






2012 City of Ames - Development Process Survey













1. Please let us know what zip code your business is located in.

		Response Percent	Response Count
50010		56.0%	56
50014		17.0%	17
Other (please specify)		27.0%	27
		answered question	100
		skipped question	1

2. You were selected to receive this survey due to your recent interaction with the City of Ames. Which of the following departments were you primarily working with on your project (s)?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Planning (e.g., site plan review, subdivisions, variances, special use permits, historic preservation, etc.)		24.2%	24
Building Inspections (includes: building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical and construction plans review)		75.8%	75
		answered question	99
		skipped question	2

3. Which Inspection staff member(s) assisted you with your most recent proposal(s)/project(s)? (please select all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
David Brown (Building Official)		10.8%	7
Bruce Kinkaid (Inspections Supervisor)		30.8%	20
Craig Hageman (Building)		35.4%	23
Adam Ostert (Building)		20.0%	13
Mike Makelbust (Plumbing)		38.5%	25
Nick Patterson (Electrical)		29.2%	19
Scott Ripperger (Plans)		24.6%	16
Tom Henriksen (Fire)		12.3%	8
Unknown		1.5%	1
Other (please type name below)		6.2%	4
		answered question	65
		skipped question	36

4. How would you describe the Inspection staff's courteousness while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project(s)?

	Very Courteous		Courteous		Not Courteous	Rating Average	Response Count
Please select the most appropriate choice.	73.8% (48)	9.2% (6)	12.3% (8)	4.6% (3)	0.0% (0)	4.52	65

Use this space to explain your choice

11

answered question

65

skipped question

36

5. How would you describe the Inspection staff's helpfulness while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project(s)?

	Very Helpful		Helpful		Not Helpful	Rating Average	Response Count
Please select the most appropriate choice.	67.2% (43)	17.2% (11)	12.5% (8)	3.1% (2)	0.0% (0)	4.48	64

Use this space to explain your choice

5

answered question

64

skipped question

37

6. How would you describe the Inspection staff's professional knowledge while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project (s)?



	Very Knowledgeable		Knowledgeable		Not Knowledgeable	Rating Average	Response Count
Please select the most appropriate choice.	67.2% (43)	17.2% (11)	14.1% (9)	1.6% (1)	0.0% (0)	4.50	64

Use this space to explain your choice

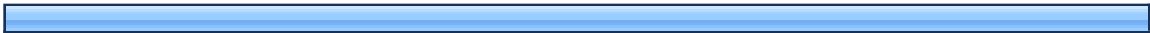
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answered question	64
skipped question	37

7. Did your project(s) require you to have interaction with counter help at City Hall?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		69.2%	45
No		30.8%	20
answered question			65
skipped question			36

8. Were you met with a "welcoming" attitude by our front counter staff?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		100.0%	43
No		0.0%	0

Use this space to explain your choice

3

answered question

43

skipped question

58

9. How would you describe the helpfulness of our front counter staff?

	Very Helpful		Helpful		Not Helpful	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
Please select the most appropriate choice.	62.2% (28)	20.0% (9)	11.1% (5)	6.7% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	4.38	45

Use this space to explain your choice

4





answered question

45




skipped question

56










10. Which of the following best describes the final outcome of your proposal(s)/project(s)? (please select all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Approved by City staff		95.4%	62
Approved by Building Board of Appeals		3.1%	2
Approved by City Council		0.0%	0
Denied by City staff		1.5%	1
Denied by Building Board of Appeals		0.0%	0
Denied by City Council		0.0%	0
Other (please specify below)		3.1%	2
answered question			65
skipped question			36

11. Overall, how would you describe your experience with the Inspection Division?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent		64.6%	42
Satisfactory		30.8%	20
Unsatisfactory		4.6%	3
		answered question	65
		skipped question	36

12. Which of the following contributed to your satisfaction level with the City of Ames' Inspection Division? (please select all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Clearly written local ordinances		20.7%	12
City staff's helpful, "can do" attitude		63.8%	37
Reasonable cost of permit(s)		27.6%	16
Timeliness of response		72.4%	42
Clear policies and/or procedures		39.7%	23
Accurate billing process		29.3%	17
Early communication of expectations		41.4%	24
City staff's willingness to help identify solutions to help facilitate your project		60.3%	35
Other (please specify below)		3.4%	2
answered question			58
skipped question			43

13. What comments or suggestions could you share to help us improve your next overall experience?

Response
Count

9




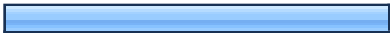


answered question

9

skipped question

92

14. Which of the following could help improve your satisfaction level with our Inspection Division? (please select all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Change the Local ordinances		33.3%	1
Display a more helpful, "can-do" attitude		33.3%	1
Reduce the cost of permit(s)		0.0%	0
Improve the timeliness of response		66.7%	2
Add clarity to the policies or procedures		33.3%	1
Increase accuracy in the billing process		0.0%	0
Show more willingness to identify potential solutions		33.3%	1
Early communications of expectations		0.0%	0
Other (please specify below)		33.3%	1
answered question			3
skipped question			98

15. How can we improve your next overall experience?

**Response
Count**

2



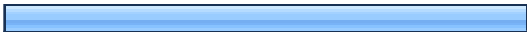






answered question

2

skipped question

99

16. Which Planning staff member(s) assisted you with your most recent proposal(s)/project(s)? (please select all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Ray Anderson		36.4%	8
Jeff Benson		31.8%	7
Charlie Kuester		45.5%	10
Sam Perry		9.1%	2
Steve Osguthorpe		27.3%	6
Cindy Hollar		4.5%	1
Tami Moen		4.5%	1
Unknown		9.1%	2
Other (please type name below)		13.6%	3
		answered question	22
		skipped question	79

17. How would you describe the Planning staff's courteousness while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project(s)?

	Very Courteous		Courteous		Not Courteous	Rating Average	Response Count
Please check your response by number.	57.1% (12)	19.0% (4)	23.8% (5)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	4.33	21

Use this space to explain your choice

6

answered question

21

skipped question

80

18. How would you describe the Planning staff's helpfulness while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project(s)?

	Very Helpful		Helpful		Not Helpful	Rating Average	Response Count
Please check the appropriate rating.	28.6% (6)	38.1% (8)	19.0% (4)	14.3% (3)	0.0% (0)	3.81	21

Use this space to explain your choice

6

answered question

21

skipped question

80

19. How would you describe the Planning staff's professional knowledge while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project (s)?



	Very Knowledgeable		Knowledgeable		Not Knowledgeable	Rating Average	Response Count
Please select the most appropriate choice.	28.6% (6)	28.6% (6)	33.3% (7)	9.5% (2)	0.0% (0)	3.76	21

Use this space to explain your choice


6

answered question	21
skipped question	80

20. Did your issue require you to have interaction with counter help at City Hall?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		54.5%	12
No		45.5%	10
answered question			22
skipped question			79

21. Were you met with a "welcoming" attitude by our front counter staff?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		100.0%	11
No		0.0%	0

Use this space to explain your choice

2

answered question

11

skipped question

90

22. How would you describe the helpfulness of the City staff's front counter staff?

	Very Helpful		Helpful		Not Helpful	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
Please select the most appropriate choice.	36.4% (4)	36.4% (4)	27.3% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	4.09	11

Use this space to explain your choice

2










answered question

11



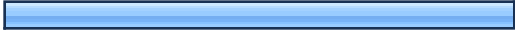

skipped question

90

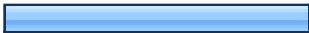


23. What type of application did you submit? (please select all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Certificate of Appropriateness (historic preservation)		5.3%	1
Major Site Plan or Planned Residential Development(PRD)Plan		10.5%	2
Special Use Permit		31.6%	6
Minor Site Plan		42.1%	8
Preliminary or Final Plat		31.6%	6
Flood Plain Development Permit		5.3%	1
Rezoning		15.8%	3
Land Use Policy Plan change		21.1%	4
Other (please specify below)		10.5%	2
answered question			19
skipped question			82




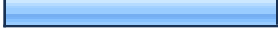



24. Which of the following best describes the final outcome of your proposal(s)/project(s)?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Approved by City staff		38.9%	7
Approved by the Zoning Board of Adjustment		11.1%	2
Approved by the Historic Preservation Commission		0.0%	0
Approved by City Council		44.4%	8
Denied by City staff		0.0%	0
Denied by the Zoning Board of Adjustment		5.6%	1
Denied by the Historic Preservation Commission		0.0%	0
Denied by City Council		0.0%	0
		answered question	18
		skipped question	83

25. Overall, were you satisfied with your experience with the Planning Division?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent		26.3%	5
Satisfactory		68.4%	13
Unsatisfactory		5.3%	1
		answered question	19
		skipped question	82

26. Which of the following contributed to your satisfaction level with our Planning Division? (please select all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Well written local ordinances		11.8%	2
City staff's helpful, "can do" attitude		47.1%	8
Timeliness of response		47.1%	8
Clear policies and/or procedures		23.5%	4
Early communication of expectations		23.5%	4
City staff's willingness to help identify solutions to help facilitate your project		58.8%	10
Other (please specify below)		17.6%	3
		answered question	17
		skipped question	84

27. How can we improve your next overall experience?

**Response
Count**

10




answered question

10

skipped question

91




28. Which of the following could help improve your satisfaction level with the City's Planning Division? (please select all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Change the Local ordinances		100.0%	1
Display a more helpful, "can-do" attitude		100.0%	1
Improve the timeliness of response		100.0%	1
Add clarity to the policies or procedures		0.0%	0
Show more willingness to identify potential solutions		100.0%	1
Early communication of expectations		0.0%	0
Other (please specify below)		100.0%	1
answered question			1
skipped question			100

29. What comments or suggestions could you share to help us improve your next overall experience?

	Response Count
	1
answered question	1
skipped question	100

30. Did you find the Application Packet useful, clear, and understandable?



		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		89.5%	17
No		5.3%	1
N/A		5.3%	1

Use this space to explain your choice

4

answered question	19
skipped question	82

31. Did your project follow the processing schedule that was included in the Planning Application packet for the project?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		76.5%	13
No		23.5%	4
Use this space to explain your choice			5
answered question			17
skipped question			84

32. A Council goal is for the City to display a "can-do" attitude to customers, promoting Ames as a welcoming place to do business. In your opinion, how well did we accomplish this?

	Excellent		Satisfactory		Unsatisfactory		N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
Planning and Zoning Commission	9.7% (6)	14.5% (9)	24.2% (15)	3.2% (2)	6.5% (4)	41.9% (26)		3.31	62
Building Board of Appeals	8.8% (5)	8.8% (5)	14.0% (8)	1.8% (1)	5.3% (3)	61.4% (35)		3.36	57
Historic Preservation Commission	1.8% (1)	9.1% (5)	14.5% (8)	1.8% (1)	3.6% (2)	69.1% (38)		3.12	55
Zoning Board of Adjustment	3.4% (2)	8.6% (5)	15.5% (9)	1.7% (1)	13.8% (8)	56.9% (33)		2.68	58
City Council	5.0% (3)	13.3% (8)	18.3% (11)	10.0% (6)	3.3% (2)	50.0% (30)		3.13	60
City Staff	33.8% (24)	35.2% (25)	19.7% (14)	5.6% (4)	2.8% (2)	2.8% (2)		3.94	71
answered question									74
skipped question									27

33. Please provide us with any suggestions for how we can best display a "can-do" attitude.

	Response Count
	18
answered question	18
skipped question	83

Page 2, Q1. Please let us know what zip code your business is located in.

1	50208	Oct 26, 2012 9:00 AM
2	50021	Oct 26, 2012 5:49 AM
3	50428	Oct 26, 2012 5:15 AM
4	52351	Oct 25, 2012 4:49 PM
5	50322	Oct 25, 2012 3:58 PM
6	50248	Oct 25, 2012 3:57 PM
7	50156	Oct 22, 2012 8:42 PM
8	43081	Oct 19, 2012 3:00 PM
9	53562	Oct 16, 2012 7:40 AM
10	50111	Oct 11, 2012 3:51 PM
11	50124	Oct 10, 2012 7:38 AM
12	50248	Oct 9, 2012 2:27 PM
13	68801	Oct 9, 2012 10:45 AM
14	53807	Oct 9, 2012 8:56 AM
15	50313	Oct 9, 2012 8:18 AM
16	54307	Oct 9, 2012 8:09 AM
17	50266	Oct 9, 2012 7:47 AM
18	50265	Oct 9, 2012 6:50 AM
19	50011	Oct 9, 2012 6:46 AM

Page 2, Q1. Please let us know what zip code your business is located in.

20	50322	Oct 9, 2012 6:33 AM
21	50613	Oct 9, 2012 6:21 AM
22	50021	Oct 9, 2012 6:13 AM
23	50315	Oct 9, 2012 6:13 AM
24	50208	Oct 9, 2012 5:14 AM
25	50134	Oct 8, 2012 9:06 PM
26	50124	Oct 8, 2012 6:59 PM
27	50130	Oct 8, 2012 5:57 PM

Page 4, Q1. Which Inspection staff member(s) assisted you with your most recent proposal(s)/project(s)? (please select all that apply)

1	Sara Kramer	Oct 10, 2012 9:01 AM
2	Ann Campbell	Oct 9, 2012 10:47 AM
3	Sara Kramer	Oct 9, 2012 5:17 AM
4	rental and neighborhood inspectors	Oct 8, 2012 7:09 PM

Page 4, Q2. How would you describe the Inspection staff's courteousness while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project(s)?

1	In the many projects I've been involved with along side this staff member, he has consistently had an attitude of arrogance and superiority. It is a very poor representation of the City of Ames. I won't comment on the other staff person as he has left City Employment. I look forward to working with a new building official who has the ability to represent Ames appropriately.	Oct 26, 2012 1:10 PM
2	First impression not too good. He said we would have to stop our project.	Oct 14, 2012 1:19 PM
3	I appreciate her timeliness in response and I can usually reach her by phone--not v/m	Oct 10, 2012 9:01 AM
4	Always very helpful, honest and I felt he wanted to be helpful. He knows the codes and that saves time.	Oct 9, 2012 6:35 PM
5	All comunicaton followed my expected protocol	Oct 9, 2012 5:11 PM
6	Staff was Excellent to Work With!!!! Is by the Book but went above and Beyond to accomidate oue needs! Thoroughly impressed.	Oct 9, 2012 10:47 AM
7	One of the nicest inspectors we have had to deal with.	Oct 9, 2012 8:57 AM
8	I have always recieved call backs and assistance when needed	Oct 9, 2012 5:47 AM
9	I find staff in field very hard to work with	Oct 9, 2012 5:40 AM
10	All of them were very polite	Oct 8, 2012 8:58 PM
11	He alway is very informative and easy to work with. We had an issue that required me to revise the project a bit. He explained why the change was needed in a professional manner and in a way that allowed me to understand how to make the changes properly.	Oct 8, 2012 7:11 PM

Page 4, Q3. How would you describe the Inspection staff's helpfulness while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project(s)?

1	They delayed a project by almost 1 month	Oct 14, 2012 1:19 PM
2	Instead of saying NO and spewing code she tries to find a way	Oct 10, 2012 9:01 AM
3	The inspector did not call me when he was ready to preform the inspection but did wait for me when he could not gain access to the site.	Oct 9, 2012 5:11 PM
4	Everyone on the office was extremely helpful and pleasant.	Oct 9, 2012 8:57 AM
5	Helped with specifications so that I could bid on a project.	Oct 8, 2012 5:07 PM

Page 4, Q4. How would you describe the Inspection staff's professional knowledge while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project(s)?

1	Their knowledge was sufficient, however, code has areas that must be taken on a case by base basis and this has never been the case. Knowledge of the code does not equate to interpreting it correctly.	Oct 26, 2012 1:10 PM
2	The project didn't need to be delayed but the person didn't seem to know this	Oct 14, 2012 1:19 PM
3	Knows all the code details	Oct 9, 2012 5:11 PM
4	Had answers to all of our questions.	Oct 9, 2012 8:57 AM
5	If there is doubt on a particular situation, they have always looked into it before rendiering a decision	Oct 9, 2012 5:47 AM
6	They were helpful but on the issue but not prompt on getting back to me I sometime had to call them what was decided on some questions	Oct 8, 2012 8:58 PM
7	they seem to comunicate between them to get the answers	Oct 8, 2012 5:49 PM

Page 6, Q1. Were you met with a "welcoming" attitude by our front counter staff?

1	the desk is far away and customers aren't always noticed immediately.	Oct 10, 2012 9:08 AM
2	They are always cheerful and helpful	Oct 9, 2012 5:12 PM
3	The staff in always helpful and quick to get my questions answerd.	Oct 8, 2012 7:12 PM

Page 6, Q2. How would you describe the helpfulness of our front counter staff?

1	they take messages...but it seems if you have a question--they defer to the inspectors	Oct 10, 2012 9:08 AM
2	Some things are beyound the counter staff's control and they admit that.	Oct 9, 2012 5:12 PM
3	Some are very helpful and some are not so helpful.	Oct 8, 2012 7:10 PM
4	She is the most curtious person who has ever answered the phone when I have called down to the office.	Oct 8, 2012 6:11 PM

Page 7, Q1. Which of the following best describes the final outcome of your proposal(s)/project(s)? (please select all that apply)

1	Still in the process on a couple of them that need answers on	Oct 8, 2012 9:00 PM
2	Denied by the Planning dept.	Oct 8, 2012 7:11 PM

Page 8, Q1. Which of the following contributed to your satisfaction level with the City of Ames' Inspection Division? (please select all that apply)

1	very willing to go the extra mile if needed	Oct 31, 2012 3:22 PM
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Page 8, Q1. Which of the following contributed to your satisfaction level with the City of Ames' Inspection Division? (please select all that apply)

2 I find City of Ames to be Excellent to Work With !!

Oct 9, 2012 10:52 AM

Page 8, Q2. What comments or suggestions could you share to help us improve your next overall experience?

1	permits are to costly now.	Oct 31, 2012 3:22 PM
2	Would like to apply and pay for permits online	Oct 29, 2012 6:51 PM
3	The 24 hour response time to get an inspection is to long. Many projects require a simple inspection to keep it moving along but the 24 hour wait can drag these projects out making them more costly to both the homeowner and the contractor.	Oct 26, 2012 5:28 PM
4	There could be more comunication about when new versions of codes will start being inforced. On line application for permits. scheduled inspection times.	Oct 9, 2012 5:23 PM
5	Keep up the great work-so many inspectors/city halls are very unpleasant & hard to work/communicate with-this was not the case with the City of Ames!	Oct 9, 2012 8:59 AM
6	only thing that would make the process better is online bill paying. Online permit submitting and inspection scheduling would be icing on the cake (or at least let me do it by email).	Oct 9, 2012 5:54 AM
7	The city to be more clear on what they want. The inspection department needs to learn that without building projects we wouldn't need an inspection department. A better approach to a can do attitude.	Oct 9, 2012 4:34 AM
8	I had a project that only had two small walls added and four electrical box outlets and had to have two people inspect the rough in part and two people do the final seams like a little waste of time by the staff time. I understand one was for framing and one was for electrical but with that small amount of work I sure would think one person could have done both inspections?	Oct 8, 2012 9:05 PM
9	Scheduling procedures could be improved. Permit fees are much higher in Ames compared to Ankeny and other jurisdictions that I am familiar with.	Oct 8, 2012 7:13 PM

Page 9, Q1. Which of the following could help improve your satisfaction level with our Inspection Division? (please select all that apply)

1	There are aspects to the code that go beyond the 2006 IBC. Many of these aspects are unnecessary and growth prohibiting. This needs to be looked at and certain addendums need to be attached to the existing code.	Oct 26, 2012 1:16 PM
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Page 9, Q2. How can we improve your next overall experience?

1	I hope I don't have another experience.	Oct 14, 2012 1:21 PM
2	staff needs to be more fixable incodes an gray areas	Oct 9, 2012 5:42 AM

Page 10, Q1. Which Planning staff member(s) assisted you with your most recent proposal(s)/project(s)? (please select all that apply)

1	Corey Mellies	Oct 17, 2012 7:08 AM
2	Karen Marren	Oct 10, 2012 7:39 AM
3	Karen	Oct 9, 2012 7:27 AM

Page 10, Q2. How would you describe the Planning staff's courteousness while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project(s)?

1	staff always returned my calls and discussed any issues i had	Oct 17, 2012 7:08 AM
2	He was very professional and has a "can-do" attitude. He cares about Ames and is not needlessly bureaucratic	Oct 16, 2012 7:42 AM
3	both staff members have been very responsive to my questions and inquiries about the process	Oct 9, 2012 2:45 PM
4	Everyone was always courteous and professional even if the process was not all that smooth	Oct 9, 2012 7:50 AM
5	Both are generally courteous through the process	Oct 9, 2012 6:57 AM
6	He makes me feel that he really wants my projects to advance.	Oct 8, 2012 6:21 PM

Page 10, Q3. How would you describe the Planning staff's helpfulness while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project(s)?

1	The majority of staff was very helpful. One brought the ranking down.	Nov 12, 2012 9:10 AM
2	He was pleasant but I felt like he didn't work to help us. Just to do his job	Oct 31, 2012 11:50 AM
3	see above	Oct 9, 2012 2:45 PM
4	City Departments lack internal communication. These issues cause unnecessary delays and lack of coordination between various public and private projects.	Oct 9, 2012 7:50 AM
5	He is always helpful, this staff member is if helpful if he likes the project and some times tries to put his own ideas into the projects	Oct 9, 2012 6:57 AM
6	When he directed the activities of the DRC I felt he was being more than conservative but actually negative toward growth and expansion.	Oct 8, 2012 6:21 PM

Page 10, Q4. How would you describe the Planning staff's professional knowledge while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project(s)?

1	No checking into solutions	Oct 31, 2012 11:50 AM
2	every one was knowledgeable but sometimes had to speak to more than one person to get all information	Oct 17, 2012 7:08 AM
3	i appreciated the input from staff and willingness to provide information	Oct 9, 2012 2:45 PM
4	Certain procedures were not well known or discussed amongst staff. Decisions previously conveyed were later revoked causing delays and re-work.	Oct 9, 2012 7:50 AM
5	The staff understands the codes, now that the director is gone hopefully they won't try to look for things wrong with the code or change the code for every project.	Oct 9, 2012 6:57 AM
6	I don't question the knowledge of the decision makers, I question the desire of some staff to make a project happen. These staff members strike me as people who really want both Ames and the developer to win.	Oct 8, 2012 6:21 PM

Page 12, Q1. Were you met with a "welcoming" attitude by our front counter staff?

1	The front staff is always very welcoming and knows my name every time I go there. Great staff!	Nov 12, 2012 9:11 AM
2	the counter staff is always willing to help with a friendly smile	Oct 9, 2012 6:58 AM

Page 12, Q2. How would you describe the helpfulness of the City staff's front counter staff?

1	Super front counter staff!	Nov 12, 2012 9:11 AM
2	they are as helpful as they need to be. Most of the stuff is done with the planners	Oct 9, 2012 6:58 AM

Page 13, Q1. What type of application did you submit? (please select all that apply)

1	no application, worked with staff on street project	Oct 17, 2012 2:09 PM
2	Plat of Survey	Oct 9, 2012 7:29 AM

Page 14, Q1. Which of the following contributed to your satisfaction level with our Planning Division? (please select all that apply)

1	I feel like the staff tries to be helpful, but I don't believe the "Department" has a "can do" attitude.	Oct 10, 2012 7:48 AM
2	Project was fairly straightforward.	Oct 9, 2012 7:33 AM
3	As was discussed in earlier comments I do not feel that the staff are looking for a way to say "yes".	Oct 8, 2012 6:26 PM

Page 14, Q2. How can we improve your next overall experience?

1	Staff is great--should be much better now. Please have clear policies. Does anyone understand the flow chart?	Nov 12, 2012 9:12 AM
2	Lack of coordination between City of Ames departments delayed the project slightly.	Oct 10, 2012 10:44 AM
3	The Planning Department has appeared to complicate procedures by their Director's interpretation or mis-interpretation of code. Their "completeness reviews" and other vague process timelines result in my inability to ever know what the submittal schedule and process for a project will be. When a client asks me how long a review and approval process with the City of Ames will take, I generally can't answer	Oct 10, 2012 7:48 AM
4	update applications for LUPP and zoning	Oct 9, 2012 2:47 PM
5	The staff did not have a "can do" attitude and overall the project team felt like there were many unnecessary roadblocks because of the Planning staff. Also, after an initial project meeting we were told one thing and when we applied for a MSDP we were told another and had to backtrack and rework some items. Therefore the initial meeting proved to be unhelpful.	Oct 9, 2012 8:45 AM
6	Better internal communication.	Oct 9, 2012 7:52 AM
7	Less regulation. Quit trying to regulate every possible situation when it's not what the public wants.	Oct 9, 2012 7:33 AM
8	a new director will hopefully set the right tone for the department. He was more interested in rewriting the code for every small issue then he was in getting things done. He was not well respected by others within the department or other departments	Oct 9, 2012 7:04 AM
9	These staff members are trying to set expectations for development without compromising the public expectations for oversight.	Oct 8, 2012 6:26 PM
10	The City of Ames did not seem to have a clear policy to address home-based businesses that are entirely internet-based. I recommend the Council look at such businesses and draft such a policy to streamline the permit process when such considerations as parking and traffic flow are irrelevant.	Oct 8, 2012 4:46 PM

Page 15, Q1. Which of the following could help improve your satisfaction level with the City's Planning Division? (please select all that apply)

1	I felt like one person on the board had an additude and was not will to hear or work with anything that was said. He was	Oct 31, 2012 12:09 PM
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Page 15, Q1. Which of the following could help improve your satisfaction level with the City's Planning Division? (please select all that apply)

particularly rude to the bussiness owner before us. Very unperfessional. He was willing to put 10 people out of a job that are now abled to support there families. a couple which just got off of state aid. I had other city people come up to me and say they were upset with the outcome and could they help to let them know.

Page 15, Q2. What comments or suggestions could you share to help us improve your next overall experience?

1	Work with what is best for the Ames people.	Oct 31, 2012 12:09 PM
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Page 16, Q1. Did you find the Application Packet useful, clear, and understandable?

1	All except the 'schedule'	Nov 12, 2012 9:13 AM
2	did not fill out any applications	Oct 17, 2012 2:11 PM
3	Except for City review timeline.	Oct 10, 2012 7:50 AM
4	i had to ask for clarification	Oct 9, 2012 2:48 PM

Page 16, Q2. Did your project follow the processing schedule that was included in the Planning Application packet for the project?

1	How can I answer that? What is the schedule?	Nov 12, 2012 9:13 AM
2	no packet	Oct 17, 2012 2:11 PM
3	We were short of time and accelerated the process.	Oct 16, 2012 7:48 AM
4	Sometimes.	Oct 10, 2012 7:50 AM
5	I had both, some have and some have not	Oct 9, 2012 7:05 AM

Page 17, Q2. Please provide us with any suggestions for how we can best display a "can-do" attitude.

1	allow several new businesses to come in like Ankeny is	Oct 31, 2012 3:23 PM
2	Listen to the people before having a negative attitude. be more helpful.	Oct 31, 2012 12:18 PM
3	The code is the determining factor. City staff pulls the curtain of "code" in front of them when they are confronted with something that is debilitatingly costly. They inform that they have to "stick to code" but the City is the entity that wrote a large portion of it. The City of Ames is known all over Iowa by contractors, building owners, Realtors etc... for being incredibly suffocating to growth and it stems from code.	Oct 26, 2012 1:26 PM
4	Professional and timely responses to questions asked with the department that I worked with. He was a pleasure to communicate with.	Oct 19, 2012 3:08 PM
5	Give this staff member a promotion.	Oct 16, 2012 7:49 AM
6	your rules on landscaping are ridiculous and should vary depending on the location of the business	Oct 11, 2012 6:48 PM
7	be more development friendly	Oct 11, 2012 3:56 PM
8	Give guidance to the P&Z and ZBA so they understand what is their purpose. I've attended many meeting where they take it upon themselves to consider "quality of life" tangent issues that have nothing to do with review of the project at hand to determine whether it meets goals and code.	Oct 10, 2012 7:53 AM
9	DO! Be available. Make the online stuff clear and easy. Have the online stuff check for errors and gently indicate the errors and possible solutions.	Oct 9, 2012 5:28 PM
10	council members need to be visioning for the future of Ames and not be so short sighted	Oct 9, 2012 2:51 PM
11	Keep doing what you are doing-	Oct 9, 2012 8:59 AM
12	City agencies should cooperate with each other. If the goal is to have something built in the city of Ames than it doesn't look good when different agencies are refusing to cooperate with each other during the process. It is frustrating when the customer has to try and soothe over issues between department personnel to keep the process moving forward.	Oct 9, 2012 8:48 AM
13	Make an effort to have all staff on board with a decision (including the department director) so that previously stated requirements are not retracted.	Oct 9, 2012 7:55 AM
14	The council has made some great strides but as a city we still struggle with wanting to grow. There are many times we still seem to be afraid of our own shadow and debate things for hours that should be resolved more quickly. Ames still	Oct 9, 2012 7:10 AM

Page 17, Q2. Please provide us with any suggestions for how we can best display a "can-do" attitude.

	has a lousy reputation in the development community and projects like Deerey's don't help	
15	when you take plans to be reviewed and approved , you get the feeling the city of ames doe not want you to build here	Oct 9, 2012 5:44 AM
16	Please continue to maintain law and order by enforcing building and zoning codes for normal everyday straight forward occurrences. However, try and adopt a more reasonable approach to some common every day problems that do not always have a perfect code/zoning answer . These types of issues can not always be solved by verbatim text in the building or zoning codes. Be willing to display a "can-do" attitude and help solve the problem. In other words, "lighten up a little bit".	Oct 8, 2012 7:33 PM
17	I want the Planning staff to understand that I don't want to go around them to council. I do business in Ames because it has strict development rules. I think that protects all citizens and I don't mind working harder than others to have the opportunity to do work in the city. I do think the "no growth" minority has permeated some of the decision makers in town. If a project is to be a true "win-win" then sometimes the City will have to take a small amount of risk to balance the developers significant risk.	Oct 8, 2012 6:31 PM
18	Update the businesses that do not require submission of proposals to ZBA to include internet-based businesses and direct sales companies.	Oct 8, 2012 4:48 PM

Development Process Survey

Results Interpretation

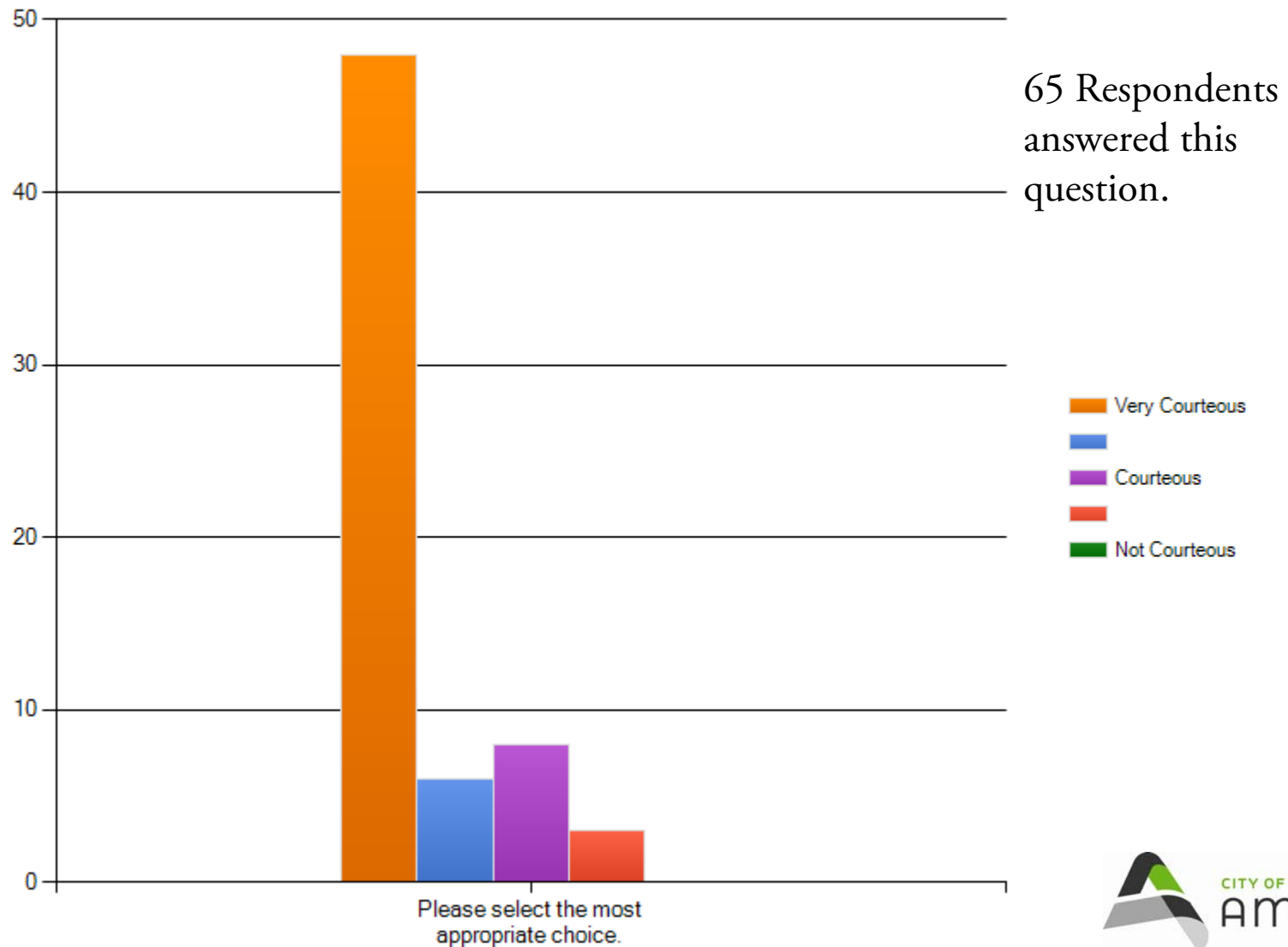
Response Summary

- 67 Planning Survey's E-mailed
- 303 Building Inspections Survey's E-mailed

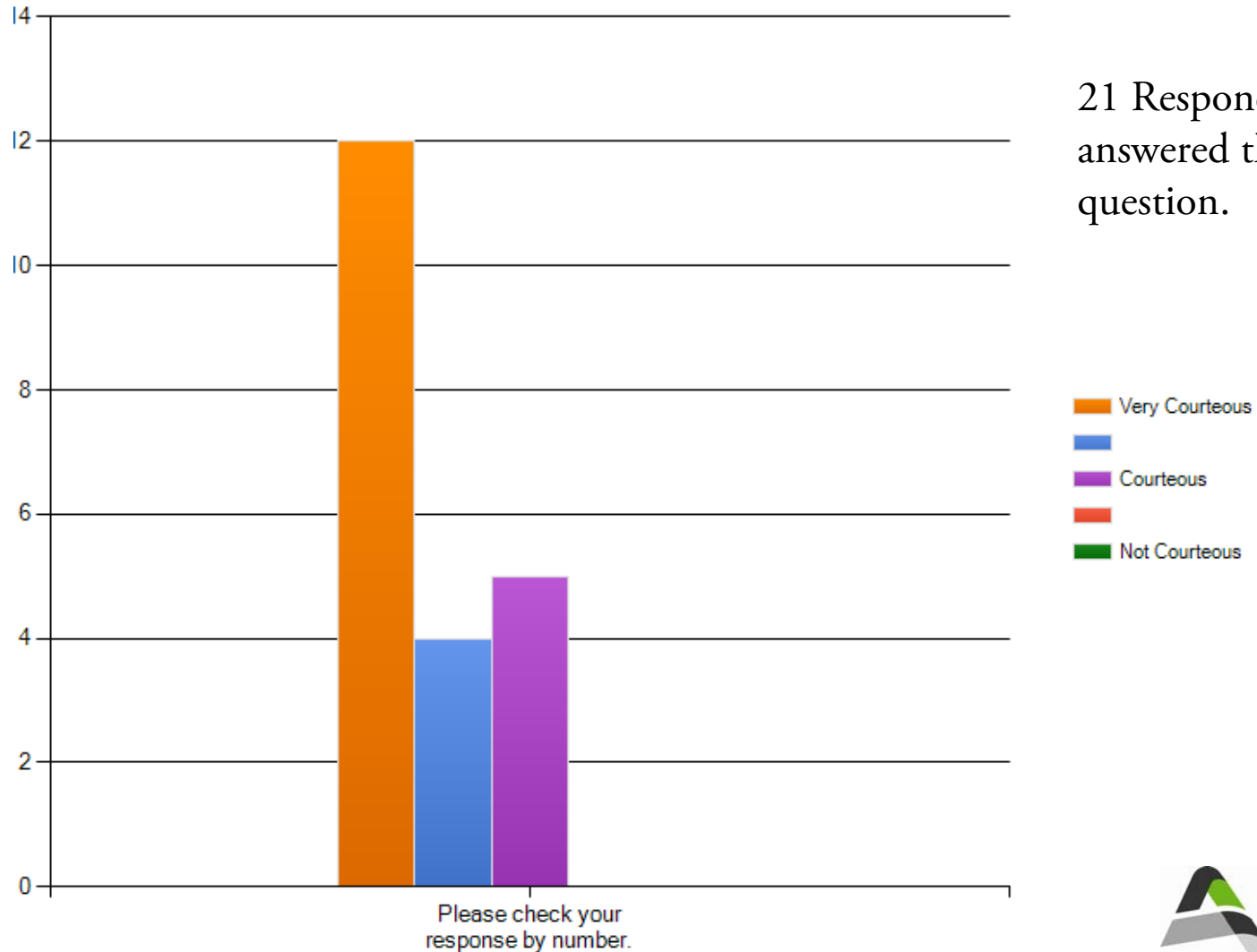
You were selected to receive this survey due to your recent interaction with the City of Ames. Which of the following departments were you primarily working with on your project(s)? (Building Inspections or Planning)

Answer Options	Percent of Total	Response Count
Building Inspections	24.8%	75
Planning	35.8%	24

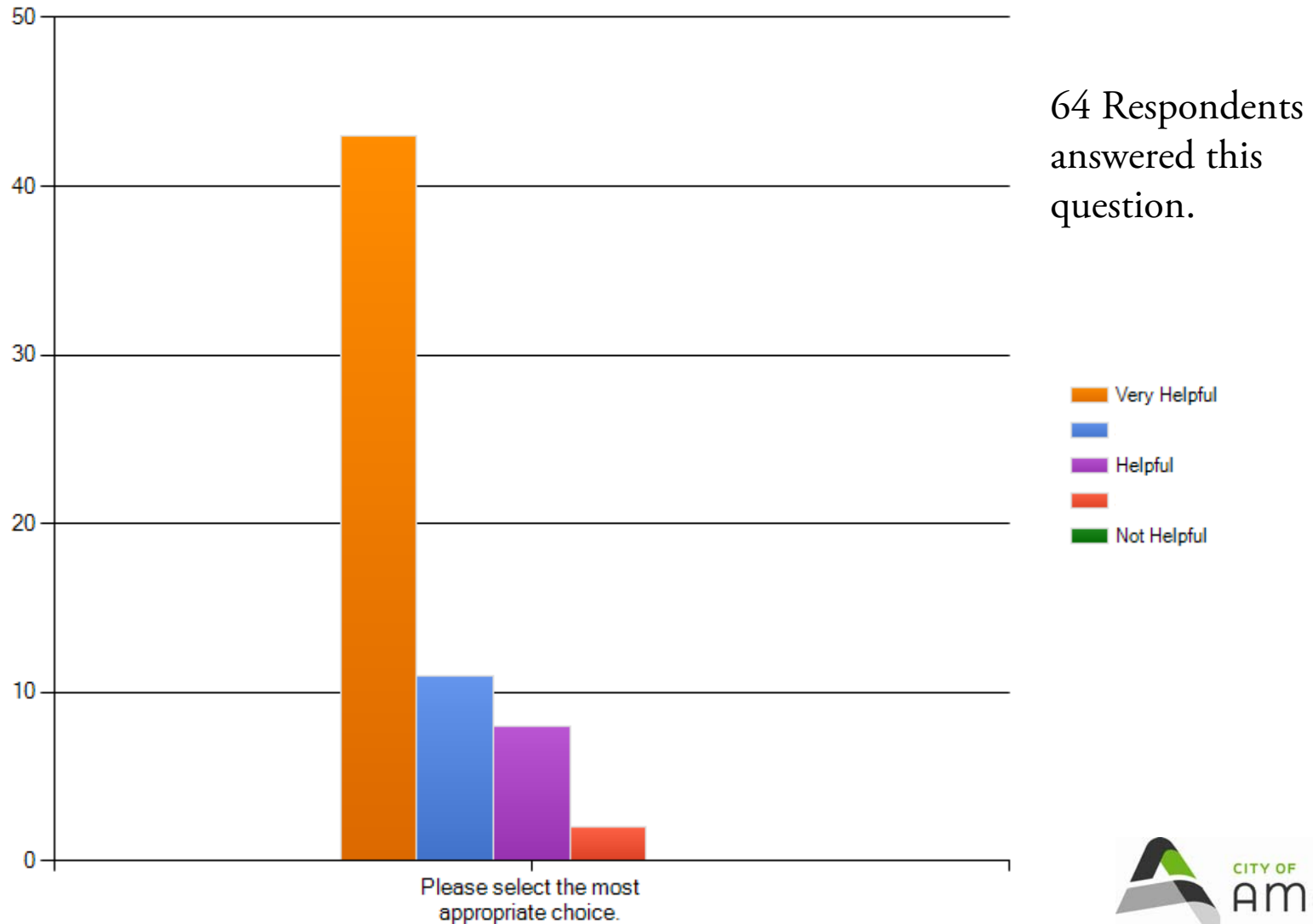
How would you describe the Inspection staff's courteousness while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project(s)?



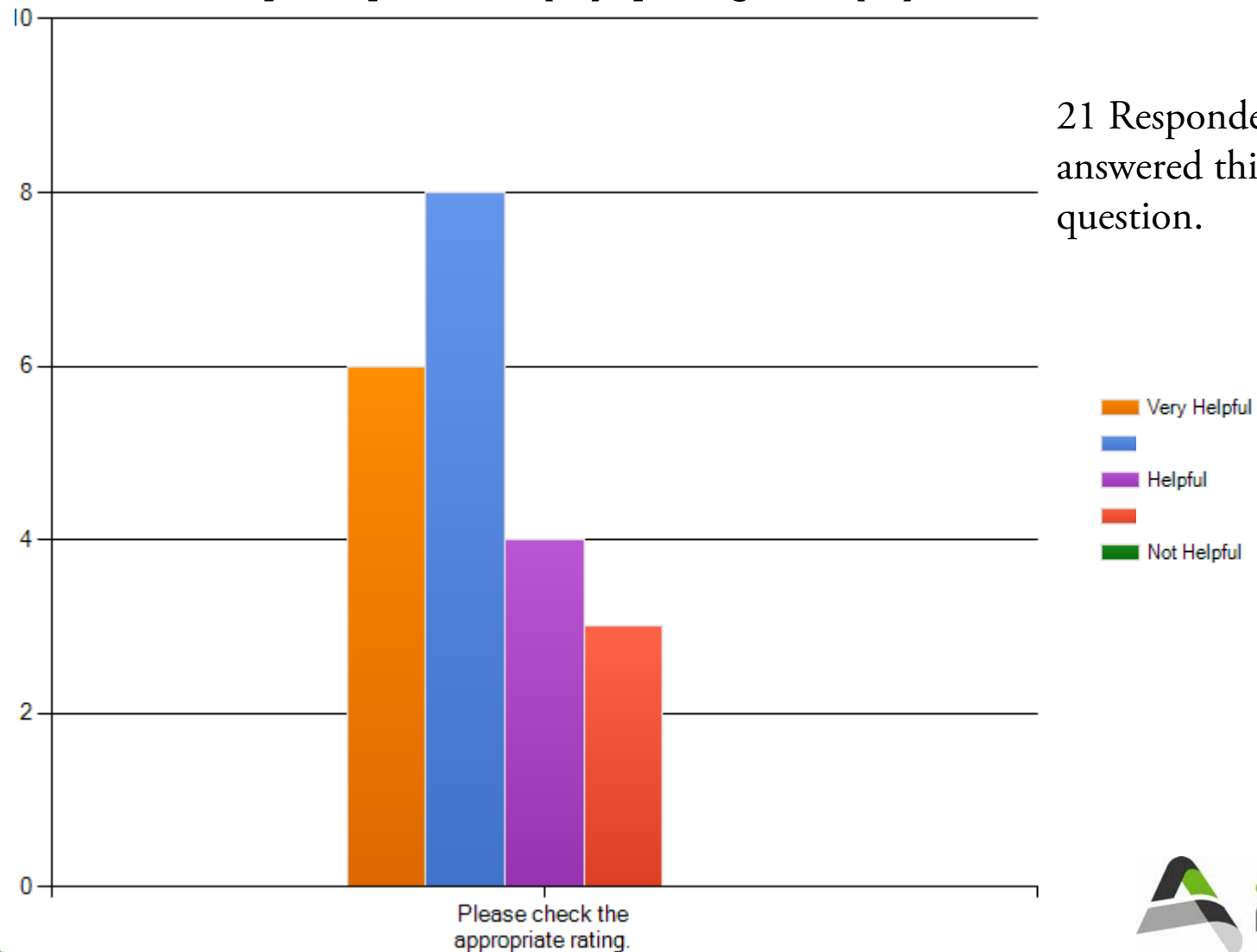
How would you describe the Planning staff's courteousness while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project(s)?



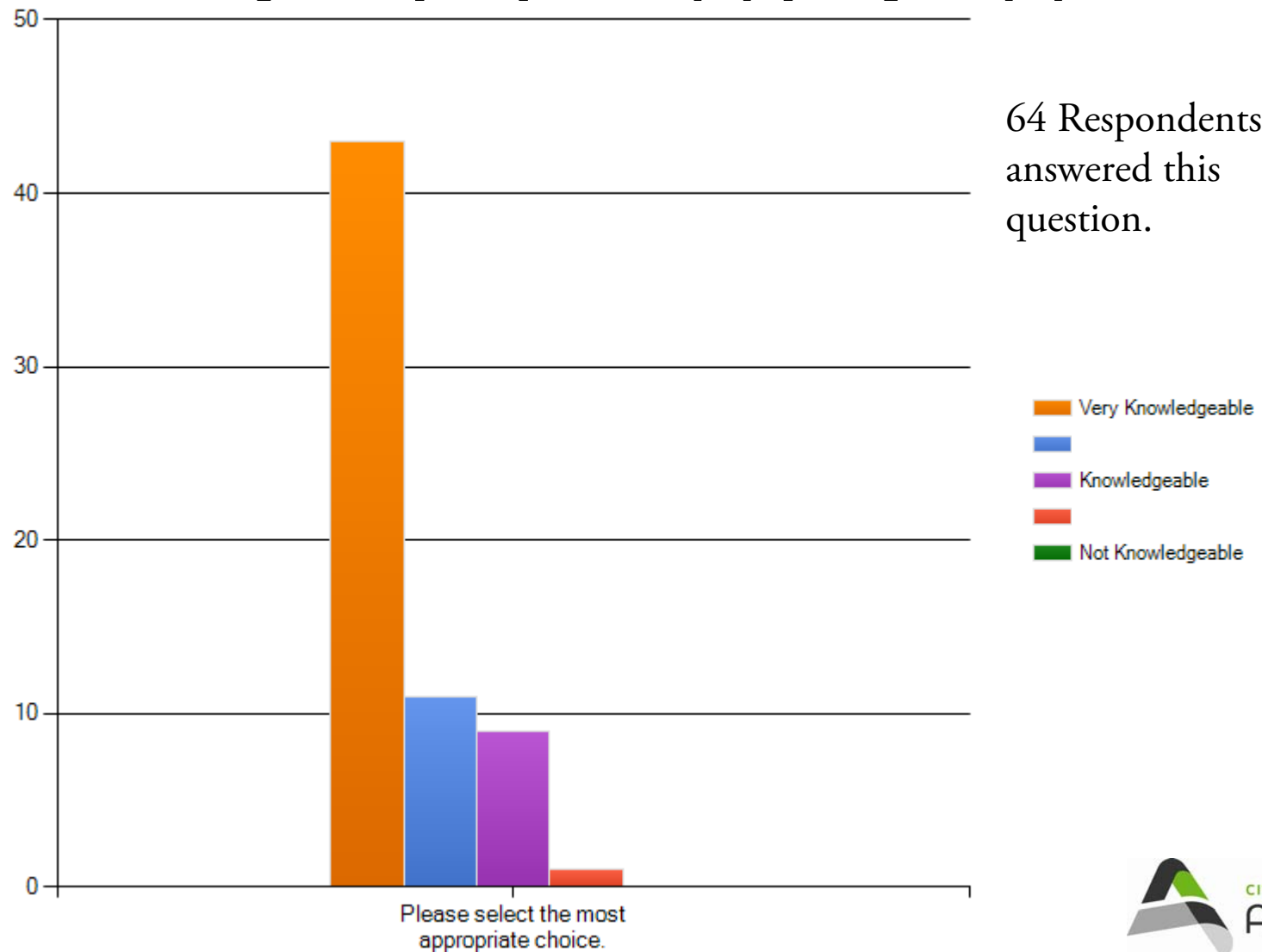
How would you describe the Inspection staff's helpfulness while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project(s)?



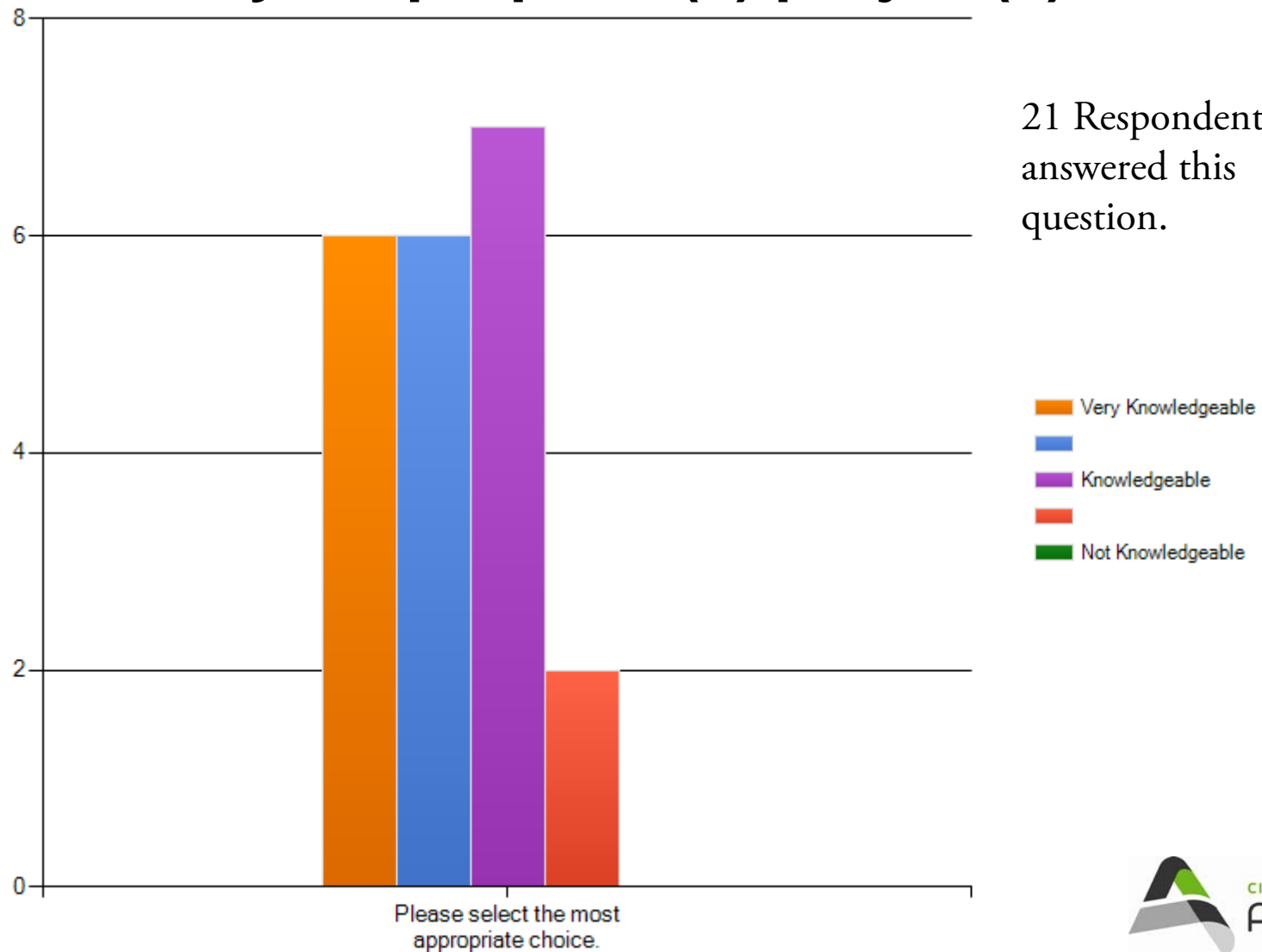
How would you describe the Planning staff's helpfulness while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project(s)?



How would you describe the Inspection staff's professional knowledge while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project(s)?



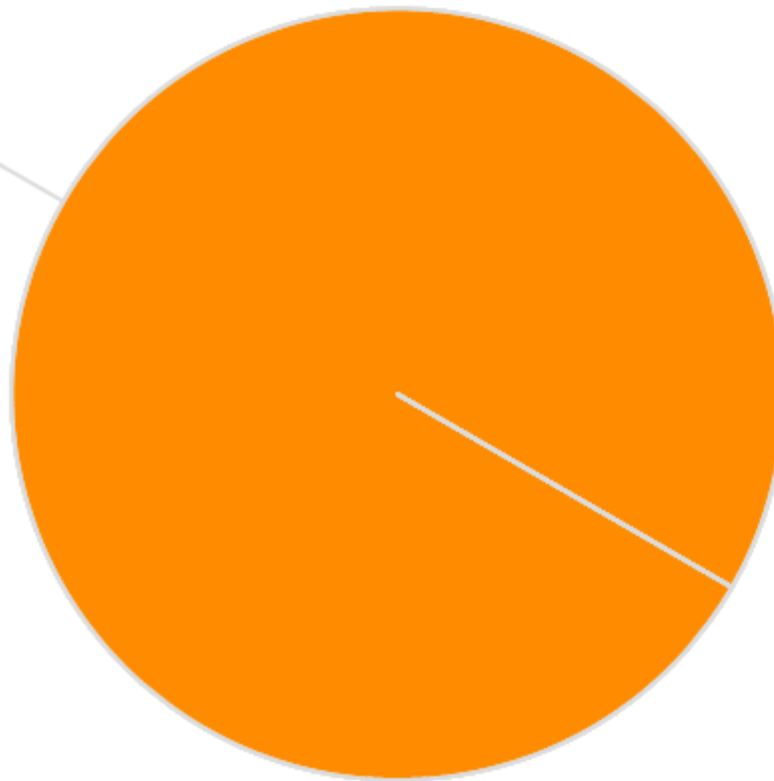
How would you describe the Planning staff's professional knowledge while assisting you with your proposal(s)/project(s)?



Were you met with a "welcoming" attitude by our front counter staff? (Inspections Division)

43 Respondents
answered this
question.

100.0 %

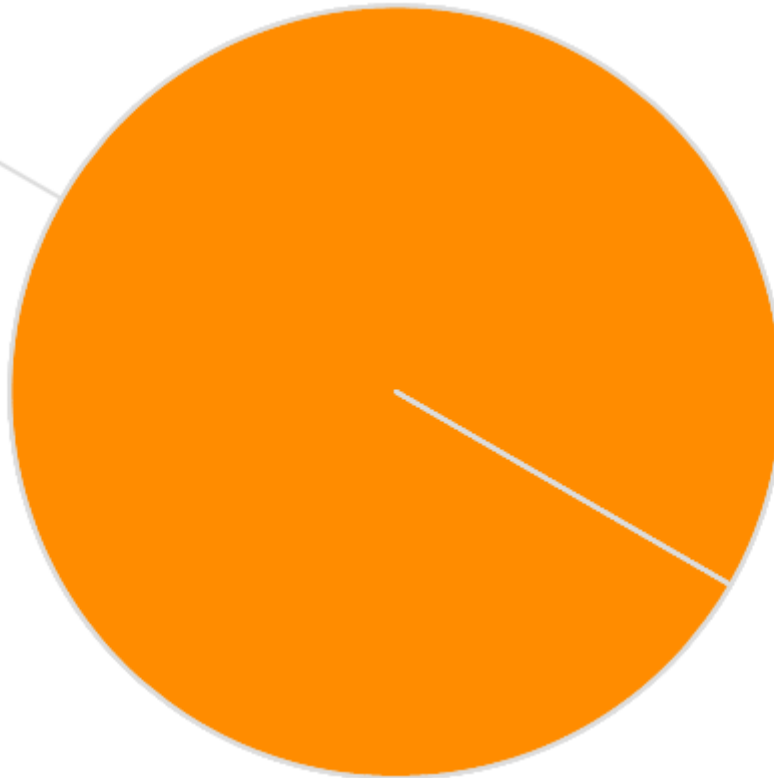


Yes
No

Were you met with a "welcoming" attitude by our front counter staff? (Planning Division)

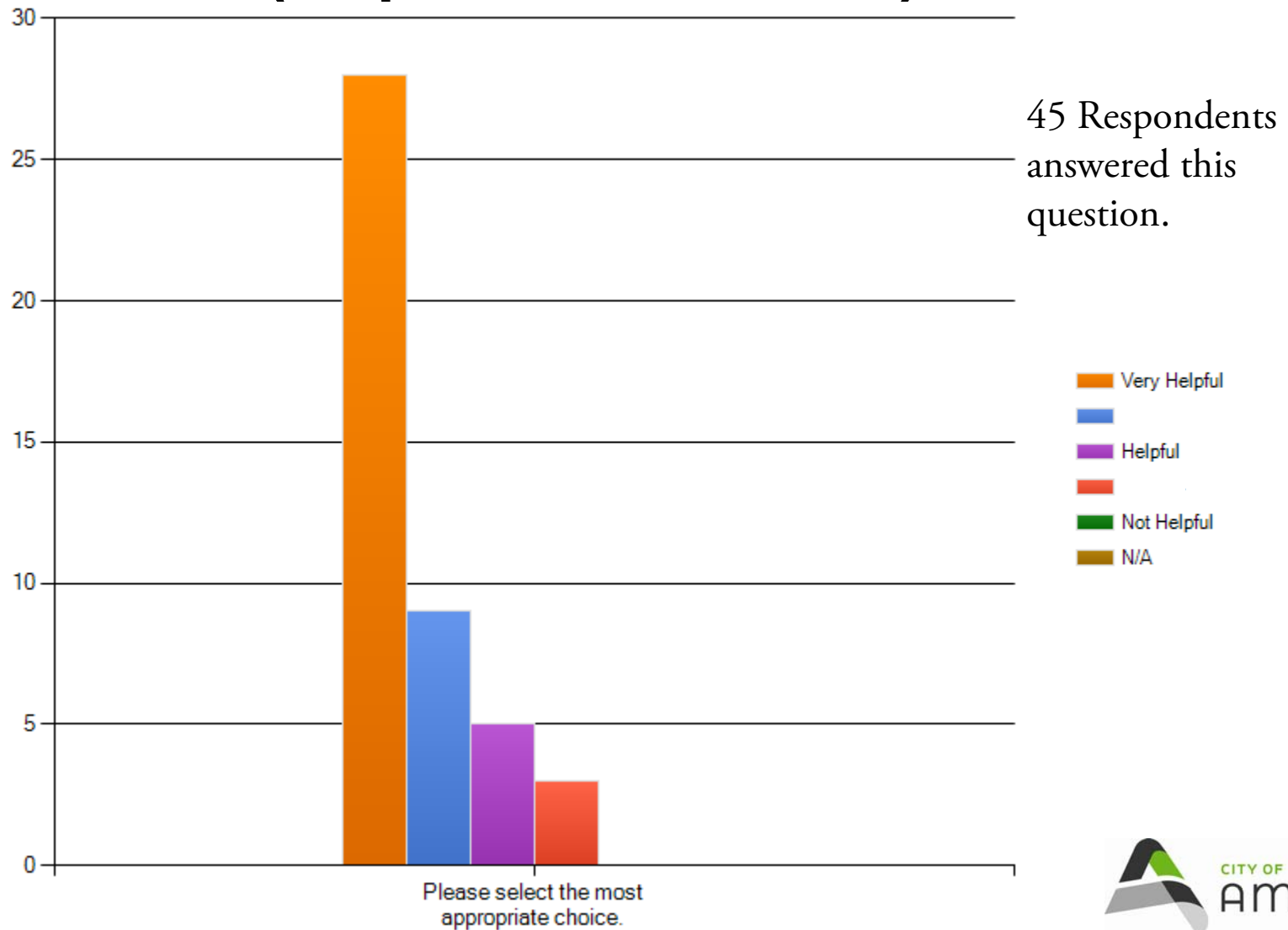
11 Respondents
answered this
question.

100.0 %

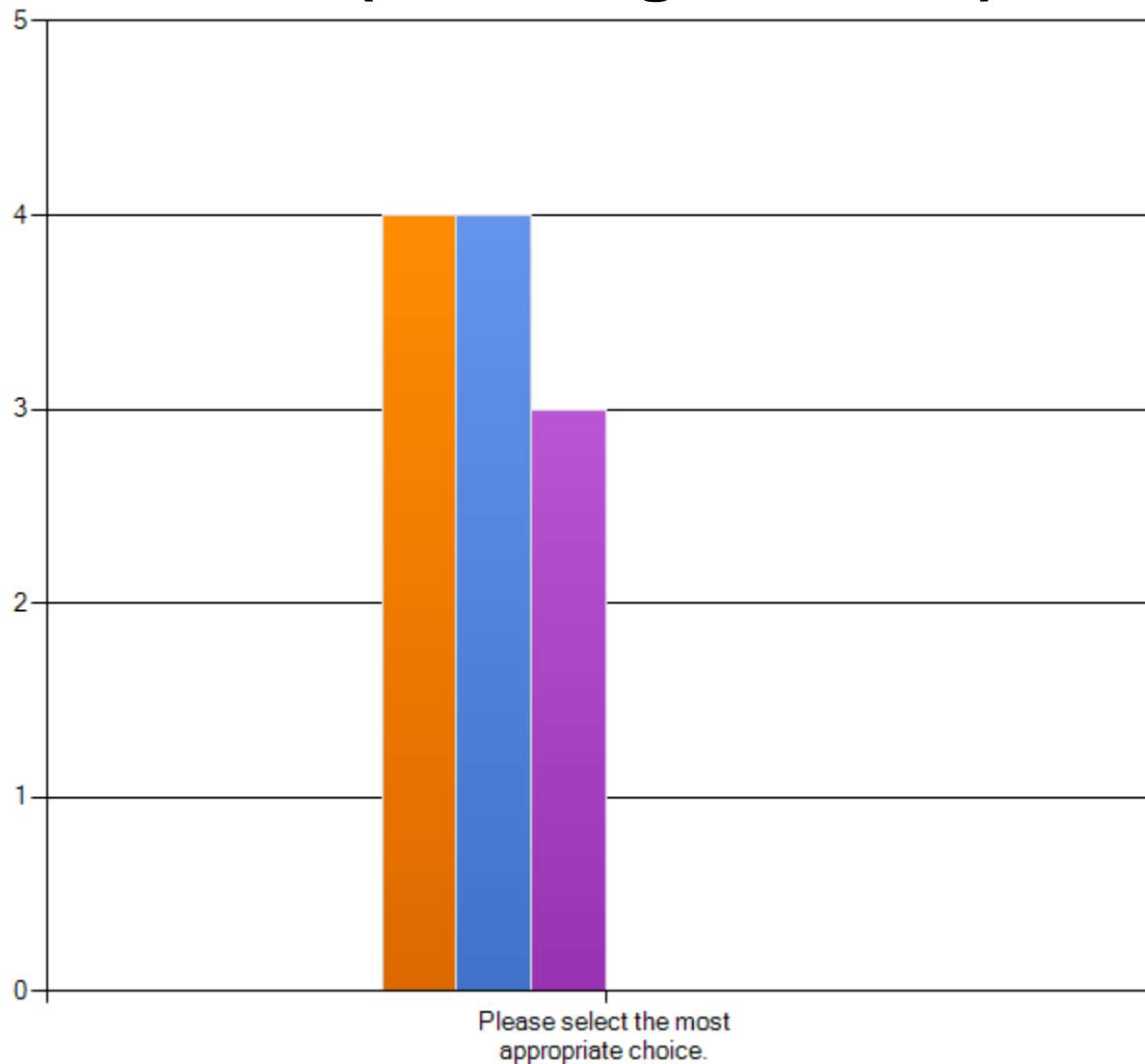


Yes
No

How would you describe the helpfulness of our front counter staff? (Inspections Division)



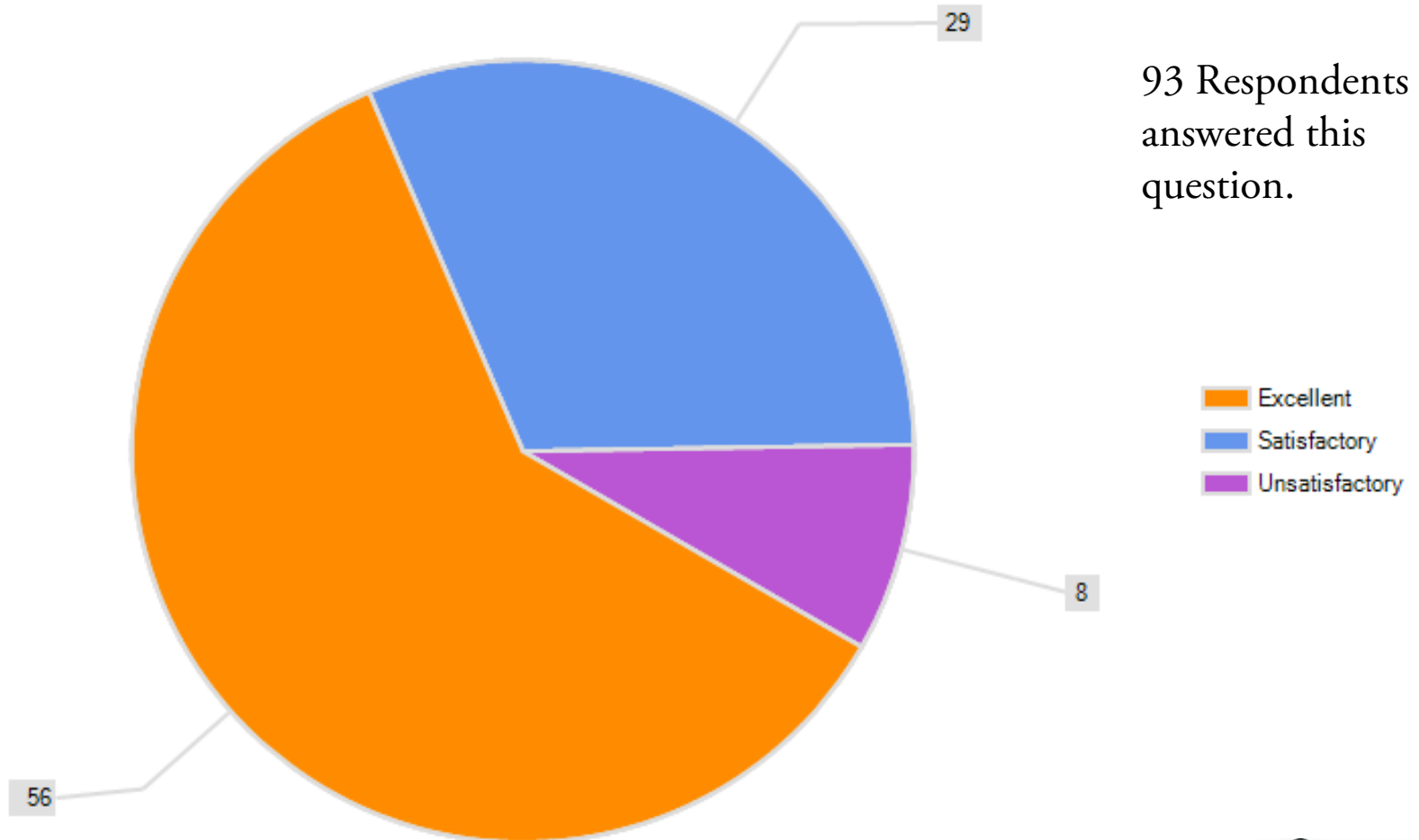
How would you describe the helpfulness of the City staff's front counter staff? (Planning Division)



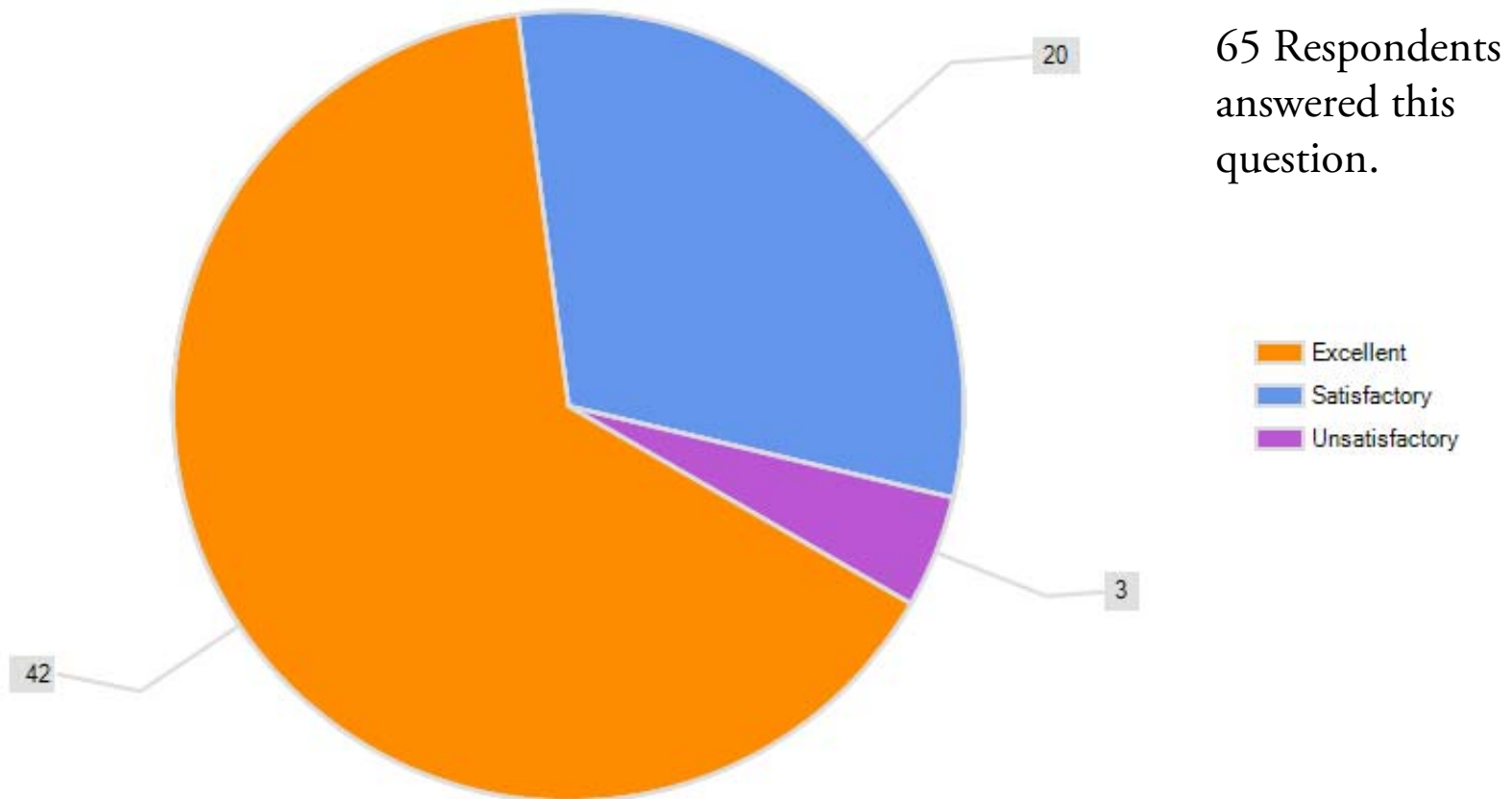
11 Respondents answered this question.

Very Helpful
Helpful
Not Helpful
N/A

-2011- Overall, how would you describe your experience with the Inspection Division?



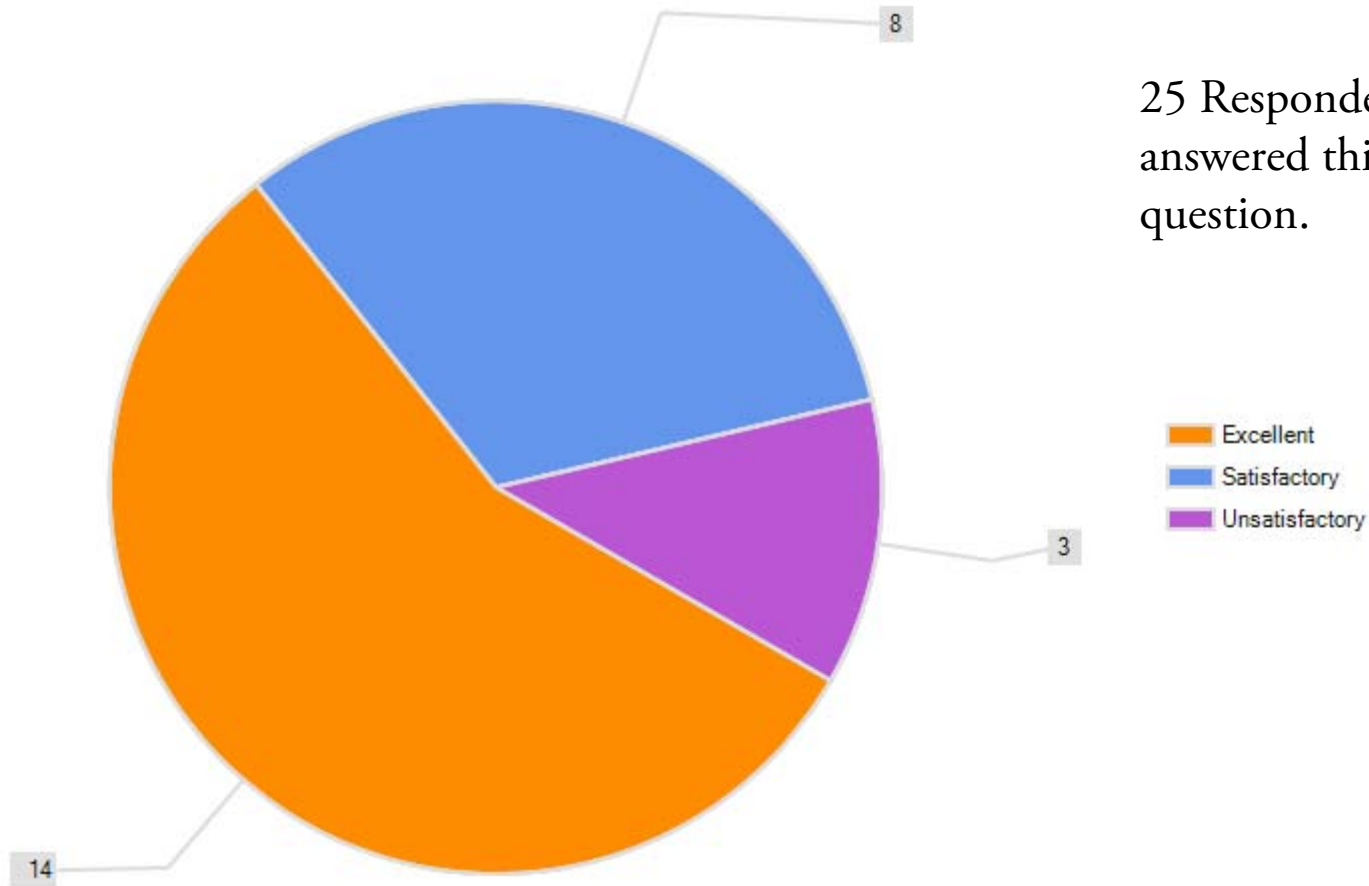
-2012- Overall, how would you describe your experience with the Inspection Division?



-2011-

Overall, were you satisfied with your experience with the Planning Division?

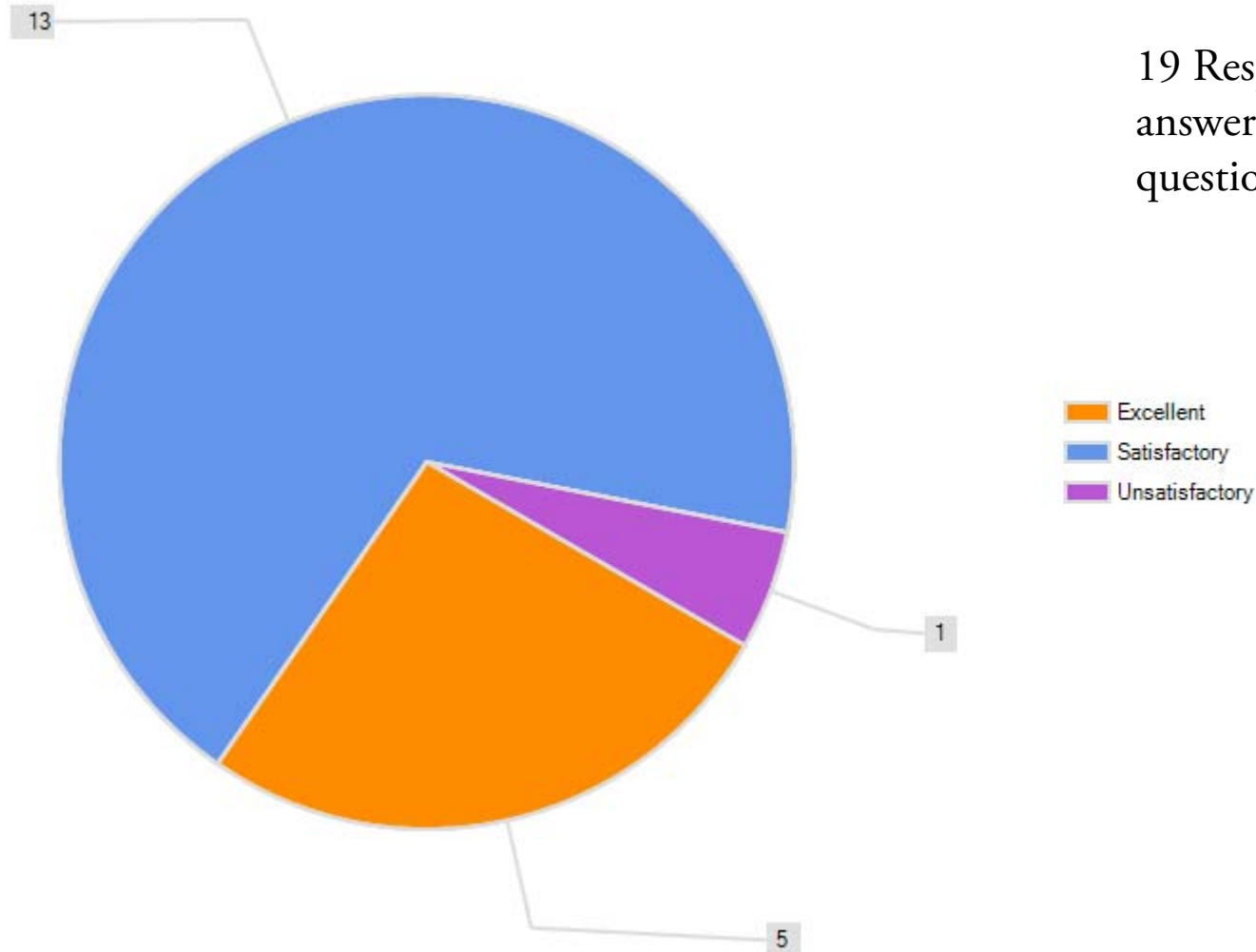
25 Respondents answered this question.



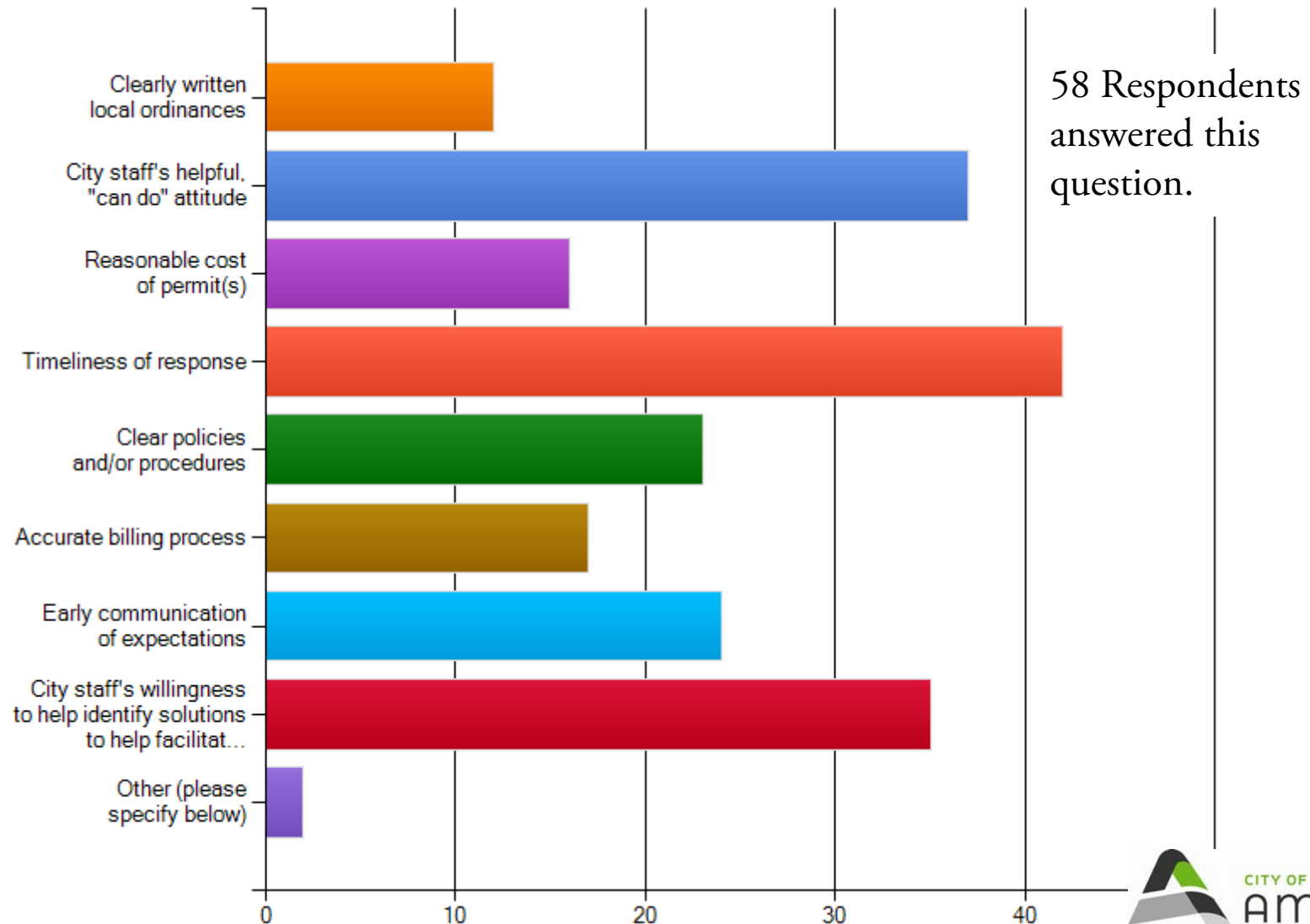
-2012-

Overall, were you satisfied with your experience with the Planning Division?

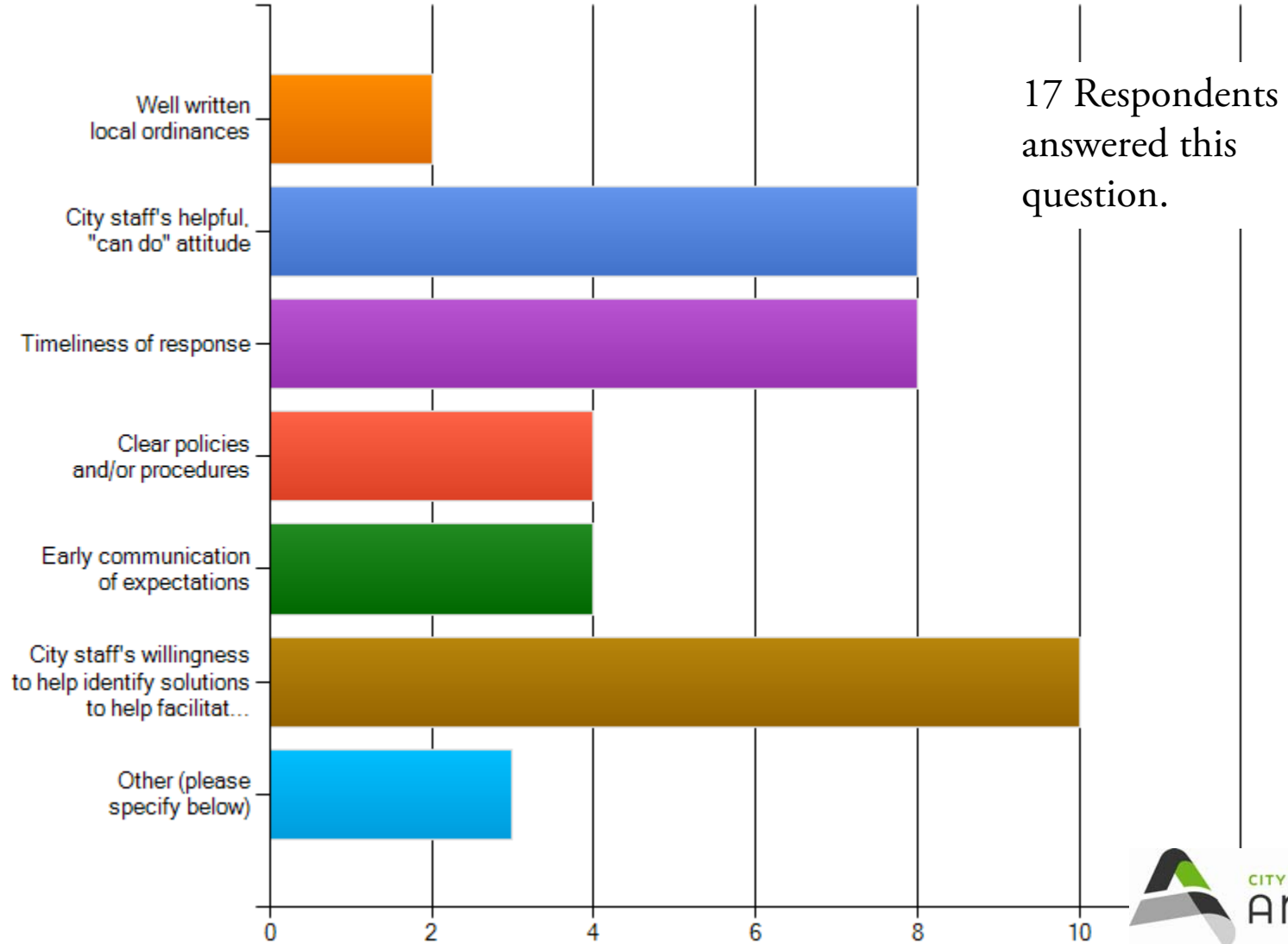
19 Respondents
answered this
question.



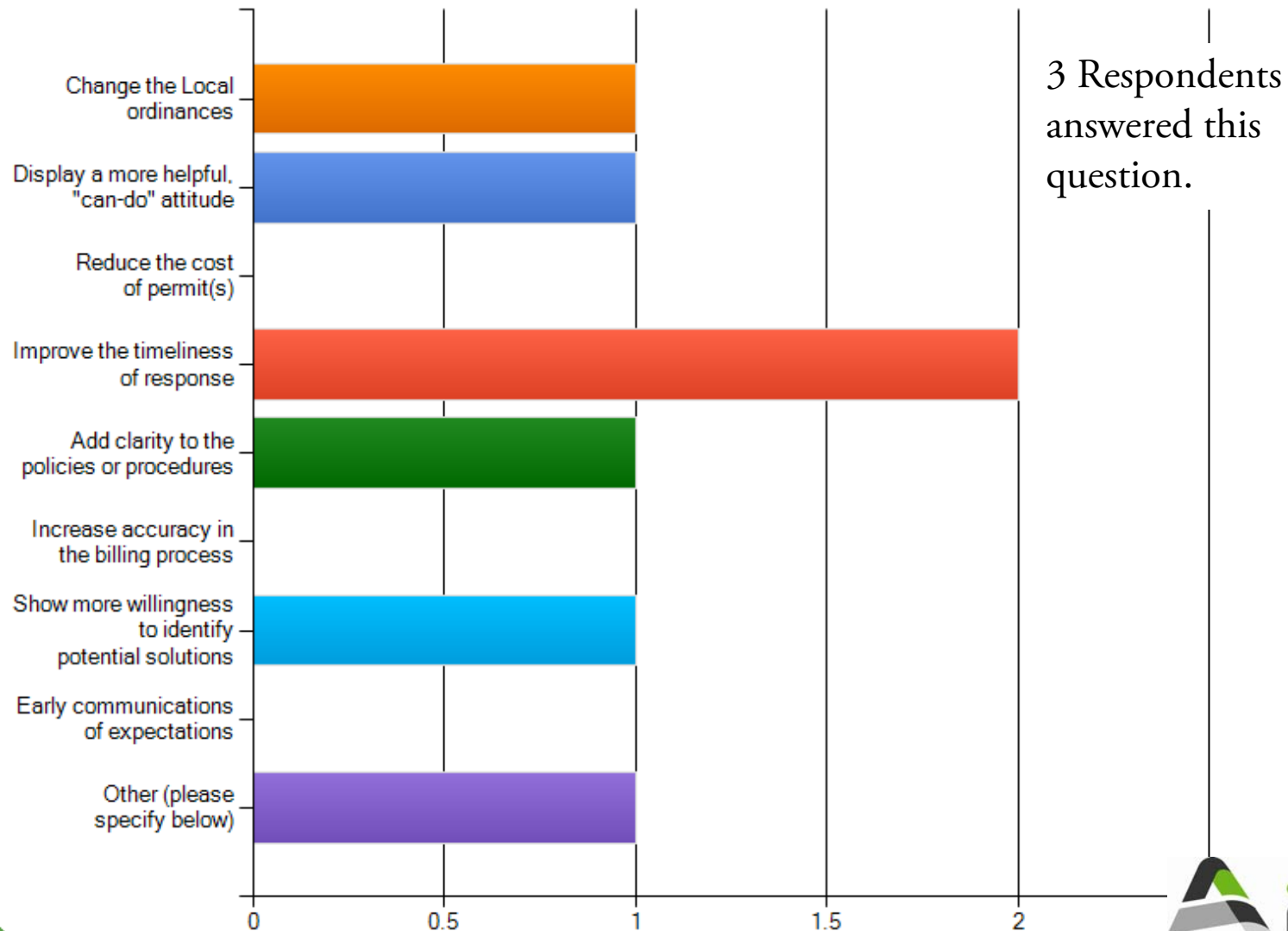
Which of the following contributed to your satisfaction level with the City of Ames' Inspection Division? (please select all that apply)



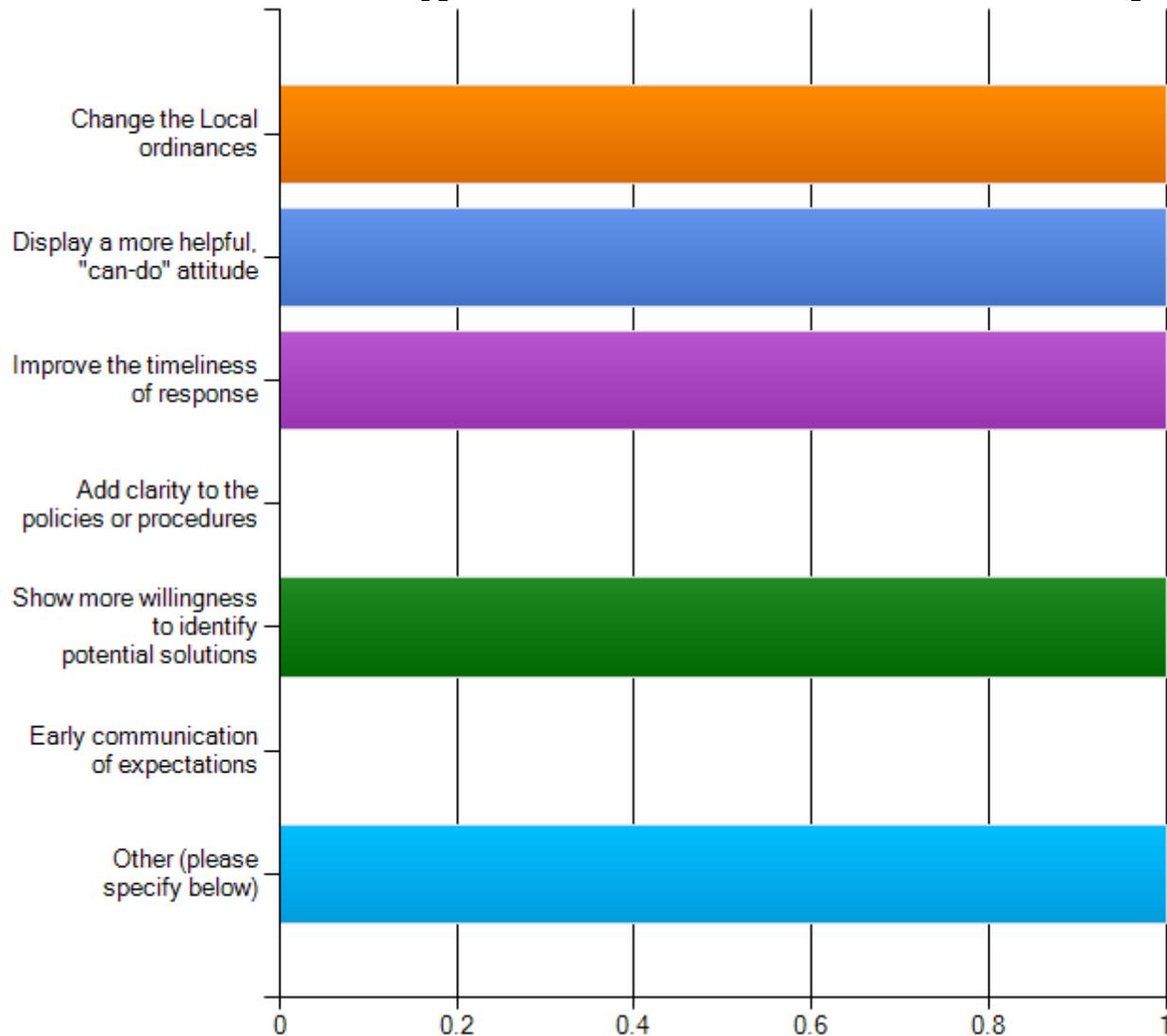
Which of the following contributed to your satisfaction level with our Planning Division? (please select all that apply)



Which of the following could help improve your satisfaction level with our Inspection Division? (please select all that apply)

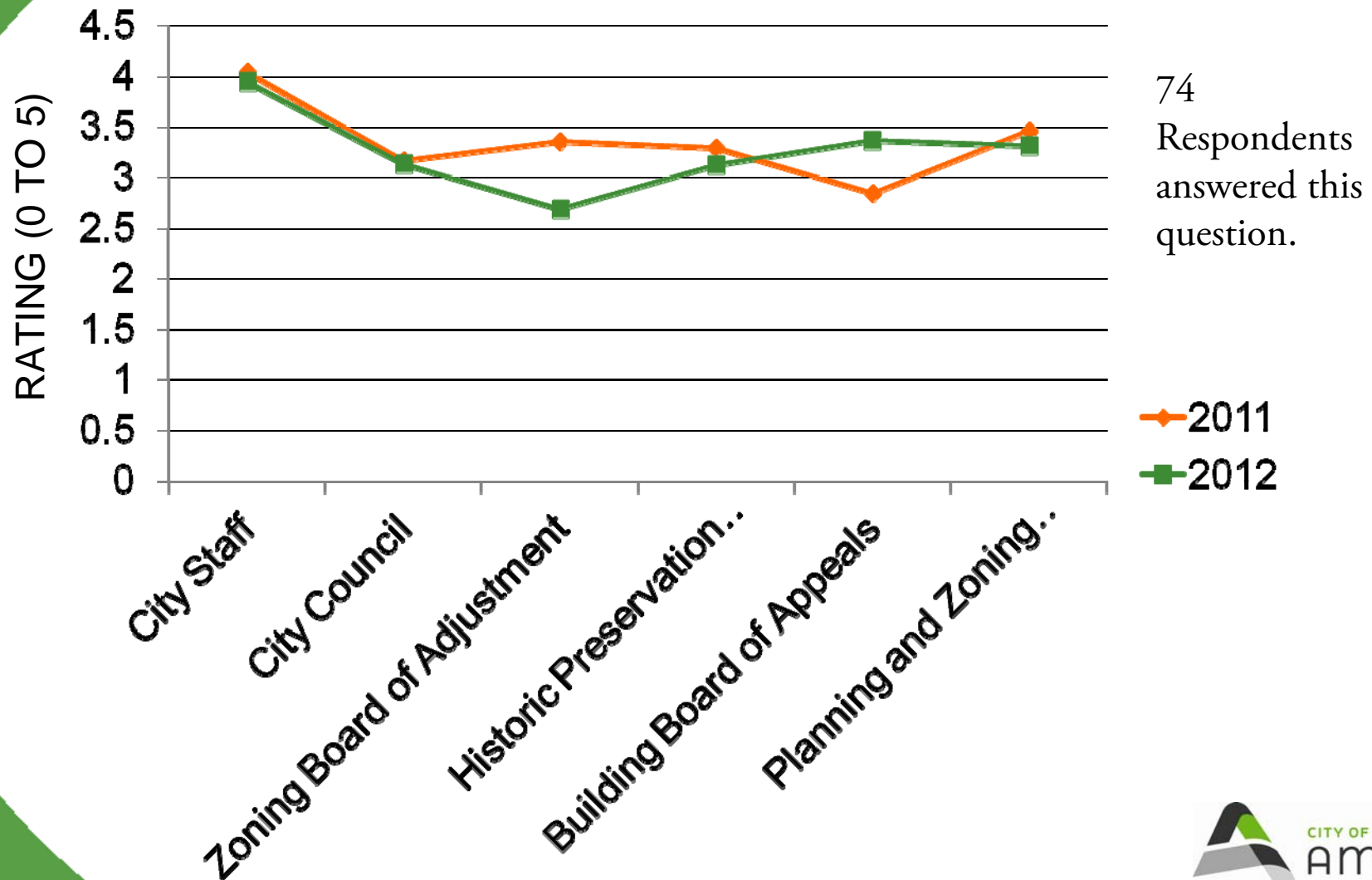


Which of the following could help improve your satisfaction level with the City's Planning Division? (please select all that apply)



1 Respondent answered this question.

A Council goal is for the City to display a "can-do" attitude to customers, promoting Ames as a welcoming place to do business.
In your opinion, how well did we accomplish this?



Continuous Improvement Themes

Improved technology to enable online permit application submittal, payment and inspection scheduling.

Review and update online applications and information to make it easy to understand.

Continue to work toward timeliness of inspections, responses to inquiries, and approval decisions, including a proactive approach to solving development dilemmas.

Clearly communicate the Planning process and the anticipated timeframe.

Display a “Can Do” attitude by helping to identify solutions that facilitate a project’s approval.

Improve the internal communication and cooperation within and between City Departments when reviewing projects to help streamline the process.



Questions?

NEED FOR NEW SOFTWARE IN INSPECTIONS DIVISION

From permitting and licensing to inspections and work orders, a new system is needed to help provide essential tools to increase productivity and better manage administrative operations. There is a need to find an easy to use content management system to conduct daily inspections, permitting, various reports, and integrate with Finance billing functions. The software would be common to the building, rental, plumbing, and mechanical inspections.

Currently, the Inspections Division does not have field access to information; but this new system would create fully mobile inspectors, with the ability to access information in the field and on job sites, to e-mail violations notices/letters/certificates of occupancy/etc. immediately to the responsible party, and to be notified remotely of newly scheduled inspections. Inspectors would have access to local ordinances and national codes on their field devices, providing more complete and accurate information to the customer on the job site.

New inspections/permitting hardware and software would facilitate the Inspection Division's efforts to better manage its operations. Inspection clerks, inspectors, and supervisors would be afforded better ease of use with report writing and customized query building. Electronic plan review would be possible, as well as the option to better track project progress across departmental jurisdictions (e.g., Inspections, Public Works, Planning, etc.).

Besides administrative efficiency, the customers would be better served if they had Internet access to their permits and other related data. This system provides a full range of e-government solutions, including remote permit requests submissions, project tracking, and e-commerce cashiering ability.