

**2009 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION STUDY**  
FINAL SURVEY REPORT

PREPARED FOR THE  
CITY OF SAN JOSE  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES PARTNERS



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## INTRODUCTION

On an annual basis, the City of San José's Development Service Partners<sup>1</sup> (Partners) collectively respond to 160,000 phone inquiries at the Development Center, process 700 planning applications, issue 33,000 building permits, and conduct 190,000 field inspections. As part of its commitment to provide high quality services that meet the needs of its customers, the Development Services program has sought to measure customer satisfaction and gain insight into how services can be improved through several feedback mechanisms. In addition to informal verbal and written feedback, for several years the Program has attempted to measure customer satisfaction through unscientific mail and email surveys made available to customers at several key milestones in the development process.

Although all of these feedback mechanisms are valuable sources of information for the Partners in that they provide timely and accurate information about the opinions of specific customers, they do not necessarily provide an accurate picture of the Development Services program customer base as a whole. For the most part, the methods rely on the customer to initiate the feedback. Consequently, the methods suffer from what is known as a self-selection bias—the Partners receives feedback only from those customers who are motivated enough to initiate the feedback process. Moreover, these customers tend to be those who are either very pleased or very displeased with the service they have received. Their collective opinions are thus not necessarily representative of the program's customer base as a whole.

The motivation for the current study was to design and employ a methodology that would avoid the self-selection bias noted above and thereby provide statistically reliable measures of customer satisfaction among the Program's customer base.

**OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY** Customers form their overall opinions about a product or service based on a number of specific factors. Collectively, these factors shape customer satisfaction—and therefore can also be thought of as *key drivers* of customer satisfaction. The first step to providing excellent customer service is thus to understand *which* factors shape customers' opinions about the services provided by the Development Services Partners, as well as how customers prioritize the factors/drivers when forming their opinions of the Partners' performance.

The research framework for this study was originally developed by True North in 2006 and proceeded in two phases. During the design stage of the study, True North discussed performance issues with City staff, reviewed past survey findings, and considered relevant findings from similar studies conducted with Development Services Departments from other cities to identify potential key drivers of customer satisfaction. Having identified the potential key drivers of customer satisfaction, True North subsequently designed two versions of a customer survey to measure customers' opinions and experiences on each of the key dimensions. Two versions of the questionnaire were created to accommodate the differences between ministerial and discretionary projects. As long as they comply with the Municipal Code, *ministerial* projects do not require a public hearing and are approved administratively by the City (e.g., electrical panel upgrade). In

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1. The City's Development Services Partners include the Planning Division, Building Division, Public Works Department, and Bureau of Fire Prevention.

contrast, a *discretionary* project (e.g., conditional use permit, zoning change) requires a public hearing. Even if the project complies with the Municipal Code, the decision-makers still have some discretion in deciding whether to approve the project.

The questionnaires and interviewing protocol used for the 2009 study are nearly identical to those first employed in 2006. A total of 1,007 randomly selected customers who were associated with at least one permit between January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009 participated in the study via telephone or online at a secure website hosted and managed by True North. Data were collected between January 19 and March 2, 2010. The telephone interviews averaged 13 minutes for ministerial customers, 15 minutes for discretionary customers. A full description of the methodology used for the survey is included later in this report (see *Questionnaires & Toplines* on page 73).

**STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE** As noted above, this is not the first statistically reliable customer satisfaction study conducted for the Development Services Department. A similar study was first developed and administered in 2006 and then again in 2007 and 2008. Because there is a natural interest in tracking the Department's performance in meeting the evolving needs of its customers, where appropriate the results of the 2009 study are compared with the results of identical questions used in the prior surveys. In such cases, True North conducted the appropriate tests of statistical significance to identify changes that likely reflect actual changes in customer opinion between 2008 and 2009—as opposed to being due to chance associated with selecting two samples independently and at random. Differences between the two studies are identified as *statistically significant* if we can be 95% confident that the differences reflect an actual change in customer opinion between the two studies. Statistically significant differences within response categories over time are denoted by the † symbol which appears in the figure next to the appropriate response value.

**ORGANIZATION OF REPORT** This report is designed to meet the needs of readers who prefer a summary of the findings as well as those who are interested in the details of the results. For those who seek an overview of the findings, the sections titled *Just the Facts* and *Conclusions* are for you. They provide a summary of the most important factual findings of the survey in bullet-point format and a discussion of their implications. For the interested reader, this section is followed by a more detailed question-by-question discussion of the results from the survey by topic area (see *Table of Contents*), as well as a description of the methodology employed for collecting and analyzing the data. And, for the truly ambitious reader, the questionnaires used for the interviews are contained at the back of this report, a complete set of crosstabulations is contained in Appendix A, and a complete list of verbatim responses (gathered from Question 16 of the ministerial version and Question 15 of the discretionary version) is contained in Appendix B.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** True North thanks the staff at the City of San José who contributed their valuable input during the design stage of this study. Their expertise, insight and local knowledge improved the overall quality of the research presented here.

**DISCLAIMER** The statements and conclusions in this report are those of the authors (Dr. Timothy McLarney and Richard Sarles) at True North Research, Inc. and not necessarily those of the City of San José’s Development Services Partners. Any errors and omissions are the responsibility of the authors.

**ABOUT TRUE NORTH** True North is a full-service survey research firm that is dedicated to providing public agencies with a clear understanding of the values, perceptions, priorities and concerns of their constituents and customers. Through designing and implementing scientific surveys, focus groups and one-on-one interviews, as well as expert interpretation of the findings, True North helps its clients to move with confidence when making strategic decisions in a variety of areas—such as planning, policy evaluation, performance management, organizational development, establishing fiscal priorities, and developing effective communication campaigns.

During their careers, Dr. McLarney (President) and Mr. Sarles (Principal Researcher) have designed and conducted 500 survey research studies for public agencies—including more than 300 studies for California municipalities and special districts.



## JUST THE FACTS

The following is an outline of the main factual findings from the survey. For the reader's convenience, we have organized the findings according to the section titles used in the body of this report. Thus, if you would like to learn more about a particular finding, simply turn to the appropriate report section.

### PROCESS, ROLE & PROJECT TYPE

- Forty-two percent (42%) of **ministerial**<sup>2</sup> customers surveyed were personally involved in all three stages of the permitting process on their most recent project—permit application and issuance, plan check, and building inspection. An additional 43% of customers were involved in two of the three stages, whereas a minority of customers (15%) were personally involved in just one of the key stages for their most recent project.
- Half (50%) of **discretionary** customers surveyed were personally involved in all three stages of their most recent project—permit application, plan review and public hearing. An additional 30% of customers were involved in two of the three stages, whereas 19% of discretionary customers were personally involved in only one of the key stages on their most recent project.
- Approximately two-thirds (66%) of **discretionary** customers in 2009 reported that they personally worked with a Project Manager assigned by the City on their most recent project.
- When **ministerial** customers were asked to describe their role on their most recent project, 44% selected contractor, 24% mentioned owner, 22% chose agent or representative, 20% mentioned architect, 15% described their role as permit runner, 9% chose engineer, and 5% indicated that their role was something other than the options previously mentioned.
- The most common role among **discretionary** customers was owner (41%), followed by contractor (20%), agent or representative (19%), and architect (19%). Twelve percent (12%) described their role as an engineer, 11% as permit runner, 9% as a planner, and 4% indicated that their role was something other than the previously mentioned options.
- Among **ministerial** customers, 48% described their most recent project as commercial, 48% described it as residential in nature, 3% described it as mixed-use, and 1% were not sure.
- **Discretionary** customers were most likely to describe their most recent project as commercial (49%). Approximately 37% described their project as residential, 12% indicated that it was a mixed-use project, and 1% were not sure.
- When **ministerial** customers were asked to describe further the nature of their project, the dominant category among residential projects in 2009 was remodel or addition (56%), followed by new construction (11%). For *commercial* projects, half of ministerial customers described the project as a tenant improvement (50%) in 2009, whereas 14% selected new construction.

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2. As long as they comply with the Municipal Code, *ministerial* projects do not require a public hearing and are approved administratively by the City (e.g., electrical panel upgrade). In contrast, a *discretionary* project requires a public hearing (e.g., conditional use permit, zoning change). Even if the project complies with the Municipal Code, the decision-makers still have some discretion in deciding whether to approve the project.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION

- Approximately two-thirds (66%) of **ministerial** customers in 2009 indicated that they were either very (33%) or somewhat (33%) satisfied with the service they received from the Development Services Partners on their most recent project. Thirty-two percent (32%) of respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with the Partners' performance, and 1% were unsure.
- Almost two-thirds (63%) of **discretionary** customers indicated that they were either very (25%) or somewhat (39%) satisfied with the service they received on their most recent project in 2009. More than one-third (36%) of respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with the Partners' performance, and approximately 1% were unsure.

## PERMIT APPLICATION & ISSUANCE

- Ninety-four percent (94%) of **ministerial** customers indicated that they were personally involved in the permit application and issuance stage on their most recent project.
- At least 80% of **ministerial** customers agreed that staff at the permit counter were courteous (89%), knowledgeable (82%), responsive (82%), helpful (81%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (80%).
- The vast majority of **ministerial** customers also agreed that the fees and taxes were assessed accurately (79%), that they received clear and correct instructions about the documents needed to apply for a permit (78%), and that staff at the permit application counter were accessible (77%).
- Overall, 69% of **ministerial** customers in 2009 indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the permit application stage on their most recent project.
- Ninety-one percent (91%) of **discretionary** customers indicated that they were personally involved in the permit application stage on their most recent project.
- At least 75% of **discretionary** customers agreed that staff at the permit counter were courteous (89%), helpful (78%), accessible (78%), responsive (77%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (77%).
- Seven-in-ten **discretionary** customers also agreed that the staff at the permit application counter were knowledgeable (70%), that they received clear and correct instructions about the documents needed to apply for a permit (70%), and that fees were assessed accurately (70%).
- **Discretionary** customers were relatively less in agreement that when they came in to submit their application, the amount of time they had to wait before being assisted by staff was reasonable (67%).
- Overall, 70% of **discretionary** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the permit application stage on their most recent project.

## PLAN CHECK & PLAN REVIEW

- Seventy-five percent (75%) of **ministerial** customers reported they were personally involved in the plan check stage of their most recent project.
- More than 80% of **ministerial** customers agreed that plan check staff were courteous (95%), knowledgeable (90%), responsive (87%), helpful (87%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (83%).
- At least three-quarters of **ministerial** customers agreed that the number of plan rechecks was reasonable (79%), that plan check comments and corrections were based on reasonable interpretations of the code (78%), that plan check staff were responsive (78%), that plan check comments and corrections made sense for the project (75%), that plan check comments and corrections were consistent (75%), and that plan check staff made an effort to understand his or her needs as a customer (75%).
- When compared with the other performance dimensions tested, **ministerial** customers expressed relatively lower levels of satisfaction regarding completion of the project by the target date (65%) and the turn-around time set for the plan check (64%).
- Overall, 71% of **ministerial** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the plan check stage.
- Eighty-three percent (83%) of **discretionary** customers reported they were personally involved in the plan review stage of their most recent project.
- More than seven-out-of-ten **discretionary** customers agreed that plan check staff were courteous (90%), knowledgeable (80%), helpful (75%), responsive (72%), and that plan review staff made an effort to understand his or her needs as a customer (73%).
- Although at least two-thirds of **discretionary** customers also felt that the number of plan rechecks was reasonable (70%), that plan review comments and corrections were based on reasonable interpretations of the code (70%), and that plan review staff were responsive (66%), far fewer agreed that the turn-around time for the plan review was reasonable (51%) and that the plan review was completed by the target date (49%).
- Overall, 60% of **discretionary** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the plan review stage.

## PROJECT MANAGER

- Sixty-six percent (66%) of **discretionary** customers indicated they personally worked with a Project Manager assigned by the City on their most recent project.
- At least three-quarters of **discretionary** customers also agreed that the Project Manager was courteous (90%), knowledgeable (82%), and communicated clearly regarding the process and steps needed to get to a public hearing (79%), that the project comment letter was accurate and complete (76%), that the Project Manager was helpful (75%), and that once all of the documents were ready, the Project Manager scheduled the hearing within a reasonable amount of time (75%).
- Overall, 73% of **discretionary** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Project Manager on their most recent discretionary project.

## PUBLIC HEARING

- Fifty-seven percent (57%) of **discretionary** customers indicated they were personally involved in the public hearing stage on their most recent project.
- More than 85% of **discretionary** customers agreed that staff represented their project in a fair, professional manner (94%), that they were given adequate information by staff about how the public hearing process would go (88%), and that the appeal process is fair and reasonable (88%).
- Overall, 88% of **discretionary** customers said they were satisfied with the service they received during the public hearing stage.

## BUILDING INSPECTIONS

- Fifty-eight percent (58%) of **ministerial** customers indicated they were personally involved in the inspection stage on their most recent project.
- The vast majority of **ministerial** customers agreed that inspectors were courteous (89%), arrived on-time for scheduled appointments (88%), and were knowledgeable (85%), responsive (84%), and helpful (83%).
- Among **ministerial** customers, levels of agreement were somewhat lower with respect to the perceived consistency of notices and corrections issued by different inspectors on the project (68%), the consistency of inspectors' comments with those of plan check staff (69%), and that changes were requested only if they made sense for the project (74%).
- Overall, 80% of **ministerial** customers agreed that they were satisfied with the service they received during the inspection stage of the process.

## FIRE DEPARTMENT

- Thirty-seven percent (37%) of **ministerial** customers surveyed indicated that they had received permit, project review, or inspection services from San José's Fire Department in the six months prior to the interview. The corresponding figure among **discretionary** customers was 53%.
- At least 90% of **ministerial** customers agreed that Fire Department staff were courteous (96%), knowledgeable (94%), helpful (93%), and responsive (91%).
- At least 85% of **ministerial** customers also agreed that the Fire Department made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (89%), that plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable (89%), that the wait time at the counter was reasonable (88%), that plan review comments and corrections were consistent (88%), that the plan review process was completed by the target date (87%), and that the process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit were clearly communicated (86%).
- When compared with the other dimensions tested, **ministerial** customers expressed slightly lower levels of satisfaction with respect to the communication/coordination between Departments during the plan review (78%) and the reasonableness of the turn-around time set for the plan review (84%).

- Overall, 89% of **ministerial** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Fire Department.
- At least 85% of **discretionary** customers agreed that Fire Department staff were courteous (92%) and knowledgeable (90%), and that wait time at the counter was reasonable (88%).
- Although nearly eight out of ten **discretionary** customers also agreed that Fire Department staff were helpful (84%) and responsive (83%), that plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable (82%), and that Fire Department staff made an effort to understand his or her needs (80%), a smaller percentage agreed that plan review comments and corrections were consistent (77%), or that the plan review process was completed by the target date set by the Fire Department (75%).
- When compared with the other dimensions tested, **discretionary** customers were least satisfied with the communication/coordination between Departments during plan review (58%).
- Overall, 77% of **discretionary** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Fire Department.

## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

- Eighteen percent (18%) of **ministerial** customers surveyed indicated that they had received permit, project review, or inspection services from San José's Public Works Department in the six months prior to the interview. The corresponding figure among **discretionary** customers was 47%.
- At least 85% of **ministerial** customers agreed that Public Works staff were courteous (93%), responsive (90%), knowledgeable (90%), helpful (88%), that plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable (87%), that staff made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (86%), and that plan review comments and corrections were consistent (86%).
- **Ministerial** customers were likely to agree that the turn-around time set for the plan review was reasonable (75%), that the plan review process was completed by the target date (72%), and that coordination with other departments was done in a seamless manner (68%).
- Overall, 83% of **ministerial** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Public Works Department on recent projects.
- At least three-quarters of **discretionary** customers agreed that Public Works staff were courteous (92%) and knowledgeable (85%), that wait times at the counter were reasonable (85%), and that Public Works staff were helpful (75%).
- Most **discretionary** customers also agreed that the Public Works staff made efforts to understand their needs as a customer (74%).
- Agreement among **discretionary** customers was lower for other services, most notably that coordination with other departments was seamless (48%) and that plan review comments and corrections were consistent (62%).
- Overall, 67% of **discretionary** customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Public Works Department on recent projects.

## INFORMATION ACCESS

- Seven-in-ten (71%) **ministerial** customers indicated that they were either very satisfied (29%) or somewhat satisfied (42%) with the Partners' efforts to make information available to them through the Development Services website, brochures, and meetings.
- Approximately 67% of **ministerial** customers reported that they had visited the Development Services' website in the 12 months prior to the interview.
- Eighty-two percent (82%) of **ministerial** customers who had visited the Development Services' website indicated that they were satisfied with the content of the site.
- Sixty-seven percent (67%) of **discretionary** customers indicated that they were either very satisfied (28%) or somewhat satisfied (39%) with the Partners' efforts to make development services information available to them through the Development Services website, brochures, and meetings.
- Seventy-one percent (71%) of **discretionary** customers reported that they had visited the Development Services' website in the 12 months prior to the interview.
- Eighty-three percent (83%) of **discretionary** customers who had visited the Development Services website reported that they were satisfied with the content of the site.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- When **ministerial** customers were provided with an open-ended opportunity to suggest changes or improvements in the area of development services that they would most like the City to make, the most common response to this question among ministerial customers was 'not sure' (18%), followed by no changes/everything is fine (15%). Among specific improvements cited, clarifying/standardizing/reducing fees<sup>3</sup> (11%), increasing staffing (10%), decreasing wait times (9%), and decreasing turn-around times (9%) were the top suggestions.
- When **discretionary** customers were provided with an open-ended opportunity to suggest changes or improvements in the area of development services that they would most like the City to make, the most common response was 'not sure' (13%), and no changes/everything is fine (13%). Among the specific improvements suggested, decreasing turn-around times (10%), clarifying/standardizing/reducing fees<sup>4</sup> (10%), increasing staffing (9%), and improving intra-departmental communication (7%) were the top suggestions.

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3. Among ministerial customers, the *clarify, standardize and reduce fees* category was comprised of 15% desiring clarification of fees, 13% requesting standardization of fees, and 72% stating that the fees should be reduced. It is worth noting that many of the requests for reduced fees were also coupled with references to lower fees in other cities.

4. Among discretionary customers, the *clarify, standardize and reduce fees* category was comprised of 6% desiring clarification of fees, 19% requesting standardization of fees, and 75% stating that the fees should be reduced.

## PERCEPTIONS OF CITY

- At least two-thirds of **ministerial** customers agreed that the City of San José's Development Services Partners do an adequate job balancing the interests of developers with the interests of the communities that will be affected by a project (70%), care about their customers (70%), and acknowledge when a mistake has been made and do their best to fix it (67%).
- Only 53% of **ministerial** customers agreed that overall, the City has improved its customer service in the past 12 months.
- Approximately two-thirds (67%) of **discretionary** customers agreed that the City of San José's Development Services Partners' care about their customers.
- Approximately 61% of **discretionary** customers agreed that the Partners do an adequate job balancing the interests of developers with the interests of the communities that will be affected by a project.
- Only 37% of **discretionary** customers agreed that overall, the City has improved its customer service in the past 12 months.



## CONCLUSIONS

As noted in the *Introduction*, this study was designed to provide the City of San José's Development Services Partners with a statistically reliable understanding of customers' satisfaction, priorities and needs as they relate to services provided by the Program. In addition to providing the Partners with a means of measuring and tracking their performance, this study gathers information that can assist the Partners in making sound, strategic decisions in a variety of areas—including prioritizing service improvements and enhancements, planning, policy evaluation, staffing, training and budgeting.

Whereas subsequent sections of this report are devoted to conveying the detailed results of the survey, in this section we attempt to 'see the forest through the trees' and note how the collective results of the survey answer some of the key questions that motivated the research. The following conclusions are based on True North's interpretations of the 2009 survey results, comparisons to the 2006, 2007, and 2008 survey results, as well as the firm's experience conducting similar studies for Development Services Departments in other California municipalities.

**DEPARTMENTAL CHANGES IN 2009** As with most public and private organizations, the ongoing economic crisis has affected all departments and divisions in the City of San José, including its Development Services Partners. Over the past three fiscal years, the Partners have seen substantial revenue shortfalls in development-related fee programs. These shortfalls were driven largely by a steep decline in development activity that began in 2007 with a 50% decrease in residential construction. By 2008, this decline had affected commercial and industrial developments, resulting in a nearly 25% drop in construction valuation. The dramatic reductions in construction and permit activity that followed prompted the City to impose an array of one-time and ongoing staffing adjustments.

Accordingly, substantial layoffs in February, August, and November of 2009 resulted in a loss of employees across the board, including key positions such as field inspectors, planners, project review staff, and permit center staff. The outcome of these changes was, as one might expect, a significant increase in office wait times and turn-around times on plan checks and plan reviews, difficulty in scheduling inspections and reaching personnel, and ultimately a lengthier process for customers from start to completion.

**WHAT WERE THE IMPACTS OF THESE CHANGES?** The current survey marks the first time since the baseline year of this study (2006) that customer satisfaction—overall and within the majority of specific service areas—has declined. In 2006, approximately three-quarters of ministerial customers and two-thirds of discretionary customers indicated that they were generally satisfied with the Partners' performance in meeting their needs on their most recent projects. In 2007 and again in 2008, not only did the overall levels of satisfaction increase for both customer groups, but the magnitude of the change and the *intensity* of satisfaction increased significantly during that same period. That positive trend was also observed with respect to *specific performance areas* across all four Partners, with 42 statistically significant improvements compared with just 4 significant decreases from 2006 to 2008.

The findings of the current study revealed a total of 64 statistically significant decreases and no significant service improvements from 2008 to 2009. And although these decreases spanned an

array of performance areas, some of the most notable were those related to the loss of personnel, such as those regarding lengthy office wait times and unreasonable turn-around times for plan reviews and plan checks. Moreover, when asked in an open-ended manner about ways to improve service, the most common specific requests among ministerial and discretionary customers included decreasing turn-around times and wait times, and increasing staffing—it is clear that customers have collectively felt the staffing changes made in 2009. The net result of these changes is a 14 percentage point drop in overall satisfaction among ministerial customers and a 12 percentage point drop among discretionary customers—both to levels below what was initially found in 2006.

**WHERE ARE THE PARTNERS PERFORMING PARTICULARLY WELL?** Despite the trend of decline in satisfaction found in 2009, it's important to recognize that the majority of customers are generally pleased with the Partners' performance in many areas—especially the courtesy, knowledge, and helpfulness exhibited by Development Services staff.

For convenience, we have organized the following discussion according to the key drivers of customer satisfaction that are typically found among customers of Development Services Departments.<sup>5</sup> The areas where the Partners are currently performing particularly well include accessibility, staff competency and sufficiency, and attitude/culture.

**Accessibility** When customers need assistance from Development Services, they want to have reasonable access by phone, fax, Internet, email and/or in-person (as appropriate) to the information and/or staff member who can resolve their issues. More than three-quarters of customers gave the Development Services staff high marks for accessibility.

**Staff Competency and Sufficiency** The competency of staff directly affects many of the other factors identified in this report—such as communication, consistency, and timeliness—so it is worth highlighting this factor as its own category. Customers expect Development Services to have an adequately trained staff who have the knowledge needed to help them resolve issues in an efficient manner. As in prior studies, staff competency and sufficiency are areas where Development Services received consistently high marks, with at least seven-in-ten customers agreeing that staff at the permit application, plan review, *and* inspection stages were knowledgeable.

**Attitude/Culture** A consistent theme of research among Development Services Departments is the importance that customers place on how they are treated by staff. The bottom line is that a good attitude on the part of staff appears to go a long way in terms of keeping a customer satisfied as they navigate what is a complex and, at times, frustrating process. Customers want to interact with staff who are professional, respectful of their time, are solution oriented as opposed to problem focused, and are helpful. Customers want a Development Services Program that is concerned about its customers' interests and acts accordingly.

In general, customers continued to hold positive perceptions of Development Services staff with respect to their interest in serving customers' needs, their courtesy, and their helpfulness. This

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5. True North has completed over 50 qualitative interviews and more than 12,000 survey interviews with customers of Development Services Departments in California. The key drivers of customer satisfaction discussed in this section are a subset of the most important drivers based on our collective experience working with San José's Development Services Partners and similar departments in other cities.

pattern was consistent across the permitting stages, with permit counter, plan review, inspection, Public Works, and Fire Department staff all receiving high marks.

It should be noted, however, survey respondents were considerably less in agreement with the general statement that the Partners care about their customers, and that the City has improved its customer service over the past year. These sentiments may reflect customers' observation of larger department-level changes, such as staff reduction and its effect on the permitting process as a whole, rather than individual staff member performance.

**WHERE SHOULD THE PARTNERS FOCUS ON IMPROVEMENT?** This study also identified aspects of the Partners' performance that could be enhanced or improved. The key areas of improvement are with respect to responsiveness, communication, consistency, accountability, and timeliness of performance.

**Responsiveness** Customers want Development Services staff to be responsive to their needs. Wait time is one of the key aspects of responsiveness and refers to the time that customers actively wait at the counter, on the phone, or at a project site to receive service from staff on a particular issue. Long waits times on the phone, in-person, or when expecting a response from staff are frustrating for customers and should be avoided. The concept of wait time applies not only to the availability of personnel, but also to materials, records and decisions that must be made on a project for it to move forward.

The Department received mixed reviews with respect to responsiveness. Only 56% of ministerial customers who visited the permit center felt the wait time before being assisted by staff was reasonable. Fewer than two-thirds of discretionary customers felt that plan review staff or public works staff were responsive. Completion of the plan check process and plan review process by their respective target dates was a concern for more than a third of customers. And when asked to cite their most desired improvements, a sizeable number of customers mentioned decreasing turn-around times and improving responsiveness and attentiveness.

**Communication** There are many aspects of communication that shape customers' perceptions of, and attitudes about, the Development Services Program. Customers desire communications that are clear, specific, thorough, and correct. This applies to staff-customer communications and communications between staff assigned to a project, as well as to verbal communications and written reports, comments and instructions. Customers also want regular communication (or at least accessibility to the information) regarding the status of projects as they move through the process. By communicating in this way, the Partners will enable customers to better navigate the submittal, review and inspection processes and avoid problems—such as late hits during plan review—that are costly in terms of time and money.

Customers generally agree that the Partners are doing an adequate job in making information available to customers via the Development Services website, brochures, and meetings, although these numbers have also declined in the past year. Approximately seven-in-ten (71%) ministerial customers indicated that they were satisfied with the Partners' performance in this respect, down from 80% in 2008, compared with two-thirds (67%) of discretionary customers, down from 85% in the prior year. Agreement that the process and steps required at various stages was clearly communicated also declined significantly. It is worth noting that perceptions of staff's

performance in communicating with customers or other staff members continued to be among the key factors that distinguished customers who were satisfied with the Partners' overall performance from those who were dissatisfied.

**Consistency** Customers desire a process that is fair and predictable, which requires consistency in both the structure and application of fees, rules, policies and procedures. Put simply, the same rules and procedures should apply to similar projects—they should not vary because of the individual staff members assigned to accept, review or inspect a project or due to political concerns. Inconsistent (and subjective) interpretations of codes and regulations should be avoided. Consistency between Development Services staff across stages of the permitting process is also important to keep projects on track.

Although most customers gave the Partners positive reviews with respect to consistency, some customers noted that they received inconsistent comments and corrections during plan review, as well as conflicting instructions for a given project between plan review and inspection staff, or between different inspectors. Concern regarding consistency (and coordination between departments that impacts consistency) continued to be particularly pronounced among discretionary customers and when customers were commenting on the plan review stage or projects that involved the Public Works Department. Setting and maintaining clear, consistent standards was among the top specific improvements sought by ministerial and discretionary customers.

**Accountability** Customers want a Development Services Program that is accountable to them. So long as customers uphold their end of the deal, they feel that the Partners should uphold their end. This applies to processing projects according agreed-upon schedules, taking ownership of mistakes and fixing them in a proactive manner, and all types of decisions and actions.

The 2009 survey results indicate that this continues to be a top area for improvement. Although most customers gave the Partners' positive reviews, a sizeable number felt that the Partners often refuse to acknowledge a mistake they have made and/or do not do their best to fix the mistake. This pattern was especially pronounced among discretionary customers. Completing the plan review or plan check process by the target date set by the City was also consistently among the performance dimensions for which the Partners received the lowest ratings.

**Project Time Lines/Timeliness** The adage "time is money" applies in force to customers of the Development Services Program. Accordingly, customers want the Partners to prepare and adhere to reasonable and quantifiable time lines. Staff actions that delay projects—such as miscommunication, inconsistencies, and late hits—are especially frustrating for customers, as are processes that are unnecessarily bureaucratic and time-consuming.

The current study indicates that customers would continue to appreciate the Partners' efforts to clarify and simplify the permitting process and thereby reduce the time it takes to complete their projects. Reducing office wait times, setting reasonable project completion dates, and then meeting those deadlines are the bottom line for many customers and are obviously dependent on adequate staffing. But as noted above, many suggested improvements in responsiveness, communication, consistency, and accountability, if taken, will positively impact the efficiency and timeliness of the permitting process overall.

## PROCESS, ROLE & PROJECT TYPE

One of the challenges to gauging customer satisfaction that is somewhat unique to the Development Services Program is that, for any given project, the Partners often interact with not one, but multiple customers who play different roles on a project (e.g., homeowner, architect and contractor). Moreover, customers vary in their level of involvement in a project. Whereas some customers are involved in each of the key stages of a project, others may be personally involved in just one stage, such as building inspection. The types of projects also vary substantially.

**INVOLVEMENT IN PROCESS** To understand the extent of customer involvement in each of the key stages in a project, as well as have the ability to tailor the interview to a customer’s individual experience with the Partners, the first substantive question of the survey asked a respondent to identify which stages they were *personally* involved in during their most recent project. For ministerial customers, the three stages were described as permit application and issuance, plan check, and inspection. For discretionary customers, the stages were described as permit application, plan review, and public hearing.

**Question SC3: Ministerial & Discretionary** *For your most recent (discretionary) project, were you personally involved in the: \_\_\_\_\_ stage of the project?*

**FIGURE 1 INVOLVEMENT IN STAGES OF PROJECT: MINISTERIAL**

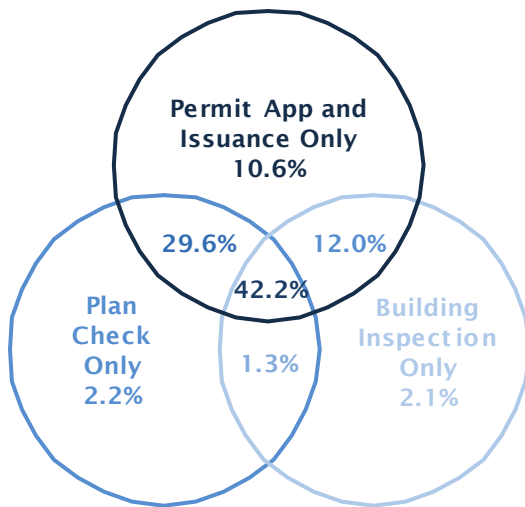


Figure 1 is a Venn diagram that displays the distribution of customers by project stage among those surveyed regarding their most recent ministerial project. Overall, 42% of ministerial customers surveyed were personally involved in all three stages of the project, and an additional 43% of customers were involved in two of the three stages. A minority of customers (15%) were personally involved in just one of the key stages for their most recent project.

For the interested reader, Table 1 shows how involvement by stage varied according to the number of projects a customer was associated with in the year prior to the interview.

**TABLE 1 INVOLVEMENT IN STAGES OF PROJECT BY NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS: MINISTERIAL**

	Overall	Number of Projects in Past 12 Months				
		1	2 to 3	4 to 5	6 to 10	11 or more
Permit app & issuance only	11%	16%	6%	9%	8%	11%
Plan check only	2%	2%	2%	10%	1%	1%
Building inspection only	2%	2%	3%	3%	0%	1%
Permit app & issuance + Plan check	30%	27%	29%	38%	37%	28%
Permit app & issuance + Bldg inspection	12%	10%	10%	12%	12%	16%
Plan check + Bldg inspection	1%	2%	1%	0%	3%	0%
All three stages	42%	40%	49%	29%	40%	43%

**FIGURE 2 INVOLVEMENT IN STAGES OF PROJECT: DISCRETIONARY**

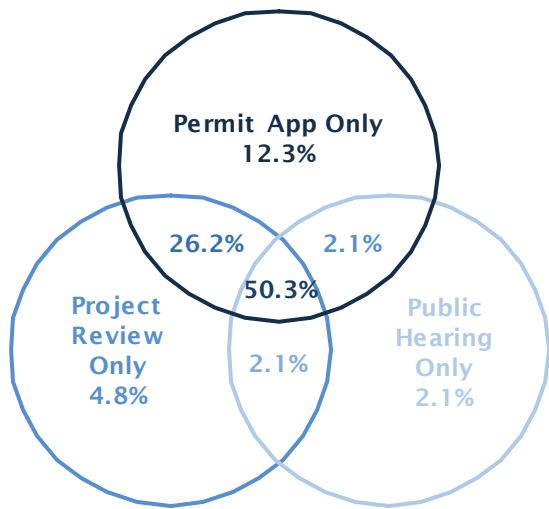


Figure 2 provides a similar Venn diagram for discretionary customers. Overall, half (50%) of discretionary customers surveyed were personally involved in all three stages of their most recent project, and an additional 30% of customers were involved in two of the three stages. Just 19% of discretionary customers were personally involved in only one of the key stages on their most recent project.

Table 2 displays the distribution of involvement by stage among discretionary customers according to the number of projects they were associated with in the year prior to the interview.

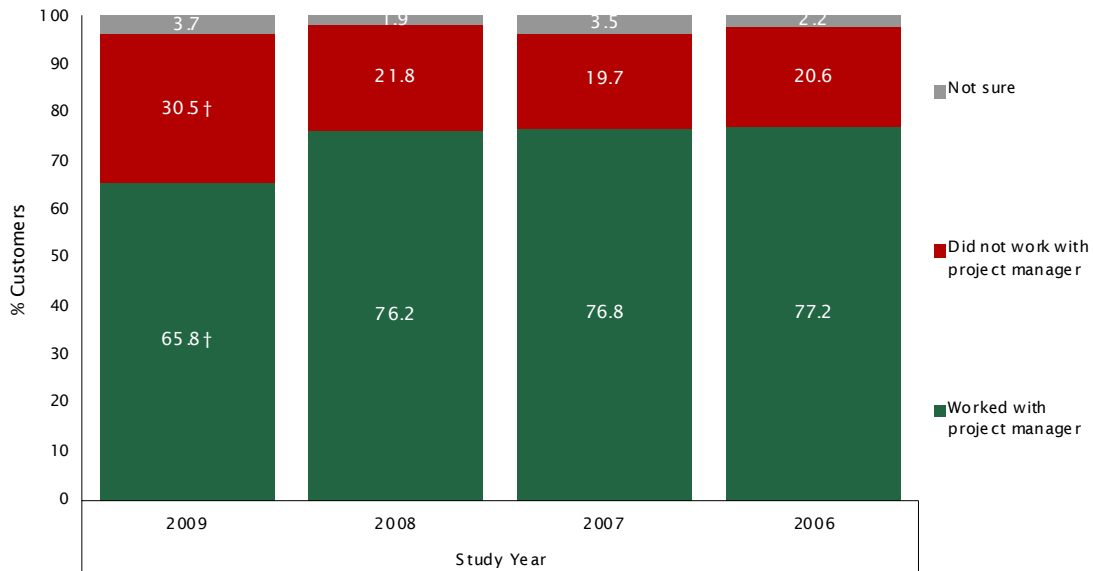
**TABLE 2 INVOLVEMENT IN STAGES OF PROJECT BY NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS: DISCRETIONARY**

	Overall	Number of Projects in Past 12 Months			
		1	2 to 3	4 to 5	6 or more
Permit app only	12%	19%	8%	4%	14%
Plan review only	5%	3%	10%	0%	3%
Public hearing only	2%	1%	3%	0%	3%
Permit app + Project review	26%	30%	20%	30%	17%
Permit app + Public hearing	2%	3%	0%	0%	3%
Project review + Public hearing	2%	1%	2%	4%	3%
All three stages	50%	42%	57%	61%	55%

**WORK WITH PROJECT MANAGER?** Discretionary projects are often assigned a Project Manager to serve as a single point-of-contact for the customer. As shown in Figure 3 on the next page, 66% of discretionary customers in 2009 reported they personally worked with a Project Manager assigned by the City on their most recent project. This finding represents a significant decrease compared with the percentage (76%) recorded in the 2008 study.

**Question SC4: Discretionary** *Did you personally work with a Project Manager assigned by the City to the project?*

**FIGURE 3 WORKED WITH PROJECT MANAGER BY STUDY YEAR**



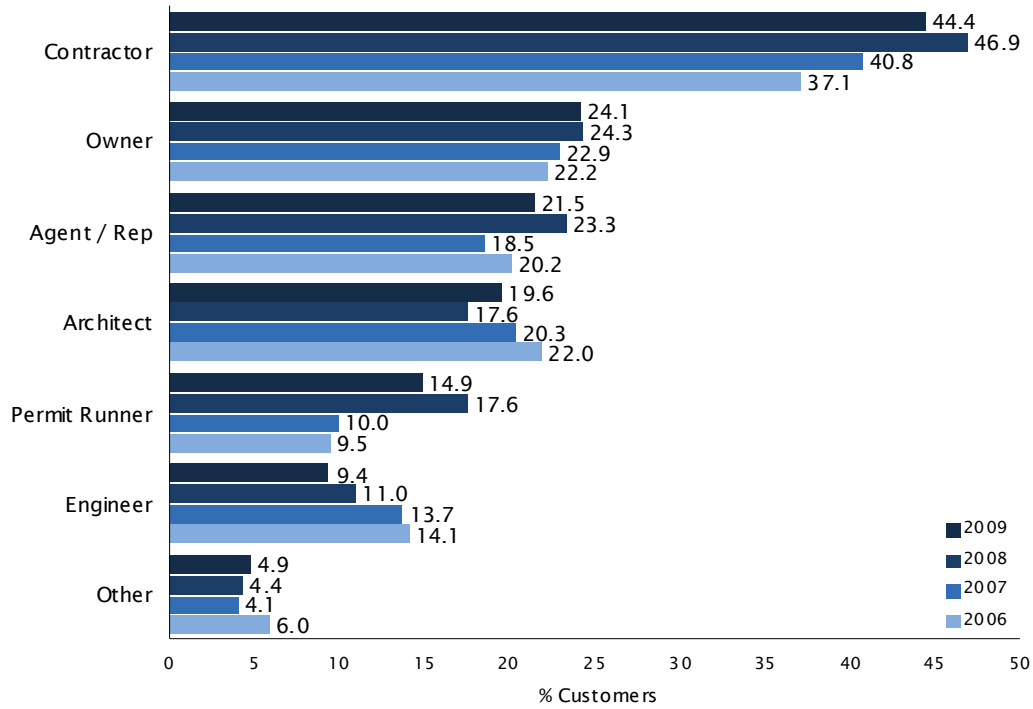
† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

**CUSTOMER ROLE** Ministerial customers were next presented with the list of roles in Figure 4 and asked to indicate which best describes their role on their most recent project with the City of San José. The results for the past three studies are shown alongside those from the 2009 study for comparison. Among ministerial customers in 2009, 44% selected contractor, 24% mentioned owner, 22% chose agent or representative, 20% mentioned architect, and another 15% described their role as permit runner. An additional 9% were an engineer, and 5% indicated that their role was something ‘other’ than the options previously mentioned.

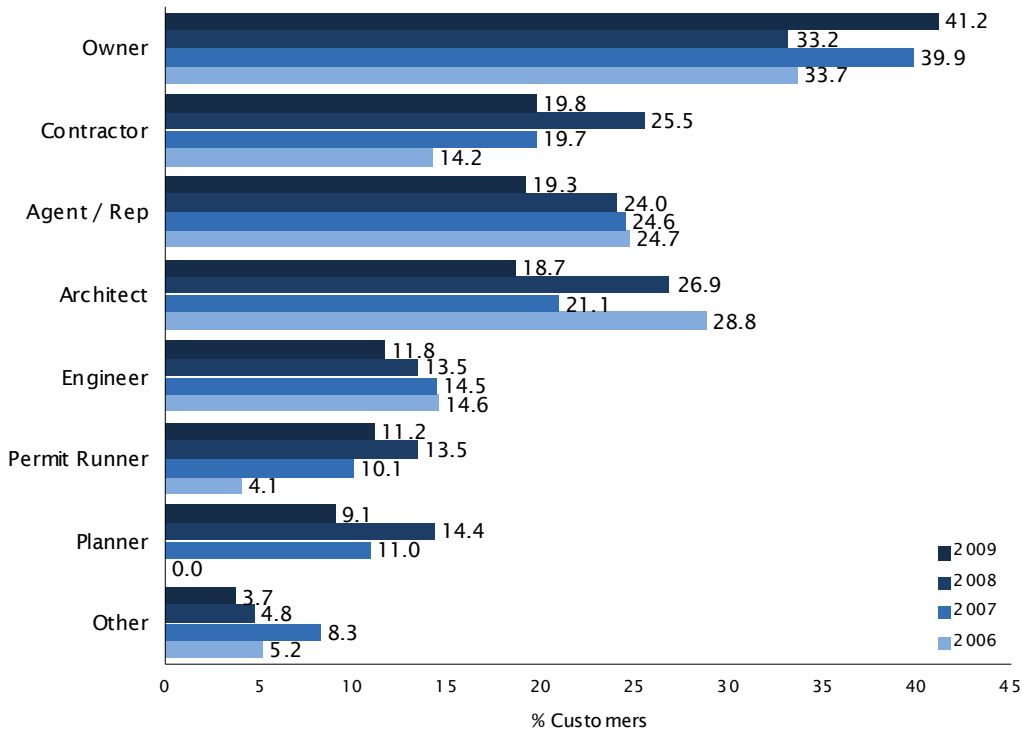
The patterns were somewhat different among discretionary customers (see Figure 5). The most commonly selected role in 2009 was owner (41%), followed by contractor (20%), agent or representative (19%), and architect (19%). Twelve percent (12%) described their role as an engineer, 11% as permit runner, 9% as a planner, and 4% indicated that their role was something other than the previously mentioned options. Although responses varied from 2008, the differences were not statistically significant.

**Question 1: Ministerial & Discretionary** Which of the following best describes your role on this project?

**FIGURE 4 ROLE WITH PROJECT BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**



**FIGURE 5 ROLE WITH PROJECT BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**



**PROJECT TYPE** Having measured a customer’s involvement in the permitting process on their most recent project, as well as their role, the final questions in this series addressed the type of project they worked on most recently with the City. Among ministerial customers in 2009, 48% described their most recent project as residential and 48% described it as commercial, findings that are nearly identical to those from 2008 (Figure 6). Figure 7 displays how the nature of their most recent project varied by customer role and stages of involvement. When compared with their respective ministerial counterparts, owners and those involved with building inspections were the most likely to describe their most recent project as residential in nature.

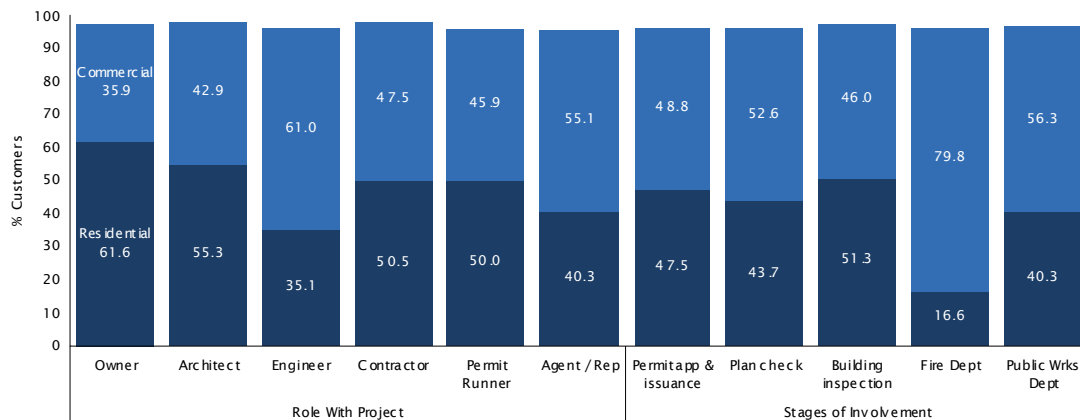
**Question 2: Ministerial & Discretionary** *Was your most recent project for a residential property, a commercial property, or a mixed use property?*

**FIGURE 6 PROPERTY TYPE BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**



† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

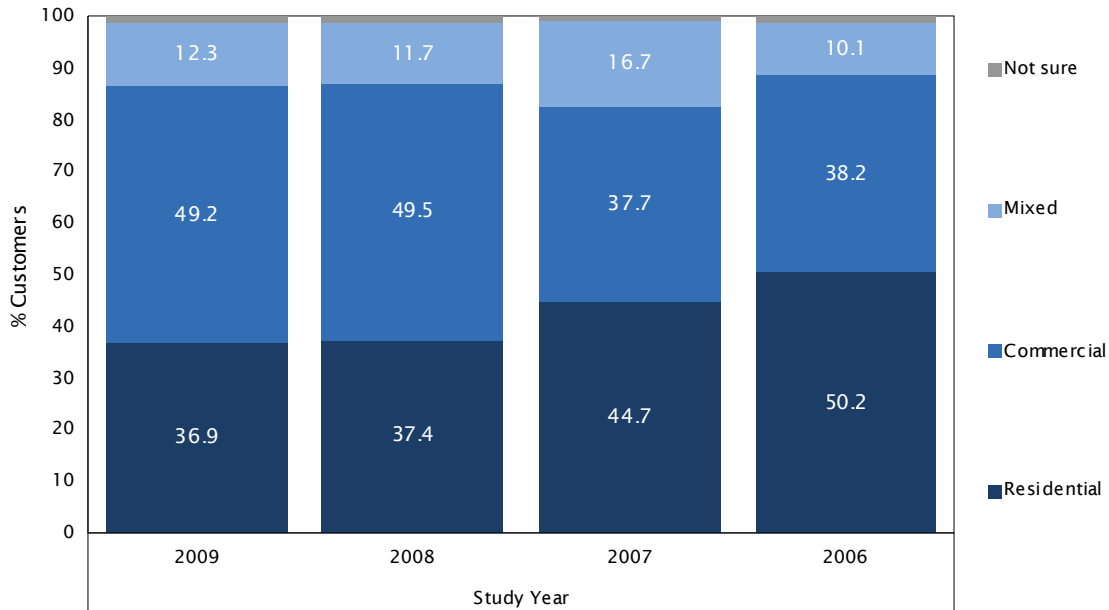
**FIGURE 7 PROPERTY TYPE BY ROLE WITH PROJECT & NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS: MINISTERIAL**



Approximately half (49%) of discretionary customers described their most recent project as commercial and approximately 37% described their project as residential. An additional 12% said that it was a mixed-use project (Figure 8). There were no statistically significant changes from 2008.

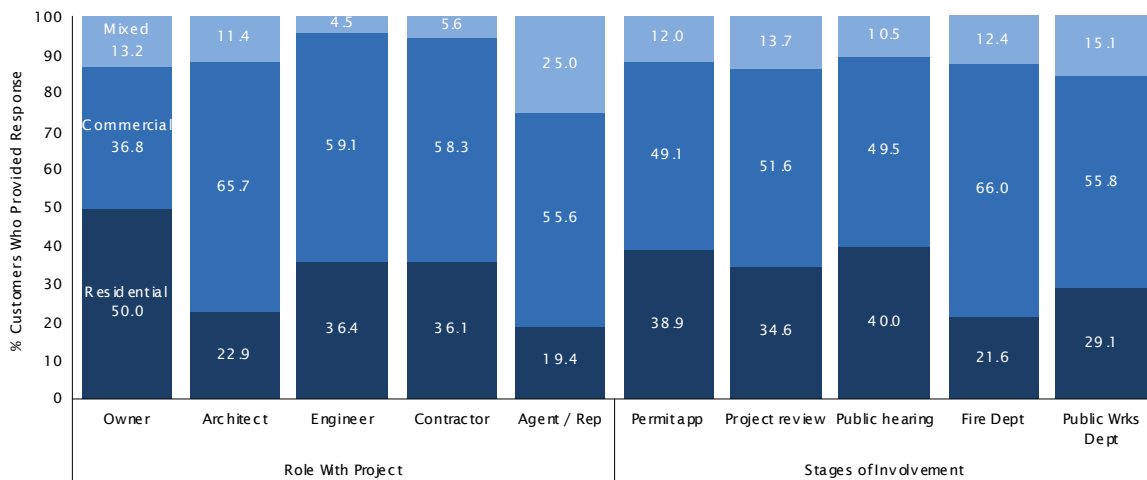
When compared with their respective discretionary counterparts, owners and those who participated in the public hearing in 2009 were the most likely to describe their most recent project with the City as residential in nature (see Figure 9).

**FIGURE 8 PROPERTY TYPE BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**



† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

**FIGURE 9 PROPERTY TYPE BY ROLE WITH PROJECT & STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT: DISCRETIONARY**



**NATURE OF MINISTERIAL PROJECT** Ministerial customers were subsequently asked to describe the nature of their project using the categories shown in Table 3 for residential projects or Table 4 for commercial projects. The dominant category among residential projects in 2009 was remodel or addition (56%), which was cited significantly more often than in 2008, followed by new construction (11%) and re-roofing (7%). For the interested reader, Table 4 displays responses to Question 3 by the customers' involvement in the project.

**Question 3: Ministerial** *Which of the following best describes the nature of your [residential] project?*

**TABLE 3 NATURE OF RESIDENTIAL PROJECT BY STUDY YEAR**

	Study Year			
	2009	2008	2007	2006
Remodel or addition	56.0†	50.7	55.3	57.7
New construction	10.7	13.1	20.7	24.0
Re-roof	7.1	6.3	2.3	3.0
Demolition / Rebuild	5.3	7.1	7.6	4.0
Re-pipe	3.1	2.4	0.3	1.0
Hot water heater	2.5	2.4	1.6	1.0
Pool-related	0.5	2.6	2.0	1.0
Other response	14.8	15.2	10.2	8.3

† Statistically significant change (p < 0.05) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

**TABLE 4 NATURE OF RESIDENTIAL PROJECT BY STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT**

	Stages of Involvement				
	Permit app & issuance	Plan check	Building inspection	Fire Dept	Public Wrks Dept
Remodel or addition	56.8	65.9	55.8	49.0	41.4
New construction	9.8	12.6	8.7	35.3	34.5
Re-roof	7.6	2.2	9.9	3.9	1.7
Demolition / Rebuild	4.9	6.3	5.8	5.9	8.6
Pool-related	3.3	1.5	4.1	0.0	3.4
Re-pipe	2.4	0.7	2.5	3.9	0.0
Hot water heater	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.0	1.7
Other response	14.7	10.4	12.4	2.0	8.6

For commercial projects, half (50%) of ministerial customers described the project as a tenant improvement in 2009, whereas 14% selected new construction (Table 5). The 2009 findings are statistically similar to those recorded in 2008. As shown in Table 6, when compared with their respective counterparts, ministerial customers with commercial or mixed-use projects who interacted with the Public Works Department were the most likely to describe their project as new construction or a demolition/rebuild (see Table 6).

**Question 4: Ministerial** *Which of the following best describes the nature of your [commercial] project?*

**TABLE 5 NATURE OF COMMERCIAL OR MIXED-USE PROJECT BY STUDY YEAR**

	Study Year			
	2009	2008	2007	2006
Tenant improvement	50.1	49.9	50.1	51.5
New construction	14.4	15.8	18.1	15.7
Sign permit	5.9	6.6	5.0	5.7
Hazardous Materials Systems	4.7	4.6	2.8	4.8
Demolition / Rebuild	4.5	4.9	6.1	6.4
Fire Protection Systems	3.8	2.4	2.2	0.7
AC / HVAC	3.3	2.9	2.4	4.3
Permit for occupancy	3.1	1.7	0.0	0.0
Re-roof	1.4	1.2	0.0	0.0
Other response	8.7	10.0	13.3	10.9

**TABLE 6 NATURE OF COMMERCIAL OR MIXED-USE PROJECT BY STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT**

	Stages of Involvement				
	Permit app & issuance	Plan check	Building inspection	Fire Dept	Public Wrks Dept
Tenant improvement	50.6	52.9	52.4	54.1	41.2
New construction	14.1	13.0	13.5	14.5	30.6
Sign permit	6.0	6.1	3.9	0.8	2.4
Hazardous Materials Systems	5.0	5.2	4.8	7.5	3.5
Demolition / Rebuild	4.0	2.9	6.1	3.9	10.6
Fire Protection Systems	4.0	4.0	4.8	5.9	1.2
AC / HVAC	3.5	3.8	4.4	3.9	0.0
Permit for occupancy	3.0	3.2	2.6	3.1	1.2
Re-roof	1.5	0.3	1.3	0.0	0.0
Other response	8.4	8.7	6.1	6.3	9.4

## OVERALL SATISFACTION

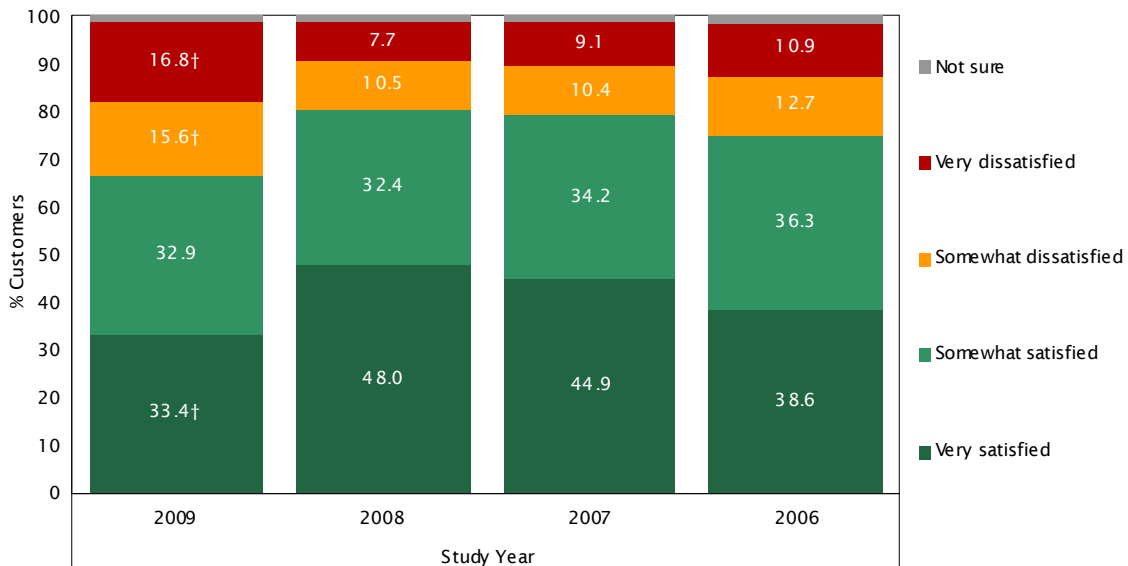
Having profiled a respondent's involvement in his or her most recent project with the City, the survey next instructed the customer to focus on this same project when answering the remaining questions in the survey. This approach was used to ensure that the survey results reflect customers' most recent—rather than most memorable—experiences with the City, thereby providing timely feedback about the Partners' *current* performance.<sup>6</sup>

All respondents were then asked to indicate if, overall, they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the service they received from the City of San José on their most recent project. Because this question does not reference a specific aspect of the project and requested that the respondent consider the City's performance in general, the findings of this question may be regarded as an *overall performance rating* for the Development Services Program.

**MINISTERIAL** Figure 10 presents the Partners' overall performance rating among ministerial customers in 2009, 2008, 2007, and 2006. Overall, approximately two-thirds of customers (66%) in 2009 indicated that they were either very (33%) or somewhat (33%) satisfied with the service they received from the City in 2009. Thirty-two percent (32%) of respondents indicated dissatisfaction with the Partners' performance, and 1% were unsure. As seen in the figure below, the overall level of satisfaction decreased significantly from the 80% registered in 2008.

**Question 5: Ministerial** *Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the service that you received from the City of San José on this project?*

**FIGURE 10 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

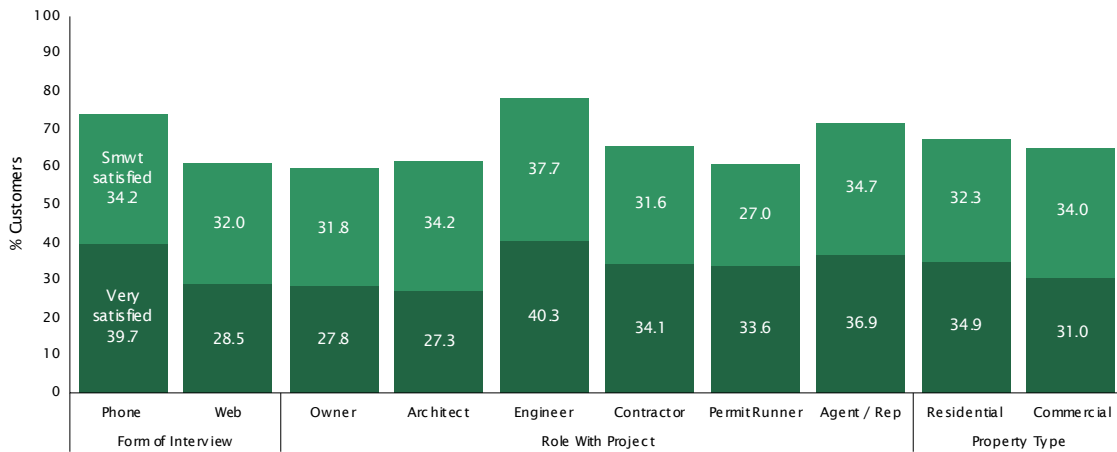


† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

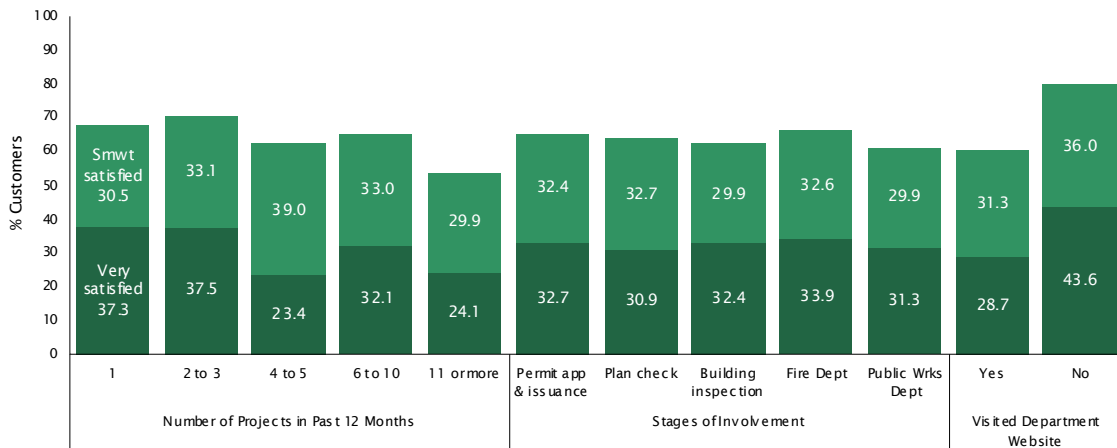
6. Without this instruction, some customers would likely comment on their most memorable experiences with the City, which could be on projects that occurred several years ago.

The next two figures display how overall satisfaction with the Partners' performance varied among ministerial customers in 2009 by the form of interview, their role in the project, property type, the number of projects they were involved with in the City of San José in 2009, their involvement in various stages of their most recent project, and whether they had visited the Development Services website in the 12 months preceding the interview. Those who took the survey via telephone, engineers, those with relatively fewer projects, and those who had not visited the website (which related to the number of projects one has had) were the most likely to express satisfaction.<sup>7</sup>

**FIGURE 11 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY FORM OF INTERVIEW, ROLE WITH PROJECT & PROPERTY TYPE: MINISTERIAL**



**FIGURE 12 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS, STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT & VISITED DEPARTMENT WEBSITE: MINISTERIAL**

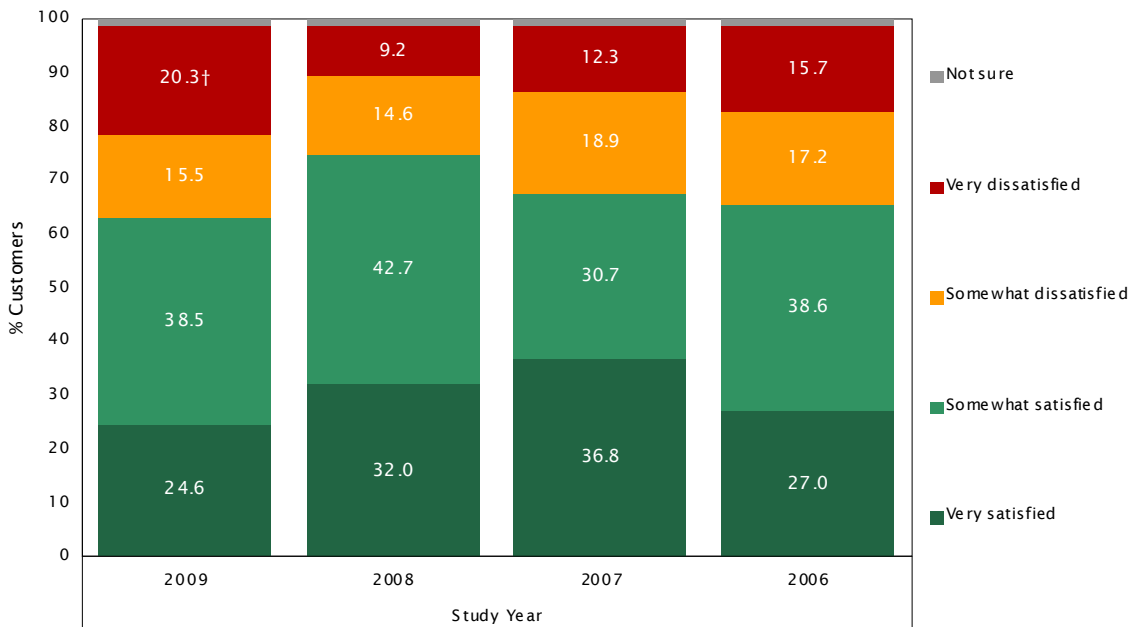


7. The lower levels of satisfaction among those who completed online is a proxy for timing. The website survey was made available prior to the telephone interview, and those customers who are displeased with the Department's performance tend to respond more quickly to the invitation to provide feedback about the Department.

**DISCRETIONARY** Figure 13 presents the Partners’ overall performance rating among discretionary customers in 2009, 2008, 2007, and 2006. Approximately two-thirds (63%) of respondents indicated they were either very (25%) or somewhat (39%) satisfied with the service they received on their most recent project in 2009. More than one-third (36%) of respondents indicated they were dissatisfied with the Partners’ performance, and approximately 1% were unsure. Similar to the findings from ministerial customers, the overall level of satisfaction among discretionary customers decreased significantly from the 75% registered in 2008.

**Question 3: Discretionary** Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the service that you received from the City of San José on this project?

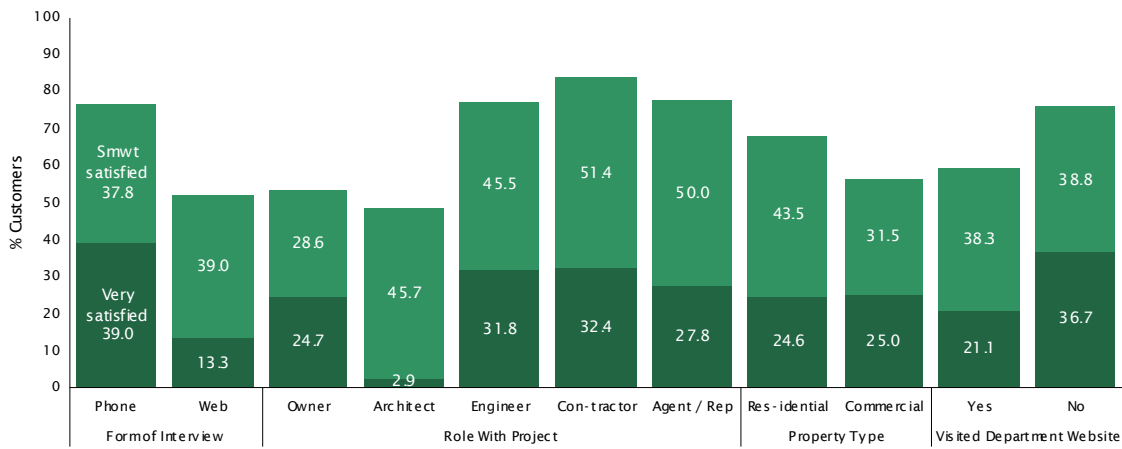
**FIGURE 13 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**



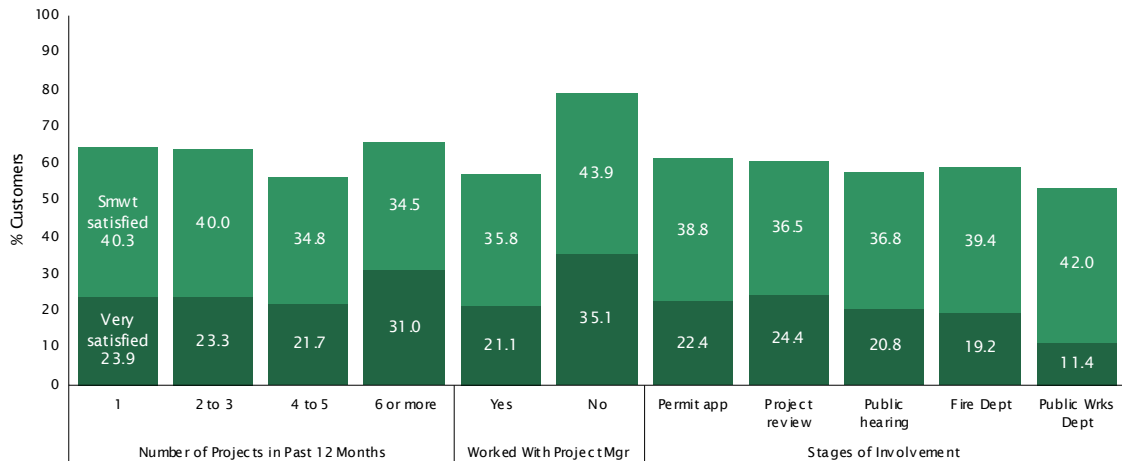
† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

Opinions varied considerably among some subgroups of discretionary customers (see figures 14 and 15). When compared with their respective counterparts, those who participated in the survey via telephone, contractors, residential projects, those who had not visited the Development Services website in the 12 months preceding the interview, and those who did not work with a Project Manager on their most recent project were the most likely to report being satisfied.

**FIGURE 14 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY FORM OF INTERVIEW, ROLE WITH PROJECT, PROPERTY TYPE & VISITED DEPARTMENT WEBSITE: DISCRETIONARY**



**FIGURE 15 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS, WORKED WITH PROJECT MGR & STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT: DISCRETIONARY**



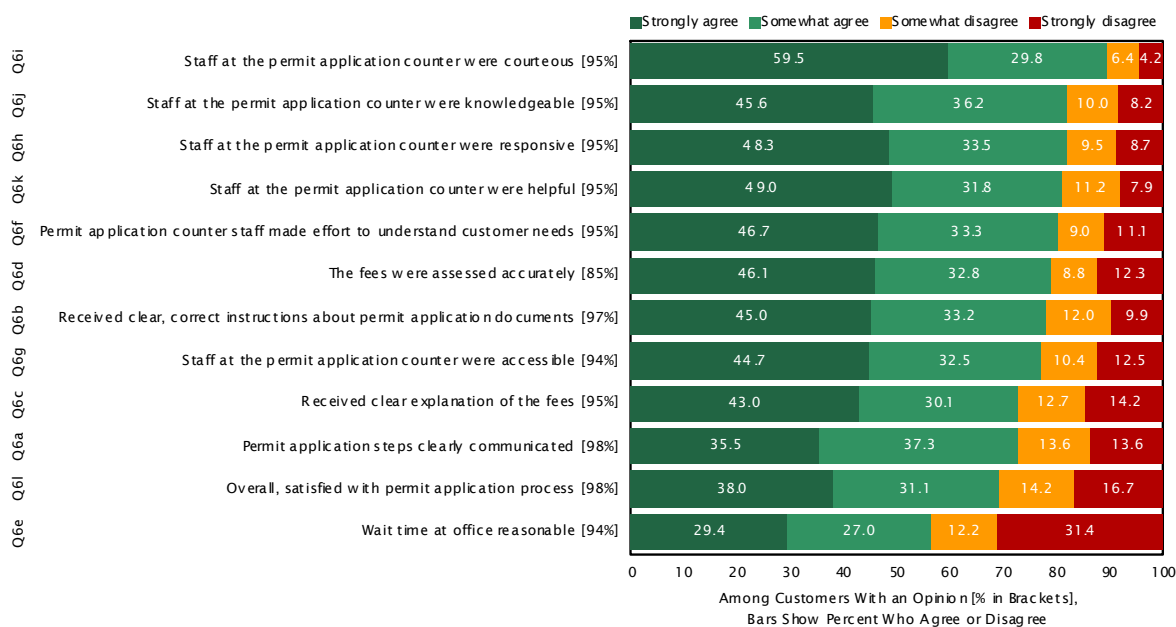
## PERMIT APPLICATION & ISSUANCE

Whereas the previous section addressed the Partners' *overall* performance, at this point the survey narrowed to focus on *specific* aspects of the Partners' performance, such as responsiveness, clarity of communication, and accuracy. Because customers varied in their level of involvement on their most recent project, and the Partners' performance can fluctuate across stages of a project, the questions were divided into the three key stages discussed previously for ministerial and discretionary projects, respectively. Only customers who indicated they were personally involved in a stage were administered questions related to the stage. Questions relating to the permit application and issuance stage are presented in this section of the report. Questions relating to plan check/review, inspections, and public hearings are discussed in later sections.

**MINISTERIAL** Overall, 94% of ministerial customers indicated that they were personally involved in the permit application and issuance stage on their most recent project. Question 6 was designed to measure the Partners' performance in meeting these customers' needs during said stage. For each of the 12 statements shown to the left of Figure 16 that comment on a specific aspect of the Partners' performance, respondents were simply asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement. The higher the level of agreement, the more favorable a customer's opinion of the Partners' performance.

**Question 6: Ministerial** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the Building permit application and issuance stage of the process. I'd like you to tell me whether or not you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience.*

**FIGURE 16 AGREEMENT WITH PERMIT APPLICATION & ISSUANCE STATEMENTS: MINISTERIAL<sup>8</sup>**



8. The percentage who held an opinion for each statement is shown to the right of the statement in brackets. The percentages shown in the bars are among those with an opinion, which allows for a more direct and meaningful comparison of responses across the statements tested. Additionally, because of size constraints of the charts, a number is not shown within bars that represent less than 3% of respondents. These conventions are used throughout this report for all figures that show levels of agreement in percentage form.

Overall, at least 80% of ministerial customers agreed that staff at the permit counter were courteous (89%), knowledgeable (82%), responsive (82%), helpful (81%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (80%). The vast majority of ministerial customers also agreed that the fees and taxes were assessed accurately (79%), that they received clear and correct instructions about the documents needed to apply for a permit (78%), and that staff at the permit application counter were accessible (77%). Overall, 69% of ministerial customers in 2009 indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the permit application stage on their most recent project.

Table 7 shows the percentage of ministerial customers who agreed with each performance statement tested during the 2009, 2008, 2007, and 2006 surveys along with the percentage change in agreement between 2008 and 2009. Agreement with aspects of the permit application and issuance stage was lower across the board in the current study, with significant decreases in 11 of the 12 items tested. Most notably, satisfaction with wait times saw the largest drop from 87% in 2008 to 56% in 2009.

**TABLE 7 AGREEMENT WITH PERMIT APPLICATION & ISSUANCE STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

	Study Year				Difference in Agreement 08 to 09
	2009	2008	2007	2006	
Received clear, correct instructions about permit application documents	78.2	81.1	82.5	77.4	-2.9
Staff at the permit application counter were courteous	89.4	93.1	94.8	92.7	-3.7†
Staff at the permit application counter were knowledgeable	81.8	86.0	86.6	80.4	-4.2†
Permit application steps clearly communicated	72.8	78.0	79.6	74.0	-5.2†
Received clear explanation of the fees	73.0	78.2	78.5	79.9	-5.2†
The fees were assessed accurately	79.0	85.0	83.5	86.2	-6.0†
Permit application counter staff made effort to understand needs	79.9	87.1	89.0	83.9	-7.2†
Staff at the permit application counter were responsive	81.8	89.2	89.9	85.1	-7.4†
Staff at the permit application counter were helpful	80.9	88.9	91.0	85.5	-8.0†
Staff at the permit application counter were accessible	77.1	88.9	91.0	86.1	-11.8†
Overall, satisfied with permit application process	69.1	85.0	84.9	78.8	-15.8†
Wait time at office reasonable	56.4	87.0	88.2	83.3	-30.7†

† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

**RATINGS BY MINISTERIAL SUBGROUP** For the interested reader, Table 8 displays how the level of agreement with each performance-related statement tested in Question 6 for the permit application stage varied according to customers' overall performance ratings for the Partners (Question 5 for ministerial). The table divides those who were satisfied with the Partners' overall performance into one group, and the minority of customers who were dissatisfied into a second group. It also displays the difference between the two groups in the percentage of customers who agreed with each statement tested in Question 6 (far right column). For most of the performance-related statements tested, there was a sizeable difference—thus indicating that customers who were disappointed with the Partners' overall performance were much more likely to also be less pleased (as a group) with specific performance criteria at the permit application stage.

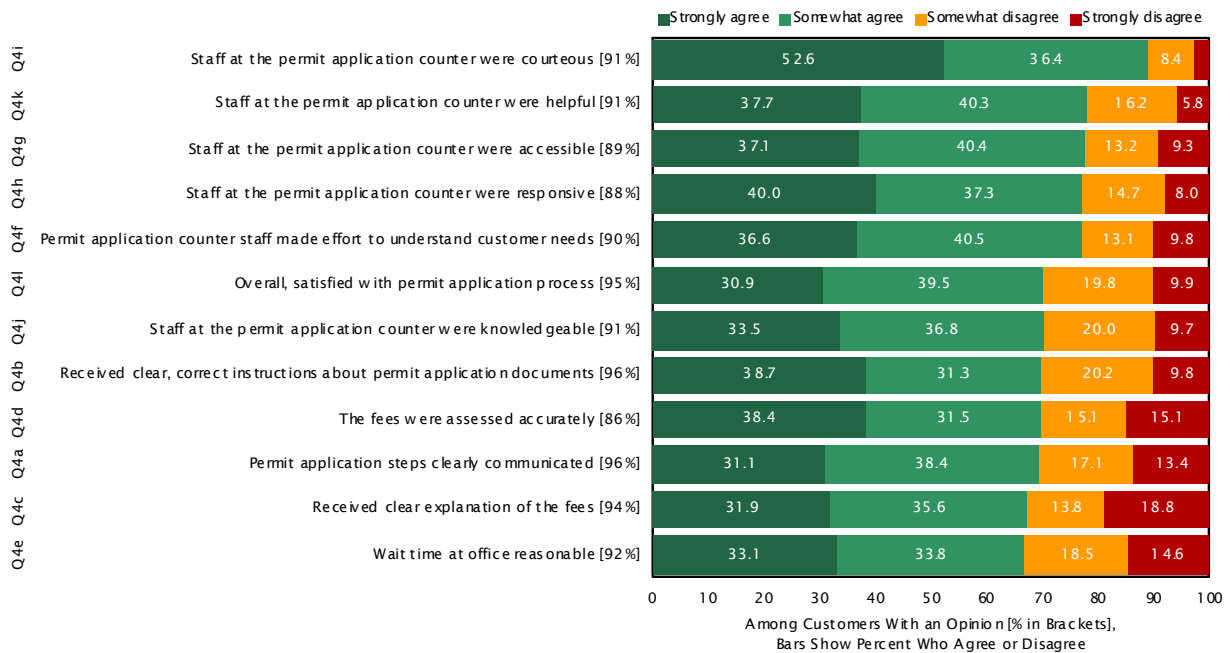
**TABLE 8 AGREEMENT WITH PERMIT APPLICATION & ISSUANCE STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: MINISTERIAL**

		Overall Satisfaction (Q5)		Difference Between Groups
		Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
% Permit Application and Issuance Customers That Agreed With Statement	Overall, satisfied with permit application process	92.9	23.8	69.0
	Permit application steps clearly communicated	88.4	43.0	45.4
	Staff at the permit application counter were accessible	92.2	48.6	43.6
	Staff at the permit application counter were helpful	94.6	53.9	40.7
	Permit application counter staff made effort to understand customer needs	93.9	53.4	40.5
	Wait time at office reasonable	70.3	30.0	40.3
	Staff at the permit application counter were responsive	94.4	57.4	36.9
	Received clear, correct instructions about permit application documents	90.6	54.0	36.7
	Staff at the permit application counter were knowledgeable	94.2	57.7	36.4
	Received clear explanation of the fees	83.9	53.4	30.5
	The fees were assessed accurately	89.1	60.3	28.8
	Staff at the permit application counter were courteous	97.3	73.8	23.5

**DISCRETIONARY** Overall, 91% of discretionary customers indicated that they were personally involved in the permit application stage on their most recent project. In the same manner described previously for ministerial projects, customers with discretionary projects were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements regarding various aspects of the Partners’ performance on their most recent project during the permit application stage. The statements tested, as well as the results for each statement, are shown in Figure 17.

**Question 4: Discretionary** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about submitting a Planning permit application during the entitlement stage of the process. I'd like you to tell me whether or not you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience. Here is the (first/next) one: ----- Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 17 AGREEMENT WITH PERMIT APPLICATION STATEMENTS: DISCRETIONARY**



Overall, at least 75% of discretionary customers agreed that staff at the permit counter were courteous (89%), helpful (78%), accessible (78%), responsive (77%), and made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (77%). Seven-in-ten also agreed that the staff at the permit application counter were knowledgeable (70%), that they received clear and correct instructions about the documents needed to apply for a permit (70%), and that fees were assessed accurately (70%). Discretionary customers were relatively less in agreement that when they came in to submit their application, the amount of time they had to wait before being assisted by staff was reasonable (67%). Overall, 70% of discretionary customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the permit application stage on their most recent project.

When compared with the 2008 findings, satisfaction with aspects of the permit application stage saw significant decreases in 9 of the 12 items tested. Satisfaction with wait times saw the largest drop from 87% in 2008 to 57% in 2009 (see Table 9).

**TABLE 9 AGREEMENT WITH PERMIT APPLICATION STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

	Study Year				Difference in Agreement 08 to 09
	2009	2008	2007	2006	
The fees were assessed accurately	69.9	73.3	81.8	82.1	-3.4
Received clear explanation of the fees	67.5	71.9	75.9	71.3	-4.4
Staff at the permit application counter were courteous	89.0	95.8	92.9	95.8	-6.9
Staff at the permit application counter were accessible	77.5	86.8	88.9	90.0	-9.3†
Staff at the permit application counter were helpful	77.9	89.3	85.3	86.7	-11.4†
Received clear, correct instructions about permit app docs	69.9	82.3	73.3	73.2	-12.4†
Staff at the permit application counter were knowledgeable	70.3	82.7	78.0	82.6	-12.4†
Permit application counter staff made effort to understand needs	77.1	89.9	86.8	87.9	-12.8†
Staff at the permit application counter were responsive	77.3	90.5	86.3	87.1	-13.1†
Permit application steps clearly communicated	69.5	83.3	75.8	76.9	-13.8†
Overall, satisfied with permit application process	70.4	85.5	78.1	81.3	-15.1†
Wait time at office reasonable	66.9	86.5	86.3	85.3	-19.7†

† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

**RATINGS BY DISCRETIONARY SUBGROUP** In a manner identical to Table 8 on page 29, Table 10 displays how the level of agreement with each performance-related statement tested in Question 4 for the permit application stage varied according to customers' overall performance ratings for the Partners (Question 3 for discretionary customers). Once again, the results indicate that customers who were dissatisfied with the Partners' overall performance were more likely than their counterparts to be disappointed with the Partners' performance on each of the dimensions tested for the permit application process.

**TABLE 10 AGREEMENT WITH PERMIT APPLICATION STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: DISCRETIONARY**

	Overall Satisfaction (Q3)		Difference Between Groups	
	Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied		
% Permit Application Customers That Agreed With Statement	Overall, satisfied with permit application process	91.2	33.9	57.3
	Received clear, correct instructions about permit application documents	87.0	41.9	45.1
	Staff at the permit application counter were helpful	95.7	50.8	44.9
	Permit application steps clearly communicated	86.0	42.9	43.1
	Permit application counter staff made effort to understand customer needs	93.5	52.5	41.0
	Staff at the permit application counter were knowledgeable	85.3	46.7	38.6
	Staff at the permit application counter were accessible	92.4	54.2	38.2
	Staff at the permit application counter were responsive	91.2	55.9	35.3
	Received clear explanation of the fees	80.6	46.8	33.8
	The fees were assessed accurately	82.2	50.0	32.2
	Wait time at office reasonable	75.5	52.5	23.0
	Staff at the permit application counter were courteous	97.8	75.4	22.4

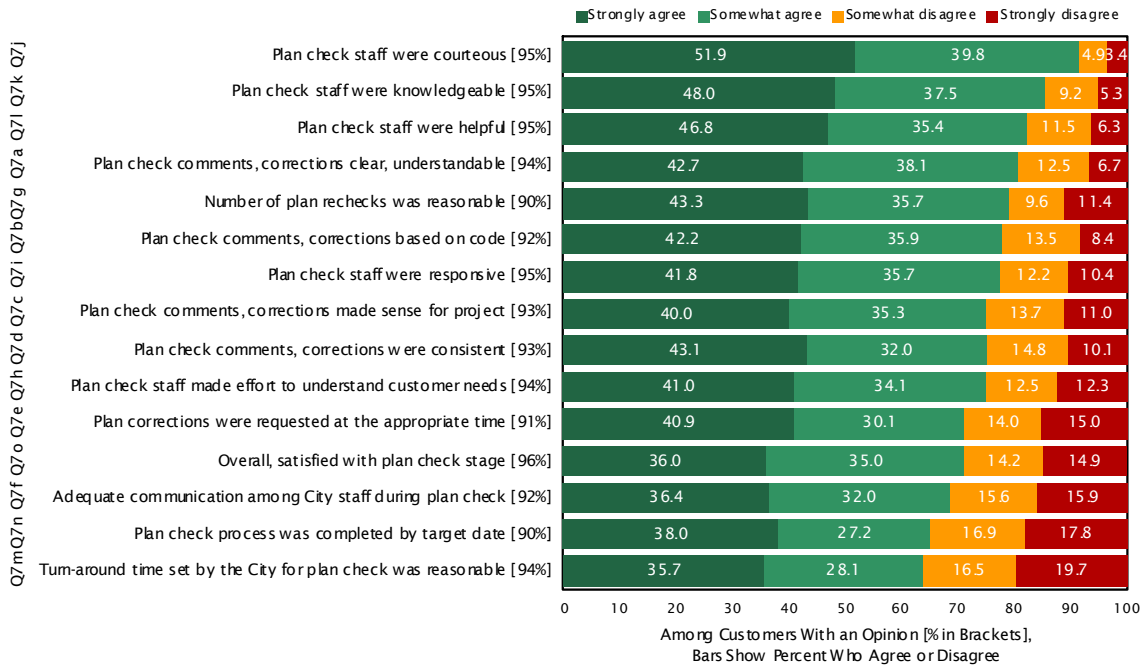
# PLAN CHECK & PLAN REVIEW

Once customers have successfully completed the permit application stage, a project enters the plan check (ministerial) or plan review (discretionary) stage. At this stage, plans submitted in connection with the permit application are reviewed by plan check staff for compliance with State- and City-adopted codes and regulations. Any necessary changes are noted in a plan check correction list and must be corrected by the customer prior to permit issuance. Overall, 75% of ministerial customers and 83% of discretionary customers reported they were *personally* involved in the plan check or project review stage.

**MINISTERIAL** Ministerial customers' satisfaction with the Partners' performance during the plan check stage was measured in the same manner described previously for the permit application stage. For each of the performance-related statements paraphrased in Figure 18, respondents were simply asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement based on their most recent experience with the City.

**Question 7: Ministerial** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the Building plan check process. I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 18 AGREEMENT WITH PLAN CHECK STATEMENTS: MINISTERIAL**



Overall, more than 80% of ministerial customers agreed that plan check staff were courteous (92%), knowledgeable (86%), helpful (82%), and that plan check comments and corrections were clear and understandable (81%). At least three-quarters agreed that the number of plan rechecks was reasonable (79%), that plan check comments and corrections were based on reasonable interpretations of the code (78%), that plan check staff were responsive (78%), that plan check comments and corrections made sense for the project (75%), that plan check comments and corrections were consistent (75%), and that plan check staff made an effort to understand his or her needs as a customer (75%). When compared with the other performance dimensions tested, ministerial customers expressed relatively lower levels of satisfaction regarding completion of the project by the target date (65%) and the turn-around time set for the plan check (64%). Overall, 71% of ministerial customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the plan check stage. As shown in Table 11, satisfaction levels were consistently lower in 2009 than in 2008, with significant decreases in 12 of 15 service aspects tested.

**TABLE 11 AGREEMENT WITH PLAN CHECK STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

	Study Year				Difference in Agreement 08 to 09
	2009	2008	2007	2006	
Plan check staff were courteous	91.7	94.5	94.0	90.7	-2.8
Plan check staff were knowledgeable	85.5	88.4	89.7	85.5	-2.9
Plan check comments, corrections clear, understandable	80.8	85.0	86.5	86.1	-4.2
Number of plan rechecks was reasonable	79.1	83.6	82.9	78.0	-4.5†
Plan check staff were helpful	82.2	87.1	88.5	84.1	-4.9†
Plan check comments, corrections were consistent	75.1	80.2	82.4	80.1	-5.1†
Plan check comments, corrections made sense for project	75.3	80.4	80.5	79.4	-5.1†
Plan check comments, corrections based on code	78.0	83.3	84.4	80.6	-5.3†
Plan check staff made effort to understand customer needs	75.1	82.5	81.8	76.8	-7.3†
Plan corrections were requested at the appropriate time	71.0	79.3	79.7	73.5	-8.3†
Adequate communication among City staff during plan check	68.5	77.1	78.5	70.5	-8.6†
Plan check staff were responsive	77.4	87.3	85.2	78.2	-9.9†
Overall, satisfied with plan check stage	70.9	81.9	79.5	76.5	-11.0†
Turn-around time set by the City for plan check was reasonable	63.8	78.6	74.9	72.0	-14.8†
Plan check process was completed by target date	65.2	80.3	75.4	70.2	-15.1†

† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

**RATINGS BY MINISTERIAL SUBGROUP** Table 12 displays how the level of agreement with each performance-related statement tested in Question 7 for the plan check stage varied according to ministerial customers' overall performance ratings for the Partners (Question 5). Once again, the results indicate that the minority of customers who were dissatisfied with the Partners' overall performance were also less likely than their counterparts to be satisfied with the Partners' performance on each of the dimensions tested for the plan check stage.

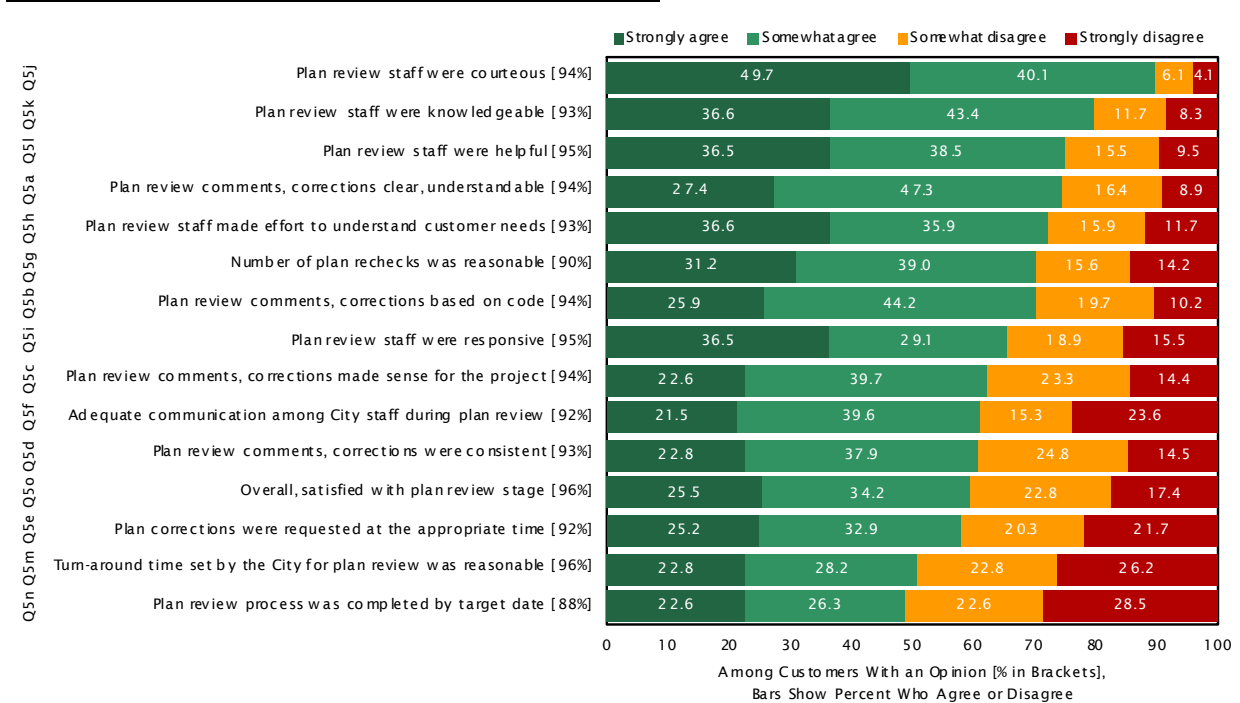
**TABLE 12 AGREEMENT WITH PLAN CHECK STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: MINISTERIAL**

		Overall Satisfaction (Q5)		Difference Between Groups
		Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
% Plan Check Customers That Agreed With Statement	Overall, satisfied with plan check stage	91.5	33.5	58.0
	Adequate communication among City staff during plan check	87.8	34.6	53.2
	Turn-around time set by the City for plan check was reasonable	81.7	31.4	50.3
	Plan check staff made effort to understand customer needs	92.0	44.1	47.9
	Plan check process was completed by target date	80.5	36.1	44.4
	Plan check staff were responsive	92.6	49.3	43.3
	Number of plan rechecks was reasonable	93.2	53.1	40.2
	Plan check staff were helpful	96.0	56.4	39.6
	Plan corrections were requested at the appropriate time	84.8	45.5	39.4
	Plan check comments, corrections made sense for project	89.1	49.8	39.3
	Plan check comments, corrections were consistent	87.3	52.5	34.8
	Plan check comments, corrections clear, understandable	92.7	58.7	34.0
	Plan check comments, corrections based on code	89.6	57.4	32.3
	Plan check staff were knowledgeable	95.3	67.0	28.3
	Plan check staff were courteous	98.4	79.0	19.4

**DISCRETIONARY** Discretionary customers were provided with a nearly identical set of statements regarding the Partners’ performance during the plan review stage of their most recent project. The statements tested, as well as the results for each statement, are shown in Figure 19.

**Question 5: Discretionary** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the City's process of reviewing the plans you submitted for a Planning permit. I'd like you to tell me whether or not you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 19 AGREEMENT WITH PLAN REVIEW STATEMENTS: DISCRETIONARY**



When compared with ministerial customers, discretionary customers were less pleased with the Partners' performance during the plan review stage on each of the dimensions tested. Overall, more than seven-out-of-ten discretionary customers agreed that plan check staff were courteous (90%), knowledgeable (80%), helpful (75%), responsive (72%), and that plan review staff made an effort to understand his or her needs as a customer (73%). Although at least two-thirds of discretionary customers also felt that the number of plan rechecks was reasonable (70%), that plan review comments and corrections were based on reasonable interpretations of the code (70%), and that plan review staff were responsive (66%), far fewer agreed that the turn-around time for the plan review was reasonable (51%) and that the plan review was completed by the target date (49%). Overall, 60% of discretionary customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received during the plan review stage.

When compared with 2008, there were statistically significant decreases in two of the performance dimensions tested in 2009: overall satisfaction with the plan review stage and the turn-around time set for the plan review stage (see Table 13 below).

**TABLE 13 AGREEMENT WITH PLAN REVIEW STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

	Study Year				Difference in Agreement 08 to 09
	2009	2008	2007	2006	
Adequate communication among City staff during plan review	61.1	58.6	60.3	53.6	+2.5
Plan review comments, corrections based on code	70.1	70.1	69.8	70.9	-0.1
Plan corrections were requested at the appropriate time	58.0	58.3	53.3	50.7	-0.2
Plan review staff were knowledgeable	80.0	81.2	73.2	78.0	-1.2
Plan review comments, corrections made sense for the project	62.3	63.9	65.6	63.0	-1.5
Plan review staff made effort to understand customer needs	72.4	76.0	72.8	69.6	-3.6
Plan review staff were courteous	89.8	94.8	89.3	90.7	-5.0
Number of plan rechecks was reasonable	70.2	75.5	71.7	65.6	-5.3
Plan review comments, corrections clear, understandable	74.7	80.6	72.3	75.3	-5.9
Plan review staff were responsive	65.5	71.9	73.1	68.6	-6.4
Plan review staff were helpful	75.0	82.4	73.7	74.2	-7.4
Plan review comments, corrections were consistent	60.7	68.9	55.7	59.9	-8.2
Plan review process was completed by target date	48.9	58.5	51.6	48.8	-9.6
Overall, satisfied with plan review stage	59.7	72.1	65.7	62.3	-12.4†
Turn-around time set by the City for plan review was reasonable	51.0	63.7	59.9	54.7	-12.7†

† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

**RATINGS BY DISCRETIONARY SUBGROUP** Table 14 on the next page displays how the level of agreement with each performance-related statement tested in Question 5 for the plan review stage varied according to discretionary customers' overall performance ratings for the Partners (Question 3).

**TABLE 14 AGREEMENT WITH PLAN REVIEW STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: DISCRETIONARY**

		Overall Satisfaction (Q3)		Difference Between Groups
		Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
% Plan Review Customers That Agreed With Statement	Overall, satisfied with plan review stage	86.8	15.8	71.0
	Plan review process was completed by target date	70.6	13.5	57.1
	Adequate communication among City staff during plan review	82.2	25.9	56.3
	Turn-around time set by the City for plan review was reasonable	71.7	16.1	55.7
	Plan review staff made effort to understand customer needs	93.3	38.2	55.1
	Plan review staff were helpful	95.6	41.1	54.5
	Plan review comments, corrections made sense for the project	84.1	29.8	54.3
	Number of plan rechecks was reasonable	90.7	37.0	53.7
	Plan review comments, corrections based on code	89.8	38.6	51.2
	Plan review comments, corrections were consistent	80.5	31.6	48.9
	Plan review staff were responsive	83.3	35.7	47.6
	Plan review comments, corrections clear, understandable	93.2	47.4	45.8
	Plan review staff were knowledgeable	95.6	52.8	42.7
	Plan corrections were requested at the appropriate time	73.6	32.7	40.8
	Plan review staff were courteous	96.7	77.8	18.9

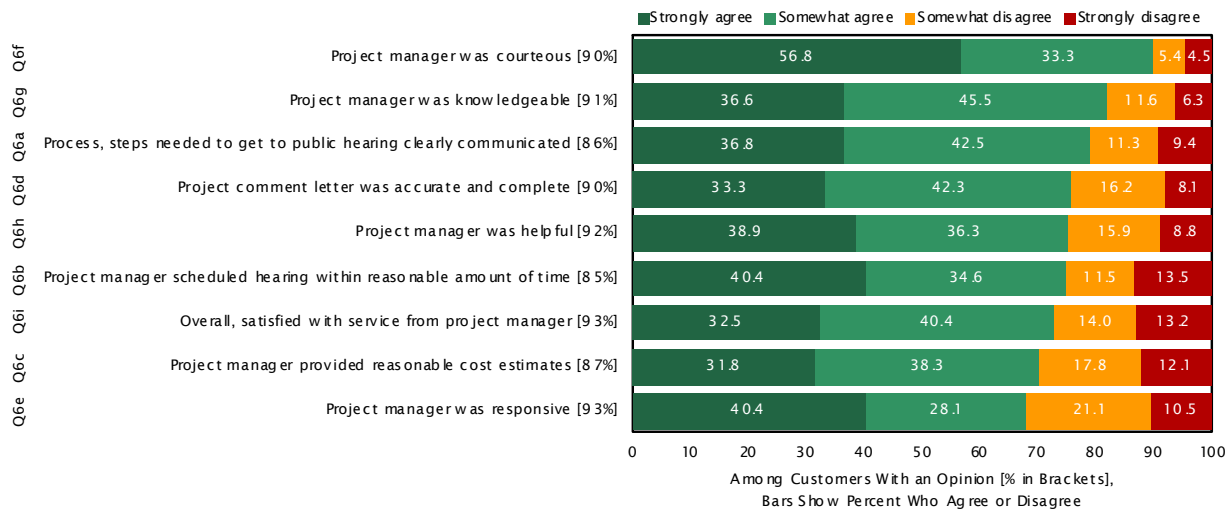
## PROJECT MANAGER

Most discretionary projects are assigned a Project Manager to serve as a single point-of-contact for the customer. The purpose of a Project Manager is to ensure that plan reviews are conducted in a timely and predictable manner, that code issues are resolved, and that the project is brought to an appropriate decision point, such as a public hearing, redesign, or construction permit issuance. Overall, 66% of discretionary customers indicated they personally worked with a Project Manager assigned by the City on their most recent project.

Question 6 in the discretionary survey was designed to measure customers' satisfaction with the performance of their Project Manager on their most recent project. As in previous sections, respondents were provided with a series of performance-related statements about the Project Manager and asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement. The statements tested and the results for each statement are shown in Figure 20 below.

**Question 6: Discretionary** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the project manager assigned to the project by the City. I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience. Here is the (first/next) one: ----- Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 20 AGREEMENT WITH PROJECT MANAGER STATEMENTS: DISCRETIONARY**



At least three-quarters of discretionary customers also agreed that the Project Manager was courteous (90%), knowledgeable (82%), and communicated clearly regarding the process and steps needed to get to a public hearing (79%), that the project comment letter was accurate and complete (76%), that the Project Manager was helpful (75%), and that once all of the documents were ready, the Project Manager scheduled the hearing within a reasonable amount of time (75%). Overall, 73% of customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Project Manager on their most recent discretionary project.

When compared with 2008, there were statistically significant decreases in agreement regarding the scheduling of the hearing within a reasonable amount of time, and the helpfulness and responsiveness of the Project Manager (see Table 15).

**TABLE 15 AGREEMENT WITH PROJECT MANAGER STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

	Study Year				Difference in Agreement 08 to 09
	2009	2008	2007	2006	
Project comment letter was accurate and complete	75.7	79.2	68.6	71.4	-3.5
Project manager was knowledgeable	82.1	85.7	77.0	81.6	-3.6
Project manager provided reasonable cost estimates	70.1	74.2	70.5	75.0	-4.1
Project manager was courteous	90.1	94.6	92.1	92.0	-4.5
Overall, satisfied with service from project manager	72.8	77.9	71.9	70.9	-5.0
Process, steps to get to public hearing clearly communicated	79.2	87.9	72.2	76.7	-8.7
Project manager scheduled hearing within reasonable time	75.0	86.6	76.4	77.1	-11.6†
Project manager was helpful	75.2	87.0	81.2	75.9	-11.8†
Project manager was responsive	68.4	80.3	74.3	73.0	-11.9†

† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

**RATINGS BY DISCRETIONARY SUBGROUP** Table 16 below displays how the level of agreement with each performance-related statement tested in Question 6 for the Project Manager varied according to discretionary customers' overall performance ratings for the Partners (Question 3).

**TABLE 16 AGREEMENT WITH PROJECT MANAGER STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: DISCRETIONARY**

		Overall Satisfaction (Q3)		Difference Between Groups
		Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
% Customers interacted With Project Manager That Agreed With Statement	Overall, satisfied with service from project manager	95.5	41.7	53.8
	Project manager was helpful	95.4	47.9	47.5
	Project manager provided reasonable cost estimates	90.2	43.5	46.7
	Project manager was responsive	87.9	41.7	46.2
	Project comment letter was accurate and complete	92.2	53.2	39.0
	Project manager was knowledgeable	96.9	61.7	35.2
	Process, steps needed to get to public hearing clearly communicated	92.1	60.5	31.6
	Project manager scheduled hearing within reasonable amount of time	84.1	61.0	23.2
	Project manager was courteous	98.5	78.3	20.2

## PUBLIC HEARING

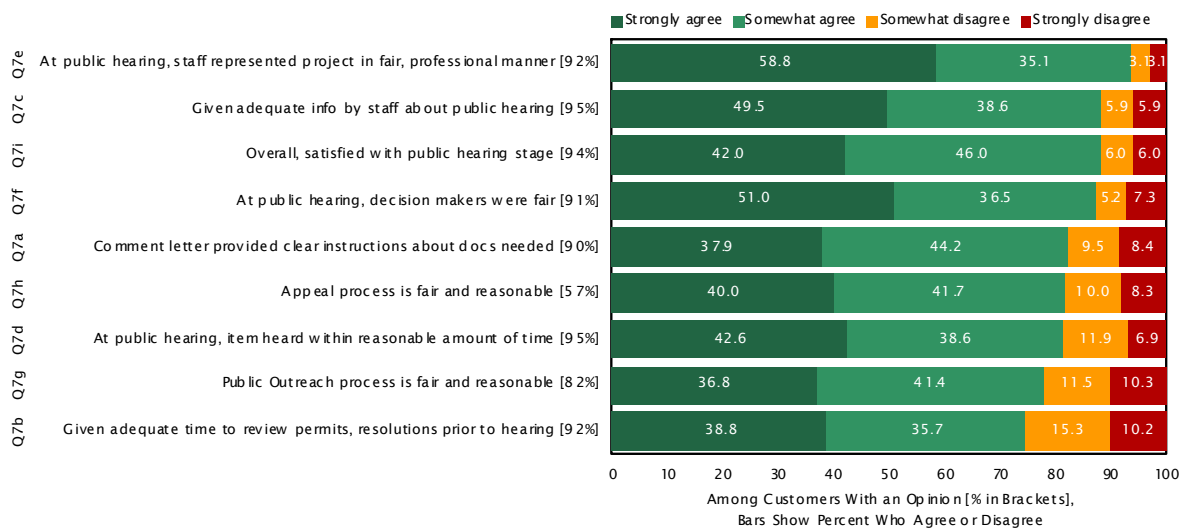
The approval of ministerial projects is based solely on whether a project complies with regulations of the Municipal Code and, where applicable, any prior approved discretionary decision. If a project complies, the City must, by law, issue a permit.

Discretionary projects, on the other hand, are labeled as such because some level of discretion is given to the assigned decision makers when deciding whether to approve or deny a project. This decision usually takes place at a noticed public hearing once the plans are submitted and Development Services staff has reviewed them against codes for discretionary permits. Community groups also play a role in this process by reviewing plans and making recommendations to the City Council, Planning Commission and other decision makers.

Overall, 57% of discretionary customers indicated they were personally involved in the public hearing stage on their most recent project. Question 7 in the discretionary survey was designed to measure customers' satisfaction with the public hearing process. As in previous sections, respondents were provided with a series of statements about the public hearing process and asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement. The statements tested and the results for each statement are shown in Figure 21.

**Question 7: Discretionary** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the public hearing process. I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 21 AGREEMENT WITH PUBLIC HEARING STATEMENTS: DISCRETIONARY**



More than 85% of discretionary customers agreed that staff represented their project in a fair, professional manner (94%), that they were given adequate information by staff about how the public hearing process would go (88%), and that the appeal process is fair and reasonable (88%). Overall, 88% of discretionary customers said they were satisfied with the service they received during the public hearing stage.

When compared with 2008, there were statistically significant decreases in agreement regarding the perceived fairness and reasonableness of the appeal process, the clarity of the and correctness of the project comment letter, and the time given to review documents prior to the hearing (see Table 17 below).

**TABLE 17 AGREEMENT WITH PUBLIC HEARING STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

	Study Year				Difference in Agreement 08 to 09
	2009	2008	2007	2006	
At public hearing, staff represented project fairly, professionally	93.8	96.0	88.8	85.4	-2.2
At public hearing, decision makers were fair	87.5	90.9	86.2	84.9	-3.4
Overall, satisfied with public hearing stage	88.0	92.2	82.2	84.6	-4.2
Given adequate info by staff about public hearing	88.1	94.2	89.1	83.9	-6.1
At public hearing, item heard within reasonable amount of time	81.2	87.4	83.5	81.0	-6.2
Public Outreach process is fair and reasonable	78.2	86.1	83.1	75.9	-8.0
Appeal process is fair and reasonable	81.7	91.5	82.1	80.8	-9.9†
Comment letter provided clear instructions about docs needed	82.1	93.0	78.2	78.2	-10.9†
Given adequate time to review permits, resolutions prior to hearing	74.5	88.2	84.4	77.3	-13.7†

† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

**RATINGS BY DISCRETIONARY SUBGROUP** Table 18 below displays how the level of agreement with each performance-related statement tested in Question 7 for the public hearing stage varied according to discretionary customers' overall performance ratings for the Partners (Question 3). Interestingly, responses were fairly consistent between the two groups.

**TABLE 18 AGREEMENT WITH PUBLIC HEARING STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: DISCRETIONARY**

		Overall Satisfaction (Q3)		Difference Between Groups
		Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
% Customers interacted in Public Hearing That Agreed With Statement	At public hearing, item heard within reasonable amount of time	94.7	63.6	31.1
	Given adequate time to review permits, resolutions prior to hearing	87.3	58.1	29.1
	Comment letter provided clear, correct instructions about documents needed	94.4	65.9	28.6
	Overall, satisfied with public hearing stage	98.2	74.4	23.8
	Public Outreach process is fair and reasonable	85.4	69.2	16.2
	Appeal process is fair and reasonable	88.2	73.1	15.2
	At public hearing, decision makers were fair	93.0	79.5	13.5
	Given adequate info by staff about public hearing	93.0	81.8	11.2
	At public hearing, staff represented project in fair, professional manner	98.2	87.8	10.4

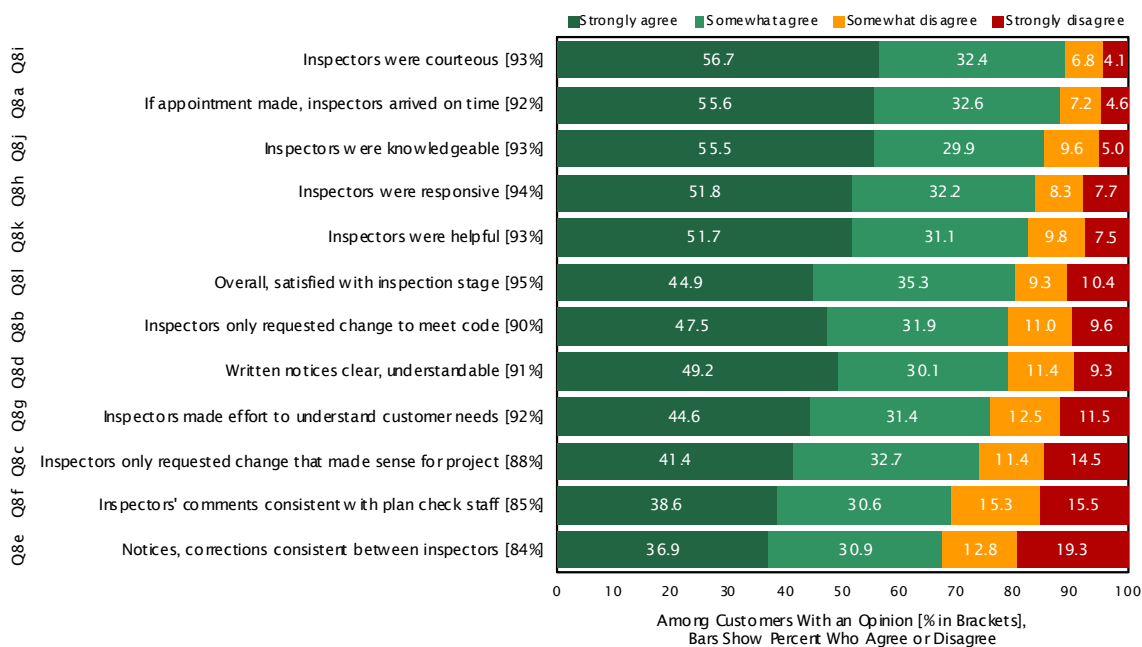
## BUILDING INSPECTIONS

The final stage in the process is the inspection stage, which involves the on-site examination of a project completed pursuant to an issued permit. Inspections are conducted to ensure that projects are completed according to plan and are in compliance with all model codes and City ordinances. On-site inspections are conducted by a staff of trained inspectors who specialize in each of the project and permit types. Overall, 58% of ministerial customers indicated they were personally involved in the inspection stage on their most recent project.<sup>9</sup>

As in previous sections, customers' satisfaction with the Partners' performance during the inspection stage was measured by providing them with a series of performance-related statements about the inspection stage and asking whether they agreed or disagreed with the statements. The statements tested and the results for each statement are shown in Figure 22.

**Question 8: Ministerial** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the building inspection process. I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 22 AGREEMENT WITH BUILDING INSPECTION STATEMENTS: MINISTERIAL**



Overall, the vast majority of ministerial customers agreed that inspectors were courteous (89%), arrived on-time for scheduled appointments (88%), and were knowledgeable (85%), responsive (84%), and helpful (83%). Levels of agreement were somewhat lower with respect to the perceived consistency of notices and corrections issued by different inspectors on the project (68%), the consistency of inspectors' comments with those of plan check staff (69%), and that changes were requested only if they made sense for the project (74%). Overall, 80% of ministerial customers

9. Because of the length of the discretionary survey, only ministerial customers were asked questions relating to the inspection stage.

agreed that they were satisfied with the service they received during the inspection stage of the process.

Agreement with aspects of the building inspection stage was lower for all service dimensions tested in the current study, with significant decreases seen for 10 of the 12 items shown in Table 19.

**TABLE 19 AGREEMENT WITH BUILDING INSPECTION STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

	Study Year				Difference in Agreement 08 to 09
	2009	2008	2007	2006	
If appointment made, inspectors arrived on time	88.2	90.5	88.4	90.3	-2.3
Inspectors were courteous	89.1	93.0	94.3	90.5	-3.9
Inspectors only requested change to meet code	79.4	84.7	82.2	79.9	-5.3†
Inspectors were responsive	84.0	89.6	88.8	86.2	-5.6†
Inspectors only requested change that made sense for project	74.1	80.0	78.4	73.2	-6.0†
Inspectors were knowledgeable	85.4	91.9	91.8	84.8	-6.5†
Inspectors were helpful	82.8	89.6	90.0	82.8	-6.9†
Written notices clear, understandable	79.3	86.7	89.2	82.7	-7.5†
Overall, satisfied with inspection stage	80.2	87.9	84.8	83.0	-7.6†
Notices, corrections consistent between inspectors	67.8	76.4	73.9	67.4	-8.5†
Inspectors' comments consistent with plan check staff	69.2	78.3	77.9	72.0	-9.2†
Inspectors made effort to understand customer needs	76.0	86.7	83.9	74.9	-10.7†

† Statistically significant change (p < 0.05) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

**RATINGS BY MINISTERIAL SUBGROUP** Table 20 below displays how the level of agreement with each performance-related statement tested in Question 8 for the inspection stage varied according to ministerial customers' overall performance ratings for the Partners (Question 5).

**TABLE 20 AGREEMENT WITH BUILDING INSPECTION STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: MINISTERIAL**

		Overall Satisfaction (Q5)		Difference Between Groups
		Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
% Building Inspection Customers That Agreed With Statement	Inspectors made effort to understand customer needs	90.7	51.6	39.1
	Overall, satisfied with inspection stage	94.6	56.4	38.3
	Notices, corrections consistent between inspectors	82.0	44.6	37.4
	Inspectors' comments consistent with plan check staff	83.3	45.8	37.4
	Inspectors only requested change that made sense for project	87.5	50.3	37.1
	Inspectors were helpful	94.2	63.5	30.7
	Inspectors were responsive	95.3	65.0	30.3
	Written notices clear, understandable	89.2	62.6	26.6
	Inspectors only requested change to meet code	88.9	62.9	26.0
	Inspectors were knowledgeable	92.1	74.2	17.9
	Inspectors were courteous	94.9	79.2	15.7
	If appointment made, inspectors arrived on time	92.3	80.5	11.8

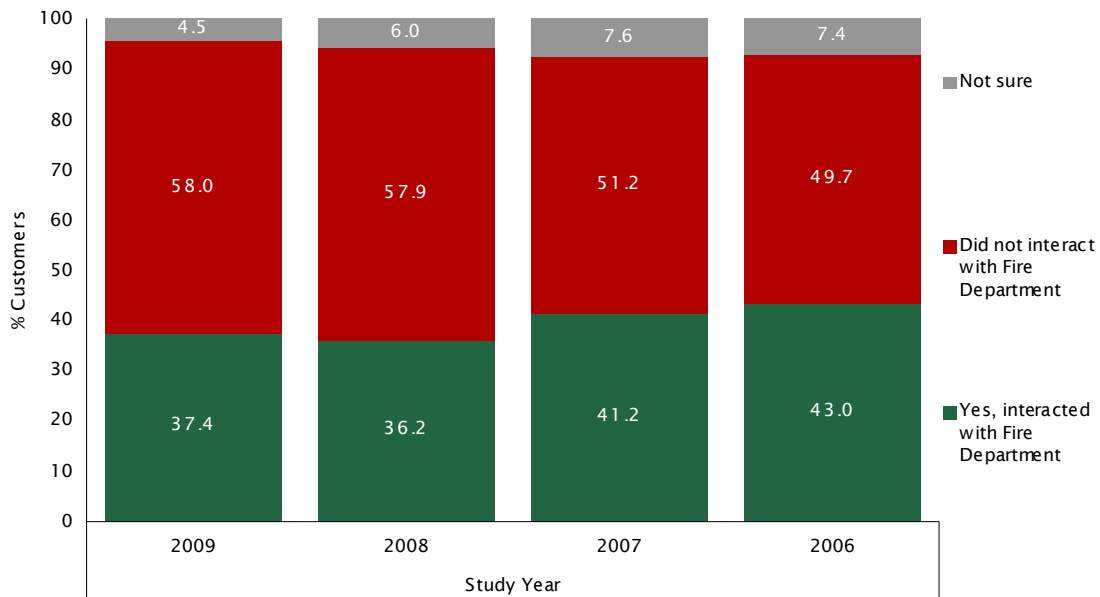
# FIRE DEPARTMENT

Development Services projects that present fire-related issues—such as a need for fire sprinkler systems and/or fire alarm systems—require special permits, project review and inspection by San José’s Bureau of Fire Prevention. This section of the report presents the findings of several questions that were designed to profile customers’ experiences when interacting specifically with the Fire Department.

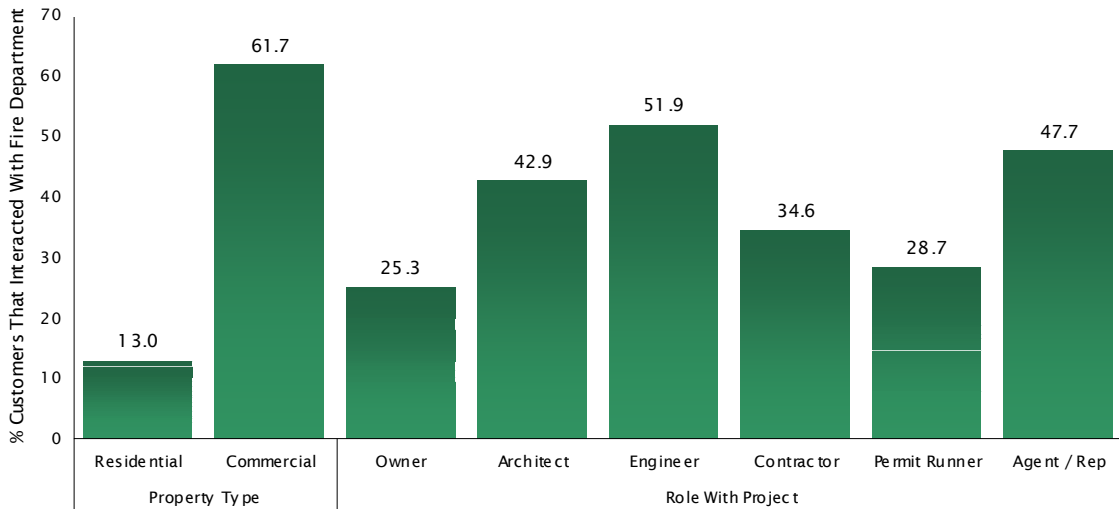
**RECENT EXPERIENCE WITH FIRE BUREAU** The first question in this series was used as a screening question to identify customers who, in the past six months, received permit, plan review, or inspection services from San José’s Fire Department on at least one project. Overall, 37% of ministerial customers said they had received such services from the Fire Department during the period of interest, which is nearly identical to the 36% found in 2008 (see Figure 23). The corresponding figure among discretionary customers was 53%, which was also similar to the percentage seen in 2008 (Figure 25). Those working on commercial projects, engineers, and architects were the most likely to report having a project that required interaction with the Fire Department (see Figures 24 & 26).

**Question 9: Ministerial/Question 8: Discretionary** *In the past six months, did one or more of your projects require a permit, project review, or inspection from San José’s Fire Department?*

**FIGURE 23 ONE OR MORE PROJECTS IN PAST SIX MONTHS REQUIRED INVOLVEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**



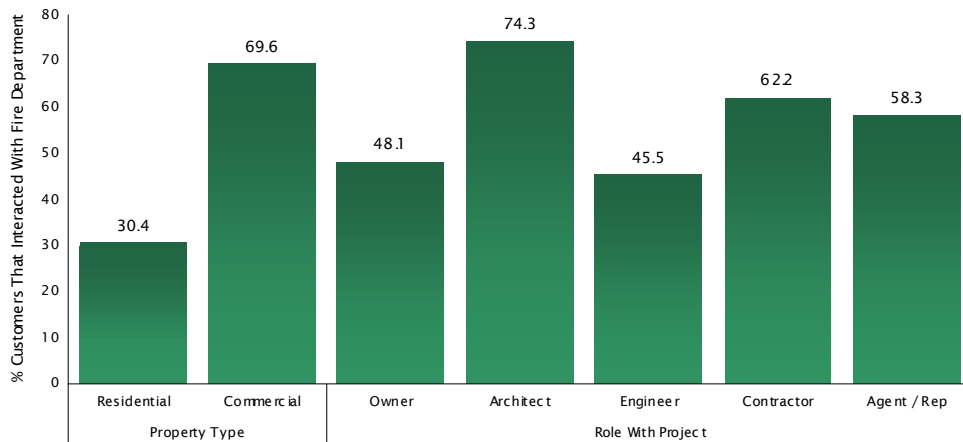
**FIGURE 24 ONE OR MORE PROJECTS IN PAST SIX MONTHS REQUIRED INVOLVEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT BY PROPERTY TYPE & ROLE WITH PROJECT: MINISTERIAL**



**FIGURE 25 ONE OR MORE PROJECTS IN PAST SIX MONTHS REQUIRED INVOLVEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**



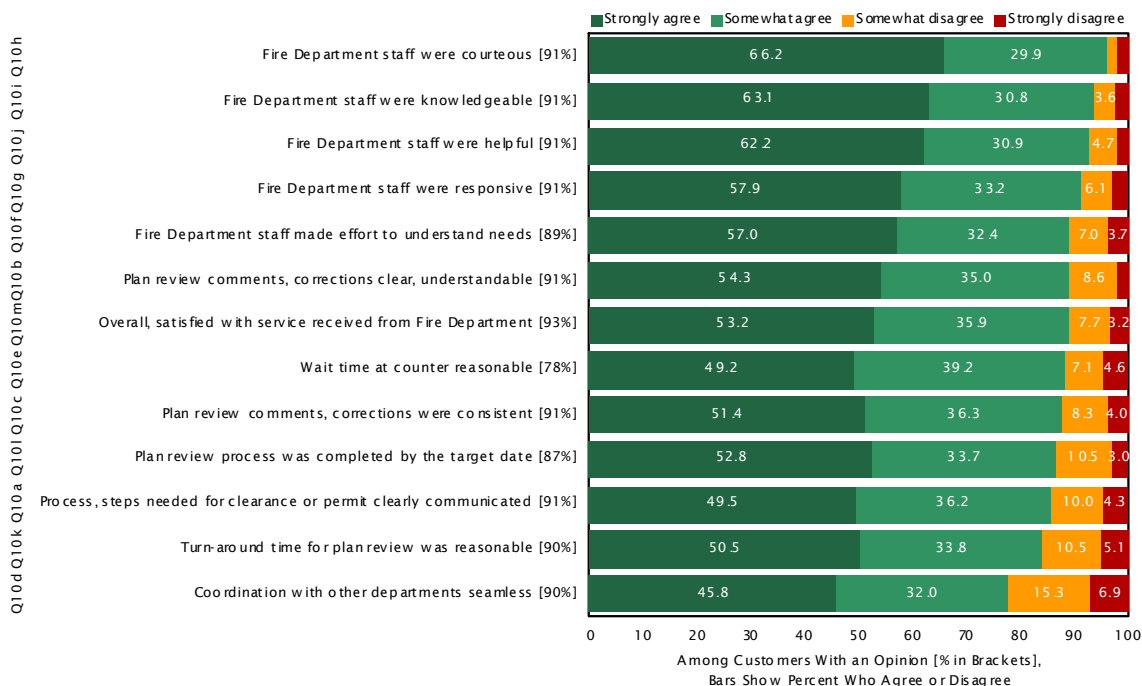
**FIGURE 26 ONE OR MORE PROJECTS IN PAST SIX MONTHS REQUIRED INVOLVEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT BY PROPERTY TYPE & ROLE WITH PROJECT: DISCRETIONARY**



**MINISTERIAL** Ministerial customers’ satisfaction with the Fire Bureau’s performance on past projects was measured in the same manner described previously throughout this report. For each of the performance-related statements paraphrased in Figure 27, customers were simply asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement based on their recent experience with the Fire Department.

**Question 10: Ministerial** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the service you received from San José's Fire Department on these projects. For each statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience with the Fire Department. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 27 AGREEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS: MINISTERIAL**



Overall, at least 90% of ministerial customers agreed that Fire Department staff were courteous (96%), knowledgeable (94%), helpful (93%), and responsive (91%). At least 85% of ministerial customers also agreed that the Fire Department made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (89%), that plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable (89%), that the wait time at the counter was reasonable (88%), that plan review comments and corrections were consistent (88%), that the plan review process was completed by the target date (87%), and that the process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit were clearly communicated (86%). When compared with the other dimensions tested, customers expressed slightly lower levels of satisfaction with respect to the reasonableness of the turn-around time set for plan review (84%) and communication/coordination between Departments during plan review (78%). Overall, 89% of ministerial customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Fire Department.

When compared with 2008, there were no statistically significant changes in opinion in 2009 (Table 21).

**TABLE 21 AGREEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

	Study Year				Difference in Agreement 08 to 09
	2009	2008	2007	2006	
Turn-around time for plan review was reasonable	84.4	81.4	82.3	76.5	+2.9
Plan review comments, corrections were consistent	87.8	85.2	87.0	85.4	+2.6
Overall, satisfied with service received from Fire Department	89.1	87.2	89.7	80.1	+1.9
Coordination with other departments seamless	77.8	76.3	78.0	72.8	+1.5
Plan review process was completed by the target date	86.5	85.2	84.1	75.7	+1.4
Plan review comments, corrections clear, understandable	89.3	89.0	87.8	87.6	+0.3
Fire Department staff were responsive	91.1	91.0	91.7	86.2	+0.0
Fire Department staff were courteous	96.0	96.6	96.9	95.1	-0.6
Fire Department staff were knowledgeable	93.9	94.8	95.5	93.0	-0.9
Wait time at counter reasonable	88.3	90.0	93.3	86.6	-1.6
Fire Department staff were helpful	93.2	95.2	94.7	N/A	-2.0
Process, steps needed for clearance or permit clearly communicated	85.7	88.6	84.4	80.6	-2.9
Fire Department staff made effort to understand needs	89.3	92.4	94.3	85.2	-3.0

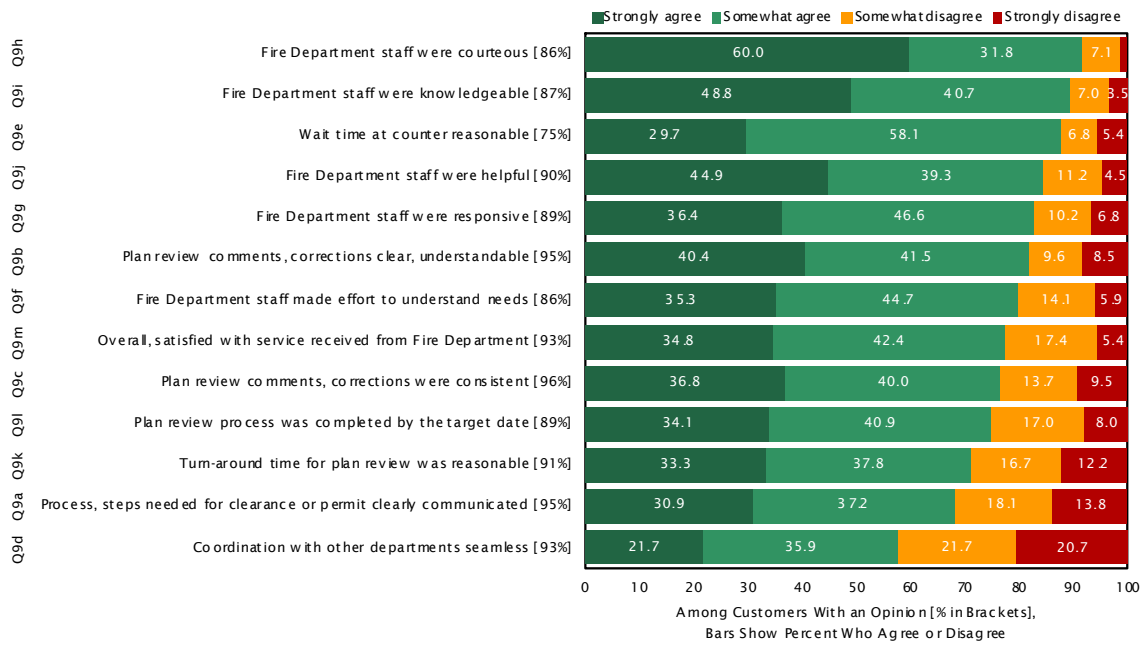
**DISCRETIONARY** Discretionary customers were provided with an identical set of statements regarding the Fire Department’s performance on recent projects. The statements tested, as well as the results for each statement, are shown in Figure 28 on the next page.

When compared with ministerial customers, discretionary customers were less pleased with the Fire Department’s performance on each of the dimensions tested. Overall, at least 85% of discretionary customers agreed that Fire Department staff were courteous (92%) and knowledgeable (90%), and that wait time at the counter was reasonable (88%). Although nearly eight out of ten discretionary customers also agreed that Fire Department staff were helpful (84%) and responsive (83%), that plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable (82%), and that Fire Department staff made an effort to understand his or her needs (80%), a smaller percentage agreed that plan review comments and corrections were consistent (77%), or that the plan review process was completed by the target date set by the Fire Department (75%).

When compared with the other dimensions tested, discretionary customers were least satisfied with the communication/coordination between Departments during plan review (58%). Overall, 77% of discretionary customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Fire Department.

**Question 9: Discretionary** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the service you received from San José's Fire Department on these projects. For each statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience with the Fire Department. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 28 AGREEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS: DISCRETIONARY**



The 2009 results showed general trend of decline in satisfaction from 2008, with statistically significant decreases regarding the turn-around time for the plan review and the process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit (see Table 22).

**TABLE 22 AGREEMENT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

	Study Year				Difference in Agreement 08 to 09
	2009	2008	2007	2006	
Wait time at counter reasonable	87.8	89.0	90.9	86.7	-1.2
Plan review comments, corrections were consistent	76.8	79.3	76.3	67.2	-2.5
Fire Department staff were helpful	84.3	86.8	89.8	N/A	-2.5
Fire Department staff were knowledgeable	89.5	92.2	89.0	88.7	-2.7
Fire Department staff were courteous	91.8	95.6	93.5	92.2	-3.8
Plan review comments, corrections clear, understandable	81.9	89.4	83.3	73.7	-7.4
Coordination with other departments seamless	57.6	65.9	68.7	53.0	-8.3
Fire Department staff were responsive	83.0	91.4	83.9	76.5	-8.4
Fire Department staff made effort to understand needs	80.0	89.0	85.8	78.0	-9.0
Overall, satisfied with service received from Fire Department	77.2	86.3	81.2	71.0	-9.1
Plan review process was completed by the target date	75.0	84.3	79.0	69.4	-9.3
Turn-around time for plan review was reasonable	71.1	88.0	77.9	67.7	-16.9†
Process, steps needed for clearance or permit clearly communicated	68.1	86.3	79.1	66.9	-18.2†

† Statistically significant change (p < 0.05) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

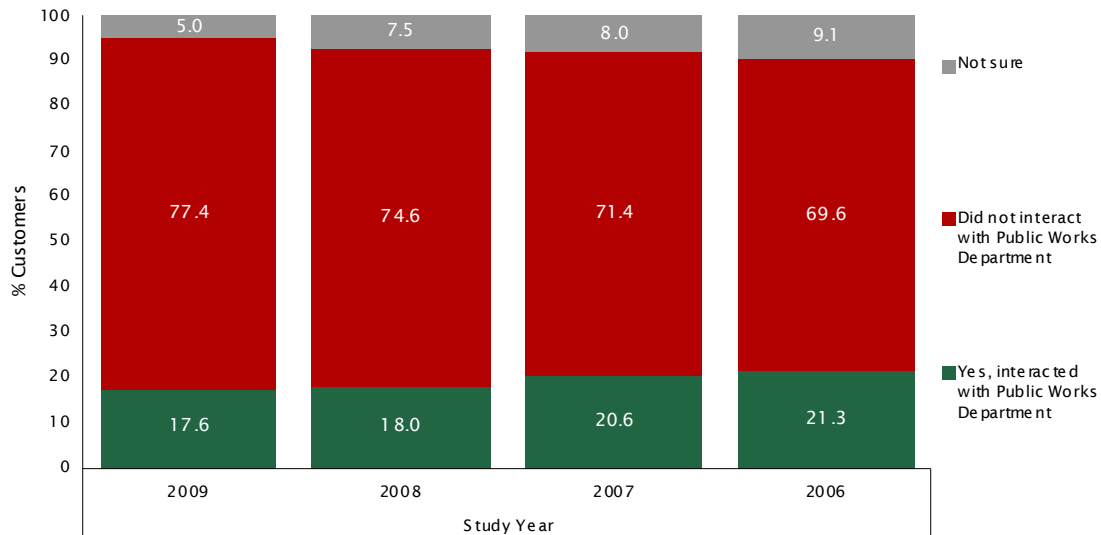
## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

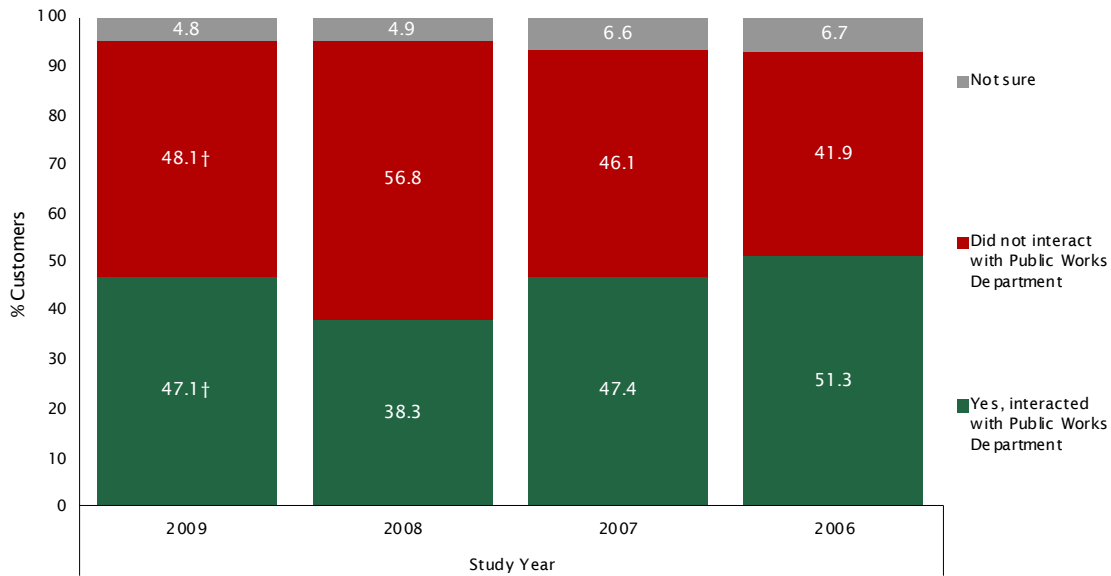
Development Services projects that present public works-related issues—such as projects that impact public facilities (e.g., traffic, streets, sewers, utilities and median landscaping) and/or are located in a flood hazard zone or geological hazard zone—require special permits, project review and clearances by San José’s Public Works Department. This section of the report presents the findings of several questions that were designed to profile customers’ experiences when interacting specifically with the Public Works Department.

**RECENT EXPERIENCE WITH PUBLIC WORKS** The first question in this series was used as a screening question to identify customers who, in the past six months, received permit, project review and/or inspection services from San José’s Public Works Department on at least one project. Overall, 18% of ministerial customers surveyed indicated that they had received such services from the Public Works Department during the period of interest (Figure 29). The corresponding figure among discretionary customers was 47%, which represents a statistically significant increase since 2008 (see Figure 30).

**Question 11: Ministerial/Question 10: Discretionary** *In the past six months, did one or more of your projects require a permit, project review, or inspection from San José’s Public Works Department?*

**FIGURE 29 PROJECT IN PAST SIX MONTHS WITH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**



**FIGURE 30 PROJECT IN PAST SIX MONTHS WITH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

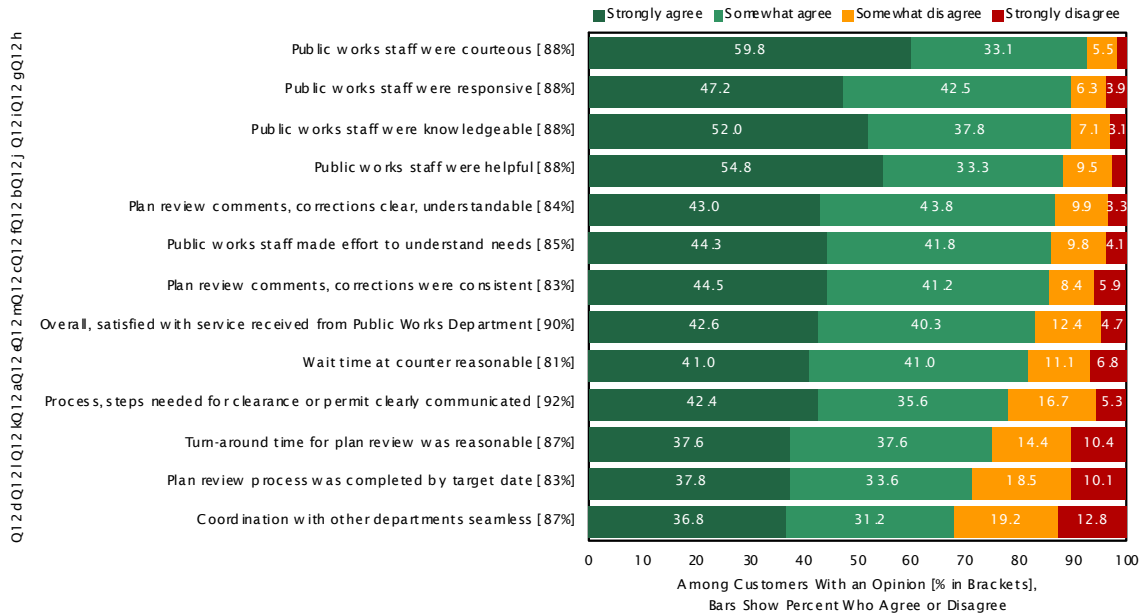
† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

**MINISTERIAL** Ministerial customers' satisfaction with the Public Works Department's performance on past projects was measured in the same manner described previously for the Fire Department. For each of the performance-related statements paraphrased in Figure 31, customers were simply asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement based on their recent experience with the Public Works Department.

Overall, at least 85% of ministerial customers agreed that Public Works staff were courteous (93%), responsive (90%), knowledgeable (90%), helpful (88%), that plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable (87%), that staff made an effort to understand their needs as a customer (86%), and that plan review comments and corrections were consistent (86%). Ministerial customers were less likely to agree that the turn-around time set for the plan review was reasonable (75%), that the plan review process was completed by the target date (72%), and that coordination with other departments was done in a seamless manner (68%). Overall, 83% of ministerial customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Public Works Department on recent projects.

**Question 12: Ministerial** Next, I'm going to read several statements about the service you received from San José's Public Works Department on these projects. For each statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience with the Public Works Department. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

**FIGURE 31 AGREEMENT WITH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS: MINISTERIAL**



The overall trend in 2009 regarding the Public Works stage among ministerial customers was a positive one with only a few exceptions. Most notably, there was a significant decrease in the percentage of ministerial customers who agreed that the plan review was completed by the target date (Table 23).

**TABLE 23 AGREEMENT WITH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

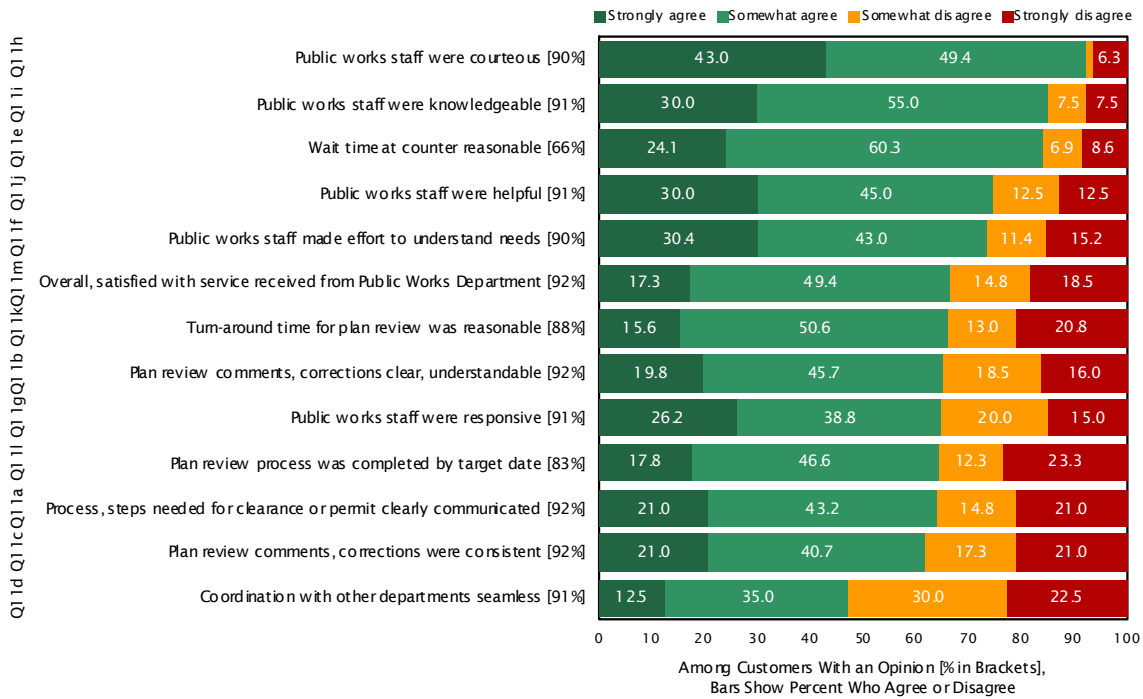
	Study Year				Difference in Agreement 08 to 09
	2009	2008	2007	2006	
Public works staff were responsive	89.8	84.4	84.2	81.9	+5.3
Overall, satisfied with service received from Public Works Department	82.9	79.3	81.9	76.0	+3.7
Plan review comments, corrections clear, understandable	86.8	83.7	82.6	77.5	+3.1
Plan review comments, corrections were consistent	85.7	83.2	75.9	77.9	+2.5
Public works staff were knowledgeable	89.8	87.4	88.9	84.7	+2.4
Public works staff were helpful	88.1	85.9	84.1	N/A	+2.2
Process, steps needed for clearance or permit clearly communicated	78.0	76.5	80.0	76.4	+1.6
Public works staff made effort to understand needs	86.1	85.5	84.5	79.0	+0.6
Public works staff were courteous	92.9	92.5	93.1	89.5	+0.4
Turn-around time for plan review was reasonable	75.2	77.0	81.0	72.9	-1.8
Wait time at counter reasonable	82.1	89.3	92.4	84.6	-7.3
Coordination with other departments seamless	68.0	76.2	72.5	65.7	-8.2
Plan review process was completed by target date	71.4	82.8	79.9	75.4	-11.4†

† Statistically significant change (p < 0.05) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

**DISCRETIONARY** Discretionary customers were provided with an identical set of statements regarding the Public Works Department’s performance on recent projects. The statements tested, as well as the results for each statement, are shown in Figure 32 below.

**Question 11: Discretionary** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the service you received from San José's Public Works Department on these projects. For each statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience with the Public Works Department. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 32 AGREEMENT WITH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS: DISCRETIONARY**



Overall, at least three-quarters of discretionary customers agreed that Public Works staff were courteous (92%) and knowledgeable (85%), that wait times at the counter were reasonable (85%), and that Public Works staff were helpful (75%). Most discretionary customers also agreed that the Public Works staff made efforts to understand their needs as a customer (74%). Agreement was lower for other services, most notably that plan review comments and corrections were consistent (62%) and that coordination with other departments was seamless (48%). Overall, 67% of discretionary customers indicated that they were satisfied with the service they received from the Public Works Department on recent projects.

When compared with 2008, the general trend was one of declining satisfaction, although there were no statistically significant changes between the two studies (Table 24).

**TABLE 24 AGREEMENT WITH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

	Study Year				Difference in Agreement 08 to 09
	2009	2008	2007	2006	
Public works staff were knowledgeable	85.0	82.7	81.8	87.0	+2.3
Plan review process was completed by target date	64.4	62.2	56.8	68.4	+2.2
Turn-around time for plan review was reasonable	66.2	67.1	57.9	71.2	-0.9
Public works staff were courteous	92.4	93.3	91.0	96.8	-0.9
Wait time at counter reasonable	84.5	85.5	89.2	92.3	-1.0
Plan review comments, corrections were consistent	61.7	63.2	59.2	71.9	-1.4
Overall, satisfied with service received from Public Works Department	66.7	70.9	71.6	78.6	-4.2
Process, steps needed for clearance or permit clearly communicated	64.2	68.4	69.6	73.2	-4.2
Plan review comments, corrections clear, understandable	65.4	71.1	67.3	77.2	-5.6
Public works staff were helpful	75.0	81.3	81.0	N/A	-6.3
Coordination with other departments seamless	47.5	55.3	52.5	60.2	-7.8
Public works staff made effort to understand needs	73.4	81.8	76.0	86.1	-8.4
Public works staff were responsive	65.0	77.9	76.8	80.0	-12.9

## INFORMATION ACCESS

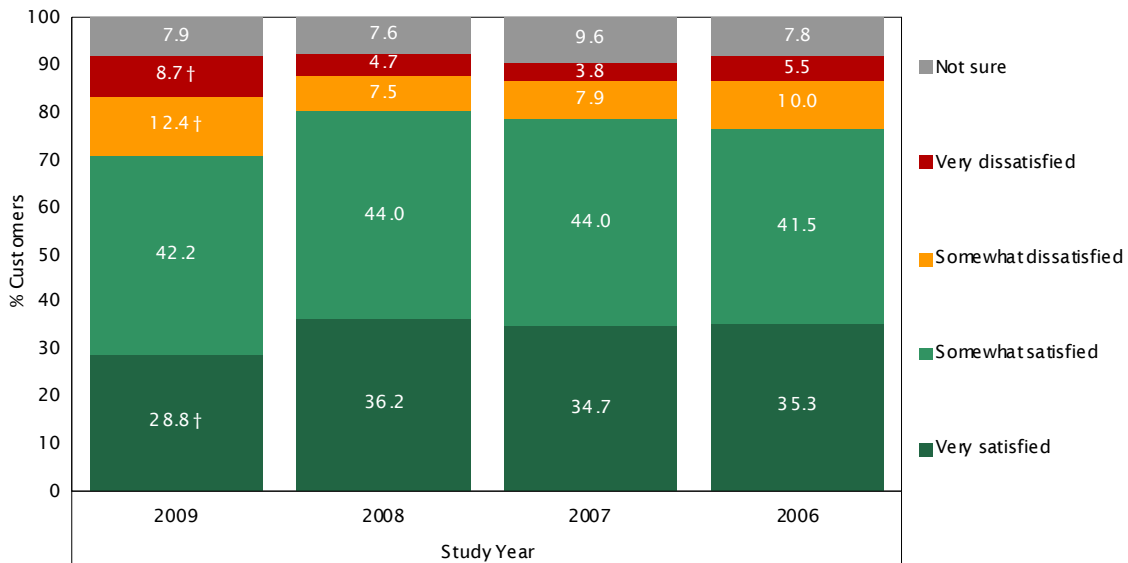
Customers must be well-informed about the types of permits and approvals that their project will need, as well as the steps and documents required for permit approval, if they are to successfully navigate the development process in an efficient and timely manner. To assist them in this respect, San José’s Development Services Partners provide detailed information and step-by-step guides through their website, brochures, and through workshops and meetings.

One of the goals of this study was to measure customers’ use of, and satisfaction with, key information sources provided by the Partners. The first question in this series simply asked whether they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the City’s efforts to make development services information available online, in brochures, and through meetings.

**MINISTERIAL** As shown in Figure 33, seven-in-ten (71%) ministerial customers indicated that they were either very (29%) or somewhat satisfied (42%) with the Partners’ efforts to make information available to them in 2009, and 21% were dissatisfied. These findings represents a significant decrease in satisfaction with information access since the 2008 study, which found satisfaction among approximately 80% of ministerial customers.

**Question 13: Ministerial** *For the remaining questions, please answer for the City of San José as a whole. Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to make development services information available through their web site, brochures and meetings?*

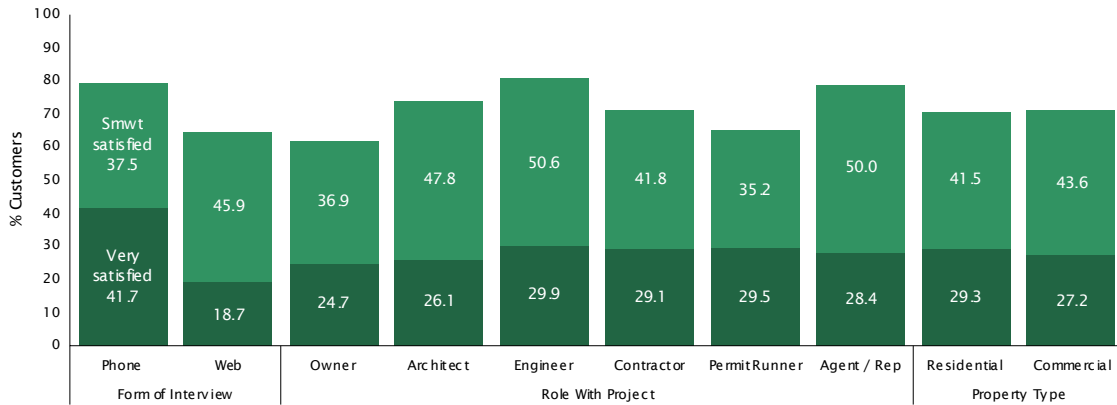
**FIGURE 33 SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ACCESS BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**



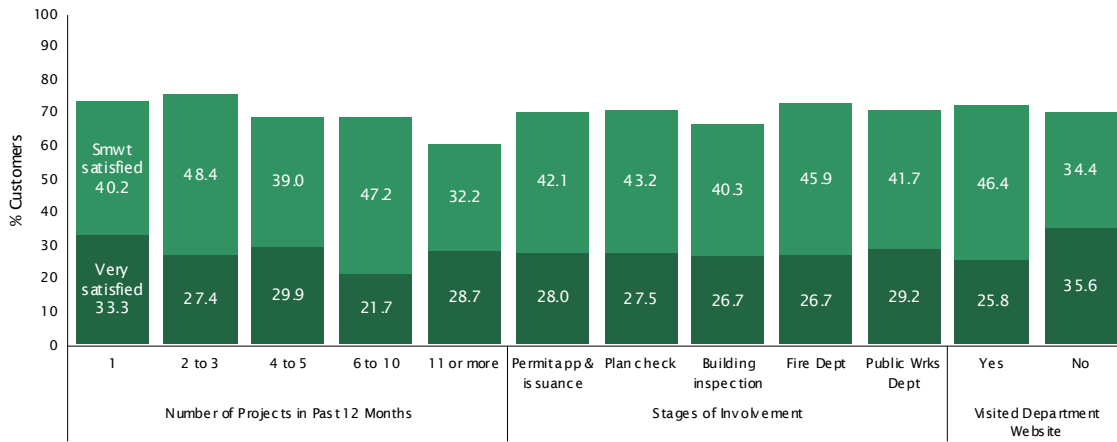
† Statistically significant change (p < 0.05) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

Figures 34 and 35 show how overall satisfaction with the Partners' efforts to make information available to customers varied in 2009 by the form of interview, their role in the project, property type, the number of projects they were involved with in the City of San José in 2008, their involvement in various stages of their most recent project, and whether they had visited the Development Services website in the 12 months preceding the interview.

**FIGURE 34 SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ACCESS BY FORM OF INTERVIEW, ROLE WITH PROJECT & PROPERTY TYPE: MINISTERIAL**



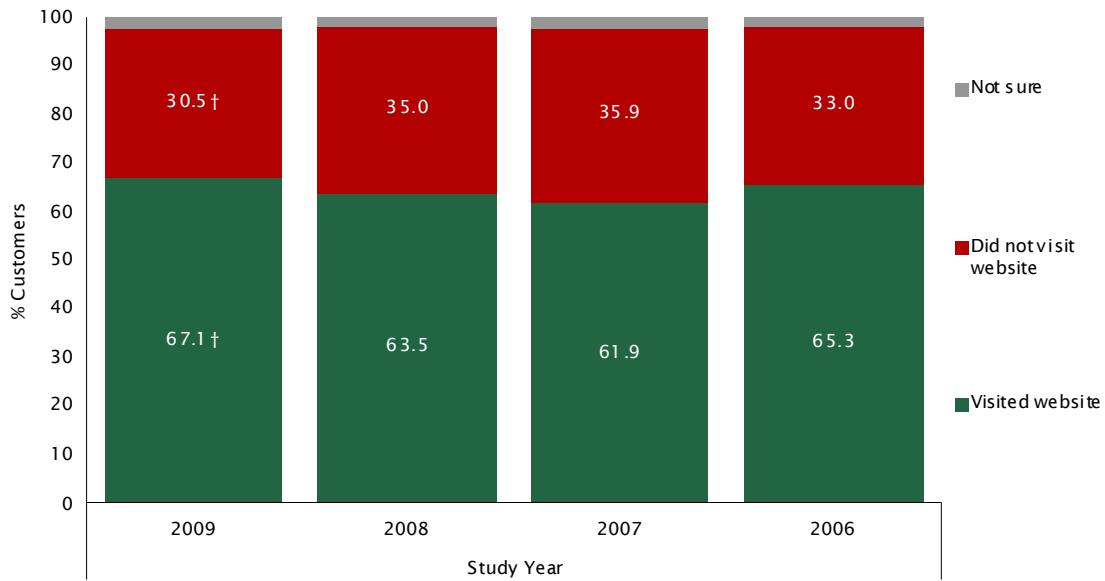
**FIGURE 35 SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ACCESS BY NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS, STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT & VISITED DEPARTMENT WEBSITE: MINISTERIAL**



Approximately 67% of ministerial customers reported that they had visited the Development Services' website in the 12 months prior to the interview (see Figure 36), which represents a statistically significant increase since the 2008 study. When compared with their respective ministerial counterparts, visitation to the Development Services' website was most frequently reported by architects and customers who were associated with multiple projects (see Figure 37).

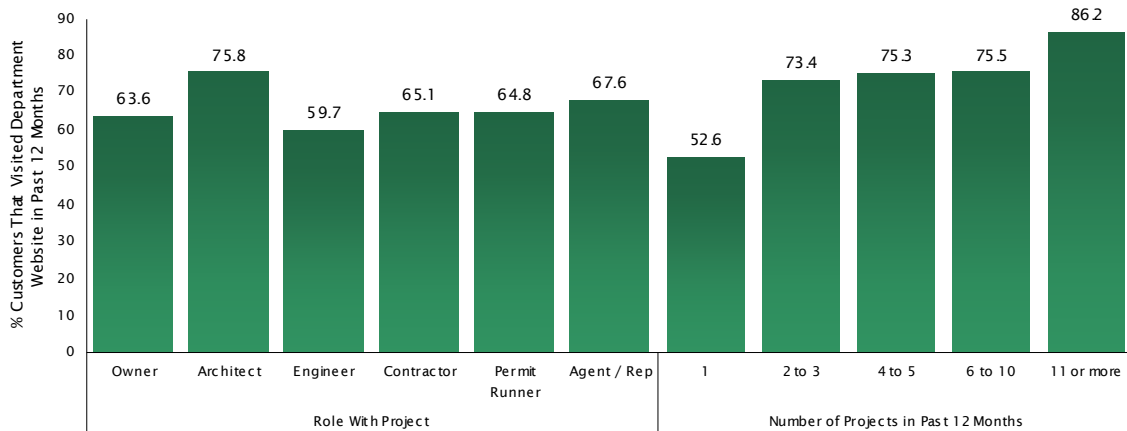
**Question 14: Ministerial** *In the past 12 months, have you visited the City's Development Services web site?*

**FIGURE 36 WEBSITE VISIT IN PAST 12 MONTHS BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**



† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

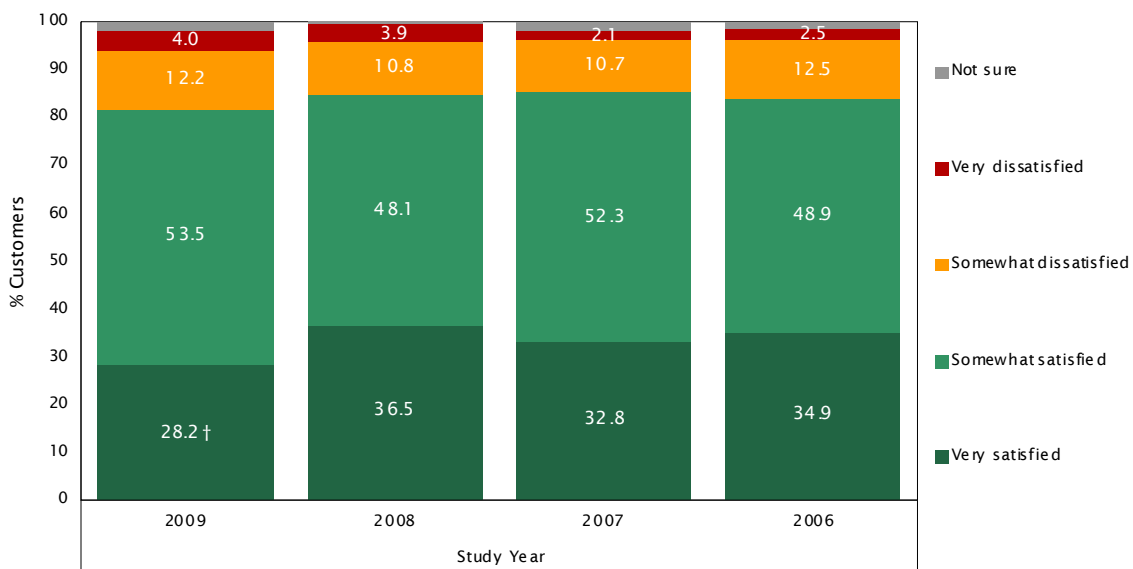
**FIGURE 37 WEBSITE VISIT IN PAST 12 MONTHS BY ROLE WITH PROJECT & NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS: MINISTERIAL**



The final question in this series, which was asked only of customers who had visited the Development Services website in the 12 months prior to the interview, inquired as to whether the customer was satisfied or dissatisfied with the content of the website. Overall, 82% of ministerial customers indicated that they were satisfied with the content of the site in 2008, which is similar to the 2008 findings. There was, however, a significant decrease in the percentage of ministerial customers who were *very* satisfied. For the interested reader, figures 39 and 40 display how satisfaction with the content of the Development Services website varied by subgroups of ministerial customers.

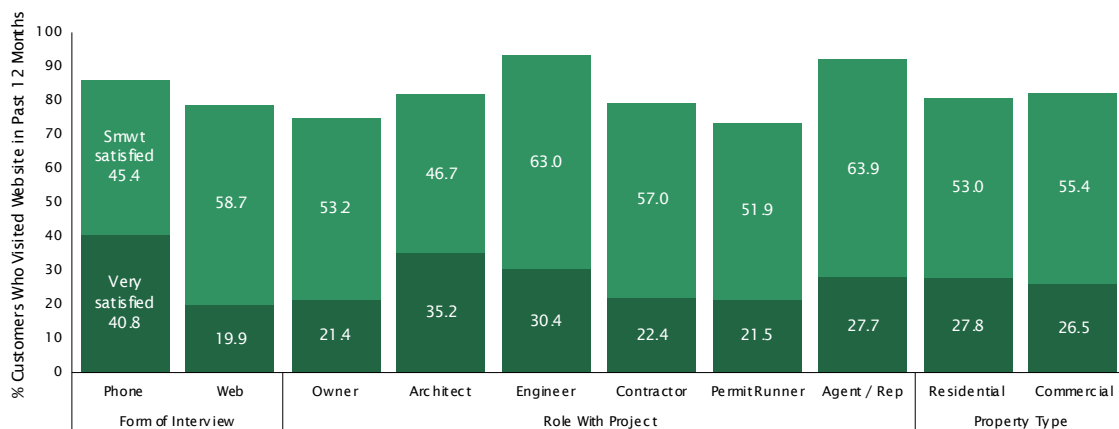
**Question 15: Ministerial** Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the content of the web site?

**FIGURE 38 SATISFACTION WITH WEBSITE BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

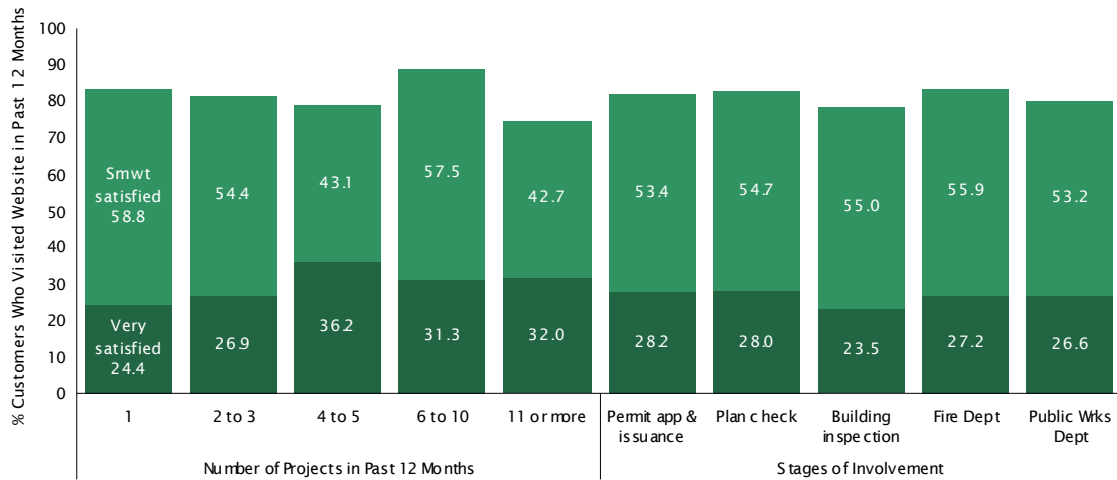


† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

**FIGURE 39 SATISFACTION WITH WEBSITE BY FORM OF INTERVIEW, ROLE WITH PROJECT & PROPERTY TYPE: MINISTERIAL**



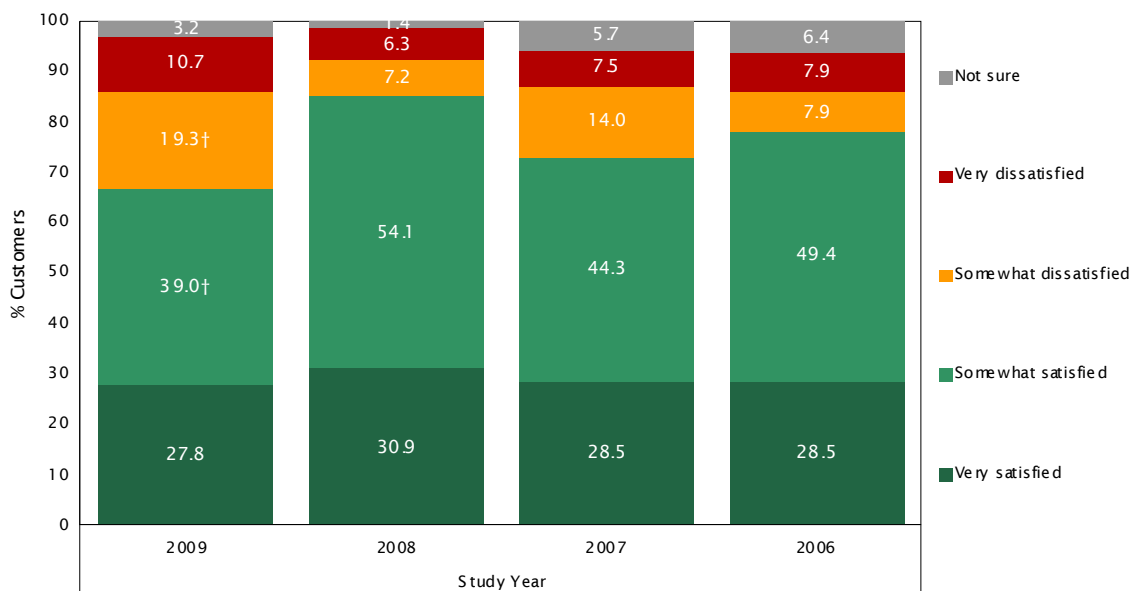
**FIGURE 40 SATISFACTION WITH WEBSITE BY NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS & STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT: MINISTERIAL**



**DISCRETIONARY** As shown in Figure 41 below, 67% of discretionary customers indicated that they were either very satisfied (28%) or somewhat satisfied (39%) with the Partners’ efforts to make information available to them in 2008, and 30% were dissatisfied. These findings represents a statistically significant decrease in satisfaction from the 2008 study. Figures 42 and 43 on the next page display the findings of Question 12 by several discretionary customer demographics.

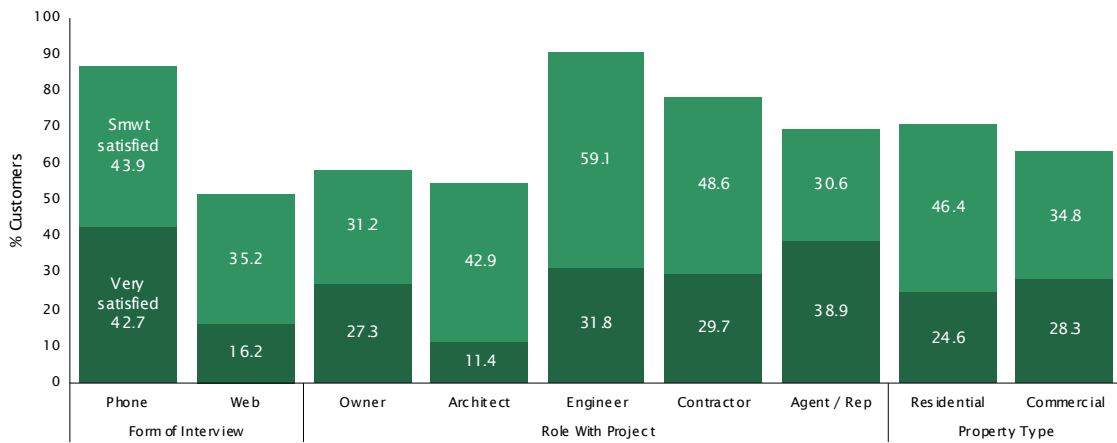
**Question 12: Discretionary** For the remaining questions, please answer for the City of San José as a whole. Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to make development services information available through their web site, brochures and meetings?

**FIGURE 41 SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ACCESS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

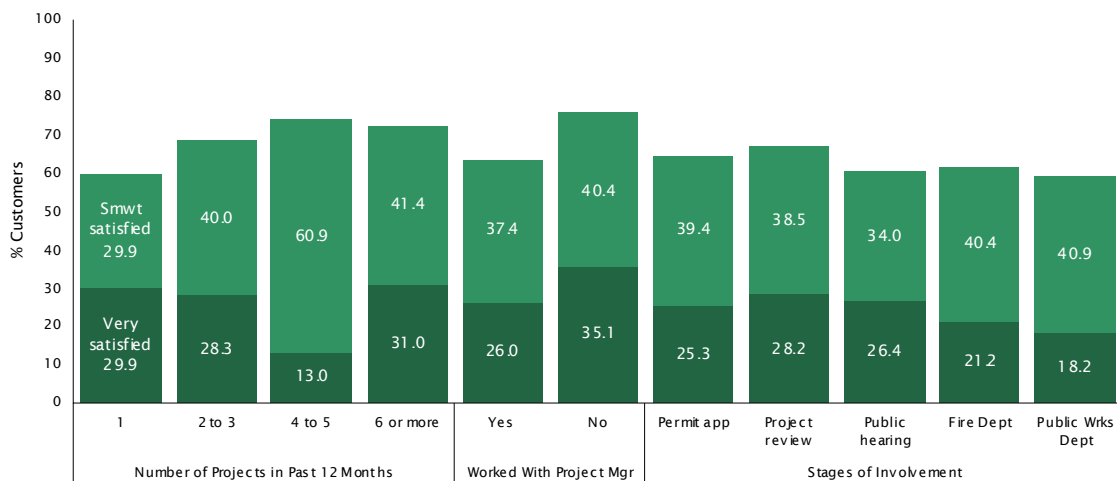


† Statistically significant change (p < 0.05) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

**FIGURE 42 SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ACCESS BY FORM OF INTERVIEW, ROLE WITH PROJECT & PROPERTY TYPE: DISCRETIONARY**



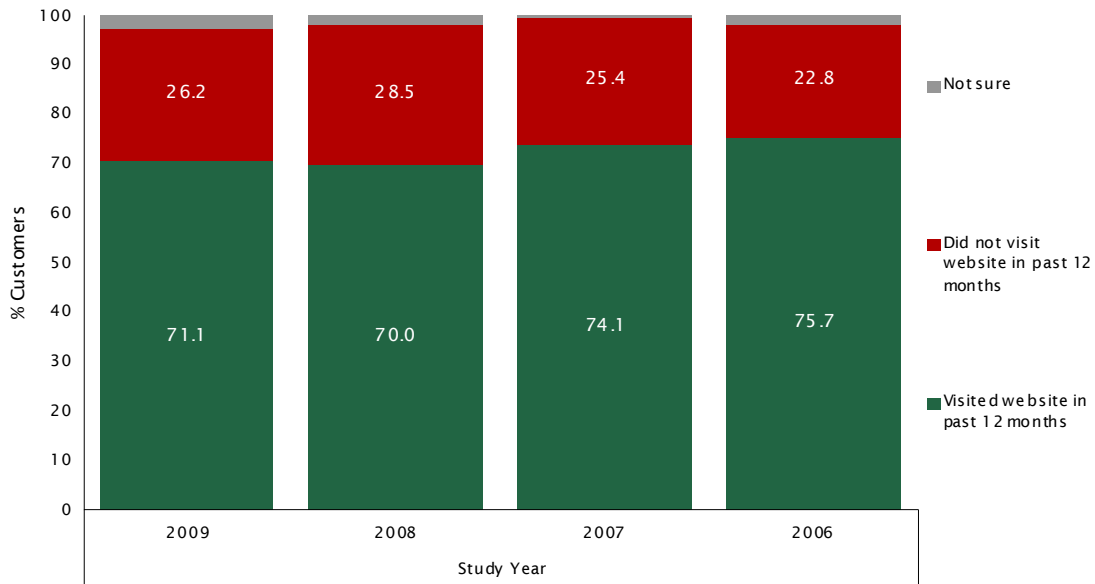
**FIGURE 43 SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION ACCESS BY NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS, WORKED WITH PROJECT MANAGER & STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT: DISCRETIONARY**



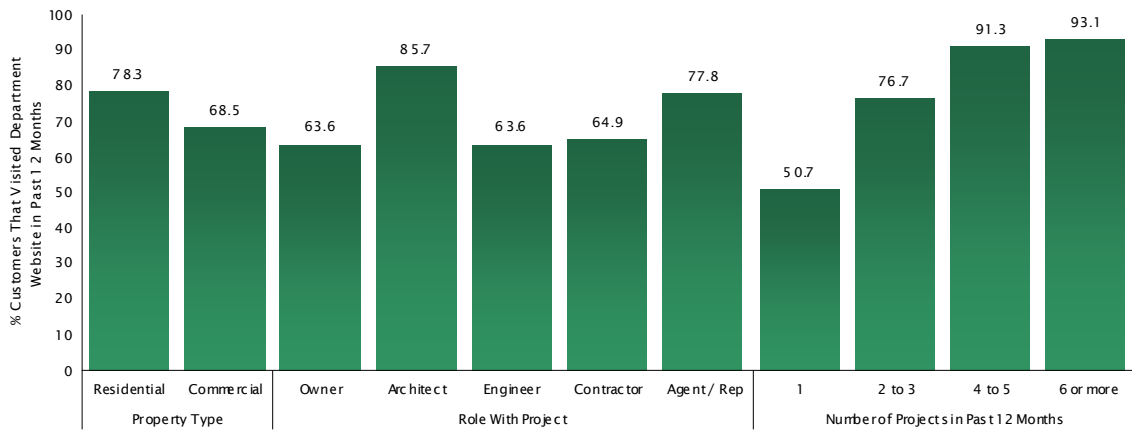
When compared with ministerial customers, the rate of visitation to the Development Services' website was somewhat higher among discretionary customers. Overall, 71% of discretionary customers reported that they had visited the website in the 12 months prior to the interview (see Figure 44 on the next page), which is similar to the findings from 2008. Among discretionary customers, website visitation was most frequently reported by those working with a residential property, architects, and those who were associated with multiple projects in 2009 (see Figure 45).

**Question 13: Discretionary** *In the past 12 months, have you visited the City's Development Services web site?*

**FIGURE 44 WEBSITE VISIT IN PAST 12 MONTHS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**



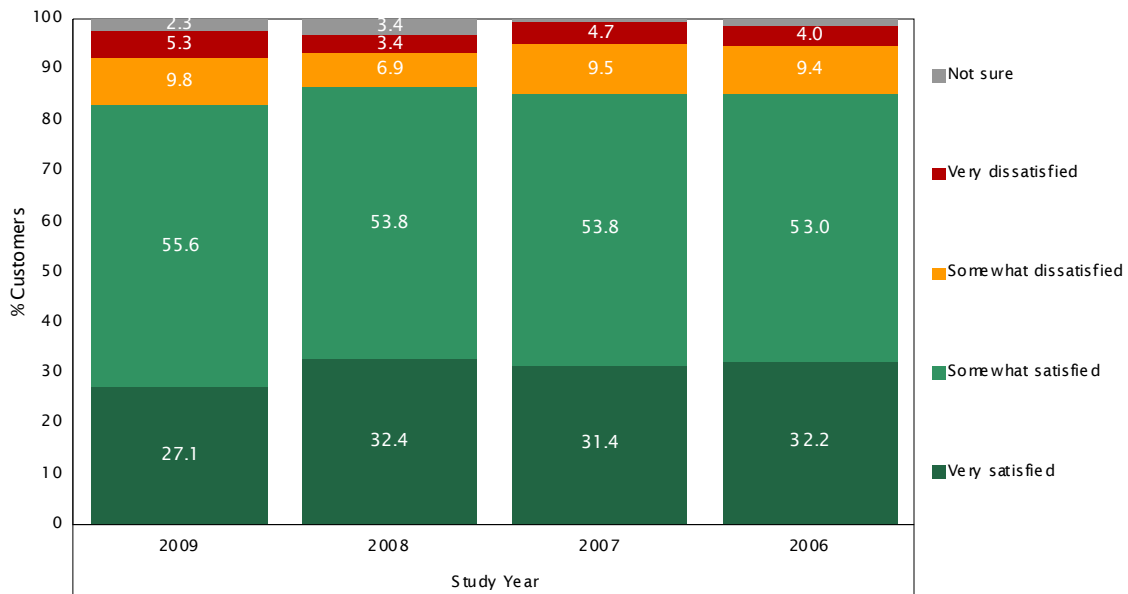
**FIGURE 45 WEBSITE VISIT IN PAST 12 MONTHS BY PROPERTY TYPE, ROLE WITH PROJECT & NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS**



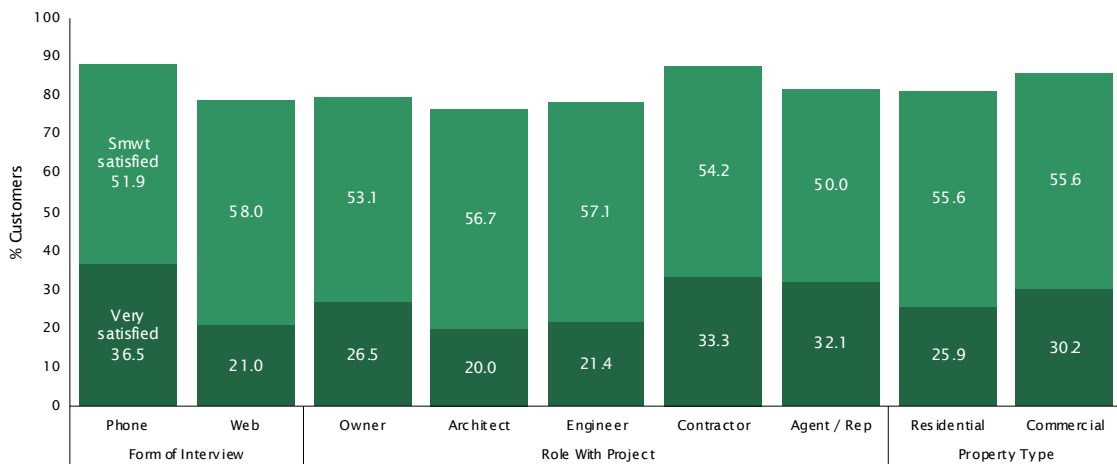
When compared with their ministerial counterparts, discretionary customers who had visited the Development Services' website were similarly pleased with the content of the site (see Figure 46). Overall, 83% reported satisfaction with the content of the site, with 27% stating they were *very* satisfied. Approximately 15% said they were dissatisfied with the site, and 2% were unsure. For the interested reader, figures 47 and 48 examine satisfaction with the website by several discretionary customer variables.

**Question 14: Discretionary** Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the content of the web site?

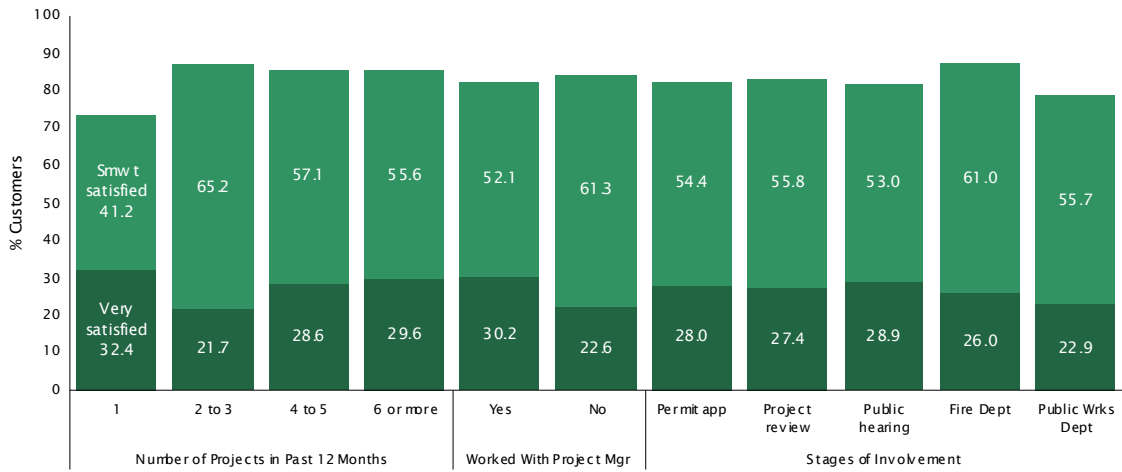
**FIGURE 46 SATISFACTION WITH WEBSITE BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**



**FIGURE 47 SATISFACTION WITH WEBSITE BY FORM OF INTERVIEW, ROLE WITH PROJECT & PROPERTY TYPE: DISCRETIONARY**



**FIGURE 48 SATISFACTION WITH WEBSITE BY NUMBER OF PROJECTS IN PAST 12 MONTHS, WORKED WITH PROJECT MANAGER & STAGES OF INVOLVEMENT: DISCRETIONARY**



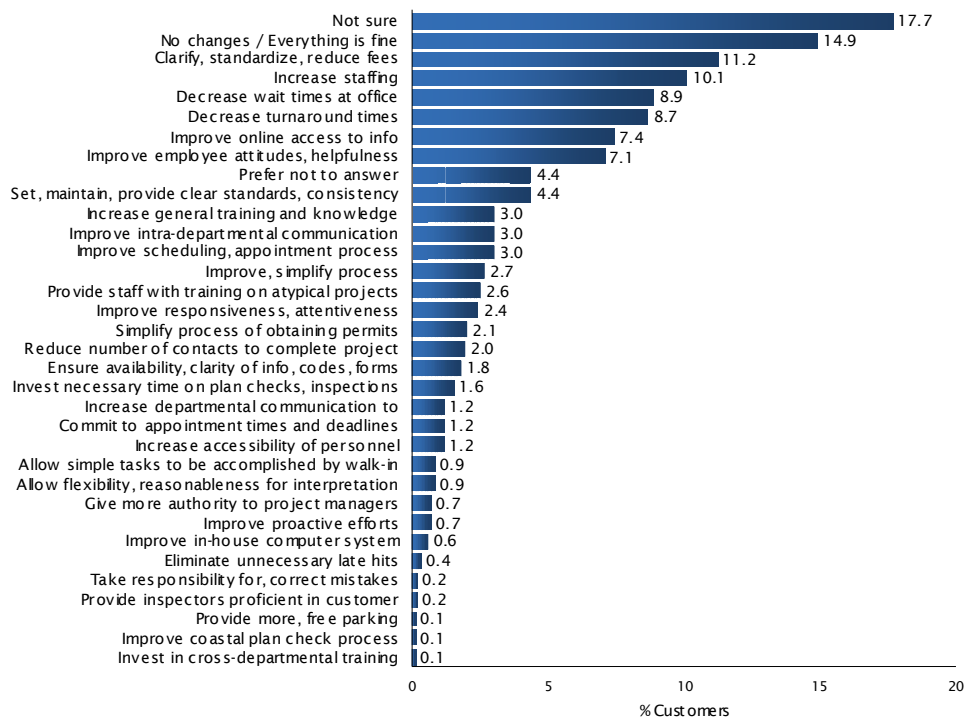
## SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

In addition to measuring customers' satisfaction with the Partners' *current* performance, a key goal of the study was to identify and prioritize ways that the Development Services Partners' can improve their performance in the future. Toward this end, the survey provided customers with an opportunity to express their ideas regarding how the City can improve the service it provides in the area of development services. This question was asked in an open-ended manner, which allowed respondents to mention any improvement that came to mind without be prompted by or restricted to a list of options. True North later reviewed the verbatim responses and grouped them into the categories shown in Figure 49 for ministerial customers and Figure 50 for discretionary customers. Because respondents could mention up to two improvements, the percentages shown in the figures reflect the percentage of respondents who mentioned each improvement and thus sum to more than 100%.

**MINISTERIAL** The most common response to this question among ministerial customers in 2009 was 'not sure' (18%), followed by no changes/everything is fine (15%). Among specific improvements cited, clarifying/standardizing/reducing fees<sup>10</sup> (11%), increasing staffing (10%), decreasing wait times (9%), and decreasing turn-around times (9%) were the top suggestions.

**Question 16 Ministerial** *We'd like your ideas on how the City can improve the service that it provides in the area of development services. What one or two changes or improvements would you most like the City to make?*

**FIGURE 49 SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: MINISTERIAL**



10. The *clarify, standardize and reduce fees* category was comprised of 15% desiring clarification of fees, 13% requesting standardization of fees, and 72% stating that the fees should be reduced. It is worth noting that many of the requests for reduced fees were also coupled with references to lower fees in other cities.

Table 25 displays the top 10 most frequently mentioned answers to Question 16 separately for ministerial customers who were generally satisfied with the Partners’ overall performance (left column) and those who were generally dissatisfied (right column). Not surprisingly, those who were generally satisfied were most likely to indicate that no changes were needed or that no changes came to mind. The top specific improvements suggested by this group were increasing staffing, clarifying/standardizing/reducing fees, decreasing wait times at office, and improving online access to information.

Ministerial customers who were generally dissatisfied with the Partners’ performance focused on a similar set of suggestions that included clarifying/standardizing/reducing fees, decreasing turn-around times, increasing staffing, and decreasing wait times at office.

**TABLE 25 TOP TEN SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: MINISTERIAL**

Overall Satisfaction (Q5)	
Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied
Not sure	Clarify, standardize, reduce fees
No changes / Everything is fine	Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness
Increase staffing	Decrease turnaround times
Clarify, standardize, reduce fees	Increase staffing
Decrease wait times at office	Decrease wait times at office
Improve online access to info	Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency
Decrease turnaround times	Improve online access to info
Prefer not to answer	Not sure
Improve scheduling, appointment process	Increase general training and knowledge
Improve intra-departmental communication	Improve intra-departmental communication

For the interested reader, Table 26 on the next page shows the top 10 suggested improvements among ministerial customers in 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009.

**TABLE 26 TOP TEN SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

Study Year			
2009	2008	2007	2006
Not sure	Not sure	Not sure	Not sure
No changes / Everything is fine	No changes / Everything is fine	No changes / Everything is fine	No changes / Everything is fine
Clarify, standardize, reduce fees	Clarify, standardize, reduce fees	Decrease turnaround times	Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency
Increase staffing	Improve online access to info	Improve online access to info	Improve, simplify process
Decrease wait times at office	Decrease turnaround times	Clarify, standardize, reduce fees	Improve intra-departmental communication
Decrease turnaround times	Improve intra-departmental communication	Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness	Clarify, standardize, reduce fees
Improve online access to info	Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness	Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency	Improve online access to info
Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness	Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency	Improve intra-departmental communication	Ensure availability, clarity of info, codes, forms
Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency	Improve responsiveness, attentiveness	Improve responsiveness, attentiveness	Decrease turnaround times
Improve scheduling, appointment process	Ensure availability, clarity of info, codes, forms	Increase departmental communication to customers	Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness

**DISCRETIONARY** The most common response to this question among discretionary customers in 2009 was ‘not sure’ (13%), and no changes/everything is fine (13%). Among the specific improvements suggested, decreasing turn-around times (10%), clarifying/standardizing/reducing fees<sup>11</sup> (10%), increasing staffing (9%), and improving intra-departmental communication (7%) were the top suggestions.

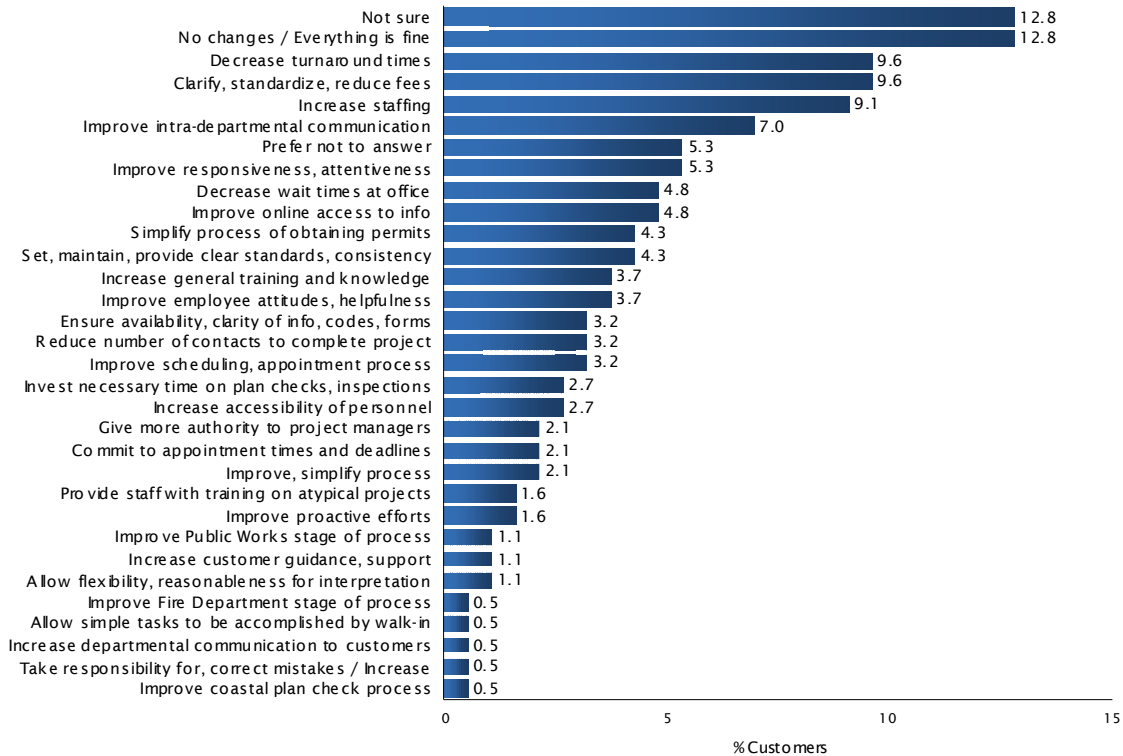
Discretionary customers who were generally satisfied with the Partners’ overall performance were most likely to indicate that no changes were needed or that no changes came to mind (see Table 27). The top specific improvements suggested by this group were increasing staff, decreasing turn-around times, and clarifying/standardizing/reducing fees. Discretionary customers who were generally dissatisfied with the Partners’ performance also focused on clarifying/standardizing/reducing fees and decreasing turn-around times, but they were more likely to mention improving intra-departmental communication and improving responsiveness and attentiveness than those who were generally satisfied.

For the interested reader, Table 28 shows the top 10 suggested improvements among discretionary customers in 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009.

11. The *clarify, standardize and reduce fees* category was comprised of 6% desiring clarification of fees, 19% requesting standardization of fees, and 75% stating that the fees should be reduced.

**Question 15: Discretionary** *We'd like your ideas on how the City can improve the service that it provides in the area of development services. What one or two changes or improvements would you most like the City to make?*

**FIGURE 50 SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: DISCRETIONARY**



**TABLE 27 TOP TEN SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: DISCRETIONARY**

Overall Satisfaction (Q3)	
Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied
No changes / Everything is fine	Clarify, standardize, reduce fees
Not sure	Decrease turnaround times
Increase staffing	Not sure
Decrease turnaround times	Improve intra-departmental communication
Clarify, standardize, reduce fees	Improve responsiveness, attentiveness
Decrease wait times at office	Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness
Improve intra-departmental communication	Commit to appointment times and deadlines
Reduce number of contacts to complete project	Improve online access to info
Improve scheduling, appointment process	Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency
Improve online access to info	Increase general training and knowledge

**TABLE 28 TOP TEN SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

Study Year			
2009	2008	2007	2006
Not sure	Not sure	Not sure	Not sure
No changes / Everything is fine	Clarify, standardize, reduce fees	No changes / Everything is fine	No changes / Everything is fine
Clarify, standardize, reduce fees	No changes / Everything is fine	Improve, simplify process	Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency
Decrease turnaround times	Improve intra-departmental communication	Improve intra-departmental communication	Improve intra-departmental communication
Increase staffing	Improve responsiveness, attentiveness	Clarify, standardize, reduce fees	Improve online access to info
Improve intra-departmental communication	Improve online access to info	Decrease turnaround times	Decrease turnaround times
Improve responsiveness, attentiveness	Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency	Improve online access to info	Improve responsiveness, attentiveness
Prefer not to answer	Decrease turnaround times	Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness	Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness
Improve online access to info	Increase departmental communication to customers	Take responsibility for, correct mistakes	Ensure availability, clarity of info, codes, forms
Decrease wait times at office	Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness	Increase general training and knowledge	Provide staff with training on atypical projects

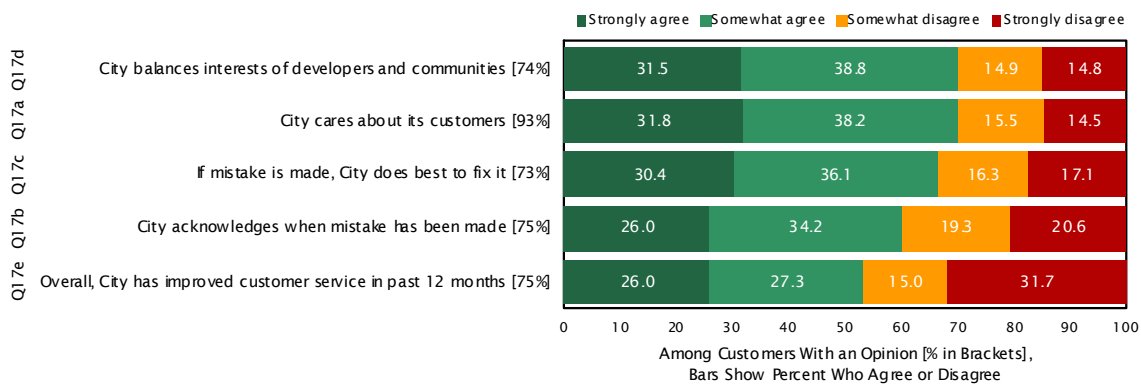
## PERCEPTIONS OF CITY

The final substantive section of the survey focused on customers' perceptions of the City of San José's Development Services Partners as an "agency". In a manner identical to that used in prior sections, customers were provided with five statements about the City and asked whether they agreed or disagreed with each statement as it applied to Development Services.

**MINISTERIAL** At least two-thirds of ministerial customers agreed that the City of San José's Development Services Partners do an adequate job balancing the interests of developers with the interests of the communities that will be affected by a project (70%), care about their customers (70%), and acknowledge when a mistake has been made and do their best to fix it (67%). Only 53% agreed that overall, the City has improved its customer service in the past 12 months.

**Question 17: Ministerial** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the City of San José I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with each statement as they apply to development services. Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 51 AGREEMENT WITH CITY OF SAN JOSÉ STATEMENTS: MINISTERIAL**



† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

When compared with 2008, there were statistically significant decreases in agreement for 3 of the 5 performance-related statements tested in Question 17 among ministerial customers (Table 29). Most notably, the percentage of ministerial customers who felt that the City had improved its customer service in the past 12 months dropped from 77% in 2008 to 53% in 2009.

**TABLE 29 AGREEMENT WITH CITY OF SAN JOSÉ STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: MINISTERIAL**

	Study Year				Difference in Agreement 08 to 09
	2009	2008	2007	2006	
City acknowledges when mistake has been made	60.1	65.1	66.1	65.7	-4.9
If mistake is made, City does best to fix it	66.6	71.6	71.3	71.2	-5.1
City balances interests of developers and communities	70.3	79.3	75.0	74.8	-9.0†
City cares about its customers	70.0	80.7	84.8	81.8	-10.6†
Overall, City has improved customer service in past 12 months	53.3	77.3	78.6	78.1	-24.0†

Consistent with the pattern found throughout this study, ministerial customers who were generally satisfied with the Partners' overall performance were much more likely to hold positive opinions of the Partners' performance on each of the dimensions tested in Question 17 when compared with their counterparts (Table 30).

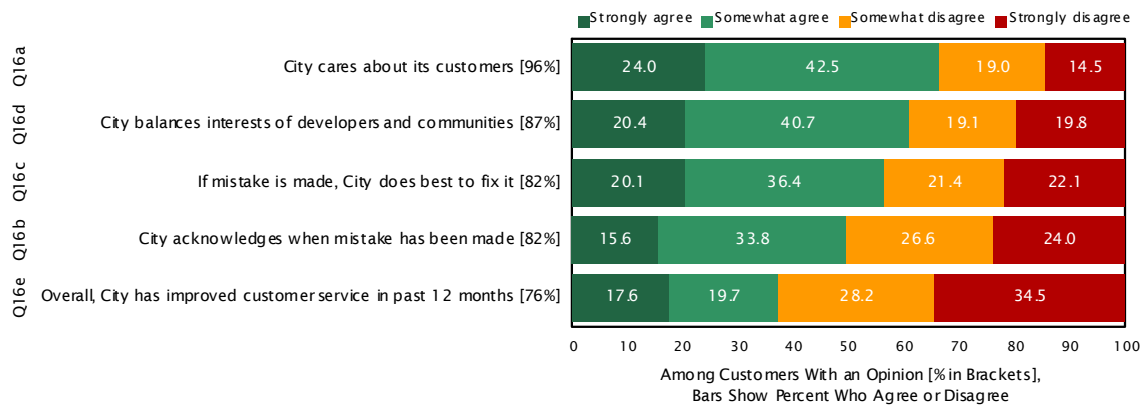
**TABLE 30 AGREEMENT WITH CITY OF SAN JOSÉ STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: MINISTERIAL**

		Overall Satisfaction (Q5)		Difference Between Groups
		Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
% Customers That Agreed With Statement	City cares about its customers	90.0	30.8	59.2
	Overall, City has improved customer service in past 12 months	72.8	15.4	57.4
	City acknowledges when mistake has been made	78.3	28.3	50.0
	City balances interests of developers and communities	86.3	36.4	49.9
	If mistake is made, City does best to fix it	82.7	37.5	45.2

**DISCRETIONARY** As seen in Figure 52, two-thirds (67%) of discretionary customers agreed that the City of San José’s Development Services Partners care about their customers. Approximately 61% agreed that the Partners do an adequate job balancing the interests of developers with the interests of the communities that will be affected by a project. Only 37% of discretionary customers agreed that overall, the City has improved its customer service in the past 12 months.

**Question 16: Discretionary** *Next, I'm going to read several statements about the City of San José I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with each statement as they apply to development services. Here is the (first/next) one: ----- Do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

**FIGURE 52 AGREEMENT WITH CITY OF SAN JOSÉ STATEMENTS: DISCRETIONARY**



When compared with 2008, there were statistically significant decreases in agreement for 4 of the 5 performance-related statements tested in Question 16 among ministerial customers (Table 31). Most notably, the percentage of ministerial customers who felt that the City had improved its customer service in the past 12 months dropped by 35 percentage points from 72% in 2008 to 37% in 2009.

**TABLE 31 AGREEMENT WITH CITY OF SAN JOSÉ STATEMENTS BY STUDY YEAR: DISCRETIONARY**

	Study Year				Difference in Agreement 08 to 09
	2009	2008	2007	2006	
If mistake is made, City does best to fix it	56.5	66.3	64.9	60.2	-9.8
City acknowledges when mistake has been made	49.4	62.1	57.8	52.3	-12.7†
City balances interests of developers and communities	61.1	73.9	68.9	69.0	-12.8†
City cares about its customers	66.5	82.3	75.3	77.3	-15.8†
Overall, City has improved customer service in past 12 months	37.3	72.1	68.3	63.3	-34.8†

† Statistically significant change (p < 0.05) between the 2008 and 2009 studies.

Like their ministerial counterparts, discretionary customers' opinions of the Partners' overall performance were strongly related to their stated opinions in response to Question 16. Those who held positive views of the Partners' performance were much more likely to also positively assess the Partners' performance on each of the dimensions tested in Question 17 (Table 32).

**TABLE 32 AGREEMENT WITH CITY OF SAN JOSÉ STATEMENTS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION: DISCRETIONARY**

		Overall Satisfaction (Q3)		Difference Between Groups
		Very or somewhat satisfied	Very or somewhat dissatisfied	
% Customers That Agreed With Statement	City cares about its customers	86.8	28.6	58.3
	If mistake is made, City does best to fix it	76.6	23.7	52.9
	City acknowledges when mistake has been made	69.1	16.9	52.2
	City balances interests of developers and communities	79.4	31.0	48.4
	Overall, City has improved customer service in past 12 months	53.9	9.8	44.1



## M E T H O D O L O G Y

The following sections outline the methodology used in the study, as well as the motivation for using certain techniques.

**QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT** Dr. McLarney of True North Research worked closely with senior management from the City of San José’s Development Services Partners to develop questionnaires that covered the topics of interest and avoided the many possible sources of systematic measurement error, including position-order effects, wording effects, response-category effects, scaling effects and priming. Many of the questions asked in this survey were presented only to a subset of respondents. For example, customers who were not personally involved in the plan review stage were not asked questions pertaining to plan review. The questionnaires included with this report (see *Questionnaires & Toplines* on page 73) identify the skip patterns that were used during the interview to ensure that each respondent received the appropriate questions.

Because experiences and interactions with the Development Services Partners differ considerably between customers involved in the *ministerial* process and those involved in the *discretionary* process, two questionnaires were created and utilized in the study. In the introduction to the survey, respondents were asked if their most recent project was ministerial or discretionary. For those who were uncertain, the interviewer clarified that most projects are ministerial and as long as they comply with the Municipal Code they have to be approved and don’t require a public hearing. Discretionary projects, on the other hand, require a public hearing and its approval may depend on the discretion of a committee. Respondents who were still uncertain after that clarification were identified as ministerial customers, as a discretionary customer would most likely be aware if his or her project was considered discretionary.

**PROGRAMMING** Prior to fielding the surveys, the questionnaires were CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) programmed to assist the live interviewers when conducting the telephone interviews, as well as web programmed to allow online participation. Both programs automatically navigate skip patterns, randomize appropriate question items, and prevent certain types of keypunching mistakes. The integrity of the questionnaires was pre-tested internally by True North prior to formally commencing the interviewing.

**SAMPLE** The sample for this study was drawn from the City’s AMANDA permit database. All customers who were associated with at least one permit between January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009 comprised the universe for the study. Because the focus of the study was on customers, and because some customers appeared on multiple permits, the data was reorganized by customer identity (rather than by permit). Fields were also derived that indicated how many permits a customer was associated with during the period of interest, as well as the types of permits—building, planning, fire and public works. The universe of customers was then stratified by the number of permits a customer was associated with during this period, and by permit type, prior to selection.

During the sample development phase, it was discovered that occasionally a customer would appear in the database multiple times due to slightly different spellings of their name, changes of address, or other minor differences in their contact information. True North manually

reviewed the original file of 5,781 records to identify records that should be combined into a single record or eliminated due to inadequate or invalid contact information. When combined, the permit information was summed by customer so that the number of permits associated with a customer was accurate. In instances where the physical address or phone contact information differed, however, records were not combined.<sup>12</sup> A total of 269 records were eliminated and/or combined through this process.

**RECRUITMENT AND DATA COLLECTION** True North used multiple methods to both recruit and encourage participation in the survey. Customers were mailed hardcopy letters that invited them to participate in the study either online at a secure website or by telephone. If the database included an email address for a customer, they were also sent an invitation via email that would allow them to link directly to the survey website. Reminder emails were sent, as appropriate, to encourage participation among those who had yet to take the survey. Each customer was assigned a unique personal identification number (PIN), which prevented outsiders from participating in the survey and ensured that customers' completed the survey only once.

A total of 820 ministerial interviews and 187 discretionary interviews were gathered between January 19 to March 2, 2010. Of the completed interviews, more than half (56%) were completed online (up from 37% in 2008). Telephone interviews were conducted during normal business hours, and the average interview was 13 minutes for ministerial customers and 15 minutes for discretionary customers.

**MARGIN OF ERROR** By using a probability-based sampling design and monitoring the sample characteristics as data collection proceeded, True North ensured that the resulting sample was representative of the universe of customers serviced by the Development Services Partners in the year prior to the study. The results of the sample can thus be used to estimate the opinions of *all* customers during this period. Because not every customer participated in the survey, however, the results have what is known as a statistical margin of error due to sampling. The margin of error refers to the difference between what was found in the survey of 802 ministerial and 206 discretionary customers, and what would have been found if all of the estimated 4,486 ministerial and 1,026 discretionary customers had been surveyed for the study.

For example, in estimating the percentage of ministerial customers that visited the City's Development Services website in the past 12 months (Question 14 of the ministerial version), the margin of error can be calculated if one knows the size of the population, the size of the sample, a desired confidence level, and the distribution of responses to the question. The appropriate equation for estimating the margin of error, in this case, is shown below:

$$\hat{p} \pm t \sqrt{\left(\frac{N-n}{N}\right) \frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{n-1}}$$

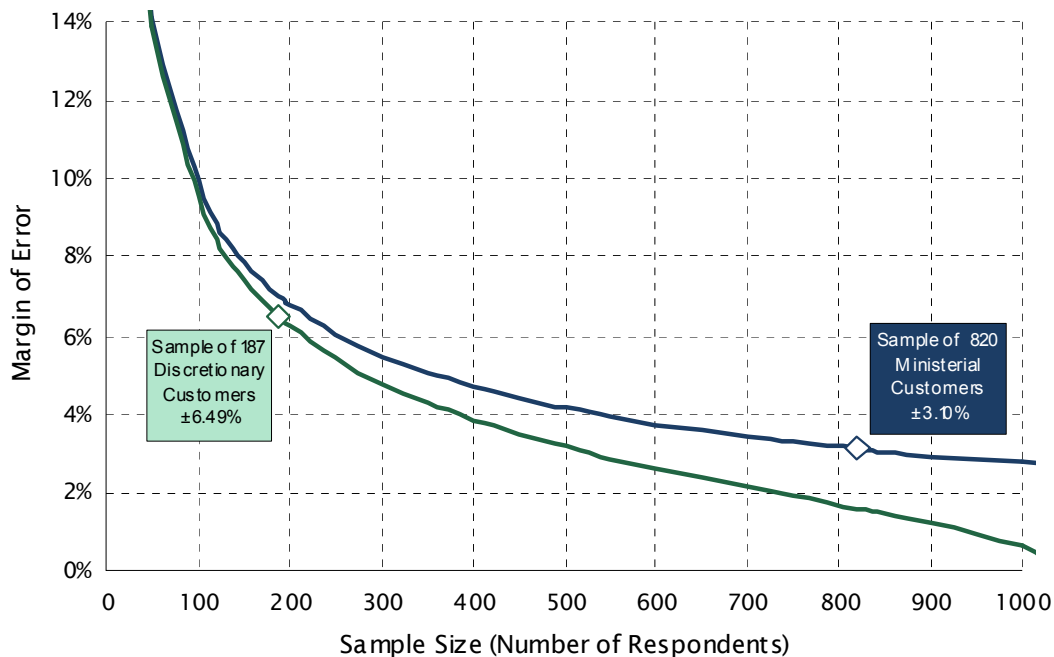
Where  $\hat{p}$  is the proportion of customers who visited the City's Development Services website in the past 12 months (0.67 for 67% in this example),  $N$  is the population (universe) size of ministerial customers (4,486),  $n$  is the sample size that received the question (820), and  $t$  is the

12. It was assumed that this may indicate that a customer moved office locations and to avoid missing the customer an invitation was sent to both locations.

upper  $\alpha/2$  point for the t-distribution with  $n - 1$  degrees of freedom (1.96 for a 95% confidence interval). Solving this equation using the values just discussed reveals a margin of error of  $\pm 2.91\%$ . This means that with 67% of ministerial respondents indicating they visited the City's Development Services website in the past 12 months, we can be 95 percent confident that the actual percentage of *all* ministerial customers who visited the City's Development Services website during that period is between 64% and 70%.

Figure 53 presents the margin of error equation as a graph, plotting sample sizes along the bottom axis. There are two lines represented in the graph—one for the ministerial version of the survey and one for the discretionary version. As seen in the figure, the maximum margin of error in the ministerial version for questions answered by all 820 respondents is  $\pm 3.10\%$ , whereas the maximum margin of error in the discretionary version for questions answered by all 187 respondents is  $\pm 6.49\%$ . For questions answered by fewer respondents within each version, the margin of error increases accordingly.

**FIGURE 53 APPROXIMATE MAXIMUM MARGIN OF ERROR DUE TO SAMPLING**



Within this report, figures and tables show how responses to certain questions varied by customer characteristics such as the number of projects the respondent had worked on in the past 12 months and the stages in which they were involved for their most recent project. Figure 53 is thus useful for understanding how the maximum margin of error for a percentage estimate will grow as the number of customers asked a question (or in a particular subgroup) shrinks. Because the margin of error grows exponentially as the sample size decreases, the reader should use caution when generalizing and interpreting the results for small subgroups.

**DATA PROCESSING** Data processing consisted of checking the data for errors or inconsistencies, coding and recoding responses, categorizing open-end responses, and preparing frequency analyses and crosstabulations. Because the research objectives involved comparing the

2009 results with those of prior studies, where appropriate, True North also accessed and processed data from the 2008, 2007, and 2006 surveys to allow for meaningful comparisons.

**STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE** Many of the figures and tables in this report present the results of questions asked in the 2009 study alongside the results found in prior years for identical questions. In such cases, True North conducted the appropriate tests of statistical significance to identify changes that likely reflect actual changes in public opinion or behavior over time—as opposed to being due to chance associated with selecting two cross-sectional samples independently and at random. Differences between studies are identified as *statistically significant* if we can be 95% confident that the differences reflect an actual change in public opinion or behavior between the two studies. Statistically significant differences within response categories over time are denoted by the † symbol which appears in the figure next to the appropriate response value for 2009.

**ROUNDING** Numbers that end in 0.5 or higher are rounded up to the nearest whole number, whereas numbers that end in 0.4 or lower are rounded down to the nearest whole number. These same rounding rules are also applied, when needed, to arrive at numbers that include a decimal place in constructing figures and charts. Occasionally, these rounding rules lead to small discrepancies in the first decimal place when comparing tables and pie charts for a given question.

**DISPARITIES BETWEEN TOPLINE RESULTS AND FIGURES IN REPORT** Throughout this report, all figures that show levels of agreement in percentage form are drawn only from those customers who provided an opinion. This allows for a more direct and meaningful comparison of responses across the statements tested since the number of respondents who answered “not sure” or “doesn't apply or refused” varies substantially by question.

Readers who wish to view the percentages for all possible responses, including “not sure” and “doesn't apply or refused,” can review the questionnaires at the end of the report which contain the percentage results for each question inclusive all response options. For example, Question 8L in the ministerial questionnaire shows that 77% of *all* customers were very or somewhat satisfied with the service they received during the inspection stage of the process. However, this percentage changes to 80% when the customers who did not have an opinion are removed from the analysis and the percentages are recalculated among just those who expressed an opinion in response to the question.

# QUESTIONNAIRES & TOPLINES

## MINISTERIAL VERSION



City of San Jose Development Services  
2008 Customer Satisfaction Survey  
Final Toplines  
Ministerial Version (n = 820)

### Section 1: Introduction to Study

Hi, may I please speak to: \_\_\_\_\_. Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm calling from True North Research on behalf of the City of San Jose. I'm following up on a letter you should have received a few weeks ago from the City which invited you to participate in a customer survey regarding development services. Our records indicate that you have yet to take the survey over the Internet, so we'd like to ask you a few questions over the telephone.

*If needed:* We're conducting a brief and confidential survey of people who have received building permit, plan check and inspection services from the City of San Jose.

*If needed:* Your name and contact information was included on a recent permit application for the City of San Jose—which is why we'd like to ask you about your experience.

*If needed:* The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete.

*If needed:* If now is not a convenient time, can you let me know a better time so I can call back?

*If needed:* You are also welcome to participate in the survey online, as described in the invitation letter we recently sent you.

*If needed:* Your answers will be kept anonymous and will be combined with the answers of other people who participate in the survey.

### Section 2: Screener for Inclusion in the Study

SC1	Our records indicate that you worked with the City of San Jose on at least one project during the past 12 months. Is this correct?				
	1	Yes	100%	Continue	
	2	No	0%	Terminate	
	99	Refused	0%	Terminate	
SC2	Was your most recent project ministerial (mini-steer-ee-al) or discretionary? <i>If unsure, clarify:</i> Most projects are ministerial projects. As long as they comply with the Municipal Code, they have to be approved. Ministerial projects do not involve a public hearing. A discretionary project is a project that requires a public hearing related to a conditional use permit or zone change. Even if the project complies with the Municipal Code, the decision-makers still have some discretion in deciding whether to approve the project.				
	1	Ministerial	Stay with Ministerial Version of Q		
	2	Discretionary	Switch to Discretionary Version of Q		
	98	Not sure	Stay with Ministerial Version of Q		
	99	Refused	Terminate		
SC3	For your most recent project, were you personally involved in the: _____ stage of the project?				
	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>		Yes	No	Not sure
A	Permit application and issuance		94%	6%	0%
B	Plan check		75%	23%	1%
C	Building inspection		58%	41%	1%
<i>If SC3a = (2, 99), SC3b = (2, 99) AND SC3c = (2, 99) then terminate interview.</i>					

**Section 3: Overall Satisfaction**

In answering the questions in this survey, I'd like you to focus on your experience with your most recent project with the City.

Q1	Which of the following best describes your role on this project? <i>Multiple responses allowed.</i>		
	1	Owner	24%
	2	Architect	20%
	3	Engineer	9%
	4	Contractor	44%
	5	Permit Runner	15%
	6	Agent/Representative	21%
	7	Other	5%
	98	Not sure	0%
	99	Refused	0%
Q2	Was your most recent project for a residential property, a commercial property, or a mixed use property?		
	1	Residential	48% Ask Q3
	2	Commercial	48% Skip to Q4
	3	Mixed use	3% Skip to Q4
	98	Not sure	0% Skip to Q5
	99	Refused	0% Skip to Q5
Q3	Which of the following best describes the nature of your project?		
	1	New construction	11%
	2	Remodel or addition	56%
	3	Demolition or Re-build	5%
	4	Re-roof	7%
	5	Re-pipe	3%
	6	Hot water heater	3%
	7	Pool related	1%
	8	Other	15%
	98	Not sure	0%
	99	Refused	0%
<i>Skip to Q5.</i>			

Q4 Which of the following best describes the nature of your project?		
1	New construction	14%
2	Tenant Improvement	50%
3	Demolition or Re-build	4%
4	Permit for occupancy	3%
5	Re-roof	1%
6	AC/HVAC	3%
7	Sign Permit	6%
8	Other	8%
9	Fire Protection Systems	4%
10	Hazardous Materials Systems	5%
98	Not sure	0%
99	Refused	0%
Q5 Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the service that you received from the City of San Jose on this project? <i>Get answer, then ask: Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?</i>		
1	Very Satisfied	33%
2	Somewhat Satisfied	33%
3	Somewhat Dissatisfied	16%
4	Very Dissatisfied	17%
98	Not sure	1%
99	Refused	0%

**Section 4: Permit Application & Issuance Stage**

*Only ask questions in this section if SC3a = 1. Otherwise, skip to instructions for Section 5.*

Next, I'm going to read several statements about the Building permit application and issuance stage of the process. I'd like you to tell me whether or not you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience.

Q6 Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? <i>Get answer, then ask: Would that be strongly or somewhat (agree/disagree)?</i>																													
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Strongly Agree</th> <th>Somewhat Agree</th> <th>Somewhat Disagree</th> <th>Strongly Disagree</th> <th>Not sure</th> <th>Doesn't Apply or Refused</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>Do Not Randomize</i></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>A The process and steps needed to obtain a permit were clearly communicated</td> <td>35%</td> <td>37%</td> <td>13%</td> <td>13%</td> <td>1%</td> <td>1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B You received clear and correct instructions about the documents needed to apply for a permit</td> <td>44%</td> <td>32%</td> <td>12%</td> <td>10%</td> <td>1%</td> <td>2%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>							A The process and steps needed to obtain a permit were clearly communicated	35%	37%	13%	13%	1%	1%	B You received clear and correct instructions about the documents needed to apply for a permit	44%	32%	12%	10%	1%	2%
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused																							
<i>Do Not Randomize</i>																													
A The process and steps needed to obtain a permit were clearly communicated	35%	37%	13%	13%	1%	1%																							
B You received clear and correct instructions about the documents needed to apply for a permit	44%	32%	12%	10%	1%	2%																							

C	You received a clear explanation of the fees, taxes and deposits	41%	29%	12%	14%	2%	3%
D	The fees and taxes were assessed accurately	39%	28%	7%	10%	9%	5%
E	When you visited the permit counter, the amount of time that you had to wait before being assisted by staff was reasonable	28%	25%	11%	30%	2%	4%
F	The permit counter staff made an effort to understand my needs as a customer	44%	32%	9%	10%	2%	3%
G	The staff at the permit application counter were accessible	42%	31%	10%	12%	2%	3%
H	The staff at the permit application counter were responsive	46%	32%	9%	8%	2%	3%
I	The staff at the permit application counter were courteous	56%	28%	6%	4%	2%	3%
J	The staff at the permit application counter were knowledgeable	43%	34%	9%	8%	2%	3%
K	The staff at the permit application counter were helpful	46%	30%	11%	7%	2%	3%
L	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received during the permit application stage of the process	37%	30%	14%	16%	1%	1%

#### Section 5: Plan Check

Only ask questions in this section if SC3b = 1. Otherwise, skip to instructions for Section 6.

Next, I'm going to read several statements about the Building plan check process. I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience.

Q7 Here is the (first/next) one: ----- Do you agree or disagree with this statement? *Get answer, then ask: Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?*

	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The plan check comments and corrections were clear and understandable	40%	36%	12%	6%	2%	4%
B	The plan check comments and corrections were based on reasonable interpretations of the code	39%	33%	12%	8%	3%	5%
C	The plan check comments and corrections made sense for the project	37%	33%	13%	10%	2%	5%
D	The plan check comments and corrections were consistent—there were no contradictions	40%	30%	14%	9%	2%	5%
E	Plan corrections were requested at the appropriate time—there were no late hits	37%	28%	13%	14%	3%	6%
F	There was adequate communication among City staff about the project during the plan check	34%	30%	14%	15%	4%	4%
G	The number of plan rechecks was reasonable	39%	32%	9%	10%	4%	7%

H	The plan check staff made an effort to understand my needs as a customer	39%	32%	12%	12%	3%	3%
I	The plan check staff were responsive	40%	34%	12%	10%	2%	2%
J	The plan check staff were courteous	49%	38%	5%	3%	2%	2%
K	The plan check staff were knowledgeable	46%	36%	9%	5%	3%	2%
L	The plan check staff were helpful	44%	33%	11%	6%	3%	3%
M	The turn-around time set by the City for plan check was reasonable	34%	27%	16%	19%	2%	4%
N	The plan check process was completed by the target date set by the City	34%	24%	15%	16%	4%	6%
O	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received during the plan check stage	34%	33%	14%	14%	2%	2%

### Section 6: Inspections

Only ask questions in this section if SC3c = 1. Otherwise, skip to instructions for Section 7.

Next, I'm going to read several statements about the building inspection process. I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience.

Q8 Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Get answer, then: Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?

<i>Do Not Randomize</i>		Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	If an appointment was made, the inspectors arrived on time	51%	30%	7%	4%	2%	7%
B	The inspectors only requested a change if it was required to meet code	43%	29%	10%	9%	2%	7%
C	The inspectors only requested a change if it made sense for the project	36%	29%	10%	13%	3%	9%
D	Written notices and corrections were clear and understandable	45%	27%	10%	8%	1%	8%
E	If more than one inspector worked on the project, their notices and corrections were consistent.	31%	26%	11%	16%	4%	12%
F	Inspectors' comments were consistent with those of plan check staff	33%	26%	13%	13%	4%	11%
G	The inspectors made an effort to understand my needs as a customer	41%	29%	11%	11%	3%	5%
H	The inspectors were responsive	49%	30%	8%	7%	1%	4%
I	The inspectors were courteous	53%	30%	6%	4%	2%	4%
J	The inspectors were knowledgeable	51%	28%	9%	5%	4%	4%
K	The inspectors were helpful	48%	29%	9%	7%	2%	4%
L	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received during the inspection stage of the process	43%	34%	9%	10%	2%	3%

Section 7: Fire									
Q9	In the past six months, did one or more of your projects require a permit, project review or inspection from San Jose's Fire Department?								
	1	Yes		37%	Ask Q10				
	2	No		58%	Skip to Q11				
	98	Not sure		4%	Skip to Q11				
	99	Refused		1%	Skip to Q11				
Next, I'm going to read several statements about the service you received from San Jose's Fire Department on these projects. For each statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience with the Fire Department.									
Q10	Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? <i>Get answer, then ask:</i> Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?								
	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>			Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit were clearly communicated by Fire Department staff			45%	33%	9%	4%	4%	6%
B	The plan check comments and corrections were clear and understandable			50%	32%	8%	2%	3%	6%
C	The plan review comments and corrections were consistent—there were no contradictions			47%	33%	7%	4%	3%	6%
D	Any plan review to be coordinated with other Departments was done so in a seamless manner			41%	29%	14%	6%	3%	7%
E	When you visited the counter, the amount of time that you had to wait before being assisted by Fire Department staff was reasonable			38%	31%	6%	4%	6%	16%
F	Fire Department staff made an effort to understand my needs as a customer			50%	29%	6%	3%	4%	7%
G	Fire Department staff were responsive			53%	30%	6%	3%	3%	6%
H	Fire Department staff were courteous			60%	27%	2%	2%	3%	6%
I	Fire Department staff were knowledgeable			57%	28%	3%	2%	3%	6%
J	Fire Department staff were helpful			56%	28%	4%	2%	3%	6%
K	The turn-around time set by the Fire Department for plan review was reasonable			45%	30%	9%	5%	3%	7%
L	The plan review process was completed by the target date set by the Fire Department			46%	29%	9%	3%	4%	9%
M	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received from the Fire Department			49%	33%	7%	3%	3%	5%

Section 8: Public Works									
Q11	In the past six months, did one or more of your projects require a permit, project review or inspection from San Jose's Public Works Department?								
	1	Yes		18%	Ask Q12				
	2	No		77%	Skip to Q13				
	98	Not sure		4%	Skip to Q13				
	99	Refused		1%	Skip to Q13				
Next, I'm going to read several statements about the service you received from San Jose's Public Works Department on these projects. For each statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience with the Public Works Department.									
Q12	Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? <i>Get answer, then:</i> Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?								
	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>			Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit were clearly communicated by Public Works Department staff			39%	33%	15%	5%	3%	5%
B	The plan check comments and corrections were clear and understandable			36%	37%	8%	3%	6%	10%
C	The plan review comments and corrections were consistent—there were no contradictions			37%	34%	7%	5%	8%	10%
D	Any plan review to be coordinated with other Departments was done so in a seamless manner			32%	27%	17%	11%	5%	8%
E	When you visited the counter, the amount of time that you had to wait before being assisted by Public Works Department staff was reasonable			33%	33%	9%	6%	8%	10%
F	Public Works Department staff made an effort to understand my needs as a customer			38%	35%	8%	3%	8%	8%
G	Public Works Department staff were responsive			42%	38%	6%	3%	6%	6%
H	Public Works Department staff were courteous			53%	29%	5%	1%	6%	6%
I	Public Works Department staff were knowledgeable			46%	33%	6%	3%	6%	6%
J	Public Works Department staff were helpful			48%	29%	8%	2%	6%	6%
K	The turn-around time set by the Public Works Department for plan review was reasonable			33%	33%	13%	9%	6%	8%

L	The plan review process was completed by the target date set by the Public Works Department	31%	28%	15%	8%	6%	11%
M	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received from the Public Works Department	38%	36%	11%	4%	6%	5%

### Section 9: Information Access

For the remaining questions, please answer for the City of San Jose as a whole.

Q13	Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to make development services information available through their web site, brochures and meetings? <i>Get answer, then ask:</i> Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?		
	1	Very satisfied	29%
	2	Somewhat satisfied	42%
	3	Somewhat dissatisfied	12%
	4	Very dissatisfied	9%
	98	Not sure	7%
	99	Refused	0%
Q14	In the past 12 months, have you visited the City's Development Services web site?		
	1	Yes	67% Ask Q15
	2	No	30% Skip to Q16
	98	Not sure	2% Skip to Q16
	99	Refused	1% Skip to Q16
Q15	Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the content of the web site? <i>Get answer, then ask:</i> Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?		
	1	Very satisfied	28%
	2	Somewhat satisfied	53%
	3	Somewhat dissatisfied	12%
	4	Very dissatisfied	4%
	98	Not sure	2%
	99	Refused	0%

Section 10: Ideas for Improving Service		
Q16	We'd like your ideas on how the City can improve the service that it provides in the area of development services. What one or two changes or improvements would you most like the City make? <i>Verbatim responses coded into following categories.</i>	
	Not sure	18%
	No changes / Everything is fine	15%
	Clarify, standardize, reduce fees	11%
	Increase staffing	10%
	Decrease turnaround times	9%
	Decrease wait times at office	9%
	Improve online access to info	7%
	Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness	7%
	Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency	4%
	Prefer not to answer	4%
	Improve scheduling, appointment process	3%
	Improve, simplify process	3%
	Improve intra-departmental communication	3%
	Provide staff with training on atypical projects	3%
	Increase general training and knowledge	3%
	Invest necessary time on plan checks, inspections	2%
	Reduce number of contacts to complete project	2%
	Ensure availability, clarity of info, codes, forms	2%
	Improve responsiveness, attentiveness	2%
	Simplify process of obtaining permits	2%
	Allow flexibility, reasonableness for interpretation	1%
	Improve proactive efforts	1%
	Increase accessibility of personnel	1%
	Commit to appointment times and deadlines	1%
	Give more authority to project managers	1%
	Increase departmental communication to customers	1%

**Section 11: Perceptions of City**

Q17 Next, I'm going to read several statements about the City of San Jose I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with each statement as they apply to development services.

Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement, or do you not have an opinion? (*Get answer. If agree or disagree, ask: Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree).*)

<i>Do Not Randomize</i>		Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The City cares about its customers	30%	35%	14%	13%	6%	1%
B	The City acknowledges when a mistake has been made	19%	25%	14%	15%	20%	6%
C	If a mistake is made, the City does its best to fix the mistake	22%	26%	12%	12%	22%	6%
D	The City does an adequate job balancing the interests of developers with the interests of the communities that will be affected by a project	23%	29%	11%	11%	20%	6%
E	Overall, the City has improved its customer service in the past 12 months	20%	20%	11%	24%	21%	4%

**Section 12: Background Questions**

Q18 In the past 12 months, approximately how many development services projects have you worked on with the City of San Jose?

1	30%
2 to 3	30%
4 to 5	9%
6 to 10	13%
11 or more	11%
Not sure / Refused	6%

**Post-Interview Items**

D1	Form of Interview		
1	Phone		44%
2	Web		56%

DISCRETIONARY VERSION



City of San Jose Development Services  
 2008 Customer Satisfaction Survey  
 Final Toplines  
 Discretionary Version (n = 187)

**Section 1: Introduction to Study**

Hi, may I please speak to: \_\_\_\_\_. Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm calling from True North Research on behalf of the City of San Jose. I'm following up on a letter you should have received a few weeks ago from the City which invited you to participate in a customer survey regarding development services. Our records indicate that you have yet to take the survey over the Internet, so we'd like to ask you a few questions over the telephone.

*If needed:* We're conducting a brief and confidential survey of people who have received building permit, plan check and inspection services from the City of San Jose.

*If needed:* Your name and contact information was included on a recent permit application for the City of San Jose—which is why we'd like to ask you about your experience.

*If needed:* The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete.

*If needed:* If now is not a convenient time, can you let me know a better time so I can call back?

*If needed:* You are also welcome to participate in the survey online, as described in the invitation letter we recently sent you.

*If needed:* Your answers will be kept anonymous and will be combined with the answers of other people who participate in the survey.

**Section 2: Screener for Inclusion in the Study**

SC1	Our records indicate that you worked with the City of San Jose on at least one project during the past 12 months. Is this correct?				
	1	Yes	100%	Continue	
	2	No	0%	Terminate	
	99	Refused	0%	Terminate	
SC2	Was your most recent project ministerial (mini-steer-ee-al) or discretionary? <i>If unsure, clarify:</i> Most projects are ministerial projects. As long as they comply with the Municipal Code, they have to be approved. Ministerial projects do not involve a public hearing. A discretionary project is a project that requires a public hearing related to a conditional use permit or zone change. Even if the project complies with the Municipal Code, the decision-makers still have some discretion in deciding whether to approve the project.				
	1	Ministerial	Switch to Ministerial Version of Q		
	2	Discretionary	Stay with Discretionary Version of Q		
	98	Not sure	Switch to Ministerial Version of Q		
	99	Refused	Terminate		
SC3	For your most recent discretionary project, were you personally involved in the: _____ stage of the project?				
	Do Not Randomize		Yes	No	Not sure
A	Permit application		91%	9%	0%
B	Project review		83%	14%	2%
C	Public hearing		57%	42%	2%
<i>If SC3a = (2, 99), SC3b = (2, 99) AND SC3c = (2, 99) then terminate interview.</i>					

SC4	Did you personally work with a Project Manager assigned by the City to the project?		
	1	Yes	66%
	2	No	30%
	98	Not sure	3%
	99	Refused	1%

### Section 3: Overall Satisfaction & Role

In answering the questions in this survey, I'd like you to focus on your experience with your most recent discretionary project with the City.

Q1	Which of the following best describes your role on this project? <i>Multiple responses allowed.</i>		
	1	Owner	41%
	2	Architect	19%
	3	Engineer	12%
	4	Contractor	20%
	5	Permit Runner	11%
	6	Agent/Representative	19%
	7	Planner	9%
	8	Other	4%
	98	Not sure	0%
	99	Refused	0%
Q2	Was your most recent project for a residential property, a commercial property, or a mixed use property?		
	1	Residential	37%
	2	Commercial	49%
	3	Mixed use	12%
	98	Not sure	1%
	99	Refused	1%

Q3	Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the service that you received from the City of San Jose on this project? <i>Get answer, then ask:</i> Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?		
	1	Very Satisfied	25%
	2	Somewhat Satisfied	39%
	3	Somewhat Dissatisfied	16%
	4	Very Dissatisfied	20%
	98	Not sure	1%
	99	Refused	1%

#### Section 4: Permit Application

*Only ask questions in this section if SC3a = 1. Otherwise, skip to instructions for Section 5.*

Next, I'm going to read several statements about submitting a Planning permit application during the entitlement stage of the process. I'd like you to tell me whether or not you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience.

Q4	Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? <i>Get answer, then ask:</i> Would that be strongly or somewhat (agree/disagree)?						
	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The process and steps needed to submit a permit application were clearly communicated	30%	37%	16%	13%	1%	2%
B	You received clear and correct instructions about the documents needed to apply for a permit	37%	30%	19%	9%	1%	3%
C	You received a clear explanation of the fees	30%	34%	13%	18%	2%	4%
D	The fees were assessed accurately	33%	27%	13%	13%	9%	5%
E	When you came in to submit your application, the amount of time that you had to wait before being assisted by staff was reasonable	31%	31%	17%	14%	3%	5%
F	The permit application counter staff made an effort to understand my needs as a customer	33%	36%	12%	9%	3%	7%
G	The staff at the permit application counter were accessible	33%	36%	12%	8%	3%	8%
H	The staff at the permit application counter were responsive	35%	33%	13%	7%	4%	8%
I	The staff at the permit application counter were courteous	48%	33%	8%	2%	3%	6%
J	The staff at the permit application counter were knowledgeable	31%	34%	18%	9%	2%	6%

K	The staff at the permit application counter were helpful	34%	36%	15%	5%	2%	7%
L	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received during the permit application stage of the process	29%	38%	19%	9%	3%	2%

#### Section 5: Project Review

Only ask questions in this section if SC3b = 1. Otherwise, skip to instructions for Section 6.

Next, I'm going to read several statements about the City's process of reviewing the plans you submitted for a Planning permit. I'd like you to tell me whether or not you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience.

Q5 Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? *Get answer, then ask:* Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?

<i>Do Not Randomize</i>		Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable	26%	44%	15%	8%	1%	6%
B	The plan review comments and corrections were based on reasonable interpretations of the code	24%	42%	19%	10%	1%	5%
C	The plan review comments and corrections made sense for the project	21%	37%	22%	13%	1%	5%
D	The plan review comments and corrections were consistent—there were no contradictions	21%	35%	23%	13%	2%	5%
E	Plan corrections were requested at the appropriate time—there were no late hits	23%	30%	19%	20%	2%	6%
F	There was adequate communication among City staff about the project during the plan review	20%	37%	14%	22%	4%	3%
G	The number of plan rechecks was reasonable	28%	35%	14%	13%	3%	6%
H	The plan review staff made an effort to understand my needs as a customer	34%	33%	15%	11%	3%	4%
I	The plan review staff were responsive	35%	28%	18%	15%	2%	3%
J	The plan review staff were courteous	47%	38%	6%	4%	3%	3%
K	The plan review staff were knowledgeable	34%	40%	11%	8%	3%	4%
L	The plan review staff were helpful	35%	37%	15%	9%	2%	3%
M	The turn-around time set by the City for plan review was reasonable	22%	27%	22%	25%	3%	2%
N	The plan review process was completed by the target date set by the City	20%	23%	20%	25%	6%	6%
O	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received during the plan review stage	24%	33%	22%	17%	2%	3%

<b>Section 6: Project Manager</b>							
<i>Only ask questions in this section if SC4 = 1. Otherwise, skip to instructions for Section 7.</i>							
Next, I'm going to read several statements about the project manager assigned to the project by the City. I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience.							
Q6	Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? <i>Get answer, then ask:</i> Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?						
	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The process and steps needed to get to a public hearing were clearly communicated by the project manager	32%	37%	10%	8%	4%	10%
B	Once all of your documents were ready, the project manager scheduled you for a hearing within a reasonable amount of time	34%	29%	10%	11%	5%	11%
C	The project manager provided you with a reasonable estimate of the processing costs throughout the project	28%	33%	15%	11%	3%	10%
D	Your project comment letter was accurate and complete	30%	38%	15%	7%	2%	7%
E	The project manager was responsive	37%	26%	20%	10%	2%	6%
F	The project manager was courteous	51%	30%	5%	4%	4%	6%
G	The project manager was knowledgeable	33%	41%	11%	6%	3%	6%
H	The project manager was helpful	36%	33%	15%	8%	2%	6%
I	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received from the project manager	30%	37%	13%	12%	2%	6%

<b>Section 7: Public Hearing</b>							
<i>Only ask questions in this section if SC3c = 1. Otherwise, skip to Section 8.</i>							
Next, I'm going to read several statements about the public hearing process. I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience.							
Q7	Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? <i>Get answer, then ask:</i> Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?						
	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The project comment letter provided clear and correct instructions about the documents needed before a public hearing could be scheduled	34%	40%	8%	8%	1%	9%

B	You were given adequate time to review the permits and resolutions prior to the public hearing.	36%	33%	14%	9%	2%	6%
C	You were given adequate information by staff about how the public hearing process would go	47%	37%	6%	6%	0%	5%
D	At the public hearing, your item was heard within a reasonable amount of time	41%	37%	11%	7%	0%	5%
E	At the public hearing, staff represented your project in a fair and professional manner	54%	32%	3%	3%	1%	8%
F	At the public hearing, the decision makers were fair in how they made their decisions	46%	33%	5%	7%	3%	7%
G	The Public Outreach process is fair and reasonable	30%	34%	9%	8%	5%	13%
H	The appeal process is fair and reasonable	23%	24%	6%	5%	15%	28%
I	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received during the public hearing stage	40%	43%	6%	6%	1%	5%

**Section 8: Fire**

Q8	In the past six months, did one or more of your projects require a permit, project review or inspection from San Jose's Fire Department?						
	1	Yes	53%			Ask Q9	
	2	No	43%			Skip to Q10	
	98	Not sure	4%			Skip to Q10	
	99	Refused	0%			Skip to Q10	

Next, I'm going to read several statements about the service you received from San Jose's Fire Department on these projects. For each statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience with the Fire Department.

Q9	Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? <i>Get answer, then ask:</i> Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?							
	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>		Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit were clearly communicated by Fire Department staff		29%	35%	17%	13%	3%	2%
B	The plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable		38%	39%	9%	8%	4%	1%
C	The plan review comments and corrections were consistent—there were no contradictions		35%	38%	13%	9%	3%	1%
D	Any plan review to be coordinated with other Departments was done so in a seamless manner		20%	33%	20%	19%	5%	2%

E	When you visited the counter, the amount of time that you had to wait before being assisted by Fire Department staff was reasonable	22%	43%	5%	4%	9%	16%
F	Fire Department staff made an effort to understand my needs as a customer	30%	38%	12%	5%	7%	7%
G	Fire Department staff were responsive	32%	41%	9%	6%	6%	5%
H	Fire Department staff were courteous	52%	27%	6%	1%	8%	6%
I	Fire Department staff were knowledgeable	42%	35%	6%	3%	7%	6%
J	Fire Department staff were helpful	40%	35%	10%	4%	5%	5%
K	The turn-around time set by the Fire Department for plan review was reasonable	30%	34%	15%	11%	4%	5%
L	The plan review process was completed by the target date set by the Fire Department	30%	36%	15%	7%	6%	5%
M	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received from the Fire Department	32%	39%	16%	5%	4%	3%

**Section 9: Public Works**

Q10	In the past six months, did one or more of your projects require a permit, project review or inspection from San Jose's Public Works Department?			
	1	Yes	47%	Ask Q11
	2	No	48%	Skip to Q12
	98	Not sure	5%	Skip to Q12
	99	Refused	0%	Skip to Q12

Next, I'm going to read several statements about the service you received from San Jose's Public Works Department on these projects. For each statement, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement based on your own experience with the Public Works Department.

Q11	Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? <i>Get answer, then:</i> Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?						
	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The process and steps needed to obtain a clearance or permit were clearly communicated by Public Works Department staff	19%	40%	14%	19%	3%	5%
B	The plan review comments and corrections were clear and understandable	18%	42%	17%	15%	3%	5%
C	The plan review comments and corrections were consistent—there were no contradictions	19%	38%	16%	19%	3%	5%
D	Any plan review to be coordinated with other Departments was done so in a seamless manner	11%	32%	27%	20%	3%	6%

E	When you visited the counter, the amount of time that you had to wait before being assisted by Public Works Department staff was reasonable	16%	40%	5%	6%	10%	24%
F	Public Works Department staff made an effort to understand my needs as a customer	27%	39%	10%	14%	3%	7%
G	Public Works Department staff were responsive	24%	35%	18%	14%	3%	6%
H	Public Works Department staff were courteous	39%	44%	1%	6%	3%	7%
I	Public Works Department staff were knowledgeable	27%	50%	7%	7%	3%	6%
J	Public Works Department staff were helpful	27%	41%	11%	11%	3%	6%
K	The turn-around time set by the Public Works Department for plan review was reasonable	14%	44%	11%	18%	7%	6%
L	The plan review process was completed by the target date set by the Public Works Department	15%	39%	10%	19%	8%	9%
M	Overall, you were satisfied with the service you received from the Public Works Department	16%	45%	14%	17%	3%	5%

#### Section 10: Information Access

For the remaining questions, please answer for the City of San Jose as a whole.

Q12	Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to make development services information available through their web site, brochures and meetings? <i>Get answer, then ask: Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?</i>		
	1	Very satisfied	28%
	2	Somewhat satisfied	39%
	3	Somewhat dissatisfied	19%
	4	Very dissatisfied	11%
	98	Not sure	3%
	99	Refused	0%
Q13	In the past 12 months, have you visited the City's Development Services web site?		
	1	Yes	71% Ask Q14
	2	No	26% Skip to Q15
	98	Not sure	2% Skip to Q15
	99	Refused	1% Skip to Q15

Q14	Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the content of the web site? <i>Get answer, then ask: Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?</i>		
	1	Very satisfied	27%
	2	Somewhat satisfied	56%
	3	Somewhat dissatisfied	10%
	4	Very dissatisfied	5%
	98	Not sure	2%
	99	Refused	0%

#### Section 11: Ideas for Improving Service

Q15	We'd like your ideas on how the City can improve the service that it provides in the area of development services. What one or two changes or improvements would you most like the City make? <i>Verbatim responses coded into following categories.</i>	
	No changes / Everything is fine	13%
	Not sure	13%
	Clarify, standardize, reduce fees	10%
	Decrease turnaround times	10%
	Increase staffing	9%
	Improve intra-departmental communication	7%
	Improve online access to info	5%
	Decrease wait times at office	5%
	Improve responsiveness, attentiveness	5%
	Prefer not to answer	5%
	Set, maintain, provide clear standards, consistency	4%
	Improve employee attitudes, helpfulness	4%
	Increase general training and knowledge	4%
	Simplify process of obtaining permits	4%
	Improve scheduling, appointment process	3%
	Increase accessibility of personnel	3%
	Invest necessary time on plan checks, inspections	3%
	Reduce number of contacts to complete project	3%
	Ensure availability, clarity of info, codes, forms	3%
	Improve, simplify process	2%
	Improve proactive efforts	2%

Commit to appointment times and deadlines	2%
Give more authority to project managers	2%
Provide staff with training on atypical projects	2%
Allow flexibility, reasonableness for interpretation	1%
Increase customer guidance, support	1%
Improve coastal plan check process	1%
Take responsibility for, correct mistakes / Increase accountability	1%
Increase departmental communication to customers	1%
Allow simple tasks to be accomplished by walk-in	1%

#### Section 12: Perceptions of City

Q16 Next, I'm going to read several statements about the City of San Jose I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with each statement as they apply to development services.

Here is the (first/next) one: \_\_\_\_\_. Do you agree or disagree with this statement, or do you not have an opinion? (*Get answer. If agree or disagree, ask*): Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree).

	<i>Do Not Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Doesn't Apply or Refused
A	The City cares about its customers	23%	41%	18%	14%	4%	1%
B	The City acknowledges when a mistake has been made	13%	28%	22%	20%	12%	5%
C	If a mistake is made, the City does its best to fix the mistake	17%	30%	18%	18%	12%	5%
D	The City does an adequate job balancing the interests of developers with the interests of the communities that will be affected by a project	18%	35%	17%	17%	11%	3%
E	Overall, the City has improved its customer service in the past 12 months	13%	15%	21%	26%	20%	4%

**Section 13: Background Questions**

Q17	In the past 12 months, approximately how many development services projects have you worked on with the City of San Jose?	
	1	36%
	2 to 3	32%
	4 to 5	12%
	6 to 10	12%
	11 or more	3%
	Not sure / Refused	4%

**Post-Interview Items**

D1	Form of Interview	
	1 Phone	44%
	2 Web	56%