



2012 Public Satisfaction Survey



Research Results

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2012 public opinion survey on services and life in Strathcona County was undertaken in December 2012 to obtain perceptions on the quality of life of residents living in Sherwood Park and rural parts of Strathcona County. This is the 15th annual formal resident satisfaction study. Overall, the following information was extracted from the data:

1. Residents of Strathcona County continue to have very positive perceptions of the quality of life for them and for their families; almost all of the people interviewed would recommend Strathcona County as a place to live. With respect to five broad aspects of life in Strathcona County measured, *a place to raise children* was rated highest overall (84.8% rated very high or high), followed by *a safe community* (73.7% rated very high or high), *County staff balancing needs and interests of people living throughout the County* (66.8% rated very fair or fair), *the quality of the natural environment* (64% rated very high or high), and *Mayor and Council balancing needs and interests of people living throughout the County* (57% 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 17 specific services offered by County staff. The overall results are shown in Figures A through E. Services that residents rated particularly high included *fire & ambulance services* (Figure A), *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* and *agricultural services* (Figure D), and *winter and summer 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 2011, with the following exceptions: *Economic Development and Bylaw Enforcement* both showed over a 4% higher satisfaction between 2011 and 2012. *Summer rural road maintenance* decreased by 7.6% between 2011 and 2012; *winter road maintenance* had a 5.5% decrease and *transit services* had a 9.5% decrease between 2011 and 2012. Please note 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

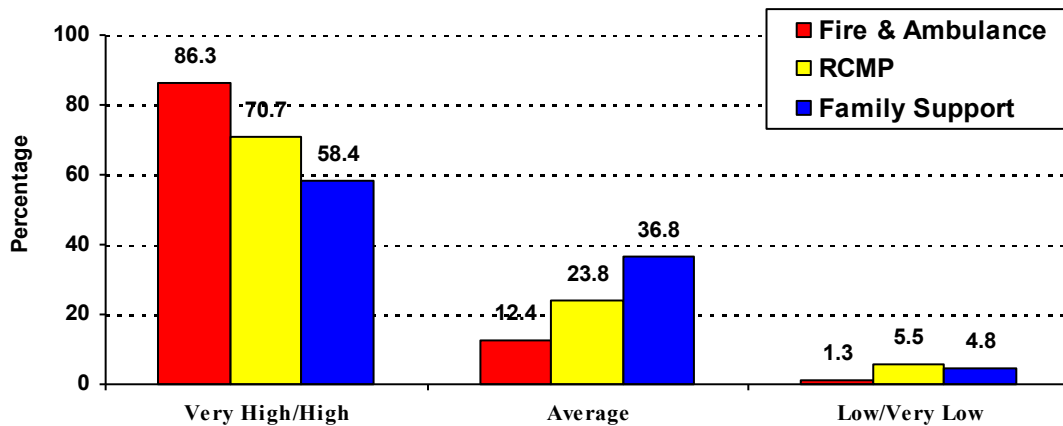


FIGURE B
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Recreation, Library & Volunteer Information Services

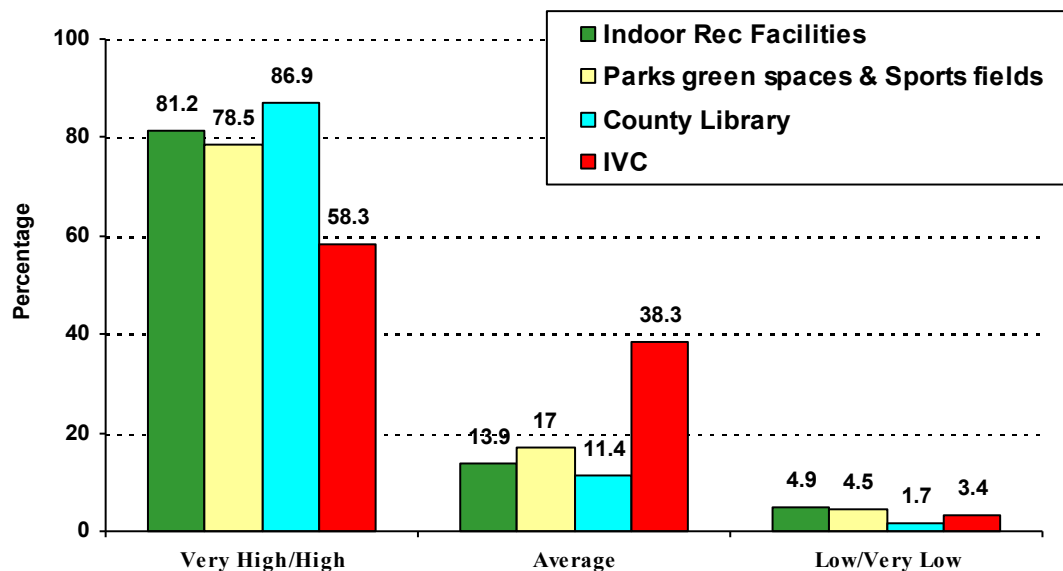


FIGURE C
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Waste & Water Services

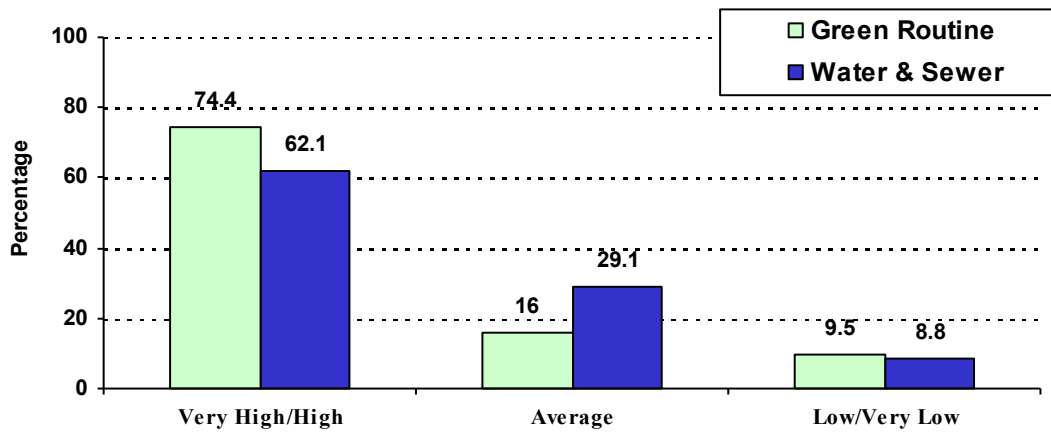


FIGURE D
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Different Inspection, Planning and Land Related Services

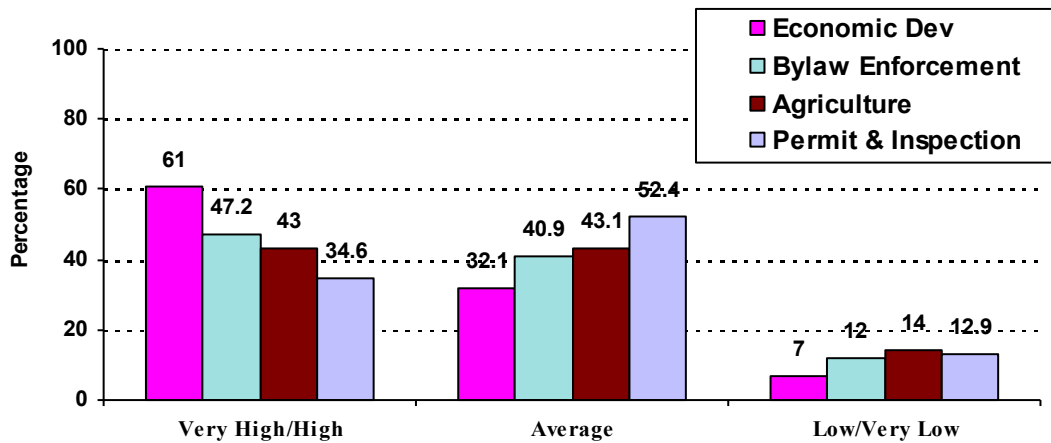
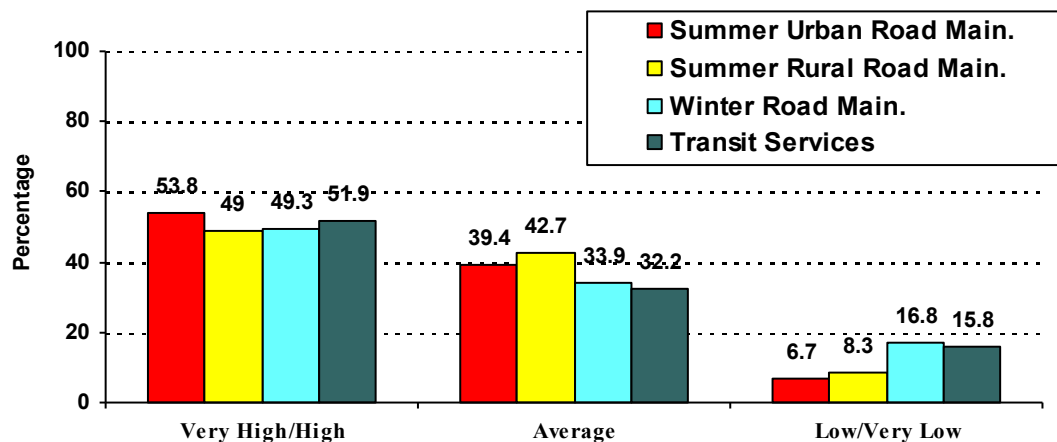


FIGURE E
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Roadwork and Transit Services



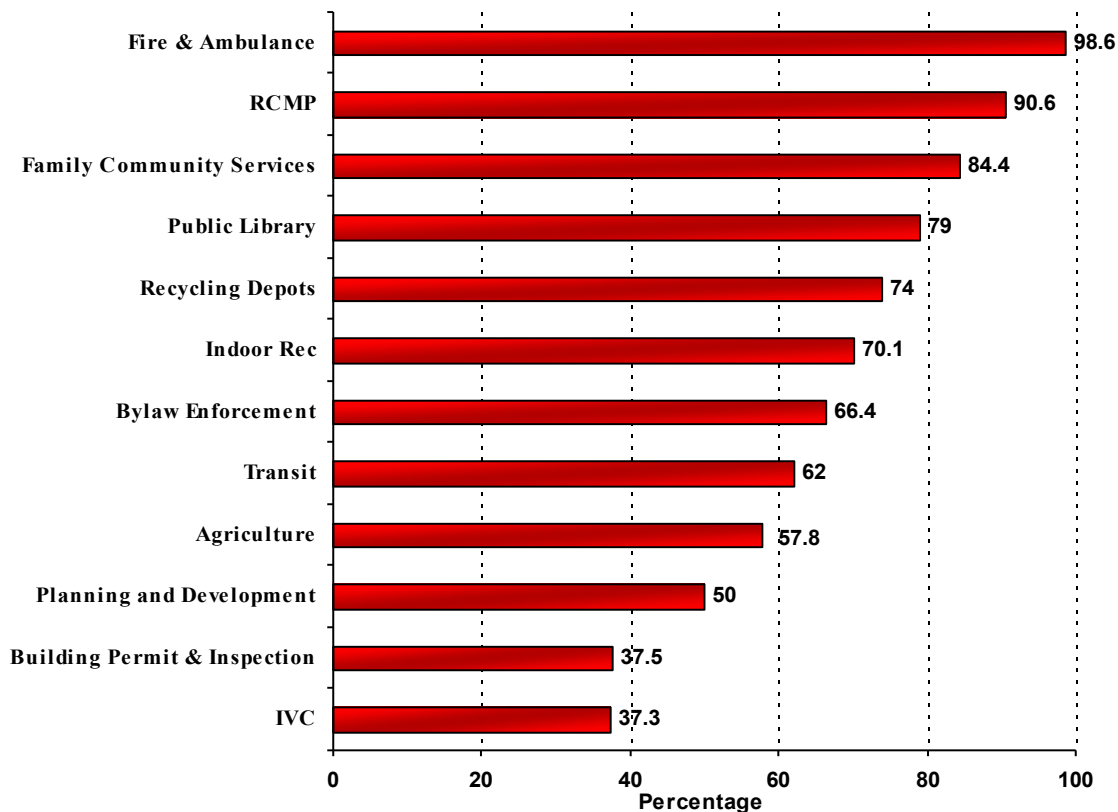
3. In this survey, as in previous years, residents rated all 17 services, but no additional questions were asked about other aspects of these County services. Individual departments can utilize the results from this survey as an overall perceptual measurement. Individual departments may also wish to consider customized detailed surveys to get feedback from County users and/or residents on specific aspects of their departments. Many departments are now already doing this as the need arises.

4. Residents were generally satisfied with the quality of new residential, commercial and industrial developments in the County, with the highest level of satisfaction noted for commercial developments (62.9% *very high/high* ratings, 7% higher than 2011). Residential developments had a combined *very high/high* rating of 47.2% (which is about the same as 2011), while 44.8 of residents gave industrial developments a positive rating in 2012, which is almost 5% higher than last year's results. 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 (34.2%) felt that there may be too many residential developments occurring within the County as of 2012; it should also be noted that this perception was about 8% higher this year compared to 2011. The other findings with respect to quantity of commercial and industrial developments have been similar to those found in previous satisfaction surveys.

5. In terms of perceived value of services for the tax dollars paid, the perception that one is getting *good* or *very good* value for the tax dollars is holding steady among urban residents when compared to previous years. The percentage of residents who felt this way was 48.5% in 2012.
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. For rural residents, the perception that one is getting *good* or *very good* value for the tax dollars was 30% in 2012. The percentage of rural residents who believe they are getting *poor* or *very poor* value for their tax dollars was 24.3% in 2012, and while this is the third lowest that it's been since tracking began in 2000, it should still be recognized that close to a quarter of rural residents continue to be dissatisfied.
7. Residents were asked to rate some existing sources of information about Strathcona County. In 2012, most of the methods received positive ratings from residents (*newspapers, County website, info via the utility bill, and newsletters or brochures*). *Open houses* were less popular and *pre-recorded telephone messages* only received minimal ratings. This was also the pattern found in the previous five years that this has been measured.
8. Overall, 77.8% of residents took the time to visit the County website, which is about 7% higher than what was recorded in 2011. Of those who visited the site, 63.1% of residents gave the website *very high or high* ratings, which is about 2% lower than what was found in 2011.
9. Residents were also asked to indicate what online methods they may have used to get information about Strathcona County. Overall, 52.8% of Internet users had used various online methods, with the most prominent methods being *online forums* or *Facebook*.
10. The majority of residents (81.4%) felt that the County kept them informed about County services and activities.

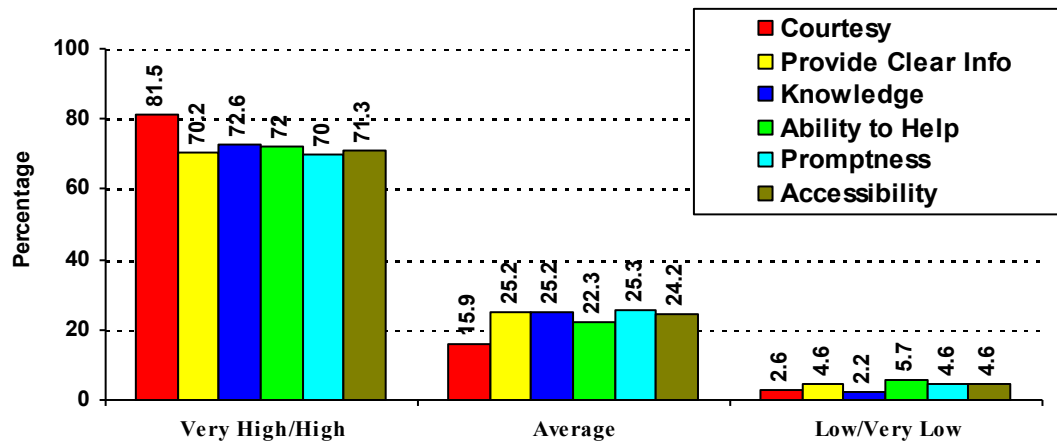
11. Overall, 48.5% of residents gave Strathcona County a positive rating toward having opportunities to express opinions about municipal services or municipal issues.
12. In 2012, outside of the current satisfaction survey, 21.9% of residents took the time to give the County feedback on a municipal initiative or issue. This is almost the same as what was found in 2011.
13. Overall, 28.1% of residents were aware of Strathcona County's Strategic Plan. This is almost the same as the awareness levels reported in 2011.
14. In this year's study, residents were asked to indicate how important various services were to them, which this year was limited to those who used a particular service. Services rated as being *very important* to the users is summarized in Figure F. Not surprisingly, helping services were at the top of the list.

FIGURE F
County Services indicated as being very important (as noted by users)



15. It can be seen in Figure G 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 about the same or slightly lower than what was found in 2011.

FIGURE G
Quality of Services provided by County Staff



I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In December 2012, Strathcona County conducted a satisfaction survey of its residents to obtain perceptions on the quality of life of residents living in Sherwood Park and rural parts of Strathcona County. This is the 15th annual satisfaction study of residents.¹ 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.

Obtaining primary data from residents directly will provide Strathcona County departments with information, and 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 to allow valid comparisons with the previous year. Since 2008, a variety of questions have been incorporated into the survey pertaining to how well the County conveys information to its residents. This year's survey added a question measuring how important particular services were to residents (see Appendix A for a copy of the full questionnaire).

¹ There was no satisfaction study conducted in 2002 due to a county-wide Community Consultation project.

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 urban² 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, 70% of the sample was drawn from the urban area, while 30% came from rural parts of Strathcona County. The sample frame provided overall results³ 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 1st and December 8th, 2012. 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.

² In this report, the urban component of Strathcona County is Sherwood Park.

³ 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

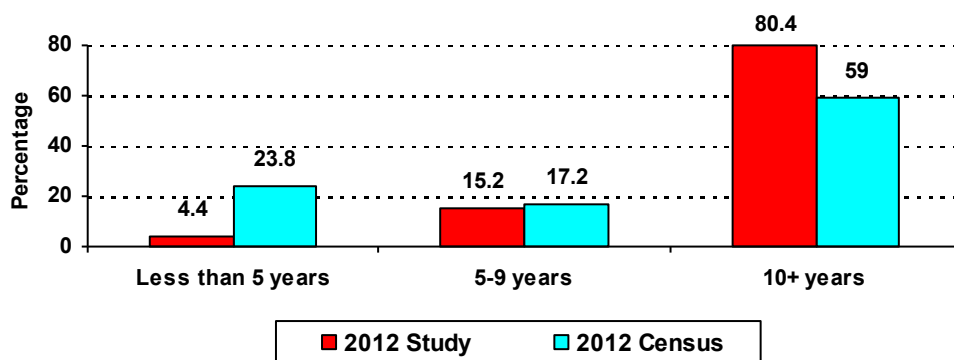
This section of the report presents a summary of the results associated with the perceptions and awareness of residents. Socio-demographic comparisons, where significant, are also highlighted. Comparisons will also be made with data collected from the previous year's survey, when significant differences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

A. Demographic Overview

This section of the report presents an overview of the type of residents who were surveyed in 2012. As indicated in the previous section of this report, part of the sampling criteria was to survey County residents, based on the percentage of people living in 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 (93.6%), while the remaining residents were renters.

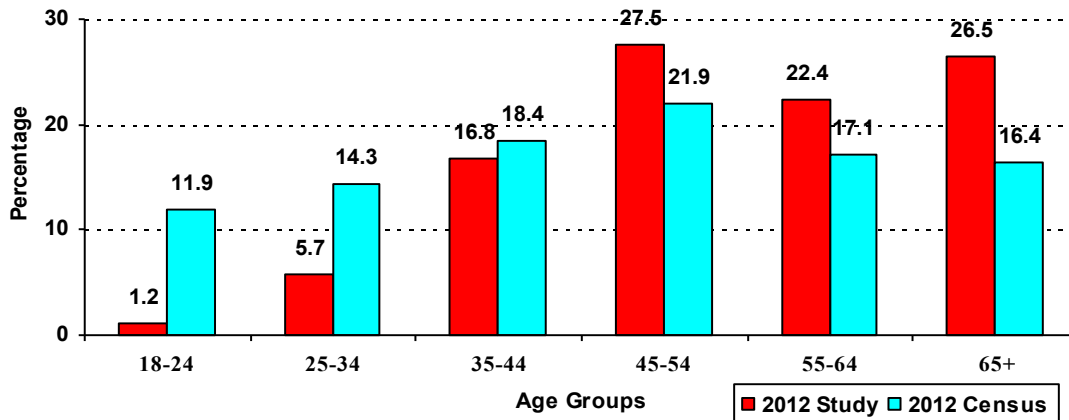
The majority of people who took part in the survey indicated they were long-term residents in the County. Figure 1 presents a breakdown of length of residence. It can be seen the majority of respondents have lived in the County for more than 10 years. The average number of years that people lived in Strathcona County was 23.5 years. In terms of sampling, it can be seen that relative to the Municipal Census, fewer newer residents to the County were interviewed compared to longer term residents.

Figure 1
Length of Time Living in the County



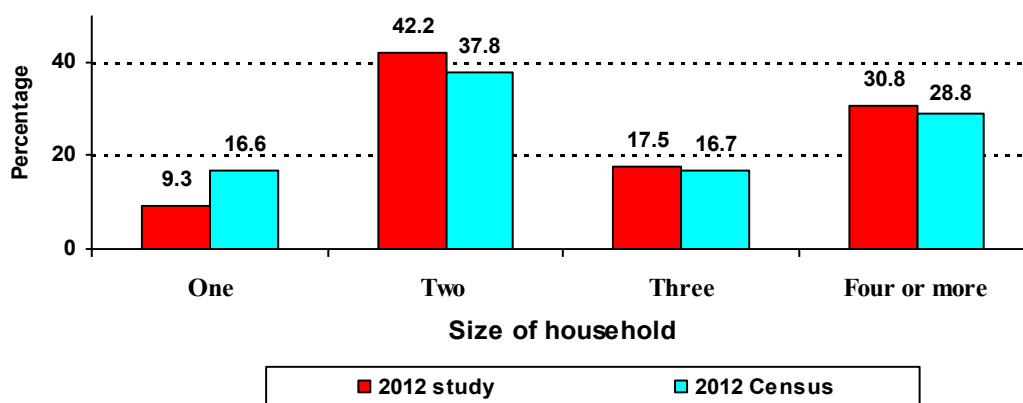
A breakdown of the age of the respondents is shown in Figure 2. There was a relatively good representation from most age groups, though in comparison to the 2012 census⁴, the 18-24 and 25-34 year age groups were under-represented and the 65 or older category was over-represented.

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 2012 census. The average household size determined for this study was 2.85 people.

FIGURE 3
Size of Household



⁴ These percentages are adjusted to reflect a 100% total of those residents 18 and older (excluding younger residents).

Overall, it was determined that 52.9% of households did not have any children living at home, while the remaining 47.1% had at least one child living at home. In Figure 4, it can be seen that the majority of households with children either had children under 16 living in the household, or were comprised of children aged 16 or older. A more detailed 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 (based on ages of children)

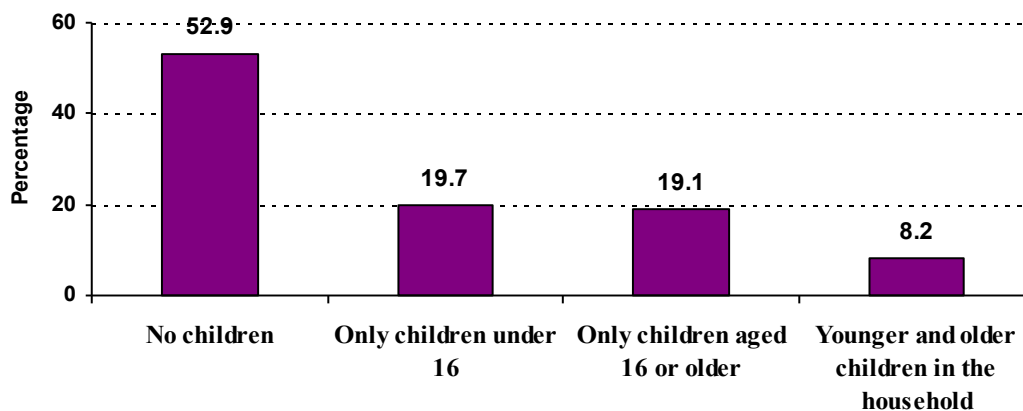
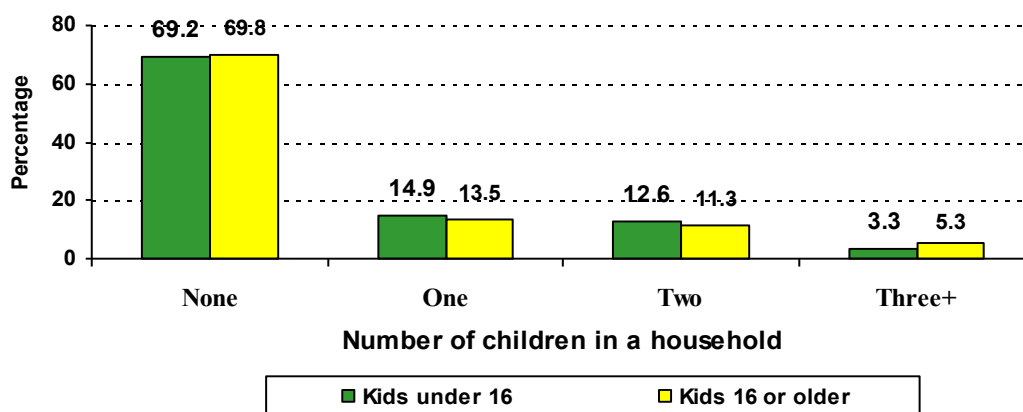


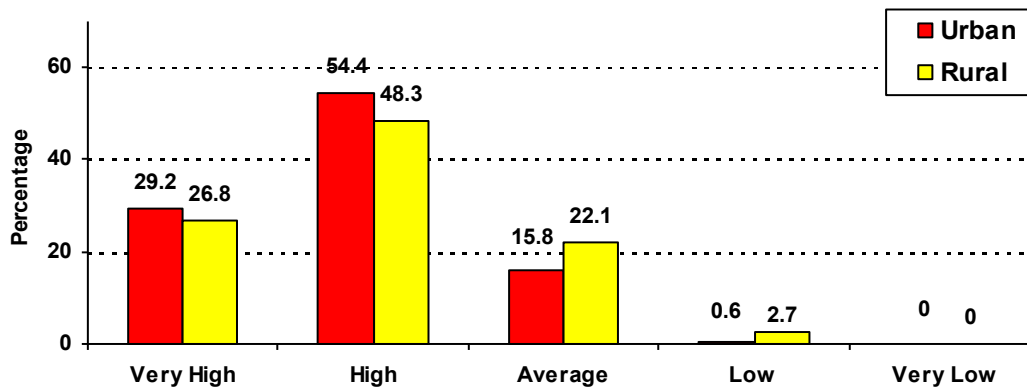
FIGURE 5
Number of Children in Household (based on ages of children)



B. Quality of Life in Strathcona County

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

FIGURE 6
Quality of Life in Strathcona County
Urban & Rural Comparisons



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. In 2011, the spread between urban and rural residents was lower (a 5.3% difference) compared to 2012 (a 7.5% difference).
- A further analysis revealed that no significant differences were found based on 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 variety of reasons were given from the 6 residents (1.2% of the entire sample) who did. Most prominent among the reasons was a request that Council listen more to the residents. Other concerns noted here included perceptions of a lack of affordable housing as well as more municipal services for rural residents.

Figure 7 presents a breakdown of urban and rural residents' ratings of Strathcona County as a place to raise children. Gender comparisons are depicted in Figure 8.

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

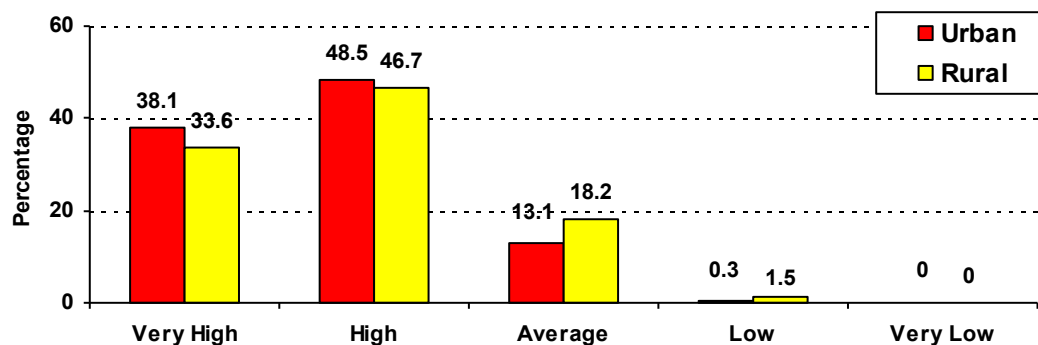
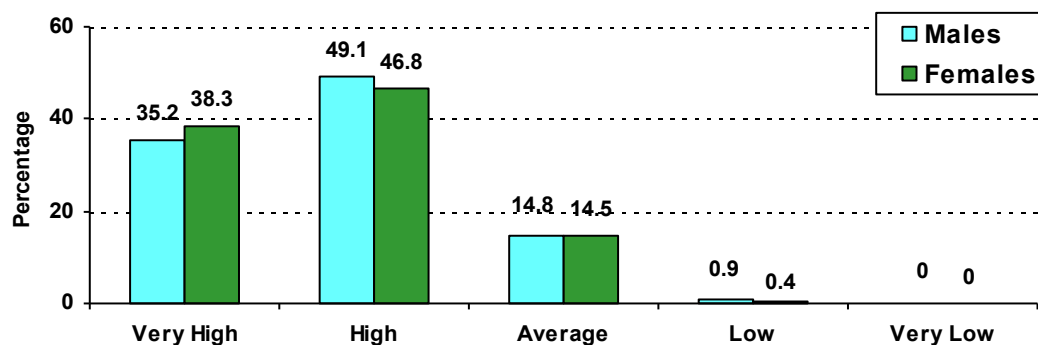


FIGURE 8
Strathcona County as a Place to Raise Children
Gender Comparisons



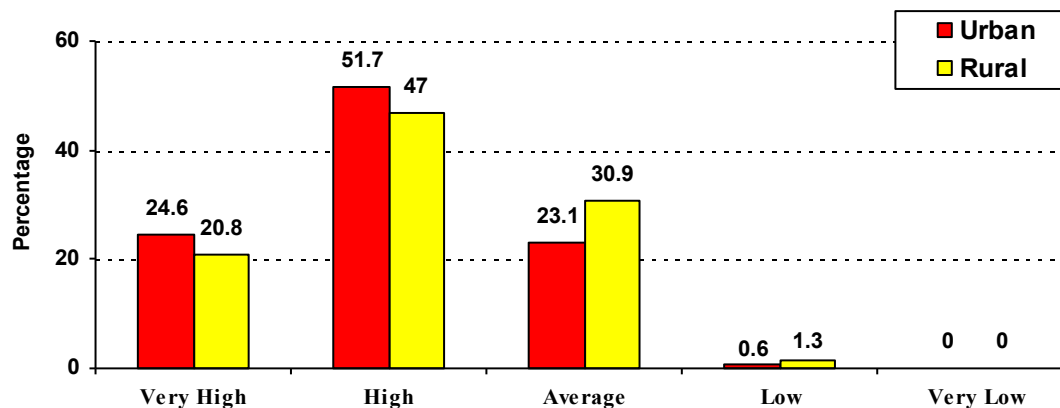
Highlights from Figure 7 & Figure 8

- The majority of people, regardless of where they live, rate Strathcona County as an excellent place to raise children. Overall satisfaction based on the combined very high/high ratings shows no differences based on geography.
- In this year's survey, there was no difference seen between males and females on this aspect of life in Strathcona County. The proportion of females who felt the County was a safe place to raise children (85.1% *very high/high*) was almost identical to males (84.3% *very high/high*). This was very similar to findings in 2011.

- There were no differences among age groups for this item in 2012.
- Respondents who rated this item as low or very low were asked to indicate what improvements could be considered. Only 0.6% of the sample (3 respondents) felt this way based on perceptions that the air quality associated with the refineries was contributing to increased cases of asthma among children. One respondent was concerned with a perceived amount of illegal drug use throughout the County.

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

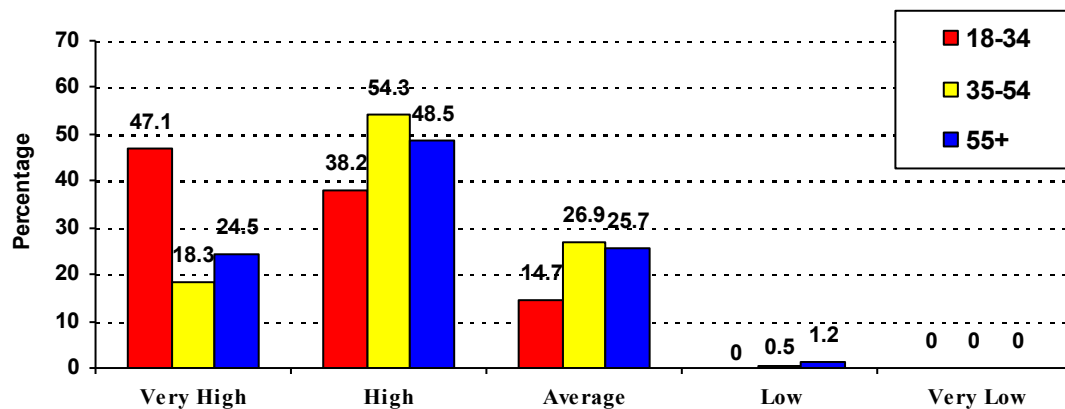


Highlights from Figure 9

- The majority of people felt that Strathcona County was a safe community in which to live, regardless of urban/rural location. The combined *very high/high* ratings have been consistent over the past few years.

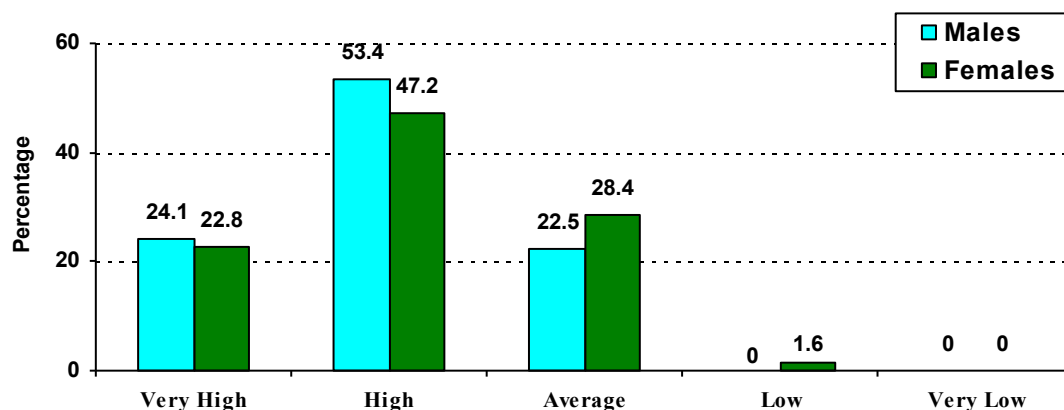
- The majority of residents, regardless of age, felt quite safe living in Strathcona County in 2012 (see Figure 10 below), though a one-way analysis of variance procedure determined that younger people (under the age of 35) felt safer than older residents.⁵

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



- In 2012, the overall percentage of residents who rated safety in the County as *very high or high* (73.7%) was similar to results posted in the past 3 years.
- In 2012, females had a slightly lower perception of this compared to males, but the difference was not statistically significant.

FIGURE 11
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Gender Comparisons

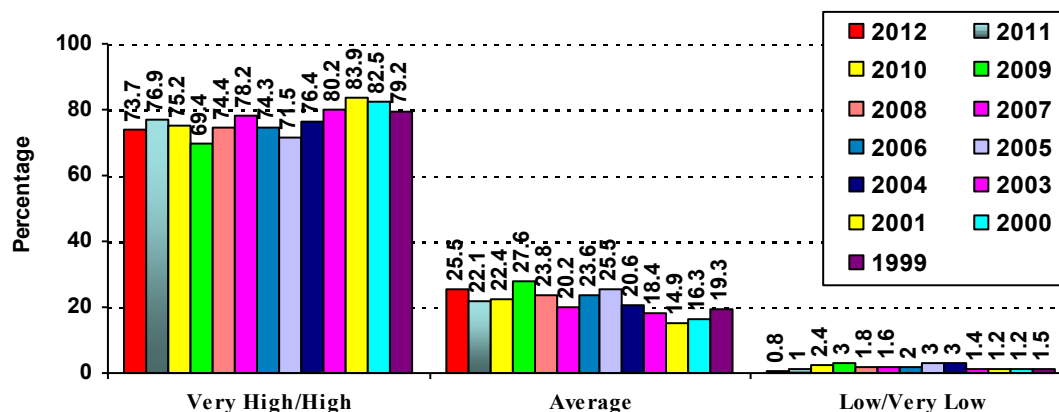


- Overall, only 0.8% of residents (i.e. 4 respondents) gave safety in Strathcona County a low rating. Reasons for this were a perceived need for more police presence in the community and better dealing of traffic issues.

⁵ F (2,491) = 5.06; p=.007.

It can be seen from Figure 12 that perceptions of safety in Strathcona County being “high or very high” dipped slightly in 2012 compared to most of the previous years. Moreover, 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, with the lowest rating being reported in this year’s 2012 survey.

FIGURE 12
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Study Comparisons (1999-2012)⁶



In Figure 13, the majority of residents indicated that they knew up between 6 and 10 other adults in their neighborhood. There is no difference seen between residents living in Sherwood Park and those living in rural Strathcona. In previous years, rural residents knew more neighbors than those living in Sherwood Park, and in previous studies, the majority of residents tended to know fewer people in their neighborhoods.

⁶ There was no satisfaction study conducted in 2002.

FIGURE 13
Number of Adults Known by Name within One's Neighborhood
Urban & Rural Comparisons

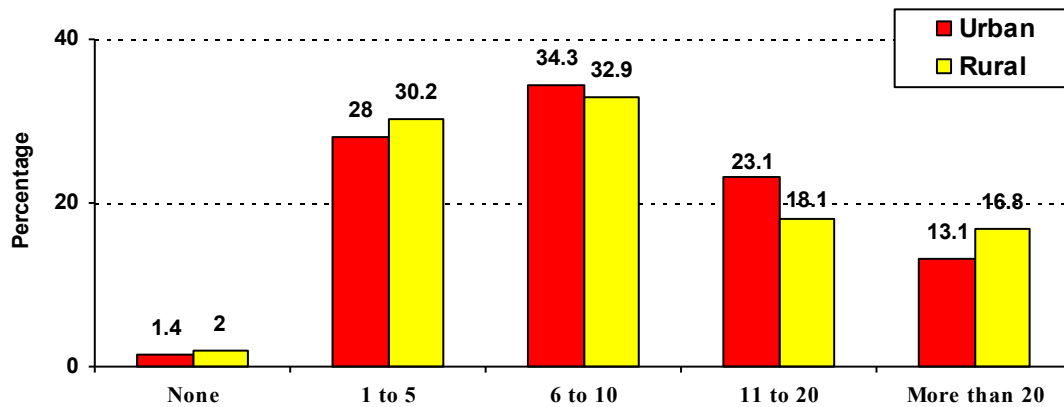
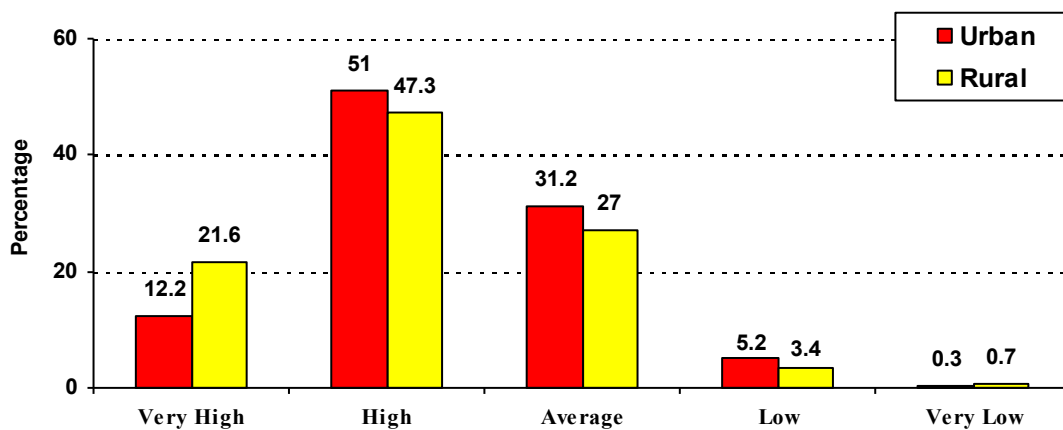


Figure 14 presents a breakdown by region of people's ratings of the quality of Strathcona County's natural environment.

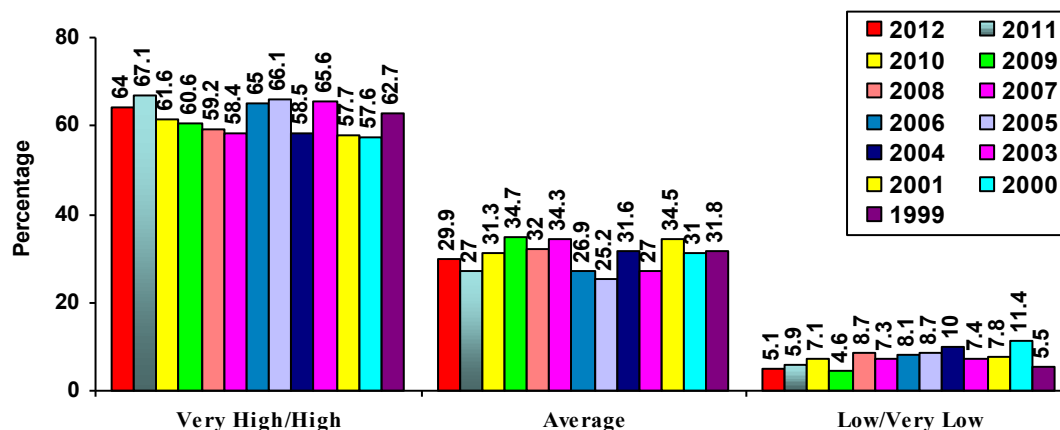
FIGURE 14
Rating the Quality of Strathcona County's Natural Environment
Urban & Rural Comparisons



Highlights from Figure 14

- It can be seen that 63.2% of the urban and 68.9% of the rural population gave a combined *very high* or *high* rating for the quality of the County's environment. This year's ratings are 4% lower in the rural area and 1% lower for urban residents compared to 2011 ratings.
- None of the demographic characteristics influenced 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 dipped a bit over last year, but is still higher than ratings noted between 2007 and 2010.
- The 5.1% (or 25 residents) who gave *low* or *very low* ratings were asked to indicate their reasons for the rating. The major concerns raised by several residents pertained to the air quality in the County, particularly near the refineries and the lessening of green space due to commercial development. These concerns have been consistent since satisfaction measurement began back in 1999.

FIGURE 15
Rating the Quality of Strathcona County's Natural Environment
Study Comparisons (1999-2012)



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 associated with the Mayor and Council are shown in Figure 16; County staff findings are depicted in Figure 17.

FIGURE 16
Balancing the Needs and Interests of People Living in Strathcona County
by the Mayor and County Council
Urban & Rural Comparisons

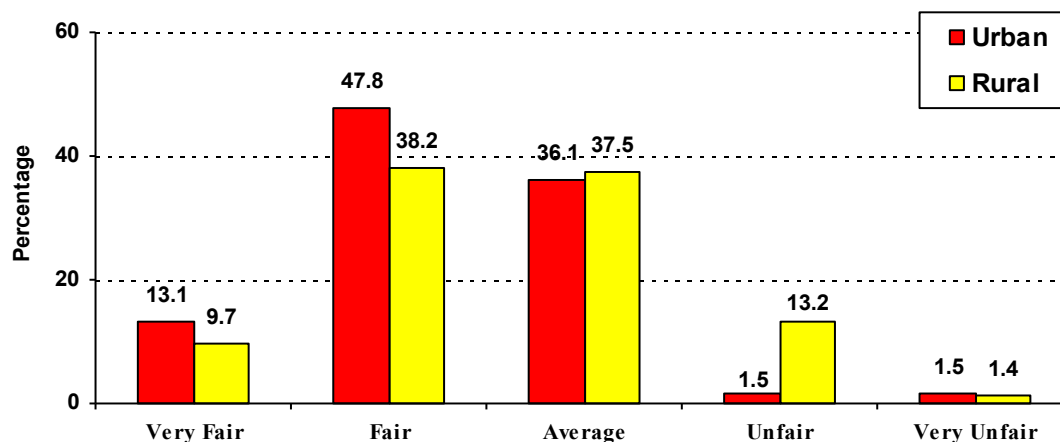
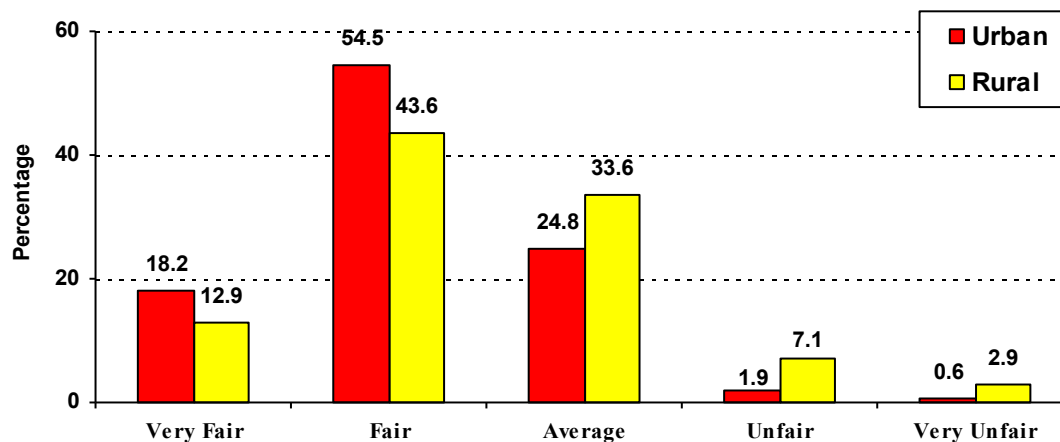


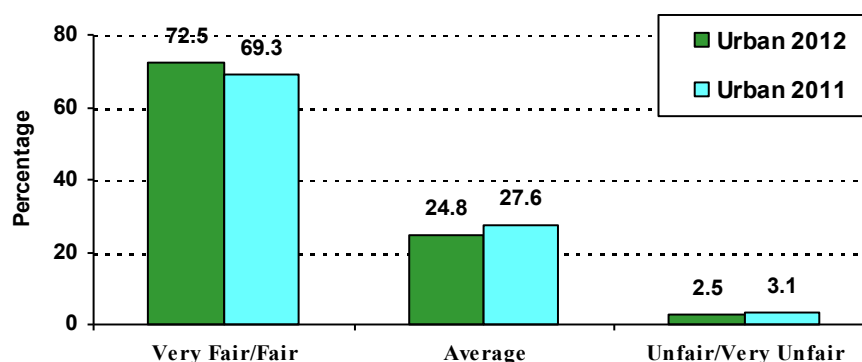
FIGURE 17
Balancing the Needs and Interests of People Living in Strathcona County
by County Staff
Urban & Rural Comparisons



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 by the Mayor, Council and staff. Considerably more people living in the urban area believe they are treated fairly by the Mayor /Council and staff, compared to those living in rural parts of the County.⁷
- Approval ratings for staff were slightly higher in 2012 compared to 2011 among urban residents (as seen in Figure 18). Combined *very fair/fair* approval ratings among rural residents for staff was about the same between 2011 (57.1%) and 2012 (56.5%).
- 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.
- Overall, 31 residents (6.5% of the sample) felt that the Mayor and Council were unfair, and 22 residents (4.8% of the sample) felt that County staff were unfair. These individuals were asked to comment on why they felt that way. Many of the comments came from rural residents, who felt they were not getting the same level of services as urban residents for the amount of tax that they paid. This has been a consistent negative comment for a number of years. Concern was also raised with respect to a perceived increase in low income housing.

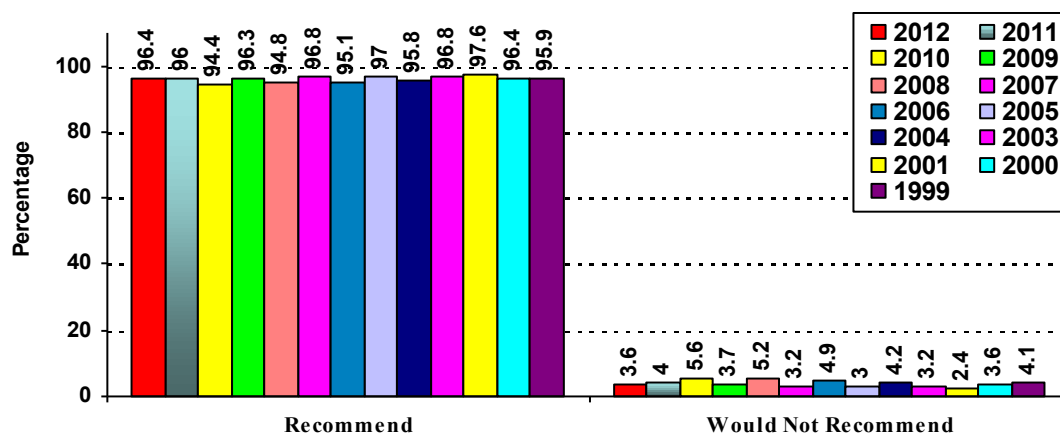
FIGURE 18
Balancing the Needs and Interests by County Staff
Urban Perceptions (2012 and 2011 comparisons)



⁷ 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 – Mayor/Council ($\chi^2 = 30.61$, 4 df, $p=.000$) and staff ($\chi^2 = 18.13$, 4 df, $p=.001$).

Almost all respondents would recommend Strathcona County to others as a place to live (Figure 19), which was virtually identical to the previous satisfaction surveys. The small percentage of people (3.6% or 18 residents) who would not recommend the County as a place to live were asked to indicate why they felt that way. The main reasons given by these residents this year were perceptions that taxes were too high for what residents were receiving, the air quality is not as good now compared to previous years, or that the County (particularly Sherwood Park) is getting over-populated.

FIGURE 19
Recommendation of Strathcona County as a Place to Live
Study Comparisons (1999-2012)



C. Quality of Services Provided by Strathcona County

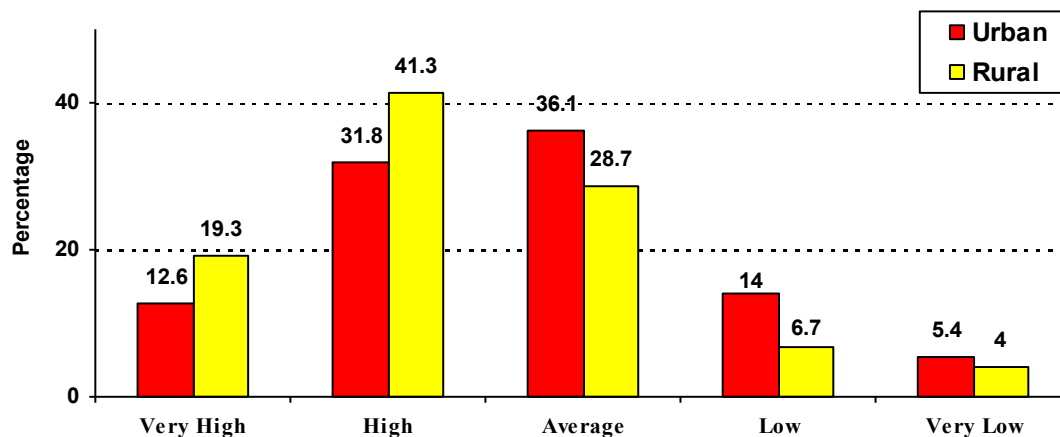
Residents of Strathcona County were asked a series of questions about what they thought of various services provided to them. Overall, respondents were asked to rate 18 different services. For each question, respondents rated the service using a 5 point Likert Scale, where a score of 1 was designated as *very high* and a score of 5 was designated as *very low*. Unless otherwise noted, the level of satisfaction in 2012 for these services was similar to the data collected in 2011.

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 20. From a statistical perspective, more people living in the rural areas felt the quality of winter road maintenance was higher than those living in the urban area.⁸

FIGURE 20
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance
Urban & Rural Comparisons



Perceptions of winter road maintenance among residents varied between 2012 and 2011. Figure 21 shows that the percentage of urban residents who felt the winter road maintenance work was *very high* or *high* decreased to 44.4% in 2012, compared to 50.1% in 2011 and 45.7% in 2010. This year's results were still higher than 2009 (38%) and 2008 (33.7%) for urban residents. It can be seen in Figure 22 that among rural residents, the combined *very high/high* level of satisfaction with winter road maintenance in 2012 (60.9%) is close to 2011's findings (61.1%) and is still higher than 2010 (56.3%), 2009 (53.1%) and 2008 (58.9%).

⁸ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between the perception of the quality of winter road maintenance on the basis of where they live in Strathcona County ($\chi^2 = 12.97$, 4 df, $p=.011$).

FIGURE 21
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance as noted by Sherwood Park Residents
2008-2012 Study Comparisons

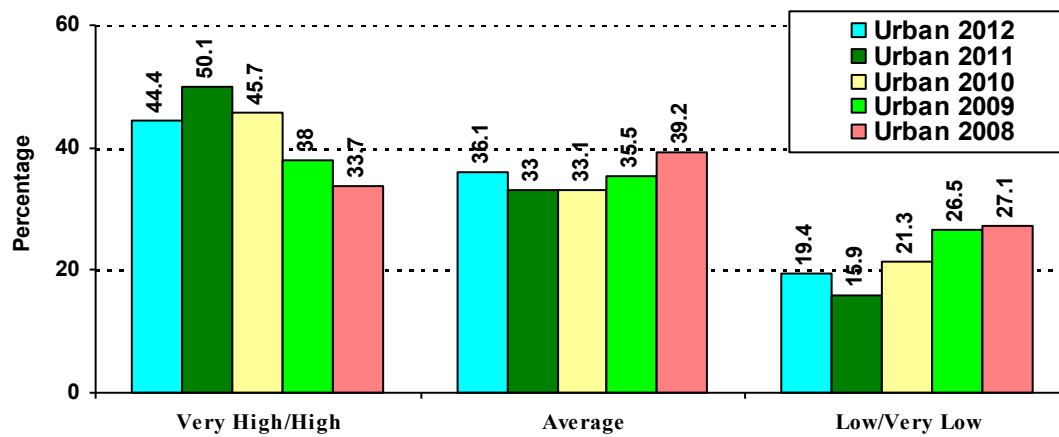
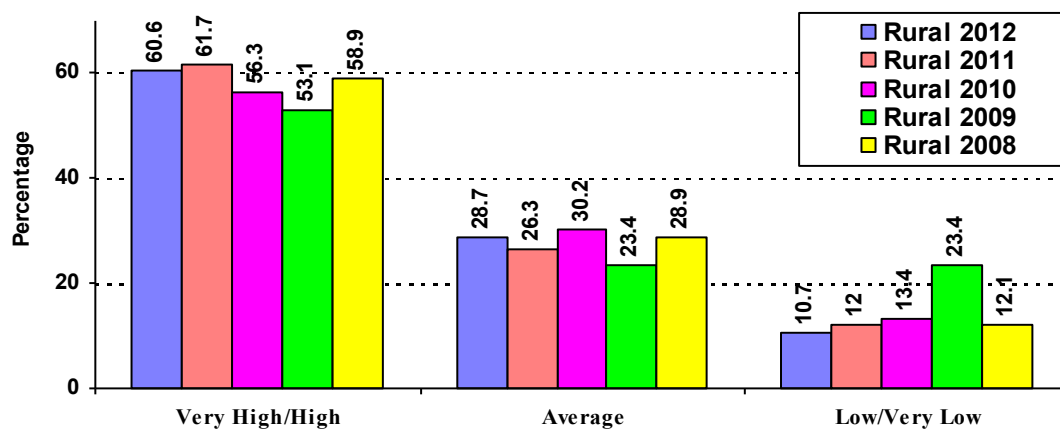


FIGURE 22
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance as noted by Rural Strathcona Residents
2008-2012 Study Comparisons

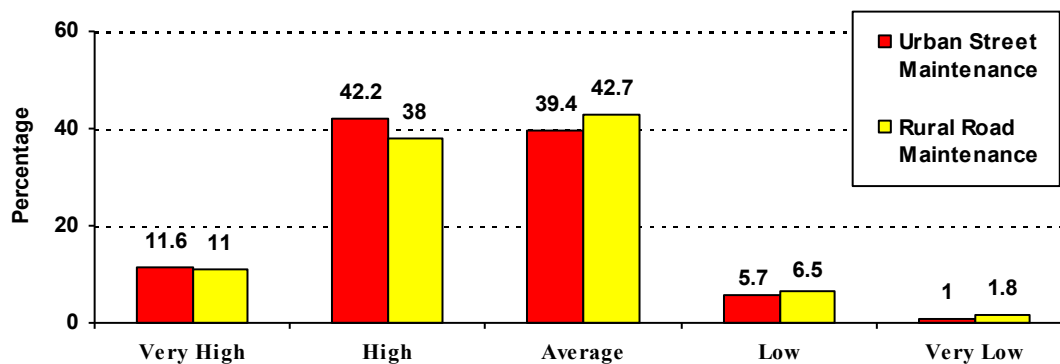


No differences for this service were seen between age groups or gender and a further analysis of the data revealed that length of residency did not have a measurable effect on perceptions of the quality of winter maintenance.

Overall, 84 residents (16.8% 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 to be cleared and sanded more often. Many residents also expressed an interest in the graders and sanders getting out earlier than they do to deal with the snow.

People were then asked to rate the quality of summer road maintenance in the urban area (Sherwood Park) and for rural areas. The overall ratings for both types of roads, regardless of where respondents lived, are depicted in Figure 23.

FIGURE 23
Quality of Summer Road Maintenance of Urban and Rural Roads:
All Residents



When each type of summer road maintenance is examined separately, however, there were statistical differences seen. In Figure 24, it was found that urban residents had a more positive perception of how well roads in Sherwood Park were maintained than those living in rural areas of Strathcona County. However, the difference between urban and rural residents was not statistically significant. No differences in perception with respect to this question were seen with any other demographic variables.

Overall, 6.7% of residents (N=33) 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 concerns raised as to when the road repairs were taking place, with some complaints associated with traffic snarls and delays in maneuvering around work crews, particularly during busy times of the day.

FIGURE 24
Quality of Summer Road Maintenance of Roads in Sherwood Park
Urban & Rural Comparisons

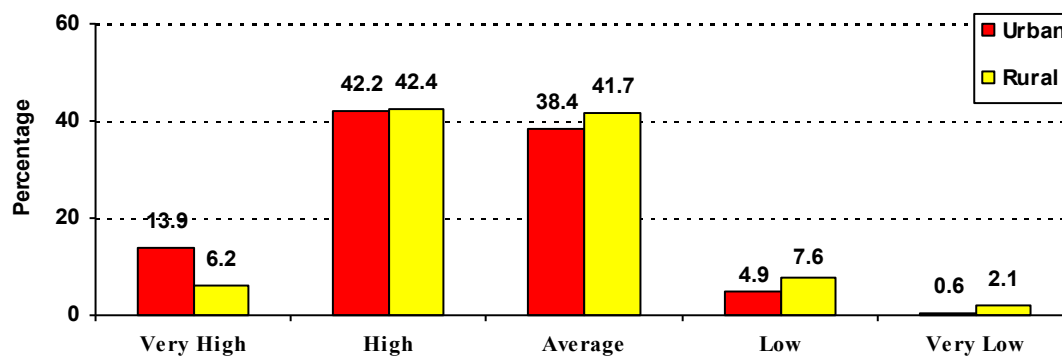
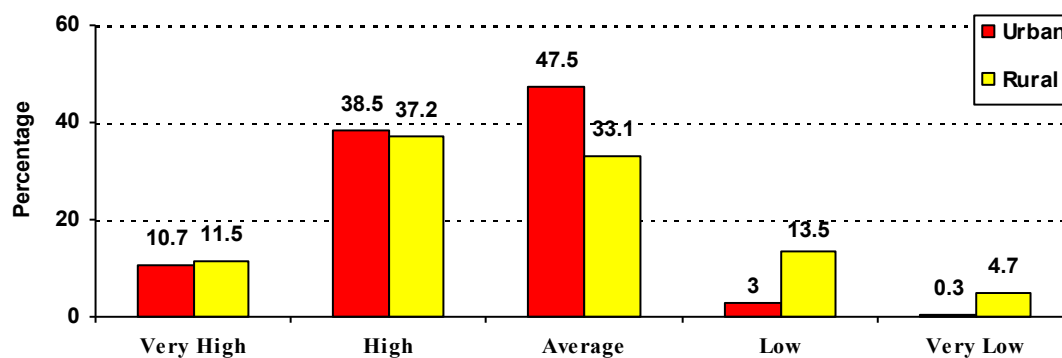


FIGURE 25
Quality of Summer Road Maintenance of Rural Roads
Urban & Rural Comparisons



It can be seen in Figure 25 that there was a difference between urban and rural residents with respect to how well the County maintains its rural roads in the summer. From a percentage basis, more rural residents were unhappy with the maintenance of their roads in the summer than those who lived in the urban area.⁹

Overall, 8.3% of residents (N=37) were unhappy with the summer maintenance of rural roads. As with the urban roads, a frequent complaint focused on the increased number of potholes on rural roads, and that these were not attended to quickly enough by road crews.

⁹ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between the perception of the quality of summer rural road maintenance on the basis of where they live in Strathcona County ($\chi^2 = 32.41$, 4 df, $p=.000$).

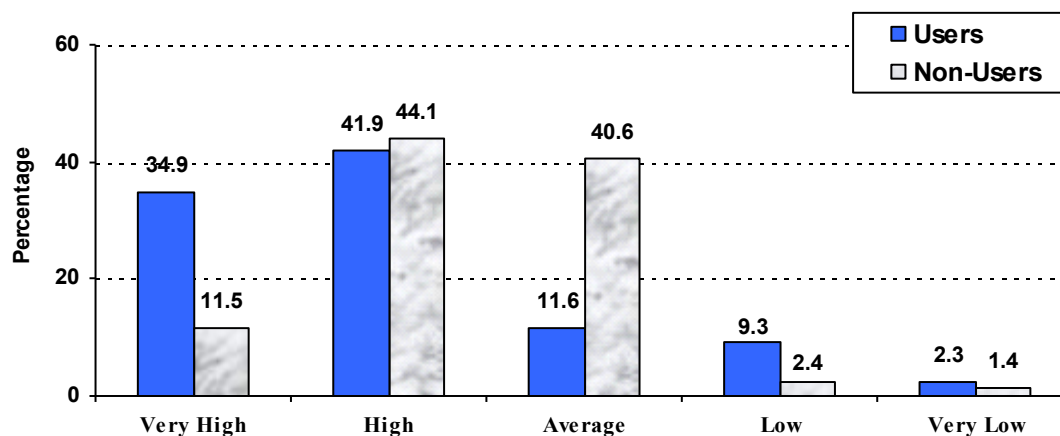
Specific roads mentioned by residents included:

- Develop the neighboring roads RR223 and Wye road;
- Do not put so many layers of asphalt on RR 214;
- Pave Township Road 22235/Township 514A;

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 26 presents the satisfaction level for family support services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services¹⁰ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should be noted that 171 respondents (34.2% of the sample) did not comment on the quality of family support services because they did not know anything about them.

FIGURE 26
Quality of Family Support Services



Highlights from Figure 26

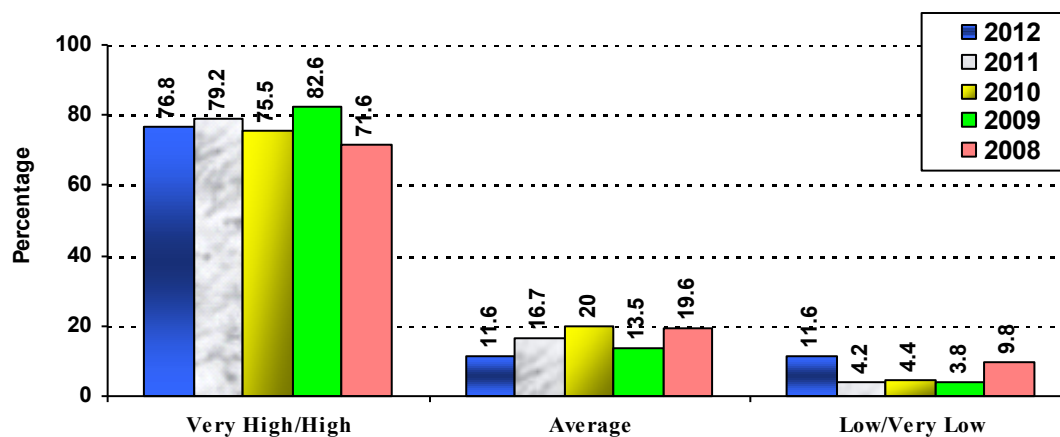
- Figure 26 shows that both resident users and non-users have a positive view toward family support services in Strathcona County. However, a chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between one's use and how satisfied one is with family services ($\chi^2 = 27.98$, 4 df, $p = .000$). A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -2.69$, 327 df, $p = .008$) also

¹⁰ Overall, 9.2% of respondents indicated they had used family support services within the past 12 months. This is almost the same as what was reported in last year's survey

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=46). It can be seen that 76.8% of the people who used Family & Community Services (FCS) gave the department *high* or *very high* satisfaction ratings. This is slightly lower than the 79.2% mark noted last year. User trends from 2008 to 2012 are depicted in Figure 27.

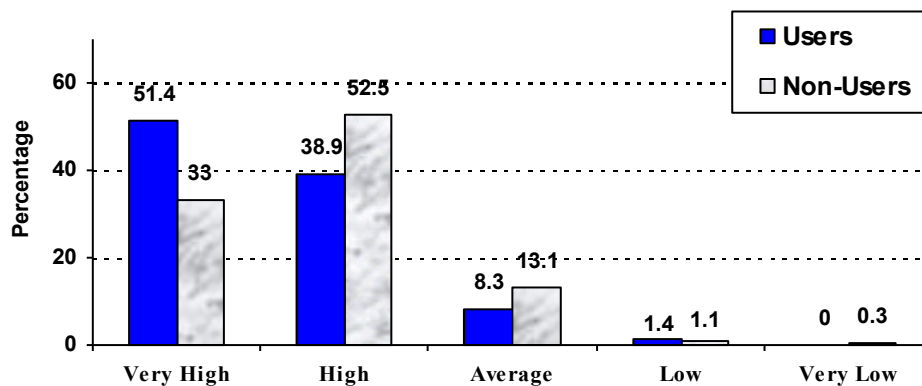
FIGURE 27
Quality of Family Support Services
User Trends 2008 - 2012



- As in previous surveys, the percentage of users rating the service as *low* or *very low* is small. However, in 2012, the level of dissatisfaction increased by just over 7% from 2011.
- The 16 people who gave family support services a low rating in 2012 (4.8% of the sample who rated the service) were asked to suggest how this could be improved. Many of the suggestions focused on additional programs for young people.
- There were no differences found for any socio-demographic characteristic for this item in 2012.

Figure 28 presents the satisfaction level people have for fire and ambulance services, based on the portion of the sample who utilized these services¹¹ in the past 12 months, and those who did not use these services. It should be noted that 42 respondents (8.4% of the sample) indicated that they “did not know” enough about these services to rate them.

FIGURE 28
Quality of Fire and Ambulance Services



Highlights from Figure 28

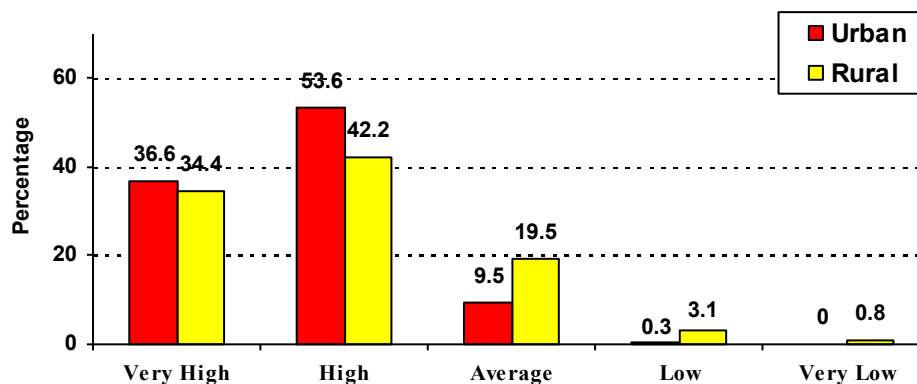
- It can be seen from Figure 28 that most residents (regardless of use) have a positive view of fire and ambulance services in Strathcona County, with strong positive feelings slightly more prevalent among users than non-users.¹² This demonstrates that recipients were pleased with the quality of services received when these services were needed.
- Overall, 6 people (1.3% of the sample) were not satisfied with the services. A couple of responses focused on the need for more fire halls in the County, especially in the rural areas.
- Apart from location (see Figure 29 - next page) there were no differences found for any other socio-demographic characteristic for this item in 2012.

¹¹ Overall, 14.8% of respondents in 2011 indicated that they had used the fire and ambulance services within the past 12 months. This reported usage is about the same as surveys conducted in 2007-2011.

¹² 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 ($\chi^2 = 9.30$, 4 df, $p = .05$). A *t*-test measurement for mean score differences ($t = -2.57$, 443 df, $p = .011$) confirms that users of fire and ambulance services rated these services higher than non-users.

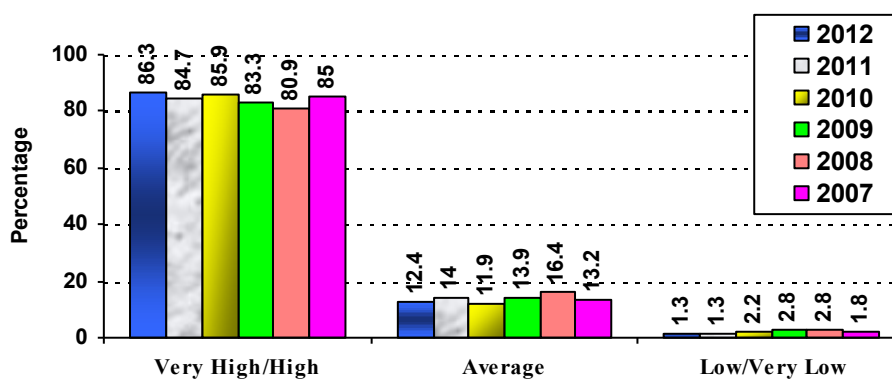
As seen in Figure 29, a further analysis of this service revealed that more Sherwood Park residents (regardless of use) were satisfied with the service (90.2% *very high or high*) compared with those living in rural areas (76.6% *very high or high*).¹³

FIGURE 29
Quality of Fire and Ambulance Services
Urban & Rural Comparisons



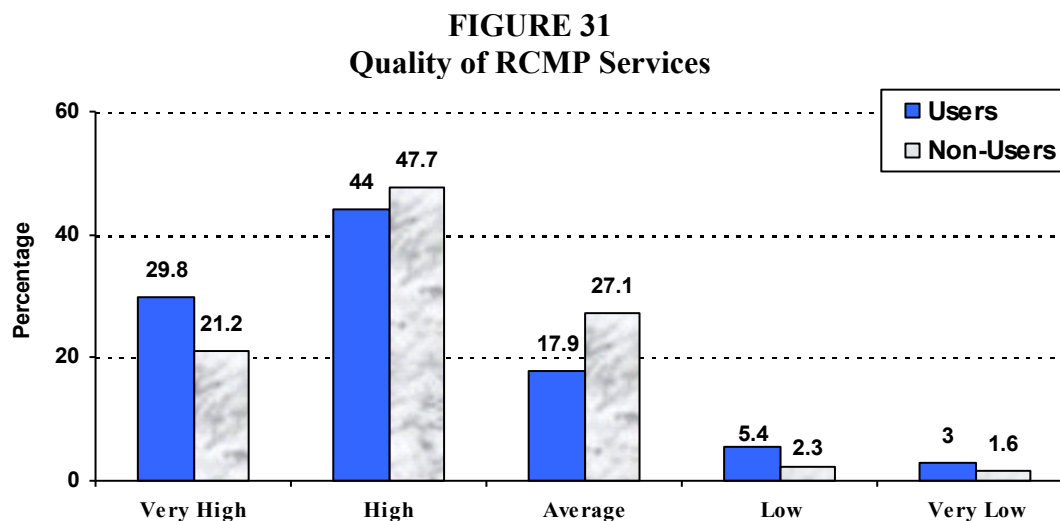
A further comparison with past satisfaction studies on this service revealed that the difference in the combined *very high/high* satisfaction scores noted for all residents (regardless of where they lived) have been constantly positive each year that the survey has been done. Figure 30 shows the trends from 2007 to 2012. The current study shows that positive perceptions toward this service are at an all time high.

FIGURE 30
Quality of Fire and Ambulance Services User Trends 2006 - 2012



¹³ 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 ($\chi^2 = 18.86$, 3 df, $p=.001$).

Figure 31 presents the satisfaction level for RCMP services, based on those who used these services¹⁴ in the past 12 months and those who did not.¹⁵



Highlights from Figure 31

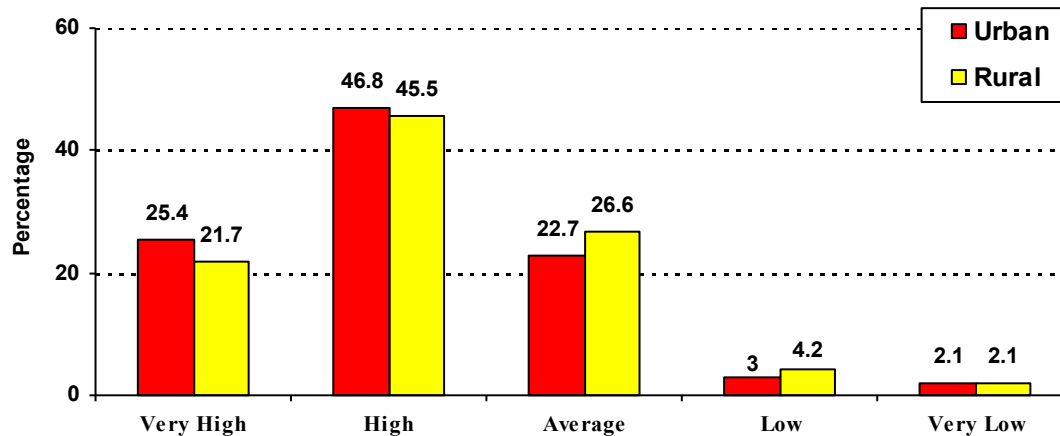
- As seen in Figure 31, most residents, regardless of use in the past 12 months, have a positive view of RCMP in Strathcona County. However, direct users gave stronger “very high” ratings than non-users.
- Ratings provided by both users and non-users in 2012 were very similar to trends found in previous years.
- Outside of users, no statistical differences were found when socio-demographic characteristics were measured for this service.
- Users and non-users (26 in all) who rated RCMP services as *low or very low* were asked to comment on ways that the service could be improved. Many of the comments centered on the perceived quality of officers working in Strathcona County; others had concerns about slow response times, and a need for a better presence in neighborhoods.
- A further analysis of this service revealed that residents were relatively happy with the RCMP services, regardless of where they live (Figure 32). The 2012 trends were very similar to what was found in the last four satisfaction surveys

¹⁴Overall, 170 respondents (34% of the 2012 sample) indicated that they had used the RCMP within the past 12 months. This reported usage is slightly higher than what was reported in both the 2011 and 2010 satisfaction surveys. It should also be noted that 26 people (5.2%) did not rate the service in 2012 on the basis that they did not know enough about the RCMP to give a rating.

¹⁵ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between users and non-users on how the RCMP is perceived ($\chi^2 = 11.42$, 4 df, $p=.022$).

with respect to urban/rural location. No statistical differences were found between urban and rural residents in 2012.

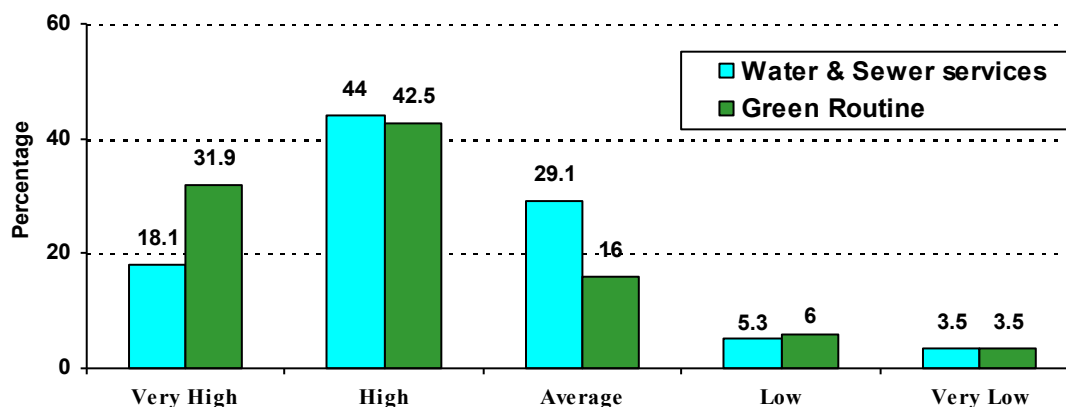
FIGURE 32
Quality of RCMP Services – Urban and Rural Comparisons



Water and Waste Management Services in Strathcona County

People were asked to rate the quality of the water and Green Routine system (waste collection and recycling program) in Strathcona County. Figure 33 presents the satisfaction level of residents for these services, regardless of where they live.¹⁶

FIGURE 33
Level of Satisfaction with Water and Waste Management Services



¹⁶ Overall, 102 people (20.4%) did not rate *water & sewer services* and 20 people (4%) did not rate the *green routine services* in 2012. These patterns are about the same as number of residents who did not rate these services in the 2011 and 2010 surveys. 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.

Highlights from Figure 33

- It can be seen from Figure 33 that residents were generally satisfied with these services. A further examination of the ratings revealed that 74.4% gave *very high/high* ratings for the Green Routine in 2012. On a year by year comparative basis, this is lower than the 77.5% rating found in 2011, but higher than the 73.7% rate found in 2010, 64.7% noted in 2009 and 63% found in 2008. The *very high/high* ratings for water and sewage services was slightly higher in 2012 (62.1%) compared to 2011 (61.1%).

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 (Figures 34 and 35).

FIGURE 34
Level of Satisfaction with Water Services
Urban & Rural Comparisons

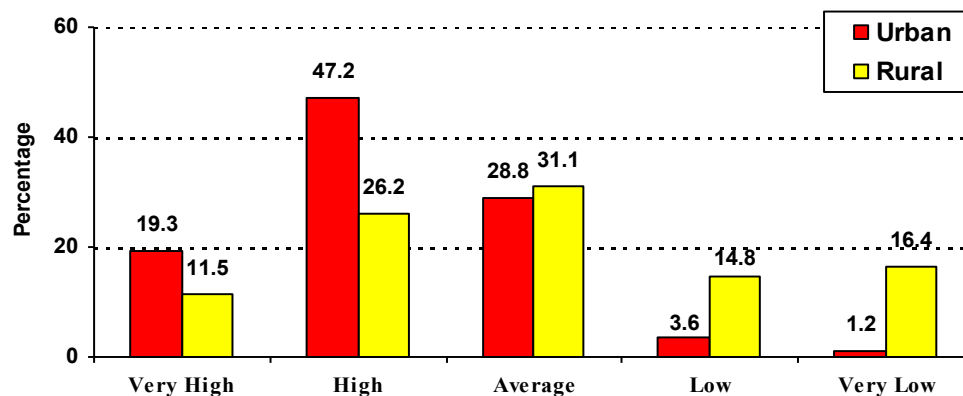
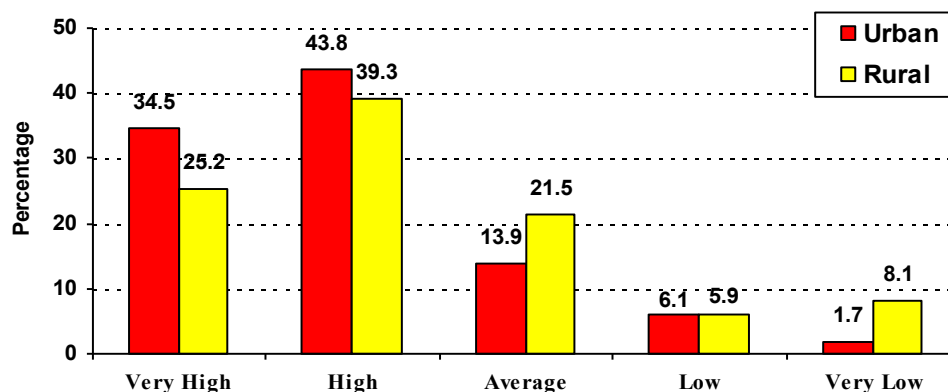


FIGURE 35
Level of Satisfaction with Green Routine Service
Urban & Rural Comparisons

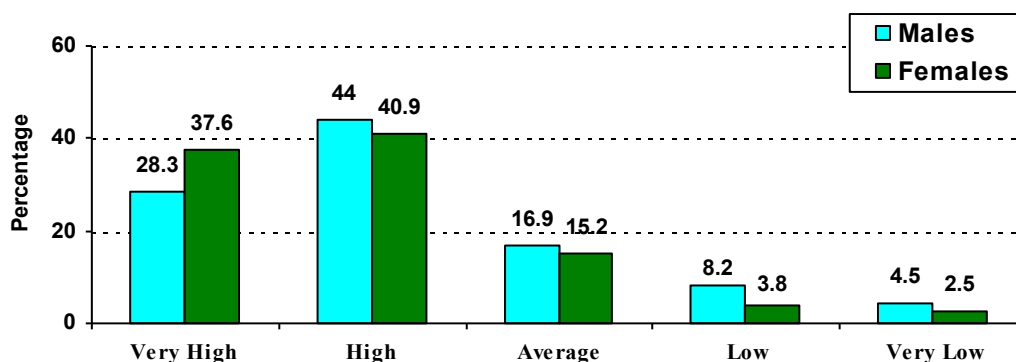


Highlights from Figures 34 & 35

- A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between where one lives and how one rated *water and sewage* ($\chi^2 = 53.22$, 4 df, $p = .000$) and the *Green Routine* ($\chi^2 = 17.82$, 4 df, $p = .001$).
- 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, 35 people (8.8% of the sample who rated the service) commented. Many of the comments focused issues associated with sewage repair or existing problems with the sewage system. Residents in the rural area lamented on the County not providing water services to them.
- With respect to the Green Routine, 46 residents (9.5% of the sample) who rated the service as *low* or *very low* had comments. As was the case in last year's survey, many residents were dissatisfied with having to sort organics from other waste. The bi-weekly pickup continues to be a source of dissatisfaction for some residents.
- It should be noted that the percentage of residents who were unhappy with the Green Routine service rose to 9.5% in 2012 compared to 5.5% in 2011 and 9% in 2010.

In terms of demographics, it can be seen in Figure 41 that females were more satisfied with the green routine service in 2012 compared to males. A chi-square test confirms the relationship ($\chi^2 = 10.47$, 4 df, $p = .033$).¹⁷

FIGURE 36
Satisfaction with the Green Routine - Gender Comparisons

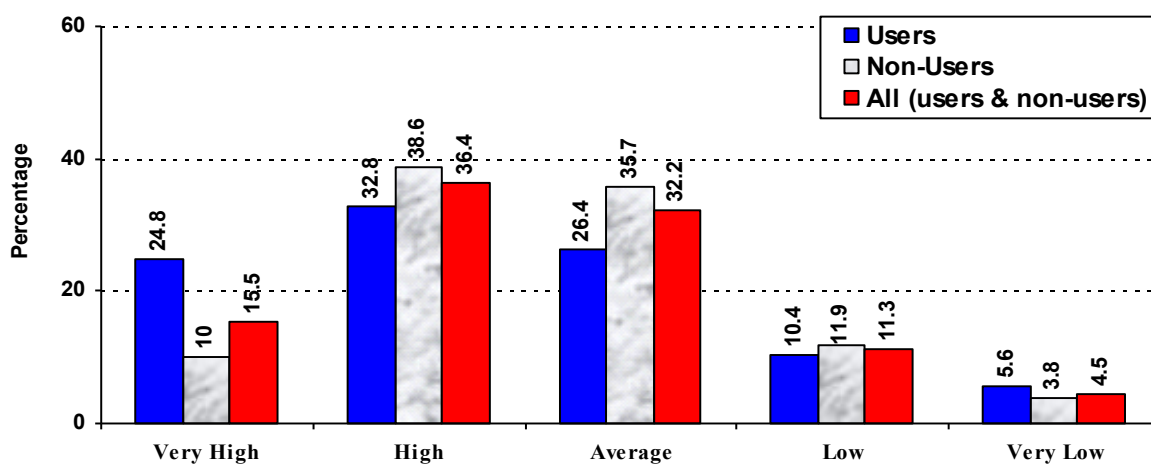


¹⁷ This was also confirmed with a t-test ($t = 3.00$, 478 df, $p = .003$).

Transit Services in Strathcona County

People were asked to rate their satisfaction with transit services in the County. Figure 37 presents the satisfaction level for transit services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services¹⁸ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 165 residents (33% of the sample) did not rate transit service on the basis that they did not know anything about the service.

FIGURE 37
Satisfaction with Strathcona County Transit Service

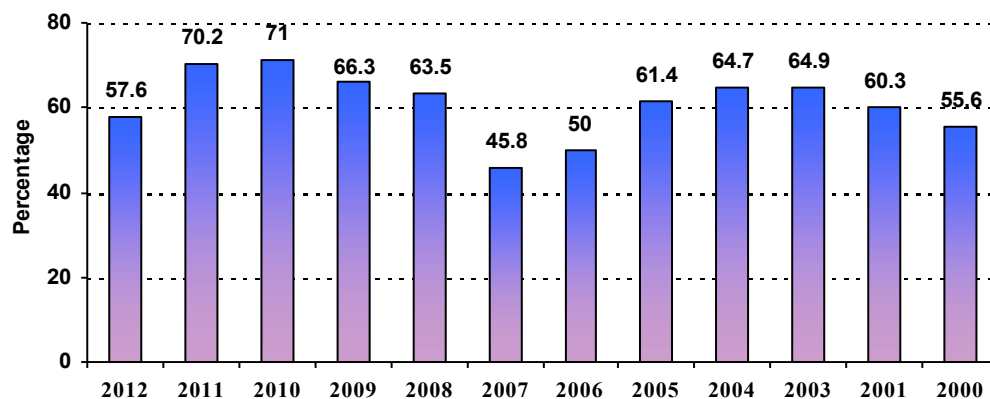


Highlights from Figure 37

- Figure 37 indicates that 51.9% of residents (regardless of use) have a positive view of transit services in Strathcona County. This is almost 10% lower than what was found in 2011.
- It can also be seen that 15.8% of users of the transit service have low or very low levels of satisfaction with the service, which is about 6% higher than 2011.
- In comparison to previous surveys, it can be seen in Figure 38 that the percentage of users rating this service as *very high/high* is at its lowest rating since 2007.

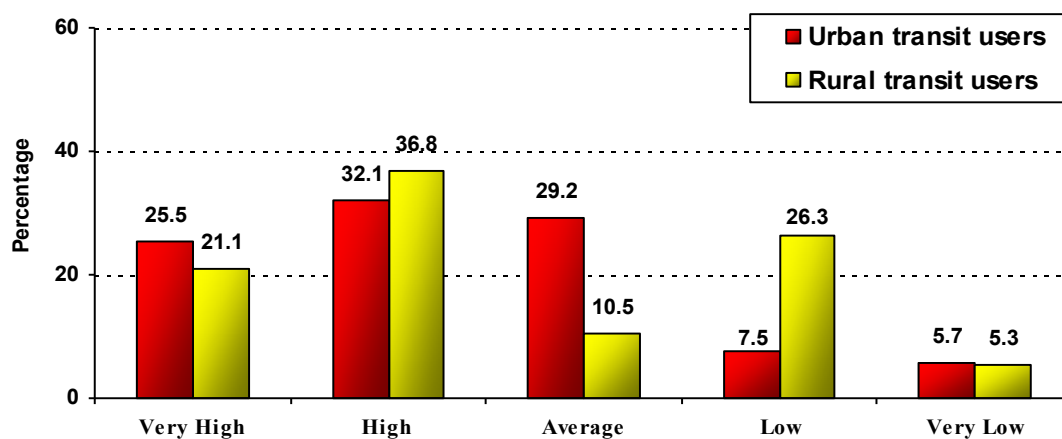
¹⁸ Overall, 25.8% of respondents indicated they had used transit services within the past 12 months. This is 4.5% higher than what was recorded in 2011.

FIGURE 38
“Very High/High” Combined Satisfaction Ratings with Strathcona County Transit Service by Transit Users 2000 – 2012 Comparisons¹⁹



- A further analysis found that majority of transit users (84.5%) live in Sherwood Park, while the remaining 15.5% lived in rural Strathcona County.
- It can be seen that the perceptions of **users of public transit** varied on a proportionate basis between urban and rural in one rating area. A pocket of residents who lived in rural Strathcona County gave the service a low rating compared to than those who lived in Sherwood Park. However, the combined *very high/high* ratings shows no differences between urban resident users (57.6%) and rural resident users (57.9%).

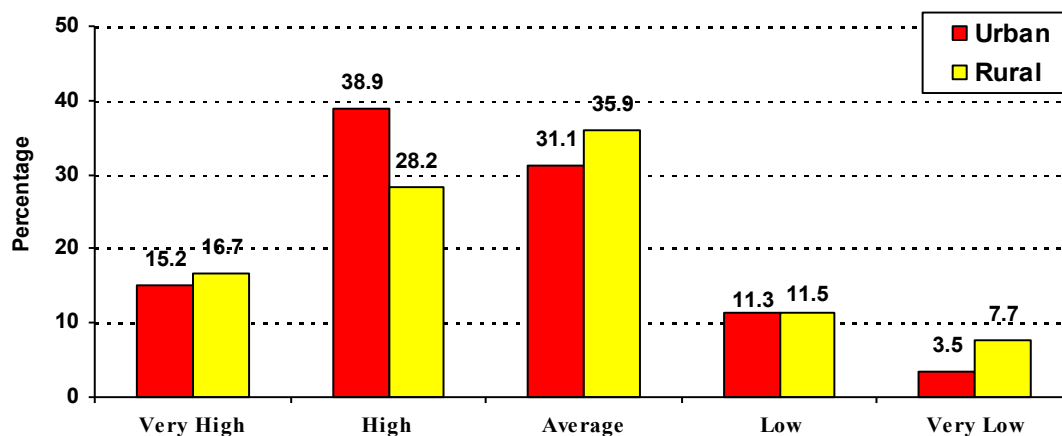
FIGURE 39
**Satisfaction with Strathcona County Transit Service by users
 Urban and Rural Comparisons**



¹⁹ There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

The satisfaction rating of transit services from the total sample (which consists of ratings from both users and non-users) on the basis of where people lived in the County is shown in Figure 40. No statistical differences were found on perceptions toward transit use based on where a resident lived within the County.

FIGURE 40
Satisfaction with Strathcona County Transit Service
Urban and Rural Comparisons

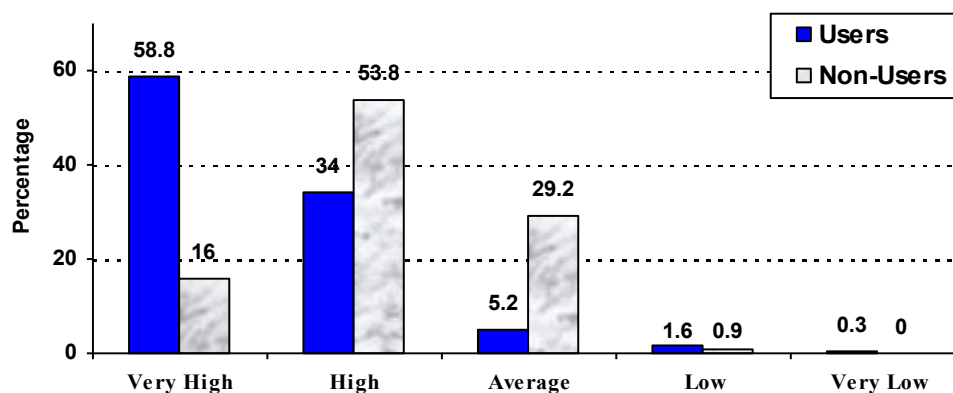


- There were also no statistically significant differences noted between any other demographic items and how residents rated transit services.
- The 53 people (15.8% of the sample) who gave transit services a *low/very low* rating were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. A variety of ideas were put forward, including increasing the number of buses running throughout Sherwood Park and decreasing the waiting times for a bus, particularly at peak times of the day. There were also multiple comments of more bus service to Edmonton from Strathcona County and to have bus service to some parts of rural Strathcona County, especially Ardrossan. There were a few people who would like Edmonton's LRT system to come out to Sherwood Park.

Library Services in Strathcona County

Figure 41 presents the satisfaction level with the Strathcona County Library, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services²⁰ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 89 people (17.6% 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 41
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library by Use



Highlights from Figure 41

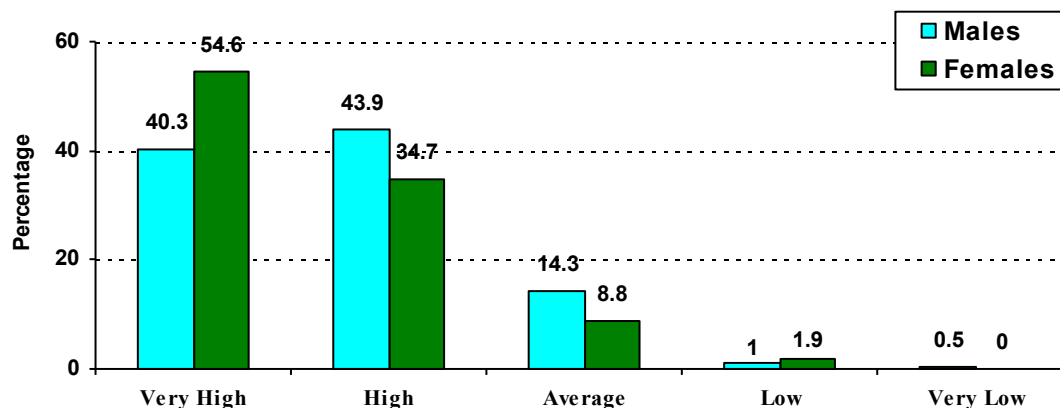
- Most residents (Figure 41) have a positive view of the library, regardless of whether they use it. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between use and how one rated library services.²¹ It can be seen that 92.8% users are more likely to give the library a combined *very high/high* rating compared to 69.8% who did not use it (but nonetheless gave the library a positive rating).
- There were 7 people (1.7% of the sample) who rated the library service as *low* or *very low*. Multiple comments from residents focused on the restrictions associated with outdoor parking (2 hour time limit) and the costs for parking underground. One person wondered why there were no e-books (which actually are available). Another resident complained about pictures from a Gallery@501 exhibit that graphically displays physical abuse.

²⁰ Overall, 61.8% of respondents indicated they had used the library within the past 12 months. This is similar to what was reported in 2011.

²¹ For library services, ($\chi^2 = 78.44$, 4 df, $p=.000$).

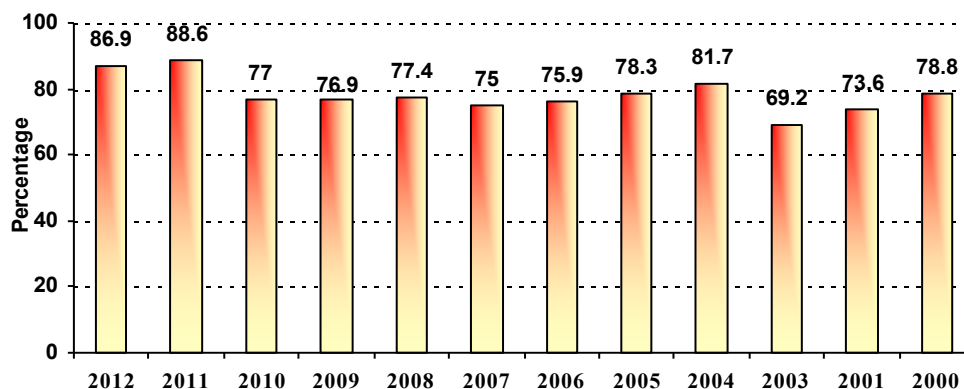
In terms of demographics, it can be seen in Figure 42 that females were more satisfied with the library service in 2012 compared to males. A chi-square test confirms the relationship ($\chi^2 = 10.92$, 4 df, $p=.028$), and a t-test confirms that females have a more favorable view of the library compared to males ($t = 2.67$, 410 df, $p = .008$). No differences were seen with the other demographic variables.

FIGURE 42
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library
Gender Comparisons



A further investigation shown in Figure 43 reveals that an overall *very high/high* satisfaction level with the Strathcona Library (regardless of use) is the second highest it has ever been since measurement began in 2000.

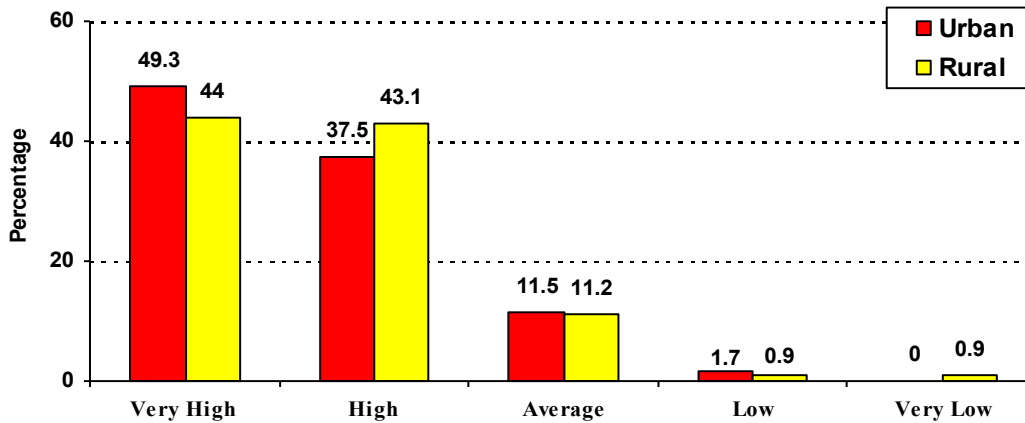
FIGURE 43
Combined “Very High/High” Satisfaction Ratings with Strathcona County Library
2000 – 2012 Comparisons²²



²² There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

The majority of library users surveyed live in Sherwood Park (73.8%), while the remaining 23.2% 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 44.

FIGURE 44
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library Regardless of Use
Urban and Rural Comparisons

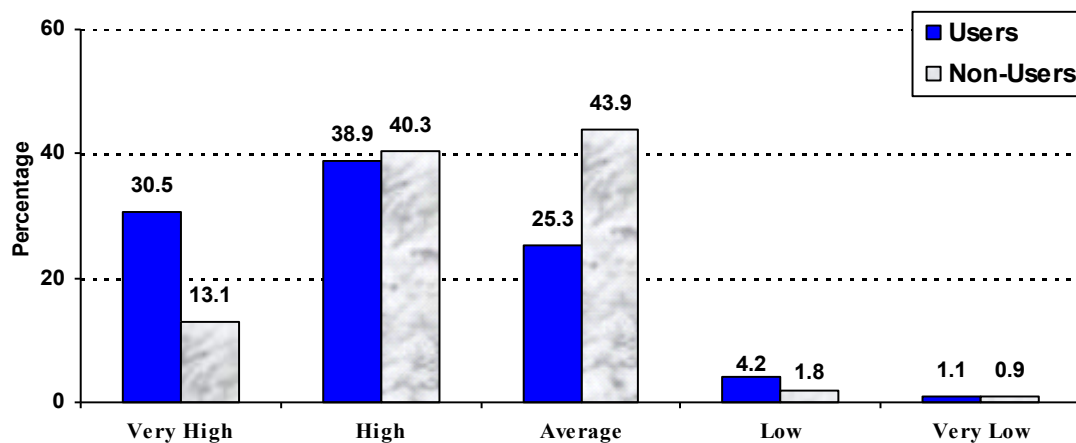


There were no statistical differences in perception toward the library on the basis of where the resident lived. It can be seen that 86.8% of those living in Sherwood Park give the library a combined *very high/high* rating compared to 87.1% of those living in rural Strathcona County.

Information and Volunteer Centre Services in Strathcona County

Figure 45 presents the satisfaction level with the Information and Volunteer Centre (IVC), based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services²³ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 36.8% of residents (n=184) did not rate the Centre on the basis that they did not know anything about it.

FIGURE 45
Satisfaction with the Information and Volunteer Centre



Highlights from Figure 45

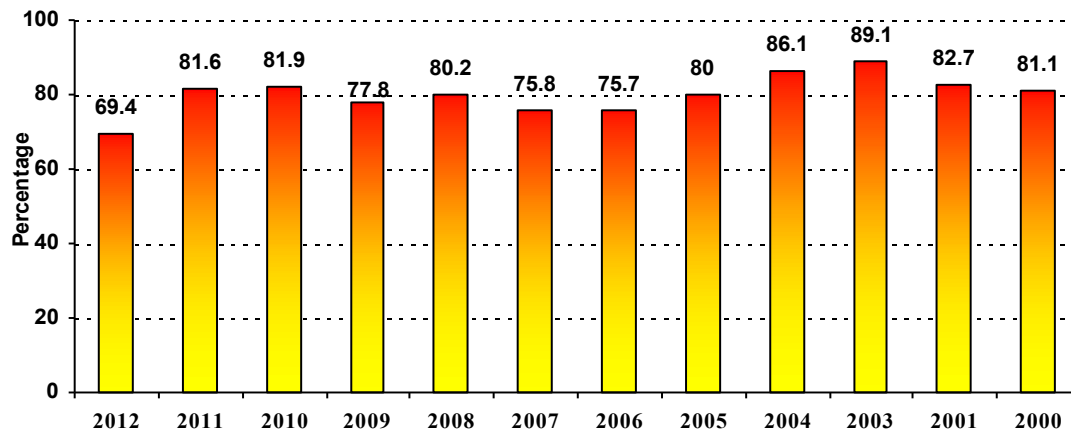
- It can be seen from Figure 45 that most residents have a positive view of the Information and Volunteer Centre, regardless of whether they use it. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between use and how one rated the IVC,²⁴ where users are more likely to give the IVC a higher rating compared to those who did not use it.

²³ Overall, 20.4% of respondents indicated that they had used the Information and Volunteer Centre within the past 12 months. This is 2% higher than 2011.

²⁴ For the IVC, ($\chi^2 = 18.54$, 3 df, $p=.001$).

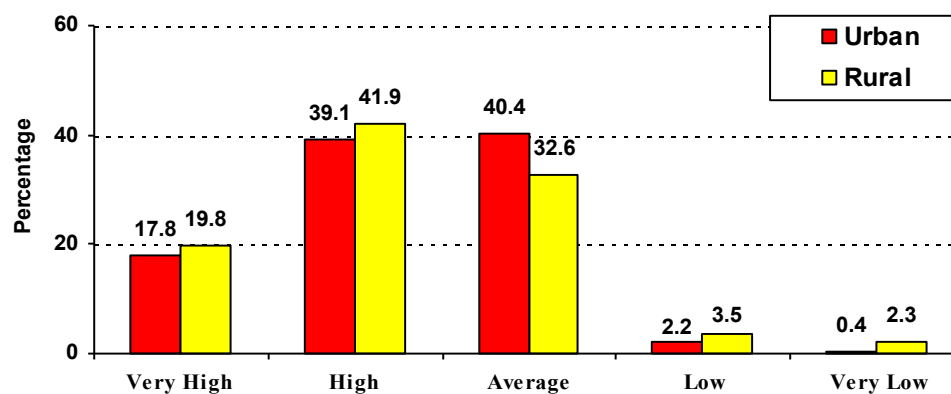
- A further investigation revealed that the combined *very high/high* satisfaction levels with users of the IVC was 69.4%, which is considerably lower than the ratings found in any of the previous surveys as shown in Figure 46.

FIGURE 46
Combined “Very High/High” Satisfaction Ratings for the Information and Volunteer Centre by Users 2000 – 2012 Comparisons²⁵



- The majority of IVC users live in Sherwood Park (75.5%) while the remaining 24.5% live in rural parts of Strathcona County. The satisfaction ratings for the IVC (regardless of use) were about the same for both urban and rural area residents (Figure 47).

FIGURE 47
Satisfaction with the Information and Volunteer Centre
Urban and Rural Comparisons

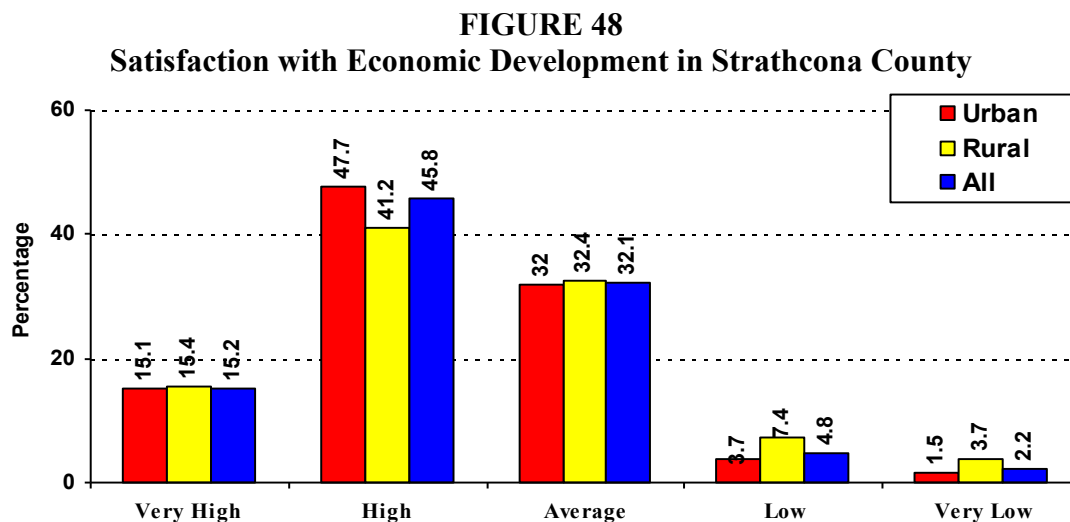


²⁵ There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

- A total of 184 people (36.8%) did not rate the Information and Volunteer Centre because they did not know enough about it to provide a rating. This finding is about the same as 2011.
- No differences were seen among any socio-demographic variables with respect to perceptions of satisfaction of the IVC.
- Overall, 11 people gave the Information and Volunteer Centre a *low* or *very low* rating. A few of the comments focused on the need for the IVC to improve its profile. There was one resident who called for volunteers, only to be given another number to call.

Economic Development Services in Strathcona County

Figure 48 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.²⁶



Highlights from Figure 48

- As can be seen in Figure 48, the perception of residents toward economic development by the County was generally positive, regardless of where people live. Overall, 61% of all residents gave *very high/high* ratings for the economic development being done at the present time. This combined rating is almost 5% higher than what was posted in 2011.

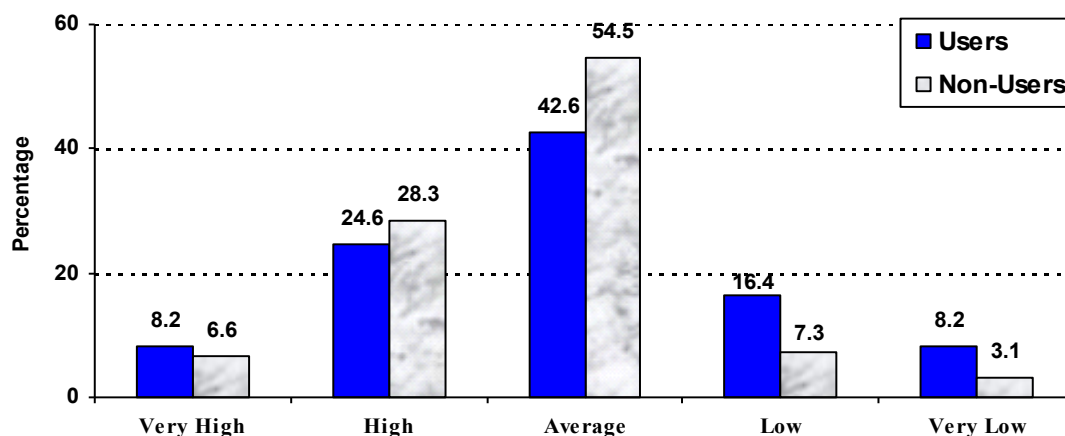
²⁶ Overall, 39 people (7.8% of the sample) did not rate this service, which is about 4% lower than what was uncovered in the 2011 survey.

- No differences were seen among any socio-demographic variables with one's satisfaction of economic development.
- Thirty-two residents throughout the County (7% of the sample) expressed a low or very low level of satisfaction with economic development in the County. In this year's study, many of the comments focused on the County taking steps to attract new businesses to the County, both in and out of Sherwood Park, especially small businesses. There were also a few people who thought that the County could benefit from different types of stores, such as electronic outlets or toy stores.

Building & Inspection Services in Strathcona County

Figure 49 presents the satisfaction level for planning, building and inspection services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services²⁷ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 153 people (30.6% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it.

FIGURE 49
Satisfaction with Building Permit and Inspections Services in Strathcona County

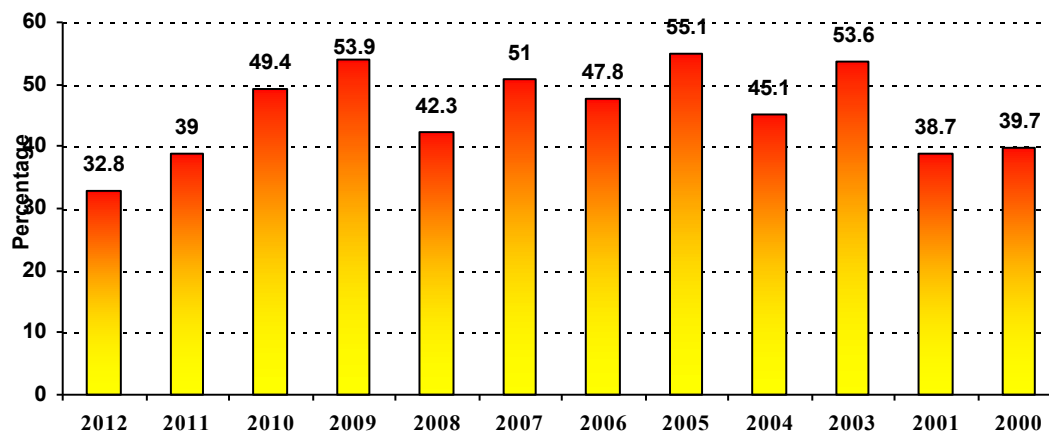


No measureable differences were seen between users and non-users for this service. From a trending perspective, it can be seen in Figure 50 that users who give this service a *very high/high* rating is the lowest it's been since measuring this service began back in 2000.

FIGURE 50

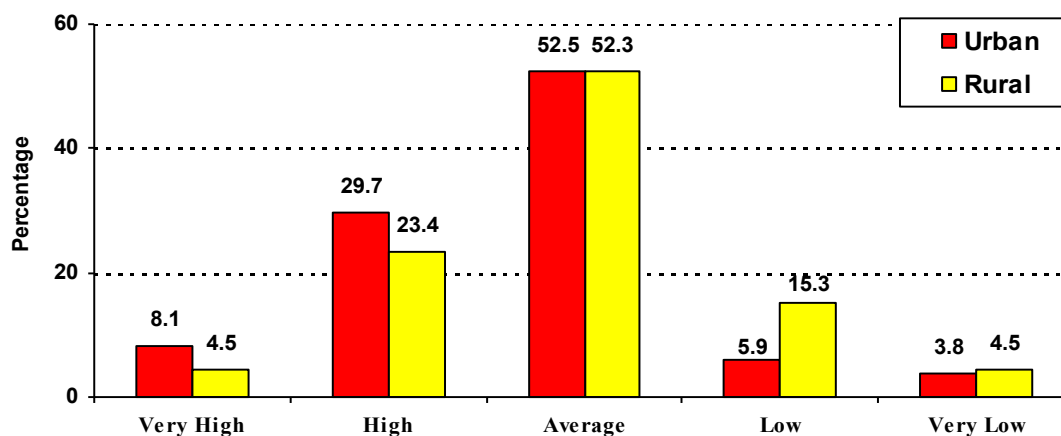
²⁷ Overall, 12.8% of respondents indicated that they had used the planning, building and inspection services within the past 12 months. This is about 4% lower than last year's survey.

Combined “Very High/High” Satisfaction Ratings for Building Permit and Inspections Services among Users: 2000 – 2012 Comparisons



A comparison of perceptions by location (regardless of use/non-use of the service) is shown in Figure 51. Location was not a determining factor in differentiating residents' perceptions toward this service, though urban residents had more favorable views than those living in rural Strathcona.

FIGURE 51
Satisfaction with Building Permit and Inspections Services in Strathcona County – Urban & Rural Comparisons



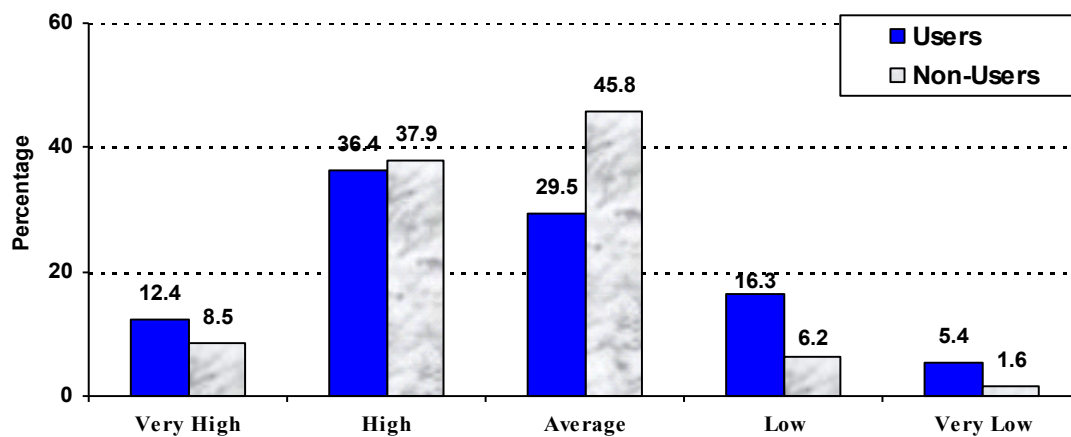
The 45 people (12.9% of the sample) who rated this service as *low* or *very low* were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. Like 2011, in this year's study, there were repeated concerns voiced by residents called for less bureaucracy and red tape

associated with getting a permit. A few people also thought that the inspectors should be more knowledgeable, and that permit fees are too high. For the most part, the comments noted in this year's survey mirrored concerns raised by residents in previous years.

Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County

Figure 52 presents the satisfaction level with bylaw enforcement, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services²⁸ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 65 people (13% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it.

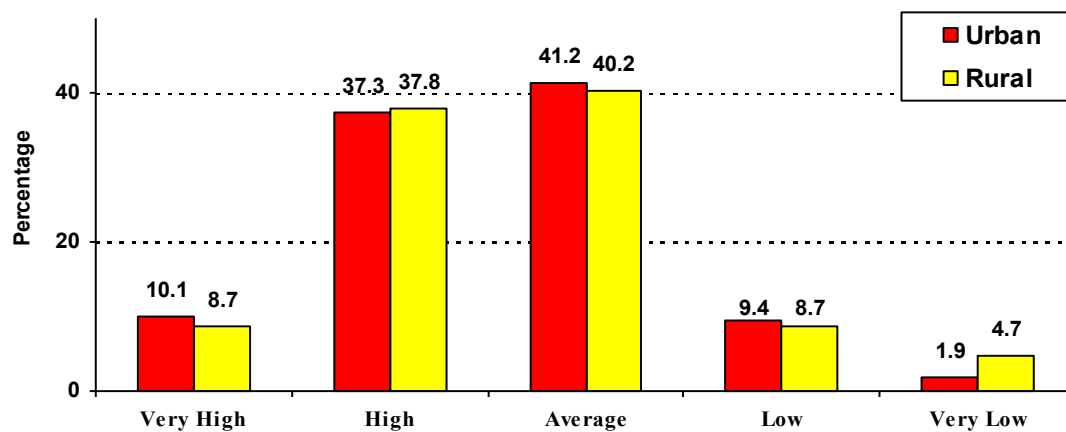
FIGURE 52
Satisfaction with Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County



²⁸ Overall, 26.6% of respondents indicated they had utilized bylaw enforcement services within the past 12 months. This is 4% higher than what was reported in the 2011 survey.

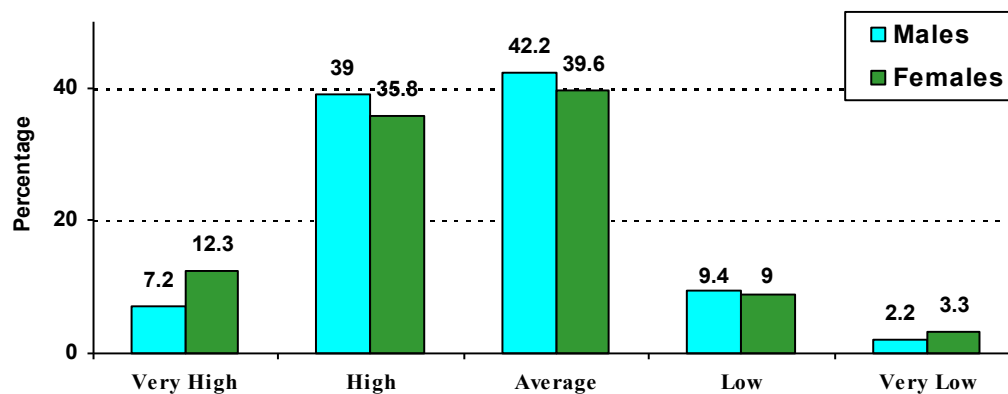
Although a chi-square test determined that there was a relationship between use and perceptions of bylaw inspection services ($\chi^2 = 22.11$, 4 df, $p=.000$), a subsequent test of means did not pinpoint a statistically significant difference between users and non-users. Furthermore, there were no statistical differences seen for this service when comparisons were done between those living in Sherwood Park and those living in rural Strathcona County (Figure 53).

FIGURE 53
Satisfaction with Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County – Urban & Rural Comparisons



In past years, there were differences seen with how residents rated this service on the basis of gender. In 2012, however, perceptions toward bylaw services were similar between males and females.

FIGURE 54
Satisfaction with Bylaw Enforcement Services– Gender Comparisons

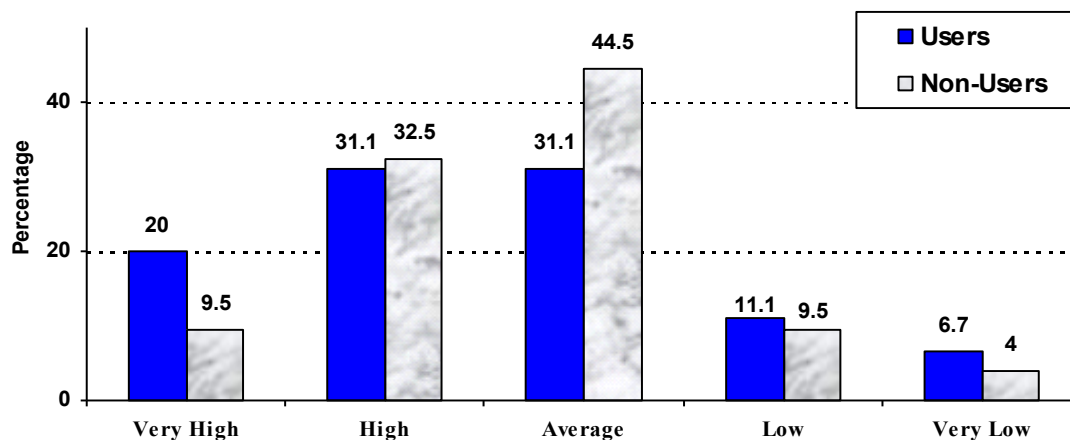


The 52 residents (12% of the sample) who had a low level of satisfaction with this service were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. There were a wide range of responses associated with this item this year, ranging from perceptions of too many bylaws, to others who felt that more bylaw officers were needed to enforce the existing bylaws. There were a few comments associated with enforcing bylaws pertaining to dogs.

Agricultural Services in Strathcona County

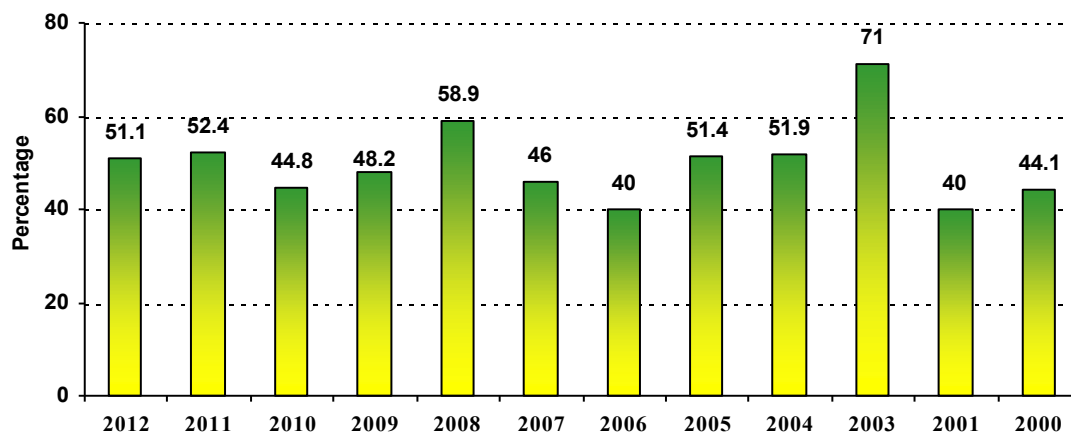
Figure 55 presents the satisfaction level with weed control and other agricultural services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 55 people (11% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it. There were no statistically significant differences with respect to users and non users with respect to perceptions toward agricultural services.

FIGURE 55
Satisfaction with Weed Control, Soil Management, Wildlife Problems
and other Agricultural Services in Strathcona County



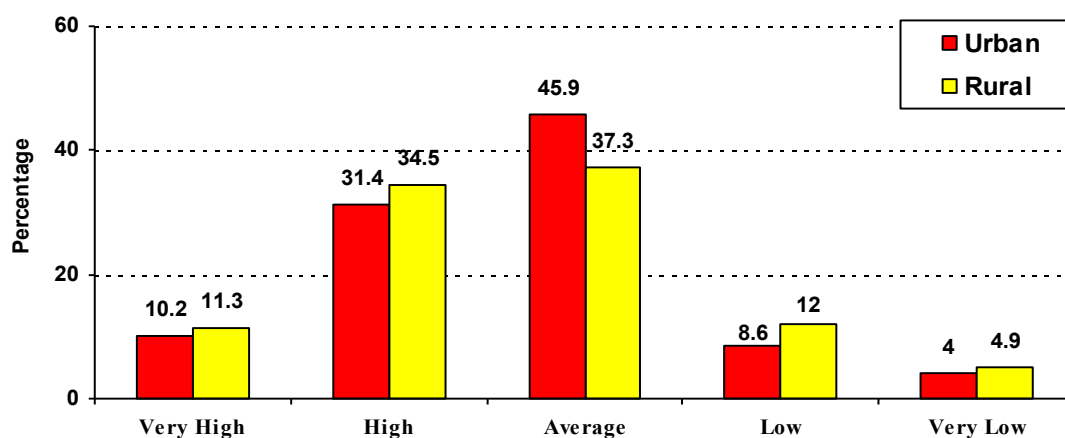
A comparison of this year's results with past satisfaction studies (Figure 56) revealed that the percentage of users who gave the service a *very high* or *high* rating this year is similar to last year's survey results.

FIGURE 56
“Very High/High” Combined Satisfaction Ratings with the Different Agricultural Services by Users of the Service-- 2000 – 2012 Comparisons²⁹



A comparison of perceptions by location (regardless of use/non-use of the service) is shown in Figure 57. No statistical differences were seen between urban and rural residents, and no differences were seen among any other demographic variables.

FIGURE 57
Satisfaction with Weed Control, Soil Management, Wildlife Problems and other Agricultural Services – Urban & Rural Comparisons



Overall, the 62 residents (14% of the sample) who had a *low/very low* level of satisfaction with this service were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. As in previous years, the majority of the comments focused on better weed control, especially

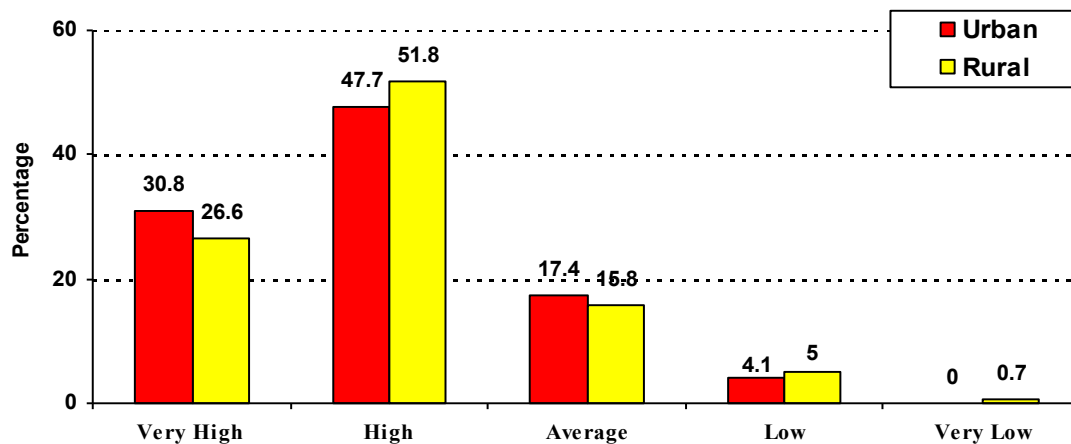
²⁹ There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

thistles and dandelions. As in 2011, several residents commented on the lack of weed control on County land itself, yet also noted how they were specifically told to control weeds on their own land.

Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Services in Strathcona County

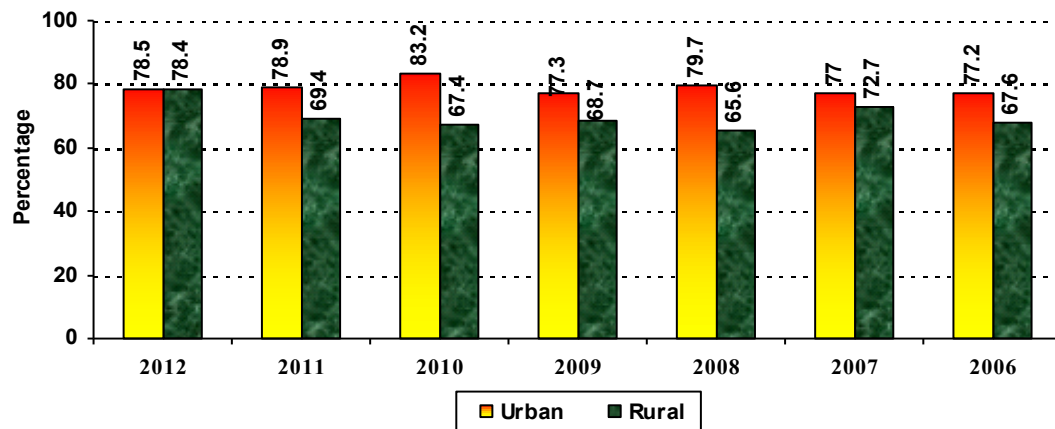
People were asked to rate their satisfaction with the various outdoor and indoor recreation opportunities offered by the County. Figure 58 presents the satisfaction level with the various parks, green spaces and sports fields. There are no differences in perceptions between urban and rural residents with respect to parks, green spaces and sports fields. Only a small handful of residents (17 people, or 3.4% of the sample) did not rate this item.

FIGURE 58
Satisfaction with Parks, Green Spaces and Sports Fields in Strathcona County



As seen in Figure 59, this year's combined *very high/high* rating for the urban area (78.9%) is similar to last year. For rural residents, their combined *very high/high* ratings this year (78.4%) is considerably higher than 2011.

FIGURE 59
Combined “Very High/High” Satisfaction Ratings for Parks, Green Spaces and Sport Fields: 2006 – 2012 Comparisons

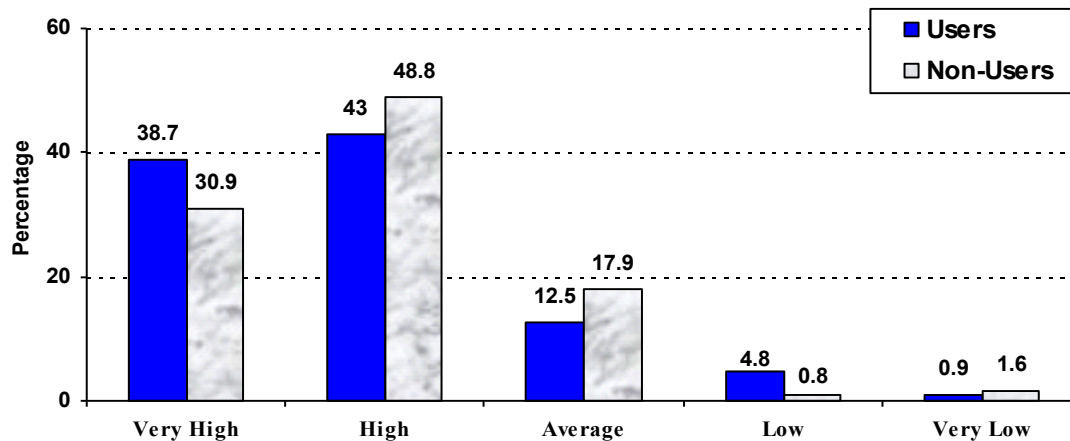


The 25 people (4.5% of the sample) who gave the parks, green spaces and sport fields a low rating were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. Most of the comments in this year's study revolved around a need for more parks and green spaces, and to control the weeds and dandelions in these areas.

Figure 60 presents the satisfaction level with indoor recreation facilities in the County, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these facilities³⁰ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 26 people (5.2% of the sample) did not rate these facilities on the basis that they did not know enough about them. In this year's study, there were no major differences seen with respect to perceptions toward indoor recreation facilities with respect to use.

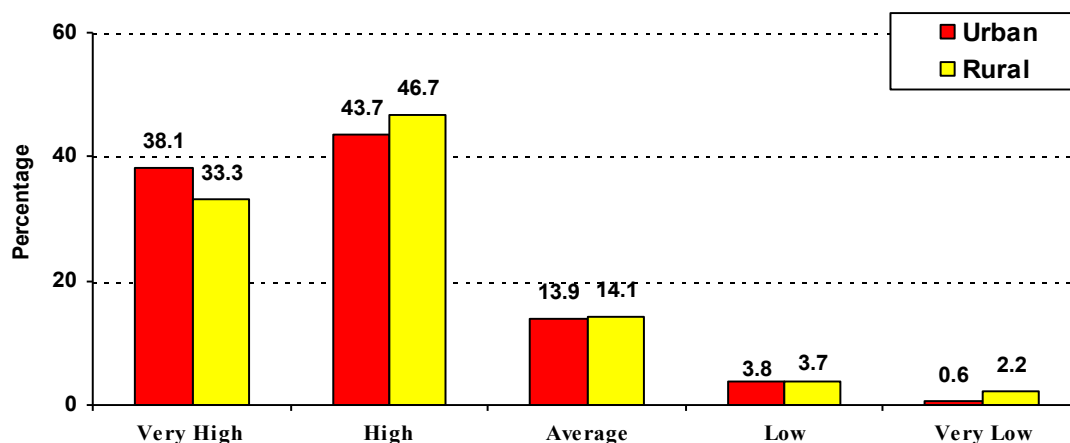
³⁰ Overall, 70.2% of respondents indicated that they had been to an indoor recreation facility in the County of Strathcona within the past 12 months. This is almost the same as the 2011 survey results.

FIGURE 60
Satisfaction with Indoor Recreation Facilities in Strathcona County



A further analysis revealed that 75.1% of Sherwood Park residents used the indoor recreation facilities at least once in the past 12 months, while 58.7% of rural residents made use of these facilities. It can be seen in Figure 61 that, regardless of use, the combined *very high/high* satisfaction levels for urban residents (81.8%) was slightly higher than it was for rural residents (80%).

FIGURE 61
Satisfaction with Indoor Recreation Facilities in Strathcona County



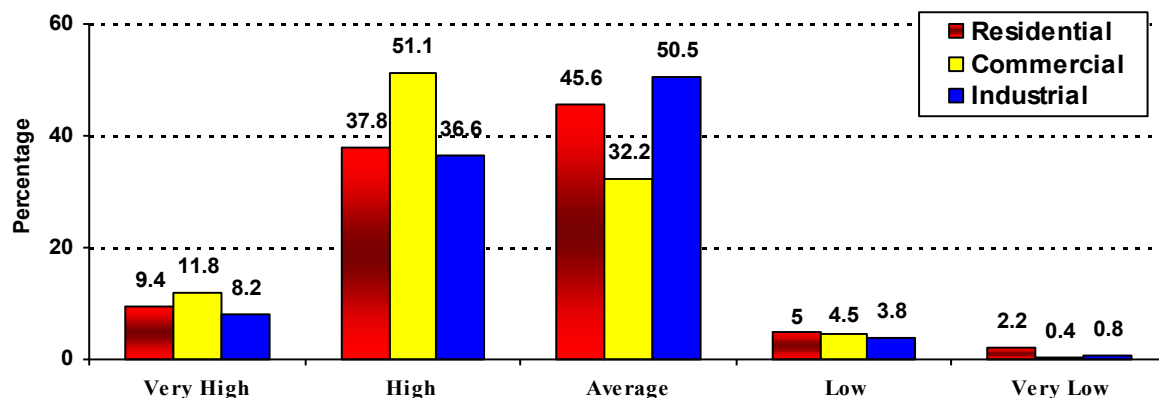
The 23 people (4.9% of the sample) who had a low level of satisfaction with the facilities were asked to suggest ways these could be improved. Similar to last year's study, most of the concerns focused on the need for more indoor facilities, both pools and

arenas. A few residents felt that it was difficult to get into swimming lessons or aqua-size classes because they are so popular.

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 62 below.

FIGURE 62
Quality of Various Developments throughout Strathcona County



Highlights from Figure 62

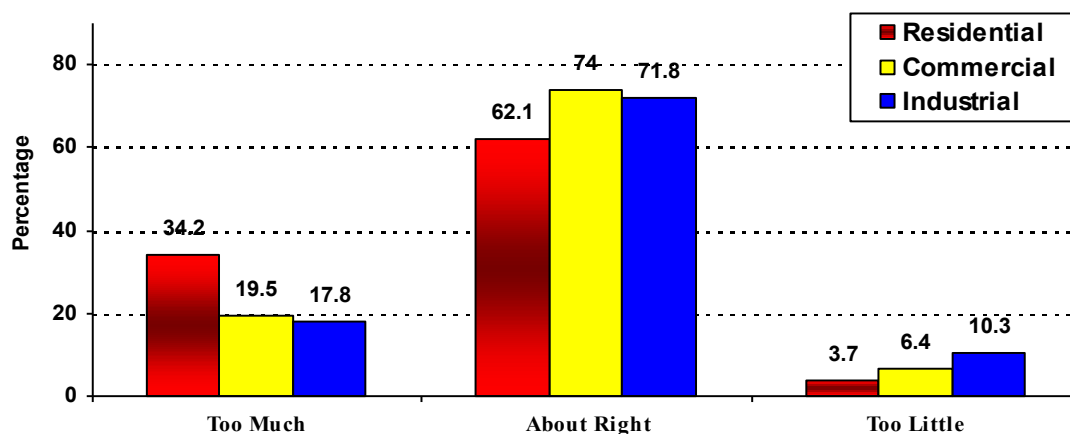
- Overall, respondents who rated the different types of developments were slightly more satisfied with the quality of residential and commercial development than industrial developments. It should be noted, however, that a considerable number of residents (n=134 or 26.8% of the sample) did not rate the quality of industrial developments.³¹
- The trends noted in this figure are similar to trends found in studies conducted in 2008 - 2011.
- 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.

³¹ Overall, 42 residents (8.4% of the sample) did not rate the quality of residential developments and 34 residents (6.8% of the sample) did not rate the quality of commercial developments.

- 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 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 (6.6% of the sample) who rated the quality of residential developments as low. A common concern was that the houses seemed cramped too close together with a lack of green space and trees in new neighborhoods, which was a common complaint in last year's study as well. There were others who felt that more affordable housing should be available, as many of the existing properties are out of the price range for young families.
 - Overall, 17 people (3.4% of the sample) who rated the quality of commercial development as low. In this year's study, many of the comments centered on the new big-box stores in Emerald Hills. A few thought they were poorly designed and are creating traffic problems for the nearby neighborhoods.
 - For industrial developments, among the 18 people (3.6% 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. Among dissatisfied residents, this view was also expressed in previous satisfaction surveys.

A comparative rating on the perception of the quantity (i.e. amount) of new types of developments is shown in Figure 63.

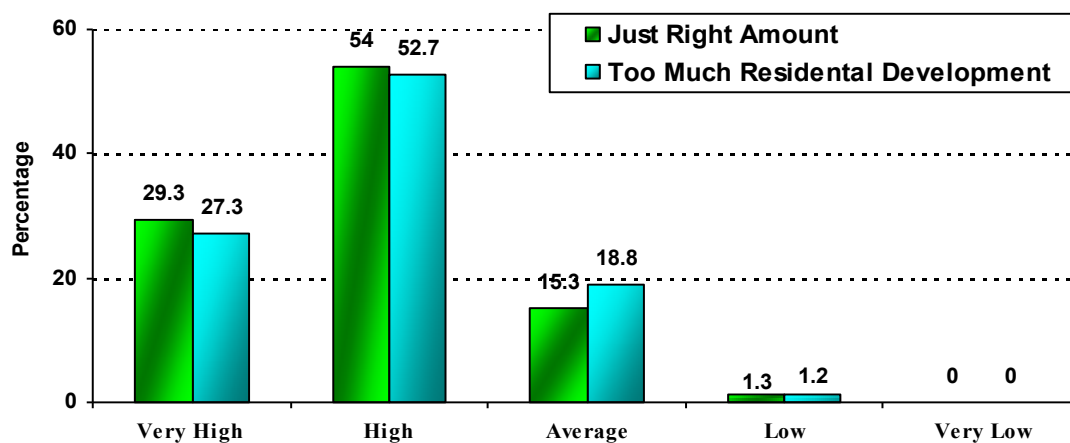
FIGURE 63
Quantity of Various Developments throughout Strathcona County



Highlights from Figure 63

- 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 2012 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. Furthermore, while 34.2% of residents believe there is too much residential development, this finding is similar to what has been found in the past 10 years (with the exception of 2011's results, which was about 10% lower).
- A further analysis (as seen in Figure 64) revealed that those who felt there was too much residential development³² had a strong positive rating on the quality of life in Strathcona County as a whole (80% *very high/high*) though it was lower than those who felt that the amount of residential development was about right (83.3% *very high/high*). As such, while concerns about continued residential development remain, it has not affected the perceived quality of one's life in Strathcona County.

FIGURE 64
Perception of the Quality of Life in Strathcona County as a Whole – Comparisons
Based on Perceptions of Amount of Residential Growth



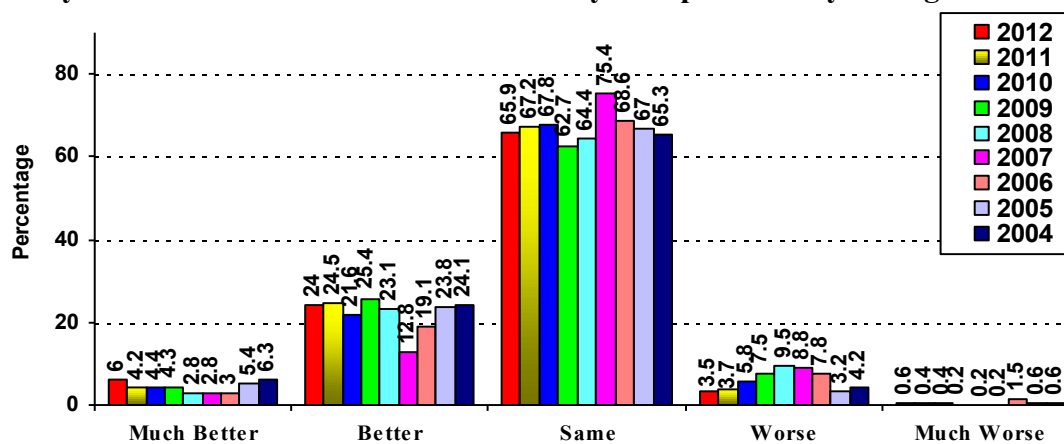
³² Among those who thought there was too much residential development, the combined very high/high ratings (80%) for 2012 is the highest ever recorded for this comparison. The percentage breakdowns for perceptions of the quality of life in Strathcona County among those who thought there were just the right amount of residential development is very similar to what was found in the last six satisfaction surveys.

- 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.

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 2012 survey results are compared with the results found in the previous surveys dating back to 2004, as shown in Figure 65 below.

FIGURE 65
Quality of Services Now in Strathcona County Compared to 2 years ago 2004-2012

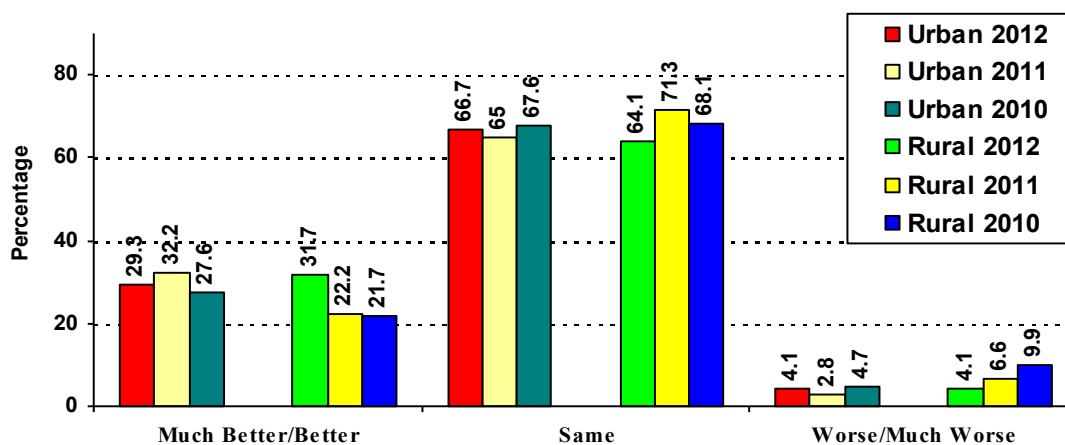


Highlights from Figure 65

- It can be seen that 30% of respondents feel that the quality of services offered by Strathcona County was better or much better than it was two years ago. This is the highest level recorded through this survey since 2005.
- 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 67 that this percentage has been quite consistent over the past 9 years (with the exception of 2007).
- The 20 people (4.1% 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. This year, many of the concerns raised centered on less attention paid to road repairs in the summer and snow clearance in the winter. A few others felt that staffing in the County has not kept up to serving an increased population, especially in Sherwood Park.

A comparison of urban and rural residents with respect to perceptions of the quality of services is shown in Figure 66. There was no statistically significant difference between the urban and rural sectors in 2012. However, a comparison between 2011 and previous years shows a considerable increase in the *much better/better* ratings for rural residents compared to 2011 and 2010. For urban residents, 2012's combined *much better/better* results is slightly lower than 2011, but still slightly better than 2010.

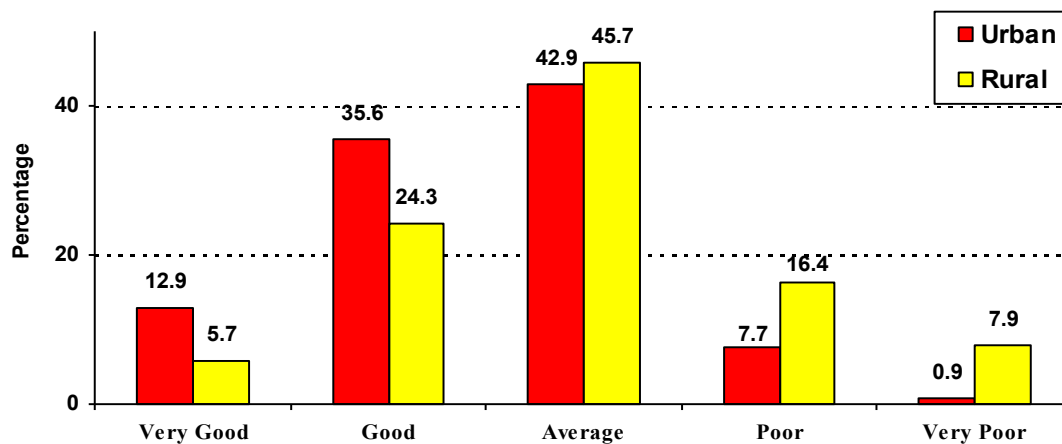
FIGURE 66
Quality of Services Now in Strathcona County Compared to 2 years ago
Urban and Rural Comparisons – 2012, 2011 & 2010 Results



F. Question on Taxes within Strathcona County

Strathcona County taxpayers³³ were asked to rate the value they receive for their tax dollars. Residents were told that 61% 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 67 below.

FIGURE 67
Value for Tax Dollars Spent in Strathcona County
- Urban and Rural Comparisons



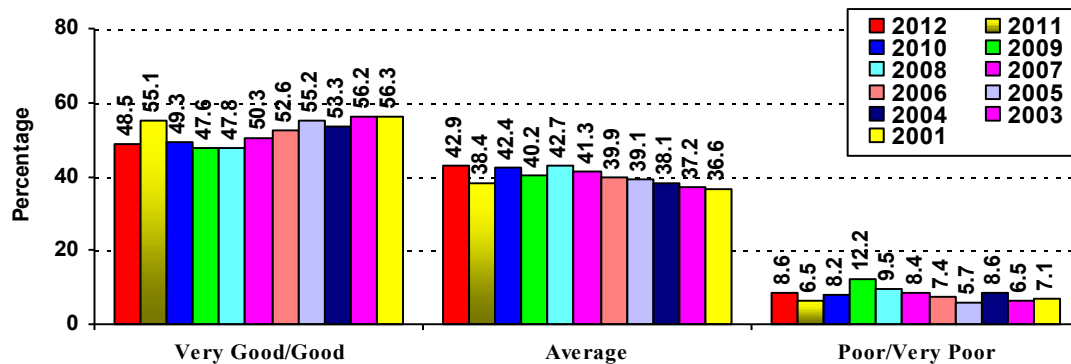
Highlights from Figure 69

- 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 ($\chi^2 = 31.73$, 4 df, $p = .000$) and a *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -5.38$, 464 df, $p = .000$). 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 (13.3% of the sample, N=62) who felt that they received poor value for the taxes paid were asked to indicate why they felt that way. As was the case in previous surveys, 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 limited amount of services they were receiving in return. There were also some who felt that the County was overspending, particularly on things that do not seem to benefit residents.

³³ In 2012, 93.6% of respondents owned property in Strathcona County and as such, were taxpayers.

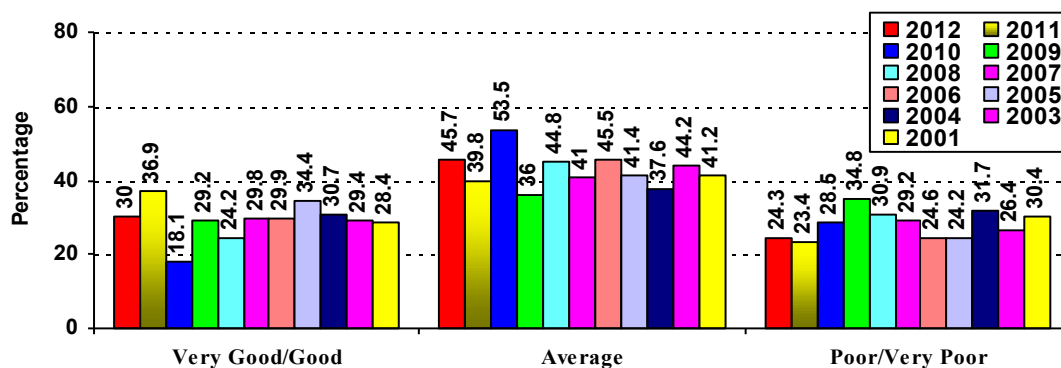
A comparison of trends from 2001- 2012 with respect to perceptions of the value of services for tax dollars are shown in Figure 68 (urban) and Figure 69 (rural). One can see that for urban residents, the perception that residents were getting very good or good value for their tax dollars dropped a bit from last year's 2011 findings.

FIGURE 68
Value of Tax Dollars Spent in Strathcona County – Urban Residents (2001-2012)



Rural residents 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. Although positive perceptions of value for tax dollars in 2012 dropped back from the all time high posted in 2011, the *poor/very poor* perceptions did not climb much higher than 2011. Instead, the growth in perception toward tax dollars was in the “average” category.

FIGURE 69
Value of Tax Dollars Spent in Strathcona County – Rural Residents (2001-2012)



F. 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.³⁴ It can be seen in Table 1 that *recycling depots* were the most frequent service used in 2012 among those surveyed. Other services utilized by a number of County residents include *indoor recreation facilities*, the *County Library*, *RCMP*, *bylaw enforcement*, and *public transit*.

Table 1
County Services in Strathcona County Used by Residents
in the Past 12 Months – 2012 vs. 2009 to 2011

Type of Service	N of Users (2012)	% Use 2012	% Use 2011	% Use 2010	% Use 2009
Recycling Depots	420	84.0%	80.8%	85.0%	86.4%
Indoor Recreation Facilities	351	70.2%	70.4%	71.8%	71.5%
Strathcona County Library	309	61.8%	63.8%	54.4%	59.7%
RCMP	170	34.0%	32.0%	32.0%	33.3%
Bylaw Enforcement	133	26.6%	22.6%	20.0%	17.1%
Public Transit Services	129	25.8%	21.4%	29.6%	22.9%
Information & Volunteer Centre	102	20.4%	18.0%	17.6%	17.6%
Fire & Ambulance Services	74	14.8%	14.4%	13.8%	15.1%
Building Permit & Inspection Services ³⁵	64	12.8%	--	--	--
Planning and Development Services	48	9.6%	--	--	--
Family Support Services	46	9.2%	10.6%	9.8%	11.8%
Agriculture Services	45	9.0%	6.4%	8.6%	6.6%

Most of the municipal services noted above had minor decreases or increases with respect to use by residents in 2012 compared to previous years. The three exceptions were public transit, bylaw enforcement, and recycling depots, all of which had a 4% increase (or better) in usage between 2011 and 2012.

³⁴ 46 respondents (9.2% of the sample) mentioned other municipal services they used (water & sewer, utilities (as a separate entity), SCAT – Senior Transportation, garbage, parks, road maintenance and the off-lease dog park), while another 7 residents (1.4% of the sample) indicated items that were not municipal services (e.g. health care and school services).

³⁵ Prior to 2012, building permit and inspection services were grouped as part of planning and development services.

A comparison of services used by urban and rural residents for 2012 and 2011 is shown in Table 2.³⁶ It can be seen that among residents who were surveyed in 2012, urban residents used *recycling depots*, *indoor recreation facilities*, the *County Library* and *public transit services* to a greater extent than rural residents. Rural residents, on the other hand, made greater use of *agricultural services* compared with urban residents. This pattern was also seen in 2011.

Table 2
County Services in Strathcona County Reportedly Used by Urban and Rural Residents in the Past 12 Months – 2012 vs. 2011

Type of Service	2012		2011	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Recycling Services	<u>86.9%</u>	<u>77.3%</u>	<u>86.8%</u>	<u>69.7%</u>
Indoor Recreation Facilities	<u>75.1%</u>	<u>58.7%</u>	<u>73.2%</u>	<u>65.1%</u>
Strathcona County Library	<u>65.1%</u>	<u>54.0%</u>	<u>66.5%</u>	<u>58.9%</u>
RCMP	<u>33.1%</u>	<u>36.0%</u>	<u>34.5%</u>	<u>27.4%</u>
Public Transit Services	<u>31.1%</u>	<u>13.3%</u>	<u>25.8%</u>	<u>13.1%</u>
Bylaw Enforcement	<u>26.0%</u>	<u>28.0%</u>	<u>24.6%</u>	<u>18.9%</u>
Information & Volunteer Centre	<u>22.0%</u>	<u>16.7%</u>	<u>20.0%</u>	<u>14.3%</u>
Fire & Ambulance Services	<u>13.7%</u>	<u>17.3%</u>	<u>14.2%</u>	<u>14.9%</u>
Family Support Services	<u>9.4%</u>	<u>8.7%</u>	<u>11.4%</u>	<u>9.7%</u>
Agriculture Services	<u>6.0%</u>	<u>16.0%</u>	<u>4.9%</u>	<u>10.3%</u>

In terms of changes between years for urban residents, there was an increase in the use of *transit services* in 2012 compared to 2011. There was an increase in the use of *the public library*. Among rural residents, there was an increase in the use of the *bylaw enforcement*, *the RCMP*, and *agricultural services* between 2011 and 2012 and a decrease in the use of *the public library*.

In this year's survey, residents were asked to indicate the level of importance that each service was to them, on the proviso that the resident made use of the service. The results are summarized in Figures 70, 71 and 72.

³⁶ 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 12 (the exact wording is found in the questionnaire located in Appendix A).

FIGURE 70
Importance of County Services (1)

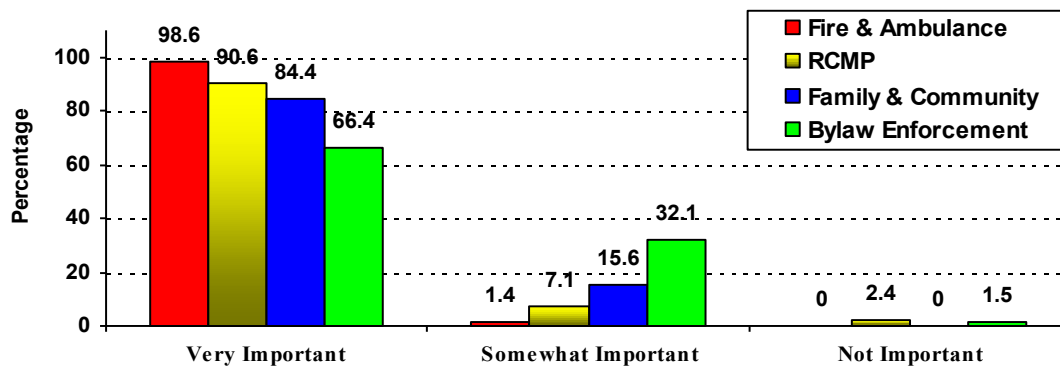


FIGURE 71
Importance of County Services (2)

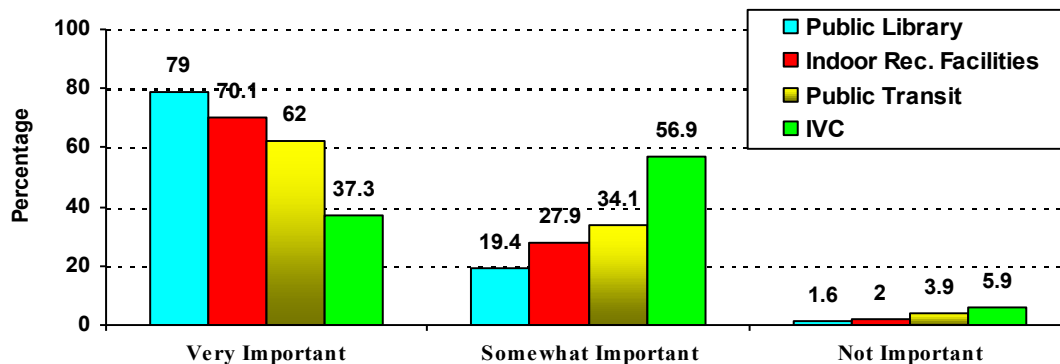
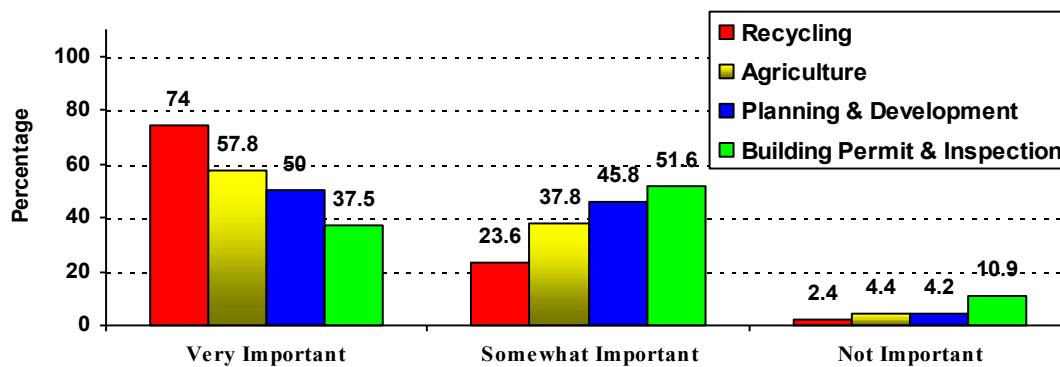


FIGURE 72
Importance of County Services (3)



In each figure, it can be seen that *Fire and Ambulance services*, the *RCMP*, and *Family & Community Services* were rated as very important by the majority of residents who made use of these services.

Respondents were asked to think of the most recent contact they had with County staff³⁷ and to rate the service they received on the basis of six criteria. The services 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 73 and 74.

Table 3
County Departments in Strathcona County Used as the Basis for Rating the Service of County Staff in 2012

Type of Service	N	%
Indoor Recreation Facilities	127	26.5%
Strathcona County Library	125	26.1%
Recycling Depot	98	20.5%
Public Transit Services	35	7.3%
Fire & Ambulance Services	22	4.6%
RCMP	21	4.4%
Bylaw Enforcement	8	1.7%
Family Support Services	5	1.0%
Planning & Development Services	5	1.0%
Information & Volunteer Centre	5	1.0%
Building, Permit & Inspection Services	4	0.8%
Agriculture Services	3	0.6%
Other Services	21	4.4%

³⁷ In this year's study, 13 respondents reported having no contact with any County staff in the past 12 months.

FIGURE 73
Quality of Services provided by County Staff

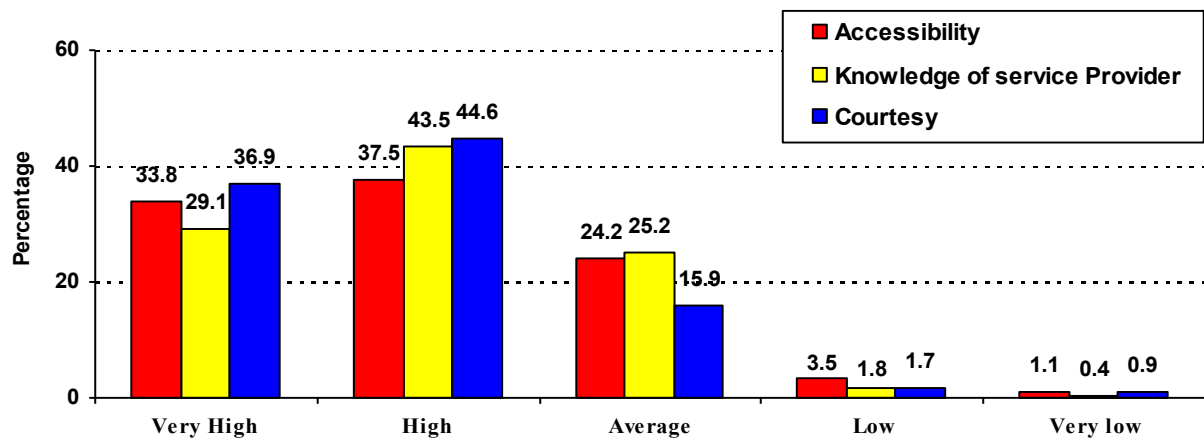
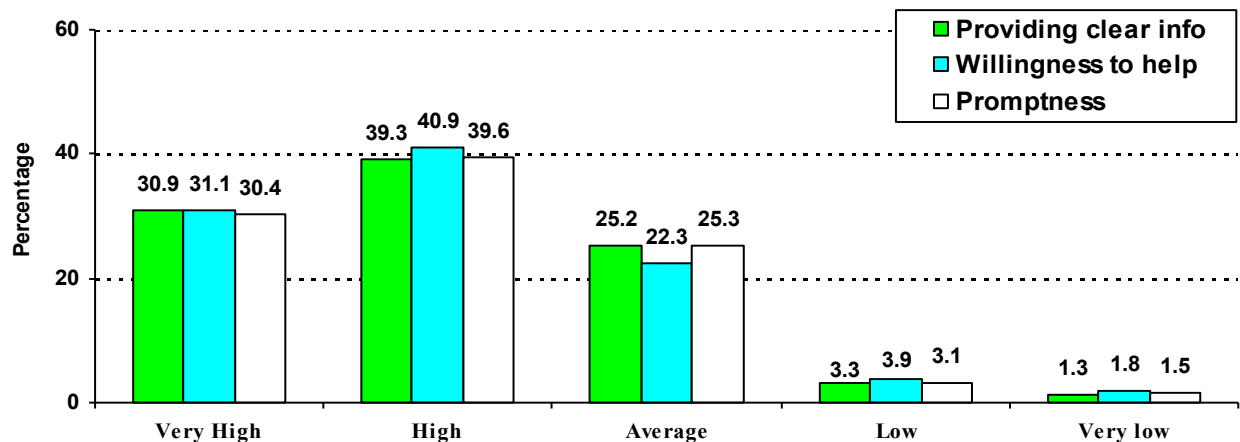


FIGURE 74
Quality of Services provided by County Staff



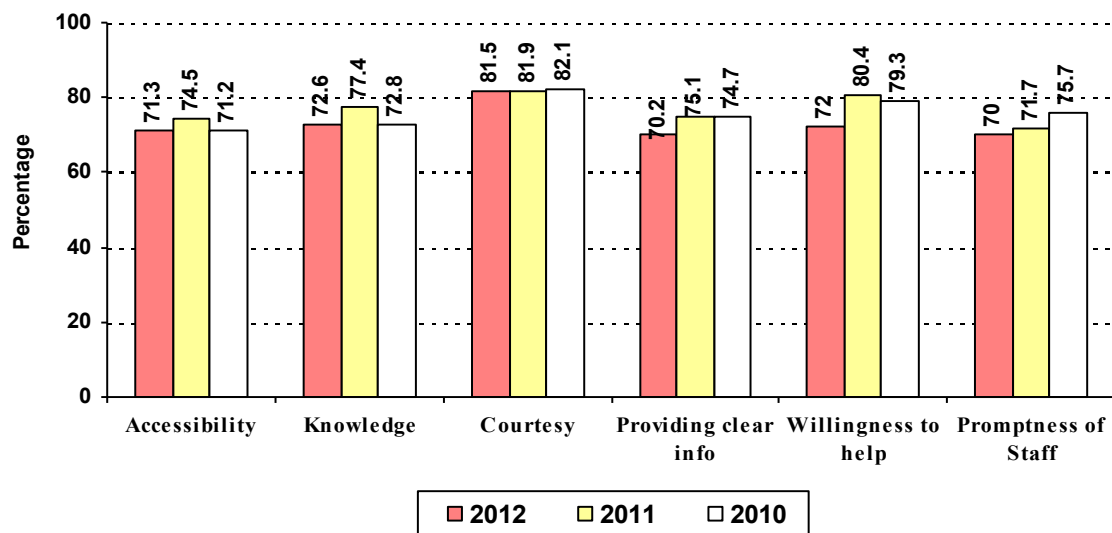
Highlights from Figure 73 and Figure 74

- 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* (81.5%). The remaining attributes of service were all rated relatively similar, with *knowledge of the service provider* the second highest at 72.6%, followed closely by *willingness of the staff to help you* (72%), *accessibility of staff* (71.3%), *being able to provide clear information and explanations* (70.2%), and *promptness of staff* (70%).

- All respondents were given the opportunity to provide any comments about the service they had received from County staff. Overall, 38.8% of the respondents (N=194) provided additional comments. Of these 194 residents, the majority of comments (170 or 86.7% of the 194 residents) were positive descriptors, including *good and/or helpful*, *professional knowledgeable staff*, *efficient* and *friendly/courteous*. The County Library and recreation staff were mentioned numerous times.
- Not everyone was pleased. Overall, 13.3% of the 194 residents were not happy with aspects of the service they received. This is fewer than what was noted in previous years. The comments in this year's survey were quite varied, and included:
 - Some encounters with staff that the resident felt were rude, distant or not knowledgeable;
 - Residents who complained about having to make multiple calls to staff to get a response;
 - Some felt that certain departments were overstaffed;
 - Other complaints weren't necessarily directed to staff, but to circumstances associated with the County, such as getting a ticket when parking by the library, the need to recycle other products or to change the layout of the bins at recycling depots, and the lack of follow-up from staff on addressing specific problems.

Figure 75 presents a comparison of overall results between this year's survey and the 2011 and 2010 surveys for these six items. The combined *very high/high ratings for staff* were lower in 2012 compared to 2011 and 2010 for all of items, except for *courtesy*, which has remained the same over the past 3 years.

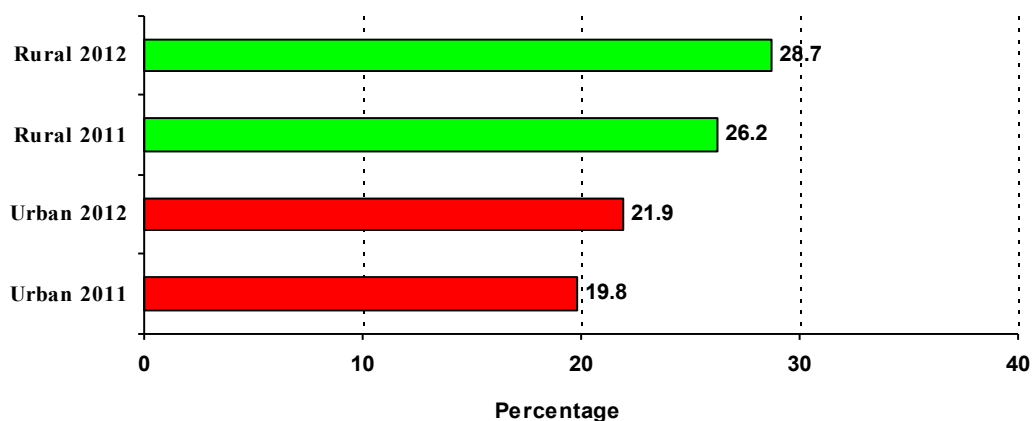
FIGURE 75
Quality of Services provided by County Staff - 2012 with 2010 & 2011 comparisons
on the combined *Very High/High* percentages



G. Public Engagement Opportunities

Toward the end of the survey, residents were asked whether they had given feedback on a County initiative or issue anytime in the past 12 months, either through a telephone or online survey, a discussion group or at an open house, outside of the 2012 Satisfaction Survey. Overall, 21.9% of Sherwood Park residents and 28.7% of rural residents had done so. The percentage of participation Sherwood Park and rural residents was higher in 2012 compared to 2011.

FIGURE 76
Public Engagement Participation
(Urban & Rural Comparisons: 2012 & 2011)

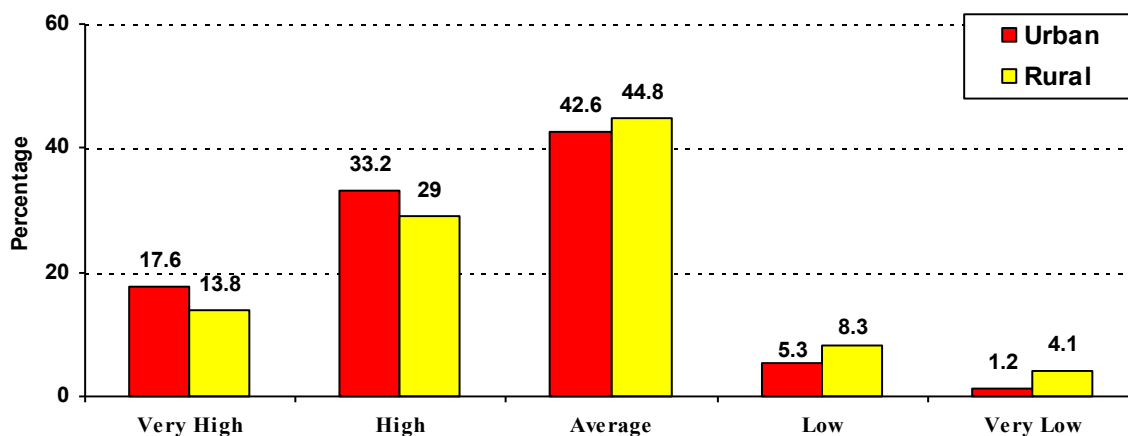


Those who had given feedback were asked how they did so. On an overall basis, methods mentioned most often were open houses (24.4%), telephone surveys (21.3%) or paper surveys (16.5%). There were a few residents who indicated that they had been part of discussion groups (10.2%). Other methods mentioned by a few residents included sending emails or making phone calls to provide feedback or ideas to counselors. Some residents also completed online surveys (9.4%). In terms of urban/rural differences, on a proportionate basis, more people in rural areas participated in open houses than those living in Sherwood Park.

H. Assessment of County Communication and Information Services

Residents were asked a series of questions about how they get information from Strathcona County. Toward the end of 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 77.

FIGURE 77
Rating Opportunities to Express Opinions

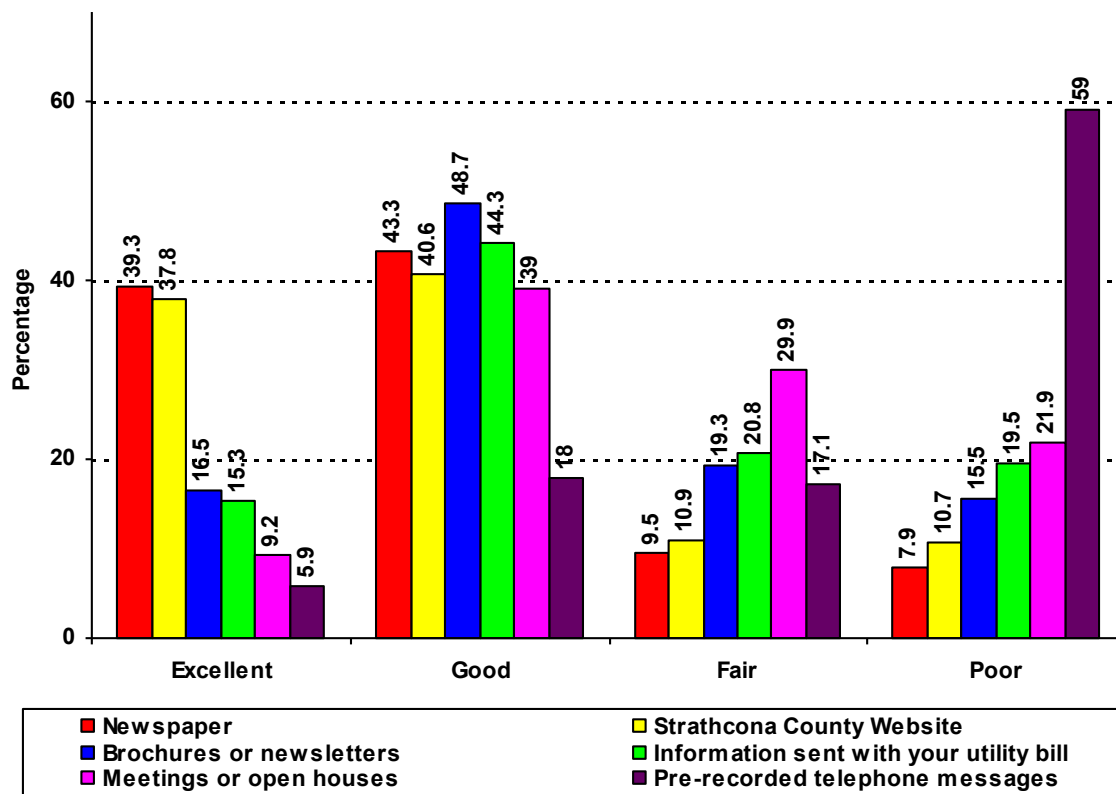


Highlights from Figure 77

- Those living in Sherwood Park were slightly more satisfied with the opportunities to express opinions compared to those living in rural Strathcona. However, the differences were not statistically significant. There were no differences found with respect to any other demographic characteristic for this item.
- The positive level of satisfaction with respect to expressing opinions was lower in 2012 among urban residents (50.8% *very high/high*) compared to 2011 (57.3%). However, rural residents perceptions of this were higher in 2012 (42.8% *very high/high*) compared to 2011 (38.6%).
- Overall, 40 people (8.3% of the sample) were not satisfied with the opportunities for expressing opinions in Strathcona County. A variety of reasons were put forward, including perceptions that opinions expressed by residents are not actually listened to by councillors, the mayor, or staff members in charge. Some of the residents wondered if the answers they gave in surveys like this one would be acknowledged and used by the various departments.

Residents were also 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 78.

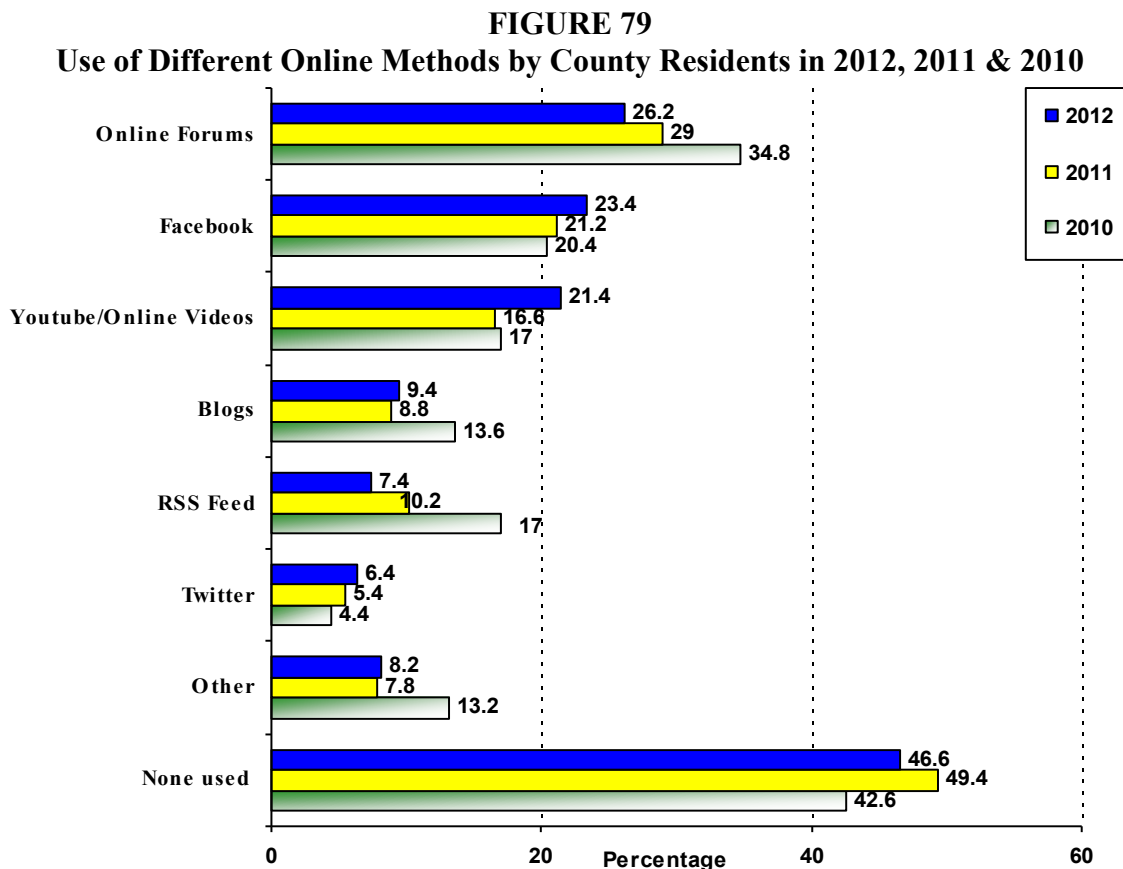
FIGURE 78
Rating Existing Methods Used to Inform the Public about Municipal Services



It can be seen in Figure 78 that the *County newspaper* and the *County Website* received solid ratings from residents. Overall, 82.6% of residents gave the *newspaper* an excellent or good rating; similarly, 78.4% of residents gave the *County website* a combination excellent/good rating. The 2012 newspaper ratings were 7.5% higher than 2011 and the County website ratings were just over 4% higher this year compared to last year. Other sources of information that were higher in 2012 compared to 2011 were *information sent to residents through the utility bill* (59.6% excellent/good in 2011, which was 9.3% higher than 2011) and *newsletters and brochures* (55.2% excellent/good rating up just under 5% from 2011).

Two other methods that received lower ratings from residents compared to other methods were *meetings/open houses* (48.2% excellent/good, 1% higher than the 2011 ratings) and *pre-recorded telephone messages* (23.9% excellent/good, about the same as 2011).

Strathcona County also asked residents what sort of different online social media methods they would like to use to get information about people and events pertaining specifically to Strathcona County. Overall, it can be seen in Figure 79 that *online forums* were the most prevalent, followed by *Facebook*, *Youtube and other online videos*, *Blogs* and *RSS Feed*. Very few residents were making use of *Twitter*. Other methods mentioned by residents included receiving information from email or checking the website.



With the exception of *Facebook*, fewer residents considered the different forms of social media in 2012 compared to 2011 and 2010 as methods for Strathcona County to

communicate with residents. There was no difference seen in online usage of these methods based on where the resident lived.

Figure 80 presents a comparison of urban and rural residents with respect to the percentage of residents who visited the Strathcona County website. From a proportion basis, it can be seen that a slightly larger percentage of residents living in Sherwood Park have accessed the website compared to those living in rural Strathcona County. On an overall basis, the percentage of residents who visited the County website increased substantially by 7% between 2011 and 2012.

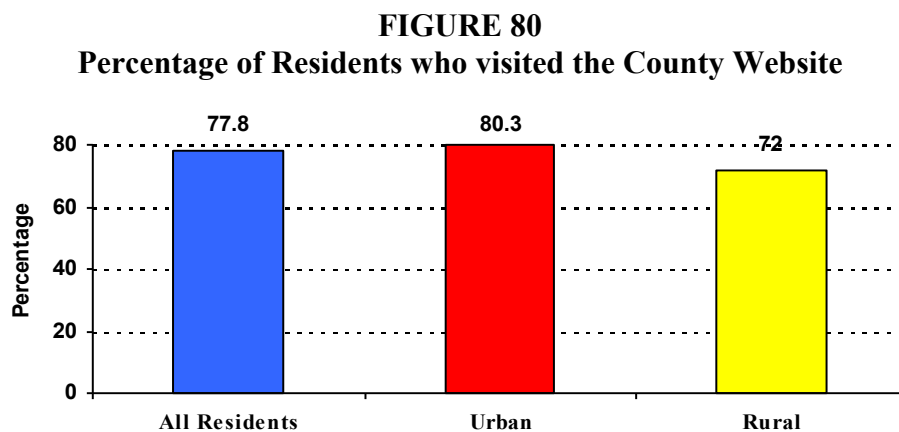
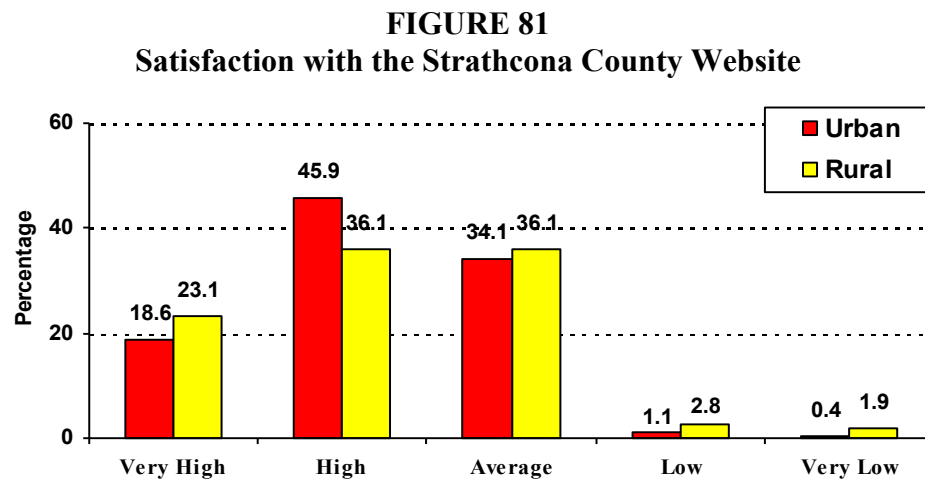


Figure 81 presents the satisfaction level with the Strathcona County website.³⁸ It can be seen that the satisfaction level was slightly higher among urban residents compared to those living in rural Strathcona, but the spread was not statistically significant.



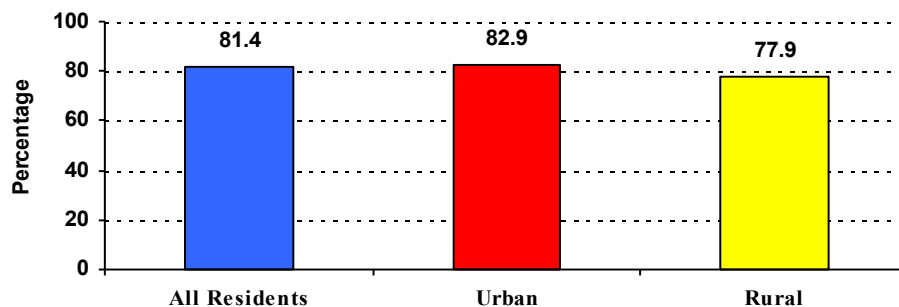
In 2012, the combined *very high/high* rating of the site was 64.5% for urban residents (4.9% lower than 2011) and 59.2% for rural residents (almost the same as 2011).

All residents were asked what step(s) they would take to get information about Strathcona County. As was the case in 2011, the most popular method was to go online, either directly to the website or via Google to find the answer (or who to talk to). A very strong second and third choice was for residents to either phone the County or visit County Hall in person. Another option mentioned by many residents was to contact their counsellor directly. There were also some people who thought they'd check the local newspaper for information.

After being asked this question, all respondents were asked whether they felt well informed about County services and activities going on throughout Strathcona County. It can be seen in Figure 81 that the majority of residents, regardless of where they lived, felt informed about things happening in Strathcona County.

³⁸ This figure excludes 22.2% of the residents who never went to the County website.

FIGURE 81
Feeling Informed about County Services and Activities Occurring in Strathcona County



Residents who did not feel well informed were asked to indicate why that occurred. These people either admitted that they were not actively paying attention to issues in Strathcona County, either because particular issues did not affect or impact them personally, or because they were concentrating on other things outside the County. There were also a few people who only became aware of issues after they had occurred and were resolved.

I. Awareness of the Strategic Plan

Overall, 139 residents (or 28.1% of the sample) were aware of Strathcona County's strategic plan, regardless of where they lived. This is almost exactly the same as the awareness level in 2011. Those who knew of the existence of the strategic plan were asked to indicate what aspects of the plan they were aware of. Overall, many of the residents indicated that they knew about the plan, but were unaware of specific contents within it. Others, however, indicated that there were aspects of expansion and long term development, as well as aspects toward sustainability.

J. 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, 199 respondents (39.8% of the sample) provided additional comments. Of these, 29.2% of the 199 residents had positive things to say about the County. Although the majority of these did not elaborate, of those who did, most associated their satisfaction with how municipal services are run.

The remaining 70.8% of the residents provided comments pertaining to a variety of areas, including spending patterns, bylaw concerns, road maintenance issues and development issues. There were a small percentage of residents who commented on hospital and education related issues (3.7%) even though these are actually provincial issues.

APPENDIX A: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Strathcona County Year 2012 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?

6. In providing services, the Mayor, County Council and staff have to consider the needs and interest of people living in different areas of the County.

	very fair	fair	average	unfair	very unfair	DO NOT READ: DK
a) In balancing these needs and interests, would you say that in general the Mayor and County Council are:	1	2	3	4	5	9

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

- | | very
fair | fair | average | unfair | very
unfair | DO NOT READ:
DK |
|--|--------------|------|---------|--------|----------------|----------------------------|
| b) In balancing these needs and interests, would you say that in general, County staff are | 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. 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.

- | | very
high | high | average | low,or | very
low | DO NOT READ:
DK |
|---|--------------|------|---------|--------|-------------|----------------------------|
| a. Thinking of winter road maintenance, snow clearing and ice control ...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? | 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?

- | | very
high | high | average | low,or | very
low | DO NOT READ:
DK |
|--|--------------|------|---------|--------|-------------|----------------------------|
| 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? | 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?

- | | very
high | high | average | low,or | very
low | DO NOT READ:
DK |
|----------------------------------|--------------|------|---------|--------|-------------|----------------------------|
| c. Thinking of rural road | | | | | | |

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

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 **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?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|------|--|--|--|------|---------------------|
| l. | Thinking of public transit | very | | | | very | DO NOT READ: |
|----|-----------------------------------|------|--|--|--|------|---------------------|

services here in the County...is	high	high	average	low,or	low	DK
your satisfaction level very high,	1	2	3	4	5	9
high, average, low or very low?						

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

m. Thinking of bylaw enforcement	very				very	DO NOT READ:
(such as dog, curfew or building	high	high	average	low,or	low	DK
bylaws) .. is your satisfaction level						
very high, high, average, low or	1	2	3	4	5	9
very low?						

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

average, low or very low?

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

9. 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 1	high 2	average 3	low, or 4	very low 5	DO NOT READ DK 9
a. New residential developments throughout the County? Overall, would you say that the quality was:						
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 1	too much, or 2	too little 3	DO NOT READ: DK 9
d. New residential developments in the County? Would you say the amount was:				
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

10. 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?

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

1 Yes – **Go to Q-11b**

2 No

9 Don't know

skip to q-12

- b. About 61 percent of residential taxes 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.

12. Which of the following County services have you used in the past 12 months? *Interviewer notes below*

- **Read list and record all numbers that apply**
- **For each service that the respondent has used, ask how important the service is to them**
- **If one or more of the services are mentioned, please go to Question 13**

For each one that is used, ask: How important is the service to you? Would you say it is:

		Very Important	Somewhat Important, or	Not Important	Don't Know
1	Family Support Services	1	2	3	9
2	Fire and Ambulance Services	1	2	3	9
3	Building Permit and Inspection Services	1	2	3	9
4	Indoor recreation facilities	1	2	3	9
5	Public transit services	1	2	3	9
6	Planning & development services	1	2	3	9
7	Bylaw enforcement	1	2	3	9
8	Recycling depots	1	2	3	9
9	Agricultural services	1	2	3	9
10	Information and Volunteer Centre	1	2	3	9
11	Strathcona County Library	1	2	3	9
12	The RCMP	1	2	3	9
13	Any Others – Please indicate: _____	1	2	3	9
98	None (do not read) - Go to Question 14				
99	Don't know (do not Read) – Go to Question 14				

13. Of the County services that you've used, which one did you use most recently? _____
Go To Question 16

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

1 Yes **Skip to Q-16**

2 No 9 Don't know
Ask Q-15 below

15. Even though you have not had recent contact with County staff, what is your general impression of the quality of service based on what you've heard or seen? 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 17

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

	very high 1	high 2	average 3	low, or 4	very low 5	DO NOT READ: DK 9
a. What about the accessibility for the service? Would you rate this as:						
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

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

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

1. Yes

2. No

Skip to Q-20

9. Don't know

Skip to Q-20

19. What aspects of the County's Strategic Plan are you aware of?

20. If you wanted to get information about Strathcona County, what would you do?

21. Do you feel well informed about County Services and activities going on throughout Strathcona County?

1. Yes → **Skip to Q-23**

2. No

9. Don't know

22. Please tell me why you do not feel well informed.

23. 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.

Rotate items

DO NOT READ:

What about _____? Is this an:	Excellent	Good	Fair, or	Poor	Method	Don't Know
a. The local newspaper, this being the Sherwood Park Strathcona County News?	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

24. There are now a variety of social media tools that people can use. I'd like to read a short list to you, and for each, please tell me which ones you'd prefer Strathcona County to use for sharing information and engaging with you. 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

25. Have you ever visited the Strathcona County website?

1. Yes

2. No **Skip to Q-27**

9. Don't know **Skip to Q-27**

26. 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

27. 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 **Skip to Q-29**

9. Don't know **Skip to Q-29**

28. Did you provide your feedback through an open house, a survey, a discussion group or some other method? (*Multiple answers allowed – probe with “Any other ways?”*)

29. 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?

30. Are there any other comments you would like to make about any Strathcona County service or the way the County is managed?

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...

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

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

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

32a) How many of these people are children aged 15 or younger? _____

32b) How many are children aged 16 or older? _____

33. 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

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

This ends our survey, but Strathcona County may hold some group discussions to get more information from residents about different aspects about our community. These group discussions are a lot a fun and run no more than 2 hours long. Would you be interested in possibly participating in one of the discussion groups?

1. Yes Could I please get your first name so that we know how to ask for? _____
And can I get a phone number from you: _____
2. No I understand, but 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 #: _____