

Riverside Community Development Department

ANNUAL REPORT

<https://www.riverside.il.us/239/Community-Development>
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27 Riverside Road
Riverside, IL
www.riverside.il.us



2021

BUILDING & PERMITTING

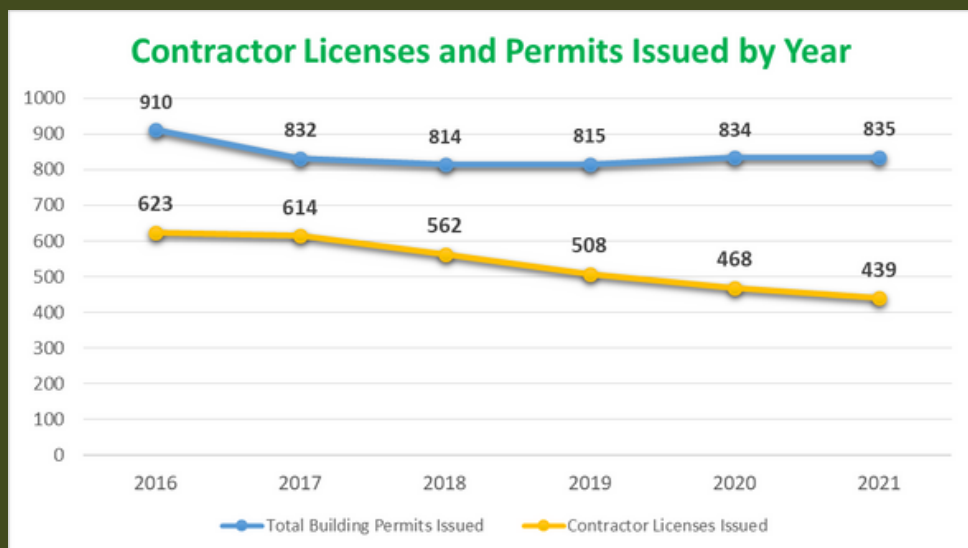
2021

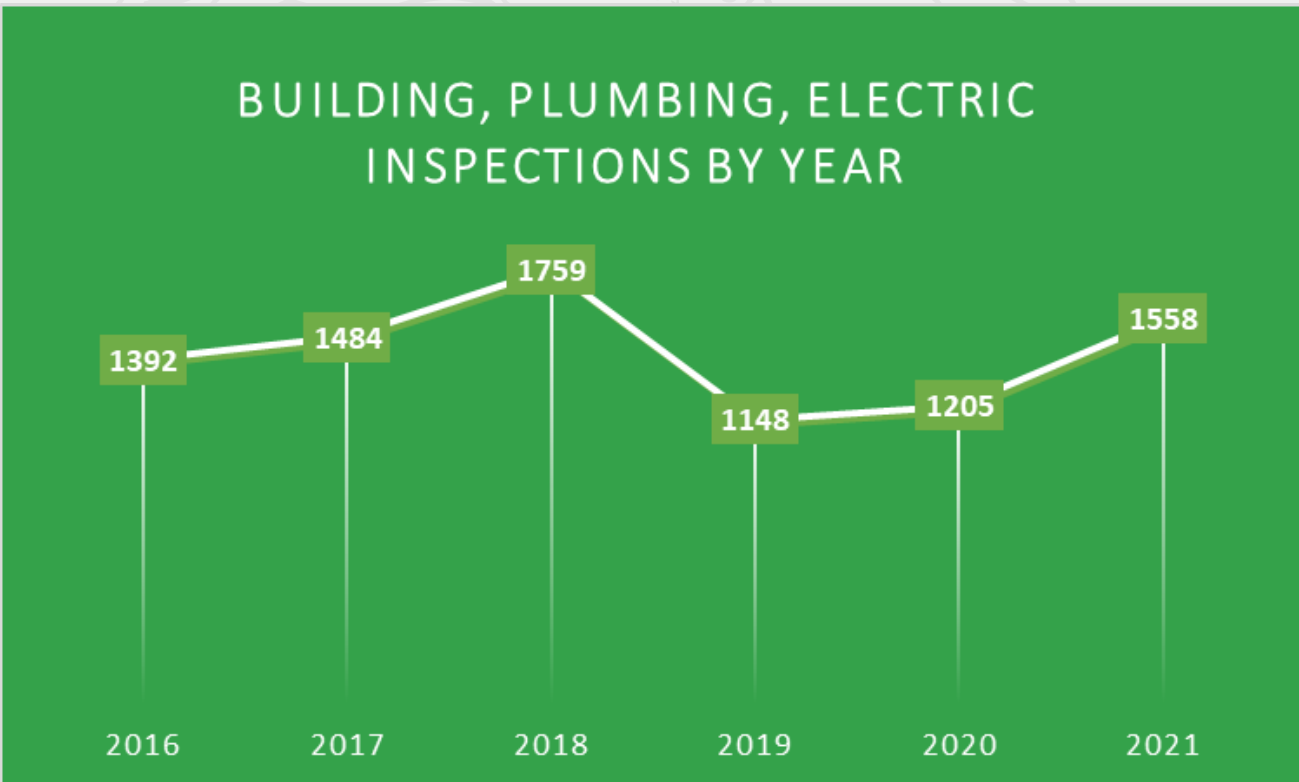
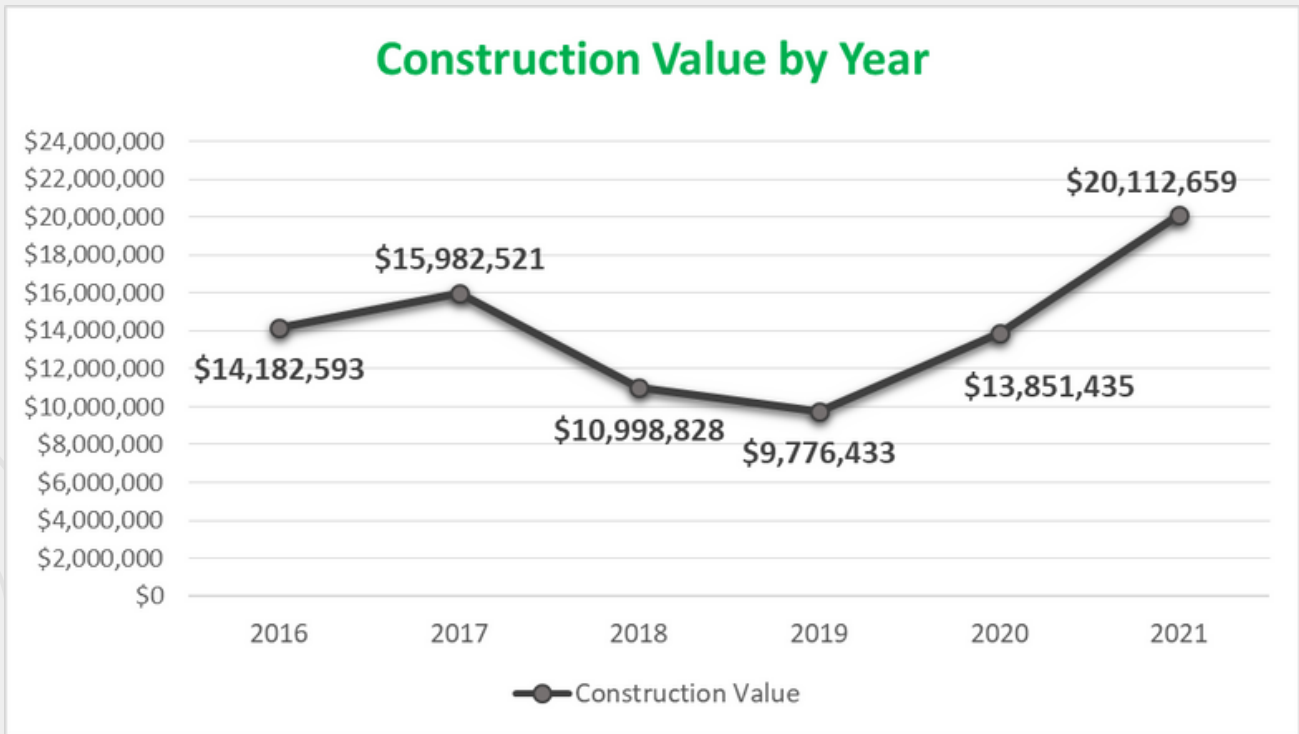
BUILDING ACTIVITY REMAINED STEADY THROUGH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

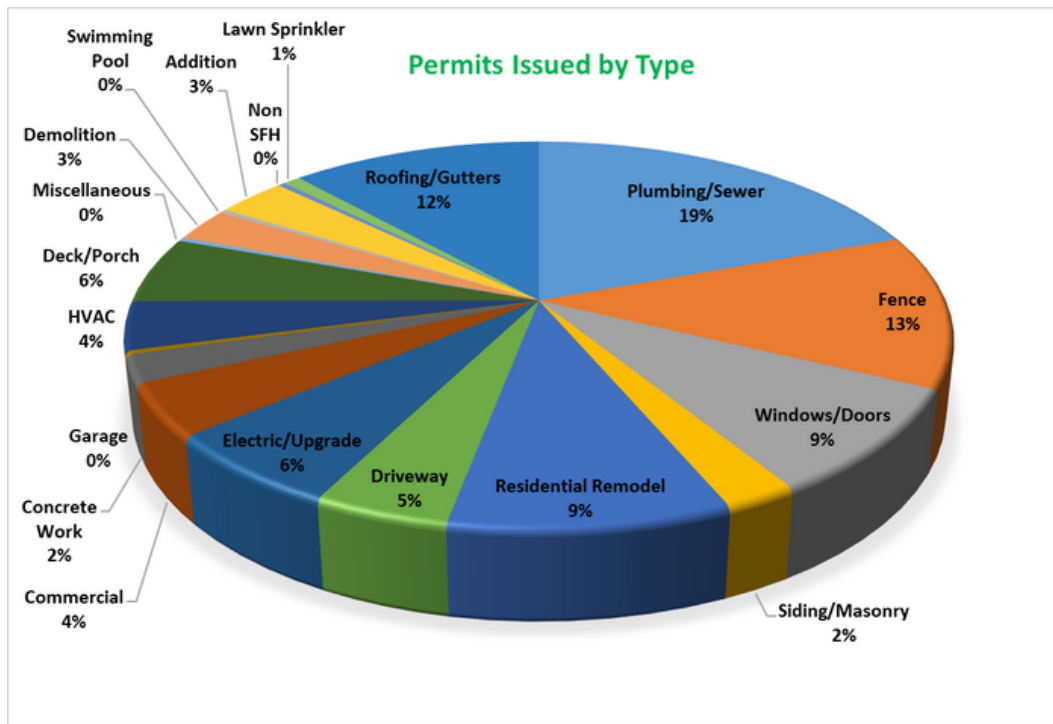
In 2021, permit activity closely matched the increased permit activity seen in 2020. The number of permits issued (835) was remarkably equivalent to that of the prior year (834) but the busiest permitting times were not the same. In 2020, permits came in at high volumes beginning in mid-summer, with the busiest month being July. This past year saw a greater number of permits issued between March and September 2021, indicating a sustained interest in building activity through much of the year. Value of construction (\$20.1 million) was also up from 2020 (\$13.8 million), with an approximately 68% increase. A portion of this increase is due to the Riverside Swim Club renovation and several significant residential remodels. The steady flow of permits meant that the Department had to absorb over 300 additional building inspections without the aid of an in-house staff inspector. The village used Lakeside Consultants, a third-party inspection and plan review team, for these services and over 1,550 building, plumbing, and electrical inspections were necessary in 2021. At the end of the year, the village issued a Request for Proposal for plan review and inspection services, and the Village Board approved an agreement with T.P.I. Building Code Consultants in early 2022.

Action taken by staff in 2020 to establish an online payment option for permits, contractors licenses and compliances has been shown to be very successful and has been a commonly used method of payment and transaction. As the Department has onboarded

a number of new staff in 2021, having such an option was especially helpful. Online submittal has been observed as more efficient and allowed new staff time to understand and accurately conduct village processes while improving turnaround time for issuing new permits, licenses, and registrations. Staff continues to track permit intake and issuance, to ensure service expectations can be clearly communicated and improved upon.

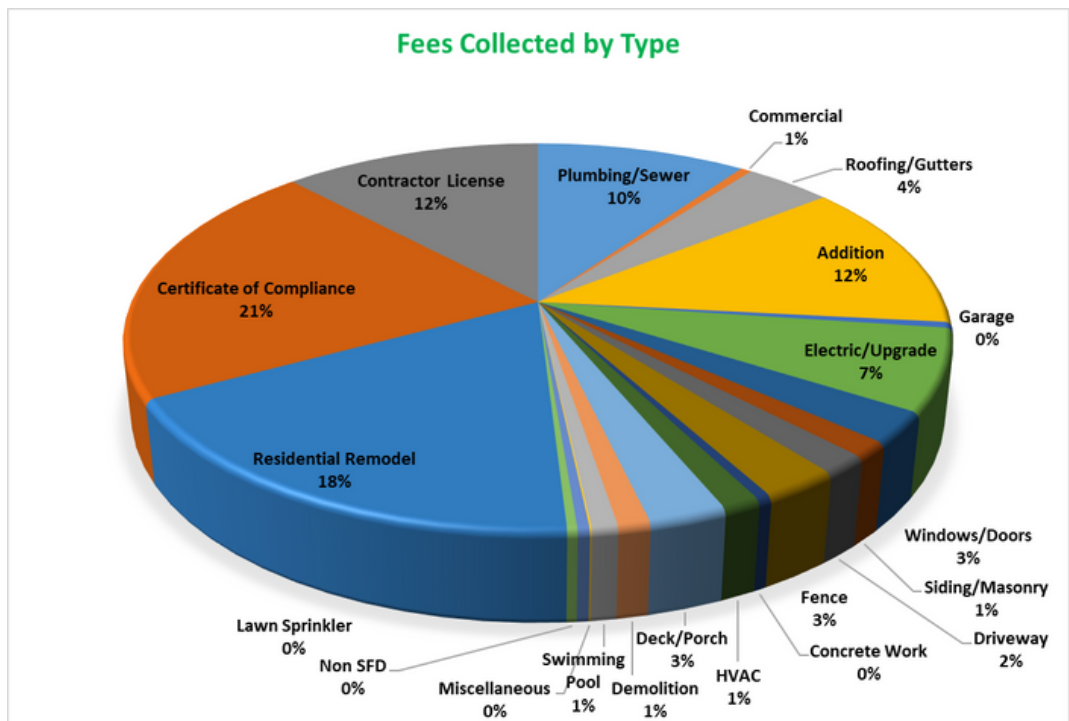






Permits for plumbing (19%), fencing (13%), roofing (12%), remodels (9%) windows and doors (9%) and electrical (6%) were the most commonly issued types of permits in 2021.

Although permits for residential remodels and additions represent a smaller percentage of permits issued, they correspond to a substantial portion of the fees collected (30%). Roofing/Gutter and Plumbing/Sewer permits represent both a significant percentage of permits issued and fees collected. Though Window/Door and Fence permits are more numerous, the fees collected are a much smaller proportion of the yearly total.



Contractor's License Fees and Compliance Fees made up 33% of the fees collected by the Department.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & BUSINESS

2021



ENTREPRENUERIAL INTEREST IN RIVERSIDE

Continued support during the pandemic was provided for the current business community, informing them of various federal and state aid opportunities as well as Public Health Department guidance.

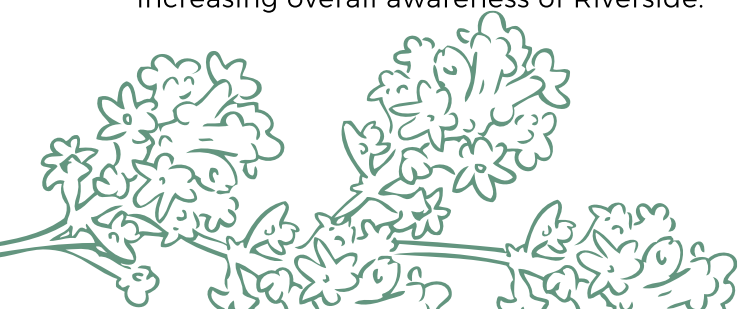
The Department assisted with the opening of Sips and Sweets and The Centre for Physical Therapy in the Central Business District and the re-opening of the Riverside Swim Club, after significant renovations.

Despite the challenging environment, there is a healthy interest in opening new businesses in Riverside. The Village has been actively working on permitting and build out with three food service establishments, two in the Central Business District, and the other on Harlem Avenue, and at least one new restaurant opened their doors in early 2022. As of the end of 2021, the three food establishments were still pursuing building permits and occupancy.

The Village was approached in early fall 2021 about the potential development of a Sherwin Williams retail store. The Village Board approved a development agreement for the new retail development at 3300 S. Harlem Avenue. As part of the agreement, the developer gave the Village the existing parking lot at 3320 S. Harlem Avenue, which may be advantageous to future economic activity or redevelopment in Riverside. Sherwin Williams is anticipated to open by the end of 2022.

Village staff also worked with new tenants in spaces left vacant by businesses that unfortunately recently closed their doors, took inquiries from potential new businesses, or responded to interest from current businesses, looking to expand.

The Economic Development Commission worked on bringing people into the downtown and promoting the business community during the pandemic. They also supported activities and discussion with Visit Oak Park, and a collaboration with RTV to coordinate a highlight video of resident-submitted photos for the #thisisRiverside promotional campaign started in fall 2021. The Commission's work plan focuses on reactivating the Riverside Train Station for economic activity and events, increasing sales tax revenue, and increasing overall awareness of Riverside.



PLANNING & ZONING

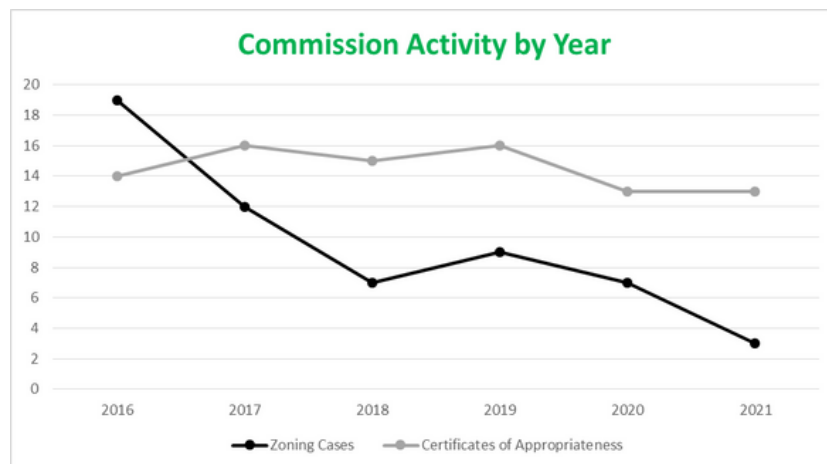
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ZONING AND CODE ANALYSIS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

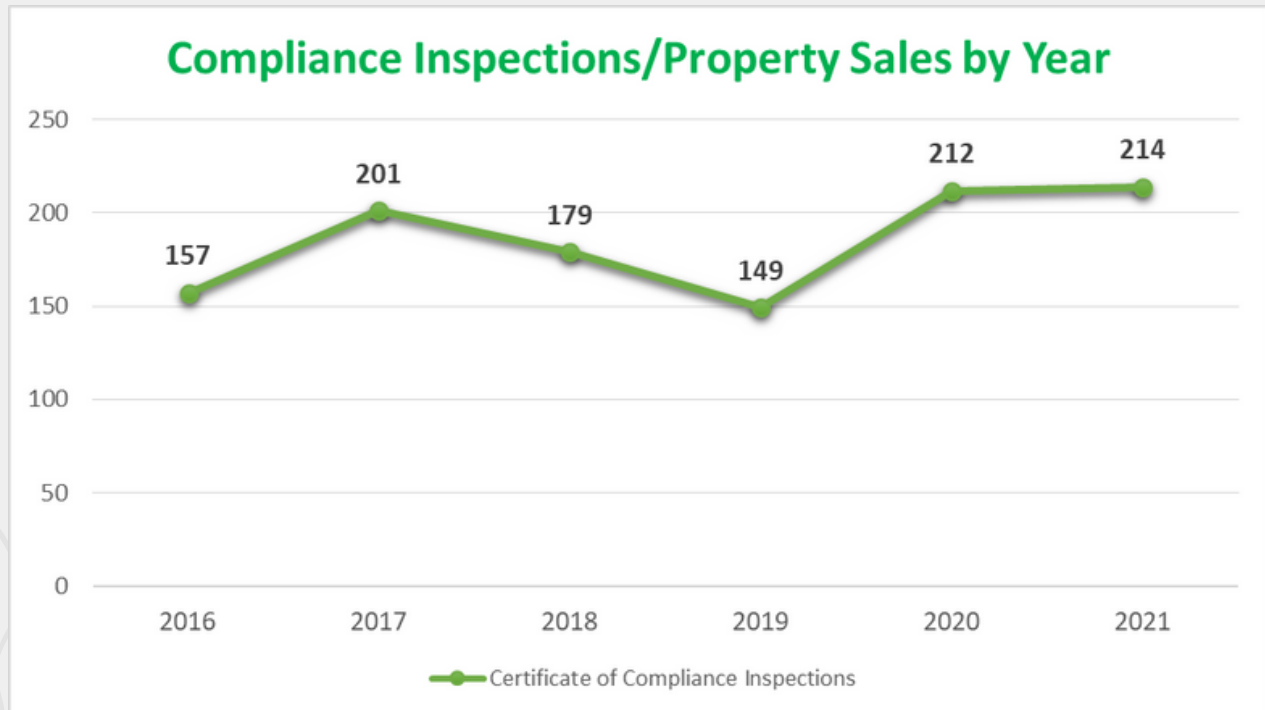
Work resumed on the Village's 2019 award of the RTA Community Planning Grant for a TOD Supportive Zoning Ordinance Update. The project Steering Committee met four times in 2021 to review public input received in 2020 and to review drafted changes to the Zoning Ordinance. Due to the pandemic delaying the project, the agreement with RTA and selected planning consultant was extended to May 2022 and work continued into early 2022, with an anticipated adoption of Code revisions in mid-2022. Revision of these codes will support transit-oriented development and improved safety for pedestrians and bicyclists in commercial areas, improve commercial parking areas, and storage, as well as create updated opportunities for redevelopment in appropriate zoning districts and clarify sign regulations.

Although the number of cases brought to Planning and Zoning Commission were reduced from 2020, discussions and preparation for future zoning cases continued. Along with a few residential variation requests, the Commission reviewed proposed text amendments remanded from the Village Board and conversation continues regarding accessory structures and home occupation definitions. In 2021, the Planning and Zoning Commission created a work plan to address the TOD Zoning Code Update, along with reviewing and proposing changes to how the village calculates and applies impervious surface requirements to development projects and residential permits. These discussions were on-going at the end of the year.

The Preservation Commission reviewed the proposed text amendments on accessory structures, along with two proposals for demolition of primary structures (60 E Quincy and 337 Longcommon). The Commission also received and approved an application to locally landmark 214 Scottswood and notably issued a Certificate of Appropriateness for rooftop solar panels at 350 Fairbank, the Coonley Playhouse.



Zoning cases in 2021 included two residential zoning requests and one text amendment initiated by the Village.



Planning staff reviewed a similar number of Certificates of Compliance (214) as in 2020 (212), which showed a steady stream of property transfers, despite the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Quick Department Facts

The Community Development Department was re-organized in 2021. Department staffing now includes:

- Assistant Village Manager / Director of Community Development (1)
- Village Planner (1)
- Resident Services Representative (1.5)
- Building Inspector - inspections and plan review currently contracted by a third-party (1)
- Part-time Electrical Inspector (hourly)

2022 Department Goals and Objectives

- Use newly implemented permitting software to efficiently process building permits.
- Use code enforcement process for property maintenance to protect property values and ensure nuisance situations are abated.
- Inspect all construction projects for adherence to the local building codes.
- Encourage investment and development in the Village's residential and business districts.
- Educate, restrict and protect development in the flood plain.
- Work with local business community and supporting economic development organizations to generate vibrant commercial districts that serve our residents and draw visitors.
- Implement the Village's economic incentive programs.