

Survey: Building Permit Review Process

September 2016

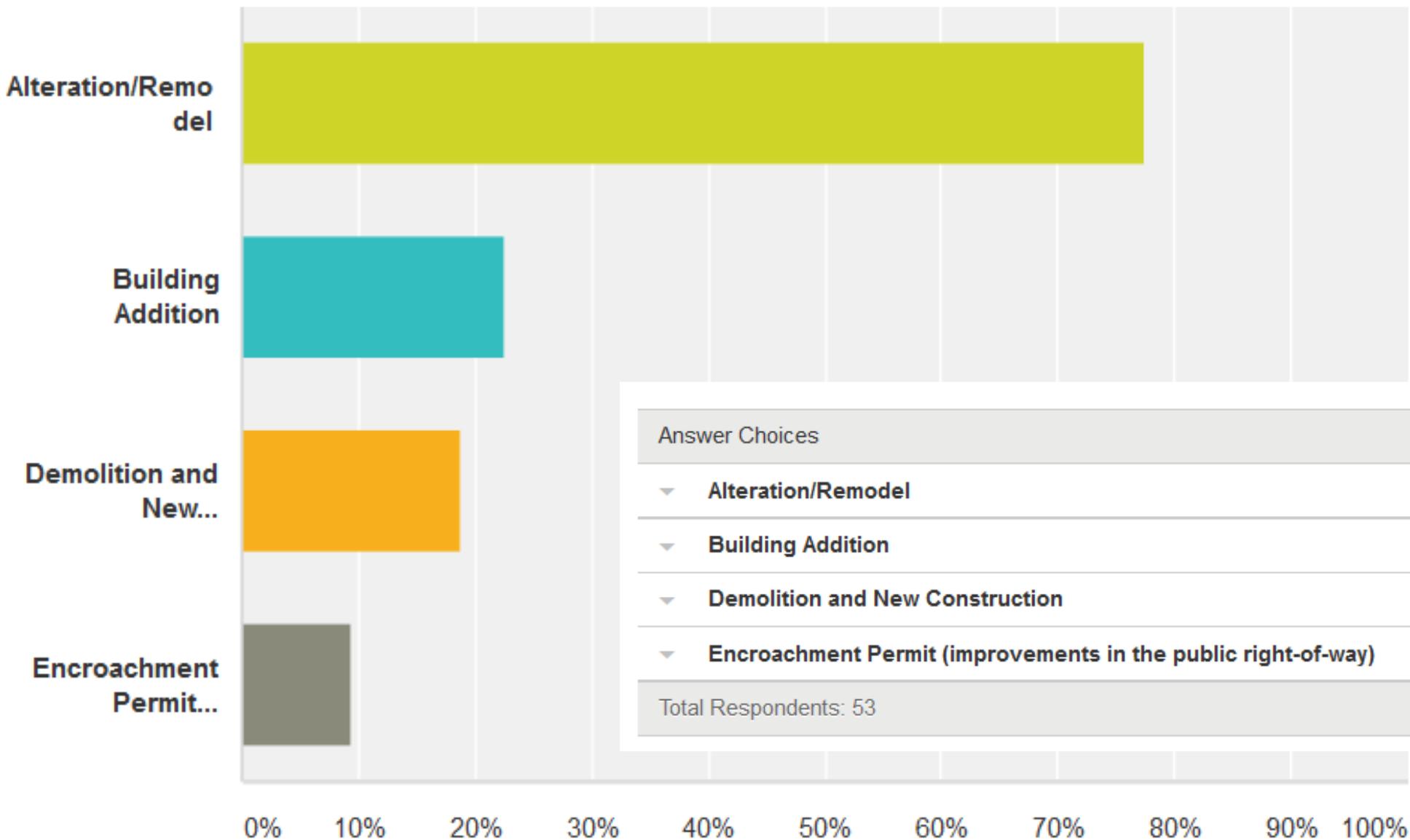
Survey: Building Permit Review Process – “Plan Check”

- SurveyMonkey
- Sent to 318 people (applicants from last three years)
- Open for 30 days
- 61 people responded to survey
- 19% response rate
- Exceeds typical response rate of 10-15%

- Six questions

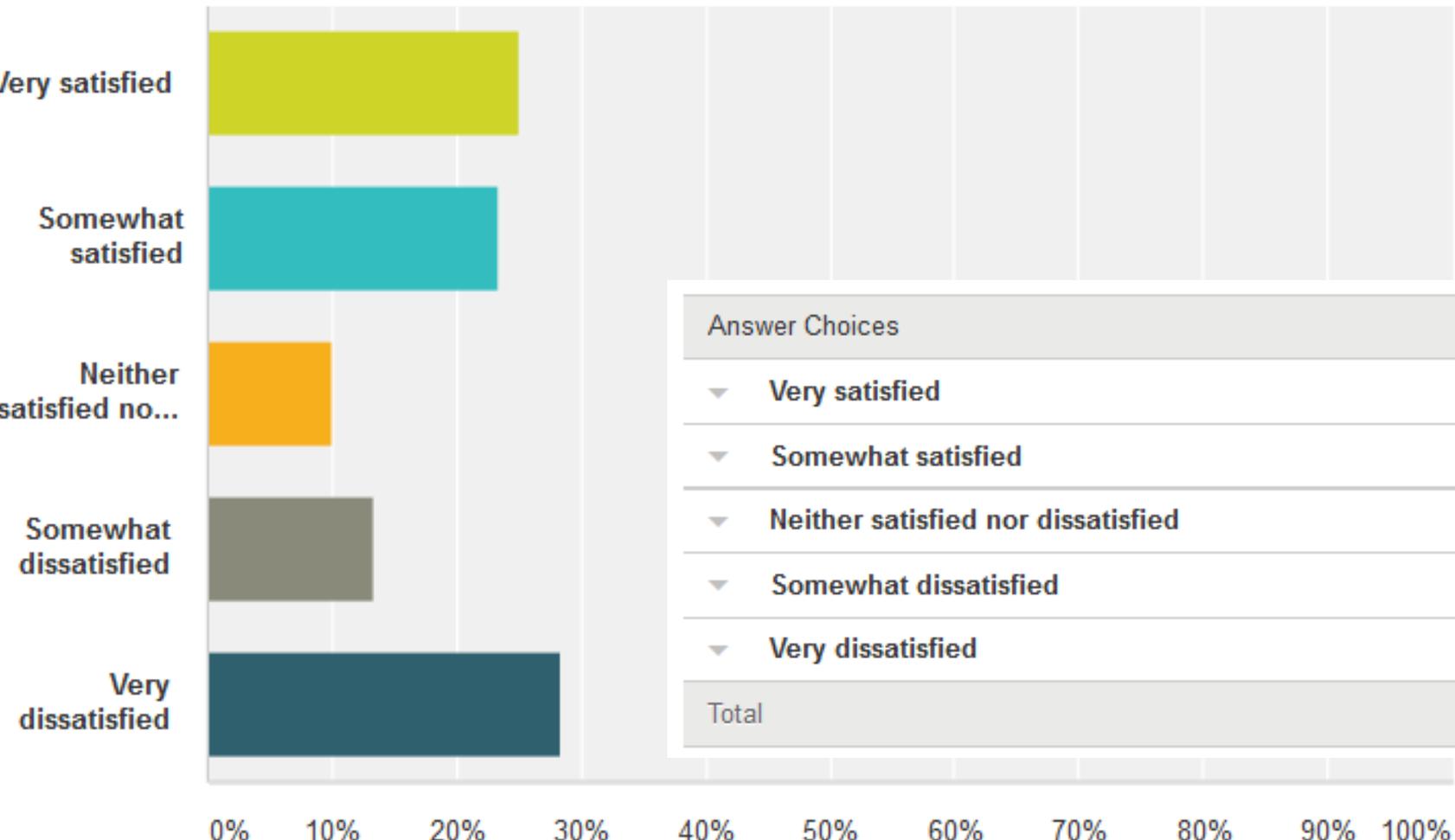
What best represents your project?

Answered: 53 Skipped: 8



How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the time it took to complete the process (from plan check submittal to obtaining a building permit)?

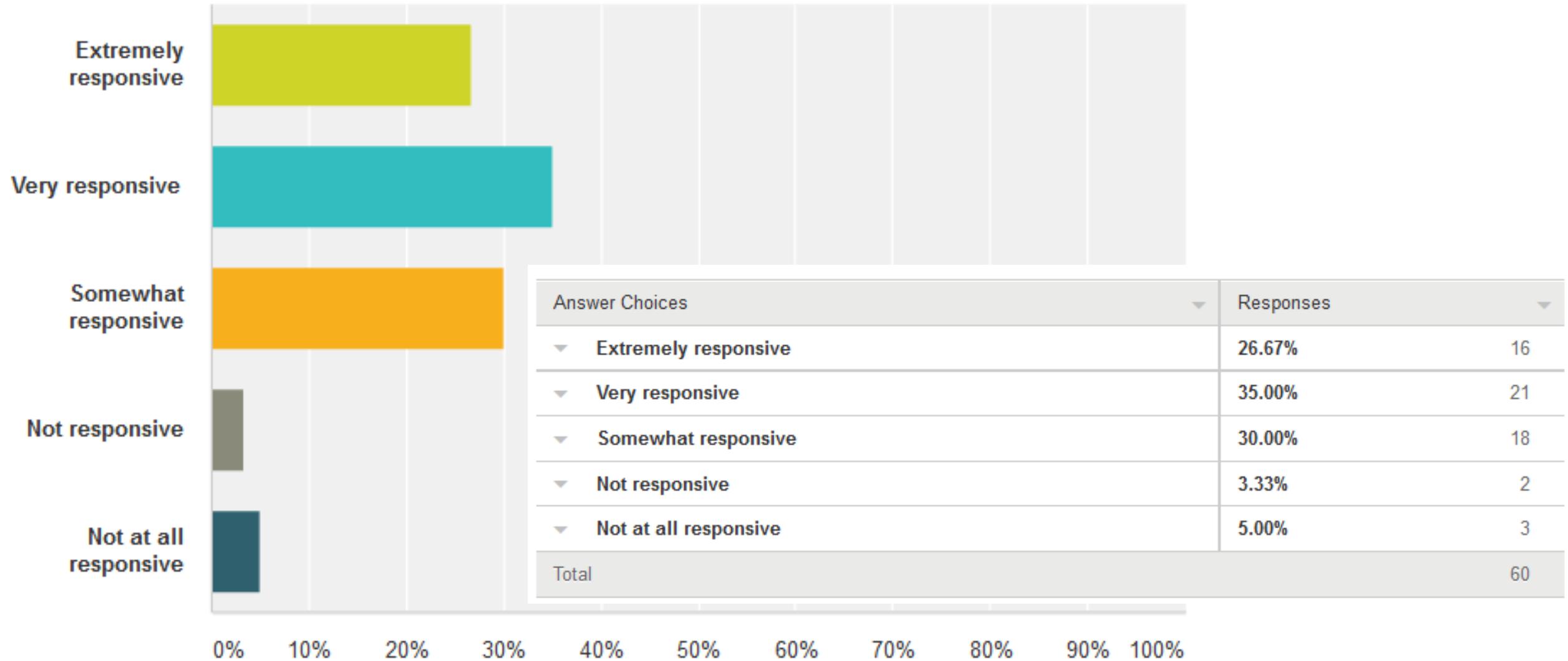
Answered: 60 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses
Very satisfied	25.00% 15
Somewhat satisfied	23.33% 14
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10.00% 6
Somewhat dissatisfied	13.33% 8
Very dissatisfied	28.33% 17
Total	60

Was City staff responsive to your questions or needs?

Answered: 60 Skipped: 1



What do you like most about the building permit review process?

- Kenneth Henry, Building Inspector – responsive, helpful, best in Marin, nice, patient, professional
- Staff at the counter; helpful attitudes; very friendly
- Pleased with the assistance at the counter
- Prompt
- Simple counter permit process
- Appointment scheduling helps to better manage time/goals
- Communication between Fire and Building Depts helpful in obtaining permit.
- Accessibility of staff; and through email.
- Like new office hours
- Good experience with the contract inspectors
- Albert Viana - paper work process made easy and then to Mr Henry with his experience with building and how to make things work. That team made things happen.
- CSG reviews plans in a timely manner and responds to questions raised by me and is also flexible in their acceptance of response procedures.
- Quick responsiveness; quick turn around
- The outside plan checker
- Staff will work with you

What are your suggestions for improvement?

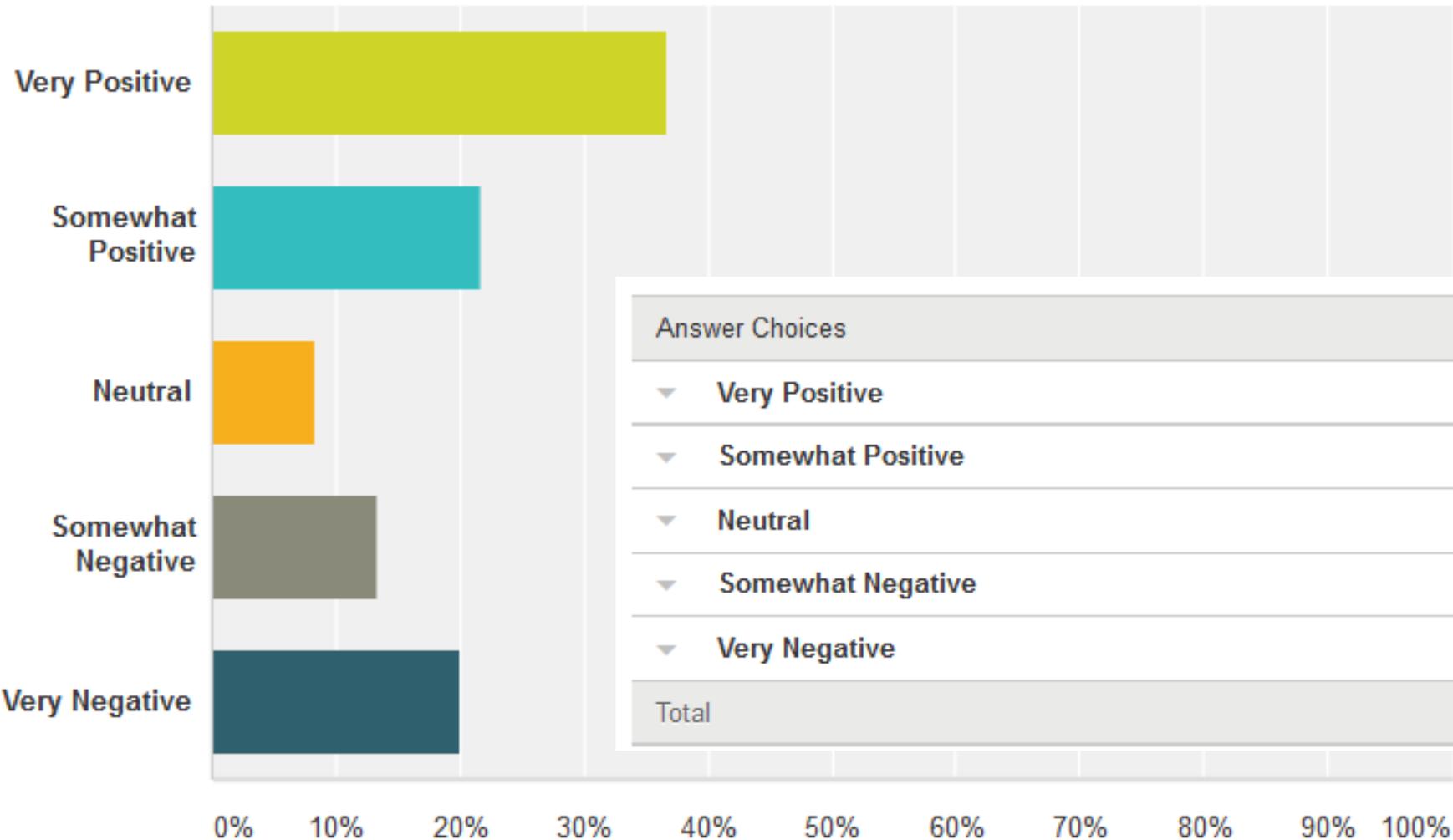
- Coordinate comments from different departments & honor the turnaround times.
- Outside plan check is sometimes very slow even when expediting
- Of course, it could be faster! Maybe we need more staff to take care of business.
- The office staff need the authority to issue simple "change out permits for water heaters, furnaces, boilers, heaters".
- Staff should be able to make decision as long as comply with code, without trying to send all decision to the outside consulting.
- Hire more people to get the work out the door
- Do more over the counter permits
- In-house processing between departments can be improved
- Speed up public works and fire department
- Retain good staff
- Need a website that allows the customer to see where they are in the process.
- Reign in third party plan checkers – enormous time sink.
- Need more capable staff members.
- More leadership and engagement from staff vs outside consultants who seem focused on running up the bill.
- Would like an option for an over the counter review.

What are your suggestions for improvement?

- Outsource all review of permit documents to outside consultants - that's how the private sector works.
- Prioritize the review process - projects of limited scope should 't take months to review.
- **More forms and information online.**
- Hire staff at DPW
- Suggest an expedited form for solar systems under a certain number of kilowatts.
- Get some stability to staffing and work with people not against them
- More over counter
- Don't outsource review of plans when the company you outsource to does not understand buildings.
- Hire additional staff to handle the work load.
- Recommend hiring someone to go through all files and straighten them out – archive material and microfiche.
- **Have an application to notify people when the permits are ready if they dropped off the plans.**
- Get more organized and finish the process in 3 to 4 weeks like everyone else. Not 3 to 4 months.
- Consistency in determinations would be helpful.
- **Create an automated online service where things can be submitted and progress can be checked.**
- In house plan check.
- **Better tracking of permits through plan check.**
- Cut the time by 80%
- Have some flexibility and try to understand where the applicant is coming from.

Overall, how would you rate your experience with the building permit review process?

Answered: 60 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses
Very Positive	36.67% 22
Somewhat Positive	21.67% 13
Neutral	8.33% 5
Somewhat Negative	13.33% 8
Very Negative	20.00% 12
Total	60