

## PLANNING, BUILDING AND CODE ENFORCEMENT

The mission of the Planning, Building and Code Enforcement Department is to facilitate the preservation and building of a safe, attractive, vibrant and sustainable San José through partnership with and exceptional service to our diverse communities and customers.

# PLANNING, BUILDING AND CODE ENFORCEMENT

The Planning, Building and Code Enforcement (PBCE) Department guides the physical development of San José. Through its three divisions, it reviews construction applications and issues permits for consistency with law and policy. PBCE's 2017-18 operating expenditures totaled \$50.3 million. This includes personal and non-personal expenditures. The department was also responsible for Citywide and other expenses totaling in \$194,500. PBCE had 317 authorized positions.

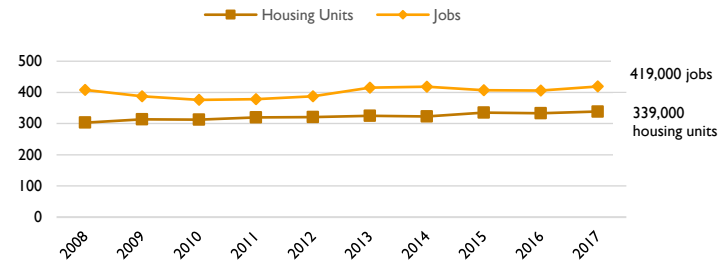
Under the collaborative umbrella of Development Services, PBCE works with other City departments to deliver the City's permitting function. Subsequent pages of this chapter discuss Development Services.

## PLANNING

PBCE's Planning Division administers the City's long-range planning projects and processes land development applications to match the City's planning goals. The [Envision San José 2040 General Plan](#), last updated in February 2018\*, identifies twelve major strategies that promote active, walkable, bicycle-friendly, transit-oriented, mixed use urban settings for new housing and job growth. PBCE reviews the major strategies of the General Plan during both an annual hearing and its regular four-year major plan review. The U.S. Census estimates that San José had 419,000 jobs and 339,000 housing units in 2017. See the *Development Services* pages of this chapter for more on the Planning Division's work. Also see Planning in [San José: A Community Guide](#) available online.

\* The update included amending the City's metric for evaluation of transportation impacts to Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) from Level of Service (LOS).

San José Housing Units and Jobs (thousands)



Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census

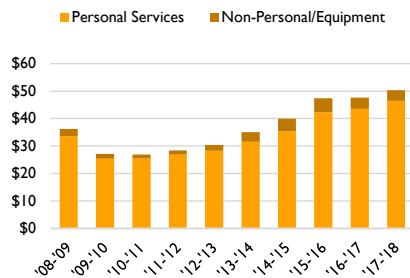
Note: In 2017-18, building permits accounted for 3,241 new residential units, 250 single-family units (including second units and duplexes), and 2,991 multi-family units.

## Select Planning Initiatives

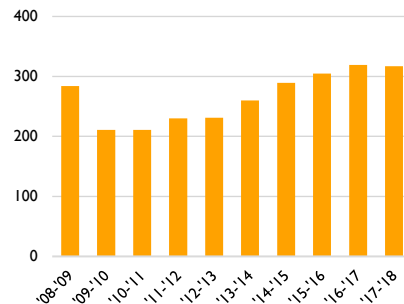
**Urban Villages:** Urban villages are walkable, bicycle-friendly, transit-oriented, mixed use settings that provide both housing and jobs, thus supporting the General Plan's environmental goals. Fourteen urban village plans have been approved, including two that are currently under development.

**Secondary Units:** In June 2018, Council approved a number of changes to secondary unit regulations that allow for more flexibility. See <http://sanjoseca.gov/adus> for all regulation changes (effective July 2018).

PBCE Operating Expenditures (\$millions)

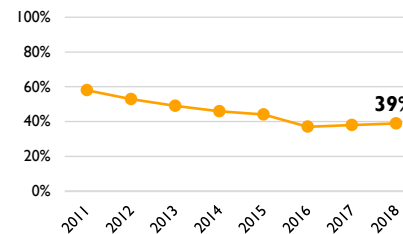


PBCE Authorized Positions



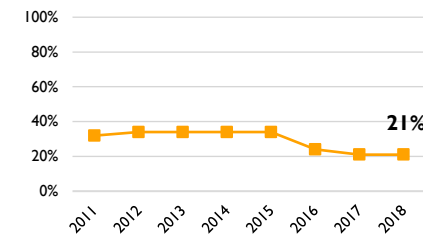
## RESIDENT SURVEY

% of San José residents rating overall quality of new development as "excellent" or "good"



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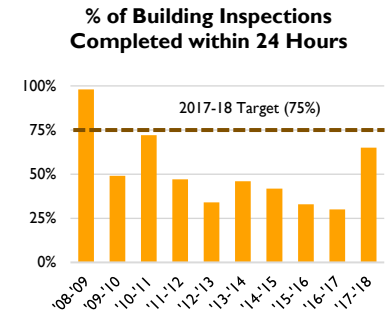
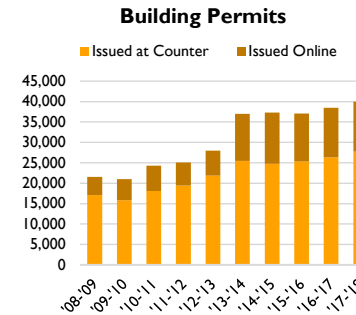
% of San José residents rating land use, planning and zoning as "excellent" or "good"



# PLANNING, BUILDING AND CODE ENFORCEMENT

## BUILDING

PBCE's Building Division reviews new construction projects within the City, ensuring they meet health and safety codes and City zoning requirements. The Division continued to see modest growth in the number of permits issued, reaching 40,000 in 2017-18. It achieved 84 percent of plan checks within cycle times and 65 percent of building inspections (target: 85%) within its goal of 24 hours (target: 75%). See *Development Services on the next page for more on the Building Division's work. Also see the CSA Dashboard chapter for additional performance measures.*

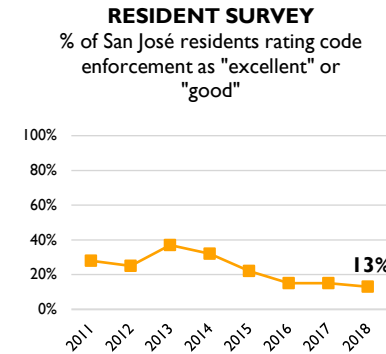
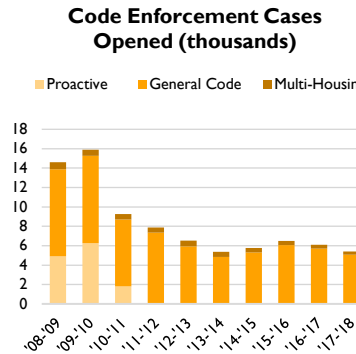


Note: '17-18 data no longer includes building inspections specifically requested for > 24 hours as missed targets

## COMMUNITY CODE ENFORCEMENT

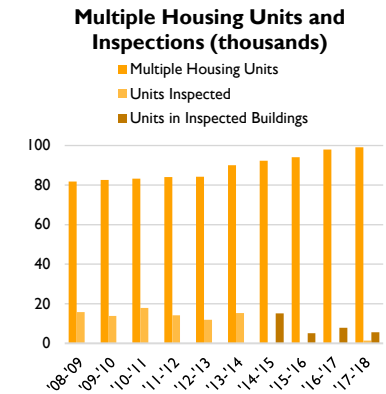
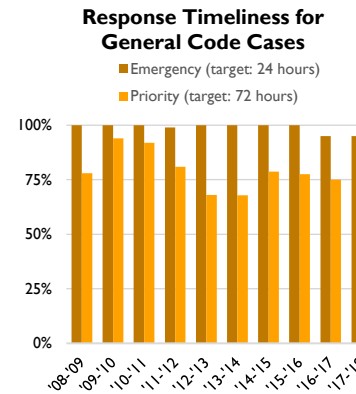
PBCE's Code Enforcement Division enforces laws that promote the health, safety, and appearance of existing buildings and neighborhoods. It also inspects businesses selling alcohol or tobacco; property and business owners fund these inspections with fees.

In 2017-18, PBCE opened about 5,000 general code enforcement cases, including 80 emergency complaints and 1,000 priority complaints. Code Enforcement staff responded to an average of 95 percent of emergency complaints within PBCE's 24-hour target and 72 percent of priority complaints within the 72-hour target.\* Code enforcement sends letters in response to other types of complaints and only responds personally on an as-available basis.



Code Enforcement has a risk-based tiered inspection program whereby inspections are targeted to properties at higher risk of violations. In 2017-18, PBCE inspected buildings that cumulatively had about 5,700 housing units out of the estimated 99,000 units on the Multiple Housing Roster.

\*Emergency complaints involve an immediate threat to life or property, such as unsecured pool fence. Priority complaints involve possible threats to life or property, such as unpermitted construction. The proportions of such complaints that met response targets—95 percent and 72 percent, respectively, as noted above—are annual averages of monthly results.



# DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

The Permit Center in City Hall provides one-stop permit services for new building projects and changes to existing structures.

The **Development Services partners** in the Permit Center are:

- Building Division
- Public Works Department (also see *Public Works chapter*)
- Fire Department (also see *Fire chapter*)
- Planning Division

In 2017-18, Development Services:

- issued about 40,000 permits (12,160 online),
- served nearly 73,600 Permit Center customers, and
- processed nearly 2,570 planning applications and adjustments.

Planning applications, plan checks, field inspections, and building permits all bottomed out in 2009-10, but have rebounded.

Both the volume and value of construction were down slightly from 2016-17. However, 2017-18 totals for each were some of the highest seen in the past decade with 15.5 million square feet of new construction valuing nearly \$1.7 billion. Trends varied across residential, commercial, and industrial categories.

## The Permit Center located in City Hall

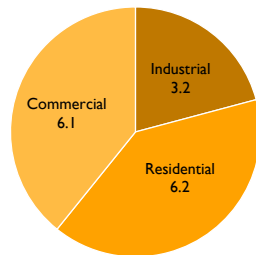


Source: Auditor photo from Fall 2015

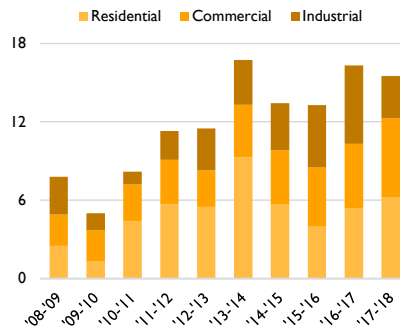
Partner	Revenue (\$millions)	Positions (rounded)
Building	\$32.50	166
Public Works	\$11.99	66
Fire	\$8.25	34
Planning	\$6.23	48
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$58.97</b>	<b>314</b>

Source: 2017-18 Modified Budget as outlined in the City's 2018-19 Adopted Operating Budget

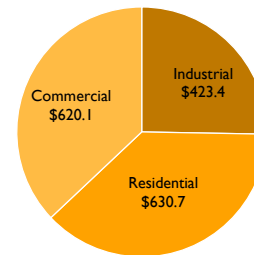
**Volume of Building Activity (millions of square feet)**



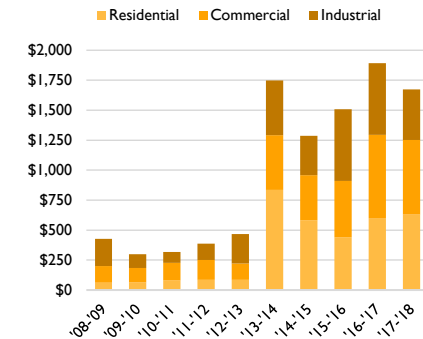
**Volume of Construction (millions of square feet)**



**Value of Building Activity (\$millions)**



**Value of Construction (\$millions)**



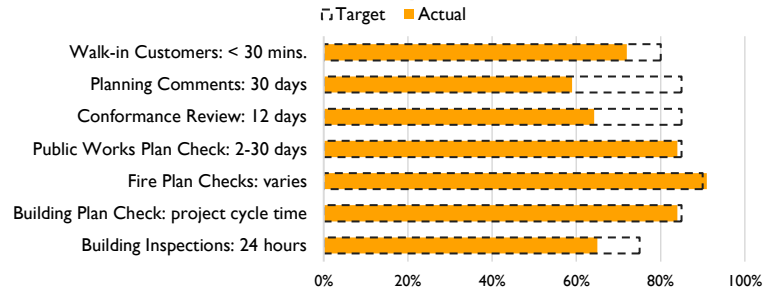
Development Services projects vary broadly, from replacing a residential water heater to large, mixed-use developments of many thousands of square feet. One project may require multiple permits and inspections. Some projects require approval through a public hearing, but most require only administrative approval (an estimated 89 percent). Projects only go through Public Works or the Fire Department when they have impacts on public facilities (e.g. traffic, streets, sewers, utilities, flood hazard zone) or fire-related issues (e.g. need for fire sprinkler systems or fire alarm systems), respectively.

The City offers a number of programs to expedite project delivery for companies, small businesses, and homeowners. However, turnaround times continue to be a primary concern. Timeliness of individual steps in the development process varies depending on the scale and complexity of a given project, and can involve one to all four of the Development Services partners listed above. Annual timeliness targets were met for one of the seven selected development processes.

To provide further convenience to customers, PBCE has expanded the availability of online permits in recent years. Of the 40,000 building permits PBCE issued in 2017-18, about 12,160 were online permits, saving staff time and customer trips to the Permit Center.

See CSA Dashboard chapter or additional performance measures for development services.

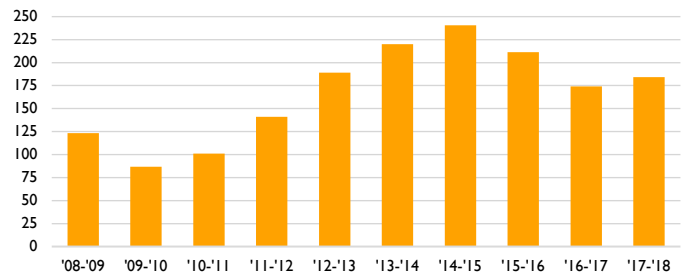
Timeliness of Development Services\*



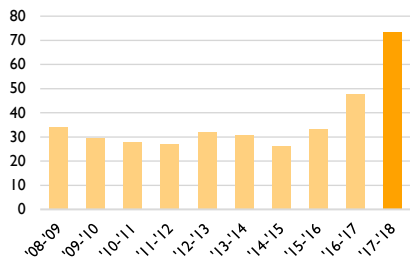
Source: PBCE from the City's Permits Database

\*These selected measures may occur simultaneously; some are dependent on completion of particular processes. For other Fire and Public Works measures related to Development Services, see the Fire and Public Works chapters.

Building Inspections (thousands)

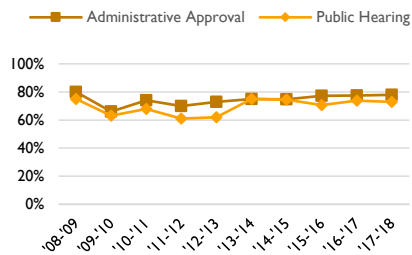


Permit Center Customers Served (thousands)\*



\* In 2017-18, PBCE changed their methodology. Customers served now is a duplicated count (i.e., individuals may be counted for each service provided in one or multiple visits)

Development Services Overall Customer Satisfaction by Project Type



Source: Development Services Customer Satisfaction Surveys

Planning Applications and Plan Checks

