

JACKSON COUNTY North Carolina

Permitting & Code Enforcement

Audit Assessment Report



October 2015



Jackson County

North Carolina

Permitting & Code Enforcement

Audit Assessment Report

Prepared for
Jackson County

Prepared by
Benchmark Planning

October 2015



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This summary highlights the process and methods of evaluation used to perform an audit of Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and Planning Department services. It also summarizes the results of the audit and recommendations for improvement.

INTRODUCTION

In an effort to improve services, Jackson County commissioned the study of the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department operations. The County retained the services of Benchmark Planning to conduct a performance audit of the departments in relation to cross-departmental interaction, overall organizational structure, effectiveness, and regulation enforcement.

PROCESS

As part of this study, the project team reviewed the following specific areas and related topics:

- Organizational structure for the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department;
- Organizational structure and departmental overlap with the Planning Department
- Work flow of permit applications;
- Applicant/contractor experience with the review process;
- Technology and management systems' use and

accessibility;

- Responsibilities of Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and Planning Department;
- Permit and activity reporting system; and
- Staff professional development

In order to conduct this study, the project team engaged in the following activities to compile research:

- Conducted detailed interviews with key staff in the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and Planning Department;
- Reviewed work flow of each application type;
- Reviewed the technological capabilities in the main Sylva office and satellite Cashiers office;
- Interviewed a sampling of contractors that engage the services of the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and Planning Department on a regular basis; and
- Completed a comparison of Jackson County's organization to similarly sized North Carolina Counties and general best management practices.

Executive Summary

As part of the assessment of the County's Permitting and Code Enforcement and Planning Departments, surveys were conducted to discern each Department's performance and the Departments' ability to serve the citizens of Jackson County. Two surveys were conducted: a public survey and a survey of the County Board of Commissioners and Planning Board members.

EVALUATION RESULTS

The evaluation results are based on observations made from the surveys and interviews that were conducted and review of ordinances, workflow, and a sampling of projects.

Generally, the public is satisfied with the level of services being provided by the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department as well as the Planning Department. Board Members perceive higher service levels being provided by the Planning Department as compared to the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department.

The focus of the evaluation was on the following areas:

- Plan Review
- Permitting
- Field Inspections
- Ordinances
- Organizational Structure and Staffing

- Interdepartmental/Jurisdiction Coordination and Communication
- Performance Measures
- Board Training

Each focus area was analyzed based on best management practices, and opportunities for improvement were noted and crafted into recommendations.

The evaluation showed no major problems in the function of the individual departments or in the overall quality of work produced by any staff members. Any perceived deficiencies in these areas have been the results of isolated incidents and do not reflect the high quality of work performed on a regular basis. Any issues, once discovered, have been resolved in a responsible manner. Most of the areas noted for improvement include organizational structure and staffing,

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following actions are recommended to improve upon the already exemplary services provided by the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and Planning Department. Some of the recommendations are discussed in more detail in the "Recommendations" section of this report. Additionally, steps for implementation are outlined in the "Implementation Plan" of this report.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND STAFFING

1. Fill the Planning Director position.
2. Create and maintain a minimum staff of four positions for the Planning Department, and review workload on annual basis to ensure that the staffing level is appropriate.
3. Move most Ordinance related review to Planning Department once fully staffed.
4. Create an Development Services Director (Assistant County Manager) position to oversee a consolidated Development Services Department with a distinct Planning Division and distinct Permitting and Inspections Division.
5. Amend the County organizational chart to reflect the actual chain of command and departmental divisions.
6. Make both the Sylva and Cashiers offices complete "One-Stop Shops".
7. Relocate the Planning Division to be immediately adjacent to the Permitting and Inspections Division.
8. Complete an annual review of Permitting and Inspections Division staffing levels to ensure that enough field inspectors are available to keep up with an increase in construction activity.

TECHNOLOGY

1. Fully implement the use proprietary ROK software.
2. Unlock internet searches on the field inspection tablets.

REGULATIONS

1. Produce a comprehensive Land Development Ordinance that consolidates all 18 development ordinances into one document.
2. Either have the designated department or division carry out administrative and approval functions, or amend the ordinances to designate the preferred approval authority.
3. Further illustrate approval procedures with flow charts within a comprehensive Land Development Ordinance so that all procedures can be viewed in one document.
4. Either amend the Mountain and Hillside Development Ordinance to reflect current administrative calculation methods or follow the calculation method currently shown in the ordinance.

ADMINISTRATION

1. Add a line on the New Residential/New Commercial Application for work by an unlicensed General Contractor or property owner.

Executive Summary

2. Formalize the Plan Review Committee by establishing guidelines for the Committee. Provide regular updates and reports to the County Manager, County Commissioners, and Planning Board about the Committee's activity.
3. Set other jurisdictional meeting dates to work with Planning Department schedule in order to avoid coverage conflicts as much as possible.
4. Provide additional report details including turnaround times, comments/complaints/surveys, updates on training, as well as online reports of activity as a means to convey workload and increase transparency.
5. Review the permitting and inspection fee schedule to ensure that adequate fees are being collected to reach a higher level of cost recoup.
3. Provide joint annual training sessions for all jurisdictional Planning Boards/Committees, Boards of Adjustment, and elected officials.
4. Either amend the Mountain and Hillside Development Ordinance to reflect current administrative calculation methods or follow the calculation method currently shown in the ordinance.

TRAINING

1. Train and certify Permitting and Inspections staff in the Cashiers office to review commercial plans.
2. Continue to encourage and incentivize inspectors to further pursue training and gain more levels through pay raises (sometimes referred to as a Career Development Plan).





INTRODUCTION

In an effort to improve services, Jackson County commissioned the study of the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department operations. The County retained the services of Benchmark Planning to conduct a performance audit of the departments in relation to cross-departmental interaction, overall organizational structure, effectiveness, and regulation enforcement.

This performance audit identifies opportunities for improvement in existing policies and procedures and incorporates industry best practices into the current business operations of Permitting and Code Enforcement. The audit also evaluates organizational structure and analyzes the enforcement of the North Carolina State Building Code and other applicable state and local regulations. As part of this study, the project team reviewed the following specific areas and related topics:

- Organizational structure for the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department;
- Organizational structure and departmental overlap with the Planning Department
- Work flow of permit applications;
- Applicant/contractor experience with the review process;
- Technology and management systems' use and accessibility;
- Responsibilities of Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and Planning Department;

- Permit and activity reporting system; and
- Staff professional development

In order to conduct this study, the project team engaged in the following activities to compile research:

- Conducted detailed interviews with key staff in the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and Planning Department;
- Reviewed work flow of each application type;
- Reviewed the technological capabilities in the main Sylva office and satellite Cashiers office;
- Interviewed a sampling of contractors that engage the services of the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and Planning Department on a regular basis; and
- Completed a comparison of Jackson County's organization to similarly sized North Carolina Counties and general best management practices.



DEPARTMENT PROFILES

This section provides a profile summary of the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and the Planning Department. The profiles include descriptions of the department organization and positions, department responsibilities, recent workloads, and budgets. The profiles also show a comparison of Jackson County to regional and similarly-sized counties in North Carolina.

PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT

DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

The current County organizational chart shows the Code Enforcement Department under the Division of Public Safety which is under the supervision of the County Manager. In reality, the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department is not under a Public Safety Division, it is a stand-alone department and is made up of the following positions:

Director This department head level position directs and supervises all employees and oversees all functions within the department. The director is responsible for overall supervision of day-to-day operations as well as developing and implementing long range goals. This position reports to the County Manager.

Assistant Director This position reports to the director and includes various duties such as assisting code enforcement staff, special projects, inspection duties as assigned, assist with supervision of employees, coordinate in-house training and continuing education for the department.

Cashiers Office Director This position directly supervises all county staff located at the Cashiers Office of Permitting and Code Enforcement and is responsible for daily work assignments of Code Enforcement Officers (both building and land development), and office staff in Cashiers.

Chief Code Enforcement Official (Building) This position acts as the chief plan reviewer and coordinates with the director regarding special projects. This position is the lead inspector for commercial projects. This position also coordinates fire inspections countywide and supervises the fire inspector position. Additionally, the position works with building code enforcement staff countywide as needed.

Department Profiles

Chief Code Enforcement Official (Land Development)

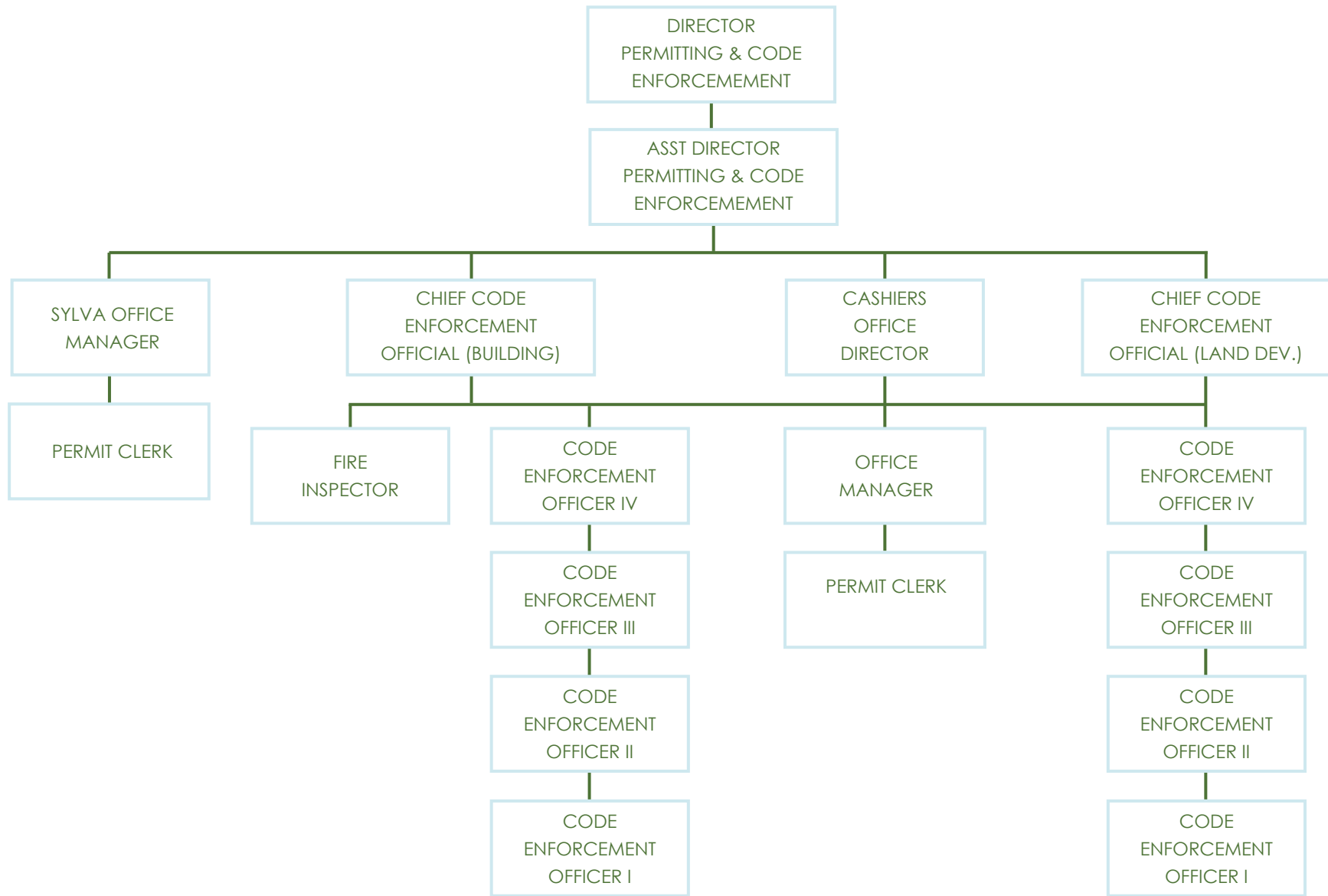
This position is responsible for all training, continuing education, and coordination of all Code Enforcement Officers in the land development division of the department. This includes erosion control, county ordinances, and floodplain enforcement. The position works with and assists in supervising land development code enforcement staff countywide.

Code Enforcement Officer I-IV These positions are responsible for varying levels of code enforcement, based on certification levels. They do not have any direct supervisory responsibilities. Levels II through IV require cross training in all areas to a degree so as to serve the public as permitting consultants in the office on a rotating basis.

Office Manager (Cashiers and Sylva) These positions are responsible for all office related functions in each office and supervision of all permit clerks. The position is responsible for training of all staff on the permitting and inspections software system. The position also serves as support staff to the director and Cashiers office director, respectively.

Permit Clerk These positions serve as the point of contact for the public when beginning the permitting process. Position performs duties as assigned by the office manager.

▼ FIGURE 1 PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION CHART



Department Profiles

DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Permitting and Code Enforcement Department is responsible for the following duties:

- Managing one stop permit centers in the main Sylva office and satellite Cashiers office
- Issuing permits and conducting inspections pursuant to the North Carolina Building Code, Fire Code, and Sedimentation and Erosion Control
- Issuing permits and conducting inspections for Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance
- Issuing Land Development Compliance Permits
- Enforcing stormwater management and the Ground Water Recharge Ordinance
- Enforcing Watershed Protection Ordinance
- Enforcing Outdoor Lighting Ordinance
- Enforcing Mountain Ridge Protection Ordinance

- Enforcing the Mountain and Hillside Development Ordinance for Minor Subdivisions
- Serving as the Damage Assessment Team for the County Emergency Management Department
- Providing permitting software support and administration for interdepartmental software
- Completing plat review for all plats except major subdivisions

JURISDICTIONS AND WORKLOAD

The Permitting and Code Enforcement Department provides all building, fire, soil and erosion control inspections for the entire county including the municipalities of Sylva, Dillsboro, Webster, and Forest Hills through interlocal agreements.

▼ TABLE 1 NUMBER OF PERMITS PROCESSED

| TYPE | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 [THROUGH JULY 1] |
|--------------------------------------|------|------|--------------------------|
| New Residential 1 & 2 Family Permits | 154 | 169 | 89 |
| New Residential Multi-Family Permits | 13 | 2 | 0 |
| New Commercial Permits | 29 | 25 | 14 |
| Land Development Permits | 690 | 796 | 571 |
| Erosion Control Permits | 32 | 14 | 10 |
| Other Permits | 1043 | 1120 | 755 |
| TOTAL | 1961 | 2126 | 1439 |

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

The current County organizational chart shows Economic and Physical Development Division under the supervision of the County Manager. This division includes the Planning Department, Cooperative Extension, Conservation Department, Community Development, and Economic Development Department.

The Jackson County Planning Department is currently made up of two staff members: Code Compliance Officer and Administrative Assistant. The Planning Director position is currently vacant. Final interviews are taking place in order to fill this position. The following are descriptions of the three positions of the Planning Department:

Planning Director Position reports to County Manager. Responsibilities include managing the activities of current and long range County planning efforts and overseeing the enforcement of land development ordinances. This position also participates, serves, coordinates and directs advisory boards, commissions, and committees. The Planning Director also prepares, and manages department budget and supervises departmental staff.

Code Compliance Officer Position reports to Planning

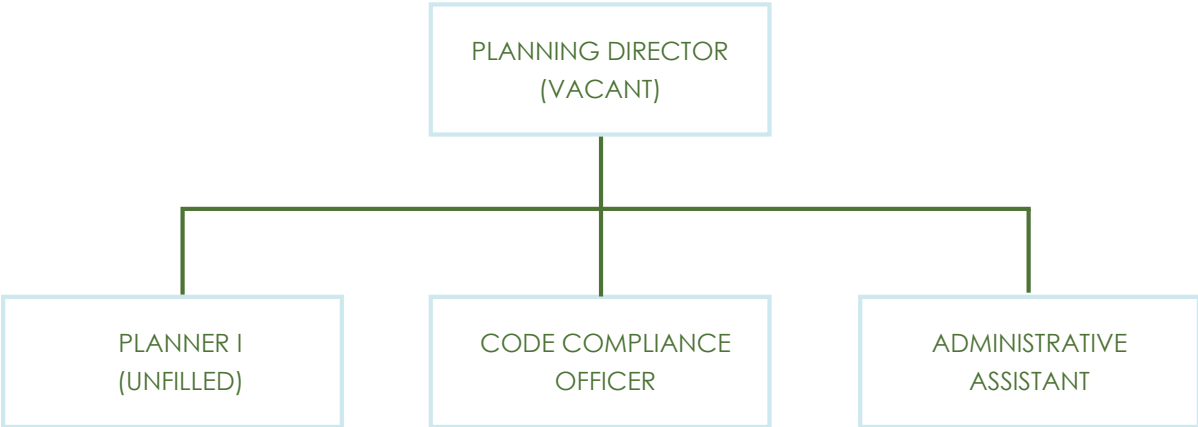
Director. Responsibilities include assisting with the approval of land development compliance applications, conducting field visits and map and plan review to support engineering analysis, reviewing grading plans for compliance, addressing and resolving complaints and concerns, issuing notice of violation for compliance and stop work orders, ensuring compliance with all applicable rules and regulations, and developing reports and other documentation.

Planning Administrative Assistant Position reports to Planning Director. This position provides administrative support to the Planning Department and the boards, councils, and committees that it serves. This position is responsible for greeting the public, maintaining departmental records, preparing and maintaining minutes for meetings, processing inquiries, and providing information regarding ordinances.

Planner I This position was authorized in 2015 but has never been advertised to be filled. Position reports to Planning Director. The duties of this position are to assist with ordinance updates and revisions, GIS mapping, assisting in preparation of the County's comprehensive plan update and transportation plan, assisting with boards, commissions and committees, assisting with review of site plans and plats, assisting with maintenance of the Planning Department website, identifying opportunities for grants, assisting with planning and zoning administration in designated areas.

Department Profiles

▼ FIGURE 2 PLANNING DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION CHART



DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The roles and responsibilities of the Planning Department include but are not limited to:

- Administration and enforcement of the US 441 Corridor Development and Cashiers Area Land Development Ordinances
- Administration and enforcement of the Mountain and Hillside Development Ordinance and Mountain Ridge Protection Ordinance (according to the ordinances, but not in practice)
- Administration and enforcement of the Subdivision Ordinance
- Administration and enforcement of the Wireless Telecommunications, Industrial Development, and Airport Hazard Ordinances
- Administration and enforcement of the development ordinances for the Towns of Sylva, Webster, Dillsboro, and Village of Forest Hills
- Ordinance and map development
- Ordinance amendments
- Site plan and subdivision plat reviews
- Site inspections
- Support for Boards and Committees of Jackson County and six separate zoning jurisdictions
- Maintenance of Planning Department permitting database

JURISDICTIONS AND WORKLOAD

The following is a summary of the duties and recent work load for the jurisdictions that the Planning Department serves:

Jackson County:

- Administer/Enforcement of the following ordinances: Subdivision, Mountain and Hillside Development, Wireless Communications, Industrial Development
- Attend Planning Board meeting once a month, average 2 hours per meeting.
- Attend Board of County Commissioner meetings, twice a month, average 2 hours per meeting.
- Attend in-house/community meetings which include: Plan Review Team, Comprehensive Transportation Plan Steering Committee, Historic Preservation Commission, Community Development Block Grants

Department Profiles

US 441 Corridor Development Ordinances (unincorporated)

- Administer and enforce zoning regulations.
- Attend Planning Council meetings-average 6 meetings per year, average 2 hours per meeting (2013-2015)
- Plan review
- Site inspections
- Ordinance amendments
- Staff reports for cases

Cashiers Commercial Area Land Development Ordinance (unincorporated)

- Administer/Enforce zoning regulations
- Attend Planning Council meetings-once a month, average 2 hours per meeting (2013-2015)
- Plan review
- Site inspections
- Ordinance amendments
- Staff reports for cases

▼ TABLE 3 US 441 CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT

| YEAR | PERMITS ISSUED | AVERAGE HOURS PER MONTH |
|----------|----------------|-------------------------|
| 2013 | 5 | 6 |
| 2014 | 5 | 8 |
| 2015 YTD | 8 | 8 |

▼ TABLE 4 CASHIERS COMMERCIAL AREA LAND DEVELOPMENT

| YEAR | PERMITS ISSUED | AVERAGE HOURS PER MONTH |
|----------|----------------|-------------------------|
| 2013 | 35 | 10 |
| 2014 | 35 | 13 |
| 2015 YTD | 37 | 14 |

Town of Dillsboro (incorporated)

- Interlocal agreement for \$1,600 annually
- Administer/Enforce zoning regulations
- Attend Board of Aldermen meetings and Planning Board meeting, as needed.
- Plan review
- Site inspections
- Ordinance amendments
- Staff reports for cases

Town of Sylva (incorporated)

- Interlocal agreement for \$20,000 annually
- Administer/Enforce zoning regulations
- Attend Board of Aldermen meetings and Planning Board meeting, as needed.
- Plan review
- Site inspections
- Ordinance amendments
- Staff reports for cases

▼ TABLE 5 TOWN OF DILLSBORO

| YEAR | PERMITS ISSUED | AVERAGE HOURS PER MONTH |
|----------|----------------|-------------------------|
| 2013 | 14 | 7 |
| 2014 | 11 | 6 |
| 2015 YTD | 13 | 6 |

▼ TABLE 6 TOWN OF SYLVA

| YEAR | PERMITS ISSUED | AVERAGE HOURS PER MONTH |
|----------|----------------|-------------------------|
| 2013 | 104 | 52 |
| 2014 | 98 | 52 |
| 2015 YTD | 92 | 60 |

Department Profiles

Town of Webster (incorporated)

- Interlocal agreement for the amount of administrative fees collected
- Administer/Enforce zoning regulations
- Attend Board of Aldermen meetings and Planning Board meeting, as needed.
- Plan review
- Site inspections
- Ordinance amendments
- Staff reports for cases

Village of Forest Hills (incorporated)

- Interlocal agreement for the amount of administrative fees collected
- Administer/Enforce zoning regulations
- Attend Board of Aldermen meetings and Planning Board meeting, as needed.
- Plan review
- Site inspections
- Ordinance amendments
- Staff reports for cases

▼ TABLE 7 TOWN OF WEBSTER JURISDICTION

| YEAR | PERMITS ISSUED | AVERAGE HOURS PER MONTH |
|----------|----------------|-------------------------|
| 2013 | 3 | 2 |
| 2014 | 3 | 3 |
| 2015 YTD | 5 | 3 |

▼ TABLE 8 TOWN OF FOREST HILLS

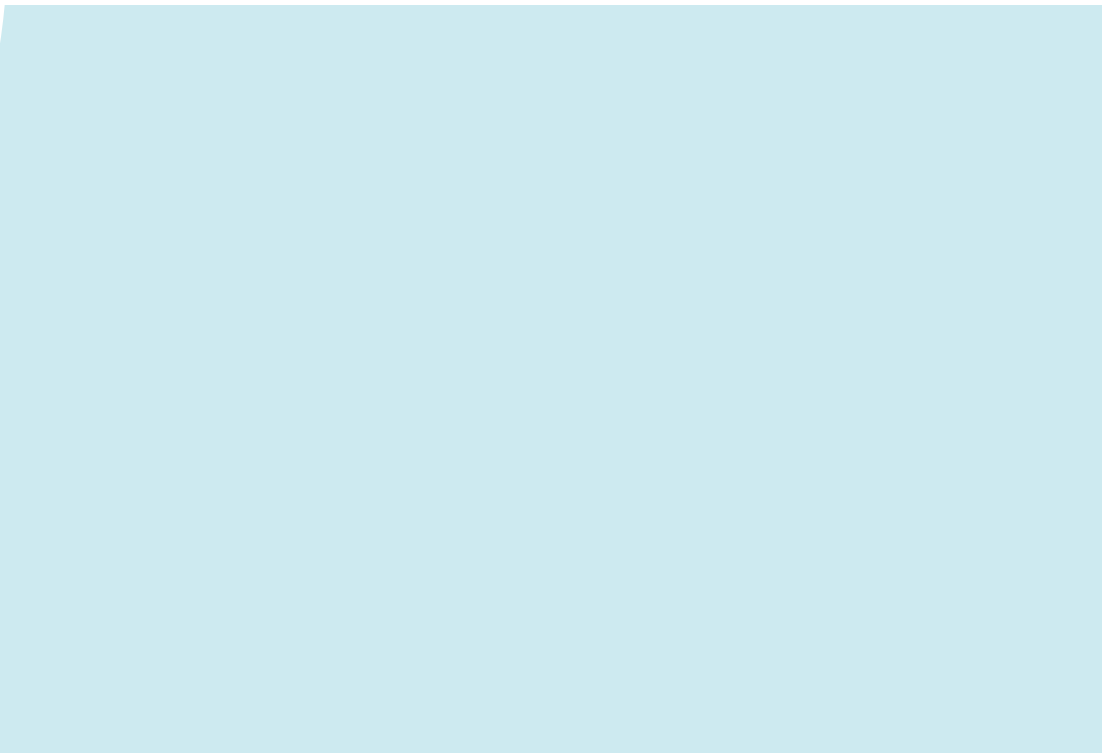
| YEAR | PERMITS ISSUED | AVERAGE HOURS PER MONTH |
|----------|----------------|-------------------------|
| 2013 | 2 | <1 |
| 2014 | 2 | <1 |
| 2015 YTD | 1 | <1 |

COUNTY COMPARISON

The project team reviewed surrounding and similarly sized counties to compare the budgets and staffing levels of permitting/inspections and planning departments. Jackson County is unique in its jurisdictional provision of services and high level of construction activity and inspections for its size and location. Of note is the low rate of cost recoup for inspections services compared to other counties.

▼ TABLE 9 COUNTY COMPARISON

| | JACKSON | MACON | HAYWOOD | SWAIN | CHEROKEE | MCDOWELL | RICHMOND | PERSON |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| COUNTY STATISTICS | | | | | | | | |
| Population | 41,032 | 34,432 | 59,913 | 14,829 | 27,360 | 45,320 | 45,543 | 39,268 |
| Land Area (square miles) | 490.76 | 515.56 | 553.69 | 528.00 | 455.43 | 440.61 | 473.82 | 392.32 |
| Density (people per sq. mi.) | 83.61 | 66.79 | 108.21 | 28.09 | 60.08 | 102.86 | 96.12 | 100.09 |
| Total FY 2015 Budget | \$55,141,090 | \$45,721,122 | \$69,068,359 | \$13,746,460 | \$35,313,605 | \$38,465,894 | \$50,037,628 | \$53,651,801 |
| BUILDING INSPECTIONS | | | | | | | | |
| # of inspectors | 8 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Total # of employees | 18 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 6 |
| FY2015 Department Budget | \$1,226,703 | \$501,164 | \$436,502 | \$117,155 | \$253,613 | \$313,018 | \$227,106 | \$405,703.00 |
| % of Overall Budget | 2.22% | 1.10% | 0.63% | 0.85% | 0.72% | 0.81% | 0.45% | 0.76% |
| FY2015 Department Revenue | \$448,750 | \$377,754 | \$347,500 | \$70,000 | \$205,974 | \$117,500 | \$115,000 | \$195,100 |
| Cost Recoup % | 36.58% | 75.38% | 79.61% | 59.75% | 81.22% | 37.54% | 50.64% | 48.09% |
| Total inspections | 12,716 | 5,556 | 6,118 | 2,871 | 3,720 | 5,000 | N/A | 6,630 |
| # of New Res. Permits | 169 | 98 | 107 | 39 | 93 | 104 | N/A | 64 |
| PLANNING | | | | | | | | |
| Total # of employees | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Planning Jurisdictions | 7 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| FY2015 Department Budget | \$203,000.00 | N/A | \$184,632.00 | n/a | n/a | \$11,520.00 | \$235,446.00 | \$185,094.00 |
| % of Overall Budget | 0.37% | N/A | 0.27% | n/a | n/a | 0.03% | 0.47% | 0.34% |
| Department Revenue | \$58,750.00 | N/A | \$6,000.00 | n/a | n/a | 0 | \$3,900.00 | \$31,000.00 |
| Cost Recoup % | 28.94% | N/A | 3.25% | n/a | n/a | 0.00% | 1.66% | 16.75% |



SURVEY SUMMARY

As part of the assessment of the County's Permitting and Code Enforcement and Planning Departments, surveys were conducted to discern each Departments' performance and the Departments' ability to serve the citizens of Jackson County. Assessments are strongest when consideration is taken from many perspectives. Two surveys were conducted: a public survey and a survey of the County Board of Commissioners and Planning Board members.

PUBLIC SURVEY

Citizens were given the ability to provide feedback by participating in an online survey. Sixty-six (66) people took the survey over the course of a month between August and September. The 19-question survey included open-ended questions, level of satisfaction questions, and assorted multiple choice questions. Participants were able to convey their perception of service levels based on their experience(s) with each Department.

Generally, the public is satisfied with the level of services being provided by the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department as well as the Planning Department, and express that most strongly for the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department.

BOARD MEMBER SURVEY

Similar to the Public Survey, Board of Commissioners members and Planning Board Members were given the opportunity to provide feedback by participating in an online survey. Sixteen (16) Board Members participated during the month of August. The survey included 31 questions including open-ended questions, service rating questions, opinion-poll questions, and various types of other multiple choice questions.

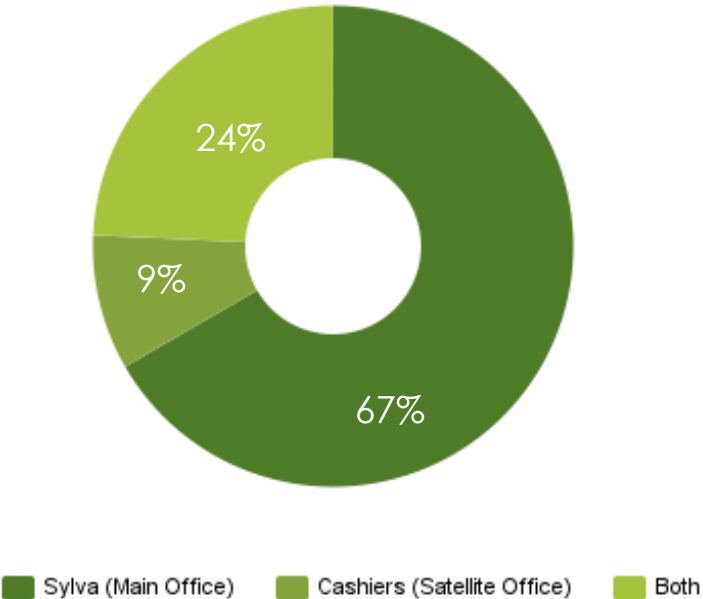
Board Members perceive higher service levels being provided by the Planning Department as compared to the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department which may be a result of their experience or lack of experience with that department.

Public Survey

QUESTION 1

Which Permitting & Code Enforcement office do you normally work with?

FIGURE 3 OFFICE LOCATION

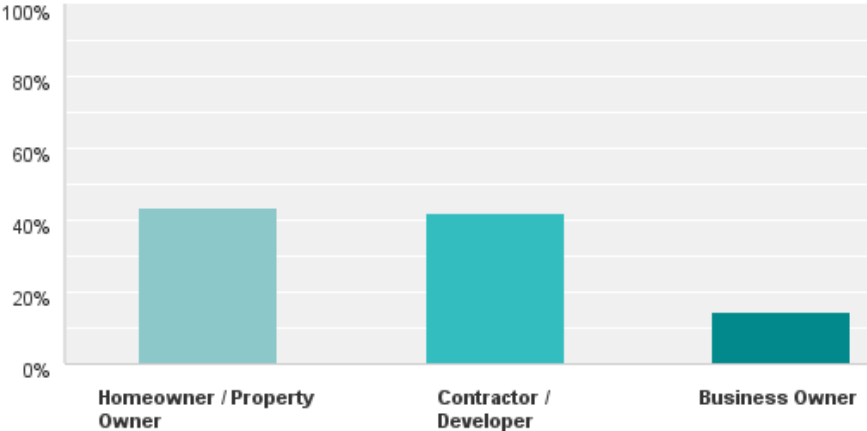


| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|-----------------------------|------------|--------|
| | Percentage | Number |
| Sylva (Main Office) | 67% | 44 |
| Cashiers (Satellite Office) | 9% | 6 |
| Both | 24% | 16 |

QUESTION 2

Your contact with the department was as a?

FIGURE 4 SURVEY PARTICIPANT'S ROLE

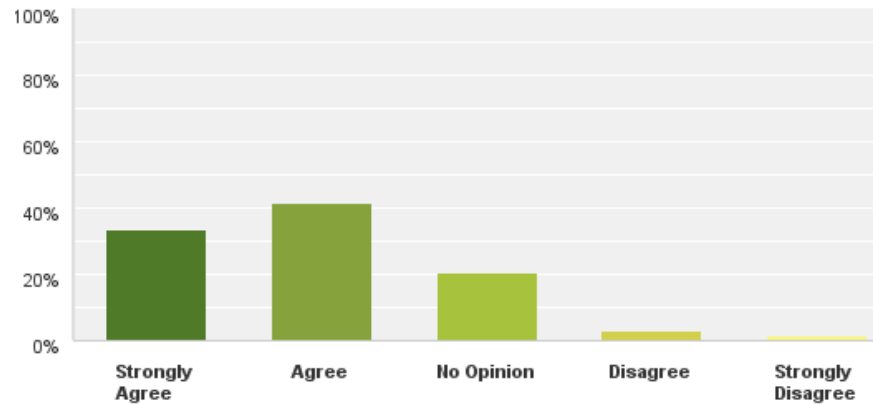


| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|----------------------------|------------|--------|
| | Percentage | Number |
| Homeowner / Property Owner | 44% | 24 |
| Contractor / Developer | 42% | 23 |
| Business Owner | 15% | 8 |

QUESTION 3

The informational pamphlets available from Permitting and Code Enforcement are helpful.

FIGURE 5 INFORMATIONAL PAMPHLETS

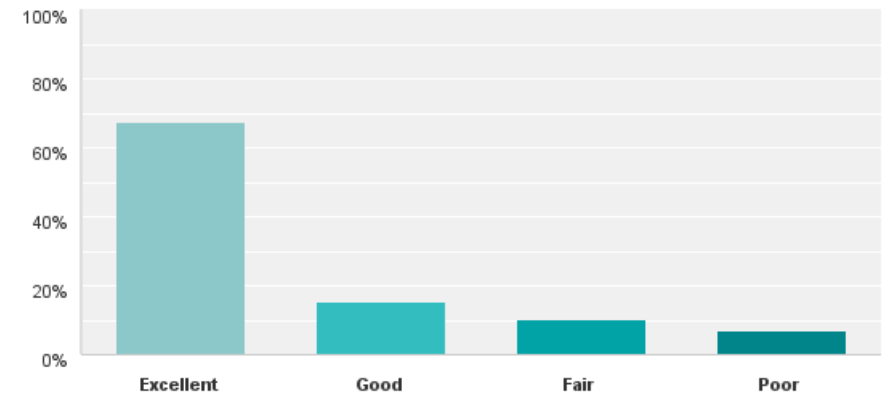


| Strongly Agree | Agree | No Opinion | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| 33% | 41% | 21% | 3% | 2% |
| 21 | 26 | 13 | 2 | 1 |

QUESTION 4

How would you rate the overall quality of the service you received?

FIGURE 6 SERVICE QUALITY RATING

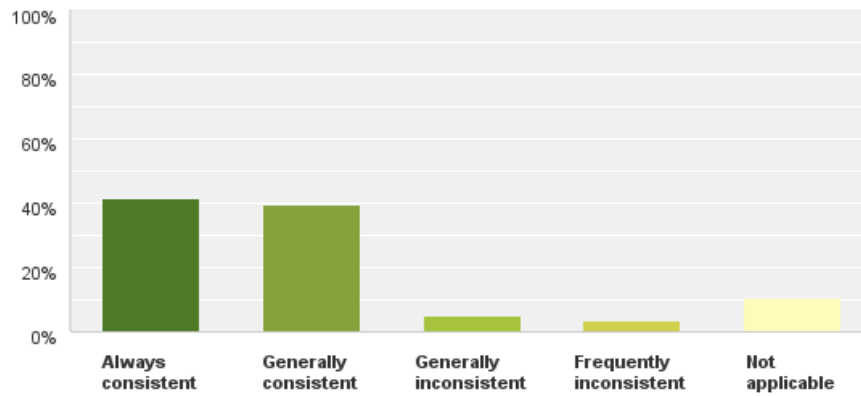


| Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
|-----------|------|------|------|
| 67% | 16% | 10% | 7% |
| 39 | 9 | 6 | 4 |

QUESTION 5

If more than one inspector inspected your project, were their decisions and interpretations:

FIGURE 7 INSPECTOR DECISIONS

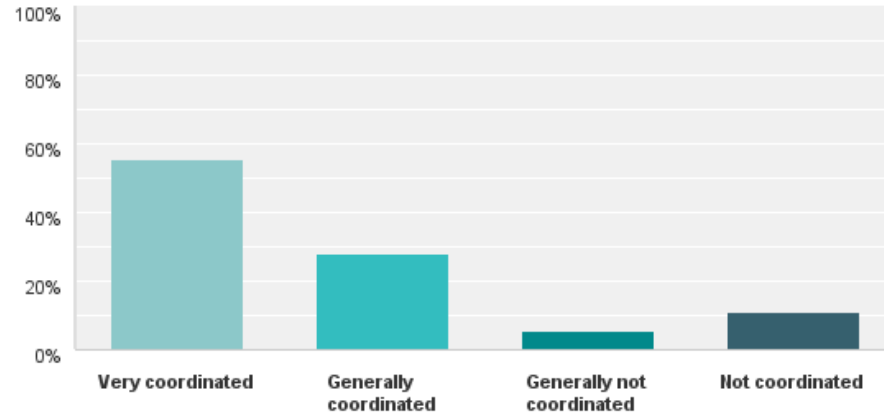


| Always Consistent | Generally Consistent | Generally Inconsistent | Frequently Inconsistent | Not Applicable |
|-------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| 41% | 40% | 5% | 3% | 10% |
| 24 | 23 | 3 | 2 | 6 |

QUESTION 6

If your project required Plan Review, how coordinated was this process with the construction inspection process?

FIGURE 8 CUSTOMER'S ROLE

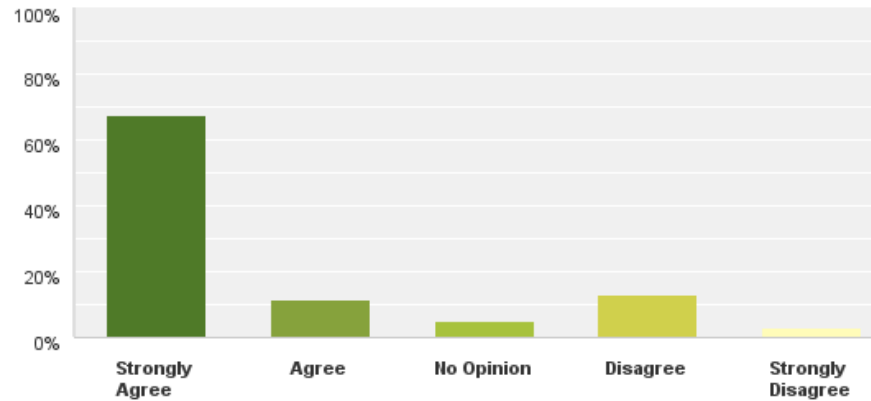


| Very Coordinated | Generally Coordinated | Generally Not Coordinated | Not Coordinated |
|------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 56% | 28% | 6% | 11% |
| 30 | 15 | 3 | 6 |

QUESTION 7

I have generally found the Jackson County Permitting and Code Enforcement Department to be responsive and helpful.

FIGURE 9 PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT

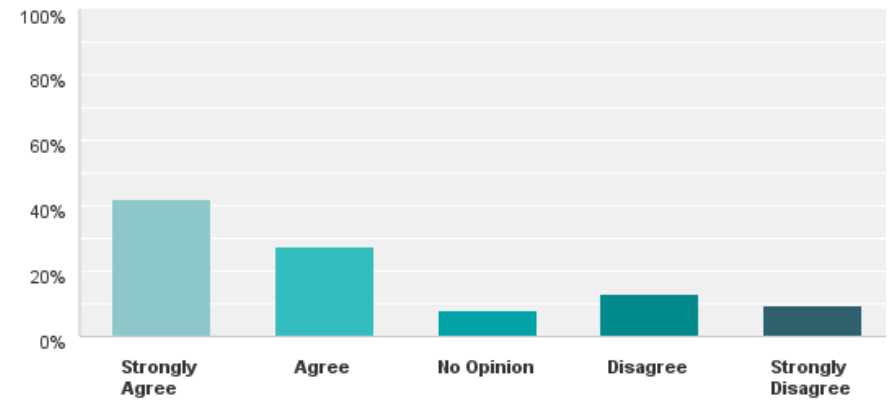


| Strongly Agree | Agree | No Opinion | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| 68% | 11% | 5% | 13% | 3% |
| 42 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 2 |

QUESTION 8

I have generally found the Jackson County Planning Department to be responsive and helpful.

FIGURE 10 PLANNING DEPARTMENT

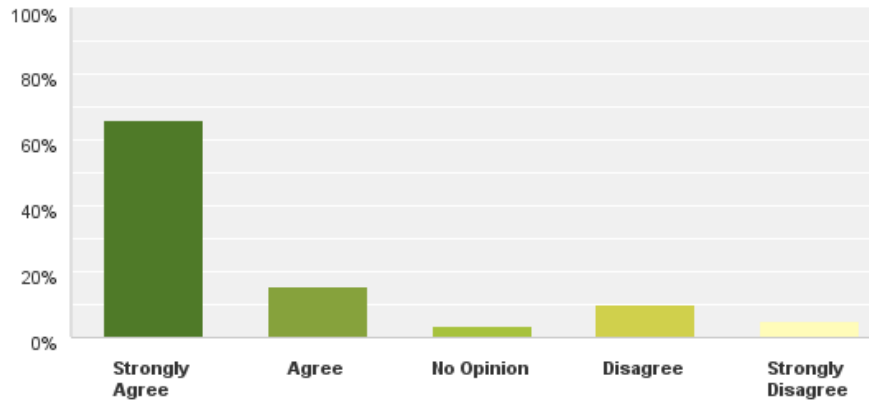


| Strongly Agree | Agree | No Opinion | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| 42% | 27% | 8% | 13% | 10% |
| 26 | 17 | 5 | 8 | 6 |

QUESTION 9

Any problems I have had have been adequately addressed in a consistent and professional manner by Permitting and Code Enforcement Department Staff.

FIGURE 11 PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT STAFF CONSISTENT & PROFESSIONAL

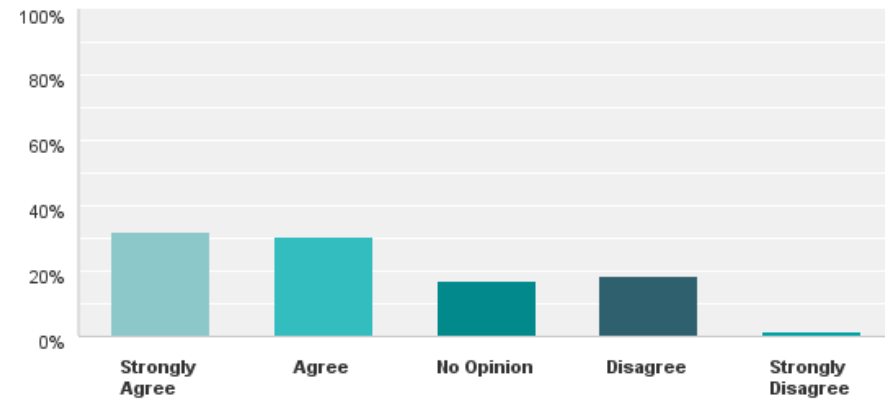


| Strongly Agree | Agree | No Opinion | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| 66% | 15% | 3% | 10% | 5% |
| 39 | 9 | 2 | 6 | 3 |

QUESTION 10

Any problems I have had have been adequately addressed in a consistent and professional manner by Planning Department Staff.

FIGURE 12 PLANNING STAFF CONSISTENT & PROFESSIONAL

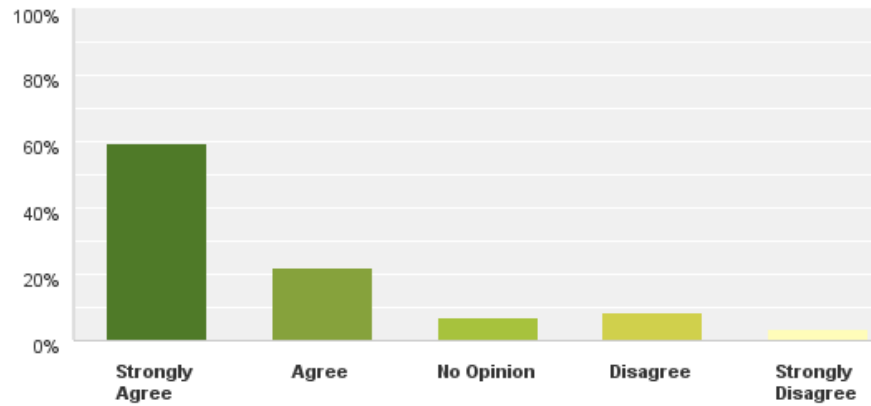


| Strongly Agree | Agree | No Opinion | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| 32% | 31% | 17% | 19% | 2% |
| 19 | 18 | 10 | 11 | 1 |

QUESTION 11

Permitting and Code Enforcement Department staff provided courteous and timely service.

FIGURE 13 PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT STAFF COURTEOUS & TIMELY

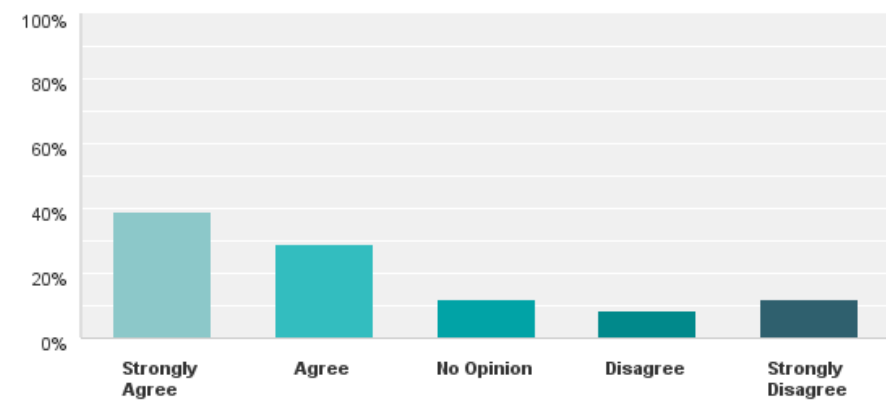


| Strongly Agree | Agree | No Opinion | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| 59% | 22% | 7% | 8% | 3% |
| 35 | 13 | 4 | 5 | 2 |

QUESTION 12

Planning Department staff provided courteous and timely service.

FIGURE 14 PLANNING STAFF COURTEOUS & TIMELY

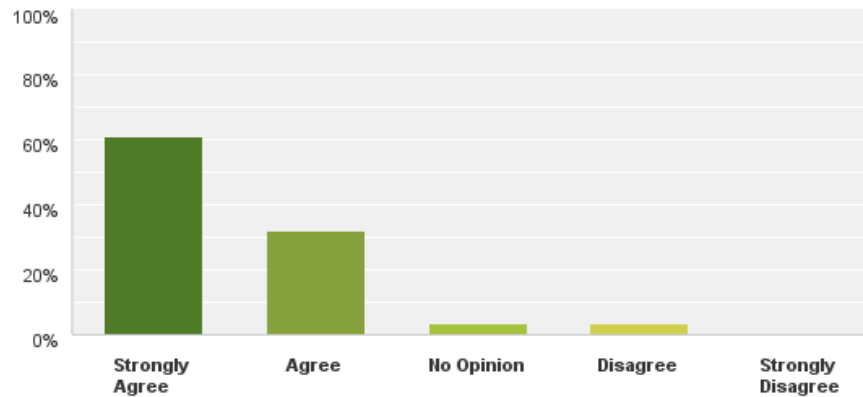


| Strongly Agree | Agree | No Opinion | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| 39% | 29% | 12% | 8% | 12% |
| 23 | 17 | 7 | 5 | 7 |

QUESTION 13

The functions carried out by the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department are critical to ensuring the safety of our community and the well-being of the residents of Jackson County.

FIGURE 15 IMPORTANCE OF PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT



| Strongly Agree | Agree | No Opinion | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| 61% | 32% | 3% | 3% | 0% |
| 36 | 19 | 2 | 2 | 0 |

QUESTION 14

My most recent contact with Code Enforcement was due to:

FIGURE 16 CUSTOMER'S ROLE

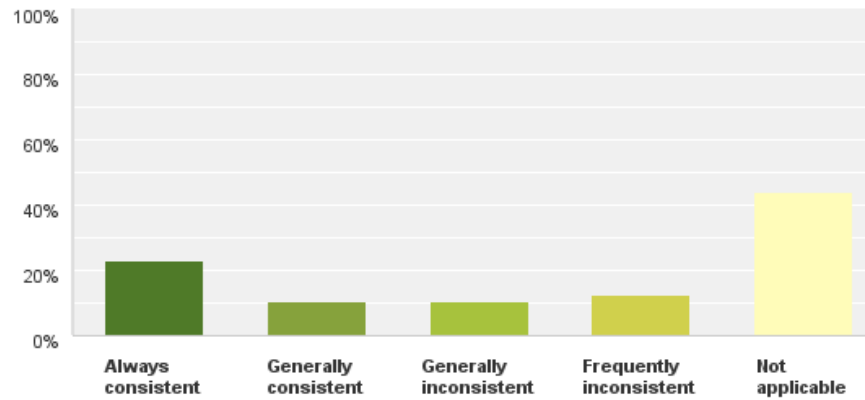


| Licensing / Permitting Requirements | A Code Complaint | A Code Violation | No Recent Contact |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 78% | 2% | 9% | 11% |
| 42 | 1 | 5 | 6 |

QUESTION 15

If you have had experience with the County's steep slope requirements of the Mountain and Hillside Development Ordinance, what has your experience been with how these regulations have been interpreted and enforced?

FIGURE 17 STEEP SLOPE REGULATION EXPERIENCE

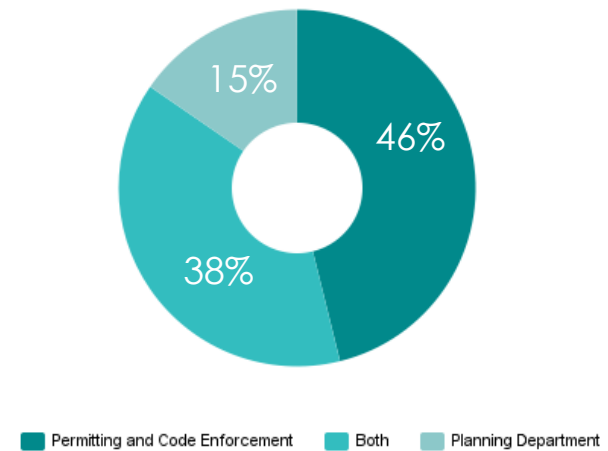


| Always Consistent | Generally Consistent | Generally Inconsistent | Frequently Inconsistent | Not Applicable |
|-------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| 23% | 11% | 11% | 12% | 44% |
| 13 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 25 |

QUESTION 16

Which department did you deal directly with regarding the steep slope requirements of the Mountain and Hillside Development Ordinance?

FIGURE 18 DEPARTMENT FOR STEEP SLOPE REGULATIONS

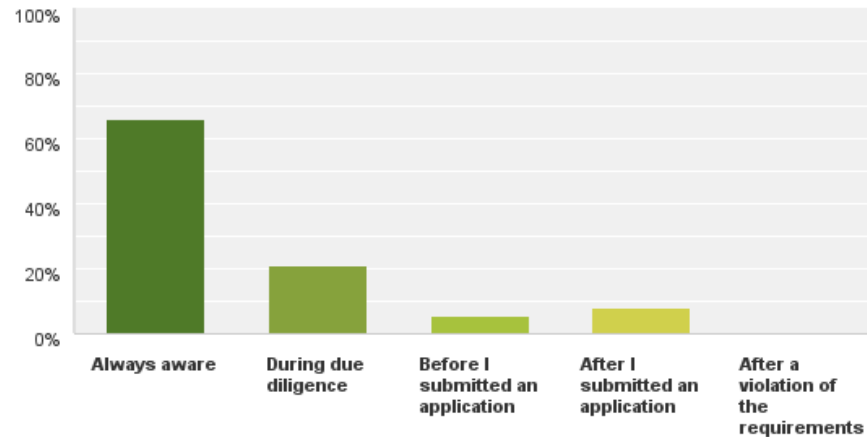


| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|-------------------------------|------------|--------|
| | Percentage | Number |
| Permitting & Code Enforcement | 46% | 18 |
| Both | 38% | 15 |
| Planning Department | 15% | 6 |

QUESTION 17

When did you first become aware of the steep slope requirements?

FIGURE 19 STEEP SLOPE REQUIREMENT AWARENESS



| Always Aware | During Due Diligence | Before I submitted an application | After I submitted an application | After a violation of the requirements |
|--------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 66% | 21% | 5% | 8% | 0% |
| 25 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 0 |

QUESTION 18

If your project required coordination between Permitting and Code Enforcement and another department, such as the Health Department, how well do you feel that the departments worked with you and each other to review and inspect your project? Which specific departments were involved?

FIGURE 20 INTER-DEPARTMENT COORDINATION

37 RESPONSES
26 HEALTH DEPARTMENT
4 PLANNING DEPARTMENT

| Great | Good | Acceptable | Less than Acceptable | Not Acceptable |
|-------|------|------------|----------------------|----------------|
| 21% | 38% | 14% | 0% | 38% |
| 6 | 8 | 4 | 0 | 11 |

| Type of Comments / Responses | |
|---|---|
| Poor response time by Health Department | 6 |
| Poor service by Health Department | 4 |
| Very coordinated | 1 |
| Computer systems not working | 1 |
| Unprofessional service by Health Department | 1 |
| Professional | 1 |
| Too many trips between departments offices | 2 |
| More streamlined processes | 1 |
| Wonderful customer service by Permitting Department | 1 |
| Lacking subject matter expertise in Permitting Department | 1 |

QUESTION 19

Please use the following space for any further comments or suggestions. Please offer at least one idea for improving these services.

FIGURE 21 IMPROVING SERVICE IDEAS

44 RESPONSES

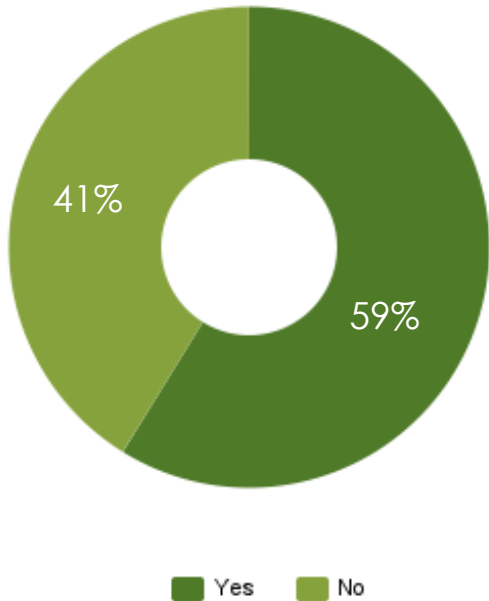


Board Member Survey

QUESTION 1

Have you dealt directly with the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department over the last 12 months?

FIGURE 22 PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT

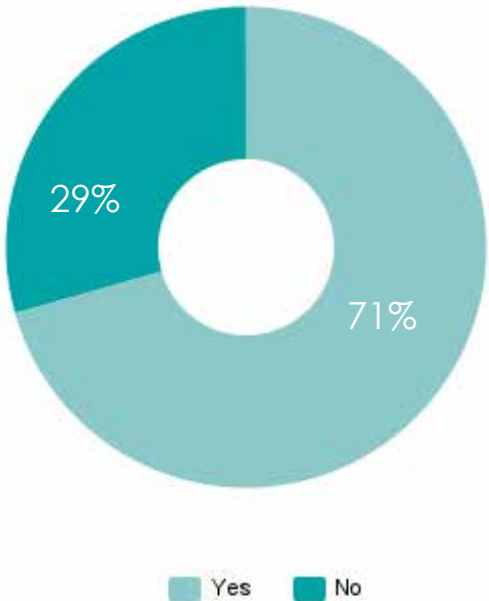


| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|----------------|------------|--------|
| | Percentage | Number |
| Yes | 59% | 10 |
| No | 41% | 7 |

QUESTION 2

Have you dealt directly with the Planning Department over the last 12 months?

FIGURE 23 PLANNING DEPARTMENT



| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|----------------|------------|--------|
| | Percentage | Number |
| Yes | 71% | 12 |
| No | 29% | 5 |

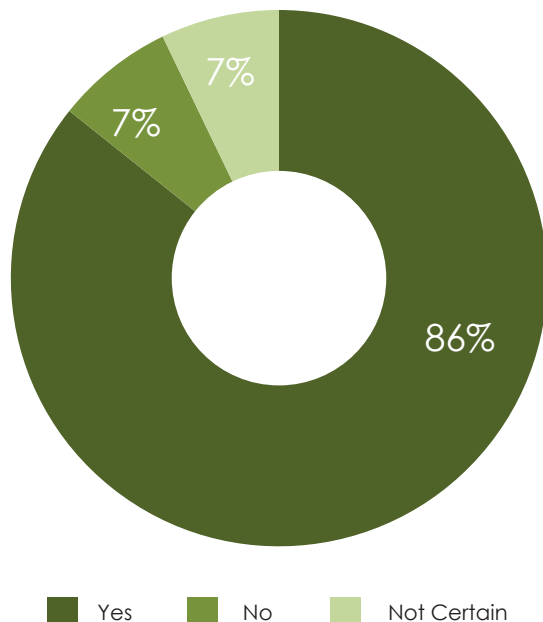
QUESTION 3

MISSION OF THE JACKSON COUNTY PERMITTING AND CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT

According to Jackson County's website, the Department exists to “administer and enforce all State building and fire codes, the flood damage prevention ordinance, sediment control ordinance, and other Jackson County Ordinances that regulate new development.” Further, “Jackson County has created a Plan Review Process to assist Developers, Design Professionals, Contractors and Property Owners who are seeking approval of site development applications for commercial, industrial, multi-family projects or projects having to meet the criteria established in the Jackson County Subdivision Ordinance. This review process includes most proposed projects within the County and in zoned jurisdictions.

Are the duties and description mentioned in the opening paragraph above (from the department website) an accurate portrayal, in your opinion, of the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department?

FIGURE 24 PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT DUTIES



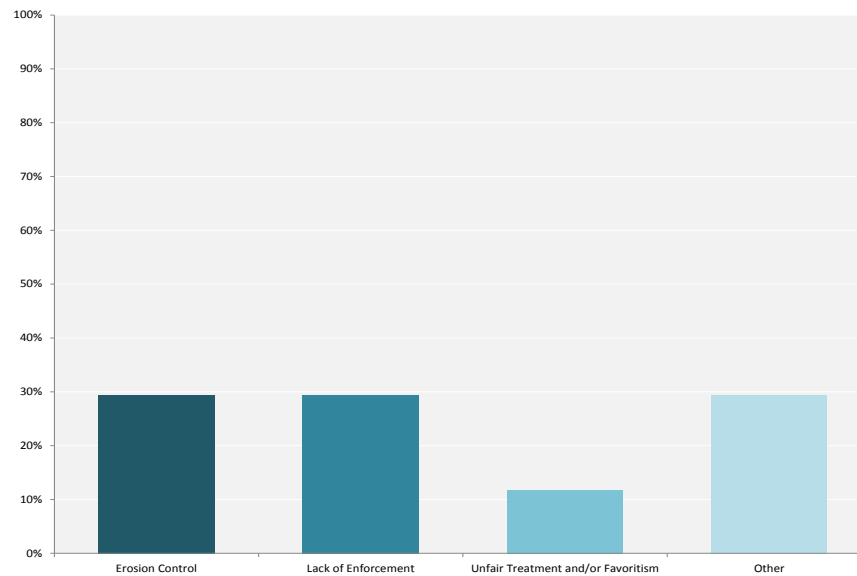
| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|----------------|------------|--------|
| | Percentage | Number |
| Yes | 86% | 12 |
| No | 7% | 1 |
| Not Certain | 7% | 1 |

Board Member Survey

QUESTION 4

What is most common Permitting and Code Enforcement problem/complaint you hear, if any?

FIGURE 25 PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT COMMON COMPLAINTS

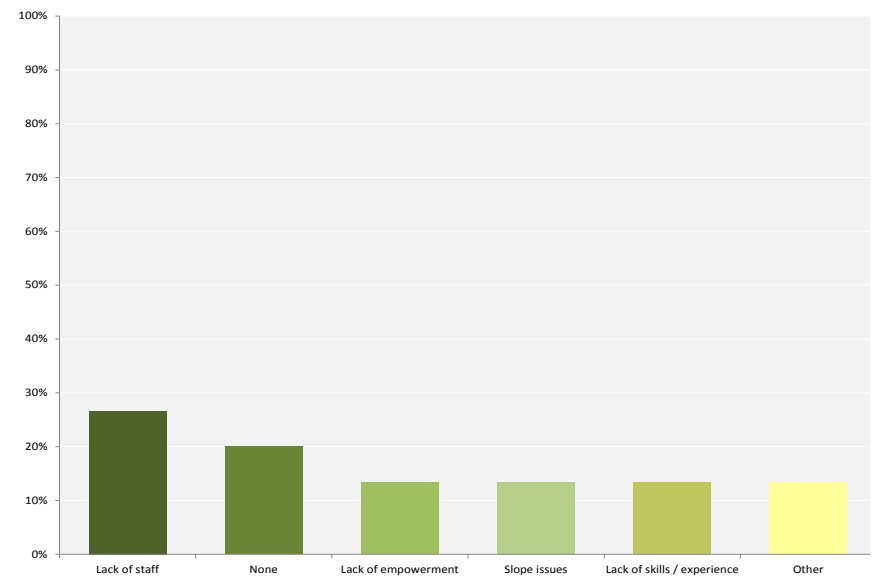


| Erosion Control | Lack of Enforcement | Unfair Treatment and/or Favoritism | Other |
|-----------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|-------|
| 29% | 29% | 12% | 29% |
| 5 | 5 | 2 | 5 |

QUESTION 5

What is most common Planning problem/complaint you hear, if any?

FIGURE 26 PLANNING DEPARTMENT COMPLAINTS

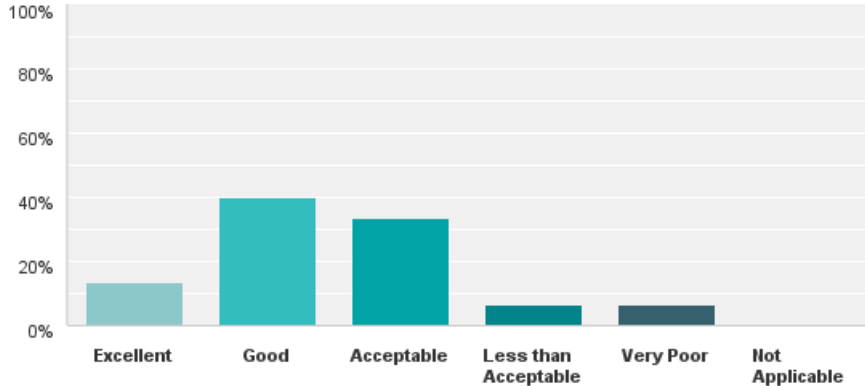


| Lack of Staff | None | Lack of Empowerment | Slope Issues | Lack of skills / experience | Other |
|---------------|------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|-------|
| 27% | 20% | 13% | 13% | 13% | 13% |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |

QUESTION 6

What is your general opinion of the service provided to residents and businesses by the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department?

FIGURE 27 OPINION OF PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT

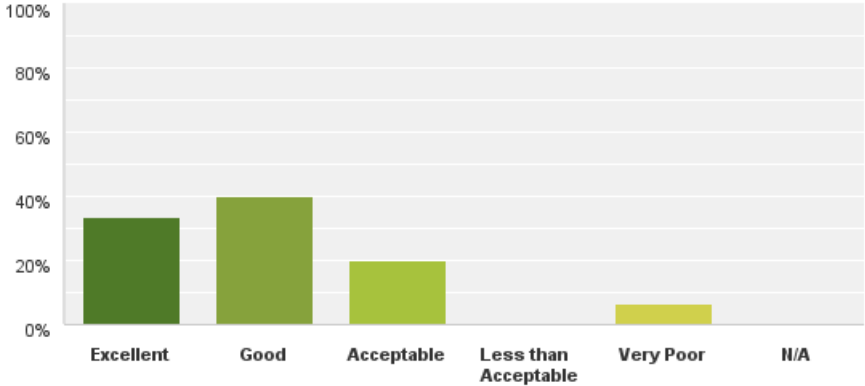


| Excellent | Good | Acceptable | Less Than Acceptable | Very Poor | Not Applicable |
|-----------|------|------------|----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 13% | 40% | 33% | 7% | 7% | 0% |
| 2 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

QUESTION 7

What is your general opinion of the service provided to residents and businesses by the Planning Department?

FIGURE 28 OPINION OF PLANNING DEPARTMENT

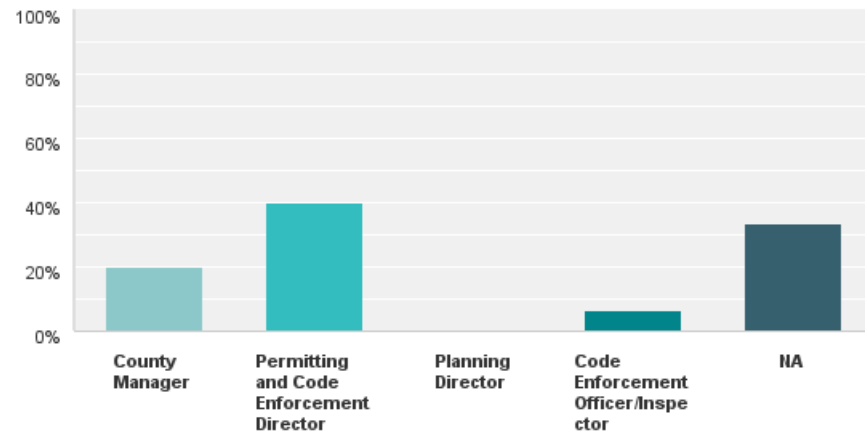


| Excellent | Good | Acceptable | Less Than Acceptable | Very Poor | Not Applicable |
|-----------|------|------------|----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 33% | 40% | 20% | 0% | 7% | 0% |
| 5 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

QUESTION 8

When you have an issue that is the responsibility of the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department to investigate, who do you typically contact first?

FIGURE 29 FIRST CONTACT

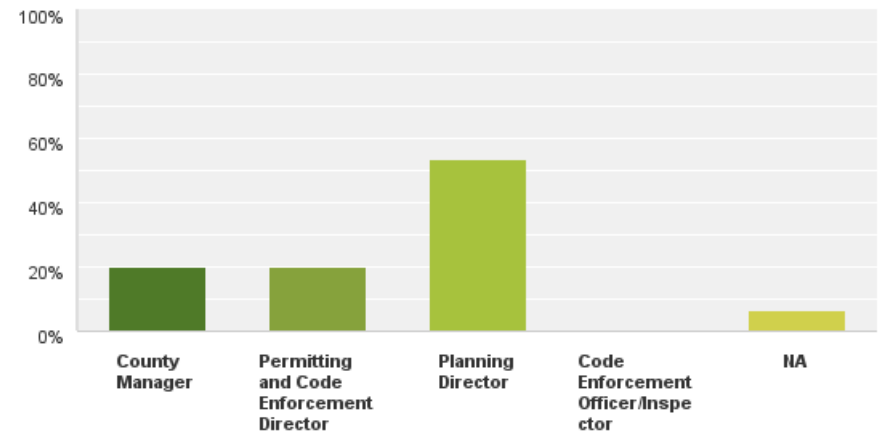


| County Manager | Permitting & Code Enforcement Director | Planning Director | Code Enforcement Officer / Inspector | Not Applicable |
|----------------|--|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| 20% | 40% | 0% | 7% | 33% |
| 3 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 5 |

QUESTION 9

When you have an issue that is the responsibility of the Planning Department to investigate, who do you typically contact first?

FIGURE 30 FIRST CONTACT

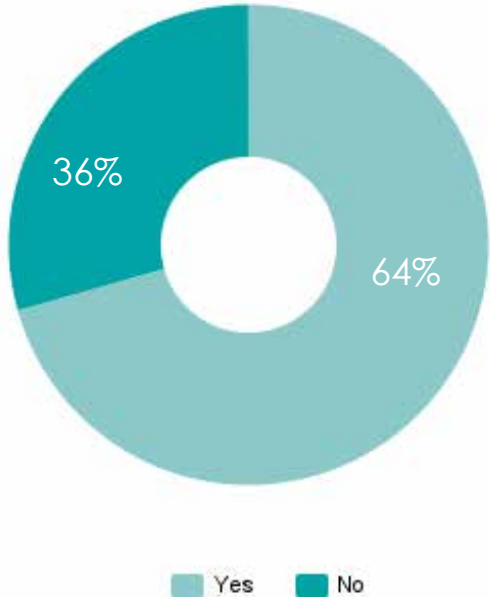


| County Manager | Permitting & Code Enforcement Director | Planning Director | Code Enforcement Officer / Inspector | Not Applicable |
|----------------|--|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| 20% | 20% | 53% | 0% | 7% |
| 3 | 3 | 8 | 0 | 1 |

QUESTION 10

Are services and enforcement offered equally to all citizens and construction professionals without favoritism?

FIGURE 31 IMPARTIAL SERVICES

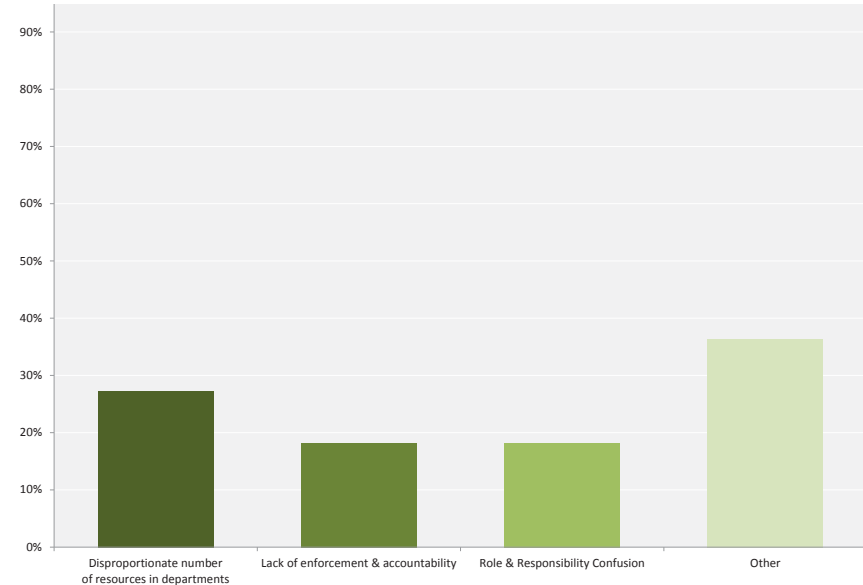


| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|----------------|------------|--------|
| | Percentage | Number |
| Yes | 64% | 9 |
| No | 36% | 5 |

QUESTION 11

Are there any particular issues that you see with the way planning, permitting and code enforcement are being administered?

FIGURE 32 ADMINISTRATION ISSUES

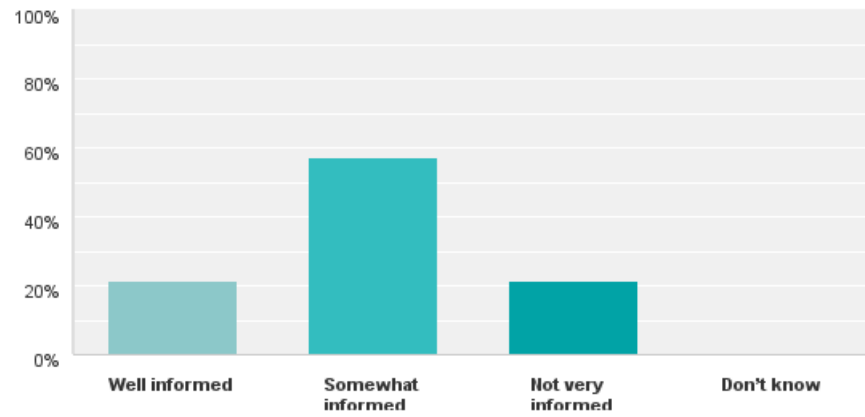


| Disproportionate number of resources in departments | Lack of enforcement & accountability | Role & responsibility confusion | Other |
|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------|
| 27% | 18% | 18% | 36% |
| 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 |

QUESTION 12

Regarding Jackson County's Permitting and Code Enforcement issues, do you feel you are:

FIGURE 33 PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

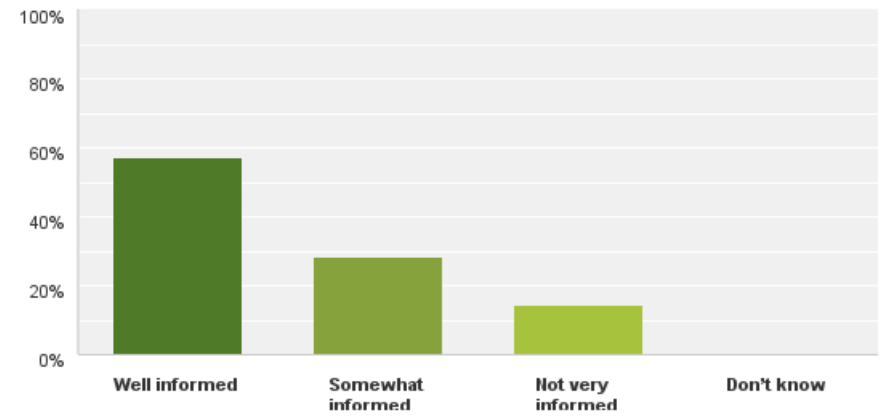


| Well Informed | Somewhat Informed | Not very Informed | Do not know |
|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 21% | 57% | 21% | 0% |
| 3 | 8 | 3 | 0 |

QUESTION 13

Regarding Jackson County's Planning issues, do you feel you are:

FIGURE 34 PLANNING DEPARTMENT ISSUES

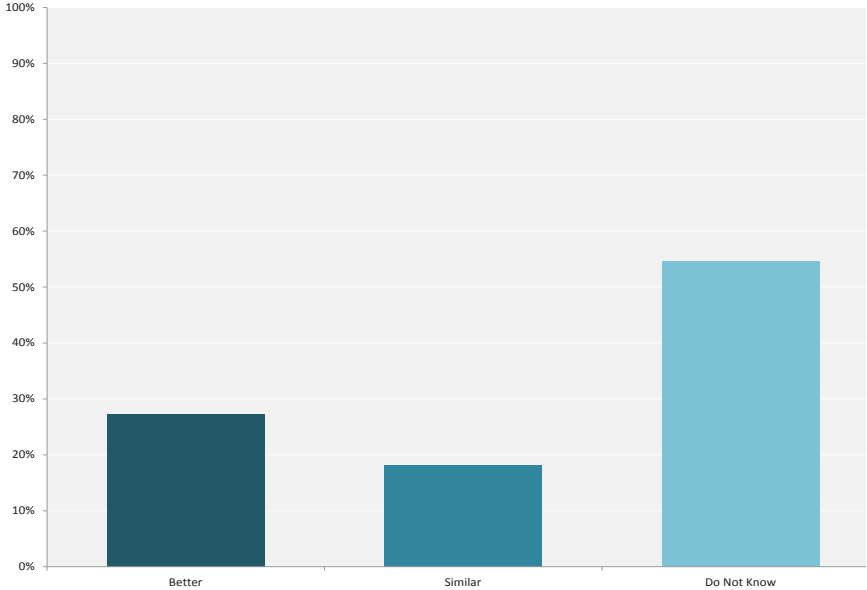


| Well Informed | Somewhat Informed | Not very Informed | Do not know |
|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 57% | 29% | 14% | 0% |
| 8 | 4 | 2 | 0 |

QUESTION 14

Permitting and Code Enforcement Departments around the state operate under the same State statutes as Jackson County. How do you think Jackson County's Department compares to those in other jurisdictions that you are familiar with, particularly neighboring counties in the region?

FIGURE 35 COMPARING THE PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT

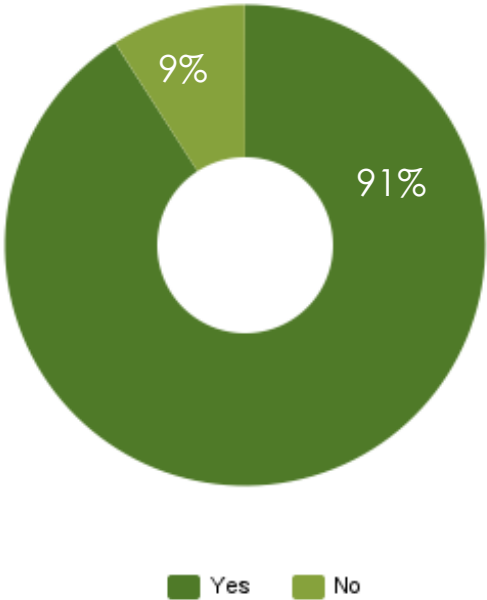


| Better | Similar | Do not know |
|--------|---------|-------------|
| 27% | 18% | 55% |
| 3 | 2 | 6 |

QUESTION 15

Has the coordination between the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and the individual towns and cities been successful?

FIGURE 36 PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT COORDINATION WITH OTHER ENTITIES

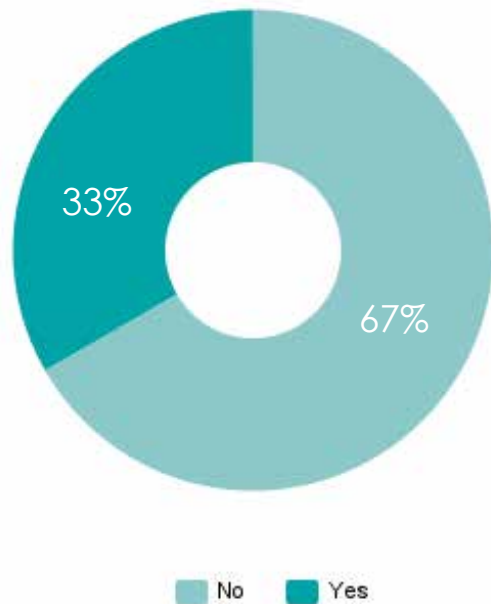


| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|----------------|------------|--------|
| | Percentage | Number |
| Yes | 91% | 10 |
| No | 9% | 1 |

QUESTION 16

Has the coordination between the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and the Planning Department been successful?

FIGURE 37 PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT COORDINATION WITH PLANNING

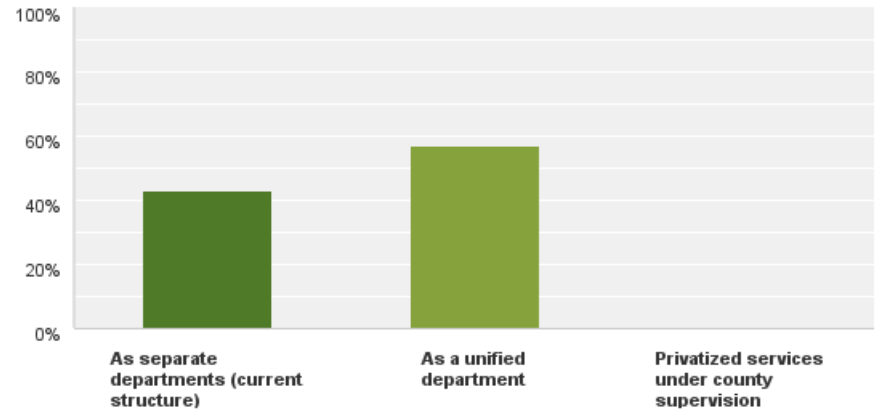


| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|----------------|------------|--------|
| | Percentage | Number |
| No | 67% | 8 |
| Yes | 33% | 4 |

QUESTION 17

In your opinion, should the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and Planning Department be organized (select one/why?):

FIGURE 38 DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

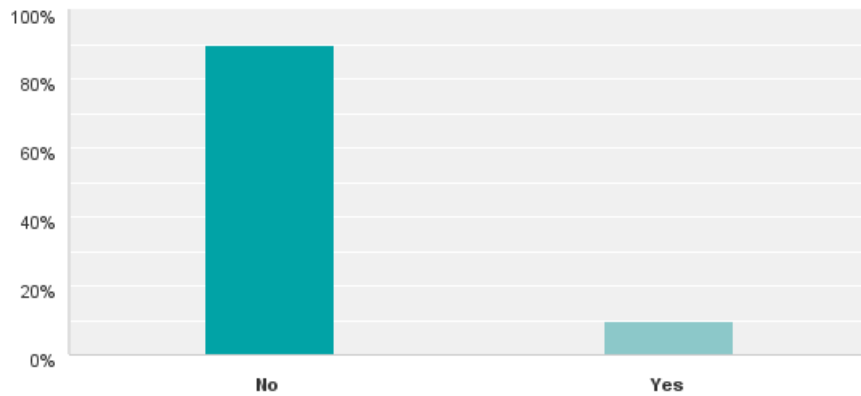


| As separate departments (current structure) | As a unified department | Privatized services under county supervision |
|---|-------------------------|--|
| 43% | 57% | 0% |
| 6 | 8 | 0 |

QUESTION 18

Is there an expectation that certain property owners and/ or contractors should be dealt with by the County Manager or the head of the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department?

FIGURE 39 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITY EXPECTATIONS



| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|----------------|------------|--------|
| | Percentage | Number |
| No | 90% | 9 |
| Yes | 10% | 1 |

QUESTION 19

If such an expectation exists, how is compliance assured? Communicated to staff?

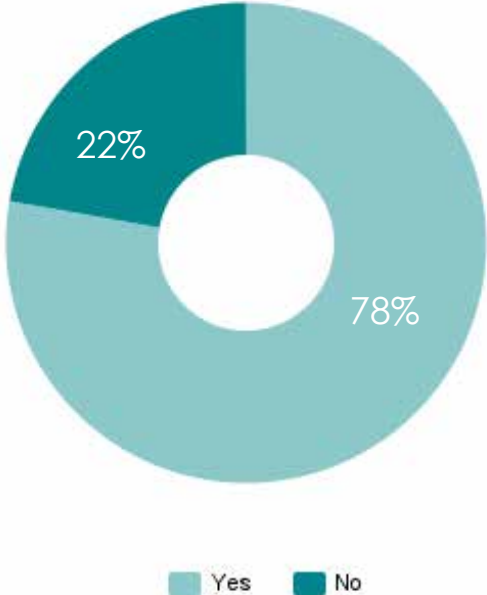
FIGURE 40 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITY EXPECTATIONS CONTINUED

| Responses | |
|--|--------------|
| Answered (4) | Skipped (13) |
| Don't know. | |
| Everyone should go through the same process. | |
| This would be up to the County Manager how this is executed. | |
| I have no insight to this topic. | |

QUESTION 20

In Jackson County, there are four residential inspectors handling 12 to 15 inspections per day or an average of 25 to 30 inspections per day per office. Is this staffing level adequate based on the county's goals for service provision?

FIGURE 41 ADEQUATE STAFFING LEVELS

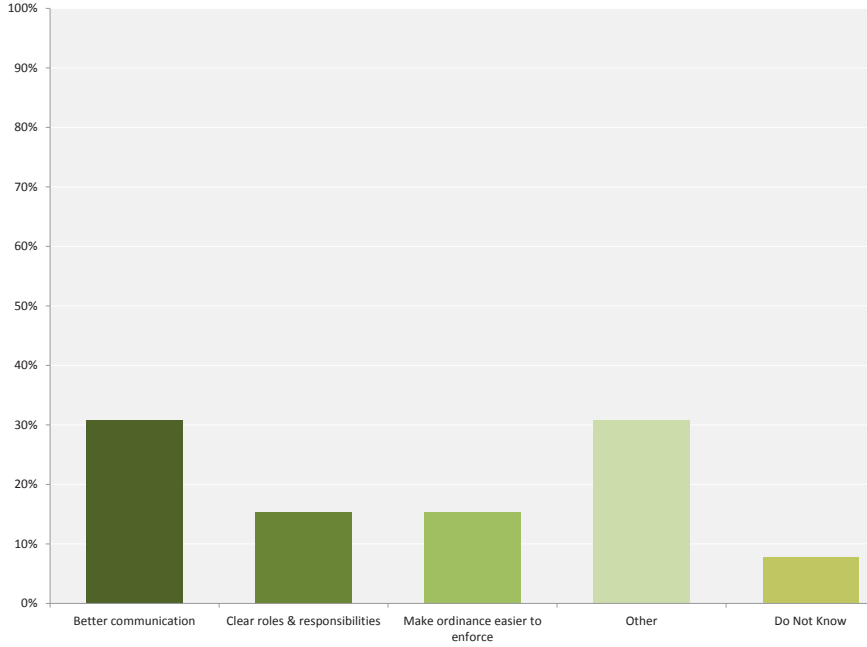


| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|----------------|------------|--------|
| | Percentage | Number |
| Yes | 78% | 7 |
| No | 22% | 2 |

QUESTION 21

How can the Board of Commissioners and County administration provide more direct support to the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department?

FIGURE 42 SUPPORT FOR PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT

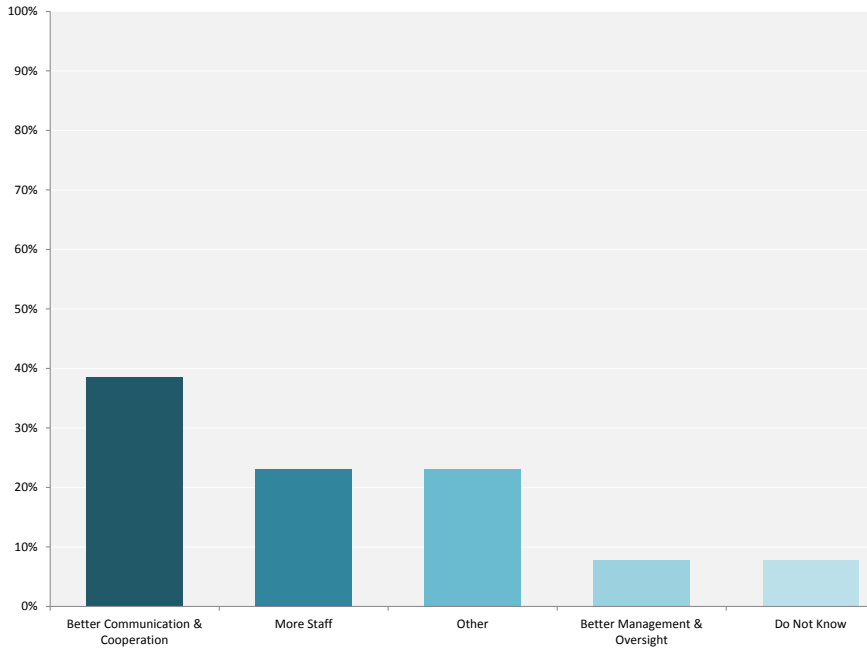


| Better Communication | Clear Roles & Responsibilities | Make Ordinance Easier to Enforce | Other | Do Not Know |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------|-------------|
| 31% | 15% | 15% | 31% | 8% |
| 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 |

QUESTION 22

How can the Board of Commissioners and County administration provide more direct support to the Planning Department?

FIGURE 43 SUPPORT FOR PLANNING DEPARTMENT

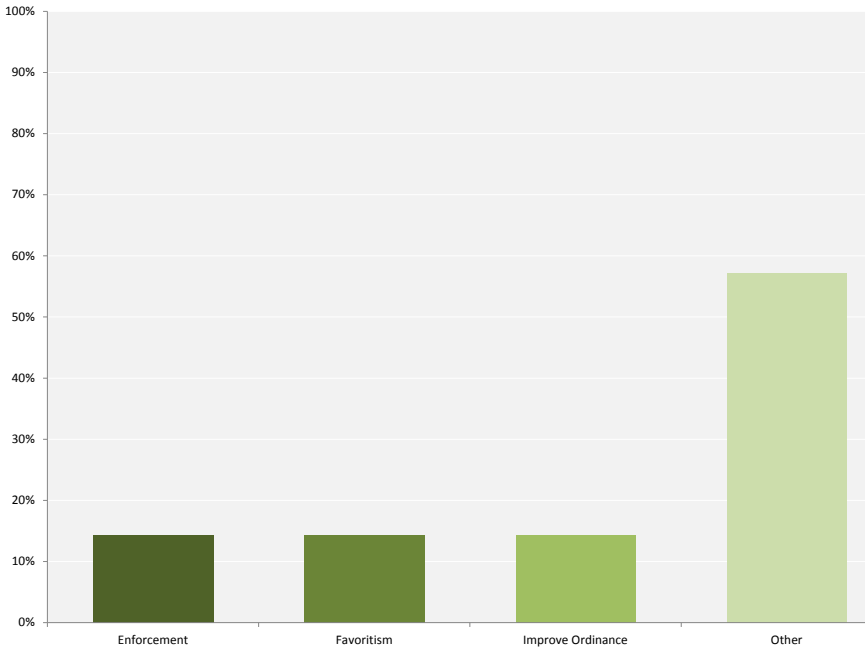


| Better Communication & Cooperation | More Staff | Other | Better Management & Oversight | Do Not Know |
|------------------------------------|------------|-------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| 38% | 23% | 23% | 8% | 8% |
| 5 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 |

QUESTION 23

What, in your opinion, is the most important Permitting and Code Enforcement issue facing Jackson County at this time?

FIGURE 44 PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT ISSUES FOR COUNTY



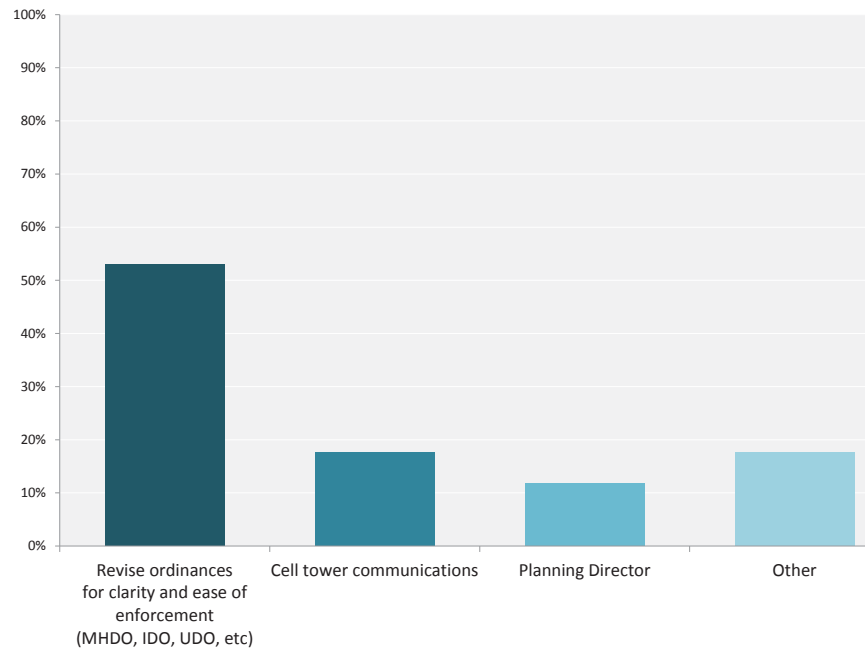
| Enforcement | Favoritism | Improve Ordinance | Other |
|-------------|------------|-------------------|-------|
| 14% | 14% | 14% | 57% |
| 2 | 2 | 2 | 8 |

Board Member Survey

QUESTION 24

What, in your opinion, is the most important Planning issue facing Jackson County at this time?

FIGURE 45 PLANNING ISSUES FOR COUNTY

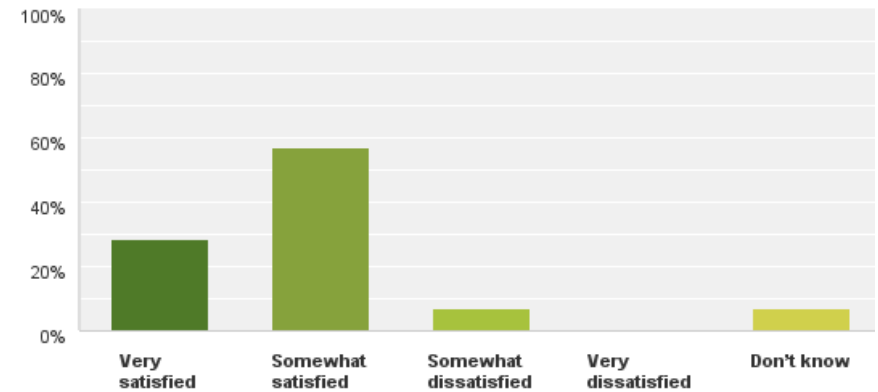


| Revise ordinances for clarity & ease of enforcement | Cell tower communications | Planning Director | Other |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| 53% | 18% | 12% | 18% |
| 9 | 3 | 2 | 3 |

QUESTION 25

Generally speaking, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the overall level of services provided by the Jackson County Permitting and Code Enforcement Department?

FIGURE 46 PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT OVERALL SERVICE LEVEL

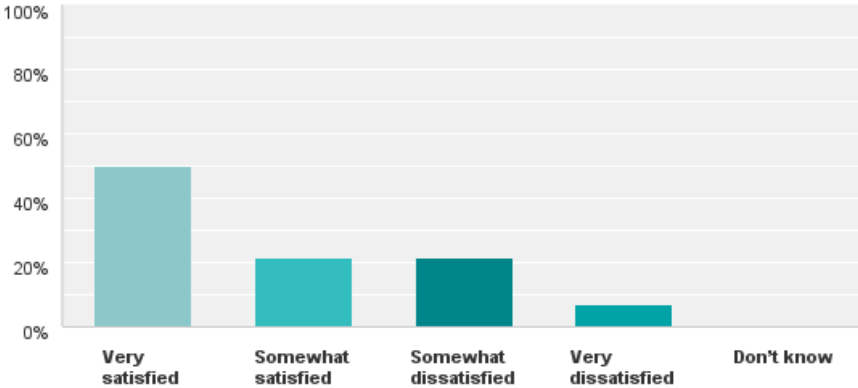


| Very Satisfied | Somewhat Satisfied | Somewhat Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | Do Not Know |
|----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 29% | 57% | 7% | 0% | 7% |
| 4 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 1 |

QUESTION 26

Generally speaking, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the overall level of services provided by the Jackson County Planning Department?

FIGURE 47 PLANNING DEPARTMENT OVERALL SERVICE LEVEL

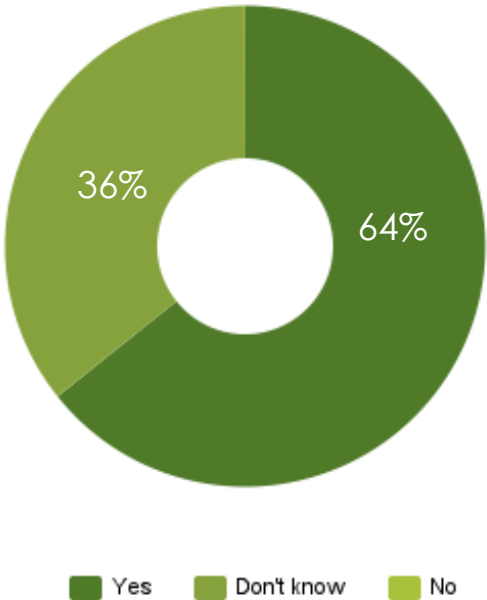


| Very Satisfied | Somewhat Satisfied | Somewhat Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | Do Not Know |
|----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 50% | 21% | 21% | 7% | 0% |
| 7 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 0 |

QUESTION 27

Do Permitting and Code Enforcement and Planning issues have an influence on the decisions of whether or not companies decide to relocate to or expand their operations in Jackson County?

FIGURE 48 PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT INFLUENCE ON CORPORATE RELOCATIONS

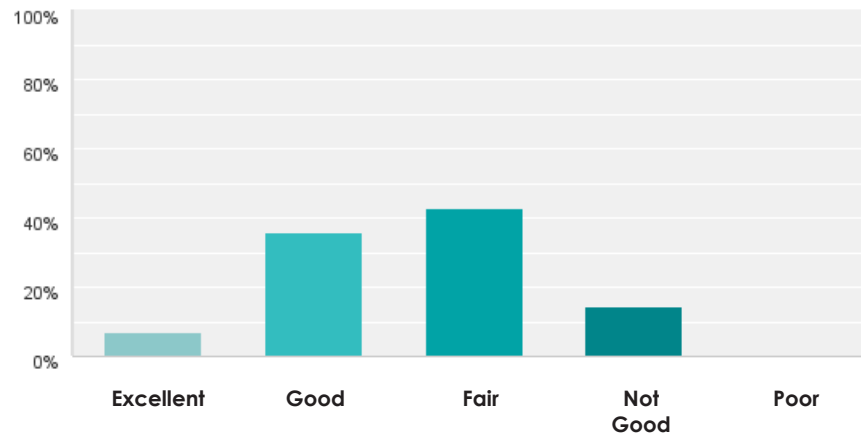


| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|----------------|------------|--------|
| | Percentage | Number |
| Yes | 64% | 9 |
| Do Not Know | 36% | 5 |
| No | 0% | 0 |

QUESTION 28

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent, how would you rate the County's Permitting and Code Enforcement Department?

FIGURE 49 PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT RATING

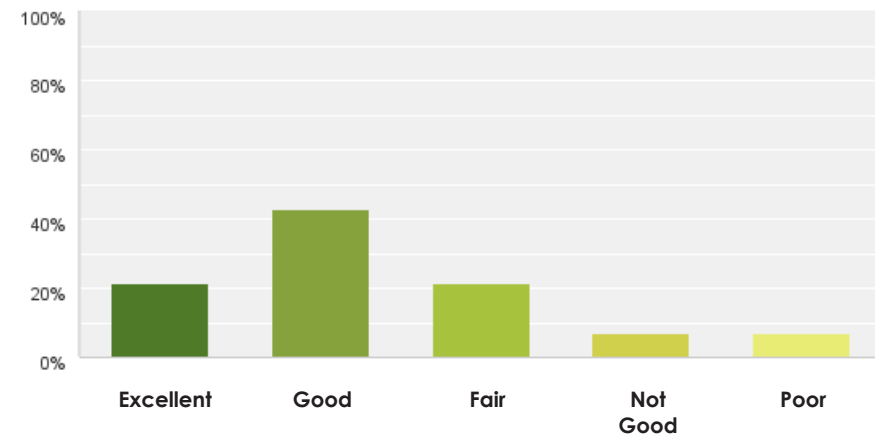


| Excellent | Good | Fair | Not Good | Poor |
|-----------|------|------|----------|------|
| 7% | 36% | 43% | 14% | 0% |
| 1 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 0 |

QUESTION 29

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent, how would you rate the County's Planning Department?

FIGURE 50 PLANNING DEPARTMENT RATING



| Excellent | Good | Fair | Not Good | Poor |
|-----------|------|------|----------|------|
| 21% | 43% | 21% | 7% | 7% |
| 3 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 1 |

QUESTION 30

What are your top three suggestions for improving the development approval, inspections, and enforcement process?

FIGURE 51 IMPROVEMENT SUGGESTIONS

12 RESPONSES



QUESTION 31

Please use the following space for any further comments or suggestions.

FIGURE 52 FURTHER COMMENTS

5 RESPONSES

| Responses | |
|--|--------------|
| Answered (5) | Skipped (12) |
| Seems the Planning Department is declaring war on the Permitting and Code Enforcement department. Thanks to the Planning Director (now previous) and Media. | |
| The Planning Department has misrepresented the revisions that the Planning Board have made to one of the ordinances. I think they have subverted the democratic process. Decisions purportedly made by the planning board are being made by the department, and not the board. | |
| I think they are all doing a good job and make the best better. | |
| Thank you. Any further questions please feel free to contact me. | |
| Stability in the resources of and authority of the various JC offices is unfortunately a function of the political process. The lack of a stable, long-term vision for the county that is apolitical exacerbates the resolution of all issues. | |





PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

An assessment of the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department's general operations was performed. This assessment included any overlap and interactions with Planning Department functions. The assessment was based on departmental interviews, board surveys, citizen surveys, and work flow analysis.

The evaluation of the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department's performance was prompted by concerns that enforcement practices might be inconsistent and that overall Department responsibilities were unclear. Therefore, the focus of the evaluation is on the following areas:

- Plan Review
- Permitting
- Field Inspections
- Ordinances
- Organizational Structure and Staffing
- Interdepartmental/Jurisdiction Coordination and Communication
- Performance Measures
- Board Training

This evaluation is shown in table format. The table shows the following for the focus areas:

1. Best Practices
2. Observations
3. Improvement Opportunities

Best practices in Column 1 have been derived from the project team's collective experience in working with other jurisdictions in the state of North Carolina and accepted professional standards. The observations in Column 2 of the table are made from several sources including staff interviews, developer interviews work flow analysis, document analysis, County Board of Commissioners and Planning Board survey, and a public input survey. Improvement opportunities in Column 3 bridge any discernible divide between best practices and observations made. These opportunities for improvement are crafted into recommendations in the next section of this report.

Performance Evaluation

| BEST PRACTICES | OBSERVATIONS | IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES |
|--|---|--|
| <i>PLAN REVIEW</i> | | |
| <p>Plan reviewer performs overview of plans to ascertain that all required information is available in the submitted package.</p> | <p>The Permitting and Code Enforcement Department has developed a checklist that coordinates the PIN#s between databases, checks for items needing approvals from other departments (slopes, water/sewer, etc. – listed on Land Development Application), and a short checklist of items that could trigger the need for additional engineering. The goal is to identify these requirements during plan review to help minimize surprises for the customer during construction.</p> | <p>Integrated database software could eliminate the need for double checking the PIN#s per parcel.</p> |
| <p>Residential plan review is not required per NC general statutes. However, some level of plan review is recommended as a best practice to avoid delays in construction and inspection.</p> | <p>The Permitting and Code Enforcement Department performs residential plan review as a courtesy review for customers. The goal of this courtesy review is to identify specific project requirements on paper before they become issues or surprises in the field. The approach is to save the customer time and money by identifying these potential requirements before construction. The Department accepts plans prepared by owner, contractor, designers, etc. Residential plans generally do not require the seal of a design professional unless specific elements are involved or thresholds are met.</p> | <p>None at this time.</p> |
| <p>Generally, commercial projects require plans to be sealed and submitted by design professionals registered by the state. These plans are reviewed per the NC Building Code, NC Plumbing Code, NC Mechanical Code, NC Fire Code, and National Electric Code, and other applicable codes as they apply.</p> | <p>The plan reviewer reviews plans for all trades on small commercial projects. For large commercial projects, The Permitting and Code Enforcement Department performs commercial plan review in a team approach. Three staff members, each having Level III certification in the appropriate field, divide the project into Building/Mechanical, Plumbing, and Electrical. All commercial projects are reviewed in the Sylva office.</p> | <p>Train and certify staff to review commercial plans in the Cashiers office.</p> |

| BEST PRACTICE | OBSERVATIONS | IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES |
|---|---|---|
| <i>PERMITTING</i> | | |
| <p>Permitting and inspections handles Building Code related items per NCGS 153A-357</p> | <p>The Permitting and Code Enforcement Department provides these services and incorporates Erosion Control, and sometimes minor plat review and steep slope calculations. Erosion Control seems to be a good fit, and the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department has staff specifically certified for this. Minor plat and steep slope are partially being done by the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department due to lack of Planning Department staffing.</p> | <p>Move all Ordinance related review to Planning Department once fully staffed. Update website, brochures, and related documents to show a clear delineation of responsibilities between the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and Planning Department.</p> |
| <p>Application, Plan Review, Permit Issuance, Field Inspections, Certificate of Occupancy</p> | <p>The Permitting and Code Enforcement Department is following this standard overall process work flow.</p> | <p>None at this time.</p> |
| <p>Permit applications clearly identify work to be done, location of work, responsible party, licensed or applicable exception, and other relevant information and approvals needed from other departments (water/sewer, planning ordinances, lien agent, etc.)</p> | <p>Since Jackson County does not have county-wide zoning, the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department uses a "Land Development Application" to identify ordinance related requirements such as watershed, protected ridge, etc. This is the first application that a customer must submit and have approved. Once approved, the customer submits a "New Residential, New Commercial Application" which lists the standard permit information of building type, contractors' license numbers, and contacts.</p> | <p>The New Residential, New Commercial Application does not have a line for work by an unlicensed GC or for work to be performed by owner. These are allowable with certain limitations and also require the signature of a separate Owner Exemption Affidavit per NCGS 87-14(a)(1). Also consider adding information related to Special Inspections that may be required, whom is responsible for those inspections, and to whom these will be reported.</p> |
| <p>Permit technicians enter information from submitted forms into database software which is integrated and accessed by all development related county departments.</p> | <p>JCPI has developed their own permitting software customized to their operations.</p> | <p>Other county departments need to begin integrating with this software. This will streamline operations by eliminating cross-checking of information between different databases, and will provide a single database of development information per parcel for each department to reference. Departments that should be included are JCPI, Planning, Tax, Health, TWSA (even though not a county department), and potentially EDC.</p> |

Performance Evaluation

| BEST PRACTICES | OBSERVATIONS | IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES |
|--|---|---|
| <i>FIELD INSPECTIONS</i> | | |
| <p>Plan reviewer performs overview of plans to ascertain that all required information is available in the submitted package.</p> | <p>The Permitting and Code Enforcement Department developed a checklist that coordinates the parcel identification numbers (PINs) between data bases, checks for items needing approvals from other departments, and a checklist of items that could trigger additional engineering. The goal is to identify requirements during plan review and minimize surprises during construction.</p> | <p>Integrated database software could eliminate the need for double checking the PINs per parcel.</p> |
| <p>Typically, inspectors are either multi-trade or single-trade, and are responsible for all projects within their assigned areas/regions of the county. A general exception to this rule is that Level III projects must be inspected by an inspector with a Level III certification in the applicable trade.</p> | <p>The Permitting and Code Enforcement Department performs multi-trade inspections. Inspectors are assigned daily inspections list based on map zones. They meet each morning to compare requested workloads and make adjustments for overloads, levels, etc. Records show that inspectors are averaging between 12 and 15 inspections per day. This is within the state recommendations. However, due to distances between jobsites and mountain roads, this amount seems to be nearing capacity. During days with heavy inspections, either the director, the plan reviewer, or both will also perform field inspections to meet that day's demand.</p> | <p>Consider hiring more field inspectors if construction continues to increase.</p> |
| <p>Buildings are classified into three levels of importance based on their occupancy type and size. In order to perform an inspection, the inspector must hold a certification level for the trade being inspected that is equal or greater than the assigned level of the building.</p> | <p>Permitting and Code Enforcement staff consists of an appropriate mix of Level I, II, and III certified inspectors.</p> | <p>Continue to encourage and incentivize inspectors to further training and gain more levels through pay raises (sometimes referred to as a Career Development Plan).</p> |

| BEST PRACTICES | OBSERVATIONS | IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES |
|--|--|--|
| <i>FIELD INSPECTIONS (CONT.)</i> | | |
| <p>Many inspections departments have begun using computer field devices that report directly into the software database.</p> | <p>The Permitting and Code Enforcement Department utilizes tablets with cell data capabilities to report directly into the software database. With these devices, the inspector may review the permit, review notes from previous inspections or inspectors, perform the requested inspection, pass/fail/comment, and email a response directly to the project contact. Devices also allow inspectors to take digital pictures and attach those to the project record.</p> | <p>Consider unlocking internet searches on the tablets to enable inspectors to research specific products or manufacturer's recommended installation instructions directly from the field.</p> |

Performance Evaluation

| BEST PRACTICE | OBSERVATIONS | IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES |
|---|--|---|
| ORDINANCES | | |
| <p>Maintain cohesive development ordinances that are free of contradiction and have clear approval procedures.</p> | <p>Jackson County has 18 separate ordinances related to land use and development. It can be difficult for applicants to ascertain which ordinances apply to individual situations. Jackson County has produced informational procedures to guide applicants through approval procedures.</p> | <p>Produce a comprehensive Land Development Ordinance that consolidates all 18 development ordinances into one document to reduce contradictions and clarify approval procedures.</p> |
| <p>Follow the approval procedures set forth in adopted ordinances.</p> | <p>Several of Jackson County's ordinances designate Planning Director or Planning Department as the administrator or approval authority, but the administrative function is being carried out by the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department. This can cause confusion for applicants and County staff. For example the Manufactured Home Park, Airport Hazard Ordinance, Mountain and Hillside Development Ordinance, Sign Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, Flood Damage Prevention, Scotts Creek Water Quality Protection Ordinance, Water Recharge Ordinance all specify the Planning Department as having administrative authority, while in reality, the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department is performing some or all of the administrative functions for these ordinances.</p> | <p>Either have the designated authority carry out administrative and approval functions, or amend ordinances to designate the preferred approval authority.</p> |
| <p>Provide flow charts showing the approval procedures for each approval type.</p> | <p>Jackson County has produced multiple brochures outlining approval procedures for different approval types.</p> | <p>Further illustrate approval procedures with flow charts within a comprehensive Land Development Ordinance so that all procedures can be viewed in one document. Update existing brochures to include the flowcharts.</p> |
| <p>Ordinances that require calculations are clear on how the calculations are to be performed, and calculations are performed consistently.</p> | <p>There has been a great deal of confusion on the part of Permitting and Code Enforcement Staff and Planning Staff as to the administration of the Mountain and Hillside Development Ordinance in relation to the slope calculation.</p> | <p>Either amend the Mountain and Hillside Development Ordinance to reflect current administrative calculation methods or follow the calculation method currently shown in the ordinance.</p> |

| BEST PRACTICE | OBSERVATIONS | IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES |
|---|--|---|
| <i>ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE & STAFFING</i> | | |
| <p>Provide a clear organizational structure and chain of command for the County as a whole and each department.</p> | <p>The current organizational chart for Jackson County does not reflect the actual organization. For example, the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department is shown as a division of Public Safety. However, in reality, it is its own stand-alone department. The Permitting and Code and Enforcement department has its own organizational chart. The Planning Department has no organizational chart.</p> | <p>Amend the County organizational chart to reflect the actual chain-of-command and departmental divisions.</p> |
| <p>As a means of coordinating all development activity while decreasing invisible barriers and obstacles to communication and coordination, many jurisdictions have combined the Development Services functions under one operational department with separate divisions for planning functions and permitting/inspections functions.</p> | <p>Jackson County has a great deal of confusion about the roles of the Permitting and Code Enforcement and Planning Department. This is due in part to the desire to provide a “one-stop shop” to applicants and the lack of clarity between ordinance text and actual administrative function. The current arrangement with the “one-stop shop” lends itself greatly toward this reorganization of services. Further, the current department separation of Planning and Permitting and Code Enforcement will assist with defining overall responsibility areas.</p> | <p>Create a position to oversee a consolidated Development Services Department with a distinct Planning Division and distinct Permitting and Inspections Division. Each division should have its own director that oversees the functions of that division as set forth in the County’s adopted ordinances.</p> |
| <p>In effort to provide more customer/developer friendly service, all development related submittals are integrated into one centrally located office. The goal is to minimize the wait time and/or travel time between multiple department reviews, and to aid in assuring that all submittal requirements are met.</p> | <p>Due to the county's geography, the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department operates a Sylva office and a Cashiers office. Both offices operate mostly the same with the exception that the Cashiers office also accepts Health Department submittals for commercial kitchens, pools, septic systems, etc. The staff of the Cashiers office then delivers these submittals to the Health Department in Sylva.</p> | <p>Consider implementing the same One-Stop Shop approach in the Sylva office that is currently being used in Cashiers. Strongly encourage Health Department to participate in the One-Stop Shop for environmental health and on-site septic review to optimize its function.</p> |

Performance Evaluation

| BEST PRACTICE | OBSERVATIONS | IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES |
|---|--|---|
| <i>ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE & STAFFING (CONT.)</i> | | |
| <p>Provide at least one planner for every three zoning jurisdictions, dependent on jurisdictional workload.</p> | <p>Jackson County provides a unique level of planning services to the jurisdictions within its boundaries. While countywide zoning does not exist, there are seven different zoning jurisdictions for which the Jackson County Planning Department is responsible. Due to the Planning Director position vacancy, one staff member has been handling the majority of zoning issues. This is not an adequate staffing level.</p> | <p>Fully implement the Planner I staff position created for the Planning Department and title it a Planner/Code Compliance position. Reclassify the Code Compliance Officer position to a Senior Planner position. Fill the Planning Director position. The complete department should consist of four employees: Planning Director, Senior Planner, Planner/Code Compliance Officer, and Administrative Assistant.</p> |
| <p>Building Inspections are mandated by the State of North Carolina, whereas Planning is not a mandated function for North Carolina counties. Separating these functions along departmental or division lines helps to facilitate expediency and lessens confusion over which department/division handles what ordinance or regulatory provision.</p> | <p>The inclusion of building inspectors as code enforcement officers allows the County to monitor development appropriately and to ensure that all ordinances are adhered to as adopted. While the departments are separate, there is discrepancy and confusion regarding roles and duties of each respective department. Many functions typically handled by Planning Departments in other jurisdictions are being handled by the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department in Jackson County.</p> | <p>Move all "planning" related functions to Planning Department, including respective duties and responsibilities designated by adopted ordinances (unless amended).</p> |

| BEST PRACTICE | OBSERVATIONS | IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES |
|--|---|--|
| <i>INTERDEPARTMENTAL / JURISDICTION COORDINATION & COMMUNICATION</i> | | |
| <p>In an effort to enhance communication and ensure cross-coordination of government agencies and departments, many jurisdictions have formed and hold regular staff technical committee meetings to review and discuss development projects</p> | <p>An informal Plan Review Committee meets the first Thursday of the month to review site plans and subdivision plats for development projects. The meeting involves various departments and organizations that have approval interest in development projects.</p> | <p>Formalize the Plan Review Committee by establishing guidelines for the Committee. Provide regular updates and reports to the County Commissioners, County Manager, and Planning Board about the Committee's activity.</p> |
| <p>Technology improvements have allowed government agencies to better track and cross-coordinate their services by utilizing permitting and project tracking software.</p> | <p>New proprietary ROK Technology software has been created to handle permitting, approvals, and inspections for development projects. The Cashiers office is currently successfully using the software. Once fully implemented, the software will create a single database usable by department involved in the development approval process and have customer service capabilities for tracking inspections.</p> | <p>The use of the proprietary ROK software needs to be fully implemented by integrating the Sylva office, the Planning Division, and Environmental Health to make the approval and inspection process more seamless and provide better customer service. Additionally, the Tax Administration office needs to cease the use of the antiquated AS400 software system and integrate into the new ROK software. Move toward completion of the available "App" downloadable through Google and Apple to allow applicants to view inspection records and file complaints.</p> |
| <p>It is ideal for neighboring communities to enter into multi-jurisdictional agreements in order to provide services in overlapping areas such as municipalities with their home counties. Adequate compensation is provided in exchange for the services rendered under interlocal agreements.</p> | <p>This arrangement is most conducive for providing services when activity is moderate to low and where budget constraints or staffing issues are challenging for one or both entities. Jackson County presently has this arrangement with the Town of Sylva, Town of Webster, Village of Forest Hills, and the Town of Dillsboro. A similar arrangement is in place for the communities of Cashiers and Highway 441. Compensation for several of the municipal interlocal agreements only include the review fees collected.</p> | <p>Set other jurisdictional meeting dates to work with Planning Department schedule in order to avoid coverage conflicts as much as possible. Review the compensation received for interlocal agreements and review fees to ensure that the revenue generated is adequate to maintain planning staff levels for the planning services provided.</p> |

Performance Evaluation

| BEST PRACTICE | STRENGTH | IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES |
|--|--|---|
| <i>INTERDEPARTMENTAL / JURISDICTION COORDINATION & COMMUNICATION (CONT.)</i> | | |
| <p>Integrating services that have inter-working components lessens the confusion for the users of these services and typically further clarifies staff duties.</p> | <p>Services have been integrated This is being achieved somewhat in the Cashiers office. The Sylva office has moved toward implementing this as well</p> | <p>Work diligently to include an Environmental Health Staff member as part of the "One-Stop Shop" in order to expedite applications and inspections. As soon as it is economically and physically possible, the Planning Division should be located closer to PCE Department Division. In order to achieve a complete "One-Stop Shop" operation, it will be most conducive to have these operations located in another facility separate from the Courthouse due to recent security enhancements. In the interim, the front desk area of PCE can serve as one-stop shop for the Sylva office.</p> |

| BEST PRACTICE | STRENGTH | IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES |
|--|--|---|
| <i>PERFORMANCE MEASURES</i> | | |
| <p>In order to better gauge the level of services provided to constituents and to increase accountability, many local governments have implemented performance measurement tools.</p> | <p>Periodic reports are provided to the Board of Commissioners and Planning Board about the activity of these two departments. There is also an existing emphasis on customer satisfaction, hence the creation of the “One Stop Shop” and new permitting software.</p> | <p>Provide additional report details including turnaround times, comments/complaints/surveys, updates on training, as well as online reports of activity as a means to convey workload and increase transparency.</p> |
| <i>BOARD TRAINING</i> | | |
| <p>Planning Boards, Boards of Adjustment, and Boards of Commissioners engage in annual training on respective areas of approval and receive updates regarding changes in state or federal laws that affect how regulations are adopted and enforced.</p> | <p>Training opportunities have historically not been regularly provided for the boards.</p> | <p>Provide joint annual training sessions for all jurisdictional Planning Boards/Committees, Boards of Adjustment, and elected officials to improve knowledge about development approval processes, state and federal regulations, and ordinance requirements. Also provide opportunities for board members to attend the annual planning conference held by the North Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association and other training opportunities geared toward citizen planners, to stay up-to-date on emerging planning issues.</p> |



RECOMMENDATIONS

Building on the opportunities for improvement noted in the Performance Evaluation Section of this report. Recommendations have been formulated to improve the functions of the Permitting and Code Enforcement and Planning Departments.

Recommendations are organized into the following five categories:

- Organization and Staffing
- Technology
- Regulations
- Administration
- Training

Most of the recommendations involve minor changes in organizational structure and a slight increase in staffing. The most significant organization and staffing recommendation is to add a Development Services Director (Assistant County Manager equivalent) position to oversee a unified Development Services Department with a Planning Division and Permitting and Inspections Division. The full implementation of the ROK proprietary permitting software will help a great deal in facilitating interdepartmental and interoffice communication. Regulatory recommendations include consolidating all 18 development related ordinances into one Land Development

Ordinance. Also, administrative functions need to be carried out by the department or division indicated in the adopted ordinances or the ordinances need to be amended to indicate the actual administrative authority. Finally, the calculation of slope in the Mountain and Hillside Ordinance either needs to be amended or followed as written to avoid further confusion by the public and staff. Administration recommendations include building permit application changes, greater transparency in reporting to the public and the Boards about the level and status of development activities, formalizing the Plan Review Committee, ensuring planning staff meeting coverage, and reviewing the fee schedules and field inspection assignments. Training recommendations include additional certifications for permitting staff, incentivizing additional training, and providing annual board training. The recommendations on the following pages also have an implementation plan in the next section of this report to show which actions are higher priority, the timeframe for implementation, the general cost for implementation and the parties responsible for implementation.

ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

1. Fill the Planning Director position.

Filling this position as soon as possible with the best candidate is necessary to bring the workload of the Planning Division to more manageable levels and restore a higher level of communication and interaction with the Permitting and Code Enforcement Division.

2. Create and maintain a minimum staff of four positions for the Planning Department, and review workload on annual basis to ensure that the staffing level is appropriate.

Fully implement the Planner I staff position created for the Planning Department and title it a Planner/Code Compliance position. Reclassify the Code Compliance Officer position to a Senior Planner position. The complete Planning Division should consist of four employees: Planning Director, Senior Planner, Planner/Code Compliance Officer, and Administrative Assistant.

Review the compensation received for interlocal agreements and review fees to ensure that the

revenue generated is adequate to maintain planning staff levels for the planning services provided.

3. Move most Ordinance related review to Planning Department once fully staffed.

Move all “planning” related functions to Planning Department, including respective duties and responsibilities designated by adopted ordinances (unless amended).

Update website, brochures, etc. to show a clear delineation of responsibilities between the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and Planning Department.

4. Create an Development Services Director (Assistant County Manager equivalent) position to oversee a consolidated Development Services Department with a distinct Planning Division and distinct Permitting and Inspections Division.

A consolidated Development Services Department will improve the perception of cohesiveness.

The Development Services Director (Assistant County Manager equivalent) position will not only provide oversight

for the consolidated department, it will also provide needed assistance and a plan of succession for the County Manager position. Additional duties may be assigned to this position as seen fit by the Board of Commissioners and County Manager.

Each division will continue to have its own director that oversees the functions of that division as set forth in the County's adopted ordinances.

5. Amend the County organizational chart to reflect the actual chain of command and departmental divisions.

The current chart is incorrect and may cause confusion for County staff, board members, and citizens. The chart should show a clear chain of command and departmental organization. This chart should be reviewed annually to ensure that no changes are needed.

6. Make both the Sylva and Cashiers offices complete "One-Stop Shops".

Take immediate measures to include Health Department personnel in the One-Stop Shop model for environmental health and on-site septic review to optimize its function and expedite applications and inspections.

Provide regular office hours for Planning Division staff at the Cashiers office.

7. Relocate the Planning Division to be immediately adjacent to the Permitting and Inspections Division.

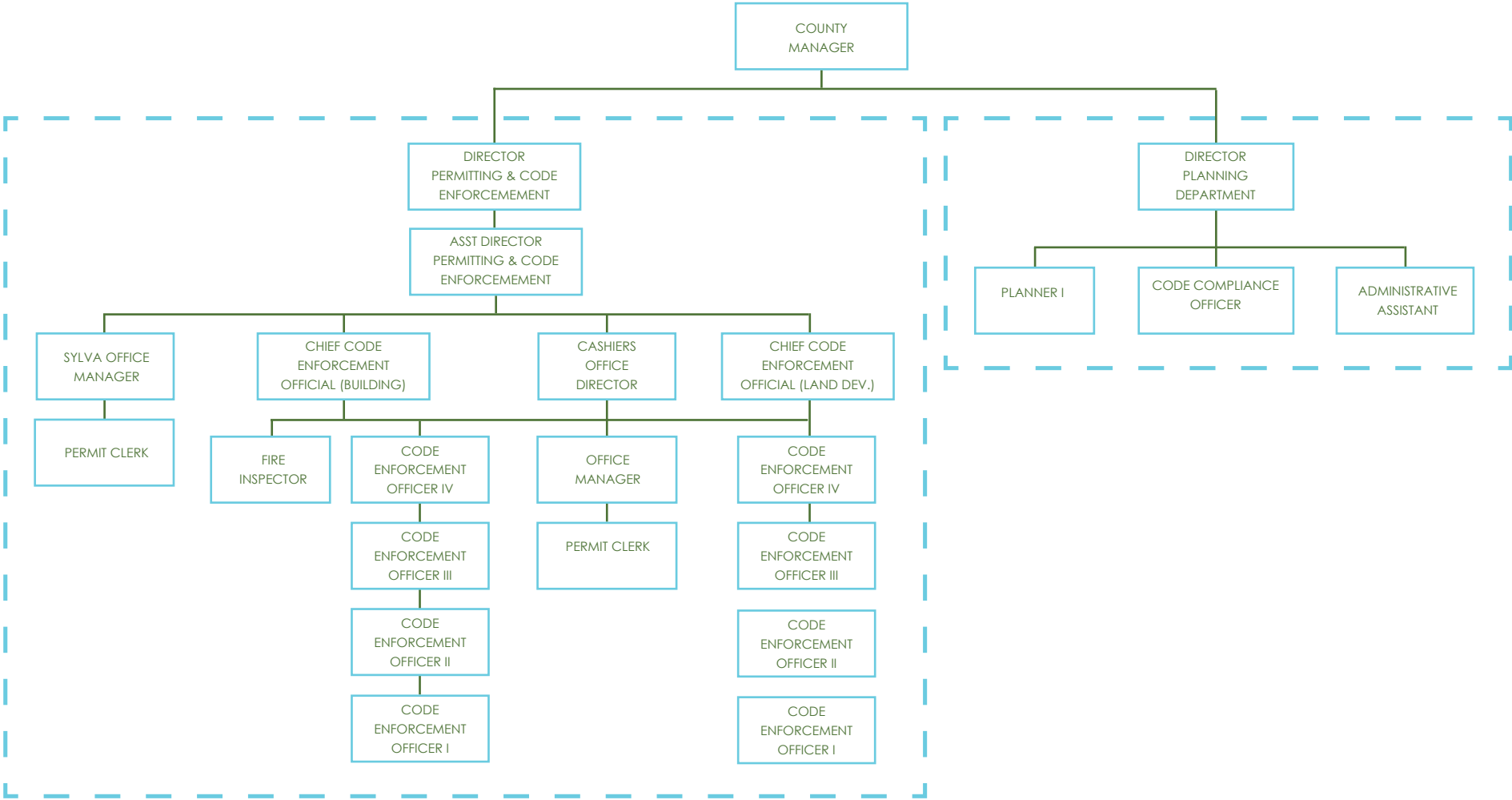
While there may be space and economic constraints to relocation efforts, having the two divisions located physically next to each other would improve communication and oversight. Possible location of both divisions in another building should be explored.

8. Complete an annual review of Permitting and Inspections Division staffing levels to ensure that enough field inspectors are available to keep up with an increase in construction activity.

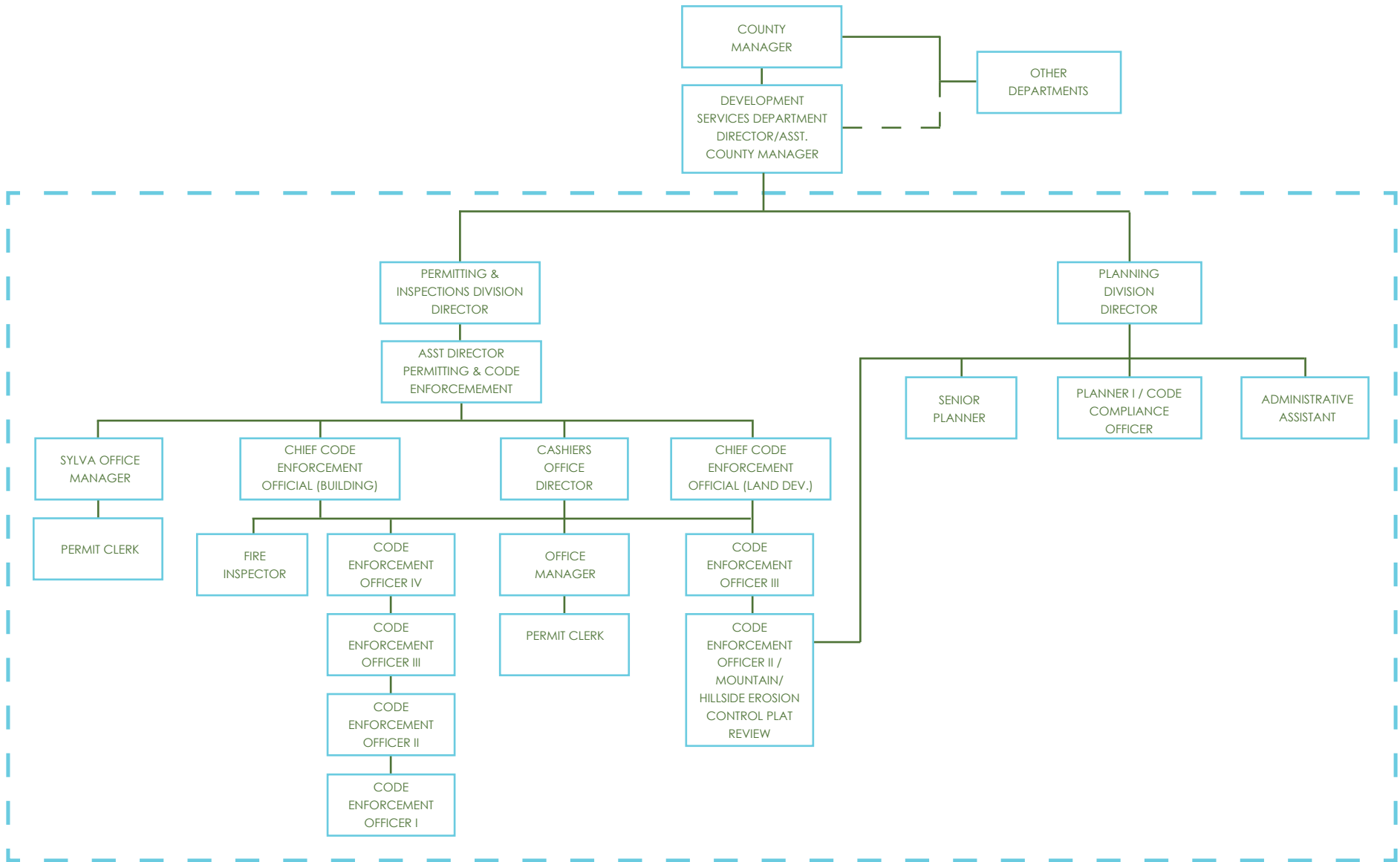
Field inspectors are currently completing inspections at the maximum recommended rate. If construction activity continues to increase, then new inspectors may need to be added to keep up with demand and maintain a high level of customer service.

Recommendations

▼ FIGURE 53 EXISTING PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION CHART



▼ FIGURE 54 PROPOSED PERMITTING & CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION CHART



Recommendations

The charts on the previous pages show the current organization of the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and Planning Department and the recommended organization of the Permitting and Inspections Division and Planning Division. Changes of note to the organizational structure include the following:

- the creation of a Development Services Director (an Assistant County Manager equivalent) position,
- the creation of a consolidated Development Services Department,
- the addition of a Planner I/Code Compliance Officer position,
- the reclassification of Code Compliance Officer to Senior Planner, and
- the reclassification of the Code Enforcement Officer II position to formally include Mountain and Hillside Ordinance compliance plat review and Erosion Control Inspection. This position would be shared by both the Planning Division and Permitting and Inspections Division.

TECHNOLOGY

1. Fully implement the use proprietary ROK software.

The use of the proprietary ROK software needs to be fully implemented by integrating the Sylva office, the Planning Division, and Environmental Health to make the approval and inspection process more seamless and provide better customer service. Additionally, following the 2016 property revaluation, the Tax Administration office needs to cease the use of the antiquated AS400 software system and integrate into the new ROK software. Move toward completion of the available “App” downloadable through Google and Apple to allow applicants to view inspection records and file complaints.

2. Unlock internet searches on the field inspection tablets.

Allowing internet searches on filed inspection tablets will enable inspectors to research specific products or manufacturer's recommended installation instructions directly from the field.

REGULATIONS

- 1. Produce a comprehensive Land Development Ordinance that consolidates all 18 development ordinances into one document.**

A consolidated Land Development Ordinance will reduce regulatory contradictions and clarify approval procedures. It will also allow citizens and developers to review one document instead of 18 separate documents to decipher which regulations are applicable.

- 2. Either have the designated department or division carry out administrative and approval functions, or amend the ordinances to designate the preferred approval authority.**
- 3. Further illustrate approval procedures with flow charts within a comprehensive Land Development Ordinance so that all procedures can be viewed in one document.**

This will enable staff and developer to view all land development approval procedures within one document. After creating the flow charts, update existing informational brochures to include the flow charts.

- 4. Either amend the Mountain and Hillside Development**

Ordinance to reflect current administrative calculation methods or follow the calculation method currently shown in the ordinance.

ADMINISTRATION

- 1. Add a line on the New Residential/New Commercial Application for work by an unlicensed General Contractor or property owner.**

These are allowable with certain limitations and also require the signature of a separate Owner Exemption Affidavit per NCGS 87-14(a)(1). Also consider adding information related to Special Inspections that may be required, whom is responsible for those inspections, and to whom these will be reported.

- 2. Formalize the Plan Review Committee by establishing guidelines for the Committee. Provide regular updates and reports to the County Manager, County Commissioners, and Planning Board about the Committee's activity.**
- 3. Set other jurisdictional meeting dates to work with Planning Department schedule in order to avoid coverage conflicts as much as possible.**

Recommendations

- 4. Provide additional report details including turnaround times, comments/complaints/surveys, updates on training, as well as online reports of activity as a means to convey workload and increase transparency.**
- 5. Review the permitting and inspection fee schedule to ensure that adequate fees are being collected to reach a higher level of cost recoup.**

Also provide opportunities for board members to attend the annual planning conference held by the North Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association and other training opportunities geared toward citizen planners, to stay up-to-date on emerging planning issues.

TRAINING

- 1. Train and certify Permitting and Inspections staff in the Cashiers office to review commercial plans.**
- 2. Continue to encourage and incentivize inspectors to further pursue training and gain more levels through pay raises (sometimes referred to as a Career Development Plan).**
- 3. Provide joint annual training sessions for all jurisdictional Planning Boards/Committees, Boards of Adjustment, and elected officials.**

Annual board training improves knowledge about development approval processes, state and federal regulations, and ordinance requirements.





IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

In order to efficiently implement the recommendations of this report the implementation plan outlined in this section has been produced. The implementation plan identifies priorities, resources, time-frame, and responsible parties.

PRIORITY

Due to the limited resources that are faced by all levels of government, priorities are identified for each action item to help guide the community toward achieving the strategies. Priorities are indicated as “high”, “medium”, or “low”, with “high” being the most pressing or urgent. Since some high priority items may take longer to achieve than low priority items, the community may see some of those lower priority action items underway due to the quick turnaround associated with them or their ease of accomplishment. As resources become available, or as community needs or desires change during the implementation of the plan, decisions will likely be made to increase the priority of certain actions while decreasing the priority of others.

RESOURCES

The resources column of the implementation plan identifies strategies that may need additional budget considerations. Some of the recommendations will need additional financial resources to be completed.

TIME-FRAME

The time-frame column indicates the estimated time period it will take to achieve the action item. Time-frames are indicated in the matrix as short-term, intermediate, or long-term. Below is a description of each time-frame:

- Short-term - can be achieved in less than 6 months
- Intermediate - can be achieved in less than 1 year
- Long-term - may take up to 2-5 years to achieve
- Ongoing - Some action items are designated as “ongoing” due to need for constant efforts toward achieving the goal.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

This category identifies the entities that will share in the responsibility for the completion of each action step. The inclusion of a consultant or other outside party may be necessary to help implement and achieve certain objectives.

Implementation Plan

| ID | Implementation Action | Priority | Resources | Timeframe | Responsibility |
|--|---|----------|--|--------------|---|
| <i>ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING RECOMMENDATIONS</i> | | | | | |
| OS1 | Fill the Planning Director position. | High | Already Budgeted | Short | County Manager |
| OS2 | Create and maintain a minimum staff of four positions for the Planning Department, and review workload on annual basis to ensure that the staffing level is appropriate. | High | Already Budgeted | Short | County Commissioners and County Manager |
| OS3 | Move most Ordinance related review to Planning Department once fully staffed. | High | n/a | Short | County Manager, Planning Division, Permitting & Inspections |
| OS4 | Create an Development Services Director (Assistant County Manager) position to oversee a consolidated Development Services Department with a distinct Planning Division and distinct Permitting and Inspections Division. | High | Budget for new position | Short | County Commissioner and County Manager |
| OS5 | Amend the County organizational chart to reflect the actual chain of command and departmental divisions. | High | n/a | Short | County Manager |
| OS6 | Make both the Sylva and Cashiers offices complete "One-Stop Shops". | High | Budget for additional computers and work stations | Short | County Commissioners, County Manager, Health Department, Planning Division |
| OS7 | Relocate the Planning Division to be immediately adjacent to the Permitting and Inspections Division. | Low | Relocation and construction costs | Intermediate | County Commissioners, County Manager, Permitting and Inspections Director, Planning Director |
| OS 8 | Complete an annual review of Permitting and Inspections Division staffing levels to ensure that enough field inspectors are available to keep up with an increase in construction activity. | Ongoing | Adjust budget accordingly for adjustments in staffing levels | Ongoing | County Commissioners, County Manager, Development Services Director, Permitting and Inspections Director, Planning Director |

| ID | Implementation Action | Priority | Resources | Timeframe | Responsibility |
|-----------------------------------|---|----------|--|---------------|--|
| <i>TECHNOLOGY RECOMMENDATIONS</i> | | | | | |
| T1 | Fully implement the use proprietary ROK software. | High | Already Budgeted | Intermediate | County Manager, All Departments |
| T2 | Create and maintain a minimum staff of four positions for the Planning Department, and review workload on annual basis to ensure that the staffing level is appropriate. | High | Already Budgeted | Short/Ongoing | County Commissioners and County Manager |
| <i>REGULATION RECOMMENDATIONS</i> | | | | | |
| R1 | Produce a comprehensive Land Development Ordinance that consolidates all 18 development ordinances into one document. | Medium | Budget to hire consultant to consolidate regulations | Intermediate | County Commissioners, Planning Board, County Manager, Planning Division, Permitting and Inspections Divisions, Private Consultants |
| R2 | Either have the designated department or division carry out administrative and approval functions, or amend the ordinances to designate the preferred approval authority. | High | n/a | Short | County Manager, Permitting and Inspections Division, Planning Division |
| R3 | Further illustrate approval procedures with flow charts within a comprehensive Land Development Ordinance so that all procedures can be viewed in one document. | Medium | Part of regulation consolidation budget | Short | Planning Division, Permitting and Inspections Division |
| R4 | Either amend the Mountain and Hillside Development Ordinance to reflect current administrative calculation methods or follow the calculation method currently shown in the ordinance. | High | n/a | Short | Planning Division, Permitting and Inspections Division, Planning Board, County Commissioners |

Implementation Plan

| ID | Implementation Action | Priority | Resources | Time-frame | Responsibility |
|---------------------------------------|---|----------|-----------|------------|--|
| <i>ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATIONS</i> | | | | | |
| A1 | Add a line on the New Residential/New Commercial Application for work by an unlicensed General Contractor or property owner. | High | n/a | Short | Permitting and Inspections Division |
| A2 | Formalize the Plan Review Committee by establishing guidelines for the Committee. Provide regular updates and reports to the County Manager, County Commissioners, and Planning Board about the Committee's activity. | Medium | n/a | Short | Development Services Director, Permitting and Inspections Division, Planning Division |
| A3 | Set other jurisdictional meeting dates to work with Planning Department schedule in order to avoid coverage conflicts as much as possible. | High | n/a | Short | Planning Services Division |
| A4 | Provide additional report details including turnaround times, comments/complaints/surveys, updates on training, as well as online reports of activity as a means to convey workload and increase transparency. | High | n/a | Ongoing | Development Services Director, Permitting and Inspections Division, Planning Division |
| A5 | Review the permitting and inspection fee schedule to ensure that adequate fees are being collected to reach a higher level of cost recoup. | Low | n/a | Short | County Manager, Finance Director, Development Services Director, Permitting and Inspections Division |

| ID | Implementation Action | Priority | Resources | Time-frame | Responsibility |
|---------------------------------|---|----------|--|------------|---|
| <i>TRAINING RECOMMENDATIONS</i> | | | | | |
| TR1 | Train and certify Permitting and Inspections staff in the Cashiers office to review commercial plans. | Medium | Budget for training costs | Short | County Commissioners, County Manager, Development Services Director, Permitting and Inspections Division |
| TR2 | Continue to encourage and incentivize inspectors to further pursue training and gain more levels through pay raises (sometimes referred to as a Career Development Plan). | Low | Budget for training and pay increases | Ongoing | County Commissioners, County Manager, Development Services Director, Permitting and Inspections Division |
| TR3 | Provide joint annual training sessions for all jurisdictional Planning Boards/Committees, Boards of Adjustment, and elected officials. | Medium | Budget for printing materials and training facilitator | Ongoing | County Manager, County Commissioners, Planning Board(s)/ Committee(s), Board(s) of Adjustment, Development Services Director, Planning Division, Permitting and Inspections Division, Private Consultant (for training) |



APPENDIX

In addition to the open-ended survey questions, survey respondents were given the option to write in additional comments for several questions in both the Public Survey and the Board Member Survey. Each survey participant's responses are provided below.

PUBLIC SURVEY

QUESTION 2

Your contact with the department was as a:

- Employee of Western Carolina University with construction/inspections related to 800 bed, two phase, residence hall project from 2008-2010.
- agency
- Professional Surveyor.
- School representative

QUESTION 14

My most recent contact with Code Enforcement was due to:

- Fire inspection/code requirements
- Subdivision and Plat review and procedure.
- Most recent contact was to become more informed on the processes needed to build in Jackson county. I was helped in EVERY area and all my concerns were address. In fact I left the meeting with confidence in the process and the feeling that I had a partner in Jackson county who was interest in the process and experience being the best in all possible areas. My wife and myself agreed, we made the best decision in moving to Jackson County. The quality of service and help was above and beyond any I have experienced in the typically bureaucratic process that is normally provided in dealing with an agency. I have done this in Texas many times and I am amazed to see this process done as correctly and effective as this is done in Jackson County.
- Building permits application
- Code questions
- I am a contractor and work with the code enforcement folks on a daily basis. They are all courteous and professional.
- Lack of enforcement of erosion control and other land disturbance violations The enforcement of erosion control out of the Sylva office is pitiful.

QUESTION 17

When did you first become aware of the steep slope requirements?

- I always knew the ordinance existed. I did not know how differently it was interpreted until someone applied for a permit for a manufactured home and I received two different calculations from building inspections and planning. The local newspaper shed light on the overall lack of enforcement of this ordinance.
- Depending on who I would talk to in the planning office, I would get different answers regarding the steep slope information, that is WHEN I could find someone in the office. They are very rarely in the office and not good about returning calls!
- Have not had a steep slope project to answer this question
- not applicable

QUESTION 18

If your project required coordination between Permitting and Code Enforcement and another department, such as the Health Department, how well do you feel that the departments worked with you and each other to review and inspect your project? Which specific departments were involved?

- Health Dept., Code, Planning
- Project included elevator inspections and possibly other state reviews. No known issues with communications or coordination.
- health dept. very independent, appeared to be self regulated, answers to no one, more concerned with discouraging growth than searching for a way to promote growth
- Pretty decent, just had more than one place to go and meet my needs.
- The health department takes WAY TOO LONG to come out and issue a permit. Took 3 weeks for me to get a return phone call.
- NA
- Not very well.
- I think certain staff in permitting and code enforcement are easy to work with and seem to coordinate very well with mapping. I think code enforcement could work in a more streamlined manner with the health department, TWSA, planning, and the municipalities.
- very well coordinated
- No problem with code enforcement, health department took FOREVER to come out to my job, and would not return calls in a timely manner.
- did excellent job, they coordinated with health dept., dot, my contractor, twsa.
- health department very slow , more concerned with finding a reason to decline request than to find a way to approve
- permitting and code
- The Environmental Health section of the Jackson County Health Department is neither helpful nor courteous. In fact, with few exceptions, their representatives are arrogant and obstructive. The department needs to be overhauled and new leadership put in place with a view towards SERVING the property owners of Jackson County, who pay their salaries.

QUESTION 18 CONTINUED

- n/a
- they worked well together. We worked with code enforcement and health dept
- Computer information is not working and you must go back and forth to individual departments. Environmental Health did not have information from Code Enforcement which required another trip
- Permitting/Code Enforcement and the Planning Department.
- Coordination with Health Department. Average coordination
- Permitting and Health Dept. worked well with each other. Permitting was not needed.
- Do not know if they have worked together. I assume they always have.
- The health department needs to be under the direction of the code enforcement in my opinion. The health department lacks in supervision and does not coordinate well with code enforcement.
- Permitting and Code Enforcement, Health Department. Working with was Permitting and Code Enforcement was/is a positive & pleasant experience: their attitude was/is let's do it and this is the best way to achieve your goals and comply with code. The Health Dept on the other hand seems more concerned with identifying all the rules and regs that could possibly apply to a project and then if there is any gray area contact Raleigh for an adverse interpretation. Their interpretations have adversely affected Jackson County Businesses relative to our adjacent counties.
- Permitting and Health Dept
- Good cooperation between health and permit depts
- Coordination and communication was very efficient and helpful. Health dept related to swimming pool.
- N/A
- Very smooth. The health department - septic division and Jackson County code enforcement
- I filled out an application for septic evaluation and approval exactly five weeks ago and have heard not one word. I feel this is absolutely unacceptable. The health department needs a major overhaul. They should learn about the customers needs and deadlines. I am thoroughly disgusted with the septic approval process. It is time they learned that they work for the tax paying citizens of Jackson county and are not a supreme power.

Appendix

QUESTION 18 *CONTINUED*

- Worked well- Health Department
- N/A
- Both Permitting and Code Enforcement and the Health Department. Each department has treated me in a courteous and professional manner.
- The health department's response time is a joke! Waited on them for 4 weeks. Then when inspector finished up my job at 10:30 a.m. he pulled over and parked in the shade and said his next appointment wasn't until 1 that afternoon. He said they only allowed them to schedule TWO inspections per day. Baloney is what I say to that!
- Health department was very unresponsive and took way too long to answer questions and issue permits.
- between Health and Permitting was great just wished they were in same office.
- Permitting and Health Depts. have always worked well together and with me as a builder
- I worked well with the Planning and the Health departments. Permitting and Code enforcement seemed to, or want to, control everything even though they did not seem to know the subject matter.

QUESTION 19

Please use the following space for any further comments or suggestions. Please offer at least one idea for improving these services.

- automated 24 hour inspection request line would be nice
- My experience with this unit is/was extremely positive. The individuals that we dealt with at that time were extremely professional and actually went beyond standard expectations to provide timely inspections needed for CO to meet opening of semester demands. To be honest, I couldn't have asked for better service than they provided during that project. Given my experience is limited to that project, I cannot offer a suggested improvement.
- establish smaller dept's under one roof , smaller groups to manage will provide better communication and detailed expertize
- environmental health very slow and not concerned
- The overall Health, Safety, and Welfare of Jackson County may benefit in the long term if the County could centralize its services under one roof. Aging buildings, housing important functions of our County, exist out there. A vision of a one stop shop for services should echo county wide to deliver the most beneficial services in one centralized location, all in the name of Health and Safety.
- All enforcement and permitting needs to be in ONE office.
- Can hardly ever find anyone in the planning office. The Planning Director (now previous) was rude and dismissive of my concerns.
- Continue to be mindful of individual homeowner schedules, and be readily available and helpful when things don't go as planned.
- All services begin with upper management
- More aspects of planning and code enforcement should be combined. The planning department needs to oversee everything related to plans, plat review, and ALL land use ordinances. The county needs clear job descriptions for departments and staff. Land development issues, flood plain administration, stormwater and erosion are closely related to planning. There has to be a model other jurisdictions use that works well. Jackson County needs to work to correct these issues and ensure the departments are working well together. Building Inspections needs to treat everyone the same instead of making permits easy to come by

Appendix

QUESTION 19 *CONTINUED*

for certain people that don't follow the rules and difficult for people they don't know. Jackson County is a wonderful place to live with a beautiful landscape. The county staff need to work together to ensure ordinances are followed and the landscape is protected. Jackson County is better than the good ol' boy mentality and it is time we act like it.

- The Permits Director was a pleasure to work with. He was very helpful determining what I needed to do for properly being inspected. The manner in which he conducted himself was very friendly and professional. He was also very patient. When he came by for the final inspection he was happy everything was done and thanked me for working with him again. Jackson County is very fortunate to have such a person representing this department.
- I like the way it is when I work in Cashiers, where I can do all my business at one place. In Sylva, they run you all over town. We were promised "one stop" service but health department and planning don't seem to care about that.
- all employees I dealt with where professional and courteous.
- too much under one umbrella makes management very difficult , staff too large making communication difficult
- Since the departments mentioned in this survey rely primarily on construction activity to justify their existence; their respective numbers of full-time employees should be increased or decreased according to the amount of building activity in their areas of responsibility.
- Maybe the permit dept. follow up calls on problems with inspections
- I feel that the Building Inspections office has done everything to answer any questions and always available to assist
- Quicker response time to questions and a general better attitude would be extremely helpful.
- Moving the location for all planning, code and environmental health, to one building would help people to be able to do it more quickly and efficiently. Without the hassle of running all over town to try and get something accomplished.
- All of the offices should be together in one central location. Planning, Code, and Environmental Health
- I am a Professional Land Surveyor and recently the Permits Director give very poor advice to one of my clients and myself that could have led to disciplinary actions against me by my State Board.
- So far my dealing have lacked nothing. Professional, consistent, informative, helpful. I have been a developer in my past in Texas and I only wish we could be as interested in the public and the projects as what I experienced in Jackson County. I am

QUESTION 19 CONTINUED

sure I will come up with something sometime but currently I cannot express enough on how well organized and beneficial the job is handled in the Planning Department. Very impressive, we could learn a lot from your organization.

- All land development administration should be in Planning Department
- I am very happy with my experience with the one stop permitting process.
- To treat each contractor equally, regarding code interpretation and enforcement.
- The code enforcement works well for me. I never had a problem with their services. They are helpful and give prompt service. The health department is another story!!
- Contact/survey confidentially and anonymous all Jackson County Businesses that are permitted by the Health Dept and audit the Health Dept.
- Health department response could be more timely but my engineer may be more at fault. Generally, good and responsive service.
- Always excellent service from cashiers personnel.
- I had limited dealings with the planning department, but received answers to questions that seemed to be opinion rather than actual codes/restrictions and were not able to provide information on where the answers came from. If I receive instruction on what I can or cannot do with my business, the planning department staff needs to be able to show me in the county ordinances where they're getting the information. Not make things up as they go.
- Top notch building department. They are not only fair in interpreting the codes for multiple situations, they are helpful with any questions along the way.
- Let the Cashiers code enforcement office give other departments lessons on customer service and professionalism.
- Provide more authority to Planning Department
- Transfer all land development enforcement to Planning Department
- Lag time and paperwork from Health Dept. is a 30 year old process
- The only problem I had was not always knowing which department to go to but that was not a big deal. They both have gone out of their way to help me.

Appendix

QUESTION 19 *CONTINUED*

- We've had a good working relationship with the county for decades and loom forward to continuing.
- The previous Planning Director and the Code Compliance Specialist in planning are two of the rudest public employees I have ever dealt with and I've been doing this for 35 years! they could care less if they help you or not.
- No one regularly available in planning to answer questions. Also, staff in planning was quite rude more than once. Code enforcement staff always available in the office and always courteous.
- Spend the county money more wiser like giving the inspectors a raise rather listen to a "Two Faced" ex Planing Directors Lies !
- Overstaffed in Permitting Office. Understaffed in Planning Office.
- I dont have any... it works well for me
- Based on my experience and what has been reported locally, there definitely seems to be a good 'Ol boy system in play with the Permitting and Code enforcement office. Handing out permits to unlicensed contractors and approving plats/slopes for projects that they don't seem to have the authority to do so seems strange and needs to be addressed.
- Engineering and technical items should be reviewed by Permitting & Codes Dept, not planning dept. Urban Planners generally do not have the engineering & construction experience for this.

BOARD MEMBER SURVEY

QUESTION 1

Have you dealt directly with the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department over the last 12 months?

If, yes, please describe the nature or reason for your interaction with the department.

- set up home
- permits and inspections
- 2 times: 1. hook-up of gas to my gas logs, 2. inquiry on behalf of a friend who was having difficult with a neighbor's construction of a deck. Neighbor appeared to be trying to get away with not getting appropriate permits. Permitting was on top of the situation.
- Listened to their presentations to the planning board
- Work related conversation with employees. No business interaction.
- Had to get some permits for building.
- I am on the Planning Board
- Participation by the Permits Director in the deliberations by the Jackson County (JC) Planning Board on various JC ordinance reviews/amendments.
- Planning Board
- Permitting related.

QUESTION 2

Have you dealt directly with the Planning Department over the last 12 months? If, yes, please describe the nature or reason for your interaction with the department.

- same
- I am a member of the planning board.
- I was the commissioner's representative to the Cullowhee Planning Committee. I attended community meetings and public meetings involving identification of the planning area and development of standards for the area.
- I serve on the planning board
- I have been to the planning board meetings and interacted with the planning board and their staff on ordinance development.
- Working with the Planning Director (now previous) and the Cullowhee Planning Group on land use standards.
- I am on the Planning Board
- Conversations with the Planning Director (now previous)
- Very positive.
- Member of the Planning Board.
- Planning Board
- Permitting related. Zoning questions.

QUESTION 3

Are the duties and description mentioned in the opening paragraph above (from the department website) an accurate portrayal, in your opinion, of the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department?

- Yes. Maybe assist could be stronger!
- yes, they go above and beyond there job to help!
- yes
- I believe the planning department reviews the multi-family projects.
- yes
- Yes
- Only if it is in concert with the Planning Dept and responsibilities for code enforcement are clearly identified by the County Manager.
- Yes
- yes
- Yes
- Yes
- YES
- Yes, to the best of my knowledge. However, I have not personally interfaced with the Permitting and Code Enforcement Office as a “customer” seeking any services or inspection actions.
- No. Local enforcement of Erosion Control ordinances/laws are pitiful. Additionally, it has been reported that people in charge of Permitting and Code Enforcement Department have been issuing permits to unlicensed contractors. There seems to be a “good ‘ol-boy” system in place.

QUESTION 4

What is most common Permitting and Code Enforcement problem/complaint you hear, if any?

- expensive hard to deal with
- Many feel they are being treated unfairly. But usually without specifics
- people complaining about getting caught for things not to code. If they do it right to start with, they have no complaint!
- I hear of erosion control problems. I hear people complain that if the erosion control ordinance were properly enforced the rivers would not run brown.
- 1. failure act on problems that are highly visible to the public including failure to adequately monitor the nearby apartment complex near Cullowhee resulting in sediment flowing into the Tuckacigee River. 2. failure to inspect the dumping sites for fill related to construction of R-5000 3. failure to monitor construction of the ""house on the river"" below Dillsboro. As it turns out, for the most part, permitting and code enforcement was doing its job.
- confusion on who's responsibility it is to enforce the MHDO
- Too willing to approve projects without regard of local development standards. Too willing to "bend" the rules or apply a "loose" interpretation of the rules.
- non-enforcement of ordinances, mainly due to the poor writing of the existing ordinances
- Since putting the new system in, I do not hear complaints like the old system. I hear more compliments than complaints now.
- That they do not enforce sediment control ordinance and give "passes" on building code violations to people they know
- Soil erosion
- None
- Enforcement
- Lack of enforcement of the JC codes. Lack of pro-active actions to explore complaints concerning potential code violations. Claims by that office that the situation that appears to be non-compliant with JC codes is not their responsibility.
- Erosion Control not being enforced, permits being issued inappropriately.

QUESTION 5

What is most common Planning problem/complaint you hear, if any?

- hard to deal with Inspectors
- Understanding of when one must have a permit. When constructing small structures
- to many rules,the people in this department have no mountain experience.
- none
- None
- Not enough people to handle added responsibilities
- Too few staff to adequately administer duties.
- That the Planning Dept has been stripped of essentially all its power and resulted in the County losing a master senior planner.
- Nothing has been done about the steep slope.
- None
- Slope percentage
- The proposed changes to the ordinances will restrict development in JC.
- Lack of staff, responsibilities striped.

QUESTION 6

What is your general opinion of the service provided to residents and businesses by the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department?

- From contractors and the public, the new system is much better for them.
- It depends on what you call "services". The main complaint has been lack of enforcement, which the immediate "customer" may appreciate, but the general populace might not.

QUESTION 7

What is your general opinion of the service provided to residents and businesses by the Planning Department?

- Lot of complaints of spinning wheels and nothing being done.
- I am biased since I am a member of the PB. However, I think the “service” (in this case advisement on ordinance development) rendered to JC residents has been very beneficial to the county.

QUESTION 10

Are services and enforcement offered equally to all citizens and construction professionals without favoritism?

- There is a perception that there is favoritism- I have not seen evidence of such but, perception is strong.
- I have seen no evidence to the contrary.
- It is my understanding that there is a “special relationship” between the department and Wayne Smith, a local contractor/entrepreneur.
- I hope that favoritism isn’t happening. It is hard for anyone to know the answer to this question without reviewing files or having first hand information of business dealings.
- A story from a friend of mine: in having a home construction project inspected, a fairly significant code violation issue arose. It was a mistake made by the builder. The code officer knew the home owner, who was present during the inspection. He told the home owner to “not worry about it” and left without requiring any corrective action. I am certain that had the home owner been an unknown entity to the code officer, this would not have been the case. It is this variety of favoritism that corrodes the trust our citizens have in local government.

QUESTION 10 CONTINUED

- I only know that there is a perception that there is favoritism in enforcement and permitting - companies that will generate a large fee are preferred.
- I believe this to be true.
- The actual answer based on my lack of interface as a "customer" is that I don't know the answer to this question.
- Good 'ol boy system is at play.

QUESTION 11**Are there any particular issues that you see with the way planning, permitting and code enforcement are being administered?**

- We need to continue to convey to citizens that we are here to work with and for them.
- The Planning Department should listen to the permitting and code enforcement department more they might learn something!
- There seems to be an inequity between the Planning and Code Enforcement offices where Code Enforcement has many more resources.
- The Planning Board is overly dominated by the desires of the planning department.
- Refer to my answer to questions 10. Are contractors required to be licensed? Prior to being allowed to construct projects, how are contractor's license status validated?
- I did not know of any until the May meeting and then it became apparent that there was confusion about who was enforcing the MHDO
- Not enough communication between departments. Lack of oversight by administration, not a good handle on what was happening or not happening.
- None

Appendix

QUESTION 11 CONTINUED

- The planning department plays a key role in the overall development of our community, but is under staffed. The codes enforcement office, or permitting office as it is called by staff, has many staff but is known for not getting out enough. This sends a very pro-development anti-planning message.
- I believe there are issues with enforcement of codes. Needs to be some accountability.
- Far too many personnel resources have been "diverted" from the Planning Office to the Code Enforcement Office, essentially causing the Planning Office to become over-burdened with tasking.

QUESTION 14

Permitting and Code Enforcement Departments around the state operate under the same State statutes as Jackson County. How do you think Jackson County's Department compares to those in other jurisdictions that you are familiar with, particularly neighboring counties in the region?

- pretty strict
- I've worked in Swain, Graham, Cherokee Reservation, Macon. Jackson permitting and code enforcement is head and shoulders above the rest and has gotten better in last 3-4 years.
- NA
- Not familiar with other counties.
- I have no idea.
- I have no opinion
- Unaware.
- Yes
- One of the better counties in WNC
- Somewhat similar based on topography there are some differences.
- Not qualified to comment.

QUESTION 15

Has the coordination between the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and the individual towns and cities been successful? If it has not, what are the shortcomings?

- Seems to be lack of communication and understanding of each other's role.
- I assume I have heard more from the local Town Manager than the other commissioners have. The Permits Director refused to enforce the town's minimum housing code even though the agreement between the county and towns indicate the county will enforce all ordinances. The Code Compliance Specialist, with the County Planning Office, emails his letters to the Town Manager who then puts them on town stationery. Rather than asking Code Enforcement to look at dilapidated structures, the Town Manager and Town Attorney look for other ways to accomplish demolition.
- It's an important partnership, as our towns are too small to handle this in house.
- Not certain. I know many planning board actions do not affect towns and incorporated communities.
- Not qualified to comment.

QUESTION 16

Has the coordination between the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and the Planning Department been successful? If it has not, what are the shortcomings?

- Answered above ?
- They had a Planning Director that thought he was above the rest, and had a hard time telling the truth!
- Neither department claimed responsibility for enforcing the Mountain and Hillside Development Ordinance.
- Putting Code Enforcement with Building Inspection was supposed to provide a "one-stop" service to the public. Health Department never placed Environmental Health inspectors in the "one-stop".
- confusion on MHDO
- Confusion on the part of the general public as to whom is in charge of what. The lack of oversight created a system where no one knew who's responsibility it was to perform certain tasks.

Appendix

QUESTION 16 CONTINUED

- The primary example being the apparent confusion over who enforces what.
- Vague ordinances which makes enforcement difficult on some issues.
- There has been an openly stated disagreement between the Code Office, the Planning Office and the County Manager concerning roles and responsibilities for quite some time. I personally don't understand why the lines of communication have been so deficient. In any organization there should be well defined roles and responsibilities as well as lines of authority. I find it incredible that these apparent conflicts have lasted for as long as they appear to have lasted and resulted in the resignation of the Planning Office Director over these unresolved issues. SOMEBODY NEEDS TO BE IN CHARGE AND HAVE THE INTESTINAL FORTITUDE TO TAKE ACTION WITHOUT AN OVERBEARING SENSITIVITY TO BEING "POLITICALLY CORRECT". The continued "festering" of these issues is detrimental to the JC residents and represents a failure in the JC governing bodies to do their job.

QUESTION 17

In your opinion, should the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department and Planning Department be organized (select one/why?):

- let the current members of Planning Department in Permitting and Code enforcement it would go all to hell!
- Given the ordinances are both planned and enforced by each office, a singular/unified approach would be the best use of resources and also ensure everything is covered.
- Tough question. Planning already does some functions that would have to be described as permitting. There is enough overlap that combining departments might be more efficient. Plus it might help avoid the problem of not knowing which department is enforcing a particular ordinance.
- Better coordination
- separate departments with dual review. A checks and balance system.
- I believe it works better that way.

QUESTION 17 CONTINUED

- I don't have a strong opinion on this, but the 2 offices should at least be working in harmony with one another, rather than in silos.
- They go hand in hand and need to be able to work together to see the big picture.
- This would seem to be more cost effective and coordinated.
- Planning is planning and code enforcement is code enforcement - they can easily be separated if the "turf" wars are settled..The Planning Office should concern itself with creating and maintaining "plans" (the ordinances themselves) and the Enforcement Office should then enforce the content of the ordinances. It's really that simple.

QUESTION 18

Is there an expectation that certain property owners and/or contractors should to be dealt with by the County Manager or the head of the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department?

- Why should they?
- Not sure, but should be uniform no matter who it is
- Depends on the circumstances and the issues involved.
- I have no insight to this topic.

QUESTION 19

If such an expectation exists, how is compliance assured? Communicated to staff?

- don't know
- Everyone should go through the same process.
- This would be up to the County Manager how this is executed.
- I have no insight to this topic.

QUESTION 20

In Jackson County, there are four residential inspectors handling 12 to 15 inspections per day or an average of 25 to 30 inspections per day per office. Is this staffing level adequate based on the county's goals for service provision? Explain.

- Can not say or justify an answer.
- They have to travel long distances and deal with the non-licenses contractors. They need a raise
- I assume it is, but I cannot answer this question with much knowledge.
- I don't really know
- There may be a need for additional inspectors. But I would like a breakdown from the code officer if this is really necessary or not.
- Not sure what number of inspectors in the past when work load was higher or lower
- It appears to be at this time but there may be some required changes in the future based on growth and other factors.
- I don't know what the county's "goals" are.

QUESTION 21

How can the Board of Commissioners and County administration provide more direct support to the Permitting and Code Enforcement Department?

- Clarify our expectations of the dept. and then support their decisions.
- “Give them a raise and let them keep up the good work.
- Quit doing unneeded audits that cost money that can be used for other needs.”
- Clear communications about who is responsible for what.
- Clarify the ordinances they are asked to enforce.
- If we have staff showing favoritism to certain contractors, individuals, it may be necessary to terminate dismiss him/them.
- Clarification of enforcement of MHDO and other new ordinances
- more oversight and review. Availability of staff attorney to review major compliance decisions in advance. Have available most modern support software.
- I think it is adequate at this time. Keep each other well informed.
- Communication and regular supervision
- More scheduled briefings to county manager.
- By giving them the needed support, communication, and input to properly do their job.
- The staffing of the Enforcement Office has been increased dramatically in the last several years. I don't know what other assets they might need.

QUESTION 22

How can the Board of Commissioners and County administration provide more direct support to the Planning Department?

- Same as above.
- They need Audited.
- Clear communications about expectations and guidance on the will of the Board.
- Don't know.
- The Planning Director left Jackson County because he felt he was getting no respect, was being ignored by the County Manager. The County Manager was unaware of the Planning Director 's feelings. The Planning Director would still be here if the County Manager had given him the time of day. We must assure that communication between the manager and planning director is two-way and supportive!
- provide funds for landslide study for slope ordinance
- More oversight and review. Availability of staff attorney to review major compliance decisions in advance. Have adequate staffing.
- I think it is adequate at this time. Keep each other well informed.
- Staffing
- More scheduled briefings to county manager
- Possibly quarterly meetings and an openness that brings about clarity and cooperation.
- The staffing of the Planning Department has been dramatically decreased in the last several years to the point of being overburdened. Increased staffing is desperately needed.
-

QUESTION 23

What, in your opinion, is the most important Permitting and Code Enforcement issue facing Jackson County at this time?

- Continuing educating the public on importance of their mission
- People accusing them of things they haven't done.
- Getting a new senior planner.
- favoritism to one or more individuals
- In addition to what they are now doing, enforcing regulations of MHDO
- Enforcement and administration of development standards.
- I would like to have input from that department on a recommendation.
- Erosion and sediment control and steep slope building regulations
- Accountability for who is following up on enforcement on all ordinance
- The department having the power to enforce the ordinances currently in place and improvement of the ordinances.
- Ordinances need to be clarified so proper enforcement can be followed up or issued. Also enforcement needs to be clarified if it's within the Planning Dept. or the Code and Enforcement Dept.
- The perception (and possibly fact) that "selective' enforcement of the JC codes has been a common practice of that office.

QUESTION 24

What, in your opinion, is the most important Planning issue facing Jackson County at this time?

- Same
- Better people, a Planning Director that tell the truth.
- MHDO and IDO
- The revision of the Mountain and Hillside Development Ordinance and the revision of the Cell Tower ordinance.
- getting a competent Planning Director with whom the County Manger will interact.
- Cell tower issues and clarifying some issues with the MHDO
- Creating uniform ordinances that are consistent.
- Mountain and Hillside Development Ordinance.
- Transparency perception by the public.
- Lack of a planning director and the need for a unified development ordinance.
- Cell Tower Communications. Many areas in Jackson County with limited access to reach emergency services. On the same level, the completion of the landslide studies in the county. Both are major safety issues.
- The lack of appropriate staffing and a clear "vision" of where JC wants to be in 50 years.

QUESTION 30

What are your top three suggestions for improving the development approval, inspections, and enforcement process?

- Less Zoning
- Be consistent, fair, and swift in providing services.
- If you look at surrounding counties we are in the top of the class for how they perform there jobs and enforce the codes. I don't think there is much to improve except more support from commissioners.
- A unified office
- Revise the ordinances to make them easier to understand and follow.
- 1. Combine planning, code enforcement and building inspection under the new planning director, 2. customer service training for all inspections and code enforcement staff. Staff should not bring irate citizens to the county manager to deal with issues as happened last month., 3. determine if an atmosphere of acceptance of lax behavior and failure to deal fairly and equally with all citizens prevails in the department and deal with it accordingly.
- better communication with the planning department. clarification of some fuzzy MHDO issues. working together.
- Consistency, compliance, customer service
- Have them enforce the ordinances, fairly and equally. Less politics, more work.
- Follow up on who is responsible to enforce ordinances. Communicate with administration.
- 1) quick responses to permits, approvals, and inspections. 2) clarity on enforcement issues and it's processes 3) Follow up to insure compliance of enforcement.
- 1. Clear lines of authority/responsibility. 2. Appropriate staffing in each functional area. 3. Stable guidance from the Commissioners (unfortunately they are up for election too often)

QUESTION 31

Please use the following space for any further comments or suggestions.

- Seems the Planning Department is declaring war on the Permitting and Code Enforcement department. Thanks to the Planning Director (now previous) and Media.
- The Planning Department has misrepresented the revisions that the Planning Board have made to one of the ordinances. I think they have subverted the democratic process. Decisions purportedly made by the planning board are being made by the department, and not the board.
- I think they are all doing a good job and make the best better.
- Thank you. Any further questions please feel free to contact me.
- Stability in the resources of and authority of the various JC offices is unfortunately a function of the political process. The lack of a stable, long-term vision for the county that is apolitical exacerbates the resolution of all issues.



