



NORTH CAROLINA'S INTERNATIONAL CITY™

**Planning and  
Development  
Department**

**2014**

**Annual Report**



The Planning & Development Department provides services to its clients and customers through its Planning Services, Development Services, and Inspection Services Divisions, with internal support provided by the Administration Unit. For more information about each division's roles and responsibilities please visit the Department's website at: <http://www.highpointnc.gov/plan>.

## **PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

### **MISSION**

#### **SHAPING A MORE LIVABLE HIGH POINT**

**We accomplish our mission by:**

- **Facilitating and promoting a shared, comprehensive plan for the development of the community that advances a quality environment, both natural and built;**
- **Creating strategies that guide development in a manner that protects and enhances the community; and by**
- **Administering services that implement the comprehensive plan and form a safe, sustainable and livable place.**

**NORTH CAROLINA'S INTERNATIONAL CITY™**

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## **2014 Annual Report**

### **Executive Summary**

Over the past several years there has been an upward trend in many of the categories used to measure development activity, almost back to levels seen prior to the Great Recession. Although this trend somewhat leveled off in 2014, there were still indicators that things were moving in a positive direction. For example, the number of rezoning cases reviewed by the Planning & Zoning Commission increased, marking the fifth consecutive year this number has gone up or stayed the same. The total number of TRC projects approved also increased in 2014; and the amount of non-residential square footage approved went up significantly, primarily due to one large industrial project – the new Ralph Lauren Corp. warehouse and distribution facility located off Highway 66 on land that was annexed into the city from Forsyth County in 2014.

While the number of residential lots/units approved by the TRC dropped off in 2014, this was due in large part to a single 288-unit apartment complex that was approved the previous year. This same project led to more than double the total number of residential units being approved for construction in 2014, as it moved from the planning stage to building permit issuance. However, there was still a decrease in the number of permits issued for new construction, which contributed to a 1.5% drop in the total number of building permits. On the bright side, the number of new commercial building permits reversed a downward trend that started in 2009, and the value of commercial permits increased significantly, resulting in an overall increase in the value of new construction. Also, the total number of building construction plans reviewed went up for the third consecutive year to their highest level in ten years, again due primarily to the amount of non-residential development, although the number of residential plan reviews also went up.

Another possible indication that the economy continues to improve can be found in the results of local code enforcement activities that have focused on addressing the deteriorated conditions in many neighborhoods over the past few years. In 2014, the number of local code violations decreased for the second consecutive year, particularly in the public nuisance category, which decreased by 13% from 2013 to 2014. In addition, while the number of minimum housing violations for unsafe residential dwellings went up for the fourth year in a row, the number that were repaired by the owner almost doubled, and the number that were demolished decreased, indicating that owners were starting to take a more active role in fixing up their properties.

The Department also completed a grant-funded project to prepare an inventory of the city's historic industrial properties with the help of a consultant. The goal is to use the information in the inventory to recommend a number of the properties for inclusion on the study list for the National Register of Historic Places.

In addition, the Department continued work on two very important projects related to the City's development review process. The first is implementation of a new land management system known as Accela that will work in conjunction with updated document management software to greatly improve the plan review, permitting, inspection and licensing processes. And the second is UPDATE High Point, which is a rewrite of the Development Ordinance that is being funded by a Community Challenge Planning Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. When these projects are complete they will make the overall development process more streamlined and responsive to our customer's needs.

Although the report was delayed this year due to the Accela software implementation project, hopefully you will find the information in this report of interest. If you have any questions please contact Lee Burnette at 883-3328, or visit our website at: [www.highpointnc.gov/plan](http://www.highpointnc.gov/plan).

## ***City of High Point Planning & Development Department***

The Planning and Development Department produces an annual report every year to highlight the activities of the Department over the previous calendar year. The following are notable projects in 2014 that helped contribute to the goal of making High Point more livable, safe and prosperous.

### **Key Projects**

#### **Development Review**

The first two projects below are significant ongoing efforts to modernize the way the City handles development activity. When completed these projects will represent an important advancement in capabilities and improve customer service. They also represent a large share of the Department's work load over the past year, which has continued to be the case in 2015.

➤ ***UPDATE High Point – Development Ordinance Rewrite***

The City hired Clarion Associates in 2012 to rewrite the Development Ordinance with a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Using a refreshed code assessment as a framework, one of the primary goals is to correct the “one-size-fits-all” approach that makes infill and revitalization efforts more difficult. In November 2014, the second of three modules was delivered



for review by the 18-member citizen advisory committee that has been helping guide the project throughout the process. Following review by the advisory committee, this module was presented at a joint meeting of the Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council in early 2015. Module Two covered zoning districts and uses, and it can be viewed on the project website at <http://www.highpointnc.gov/plan/DORewrite/index.cfm>. The final module and a public hearing draft are expected to be completed by the end of 2015.

➤ ***Accela Land Management System***

In 2012, the City hired RedMark Technologies to implement a new land management system called Accela. The goal is to improve customer service by making the plan review, permitting, inspections and licensing processes more predictable, consistent, accountable, transparent, and efficient. Working in conjunction with a new document management system, it will increase staff productivity by making it easier to search, retrieve, and share information, and allowing customers to make submittals electronically via the web. In 2014, the consultant designed and configured the software in anticipation of implementation in mid-2015.

➤ ***Urban Forestry Guidelines Update***

In August 2014, a set of revisions to the *Guidelines and Standard Practices for Trees* was reviewed and approved by the City's Urban Forestry Committee. These guidelines provide the standard practices for the planting, maintenance and removal of trees on City owned and controlled property, and they are referenced in the tree conservation section of the Development Ordinance. The guidelines were originally approved in 2006, but the only time they had been revised was soon after they were adopted. One of the changes was to establish an approximately five-year time period for them to be reviewed in the future. In addition to minor changes in wording, other notable changes included further explaining the committee's role in reviewing certain types of requests, modifying the standards for planting trees on steep slopes and near overhead power lines, clarifying the responsibilities of those making a request, adding additional reasons for removal and exemptions, introducing an administrative decision process under limited circumstances, and aligning the application process with current practices.

## 2014 Annual Report

### Comprehensive Planning

#### ➤ ***Piedmont Together Sustainable Communities Project***

The City of High Point partnered with the Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART), Piedmont Triad Regional Council (PTRC), and other agencies and local governments in implementing a project funded by a HUD grant to create a regional plan for the 12-county Piedmont Triad region. It is intended to build economic competitiveness in the region by connecting housing with good jobs and transportation in an equitable manner. Staff from the Department attended meetings in 2014 to help wrap up the nearly three and half year planning process, culminating in the *Framework for Prosperity Summit* held on March 27, 2014 where the final vision was presented.

#### ➤ ***Historic Industrial Property Inventory***

Department staff worked with Laura Phillips, a historic preservation consultant, to prepare an inventory of historic industrial properties in the city, with a focus on those located within the Core City area. The project located those properties deemed potentially eligible for the National Register study list and provided a general assessment of their condition and historic significance. The consultant also prepared a detailed outline of the city's industrial history to provide context for the identified properties, and examined whether they are industrially viable or might be better suited for commercial or residential adaptations in the hope of encouraging reinvestment in these properties.

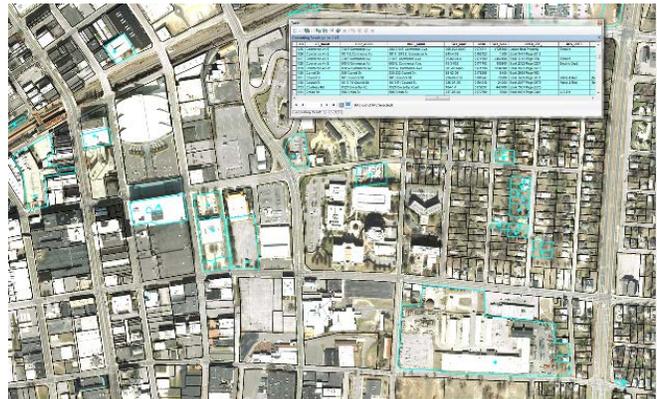
### Information Management

#### ➤ ***City Property GIS Database***

This project involved the creation of a Geographic Information System (GIS) data layer for the purpose of maintaining an inventory of City owned properties. This required matching all of the records in the database with the Guilford County tax records and other sources to determine any discrepancies. Although this database will need to be updated on an on-going basis, the bulk of the work was done throughout 2014 and is anticipated to be complete by mid-2015 and will be made available on the City's interactive GIS mapping website *The Point*.

#### ➤ ***GIS Base Mapping***

Every several years the aerial photography used in the City's GIS is updated. In 2013, the City decided to partner with the State in its state-wide ortho-imagery project. Using their selected vendor – Spatial Data Consultants, a firm based in High Point – resulted in cost savings that were put toward a historic image indexing project that had been put on hold due to lack of funding. The flights capturing the imagery were flown in February 2014, and quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC) was performed by Department staff throughout 2014. The finished product was completed and added to *The Point* website in early 2015.



#### ➤ ***Historic Image Archiving***

The process of converting historic aerial imagery for the years 1958, 1970, 1977, 1982, 1985 and 1988 to digital format was completed by a consultant, Quantum Spatial, in 2014. The converted images went through QA/QC and then made available on *The Point* in early 2015.

**City of High Point Planning & Development Department**

**High Point Growth**

**Annexations**

The City of High Point typically adds to its incorporated boundaries through voluntary annexations, which allows for access to City services such as water and sewer. Table 1 shows the number of annexations and amount of acreage annexed over the past ten years, along with the city's total incorporated area and annual growth rate in terms of area. There was a slight drop in the number of annexations and a large decrease in the acreage annexed in 2014, although this was due to a 510-acre annexation in 2013 that was the single largest annexation in over 25 years. The acreage annexed was still 100 times higher than the low point in 2010.

**Table 1: High Point Annexations and Incorporated Area**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Annexations</b>	<b>Acreage Annexed</b>	<b>Total Incorporated Area</b>	<b>Annual Area Growth Rate</b>
2005	19	403.85	54.29 sq. miles	1.17%
2006	8	283.32	54.73 sq. miles	0.81%
2007	14	316.29	55.23 sq. miles	0.91%
2008	6	92.45	55.37 sq. miles	0.25%
2009	2	5.69	55.38 sq. miles	0.02%
2010	1	1.33	55.38 sq. miles	0.004%
2011	4	39.36	55.44 sq. miles	0.11%
2012	6	33.75	55.50 sq. miles	0.11%
2013	5	583.77	56.41 sq. miles	1.64%
2014	4	133.20	56.62 sq. miles	0.37%
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>1,893.01</b>	<b>56.62 sq. miles</b>	<b>0.54%*</b>

\* Average annual growth rate over the entire 10-year period

**Population**

The Department estimates the city's population as of April 1 each year. In 2014, the city's estimated population was 109,270, which was a 0.91% increase over the population estimated in 2013 and a 4.69% increase over the population determined during the 2010 Census. Table 2 shows the population figures and annual growth rates based on the Department's annual population estimate and the most recent census. Population projections for 2015 through 2030 were calculated in 2012 using 2010 census figures as a base.

**Table 2: Annual Population Estimates and Projections**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Estimated/Projected Population</b>	<b>Increase From Previous Year</b>	<b>Annual Population Growth Rate</b>	<b>Change Since April 1, 2010</b>
2010	104,371*	N/A	N/A	N/A
2011	105,843	1,472	1.41%	1,472
2012	107,157	1,314	1.24%	2,786
2013	108,285	1,128	1.05%	3,914
2014	109,270	985	0.91%	4,899
2015	109,919^	649~	0.59%~	5,548
2020	116,676^	1,351~	1.23%~	12,305
2025	124,087^	1,482~	1.27%~	19,716
2030	131,032^	1,389~	1.12%~	26,661

\* Based on decennial census

^ Projections calculated in 2012 by City

~ Average annual increase and average annual percent change since year noted in previous row

**Appointed Boards**

**Planning & Zoning Commission**

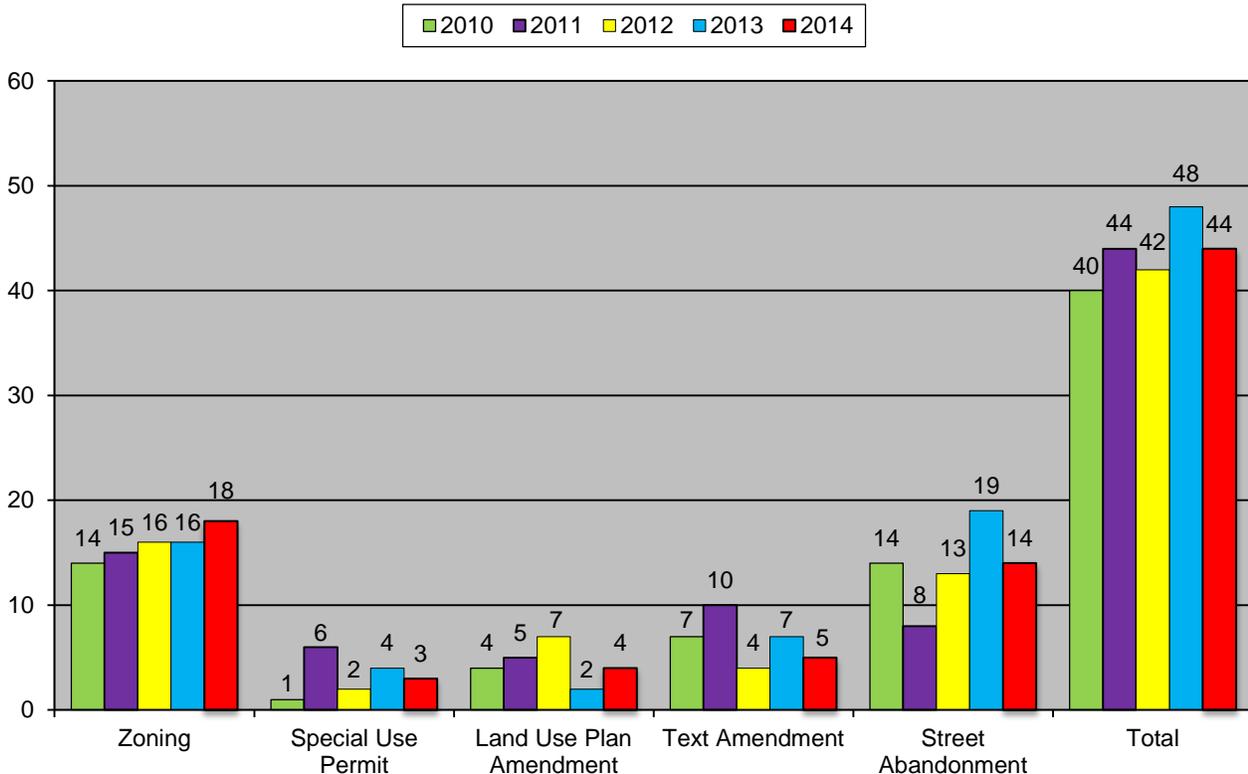
High Point's Planning & Zoning Commission is an advisory body made up of nine members appointed by the City Council. It reviews and makes recommendations on a variety of items, including requests to rezone property to change the allowable uses and development regulations; special use permits to approve a use that is permitted only after a review process; amendments to the proposed future use of land in an area; amendments to the text of the Development Ordinance; and street abandonments to abandon the public interest in street rights-of-way. The Planning & Zoning Commission also reviews and makes recommendations on the Land Use Plan and other small area plans produced by the Department, and makes final decisions on street renaming petitions.

**Planning & Zoning Commission  
(as of Dec. 31, 2014)**

Andrew Putnam, Chair  
 Marie Stone, Vice Chair  
 James Armstrong  
 Ozzie Hough  
 Tom C. Kirkman  
 John W. McKenzie  
 Edward A. Squires  
 Mark Walsh

In 2014, the Planning & Zoning Commission reviewed a total of 44 cases, which was a decrease from the previous year, but was still higher than or equal to the totals for 2010 through 2012. Of those cases, the number of zoning cases increased in 2014 to the highest levels since the beginning of the Great Recession in 2008. However, the only other category to increase in 2014 was land use plan amendments. The decrease in the number of street abandonment cases was due to the winding down of the Department's efforts over the last several years to identify street rights-of-way that could be abandoned. A breakdown of the types and total number of cases reviewed from 2010 to 2014 is shown in Chart 1.

**Chart 1: Cases Reviewed by the Planning & Zoning Commission**



## City of High Point Planning & Development Department

Not every request the Planning and Zoning Commission reviews is approved. The ultimate decision on whether to approve or deny a request lies with the City Council, after consideration of the recommendation by the Commission. In 2014, the Commission recommended approval of 42 of 44 requests they reviewed, and recommended denial of the remaining two. This resulted in concurrence with staff's recommendation on 43 of 44, or 97.7%, of the cases, as shown in Table 3. Table 4 shows that City Council concurred with the Commission's recommendation on 42 of 43, or 97.7%, of the cases, with one case being withdrawn by the applicant after receiving a recommendation of denial from the Commission. Charts 2 and 3 below show the breakdown of staff and Commission recommendations and the final decisions by City Council, which approved all 43 cases they reviewed.

### City Council (as of Dec. 31, 2014)

William S. Bencini, Jr., Mayor  
 Latimer Alexander, At-Large Representative  
 Cynthia Davis, At-Large Representative  
 Jeff Golden, Ward 1 Representative  
 Christopher Williams, Ward 2 Representative  
 Alyce Hill, Ward 3 Representative  
 Jay W. Wagner, Ward 4 Representative  
 Jim Davis, Ward 5 Representative  
 Jason Ewing, Ward 6 Representative

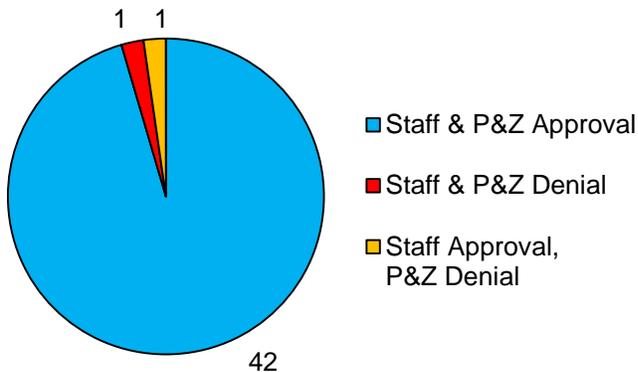
**Table 3: Staff and P&Z Concurrence**

Year	Staff and P&Z Commission Concurred	Rate of Concurrence
2010	38 of 40	95.0%
2011	38 of 44	86.4%
2012	41 of 42	97.6%
2013	45 of 46	97.8%
2014	43 of 44	97.7%

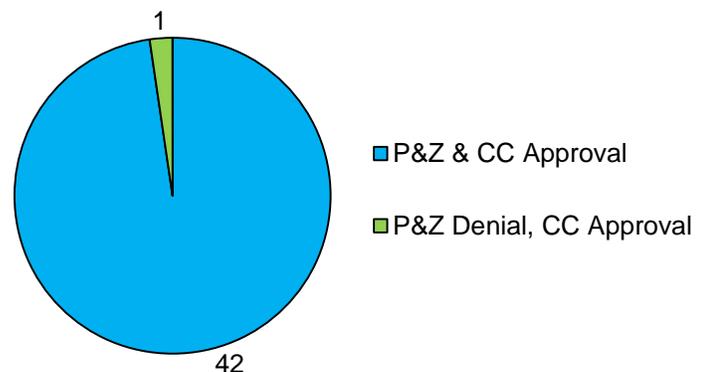
**Table 4: P&Z and City Council Concurrence**

Year	P&Z Commission and City Council Concurred	Rate of Concurrence
2010	37 of 39	94.9%
2011	37 of 44	84.1%
2012	41 of 42	97.6%
2013	45 of 46	97.8%
2014	42 of 43	97.7%

**Chart 2: 2014 Staff/P&Z Recommendations**



**Chart 3: 2014 P&Z/Council Decisions**



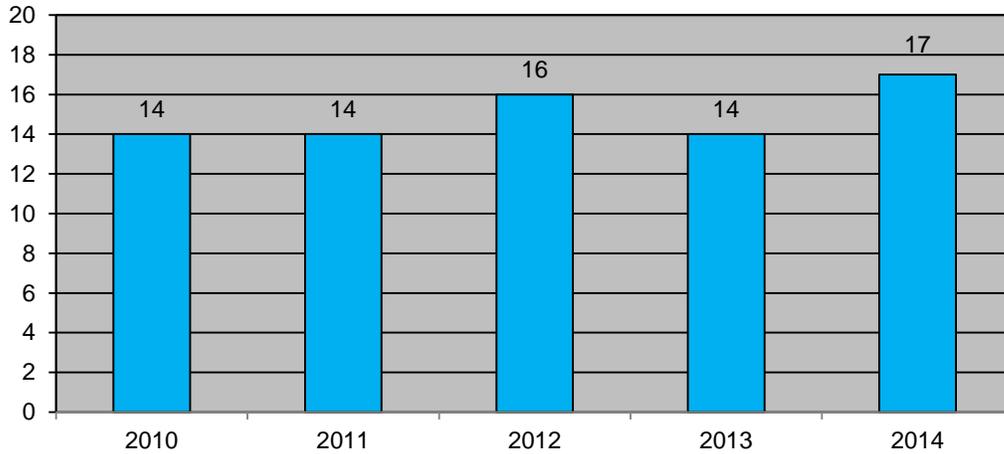
### Street Abandonment Initiative

Over the past seven years, the Department has made a concerted effort to identify and assess unopened or unused street rights-of-way in the city that could be abandoned. Of the 390 rights-of-way identified for possible abandonment since the beginning of the initiative, 198 had been abandoned by the end of 2014. Of the remaining 192, 150 are either not able to be abandoned or would be difficult to abandon, and 14 were denied or misidentified. That only leaves 28 remaining rights-of-way that are considered "simple to moderate" possibilities.

## 2014 Annual Report

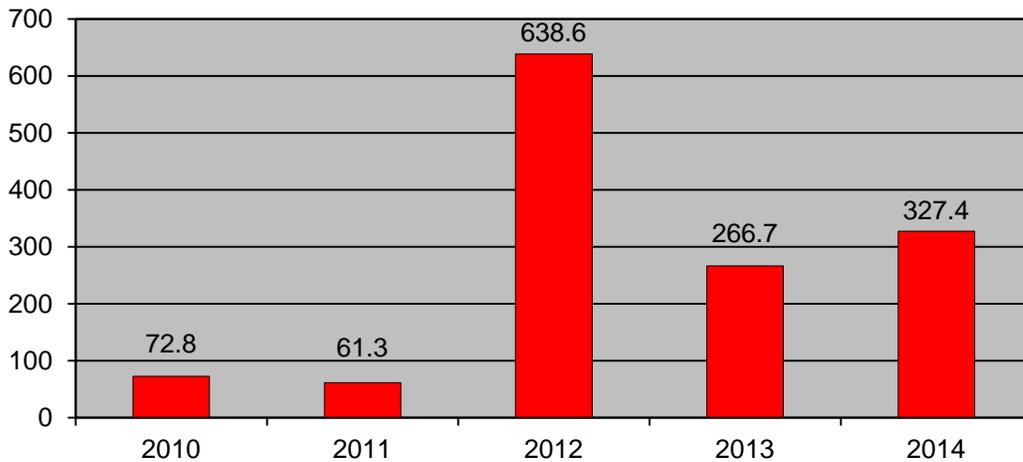
Of the cases reviewed by the Planning & Zoning Commission, zoning cases are generally the most significant in terms of the impact on future development in High Point. Chart 4 shows the number of zoning cases, including amendments to previous zoning cases, that were approved from 2010 to 2014.

**Chart 4: Approved Zoning Cases**



The number of approved zoning cases increased in 2014 to the highest levels since 2008. The total acreage also increased in 2014, as shown in Chart 5. Although it did not reach the levels of 2012 when approximately 510 acres were zoned as part of the 350 South project, the amount of acreage rezoned still compares favorably to 2008 through 2011 during the Great Recession. Table 5 shows the acreage zoned from 2010 through 2014 by primary use. Institutional uses comprised the largest share of the acreage zoned for the second year in a row, largely due to High Point University, followed closely by rezonings for non-residential uses.

**Chart 5: Total Acreage Rezoned**



**Table 5: Acreage of Approved Zoning Cases by Primary Use**

Year	Residential Acreage	Non-Residential Acreage	Institutional Acreage	Mixed-Use Acreage
2010	20.0	8.2	34.7	10.0
2011	13.6	15.0	32.6	0.0
2012	31.2	582.2	25.0	0.2
2013	19.3	48.7	133.7	65.0
2014	2.3	156.6	168.5	0.0

**City of High Point Planning & Development Department**

**Table 6: 2014 Approved Zoning Cases**

#	Case	Acreage	Previous Zoning	New Zoning	CC Action
1	14-01	129.5	RS-20 (Forsyth County)	CZ LI	4/21/14
2	11-14*	1.8	CU RM-5	CZ RM-8	3/17/14
3	14-02	9.2	CU PDL	CZ PDL	4/21/14
4	14-03	0.5	RS-20 (Guilford County)	RS-9	4/21/14
5	13-08*	7.1	RS-7	CZ PI	5/5/14
6	14-01*	1.5	RS-20 (Forsyth County)	CZ LI	5/19/14
7	14-05	11.5	CU HB	CZ LI	6/16/14
8	14-06	2.5	CU GO-H	CZ LB	7/21/14
9	14-07	2.2	CU SC	CZ SC	7/21/14
10	14-08	8.6	CU PDL	CZ GO-M	7/21/14
11	12-06*	11.2	CZ PI	CZ PI	7/21/14
12	13-04*	42.4	CZ RS-9	CZ RS-9	8/18/14
13	14-09	92.2	CU PI	CZ-PI	9/15/14
14	14-09*	4.1	RS-7	CZ PI	10/20/14
15	14-10	0.6	RS-7	GB	11/17/14
16	12-07*	0.6	RS-7	CZ GB	11/17/14
17	14-11	1.9	CU HB	CZ HB	11/17/14

\* Indicates an amendment to a previous zoning case



Four of the approved rezoning cases in 2014 were requests by High Point University, primarily related to their acquisition of approximately 11 acres of land for a new building that will house the School of Health Sciences and School of Pharmacy (currently under construction as shown above).



Two of the approved rezoning cases in 2014 were related to new charter school buildings. One involved amendments to the transportation conditions for the new Phoenix Academy building (pictured above). The other was to allow The College Preparatory and Leadership Academy of High Point to occupy a vacant retail furniture store.



## City of High Point Planning & Development Department

### Board of Adjustment

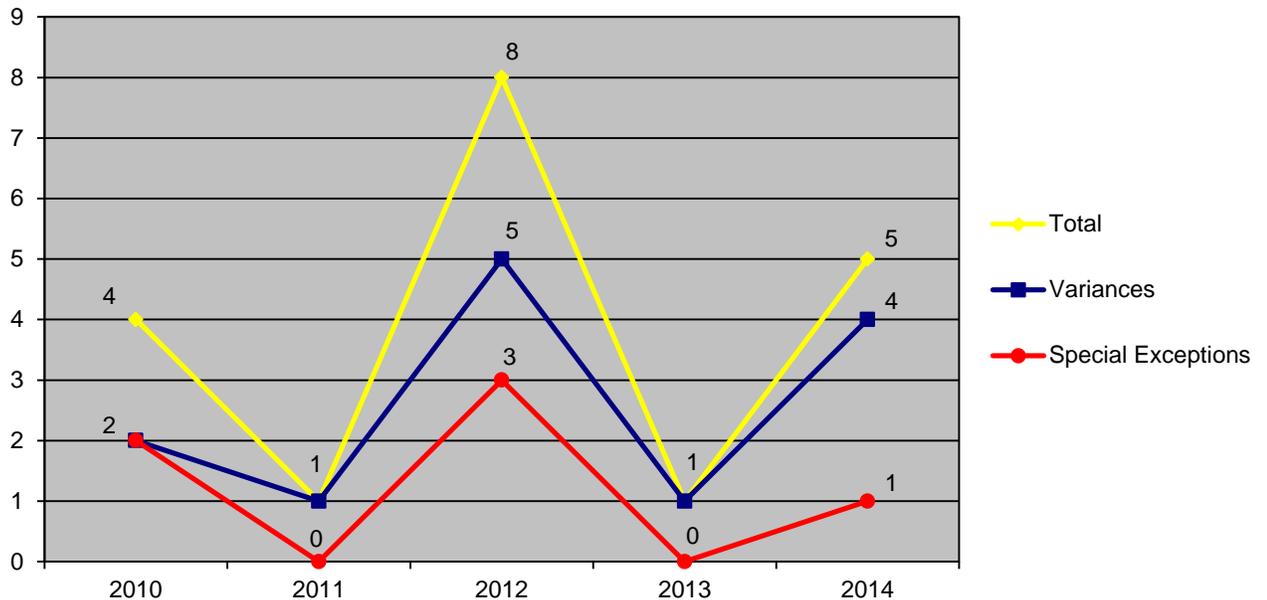
High Point's Board of Adjustment is a quasi-judicial body made up of five regular members plus several alternate members appointed by the City Council. As a quasi-judicial body, the Board considers requests during a hearing where applicants, opponents and staff submit evidence, and all discussion related to the case is limited to what is presented at the public hearing.

The Board of Adjustment hears three types of cases – variances, special exceptions and appeals. Variances involve relief from strictly literal interpretations and enforcement of zoning provisions in the Development Ordinance that would result in a property owner losing privileges shared by other properties in the same zoning district. A hardship or practical difficulty that is unique to the property, and not caused by the applicant, must be present for a variance to be approved. Special exceptions allow certain activities normally prohibited by zoning regulations, such as the expansion of a non-conforming use, as long as the activity meets the general intent of the regulations. Appeals heard by the Board relate to any zoning decision or interpretation made by Planning & Development Department staff relative to the Development Ordinance, or from decisions of other boards, such as the Historic Preservation Commission.

**Board of Adjustment**  
(as of December 31, 2014)  
David Horne, Chair  
Michael Fox, Sr. Vice Chair  
Richard Andrews  
Larry Barr, Sr.,  
Andrew Richardson  
Deborah Davis (Alternate)  
Justin Gibhardt (Alternate)  
André White (Alternate)

In 2014, there was an increase in the number of cases heard by the Board of Adjustment compared to the previous year, although it was fewer than in 2012 when there was a spike in the number of requests. There were four variance cases reviewed in 2014, along with one special exception request. Appeals are relatively rare, and none have been submitted since 2008. The total number of cases heard by the Board of Adjustment from 2010 to 2014 is shown in Chart 6.

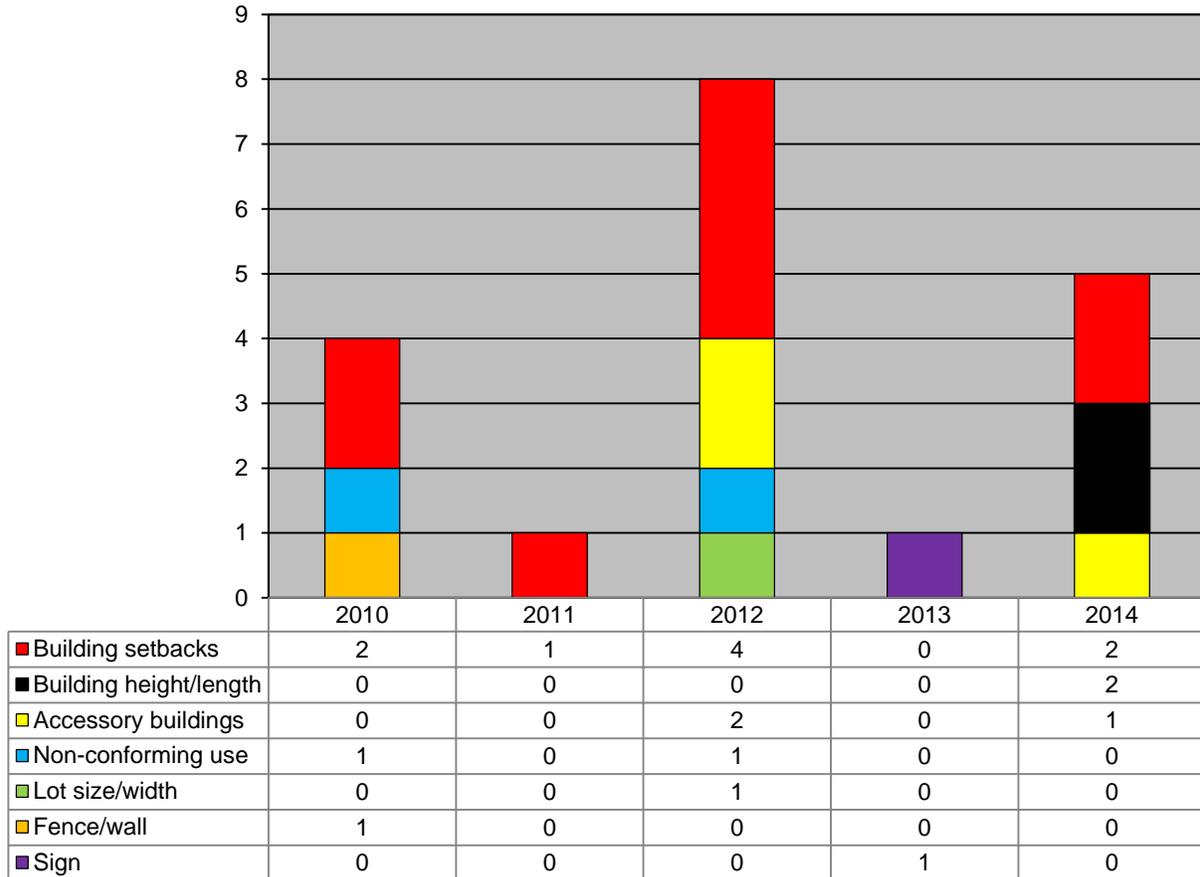
**Chart 6: Total Cases Reviewed by Board of Adjustment**



## 2014 Annual Report

Chart 7 shows a breakdown of the different types of requests reviewed by the Board over the past five years. The most common type of request over this time period was to allow an encroachment into building setbacks. There were two of these types of variances in 2014, along with two variance cases dealing with the maximum height or length of a building, and one special exception request to allow the cumulative total square footage of accessory structures on a residential lot to be greater than 50% of the gross floor area of house, which was denied.

**Chart 7: Types of Requests Reviewed by Board of Adjustment**



As shown in Table 7, two of the five cases reviewed last year were approved, and one was approved with conditions, resulting in 60% of the cases being approved. Of the remaining two, one was denied and the other was withdrawn by the applicant. Results from previous years show that it is not that uncommon for requests to be denied, as it depends solely on the circumstances of each case.

**Table 7: Results of Cases Reviewed by Board of Adjustment**

Year	Total Cases	Approved	Approved w/ Conditions	Denied	Withdrawn	% of Cases Approved
2010	4	1	1	2	0	50.0%
2011	1	1	0	0	0	100.0%
2012	8	6	1	1	0	87.5%
2013	1	0	0	1	0	0.0%
2014	5	2	1	1	1	60.0%

## City of High Point Planning & Development Department

### Historic Preservation Commission

High Point's Historic Preservation Commission is a nine-member body appointed by the City Council. They serve the entire city, including the three local historic districts – **Johnson Street** (Johnson St. between E. Lexington Ave. & E. Parkway Ave.), **Sherrod Park** (Woodrow Ave. between N. Hamilton St. & Forrest St.), and **West High Avenue** (Oak St. between W. High Ave. & Green Dr.). Members are appointed based on their demonstrated experience or interest in historic preservation, architectural history or other related disciplines. The Commission promotes historic preservation, and examines historic designations for properties and districts with historic significance. For example, the City was awarded a grant to prepare a survey of historic industrial properties, which was completed in 2014 (see excerpts below).

#### **Historic Preservation Commission**

(as of December 31, 2014)

Peter Freeman, Chair  
Ray Wheatley, Vice Chair  
William Hollis Anderson  
Phyllis Bridges  
Benjamin Briggs  
Glenn Chavis  
Julius Clark  
Gloria Halstead  
Tom Lugarich

One of the primary responsibilities of the Historic Preservation Commission is to review applications for Certificates of Appropriateness, which are required for exterior renovations to structures in the City's three designated local historic districts. This helps ensure such renovations are in line with the historic characteristics of the property and the adopted design guidelines for historic districts. Staff can approve a variety of limited activities related to general maintenance and repair of historic structures and properties, referred to as minor works, which do not require review by the Commission. As shown in Table 8, there were a total of 10 cases in 2014. All four Certificates of Appropriateness were approved. Two were located in the Johnson Street Historic District and two were in the Sherrod Park Historic District.

**Table 8: Historic Preservation Cases**

Year	Certificates of Appropriateness	Minor Works	Total Cases
2010	4	3	7
2011	6	8	14
2012	5	4	9
2013	5	7	12
2014	4	6	10

#### ***Excerpts from "High Point Historic Industrial Architecture Survey"***

"By the early twenty-first century, many of the city's factory buildings stood idle. With concern for the effect this has on High Point's economy and knowledge that many of the vacant buildings could be rehabilitated for new uses, the City of High Point decided to undertake a survey that would record the city's historic industrial buildings – both those that still function industrially and those that do not. Such a survey would provide the city with a much clearer understanding of the breadth and depth of High Point's overall industrial history and identify those properties that warrant preservation and potential listing in the National Register. ... Ultimately, the buildings or complexes that rose to the top of the pool of surveyed properties in the selection of those to be recommended for addition to the Study List exhibit at least one of the two following characteristics. They possess historical significance as part of High Point's industrial history and retain sufficient architectural integrity to physically represent that history, and/or they represent certain types or periods of industrial buildings and/or industrial construction methods and are largely intact."

## 2014 Annual Report

### Staff Committees

#### Urban Forestry Committee

The Urban Forestry Committee is responsible for the implementation of the City's urban forestry program, which includes implementation of the adopted urban forestry ordinance and *Guidelines and Standard Practices for Trees*. The Committee also seeks ways to improve the City's tree related activities through programs such as the *Plant to Remember Memorial Tree Program* and updates to the Core City Tree Inventory.

#### **Urban Forestry Committee**

(as of Dec. 31, 2014)

Andy Piper, Planning & Development  
Jeff Bodenheimer, Parks & Recreation  
Charles Collier, Electric  
Ken Sult, Public Services

One of the Committee's primary responsibilities is to review applications to plant, maintain, or remove trees in City-controlled spaces. In addition, the Committee reviews and comments on tree related activities that do not require applications, investigates cases that might require applications, but ultimately do not, and in rare instances, presents appeals of their decisions to the City Council. In 2014, two applications were submitted for removal and replanting of trees, both of which were approved. The first was for an oak tree in the Sherrod Park historic district that had outgrown its planting space, and the other involved two Bradford pear trees next to a furniture showroom that had been repeatedly topped over the years. There also continued to be a higher than usual number of investigations of tree related issues that did not meet the criteria for a formal application, due primarily to the removal of dead trees on City rights-of-way that posed a potential safety hazard. Table 9 shows the number of requests reviewed by the UFC over the past five years.

**Table 9: Urban Forestry Requests**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Applications</b>	<b>Reviews &amp; Comments</b>	<b>Investigations</b>	<b>Appeals</b>	<b>Total Requests</b>
2010	4	4	3	1	12
2011	2	4	2	0	8
2012	4	1	4	1	10
2013	4	0	11	0	15
2014	2	1	12	0	15

The Committee is also responsible for submitting the City's annual Tree City USA application every December. High Point received this award from the National Arbor Day Foundation for the eleventh year in a row in 2014. One of the requirements is to observe Arbor Day, which was celebrated on March 12, 2014 with a bus tour of notable trees in the city, including several that were planted five years earlier in celebration of the city's sesquicentennial by the Midweek Garden Club (shown on the left), as well as memorial trees planted as part of the *Plant to Remember* program, and a Liberty Elm tree that was planted as part of an Eagle Scout project (shown on the right).



## City of High Point Planning & Development Department

### Technical Review Committee

The Technical Review Committee (TRC) reviews plans for proposed residential and non-residential subdivisions, apartments and condominium developments, as well as other developments like shopping centers and office parks. The TRC's primary role is to determine if proposals meet the development regulations and can be adequately served by public services in a timely and cost effective way. There is also a Watershed Subcommittee whose primary role is to determine if development proposals within the city's watershed areas meet the applicable development standards related to water quality.

The TRC reviews and approves a variety of different development related submissions. Each project is placed into one of several categories, including minor subdivisions, major subdivisions, integrated multiple use developments (IMUD's), group developments, or site plans. However, for each project there are typically a number of different items submitted. The major kinds of items submitted include preliminary plats, final plats, site plans, group development plans, plans & profiles, and watershed development plans. For example, a new "major subdivision" that includes a mix of single-family and multi-family housing might have a preliminary plat, followed by final plats for each phase of detached single family homes, along with group development plans for an apartment complex, as well as plans & profiles showing the location of proposed utilities and a watershed development plan to ensure the entire development meets watershed regulations. Some larger planned developments might even have a commercial component that would require site plan review of each new commercial building. Although this is all part of one "project," there are at least six "items" that the TRC has to review and approve for that project to begin construction. It is also important to note that the TRC only reviews residential projects with greater than 8 dwelling units or site plans for projects over 15,000 square feet in size. As a result, there may be many smaller projects that are not subject to formal TRC review, which results in a higher number of building permits being issued during the year regardless of the amount of TRC activity.

#### **Technical Review Committee**

(as of Dec. 31, 2014)

Andy Piper, Planning & Development  
Ray Adams, Planning & Development  
Vickie Embry, Transportation  
Greg Hall, Public Services  
Scott Dingus, Engineering Services  
Allen Averill, Electric  
Don Hinshaw, Fire

#### **Watershed Subcommittee**

(as of Dec. 31, 2014)

Anita Simpson, Public Services  
Terry Kuneff, Engineering Services  
Andy Piper, Planning & Development

#### ***Ralph Lauren Corp. Distribution Facility***

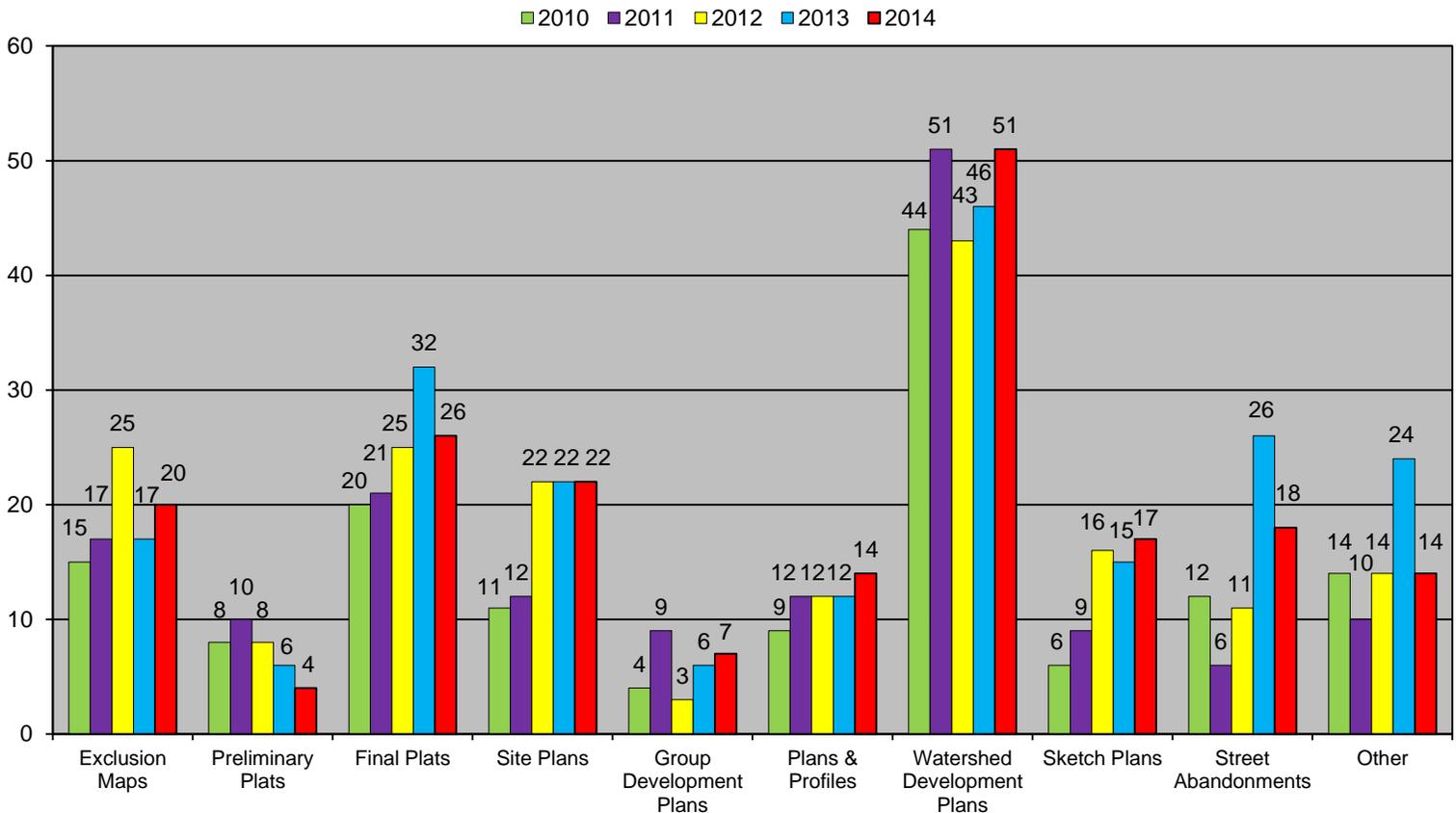
The largest project approved in 2014 was a new 805,000 sq. ft. distribution facility for the Ralph Lauren Corp. that will also include offices. In fact, that makes it the single largest non-showroom building in the entire city, and when combined with their other two existing facilities, which are each over 700,000 sq. ft. in size, Ralph Lauren now has over 2 million sq. ft. of total space in the city. They were also the largest employer in the city with 2,853 employees in 2014 according to the High Point Economic Development Corp.



## 2014 Annual Report

Chart 8 illustrates the types of items that were reviewed by the Technical Review Committee from 2010 to 2014. In addition to the major types of items mentioned previously, the TRC also reviews exclusion maps, sketch plans, street abandonments, and a variety of less common items that have been placed in an “other” category, including annexation maps, discussion items, easement reconveyances, City property sales, right-of-way encroachments, modifications, water/sewer connection requests, and minor watershed variances. In the past, this annual report only provided the number of projects reviewed each year. However, reporting the number of items reviewed provides a better understanding of the TRC’s total workload. For instance, the 193 total items reviewed in 2014 were associated with 104 projects, while in comparison there were 206 items and 110 projects in 2013, and 179 items and 101 projects in 2012. Although there was a slight decrease in the total number of projects and items reviewed by the TRC compared to the previous year, the 2013 numbers were buoyed by a higher than usual amount of street abandonments and “other” category items. Overall, the totals were still higher than in previous years when the Great Recession negatively impacted development activity.

**Chart 8: Items Reviewed by the Technical Review Committee**



In trying to get a sense of the amount of development occurring in the city, a better indicator than the number of items reviewed by the TRC is the number of major projects they approved that resulted in new residential lots/units or additional building square footage. Also, because the way projects are categorized for the purpose of TRC review does not always reflect the use that will eventually result from a project, Table 10 on the next page shows the types of major projects that were approved by the TRC over the past three years according to more general land use categories. It also shows the number of lots/units and acreage for residential uses, and the amount of building square footage for non-residential uses.

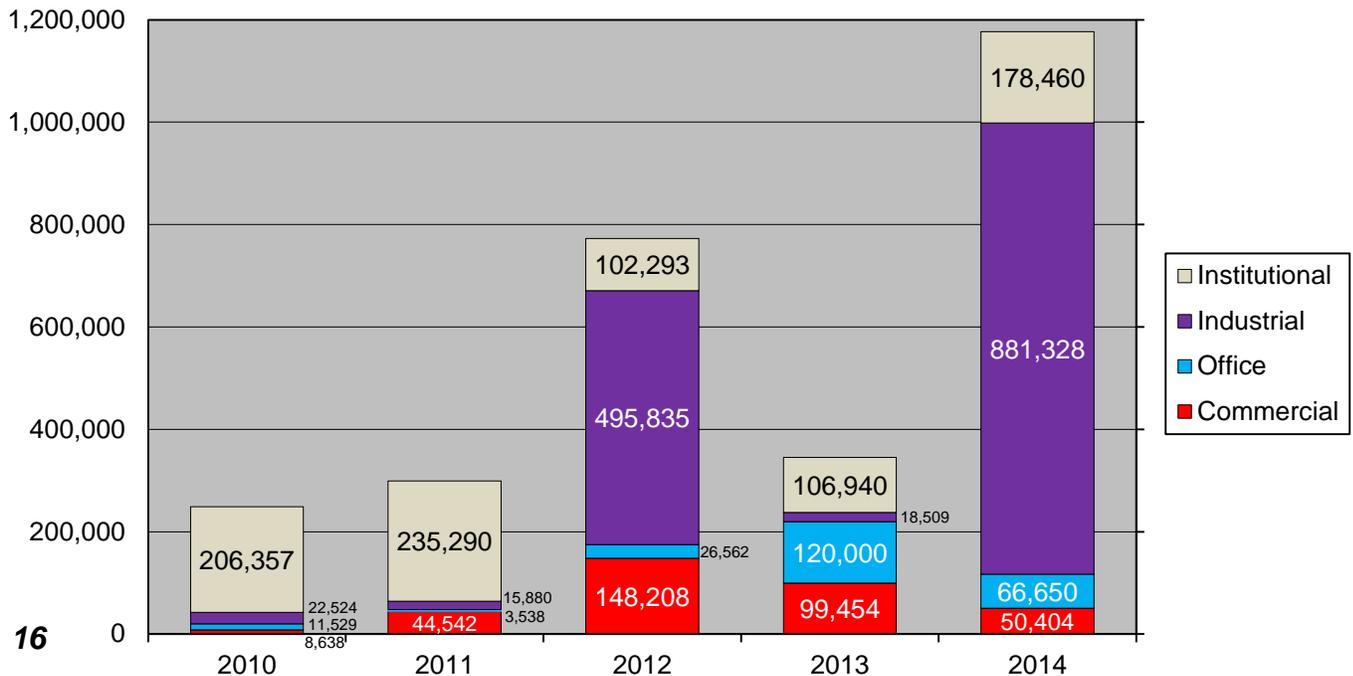
**City of High Point Planning & Development Department**

**Table 10: Major Projects Approved by Technical Review Committee**

Project Type	2012				2013				2014			
	Projects	Lots/Units	Acreage	Square Footage	Projects	Lots/Units	Acreage	Square Footage	Projects	Lots/Units	Acreage	Square Footage
Detached Single Family Residential	7	113	43.4	--	11	216	94.84	--	10	110	81.09	--
Attached Single Family Residential	3	15	1.74	--	4	29	2.37	--	7	54	4.23	--
Multi-family Residential	0	0	0	--	1	288	16.76	--	1	58	2.64	--
Commercial	11	--	--	148,208	6	--	--	99,454	8	--	--	50,404
Office	3	--	--	26,562	1	--	--	120,000	4	--	--	66,650
Industrial	4	--	--	495,835	3	--	--	18,509	5	--	--	881,328
Institutional	5	--	--	102,293	8	--	--	106,940	5	--	--	178,460
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>45.14</b>	<b>772,898</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>113.97</b>	<b>344,903</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>87.96</b>	<b>1,176,842</b>

In 2014, the total number of new lots/units approved by the TRC was much lower than the previous year, primarily due to almost half the number of detached single-family lots being approved, as well as a large apartment complex that boosted the number in 2013. However, the number of attached single-family lots increased, and the total number of projects approved actually increased. There was also a significant increase in the total amount of non-residential square footage approved, especially in the industrial category, which included the 800,000+ sq. ft. Ralph Lauren Corp. warehouse/distribution facility off Highway 66. Chart 9 compares the amount of non-residential square footage approved by the TRC over the last five years.

**Chart 9: Non-Residential Square Footage by Use**

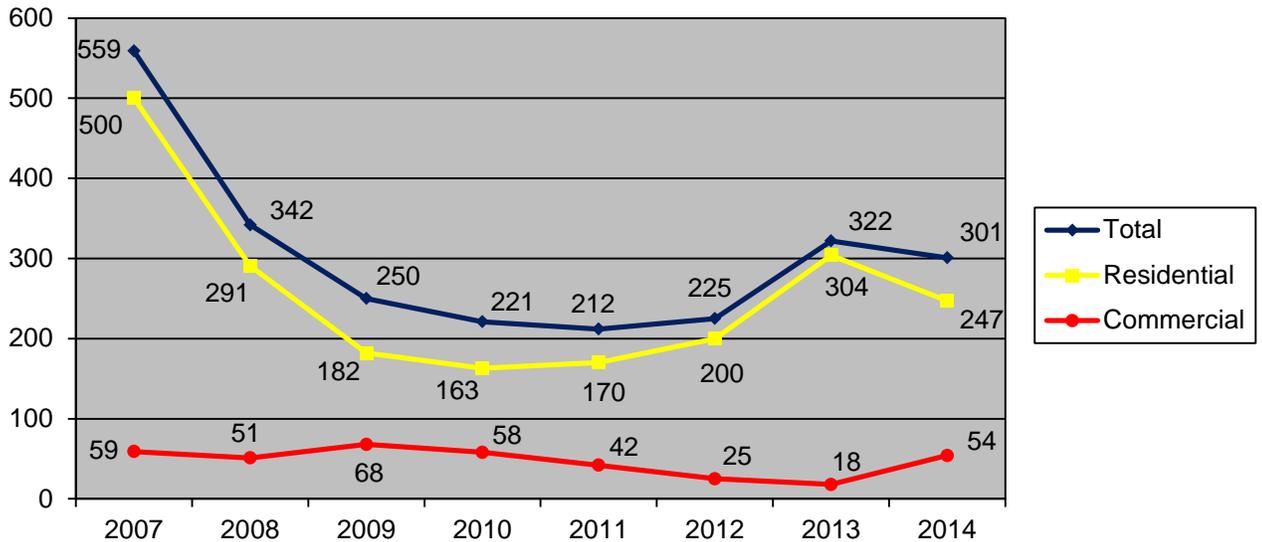


**Permits and Code Enforcement**

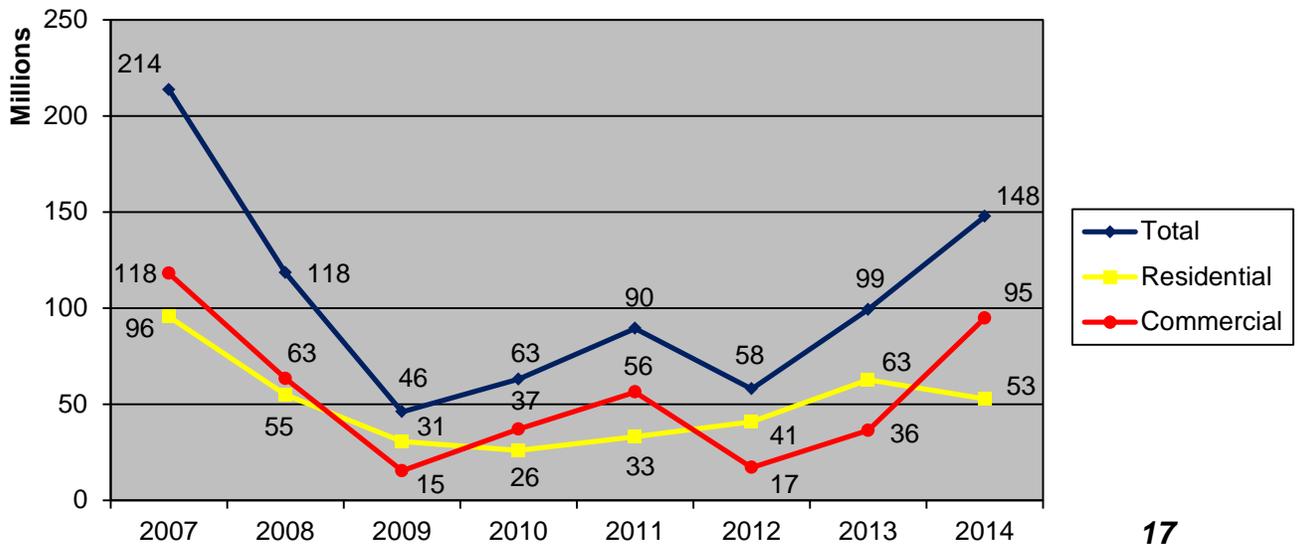
**Building Permits**

The Department also reviews and issues permits for a variety of building activities. As shown in Chart 10, for the first time in three years there was a slight decrease in the total number of building permits issued for new construction. Although the 6.5% decrease in 2014 is a step down from the 43% increase from 2012 to 2013, it is still 42% higher than the low point in 2011. This decrease was due primarily to a 19% drop in the number of new residential permits from 2013 to 2014, which follows three years of increases. However, the number of permits for new commercial construction tripled, which was the first increase in five years, and as shown in Chart 11, the total value of new commercial permits increased 164% from 2013 to 2014. This increased the overall value of new construction in 2014 by approximately 50%, even with a decrease in the value of new residential construction. The charts below reiterate that, generally speaking, residential construction drives the total number of new permits, while commercial projects drive the total value of new construction.

**Chart 10: Number of Building Permits for New Construction**



**Chart 11: Value of Building Permits for New Construction**



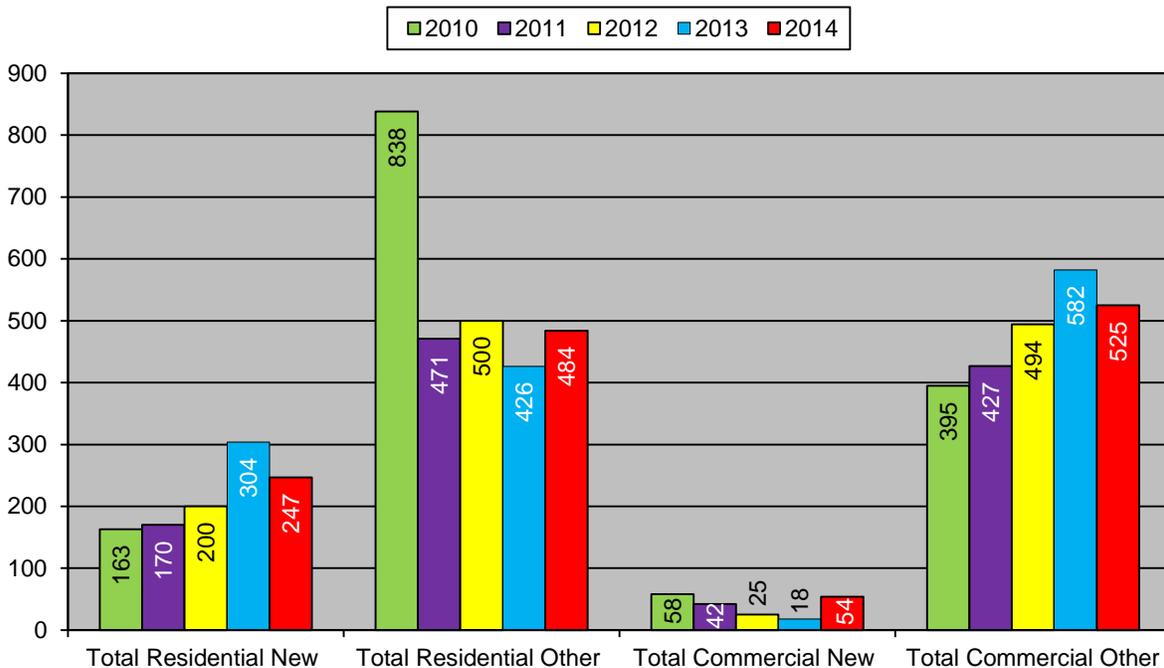
**City of High Point Planning & Development Department**

Table 11 provides the overall number of building permits issued in 2014 by type. The table categorizes the permits by whether they are residential or commercial, and whether they are new or other. “New” permits are those that established a new use for a site, while the “other” category includes activities related to existing uses, such as accessory buildings, demolitions, additions, repairs, and interior alterations, decks or tenant upfits. The detached single family residential category includes permits for single family dwellings, as well as modular and manufactured housing, while the attached single family residential category includes duplexes and townhomes. Permits for multi-family buildings are included in the commercial category, although the number of permits does not reflect the actual number of multi-family rental units. There were 383 new multi-family rental units permitted in 2014, primarily due to a large new complex – the Signature Northpoint Apartments at Highway 68 and Regency Drive. This resulted in a total of 630 residential units approved in 2014, compared to 304 in 2013, when no new multi-family units were approved, and 254 in 2012, when only 54 multi-family units created. The commercial category also includes all other non-residential uses, such as retail, office, industrial, or institutional buildings. Chart 12 below shows the distribution of permits in each category over the last five years.

**Table 11: 2014 Building Permits by Type**

Category	Total Residential New	Total Residential Other	Total Commercial New	Total Commercial Other
Detached Single Family	187	--	--	--
Attached Single Family	60	--	--	--
Accessory Buildings	--	22	--	--
Demolitions	--	95	--	15
Additions	--	56	--	14
Repairs	--	111	--	15
Alterations/Decks/Tenant Upfits	--	200	--	481
Commercial Buildings	--	--	54	--

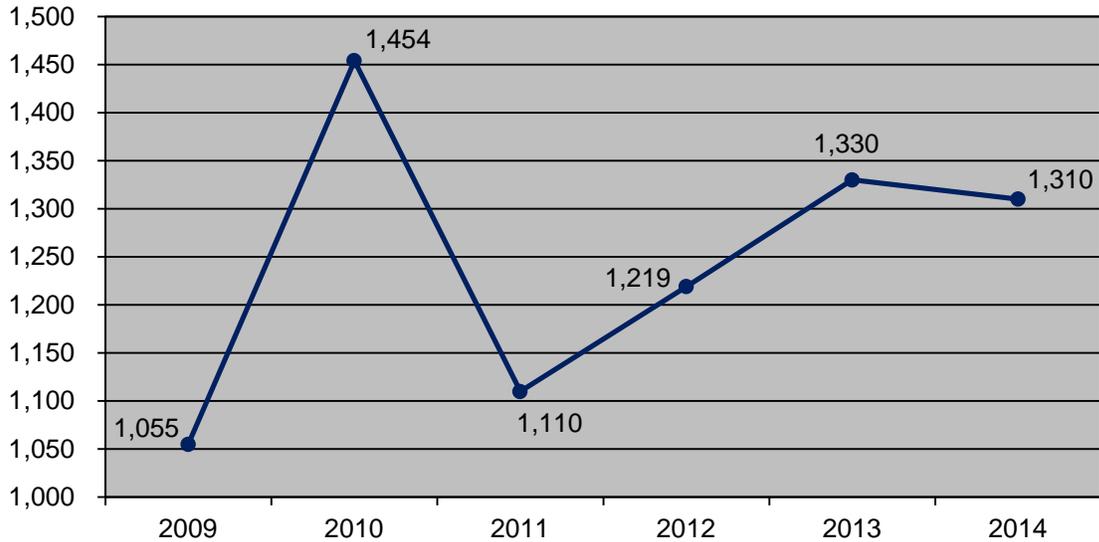
**Chart 12: Building Permits by Type from 2010 through 2014**



## 2014 Annual Report

Chart 13 shows the distribution of building permits issued over the past six years, regardless of type. There was a slight 1.5% decrease in the total number of building permits issued in 2014. This is the first decrease since 2011, when there was a 24% drop due to higher than expected levels in the “other” residential permits, particularly repairs and residential alterations, in 2010. Not including this spike, the total number of building permits issued last year was still higher than at any other time during the Great Recession that started in 2008.

**Chart 13: Total Building Permits Issued**



### **Signature Northpoint Apartments**

Although the number of new residential permits dropped in 2014, the total number of new housing units actually increased by 326 units. How is that possible? It is important to realize that each building within a multi-family residential project is permitted as commercial, not residential, construction. And while each building counts as one commercial permit, there are usually 24 units in a typical apartment building. That is why one large apartment complex can add significantly to the total number of residential units approved in a given year, even though they don't count towards the residential permit totals. For example, the Signature Northpoint Apartments shown below counted as twelve commercial building permits for the purposes of this report, but since each building had 24 residential units, it resulted in 288 new residential units. That was more than all other new residential permits.

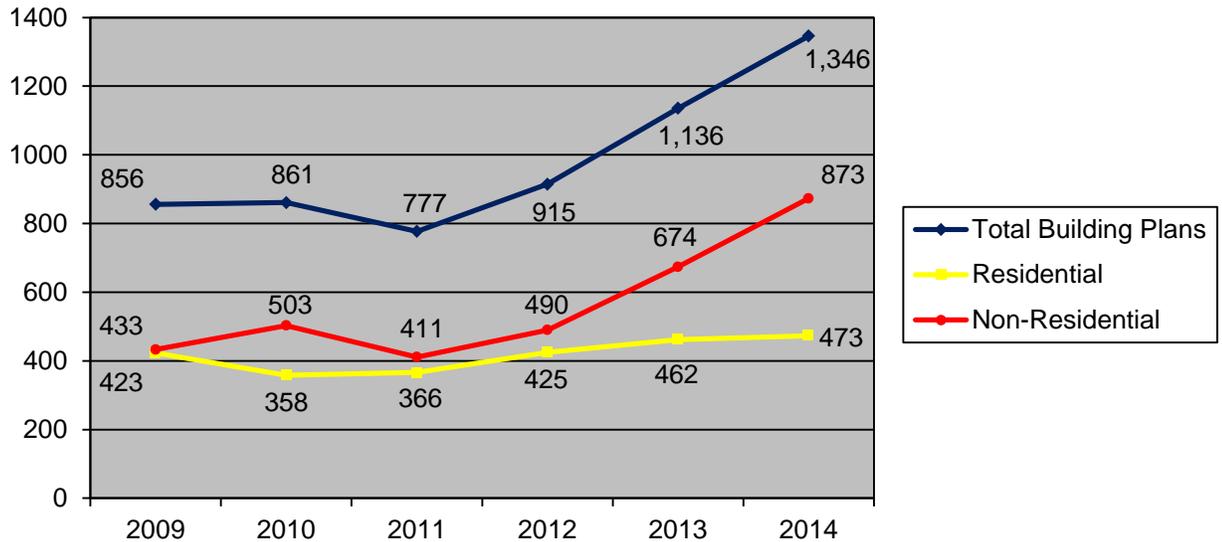


## City of High Point Planning & Development Department

### Building Construction Plans

As shown in Chart 14, the Department reviewed a total of 1,346 building construction plans in 2014, which is an 18.5% increase from the previous year. This continues the trend of increases seen over the previous two years following a 24% increase from 2012 to 2013 and an approximately 18% increase from 2011 to 2012. This is largely due to the number of non-residential construction plans reviewed, which exceeded residential plans for the sixth consecutive year and increased by approximately 30% last year to the highest level in over ten years. Residential plan reviews went up for the fourth year in a row after declining by approximately 65% from the peak of 1,035 in 2006. The total number of building plans reviewed, which peaked at 1,523 in 2005, is almost reaching levels seen before the Great Recession.

**Chart 14: Building Construction Plans Reviewed**



Typically, multiple permits are issued for each building plan. However, some of the plans reviewed may not result in any building permits. There is also a lag between the time building plans are reviewed and the time building permits are issued. Therefore, some of the permits issued in 2014 may be for plans that were reviewed in late 2013, while some of the plans reviewed in 2014 may not have building permits issued until sometime in 2015.

### Local Code Enforcement

In addition to plan review and the issuance of building permits, the Department is also responsible for the enforcement of local codes regarding zoning violations, junk vehicles, parking in front yards, public nuisances, and minimum housing standards. Zoning violations address a variety of issues related to nonconformance with regulations in the Development Ordinance. Junk vehicle codes address any vehicle that does not display a current license plate, cannot be driven as it was intended, is partially or wholly dismantled or wrecked and could be considered a health, fire or safety hazard. Regulating parking in front yards was adopted in 2009 to prevent parking on the grass in the front yard of single-family and two-family residential properties. Public nuisance codes address items such as dense growth of grass and weeds exceeding twelve inches in height, any concentration of trash and debris, open storage of household furniture or appliances, and any open or unsecured dwelling or commercial building. The minimum housing codes ensure that any renter or owner occupied dwelling complies with basic structural, sanitary and cosmetic requirements in order to be considered “fit for human habitation.” Table 12 outlines the Department’s local code enforcement over the past five years.

## 2014 Annual Report

**Table 12: Local Code Enforcement Violations Issued**

Year	Zoning Violations	Junk Vehicles	Parking in Front Yard	Public Nuisances	Minimum Housing
2010	284	41	65	2,544	320
2011	148	117	81	1,821	187
2012	110	22	89	2,152	234
2013	138	27	96	1,796	261
2014	152	19	95	1,563	302

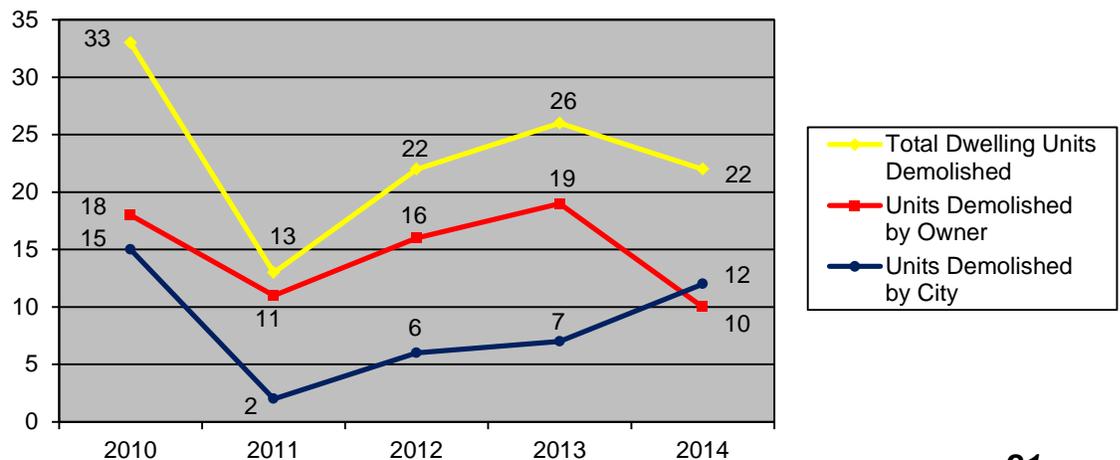
The overall number of local code violations that were issued decreased from 2,318 in 2013 to 2,131 in 2014, primarily due to a 13% drop in the number of public nuisance violations, which decreased for the second consecutive year to their lowest level in over ten years. However, both zoning violations and minimum housing violations increased to their highest levels since 2010.

Table 13 outlines the Department’s minimum housing code enforcement activities over the past five years. The number of unfit dwelling units repaired by their owner almost doubled from 2013 to 2014, reversing a trend of steady declines in this category over the past three years. This resulted in the total number of units that had to be secured decreasing for the first time over that same time period, with the vast majority of those units being secured by their owner, as has been the case the past several years. As shown in Chart 15, the total number of units demolished decreased for the third year in a row in 2014, although unlike in previous years, the majority of these units were demolished by the City, and consequently the amount of money spent to do so went up. However, overall, fewer unfit dwelling units had to be secured or demolished, and owners were taking more responsibility for repairs to their properties.

**Table 13: Minimum Housing Code Enforcement Activities**

Year	Units Repaired by Owner	Units Secured		Units Demolished		\$ Spent by City on Demolitions
		by Owner	by City	by Owner	by City	
2010	247	23	22	18	15	\$44,047
2011	219	47	17	11	2	\$2,231
2012	163	46	26	16	6	\$38,424
2013	110	60	18	19	7	\$41,051
2014	213	39	19	10	12	\$52,369

**Chart 15: Unsafe Dwelling Units Demolished**



## City of High Point Planning & Development Department

The tables on the previous page only include the number of violations issued and not the large number of properties that were investigated for possible violations, but which were not cited. For example, there were a total of 6,267 local code enforcement inspections in 2014, of which 34% ended up being violations. This compares to 6,591 inspections and 35% resulting in violations in 2013, and 6,471 inspections and 40% being violations in 2012. Many potential violations are resolved because the property is brought into compliance after discussing the issue with a code enforcement officer. Reinspections to determine if potential violations have been resolved represent a large part of these total local code enforcement inspections.

### **Building Inspections**

The activity that makes up the largest share of the Inspection Services Division's work load is building construction inspections. This includes initial inspections, which are the first time an inspector reviews the work to determine if it has been done according to code, and follow-up inspections, which are conducted for work that has been previously inspected but was not approved due to an issue, or multiple issues, that needed to be corrected. In 2014 there were 15,281 initial inspections and 3,682 (24%) follow-up inspections for residential building permits, and 9,482 initial inspections and 2,479 (26%) follow-up inspections for commercial building permits. In comparison, in 2013 there were 13,857 initial inspections and 2,997 (22%) follow-up inspections for residential building permits, and 8,376 initial inspections and 2,027 (24%) follow-up inspections for commercial building permits, while in 2012 there were 11,960 initial inspections and 2,994 (25%) follow-up inspections for residential building permits, and 7,880 initial inspections and 2,164 (27%) follow-up inspections for commercial building permits. Chart 16 shows the total number of inspections each year from 2010 through 2014.

**Chart 16: Total Building Inspections**

