

Sampson County Economic Development Customer Service Analysis

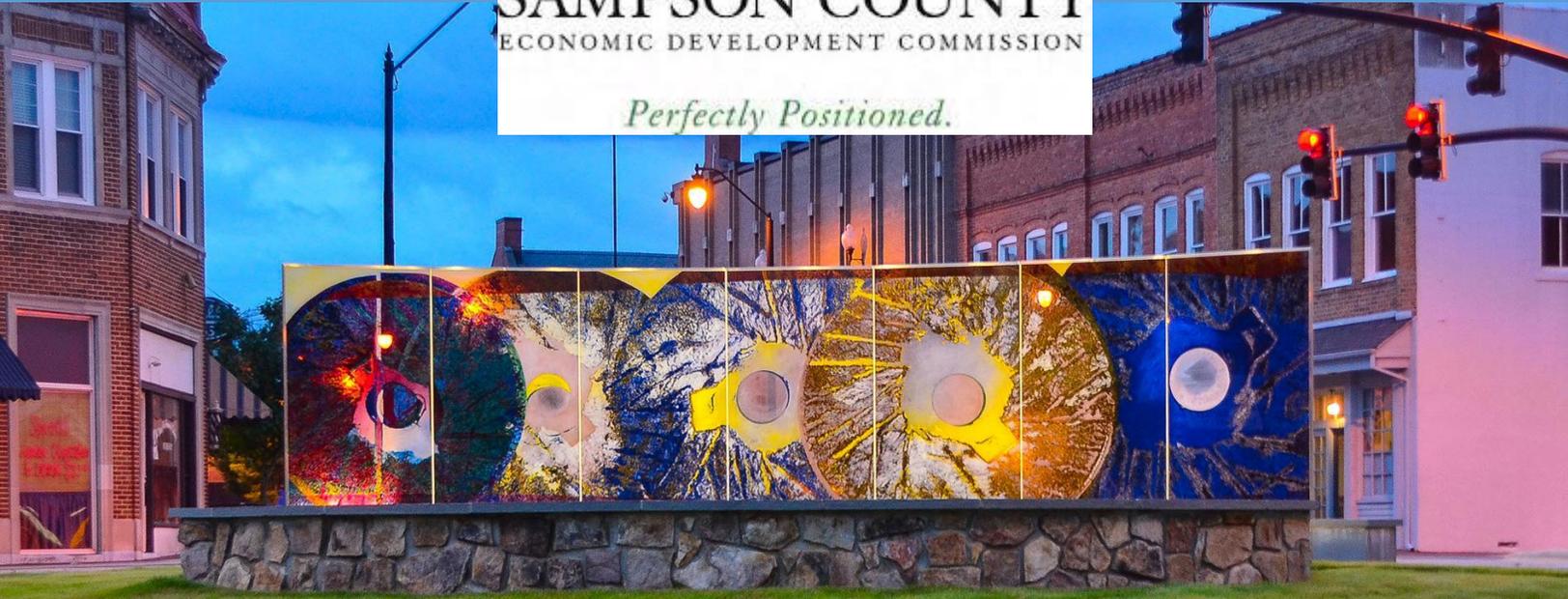


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the spring of 2019, Sampson County engaged Creative Economic Development Consulting to perform a Customer Service Analysis related to economic development. The project gathered input on customer service and pinpointed ways to improve customer satisfaction. More than 90 businesses, citizens, county staff, and ally organizations had input into this analysis.

The Customer Service Analysis found Sampson County is business-friendly and provides quality customer service to businesses and citizens. The county rated high on responsiveness, communication, and time to completion.

The Customer Service Analysis evaluated departments that are engaged with economic development and the business community, including: County Administration, Economic Development, Environmental Health, Inspections, Planning and Zoning, Public Works, and Tax Administration. Business, citizens, and ally organizations rated the departments through an online survey and interviews. County staff provided input via a focus group session.

All departments were rated above average. The Economic Development Department was rated the highest and was noted for responsiveness, professionalism, and effective communications. The second highest rated department was County Administration, which was also noted as responsive and engaged. Lower rated departments were often cited for being closed on Fridays, which impacts customer service through accessibility, but is not a direct impact of staff customer service.

The findings and recommendations are organized in seven areas:

- ⦿ Service Hours
- ⦿ Streamline the Development Process
- ⦿ Enhance Communications
- ⦿ Business Liaison
- ⦿ Team Training
- ⦿ Engage County Staff
- ⦿ Economic Development Strategic Plan

Within these seven areas there are several recommended action steps. A few of note are: using a technical team approach to streamline the development process; increasing communications from the county to the community; designating a Customer Service Representative in each department; designating the Economic Development Department as the business liaison; engaging county staff in customer service evaluations; and developing and sharing with the community an economic development strategic plan.

Implementing a policy of regular customer service surveys following transactions and inquiries will provide continuous feedback. This information can be used on an FAQ webpage and for quick adjustments in departments. Finally, we recommend the customer service study be repeated every 12-18 months to gauge the impacts of policy and program changes.

Sampson County, and the Economic Development Department specifically, should tout its accomplishments to the general public and its regional and state allies. An annual report and State of the County meeting are just two ways to do this. Use this report, and other communications, to continue to tell the Sampson County story.

SUMMARY OF BUSINESS SURVEY & INTERVIEWS

Sampson County distributed an online survey to approximately 340 customers of economic development, environmental health, tax, planning, inspections, and public works. There were 41 responses, a 12% response rate, which is good for an online survey. The full survey results can be found in Appendix A.

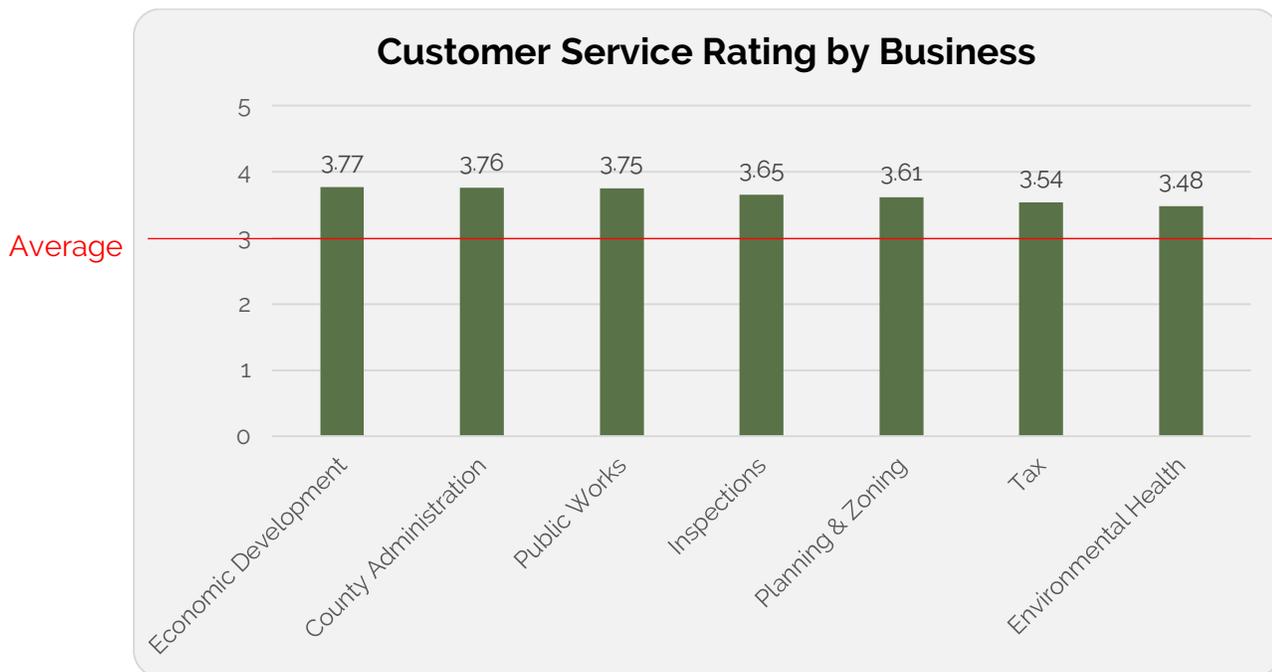
The top three departments with the most overall interaction from businesses include Environmental Health, Tax, and Inspections. Below is an individual departmental breakout providing detailed customer service feedback. Overall, the county scored a 3.54 out of 5 on business-friendliness, which is slightly above average (3 is average). There are some minor weaknesses cited, but most report the county does a good job meeting the needs of the business community.

- ⦿ County Administration scored a 3.76 out of 5 for customer service, above average. Approximately 24% of the respondents noted County Administration as above average, 72% as average, and only 4% as below average. In several survey responses, it was noted that there is a communications gap. Staff, as well as board members, sometimes do not respond to issues, emails, or phone calls timely. However, in personal interviews, staff and the Board of Commissioners were noted as responsive and engaged with the community and individual municipalities.
- ⦿ Economic Development scored a 3.77 out of 5 for its customer service rating, which was the highest score for all departments evaluated. Of the businesses surveyed, 42% said customer service is above average, 53% said service is average, and only 5% said service is below average. The local business community feels strongly that the department is very responsive and professional and communicates effectively. Several comments were made about the need for more funding for this department. Overall, businesses said this department does a great job. They work hard and spend limited resources diligently to make the county successful.
- ⦿ Environmental Health scored a 3.48 out of 5 for its customer service rating, which was the lowest overall score for all the departments listed but still slightly above average. Approximately 44% of the businesses surveyed said customer service is above average and 32% feel the service is average. Roughly 24% feel the service is below average, which is the highest dissatisfaction rate for all the departments, but still a relatively low figure. Several businesses stated that the department does not respond to calls or requests in a timely manner. For this reason, many stated that the department should be open five days a week. Some stated that their processes need to be more streamlined for builders and developers. Overall, the department is friendly and treats customers well.
- ⦿ The Inspections Department scored a 3.65 out of 5 for customer service. Of the businesses surveyed, 44% said they are providing above average customer service, 39% said it is average, and 17% said below average. Some businesses said communication skills need to be improved. It was stated that the department needs to streamline the process for builders of stick-built subdivisions, as well as have the department accessible five days a week. Even with a few challenges, businesses said the department is friendly and fair, and they recognize the department has a large territory with a heavy work load.
- ⦿ The Planning & Zoning Department scored a 3.61 out of 5 customer service rating. Approximately 32% of the businesses said customer service is above average, while 45% said it is average. Roughly 23% of the businesses said customer service is below average, which is the second highest dissatisfaction rate of all the departments listed, but again a relatively small number. Businesses commented on the department's lack of customer service and difficulty working with the board. It was stated that they need to streamline processes for developers and be willing to modify regulations in order to promote development. Other comments were that the department is fast

Economic Development
Highest
Customer Service
Rating by Business

and efficient, helpful with the location of zoned properties, and is striving to be more proficient and professional.

- Public Works scored a 3.75 out of 5 for its customer service rating. Of the businesses surveyed, 38% said customer service is above average, 57% said average, and almost 5% said below average. Businesses stated that the department handles responses in a timely manner and provides thorough information. They provide solid feedback and do an excellent job with the management and maintenance of the infrastructure.
- The Tax Administration department scored a 3.54 out of 5 for its customer service rating. This was the second lowest overall customer service rating out of the departments listed, but still slightly above average. Approximately 40% of the businesses said customer service is above average, 44% average, and 16% below average. Businesses said the department has fast and friendly service. One thing that would help is a phone system adjustment. It's hard to access the right people because many citizens do not know which division they need. Another thing that would help businesses is sending appraisal information sooner. The website is easy to use, and staff is accommodating and very knowledgeable.



Overall, Sampson County departments that interact with and serve businesses scored slightly above average in customer service. The few recommendations for enhancements were integrated into the Findings and Recommendations section of the report.

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY PARTNERS SURVEY

Sampson County Economic Development Commission distributed an online survey to approximately 175 ally organizations including local government, chamber, community college, economic development advisory board, and others. There were 12 responses, a 7% response rate, which is lower than the business survey. The full survey results can be found in Appendix B.

Ally organizations work with various groups throughout Sampson County. The top three ally groups that work most with economic development are the Economic Development Advisory Board, Committee of 100, and other community nonprofits. Allies were asked to rate the business-friendliness of the county government. Allies gave the county 3.64 stars out of 5, which is higher than the business community rated the county government.

The summary information below includes information gathered from the survey and phone interviews with ally organizations.

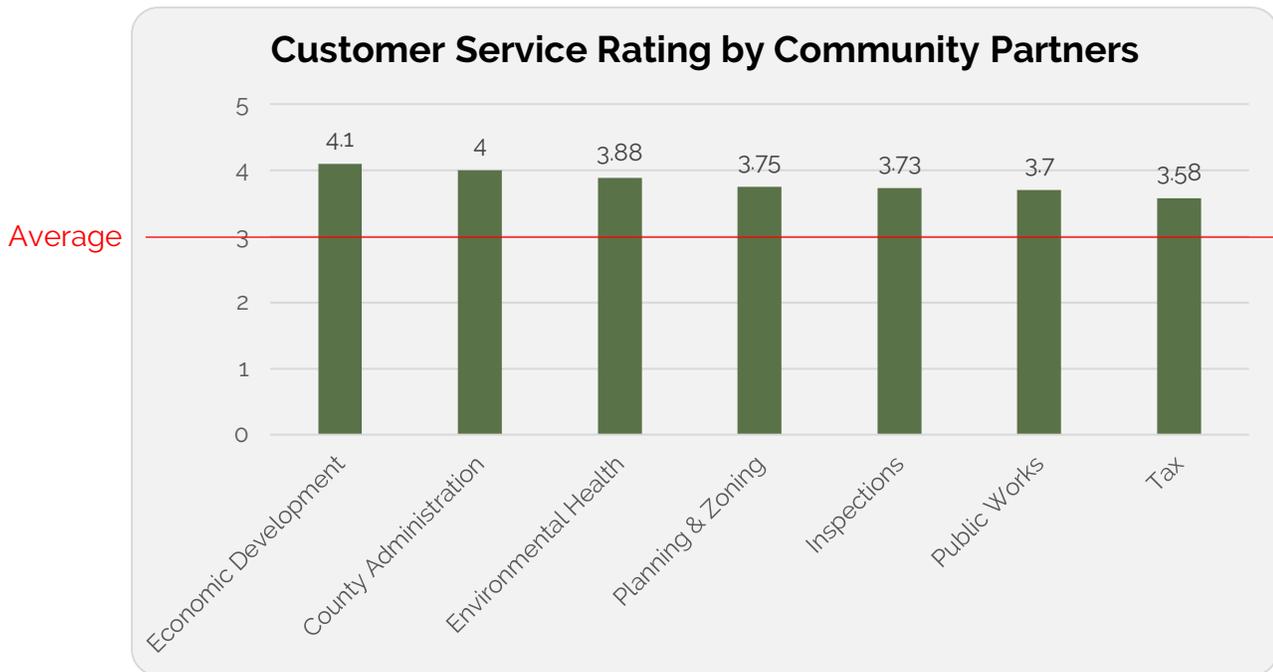
- ⊙ Allies gave the county administration 4 out of 5 stars for its customer service rating. Approximately 64% of the responses stated that the customer service was above average, while 36% feel it is average. No one gave this department a below average rating. Allies did feel that the department could improve on communication as well as enhance marketing. They felt it was important to keep citizens of Sampson County updated and informed of potential initiatives, but also realize that often information is time sensitive and confidential. Overall, allies feel like this department is knowledgeable, courteous, welcoming, and professional.
- ⊙ Economic development scored 4.1 stars out of 5 from the allies. Of the allies surveyed, 70% feel like the economic development department is above average with its customer service, which is the highest of all departments listed. Approximately 20% say they are average, and only 10% feel they are below average. It was stated that the department needs to build stronger partnerships and work on communication in keeping the area informed. Allies said the staff is passionate about the county, professional, knowledgeable, and helpful.

70%
Rate Economic
Development Above
Average

Interviews with ally organizations focused on the Economic Development Department. Their comments mirrored those of the business survey. They received kudos in responsiveness, personal interactions, and leveraging limited resources.

- ⊙ Environmental health scored 3.88 stars out of 5 for its customer service rating. Approximately 22% of allies feel the department is above average and 78% said average. There were no allies that gave this department a below average rating, which is significantly different from the business response, which gave the staff the highest below average rating. Allies recommend better communication and that this department move to a five-day work week. Most said staff are friendly and knowledgeable.
- ⊙ Allies rated Inspections 3.73 stars out of 5 for customer service. Of the allies surveyed, 50% rated the department above average, 40% average, and 10% below average. It was stated that the staff provides timely responses. They also said the department needs to operate five-days a week. Overall, allies feel like the department is friendly, knowledgeable, and helpful.
- ⊙ Planning & zoning received 3.75 stars out of 5 from the allies. This score fell right in the middle of all the departments. Approximately 22% of the allies said customer service for this department is above average and 78% said average. There were no allies that gave a below average rating, which again is different from the business survey, which gave the department the second highest below average rating. Allies said this department needs better communication and a five day a week schedule. Most felt the department is friendly, knowledgeable, and respectful.

- ⦿ Allies rated public works 3.7 stars out of 5, which is the second lowest overall rating. Of the allies surveyed, 30% rated it above average, while 50% said average and 20% below average. This was the highest dissatisfaction rating for the allies for all the departments, and was 15% higher than the dissatisfaction rating for the businesses surveyed. Allies stated better communication is needed and phone calls need to be returned timely. It was also stated that this department should operate on a five day a week schedule. Most feel staff are great, willing to help, and very respectful.
- ⦿ Tax administration scored 3.58 out of 5 stars. This was the lowest overall rating for customer service by allies. Approximately 25% of the allies said customer service is above average, 67% average, and 8% below average. Allies said that a phone system adjustment would improve customer service, as it's hard to access information. The allies also said the website is great and easy to use and that staff is professional and efficient.



As with the business survey, allies rated Sampson County customer service slightly above average. Again, the Economic Development Department received the highest rating. While there were a few comments for enhancement, overall the comments were kudos to the staff.

COUNTY STAFF INPUT SUMMARY

The consulting team facilitated an input session with county staff. The group discussed areas where they believe county staff excel and where they fall short in customer service. The group also brainstormed ways customer service could be improved.

County staff excel in personal communications. They are quick to respond, follow up, explain services and options well, and are good with personal interactions. Some use social media and other forms of communication to interact with the public. Others have implemented technologies to support customer service, such as providing multiple ways to pay bills.

County Staff Excel at Personal Communications

County staff acknowledge that some departments, such as Environmental Health, need more boots-on-the-ground for better customer service. There is a need for a broader understanding of other departments (cross training) and resources.

Staff recommended more public investment in personnel, technology, and some specific equipment such as four-wheel drive vehicles in the field. One technology investment example was scanning public records to digital forms. This will significantly reduce staff time searching for information. There was unanimous support for better facility signage at the government center to direct citizens.

County staff input mirrored the comments from businesses and other customers. This shows that county staff understand their strengths and weaknesses. Their recommendations for improvement address many of the customer service comments. One of our recommendations is to regularly engage staff for input on customer service enhancements. They engage with customers every day and have good ideas on how to improve service.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, Sampson County is doing a good job providing customer service to businesses, economic development prospects, and the general public. All departments were rated above average. All received direct comments about business-friendliness, responsiveness, and quality personal interactions. The recommendations below are designed to enhance the good customer service already provided by the county.



SERVICE HOURS

Conduct an in-depth analysis of the benefits of being open on Fridays. This was the most often and consistent customer service comment from businesses and the organizations that engage with business development. It was also noted in the county staff input session that being closed on Fridays impedes customer service. Friday closure:

- ⦿ Extends response time to customers.
- ⦿ Impacts business service providers: architects, builders, electricians, plumbers, engineers, etc.
- ⦿ Impacts response time for economic development inquiries.
- ⦿ Does not align with regional and state partners who are part of the economic development team.



STREAMLINE THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Investigate the "Technical Team Approach" used by Chatham County to streamline the development process. Streamlining and clarifying the regulatory process were consistent comments from businesses and allies. In the Chatham County model, all departments are represented at a standing weekly meeting to review and discuss development projects. Developers, businesses, builders, etc. can sign up to meet with the team, which includes representatives of Planning and Zoning, Inspections, Environmental Health, Fire Marshal, Recreation, Economic Development, etc., to review their plans and get questions answered in a collaborative group setting. This eliminates receiving an answer from one department that may conflict with an answer from another department. It also keeps all departments current on potential development projects.

ENHANCE COMMUNICATIONS

There were across-the-board comments on raising the level of communications, both internally among departments, and externally to businesses, allies, and economic development partners.

⦿ Increase internal communications from the Economic Development Department.

- Develop regular e-communications such as an eblast or newsletter. Send to advisory board, allies, stakeholders, public officials, etc.
- Maintain current news posts on the website.
- Create and post on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram. There are tools, such as Hootsuite, that allow one post to be sent to multiple social platforms.
- Create and share an Annual Report.



The Economic Development Department will need additional resources to implement a communications strategy – additional staff or funding to contract for services.

⦿ Create a full-time position for a Public Information Officer. It will be this position's responsibility to coordinate county communications to the public.

- The Public Information Officer should align communications strategies between departments. The position can help departments like Economic Development create and implement a communications plan.
- This will ensure a consistent business-friendly message from the county.
- The position will also expand awareness of business news. Interviewees said they are current on information only because they have a personal connection/network.



⦿ Designate one person in each department as the "Customer Service Representative." This person will receive a high level of cross-training with other departments that will allow them to direct any citizen to the right department and staff person to assist them. Everyone in each department will refer people to the CRM as a point of contact.

- The manual developed in County Administration could be the starting foundation of the cross-training.

⦿ Develop, distribute, and post online a Sampson County Annual Report that summarizes county projects and how those projects support the overall goals of the county.

- The annual report could be delivered at a "State of the County" meeting.

⦿ Consider adding a staff position of switchboard operator in the Tax Department. Customers of the Tax Department often do not know which division they need. After roaming the automated system, they are already frustrated by the time they reach a staff person.

⦿ Send a customer satisfaction survey to each customer of these departments following each service. It can be a simple survey of a few questions delivered by email using a service like Survey Monkey.

⦿ Keep a log of questions asked over 8 weeks to add a "Frequently Asked Questions" section to each department's website.

⦿ Review technology systems of allies, such as the City of Clinton, to determine feasibility of merging onto the same platform to enhance customer service. One example is zoning permits.

⦿ Organize an inter-departmental meeting once a year so department staff can become more knowledgeable about other departments and the resources they provide customers.

⦿ Invest in facility signage at the county government center to better direct citizens.

BUSINESS LIAISON

The economic development department acts as the single point of contact for businesses, a service that should be codified and promoted. One industry interviewee said that the Economic Development Department is their "go-to" for all needs. This single point of contact streamlines getting the right information to businesses in a timely manner.

- ⦿ Share with other departments that the Economic Development Department is the Sampson County Business Liaison. Ask them to direct all business inquiries to the department so they can be the liaison and guide businesses through the regulatory process.
- ⦿ Post on the EDC website that the department is the Business Liaison and list services the department provides business.
- ⦿ Develop a one-page marketing flyer for Business Liaison Services.
 - Post electronically on the website.
 - Use in e-communications.
 - Print in small quantities for promotions and handouts at other departments, Small Business Center, chamber, etc.

Designated
Business
Liaison

TEAM TRAINING

The Economic Development Department should create and implement an annual Team Training Program for county staff and allies who engage with prospects. Team members usually include community college training staff, utilities, planning and zoning, environmental health, inspections, etc. At the program:

- ⦿ Define and review each organization's role in the economic development process.
- ⦿ Update on prospect activity, product development, capital improvements, and other changes since the last team training session.
- ⦿ Review and sign a confidentiality policy.
- ⦿ Run through a mock project scenario exercise.

ENGAGE COUNTY STAFF IN CUSTOMER SERVICE REVIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- ⦿ Annually engage with county staff to ask for feedback on customer service and how it can be improved. Their input into this study shows they understand strengths and weaknesses and have good ideas for customer service improvements. This could be done through a survey with an in-person focus group every two or three years to add depth to the discussion.
- ⦿ In the budget planning process, ask staff for recommendations for investments in technology that will enhance customer service. Example is digitizing records.
- ⦿ In the budget planning process, ask staff for recommendations for personnel additions that will enhance customer service. Example is tax department switchboard operator.
- ⦿ Provide customer service training to raise performance in work areas and communicate the organization's value of customer service.
- ⦿ Use a "secret shopper" or "mock projects" as a way to evaluate the in-depth customer service experience. Realtors could be engaged to approach departments with mock projects as a training exercise.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

There is a need for an overall economic development strategic plan. Many allies reported not understanding the economic development program, desired goal outcomes, strategies, and how they can be supportive. A comprehensive economic development strategic plan will allow the Economic Development Department to communicate the county's goals, strategies, and how allies can support action steps. A strategic plan typically includes goals, strategies, and action steps for:

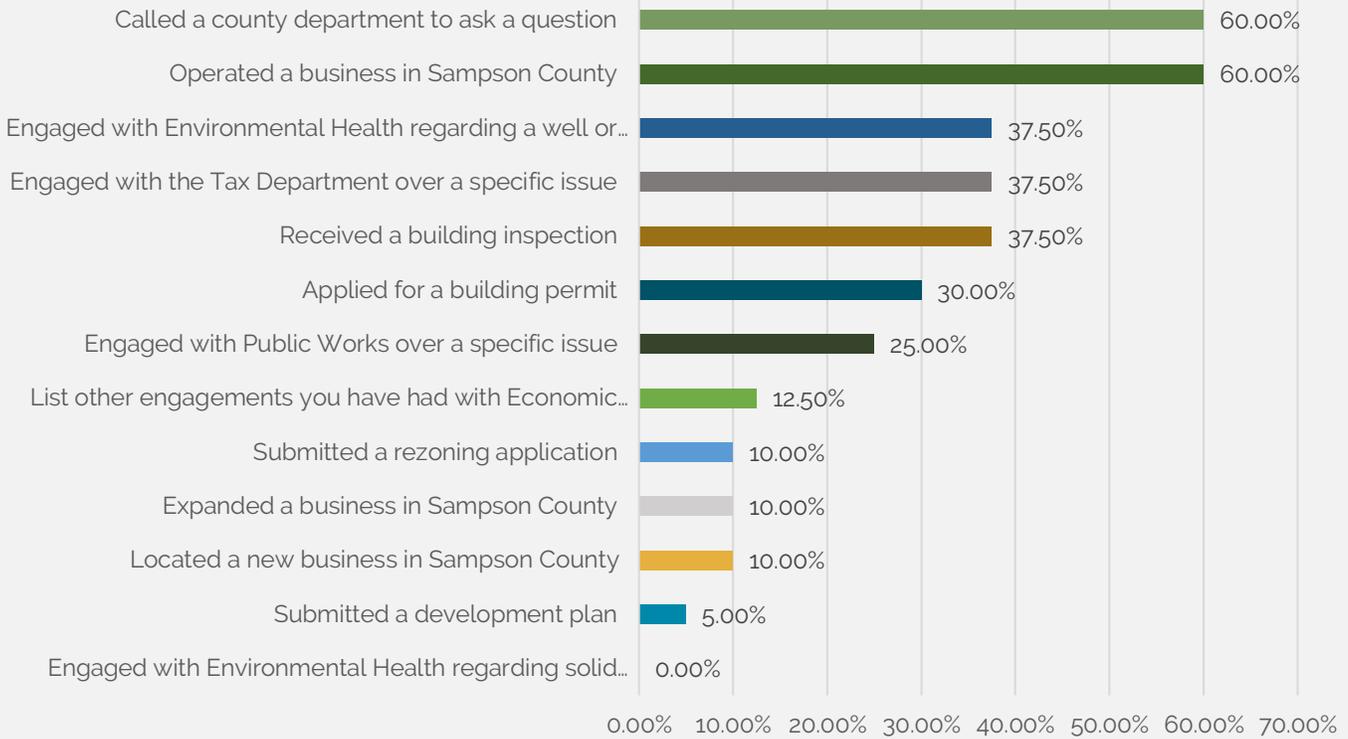
- ⦿ Business recruitment
- ⦿ Existing business retention and expansion
- ⦿ Product development
- ⦿ Internal and external marketing and communications
- ⦿ Talent development, retention, and attraction
- ⦿ Niche strategies specific to the community: entrepreneurship, tourism, retail development, downtown revitalization, and others

REPEAT SURVEY

Repeat the customer service survey every 12-18 months to gauge impacts of any changes.

APPENDIX A: BUSINESS CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY

Within in the last two years, I have...



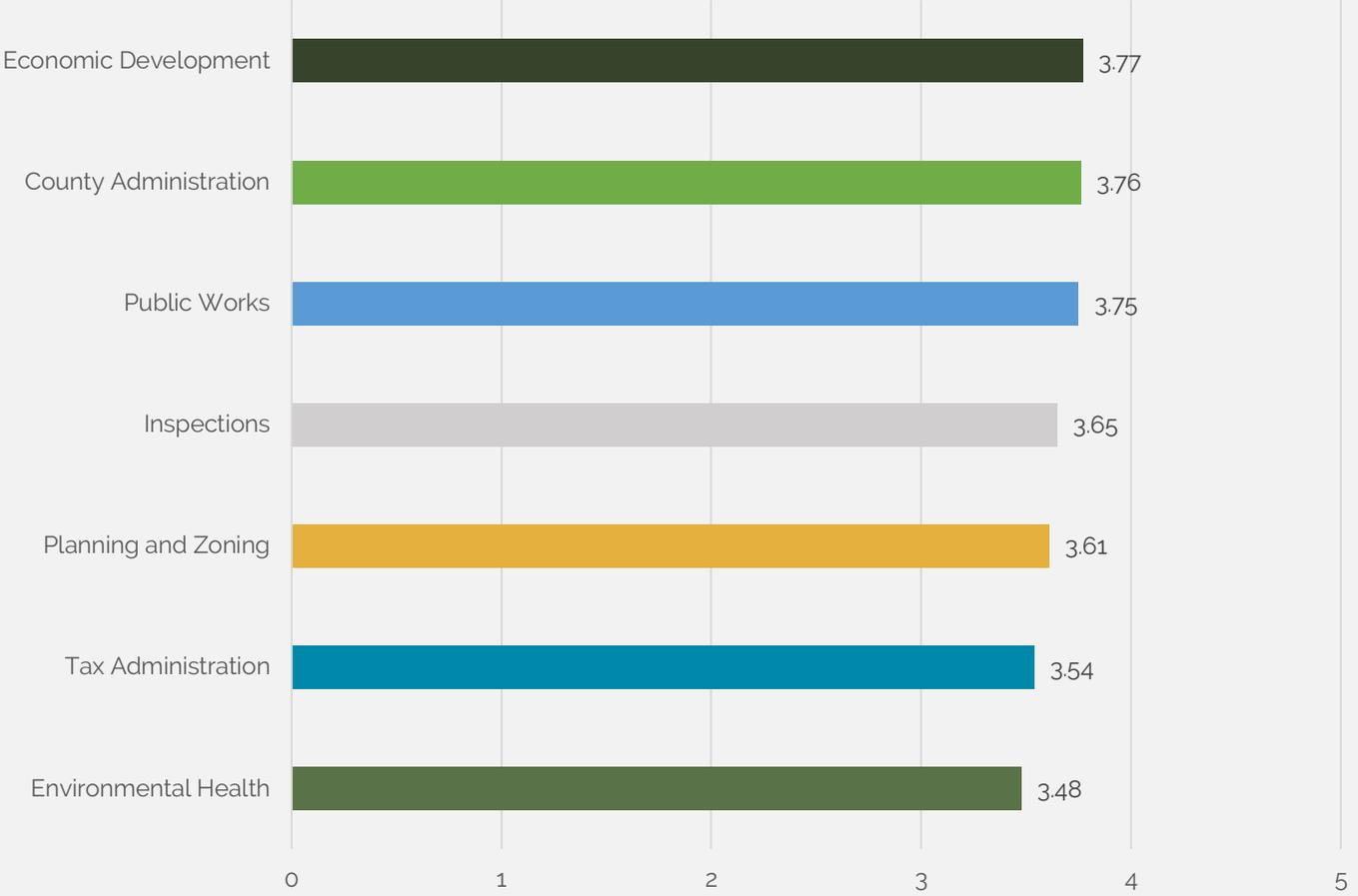
How business-friendly is Sampson County government?



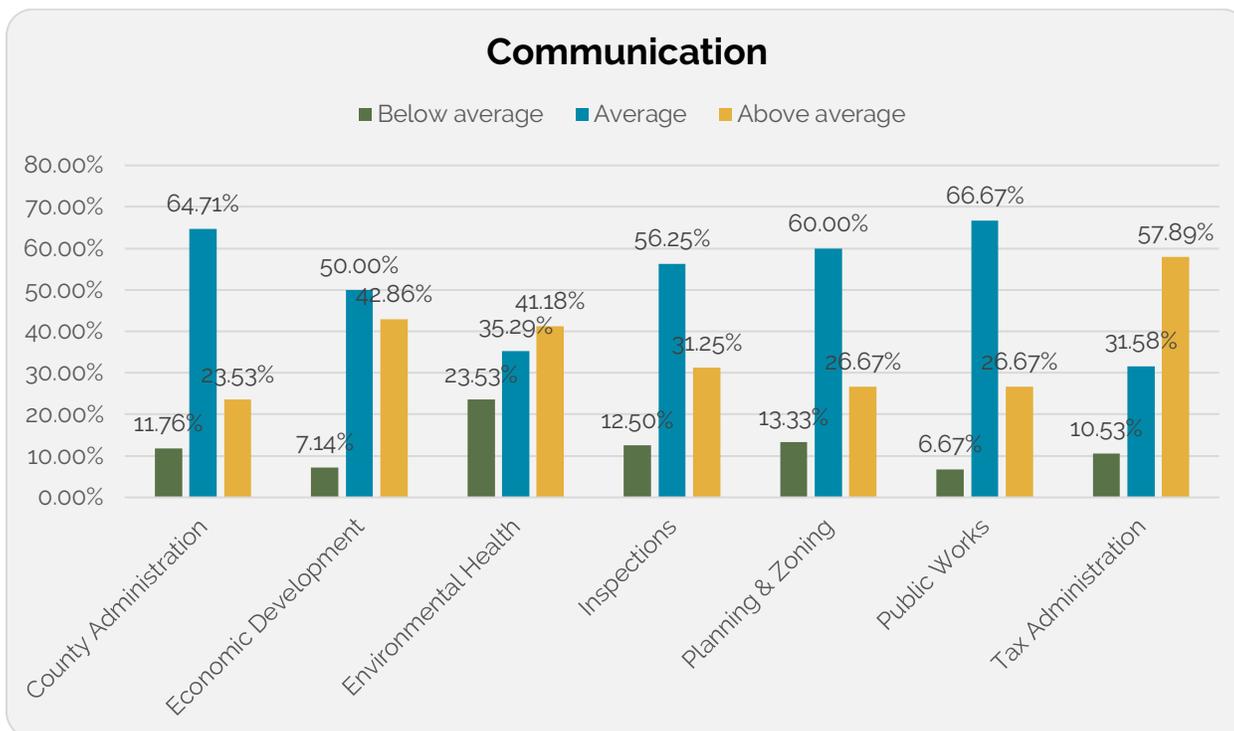
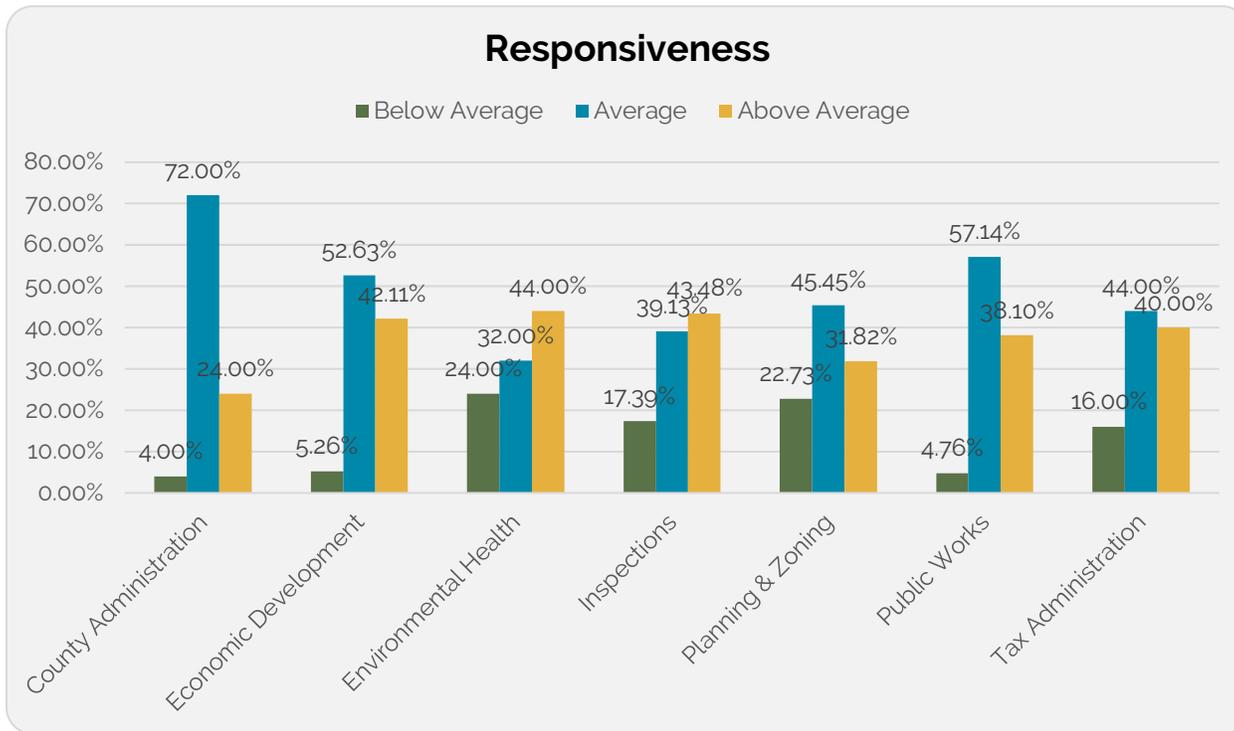
1=Poor Service | 2=Below Average Service | 3=Average Service | 4=Above Average | 5=Exceptional

Rate your overall customer service experience with the following Sampson County departments.

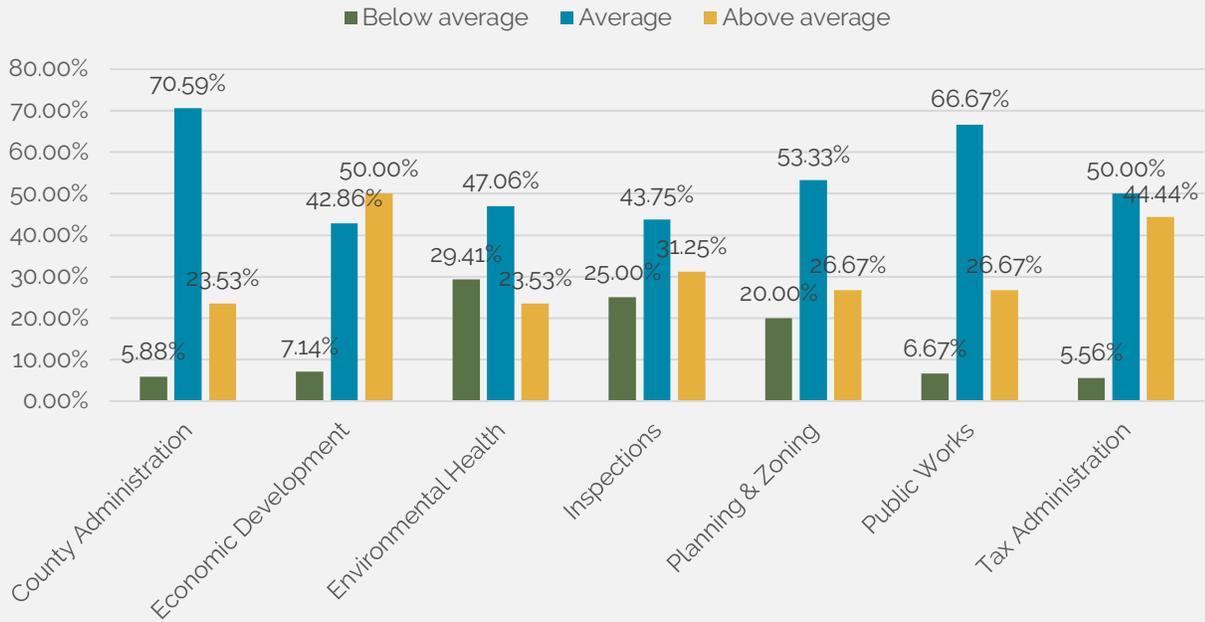
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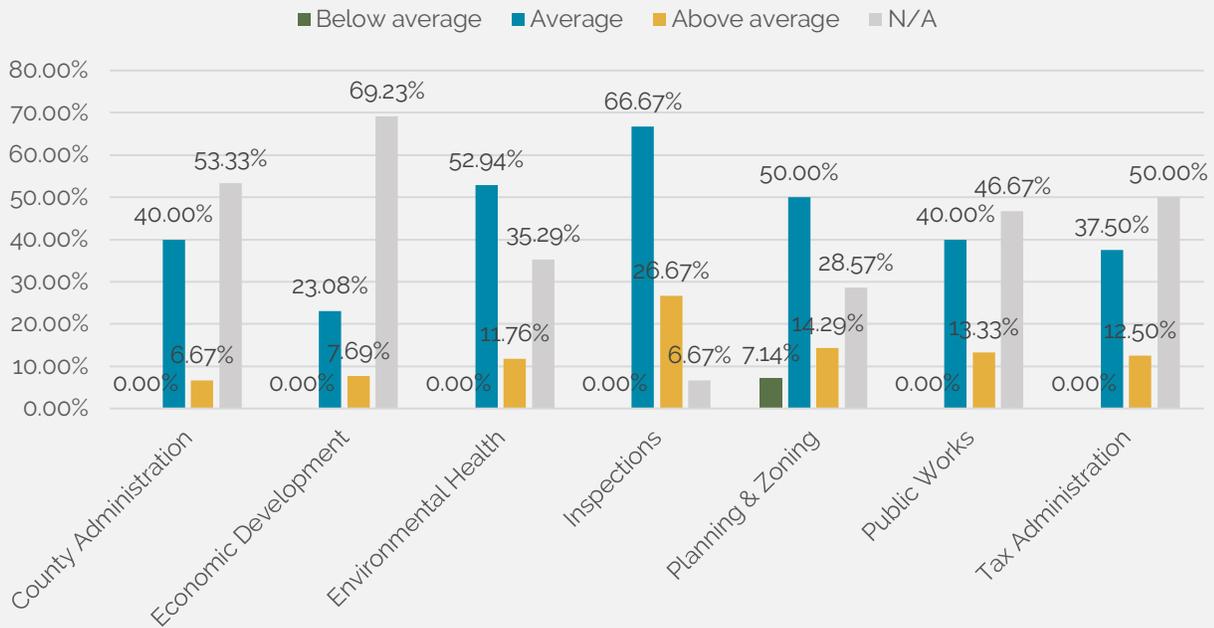
Rate the following customer service attributes within each department by using the drop-down menus.



Time To Completion



Cost



Name one thing each department could do to provide better customer service.

Not all comments were related to customer service. We segmented unrelated comments.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

- ⊙ Address phone calls at time of receipt.
- ⊙ Talk to staff. Find out what they need to do a better job.
- ⊙ Board members should respond to emails
- ⊙ Act like you want to help when someone calls in.
- ⊙ More polite
- ⊙ Be more than just a face listening to problems - do something and communicate solutions to public.

Not related to customer service:

- ⊙ *Reduce staff by 50%*
- ⊙ *Clean up the trash and junk throughout the county.*
- ⊙ *Provide more assistance to law enforcement to get a better handle on the drug issue. Put pressure on Clinton City to consolidate the school systems to save money on administration.*
- ⊙ *Manage by "walking around" - see what is going on.*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ⊙ Maybe more "event" type interaction local and out of area
- ⊙ Perfect!
- ⊙ Work for entire county
- ⊙ Nothing at this time - Great material and visuals for growth
- ⊙ No complaints
- ⊙ Consolidate with Planning/Zoning/Inspections
- ⊙ More polite

Not related to customer service:

- ⊙ *Give more resources to this department*
- ⊙ *Need more funds to advertise/promote the county.*
- ⊙ *Start advertising Sampson County as industrial. We still have the image as being ag only*

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

- ⊙ Address phone calls at time of receipt.
- ⊙ Communication and timely service is needed.
- ⊙ Perfect!
- ⊙ Work 5 days a week.
- ⊙ Use a single application number or address that all departments use.
- ⊙ No complaints
- ⊙ Follow up as indicated
- ⊙ Put onsite wastewater treatment records online to be easily searched or make the search more user friendly. Streamline the process for builders and developers.
- ⊙ Nothing - just needs more help with work load
- ⊙ Open 5 days per week during business hours (8 am to 5 pm)
- ⊙ Permit process takes months
- ⊙ Learn the law
- ⊙ Work regular hours Monday - Friday and communicate better

Not related to customer service:

- ⊙ *4-wheel drive trucks.*
- ⊙ *Enforce environmental rules and regulations throughout the county.*

INSPECTIONS

- ⊙ Consider outside the box
- ⊙ Give them the right tools for the job
- ⊙ Perfect!
- ⊙ Work with people better
- ⊙ Training all staff, service every day of the week.
- ⊙ Stay open 5 days a week. Not close on Fridays
- ⊙ Work 5 days a week
- ⊙ No suggestions.
- ⊙ They let you know they are in control and can be intimidating
- ⊙ Follow up as indicated
- ⊙ Streamline the process for builders of stick-built subdivisions.
- ⊙ Open 5 days per week during business hours (8 am to 5 pm)
- ⊙ No other inspection department around is closed on Friday
- ⊙ Learn the law

Not related to customer service:

- ⊙ *Continue to put limits on trailer parks. We have enough mobile homes in the county.*

PLANNING & ZONING

- ⊙ Consider outside the box
- ⊙ Address phone calls at time of receipt.
- ⊙ Not customer friendly
- ⊙ Perfect!
- ⊙ Friendlier service
- ⊙ No suggestions.
- ⊙ Intimidating
- ⊙ Streamline for developers
- ⊙ Learn the law

Not related to customer service:

- ⊙ *They need to be open to modify regs in order to promote development.*
- ⊙ *Work with the towns like Garland, Roseboro, etc. to improve zoning issues.*
- ⊙ *Repeal county-wide zoning*

PUBLIC WORKS

- ⊙ ok job
- ⊙ Perfect!
- ⊙ Pleased
- ⊙ Act like you want to help when someone calls in
- ⊙ More polite

Not related to customer service:

- ⊙ *Continue efforts to get more clean water throughout the county.*
- ⊙ *Continue to invest in county-wide water.*

- ⊙ *Increase budget*

TAX ADMINISTRATION

- ⊙ Hire more people like Sheila Baldwin
- ⊙ Perfect!
- ⊙ I do not have any suggestions
- ⊙ Nothing
- ⊙ Get the appraisal information out sooner and know how it will impact tax rate.
- ⊙ I can't think of a thing. They are a pleasure to work with.
- ⊙ No suggestions.
- ⊙ List extension numbers of different depts. on answering machine
- ⊙ Everything
- ⊙ Lower taxes
- ⊙ Satisfied with my interactions at tax payments, business property, and real estate property. Staff is very helpful.

Not related to customer service:

- ⊙ *CUT TAX RATE , PROVIDE MORE TAX BILL INFORMATION*
- ⊙ *Tax rate is too high*
- ⊙ *County wide sales tax of 1% to help lower property taxes*
- ⊙ *Eliminate tax certification prior to deed recordation*

Provide a positive feedback item for each department.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

- ⊙ Half the personnel are doing a great job
- ⊙ Demonstrated friendly receptive attitude
- ⊙ Ed Causey does a good job.
- ⊙ Good Leadership shown by listening to Citizens
- ⊙ Dedicated staff and growth-oriented board.
- ⊙ Willing to listen.
- ⊙ Good job on putting more money towards economic development
- ⊙ County is better overall than 2, 4, 6 years ago - making progress

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ⊙ Keep up good work
- ⊙ All is good
- ⊙ Meetings around county were good.
- ⊙ Responsive
- ⊙ Director working hard to locate industry
- ⊙ Always responsive in an above average time, efficient and thorough in all things. Communicates well, professionally and holds confidence.
- ⊙ John is a great communicator and representation of the County
- ⊙ Will return calls and help if they can
- ⊙ Use the money wisely, continue doing a lot of homework so that once the money is spent it will be the best bang for our buck
- ⊙ Incremental progress at Sampson County Airport

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

- ⊙ They do a great job for the amount of people
- ⊙ Seem to be business friendly
- ⊙ They are cordial
- ⊙ All is good
- ⊙ They treat people fairly.
- ⊙ Glad they inspect Restaurants
- ⊙ Good people to work with
- ⊙ Friendly, trying their best to serve customers.
- ⊙ Needs to be more proactive in enforcing environment rules and regulations.
- ⊙ Janice is friendly and willing to help
- ⊙ Continue to be friendly to talk to as you have been in the past
- ⊙ Very Helpful
- ⊙ No publicly known health crisis
- ⊙ Very informative

INSPECTIONS

- ⊙ Cover a lot of area and an increased work load is notable
- ⊙ Great job. Need four-wheel drive trucks
- ⊙ Most inspectors really good to work with
- ⊙ Very timely
- ⊙ All is good
- ⊙ Staff is friendly
- ⊙ Staff is nice
- ⊙ Good people to work with
- ⊙ Fair and knowledgeable.
- ⊙ Friendly when meeting in person.
- ⊙ Staff Associate responded by email
- ⊙ Just like health continue to be friendly to talk to as in the past. Try keeping employees who are locals which helps
- ⊙ No publicly known building collapse
- ⊙ Helpful and knowledgeable

PLANNING & ZONING

- ⊙ Staff is pleasant
- ⊙ Demonstrated friendly receptive attitudes.
- ⊙ Fast & efficient but not business friendly
- ⊙ Communicate well and responsive
- ⊙ All is good
- ⊙ I have not had a good experience with new board.
- ⊙ Helpful in locating the Zoning of property
- ⊙ Striving to become more efficient and professional.
- ⊙ Wants to help
- ⊙ Continue working closely with the towns, they need help
- ⊙ Ended contract with Clinton and Anita Lane as director
- ⊙ Very helpful

PUBLIC WORKS

- ⊙ Good job, lot of water projects (county)
- ⊙ All is good

- ⦿ Lin Reynolds is good to work with.
- ⦿ Provides answers to questions
- ⦿ Good job on maintaining water system during storms, continue to invest in the infrastructure you need to maintain services during natural disasters.
- ⦿ Great management
- ⦿ Mary at water department is helpful when my county water turns brown - she returns my calls.

TAX ADMINISTRATION

- ⦿ At least you are almost always open
- ⦿ Most personnel very helpful
- ⦿ Sheila Baldwin
- ⦿ All is good
- ⦿ Very friendly and cooperative
- ⦿ Very helpful and fast
- ⦿ Website of Property easy to use
- ⦿ Very helpful and pleasant.
- ⦿ Everyone seems friendly and accommodating
- ⦿ Don't call us, we will call you. No more reevaluations for many years to come.
- ⦿ Awesome collection rate
- ⦿ Staff is knowledgeable and helpful



Is there anything else you would like to share?

Please continue keeping processes simple and use common sense approach.

Construction Projects are hindered because Inspection Dept. is closed on Fridays.

Best county to work in except need to work on Friday

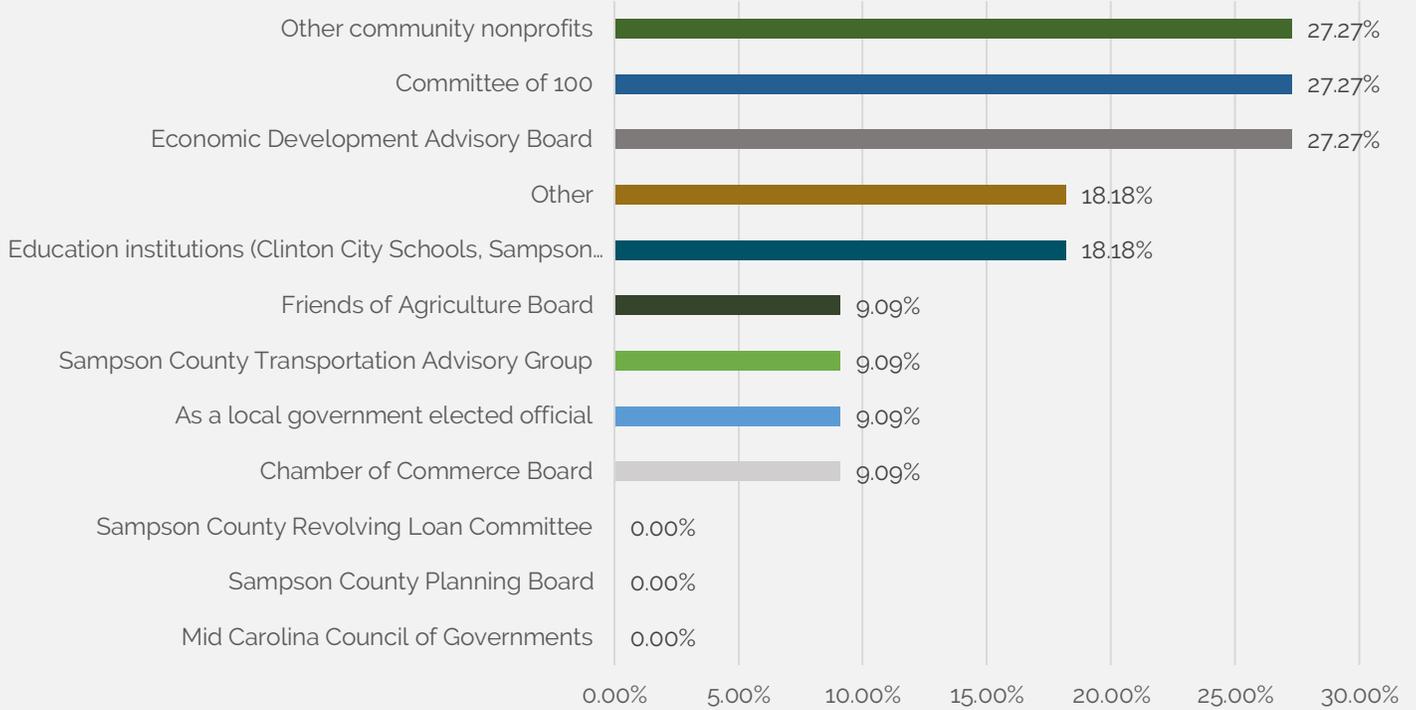
Ensure that all departments continue to help their customers get the job done, which benefits all, and makes for a happy place to work and live.

The county boards, departments, and communities need to be on the same page when it comes to selling the county to new and existing economic development projects. The failure of some high schools to improve their overall education achievement scores has is causing families to move out of certain districts or enroll their children in private schools. Failure of schools to show real improvement over a number of years drives away talent and makes it very difficult to attract businesses and grow communities.

Let's continue to grow our county, not just in Clinton but county wide. We are all in this together. We should advertise Sampson County, not Clinton-Sampson.

APPENDIX B: GENERAL CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY

I engage with economic development through serving on...



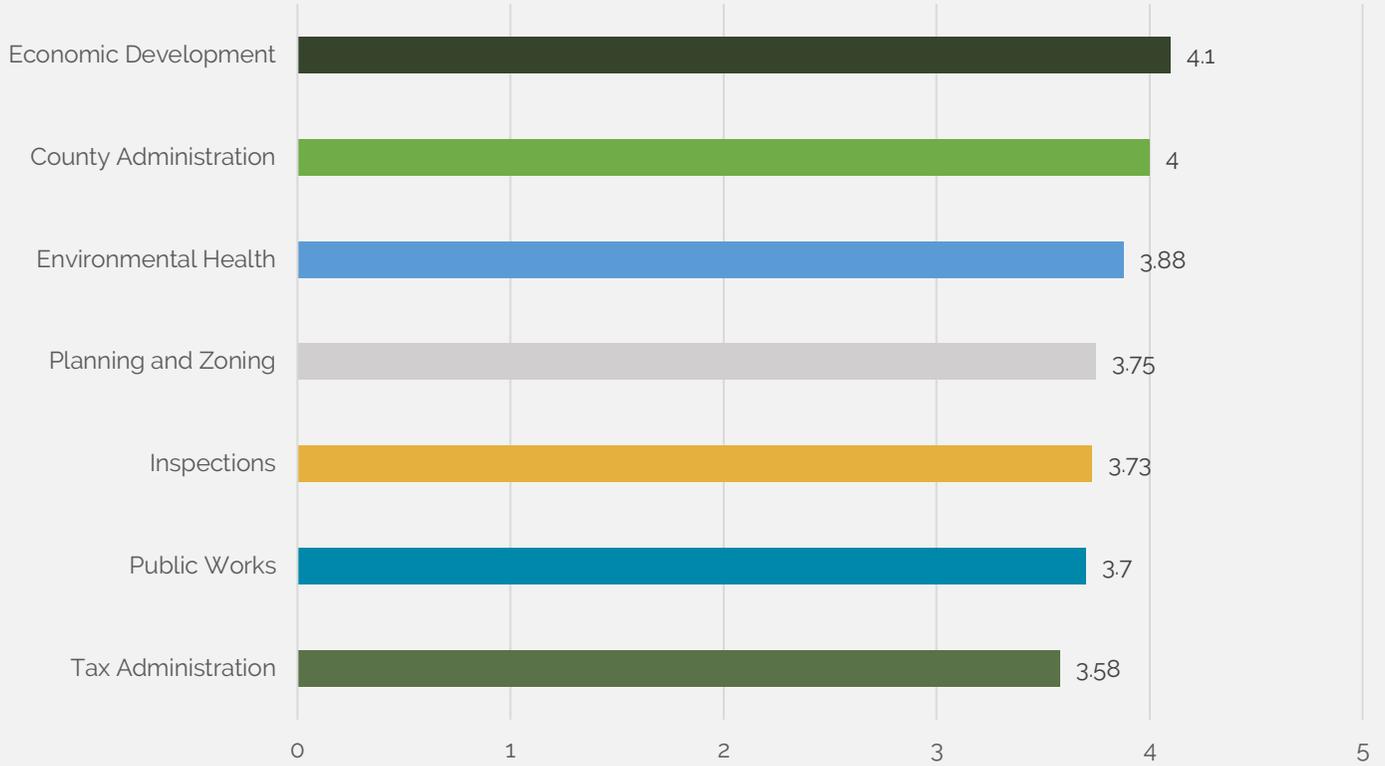
How business-friendly is Sampson County government?



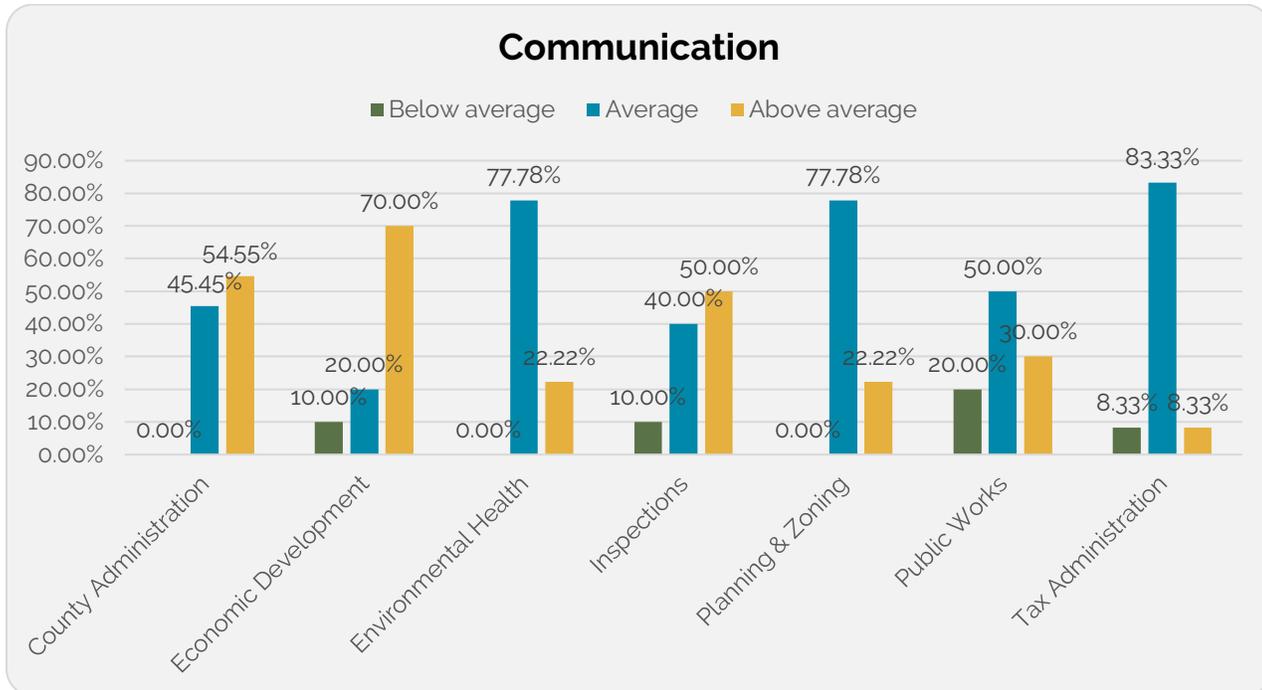
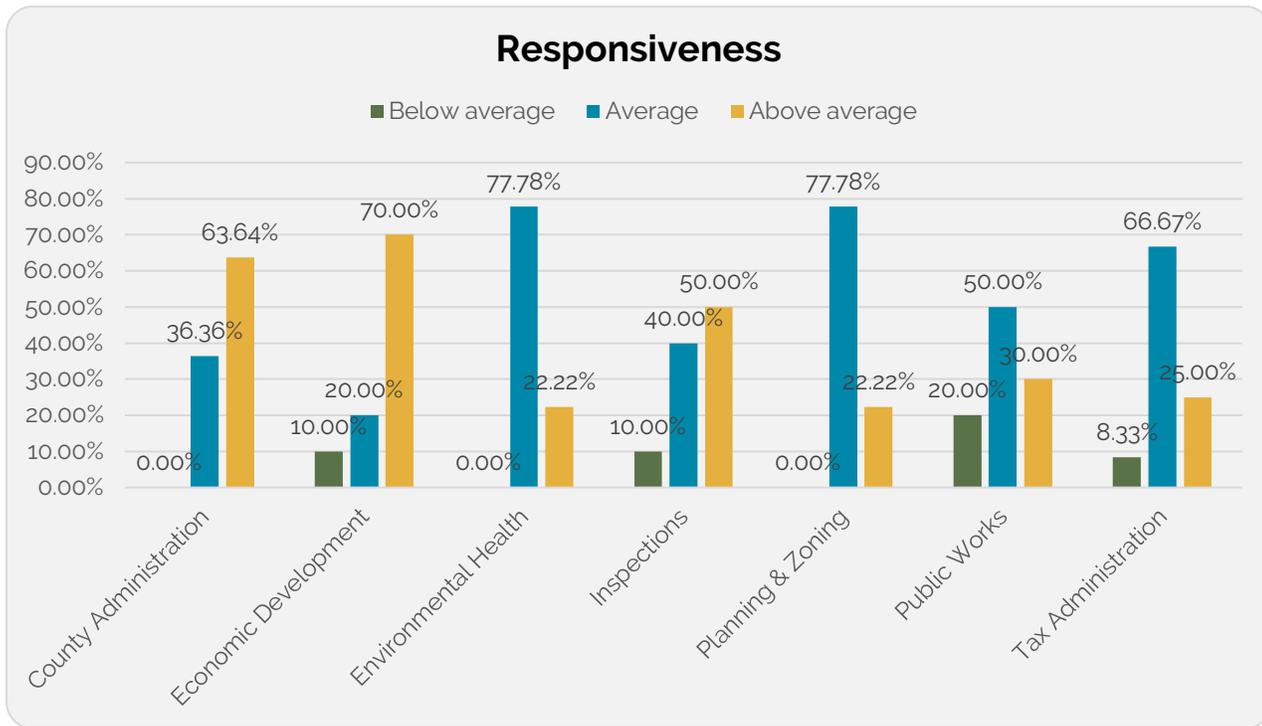
1=Poor Service | 2=Below Average Service | 3=Average Service | 4=Above Average | 5=Exceptional

Rate your overall customer service experience with the following Sampson County departments.

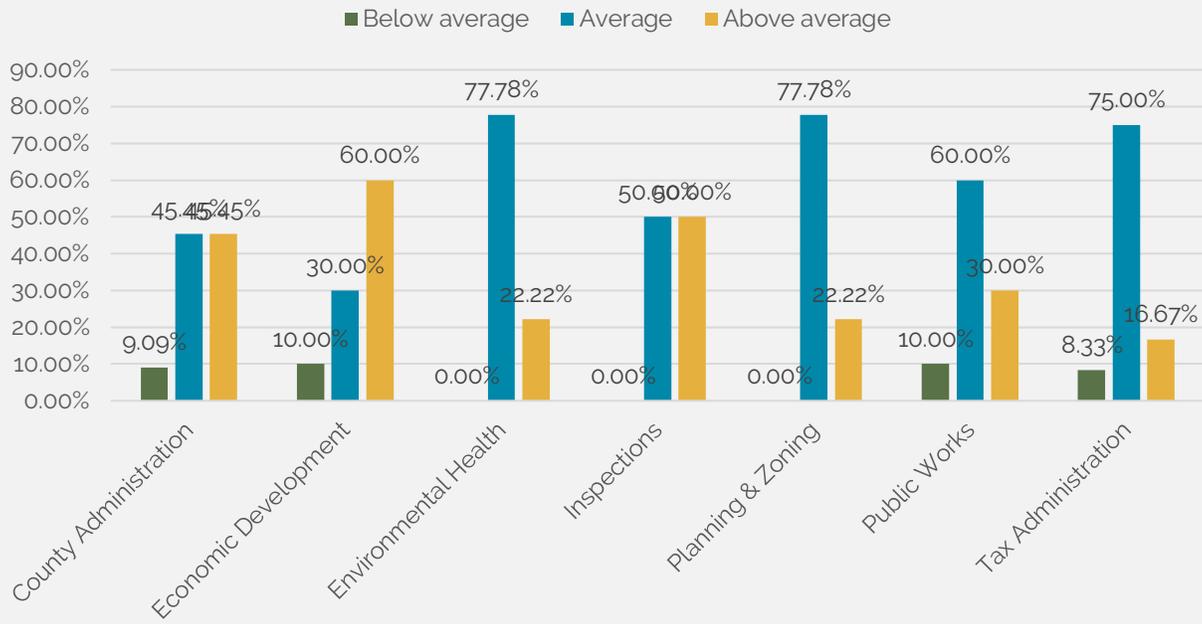
1-Poor Service | 2-Below Average Service | 3-Average Service | 4-Above Average | 5-Exceptional



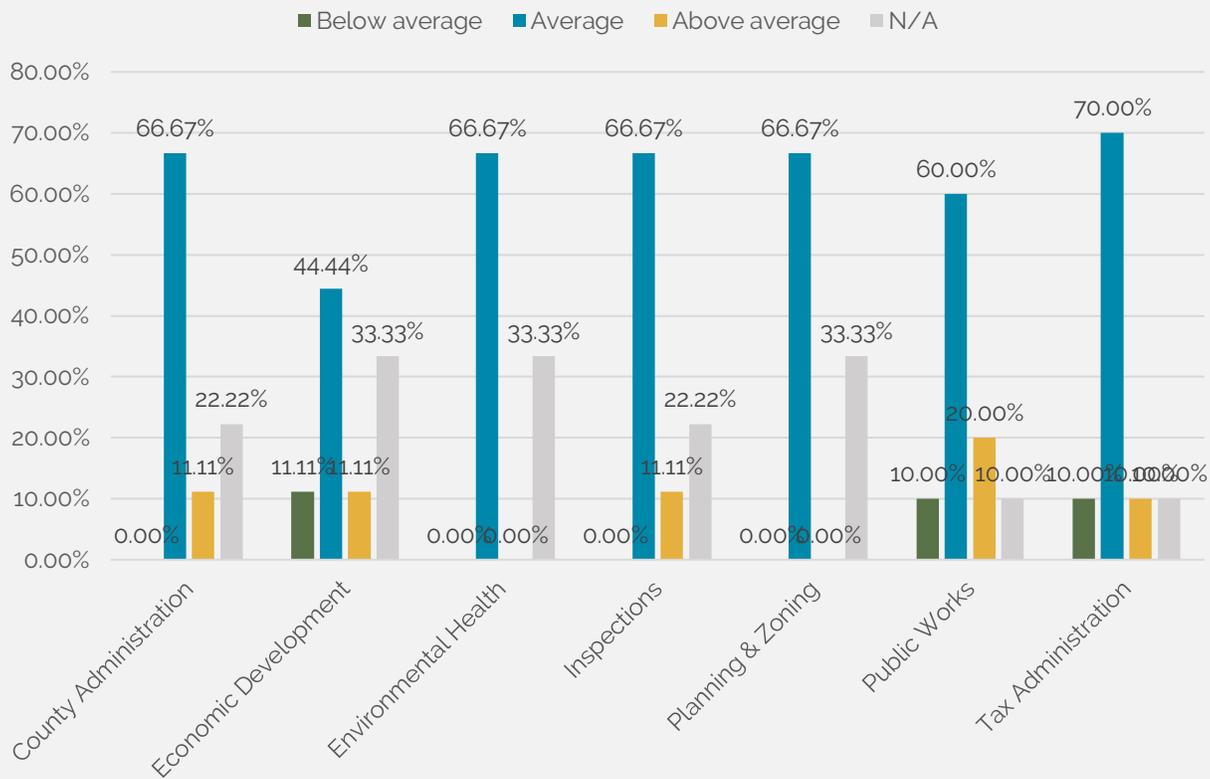
Rate the following customer service attributes with each department by using the drop-down menus.



Time To Completion



Cost



Name one thing each department could do to provide better customer service.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

- ⊙ To enhance marketing; to keep citizens of Sampson County updated & informed of potential initiatives; involve volunteers. Realizing that often times, information is time sensitive & confidential.
- ⊙ Better communication

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ⊙ To build stronger partnerships.
- ⊙ Better communication

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

- ⊙ 5-day work week
- ⊙ To enhance marketing
- ⊙ Better communication

INSPECTIONS

- ⊙ Listen more and talk less
- ⊙ 5-day work week
- ⊙ To enhance marketing
- ⊙ Faster response

PLANNING & ZONING

- ⊙ 5-day work week
- ⊙ To enhance marketing
- ⊙ Better communication

PUBLIC WORKS

- ⊙ 5-day work week
- ⊙ To enhance marketing
- ⊙ Better communication
- ⊙ return phone calls when you report a problem

TAX ADMINISTRATION

- ⊙ Smile more (for personal contact)
- ⊙ Phone System is Horrible, Access to Information is often delayed
- ⊙ To enhance marketing
- ⊙ Be more Friendly

Provide one positive feedback item for each department.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

- ⊙ Prompt reimbursement summaries from Melissa
- ⊙ Committed
- ⊙ Reception staff are extremely welcoming and professional
- ⊙ Involved with promoting commerce.
- ⊙ Staff is very knowledgeable & courteous; strong customer service
- ⊙ Getting better with communication

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ⊙ Passionate
- ⊙ Staff are exceptionally professional
- ⊙ Keeps area informed of opportunities.
- ⊙ Staff is very knowledgeable & courteous; customer service excellent
- ⊙ Don't know what I can say

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

- ⊙ Friendly staff
- ⊙ Staff is very knowledgeable, kind, & friendly

INSPECTIONS

- ⊙ Myron Cashwell is always so helpful in providing information
- ⊙ Friendly staff
- ⊙ Provides timely responses.
- ⊙ Staff is very knowledgeable, kind, friendly, & helpful

PLANNING & ZONING

- ⊙ Friendly staff
- ⊙ Staff is very knowledgeable & friendly; respectful

PUBLIC WORKS

- ⊙ Great staff, friendly, always willing to help
- ⊙ Director is knowledgeable and helpful
- ⊙ Staff is very knowledgeable & friendly; respectful

TAX ADMINISTRATION

- ⊙ Phone etiquette is professional
- ⊙ Data totals are correct
- ⊙ Efficient
- ⊙ Helpful staff
- ⊙ Well maintained website.
- ⊙ Staff is very knowledgeable, courteous, & helpful

Rate your overall customer service experience with Sampson County.



Is there anything else you would like to share?

I was dissatisfied with the interactions with the Inspections Department. The person I spoke with would over-talk me, would not allow me to finish my sentences, and made me feel like I was just a bother.

Most County staff are very helpful and professional in performing their assigned duties. I would add however add that customer service does go beyond these attributes. Working with local and state agencies, community organizations, businesses, and citizens to achieve goals together could take Sampson County to the next level needed to achieve greater things here in our county.

As a citizen of Sampson County & an employee of a government agency, I am very proud to live & work in Sampson County; the overall customer service throughout the entities are "Excellent Customer Service." As we look around us, we are very fortunate. However, it does not mean that we need to move into a respite mode, but we have many entities to build upon - to make Sampson County a better place to live & work.

It doesn't hurt to take the time to listen. Let's bring customer service back!

STUDY SPONSOR AND CONSULTANT



The Sampson County Economic Development Commission works to promote Sampson County and its eight municipalities as a great place to do business. We support our existing industry, as well as actively pursue companies from outside the area to locate or expand their facilities in our community.

<http://www.sampsonedc.org/>



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