



CITY OF  
Ames™

*Caring People ♦ Quality Programs ♦ Exceptional Service*

# MEMO

25

**To:** Honorable Mayor Ann Campbell and City Council  
**From:** Tiffany Coleman, Business Development Coordinator  
**Date:** February 27, 2015  
**Subject:** 2014 Development Process Survey

Included in the Council packet are the results of the 2014 Development Process Survey. The survey has been conducted for four consecutive years. The purpose is to give customers of the Planning Department and Inspection Divisions the opportunity to provide feedback to the City Council on the services received.

Enclosed for your review are both the results of the survey and a copy of the presentation slides I will use during my report at the City Council meeting.



# Development Process Survey

2014 Results



# Introduction

- Fourth time survey has been conducted
- Responses are very positive
- Snapshot of results
- Responses are anonymous
- Overview of process

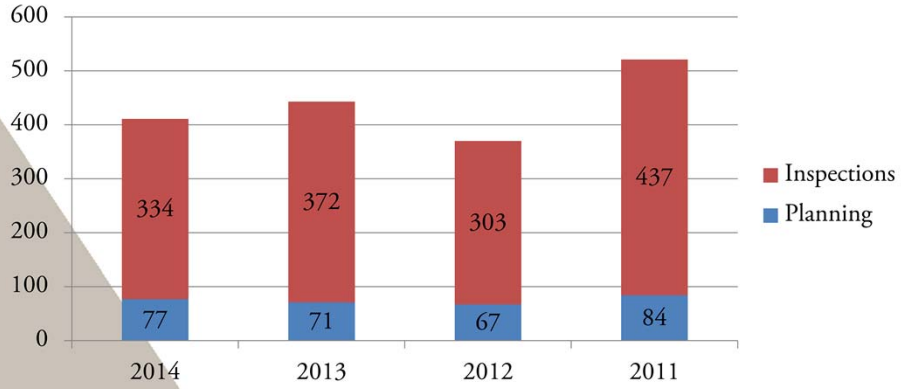


All results of survey are contained in the Survey Monkey report.

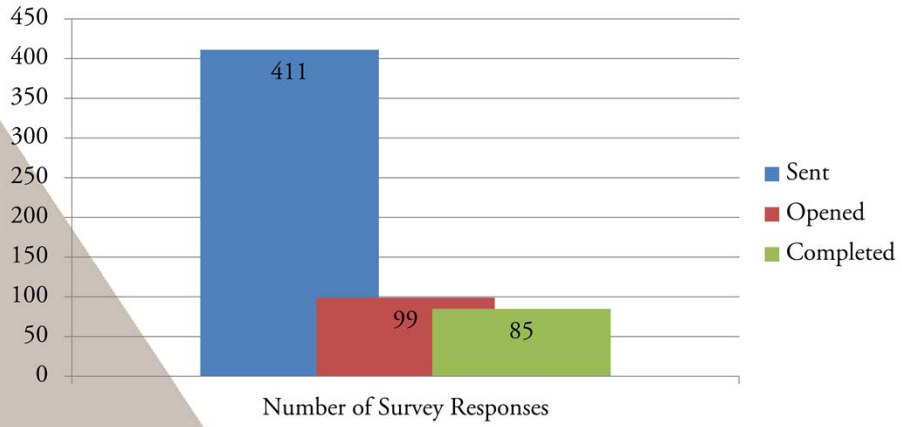
# Overview



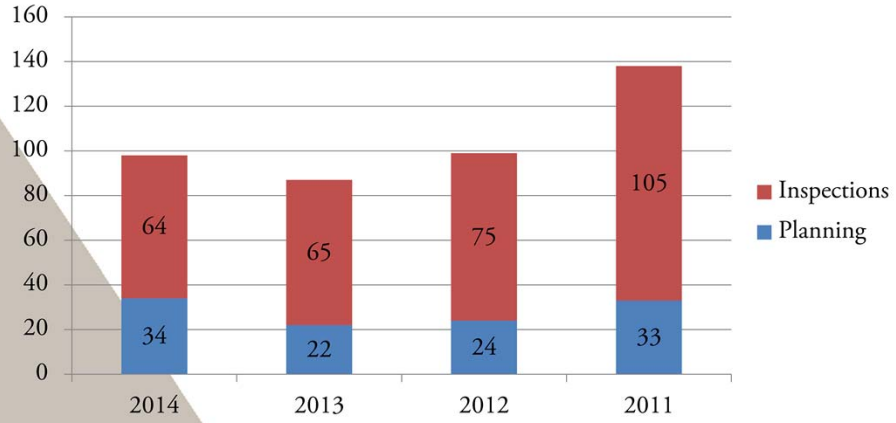
# Surveys Sent Per Year



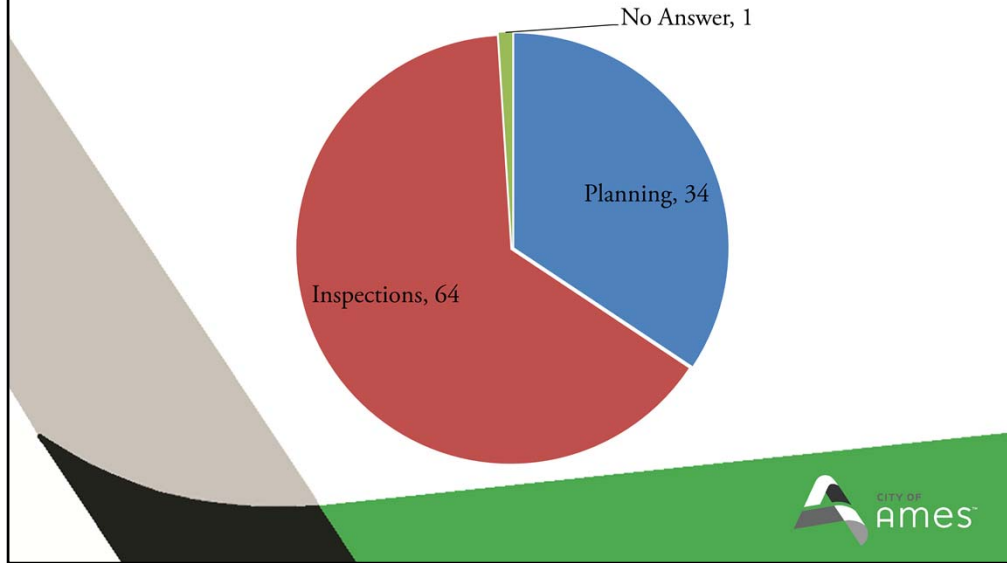
# Response Summary



# Survey Responses Per Year

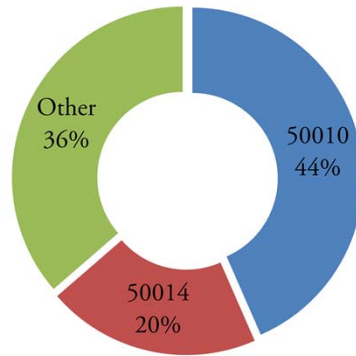


# Primary Department Interaction





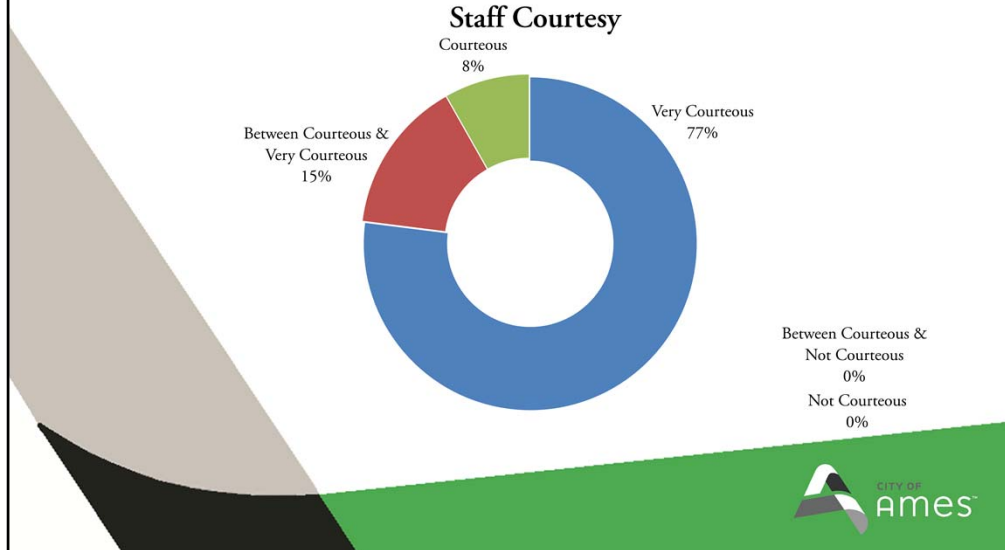
# Business Location by Zip Code



# Inspection Division



# Inspection Service Quality



2013

75% Very Courteous  
18% Above Average  
7% Courteous

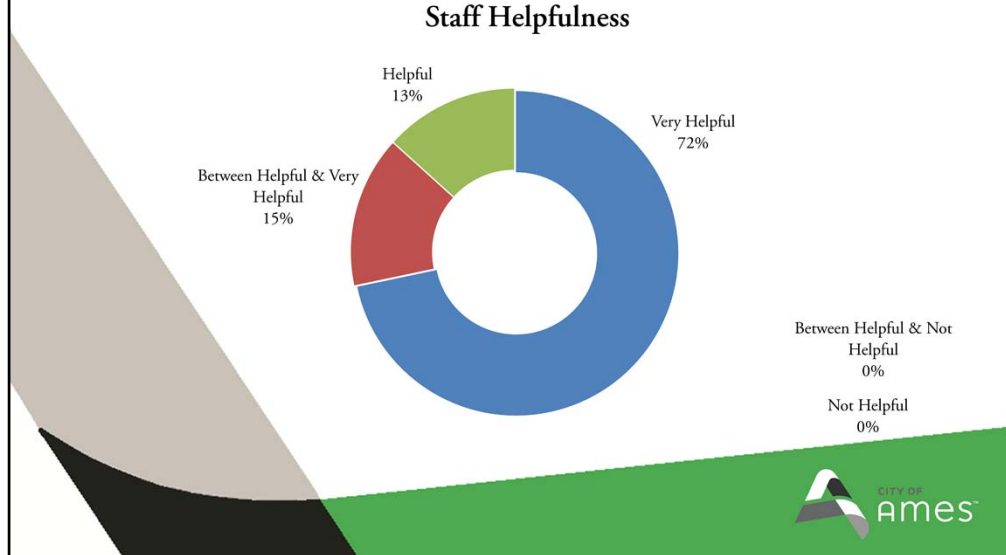
2012

74% Very Courteous  
9% Above Average  
12% Courteous  
5% Below Average

2011

58% Very Courteous  
20% Above Average  
19% Courteous  
3% Below Average

# Inspection Service Quality



## 2013

73% Very Helpful  
16% Above Average  
9% Helpful  
0% Below Average  
2% Not Helpful

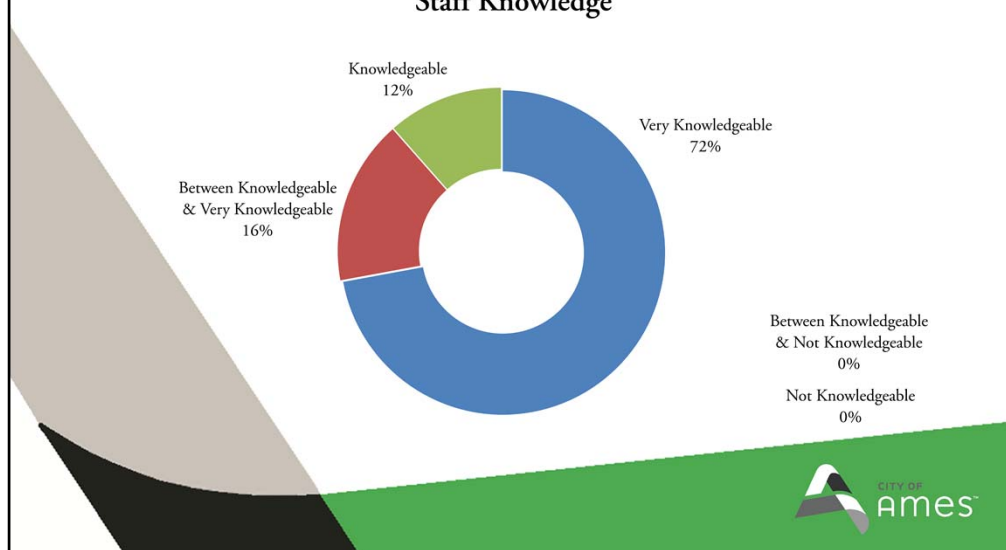
## 2012

67% Very Helpful  
17% Above Average  
13% Helpful  
3% Below Average

## 2011

57% Very Helpful  
18% Above Average  
18% Helpful  
3% Below Average  
4% Not Helpful

# Inspection Service Quality



2013

68% Very Knowledgeable

14% Above Average

16% Knowledgeable

0% Below Average

2% Not Knowledgeable

2012

67% Very Knowledgeable

17% Above Average

14% Knowledgeable

2% Below Average

2011

54% Very Knowledgeable

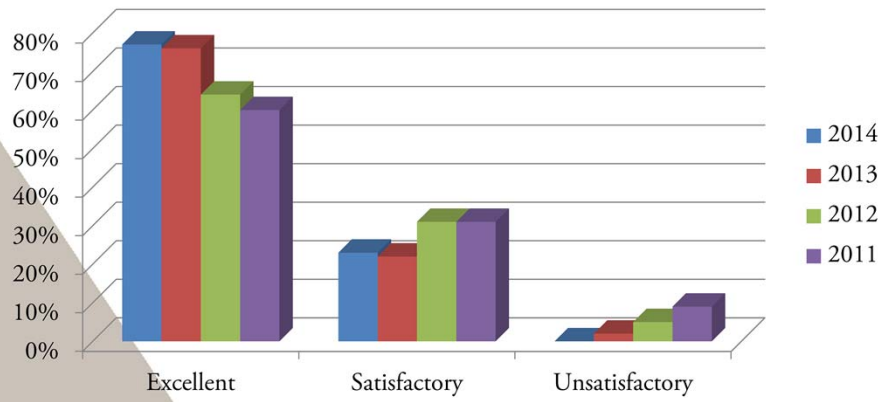
18% Above Average

17% Knowledgeable

9% Below Average

2% Not Knowledgeable

# Inspection Division Overall Rating



## Inspection Division Comments

- Professional
- My superintendents say everyone is great. That can't be said for the other .... communities I'm in
- Very helpful from permit to C of O
- Answered questions and responded in a very timely manner.
- Ames' inspection department is second to none. From the front counter to the inspectors, we should be proud of this professional group of people.

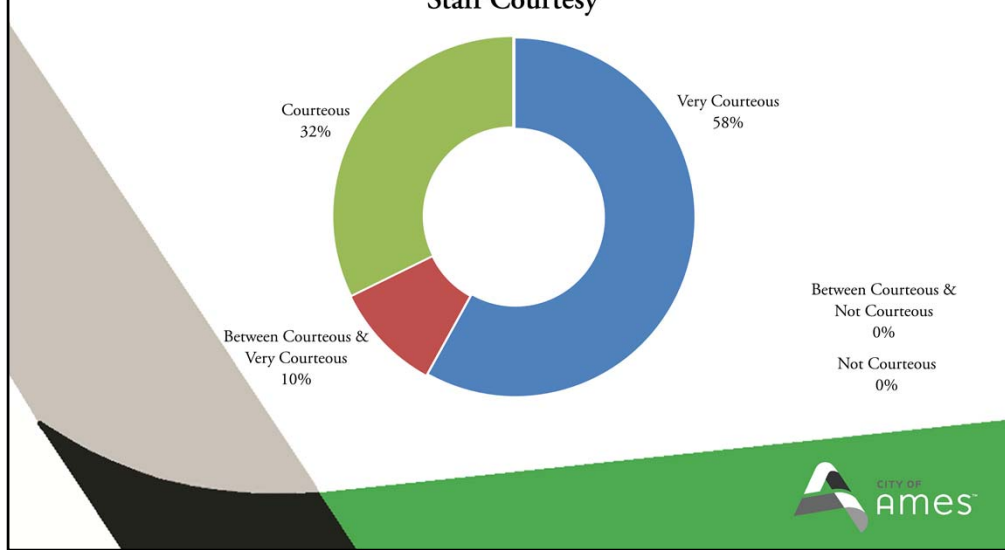


# Planning Division





# Planning Service Quality



2013

85% Very Courteous  
10% Above Average  
5% Courteous  
0% Below Average

2012

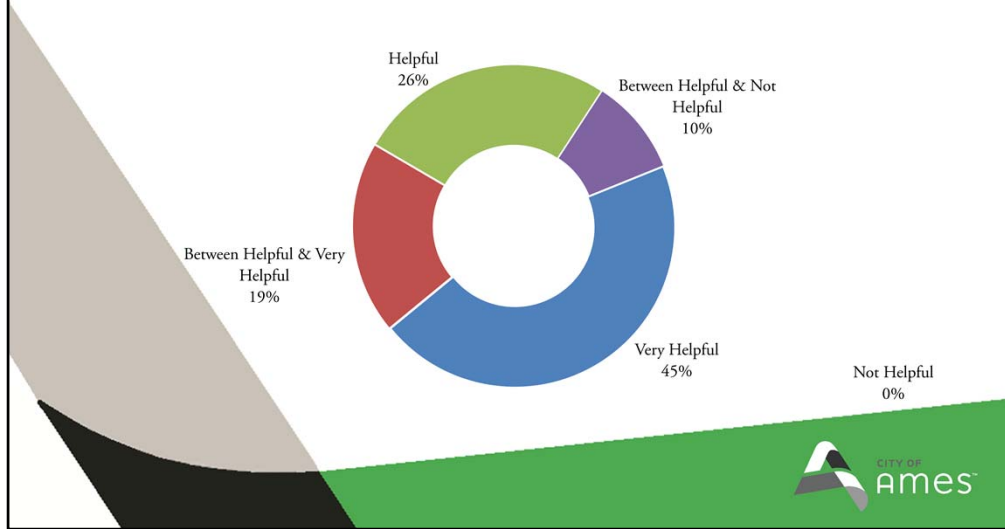
57% Very Courteous  
19% Above Average  
24% Courteous  
0% Below Average

2011

74% Very Courteous  
18% Above Average  
4% Courteous  
4% Below Average

# Planning Service Quality

## Staff Helpfulness



### 2013

60% Very Helpful  
25% Above Average  
15% Helpful  
0% Below Average

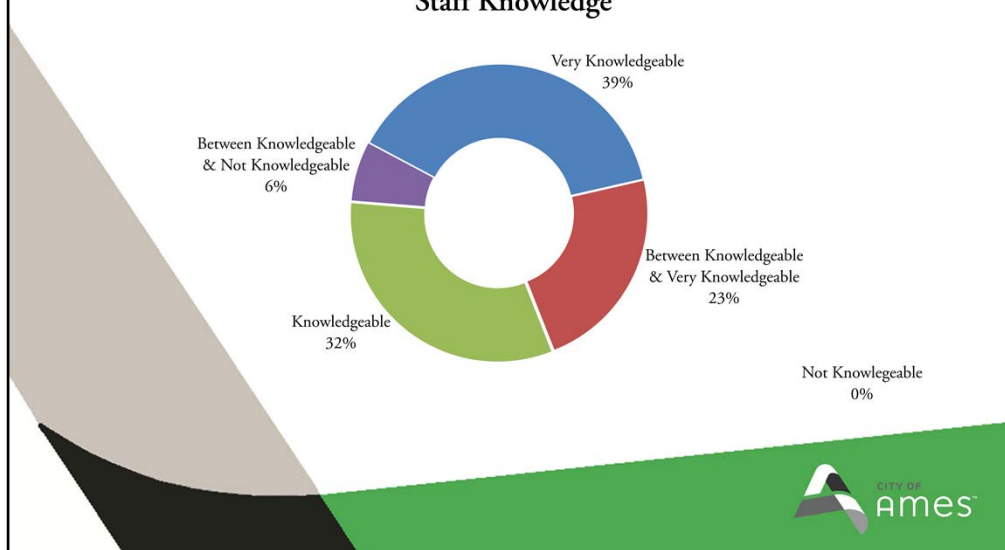
### 2012

29% Very Helpful  
38% Above Average  
19% Helpful  
14% Below Average

### 2011

63% Very Helpful  
22% Above Average  
11% Helpful  
0% Below Average  
4% Not Helpful

# Planning Service Quality



2013

55% Very Knowledgeable  
20% Above Average  
20% Knowledgeable  
5% Below Average

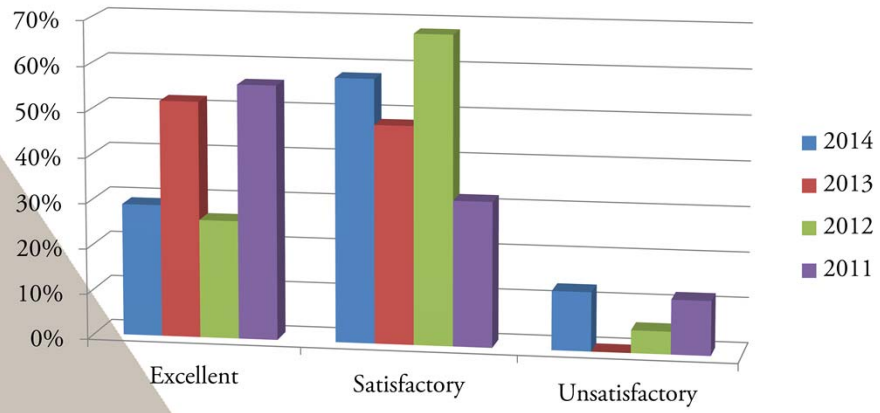
2012

29% Very Knowledgeable  
29% Above Average  
33% Knowledgeable  
9% Below Average

2011

59% Very Knowledgeable  
19% Above Average  
15% Knowledgeable  
0% Below Average  
7% Not Knowledgeable

# Planning Division Overall Rating



## Planning Division Customer Service Comments

- Always very courteous via email, on the phone, and in person.
- They are very professional.
- Staff has been very accommodating and generous with their time.
- All have helped find solutions to challenges that arise during the planning of a project.
- The City of Ames has probably one of the most comprehensive code and procedures we have ever come across. It is great to see things accomplished with such transparency.
- The City is doing a great job with the current process and staff in encouraging more developments in the City.



## Planning Division Improvement Comments

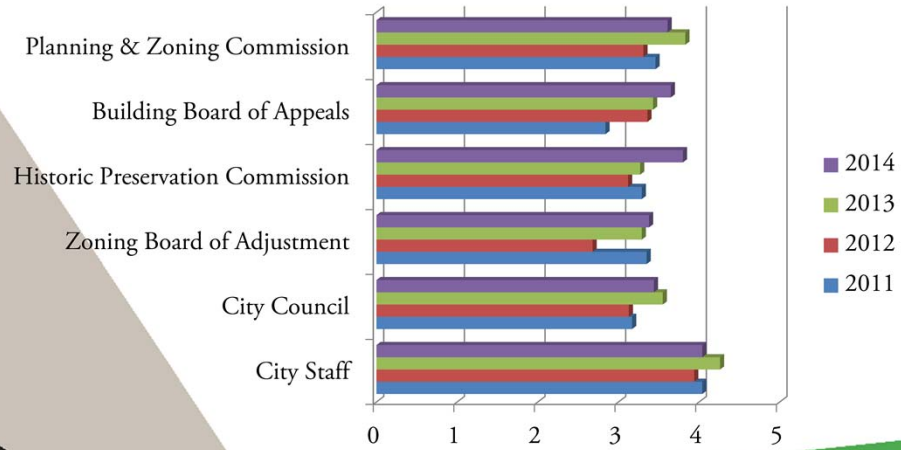
- Reduce the number of pages in your applications and simplify the questions within it.
- More flexibility related to alternatives/variances. Process became very slow after initial approval, when revisions still needed to be processed.
- Departments need to work together more cohesively
- Basic disregard for the project and very long wait times. Somewhat unreasonable expectations of landowners.
- Don't change the rules in the middle of the game. Don't take the most aggressive/anti approach where the code is ambiguous. Stand up to the neighborhood NO vote.



# Overall Rating of City



How well did we accomplish a “can-do” attitude and promote Ames as a welcoming place to do business?  
(Rating Scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being a high or good rating.)





## Closing

- Similar number of surveys were completed
- Many positive written comments
- Overall very positive response with a limited number of below average ratings



Thank You  
Questions



# 2014 City of Ames - Development Process Survey





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











		Response Percent	Response Count
50010		43.4%	43
50014		20.2%	20
Other (please specify)		36.4%	36
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>99</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>0</b>

Other Zip Codes		
46226	50130	50248
50009	50131	50265
50021	50156	50265
50021	50158	50309
50023	50201	50313
50111	50201	50317
50111	50201	50321
50111	50208	50322
50111	50235	50322
50125	50248	50327
50125	50248	50669
50129	50248	55311

**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)?**

		<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Planning (e.g., site plan review, subdivisions, variances, special use permits, historic preservation, etc.)		34.7%	34
<b>Inspections (includes: building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical and construction plans review)</b>		65.3%	64
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>98</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>1</b>

**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
Seana Perkins (Building Official)		9.8%	6
<b>Bruce Kinkaid (Plumbing)</b>		<b>37.7%</b>	<b>23</b>
Craig Hageman (Building)		34.4%	21
Adam Ostert (Building)		11.5%	7
Mike Makelbust (Plumbing)		29.5%	18
Nick Patterson (Electrical)		32.8%	20
Scott Ripperger (Plans)		19.7%	12
Tom Henriksen (Fire)		13.1%	8
Unknown		6.6%	4
Other (please type name below)		13.1%	8
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>61</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>38</b>

Other	
SARA VAN MEETEREN	Holly McDonald
Sara Van Meeteren	engineering
Sara Van Meeteren	Don't know inspectors names.
Sara	I'm the owner so I'm not sure who my guys deal with I do know they never have issues with any of them

#### 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	Rating Count
Please select the most appropriate choice.	<b>77.0% (47)</b>	14.8% (9)	8.2% (5)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	4.69	61

Use this space to explain your choice 10

<b>answered question</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>skipped question</b>	<b>38</b>

Comments
Professional
My superintendents say everyone is great. That can't be said for the other 15 communities I'm in
[Staff member] and [staff member] always answered questions for me over the years
[Staff member] is always courteous and polite.always goes the extra mile to help us accomplish our work.
ALWAYS VERY HELPFUL AND COURTEOUS
Very helpful from permit to C of O
I respect these inspectors for their knowledge of the code and they respect me.
always appropriate language and respectful.
[Staff member] Knows construction and is A+ to work with
Answered questions and responded in a very timely manner.

## 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	Rating Count		
Please select the most appropriate choice.	71.7% (43)	15.0% (9)	13.3% (8)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	4.58	60
Use this space to explain your choice							7
<b>answered question</b>							<b>60</b>
<b>skipped question</b>							<b>39</b>

Comments
Again. I see it as if they find something or want something changed is for the better on the home and future owners
[Staff member] always knowledgeable about the code and gives prior instruction to let us accomplish our jobs so rework is not necessary.
Inspectors were very accommodating and on time
I have always received prompt help in answering a question or setting up an inspection.
They tell me what they want.
Directed me to the right person in the Planning dept.
Provided fast answers to code questions on a fast track project



## 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	Rating Count		
Please select the most appropriate choice.	72.1% (44)	16.4% (10)	11.5% (7)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	4.61	61
						Use this space to explain your choice	7
						<b>answered question</b>	<b>61</b>
						<b>skipped question</b>	<b>38</b>


Comments
My supers are very experienced so I only assume they are knowledgeable with other other sides we see
[Staff member] stands for knowledge and consistency.
[Staff member] is probably the most knowledgeable [ ] inspector in central Iowa
I do not like to be called a customer when I have no other choice but am regulated to work with inspections. Regulations require us to work with inspections. I do like the current staff.
Both inspectors were in the trade and had lots of professional knowledge, not just book skills.
If there re questions we look in to it.
Knew answers to my code questions



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

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		53.3%	32
No		46.7%	28
<b>answered question</b>			<b>60</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>39</b>

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

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		100.0%	31
No		0.0%	0

Use this space to explain your choice 4

<b>answered question</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>skipped question</b>	<b>68</b>

Comments
Communication by phone only. Always very pleasant.
VERY CHEERFUL AND HELPFUL
They are always pleasant and helpful.
The greet me when I arrive or call and get to the reason for the call or visit

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

	Very Helpful	Helpful	Not Helpful	N/A	Rating Average	Rating Count		
Please select the most appropriate choice.	<b>78.1% (25)</b>	9.4% (3)	9.4% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	3.1% (1)	4.71	32
	Use this space to explain your choice						5	
	<b>answered question</b>						<b>32</b>	
	<b>skipped question</b>						<b>67</b>	

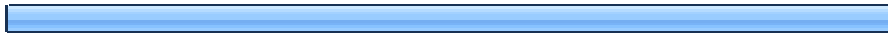

Comments
The [ ] staff very helpful [ ] not so much
very accomodating
[Staff members] directed me in the right direction of who to talk to and giving me the right forms to fill out. The entire application process was very smooth.
They try to answer your question or get you an answer on one trip, not just put you off.
They answer questions and have the printed for and instruction available.

**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		92.5%	49
Approved by Building Board of Appeals		5.7%	3
Approved by City Council		5.7%	3
Denied by City staff		0.0%	0
Denied by Building Board of Appeals		0.0%	0
Denied by City Council		0.0%	0
Other (please specify below)		1.9%	1
<b>answered question</b>			<b>53</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>46</b>

<b>Comment</b>
Projects have been both approved and denied.

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

		Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent		77.2%	44
Satisfactory		22.8%	13
Unsatisfactory		0.0%	0
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>57</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>42</b>

**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		14.5%	8
<b>City staff's helpful attitude</b>		<b>76.4%</b>	<b>42</b>
Reasonable cost of permit(s)		38.2%	21
Timeliness of response		70.9%	39
Clear policies and/or procedures		27.3%	15
Accurate billing process		27.3%	15
Early communication of expectations		25.5%	14
City staff's willingness to help identify solutions to help facilitate your project		47.3%	26
Other (please specify below)		1.8%	1
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>55</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>44</b>

**Comment**

Ames' inspection department is second to none. From the front counter to the inspectors, we should be proud of this professional group of people.

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

	Response Count
	10
answered question	10
skipped question	89

Comments
Would encourage filling [the position] (previously held by [staff member]). The City of Ames needs to have eight hours of inspections per day instead of the current 4 hours per day.
There is a glitch in the coordination between public works and inspections
I have had trouble in billing. They don't have recorded that I paid one invoice, but I have shown them that I did. Still received a bill again the next month. And no communication with me to let me know what's going on.
None that I can think of. I deal with a lot of city officials in 26 states. Some large and some small, I would have to say Ames staff was easier to work with than most.
When [staff member] retired [staff member] took over [staff member's] inspections and continued [ ] current inspection load. With all the work going on in Ames now, this makes no sense. Making [staff member] take on another full load is poor management.
there is a lot of time wasted because of the two tier inspection on water mains and services between plumbing and engineering, there is also a difference in requirements. we and others had a terrible time getting water main bacteria samples to pass. we do not have this problem in other communities
KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK WITH THE PUBLIC, IT MEANS ALOT TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO HAVE GOOD PEOPLE IN OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT
Permit costs are a hardship for homeowners.
When there is a change in policy or ordinance an email could be sent.
Being a family business in Ames for over [ ] years , we have always had a high respect for the Inspection Division.

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






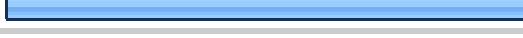
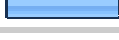
	Response Percent	Response Count
Change the local ordinances	0.0%	0
Display a more helpful attitude	0.0%	0
Reduce the cost of permit(s)	0.0%	0
Improve the timeliness of response	0.0%	0
Add clarity to the policies or procedures	0.0%	0
Increase accuracy in the billing process	0.0%	0
Show more willingness to identify potential solutions	0.0%	0
Early communications of expectations	0.0%	0
Other (please specify below)	0.0%	0
	<b>answered question</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>skipped question</b>	<b>99</b>



## 15. How can we improve your next overall experience?

	Response Count
	0
answered question	0
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		54.8%	17
Jeff Benson		35.5%	11
Charlie Kuester		48.4%	15
Kelly Diekmann		38.7%	12
Lorrie Banks		6.5%	2
Karen Marren		45.2%	14
Unknown		9.7%	3
Other (please type name below)		0.0%	0
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>31</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>68</b>

**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	Rating Count
Please check your response by number.	<b>58.1% (18)</b>	9.7% (3)	32.3% (10)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	4.26	31

Use this space to explain your choice

3

**answered question**

**31**

**skipped question**

**68**

**Comments**

Always very courteous via email, on the phone, and in person.

Both [staff member] and [staff member] were very helpful.

They are very professional.

**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	Rating Count		
Please check the appropriate rating.	45.2% (14)	19.4% (6)	25.8% (8)	9.7% (3)	0.0% (0)	4.00	31

Use this space to explain your choice

4

**answered question**

**31**

**skipped question**

**68**

**Comments**

I see a real attitude of wanting to see projects advance. This is very different from the past.

Staff has been very accomodating and generous with their time. [Staff member] has been very forthcoming with information needed for us to plan the project and guided us well through the approval process.

All have helped find solutions to challenges that arise during the planning of a project.

They are somewhat helpful. They seem somewhat less afraid to offer real solutions to issues now that there is a new director.

**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	Rating Count
Please select the most appropriate choice.	<b>38.7% (12)</b>	22.6% (7)	32.3% (10)	6.5% (2)	0.0% (0)	3.94	31

Use this space to explain your choice 4


<b>answered question</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>skipped question</b>	<b>68</b>

<b>Comments</b>
I really think it helps that [staff member] came from a city where density and flexibility were likely high priorities.
Staff has been a great resource in ensuring that we covered all aspects and requirements for our project. [Staff member] was diligent in following up on questions [staff member] wasn't able to answer initially.
Some are more knowledgeable than others. They all try to find answers if they do not know them.
They seem to know the codes governing their work.

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

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		67.7%	21
No		32.3%	10
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>31</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>68</b>

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

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		100.0%	21
No		0.0%	0

Use this space to explain your choice 1

<b>answered question</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>skipped question</b>	<b>78</b>

### Comment

Very pleasant. Called me by name.



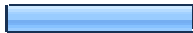



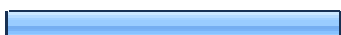


## 22. How would you describe the helpfulness of the City staff's front counter staff?

	Very Helpful	Helpful	Not Helpful	N/A	Rating Average	Rating Count
Please select the most appropriate choice.	61.9% (13)	23.8% (5)	14.3% (3)	0.0% (0)	4.48	21

Use this space to explain your choice 0

<b>answered question</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>skipped question</b>	<b>78</b>

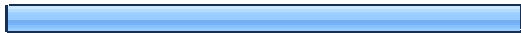


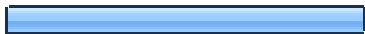


**23. What type of application did you submit? (please select all that apply)**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Certificate of Appropriateness (historic preservation)		9.7%	3
<b>Major Site Plan or Planned Residential Development (PRD) Plan</b>		<b>48.4%</b>	<b>15</b>
Special Use Permit		16.1%	5
Minor Site Plan		41.9%	13
Preliminary or Final Plat		32.3%	10
Flood Plain Development Permit		9.7%	3
Rezoning		29.0%	9
Land Use Policy Plan change		9.7%	3
Other (please specify below)		9.7%	3
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>31</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>68</b>




Comments
Demo Permit
boundary adjustment
Plat of Survey



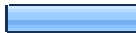






**24. Which of the following best describes the final outcome of your proposal(s)/project(s)?**

		<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
<b>Approved by City staff</b>		<b>44.8%</b>	<b>13</b>
Approved by the Zoning Board of Adjustment		6.9%	2
Approved by the Historic Preservation Commission		6.9%	2
Approved by City Council		31.0%	9
Denied by City staff		3.4%	1
Denied by the Zoning Board of Adjustment		0.0%	0
Denied by the Historic Preservation Commission		0.0%	0
Denied by City Council		6.9%	2
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>29</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>70</b>

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

		<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Excellent		29.0%	9
<b>Satisfactory</b>		<b>58.1%</b>	<b>18</b>
Unsatisfactory		12.9%	4
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>31</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>68</b>

**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		11.1%	3
City staff's helpful, "can do" attitude		44.4%	12
Timeliness of response		29.6%	8
Clear policies and/or procedures		18.5%	5
Early communication of expectations		29.6%	8
<b>City staff's willingness to help identify solutions to help facilitate your project</b>		<b>77.8%</b>	<b>21</b>
Other (please specify below)		11.1%	3
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>27</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>72</b>








Comments
I don't always expect a "yes" but I do expect a feeling of partnership to make things happen. If there are decisions that are grey, look at the big picture and what mark the developer will leave on the city for the next 100 years. I feel that in the past the staff was worried about ANY complaint that could somehow leave them vulnerable or liable. I do not see that with this group.
The City of Ames has probably one of the most comprehensive code and procedures we have ever come across. It is great to see things accomplished with such transparency.
Ames does not have a willingness to find solutions and does not apply policies evenly.

## 27. How can we improve your next overall experience?

	Response Count
	9
answered question	9
skipped question	90

Comments
Realize that in these lightning rod positions, "you are paid to deal with conflict". I definitely feel this attitude is considered now.
The City is doing a great job with the current process and staff in encouraging more developments in the City.
More flexibility related to alternatives/variances. Process became very slow after initial approval, when revisions still needed to be processed.
Departments need to work together more cohesively
Be more business "friendly"
Reduce the number of pages in your applications and simplify the questions within it.
Look at overall project scope before requiring standard submittals
Ours was a simple request but after a few weeks we still hadn't gotten the okie-dokie. When I called to check on it, I was told that they were super busy so they hadn't gotten ours out, but that it was all right to start. I don't really like having to call.
Reduce red tape and bureaucracy.

**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		50.0%	2
Display a more helpful, "can-do" attitude		50.0%	2
Improve the timeliness of response		50.0%	2
Add clarity to the policies or procedures		50.0%	2
<b>Show more willingness to identify potential solutions</b>		<b>75.0%</b>	<b>3</b>
Early communication of expectations		50.0%	2
<b>Other (please specify below)</b>		<b>75.0%</b>	<b>3</b>
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>4</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>95</b>

Comments
Basic disregard for the project and very long wait times. Somewhat unreasonable expectations of landowners.
Don't change the rules in the middle of the game. Don't take the most aggressive/anti approach where the code is ambiguous. Stand up to the neighborhood NO vote.
Getting anything done in Ames is 10 time harder than any other place.

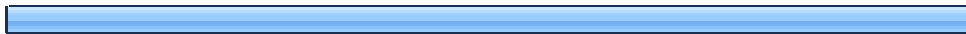


**29. What comments or suggestions could you share to help us improve your next overall experience?**

	<b>Response Count</b>
	1
<b>answered question</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>skipped question</b>	<b>98</b>

**Comments**



[Elected official] needs a lesson in manners when someone is investing substantial money into Ames and [elected official] feels the need to question their business, motives and intent.

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

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		83.9%	26
No		6.5%	2
N/A		9.7%	3
	Use this space to explain your choice		4
<b>answered question</b>			<b>31</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>68</b>

Comments
don't remember getting one
Yes, for the most part.
The applications are too lengthy and the questions are somewhat unnecessary and arduous.
Its way more complicated than it needs to be.

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

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		82.1%	23
No		17.9%	5
Use this space to explain your choice			6
<b>answered question</b>			<b>28</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>71</b>

Comments
I have asked to have certain requests be brought to council in a more aggressive time frame and have been accommodated.
see above answer
But subsequent revisions and approval of those revisions took long.
The schedule indicated is generally a lie. They will find a reason to delay the project if it is in the Staff's interest.
In progress. . . .
6 month expectation was set to get to an ultimate decision on whether an approval or denial from the city on the application. We are on month 12 now and still sense resistance from the city on producing a \$40 Million+ development to meet the housing needs of the city. We understand the cities obligation to control and protect the city from potentially detrimental development, however the city of Ames still needs a multitude of housing options due to the student growth AND 5,000+ jobs added in the past 5 years, which is truly exciting for the city. We've heard many developers focusing on other suburbs of Ames like Ankeny where the city has welcomed and encouraged investments and development in their community. There will always be challenges and negatives to development in the community but I feel there is an opportunity with the city to look at the big picture impact of the benefits that an investment in their community will bring and do so in a more expeditious manner.



**32. A goal for the City is 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	Rating Count
Planning and Zoning Commission	21.4% (15)	15.7% (11)	22.9% (16)	4.3% (3)	5.7% (4)	<b>30.0% (21)</b>	3.61	70
Building Board of Appeals	8.6% (5)	8.6% (5)	22.4% (13)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	<b>60.3% (35)</b>	3.65	58
Historic Preservation Commission	11.9% (7)	13.6% (8)	13.6% (8)	3.4% (2)	0.0% (0)	<b>57.6% (34)</b>	3.80	59
Zoning Board of Adjustment	11.7% (7)	5.0% (3)	18.3% (11)	5.0% (3)	3.3% (2)	<b>56.7% (34)</b>	3.38	60
City Council	14.5% (9)	14.5% (9)	14.5% (9)	3.2% (2)	8.1% (5)	<b>45.2% (28)</b>	3.44	62
City Staff	<b>45.1% (37)</b>	20.7% (17)	24.4% (20)	4.9% (4)	2.4% (2)	2.4% (2)	4.04	82
							<b>answered question</b>	<b>85</b>
							<b>skipped question</b>	<b>14</b>

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

	Response Count
	11
answered question	11
skipped question	88

Comments
These are my opinions in general rather than related to my last very minor project
Call back in timely manner, eliminate some of the micro-manage within every aspect.
Follow your own rules and regulations. Realize the property owner doing the development has property rights and the neighborhood groups don't have veto power over any development.
The city council did a poor job reviewing a code that is out of date with current technology in my industry. I had a permit denied due to a gray area in the code. After making an appeal, I asked that the city council review the code. The response to this was basically a "we don't care" attitude. It would have been nice to see a council member or two meet with businesses in my industry to discuss new technology available to our customers - other local businesses.
I have lived in Ames since the early 70's and I feel in general Ames has been developing a more hostile attitude for business that are not white collar
In the past Ames has not been a can do City, it was can't do rather than can do. but maybe that is changing.
I do work for some rental property owners and there seems to be a little unhappiness with rental inspections.
You have always been helpful.
Simplify you codes
At times it feels the zoning commission and council members can focus on very detailed aspects of the projects and fail to see the big picture benefit of developments and investments in their community. There will always be negatives to development projects, regardless of the location and need and if you focus so much on the negative details of the projects and don't widen your horizon or perspective to major benefits to the city, very little to no projects will be approved. Improving upon this opportunity will help the city to display a "can-do" attitude.
It's one thing to "display" said attitude. You must actually have a can-do attitude and actually conduct your business that way. You lure projects in with this display, then put up every roadblock you can think of to quash the project. Quit listening to the vocal minority and think for yourselves. They'll get over it.