

Inspectional Services Department

Mission

The Inspectional Services Department (ISD) is the keeper of the record for all real property in the City. Homeowners, developers, contractors, property owners, attorneys, architects, engineers and researchers are able to access the property records of the City on-line and at our windows.

ISD acts as the portal for all new businesses in the City. When someone decides to pursue a new venture in Newton, they are encouraged to visit ISD to get a complete read on whether their idea, in the proposed location, is allowed and if it conforms to zoning code regulations and what is their best path forward.

The ISD issues +/- 10,000 permits annually for building, plumbing, gas, electrical and mechanical work. The business counter at ISD is staffed 53 hours per week, opening at 7:00 AM to service the public. ISD's front counter is tended by Development Service Assistants and inspectors at all hours to provide accurate answers to building and zoning questions.

Every school, camp, day care, restaurant, places of assembly and multi-unit housing units are inspected by the Periodic Inspection program at ISD. Over 800 inspections are completed, and then followed up and re-inspected as necessary.

The Code Enforcement pursues zoning and building code violations, Special Permit conditions monitoring, as well as work hour and noise violations. Violations of historic and conservation restrictions, signage, light and noise complaints also come to ISD for enforcement.

ISD inspectors perform tens of thousands of inspections per year along with dealing with property line disputes, fence violations, accessory structures, signs, tree removal complaints, illegal parking and apartments, work without permits, abandoned building, etc.

ISD interacts daily with many other city departments in pursuit of our work. Engineering, Fire, City Clerk, Law, Planning, DPW, Health, Assessing, and IT are all vital to complete the information that must be accessed on a daily basis.

FY 2020 continued to be very busy in ISD. Construction work and development continues to challenge the City. The following adjustments are being made:

- ISD inspectors utilize scheduling, data entry and reporting via in-field technology.
- This year we have incorporated the 2nd DSA (Development Services Assistant) position into ISD. After a training period this new DSA position will support all business counter work, provide excellent customer service and begin the process of administrative support to both the periodic and code enforcement ends of ISD.
- The property record scanning project continues. This ongoing effort is readying our property records for uploading to a new property management system when it is acquired.
- Code Enforcement remains a substantial challenge in Newton. With the addition of Accessory apartment and STR (short term rentals) and the existing volume of complaints.
- The School Safety program has seen substantial progress in our goal of fully compliant facilities. The cooperation of the School, Fire, Police, Public Buildings, Law and Health Department have achieved much progress; however, more remains to be done.
- ISD remains committed to working with the Planning Department, the Zoning and Planning Committee and the public as we re-start zoning redesign/rewrite project. A changing City requires constant change to meet the challenges of the future.
- This year ISD has been challenged, like everyone else during the COVID-19

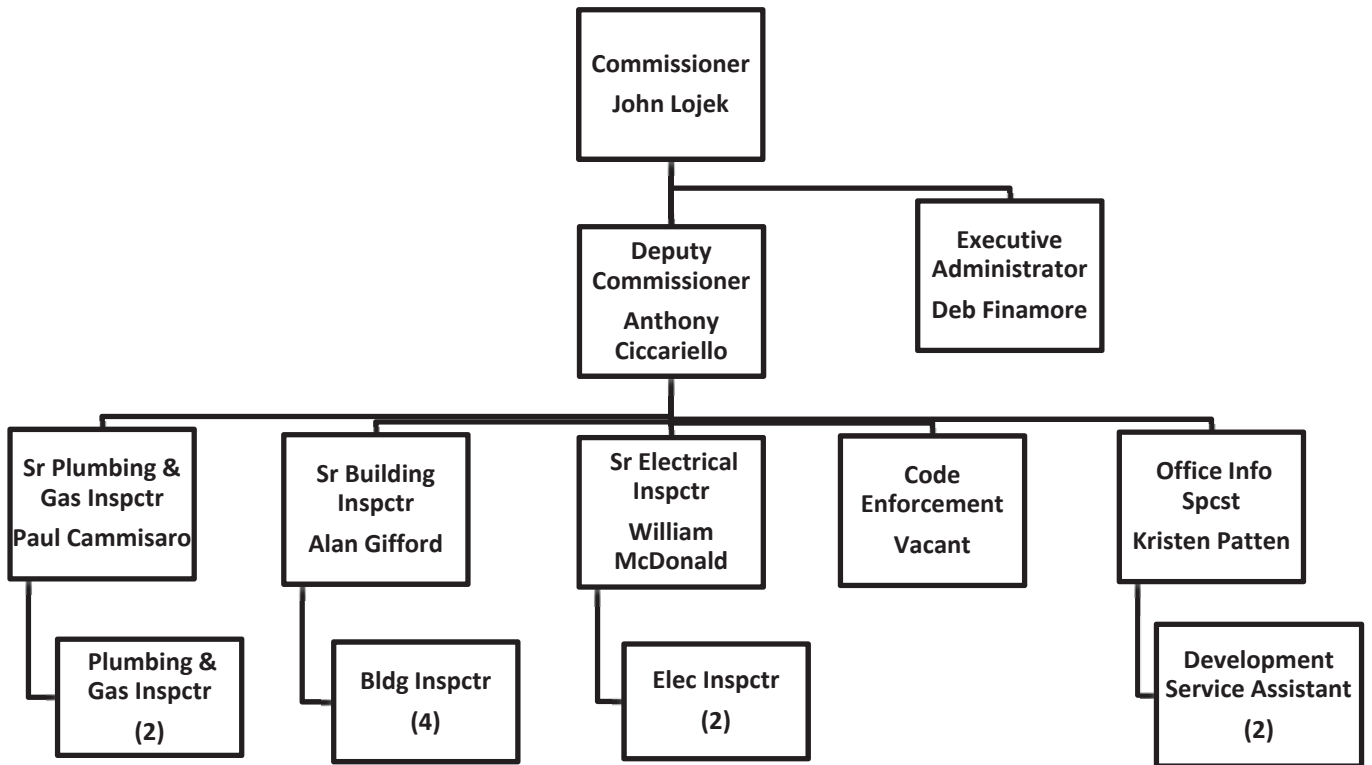
Pandemic, as we had to shut down all non-essential construction, per the order of the Governor. The differentiation between essential and non-essential work caused much consternation among the citizens and the staff. ISD worked hard to try and make people understand the rules and reasoning. Now, as we start the re-entry into all construction being open, ISD is challenged once again to monitor job sites and enforce the rules of distancing and PPE use.

- ISD remains committed to our stated goals and hope to build on our accomplishments. We believe the acquisition and implementation of a new permitting/municipal management system will go a long way in bringing ISD and the City as a whole to a more transparent user-friendly position.
- At this time ISD is nearly fully staffed and we look forward to providing the excellent customer service and strict code enforcement.

John D. Lojek

John D. Lojek, Commissioner

INSPECTIONAL SERVICES



Financial and Operating Highlights

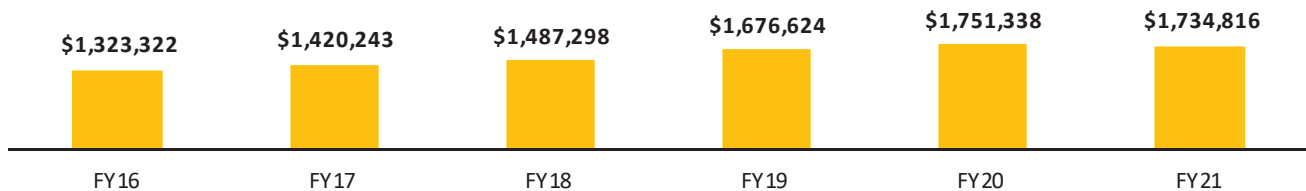
Financial Highlights

	FY2016		FY2017		Actual FY2018		<-Adj Budget-> FY2019		<-Proposed-> FY2020		FY2021	
Expenditure by Department												
Admin	\$	526,765	\$	515,097	\$	474,428	\$	672,008	\$	717,754	\$	707,073
Bldg Code Enf.	\$	359,244	\$	401,373	\$	449,152	\$	461,369	\$	468,018	\$	483,951
Mech Inspections	\$	437,313	\$	503,773	\$	563,718	\$	543,247	\$	565,566	\$	543,792
Total	\$	1,323,322	\$	1,420,243	\$	1,487,298	\$	1,676,624	\$	1,751,338	\$	1,734,816
% Incr				7.32%		4.72%		12.73%		4.46%		-0.94%

Personnel

Full-Time Employ		16		16		17		18		18		18
Part-Time Employ		0		0		0		0		0		0
Total		16		16		17		18		18		18

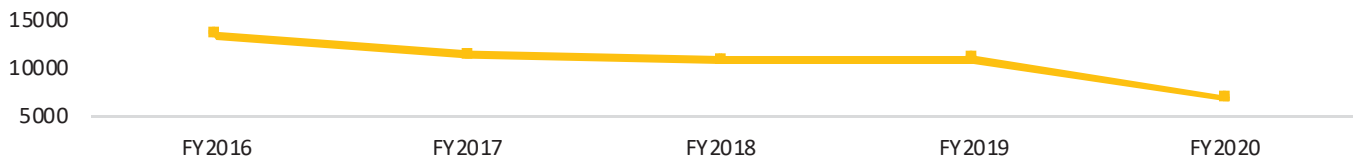
Total Inspectional Services Expenditures



Operating Highlights

	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020 YTD
Building Permits	4,925	3,971	3,721	3,968	2,530
Electrical Permits	3,373	3,204	3,169	3,017	1,845
Plumbing Permits	3,115	2,422	2,127	2,083	1,342
Gas Permits	1,842	1,635	1,625	1,754	1,084

Total Permits



	New	Open	Closed	Closed 30days
Enforcement Requests (Feb 2018-Feb2020)	550	198	352	89

FY 2020 Building Permit Breakdowns to Date

Residential Construction (new)	65	Solar	84
Commercial (new)	1	Charging Stations	23
Demolition	71		

Inspectional Services Department

Fiscal Year 2021 Outcomes and Strategies

As always, the first priority of ISD is to provide the citizens of Newton with 1st class customer service. ISD is open over 53 hours per week in order to service our clients, opening at 7:00AM in order to be more accessible. ISD issues more than 90% of permits the same day that they are submitted. The public has come to rely upon ISD to explain any property issue which they might encounter as well as making senses of the City of Newton Zoning Code and many other ordinances and codes.

A quick conversation at ISD often enlightens the citizens about what they may or may not do with their own property or a prospective property. There are many questions concerning Accessory Apartment, Short-term Rentals, change of use of existing commercial spaces, dimensional controls and parking, just to name a few.

A well-trained staff is essential to deliver a consistent message to the public. Staff are regularly updated on changes to code, interpretations and legal cases. ISD has brought forward changes to be proposed to the Planning Department and City Council.

We look forward to monitoring and participating in the next phase of Zoning Redesign/Rewrite.

Outcome 1

Provide 1st Class Customer Service

The primary responsibility of ISD is to perform Code Compliance and Enforcement under both the Building and Zoning Codes, the essential goal is to ensure life safety and quality of life issues.

During the course of our work ISD we are engaged in many activities including zoning redesign, scanning of records, permit issuance and customer service. Our most important task however is life safety.

We can and should be judged by how well we respond to citizen complaints. ISD is actively engaged in tracking and resolving code issues in a pro-active and amicable fashion. The School Safety program has made tremendous gains in the resolution of code issues in our public schools. Under the leadership of NFD Chief Proia interdepartmental cooperation has resulted in compliance with building and safety codes heretofore not achieved. We are closing in on awarding permanent certificates of occupancy for all Newton Schools.

While School Safety is important ISD also inspects all schools, daycares and restaurants in Newton so that we can assure safety in all occupancies. We have moved our periodic inspection program forward by cataloging all inspections as we look forward to the software program that will make this information more accessible.

Outcome 2

Ensure Code Enforcement, School Safety, Periodic Inspections

Inspectional Services Department

Fiscal Year 2021 Outcomes and Strategies

Outcome 3

Upgrade the Permitting System with New Software

During the past year ISD and many other Department have been engaged with our consultant D.H. Keene Associates, Inc. to create an RFP (Request for Proposals) for a new city wide permitting and municipal information management system. This process has led to the analysis of all City

Departments who are engaged in any way with property information or the approval of or issuance of permits. The goal of the RFP is to acquire a new system which allows for on-line access, permitting, approvals, and cross departmental communication heretofore not possible. Additionally, it is to be hoped that this system will be capable of consolidating much of the property information of the city which is presently not available and scattered in various formats.

Presently ISD issues more than 10,000 permits for work in building, electrical, plumbing and gas as well as for fences, signs, paving and other zoning issued that require our attention. Replacing the existing system is vital in that the present system is no longer supported.

Outcome 4

Continuing Scanning Project

Since 2013 ISD has immersed in a project to scan the building files to our existing permit software in order to make these historical records available to the public.

These paper files, maintained in ISD, date back to the 1800's. In 2019 we completed the scanning of all the mechanical files and continue to work on the building permit files, which are at 20% complete.

One of the challenges as we move to a new permit system is the migration of old files to the new system so that they are also available in the new format.

FUND: 0001 - GENERAL FUND
DEPARTMENT: 220 - INSPEC SERVICE DEPARTMENT

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET
DEPARTMENT LEGAL LEVEL OF CONTROL

	ACTUAL 2017	ACTUAL 2018	ACTUAL 2019	ORIGINAL 2020	RECOMMENDED 2021	CHANGE 2020 to 2021
INSPECTIONAL SERVICES SUMMARY						
51 - PERSONAL SERVICES	1,164,503	1,198,822	1,353,328	1,428,517	1,436,704	8,188
52 - EXPENSES	68,187	72,410	62,861	66,365	50,225	-16,140
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	205,432	233,533	244,726	256,456	247,887	-8,569
TOTAL DEPARTMENT	1,438,123	1,504,765	1,660,915	1,751,337	1,734,816	-16,521
INSPECTIONAL SVS ADMIN						
51 - PERSONAL SERVICES	404,653	352,667	500,293	568,147	573,146	5,000
52 - EXPENSES	55,290	60,267	52,919	50,215	39,425	-10,790
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	72,998	77,551	93,634	99,391	94,502	-4,889
TOTAL INSPECTIONAL SVS ADMIN	532,940	490,485	646,846	717,753	707,073	-10,680
BLDG CODE/ZONING ENFMT						
51 - PERSONAL SERVICES	347,741	387,649	400,882	399,139	399,797	658
52 - EXPENSES	4,481	4,334	2,340	4,750	4,200	-550
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	49,152	57,366	61,778	64,130	79,954	15,824
TOTAL BLDG CODE/ZONING ENFMT	401,373	449,349	465,000	468,018	483,951	15,933
MECHANICAL INSPECTIONS						
51 - PERSONAL SERVICES	412,110	458,505	452,153	461,231	463,761	2,530
52 - EXPENSES	8,417	7,809	7,601	11,400	6,600	-4,800
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	83,283	98,617	89,314	92,935	73,431	-19,504
TOTAL MECHANICAL INSPECTIONS	503,810	564,931	549,068	565,566	543,792	-21,774

FUND: 0001 - GENERAL FUND
DEPARTMENT: 220 - INSPEC SERVICE DEPARTMENT

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET
DEPARTMENTAL DETAIL

	ACTUAL FY2017	ACTUAL FY2018	ACTUAL FY2019	ORIGINAL 2020	RECOMMENDED 2021	CHANGE 2020 to 2021	
220 - INSPECTIONAL SERVICES							
0122040 - INSPECTIONAL SVS ADMIN							
PERSONAL SERVICES							
511001	FULL TIME SALARIES	357,066	328,231	426,035	488,997	528,396	39,400
512001	SEASONAL WAGES	0	0	24,840	25,000	25,000	0
513010	REGULAR OVERTIME	21,054	10,365	11,564	15,000	15,000	0
51301B	OVERTIME/SPEC PROJEC	18,017	11,391	31,514	35,000	0	-35,000
514001	LONGEVITY	775	900	2,150	2,150	2,750	600
514006	EXCEPTIONAL SVS PAY	0	79	1,791	0	0	0
515005	BONUSES	0	700	900	0	0	0
515006	VACATION BUY BACK	6,741	0	0	0	0	0
515101	CLOTHING ALLOWANCE	1,000	0	0	0	0	0
515102	CLEANING ALLOWANCE	0	1,000	1,500	2,000	2,000	0
TOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES		404,653	352,667	500,293	568,147	573,146	5,000
EXPENSES							
524010	OFFICE EQUIPMENT R-M	0	0	0	200	200	0
524030	MOTOR VEHICLE R-M	0	16,022	0	0	0	0
527400	RENTAL - EQUIPMENT	1,500	250	0	6,000	6,000	0
530400	DOCUMENT PRESERVATI	10,710	9,731	19,560	10,000	0	-10,000
531300	TEMP STAFFING SERVICE	9,496	0	0	0	0	0
531900	TRAINING EXPENSES	606	35	0	0	0	0
534010	TELEPHONE	1,455	1,296	1,394	1,325	1,325	0
534020	CELLULAR TELEPHONES	15,306	15,935	11,821	15,000	15,000	0
534100	POSTAGE	1,659	966	1,068	2,500	1,500	-1,000
534200	PRINTING	3,577	1,445	1,447	1,500	1,500	0
542000	OFFICE SUPPLIES	2,536	3,029	3,532	3,500	3,500	0
548000	GASOLINE	478	485	765	1,000	0	-1,000
548400	VEHICLE REPAIR PARTS	1,821	9,736	10,960	2,000	2,000	0
558100	UNIFORMS/PROTECTIVE	559	378	448	500	1,000	500
558500	COMPUTER SUPPLIES	4,354	619	1,565	5,000	5,000	0
559200	BOOKS/MANUALS/PERIODI	779	0	0	1,000	1,500	500
571000	VEHICLE USE REIMBURSE	139	0	60	150	150	0
573000	DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	315	339	299	540	750	210
TOTAL EXPENSES		55,290	60,267	52,919	50,215	39,425	-10,790
FRINGE BENEFITS							
57DENT	DENTAL INSURANCE	2,020	1,965	2,688	2,796	1,632	-1,164
57HLTH	HEALTH INSURANCE	61,863	66,609	77,952	82,740	73,358	-9,382
57LIFE	BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	57	57	113	114	114	0
57MEDA	MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	5,377	4,842	6,803	7,187	7,590	402
57OPEB	OPEB CONTRIBUTION	3,681	4,078	6,077	6,554	11,809	5,255
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS		72,998	77,551	93,634	99,391	94,502	-4,889
TOTAL INSPECTIONAL SVS ADMIN		532,940	490,485	646,846	717,753	707,073	-10,680

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET DEPARTMENTAL DETAIL
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	ACTUAL FY2017	ACTUAL FY2018	ACTUAL FY2019	ORIGINAL 2020	RECOMMENDED 2021	CHANGE 2020 to 2021	
0122041 - BLDG CODE/ZONING ENFMT							
PERSONAL SERVICES							
511001	FULL TIME SALARIES	342,341	377,950	384,858	386,639	389,797	3,158
513010	REGULAR OVERTIME	0	132	0	0	0	0
514001	LONGEVITY	2,900	3,650	4,000	4,000	3,500	-500
514006	EXCEPTIONAL SVS PAY	0	11	4,881	0	0	0
515005	BONUSES	0	1,750	1,500	0	0	0
515006	VACATION BUY BACK	0	1,656	3,143	6,000	4,000	-2,000
515101	CLOTHING ALLOWANCE	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	0
	TOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES	347,741	387,649	400,882	399,139	399,797	658
EXPENSES							
531900	TRAINING EXPENSES	500	673	20	1,500	1,500	0
548000	GASOLINE	1,738	2,567	1,669	1,700	0	-1,700
558000	PUBLIC SAFETY SUPPLIES	0	0	0	100	1,250	1,150
558100	UNIFORMS/PROTECTIVE	1,917	861	551	1,000	1,000	0
571100	IN-STATE CONFERENCES	0	65	0	0	0	0
573000	DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	225	100	0	250	250	0
577100	PROFESSIONAL LICENSES	100	68	100	200	200	0
	TOTAL EXPENSES	4,481	4,334	2,340	4,750	4,200	-550
FRINGE BENEFITS							
57DENT	DENTAL INSURANCE	1,243	1,509	1,569	1,632	1,398	-234
57HLTH	HEALTH INSURANCE	42,952	48,156	52,085	54,168	67,551	13,383
57LIFE	BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	57	57	57	57	0	-57
57MEDA	MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	4,900	5,400	5,563	5,701	5,732	31
57OPEB	OPEB CONTRIBUTION	0	2,244	2,503	2,572	5,273	2,701
	TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	49,152	57,366	61,778	64,130	79,954	15,824
	TOTAL BLDG CODE/ZONING ENFMT	401,373	449,349	465,000	468,018	483,951	15,933

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET DEPARTMENTAL DETAIL
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	ACTUAL FY2017	ACTUAL FY2018	ACTUAL FY2019	ORIGINAL 2020	RECOMMENDED 2021	CHANGE 2020 to 2021
0122049 - MECHANICAL INSPECTIONS						
PERSONAL SERVICES						
511001 FULL TIME SALARIES	405,137	440,403	426,815	448,731	453,261	4,530
511101 PART TIME < 20 HRS/WK	0	0	8,587	0	0	0
513010 REGULAR OVERTIME	0	1,189	0	0	0	0
513050 WORK FOR OTHER DEPT	0	24	0	0	0	0
514001 LONGEVITY	2,500	2,500	3,500	3,500	3,500	0
514006 EXCEPTIONAL SVS PAY	0	87	5,073	0	0	0
515005 BONUSES	0	2,100	1,800	0	0	0
515006 VACATION BUY BACK	1,473	9,202	3,129	6,000	4,000	-2,000
515101 CLOTHING ALLOWANCE	3,000	3,000	3,250	3,000	3,000	0
TOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES	412,110	458,505	452,153	461,231	463,761	2,530
EXPENSES						
531900 TRAINING EXPENSES	2,068	1,202	1,184	2,500	2,500	0
543200 SMALL TOOLS	43	0	68	1,000	1,000	0
548000 GASOLINE	2,680	4,321	3,890	4,000	0	-4,000
558000 PUBLIC SAFETY SUPPLIES	508	142	0	500	500	0
558100 UNIFORMS/PROTECTIVE	2,037	1,206	1,765	1,500	1,500	0
571000 VEHICLE USE REIMBURSE	37	0	0	0	0	0
573000 DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	655	539	555	600	600	0
577100 PROFESSIONAL LICENSES	390	399	140	1,300	500	-800
TOTAL EXPENSES	8,417	7,809	7,601	11,400	6,600	-4,800
FRINGE BENEFITS						
57DENT DENTAL INSURANCE	2,070	2,608	2,249	2,328	1,164	-1,164
57HLTH HEALTH INSURANCE	71,016	83,303	73,210	75,736	59,753	-15,983
57LIFE BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	170	222	170	171	57	-114
57MEDA MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	5,584	6,134	6,051	6,526	6,657	131
57OPEB OPEB CONTRIBUTION	4,443	6,350	7,634	8,174	5,800	-2,373
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	83,283	98,617	89,314	92,935	73,431	-19,504
TOTAL MECHANICAL INSPECTIONS	503,810	564,931	549,068	565,566	543,792	-21,774
TOTAL INSPECTIONAL SERVICES	1,438,123	1,504,765	1,660,915	1,751,337	1,734,816	-16,521