

TCG
THOMAS
CONSULTING
GROUP

Department of Permits, Licenses, & Inspections

Transition Briefing



Contents

Executive Summary	2
Internal Partners.....	4
Findings.....	6
Workforce	7
Rental Registry	7
Asbestos Consent Decree	8
Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit.....	8
About the Agency	9
Contact Information	10
Enabling Legislation.....	10
Mission	11
Organizational Chart	11
Descriptions of Services	11
Agency Goals.....	13
Performance Metrics.....	18
Department-Wide 2021 Performance Data.....	19
Budget.....	20
Staffing and Salaries	21
Other Operating Funds.....	22
5-Year Forecast.....	23
Programs & Projects.....	24
2020 Accomplishments	25
2021 Accomplishments	26
Planned, Current and Ongoing Programs.....	27
Opportunities & Risks	28
Significant Milestones Between 11/3/21 and 4/30/22.....	29
Important Decisions Between 1/6/21 and 12/31/22	29
Risks Ahead.....	31
Reports.....	32
Performance Audit: Department of Permits, Licenses and Inspections.....	33
City of Pittsburgh Rental Registration Rules	33



Executive Summary



The Department of Permits, Licenses, & Inspections (PLI) regulates construction by issuing a separate permit for specific types of work and for each system type as follows: building, demolition, land operations, signs, electrical systems, mechanical systems (including fuel gas), fire alarm systems and suppression systems permits. PLI also issues permits that do not include construction as follows: occupancy only and occupant load placard permits. Please note that the [Allegheny County Health Department Plumbing Division is responsible for plumbing permits](#).

PLI issues licenses for the following activities:

- Contractor Licenses
 - General Contractors and Sign Contractors
- Trade Licenses
 - Electrical Trade, HVAC Trade, Stationary Power Engineer and Fire Suppression Trade
 - Trade license holders are required to obtain eight continuing education units (CEUs) annually to be eligible for renewal.
- Business Licenses
 - Amusement places, amusement producers, bed and breakfast, antique or secondhand dealers (Includes junk dealer and pawnbroker licenses), mechanical amusement devices, parking lot, towing, sign maintenance certificates, mobile vehicle vendors, mobile peddler, stationary vendors, one-day solicitation (Tag Day), ticket reselling, trade fair, and transient merchant

PLI Code Enforcement is used as a means of protecting the health, safety and welfare in existing buildings and structures. PLI enforces the International Property Maintenance Code ("IPMC") as adopted by the [City of Pittsburgh Code of Ordinances Title 10 Chapter 1004](#). PLI also enforces the [Zoning Code—Title Nine](#).

PLI routinely inspects structures to assess building integrity. When a structure has been declared a public safety hazard, PLI will condemn the building. PLI is also the enforcement arm for the Zoning and Development Review Division of City Planning.



Internal Partners

Development Agencies:

PLI. The Department of City Planning, and the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI) are all part of the one-stop system, working to coordinate reviews and streamline processes for customer plan reviews. They answer questions such as:

Zoning—Can you do this?

Planning—How will you do this in the construction space required?

DOMI—How will you do this in the public space required?

Operations: Department of Public Works (DPW) and PLI each oversee Operations, with DPW cleaning up lots and PLI issuing any lot citations.

Emergencies: DPW, the Department of Public Safety (DPS) and PLI are all in play in case of any structural emergencies, and will block off right-of-way and adjacent structures during demolitions,

Office of Innovation & Performance (I&P): The OneStopPGH system depends on the infrastructure of city servers and works closely with the department to make sure customer service solutions are maintained.

Law: In certain situations, the issuing of criminal complaints will go into effect, and the City's legal team will handle code enforcement issues in court.

External Partners

Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority (PWSA): The underground suppression system operates as a means of properly loading water for the City's fire and safety system. Also, in cases of increasing the water needed for storm flow from existing storm systems, PWSA will issue tap-in permits.



Currently, the City does not have an official plumbing code and instead partners with Allegheny County to make sure plumbing codes are enforced.

The City and PLI are hoping to work with more external partners, including engineers, architects, design professionals, etc., to provide better technical assistance for permitting, so that the needs of community members are best met.

Boards

Board of Appeals: Made up of area architects and engineers, the Board of Appeals reviews all building code decisions.

License and Inspections Review Board: In matters of licensing or code violations, this board reviews all cases.



Findings



Workforce

- PLI is a pivotal department in the success of OneStopPGH.
- Explosion of new construction has existing staff experiencing burnout due to high demand and lack of staff capacity. Consistent use of overtime has become a necessity.
- Morale remains relatively high despite the overwhelming workload. The department has made accommodations to allow for flex work, which has been well-received and has improved morale for staff. Inspectors take cars home and report to the field from home. Others are working remotely.

Rental Registry

- The City recognizes the need for a registration program for residential rental units that meet all applicable building, existing structures, fire, health, safety and local zoning codes. The City also recognizes it should provide an efficient system for compelling both absentee and local landlords to correct violations and maintain proper condition of citywide rental property.
- As prescribed in the [City of Pittsburgh Rental Registration Rules](#), the fees are as follows: \$65 per unit for 10 or fewer units, \$55 per unit for between 11 and 100 units, \$45 per unit for 101 and more units.
- No person shall lease, rent, or otherwise allow a rental unit within the City to be occupied without first obtaining a rental permit from PLI and designating a Responsible Local Agent.
- Affordable Housing Properties shall be exempt from the Annual Rental Registration Permit Fee but are subject to registration and inspection.
- Owner-occupied units shall be exempt from the Annual Rental Registration
- Legislation expected to pass in 2022 will require more staffing for a successful launch.
 - Six (6) operations inspectors were requested in the 2022 budget.
 - Details on program application, enforcement and performance metrics are not expected to be in place until after December 15, 2021.



Asbestos Consent Decree

- State asbestos consent decree requires additional funding of staff positions and training.

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit

- There are approximately 7,250 permitted Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s), including large and small MS4s that exist nationwide, operating under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) MS4 permit. The NPDES MS4 permit requires permittees to develop and implement a comprehensive Storm Water Management Program (SWMP) that must include pollution prevention measures, treatment or removal techniques, monitoring, use of legal authority, and other appropriate measures to control the quality of stormwater discharged to the storm drains and thence to waters of the United States.
- Failure to adequately perform inspections and reporting, per the City's MS4 permit, risks the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other outside compliance monitoring.
- Funding of Stormwater Inspectors is needed.



About the Agency



Contact Information

Department of Permits, Licenses, & Inspections

Sarah Kinter, Acting Director

Email: Sarah.Kinter@pittsburghpa.gov

Phone: (412) 255-2175

Enabling Legislation

§ 114.01 - DIRECTOR AS HEAD

The Department of Permits, Licenses, & Inspections shall be under the charge of a Director, who shall be the head thereof.

(Ord. No. 27-2014, § 1, eff. 12-22-14)

§ 114.02 - POWERS AND DUTIES OF DIRECTOR

The Director of the Department of Permits, Licenses, & Inspections shall have the following powers and duties:

The enforcement of all building, property maintenance, fire prevention and licensing codes;

The establishment and management of all inspection programs related to the enforcement of these codes;

The issuance of permits and licenses related to these codes;

The condemnation and demolition of structures;

The signing of contracts and other signatory functions related to the Department;

Any other duties assigned by the mayor.

(Ord. No. 27-2014, § 1, eff. 12-22-14)



§ 114.03 - ASSUMING FUNCTIONS OF BUREAU OF BUILDING INSPECTION

The Department of Permits, Licenses, & Inspections and the director thereof shall assume all codified roles, responsibilities, and functions of the Bureau of Building Inspection and the chief thereof.

(Ord. No. 27-2014, § 1, eff. 12-22-14)

Mission

The mission of the Department of Permits, Licenses, & Inspections is to improve the safety and quality of life for residents of the City of Pittsburgh through the administration and enforcement of the Pittsburgh Building Code, Zoning Code, and the regulation of contractor and trade licenses, and various business licenses as prescribed by the Pittsburgh Business Licensing Code. The Department's mission is also to provide a high level of customer service to residents and developers alike as they do business with the Department.

Organizational Chart



Descriptions of Services

The Department of Permits, Licenses, & Inspections is separated into three divisions: Operations, Construction, and Licensing and Administration. These three divisions review and approve applications for construction permits and inspect buildings for City Building Code compliance and building permit provisions. They are responsible for making sure that Pittsburgh's existing buildings and businesses operate in accordance with Property



Maintenance, Business and Trade Licensing, Zoning, and portions of the Fire Codes, and are responsible for issuing business, trade and contractor licenses; and processing all payments for licenses, permits and registrations.

Construction Division

This group is responsible for reviewing and inspecting building permits. Staff duties include reviewing plans and permit applications, inspecting issued building permits, and responding to constituent complaints related to issued permits or building without a permit.

Operations Division

This group is responsible for all property maintenance of existing buildings. Staff duties include responding to constituent requests related to property maintenance and structural deficiencies, condemnations, city-funded demolitions, and license-related inspections.

Administration and Licensing Division

This group is responsible for the everyday functions of the office. Staff duties include operating the applications counter, answering general inquiries, managing records, finance and accounting, community engagement, social media, technology improvements, and administering business licenses.



Agency Goals



Continue to invest and retain the Department's workforce

Strategies to Achieve Goal:

- Continue focus on soft skills—change management, customer service, dispute resolution and leadership.
- Continue improving the PLI hiring and retention process.
- Focus on attracting and retaining a well-qualified and diverse pool of candidates for all open positions.

How Success Will Be Measured:

- Attracting and retaining well-qualified, diverse candidates who reflect PLI's values.
- Bring electrical inspection functions back "in-house" rather than using a third party.
- Continue improving plan review and inspection times.

Continue to better integrate and align with other departments and agencies

Strategies to Achieve Goal:

- Better align internal processes with those of the Urban Redevelopment Authority, City Planning, Fire, Police, Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority, Allegheny County Health Department, and others.
- Work closely with the Department of City Planning Zoning Division (DCP) and the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI) to streamline development processes for customers.

How Success Will Be Measured:

- Increasing joint-communication and coordination outreach and education with other departments and agencies.
- Publish agency timelines in concert for all users of the OneStopPGH.
- Increase the number of customers that apply for multi-applications across departments up-front.
- Decrease the overall number of days to obtain permits across departments.
- Improve transparency and predictability of construction requirements.



Improve transparency and predictability of construction requirements

Strategies to Achieve Goal:

- Provide more formalized auditing of plan reviews and inspections.
- Integrate website guidance into the OneStopPGH customer portal.
- Publish PLI inspection checklists to provide permit holders and the public with inspection requirements.
- Publish PLI plan review checklists to provide applicants and the public with plan review requirements.
- Continue to reduce permit review and inspection times for all permit types.

How Success Will Be Measured:

- Improves turnaround times for all reviews and inspections.
- Reduction in number of plan review revisions.
- Decrease in failed inspections related to process requirements.
- Completion of Permitting Rules and Regulations.
- Completion of Code Enforcement Rules and Regulations.

Continue modernizing code enforcement to meet collaborative community goals

Strategies to Achieve Goal:

- Continue plan for proactive legal strategies to provide families with assistance.
- Work with community organizations to identify code enforcement priorities and goals.
- Develop additional strategies to bring vacant land back into productive use.
- Incenting better outcomes through compassionate code enforcement.

How Success Will Be Measured:

- Improved code enforcement compliance rates.
- Improved relationships with community organizations and understanding their needs.
- Reduce number of vacant, blighted and abandoned properties.



Organize and digitize all PLI records and record types

Strategies to Achieve Goal:

- Continue to work with scanning vendors to digitize all paper, microfiche and microfilm records.
- Organize physical files for proper scanning and indexing.
- Provide additional tagging to already-scanned documents for better searching.
- Correct indexing for historic documents.
- Continue to support a public search tool of commonly requested public documents, including Occupancy Load Placard, Board of Appeals decisions, License and Inspection Review Board decisions, etc.
- Migrate all construction drawings from legacy drives.

How Success Will Be Measured:

- Additional documentation will be available to the public.
- Reduce number of physical files and filing cabinets.
- Digital centralization of all PLI documents.

Continue to create the OneStopPGH Shop setup to support customer service excellence

Strategies to Achieve Goal:

- Design new space to meet customer flow and staff needs.
- Configure customer service roles to support counter, online and self-serve kiosk intake processes.
- Continue to coordinate service level timelines with participating departments.
- Further coordinate with DOMI and the Fire Bureau to enhance single point of intake for city development applications.
- Enhance information to create seamless intake processing.



How Success Will Be Measured:

- Complete move to 412 Blvd of the Allies
- Customers will no longer have to visit multiple sites or stand in multiple lines to complete applications for development project(s).
- Implement self-serve kiosks and queueing system.
- Increase in customers applying online via a single website at OneStopPgh.pittsburghpa.gov.



Performance Metrics



Department-Wide 2021 Performance Data

- [OneStopPGH](#) holds datapoints and a reporting system.
- PLI produces quality inspection reports and other open-source data that can be found on Western Pennsylvania Regional Data Center's website at wprdc.org.
- Adopted internal auditing policies to meet national best practices for building departments and ensured equity and uniformity in service delivery.
- Achieved over 3,000 hours of building and enforcement code-related continuing education across the department.
- Enhanced resources to the public, including the launch of an online catalog of plan review checklists to provide transparency in PLI's reviews, enabling design professionals to get through plan review on the first try, the launch of an EngagePGH page to incorporate public feedback into the demolition process, and improved public permitting and code enforcement data in the CivicCentral/ BuildingEye platform.
- Implemented a robust scoring system to manage condemned properties and prioritized demolitions.
- Digitized over one (1) million legacy records and incorporated them into PLI's comprehensive digital library moving closer to a truly paperless operation.



Budget



Staffing and Salaries

Bud

City of Pittsburgh Operating Budget
Fiscal Year 2022

Department of Permits, Licenses, & Inspections
130000

Position Summary

Title	2021	Rate/	Hours/	2021	2022	Rate/	Hours/	2022
	FTE	Grade	Months	Budget	FTE	Grade	Months	Budget
Director	1	35G	12	\$ 114,720	1	35G	12	\$ 118,162
Assistant Director - Building Inspection	1	30G	12	91,002	1	34E	12	101,320
Assistant Director - Code Enforcement	1	30G	12	91,002	1	34E	12	101,320
Assistant Director - Licensing & Administration	1	30G	12	91,002	1	34E	12	101,320
Personnel & Finance Analyst	1	22E	12	60,563	1	22E	12	62,380
Project Coordinator	1	18E	12	51,146	1	18E	12	52,680
Lead Technician, Permit & Licensing	1	U08-C	12	51,915	1	U08-C	12	53,473
Assistant I, Administrative	3	U02-G	12	105,814	3	U02-G	12	108,988
Technician, Records	1	U02-N	12	40,215	1	U02-N	12	41,422
Permitting Supervisor	1	31E	12	87,577	1	31E	12	90,204
Master Code Professional	12	26G	12	931,061	12	U10-N	12	971,605
Inspection Supervisor	6	25E	12	410,745	6	27E	12	458,520
Inspector, Construction Code	19	U08-H	12	1,083,287	21	U08-H	12	1,233,235
Inspector, Construction Code	2	U08-H	4	38,010	—	U08-H	—	—
Inspector, Stormwater Construction	—	U08-H	—	—	3	U08-H	12	176,176
Inspector, Fire	3	U07-L	12	169,137	3	U07-L	12	174,211
Inspector, Combined Electrical	5	U09-B	12	282,780	5	U09-B	12	291,264
Inspector, Code	13	U07-G	12	667,372	15	U07-G	12	793,145
Inspector, Code	2	U07-G	4	34,224	—	U07-G	—	—
Inspector, Vacant Property	3	U07-H	12	156,922	3	U07-H	12	161,630
Technician, Permit & Licensing	8	U05-J	12	365,661	9	U05-J	12	423,708
Technician, Permit & Licensing	1	U05-J	4	15,236	—	U05-J	—	—
Data Solutions Architect	1	29E	12	80,876	1	29E	12	83,302
Total Full-Time Permanent Positions	87			\$5,020,266	90			\$5,598,065
Temporary, Part-Time, and Seasonal Allowances								
PLI Interns	—	9.00-14.00	—	\$ 5,000	—	9.00-14.00	—	\$ 5,000
Total Full-Time Permanent Positions	87			\$5,020,266	90			\$5,598,065
Temporary, Part-Time, and Seasonal Allowances	—			5,000	—			5,000
Vacancy Allowance	—			(434,000)	—			(498,586)
Total Full-Time Positions and Net Salaries	87			\$4,591,266	90			\$5,104,479



Other Operating Funds

Budget

City of Pittsburgh Operating Budget
Fiscal Year 2022

Department of Permits, Licenses, & Inspections
130000

Subclass Detail

	2020	2021	2022	Increase/	%
	Actual	Budget	Budget	(Decrease)	Change
Expenditures					
51 - PERSONNEL-SALARIES & WAGES	\$ 4,602,178	\$ 4,569,689	\$ 5,271,817	\$ 702,128	15.4%
51101 - Regular	4,619,916	4,591,267	5,104,479	513,212	
51207 - Leave Buyback	5,879	—	—	—	
51401 - Premium Pay	(23,616)	(21,578)	167,338	188,916	
52 - PERSONNEL-EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	1,391,717	1,446,209	1,630,056	183,847	12.7%
52101 - Health Insurance	886,426	900,635	944,640	44,004	
52111 - Other Insurance/Benefits	106,710	109,524	122,678	13,153	
52201 - Social Security	339,245	384,050	438,289	54,239	
52301 - Medical-Workers' Compensation	—	—	18,450	18,450	
52601 - Personal Leave Buyback	56,375	45,000	85,000	40,000	
52602 - Tuition Reimbursement	2,961	7,000	21,000	14,000	
53 - PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL SERVICES	210,105	182,000	255,600	73,600	40.4%
53101 - Administrative Fees	410	5,000	5,000	—	
53105 - Recording/Filing Fees	19,542	16,000	16,000	—	
53301 - Workforce Training	103,450	91,000	96,000	5,000	
53501 - Auditing & Accounting Services	15	—	—	—	
53509 - Computer Maintenance	36,938	25,000	30,000	5,000	
53901 - Professional Services	49,750	45,000	108,600	63,600	
54 - PROPERTY SERVICES	3,891	5,000	5,000	—	—%
54101 - Cleaning	1,216	5,000	5,000	—	
54301 - Building-General	2,675	—	—	—	
55 - OTHER SERVICES	9,524	12,000	12,000	—	—%
55201 - Telephone	122	—	—	—	
55305 - Promotional	1,245	5,000	5,000	—	
55309 - Regulatory	4,173	2,000	2,000	—	
55501 - Printing & Binding	3,984	5,000	5,000	—	
56 - SUPPLIES	41,992	77,177	77,177	—	—%
56101 - Office Supplies	13,684	20,000	20,000	—	
56105 - Postage	161	—	—	—	
56151 - Operational Supplies	28,147	57,177	57,177	—	
57 - PROPERTY	11,551	5,000	5,000	—	—%
57501 - Machinery & Equipment	7,296	5,000	5,000	—	
57571 - Furniture & Fixtures	4,255	—	—	—	
	\$ 6,270,958	\$ 6,297,075	\$ 7,256,650	\$ 959,575	15.2%



5-Year Forecast

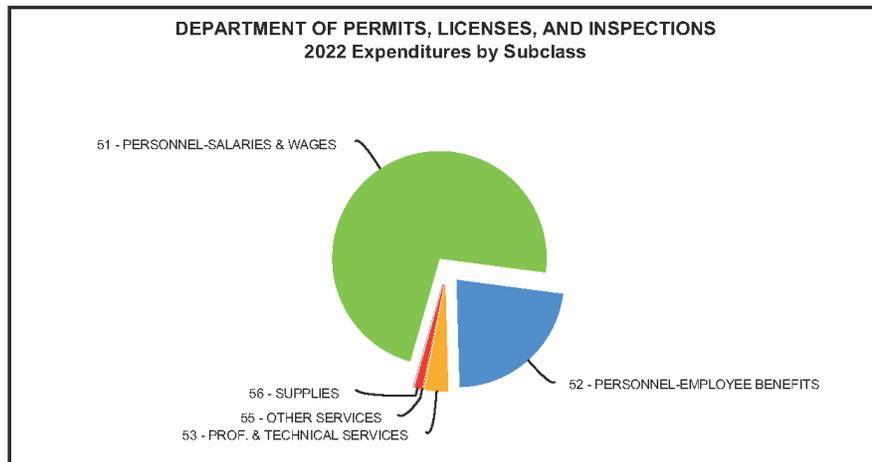
B

City of Pittsburgh Operating Budget
Fiscal Year 2022

Department of Permits, Licenses, & Inspections
130000

Five Year Forecast

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Expenditures					
51 - PERSONNEL-SALARIES & WAGES	\$ 5,271,817	\$ 5,423,117	\$ 5,578,819	\$ 5,739,055	\$ 5,855,536
52 - PERSONNEL-EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	1,630,056	1,687,715	1,763,202	1,842,718	1,921,116
53 - PROF. & TECHNICAL SERVICES	255,600	235,600	185,600	185,600	185,600
54 - PROPERTY SERVICES	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
55 - OTHER SERVICES	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
56 - SUPPLIES	77,177	77,177	77,177	77,177	77,177
57 - PROPERTY	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Total	\$ 7,256,651	\$ 7,445,609	\$ 7,626,797	\$ 7,866,550	\$ 8,061,429
% Change from Prior Year	15.2%	2.6%	2.4%	3.1%	2.5%





Programs & Projects



2020 Accomplishments

Improvements to Processes

- Implemented the 2015 International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) enforcement provisions, following successful adoption into Pittsburgh City Code.
- Completed the final rollout of the Code Enforcement system into OneStopPGH, so that all PLI employees now work in the same system.
- Implemented microfiche digitization project to scan and index tens of thousands of departmental microfilm and microfiche files to contribute to a robust digital PLI library.
- Provided technical and soft-skill training to staff to improve management, leadership, and customer service.

Improvements to Customer Experiences

- Continued to provide standardized plan review timelines, as well as enhancing customer service.
- Continued operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, including processing and reviewing permits, and issuing and inspecting emergency permits during the statewide construction shutdown.
- Provided comprehensive inspection result reports to customers in the OneStopPGH system to transparently show the inspection checklists, and reasons for inspection pass or failure.
- Provided eight (8) hours of continuing education credits in partnership with the Building and Fire Codes Academy (BFCA) for Fire Suppression, HVAC/Mechanical, and Electrical license holders.
- Made additional fields and data available to the public in the new and improved CivicCentral/BuildingEye platform.
- Continued to enhance the functions and business practices in the OneStopPGH, a robust, enterprise-wide software platform to streamline the City's development processes, which now includes PLI, the Department of City Planning's (DCP) Zoning Division, the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI) and the Fire Bureau.
- Continued to support staff in achieving required certifications to improve plan review and inspection times.



- Implemented a OneStopPGH queuing system to provide customers with better service at the counter and obtained data regarding customer flow.
- Implemented upgraded phone and chat systems to assist customers remotely in the OneStopPGH system.
- Improvements in Proactive Inspections in Key Areas.
- Created a new programmatic inspection protocol of proactive fire and life safety and condemned “dead end” case types in PLI's code enforcement division.
- Continued proactive inspections of high-risk occupancies for fire code issues, including schools.

2021 Accomplishments

- Adopted internal auditing policies to meet national best practices for building departments and ensure equity and uniformity in service delivery
- Achieved over 3,000 hours of building and enforcement code-related continuing education across department
- Enhanced resources to the public, including the launch of an online catalog of plan review checklists to provide transparency in PLI's reviews, enabling design professionals to get through plan review on the first try, the launch of an EngagePGH page to incorporate public feedback into the demolition process, and improved public permitting and code enforcement data in the CivicCentral/ BuildingEye platform
- Implemented a robust scoring system to manage condemned properties, and prioritize demolitions
- Digitized over 1 million legacy records and incorporated them into PLI's comprehensive digital library moving closer to a truly paperless operation



Planned, Current and Ongoing Programs

- Launching accelerated reviews—The department plans to offer a premium plan review process that would allow applicants to pay a premium cost to jump ahead in the queue. The initiative presents an overtime opportunity for staff.
- Spring plan review meetings for more complicated submissions (new service).
- Special Inspections (new program likely launching in Q3 2022) would ensure that complex construction jobs will require persons performing inspections to be appropriately qualified to do so.
- Deconstruction—Initiated under an executive order, deconstruction requires that when performing demolition, the City must deconstruct (as opposed to destroying) to save and reuse materials. City Council passed a resolution for the pilot program in July 2021.
- 412 Blvd of the Allies—Hope to move in and open the One Stop in Spring 2022. OneStopPGH customer portal is already online.



Opportunities & Risks



Significant Milestones Between 11/3/21 and 4/30/22

- The updated Uniform Construction Code will need to be reviewed by PLI. This may require increased outreach to, and engagement with, contractors.
- Adopted new technical systems to track workflow. In 2019, The City began rolling out the OneStopPGH system. Now the entire department is on the same system and has helped ensure standardization and uniform processes. It allows for complete record keeping and transparency across the team—great for workflow and performance.
- Worked to get the department accredited through IAS in 2022.
- The Department was reorganized in 2015 to professionalize the positions (updated structure and job descriptions). Almost every position in PLI requires at least one certification, and some require as many as 12 certifications.
- Changed to licensing code: A new license called Fire Suppression was adopted, which requires taking at least eight (8) hours of continuing education per year.
- Overhauled the condemned property system.

Important Decisions Between 1/6/21 and 12/31/22

Rental Registration

- The rental registration law passed in 2015 but has been held up in court, which delayed implementation. PLI submitted the proposed new fee to the City Council in the fall of 2021, where it was adopted by Council. Though details regarding implementation and timing are expected after December 15, 2021, when the registration program is launched in 2022, landlords will have to begin registering. PLI will have to inspect every registered rental unit in the City (estimated 71K rental units). The proposed fee is a \$16 application fee + \$5.50 inspection fee + \$14 times the number of units on the parcel. If the unit passes 100% the first time, it will only be reinspected every three years.
- The City of Pittsburgh will utilize the International Property Maintenance Code for the purposes of carrying out and enforcing compliance with minimum residential rental housing quality and standards. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) uses the Uniform Physical Conditions Standard (UPCS) and



the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) for affordable units funded by various mechanisms.

- The new law requires PLI to inspect all units, including short-term rentals. While affordable housing units are exempt from paying the annual registration fee, they are subject to registration and inspection.
- More staffing is required for a successful launch. It's a critical budget item that will need immediate decision-making if the positions are not in the 2022 budget. PLI has requested six (6) additional operations inspectors.
- Examine overlapping residential inspection requirements between the City, the Housing Authority and the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency to mitigate any duplication of efforts.

Stormwater Obligations to Fulfill MS4 Permit

PLI is the inspection and code enforcement agency to make sure that a plan on how stormwater parcels are being handled is submitted and enforced. EPA will be checking in quarterly. Stormwater inspectors were requested in the 2022 budget and will be necessary to fulfill March 2022 obligations.

Lead Ordinance

City Council is currently crafting legislation that would require PLI to inspect for lead paint hazards and lead safe demolitions. Winter 2022 staffing will be needed to support the program to launch a lead safe inspection system.

Technical Assistance

Opportunity: Create a public private partnership to help link applicants to design professionals to get through the permitting process. The department recognizes that there is an opportunity to provide enhanced support and tools for applicants to meet design and code requirements.



Risks Ahead

Consent Decree for Asbestos

Allegheny County oversees asbestos compliance. The City entered a consent decree with the county in 2017. This is something to closely monitor; however, there do not appear to be any immediate decision points at the time of this writing.

Permit Timeframes

The length of time in receiving permits is a long-standing and growing frustration, especially in relation to large, complex projects. There is currently no differentiation in wait times between major and minor permitted projects, which led to dissatisfaction in the developer community. Examination of the Zoning Code identify opportunities to streamline the need for permits on small-scale projects (i.e. residential fence installation) and allow the department to prioritize larger, impactful projects may be necessary. Absent a solution, the permitting timeframes could become a source of political pressure and stress from major developers.



Reports



Performance Audit: Department of Permits, Licenses and Inspections

Report by the Office of City Controller, March 2018

A [performance audit](#) of the City's PLI was conducted pursuant to section 404(c) of Pittsburgh's Home Rule Charter. The audit evaluates the process and procedures for issuing all city permits, licenses and inspections; assesses the 311 Response Center complaints; examines departmental staffing and training; assesses building permit review times; and evaluates the violation process and demolition procedures and costs.

City of Pittsburgh Rental Registration Rules

The rental registration rules provide [regulations](#) to ensure that residential rental units located within the City meet all applicable building, existing structures, fire, health, safety and zoning codes; and provide an efficient system for compelling both absentee and local landlords to correct violations and maintain, in proper condition, rental property within the City.

(apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/2113_PLI_Rental_Registration_Rules_Regulations.pdf)