

**ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL
STUDY SESSION AGENDA
Monday, May 20, 2024
Council Chambers, 1175 E Main Street**

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HELD HYBRID (In-Person or Zoom Meeting Access)

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Please complete the online [Public Testimony Form](#) (ashland.or.us/Council), ashland.or.us/Council. Indicate on the Public Testimony Form if you wish to provide WRITTEN testimony, or if you wish to speak ELECTRONICALLY during the meeting.

Please submit your testimony no later than 10 a.m. the day of the meeting.

I. PUBLIC FORUM

15 minutes – Public input or comment on City business not included on the agenda

II. PDMAC Report

1. PDMAC Report

III. New Website Review

1. New Website Review

IV. ADJOURNMENT

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Council Study Session

Date: May 20, 2024

Agenda Item	PDMAC Report
From	Brandon Goldman, Director of Community Development
Contact	brandon.goldman@ashland.or.us

SUMMARY

The ad-hoc Development Process Management Advisory Committee (DPMAC) was established to review and propose enhancements to Ashland's development process. The committee focused on streamlining service delivery and reducing uncertainty for developers and the public. After extensive review, including feedback from a customer satisfaction survey and comparative analysis with other cities, DPMAC has proposed several recommendations aimed at improving the efficiency and transparency of our development processes.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

- 2023 City Council Value Statements relating to the City Organization
- Excellence in governance and city services
- Sustainability through creativity, affordability and rightsized service delivery
- Housing: Recommendations to streamline accessory dwelling units (ADUs), promote higher densities in multi-family zones, align with the Council's goal to increase housing availability and affordability.
- Public Engagement and Transparency: The development of a user-friendly online portal and other informational resources supports the Council's commitment to accessible and transparent government.

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Over the last six months, DPMAC met multiple times to discuss and develop strategies to streamline the city's development process. Key activities and findings include:

- System Enhancements: Examined the new online permitting software, Citizen Self Service, for its potential to improve service delivery.
- Customer Satisfaction Survey: Highlighted areas for improvement in responsiveness and consistency in the planning and building departments.
- Comparative Fee Analysis: Reviewed development costs across nearby cities to identify potential efficiency improvements.

The committee also explored legislative land use adjustments intended to expedite the planning process and remove unnecessary discretion and uncertainty from the development process.

The development process in Ashland is designed to incorporate significant public involvement, a feature that distinguishes our approach and impacts our Community Development Department's reputation. Members of the Development Process Management Advisory Committee (DPMAC) clarified that when developers mention difficulties with the "city," they are often referring to challenges with the broader community and prevalent NIMBYism (Not In My Backyard), a resistance where community members oppose new developments because they affect them directly, rather than any inefficiencies within the Community Development Department itself. This misunderstanding underscores the need for a balance between efficient city procedures and robust public engagement, which is central to navigating the complexities of development planning in Ashland. This balance helps manage the pace of development while respecting the depth of community interaction that is so characteristic of our city's approach to planning and development.

Community Development staff are in general agreement with the actions identified by the Development Process





Council Study Session

Management Advisory Committee (DPMAC) and are prepared to move forward with the necessary steps to implement these changes. With direction from the Planning Commission and City Council, staff anticipate undertaking selected legislative actions that require broader community engagement and detailed ordinance development. These actions will follow the completion of several significant projects currently underway, including the Economic Opportunity Analysis, Climate Friendly Area zone, Manufactured Home Park Zone, Croman Mill District plan, and the Southern Oregon University Masterplan. These projects are expected to conclude between July 2025 and December 2025, which will then allow staff to begin focusing on the new legislative efforts during that same period.

In the meantime, recommended administrative changes that can be implemented by the department such as the development of user guides, pre-approved Accessory Residential Unit Plans, and enhancements to the online permitting process are already underway. These initiatives are expected to be completed within this year, demonstrating Community Development's commitment to improving efficiency and service delivery in line with the DPMAC's recommendations. This phased approach ensures that the department maintains a strategic focus while preparing to engage in more comprehensive legislative updates following the wrap-up of the current major planning projects.

FISCAL IMPACTS

The development of User Guides and Pre-Approved ARU Building Plans are already funded under the existing budget, ensuring that no additional funding is required for these initiatives. Necessary staff time to implement online system upgrades is accounted for within the current budget, negating the need for extra financial resources.

Costs associated with future legislative changes, intended to be undertaken in the next biennium, will be included for consideration during the budget process for the upcoming biennium. This approach ensures a planned and phased implementation of improvements based on prioritized needs and available funding.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS, MOTIONS, AND/OR OPTIONS

As the Council considers this report, staff seeks guidance on how these changes align with the Council's vision for development and community engagement. Staff is available to discuss any potential challenges and opportunities related to implementing these changes.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

1. DPMAC Report_final_05082024

Development Process Management Advisory Committee

Report to the City Manager

May 8, 2024



City Staff, under the direction of the City Manager, established a management advisory committee tasked with reviewing and discussing the city's development process. The primary objective of this committee is to streamline service delivery and reduce uncertainty within the development process. While the management advisory committee is actively providing recommendations to the staff, its role extends beyond internal advisory.

The intention behind forming this ad-hoc committee was also to bridge communication between the development community and the City. By doing so, the committee serves as a critical conduit, relaying the perspectives and experiences of developers to inform and guide the council's decisions on future urban planning and development policies. This structured approach ensures that both operational improvements and stakeholder insights are considered in shaping the city's developmental strategies.

Introduction

The Development Process Management Advisory Committee (DPMAC) was a limited duration ad-hoc committee appointed by the City Manager of Ashland. The committee's primary goal was to examine potential ways to streamline the development process in Ashland while ensuring it aligned with Oregon State Law and local objectives for meaningful public involvement.

Background

Over the last six months, the committee has convened four times to achieve its objectives. In these meetings, the committee concentrated on a comprehensive evaluation, including reviewing a customer survey to assess customer experiences with the department. This review aimed to uncover patterns in the clarity and responsiveness of City Staff's interactions with applicants, leading to recommendations for enhancing customer service and the overall application process.

Moreover, the committee investigated development costs in nearby cities to provide a comparative analysis. This examination was geared towards identifying potential areas for efficiency improvements and cost reductions in Ashland's development process without compromising legal and public participation standards.

The committee examined the City's new online permitting software, Citizen Self Service, to understand its capabilities and potential to enhance efficiencies and the customer experience. This online system, a new introduction to the application submission and processing landscape in Ashland, was reviewed by the committee shortly before its launch. Their assessment aimed to recognize the system's contribution to streamlining procedures and improving service levels for applicants. Some ad-hoc committee members participated as initial beta testers of the online system. Their involvement provided valuable insights into the system's functionality and user experience. This feedback helped identify minor adjustments to refine the system, ensuring it was well-positioned to offer an improved permitting experience upon its public release. Their role was instrumental in validating the system's readiness and its potential to positively impact the application process.

Additionally, the committee delved into the various planning action types to ascertain if there were opportunities within the land use code to expedite or simplify the approval processes. This effort included assessing the thresholds for public hearings and considering the feasibility of designating certain actions for ministerial or staff approval.

By leveraging diverse expertise and insights, the Ad-Hoc Development Process Management Advisory Committee aimed to recommend strategies that would lead to a more streamlined and effective development process in Ashland, all while adhering to regulatory mandates and emphasizing the importance of public engagement.

Membership of the Committee

- **Committee Composition:** The DPMAC consisted of individuals familiar with Ashland's development process, including planners, architects, builders, developers, and real estate professionals.

APPOINTED MEMBERS

Matt Small <i>Architect</i> Email: matts@kswarchitects.com Brian Druihet <i>Catherine Rowe Real Estate Team</i> Email: roweteam@johnlscott.com Kerry KenCairn <i>Planning Commissioner Landscape Architect/Planner</i> Email: kerry@kencairnlandscape.com Christopher Brown <i>Architect</i> Email: arkitek@arkitek.us	Ben Treiger <i>Builder</i> Email: ben@benthebuilderinc.com Jim McNamara <i>Southern Oregon University Facilities</i> Email: mcnamaraj@sou.edu Ray Kistler <i>Architect</i> Email: raymondk@kswarchitects.com Dan Jovick <i>Builder</i> Email: dan@jovickbuilt.com
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STAFF LIAISONS

Brandon Goldman, *Community Development Director*
April Lucas, *Development Services Coordinator*
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Overview of DPMAC Meetings

Meeting Schedule

Meeting dates: The DPMAC met four times over the course of six months as follows:

- October 18, 2023
- November 29, 2023
- March 6, 2024
- April 24, 2024

On the following pages meeting notes are provided for each meeting, which include an overview of the discussions, highlighting the main topics discussed and comments from the committee members. Meeting Notes including specific member comments are attached in the Appendix.

October 18, 2023 Meeting Summary

During the inaugural meeting of the Development Process Management Advisory Committee (DPMAC), the members were introduced and discussed the objectives of the committee. The session served as a platform for committee members to voice their initial thoughts on the challenges facing Ashland's development and planning efforts.

Development Process Management Advisory Committee members shared their experiences and observations including the demographic shifts in Ashland, which they perceived as becoming more of a retirement community and less attractive to young families and workers.

During the discussion it was noted that while some believe other jurisdictions may be easier to deal with, personal experiences suggest that this is not necessarily the case for everyone, although a negative perception about Ashland continues to exist in the development community. In Ashland, projects often face significant delays when compared to other communities. This is not due to city processes but because of strong neighbor and community opposition to development. This neighborhood resistance, which typically falls outside the control of the City, leads to detailed application preparation, high legal costs, and lengthy appeals processes, which can result in compromised outcomes even when projects receive City approval.

City Staff presented the findings of the 2022 Ashland Community Development Department Customer Satisfaction Survey. Conducted in December of 2022, the survey targeted individuals who had engaged with the city's planning and building services during the prior four years, garnering responses from 71 out of 1,200 contacted. This survey, which also included questions from previous surveys conducted in 2016 and 2011, provided insights into trends and changes in customer satisfaction over time (Survey attached in appendix).

The DPMAC reviewed the survey feedback and noted that the survey results generally indicated that both the Planning and Building Departments were responsive and available to applicants. Many survey respondents praised the staff for their helpfulness and efficiency. However, there were also calls for improvements, such as reducing the high fees and streamlining communication processes affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Suggestions from respondents included revising and clarifying codes, enhancing online resources, and simplifying the application process. These points from the survey informed the committee's discussion on how the departments could further improve their services to better meet the needs of the community.

The session served as a platform for committee members to voice their initial thoughts on the challenges facing Ashland's development and planning efforts and to begin shaping the direction of future policies and regulations.

November 29, 2023 Meeting Summary

During this second meeting of the DPMAC, Staff provided the committee with a summary of building permit fee comparisons as was requested at the prior meeting. The building fee comparison provided detailed Ashland's fee structures compared to 13 other jurisdictions across three categories: new single-family dwellings, new multi-family development, and new commercial office space. This comparison aimed to offer transparency and context on how Ashland's fees align with those of other regions.

Addressing questions and suggestions regarding enhancements to Ashland's online resources for Building and Planning, April Lucas, Ashland's Development Coordinator, showcased the new features of the new Building and Planning Permit portal, known as EnerGov Citizen Self Service. At the time of the presentation the self-service portal was in Beta and had not been widely released. Members of the DPMAC were "beta testers" of the site to ensure the online portal was both useable and readily accessible. This new online resource allows customers to apply for various permits and plans, enhancing operational transparency and streamlining the permitting process. April Lucas highlighted future features the City expects to roll out, including the ability to pay invoices online.

During the discussion led by Brandon Goldman, an in-depth presentation was given on the various types of land use actions—Type I, II, and III—complete with flowcharts that detail the respective approval processes. The dialogue that ensued focused on the potential inefficiencies of requiring certain projects to undergo Planning Commission review. This step in the process can often result in lengthy and expensive delays, particularly when opposition to the project is minimal or unsubstantiated.

Participants expressed a desire to optimize the review process by reclassifying certain decisions from Planning Commission review to administrative approval. Such a shift would not only streamline procedures but also reduce the bureaucratic hurdles associated with development projects. This approach aligns with the broader objective of the DPMAC to refine planning processes in a manner consistent with statewide planning goals.

The balance between ensuring public involvement and facilitating development expedience is a delicate legislative issue. By forwarding recommendations that propose modifications to the planning action types, the DPMAC aims to enhance the efficiency of the planning application review process while still adhering to the necessary legislative frameworks. These recommendations will seek to strike an equitable balance between public engagement in the planning process and the expedited execution of development projects, recognizing that the ultimate decision lies within the legislative purview.

March 6, 2024 Meeting Summary

During the third session of the Development and Planning Management Advisory Committee (DPMAC), updates on the city's planning and development processes were provided, with significant emphasis on the advancements in digital tools. April Lucas reported on the launch of Ashland's new online permitting portal, Citizen Self Service, which is now fully operational and accessible to the community. Since its launch, the system has already seen engagement from 80 users applying for permits without any substantive difficulties reported, marking a smooth transition and adoption of the new digital service.

Brandon Goldman then outlined proposed adjustments to streamline the development process within Ashland. His presentation included a variety of recommendations designed to simplify and expedite planning actions and land use code amendments. The committee discussed reducing discretionary processes for common actions, such as adjusting requirements for tree removals, combining steps in the subdivision review process, and streamlining the review process for manmade steep slopes. The DPMAC members expressed general support for these adjustments, recognizing the potential for these changes to facilitate quicker and more predictable development activities.

During the deliberations of the Development and Planning Management Advisory Committee (DPMAC), there was a shared understanding among members that any proposed changes to the land use process would aim to enhance clarity and predictability in the approval procedures. However, the committee recognized that since these changes would involve legislative amendments, it was crucial to maintain a careful balance between streamlining processes and ensuring adequate public involvement. The members underscored the importance of public engagement in the legislative process to ensure that the amendments reflect the community's needs and values while also enhancing the efficiency of development activities.

Staff highlighted that while the list of potential land use code amendments (see attached) discussed by the committee could be considered, the long-range planning division is currently engaged with other ongoing code amendments. They noted that while some minor adjustments might feasibly be undertaken within the coming year, more substantial amendments, such as those addressing hillside development standards, would necessitate a lengthier review process. These larger changes would require explicit direction and prioritization from the City Council to ensure they align with broader city planning goals and resource allocations.

The meeting concluded with an overview of the forthcoming steps, where it was announced that the DPMAC would convene one final time to review and finalize their recommendations.

April 24, 2024 Meeting Summary

The Development and Planning Management Advisory Committee (DPMAC) convened on April 24th to review the report and finalize their recommendations. This session allowed the committee to ensure that their insights and proposals are effectively communicated to the city's executive leadership.

Discussions covered several major areas for recommendations to the City Manager, including streamlining permit processes, modifying land use codes to encourage development, enhancing public engagement in planning, and improving the online permitting and inspection processes.

In the meeting, members briefly discussed the new Citizen Self Service portal and supported various other initiatives, including the guide and pre-approved plans for accessory residential units (ARUs). There was discussion regarding certain permit requirements and potential relaxation of specific requirements to make the development process more efficient. However, it was pointed out that some recommendations might not align directly with the goal of streamlining the development process but were more about changing the code to facilitate development. Discussions along these lines included potential adjustments to the Maximum Permitted Floor Area (MPFA) regulations in historic districts, which were influenced by Senate Bill 1537. This bill allows for increased height and expanded lot coverage to facilitate more housing.

The meeting concluded with an update regarding the ongoing collaboration with local designers to offer pre-approved plans for ARUs, which will be available to residents free of charge but will likely require consultation for any modifications.

Overall, the DPMAC's discussions and forthcoming recommendations, set to be presented to the City Manager in this report are geared towards enhancing city planning and development processes for the future.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Development Process Management Advisory Committee discussed potential actions that the City could take to streamline the development review process and reduce the burden of application requirements. The committee did not rank these actions in order of priority; however, there was a consensus on the importance of certain initiatives.

Key Areas of Discussion

- Members of the Committee particularly highlighted the need to enhance public online access to the permitting process. This improvement was seen as a significant advancement, and there was a strong advocacy for the City to continue expanding these efforts. The online enhancements discussed included:
 - Upgrades to Online Permitting: Continued improvements to online permitting processes, including the introduction of online payment options, were seen as vital for making the system more user-friendly and efficient.
- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs): The Committee emphasized the importance of providing educational materials to the public on the development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), also known as ARUs. It was recommended to create a how-to guide for ADUs and offer pre-approved ARU building plans at no charge to property owners interested in adding units.
- Simplifying the Tree Removal Permit Process: Efforts to simplify this process were supported to make it less cumbersome for property owners and developers.
- Extended Permit Timelines: Given the challenges related to supply chain interruptions and fluctuations in financing, there was a suggestion to address the expiration of permit timelines by allowing for more extended periods.

Legislative Considerations

The Committee was informed by staff that many of the proposed actions would require legislative changes. Prior to initiating any new legislative actions, staff clarified that the Department's focus would remain on long-range projects already underway, including, Climate Friendly Area Zoning, Manufactured Home Park Zoning, Housing Production Strategic Actions, Economic Opportunities Analysis.

Longer term legislative changes that were discussed and could be considered in the future included:

- Considering Land Use Ordinance changes that promote administrative approvals for common actions with clear and objective criteria.
- Fence Permit Requirements: Removing the requirement that a fence permit be obtained for fences that comply with Ashland's standards for height, location, and materials.

- Residential Density Increases: Considering increases in residential density in R-2 and R-3 zones to allow triplexes and quadplexes outright, similar to how accessory dwelling units are treated in R-1 zones.
 - This may include reevaluating the maximum permitted house size ordinance in Historic Districts to adjust square foot thresholds for multifamily developments.
- Conversion of Commercial Space: Allowing the conversion of existing commercial space to residential use without a planning review, requiring only the issuance of building permits.
- Simplification to the subdivision process for developments to reduce steps in the review process for smaller developments (12 or less units).
- Solar Access ordinance amendments to allow increased shading arrangements for homes within a discrete subdivision without impacting properties outside the subdivision.

The Committee did put forward several actionable strategies that could be implemented in the shorter term:

- User Guide for Business Owners: Creation of a user guide for business owners for change of use/code analysis, which would include steps and code references to facilitate understanding and compliance.
- Community Development Staff Consultations: Retaining the availability of Community Development Staff for phone and walk-in consultations to assist developers and property owners.
- Flexible Policy on Permit Expiration: Implementing a more flexible policy regarding the expiration of land use approvals and the process for requesting extensions. Currently, the approval expires 18 months after initial approval, with an allowance for a one-time 24-month extension.

These strategies represent a balanced approach to enhancing the development process, focusing on both immediate improvements and long-term planning to ensure a more streamlined, efficient, and accessible system for all stakeholders involved.

Appendices

- **Appendix A**
 - o Potential Land Use Amendments for Streamlining
- **Appendix B**
 - o Customer Survey December 2022
- **Appendix C**
 - o Planning Action Types
- **Appendix D**
 - o Development Fee Comparisons
 - Single Family
 - Multifamily
 - Commercial
- **Appendix E**
 - Meeting Notes**
 - o October 18, 2023
 - o November 29, 2023
 - o March 6, 2024
 - o April 24, 2024

Appendix A

Development Process Management Advisory Committee Potential Land Use Amendments for Streamlining

Ashland's processes or land use codes could be amended as follows, with a focus on facilitating development while maintaining environmental and community standards:

Tree Removal Permits within Building Footprints as Administrative Actions:

- **Process Amendment:** Create a fast-track administrative procedure for tree removal permits within a building's footprint. This process would bypass the need for public notice, assuming the removal meets predefined criteria that justify no public input is required (e.g., non-heritage, non-significant trees).
- **Code Amendment:** Amend the land use code to clearly define criteria for trees within building footprints that qualify for administrative action, including tree size, species, and condition.
- **Code References:** Section 18.5.7.020.A. – Applicability and Review Procedure, Ministerial Action.

Emergency Removals for Hazardous or Diseased Trees:

- **Process Amendment:** Establish a clear, streamlined process for the immediate administrative approval of permits for trees posing imminent hazards or severely infected by disease, or infested by insects, without requiring public notice.
- **Code Amendment:** Update the code to include a list of conditions considered emergencies and a protocol for rapid assessment by a qualified arborist or city official.
- **Code References:** Section 18.5.7.020.A. – Applicability and Review Procedure, Ministerial Action; Section 18.5.7.040.A. – Approval Criteria, Emergency Tree Removal Permit.

Subdivision Processing for Up to 12 Residential Lots:

- **Process Amendment:** Simplify the subdivision process for developments proposing no more than 12 residential lots by allowing a combined outline and final planning action, reducing steps in the review process.
- **Code Amendment:** Adjust subdivision regulations to permit a unified process for small-scale developments, detailing criteria and standards for approval.
- **Code References:** Section 18.5.3.020.C. – Applicability and General Requirements, Subdivision and Partition Approval Through Two-Step Process; Section 18.5.3.030. – Preliminary Plat Approval Process; Section 18.5.3.070. – Preliminary Subdivision Plat Criteria; Section 18.5.3.090. – Final Plats.

Manmade Steep Slopes in Physical and Environmental Constraints Permits:

- **Process Amendment:** Provide clear guidelines for the treatment of manmade steep slopes during the permit review process, differentiating them from natural steep slopes.
- **Code Amendment:** Amend the environmental constraints code to include definitions and standards for the treatment of manmade steep slopes, including mitigation measures and engineering standards.
- **Code References:** Section 18.3.10.090.H. – Development Standards for Hillside Lands, Exception to the Development Standards for Hillside Lands; Section 18.3.10.060 – Land Classifications.

Private Drive/Street Lot Serving Increases:

- **Process Amendment:** Evaluate and potentially increase the number of lots that can be accessed by a private drive or street based on safety, environmental impact, and infrastructure capacity.
- **Code Amendment:** Revise the subdivision and infrastructure codes to allow for more lots per private drive/street, incorporating design and safety standards.
- **Code References:** Section 18.4.6.040.F. – Street Design Standards, table; Section 18.4.6.040.G.5. – Street Design Standards, Standards Illustrated; Section 18.5.3.020.A. – Applicability and General Requirements, Applicability; Section 18.6.1.030.P. – Private Drive.

Solar Ordinance Amendments for Intra-Parcel Shading:

- **Process Amendment:** Establish a process for evaluating and permitting intra-parcel shading arrangements, ensuring compliance with new standards.
- **Code Amendment:** Amend the solar ordinance to permit intra-parcel shading that does not extend more than 4 feet up the southern wall of a building's ground floor within the parent parcel of the development. Neighboring parcels to the north of the developing property, would retain protections of the existing Solar Ordinance.
- **Address solar ordinance in Climate Friendly Areas**
As Climate Friendly Areas (CFAs) would allow taller buildings and higher densities, amendments to the solar ordinance may be needed to facilitate the density and intensity of development envisioned for such areas.
- **Code References:** Section 18.4.8.040. – Solar Access Performance Standard (possibly also Section 18.4.8.020.C. – Applicability, Exceptions and Variances; Section 18.4.8.030. – Solar Setbacks)

Planning Application Expiration and Extensions:

- **Process Amendment:** Implement a clearer, more flexible policy regarding the expiration of planning applications and the process for requesting extensions.

- **Code Amendment:** Amend planning codes to outline specific conditions under which application periods can be extended, including consideration of lengthening the maximum extension time period (currently 18 months initial approval, with one 24-month extension), and address required documentation.
- **Code References:** Section 18.1.6.030 – Permit Expiration; 18.1.6.040 – Permit Extension.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Permitting:

- **Process Amendment:** Streamline the ADU permitting process, reducing barriers to ADU development through promotion of permit-ready plans and clear guidelines. Establish website how-to guide, and resource lists for homeowners.
- **Code Amendment:** Not needed – outright permitted.

Commercial-to-Residential Conversions:

- **Process Amendment:** Establish a streamlined process for commercial-to-residential conversions that requires only a building permit, exempting these conversions from more extensive site reviews.
- **Code Amendment:** Amend zoning and development codes to clarify conditions under which commercial properties can be converted to residential uses with minimal procedural requirements.
- **Code References:** Section 18.3.14.040 – Allowed Uses (Transit Triangle); Section 18.2.2.030. – Allowed Uses (Base Zones and Allowed Uses); Section 18.2.3.130 – Dwelling in Non-Residential Zone and possibly Section 18.5.1.010 – Summary of Approvals by Type of Review Procedure (table)

Fence Permit Amendments:

- **Process Amendment:** Remove requirement that a fence permit be obtained for fences that comply with Ashland's standards for height, location, and materials. This amendment would reduce Staff time spent on reviewing, issuing and inspecting fence permits for new and replacement fencing. Failure to build a fence in compliance with standards would trigger code compliance action.
- **Code Amendment:** Update the code to amend permit requirement but retain existing design standards.
- **Code References:** Section 18.4.4.060

Implementing these amendments would require careful consideration of the balance between development efficiency and the protection of community, environmental, and aesthetic values. Each amendment would undergo public consultation and legal review to ensure compliance with broader planning goals and state laws. Then would be presented to the Planning Commission and City Council at public hearings for consideration.

Appendix B

Customer Survey December 2022

2022 Ashland Community Development Department Customer Satisfaction Survey

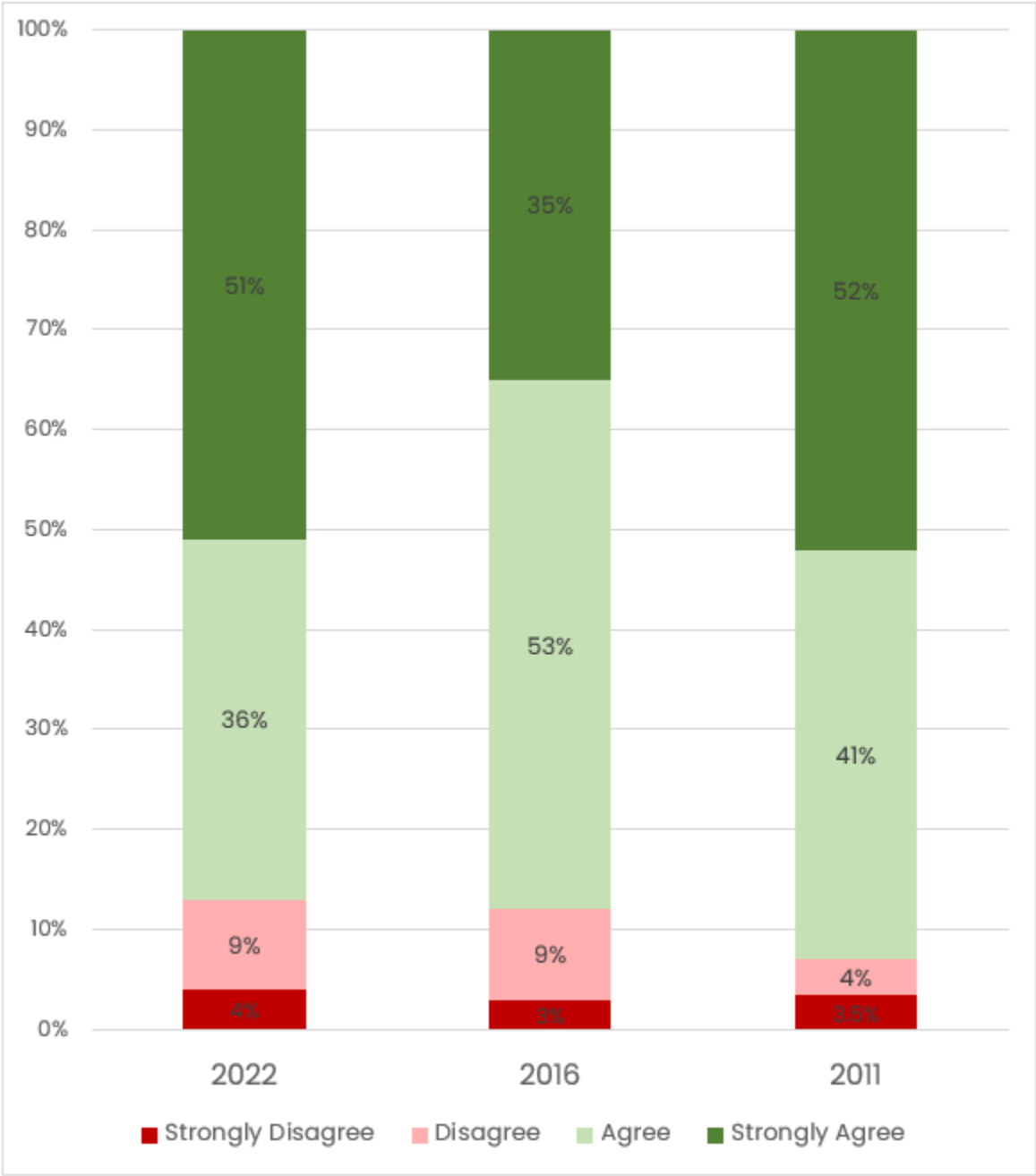
In December 2022, the City of Ashland conducted an online survey targeting a specific group of residents, namely the 1,200 individuals who had applied for either a building permit or planning action within the preceding 48 months. The survey aimed to gauge their experiences and satisfaction levels with the development review process facilitated by the Department of Community Development. Out of the 1,200 recipients, 71 individuals responded to the survey, providing valuable insights into their perceptions and opinions. What makes this survey particularly noteworthy is the fact that it incorporated questions that were previously used in 2016 and 2011, enabling the City to draw direct comparisons and track changes in customer satisfaction over the years. This historical context adds depth and significance to the findings, making the survey a valuable tool for the City to assess and enhance its services.

Respondent Distribution

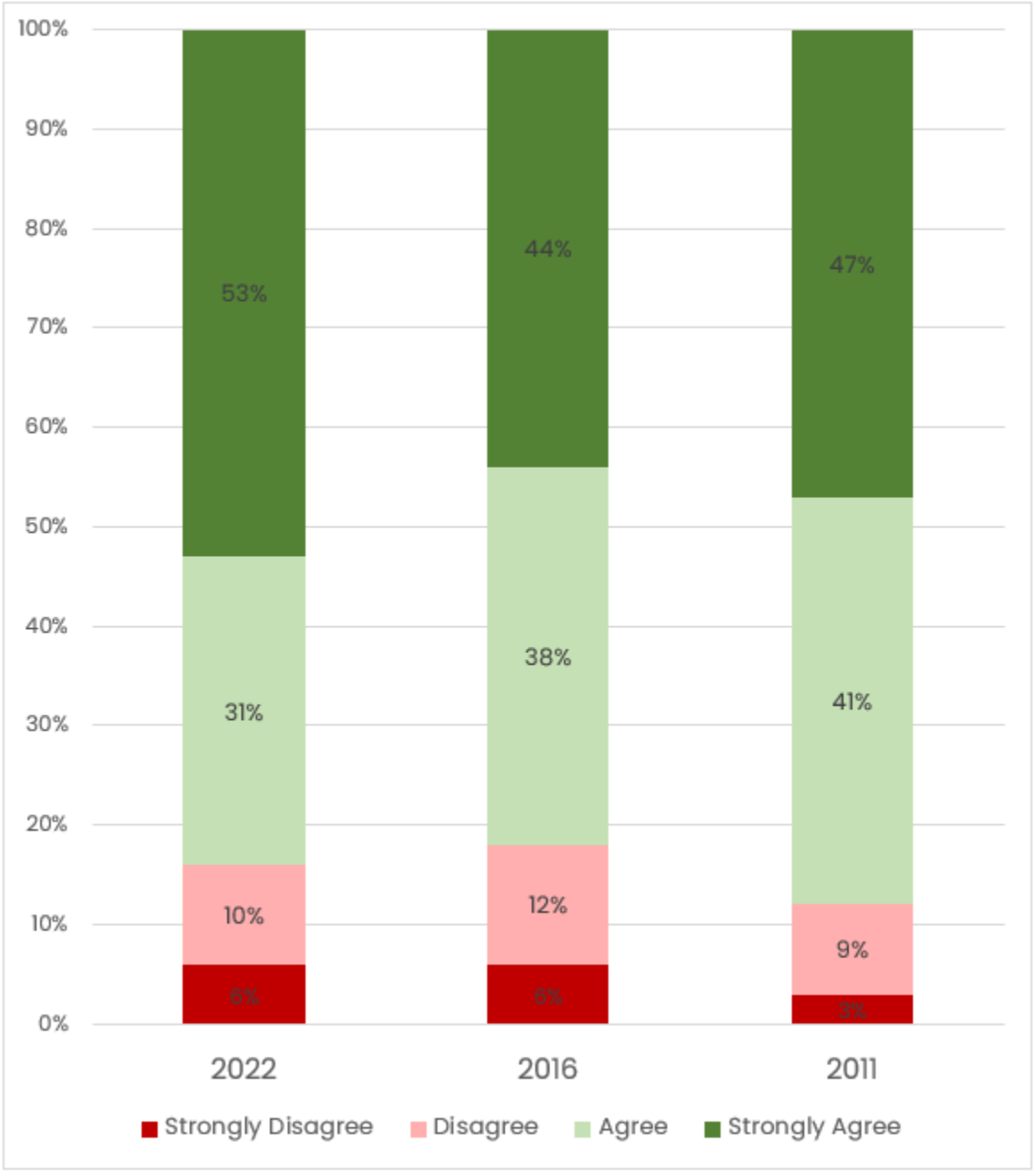
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I am the Property Owner	70.42%	50
I am a Design Professional (Architect/Engineer/etc.)	8.45%	6
I am the Property Owner's Agent (Consultant/Attorney/Contractor/etc)	21.13%	15
TOTAL		71

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Building Permit	64.79%	46
Residential Site Review	28.17%	20
Commercial Site Review	15.49%	11
Land Partition/Subdivision	19.72%	14
Conditional Use Permit	14.08%	10
Variance	7.04%	5
Pre-Application Conference	39.44%	28
Tree Removal	32.39%	23
Other (please specify)	16.90%	12
Total Respondents: 71		

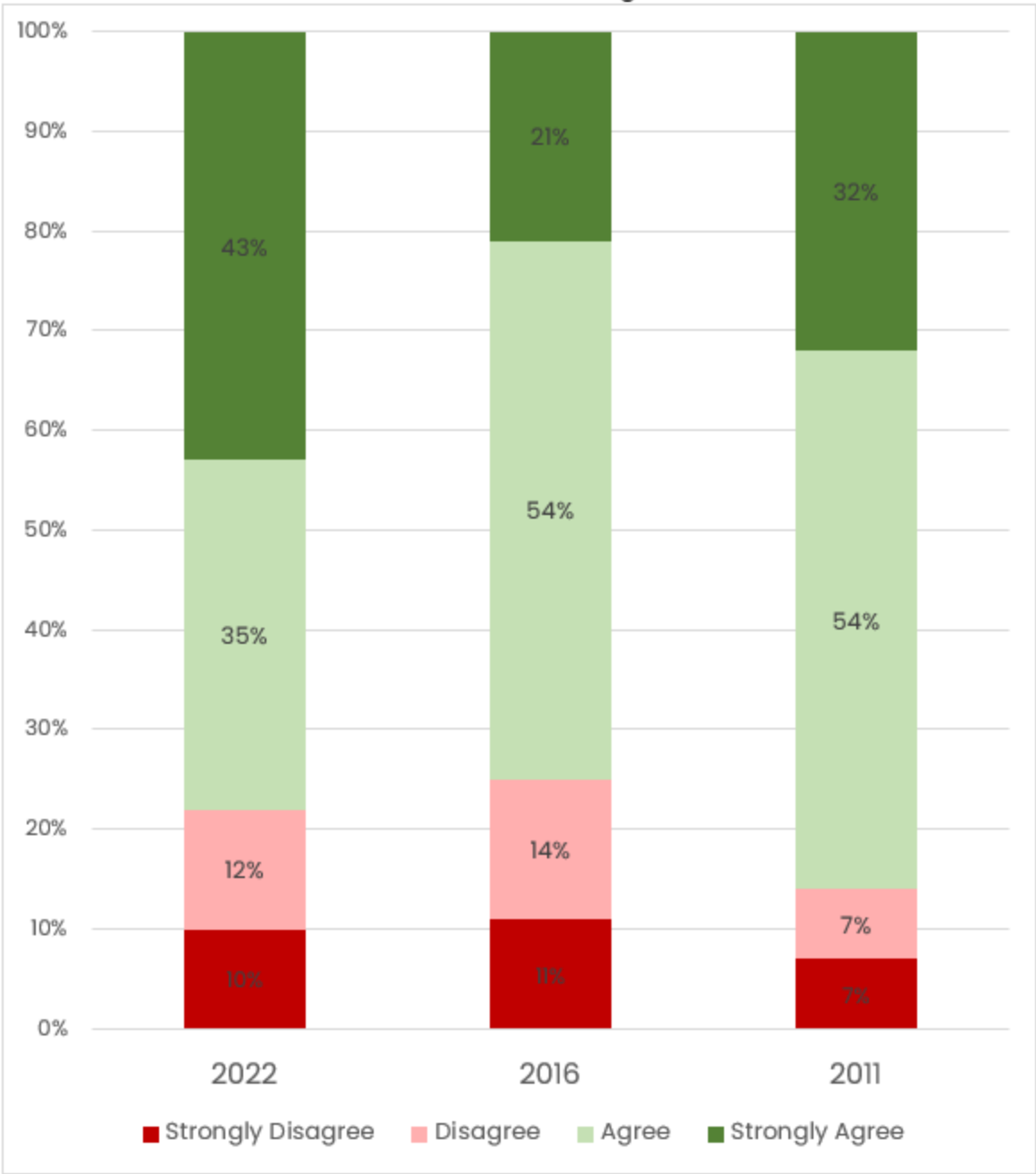
1. When making an application, I have generally found the Community Development staff to be responsive and helpful.



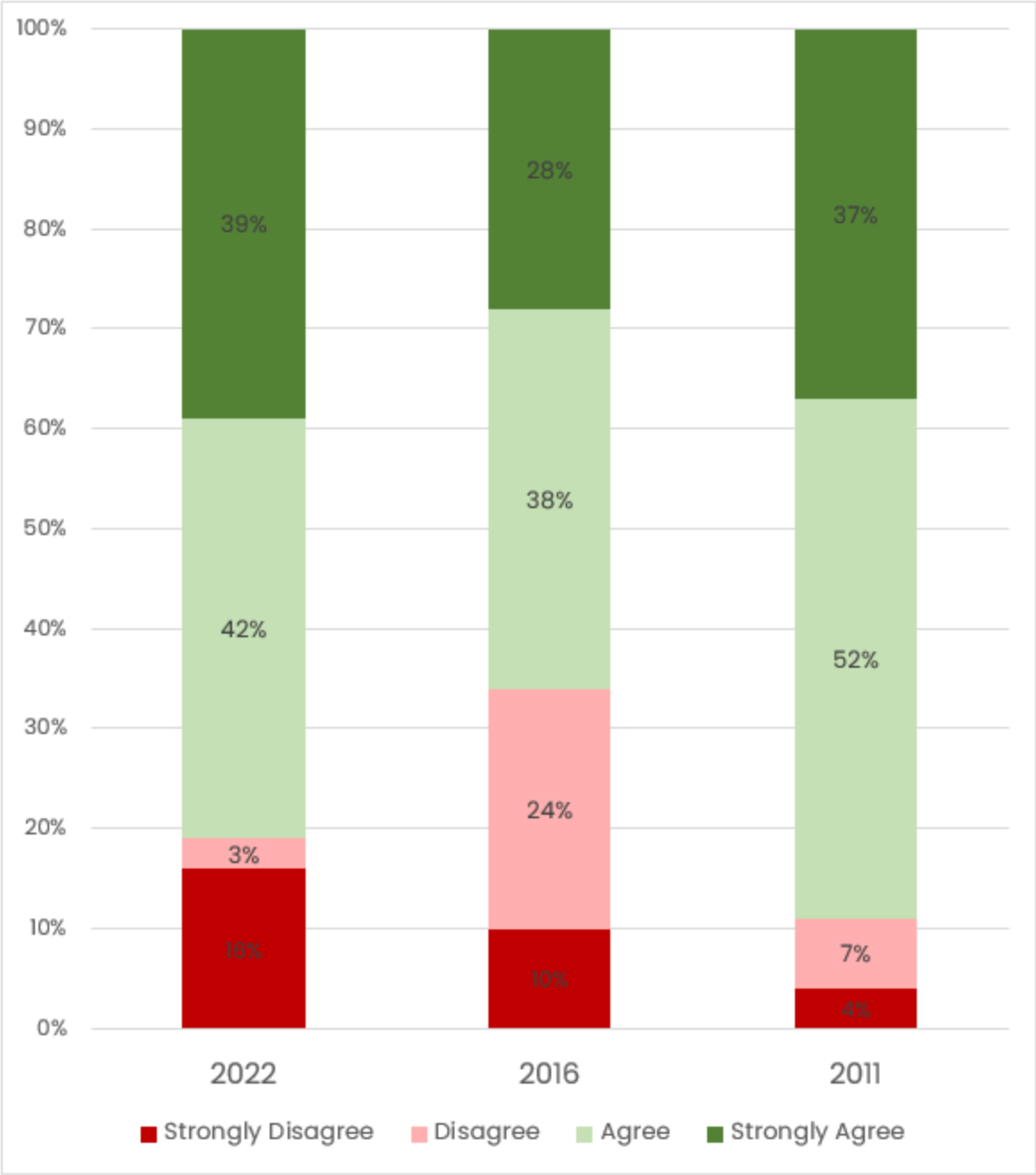
2. In general, the staff has dealt with me in a professional and positive manner, providing options where available, and attempting to help me navigate through the process.



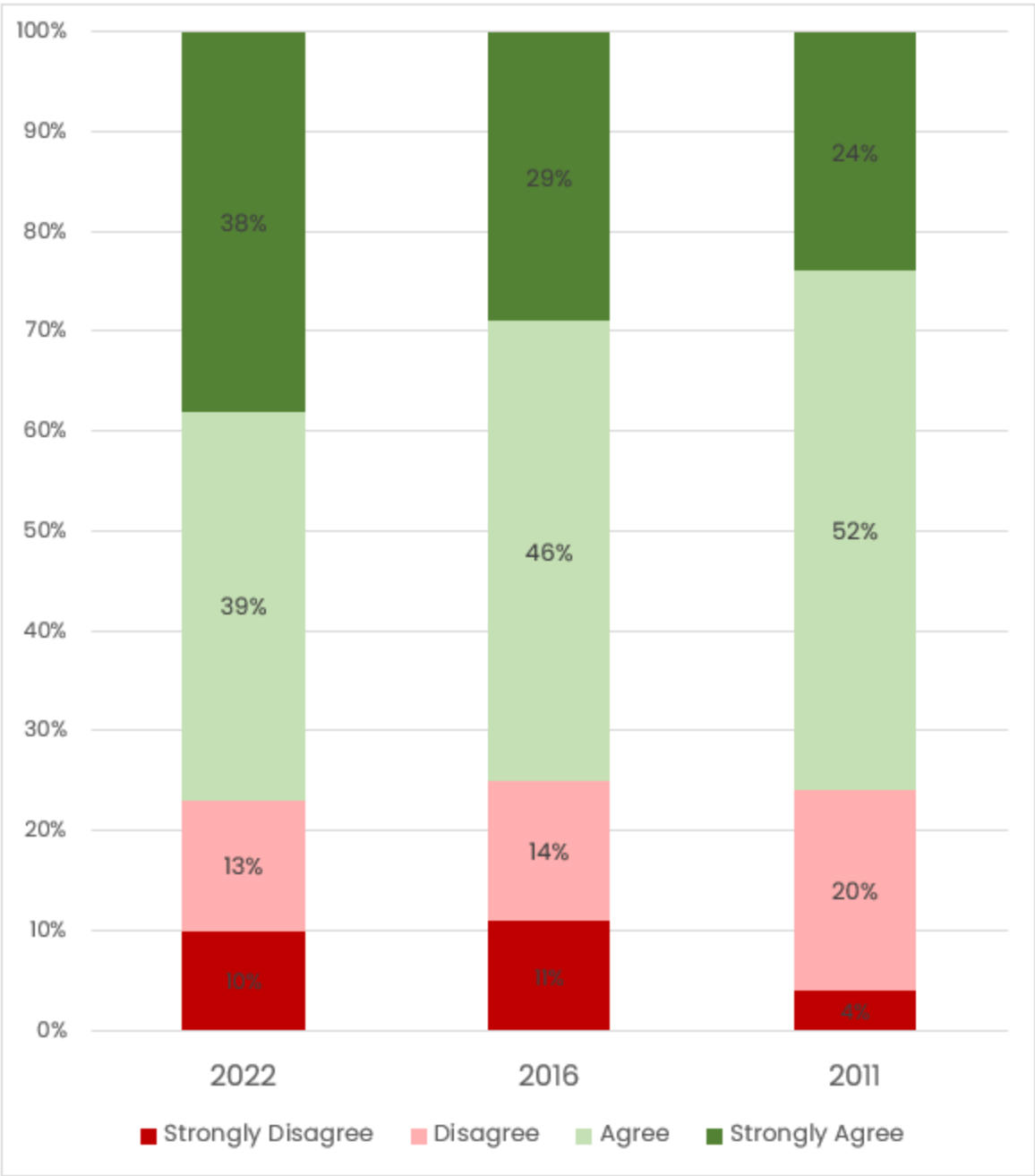
3. Application plan checking is complete and accurate. Additional problems did not surface later that should have been caught in the initial review.



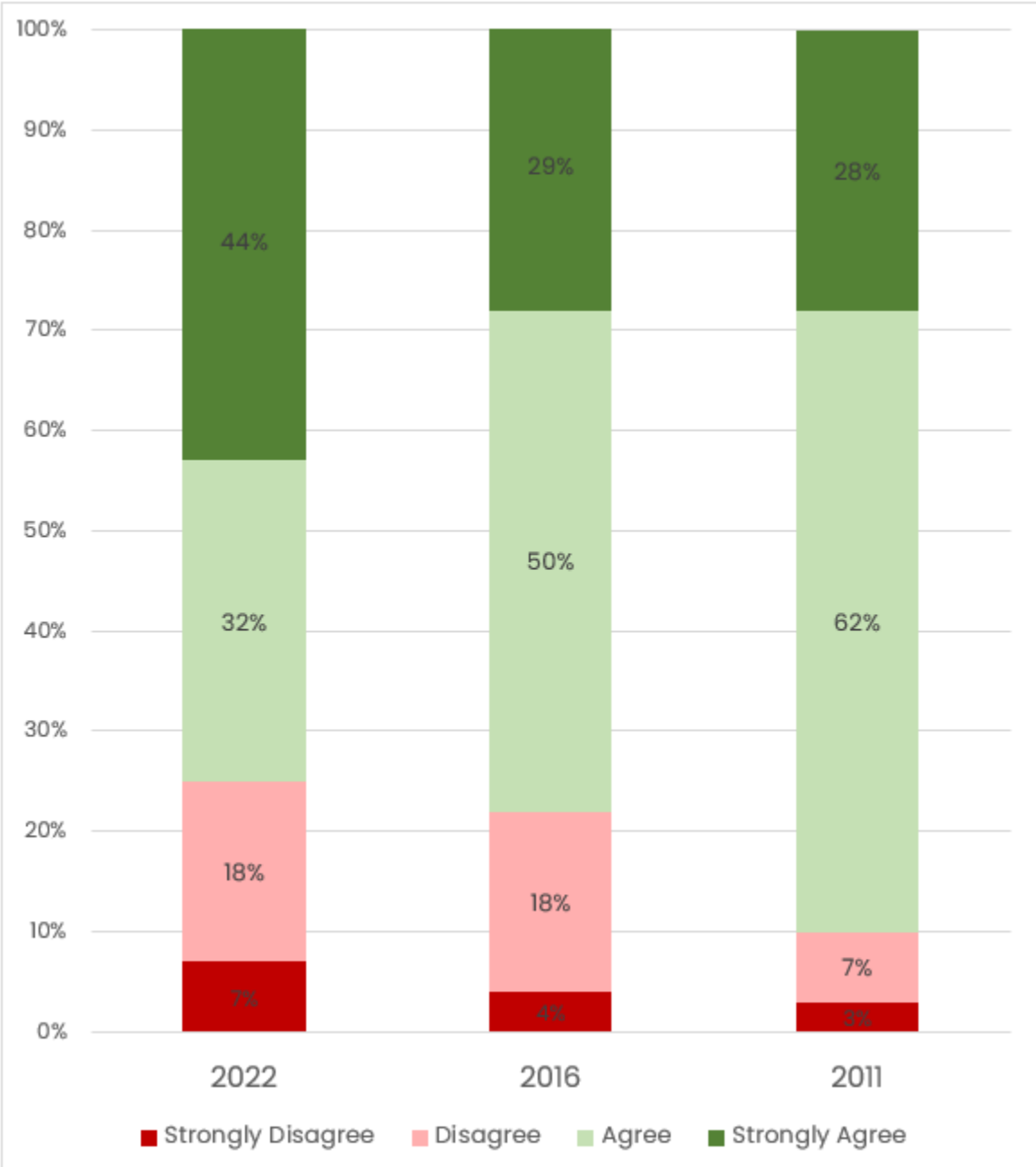
4. Application review turnaround time is acceptable. I did not have to wait an excessive amount of time to get back plans or find out about problems that needed to be corrected.



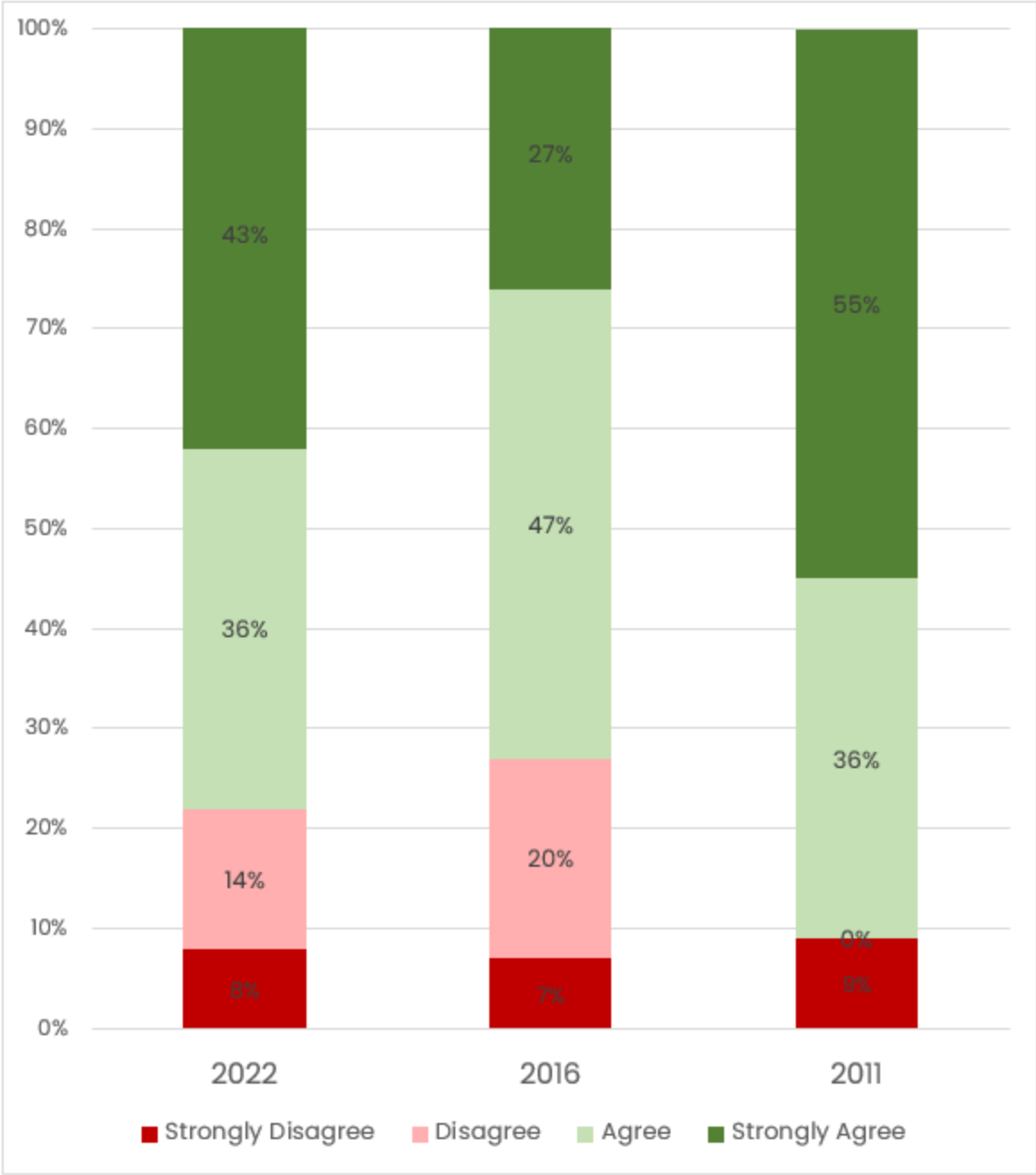
5. Codes and policies are applied by staff in a fair, consistent, and practical manner.



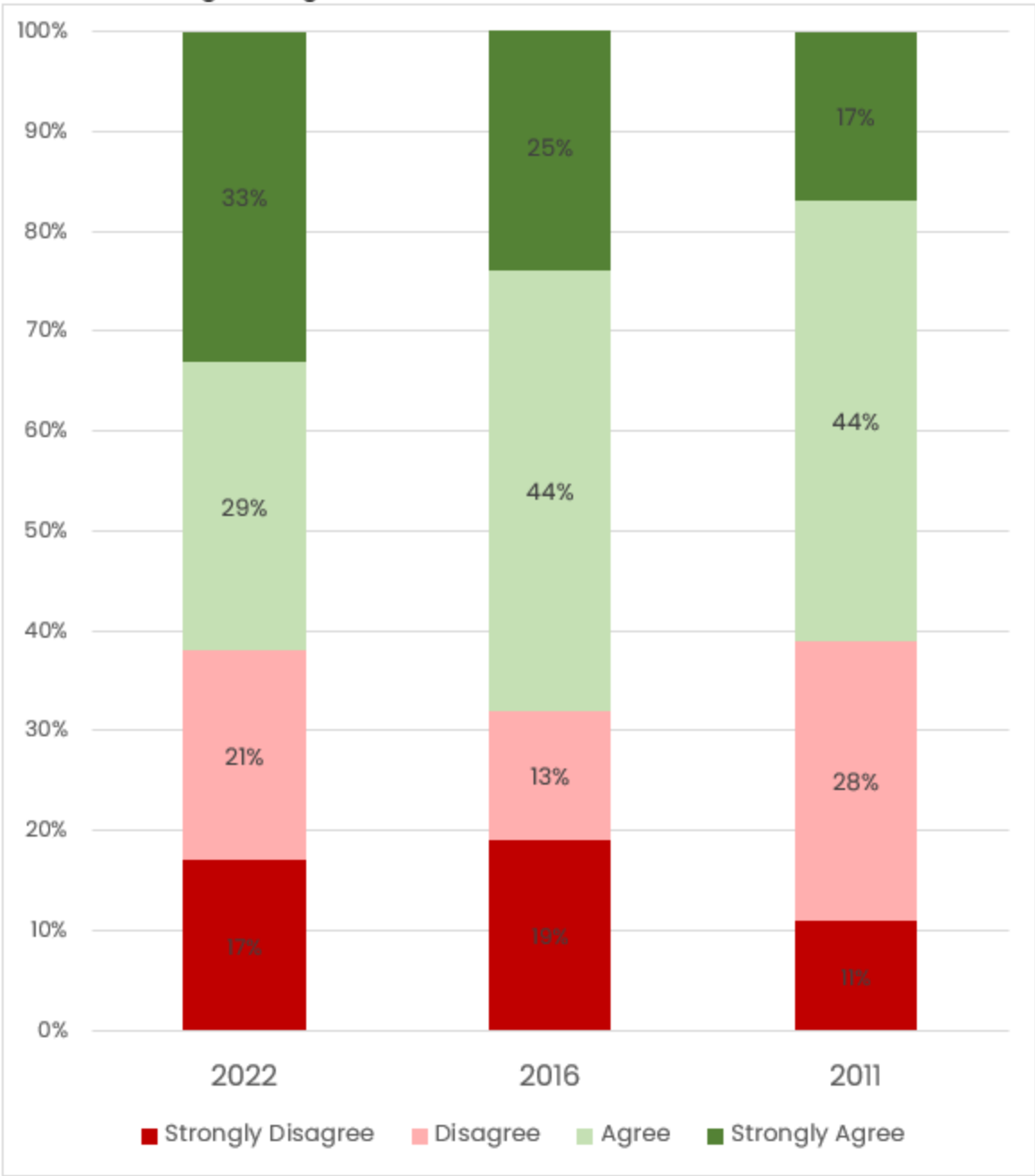
6. Staff explanations regarding the background and purpose of regulations and standards were clear and informative.



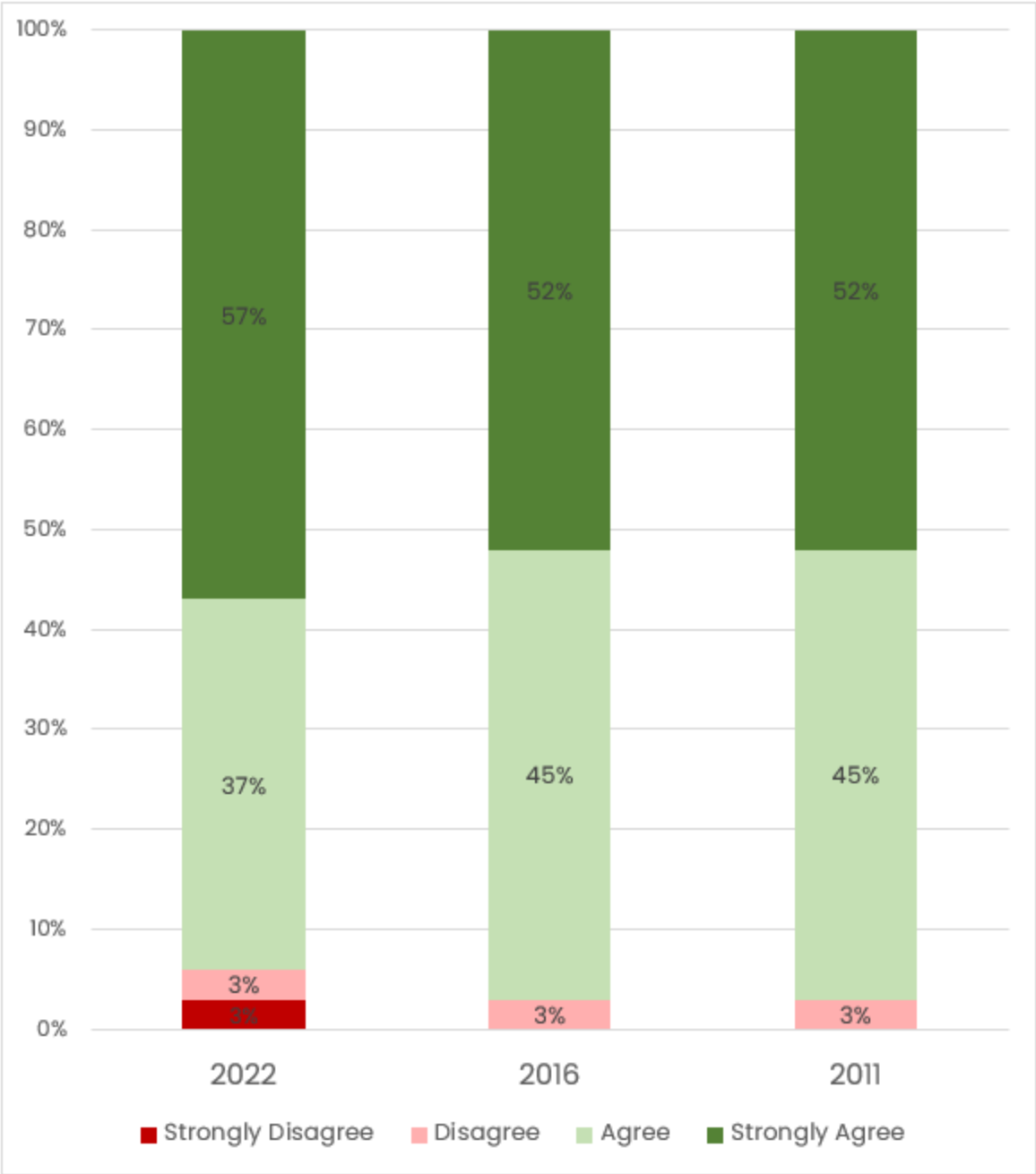
7. The turnaround time for review and approval or disapproval of my application was similar to other cities where I have filed applications.



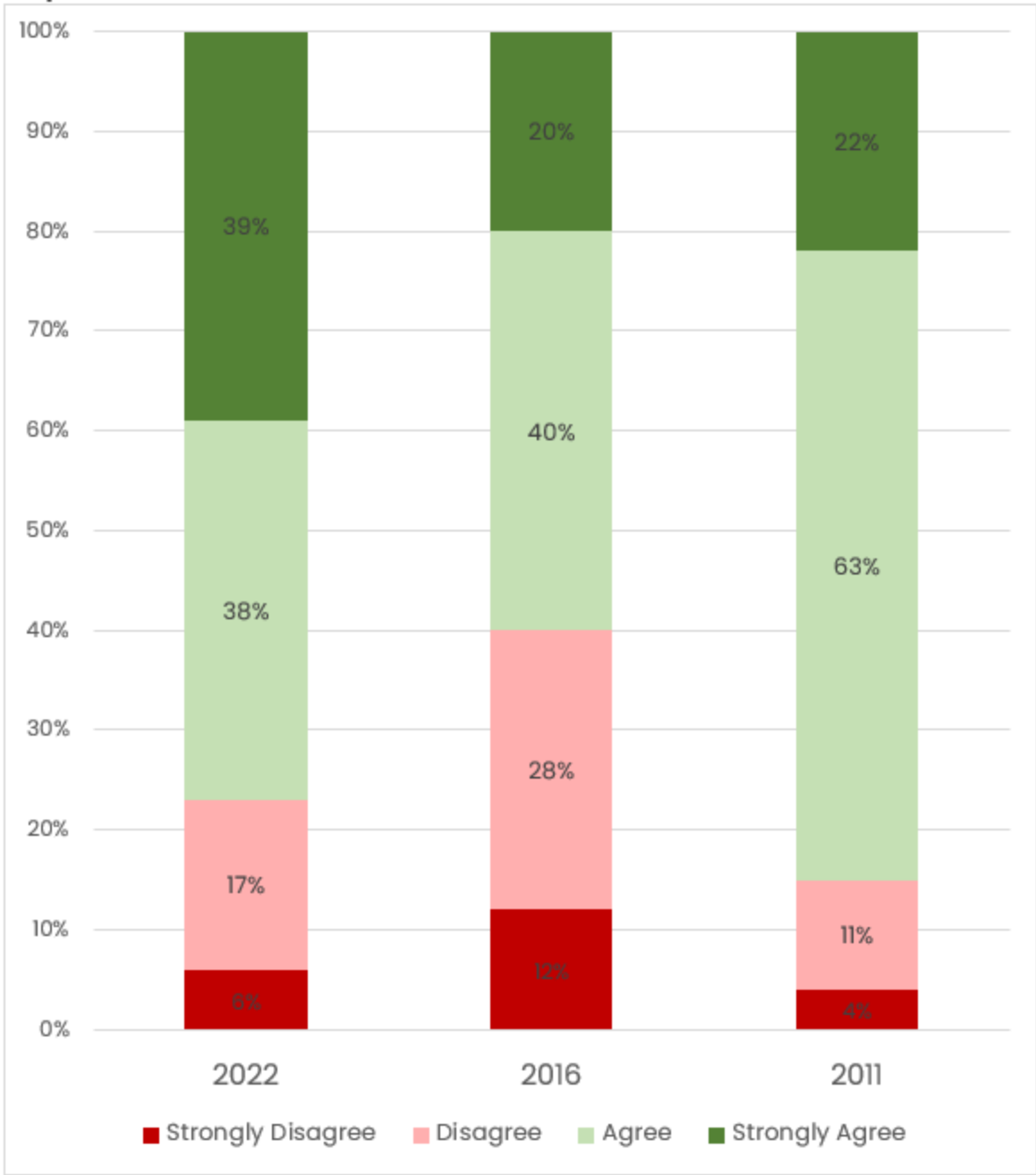
8. Ashland is just as fair, consistent, and practical in its application of regulations as other neighboring cities or counties.



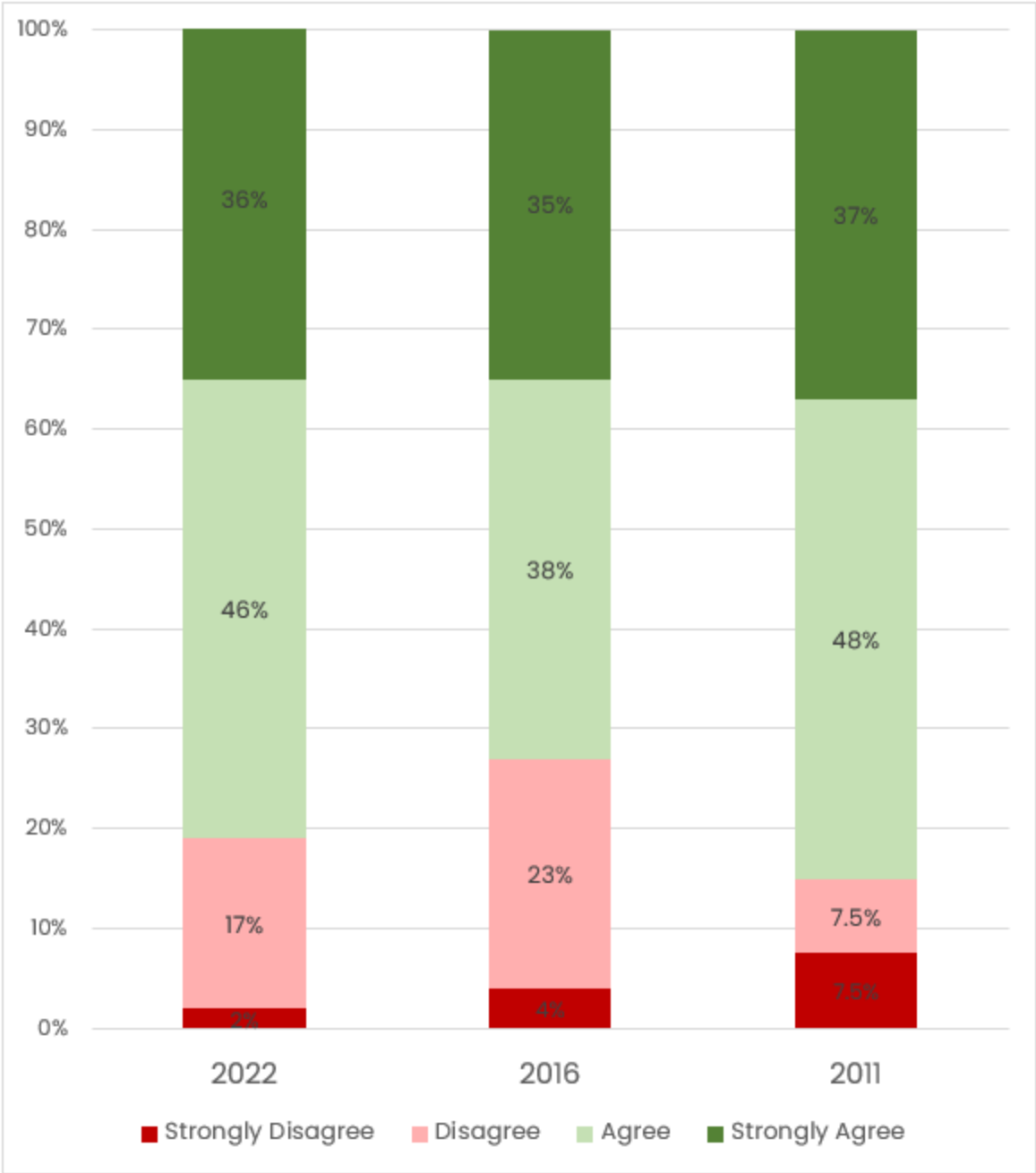
9. Staff was courteous.



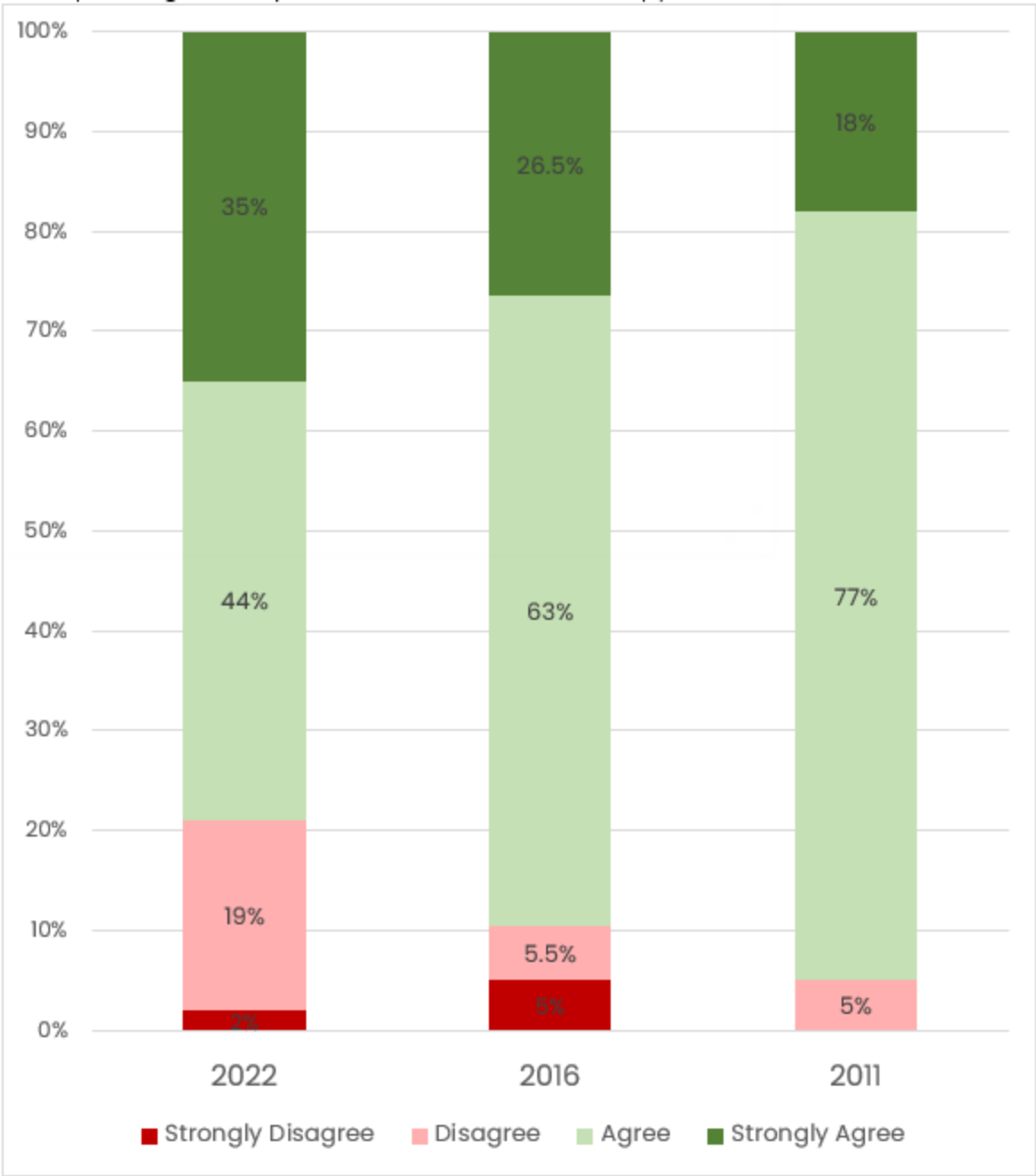
10. The conditions of approval applied to my project were reasonable and justified.



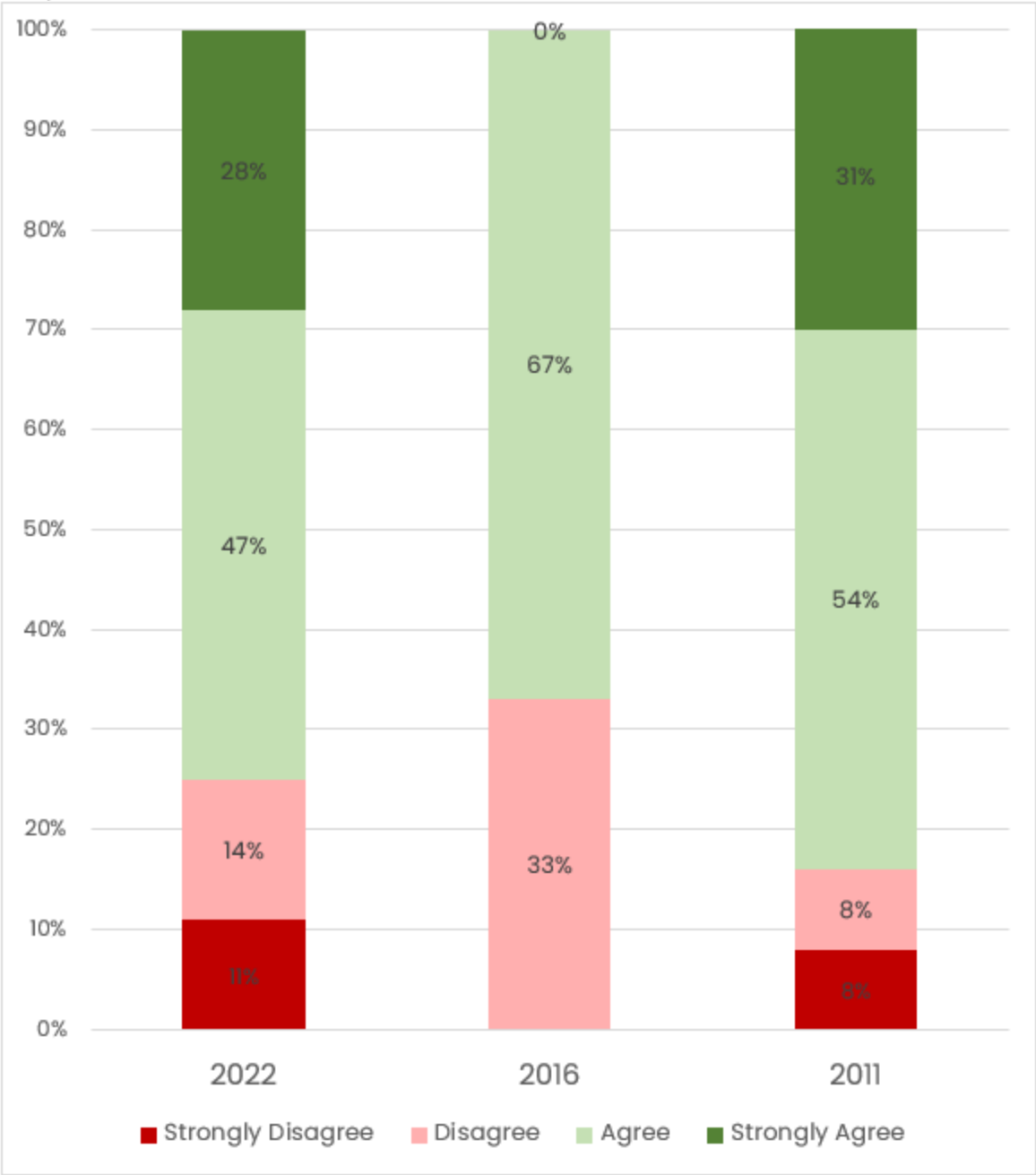
11. Staff was easily accessible when I needed assistance in resolving problems.



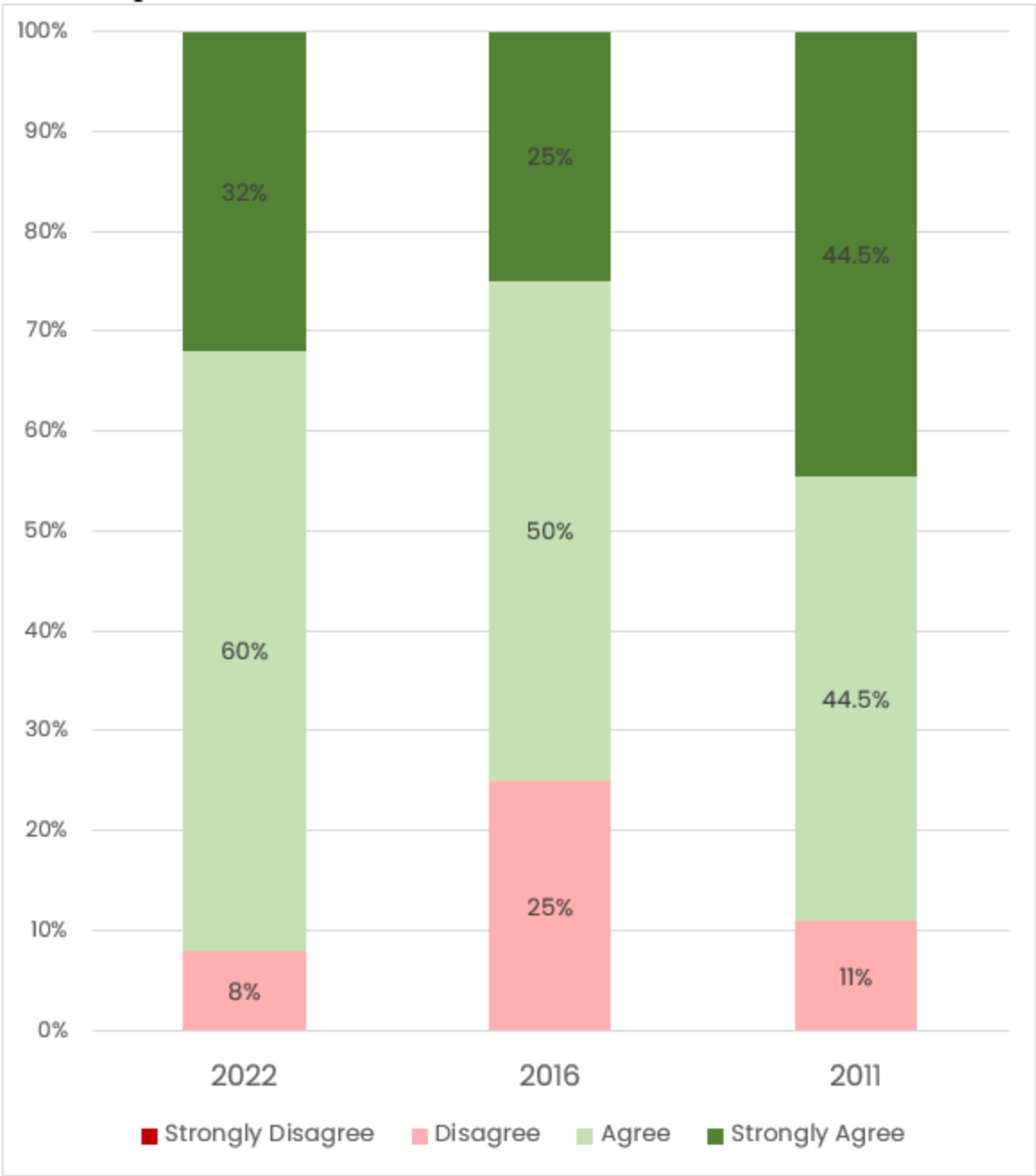
12. I found the handouts supplied by the City to be useful and informative in explaining the requirements I must meet for approval.



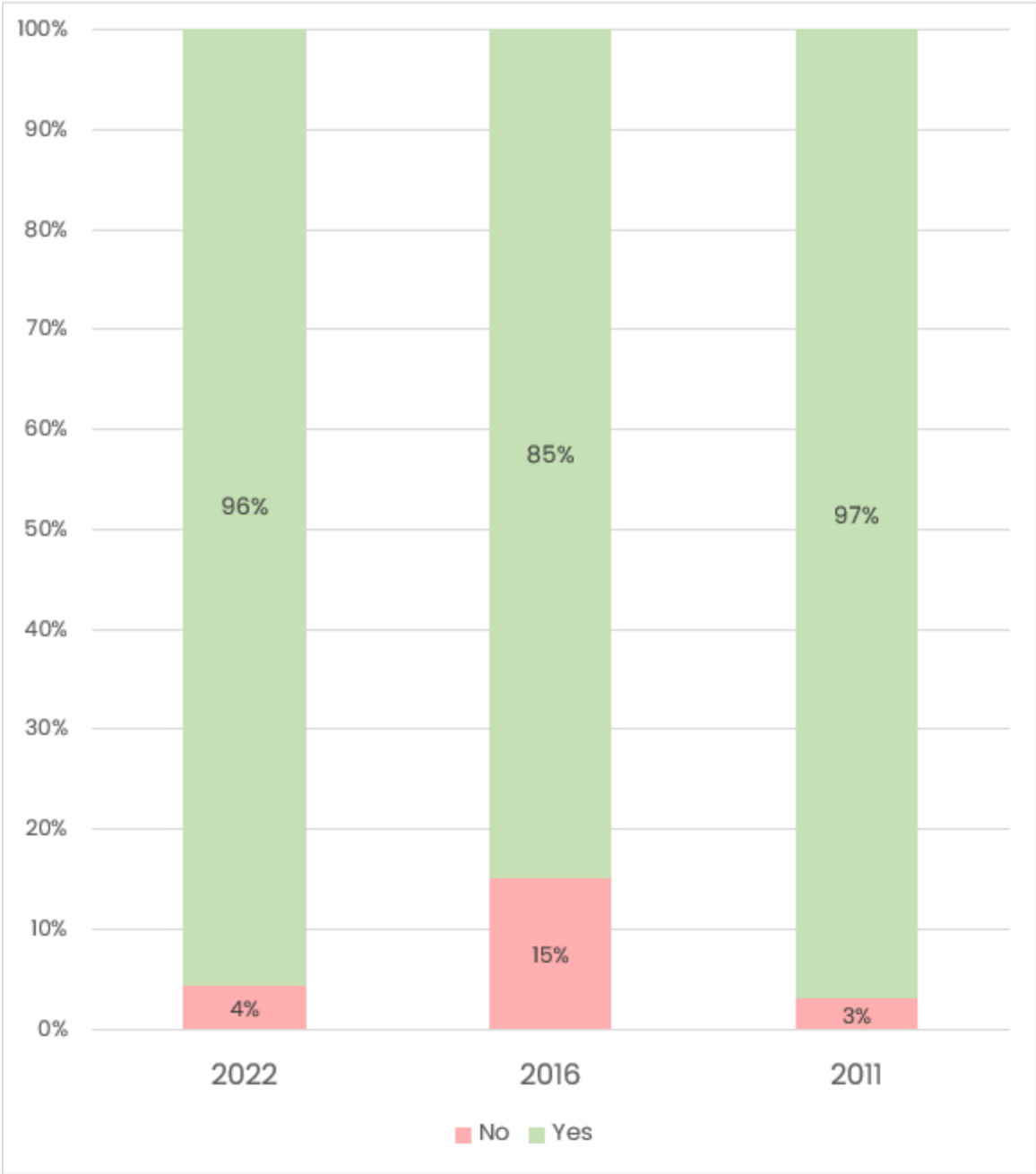
13. The Planning Commission applied the approval criteria in a fair, consistent, and practical manner.



14. The Planning Commission members were courteous and respectful during the hearing.



15. Was your application ultimately approved?



Written Response sections

The survey requested final written comments and suggestions from those that completed the survey, and these responses indicate that there were a mix of positive and negative experiences with the development process in Ashland. Some respondents described the process as seamless

and praised the staff as friendly, knowledgeable, and helpful. Others had more negative experiences, with complaints about their difficulty in working through the planning process and staff interactions. There were also a variety of comments about the fees for building permits, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on communication, the ability to complete the process remotely, and challenges with the permitting process. There were suggestions for improving the process, including revising and clarifying codes, creating guides and online resources, and streamlining the application process. Some respondents also mentioned the importance of supporting small businesses and affordable housing, and suggested that the city could benefit from more collaboration and cooperation with other agencies and organizations.

The customer survey requested all respondents provide any final comments and suggestions that may help us improve our process or customer service. Specific comments received included:

- My process was fairly seamless. Everyone was helpful and expeditious. I found the fees to be quite high however, especially for a senior citizen, or anyone, I would imagine.
- Friendly, knowledgeable and helpful staff who are advocates for the citizens. Improved timeliness of application and decisions.
- My interactions were very limited: it was just a simple remodel on our home. But I found the staff (mostly dealt with Front Counter Staff) very helpful.
- Your building department and front office staff are great, but your planning department needs change.
- Well done during times of COVID staffing challenges!
- Solutions to the above dilemma would come primarily through revisions and/or clarifications of code, the latter perhaps via a "Builders' and Property Owners' Guide to Medium-Density Development" which would summarize the nexus of salient AMC and ORSC components, and offer examples and diagrams to facilitate the design process. Ashland's capable staff might contribute thought leadership to the evolution of statewide municipal codes and the ORSC in light of increasing--and often conflicting--pressures of urban density and climate change resilience.
- Great experience with the staff and inspectors
- Communication with staff was somewhat delayed due to pandemic, but I was really happy with their effort and clarity in responses.
- During this multiple year process with the City of Ashland, I've spoken to many different professionals in the building industry and Ashland is widely known as excessively difficult to get anything built. We built our previous house in California, and it was a piece of cake compared to Ashland. Another process improvement opportunity is when one of your employees has an unexpected emergency like a death in the family, the policy should be to have another employee monitor that employee's phone and email while they are absent to cover any communications from people that employee is currently working

with. This did not happen in our case, again causing a delay in response from the city because it sat in an inbox unanswered.

- 3rd party reviewers are also slow but predictable.
- "Water heater replacement" needs to be an option. Make it simple for the homeowner to apply. Luckily, Front Counter Staff is excellent at helping beginners. Give Front Counter Staff a raise!
- I have worked as Contractor with the City of Ashland Development Department for over 30 years and find that the current Staff Team is by far the best it has ever been. PLEASE DON'T CHANGE ANYTHING! These people are wonderful.
- If the planning department didn't make it so difficult to work with, many home owners would take the proper channels and get permits. Instead we have a city filled with illegal add-ons and shotty remodels. There is zero incentive to make improvements through the proper channels. I think planners should ONLY have broader say in usage and there should be a quicker path to the building department, building department is a necessary step and reasonable, basing their reviews on code requirements is smart. But planning should not be able to deny a building permit due to their own personal desires.
- First time dealing with Planning Department. It was a good experience and everyone was very helpful.
- Excellent, cooperative city staff! Due to the Covid-19 environment, we were able to navigate the entire approval process via email and photos, which resulted in successful completion and approval of the project.
- This department is really great! Friendly, professional, well-qualified, and efficient. A real asset to our community!
- Always very helpful, and I so appreciate the links to parts of the code which I have difficulty locating.
- The Building department staff are always responsive and pleasant to work with.
- The planning office staff were timely in their responses and the rules in Ashland make it an attractive and livable community
- The staff is friendly and reasonably available and responsive, but the city permit fees are astronomical and make new housing costs unaffordable
- The neighbor input process requires excessive staff time, delays applications, and adds significant costs
- The planning process is challenging, costly, restrictive, and not supportive of development in Ashland, pushing business and development out of the city
- The planning process takes too long and costs too much, making it difficult for people with limited finances and stamina to pursue development projects
- The staff was great, helpful, and knowledgeable

- The approval process for solar PV installations in the Rogue Valley was one of the quickest, and the staff was kind and courteous
- The entire process was handled in a professional and friendly manner, and the staff was excellent.
- It would be helpful to have initial plan intake done in person or over a call to reduce questions in the review process and expedite approval.
- It is difficult to find reasonable contractor help.
- Fees are very high.
- The building department staff were positive during plan reviews and inspections.
- It has been a joy to work with the Community Development Department, which was responsive, professional, and took the time to explain processes and timelines.
- A person-to-person meeting or phone call can resolve issues for a reasonable solution, and it is a pleasure to work with everyone.
- More staff authority is needed to de-escalate situations and find common sense solutions.

As evidenced above, the City of Ashland Community Development department has received a range of feedback about its services. Some commenters have praised department staff for their helpfulness and professionalism, while others have criticized the department for its difficulty in working with applicants. Other commenters have highlighted the challenges the department has faced during the COVID-19 pandemic and praised its efforts in navigating the approval process through email, photos, and electronic plan review. Overall, the feedback suggests that the City of Ashland Community Development department has received mostly positive reviews, with some areas for improvement and suggestions for process improvements.

In addition to the above suggestions and comments, the survey also asked individuals who specifically marked "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" on individual survey questions to provide additional feedback on how the building process in Ashland could be improved. This means that the opinions and complaints generally described in the bulleted list below are likely to be more negative and may not reflect the experiences of all individuals involved in the building process in Ashland.

- Interpretations of municipal and building codes are uneven and may err on the side of the "letter of the law" rather than the "intent of the law."
- Planners should not be involved in city politics and should have high working standards and high ethics.
- Staff provided inaccurate and conflicting advice, was rude, and generally unhelpful regarding building a shed in the flood plain.
- There is a lack of clarity in the process to obtain a conditional use permit on the city website.

- The process to build a retirement home in Ashland was frustrating, opaque, time-consuming, and expensive.
- The building department is slow and often requires multiple visits for inspections.
- There is a lack of communication between departments and outdated calculations for solar shading.
- The planning department is slow and unresponsive.
- There are inconsistencies in the interpretation and enforcement of codes.
- There is a lack of transparency in the process and a lack of information available online.
- The fees for building and development in Ashland are high.
- There are arbitrary decisions made and a lack of justification for certain actions.
- The process for obtaining a traveler's accommodation permit is confusing and contradictory.
- There are barriers to urban growth and housing affordability.
- There is a lack of support for development in the community
- Planning staff have made a considerate effort to help applicants expedite applications, unless they do not meet development standards or criteria. I believe this is due to an understanding of the shortage of housing.

In summary, the trends indicated in the survey questions show consistent improvements over time, particularly in areas of staff responsiveness, professionalism, accuracy, fairness, accessibility, and the overall quality of the application process in Ashland. These positive trends are evident in 2022 compared to 2016, showcasing the city's commitment to enhancing the applicant experience and maintaining high standards.

However, in consideration of the above comments, suggestions and complaints, the Community Development Department can continue to address the issues by ensuring that all community development staff maintain high working standards and high ethics and provide accurate and helpful advice to applicants. The focus on clarity and responsiveness in the process for obtaining permits should continue to improve communication between departments and permit applicants through the use of coordinated plan review processes.

In line with a continuous commitment to bolster transparency and accessibility, the department has been proactively implementing measures to enhance the accessibility of information through online platforms. Simultaneously, endeavors are being directed towards refining and expediting the procedures involved in securing permits and approvals for planning purposes. These efforts are valuable as they facilitate streamlined access to crucial resources, empower stakeholders with readily available information, and pave the way for a more efficient and responsive interaction between applicants, the department, and the broader community.

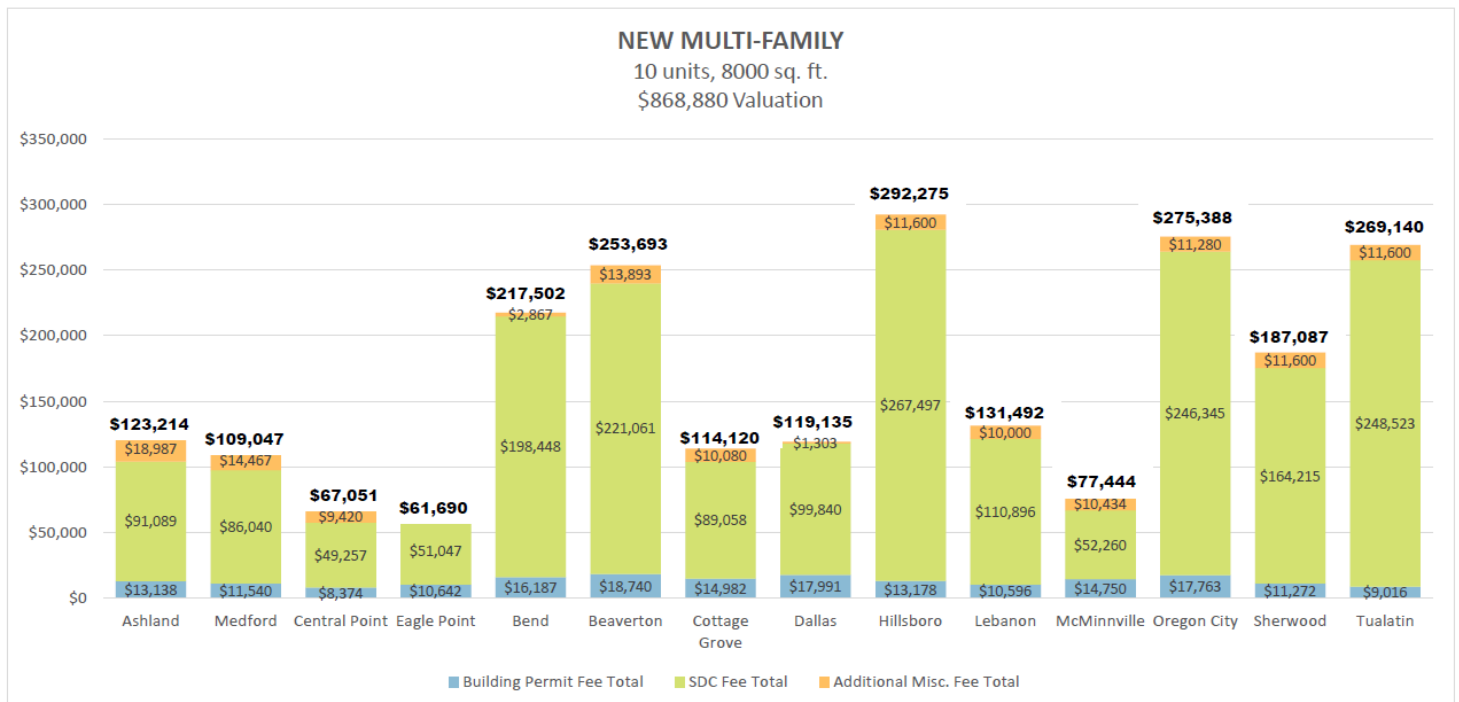
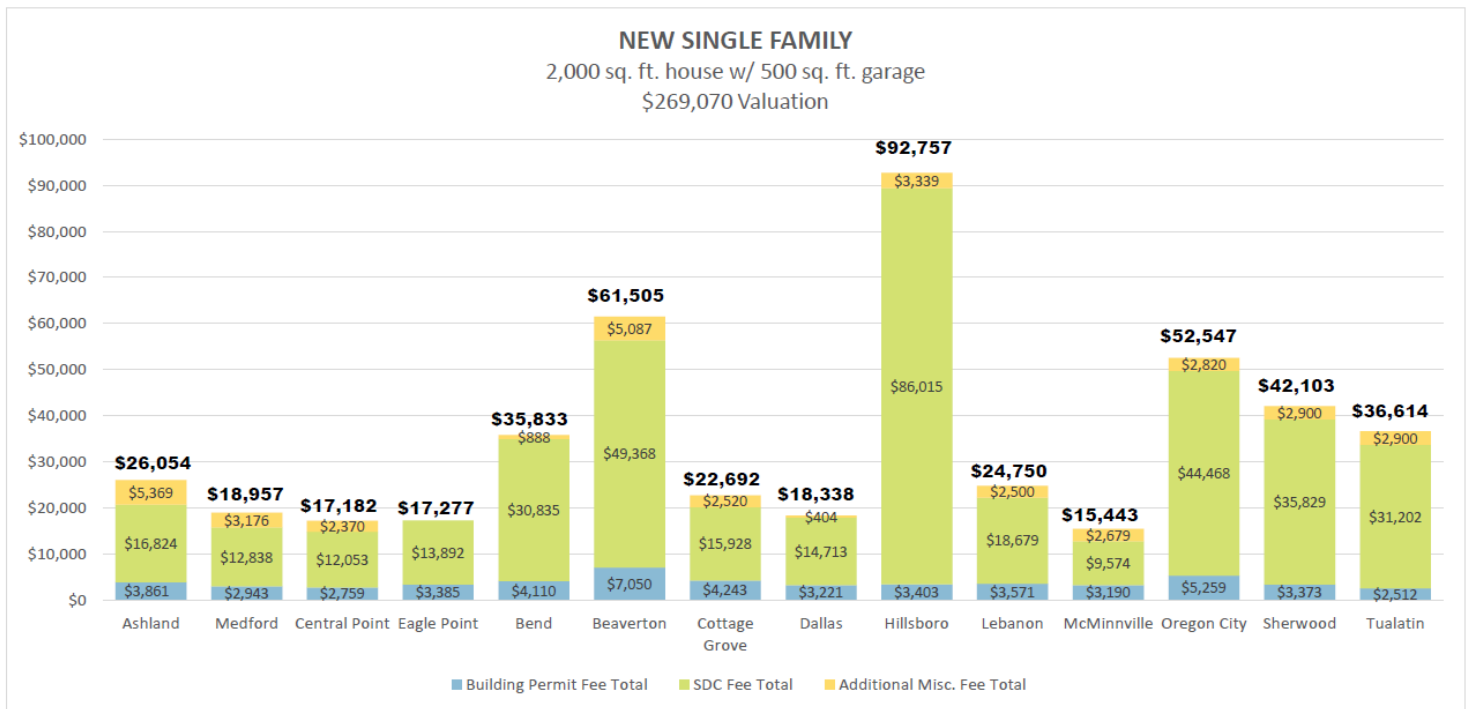
Appendix C: Planning Action Types

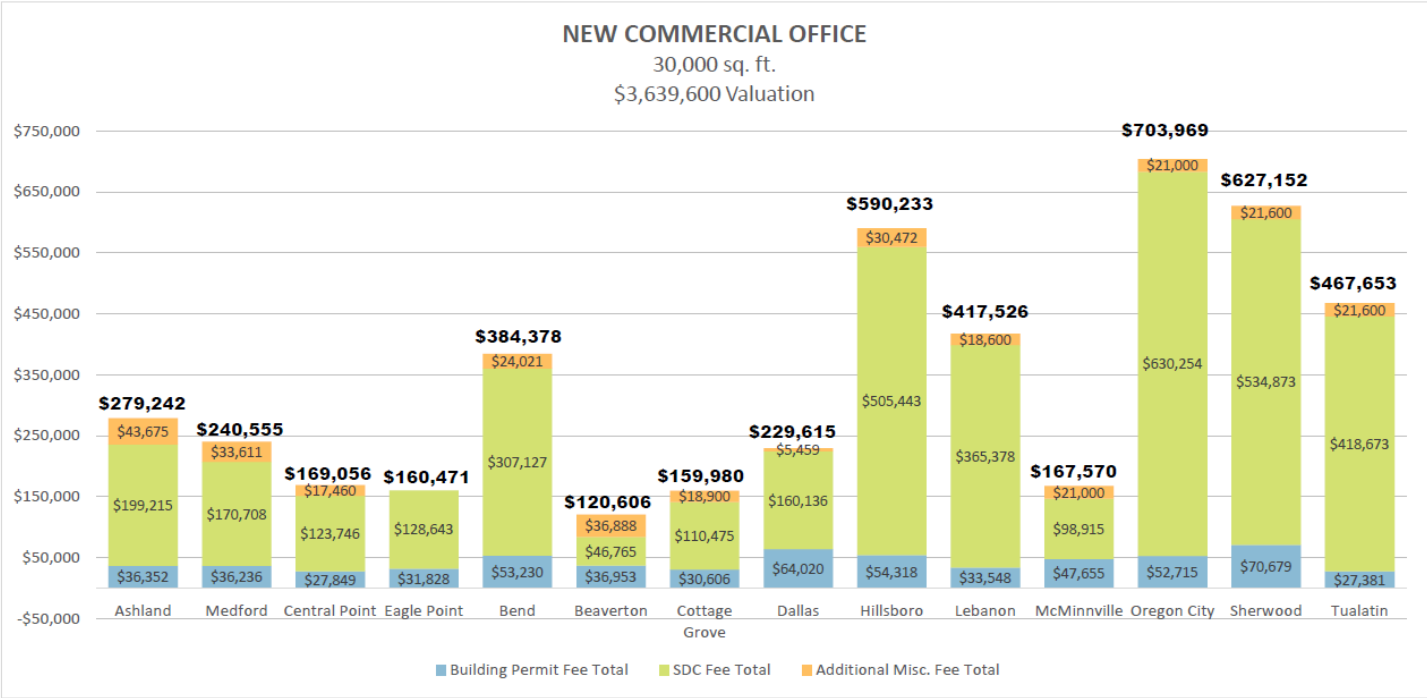
Table 18.5.1.010 – Summary of Approvals by Type of Review Procedure

Planning Actions	Review Procedures	Applicable Regulations
Access to a Street/Driveway Approach	Ministerial	Chapter 18.4.3
Annexation	Type III	Chapter 18.5.8; See ORS 222
Aircraft Hangar with no associated commercial use	Ministerial	Chapter 18.3.7.030
Aircraft Hangar in conjunction with another use	Type I or II	Chapter 18.5.2
Ordinance Interpretation	Type I or II	Chapter 18.1.5
Ordinance Text Amendment	Type III	Chapter 18.5.9
Comprehensive Plan Amendment	Type III	Chapter 18.5.9
Conditional Use Permit	Type I or II	Chapter 18.5.4
Conversion of Multifamily Dwelling Units into For-Purchase Housing	Ministerial	Section 18.2.3.200
Exception to Fire Prevention and Control Plan and General Fuel Modification Area Standards	Type I	Subsection 18.3.10.100.E
Exception to Site Development and Design Standards	Type I	Subsection 18.5.2.050.E
Exception to Street Standards	Type I	Subsection 18.4.6.020.B.1
Extension of Time Limit for Approved Planning Action	Ministerial	Section 18.1.6.040
Fence	Ministerial	Section 18.4.4.060
Hillside Standards Exception	Type I	Subsection 18.3.10.090.H
Home Occupation Permit	Ministerial	Section 18.2.3.150
Land Use Control Maps Change	Type II or III	Chapter 18.5.9
Legal Lot Determination	Ministerial	Chapter 18.1.3
Modification to Approval		
Minor Modification	Ministerial	Chapter 18.5.6
Major Modification	Per original review	Chapter 18.5.6
Nonconforming Use or Structure, Expansion of	Ministerial or Type I	Chapter 18.1.4
Partition or Re-plat of 2-3 lots		
Preliminary Plat	Type I	Chapter 18.5.3
Final Plat	Ministerial	Chapter 18.5.3
Minor Amendment	Ministerial	Subsection 18.5.3.020.F
Performance Standards Option		

Outline Plan	Type II	Chapter 18.3.9
Final Plan	Type I	Chapter 18.3.9
Minor Amendment	Ministerial	Subsection 18.5.3.0100F
Physical and Environmental Constraints Permit	Type I	Chapter 18.3.10
Property Line Adjustments, including Lot Consolidations	Ministerial	Chapter 18.5.3
Sign Permit	Ministerial	Chapter 18.4.7
Site Design Review	Type I or II	Chapter 18.5.2
Solar Setback Exception	Type I	Chapter 18.4.8
Subdivision or Replat of >3 lots		
Preliminary Plat	Type II	Chapter 18.5.3
Final Plat	Ministerial	Chapter 18.5.3
Minor Amendment	Ministerial	Subsection 18.5.3.020.F
Tree Removal Permit	Type I	Chapter 18.5.7
Variance	Type I or II	Chapter 18.5.5
Water Resources Protection Zone – Limited Activities and Uses	Type I	Section 18.3.11.060
Water Resources Protection Zone Reduction	Type I or II	Section 18.3.11.070
Water Resources Protection Zone – Hardship Exception	Type II	Section 18.3.11.080
Zoning District Map Change	Type II or III	Chapter 18.5.9

Appendix D: Development Fee Comparisons





Appendix E

Meeting Notes

October 18, 2023
Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way
4:00 PM – 5:30 PM

MEETING NOTES

Committee Members Present:

Brian Druihet
 Ben Treiger
 Jim McNamara
 Ray Kistler
 Dan Jovich

Staff Present:

Brandon Goldman, Community Development Director
 April Lucas, Development Services Coordinator
 Steve Matiaco, Building Official
 Derek Severson, Planning Manager

Mr. Goldman provided an overview of the purpose of this advisory group and staff/committee members introduced themselves.

Mr. Goldman noted upcoming changes that are already in the works, including the Climate-Friendly & Equitable Communities rules which state the city cannot require parking within a half mile of transit services, which for Ashland is 80% of the city. In the second phase of implementation, the city can choose to remove requirements for the entire city with the exception of handicap accessible spaces.

Mr. Kistler commented on the Mid-Town Urban Lofts project on the corner of Iowa and Garfield and asked if these rules had been in place would they have been permitted to build additional units or would the parking area be open space. Staff clarified in this scenario since the number of units was already at the max, reducing the parking could have resulted in either more open space or larger unit sizes. It was noted that in the new Climate Friendly designated areas there will not be density maximums set, however this is another year or so out before being implemented. Mr. McNamara noted that Portland does not have parking minimums and it has created problems for residents, especially those located close to arterials. He stated residents have difficulty parking in front of their homes, and it is especially challenging if they have visitors.

Mr. Goldman continued his update on improvements already taking place and noted the city's new Citizen Self Service portal. Ms. Lucas explained this new program allows citizens, contractors, and developers to apply for permits online, track review status, schedule inspections, and see inspection results in real time. It also includes a public records search that allows citizens access to the permit history (dating back to 2018) for properties within the city limits.

Mr. Goldman provided a summary of the Community Development Customer Satisfaction Survey that was completed in December 2022. 1,200 individuals who had applied for either a building or planning permit in the last 4 years were asked to participate to gauge satisfaction levels with the development review process. Mr. Goldman noted the areas where the results showed an increase in Disagree and Strongly Disagree ratings, including "Application Review turnaround time is acceptable" and "Ashland is just a fair, consistent, and practical in its application of regulations as other neighboring cities and counties".

Mr. Treiger commented that he has heard others make statements that other jurisdictions are easier to deal with, but this has not been his experience. He added there is a negative perception about Ashland that exists.

Mr. Goldman gave an example of a process change that could improve processing times and suggested tree removals could be changed from the Type I review process, which requires noticing and an appeal period, to an administrative decision made at the staff level. A change such as this would reduce the approval process from a month or more down to a few days.

Mr. Kistler commented that building departments seem to be consistent from community to community, but planning requirements vary. He stated Ashland's population and demographic have resulted in a lot of projects not moving forward because of neighbor objections. He stated citizens have such a large say and control over a persons development that many clients quit or pile up high legal costs navigating appeals. He added if applicants prevail, often times they end up with a less superior project at the end. He stated this happens all the time and this group should focus on what can be done to address this.

Mr. Druihet stated there is a perception that Ashland's fees are a lot more expensive than other areas and asked if this was true. Mr. Matiaco explained that fees collected by the building division are about 8%-12% of the building permit total, planning collects a similar amount, and they bulk of the fees are in Systems Development Charges collected by the Public Works Department to maintain the city's infrastructure. Staff noted that a fee comparison with other jurisdictions was done fairly recently and they would bring back this information for the group to review.

Mr. Goldman requested the committee members share their initial expectations, ideas, and comments regarding this committee's charge.

Around the Room Comments:

- Mr. Treiger asked whether they would be looking at reclassifying what is a Type I vs. Type II planning action.
- Mr. Kistler stated that tree removals are not very scientific and often times when you hire an arborist that will ask whether you'd like their report to say if the tree should stay or go.

- Mr. Jovich stated he is fine with the tree removal process and giving neighbors this outlet to voice concerns.
- Mr. Kistler commented that Ashland has a much different feel than it used to and has turned into a retirement town. He stated it is difficult to attract young workers and residents and it is not attractive to this demographic. He noted in other college mountain towns they saw a large increase in people moving in during covid when people worked remotely, and that did not happen here.
- Mr. McNamara noted at Southern Oregon University freshman enrollments went up, but returning students went down.
- Mr. Kistler stated there has been a loss of families in Ashland and commented that downtown is not healthy. He said he was not worried about too much growth too fast, but rather the other side.
- Mr. Jovich stated it is very expensive to live in Ashland and most families live in the Quiet Village neighborhood. He stated the people who do want to move to Ashland have a difficult time finding what they want here, even those with money. He also commented that neighbors scare people here, and he has heard horror stories.
- Mr. Kistler suggested they look at the maximum house size regulations in the historic district and stated the math needs to be looked at.

Mr. Goldman thanked the group for their input and encouraged members to send any additional thoughts and ideas to Ms. Lucas. He stated staff would be sending out a Doodle poll to determine everyone's availability for the November meeting, and noted staff would be providing a presentation of the city's new Citizen Self Service at that meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 5:25 PM.

November 29, 2023
Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way
4:00 PM – 5:30 PM

MEETING NOTES

Committee Members Present:

Matt Small
Kerry KenCairn
Chris Brown
Ben Treiger
Jim McNamara
Ray Kistler

Staff Present:

Brandon Goldman, Community Development Director
April Lucas, Development Services Coordinator
Derek Severson, Planning Manager
Sabrina Cotta, Interim City Manager

I. Comparison of Building Permit Fees by jurisdiction.

The Building Fee Comparison, which compares Ashland's permit fees with 13 other jurisdictions for new single-family dwellings, new multi-family development, and new commercial office space was presented for review. (see Attachment #1)

II. EnerGov Citizen Self Service.

April Lucas provided a presentation on the city's new EnerGov Citizen Self Service portal, which allows customers to apply for common permit and plan types online, provides operational transparency for customers and citizens, and streamlines the permitting, plan review, and record requests by offering the community fast, intuitive, and self-service access for achieving their needs. (see Attachment #2)

Comments:

Support was voiced for paying invoices online, and Ms. Lucas clarified this feature would be made available in the next phase of the roll-out. Mr. McNamara suggested the ability to pay via electric fund transfer rather than by credit card only. Additional comment was made recommending the ability for customers to perform SDC estimates using the Estimate feature on the new portal.

III. Overview of Types of Land Use Actions

Brandon Goldman provided an overview of the three different types of land use actions (Type I, II, and III) and provided flowchart handouts outlining the approval process for each type. (See Attachment #3)

Comments:

Mr. Small questioned why some actions are classified as Type II and therefore required to go to the Planning Commission. He questioned if some of these could be approved administratively

instead if all the criteria are met. He added going to the Planning Commission can sometimes open a can of worms and a lot of time and money is spent even though a neighbor in opposition may have no basis for an appeal. Mr. Trieger commented that the Planning Commission has served in a quality control role and if larger projects are approved administratively the city might lose some control over what the final project will look like.

Mr. Goldman noted staff has been looking into moving tree removals from a Type I action, which involves public noticing and comment/appeal periods, to a ministerial decision.

Staff was asked if the city is required by state law to take new development proposals to the Planning Commission. Mr. Goldman clarified Type III actions and those that require discretion require a public hearing.

IV. Committee Recommendations

Mr. Goldman stated at their next meeting the DPMAC will start developing their recommendations that will be presented to the city council, and stated if they need any additional information to please notify staff. He stated a Doodle poll will be sent out to assess the group's availability and the next meeting will be scheduled after the holidays.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 PM.

March 6, 2024
Lithia Room, 51 Winburn Way
4:00 PM – 5:30 PM

MEETING NOTES

Committee Members Present:

Matt Small
Chris Brown
Ben Treiger
Jim McNamara
Brian Druihet

Staff Present:

Brandon Goldman, Community Development Director
April Lucas, Development Services Coordinator
Steve Matiaco, Building Official

V. Citizen Self Service Update & Internal Processing Improvements

April Lucas provided an update on the roll-out of the city's online permitting portal, Citizen Self Service, and also highlighted internal processing improvements.

- Ashland's online permitting needs are now 100% internal and the city is no longer utilizing BCD's online ePermitting system
- Ashland's system offers 16 different building permit application types, 5 planning applications, and 3 public works permits – compared to the state's system which only offered 3. Next steps include offering more complex permit types for online submission, including SFR/ARUs, new Commercial, and Tenant Improvements, as well as online payment options
- Citizen Self Service has reduced processing time for over-the-counter (non-plan review) permits. Instead of same day issuance online permits are processed in as little as 30 minutes.
- Increased efficiency utilizing the software's inspection management tools. Inspectors can view, re-assign, and result inspections all from their mobile devices and applicants/contractors have instant access to their inspection information.
- Ashland is launching a new website in May 2024, which will be more user-friendly with frequently searched for information more prominently displayed and better search features.

VI. Development Streamlining – Planning.

Brandon Goldman reviewed staff's suggested recommendations to streamline the development process (see Attachment #1), including:

- Create a user guide for businesses owners for change of use/code analysis which includes steps and code references. The matrix would include two paths, one for DIY business owners and one for those working with a design professional.

- Fast track tree removal permits for those located within the building's footprint and/or hazardous trees. Suggestion was made for this to include trees within 10 ft. of the footprint to accommodate foundations and drainage installation and repairs. Staff was also asked if this could include trees whose roots are creating foundation issues but the tree itself is outside the footprint/buffer.
- Allow a one-step combined outline and final plan review for subdivisions up to 12 residential lots in size. Currently this is a two-step process. Support was voiced for this change which would put it in line with the city's cottage housing standards and streamline the process.
- Eliminate the need for manmade steep slopes to go through the city's Physical & Environmental Constraints review process. A Geotech report would still be required to ensure it is safe, but this would eliminate the need for noticing, public comment, and appeal period.
- Increase the number of lots that can be accessed by a private drive based on safety, environmental impact, and infrastructure capacity. Currently if there are more than 3 lots a variance is required. Mr. Goldman stated staff is considering increasing this to 4-6 lots and support was voiced for this change.
- Memorialize Planning Commission's decision that establishes a process for evaluating and permitting intra-parcel shading.
- Implement a more flexible policy regarding the expiration of land use approvals and the process for requesting extensions. Currently the approval expires 18 months after initial approval, with an allowance for a one-time 24 month extension.
- Create a how-to guide for Accessory Dwelling Units and offer pre-approved ARU building plans free to charge to property owners interested in adding another unit. Mr. Goldman noted there is already funding set aside in the department's budget for this endeavor and staff is interested in obtaining three different sets of plans: 1) an energy efficient unit, 2) an ADA accessible unit, and 3) a micro-unit for those with smaller lot sizes. Chris Brown recommended the city contact Pacific Wall Systems for the creation of pre-approved plans and stated this is what the City of Medford uses and the plans were designed by local architect Carlos Delgado.
- Establish a process for commercial to residential conversions that requires only a building permit rather than the more extensive site design review.
- Mr. Druhet inquired about outright permitting additional units in R-2 and R-3 zones and eliminating roadblocks to allow for more units. Mr. Goldman commented that changing the density and zoning is a much bigger process but stated increasing the outright allowance to 3 units could be considered.

Mr. Goldman announced the group will meet one last time to review the committee's final report before it is presented to the city council for consideration in May.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 PM.

**April 24, 2024
Lithia Room, 51 Winburn Way
4:00 PM – 5:30 PM**

MEETING NOTES

Committee Members Present:

Matt Small
Ben Treiger

Staff Present:

Brandon Goldman, Community Development Director
April Lucas, Development Services Coordinator
Steve Matiaco, Building Official
Derek Severson, Planning Manager

VII. Review of Consolidated Report

Given the number of absent members, Mr. Goldman announced that staff would be emailing the group for their final comments, and noted the final report will be presented to the City Manager's Office on May 6. He stated staff is interested in whether there are specific recommendations the group feels should be prioritized and asked for their general feedback on being apart of a management advisory committee (MAC).

Mr. Treiger commented that at the onset of a MAC it is beneficial for the members to agree on the direction the groups wants to go. He also advocated for a commitment among members in regards to attendance expectations.

VIII. Discussion on Final Recommendations

Mr. Goldman noted the draft recommendations were presented at the Planning Commission's April Study Session and there was some push back on eliminating public notice for tree removals. However, he expressed his support for the recommendation and stated is it somewhat misleading to engage neighbors in the process with the appearance of discretion and influence when the truth is if the removal meets the adopted criteria it will be approved.

Mr. Treiger commented on the wildfire risk reduction project that is currently happening in the Ashland watershed and contrasted the noticing process for the removal of a single tree on a private lot with the hundreds of trees that are being removed without public notice or input.

Mr. Matiaco commented on the recommended changes to the fence permit and clarified that certain fences will still require a building permit.

Mr. Goldman clarified that when the recommended code amendments move forward it will entail a broad legislative process with public input and hearings before the Planning Commission and

City Council. He added given the department's current workplan and the legislative changes mandated by the state, it will likely be January 2025 before any of these actions move forward. When asked if any additional recommendations should be included, Mr. Treiger requested clarification on the Maximum Permitted Floor Area (MPFA) regulations. Mr. Goldman clarified this provision only applies in historic districts and the intent is to ensure what is built in those neighborhoods is consistent with the size and scale of the surrounding homes. Mr. Trieiger questioned if it is worth considering raising the density allowance. Mr. Goldman noted Senate Bill 1537 allows outright for increased height and expanded lot coverage. He stated it will make it more financially feasible to increase housing and it also creates some relief from local design standards. He suggested the final report articulate some of the state's streamlining measures that are currently in the process of being adopted locally.

IX. Conclusion and Next Steps

Mr. Treiger stated the new Citizen Self Service portal is excellent and encouraged staff to continue to move forward with enhancements. He also voiced his support for the ARU guide and pre-approved plans. He stated he also supports the removal of fence permits and voiced support for relaxing the MPFA requirements in historic districts. Mr. Small commented that the MPFA recommendation doesn't quite fit into the groups charge, and stated this does not streamline the development process and is more about changing the code. Mr. Goldman noted that staff could break the recommendations into separate categories.

Mr. Goldman provided a brief update on the ARU recommendation and stated staff has already met with several local design professionals who have agreed to prepare plans for city residents to use. He stated staff's goal is to have a gallery of several different unit types for residents to choose from. The plans will be made available free of charge and will be pre-approved for consistency with building code requirements. Homeowners, however, will need to consult with the design professional if they wish to make modifications or customizations and any revisions will need to be reviewed for compliance.

X. Adjournment

Mr. Goldman thanked those in attendance and stated the DPMAC will have until Friday, May 3 to submit their final input.

Meeting adjourned at 5:10 PM.



Council Study Session

Date: May 20, 2024

Agenda Item	New Website Review
From	Sabrina Cotta
Contact	sabrina.cotta@ashland.or.us

SUMMARY

On August 15th, 2023, Council approved a contract with CivicPlus LLC for website development after a competitive sealed bid proposal process. Over the last several months the City has worked to transition the website to the new platform with a focus on ease of use and cleaning up the website to essential information. This transition includes CivicClerk, a new agenda management module to be utilized by all commissions and committees. The City will also be rolling out SeeClickFix, a citizen reporting tool for community issues.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

Updating the city's website serves multiple council goals. The existing website's outdated design and navigation make it challenging for users to find essential information quickly. Upgrading to a modern and responsive design ensures a seamless browsing experience on various devices, encouraging more residents to explore the website and access crucial services. It adheres to the latest accessibility standards, making it more inclusive for all users, including those with disabilities. It will allow for greater citizen engagement through citizen reporting tools, enabling staff to promptly respond to resident inquiries and requests and empowering community members to collaborate with the city on service requests. Agenda and meeting management tools will streamline public meetings and processes, allowing for greater transparency and civic engagement.

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Website project lead- Dorinda Cottle, City Communications Officer

Website Goals:

- Consistent with City branding.
- Focus on user and ease of locating essential items.
- Provide multiple avenues acknowledging that individuals search for information differently to reach frequently searched for information.
- Consistent with ADA and website best practices.

CivicClerk lead- Alissa Kolodzinski, City Recorder/ Management Analyst

Agenda Management Goals:

- Streamline agenda management process.
- Consistent agenda preparation and posting for all commissions and committees.
- Uniform templates to the extent possible
- Ease of access for public to all public meetings.

SeeClickFix lead- Jason Wegner, Innovation & Technology Director

Citizen reporting goals:

- Ease of use.
- Ability to report in a timely manner with follow-up to reporter of issue resolution.
- Tool for staff to address citizen concerns quickly and efficiently.

A focus group was held on 5/7/2024 and feedback was requested from volunteers who signed up to review the website through the Communication Survey that was available to the public from January 24, 2024, through March 3rd 2024. The Communication Survey identified the website as the most utilized way individuals interact with the City. Several adjustments that fell within the parameters of best practices and ADA requirements were



Council Study Session

made to the website based on the feedback and the City appreciates the individuals who took time to help the City refine the website.

FISCAL IMPACTS

This project was budgeted for and awarded in the amount of \$171,978.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS, MOTIONS, AND/OR OPTIONS

The website will go live on May 22, 2024. Staff will continue to refine the website as we receive feedback. This has been a city-wide effort by all departments to bring this forward and their effort and suggestions are much appreciated.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

1. 2023-008-15_CC_RfP_Website_Development
2. Communication Survey March 2024_v3-Minutes



Council Business Meeting

August 15, 2023

Agenda Item	Contract for City of Ashland Website Development with CivicPlus LLC		
From	Jason Wegner	Innovation & Technology Director	
Contact	jason.wegner@ashland.or.us 541-552-2417		
Item Type	Requested by Council ☐ Update ☐ Request for Approval ☒ Presentation ☐		

SUMMARY

Approval is being requested to enter into a contract for **Website Development**. A formal competitive sealed proposal (Request for Proposal) is the required sourcing method for an acquisition of this type (Personal Services) greater than \$75,000.00. The City's intent is to award a contract to the highest ranked proposer, CivicPlus, LLC.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

Updating the city's website will serve multiple council goals. The existing website's outdated design and navigation make it challenging for users to find essential information quickly. Upgrading to a modern and responsive design will ensure a seamless browsing experience on various devices, encouraging more residents to explore the website and access crucial services. It will adhere to the latest accessibility standards, making it more inclusive for all users, including those with disabilities. It will allow for greater citizen engagement through citizen reporting tools, enabling staff to promptly respond to resident inquiries and requests and empowering community members to collaborate with the city on service requests. Agenda and meeting management tools will streamline public meetings and processes, allowing for greater transparency and civic engagement.

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A formal RFP (Request for Proposal) was facilitated, and the City received eleven (11) proposals in response to the RFP. The proposals were evaluated by a three-person evaluation committee in accordance with the evaluation process and criteria outlined in the RFP and the City's intent is to award a public contract to the highest ranked proposer.

In accordance with AMC 2.50.070(2), this contract exceeds delegated authority and thus requires Council approval.

In accordance with AMC 2.50.090 and AMC 2.50.120(A), a formal Competitive Sealed Proposal (Request for Proposal) is required to acquire personal services exceeding \$75,000.00.

This contract will be for two years, at which time it can be renewed.

FISCAL IMPACTS

The total for the 2-year contract includes website conversion, implementation, hosting and support for two years, and is budgeted for in the administration budget. The 2-year contract proposal is for \$171,977.18 and its funding is included in the Administration 2023-2025 BN budget.





Council Business Meeting

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS

Staff recommends the public contract for Website Development be awarded to the highest ranked proposer, CivicPlus, LLC.

ACTIONS, OPTIONS & POTENTIAL MOTIONS

I move to award a website development and support contract with Civic Plus, LLC., in the amount of \$171,977.18.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

Evaluation Summary



**City of Ashland
Request for Proposal
WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT
Evaluation Summary
August 4, 2023**

Evaluation Criteria	Points	Alpha Company Marking and Media, LLC			Ashapura Softech Inc.			By The Way Labs, LLC			Catalis Public Works & Citizen Engagement, LLC		
		#1	#2	#3	#1	#2	#3	#1	#2	#3	#1	#2	#3
Letter of Introduction, Table of Contents and Proposal Submission Form (Exhibit A)	5	5	5	2	0	3	0	3	4	2	5	2.5	4
Qualifications and Experience	25	10	25	5	5	5	5	5	15	10	20	15	10
Task List & Timeline for Website Development and Implementation	25	15	15	10	0	2	5	5	10	10	20	18	10
Migration, Training, Technical Support and Maintenance Plans	25	10	15	8	5	5	5	5	10	10	15	7	5
References	10	5	5	5	0	5	0	0	3	2	10	5	5
Contractual Terms and Conditions	5	5	5	5	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUBTOTAL	95	50	70	33	10	25	20	18	42	34	70	47.5	34
Cost Proposal	25	3.45	3.45	3.45	25	25	25	2.66	2.66	2.66	3.29	3.29	3.29
TOTAL	120	53.45	73.45	36.45	35	50	45	20.66	44.66	36.66	73.29	50.79	37.29

Evaluation Criteria	Points	CivicPlus, LLC			Globescope Internet Services, Inc.			OrgCentral Labs, Inc. dba JesseJames Creative			Plan Left, LLC		
		#1	#2	#3	#1	#2	#3	#1	#2	#3	#1	#2	#3
Letter of Introduction, Table of Contents and Proposal Submission Form (Exhibit A)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	5
Qualifications and Experience	25	25	25	25	15	15	15	15	20	15	15	20	15
Task List & Timeline for Website Development and Implementation	25	25	25	25	15	10	15	15	15	0	15	10	5
Migration, Training, Technical Support and Maintenance Plans	25	25	25	25	20	20	15	15	5	5	10	5	5
References	10	10	10	10	3	10	5	5	10	5	3	5	5
Contractual Terms and Conditions	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	0	0	0
SUBTOTAL	95	95	95	95	63	65	60	60	60	35	46	45	35
Cost Proposal	25	3.24	3.24	3.24	2.01	2.01	2.01	8.58	8.58	8.58	1.16	1.16	1.16
TOTAL	120	98.24	98.24	98.24	65.01	67.01	62.01	68.58	68.58	43.58	47.16	46.16	36.16

Evaluation Criteria	Points	RighIT Solutions, LLC			vTech Solutions, Inc.			W.B. Creations, LLC dba Watson Creative+		
		#1	#2	#3	#1	#2	#3	#1	#2	#3
Letter of Introduction, Table of Contents and Proposal Submission Form (Exhibit A)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Qualifications and Experience	25	10	18	5	15	18	18	20	15	20
Task List & Timeline for Website Development and Implementation	25	10	15	10	15	5	5	20	20	20
Migration, Training, Technical Support and Maintenance Plans	25	10	15	10	15	5	5	15	20	20
References	10	2	2	2	5	5	2	5	5	5
Contractual Terms and Conditions	5	5	5	4	0	2.5	5	5	0	0
SUBTOTAL	95	42	60	36	55	40.5	40	70	65	70
Cost Proposal	25	1.89	1.89	1.89	2.69	2.69	2.69	1.55	1.55	1.55
TOTAL	120	43.89	61.89	37.89	57.69	43.19	42.69	71.55	66.55	71.55

COST PROPOSALS				
Proposer	Cost Estimate	Formula	Percentage	Points
Alpha Company Marketing and Media, LLC	\$161,548.00	\$22,300.00 / \$161,548.00	0.14	3.45
Ashapura Softech Inc.	\$22,300.00	\$22,300.00	1.00	25.00
By The Way Labs, LLC	\$209,570.00	\$22,300.00 / \$209,570.00	0.11	2.66
Catalis Public Works & Citizen Engagement, LLC	\$169,386.00	\$22,300.00 / \$169,386.00	0.13	3.29
CivicPlus, LLC	\$171,977.18	\$22,300.00 / \$171,977.18	0.13	3.24
Globescope Internet Services, Inc.	\$277,126.40	\$22,300.00 / \$277,126.40	0.08	2.01
OrgCentral Labs, Inc. dba JesseJames Creative	\$65,000.00	\$22,300.00 / \$65,000.00	0.34	8.58
Plan Left, LLC	\$482,160.00	\$22,300.00 / \$482,160.00	0.05	1.16
RighIT Solutions LLC	\$295,400.00	\$22,300.00 / \$295,400.00	0.08	1.89
Vtech Solution Inc.	\$207,000.00	\$22,300.00 / \$207,000.00	0.11	2.69
W.B. Creations LLC, dba Watson Creative+	\$360,000.00	\$22,300.00 / \$360,000.00	0.06	1.55



Early 2024

Communications Survey

Communications Survey

LAUNCHED JANUARY 24, 2024

Town Hall 2024

Posted on the City website

Pushed out to local media and

Pushed out on City's social media platforms

In the February City Newsletter

Survey closed March 3, 2024

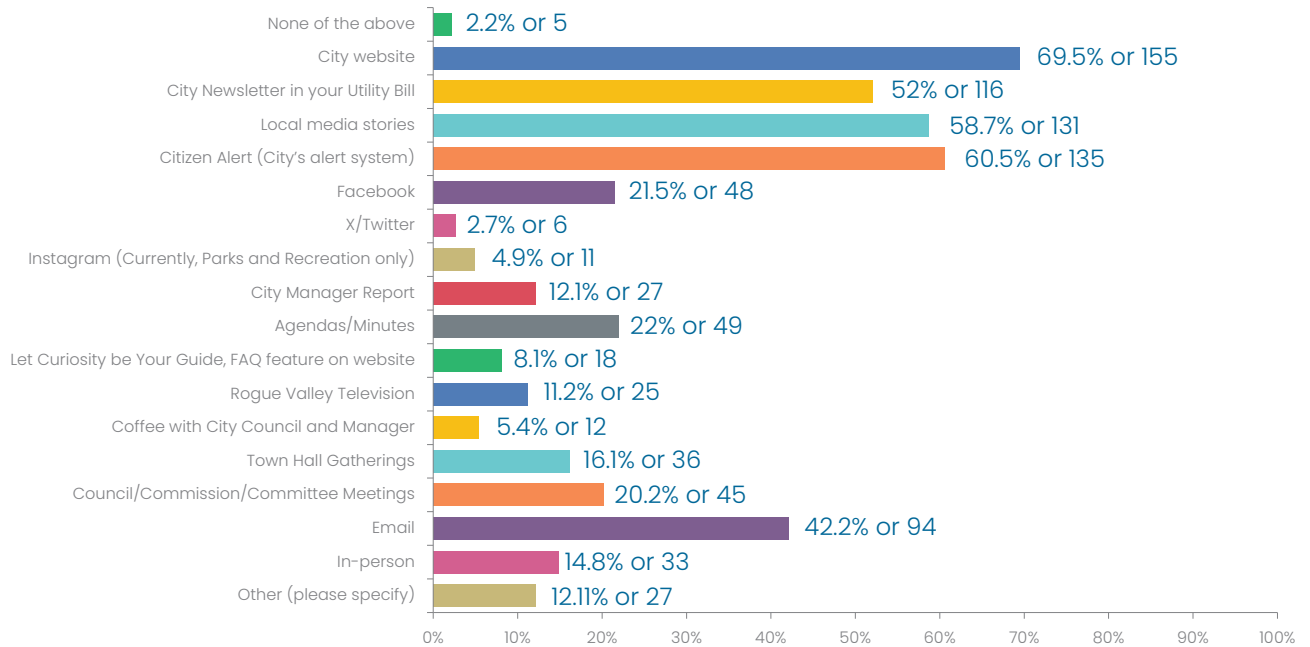
COMPLETED RESPONSES

223

LAUNCH &
PROMOTION

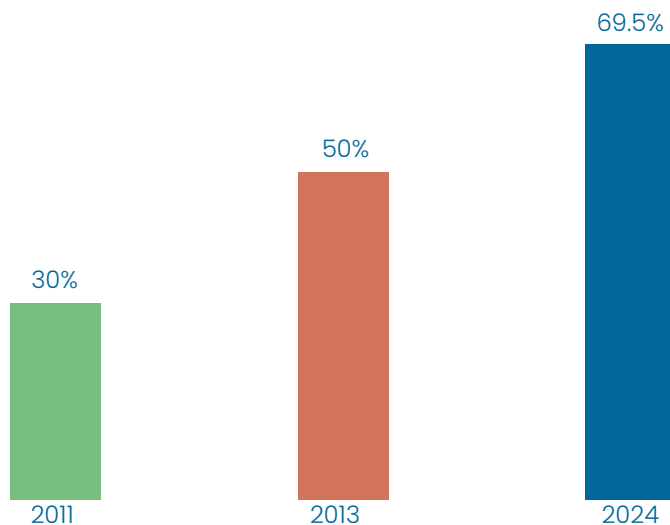


Q1: How do you currently interact with the City? Please select all that apply.



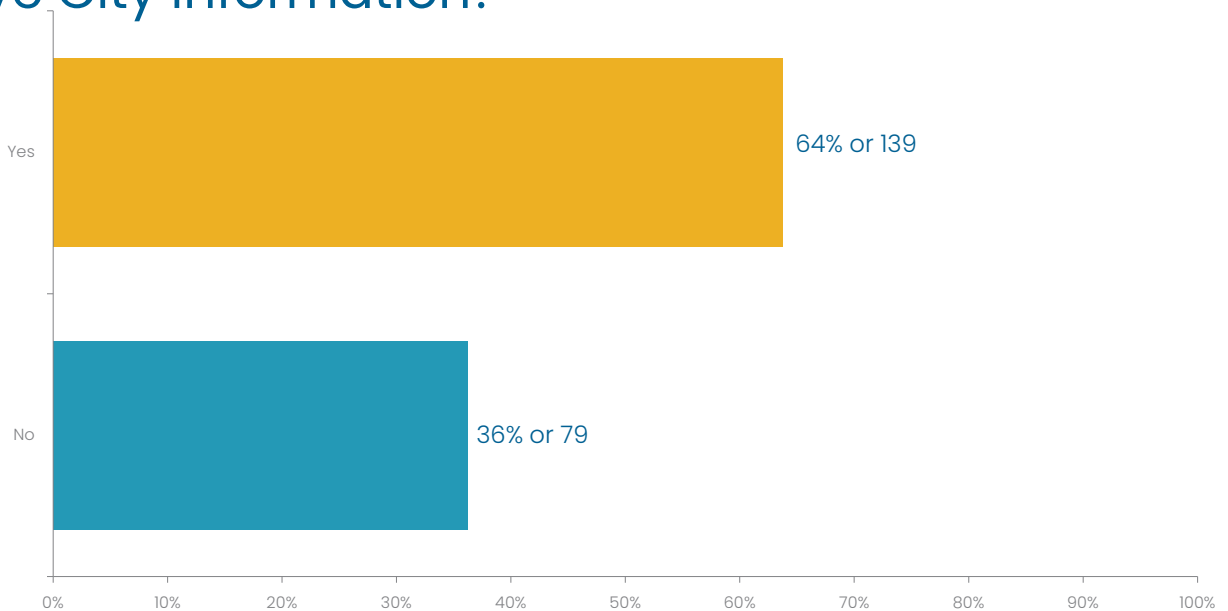
Percentage of residents who get their news & information from the City website

CITY WEBSITE

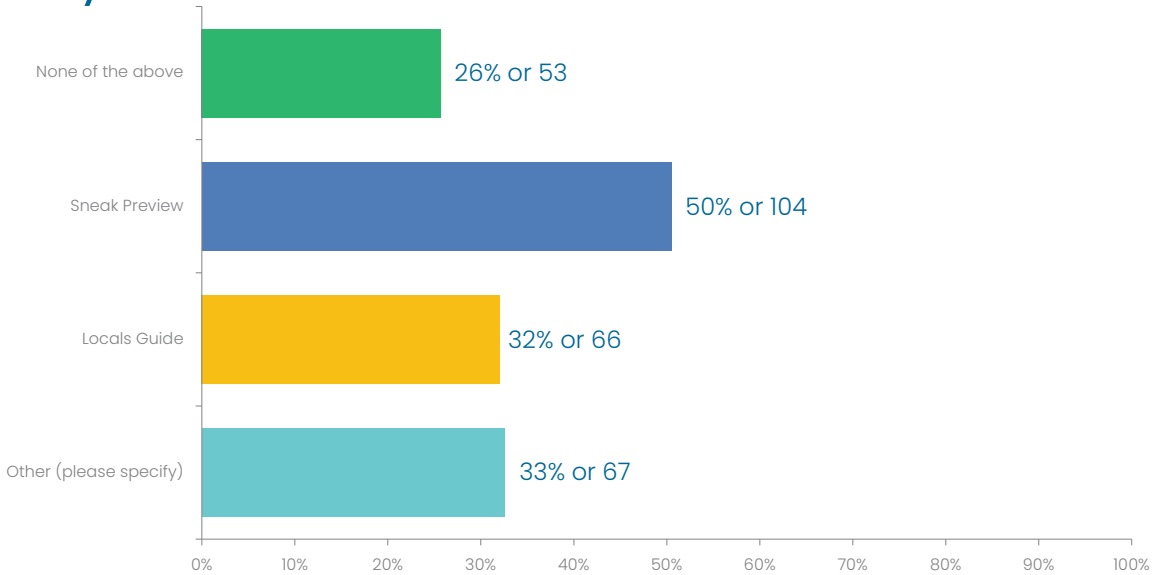




Q2: Would you utilize a City App to access and receive City information?

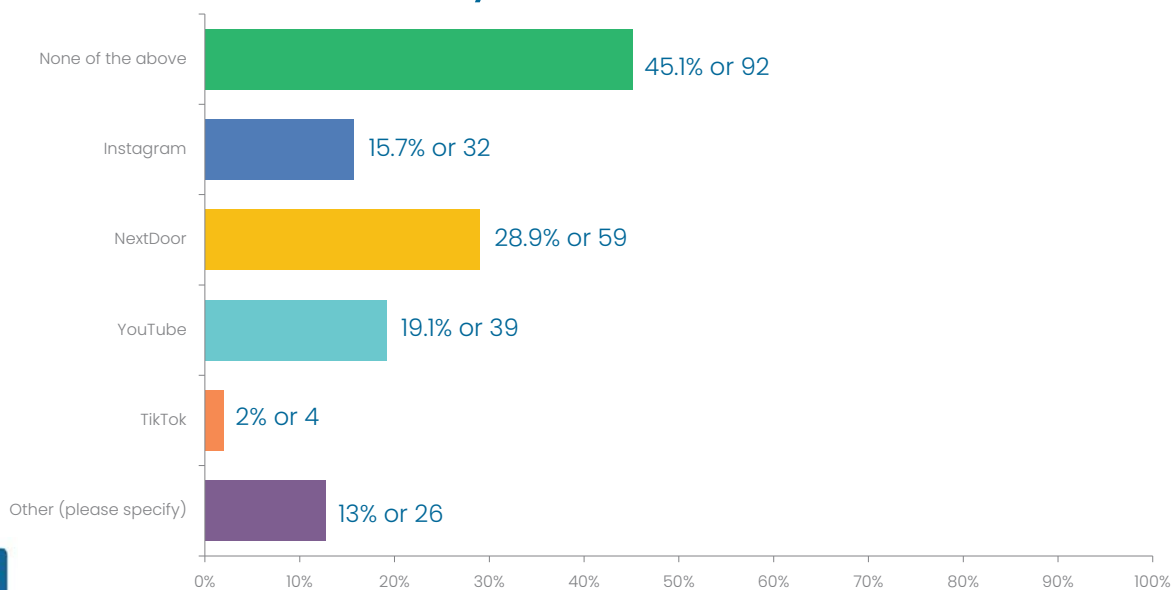


Q3: What additional media sources would you like to see City information in?



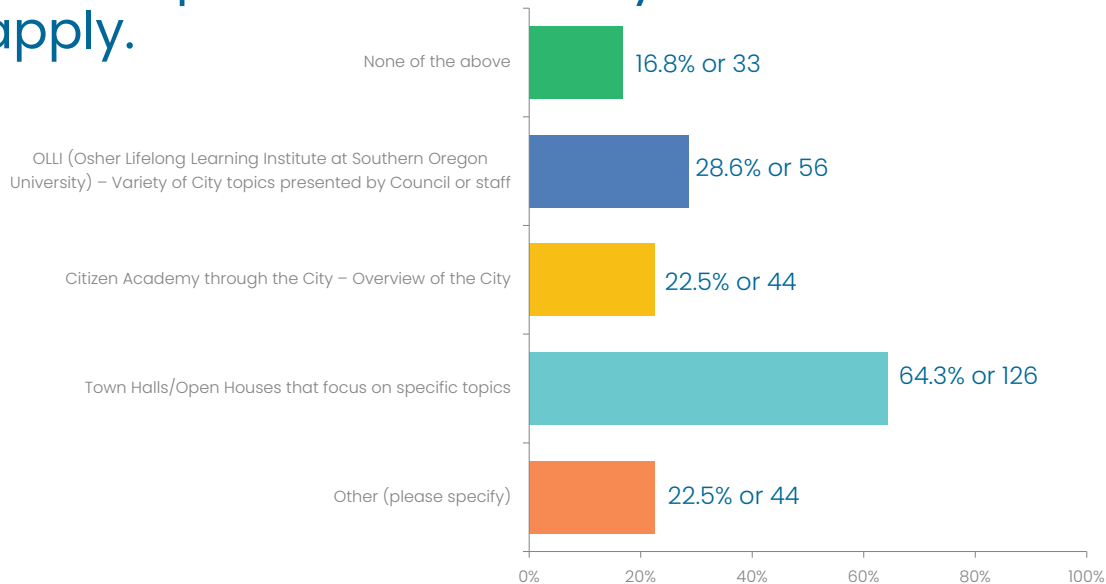
7

Q4: What additional social media platforms would you like to see the City utilize?



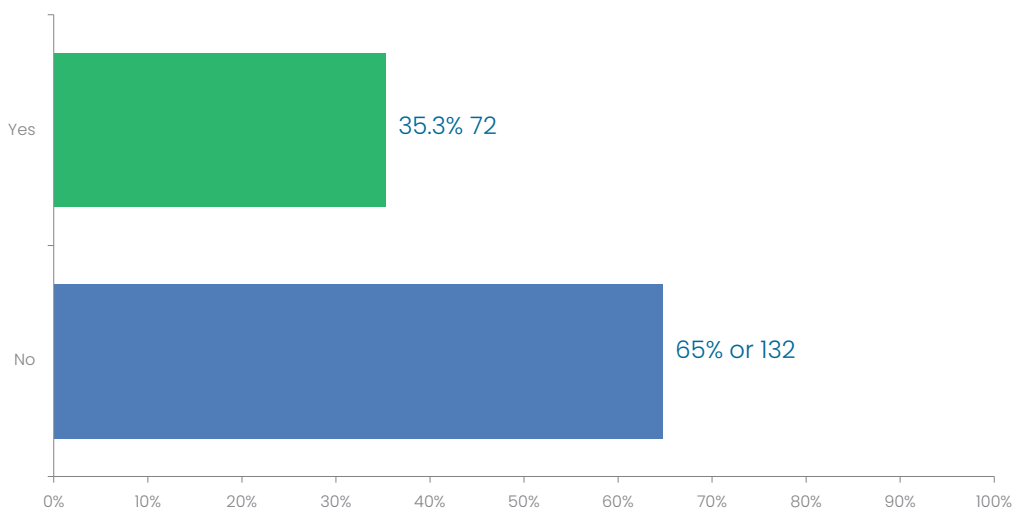
8

Q5: Are you interested in learning more about particular topics within the City? Please select all that apply.



9

Q6: Would you be interested in taking part in a forum to review the new website and offer valuable feedback before the site goes live?



10

QUESTIONS?

