

Strathcona County

2009

Public Satisfaction Survey



Research Results

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i
I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY	1
II. METHODOLOGY.....	1
A. The Questionnaire.....	1
B. Sampling Design and Data Collection Procedure.....	2
III. RESULTS.....	3
A. Demographic Overview	3
B. Quality of Life in Strathcona County.....	6
C. Quality of Services Provided by Strathcona County.....	15
Road Maintenance in Strathcona County.....	16
Helping Services in Strathcona County	20
Water and Waste Management Services in Strathcona County.....	26
Transit Services in Strathcona County.....	28
Library Services in Strathcona County	31
Information and Volunteer Centre Services in Strathcona County.....	34
Land Use Planning & Economic Development Services in Strathcona County....	36
Permit & Inspection Services in Strathcona County.....	39
Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County	41
Agricultural Services in Strathcona County.....	43
Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Services in Strathcona County	45
D. Perceptions of New Residential, Commercial and Industrial Developments in Strathcona County.....	48
E. Question on Quality of Services Now Compared to Two Years Ago	51
F. Question on Taxes within Strathcona County.....	53
G. Services Provided by Strathcona County Employees	55
H. Assessment of County Communication and Information Services.....	60
I. Relationship with Other Municipalities	65
J. Thoughts on a 40 km/hr Speed Limit.....	66
K. Awareness of the Strategic Plan.....	69

L. Final Thoughts69

APPENDIX A: THE QUESTIONNAIRE71

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2009 Public Opinion Survey on Services and Life in Strathcona County was undertaken in December 2009 to obtain perceptions on the quality of life of residents living in Sherwood Park and rural parts of Strathcona County. This is the 12th year that a formal satisfaction study of residents has been conducted. Overall, the following information was extracted from the data:

1. Residents of Strathcona County continue to have very positive perceptions of quality of life that they have for themselves and for their families, particularly since almost all of the people interviewed would recommend Strathcona County as a place to live. With respect to four broad aspects of life in Strathcona County, *a place to raise children* was the highest overall (84.5% rated very high or high). This was followed by *a safe community* (69.4% rated very high or high), *the quality of the natural environment* (60.6% rated very high or high) and *balancing needs and interests of people living throughout the County* (59.8% rated very fair or fair).
2. The positive views that people had of living in the County as a whole extended to the general satisfaction level for 18 specific services offered by County staff. The overall results are shown in Figures A through E. Services that residents were particularly rated highly included *fire & ambulance services* (Figure A), the *indoor recreation facilities, parks, green spaces and sports fields* and *the County Library* (Figure B). The services that received lower satisfaction ratings were *permit & inspection services, land use planning and agricultural services* (Figure D), and *winter road maintenance* (Figure E). Even here, residents still tended to rate these services as “average” rather than “low.” Overall, the rating of services by residents this year is very similar to findings from 2008. Please note that the ratings of some services may be dependent on whether residents lived in urban or rural Strathcona County and/or whether residents actually used a particular service. Details of these types of breakdowns can be found in the main body of the report.

FIGURE A
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Helping Services in 2009

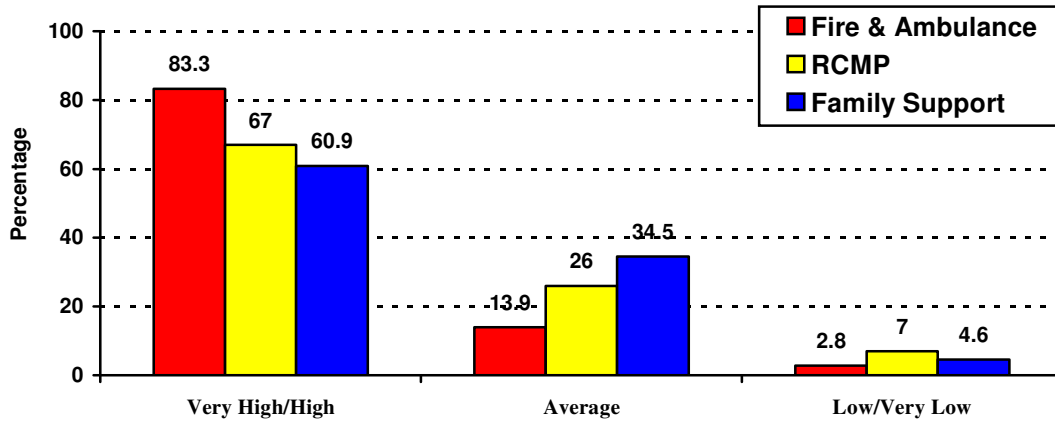


FIGURE B
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Recreation, Library & Volunteer Information Services in 2009

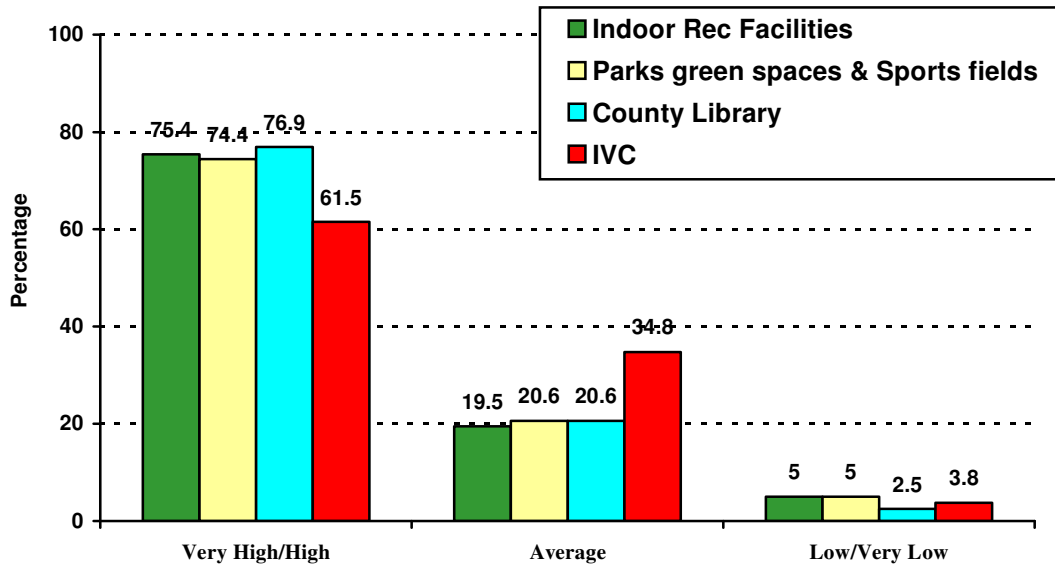


FIGURE C
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Waste & Water Services in 2009

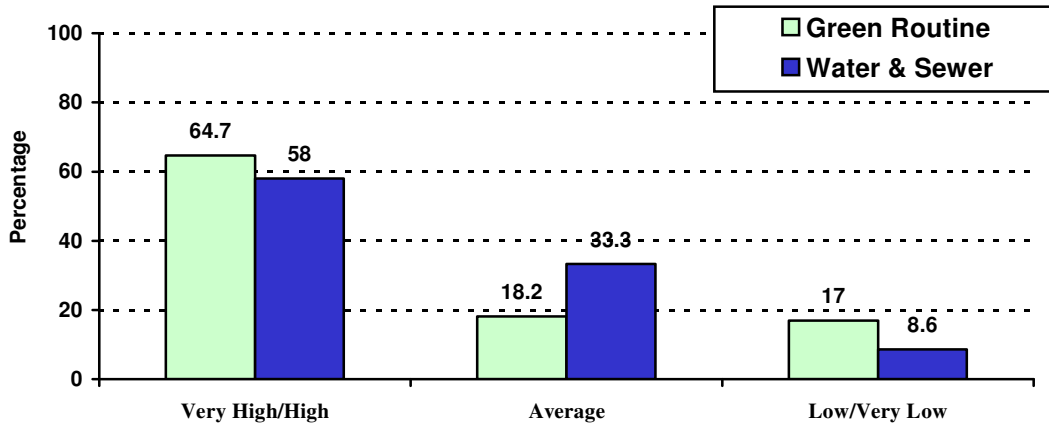


FIGURE D
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Different Inspection, Planning and Land Related Services in 2009

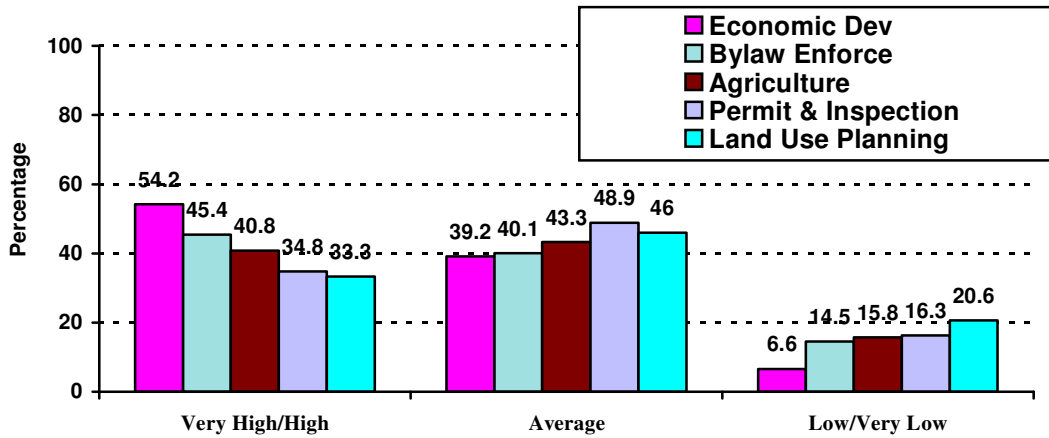
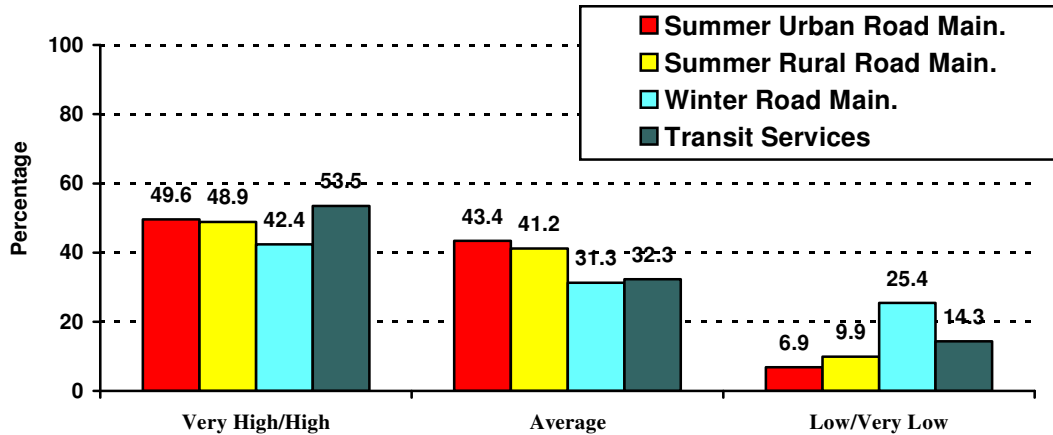


FIGURE E
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Roadwork and Transit Services in 2009

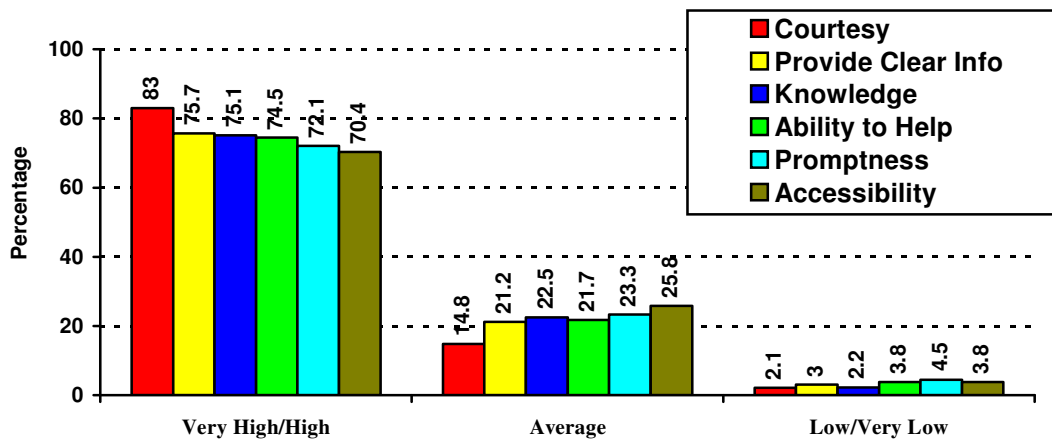


- It should be noted that in this survey, as in previous years, when residents rated all 18 services, there were no additional questions asked about other aspects of these County services. Individual departments can utilize the results from this survey as an overall perceptual measurement. In addition, individual departments may wish to consider customized detailed surveys in order to get feedback from the users and/or residents in the County on specific aspects of their departments, and many departments are doing this now as the need arises.
- Residents were generally satisfied with the quality of new residential, commercial and industrial developments in the County, with the highest level of satisfaction resting evenly between residential developments (48% *very high/high* ratings) and commercial developments (47% *very high/high* ratings), while 33.1% of residents gave industrial developments a positive rating in 2009. The majority of people felt that the quantity of commercial and industrial developments in the County was about right at the present time. However, a large percentage of residents (37.5%) felt that there may be too many residential developments occurring within the County as of 2009, though it should be noted that this perception was lower this year compared to

2008. The other findings with respect to quality and quantity have been similar to those found in previous satisfaction surveys conducted by the County since 1999.

5. In terms of perceived value of services for the tax dollars paid, it was found that the perception that one is getting *good* or *very good* value for the tax dollars is holding steady among urban residents compared to previous years. The percentage of residents who felt this way was 47.6% in 2009, which was almost identical to how residents felt in 2008 (47.8%). However, it should be noted that this perception is still lower than how people felt in 2007 (50.3%), 2006 (52.6%) and 2005 (55.2%).
6. In terms of perceived value of services for the tax dollars paid, there was much greater dissatisfaction among rural residents, and this pattern has not changed over the past 6 years of tracking this item. For rural residents, the perception that one is getting *good* or *very good* value for the tax dollars was 29.2%, which is considerably lower than what was reported for urban residents. From a tracking perspective, this finding for 2009 is almost identical to what was reported in 2008 and 2007. However, the percentage of rural residents who believe they are getting *poor* or *very poor* value for their tax dollars was 34.8%, which is higher than the level of dissatisfaction reported in 2008 (30.9%), 2007 (29.2%) and 2006 (24.6%).
7. It can be seen in Figure F that ratings of County staff on the provision of services to the public were favorable on all aspects of service delivery, particularly *courtesy*. The positive ratings for each of these were slightly higher for each of the ratings found in the previous 2008 and 2007 surveys. It should be noted that the approval ratings are ranging between 70% and 76% for each type of interaction that occur between staff and the public (with the exception of *courtesy*, which increased to 83% in this year's survey).

FIGURE F
Quality of Services provided by County Staff -2009 Results



8. Residents were asked to rate some existing sources of information about Strathcona County. In 2009, most of the methods received positive ratings from residents (*County website, newspapers, info via the utility bill, and newsletters or brochures*). *Open houses* were less popular, while *pre-recorded telephone messages* only received minimal ratings. This was also the pattern found in 2008 and 2007.
9. Overall, just over 71% of residents took the time to visit the County website, which is 10% higher than what was recorded in 2008. Of those who visited the site, 55.4% of residents gave the website *very high or high* ratings, which is slightly lower than what was found in 2008.
10. Residents were also asked to indicate what online methods they may have used to get information about Strathcona County anytime in 2009. Overall, only 43.4% had used various online methods, with the most prominent methods being *online forums* or *Facebook*.
11. Overall, 57.5% of residents gave Strathcona County a positive rating on its overall communication with residents in 2009 (which was lower than the 64% reported in

2008), while 46.2% were satisfied with having opportunities to express opinions about municipal issues, which was on par with the 2008 findings.

12. In 2009, 26.6% of residents previously¹ took the time to give the County feedback on a municipal initiative or issue, either through a telephone or online survey, a discussion group or at an open house.
13. Residents do take pride in Strathcona County being an independent municipality, as this was supported by close to 84% of respondents. The majority of residents (63.7%) were also satisfied with how well Strathcona County works with other municipalities in the Capital Region.
14. Overall, 32.7% of residents were aware of Strathcona County's Strategic Plan. Of those who were aware of it, the majority had some familiarity with the content within the plan.

¹ Participation in the current satisfaction survey was not included.

I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In December 2009, Strathcona County conducted a satisfaction survey of its residents in order to obtain perceptions on the quality of life of residents living in Sherwood Park and rural parts of Strathcona County. This is the 12th year that a formal satisfaction study of residents has been conducted.² The main purpose of this research was to identify and measure a series of factors (or impact of County services) that contribute to a person's satisfaction with the quality of life in Strathcona County.

As such, obtaining primary data from the residents themselves will provide Strathcona County departments with information that will enable County officials to make decisions that accurately reflect the perspectives and attitudes of residents. This report will provide a comprehensive review of all steps undertaken in the development and implementation of the survey, as well as a detailed summary of the results. A review of the methodology associated in the development and implementation of the survey can be found in the next section of this report.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. The Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in this study was a similar instrument to that used in 2000 and subsequent years. Most of the questions from previous surveys were retained in order to make valid comparisons with the previous year. In this year's survey, several questions were also asked pertaining to how well the County conveys information to its residents. In addition, two questions were asked about the County's relationship within the Edmonton Capital Region and one question was asked about the potential of having 40 km/h speed limits in residential areas (see Appendix A for a copy of the questionnaire).

² There was no satisfaction study conducted in 2002, as a county-wide Community Consultation project was done in its place.

B. Sampling Design and Data Collection Procedure

The sample frame used in this study were residents of Strathcona County who were 18 years of age or older. The sample frame incorporated a statistical proportion estimate of 0.5, which assumes that there is a homogeneous mixture of attitudes and opinions about the quality of life in Strathcona County. A 95% confidence interval was established for this study, which is standard for any public opinion study that utilizes a random sample of residents.

The sample frame consisted of 500 people living in urban³ and rural parts of Strathcona County. The number of urban and rural residents was reflective of the proportionate distribution of residents living in Strathcona County. As such, 65% of the sample was drawn from the urban area, while 35% came from rural parts of Strathcona County. The sample frame provided overall results⁴ accurate to within $\pm 4.32\%$, 19 times out of 20.

A telephone survey research design was used to collect the data for this study. Respondents were contacted by telephone between December 2nd and December 9th, 2009. Strathcona County derived telephone numbers from the Select Phone Canadian Edition database along with the *Telus Telephone Directory* and randomized them for this study. Trained interviewers from Banister Research & Consulting Inc. made all telephone calls under supervised conditions. Each questionnaire took an average of 12 minutes to complete. The data was analyzed by Strathcona County's Corporate Planning and Intergovernmental Affairs using SPSS for Windows.

³ In this report, the urban component of Strathcona County is Sherwood Park.

⁴ The $\pm 4.35\%$ is the *margin of error* associated with this study and refers to the potential percentage spread that exists within answers to particular questions. This means that an answer could be up to 4.35% higher or lower than what is reported.

III. RESULTS

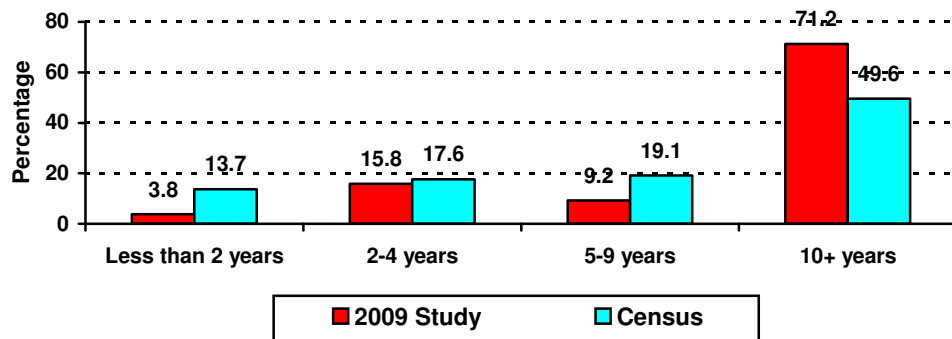
This section of the report presents a summary of the results associated with the perceptions and awareness of residents. Socio-demographic comparisons, where significant, are also highlighted. Comparisons will also be made with data collected from the previous year's survey when significant differences occur.

A. Demographic Overview

This section of the report presents an overview of the type of residents who were surveyed in 2009. As indicated in the previous section of this report, part of the sampling criteria was to survey County residents on the basis of the percentage of people living in the rural and urban areas. The other sampling criteria was to obtain answers from equal numbers of males and females. Almost all of the people interviewed were homeowners (92%), while the remaining residents were renters.

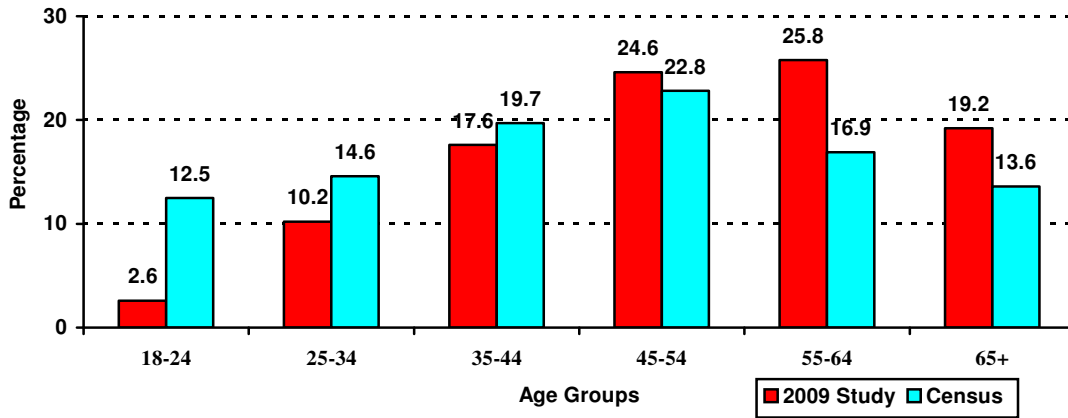
The majority of people who took part in the survey indicated that they were long term residents in the County. Figure 1 presents a breakdown of length of residence. It can be seen the majority of respondents have lived in the County for more than 10 years. The average number of years that people lived in Strathcona County was 20 years. In terms of sampling, it can be seen that relative to the Municipal Census, fewer newer residents to the County were interviewed relative to longer term residents.

Figure 1
Length of Time Living in the County (Current 2009 Study & 2008 Census)



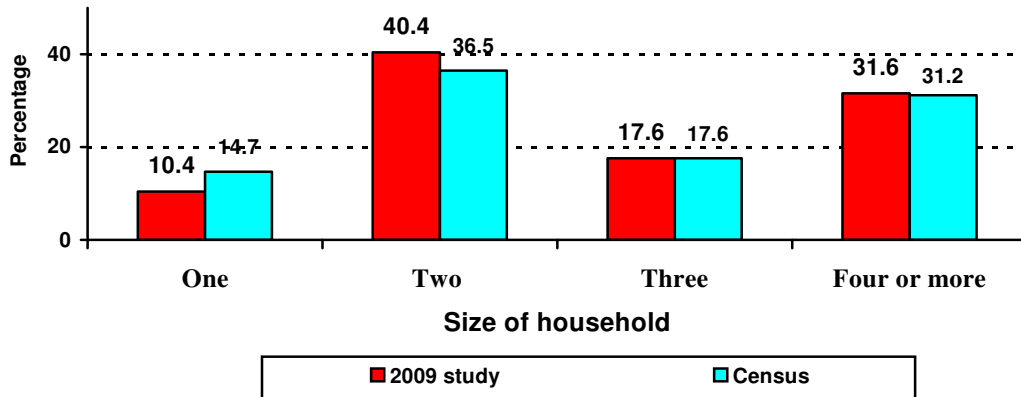
A breakdown of the age of the respondents is shown in Figure 2. There was a relatively good representation from all age groups, though in comparison to the 2009 census⁵, the 18-24 and 25-34 year age groups were under-represented.

FIGURE 2
Age of Respondents



A breakdown of household size is shown in Figure 3. The sample frame for this study was comparable with the 2009 census. The average household size was 2.9 people

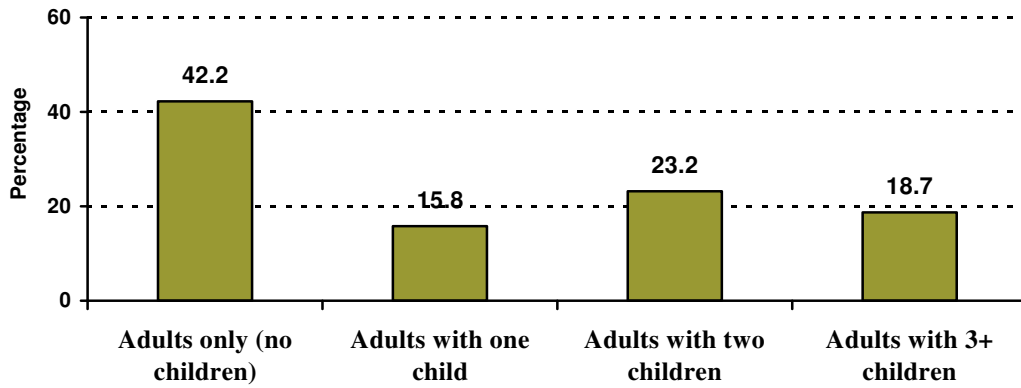
FIGURE 3
Size of Household



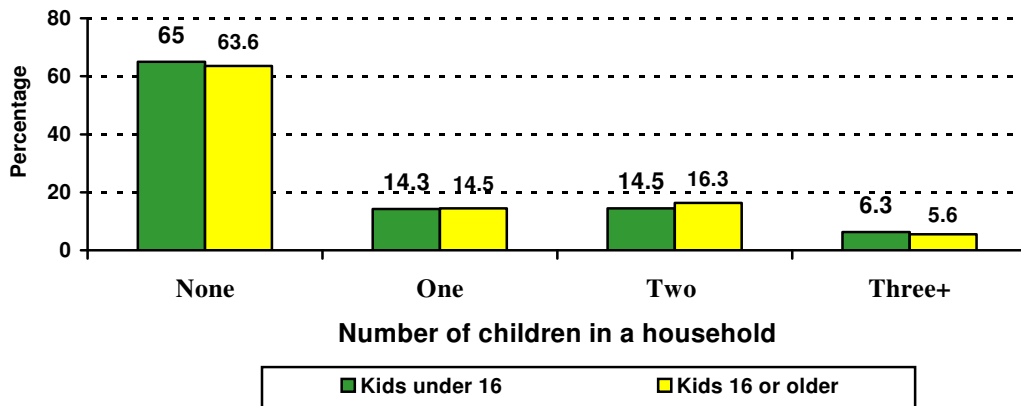
⁵ These percentages are adjusted to reflect a 100% total of those residents 18 and older (excluding younger residents).

Household composition is shown in Figure 4 and a breakdown of the number of children in the household is shown in Figure 5. These findings have been consistent over the past few years when conducting the satisfaction survey.

**FIGURE 4
Household Composition**

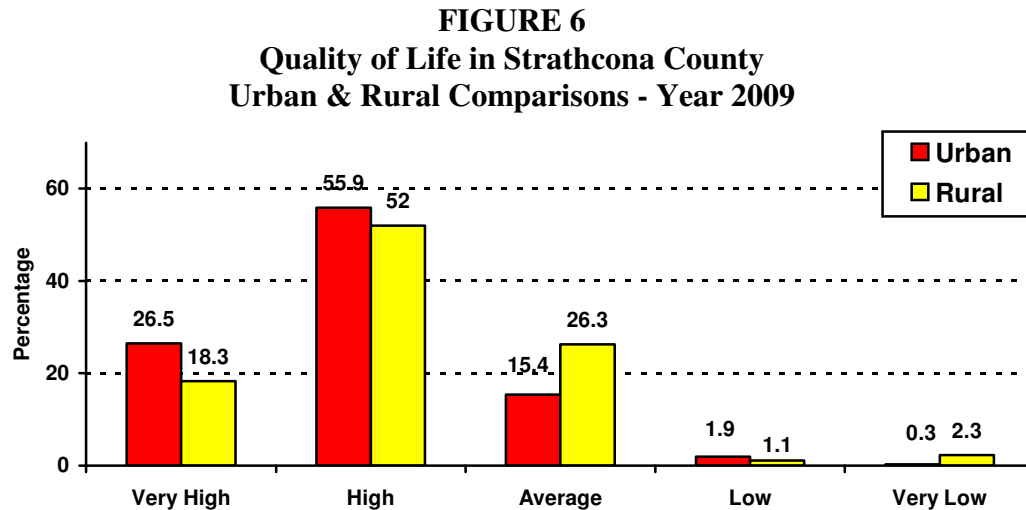


**FIGURE 5
Number of Children in Household (based on ages of children)**



B. Quality of Life in Strathcona County

Respondents were initially asked to indicate the extent that they were satisfied with life in Strathcona County. A breakdown by region is shown in Figure 6.



Highlights from Figure 6

- The overall rating of Strathcona County was very positive regardless of where one lived in the County. It can be seen in Figure 6 that the combined *very high and high* quality of life ratings are slightly higher for urban residents compared to rural residents.⁶
- A further analysis revealed that no significant differences were found among gender or age for this item.
- Respondents who rated the quality of life as low or very low were asked to indicate how the quality of life in Strathcona County could be improved. Although most people did not rate the quality of life in the County in this manner, a few of the 13 residents (2.6% of the sample) who did cited perceptions that the government was imposing its will on the personal lives of residents through rules associated with waste collection, civic bylaws, or use of tax dollars as reasons for their dissatisfaction.

⁶ With the exception of last year's survey (where urban and rural resident ratings were almost identical), this pattern has been consistently similar in previous satisfaction surveys.

Figure 7 presents a breakdown of urban and rural residents' ratings of Strathcona County as a place to raise children.

FIGURE 7
Strathcona County as a Place to Raise Children
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2009

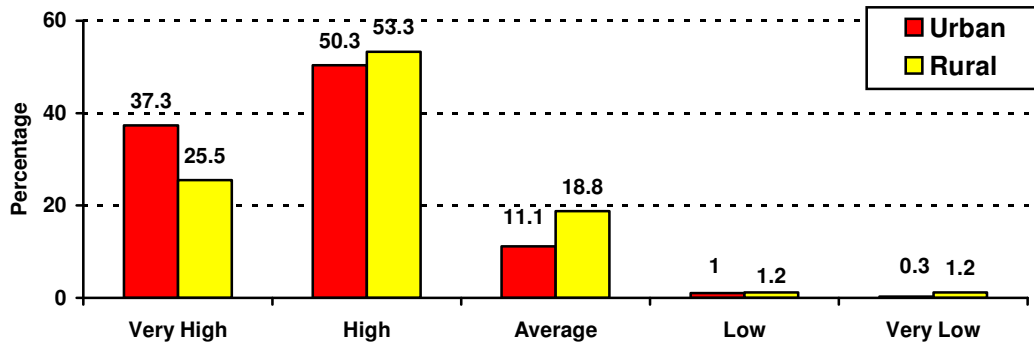
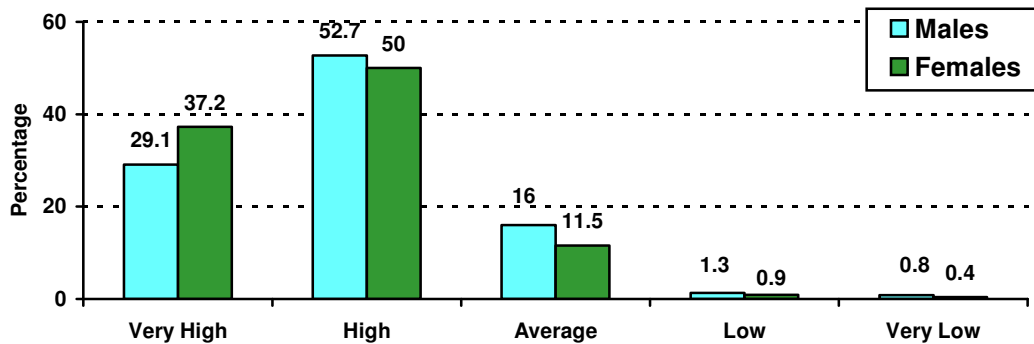


FIGURE 8
Strathcona County as a Place to Raise Children
Gender Comparisons - Year 2009



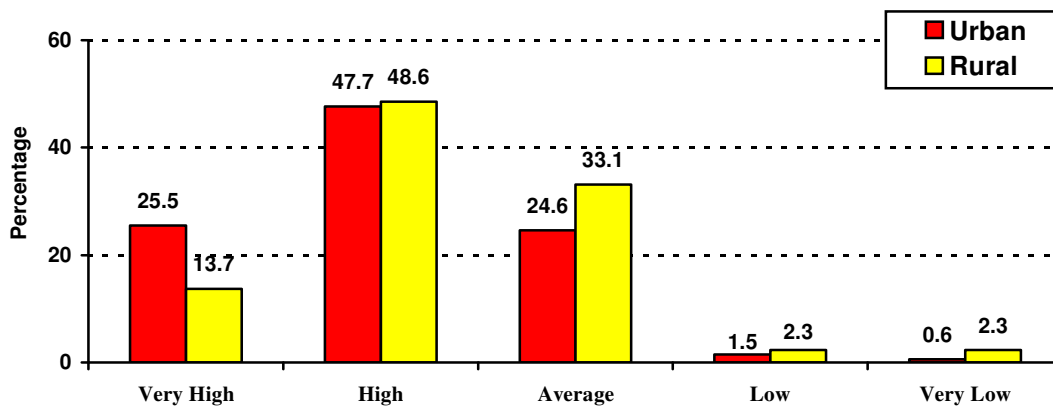
Highlights from Figure 7 & Figure 8

- The majority of people, regardless of where they live, perceive that Strathcona County is an excellent place to raise children, as the majority felt it is high or *very high*.
- In this year’s survey, a slightly higher proportion of females felt the County was a safe place to raise children (87.2% *very high/high*) compared to males (81.8% *very high/high*). There were no differences among age groups for this item.

- Respondents who rated this item as low or very low were asked to indicate what improvements could be considered. Only 1.5% of the sample (7 respondents) felt this way; a couple of reasons associated with this were with concerns about teens in the community, based on perceptions that they had too much free time on their hands with nothing to do in the community.

Figure 9 presents a breakdown by region pertaining to ratings of Strathcona County as safe community.

FIGURE 9
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2009

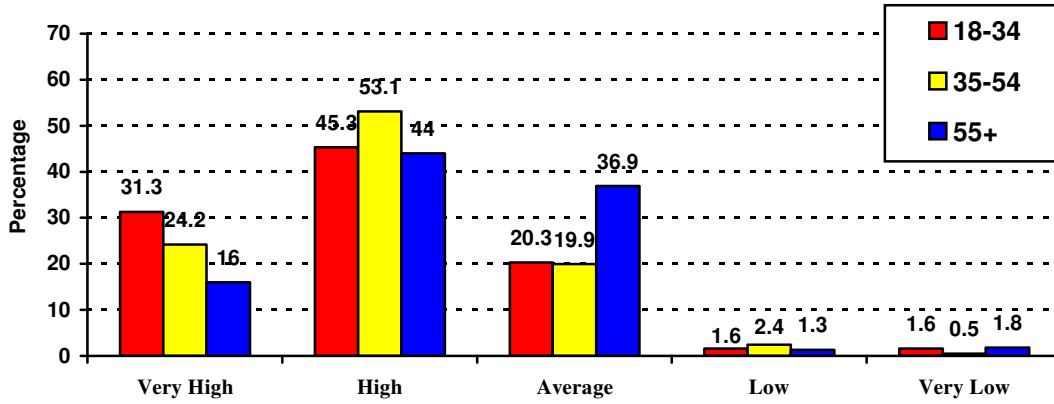


Highlights from Figure 9

- The majority of people felt that Strathcona County was a safe community in which to live. The percentage of residents who gave a *very high* rating for this question has stayed the same for the past two years of conducting this survey.

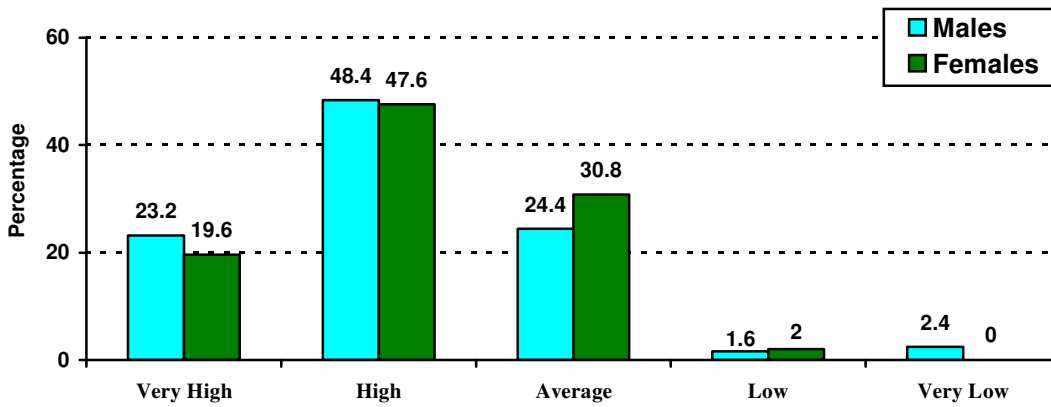
- The majority of residents under the age of 55 felt quite safe living in Strathcona County in 2009 (see Figure 10 below).

FIGURE 10
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Age Group Comparisons – Year 2009



- In 2009, the percentage of residents who rated safety in the County as *very high or high* (69.4%) was lower than results posted in 2008 (74.4%). An examination of perceptions showed there was no difference in this perception on the basis of gender.

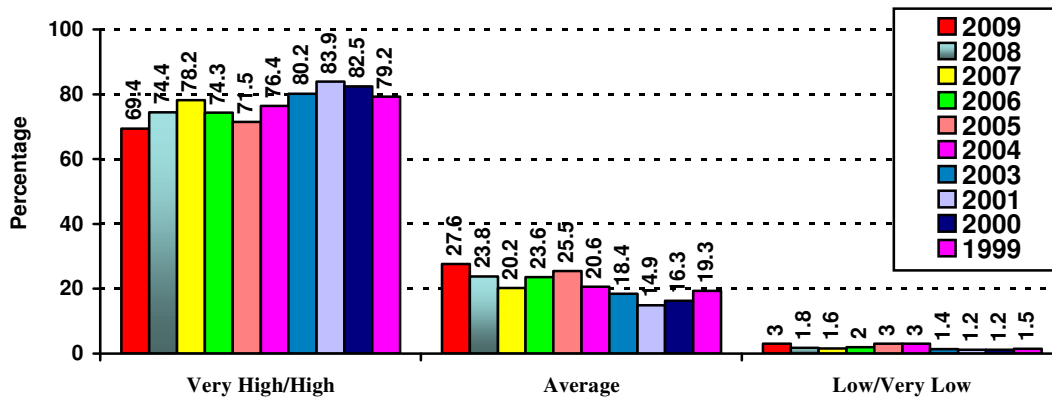
FIGURE 11
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Gender Comparisons - Year 2009



- Overall, only 3% of residents (i.e. 15 respondents) gave safety in Strathcona County a low rating. Of these, concerns that were raised had to do with questioning why the curfew bylaw was not being enforced, and how effective the RCMP has been in enforcing laws in Strathcona County after 11 pm.

It can be seen from Figure 12 that perceptions of safety in Strathcona County being “high or very high” have dropped to their lowest level in 2009 (with the highest safety ranking occurring in 2001). Nevertheless, it can be seen that the percentage of people who gave safety in the community a low rating has been very small in every year where this has been monitored.

FIGURE 12
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Study Comparisons (1999-2009)⁷



It can be seen from Figure 13 the majority of residents indicated that they knew up to five other adults in their neighborhood. It can be seen, however, that a larger percentage of residents living in rural Strathcona knew more than 20 adults compared to those living in Sherwood Park.⁸ This is consistent with the findings from last year’s satisfaction survey.

⁷ There was no satisfaction study conducted in 2002.

⁸ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between the number of neighbors one knows on the basis of where one lives in Strathcona County ($\chi^2 = 18.8, 4 \text{ df}, p=.001$).

FIGURE 13
Number of Adults Known by Name within One’s Neighborhood
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2009

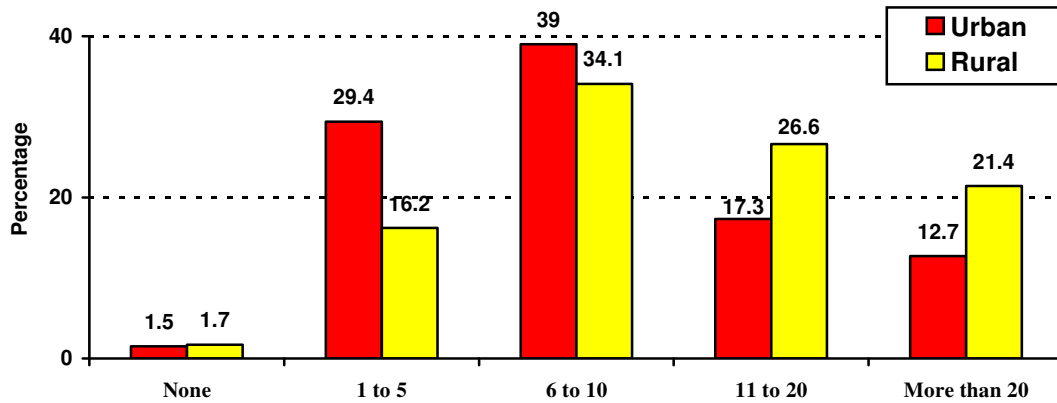
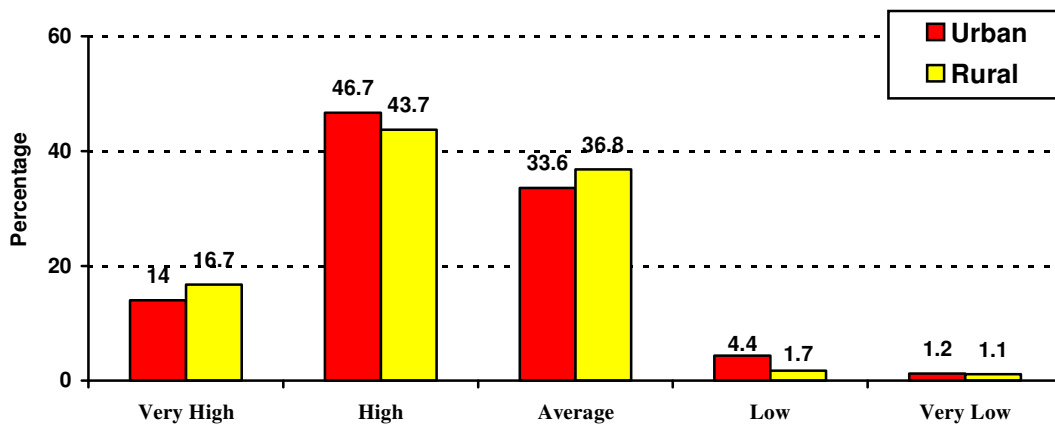


Figure 14 presents a breakdown by region of people’s ratings of the quality of Strathcona County’s natural environment.

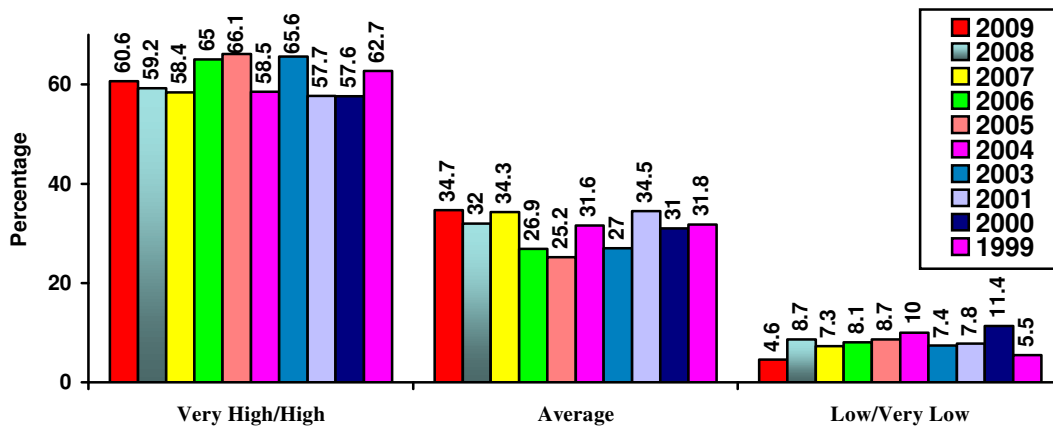
FIGURE 14
Rating the Quality of Strathcona County’s Natural Environment
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2009



Highlights from Figure 14

- It can be seen that 60.7% of the urban and 60.4% of the rural population gave *very high* or *high* ratings for the quality of the County’s environment. This year’s ratings were 4% higher in the urban area, but 4% lower in the rural area compared to 2008 ratings.
- None of the demographic characteristics were factors in influencing how people rated the quality of the natural environment in Strathcona County.
- Overall results (depicted in Figure 15 below) show that the combined very high and high ratings that people gave to the quality of Strathcona County’s natural environment have increased slightly since 2007, but generally have not matched ratings noted in 2005 and 2006.
- The 4.6% (or 23 residents) who gave *low* or *very low* ratings were asked to indicate their reasons for the rating. The most common concerns conveyed by these residents was the loss of natural areas and minimal or no replacement of trees as a result of residential, commercial and industrial growth throughout the County. Another aspect of the environment echoed by a number of residents focused on the negative effects associated with the refineries. These comments have been consistent since 1999.

FIGURE 15
Rating the Quality of Strathcona County’s Natural Environment
Study Comparisons (1999-2009)



Respondents were asked to rate how well the County Council and staff balanced the needs and interests of people living in different areas of the County. The results are shown in Figure 16, with overall trends shown in Figure 17.

FIGURE 16
Balancing the Needs and Interests of People Living in Strathcona County
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2009

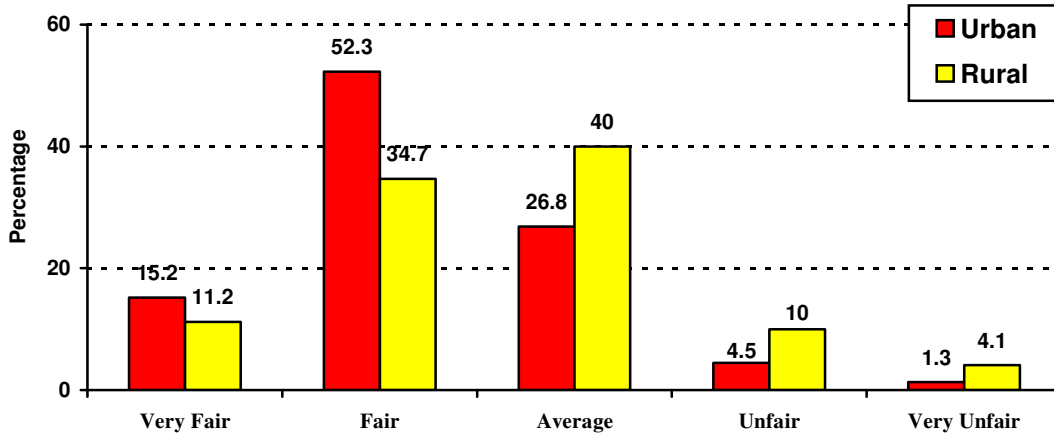
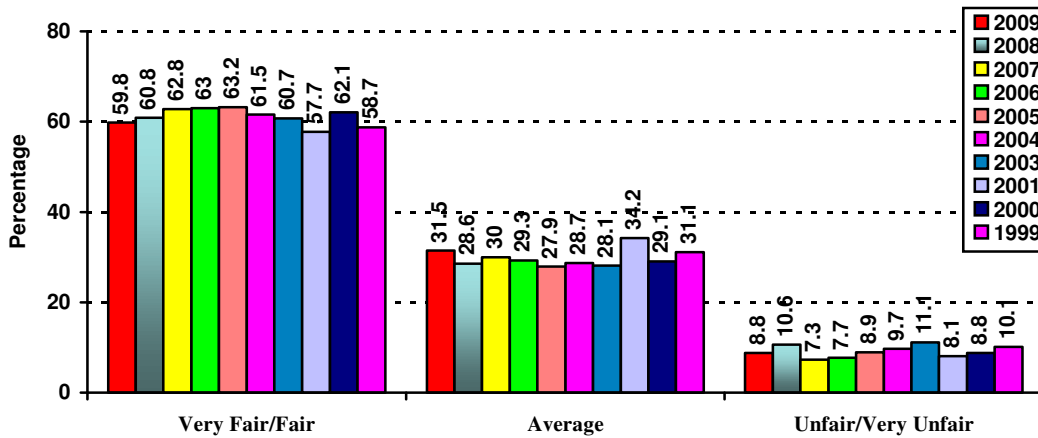


FIGURE 17
Balancing the Needs and Interests of People Living in Strathcona County
(1999-2009 Comparisons)



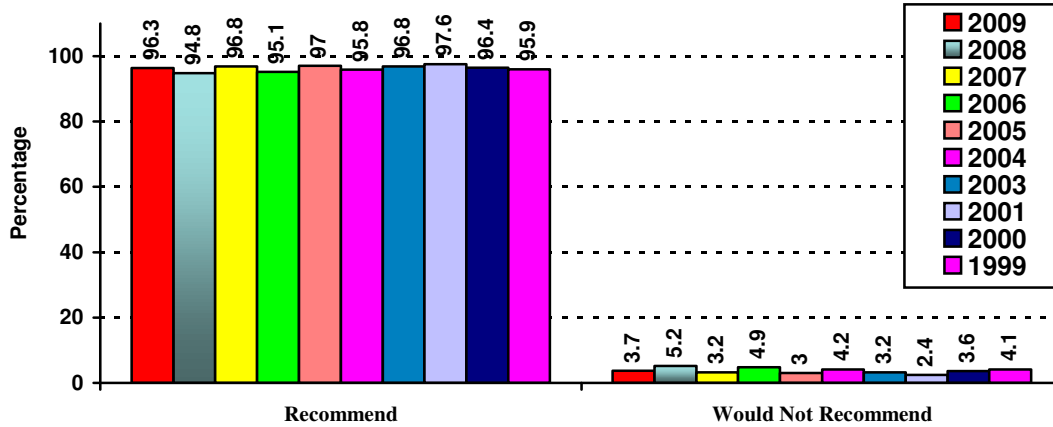
Highlights from Figure 16 & Figure 17

- There was a difference in perception between rural and urban residents as to how fairly they believe people are treated in the County. It can be seen that considerably more people living in the urban area believe they are treated fairly by County Council and staff compared to those living in rural parts of the County.⁹
- Outside of residence location, none of the other demographic characteristics influenced how people perceived the fairness of County Council and staff toward people living in different parts of Strathcona County.
- With respect to measuring attitudes on this issue on a long-term basis, it can be seen in Figure 17 that overall perceptions of fairness in balancing the needs and interests of people living in the County has not varied considerably over the past 10 years that this survey has been conducted.
- The 42 residents in 2009 (8.8% of the sample) who felt the County was unfair were asked to comment on why they felt that way. Many of the comments were by rural residents, who felt they were not getting the same level of services as urban residents.

It can be seen in Figure 18 that almost all of the respondents would recommend Strathcona County to others as a place to live. This was virtually identical to the satisfaction surveys done in previous years. The small percentage of people (3.7% or 18 residents) who would not recommend the County as a place to live were asked to indicate why they felt that way. There were a variety of reasons put forward, though the most common reasons centered on perceptions of high taxes, with a few residents also noting an increased lack of weed control in different parts of the County.

⁹ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between perception of balancing needs and interests of people within the County on the basis of where they live in Strathcona County ($\chi^2 = 23.66$, 4 df, $p=.000$).

FIGURE 18
Recommendation of Strathcona County as a Place to Live
Study Comparisons (1999-2009)



C. Quality of Services Provided by Strathcona County

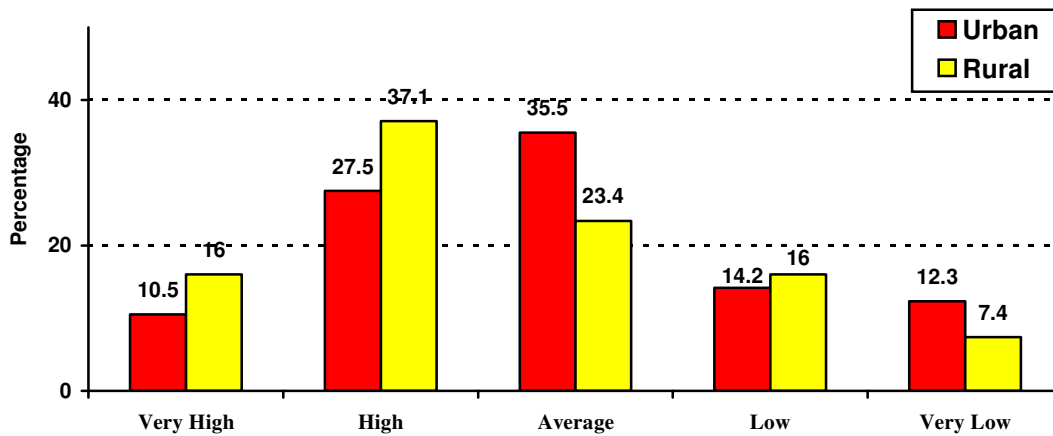
Residents of Strathcona County were asked a series of questions about what they thought of various services provided to them. Overall, respondents were asked to rate 18 different services. For each question, respondents rated the service using a 5 point Likert Scale, where a score of 1 was designated as *very high* and a score of 5 was designated as *very low*. Unless otherwise noted, the level of satisfaction in 2009 for these services was similar to the data collected in 2008.

It should be noted that for all of these services, the percentages noted in the report are based on those people who expressed an opinion. People who stated that they “did not know” enough to provide a rating were removed from the percentage calculations.

Road Maintenance in Strathcona County

People were first asked to rate the quality of winter road maintenance. Comparative results by geographic location of residence are depicted in Figure 19. There was a statistical difference in perception between rural and urban residents on winter road maintenance¹⁰ as it can be seen that more people living in the rural areas felt the quality of winter road maintenance was higher than those living in the urban area.

FIGURE 19
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2009



A further analysis revealed that perceptions of winter road maintenance among residents varied slightly between 2008 and 2009. It can be seen in Figure 20 that the percentage of urban residents who felt the winter road maintenance work was *very high* or *high* increased to 38% in 2009 compared to 33.5% in 2008. Among rural residents, there was a slight decrease seen between 2008 and 2009; as seen in Figure 21, 53.1% gave this service a *very high* or *high* rating in 2009 compared with 58.9% in 2008.

¹⁰ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between perception of winter road maintenance on the basis of where they live in Strathcona County ($\chi^2 = 14.35, 4 \text{ df}, p=.006$).

FIGURE 20
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance as noted by Sherwood Park Residents
2006-2009 Study Comparisons

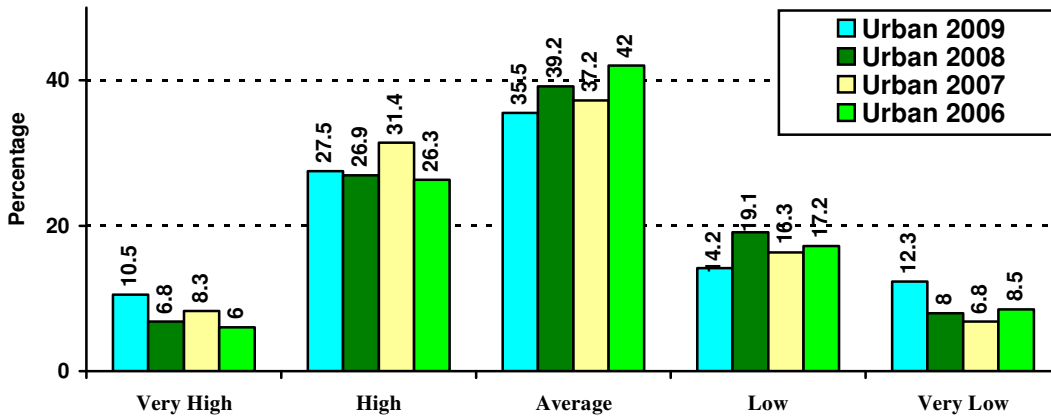
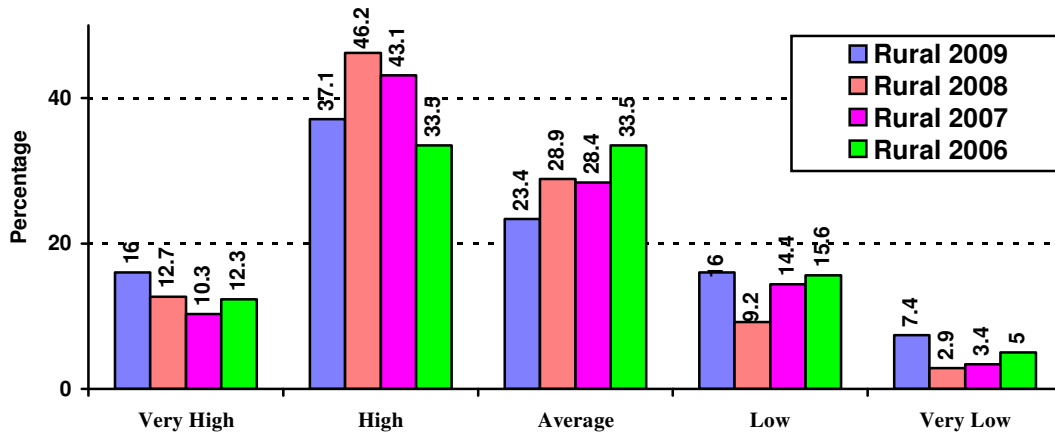


FIGURE 21
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance as noted by Rural Strathcona Residents
2006-2009 Study Comparisons

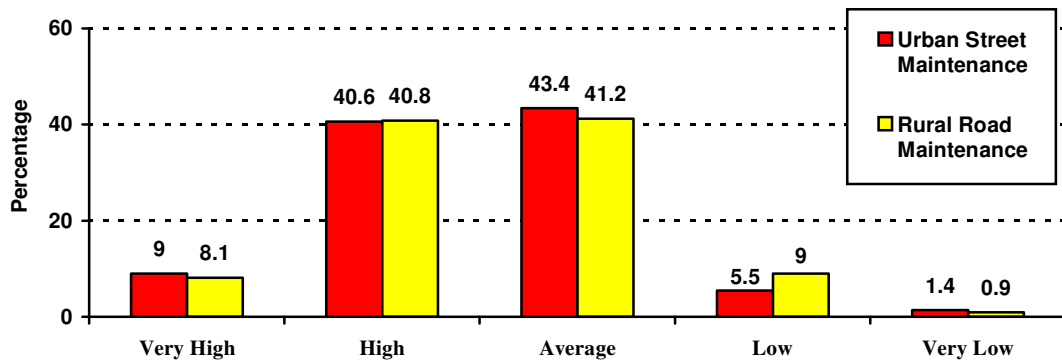


No differences for this service were seen among age groups or gender and a further analysis of the data revealed that length of residency did not have a measurable effect on perceptions of the quality of winter maintenance.

Overall, 127 residents (25.2% of the sample) were not happy with winter road maintenance, and were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. The main criticism among residents was for residential side streets in Sherwood Park to be cleared, especially after a number of frequent snowfalls. In this regard, many residents added that the lack of clearing resulted in more cars getting stuck and, in many cases, having to maneuver on very slippery roads.

People were then asked to rate the quality of summer road maintenance in the urban area (Sherwood Park) and for rural areas. The overall results for both types of roads are depicted in Figure 22.

FIGURE 22
Quality of Summer Road Maintenance of Urban and Rural Roads
in the Year 2009 – All Residents



Highlights from Figure 22

- Overall, people living throughout Strathcona County feel that there is very little difference between the urban and rural areas for summer road maintenance.
- None of the demographic characteristics were factors in influencing how people felt about summer urban and rural road maintenance. However, there was a statistical difference in perception between rural and urban residents on summer road maintenance on rural roads.¹¹ It can be seen in Figure 24 that there was a higher percentage of people living in the rural areas who indicated

¹¹ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between perception of rural road maintenance on the basis of where they live in Strathcona County ($\chi^2 = 15.8, 4 \text{ df}, p=.003$). There was no statistical difference seen among residents with respect to perceptions of summer urban road maintenance.

that summer rural road maintenance was *low* compared to those living in the urban area who felt that way.¹²

FIGURE 23
Quality of Summer Road Maintenance of Roads in Sherwood Park
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2009

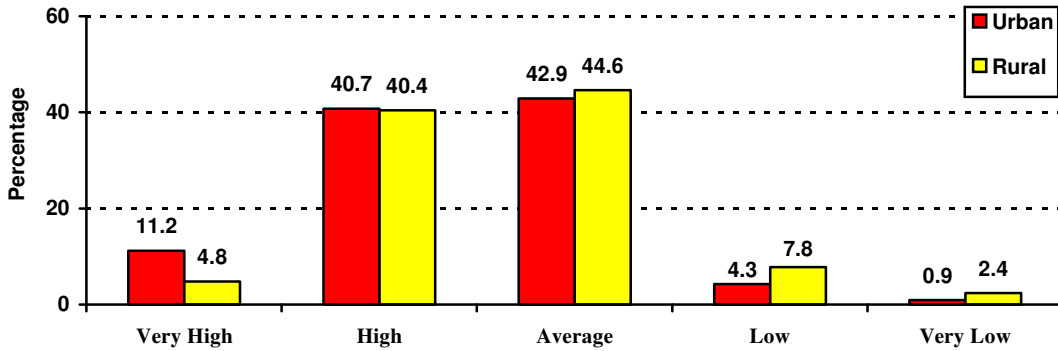
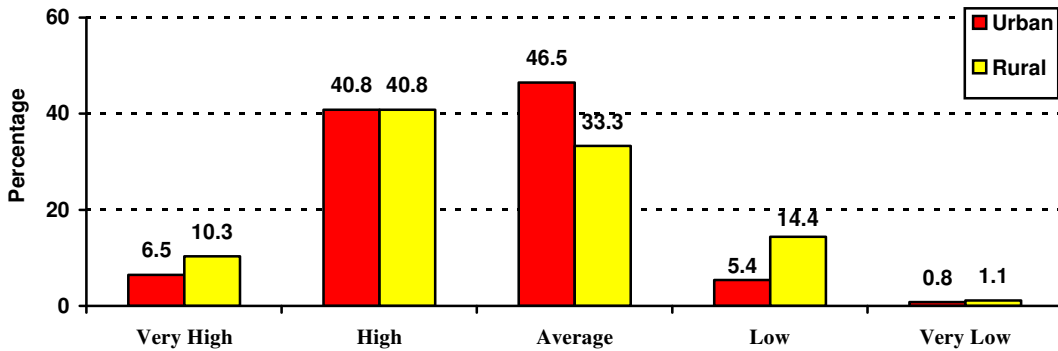


FIGURE 24
Quality of Summer Road Maintenance of Rural Roads
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2009



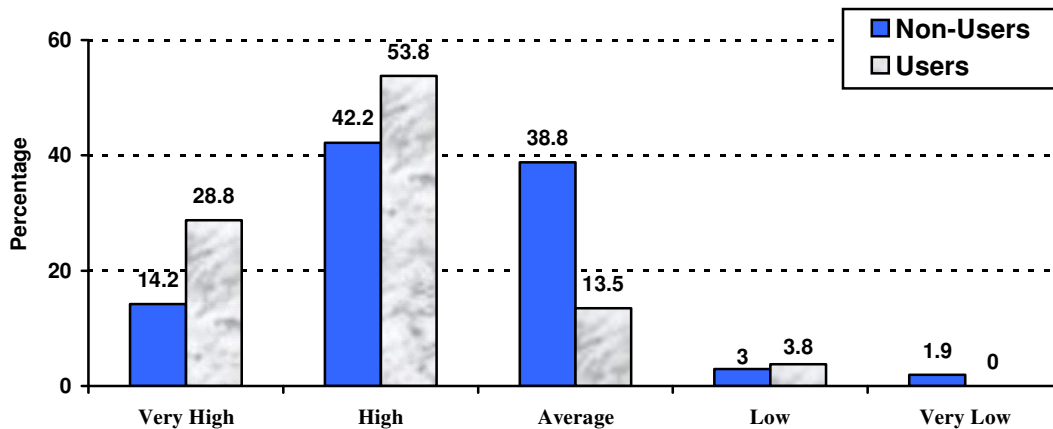
- Overall, 6.9% of residents (N=34) were unhappy with the summer maintenance of urban roads. Almost all of these residents reflected on the need to fill in the potholes in the roads; there were also some who felt that attention should be placed on sidewalk repair as well.
- Overall, 9.9% of residents (N=43) were unhappy with the summer maintenance of rural roads. As with the urban roads, a frequent complaint focused on the increased number of potholes encountered on these roads. Some residents wondered if widening some of the rural roads was a possibility (RR 221 and RR 215 were specifically mentioned).

¹² While there was a statistical difference seen, it should be noted that the actual number of residents who were dissatisfied is less than those who were satisfied with the service.

Helping Services in Strathcona County

People were also asked to rate the quality of family support services, fire and ambulance services and the RCMP. Figure 25 presents the satisfaction level for family support services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services¹³ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should be noted that 175 respondents (35% of the sample) did not comment on the quality of family support services because they did not know anything about them.

FIGURE 25
Quality of Family Support Services – 2009 Results



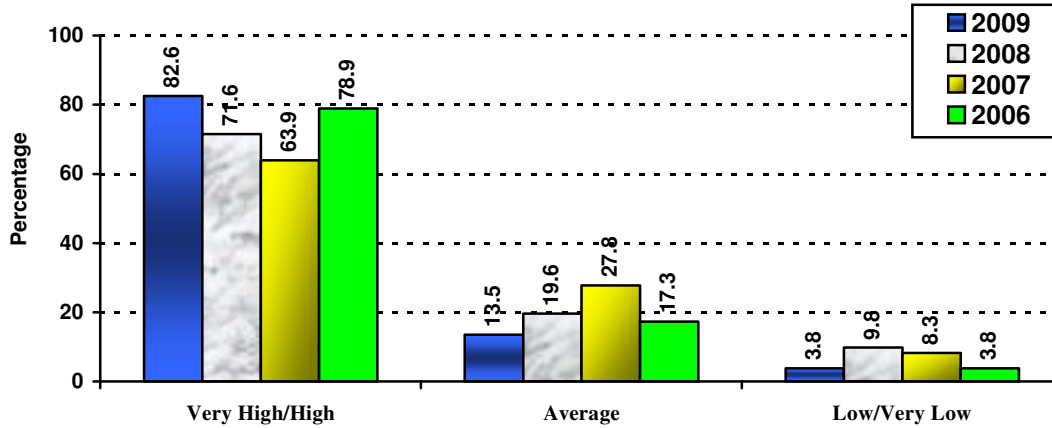
Highlights from Figure 25

- It can be seen from Figure 25 that both resident users and non-users have a positive view toward family support services in Strathcona County. However, a chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between one's use and how satisfied one is with family services ($\chi^2 = 16.14$, 4 df, $p = .003$). A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -3.53$, 318 df, $p < .001$) confirms that users of family support services rated these services higher than non-users.
- The actual number of residents who used (and rated) the services in the past 12 months was low (N=57). It can be seen that close to 83% of the people who used FCS gave the department *high* or *very high* satisfaction ratings. The

¹³ Overall, 11.8% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had used family support services within the past 12 months. This is almost identical to the percentage of 2008 users and about 4% higher than what was found in 2007.

combined *very high/high* ratings of Family and Community Services is higher in 2009 than in the previous three years (Figure 26).

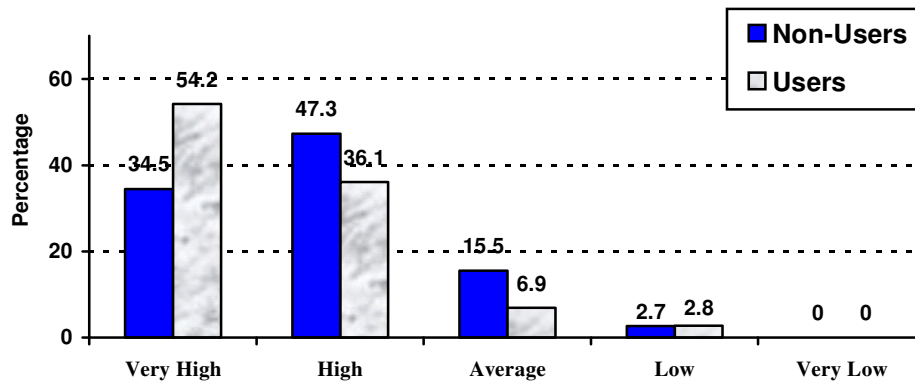
FIGURE 26
Quality of Family Support Services
User Trends 2006 - 2009



- As in previous surveys, the percentage of users rating the service as *low or very low* is small. In 2009, only 3.8% were dissatisfied.
- The 15 people who gave family support services a low rating in 2009 (3.8% of the sample) were asked to suggest how this could be improved. Almost all of the suggestions focused on additional programs for seniors.
- There were no differences found for any socio-demographic characteristic for this item in 2009.

Figure 27 presents the satisfaction level people have for fire and ambulance services, based on the portion of the sample who utilized these services¹⁴ in the past 12 months, and those who did not use these services. It should be noted that 60 respondents (12% of the sample) indicated that they “did not know” enough about these services to rate them.

FIGURE 27
Quality of Fire and Ambulance Services – 2009 Results



Highlights from Figure 27

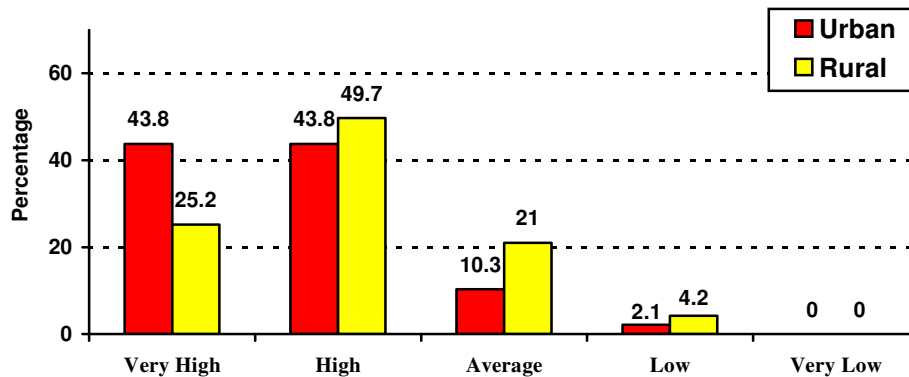
- It can be seen from Figure 27 that most residents (regardless of use) have a positive view of fire and ambulance services in Strathcona County, with strong positive feelings more prevalent among users than non-users.¹⁵ This demonstrates that recipients were pleased with the quality of services received when these services were needed.
- Overall, 12 people (2.8% of the sample) were not satisfied with the services. There were a variety of suggestions, though the most frequent idea put forward was to have the County try and improve response times to emergencies, especially in the rural areas.
- Apart from location (see below) there were no differences found for any other socio-demographic characteristic for this item in 2009.

¹⁴ Overall, 15.1% of respondents in 2009 indicated that they had used the fire and ambulance services within the past 12 months. This reported usage is about the same as 2007 and 2008.

¹⁵ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between one's use and how satisfied one is with County fire and ambulance services ($\chi^2 = 10.76, 4 \text{ df}; p = .03$). A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -2.82, 410 \text{ df}; p = .005$) statistically confirms that users of fire and ambulance services rated these services higher than non-users.

As seen in Figure 28, a further analysis of this service revealed that more Sherwood Park residents (regardless of use) were satisfied with the service (87.6% *very high or high*) compared with those living in rural areas (74.9% *very high or high*).¹⁶ As indicated earlier, part of the reason for the gap in satisfaction with this service between urban and rural residents has to do with response time and availability of this service for rural residents. A further comparison with past satisfaction studies on this service revealed that the difference in the combined *very high/high* satisfaction scores noted for rural and urban residents is slightly higher than what was reported in 2008 (and about the same as 2007), but is still better than what was seen in previous years when satisfaction studies were conducted (2000-2006).

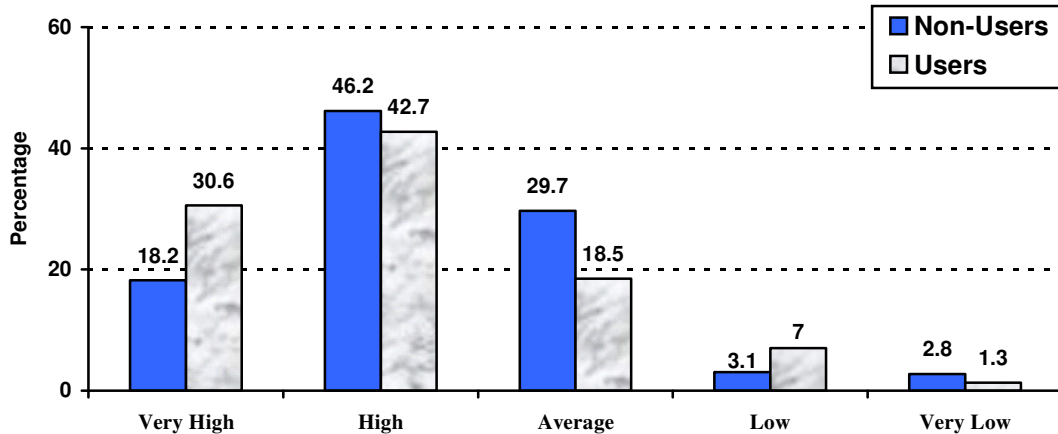
FIGURE 28
Quality of Fire and Ambulance Services
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2009



¹⁶ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between perception of fire and ambulance services on the basis of where they live in Strathcona County ($\chi^2 = 18.62, 4 \text{ df}, p=.000$).

Figure 29 presents the satisfaction level for RCMP services, based on those who used these services¹⁷ in the past 12 months and those who did not.

FIGURE 29
Quality of RCMP Services – 2009 Results

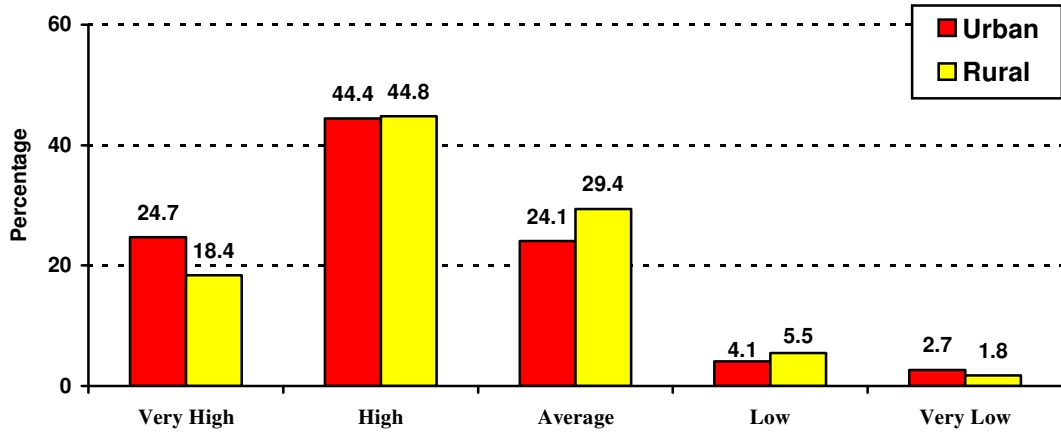


Highlights from Figure 29

- It can be seen from Figure 29 that most residents have a positive view of RCMP in Strathcona County, regardless of whether or not they used the service in the past 12 months. A *chi-square* measurement test between users and non-users suggested that there was a difference in perceptions on how users and non-users rated the service ($\chi^2 = 16.54, 4 df, p = .002$).
- The ratings provided by both users and non-users in 2009 were very similar to trends found in 2006 - 2008.
- The 32 users and non-users who rated RCMP services as *low* or *very low* were asked to comment on ways that the service could be improved. A variety of reasons were put forward, with people citing more manpower, more visibility in the community overall, with an emphasis on evening patrols, and less photo radar.
- A further analysis of this service revealed that residents were relatively happy with the RCMP services, regardless of where they live (Figure 30). The 2009 trends were very similar to what was found in the last three satisfaction surveys with respect to urban/rural location.

¹⁷Overall, 161 respondents (32.2% of the 2009 sample) indicated that they had used the RCMP within the past 12 months. This reported usage is lower than what was reported in previous satisfaction surveys. It should also be noted that 42 people (8.4%) did not rate the service in 2009 on the basis that they did not know enough about the RCMP to give a rating.

FIGURE 30
Quality of RCMP Services – Urban and Rural Comparisons (2009)

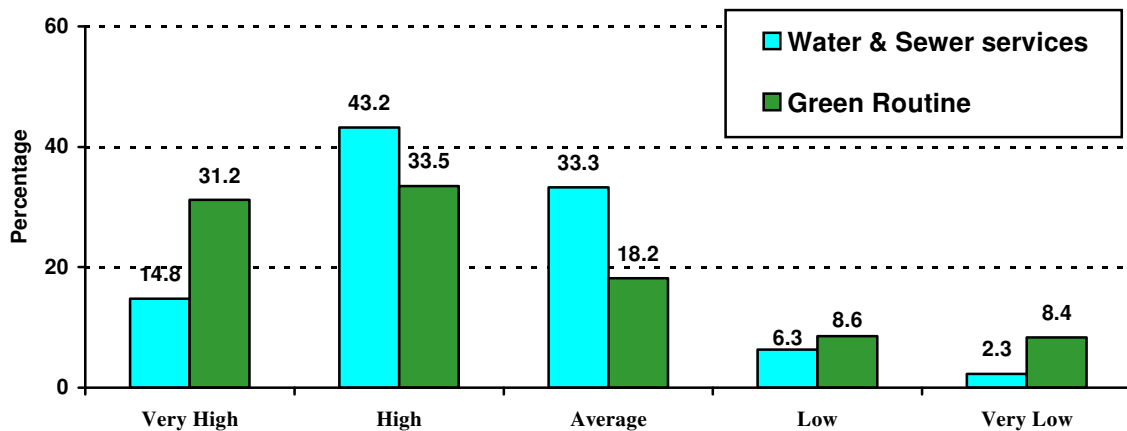


- No differences were seen with RCMP services with any demographic variable.

Water and Waste Management Services in Strathcona County

People were asked to rate the quality of the water and the Green Routine (the waste collection and recycling system) in Strathcona County. Figure 31 presents the satisfaction level of residents for these services, regardless of where they live.¹⁸

FIGURE 31
Level of Satisfaction with Water and Waste Management Services – 2009 Results



Highlights from Figure 31

- It can be seen from Figure 31 that residents were generally satisfied with these services. A further examination of the ratings revealed that 64.7% gave *very high/high* ratings for the Green Routine (which was almost the same rating given in 2008). The ratings for water and sewage services however, were lower in 2009, with 58% giving this a *very high* or *high* rating compared to 62.6% in 2008.
- A further analysis by geographic area revealed that rural residents in the County were not as satisfied with either utility service compared to those living in Sherwood Park. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between where one lives and how one rated *water and sewage* ($\chi^2 = 69.44$, 4 df, $p = .000$) and the *Green Routine* ($\chi^2 = 11.17$, 4 df, $p = .025$). A depiction of how residents rated both services based on where they lived is shown in Figures 32 and 33.

¹⁸ Overall, 116 people (23.2%) did not rate water & sewer services and 23 people (4.6%) did not rate the green routine services in 2009. These patterns are about the same as number of residents who did not rate these services in the 2008 survey. It should also be noted that the majority of those who did not rate water & sewer and green routine services live in rural parts of Strathcona County.

FIGURE 32
Level of Satisfaction with Water Services
Urban & Rural Comparisons - 2009

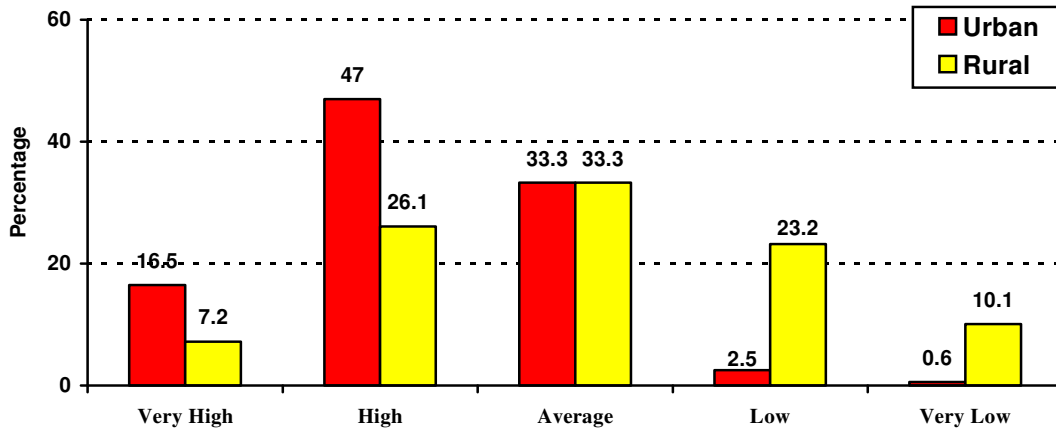
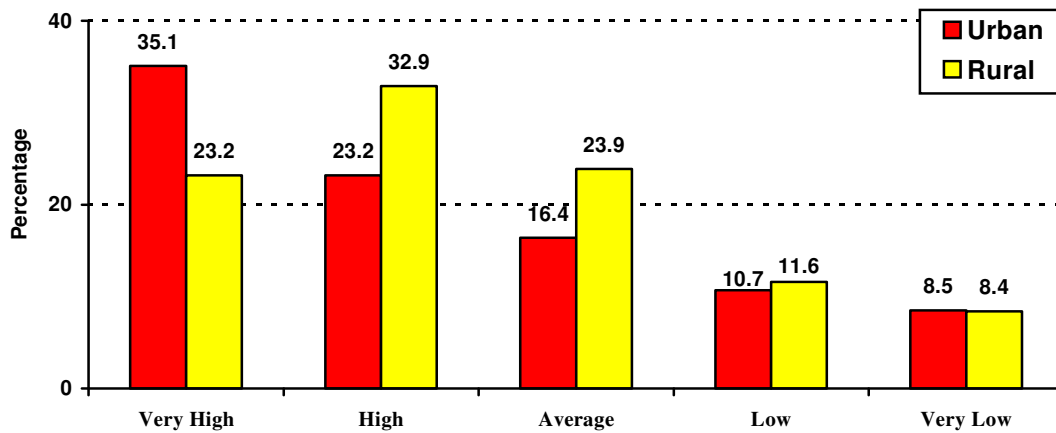


FIGURE 33
Level of Satisfaction with Green Routine Service
Urban & Rural Comparisons - 2009



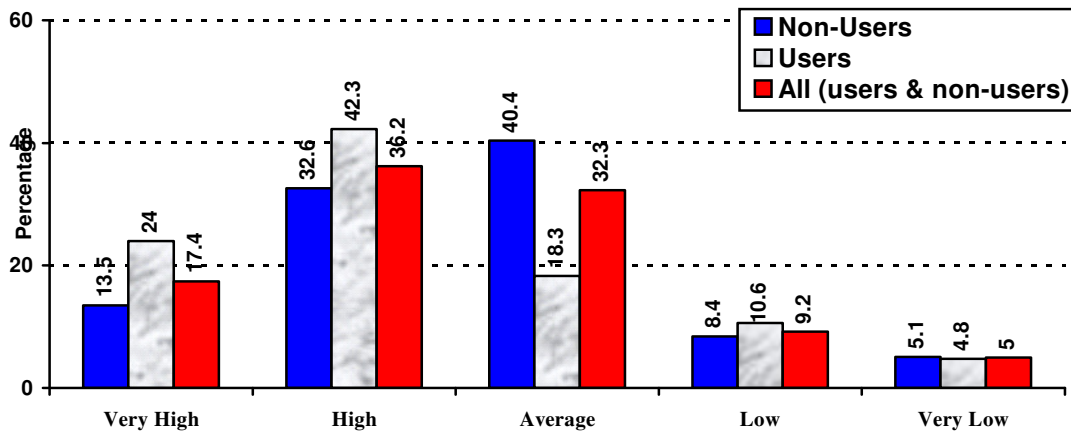
- The people who rated these services as *low* or *very low* were asked to comment on ways that the services could be improved. With respect to water services, 33 people (8.6% of the sample) made comments. There were also several people in rural areas who thought that the County should run sewer and water lines out to acreages, as the only way many can get water is to haul it out (South Cooking Lake was cited by several rural residents). Some residents were concerned about the quality of the water (e.g. fluoride level, hardness level) that they were currently receiving.

- With respect to the Green Routine services, 81 residents (17% of the sample) who rated the service as *low* or *very low* had comments. Many of the residents were upset with the sorting of organics, and problems with missed pick-ups during the winter months (when it’s reduced to once every two weeks). Some of the residents with larger families reported having problems adhering to the number and size of carts that are provided to deal with the waste and recycling products.

Transit Services in Strathcona County

People were asked to rate their satisfaction with transit services in the County. Figure 34 presents the satisfaction level for transit services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services¹⁹ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 212 residents (42.4% of the sample) did not rate transit service on the basis that they did not know anything about the service.

FIGURE 34
Satisfaction with Strathcona County Transit Service – 2009 Results



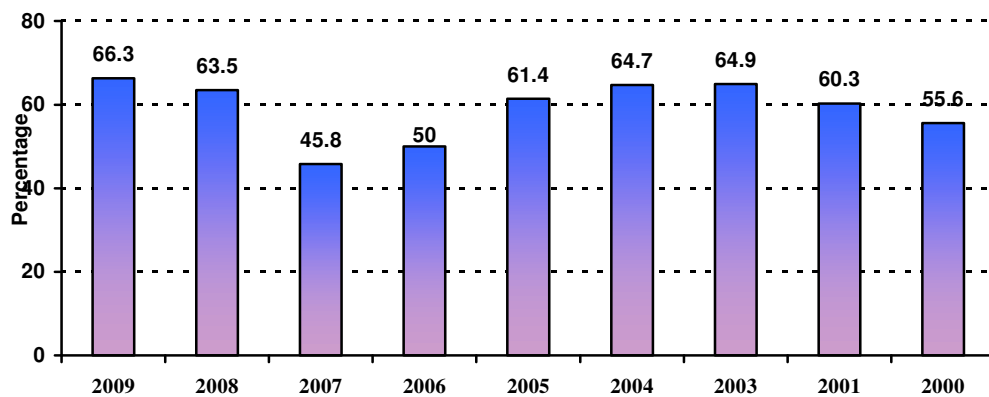
Highlights from Figure 34

- It can be seen from Figure 34 that around 54% of residents (regardless of use) have a positive view of transit services in Strathcona County. This is about the same as 2008.

¹⁹ Overall, 22.9% of respondents indicated they had used transit services within the past 12 months. This is almost 4% lower than what was seen in 2008.

- It can also be seen that 15.4% of users of the transit service have low or very low levels of satisfaction with the service, which is about the same as what was seen in 2008.
- In comparison to previous surveys, it can be seen in Figure 34 that the percentage of users rating this service as *very high/high* has continually increased since 2007, and is at its highest level since annual measurement began in 2000.

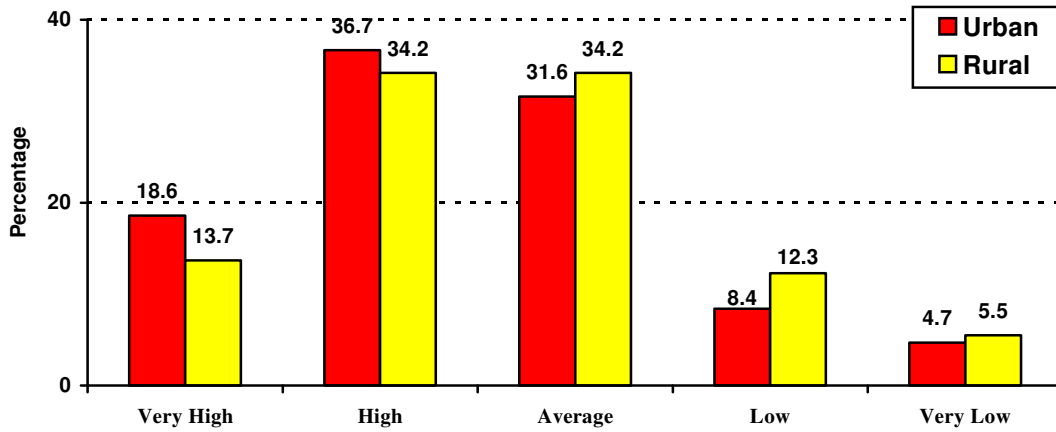
FIGURE 34
User “Very High/High” Combined Satisfaction Ratings with Strathcona County Transit Service 2000 – 2009 Comparisons²⁰



- The majority of transit users (81.1%) live in Sherwood Park (Figure 36). Although the *very high* ratings for transit are higher among those living in Sherwood Park compared to those living in the rural area (regardless of use), there were no statistically significant differences based on region.

²⁰ There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

FIGURE 36
Satisfaction with Strathcona County Transit Service – 2009 Results
Urban and Rural Comparisons

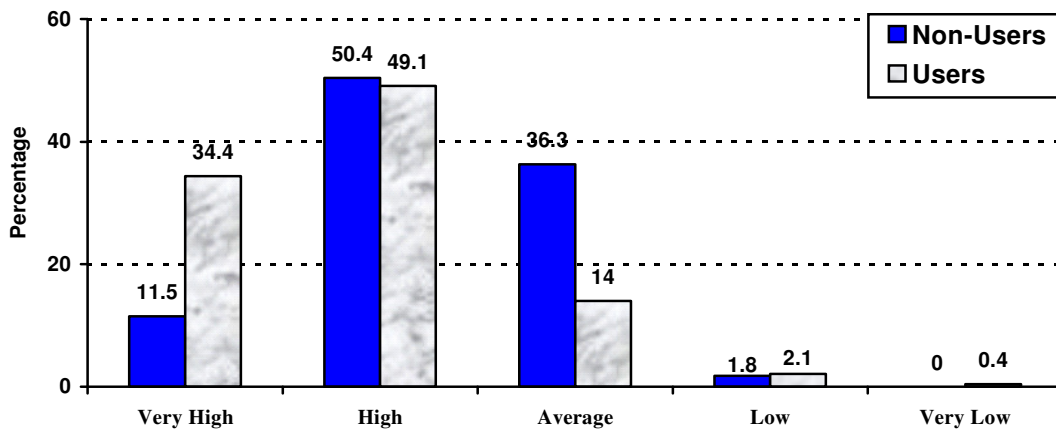


- There were no statistically significant differences noted between any demographic items and how residents rated transit services.
- The 41 people (14.3% of the sample) who gave transit services a *low/very low* rating were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. A variety of ideas were put forward, including a suggested increase in the number of buses, an improvement in frequency of buses on routes within Sherwood Park (especially on weekends) as well as additional bus routes within Sherwood Park. There were others who would like to have more covered bus stops put up at popular pick-up sites (such as Millennium Place) and more parking at the park and ride spots.

Library Services in Strathcona County

Figure 37 presents the satisfaction level with the Strathcona County Library, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services²¹ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 93 people (18.6% of the sample) did not rate library services on the basis that they did not know enough about the library to give it a rating.

FIGURE 37
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library – 2009 Results



Highlights from Figure 37

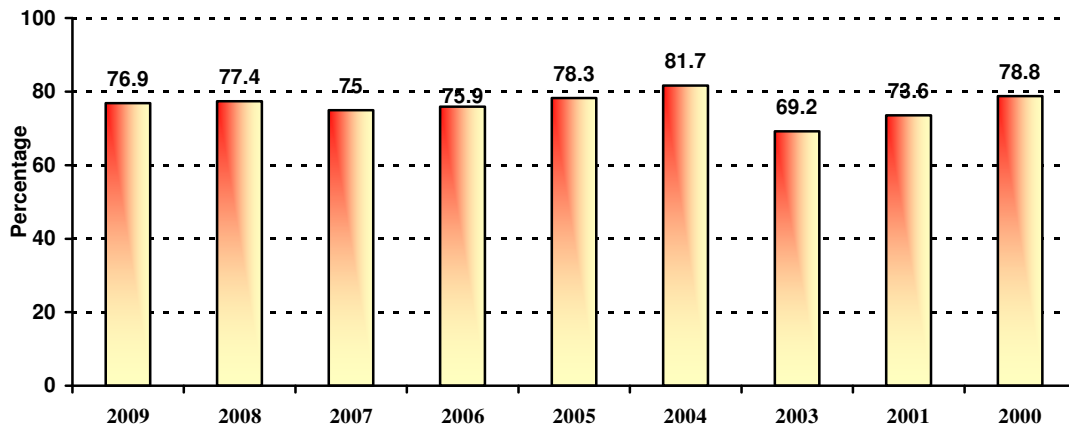
- It can be seen from Figure 37 that most residents have a positive view of the library, regardless of whether they use it. Nevertheless, a chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between use and how one rated library services.²² A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences revealed a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between users and non-users ($t = - 5.27, 396 \text{ df}, p < .001$), where users are more likely to give the library a higher rating than those who did not use it.
- It was also found that females gave the library slightly higher ratings in 2009 compared to males ($\chi^2 = 10.08, 4 \text{ df}, p=.04$). No differences were seen with the other demographic variables.

²¹ Overall, 59.7% of respondents indicated they had used the library within the past 12 months. This is about 3% lower than what was reported in 2008.

²² For library services, ($\chi^2 = 35.34, 4 \text{ df}, p=.000$).

- A further investigation revealed that an overall *very high/high* satisfaction level with the Strathcona Library (regardless of use) remains solid. The *very high/high* rating for the library from this and previous years is shown in Figure 38.

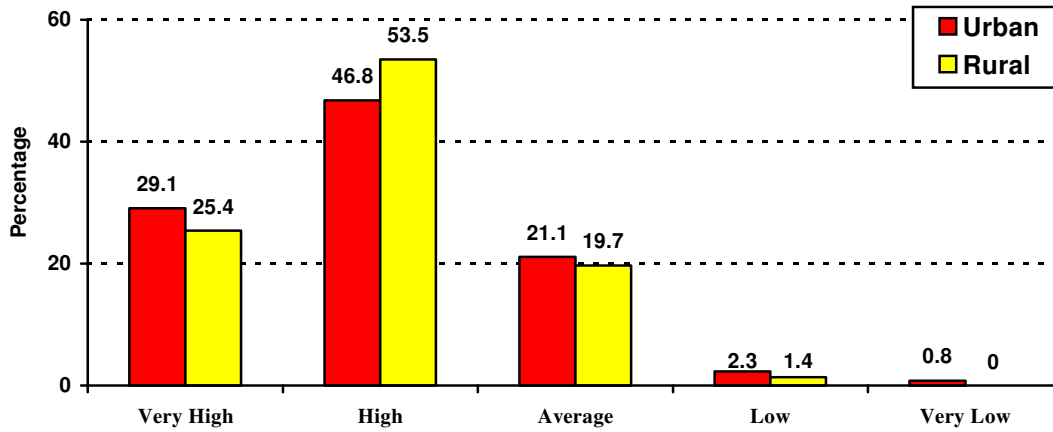
FIGURE 38
Combined “Very High/High” Satisfaction Ratings with Strathcona County Library
2000 – 2009 Comparisons²³



- The majority of library users surveyed live in Sherwood Park (68.2%), while the remaining 31.8% live in other parts of Strathcona County. A breakdown of the satisfaction ratings of the library by all urban and rural residents (regardless of use) is shown in Figure 39. Perceptions did not vary considerably between rural and urban area residents.

²³ There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

FIGURE 39
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library – 2009 Results
Urban and Rural Comparisons

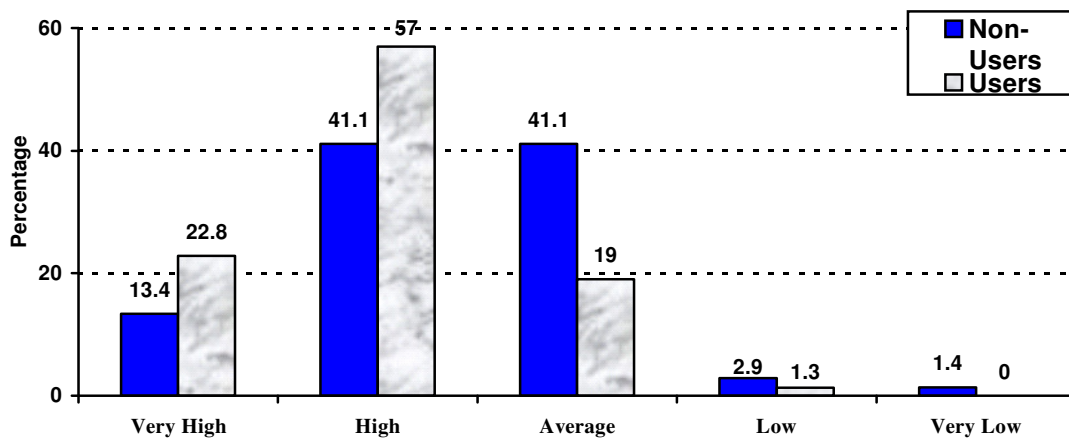


- There were 10 people (2.5% of the sample) who rated the library service as *low* or *very low*. The primary suggestion on how the library could be improved was for the book collection to increase. Many of these respondents were looking forward to the opening of the new library location in the new County Hall expansion in 2010.

Information and Volunteer Centre Services in Strathcona County

Figure 40 presents the satisfaction level with the Information and Volunteer Centre (IVC), based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services²⁴ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 41.4% of residents (n=207) did not rate the Centre on the basis that they did not know anything about it.

FIGURE 40
Satisfaction with the Information and Volunteer Centre – 2009 Results



Highlights from Figure 40

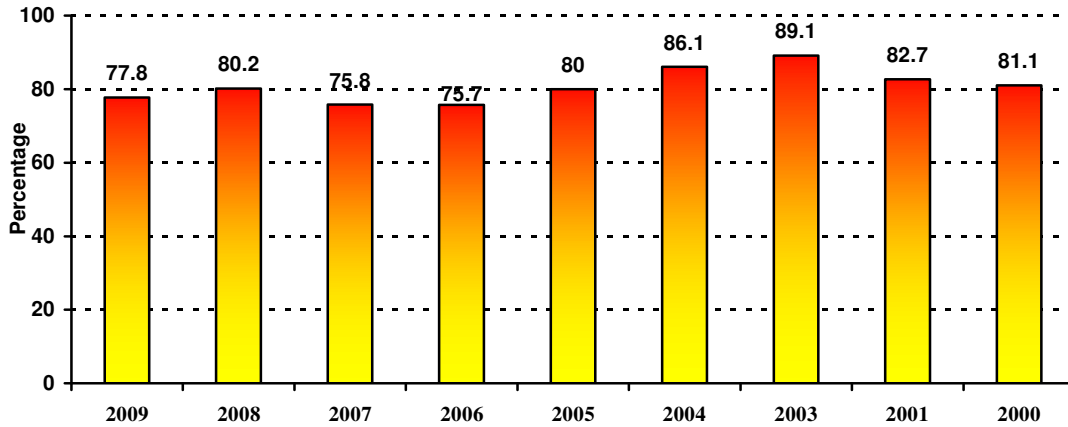
- It can be seen from Figure 40 that most residents have a positive view of the Information and Volunteer Centre, regardless of whether they use it. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between use and how one rated the IVC.²⁵ A *t*-test measurement for mean score differences revealed a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between users and non-users ($t = -3.81$, 286 *df*, $p < .001$), where users are more likely to give the IVC a higher rating than those who did not use it.
- A further investigation revealed that the combined *very high/high* satisfaction levels with users of the IVC was 77.8% in 2009, which is a slight drop from

²⁴ Overall, 17.6% 21% of respondents indicated that they had used the Information and Volunteer Centre within the past 12 months. This is about 3% less than what was found in previous satisfaction surveys (2006-2008)

²⁵ For the IVC, ($\chi^2 = 16.09$, 4 *df*, $p=.003$).

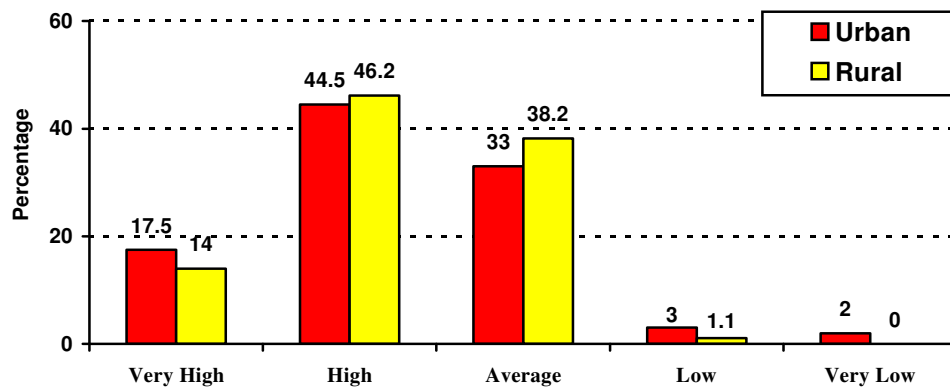
last year’s findings. The *very high/high* rating provided by users of the IVC between 2000 and 2009 is shown in Figure 41.

FIGURE 41
User “Very High/High” Combined Satisfaction Ratings for the Information and Volunteer Centre 2000 – 2009 Comparisons²⁶



- The majority of IVC users live in Sherwood Park (69.4%) while the remaining 30.6% live in rural parts of Strathcona County. The satisfaction ratings for the IVC were about the same for both urban and rural area residents (Figure 42).

FIGURE 42
Satisfaction with the Information and Volunteer Centre – 2009 Results
Urban and Rural Comparisons



- A total of 169 people (33.8%) did not rate the Information and Volunteer Centre because they did not know enough about it to provide a rating. This finding is considerably higher than what was reported in 2006 through 2008. It

²⁶ There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

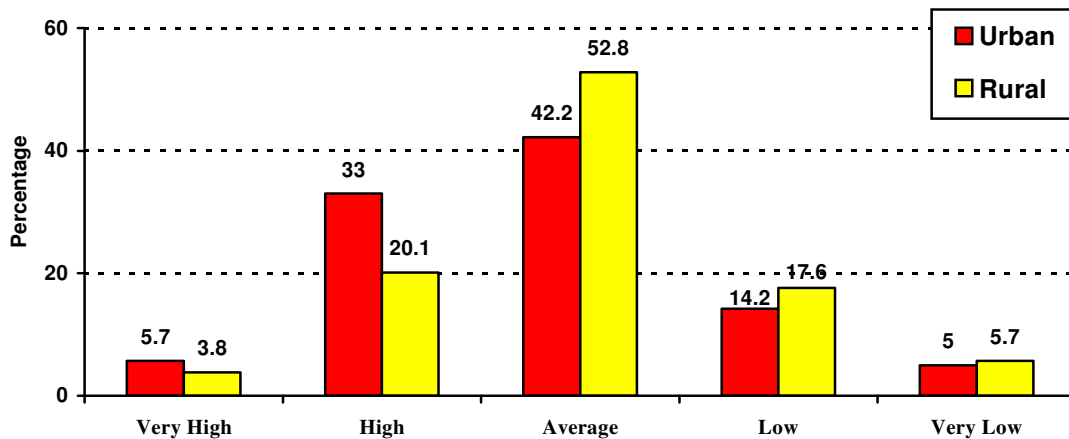
is recommended that the IVC re-examine how it promotes its services in order to boost awareness levels among residents.

- No differences were seen among any socio-demographic variables with respect to perceptions of satisfaction of IVC.
- Only 10 people gave the Information and Volunteer Centre a *low* or *very low* rating. Almost all of the comments focused on the need for the IVC to improve its profile.

Land Use Planning & Economic Development Services in Strathcona County

People were asked to rate their satisfaction with various planning services performed by the County. Figure 43 presents the satisfaction level of people living in rural and urban parts of the County for land use planning, which includes determining new residential, commercial and industrial development.²⁷

FIGURE 43
Satisfaction with Land Use Planning in Strathcona County – 2009 Results



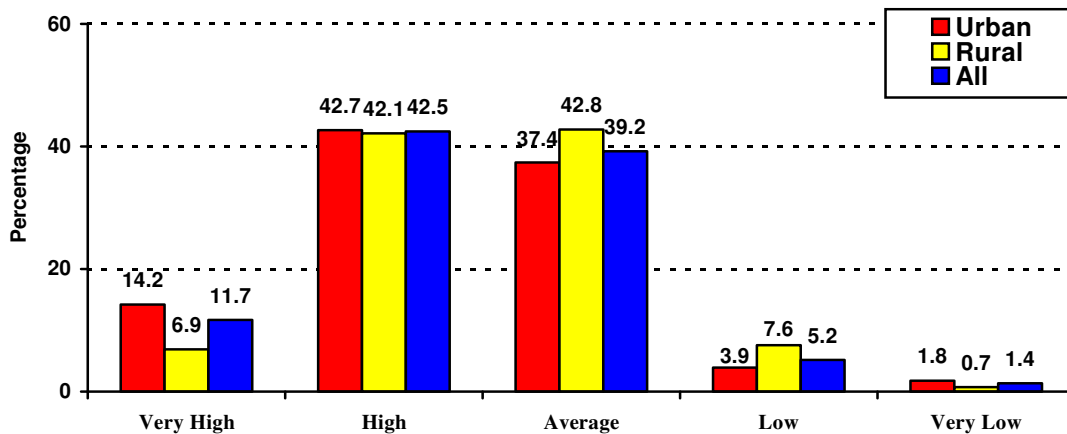
²⁷ Overall, 59 people (11.8% of the sample) did not rate this service. This was slightly higher than what was reported in satisfaction surveys conducted between 2006 and 2008.

Highlights from Figure 43

- It can be seen in Figure 43 that the perception of residents toward land use planning by the County is very similar, regardless of where people live. The majority of residents were relatively satisfied with existing land use planning.
- The patterns found in this year's survey were almost identical to the results found in previous satisfaction surveys. No differences were seen among any socio-demographic variables with respect to perceptions of satisfaction toward land use planning.
- Overall, 91 people (20.6% of the sample) gave a *low* or *very low* rating of the land use planning service. Many of the comments centered on the County's approach to development in the rural areas, particularly with respect to farmland (and a perception that non-agricultural development was occurring here). Others questioned the type of retail stores that have been approved in Sherwood Park – some people wondered why there were so many drug stores in Sherwood Park, yet no department stores such as the Bay. Some people also wondered if the land development was properly assessing the increased traffic that came with development as well. Some residents also wondered what the status was with the proposed hospital. Other repeated comments included concerns with housing density in some parts of the County (including an increased perception that houses are being built too close together).

Figure 44 presents the satisfaction level of people living in rural and urban parts of the County with economic development, which includes attracting new businesses into the County.²⁸

FIGURE 44
Satisfaction with Economic Development in Strathcona County – 2009 Results



Highlights from Figure 44

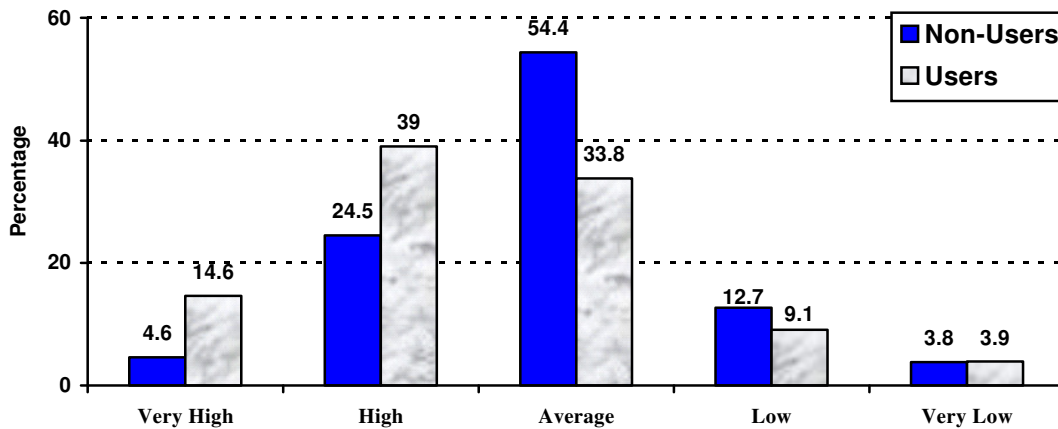
- It can be seen from Figure 44 that the perception of residents toward economic development by the County was generally positive, regardless of where people live. Overall, 54.2% of all residents gave *very high/high* ratings for the economic development that is being done at the present time. This combined rating is about 3% higher than what was posted in 2008.
- No differences were seen among any socio-demographic variables with one's satisfaction of economic development.
- Twenty-eight residents throughout the County (6.6% of the sample) expressed a low or very low level of satisfaction with economic development in the County. In this year's study, suggestions were varied and included having more original restaurants and possibly a department store such as The Bay in Sherwood Park.

²⁸ Overall, 74 people (14.8% of the sample) did not rate this service, which is slightly higher than the 2008 survey.

Permit & Inspection Services in Strathcona County

Figure 45 presents the satisfaction level for building permit and inspection services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services²⁹ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 175 people (35% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it, which is about the same as last year's survey.

FIGURE 45
Satisfaction with Building Permit and Inspections Services in Strathcona County – 2009 Results



Highlights from Figure 45

- A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between one's use of building permit & inspection services and the rating that one gave to the service,³⁰ with a *t-test* ($t = -3.25$, 312 *df*, $p < .001$), confirming that users gave higher ratings than non users.
- A comparison of trends between the 2009 and 2008 surveys revealed a sharp increase in the combined percentage of users who gave the service a *very high/high* rating (53.6% in 2009 compared to 42.3% in 2008).

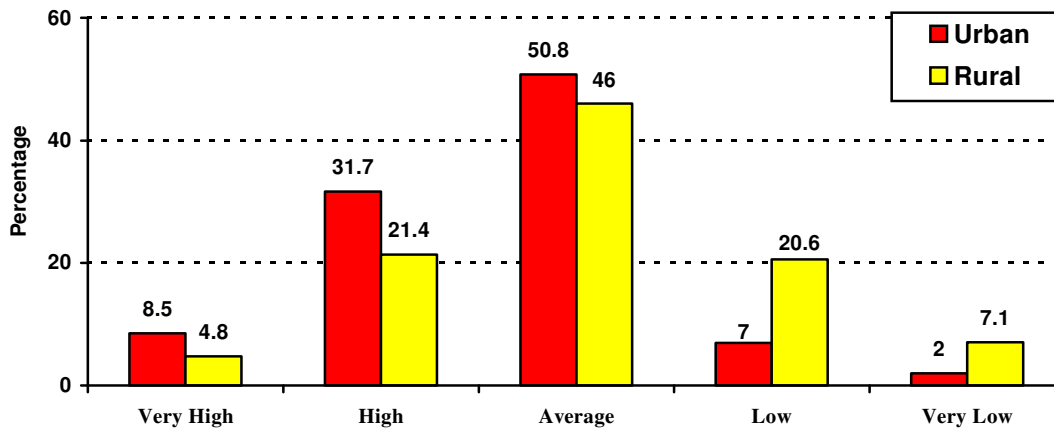
A comparison of perceptions by location (regardless of use/non-use of the service) is shown in Figure 46. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship

²⁹ Overall, 16.7% of respondents indicated that they had used the building permit and inspection services within the past 12 months. This is slightly lower than last year's survey.

³⁰ $\chi^2 = 17.73$, 4 *df*, $p = .001$.

between where one lived and how one rated these services.³¹ A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences confirmed a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between urban and rural residents ($t = - 4.20, 323 \text{ df}, p < .001$), where urban residents are more likely to give building permit and inspections services a higher rating than those living in rural Strathcona.

FIGURE 46
Satisfaction with Building Permit and Inspections Services in Strathcona County –
Urban & Rural Comparisons - 2009



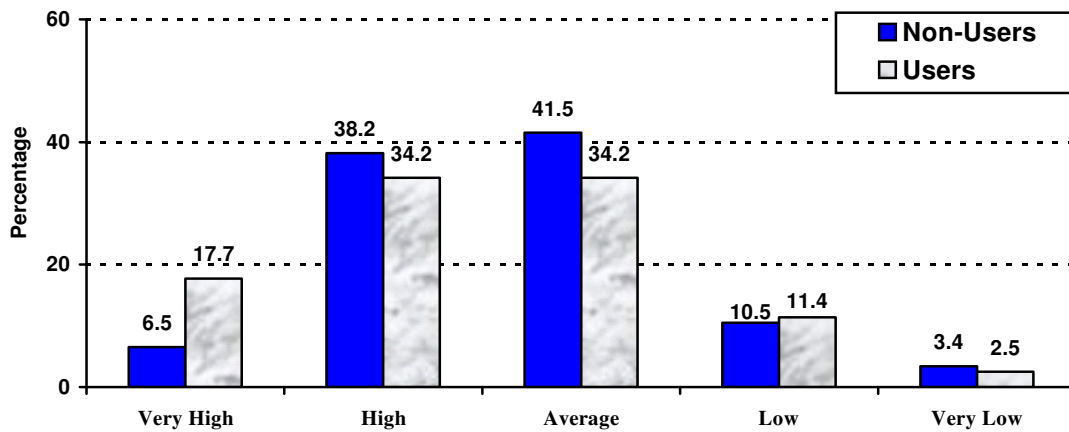
- The 53 people (16.3% of the sample) who rated this service as *low* or *very low* were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. Many of these people were concerned with the length of time and costs associated with permits, as well as a perceived shortage of staff available to process the applications. There were also some concerns around a perceived shortage of inspectors. For the most part, the comments noted in this year's survey mirrored concerns raised by residents in previous years.

³¹ For building and inspection services, ($\chi^2 = 21.50, 4 \text{ df}, p < .001$).

Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County

Figure 47 presents the satisfaction level with bylaw enforcement, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services³² in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 81 people (16.2% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it.

FIGURE 47
Satisfaction with Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County – 2009 Results



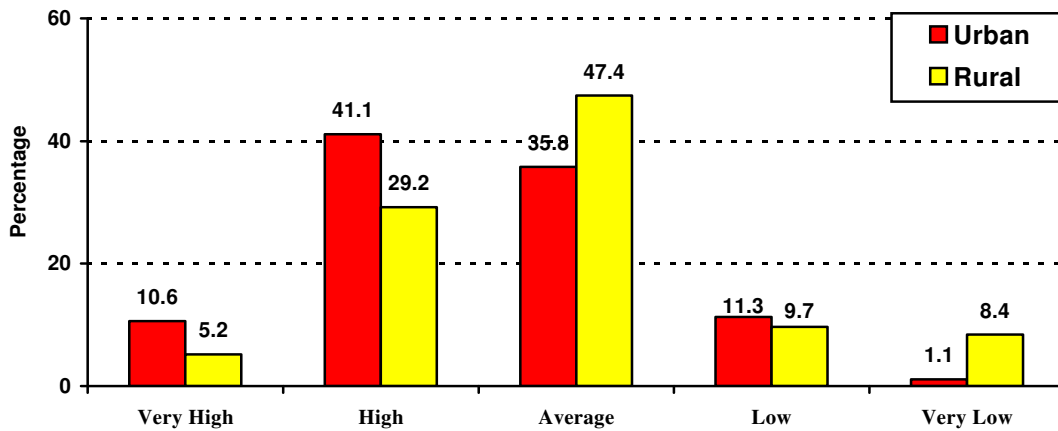
Highlights from Figure 47

- Figure 47 shows that users had a stronger rating of bylaw services than non users, through there was a portion of other users who were not satisfied with the service.

³² Overall, 17.1% of respondents indicated they had utilized bylaw enforcement services within the past 12 months. This is slightly lower than what was reported in the 2008 survey.

A comparison of perceptions by location (regardless of use/non-use of the service) is shown in Figure 48, where a chi-square statistical procedure confirmed that where one lived in Strathcona County was a factor in how residents rated bylaw enforcement services.³³

FIGURE 48
Satisfaction with Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County – Urban & Rural Comparisons – 2009 Results



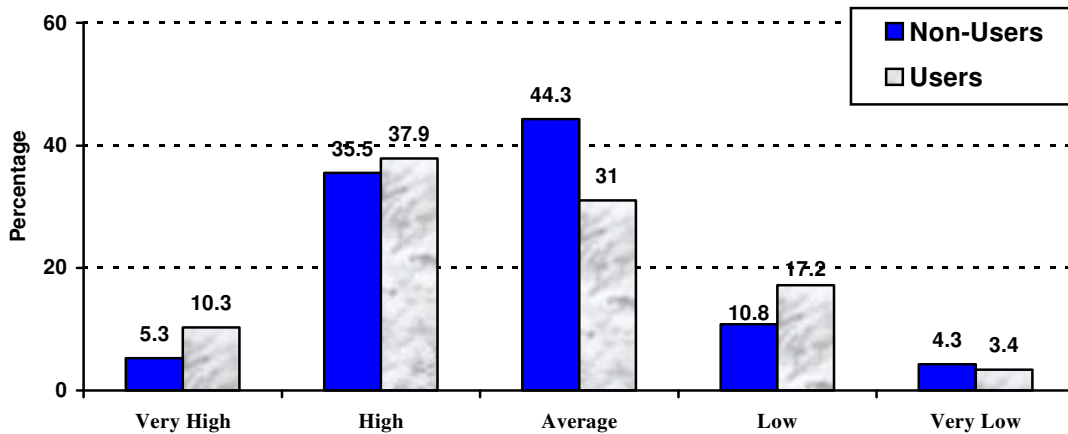
- It can be seen that urban residents gave higher combined *very high/high* ratings for bylaw enforcement services compared to rural residents.
- The 61 residents (14.5% of the sample) who had a low level of satisfaction with this service were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. There were some who felt that more bylaw officers were needed and that the response time for some complaints needed to be faster. Others felt that existing bylaws were not being enforced (such as animal control, cell phone use in automobiles, or illegal building by residents).

³³ For bylaw enforcement services, ($\chi^2 = 24.13$, 4 df, $p < .001$).

Agricultural Services in Strathcona County

Figure 49 presents the satisfaction level with weed control and other agricultural services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 57 people (11.4% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it.

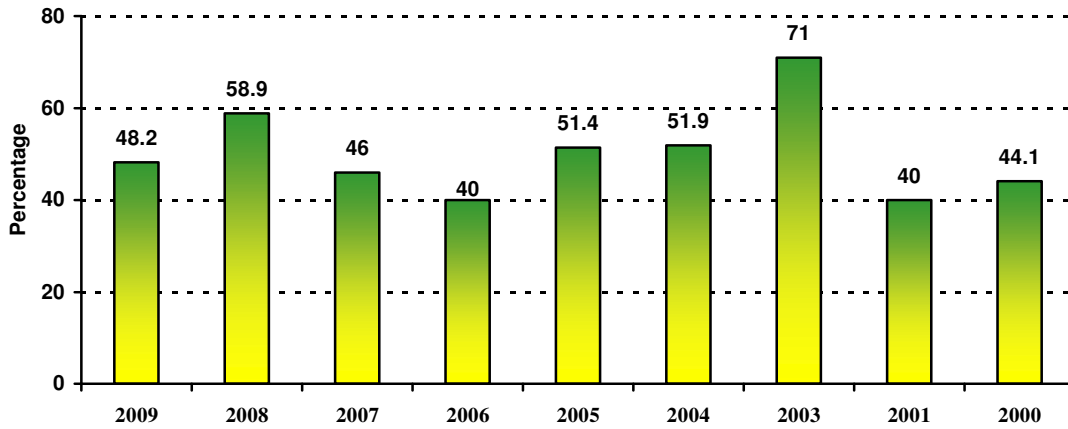
FIGURE 49
Satisfaction with Weed Control, Soil Management, Wildlife Problems
and other Agricultural Services in Strathcona County – 2009 Results



Highlights from Figure 49 and 50

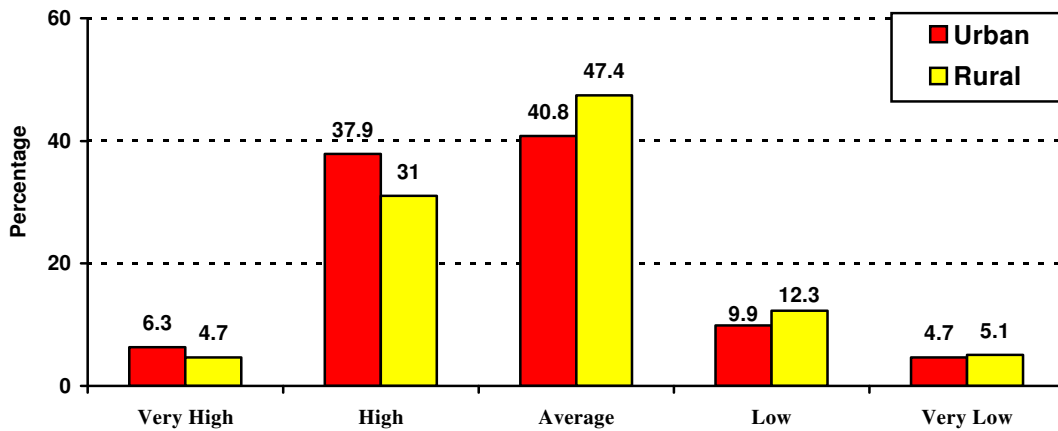
- It can be seen from Figure 49 that although users gave higher ratings to the service than non-users the differences in perceptions were not statistically significant to separate users from non users.
- A comparison of this year's results with past satisfaction studies (Figure 50) revealed that the percentage of users who gave the service a *very high* or *high* rating was lower this year compared to last year, but was still slightly higher than trends seen in 2006 and 2007 .

FIGURE 50
User “Very High/High” Combined Satisfaction Ratings with the different Agricultural Services -- 2000 – 2009 Comparisons³⁴



A comparison of perceptions by location (regardless of use/non-use of the service) is shown in Figure 51. There were no differences seen based on where people lived.

FIGURE 51
Satisfaction with Weed Control, Soil Management, Wildlife Problems and other Agricultural Services – Urban & Rural Comparisons 2009



- Overall, the 70 residents (15.8% of the sample) who had a *low/very low* level of satisfaction with this service were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. The majority of the comments came from people who feel that the County needs to do more with respect to weed control, either because the

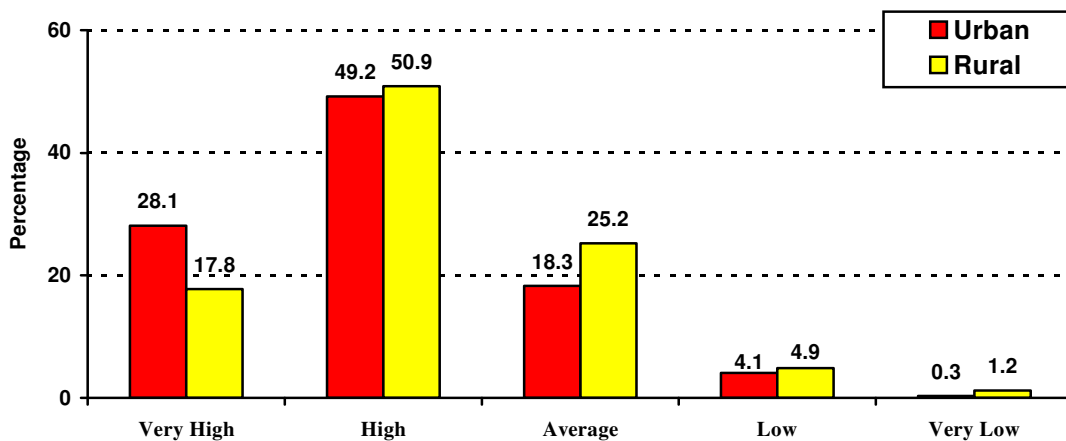
³⁴ There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

public felt that the County wasn't doing enough to control the weeds, or that people were being told by the County to do more weed control on their own properties. As in 2008, animal control concerns were mentioned by only a few residents in this year's survey.

Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Services in Strathcona County

People were asked to rate their satisfaction with the various outdoor and indoor recreation opportunities offered by the County. Figure 52 presents the satisfaction level with the various parks, green spaces and sports fields. Only a small handful of residents (21 people, or 4.2% of the sample) did not rate this item.

FIGURE 52
Satisfaction with Parks, Green Spaces and Sports Fields in Strathcona County – 2009 Results



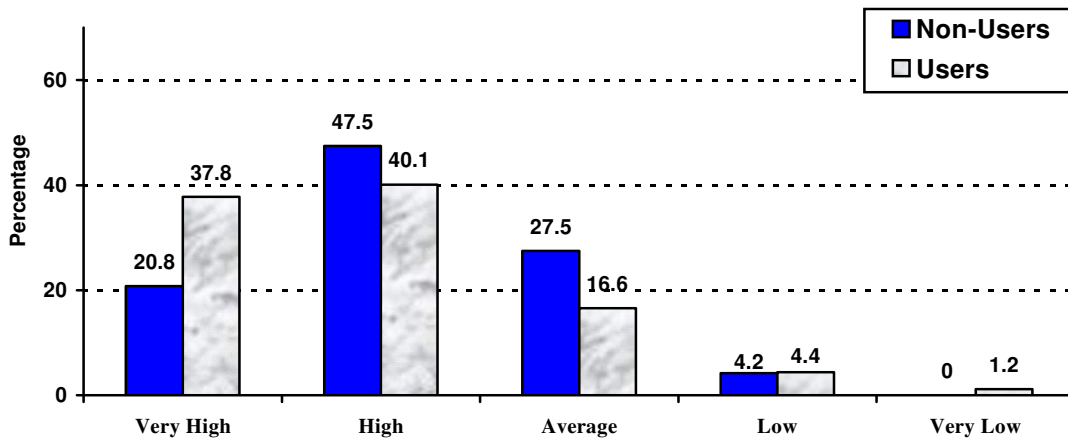
Highlights from Figure 52

- It can be seen from Figure 52 that residents living in Sherwood Park had a slightly higher positive perception toward various outdoor green spaces than those living in rural Strathcona, though the difference was not statistically significant.
- This year's combined *very high/high* ratings for the urban area (77.3%) was slightly lower than 2008 (79.7%). For rural residents, their combined *very high/high* ratings in 2009 (68.7%) was slightly higher than 2008 (65.6%).
- The 24 people (5% of the sample) who gave the parks, green spaces and sport fields a low rating were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. Comments included a need for better maintenance of the existing green spaces

and (especially) sports fields. There were a few residents who thought that the County should create more walking trails in both Sherwood Park and the rural areas.

Figure 53 presents the satisfaction level with indoor recreation facilities in the County, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these facilities³⁵ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 30 people (6% of the sample) did not rate these facilities on the basis that they did not know enough about them.

FIGURE 53
Satisfaction with Indoor Recreation Facilities in Strathcona County – 2009 Results



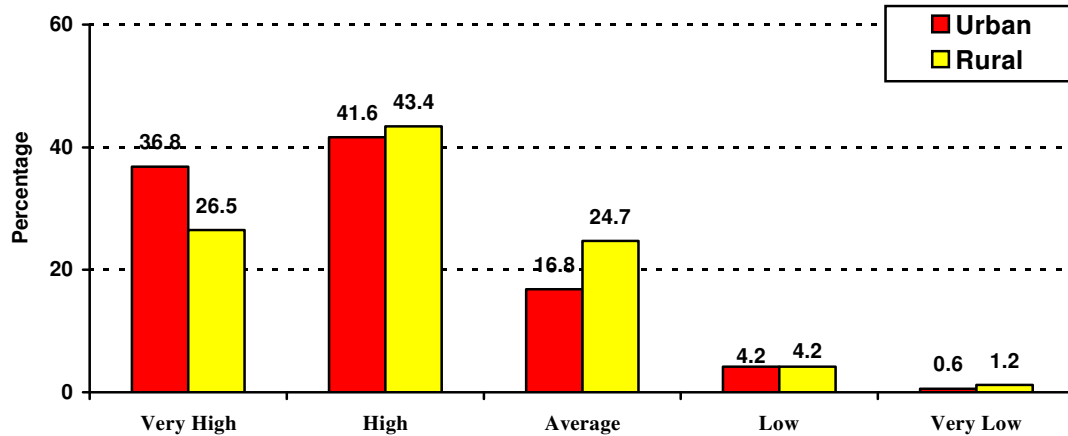
Highlights from Figure 53

- It can be seen from Figure 53 that the perception of residents toward indoor recreation facilities was somewhat dependent on past user patterns. Overall, people who used indoor recreation facilities were more satisfied than those who had not used these facilities. This was confirmed by a chi-square procedure ($\chi^2 = 15.70, 4 \text{ df}, p=.003$), and a *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = - 2.58, 462 \text{ df}, p = .02$).
- A further analysis revealed that 76.5% of Sherwood Park residents used the indoor recreation facilities at least once in the past 12 months, while 62.1% of rural residents made use of these facilities. It can be seen in Figure 54 that the combined *very high/high* satisfaction levels for urban residents (78.4%) was

³⁵ Overall, 71.5% of respondents indicated that they had been to an indoor recreation facility in the County of Strathcona within the past 12 months. This is about 3% lower than the 2008 survey results.

higher than it was for rural residents (70.1%), though the difference was not statistically significant.

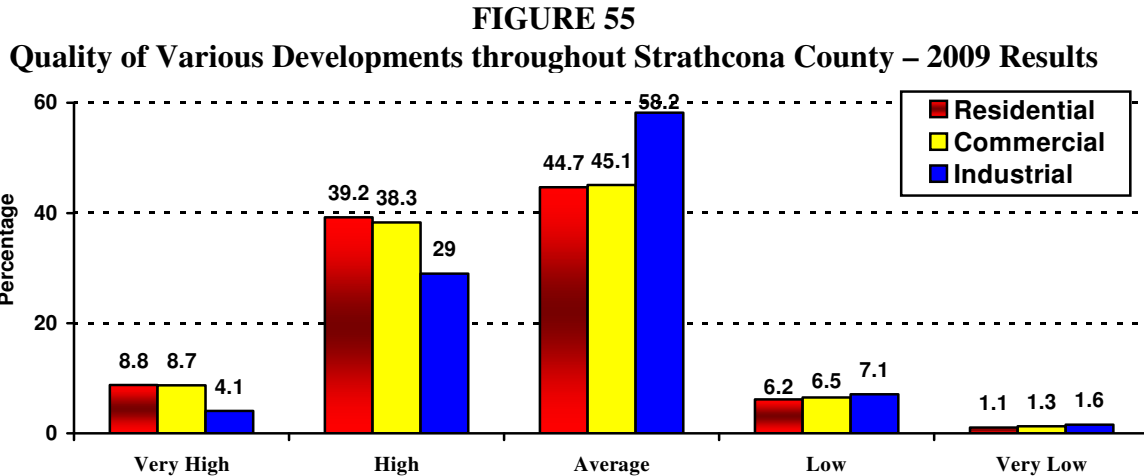
FIGURE 54
Satisfaction with Indoor Recreation Facilities in Strathcona County – 2009 Results



- The 24 people (5% of the sample) who had a low level of satisfaction with the facilities were asked to suggest ways these could be improved. Most of the complaints focused on the need for more indoor recreation facilities throughout the County, especially in the rural areas. Many of those residents who were dissatisfied love Millennium Place, but felt it was very crowded and would like to see the County build another similar multi-purpose facility.

D. Perceptions of New Residential, Commercial and Industrial Developments in Strathcona County

Residents of Strathcona County were asked a series of questions about their perceptions of residential, commercial and industrial developments in the County. A comparative rating of the quality of all three types of developments is shown in Figure 55 below.



Highlights from Figure 55

- Overall, respondents who rated the different types of developments were slightly more satisfied with the quality of residential and commercial development than industrial developments. It should be noted, however, that a considerable number of residents (n=134 or 26.8% of the sample) did not rate the quality of industrial developments.³⁶
- The trends noted in this figure are very similar to trends found in last year's study.
- No differences in perceptions were seen between those living in Sherwood Park and those living in other parts of Strathcona County with respect to quality of residential, commercial or industrial development.
- Those who rated the quality of any of these developments as *low* or *very low* were asked to indicate why they felt that way. Many residents used this section

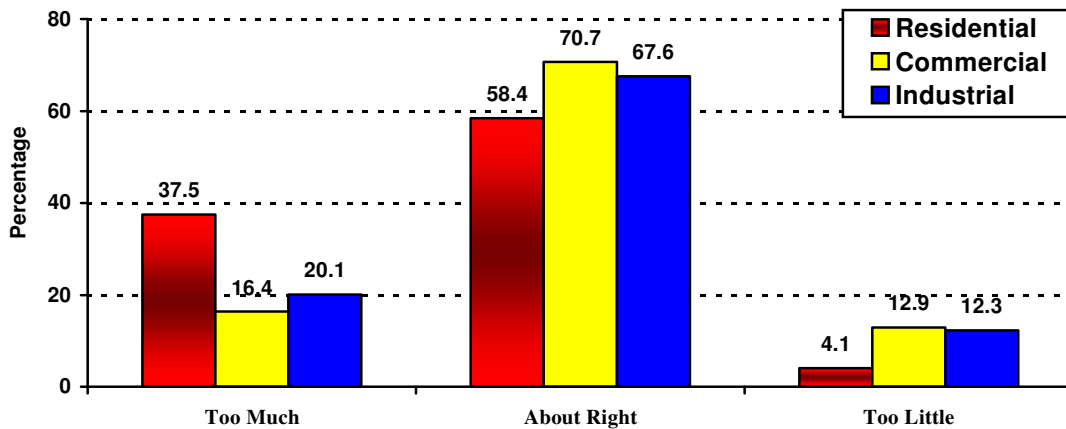
³⁶ Overall, 48 residents (9.6% of the sample) did not rate the quality of residential developments and 41 residents (8.2% of the sample) did not rate the quality of commercial developments.

to comment on increased traffic problems in all parts of the County. Comments specific to each type of development are noted below:

- A variety of concerns were expressed among the 33 people (7.3% of the sample) who rated the quality of residential developments as low. A common concern was that the houses seemed crammed too close together with a lack of green space in new neighborhoods, and potential traffic problems.
- Some of concerns were put forward by the 36 people (7.8% of the sample) who rated the quality of commercial development as low. Repeated concerns were aimed at the choices for commercial development, with some people questioning the emergence of drug stores in Sherwood Park, but not department stores such as the Bay. There was also a question raised about the lack of commercial development in the County outside of Sherwood Park.
- For industrial developments, among the 32 people (8.7% of the sample) who rated the quality of development as low, most of the comments centered on safety and pollution concerns for residents, particularly with respect to air quality. Power lines were also mentioned by some residents.

A comparative rating on the perception of the quantity (i.e. amount) of new types of developments is shown in Figure 56.

FIGURE 56
Quantity of Various Developments throughout Strathcona County – 2009 Results

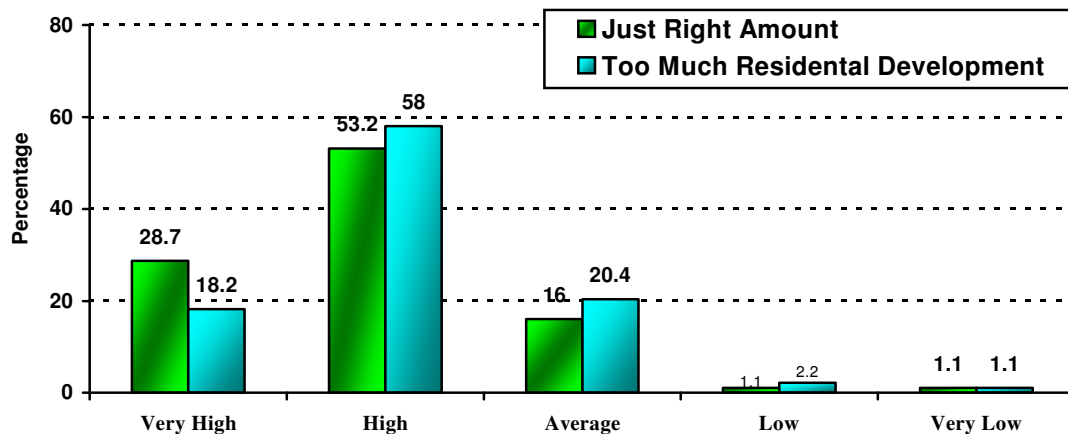


Highlights from Figure 56

- Overall, the majority of respondents were of the opinion that there were about the right amount of developments in the County at the present time. The percentage of people who felt this way in 2009 was almost identical to results found in studies dating back to 2003.
- The findings with respect to quality and quantity of development suggest a perception in the County right now that there is a good balance of commercial and industrial developments. However, 37.5% of residents believe there is too much residential development. A further analysis (as seen in Figure 57) revealed that those who felt there was too much residential development **still had a high positive rating** on the quality of life in Strathcona County as a whole (76.2% *very high/high*) compared to those who felt that the amount of residential development was about right (81.9% *very high/high*).³⁷ As such, while concerns about continued development remain, it has not adversely affected the perceived quality of one's life in Strathcona County.

FIGURE 57

Perception of the Quality of Life in Strathcona County as a Whole – Comparisons Based on Perceptions of Amount of Residential Growth - 2009 Results



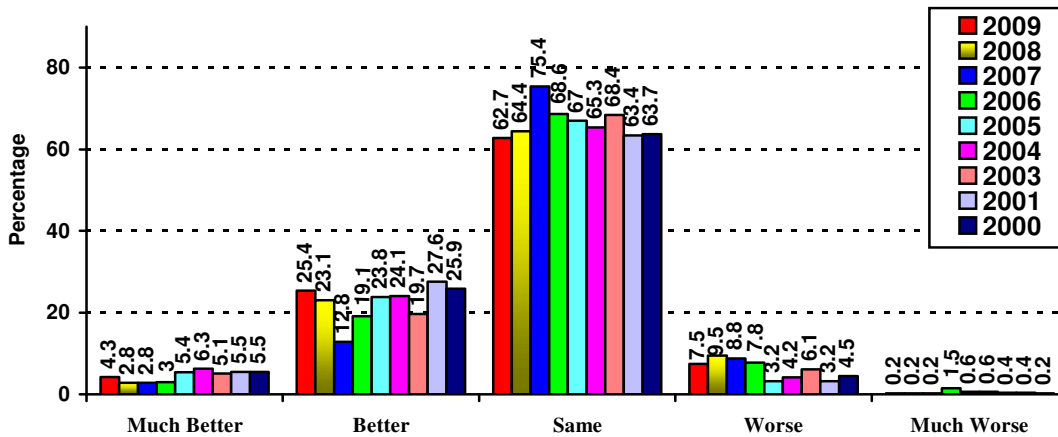
- No differences in perceptions were seen between those living in Sherwood Park and those living in other parts of Strathcona County with respect to amount of industrial development, residential or commercial development.

³⁷ These percentage comparisons are very similar to what was found in 2007 and 2006.

E. Question on Quality of Services Now Compared to Two Years Ago

Respondents were asked to compare the current quality of services offered by Strathcona County with the quality of services offered two years ago. The 2009 survey results are compared with the results found in the previous surveys dating back to 2000, when this same question was asked, and are shown in Figure 58 below.

FIGURE 58
Quality of Services Now in Strathcona County Compared to 2 years ago 2000-2009

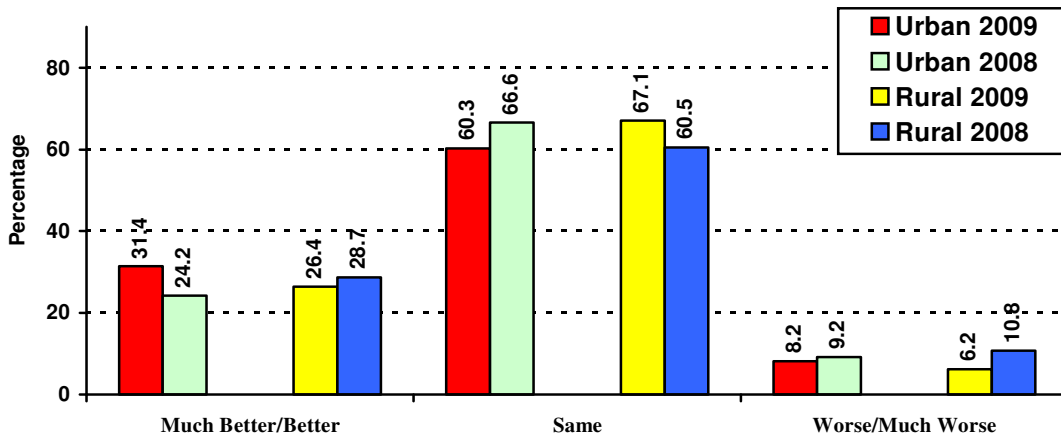


Highlights from Figure 58

- Overall, the majority of respondents were of the opinion that the quality of services offered by Strathcona County was the same as it was two years ago. It can be seen from Figure 58 that this percentage has been quite consistent over the past 10 years (with the exception of 2007).
- It can also be seen in that the percentage of residents who thought things had gotten *better/much better* compared to two years ago has increased to its highest level since 2005.
- The 36 people (7.7% of the sample) who felt that the quality of services had gotten worse or much worse were asked to indicate what changes they noticed about the quality of service. Most of the concerns were complaints about maintenance of roadways, sidewalks and park trails in both summer and winter. There were some concerns about garbage pickup and a reduced number of staff available to handle existing services.

A comparison of urban and rural residents with respect to perceptions of the quality of services is shown in Figure 59. There was no statistically significant difference between the urban and rural sectors in 2009. However, a comparison between 2009 and 2008 findings shows an increase in the *much better/better* ratings for urban residents.

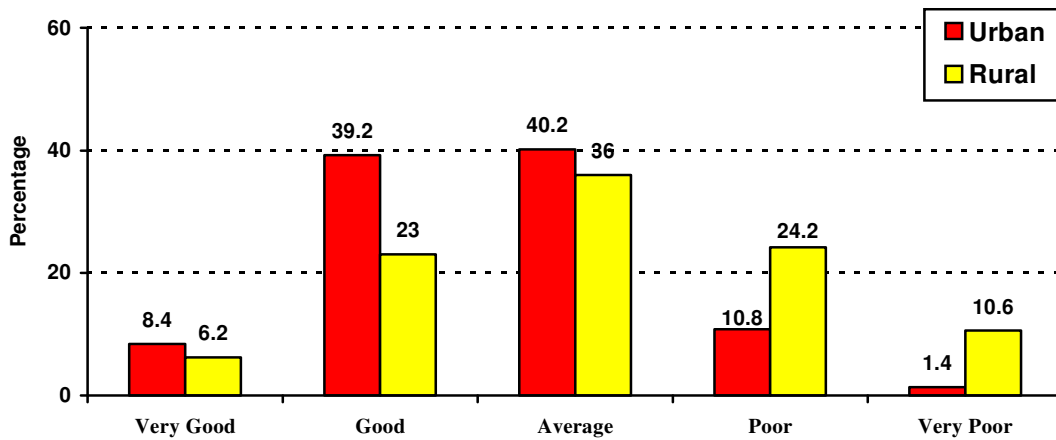
FIGURE 59
Quality of Services Now in Strathcona County Compared to 2 years ago
Urban and Rural Comparisons – 2009 & 2008 Results



F. Question on Taxes within Strathcona County

Strathcona County taxpayers³⁸ were asked to rate the value they receive for their tax dollars. Residents were told that 62% of their taxes were earmarked for municipal services. Knowing this, residents were asked to what extent they felt they were getting good value for their tax dollars. The results to this question are shown in Figure 60 below.

FIGURE 60
Value for Tax Dollars Spent in Strathcona County
- Urban and Rural Comparisons 2009



Highlights from Figure 61

- Statistically, there was a difference between urban and rural residents with respect to how people felt about the value of tax dollars spent on municipal services. This was confirmed by a chi-square procedure ($\chi^2 = 40.65$, 4 df, $p = .000$) and a *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -5.77$, 455 df, $p < .001$). It can be seen that a higher percentage of people living in the urban area felt that they were getting very good or good value for their tax dollars compared to those living in rural areas.
- Those people (20.1% of the sample, N=92) who felt that they received poor value for the taxes paid were asked to indicate why they felt that way. Many of these comments came from rural residents who felt that there was an inequity between the amount of money they paid in taxes and the amount of services they were receiving in return (especially no water, sewage service or sidewalks). Dissatisfied Sherwood Park residents cited a lack of snow

³⁸ It was found that 92% of respondents owned property in Strathcona County and as such, were taxpayers.

removal. Overall, the comments put forward by residents here echo comments made by others in past satisfaction surveys with respect to taxes.

A comparison of trends from 2000 - 2009 with respect to perceptions of the value of services for tax dollars are shown in Figure 61 (Urban) and Figure 62 (Rural). One can see that for urban residents, the perception that residents were getting very good or good value for their tax dollars has been declining slightly since it hit its peak level of satisfaction in 2005. Rural residents, on the other hand, have consistently had a much higher negative perception of the value they get for their tax dollars compared to urban residents each year this has been measured, with 2009 registering the highest level of dissatisfaction.

FIGURE 61
Value of Tax Dollars Spent in Strathcona County – Urban Residents (2000-2009)

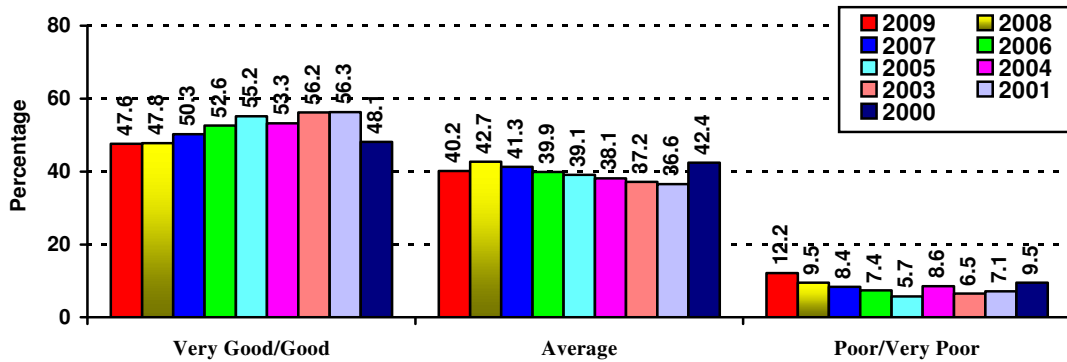
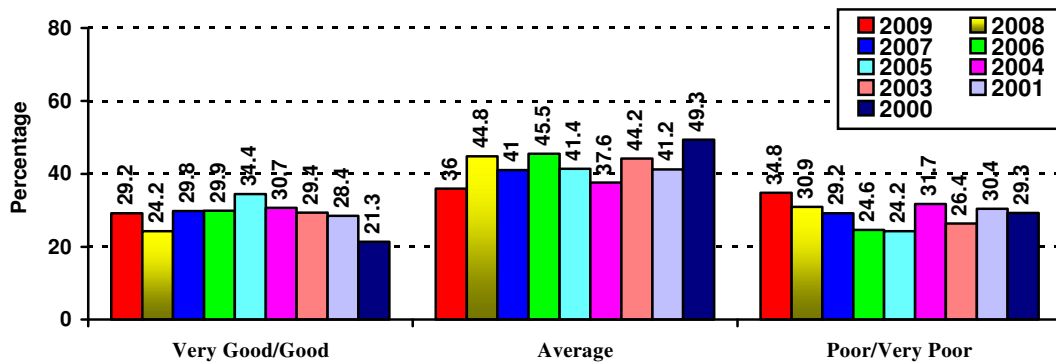


FIGURE 62
Value of Tax Dollars Spent in Strathcona County – Rural Residents (2000-2009)



G. Services Provided by Strathcona County Employees

Residents were asked to indicate which County services they had used in the past 12 months. Most survey respondents had used at least one County service during this time period.³⁹ It can be seen in Table 1 that *recycling depots* were the most frequent service used in 2009 among those surveyed. Other services utilized by a number of County residents include *indoor recreation facilities*, the *County Library*, *RCMP*, *public transit services* and the *Information and Volunteer Centre*.

Table 1
County Services in Strathcona County Used by Residents
in the Past 12 Months – 2009 vs. 2006 to 2008

Type of Service	N of Users (2009)	% Use 2009	% Use 2008	% Use 2007	% Use 2006
Recycling Depots	418	86.4%	86.8%	87.0%	81.6%
Indoor Recreation Facilities	346	71.5%	74.0%	72.4%	71.0%
Strathcona County Library	289	59.7%	63.0%	61.0%	59.2%
RCMP	161	33.3%	38.8%	30.0%	34.6%
Public Transit Services	111	22.9%	26.8%	24.2%	22.6%
Information & Volunteer Centre	85	17.6%	21.0%	22.8%	22.8%
Bylaw Enforcement	83	17.1%	19.6%	19.8%	19.8%
Building Permit & Inspection Services	81	16.7%	22.6%	17.0%	19.2%
Fire & Ambulance Services	73	15.1%	15.4%	15.4%	14.0%
Family Support Services	57	11.8%	11.4%	8.2%	11.0%
Agriculture Services	32	6.6%	7.0%	8.0%	9.0%

All of the municipal services noted above had minor decreases or remained constant with respect to use by residents in 2009 compared to previous years.

³⁹ 14 respondents (2.8% of the 8.1% of the sample) mentioned other municipal services they used (water & sewer, garbage, parks, planning and Festival Place), while another eight residents (1.6% of the sample) indicated items that were not municipal services (e.g. health care and legal services).

A comparison of services used by urban and rural residents for 2009 and 2008 is shown in Table 2.⁴⁰ It can be seen that among residents who were surveyed in 2009, urban residents used *recycling services, indoor recreation facilities, the County Library, public transit services* and the *RCMP* to a greater extent than rural residents. Rural residents, on the other hand, made greater use of *agricultural services* compared with urban residents.

Table 2
County Services in Strathcona County Reportedly Used by Urban and Rural Residents in the Past 12 Months – 2009 vs. 2008

Type of Service	2009		2008	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Recycling Services	89.5%	80.5%	89.5%	81.7%
Indoor Recreation Facilities	76.5%	62.1%	80.6%	61.7%
Strathcona County Library	62.5%	54.4%	65.8%	57.7%
RCMP	36.8%	<u>26.6%</u>	39.1%	<u>38.3%</u>
Public Transit Services	28.6%	<u>12.4%</u>	30.8%	<u>19.4%</u>
Information & Volunteer Centre	<u>18.7%</u>	15.4%	<u>23.7%</u>	16.0%
Bylaw Enforcement	16.8%	17.8%	19.7%	19.4%
Planning, Building & Inspection Services	16.5%	<u>17.2%</u>	18.2%	<u>30.9%</u>
Fire & Ambulance Services	14.0%	17.2%	13.8%	18.3%
Family Support Services	12.1%	11.2%	12.6%	9.1%
Agriculture Services	3.8%	10.7%	4.0%	12.6%

In terms of changes between years for urban residents, there was a decrease in the use of the *Information & Volunteer Centre* in 2009 compared to 2008. Among rural residents, there was a decrease in the use of the *RCMP, public transit services* and *planning, building and inspection services* in 2009 compared to 2008.

Respondents were asked to think of the most recent contact they had with County staff⁴¹ and to rate the service they received on the basis of six criteria. The services

⁴⁰ All respondents were read a list of municipal services and were asked to indicate which ones they had used within the past 12 months. This is question number 13 (the exact wording is found in the questionnaire located in Appendix A).

⁴¹ In this year's study, only 10 respondents reported having no contact with any County staff in the past 12 months.

residents based their ratings on are shown in Table 3. The overall rating results for all six criteria (regardless of the service used) are shown in Figures 63 and 64.

Table 3
County Departments in Strathcona County Used as the Basis for Rating the Service of County Staff in 2009

Type of Service	N	%
Indoor Recreation Facilities	150	31.2%
Strathcona County Library	118	24.5%
Recycling Depot	83	17.3%
RCMP	30	6.2%
Public Transit Services	21	4.4%
Fire & Ambulance Services	16	3.3%
Planning, Building & Inspection Services	15	3.1%
Family Support Services	11	2.3%
Bylaw Enforcement	9	1.9%
Information & Volunteer Centre	6	1.2%
Agriculture Services	3	0.6%

FIGURE 63
Quality of Services provided by County Staff -2009 Results

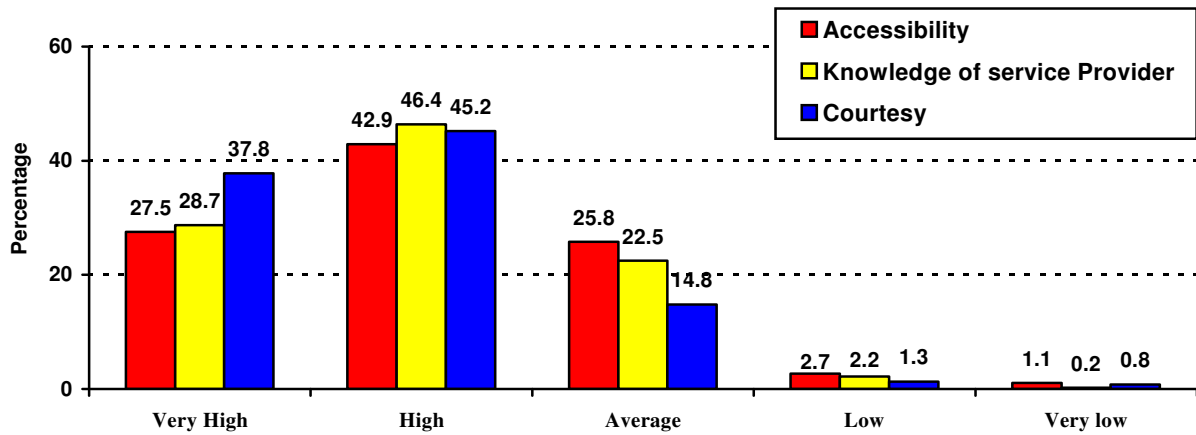
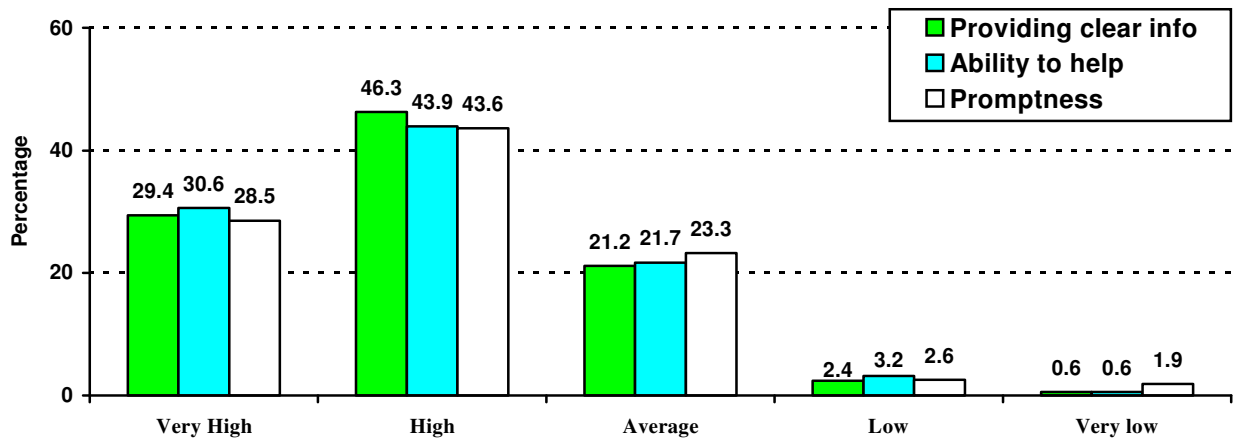


FIGURE 64
Quality of Services provided by County Staff – 2009 Results



Highlights from Figure 63 and Figure 64

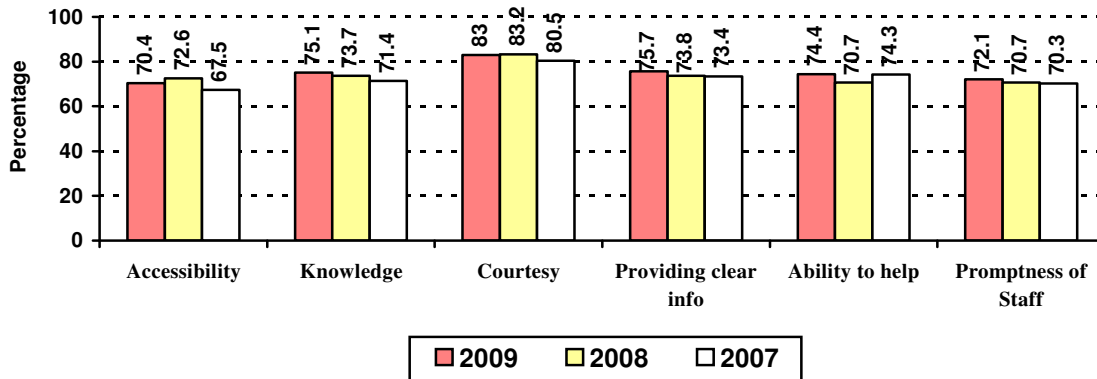
- Overall, residents had a very positive perception of County staff on the basis of all six criteria.
- Based on the combination of the *very high* and *high* scores, the strongest criterion was *courtesy* (83%). The remaining attributes of service were all rated relatively similar, with *being able to provide clear information* the second highest at 75.7%, followed closely by *knowledge of the service*

provider (75.1%), ability of the staff to help you (74.4%), promptness of staff (72.1%) and accessibility of staff (70.4%).

- All respondents were given the opportunity to provide any comments about the service they had received from County staff. Overall, 38.4% of the respondents (N=192) provided additional comments. Of these 192 residents, the majority of comments (156 or 81.3% of the 192 residents) were positive descriptors, including *good and/or helpful, professional knowledgeable staff, efficient and friendly/courteous*. Many of these residents had additional positive perceptions toward departments that were particularly helpful to them. The County Library and Millennium Place were mentioned multiple times.
- Not everyone was pleased, however, as 19.7% of the 192 residents were not happy with aspects of the service they received. The comments in this year’s survey were quite varied, and included:
 - Concerns that some Recreation and Parks staff were inconsistent in enforcement of rules within their facilities;
 - Residents who could not get through to departments by telephone;
 - No follow through on requests made by residents.

Figure 65 presents a comparison of overall results between this year’s survey and the 2008 and 2007 surveys for these six items. The combined *very high/high ratings for staff* were slightly higher or the same in 2009 compared to 2008 and 2007 for almost all of items (except for *accessibility*, which dropped slightly in 2009).

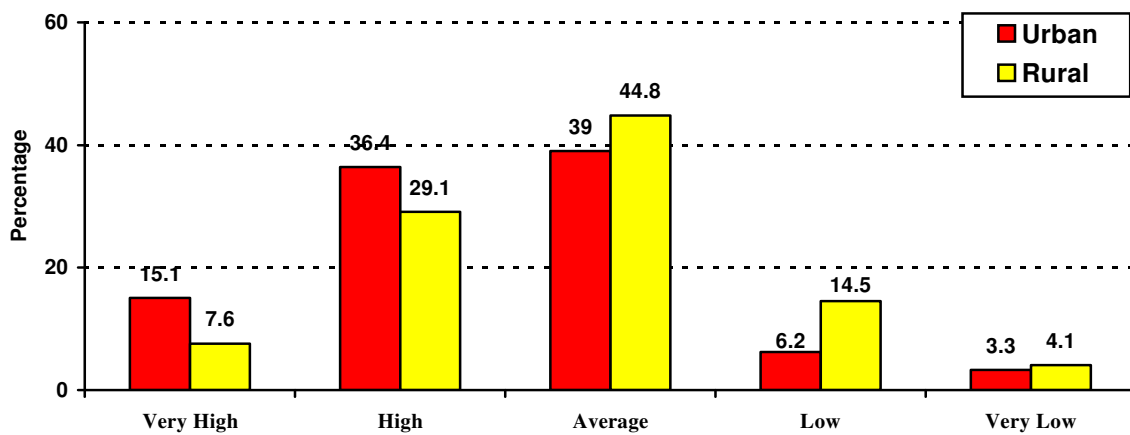
FIGURE 65
Quality of Services provided by County Staff - 2009 with 2008 & 2007 comparisons on the combined Very High/High percentages



H. Assessment of County Communication and Information Services

Residents were asked a series of questions about how they get information from Strathcona County. Early in the survey, residents were asked to indicate how satisfied they were with opportunities to express opinions about municipal services or municipal issues in Strathcona County. A breakdown by residence is shown in Figure 66

FIGURE 66
Rating Opportunities to Express Opinions– 2009 Results



Highlights from Figure 66

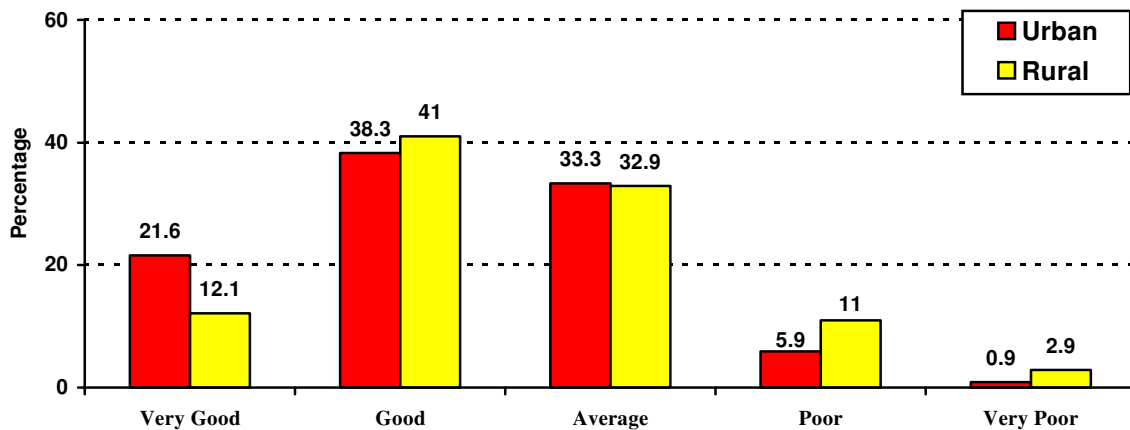
- Those living in Sherwood Park were somewhat more satisfied with the opportunities to express opinions than those living in rural Strathcona.⁴² There were no differences found with respect to any demographic characteristic for this item.
- These results were very similar to those found in last year's survey.
- Overall, 61 people (12.8% of the sample) were not satisfied with the opportunities for expressing opinions in Strathcona County. The most frequent reasons given by residents was that elected officials and County personnel were not listening to the concerns raised, or had made up their mind about the issue before residents could question it (and were not about to change their

⁴² This was confirmed by a chi-square procedure ($\chi^2 = 16.08, 4 \text{ df}, p = .003$) and a *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -3.63, 475 \text{ df}, p < .001$).

minds). In this year's survey, most residents who had a low view on this focused on Council as the source of their frustration.

Figure 67 presents the overall rating residents have tabled to how the County communicates with its citizens.

FIGURE 67
Rating of how well Strathcona County Communicates with Residents – 2009 Results



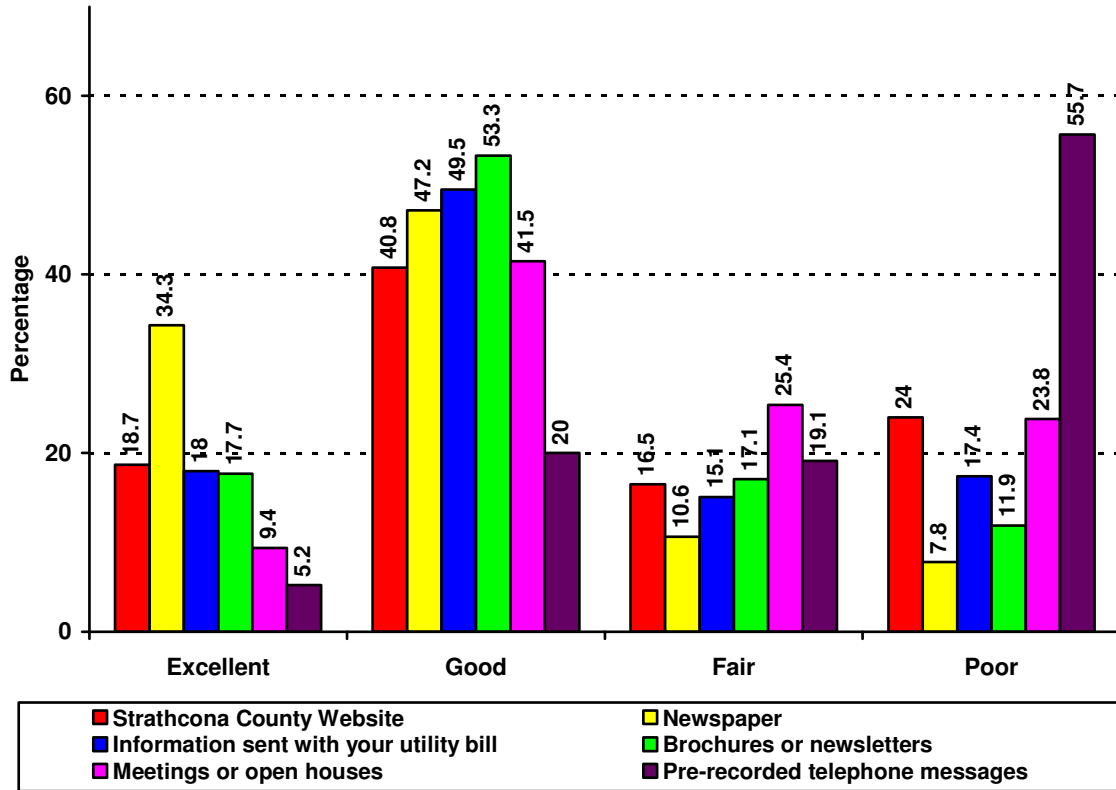
Highlights from Figure 67

- Overall, 59.9% of those living in Sherwood Park and 53.1% of those living in other parts of Strathcona County felt that the County was doing a good or very good job communicating with residents. The confidence that residents in both urban and rural parts of Strathcona County had with the County's communication efforts has dropped between 2008 and 2009; for urban residents the drop was just over 5%; however, rural residents' satisfaction with the County's communication dropped 10%. The difference between urban and rural residents was confirmed by a chi-square procedure.⁴³
- No differences were found among any other demographic characteristics for this variable.

⁴³ This was confirmed by a chi-square procedure ($\chi^2 = 12.31$, 4 df, $p = .015$).

Residents were then read a list of different methods the County currently has in place for providing information about municipal services to its residents. For each method, respondents were asked to indicate whether they thought these were excellent, good, fair or poor methods. An overall rating of the methods is shown in Figure 68.

FIGURE 68
Rating Existing Methods Used to Inform the Public about Municipal Services

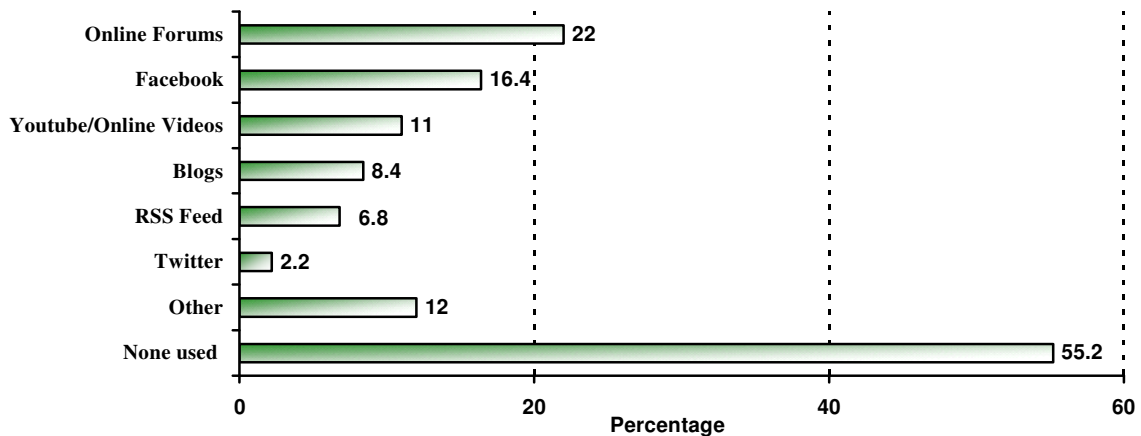


It can be seen in Figure 68 that the *County newspaper* and *newsletters and brochures* received solid ratings from residents. Overall, 81.5% of residents gave the *newspaper* an excellent or good rating, while 71% gave *newsletters and brochures* an excellent or good rating. *Information sent to residents through the utility bill* (67.5% excellent/good) as well as the *County website* also received acceptable ratings (69.5% excellent/good) though both of these ratings were slightly lower than what was reported in 2008.

Two methods that received considerably lower ratings from residents were *meetings/open houses* (50.9% excellent/good, a 9% drop from the 2008 ratings) and *pre-recorded telephone messages* (25.2% excellent/good, almost the same as the 2008 ratings).

In this year's survey, Strathcona County also asked residents what sort of different online methods were used to get information about people and events pertaining specifically to Strathcona County.⁴⁴ Overall, it can be seen in Figure 69 that *online forums* were the most prevalent, followed by *Facebook, blogs and RSS Feed*. Very few residents were making use of *Twitter*. Other methods mentioned by residents included using Google, email or visiting the County website. There was no difference seen in online usage of these methods based on where the resident lived.

FIGURE 69
Use of Different Online Methods by Strathcona County Residents



⁴⁴ It is important to point out that the question specifically focused on Strathcona County. It is possible that a greater percentage of residents are using these different methods, but not for finding information pertaining to Strathcona County.

Figure 70 presents a comparison of urban and rural residents with respect to the percentage of residents who visited the Strathcona County website. It can be seen that a slightly larger percentage of residents living in Sherwood Park accessed the website compared to those living in rural areas, but the difference is minimal. The percentage of residents visiting the County website has increased by about 10% since the 2008 study.

FIGURE 70
Percentage of Residents who visited the County Website

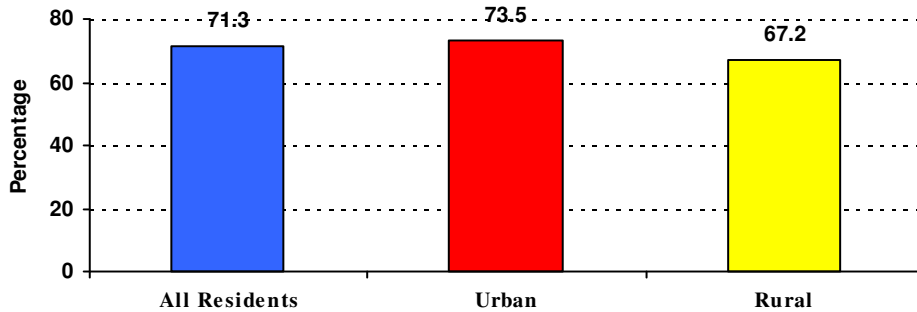
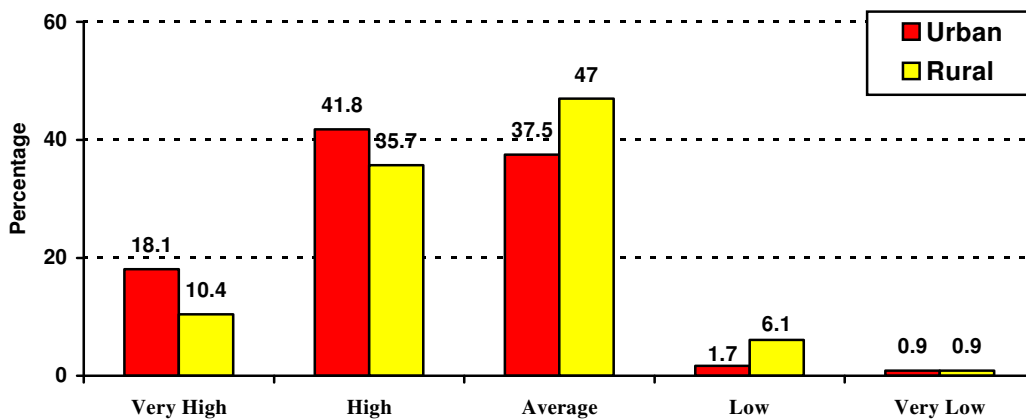


Figure 71 presents the satisfaction level with the Strathcona County website.⁴⁵ It can be seen that the satisfaction level was higher among urban residents compared to those living in rural Strathcona.⁴⁶

FIGURE 71
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Website – 2009 Results



⁴⁵ This figure excludes 28.7% of the residents who never went to the County website.

⁴⁶ This was confirmed by a chi-square procedure ($\chi^2 = 9.95, 4 \text{ df}, p = .04$).

I. Relationship with Other Municipalities

All respondents were asked two questions with respect to how Strathcona County fits within the Capital Region. It can be seen that there was virtually no change among residents since the question was first asked in 2007. Moreover, it can be seen in Figure 73 that there is very little difference between urban and rural residents on this issue.

FIGURE 72
Support for Retention of Independence

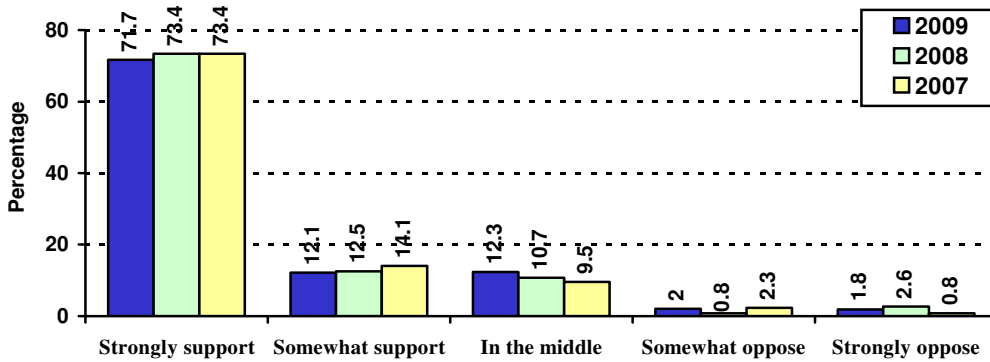
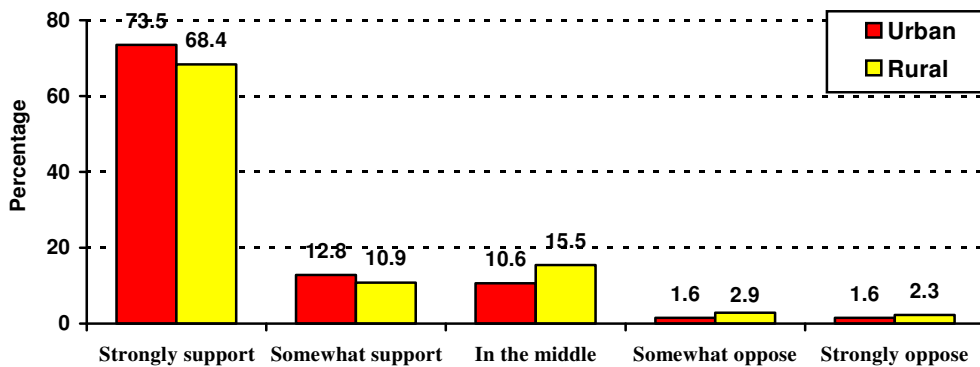
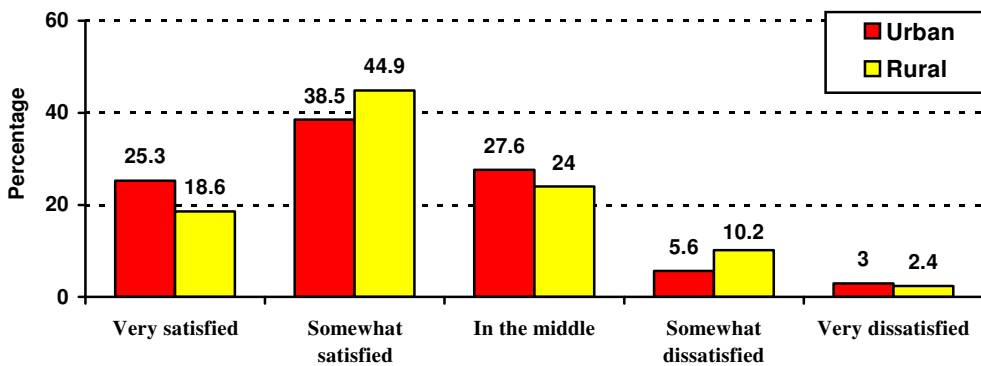


FIGURE 73
Support for Retention of Independence
(2009 Urban & Rural Comparisons)



Residents were also asked to indicate how satisfied they were with the way Strathcona County worked with other municipalities in the Capital Region. It can be seen in Figure 74 that the combined very/somewhat satisfied ratings reveal that the majority of Sherwood Park (63.8%) and rural residents (63.5%) are satisfied with the County’s efforts.

FIGURE 74
Satisfaction with Strathcona County working with other Municipalities
(2009 Urban & Rural Comparisons)



J. Thoughts on a 40 km/hr Speed Limit

All 500 respondents from the 2009 Strathcona County Satisfaction Survey were asked “To what extent would you support a 40 km per hour speed limit on all residential streets in Sherwood Park, as well as the various hamlets and subdivisions throughout Strathcona County” and then to indicate why they felt this way. The results of this are shown in Table 4, with the reasons for support or opposition to changing the speed limit summarized in Tables 5 and 6.

It can be seen from Table 4 that overall, 41.3% supported this initiative, while 44.9% were opposed. Another 13.8% reported being in the middle on this (i.e. neither supported nor opposed the proposed change). Support for the speed change was higher in Sherwood Park compared to rural Strathcona County.

Table 4
Perception of a 40 km/hr Speed Limit

	Sherwood Park	Rural Strathcona	Total Strathcona County
	%	%	%
Strongly support	30.5%	19.5%	26.7%
Somewhat support	16.9%	10.3%	14.6%
In the middle	11.4%	18.4%	13.8%
Somewhat oppose	11.1%	19.5%	14.0%
Strongly oppose	30.2%	32.2%	30.9%

Table 5
Reasons for Supporting a 40 km/hr Speed Limit

	Urban support	Rural support	Total
	%	%	%
To protect children/school areas	33.1%	42.3%	35.4%
People are speeding/Should slow down/ 50 km too fast	31.8%	21.2%	29.1%
Lower speed in some areas depending on a road assessment	8.4%	11.5%	9.2%
Because of safety concerns/Volume of traffic on roads	7.8%	7.7%	7.8%
Should work on enforcing present speed limits	5.2%	3.8%	4.9%
Driver education needed/bad driver habits/drivers inattentive now	3.2%	3.8%	3.4%
40 km already in some neighborhoods/Traffic calming in effect	3.2%	---	2.4%
Speed limit should be even lower	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%
Comment pertains to main roads - doesn't pertain to the 40 km/hr issue	1.3%	1.9%	1.5%
Don't want to slow traffic too much	1.9%	---	1.5%
Don't think there is enough of a problem to warrant 40 km/hr	0.6%	1.9%	1.0%
50 km/hr limit is fine	1.3%	---	1.0%
Have this instead of roundabouts	---	1.9%	0.5%
Good idea for rural areas where there are no sidewalks	---	1.9%	0.5%

It can be seen from Table 5 that support for the speed change is heavily weighted on the need to protect children in the residential areas and a perception that many drivers are exceeding the 50 km/hr speed limit right now. With respect to those opposing a change, it can be seen in Table 6 that the primary reasons are residents either feeling the present 50 km/hr speed limit is fine or that the County should perhaps do a better job of enforcing the present speed limits (with this view higher among urban residents).

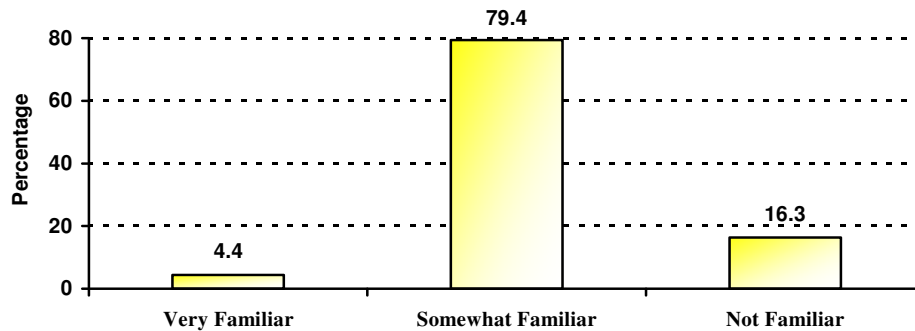
Table 6
Reasons for Opposing a 40 km/hr Speed Limit

	Urban support	Rural support	Total
	%	%	%
50 km/hr limit is fine	29.9%	32.2%	30.8%
Should work on enforcing present speed limits	13.4%	8.9%	11.6%
Don't think there is enough of a problem to warrant 40 km/hr	11.2%	6.7%	9.4%
Seen as a way [cash cow] for photo radar	11.9%	5.6%	9.4%
Don't want to slow traffic too much	7.5%	5.6%	6.7%
Driver education needed/bad driver habits/drivers inattentive now	5.2%	6.7%	5.8%
40 km/hr is too slow	---	14.4%	5.8%
Lower speed in some areas depending on a road assessment	6.0%	4.4%	5.4%
Irrelevant comments	4.5%	1.1%	3.1%
Think that 50 km/hr is a provincial standard/different speed limit may confuse visitors	3.0%	3.3%	3.1%
People are speeding/Should slow down/ 50 km too fast	2.2%	3.3%	2.7%
To protect children/school areas	1.5%	2.2%	1.8%
Responsibility of parents to teach kids traffic rules	2.2%	1.1%	1.8%
Not fair to those who are currently going 50 km/hr	---	2.2%	0.9%
No consistency in speed limits throughout County	---	2.2%	0.9%
Comment pertains to main roads - doesn't pertain to the 40 km/hr issue	0.7%	---	0.4%
Need more substantial evidence before changing speed limit	0.7%	---	0.4%

K. Awareness of the Strategic Plan

Overall, 32.7% of residents were aware of Strathcona County's strategic plan, regardless of where they lived. Those who knew of the existence of the strategic plan were asked to indicate the extent of their familiarity of the material within the plan. Most residents who were aware of the plan also had some familiarity with its contents.

FIGURE 75
Familiarity of the Strategic Plan Content by County Residents who were Aware of it



L. Final Thoughts

The closing question directed to all residents was a general one that allowed people to provide comments about any Strathcona County service or how the County is managed. Overall, 37.2% of respondents provided additional comments. Of these respondents, 24% provided positive comments; most associated with satisfaction on how specific municipal services are managed. Some of the comments cited positive experiences residents had in their direct communications with staff and/or Council.

Many of the final comments made, however, reiterated concerns some residents had with how the County was run, which included:

- Urban favoritism with respect to how taxes were spent by the County;
- Tax concerns in general, with some residents raising concerns about how much money they were paying in property taxes;

- Concerns with medical facilities and the hospital (though this is a provincial issue, not a municipal one);
- Concerns over the completion of road repairs to Highway 21;
- Concerns on how the County is altering roads to deal with the speed and flow of traffic.

APPENDIX A: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Strathcona County Year 2009 Client Satisfaction Questionnaire

Hello. My name is _____ of *company name*. We are doing a survey of adult residents on behalf of Strathcona County to find out what people like and don't like about living in the community. Can you spare me about **10 minutes** of your time right now to take part in this important survey?

ONCE AN ADULT MEMBER OF THE HOUSEHOLD IS ON THE LINE, CONTINUE.

The survey will ask for your opinions about the quality of life in Strathcona County, the quality of municipal services, and the service provided by County staff. The County will use these results to evaluate its services, and help make the best use of its resources.

Great, but before we begin I need to know:

- Do you live: In Sherwood Park 1
- or elsewhere in Strathcona County? 2

 If not 1 or 2 – Thank and terminate

I'd like to begin by asking you some general questions about life in Strathcona County...

	very high	high	average	low, or	very low	DO NOT READ: DK
1. To what extent are you satisfied with the quality of life in Strathcona County at the present time? Would you rate your level of satisfaction as:	1	2	3	4	5	9

IF LOW OR VERY LOW, ASK: How could the quality of life be improved?

	very high	high	average	low, or	very low	DO NOT READ: DK
2. How would you rate Strathcona County as a place to raise children? Would you rate your level of satisfaction as:	1	2	3	4	5	9

IF LOW OR VERY LOW, ASK: Why do you feel that way?

	None	1 to 5 Adults	6 to 10 Adults	11 to 20 Adults, or	More than 20 Adults	DO NOT READ DK
3. How many adults in your neighborhood do you know by name? Would you say:	1	2	3	4	5	9

	very high	high	average	low, or	very low	DO NOT READ: DK
4. How would you rate Strathcona County as a safe community to live in? Would you rate this as...	1	2	3	4	5	9

IF LOW OR VERY LOW, ASK: What could be done to make the community safer?

	very high	high	average	low, or	very low	DO NOT READ: DK
5. How would you rate the quality of Strathcona County's natural environment? Would this be...	1	2	3	4	5	9

IF LOW OR VERY LOW, ASK: Why do you feel that way?

	very fair	fair	average	unfair, or	very unfair	DO NOT READ: DK
6. In providing services, County Council and staff have to consider the needs and interests of people living in different areas of the County. In balancing these needs and interests, would you say that in general the County is:	1	2	3	4	5	9

DO NOT READ: IF UNFAIR OR VERY UNFAIR, ASK: Why do you feel that way?

7. Would you recommend Strathcona County to others as a place to live?	1. yes	2. no	9. Don't know
--	--------	-------	---------------

DO NOT READ: IF NO, ASK: Why do you say that? _____

8. Overall, how satisfied are you with the opportunities for residents to express their opinions about municipal services or municipal issues in Strathcona County? Is your satisfaction level:

1. Very High 2. High 3. Average 4. Low 5. Very Low 9.DK

IF LOW OR VERY LOW, ASK: Why do you feel that way?

9. I'd now like to know what you think of the quality of services provided by Strathcona County.

DO NOT READ: PLEASE ROTATE THE LIST, STARTING AT THE X.

a. Thinking of **winter road maintenance, snow clearing and ice control**...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low?

very high	high	average	low, or	very low	DO NOT READ: DK
1	2	3	4	5	9

FOR WINTER SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:
What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

b. Thinking of **urban street maintenance in the summer** (potholes filled, streets in good repair)...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low?

very high	high	average	low, or	very low	DO NOT READ: DK
1	2	3	4	5	9

FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:
What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

c. Thinking of **rural road maintenance in summer** (potholes, grading, dust control)...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low?

very high	high	average	low, or	very low	DO NOT READ: DK
1	2	3	4	5	9

FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:
What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

- d. Thinking of **family support services, which include things such as home care, counseling, youth programs** ...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? very high high average low,or very low **DO NOT READ: DK**
- 1 2 3 4 5 9

FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area? _____

- e. Thinking of **fire and ambulance services**...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? very high high average low,or very low **DO NOT READ: DK**
- 1 2 3 4 5 9

FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area? _____

- f. Thinking of **land use planning, which includes determining new residential, commercial and industrial development**...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? very high high average low, or very low **DO NOT READ: DK**
- 1 2 3 4 5 9

FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area? _____

- g. Thinking of **economic development, which includes attracting new businesses**...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? very high high average low,or very low **DO NOT READ: DK**
- 1 2 3 4 5 9

FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area? _____

- h. Thinking of **building permit and inspection services** ...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low. very high high average low,or very low **DO NOT READ: DK**
- 1 2 3 4 5 9

FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area? _____

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------|------|---------|---------|-------------|----------------------------|
| i. | Thinking about water and sewer services ...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? | very
high | high | average | low, or | very
low | DO NOT READ:
DK |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 9 |

FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------|------|---------|---------|-------------|----------------------------|
| j. | Thinking about the green routine , which includes the collection of waste, organic and recycling materials...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? | very
high | high | average | low, or | very
low | DO NOT READ:
DK |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 9 |

FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------|------|---------|---------|-------------|----------------------------|
| k. | Thinking about the various parks, green spaces and sports fields ...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? | very
high | high | average | low, or | very
low | DO NOT READ:
DK |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 9 |

FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------|------|---------|---------|-------------|----------------------------|
| l. | Thinking about indoor recreation facilities (arenas and pool) ...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? | very
high | high | average | low, or | very
low | DO NOT READ:
DK |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 9 |

FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------|------|---------|---------|-------------|----------------------------|
| m. | Thinking of public transit services here in the County ...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? | very
high | high | average | low, or | very
low | DO NOT READ:
DK |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 9 |

FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

- n. Thinking of **bylaw enforcement** .. is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? very high high average low,or very low **DO NOT READ: DK**
- 1 2 3 4 5 9

FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

- o. Thinking about **weed control, soil management, wildlife problems and other agricultural services**...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? very high high average low,or very low **DO NOT READ: DK**
- 1 2 3 4 5 9

FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

- p. Thinking of the **Information and Volunteer Centre**...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low. very high high average low,or very low **DO NOT READ: DK**
- 1 2 3 4 5 9

FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

- q. Thinking of the **Strathcona County Library**...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? very high high average low,or very low **DO NOT READ: DK**
- 1 2 3 4 5 9

DO NOT READ: FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

- r. Thinking of **the services provided by the RCMP**...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? very high high average low,or very low **DO NOT READ: DK**
- 1 2 3 4 5 9

DO NOT READ: FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

10. Now I'd like to know how you feel about new residential, commercial and industrial developments in Strathcona County. To begin with...

How would you rate the <u>quality</u> of:	very high	high	average	low, or	very low	DO NOT READ DK
a. New residential developments throughout the County? Overall, would you say that the quality was:	1	2	3	4	5	9
b. New commercial developments throughout the County? Overall, would you say that the quality was:	1	2	3	4	5	9
c. New industrial developments throughout the County? Overall, would you say that the quality was:	1	2	3	4	5	9

IF LOW OR VERY LOW FOR ANY OF THE ABOVE, ASK: Why do you feel that way?
DO NOT READ: SPECIFY WHETHER RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL OR INDUSTRIAL

I'd now like to find out how you feel about the amount of new developments in the County.

What about the amount of:	about right	too much, or	too little	DO NOT READ: DK
d. New residential developments in the County? Would you say the amount was:	1	2	3	9
e. New commercial developments in the County? Would you say the amount was:	1	2	3	9
f. New industrial developments in the County? Would you say the amount was:	1	2	3	9

11. I'd now like you to think back about the quality of services offered to residents in Strathcona County two years ago...

	much better	better	the same	worse, or	much worse	DO NOT READ: DK
To the best of your knowledge, compared to two years ago, would you say that the quality of services now is much better, better, the same, worse or much worse than it was two years ago?	1	2	3	4	5	9

IF WORSE OR MUCH WORSE, ASK:
 What changes have you noticed about the quality of service?

12. a. Do you presently own property in Strathcona County?

1 Yes – **Go to Q-12b**

2 No

9 Don't know

skip to q-13

b. Of the residential property tax you pay, about 58 per cent pays for municipal services. Knowing this, would you say you receive...

1. Very good value for your tax dollars

2. Good value

3. Average value

4. Poor value, or

5. Very poor value for your tax dollars

9. Don't Know

IF POOR OR VERY POOR VALUE, ASK:

Why do you believe you receive poor value for the taxes you pay?

Now I would like to know your opinion about the service provided by Strathcona County employees.

13. Which of the following County services have you used in the past 12 months? (**Read list and record all numbers that apply**)

1 Family Support Services

2 Fire and Ambulance Services

3 Building Permit and Inspection Services

4 Indoor recreation facilities

5 Public transit services

6 Bylaw enforcement

7 Recycling depots

8 Enviroservice event

9 Agricultural services

10 Information and Volunteer Centre

11 Strathcona County Library

12 The RCMP

13 Any Others – Please indicate: _____

98 None (**do not read**) - **Go to Question 15**

99 Don't know (**do not Read**) – **Go to Question 15**

If one or more of these services are mentioned, please go to Question 14

14. Of the County services that you've used, which one did you use most recently? _____
Go To Question 17

15. Have you had contact with any County staff in the past year?

1	Yes	Skip to Q-17	2	No	9	Don't know
			Ask Q-16 below			

16. Even though you have not had recent contact with County staff, what is your general impression of the quality of service that they provide? Would you say that it was:

- 1 Very good
- 2 Good
- 3 Average
- 4 Poor, or
- 5 Very Poor

- 9 Don't know

Go to Question 18

17. I'd like you to think about your most recent contact with County staff and the quality of service that you received.

		very high	high	average	low, or	very low	DO NOT READ: DK
a. What about the accessibility for the service? Would you rate this as:	1	2	3	4	5	9	
b. What about the knowledge of the service provider? Would you rate this as:	1	2	3	4	5	9	
c. What about courtesy? Would you rate this as:	1	2	3	4	5	9	
d. What about the ability for providing clear information and explanations? Would you rate this as:	1	2	3	4	5	9	
e. What about the ability to help you? Would you rate this as:	1	2	3	4	5	9	
f. What about promptness? Would you rate this as:	1	2	3	4	5	9	

18. Are there any comments you would like to make about the service provided by County staff? **DO NOT READ: PROBE AND CLARIFY**
-

- 19 To what extent do you support Strathcona County retaining its independence as a separate municipality? Would you say that you:

1. Strongly support this
 2. Somewhat support this
 3. Somewhat oppose this
 4. Strongly oppose this, or
 5. Somewhat in the middle
-

9. Don't know

- 20 In general, to what extent are you satisfied with the way your local government works with other municipalities in the Capital Region? Would you say that you are:

1. Very satisfied
 2. Somewhat satisfied
 3. Somewhat dissatisfied
 4. Very dissatisfied, or
 5. Somewhat in the middle
-

9. Don't know

21. Are you aware of Strathcona County's Strategic plan?

1. Yes

2. No

Skip to Q-23

9. Don't know

Skip to Q-23

22. To what extent are you familiar with the material within Strathcona County's Strategic Plan? Would you say that you are:
1. Very familiar with it
 2. Somewhat familiar, or
 3. Not familiar with it
-
9. Don't know

There has been some discussion lately about how fast vehicles travel on residential streets within neighborhoods throughout Strathcona County.

23. It has been suggested that the speed limit in all residential neighborhoods be changed from 50 km per hour to 40 km per hour. To what extent would you support a 40 km per hour speed limit on all residential streets in Sherwood Park as well as the various hamlets and subdivisions throughout Strathcona County? Would you:
1. Strongly support this
 2. Somewhat support this
 3. Somewhat oppose this
 4. Strongly oppose this, or
 5. Somewhere in the middle
-
9. Don't know

24. Why do you feel this way?
-

25. How would you rate the County overall on its communication with its citizens? Would you say that it was:
1. Very good
 2. Good
 3. Average
 4. Poor, or
 5. Very Poor
-
9. Don't Know

26. There are different ways that Strathcona County provides information to its residents. I'd like to read a short list to you, and for each, please tell me if this is an excellent, good, fair or poor way of conveying information to you.

What about _____? Is this an:	Excellent	Good	Fair, or	Poor	DO NOT READ:	
					Method	Don't Know
a. The local newspaper?	1	2	3	4		9
b. Brochures or newsletters?	1	2	3	4		9
c. Information sent with your utility bill?	1	2	3	4		9
d. Pre-recorded telephone messages?	1	2	3	4		9
e. Public meetings or open houses?	1	2	3	4		9
f. Information on the Strathcona County website?	1	2	3	4		9

27. There are now a variety of different online methods that people can use to get information about people and events. I'd like to read a short list to you, and for each, could you tell me whether you might use one or more of them to get information about Strathcona County. What about: (*read list, circle all that apply*)

1. Twitter
2. Facebook
3. YouTube or other online video casts
4. Blogs
5. Online Forums
6. RSS Feed
7. Anything else? (*Please indicate _____*)

0. None of the above/Don't use online methods

9. Don't know

28. Have you ever visited the Strathcona County website?

1. Yes

2. No	Skip to Q-30
9. Don't know	Skip to Q-30

29. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Strathcona County website? Is your satisfaction level:
1. Very high
 2. High
 3. Average
 4. Low, or
 5. Very Low
-
9. Don't know
30. Outside of today, have you given feedback on a County initiative or issue anytime within the past 12 months, either through a telephone or online survey, a discussion group or at an open house?
1. Yes
 2. No
-
9. Don't know
31. Are there any other comments you would like to make about any Strathcona County service or the way the County is managed?
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In finishing up this survey, I'd like to get some basic information about your household so that we may better understand how your answers compare to others that we've talked to. This information will remain confidential. To begin with...

32. How many years have you lived in Strathcona County? _____

DO NOT READ: IF LESS THAN ONE YEAR, ENTER 0.

33. Including yourself, how many people live in your household? _____ (*If "One" Go to Q-34*)

33a) How many of these people are children aged 15 or younger? _____

33b) How many are children aged 16 or older? _____

34. And as I read a list of age groups, please stop me when I mention the group that includes your age....
1. 18 to 24
 2. 25 to 34
 3. 35 to 44
 4. 45 to 54
 5. 55 to 64
 6. 65 years of age or older
-
9. Refused

35. **DO NOT READ. NOTE GENDER.** 1. Male 2. Female

36. Could I please get your first name or initials in case my supervisor wants to verify that we completed this survey? _____

Thank you for your help in completing this survey, and have a very pleasant evening.

DO NOT READ: Phone #: _____