

2013 Public Satisfaction Survey



Research Results

Report Prepared by Phil Kreisel, Ph.D.
Corporate Planning & Intergovernmental Affairs

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I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In December 2013, 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 16th 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. An executive summary highlighting overall findings is available as a separate document.

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. The major change in this year's survey pertained to a modification of its questions about the County's new strategic plan (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 7th and December 11th, 2013. Strathcona County derived telephone numbers from the EVS 2013 database of residential phone numbers 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

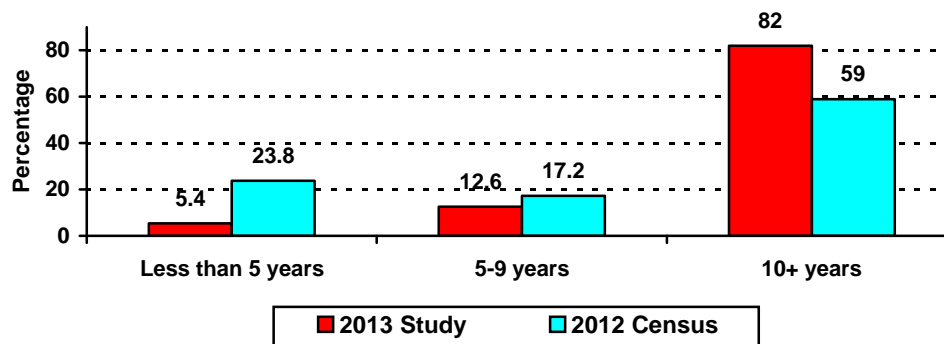
This section of the report presents a summary of the results associated with the perceptions and awareness of residents. Socio-demographic comparisons, where significant, are also highlighted. Comparisons will also be made with data collected from the previous year's survey, when significant differences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

A. Demographic Overview

This section of the report presents an overview of the type of residents who were surveyed in 2013. 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 (93.2%), while the remaining residents were renters.

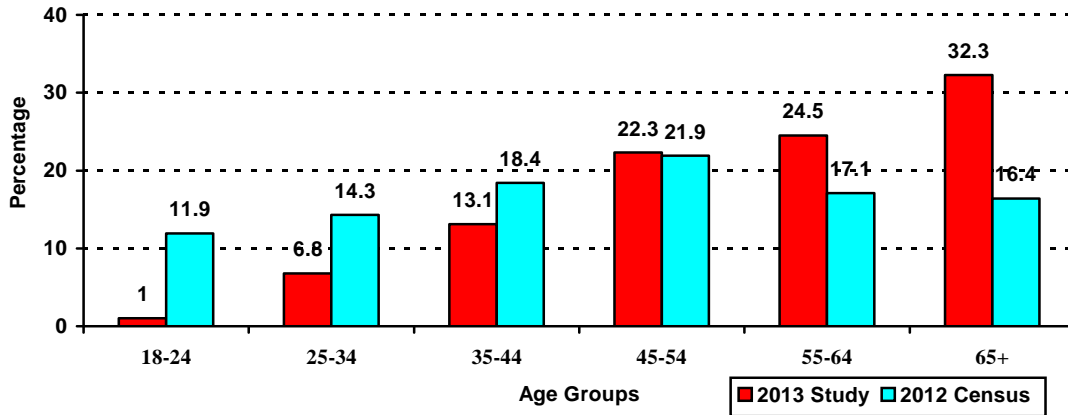
The majority of people who took part in the survey indicated they were long-term residents in the County. Figure 1 presents a breakdown of length of residence. It can be seen the majority of respondents have lived in the County for more than 10 years. The average number of years that people lived in Strathcona County was 25 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



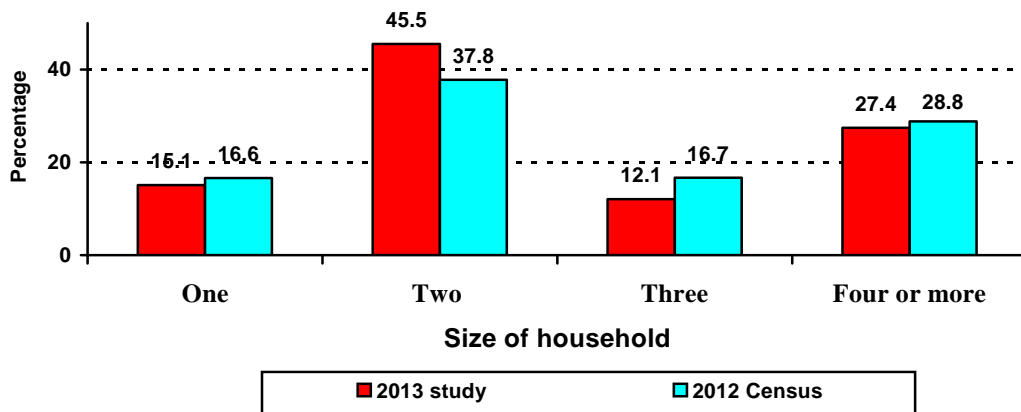
A breakdown of the age of the respondents is shown in Figure 2. There was a relatively good representation from most age groups, though in comparison to the 2012 census⁴, the 18-24 and 25-34 year age groups were under-represented and the 65 or older category was over-represented. This distribution is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

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 2.68 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 59.4% of households did not have any children living at home, while the remaining 40.6% 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)

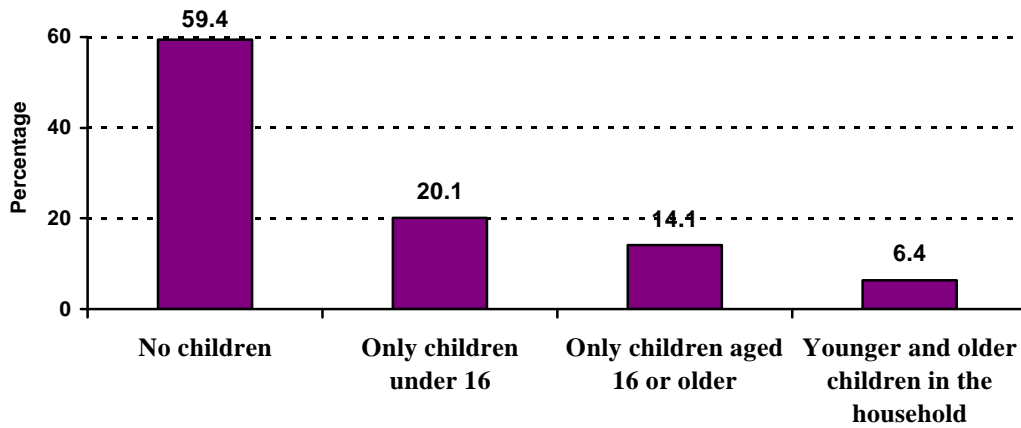
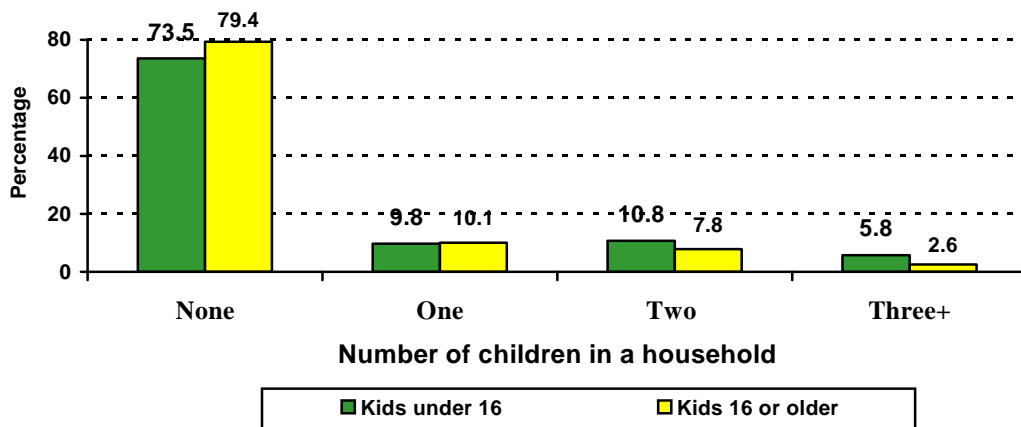


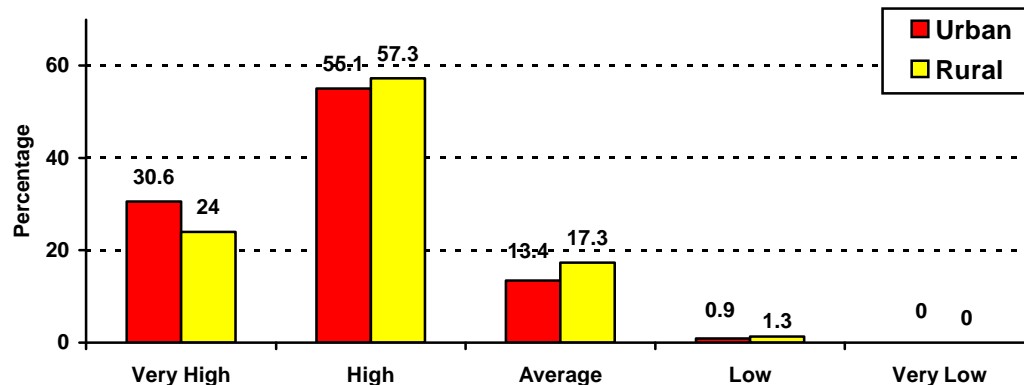
FIGURE 5
Number of Children in Household (based on ages of children)



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 2013, the spread between urban and rural residents was lower (a 4.3% difference) compared to 2012 (a 5.3% 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 5 residents (1% of the entire sample) who did. Nothing in particular stood out, though there was one who thought more residential services for seniors were needed, while another did not want the County to develop high density residential developments.

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

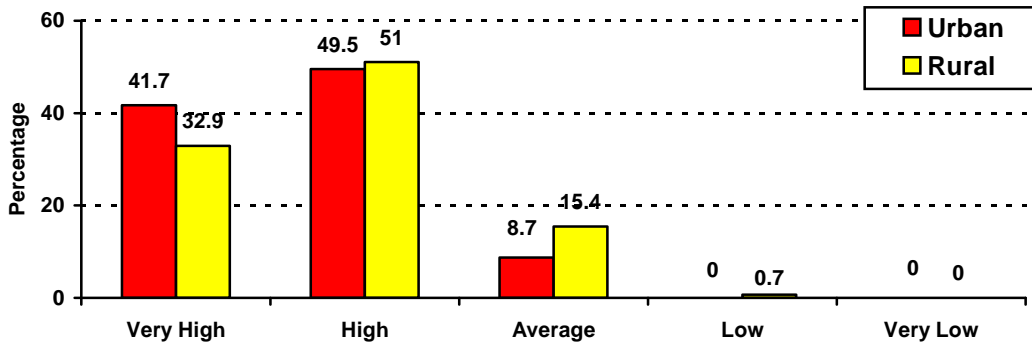
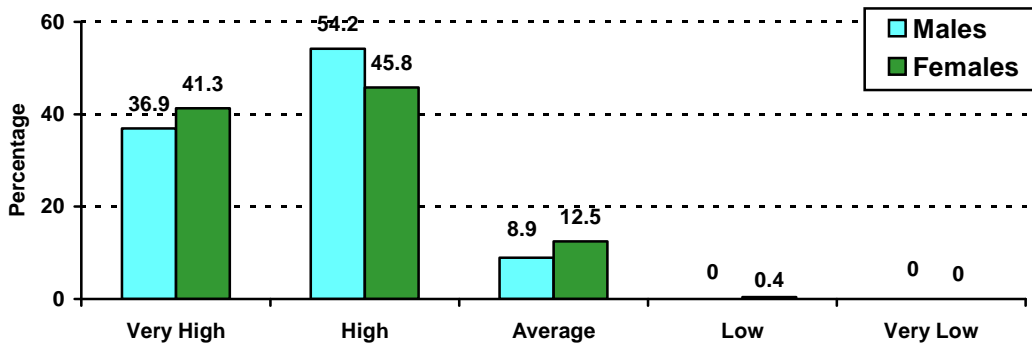


FIGURE 8
Strathcona County as a Place to Raise Children
Gender Comparisons



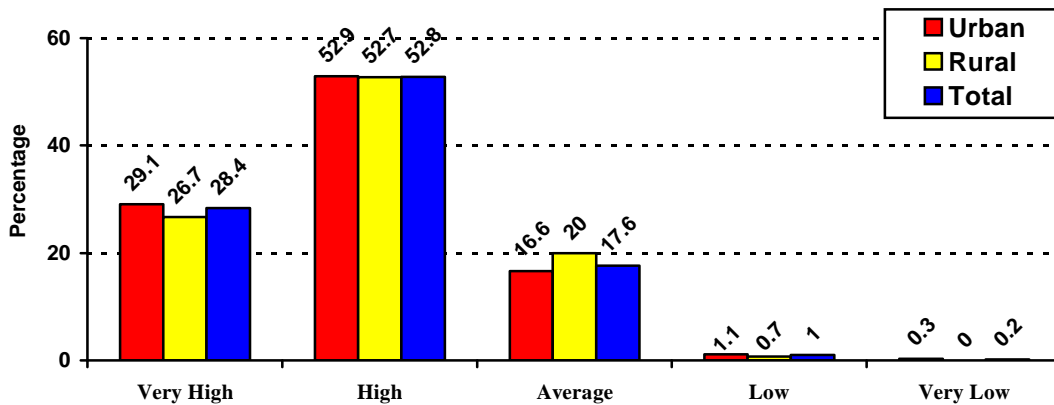
Highlights from Figure 7 & Figure 8

- 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 (87.1% *very high/high*) was almost identical to males (91.1% *very high/high*). This was very similar to findings in 2012.

- There were no differences among age groups for this item in 2013.
- Respondents who rated this item as low or very low were asked to indicate what improvements could be considered. Only one person commented on this, and the reason was that living in the rural area, it was difficult to get children to school.

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

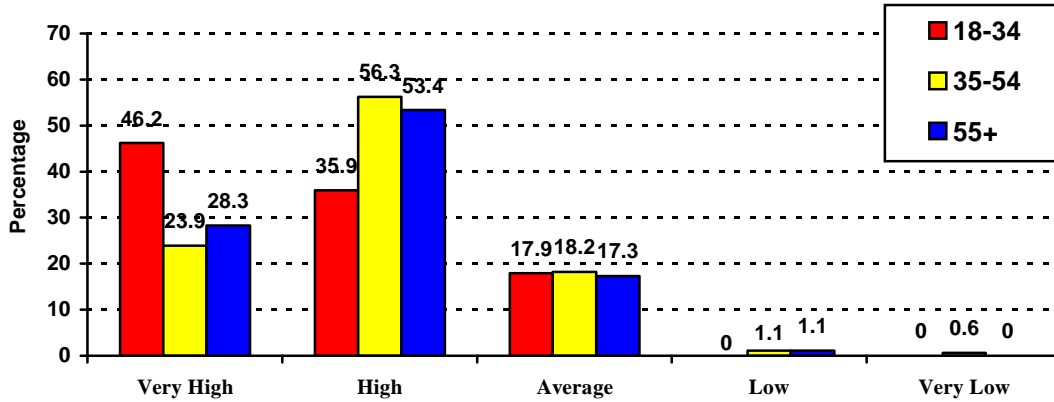


Highlights from Figure 9

- 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.
- In 2013, the overall percentage of residents who rated safety in the County as *very high or high* (81.2%) was higher than the 2012 results (73.7%).

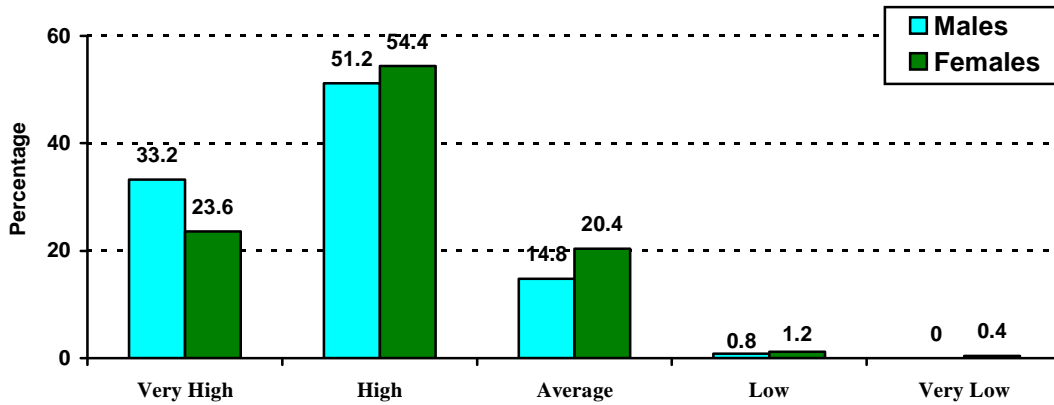
The majority of residents, regardless of age, felt quite safe living in Strathcona County in 2013 (see Figure 10 below).

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



It can be seen in Figure 11 that in 2013, females had a slightly lower perception of safety compared to males, but the difference was not statistically significant.

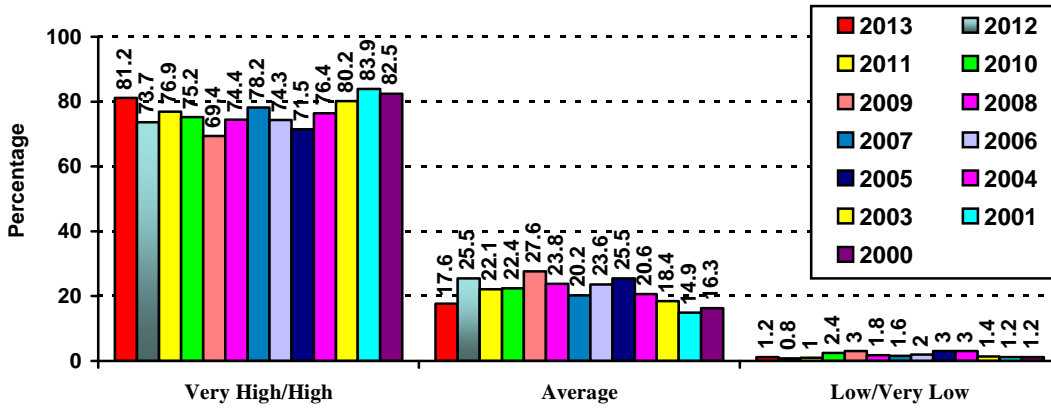
FIGURE 11
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Gender Comparisons



Overall, only 1.2% of residents (i.e. 6 respondents) gave safety in Strathcona County a low rating. Reasons for this included a perceived need for more police officers due to break-ins, and to enforce the curfew laws that were put in place by the County a few years ago.

It can be seen from Figure 12 that perceptions of safety in Strathcona County being “high or very high” increased in 2013 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.

FIGURE 12
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Study Comparisons (2000-2013)⁵



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. The percentage of residents knowing more than 20 people in their neighborhood is higher this year compared to previous years.

⁵ There was no satisfaction study conducted in 2002.

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

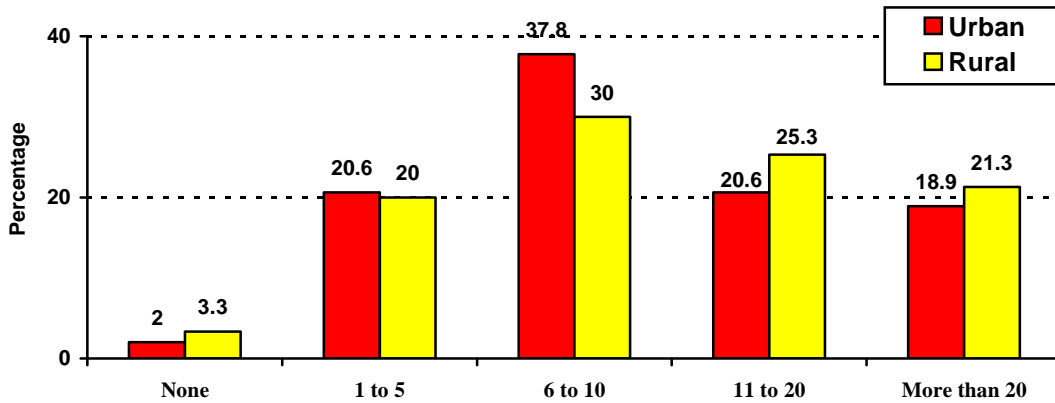
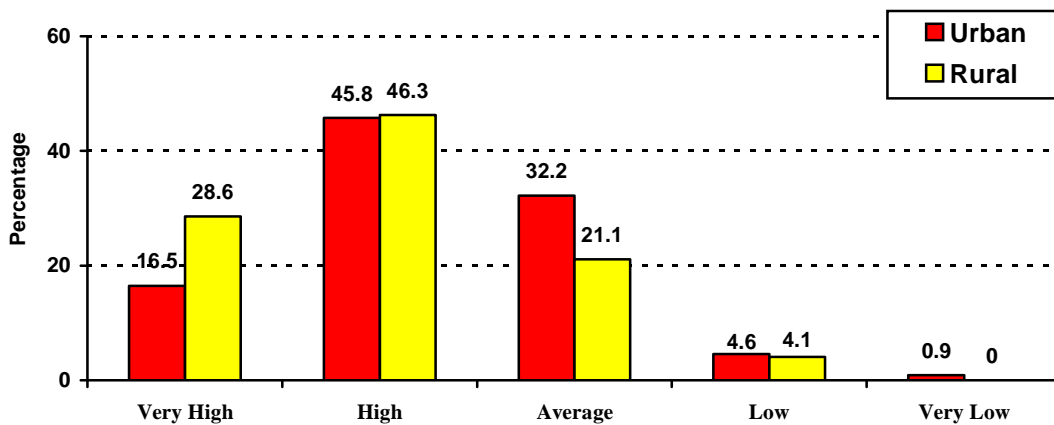


Figure 14 presents a breakdown by region of people’s ratings of the quality of Strathcona County’s natural environment.

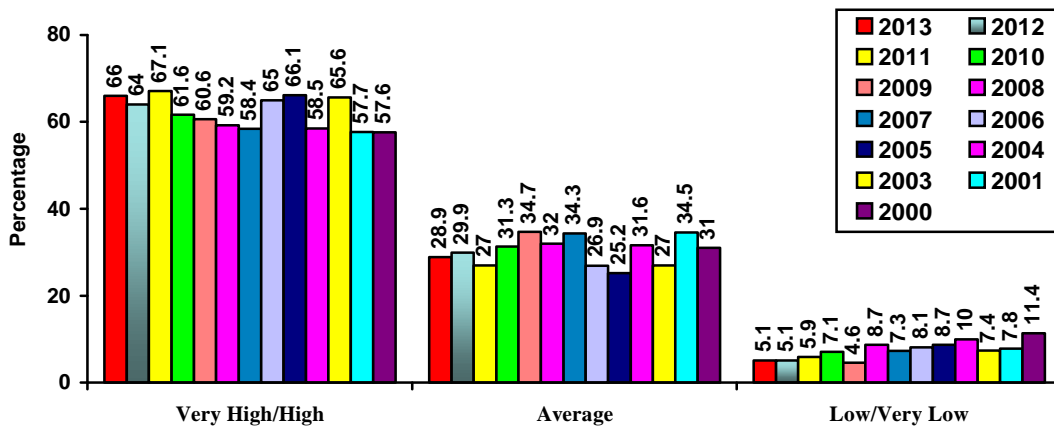
FIGURE 14
Rating the Quality of Strathcona County’s Natural Environment
Urban & Rural Comparisons



Highlights from Figure 14

- It can be seen that 62.3% of the urban and 74.9% 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 6% higher in the rural area and 0.9% lower for urban residents compared to 2012 ratings.
- None of the other 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 rebounded since last year, and is also higher than ratings noted between 2006 and 2010.
- The 5.1% (or 25 residents) who gave *low* or *very low* ratings were asked to indicate their reasons for the rating. In this year’s study, residents were equally divided on two issues: 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 (2000-2013)



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

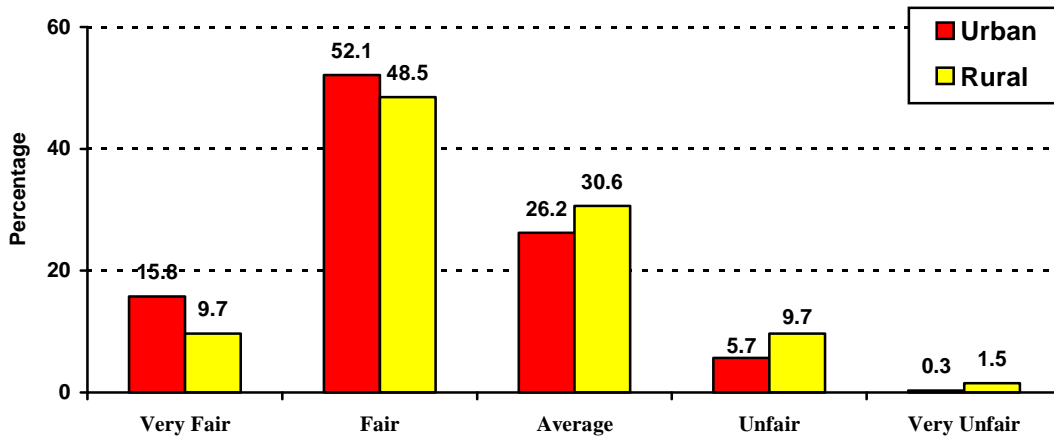
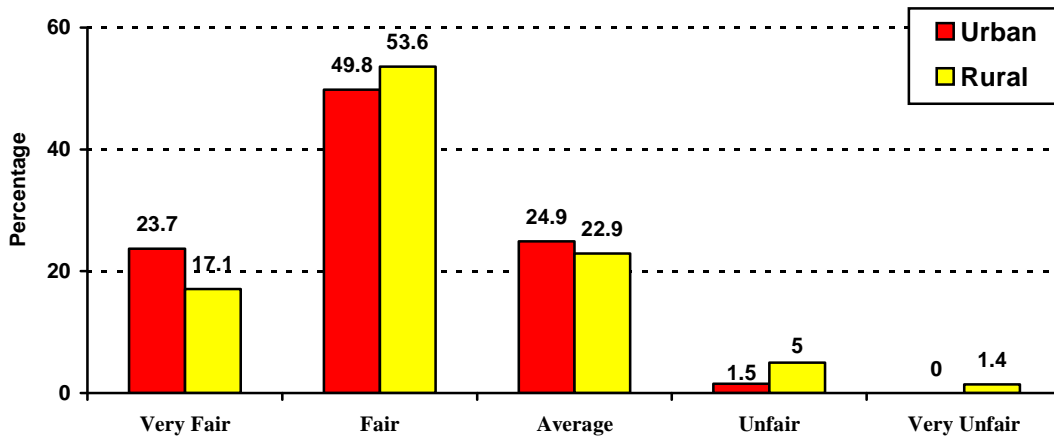


FIGURE 17
Balancing the Needs and Interests of People Living in Strathcona County
by County Staff
Urban & Rural Comparisons

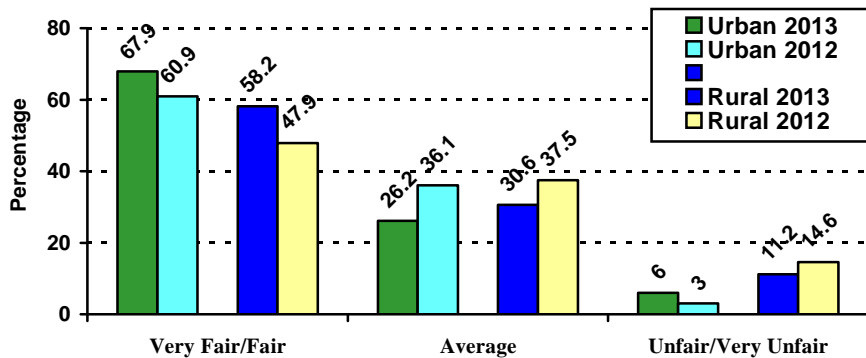


Highlights from Figure 16 & Figure 17

- It can be seen in Figure 16 that with respect to perceptions of being treated fairly by the mayor and council, a higher percentage of Sherwood Park residents felt that the treatment was *very fair/fair* (67.9%) compared to those living in rural parts of the County (58.2%). With respect to treatment by staff, it can be seen in Figure 17 that the perceptions between urban (73.7% *very fair/fair*) and rural residents (70.7% *very fair/fair*) was much closer.
- Outside of residence location, none of the other demographic characteristics influenced how people perceived the fairness of County Council and staff.

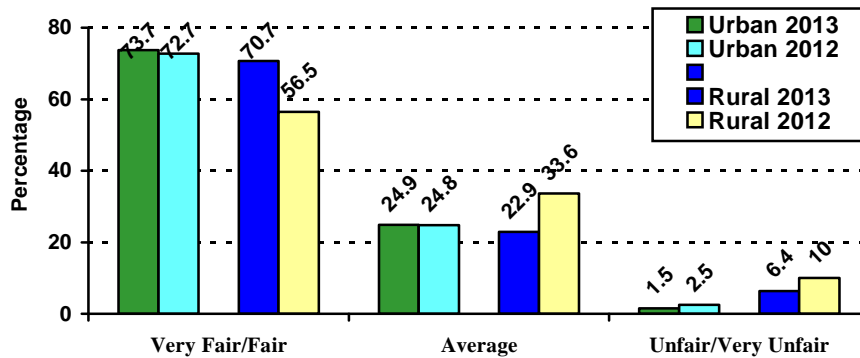
Among urban residents, perceptions of fairness by the Mayor and council were slightly higher in 2013 compared to 2012 (as seen in Figure 18). Perceptions of the mayor and council being *very fair/fair* to rural residents were higher in 2013 compared to 2012.

FIGURE 18
Balancing the Needs and Interests of Urban and Rural Residents
by Mayor & Council (2013 and 2012 comparisons)



With respect to perceptions of fairness by staff, it can be seen in Figure 19 that there was no difference between 2013 and 2012 among urban residents. However, perceptions of staff being *very fair/fair* to rural residents were higher in 2013 compared to 2012.

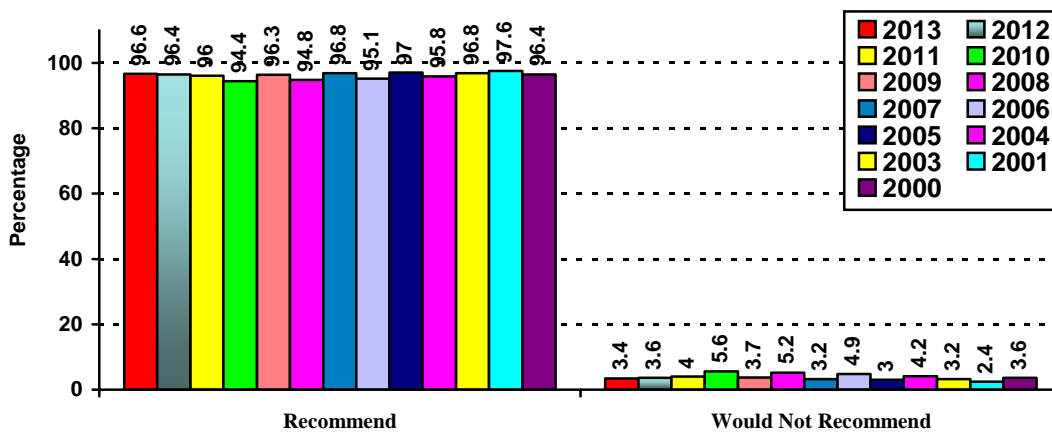
FIGURE 19
Balancing the Needs and Interests of Urban and Rural Residents
by County Staff (2013 and 2012 comparisons)



Overall, in 2012, 34 residents (7.6% of the sample) felt that the Mayor and Council were unfair, and 14 residents (3% of the sample) felt that County staff were unfair. These individuals were asked to comment on why they felt that way. As in past years, 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. However, in this year’s study, there were concerns from Sherwood Park residents as well, pertaining to perceptions that the services provided have gone down in quantity and/or quality, even though taxes have increased.

Almost all respondents would recommend Strathcona County to others as a place to live (Figure 20), which was virtually identical to the previous satisfaction surveys.

FIGURE 20
Recommendation of Strathcona County as a Place to Live (2000-2013)



The small percentage of people (3.4% or 17 residents) who would not recommend the County as a place to live were asked to indicate why they felt that way. The main reason given by these residents this year was a perception that taxes were too high for what residents were receiving. Other reasons noted were that the urban center is getting too big, it's not as friendly as it used to be, and that there are too many rules associated with building.

C. Quality of Services Provided by Strathcona County

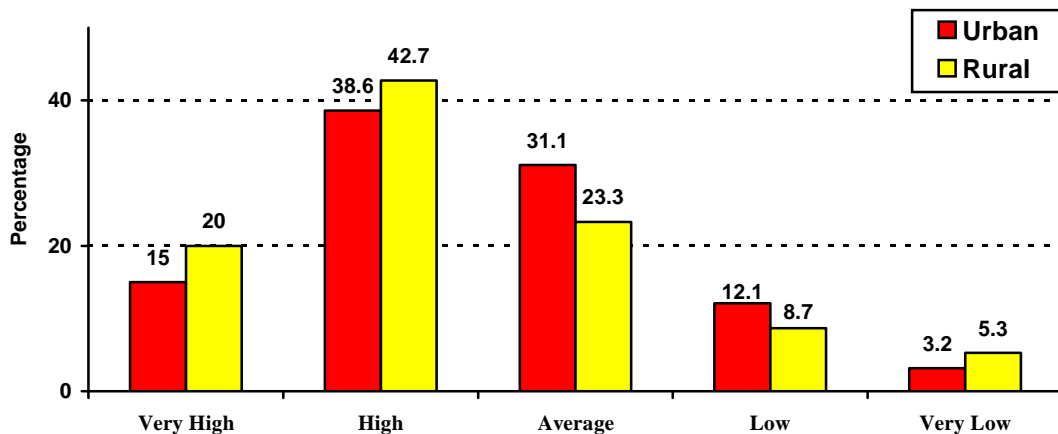
Residents of Strathcona County were asked a series of questions about what they thought of various services provided to them. Overall, respondents were asked to rate 18 different services. For each question, respondents rated the service using a 5 point Likert Scale, where a score of 1 was designated as *very high* and a score of 5 was designated as *very low*. Unless otherwise noted, the level of satisfaction in 2013 for these services was similar to the data collected in 2012.

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 21. Although people living in the rural areas felt the quality of winter road maintenance was higher than those living in the urban area, the differences were not statistically significant.

FIGURE 21
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance
Urban & Rural Comparisons



Perceptions of winter road maintenance among residents varied between 2012 and 2013. Figure 22 shows that the percentage of urban residents who felt the winter road maintenance work was *very high* or *high* increased to 53.6% in 2013, compared to 44.4% in 2012 and 50.1% in 2011. This year's results were also considerably higher in 2013 compared to 2010 (45.7%) and 2009 (38%) for urban residents. Among rural residents, it can be seen in Figure 23 that the combined *very high/high* level of satisfaction with winter road maintenance in 2013 (62.7%) is at an all-time high compared to the last 4 years.

FIGURE 22
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance as noted by Sherwood Park Residents
2009-2013 Study Comparisons

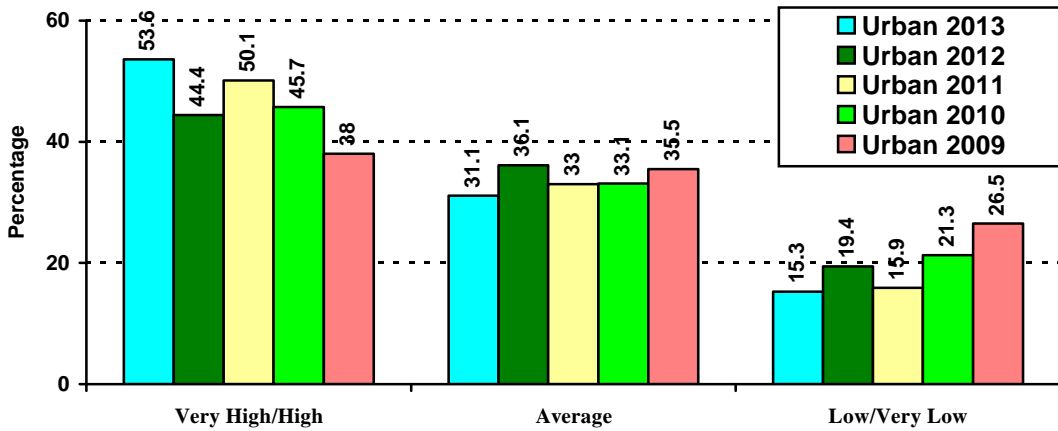
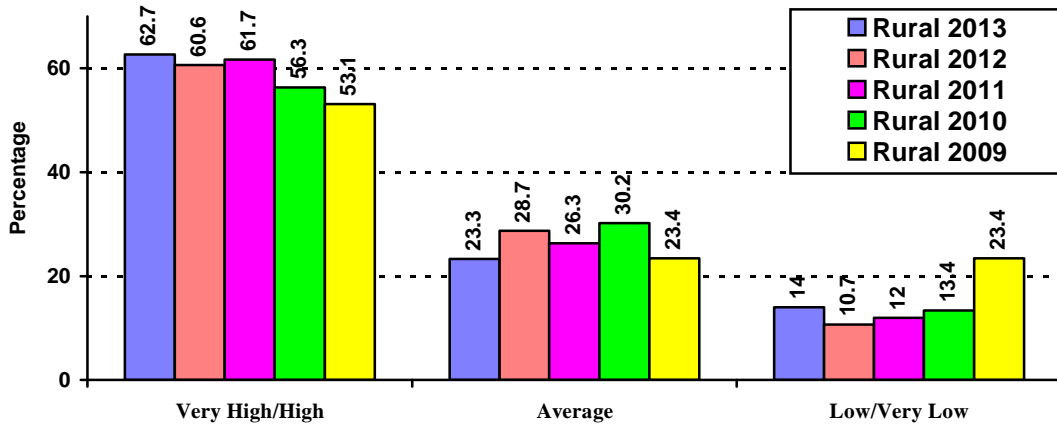


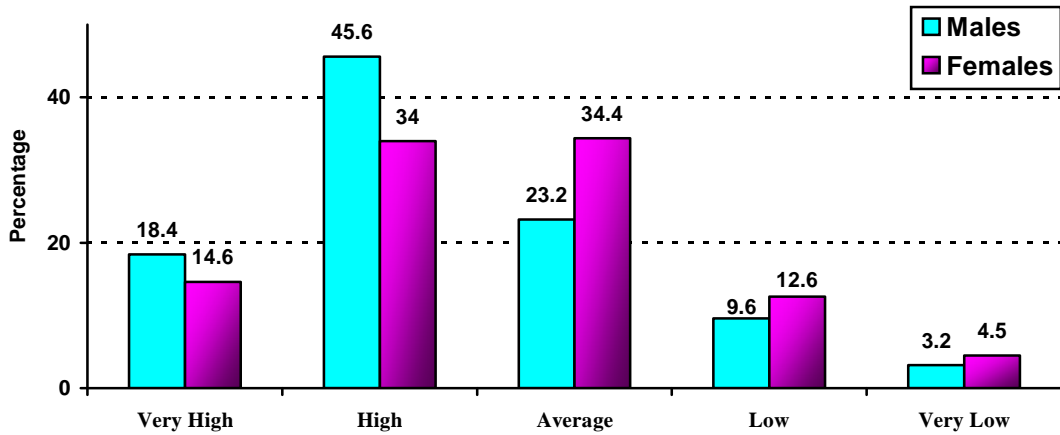
FIGURE 23
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance as noted by Rural Strathcona Residents
2009-2013 Study Comparisons



A further analysis of the data revealed no differences between age groups or length of residency on perceptions of the quality of winter maintenance. However, it can be seen in Figure 24 that males had more positive perceptions of winter road maintenance than females.⁶

⁶ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between gender and how satisfied one is with winter road maintenance ($\chi^2 = 12.21, 4 \text{ df}, p=.016$). A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t=- 2.73, 495 \text{ df}, p = .007$) also confirms that males rated this service higher than females.

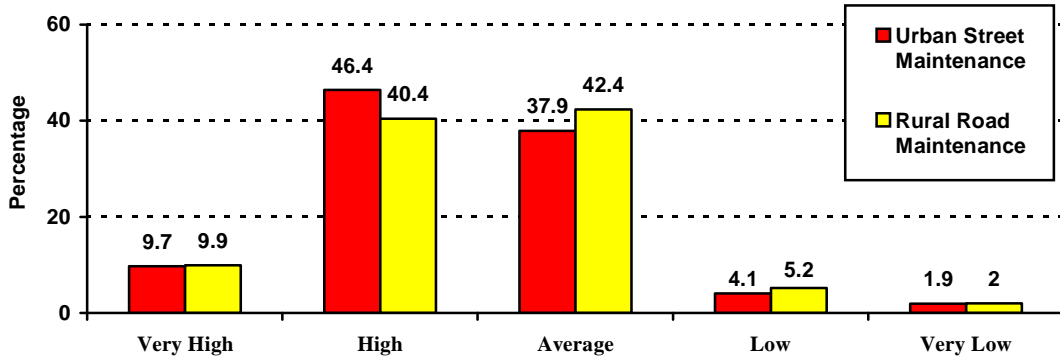
FIGURE 24
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance
Gender Comparisons



Overall, 74 residents (14.9% of the sample) were not happy with winter road maintenance, and were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. As in past studies, the main criticism among residents was for residential side streets to be cleared and sanded more often. Some rural residents also felt that this should be occurring in subdivisions such as Willow Dale Estates, Greenbrae and Hollands Drive. There were also residents who felt that the clearing of the main streets took longer this year compared to past years, and that the county was not dealing with the windrows left over from initial snow clearing throughout residential neighborhoods.

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 25.

FIGURE 25
Quality of Summer Road Maintenance of Urban and Rural Roads:
All Residents



When each type of summer road maintenance is examined separately, it can be seen from Figures 26 and 27 that the perceptions of residents did not vary much on the basis of where they lived. A further analysis revealed that there were no differences in perception with respect to these questions with any other demographic variable.

FIGURE 26
Quality of Summer Road Maintenance of Roads in Sherwood Park
Urban & Rural Comparisons

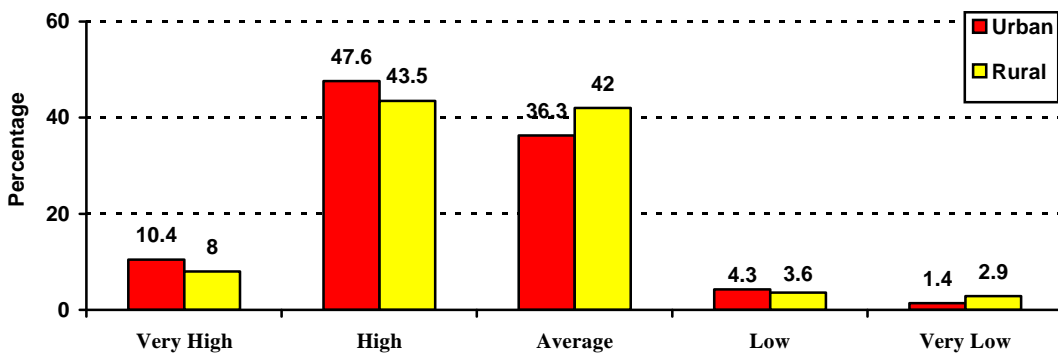
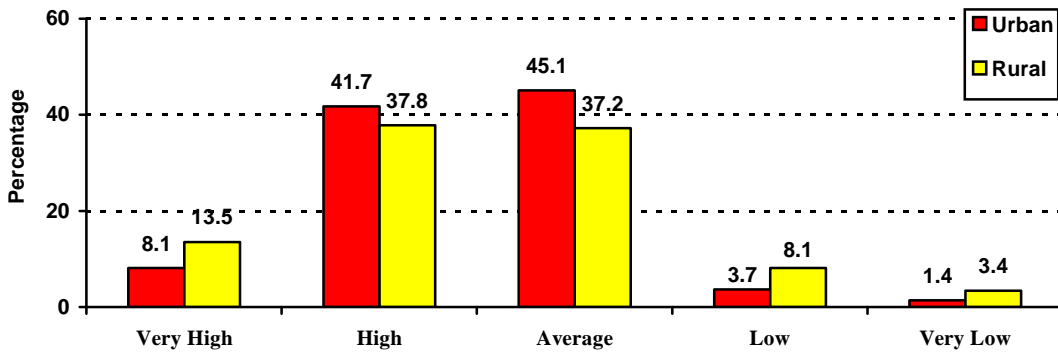


FIGURE 27
Quality of Summer Road Maintenance of Rural Roads
Urban & Rural Comparisons



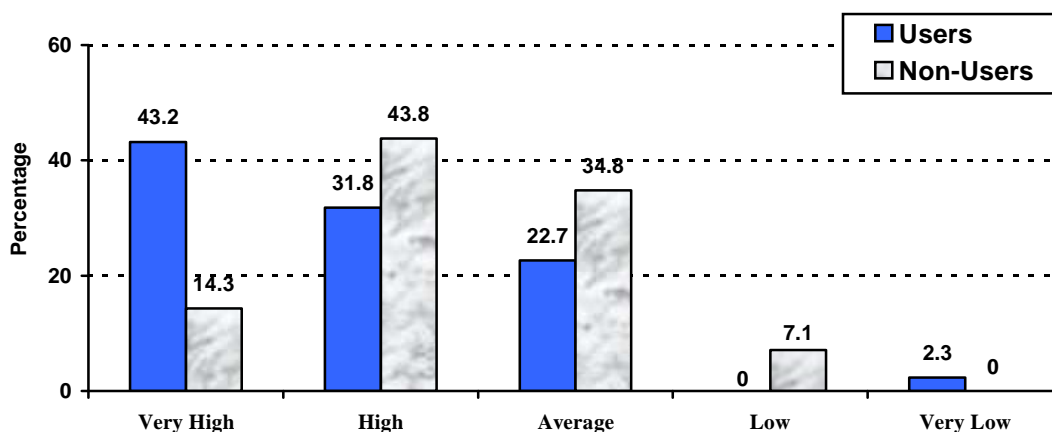
Overall, 6% of residents (N=29) were unhappy with the summer maintenance of urban roads. Almost all of these residents reflected on the need to fill in the potholes in the roads. With respect to other concerns, one person disliked the roundabouts, and instead wondered why four-way stops weren't considered instead, while another was considered with drainage problems on the sidewalks that were causing sewer backups in the summer, or just collecting on the sidewalk and the bottom of driveways.

It was also found that 7.2% of residents (N=32) 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. This problem has been reported annually for several years now.

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 28 presents the satisfaction level for family support services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services⁷ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should be noted that 134 respondents (26.8% of the sample) did not comment on the quality of family support services because they did not know anything about them.

FIGURE 28
Quality of Family Support Services



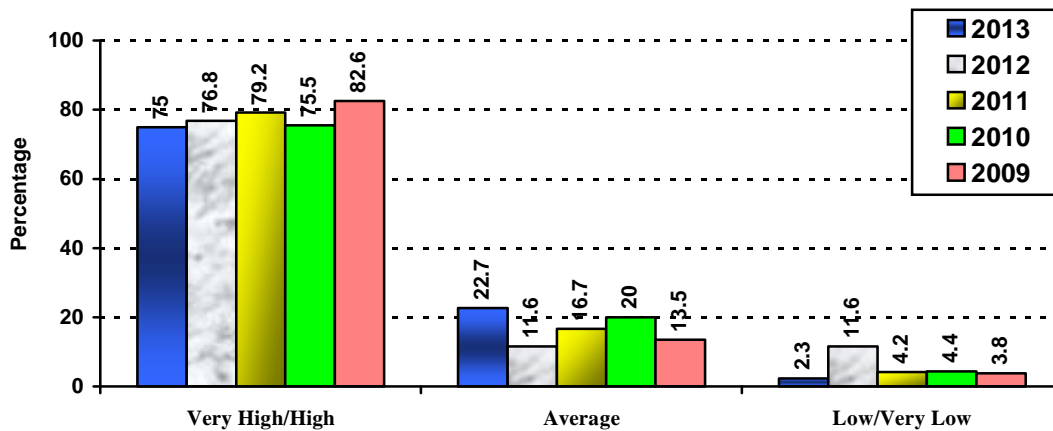
Highlights from Figure 28

- Figure 28 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 ($\chi^2 = 31.66$, 4 df, $p = .000$). A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -3.65$, 364 df, $p = .000$) also 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 75% of the people who used Family & Community Services (FCS) gave the department *high* or *very high*

⁷ Overall, 9.2% of respondents indicated they had used family support services within the past 12 months. This is the same as what was reported in last year's survey

satisfaction ratings. This is slightly lower than the 76.8% mark noted last year. User trends from 2009 to 2013 are depicted in Figure 29.

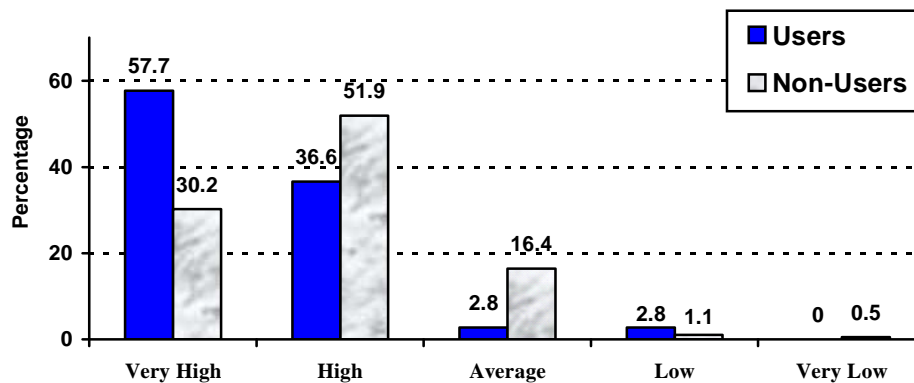
FIGURE 29
Quality of Family Support Services
User Trends 2009 - 2013



- As in previous surveys, the percentage of users rating the service as *low or very low* is small. Moreover, in 2013, the level of dissatisfaction among users is the lowest recorded in the past five years.
- The 24 people who gave family support services a low rating in 2013 (6.6% of the sample who rated the service) were asked to suggest how this could be improved. Many of this year's suggestions focused on a perceived need for more seniors services and/or centers. There were also some people who alluded to other aspects such as the need for a hospital, which is something that is under provincial jurisdiction.
- There were no differences found for any socio-demographic characteristic for this item in 2013.

Figure 30 presents the satisfaction level people have for fire and ambulance services, based on the portion of the sample who utilized these services⁸ in the past 12 months, and those who did not use these services. It should be noted that 51 respondents (10.2% of the sample) indicated that they “did not know” enough about these services to rate them.

FIGURE 30
Quality of Fire and Ambulance Services



Highlights from Figure 30

- It can be seen from Figure 30 that most residents (regardless of use) have a positive view of fire and ambulance services in Strathcona County, with strong positive feelings more prevalent among users than non-users.⁹ This demonstrates that recipients were pleased with the quality of services received when these services were needed.
- Overall, 8 people (1.7% 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, while others thought that response times should be improved.
- No differences were found between gender groups or the length of time that people lived in the County. However, differences were found between age groups and location of residence for this item in 2013.

⁸ Overall, 14.6% of respondents in 2013 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 2007-2012.

⁹ 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 ($\chi^2 = 25.48, 4 df, p = .000$). A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -4.14, 447 df, p = .000$) confirms that users of fire and ambulance services rated these services higher than non-users.

As seen in Figure 31, a further analysis of this service revealed that more Sherwood Park residents (regardless of use) were satisfied with the service (87.5% *very high or high*) compared with those living in rural areas (75.3% *very high or high*).¹⁰ In Figure 32, it can be seen the perceptions of Fire and Ambulance Services were higher for older residents compared to younger ones.

FIGURE 31
Quality of Fire and Ambulance Services
Urban & Rural Comparisons

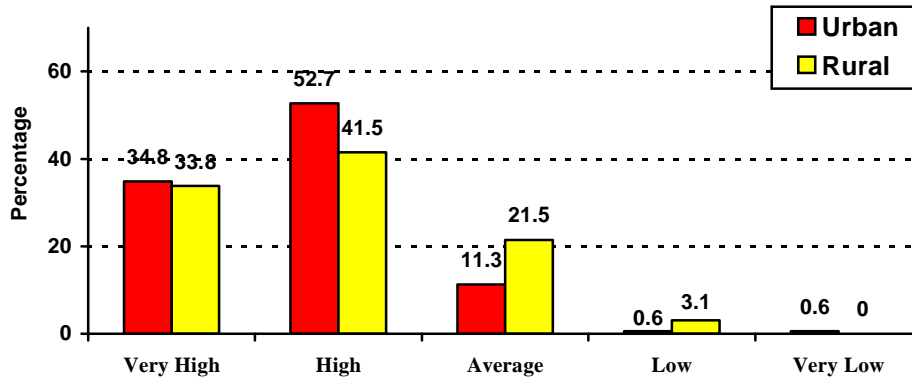
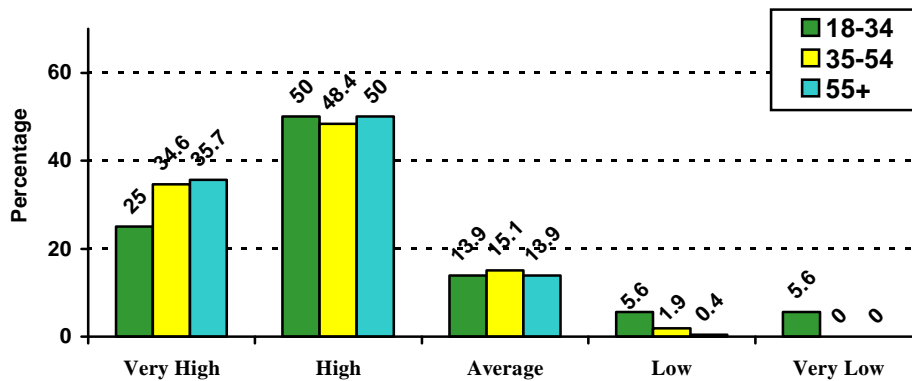


FIGURE 32
Quality of Fire and Ambulance Services
Age Comparisons



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

¹⁰ 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 ($\chi^2 = 14.11, 4 \text{ df}, p = .007$).

has been done. Figure 33 shows the trends from 2008 to 2013. The current study shows that positive perceptions toward this service are at an all-time high.

FIGURE 33
Quality of Fire and Ambulance Services User Trends 2008 - 2013

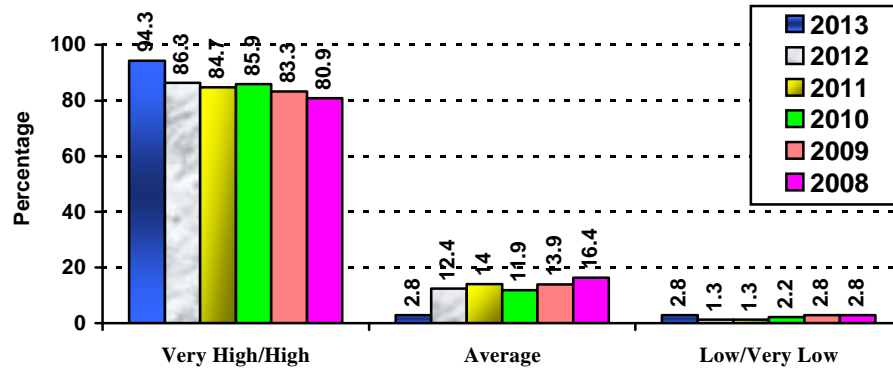
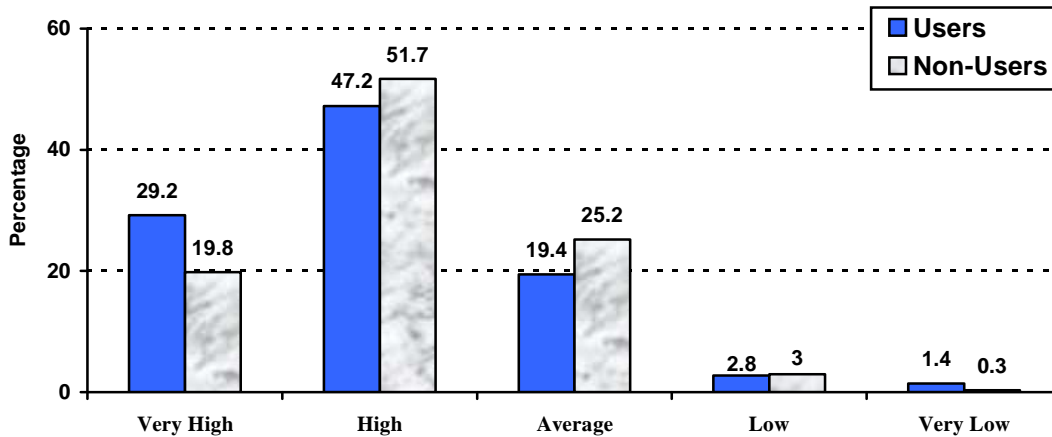


Figure 34 presents the satisfaction level for RCMP services, based on those who used these services¹¹ in the past 12 months and those who did not.

FIGURE 34
Quality of RCMP Services

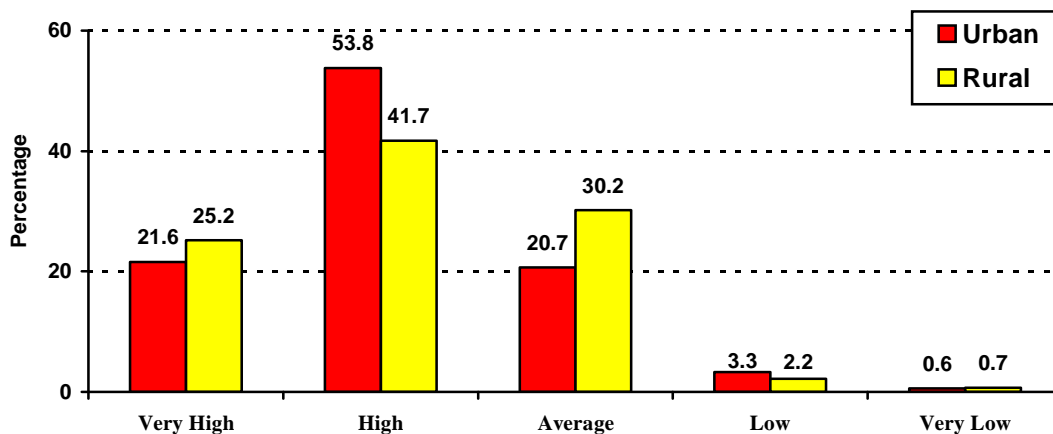


¹¹Overall, 145 respondents (29% of the 2013 sample) indicated that they had used the RCMP within the past 12 months. This reported usage is slightly lower than what was reported in the 2012 satisfaction surveys. It should also be noted that 23 people (4.6%) did not rate the service in 2013 on the basis that they did not know enough about the RCMP to give a rating.

Highlights from Figure 34

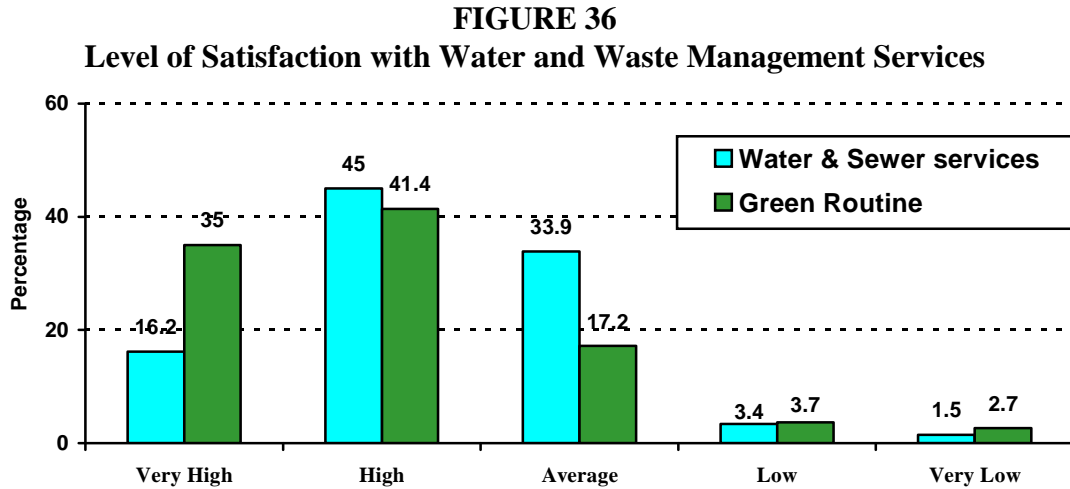
- As seen in Figure 34, most residents, regardless of use in the past 12 months, have a positive view of RCMP in Strathcona County. However, direct users gave stronger “very high” ratings than non-users.
- Ratings provided by both users and non-users in 2013 were similar to trends found in previous years.
- No statistical differences were found when socio-demographic characteristics were measured for this service.
- Users and non-users (17 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 less emphasis on handing out speeding tickets and improve response times for real emergencies. Others thought that the presence of police officers should be improved, particularly in the rural parts of the county.
- A further analysis of this service revealed that residents were relatively happy with the RCMP services, regardless of where they live (Figure 35). The 2013 trends were very similar to what was found in the last five satisfaction surveys with respect to urban/rural location. No statistical differences were found between urban and rural residents in 2013.

FIGURE 35
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 36 presents the satisfaction level of residents for these services, regardless of where they live.¹²



Highlights from Figure 36

- It can be seen from Figure 36 that residents were generally satisfied with these services. A further examination of the ratings revealed that 76.4% gave *very high/high* ratings for the Green Routine in 2013. On a year by year comparative basis, this is higher than the 74.4% rating given in 2012 but lower than the 77.5% rating found in 2011. The 2013 rating is also 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 lower in 2013 (61.2%) compared to 2012 (62.1%).

¹² Overall, 93 people (18.6%) did not rate *water & sewer services* and 17 people (3.4%) did not rate the *green routine services* in 2013. These patterns are about the same as number of residents who did not rate these services in the 2011 and 2012 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.

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 37 and 38).

FIGURE 37
Level of Satisfaction with Water Services
Urban & Rural Comparisons

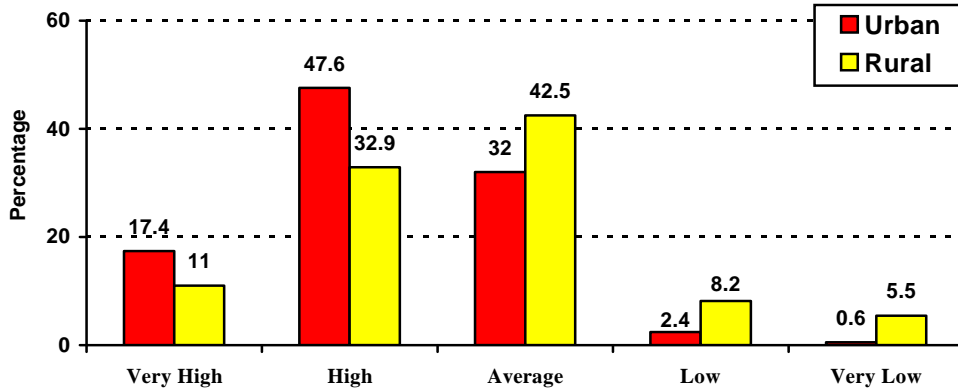
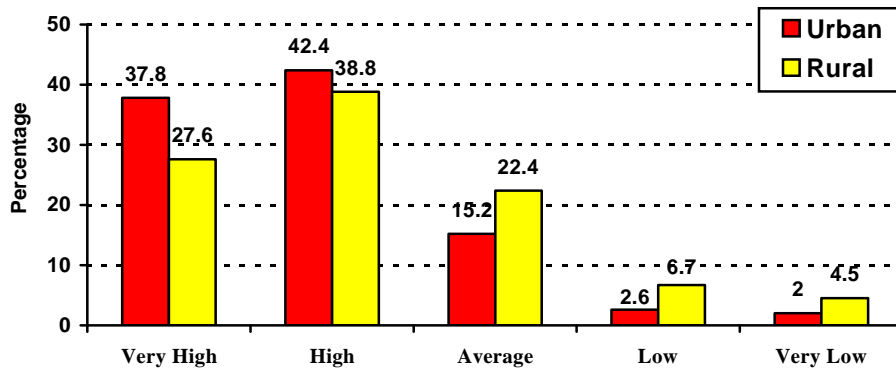


FIGURE 38
Level of Satisfaction with Green Routine Service
Urban & Rural Comparisons



Highlights from Figures 37 & 38

- A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between where one lives and how one rated *water and sewage* ($\chi^2 = 21.92, 4 \text{ df}, p = .000$) and the *Green Routine* ($\chi^2 = 12.76, 4 \text{ df}, p = .013$).
- 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

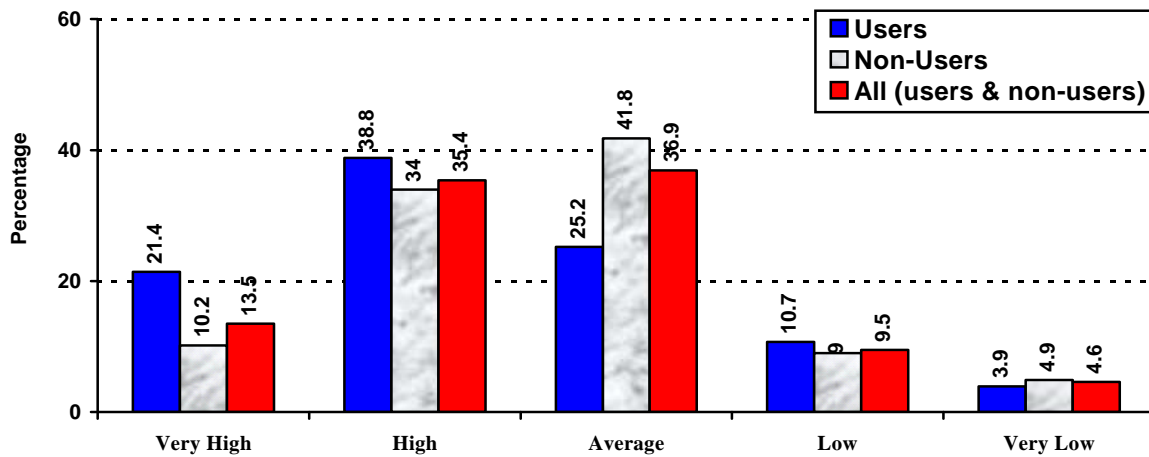
services, 20 people (4.9% of the sample who rated the service) commented. In this year's study, most of the comments focused on the water utility rate charges. There were also a few residents who felt that some of the sewer systems needed to be upgraded.

- With respect to the Green Routine, 31 residents (6.4% of the sample) who rated the service as *low* or *very low* had comments. Many residents in this year's survey were dissatisfied with the bi-weekly pickup schedule.
- It should be noted that the percentage of residents who were unhappy with the Green Routine service dropped to 6.4% in 2013 compared to 9.5% in 2012.
- Outside of location, no other demographics were factors in determining differences with respect to the Green Routine or Water services.

Transit Services in Strathcona County

People were asked to rate their satisfaction with transit services in the County. Figure 39 presents the satisfaction level for transit services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services¹³ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 153 residents (30.6% of the sample) did not rate transit service on the basis that they did not know anything about the service.

FIGURE 39
Satisfaction with Strathcona County Transit Service

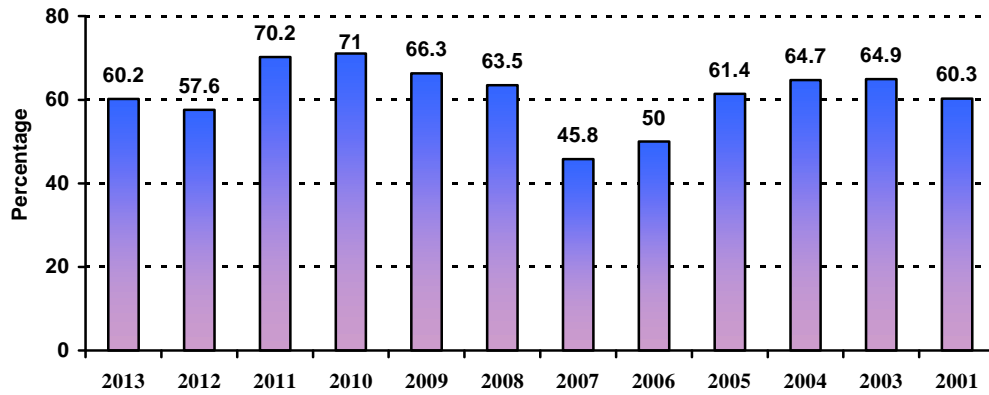


Highlights from Figure 39

- Figure 39 indicates that 48.9% of residents (regardless of use) have a positive view of transit services in Strathcona County. This is 3% lower than what was found in 2012.
- It can also be seen that 14.6% of users of the transit service have low or very low levels of satisfaction with the service, which is about 1% lower than 2012.
- In comparison to previous surveys, it can be seen in Figure 40 that the percentage of users rating this service as *very high/high* has rebounded slightly from last year’s ratings.

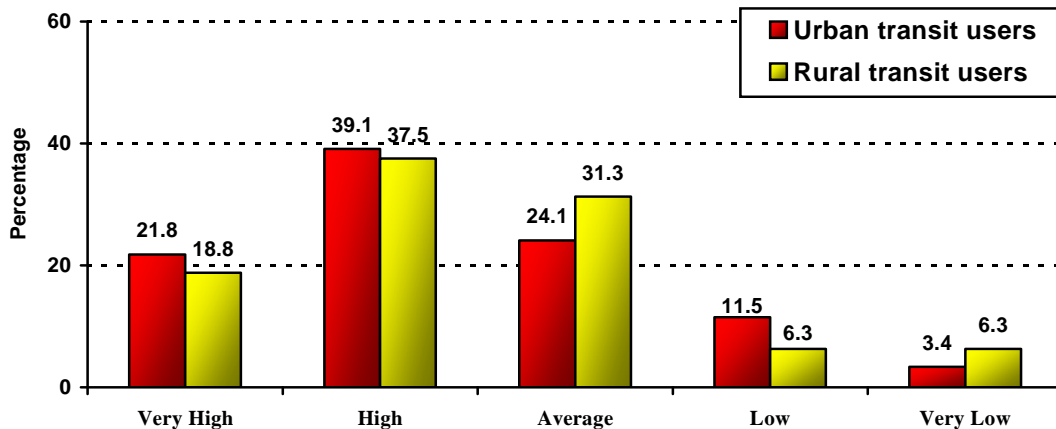
¹³ Overall, 21.6% 25.8% of respondents indicated they had used transit services within the past 12 months. This is 4.2% lower than what was recorded in 2012.

FIGURE 40
“Very High/High” Combined Satisfaction Ratings with Strathcona County Transit Service by Transit Users 2001 – 2013 Comparisons¹⁴



- A further analysis found that majority of transit users (83.3%) live in Sherwood Park, while the remaining 16.7% lived in rural Strathcona County. This has been consistent for many years now.
- It can be seen that the perceptions of **users of public transit** were fairly similar among urban and rural residence. It can be seen in Figure 41 that the combined *very high/high* ratings shows very little difference between urban resident users (60.9%) and rural resident users (56.3%).

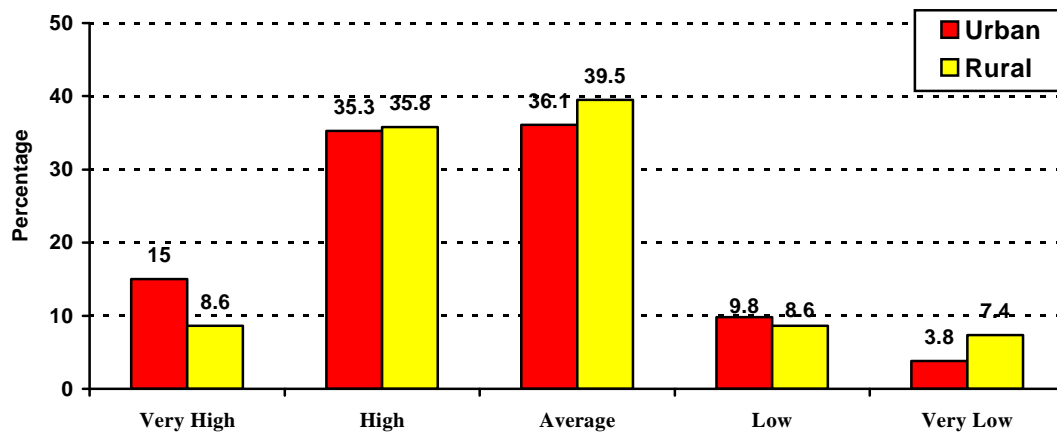
FIGURE 41
Satisfaction with Strathcona County Transit Service by users Urban and Rural Comparisons



¹⁴ 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 42. No statistical differences were found on perceptions toward transit use based on where a resident lived within the County.

FIGURE 42
Satisfaction with Strathcona County Transit Service
Urban and Rural Comparisons

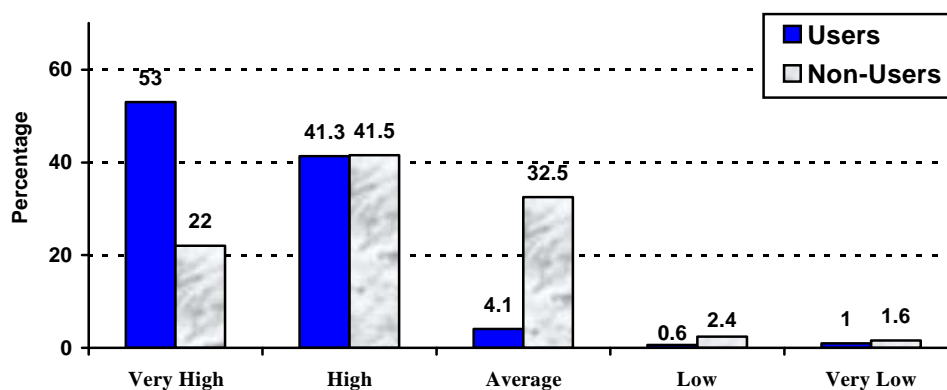


- There were also no statistically significant differences noted between any other demographic items and how residents rated transit services.
- The 49 people (14.1% of the sample) who gave transit services a *low/very low* rating were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. A variety of ideas 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 calls for more park and ride spots to encourage ridership. 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.

Library Services in Strathcona County

Figure 43 presents the satisfaction level with the Strathcona County Library, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services¹⁵ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 62 people (12.4% 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 43
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library by Use



Highlights from Figure 43

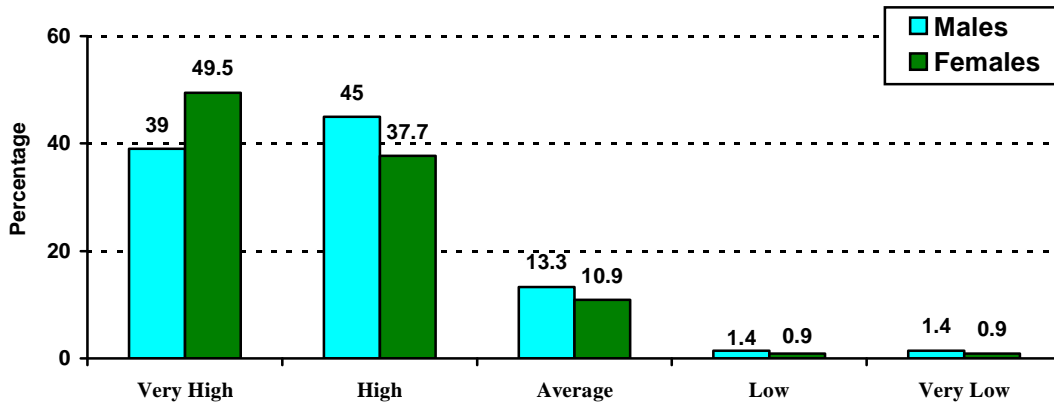
- Most residents (Figure 43) have a positive view of the library, regardless of whether they use it. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between use and how one rated library services.¹⁶ It can be seen that 84.3% users are more likely to give the library a combined *very high/high* rating compared to 63.5% who did not use it (but nonetheless gave the library a positive rating).
- There were 10 people (2.2% of the sample) who rated the library service as *low* or *very low*. Multiple comments from residents who thought it was too noisy in the open area, and not be overly concerned with creating a social meeting place in the library. There were a couple of people who wondered why there was still a need for a library, as they were under the perception that everything is electronic these days.

¹⁵ Overall, 63.8% of respondents indicated they had used the library within the past 12 months. This is slightly higher than what was reported in 2012.

¹⁶ For library services, ($\chi^2 = 81.08, 4 \text{ df}, p=.000$).

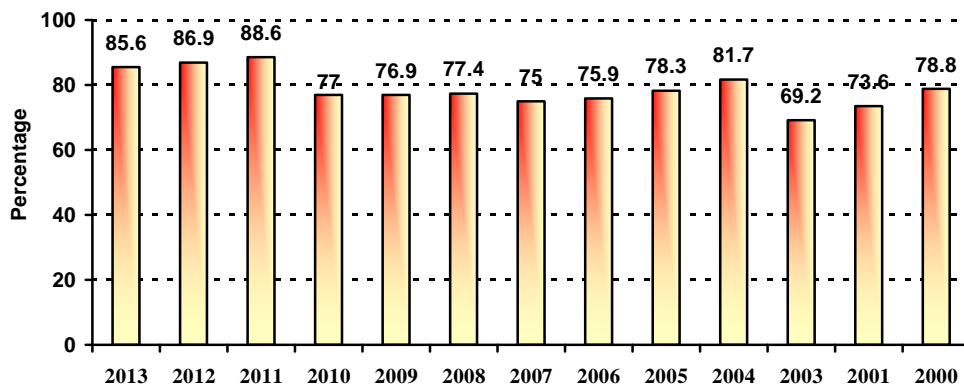
In terms of demographics, it can be seen in Figure 44 that females slightly more satisfied with the library service in 2013 compared to males, though the differences were not statistically significant.

FIGURE 44
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library
Gender Comparisons



A further investigation shown in Figure 45 reveals that an overall *very high/high* satisfaction level with the Strathcona Library (regardless of use) is the third highest it has ever been since measurement began in 2000.

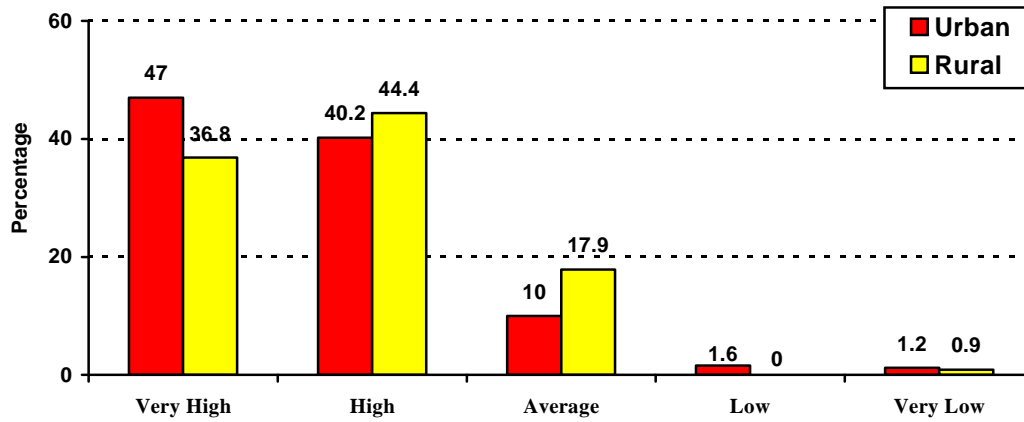
FIGURE 45
Combined “Very High/High” Satisfaction Ratings with Strathcona County Library
2000 – 2013 Comparisons¹⁷



¹⁷ There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

It was further determined that within Sherwood Park, 68.9% are library users; in Rural Strathcona, 52% are library users. A breakdown of the satisfaction ratings of the library by all urban and rural residents (regardless of use) is shown in Figure 46.

FIGURE 46
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library Regardless of Use
Urban and Rural Comparisons

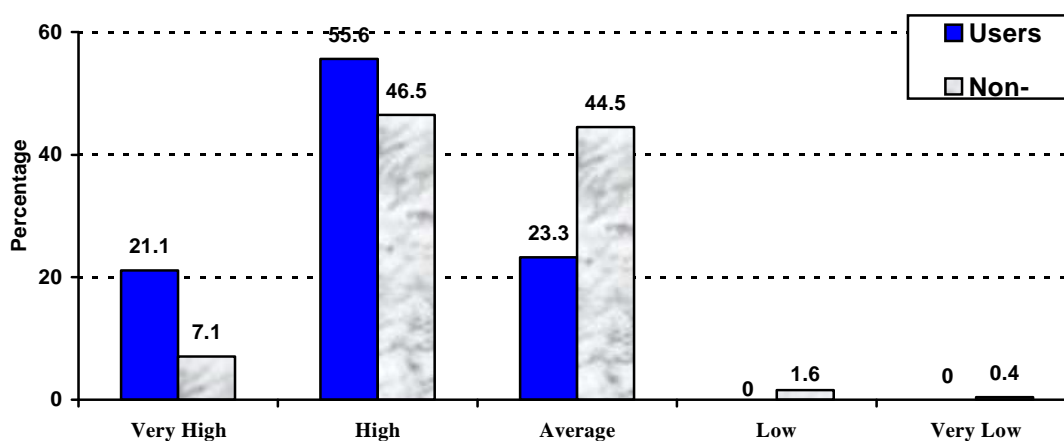


There were no statistical differences in perception toward the library on the basis of where the resident lived. It can be seen that 87.2% of those living in Sherwood Park give the library a combined *very high/high* rating compared to 81.2% of those living in rural Strathcona County.

Information and Volunteer Centre Services in Strathcona County

Figure 47 presents the satisfaction level with the Information and Volunteer Centre (IVC), 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 31.2% of residents (n=156) did not rate the Centre on the basis that they did not know anything about it.

FIGURE 47
Satisfaction with the Information and Volunteer Centre



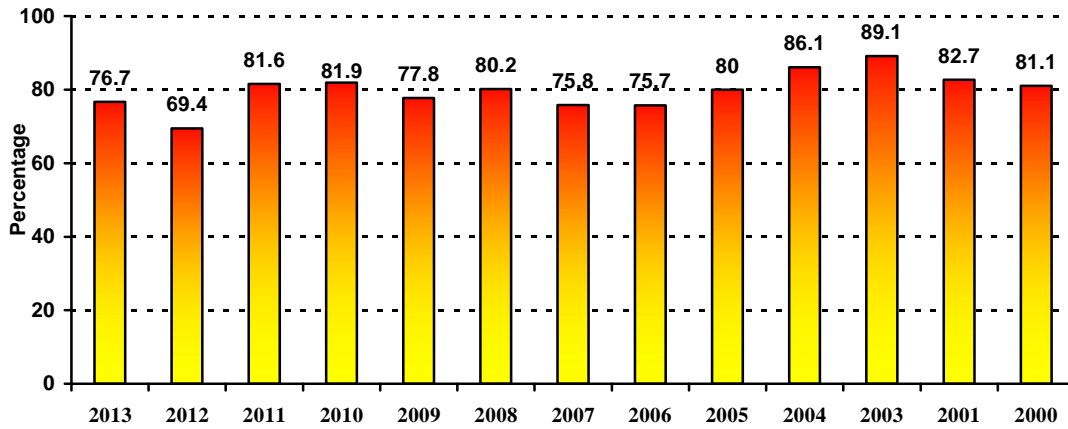
Highlights from Figure 47

- It can be seen from Figure 47 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,¹⁹ where users are more likely to give the IVC a higher rating compared to those who did not use it.
- A further investigation revealed that the combined *very high/high* satisfaction levels with users of the IVC was 76.7%, which was a strong rebound from last year's results, but still lower than the ratings found in since 2007, as shown in Figure 48.

¹⁸ Overall, 18.8% of respondents indicated that they had used the Information and Volunteer Centre within the past 12 months. This is about 2% lower than 2012.

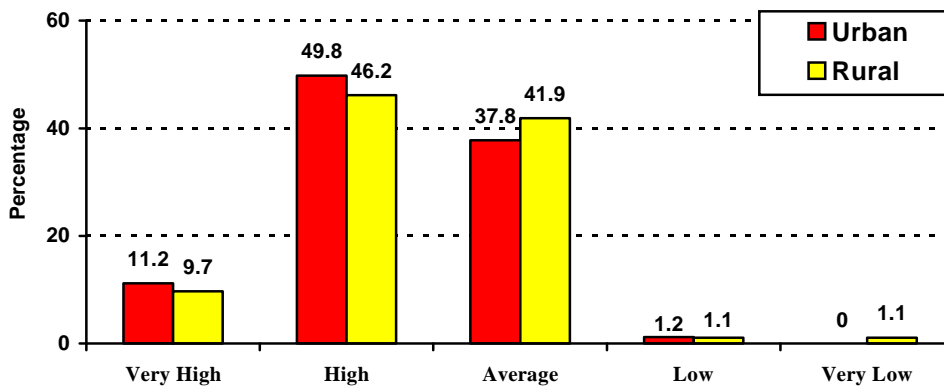
¹⁹ For the IVC, ($\chi^2 = 22.69, 4 \text{ df}, p=.000$).

FIGURE 48
Combined “Very High/High” Satisfaction Ratings for the Information and Volunteer Centre by Users 2000 – 2013 Comparisons²⁰



- The majority of IVC users live in Sherwood Park (77.7%) while the remaining 22.3% live in rural parts of Strathcona County.
- Looking at this on the basis of where people lived, 20.9% of Sherwood Park residents used the IVC. Among rural residents surveyed, 14% used the IVC.
- The satisfaction ratings for the IVC (regardless of use) were about the same for both urban and rural area residents (Figure 49).

FIGURE 49
Satisfaction with the Information and Volunteer Centre Urban and Rural Comparisons



- A total of 156 people (31.2%) did not rate the Information and Volunteer Centre because they did not know enough about it to provide a rating. This

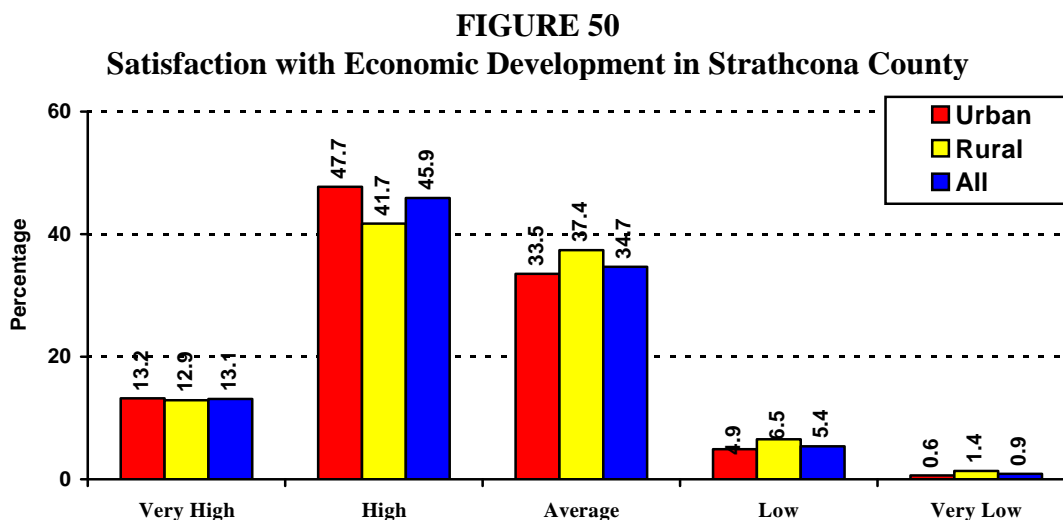
²⁰ There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

finding is just over 5% lower than 2012, which indicates that more residents have a basic awareness of the IVC compared to previous years.

- No differences were seen among any socio-demographic variables with respect to perceptions of satisfaction of the IVC.
- Overall, 5 people gave the Information and Volunteer Centre a *low* or *very low* rating. Most of the comments focused on the need for the IVC to improve its profile, by letting people know about volunteer opportunities that are available and let people know what the hours are.

Economic Development Services in Strathcona County

Figure 50 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.²¹



Highlights from Figure 50

- As can be seen in Figure 50, the perception of residents toward economic development by the County was generally positive, regardless of where people live. Overall, 59% of all residents gave *very high/high* ratings for the economic development being done at the present time. This combined rating is 2% lower than what was posted in 2012.

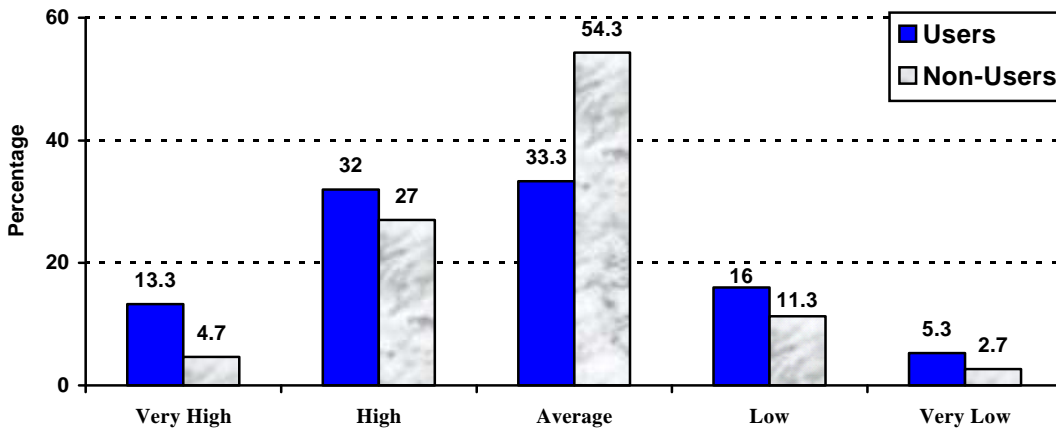
²¹ Overall, 36 people (7.8% of the sample) did not rate this service, which is about the same as the 2012 survey.

- No differences were seen among any socio-demographic variables with one’s satisfaction of economic development.
- Twenty-nine residents throughout the County (6.3% of the sample) expressed a low or very low level of satisfaction with economic development in the County. There were a variety of different comments expressed about current businesses, ranging from those who thought that more businesses were needed, such as new restaurants and retail stores, to those who felt the exact opposite way, stating that there were too many businesses in Sherwood Park now, especially strip malls.

Building & Inspection Services in Strathcona County

Figure 51 presents the satisfaction level for planning, building and inspection services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services²² in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 169 people (33.8% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it.

FIGURE 51
Satisfaction with Building Permit and Inspection Services in Strathcona County



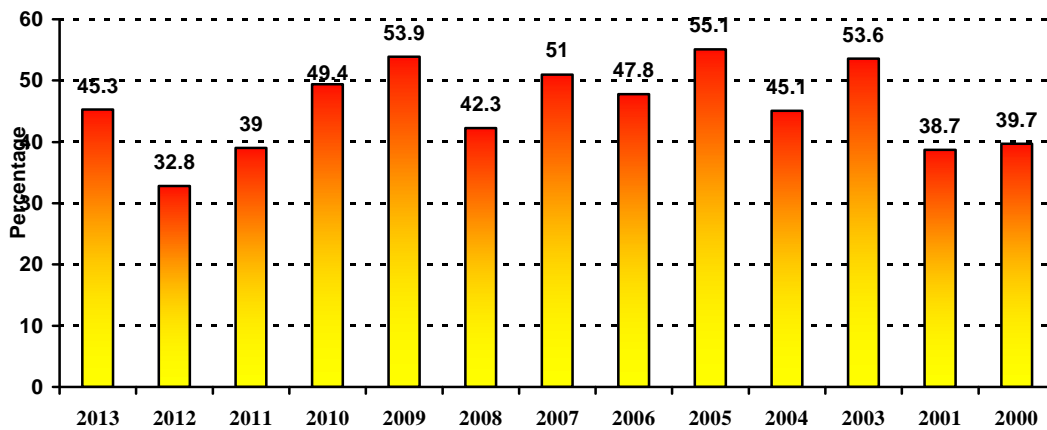
It can be seen from Figure 51 that residents who made use of the building permit and inspection services have a more positive view of it compared to those who had not

²² Overall, 15.8% of respondents indicated that they had used the planning, building and inspection services within the past 12 months. This is about 3% higher than last year’s survey.

used it in the past 12 months. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between use and how one rated this service.²³

From a trending perspective, it can be seen in Figure 52 that users who give this service a *very high/high* rating has sharply rebounded (in a positive direction) from last year’s all-time low.

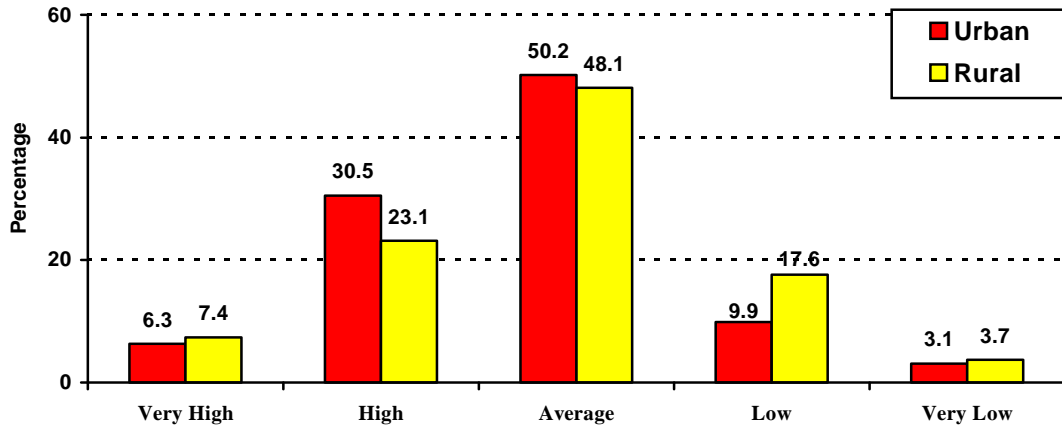
FIGURE 52
Combined “Very High/High” Satisfaction Ratings for Building Permit and Inspection Services among Users: 2000 – 2013 Comparisons



A comparison of perceptions by location (regardless of use/non-use of the service) is shown in Figure 52. 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.

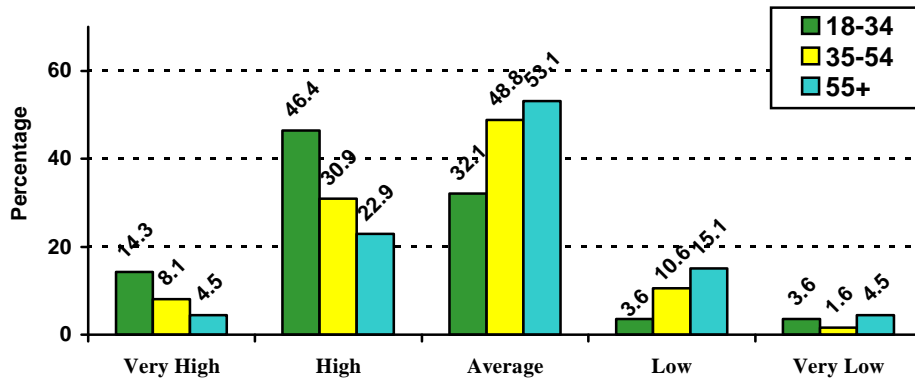
²³ For building permit and inspection services, ($\chi^2 = 14.40, 4 \text{ df}, p=.006$).

FIGURE 52
Satisfaction with Building Permit and Inspection Services in Strathcona County – Urban & Rural Comparisons



A further analysis of this service by other demographics revealed that positive perceptions of building permit and inspection services decreased as the age of residents increased (Figure 53).²⁴

FIGURE 53
Satisfaction with Building Permit and Inspection Services in Strathcona County Age Comparisons



The 52 people (15.7% of the sample that expressed opinions) who rated this service as *low* or *very low* were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. Like 2012, in this year’s study, there were repeated concerns voiced by residents called for less

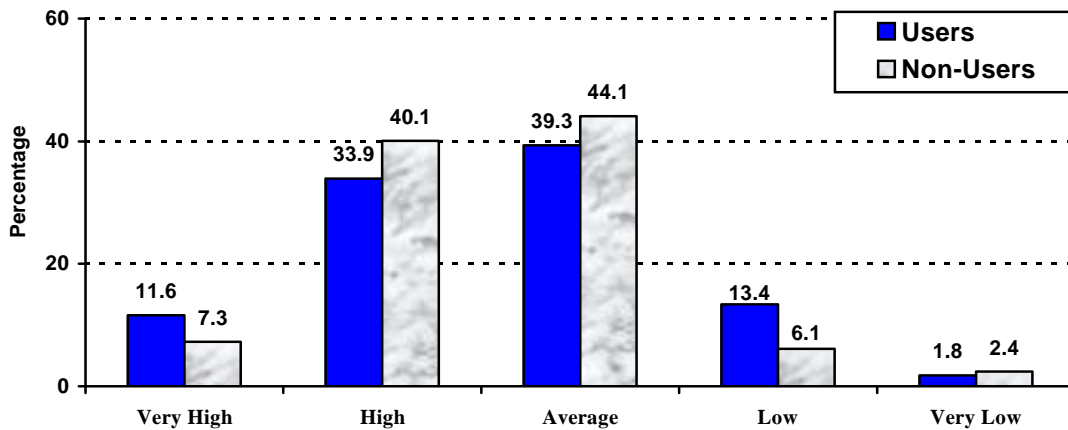
²⁴ A one-way analysis of variance confirmed that the main spread was between the youngest and oldest age groups, with $F(2,327) = 6.98, p=.001$.

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

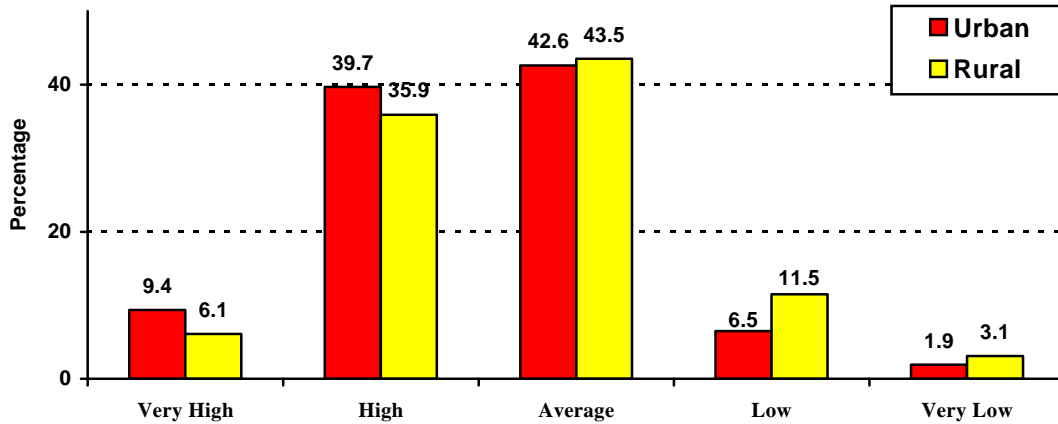
Figure 54 presents the satisfaction level with bylaw enforcement, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services²⁵ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 59 people (11.8% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it. Figure 55 shows a comparison between urban and rural residents for this service.

FIGURE 54
Satisfaction with Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County



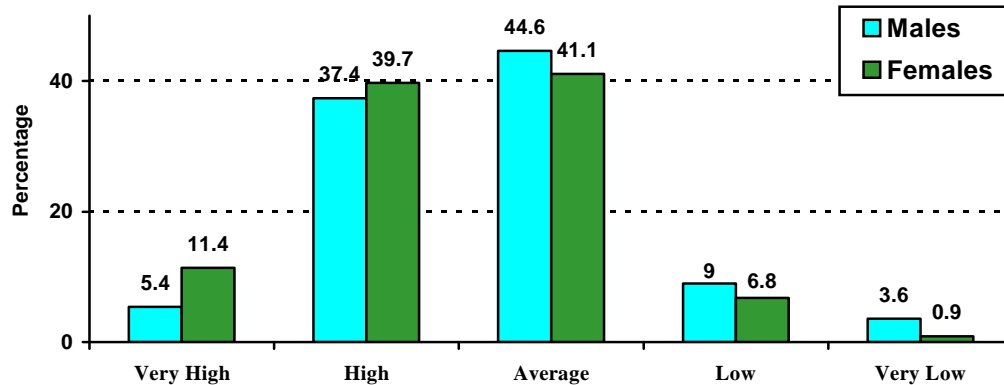
²⁵ Overall, 23.4% of respondents indicated they had utilized bylaw enforcement services within the past 12 months. This is 3% lower than what was reported in the 2012 survey.

FIGURE 55
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 2013, females were more likely to have positive perceptions toward bylaw services than males.²⁶

FIGURE 56
Satisfaction with Bylaw Enforcement Services– Gender Comparisons



The 45 residents (10.2% 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, with the most predominant comment attributed to those who felt that more bylaw officers were needed to enforce the existing

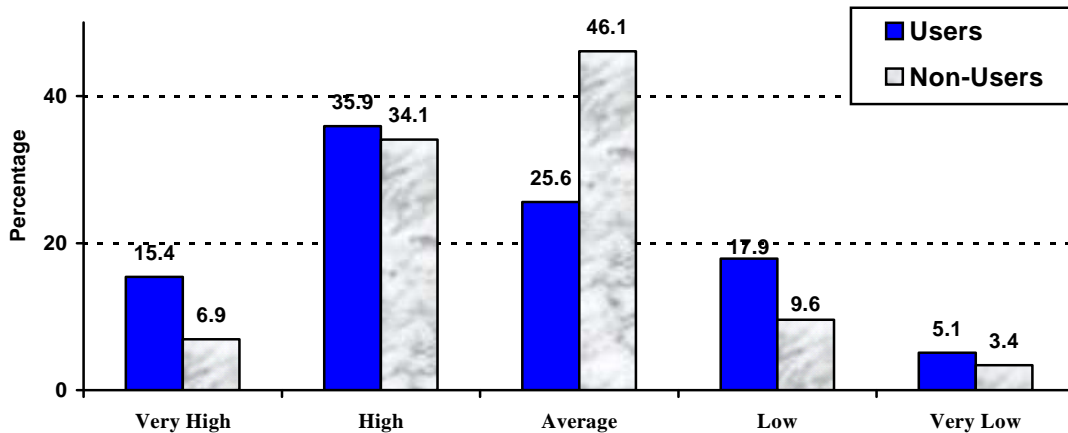
²⁶ For bylaw enforcement services, ($\chi^2 = 9.39, 4 \text{ df}, p=.05$).

bylaws. There were a few comments specifically associated with enforcing bylaws pertaining to dogs and what people felt were unfair traffic violations.

Agricultural Services in Strathcona County

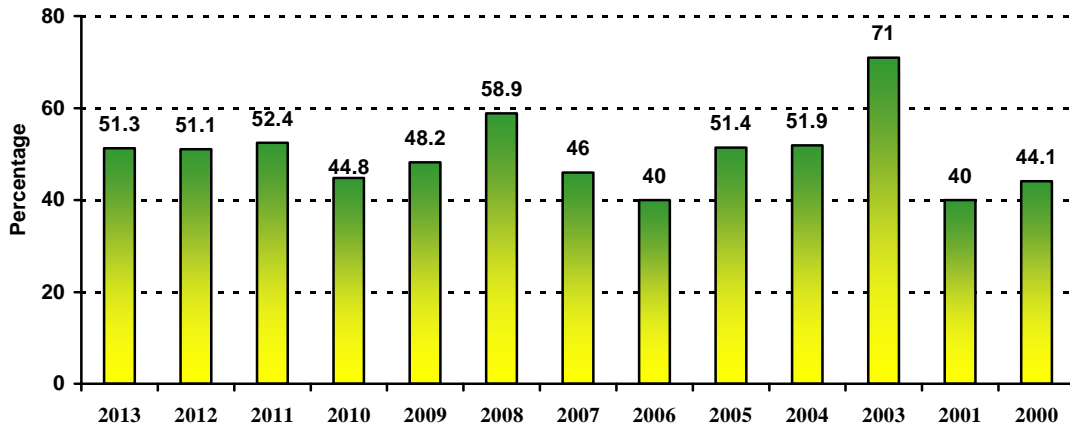
Figure 57 presents the satisfaction level with weed control and other agricultural services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 53 people (10.6% of the sample) did not rate this service 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 57
Satisfaction with Weed Control, Soil Management, Wildlife Problems
and other Agricultural Services in Strathcona County



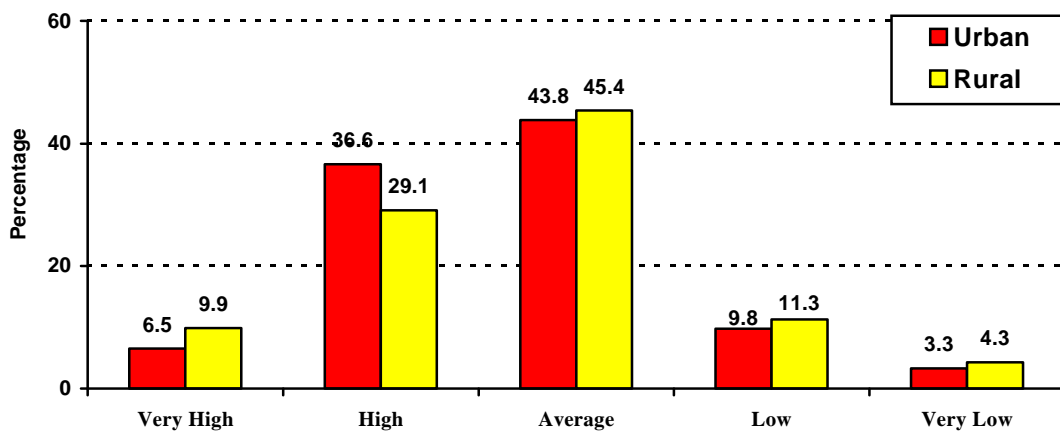
A comparison of this year’s results with past satisfaction studies (Figure 58) revealed that the percentage of users who gave the service a *very high* or *high* rating this year is similar to last year’s survey results.

FIGURE 58
“Very High/High” Combined Satisfaction Ratings with the Different Agricultural Services by Users of the Service-- 2000 – 2013 Comparisons²⁷



A comparison of perceptions by location (regardless of use/non-use of the service) is shown in Figure 59. No statistical differences were seen between urban and rural residents, and no differences were seen among any other demographic variables.

FIGURE 59
Satisfaction with Weed Control, Soil Management, Wildlife Problems and other Agricultural Services – Urban & Rural Comparisons



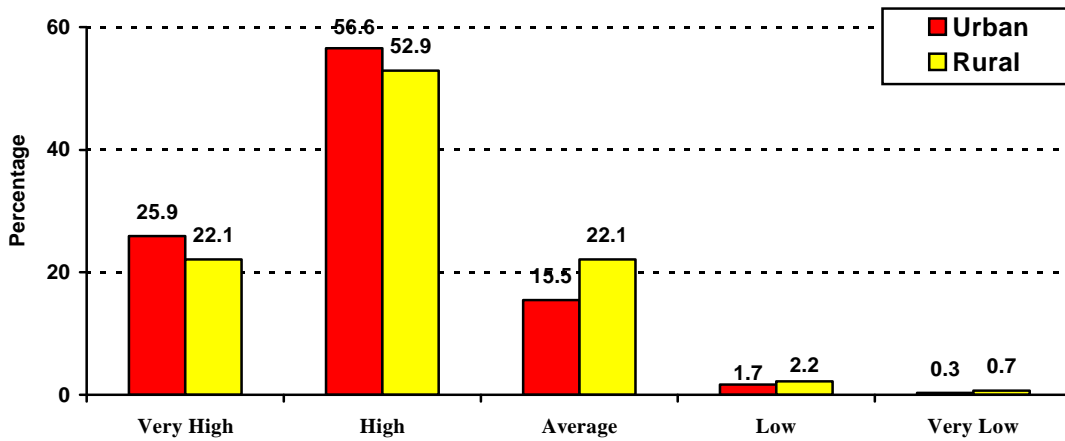
Overall, the 53 residents (14.4% of the sample) who had a *low/very low* level of satisfaction with this service were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. As in previous years, the majority of the comments focused on better weed control, especially

thistles and dandelions. As in 2011 and 2012, several residents commented on the lack of weed control on County land itself. In this year’s study, there were also a concern about coyotes and rabbits

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 60 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 (21 people, or 4.2% of the sample) did not rate this item.

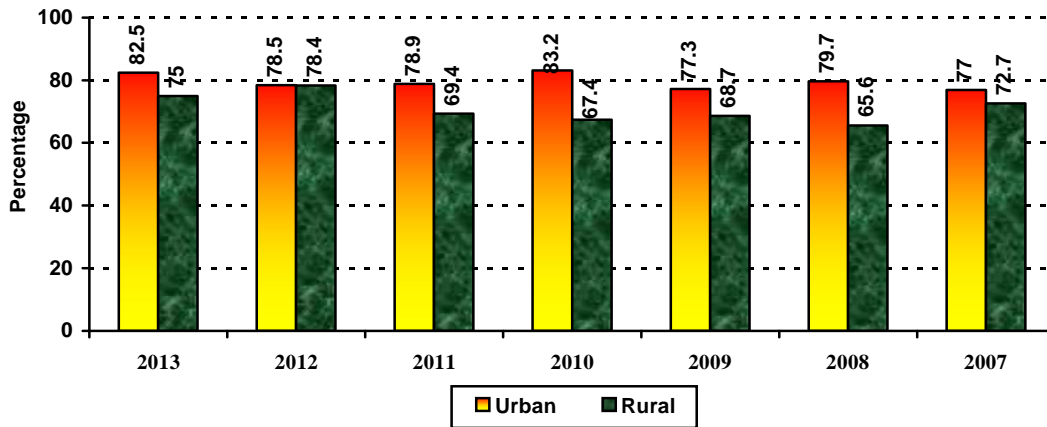
FIGURE 60
Satisfaction with Parks, Green Spaces and Sports Fields in Strathcona County
Urban & Rural Comparisons



²⁷ There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

As seen in Figure 61, this year’s combined *very high/high* rating for the urban area (82.5%) is higher than last year, and is the strongest posting since 2010. For rural residents, their combined *very high/high* ratings this year (75%) is slightly lower than 2012.

FIGURE 61
Combined “Very High/High” Satisfaction Ratings for Parks, Green Spaces and Sport Fields: 2007 – 2013 Comparisons



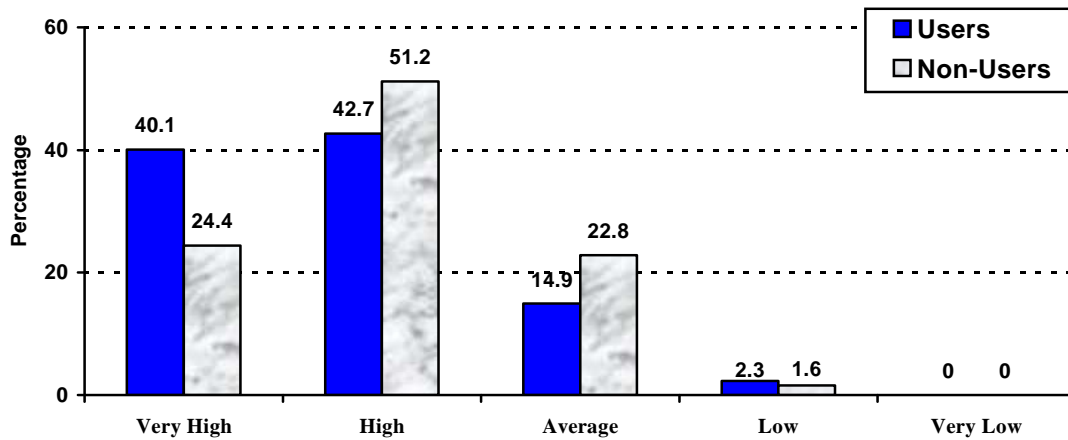
The 11 people (2.3% of the sample) who gave the parks, green spaces and sport fields a low rating were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. Most of the comments in this year’s study revolved around a need for more parks, walking paths and green spaces, and to do a better job of maintaining and improving the sports fields that currently exist in the County.

Figure 62 presents the satisfaction level with indoor recreation facilities in the County, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these facilities²⁸ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 28 people (5.6% of the sample) did not rate these facilities on the basis that they did not

²⁸ 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 the same as the 2012 survey results.

know enough about them. In this year's study, there was a relationship between use of the facilities and perceptions of how satisfied residents were with them.²⁹

FIGURE 62
Satisfaction with Indoor Recreation Facilities in Strathcona County

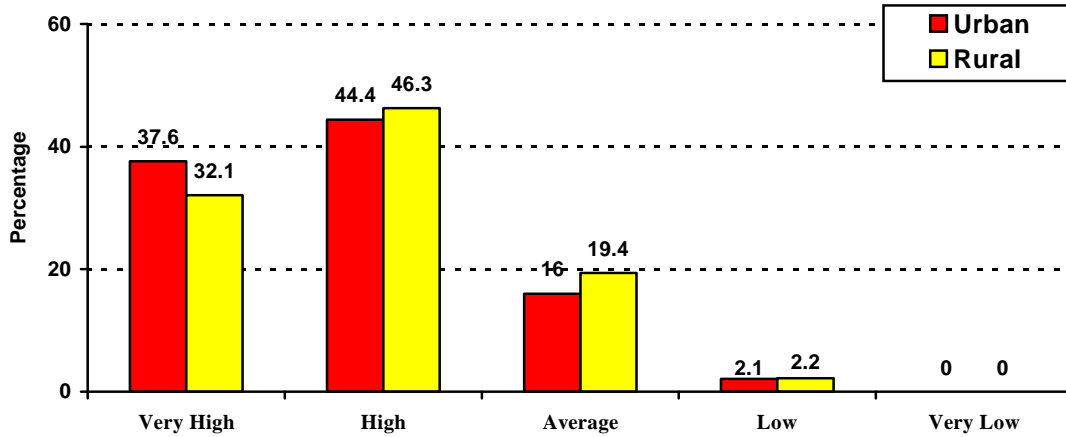


A further analysis revealed that 72.3% of Sherwood Park residents used the indoor recreation facilities at least once in the past 12 months, while 65.3% of rural residents made use of these facilities.

²⁹ For indoor recreation facilities, ($\chi^2 = 11.23, 3 \text{ df}, p=.01$). A t-test looking at mean scores also confirmed that users had a slightly more positive view toward the facilities compared to non-users ($t = -2.77, 470 \text{ df}, p=.006$).

It can be seen in Figure 63 that regardless of use, the combined *very high/high* satisfaction levels for urban residents (82%) was slightly higher than it was for rural residents (78.4%).

FIGURE 63
Satisfaction with Indoor Recreation Facilities in Strathcona County

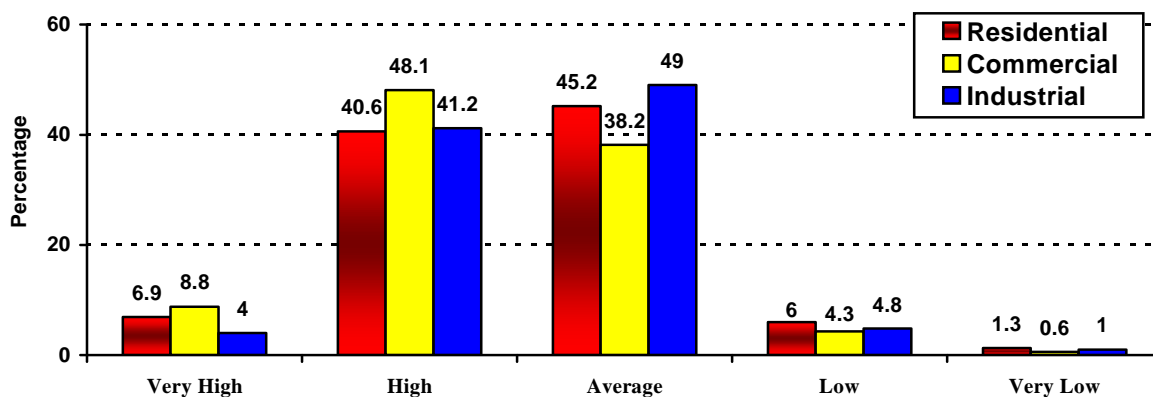


The 10 people (2.1% of the sample) who had a low level of satisfaction with the facilities were asked to suggest ways these could be improved. Similar to comments found in 2011 and 2012, most of this year’s concerns focused on the need for more indoor facilities, both pools and arenas. A few residents felt that it was difficult to get into swimming lessons or aqua-size classes because they are so popular. There were also some concerns that the cost for accessing facilities was becoming prohibitive, especially for larger families.

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 64 below.

FIGURE 64
Quality of Various Developments throughout Strathcona County



Highlights from Figure 64

- Overall, respondents who rated the different types of developments were 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=104 or 20.8% of the sample) did not rate the quality of industrial developments.³⁰
- The trends noted in this figure are similar to trends found in studies conducted in 2008 - 2012.
- No differences in perceptions were seen between those living in Sherwood Park and those living in other parts of Strathcona County with respect to quality of residential, commercial or industrial development.
- Those who rated the quality of any of these developments as *low* or *very low* were asked to indicate why they felt that way. Many residents used this section

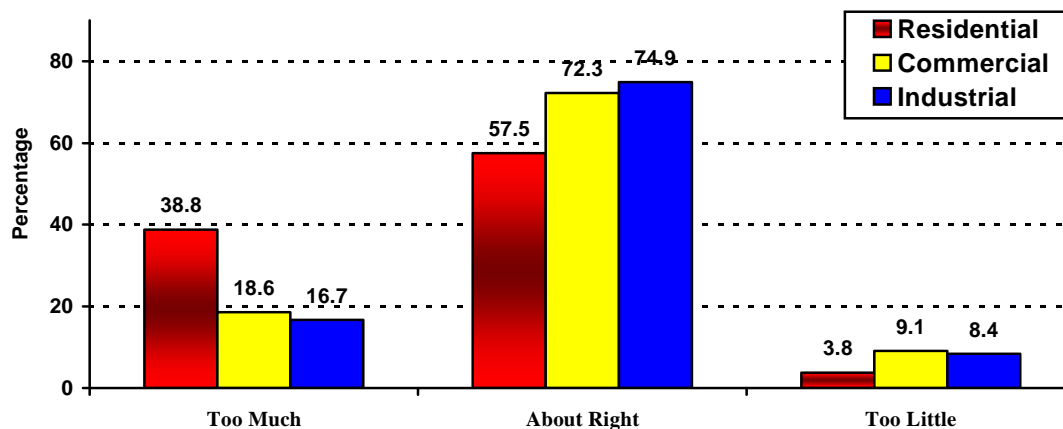
³⁰ Overall, 35 residents (7% of the sample) did not rate the quality of residential developments and 34 residents (6.8% of the sample) did not rate the quality of commercial developments.

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 34 people (7.3% of the sample) who rated the quality of residential developments as low. A common concern was that the houses seemed crammed too close together and in new neighborhoods, seem to look the same. In a related issue, other people wondered if houses that were built too close together would create an inferno if one caught on fire. There were also people who were concerned about larger houses that seemed to be too big for the lots. The quality of new housing was also questioned, as many residents felt that they looked “cheap.”
- Overall, 23 people (4.9% of the sample) who rated the quality of commercial development as low. There were a wide variety of comments in this year’s study, with some people feeling that the stores were too far away from where they lived. One person felt that the lack of a “downtown” in Sherwood Park creates commercial space that seems scattered rather than consolidated. A couple of other people are not happy with the proliferation of big box stores such as Wal-Mart and Home Depot in Sherwood Park.
- For industrial developments, among the 23 people (5.8% of the sample) who rated the quality of development as low, most of the comments centered on safety and health concerns for residents, particularly with respect to air quality. 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 65.

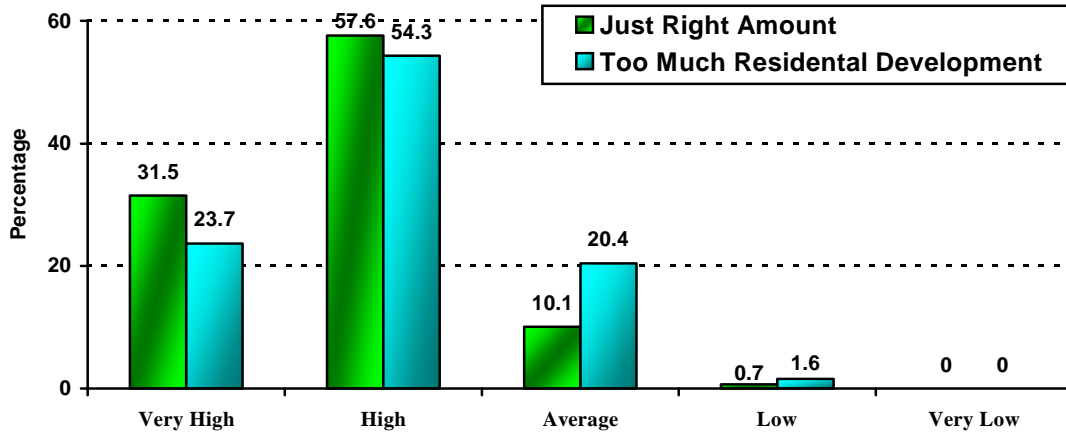
FIGURE 65
Quantity of Various Developments throughout Strathcona County



Highlights from Figure 65

- 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 2013 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 38.8% 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 6% lower).
- A further analysis (as seen in Figure 66) revealed that those who felt there was too much residential development had a strong positive rating on the quality of life in Strathcona County as a whole (78% *very high/high*) though it was lower than those who felt that the amount of residential development was about right 89.1% *very high/high*). As such, while concerns about continued residential development remain, it has not overly affected the perceived quality of one's life in Strathcona County.

FIGURE 66
Perception of the Quality of Life in Strathcona County as a Whole – Comparisons Based on Perceptions of Amount of Residential Growth

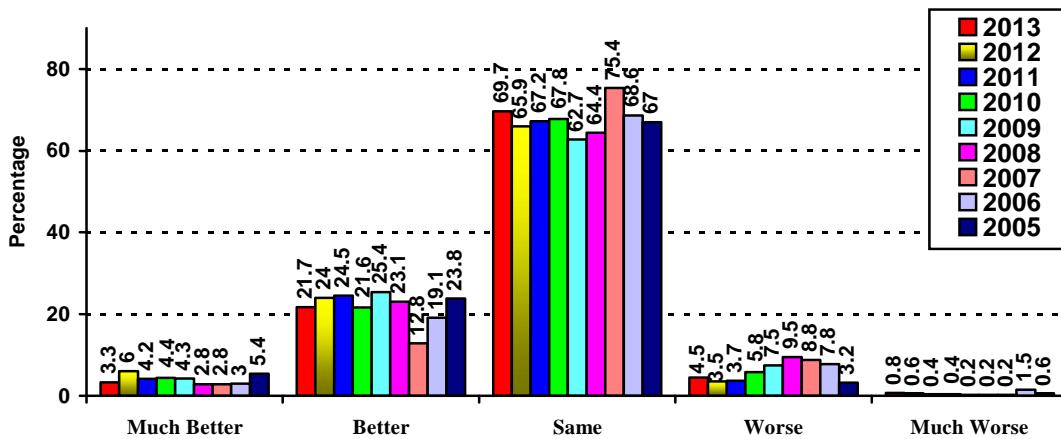


- No differences in perceptions were seen between those living in Sherwood Park and those living in other parts of Strathcona County with respect to amount of industrial development, residential or commercial development.

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 2013 survey results are compared with the results found in the previous surveys dating back to 2005, as shown in Figure 67 below.

FIGURE 67
Quality of Services Now in Strathcona County Compared to 2 years ago 2005-2013

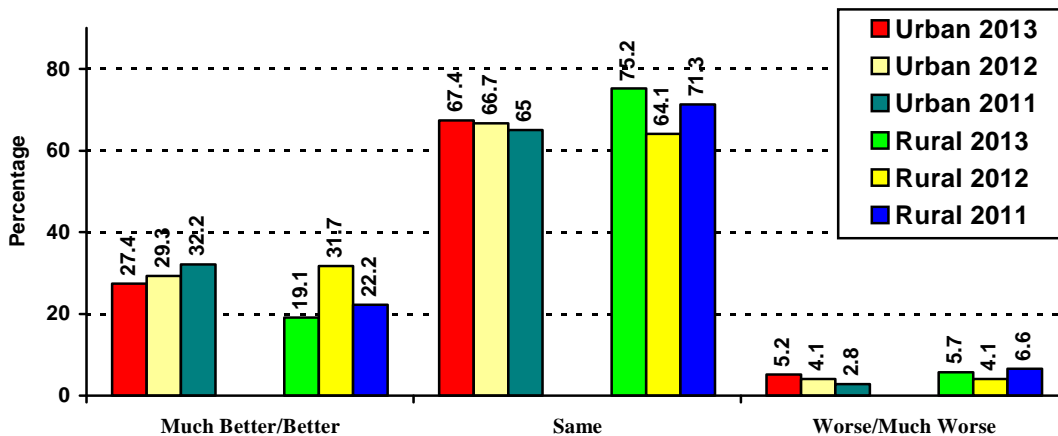


Highlights from Figure 67

- It can be seen that 25% 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 5% lower this year compared to 2012.
- 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 26 people (5.3% 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 the quality of street maintenance in the winter and summer, as well as problems with weed control in the summer. As was the case in 2012, there were some residents who 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 68. There was no statistically significant difference between the urban and rural sectors in 2013. However, a comparison between 2013 and previous years shows a considerable decrease in the *much better/better* ratings for rural residents compared to 2012 (and slightly lower compared to 2011). For urban residents, 2013’s combined *much better/better* results is lower than 2012 and 2011.

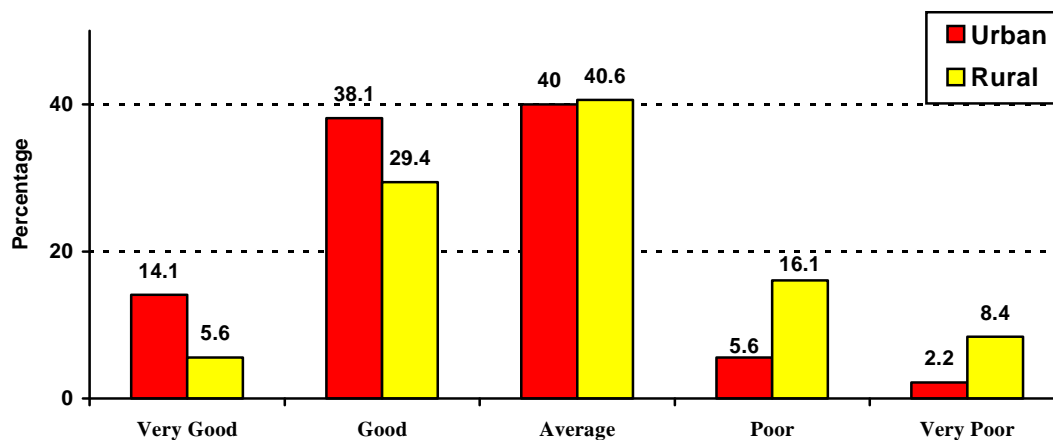
FIGURE 68
Quality of Services Now in Strathcona County Compared to 2 years ago
Urban and Rural Comparisons – 2013, 2012 & 2011 Results



F. Question on Taxes within Strathcona County

Strathcona County taxpayers³¹ 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 69 below.

FIGURE 69
Value for Tax Dollars Spent in Strathcona County
Urban and Rural Comparisons



Highlights from Figure 69

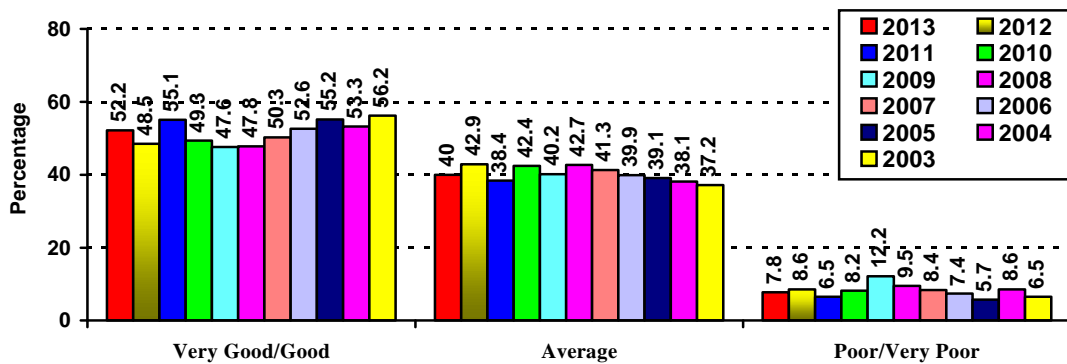
- Statistically, there was a difference between urban and rural residents with respect to how people felt about the value of tax dollars spent on municipal services. This was confirmed by a chi-square procedure ($\chi^2 = 29.82$, 4 df, $p = .000$) and a *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -5.24$, 461 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% of the sample, N=60) 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, particularly with respect to water and sewage services and waste disposal. There were also complaints from Sherwood Park residents about

³¹ In 2013, 93.2% of respondents owned property in Strathcona County and as such, were taxpayers.

what they felt were deteriorating conditions in their neighborhoods, such as increased instances of graffiti, crumbling sidewalks and minimal snow removal.

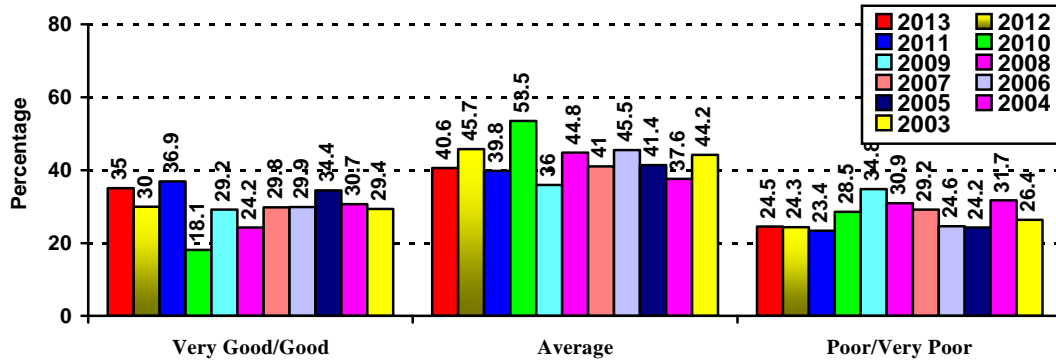
A comparison of trends from 2003- 2013 with respect to perceptions of the value of services for tax dollars are shown in Figure 70 (urban) and Figure 71 (rural). One can see that for urban residents, the perception that residents were getting very good or good value for their tax dollars bounced back from last year’s 2012 findings.

FIGURE 70
Value of Tax Dollars Spent in Strathcona County – Urban Residents (2003-2013)



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. Positive perceptions of value for tax dollars in 2013 bounced back from 2012 to come close to the all-time high posted in 2011. The *poor/very poor* perceptions did not change much since 2011.

FIGURE 71
Value of Tax Dollars Spent in Strathcona County – Rural Residents (2003-2013)



G. Services Provided by Strathcona County Employees

Residents were asked to indicate which County services they had used in the past 12 months. Most survey respondents had used at least one County service during this time period.³² 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 – 2013 vs. 2010 to 2012

Type of Service	N of Users (2013)	% Use 2013	% Use 2012	% Use 2011	% Use 2010
Recycling Depots	407	81.4%	84.0%	80.8%	85.0%
Indoor Recreation Facilities	351	70.2%	70.2%	70.4%	71.8%
Strathcona County Library	319	63.8%	61.8%	63.8%	54.4%
RCMP	145	29.0%	34.0%	32.0%	32.0%
Bylaw Enforcement	117	23.4%	26.6%	22.6%	20.0%
Public Transit Services	108	21.6%	25.8%	21.4%	29.6%
Information & Volunteer Centre	94	18.8%	20.4%	18.0%	17.6%
Building Permit & Inspection Services ³³	79	15.8%	12.8%	--	--
Fire & Ambulance Services	73	14.6%	14.8%	14.4%	13.8%
Planning and Development Services	48	9.6%	9.6%	--	--
Family Support Services	46	9.2%	9.2%	10.6%	9.8%
Agriculture Services	39	7.8%	9.0%	6.4%	8.6%

Most of the municipal services noted above had minor decreases or increases with respect to use by residents in 2013 compared to previous years. The one exception was the RCMP, which had a 5% decrease in usage in 2013 compared to 2012.

³² 25 respondents (5% of the sample) mentioned other municipal services they used (water & sewer, utilities (as a separate entity), transportation, garbage, parks, road maintenance and the off-lease dog park, while another 6 residents (1.2% of the sample) indicated items that were not municipal services (e.g. health care, home care and the farmer's market).

³³ 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 2013 and 2012 is shown in Table 2.³⁴ It can be seen that among residents who were surveyed in 2013, urban residents used 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* and *building permit and inspection services* compared with urban residents.

Table 2
County Services in Strathcona County Reportedly Used by Urban and Rural Residents in the Past 12 Months – 2013 vs. 2012

Type of Service	2013		2012	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Recycling Depots	83.4%	76.7%	<u>86.9%</u>	<u>77.3%</u>
Indoor Recreation Facilities	72.3%	65.3%	<u>75.1%</u>	<u>58.7%</u>
Strathcona County Library	<u>68.9%</u>	<u>52.0%</u>	<u>65.1%</u>	<u>54.0%</u>
RCMP	27.7%	32.0%	33.1%	36.0%
Public Transit Services	<u>25.7%</u>	<u>12.0%</u>	<u>31.1%</u>	<u>13.3%</u>
Building Permit and Inspection Services	<u>13.1%</u>	<u>22.0%</u>	10.9%	17.3%
Bylaw Enforcement	21.7%	27.3%	26.0%	28.0%
Information & Volunteer Centre	20.9%	14.0%	22.0%	16.7%
Fire & Ambulance Services	14.6%	14.7%	13.7%	17.3%
Family Support Services	9.1%	9.3%	9.4%	8.7%
Agriculture Services	<u>4.6%</u>	<u>15.3%</u>	<u>6.0%</u>	<u>16.0%</u>

In terms of changes between years for urban residents, most of the services showed a slight decrease in use in 2013 compared to 2012. Slight increases were seen in the use of *the public library* and *building permit and inspection services*. Among rural residents, there was an increase in the use of the *indoor recreation facilities* and *building permit and inspection services* between 2012 and 2013.

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 72, 73 and 74.

³⁴ 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 72
Importance of County Services (1)

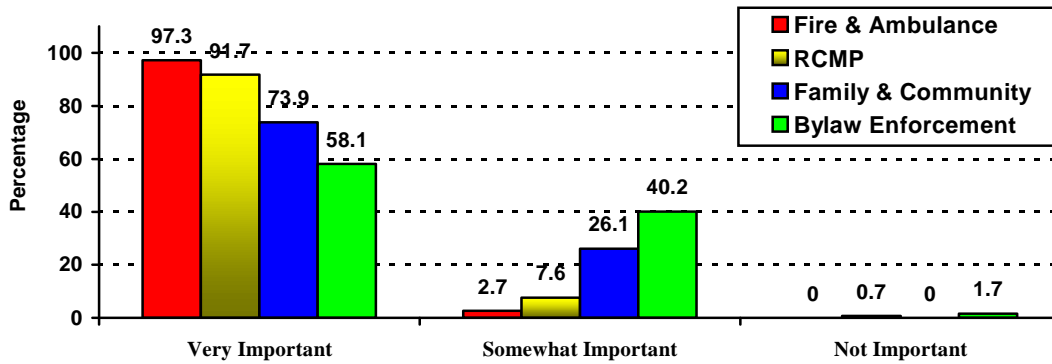


FIGURE 73
Importance of County Services (2)

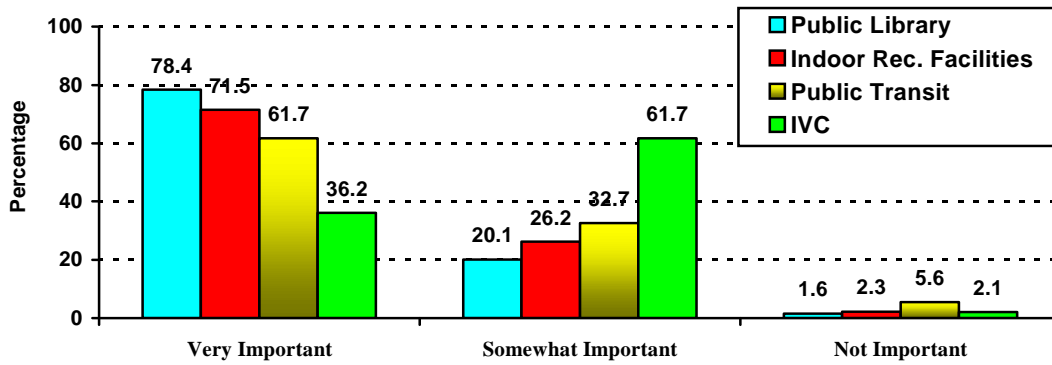
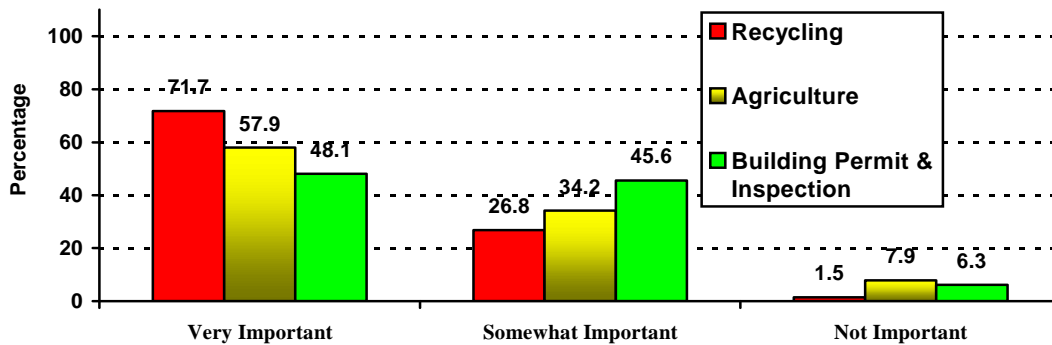


FIGURE 74
Importance of County Services (3)



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

Other services that were also ranked strongly in importance included the *Public Library, Family and Community Services, indoor recreation facilities* and *recycling depots*.

Respondents were asked to think of the most recent contact they had with County staff³⁵ 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 75 and 76.

Table 3
County Departments in Strathcona County Used as the Basis for Rating the Service of County Staff in 2013

Type of Service	N	%
Indoor Recreation Facilities	143	30.0%
Strathcona County Library	116	24.4%
Recycling Depot	102	21.4%
Public Transit Services	25	5.3%
Building, Permit & Inspection Services	16	3.4%
Fire & Ambulance Services	16	3.4%
RCMP	15	3.2%
Bylaw Enforcement	8	1.7%
Family Support Services	7	1.5%
Agriculture Services	5	1.1%
Information & Volunteer Centre	2	0.4%
Other Services	21	4.4%

³⁵ In this year's study, 24 respondents reported having no contact with any County staff in the past 12 months.

FIGURE 75
Quality of Services provided by County Staff

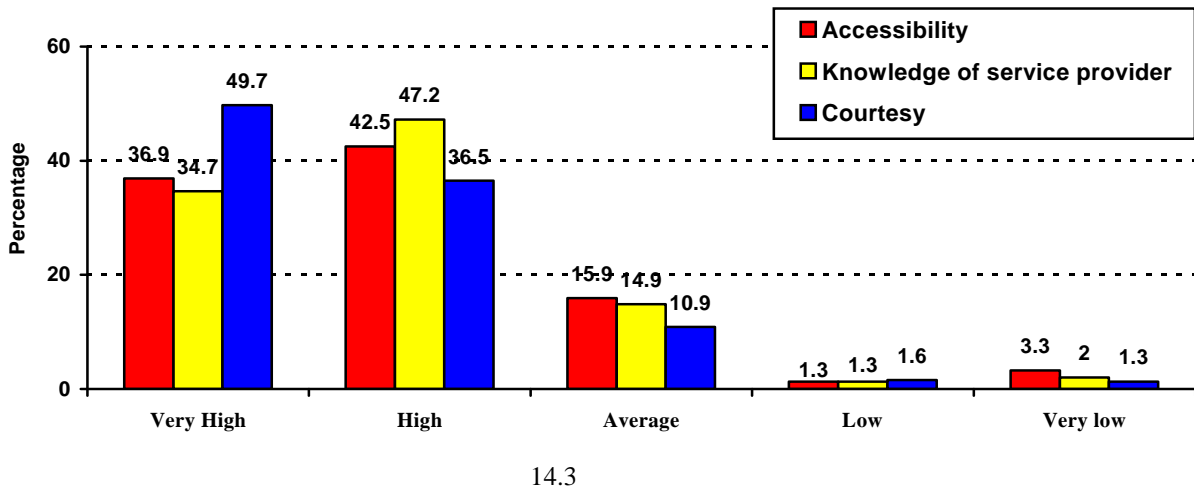
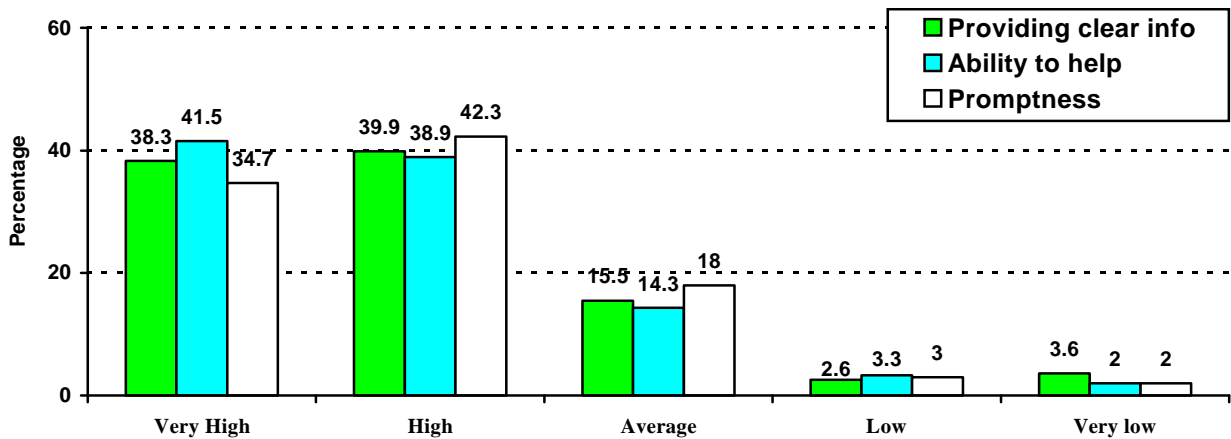


FIGURE 76
Quality of Services provided by County Staff



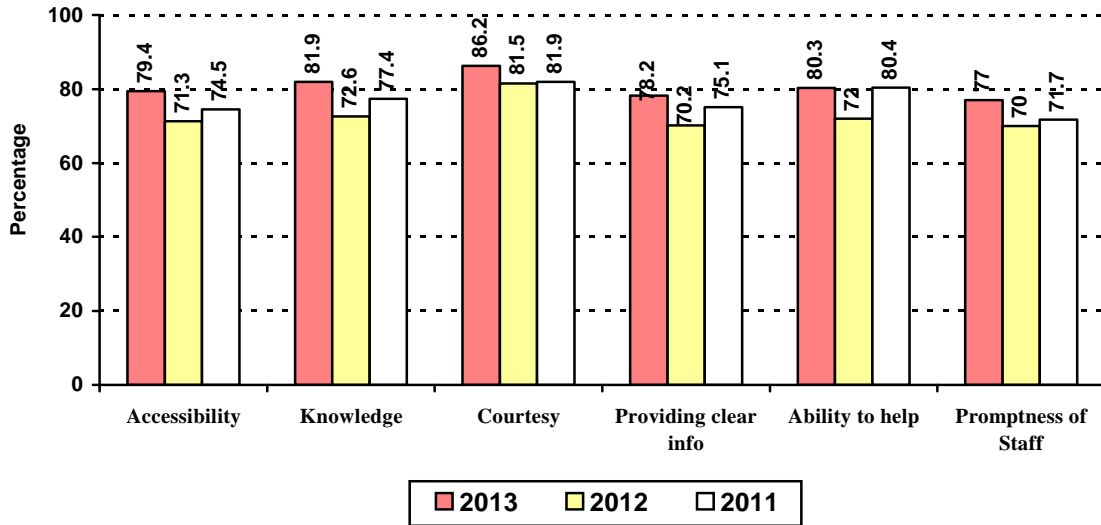
Highlights from Figure 75 and Figure 76

- 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* (86.2%). The remaining attributes of service were all rated relatively similar, with *knowledge of the service provider* the second highest at 81.9%, followed closely by *willingness of the staff to help you* (80.3%), *accessibility of staff* (79.4%), *being able to provide clear information and explanations* (78.2%), and *promptness of staff* (77%).

- All respondents were given the opportunity to provide any comments about the service they had received from County staff. Overall, 36.4% of the respondents (N=182) provided additional comments. Of these 182 residents, the majority of comments (152 or 83.5% of the 182 residents) were positive descriptors, including *good and/or helpful, professional knowledgeable staff, efficient and friendly/courteous*. Ambulance personnel were singled out on a few occasions, as were the library and bookmobile staff.
- Not everyone was pleased. Overall, 16.5% of the 182 residents were not happy with aspects of the service they received. This is about the same as previous years. The comments in this year's survey included:
 - A few 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;
 - The majority of negative complaints weren't necessarily directed to staff, but to dissatisfaction associated with various County services including snow removal, RCMP response times, and perceptual problems when not hearing back from the mayor and/or counselors.

Figure 77 presents a comparison of overall results between this year’s survey and the 2012 and 2011 surveys for these six items. The combined *very high/high* ratings for staff were higher in 2013 compared to 2011 and 2012 for all of items.

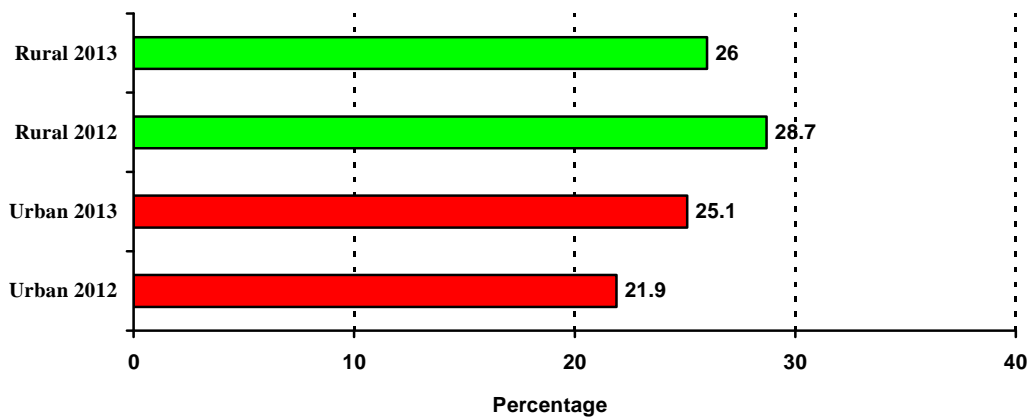
FIGURE 77
Quality of Services provided by County Staff - 2013 with 2011 & 2012 comparisons
on the combined *Very High/High* percentages



H. 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, 25.1% of Sherwood Park residents and 26% of rural residents had done so. The percentage of participation Sherwood Park residents was higher this year, while participation by rural residents was slightly lower in 2013 compared to 2012.

FIGURE 78
Public Engagement Participation
(Urban & Rural Comparisons: 2013 & 2012)

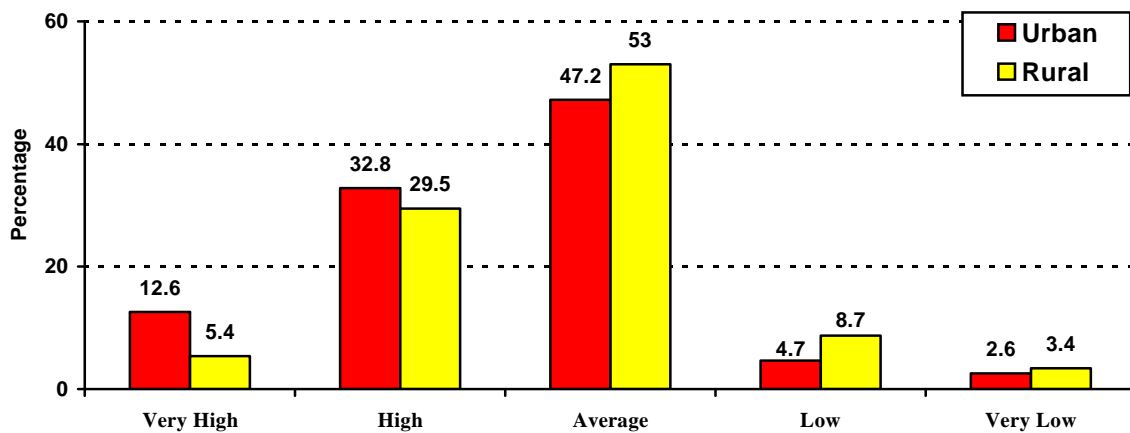


Those who had given feedback were asked how they did so. On an overall basis, methods mentioned most often were open houses (20.5%), telephone surveys (16.5%) or discussion groups (13.4%). In addition, 15.7% indicated that they had done a survey, but did not specify what type of survey it was. Some residents also completed online surveys (10.2%). Other methods mentioned by a few residents included sending emails or making phone calls to provide feedback or ideas to counselors. In terms of urban/rural differences, on a proportionate basis, more people living in Sherwood Park participated in open houses than those living in rural areas.

I. 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 79.

FIGURE 79
Rating Opportunities to Express Opinions



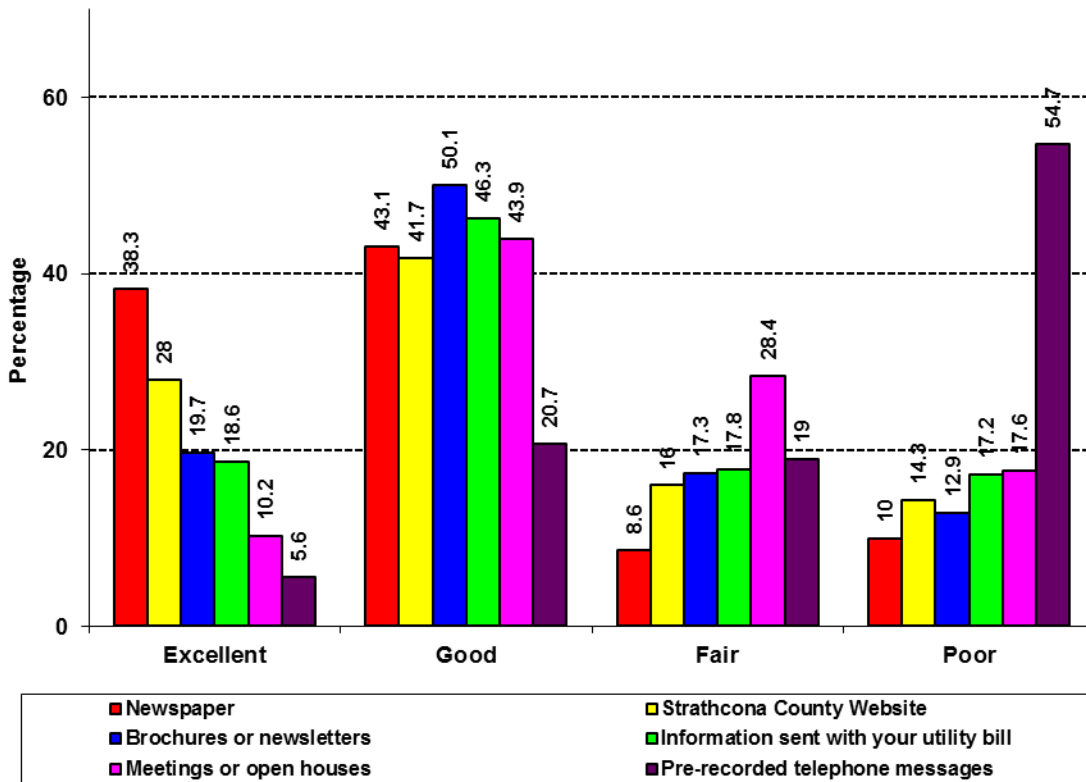
Highlights from Figure 79

- Those living in Sherwood Park were 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.
- Positive perceptions toward expressing opinions has been decreasing over the past 3 years, as trending shows that among urban residents, positive opinions was lower in 2013 (45.4% *very high/high*) compared to 2012 (50.8%) and 2011 (57.3%). Rural residents perceptions of this were lower in 2013 as well (34.9%) compared to 2012 (42.8% *very high/high*) and 2011 (38.6%).
- Overall, 43 people (8.8% of the sample) were not satisfied with the opportunities for expressing opinions in Strathcona County. A variety of reasons were put forward, including multiple people who felt that opinions expressed themselves about County matters were being ignored, either because requests were not answered, or counselors were not interested in the topic area. Some residents also wondered what opportunities existed for them

to be able to provide feedback about issues in the County. There were a few residents who indicated that completing this survey was the first time that they had ever been asked for their opinion about County services.

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 80.

FIGURE 80
Rating Existing Methods Used to Inform the Public about Municipal Services



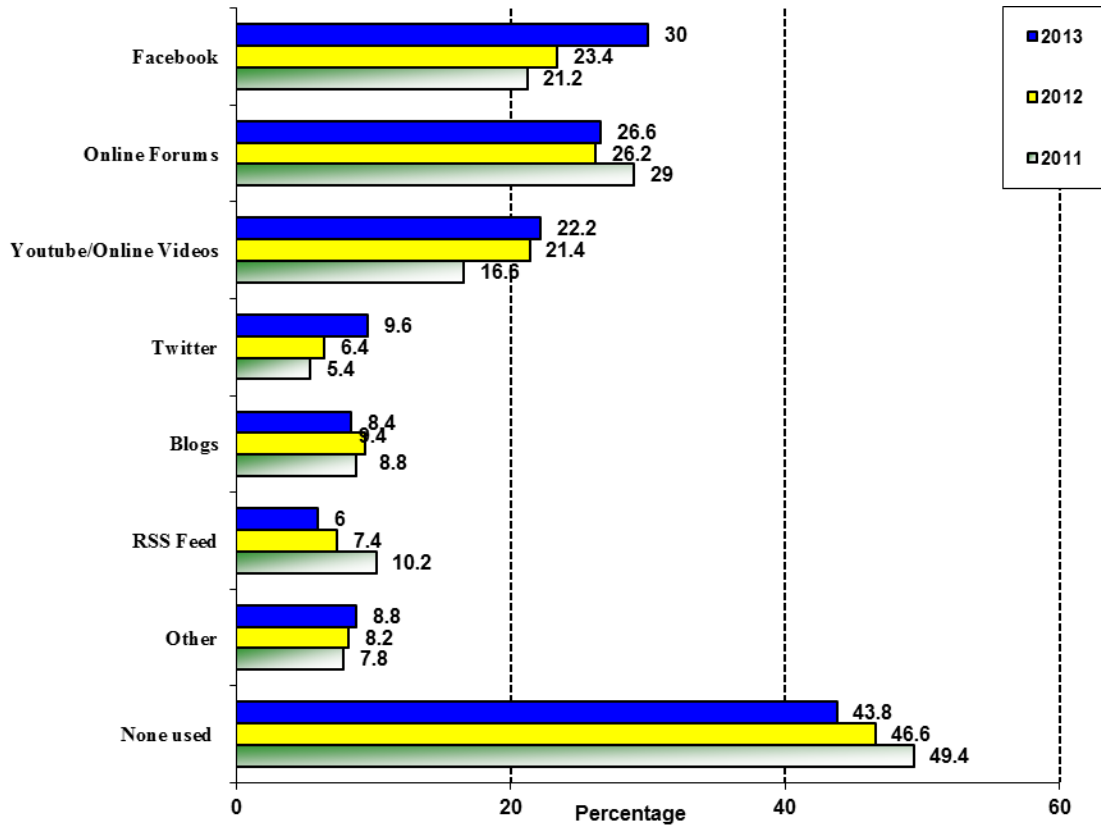
It can be seen in Figure 80 that the County newspaper and the County Website received solid ratings from residents. Overall, 81.4% of residents gave the newspaper an excellent or good rating while, 69.7% of residents gave the County website a combination excellent/good rating. The 2013 newspaper ratings were almost the same as the 2012 results. The County website ratings, however, were 8.6% lower 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 (65% excellent/good in 2013, which was 5.4% higher than 2012) and newsletters and brochures (69.8% excellent/good rating up 14.6% from 2012).

Two other methods that received lower ratings from residents compared to other methods were meetings/open houses (54.1% excellent/good, 5.9% higher than the 2012 ratings) and pre-recorded telephone messages (26.3% excellent/good, 2.4% higher than 2012).

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 81 that *Facebook* was the most prevalent in 2013, followed by *online forums* and *Youtube and other online videos. and RSS Feed*. More residents were making use of *Twitter* in 2013 compared to earlier years, but it, along with Blogs and an RSS Feed were utilized less often than other social media methods. Other methods mentioned by residents included receiving information from email or checking the website.

FIGURE 81
Use of Different Online Methods by County Residents in 2013, 2012 & 2011



On a proportionate basis, residents living in Sherwood Park made greater use of the various forms of social mean to a greater extent than those in rural Strathcona, but the differences were not statistically significant.

Figure 82 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 decreased by 2.2% between 2012 and 2013.

FIGURE 82
Percentage of Residents who visited the County Website

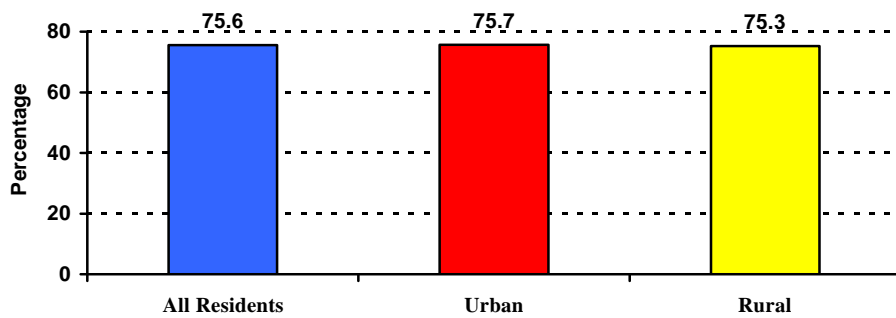
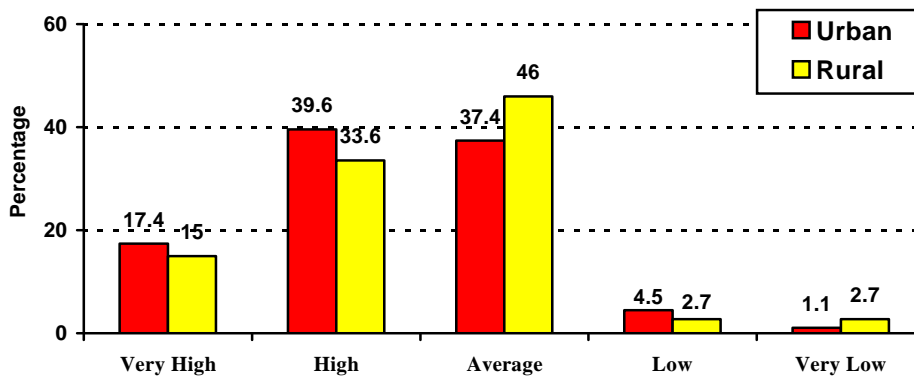


Figure 83 presents the satisfaction level with the Strathcona County website.³⁶ It can be seen that the satisfaction level was slightly higher among urban residents compared to those living in rural Strathcona, but the spread was not statistically significant.

FIGURE 83
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Website

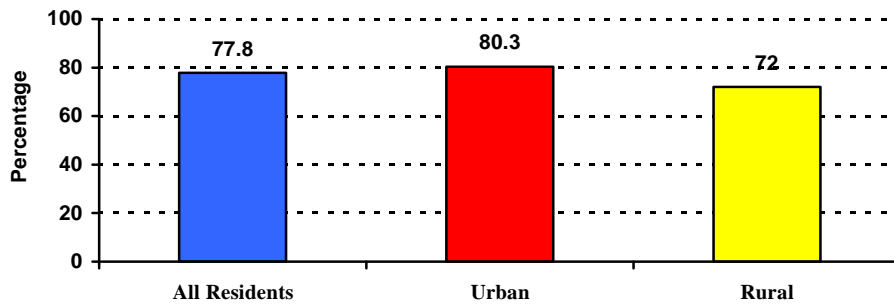


³⁶ This figure excludes 24.4% of the residents who never went to the County website.

In 2013, the combined *very high/high* rating of the site was 57.0% for urban residents (7.5% lower than 2012) and 48.6% 59.2% for rural residents (10.6% lower than 2012).

All respondents also were asked whether they felt well informed about County services and activities going on throughout Strathcona County. It can be seen in Figure 84 that the majority or residents, regardless of where they lived, felt informed about things happening in Strathcona County.

FIGURE 84
Feeling Informed about County Services and Activities Occurring in Strathcona County



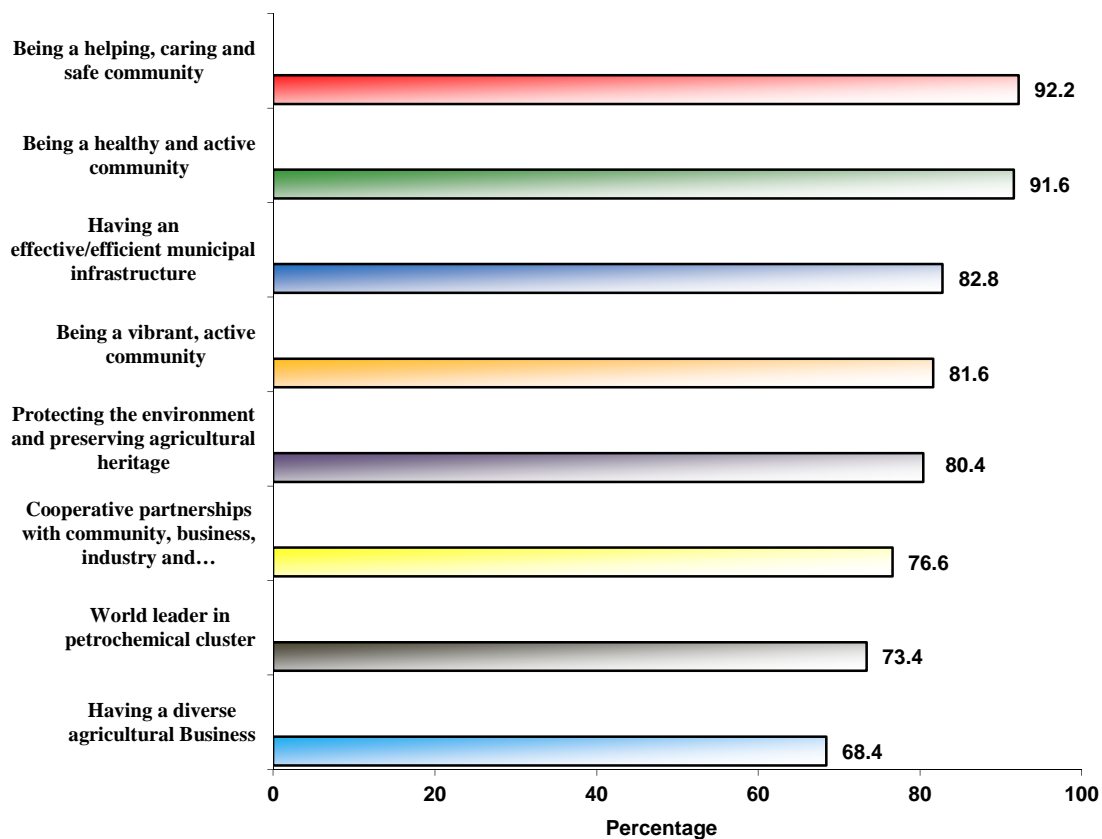
Residents who did not feel well informed were asked to indicate why that occurred. Overall, 22.2% of residents felt this way. When asked about the reasons why, these people either admitted that they were not actively paying attention to issues in Strathcona County, either because particular issues did not affect or impact them personally, or because they were not interested in seeking out any information pertaining to the County. Of those who were concerned, some wondered whether or not the newspaper was adequately covering county issues. There were also a few people who only became aware of issues after they had occurred and were resolved.

J. Awareness of the Strategic Plan

Overall, it was found that 31% of the sample were aware of Strathcona County's strategic plan, regardless of where they lived. This is an approximately 3% increase from the results last year.

All citizens were then asked to rate each of the 8 community wide priorities areas associated with the new strategic plan. All priority areas were read to them before they rated them. Citizens were asked to indicate if they thought each strategy was excellent, good, fair or poor.³⁷ Figure 85 shows the combined excellent/good percent rating for each strategy read to the citizens.

FIGURE 85
Community Wide Priority Areas from the County Strategic Plan Rated as Excellent or Good by Citizens



³⁷ The combined fair/poor ratings for each priority area can be derived as follows (100%-depicted rating).

K. 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, 191 respondents (38.2% of the sample) provided additional comments, both positive and negative. Issues ranged from recreation and transit compliments and complaints, to comments on bylaw concerns, road maintenance issues and growth issues. There were a small percentage of residents who commented on hospital and education related issues, even though these are actually provincial issues.

APPENDIX A: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Strathcona County Year 2013 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.

- | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|------|---------|--------|-------------|----------------------------|
| a. Thinking of winter road maintenance, snow clearing and ice control ...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? | very
high | high | average | low,or | very
low | DO NOT READ:
DK |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 9 |

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

- | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|------|---------|--------|-------------|----------------------------|
| b. Thinking of urban street maintenance in the summer (potholes filled, streets in good repair)...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? | very
high | high | average | low,or | very
low | DO NOT READ:
DK |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 9 |

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

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------|------|---------|--------|-------------|----------------------------|
| c. | Thinking of rural road maintenance in summer (potholes, grading, dust control)... is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? | very
high | high | average | low,or | very
low | DO NOT READ:
DK |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 9 |

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

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

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

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

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

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------|------|---------|--------|-------------|----------------------------|
| f. | Thinking of 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	high	average	low, or	very low	DO NOT READ: DK
1	2	3	4	5	9

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

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

h. Thinking about **water and sewer services**...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low?

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

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

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

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

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

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

j. Thinking about the various **parks, green spaces and sports fields**...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low?

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

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

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

k. Thinking about **indoor recreation facilities (arenas and pool)**...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low?

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

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

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

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

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** (such as dog, curfew or building bylaws) .. is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low?
- | | | | | | |
|-----------|------|---------|--------|----------|---------------------|
| very high | high | average | low,or | very low | DO NOT READ: |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| | | | | | 9 |

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

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 Volunteer Centre**...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low.
- | | | | | | |
|-----------|------|---------|--------|----------|---------------------|
| very high | high | average | low,or | very low | DO NOT READ: |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |
| | | | | | 9 |

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

DO NOT READ: FOR SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:
What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

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

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

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? _____

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

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

- 9. Don’t know

19. There are 8 key priorities associated with Strathcona County’s new Strategic Plan. I’d like to identify these to you, and for each, please tell me the extent that you agree with these as strategies for Strathcona County to pursue in the future.

Rotate items

DO

NOT READ:

What about _____? Is this strategy: Know	Excellent	Good	Fair, or	Poor	Don’t
a. Being a world leader in the petrochemical cluster?	1	2	3	4	9
b. Being a helping, caring and safe community?	1	2	3	4	9
c. Being a vibrant, creative community?	1	2	3	4	9
d. Having diverse agricultural businesses?	1	2	3	4	9
e. Having an effective and efficient municipal infrastructure?	1	2	3	4	9
f. Fostering cooperative partnerships with community, business, industry and neighbouring governments?	1	2	3	4	9
g. Protecting our environment and preserving our agricultural heritage?	1	2	3	4	9
h. Being a healthy and active community?	1	2	3	4	9

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

- 1. Yes → **Skip to Q-22**
- 2. No

- 9. Don’t know

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

22. 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: Know	Excellent	Good	Fair, or	Poor	Method	Don't
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

23. 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

24. 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
-
0. Never Visited/Don't use the Internet
9. Don't know
25. 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-27 |
| 9. Don't know | Skip to Q-27 |

26. 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?”*)
-

27. 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?

28. 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...

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

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

30. Including yourself, how many people live in your household? ____ (*If "One" Go to Q-31*)
- 30a) How many of these people are children aged 15 or younger? _____
- 30b) How many are children aged 16 or older? _____
31. 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
32. **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 #: _____