

SURVEY SAYS ...



Strathcona County 2015 Public Satisfaction Survey Research Results

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I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In December 2015, 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 survey has been done annually since 1998. The main purpose of this research is 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 directly from residents provides Strathcona County departments with information, and enables County officials to make decisions that accurately reflect the perspectives and attitudes of residents. This report provides 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 is a similar instrument to that used in 2000 and subsequent years. Most of the questions from previous surveys have been retained to allow valid comparisons with the previous year (see Appendix A for a copy of the full questionnaire).

B. Sampling design and data collection procedure

Two methods of data collection were used for this year's satisfaction survey. The first method was the traditional telephone method that has been used in previous years, where 500 residents aged 18 or older were contacted by Banister Research.¹ Data from the telephone survey was collected between December 4 and 11, 2015.

¹ 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. Overall, 70% of responses came from people living in Sherwood Park, while the remaining 30% were drawn from residents living in various parts of rural Strathcona County.

The second method was an online questionnaire where residents could choose to participate. The only criterion was that respondents had to live in Strathcona County. Availability to participate in the online survey occurred between December 4, 2015 and January 11, 2016. At the end of the availability period, 699 residents took part in the survey.²

The sample frame for the telephone survey provided overall results accurate to within $\pm 4.32\%$, 19 times out of 20. When the online data was folded in with the telephone sample, the new dataset provided results accurate to within $\pm 2.81\%$, 19 times out of 20.³

The data was analyzed by Strathcona County's Corporate Planning and Intergovernmental Affairs using SPSS for Windows.

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 2015. As indicated in the previous section of this report, part of the sampling criteria from the telephone methodology was to survey County residents, based on the percentage of people living in rural and urban areas. The other sampling criterion was to obtain answers from equal numbers of males and females. However, when the online respondents were factored in, the proportions of males/females and urban/rural residents shifted slightly.⁴ Almost all of the people who took part in the survey were homeowners (92.7%), 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

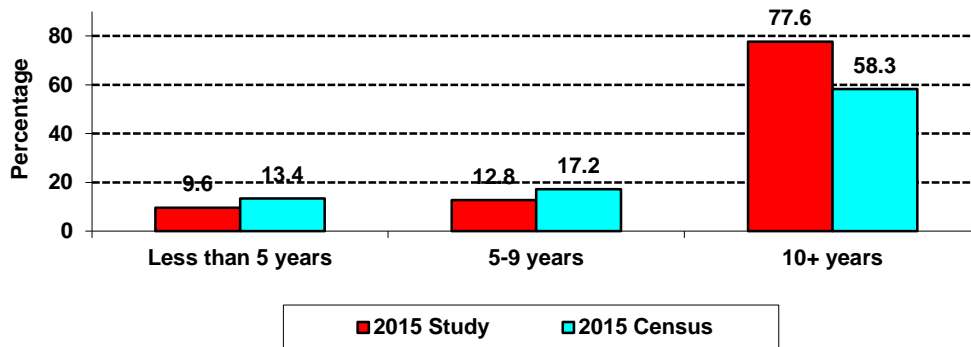
² It should be noted that for open-ended questions, many residents chose not to provide insight into County issues, even though they had an opportunity to do so.

³ The $\pm 2.81\%$ 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 2.81% higher or lower than what is reported.

⁴ Including the online survey, 59.8% were female and 40.2% were male; 78.5% lived in Sherwood Park and the remaining 21.5% lived in rural Strathcona.

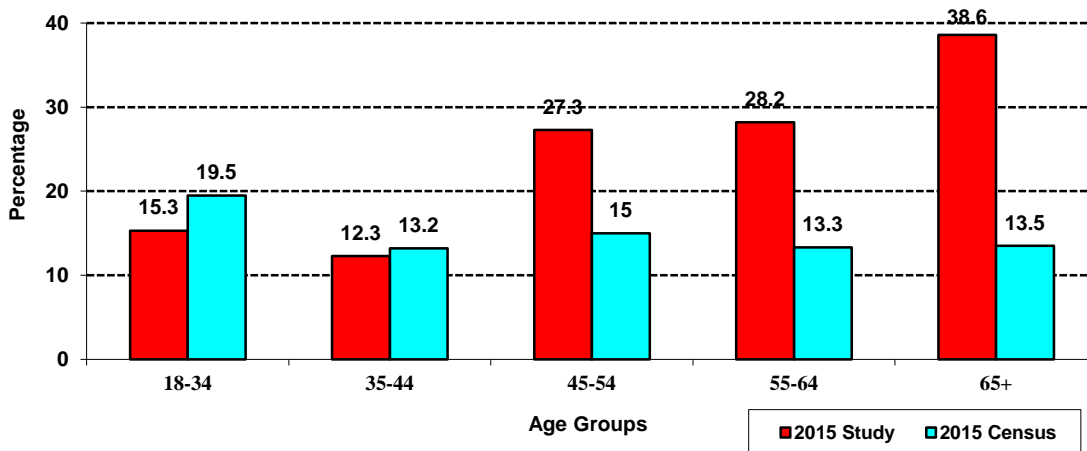
years that people lived in Strathcona County was 22.8 years. In terms of sampling, it can be seen that relative to the Municipal Census, fewer newer residents to the County took part in the survey compared to longer term residents.

Figure 1
Length of time living in the County



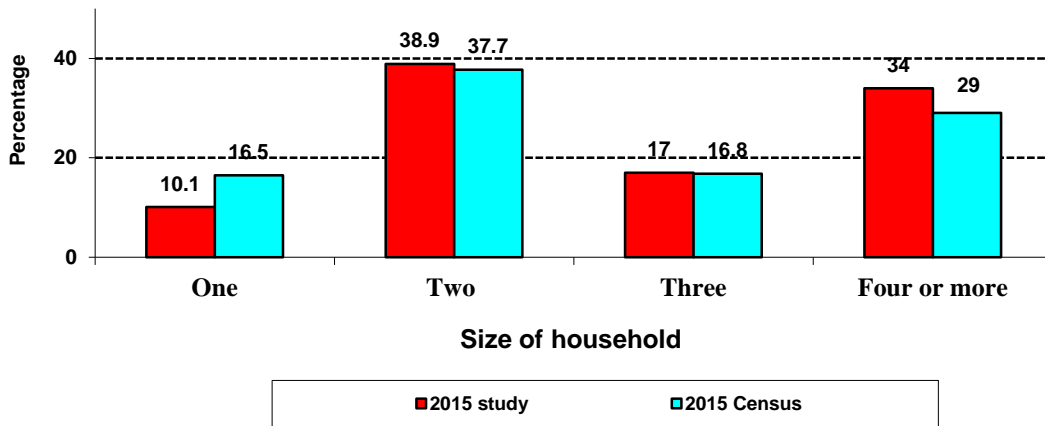
A breakdown of the age of the respondents is shown in Figure 2. There was a relatively good representation from most age groups, though in comparison to the 2012 census, the 18-34 year age group was under-represented and the 65 or older category was over-represented. This distribution is similar to past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

FIGURE 2
Age of respondents



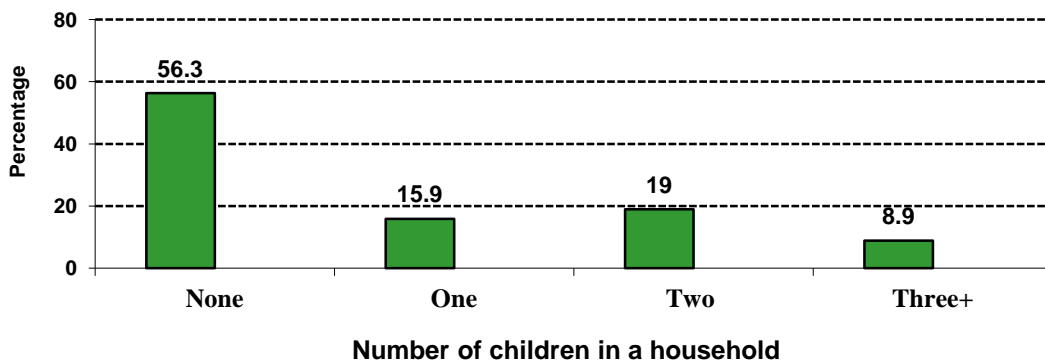
A breakdown of household size is shown in Figure 3. The sample frame for this study was comparable with the 2012 census. The average household size determined for this study was 2.84 people.

FIGURE 3
Size of household



Overall, it was determined that 56.3% of households did not have any children living at home,⁵ while the remaining 43.7% had at least one child living at home. A breakdown of the number of children in the household is shown in Figure 4. These findings have been consistent over the past few years when conducting the satisfaction survey.

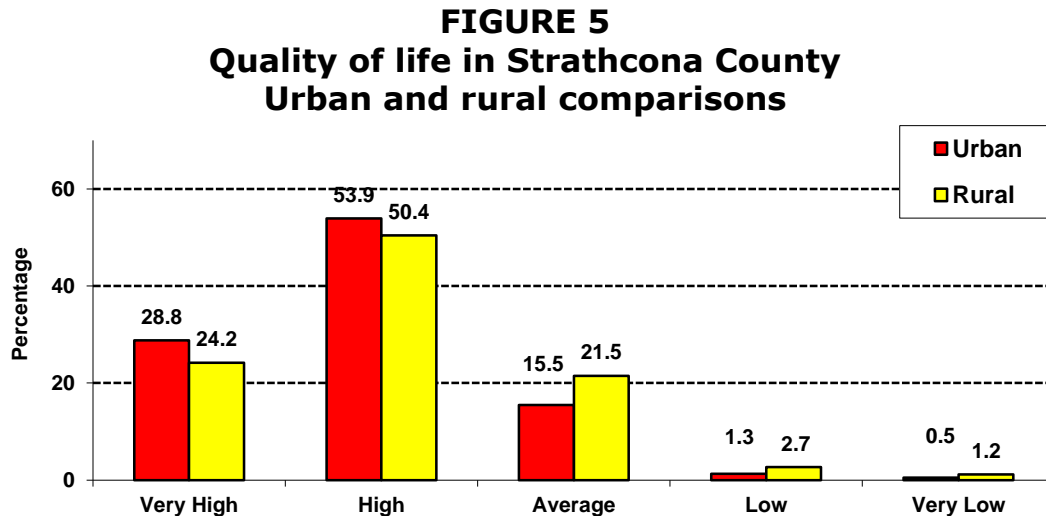
FIGURE 4
Number of children in household



⁵ The 56.3% figure includes 10.1% of households that had one single adult.

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 5.



Highlights from Figure 5

- The overall rating of Strathcona County was very positive regardless of where one lived in the County. It can be seen in Figure 5 that the combined *very high and high* quality of life ratings are slightly higher for urban residents compared to rural. However, in 2015, the spread between satisfied urban and rural residents was slightly lower (an 8.1% difference) compared to 2014 (a 10.1% 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. There were different reasons suggested, though concerns that were repeated by a few people included a perception of taxes being too high, the continuous growth of the community and a perception of too many multi-family developments in Sherwood Park.

Figure 6 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 6
Strathcona County as a place to raise children
Urban and rural comparisons

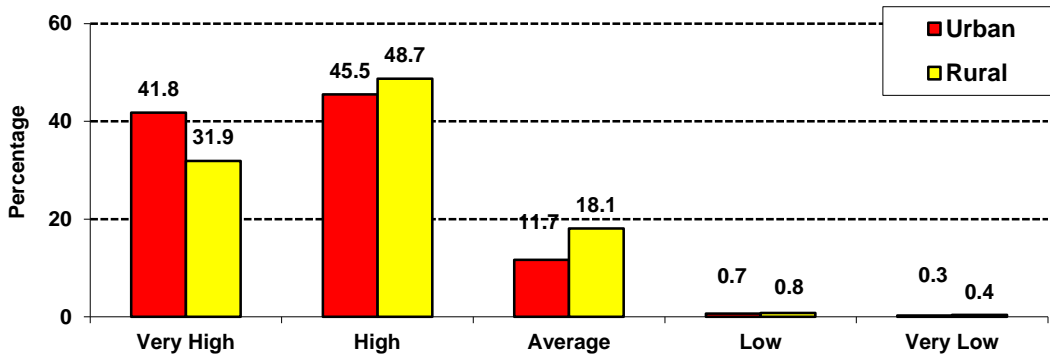
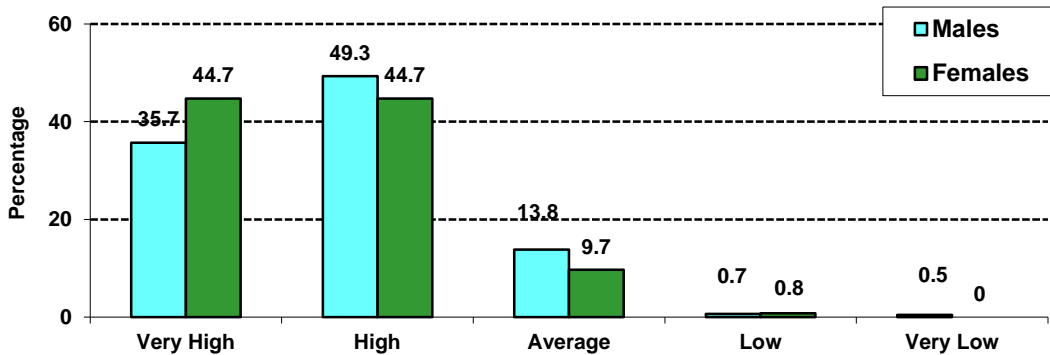


FIGURE 7
Strathcona County as a place to raise children
Gender comparisons



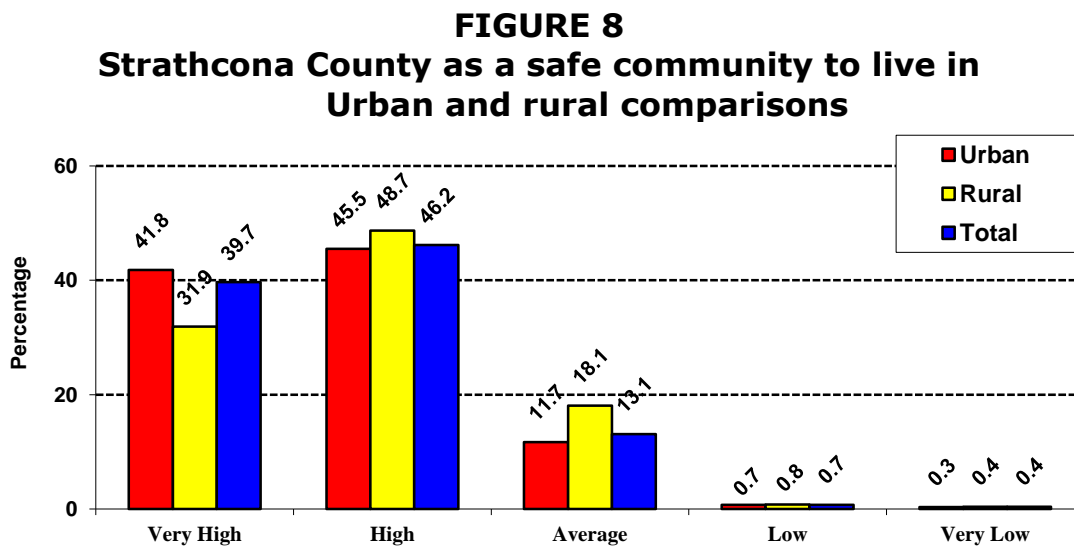
Highlights from Figure 6 and Figure 7

- 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 very little difference 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 (89.4% *very high/high*) was almost

identical to males (85% *very high/high*). This was very similar to findings in past satisfaction studies.

- There were no differences among age groups for this item in 2015.
- Respondents who rated this item as low or very low were asked to indicate what improvements could be considered. Overall, 2% gave this a negative rating; while one person believed that there was a potential drug problem brewing in the community, most of the concerns had to do with the state of existing schools and the size of classrooms being overly large.

Figure 8 presents a breakdown by region pertaining to ratings of Strathcona County as safe community.

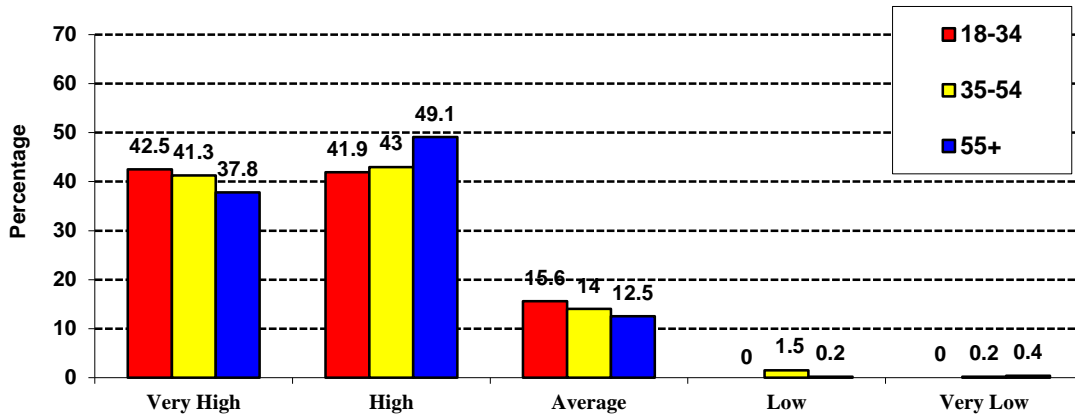


Highlights from Figure 8

- 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 2015, the overall percentage of residents who rated safety in the County as *very high or high* (85.9%) was higher than the 2014 results (80.8%).

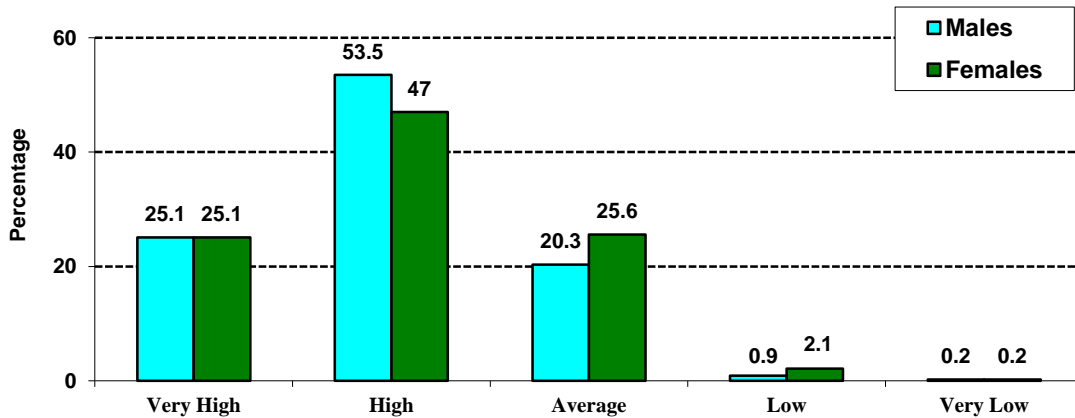
The majority of residents, regardless of age, felt quite safe living in Strathcona County in 2015 (see Figure 9 on the next page).

FIGURE 9
Strathcona County as a safe community to live in
Age group comparisons



It can be seen in Figure 10 that in 2015, males had a slightly higher perception of safety compared to females, though the difference is not statistically significant.

FIGURE 10
Strathcona County as a safe community to live in
Gender comparisons

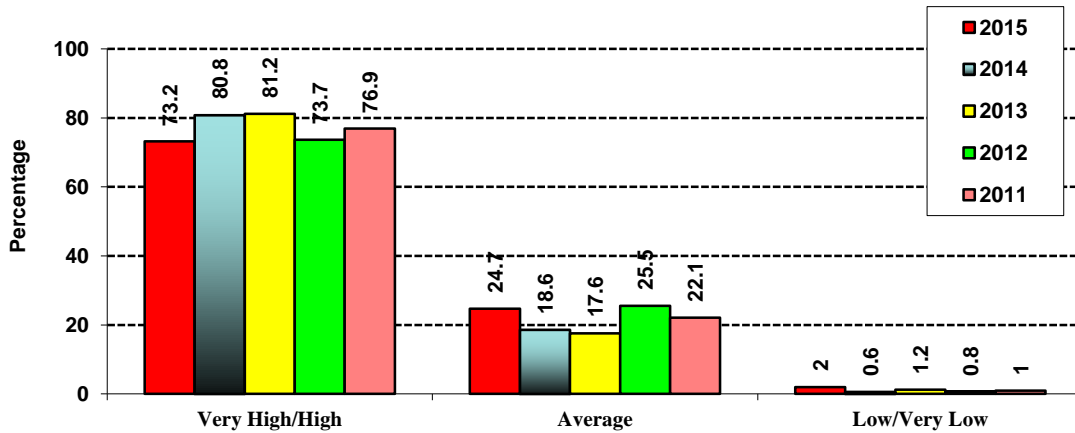


Overall, 3.4% of residents gave safety in Strathcona County a low or very low rating.⁶ Common themes emerging from this include: numerous comments for more of a police presence throughout Sherwood Park and in rural neighborhoods; concerns associated with aspects of traffic safety and speeding; a desire for more Neighborhood Watch/Block programs; and better lighting on streets.

⁶ Although they didn't have to, residents who completed the survey online and had more positive ratings for this item did add optional comments.

It can be seen from Figure 11 that perceptions of safety in Strathcona County being “high or very high” has dipped slightly in 2015 compared to the previous four years. However, 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 11
Strathcona County as safe place to live
Study comparisons (2011-2015)



In Figure 12, it can be seen that a slightly higher percentage of rural residents (proportionately) know more neighbors compared to those living in Sherwood Park.

FIGURE 12
Number of adults known by name within one’s neighborhood
Urban and rural comparisons

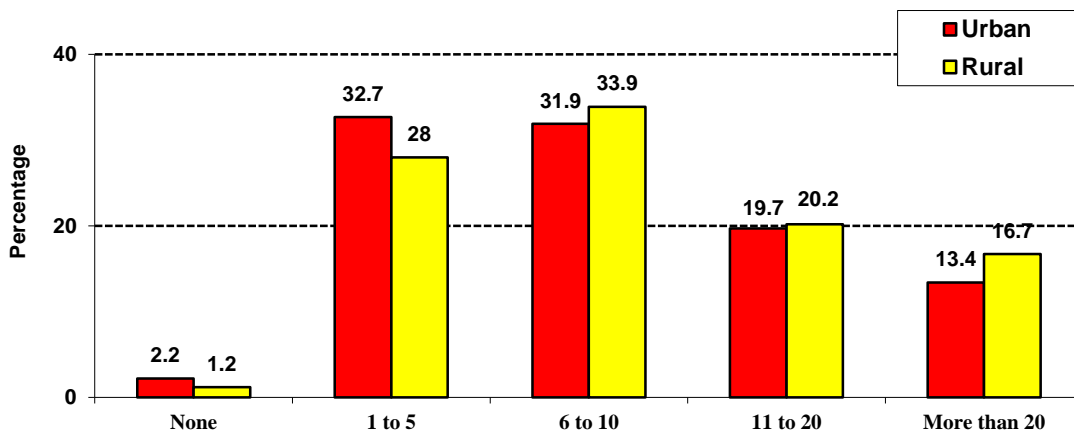
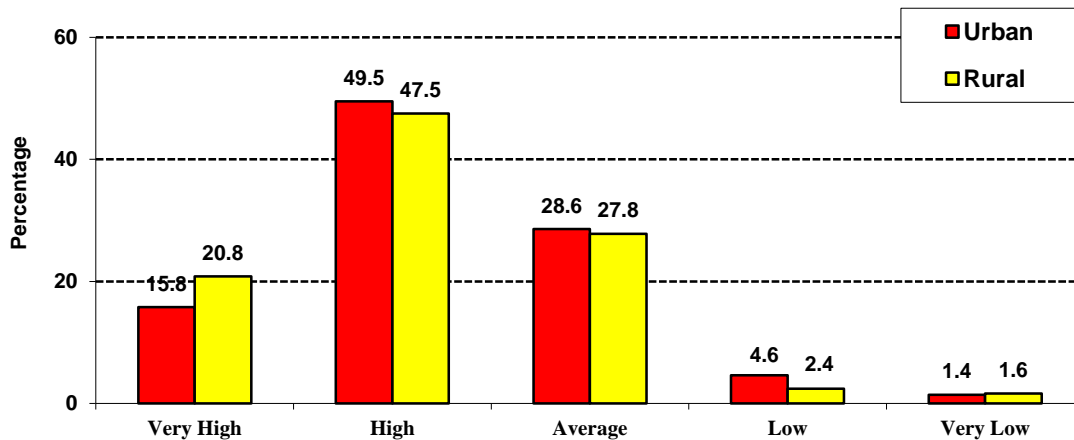


Figure 13 presents a breakdown by region of people’s ratings of the quality of Strathcona County’s natural environment.

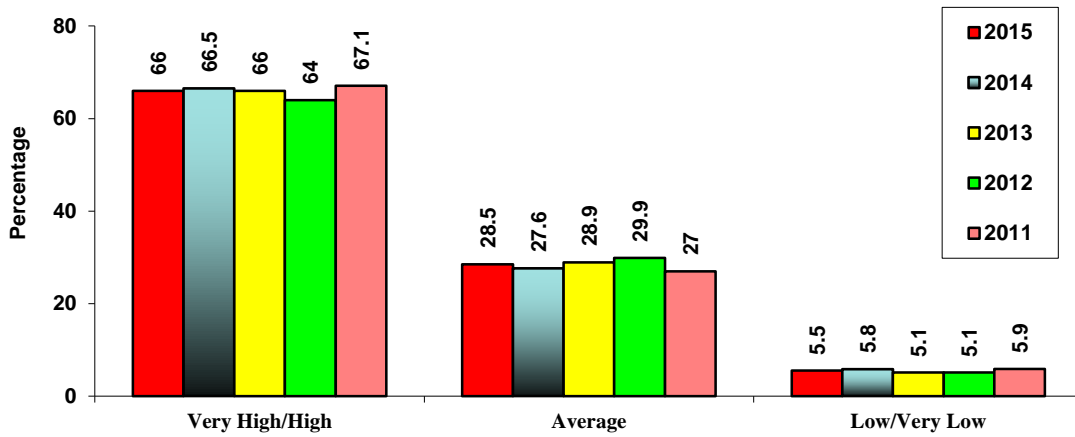
FIGURE 13
Rating the quality of Strathcona County's natural environment
Urban and rural comparisons



Highlights from Figure 13

- It can be seen that 65.3% of the urban and 68.3% 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 2.6% higher in the rural area and 1.7% lower for urban residents compared to 2014 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 14 below) show that the combined *very high* and *high* ratings that people gave to the quality of Strathcona County's natural environment has not varied much in the past 5 years.
- The 5.5% 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 on this began back in 1999.

FIGURE 14
Rating the quality of Strathcona County’s natural environment
Study comparisons (2011-2015)



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 15; perceptions toward County staff are depicted in Figure 16.

FIGURE 15
Balancing the needs and interests of people living in Strathcona
County by the Mayor and County Council
Urban and rural comparisons

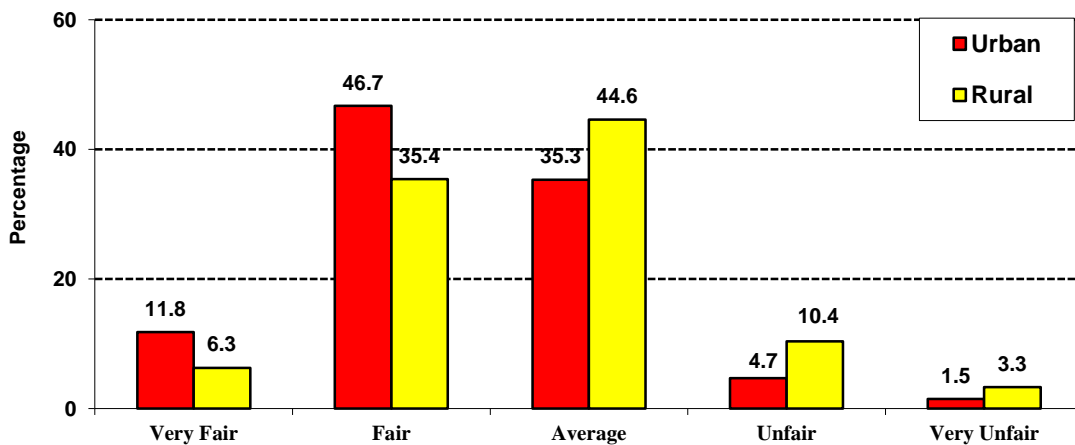
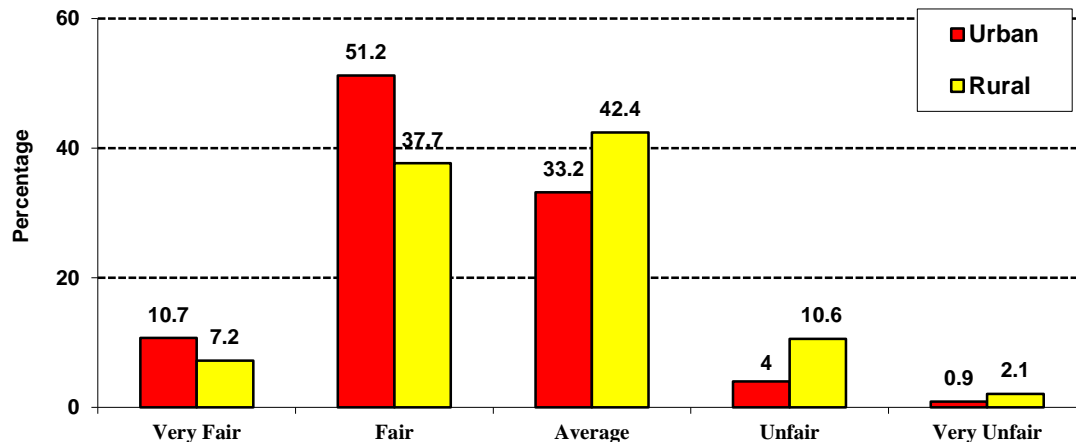


FIGURE 16
Balancing the needs and interests of people living in Strathcona County by County staff
Urban and rural comparisons



Highlights from Figure 15 and Figure 16

- It can be seen in Figure 15 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* (58.5%) compared to those living in rural parts of the County (41.7%). Perception of fairness among both urban and rural residents is about 5% lower compared to last year's study.
- With respect to treatment by staff, it can be seen in Figure 16 that the perceptions between urban (61.9% *very fair/fair*) and rural residents (44.9% *very fair/fair*) was considerably further apart than it was with respect to perceptions of fairness by the Mayor and Council. Furthermore, perception of fairness by staff is about 7% lower among urban residents compared to last year's study, and is approximately 12% lower among rural residents.
- In this year's study, it was found that females had slightly higher positive perceptions of fairness with the Mayor and Council (59.2% *very fair/fair*) and staff (63.2% *very fair/fair*) compared to males (52.7% *very fair/fair* with Mayor/Council) and staff (55.6% *very fair/fair* with staff).
- One's age was not a factor in influencing how people perceived the fairness of County Council and staff.

It can be seen in Figure 17 that perceptions of fairness by the Mayor and Council were lower in 2015 compared to 2014 for both urban and rural residents. This was also the case for perceptions of staff (Figure 18).

FIGURE 17
Balancing the needs and interests of urban and rural residents by Mayor and Council (2015 and 2014 comparisons)

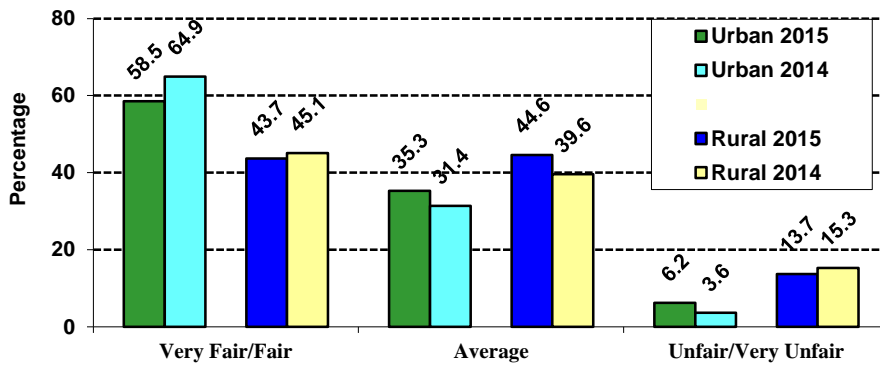
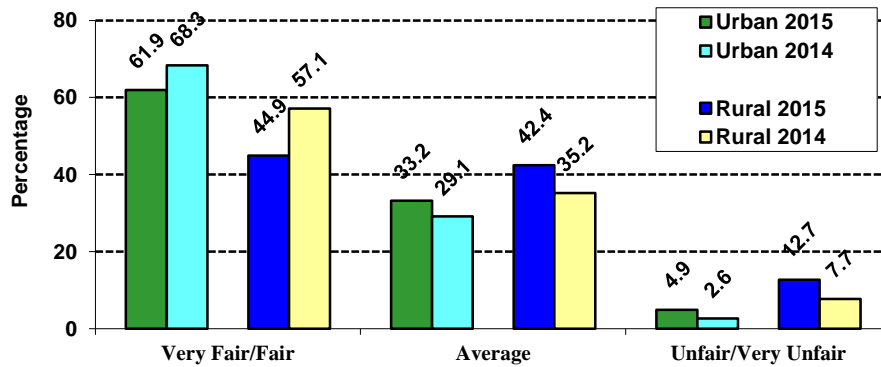


FIGURE 18
Balancing the needs and interests of urban and rural residents by County staff (2015 and 2014 comparisons)



Overall, in 2015, 7.8% of the sample felt that the Mayor and Council were unfair, and 6.6% 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 from rural residents focused on not getting the same level of services as urban residents for the amount of tax they paid. However, there were some urban residents who had perceptions that they were paying more in taxes to subsidize rural residents. There were also a few residents who felt that Council had their own agendas and were not listening to concerns from residents. Other comments were directed toward the lack of decision making on policy changes, and perceptual problems associated with

permits. With respect to specific concerns about County staff, here were some people who did not feel that staff were listening to complaints or concerns from residents, but instead sided with Council, particularly on development issues. Many of the concerns expressed about the Mayor and Council's actions spilled over to staff as well.

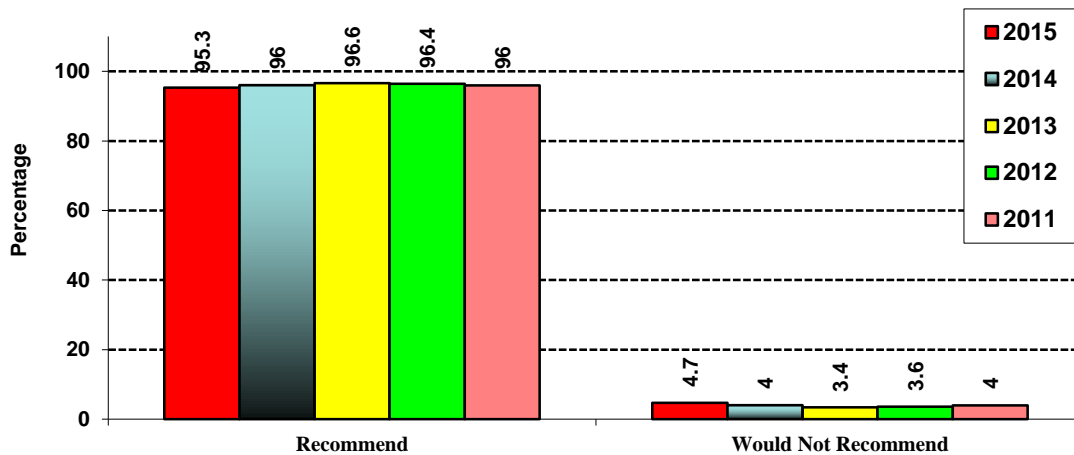
A new question was added to the survey this year asking residents to identify any issues that the Mayor and Council should focus on in 2016.⁷ The most prominent areas mentioned included:

- lowering taxes and dealing with budget related issues
- dealing with traffic issues facing Sherwood Park and the County as a whole
- deal with recreation facilities (either repair, upgrade or add facilities) and trails
- recognize business needs
- transit-related issues
- affordable housing
- seniors issues
- growth issues
- crime in the community
- snow removal issues
- build a hospital (although this is actually a provincial matter, numerous residents mentioned this). Residents also thought that school and education issues be examined (another provincial matter)

⁷ All of the ideas mentioned are collected in a separate document: *Issues that the Mayor and Council should consider in 2016*.

Almost all respondents would recommend Strathcona County to others as a place to live (Figure 19), which was virtually identical to the previous satisfaction surveys.

FIGURE 19
Recommendation of Strathcona County as a place to live
(2011-2015)



The small percentage of people (4.7%) who would not recommend the County as a place to live were asked to indicate why they felt that way. The main reasons given by these residents this year was a perception that taxes were too high for what residents were receiving, the increasing growth in the County, particularly in Sherwood Park, and the increased cost of housing.

C. Quality of services provided by Strathcona County

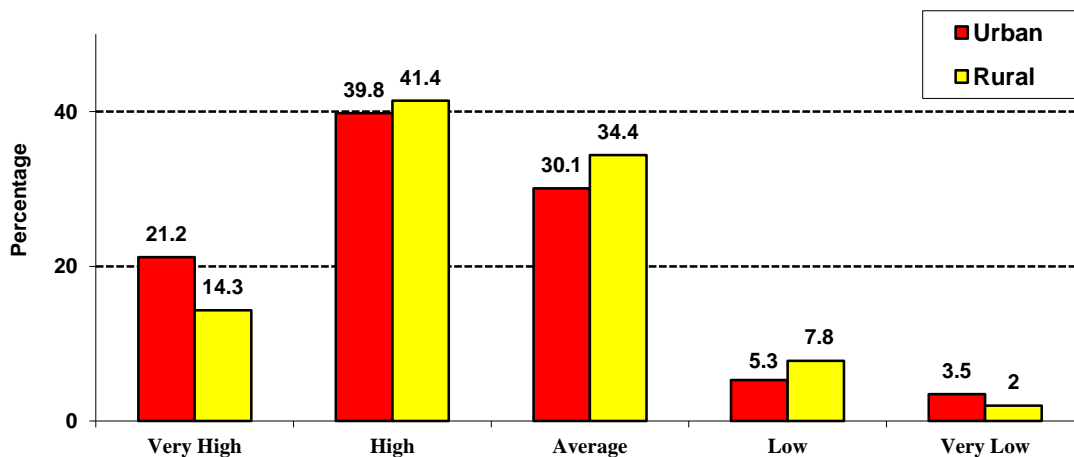
Residents of Strathcona County were asked a series of questions about what they thought of various services provided to them. Overall, respondents were asked to rate 18 different services. For each question, respondents rated the service using a 5 point Likert Scale, where a score of 1 was designated as *very high* and a score of 5 was designated as *very low*. Unless otherwise noted, the level of satisfaction in 2015 for these services was similar to the data collected in 2014.

For all 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

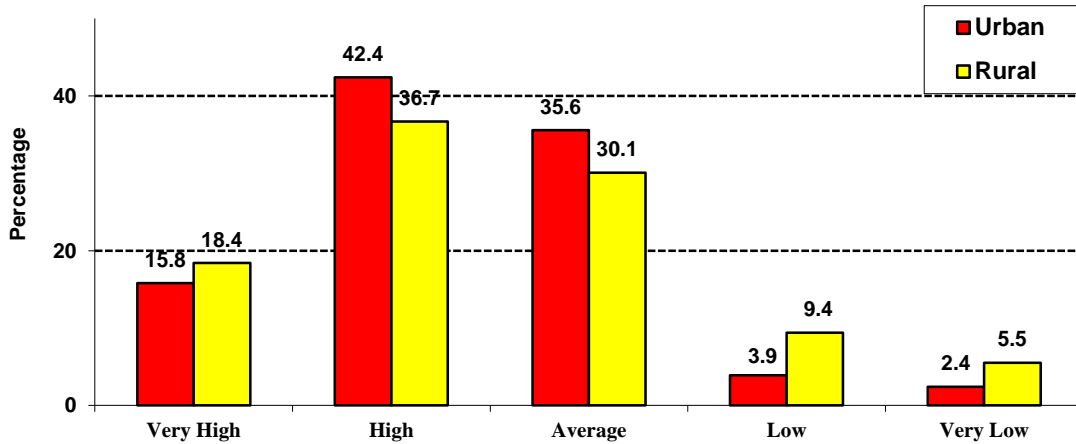
People were first asked to rate the quality of winter road maintenance in Sherwood Park and rural Strathcona County.⁸ Comparative results by geographic location of residence are depicted in Figure 20 for maintenance done in Sherwood Park and Figure 21 for maintenance done in rural Strathcona County. Perceptions of acceptable winter maintenance of both urban and rural roads is about the same by residents, regardless of where they live.

FIGURE 20
Quality of winter road maintenance in Sherwood Park
Urban and rural comparisons



⁸ In previous years, winter road maintenance was not separated into urban and rural components.

FIGURE 21
Quality of winter road maintenance in Rural Strathcona County
Urban and rural comparisons



Historically, perceptions of winter road maintenance among residents varied between 2015 and previous years. Figure 22 shows that the percentage of urban residents who felt the winter road maintenance work was *very high* or *high* decreased between 58.2% and 61% in 2015, down from the previous 70.6% noted in 2014. Among rural residents, it can be seen in Figure 23 that the combined *very high/high* level of satisfaction with winter road maintenance in 2015 (55.1% - 55.7%) is also lower compared to previous years.

FIGURE 22
Quality of winter road maintenance
as noted by Sherwood Park residents
2012-2015 study comparisons

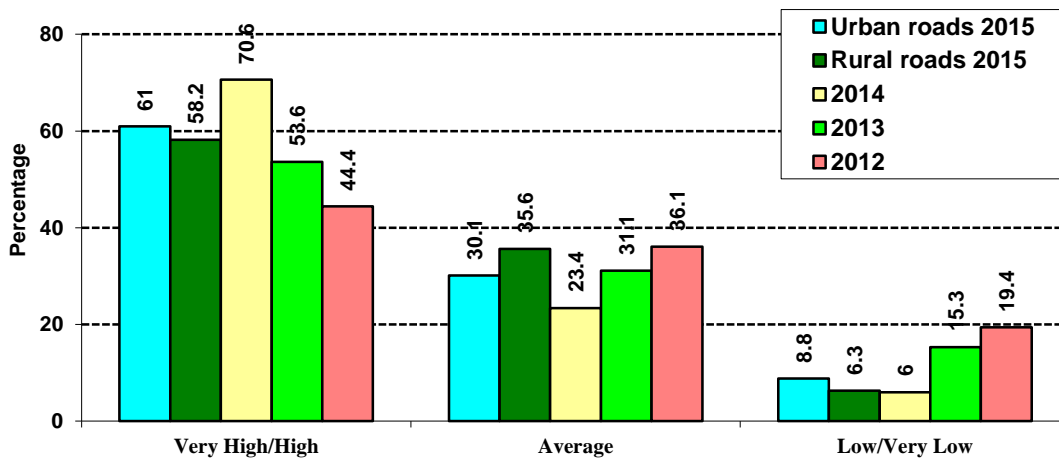
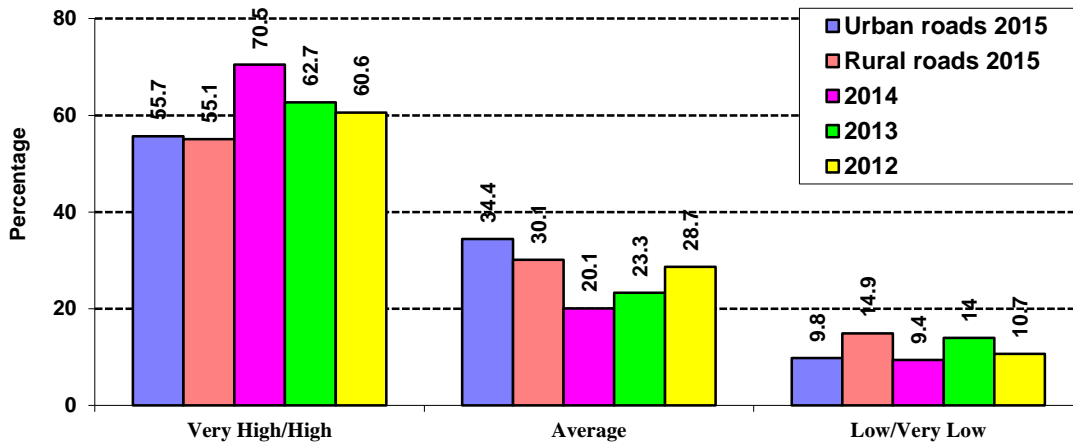


FIGURE 23
Quality of winter road maintenance
as noted by rural Strathcona residents
2012-2015 study comparisons

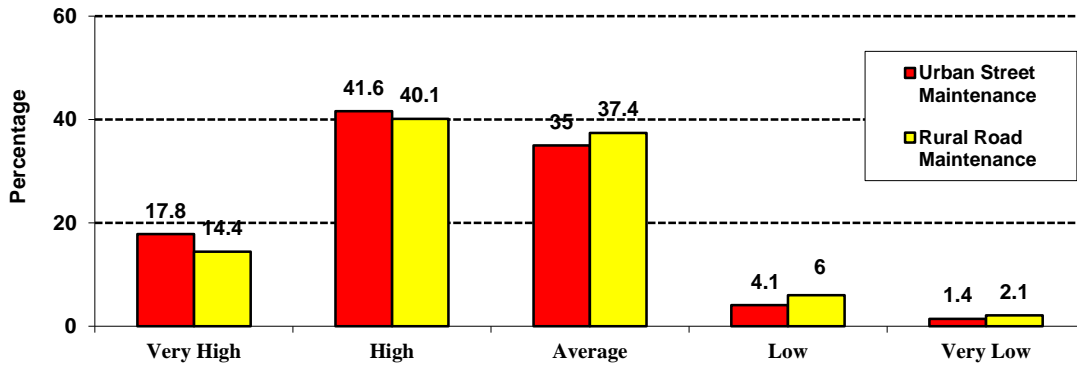


A further analysis of the data revealed no differences between age groups, gender or length of residency on perceptions of the quality of winter maintenance.

There were residents who were not happy with winter road maintenance in both the urban and rural areas, and they were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. As in past studies, one of the main criticisms among residents was for residential side streets to be cleared and sanded more often (n=46, both in the rural and urban areas). This year, there were also some comments directed toward sidewalks being better maintained, both by residents in front of their homes, as well as adjacent to County facilities (n=14). There were also concerns that snow on the main roads was not being cleared enough, either causing ruts to form or for the remaining snow to become icy and dangerous (n=11).

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 24.

FIGURE 24
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 25 and 26 that Sherwood Park residents felt that the quality of summer road maintenance of roads in the urban area was higher than perceptions of those living in rural Strathcona. Perceptions between urban and rural residents were closer with respect to summer maintenance of rural roads. A further analysis revealed that there were no differences in perception with respect to these questions with any other demographic variable.

FIGURE 25
Quality of summer road maintenance of roads in Sherwood
Park - Urban and rural comparisons

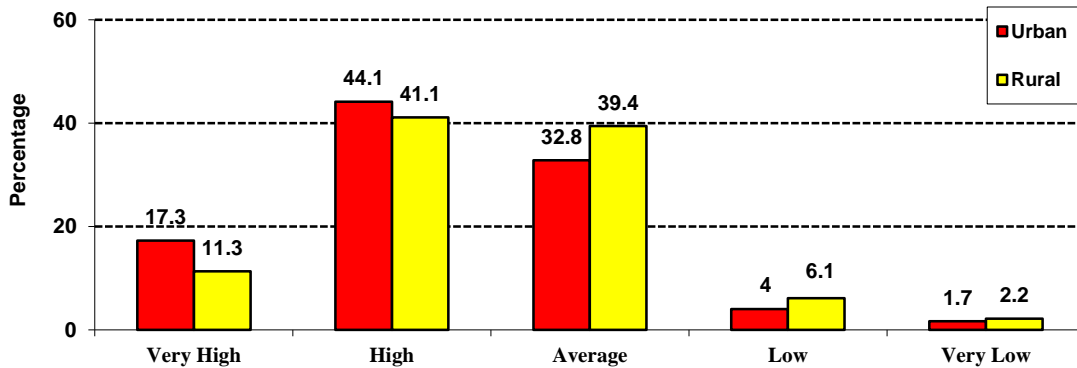
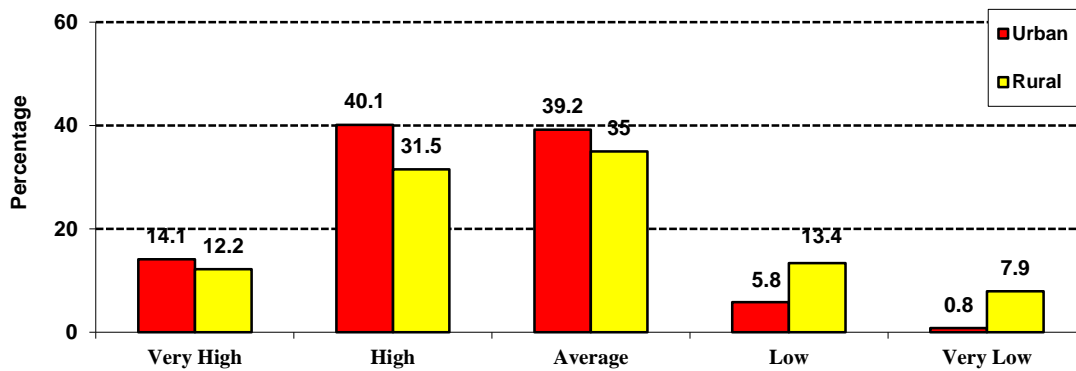


FIGURE 26
Quality of summer road maintenance of rural roads
Urban and rural comparisons

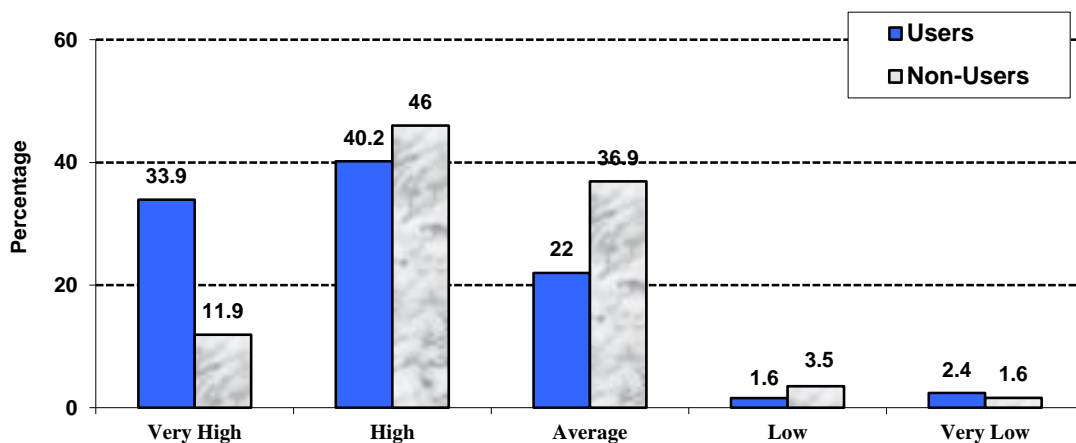


Some residents were unhappy with the summer maintenance of urban and rural roads. With respect to both urban and rural roads, the most common complaint was the increased number and severity of potholes in the roads (n=47). With respect to other concerns, some people felt that there was a lack of quality in repairs of roads (outside of potholes) (n=21).

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 27 presents the satisfaction level for family support services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services⁹ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should be noted that 644 respondents (53.7% of the entire sample) did not comment on the quality of family support services because they did not know anything about them.

FIGURE 27
Quality of family support services

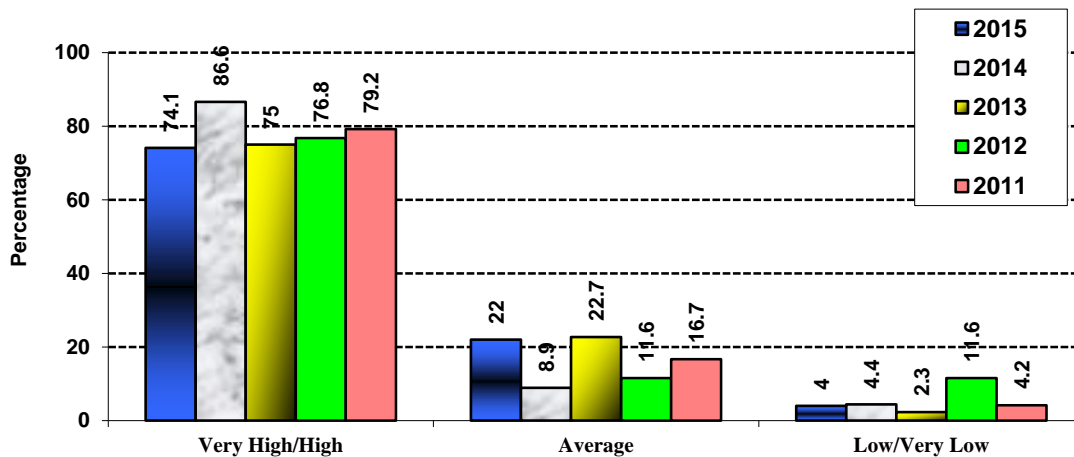


Highlights from Figure 27

- Figure 27 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 ($\chi^2 = 35.54, 4 \text{ df}, p=.000$). A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -4.60, 553 \text{ df}, p = .000$) 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 small (N=137). Of these people, 74.1% gave the department *very high* or *high* satisfaction ratings. This is 12.5% lower than the 86.6% noted last year. User trends from 2011 to 2015 are depicted in Figure 28.

⁹ Overall, 11.4% of respondents indicated they had used family support services within the past 12 months. This is 1.2% higher than what was reported in last year's survey.

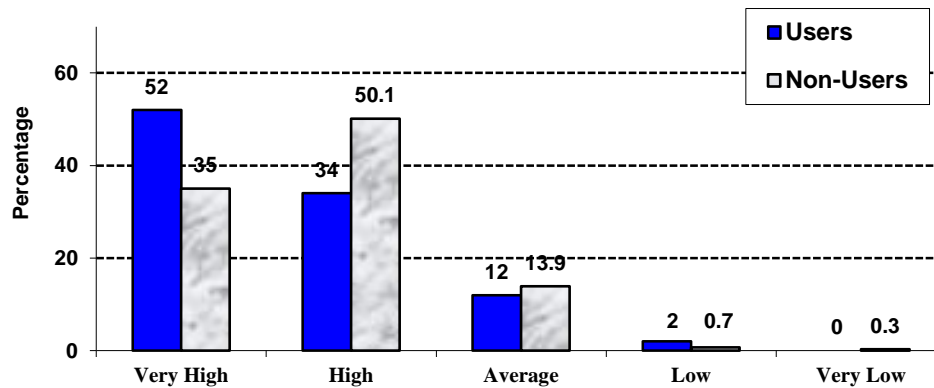
FIGURE 28
Quality of family support services
User trends 2011 - 2015



- As in previous surveys, the percentage of users rating the service as *low or very low* was small.
- Those who gave family support services a low rating in 2015 were asked to suggest how this could be improved. This year's suggestions included perceived needs for more services for seniors and/or centers, youth services, and mental health needs (n=14).
- In addition to users, socio-demographic differences were also found between genders and urban/rural for this item in 2015. Females had higher satisfaction levels than males, and those in Sherwood Park had more favorable perceptions than those living in rural Strathcona County.

Figure 29 presents the satisfaction level people have for fire and ambulance services, based on the portion of the sample who utilized these services¹⁰ in the past 12 months, and those who did not use these services. It should be noted that 302 respondents (25.2% of the sample) indicated that they “did not know” enough about these services to rate them.

FIGURE 29
Quality of fire and ambulance services



Highlights from Figure 29

- It can be seen from Figure 29 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.¹¹ This demonstrates that recipients were pleased with the quality of services received when these services were needed.
- Overall, 10 people (1.1% of the sample) were not satisfied with the services. The majority of these responses were staffing related (n=3); need for more fire halls and ambulances in the County stemming from the need for better response times and/or fire hydrants that were not close to where people lived in the rural areas (n=4).
- No differences were found between gender, age groups or the length of time that people lived in the County. However,

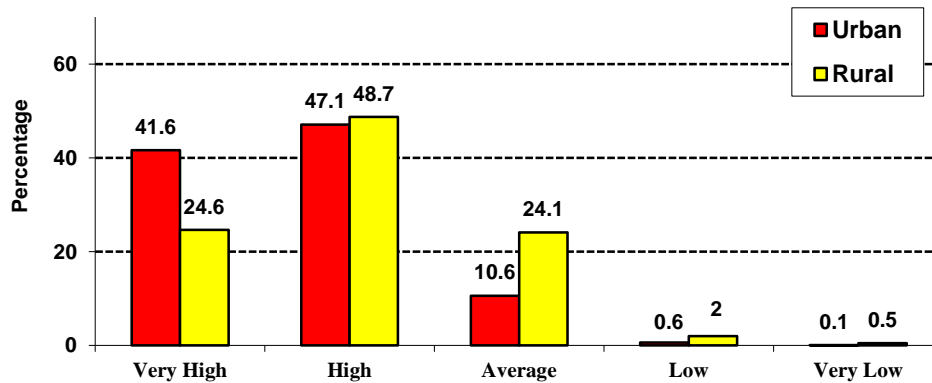
¹⁰ Overall, 13% of respondents in 2015 indicated that they had used the fire and ambulance services within the past 12 months. This reported usage is 6% lower than last year's survey.

¹¹ 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 ($\chi^2 = 19.63, 4 df, p = .001$). A *t*-test measurement for mean score differences ($t = -2.65, 894 df, p = .008$) confirms that users of fire and ambulance services rated these services higher than non-users.

differences were found between urban and rural residents for this item in 2015.

As seen in Figure 30, a further analysis of this service revealed that more Sherwood Park residents (regardless of use) were satisfied with the service (88.7% *very high or high*) compared with those living in rural areas (73.3% *very high or high*).¹²

FIGURE 30
Quality of fire and ambulance services
Urban and rural comparisons



A further comparison with past satisfaction studies on this service revealed that the difference in the combined *very high/high* satisfaction scores noted for residents who used the service (regardless of where they lived) have been constantly positive each year that the survey has been done. Figure 31 shows the trends from 2011 to 2015.

¹² 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 ($\chi^2 = 37.1$, 4 df, $p = .000$).

FIGURE 31
Quality of fire and ambulance services
User trends 2011 - 2015

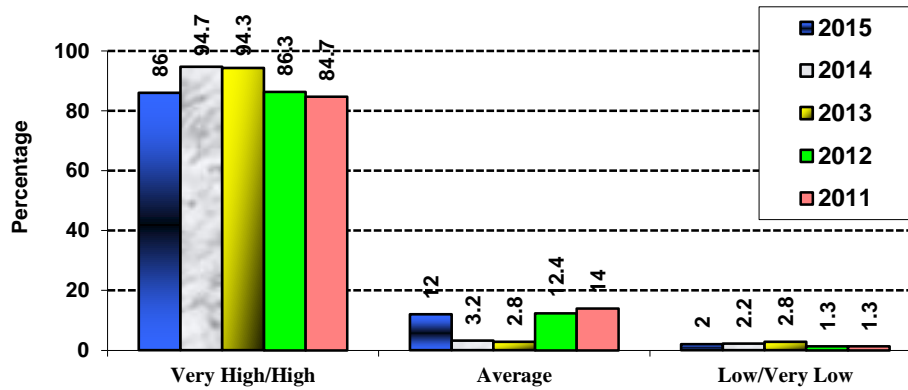
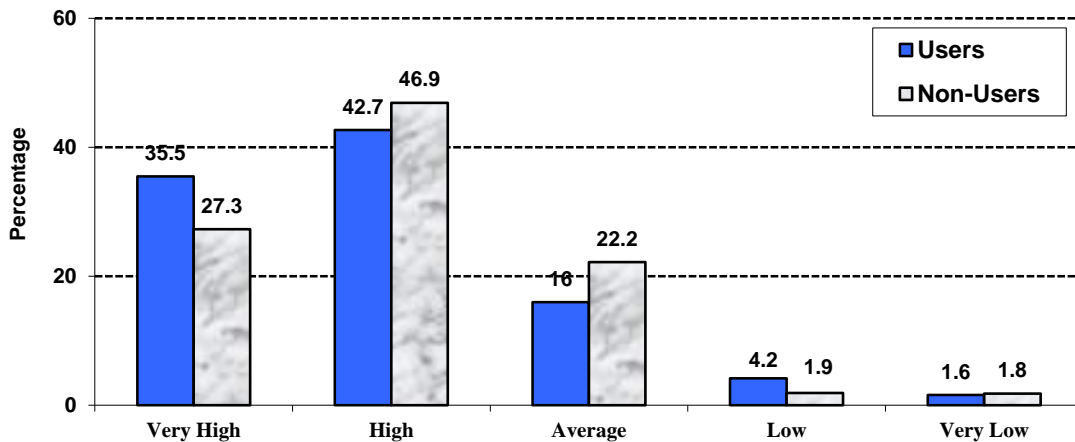


Figure 32 presents the satisfaction level for RCMP services, based on those who used these services¹³ in the past 12 months and those who did not.

FIGURE 32
Quality of RCMP services



Highlights from Figure 32

- As seen in Figure 32 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.¹⁴

¹³ Overall, 318 respondents (26.5% of the 2015 sample) indicated that they had used the RCMP within the past 12 months. It should also be noted that 12.7% did not rate the service in 2015 on the basis that they did not know enough about the RCMP to give a rating.

¹⁴ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between use and how satisfied one is with the RCMP ($X^2 = 14.51, 4 df, p = .006$). A *t*-test measurement for mean score differences ($t = -2.28, 886 df, p = .02$) confirms that users of RCMP services rated these services higher than non-users.

- Ratings provided by both users and non-users in 2015 were similar to trends found in previous years.
- Users and non-users (45 in all) who rated RCMP services as *low or very low* were asked to comment on ways that the service could be improved. The comments varied, but there were multiple instances where residents wondered why the RCMP did not respond faster to calls.
- Statistical differences were also found for gender and urban/rural residents for this service (see Figure 33 and 34).¹⁵

FIGURE 33
Quality of RCMP services – male and female comparisons

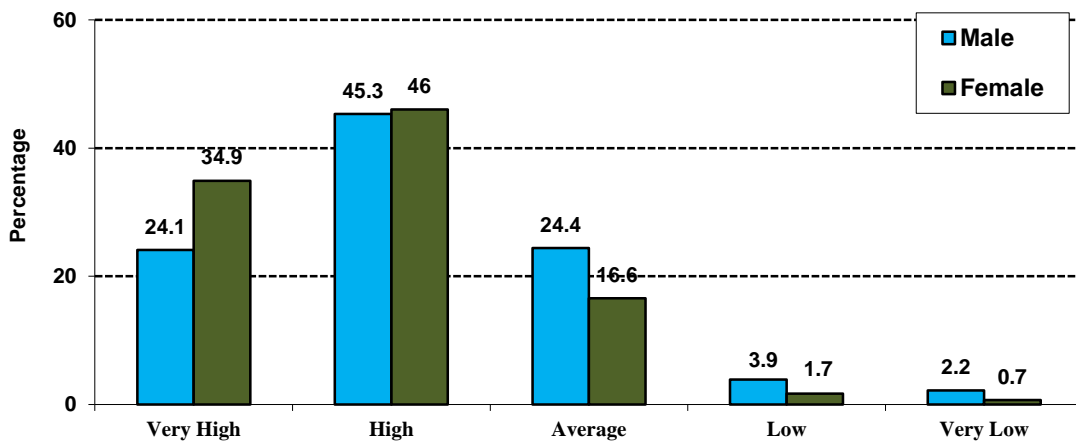
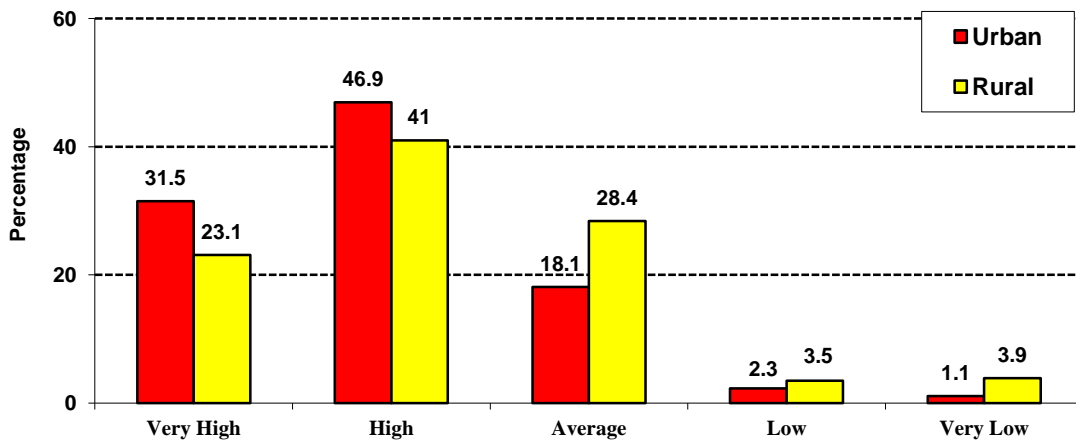


FIGURE 34
Quality of RCMP services – urban and rural comparisons

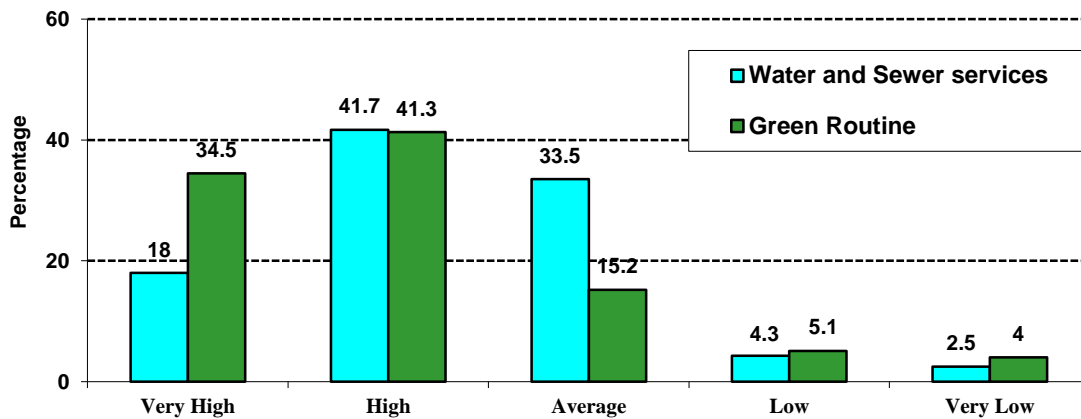


¹⁵ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship in perception of RCMP services with gender ($X^2= 25.1, 4 \text{ df}, p=.000$) and where they lived in Strathcona County ($X^2= 24.21, 4 \text{ df}, p=.000$).

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 35 presents the satisfaction level of residents for these services, regardless of where they live.¹⁶

FIGURE 35
Level of satisfaction with water and waste management services



Highlights from Figure 35

- It can be seen from Figure 35 that residents were generally satisfied with these services. A further examination of the ratings revealed that 75.8% gave *very high/high* ratings for the Green Routine in 2015, which is virtually the same as last year's findings. The *very high/high* ratings for water and sewerage services was lower in 2015 (59.7%) compared to 2014 (66.5%).

¹⁶ Overall, 229 people (19.1%) did not rate *water and sewer services* and 60 people (5%) did not rate the *Green Routine services* in 2015. These patterns are about the same as the percentage of residents who did not rate these services in the 2013 and 2014 surveys. It should also be noted that the majority of those who did not rate *water and 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 36 and 37).

FIGURE 36
Level of satisfaction with water services
Urban and rural comparisons

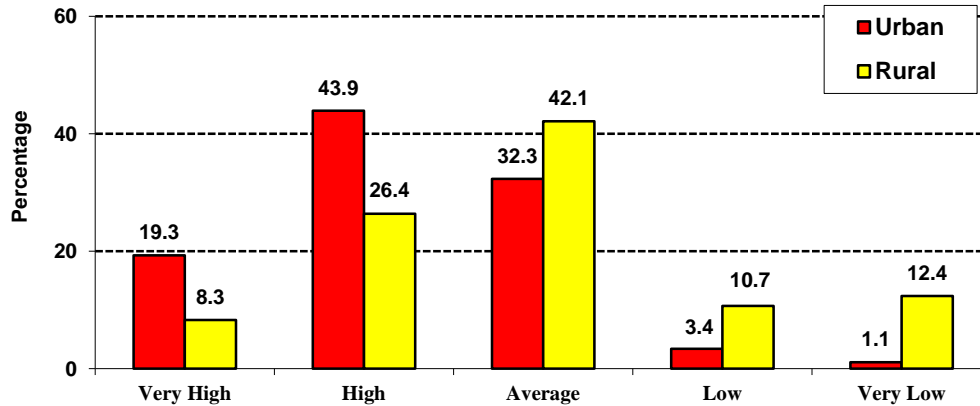
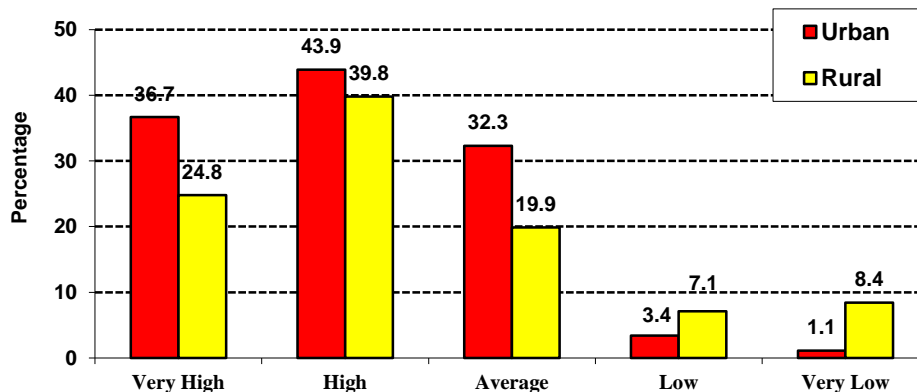


FIGURE 37
Level of satisfaction with Green Routine service
Urban and rural comparisons



Highlights from Figures 36 and 37

- A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between where one lives and how one rated *water and sewage* ($X^2 = 86.04$, 4 df, $p = .000$) and the *Green Routine* ($X^2 = 27.26$, 4 df, $p = .000$).
- 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, 63 people (6.8% of

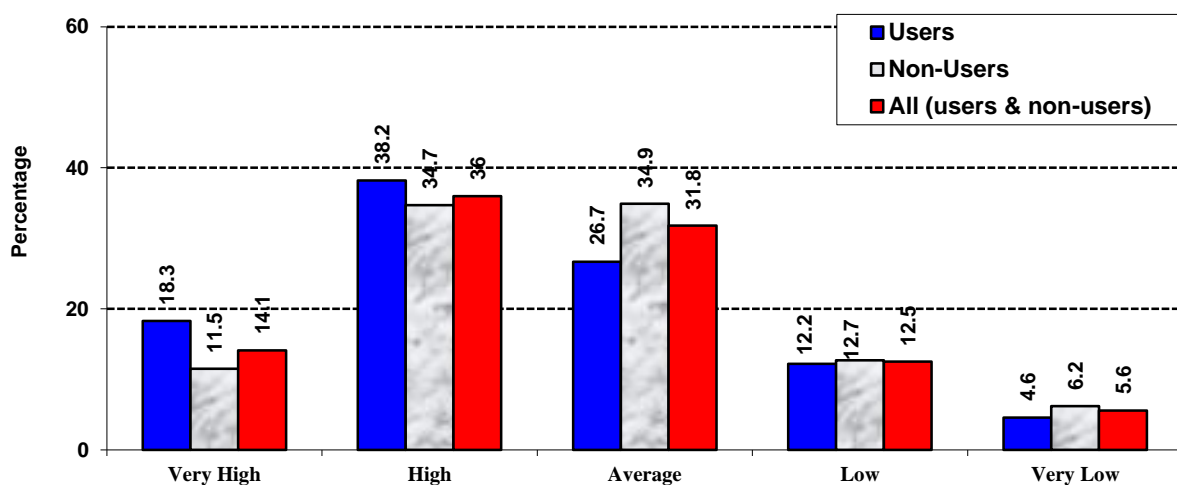
the sample who rated the service) commented. In this year's study, most of the comments either focused on not receiving the services (noted by those who live in the rural section of the County), or complained about the rates that are charged for the service. A low water pressure was also mentioned (n=4).

- With respect to the Green Routine, 104 residents (9.1% of the sample) who rated the service as *low* or *very low* had comments. Many residents in this year's survey felt that the container bins were too small for the amount of waste they were producing. As in past years, many would prefer the pickup schedule to be weekly (n=13). There were residents who mentioned that the collection was improperly done, with remnants of garbage remaining on the property or in bins after collection. Others indicated that the materials were not picked up according to the schedule (n=20).
- It should be noted that the percentage of residents who were unhappy with the Green Routine service increased to 9.1% in 2015 compared to 5.8% in 2014 and 6.4% in 2013.
- 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 38 presents the satisfaction level for transit services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services¹⁷ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 494 residents (41.2% of the sample) did not rate transit service on the basis that they did not know anything about the service.

FIGURE 38
Satisfaction with Strathcona County transit service

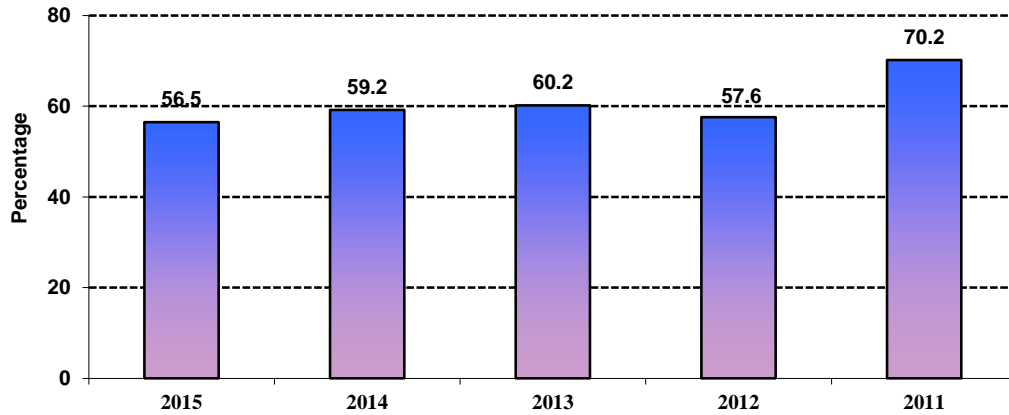


Highlights from Figure 38

- Figure 38 indicates that 50.1% of residents (regardless of use) have a positive view of transit services in Strathcona County. This is almost 6% lower than what was found in 2014.
- It can also be seen that 16.8% of users of the transit service have low or very low levels of satisfaction with the service, which is 1.5% greater than 2014.
- In comparison to previous surveys, it can be seen in Figure 39 that the percentage of users rating this service as *very high/high* is slightly lower than the previous three years, and considerably lower than what was found in 2011.

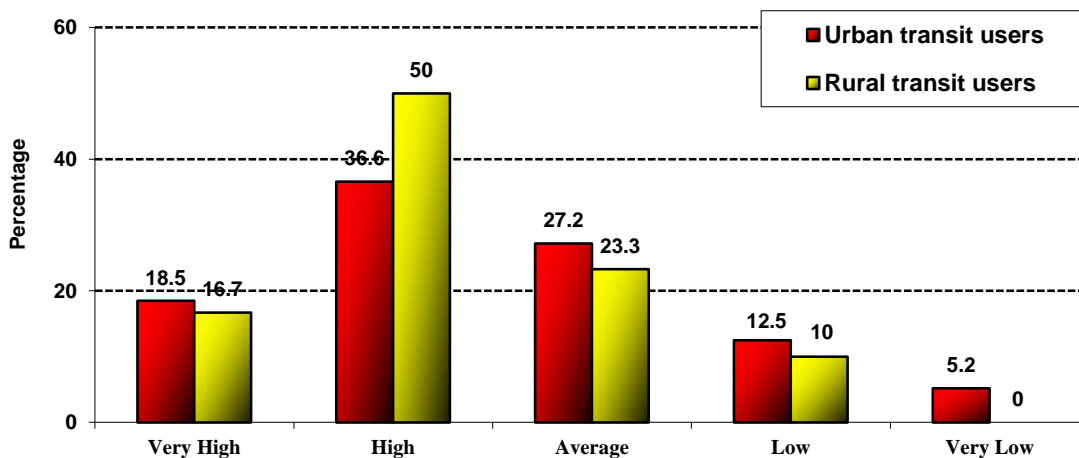
¹⁷ Overall, 23.4% of respondents indicated they had used transit services within the past 12 months. This is 3.2% higher than what was recorded in 2014.

FIGURE 39
“Very high/high” combined satisfaction ratings with Strathcona County transit service by transit users 2011– 2015 comparisons



- A further analysis found that the majority of transit users (88.9%) live in Sherwood Park, while the remaining 11.1% live in rural Strathcona County. This has been consistent for many years now.
- It can be seen that the rating perceptions of **users of public transit** were fairly more favorable among rural users compared to urban users. It can be seen in Figure 40 that the combined *very high/high* ratings for rural resident users (66.7%) was higher than the 55.1% for urban resident users.

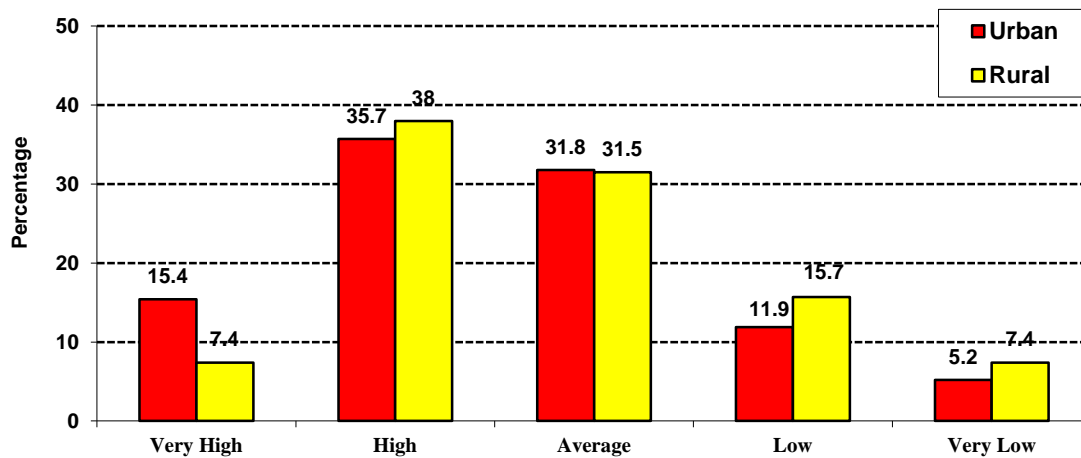
FIGURE 40
Satisfaction with Strathcona County transit service by users Urban and rural comparisons



The satisfaction rating of transit services from the total sample (regardless of use) on the basis of where people lived in the County is

shown in Figure 41. No statistical differences were found on perceptions toward transit based on where a resident lived within the County.

FIGURE 41
Satisfaction with Strathcona County transit service
Urban and rural comparisons

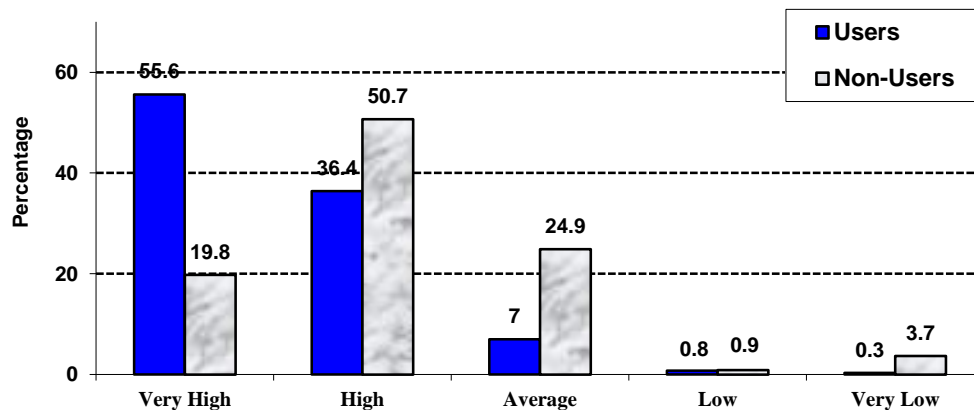


- There were also no statistically significant differences noted between any other demographic items and how residents rated transit services.
- The 123 people (18.1% of the sample) who gave transit services a *low/very low* rating were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. Many residents wondered about buses moving around Sherwood Park with only one or two passengers on them (n=10). Some comments were directed toward aspects about the double-decker buses (N=7), noting that the seats on this style of bus was considered to be very uncomfortable. Other comments that were also mentioned in past surveys included: taking too long to get to desired destination(s) (n=8). There were also multiple comments associated with how long/awkward it was getting to Edmonton from Strathcona County (n=21).

Library services in Strathcona County

Figure 42 presents the satisfaction level with the Strathcona County Library, 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 161 people (13.4% 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 42
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library by use



Highlights from Figure 42

- Most residents (Figure 42) 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.¹⁹ It can be seen that 92% users are more likely to give the library a combined *very high/high* rating compared to 70.5% who did not use it (but nonetheless gave the library a positive rating).
- There were 18 people (1.8% of the sample) who rated the library service as *low* or *very low*. Almost all of comments centered on the lack of parking availability and/or the fees associated with parking (n= 7).

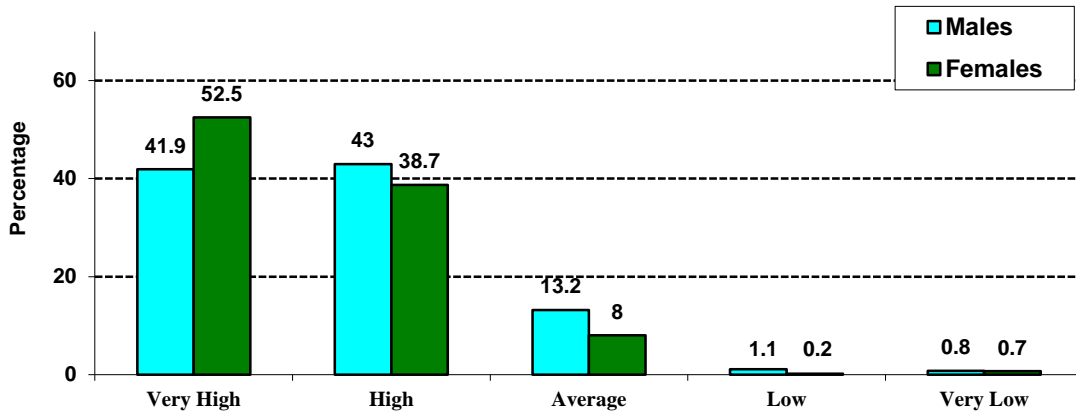
In terms of demographics, it can be seen in Figure 43 that females were slightly more satisfied with the library service in 2015 compared to males.²⁰

¹⁸ Overall, 67.9% of respondents indicated they had used the library within the past 12 months. This is slightly higher than what was reported in 2014.

¹⁹ For library services, ($X^2 = 125.22$, 4 df, $p = .000$).

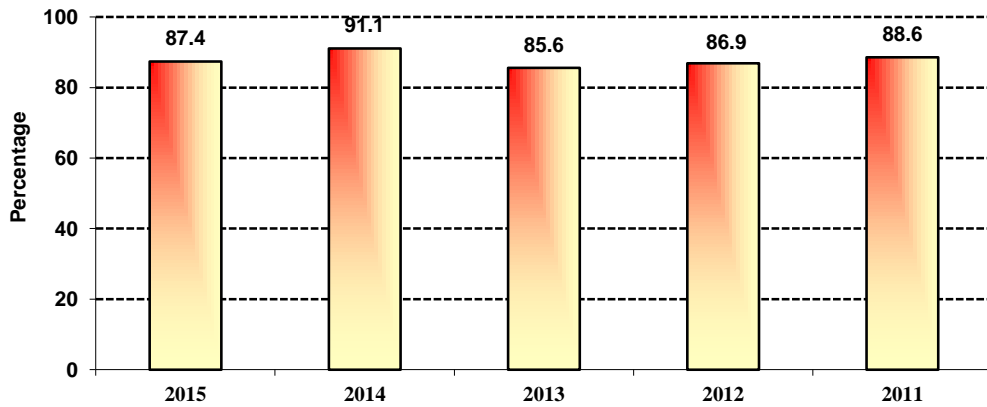
²⁰ For library services, ($X^2 = 16.10$, 4 df, $p = .003$).

FIGURE 43
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library
Gender comparisons



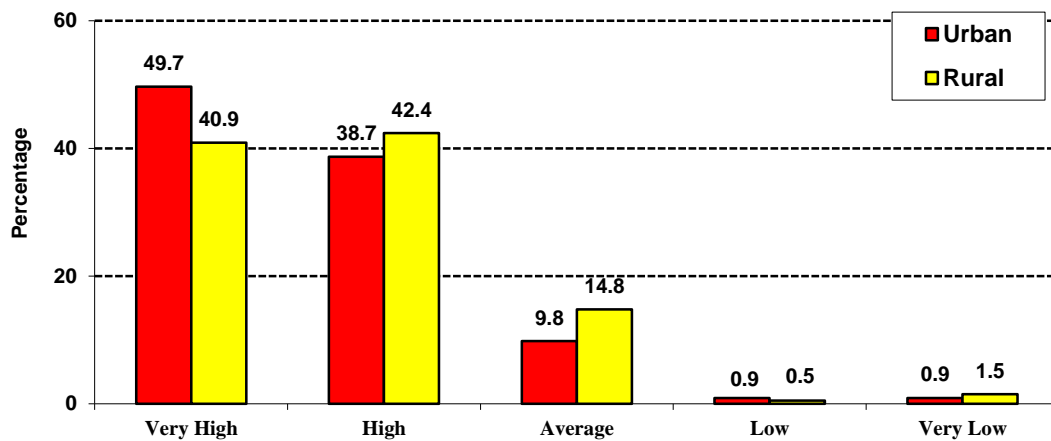
A further investigation shown in Figure 44 reveals that an overall *very high/high* satisfaction level with the Strathcona library (regardless of use) has been very strong over the past five years.

FIGURE 44
Combined “very high/high” satisfaction ratings with
Strathcona County Library 2011 – 2015 comparisons



It was further determined that within Sherwood Park, 71.7% are library users; in Rural Strathcona, 54.1% 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 45.

FIGURE 45
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library regardless of use - Urban and rural comparisons

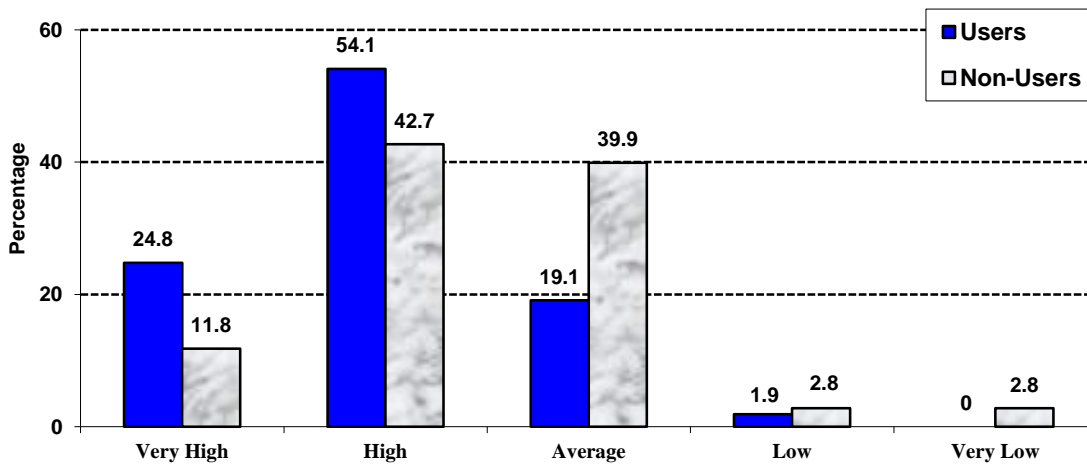


There were no statistical differences in perception toward the library on the basis of where the resident lived. It can be seen that 88.4% of those living in Sherwood Park give the library a combined *very high/high* rating compared to 83.3% of those living in rural Strathcona County.

Information and Volunteer Centre services in Strathcona County

Figure 46 presents the satisfaction level with the Information and Volunteer Centre (IVC), based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services²¹ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 51.7% of residents (n=619) did not rate the centre on the basis that they did not know anything about it.

FIGURE 46
Satisfaction with the Information and Volunteer Centre



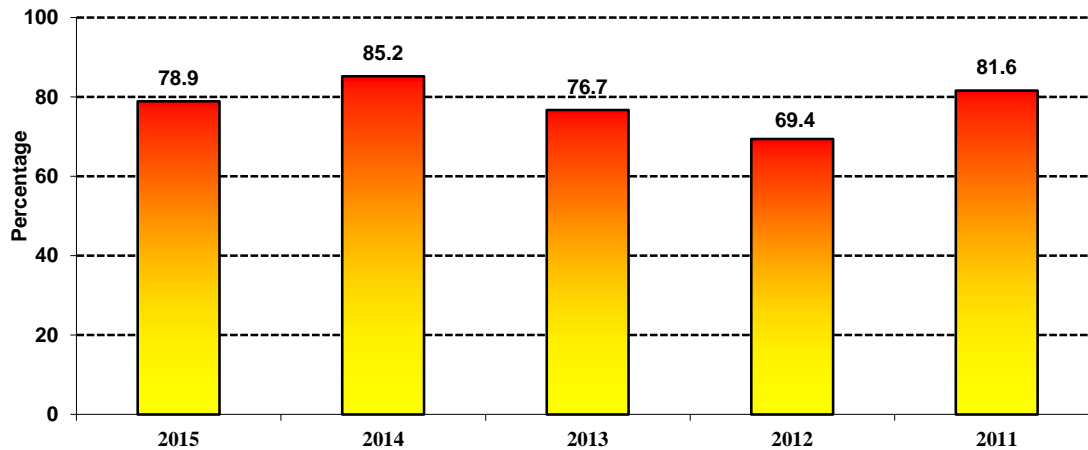
Highlights from Figure 46

- It can be seen from Figure 46 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,²² 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 78.9%, which was just over 6% lower from last year's (85.2%) results.

²¹ Overall, 14.8% of respondents indicated that they had used the Information and Volunteer Centre within the past 12 months. This is about 5% lower than what was recorded for 2014.

²² For the IVC, ($X^2 = 34.56$, 4 df, $p = .000$).

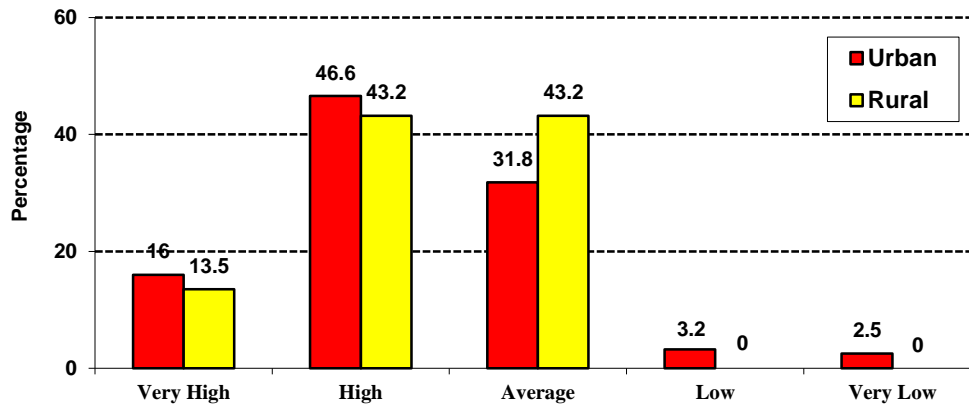
FIGURE 47
Combined “very high/high” satisfaction ratings for the Information and Volunteer Centre by users - 2011 – 2015 comparisons



- The majority of IVC users live in Sherwood Park (84.7%) while the remaining 15.3% live in rural parts of Strathcona County.
- Looking at this on the flip side, on the basis of where people lived, of all the people residing in Sherwood Park, 15.9% used the IVC. Among all the rural residents surveyed, 10.5% used the IVC.
- It can be seen in Figure 48 that the satisfaction ratings for the IVC (regardless of use) were slightly stronger for urban residents (64.6%) compared to rural ones (56.7%)²³

²³ On the basis of location, ($X^2 = 10.26$, 4 df, $p=.04$).

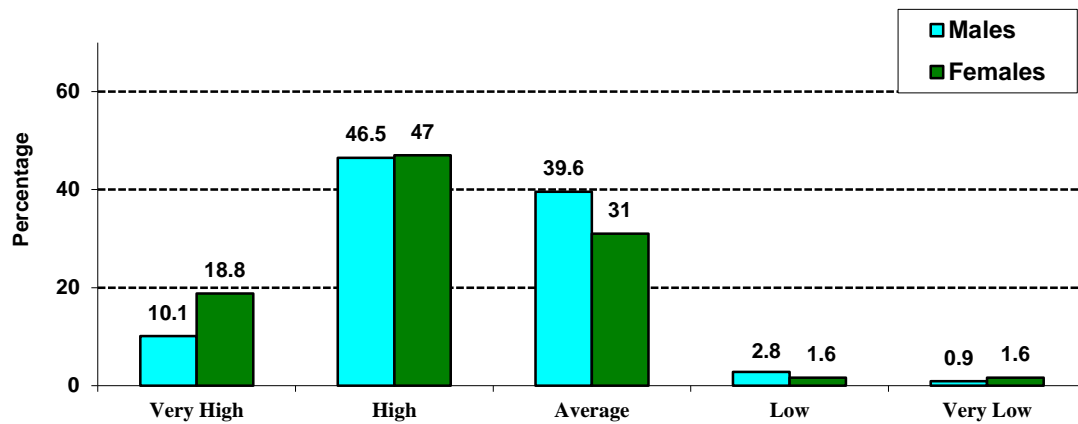
FIGURE 48
Satisfaction with the Information and Volunteer Centre
Urban and rural comparisons



- A total of 195 people (39%) did not rate the Information and Volunteer Centre because they did not know enough about it to provide a rating. This finding is almost 8% higher than 2013, which indicates that fewer residents have a basic awareness of the IVC compared to the previous year.
- In this year's study, it can be seen in Figure 49 that females gave the IVC a higher rating than males with respect to perceptions of satisfaction of the IVC. A chi-square test of association confirmed a relationship between gender and how one rated the IVC.²⁴ Age was not a factor in rating satisfaction with the IVC.

²⁴ For the IVC rating based on gender, ($\chi^2 = 10.43$, 4 df, $p = .03$).

FIGURE 49
Satisfaction with the Information and Volunteer Centre
Gender comparisons

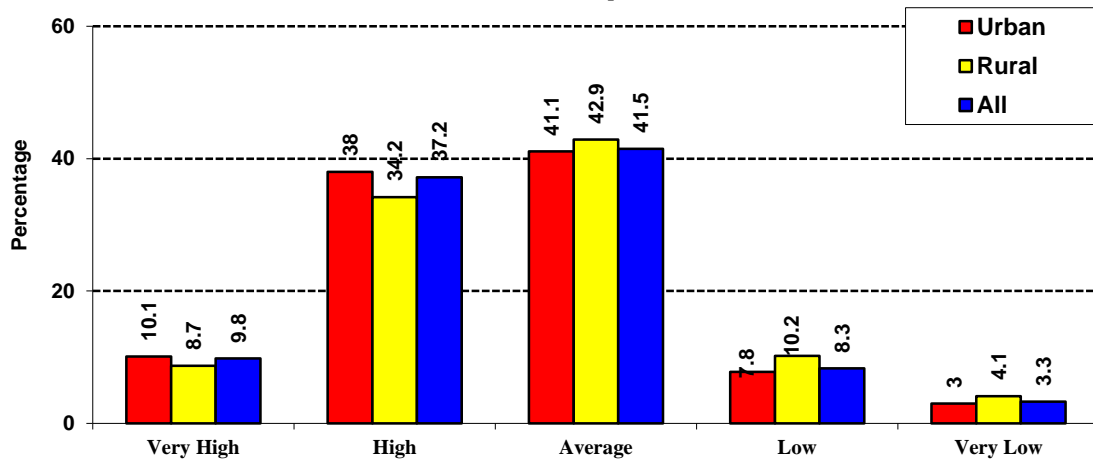


- Overall, 25 people gave the Information and Volunteer Centre a *low* rating. A variety of comments were put forward, including a perceived need for the IVC to improve its profile (n=3) or whether it's needed at all (n=5). Two people independently commented that staff members at the center were rude to them when they went there.

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.²⁵

FIGURE 50
Satisfaction with economic development in Strathcona County



Highlights from Figure 50

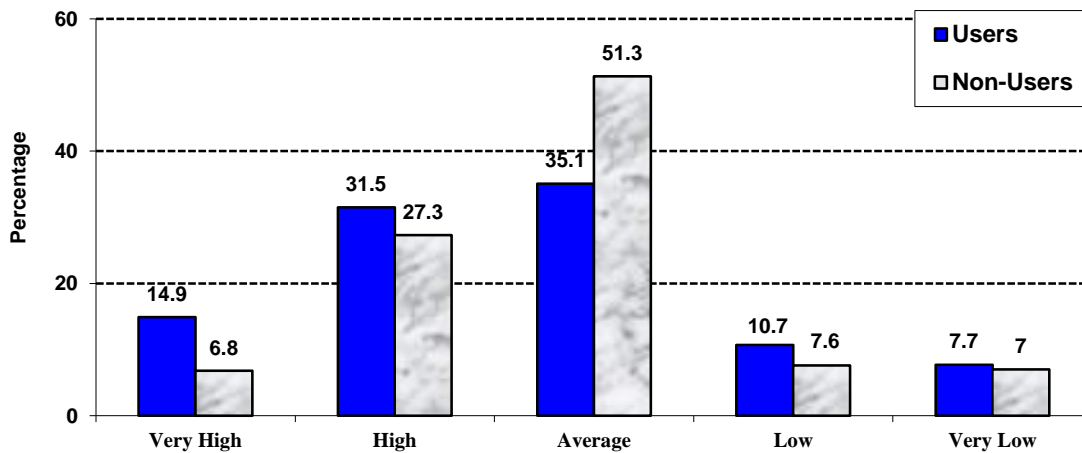
- As can be seen in Figure 50, the perception of residents toward economic development by the County was somewhat positive. No differences were seen between those living in Sherwood Park and those living in rural Strathcona.
- No differences were seen among age or gender with respect to one's satisfaction of economic development.
- Overall, 110 residents throughout the County (11.6% of the sample who provided an opinion) expressed a low or very low level of satisfaction with economic development in the County. Most of this year's comments focused on retail concerns (n=28), particularly a feeling that there was a need for more "decent" stores, though there is no clear definition among residents as to what a "decent store" is. Big Box stores had mixed perceptions – some people (n=7) thought there were too many, while two people thought there were not enough of them.

²⁵ Overall, 223 people (18.6% of the sample) did not rate this service.

Building and 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 services²⁶ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 546 people (45.6% 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



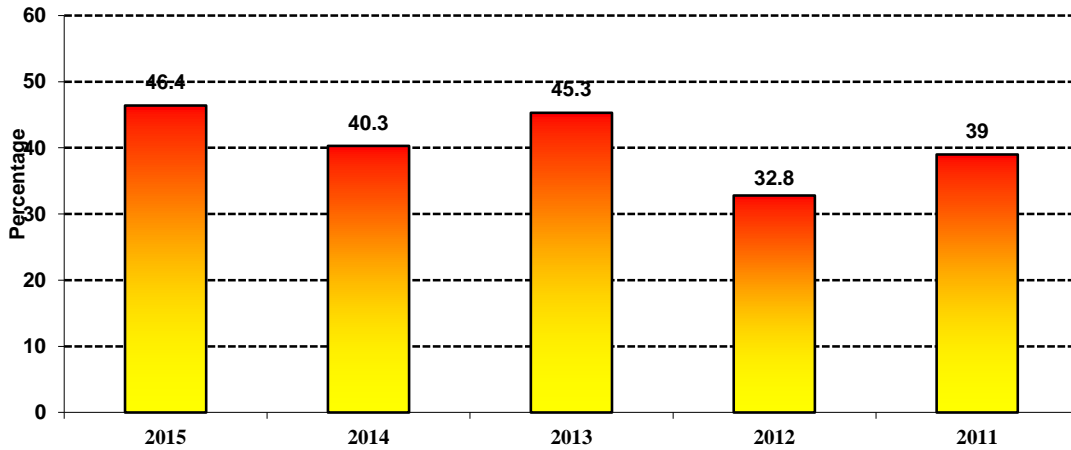
It can be seen from Figure 51 that residents who made use of the building permit and inspection services have a more positive view of it compared to those who had not used it in the past 12 months. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between use and how one rated building permit and inspection services,²⁷ where users are more likely to give this a higher rating compared to those who did not use it.

From a trending perspective, it can be seen in Figure 52 that users who give this service a *very high/high* rating was higher this year compared to last year. However, it can also be seen in this figure that perceptions toward building permit and inspection services vary from year to year.

²⁶ Overall, 15.2% of respondents indicated that they had used the planning, building and inspection services within the past 12 months. This is about the same as last year's survey.

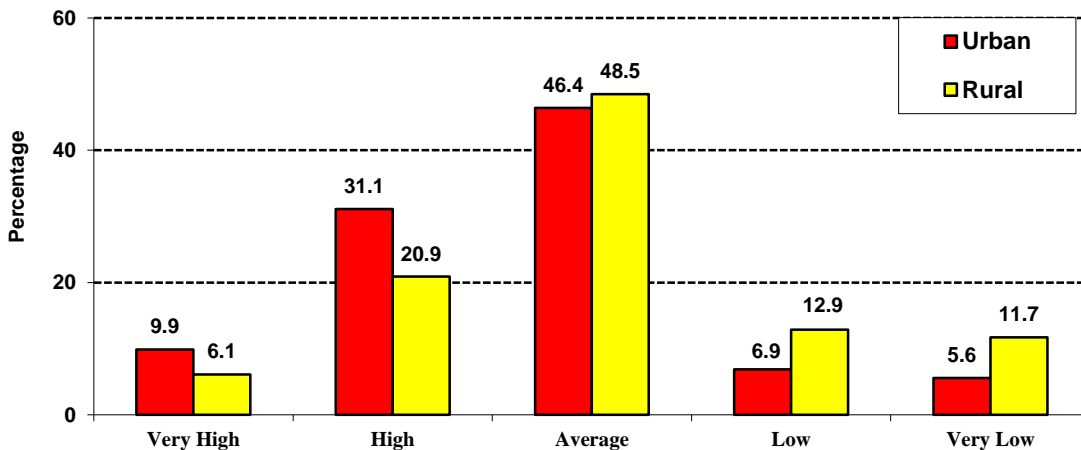
²⁷ For Building permit and inspection services, ($\chi^2 = 18.15, 4 \text{ df}, p=.001$).

FIGURE 52
Combined “very high/high” satisfaction ratings for building permit and inspection services among users: 2011 – 2015 comparisons



A comparison of perceptions by location (regardless of use/non-use of the service) is shown in Figure 53. Location was a factor in differentiating residents’ perceptions toward this service, as urban residents had more favorable views than those living in rural Strathcona.²⁸

FIGURE 53
Satisfaction with building permit and inspection services in Strathcona County – urban and rural comparisons



In this year’s study, among users of building permit and inspection services, 13.6% lived in Sherwood Park, while 21% of rural residents made use of the service.

²⁸ For building permit and inspection services based on residence, ($\chi^2 = 17.70, 4 \text{ df}, p=.001$).

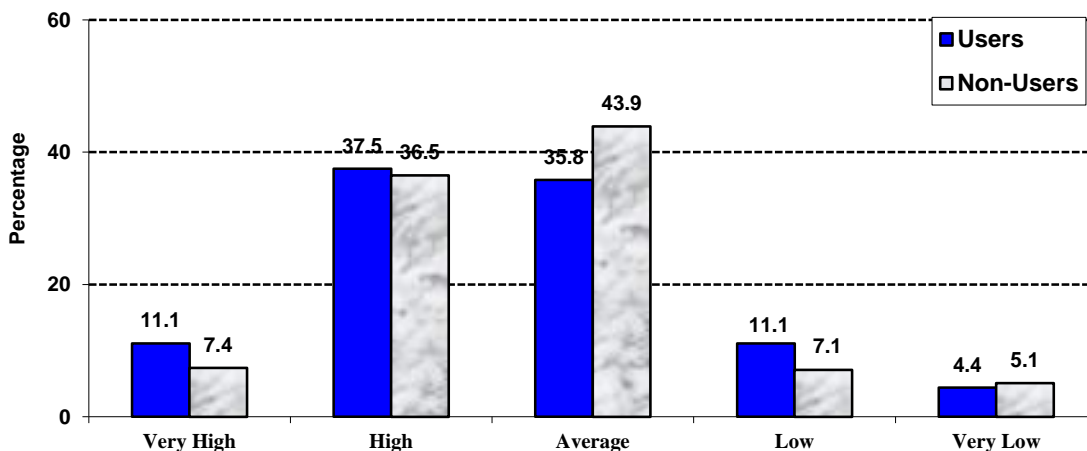
Neither gender nor age are influencing factors in rating the service.

The 98 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. The most frequently mentioned concern was how long it took to get a permit (n= 26). Thirteen people mentioned that the procedures associated with inspections were not consistent.

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 services²⁹ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 315 people (26.3% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it. A chi-square procedure showed that there was a slight difference between users and non-users of bylaw enforcement.³⁰

FIGURE 54
Satisfaction with bylaw enforcement services in Strathcona County



In past years, there were differences seen with how residents rated this service on the basis of gender. This is also the case in 2015, as a chi-square procedure showed that there was a difference between males and females with respect to bylaw enforcement.³¹ There were no differences noted between age groups.

²⁹ Overall, 26.2% of respondents indicated they had utilized bylaw enforcement services within the past 12 months. This is almost 4% higher than what was reported in the 2014 survey.

³⁰ For bylaw enforcement services, ($\chi^2 = 10.35$, 4 df, $p=.035$).

³¹ For bylaw enforcement services, ($\chi^2 = 19.64$, 4 df, $p=.001$).

FIGURE 55
Satisfaction with bylaw enforcement services– gender comparisons

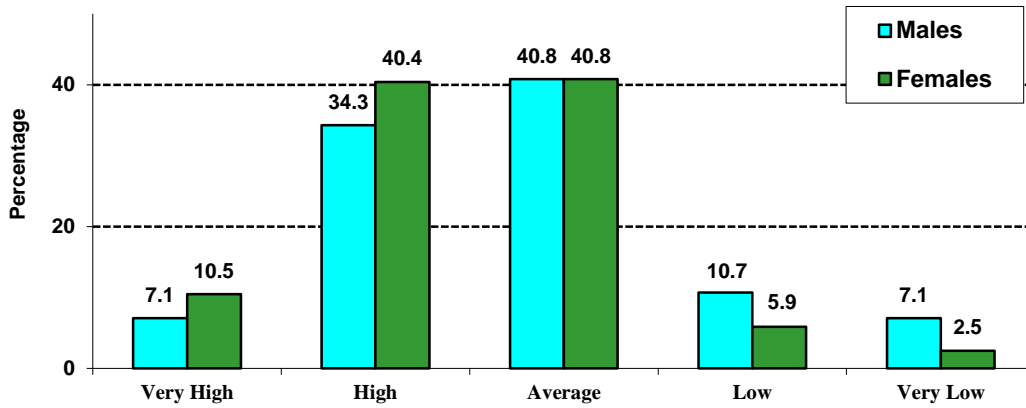
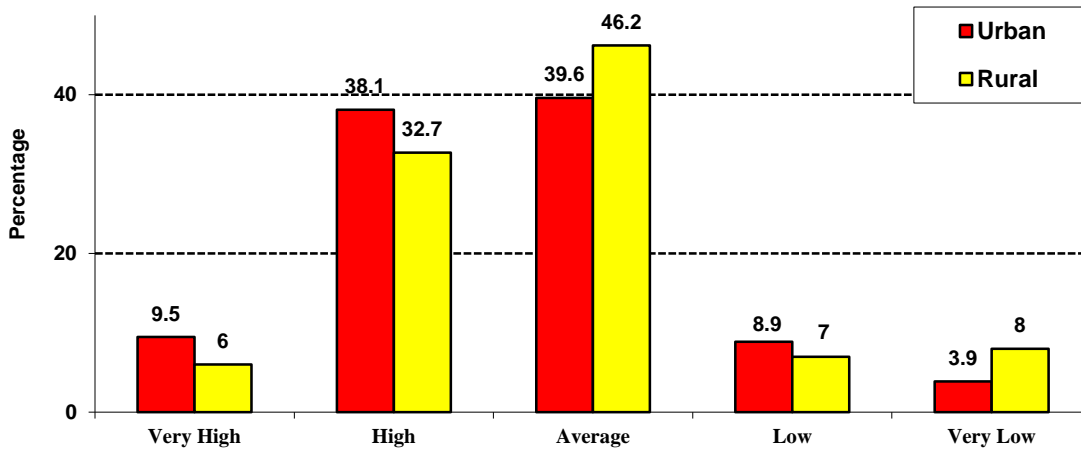


Figure 56 shows a comparison between urban and rural residents for this service.

FIGURE 56
Satisfaction with bylaw enforcement services in Strathcona County – urban and rural comparisons

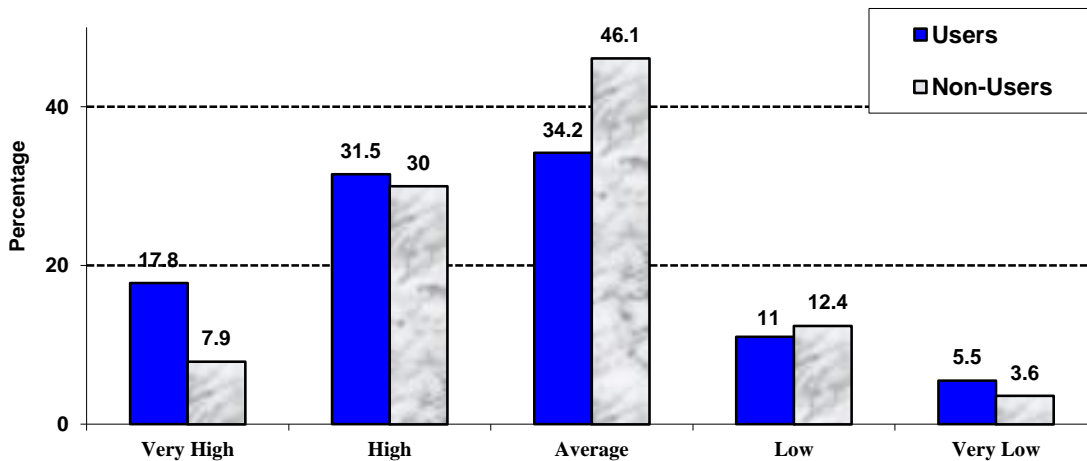


The 115 residents (13.4% of the sample) who had a low level of satisfaction with this service were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. There were a wide range of responses associated with this item this year, with the most predominant comments attributed to enforcing existing bylaws (n=37). There were a few comments specifically related to enforcing bylaws associated with dogs and other animals (n=22).

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 330 people (27.5% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it. A chi-square procedure showed that there was a slight difference between users and non-users of agricultural services.³²

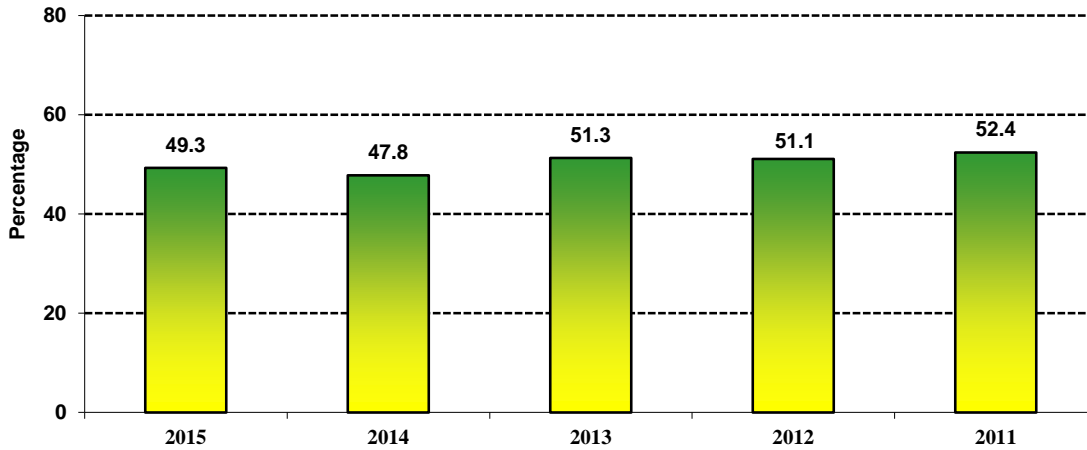
FIGURE 57
Satisfaction with weed control, soil management, wildlife problems and other agricultural services in Strathcona County



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 the last four years.

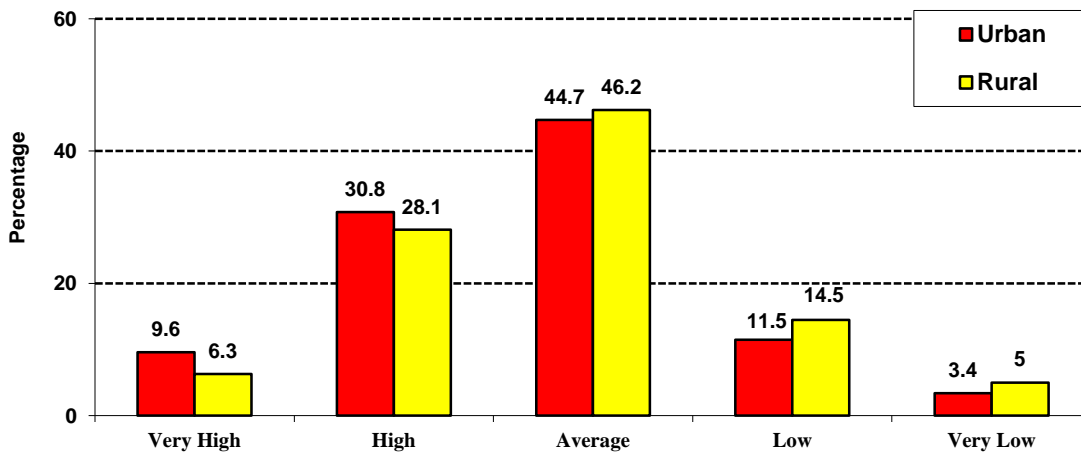
³² For bylaw enforcement services, ($\chi^2 = 10.39$, 4 df, $p=.034$).

FIGURE 58
“Very high/high” combined satisfaction ratings with the agricultural services by users of the service 2011 – 2015 comparisons



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 and rural comparisons



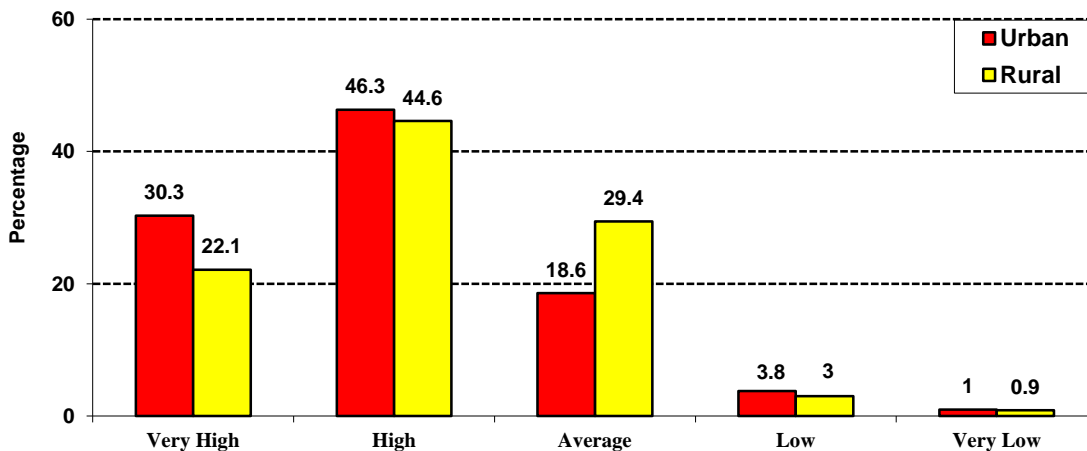
Overall, the 136 residents (16.1% of the sample) who had a *low/very low* level of satisfaction with this service were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. As in previous years, the majority of the

comments focused on better weed control, especially thistles and dandelions (n=70).

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. In this year's study, a higher percentage of urban residents rated this item more favorably than those living in the rural area.³³ Only a small handful of residents (47 people, or 3.9% of the sample) did not rate this item.

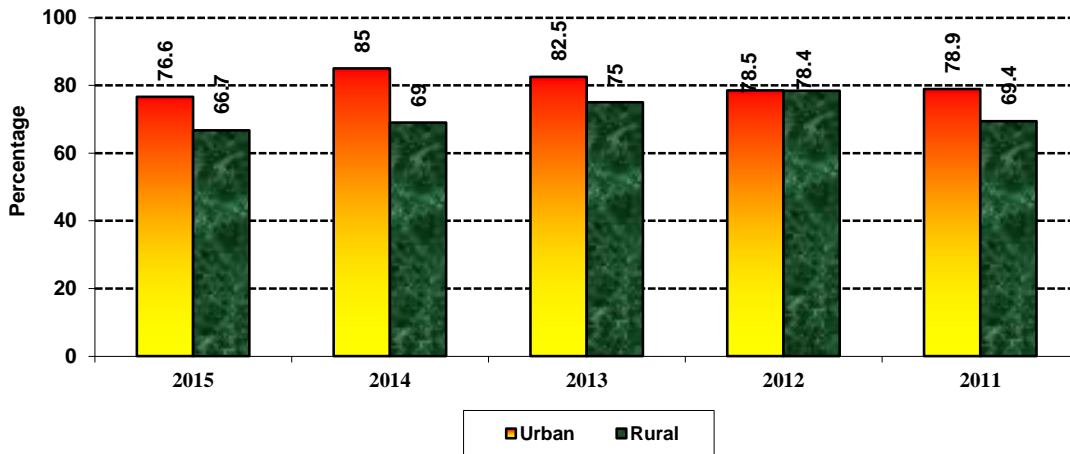
FIGURE 60
Satisfaction with parks, green spaces and sports fields in
Strathcona County
Urban and rural comparisons



As seen in Figure 61, this year's combined *very high/high* rating for the urban area (76.6%) is the lowest it's been in the last five years. This is also the case among rural residents with their combined *very high/high* ratings this year (66.7%).

³³ For Parks, Green Spaces and Sport Fields, ($X^2 = 15.15$, 4 df, $p=.004$).

FIGURE 61
Combined “very high/high” satisfaction ratings for parks, green spaces and sport fields: 2011 – 2015 comparisons



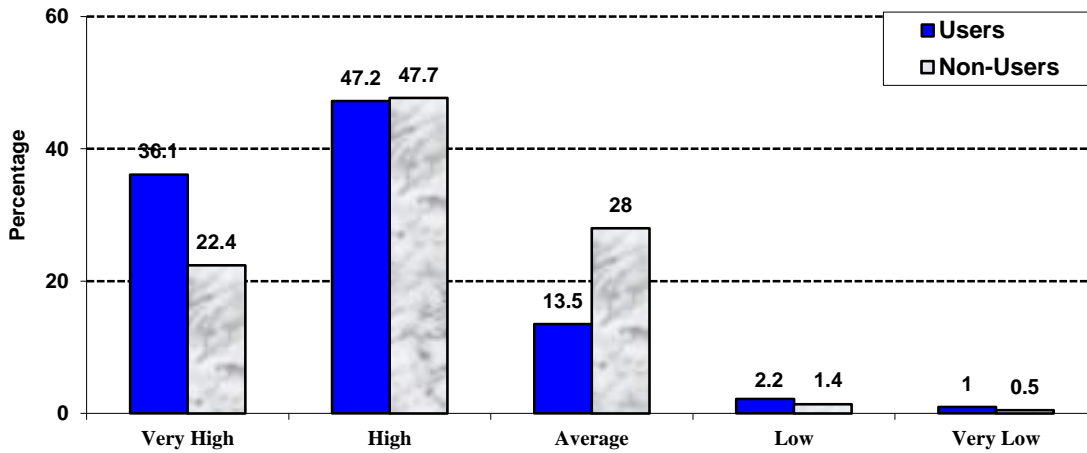
The 52 people (4.3% of the sample) who gave the parks, green spaces and sport fields a low rating were asked to suggest ways this could be improved. Many of the comments in this year’s study revolved around a need for more parks, walking paths and green spaces in the County (n=11). There were also comments focusing on better weed and insect control in the open parks (n=8).

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 facilities³⁴ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 74 people (6.2% of the sample) did not rate these facilities on the basis that they did not know enough about them. In this year’s study, there was a statistically significant relationship between use of the facilities and perceptions of how satisfied residents were with them.³⁵

³⁴ Overall, 76% of the respondents indicated that they had been to an indoor recreation facility in the County of Strathcona within the past 12 months. This is almost 8% higher than the 2014 survey results.

³⁵ For Indoor recreation facilities, ($\chi^2 = 33.17, 4 \text{ df}, p=.000$).

FIGURE 62
Satisfaction with indoor recreation facilities in Strathcona County by usage

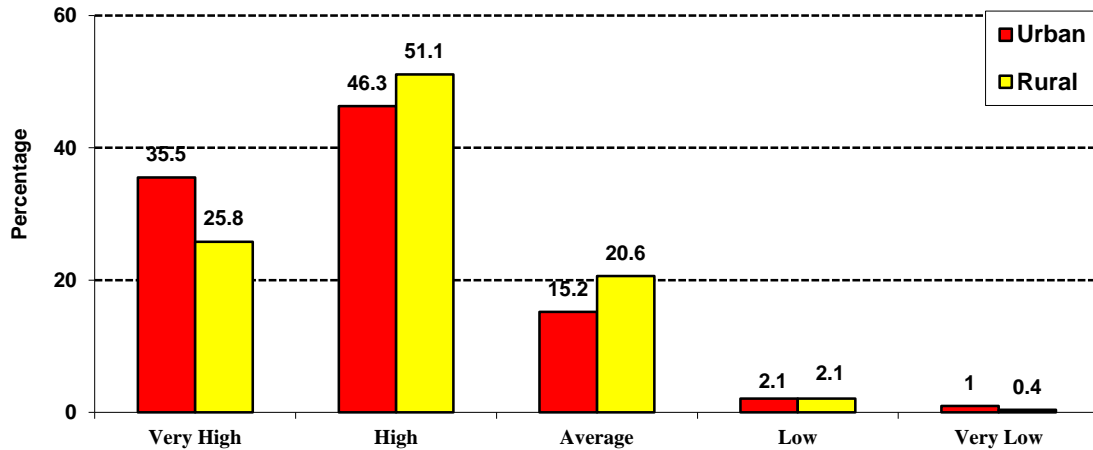


A further analysis revealed that 78.3% of Sherwood Park residents used the indoor recreation facilities at least once in the past 12 months, while 67.3% of rural residents made use of these facilities.

It can be seen in Figure 63 that regardless of use, the combined *very high/high* satisfaction levels for urban residents (81.8%) was slightly higher than it was for rural residents (76.9%). A statistically significant relationship between where residents lived and perceptions of how satisfied residents were with them was also found.³⁶ No statistically significant differences were uncovered for gender or age groups.

³⁶ For Indoor recreation facilities, ($\chi^2 = 10.19$, 4 df, $p = .04$).

FIGURE 63
Satisfaction with indoor recreation facilities in Strathcona County

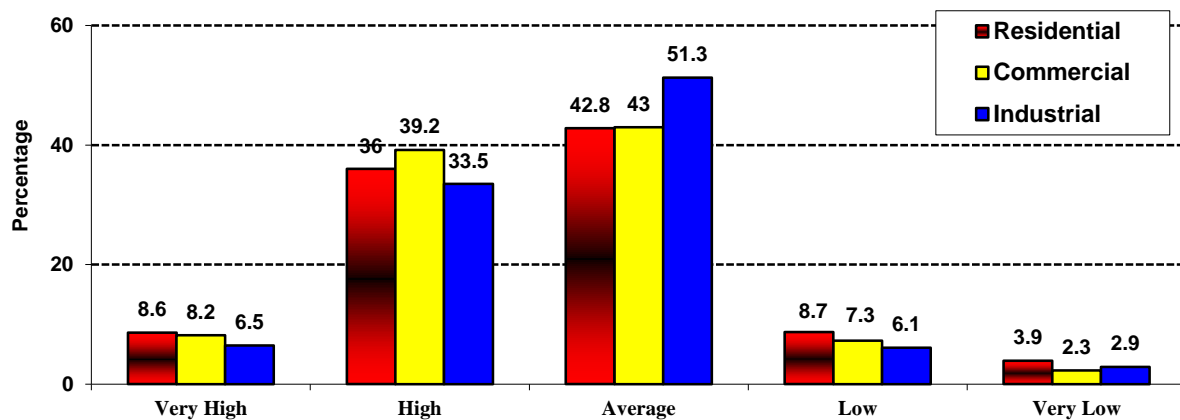


The 33 people (3% of the sample) who had a low level of satisfaction with the facilities were asked to suggest ways these could be improved. Similar to comments found in the past five years, most of this year's concerns focused on the need for more indoor facilities, especially pools and to a lesser extent, arenas for hockey and/or indoor soccer (n=13).

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 regardless of where residents lived 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 slightly more satisfied with the quality of commercial development than residential or industrial developments. It should be noted, however, that a considerable number of residents (n=398 or 33.2% of the sample) did not rate the quality of industrial developments.³⁷
- The trends noted in this figure for residential, commercial and industrial developments are similar to trends found in studies conducted in previous years.
- There were no statistical differences in perceptions seen between those living in Sherwood Park and those living in other parts of Strathcona County with respect to quality of residential development (Figure 65), commercial development (Figure 66) or industrial development (Figure 67) in this year's survey.

³⁷ Overall, 141 residents (11.8% of the sample) did not rate the quality of residential developments and 130 residents (10.9% of the sample) did not rate the quality of commercial developments.

FIGURE 65
Quality of residential developments throughout Strathcona County - Urban and rural comparisons

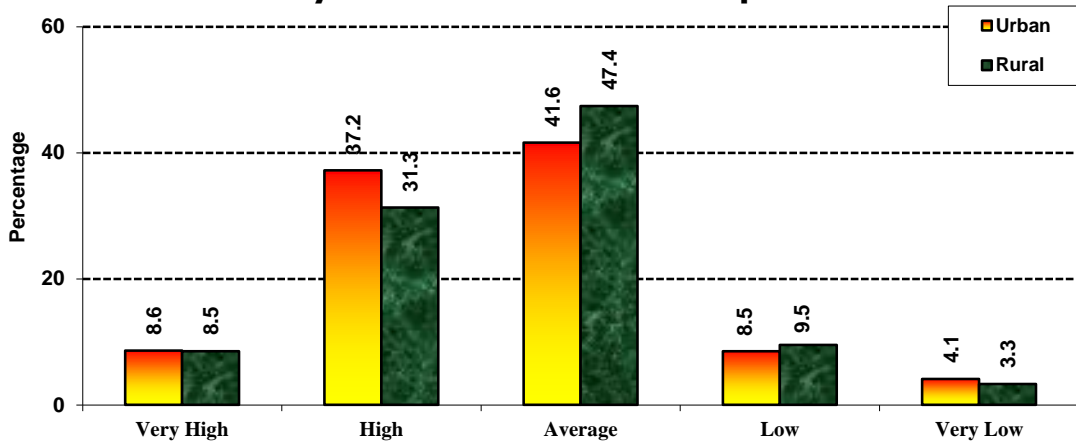


FIGURE 66
Quality of commercial developments throughout Strathcona County - Urban and rural comparisons

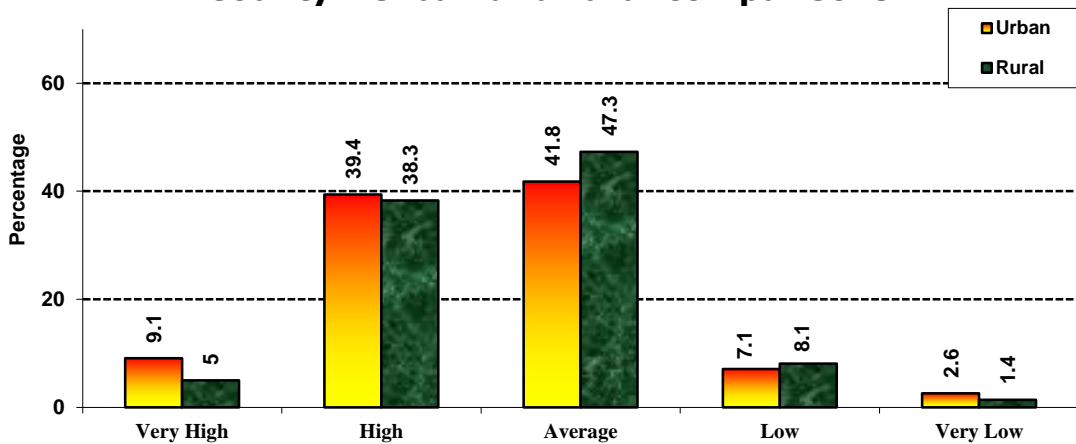
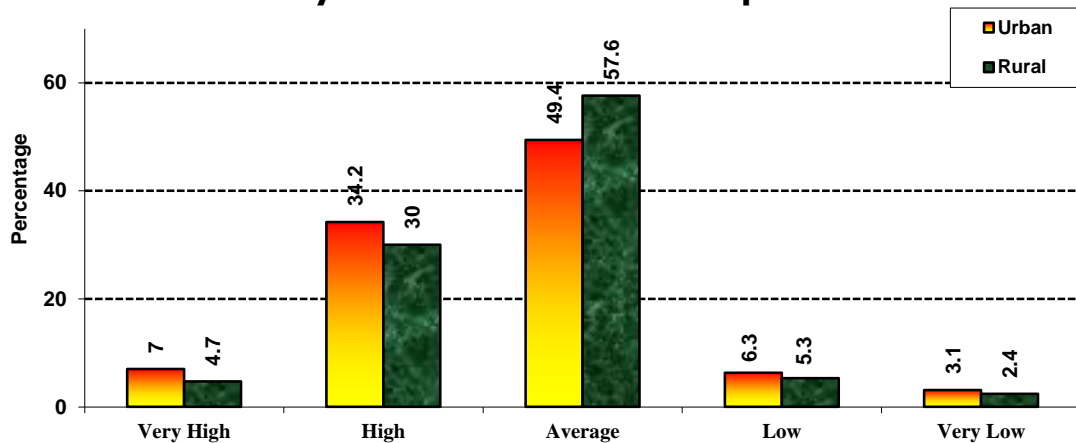


FIGURE 67
Quality of industrial developments throughout Strathcona County - Urban and rural comparisons

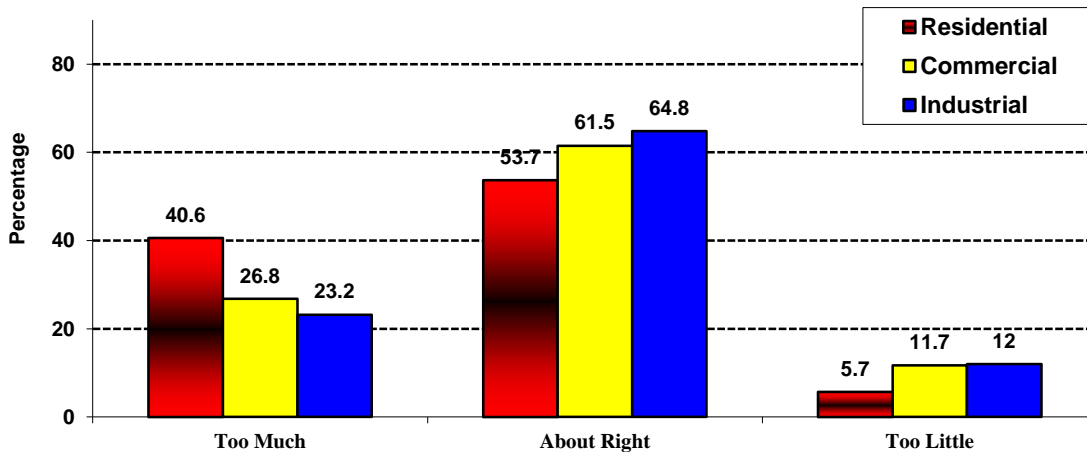


- Those who rated the quality of any of these developments as *low* or *very low* were asked to indicate why they felt that way. Comments specific to each type of development are noted below:
 - A variety of concerns were expressed among the 128 people (12.6% of the sample) who rated the quality of residential developments as low/very low. Like results from the past two years, many residents in 2015 felt that the houses seemed crammed too close together, perhaps because the lot sizes were too small (n=22). A related concern among some residents was a shared perception that residential streets were too narrow (n=9).
 - Overall, 119 people (9.6% of the sample) rated the quality of commercial development as low/very low. Comments about this included concerns about either the lack department stores such as The Bay or Sears, or a perception that there were too many drug stores or liquor stores in Sherwood Park (n=14). A common concern among many residents was the lack of parking outside commercial establishments, as well as in residential areas (n=19).
 - For industrial developments, among the 68 people (9% of the sample) who rated the quality of development as low or very low, perceptions varied among those who decided to provide comments. While safety and health concerns were sporadically mentioned, there were no other

problems mentioned multiple times by dissatisfied residents.

A comparative rating on the perception of the quantity (i.e. amount) of new types of developments is shown in Figure 68.

FIGURE 68
Quantity of various developments throughout Strathcona County

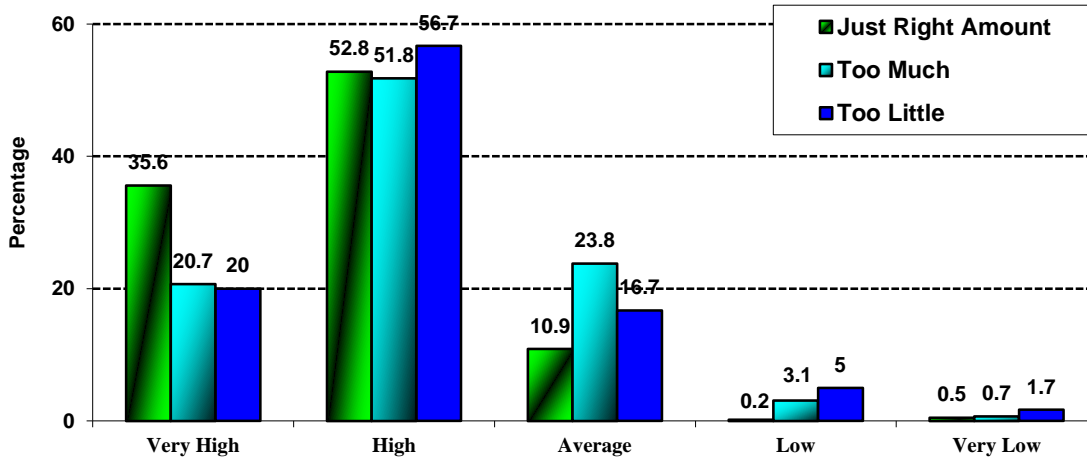


Highlights from Figure 68

- 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 2015 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 40.6% of residents believe there is too much residential development, this finding is similar to what has been found in the past 10 years.
- A further analysis (as seen in Figure 69) revealed that the majority who felt there was just the right amount of residential development had a strong positive rating on the quality of life in Strathcona County as a whole (88.4% *very high/high*) compared to those who felt that there was too much residential development (72.5% *very high/high*) or too little residential development (76.7% *very high/high*). As such, while concerns about too much residential development

exist with some residents, it has not overly affected the perceived quality of one’s life in Strathcona County.

FIGURE 69
Perception of the quality of life in Strathcona County as a whole – comparisons based on perceptions of amount of residential growth

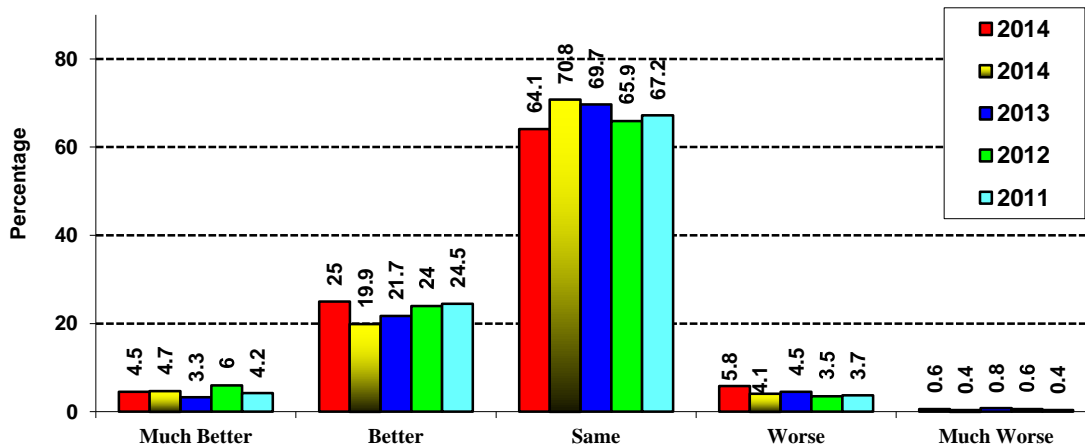


- No differences in perceptions were seen between those living in Sherwood Park and those living in other parts of Strathcona County with respect to amount of industrial development, residential or commercial development.

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 2015 survey results are compared with the results found in the previous five surveys dating back to 2011, as shown in Figure 70 below.

FIGURE 70
Quality of services now in Strathcona County compared to two years ago 2011-2015

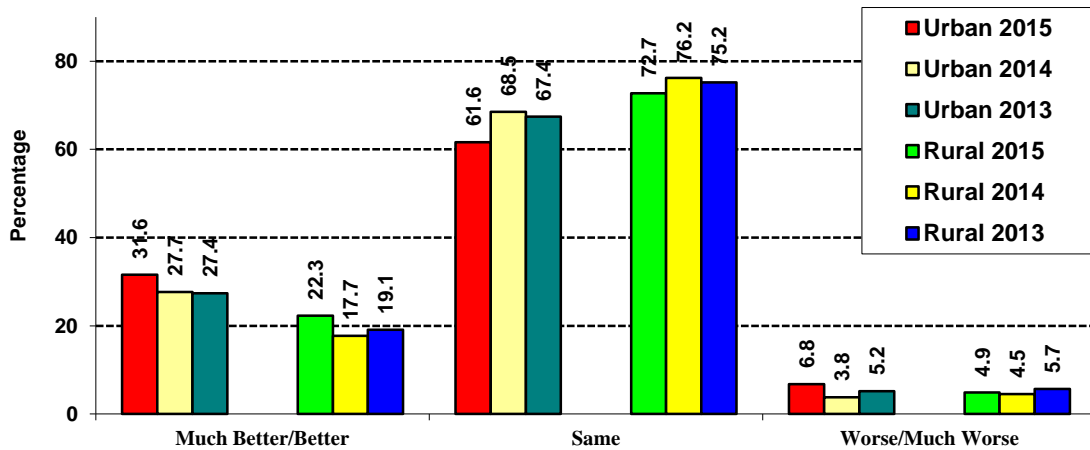


Highlights from Figure 70

- It can be seen that 29.5% 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 slightly better than last year's combined results.
- 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 70 that this percentage is consistent from residents over the last five years.
- The 69 people (6.4% of the sample) who felt that the quality of services had gotten worse or much worse were asked to indicate what changes they noticed about the quality of service. Most of the concerns put forward by residents reiterated concerns mentioned previously about various County services (e.g. transit issues, traffic concerns, etc.).

A comparison of urban and rural residents with respect to perceptions of the quality of services is shown in Figure 71. There was a statistically significant difference between the urban and rural sectors in 2015, as more urban residents felt things were somewhat better compared to rural residents.³⁸

FIGURE 71
Quality of services now in Strathcona County compared to two years ago - Urban and rural comparisons (2015, 2014 & 2013)

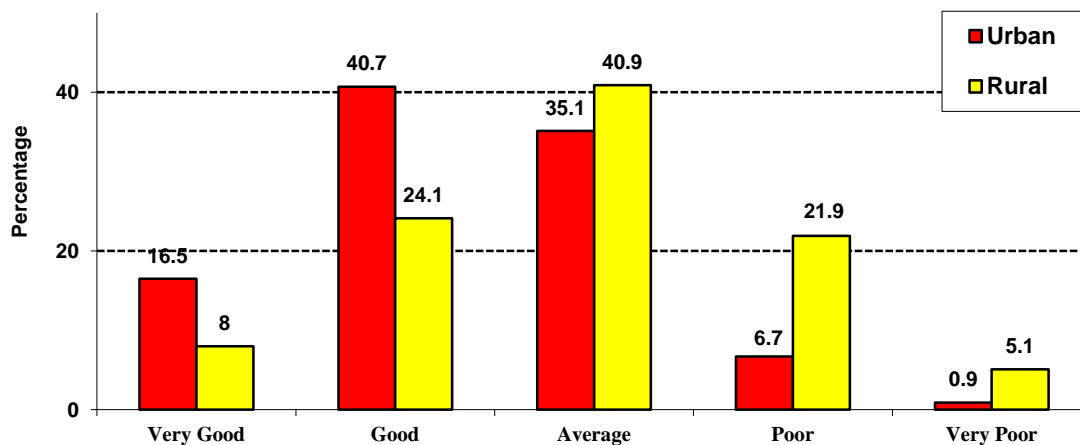


³⁸ ($\chi^2 = 13.18, 4 \text{ df}, p=.01$).

F. Question on taxes within Strathcona County

Strathcona County taxpayers³⁹ were asked to rate the value they receive for their tax dollars. Residents were told that 62% of their taxes were earmarked for municipal services. Knowing this, residents were asked to what extent they felt they were getting good value for their tax dollars. The results to this question are shown in Figure 72 below.

FIGURE 72
Value for tax dollars spent in Strathcona County
Urban and rural comparisons



Highlights from Figure 72

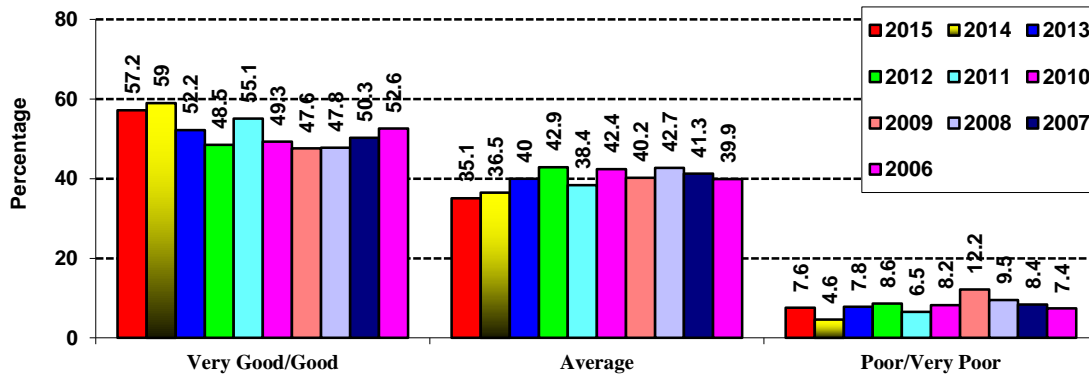
- Statistically, there was a difference between urban and rural residents with respect to how people felt about the value of tax dollars spent on municipal services. This was confirmed by a chi-square procedure ($X^2 = 80.72$, 4 df, $p = .000$) and a *t*-test measurement for mean score differences ($t = -8.57$, 991 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. This variance has been seen for many years now.
- Those people (12.3% of the sample, N=122) 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 all of the 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

³⁹ In 2015, 92.7% of respondents owned property in Strathcona County and as such, were taxpayers.

respect to water and sewage services and waste disposal (n= 43). There were also complaints about the quality of road maintenance done relative to the taxes that go into the service, regardless of where residents lived (n=32), as well as complaints about paying for school taxes, even though the families have no children in school (n=17).

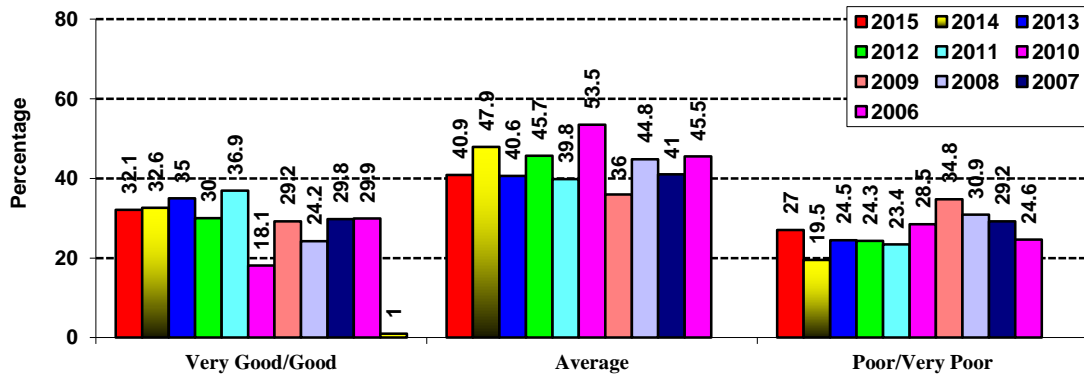
A comparison of trends over a 10-year period (2006 - 2015) with respect to perceptions of the value of services for tax dollars are shown in Figure 73 (urban) and Figure 74 (rural). One can see that for urban residents, the perception that residents were getting very good or good value for their tax dollars is similar to 2014, and as such is the second highest perception over the past 10 years.

FIGURE 73
Value of tax dollars spent in Strathcona County – urban residents (2006-2015)



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 dipped slightly in 2015. However, perceptions of *poor/very poor* increased by close to 8% from last year and is at its highest level since 2010.

FIGURE 74
Value of tax dollars spent in Strathcona County – rural residents (2006-2015)



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.⁴⁰ It can be seen in Table 1 that *County recycling facilities* were the most frequent service used in 2015 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 – 2015 vs. 2012 to 2014

Type of service	N of Users (2015)	% Use 2015	% Use 2014	% Use 2013	% Use 2012
County Recycling facilities	934	78.0%	82.6%	81.4%	84.0%
Indoor recreation facilities	910	76.0%	68.2%	70.2%	70.2%
Strathcona County Library	814	67.9%	64.6%	63.8%	61.8%
RCMP	318	26.5%	29.0%	34.0%	32.0%
Bylaw enforcement	314	26.2%	23.4%	26.6%	22.6%
Public transit services	280	23.4%	21.6%	25.8%	21.4%
Building Permit and Inspection Services	182	15.2%	15.8%	12.8%	--
Information and Volunteer Centre	177	14.8%	18.8%	20.4%	18.0%
Fire and Ambulance Services	156	13.0%	14.6%	14.8%	14.4%
Family support services	137	11.4%	9.2%	9.2%	10.6%
Agriculture services	77	6.4%	7.8%	9.0%	6.4%

Most of the municipal services noted above had minor decreases or increases with respect to use by residents in 2015 compared to previous years.

A comparison of services used by urban and rural residents for 2015 and 2014 is shown in Table 2.⁴¹ It can be seen that among residents who were surveyed in 2015, urban residents used the *County library*, *indoor recreation facilities* and *public transit services* to a greater extent than rural residents. Rural residents, on the other hand, made greater use of *agricultural services* compared with urban residents.

⁴⁰ 89 respondents (7.4% of the sample) mentioned other municipal services they used (water and sewer, utilities (as a separate entity), transportation, garbage, parks, outdoor rinks, various RPC fitness programs and dog licensing, while a few other residents indicated items that were not municipal services (e.g. health care and home care).

⁴¹ All respondents were read a list of municipal services and were asked to indicate which ones they had used within the past 12 months. Those online were able to read a list and select the ones they used. This is question number 12 (the exact wording is found in the questionnaire located in Appendix A).

Table 2
County services in Strathcona County reportedly used by urban and rural residents in the past 12 months – 2015 vs. 2014

Type of Service	2015		2014	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
County Recycling facilities	79.5%	72.4%	<u>85.7%</u>	<u>75.3%</u>
Indoor Recreation Facilities	<u>78.3%</u>	<u>67.3%</u>	<u>70.3%</u>	<u>63.3%</u>
Strathcona County Library	<u>71.7%</u>	<u>54.1%</u>	65.4%	62.7%
RCMP	26.5%	26.8%	30.6%	26.0%
Public Transit Services	<u>26.5%</u>	<u>12.1%</u>	<u>24.6%</u>	<u>10.0%</u>
By-law Enforcement	27.2%	22.6%	22.9%	21.3%
Information and Volunteer Centre	15.9%	10.5%	19.4%	18.7%
Fire and Ambulance Services	13.7%	10.5%	18.3%	20.7%
Building Permit and Inspection Services	13.6%	21.0%	15.7%	18.7%
Family Support Services	12.6%	7.0%	<u>12.0%</u>	<u>6.0%</u>
Agriculture Services	<u>4.3%</u>	<u>14.4%</u>	<u>5.4%</u>	<u>17.3%</u>

In terms of changes between years for urban residents, most of the services showed a slight drop in use in 2015 compared to 2014. This was also the case among rural residents, though there were some exceptions. There was a small increase in the use of the *indoor recreation facilities* and *public transit services* between 2014 and 2015.

Residents were also asked to indicate the level of importance of each service to them, on the proviso that the resident made use of the service. The overall results, regardless of where one lived, are summarized in Figures 75, 76 and 77.

FIGURE 75
Importance of County services (1)

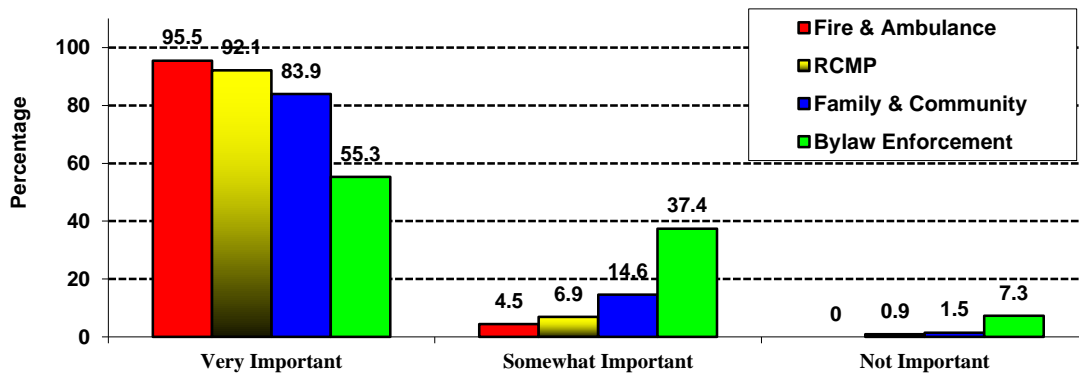


FIGURE 76
Importance of County services (2)

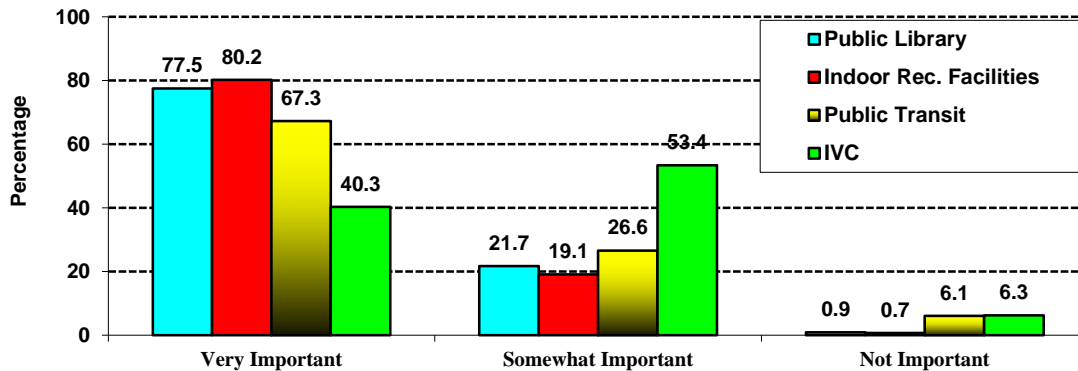
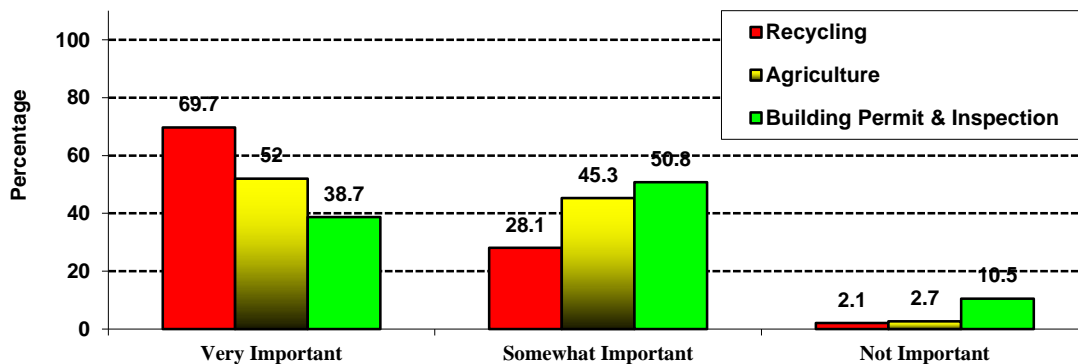


FIGURE 77
Importance of County services (3)



From these figures, 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* and *indoor recreation facilities*. These ratings have been consistent since 2012, when residents were first asked to measure the importance of municipal services.

Respondents were asked to think of the most recent contact they had with County staff⁴² and to rate the service they received on the basis of six criteria. The overall rating results for all six criteria (regardless of the service used) are shown in Figures 78 and 79.

⁴² In this year’s study, 68% of respondents reported having contact with one or more County staff members in the past 12 months.

FIGURE 78
Quality of services provided by County staff

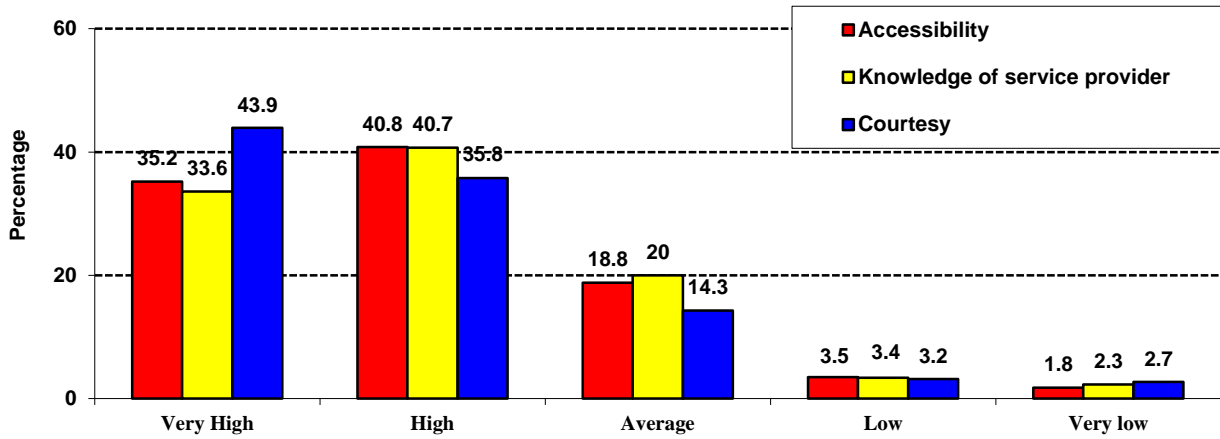
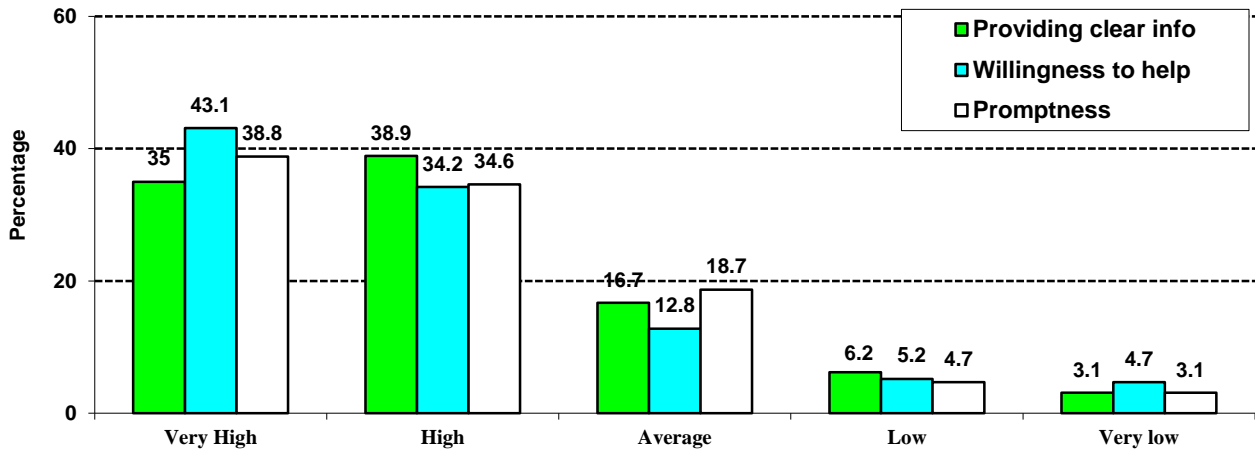


FIGURE 79
Quality of services provided by County staff



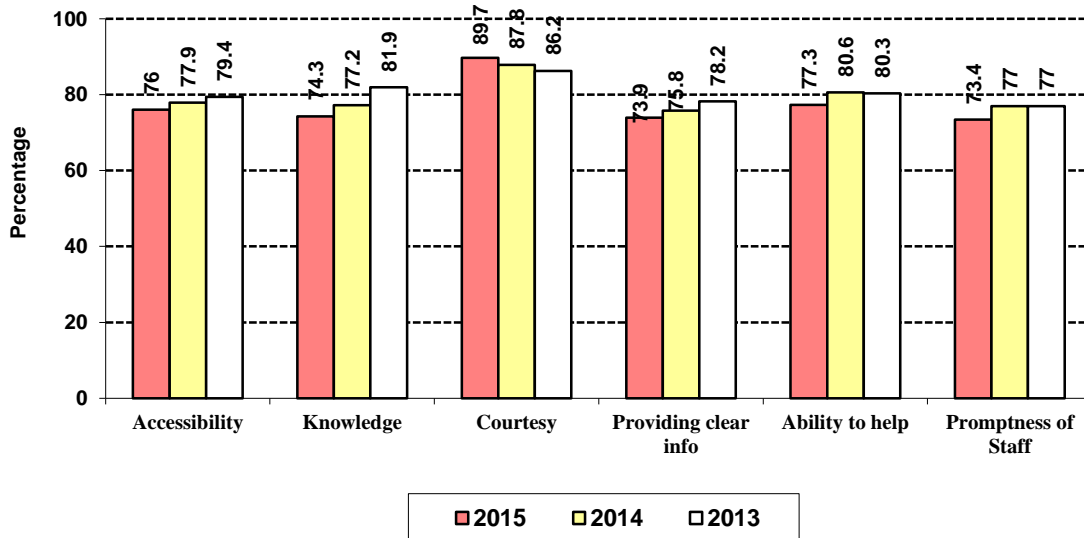
Highlights from Figure 78 and Figure 79

- 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* (89.7%). The remaining attributes of service were all rated relatively similar, with *willingness of the staff to help you* the second highest at 77.3%, followed closely by *accessibility of staff* (76%), *knowledge of the service provider* (74.3%), *being able to provide clear information and explanations* (73.9%) and *promptness of staff* (73.4%).

- All respondents were given the opportunity to provide any comments about the service they had received from County staff. Overall, 17.8% of the respondents (N=213) provided additional comments. Of these 213 residents, the majority of comments (137 or 64.3% of the 213 residents) were positive descriptors, including *good and/or helpful, professional knowledgeable staff, efficient and friendly/courteous*. Library (n=11) and Recreation personnel (n=5) were singled out for exceptional service.
- Not everyone was pleased. Overall, 35.7% or 76 of the 213 residents were not happy with aspects of the service they received. Common themes include staff sometimes being rude, distant or impolite (such as not returning phone calls or emails).

Figure 80 presents a comparison of overall results between this year’s survey and the 2013 and 2014 surveys for these six items. In general, the combined *very high/high* ratings for staff were higher for “courtesy” in 2015 compared to the last two years. The other five services were slightly lower.

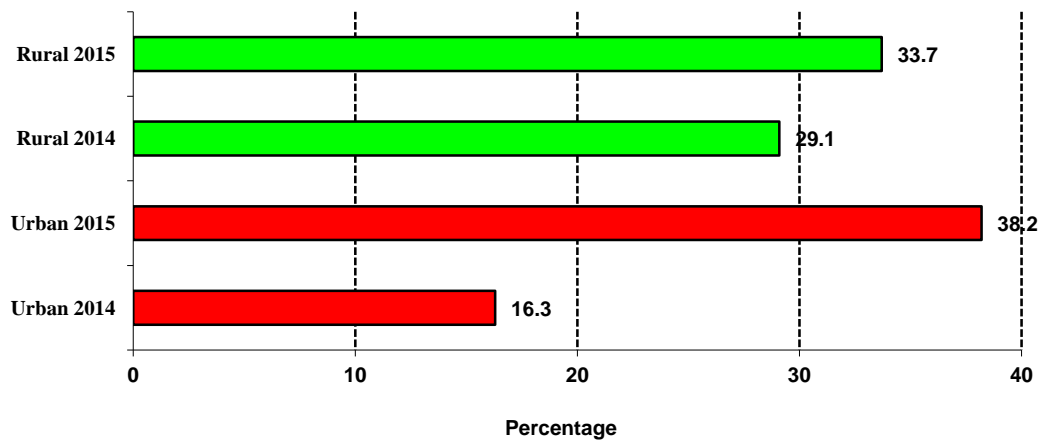
FIGURE 80
Quality of services provided by County staff - 2015 with 2013
and 2014 comparisons on the combined *very high/high*
percentages



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 2015 satisfaction survey. Overall, 38.2% of Sherwood Park residents and 33.7% of rural residents had done so. The percentage of participation by Sherwood Park and rural residents was higher this year compared to 2014.

FIGURE 81
Public engagement participation
(Urban and rural comparisons: 2015 and 2014)

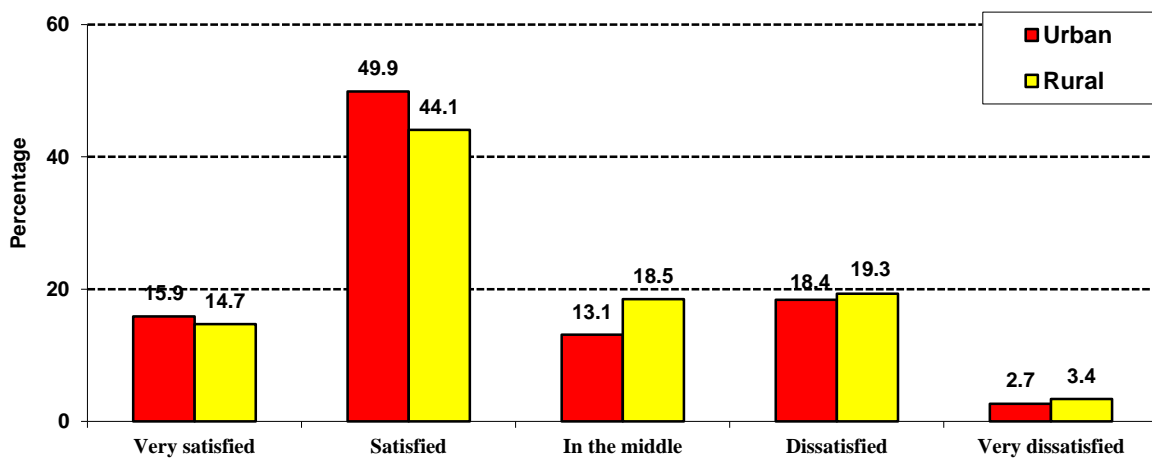


Those who had given feedback were asked how they did so. On an overall basis, methods mentioned most often were surveys (44.6%) with 20.8% being telephone, and 15.8% being online. Other methods mentioned were open houses (28.7%) and discussion groups (8.9%).

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 82.

FIGURE 82
Rating opportunities to express opinions



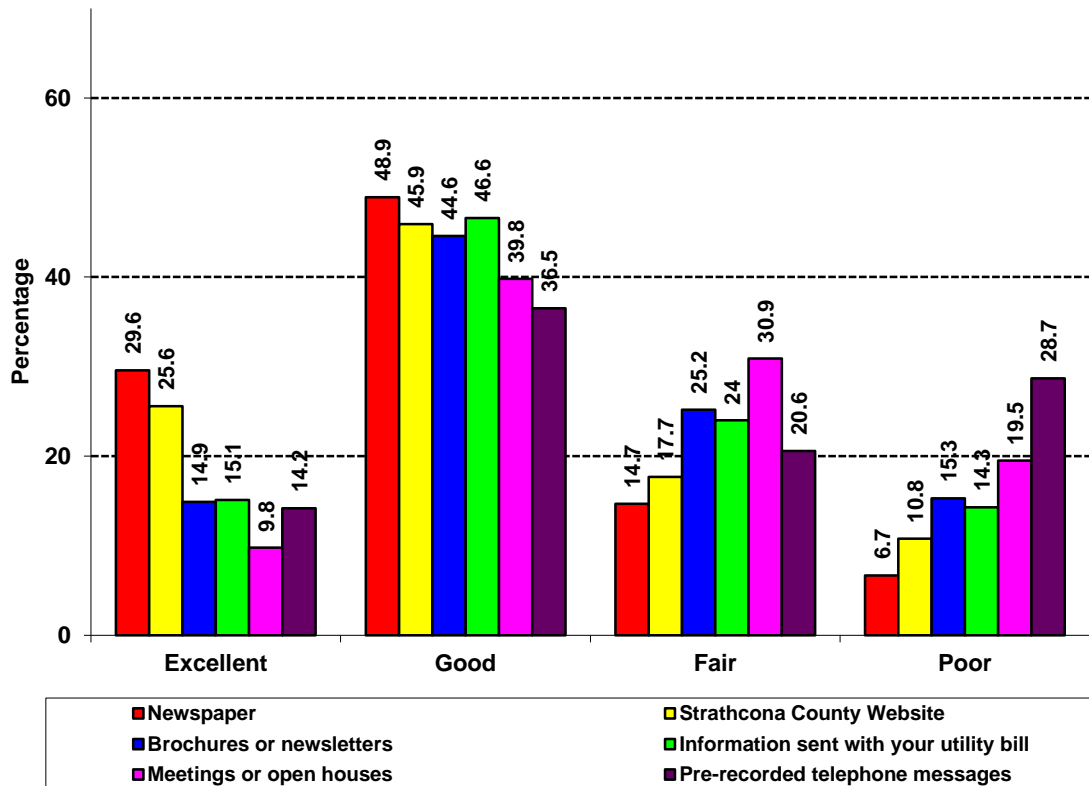
Highlights from Figure 82

- In this year's study, the satisfaction levels toward rating opportunities to express opinions was virtually the same for residents regardless of where they lived. Furthermore, there were no differences found with respect to any other demographic characteristic for this item.
- Positive perceptions toward expressing opinions has been increasing over the past three years, as trending shows that among urban residents, positive opinions were higher in 2015 (65.8% *very satisfied/satisfied*) compared to 2014 (51.5% *very satisfied/satisfied*) and 2013 (45.4%). Rural residents perceptions of this were higher in 2015 (58.8%) compared to 2014 (40.6%) and 2013 (34.9% *very satisfied/satisfied*).
- Overall, 233 people (19.5% of the sample) were not satisfied with the opportunities for expressing opinions in Strathcona

County, though only 42 of them took the time to express reasons as to why they felt that way. As in previous surveys, the reasons that were repeated most often were from people who felt that opinions expressed themselves about County matters were being ignored (n=17).

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 83.

FIGURE 83
Rating existing methods used to inform the public about municipal services



It can be seen in Figure 83 that the County newspaper and the County website received solid ratings from residents. Overall, 78.5% of residents gave the newspaper an excellent or good rating while 71.5% of residents gave the County website a combination excellent/good rating. The 2015 newspaper ratings were 6% lower than 2014, while the 2015 County website ratings was about the same as the previous year.

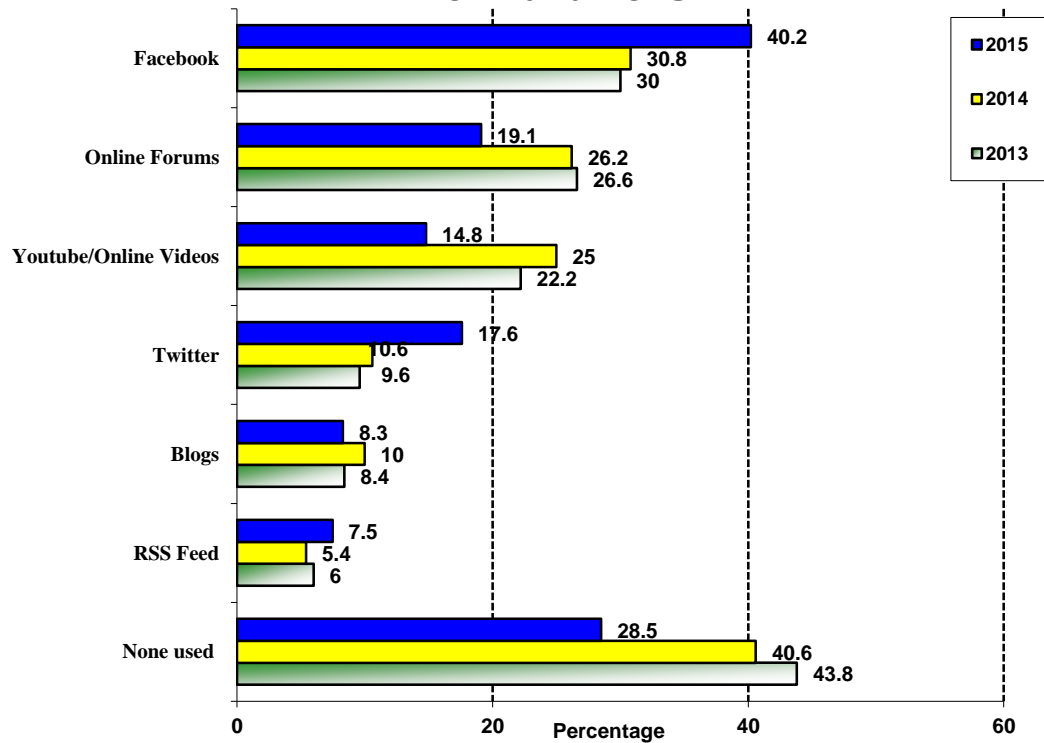
Most other methods of information received lower combined ratings in 2015 compared to 2014:

- Utility bills – 61.7%, which was 6% lower in 2015 compared to 2014;
- Newsletters and brochures – 59.5%, which was 7.7% lower in 2015 compared to 2014;
- Meetings/open houses – 49.6%, which was 1.6% lower in 2015 compared to 2014;

Although pre-recorded telephone messages was one of the lowest rated forms of information noted by residents (50.7% combined excellent/good rating in 2015), it was considerably stronger in 2015 compared to 2014, when it had a 27.7% approval rating. This meant that it rose by 13% between 2014 and 2015.

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. The results are depicted in Figure 84.

FIGURE 84
Use of different online methods by County residents in 2015, 2014 and 2013



Overall, 28.5% of residents did not make use of social media. Of those who did, *Facebook* was the most prevalent in 2015, followed by *online*

forums, Twitter, Youtube and other online videos. Blogs and RSS Feeds were utilized less often than other social media methods.

On a proportionate basis, it can be seen in Figure 85 that residents living in Sherwood Park made greater use of *twitter* and *Facebook* to a greater extent than those in rural Strathcona, but the differences were not statistically significant.

FIGURE 85
Use of different online methods by County residents – Urban and Rural comparisons

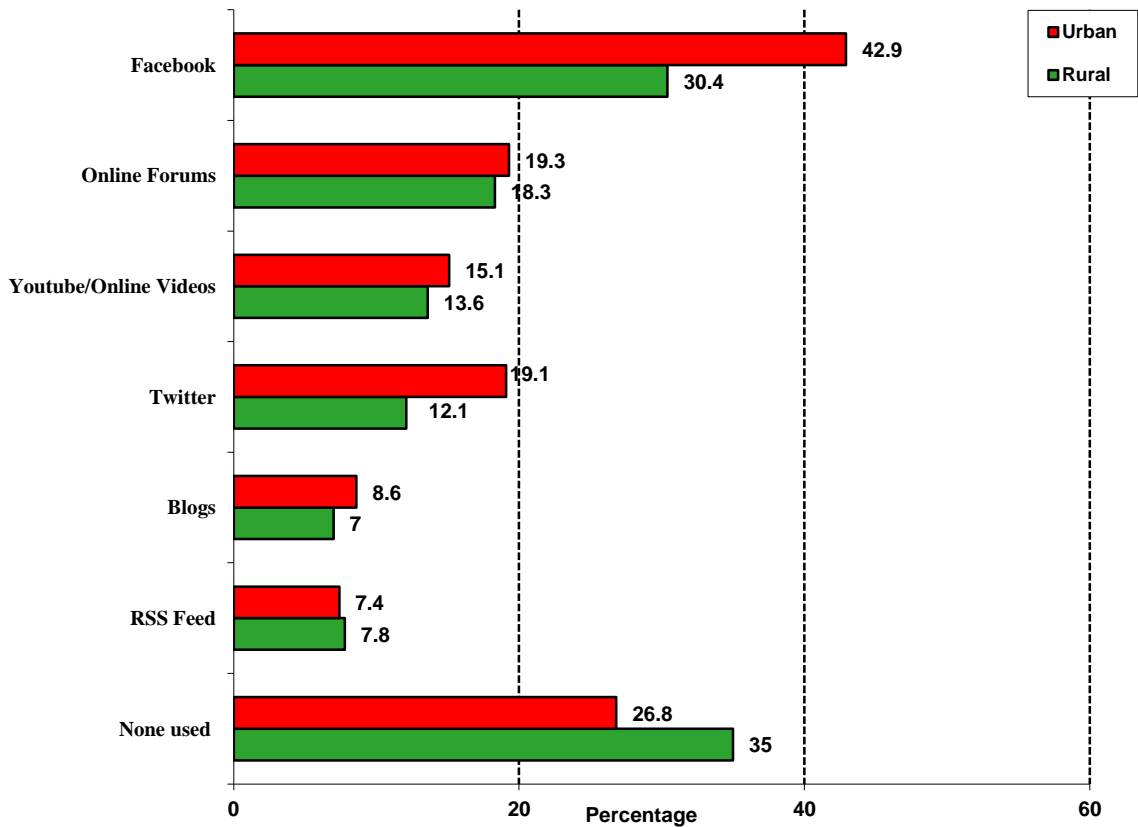


Figure 86 presents a comparison of urban and rural residents with respect to the percentage of residents who visited the Strathcona County website. From a proportion basis, it can be seen that Sherwood Park residents who have accessed the website is almost the same as those living in rural Strathcona County. On an overall basis, the percentage of residents who visited the County website increased by 11.6% between 2014 and 2015.

FIGURE 86
Percentage of residents who visited the County website

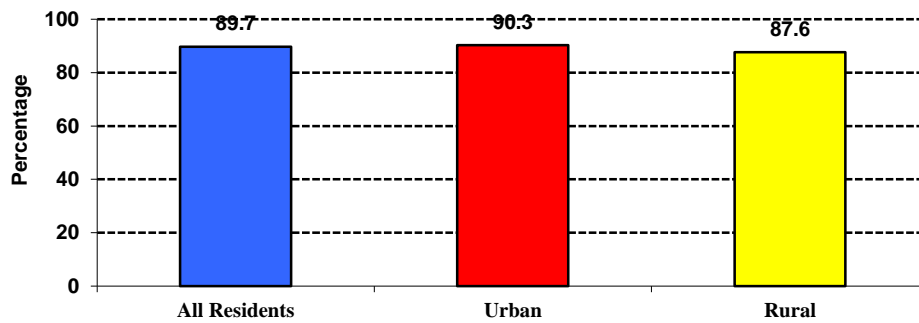
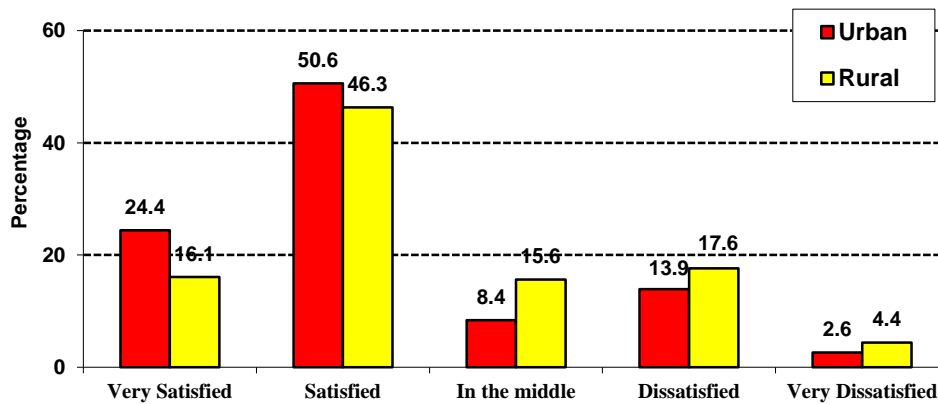


Figure 87 presents the satisfaction level with the Strathcona County website.⁴³ It can be seen that the satisfaction level was higher among urban residents compared to those living in rural Strathcona, which was confirmed by running a chi-square test of association.⁴⁴

FIGURE 87
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County website



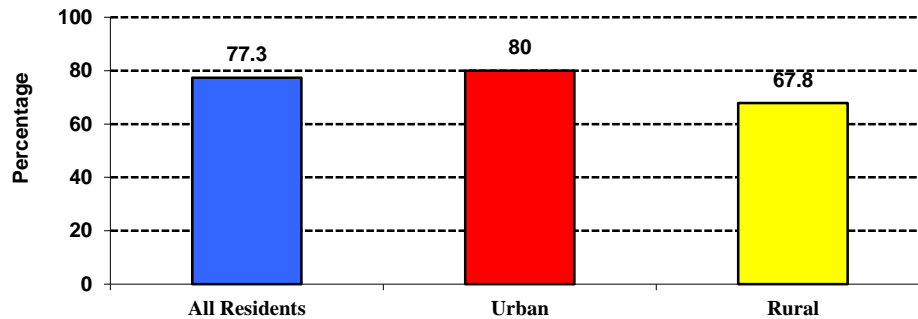
In 2015, the combined *very high/high* rating of the site was 75% for urban residents (12.2% higher than 2014) and 62.7% for rural residents (16.5% higher than 2014).

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 88 that the majority or residents, regardless of where they lived, felt informed about things happening in Strathcona County.

⁴³ This figure excludes 18.6% of residents who never went to the County website.

⁴⁴ For satisfaction with the County website, ($\chi^2 = 17.14, 4 \text{ df}, p=.002$).

FIGURE 88
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, 20.9% of residents felt this way. When asked about the reasons why, most 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 (n=72). Many mentioned the County newspaper, but also indicated that either they do not receive it or that if they get it, they do not bother to read it (n=54).

J. Awareness of the strategic plan

Overall, it was found that 32.6% of the sample was aware of Strathcona County's strategic plan, regardless of where they lived. This is a 3.4% increase from 2014's results.

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, 315 respondents (26.3% of the sample) provided additional comments. Of these 315 people, 83 residents (26.4%) provided positive comments, 39.1% had concerns, while the remaining 34.6% had suggestions. There were a wide range of topics mentioned, ranging from aspects associated with Strathcona County services already covered in the survey, to additional comments about such things as traffic safety, dispositions of various Council members and/or the Mayor, and other issues, such as Sherwood Park growing too fast, infill development and potential new recreation opportunities. There were also a few comments made from residents on hospital related issues or public/catholic school concerns, even though these are actually provincial issues.

APPENDIX A: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Strathcona County Year 2015 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 low	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 low	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 low	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 low	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, decisions of 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, decisions of County staff are	1	2	3	4	5	9

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

c) In your opinion, what issues, if any, should the Mayor and Council focus on in 2016?

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

b. Thinking of **rural 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 SERVICE RATED LOW OR VERY LOW (4, 5), ASK:
What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

c. 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?

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------|------|---------|--------|-------------|----------------------------|
| d. | 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?

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------|------|---------|--------|-------------|----------------------------|
| e. | 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?

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------|------|---------|--------|-------------|----------------------------|
| f. | 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?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

l. Thinking about **indoor recreation facilities (arenas and pool)**...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? very high high average low,or very low **DO NOT READ: DK**

1 2 3 4 5 9

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

m. Thinking of **public transit services here in the County**...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? very high high average low,or very low **DO NOT READ: DK**

1 2 3 4 5 9

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

n. Thinking of **bylaw enforcement** (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: DK**

1 2 3 4 5 9

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

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

1 2 3 4 5 9

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 number of new developments in the County.

What about the amount of:	about right 1	too much, or 2	too little 3	DO NOT READ: DK 9
d. New residential developments in the County? Would you say the number was:				
e. New commercial developments in the County? Would you say the number was:	1	2	3	9
f. New industrial developments in the County? Would you say the number 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 1	better 2	the same 3	worse, or 4	much worse 5	DO NOT READ: DK 9
To the best of your knowledge, 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?						

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. Residential taxes go toward both municipal services and education. Of your residential taxes, about 62 per cent pays for municipal services. Knowing this, would you say you receive...

1. Very good value for your tax dollars
 2. Good value
 3. Average value
 4. Poor value, or
 5. Very poor value for your tax dollars
-
9. Don't Know

IF POOR OR VERY POOR VALUE, ASK:

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

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

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	Bylaw enforcement	1	2	3	9
7	County Recycling Facilities	1	2	3	9
8	Agricultural services	1	2	3	9
9	Information and Volunteer Centre	1	2	3	9
10	Strathcona County Library	1	2	3	9
11	The RCMP	1	2	3	9
12	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						

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

Go to Question 18

9. Don't know

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 level of the staff person? Would you rate this as:	1	2	3	4	5	9
c. What about the level of courtesy you received? Would you rate this as:	1	2	3	4	5	9
d. What about the clarity of the information you received? Would you rate this as:	1	2	3	4	5	9
e. What about their willingness to help you? Would you rate this as:	1	2	3	4	5	9
f. What about how quickly they responded to your inquiry? 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? It is called Strathcona County 2030: Powering our New Tomorrow.”

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

- 9. Don’t know

19. Do you feel well informed about County Services and activities provided by Strathcona County?

- 1. Yes → **Skip to Q-21**
- 2. No

- 9. Don’t know

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

21. 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 source:	Excellent	Good	Fair, or	Poor	Don’t Know
a. The local newspaper, this being the Sherwood Park Strathcona County News?	1	2	3	4	9
b. Brochures or newsletters?	1	2	3	4	9
c. Information sent with your utility bill?	1	2	3	4	9
d. Pre-recorded telephone messages?	1	2	3	4	9
e. Public meetings or open houses?	1	2	3	4	9
f. Information on the Strathcona County website?	1	2	3	4	9

22. 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

23. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Strathcona County website? Are you:

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Dissatisfied,
4. Very Dissatisfied, or
5. In the middle

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

24. How can we improve the website?

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? Are you:
1. Very satisfied
 2. Satisfied
 3. Dissatisfied,
 4. Very Dissatisfied, or
 5. In the middle
-
9. Don't know

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 17 or younger? _____

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

33. Strathcona County distributes a free monthly e-newsletter that lets residents know about all sorts of public engagement opportunities in the County. Would you be interested in receiving this newsletter?

1. Yes à please provide us with an email address _____
2. No
9. Don't know

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 #: _____