



ROCKY VIEW COUNTY

SURVEY SUMMARY

DEPARTMENT ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY (DES)

CUSTOMER AND STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

MARCH 2025





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SUMMARY

The Planning department provided opportunities to gather feedback from applicants on the quality, accuracy, and responsiveness of the department's customer service to guide improvements based on customer experience. These included surveys on the following four services:

1. In-person front counter service desk at County Hall
2. Planning and development pre-application meetings
3. Development permit application processing
4. Planning and subdivision application processing

The formal avenue for the public to provide their comments and feedback was primarily through a tablet at the front counter, or through an online survey link provided by email. Where no survey response was received from customers, department staff did follow up over the phone to obtain feedback on the survey questions.

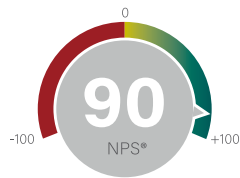
This Survey Summary presents the results of all formal feedback received from a total of 208 responses in 2024. Along with other planning policy and technical considerations, the survey feedback is a key input into the refinement of Planning department process improvements and customer service coaching for staff members.

This DES project aligns with the County Strategy of 'Effective Service Delivery' by supporting the department's understanding of how customers' expectations are being met across services and inquiring into areas of improvement through follow-up calls.



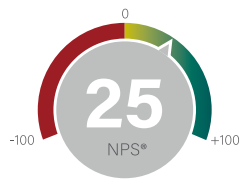
This DES project aligns with the County Strategy of 'Effective Service Delivery' by supporting the department's understanding of how customers' expectations are being met across services and inquiring into areas of improvement through follow-up calls.

Feedback was received on a variety of topics as presented in further detail within this Survey Summary. In addition to providing a quantitative assessment of the department's performance, a selection of verbatim comments are included to represent common themes in the feedback. Key highlights of the feedback across the four customer service areas in 2024 are:



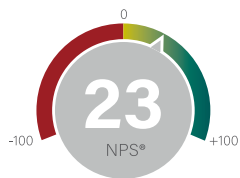
Front Counter Survey

County Staff are providing excellent face-to-face customer service at the front counter by being personable, helpful, friendly and knowledgeable



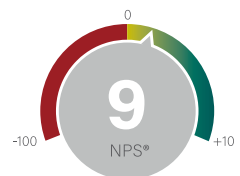
Pre-Application Meeting Survey

County Staff provide good information and feedback to the applicant regarding their potential application, although the pre-application process takes time and can be too slow for some applicants, and occasionally the technical terms/jargon used in the pre-application meeting by County Staff can overwhelm applicants.



Development Permit Application Survey

County Staff are professional and timely with answering any questions raised by the applicant, while applicants would like an improvement regarding the length of time to complete the development permit process.



Planning Application Survey

Respondents mainly expressed a desire for improved consistency having one file manager for the whole process, although many respondents were satisfied working with the County Staff on their planning applications.

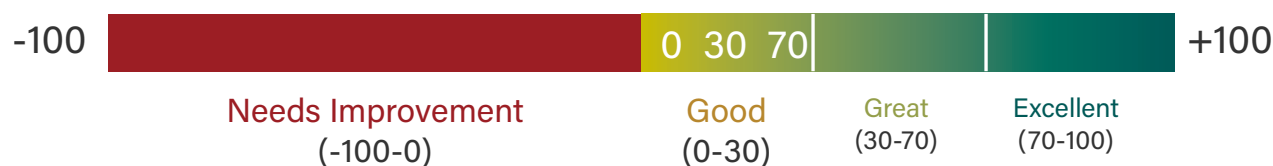
SURVEY STATUS AND METHODS

In Q3 2023, Planning began the Customer and Stakeholder Feedback Survey project. Distribution of the surveys commenced in August, and customers are asked to grade the level of service they have received on a scale of 0-10. In addition to providing a score, customers are also asked to provide comments on the service they received.

Survey scores are analysed using the Net Promoter Score (NPS) method, a widely used approach to understanding the quality of a customer's experience. NPS is calculated by taking the percentage of Promoters (respondents who provided a 9 or 10) minus the percentage of detractors (respondents who provided a number in the range of 0-6) to provide a score between -100 and +100.

Department supervisors proactively reach out to customers who submit a score lower than 7 to better understand concerns. This feedback allowed the department to further explore process improvements and to coach staff on customer service approach.

What is a good NPS score?



This survey was provided via an emailed link to the Microsoft Forms survey, in-person with a business card showing a QR code, a printed PDF paper option, or a tablet with the survey loaded up on Microsoft forms (front counter only).

Survey Feedback Challenges

As the survey has continued, there has been some reluctance from some regular customers to provide repeated survey responses on the separate applications or inquiries they are submitting. While the ongoing survey is likely to remain useful for one-time and infrequent users of the Planning services, the department will need to explore further ways of engaging with regular customers such as consultants, developers, and owners of multiple properties, to ensure that these groups are adequately represented in any feedback that is gathered.

WHO TOOK PART

Although all customers and applicants of the Planning department were encouraged to provide their feedback through the survey, it is acknowledged that the sample collected only represents a portion of all Planning department customers. The number of applications, meetings and inquiries is outlined below as an indication of how the sample collected relates to the overall customers served.

Survey numbers (from 2024 only):

FRONT COUNTER

63
RESPONSES

There were **1155**
front counter visits in 2024.

PRE-APPLICATION

40
RESPONSES

There were **137**
pre-application meetings in 2024.

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATIONS

82
RESPONSES

There were **396**
development permit
applications submitted in 2024.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

23
RESPONSES

There were **151**
planning applications
submitted in 2024.

WHAT WE ASKED

The main objective of this survey project was to receive feedback on the Planning department's customer service provided to customers and applicants. The formal methods for feedback were strictly surveys. All survey respondents were directed to submit their feedback through the respective survey sent to them. The survey included a combination of qualitative and quantitative rating questions to gauge their experience with Planning staff, how likely they would be to recommend Rocky View County as a place to undertake development, what we could improve on, and what we did well.

WHAT WE HEARD

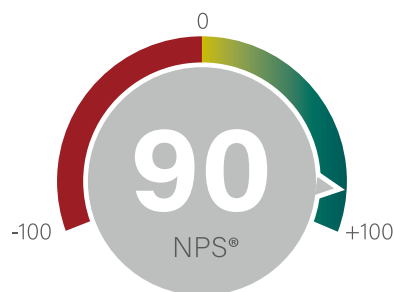
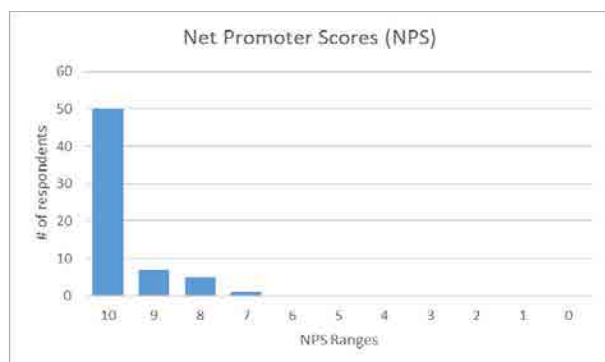
This section is organized into five parts, one for each method of feedback that was collected – general and focused surveys, Focus Group meeting minutes, and written submissions from the public. The City of Calgary also provided comments through the intermunicipal circulation process.

Part 1 - Front Counter Survey

The front counter survey sought feedback from customers coming to County Hall in person and were requesting service from the Planning department. The key topics included a quantitative question asking the respondent to rate their experience and a couple of open-ended questions to understand their experience with Planning staff: what was done well and what could be improved.

Question #1: Net Promoter Score

How would you rate your recent experience at our Planning front counter?



From the data collected in 2024, there was an overall NPS of 90 (as shown above). This means that Planning department staff are providing excellent customer service at the front counter (as illustrated by the image on page 6).

Question #2: Customer Service Successes and Opportunities for Improvement

What could we improve and/or what did we do well?

When asked what improvements they would like to see, respondents expressed the difficulty in hearing the staff responses to their questions and that staff talked too fast for them to understand. Some of the important aspects they identified were:

- A respondent found it difficult to hear the responses to their questions
- County Staff talked a bit too fast

When asked what went well, respondents expressed positive satisfaction to the customer service received at the front counter. Some of the important aspects they identified were:

- County Staff were helpful and informative
- County Staff were friendly and knowledgeable
- Timely service was provided by County Staff

Verbatim Quotes:

"Prompt quick service"

"Very friendly"

"Answered all questions, plus answered questions and areas I hadn't thought of."

"Completely satisfied"

"Explained everything very clearly"

*"Very helpful and knowledgeable.
Very friendly and personable."*

"All questions were answered clearly"

"Was just perfect, friendly and professional team and quite place"

Question #3: Experience with Planning Staff***What was your experience with County Staff, and was there anyone that stood out (good or bad)?***

When asked their experience with County Staff, respondents were very positive with the responses given. Some of the important aspects they identified were:

- County Staff were personable and helpful
- County Staff were friendly and knowledgeable
- There were 23 respondents who answered with "good" or "great"

Verbatim Quotes:

"We spoke to (County Staff Member), he was very helpful and answered all our questions"

"Very personable, friendly and knowledgeable. (County Staff Member) was great!"

"Love the personal versus technology experience in getting what I needed to know"

"(County Staff Member) from planning was very helpful and knowledgeable"

"(County Staff Member) is very good to work with"

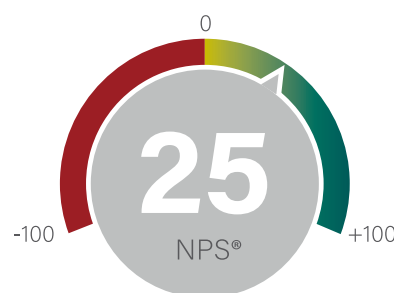
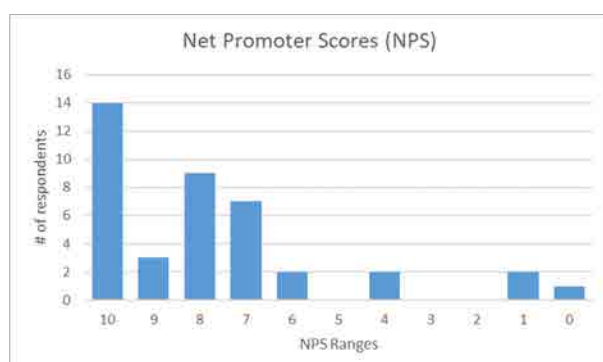
"Almost no wait time and (County Staff Member) answered the question I had related to area land use districts and subdivisions."

Part 2 – Pre-Application Meeting Survey

The pre-application meeting survey sought feedback from applicants who worked with the Planning and Development team and attended the pre-application meeting. The key topics included a quantitative question asking the respondent to rate their experience and a couple open-ended questions to understand their experience with Planning staff; what was done well and what could be improved.

Question #1: Net Promoter Score

Based on your experience with the Planning and Development team for this specific Pre-application process, how likely are you to recommend Rocky View County as a place to undertake development?



From the data collected in 2024, there was an overall NPS of 25. This means that Planning department staff are providing good customer service with the applicants during the Pre-Application meetings and overall process (as illustrated by the image on page 6).

Question #2: Customer Service Successes and Opportunities for Improvement

What could we improve and/or what did we do well?

When asked what improvements they would like to see, some respondents were dissatisfied with technical jargon used in the Pre-Application meeting as well as the slow speed for the setup of the Pre-Application meeting. Some of the important aspects they identified were:

- The overall pre-application process could take some time and be too slow for some applicants
- Some of the technical terms and jargon used in the meeting by County Staff can overwhelm applicants

When asked what went well, respondents mainly expressed that good information and feedback was provided by knowledgeable County Staff. Some of the important aspects they identified were:

- County Staff provided good information and feedback to the applicant

Verbatim Quotes:

"The feedback was excellent, though some moving forward progressive solutions would be helpful too."

"Did well- Everything. The meeting met the requirements. improve- Simpler words and less technological jargon as there were times I didn't understand what was being discussed."

"Improve - The speed at which it happened (from time of request to getting the meeting). However, this was my first time doing a meeting like this so many this is standard. Well- the follow up memo after was great! I had some questions afterwards and (County Staff Member) was great at responding to them."

"County Staff was incredibly helpful in answering questions and providing a clear path forward for how the proposed work could proceed in a timely, efficient manner. Unanswered questions were followed-up on with County Staff, and answers were provided."

"Improve - The meeting was great and they did really well. I am not satisfied with the process afterwards."

There are too many restrictions on the process due to the counsellor's input. As soon as you open up the process to Neighbours and councilors, we find it very hard to get anything done. What we did well- The county representatives were very knowledgeable and were able to answer many questions that we had. The meeting minutes and feedback that they provided were helpful. We were able to reach out afterwards with follow up questions."

"I think it's very well planned, and the staff provided all information needed for this meeting regarding Future Subdivision for this property. I think this meeting did provide all information needed especially having the knowledge of the City of Calgary"

"Improve - some of the time engineering information is too robust or not relevant to what we are trying to propose which can scare off development. Sometimes the policy side is too prescriptive and doesn't allow for room to implement things. What we did well- Good process. Good use of time and information. Very valuable and provided good insights."

Question #3: Experience with Planning Staff

What was your experience with County Staff, and was there anyone that stood out (good or bad)?

When asked their experience with County Staff, respondents were very positive with the responses given. Some of the important aspects they identified were:

- Applicants were very satisfied with the customer service and professionalism displayed by County Staff
- County Staff were knowledgeable, courteous, and professional

When asked their experience with County Staff, some respondents were critical of County Staff with the responses given. Some of the important aspects they identified were:

- One respondent did not feel the file manager was qualified and didn't have the answers they were looking for
- In one instance, there was an applicant who was misinformed by a County Staff member

Verbatim Quotes:

"All three participants in my meeting were excellent and put me at ease in territory I had no knowledge about"

"Our experience with County Staff was very good. We look forward to working with the County again in the future."

"Excellent service from everyone, even the enforcement officer was great when he gave us a ticket."

"Everyone was courteous and professional."

"The whole team that I worked with was great."was great!"

"POSITIVE experience overall. (County Staff Member) and (County Staff Member) really outlined what we could and couldn't do. They were very knowledgeable and informative."

"No particular individual stood out, everyone was great! - Very Good! planning knowledge"

"Excellent staff- (County Staff Member) was amazing and was always available to answer questions even after the Pre-App"

"Overall good experience from the time we walked in the door."

"The preplanning discussion for this potential project and subsequent report from staff was valuable and informative."

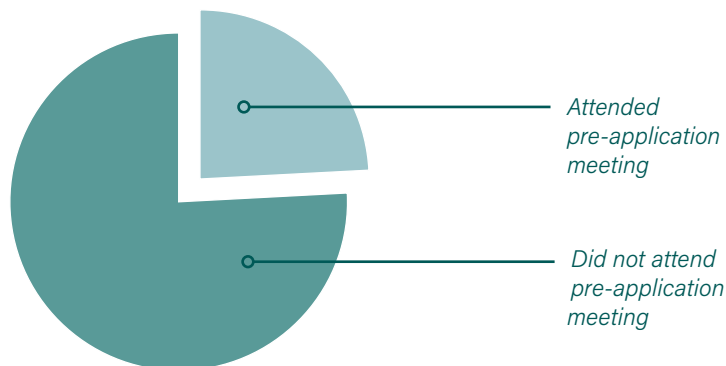
"Staff was great! Everyone was good."

Part 3 – Development Permit Application Survey

The development permit application survey sought feedback from applicants who went through the development permit process with the Development team. The questions asked if the applicant attended a pre-application meeting, asked for an overall rating of their experience and finally open-ended questions were included to understand experiences with Planning staff: what was done well and what could be improved.

Question #1: Pre-Application Attendance

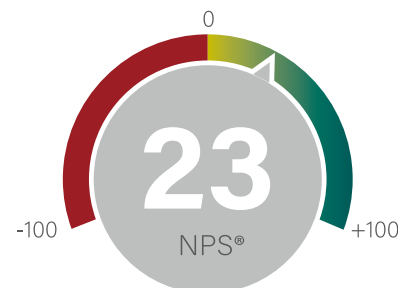
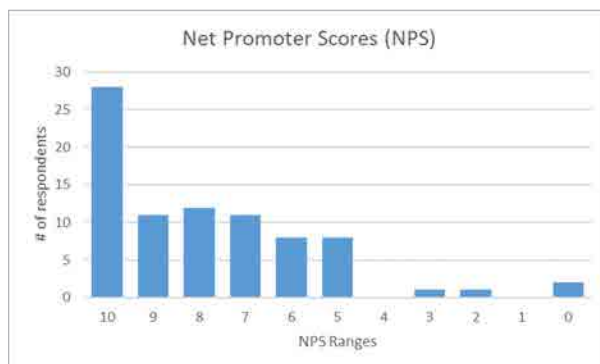
Did you attend a pre-application meeting for this application?



24% (20 out of 82 respondents) attended a pre-application meeting for their development permit application. 76% (62 out of 82 respondents) did not attend a pre-application meeting for their development permit application, as shown in the pie chart above.

Question #2: Net Promoter Score

Based on your experience with the Planning and Development team for this specific Development Permit application process, how likely are you to recommend Rocky View County as a place to undertake development?



From the data collected in 2024, there was an overall NPS of 23. This means that Planning department staff are providing good customer service throughout the development permit application process (as illustrated by the image on page 6).

Question #3: Customer Service Successes and Opportunities for Improvement

What could we improve and/or what did we do well?

When asked what improvements they would like to see, respondents mainly expressed a desire for faster timelines. Some of the important aspects they identified were:

- Improve the length of time to complete the development permit process
- Improve the application forms

When asked what went well, respondents expressed that County Staff provide good information and answer the applicant promptly. Some of the important aspects they identified were:

- County Staff are professional and timely with answering any questions raised by the applicant
- Meetings with County Staff are helpful

Verbatim Quotes:

"The only change in RVC would be a faster use approval for permitted uses. The process is too long for businesses that are trying to move and have timelines related to a real estate deal."

"Application forms could be improved"

*"Improve- more online instructions
Well- It was fast and communication."*

"Improve - The website was hard to navigate but the in person/one on one communication was great. Well- Nice to see how the cross departments work together and network to make it easy."

"Improve- It takes a long time and I feel like it takes too much time. Well- File Manager is great!"

"Improve- Timeliness. Well - Very easy to submit and get answers to any and all questions."

*"Improve- More communication throughout the process rather than just a confirmation that the application has been accepted rather than a wait with no information.
Well- Good experience"*

"Improve - The renewal this year was a little bit different as they needed a title but nothing was difficult. Well- Always kept informed, and communication was great"

"Improve- length of time to complete permits was longer than expected. Well- very responsive DO. Always available to answer questions."

"More communication on status updates, but other than that everything went well."

Question #4: Experience with Planning Staff

What was your experience with County Staff, and was there anyone that stood out (good or bad)?

When asked their experience with County Staff, respondents were very positive with the responses given. Some of the important aspects they identified were:

- Applicants were very satisfied with the customer service and professionalism displayed by County Staff
- County Staff were knowledgeable, courteous, and professional

When asked their experience with County Staff, some respondents were critical of County Staff with the responses given. Some of the important aspects they identified were:

- An applicant expressed concern with the Engineering department being separate from the Planning department

Verbatim Quotes:

"Everyone was amazing. Your front desk the ladies that direct our call were fantastic. The lady that answers the phone in planning all the way to the development officer that we talk to."

"Everyone I talked to was very good. I came frequently and they were always very understanding and guided me step by step so that I knew what I needed to do."

"Met with (County Staff Member). Very professional, extremely knowledgeable, very straight forward and answered all of our questions with clarity. We left the meeting knowing exactly where we stood, what limitations and what expectations of us were required. This individual was a pleasure to deal with and left a very positive impression of Rocky View."

"The counter staff was great getting me started and answering my questions. I then got a call from (County Staff Member) and we continued the conversations."

"The engineering group being separated doesn't seem as strong. Maybe it is just the way that the groups are set up. I'm not sure."

"County staff at the meeting were very helpful and I gained valuable information that helped me plan for the development. The staff were very professional and knowledgeable as well. Overall, I had a great experience meeting with all the County staff."

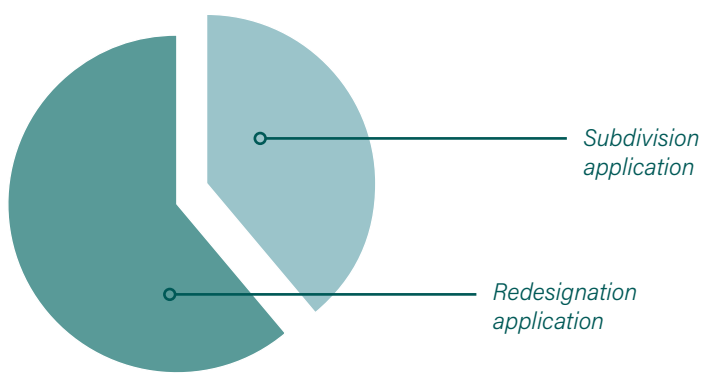
"There are a lot of new faces, and the staff is great. It is the extra red tape issues that need to be addressed. All of the staff are very nice and helpful. They do their best."

Part 4 – Planning Application Survey

The planning application survey sought feedback from applicants who went through the redesignation application or subdivision application processes with the Planning team. The key topics included what type of planning application the respondent undertook, a yes or no question asking if the applicant attended a pre-application or not, a quantitative question asking the respondent to rate their experience, and a couple open-ended questions to understand their experience with Planning staff: what was done well and what could be improved.

Question #1: Type of Planning Application

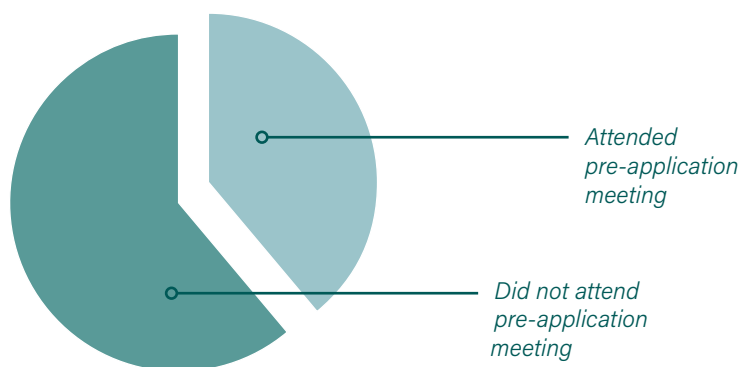
What Planning application process did you recently or currently undertake?



61% (14 out of 23 respondents) undertook the redesignation application process for their planning application, and 39% (9 out of 23 respondents) undertook the subdivision application process for their planning application, as shown in the pie chart above.

Question #2: Pre-Application Attendance

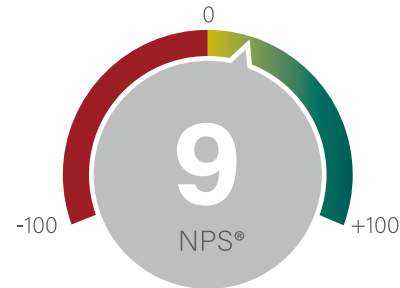
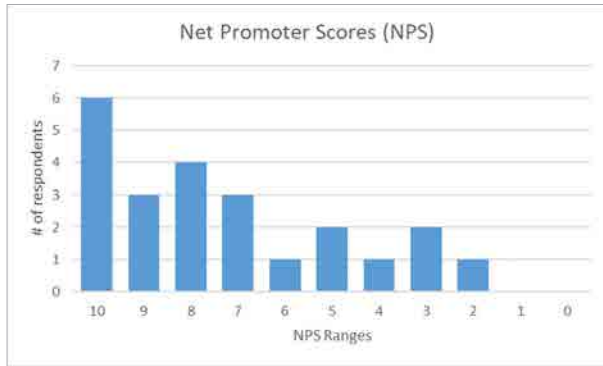
Did you attend a pre-application meeting for this application?



39% (9 out of 23 respondents) attended a pre-application meeting for their planning application, and 61% (14 out of 23 respondents) did not attend a pre-application meeting for their planning application, as shown in the pie chart above.

Question #3: Net Promoter Score

Based on your experience with the Planning and Development team for this specific application process, how likely are you to recommend Rocky View County as a place to undertake development?



From the data collected in 2024, there was an overall NPS of 9 (as shown above). This means that Planning department staff are providing good customer service throughout the planning application process (as illustrated by the image on page 6).

Question #4: Customer Service Successes and Opportunities for Improvement

What could we improve and/or what did we do well?

When asked what improvements they would like to see, respondents mainly expressed a desire for improved consistency having one file manager for the whole process. Some of the important aspects they identified were:

- Improve consistency of having one file manager from start to finish

When asked what went well, many respondents were satisfied working with the County Staff on their planning applications. Some of the important aspects they identified were:

- Professional and informative County Staff

Verbatim Quotes:

"Communication was very good."

"Cost and slow timeline needs improvement, employees were very helpful!"

"Improve: consistency. New people each time we make an app. Not consistent. Time frames take longer than any other jurisdiction. Need more responsiveness and clear direction from staff."

"Council was very reasonable and no-nonsense. The PDFs online about what goes into different designations was very helpful and a good guide on the process."

*"To Improve: Processing time
What did we do well:
Professional & right info"*

Verbatim Quotes (Question 4 - continued):

"At the time of the initial application, there were staffing constraints that made the project difficult to start. It seems those gaps have since been filled which has expedited the project."

"We have had a positive experience working with the County, starting with their website and continuing with the professionalism of the staff we interacted with."

"RVC lost the file in beginning. Answered questions well. Always someone to help us when we went in to the county. Someone to guide us as we are not used to this. Neg: The phones are frustrating. Have to leave messages all the time. Takes a long time for someone to get back to us."

Question #5: Experience with Planning Staff

What was your experience with County Staff, and was there anyone that stood out (good or bad)?

When asked their experience with County Staff, respondents were mixed with the responses given. Some of the important aspects they identified were:

- Applicants were satisfied with the customer service and professionalism displayed by County Staff
- The high turnover of County Staff is a problem area for some applicants

Verbatim Quotes:

"Everyone was pretty good. Very congenial."

"Great, staff is well informed and very cooperative"

"Often I would call in and get 1 story, then I would do that and then I would submit and get called back and told I did it wrong. I called a number of people and got a different story. I eventually wrote an email and asked for the instructions in writing. Lots of different viewpoints from RVC staff and none really matched. Very frustrating."

"All good, except kept changing. Lots of changes in dept. (County Staff Member) very good. Others were fine but we forgot who they were because they changed so often."

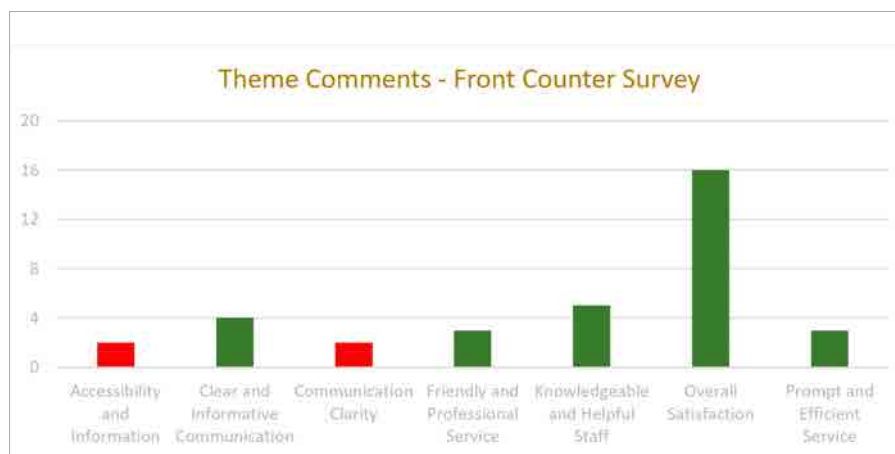
"Turnover of the planners is frustrating for clients. when a new planner gets a file, it would be better for them to review the file and touch base with the applicant."

"They were all attentive and cooperative."

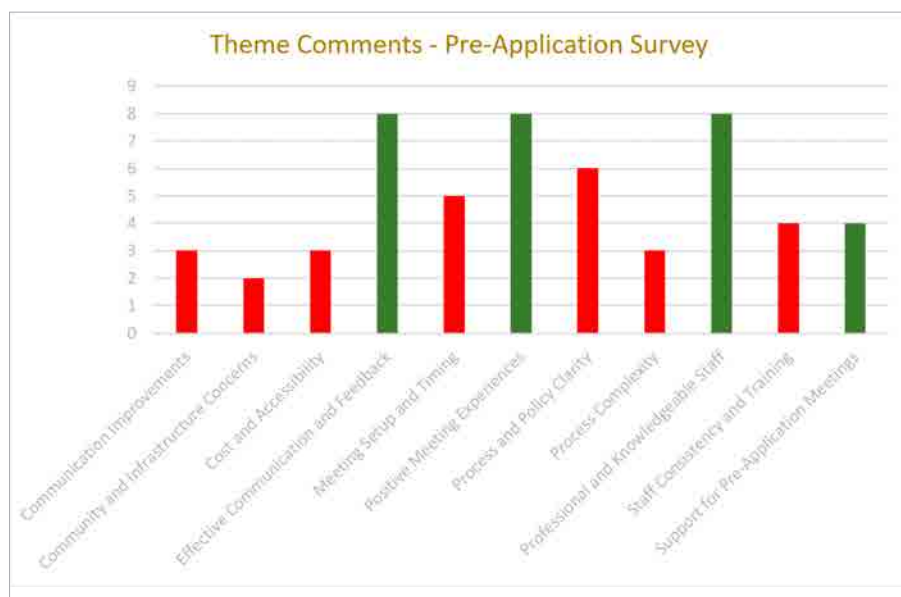
THEMING OF SURVEY RESULTS

Further analysis of the survey results was done using the technique of theming similar responses into categories. Each survey shown below has a bar graph illustrating the various themes for each survey. Bars in **red** are themes that reflect areas for improvement, whereas bars in **green** reflect positive feedback of what was successful.

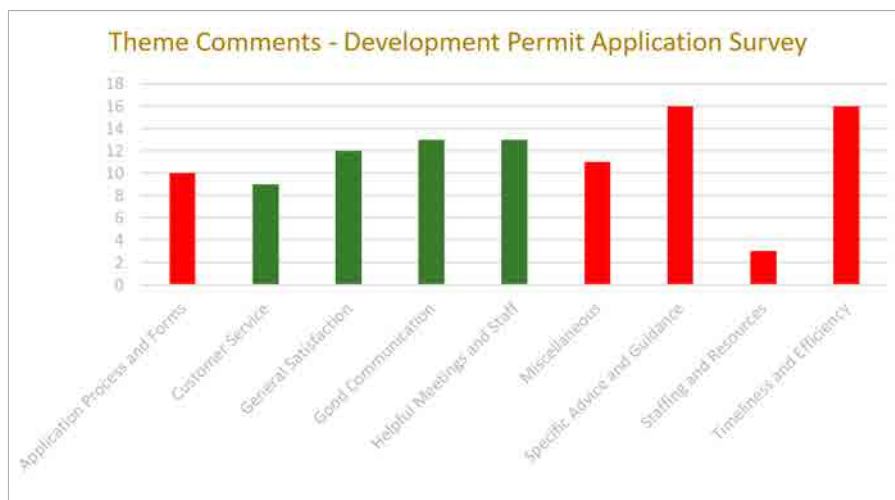
Part 1 – Front Counter Survey



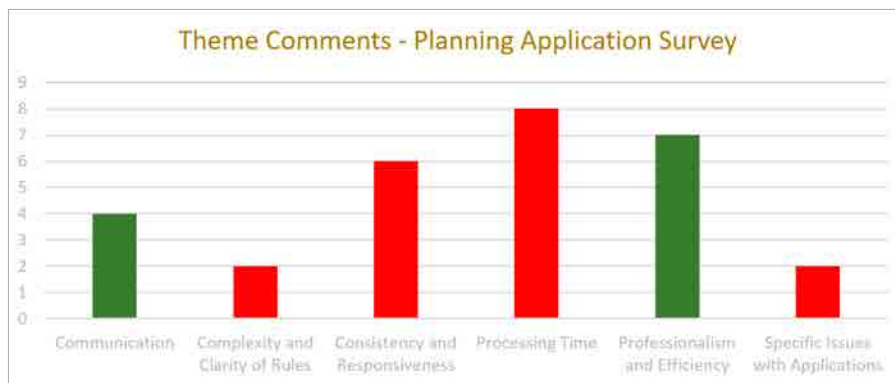
Part 2 – Pre-Application Meeting Survey



Part 3 – Development Permit Application Survey



Part 4 – Planning Application Survey



CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The purpose of this survey was to obtain feedback on the quality, accuracy, and responsiveness of the department's customer service to guide improvements based on customer experience.

We heard from the many respondents who were happy with the professional and personal customer service they received during their interactions with County Staff. However, there were some clear areas for action across the four surveyed customer service areas. These include:

- Time to receive some services: many customers thought it took too long to process their application or to arrange a pre-application meeting. Administration will continue to review its processes as part of the department enhancement strategy and wider development diagnostic project being undertaken by Administration.
- Use of technical language: some customers noted the technical language used by staff was not helpful in receiving advice on their proposals or applications. The department will continue to look at how information is conveyed by staff and through media such as the County website, to promote the use of plain language in providing planning advice to customers.
- The majority of customers do not attend pre-application meetings: although many applications submitted to the County are straightforward and may not require a pre-application meeting, the department will explore more ways of raising awareness of the pre-application service and that the cost of the meeting is discounted from the application fee. Increasing customer participation in pre-application meetings is likely to improve customer satisfaction in the overall planning and development permit process.
- Maintaining and expanding survey participation: to ensure that customer participation continues to be secured in the feedback surveys, especially amongst regular customers, alternative survey questions will be explored for repeat customers to review the ongoing performance of the department over time. The department will also explore expanding the survey across other service areas such as real property reports and policy projects.
- Understanding the various application processes: some customers noted the lack of information regarding the step-by-step process of the planning and development application streams. The department will explore communicating the various planning processes via many media outputs on mainly the County website and other areas to be determined by ongoing technology solution initiatives led by the Information Technology department.



If you have any questions in relation to this Customer Feedback Survey Summary Report, please do not hesitate to contact the Planning at 403-520-8158, or email development@rockyview.ca.

Rocky View County

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