive map. The in-depth study is the third phase of an effort by Chester and Delaware counties, which concludes 12 years of work on the battlefield for focused planning purposes and continuing heritage interpretive educational information. The phased study was awarded grant funding from the National Park Service’s American Battlefield Protection Program. The study had a celebratory event hosted by the Brandywine Battlefield Task Force in June.

Underground Railroad Driving Tour

CCPC worked with four municipalities – Kennett Township, Kennett Square Borough, Pennsbury Township, and Pocopson Township, as well as a Task Force to develop an Underground Railroad driving tour, which is complementary to the countywide heritage interpretive network concept under the County Heritage Tourism Plan.



How We LIVE

neighborhoods • housing • community facilities • parks and recreation • community health

Housing Data

The annual Housing Report continued to show significant changes in housing prices between 2023 and 2024. The median housing sale price rose to \$525,000, a 6.7% increase over the prior year and the highest sales price ever for the county, even after adjusting for inflation. 1,639 units were built in 2024, with 35% of those being single-family detached, 40% single-family attached, and 25% multi-family housing.

Housing Organization Coordination

The coordination of housing organization partners continued in 2025. The county's Housing Choices Committee met twice in 2025 to assist CCPC in guiding its housing efforts.



569

SINGLE FAMILY UNITS BUILT



653

SINGLE FAMILY ATTACHED UNITS BUILT



417

MULTI-FAMILY UNITS BUILT

In addition, housing organizations from around the county met twice in 2025. During these meetings the organizations provided updates on progress of the housing strategies identified in 2024, determined unified housing terminology, and worked to progress setting target numbers for housing in the county. As a result of these robust conversations, CCPC will continue to implement strategies identified in 2024 and will conduct a land capacity assessment in 2026. Progress on the identified strategies included the initiation of a resource sharing hub and the creation of a citizen corner for chescoplanning.org.

A+ Homes Adaptable Guide – Housing Assessment

The A+ Homes adaptable guide, “Housing Assessment,” was completed in 2025. The assessment used both quantitative and qualitative analyses to identify current and future housing trends, challenges, and needs. Major challenges include lower and median income ownership households being priced out of the county while rental households are becoming increasingly housing cost burdened, and the county's undersupply in total housing units with an oversupply in larger homes.

Chester County Land Bank

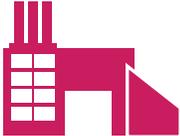
The planning commission continued researching, applying for funding, and drafting materials for the implementation of a county land bank to acquire land for affordable housing projects. The county land bank is anticipated to be created in 2026.



How We PROSPER

Nonresidential Construction

The county's Nonresidential Construction Report showed that such construction was moderate in 2024, with about 1,107,081 square feet built, much of which is institutional and commercial development. Two projects, a Great Valley School District center in East Whiteland Township and the Longwood Gardens West Conservatory project in East Marlborough Township were each over 115,000 square feet.



141,900 SF
BUILT INDUSTRIAL



417,708 SF
BUILT COMMERCIAL



105,285 SF
BUILT INSTITUTIONAL



442,188 SF
BUILT AGRICULTURAL

job centers • business parks • main streets • industrial areas • retail centers • agriculture

Economy Dashboard

The annual county economy report transitioned to a dashboard that describes resident, employment, business, and real estate characteristics, as well as gross domestic product data and information about key industry groups.

Urban Centers Forum

The 2025 Urban Centers Forum was held on September 25th as an online webinar providing information to participants about active transportation plans and bike parks, including defining what these plans and facilities are and ways they can be funded. Several local examples of bike parks were presented. The webinar was recorded and posted on CCPC's website as a resource for residents and municipalities.



How We CONNECT

roadways • sidewalks • trails • public transportation • airports • freight • communications • utilities • energy • pipelines

Municipal Transportation Grants Guide

This guide was created to help Chester County municipalities take their transportation improvement goals from concept to reality by increasing their knowledge of the grant and reimbursement program processes and to prepare them for the application process. Developed by working with a committee of current and former private sector consultants and municipal managers, the guide walks potential applicants through the process of identifying needed improvements, planning for how to move the project(s) forward, and ultimately preparing strong and competitive applications to various transportation funding programs. The guide is available as both a webpage and a downloadable PDF document.

Transportation Resources for Rural and Agricultural Communities

Of Chester County's 73 municipalities, 50 have rural and/or agricultural landscapes as designated by *Landscapes3*. Beginning in 2023, the Multi-Modal Transportation Division reached out to these rural and agricultural communities through email, survey, and during multi-municipal meetings to better understand which local roads may be unsafe or experience higher use by vulnerable road users, such as cyclists and pedestrians. The resulting resource addresses safety in rural areas and provides information on complete streets policies, maintenance, funding, and training opportunities. This resource was published as both a webpage and a downloadable PDF document.

Transportation Improvement Inventory (TII)

The TII is the Planning Commission's first step in the biennial process of updating the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) where all 73 municipalities are asked to review and update their list of desired transportation improvements. This year's iteration included a more robust initial outreach beyond the municipal managers, in which municipal elected officials were notified of the solicitation to achieve more participation in the process. The final results of the 2025 TII included 561 proposed roadway, bridge, bicycle and pedestrian, freight, and transit projects with an estimated cost of \$4.59 billion, which is an increase of 50 projects and \$240 million over the previous 2023 TII.

Phoenixville Bus Shelter

Phoenixville Borough completed the installation of a new bus shelter at the intersection of Church and Main streets this summer to serve SEPTA's current 99 and 139 bus routes. The installation includes the streetscape improvements of a pedestrian bump-out and two new Eastern Redbud street trees with the shelter featuring a bench and solar powered lighting. Funding for the shelter was provided by a grant from Chester County for their participation in the MTP Division's Bus Shelter Initiative. The goal of this initiative was to

provide shelters at bus stops that have the most boardings in support of improving the transit environment, one of the key principles of the Chester County Public Transportation Plan. The grant allowed Phoenixville to purchase a shelter of their choice in exchange for their agreement to install and maintain the shelter in perpetuity.

APA PA Chapter Award for a Plan: Chester County Trail Planning Series

The Chester County Planning Commission received an 'Award for a Plan' from the American Planning Association's (APA) PA Chapter for the 'Chester County Trail Planning Series' at their annual conference held in Harrisburg, October 12th to 14th. The four plans in this series include the Chester Valley Trail (CVT)

Extension to Downingtown Feasibility Study/Master Plan, the CVT West Feasibility Study/Master Plan, the Southern Chester County Circuit Trail Feasibility Study, and the Chester County Trails Master Plan. The committee was especially impressed "by how quickly the work has moved from planning to implementation with tangible progress already underway."



Trail Development

In May 2025, the Chester County Board of Commissioners approved the purchase of the former Philadelphia & Thorndale (P&T) branch rail corridor from PennDOT for \$1. This conveyance was ten years in the making since the advent of the Chester Valley Trail (CVT) Extension to Downingtown Study, completed in 2017, and will allow Chester County to extend the CVT westward to the Downingtown area. The consultant selection processes for both Phase 1 (the 3.4-mile trail section between the Whitford Bridge and Downingtown Trestle) and Phase 2 (renovation of the Downingtown Trestle) are currently underway with design review processes anticipated to last 3-5 years. Other trail development projects and their statuses include:

- **CVT Phase IVa: a one-mile extension of the CVT to Oaklands Corporate Center** – under construction with completion anticipated in 2026.
- **CVT West: Enola Low Grade Trail extension into Atglen Borough** – in design with construction anticipated to begin in 2027.
- **Struble Trail: Extension to Marsh Creek State Park** – a short connection across Dorlan's Mill Road – construction anticipated to begin in mid-2026.

These projects advance the *Landscapes3* recommendation to create a countywide, interconnected trail network and are documented in the Trails Master Plan completed in 2024.

Director's MESSAGE



Matthew Edmond, AICP

Kicking Off the Next 75 Years

Looking back, 2025 was a big year for the Chester County Planning Commission, as we celebrated our 75th anniversary! Think about what that means for a moment. In 1950 Chester County was the 19th most populous county in the Commonwealth. There were no

highways. And yet county leadership had the foresight soon after World War II to see the coming growth pressures and establish the planning commission. For those of you who celebrated with us, thank you for being a part of our work over three-quarters of a century. Whether you are a former employee or a longtime planning partner – we couldn't do it without you.

And now 2026 is here. America is facing unprecedented political, financial, and technological upheaval – and the planning industry has to step up to the moment. That's why the Chester County Planning Commission is leaning into innovation for 2026. With data centers on the rise, our staff are developing tools this year to help our municipalities properly plan for and regulate them. Our organization is tackling the housing affordability crisis by taking a central role to establish a county land bank. We'll be starting an on-road bicycle plan to lay the groundwork to expand multi-modal transportation options around the county. And our team is assisting the Chester County 250th Commission to lead our citizens in celebrating the nation's sesquicentennial. These are just a few of the ambitious efforts we have in the queue this year, which you can find in our new 2026 work program.

As 2026 dawns, we will continue to help our communities grow, thrive, and remain positioned to weather the coming economic and societal changes. As we embark on the next 75-year period, we invite you to continue your important role in working with us. Let's do great things together.

Matthew Edmond, AICP
Executive Director



Budget

Expenditures	2023	2024	2025
Personnel Services	\$3,361,124	\$3,336,180	\$3,459,935
Materials & Services	\$187,135	\$253,574	\$285,256
Contributions, Grants, Subsidies	\$188,290.00	\$188,290.00	\$205,810.00
TOTAL	\$3,736,549	\$3,778,044	\$3,951,001

Revenues	2023	2024	2025
Federal	\$254,218	\$266,812	\$266,724
State	\$38,530	\$1,045	\$0
Local	\$63,056	\$64,740	\$45,240
Subdivision/Land Review Fees	\$233,118	\$209,564	\$150,165
Miscellaneous	\$12,650	\$1,700	\$11,775
TOTAL	\$601,572	\$543,861	\$473,904

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* Former staff



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