

CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA
CITY COUNCIL
BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
AGENDA

Municipal Building Conference Room
201 West Gray

THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 2013

9:00 A.M.

- 1. CONTINUED DISCUSSION REGARDING ONGOING CUSTOMER SERVICES OUTREACH ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.**
- 2. MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION.**



TO: Council Business and Community Affairs Committee
THRU: Steve Lewis, City Manager 
FROM: Terry Floyd, Development Coordinator 
DATE: March 28, 2013
SUBJECT: Updates Regarding Staff Customer Service Survey
Research and 2009 International Building Code
Public Meetings

At the March 7, 2013, Council Business and Community Affairs Committee (BACA) meeting, staff brought forward preliminary information regarding the development and distribution of a customer service survey for customers who utilize City permitting, planning, inspection and property development services. From committee member input from the March 7th meeting, staff has furthered researched the elements involved in utilizing a third party to implement a survey. Staff has also outlined ideas to implement a “follow-up” survey that would be conducted by staff after a building project is complete to gain additional information from users of the City’s development services regarding their satisfaction with the services, suggested areas for improvement and comments. Additionally, staff has outlined ideas to conduct a survey of former development services users.

Implementation of a survey regarding City development services

Staff has contacted firms that specialize in survey research to gather preliminary details into the possibility of conducting a survey for general contractors, developers, trades and engineering firms that utilize City development services. In staff’s contact with the companies, it has been suggested that a mailed survey along with a follow-up telephone call (4-5 days after the survey is mailed) would be a successful method for conducting a survey for City development services.

Similar surveys that firms conduct for other municipalities have utilized 4-5page surveys that are sent to organizations (i.e. contractors, builders, developers, design professionals and other project representatives). These surveys can gather information regarding a number of different areas of a City’s development services, including: zoning/land use processes, platting processes, public improvement plan review, building permit review, inspections and any other pertinent information in these areas that the City would like to gather. Upon receiving the completed surveys, these firms provide a detailed report with survey results and detailed analysis. The process to develop the survey, administer and prepare the final report can take an estimated 90 days to complete. The estimated cost to conduct this survey can range from \$7,000 – \$8,000. An example survey from another municipality is included as Attachment A to this memo.

Utilizing an independent firm to develop, administer, receive and analyze the survey can often provide the best method to achieve statistically accurate and beneficial results. The

use of an independent firm can also be beneficial in providing a level of comfort for those completing the survey, which can increase the likelihood of receiving pointed and detailed responses. These firms work with staff to design the survey, and gather a representative sample. These firms are also willing to gather input regarding survey questions from interested outside stakeholders during the development of the survey if requested.

If the committee would like to move forward with development of a survey, staff will work to obtain a formal quote and scope of work from a survey firm.

Develop a system to survey developers, contractors and other users upon project completion

At the March 7th BACA meeting, the committee also expressed interest into possibly developing a system to survey developers, contractors and other users upon project completion. This could potentially be implemented as part of the Certificate of Occupancy (CO) portion of building permit. When a final CO is issued to a business, the City's Development Coordinator will contact the general contractor (or other representative involved in utilizing inspection and permitting services) to gather contact information and send the user a link to an online survey. This survey would initially focus on Development Services users (permitting and inspections), but later could be implemented for those utilizing Public Works Engineering services (owners/engineers involved in platting and developing).

Questions for those utilizing these services might include questions identifying: the type of firm, years performing work in the City of Norman, which building permitting and inspections were performed, helpfulness of staff, overall experience with inspection process, inspection thoroughness, consistency of inspections, comments areas and contact information for the Development Coordinator so that additional comments or concerns can be voiced and addressed. An example survey from another municipality is attached to this memo as Attachment B.

The information from these surveys will be utilized to identify areas in these departments that may need improvement, areas of success and to gauge the effectiveness of changes that are made as a result of the City's efforts to enhance the development process.

Every six months, a random sample of those who were surveyed can then be selected to be directed to an additional link for a detailed survey to gather more in-depth information regarding their satisfaction with the development services they utilized. An example of this type of detailed survey from another municipality is included as Attachment C in this memo.

Survey of former users of Norman development services

Comments were also made at the March 7 BACA meeting that a survey could be conducted for organizations that have not developed in Norman in the last 3-5 years. To potentially conduct this type of survey, the Development Coordinator would work with staff in the Public Works Engineering and Planning and Community Development departments to identify commercial applicants, trade contractors, design professionals and developers that have not obtained a permit or applied for platting/rezoning in the past 3-5 years. The Development Coordinator would also work with the Chamber of Commerce and NEDC to identify former applicants for the survey. These former applicants would be sent a survey that will identify the capacity in which the former applicant utilized City services (trade, contractor, developer, business owner, design professional), gauge the satisfaction of their experience utilizing City development services, reasons for not obtaining a permit since their last use of City services and questions gauging their interest in developing and working in Norman in the future. The survey could also include a comment section for applicants to give further information regarding their experience.

This project would be conducted as an effort to possibly further identify what reasons certain businesses and/or developers have not chosen to recently work in Norman, and to also further explore what areas of the development and permitting process can be improved.

Update on 2009 International Building Code (IBC) adoption

Staff has been reviewing and researching changes from the 2006 IBC (currently adopted by the City) to 2009 IBC. The State of Oklahoma has adopted the 2009 edition of the IBC and cities in Oklahoma are required to adopt this edition as part of their ordinances. Staff anticipates having these meetings with stakeholders (contractors, developers, builders, design professionals and other interested parties) during the last week in April and early May to highlight the changes from the 2006 IBC to the 2009 IBC.

This information will be presented to the committee at the April 4th BACA meeting. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

ATTACHMENT A

(following page)

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. Your input is an important part of the City's on-going effort to improve the quality of our services. Your responses will remain completely confidential.

ZONING & LAND USE AMENDMENT REVIEW PROCESS

1. Have you interacted with the City's Zoning & Land Use Amendment Review Process during the past two years?
 ___(1) Yes - please answer Questions 2-4 ___(2) No - Go to Question 5 (below)

2. Several items that may influence your satisfaction with the City's Zoning & Land Use Amendment Review Process and Staff are listed below. Please rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means "Very Satisfied" and 1 means "Very Dissatisfied."

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
(A) The length of time the process takes complete.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(B) How easy the process is to understand.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(C) How easy the process is to complete.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(D) The technical competence of City staff.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(E) How easy it is to contact City staff.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(F) How responsive City staff are to your needs.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(G) How fairly you are treated by City staff.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(H) How consistently standards are applied by City staff.....	5	4	3	2	1	9

3. Which THREE of these items do you think should receive the most emphasis from the City over the next 2 years? [Write in the letters below using the letters from the list in Question 2 above].
 1st: ___ 2nd: ___ 3rd: ___

4. Compared to other governmental organizations in _____ with whom you have worked, how would you rate City of _____ Zoning & Land Use Amendment Review Process?
 ___(1) Better ___(2) About the Same ___(3) Worse ___(9) Don't know

SUBDIVISION PLATTING REVIEW PROCESS

5. Have you interacted with the City's Subdivision Platting Review Process during the past two years?
 ___(1) Yes - please answer Questions 6-8 ___(2) No - Go to Question 9 (next page)

6. Several items that may influence your satisfaction with the City's Subdivision Platting Review Process and Staff are listed below. Please rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means "Very Satisfied" and 1 means "Very Dissatisfied."

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
(A) The length of time the process takes complete.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(B) How easy the process is to understand.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(C) How easy the process is to complete.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(D) The technical competence of City staff.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(E) How easy it is to contact City staff.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(F) How responsive City staff are to your needs.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(G) How fairly you are treated by City staff.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(H) How consistently standards are applied by City staff.....	5	4	3	2	1	9

7. Which THREE of these items do you think should receive the most emphasis from the City over the next 2 years? [Write in the letters below using the letters from the list in Question 6 above].
 1st: ___ 2nd: ___ 3rd: ___

8. Compared to other governmental organizations in _____ with whom you have worked, how would you rate City of _____ **Subdivision Platting Review Process?**
 ___(1) Better ___(2) About the Same ___(3) Worse ___(9) Don't know

WATERSHED PROTECTION REVIEW PROCESS

9. Have you interacted with the City's Watershed Protection Review Process during the past two years?
 ___(1) Yes – please answer Questions 10-12 ___(2) No - Go to Question 13 (below)

10. Several items that may influence your satisfaction with the City's Watershed Protection Review Process and Staff are listed below. Please rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means "Very Satisfied" and 1 means "Very Dissatisfied."

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
(A) The length of time the process takes complete.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(B) How easy the process is <u>to understand</u>	5	4	3	2	1	9
(C) How easy the process is <u>to complete</u>	5	4	3	2	1	9
(D) The technical competence of City staff	5	4	3	2	1	9
(E) How easy it is to contact City staff	5	4	3	2	1	9
(F) How responsive City staff are to your needs.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(G) How fairly you are treated by City staff	5	4	3	2	1	9
(H) How consistently standards are applied by City staff.....	5	4	3	2	1	9

11. Which **THREE** of these items do you think should receive the most emphasis from the City over the next 2 years? [Write in the letters below using the letters from the list in Question 10 above].

1st.: _____ 2nd.: _____ 3rd.: _____

12. Compared to other governmental organizations in _____ with whom you have worked, how would you rate City of _____ **Watershed Protection Review Process?**
 ___(1) Better ___(2) About the Same ___(3) Worse ___(9) Don't know

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT PLANS REVIEW PROCESS

13. Have you interacted with the City's Public Improvement Plans Review Process during the past two years?
 ___(1) Yes – please answer Questions 14-16 ___(2) No - Go to Question 17 (next page)

14. Several items that may influence your satisfaction with the City's Public Improvement Plans Review Process and Staff are listed below. Please rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means "Very Satisfied" and 1 means "Very Dissatisfied."

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
(A) The length of time the process takes complete.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(B) How easy the process is <u>to understand</u>	5	4	3	2	1	9
(C) How easy the process is <u>to complete</u>	5	4	3	2	1	9
(D) The technical competence of City staff	5	4	3	2	1	9
(E) How easy it is to contact City staff	5	4	3	2	1	9
(F) How responsive City staff are to your needs.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(G) How fairly you are treated by City staff	5	4	3	2	1	9
(H) How consistently standards are applied by City staff.....	5	4	3	2	1	9

15. Which **THREE** of these items do you think should receive the most emphasis from the City over the next 2 years? [Write in the letters below using the letters from the list in Question 14 above].

1st.: _____ 2nd.: _____ 3rd.: _____

16. Compared to other governmental organizations in _____ with whom you have worked, how would you rate City of _____ **Public Improvement Plans Review Process?**
 ___(1) Better ___(2) About the Same ___(3) Worse ___(9) Don't know

SITE PREP REVIEW PROCESS

17. Have you interacted with the City's Site Prep Review Process during the past two years?
 ___(1) Yes – please answer Questions 18-20 ___(2) No - Go to Question 21

18. Several items that may influence your satisfaction with the City's Site Prep Review Process and Staff are listed below. Please rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means "Very Satisfied" and 1 means "Very Dissatisfied."

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
(A) The length of time the process takes complete.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(B) How easy the process is <u>to understand</u>	5	4	3	2	1	9
(C) How easy the process is <u>to complete</u>	5	4	3	2	1	9
(D) The technical competence of City staff	5	4	3	2	1	9
(E) How easy it is to contact City staff	5	4	3	2	1	9
(G) How responsive City staff are to your needs.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(G) How fairly you are treated by City staff	5	4	3	2	1	9
(H) How consistently standards are applied by City staff.....	5	4	3	2	1	9

19. Which **THREE** of these items do you think should receive the most emphasis from the City over the next 2 years? [Write in the letters below using the letters from the list in Question 14 above].

1st. _____ 2nd. _____ 3rd. _____

20. Compared to other governmental organizations in _____ with whom you have worked, how would you rate City of _____ **Site Prep Review Process?**
 ___(1) Better ___(2) About the Same ___(3) Worse ___(9) Don't know

BUILDING PERMIT REVIEW PROCESS

21. Have you interacted with the City's Building Permit Review Process during the past two years?
 ___(1) Yes – please answer Questions 22-24 ___(2) No - Go to Question 25 (next page)

22. Several items that may influence your satisfaction with the City's Building Permit Review Process and Staff are listed below. Please rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means "Very Satisfied" and 1 means "Very Dissatisfied."

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
(A) The length of time the process takes complete.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(B) How easy the process is <u>to understand</u>	5	4	3	2	1	9
(C) How easy the process is <u>to complete</u>	5	4	3	2	1	9
(D) The technical competence of City staff	5	4	3	2	1	9
(E) How easy it is to contact City staff	5	4	3	2	1	9
(H) How responsive City staff are to your needs.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(G) How fairly you are treated by City staff	5	4	3	2	1	9
(H) How consistently standards are applied by City staff.....	5	4	3	2	1	9

23. Which **THREE** of these items do you think should receive the most emphasis from the City over the next 2 years? [Write in the letters below using the letters from the list in Question 14 above].

1st. _____ 2nd. _____ 3rd. _____

24. Compared to other governmental organizations in _____ with whom you have worked, how would you rate City of Building Permit Review Process?
 ___(1) Better ___(2) About the Same ___(3) Worse ___(9) Don't know

INSPECTIONS

25. Have you needed an inspection that was conducted by City employees during the past two years?
 ___(1) Yes – please answer Questions 26-27
 ___(2) Go to Question 28 (below)

26. Several items that may influence your satisfaction with City Inspections are listed below. Please rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means “Very Satisfied” and 1 means “Very Dissatisfied.”

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
(A) How fairly standards are enforced.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(B) The availability of building inspectors.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(C) The ease of interpreting inspection requirements	5	4	3	2	1	9
(D) How well the City communicates inspection requirements	5	4	3	2	1	9
(E) How long it takes the City to complete inspections	5	4	3	2	1	9

27. The last time you needed an inspection that was conducted by the City, how many days did it take from the time you requested the inspection until the inspection was completed?

_____ days

OVERALL – ALL RESPONDENTS RESUME HERE

28. Do you think there is too much duplication in the development review process in the City of _____

- ___(1) Yes – answer 28a
- ___(2) No – go to 29

28a. If YES: Where do you see duplication?

29. From how many different departments did you have to obtain approval during the development review process the last time you completed a project in the City of _____ ?

_____ different departments

30. Several items that may influence your perception of the development climate in _____ are listed below. Please rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means “Much Better” and 1 means “Much Worse” than other communities in _____

	Much Better	Better	About the Same	Worse	Much Worse	Don't Know
(A) Overall image of the City.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(B) Overall quality of life in the City.....	5	4	3	2	1	9
(C) Overall development climate in the City.....	5	4	3	2	1	9

31. Over the next five years, how do you think your organization's level of investment in will change:
- ___(1) Much greater
 - ___(2) Greater
 - ___(3) About the same
 - ___(4) Less
 - ___(5) Much less
 - ___(9) Don't know

32. Which of the following BEST describes you?
- ___(1) Developer
 - ___(2) Engineer/architect
 - ___(3) Lawyer
 - ___(4) Government officials
 - ___(5) Surveyor
 - ___(6) Contractor/Builder
 - ___(9) Other: _____

33. [Optional] Can you think of any ways that the City of _____ could make the development review process better or more efficient?

The City of _____ reviewing ways to improve the development review process. If you would be willing to be kept informed about the outcomes of this review, please provide your name, address, and phone number in the space below.

Your Name: _____ Organization: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____

The City of _____ Thanks You for Your Time
Please return your completed survey in the return envelope provided or by fax to _____

ATTACHMENT B

(following page)

DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

1. How would you describe the City staff's attitude while assisting you with your project?
Please circle your answer on a scale from 1-5.

(Courteous) 1 2 3 4 5 **(Discourteous)**

EXPLANATION:

2. How would you describe City staff's level of assistance with your project? (for example: offering alternatives, explaining what is required and why, and keeping the process moving quickly.) Please circle your answer on a scale of 1-5.

(Helpful) 1 2 3 4 5 **(Not Helpful)**

EXPLANATION:

3. Please rate the performance of the following departments:

- Building Services	(Helpful)	1	2	3	4	5	(Not Helpful)
- Engineering	(Helpful)	1	2	3	4	5	(Not Helpful)
- Utilities	(Helpful)	1	2	3	4	5	(Not Helpful)
- Planning	(Helpful)	1	2	3	4	5	(Not Helpful)
- Fire	(Helpful)	1	2	3	4	5	(Not Helpful)
- Dev. Review Team	(Helpful)	1	2	3	4	5	(Not Helpful)

4. Were there any city requirements that you felt were unnecessary?

5. Do you have any suggestions for improving our performance?

6. My involvement in this project (please select one):

Design Professional **Contractor** **Owner**

7. *Optional:* Please include project name, address and/ or permit number:

PLEASE USE THE BACK OF THE SURVEY FOR ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

ATTACHMENT C

(following page)

1. How many years have you been performing work in the city?

- 0 – 4 years
- 5 – 9 years
- 10 – 14 years
- 15 – 19 years
- 20 or more years

2. Would you describe yourself or your firm as a:

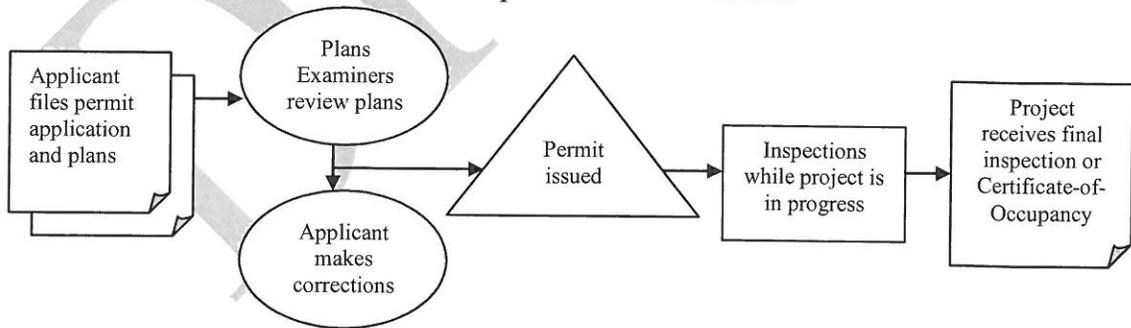
- General contractor
- Sub-contractor
- Project owner
- Other _____

3. Please indicate which inspections were performed on your **PROJECT** (mark all that apply)

- Building
- Electrical
- Plumbing
- Mechanical
- All of the above

If no inspections were performed on your **PROJECT**, please mark here . Do not complete the rest of the survey. Return it in the postpaid envelope.

4. Below is a flow chart and list of the most common steps and professional staff members that you may have experienced or come into contact with while obtaining a building permit and inspections related to your project. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with each of the steps or contacts as you experienced them during the course of your **PROJECT**. Circle "Don't Know" if you have no opinion, or if you did not have to perform the step indicated, or if you did not come into contact with the staff professional mentioned.



FOR THIS PROJECT:	VERY SATISFIED	SATISFIED	DON'T KNOW	SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED	VERY DISSATISFIED
(a) Ease of completing the permit application forms	5	4	3	2	1
(b) Helpfulness of the front counter Permit Technicians	5	4	3	2	1
(c) Professionalism and demeanor of the front counter Permit Technicians	5	4	3	2	1
(d) Helpfulness of the Plans Examiners	5	4	3	2	1
(e) Speed of the permit application review process	5	4	3	2	1
(f) Reasonableness of permit fees	5	4	3	2	1
(g) Ease of scheduling an inspection by telephone	5	4	3	2	1
(h) Ease of scheduling an inspection online	5	4	3	2	1
(i) Timeliness of inspections	5	4	3	2	1
(j) Inspectors' knowledge of applicable codes and ordinances	5	4	3	2	1
(k) Consistent interpretation of codes by the Inspectors	5	4	3	2	1

(l)	Thoroughness of the Inspectors	5	4	3	2	1
(m)	Flexibility of the Inspectors	5	4	3	2	1
(n)	Professional demeanor and appearance of the Inspectors	5	4	3	2	1
(o)	Overall helpfulness of the Inspectors	5	4	3	2	1
(p)	Ease of accessing inspection results information online	5	4	3	2	1
(q)	Ease in obtaining a Certificate-of-Occupancy	5	4	3	2	1
(r)	Overall experience with the Inspections Division	5	4	3	2	1

5. During the course of your **PROJECT**, did any of your work initially fail to pass an inspection?

Yes

No

If "Yes," did the inspector explain verbally or in writing the reasons why the work failed to pass?

Yes

No

6. If the **PROJECT** was *non-residential* in nature, did you pass the initial final inspection that leads to issuance of Certificate-of Occupancy?

Yes

No

Not applicable (project was residential in nature)

If "No," did the inspector discuss with you the conditions for receiving a Temporary Certificate-of-Occupancy?

Yes

No

7. Do you engage in construction work in other cities?
 Yes
 No (please skip to Question #9 and continue the survey)

8. Considering similar jobs that you have performed in other cities, how would you rate the inspections experience you received in this City during the course of your **PROJECT** compared to your experiences in other cities, according to each of the following characteristics:

	As to the characteristics in the left-hand column, the inspection experience on my project in this City was:		
	Better than most other cities	About the same as other cities	Worse than most other cities
(a) Promptness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Thoroughness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Flexibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Helpfulness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) Consistency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(f) Fairness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(g) Professionalism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Did you use the City website to access information about the inspections on your **PROJECT**?
 Yes
 No (please skip to Question #10 and continue the survey)

If "Yes," was the website (mark all that apply):

- Easy to access
 Informative
 A timesaver for you
 Thorough

Including your **PROJECT**, how many times have you used the City website in the last 6 months? _____ times

10. Now consider all of your experiences, whether in this City or elsewhere. Please rank the **top three** factors, which according to you do the most to affect the quality of the building inspection process. Use a “1” to indicate the most important factor, a “2” for the second most important factor, and a “3” for the third most important factor. **Please mark ONLY three answers.**

- Timely feedback on problems in the permit application
- Consistent interpretation of the codes
- Ability to access inspection results online
- Reasonableness of permit fees
- Thorough inspections that catch problems the first time
- Willingness of the inspector to consider alternative methods
- Reduction in paperwork
- Speed of the plan review process
- Knowing the rules before the project starts
- Definite times when requested inspections will take place

We are always looking for ideas to improve the services of the Inspections Division. If you have additional thoughts or comments to share, please write or type them in the space below.

Please place the completed survey in the postpaid envelope and mail it to us.
Thank you for taking the time to complete our survey.