CITY OF
BAINBRIDGE ISLAND

CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
Tuesday, June 20, 2017
280 Madison Avenue N,
Bainbridge Island, Washington

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL - 7:30 PM

Mayor:	Val Tollefson	
Deputy Mayor:	Ron Peltier	Wayne Roth
	Sarah Blossom	Michael Scott
	Kol Medina	Roger Townsend

2. AGENDA APPROVAL OR MODIFICATION/CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

3. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

4. PRESENTATION

A. 7:35 PM Latimore Assessment of Development Review Process, AB 17-090 - Planning (Pg. 2)

5. FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER - 8:55 PM

6. ADJOURNMENT - 9:00 PM

City of Bainbridge Island
City Council Agenda Bill

CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND

PROCESS INFORMATION	
Subject: 7:35 PM Latimore Assessment of Development Review Process, AB 17-090 - Planning (Pg. 2)	Date: 6/20/2017
Agenda Item: PRESENTATION	Bill No.: 17-090
Proposed By: Planning and Community Development	Referrals(s):

BUDGET INFORMATION		
Department: Planning	Fund:	
Expenditure Req:	Budgeted?	Budget Amend. Req?

REFERRALS/REVIEW		
:	Recommendation:	
City Manager: Yes	Legal: Yes	Finance:

DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND

The City has engaged the Latimore Company, LLC, to assess the development review process and permit review performance of the Department of Planning & Community Development and to make findings and provide recommendations for process improvements that advance development review and project workflow predictability, efficiency, and collaboration of City services.

The *City of Bainbridge Island Development Review Assessment Findings and Recommendations* report includes a discussion on the current development review workflow process; public feedback on the development review process; baseline permit review timelines; identification of development review process strengths and constraints; and recommendations for development review process and project workflow improvements.

The next steps will be to implement the recommendations by: improving codes, design standards, development review application procedures, forms, handouts, checklists, and electronic submittal requirements; utilizing SmartGov project tracking software features; enhancing online development review project information; addressing roles and responsibilities in development review processes; establishing project level of service standards; measuring workflow project schedules; and enhancing collaboration.

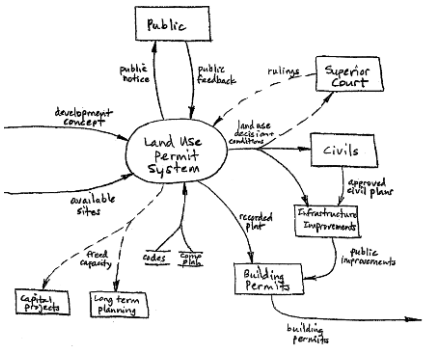
In all, the development review project work program contains 12 transformational elements. Near and long-term work program priorities, project schedules/timelines, and projected implementation costs need to be identified.

To assist with next steps, a Citizen Customer Advisory Board (CCAB) or Task Force will be formed (consisting of 10 members) who together represent the development industry (architects, developers, contractors) and community. The Task Force will also include a representative of the Design Review Board, Planning Commission, and the City Council to provide feedback and support in the implementation of the Development Review Assessment report recommendations.

RECOMMENDED ACTION/MOTION
Discussion.

ATTACHMENTS:

	Description	Type
🗋	COBI Development Review Assessment Findings and Recommendation Report, June 14, 2017	Presentation



The Latimore Company, LLC

11805 Ingraham Road
Snohomish Washington 98290
(360) 805-2999
klatimore@latimorecompany.com
latimorecompany.com

June 14, 2017

City of Bainbridge Island
Development Review Assessment
Findings and Recommendations



Summary

To move the City of Bainbridge Island forward toward newly updated Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and high priority land use actions, the City Manager and Director of Planning & Community Development called for an assessment of the development review process.

The Latimore Company, an expert in local government permit process in Washington State, produced this assessment of the process and the many forces acting on it in this remarkably picturesque community 8 miles from downtown Seattle.

The assessment concluded the Bainbridge Island development review process boasts 6 strengths and recommends 18 improvements to redesign the way the City's department staff, advisory boards, committees, and applicants work together to produce a top quality built environment, predictable timelines, consistent results, and high customer satisfaction.

The pacing aspects of project review are identified. Strong development demand, Island ecology, evolving regulations, customer service standards, a lag between Comprehensive Plan updates and adopted code regulations, and a lag between development volumes and staffing combine to create a challenging work environment, applicant calls for more durable guidance and predictability, and a sense from some in City Leadership and in community survey results that results on the ground are not what was intended. The "physics" of how these forces affect the results, timelines, and atmosphere of development review are explained.

The Improvement Recommendations create a closed-loop process where City Leadership, Department Staff, and Applicants guide, set, and manage levels of service, methodically pace Comprehensive Plan implementation into practice, and provide new ways for the City and its Applicants to establish more durable understandings up-front, efficiently respond to staff correction comments, and capitalize on online technology.

Next Steps finalize an implementation schedule. The Latimore Company recommends a 12-point work program for timely transformation, expertise, and steady reinforcement to bring this high-performance development review process to the City of Bainbridge Island.

Table of Contents

Summary 2
Introduction 5
Introduction 5
The Latimore Company, LLC 6
Assessment Scope 8
The Theory of Constraints 9
Baseline Process Specification 9
A System of Iteration 10
Assessment Approach 13
Current Process 14
Current Process 14
Planning 15
Development Engineering 16
Building 17
Public Feedback on the Process 18
Public Feedback on the Development Review Process 18
Applicant Messages 18
Open House Messages 19
Online Survey Messages 21
Respondent Perspectives 21
Respondent Messages 23
Baseline Measurements 30
Baseline Measurements 30
Site Plan and Design Review Approval 30
New Single-Family Home Permits 32
Findings and Recommendations 34
Findings and Recommendations 34
Strengths 34
Passion for Bainbridge Island 34
Building Inspector Service 35
Fast Track 35
Tracking System 35
Redlines 35
Passion to Improve the Process 36
The Constraint 37
The Constraint 37
The Physics of the Challenge 38
Complexity of Review and Current Development Demand 38
Staffing Lag 40
Exceptional Customer Service Policy 45
Instability 45

Applicant Effect ... 46
Code Lag ... 46
Improvement Recommendations ... 49
Improvement Recommendations ... 49
Rebuild the Process ... 50
1. Assemble Templates, Procedures, Checklists. Apply Lean principles. ... 50
2. Build an Array of Handouts for Citizen/Customer Advisory Board Comment, Development Review Committee Approval, and Applicant/Staff Use ... 51
3. Guide SmartGov© Enhancement, Administrator, and Public Works Integration. Pull this together. ... 51
4. Launch the Development Review Committee (DRC) and Robust Process Change Methods. ... 51
5. Guide Project Manager Implementation and Integrated Letters. ... 52
6. Implement LOS and % Time Elapsed Timeline Management ... 52
7. Ahead: Real-time Completeness Determination and Review Debriefings. ... 53
New Applicant Tools and Options ... 54
1. Launch Citizen/Customer Advisory Board (CCAB) and Facilitate Discussions. Obtain Customer Perspectives of LOS, Handouts, Procedures. ... 54
2. Guide/Develop Parcel Report Capability. Get the Word Out ... 55
3. Offer Pre-Development Consultations. ... 57
4. Expand Electronic Submittal Options. ... 58
5. Expand Real-Time Progress Visibility through SmartGov© ... 59
6. Ahead: SFR Site Layout Option. ... 59
Comprehensive Plan Implementation ... 60
1. Comprehensive Plan implementation Project Management and Pace Monitoring. ... 60
2. Robust Procedural Incorporation. ... 60
Measure and Manage Results and LOS ... 61
1. Establish and Proactively Manage Levels of Service Standards ... 61
2. Establish Initial Plan Review LOSs based on Current Performance. ... 61
3. Measure Results (On the Ground, Actual LOSs, CCAB Feedback) ... 62
Enabling through The Latimore Company ... 62
Conclusion ... 64
Conclusion and Next Steps ... 64
Thank You ... 64
Appendix ... A-1
Appendix ... A-1
Online Survey Responses ... A-1
Question 3: How satisfied are you with the City regulations governing growth, development and construction on Bainbridge Island? ... A-1
Question 5: How satisfied are you with the design, character, appearance and quality of the development on Bainbridge Island? ... A-13
Question 9: How satisfied are you with the City's Planning and Community Development Department (Planning, Development Engineering and Building) development review service? ... A-22
Question 11: Please add any feedback or suggestions you'd like us to understand about the City's Planning and Community Development Department development review service: ... A-30

Introduction

Introduction

Residents of The City of Bainbridge Island are passionate about their island.

Wholly encompassing Bainbridge Island since Winslow annexation in the 1990s, this City is a remarkable combination of scenic vistas and Puget Sound shorelines, local shopping areas, forested landscapes, and large lots with basic infrastructure, 8 miles from downtown Seattle.

It's a city where residents travel two maximum-visibility connection corridors, Agate Pass Bridge to the west, Washington State Ferries to the east (Figure 1).

Where new residents, drawn to island charm and fueled by a strong economic recovery, are building dream houses and clearing longtime forested lands.

Where generational families are watching the familiar transform, shopping centers, schools, municipal buildings, and apartment complexes erected, and bridge and ferry lineups grow.

There is a tension on the island to preserve this unique haven yet build homes and services for new residents eager to live the Bainbridge Island life.

At the center of these forces is the land use and development permit process.

One by one, permit and land use decisions are made by the Department of Planning & Community Development per the City's development codes and state regulations that trigger extensive evaluations and treatments for environmental protections, shoreline management, and growth management regulations.

It is a complex regulatory environment on an island where added layers are routinely triggered. Many citizens actively comment on pending projects, construction projects are scrutinized, and sometimes do not want any more development at all. The Department has experienced significant turnover and relies greatly on its few longtime experts with the island, its municipal code, and its development review process.

City planners and leaders just completed a Comprehensive Plan update. It includes specific policies and priority actions to sort out how the many entities of land use review work together to create a built environment worthy of Bainbridge Island while preserving island character. A tall order.

The City Manager and Director of Planning & Community Development called for The Latimore Company, an expert in local government permit process, to assess the situation and guide the City forward toward its goals.

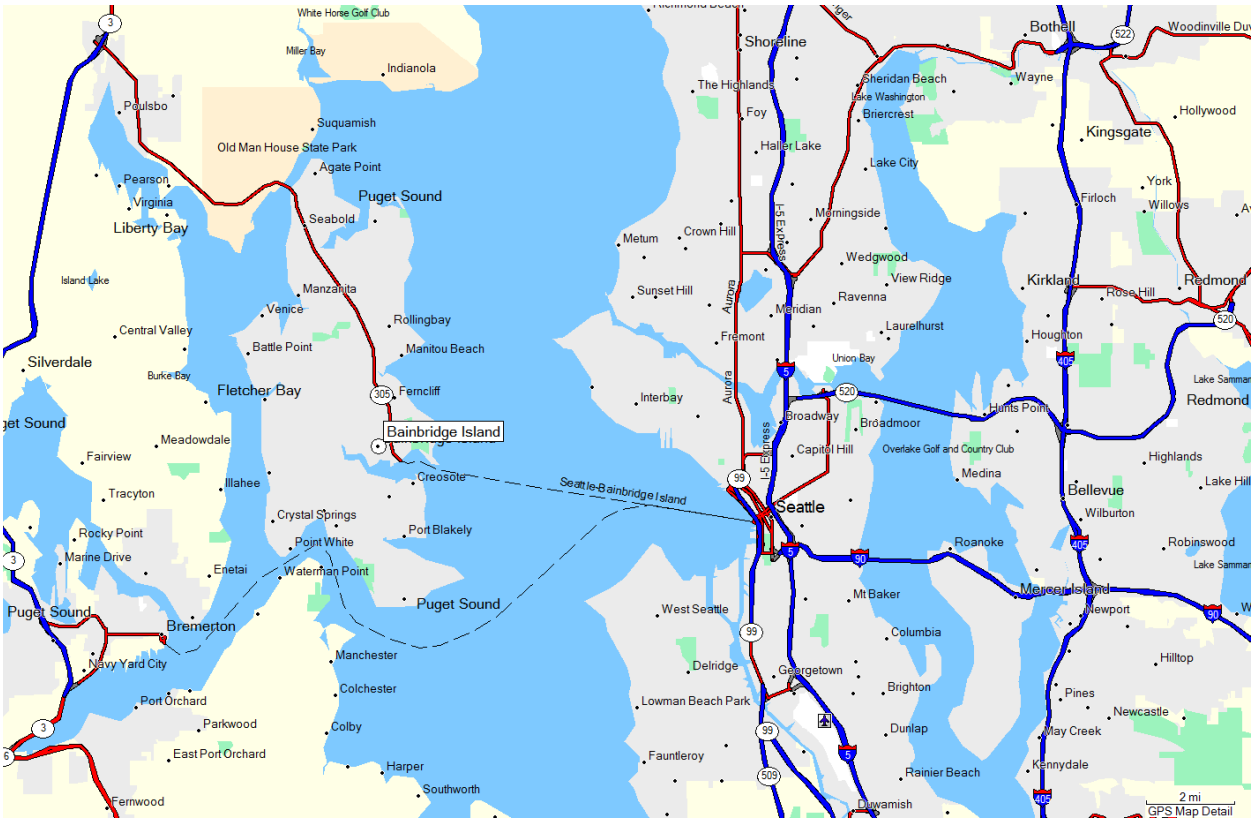


Figure 1 - Bainbridge Island Proximity and Corridors

The Latimore Company, LLC

The Latimore Company, LLC (TLC) is a community government consulting firm located in nearby Snohomish County that is dedicated to improving the predictability, efficiency and collaboration of permit operations. TLC has consulted for 23 Washington State jurisdictions (Figure 2) to boost permit system performance and is the author of *Best Practices for Local Government Permitting* for the Washington Governor's Office of Regulatory Assistance.

Its founder, Kurt Latimore, led the deployment and refinement of the Model Permit System, a package of administrative processes proven effective at streamlining permit application preparation and review, through the Economic Development Council of Snohomish County in 2003. This work was the recipient of the Puget Sound Regional Council's *Vision 2020* award.

Kurt is a frequent speaker at industry conferences, such as the Washington Association of Building Officials (WABO), the American Planning Association (APA), and the Washington State Hearings Examiners. He is a continuing education instructor for WABO and New York State's Finger Lakes Building Officials Association.

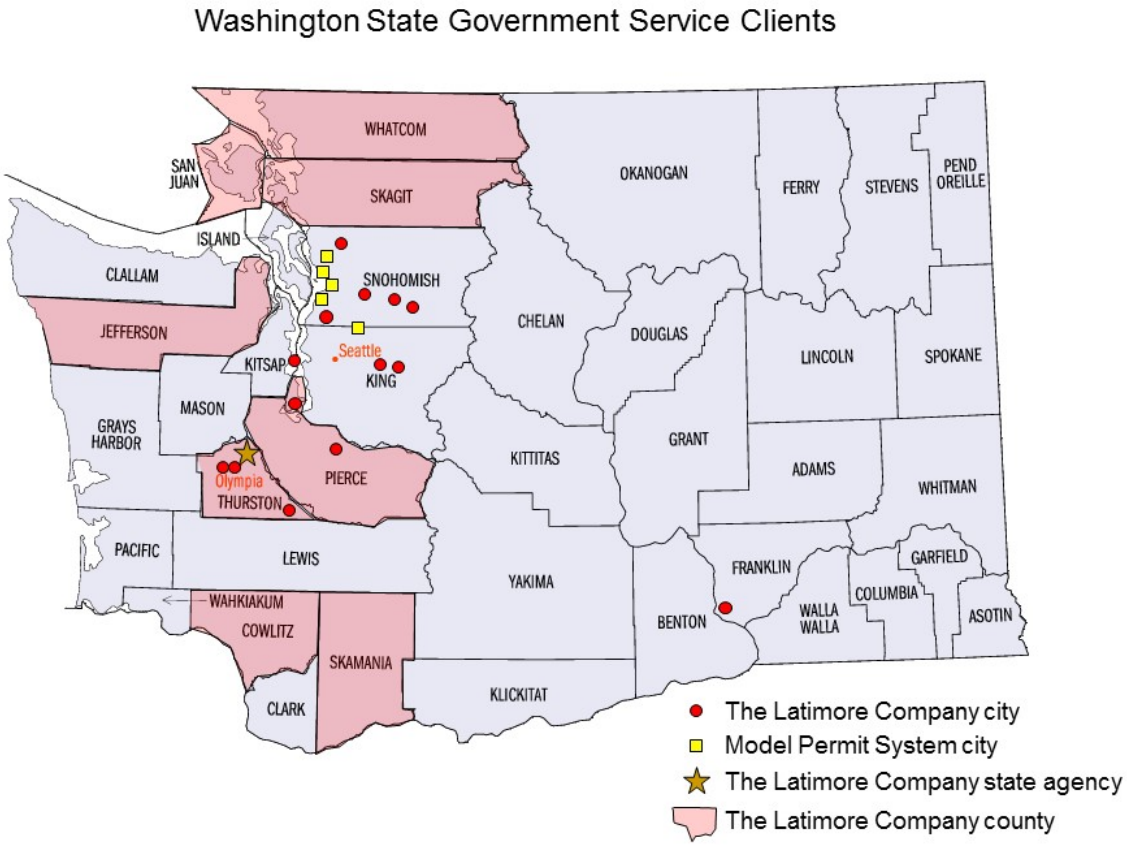


Figure 2 - The Latimore Company Communities

Assessment Scope

The scope for this assessment (Figure 3, red) is the receipt, review, and decision of development permit applications. This includes:

- Land use actions,
- Civil plan approval, and
- Building permits.

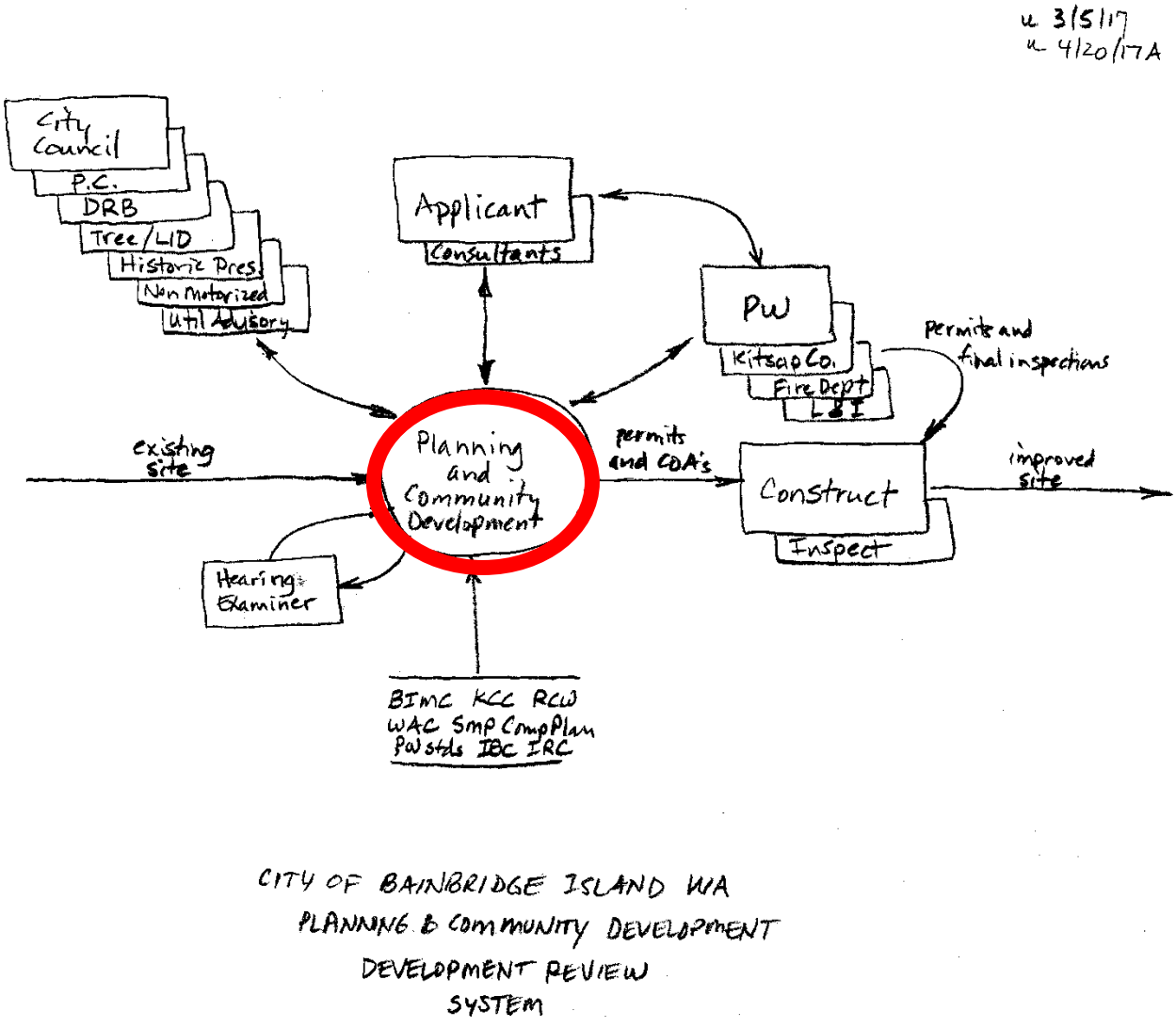


Figure 3 - Assessment Scope

Outside of the development review assessment scope (rectangles in Figure 3) are:

- Comprehensive planning, ordinance development, rezones and Council actions beyond final plat acceptance.
- Advisory committee functions beyond their interconnections with development review,
- Capital improvement projects (CIPs).
- Construction and inspection.
- Code enforcement.
- Mechanics of interactions with outside agencies, the County or Court system.
- Mechanics of applicant design or team structure.
- Personnel assessment.
- Fees, fee structure or cost recovery.

The Theory of Constraints

Underlying efficiency recommendations is a proprietary methodology that includes Eliyahu Goldratt's *Theory of Constraints*. Goldratt, a physics professor, found that by modeling organizations and their objectives as physical systems (like gravity, water flow or electromagnetism) the model predicted dramatic performance improvement was achievable. Organizations throughout the world are realizing these results. Its fundamental premise is that within any system is a constraint, rarely more than one, that generally remains consistent until changed by market forces or systematic change. Once this constraint (a particular resource, policy or skill) is understood, improvements are focused accordingly and thus elevate the performance of the entire system. In combination with *Lean* principles (eliminate waste, provide visual controls, single-piece flow, etc.), powerful tools are wielded that dramatically improve results.

Baseline Process Specification

Tom DeMarco's *Structured System Specification* method was used to depict baseline City of Bainbridge Island processes. This effective method focuses on the data that flows between process steps, noting that any system at its conceptual level performs a series of transformations to incoming data (and/or raw materials) to produce new data (and/or a product). By focusing on the data as it is transformed by internal system processes, it can be visualized whether there are smooth transitions or whether tangential, variable or non-value-added states are present along the way, signaling improvement potential.

The method uses a series of oval "bubbles" and arrow "data flows" to depict processing steps and the data in and out of each step. Implicitly, a step can begin once its first data-flow input is received, but cannot complete before its last input is received. Task performance is highest when processing begins after all inputs are received. Processing steps (bubbles) are numbered

uniquely and may decompose into finer working-level steps, e.g. Process 1 breaks into Processes 1.1, 1.2… and so on. There is a loose sense of time in the diagrams as data generally flows left to right and process numbers generally increase in kind. Dashed arrows or bubbles indicate data-flows or processes which only occur sometimes or are a lesser-chosen alternative among options. Processing steps outside the scope of this analysis are shown as rectangles for reference.

A System of Iteration

Regulation in Washington State takes many forms, most of them implemented locally, e.g. by the City of Bainbridge Island.

- There are land use codes to accomplish the goals and policies of growth management and the local comprehensive plan.
- Engineering standards to harmonize the function, look, feel, and maintenance of municipal infrastructure and connections across the City.
- Building and fire safety codes to ensure safely occupied structures with reliable escape provisions and stable site grading.
- Health codes governing water, sewage disposal, and various commercial settings.
- Some Bainbridge Island developments add flood hazard determinations, Shoreline Substantial Development Permits or Exemptions, Variances, State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) threshold determinations, Critical Area Ordinance (CAO) protections, Hydraulic Project Approvals, Corps of Engineers approvals, and more.

Projects large and small can trigger multiples of these approvals and subtle changes to project layout can add or subtract whole regulatory layers.

It's incumbent on the permit applicant to know and comply with these regulations.

Few applicants are experts across all these codes and standards. Large-scale applicants hire or contract with teams of professionals in architecture, engineering, wetland biology, urban planning, geotechnical, habitat management, and other specialties to design project layouts to suit the goals of their clients and assemble the applications, reports and drawings for construction and permit approvals. Some go it alone.

What typically unfolds is a system of iteration (Figure 4).

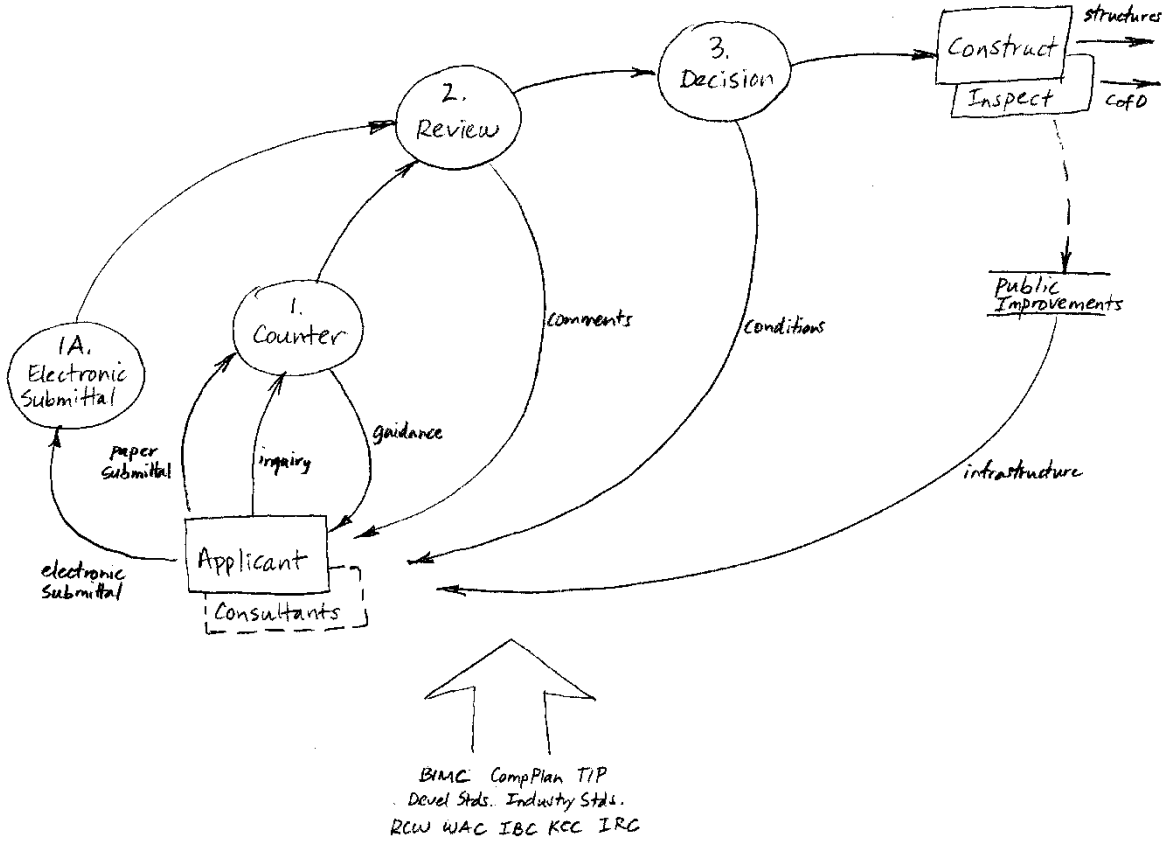


Figure 4 - A System of Iteration

As the applicant (or applicant team as described above) matures a development design, there are typically iterations to optimize the layout to yield the best results for the intended use: the best residential lots, tenant sites, street appeal, etc. Often, restrictions of one or more of the development codes have to be worked through to preserve the best result: wetlands or forest groves preserved, traffic flows altered or mitigated with improvements, stormwater detained, architectural requirements incorporated and so on. Some may be overlooked. Some applicants request optional counter or pre-application meetings to gauge sufficiency of these treatments from City reviewers. Some do not.

At the time of formal application "intake," these many drawings, reports, and forms are assembled and presented at City Hall for submittal. Building permits may be submitted electronically in some cases.

The City is organized much the same way as applicants, decomposing what the applicant assembled into the salient documents for each reviewer, such as these examples:

- Planning reviews land use, signage, shoreline, and other environmental facets of the design, and coordinates reviews with the design review board and other City boards and committees as may apply to a development under the municipal code.

- Development Engineering reviews the survey, stormwater, roadway encroachments, infrastructure, and connections as well as land clearing and grading under the building code.
- Building reviews the vertical work: structures, retaining walls, emergency provisions, and the like.
- Kitsap County reviews the well, onsite septic, commercial kitchen, pools, addressing and related environmental health systems.
- The Fire Department reviews hydrant, alarm, sprinkler, and related life safety provisions.

For all but the simplest of projects, the many who build the design and the many who review it find or miss problems or disagree on adequacy of various details.

Rather than simply denying such an application, City reviewers compile comment letters from their individual reviews for the applicant citing missing, non-compliant, or vague aspects of the submittal, giving the applicant an opportunity to resolve the issues with a resubmittal.

The applicant team specialists then address the issues in their respective facets of the design. The result may be cohesive or changes in one area might undermine another. Depending on the City process, the resubmittal is presented in parts or in whole. Bainbridge Island planners, development engineers, and plans examiners typically work directly with their applicant counterparts to resolve submittal issues or ambiguities under their respective code.

This cycle continues until City and applicant agree on a compliant design. Then, either City staff, the hearings examiner, or City Council for final actions, issue a decision. Decisions typically include conditions of approval (COAs) for projects (e.g. construction hours, downstream permit requirements, and agreements to implement the approved design). Once in construction, a series of inspections and correction notices iterate away any departures from approved plans.

The larger the project, the more times the applicant and City team go through this pattern. If a building triggers site improvements, civil plan review is added. If civil plan review triggers a land use action, preliminary and final approval are added. Each step typically includes this iteration. Pre-application cycles add to this as well.

So, when viewed start to finish there is a great deal of rework and the time it takes to cycle through this adds up. While this system ultimately reaches success—the tracking system lists only 229 denied or withdrawn applications over the years vs. thousands of Bainbridge Island applications that were found compliant—applicants must plan for the unforeseen and the timelines that result.

Assessment Approach

The assessment examined the process from several dimensions. First, the basic process and its variations were examined through a course of City staff interviews that engaged most department personnel.

City staff perspectives were supplemented with:

- Timeline measurements.
- Direct feedback from applicants.
- Public feedback from an Open House to comment on the permit process.
- An anonymous online survey.
- Feedback from the:
    - Design Review Board.
    - Planning Commission.
    - City Council.

TLC analyzed these insights, using its proprietary methods and knowledge of processes and settings across the State, and compiled results in this report of findings and recommendations.

Current Process

Current Process

Today's development review process in the City of Bainbridge Island is depicted by a network of process models that capture the primary interfaces of the process (Figure 5) and the essence of the three main phases of permit review: Planning (Figure 6), Development Engineering (Figure 7) and Building (Figure 8).

The Department of Planning & Community Development works with the City's Design Review Board, Committees, Hearings Examiner, City Council, Planning Commission, Codes, Standards, Agencies, other City Departments, the Public, Applicants and their Consultants, to govern development review applications that add improvements to existing properties.

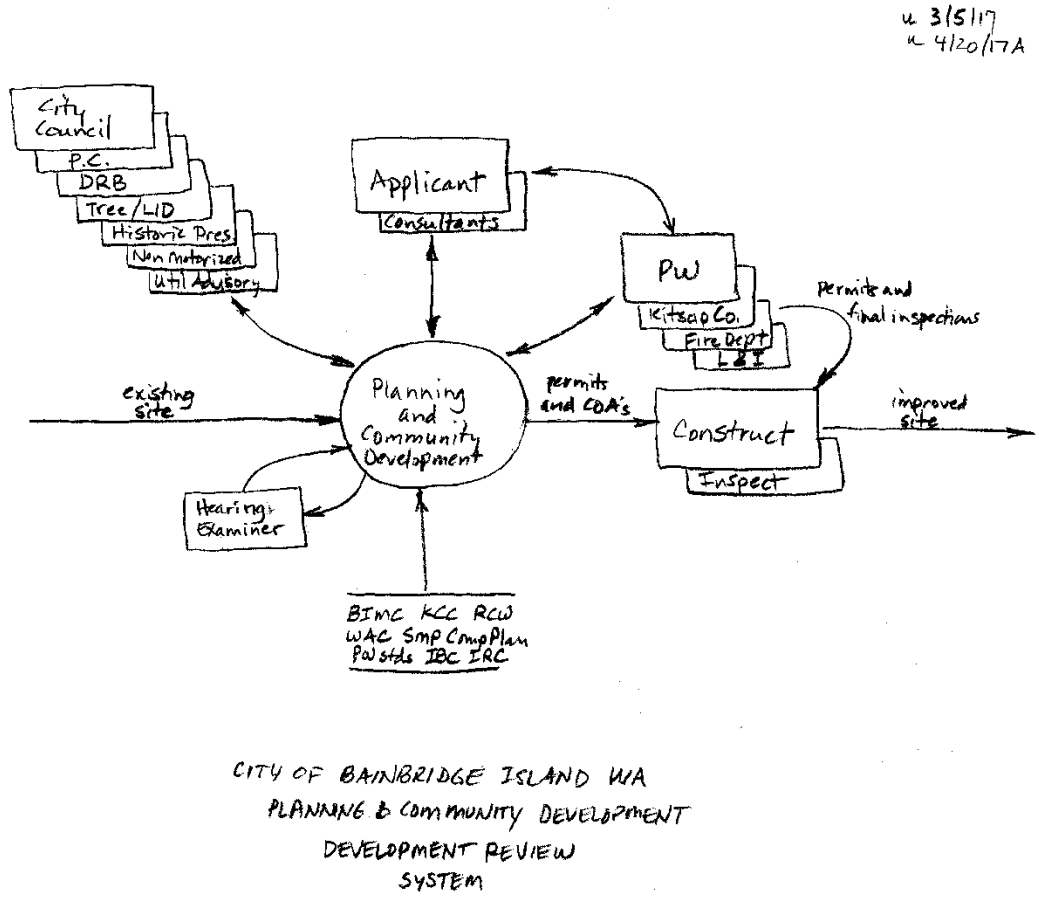


Figure 5 - Top Level View of the Planning & Community Development Process

Planning

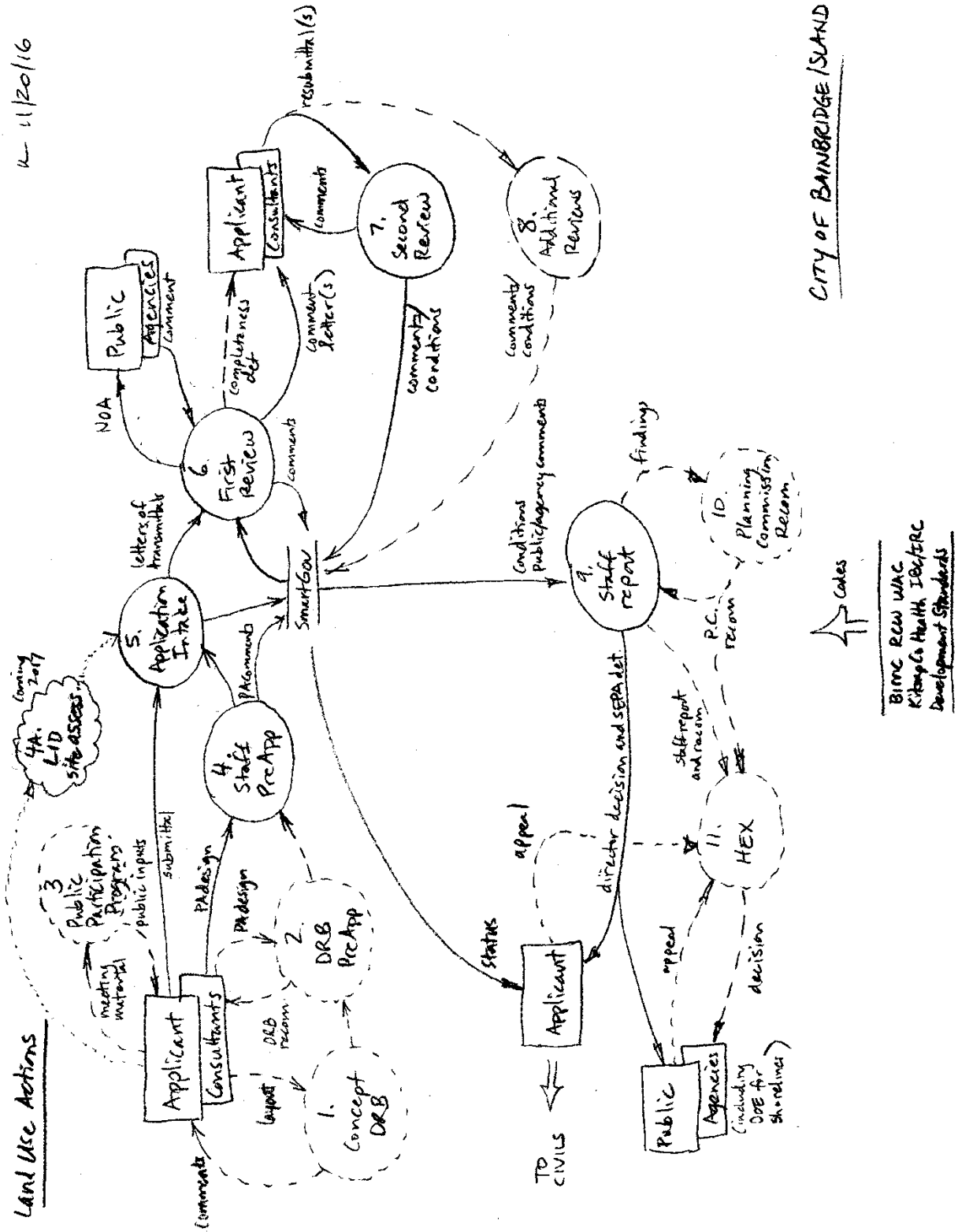


Figure 6 - Planning Review

Development Engineering

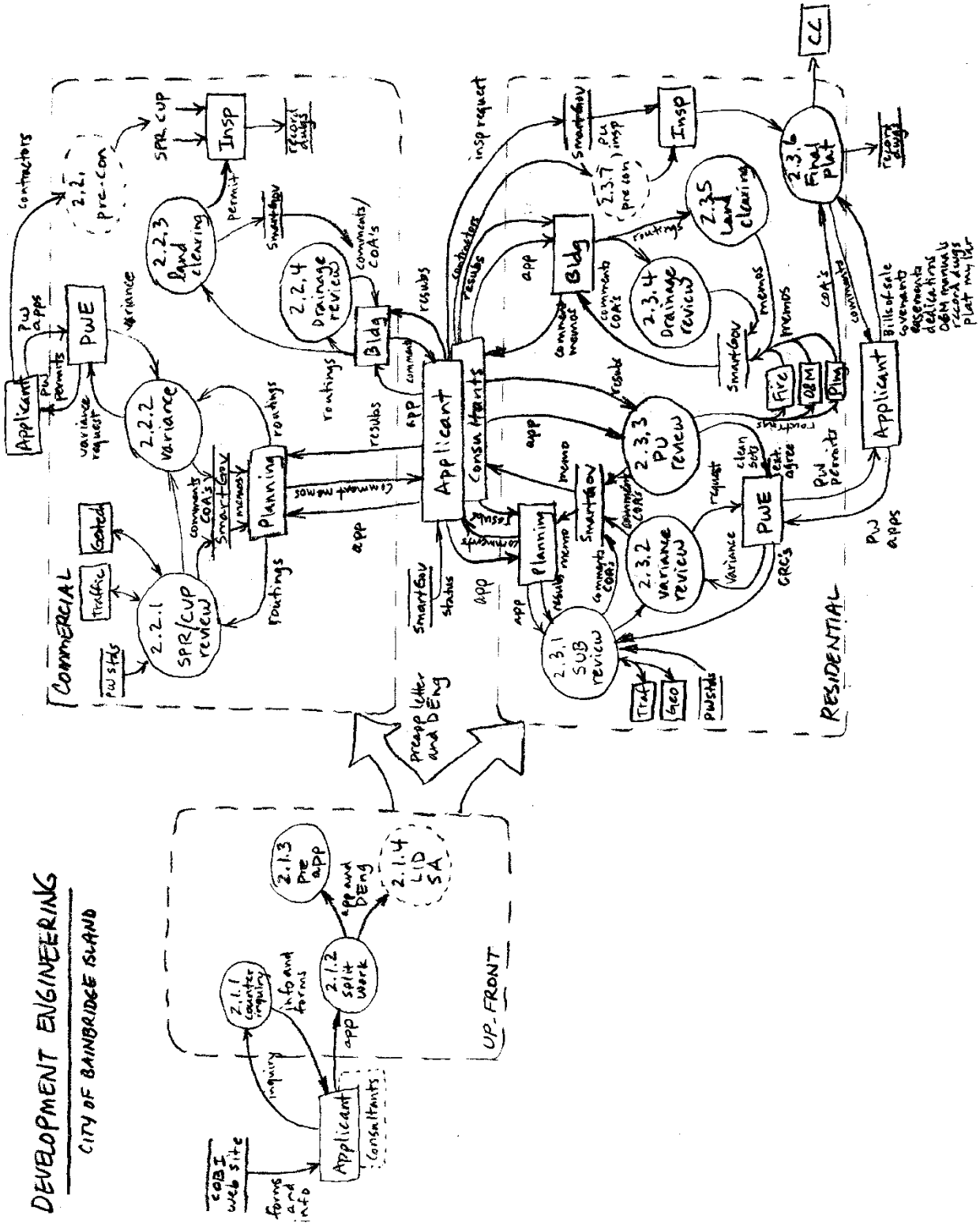


Figure 7 - Development Engineering Review

Building

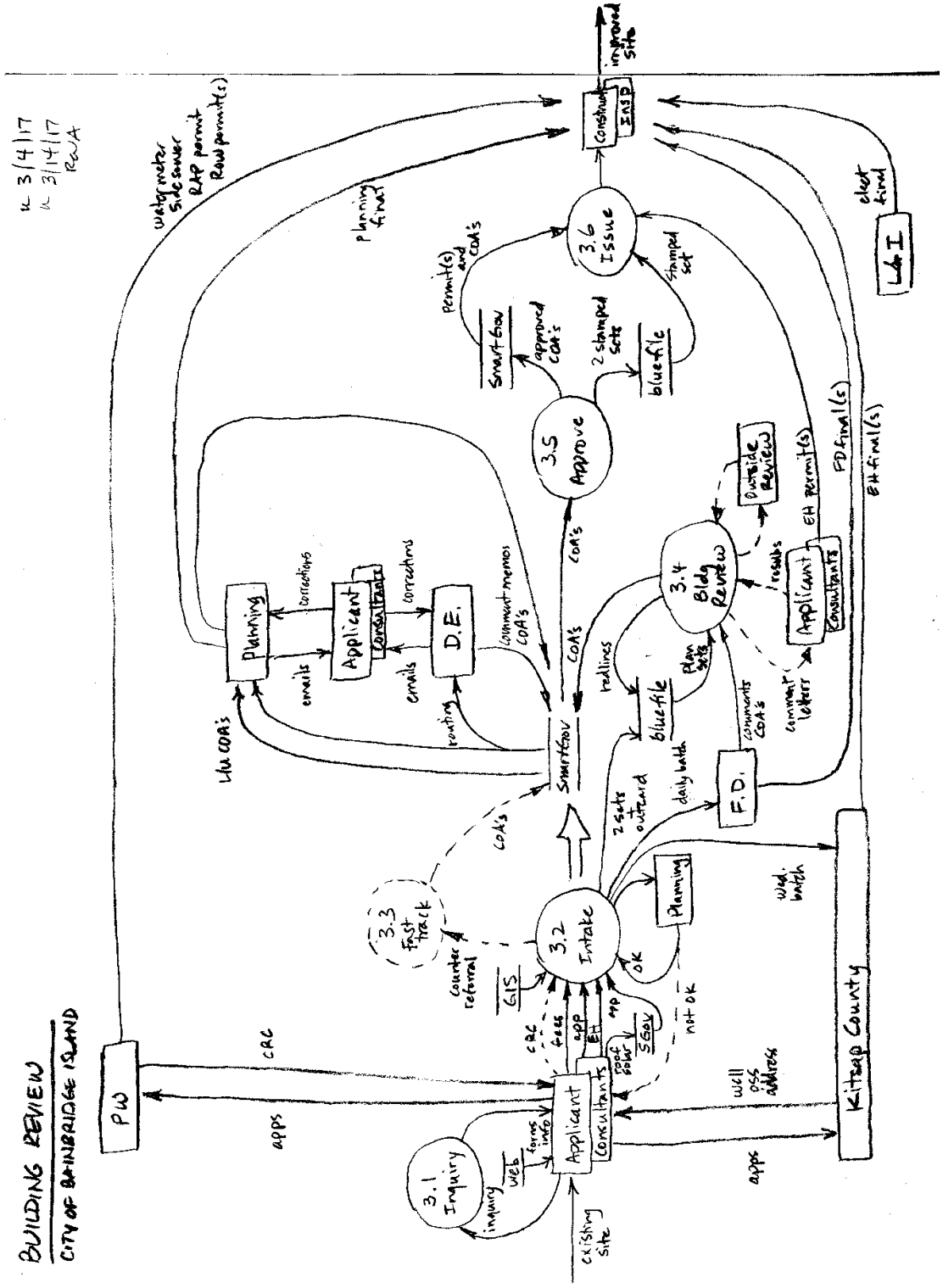


Figure 8 - Building Review

Public Feedback on the Process

Public Feedback on the Development Review Process

Feedback on the performance, strengths, and improvement needs in the current City of Bainbridge Island development review process was collected in a variety of ways:

- Direct outreach to a spectrum of applicants that staff identified who had deep experience with the City process.
- An open house at City Hall to collect feedback from local citizens, business owners, architects, builders, and others with opinions to share about the permit process here. (Figure 9)
- A convenient online survey to collect anonymous feedback to a set of 5 questions about the permit process with open-ended response options.
- Further direct outreach to applicants based on research and referrals from others interviewed in this effort.
- Feedback from City Leadership: The City Council, Design Review Board (DRB), and Planning Commission.



CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 5, 2016

MEDIA CONTACTS
Kellie Stickney
Communications Manager
kstickney@bainbridgewa.gov
206.780.3741 (office)
206.786.2342 (cell)

City of Bainbridge Island Seeks Community Input on Development Services

Bainbridge Island, Wash., (December, 2016) – The City of Bainbridge Island is seeking input from the community regarding the development services provided by the Planning and Community Development Department.

In an effort to improve the services being provided to the public, the Planning and Community Development Department is seeking input from the community. Input can be provided via a brief five minute anonymous survey or at an in-person open house on Wednesday, December 14. The survey can be found at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/COBIpcd. The deadline for completing the survey is 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 20. The public can also provide input at an Open House on Wednesday, December 14, anytime between 3:00 to 7:30 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber. During the Open House the public is invited to stop by and provide feedback and suggestions on how the Planning and Community Development Department can improve its services.

"We at the City of Bainbridge Island are committed to continuously improving how we serve the community," said Director of Planning and Community Development Gary Christensen. "We hope that you will take the opportunity to take the survey or attend the Open House and let us know how we can better serve you."

For more information on the services currently provided by the Planning and Community Development Department visit the City website or email or pcd@bainbridgewa.gov.

###

Figure 9 - Open House and Survey Invitation

Applicant Messages

TLC reached out to the applicant community in a variety of ways to learn what the Planning & Community Development process looks like to them, what they like, what they would like changed, and top priorities for service improvement. Feedback was candid and actionable. Their input is presented here in a non-identifiable manner as agreed with participants to encourage the fullest conversation and unfiltered feedback.

TLC contacted a cross-section of applicants suggested by department leaders as being familiar with the City process. Many provided feedback.

TLC led an open house at City Hall to engage local citizens, business owners, architects, applicants, and other interested parties, to hear what they say about the permit process.

TLC added an online survey to collect feedback any time of day and expand the reach of our feedback efforts.

Open House Messages

An open house was held in City Hall on December 14, 2016. This session was an open invitation to comment on the permit process. The event was advertised on the City web page and broadcast to the 400+ subscribers on the City's distribution list. The time was chosen to provide convenient options for late business day or early evening participation. Some arrived in the afternoon, some later, balancing the discussion. Input was steady and the pace provided generous time to discuss details with each participant. A very helpful discussion with a collection of local architects occurred midway through.

Most came with specific projects in mind to comment on.

Their messages were captured interactively, with the group present at the time, on the screen to ensure the words and intent were captured. A few comments are edited to remove obviously identifying specifics.

Their messages:

1. Like Seattle's tip sheets. [Counter staff can't know everything… a useful reference.]
2. [Planning & Community Development] People are great.
3. Building team's (James' area) response is good.
4. Planning entitlements and Public Works and Planning having opposite/conflicting requirements. Who wins? Weave the needle between the two. Like tree vs. sewer line.
5. Durable pre-application meeting guidance.
6. Site Plan Review (SPR) has too tall an intake requirement: very expensive, prone to revision.
7. Incomplete code here for consistency.
8. Not sure when we'll be done.
9. Squeaky wheel to move things forward. No project manager to move things forward.
10. The SmartGov© permit tracking system SMARTQueue© score affects priority. Need more points. As reviewers check off, score rises. Till then no priority.
11. Market has attracted commodity builders. More interested in bottom lines than community benefit. Their horsepower, legal team gains attention.

12. Need attorneys to succeed.
13. Disconnect between the objectives of Planning and the objectives of Public Works.
14. The Design Review Board (DRB) has improved outcomes. Not a problem with this. Collaboration has been ok. Disagreements at times. Work through solutions. Recommendation body.
15. Don't know when I'll be done and staff can't tell me either.
16. Department leaders need to take the reins to lead and be decisive. A decision is better than no decision.
17. Sprinklers or not. Yes or no. Which?
    a. And not just at the end… or say no up-front then yes. The spectrum of unknowns.
18. Kitsap Health is fine.
19. Great example: Kitsap PUD is:
    a. Friendly.
    b. Problem solving. Work with us.
    c. Model to follow.
    d. Not fearful, hiding.
20. Sewer capacity Equivalent Residential Units (ERUs) must be bought for SPR completeness… on a flier. Couldn't proceed at risk (condition of approval). Since then [the City] allows this option.
21. Don't feel part of a team. At odds.
22. Adopt the "living building standards." It alone would cull out spec building and create the desired outcome. Yes, it's tough. Inventor of this code lives here!
23. Staff taking zero risk at pre-app. Current pre-app intake requirement is sufficient. Yet just boilerplate responses. SPR intake disproportionate to that stage of development.
24. Our roadblock is a relief to staff…
25. Rare to get written response. James is good about this though.
26. Triple problem:
    a. Ambiguous, layered code.
    b. Public Works/Planning different objectives. Do this or do that?
    c. No leadership to cut through these now. Used to.
27. Staff isn't letting this bad outcome happen. It's the code.
28. Admin decisions quickly.

Online Survey Messages

Nearly all the 117 survey respondents are Bainbridge Island residents, a third of whom themselves have applied for a development permit in recent years. A majority used the forum to call for greater controls on new development. Most are dissatisfied with current development regulations on the Island. Half are not happy with the resulting construction. Two-thirds feel growth is too fast. The respondents were split on their overall view of Planning & Community Development service: half are satisfied, the others are not. Recent permit experience significantly sways satisfaction in certain facets of department service.

Unedited, free-form responses for why each answered the way he or she did are included in the Appendix for the following questions:

- Question 3 pertaining to the development regulations.
- Question 5 pertaining to the character and quality of development occurring here.
- Question 9 pertaining to the various aspects of customer service by the department.
- Question 11 to add any other feedback or suggestions.

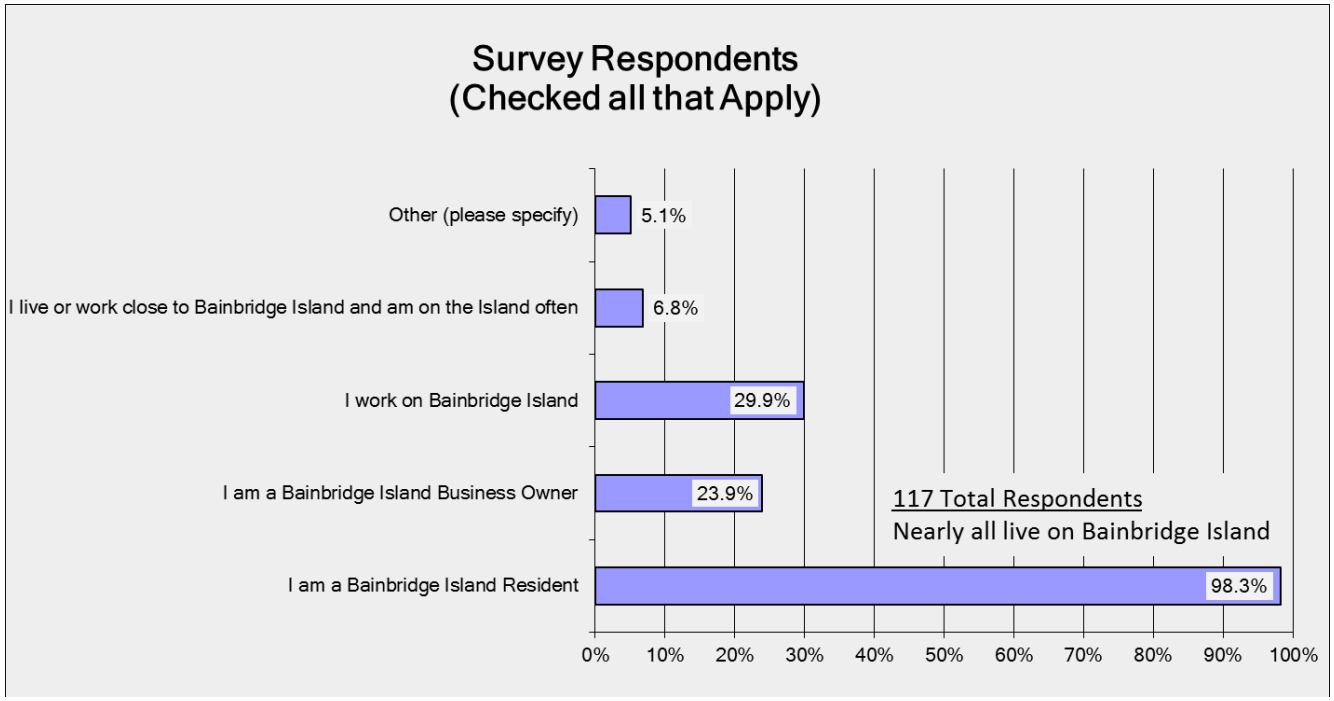


Figure 10 - Respondent Perspectives

Respondent Perspectives

117 people (0.5% of the 2010 Census population) responded to the online survey from announcements on the City web page, City Manager's Report, and broadcast to subscribers on the City's distribution list (Figures 9-10). This is a vigorous response compared with similar surveys conducted by TLC in similarly sized Western Washington communities.

Nearly all (98.3%) are Bainbridge Island residents (Figure 10). About a quarter are also Bainbridge Island business owners (23.9%) and/or work on Bainbridge Island (29.9%).

About 80% of respondents live in neighborhoods designated in the Comprehensive Plan (Figure 11). 20% identified other or more specific locations. A third of respondents live in Winslow or Lynwood Center.

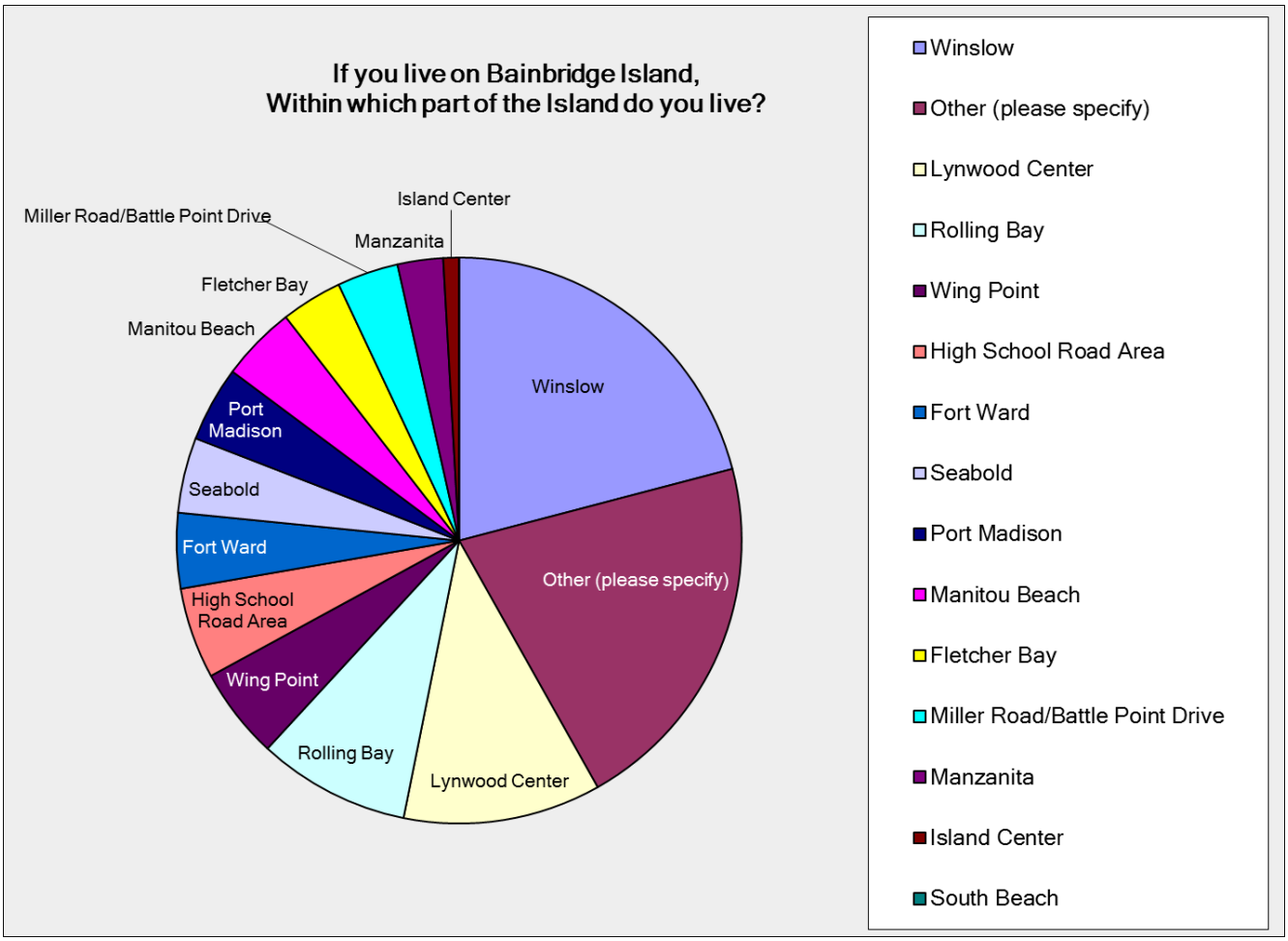


Figure 11 - Respondent Neighborhoods

Respondents identifying with other locations on the Island listed:

Agate Point
Bill Point
Blakely Harbor
Crystal Springs
Eagledale
Eagle Harbor
East Port Madison
Ferncliff
Laughing Salmon Lane
Madison Ridge
Meadowmeer
Northendia/Agatewood/Dolphin Loop
Old Mill
Pleasant Beach
Sportsman Road/ Wardwell area
Sunrise
Toe Jam
Wardwell
West Port Madison

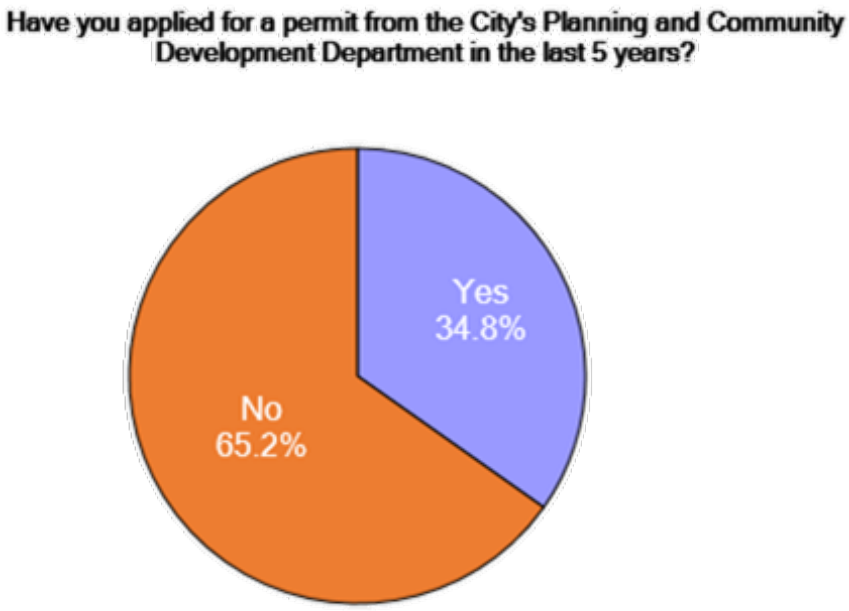


Figure 12 - Recent Permit Experience

Lastly, a third of respondents indicated recent experience obtaining a development permit within the last 5 years (Figure 12).

Respondent Messages

The survey asked 5 questions that included unstructured essay response fields to allow respondents to clarify and amplify why they answered questions as they did.

The survey questions were:

1. How satisfied are you with the City regulations governing growth, development, and construction on Bainbridge Island?
2. How satisfied are you with the design, character, appearance, and quality of the development on Bainbridge Island?
3. The pace of growth on the Island… fast or slow?
4. How satisfied are you with various aspects of Planning & Community Development review service?
5. Please add any final feedback or suggestions you'd like us to understand about the City's Planning and Community Development Department development review service.

Here is what people said.

Regulations

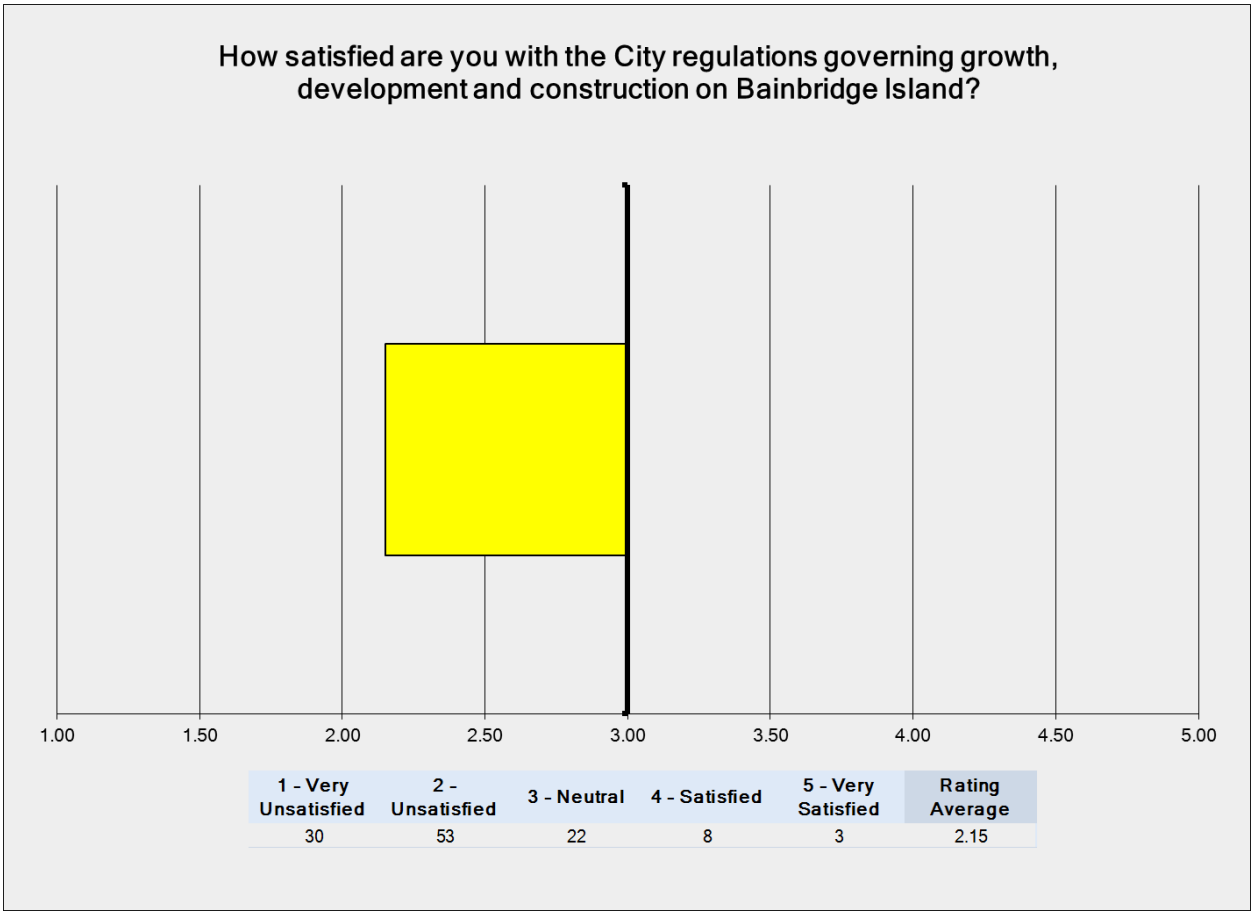


Figure 13 – Satisfaction with City Development Regulations

The first question explored how satisfied people are with Bainbridge Island regulations (Figure 13). Over 80% are dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied.

Most amplified their rating. There were 109 remarks in total, detailed in the Appendix.

Common themes were:

- The codes are hard to follow, expensive to demonstrate and fulfil, yet the resulting development often is not what we want.
- The new Shoreline Master Program is overreaching and few understand it.
- Regulations on existing homeowners are tight, yet developers seem to be able to do whatever they want.
- Tree protection is inadequate. Huge swaths are cut, seemingly at will.
- Water availability on the Island is limited. Is development outpacing supply?
- Seem to be many variances.
- Is there follow-up to check that permit conditions are truly fulfilled?
- Regulations are too pro-growth.

Results on the Ground

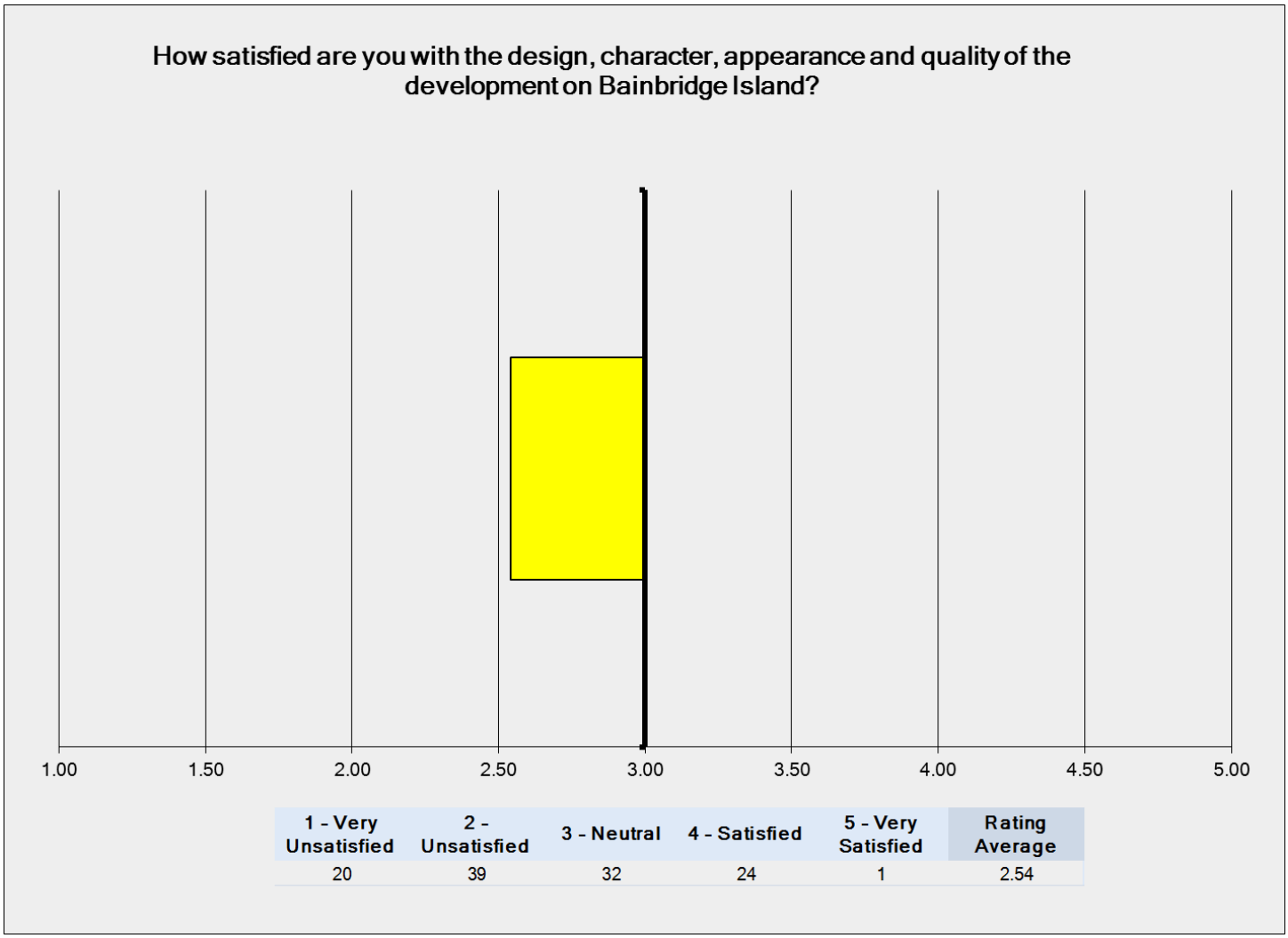


Figure 14 – Satisfaction with Results on the Ground

Many respondents are unsatisfied with the final results on the ground (Figure 14). 21% said they're satisfied with the quality of current development on the Island. 51% said they are not.

The 91 amplifying comments in the Appendix covered a range of topics. The general themes were:

- Recent large-scale residential and commercial developments do not fit the vision they have for Bainbridge Island, are unattractive, and worse many of these are situated in high visibility crossroads.
- Some projects are tasteful and respect the Island character.
- The unique Bainbridge Island charm is evaporating. Cookie cutter now. Mass market.
- Need more affordable housing options.
- Many mansions.

Growth Rate

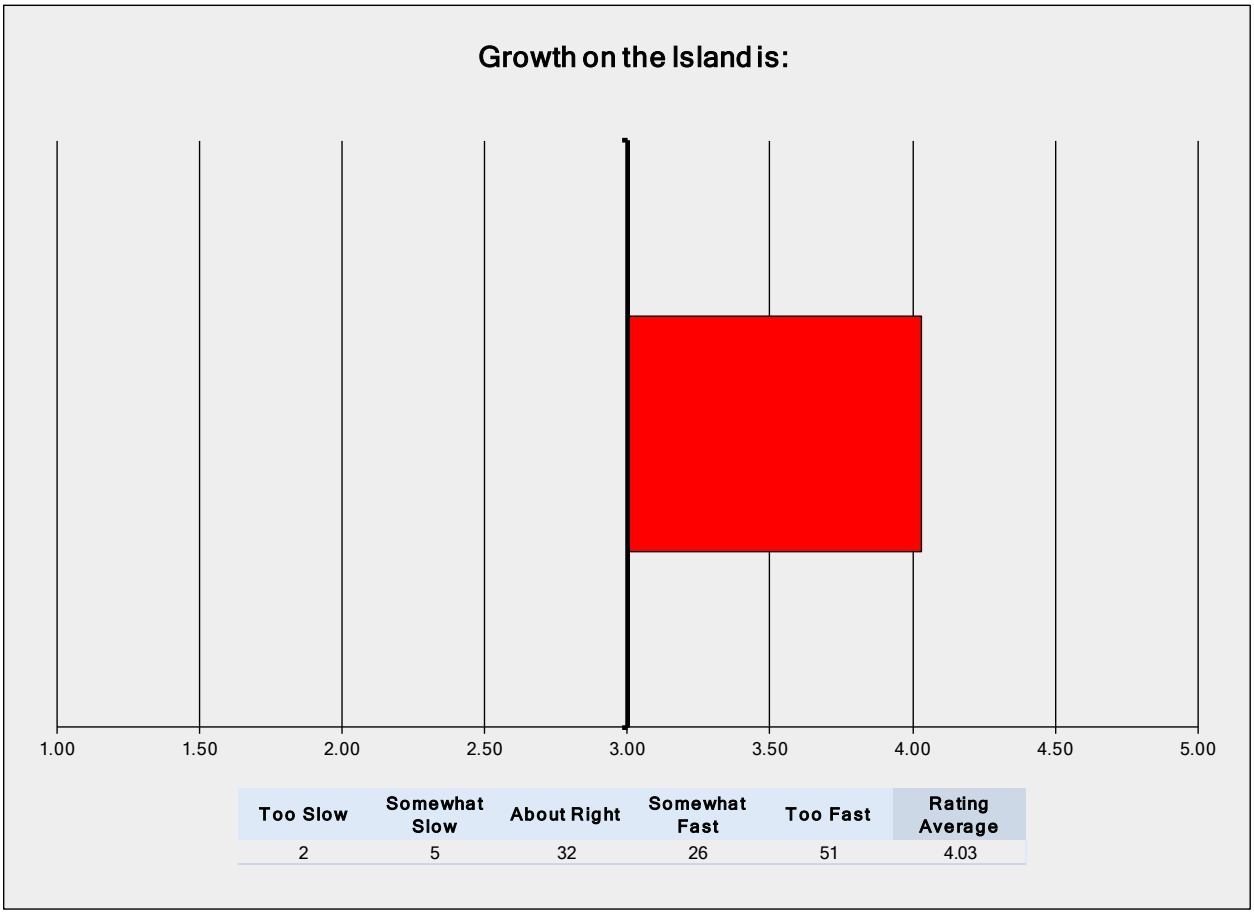


Figure 15 - Pace of Growth

Two thirds of respondents feel the pace of growth on Bainbridge Island is somewhat fast or too fast (Figure 15). 27% feel the pace is about right for the Island. 6% feel growth lags what it should be.

Department Service

This question probes key aspects of the Department permit and development review process service. Responses are shown for those with recent permit experience and those without this perspective (Figure 16). A detailed breakdown is included in the Appendix.

Satisfaction patterns are similar in some aspects of service from both points of view.

- Many are satisfied with current public records inquiries and counter service.
- Many see room for improvement in innovation/collaboration, how their comments affect development decisions, and resolution of code enforcement complaints.

Sharp breaks are apparent in some service areas however.

- Recent permit applicants are:
  - Very satisfied with City inspectors.
  - More satisfied with plan reviewers and with the ability to comment on proposed developments.
  - More dissatisfied with approval timelines.
- Those without recent permit experience are:
  - More satisfied with their phone inquiries.
  - More dissatisfied with plan reviewers, the ability to comment on proposed developments, how comments affect development decisions, and resolution of code enforcement complaints.

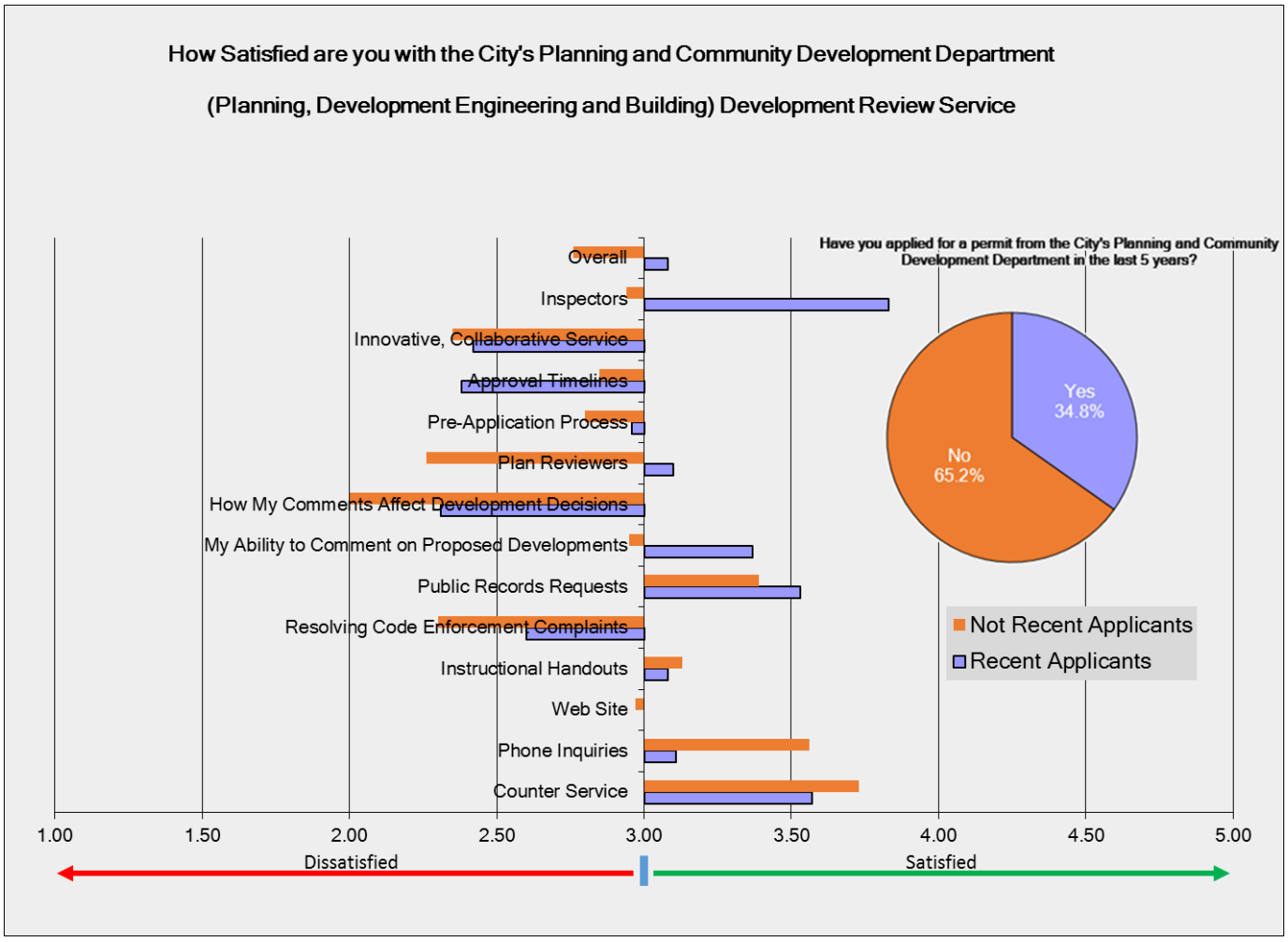


Figure 16 - Satisfaction with Key Aspects of Department Service

Overall satisfaction with City permit department service (Figure 17), while varying person to person from very satisfied to the exact opposite, washed out to roughly neutral with recent applicants a bit more positive. (3.08 vs. 2.76 where 3 is neutral). This is similar to overall satisfaction in other regional permit departments where this ranges from 2.35 to 3.08 with an average of 2.81.

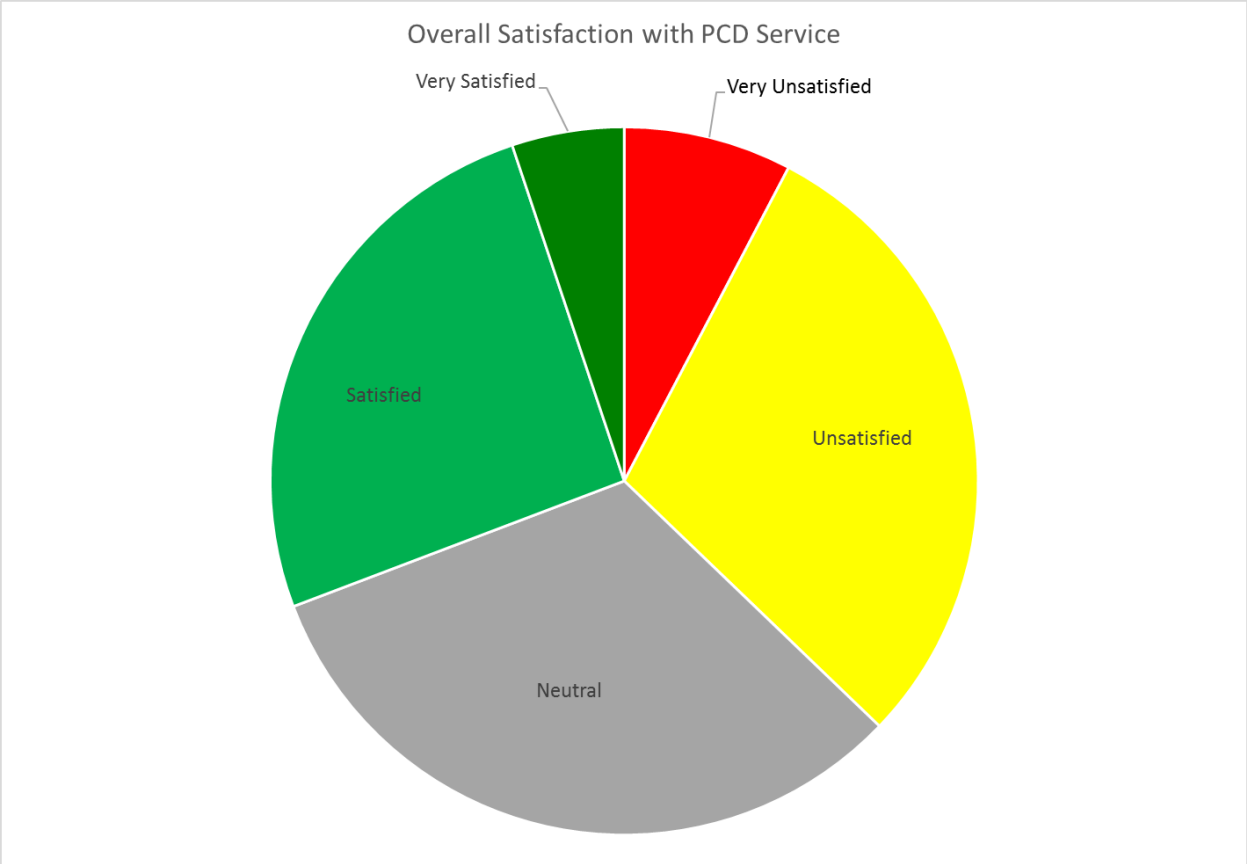


Figure 17 - Overall Customer Service Satisfaction

Expanded responses to these customer service ratings are in the Appendix.

Themes include:

- City staff feel there are lots of eyes on them. Cautious. Reluctant to make a judgment call.
- Answers are a function of who you talk with, when you talk with them. Inconsistent. City staff knowledge of codes varies widely.
- Pre-application and front counter service is not very helpful. Expensive discoveries as the process unfolds.
- Kudos for Department front counter staff and the Building side of Planning & Community Development.
- Feel like the enemy.
- Process takes way too long.

Final Messages

The last survey question was an open mic for final feedback.

Responses were largely in kind with prior messages.

Final thoughts:

- Suggest stronger leadership. Crisper decision making.
- Periodically evaluate whether policies are working.
- The current process sidelines local citizens.
- Call for greater collaboration, shared vision.
- Assign an advocate to keep applications moving through the system.
- It should not take longer to get a permit than to actually build the project.

Baseline Measurements

Baseline Measurements

Permit tracking system records were analyzed for key permit and land use decision types. Average durations to decide these applications and the range of pace from fastest to slowest are presented below. A comparison to a similar coastal community, Gig Harbor in neighboring Pierce County, is included for perspective.

Most of the participants in the Open House and the focus of most one-on-one applicant feedback was new home and commercial site construction, so the measurements central to these types of projects are particularly helpful.

Site Plan and Design Review Approval

Timelines to decide new site plan and design review applications are shown in Figure 18. Sixteen of these non-residential (generally commercial, mixed use, or multifamily) applications for buildings and associated site plans were decided on Bainbridge Island in the last two years.

The average timeline from first submittal to Department decision is 225 calendar days. This period includes determination of completeness and any time taken by applicants to cure deficiencies or to supply additional information (resubmittals). Across the Puget Sound region, roughly half of this timeline is city review and half is applicant resubmittal preparation. Monitoring of the 120 day clock reinforces City pace—half of 225 days is 112 days, just under 120.

Neighboring Gig Harbor issued 9 site plan decisions over this period averaging a similar 232 calendar day timeline. The scatter of individual project timelines is about half the range of Bainbridge Island.

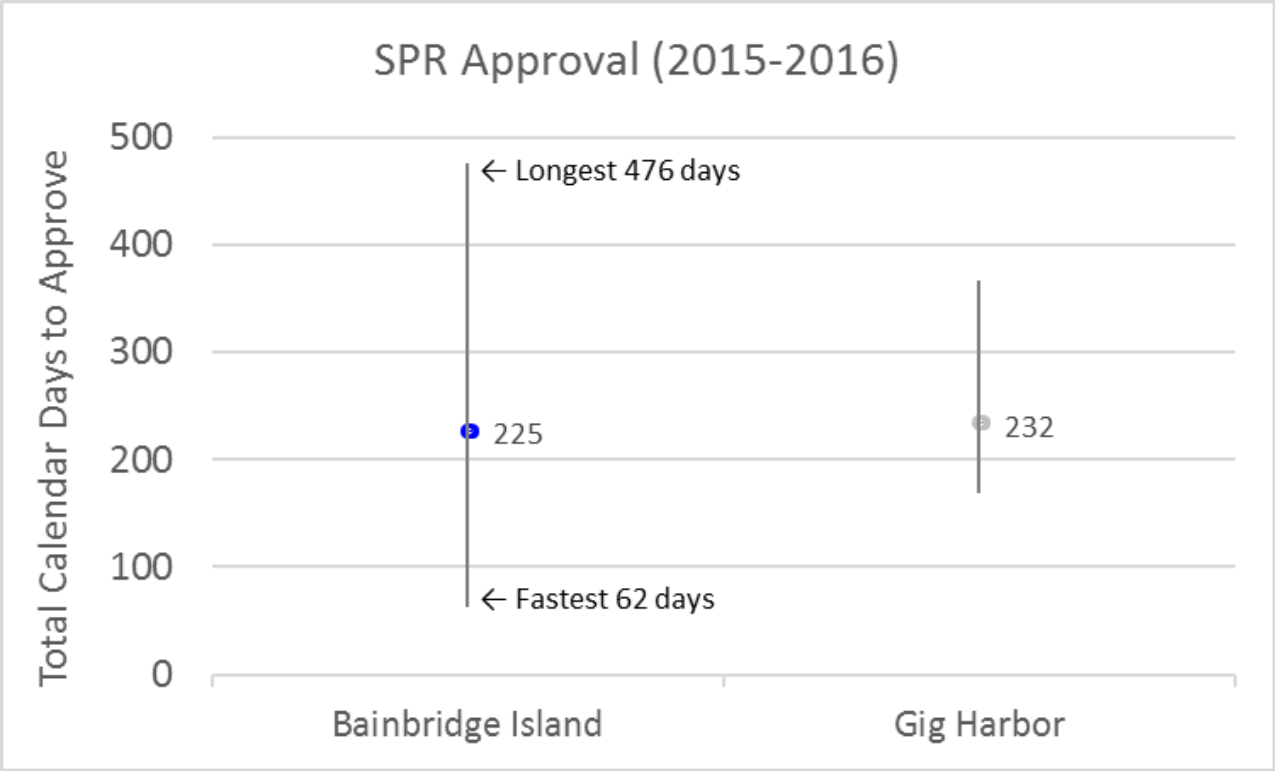


Figure 18 - Site Plan & Design Review Timelines (2015-2016)

New Single-Family Home Permits

Timelines to decide new, detached, single family residence building permits is shown in Figure 19. 116 of these applications were decided in 2016 in Bainbridge Island.

The average timeline from first submittal to permit approval is 107 days. As for site plan approval, this duration includes time taken by applicants to cure deficiencies or to supply additional information (resubmittals).

Staff reported 50-75% of these applications require a resubmittal to demonstrate compliance and most if not all shoreline jurisdiction homes require at least one resubmittal cycle.

City of Bainbridge Island SmartGov© project records generally don't differentiate City from applicant correction time. Compared to the roughly 50/50 regional norm noted before, new single-family building permit City time is about 2/3 of the 107 total days, e.g. 71 days. This is projected to be somewhat higher in the City because applicants are provided redline plans that reduce overall timelines by sparing extra review cycles. This is a strength of the current process, described later in the report.

Using the 2/3 figure above, and dividing the 71 city days by 1.75 reviews per project on average for the above reasons, indicates roughly 41-day development permit review cycles, about 6 weeks.

These permits are also reviewed by Planning (for zoning and environmental codes), Development Engineering (for stormwater and applicable utilities), and usually Kitsap County (for septic disposal and potable water), as illustrated in Figure 8.

For comparison, the neighboring City of Gig Harbor issued 171 home permits over this period (most of these on freshly platted lots), averaging 81 total elapsed days. Newly subdivided lots are generally provisioned for utilities and environmental factors.

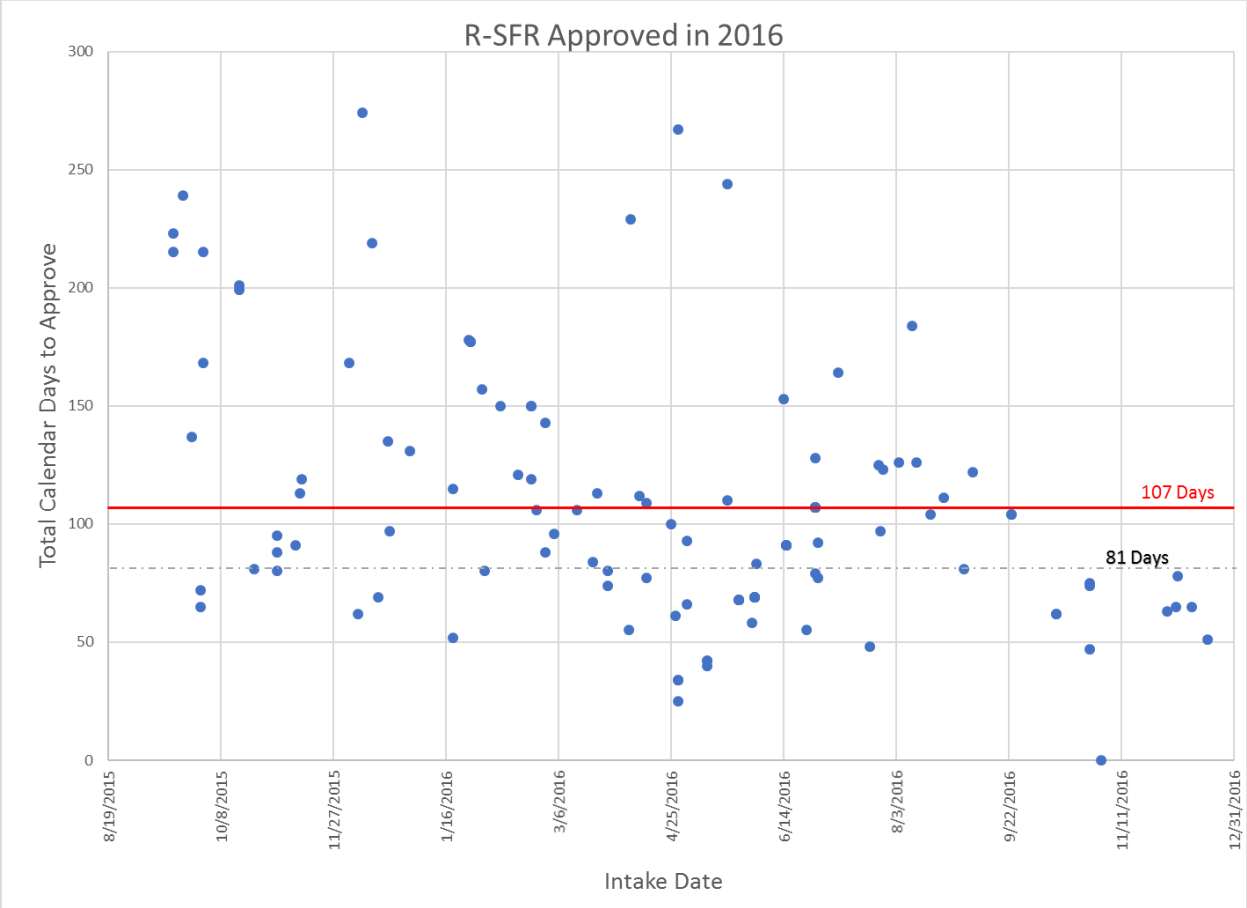


Figure 19 - New Single-Family Home Building Permit Review Timelines (2016)

Findings and Recommendations

Findings and Recommendations

The current development review process in the City of Bainbridge Island displays six notable strengths and benefits from a package of 18 recommended improvements.

The strengths were observed during the assessment, lauded by applicants, or pointed to by respondents in open house, impromptu, or online survey input.

The six improvements capitalize on existing strengths and improve service based on the TLC assessment methodology and the people who contributed their feedback through these various means.

Strengths

The City of Bainbridge Island development review process possesses six notable strengths. These form a strong foundation for development review process improvements.

Passion for Bainbridge Island

City of Bainbridge Island residents are very passionate about their island.

There is profound energy to preserve Island character, respect its environmental functions, construct a top quality built environment, and bask in the picturesque Puget Sound shorelines a mere 8 miles from downtown Seattle.

Many volunteer substantial time and professional expertise to serve on City Council, the Planning Commission, the Design Review Board, and many other boards and committees to shape island life and development.

The online survey conducted for this assessment drew double the responses typical for a community of this size. This energy was also apparent in added remarks about current development process.

This passion provides a superb foundation for building our recommended process improvements.

Building Inspector Service

Building field inspectors received the highest customer satisfaction rating in the survey.

Those with an opinion of building field inspector service said they are satisfied or very satisfied 6 to 1 over those unsatisfied. This suggests that most in construction appreciate building field inspector demeanor and responsiveness when working through corrections. This lines up with favorable feedback in several applicant discussions, where a sense of professionalism on both sides was appreciated.

The method to assign and rotate daily building code inspection and plan review currently in place is working well.

Fast Track

Planning & Community Development offers a fast track service to review small-scale applications in real time when submitted at the front counter. When plan review capacity, based on lobby activity, is sufficient for the scope of an incoming application, the front counter technician and on-duty plans examiner conduct the review and process the application and permit live for the applicant. This is very appreciated by applicants.

Tracking System

The City of Bainbridge Island implemented the locally-developed Paladin Data System SmartGov© permit tracking system in 2014. This is a current-generation tracking system that has provisions for online submittal and progress tracking, status tracking functions, GIS digital map integration, archive of approved plans, inspections, and fee collection.

Planning & Community Development is striving to use the system rigorously, which is good practice. It helps the development review team understand where each review stands, and can inform good decision making about what to work on next based on the myriad of applications in review, big and small. A recommended enhancement to the current use of the system will improve this functionality even more.

Redlines

The building plans examiners capitalize extensively on a technique some building departments use to efficiently incorporate specific code callouts and treatments themselves when applicant plans aren't explicit enough to ensure compliant construction.

The building plans examiners redline the plans, as a courtesy to the applicant, by adding supplementary content to permit drawings in lieu of requiring a new set of plans. This saves a resubmittal cycle with its attendant effort, days or weeks of lost time, and administration (a

comment letter and second intake and routing through the office). Applicants concur with these refinements at issuance.

This is a welcome service for applicants, ensures resulting construction meets rigorous code standards, and streamlines the process.

Passion to Improve the Process

The Planning & Community Development team, alongside Public Works counterparts, is very energetic and dedicated to improving the City's process and the feel of daily operations. The team was very forthcoming during the assessment, and proactively raised issues and concerns to assure the underlying problems could be studied and inform the recommendations herein.

Through this process, a great deal of momentum has been built. The team is ready for action.

The Constraint

The Constraint

Every system has a constraint, the one piece, step, or specialty that sets the pace of everything through it. Picture Agate Pass Bridge at rush hour. The Theory of Constraints guides us to focus on the constraint for therein lies the improvement potential of the system. Improvements elsewhere that do not ease this constraint miss the central, high leverage, opportunity.

The area of the development review system in Bainbridge Island that paces overall application flow through Planning & Community Development is generally Planning review though all specialties in the development review process experience a common "physics" explained in the following section. This was the principal focus of feedback from a spectrum of stakeholders. On Bainbridge Island, the confluence of several forces sets this stage and concentrates workload in this area of the development review process.

Underlying it is a regional surge in development demand from latent projects set free by low interest rates and the economic recovery from the Great Recession. Next, the development review process goal for top quality development has driven design review standards and growing pre-application steps for Planning to administer and enforce. Further, low impact development stormwater and no-net-loss shoreline master program requirements—that must be verified even for exempt construction—drive more rigorous analyses and complicated applications to review. Codes require interpretation. Now, there is also a new comprehensive plan update to implement.

Magnifying is the doubling effect of iteration. Planning & Community Development reviews commonly require at least one applicant resubmittal to demonstrate compliance with City planning codes. This, in turn, churns downstream reviews. Building permit submittal requires an approval from Planning to take it in. Redlines that plans examiners add to applicant plans often must be redone, mostly due to Planning driven changes.

City staff feel the eyes on them. Applicants want crystal-clear and durable guidance up front. There are complaints when problems with these complex applications surface later. There is public outcry when trees come down. In addition, there are state, on top of local, regulations to uphold. Furthermore, the community calls for transparency and strict compliance. Together, this drives caution, rigor, and detailed documentation. Staff turnover complicates matters as few have extensive institutional knowledge and familiarity with the municipal code. The 120-day clock (RCW 36.70B.080), once a highly quoted and tightly monitored timeclock across the state, is a constant reminder, and careful attention is paid to separate up-front activities from clock time.

The Physics of the Challenge

The fundamental physics, or drivers, behind the performance of today's development review process are illustrated in Figure 20. These combine to produce a very challenging environment in City Hall that complicates applicant efforts and creates a gap between City Leadership goals and the results of the process.

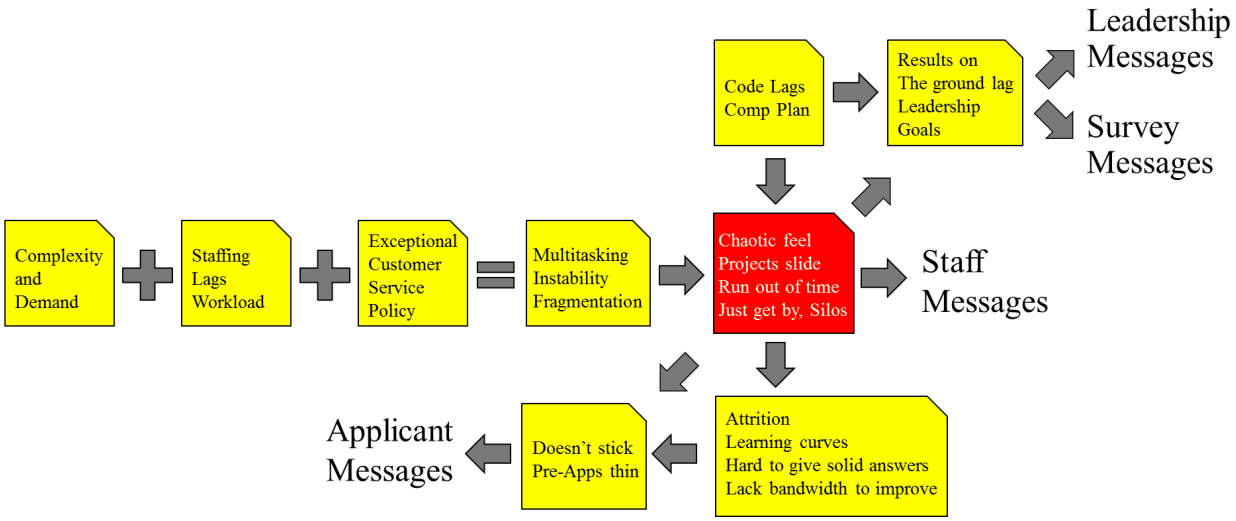


Figure 20 - The Physics of The Challenge

Complexity of Review and Current Development Demand

First is the intensity of complex City staff review magnified by current development demand.

Complexity

Complexity of the development review process has risen in recent years. What began in the 1970s with the Federal Environmental Protection Act, Clean Air and Water Acts, and Washington State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA), Growth Management Act, and the Shorelines Management Act (SMA) has evolved over the years to sophisticated efforts to contain the effects of new construction on stormwater, shoreline functions, resource lands, and more. Meanwhile, the State's building codes have similarly evolved to the current International Building Codes with triennial updates.

In current forms, no-net-loss of environmental function standards apply to shoreline construction, National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Low Impact Development standards apply to stormwater management, and an updated critical areas ordinance is in the wings. Meanwhile, cities and counties have been adding zoning sophistication to more precisely shape the look, feel, and placement of growth. The City of Bainbridge Island has added subarea standards, design review, innovative housing design demonstration provisions, and recently updated the Comprehensive Plan.

These take effect when adopted into the municipal code.

The municipal code often requires engineered solutions and added specialists like geotechnical engineers, wetland biologists, and others to develop sites. Further, demonstration of this compliance in construction plans and studies can be onerous, particularly as the standard may vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction as to what it takes on paper to verify the design meets the municipal code. Extensive and popular marine and freshwater shorelines, wetlands, steep slopes, and pockets of municipal infrastructure routinely trigger this added rigor for applicants, City reviewers, and inspectors.

Current Demand

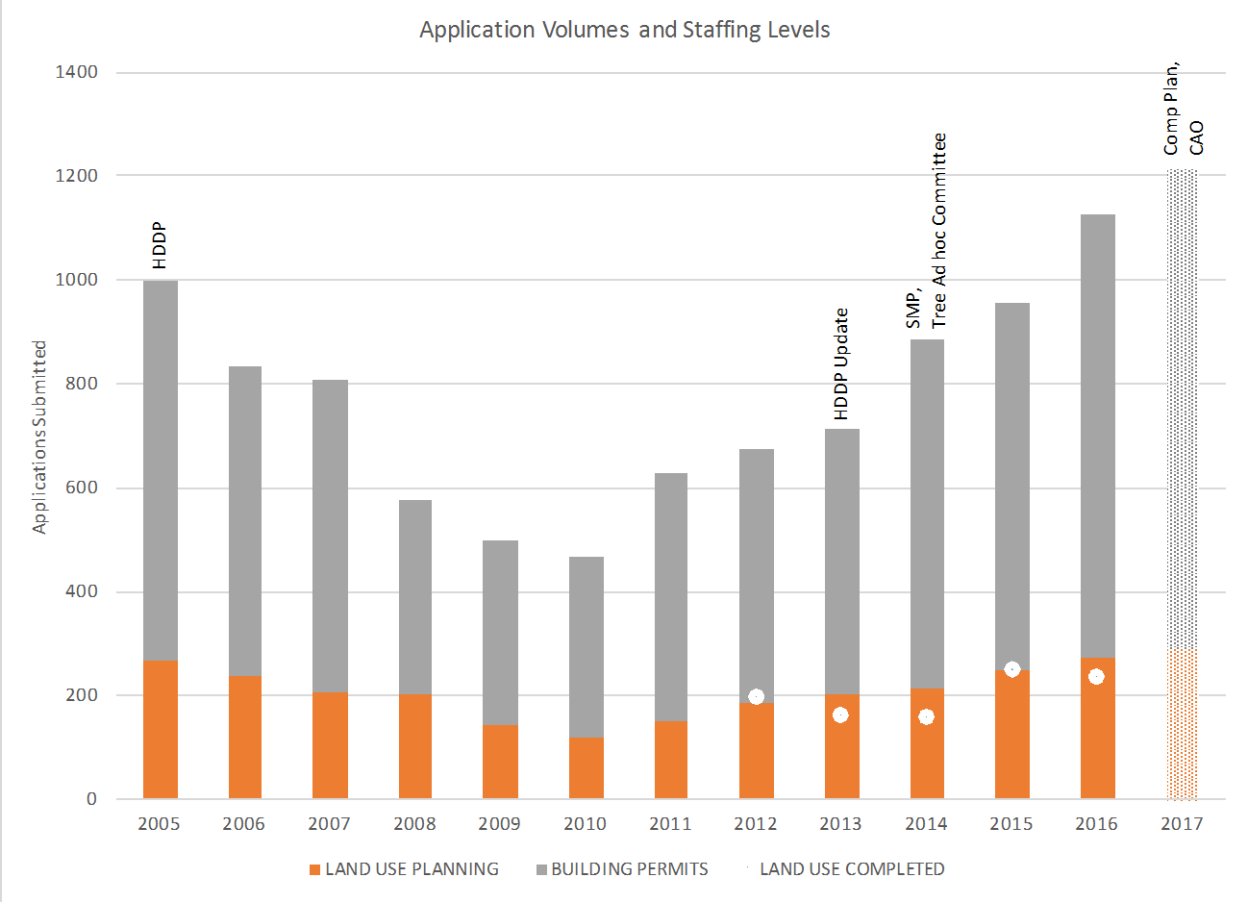


Figure 21 - Application Volume

Application volumes have risen significantly since a recession-sharpened decline reversed in 2010 (Figure 21). Annual building permit volume has risen nearly 250% to 875 in 2016 and land use actions are up 230% to 275. 2017 projections are up another 5-9%.

Further, planning applications are coming in faster than the City can process them. Since 2012, a backlog of 104 applications has amassed. Based on 262 applications decided in 2016, this approaches half a year of latent work (Figure 22).

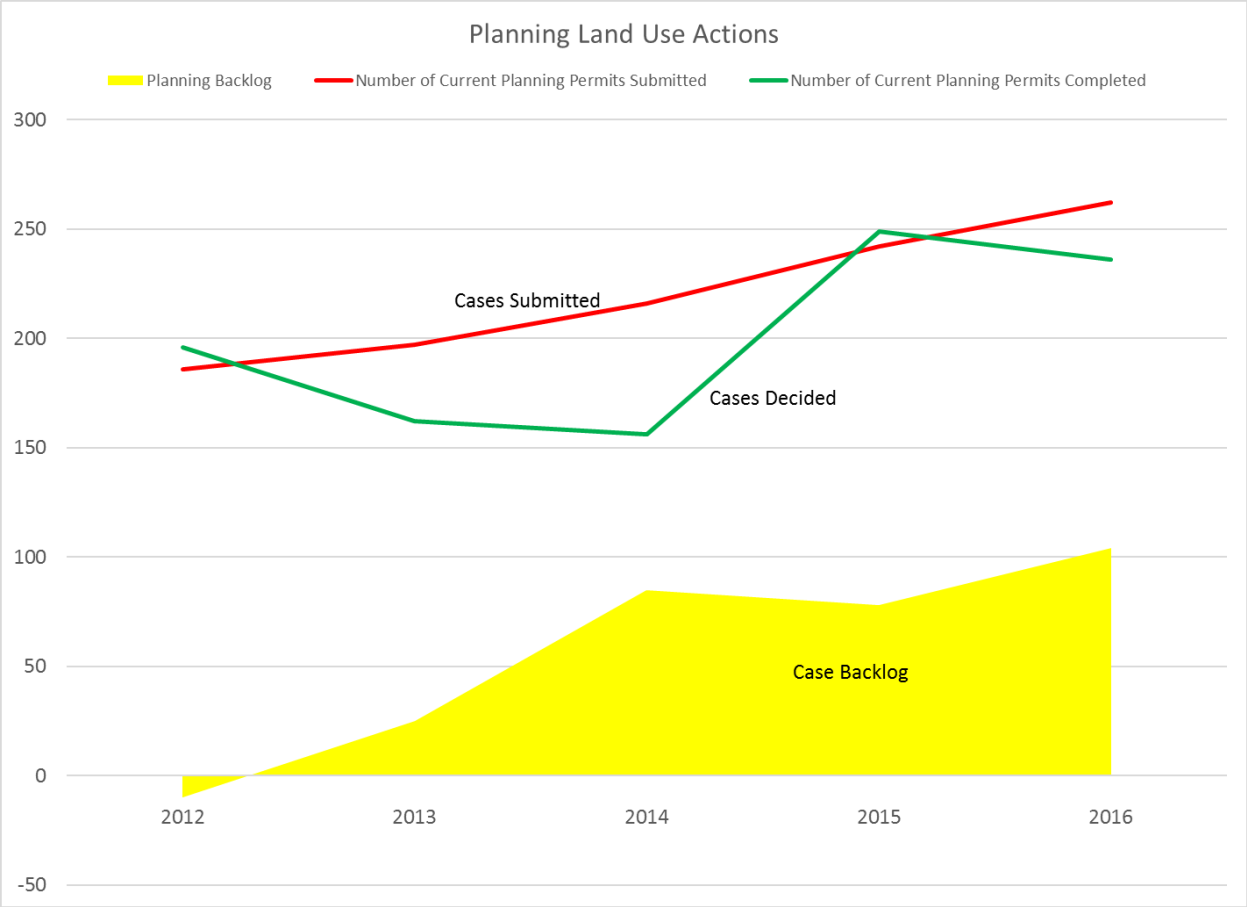


Figure 22 - Rising Planning Case Backlog

Staffing Lag

The spectrum of economic sectors surge and wane with macroeconomic cycles. However, the development industry swings intensely. Single-family residential building permit demand, a key indicator of the industry in the Western US since 1959 (Figure 23), shows this volatility. A finer view of the Puget Sound region follows suit (Figure 24). Accelerators include interest rates, world events, and code advances.

Figure 25 illustrates this trend on Bainbridge Island.

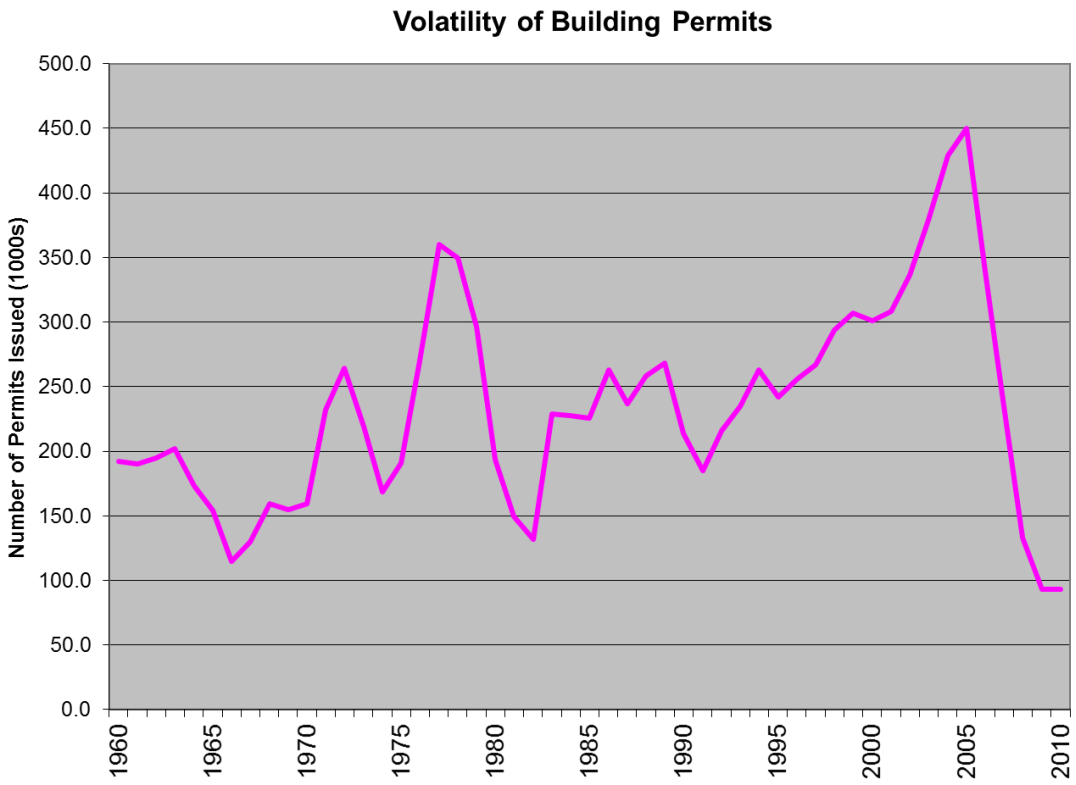


Figure 23 - Western US SFR Demand

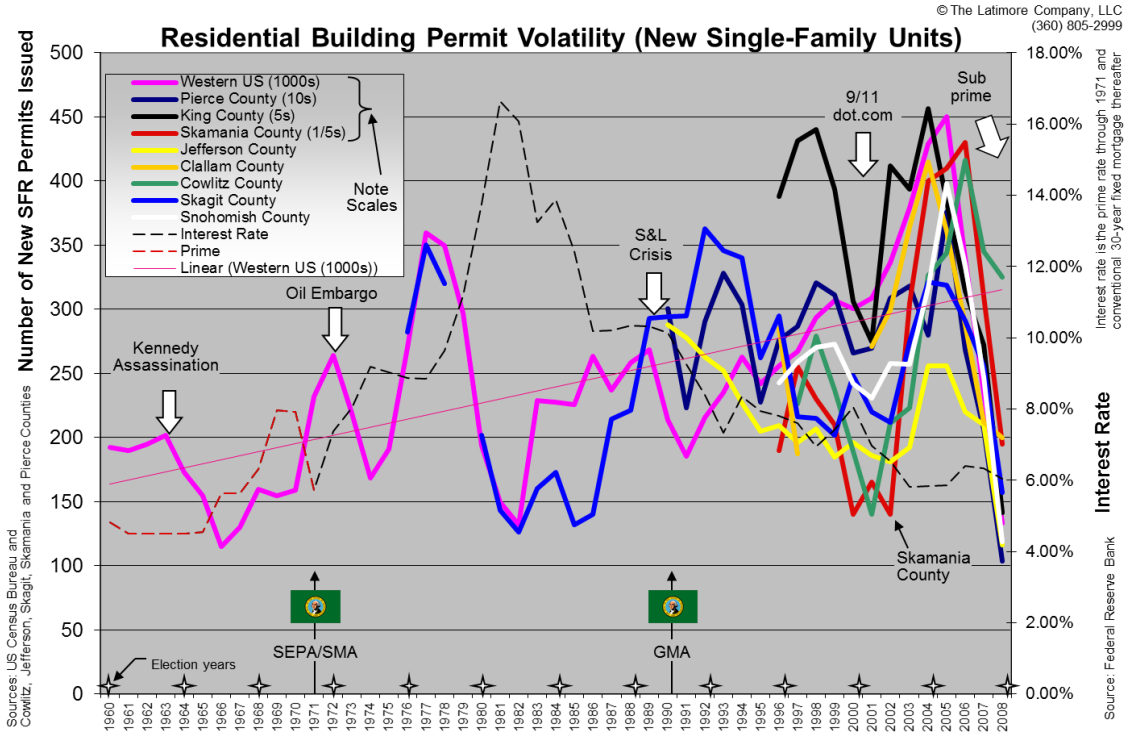


Figure 24 - SFR Demand (Puget Sound Region)

This peaky demand cycle plays havoc on local governments. Development review services are supported by fee-based systems. Evaporating demand leaves local governments underfunded. Reductions in force follow. These are very painful experiences, for those impacted and for local government leadership. Some laid off reviewers leave the industry, and the local government loses experience and organizational memory.

These memories are firmly in place when markets reverse and the industry scrambles to fulfill pent-up demand. But, local governments worry, "is this a real recovery?" Local governments are cautious about budget risk and the possibility of further layoffs, so hiring is cautious. By the time the market cycle is confirmed, local governments are left competing for a diminished skill base.

As a result, capacity lags demand.

This is occurring on Bainbridge Island right now (Figures 25-28). The most marked lag is in administrative support, down 75% (more so in 2016 with one on a leave of absence) since a 2008 peak.

Building plans examiners and Development Engineers are currently loaded nearly 75% higher than in 2012. In 2017, Development Engineers were transferred to Public Works, where a project manager and inspector were added.

Two Planner positions have recently been added to address planning permit volumes.

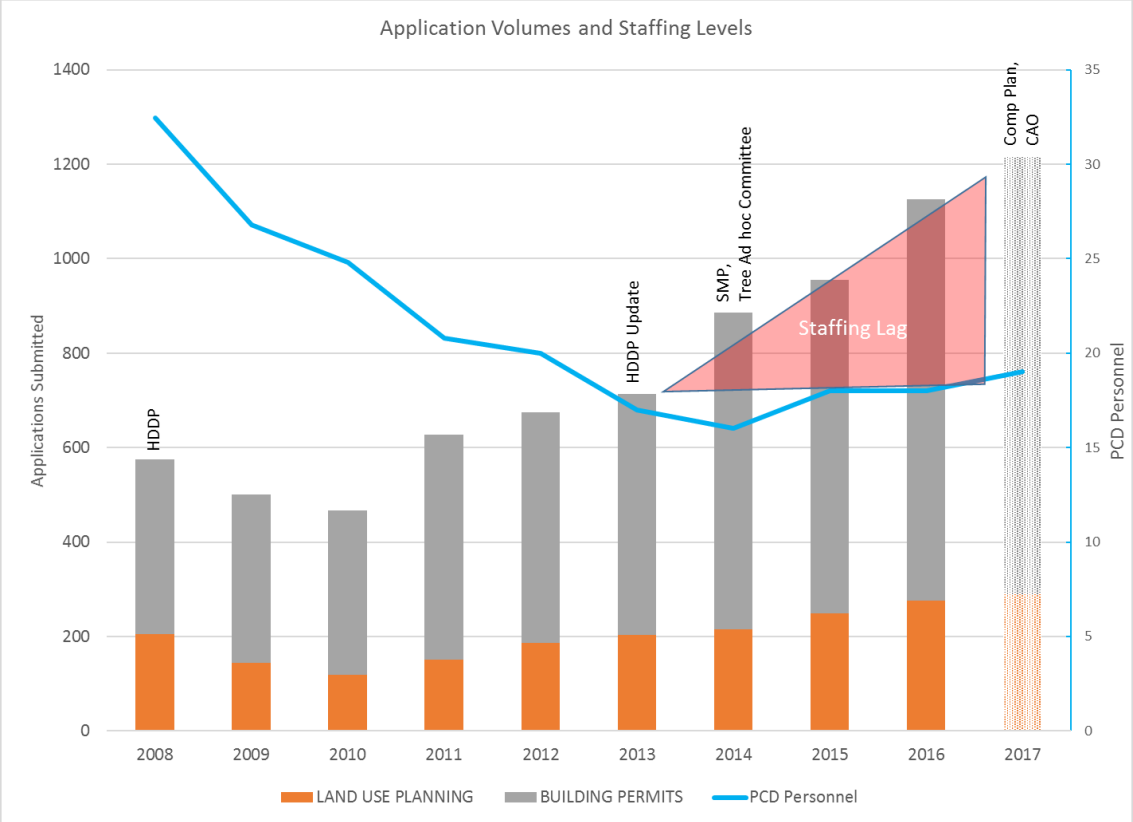


Figure 25 – Bainbridge Island Staffing Lags Demand

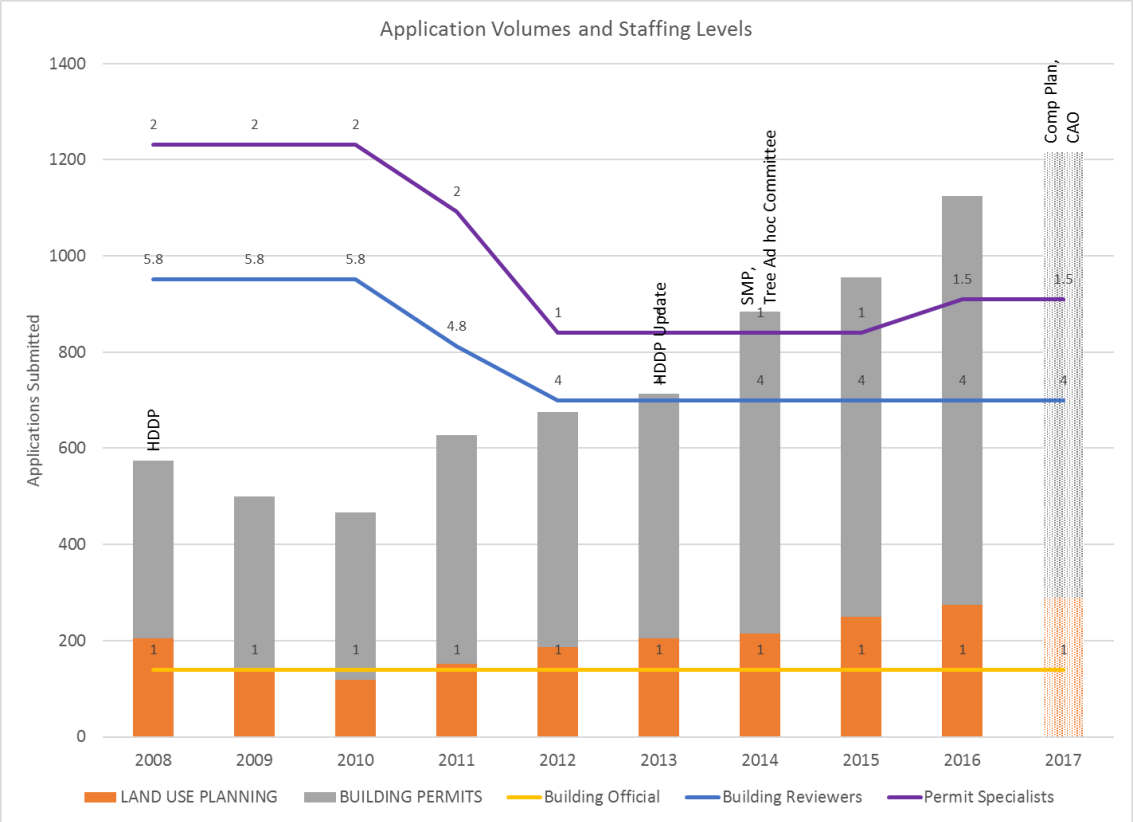


Figure 26 - Building Reviewers

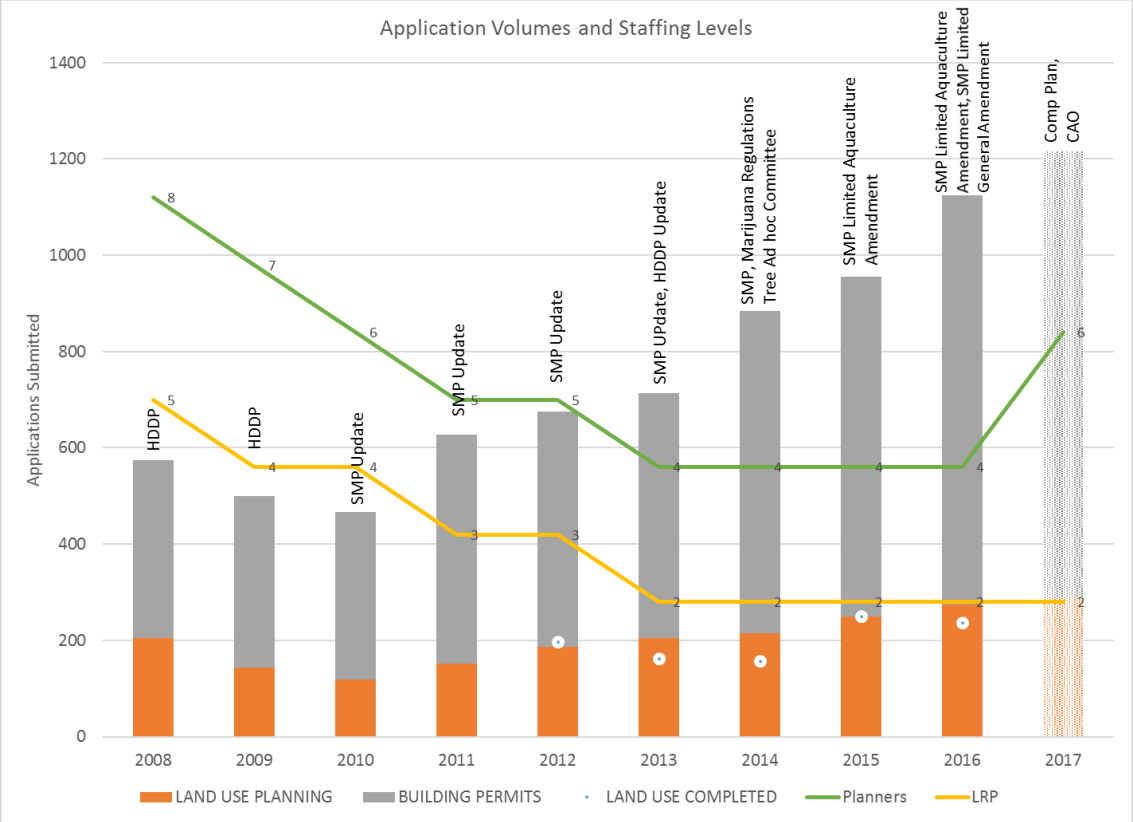


Figure 27 - Planners

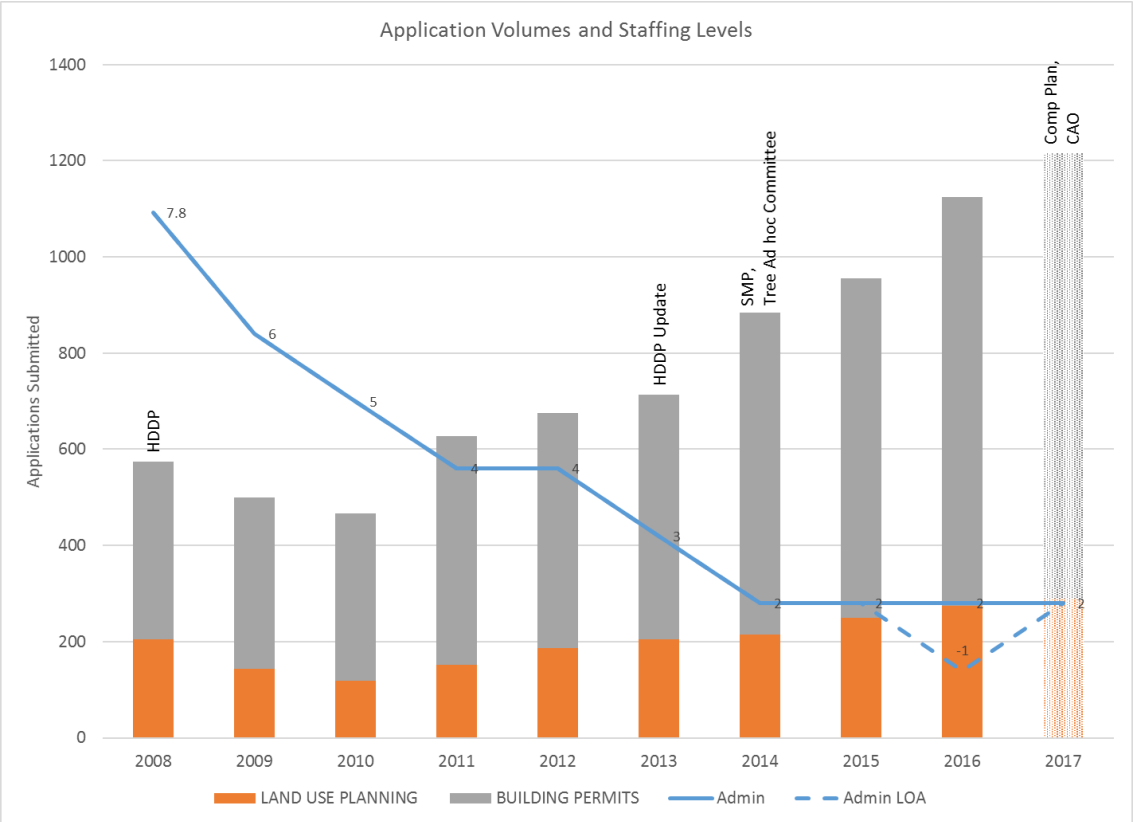


Figure 28 - Administrative Support

Exceptional Customer Service Policy

Planning & Community Development staff dutifully uphold a longstanding policy to provide exceptional, personal, customer service. This policy was cited often in staff interviews, as the hallmark of Department client service.

Regardless of what is in work at the time, if someone comes to the counter, calls, inquires, lodges a complaint, questions legitimacy of projects in construction: whatever it is, that person is served. And, additional City staff are commonly needed for an answer since basic questions often cross multiple municipal codes. Newer City staff members may also need to confirm an answer. Several City staff members can be engaged in a front counter question.

This is an exceptional service level, particularly considering the inventory of plans to be reviewed, inspections to perform, and decisions to render. While this is a well-known level of service amongst staff, a written copy of this policy does not exist.

Every day, this devotion to duty provides a great service to the community, but shreds planned work. One City staff reviewer lamented: "Sometimes I come to work with just 1 or 2 [key objectives] to complete and I don't even get to the first one."

This multitasking has the effect of fragmenting the workday and creates a chaotic work environment as City staff members react to various interruptions. This fragmentation often pushes intended development project reviews to tomorrow, the next day, next week, or to an absolute deadline like a public hearing date or the 120 day clock. Then the review becomes a rush, which opens the door to errors or omissions, foregoes collaboration with peers or other project reviewers; and delays if not skips SmartGov© entries which compromises the utility of the tracking system across the team and limits applicant visibility. The team is conscious of the dilemma, knows there are better practices, but against the stops can't break the fray.

Instability

Rising application volumes, backlog, complexity, paired with the lag in corresponding staffing, clash with the competing demands of unplanned customer service surprises to create a chaotic, unstable work atmosphere. It's isolating as individual deadlines are jeopardized and rallied, while dependent on others to provide their findings and conditions subject to their own pickles.

A long-term effect of this is City staff turnover, which erodes organizational memory and forces in-progress projects to be reassigned, relearned, and potentially reinterpreted, potentially upsetting applicants, and losing velocity.

Incoming personnel must climb learning curves which are particularly challenging for Planners and Development Engineers, as these codes and standards are far more localized than building

codes across jurisdictions. Undocumented steps can be missed or painfully detected later. Process guides vary across the Department. In some areas, few resources exist for City staff.

Applicant Effect

Applicants perceive this instability, not only during project review but during front counter inquiries. Applicants cited that answers seemed to be a function of which City staff member was asked and even when they were asked. This is a predictable outcome given varying learning curves, and whether other City staff are available for consultation when other project deadlines are looming.

Some base purchase or major construction decisions on front counter advice. Some cited they were told the wrong answers and the project complexity soared once underway. Answers did not stick through the development review process.

A related pattern in applicant feedback was an imbalance in pre-application efforts. Namely, despite a substantial submittal rigor requirement to hold a pre-application meeting, the answers back from staff were disproportionally generic, boilerplate. Pre-application meetings are short lead-time compared with project reviews, generally scheduled 2-3 weeks out. City staff pre-application preparations are often squeezed by the chaotic work environment.

Code Lag

The centerpiece of communities planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA) is the Comprehensive Plan. It documents, through extensive, early and often public debate a forecast of population growth and associated services, articulates a vision for future land use, housing, and reconciles concurrency of infrastructure, transportation, and other considerations in aims of accommodating planned growth while retaining or intentionally transforming the essence of the community. Bainbridge Island's first Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1994, alongside other communities' first-edition GMA plans. Updates over the years added the Lynwood Center subarea, the Winslow Master Plan, and incorporation of increasingly complex State standards.

The Comprehensive Plan, in turn, is implemented into practice by aligning the array of individual Bainbridge Island Municipal Code (BIMC) development regulations through code amendments, and updates of corresponding Public Works Design & Construction Standards, to accomplish the intent of the Plan. Private development is then held to these standards by enforcing these updated regulations during project land use and permit review and inspection.

The Comprehensive Plan guides, the Code enforces (RCW 36.70.340).

Code amendments follow the legislative process. Long-range planners deduce what codes need to change to implement an aspect of the Plan, formulate proposed text, and with administrative help, package, schedule, and present a draft to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission evaluates the draft, hears public comment, remands for changes as decided, rehears changes, and forwards final recommendations to the City Council for review and action. Once adopted and effective, the municipal code change becomes law and is enforceable.

So, this codification process introduces a lag between Comprehensive Plan adoption and implementation in project review. The extent of this offset is governed by:

- The nature of the Comprehensive Plan update (its scope and transformation).
- Long-range planner capacity to reduce the update to its complete set of code amendments.
- The pace of advisory boards, committees, task forces, the Planning Commission and City Council.
- Intensity of public comment. In most communities, few other than applicants take the opportunity to complete surveys of the type conducted for this assessment. However, 2/3 of the Bainbridge Island survey respondents are not applicants themselves. Public interest in development on the Island is high. This is likely present throughout the legislative process as well. There is a lot of community interest and passion on Bainbridge Island.
- Plus, the lack of time to incrementally revise forms, handouts, and staff practices for development review as amendments are completed.

Several interviewed said the last Comprehensive Plan update took some time to implement through code. Some see lingering gaps. It is an extensive effort to discern what municipal codes need to change to capture a goal, how to clearly express the requirement in code language, and vet each through the legislative process. The author of this report served on a city planning commission himself.

The *Navigate Bainbridge* Comprehensive Plan update adopted this February now must go through this process.

The anticipated work program (Figure 29) is substantial. Resulting municipal codes are forecasted to take about a year to develop and codify, and this rests on two long-range Planners with limited administrative support and simultaneous elements moving through Planning Commission and City Council.

DEPT. OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT 2017/2018 LEGISLATIVE WORK PROGRAM

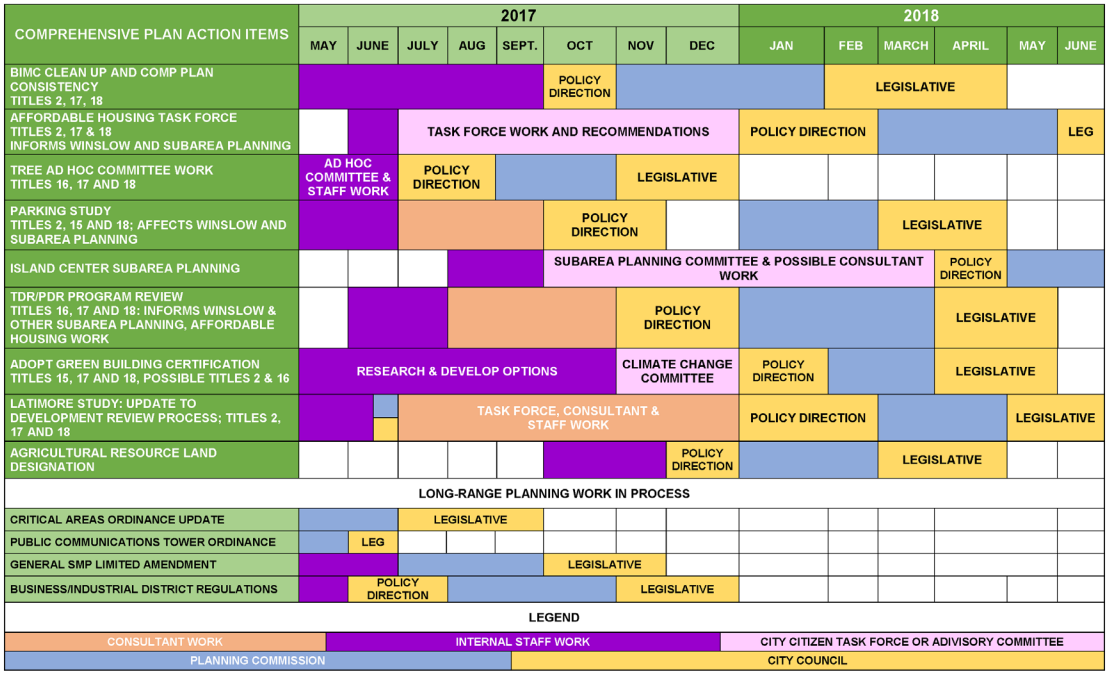


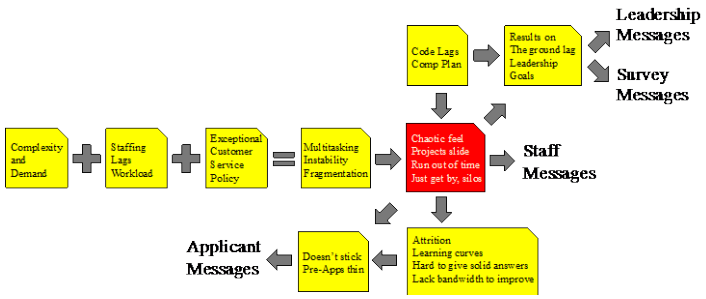
Figure 29 - Comprehensive Plan Implementation Work Program

Meanwhile, a year's worth of high volume applications will be submitted and vested under prior municipal codes on top of those currently in work or in rising backlog. Adding the time needed to decide these applications, well over a year of lag is vested under the previous Comprehensive Plan.

Further, materials must be developed to capture these new regulations into forms, standards, and daily practices in the Department and Public Works. In the current fray, this will be difficult to muster. And, until this is in place, staff have limited ability to durably advise prospective applicants.

Some in City Leadership and some survey respondents reacting to certain projects on the Island expressed a concern that the results on the ground—the output of the Bainbridge Island development review process—may not be what was or should have been approved.

The current instability combined with the municipal code lag creates this problem.



Improvement Recommendations

Improvement Recommendations

The Physics of this Challenge can be solved.

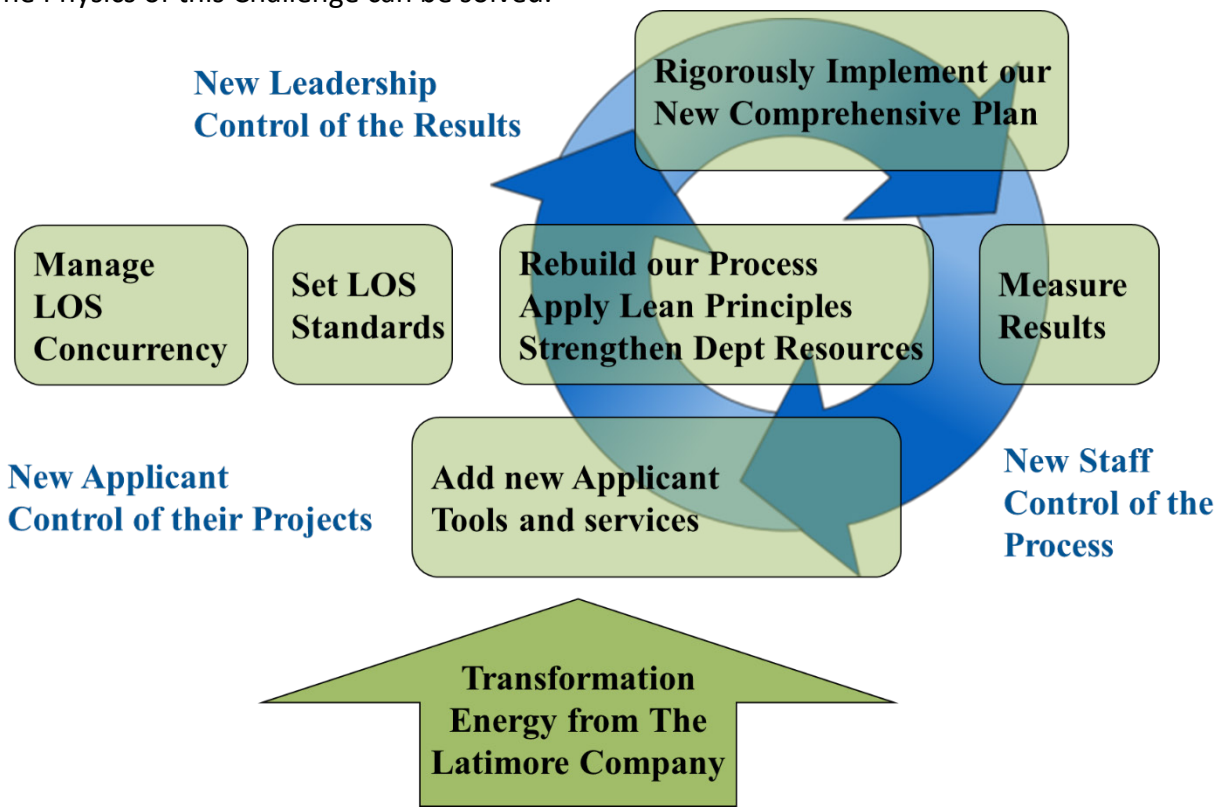


Figure 30 - The Solution

This can be transformed to a closed-loop development review system in the City of Bainbridge Island. A system where City Leadership, City staff, and applicants gain new controls over results on the ground; daily work life in the department; and applicant project success.

It is recommended the development review process be closed-loop, where (Figure 30):

- Levels of service are expressly set.
- Best practices are implemented for project review.
- Comprehensive Plan codification is methodically paced.
- New tools and options are added for durable up-front guidance.
- Results are measured, reported, and used to actively manage a concurrent system.
- The Latimore Company provides the energy and guidance to achieve this excellence.

This approach incorporates best practices for local government permitting. The Latimore Company assembled and published these practices for the Washington Governor's Office of Regulatory Assistance in 2008 (Figure 31).[1]



Figure 31 - Governor's Office of Regulatory Assistance Best Practices

Rebuild the Process

This package of improvements includes:

1. Assemble Templates, Procedures, Checklists. Apply *Lean* principles.

Bolster areas thin on process documentation. Procedures are drafted, reviewed by the team and Director, and implemented into practice. Review checklists are assembled and chosen for use on all project reviews, boosting consistency and providing placeholders while interruptions are reduced. Best example staff reports are established as "save as" templates to streamline preparation, improve consistency, and provide a built-in checklist of steps and conclusions to be

[1] Governor's Office report.

completed. All the while, the handling and artifacts for these are scrutinized to remove waste and exploit growing team resources to achieve lean practices.

2. Build an Array of Handouts for Citizen/Customer Advisory Board Comment, Development Review Committee Approval, and Applicant/Staff Use.

Update existing and add new handouts where needed. These are reviewed by City staff, the proposed Citizen/Customer Advisory Board (CCAB), and the proposed Development Review Committee (DRC) for accuracy and clarity, placed into practice, and stocked in counter and online repositories for ready staff and applicant use.

3. Guide SmartGov© Enhancement, Administrator, and Public Works Integration. Pull this together.

Enhance the existing SmartGov© case architecture to implement LOS standards across Department and Public Works reviewers, measure real-time aging against these standards for projects big and small, and capitalize on online submittal features.

To reach this level of sophistication, a SmartGov© administrator is needed. The administrator develops and refines SmartGov© templates, fine tunes them over time with Development Review Committee and Citizen/Customer Advisory Board feedback, actively scrutinizes project records for timely and accurate entries (vital for % time elapsed visibility), adds and refines online features, trains staff on intended use of feature sets, resolves issues, coordinates ongoing support with Paladin Data Systems, and runs standard and customized reports for management evaluation. Particularly during implementation of these department improvements, this is a full-time position. This adds the utilities sought from the tracking system and ensures the team uses them properly and consistently for sustainable gain.

4. Launch the Development Review Committee (DRC) and Robust Process Change Methods.

Establish a weekly cross-functional Development Review Committee (DRC) meeting to discuss and reach affirmative conclusions across codes on complex applications prior to comments being released for applicant revision or conditions being released for project approval. Through this collaboration, past project precedence can be infused, regulations can be interpreted with Director leadership, and experience grows even for those just listening in. DRC applications include those appearing before the hearing examiner, new custom single-family residential permits, and others the DRC adds for this integration. Further, the DRC vets and approves incoming improvements and reference materials, assuring positive implementation.

5. Guide Project Manager Implementation and Integrated Letters.

Clearly establish the leader of each project. This teammate leads DRC discussion, serves as the single point-of-contact for the project applicant team, receives and integrates review findings, and drives the project to its LOS to its final decision. Integrated review findings, including any outside/expedited reviews, are packaged into a single comment letter for the applicant to revise and resubmit as one comprehensive and complete response.

Types	Cycle Time (weeks)
Address assignment	2
Appeal (admin)	6
Appeal (SEPA)	6
Binding Site Plan	6
BLA/Lot Consolidation	2
Certificate of Appropriateness	6
Civil Plan Review	6
Code amendment	12
Comm (accessory)	2
Comm (SEPA exempt)	4
Comm (SEPA)	6
Conditional Use	6
Demolition	2
DRC (feasibility)	2
DRC (formal)	4
DRC (preliminary)	4
Fire (alarm)	2
Fire (sprinkler)	6
Grading (non SEPA)	6
Grading (SEPA)	6
Land Clearing (Non SEPA)	6
Land Clearing (SEPA)	6
Land Use Action	6
Mechanical	2
Multi Family	6
Plat (final)	6
Plat (preliminary)	6
Plat (short)	6
Plumbing	2
Private utilities (ROW)	3
PUD	6
Reasonable Use (riparian)	6
Reasonable Use (wetland)	6
Res (all other)	2
Res (new custom)	4
Res (stock plan)	2
Retaining Wall	4
SEPA Determination	4
Shorelines	6
Sign	2
Tank	2
UGA (DRC)	2
UGA (Utilities)	6
Variance	6
Wetland Permit	6
Wireless Facility	6

Figure 32 - Sample LOS Cycle Standards

6. Implement LOS and % Time Elapsed Timeline Management.

City Council establishes LOS standards for application review (Figure 32) and other aspects of excellent customer service. Then, associated timelines are built into SmartGov© projects, and the team uses % time elapsed, the SMARTQueue©, and real-time data entries to visualize and manage department focus. Implementation of these best practices is managed by the DRC. TLC helps the team through the transition when the projects in review are a mix of old and new methods.

Planning & Community Development uses Paladin Data System's SmartGov© permit tracking system. The team uses the system as most departments do to calculate and apply fees, signal incoming plans to City staff, record City staff comments, conditions and approval decisions, manage inspections, and print permits. Applicants in turn have an online portal that allows them to check on review progress, and as Building has begun experimenting with, there are tools for online submittal.

The team uses the system's SMARTQueue© feature. This feature calculates a percent complete for each application in the system. This allows City staff across departments to see projects that are nearing completion, perhaps awaiting just one last check. For example, if a permit requires 5 review steps, when 4 of them are complete, the SMARTQueue© is 80 (for 80% complete). The team uses this information to focus attention on those approaching 100.

To improve predictability of review timelines, TLC recommends a second measure be added alongside SMARTQueue©. Taken together with SMARTQueue©, this combination provides new insight to make project management decisions, hour to hour in the busy office environment and between inspections, on what to work on to deliver best service.

This complementary measure is *percent of time elapsed*.

The first step is to define turnaround (cycle time) standards for each type of application. These can, and often do, range greatly from, say, a small accessory building to a subdivision.

As an example, here is what one community chose for development review LOS standards (Figure 32). First review cycle times can differ from resubmittal reviews or be the same. These targets are a level of service discussion, akin to setting traffic flow standards in comprehensive planning. Faster targets draw more capacity. A starting point for the City of Bainbridge Island could be roughly the cycle times Planning & Community Development deliver today.

Once targets are established, SmartGov© is used to tally the number of days each application has been in-house since its last counter submittal (aging). The number of days is divided by the respective target for its application type to arrive at % time elapsed.

For example, wireless facility review in Figure 24 has a 6-week target. At the end of Week 3, the % time elapsed is 50%. At the end of Week 4 it is 67%.

Once % time elapsed is calculated for all the applications in review, all of them are sorted by this number. The application with the greatest % time elapsed is the top priority whether a deck or a new commercial development.

Next to the sorted % time elapsed field is the SMARTQueue©. With the combination, both staff and administration can gauge progress relative to time elapsed. Outliers stand out and can be addressed, and week to week trends can be monitored to predict and bolster future performance.

The effect of this recommended approach is a narrowing in the scatter of fastest to slowest and a similar convergence to the targets set for each application type, the very definition of predictability. Current averages can be published to give residents and prospective applicants a sense for when reviews will be complete. Publishing the real-time % time elapsed and SMARTQueue© value for each application allow applicants and the public to see precisely the status and evolution of individual project reviews. Lastly, tallies can be summed from cycle to cycle to derive 120-day or other clock measures.

7. Ahead: Real-time Completeness Determination and Review Debriefings.

From the vantage when the development review process stabilizes through the recommended

improvements, refinements are added that boost predictability, timeliness, efficiency, and collaboration. The 28-day cycle for determination of completeness is replaced by a real-time decision at the time of submittal by the DRC. Then at the conclusion of each DRC review cycle, a meeting is held with the applicant team to explain findings, discuss solutions, and prepare the applicant team for a successful, real time, resubmittal completeness determination. These leaner practices further eliminate resubmittal cycles and the attendant energy consumed by the current development review cycles.

New Applicant Tools and Options

The pending Site Assessment Review (SAR) should be implemented as currently envisioned. It is intended to establish a mutual understanding of site hydrology so that successive land use and permit applications can properly implement the low impact design aspirations of the latest Department of Ecology stormwater manual.

The SAR hand-assembles GIS map information the City has on a subject parcel planned for development, and provides stormwater recommendations. The GIS portion creates a tacit baseline of existing conditions to underpin development plans and inform development review. The recommended parcel report, defined below, would add new utility and efficiencies to the SAR.

Building on SAR, six new applicant tools and optional services are recommended. The sixth, an option to establish a *site layout*, is recommended after the other improvements are well established in practice.

1. Launch Citizen/Customer Advisory Board (CCAB) and Facilitate Discussions. Obtain Customer Perspectives of LOS, Handouts, Procedures.

A task force/advisory board, which could be called the Citizen/Customer Advisory Board (CCAB), is formed and convened from time to time to advise the Planning & Community Development Director on development review processes and community and customer service. The group is on order of 10 members, comprised of development industry representatives (architects, developers, contractors), a representative from City Council, one from the Planning Commission, and one from the Design Review Board, and representation from the community, including The Latimore Company and Planning & Community Development staff. Near-term topics are advice on desired LOS standards, feedback on the clarity and utility of draft handouts and other reference material, and perspectives on new procedures. This guidance helps the Planning & Community Development Director gauge the readiness of improvements, hear matters of interest to those working with the Department, and provides valuable data points for what levels of service clients need to be successful.

2. Guide/Develop Parcel Report Capability. Get the Word Out.

As recommended in Best Practices for Local Government Permitting, a foundational step is to build a mutual understanding. This begins with an understanding of the existing (starting) conditions of the parcel. What do City maps say? Are there streams, wetlands, steep slopes, tree groves, existing structures, road approaches, etc.? How is it laid out now? What do such features imply for development? Applicant familiarity with regulations varies widely: what factors are significant? What do these terms mean? Professional studies may be needed based on how the prospective applicant wants to proceed, and the conclusions of these studies may limit what was intended or render it expensive.

A powerful tool, called a *parcel report* creates breakthrough mutual understanding.

The City's GIS data is programmatically formatted to present mapped features and aerial imagery, in a standard, repeatable, way. It automatically highlights mapped features on the parcel and links the reader to explanatory material to indicate the significance.

It's the official starting point of Bainbridge Island development. And, it's available 24/7. Prospective applicants begin with it. Counter inquiries begin with it. The upcoming SAR begins with it. Realtors begin with it. It's the baseline of mutual understanding. And if the applicant sees a different picture on the ground, the parcel report is the benchmark to ferret out the differences.

This has been in place for nearly a decade in nearby Cowlitz County. Its debut was widely praised by prospective applicants, buyers, sellers, and front counter staff who gained a shared vocabulary and site understanding that accelerates collaboration—literally on the same page. It packages traditional GIS information (Figure 33) into a powerful new format (Figures 34-35).

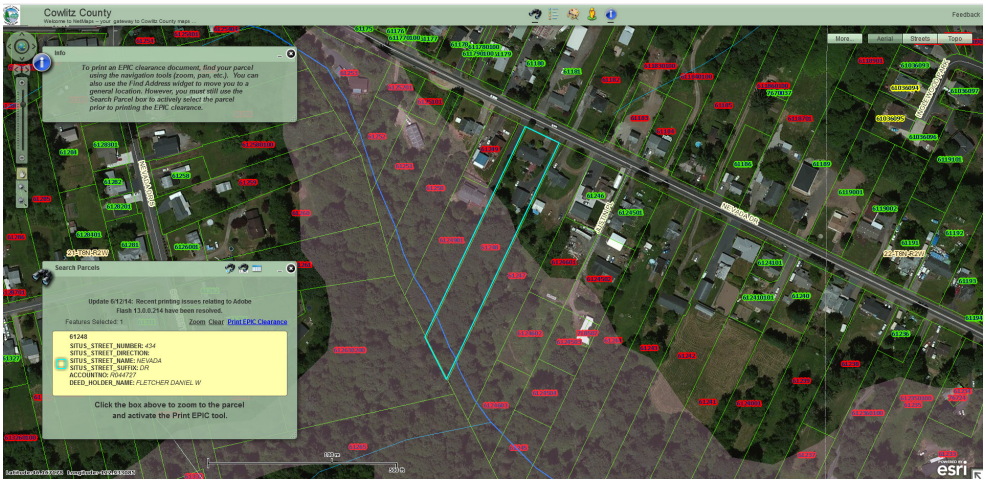


Figure 33 - GIS Map (Cowlitz County Example)

EPIC Planning Clearance Information

Parcel: 61248
Owner: FLETCHER DANIEL W
Site Address: 434 NEVADA DR

Status Red

Proceed to the Building and Planning Department for a Planning Clearance Review.
You can access the necessary forms from the online Site Plan Package.
Planning Clearance may take up to 2 weeks from time of application.

Zoning and Comprehensive Plan

Zone: UR
Comprehensive Plan: L-UR
Subdivision: COLUMBIA HGTS GDNS
Short Plat/Large Lot #:
Abbreviated Legal:
SUB:COLUMBIA HGTS GDNS BLK:7 LOT:37 DES
Acres: 1.5

Critical Areas

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Areas

Riparian Shoreline Stream:	No
Riparian Fish Bearing Stream:	Yes
Riparian Non Fish Bearing Stream:	No
Riparian Habitat:	Yes
Shoreline Jurisdictions:	No
PHS:	No
Stormwater:	Yes

Geologically Hazardous Areas

Deep Seated Landslide:	No
Deep Seated Landslide Scarp:	No
Shallow Landslides:	No
Sag Ponds:	No
Potentially Unstable Slopes:	Yes
Slopes 80%:	No
Slopes 60-80%:	No
Slopes 45-60%:	No
Slopes 30-45%:	No
Mine Hazards:	No
Volcanic Hazards:	No

Wetlands

NWI Wetlands:	No
Hydric Soils:	No

Other

Timber Moratorium:	No

Riparian Habitat Area (RHA): *Areas adjacent to streams or rivers that influence the aquatic ecosystem by providing habitat, shade, nutrients, organic or inorganic debris, and woody material. The size of the RHA is dependent on the type of stream associated with it.*

Shoreline Stream: *A stream or water body that is designated a 'Shoreline of the State' by the WAC. Standard RHA width for a type 1(S) Stream is 150 feet as measured from the ordinary high water mark. Also see 'Shorelines Jurisdiction.'*

Fish Bearing Stream: *A stream that flows perennially and contains fish and/or potential fish habitat. Standard RHA width for Type 3(F) Fish Bearing Stream is 100 feet as measured from the ordinary high water mark.*

Non Fish Bearing Stream: *A stream that flows either seasonally or perennially, but does not contain fish and does not meet the physical criteria for a fish-bearing stream. Standard RHA width for a non fish bearing stream is 50 feet as measured from the ordinary high water mark.'*

Shorelines Jurisdiction: *All of the water areas of the state, including reservoirs, and the associated shorelands, together with the lands underlying them. Development within 200 feet of the Ordinary High Water Mark or within the floodplain of the water body is regulared by Cowlitz County's Shoreline Master Program.*

Priority Habitat Species (PHS): *Habitat areas with unique or significant value to one or more priority species as classified by the State Department of Fish and Wildlife.*

Wetlands: *Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support prevalance of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marches, bots and siimilar areas. Buffer requirements may vary, and are determined by the type of wetland and proposed development activity.*

Hydric Soils: *A hydric soil is a soil that formed under conditions of saturation, flooding, or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part. Hydric soils may. indicate the presence of a wetland area.*

Stormwater: *Areas of the unincorporated, urbanized areas of Cowlitz County that are subject to the requirements and provisions of the Cowlitz County Stormwater Management Ordinance.*

Geologically Hazardous Areas: *Areas potentially subject to landslides based on a combination of geologic, topographic, and hydrologic factors. These may include areas with active or inactive landslides, active or inactive landslides, active or inactive scarps, and potentially unstable slopes as identified on the adopted landslide inventory maps.*

Counter Complete
Ready for Permit Application

Printed: 06/12/2017 06:25:36 AM

Figure 34 - Parcel Report (for this Cowlitz County Example)

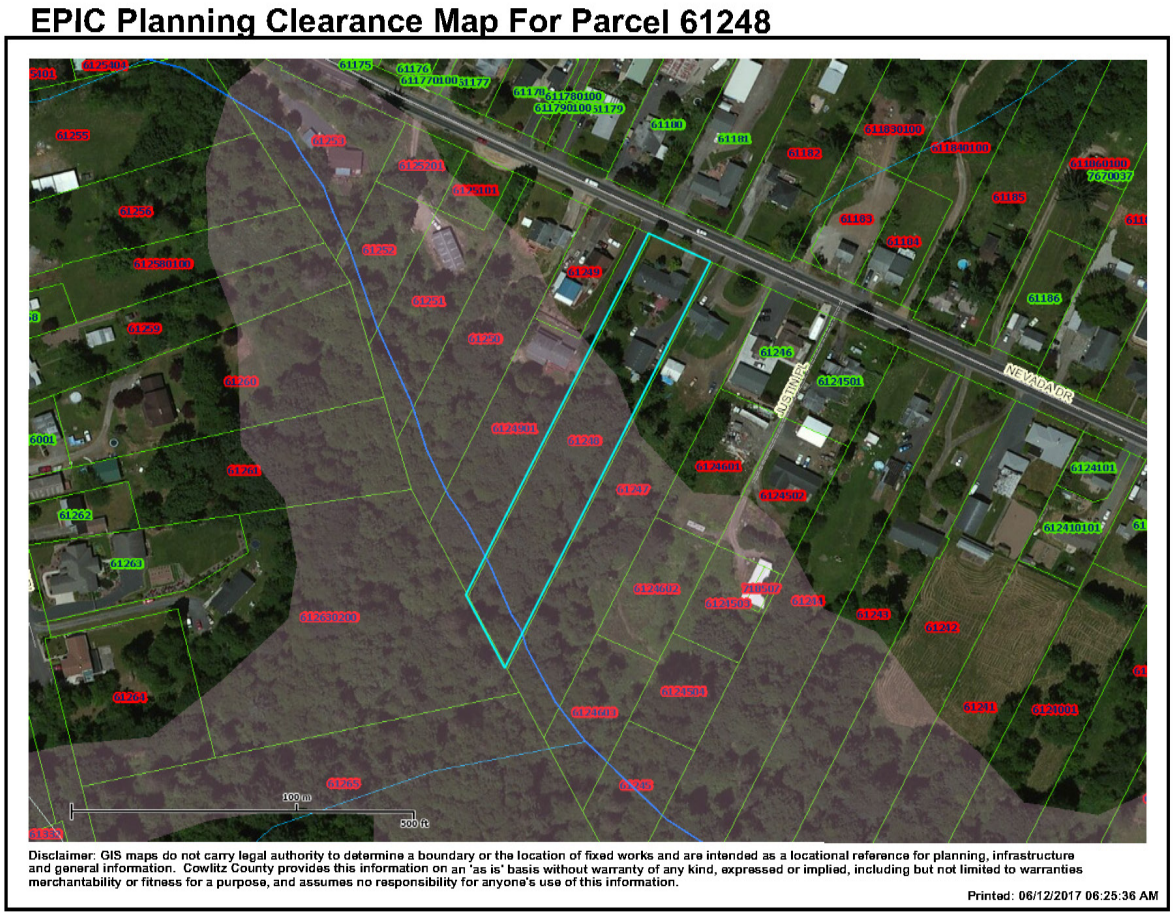


Figure 35 - Parcel Report (Cowlitz County Example)

Once implemented, the parcel report will also streamline staff SAR research, providing a running start for site visits and a structure for organizing staff SAR comments and hydrology recommendations.

Once well established, the City could leverage parcel reports to create additional efficiencies. For example, the logic of the Cowlitz County parcel report assigns a red/yellow/green color coding based on the nature of "yes" mapped features. Green parcel reports, indicating minor if any such features, prequalify certain steps required for a yellow parcel report. Red parcel reports, in turn, signal a staff site visit is required to submit significant construction applications.

3. Offer Pre-Development Consultations.

Some years back, Planning & Community Development offered a development review service called a "Consultation." The objective of a consultation was to provide a prospective applicant with an hour of time with staff to explore a development concept or assess the development potential of a site. As this is intended to occur very early in the development review process, minimal materials are required from the requestor to hold the meeting. Whether called a pre-

development meeting or a consultation, this optional service builds on the benefit of parcel reports to flag potential environmental factors and discuss alternatives with a common initial understanding.

4. Expand Electronic Submittal Options.

Electronic submittal has become very popular in our digital world. Indeed, some jurisdictions now see 80% of their building plans digitally submitted. SmartGov© is provisioned for electronic submittal and fee payments and it has tools for routing these virtual plans for office review and resubmittal exchanges. Planning & Community Development has been piloting electronic submittal for residential solar panel and roof permits in Bainbridge Island (Figure 36). The Department also collects digital versions with many incoming paper plans to capture configurations in SmartGov© or local file servers.

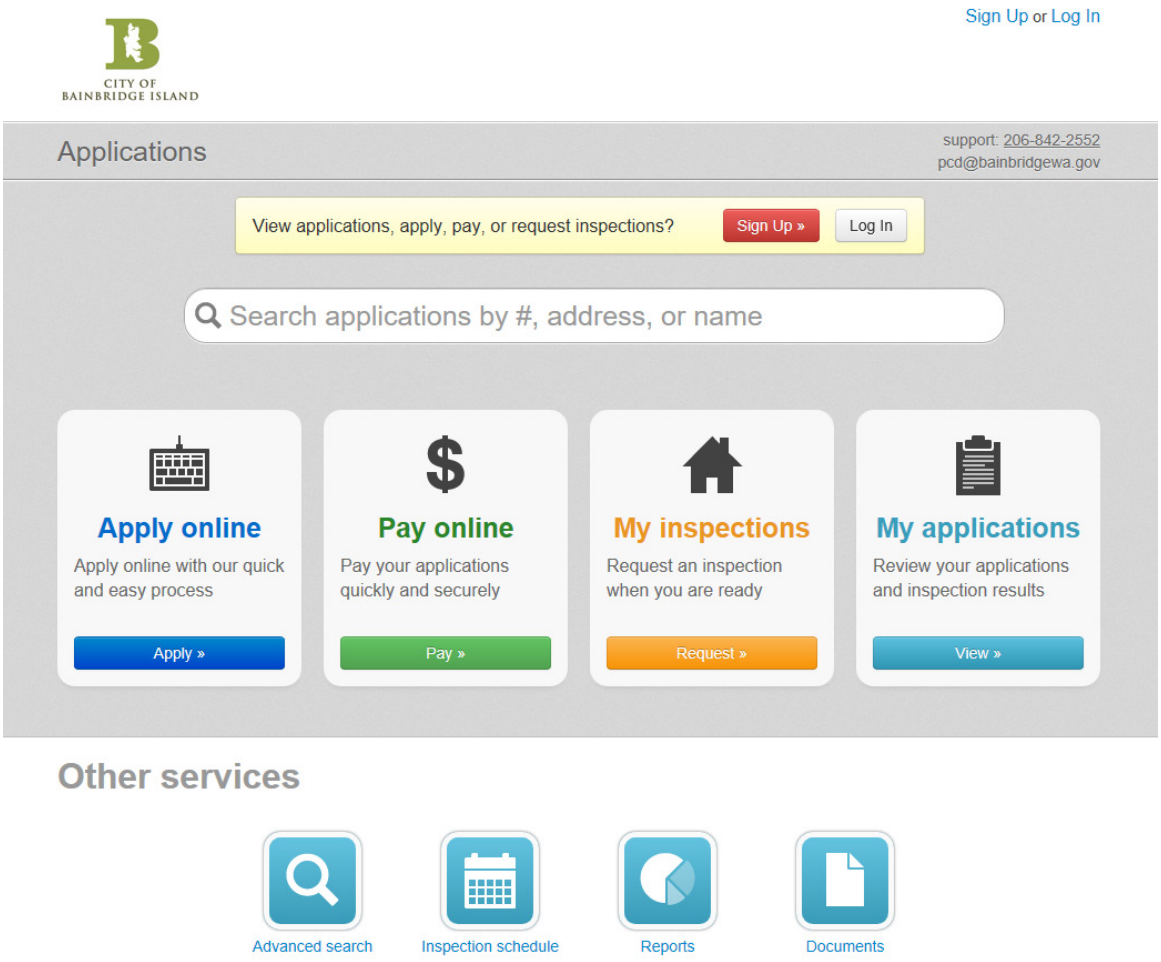


Figure 36 - Current Online Features in Bainbridge Island

TLC applauds the team for moving in this direction with these first building permit application types and recommends expanding electronic submittal offerings. Many jurisdictions begin with building permits and expand through road approach, sign, and special use to full civil plan and land use applications over time. Incoming plans continue to be vetted at intake to ensure

sufficient content to render accurate permit decisions.

5. Expand Real-Time Progress Visibility through SmartGov©

Improved project architecture, real-time staff data entries, and LOS standards, which enable % time elapsed, on top of the current SMARTQueue© which indicates % complete, applicants receive powerful new insight and confidence in the state of their project reviews. Development review progress can be monitored as it convergences on LOS targets. After project review, notations for common construction-phase questions from the public such as proper setback or building height could help reassure the public when key features pass inspection.

6. Ahead: SFR Site Layout Option.

It's not uncommon throughout Washington State for individuals to buy property for future home sites or existing residences for renovation. Longtime family properties may be due for an update: a bigger dock, armoring, an addition, clearing out of overtaking vegetation. The attraction for many of these sites are great vistas and waterfronts for beautiful homes, vacation getaways, or retirement destinations. Bainbridge Island is a wealth of these wooded coastlines, slopes, and streams, all within reach of Seattle. Improvement of these sites, like elsewhere, may stretch years, paced by financing, availability or both.

A fair number of applicants providing feedback for this assessment were in this category.

The challenge is the very features that draw this interest present the greatest environmental challenges and complexity in the development review process. Many underestimate the effort, studies, and cost. Some proceed slowly enough to encounter new regulations midway through that force new courses, dampen dreams.

After other improvements are well established, a new development review service could be offered, for example a Site Plan Advance Approval Determination as Jefferson County calls it. Or, perhaps, *Site Layout*, could be added. This is a popular option for applicants fitting this home site scenario.

This approach allows a Single Family Residential (SFR) applicant to establish a site layout up-front that serves as a framework and baseline for downstream permitting. It establishes a construction envelope: the location of the house, accessory buildings, driveways, wells, onsite septic system components, primary and reserve areas, and other areas presumed to be disturbed with construction. Discussions of allowable envelopes, drainage provisions, mitigation, and the like, and downstream permit requirements occur at this phase.

Once agreed, this site layout is vested and valid for a reasonable development period the City sets in its municipal code. Five years was chosen in the noted county. The applicant then develops his or her plans accordingly, placing improvements per the site layout.

The regulations are fixed during this period barring state or federal changes, so the applicant can plan, finance, and chip away at the improvements confidently.

In turn, staff gain a clear baseline to work from that streamlines downstream permitting. Incidental deviations from the site layout can be approved administratively. Substantial changes render the site layout moot and normal permitting applies.

The site layout process is an optional add-on to the pre-application process. The applicant chooses either the incremental (most likely) or the concurrent approach in the prior recommendation, developing their SAR and site layout. After pre-application meeting discussion, staff and the applicant agree on the site layout. Then it's off to the races.

Comprehensive Plan Implementation

Rigorous, proactive methods are used to manage the lag between Comprehensive Plan adoption and implementation into daily project review practice.

1. Comprehensive Plan implementation Project Management and Pace Monitoring.

To proactively manage the lag between Comprehensive Plan adoption and implementation of updated goals and policies in development review, detail tasks and precedence relationships are built beneath the work program recently review by the City Council (Figure 29). These tasks are then resource-loaded and re-phased based on available staff capacity. City Leadership can then proactively assess the predicted pace and make adjustments accordingly. Once agreed, progress is monitored and reported to City Leadership in closed-loop fashion to understand when policies, programs, and development code is implemented and thus start shaping results on the ground.

2. Robust Procedural Incorporation.

Implementation into Department practice is managed through the new DRC, with input from the new CCAB. Incoming regulations and their intent are presented and questions are answered to poise staff for implementation. Handouts, forms, templates, construction standards, and review checklists are revised to capture the new criteria; these are also reviewed in the same fashion for clarity, accuracy, and readiness by the CCAB, DRC, and the long-range planning team. Vesting considerations are clarified at this time as well.

Measure and Manage Results and LOS

A closed-loop system is implemented that measures, reports, and responds to results on the ground, pace of Comprehensive Plan implementation into practice, and actual City performance to level of service (LOS) standards. It also establishes concurrency where levels of service are linked to staffing levels so City Leadership can choose LOSs with an understanding of the cost of service alternatives.

1. Establish and Proactively Manage Levels of Service Standards

As cited before, Level of Service standards are considered and chosen by City Leadership. Staff use these LOS standards to apportion capacity accordingly. Standards are set for plan review cycles, counter and inquiry services, and response to construction concerns.

These are documented and replace unwritten policies that have had detrimental effects on plan review as described.

Target areas:

- Counter inquiries. Discussions on order of 15 minutes is common regional practice. Aided by parcel reports. SAR and pre-development consultations for deeper discussions.
- Online inquiries. Available by portal and by embedded link in parcel reports. Response on order of ≤ 1 week is common. Also aided by parcel reports.
- *SeeClickFix* issues. Recent actual issues "clicked in" constitute a day's worth of staff effort to acknowledge, research the concern, verify matters onsite, and respond. On top of daily inspections and counter service, and compounded by any absences, one or two issues could consume all remaining plan review capacity that day.
- Phone call returns. Current practice is to answer calls and return missed calls that day. Next day response is common.
- Dedicated plan review time blocks. These reserve useful blocks of uninterrupted time for heavy project review. These are on order of 2-4 hour blocks once or twice a week, which can be staggered. Able to count on these, larger, more interruption-sensitive, reviews are undertaken on time rather than sliding until urgent or pockets of quiet time are found. Inquiry coverage must be reconciled.
- Pre-development consultations depth beyond a counter inquiry. One hour meetings. 2 to 3 week lead time for a time slot is common.
- Daily coverage levels. Hours when counter service is available by specialty. Absences and fast-track services figure into this.

2. Establish Initial Plan Review LOSs based on Current Performance.

It's recommended that first-edition LOS standards for the various types of project review be set conservatively, as near as can be determined from SmartGov© records to current performance.

Predictability is vital to applicants. Choosing feasible LOSs, given the physics currently limiting performance, yields more predictable results. Meanwhile, improvements will be steadily added. As pieces are put into place, performance improves and LOSs stabilize at new, higher performance levels. Then, second-edition LOSs are chosen.

3. Measure Results (On the Ground, Actual LOSs, CCAB Feedback)

Measurement, evaluation, and response to ongoing results closes the loop of an actively managed development review system.

- Actual performance to LOS standards is measured (e.g. 2.8 weeks vs. 3 weeks for this backlog of this application type, 7.4 weeks vs. 6 weeks for that backlog of that application type, etc.), shared with the CCAB for feedback, and reported to City Leadership.
- Actual progress toward Comprehensive Plan implementation into practice is tracked and similarly reported to City Leadership. This provides an in-process opportunity to adjust pace, hearing schedules, or priorities to actively manage the lag.
- Final results on the ground are assessed and reported to City Leadership. Annually, a cross-section of completed projects are evaluated for conformance to vested codes and consistency with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Through closed-loop management, City Leadership can positively assess the results of its development review system, confirm it is working as intended, identify solutions for any undesired trends, and speak with confidence that the system is serving the community as intended.

Enabling through The Latimore Company

Department staff concur with and are committed to this improvement effort, are eager to begin, and are excited to reach this new operating environment. The team wants to be successful.

However, pursuit of best practices in the past was often overtaken by the ongoing demands of the daily fray City staff are trying to address. The energy required to break through from A to B couldn't be mustered, so the fray remained.

The Latimore Company will provide this transformational energy, reinforcement, and continuity. Together, we reach B.

The development review project work program contains 12 transformational elements, identified below. The next step is to develop near and long-term work program priorities, project schedules/timeline, and projected implementation costs.

1. Establish initial Customer Service and Plan Review LOSs.
2. Develop Comprehensive Plan implementation resource-feasible plan, pace, tie to daily practices.
3. Assemble the templates, procedures, checklists. Apply *Lean* principles.
4. Build the array of handout drafts for CCAB comment and DRC approval.
5. Guide SmartGov© enhancement, administrator, and Public Works integration. Pull this together.
6. Implement and phase-in LOSs and % time elapsed timeline management.
7. Launch and establish the DRC and incorporated development review practices and methods.
8. Launch and establish the CCAB. Obtain feedback on LOS, handouts, procedures.
9. Guide Project Manager implementation, integrated letters, and correction cycles.
10. Guide/develop parcel report capability. Get the word out.
11. Guide City Leadership through implementation of closed-loop system management.
12. Provide ongoing communications with Team, City Leadership, CCAB.

These are phased for maximum benefit to department operations, applicants, and City Leadership, and paced to provide the team and the system an orderly transition.

Conclusion

Conclusion and Next Steps

This Assessment of the City of Bainbridge Island development review process concluded the process boasts 6 strengths and 18 improvements are recommended to redesign the way the City's department staff, advisory boards, committees, and applicants work together to produce a top quality built environment, predictable timelines, consistent results, and high customer satisfaction.

The pacing aspects of review are the effects of strong development demand, Island ecology, evolving regulations, customer service standards, a lag between Comprehensive Plan updates and changes in staff practice, and a lag between development volumes and staffing. These combine to create a challenging work environment, applicants call for more durable guidance and predictability, and a sense from some in Leadership and in community survey results that final results on the ground are not what was intended. The "physics" of how these forces affect the results, timelines, and atmosphere of development review are explained in the report.

The Improvement Recommendations create a closed-loop process where City Leadership, Department Staff, and Applicants guide, set, and manage levels of service, methodically pace Comprehensive Plan implementation into practice, and provide new ways for the City and its Applicants to establish more durable understandings up-front, efficiently respond to staff correction comments, and capitalize on online technology.

Next Steps finalize an implementation schedule. The Latimore Company recommends a 12-point work package to supply the energy for timely transformation, expertise, and steady reinforcement to bring this high-performance development review system to the City of Bainbridge Island.

Thank You

The Latimore Company thanks the City of Bainbridge Island Leadership for this opportunity to work together to improve the performance and outcome of the development review process and deliver superior customer service to the Bainbridge Island community.

We also thank the many applicants, residents, local business leaders, online respondents, and development review staff for sharing their insights and passion for good development review with us. On to implementation!

Respectfully submitted, Kurt Latimore, Member of The Latimore Company, LLC

Appendix

Appendix

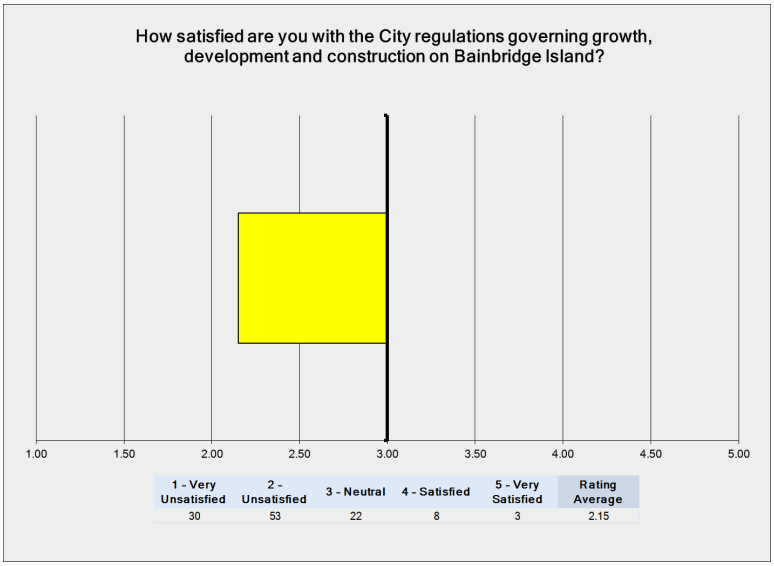
Online Survey Responses

These are the raw, free-form responses clarifying why each answered the way he or she did on the following questions:

- Question 3 pertaining to the development regulations.
- Question 5 pertaining to the character and quality of development occurring here.
- Question 9 pertaining to the various aspects of customer service by the department.
- Question 11 to add any other feedback or suggestions.

In roughly 5 of these free-form responses, a word or two was edited to redact personal information. In these cases, [brackets] surround the edited text.

Question 3:
How satisfied are you with the City regulations governing growth, development and construction on Bainbridge Island?



Seems like a gauntlet - lots of permits (trees, low impact development,
City staff turnover high. Little or no institutional member inside city hall or within some of its processes. We seem to be training staff & elected officials & esp. department heads to move

on. Infill in Winslow former city limits extreme of new residents & folks parking their money as investments & of off island commuters. Now that classic downtown maxed, planning focus on density seems goal- muddled and starting new density ring around island mixed use sites which are lacking in infrastructure. Need to identify the checks to sustain livability, perhaps replace planning commission figures by qualified brakepersons, less as advocates.
Even with seemingly lots of community input and committees, lots of complex regulations do not seem to yield consistent high quality outcomes that reflect the values that community members express as desirable.
Too complicated, too restrictive, too many inconsistencies and gray areas.
shoreline management is out of control.
There are a lot of conflicts in the way the city staff interprets land use rules. Also, as one who has participated in comp plan and SMP updates, it's pretty clear that the rules ultimately adopted largely follow what city planning staff and outside, off-island organizations initially propose and pretty much ignore the input of citizens and other island government agencies.
The number of permits approved has sky-rocketed. There are way too many multi-home developments going in, that take away from the character of the Island and degrade quality of life for current residents. We need to slow the growth of housing significantly.
I'm sorry to see us getting crowded but realize it's inevitable.
I think the City if doing the best it can under current regulations, but I'm looking forward to the Comp Plan helping to provide more visionary direction and empowering staff to maintain a personal touch. That being said, while much development strives to fit into an Island character, somehow we all lost the plot on the new development on Wyatt - too big, not in character, stupid design and heavy-handed waste of space on water retention. A total lack of imagination that we all allowed to slip through on a significant property.
They are completely out of touch with what citizens values.. their main goal is to foster development, regardless of how awful and ugly. They hand out variances like candy to anyone for anything. They refuse to protect open space, critical areas and trees by the laws they draft. They completely left out citizens in the final Comp Plan writing, essentially making it a developer and retail friendly, again completely ignoring citizen input at all levels and using a completely false and misleading "survey" to say that this is what citizens want, when the survey was not one that asked for priorities at all and had no questions about environmental issues etc. You lie to citizens all the time about how much trees and open space are valued while allowing clearing everywhere anyone wants it, with absolutely no penalties. The Code Enforcement Officer is a joke, perhaps the worst we have ever had.
Land Clearing Regulations need to be clarified and enforced.
Over reaching in its efforts to preserve quality of life. Creates processes, increases costs, delays, much of which provide little real value. Especially at the individual homeowner level.
There are too many new homes being built. The island is getting too crowded. The island roads were not built for this many cars.
I appreciate the rules that limit sprawl, however I think we need to do MUCH more to promote and create affordable housing on the island. There are many reasons to want our workers, including our lowest paid ones, to live on the island, and currently there is no adequate plan to make that happen. We should allow for ADU's/mother-in-law/tiny homes

on properties, require builders to include truly affordable units, and study at all aspects of this issue. Also, I didn't see a need to build the new shopping area on High School (the Visconsi project). Why should we be approving projects just because an area is zoned for them, if there isn't a need for that type of development? And lastly, my mother recently moved to the island and has discovered that very few condos and town homes are designed for older people to age in place. Most new development has two or more stories with bedrooms on a second story. Bainbridge has a huge draw as a retirement community, but our housing doesn't reflect that. We should be strongly encouraging builders to create housing for older people who want to age in place (our community would really benefit).
no benefit except to the developer. no thought for the whole impact on the water and habitat
I have had very little interaction with the city regarding growth, development, and construction other than to take one phone survey shortly after moving to the island. I do like the emphasis on large, undeveloped spaces and parks and keeping the congestion of clustered homes/condos on the south end. I worry a bit about what that congestion will do to our utilities, traffic flow, etc., however. AND WHEN ARE WE FINALLY GOING TO GET A NEW, DECENT POLICE DEPARTMENT BUILDING??
COBI needs to do more to facilitate and encourage the development of more affordable housing.
too many rules and regulations and they're hard to keep up with. Even the city staff can't understand them.
While I understand that the business folks are eager to make more money, I don't like the move to make Winslow businesses cater more to tourists than our island population. Too many high-end gift stores, etc. I do appreciate the move to concentrate more of the inevitable residential growth to the Winslow area. I am against new chain stores such as Walgreens. Please do not put in a big parking garage.
Good job of protecting undeveloped areas outside Winslow and the community centers. Need to ease parking restrictions (zoning ordinance limit on # parking spaces) for commuters around the ferry---they are the ones paying the bills (high property taxes) and yet, we do everything we can to make their lives complicated. Staff does a good job of enforcing the existing rules but some of the other bureaucracy (Design Review Board, Planning Commission) are unrealistic and counter-productive.
Driven by developers, whether its low income housing or more traditional construction. How many empty commercial properties exist on the island?
While applying for a building permit in 2015 I found the process quite cumbersome. The interface between the city and the county seemed more difficult than necessary. I spent about 2 months at City Hall dealing with both the city and the county and found at times the

same questions and answers were required even though the information they stated they needed I had supplied previously. I understand that most times I dealt with different personnel who were not familiar with my questions and therefore they were required to look things up. One item that cost us over $2000.00 was found at the final inspection unnecessary for our situation. Needless to say I was upset. It was an indication that someone did not know or understand the requirements and therefore gave me wrong information.
The regulations seem to apply to individual home owners but not to developers. We had a hard time getting a permit to remodel our home, meanwhile developers clearcut 5 acres near Battlepoint, put 2 homes on a less than 2 acre lot here in Seabold, put a house on a cliff on Euclid and then there is Allens Cove (admittedly before growth regs but still a travesty. Net Systems is doing all sorts of things on their property but since it is off the roads, no one even knows.
Building plans seem to be approved before the public can chime in. Walgren's.
I am very unhappy about the handling of the Sportsman Club contamination site. (Which isn't a club at all, they are open to the public). I am new to the island and understand there is a group of people trying to bring this news to the forefront only to be met with sweeping it under the rug and coverup. They have documents and test results to prove these facts. This is going to get out and when it does, I'm afraid the BI government will have a black eye. I hate to see this happen. All our property values will suffer when people realize this entire site and their neighbors properties are contaminated with LEAD and ARSENIC. How long will it take for this to affect our well water while lead penetrating into the soil for 80 years. How did these schools get built so close to this business? Our children have to listen to nonstop shooting while at school. These children don't even react to Gun fire while we live in a world that you better react and fast if you hear gunfire. There are people with PTST living within earshot and this can't be good! How long before a PTSD victim reacts to gunfire because of hearing it constantly, 7 days a week. Then there is the stray bullet theory! If a stray bullet from these high powered guns escapes the facility it could travel over two schools! Really? Who thinks that couldn't happen? Then let's address the pond across the street where children fish! Contaminated! I don't understand why this isn't a top priority for our city leaders! It's time to stop turning a blind eye and address this issue! What is it going to take to get this resolved?
I feel that the reason most of us have moved and live on BI is because of the bucolic surroundings. Over the years I have found this to be a dwindling area of green and peace I feel the only thing COBI wants is the income from developers to fill their coffers and build edifices to themselves! Think about the reason you moved here!!
It seems that we suffering from zealous enforcement of meaningless regulations in terms of they affect the environment or liveability of the Island. Lack of leadership seems to be a constant struggle with the ever changing city council.

The joke (haha) is that developers own the city council, planning department and the like. Having their way with what is built and where. Its time for change - look around, how out of control are things? Personally, I think those in decision making need to more honest/forthcoming about availability of water & sewage services, growth impact on traffic, schools and community health. Stop reacting - giving in and take the LEAD for a community for everyone and healthy island future.
I think professional management has made a huge difference in how the city functions, plus the city council seems very professional and objective.
SMP has prevented me from putting in a generator, improving my property and views. I have a vacant lot next door to me that is full of junk, yet there are no ordinances that prevent that as there are in other cities.
We have outgrown our limits. Any more growth and the island will completely lose its character. Traffic has become horrible; the wildlife we used to have are gone. I can't imagine how bad it would be already if not for Parks, Land Trust, etc.
It appears that anyone can buy private land and decide to build a development or a new huge house. We have seen a lot of development over the last couple years. I worry about whether we are looking at the water resources being used by these new houses, the additional educational needs, and trees and wildlife that are destroyed. I think we should be trying to house people in denser areas. We also seem to be building new office/commercial space when there is perfectly good space available.
Bainbridge has become overpopulated and is getting worse. Developers and RE agents are getting rich at the expense of our life style.
Winslow is already the urban center of the island, so I am personally not as affected as most by new construction - except in instances where it may alter major traffic flow areas. I am thus neutral on the subject.
Ignore comp plan. Combined Tree committee with farmland, which obviates anything they can do. No protection for trees. Development allowed with no regard for dwindling water resources.
The regulations themselves are fine and fair. The city's execution of them is scattered and misunderstood by the staff themselves.
Response to Item #3 above is primarily related to the SMP update process. See Item #11 below for more specific information.
This is an island of limited water resources. With climate warming already here and exponentially increasing in the years ahead, we will be experiencing dry, hot summers unknown to this area in the past. Aquifers will be drawn down during those periods by increased population needs, but more importantly, we are at risk of fires from dried out trees and vegetation and the only source of water for firefighting will come from on those same aquifers...in massive draw down. Water accumulated over thousands of years simply cannot be replaced. I know past studies have projected that the island aquifers can sustain a population of

30,000. But I believe that projection should be subjected to analysis under different working assumptions...wet winters with increase in vegetation, followed by months of drought conditions and fire as well as increased water use during those months by residents. Also, prolific use of water for pressure washing buildings and grounds, especially condos and townhomes has become a standard of practice in Winslow. Lastly, the traffic and parking in town has already maxed out with the current increased density. We're already 15 years behind on implementing any solution for public transportation. Let's face it, bicycling is not the answer for the majority of our citizens. Separated byways for small motorized vehicles could help as could regular, frequent bus routes. Th council has increased the vehicle registration...let's use that money for alternative transportation...not more bike lanes that benefit the very few until some solutions for the rest of us are on the table.
I feel growth is happening too fast and the island is getting over-developed. There are serious concerns that have been raised on water resources but the city does not appear to take it seriously
I think the City needs to go further with green building and ensuring a better planned future for the island that preserves habitat while encouraging walkable, urban development. Incentives should be created to promote deep green solutions like the Living Building Challenge for example.
It seems the infrastructure, especially parking and traffic, is not being improved to handle the increased development. For instance, our Seabold area is now overrun with commuters trying to avoid the highway, and the speed limits and traffic flow have not been amended to prevent this or to slow the traffic down. Also, dense developments downtown don't seem to require sufficient parking, so the side streets and downtown areas are being used for what should be residential parking.
I believe there has been an insane amount of growth in recent years that does not preserve the character and environment of the island. Despite public outcry several large developments have been allowed to move forward. I believe the city is more focused on short term money making/tax making ventures rather than maintaining good quality of life for existing residents. I also don't understand why we approve buildings on unstable slopes or in environmentally sensitive areas. Eventually the tax payers have to pay to maintain roads and areas that continually wash out because of the natural drainage in the area.
Not very familiar with the regulations or process for creating them.
COBI is not listening to all of us ONLY A FEW. We do not want more housing/people, more cars, less water & more stuff. Bainbridge Island is adored for what it is, local hiking, beaches, farms and a vibrant downtown. Not the monument the City Manager wants to make for himself and not for the architects that suck up to COBI for there own obvious gain. Farms, clean food, clean water and air are the essentials we want and need. Bainbridge has been designated 'tree city us' let's walk that talk instead of touting the plaque on the wall.
HTTP projects allow increasing density which affects neighborhoods with little return. Trees and vegetation are not protected by regulations, and when the are, many are removed without penalty.

Regulation is lacking, and developers are allowed to clear cut, densify, and adversely impact my quality of life. City staff, especially the City Manager, and some on the Council, appear to be overly cozy with developers.
Lots shouldn't be so small. Should not focus on 'affordable housing'. Should have kept our own water company. Cost went way up and there's no incentive to conserve water. Quit spending so much money. The super expensive new schools, studies for things like a parking garage and our own power company, etc. Our own power company? Seriously?! Costs will skyrocket. Tired of that, and tax increases. Ridiculous. Just spending other people's money. Disgusting.
COBI appears to be writing growth based on Winslow and not the outer Island areas. The unique neighborhoods are not given much say in how their part of the Island is going to grow. Consultants are from places with much larger population and think the Island should look like those places. The availability of water is not given enough weight in planning decisions. The Comp Plan tends to be ignored. The Island wide Transportation Plan used the Transportation Research Board Special Report 209 from (1986). This report is obsolete and has been removed from the Transportation Research Boards web page. The Special Report 209 was replaced by the 2010 Highway Capacity Manual which was updated in 2015 and again in October 2016. Using obsolete data COBI has decided to replace the four-way stop at Wyatt and Madison with a roundabout. Currently the northbound Madison has a left turn lane allowing the afternoon commute to process efficiently through the intersection. By removing the left turn lane the vehicles turning onto Wyatt will have to merge with the vehicles going north on Madison. This will reduce the capacity of the intersection. COBI removed parking spaces from Winslow Way reducing the maximum number of shoppers reducing the demand for addition retail along Winslow Way. Now COBI wants to build a garage with Seattle garage parking spaces running around $25,000 for aboveground and $35,000 for underground spaces. So every 100 spaces is going to cost taxpayers about $3,000,000 because COBI rebuilt Winslow Way with fewer spaces. COBI widened the sidewalk during the rebuild but did not underground the electricity. COBI put the poles in the sidewalk that where widen for more capacity. COBI proposes cutting trees in the SR-305 Scenic Byway to build a pedestrian overpass to 49 Condos at a cost of $3,500,000. Those condo users can use the Sound-to-Olympic Trail. COBI needs a new police station but the siting has been used not to provide the best security services for citizens of the Island but to further COBI's city managers vision of a government campus. COBI put No Parking signs next to the Grange on north Madison while the community wanted to share the space. "Woonerf" is the transportation term for a shared space without lines and controls. The public right-of-way maintains the look and feel of a friendly transportation system like Pike Place Market street in Seattle versus the cold impersonal control of bikes go here and cars go here while pedestrians must go over there. Adding the Day Road center instead of concentrating retail in Winslow is a big mistake. You have already seen how Visconti killed

both Winslow Drugs and the Virginia Mason Clinic on Winslow Way. Building Visconti in a Mixed Use Zone with not one residential unit while complaining there is not enough housing in Winslow is hypocritical. COBI pushing to build a new court facility in Winslow after pushing to put the court services in Poulsbo makes the decision making process at COBI to appear laughable. COBI pushed with Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council to put $38,000,000 in widening SR-305 without letting the citizens have a say does not bold well for buy in of the process. The Comp Plan describes SR-305 as a wall of traffic while not recognizing the Suquamish Way right turn lane all but eliminated the afternoon backup on the Island. Yet COBI is continuing on as if that fix never occurred. Island have asked repeatedly to protect the trees yet COBI cut trees and cut limbs on the ones left standing in the Waterfront Park to the point of removing the opportunity of finding a place of solitude in a natural setting in Winslow. I would like to see COBI put more Capital Projects to a vote. I would also like to see all Island Town Hall meetings every quarter.
Any policy or regulations in place do not appear to be respected or enforced.
Way too much construction being permitted - open space is fast-disappearing. Slow it down!
I don't know as much as I should about the issue, but my sense is that (1) the Council has made some peculiar choices recently (eg, the midnight approval of the moratorium on contingent uses) and (2) every decision that gets made meets with community ire, often from those who oppose any development. It might make sense to try to determine how best to involve the community at the level of policy/permitting/zoning before specific projects get started -- and things like giving best- and worst-case scenarios about what regs would allow/prohibit would be a useful part of that kind of engagement. It's hard for most people to project such scenarios when they read an abstract proposal.
I think the city is transparent with its growth and development projects and have had no problems understanding its intent to involve community it its efforts to solve challenging problems.
I believe at times they are too restrictive, and the approval processes take much too long and are discouraging to development.
The city codes require building out to the sidewalk - it is claustrophobic and leaves little other than cement to building views. The city also promised (a very long time ago) to control growth "better than kitsap county", however they make their money issuing building permits...hmmmmm. Downtown BI or Winslow is beginning to look cramped and overbuilt, other areas are following. Start relating water to growth!
Tax utility increase on water/sewer
I'm not fully aware of the regulations. I've lived here for three years, and have heard vague references to them, but do not know the details of them.
I don't know enough about them to have a strong opinion.
Don't know a lot about city regulations. But there are too many subdivisions that can clearcut the land, yet existing homeowners cannot cut trees. Makes no sense at all.
Understand we need growth but don't like the clear cutting
I don't understand the need for more housing developments and tract homes.
I feel that the culture of the island is being fundamentally changed by the false feeling of need to be an island version of Kirkland.

We are coping as fast as we can considering the continual influx of people from out of State. People will continue to move here (jobs in Seattle) & our good schools. Our roads are in bad shape, we need infrastructure improvement & not just housing (at any price).
The current regulations make it impossible for builders to make a profit unless they build the biggest mansion they can. This is only worsening the affordability crisis and turning our wonderful island into the next Orange County.
There is far, far too much high density, cluster housing being built here. It's turning what was once a low key, semi-rural community into a cookie cutter, build on every available lot, no place to park, overcrowded clone of everyplace America. Look at the Grow Community. How many hundreds of apartment units have been crammed into that space. It looks more like a prison complex than small island sensible development. Look at the Visconti development. The community didn't want it, there was no need for it, but it was approved anyway. Look at Lynwood Center. Will hundreds of new residents on Blossom Hill and Baker Hill add to the quality of life single family housing residents throughout Lynwood Center currently enjoy here?
Inadequate infrastructure for the pace of development (traffic, parking, utilities). Excessive bureaucracy and taxation. Loss of small town character, which is the reason that most of us chose to live here.
not as informed as i'd like to be
everyone just does what they want and if they pay enough in fees they get it. do we ever fine anyone or make them stop or limit density? no. we reward density. we never make any public good part of any development. it is alland only about fees for the city and nothing more. shameful.
Current infra structure (roads, water, sewage, bike lanes, parking, street lighting,power grid) seemed to maxed out and new development and construction seems to not take this in to consideration.
No attempt to control development of too-large homes right downtown, where the houses would seem to be valued by older residents who want one-story, relatively inexpensive homes, not those huge homes. Anyone with children would want to be out in the country in a big house, not right downtown where the kids will run into the street because there are no yards for them to play in...
I have lived on Bainbridge Island for over 35 years. I was born here, and have lived here most of my life. When I grew up, development was slow and thoughtful. Islanders thought about green spaces and keeping the island rural feeling rather than suburban. I am appalled at some of the development choices I have seen recently for example on Torvanger Rd where two large developments are being planned. The reason Bainbridge has always been great was because we had large tracts of green and open space. As I see more and more of this development on the island where large properties are cleared for huge houses, with little restriction, I think the island is losing its identity. We are quickly becoming another Mercer Island.

I am not anti-development. I recognize the need for development on our island. I am currently disheartened with the lack of environmental and social criteria for development. Good development should cater to the needs of the environment in which it is placed and the people who will live within it. Currently most development seems to cater to the convenience of the builders create it and the cars that will drive to it. This is not strengthening our social fabric.
Appropriate regulations would not have allowed the Visconsi development to go forward. In general, I am opposed to development of the finite amount of undeveloped land we have on the island. I am very much in favor of smart redevelopment of already developed land.
Over-regulation in shoreline master plan, over-regulation & unrealistic requirements for development, overly strict construction requirements, especially in green space & vegetation requirements. The regulation is just plain stifling.
Since GMA is mandated, I think the city has done a good job keeping the growth in areas that make sense (close to commercial centers) while preserving the more natural residential areas from larger projects.
Too much clear cutting. I understand growth, but I think what makes our community special is that we still have room to breath. Stop the developers trying to make $ on cheaply made homes and put efforts into individuals wanting to build unique and quality homes.
We need a water supply study before more building. We have no idea how the extensive new housing is affecting our supply. We are and island.
I understand that there are a few factors at play simultaneously. There is the Comprehensive Plan, which mandates a certain amount of growth, as well as sky high home prices prohibiting people from living on the island. This puts pressure to build out housing. However, the speed at which the Island is permitting housing developments seems to be overwhelming a limited city infrastructure. The Grow Apartments violate fire code because of the above ground wires. There have been sewer issues in the downtown area as well. Additionally, as we know, housing prices will go back down, and then we'll have a glut of gross ticky-tacky homes. (And don't say it won't happen, I know of people on the island who abandoned their homes during the last housing crisis) It all just smacks of a cash grab without thinking of the longer-term. And also, who wants to live on an overcrowded island without any charm?
Little consideration for natural resources, water, open space island quality, just build baby build.
I do not feel like there is enough work done to make sure that there are affordable places to live for people like teachers, librarians, and service industry jobs that we need on Bainbridge.
I have been doing this since 1995 and today the service at the counter is outstanding. No complaints at all.....

I interact with the Seattle, Poulsbo and Kitsap Planning departments routinely and find their regulations easier to understand and implement. There is a more collegial rather than adversarial relationship with the public and their websites are more user-friendly.
There is too much development in or near wetlands. It would also be good to see the leash law enforced in Fort Ward Park. In addition, people should be encouraged to clean up after their dogs (perhaps with more waste bags and disposal sites made available at trailheads and in parking areas). I would like to see more bicycle paths along roads like Fort Ward Hill Rd to make cycling safer.
I understand that we need more housing downtown but the granting of variances without a process is troubling. The burdens of development - roads, other infrastructure, should be paid by the developers - not Island residents. And yet, that's what happens now. We pay for road improvements made worse by development. Also we have so many mixed messages about housing in our Comp Plan - it is comedic! We need to ensure that all marinas allow liveaboards. That's affordable housing for both the workforce and people that wish to live here.
Unreasonably restrictive shoreline policy
on one hand, I would like to see less growth in general. Specifically less density in Winslow. The new buildings to the east of the cinema are awful!! Way to big for BI. Also, the new housing project on Wyatt: the houses are way out of scale for the lots. It is starting to look like any other suburban area in the US. On the other hand, the rules for accommodating existing needed or practical improvements to existing properties is way (!) to onerous and difficult adding to the cost of simply maintaining and updating good current properties. There is a real lack of common sense and reasonable accommodation in rules and in interpretations.
Want to see more downtown development and encouragement of growth and investment. An island like Bainbridge should have a bustling and impressive waterfront and downtown. Too conservative currently.
The hideous prison-like monstrosity on Wyatt has ruined that neighborhood. It is so ugly and disturbing about what has passed as acceptable development in Winslow that I feel it doesn't make any difference what the values of our community are, the developers are in charge. Are there wildlife corridors in Winslow?
Grow neighborhood too high density! Architecture does not fit Island style! Too many other "clear cuts" happening all over Island for development! We are losing rural character and stressing infrastructure.
Regulations are okay, although imperfect. Their application reflects limited real life experience of city staff. It's a difficult balancing act.

I keep abreast of projects and proposals and am generally satisfied with how things are handled
Slow growth down.
The focus on measuring/maintaining current infrastructure like sewer, water, roads, bridges has been sorely neglected by the city because the city's focus for the past few years has been on looking 20 years forward doing the "Comprehensive Plan". Lovely to make a plan, but planning is not the same as actually doing. This has been seen many times over when according to the "comp" plan decisions are made without any preliminary discovery or measure of current conditions known to get to a successful outcome. This is why the council keeps seeming to "put the cart before the horse". No one likes to see this and I'm sure it doesn't feel good.
To much unchecked development without consideration of water or transportation impacts.
The large new generic developments, with large houses on small, do not seem to fit with our comprehensive plan and vision for keeping Bainbridge Island a lovely place to live.
I think there is very little follow-up to make certain that conditions in permits are actually followed by the developer. It doesn't help to include conditions and then allow the develop to ignore them and go ahead with the project. There are also not strong enough fines to discourage bad behavior when developing, like clear cutting parcels sequentially. Or after-the-fact permits being granted which should not be without hefty fines.
Too few restrictions on growth and lack of infrastructure to support it.
There are too many conditional use permits issued, the City not following its own Comp Plan and the intent on the Comp Plan. Not enough monitoring of projects to be sure there is compliance.
Judging from all the construction I see, and what I understand is soon to begin, it seems that development is out-of-control. This, to me, means that BI lacks adequate laws/policies control development. While the City needs to take projected growth into consideration, those projections also need to account for available water resources, infrastructure and (per the Comprehensive Plan, unless it becomes diluted in the current revision) the Island's unique rural character.
Too many trees are being cut down. The city is allowing too much development without adding sufficient sidewalks and bike lanes. The Speed limits are not enforced. City is eliminated walking paths and adding roads through neighborhoods.
City continues to green light commercial and to a lesser extent, residential projects without regard for traffic impact and sustainable water tables. We have had a considerable amount of vacant commercial space in Winslow for as long as the past 10 years while more development continues to be approved.
Not enough attention paid to maintaining tree cover and promoting that low-impact development. Would like to see large home size discouraged and small homes (under 1200 sf) encouraged. Would like to see more use of the empty lots and "brownfield" used for building rather than clearing of new land for houses and businesses.
I understand the need for regulations to control growth and protect the environment. I believe our development codes and procedures are more complicated than necessary to accomplish the desired ends.

No plan to assist the commercial properties on Winslow E
I would like to see development that requires a portion of affordable housing.
The Shoreline Management Plan is overly restrictive and complicated. Taken to its logical conclusion, it will greatly reduce the property values of shoreline property owners and thus significantly reduce the City of Bainbridge Island's revenue stream. And city planning staff seems unable or unwilling to work with owners to modify it in a way which is fair to all.
Regulations should delineate what IS permitted not what is NOT allowed so as to logically follow the intent of our Comprehensive Plan.
As the pressures of population growth increase, the pressures on the infrastructure also increase but do not appear to be regulated appropriately with an eye to the need for more operations and maintenance workers to keep the utilities healthy, properly maintained & updated. The boom in new developments are connecting to existing infrastructure - roads, stormwater, sewer & water; it is my opinion that the developers should be the ones paying fees for this rather than the grandfathered residents.
Clear-cutting for housing developments -- big UGH!
Somewhat restrictive regulations but they help maintain the character of the island.

Question 5:
How satisfied are you with the design, character, appearance and quality of the development on Bainbridge Island?



Like some development, but don't like homes with no garages or carport, and storage (yard junk) is often unsatisfactory.

Affordable housing mix skewed or eliminated and so the island needs more or some apartments. Balancing & timing of revenue levy demands on taxpayers by schools, parks city, & fire districts no longer coordinated in a balloting race to beat others to the ballots. Please review the issue of whether four -six taxing authorities on island should be eliminated by now. Otherwise, no new parking garage or plaza is needed. A viable tree and undergrowth ordinance& infrastructure rehab levy is past due. Transport by other than private, carbon consuming motor vehicles needs to be made into a moratorium issue in favor of fewer private autos.. Go to the Gates Foundation for climate change $. Ask Uber to franchise neighborhood vans.
Similar comment to above. This is an area where I feel that "more rules/restrictions" are not necessarily going to drive better outcomes, but rather incentivizing outcomes, will likely be a greater motivator of high quality design. I think COBI should study other jurisdictions with better outcomes to see what prevailing wisdom is, for how to incentivize. Personally I am in favor of extremely tough MINIMUM standard, such as "Living Building Challenge" Certification, and then give creative professionals liberty beyond high base standard to do their best work. If point of entry is very high, free market will self limit low quality, fast buck type development.
This may or may not be the fault of CoBI Planning and Development. Personally, I think development on the island is too conservative, over regulated, uninspired, too cautious, and too difficult. It's a wonder anything at all happens here. Smart people with good ideas want to do things and just get beat up by an antidevelopment political climate. Change will find a way so we need to agree on that vision and not just fight change.
the downtown area is a mess with unregulated sandwich boards and signage. the power lines should have been underground. bad city council decision and planning. look on the corner of winslow and madison, 13 sandwich boards that stay up year round. the roundabout on high school road is loaded with signs. people put them up because they know there is no enforcement. like talking on the phone and driving. i don't know anyone one who has received a ticket and they all still talk.
My main comment is that the city's rules seem to favor large developers and penalize and intimidate the individual homeowner who isn't wealthy enough to take the city to court.
There are too many multi-home developments with cookie cutter homes that are too big and do not fit into the character of our Island.
I don't think we need some of the density such as what is developing at Sunrise and Torvanger
See above.
above... the buildings are so ugly, the people on the design review board said that the Key Bank building was the ugliest building on a corner in the City. The Grow Ave development is a wall of solid concrete behind the also awful pavilion. Of course Visconsi is the worst thing I have ever seen. Putting two little "awnings" on the terrible but predictable Walgreens. The waterfront park is decimated. I can never go there again.. how dare you cut 80 beautiful trees and limb up the rest so they look like sticks with a little green on them. All that just so the Chamber of commerce folks can now have a "view of the water".

You allowed several developers this year to completely clear beautiful historic trees. Basically, developers and the Chamber now run the city, and the City Manager is terrible, never ever listening to citizens, refusing to do an all Island REAL survey of what is wanted. Now a parking garage... again all for the Chamber.
Tract Houses are still allowed.
Some good, some uninspired. The new development off Wyatt, while still in the early stages appear to be a an expensive housing track that will offer large living space while adding nothing to the community.
The new homes that are being built are too large and expensive. The island needs more affordable housing for families. Smaller homes would be more affordable.
Too "modern", not a timeless look.
ugly. harbor suare a blight. low cost housing with no park. no trails. ugly
I appreciate the character of the downtown area, keeping the original structures as much as possible, and making sure that any new structures fit in well with the 1950's look. Do you think the city might expand on that look? It does make the downtown area unique and very charming. To help direct more pedestrian traffic to the various businesses, it would be nice to have directional signs. A good example is the mall area. A directional sign on the sidewalk to indicate the various businesses inside the mall area and any additional signage would be nice. Keeping with the historical theme, maybe some stop-and-read points of interest signs with historical photos about the history of the island? At one point, during the heaviest tourist times of summer, why doesn't BI have a booth in Seattle offering a one-for-all ticket for tourist to direct them to come to the island? (ferry pass, freebies at various businesses, lunch ticket, free shuttle bus ride passing by the island's main attractions, etc.)? This would bring much more tourism to the island. I would like to see a driving 'scenic route' developed with signage and flyer/booklet to direct tourists in vehicles around the island to the most interesting, historic, and beautiful points. Traffic in the downtown area is very congested, especially in summer; would it be possible for the police department to develop (and install traffic control devices if necessary) a traffic plan to direct residents away from the congestion? And keep the majority of the tourists in the main downtown area? Would it be possible to place activity acres along Winslow way such as permanent chess boards and stools?
It looks okay. Some buildings/signage are wonderful and others have little aesthetic appeal to offer, in my opinion. Please do not put in a large parking garage. Please put emphasis on biking and community transit services. Please promote electric cars with more (and free, if possible) plug-in stations.
Example: Unintended consequences. Height restrictions have resulted in huge boxes for apartment houses (eg Harbor Square, Grow Avenue Apartments) Perhaps some kind of carrot for creating something that has a more creative appearance. Requirement for landscaping to be installed on subdivision before buildings are put in and

water is connected resulted in lots of waste---dead trees, etc. (eg. Grow Avenue and Wyatt Way--DR Horton development).
I find that some of the new buildings/homes being built do not fit in with the Island makeup, way too modern/square unappealing to fit in with the existing buildings.
No design overview. The two "homes" on Henderson look like dental offices.
As in number 4, too much development with not enough attention to our utilities that are needed for the quality of life we moved here for . Not to mention the dismal architecture of the ongoing developments. Shows no originality or pride in the homes being thrown up!
I think Charlie Wenzlow has done an excellent job of designing buildings that not only add character, but pay attention to a certain NW style, while saluting sustainable concepts. There are aspects of the downtown Winslow street remodel that still need adjustments. The awkward 4" step in only 1/2 of the cement ramp at the T & C crosswalk. The crazy triangular pointed planter that juts out by Mill Stream is a favorite attraction for drivers to run over on the way to Madison Avenue.
some look and feel are beautiful and on track. there are others, for example the giant homes on Wyatt - fast construction and materials are cheep. Signs of disaster later. For example what about the schools? - quality has been poor and even more of a shame is the lack of quality maintenance. How many schools do we have to REPLACE? Do we really believe that because our new community is typically wealthy that the solution is to just let the school fall apart because we'll be able to replace it anyway? its like cutting trees down without a permit because I can afford the fine anyway ... bah
The dense growth seems to have expanded way beyond Winslow. And within Winslow, green spaces must be preserved.
Cheaply constructed, horribly landscaped and not very attractive.
Bainbridge is a suburb. I know it wants to be seen as this quaint, artistic mecca, but it's a suburb. Thus, shopping centers and housing developments are what I expect. Build some more. Houses too. Though I am, in fact, upset by the lack of rental property and affordable housing here, as that would bring some much-needed young blood to the island. We can't cultivate this hip, welcoming ideal while simultaneously making it impossible for so many to live here.
Hate that COBI required commercial building right up to lot line. Leave a buffer of trees!!!!!
Quality and character of new development varies between good, bad and in-between. I think the Planning Dept. and the Design Review process encourages higher quality development, but the outcome ultimately depends on the attitude and objectives of the development team and their consultants.
Some are great (Grow community) others are horrible, like the massive houses on Wyatt Way, just west of Grow that look like something in a Texas neighborhood with the house covering the entire plat and surrounded by asphalt.
Trying to concentrate growth in specific areas with affordable housing is a positive thing.
It seems to be focued more on tourists than residents.
For such a wealthy island, our town should be more attractive. The past has seen some poor planning decisions. There are some notable recent improvements however - the art gallery and that overall development and the park across the street to welcome people to the island

is excellent. The community needs a stronger vision for elevating the quality of the City and its infrastructure. I realize this is made difficult by the nature of public discourse on the island with people that seem to fight everything. We need some more 'big ideas'.
I appreciate the requirements for green buffers along the roadside for new rural development, and the downtown developments are attractive enough.
The pleasant beach development was disappointing because it completely dwarved and overshadowed the small historical theater and other buildings across the street. Completely changed the character of the area.
Starting to look like everywhere else. Formulas.
Cars/parking dominate designs. Also very large homes use up natural resources and create non-affordable homes for the next occupant.
Clearcuts, McMansions, or dense developments that fail to maintain green space. For example, there is nothing "green" about the Grow development.
Home lots too small, too many condos downtown. Ugly
Visconti is a disaster compared to what it could have been with underground parking and above store housing. It looks like everywhere USA. Thanks COBI for another lost opportunity.
How in the world does a place like Bainbridge approve anything at all like the memory care center near the fire department or a housing development like Ferncliff Village or the buildings at the Visconci site????? It appears there is an absences of caring or expertise and most likely both. And then there is the proliferation of sandwich board signs and make the whole Winslow downtown look trashy.
The humongous new Grow building is the latest example of the uncontrolled greed of the developers that rule Bainbridge Island.
Some of the new buildings that have gone up recently are pretty terrible looking -- but I also think that, in general and with few exceptions, people have a right to build what they like on their property, within the parameters of the regs/rules under which they bought it.
the GROW community is an example of a good idea gone bad. When it started it represented a nice small community of homes, now it looks like an industrial nightmare..not ver attractive anymore, looks like a metal jungle...
Grow, Sakai, emerald, and others
The most visible developments are in Winslow. The Grow project started out beautifully, but the newest blocks of buildings are hideous and incongruous with the surroundings of a small town. The new development on Wyatt is ugly and will house more wealthy people with poor taste who are willing to pay huge sums for large cheaply constructed McMansions to feed their oversized egos. Maybe that's harsh, but I miss the lovely meadow that was there before.

Too much growth that has not been well-thoughout. Many larger developments look like they could be built in any community. They need to match the scale and feel of Bainbridge island.
I think some are very aesthetically pleasing while others look like big box cookie cutter homes
The public builings that exist seem are nice.
Again trying to turn the populated areas into a thing they aren't. Craftsman style not modern chic.
I have no objection to modern sustainable buildings that are high performance. Unlike older Boomers (I'm Gen X), I think the Grow Community is a necessary offering which got snapped up by MANY who want to live there, not drive & still be near ferry etc. It is avtually very well planned with community gardens & alternative energy to fossil fuel consumption. Older generation calls it "ugly" & want Carfstman Cottages that are 3,000 sf. on at least 1/3 acre...that's NOT realistic for us. We ARE a Seattle suburb, wake up people!
Lynwood Center is the lone development that maintained the local character while adding needed density. There are way too many developments going up that are indistinguishable from cheap tract housing in the Midwest and Texas.
Recent speculative construction projects lack design imagination and quality. The design review process result in substandard appearance, with low cost (but high prices) taking precedence over quality.
small town feel. some modernity
ugly. not pedestrian friendly except by accident. no safety for bikes or kids or walkers. no peace and quiet. ugly lights and all the noise.
Just look at the Grow Community ... need I write more?
See #4 above.
Bainbridge was known as a small, rural, farming and artist community, with a small group of summer vacationists. It has lost this identity with huge home developments, lots being clear-cut, and high price of homes. We have very little space for low income families to live on our island. Even the highly touted "Grow Community" displaced several people in low income homes to build high density, high cost housing. This high rise community has become an eyesore on Wyatt Way where there used to be a hidden development of government homes.
See answer #4.
Generally, I like things the way they are. I don't think we need more development.
New developments like Grow Community are ugly in design and way too crowded together. Makes Bainbridge begin to look like "Tenement Row."
There's such a wide variety, from beautiful to dreadful it's hard to have an opinion.
Too much cookie cutter developers trying to make $$. Concentrate on the people of your community not developers.

Some folks refer to Grow Avenue development as the "Great Wall of Bainbridge". Most new housing seems quite extravagant in size and intrusive in design. How about more green space in future developments and screening from the street??
The housing developments have uniformly been generic, "McMansiony" style homes that add nothing to the character of the Island. Additionally, developments like Grow have had building code violations and issues with mold and shoddy craftsmanship.
It fits in with existing standards/appeal
Half the time it seems like projects have stalled. New projects appear to be approved even though there are a number of empty/unused spaces.
Much of these features have more to do with land prices and project budgets and less with design regulations. The planning department should focus on land-use, density and environmental impacts and less on aesthetics, which is always subjective.
Well i don't believe we have much control over it and I suppose that is ok - the market will work to ensure quality construction. Still the City enacted the HDDP ordinance to encourage high density development and promised to study the effects but to date has not.
See above
Hard to judge with so little development available.
Although much of the development has shown thoughtful deliberation, a few projects (the new Walgreens and the Emerald housing development) has been woefully lacking in foresight.
See #4. It's so ugly I can't even drive down that part of Wyatt, but have to cut over from Grow. It's huge. A glut of hideous condos that will bring down all the surrounding property value. Compare it to the attractive condo complex "Winslow?" tucked out of sight across Shepard from the backend of the monster. I can't imagine anyone wanting to live in that blocky warren. I think it's the lifting of the two-story height limit that has ruined Winslow. I would like to see that reinstated.
See 4
Our rules and their application are a cut above the average community, but certainly not wonderful.
All seem to be appropriate and in concert with BI and our lifestyle and propery
The island is a destination for tourism as well as an aging bedroom community. Why are tourism opportunities not a primary goal for the downtown business community. Why does the city not open up to ideas of summer weekend attractions to keep tourist on the island after the ferry drops them off. We have great eateries, but need more artist access to the downtown area, why not bring a larger stage to Eagle Harbor and do music, musicals, plays. This past Black Friday there were many visitors but nothing planned to help them spend time/money in the island. An early farmers market or craft fair should have been offered.

Our studio tour and Christmas in the country need free bus service to/from the ferry to get people into these places. We have great trails to hike and bike as well as public access to beaches and water craft rental.
Most of what I have seen is just ugly, lacking character or personality, and out of place on Bainbridge.
The current residential developments I see being built are generic, have limited to no community areas, are large homes on small lots, and have limited design appeal. The development by our home seems to be driven by profits only, with a developer that is not from the Island. The houses are huge with tiny back yards, all the same basic design, no consideration for quality of life or any building a nice place to live.
Some of it is admirable, but other development looks like a Soviet gulag. There is too little effort made by some architects to create lovely buildings -- some seem to just want to create some sort of monument to themselves, regardless of whether it blends into the neighborhood (which it often does not).
Developments like grow and others are too intensive for the island. Visconti was s tragedy.
Harbor Square and Walgreens developments. There are no trees saved to make the developments environmentally and visually more appealing, No use of pervious pavement or driveways for water recharge to our acquirers. It seems like nothing is done to assure developments fit in to their surrounding areas architecturally. Grow Community is huge on Wyatt Way! It overpowers the neighborhood.
For example, that monstrous housing development at Grow and Wyatt is about the ugliest eyesore I can imagine. It is totally out-of-character for BI. I am not necessarily opposed to high-density residential projects in the true City Core (excluding Suzuki), but I believe it should at least try to meet some reasonable aesthetic criteria.
It is willy nilly. The needs to be a vision. Less modern more Bainbridge. Grow community is a perfect example of development gone awry. The plan has changed too many times to satisfy the developer and not the community.
Most of the new commercial development such as the Visconsci project and much of the new residential development such as Harbor Square is typical of the low cost, cookie cutter approach to development that is prevalent across much of suburban America. The island is fast approaching the same generic look that is endemic throughout the U.S.
See above comment. That new housing development on Wyatt is disgusting.
Generally pleased with the way the Island has developed in the 40 years I have lived here. The current development on Wyatt near the corner of Lovell is a marked negative, out of scale and with poor aesthetics. Also unfortunate that a more attractive solution could not have been found for Visconsi.
Looks and high density are good.
Mostly a matter of taste.
The developers from other places have discovered that they can fetch top dollar for properties on Bainbridge Island. Their interest is in the dollars rather than the quality of life for the island. Traffic is horrendous, houses are filling in the land in order to "get as much bang for the buck" as possible for the developers. Solution: Develop "character requirements" that buildings and developments need to adhere to as well as charge the

developers fees for keeping the infrastructure healthy and fully functioning. In my opinion, this question is primarily a question of "quality of life" that should be included in the acceptance or rejection of a development or requirements thereof.
Clear-cut developments, cookie cutter, outsized homes.
New construction is limited and carefully done to a higher standard of aesthetic. Not too many chain stores so smaller businesses have a little more of a chance to survive. Careful protection of waterfront areas.

Question 9:
How satisfied are you with the City's Planning and Community Development Department (Planning, Development Engineering and Building) development review service?

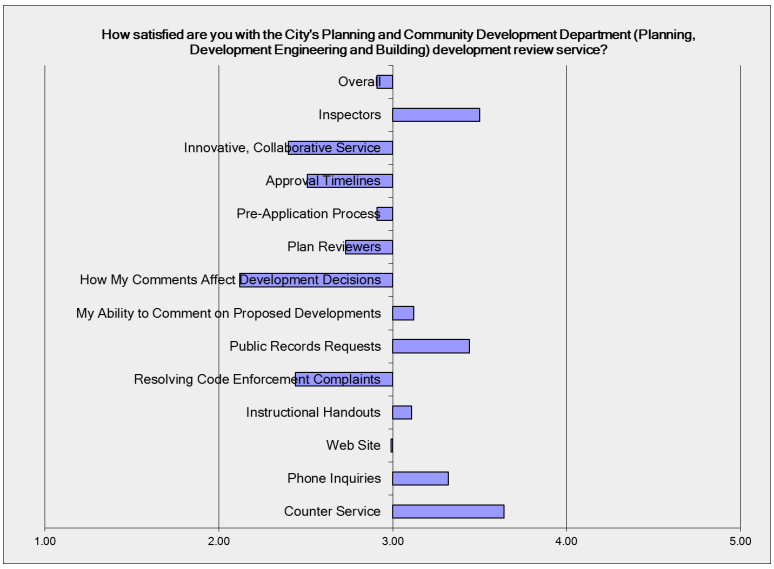


Figure 37 - Combined Satisfaction (Applicant and Non-Applicant Perspective)

	1 - Very Unsatisfied	2 - Unsatisfied	3 - Neutral	4 - Satisfied	5 - Very Satisfied	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
Counter Service	2.50% 1	15.00% 6	22.50% 9	32.50% 13	20.00% 8	7.50% 3	40	3.57
Phone Inquiries	10.81% 4	13.51% 5	24.32% 9	10.81% 4	16.22% 6	24.32% 9	37	3.11
Web Site	8.11% 3	16.22% 6	32.43% 12	21.62% 8	5.41% 2	16.22% 6	37	3.00
Instructional Handouts	5.41% 2	16.22% 6	16.22% 6	21.62% 8	5.41% 2	35.14% 13	37	3.08
Resolving Code Enforcement Complaints	13.51% 5	10.81% 4	13.51% 5	16.22% 6	0.00% 0	45.95% 17	37	2.60
Public Records Requests	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	26.32% 10	13.16% 5	5.26% 2	55.26% 21	38	3.53
My Ability to Comment on Proposed Developments	5.26% 2	10.53% 4	18.42% 7	39.47% 15	5.26% 2	21.05% 8	38	3.37
How My Comments Affect Development Decisions	13.51% 5	27.03% 10	24.32% 9	5.41% 2	0.00% 0	29.73% 11	37	2.31
Plan Reviewers	10.53% 4	13.16% 5	21.05% 8	21.05% 8	10.53% 4	23.68% 9	38	3.10
Pre-Application Process	13.16% 5	15.79% 6	15.79% 6	18.42% 7	10.53% 4	26.32% 10	38	2.96
Approval Timelines	23.68% 9	26.32% 10	18.42% 7	10.53% 4	5.26% 2	15.79% 6	38	2.38
Innovative, Collaborative Service	16.22% 6	27.03% 10	13.51% 5	8.11% 3	5.41% 2	29.73% 11	37	2.42
Inspectors	0.00% 0	2.78% 1	22.22% 8	41.67% 15	13.89% 5	19.44% 7	36	3.83
Overall	2.70% 1	32.43% 12	24.32% 9	29.73% 11	8.11% 3	2.70% 1	37	3.08

Figure 38 - Expanded Satisfaction Responses - Recent Applicants

	1 - Very Unsatisfied	2 - Unsatisfied	3 - Neutral	4 - Satisfied	5 - Very Satisfied	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
Counter Service	0.00% 0	4.48% 3	14.93% 10	19.40% 13	10.45% 7	50.75% 34	67	3.73
Phone Inquiries	2.99% 2	1.49% 1	13.43% 9	10.45% 7	8.96% 6	62.69% 42	67	3.56
Web Site	6.06% 4	10.61% 7	19.70% 13	15.15% 10	3.03% 2	45.45% 30	66	2.97
Instructional Handouts	0.00% 0	4.55% 3	22.73% 15	6.06% 4	1.52% 1	65.15% 43	66	3.13
Resolving Code Enforcement Complaints	8.96% 6	10.45% 7	10.45% 7	4.48% 3	0.00% 0	65.67% 44	67	2.30
Public Records Requests	1.52% 1	6.06% 4	15.15% 10	13.64% 9	6.06% 4	57.58% 38	66	3.39
My Ability to Comment on Proposed Developments	10.77% 7	13.85% 9	16.92% 11	20.00% 13	6.15% 4	32.31% 21	65	2.95
How My Comments Affect Development Decisions	25.76% 17	18.18% 12	18.18% 12	1.52% 1	1.52% 1	34.85% 23	66	2.00
Plan Reviewers	9.09% 6	10.61% 7	12.12% 8	3.03% 2	0.00% 0	65.15% 43	66	2.26
Pre-Application Process	4.55% 3	0.00% 0	13.64% 9	4.55% 3	0.00% 0	77.27% 51	66	2.80
Approval Timelines	1.52% 1	1.52% 1	15.15% 10	1.52% 1	0.00% 0	80.30% 53	66	2.85
Innovative, Collaborative Service	7.58% 5	4.55% 3	10.61% 7	3.03% 2	0.00% 0	74.24% 49	66	2.35
Inspectors	2.99% 2	1.49% 1	14.93% 10	5.97% 4	0.00% 0	74.63% 50	67	2.94
Overall	7.58% 5	16.67% 11	24.24% 16	13.64% 9	1.52% 1	36.36% 24	66	2.76

Figure 39 – Expanded Satisfaction Responses - Other than Recent Applicants

Free-form amplifications of satisfaction responses (applicant and non-applicant):

New PRR system infinitely better than the old non-system.
Public notices for pending developments when posted on site are not visible. Current distancing from ROW, fall down or deterioration rate, and vandalism. Written notices on city hall bulletin board are artfully vague & misleading in a keep-it-short bullet style. Rehearings or continued hearings or permitting compliance deadlines are not required to post the premises again or inform identified interested parties. The three-minute rule indulged-in by city council or commission for public hearings comments by public on certain issues that are complex or nuanced is negligence in practice. Putting that warning on all agendas is crucial. The DCD staff practice of inviting developers to be advanced briefed & present when citizens wish to discuss information in a neutral way about pending permits is discouraging. Even

more so is when the developers are leaving in the company of the planner as the requested meeting starts!
Staff often struggles with rule complexity, and their ability to make clear and decisive decisions is hampered. Generally staff competent and decent people trying to do a good job, but seemingly fearful about making a decision that might get them in trouble in public eye, so become frozen, therefore making even the simplest process time consuming, infer Tim Ament and therefore, an untennble business environment.
While counter service is satisfying and most of the staff are nice and helpful, follow through with phone and email inquiries is lacking to non-existent. Process and approval times are ridiculously long.
the SMP is so complicated you have only found one person that can understand it and process the SMP plans. she is probably the only one that has read it. The SMP usurps my rights as a land owner. i agree we need regulations but i basically own the property and building but have no rights unless i get a permit for everything ... have you read it ????
The answers one gets depends on who the questioner is talking with at the time. Two different staffers will give two very different answers to the same question. I think most try to do a good job, but, there are some in the planning department who try to impose their personal values over the city ordinances. The department needs a strong and effective leader, something that has been lacking for many years.
I have said all I want to say.
Code enforcement is based upon voluntary Compliance and not about enforcing the regulations. After the fact permits must still comply with the rules, cutting of trees without a permit must have consequences (re-planting Required) and Fines.
Constant need to be followed up. New requirements with each contact.
Behind the desk help is not helpful; do not offer assistance - tell you what you can't do and do not offer suggestions on how to accomplish the end goal. Feels very "us agaisnt them"- Power issues. Would like to see a change in staff.
I have had little contact with the planning department.
The inspection and building department are very responsive and helpful. They do seem somewhat siloed with the left hand not knowing what the right is doing sometimes. Working with planning (at least our planner) is very frustrating. It's difficult to get answers in a timely fashion. Planning doesn't seem to communicate with the building group. It would be great to have one contact that can help to shepherd a development from start to finish rather than having to call all around looking for answers. It takes forever to get through the preapplication phase and timelines are not well defined. Overall I ranked as satisfied and that is because of the help a few folks there gave me toward the end..
All the staff at city hall try to be helpful. The first point of contact is either Jay or Aaron. they couldn't be nicer and they try to help but the information they give out is very often wrong or not complete. they're too new to have the correct answers. The development engineers have very limited counter hours and they too don't give out very good information. Their answer is

to hire a consultant. A drainage consultant, a wetlands consultant, a fish and wildlife consultant,a geotec consultant a 3rd party geotech consultant etc etc. It takes time and cost money. they just don't want to take responsiblilty for anything. It also seems like as soon as you give them what they ask for they raise the bar and ask for more. I don't think they answer to anyone. Permitting used to be a simple logical process and it's now getting way over regulated and too complex. I don't care what the rules are I just want them easy to understand and easy to follow with out hiring multiple consultants. On the other hand the building side is the opposite. James Weaver is always helpful and the inspectors are great.
My family is about to begin the process of adding a building to our property for the first time in 22 years, so at this point I can't answer most of the above from personal experience. However, friends and neighbors have had various problems so I am, unfortunately, wary about how our experience will go.
Staff does a good job of enforcing the rules and tries to be fair and responsive. Building premit website is not kept up to date, so inspectors don't have current info.There is a ton of process. Please don't add more!
During the pre-application action I received many different inputs that did not agree. I would hope that each person giving answers/help would know all the requirements and not guess or give haphazard statements leading to wasted time and money by the applicant
The process is too complicated for ordinary home-owners, biased towards developers. Multiple copies of things all different sizes. Questions about neighboring properties. I can't remember all the specifics but I do know we had to hire someone just to fill out the paperwork. We got conflicting answers to questions from the counter.
See my comments on #4
I feel that the head of Community Development is too swayed by the City Manager and I truly think he is not sharing the wants and desires of the majority of the population on BI!!
I think any city/public job is almost an impossible task to do well, but in our situation, it seems we have gone from nieve and new to old and jaded pretty quickly. Kitsap County always had helpful and flexible permitting.
The planning department decision making is almost always done BEFORE the public is made aware. One complaint I have today is the historical commission - as a historical home owner impacted by commission decisions, I was not once contacted by that organization to participate in decision making. Attended public meetings and asked to be kept up to date - not once was I notified of changes/decisions etc.. where is the community in that process?
I am not able to find projects under review (preliminary plat on Weaver across from Rotary Park) or approved projects on the city website. For me, it is either not intuitive or the information is not provided. As an interested citizen, I would like on line access to pending and approved land use projects, including site pans, plat maps, etc.
I could not put a generator on my property because of the SMP, they were polite, but denied my request.

I commented on how the Copper Top development would destroy the ability to get out of Wardwell and Planning disagreed based on 'studies'. Guess what, it is impossible to get onto Wardwell from Sportsmans from the south, and imposssible to turn left from Wardwell onto Sportsmansclub. Wood stove pollution is becoming a serious issue and the city is doing nothing about it.
You do as well as you can, but a great portion of this island won't be happy until you personally chauffeur them back to 1985 in a DeLorean.
For Very Unsatisfied, see #11 below.
Don't have much reason to interact with city Hall. Appreciate this survey. We should have more on important issues like the car tax and how it might be used.
I think the City has some great staff. James in Building department for example. Heather in planning. I have had good experiences with multiple staff including the new planning director.
Trying to stay engaged with the the Pleasant Beach development has been difficult. Mailers notifying residents of meetings/plan changes weren't sent consistently to all affected. Public meetings seem to check the box rather than truly allow residents to comment and affect change. My interactions with Josh Machen on the zipline proposal were disappointing. He was extremely biased in support of the project and seemed to disregard neighbors concerns about the proposed project. In a separate incident we contacted the city about a code violation (a neighbor using a city easement as his own property and also dumping manure on our property) and the city chose to take no action.
I am very frustrated that the City listens to a few and especially caters to the developers. The Island has become an Island of whiners and he/she who whines the loudest wins. Unless you have a money and/or influence then that's an automatic win.
Planning and Public Works need to improve coordination. See-Click Fix allows some email one-way communication, but does not resolve code enforcement which often requires one-on-one communication. Planning Staff and Planning Commission are very helpful.
This is an example of the City worrying about the developers needing faster service; we need to slow down development, we need regulation that preserves the Island's character. The City fails to enforce codes that would preserve trees, and consequently the clean water and clean air on the Island in favor of fast development. The City Manager is overly concerned with obtaining fees, as though that is the purpose of government.
All public records in electronic format should be available on a read only access with a key word search that does not require a public records request.
Everything seems to be directed by the CM who is neither authorized or experienced/skilled in this area.
Our permit was delayed 3 months due to the inability to make a decision on an SMP code. That may seem minor to to the city planners, but when someone is paying two mortgages while that decision is being made it is a tremendous burden on the homeowner. Code interpretation should not result in delays. Also, it seems that developers take president over private homeowner...hmmm, maybe more money gets results faster?
Don't listen. Visconti, Sakai, etc. Public opinion means nothing

I find the COBI web site very difficult to navigate through to get information I want on what is being planned in the community. I have signed up for emails and agendas etc., for several public commissions, including planning commission, design review board, and other groups. These emails are helpful and useful so that I know what is going on in terms of city projects and development proposals.
Either nobody in the last 20 years has cared or there hasn't been anyone in charge who has been able to fix the inequitably of how applicants are treated by different members of planning staff. Rules are not applied the same everyone. Also, I would love to be able to ask the same question to the different planners and get the same answer from all three.
N/a
I do most things on line so any printed handouts or literature on paper is N/A for me. Website is typical of municipality. NOT dynamic & too many clicks to get to some info. I'm used to software development with much higher design on User Experience for the customer so they don't get frustrated trying to find information that are not connected with dynamic links. Modern websites are MUCH more than just the typical top horizontal and left hand column Navigation Bars (Nav Bars). The email list serv is a pain to opt out once info is no longer needed. Still using postcards to reach out to community (archaic & super expensive & labor intensive). Instead, use more collaborative methods e.g. social media, automated txt messaging & automated community engagement tools.
Reviewers unwilling to be helpful, reasonable and flexible. I have never had one telephone call returned, or one email response in my many attempts to contact city council members regarding questions about upcoming issues before the council regarding concerns from our neighborhood meetings. Only lip service is paid to community involvement and citizen input is discouraged by default.
not necessary
I don't see significant change to design after consultation, especially with regard to environmental and societal concerns.
When attending public meetings, I always get reinforcement of my feeling that the members of the various planning, advisory and other groups related to development and planning listen but don't hear what they don't want to hear. They then give recommendations or approvals based on their personal political or environmental biases. I have the impression that many of the members of these committees or advisory groups are on them to acquire the power to change the Island as they would have it and not necessarily to work on behalf of the majority of the island's citizens.

We've only had one permit for some minor electrical work and it was set up by our contractor so we didn't have much to do with it. We were surprised at how quick the approval was given and how timely the inspector was.
I haven't felt with getting permits, but I heard it is a nightmare. My family would like to build one day (for a nice family home) and we were told all about the permit process and how hard and expensive it is. Seems like another challenge for those of us already trying hard to make ends meet. We can't compete with developers!!!
Web site is not user friendly, difficult and frustrating
As I mentioned.....I have been developing land and building since 1995.....I make my living at the Counter.....I am OK with everything.
As I said before, I routinely work with other planning departments and find the Bainbridge department lacking in available resources (take-away information), return of voice mail and the turnaround time on permit submittals for single family residential projects. I never need to ask for handouts in other cities; they are on display and ready to grab. Their websites are much more user-friendly. Turnaround times for standard residential permits are much quicker and my phone calls get returned promptly. In addition, in Seattle, there are "over-the-counter" permits for small residential remodel projects. I've been begging the staff at Bainbridge for years to implement something similar. Currently, a small residential project gets thrown in the same hopper with large-scale commercial/mixed-use projects. It's ridiculous. As is the so-called "expedited" process, which saves no time and favors wealthier clients. One last thing: all staff should be required to wear name tags and offer a business card with contact information at the end of every conversation.
I checked neutral for items with which I have no direct experience. While I am satistfied wth being notified of development, it is not always practical to go to hearings. There should be dedicated environmentalists watching development. Environmental integrity should be a priority of the city.
Codes are unevenly enforced. City needs to ensure that residential neighborhoods remain residential and not manufacturing districts. People that wish to say - make wine - need to be in an industrial area not creating illegal warehouses with 24 hour fan systems in them that disturb neighbors.
Plan reviewers: you have to separate planning from building. Building is good and I am satisfied. Planning is awful - arrogant, combative, unable to use common sense
I'm not a developer so I've had little need to use these services, but the one time I did recently the personnel were courteous and helpful.
I'm not actively involved in much of the bureaucratic steps that are necessary to effectively running the city. From the outside -- and the everyday comments overheard on the street -- I can't offer many comments; positive or constructive.
I participated in the public review process for a 17 home development in Wing Point that borders my home. I went to the public meeting and hearing, had many conversations with

the Planning Department, and wrote letters. The local neighbors were given absolutely zero consideration in the decisions regarding this development. The public review process was a complete waste of time. We asked for a simple buffer of a few trees. The Planning Dept said it was following a code that was not publicly available and refused to make any changes to the developer's plans for the people who actually live here. My home is now backed by two huge homes with 15 ft back yards and my yard is basically ruined. The entire process felt very disheartening. Now the Planning Dept. isn't available for questions and no longer respond when we inquire about the project.
I think code enforcement is the most lax (and most difficult) job for the city, and I think it is not being done as consistently as it should be.
I often find out about a proposed development too late in the process to comment.
Unclear if #9 only applies to those who have actually applied. But, in general, I have heard many, many complaints that objections and opposition to any particular development project are allowed, and even seemingly encouraged, but then ignored. One exception was placement of the planned Police/Justice center next to City Hall. In that case, the public outcry was overwhelming, but even then COBI did not relent for a conspicuously long time.
I believe individual city planning departments are trying to do their best in working with the community but too often it seems like once the city has decided on a course of action, there is little weight given other voices and their concerns. What is the city doing about guaranteeing our water supply? What is the cities plan for controlling traffic? Driving in Winslow is difficult and parking is non-existent. Congestion at #305 and High School Rd is terrible much of the day.
I am about 11 months into an attempt to get a boundary line adjustment and then short plat a residential lot in Winslow. That seems an exorbitant amount of time for a relatively simple project. I DO understand that the Planning & Community Development department is short-handed, and other than the amount of time this has taken, have no complaints about the way it is being handled.
Website in general is illogical. Hard to find info.

Question 11:
Please add any feedback or suggestions you'd like us to understand about the City's Planning and Community Development Department development review service:

The position of city ombudsperson has been discussed over the years as needed to help blow whistles in a timely way about cavalier development review service. The same applies to public works reviews. The so-called tasking of "an engineer "on DCD staff to review public works-type of issues during LAND USE permitting has not worked. Its disingenuine RUBBER STAMPINGS show. This lack of quality in DCD reviews for so long is irresponsible. One feature in all cases due to CONTINUED faulty acoustics during public hearings (subnormal despite new expenditures as we start 2017) in city council chambers is no one in rear half w/o more hearing wands or beyond row 2or 3 hears most monotone, mushy half phrases by council persons, planning commissioners, hearing examiner, other public members or experts, OR

CITY DCD STAFF LOOKING EAST OR DOWN OR TO MONITORS IN PARTICULAR. [Staff] should be tasked to groom articulation skills. Our reps might best visit a few local churches for acoustics upgrades such as Rolling Bay Presbyterian. It's a guess which of 7 councilors or CM are speaking in exchanges involving 4 or 5 podiumees.
Have had good luck in Bldg specific permit review process. Clear code, clear decision tree keeps it relatively simple and straight forward. Lots of difficulty with "grey code" on planning side that had lead to slow process, as fear by staff of making wrong decision, creates indecision, which is very problematic situation for making cost effective business decisions.
Regulations need to be clear and consistent. Developers, builders, designers, Architects, homeowners, and business owners just want to know the rules and have them applied consistently and efficiently.
you have started a cottage industry for consultants for people getting a permit. i had to hire 3 consultants ($5400) besides the architect to receive a permit. it potentially could have been much higher. the consultant bids for storm water ranged from $600 - $5000.
I would like to see some demonstration projects documented to see how well the process works and act as a guide for others who plan on going through a similar process. A case in point: how have the Shoreline Management rules affected permitting and what people can or cannot do on their property?
They and the City Manager need to get out of writing the law and our Comp Plan should be completely redone. You mislead people, you make it easy for developers while putting single citizens through hell by misquoting the regulations to get more fees and making them do all kinds of things that aren't really necessary. These folks don't know the law, so they can and are manipulated by the staff and department. I have now helped several people avoid huge fees because they did not know the law, and I do. It's all about money.
The process is very unfriendly. Not collaborative, and produces a we versus them attitude. Frequent response is that it is a requirement of the code, end of conversation. No way to provide feedback to modify code sections that are having unintended consequences. Process results in excess costs and delays with little gained.
Growth this fast is not good for the island. The roads are getting too busy. The island does not need more expensive mansions. We need smaller homes that are affordable.
the city has no connection to the island. never goes out to se what they are destroying with clumsy laws and enforcement.
I would like to see the island's various governmental entities engaging the public more such as holding events that bring residents into direct contact with city officials: Coffee with a Cop, Coffee with the Chief of PD, Pizza with the Chief (for the youth), more tours of facilities such as the fire department buildings and many more preparedness classes such as disaster preparedness, Safe Sitter classes, First Aid/AED/CPR classes, food/clothing drives to stock Helpline House, regular police department/sheriff's office community forums to keep residents informed and also provide feedback to the PD/Sheriff, emphasis on the development of Neighborhood Watch or Block Watch programs or Map Your Neighborhood,

blood drives, CERT classes, child car seat safety clinics, bicycle safety clinics, physical fitness/agility events with the police officers where our large fitness community can directly contact and get to know the officers while walking/running/biking 5K's or such, establishment of a police advisory committee on the island, driving and bicycle safety courses for teens and children with emphasis on helmet use, blinker lights, etc. (and these items offered for sale at the events) to bring our youth into contact with our police officers and also to teach them safety. We may live on an island apart from the main (ha ha) but we are still a part of the larger PNW society.
streamline the entire planning process. It's out of hand
It would be wonderful if there was a more positive relationship between city employees and island residents. The prevalent distrust is discouraging. Whatever can be done to promote honestly, openness, and helpfulness will be most appreciated by all. Friends and neighbors who are known for their own compassion and integrity have told me accounts where they were made to feel like the enemy in dealing with city employees. How can we stop this and promote positive dealings? Perhaps a tall order, but surely one worth aspiring to, at this time.
I wish we had a design review that could reject or modify buildings based on the character of the neighborhood. Homes are being built now which we will be stuck with for all eternity that have nothing to do with their surroundings. And there aren't enough trees to hide them! So then if there aren't going to be more guidelines, at least make it easy for homeowners to modify their existing homes. We should all be encouraged to stay where we are and use what we have rather than sell our homes and build something new on pristine land. Why can't we just fill out a form about what we want to do and have the City be responsible for the larger setting?
I attended a meeting with two members of the city council regarding the shooting range and it was quite apparent that nobody at city hall wants to touch this issue. There were doctors there to prove the above mentioned issues and yes, these gentlemen seemed concerned, but we know concerned until everyone walked out the door. I hate to see this get into the news but from what I hear, that is the next step. Everyone seems like our city government isn't caring for the people of island, only a chosen few get this special treatment. We don't live in a world of coverups anymore, our news is 24/7 and everyone is held accountable for their actions! It's time to hold Sportsmans Club Gun Club.
Someone needs to address the concerns of the citizens of BI, I don't think the city pays a whole lot of attention to what we as residents of this island truly want to see happen. Not sure about the future water supply, sewer hook-ups...who is watching the store? I don't see a lot of positive action to preserve our island's treasures!
Would be great to have the City Manager try to gather a sense of well being and respect for his individual employees which wild then transfer to the public interactions. Seems as if the workers are on the verge of being 'caught' and are leary of making any statements that might make things worse.
stop development - step back and look at each sub-community on the island - what is the impact of current and proposed development on service demand and availability in that sub-community? For example, Island land marks like the sportsman club is already impacting

housing/schools built too close - their gun residue travels miles and is harmful to health. As part of a sub-community - is this considered when development was approved in that sub-community? Suggest you ask folks from each sub-community - where not that big, get personal - to partake in an oversight committee, involved in proactive reviews of community resources (like water, sewage, drainage, trees) and impact of proposed development demands on those resources. What will they loose IF .. or what will they gain IF. We have one aquifer on this island ....and where is all this new grey and brown water going to go? How many people shower in that 5 bedroom house. OR is it all about MONEY?
See above
We need ordinances to prevent property owners from keeping unsightly junk (boats, cars, garbage) on their property. The city restricts owner from trimming trees, yet my neighbor can store a derelict sailboat on his property (which I can't block because of an easement and fence height restrictions.
Please stop the development and 'growth'. RE prices will rise -- that's good
The planning department needs to be fair and even with application of regulations. They need to remember that the citizens are their customers and employers. They need a much better appreciation for the amount of commitment and resources the applicants are putting into their projects. While some staff are helpful, some act as if it is their job to interfere with and block projects that are completely aligned with the SMP and the regulations as they stand. I am very disappointed with the results.
As an architect with over 40 years experience in many different jurisdictions around the US, I have worked with a wide range of land use codes and planning documents. The recently adopted SMP is without question the worst land use document I have encountered. It is filled with ambiguities, discrepancies and internal contradictions. Ultimately, many critical interpretations are simply left up to the discretion of the "Administrator". This means there can be no reasonable expectation that the regulations can or will be applied consistently over time. This will inevitably lead to future litigation against the City. I attended a number of [public] meetings where local citizens (who had read and apparently understood the problems with the draft versions of the SMP) offered reasonable comments and suggestions for changes that could have corrected some of the worst problems. As far as I can tell, their efforts were completely ignored by the Planning and Community Development Department. The fact that the Director and Staff allowed such a flawed document to go the Council for a vote is hard to understand, and it raises some serious questions about the focus of the Department.

The working assumptions behind analysis should always be made explicit. Too often contentious disagreement is focused on data when the real disagreement is on those implicit assumptions behind the data...values, predictions in the face of uncertainty, etc.
Please consider water resources and work on a sustainable growth plan. Seattle in general is growing which adds pressure on growth here but it must approached carefully and reasonably to maintain all the things that make this a great place to live.
The community needs to appreciate the excellent and dedicated people it has on staff. City council and senior leadership need to push for a stronger, bolder vision that is based on a deeper plan for sustainability island-wide and preserving the island's natural character - encouraging strong urban development in nodes like Lynwood, Winslow and Rolling Bay and reducing sprawl. Development should be incentivized that is deep green.
I feel like the purpose of the department is to encourage development and create tax revenue for the city. I have no confidence that the city is listening to the concerns of citizens about the pace and location of development, preserving water, and the environment.
I recognize there are a lot of pressures on the City. In my opinion, it would be prudent to move at a slower pace than at present and get all science and facts in place prior to a project. Not just the convenient science/facts that suit the City's ambitions. COBI spends money (My tax dollars) TOO FREELY on studies, surveys etc., that the outcome is already in alignment to what COBI wants to do. I do not want a downtown parking structure (above or beneath) because we cannot afford it. The recent school bond has many strapped. Focus should be on better mass transit and fixing pot holes. Bainbridge has been designated 'tree city us' let's walk that talk instead of touting the plaque on the wall. The Island is fine as it is. Thank you for reading/listening.
Committees & Boards which make/recommend conditions (e.g. Council/Planning Commission, DRB) should occasionally visit those sites for which they had approved policies/conditions/designs/ to really understand what their decisions resulted in.
Higher a City Manager who has the marching orders to preserve the Island's character rather than building, including the latest horrific idea of charging Islanders for a parking garage downtown because the City Staff refuses to use public transportation. I am offended at the City Manager's blithe assumption that we should all pay so that City Staff need not commute by public transportation and to support merchants. Let the merchants pay. We have lost every downtown business except the grocery store and the post office, and I don't need to go downtown.
COBI transportation planning has not include technology changes like Adaptive Control Traffic Signals using optical sensors to provide real time changes to signal timing for maximum capacity of the transportation system. All the traffic signals are on the state highway and they are time-of-day uncoordinated signals which cause cross Island backups during the peak commute periods. These backups are due to very poor transportation planning and coordination between COBI, WSDOT and WSF. Example the traffic signal at WSF toll booths for pedestrians is not coordinated with the Winslow Way traffic signal causing WSF unload to take longer then necessary. The fix would be for WSF to unload walk-

on passengers both to the north and south when unloading the ferry at the very end of Olympic Drive (SR-305). COBI transportation planning does not even acknowledge that driverless buses and cars will be here in under a decade. Building a garage to park cars may be like buying better buggy whips just as everyone buys a cars. Great solution but a couple of decades to late. COBI should work with WSDOT and WSF to get three smaller ferries on this route. That change alone would spread the demand on SR-305 over more of the hour rather than the 15 minute ferry traffic surge we see today. Do not add any more streets or traffic signals to SR-305 that would only reduce capacity on the Islands one and only highway. Do not make the Island's SR-305 segment look like Poulsbo's with 7 traffic signals in less than two miles. Poulsbo has turned their SR-305 into a main street with the resultant speed and capacity of a main street. Don't make the same mistake here. Doug Rauh rauh01@msn.com
New CM; a new Planning director with vision and guts to challenge CM, CC and Planning Commission.
The city in general, including city council, city manager, and planning department are very pro-development and unlike city government during the first 10 yrs of COBI governance, has not shown an interest in preserving island values; We need to build a non-motorized system to encourage walking and biking and not continue suburban projects that rely on the automobile. Even though the Visconsi project at H.S. road and 305 was approved by the hearing examiner, there are many, I mean MANY people who opposed this project as not representing Bainbridge Island. There are some very nice projects on the island, including Lynwood center that have character and people love that. The projects and land uses at the four corners of H. S. road and 305 represent every suburban city in America, and it could be in LA, Houston, Chicago, or worse, Bellevue or Kirkland. Development is OK if it speaks to island living, is in scale with other buildings, has similar colors and materials as the rest of the island, and relies on walking, biking and NOT automobiles.
Continued development of the type and pace being approved here is making what was once a distinctive, attractive living environment into a Mercerized everywhere. More water use, more sewage, more need for municipal services, more schools, more traffic (traveled Fletcher/Miller Rd at 8am lately?) but no infrastructure to accommodate the increased demands has already resulted in, and will continue to result in, a reduced quality of life for everyone. Growth management on Bainbridge is a joke. Plenty of growth, but no management.
The last word in #11 above is service. What is lost in the review process is that the city should be providing a service, not an inflexible team of adversaries who see their job not as helping, but rather as heartlessly enforcing regulations and documents. The process has become more of a bureaucracy than a service.
we need better control over water. over noise. over light. we need to inventory and protect wildlife. give credit for habitat.council and staff need to actually get out and see what they are doing to the island.
IMO what attracted me to B.I. 10 years ago seems to be disappearing and what is taking its place is not necessarily an improvement.
I think in order to keep our identity as a farming/semi-rural community, Bainbridge needs to put the breaks on development. Bainbridge doesn't have the resources or the infrastructure

to maintain this level of development. I look back at the two developments on Torvanger. Living on Madison Ridge, I have seen traffic increase on Madison each year that I have lived there (over 10 years). Adding 30 or 40 large homes to that section of the island will only make things worse. We have back ups at Day Road and 305, Madison/Sportsman and 305 and adding more traffic to this small country road will only exacerbate the problem. there should also be limits to how many homes can fit on to one development outside of the Winslow core. There are some older developments on Bainbridge that have a mix of homes and green space with trail systems and open space for the public. It breaks my heart to see a large scale development like the one on Torvanger, with several large homes and no open space. That development should never have gone through. I also think Bainbridge needs to upgrade infrastructure to keep up with development. We seem to be going the way of suburban Bellevue or Mercer Island, but with the road infrastructure of rural Kitsap County. Up until last summer, Madison Ave N, had no shoulder to speak of until a bike lane was added to one side of the road. There are still several roads on Bainbridge with little to no shoulder and very few sidewalks. Why isn't there a raised sidewalk leading to Blakely or Wilkes? There is a planned development for Rolling bay, yet Valley Road has no shoulder for bikes or pedestrians. Valley Road is a popular walking street and isn't at all safe.
How do we design a community that is about natural and social community, not the ability of developers to build easily (removal of too many trees, creation of crazy retention ponds surrounded by fences) and cars to access (roads create moats around where people live and slice through our downtown)? Can we envision a future where the place we live is about the people who live there, not the machines and services that are meant to help them?
See 10 above. Go further into the community for members of planning and advisory groups. Do not depend on the usual community activists. Difficult job but it must be done. The usual suspects will always volunteer to be on these committees. We need to convince a few who prefer not to be on these committees to take up the task on behalf of the community. We need new blood.
Please please please stop this madness. Way too many ugly developments and not enough uniqueness with trees!!!!! Please!!! BIis becoming a suburb not a quirky little gem of a town. It is gross.
Why so strict on waterfront and not on hillsides? The Lynwood hillside seems open for disaster since stripped of its vegetation. Lots of clearing all over the Island as well.
Up to date information on our water supply. What growth will do, how much growth is enough? What should we be looking at on growth 20+ yrs from today?

Natural resources should be front and center on all growth issues.
I do think that the review process could be faster, especially with developers/builders like myself that are well known for their ability to get things done or have been doing same for years. Other than that I have no complaints.....it is all good! [name removed]
See above. The Planning Department can and should do better.
On getting permits, inspections - very good...timely. On code enforcement....I think the process needs some work.
Bring back height limits. More open space, wildlife corridors.
Our island is an amazing place and beautiful resource that could offer a wonderful experience for families to enjoy over holidays and summer. Let's look at meshing our economic needs with the opportunities that arrive hourly at our dock. The ferries are a top tourist attraction, let's make sure when those people come off the ferry they have a lovely reason to stay, play, dance, eat and shop.
Please serve the community and help us preserve what makes Bainbridge special. Listen to public review, address the needs whenever possible, developers will still make money but small changes make a big difference for those who live here. And make sure the code actually aligns with the Comprehesive Plan and the values of our Island. The "open space" provisions seem too favorable for developers.
Generally very good people, and they seem very overworked at times. The city should provide additional staff for Planning & Community Development.
The Comprehensive Plan was put in place to keep Bainbridge Island a special place. We are known for our rural character. I am not opposed to development, particularly in areas we have designated for density. It just seems that things are built without environmental regulations or preferences in mind and are out of balance with the neighborhoods. Bigger is not always better. It's important to take into account our scarce water, trees and character of our area.
I believe that the City needs to scale back its plans for continued growth. The Island simply does not have adequate resources to sustain it, and doubly so if one considers open space and forests among those resources. Every tree that is cut down, every meadow that is paved over, and every new road constructed depletes the essential character of this unique haven.
More on line access to the rational for the city's decision to move forward on various projects. It often seems like short term gain (tax revenue) always trumps long term impact. Where is the sustainability in our planning process? We are a sole source aquifer and yet the city planners still have no knowledge, to my knowledge, of the level of population and development the island can maintain.

Where infill is a desired result (in Winslow), there should be an expedited process to allow short plats.
Need to update the skills of the City manager or replace to that of Executive
Communication about the shoreline regulations could be much clearer. Also compassion for older folks who need exceptions would be appropriate.
n/a