
Land Development Review Services

An audit of services
provided by the Village
of Weston

FINAL: May 7, 2018

Prepared by: 
MDROFFERS CONSULTING

Table of Contents

Purpose..... 2
Process..... 2
Recommendations..... 3
Appendix A: Business Roundtable Notes..... 9
Appendix B: Customer Satisfaction Survey Results 20
Appendix C: Suggested Ordinance Amendments..... 29
Appendix D: Suggested Department Structure and Position Descriptions 32
Appendix E: Draft Policies and Procedures Guide..... 36
Appendix F: Draft Land Development Handbook..... 39

Purpose

In late 2017, the Weston Village Board authorized an audit of the village's land development review services. The purpose of the audit is to evaluate the village's development review processes, ordinances, policies, procedures, organization, interactions, and overall experience for customers and the community. This audit is timed three years after a major overhaul to the village's zoning and subdivision regulations.

The village's land development review services are managed by its Planning & Development Department. That Department is overseen and guided by the Village Administrator, Village Board, and Plan Commission. Other village staff members participate in aspects of the village's land development review services, including those from the Public Works & Utilities and Clerk's departments. Other village committees are also involved, including the Board of Zoning Appeals, Extraterritorial Zoning Committee, and Community Development Authority. By agreement, the village also provides planning and land development review services to the Town of Weston through its Planning & Development Department.

The village hired MDRoffers Consulting to complete this audit. Mark Roffers, co-owner of MDRoffers Consulting, led the audit. Mr. Roffers has 26 years of experience in planning and development in the public and private sectors in Wisconsin, including assisting municipalities and counties develop and refine their planning and zoning systems. Mr. Roffers has also worked with the village on a variety of planning and zoning projects since 2013.

Process

The process to complete this audit included the consultant's evaluation of the village's land development review processes, ordinances, and organization. The consultant also interacted with key persons and stakeholders through the following efforts:

- Interviews with all Planning & Development Department staff, and with other village staff and officials who participate in the village's land development review services.
- Facilitation of two "business roundtable" discussions of business and development representatives from the Weston community to identify and help resolve issues with development review services and ordinances. Appendix A includes meeting notes.
- Administration of an on-line customer satisfaction survey provided to every representative of land development review applications for which an email was provided over the past three years (~1,500). 169 persons completed the survey. Results are included as Appendix B.

Recommendations

The multi-page matrix that begins on the next page includes the consultant's recommendations for adjustments to the village's land development review organization, approach, processes, and ordinances.

The matrix includes the following columns:

- **Topic:** Breaks the recommendations into categories for ease of reference.
- **Ref. #:** Reference number. Another reference tool.
- **Description and Finding:** A description of the purported issue or concern that the consultant believes warrants attention, and that may be addressed by one or more recommendations.
- **Recommendations:** The consultant's recommended actions for addressing each purported issue or concern. In certain cases, the recommendation refers to materials in one of the appendices to this audit.
- **Status Update:** Intentionally left blank. Intended to provide an opportunity for the village to track and mark future progress towards meeting each recommendation.

Broadly speaking, the consultant certainly believes there is room for improvement in several areas. That being said, the consultant does not believe that major structural changes are required to the way the village delivers land development review services, or the tools, procedures, or staff used to deliver them.

Finally, this is an audit of the Village of Weston government's land development review services, and by extension the village department primarily responsible for these services. It is not an audit of the local development community. Were it the latter, there would be other recommendations for improvement. These might include, for example, providing the Plan Commission with application materials that are fully-formed before expecting action. The point is that improving the village's land development review services is a two-way street, requiring open communication, understanding, and performance on both sides. The recommendations below, however, are decidedly one-sided to reflect the consultant's scope of work.

Procedures

Topic	Ref. #	Description and Finding	Recommendations	Status Update
	1.	The process <i>before</i> submitting a development review application is sometimes confusing, disjointed, lengthy, and discouraging to prospective applicants for land development review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Finalize and embrace a Staff Policies and Procedures Guide (see draft as Appx. E). (b) Finalize and distribute a Land Development Handbook (see Appx. F) to improve pre-application contacts, procedures, experience, and understanding—especially for new and infrequent applicants. (c) Improve web page (see below). 	
	2.	Staff review of land development applications can be somewhat disjointed, overlapping, and difficult to coordinate. This seems particularly the case between the planning/zoning and engineering/utility staffs. Both departments' review is critical for site plans and more complicated development projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Hold regular staff Development Review Team meetings with a defined agenda and an administrative facilitator (not P&D Director) as a means to better collaborate (and avoid overlap) on development review, better ensure prompt review from all departments, and provide a platform to iron out any differences and interact with applicants. (b) Minimize extent to which planning/zoning staff review grading, utility, erosion control, and stormwater management matters—leaving primary responsibility to public works/utilities staff. (c) Hold all departments accountable for prompt review and comment on development applications referred to them. Ordinance requires any staff comments within 12 days of being provided materials. (d) Limit the number of staff people that must “check off” on building permit and other simple applications. Instead, train and then trust. 	

Procedures

Plans and Ordinances

Topic	Ref. #	Description and Finding	Recommendations	Status Update
Procedures	3.	The village's on-line application forms have been frustrating for some to use, particularly first-timers and infrequent applicants. Challenges include not allowing users to complete the form over more than one session, complicated format, and the perception that technical support is not readily available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Enable users to save their work on partially completed application forms, and otherwise simplify information. (b) Re-evaluate how much information is requested for existing on-line applications, and temper requests for excessive information in future application roll-outs. (c) Thoroughly vet, including through external beta testing, new on-line application forms before they are fully released. (d) Develop a YouTube video or similar guide to walk first-timers/one-timers through the on-line building permit process. (e) Train and enable front desk and other staff to assist customers with on-line forms at the office kiosk—at least for a period. 	
	4.	Vision and make-up of village plans, priorities, and policies related to land and economic development can be difficult to get one's arms around, and if more widely known may increase understanding of what the village is trying to accomplish with development review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Lessen the burden on casual users of the village's services. For example, do not require a sign in or account to access basic village web page information. (b) Make the village's vision and key goals, related to development, more accessible on the village's web page. For example, in the "how do I" section of the village's web page, include an "Understand the Village's Vision" section and include links to relevant plans, programs, and recent policy decisions. (c) Share the village vision and rationale for village plans, policies, and ordinance provisions wherever opportunity allows. 	
Plans and Ordinances				

Topic	Ref. #	Description and Finding	Recommendations	Status Update
Plans and Ordinances	5.	Some particular zoning ordinance requirements, or village interpretation and enforcement of them, seem overly-aggressive to many regular, local users. The requirements and interpretation are some of the strictest in the region. Still, many of the more assertive requirements have built-in flexibility without having to get a variance from the Board of Zoning Appeals, which may not be widely understood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Adopt zoning ordinance amendments in Appx. C. (b) Pursue more flexible interpretations of zoning ordinance requirements where the ordinance allows for flexibility. Reflecting state court decisions, recent statutory changes, and local context, work to interpret requirements in favor of the free use of private property. (c) Revisit the types of matters that require a permit, such as re-roofing, pavement resurfacing/ restriping, and certain internal remodeling projects. Evaluate what the worst case scenario would be for non-compliance versus other positive impacts (e.g. more staff time & goodwill). 	
	Communications	6.	Those making development review applications—particularly local applicants—believe that development review staff sometimes lack flexibility; a “can do” approach and creativity in finding mutually agreeable solutions; empathy towards applicants; and understanding of relationships among zoning requirements, their interpretation, and development costs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Finalize and embrace Policies and Procedures Guide (Appx. E). (b) Assure that staff interacting with those making or considering development proposals have unbiased “basic training” in customer service and in understanding developers’ and builders’ constraints, motivations, and costs. (c) Create an Economic Development Coordinator position (see Appx. D), in part to serve as a development advocate and facilitator. (d) Through tax incremental districts and other creative municipal financing and partnerships, explore ways for village to be a more active partner in developments that advance the village’s vision.

Communications

Topic	Ref. #	Description and Finding	Recommendations	Status Update
Communications	7.	<p>Communications from some businesses, land developers, their representatives, and municipal officials have resulted in some negative feedback about the procedures and staff engaged in the village's land development review and economic development services. The consultant is not sure whether the issues causing complaints are getting better, getting worse, or staying the same, but there is evidence of recent improvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Provide opportunity for each future development review applicant to complete a short survey at the end of his or her development review process, keeping some continuity with the survey in Appx. B. (b) Reconvene the business roundtable once per year to review progress. Enable village staff to be active participants. (c) Implement/continue annual internal reviews of land development review staff, referencing this audit and evaluating customer service as part of the reviews. (d) Implement probationary periods and provide proper training for all new/future employees, including in customer service and matters outlined in Appx. E. 	
	8.	<p>There appears to be general satisfaction about how public meetings related to development review are conducted. Still, concerns from board/committee members and applicants suggest room for improvement. For example, forms, agendas, reports, and other communications change too frequently for some users. Also, some have expressed concern that staff can be unclear, verbose, and condescending in their communications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Share results of audit with the Plan Commission, including survey results in Appx. B. Engage in dialogue. (b) Enact an internal moratorium on changes to agendas, reports, etc. except for those directed or approved by the board, commission, or authority for which materials are intended. (c) Focus on using plain English, not talking down to the reader or listener, speaking loudly or using microphones at public meetings, and avoiding lengthy monologues. (d) Balance sharing of information with shorter meeting packets. (e) Ensure packet delivery four days before the meeting. 	

Structure

Topic	Ref. #	Description and Finding	Recommendations	Status Update
	9.	The significant workload of those involved in land development review and economic development may be resulting in difficulty in achieving village priorities and other recommendations in this audit, morale issues, burnout, and real or perceived conflicts in staff roles. These may occur, for example, when an economic development proposal meets with neighborhood resistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Create a new Economic Development Coordinator position within the Planning & Development Department (see Appx. D). Transition most current economic development staffing functions to this new position. (b) Implement other recommended adjustments to position descriptions referenced in Appx. D. (c) Limit administration-initiated projects to be led by the Planning & Development Department. (d) Audit the types and methods of work performed in support of development review. For example, explore opportunities to consolidate sign-offs for simple building permit requests. Also, look for opportunities for more in-person and verbal communication. (e) During each individual staff performance review, compare the type of work performed to the position description, as revised. If they don't align, change one or the other. 	
	10.	The Planning & Development Department is located in a setting that invites distraction—largely forward of the front desk and on most every employees' entry/exit paths.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Expedite construction of a new municipal building. If that is not possible in the near term, significantly remodel the Municipal Building to a more modern office format (e.g., front desk actually out front). (b) Train and empower front desk staff to respond to more basic development-related questions (e.g., how can I get a fence permitted? what is my land zoned?). 	

Appendix A: Business Roundtable Notes

Land Development Review Services Audit
Roundtable Discussion Meeting #1
Village of Weston Municipal Center
5500 Schofield Avenue
Weston, WI 54476

Wednesday, January 17, 2018
1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Present at this meeting were:

Daniel Guild, Village Administrator,
Mark Roffers, MDRoffers Consulting, LLC
Joe Jordan, Wausau Supply
Gary Guerndt, PGA Inc.
Mike Molitor, Auto Select
Mitch King, Mitch King & Sons Excavating
Scott Habeck, Scott's Enterprises
Dale Pickruhn, Urban Construction Co.
Jeff Babl, Tito, Inc.
Kent Ozolins, Greenheck (present for Troy Galster)
Loren White, Village Trustee
Buck Marcott, Vortex
Ron Serwa, Vortex
Randy Wanta, Wanta & Son, Inc.
Tina Kollmansberger, Village Plan Commission Citizen Member
Fred Schuster, Former Village President and Village Trustee

Village Staff in attendance:

Jennifer Higgins, Planning & Development Director
Keith Donner, Director of Public Works
Scott Tatro, Building Inspector
Roman Maguire, Property Inspector
Jared Wehner, Assistant Planner
Victoria Henschel, Assistant to the Administrator
Valerie Parker, Planning Technician

Guild opened the meeting explaining the purpose to this meeting is part of an audit to the village's land development and review processes. He stated three years ago the village had revised its zoning code and some of its processes and procedures. The village is interested in hearing people's feedback and thoughts on how the new zoning code has worked and how effective it has been.

Roffers explained that staff is present only to listen to the questions and concerns in order to look for opportunities for enhancement of the land development functions. He said as we work towards a process, we are also working towards solutions and how this meeting is essentially the first day of this project. He explained the two documents he has made available for everyone (1. Purpose and Expected Outcomes and 2. Questions/Topics for Roundtable/Interviews). He explained the purpose of this audit is to first review the development review processes, ordinances, and how the department interacts with folks that are proposing developments and community requests; and second, to evaluate the Planning & Development Department, including its policies, procedures, and organization. That is, how the department works and serves the community.

The goal of the audit is to come up with an evaluation and set of recommendations for potential improvements to land development ordinances, application forms, introducing the on-line application system, and ordinance amendments that focus on tweaking some substantive standards (building design, landscaping, etc.) and some procedural standards.

Roffers asked if there was one goal or outcome they would like to see through this process.

Jordan stated he would like a better understanding of what we as a community really want the village to become or look like. He stated that he has always been a big property rights advocate, and not a lot of regulation. Jordan commented on how he was surprised (back when he sat on the steering committee) by the number (over 300) of pages the new zoning code consisted of. He said that he understands that we want a set of regulations that the staff can use for direction, but the reality is there does not seem to be a black and white rule for every situation. His biggest concern is how we deal with the situations that are not black and white. He personally had a situation come up where this was an issue. Though he does appreciate and respect the job staff is doing, and he understands how challenging it could be some days, but from a business standpoint, it is really about customer service. While we have these rules and regulations, the important thing for him is to be able to come in and understand where the village is coming from, or why the rules are what they are.

Pickrun feels there could be a quicker process, especially closer to late fall when things need to get done before it gets cold. He feels the process is a little longer than it needs to be. He understands there needs to be information gathered for a recommendation to be made, but get going on a project and follow up other items later on (for projects that occur at certain times of the year).

Ron Serwa would like to see a process for people here (as he feels other people here may have a story to tell related to projects they have run in to problems with, and have come away from the process with a very negative experience with the village) and other business people in the community to come up with a list. He gave the example of his own project where there was a lot of focus on landscaping, where the requirements make it where a building addition needs to be planned around the landscaping, which he feels is meaningless. He does not agree with that rule as he is in an industrial park, and for them to spend a lot of time and effort towards landscaping requirements would take away from the safety and the practicality of the building. He would like to see an opportunity for businesses to list their objections to certain regulations.

Guerndt pointed out there are a few other business owners he had contacted to attend today but they chose not to, fearing repercussions from village staff and thinking it would not help. Guerndt

feels we need to stop the negativity in the community. He stated there is a lot of negativity in the developers he has talked to, due to the turn-around or just the interactions they have. Guerndt stated he personally cares for all of the staff, and how he would not want the staff's jobs, but he feels in the last 5 years if you were to take a poll from the citizens and business people on how they feel, there would be a thumbs down. Guerndt stated that as a team (the people present in this meeting) has an opportunity to turn this around and make it a better place, if the community that we are working with is willing to listen and help.

Roffers confirmed that Guerndt is asking to get the peace back, feeling that things have gone in the wrong direction. Guerndt stated he really cares about this community and he wants it to be a better place.

Jordan stated there is a lot of power in the word "no" when you have rules and regulations that you interpret black and white, the simple answer is "no". He said there needs to be some platform for discussion that may find a solution to that initial answer.

Guerndt commented on how in his business, every day when contracts are being made there is negotiation and compromises occurring. He stated when you hit a wall, or when someone is doing something and make you feel like you are breaking the law, and you do not know when the rules have changed, and you are then treated like you are committing a crime. He stated this is how they feel and how they have been approached, and has in the past, though this has gotten better recently. He stated that people out there feel the village has been very abrasive. Guerndt feels we should all work together, as we are all in this together, a team effort. He stated how they like to see development here too, as he likes the work, and the village gains more tax base. He stated if things do not change, he does not feel there will be another development in Weston. In his own experience with all the requirements that have been put in place, a development in Weston is over \$5,000 higher than what it would cost in other communities.

Ozolins stated how in their experience, they had negative feedback where they were told by staff of what the owner (Greenheck) should have in terms of design, whether it be to comply with some or the ordinances or not. The code seems to be written around design and landscaping requirements, leading to the staff telling the owner what he needs and does not need without understanding the outcome of what the owner wants. The owner has been through a number of projects, and for the village to tell him what he should or should not do is not appropriate. Up front, as the design (building design and site design) goes on, there is a negativity due to being told what to do. A lot of this revolved around the site itself, but it did affect the building and the components of the building.

Wanta stated there needs to be some flexibility, such as for building additions, and a need for staff to look at the project and see really what the needs are or aren't. The code sometimes dictates a component on a project that does not make sense. Everybody needs to work together, and we need a better working relationship.

Guerndt stated what he has heard is if someone wants to add on to their building, now they come up with an entire landscaping plan, along with all these added requirements. Guerndt stated when the village is requiring certain standards on businesses, the same should go for village projects. Just like the village has a budget, so do the businesses. He commented on an additional \$100,000 cost to

add landscaping and curb & gutter to a parking lot. He knows of several people who have chosen not to locate in Weston due to our landscaping and curb & gutter requirements.

Serwa feels the village staff may not be hearing the public negativity like they do. Serwa said on the other hand he just may not be hearing the positive feedback that may be out there. He has been involved in other communities for years, and never has heard this kind of negativity. It should be “what can we do to help you” or “what can we do to get your business here.” He said this is not the village atmosphere. He has been getting calls from developers in other communities who want to get him to move to their area, knowing it is a marketing point for them. He feels if someone wants to replace their parking lot, they should be able to repave without all the added requirements and the expense that is caused by village regulations.

Roffers confirmed so far he has heard concerns on:

- curbing around parking lots
- resealing a parking lot without additional, unrelated requirements
- expansions not being held to the same standards as a greenfield development
- needing to bring an entire site into compliance when just expanding
- concern that landscaping requirements are driving site design, and are not appropriate in an industrial park setting.

Guerndt stated he understands beautification of the community, but he feels there is a certain place for it. If a person buys a property along the main corridors of Weston, you will have to meet certain criteria, but if you are in an industrial park you should not have to meet all those same requirements. He stated how the village’s requirements are driving businesses out. He gave an example of a person wanting to come in, who could not come up with the extra \$150,000 to build here in Weston. Instead he moved into Wausau. There are situations where the village has to come down on people who do not care, but there are a lot of who do care. He commented on why certain plants should matter, or why people need to hire engineers or landscape architects to draw a plan.

Jordan stated for a small business person, coming in and building his first building and being told he cannot do that without hiring a professional landscape architect and engineer to draw the plans. Jordan stated how with his building additions, how he was no longer allowed to draw the plans and he had to pay to hire engineers to draw the plans instead. This is a great cost to someone just starting out, which causes them to instead look elsewhere. Jordan feels it is impractical to make the industrial area look like the retail areas.

Roffers confirmed he heard concerns about the degree in which the ordinance requires professionals in particular fields to prepare landscaping and site design plans. This is a challenge. He confirmed that Pickruhn was referring to the process of getting building permit plans reviewed.

Pickrun stated in Wausau they can turn a site plan located in their industrial park, where there are not a lot of requirements, around in a week, whereas here the review is longer. Landscaping does not catch his eye as much as someone having junk lying outside. Pickruhn is okay if the village wants to see different architectural things (within reason) he is fine with it, just not so much all the landscaping and outside lighting requirements. He worked on a building for a business looking to get established in Weston who ended up going to Wausau instead. It was a start-up business

(Hands-On Cleaning). Another person looking to expand his business in July chose not to because of Weston's regulations. These are just some of the stories he's heard. Pickruhn stated there is a stigma that people out there are hearing. It was confirmed that most of the businesses that are being referred to in tonight's discussion are more industrial in nature.

Molitor stated that his business is more in the retail area and in their major renovation, he had to submit 3 different plans on the front of his building, and then 3 plans on the landscaping. Once he started his project, he started falling under the new construction regulations which then required such things as a parking lot. All he wanted to do was a fine layer of asphalt, but because it was new and the size of it, he was required to go down to dirt. He wanted to pave his entire property, but because that added expense alone doubled the cost of the project. He only then did half his project. With the front of his building, he had to have a landscaping design that met staff approval. There was no landscaping in front, as it was blacktop to the sidewalk, which happened because of the widening of Schofield Avenue 15 years ago. He said that jokingly, if his building was set back another 20 feet this would not be a problem. So, he had to lose 1/3 of his parking in the front due to new requirement to add curb and landscaping. He said that his property was built in 1972, back when there was not curbing. He explained how, due to the way the center median was arranged on Schofield Avenue, there was a cut out where vehicles would drive from the gas station through his property and the gas station to the east, using it as an easy way out to avoid the center median. After 3 accidents occurred there over the years, he wanted to block that area between his and the gas station with boulders but he was not allowed to do that. Instead he was required to install curbing all the way back along his property. Suddenly, he had an extra \$75,000 in unexpected expense. He said the other thing that occurred which made him feel the village was anti-business was when he wanted to install glass garage doors on the front of his building. The reason he was given was that the village did not want people to see what he did inside the building, and the glass doors would allow people to look into his building as they drove by. When this happened it was upsetting, as he felt with his business, he fixes cars and he wants people to see that he is busy and doing well. He stated a recent project was approved just up the street from him where they have 6 glass doors on the front. He feels there needs to be some flexibility and he was not quite sure how he ended up under new construction guidelines on a building that was 20 years old. He said he had a conceptual drawing for the new front facade, and now wishes he would have had PGA's designer. He said it was a real struggle. He said it took him 6 months just to get the approval, and then he was forced to lose 15 parking spots in the front. He said he does understand the beautification, and he feels his auto repair business looks much nicer than some of the other retail along Schofield Avenue. [Planning Director note: This project was started without site plan approval and just after the new zoning code went into effect in 2015.]

King commented on how he has older buildings across the street and as he wants them to look nice. He was trying to blacktop the parking lot, but the village wanted the curb and gutter and all the landscaping. He said this place has been a gravel parking lot and here he just wanted to make it look nicer, but then it became a very costly venture. He commented on how the person right across the road wanted to blacktop their entire property, but when finding out about the landscaping he only blacktopped what was needed. King feels blacktop looks nicer than gravel. [Planning Director Note: This project went to Plan Commission where modifications to the code requirements on curbing and landscaping were approved.]

Guerndt brought up the situation that happened with Cloverbelt Credit Union when they wanted to resurface their parking lot. The project was shut down because there was no permit on file. He stated that most businesses do not know a permit is required. The issue with Cloverbelt happened when all of a sudden staff told them they needed to meet landscaping, curb & gutter. Guerndt stated people are going to choose not to improve their properties because of the costs due to our regulations. He feels staff is in a tough position as they try to regulate the rules. Another issue with Cloverbelt was that the FDIC would not let them open to the public with a gravel or non-finished parking lot. He questioned if the village wants to see businesses choose not to improve and let their parking lots go bad? [Planning Director Note: The asphalt company knew that permits were required as they had been stopped recently from doing a similar project within the village. All asphalt companies were also sent notifications by mail of the new requirements.]

Roffers questioned if there is more the village can do to communicate these things. Guerndt stated the entire team's job is to follow the code. Guerndt and Serwa stated they heard talk from the entire banking community how bad that went down between the village and Cloverbelt. Serwa stated for something that extreme (the village shutting the project down) it should have been the Administrator going there, not staff. [Planning Director Note: The Village Building Inspector has been granted this authority by the Village Board. It has been listed in the job duties and by village ordinance to be able to issue "Stop Work Orders".]

Serwa stated some of these regulations do not make sense, they need a reason (such as the prohibition of exposed fasteners on an industrial building.)

Wanta stated he had a project that costed another \$14,000 because he had to add concealed fasteners. He has property in the Business Park, and was not able to sell/lease those, because no one wants to move to Weston due to costs to meet requirements. Wanta pointed out the Randy Worden project that failed, he believes, due to landscaping requirements, where new owner turned around and sold the property. Wanta stated this should not happen. [Planning Director Note: An official site plan submittal was never received for this project. Staff was doing preliminary site plan review with the applicant and working through the adjacent property rezone, CSM and sale of property between the Village Board and Mr. Worden when he decided to pull the project.]

Roffers asked if Weston can afford to have standards higher than other communities. Guerndt stated no, as it is too competitive up here. Jordan commented about Weston's boulevards, and how he watched village employees taking sheet metal panels to protect the plants in medians. Jordan stated these high esthetics are not realistic here.

Roffers asked who is a good community to look at, as far as sample ordinances (Wausau, Schofield, Rothschild, Kronenwetter)? Babl feels Rothschild is a good place to look at. Jordan commented on the communities he has located his other facilities are those where there are less regulations. Jordan stated it is too hard to be competitive with all these requirements.

Guerndt feels that no one here tonight has the right answers, but are here because they care enough and want to help make an improvement somehow. Guerndt feels it has not been easy for the staff to enforce this code.

King does not understand why a new residential subdivision requires sidewalk, especially one that does not connect to any other sidewalks on either side of subdivision. There could be sidewalk extended on later down the road, but the village does not have the money to install sidewalks. There is a lot of cost in sidewalk. [Planning Director Note: The subdivision referenced does link to sidewalks on Birch Street and an on-pavement multi-use path on Ross Avenue.] Guernndt had a discussion with the village, as he felt a one-sided sidewalk was good, but they ended up doing both sides. He said that though there were a lot of compromises with this subdivision and it was an expensive venture. He does not see much more residential subdivision development occurring in the village.

Roffers then read the Planning & Development Department's mission statement, and asked how successful the Department has been in achieving this mission, and if this is the correct mission.

Jordan feels their skillset is good and they are doing their best to interpret the rules as stated. Where we struggle is coming up with solutions. He gave the example of his personal property, which is zoned so that a fence permit would not be required, but only for fences no more than 4 feet high. The failure was the inability to come up with a solution, for something everyone (he and staff) agreed was a good thing. The process took more than 90 days and costed him \$400. Originally, he was told no, and after a few weeks found that a variance was possible. He feels the staff may not have the time to devote to looking for solutions to these situations.

Roffers questioned where the group may see opportunities exist for improvements for village staff and the Plan Commission.

Marcott explained how he has a home out on Ryan Street, with 40 acres behind it, next to the Village of Weston's yard waste site and Babl's dirt piles. He has a 16.5 feet wide driveway on Ryan Street going back to his 40 acres. He was talking about building a home back on the 40 acres that he could retire on. He was told that he would have to have 100 feet of frontage on Ryan Street. His other property does not connect to this and is 100 yards away. So he does not have 100 feet of property. He then talked to a guy who was selling land near his, and this guy agreed he would sell 100 feet to him. But then he talked to the village to see if he would then be okay. He was going to buy 16.5 feet wide of driveway from this guy to give him a 33-foot wide driveway, that goes to Ryan Street and he has 100 feet here. He still does not meet the driveway setbacks even though the one property line is up against the village's rock piles. It's treated like a city lot even though it is rural. He then asked if he could at least build a shed on his property to house his tractor and equipment, but was told he could not, as he needs to have a primary building (house) on the property first. He pointed out how there is a concrete slab on the ground, which was poured before he bought the property. Roffers stated he has seen ordinances for growing municipalities with rural areas. Marcott stated he can have cows and chickens, but he can't have a building. [Planning Director Note: Mr. Marcott would have still had these issues with the previous code. The previous code would have also looked at his parcel as being landlocked, unbuildable and also did not allow for an accessory structure without a principal structure.]

Jordan stated this goes back to the power of "no" and the unintended consequences. Jordan feels the shed would be a tax value to the village, but now his property is devalued. Marcott stated now he can't retire on his land.

Jordan stated that by the time any of his projects have gone to Plan Commission, staff has helped him understand what he needs to do to make it through the process. Guerndt agreed, and stated the staff has been great. Guerndt admitted, though, that he has taken his frustrations out on staff. He feels for staff, and understands how staff would like things black and white.

Serwa would like to see people with more business background to make the recommendations and decisions on Plan Commission.

White commented how Plan Commission is dealing with a new code. The old code was designed for a rural community. Staff is apprehensive of applying reasonableness, as if they do something for one person, they will have to do it for another. White stated Plan Commission has the authority to make changes. The feedback from the general public is that they want the village to look better. White stated that Plan Commission is more than willing to work with the community.

Guerndt stated staff does 90% of the work before it gets to Plan Commission. White commented how some of the Trustees may question the Plan Commission why there are so many ordinance amendments, but it is because we find issues with some of them and need to modify them. He stated a lot of changes have occurred in the village over the years, and we want the business community here, we need the tax base.

Serwa stated the village is a non-profit, where they are for-profit. It would be better if there could be more representation from people that are in it for functionality and more practicality. White stated the issue is people here are really busy, and are they willing to put in the time? Roffers stated how people can apply to be on the Plan Commission or run for Trustee.

Guerndt stated how it is easy for them to complain, but staff lives this every day. Guerndt stated it is difficult for them, as they have a lot of responsibilities to take care of, which can take them into the late evening. Jordan stated he has been building in Weston since 2002. The process then was where Plan Commission did the approvals, not staff. Jordan stated he gets the feeling that the people on committees are people who do not understand the businesses, as people on the committee in the past had.

Schuster commented he understands Jordan's comments about the boulevard. He explained that he was on the Board when they approved the boulevard upgrades and the higher aesthetic and curbing standards. He understands that Target, Ace Hardware, and Pick 'n Save remodeled and reinvested in the village after those higher standards were put in place. He feels that perhaps the Trustees set the bar too high when wanting to look more like Stevens Point/Plover, who have a nice business park. He stated Trustees are the ones pushing the regulations, staff and the Administrator are just carrying out their duties. He discussed that if you give one person a break, you will have to do the same for someone else.

Roffers questioned if there was anything else they would want to share before this meeting ends, and how would people here today like to stay in touch with this process as this wraps up over the next several weeks.

Guerndt stated he would be willing to sit in at a meeting again. Jordan stated some kind of group, where if not everyone has the time to get together, he could at least bring their viewpoints too.

Guild commented the policy making process is intricate, because for every person that comes to us and says how they do not like how the application of government power was applied to them, you get a whole group of people who like it. Sometimes then the same people who want the government, strong and powerful, to apply that power against things, they don't want to see happen. We try to take this feedback, and bring it to our officials, and try to distill this information in a way that they can be effective in making legislation and rules. It is a huge commitment to be a Trustee, not just the meeting, but also the packets, e-mails, reports, and other things that happen behind the scenes.

Guild stated if anyone is interested in serving on a committee, on the village's website (www.westonwi.gov/jobs), people can apply to serve on a committee.

He and Jordan are talking about putting together a business roundtable that could get together and meet periodically, and come up with some recommendations and feedback, as he realized most do not have the time to commit to being on a committee. Guild stated is anyone is interested in participating in these meetings, to let him know.

Guild stated that it is disheartening for him to hear some of these examples as he was not aware of 90% of them. Guild stated that he and his staff can't help the problems if he is not aware of them.

Guernndt commends all who are involved in the community, and the job that staff is doing.

Meeting Notes Respectfully Submitted,
Valerie Parker
Planning Technician

Land Development Review Services Audit
Roundtable Discussion Meeting #2
Village of Weston Municipal Center
5500 Schofield Avenue
Weston, WI 54476

Tuesday, March 20, 2018
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Present at this meeting were:

Daniel Guild, Village Administrator
Ron Serwa, Vortex
Dan Serwa, Vortex
Randy Wanta, Wanta & Son, Inc.
Mitch King, Mitch King & Sons Excavating
Paul LaPree, Miron Construction
Scott Habeck, Scott's Enterprises
Jeff Babl, Tito, Inc.
Kent Ozolins, Greenheck Fan
Loren White, Village Trustee
Matt Yde, Village Attorney
Mark Roffers, MDRoffers (via phone)

Village Staff in attendance:

Jennifer Higgins, Planning & Development Director
Victoria Henschel, Assistant to the Administrator
Scott Tatro, Building Inspector
Valerie Parker, Planning Technician

Guild opened the meeting explaining there are three topics he would like to talk about today:

1. Present a copy of the draft land development review services audit for comments and feedback;
2. Discuss the suggestions for zoning code changes that were brought up at a meeting held at Serwa's facility; and
3. To hear a presentation from Attorney Yde on zoning regulations/processes that are subject to State law.

Roffers then gave a presentation to the group going through the entire draft Land Development Review Services document.

Ron Serwa commented on the exposed fastener requirement, and asked Wanta if he knew there was an option to request the Plan Commission to allow the exposed fasteners. Higgins explained how if a builder wants to develop their property without going through committees, their building plans must meet all the requirements of the code. If there is something they would like a waiver on, that is when they have to go through Plan Commission.

Higgins explained how in the past, any site plans that came in would get reviewed by staff, then forwarded to the Plan Commission for review, followed by final review and approval by Village Board.

Guild stated staff should never be in a position to use their judgment of enforcing the law, which is up to the Plan Commission and Village Board. He explained the meetings are held in open transparent format, so then people understand why something was allowed.

Wanta stated there may have been some misinterpretations and the key thing is to communicate more.

LaPree stated he is assuming staff is asked all the time what the Plan Commission would like to see, which puts staff in a tough position. Guild stated the Plan Commission has legislative and judicial powers, and they have to review whether the application meets the letter of the law. Guild stated if he was asked that question, he would say they would like to see the requirements in the code. LaPree suggested people asking for staff's recommendation might be there trying to expedite the process, not trying to manipulate.

Following the remainder of Roffers presentation, Guild asked if there were any questions or comments. White stated the group most likely has not had enough time to go through the documents in order to make comments.

Serwa expressed his appreciation of the suggested ordinance changes referred to in the draft document, such as not requiring a permit for resurfacing, reconfiguration, or restriping parking lots. He does agree to require permits in the cases of reconstruction.

Yde commented he likes the idea of the economic development coordinator position, as it is hard to be the enforcer and welcomer at the same time. Municipalities with a population of 10,000-15,000 tend to have an economic development coordinator.

Yde then gave his presentation on Zoning (attached), where he included a history of how zoning came about. This presentation included Conditional Use Permits and Variances through Zoning Board of Appeals.

Serwa questioned if there will be exposure to the suggested changes, Yde explained these will be published as public hearing notices for the public to see.

White commented how the zoning code rewrite took over 3 years, it was done at public meetings. However, no one took the time to attend. White stated that now people can't just object to object, they have to have legitimate reasons to object.

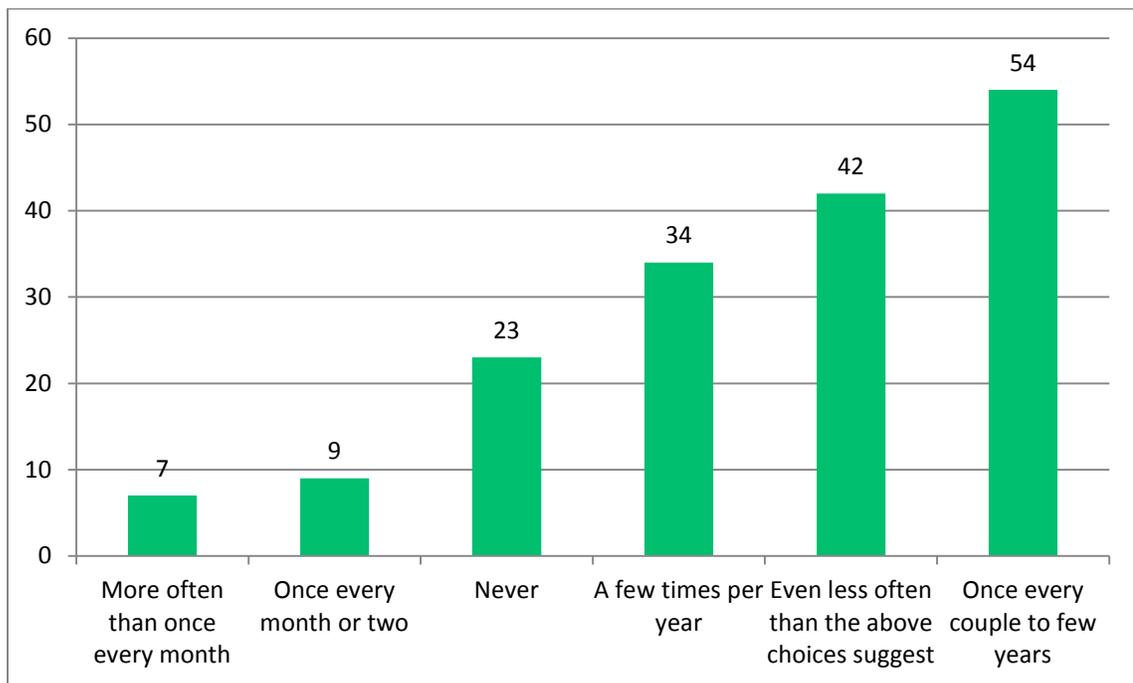
King commented on his property that was zoned AG Agriculture, then M1, and now Light Industrial. What conditions does he adhere to, given the changes? It was explained King can continue legally through his conditional use permit, as long as he continues the business. If the business stops, then the land would be subject to the new code.

Meeting Notes Respectfully Submitted,
Valerie Parker

Appendix B: Customer Satisfaction Survey Results

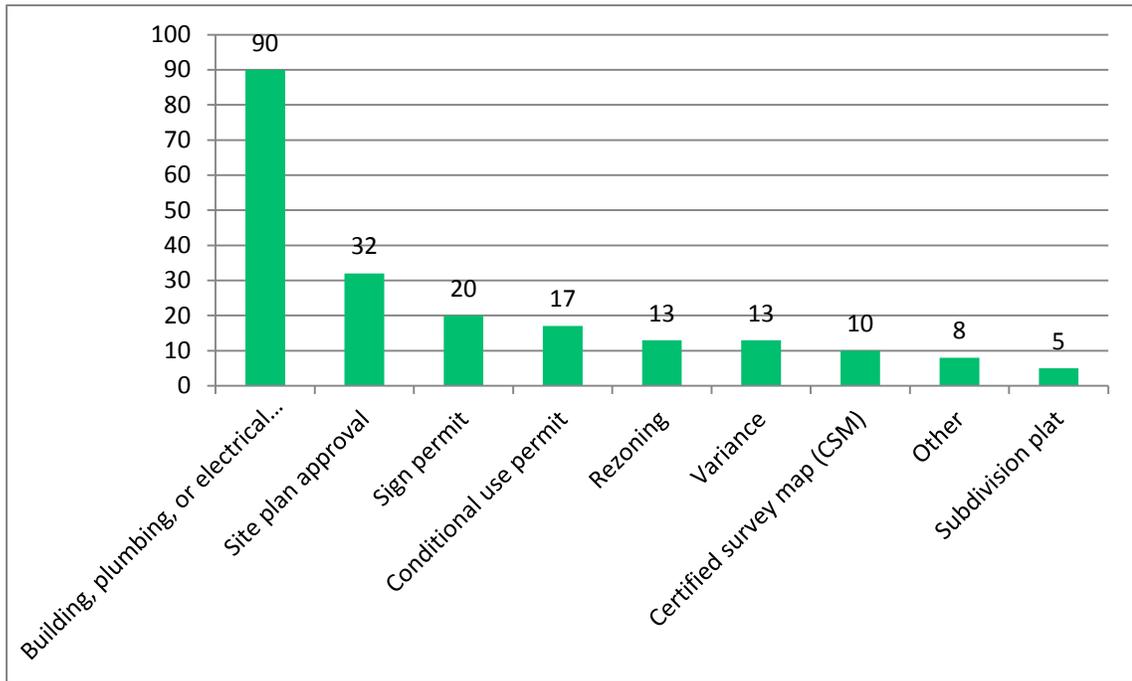
As part of this audit process, the consultant and village staff collaborated on a Web-based (Survey Monkey) survey of each individual that had, within the past three years, been involved in some type of land development review application to the village and provided his or her email address on the application. That amounted to approximately 1,500 individuals being sent an invitation and link to the survey. The survey yielded 169 responses. The following are the survey results.

- 1. How often have you been involved with an application to the Village of Weston for a building, plumbing, or electrical permit; land division approval (i.e., plat or CSM); or zoning approval (e.g., rezoning, conditional use permit, site plan, variance)?**



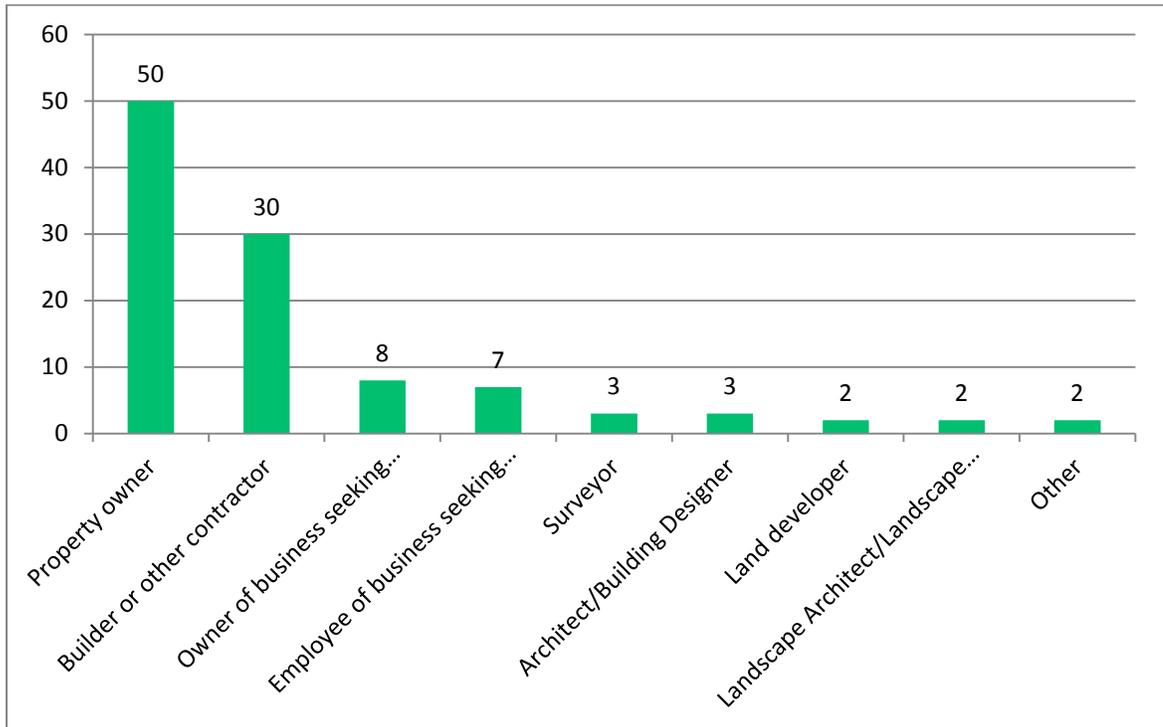
Number of Responses: 169

2. Which of the following types of development approvals have you sought from the village?
Check all that apply.



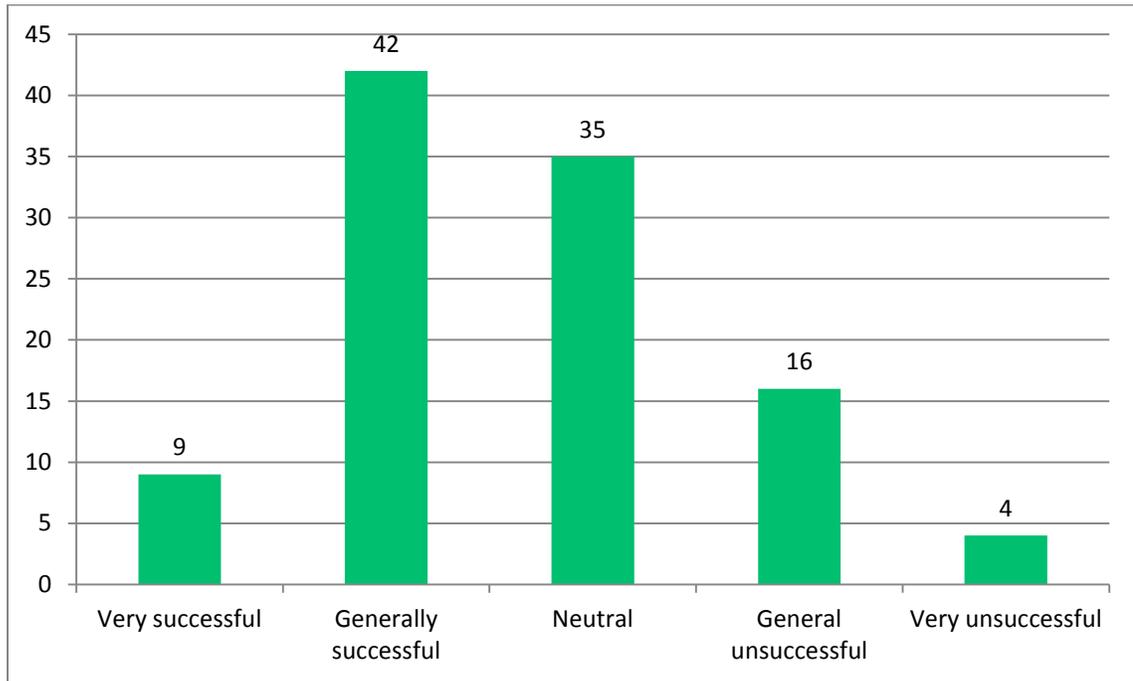
Number of Responses: 107

3. Which of the following best describes your profession or role when you have applied for a development approval with the village's Planning and Development Department?



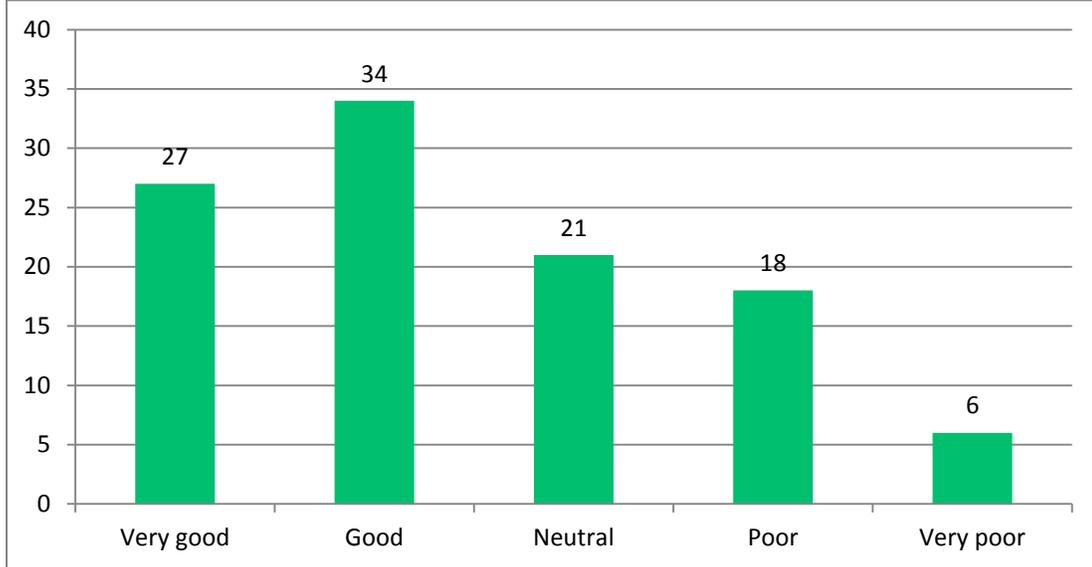
Number of Responses: 107

4. The Planning and Development Department’s mission is to provide solution oriented services to the community through the application of professional skills, adopted plans, standards, and village codes and polices that facilitate the growth of the local economy, preserve the natural environment for current and future generations, enhance the quality of life, promote distinctive neighborhoods and a healthy community, and involve citizens in decisions that affect them. In your experience, how successful is the Department in achieving its mission?



Number of Responses: 106

5. How would you rate the customer service you received as part of your development review experience(s) with the Village of Weston?



Number of Responses: 106

6. In the space provided below, please share the reason(s) you rated the Department's achievement of its mission or the village development review customer service the way you did.

There were 79 written responses to this question.

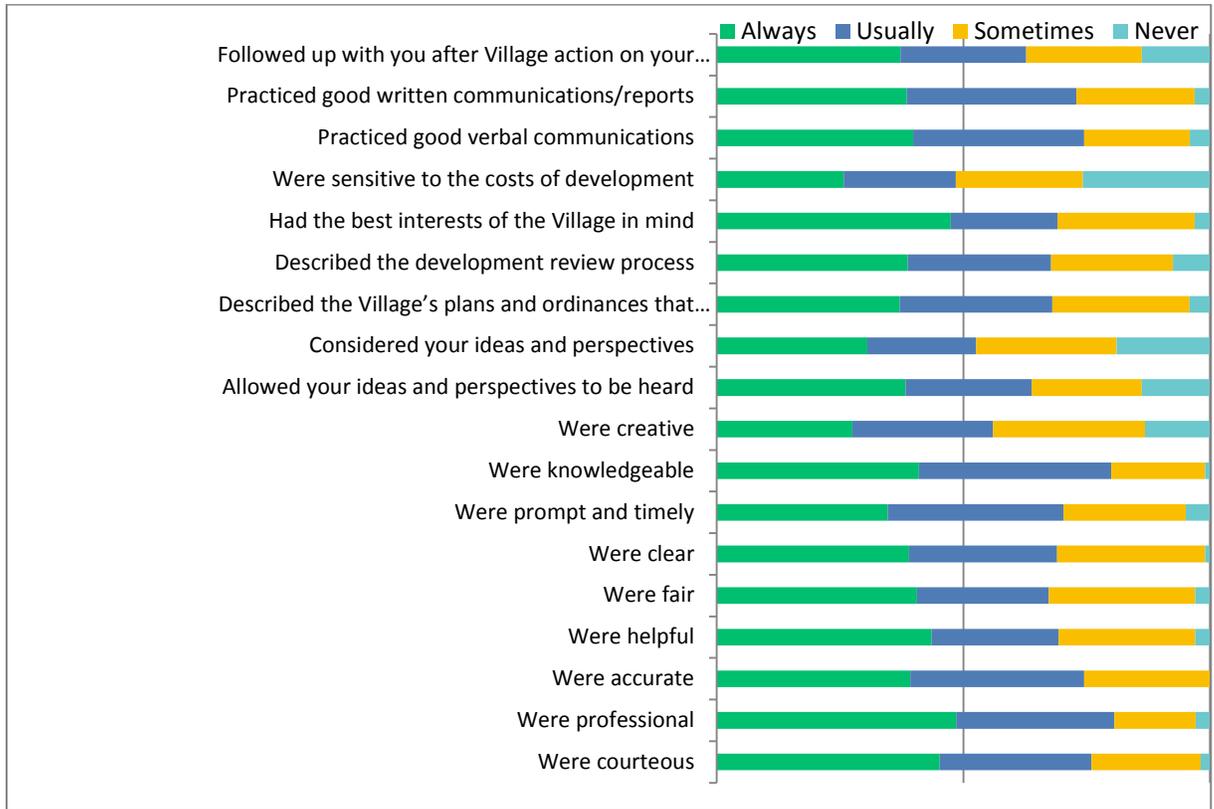
24 respondents expressed overall positive experiences and interactions with village staff and the development process. These respondents most often mentioned:

- Helpful staff
- Knowledgeable staff
- Dealing with the village was an easy process

55 respondents offered criticisms towards their customer service experience associated with their land development review application(s). The most common types of criticisms, in order, were as follows:

- Poor or condescending attitude towards applicants
- Poor staff accessibility, or too slow to get a response
- Zoning requirements are too stringent
- Staff interpretation and enforcement of zoning requirements are too strict
- Online application forms are difficult to complete

7. Please check the most appropriate box in each row regarding village Planning and Development Department employees in their review of your development review application(s). Planning and Development Department employees...



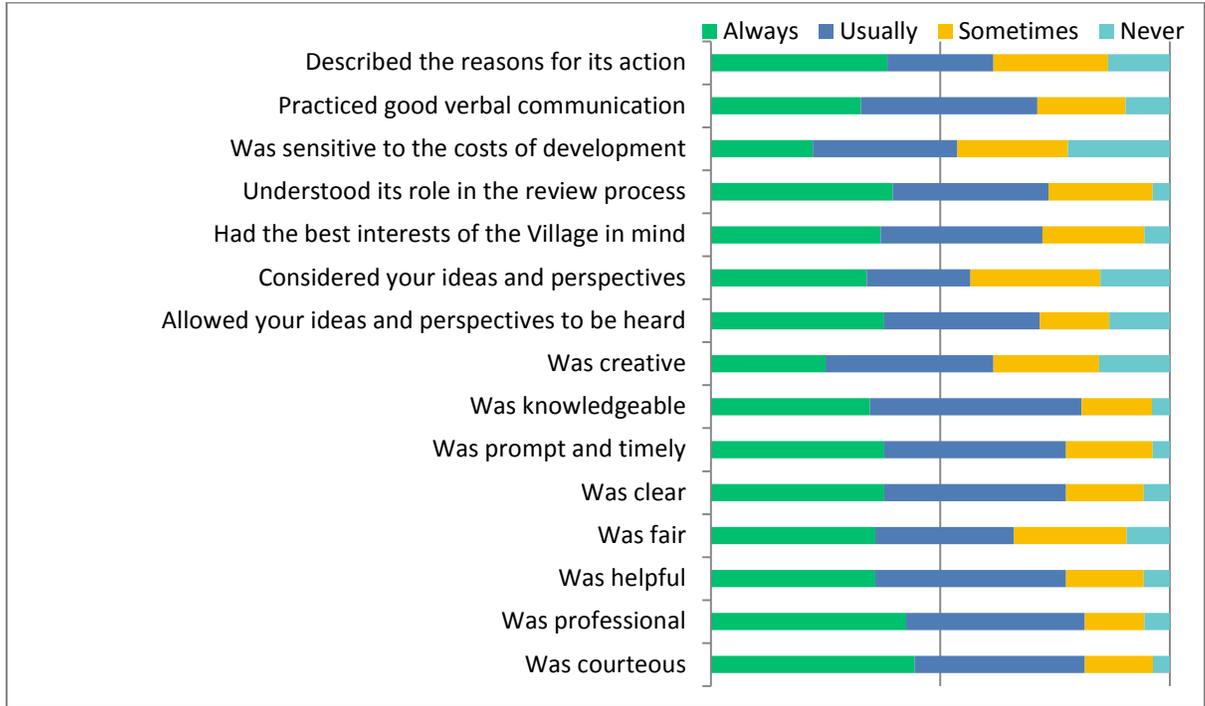
Number of Responses: 105

8. Have you appeared before the Plan Commission, Extraterritorial Zoning Committee, or Board of Zoning Appeals as part of any development review applications?

No	73%
Yes	27%

Number of Responses: 106

9. Please check the most appropriate box in each row regarding the Plan Commission, Extraterritorial Zoning Committee, or Board of Zoning Appeals in the review of your development review application(s). The Board and/or Commission/Committee...



Number of Responses: 56

10. Have you had any significant problem(s) during any development review process with the village?

No	75%
Yes	25%

Number of Responses: 106

11. If so, were village employees or officials helpful in resolving that problem(s)?

No	74%
Yes	26%

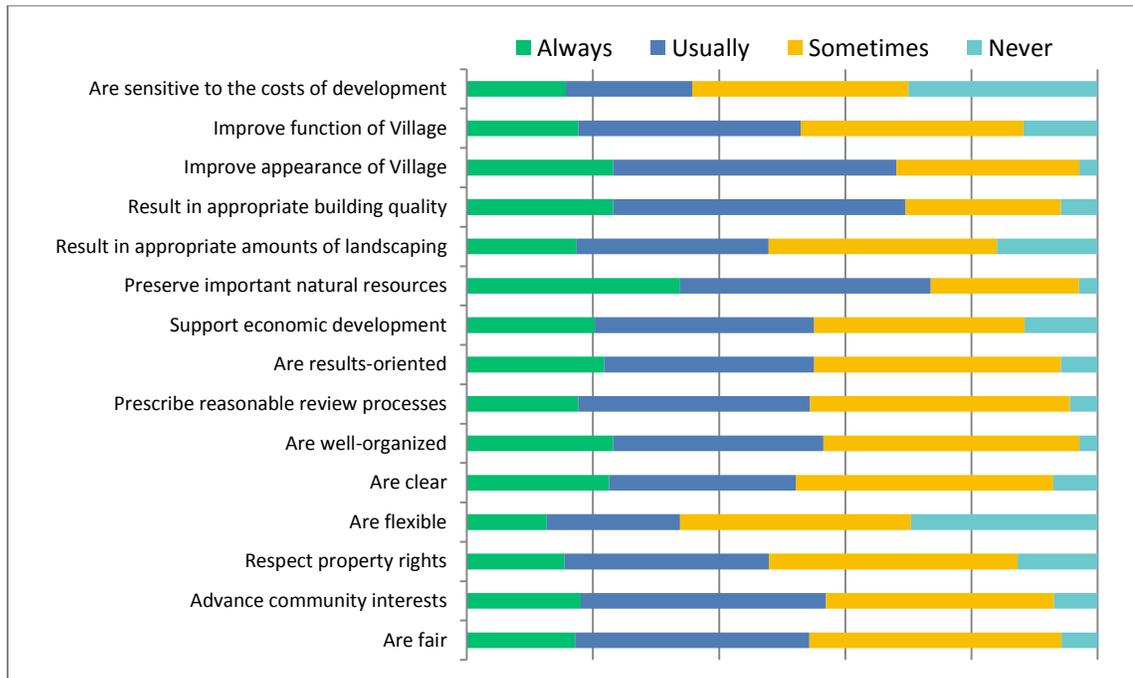
Number of Responses: 23

12. Could you please indicate what you believe village employees and/or officials could have done to be more helpful in resolving that problem(s)?

There were 15 written responses to this question. Suggestions commonly included:

- Improved communication and listening from staff is desired
- Seeming disregard for costs associated with land development decisions
- Offer handouts or have workshops to explain common village processes or regulations

13. The Village of Weston is guided by village Board-adopted plans and ordinances, like the comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance. Please check the most appropriate box in each row regarding village plans and ordinances.



Number of Responses: 74

14. Are there any particular aspects of village plans and ordinances that the village should consider changing?

Yes	39%
Maybe	39%
No	22%

Number of Responses: 80

15. What aspects of village plans and/or ordinances should the village consider changing?

There were 47 written responses to this question.

Many respondents expressed concern over the number of village's requirements and permits, the cost to comply with them, a perception that the village failed to communicate what was in the new zoning ordinance, and a perception that some businesses were able to execute their projects without meeting requirements while others were not. Specific village standards that were mentioned as warranting change included:

- Parking lot requirements, including curbing
- Requiring sidewalk on both sides of the street
- Landscaping requirements
- Sign regulations
- Building material standards, which some believed did not even advance aesthetic objectives

16. Any other final comments you care to offer regarding the subject of this survey?

There were 24 written responses to this question.

Many respondents expressed appreciation to have an opportunity to comment.

Those reporting negative experiences were concerned that the village's actions and requirements were a deterrent to businesses either setting up or remaining in Weston. Similarly, many of these commenters felt that the development process could be much more straightforward than how it is currently practiced. Several comments mentioned the importance of customer service and being treated with respect.

Appendix C: Suggested Ordinance Amendments

The consultant advises that the village consider amendments to the following provisions of the village's zoning ordinance (Chapter 94):

1. Figures 94.3.04 and 94.3.05: Allowable Uses in Zoning Districts – Review all conditional uses in all zoning districts. Through 2017 Act 67, the Wisconsin legislature has made it more difficult for villages to reject or add conditions to conditional use permits. One response may include removing the possibility of some conditional uses from some zoning districts entirely. Another response may be to convert some conditional uses to permitted uses in certain zoning districts, which would speed the review process and reduce uncertainty for such uses.
2. Article 4: Land Use Descriptions and Standards – Review performance standards for remaining conditional uses. 2017 Wisconsin Act 67 preserves municipal rights to reject a conditional use permit or apply conditions where related to specific standards in the zoning ordinance. Having pre-set standards can also reduce uncertainty and discretion in the development review process. Also, with reference to suggested adjustments to design requirements below, assure that related performance standards in Article 4 are brought into conformance.
3. Figures 5.01(1) and 5.02(1): Lot Dimension and Intensity Standards – dismiss minimum public street frontage requirements for the FP, AR, RR-2, RR-5, and RM to 40 feet to enable flag lots where warranted and to match existing minimums in most residential and business districts.
4. Section 94.10.03(3): Licensed Architect Required – Repeal for industrial buildings and for commercial and institutional buildings less than 20,000 square feet. Employing a licensed architect for commercial and industrial buildings is good practice and usually results in more interesting and aesthetically pleasing designs. However, this requirement may exclude some design-build firms and add to project costs. Finally, it is rare for municipal zoning ordinances to have such a requirement. Also, 20,000 square feet is the village's threshold for "large" commercial service and retail uses subject to other standards.
5. Section 94.10.03(7): Approved Materials – Within (7)(a)2., repeal the following provision related to industrial buildings: "The remaining sides shall be matching masonry brick, stone or concrete panel for the first 4 feet from the finished floor elevation where abutting an all-weather surface and/or not screened by landscaping." Within (7)(a)3., repeal the restriction against reducing the decorative material requirement from 60 to 40 percent if the building is within the Weston Business and Technology Park or any additions thereto. That requirement would remain for any industrial building abutting the main roads surrounding the Park. Within (7)(b), clarify that metal panels that are "copper panels, stainless steel, brushed nickel" or "comparable material as approved by the site plan approval authority" may be considered a "decorative" material under (7)(a), but not if they have exposed fasteners. These minor adjustments would moderate material requirements for industrial buildings and facades with lower visibility.

6. Section 94.10.03(8): Materials – Use of Metal and Other Non-decorative Materials. Current requirement restricts along on any wall “exposed along front or street side yard facing building facades” any “material using exposed fastener systems, metal sheets, panels or other similarly inferior materials as determined by the site plan approval authority.” Change requirement to read “material using non-concealed fastener systems, metal sheets not designed for commercial exterior walls, paneling, and other similarly inferior materials as determined by the site plan approval authority.”
7. Section 94.11.02(1)(e): Landscaping Requirements, Applicability – Section already allows site plan review authority to reduce normal landscaping requirements in a number of cases, including “where a proposed addition does not exceed 50% of the original building or hard surfaced area size.” Repeal the following current limit to that reduction: “In such cases, the quantitative landscaping standards shall be met in proportion to the size of the addition as compared to the original building or hard surfaced area.” It is possible in such cases that, per (1)(a), “preexisting buildings or impervious services, and/or insufficient lot area, do not provide sufficient green space for full compliance.”
8. Section 94.12.06(2)(b): Exterior Storage Standards for Multi-Family Dwellings and Non-Residential Facilities and Properties – Revise current allowance to reduce trash dumpster screening requirements to read as follows: “The site plan approval authority, or Zoning Administrator in the case where the project does not require site plan approval under this chapter, may waive or modify one or more requirements in subsection (a). Such waiver or modification may be provided only if the authority or Administrator determines that the intent of the ordinance requirement(s) will be met in another way and that the reduction will not harm the public interest or undermine the purpose of this chapter or the associated zoning district.”
9. Section 94.12.09(2): Parking Lot Permit – Modify to no longer require a permit for “resurfacing, reconfiguration, or restriping” of existing parking lots, but to still require a permit for “expansion” or “reconstruction” of existing parking lots.
10. Section 94.12.09(6)(c): Curbing – Add the following additional circumstance whereby the site plan approval authority could modify the normal parking lot curbing requirement: “For reconstruction or resurfacing of existing parking lots, or expansion of existing parking lots where the size of the expansion plus any other expansions in the previous five years does not exceed 50% of the parking lot area before such expansion(s).”
11. Section 94.12.09(6)(i): Landscaping Standards – Remove requirement that landscaping is required for a project that otherwise would solely involve the conversion of a gravel parking lot to a paved parking lot, not including parking lot expansion or other site improvements that would normally be accompanied by landscaping under the zoning ordinance.
12. Section 94.16.06: Conditional Use Permits – Modify procedures and standards for considering conditional use permit applications to bring into conformance with 2017 Wisconsin Act 67.

The consultant reviewed other zoning ordinance provisions, including those identified by stakeholders as potentially problematic. For these other standards, the consultant determined that there was occasionally misunderstanding of the requirement, already adequate flexibility in the zoning ordinance without having to appeal for a variance to the Board of Zoning Appeals, perhaps stricter-than-necessary interpretation and enforcement of the requirement, and/or overriding reasons not to amend.

The consultant also reviewed the village's subdivision regulations (Chapter 74), but does not recommend any amendments at this time. The village's standards are generally in line with other suburban (not rural) community standards, and Section 74.12.02 already provides an opportunity for waivers and exceptions to every standard in Chapter 74 without having to go to a separate approval body (i.e., no Board of Zoning Appeals).

Appendix D: Suggested Department Structure and Position Descriptions

Service and Department Structure

As part of this audit, the consultant examined the village's existing staffing structure for land development review services and within the Planning and Development Department. The chart on the following page graphically represents how these services and Department are organized, with limited consultant-proposed adjustments.

The most significant proposed adjustment is a new Economic Development Coordinator position. This is suggested at a similar grade to the Assistant Planner position, but serving a different function. The Economic Development Coordinator position would be primarily responsible for promoting economic, housing, and community development in the village in a manner consistent with the village's plans and vision. The position could serve as the Executive Director for the Community Development Authority and the manager of the village's tax incremental districts. The position may be fundable, at least in part, through the village's tax incremental districts.

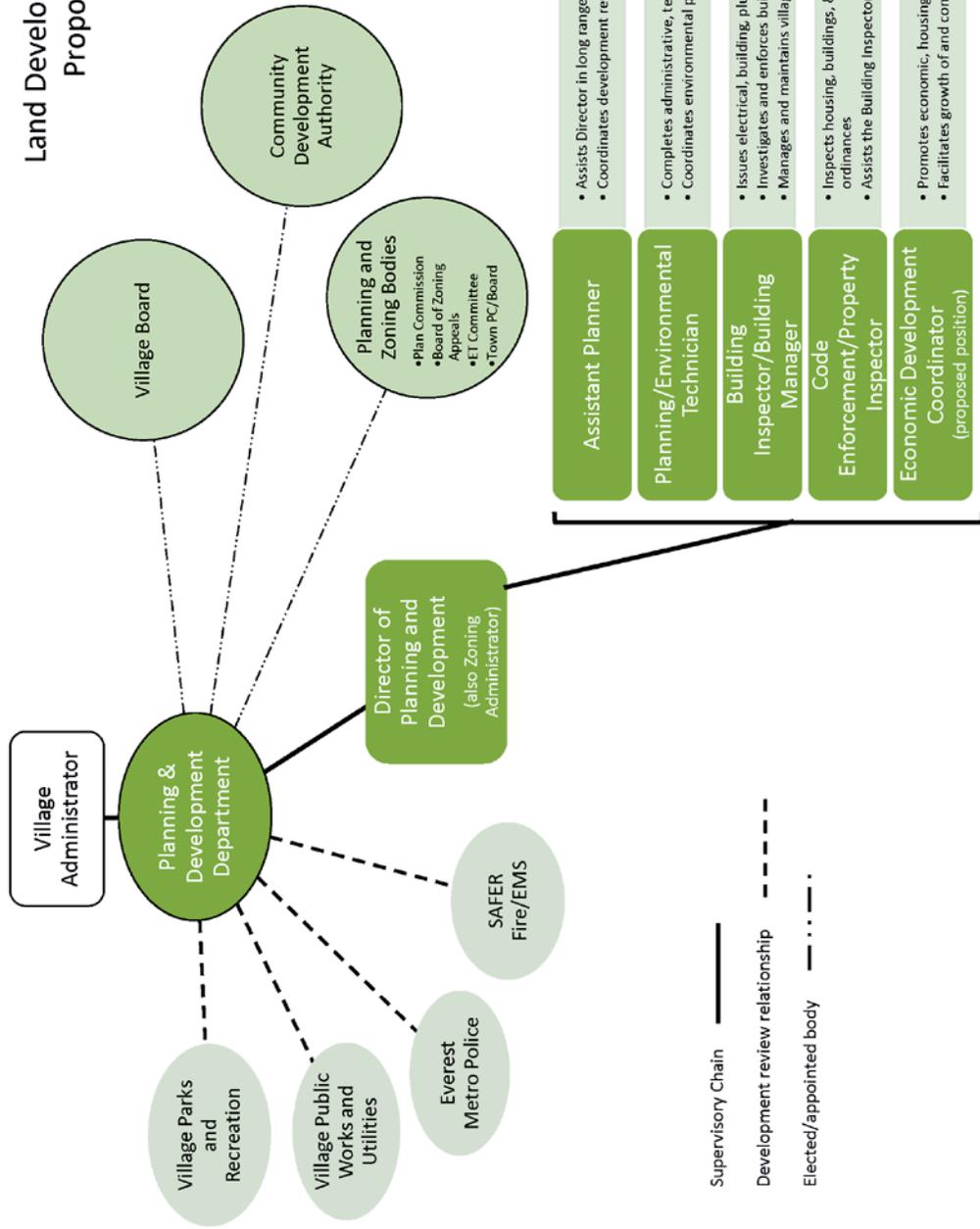
The Economic Development Coordinator position would be exclusively focused on economic growth and health of the village. In this role, the position could be a liaison and advocate for the business and development community. A separated position would relieve the potential for conflicts associated with assigning that role to personnel focused on land use planning/regulation and all-constituent representation. Relatedly, the position would also relieve workload from Director of Planning and Development and Village Administrator. The persons in both of those positions both work significantly greater hours than required, without extra compensation, which the consultant does not believe is sustainable.

Position Descriptions

The pages that follow the organizational chart include the proposed position description for the Economic Development Coordinator position. In addition, the consultant has proposed revisions to position descriptions for each of the current Planning and Development Department positions. These other descriptions are available upon request.

The existing position descriptions generally contain appropriate technical requirements of the associated jobs, but do not always capture the actual duties of the current people in those positions. They also lack appropriate emphasis on interpersonal and customer service skills and connection to the village's and department's vision and mission. A potential candidate, hiring agent/committee, or supervisor can use this type of information to evaluating whether or not the candidate or employee is a good fit.

Village of Weston Land Development Review Services Proposed Organization Chart



Village of Weston, Wisconsin
PROPOSED Job Description – Economic Development Coordinator

Division:	Services	Reports To:	Dir of Planning & Development
Department:	Planning and Development	Pay Grade:	I
FLSA Status:	Exempt	Last Updated:	5/7/2018

This description is not an announcement of a position opening. To view current openings please visit www.westonwi.gov/jobs. The following statements are intended to describe, in broad terms, the general functions and responsibility levels characteristic of positions assigned to this classification. They should not be viewed as an exhaustive list of the specific duties and prerequisites applicable to individual positions that have been so classified.

Purpose of the Position

Under the direction of the Director of Planning and Development, the Economic Development Coordinator plans, organizes, and coordinates the Village’s economic, housing, and community development programs and functions. The goal of such programs will be to insure a healthy business climate, provide more goods and services, and retain and grow jobs and tax base in the Village. This Coordinator forges strategic alliances with local and prospective businesses, industries, and regional and state development entities.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

1. Help refine and implement the Village’s economic development strategy and corridor and other economic development-focused plans.
2. Implement economic development and redevelopment efforts, including the oversight of associated planning, engineering, and other contracts and assistance with development agreements.
3. Attract, retain, and help grow businesses, industries, and housing consistent with the Village’s vision, understanding of Village incentives, ordinances, and other constraints and opportunities.
4. Work with other Village staff in the administration, amendment, and creation of tax incremental districts and associated project plans.
5. Develop clear standards against which economic development and redevelopment projects will be evaluated for potential Village support, and articulate the costs/benefits of development proposals to Village officials.
6. Serve as the Executive Director of the Village’s Community Development Authority.
7. Keep abreast of local, county, state, and federal legislation and programs that could impact economic development activity in Weston.
8. Pursue regional, state, and federal grants, loans, and other financial incentives to support Weston’s economic development, related infrastructure investment efforts, and interested businesses and developers.
9. Develop relationships with the business community and engage in business development, retention, and expansion efforts.
10. Refine and implement a business recruitment and economic development marketing strategy and promotional materials.
11. Facilitate efficient approval process for economic development entitlements, zoning, and incentives. Help guide businesses and developers through these processes.
12. Establish clear channels of communication between various partners involved in economic development, including financial institutions and real estate professionals.

13. Compile and share economic, housing, and community development data, including land availability and site selection, demographic information, community profile, business feasibility, trade ring analysis, workforce data, development trends, and inventory of existing businesses and available industrial and commercial sites and buildings.
14. Engage in effective communications with the Department's customers, including builders and developers, business people, and residents, in accordance with Department policies and best practices in customer service.
15. Assist with other economic and community development, planning, land development, and administrative work as directed.

Job Requirements and Preferences

- Bachelor's Degree in real estate, marketing, economics, community and economic development, urban planning, public administration/affairs, or another related field (required).
- Professional experience in economic development, business development, municipal planning, or some combination (preferred).
- Valid motor vehicle operator's license (required).

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Knowledge of the principles, methods, and practices of community and economic development and planning.
- Working knowledge of municipal government.
- Knowledge of real estate, finance, and promotional and marketing techniques.
- Knowledge of laws, statutes, and regulations governing economic development.
- Understanding of economic development incentive programs including tax incremental financing, and the relationship between economic development, municipal finance, and land regulation.
- Ability to read and interpret laws, policies, plans, and other documents.
- Ability to perform research and select, compile, analyze, and share data.
- Strong interpersonal communication and customer service skills.
- Interest and ability in building trusting, effective working relationships with business and development interests, Village officials and staff, community representatives, outside governmental and economic development agencies, media, and the general public.
- Familiarity with techniques in negotiation, facilitation, and conflict resolution—and skills and willingness to engage in such techniques.
- Ability to understand and be understood in written and oral communications.
- Ability to balance individual responsibilities with working in a collaborative environment.
- Ability to complete work tasks thoroughly, accurately, and in a timely manner.
- Ability to successfully manage stressful situations and heavy work volumes.
- Ability to learn, adapt to, and share new technologies in the field.
- Computer skills as follows: MS Word – Advanced; MS Excel – Intermediate; MS Power Point – Intermediate; Arcview GIS – Basic to Intermediate; Advanced Adobe Creative Suite or related – Basic to Intermediate;

Work Environment

Ability to work in a standard office environment with limited exposure to hazards. Site visits may be required and may be hazardous in nature.

Appendix E: Draft Policies and Procedures Guide

Introduction

This guide provides the Village of Weston’s land development review staff with procedures for interactions with customers and each other. This guide borrows from best practices provided by others in the field, such as the American Planning Association.

This guide is not intended to repeat or substitute for policies or procedures established by ordinance, statute, or administrative rule. Each staff member interacting with procedures specified by law should become familiar with and follow such laws. Each staff should also follow and be responsive to the village’s employee handbook and his or her professional code of ethics. For planners, see:

<https://www.planning.org/ethics/ethicscode/>.

Interpersonal Communications and Customer Service

How the land development review staff approach communication is as important as their technical performance.

Below is a list of skills associated with customer service and internal communications that staff is expected to absorb and practice. While this list is not exhaustive, it offers an idea of the desired attitudes and approaches for land development review staff.

- **Communication** verbal, presenting, listening, problem-solving
- **Courtesy** manners, etiquette, respect, responsiveness
- **Empathy** understanding different backgrounds, limits, concerns, costs
- **Flexibility** adapting to different styles, accepting different approaches
- **Creativity** solution-oriented, problem solving
- **Integrity** honest, ethical, high moral standards, “do unto others”
- **Social skills** personable, empathetic, self-control, patience
- **Attitude** optimistic, enthusiastic, encouraging, aimed towards results
- **Professionalism** businesslike, poised, confident but not condescending
- **Responsibility** accountable, reliable, timely, resourceful, self-disciplined
- **Work ethic** willing to work, loyal, initiative, self-motivated, on time
- **Teamwork** cooperative, agreeable, supportive, advances community vision

No one person excels at all of the above desired skills. Still, everyone can improve and be willing to admit when they may have fallen short.

Basic Practices

The following are basic customer service and interpersonal practices that land development review staff are expected to observe:

- **First impressions.** There is only one chance to make a first impression, and poor first impressions tend to stick. Attempt to make a favorable first impression at all times.
- **General approach.** Work towards mutually-acceptable solutions wherever consistent with laws and policies, recognizing where flexibility may be warranted. Make sure people know you've heard them.
- **Response time.** Respond to all emails and phone calls within 24 hours, or by Monday after a Friday. When away, make it clear in a voicemail and automated email response when you will return, and provide another staff person to contact if the requestor cannot wait that long.
- **Appointments.** Encourage customers to schedule appointments at mutually agreeable times, explaining that walk-ins can interrupt work flow and efficient operations. Schedule requested appointments and inspections as soon as practical. Respect this practice.
- **Communication style.** Keep written communications concise, complete, and focused on the intended audience. Plan your verbal communications before starting them. Speak clearly and at an appropriate volume for the setting (or use a microphone). Write and speak in plain English. See <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/write/plain-english.html>.
- **Emails vs. other forms.** Avoid too many and long emails. If the email text cannot be read without scrolling, it is probably too long. Lean more on phone calls or meetings to engage in dialogue or to deal with complex or potentially controversial issues.
- **Time off.** Avoid overlapping time off with staff with similar functions, especially during peak development season. This may mean sacrifices around the holidays and summer in particular. Some vacation time may need to be redirected to other periods.
- **Out of office.** Inform each other and front desk staff when leaving the office, when expected to return, and when actually returning.
- **Mutual respect.** Respect your co-workers and their time and expertise. Respond to information or review requests in the desired timeframe, without need for reminders. Try not to tread into others' areas of expertise or responsibility without their advance knowledge and consent.
- **Meeting agendas.** Prepare, share, and follow agendas for all meetings. Include clearly defined outcomes and meeting end times. For short or simple meetings, agendas can be verbal as long as they are mutually understood. Summarize outcomes.
- **Packet delivery.** Complete and distribute Plan Commission and other public meeting agenda packets at least four days before the meeting, which means that internal staff coordination and review should be completed sooner. Provide agenda and applicable reports directly to applicants.

Dealing with Difficult Situations

At times, even after engaging in the attitudes and practices in this guide, land development review staff will encounter difficult situations and customers. This is not surprising, as few people like to be regulated!

In approaching these difficult encounters, “the customer is always right” is an overused and often unhelpful credo. A better substitute might be that “the customer should always be heard and respected.” The following are tips to help overcome and perhaps turn around difficult situations with challenging customers:

- Work to truly understand their concerns and perspective. How can you be educated? Are they concerned about costs? Being treated fairly? Might they be affected by a prior unpleasant experience? Might they just be having a bad day?
- Always maintain a calm, respectful demeanor. Do not raise your voice, speak in condescending tones or words, or engage in threatening or dismissive body language—even if they do.
- Avoid difficult situations based on misunderstanding or miscommunications. Near the end of the conversation, or at key points, attempt to restate their concern or problem, and see if they agree. Try not to walk away from a meeting when you believe there is a misunderstanding.
- Maintain consistency among interactions and application of plans and rules across different customers. In response a difficult interaction, avoid either providing the person special treatment in a positive or negative way.
- Seek ways to move forward on the bigger project or request, while addressing or tabling the issue of concern.
- Practice the appropriate level of flexibility under ordinances, other laws, and good professional and ethical practice. Call “time out” and seek help or a second opinion when needed.
- Know when to say when. If you feel you don’t have the information, authorization, or patience to address the problem, politely say so and provide a reasonable timeframe for a response or follow-up conversation.
- Everyone makes mistakes, especially when dealing with difficult or stressful situations. When you make a mistake, apologize ASAP and otherwise work to improve the situation.

Amendments and Additions

When individuals are involved with making and shaping policies that personally affect them, they are likelier to adopt and implement them. Land development review staff is encouraged to suggest additions and revisions to this guide, and speak to the Director of Planning & Development with questions or concerns.

Appendix F: Draft Land Development Handbook

A land development handbook can help first-time and occasional users of the village's development review services. A development handbook should be written clearly, allowing a customer unfamiliar with the village to easily understand what may be needed to build something.

Two examples of relatively long (15+ pages) handbooks can be found by clicking on the following links:

[Guide to Waunakee Development and Village Services](#)

[City of Oconomowoc Development Process and Fees](#)

A useful handbook, however, need not be long. In fact, a handbook may risk being unhelpful and overwhelming if it is too long.

The consultant recommends a handbook derived from the draft on the following pages. The draft should be finalized following input from village staff, board and commission members, and members of the development and building community. Before finalizing the handbook, the intended audience(s) should be finalized. Prospective or expanding businesses (which is the current focus of draft)? Home owners considering weekend projects? Contractors? The handbook should be available in both print and digital (web, PDF) form. Digital versions should include hyperlinks to contacts' email addresses and on-line resources like application forms.

Land Development Handbook



On behalf of the Village of Weston, its Village Board, and its staff, we are happy and appreciative that you are interested in our community!

Please contact us at any time if we can be of assistance. We will best be able to serve you if you make an appointment.

Municipal Building
5500 Schofield Avenue
Weston, WI 54476

Hours: Monday - Friday: 8:00 - 4:30
Ph: 715-359-6114
<https://westonwi.gov/>

Contact Information

Administration	715-359-6114
Planning and Development	715-241-2638
Building or Property Inspector	715-359-6114
SAFER Fire/EMS	715-355-6763
Everest Metro Police	715-359-4202
Public Works/Utilities	715-241-2610
Advanced Disposal	715-359-6637
Wisconsin Public Service (Electric and Gas)	800-450-7260
Marathon County Development Corporation (MCDEVCO)	715-298-0084
Wausau Region Chamber of Commerce	715-845-6231

Boards and Committees

The village has several boards and committees. The following are most often involved in development policy and review:

Village Board. Elected representatives of the village. Sets village policy through adopted plans, budget, ordinances.

Village Plan Commission. Guides village plans and requests for rezoning, conditional use permit, land divisions, and certain site plan approvals that are not staff-approved.

Board of Zoning Appeals. Considers requests for zoning ordinance variances and appeals to administrative decisions.

Community Development Authority. Helps set and guide village economic and housing development policy.

Common Village Permits, Licenses, and Approvals

Licensing. Depending on your business activities, your establishment may be required to obtain various licenses including operator, alcohol, tobacco, sellers' permits, and/or special events permits. Contact Village Clerk's office.

Building Permit. Construction and remodeling work may require a building permit. Examples include (but are not limited to) new construction, remodeling, fences, paving, roofing, siding, plumbing, and HVAC. Contact the Building or Property Inspector.

Fire Inspection. Your non-residential construction project (new or existing space build-out) may require additional Fire-Code applications and permitting. Contact the Fire Inspector.

Occupancy Permit. Whether moving into an existing space or building new, the Village asks that business owners obtain an occupancy permit. Village staff will verify that the business complies with local fire, zoning, and building codes. Contact the Building or Property Inspector.

Zoning Approval. If you are doing a commercial building project, your project may require some type of zoning approval, such as a rezoning, a conditional use permit, and/or site plan approval. Contact the Assistant Planner with the Planning & Development Director.

Sign Permit. Most permit signs above a certain size require a sign permit. Temporary and other types of signs often don't require a sign permit, but are still subject to size and other requirements. Contact the Assistant Planner with the Planning & Development Director.

Utility Connections. Whether in a new facility or an existing space, please consider a proactive call to the Utilities department to setup Water/Sewer/Storm water utility accounts. Contact the Public Works & Utilities Department.

Public Safety. Contact the Everest Metro Police Department to help the department better serve you. By knowing your business, officers are more likely to notice irregularities and respond quicker.

Your development project may also be subject to county, state, and even federal approvals. The village may be able to help you identify some of these, but such non-village approvals are ultimately you or your contractor's responsibility.

Frequently Asked Questions

What types of beneficial information/services are available on the village website?

There is a calendar of events, news updates, numerous forms, image and video galleries as well as quick links to recreation programs, online payments, to name a few.

What type of work requires a building permit?

Please consult the village website, our development handbook, or feel welcome to contact our Building or Property Inspector with the contact information provided in this document.

What are the village's allowed construction hours?

Construction equipment in all zones may be operated between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Are there liquor licenses available for selling alcoholic beverages?

The sale and consumption of alcohol is regulated by the State of Wisconsin. Please contact the Village Clerk for guidance.

Is there specific licensing required for food establishments?

Retail food establishments are required to be licensed. Any establishment selling food or drink, to be consumed on or off the premises, with or without seating, must have a seller's permit and pass all inspections and additional requirements and licensing from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (608-224-5012, www.datcp.wi.gov) as well as the Marathon County Health Department (715-261-1900).