

REPORT

**City of Bellingham  
Permit Center Customer Satisfaction Survey  
Fourth Quarter 2008**

**March, 2009**

**Presented by the  
Center for Economic Vitality  
at  
Western Washington University**

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## ■ INTRODUCTION

During the fourth quarter (October to December) of 2008, the Center for Economic Vitality in the College of Business and Economics at Western Washington University worked with Applied Research Northwest to continue a satisfaction survey of recent customers of the City of Bellingham's Permit Center. This follow-up report includes respondents that used the Permit Center's services from October 2006 to December 2008.

This customer satisfaction survey was again conducted online, so researchers first needed to obtain email addresses for the individuals that used Permit Center services. Seventy six (76) individuals completed the survey during this time period, resulting in a 22% response rate. This calculates to a 9.9% margin of error on the survey.

The findings of this follow-up customer satisfaction survey are compared to previous quarters' findings in order to inform the continuous quality improvement efforts of the Permit Center. The opportunity for respondents to request a copy of the results of this study was again offered. Eighteen (18) respondents provided their email addresses at the end of the survey (20%) so that they could receive a memo of this study's key findings. The process for disseminating the results to survey participants needs to be discussed by the City.

This report uses the convention of *italicizing* any verbatim response option from the survey in an effort to fully convey the voice of the respondents' survey responses. Appendix A presents the full script of the online survey, and Appendix B documents the verbatim comments made by respondents to various open-ended questions. Any staff identifiers were removed.

Please note that some historical results have been dropped from the graphs due to space restrictions. In all cases, the baseline time period as well as the three most current time periods are shown.

## TYPE OF CUSTOMERS

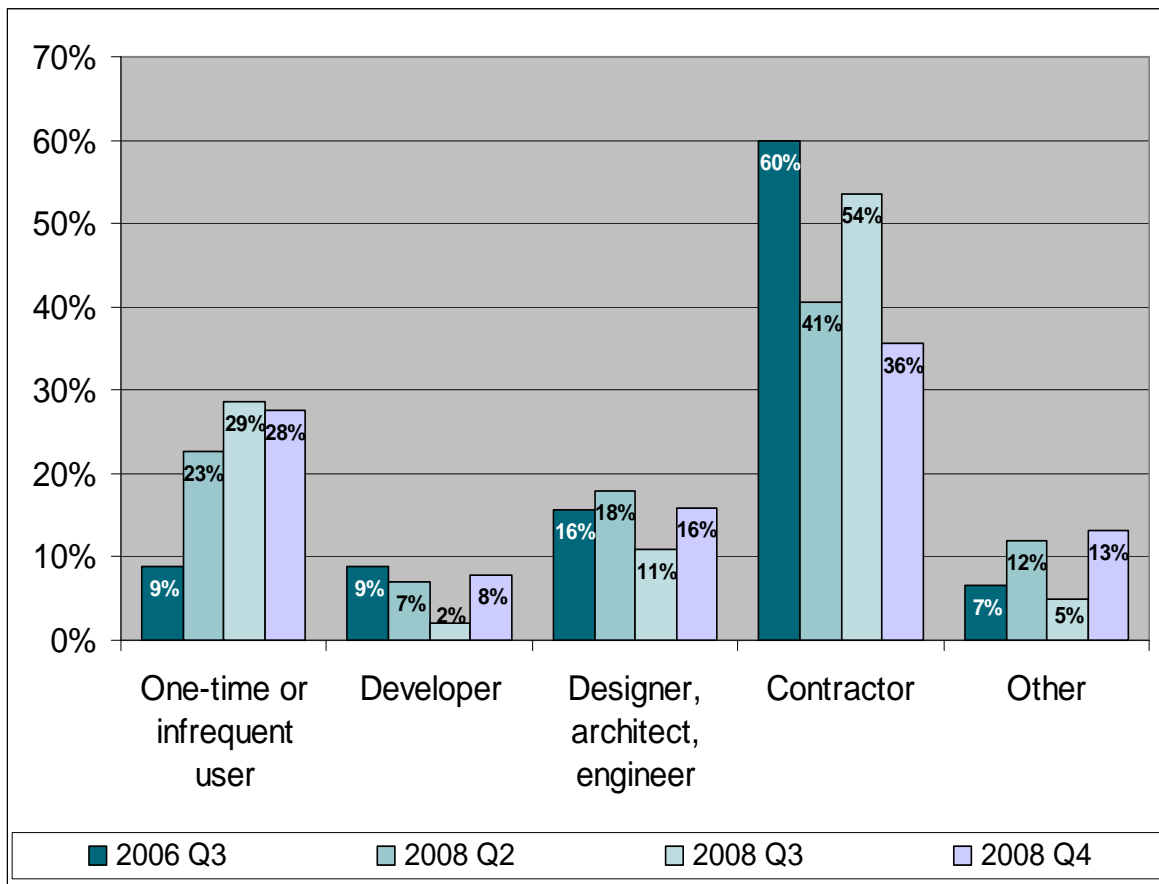
Customers of the Permit Center were first asked to describe the role that brought them to the Permit Center from October to December of 2008. As figure 1 indicates, the majority of respondents were contractors (36%) and one-time or infrequent users (28%).

In the fourth quarter of 2008 there was a decrease in use by contractors and one-time or infrequent users. However, developers; designers, architects and engineers; and “other” users all used the Permit Center more than in the previous quarter.

Customer types reported under other include: city department seeking permits for a city funded project, development consultant/project manager, owner, owner builder, owner/ university, project manager, small business, submit for permits for City of Bellingham's Home Rehab Program, we're a developer, designer and contractor, Western Washington University Electrical supervisor.

**Figure 1. Distribution of Permit Center Customer Type**

(N=76 for current time period)



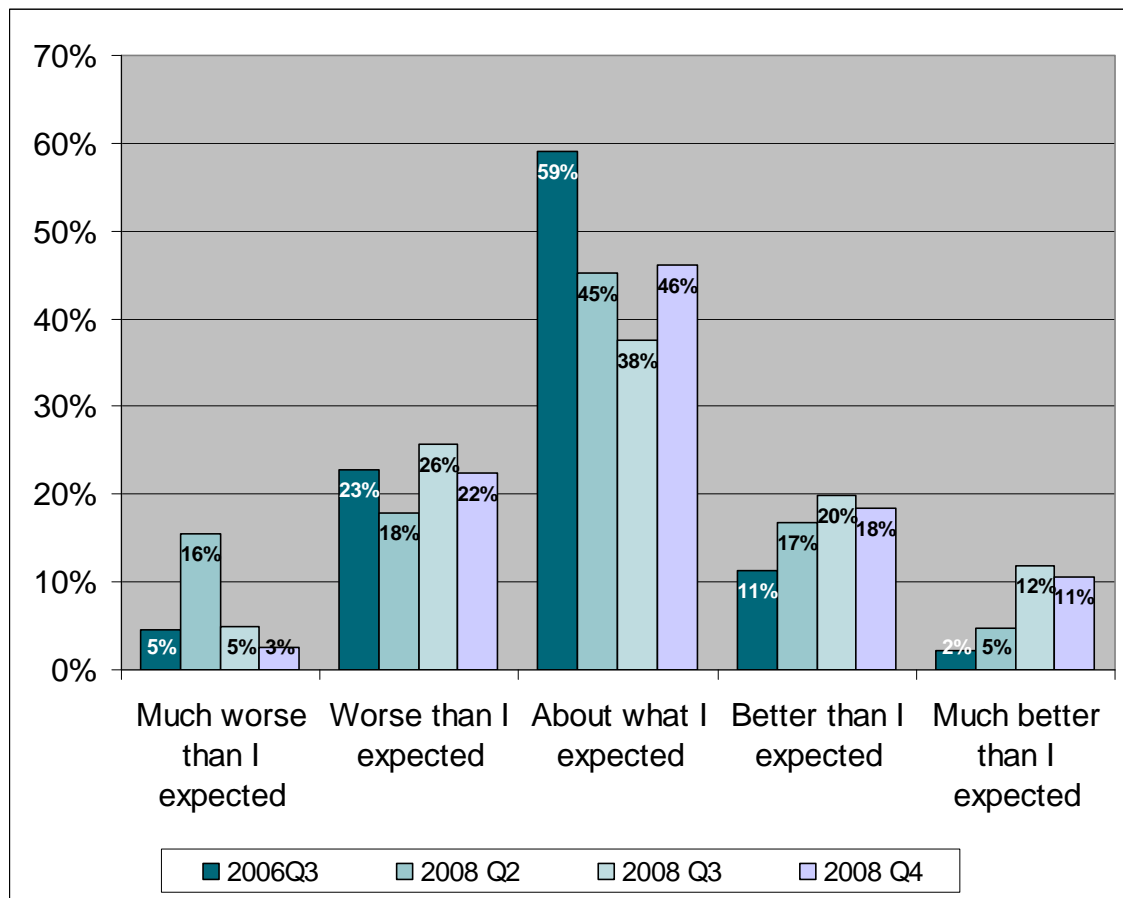
## OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Respondents were then asked about their overall experience with the Permit Center. Figure 2 shows that during October through December of 2008, 75% of respondents said that their experience was *about what I expected* or better. This relatively high proportion of respondents indicates that customer expectations are being met by the Permit Center.

Conversely, one fourth of the respondents (25%) reported that their experience was *worse or much worse* than expected during the final quarter of 2008. While this is still the minority of customers, it remains a noticeable proportion that needs to be addressed through continued quality improvement efforts.

**Figure 2. Overall Experience with the Permit Center**

(N=97 for current time period)



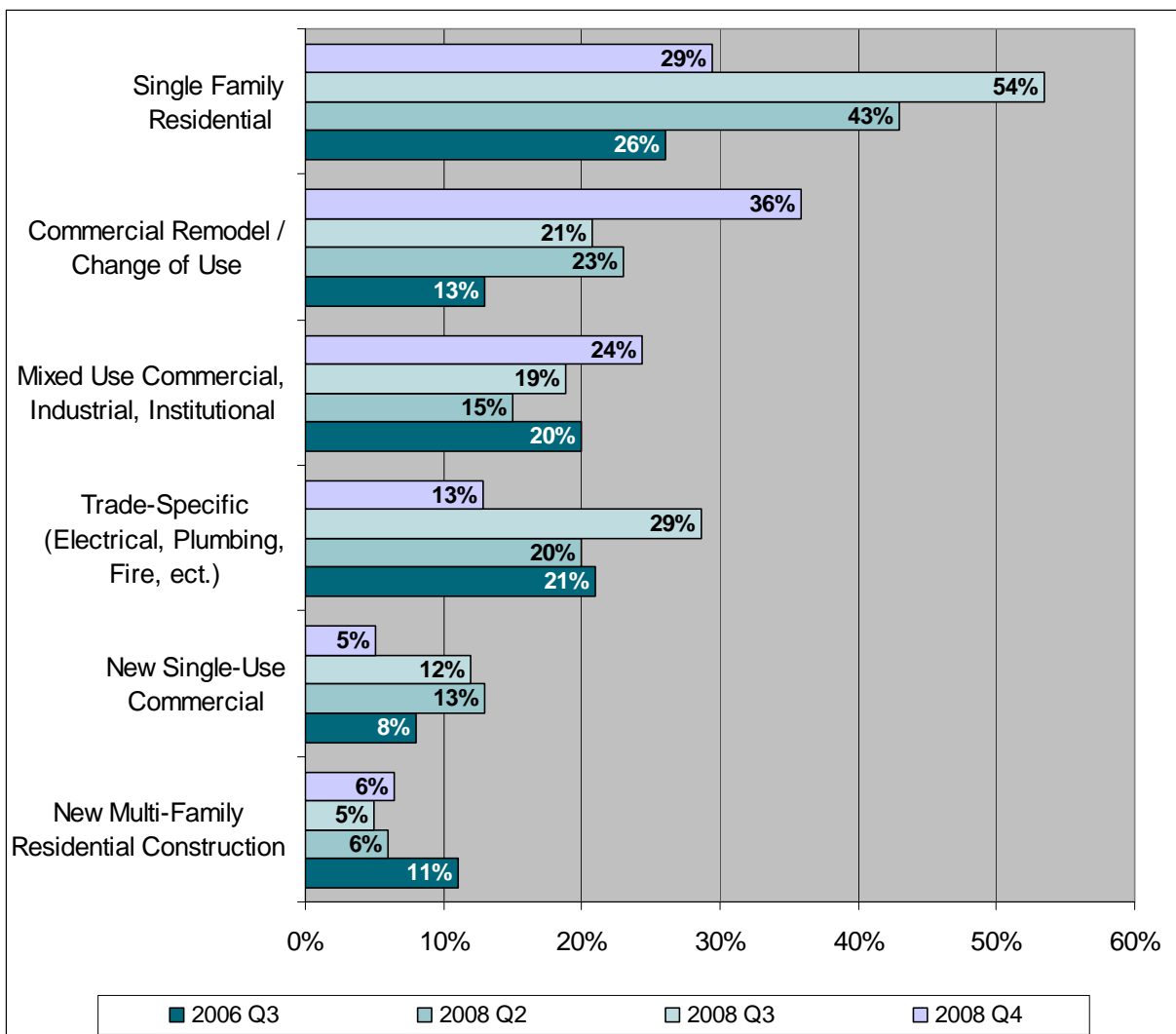
## PROJECT TYPES

Respondents were asked to indicate what kind of project brought them in contact with the Permit Center. As figure 3 shows, commercial remodel/change of use permits were the most common. Notable shifts in project types since last quarter include a decrease in the proportion of single family residential applications, as well as a relative increase in the proportion of mixed use commercial, industrial, and institutional permit applications.

Please note that respondents could select more than one type of project, so the total number of projects (114) exceeds the total number of respondents (97).

**Figure 3. Distribution of Project Types**

(N=97 for current time period)



## PERMIT CENTER MATERIALS

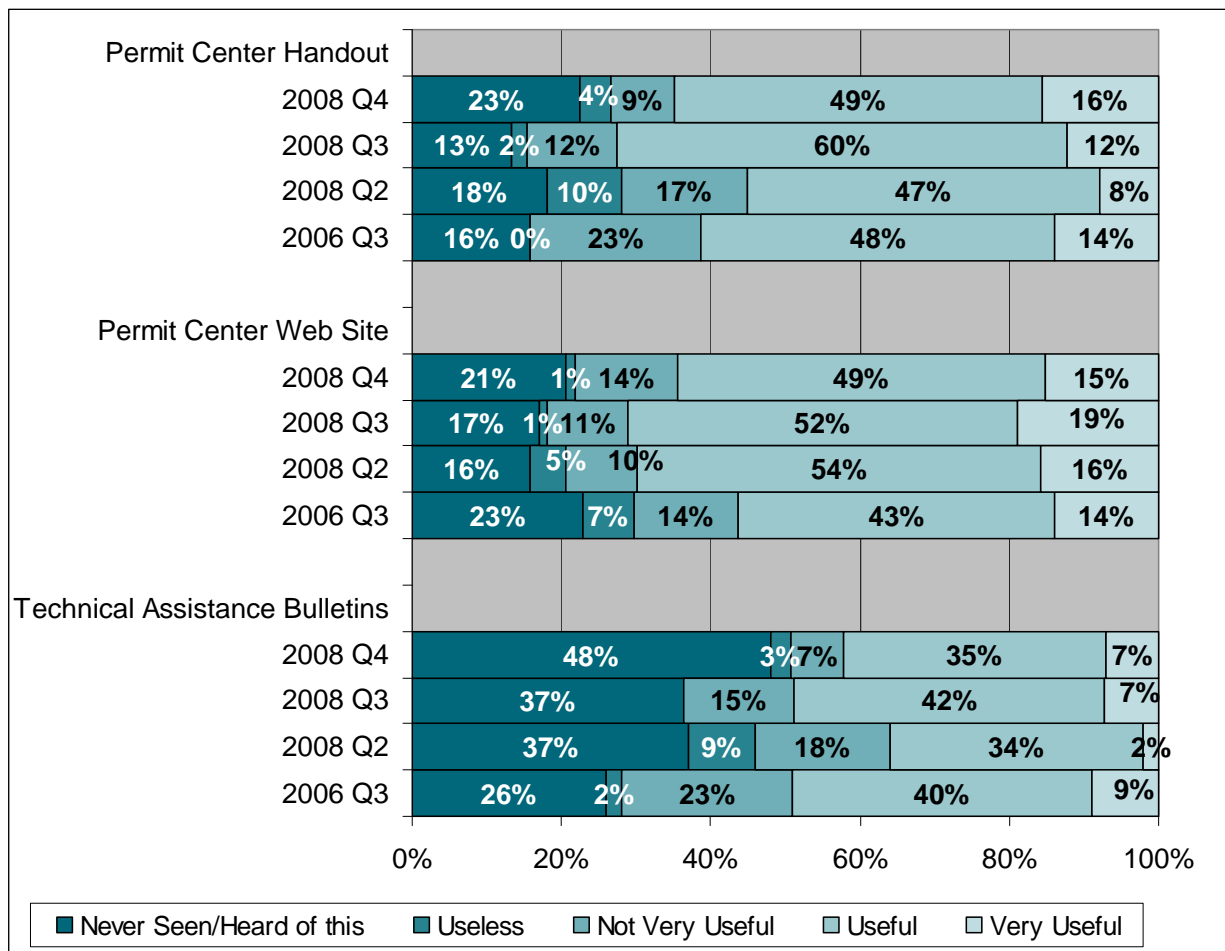
The first rating items on the survey asked respondents to indicate how useful the Permit Center support materials were. This included the Center’s website, handouts, and assistance bulletins.

Figure 4 shows that there was a decrease in the percentage of customers that found the website, handouts, and assistance bulletins useful in the fourth quarter of 2008.

Awareness remains relatively low for each of these resources. In particular, nearly half of the respondents were unaware of the technical assistance bulletins. Continuing to focus on increasing the awareness of the highly rated but somewhat under-utilized resources could positively affect customer satisfaction with the Permit Center.

**Figure 4. Usefulness of Permit Center Materials**

(Ns vary by category for current time period)



## COUNTER ASSISTANCE

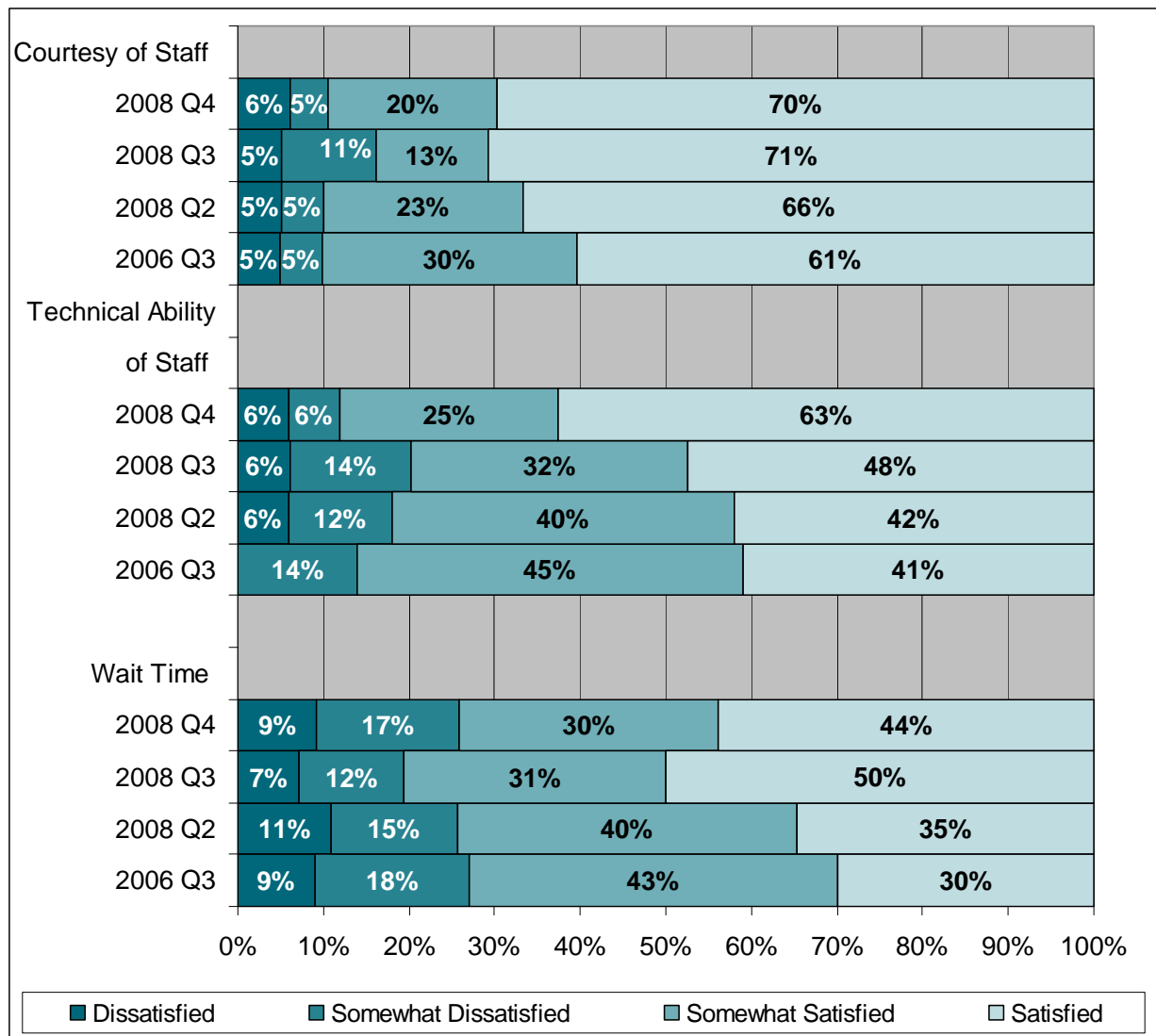
Respondents were then asked to indicate their satisfaction with the assistance they received from the Permit Center’s counter staff. Overall, satisfaction with the counter staff was still high, with staff courtesy and technical ability showing improvement over the previous quarter.

Technical ability of the staff showed the greatest improvement with 88% of respondents either *satisfied* or *somewhat satisfied* (up from 80%). Wait time satisfaction dropped slightly from 81% in quarter 3 to 74% in Quarter 4.

Courtesy of the counter staff does not appear to be a significant issue with customers’ overall satisfaction with the Permit Center.

**Figure 5. Customer Satisfaction with the Counter Assistance**

(Ns vary by category for current time period)



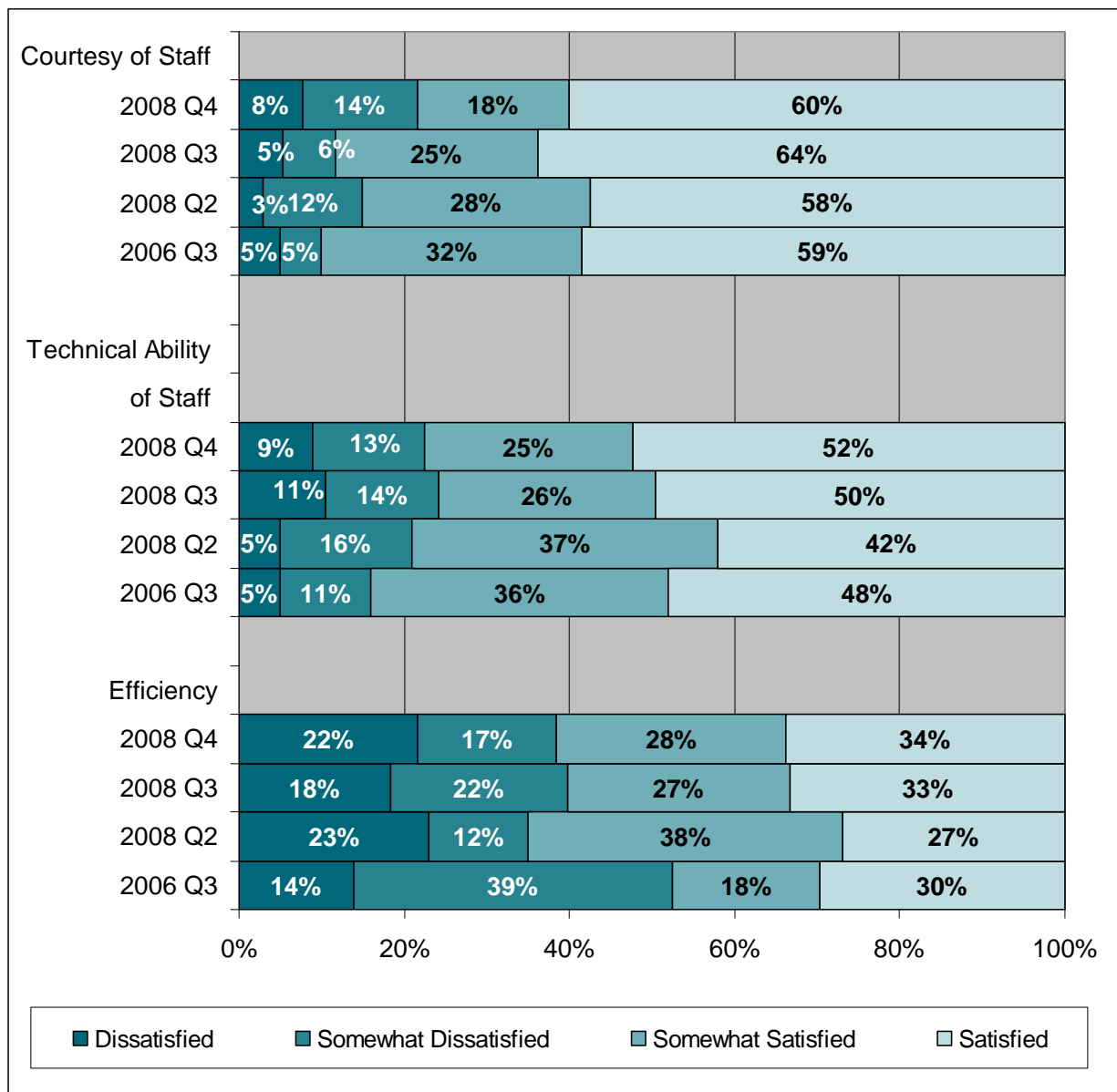
## PROCESSING APPLICATION

Permit Center customers were then asked to evaluate the application processing procedures. As figure 6 shows, the courtesy of staff was again the highest rated aspect of this particular process, although satisfaction rates dropped from the third to fourth quarter of 2008.

Customer satisfaction with the efficiency of processing applications increased between the third and fourth quarters of 2008 (62% either *satisfied* or *somewhat satisfied*, up from 60%). However, it remains the lowest rated aspect of this particular Permit Center process.

**Figure 6. Satisfaction with the Processing Application**

(Ns vary by category for current time period)



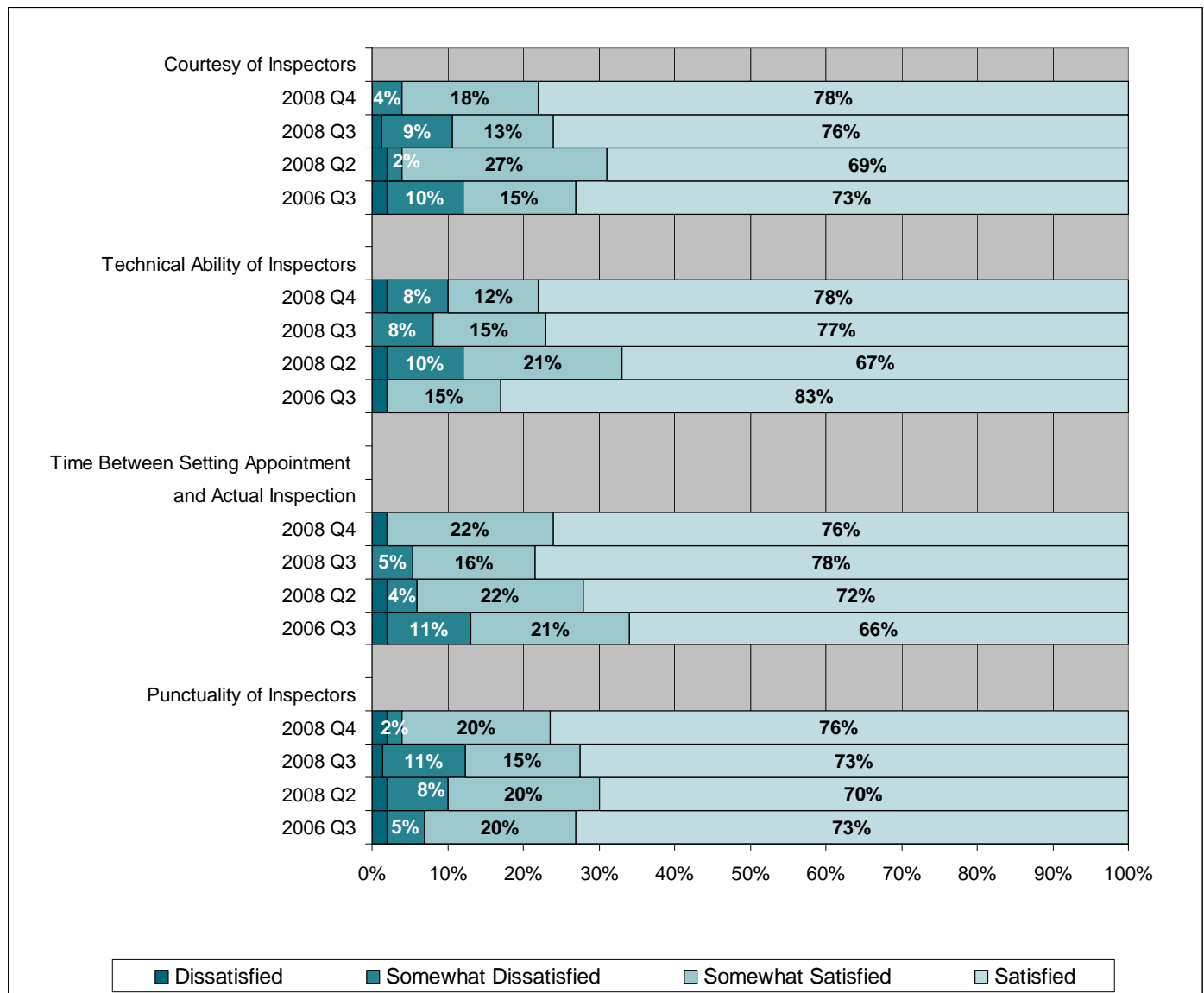
## INSPECTORS

The inspectors from the Permit Center were also evaluated by customers. Figure 7 shows that while the inspectors are still the highest rated aspect, there are a couple notable shifts since last quarter.

The percentage of people reporting *satisfied* or *somewhat satisfied* for inspector courtesy and punctuality of inspectors, as well as the delay between setting the appointment and the actual inspection of the inspectors increased in the last quarter. Customer satisfaction with the technical ability of inspectors decreased slightly in the fourth quarter of 2008 (90% either *satisfied* or *somewhat satisfied*, down from 92%). Overall, inspectors still received the highest satisfaction rating by customers.

**Figure 7. Customer Satisfaction with Inspectors**

(Ns vary by category for current time period)



## CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY PROCESS

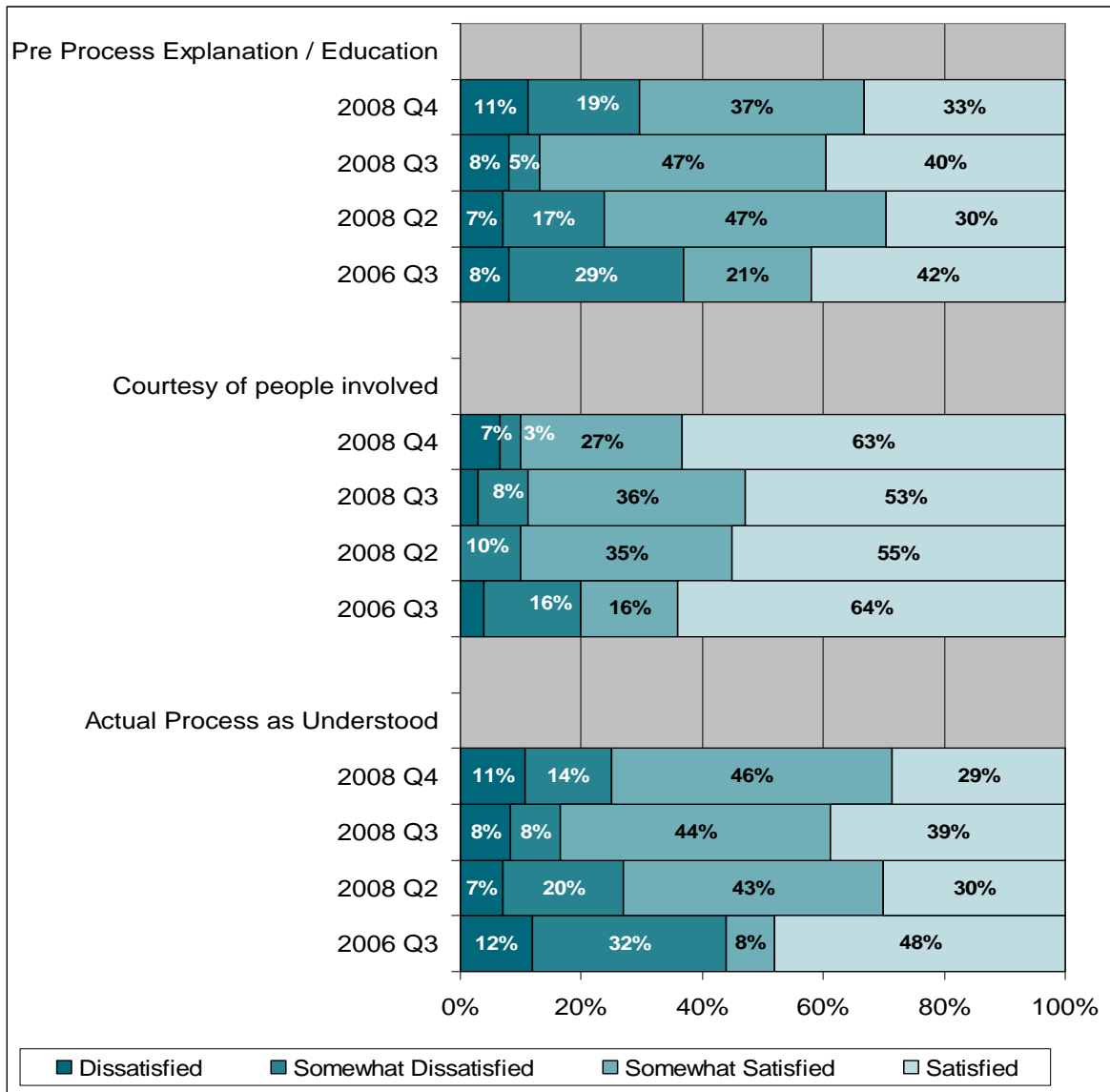
The Certificate of Occupancy process was also rated by customers. As figure 8 shows, there are mixed results and emerging trends in this area of the Permit Center's service.

The rating of the preprocess explanation decreased from the previous quarter (70% either *satisfied* or *somewhat satisfied*, down from 87%). The process actually being understood also decreased during this time period, with an 8% decrease in the number reporting *satisfied* or *somewhat satisfied*.

There was a slight improvement in the satisfaction with the courtesy of people involved (90%, up from 89%) and this remains the strongest area for the Certificate of Occupancy process.

**Figure 8. Satisfaction with Certificate of Occupancy Process**

(Ns vary by category for current time period)



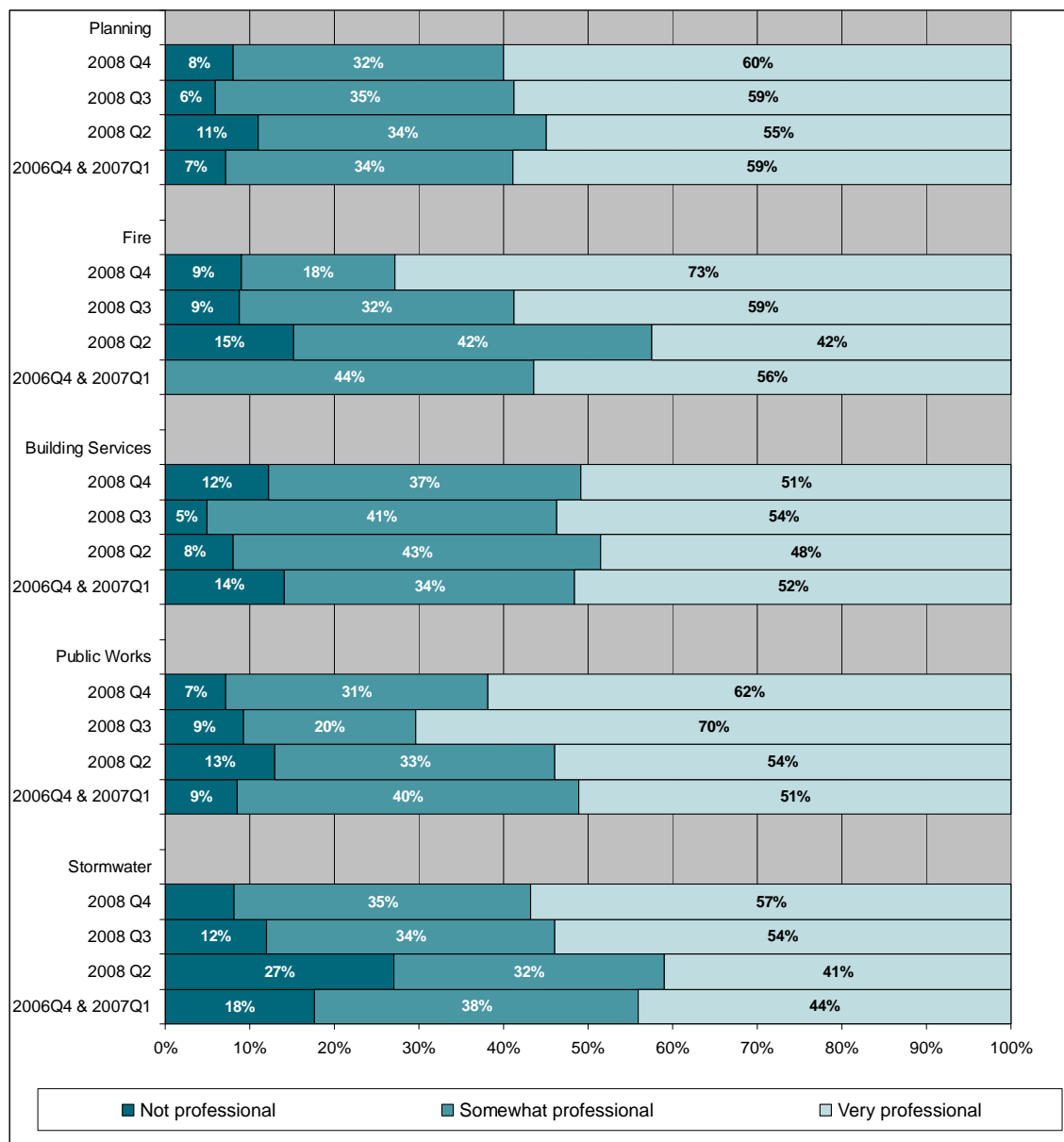
## PROFESSIONALISM

Customers of the Permit Center were asked to rate the professionalism of each department with which they interacted. (The results of this section can not be compared to the baseline time period because the format of the items changed.)

As figure 9 indicates, Public Works and Stormwater departments showed the largest gain in the percentage of respondents selecting *somewhat professional* or *very professional* during the fourth quarter of 2008. Planning and Building Services departments saw a decrease in the percentage of people who reported *somewhat professional* or *very professional*.

**Figure 9. Rating of the Professionalism of each Department**

(Ns vary by year and department)



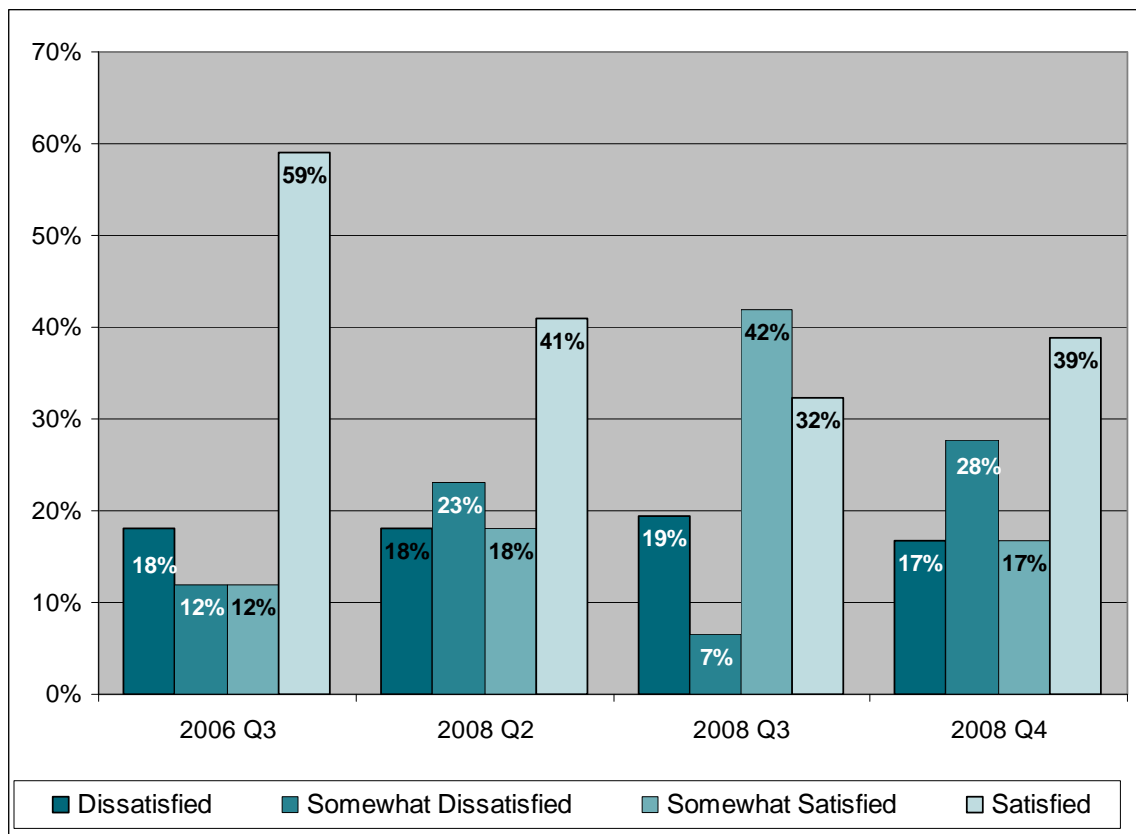
## PRE-APPLICATION MEETINGS

Respondents that had participated in a pre-application meeting (18) were asked to evaluate the process. As figure 10 shows, the percentage of *satisfied* or *somewhat satisfied* customers (56% down from 74%) decreased in the last quarter. However, a slightly lower percentage of respondents selected *dissatisfied*.

Respondents that participated in a pre-application meeting were again asked to provide suggestions that might make the meetings more effective. Their verbatim responses are presented in Appendix B of this report.

**Figure 10. Distribution of Satisfaction with Pre-Application Meetings**

(N=18 for current time period)



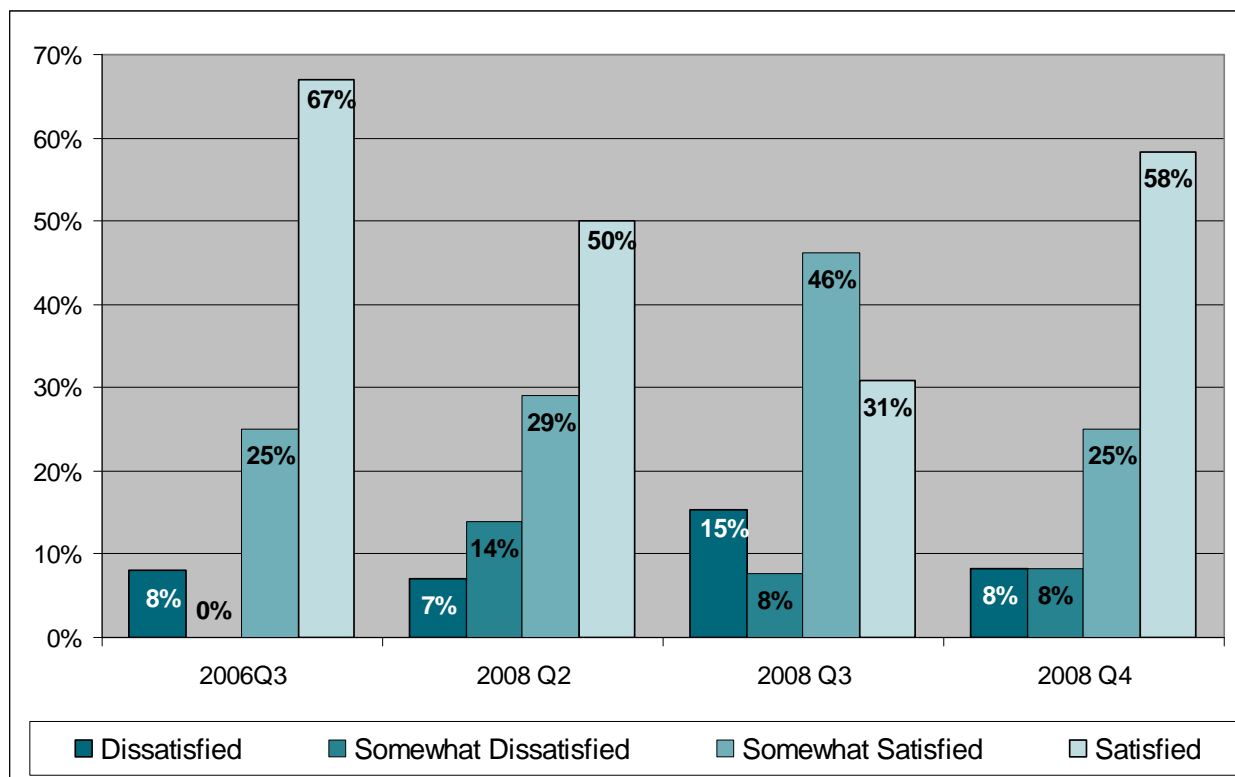
## PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETINGS

Respondents that had participated in a pre-construction meeting were also asked to evaluate the process. As figure 11 shows, there is quite a bit of variability in customers' satisfaction from quarter to quarter, with an increase in the percentage of people selecting *satisfied* or *somewhat satisfied* from the third quarter to the fourth quarter of 2008 (83%, up from 77%).

Respondents that participated in a pre-construction meeting were asked to provide suggestions that might make the meetings more effective. Their verbatim responses are presented in Appendix B of this report.

**Figure 11. Satisfaction with Pre-Construction Meetings**

(N=12 for current time period)



## SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT

Respondents were asked about their satisfaction with the Permit Center’s recently implemented ‘single point of contact’ approach. This question was new in the second quarter of 2008.

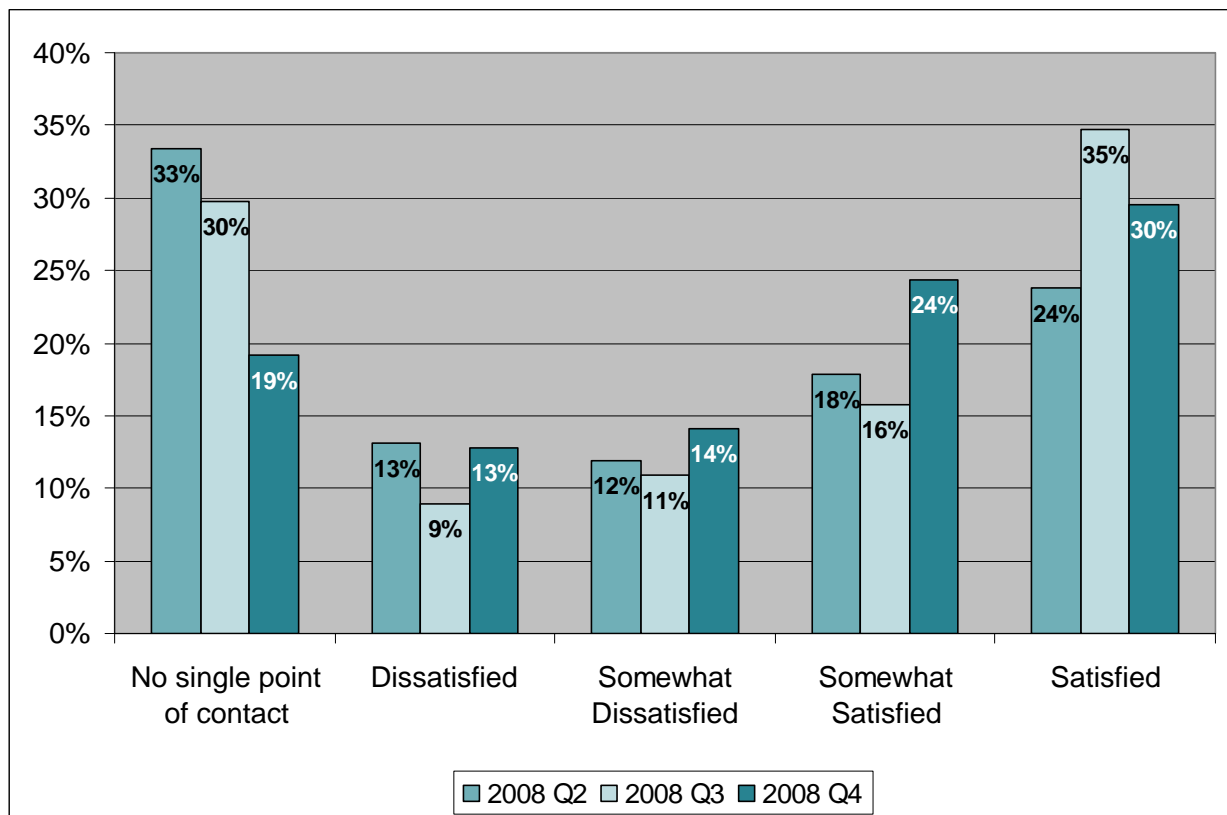
As figure 12 indicates, respondents who were *satisfied* or *somewhat satisfied* increased in the fourth quarter (54% vs. 51%). The number of dissatisfied clients also increased.

The percentage of respondents who reported that they did not have a single point of contact decreased dramatically in the fourth quarter of 2009 (19%, down from 30%) indicating a greater awareness of the service.

When the *no single point of contact* responses are removed from the analysis, 67% of the remaining respondents were *satisfied* or *somewhat satisfied* and 33% were *dissatisfied* or *somewhat dissatisfied*.

**Figure 12. Satisfaction with Single Point of Contact Approach**

(N=78 for current time period)



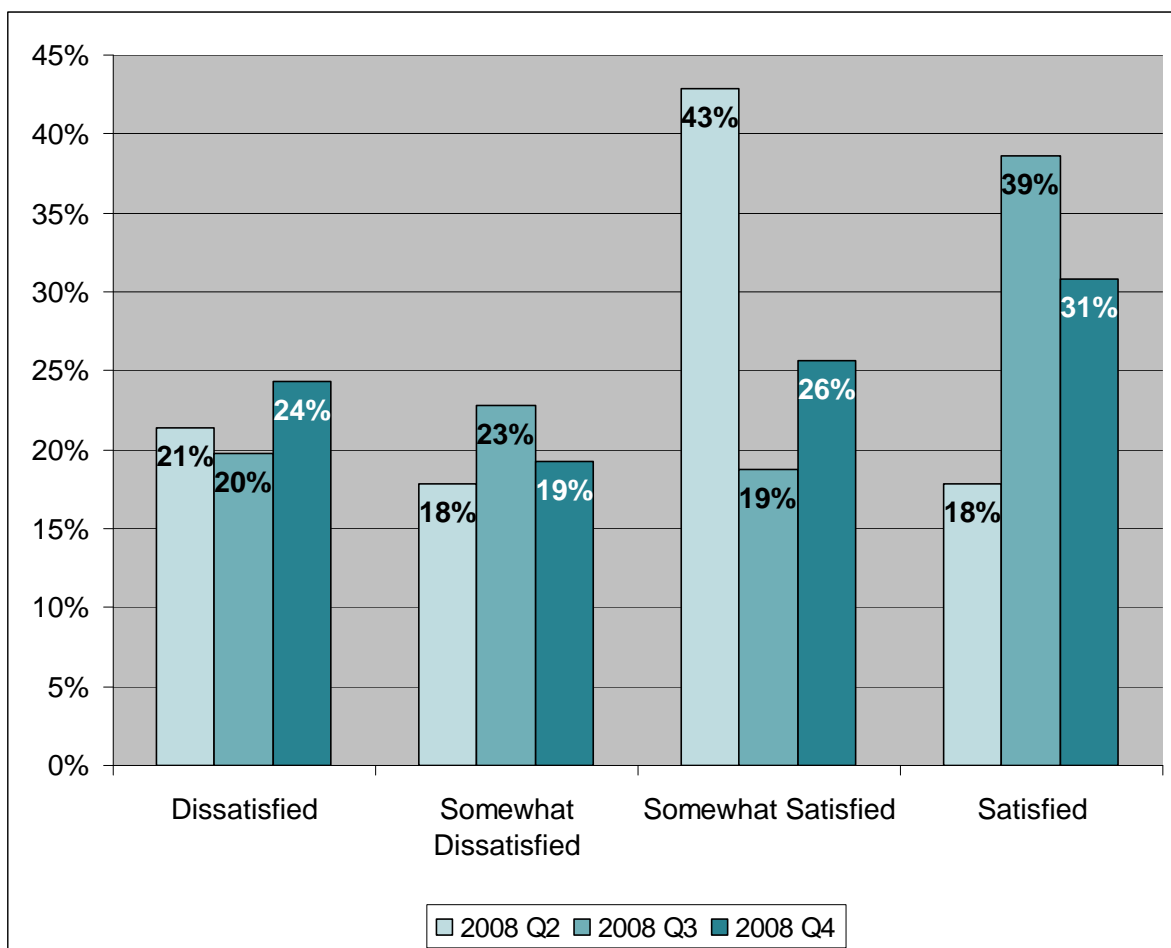
## TRANSPARENCY OF PROCESS AND TIMELINES

Respondents were also asked about their satisfaction with the Permit Center’s new emphasis on transparency of the process and timelines.

As figure 13 indicates, over half (57%) of respondents were *satisfied* or *somewhat satisfied* with this new emphasis. The remaining proportion (43%) was dissatisfied with the level of transparency in the Permit Center. Although there are only three data points for this question, it is worth noting that there is a downturn since last quarter (31% were *satisfied* this quarter compared to 39% last quarter).

**Figure 13. Satisfaction with Transparency**

(N=78 for current time period)



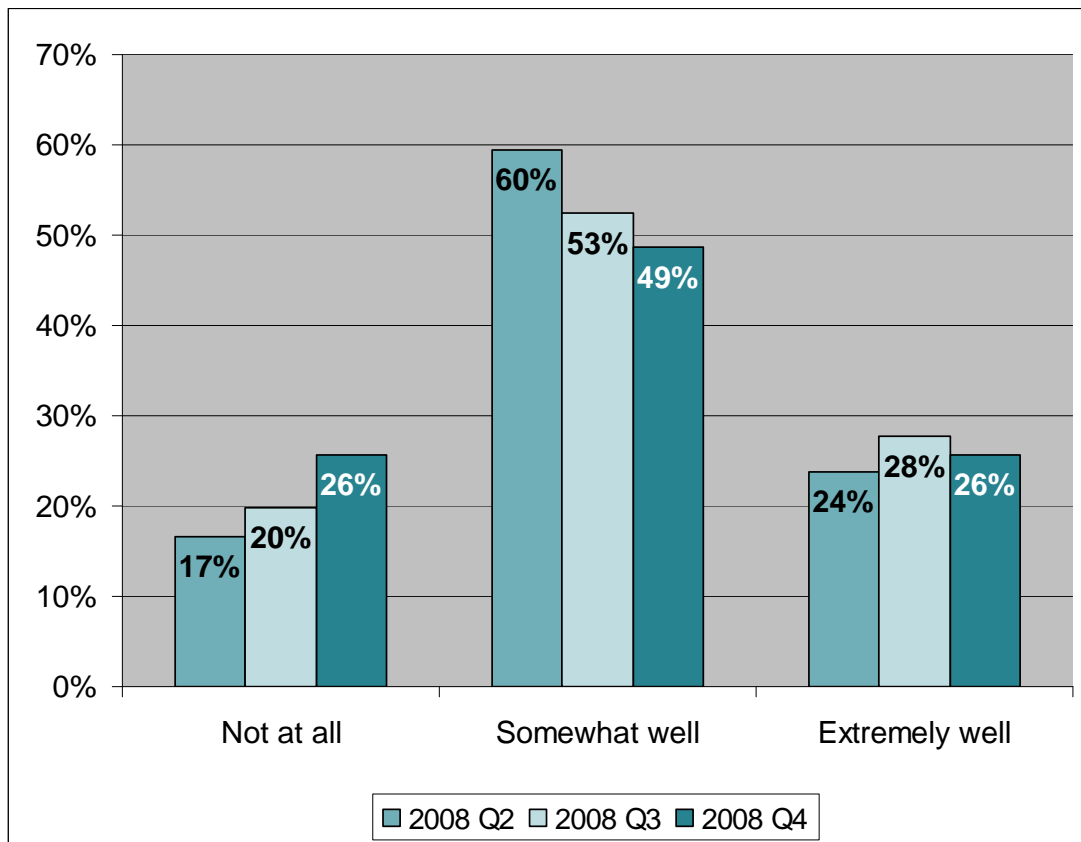
## COMMUNICATION ABOUT DELAYS

Customers were asked about how well they were kept informed by the Permit Center about any delays in their application process.

As figure 14 indicates, the majority of respondents (75%) were either *extremely* or *somewhat well* informed by the Permit Center staff. However, there has been a steady quarterly increase in the percentage of respondents that were *not at all* informed about delays.

**Figure 14. Communication about Delays**

(N=78 for current time period)



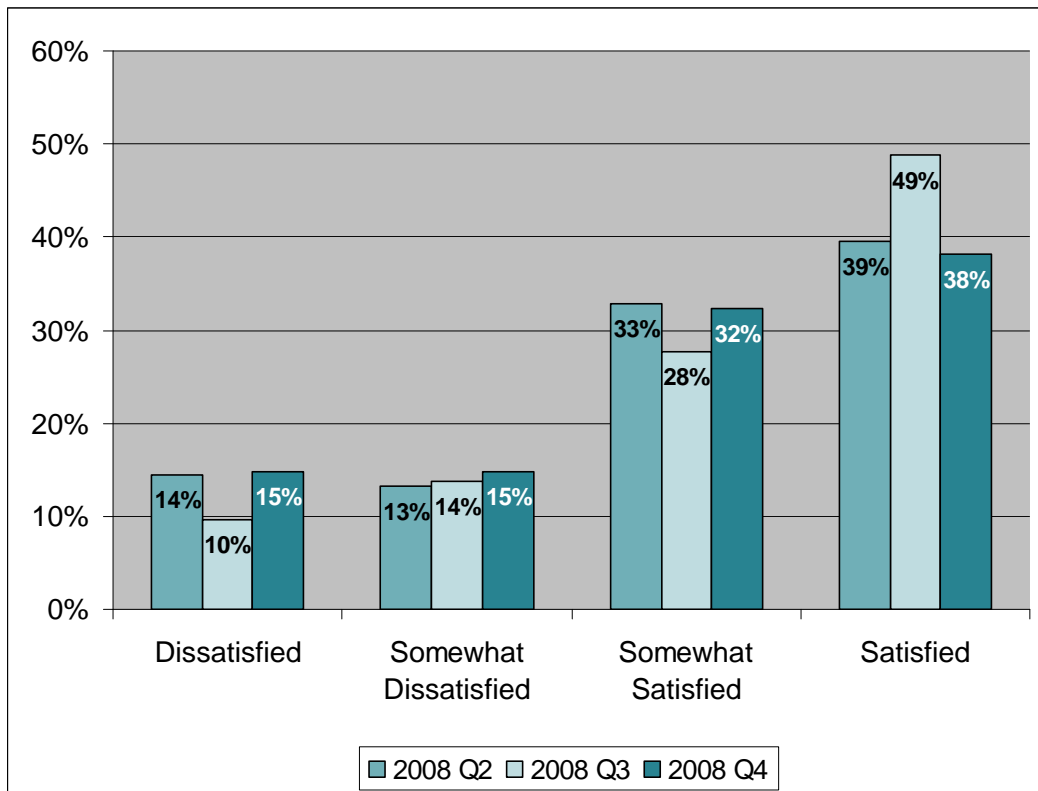
## COMPLETENESS OF APPLICATION REVIEW

Respondents were also asked for the second time this quarter about how satisfied they were with how completely Permit Center staff reviewed their application before it was submitted.

As figure 15 indicates, the vast majority (87%) were *satisfied* or *somewhat satisfied* with the level of review completeness by Permit Center staff. However, more (30%, up from 24%) respondents were *dissatisfied* or *somewhat dissatisfied* with this process.

**Figure 15. Level of Completeness in Application Review**

(N=73 for current time period)



## CROSS TABULATION: USER TYPE AND OVERALL EXPERIENCE

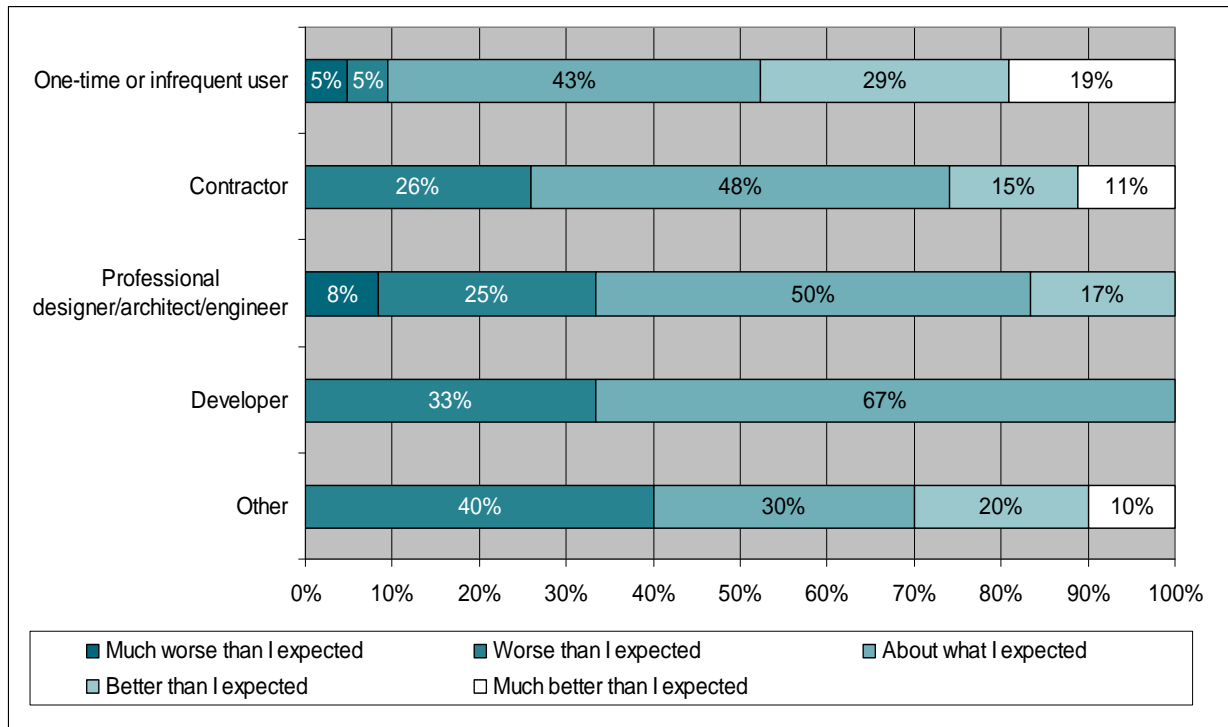
By cross tabulating the data from Figure 1 and Figure 2, it is possible to match the customer type with the overall experience they had with the permit center.

As figure 16 indicates, one-time or infrequent users have the highest percentage of respondents selecting *better than I expected* or *much better than I expected* (48%), whereas developers have the lowest rate (0%).

Professional designers, architects, engineers and those in the other category had the highest percentage of respondents who selected *worse than I expected* or *much worse than I expected* (33% and 40% respectively). One-time or infrequent users had the lowest percentage of users who selected *worse than I expected* or *much worse than I expected* (10%).

**Figure 16. User Type and Overall Experience with the Permit Center**

(N=73)



## CROSS TABULATION: USER TYPE AND SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT

By cross tabulating the data from Figure 1 and Figure 12, the customer type was matched with their response to the question, “How satisfied were you with the Permit Center’s new ‘single point of contact’ approach with your project manager?”

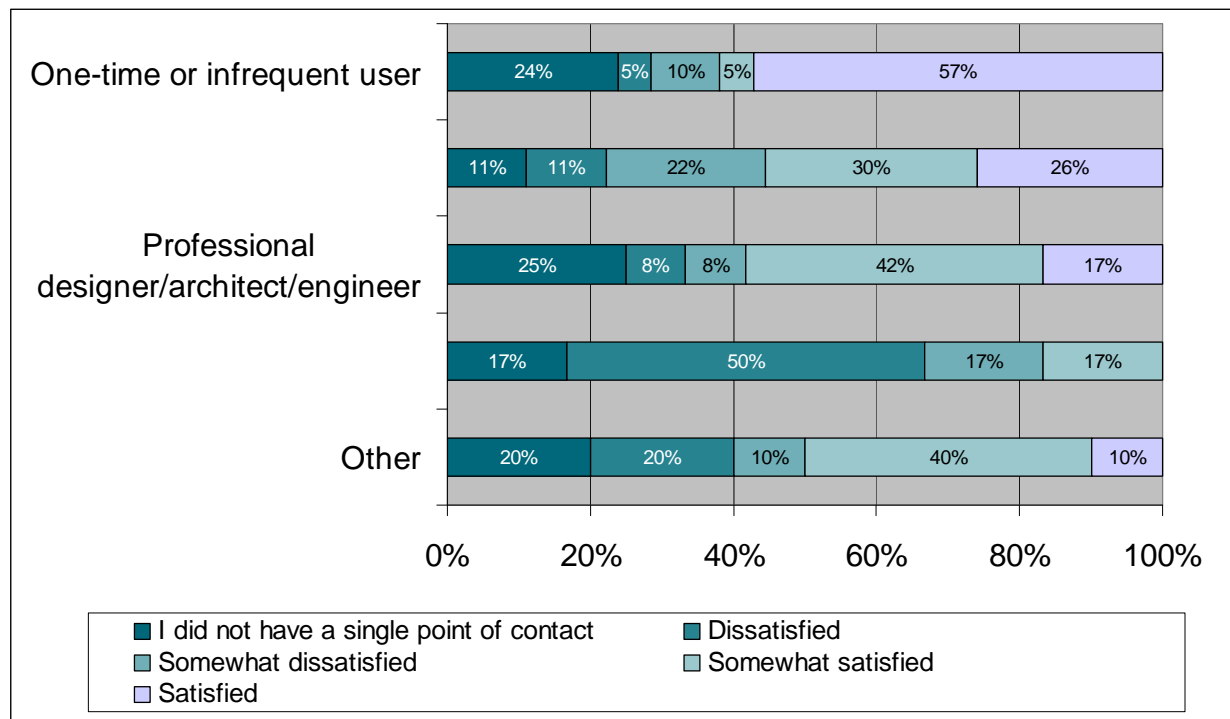
As figure 17 indicates, one-time or infrequent users have the highest satisfaction rate with the single point of contact (57% *satisfied*). None of the developers selected *satisfied* for the single point of contact approach.

Awareness of the single point of contact amongst user types was varied. Nearly a quarter of one-time or infrequent users and professional designers, architects, engineers were unaware that they had a single point of contact. Contractors and developers were more aware of the single point of contact approach (awareness of such services was 89% and 83% respectively).

When the single point of contact is removed from the data, 81% of one-time or infrequent users were *satisfied* or *somewhat satisfied*, whereas only 20% of developers experienced the same level of satisfaction.

**Figure 17. User Type and Single Point of Contact**

(N=73)

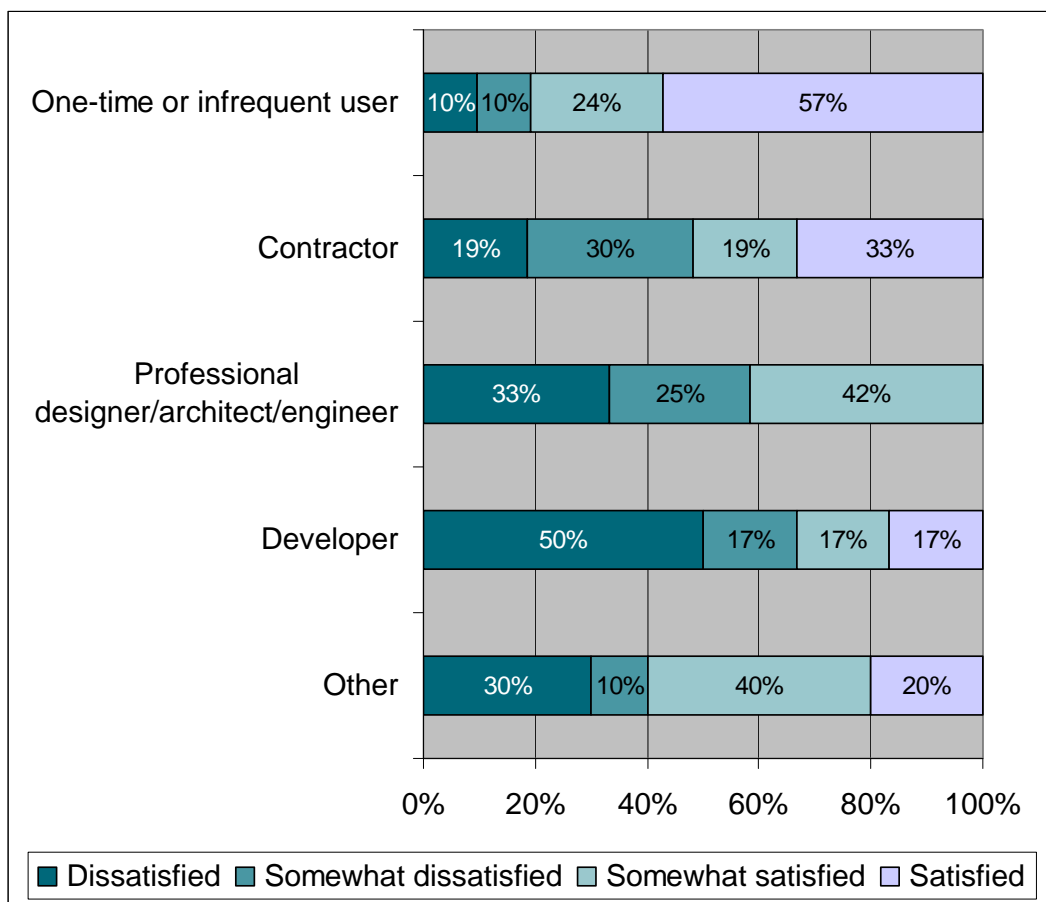


## CROSS TABULATION: USER TYPE AND TRANSPARENCY

By cross tabulating the data from Figure 1 and Figure 13, the customer type was matched with their response to the question, “How satisfied were you with the transparency of the Permit Center’s process and timelines?”

As figure 18 indicates, one-time or infrequent users have the highest satisfaction rate with the transparency of the process and timelines (81% *satisfied or somewhat satisfied*). Once again, developers had the lowest level of satisfaction (34% *satisfied or somewhat satisfied*). However, developer satisfaction is much higher for transparency than it was for the single point of contact.

**Figure 18. User Type and Transparency**  
(N=73)



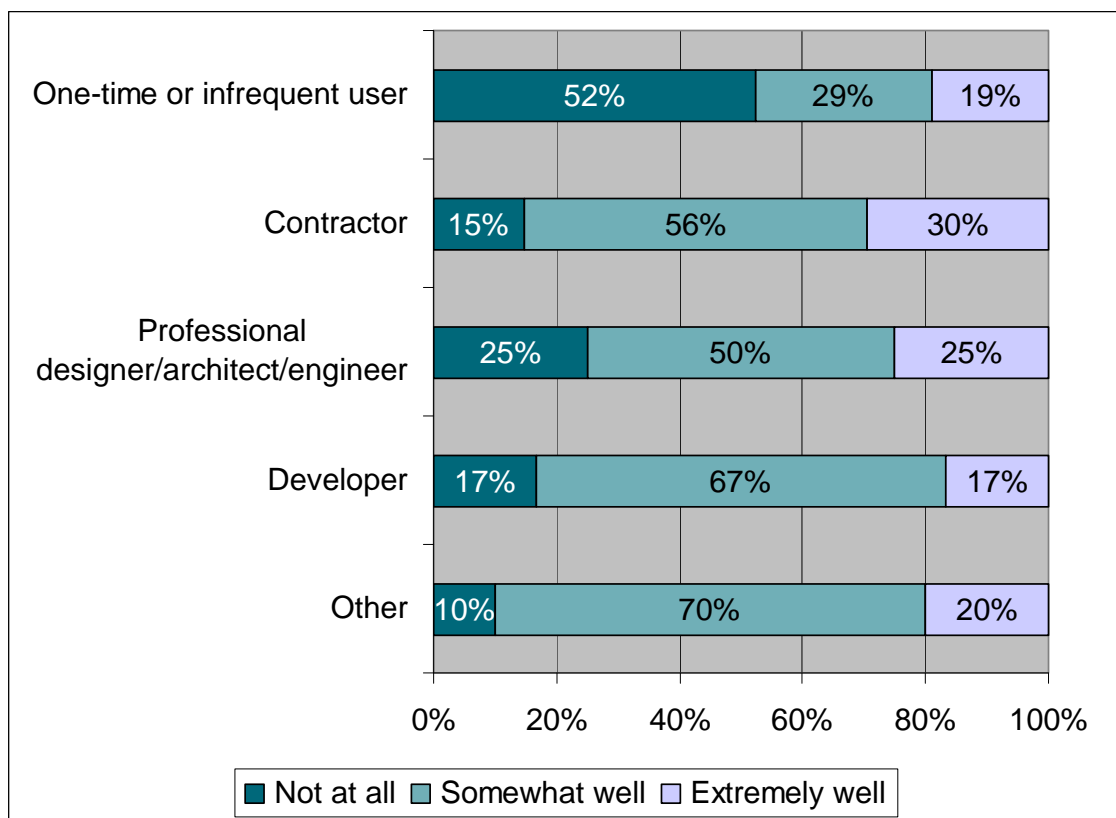
## CROSS TABULATION: USER TYPE AND COMMUNICATION ABOUT DELAYS

By cross tabulating the data from Figure 1 and Figure 14, the customer type was matched with their response to the question, “How well were you informed about what kind of permit review was needed for your application and how long it would take?”

As figure 19 indicates, contractors felt the most informed about which type of permit they needed and how long it would take (30% were *extremely well* informed). One-time or infrequent users and developers had the lowest percentage of respondents who felt they were *extremely well* informed.

Over half of the one-time or infrequent users felt they were *not at all* informed about what kind of permit was needed or how long it would take. Only 10% of those in the “Other” category felt they were *not at all* informed.

**Figure 19. User Type and Communication about Delays**  
(N=73)



## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As indicated by survey results from the fourth quarter of 2008, customer satisfaction with the City of Bellingham's Permit Center has remained relatively high but flat (although there are notable exceptions to this general statement). For instance, the technical ability of the counter staff and the time between setting appointment and actual inspection were at the highest satisfaction ever reported, while the satisfaction with the counter staff wait time has dropped.

Internal discussions should try to identify what processes, procedures, or personnel have changed that would lead to the stagnant and sometimes decreasing ratings by customers. The introduction of the single point of contact approach and the emphasis on transparency seem to be a positive step in the right direction from the perspective of the customers. Awareness of the single point of contact grew substantially during the fourth quarter of 2008 and two thirds of clients were *somewhat satisfied* or *satisfied* with the single point of contact. However, satisfaction levels with the transparency of the process dropped during the same time period.

Of particular note is the varying satisfaction levels amongst the different types of customers. One-time or infrequent users' expectations are frequently met or exceeded, while developers' report much lower satisfaction with their overall experience. In particular, developers cite lower satisfaction with the process transparency and single point of contact. Contractors, who are the largest percentage of respondents, typically have moderate to high levels of satisfaction.

The improvement efforts should focus first on the notably decreased customer ratings in areas. It is imperative that the Permit Center actively and strategically address the comments and concerns made by its customers. Strong effort is obviously being made by staff; it now seems that a more targeted approach would most benefit customers and staff alike.

## APPENDIX A: SURVEY SCRIPT

Thank you for participating in the City of Bellingham's Permit Center's listening and feedback tool. The City of Bellingham will use your input to help improve the services offered by the Permit Center.

Your thoughts are greatly appreciated and will be confidential. All information reported to the City of Bellingham will be in aggregate form so that no one individual's answers can be identified.

Q1. Which description best fits you as a user of City of Bellingham Permit Center during the 4th quarter of 2008?

- One-time or infrequent user
- Developer
- Professional designer/architect/engineer
- Contractor
- Other, please specify

Q2. How have your recent experiences with the Permit Center compare to your expectations?

- Much better than I expected
- Better than I expected
- About what I expected
- Worse than I expected
- Much worse than I expected

QX. How satisfied were you with the Permit Center's new 'single point of contact' approach with your project manager?

- Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- I did not have a single point of contact

QY. How satisfied were you with the transparency of the Permit Center's process and timelines?

- Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied

Q3. Which description best fits your project(s) from October to December of 2008? (check all that apply)

- Single Family Residential
- New Multi-Family Residential Construction
- Commercial Remodel / Change of Use
- New Single-Use Commercial
- Mixed Use Commercial, Industrial, Institutional
- Trade-Specific (Electrical, Plumbing, Fire, etc.)

QZ. How well were you informed about what kind of permit review was needed for your application and how long it would take?

- Extremely well
- Somewhat well
- Not at all

Q4. Please rate each of the following RESOURCES provided by the Permit Center:  
(Very Useful, Useful, Not Very Useful, Useless, I've Never Seen/Heard of this)

- Permit Center Web Site
- Permit Center Handout
- Technical Assistance Bulletins

The following section of the survey pertains to the Permit Center as a whole. The individual departments (such as Planning and Fire) will be surveyed in a later section.

Please rate your SATISFACTION WITH THE SERVICE you received from the Permit Center from October to December of 2008.

QA. How well your application was reviewed for completeness by staff before you turned it in?

- Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Not applicable

Q5. General counter assistance

(Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied)

- Rate Counter Assistance: Technical Ability of Staff
- Rate Counter Assistance: Courtesy of Staff
- Rate Counter Assistance: Wait Time

Q6. Processing your application including review and corrections

(Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied)

- Rate Processing Application: Technical Ability of Staff
- Rate Processing Application: Courtesy of Staff
- Rate Processing Application: Efficiency

Q7. Construction Inspections (if applicable)

(Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied)

- Rate Construction Inspections: Technical Ability of Inspectors
- Rate Construction Inspections: Courtesy of Inspectors
- Rate Construction Inspection: Time Between Setting Appointment and Actual Inspection
- Rate Construction Inspections: Punctuality of Inspectors

Q8. Certificate of Occupancy Process (if applicable)

(Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied)

- Rate Certificate of Occupancy Process: Pre Process Explanation / Education
- Rate Certificate of Occupancy Process: Actual Process as Understood
- Rate Certificate of Occupancy Process: Courtesy of people involved

The Permit Center represents a number of departments that may have been involved in the review / approval of your permit application.

The following section will measure the effectiveness of those departments during your interaction with the Permit Center between October and December of 2008.

Q9 & Q10. For each department that you interacted with, please rate how professionally they treated you. (If you did not interact with any of the following departments, click on 'does not apply')

- Planning
- Public Works
- Stormwater
- Building Services
- Fire

Q11. If you participated in a pre-application meeting, please describe your satisfaction with that process.

- Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied

Q11a. If you participated in a pre-application meeting, do you have any suggestions to make these meetings more effective? (open-ended)

Q12. If you participated in a pre-construction meeting, please describe your satisfaction with that process.

- Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied

Q12a. If you participated in a pre-construction meeting, do you have any suggestions to make these meetings more effective? (open-ended)

Q13. Please provide any additional comments you would like to share with us regarding your experiences with the City of Bellingham's Permit Center. (open-ended)

That is the end of the survey. Thank you very much for participating in this quality improvement project.

## APPENDIX B: VERBATIM CUSTOMER COMMENTS

### **Q11a. If you participated in a pre-application meeting, do you have any suggestions to make these meetings more effective?**

- Ensure that all city staff have reviewed the materials in advance.
- Having the meeting in the conception stage not after a lot of client money is spent and it still does not meet their combined requirements. There is not any common sense in what this process.
- I have been to several of these meetings and the COB always over commits on time lines and they need to take notes so they remember what they agree too...
- I think you are very helpfully.
- Make sure the person there gives you all the information from start to finish. Getting codes and requirements on several different occasions is just a waste of time.
- My preapplication meeting with staff member was extremely helpful. I believe that without this meeting the process would not have been as satisfactory.
- Not all the city staff involved attended the pre-app. If it required of the applicant (and paid for by the applicant) then the appropriate city employees should attend.
- Public works needs to be more helpful. They through to many roadblocks in the way of projects rather than help with solutions like other departments.
- Staff should respond and follow up in a timely manner.

### **Q12a. If you participated in a pre-construction meeting, do you have any suggestions to make these meetings more effective?**

- ditto
- the city needs to be more organized...they have lost many of my permit applications and they need to write down what they agree too in these meetings. The COB cost contractors a lot of money because of their inability to stay organized and keep track of it

### **Q13. Please provide any additional comments you would like to share with us regarding your experiences with the City of Bellingham's Permit Center.**

- I don't believe that the permit fee should be based on the project cost estimate by the planning dept. I am a do-it-yourselfer and don't think it fair that I have to pay a permit fee based on a contractor's labor rate. I also build green where possible
- As an architect working on several cities and counties, City of Bellingham is fine and fair enough and good communication was done either by phone and e-mail promptly. I think the service has been fair and very satisfied in general. Tks.
- at the revision submittal, we were told / lectured to go through all the appointment / documentation process at the counter when there was no waiting. it seemed a little insufficient.
- Electrical: Permit fees out of line with work/inspections required. Permit process requires more information then needed for proper inspections. Let the inspectors do their job in the field. Increase the inspector work force
- For an electrical permit the process was very fast. For the building permit it was a joke, it took over 1 year to get it through.
- I found the assistance of the staff to be very helpful. I would specifically like to point out a couple of people without whom the experience would have been less than satisfactory.
- I have worked for 25 years in Bellingham in this business as a small builder, designer and sometimes developer and I no longer feel welcome to do my work here. I hope you can really understand that the system is broken and it is not all the clients fault

- I ran into problems with previous owners of this property not having pulled permits for projects. I dealt with planning and finally managed to come up with a scheme to bring the previous work into compliance that satisfied the current owners
- I was treated very courteously and professionally by people in the permit center office even though it was obvious I was not familiar with the nuances of permit application procedure. My business partner and I were rather shocked
- inspector - very helpful - very nice - always on time
- It is definitely improving. People are trying. I think people at the counter should sometimes realize that the information they are giving is incorrect, and should be willing to talk to others when it is suggested they do so. Keep up the good work.
- It seems to me, that the process is very slow and permits are not being issued because of the lack of response from the planning department.
- It would be nice if the glitches on the website (like the permit login screen) were fixed. It never fits within the width of the monitor, regardless of the resolution. The front desk are doing a great job.
- It's awesome that everything is accessible on the web-site but I found it really hard to get to areas of the building codes that apply to each zoning. For example, figuring out how many parking spaces are required, how many of them have to be ADA,
- staff member went above and beyond what was required to ensure my project went through the process quickly. He was informative on what I needed to submit and kept me informed along the way.
- Just because there is not as much activity in Building Services should not mean that plan checking has to get down to splitting hairs on items that just some verbal communication with plan reviewer used to take care of.
- My main concern is not with the permit center itself but with what happens once a permit is submitted. I have submitted a number of applications for permits and/or planned developments and have had no problem with submittal at the permit center.
- personnel in the permit dept were very helpful for this first time user
- Planning staff were friendly and helpful. Waiting times were short. Permits were issued quickly. The only complaint I have is that the printout of my payment of fees was confusing, perhaps due to the fact that I had not completed final inspections
- plans were approved but when inspector arrived to do first insp made all kinds of additional things he wanted, to the project.
- Staff and inspectors I believe would benefit from getting training on the rules and regulations for the Manufactured home industry. Most jurisdiction I have dealt with, send someone from their staff to take the same classes that installers are required to
- The ability to go online and see progress for permits is wonderful. But when a correction is noted by a department there is no way to find out what needs to be done or corrected. This means a trip to City Hall
- The city is becoming more and more process oriented with more and more rules that often as not conflict with another arcane rule. Can't we use common sense? Can't we all just get along?
- The City needs to have one point of contact between the customer and the City Official. The City must take on the responsibility to distribute plans submitted by the customer to all relevant departments and make sure they receive comments in a timely manner
- The issues have been the most difficult for us is when we get a preliminary determination on a code issue. The design is completed and construction contract are based on that determination. Then in final permit review the determination is changed
- The management at the city should set up a town hall type meeting with their inspectors available to hear from them and the users as we are not sure the management knows what a great job the inspectors are doing at covering for the management's decisions.
- the people that work there are suppose to be helping us get permits. they work on our tax dollars. it wouldn't hurt them one bit to pick up the pace a bit.
- The permit center is making good progress toward streamlining the permitting process

- The personnel of the permit center towards their customers is what needs to change. This starts with the department head. Most employees are fine but in particular Plan Checker and his confrontational, condescending, attitude is not acceptable.
- The planning and building department staff are out of control. Design Review has become an opportunity for the staff to be the designer - which is simply wrong. The staff do not have the training and expertise of a designer or architect.
- The process for getting a building permit for small jobs takes longer than it has to, nothing got done until after a plan check payment was made, which followed three weeks or so after drawings were submitted. plan check fees for smaller jobs (< \$500 total)
- The staff in the permit center were great, the process was quite intimidating for a simple tenant improvement, and the timelines quoted were ridiculous for someone leasing and starting a small business. However they really did help push this through
- The work should be hired out to a private party. This would encourage accountability, integrity and ethical behavior. A union staff is not a way to promote anything but the continued employment of unqualified staff who have their own agenda and no repercussions
- This has been an ongoing problem for many years. The answers you receive from individual to individual is not consistent. Handouts don't specify all the requirements when submitting applications, so when you've done everything that's stated on the handout
- We did not have a single point of contact and had a hard time getting clear concise answers on deadlines and fees. The high cost of permitting and traffic impact fees makes it difficult for small, locally owned business.
- What's the point, they haven't changed their tune in the past decade and aren't going to now... their union employment contract effectually guarantees this.