

Building Standards Satisfaction Report

February 2018



Prepared for City of Saskatoon (Building Standards) by PRA Inc.



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Report outline

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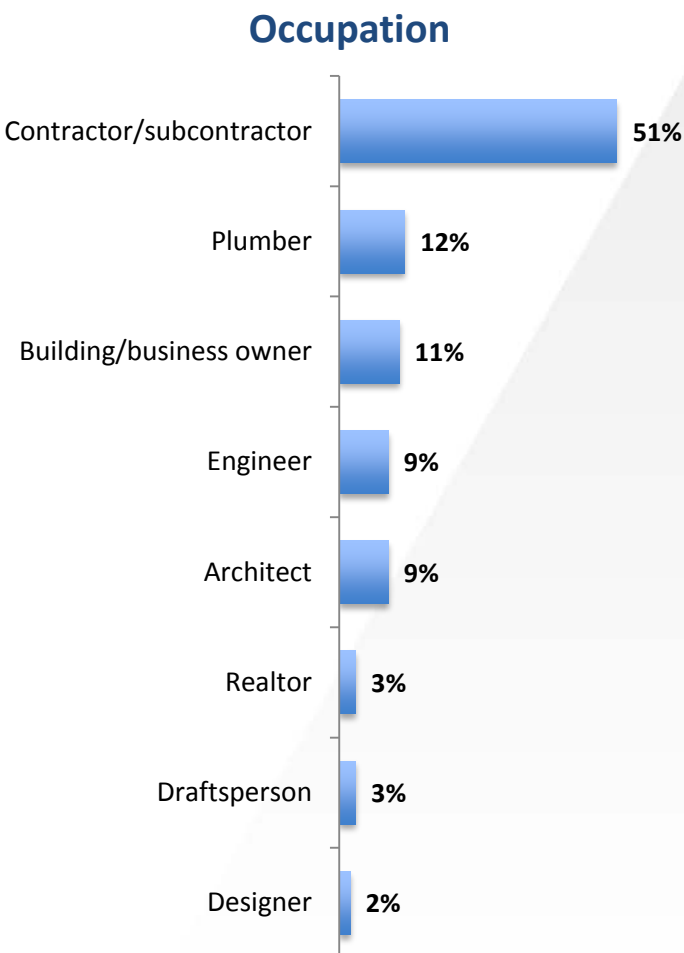


Introduction

- In 2017, City of Saskatoon Building Standards Division contracted PRA Inc. to conduct a satisfaction survey of its clients.
- The objectives of the survey included determining satisfaction levels with the following:
 - the residential and commercial review process
 - the plumbing permit process
 - the building inspection process
 - the customer service at the Building Standards Division
- In addition, the survey intended to measure the following:
 - preparedness for changes to building codes
 - importance of several of the Division's key initiatives

Methodology

- To assess these objectives, PRA conducted a survey of Building Standards clients who used the program and services of the division over the past year.
- PRA conducted a mixed-mode survey (telephone and online) from January 3 to January 22, 2018.
- In total, 248 clients completed the survey: 196 online and 52 by phone.
- Results in this report were analyzed for differences between the occupational groups. Unless stated, no differences exist between groups.
- Please note that proportions in this report have been rounded to zero decimal places, so results may not sum to 100%. In addition, for some questions, respondents were able to select more than one answer, producing results that may total to more than 100%.

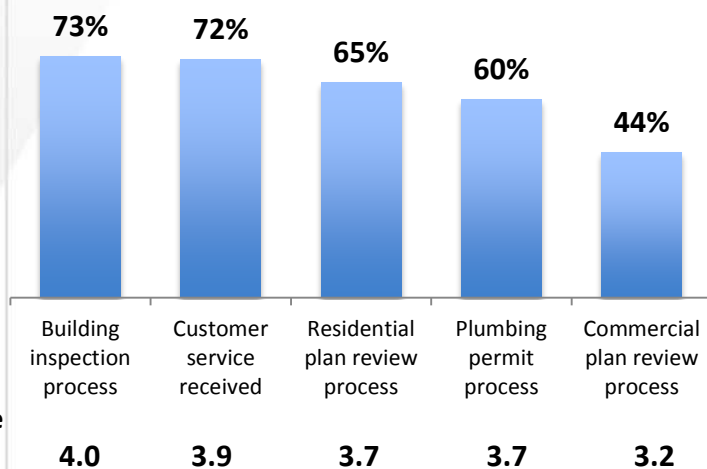




Executive Dashboard and Key Takeaways

Executive Dashboard

Overall satisfaction rating (% rating 4 or 5 out of 5)



Top 2 drivers of satisfaction – Building inspection process

1. City meeting the one-day turnaround time for residential inspections
2. Inspectors are knowledgeable

Top 2 drivers of satisfaction – Customer service received

1. Overall satisfaction with staff knowledge and professionalism
2. Telephone inquiries are answered promptly and directed to appropriate staff

Top 2 drivers of satisfaction – Residential review process

1. Quality of the residential plan review process
2. City meeting the expected response time for residential inquiries

Top 2 drivers of satisfaction – Plumbing permit process

1. Telephone inquiries are answered promptly and directed to appropriate staff
2. City meeting the one-day turnaround time for plumbing inspections

Top 2 drivers of satisfaction – Commercial plan review process

1. City meeting the four to six week expected turnaround time
2. Full and/or partial occupancy permit process

Average overall satisfaction ratings by occupation

Averages for cells with fewer than 2 respondents have been removed to protect respondents' anonymity

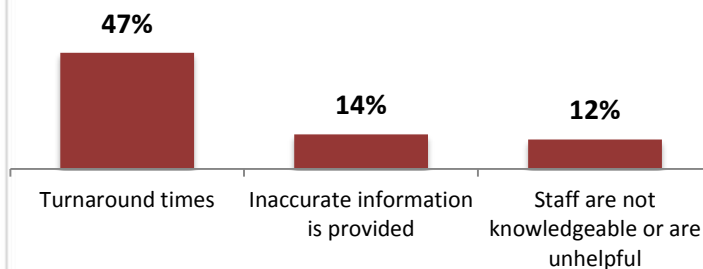
	Architect	Building/ business owner	Contractor/ subcontractor	Designer	Draftsperson	Engineer	Plumber	Realtor
Building inspection process	3.7	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.0	4.2	3.6	4.3
Customer service received	3.9	3.8	3.8	4.6	4.1	4.3	3.9	4.0
Residential plan review process	2.9	4.2	3.7	4.4	3.8	4.2	3.2	4.0
Plumbing permit process	-	3.4	4.1	-	-	4.0	3.7	-
Commercial plan review process	3.4	2.8	3.1	2.7	3.7	3.7	2.6	2.5

Executive Dashboard

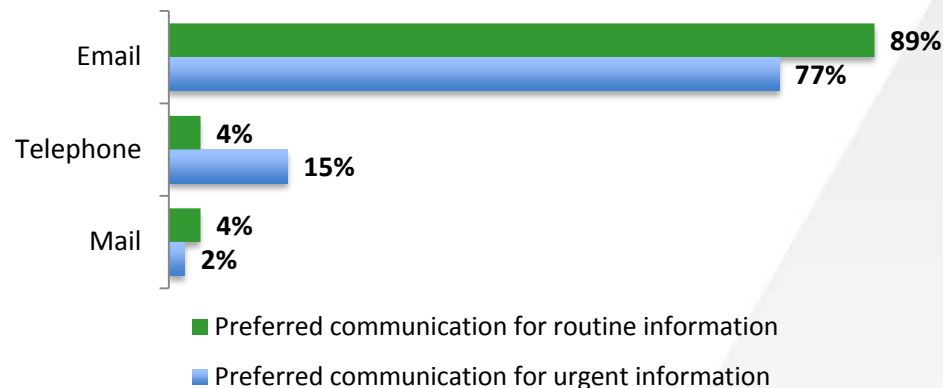
Like most about working with Building Standards



Dislike most about working with Building Standards



Top 3 preferred methods of communication



Top 3 items most needed from Building Standards Division:

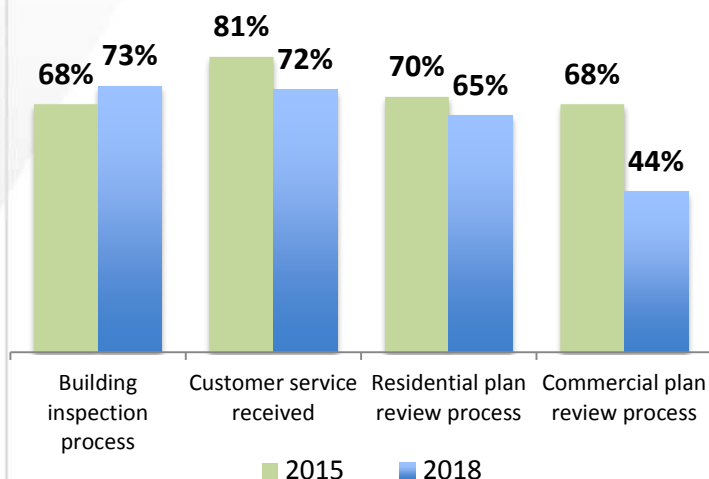
1. Reduce permit turnaround times (33%)
2. Reduce red tape/bureaucracy (19%)
3. More transparent/clear communication (13%)

Top 3 challenges facing organizations in Saskatoon:

1. Lack of work/slow market (39%)
2. Cost of land (30%)
3. Turnaround times for permits/inspections (26%)

Executive Dashboard

Overall satisfaction rating: 2015 to 2018 (% rating 4 or 5 out of 5)



Note: Satisfaction with plumbing permit process was not asked in 2015.

Notable changes from 2015 to 2018

- Ratings for satisfaction with building inspection process were up from 2015 from 68% to 73%. Among occupational groups, satisfaction with this process was higher in 2018 for realtors, draftspersons, engineers, and building/business owners.
- Ratings for commercial plan review process dropped significantly from 68% in 2015 to 44% in 2018. In fact, among all occupational groups, satisfaction with commercial plan review process is lower in 2018 than 2015.
- Among most questions related to satisfaction, results were similar, albeit slightly lower than 2015.
- Most noticeable decreases from 2015 were all related to the commercial review process, with the biggest decrease in satisfaction with *expected turnaround time for commercial permits* from 58% to 30% as well as *turnaround time for multi-dwelling site permits* from 57% to 30%. The latter point is further compounded by the fact that in 2015 the expected turnaround time was 3 to 5 weeks and in 2018 the question asked about 4 to 6 weeks.
- Significant increase in mentions of turnaround times as the aspect respondents disliked most about working with the Division, up from 28% in 2015 to 47% in 2018.
- Significant increase in the proportion wanting routine or urgent information by email compared to 2015, up from 79% to 89% for routine and 58% to 77% for urgent information.



Key Takeaways

- Overall, the majority of respondents are satisfied with the key areas surveyed, with the exception of the *commercial plan review process* (44% satisfied). Satisfaction is highest in two areas: *building inspection* and *customer service*.
- When assessing what respondents like most about working with the Building Standards Division, the most common responses relate to staff, as opposed to processes. These responses include *staff being knowledgeable, helpful, friendly, courteous, and professional*.
- The primary area for improvement seems to be related to *turnaround times*. Indeed, it is the most commonly cited reason that respondents dislike working with the Division, and also tends to be a key driver of satisfaction in most areas.
- Most respondents feel prepared for changes to building codes. For those feeling less prepared, *information sessions* or *more information on the Division's website* would be most helpful.



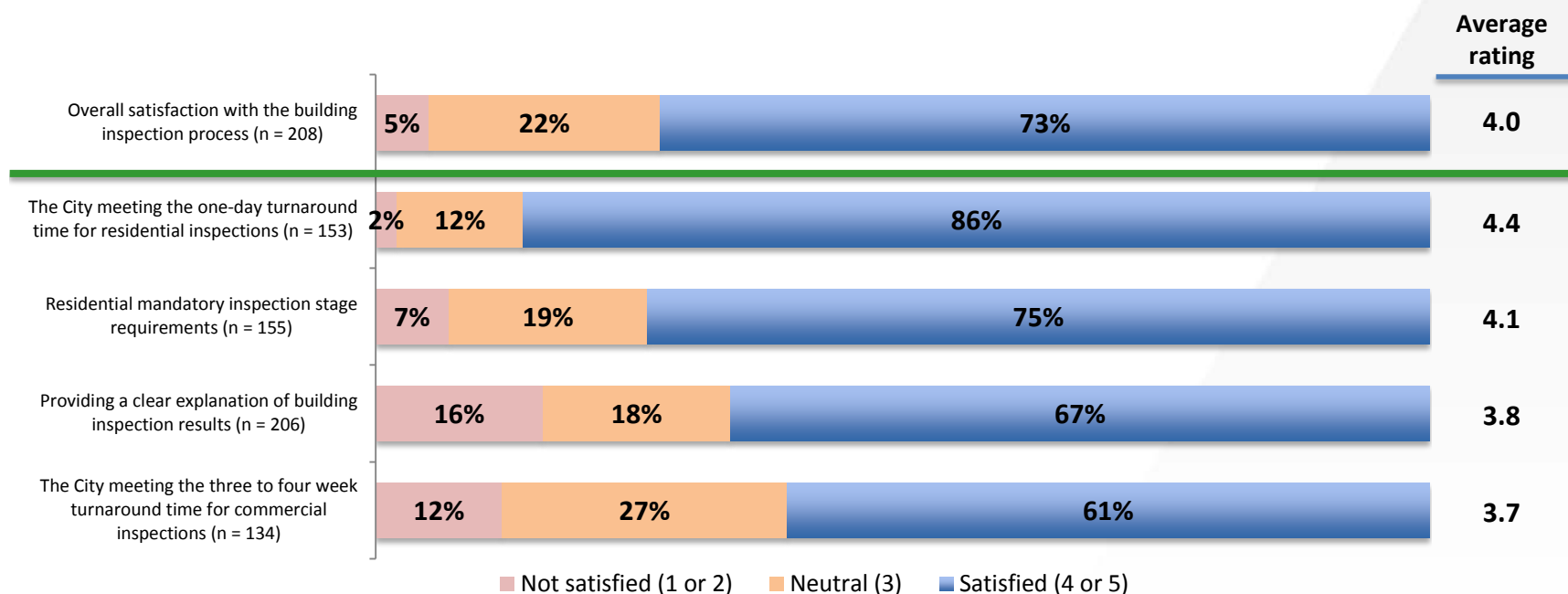
Building Inspection Process

Satisfaction with building inspection process

Q8. How satisfied are you with each of the following as they relate to the building inspection process?

BASE: Respondents who worked with the Building Standards Division in a commercial or residential area. (n = 238)

- Overall, the majority of respondents who have experience with the building inspection process are satisfied, including 32% who are very satisfied.
- Stronger satisfaction is noted for the residential inspection program, as compared to the commercial inspection program.

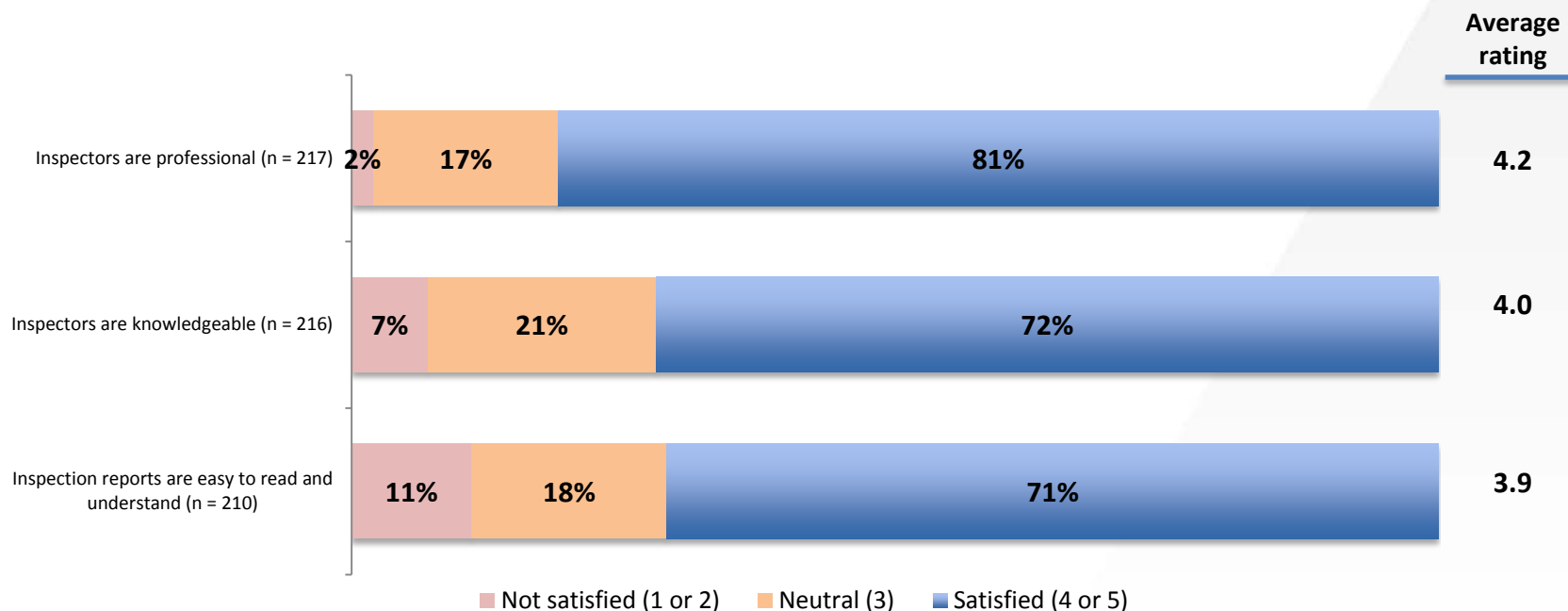


Satisfaction with building inspection process

Q8A. How satisfied are you with each of the following as they relate to the building inspection process?

BASE: Respondents who worked with the Building Standards Division in a commercial or residential area. (n = 238)

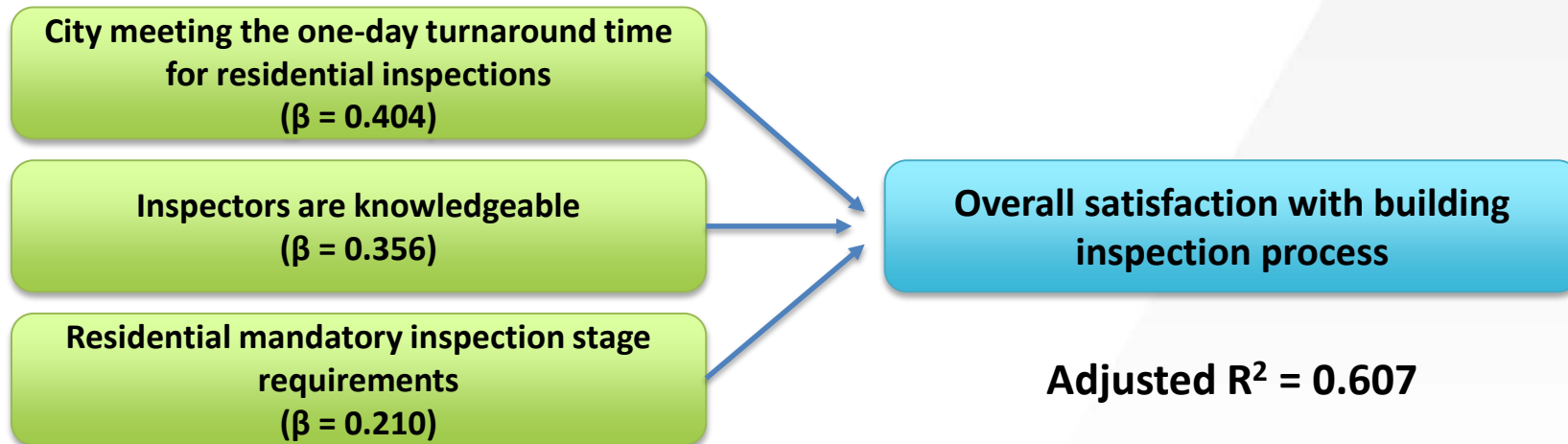
- The majority of respondents are satisfied with the building inspectors' *professionalism* (81%), *knowledge* (72%), and *ability to produce reports that are easy to read and understand* (71%).



Key driver analysis – overall satisfaction with building inspection process

- A step-wise linear regression model was conducted using satisfaction with the overall building inspection process to determine key drivers of overall satisfaction.
- Three factors were identified to be key drivers, accounting for 61% of the variance in overall satisfaction with the building inspection process. The larger the beta (β) score derived for the final model, the greater the impact it has on overall satisfaction.

Key drivers

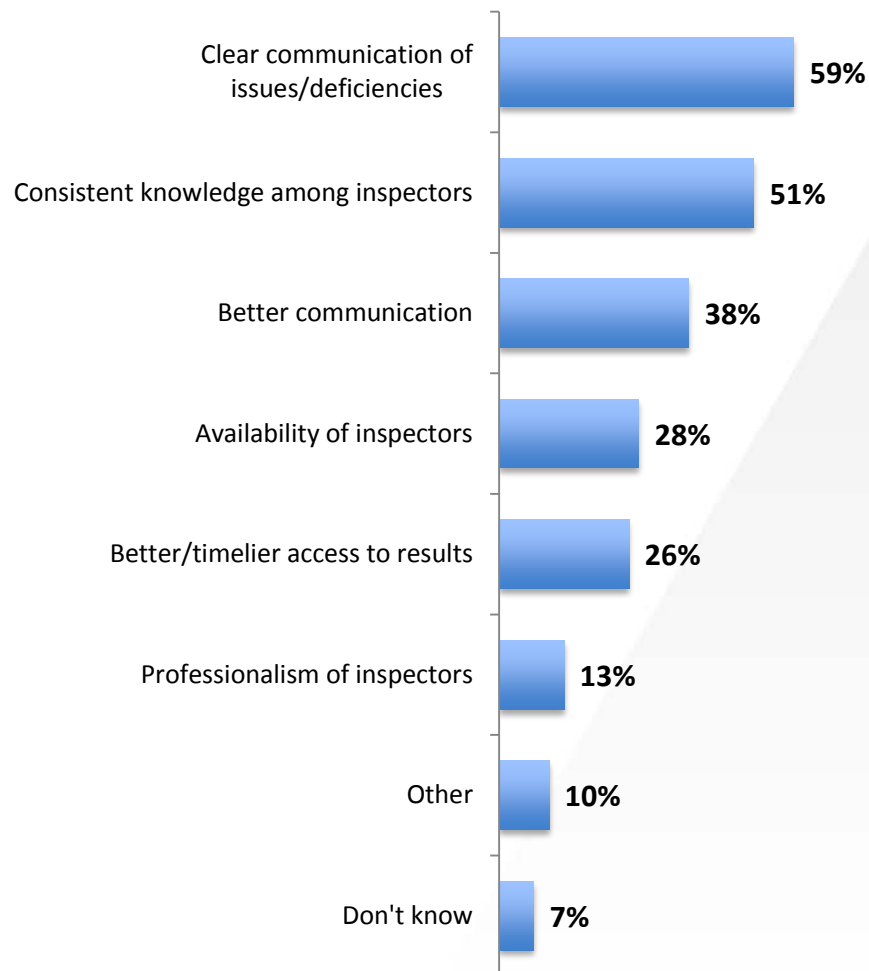


Suggestions to improve building inspection process

Q9. In what ways can the Building Standards Division improve the building inspection process?

BASE: Residential or commercial clients who rated at least one aspect in Q8 or Q8A as 1 or 2 out of 5. (n = 61)

- Respondents who provided lower satisfaction ratings for the building inspection process suggested improving *communication of issues/deficiencies* and having *consistent knowledge among inspectors*.





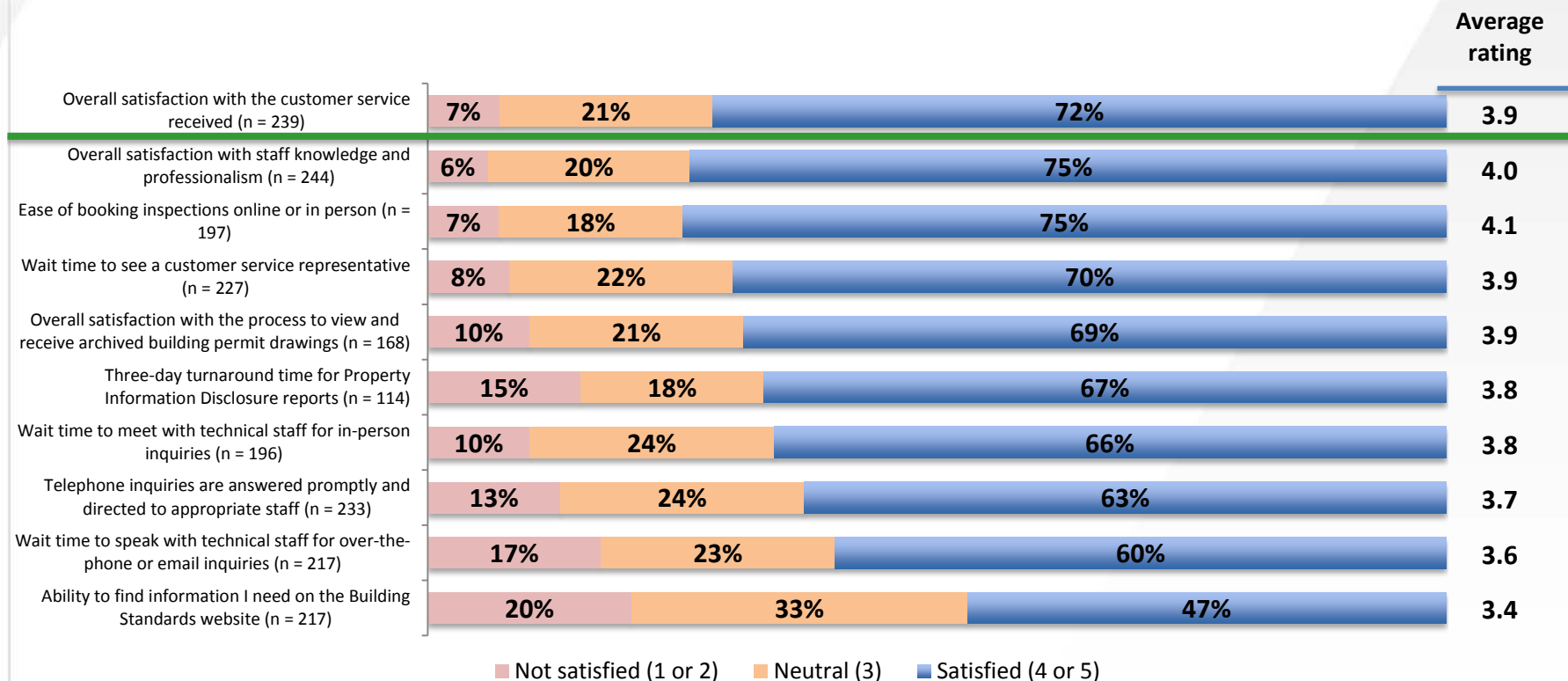
Customer Service

Satisfaction with customer service process

Q10. How satisfied are you with each of the following as they relate to the customer service process?

BASE: All respondents (n = 248)

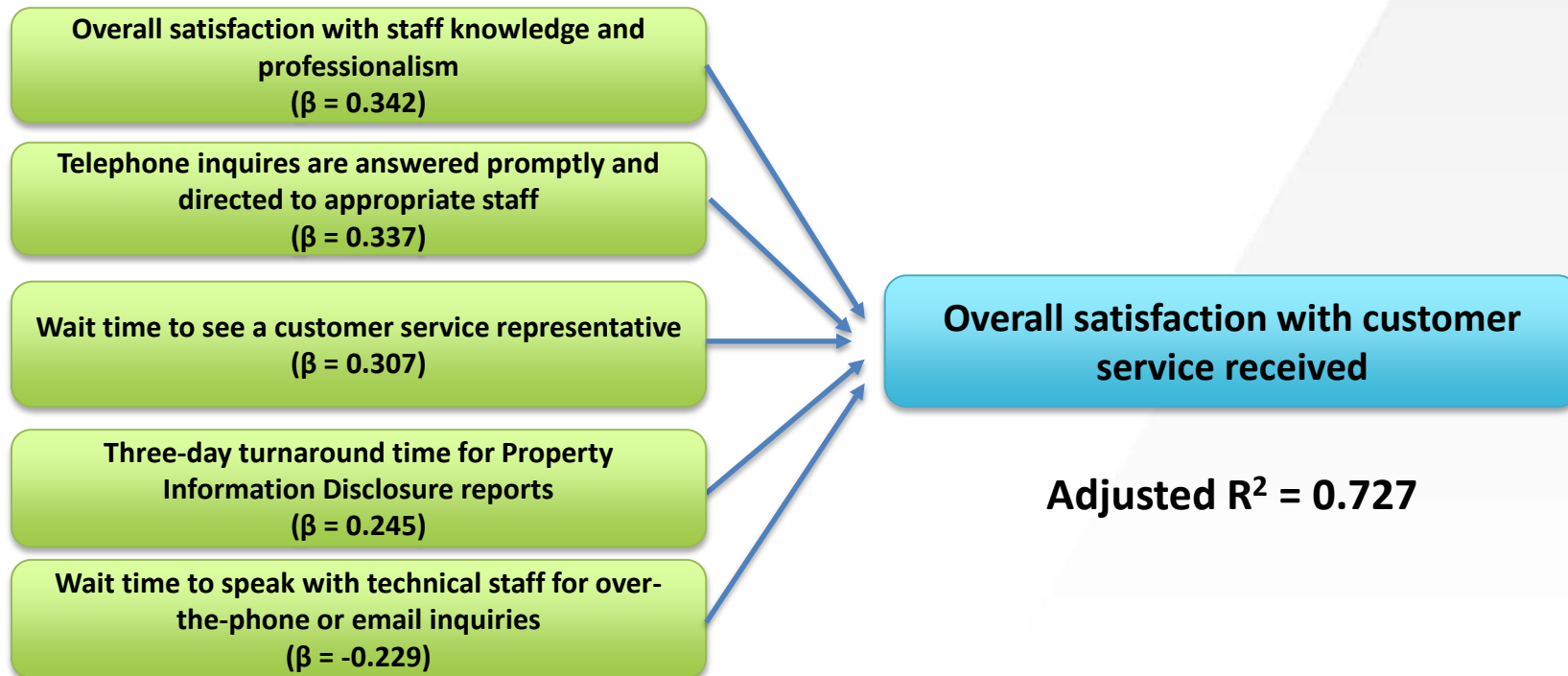
- Overall, the majority of respondents who have experience with customer service are satisfied, including 28% who are very satisfied.
- Satisfaction with the other nine aspects varies, from 47% who are satisfied with the *ability to find information on the Building Standards website* to 75% satisfied with *staff knowledge and professionalism* and the *ease of booking inspections online or in person*.



Key driver analysis – overall satisfaction with customer service received

- A step-wise linear regression model was conducted using satisfaction with the overall customer service received to determine key drivers of overall satisfaction.
- Five factors were identified to be key drivers, accounting for 73% of the variance in overall satisfaction with customer service. The larger the beta (β) score derived for the final model, the greater the impact it has on overall satisfaction.

Key drivers

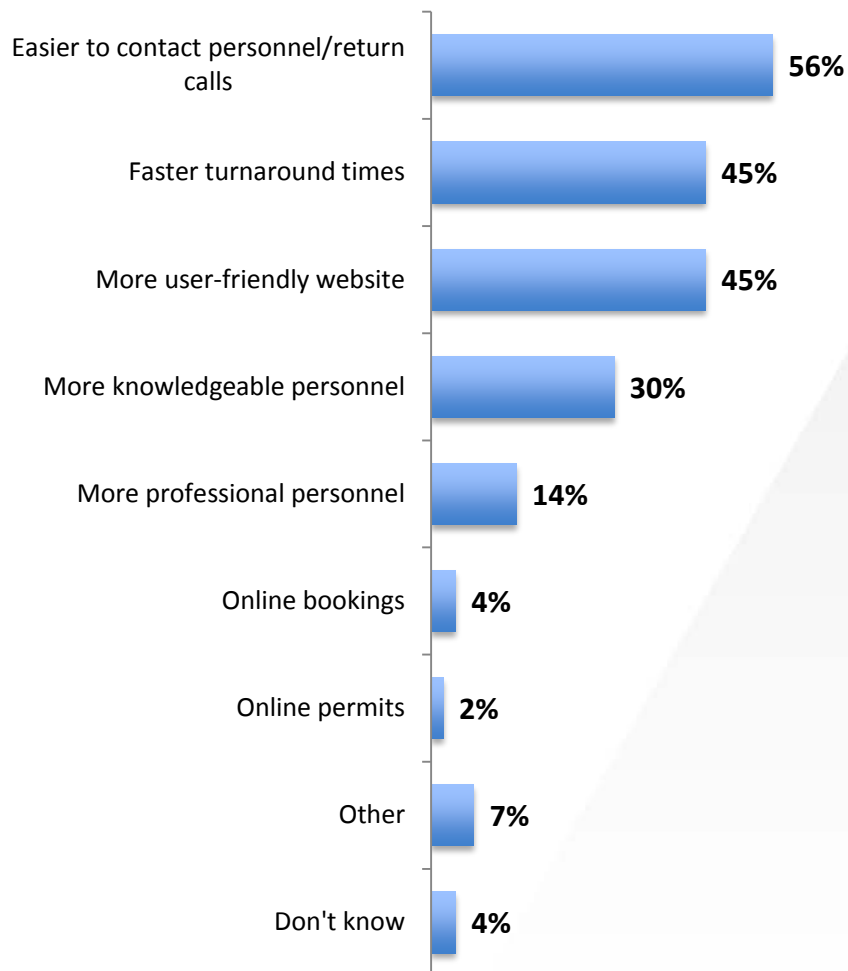


Suggestions to improve customer service process

Q11. In what ways can the Building Standards Division improve the customer service process?

BASE: All respondents who rated at least one aspect in Q10 as 1 or 2 out of 5. (n = 86)

- Respondents who provided lower satisfaction ratings for the customer service process suggested making it *easier to contact personnel/return calls*, having *faster turnaround times*, or having a *more user-friendly website*.





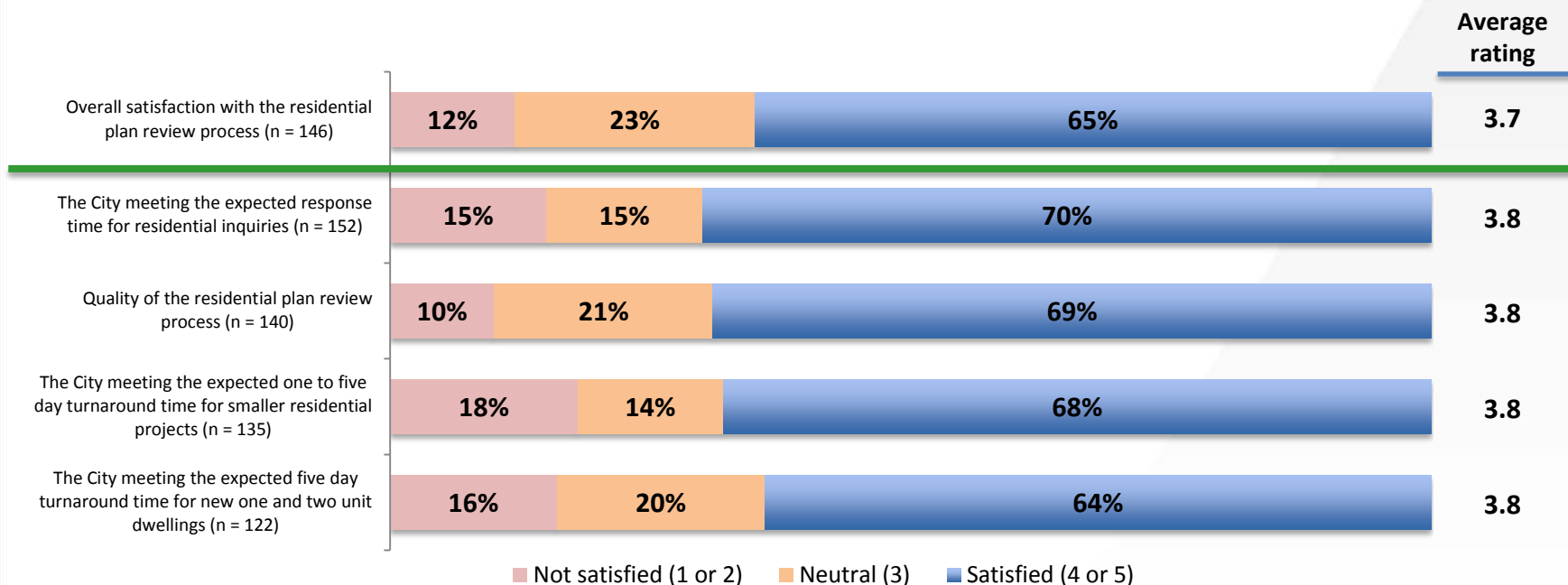
Residential Review Process

Satisfaction with residential plan review process

Q4. How satisfied are you with each of the following as they relate to the residential plan review process?

BASE: Respondents who worked with the Building Standards Division in a residential area. (n = 173)

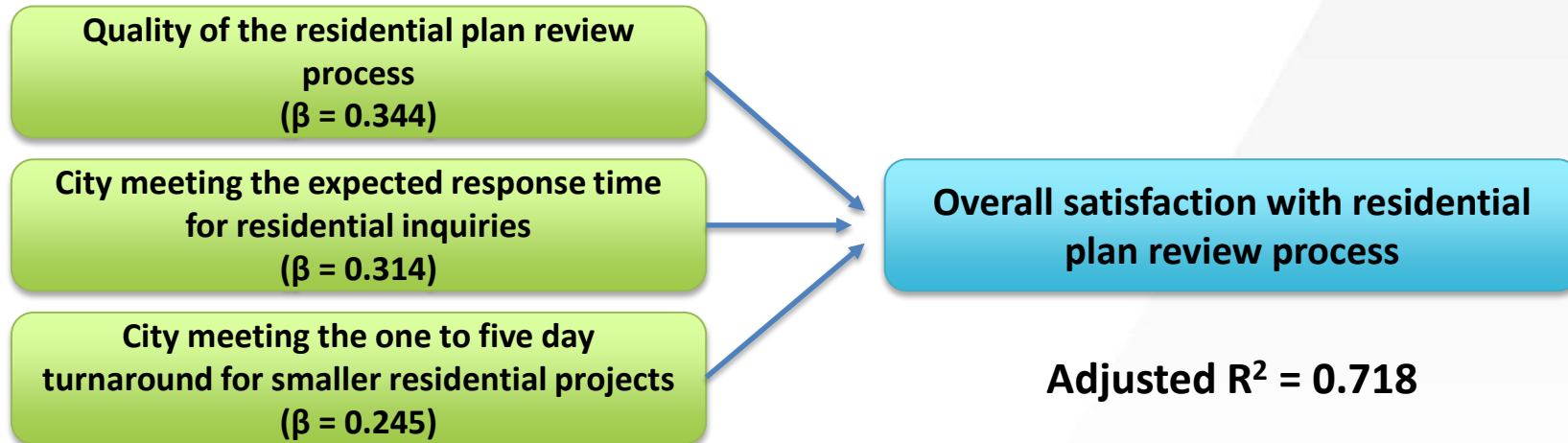
- Overall, the majority of respondents who have experience with the residential plan review process are satisfied, including 25% who are very satisfied.
- Comparatively stronger satisfaction is noted for inquiries, quality of review, and turnaround for small projects.



Key driver analysis – overall satisfaction with residential plan review process

- A step-wise linear regression model was conducted using satisfaction with the overall residential plan review to determine key drivers of overall satisfaction.
- Three factors were identified to be key drivers, accounting for 72% of the variance in overall satisfaction. The larger the beta (β) score derived for the final model, the greater the impact it has on overall satisfaction.

Key drivers

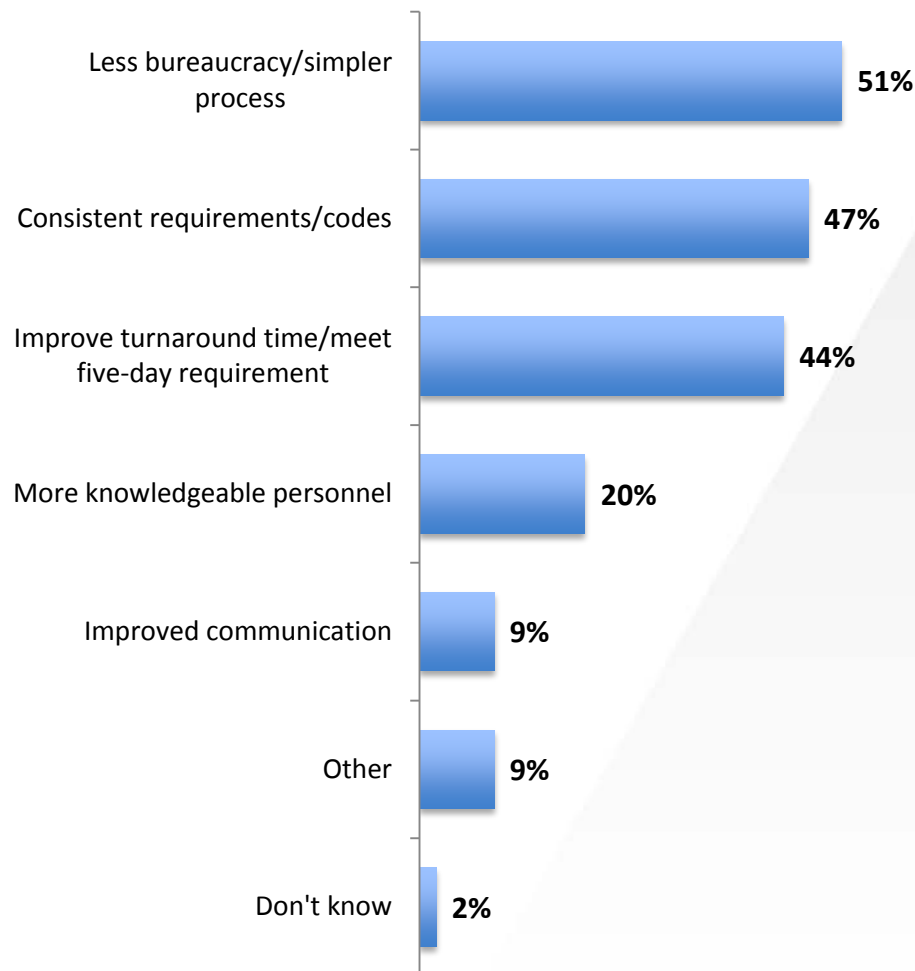


Suggestions to improve residential review process

Q5. In what ways can the Building Standards Division improve the residential review process?

BASE: Residential clients who rated at least one aspect in Q4 as 1 or 2 out of 5. (n = 45)

- Respondents who provided lower satisfaction ratings for the residential review process suggested *making the process simpler/less bureaucratic, making the requirements/codes consistent, and improving turnaround times.*



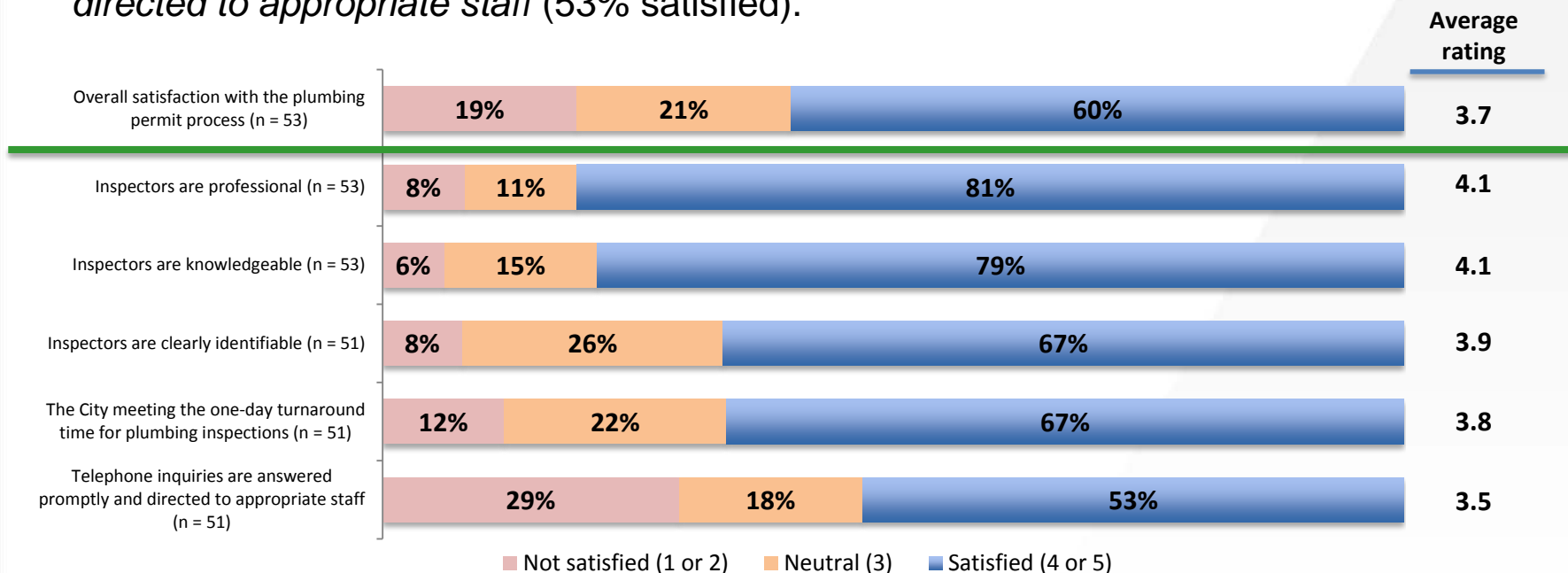


Plumbing Permits and Inspections

Satisfaction with plumbing permit process

Q13. How satisfied are you with each of the following as they relate to the plumbing permit process?
BASE: Respondents who worked with the Building Standards Division in a plumbing area. (n = 58)

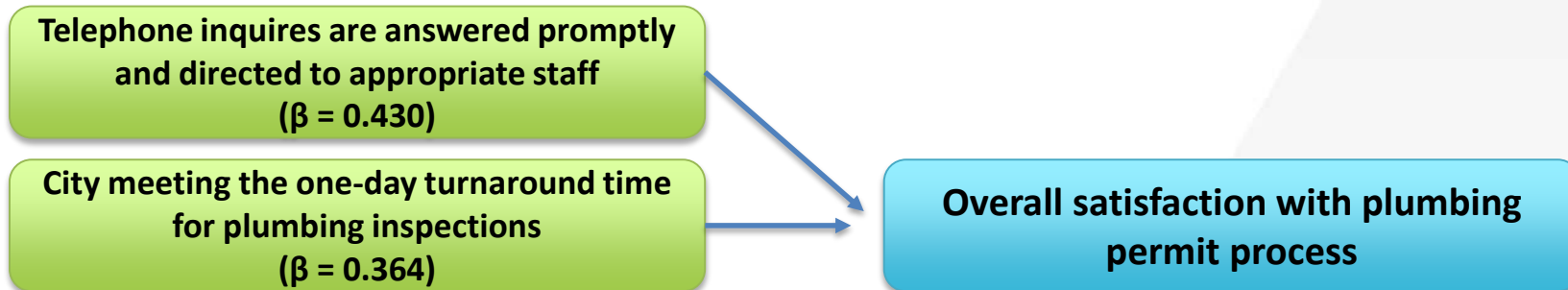
- Overall, the majority of respondents who have experience with the plumbing permit process are satisfied, including 32% who are very satisfied.
- Despite the lower level of overall satisfaction, several aspects rate very highly, including *inspectors are professional* (81% satisfied) and *inspectors are knowledgeable* (79% satisfied).
- There are low satisfaction ratings for *telephone inquiries are answered promptly and directed to appropriate staff* (53% satisfied).



Key driver analysis – overall satisfaction with plumbing permit process

- A step-wise linear regression model was conducted using satisfaction with the overall plumbing permit process to determine key drivers of overall satisfaction.
- Two factors were identified to be key drivers, accounting for 46% of the variance in overall satisfaction with the plumbing permit process. The larger the beta (β) score derived for the final model, the greater the impact it has on overall satisfaction.

Key drivers



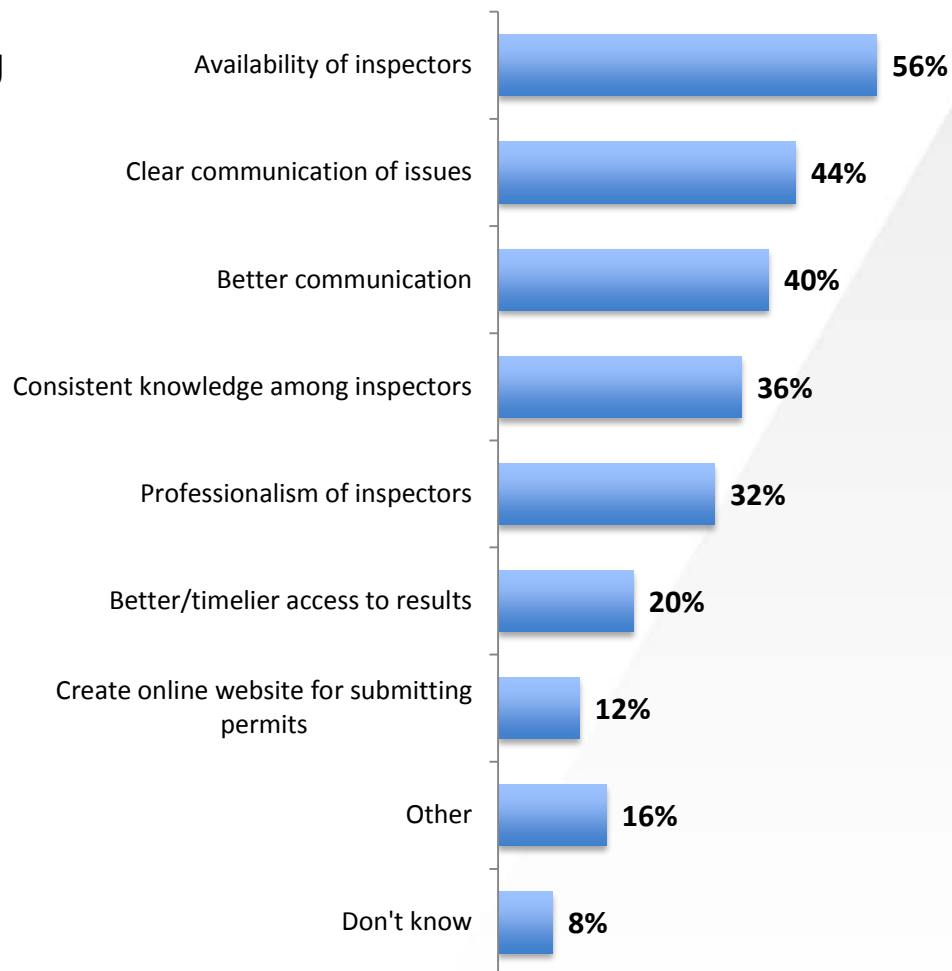
Adjusted $R^2 = 0.456$

Suggestions to improve plumbing permit process

Q14. In what ways can the Building Standards Division improve the plumbing permit process?

BASE: Plumbing clients who rated at least one aspect in Q13 as 1 or 2 out of 5. (n = 25)

- Respondents who provided lower satisfaction ratings for the plumbing permit process strongly suggested improving *availability of inspectors* (mentioned by more than half) and *communication*.





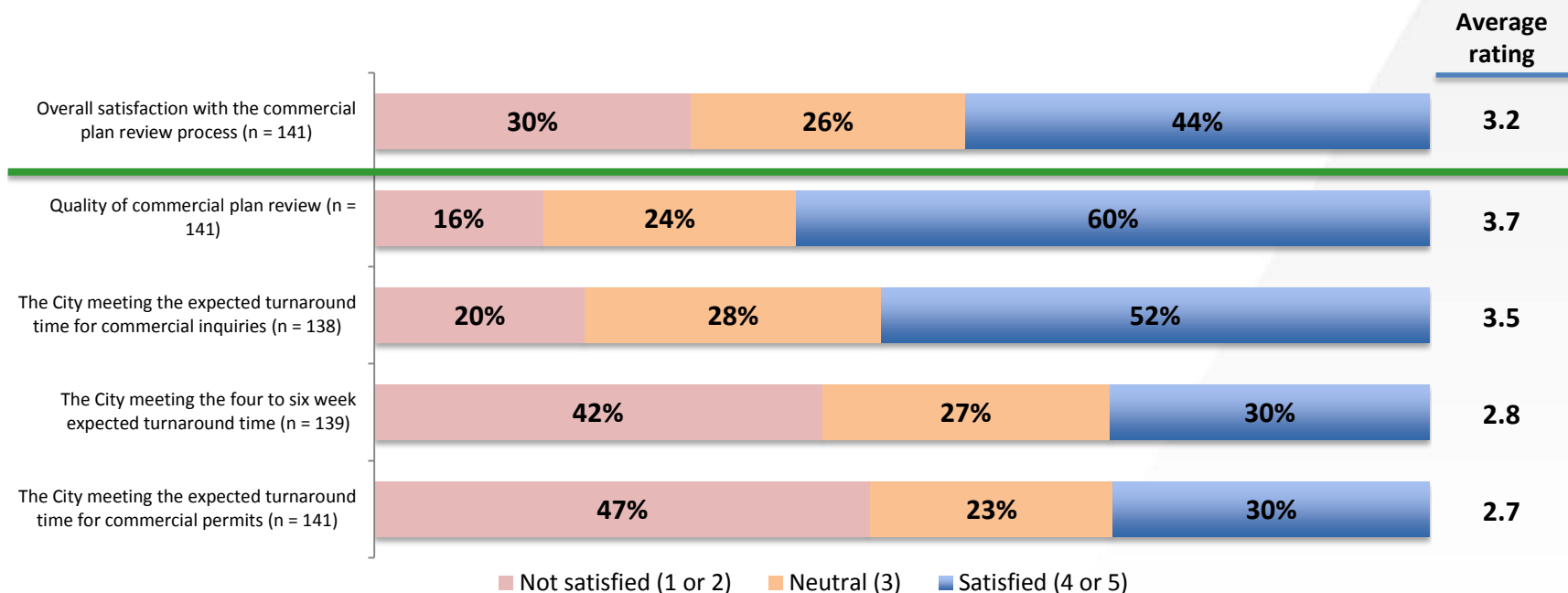
Commercial Review Process

Satisfaction with commercial plan review process

Q6. How satisfied are you with each of the following as they relate to the commercial plan review process?

BASE: Respondents who worked with the Building Standards Division in a commercial area. (n = 158)

- Overall, 44% of respondents are satisfied with the commercial plan review process, including 19% who are very satisfied.
- Comparatively stronger satisfaction is noted for quality of plan review and response time for inquiries.
- Low satisfaction is noted for meeting permit turnaround time.

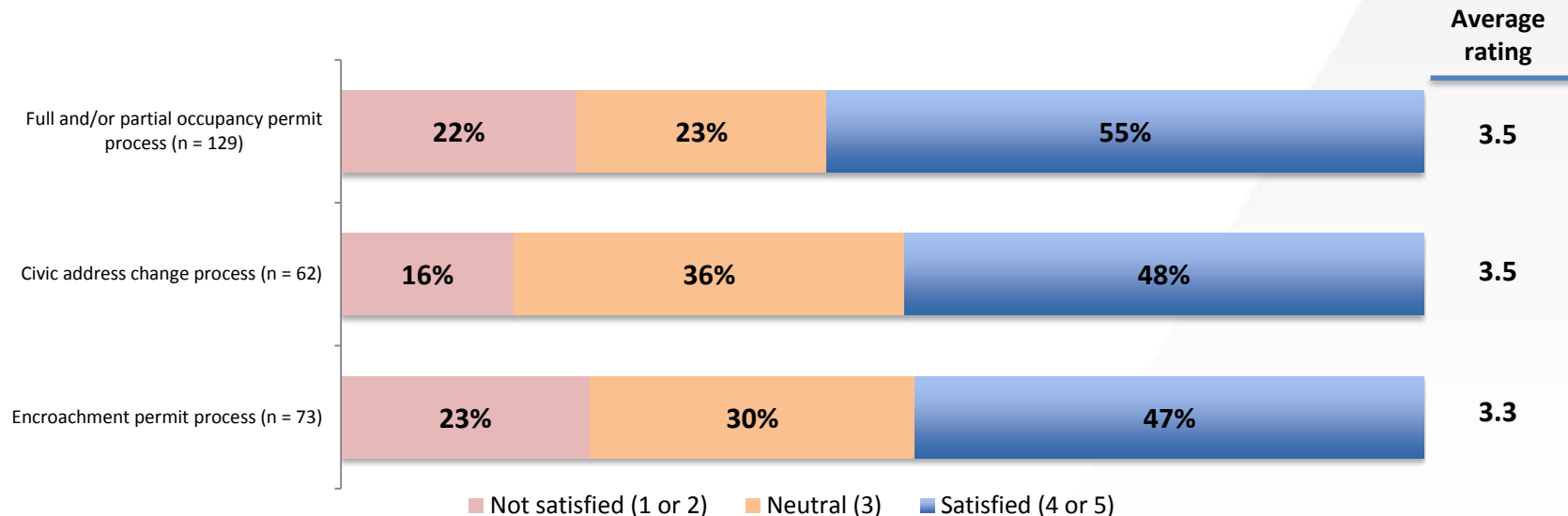


Satisfaction with commercial processes

Q6A. Overall, how satisfied are you with the following commercial processes?

BASE: Respondents who worked with the Building Standards Division in a commercial or residential area. (n = 238)

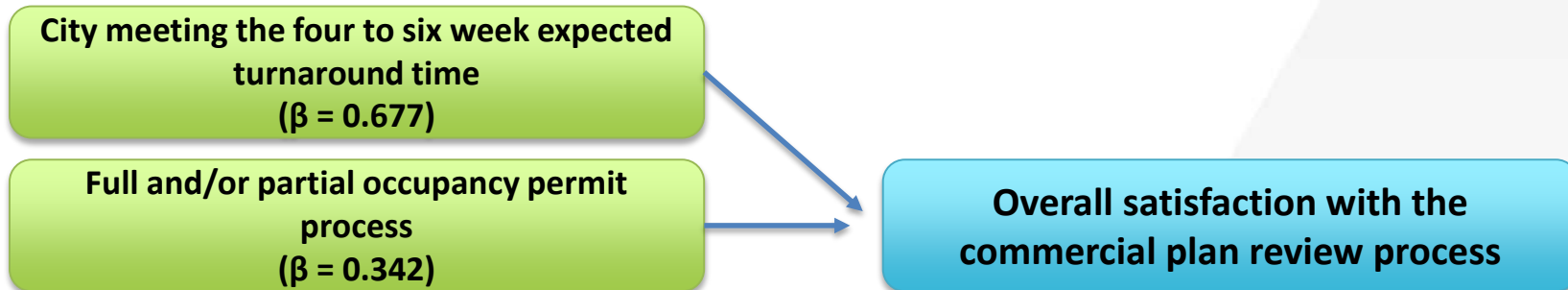
- About half of respondents are satisfied with the process for *occupancy permits* (55%), *civic address changes* (48%), and *encroachment permits* (47%).



Key driver analysis – overall satisfaction with commercial plan review process

- A step-wise linear regression model was conducted using satisfaction with the overall commercial plan review to determine key drivers of overall satisfaction.
- Two factors were identified to be key drivers, accounting for 91% of the variance in overall satisfaction with the commercial plan review process. The larger the beta (β) score derived for the final model, the greater the impact it has on overall satisfaction.

Key drivers

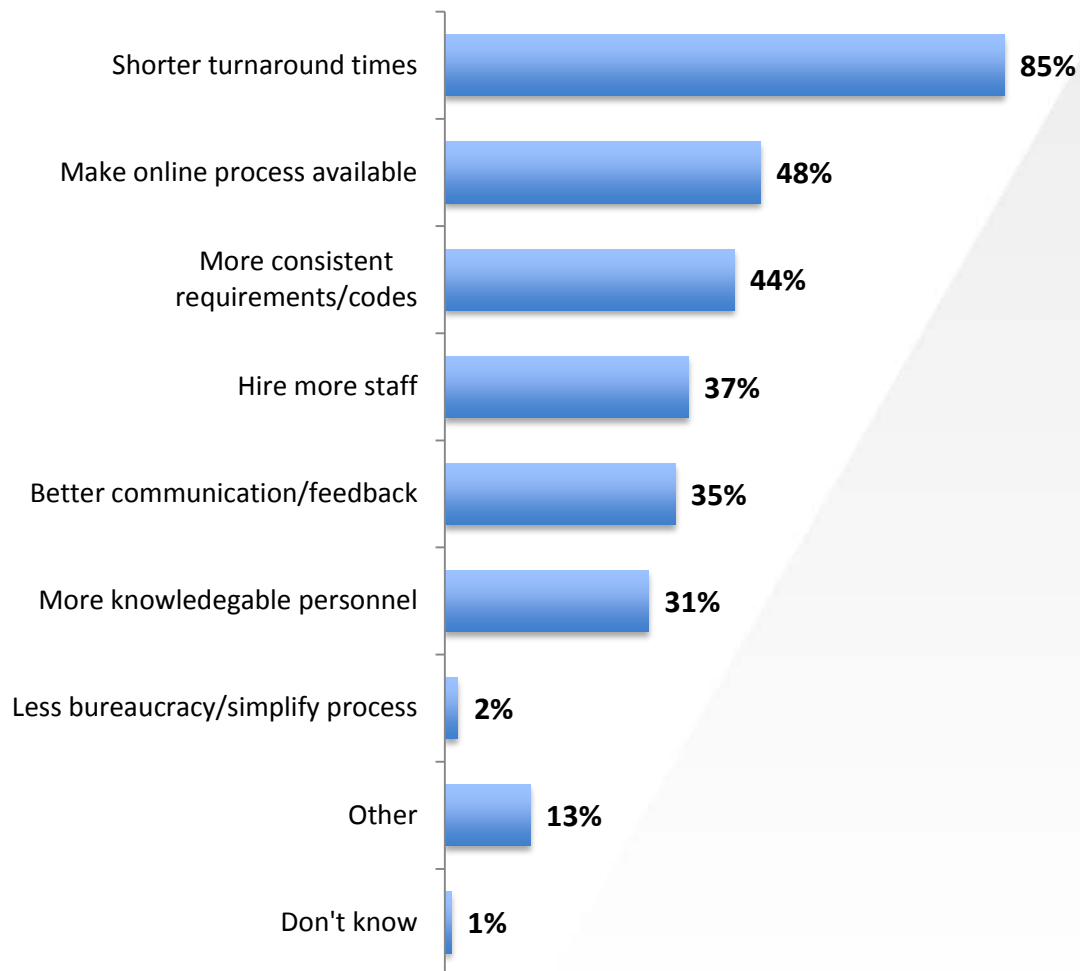


Adjusted $R^2 = 0.908$

Suggestions to improve commercial review process

Q7. In what ways can the Building Standards Division improve the commercial review process?
BASE: Commercial clients who rated at least one aspect in Q6 or Q6A as 1 or 2 out of 5. (n = 82)

- Respondents who provided lower satisfaction ratings for the commercial review process strongly suggested improving *turnaround times*.





Priorities and Challenges

Areas liked most and least

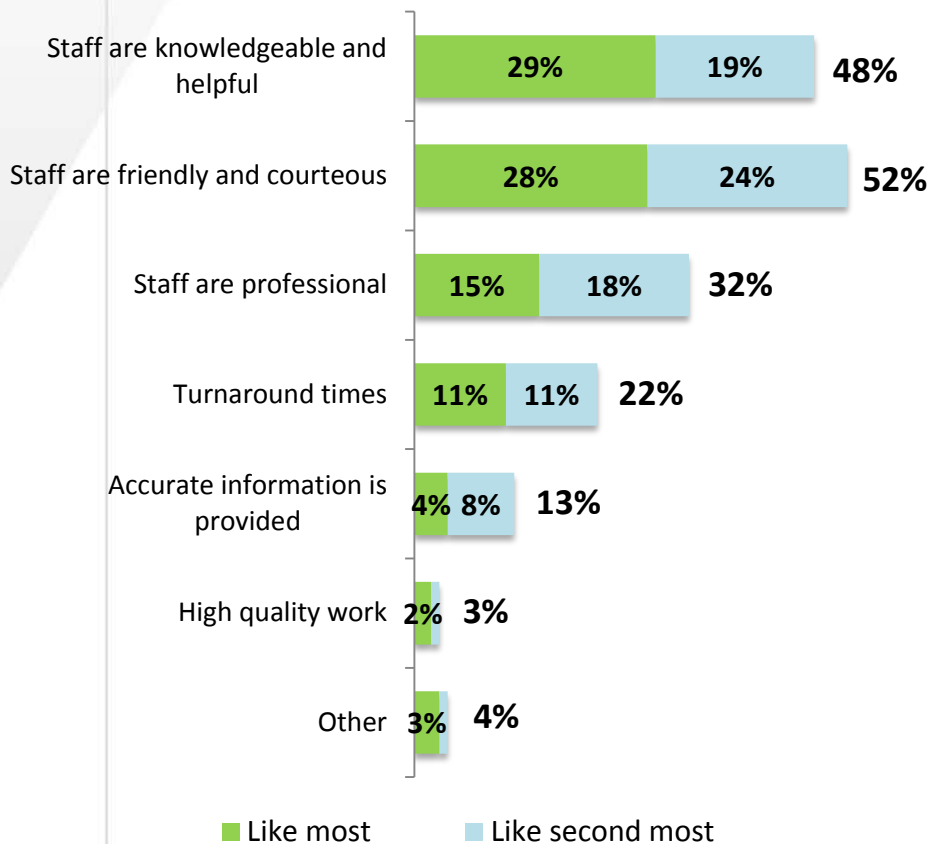
Q12A. What are the top 2 areas you like most about working with the City of Saskatoon Building Standards Division?

Q12B. What are the top 2 areas you dislike most about working with the City of Saskatoon Building Standards Division?

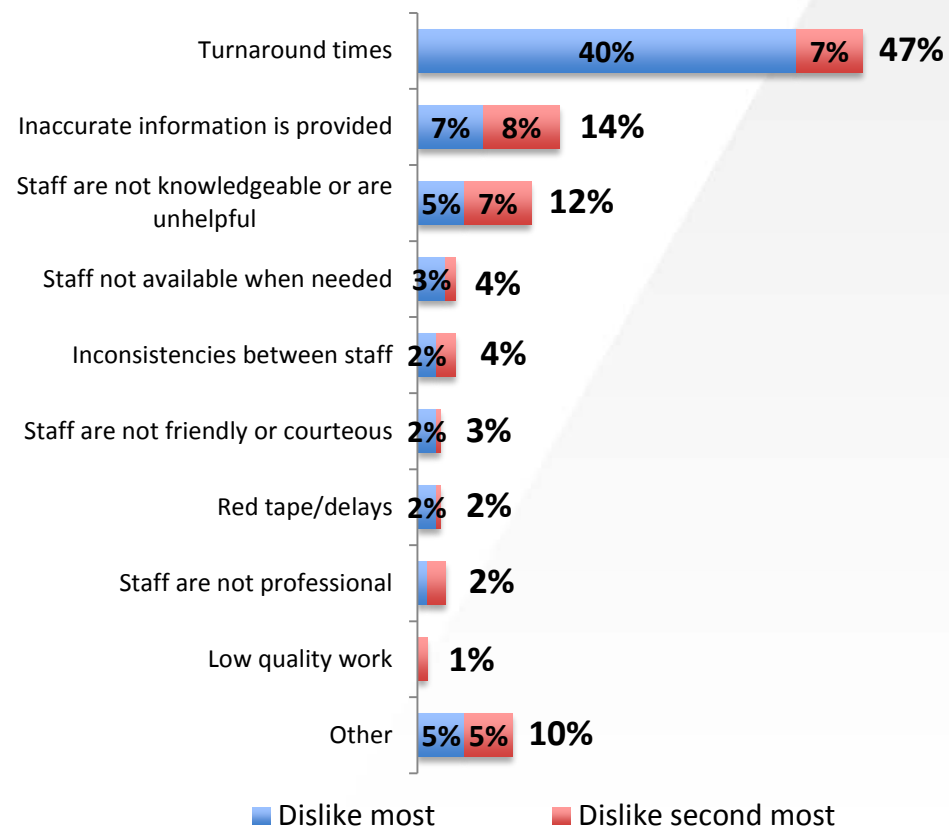
BASE: All respondents (n = 248)

- Respondents like staff *knowledge and helpfulness, friendliness and courteousness, and professionalism* most, while they least like *turnaround times*.

Areas liked most about working with the Building Standards Division



Areas disliked most about working with the Building Standards Division

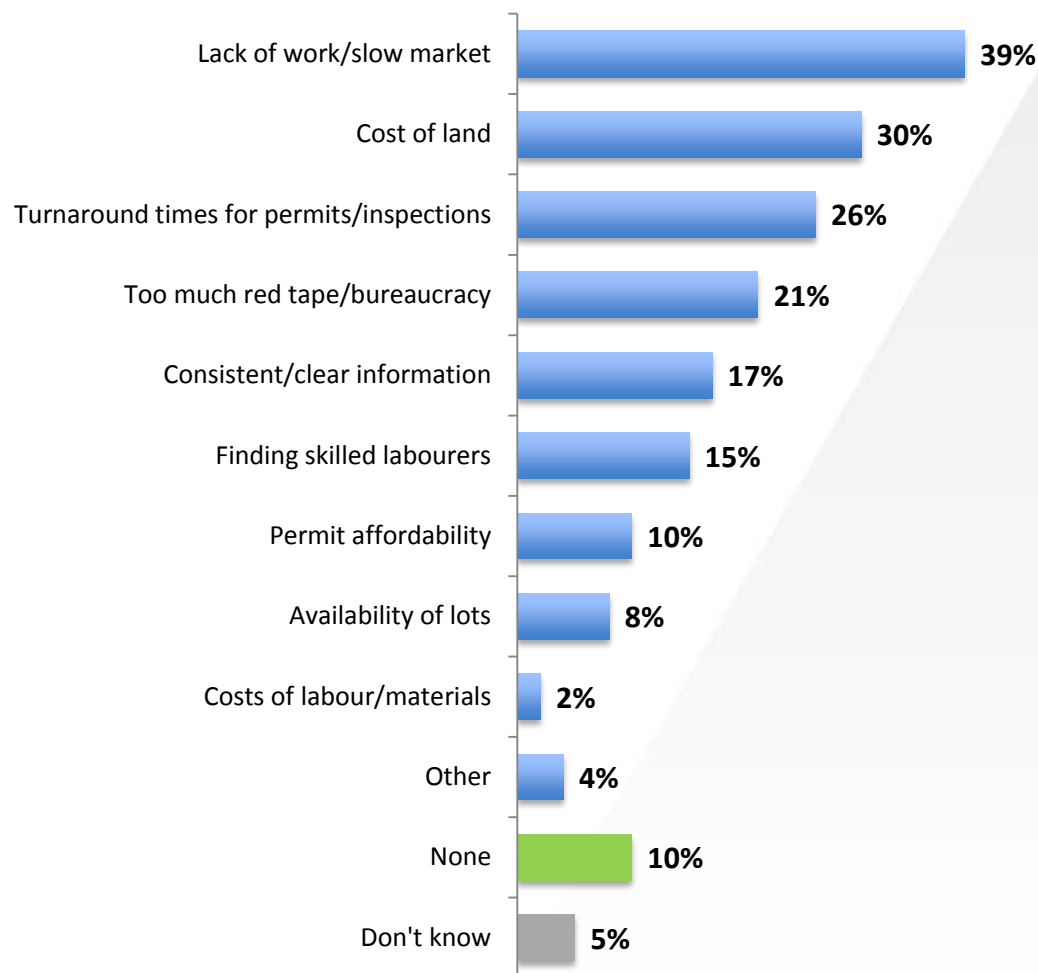


Challenges facing organizations

Q17. What key challenges does your organization face in today's market as they relate to building in Saskatoon?
BASE: All respondents (n = 248)

- Respondents report several perceived building challenges in Saskatoon.
- The most common challenges are a *lack of work/slow market* (39%), the *cost of land* (30%), *turnaround times for permits or inspections* (26%), and *too much red tape/bureaucracy* (21%).

Lack of work/slow market was mentioned more often by plumbers and engineers, while ***turnaround times*** were mentioned more often by architects, draftspersons, and designers.





Communication and Needs

Preferred method of communication

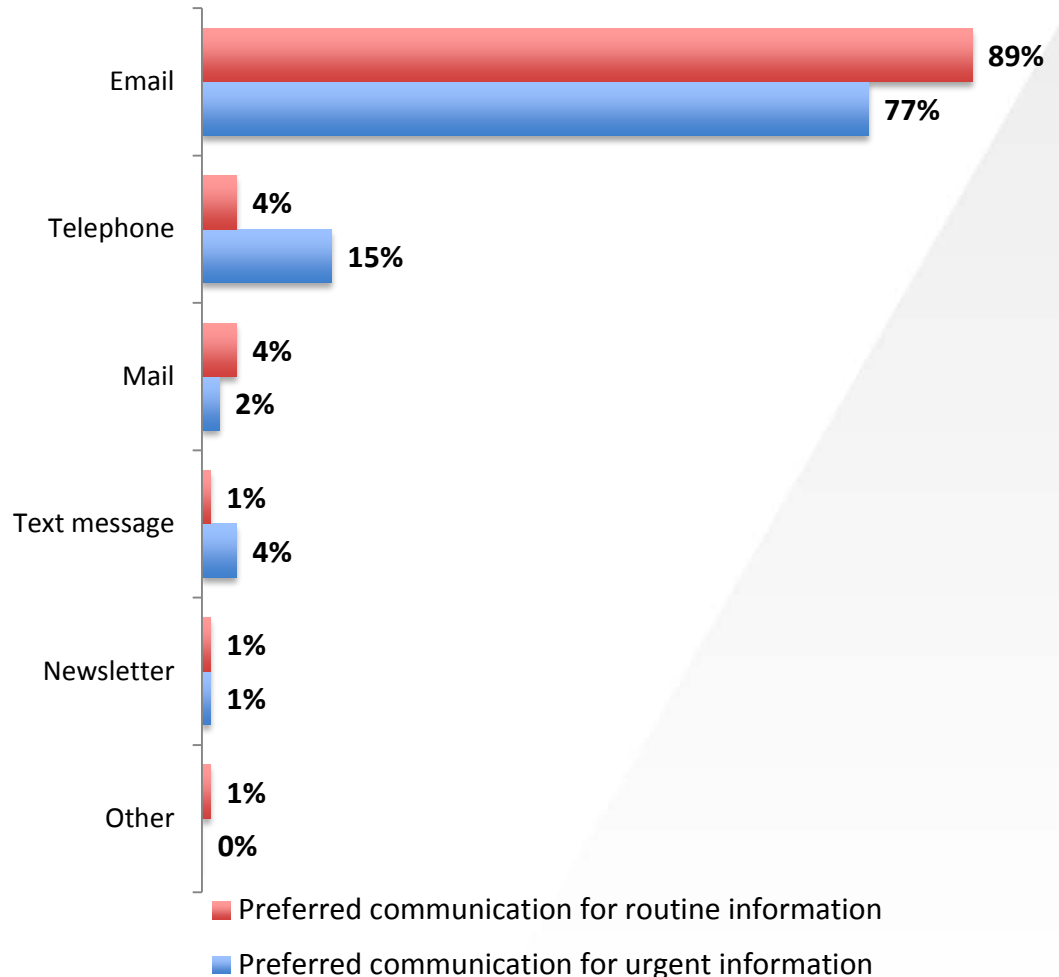
Q24A. What is your most preferred way for the Building Standards Division to communicate with your organization for routine information sharing?

Q24B. What is your most preferred way for the Building Standards Division to communicate with your organization for more urgent information or significant changes?

BASE: All respondents (n = 248)

- The vast majority of respondents prefer *email* as their source of communication for both routine information (89%) and urgent information (77%).
- There is some desire for using *telephone* for urgent information (15%).

Plumbers (17%) have a stronger need for routine information via mail, while realtors (13%) have a stronger need by newsletter.



Most needed items from Buildings Standards Division

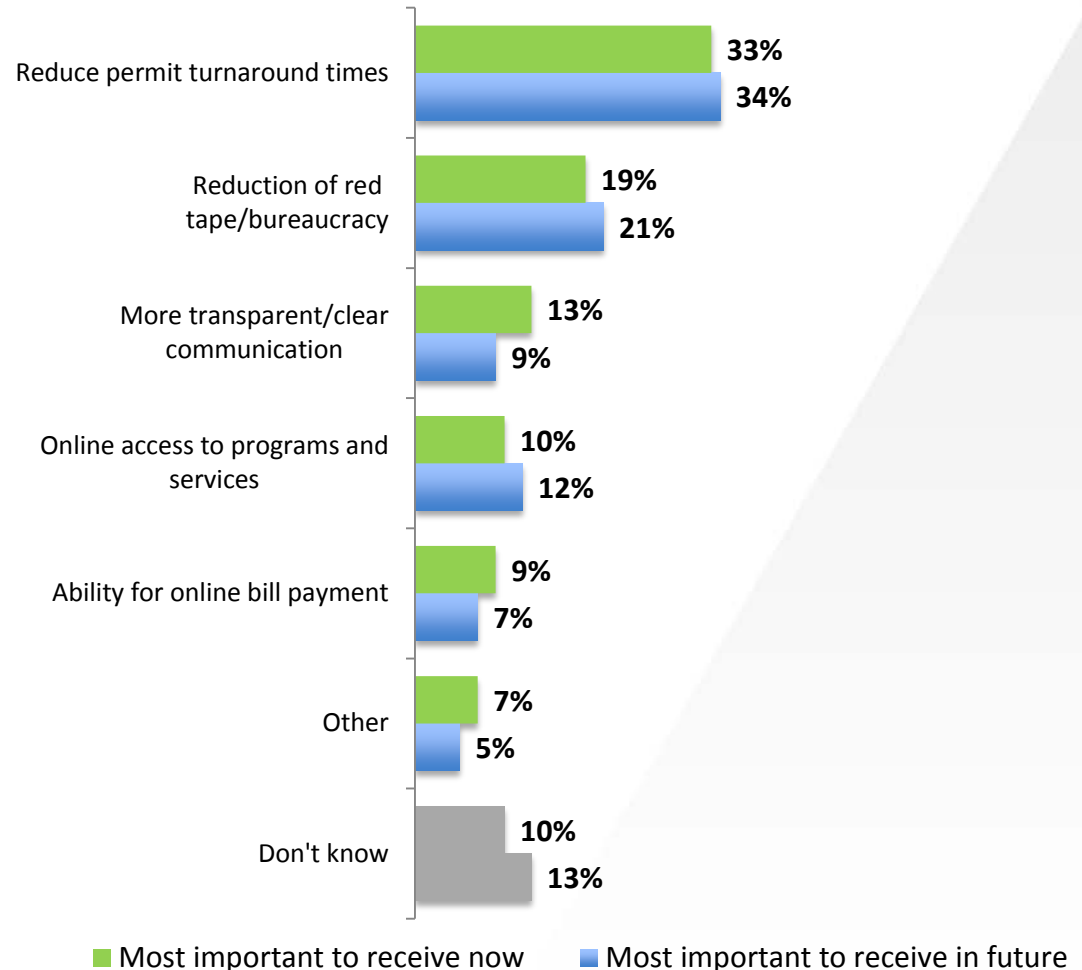
Q15. Thinking about the services you receive currently from the Building Standards Division, what is the most important item you wish to receive now?

Q16. Thinking about the services you receive currently from the Building Standards Division, what is the most important item you wish to receive in the future?

BASE: All respondents (n = 248)

- Respondents most commonly indicate that they want the Building Standards Division to reduce *permit turnaround times* now (33%) and in the future (34%).

Reduce turnaround on permit times was most important by occupation, with the exception of realtors, who did not rate this as most important.





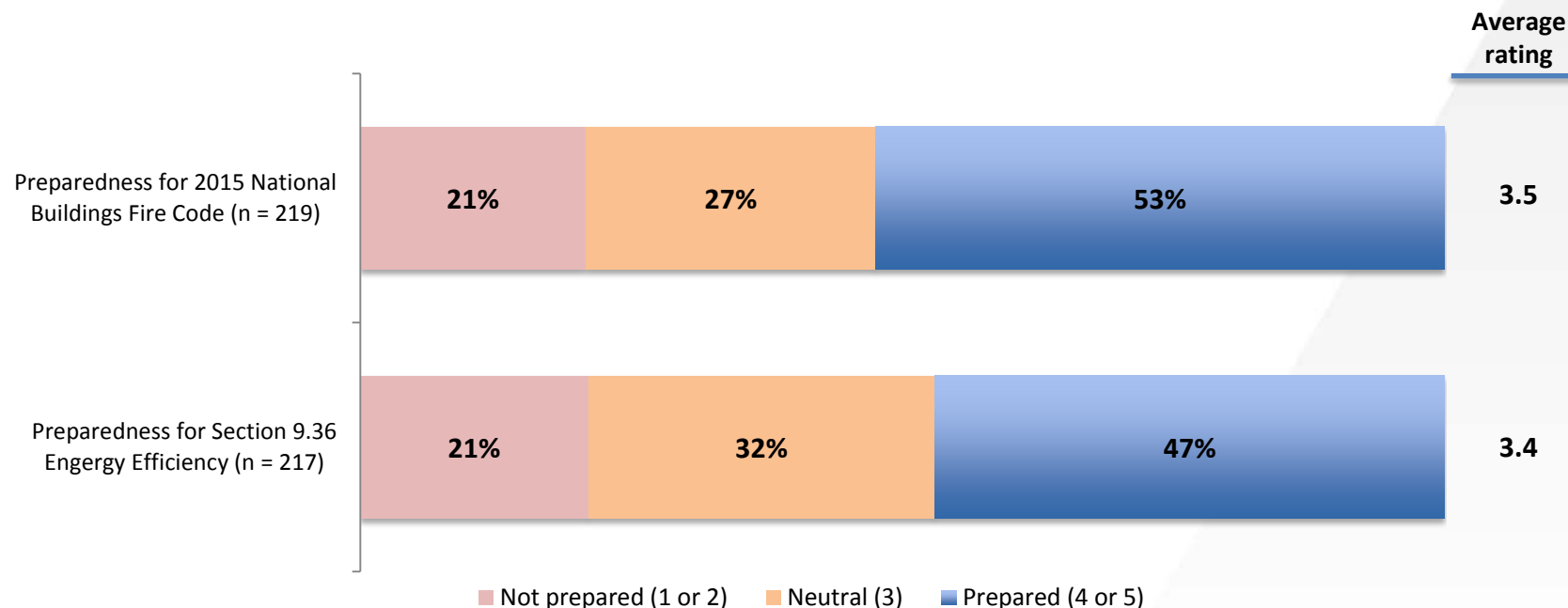
New Building Codes

Preparedness for new building codes

Q18. As announced by the provincial government, the 2015 National Building Code and the 2015 National Fire Code have been adopted and will be enforced in Saskatchewan as of January 1, 2018. How prepared do you feel your company is for this change?

Q20. As announced by the provincial government, Section 9.36. Energy Efficiency from the 2015 National Building Code and the 2015 National Energy Code for Buildings have been adopted and will be in force in Saskatchewan on January 1, 2019. How prepared do you feel your company is for this change?

- Respondents appear prepared for the adoption of the 2015 National Building and Fire Code in January 2018 and Section 9.36 Energy Efficiency in January 2019.



Tools or resources to help prepare for new building codes

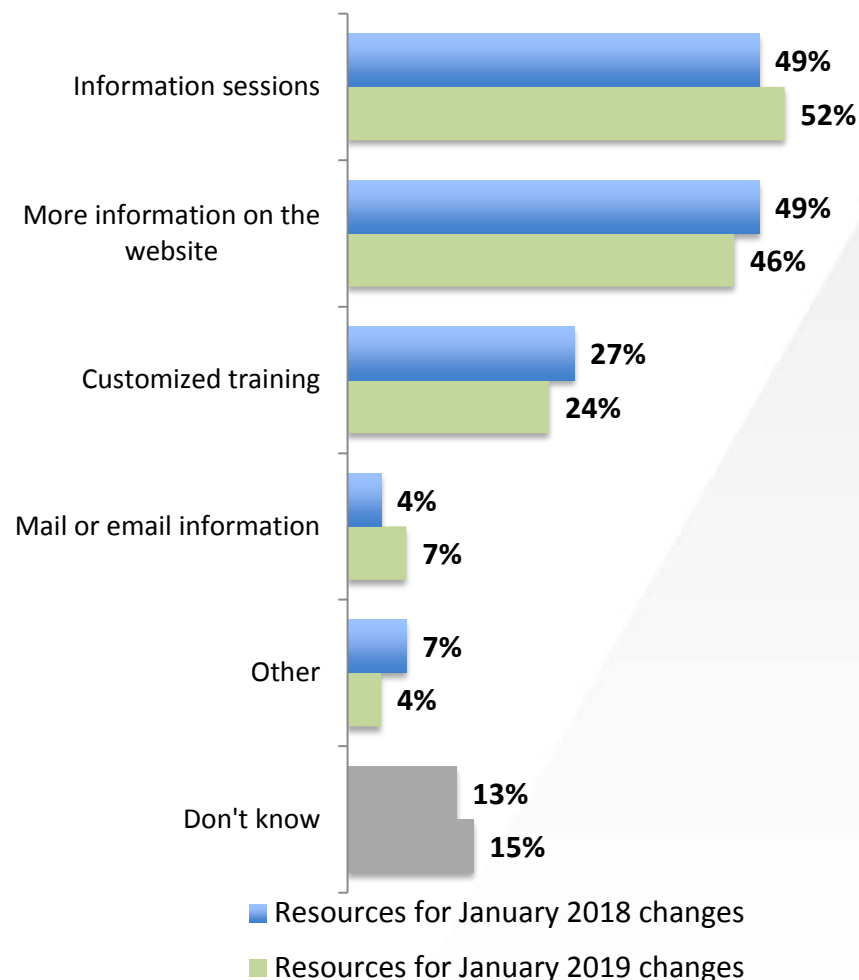
Q19. What tools or resources would better prepare you for the change?

BASE: Residential or commercial clients who rated Q18 1 or 2 out of 5. (n = 45)

Q21. What tools or resources would better prepare you for the change?

BASE: Residential or commercial clients who rated Q20 1 or 2 out of 5. (n = 46)

- For those feeling unprepared for the changes in January 2018 or January 2019, the most common resources selected to help prepare for the changes were *information sessions* and *information on the website*.





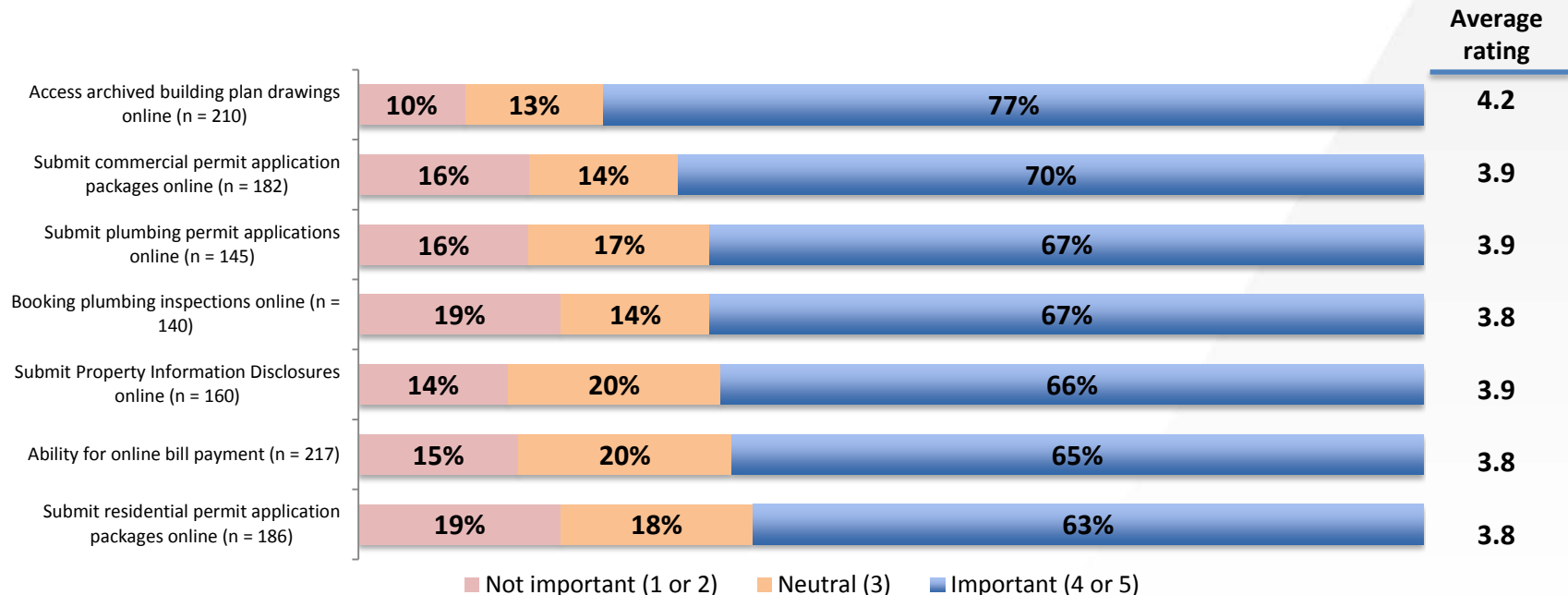
Key Initiatives

Importance of key initiatives

Q22. Below are some key initiatives Building Standards has identified to help move more programs and services online. Please rate how important these are to your business on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all important and 5 is very important.

BASE: All respondents (n = 248)

- Between 63% and 77% of respondents consider the seven key initiatives important.
- The most important key initiative to respondents is the ability to *access archived building plan drawings online* (77%), while the least important is the ability to *submit residential permit application packages online* (63%).



Learning more about Building Standards permit processes

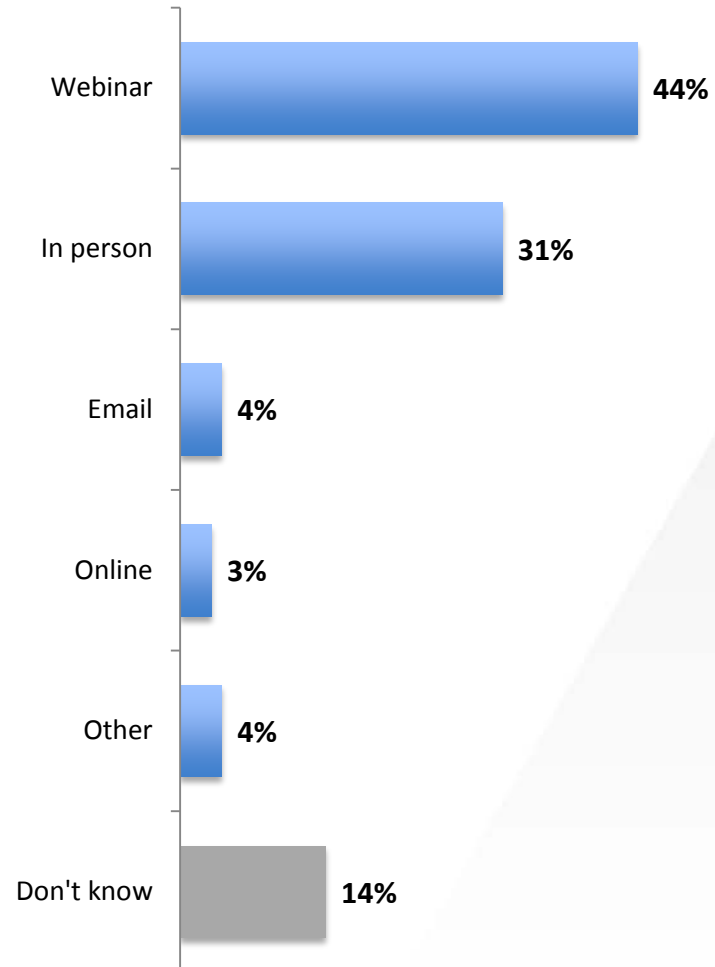
Q23A. In addition to the information on our website, are you interested in learning more about Building Standards permit processes?

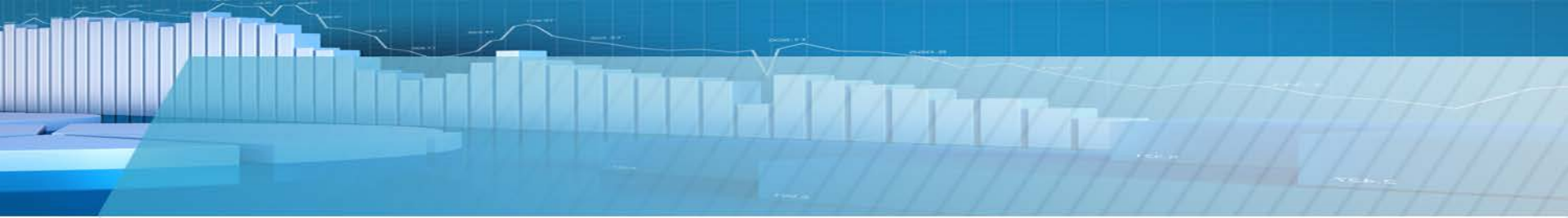
Q23B. What is your most preferred way to learn about the process?

BASE: All respondents (n = 248)

- Almost half of respondents (47%) are interested in learning more about the Building Standards permit processes.
- Of those who are interested, most respondents would prefer to learn about the process through a *webinar* or *in person*.

***Webinar* was the most preferred option among each occupation.**



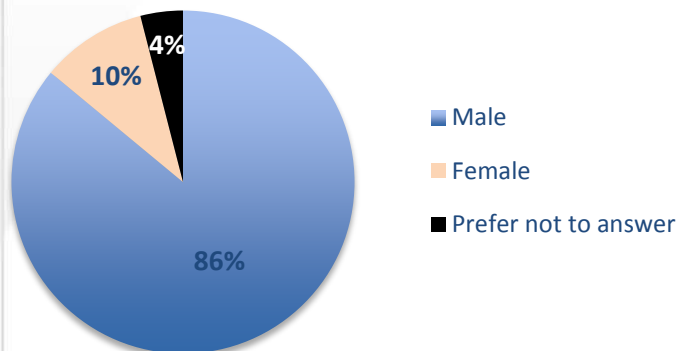


Respondent Profile

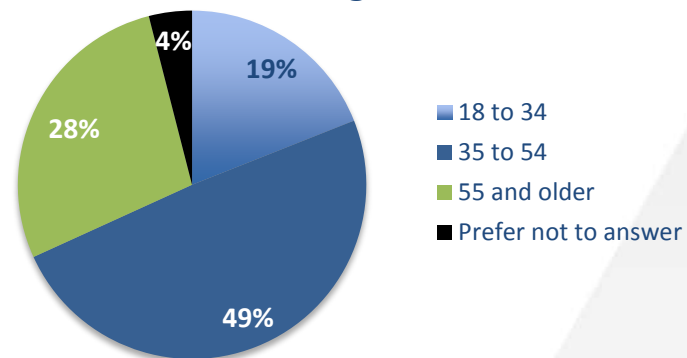
Respondent profile

BASE: All respondents (n = 248)

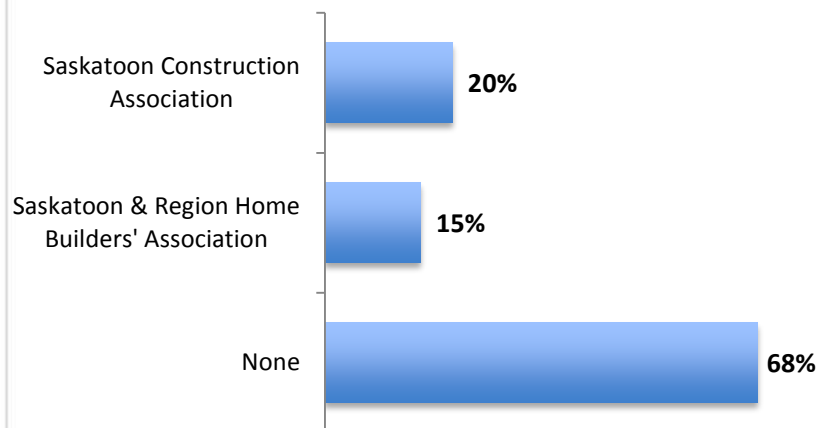
Gender



Age



Membership



Years in operation

