



Planning and Land Services

Activity Report

May 2008

Initiatives for 2008:

Permit Intake Process

Work continues on the development of the self help kiosk. PALS Plus enhancements are being made that will create an application type called "Pre-Screening Triage". An applicant will be able to access the pre-screen triage through an internet link and create their own submittal without interacting with staff. This provides the applicant an option to waiting in the lobby. Repeat customers can access this feature at home and bring in their projects ready to drop off.

PALS Plus Enhancements to our Permit Tracking System and Web Page

A new version of PALS Plus was deployed over the weekend of April 26th. This was a major release addressing several enhancements and system improvements. The PALS Plus Team is currently finishing maintenance releases for both PALS Plus and the Cash Register software to address a few minor issues.

The team has also started developing a web-based application that will give Development Center customers the ability to document the submittal of an application package without waiting in line. We will also develop items from the prioritized enhancement list while creating the new lobby software.

Revisions to the LUAC Process

Expanding and Clarifying the Role of Project Managers

Work on both of these initiatives is continuing. However there were no proposals or changes during this reporting period.

Phone Upgrade

In April, 81% of incoming calls to the Development Center were answered compared to 60% in April 2007. Fewer dropped calls are the result of the improvements to the Permit Information phone line that were implemented in March. They have made it possible to monitor and respond to high call volumes quickly. The ability for a caller to know where they are in the queue, approximate wait time and a prompt to leave a message are new features.

PALS Audit Oversight Committee

The next meeting is scheduled for July 10th.

Performance of Reviews for April 2008

Building Division

At the end of April, 99% of the reviews needed to achieve zero backlog were completed.

On-time reviews had an efficiency rating of 76% up 7% from March. Together, with those less than a week late, combine to a 94% efficiency rating, up 6% from March. The pie chart on page 6 shows 2 applications (1%) for April that were in backlog status. The staffing level for Plans Examiners is less than the 2004 Audit recommended.

We continue to see some Base Plans coming in for updating to the current building code. We are working on a quality control check of all old Base Plans and will be working with builders to get them updated. During April, we completed 2,707 building inspections, or an average of 120 inspections per day. Of the 2,707 completed inspections, 2,687 were done the day requested for an efficiency of just over 99%.

Development Engineering

At the end of April, 96% of the reviews needed to achieve zero backlog were completed.

On-time reviews had an overall efficiency rating of 74%. Together with those less than a week late combines to an 85% efficiency rating. The pie chart on page 6 shows that 21 applications (4%) of the reviews for April were in backlog status. Of the 21 in backlog, 11 have been reviewed by DENG and are waiting for external reviews.

With an overall efficiency score of 74% in April, our on-time performance for permit review is still significantly improved over previous years. The slowdown of residential building permits has resulted in more timely plan review and inspections in our single family work units.

*In April the permit review efficiency for the Single Family Review Work Unit was 93%, only 2% below our target. In January and February our efficiency was 84% and 86% respectively. Submittals and resubmittals were approximately 45% of normal in April. This slowdown has allowed us to be more responsive to phone inquiries and to spend additional time helping Development Center customers. This work unit is still busy, but not as chaotically busy as previous years.

*In the Single Family Inspection Work Unit we are meeting our performance measures of 92% on time inspections. In the first 3 months of 2008, we have completed 95.9% of requested inspections on time, compared with 94.8% completed on time during the 2005 - 2007 three years. While this may not look like a large improvement, we did it without any overtime and/or extra staff which we used extensively for most of the prior three years.

Also, while our total inspection workload is down 23.3% compared with the average of the three previous years, there have been sporadic bursts of activity which are difficult to plan for and manage.

Our Area Review Work Unit has not experienced the slowdown that has occurred on the residential building permit side. While submittals did drop in November and December of 2007, they are again up to 2006 levels. Even with the high volume of submittals and resubmittals this work unit was able to achieve a 72% efficiency in April. This efficiency is an all time high for this work unit. Our efficiency in the first quarter of 2007 was in the mid 20% range. We consider this level of efficiency to be a significant accomplishment. This work unit still has two unfilled Civil Engineer 2 positions and the staffing level is less than the 2004 Audit recommended.

In the Plat Review Work Unit our review efficiency was 62% for the month of April. We are still getting a significant number of submittals and resubmittals for this work unit. Our incoming numbers indicate that we need one additional staff person. We have tried to offset this high work volume by distributing work to the Area Review Work Unit, and this has been somewhat successful.

More specific details about the Development Engineering Section's trends in submittals, efficiency, etc. can be found in our Fast Forward report. This report is updated monthly and reflects data for each of the previous 12 months. It can be found on the County's internet web page at:

<http://www.co.pierce.wa.us/xml/services/home/property/pals/pdf/deng0308ffreport.pdf>.

Alternatively it can also be found on the County's intranet by selecting the Planning and Land Services Department, then select "About Us", then select "Reports and Statistics" and finally "Development Engineering".

Current Planning

At the end of April, 96% of the reviews needed to achieve zero backlog were completed.

On-time reviews had an efficiency rating of 76%. Together with those less than a week late, we had an efficiency rating of 85%. The pie chart on page 6 shows that 15 applications (4%) of the reviews for April were in backlog status.

We have maintained this performance level for several months. Current Planning case load is primarily comprised of administrative and land use applications. The number of land use applications has been steady and is comparable to the months in the past. The number of applications filed each month has continued to exceed 184 applications, which is the maximum number of applications that can be reviewed in a timely manner with the existing staff.

Planning Technical Support staff has been busy in assisting the informational customer at the Development Center. Their reviews of residential building permits have been reduced. However, there are other application types that have consumed their time.

Resource Management

At the end of April, 98% of the reviews needed to achieve zero backlog were completed.

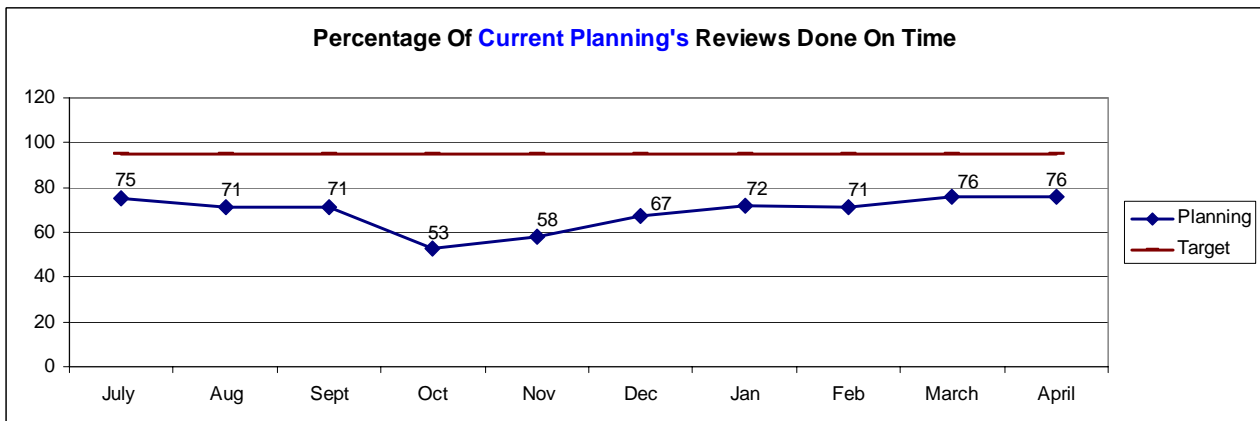
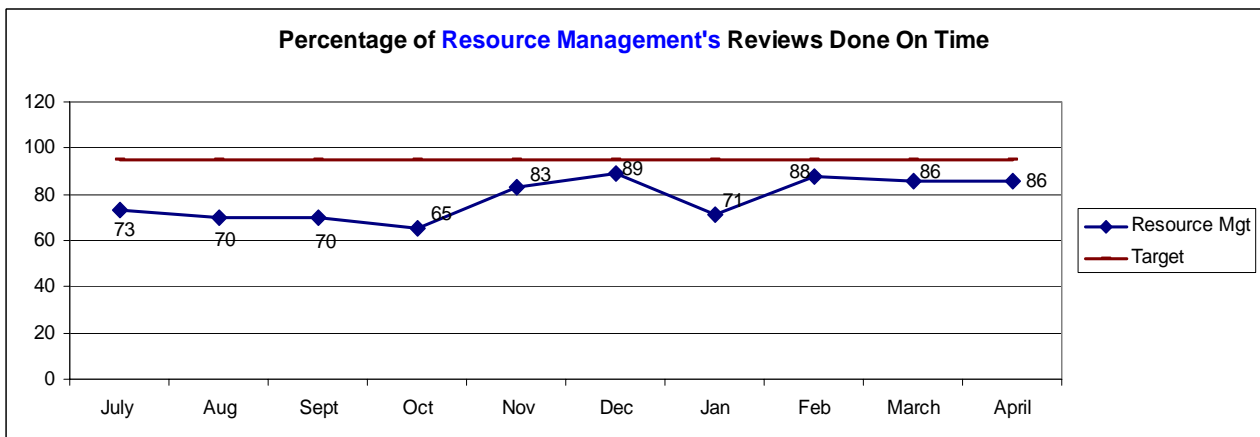
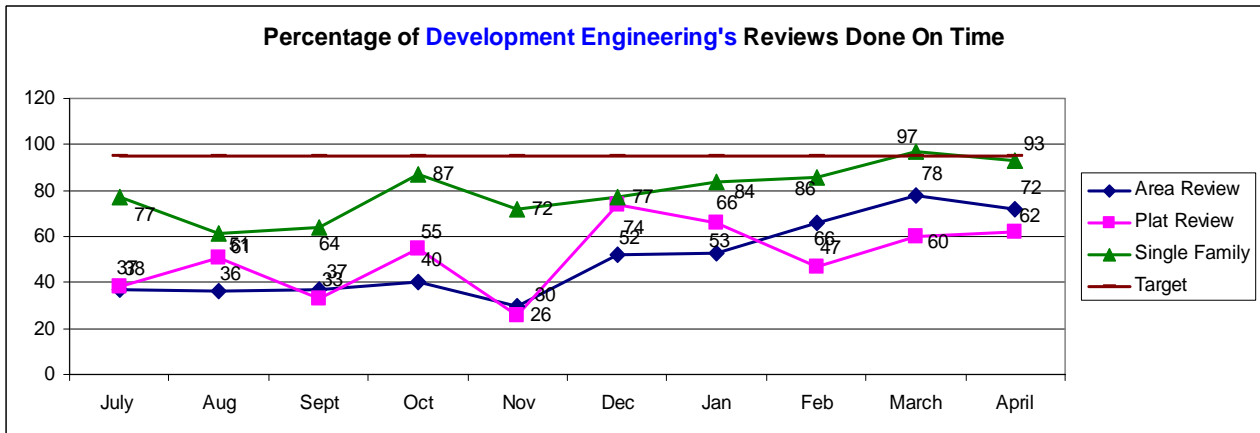
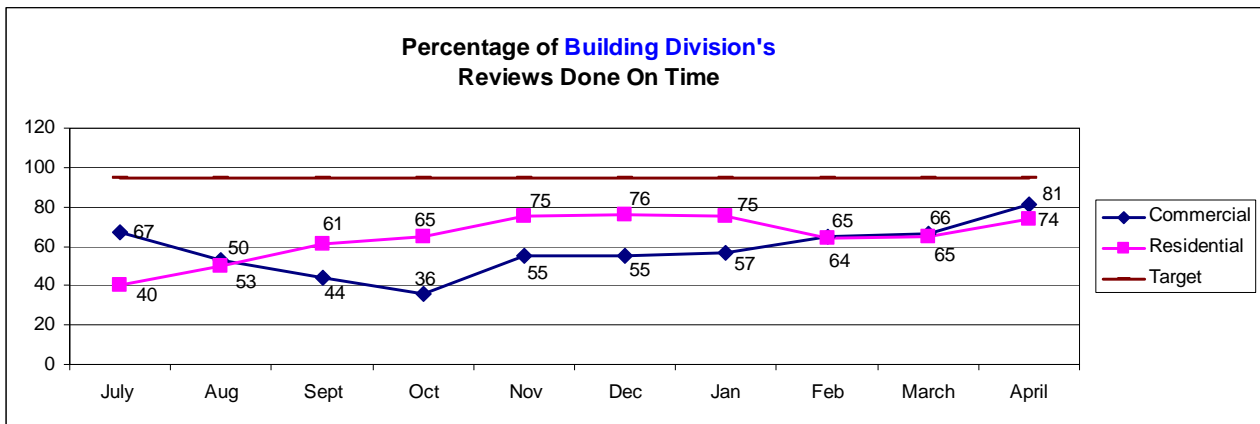
On-time reviews had an efficiency rating of 86%. Together with those less than a week late, we had an efficiency rating of 93%. The pie chart on page 6 shows that 2 applications (2%) of the reviews for April were in backlog status.

Resource Management is still seeing high numbers of applications and continues to process applications from previous months, and in some cases prior years. However, in April, Resource Management did see a decline in the number of wetland and fish and wildlife applications. We continue to have enough applications to keep all staff very busy. The staffing level is less than what the 2004 Audit recommended.

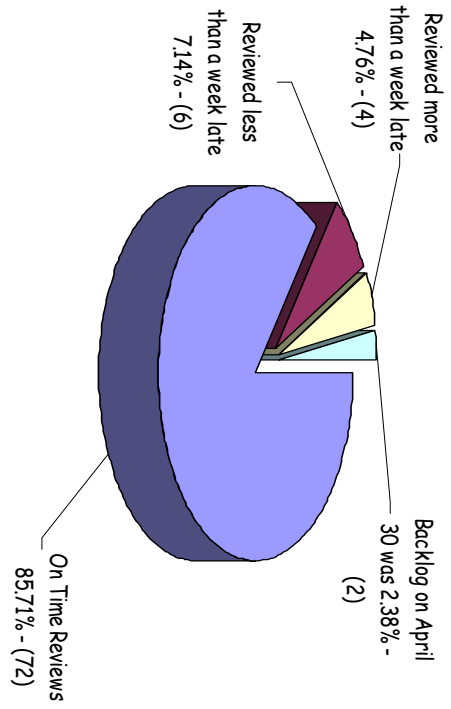
Development Center

In April, 74% of customers in all categories were seen in 20 minutes. The Table on page 8 of this report breaks out four categories of customers that we currently track. The staffing level for Permit Technicians is less than the 2004 Audit recommended.

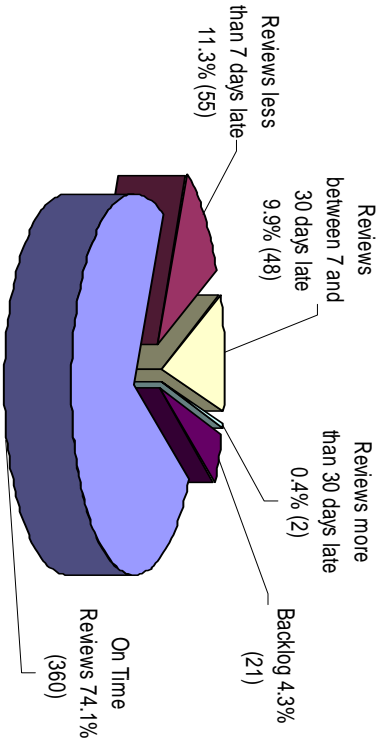
The number of customers coming into the Development Center in April was the highest number since August 2007. There were 2157 customers in April, 74% were seen in 20 minutes, see Customer Service Table on page 8.



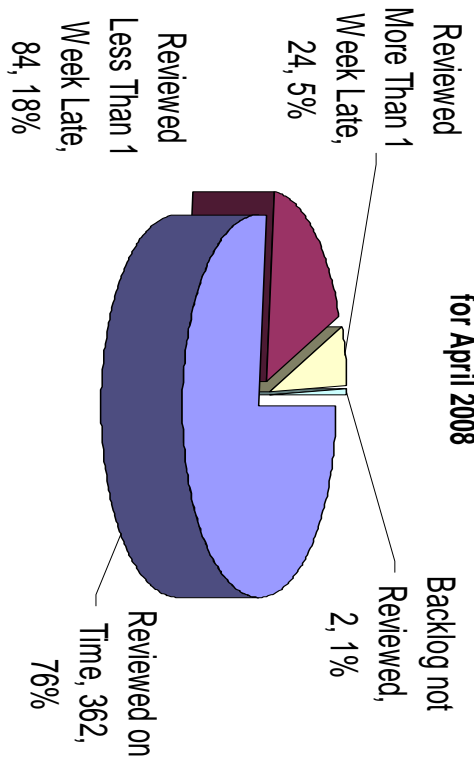
Resource Mgt Performance Review April 2008



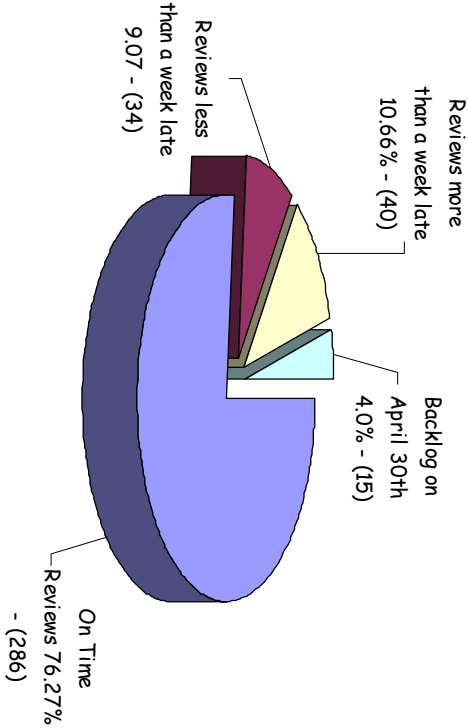
Development Engineering Review Performance April 2008



BLDG Plan Review Performance for April 2008

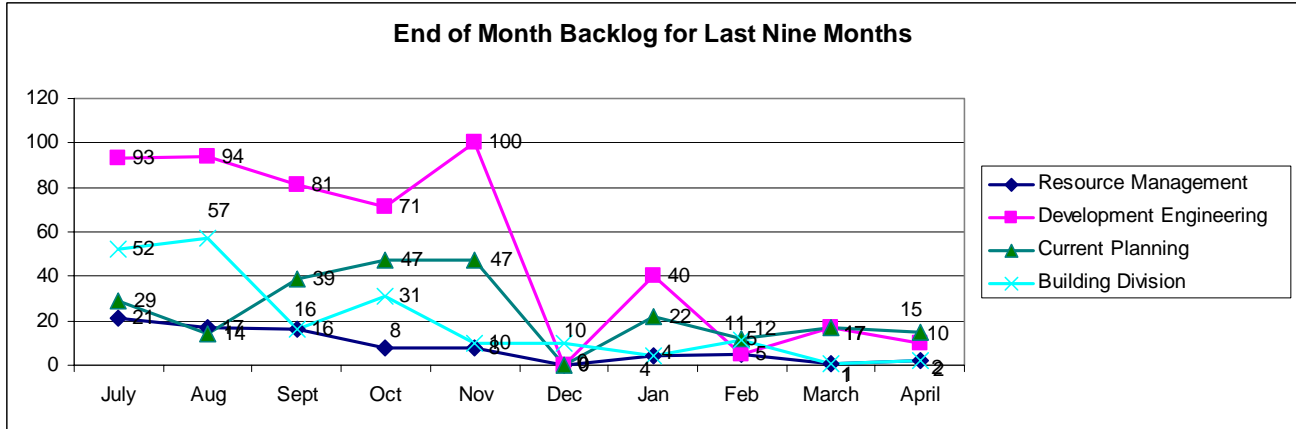


Current Planning Performance Review April 2008



Backlog Summary

Backlog represents those applications on the last day of the month that should have been reviewed. As noted in the pie charts on page 3, most of these applications are days late not months late. **On-Time Performance** is our measure of success not just backlog.

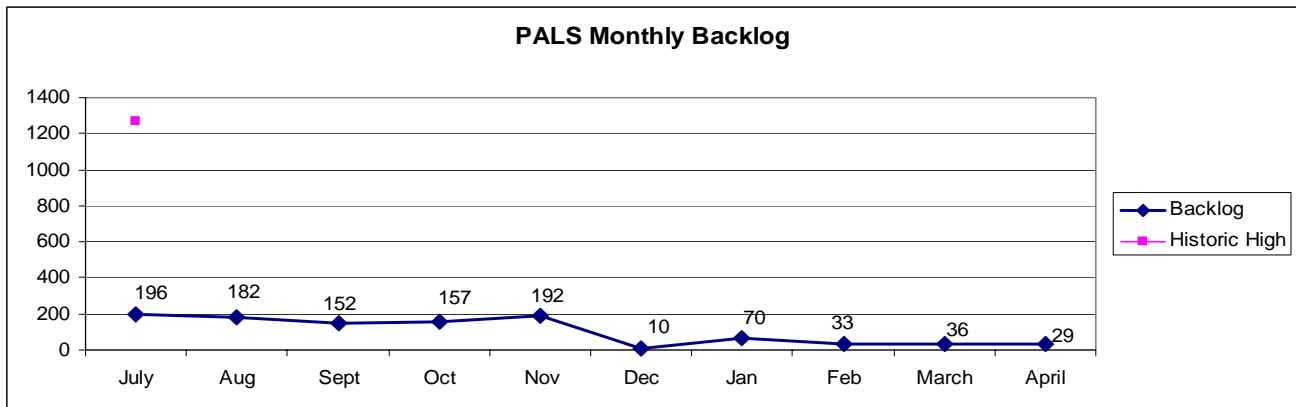


Additional details on backlog and what is being done to address the volume of applications will be in the individual Section reports. Those will be posted to the PALS web-page no later than the 15th of the month.

<http://piercecountywa.org/pc/services/home/property/pals/aboutus/reportsandstats.htm>

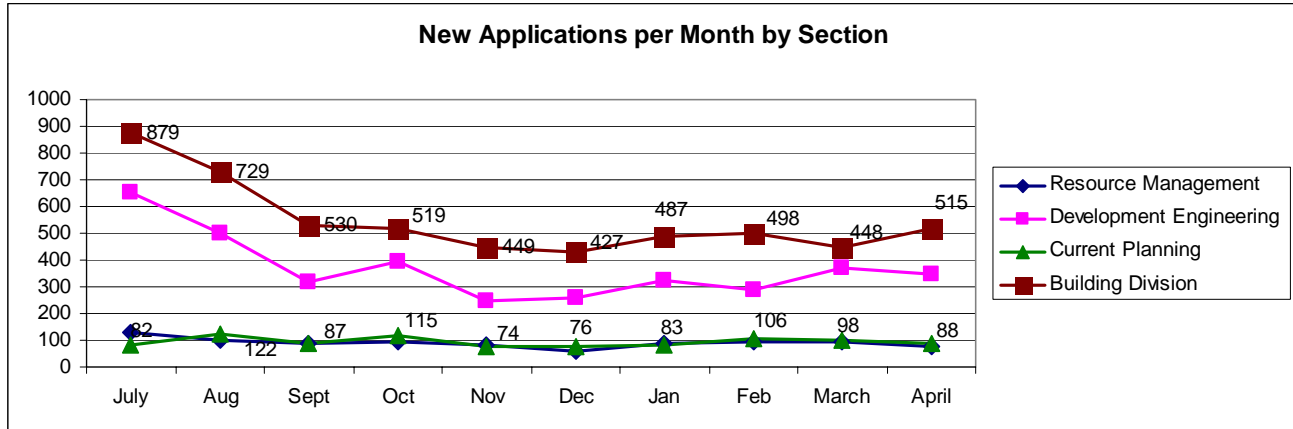
Meeting our performance goals of being 95% efficient is considered a success. At 95% there will always be some backlog.

	As of April 30 th
Building Division	2
Current Planning	15
Development Engineering	10 ¹
Resource Management	2
Total	29



¹ Of the 21 reviews shown in backlog in the pie chart on the previous page 11 were reviewed by DENG and were waiting for PW&U to review.

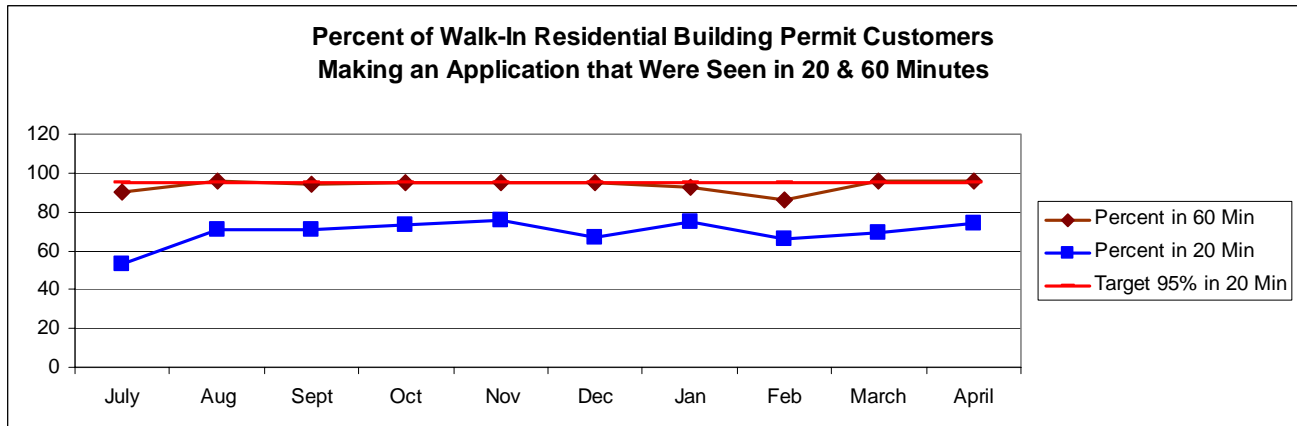
New Applications in April



Depending on the type of applications they will be reviewed within 14, 30 or 60 days from their date of application. Each permit represented here, generates a review by the other sections. For example, 100 building permits can generate 300 reviews within PALS.

Customer Service

Development Center			
April 2008			
	Percent Seen in 20 minutes	Percent Seen in 60 minutes	No Data ²
New Applications (walk-in) 306	74%	96%	0%
Over The Counter (pick up) 476	79%	97%	0%
Appointments (commercial) 26	96%	100%	0%
Information Only 253	70%	94%	2%



² Formerly reported as a percentage of customers leaving before getting service. In actuality it is the percentage of customers who checked in but were not checked out. They show up as “No Data” in the report.