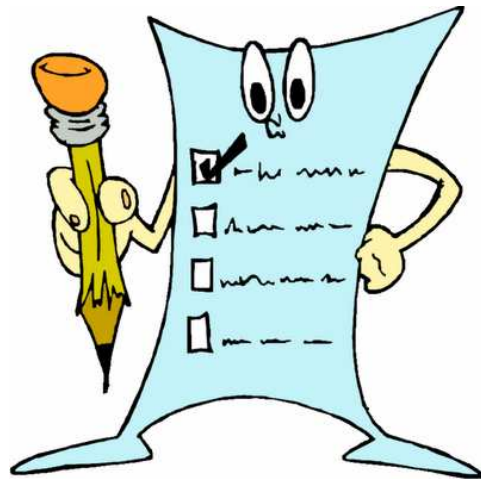


Strathcona County

2008 Public Satisfaction Survey



Research Results

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2008 Public Opinion Survey on Services and Life in Strathcona County was undertaken in December 2008 to obtain perceptions on the quality of life of residents living in Sherwood Park and rural parts of Strathcona County. This is the eleventh year that a formal satisfaction study of residents has been conducted. Overall, the following information was extracted from the data:

1. Residents of Strathcona County continue to have very positive perceptions toward the quality of life that they have for themselves and for their families, particularly since almost all of the people interviewed would recommend Strathcona County as a place to live. With respect to four broad aspects of life in Strathcona County, *a place to raise children* was the highest overall (86.6% rated very high or high). This was followed by *a safe community* (74.4% rated very high or high), *balancing needs and interests of people living throughout the County* (60.8% rated very fair or fair) and *the quality of the natural environment* (59.2% rated very high or high).
2. The positive views that people had toward the living in the County as a whole extended to the general satisfaction level for 18 specific services offered by County staff. The overall results are shown in Figures A through E. Services that residents were particularly rated highly included *fire & ambulance services* (Figure A), the *indoor recreation facilities, parks, green spaces and sports fields* and *the County Library* (Figure B). The services that received lower satisfaction ratings were *permit & inspection services, land use planning* (Figure D), and *winter road maintenance* (Figure E). Even here, residents still tended to rate these services as “average” rather than “low.” The rating of services by residents this year is very similar to findings from 2007. Please note that the ratings of some services may be dependent on whether residents lived in urban or rural Strathcona County and/or whether residents actually used a particular service. Details of these types of breakdowns can be found in the main body of the report.

FIGURE A
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Helping Services in 2008

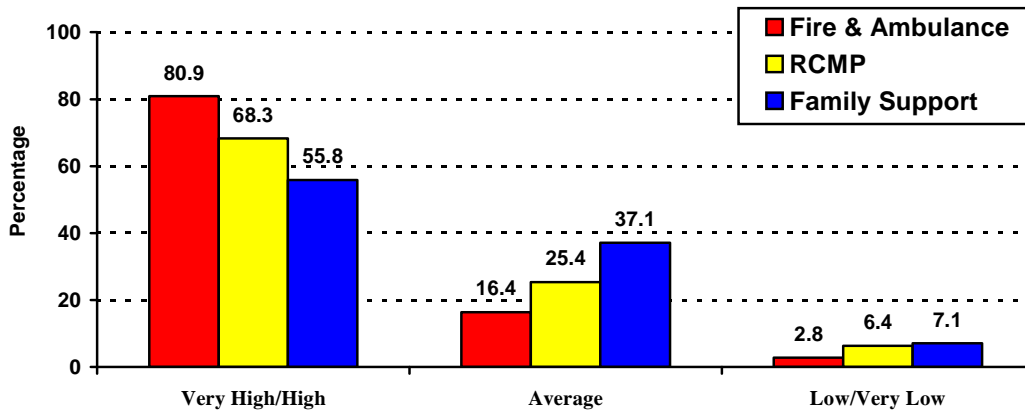


FIGURE B
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Recreation, Library & Volunteer Information Services in 2008

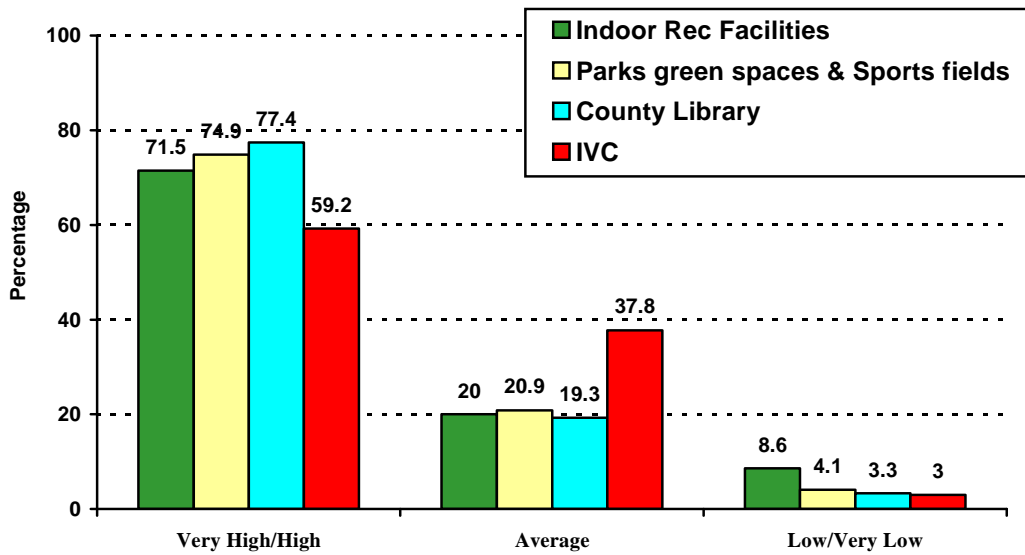


FIGURE C
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Waste & Water Services in 2008

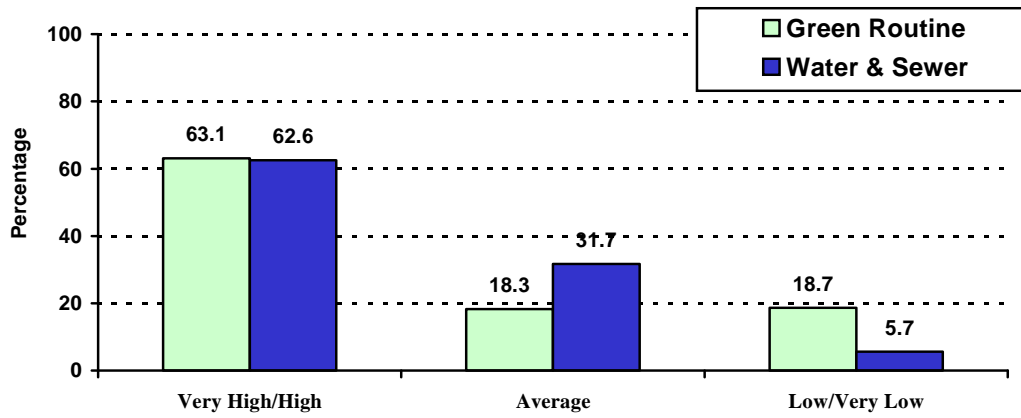


FIGURE D
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Different Inspection, Planning and Land Related Services in 2008

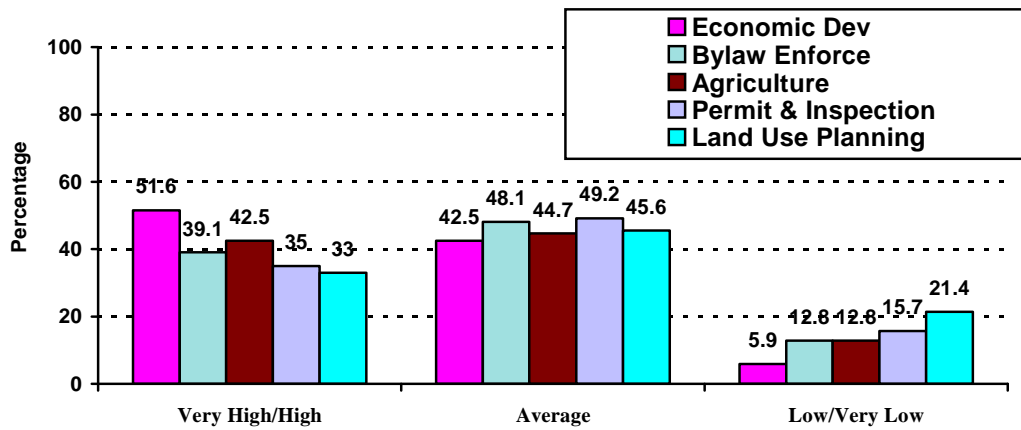
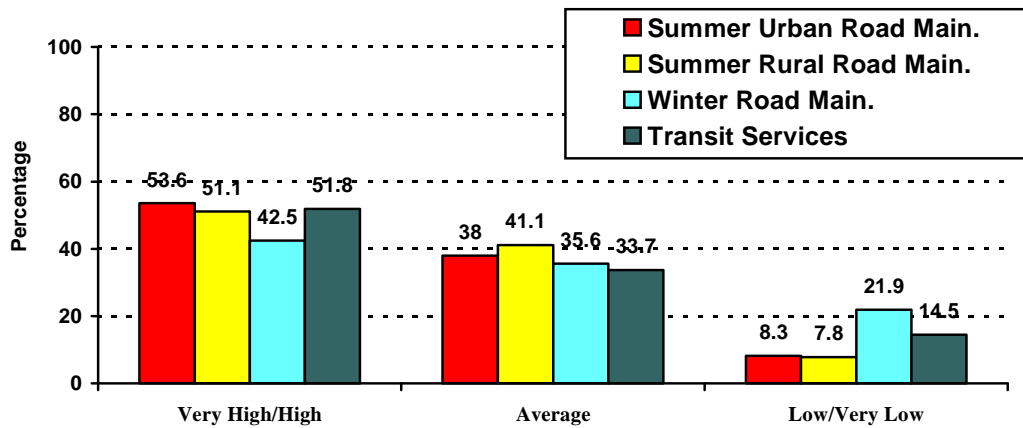


FIGURE E
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Roadwork and Transit Services in 2008

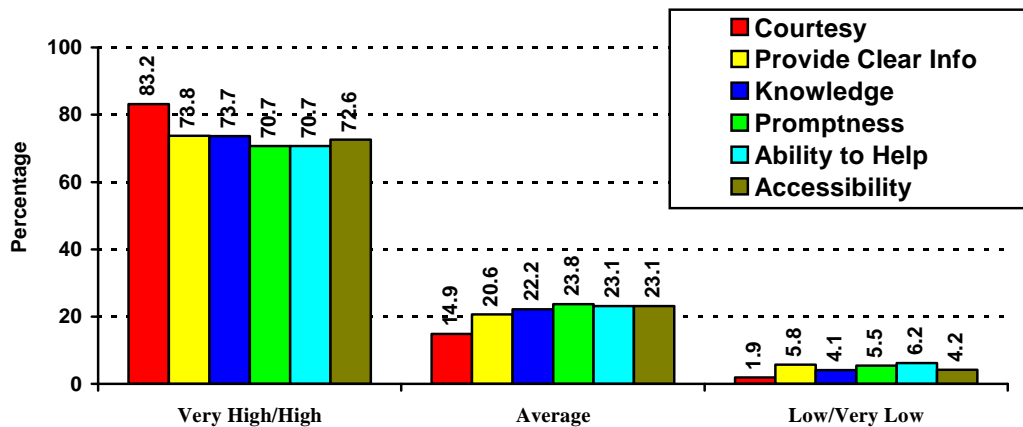


3. It should be noted that in this survey, as in previous years, when residents rated all 18 services, there were no additional questions asked about other aspects of these County services. Individual departments can utilize the results from this survey as an overall perceptual measurement. In addition, individual departments may wish to consider customized detailed surveys in order to get feedback from the users and/or residents in the County on specific aspects of their departments, and many departments are doing this now as the need arises.

4. Residents were generally satisfied with the quality of new residential, commercial and industrial developments in the County, with the highest level of satisfaction resting evenly between commercial developments (46.9% *very high/high* ratings) and residential developments (46.8% *very high/high* ratings), while 36.6% of residents gave industrial developments a positive rating in 2008. The majority of people felt that the quantity of commercial and industrial developments in the County was about right at the present time. However, a large percentage of residents (42.3%) felt that there may be too many residential developments occurring within the County as of 2008. These findings have been similar to those found in previous satisfaction surveys conducted by the County since 1999.

5. In terms of perceived value of services for the tax dollars paid, it was found that the perception that one is getting *good* or *very good* value for the tax dollars is holding steady among urban residents compared to previous years. The percentage of residents who felt this way was 47.8% in 2008, which was slightly lower than how residents felt in 2007 (50.3%), 2006 (52.6%) and 2005 (55.2%).
6. In terms of perceived value of services for the tax dollars paid, there was much greater dissatisfaction among rural residents, and this pattern has not changed over the past 5 years of tracking this item. For rural residents, the perception that one is getting *good* or *very good* value for the tax dollars was 29.1%, which is considerably lower than what was reported for urban residents. From a tracking perspective, this finding for 2008 is almost identical to what was reported in 2007. However, the percentage of rural residents who believe they are getting *poor* or *very poor* value for their tax dollars was 30.9%, which is higher than the level of dissatisfaction reported in 2007 (29.2%) and 2006 (24.6%).
7. It can be seen in Figure F that ratings of County staff on the provision of services to the public were favorable on all aspects of service delivery, particularly *courtesy*. The positive ratings for each of these were slightly higher for each of the ratings found in the previous 2006 and 2007 surveys with the exception of *ability to help*, which dropped slightly this year. It should be noted that the approval ratings are ranging between 70% and 74% for each type of interaction that occur between staff and the public (with the exception of *courtesy*, which is just over 80%).

FIGURE F
Quality of Services provided by County Staff -2008 Results



8. Residents were asked to rate some existing sources of information about Strathcona County. In 2008, most of the methods received positive ratings from residents (*County website, newspapers, info via the utility bill, and newsletters or brochures*). *Open houses* were less popular, while *pre-recorded telephone messages* only received minimal ratings. This was also the pattern found in 2007.
9. Overall, just over 61% of residents took the time to visit the County website. Of those who visited the site, 59% of residents gave the website *very high or high* ratings.
10. Just over 64% of residents gave Strathcona County a positive rating on its overall communication with residents in 2008, while approximately 47% were satisfied with having opportunities to express opinions about municipal issues.
11. Residents do take pride in Strathcona County being an independent municipality, as this was supported by close to 86% of respondents. The majority of residents were also satisfied with how well Strathcona County works with other municipalities in the Capital Region.

I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In December 2008, Strathcona County conducted a satisfaction survey of its residents in order to obtain perceptions on the quality of life of residents living in Sherwood Park and rural parts of Strathcona County. This is the eleventh year that a formal satisfaction study of residents has been conducted.¹ The main purpose of this research was to identify and measure a series of factors (or impact of County services) that contribute to a person's satisfaction with the quality of life in Strathcona County.

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

II. METHODOLOGY

A. The Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in this study was a similar instrument used in 2000 and subsequent years. Most of the questions from previous surveys were retained in order to make valid comparisons with the previous year. In this year's survey, several questions were also asked pertaining to how well the County conveys information to its residents. In addition, 2 questions were asked about the County's relationship within the Edmonton Capital Region (see Appendix A for a copy of the questionnaire).

¹ There was no satisfaction study was conducted in 2002, as this was the year that a county-wide Community Consultation project was done in its place.

B. Sampling Design and Data Collection Procedure

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

The sample frame consisted of 500 people living in urban² and rural parts of Strathcona County. The number of urban and rural residents was reflective of the proportionate distribution of residents living in Strathcona County. As such, 65% of the sample was drawn from the urban area, while 35% came from rural parts of Strathcona County. The sample frame provided overall results³ accurate to within $\pm 4.32\%$, 19 times out of 20.

A telephone survey research design was used to collect the data for this study. Respondents were contacted by telephone between December 1st and December 10th, 2008. Strathcona County derived telephone numbers from the Select Phone Canadian Edition database along with the *Telus Telephone Directory* and randomized them for this study. Trained interviewers from Banister Research & Consulting Inc. made all telephone calls under supervised conditions. Each questionnaire took an average of 12 minutes to complete. The data was analyzed by Strathcona County's Corporate Planning and Intergovernmental Affairs using SPSS for Windows.

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

³ The $\pm 4.35\%$ is the *margin of error* associated with this study and refers to the potential percentage spread that exists within answers to particular questions. This means that an answer could be up to 4.35% higher or lower than what is reported.

III. RESULTS

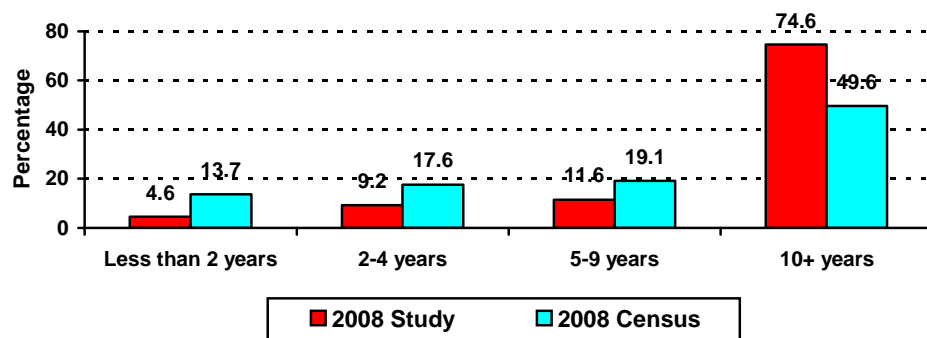
This section of the report presents a summary of the results associated with the perceptions and awareness of residents. Socio-demographic comparisons, where significant, are also highlighted. Comparisons will also be made with data collected from the previous year's survey when significant differences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

A. Demographic Overview

This section of the report presents an overview of the type of residents who were surveyed in the year 2008. As indicated in the previous section of this report, part of the sampling criteria was to survey the County on the basis of the percentage of people living in the rural and urban areas. The other sampling criteria was to obtain answers from equal numbers of males and females. Almost all of the people interviewed were homeowners (92.6%), while the remaining residents were renters.

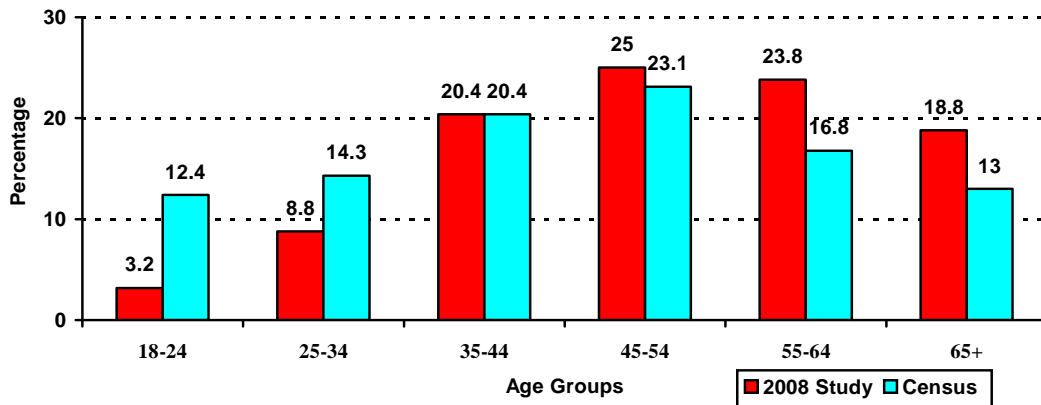
The majority of people who took part in the survey indicated that they were long term residents in the County. Figure 1 presents a breakdown of length of residence. It can be seen the majority of respondents have lived in the County for more than 10 years. The average number of years that people lived in Strathcona County was 20.7 years. In terms of sampling, it can be seen that relative to the Municipal Census, fewer newer residents to the County were interviewed relative to longer term residents.

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



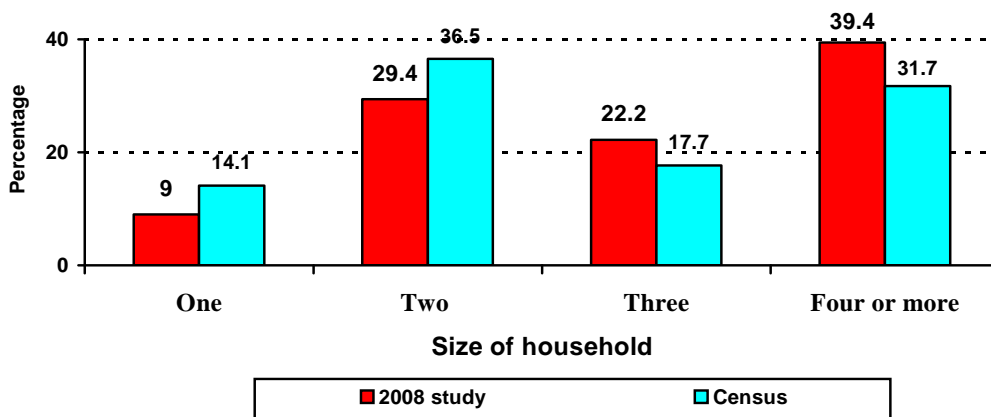
A breakdown of the age of the respondents is shown in Figure 2. There was a relatively good representation from all age groups, though in comparison to the 2008 census, the 18-24 and 25-34 year age groups were under-represented.

FIGURE 2
Age of Respondents
(Current 2008 Study and 2008 Census Comparison)



A breakdown of household size is shown in Figure 3. The sample frame for this study was comparable with the 2008 census. The average household size was 3.2 people

FIGURE 3
Size of Household



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

FIGURE 4
Household Composition

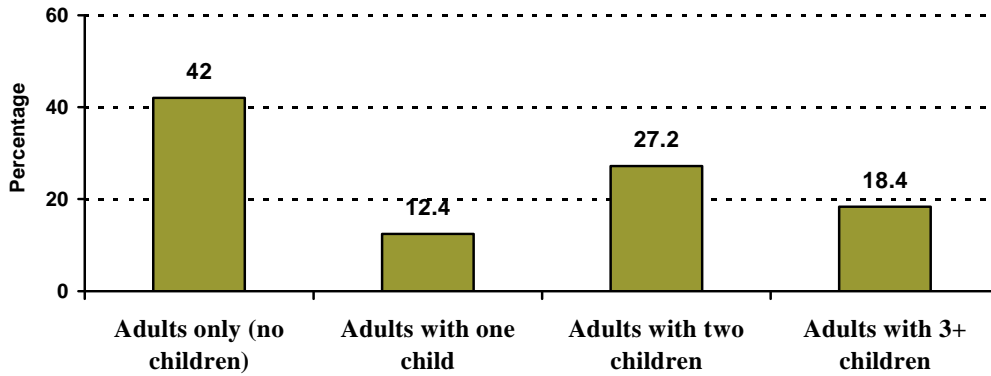
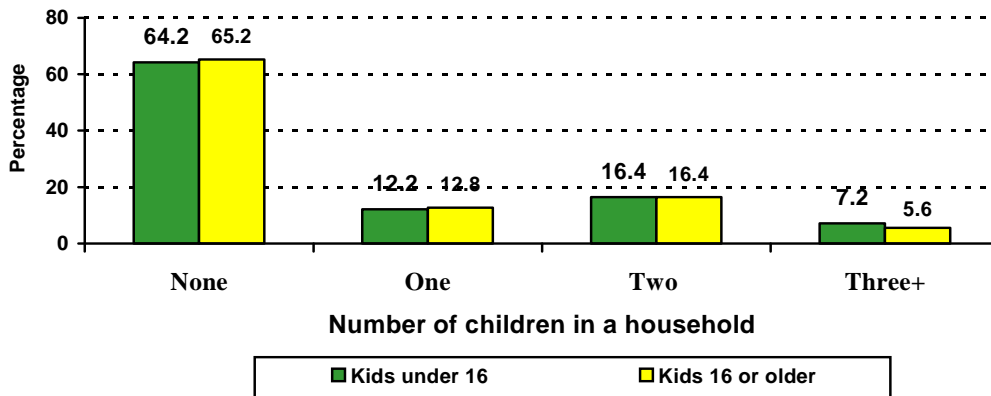


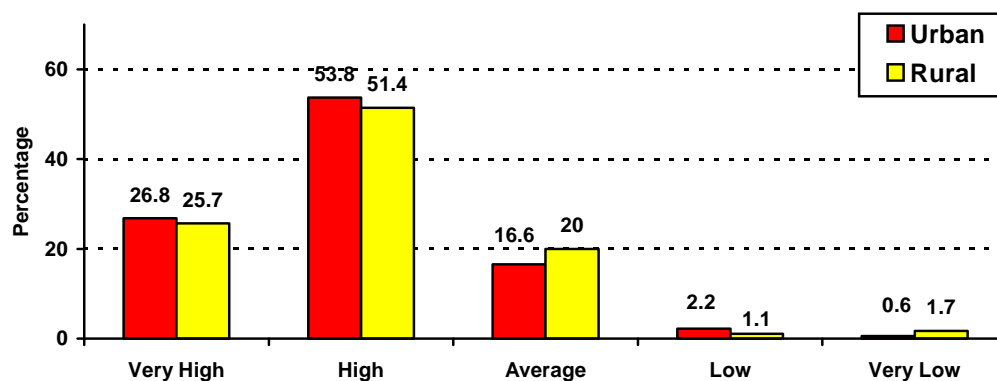
FIGURE 5
Number of Children in Household (based on ages of children)



B. Quality of Life in Strathcona County

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

FIGURE 6
Quality of Life in Strathcona County
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2008



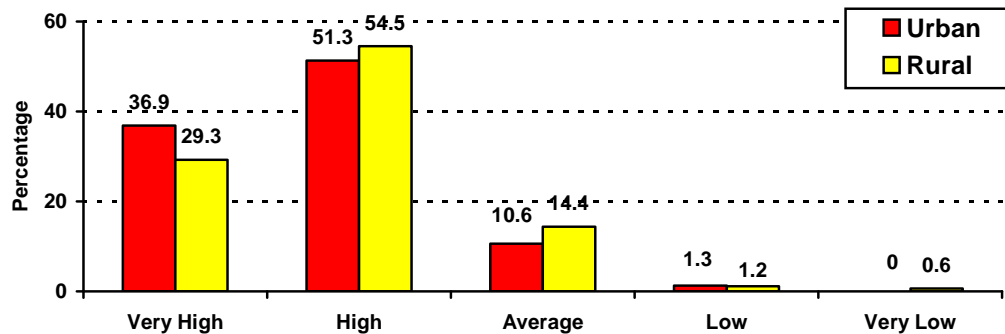
Highlights from Figure 4

- The overall rating of Strathcona County was very positive regardless of where one lived in the County. It can be seen in Figure 4 that the combined *very high and high* quality of life ratings were almost identical for urban residents and rural residents.⁴
- A further analysis revealed that no significant differences were found among gender or age for this item.
- Respondents who rated the quality of life as low or very low were asked to indicate how the quality of life in Strathcona County could be improved. Although most people did not rate the quality of life in the County in this manner, a few of the 14 residents (2.8% of the sample) who did cited perceptions that taxes and utility fees were too high as reasons for their dissatisfaction. Other individual reasons included a concern with traffic congestion, street clearing in the winter and a lack of noise barrier walls around subdivisions.

⁴ In previous satisfaction surveys, there has been a noted difference between urban and rural residents, with urban residents expressing a higher level of satisfaction with the quality of life in the County than rural residents.

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

FIGURE 7
Strathcona County as a Place to Raise Children
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2008

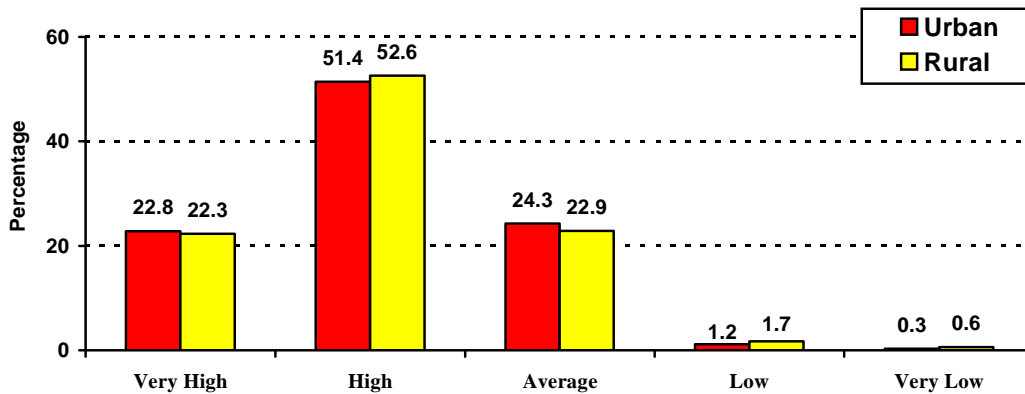


Highlights from Figure 7

- The majority of people, regardless of where they live, perceive that Strathcona County was an excellent place to raise children, as the majority felt it was high or *very high*.
- No significant differences were seen between age groups or gender for this item.
- Respondents who rated this item as low or very low were asked to indicate what improvements could be considered. Only 1.5% of the sample (7 respondents) felt this way; reasons associated with this varied from a lack of ice time for children's hockey, to problems with the schools in the County (not actually a municipal government concern) and concerns with drugs in the community.

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

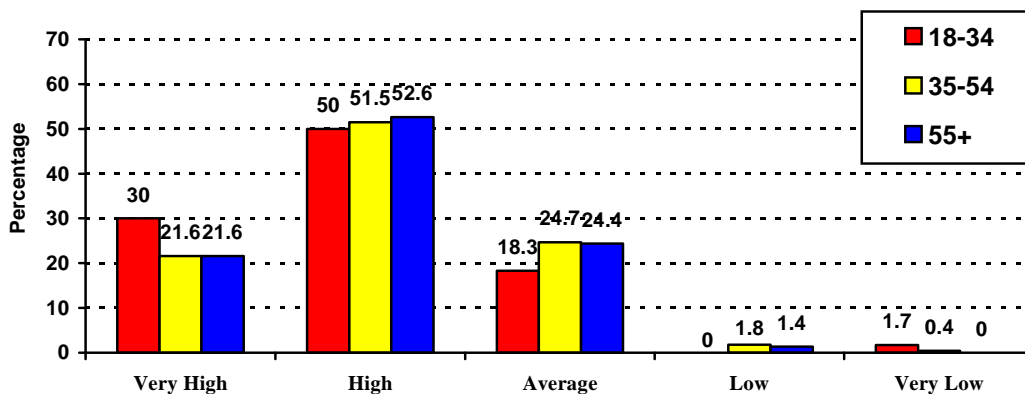
FIGURE 8
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2008



Highlights from Figure 8

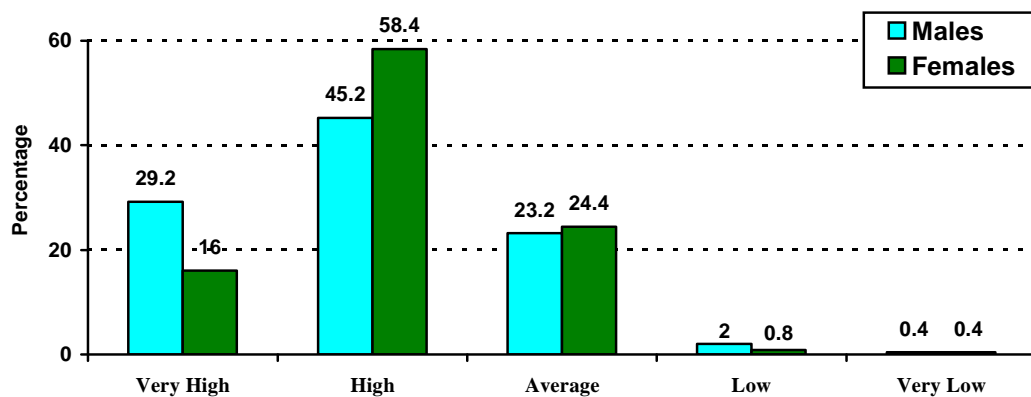
- The majority of people felt that Strathcona County was a safe community to live in. The percentage of residents who gave a *very high* rating for this question has stayed the same in the past two years of conducting this survey.
- The majority of residents, regardless of age, felt quite safe living in Strathcona County in 2008 (see Figure 9 below).

FIGURE 9
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Age Group Comparisons – Year 2008



- In 2008, the percentage of males and females who rated safety in the County as *very high or high* (74.4%) was slightly lower than results posted in 2007 (where 76.7% of females and 79.8% of males gave safety a combined very high/high rating). While the combined totals were the same for males and females, examining perceptions of safety in separate categories revealed that from a statistical perspective, males felt safer in Strathcona County compared to females.⁵

FIGURE 10
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Gender Comparisons - Year 2008

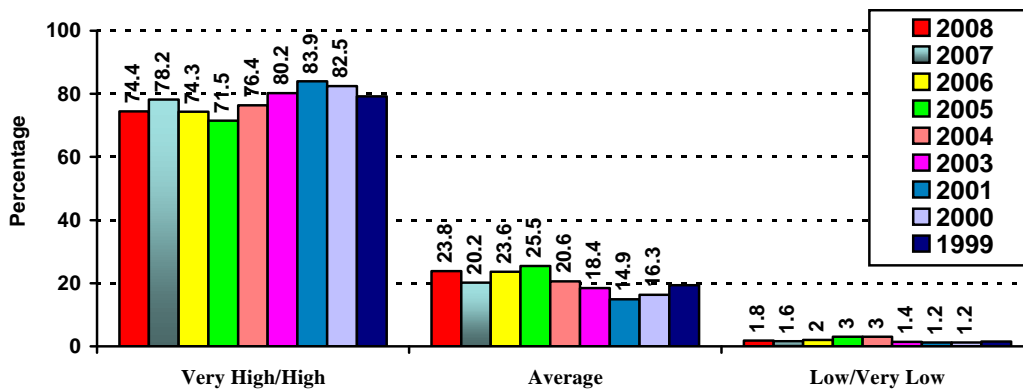


- Overall, only 1.6% of residents (i.e. 8 respondents) gave safety in Strathcona County a low rating. Of these, concerns that were raised had to do with better controls on the roads and traffic (but not to spend excessive time on speed traps), and better ways to make the streets safer from crime. There was a perception by a couple of residents that there was an increase in juvenile crime, which prompted one resident to question why the curfew bylaw was not being enforced.

⁵ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between gender for the perception of Strathcona County being a safe place to live ($\chi^2 = 15.2$, 4 df, $p=.004$).

It can be seen from Figure 11 that perceptions of safety in Strathcona County have stayed fairly steady after taking a dip in 2003. Moreover, it can be seen that the percentage of people who gave safety in the community a low rating has been very small in every year where this has been monitored.

FIGURE 11
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Study Comparisons (1999-2008)⁶



A new question asked on this year’s satisfaction survey pertained to the number of people one knew within one’s neighborhood.⁷ It can be seen from Figure 12 that there were very few people who indicated that they did not know any of their neighbors. The majority of residents indicated that they knew up to 5 other adults in their neighborhood. It can be seen, however, that a larger percentage of residents living in rural Strathcona knew more than 20 adults compared to those living in Sherwood Park.

⁶ There was no satisfaction study conducted in 2002.

⁷ This question has been asked in a separate health and lifestyle survey that Strathcona County conducted in 2002 and 2007.

FIGURE 12
Number of Adults Known by Name within One's Neighborhood
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2008

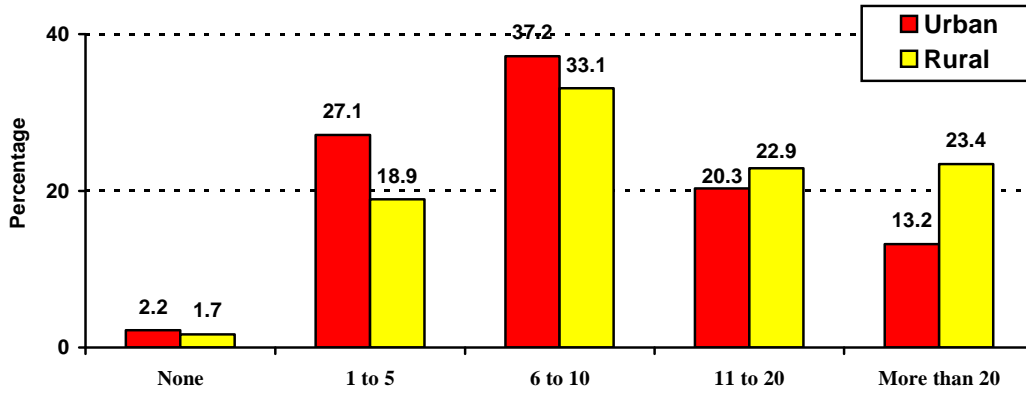
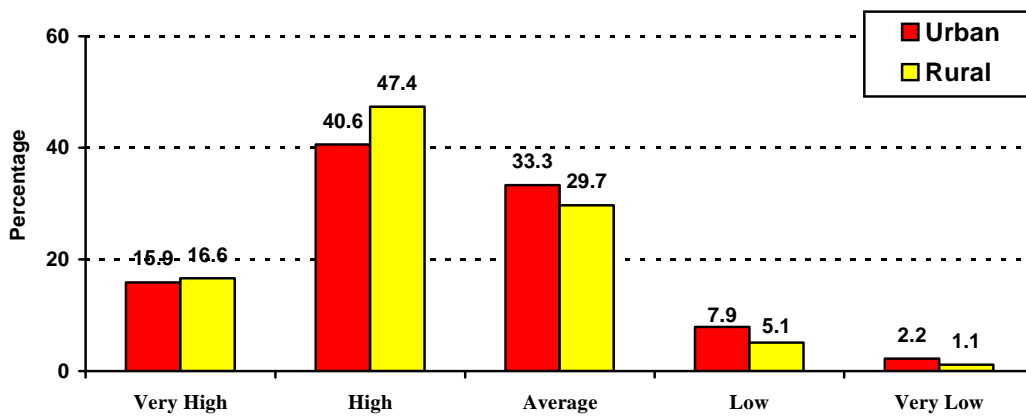


Figure 13 presents a breakdown by region pertaining to people's ratings of the quality of Strathcona County's natural environment.

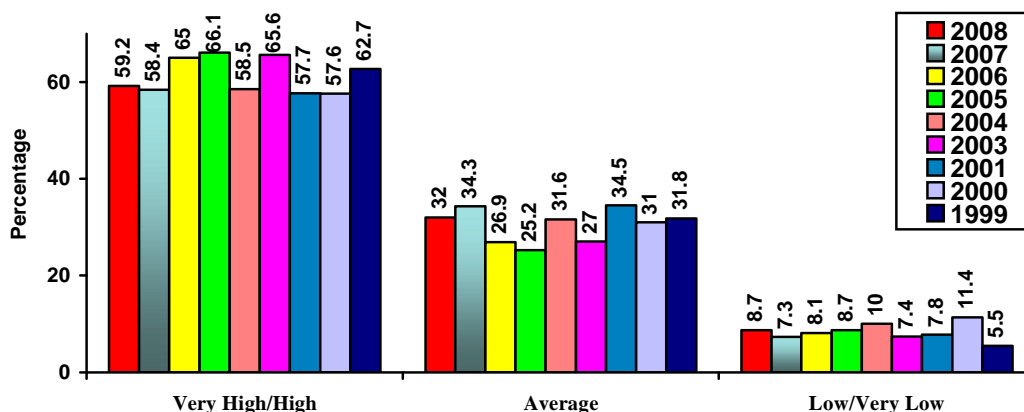
FIGURE 13
Rating the Quality of Strathcona County's Natural Environment
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2008



Highlights from Figure 13

- It can be seen that 56.5% of the urban and 64% of the rural population gave *very high* or *high* ratings for the quality of the County's environment. In both the urban and rural areas, these ratings were lower in 2008 by 1.5% in the urban area, but 4% higher in the rural area compared to 2007 ratings.
- None of the demographic characteristics were factors in influencing how people rated the quality of the natural environment in Strathcona County.
- Overall results (depicted in Figure 14 below) show that the combined very high and high ratings that people gave to the quality of Strathcona County's natural environment were slightly higher than 2007, but generally has not matched ratings noted in 2005 and 2006.
- The 8.7% (or 43 residents) who gave *low* or *very low* ratings were asked to indicate their reasons for the rating. The most common concerns conveyed by these residents was the loss of natural areas and minimal or no replacement of trees as a result of residential, commercial and industrial growth throughout the County. Another aspect of the environment echoed by a number of residents was the quality of the air, especially around the industrial developments (particularly the refineries). These comments have been consistent since 1999.

FIGURE 14
Rating the Quality of Strathcona County's Natural Environment
Study Comparisons (1999-2008)



Respondents were asked to rate how well the County Council and staff balanced the needs and interests of people living in different areas of the County. The results are shown in Figure 15, with overall trends shown in Figure 16.

FIGURE 15
Balancing the Needs and Interests of People Living in Strathcona County
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2008

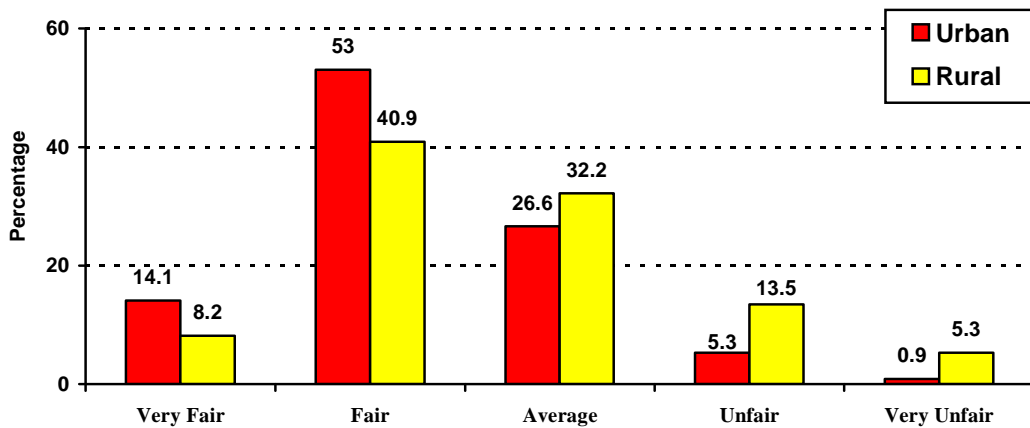
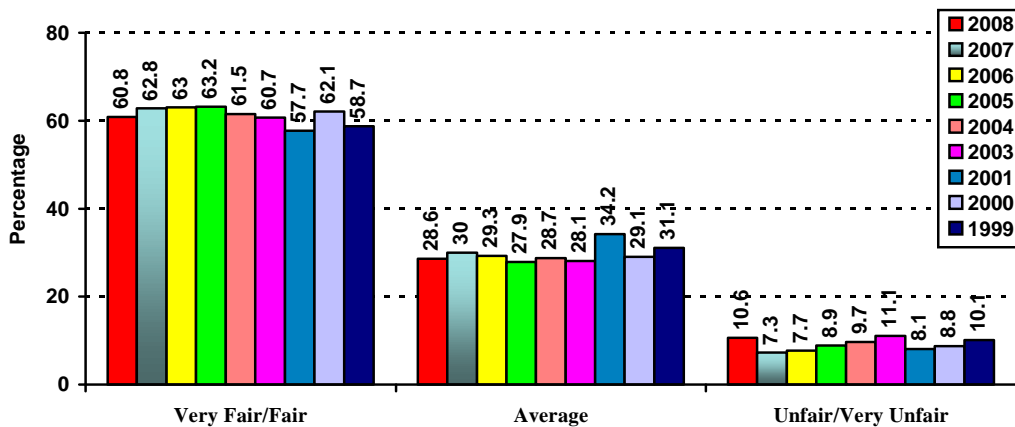


FIGURE 16
Balancing the Needs and Interests of People Living in Strathcona County
(1999-2008 Comparisons)



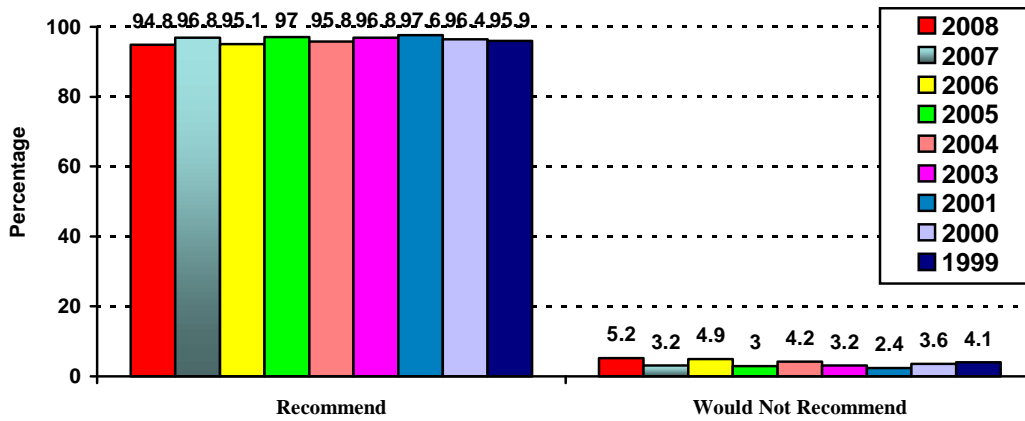
Highlights from Figure 15 & Figure 16

- There was a difference in perception between rural and urban residents as to how fairly they believe people are treated in the County. It can be seen that considerably more people living in the urban area believe that they are treated fairly by County Council and staff compared to those living in rural parts of the County.⁸
- Outside of residence location, the other demographic characteristics were not factors in influencing how people perceived the fairness of County Council and staff toward people living in different parts of Strathcona County.
- With respect to measuring attitudes on this issue on a long-term basis, it can be seen in Figure 16 that overall perceptions of fairness in balancing the needs and interests of people living in the County has not varied considerably over the past 9 years that this survey has been conducted. However, it should also be noted that the 10.6% of residents who feel that the County has been *unfair or very unfair* is at its highest level since 2003.
- The 52 residents in 2008 (10.4% of the sample) who felt the County was unfair on this issue were asked to comment on why they felt that way. The primary reasons were put forward by rural residents who felt they were not getting the same level of services as urban residents. One topic that came up repeatedly was a lack of maintenance of roads (in both Sherwood Park and in the rural area). Some rural residents lamented on the lack of high speed internet service.

It can be seen in Figure 17 that almost all of the respondents would recommend Strathcona County to others as a place to live. This was virtually identical to the satisfaction surveys done in previous years. The small percentage of people (5.2% or 26 residents) who would not recommend the County as a place to live were asked to indicate why they felt that way. There were a variety of reasons put forward, including a perceived increase in industry and pollution in the area. There were a couple of residents who felt that there was too much growth occurring throughout the County, or that the taxes were too high (with no increase in services for residents).

⁸ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between perception of balancing needs and interests of people within the County on the basis of where they live in Strathcona County ($\chi^2 = 25.22$, 4 df, $p = .000$).

FIGURE 17
Recommendation of Strathcona County as a Place to Live
Study Comparisons (1999-2008)



C. Quality of Services Provided by Strathcona County

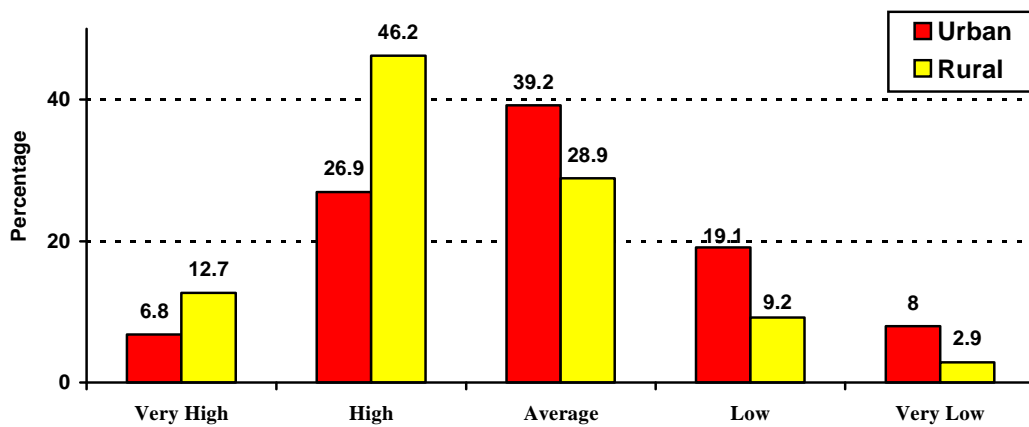
Residents of Strathcona County were asked a series of questions about what they thought of various services provided to them. Overall, respondents were asked to rate 18 different services. For each question, respondents rated the service using a 5 point Likert Scale, where a score of 1 was designated as *very high* and a score of 5 was designated as *very low*. Unless otherwise noted, the level of satisfaction that was found in 2008 for these services was similar to the data collected in 2007.

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

Road Maintenance in Strathcona County

People were first asked to rate the quality of winter road maintenance. Comparative results by geographic location of residence are depicted in Figure 18. There was a statistical difference in perception between rural and urban residents on winter road maintenance⁹ as it can be seen that more people living in the rural areas felt the quality of winter road maintenance was higher than those living in the urban area.

FIGURE 18
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2008



A further analysis revealed that perceptions of winter road maintenance among residents were mixed between 2007 and 2008. It can be seen in Figure 19 that 33.7% of urban residents felt the winter road maintenance work was *very high* or *high* in 2008 compared with almost 40% in 2007 who felt this way. However, an increase in positive perception of winter road maintenance work between 2007 and 2008 was seen among rural residents. It can be seen in Figure 20 that 58.9% gave this service a *very high* or *high* rating in 2008 compared with 53.4% in 2007 and 45.8% in 2006 who felt this way.

⁹ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between perception of winter road maintenance on the basis of where they live in Strathcona County ($\chi^2 = 32.24$, 4 df, $p = .000$).

FIGURE 19
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance as noted by Sherwood Park Residents
2008, 2007 and 2006 Study Comparisons

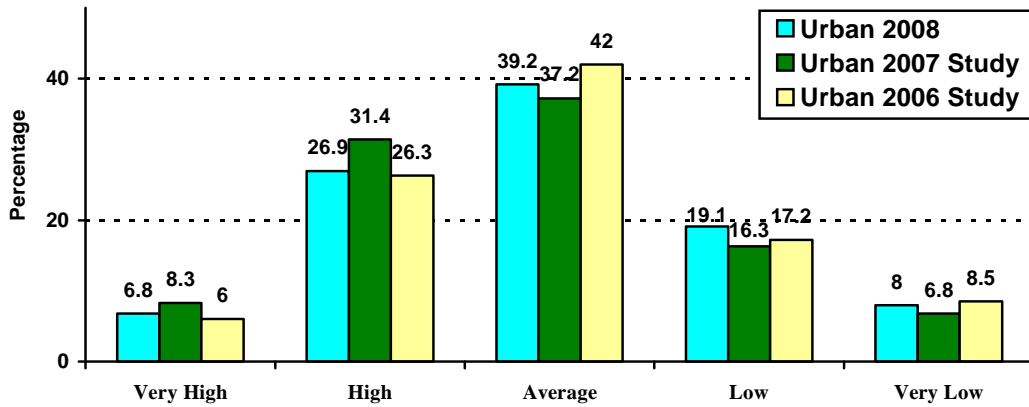
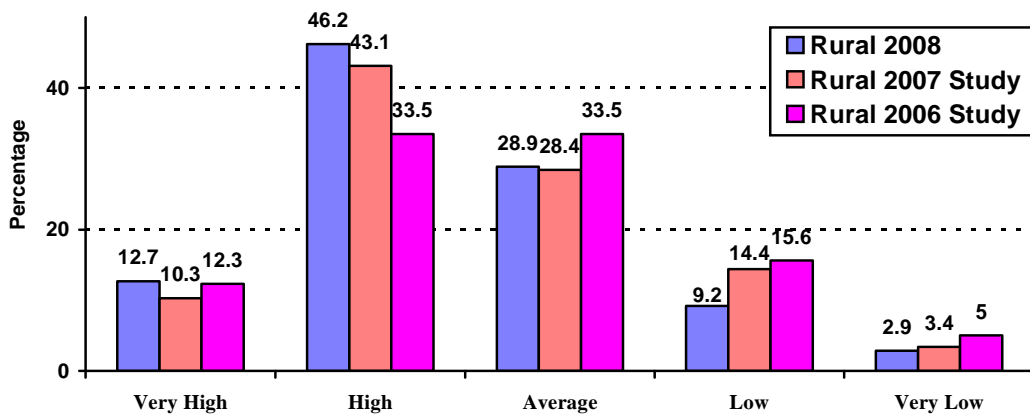


FIGURE 20
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance as noted by Rural Strathcona Residents
2008, 2007 and 2006 Study Comparisons

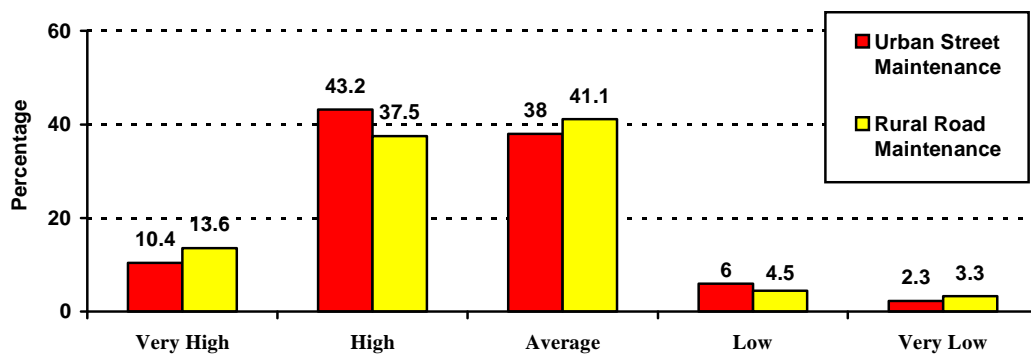


No differences for this service were seen among age groups or gender and a further analysis of the data revealed that length of residency did not have a measurable effect on perceptions toward the quality of winter maintenance.

Overall, 109 residents (21.9% of the sample) were not happy with the winter road maintenance, and were asked to suggest ways on how this could be improved. Complaints often cited by residents included the need for more frequent snow removal to be done for residential side streets in Sherwood Park, and for secondary roads in rural areas to be cleared and sanded. There were also some residents who felt there was too much salt put on the roads.

People were then asked to rate the quality of summer road maintenance in the urban area (Sherwood Park) and for rural areas. The overall results for both types of roads are depicted in Figure 21.

FIGURE 21
Quality of Summer Road Maintenance of Urban and Rural Roads
in the Year 2008 – All Residents



Highlights from Figure 21

- Overall, people living throughout Strathcona County feel that summer road maintenance is slightly better in the urban area than in the rural area. This was a similar pattern seen in findings from previous studies dating back to 2001.
- None of the demographic characteristics were factors in influencing how people felt about summer urban and rural road maintenance. However, there was a statistical difference in perception between rural and urban residents on summer road maintenance on rural roads.¹⁰ It can be seen in Figure 23 that there were higher percentages of people living in the rural areas who indicated

¹⁰ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between perception of summer rural road maintenance on the basis of where they live in Strathcona County ($\chi^2 = 14.76$, 4 df, $p = .005$). There was no statistical difference seen among residents with respect to perceptions of summer urban road maintenance.

that summer rural road maintenance was *average, low or very low* compared to those living in the urban area who felt that way.¹¹

FIGURE 22
Quality of Summer Road Maintenance of Roads in Sherwood Park
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2008

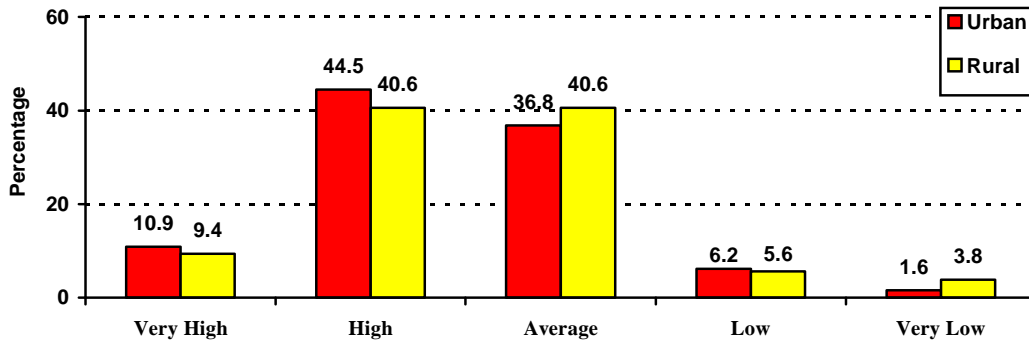
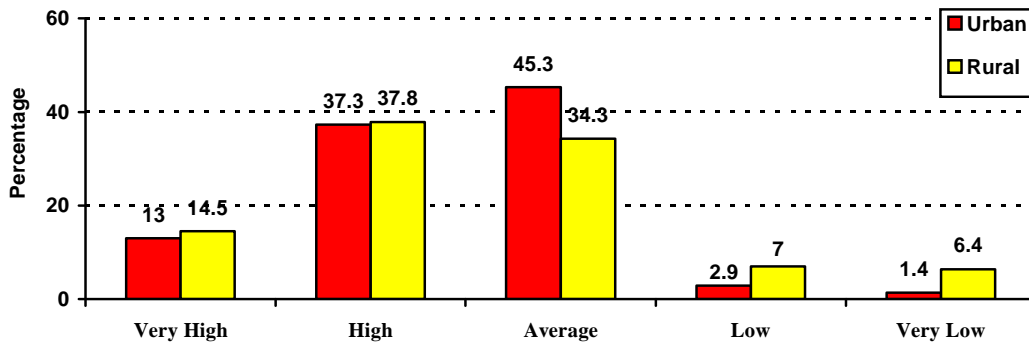


FIGURE 23
Quality of Summer Road Maintenance of Rural Roads
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2008



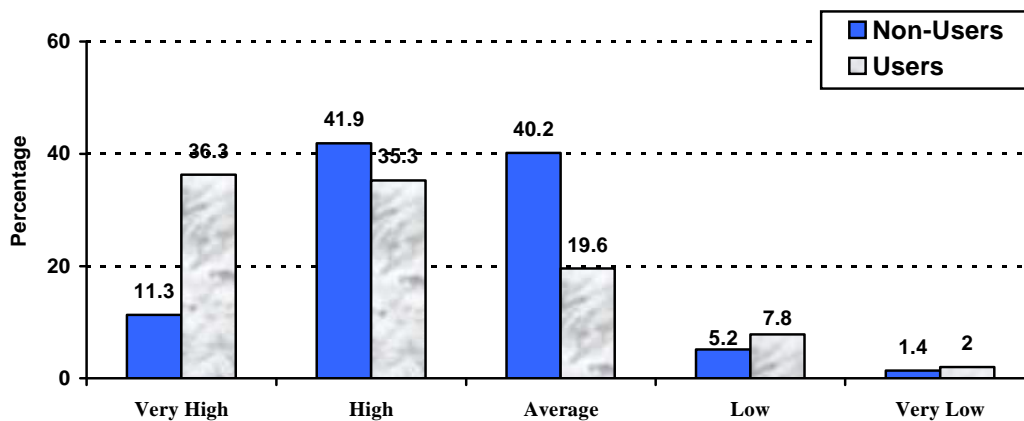
- Overall, 8.3% of residents (N=40) were unhappy with the summer maintenance of urban roads. Almost all of these residents reflected on the need to fill in the potholes in the roads and a perceived lack of action on the part of the County to do necessary repairs in what they considered to be a timely fashion. Some people also felt that the lack of repairs increased risks for bicyclists who also used the roads in the summertime.
- Overall, 7.8% of residents (N=35) were unhappy with the summer maintenance of rural roads. As with the urban roads, a frequent complaint focused on the increased number of potholes encountered on these roads and the emphasis on patching the holes rather than repaving larger portions of the roads.

¹¹ While there was a statistical difference seen, it should be noted that the actual number of residents who

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 24 presents the satisfaction level that people have for family support services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services¹² in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should be noted that 158 respondents (31.6% of the sample) did not comment on the quality of the family support services because they did not know anything about them.

FIGURE 24
Quality of Family Support Services – 2008 Results



Highlights from Figure 24

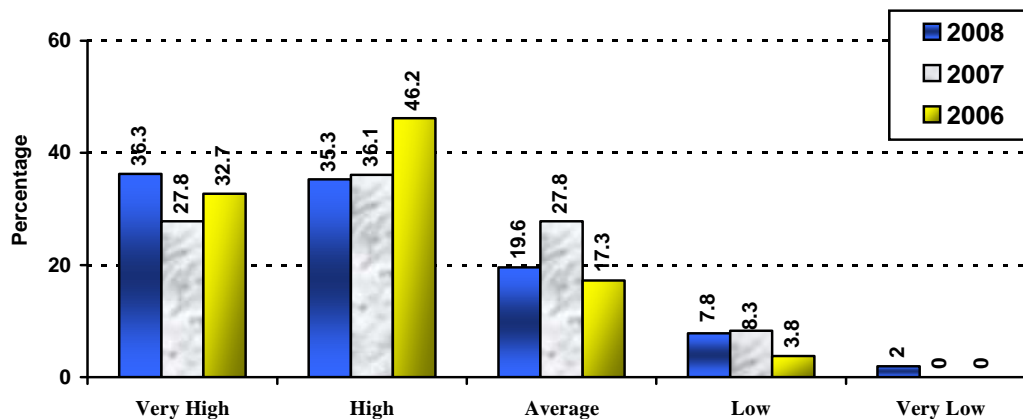
- It can be seen from Figure 24 that both resident users and non-users have a positive view toward family support services in Strathcona County. However, a chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between one's use and how satisfied one is with family services ($\chi^2 = 22.79$, 4 df, $p = .000$). A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = 2.91$, 340 df, $p < .005$) confirms that users of family support services rated these services higher than non-users.
- The actual number of residents who used (and rated) the services in the past 12 months was low (N=51). It can be seen that among these people, close to 72% of these people gave *high* or *very high* satisfaction ratings with the

were dissatisfied is less than those who were satisfied with the service.

¹² Overall, 11.4% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had used family support services within the past 12 months. This is 3.6% higher than 2007 and about the same usage noted in the 2006, 2005 and 2004 studies.

services. The combined *very high/high* ratings of family and community services has rebounded from 2007 and is close to the patterns found in 2006 (Figure 25).

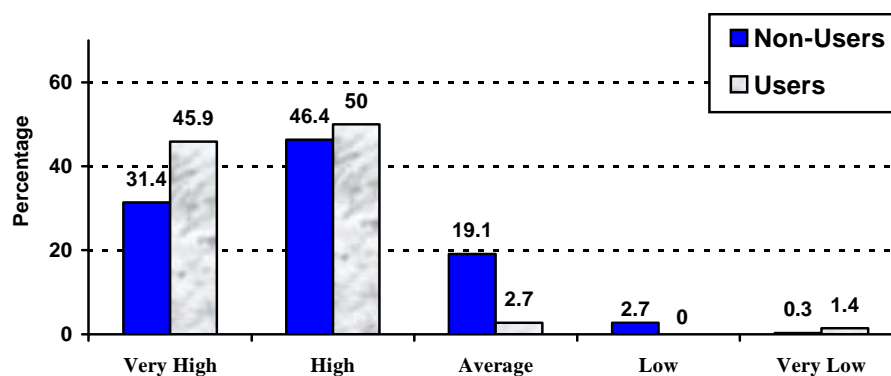
FIGURE 25
Quality of Family Support Services
User Trends 2006 - 2008



- As in previous surveys, the percentage of users rating the service as *low or very low* is small. However, in 2008, 9.8% were dissatisfied, which was a slightly higher percentage compared to what was reported in the previous three years.
- The 24 people who gave family support services a low rating in 2008 (7.1% of the sample) were asked to suggest ways on how this could be improved. Most of the suggestions focused on additional programs for seniors and youth within the County. There were also some people who felt there needed to be more doctors and professional services in Sherwood Park, as well as more housing for seniors.
- There were no differences found for any socio-demographic characteristic for this item in 2008.

Figure 26 presents the satisfaction level that people have for fire and ambulance services, based on the portion of the sample who utilized these services¹³ in the past 12 months, and those who did not use these services. It should be noted that 60 respondents (12% of the sample) indicated that they “did not know” enough about these services to rate them.

FIGURE 26
Quality of Fire and Ambulance Services – 2008 Results



Highlights from Figure 26

- It can be seen from Figure 26 that most residents (regardless of use) have a positive view toward the fire and ambulance services in Strathcona County, with the strong positive feelings more prevalent among users than non-users.¹⁴ This demonstrates that recipients were pleased with the quality of the services that they received when these services were needed.
- Overall, 12 people (2.8% of the sample) were not satisfied with the services. There were a variety of suggestions, though the most frequent idea put forward was to have an increase in personnel, as well as have more fire trucks and ambulances. One person hoped that the County would examine and assess response times to emergencies.

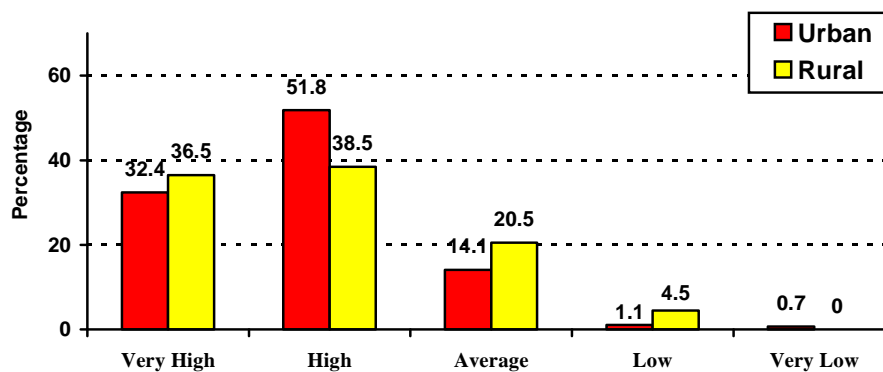
¹³ Overall, 15.4% of respondents in 2008 indicated that they had used the fire and ambulance services within the past 12 months. This reported usage is the same as 2007 and slightly higher than results previously noted in the 2006 survey (14% usage).

¹⁴ 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 ($\chi^2 = 17.74, 4 df, p = .001$). A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = 3.34, 438 df, p = .001$) statistically confirms that users of fire and ambulance services rated these services higher than non-users.

- Apart from location (see below) there were no differences found for any other socio-demographic characteristic for this item in 2008.

As seen in Figure 27, a further analysis of this service revealed that more Sherwood Park residents (regardless of use) were satisfied with the service (84.2% *very high or high*) compared with those living in rural areas (75% *very high or high*).¹⁵ As indicated above, part of the reason for the gap in satisfaction with this service between urban and rural residents has to do with response time and availability of this service for rural residents. A further comparison with past satisfaction studies on this service revealed that the difference in the combined *very high/high* satisfaction scores noted for rural and urban residents is slightly higher than what was reported in 2007, but is still better than what was seen in previous years when satisfaction studies were conducted (2000-2006).

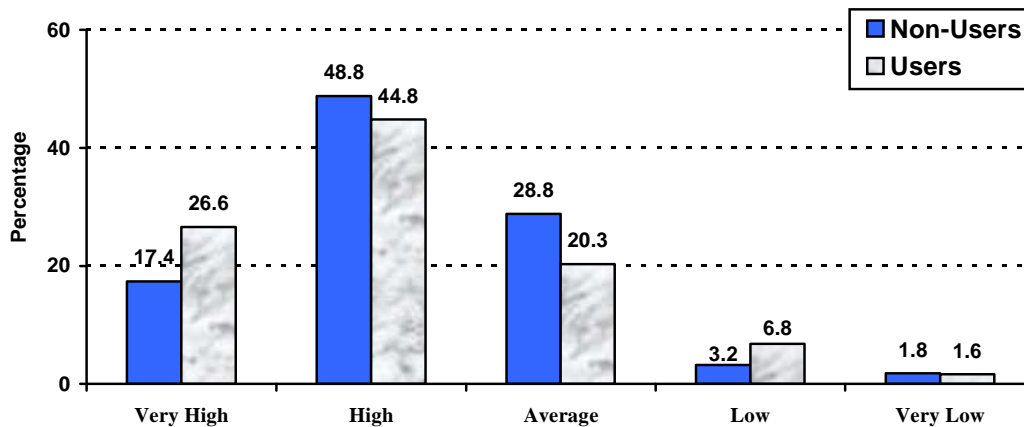
FIGURE 27
Quality of Fire and Ambulance Services
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2008



¹⁵ 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 ($\chi^2 = 13.15$, 4 df, $p = .011$).

Figure 28 presents the satisfaction level that people have for RCMP services, based on those who used these services¹⁶ in the past 12 months and those who did not.

FIGURE 28
Quality of RCMP Services – 2008 Results



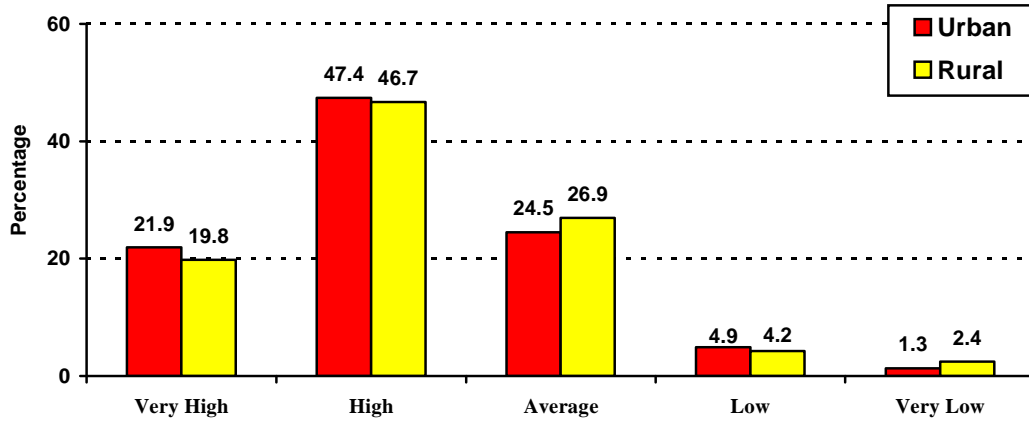
Highlights from Figure 28

- It can be seen from Figure 28 that most residents have a positive view toward the RCMP in Strathcona County, regardless of whether or not they used the service in the past 12 months. A *chi-square* measurement test between users and non-users suggested that there was a difference in perceptions on how users and non-users rated the service ($\chi^2 = 11.28, 4 df, p = .02$).
- The ratings provided by both users and non-users in 2008 were very similar to trends found in 2007 and 2006.
- The 30 users and non-users who rated RCMP services as *low or very low* were asked to comment on ways that the service could be improved. A variety of reasons were put forward, with some people citing a slow response time to calls and complaints. Several people felt that the RCMP should do more regular patrolling throughout the County (in both the rural and urban areas). Others felt that an increase in staffing might lead to more improvements.
- A further analysis of this service revealed that residents were relatively happy with the RCMP services, regardless of where they live (Figure 29). The 2008

¹⁶Overall, 194 respondents (38.8% of the 2008 sample) indicated that they had used the RCMP within the past 12 months. This reported usage is higher than what was reported in previous years when a satisfaction survey has been conducted. It should also be noted that 27 people (5.4%) did not rate the service in 2008 on the basis that they did not know enough about the RCMP to give a rating.

trends were very similar to the 2006 and 2007 findings with respect to urban/rural location.

FIGURE 29
Quality of RCMP Services – Urban and Rural Comparisons (2008)

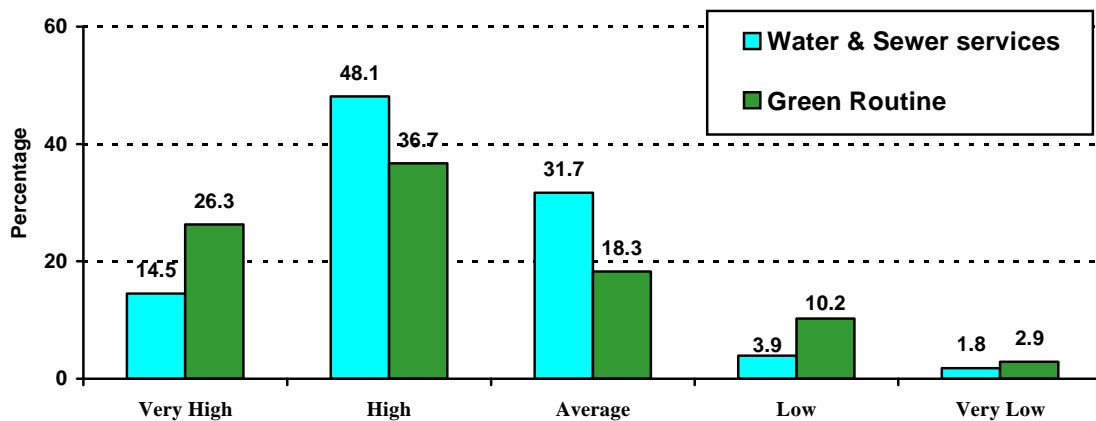


- No differences were seen with RCMP services with any demographic variable.

Water and Waste Management Services in Strathcona County

People were asked to rate the quality of the water and the Green Routine (the waste collection and recycling system) in Strathcona County. Figure 30 presents the satisfaction level that residents have for these services, regardless of where they live.¹⁷

FIGURE 30
Level of Satisfaction with Water and Waste Management Services – 2008 Results



Highlights from Figure 30

- It can be seen from Figure 30 that residents were generally satisfied with these services. A further examination of the ratings revealed that 63% gave *very high/high* ratings for the Green Routine (which was about 10% lower than the 2007 ratings when residents were asked about their garbage collection). The ratings for water and sewage services however, were similar to 2007 findings, with 62.6% giving this a *very high* or *high* rating.
- A further analysis by geographic area revealed that rural residents in the County were not as satisfied with their *water service* as those living in Sherwood Park. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between where one lived and how one rated this service ($\chi^2 = 31.73$, 4 df, $p = .000$). No differences were found for the *Green Routine service* in terms of where one lived. A depiction of how residents rated both services, based on where they lived is shown in Figures 31 and 32.

¹⁷ Overall, 115 people (23%) did not rate water & sewer services and 29 people (5.8%) did not rate the green routine services. These 2008 patterns are about the same as number of residents who did not rate these services in the 2006 survey. It should also be noted that the majority of those who did not rate water & sewer and garbage collection services lived in rural parts of Strathcona County.

FIGURE 31
Level of Satisfaction with Water Services
Urban & Rural Comparisons - 2008

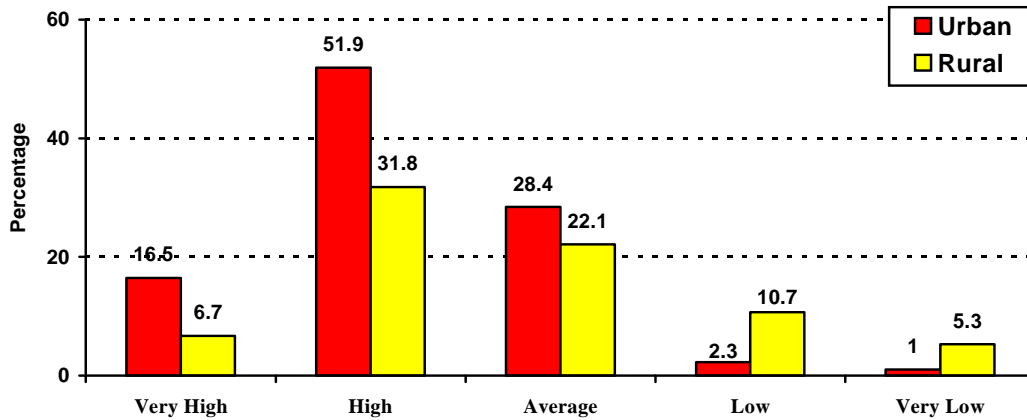
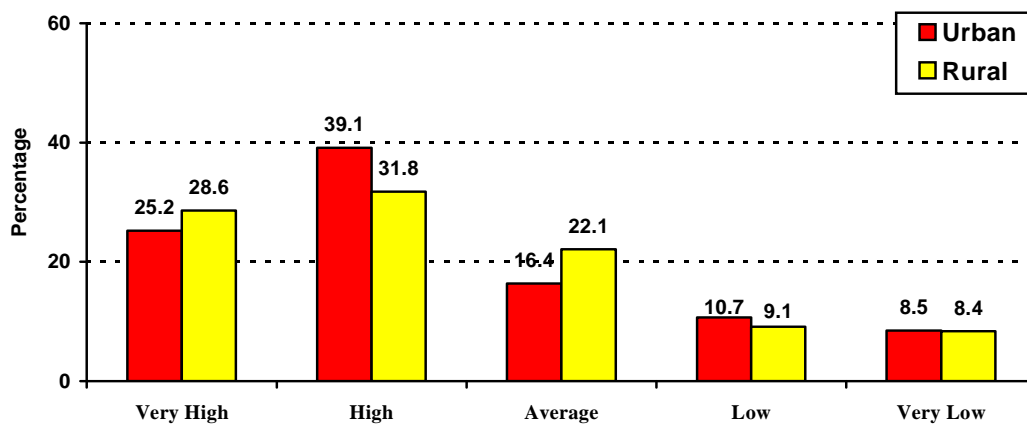


FIGURE 32
Level of Satisfaction with Green Routine Service
Urban & Rural Comparisons - 2008



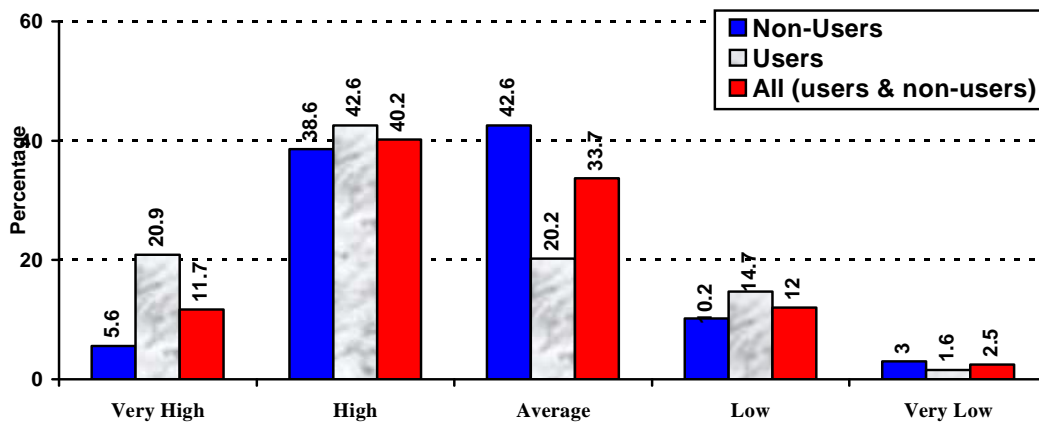
- The people who rated these services as *low* or *very low* were asked to comment on ways that the services could be improved. With respect to water services, 22 people (5.7% of the sample) made comments. A variety of thoughts were put forward, including complaints from some people about drainage fees. There were also several people in rural areas who thought that the County should run sewer and water lines out to acreages.
- With respect to the Green Routine services, 88 residents (18.7% of the sample) who rated the service as *low* or *very low* had comments. Many of the

residents were upset with the time lag between pick-ups (especially in the summer), the sorting of organics, and problems with moving the carts (especially for seniors). Others would like to have a cart for recycling, as their blue bags got blown around the neighborhood on windy days.

Transit Services in Strathcona County

People were asked to rate their satisfaction with transit services in the County. Figure 33 presents the satisfaction level that people have for transit services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services¹⁸ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 174 residents (34.8% of the sample) did not rate transit service on the basis that they did not know anything about the service.¹⁹

FIGURE 33
Satisfaction with Strathcona County Transit Service – 2008 Results



Highlights from Figure 33

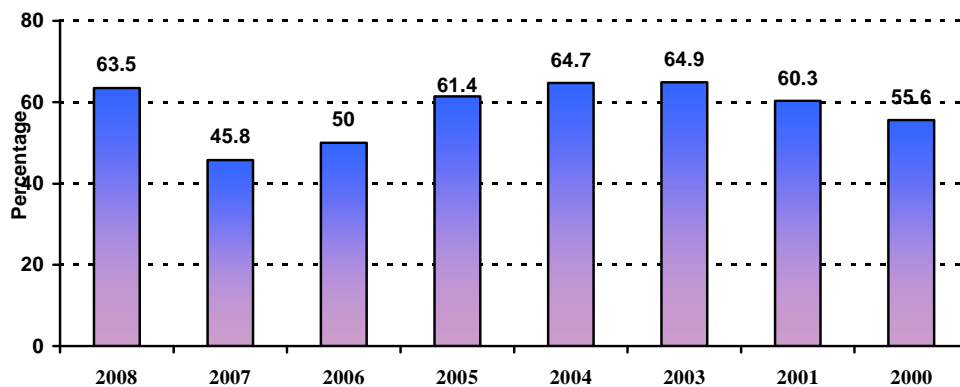
- It can be seen from Figure 33 that around 55% of residents (regardless of use) have a positive view toward transit services in Strathcona County. This is an 11% jump from the 44% reported in 2007.

¹⁸ Overall, 26.8% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had used transit services within the past 12 months. This is 2.6% higher than what was seen in 2007.

¹⁹ The percentage of those who said “don’t know” was about the same as what was seen in 2005 – 2007.

- It can also be seen that 16.3% of users of the transit service have low or very low levels of satisfaction with the service. Compared to 2007, this is an improvement, as 22% of users in that year were dissatisfied with transit services.
- In comparison to previous surveys, it can be seen in Figure 34 that the percentage of users rating this service as *very high/high* has increased substantially in 2008 compared to the previous two years of measurement (45.8% in 2007 and 50% in 2006).

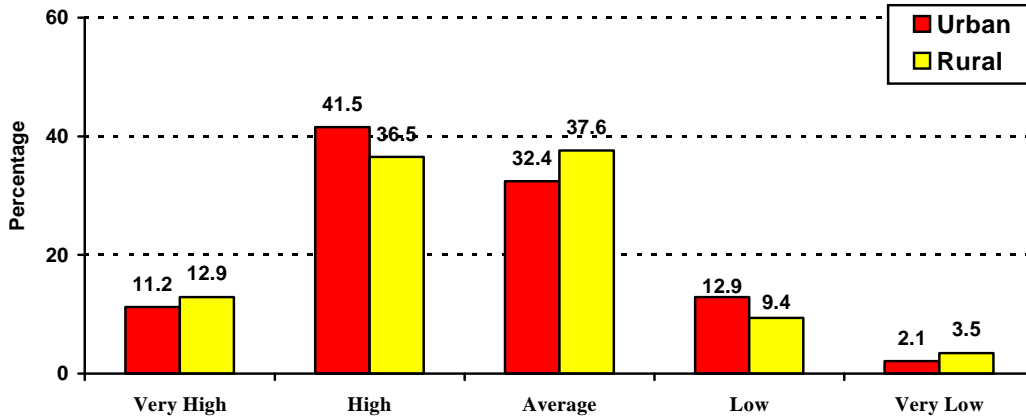
FIGURE 34
User “Very High/High” Combined Satisfaction Ratings with Strathcona County Transit Service 2000 – 2008 Comparisons²⁰



- A further analysis found that the majority of transit users (74.6%) live in Sherwood Park. While the percentage of urban/rural transit users has been higher among Sherwood Park residents, the percentage of rural transit users increased by about 6% between 2007 and 2008. Although it can be seen in Figure 35 that the *very high* ratings with transit are higher among those living in Sherwood Park compared to those living in the rural area (regardless of use), there were no statistically significant differences based on region.

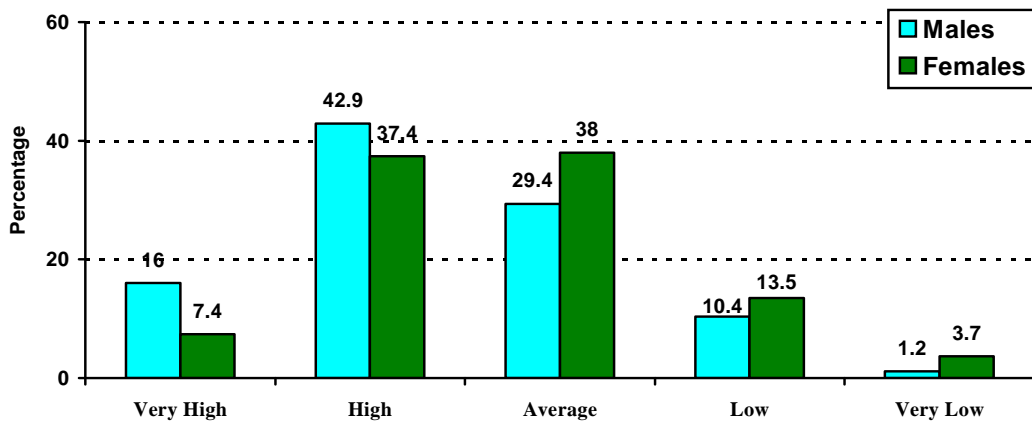
²⁰ There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

FIGURE 35
Satisfaction with Strathcona County Transit Service – 2008 Results
Urban and Rural Comparisons



- With the exception of gender (Figure 36), there were no statistically significant differences noted between any of the other demographic items and how residents rated transit services.

FIGURE 36
Satisfaction with Strathcona County Transit Service – 2008 Results
Urban and Rural Comparisons



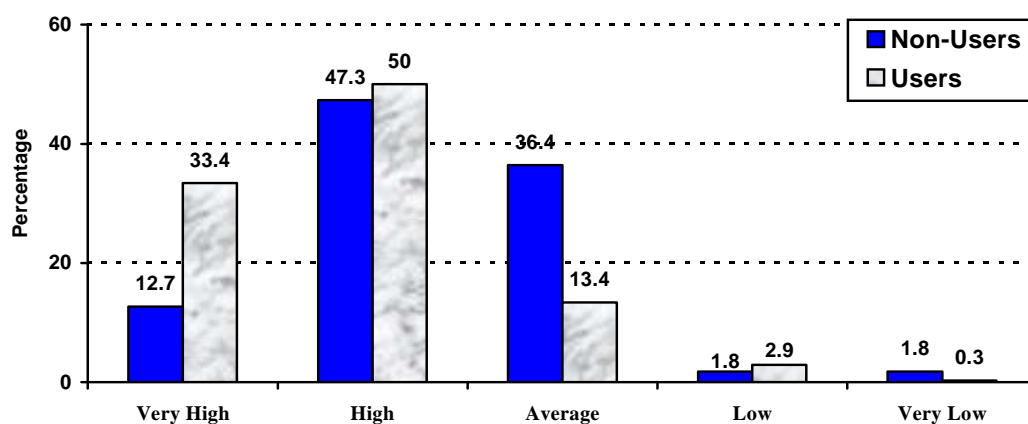
- The 39 people (9.8% of the sample) who gave transit services a *low/very low* rating were asked to suggest ways on how this could be improved. A variety

of ideas were put forward, including a suggested increase in the number of buses, an improvement of frequency of buses on routes within Sherwood Park as well as additional bus routes within Sherwood Park. There were also some residents who would like to see additional destination stops within Edmonton. A number of residents brought up the potential of transit service to rural parts of the County, and there were several requests to increase available parking at the transit centre. There were a couple of suggestions for an LRT to be built and linked to the Edmonton system.

Library Services in Strathcona County

Figure 37 presents the satisfaction level that people have with the Strathcona Public Library, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services²¹ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 76 people (15.2% of the sample) did not rate the library services on the basis that they did not know enough about the library to give it a rating.

FIGURE 37
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library – 2008 Results



Highlights from Figure 37

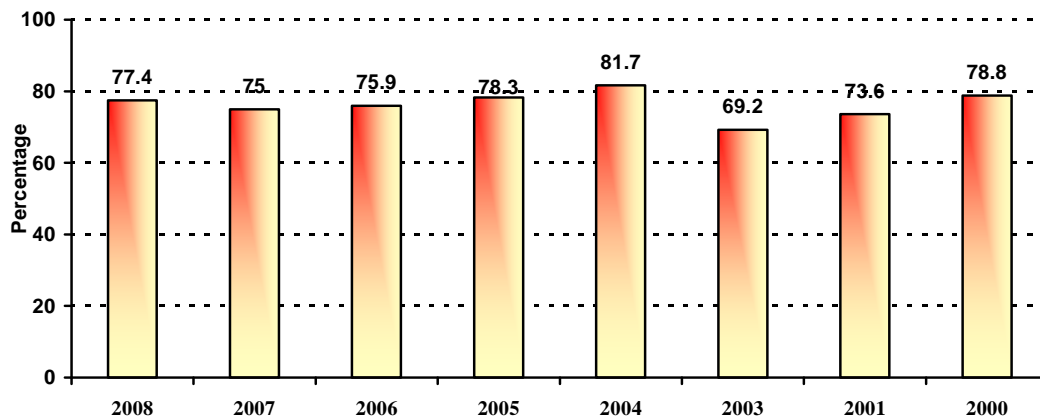
- It can be seen from Figure 37 that most residents have a positive view toward the library, regardless of whether they use it. Nevertheless, a chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between use and how one rated

²¹ Overall, 63% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had used the library within the past 12 months. This is about 2% higher than what was reported in 2007.

library services.²² A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences revealed a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between users and non-users ($t = 5.36$, 442 *df*, $p < .001$), where users are more likely to give the library a higher rating than those who did not use it.

- No differences were seen any socio-demographic variables with respect to perceptions of satisfaction toward the library in 2008.
- A further investigation revealed that overall *very high/high* satisfaction level with the Strathcona Library (regardless of use) remains solid. The *very high/high* rating for the library from this and previous years is shown in Figure 38.

FIGURE 38
Combined “Very High/High” Satisfaction Ratings with Strathcona County Library
2000 – 2008 Comparisons²³

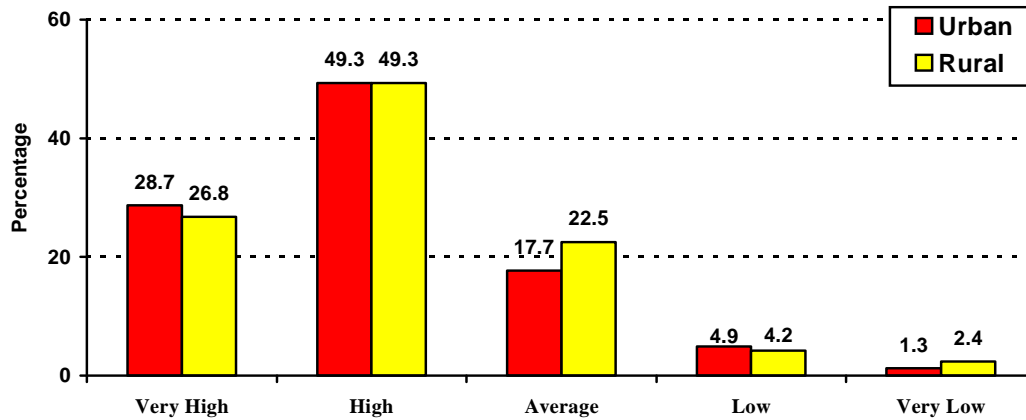


- The majority of library users surveyed live in Sherwood Park (67.9%), while the remaining 32.1% live in other parts of Strathcona County. A breakdown of the satisfaction ratings of the library by all urban and rural residents (regardless of use) is shown in Figure 39, where it can be seen that the perceptions did not vary considerably between rural and urban area residents.

²² For library services, ($\chi^2 = 37.77$, 3 *df*, $p=.000$).

²³ There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

FIGURE 39
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library – 2008 Results
Urban and Rural Comparisons

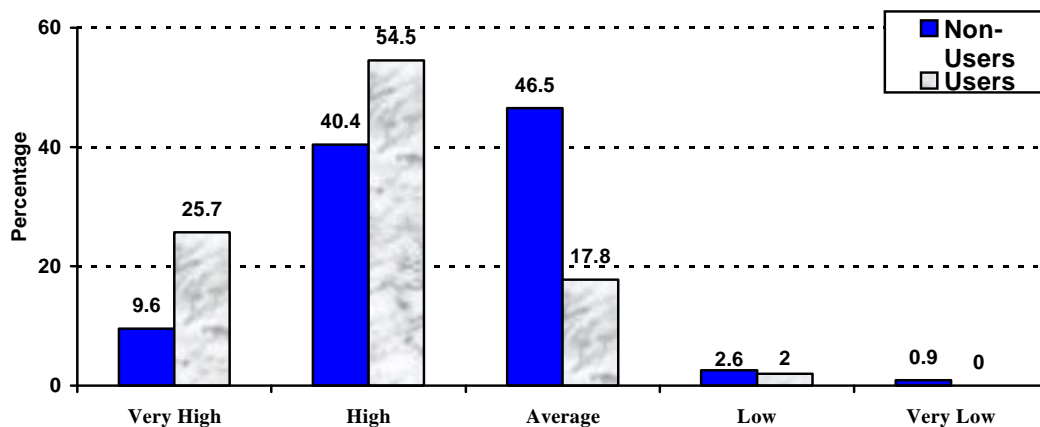


- There were 14 people (3.3% of the sample) who rated the library service as *low* or *very low*. Suggestions on how the library could be improved included having more Braille and taped books, having the library move to a larger location [which will occur once the new community centre is completed], and increasing its book and reference collection.

Information and Volunteer Centre Services in Strathcona County

Figure 40 presents the satisfaction level that people have with the Information and Volunteer Centre (IVC), based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services²⁴ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 33.8% of residents (n=169) did not rate the Centre on the basis that they did not know anything about it.

FIGURE 40
Satisfaction with the Information and Volunteer Centre – 2008 Results



Highlights from Figure 40

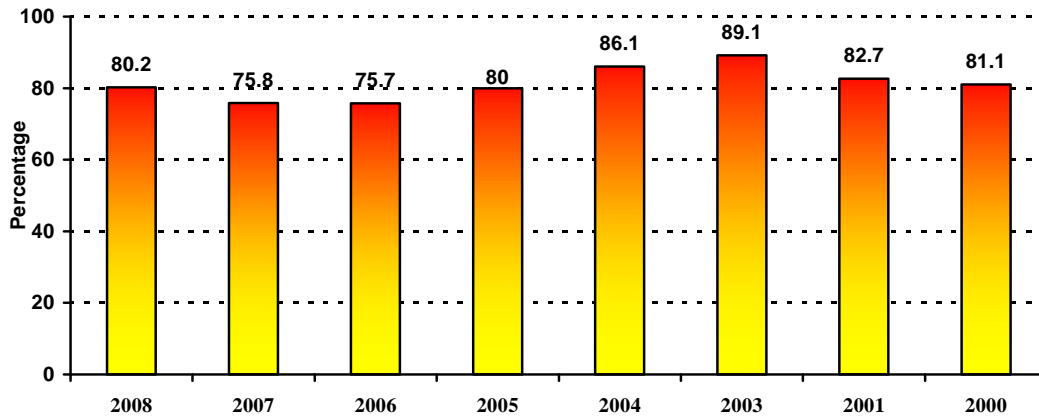
- It can be seen from Figure 40 that most residents have a positive view toward the Information and Volunteer Centre, regardless of whether they use it. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between use and how one rated the IVC.²⁵ A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences revealed a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between users and non-users ($t = 5.57, 329 \text{ df}, p < .001$), where users are more likely to give the IVC a higher rating than those who did not use it.
- A further investigation revealed that the combined *very high/high* satisfaction levels with users of the IVC increased to 80.2% in 2008, which is the highest

²⁴ Overall, 21% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had used the Information and Volunteer Centre within the past 12 months. This is almost the same figure that was reported in the 2005-2007 surveys.

²⁵ For the IVC, ($\chi^2 = 35.05, 4 \text{ df}, p=.000$).

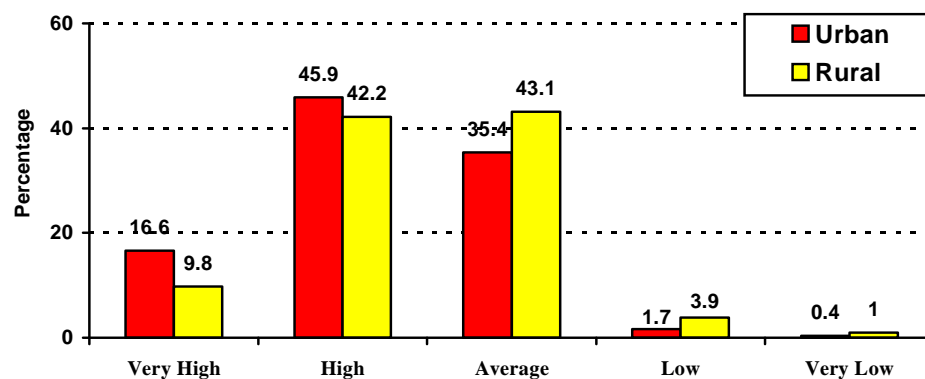
this has been since 2005. The *very high/high* rating provided by users of the IVC between 2000 and 2008 is shown in Figure 41.

FIGURE 41
User “Very High/High” Combined Satisfaction Ratings with the Information and Volunteer Centre 2000 – 2008 Comparisons²⁶



- Among users of the IVC, the majority live in Sherwood Park (73.3%) while the remaining 26.7% live in rural parts of Strathcona County. The satisfaction ratings for the IVC were slightly higher among urban area residents (Figure 42), though the variation between urban and rural was not statistically significant.

FIGURE 42
Satisfaction with the Information and Volunteer Centre – 2008 Results
Urban and Rural Comparisons



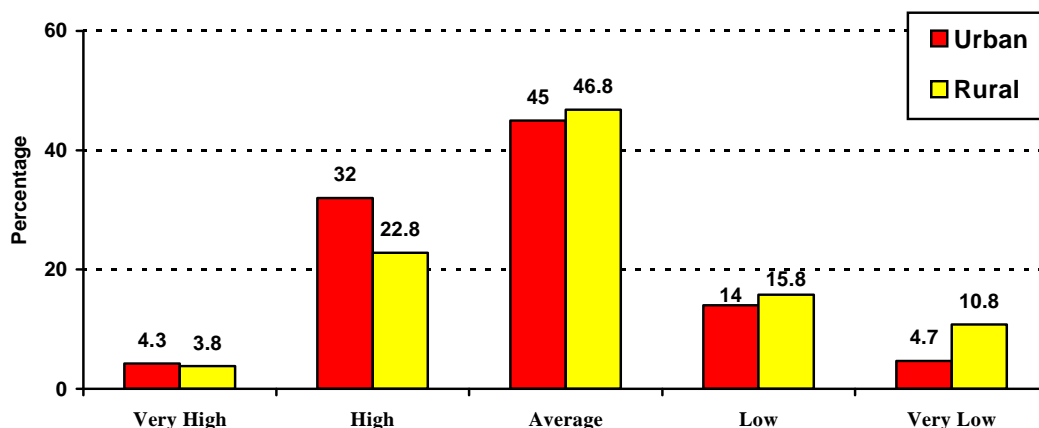
²⁶ There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

- A total of 169 people (33.8%) did not rate the Information and Volunteer Centre because they did not know enough about it to provide a rating. This finding, while high, is very similar to 2006 and 2007 and has improved over previous years in terms of awareness [e.g. in 2005, 212 people (42.4%) did not rate the IVC and in 2004 256 people (50.1%) did not rate this]. It is recommended that the IVC continue its efforts to maintain awareness of its services among residents on a regular basis.
- No differences were seen among any socio-demographic variables with respect to perceptions of satisfaction toward the IVC.
- Only 10 people gave the Information and Volunteer Centre a *low* or *very low* rating. Almost all of the comments focused on the need for the IVC to improve its profile.

Land Use Planning & Economic Development Services in Strathcona County

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

FIGURE 43
Satisfaction with Land Use Planning in Strathcona County – 2008 Results



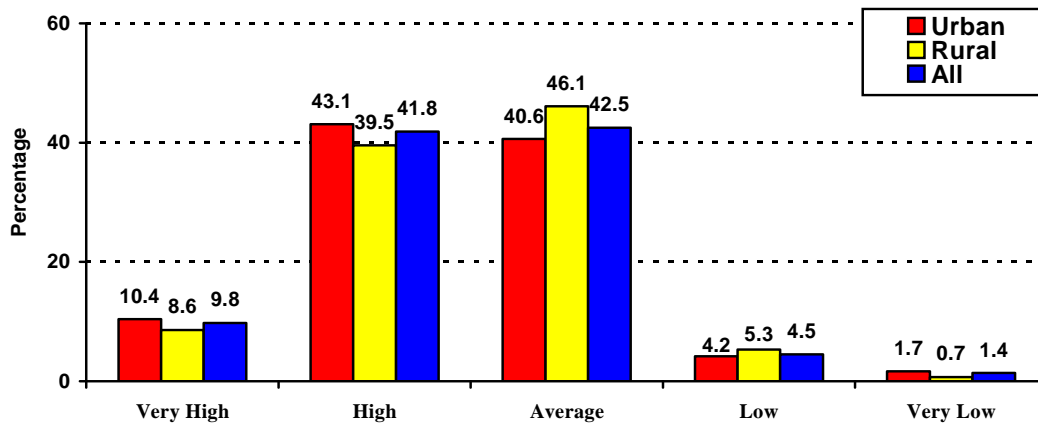
²⁷ Overall, 42 people (8.4% of the sample) did not rate this service. This was about the same as the 2006/7 survey.

Highlights from Figure 43

- It can be seen from Figure 43 that the perception of residents toward land use planning by the County is very similar, regardless of where people live. The majority of residents were relatively satisfied with existing land use planning.
- The patterns found in this year's survey were almost identical to the results found in the previous satisfaction surveys. No differences were seen among any socio-demographic variables with respect to perceptions of satisfaction toward land use planning.
- Overall, 98 people (21.4% of the sample) gave a *low* or *very low* rating of the land use planning service. When asked to suggest ways on how this could be improved, a number of different ideas were put forward, though a common theme was that there were too many subdivisions being built without proper retention of green space retained for parks or playgrounds, or that good agricultural land was being turned over for residential and commercial development. Some people also thought that there should be some consideration placed on space for churches and recreational facilities. Other repeated comments included concerns with housing density in some parts of the County (including an increased perception that houses are being built too close together).

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

FIGURE 44
Satisfaction with Economic Development in Strathcona County – 2008 Results



Highlights from Figure 44

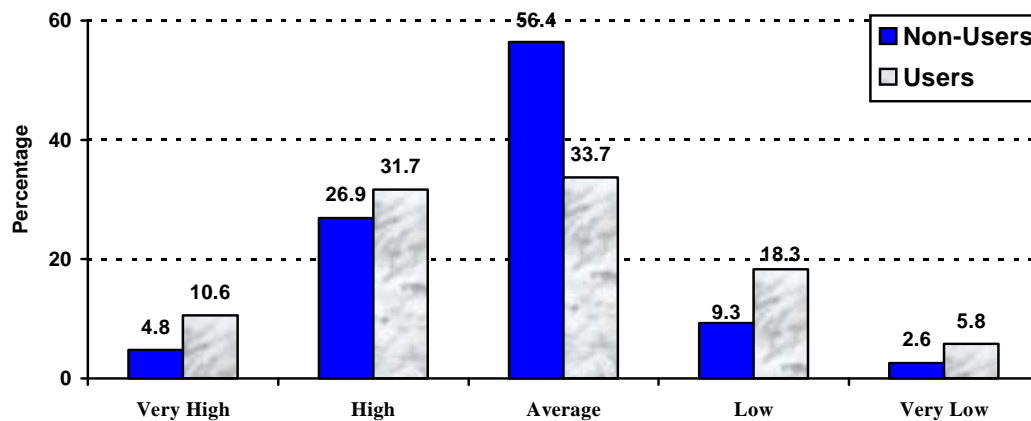
- It can be seen from Figure 42 that the perception of residents toward economic development by the County was generally positive, regardless of where people live. Overall, 51.6% of all residents gave *very high/high* ratings for the economic development that is being done at the present time. This combined rating is, however, almost 10% lower than what was posted in 2007.
- No differences were seen among any socio-demographic variables with one's satisfaction of economic development.
- Twenty-six residents throughout the County (5.9% of the sample) expressed a low or very low level of satisfaction with economic development in the County. In this year's study, suggestions were varied and included having more restaurants and department stores (such as The Bay) in Sherwood Park, and lower the rental rates in the strip malls (though the County has no control over this). There were some people who felt that the County should do more to attract new businesses, such as offering incentives.

²⁸ Overall, 60 people (12% of the sample) did not rate this service, which is similar to the 2007 survey.

Permit & Inspection Services in Strathcona County

Figure 45 presents the satisfaction level that people have with building permit and inspection services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services²⁹ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 169 people (33.8% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it, which is about the same as last year's survey.

FIGURE 45
Satisfaction with Building Permit and Inspections Services in Strathcona County – 2008 Results



Highlights from Figure 45

- A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between one's use of building permit & inspection services and the rating that one gave to the service.³⁰ A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences, however, failed to pinpoint precisely where the differences lie. It can be seen from Figure 45 that while some users gave higher ratings to the service than non-users, one can also see that other users gave lower ratings to the service than non-users and a larger proportion of non-users rated the service as "average" compared to users.

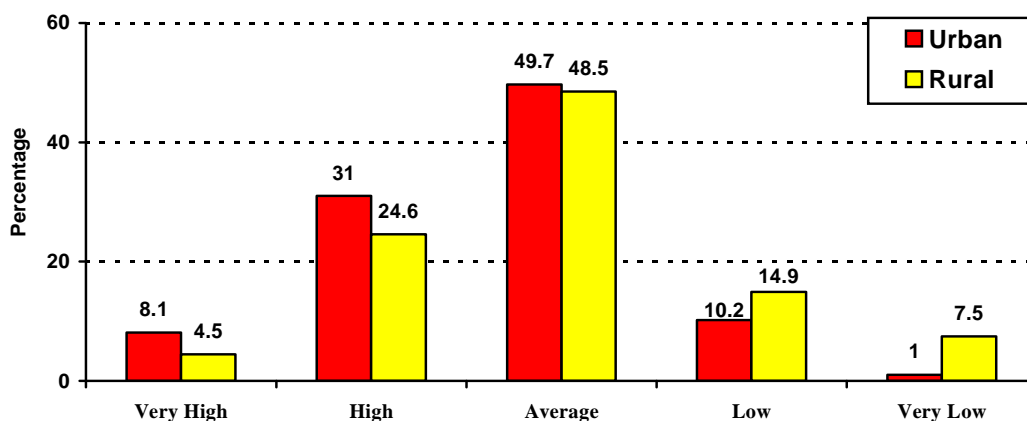
²⁹ Overall, 19.8% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had used the building permit and inspection services within the past 12 months. This is about the same as last year's survey.

³⁰ $\chi^2 = 18.33, 4 \text{ df}, p=.001$.

- A comparison of trends between the 2008 and 2007 surveys revealed a drop in the combined percentage of users who gave the service a *very high/high* rating (42.3% in 2008 compared to 51% in 2007).

A comparison of perceptions by location (regardless of use/non-use of the service) is shown in Figure 46. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between where one lived and how one rated these services.³¹ A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences confirmed a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between urban and rural residents ($t = - 3.23, 329 \text{ df}, p < .001$), where urban residents are more likely to give building permit and inspections services a higher rating than those living in rural Strathcona.

FIGURE 46
Satisfaction with Building Permit and Inspections Services in Strathcona County –
Urban & Rural Comparisons - 2008



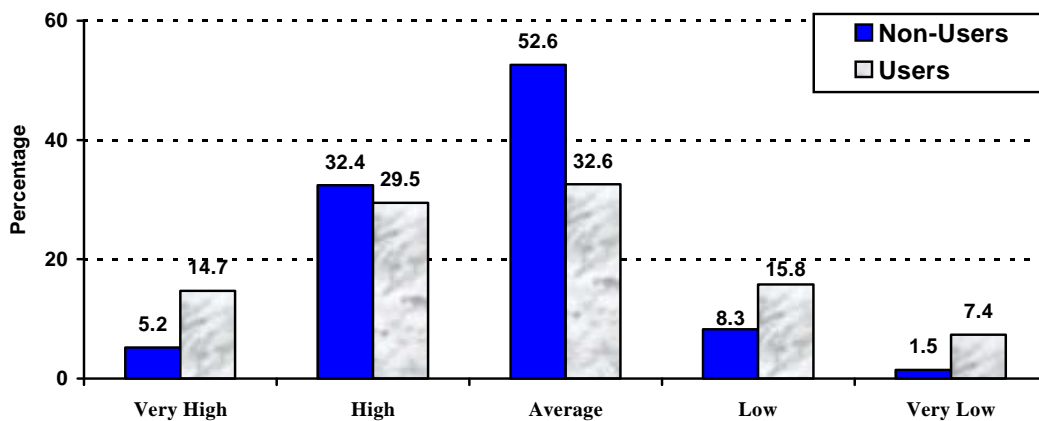
- The 52 people (15.7% of the sample) who rated this service as *low* or *very low* were asked to suggest ways on how this could be improved. Many of these people were concerned with the length of time and requirements necessary to get a permit through the County. Some residents were upset with the costs associated with permits, a shortage of inspectors and the quality of inspections when they were done. For the most part, the comments noted in this year's survey echo concerns raised by residents in previous years.

³¹ For building and inspection services, ($\chi^2 = 13.39, 4 \text{ df}, p=.01$).

Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County

Figure 47 presents the satisfaction level that people have with bylaw enforcement, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services³² in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 78 people (15.6% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it.

FIGURE 47
Satisfaction with Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County – 2008 Results



Highlights from Figure 47

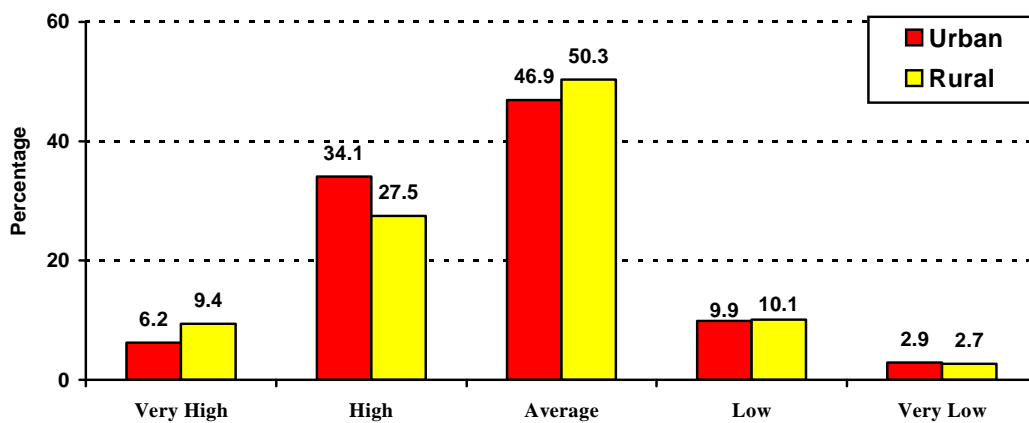
- A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between one's use of bylaw enforcement services and the rating that one gave to the service.³³ A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences, however, failed to pinpoint precisely where the differences lie. Figure 47 shows that while some users gave higher ratings to the service than non-users, other users gave lower ratings to the service than non-users and a larger proportion of non-users rated the service as "average" compared to users.

³² Overall, 19.6% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had utilized bylaw enforcement services within the past 12 months. This is almost 3% higher than what was reported in the 2007 survey.

³³ $\chi^2 = 28.44$, 4 df, $p = .000$.

A comparison of perceptions by location (regardless of use/non-use of the service) is shown in Figure 48. There was no difference in perceptions between those living rural part of Strathcona County and those living in Sherwood Park.

FIGURE 48
Satisfaction with Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County – Urban & Rural Comparisons – 2008 Results

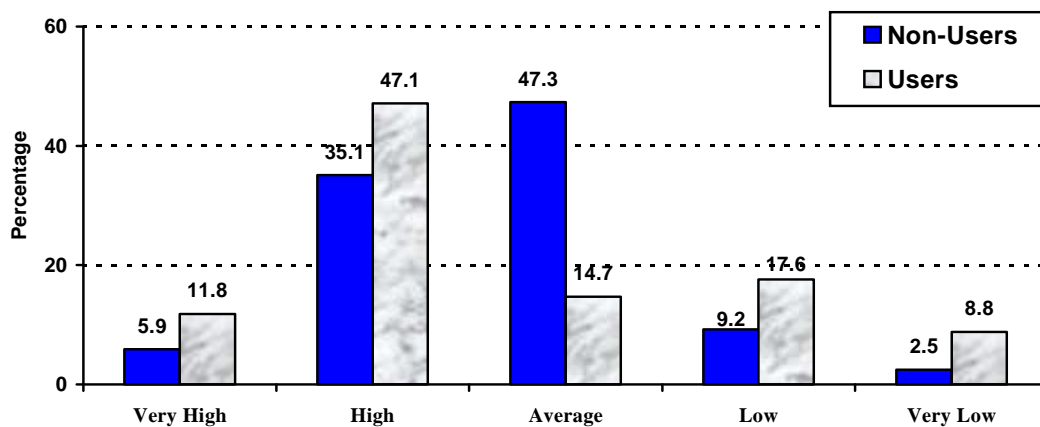


- The *very high/high* ratings given by urban and rural residents for Bylaw Enforcement services was slightly lower in 2008 compared to 2007.
- The 54 residents (12.8% of the sample) who had a low level of satisfaction with this service were asked to suggest ways on how this could be improved. There were some who felt that more bylaw officers are needed. Others felt that existing bylaws were not being enforced, or that there was inconsistency in how bylaws were enforced (e.g. dog control).

Agricultural Services in Strathcona County

Figure 49 presents the satisfaction level that people have with weed control and other agricultural services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these services³⁴ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 62 people (12.4% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it.

FIGURE 49
Satisfaction with Weed Control, Soil Management, Wildlife Problems
and other Agricultural Services in Strathcona County – 2008 Results



Highlights from Figure 49

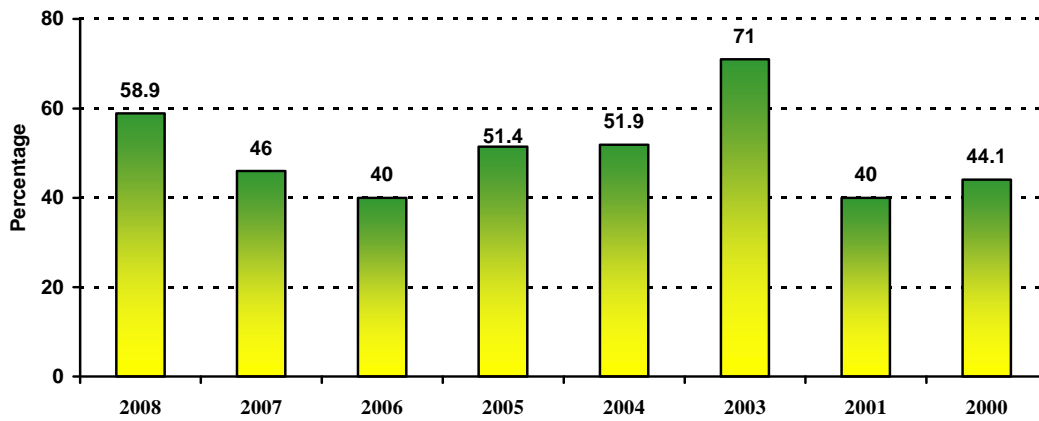
- It can be seen from Figure 49 that there are differences in perception toward agricultural services based on whether or not one used the service, which is confirmed by the chi-square test of association.³⁵ A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences, however, failed to pinpoint precisely where the differences lie. While users gave higher ratings to the service than non-users, other users gave lower ratings to the service than non-users. Furthermore, a considerably larger proportion of non-users rated the service as “average” compared to users.

³⁴ Overall, 7% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had utilized agricultural services within the past 12 months, which is slightly lower than what was reported in 2007.

³⁵ $\chi^2 = 16.89, 4 \text{ df}, p=.002$.

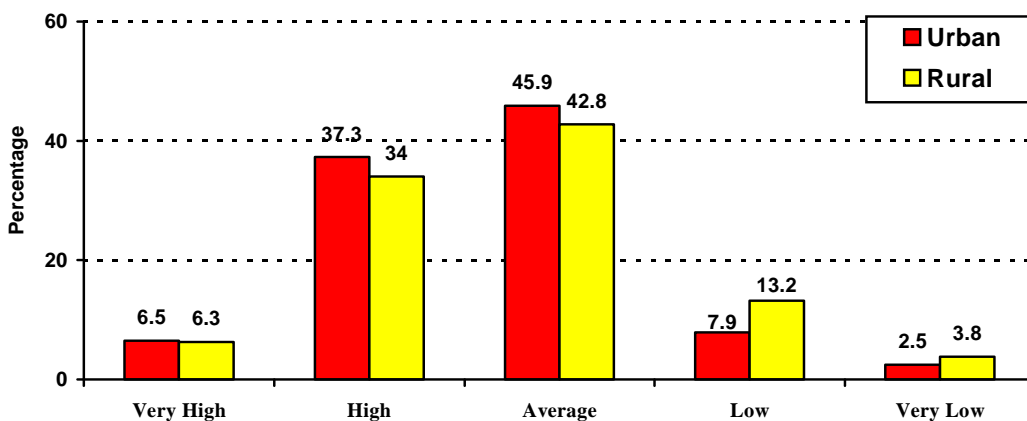
- A comparison of this year’s results with past satisfaction studies revealed that the percentage of users who gave the service a *very high* or *high* rating was higher this year than in previous years. The combined ratings this year are the second highest recorded since tracking began in 2000, and the highest rating noted within the past 5 years.

FIGURE 50
User “Very High/High” Combined Satisfaction Ratings with the different Agricultural Services -- 2000 – 2008 Comparisons³⁶



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

FIGURE 51
Satisfaction with Weed Control, Soil Management, Wildlife Problems and other Agricultural Services – Urban & Rural Comparisons 2008



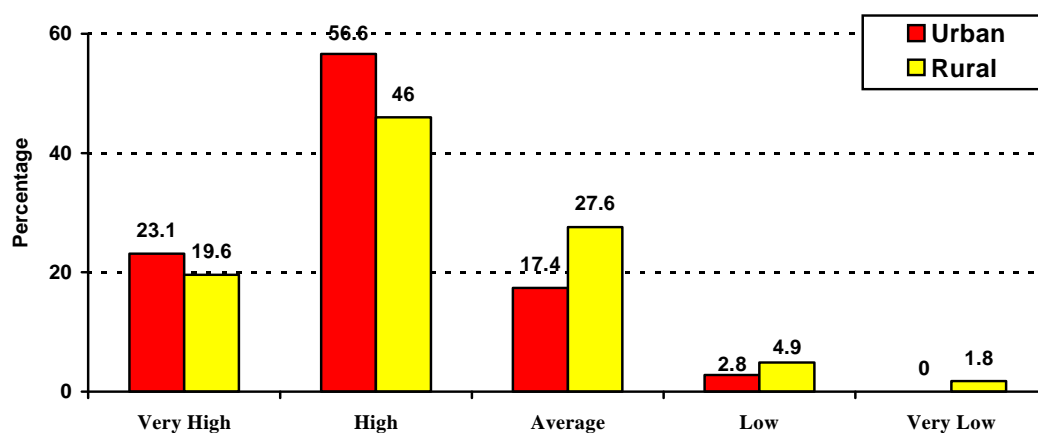
³⁶ There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

- Overall, the 56 residents (12.8% of the sample) who had a *low/very low* level of satisfaction with this service were asked to suggest ways how this could be improved. The majority of the comments came from people who feel that the County needs to do more with respect to weed control, particularly within ditches (dandelions and thistles were frequently mentioned). Some residents were perplexed with the County not controlling weeds that are on County property (e.g. fence lines, roadways, playgrounds and sports fields), yet expecting residents to take care of their weeds. As in 2007, animal control concerns were minimally mentioned in this year's survey.

Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Services in Strathcona County

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

FIGURE 52
Satisfaction with Parks, Green Spaces and Sports Fields in Strathcona County – 2008 Results



Highlights from Figure 52

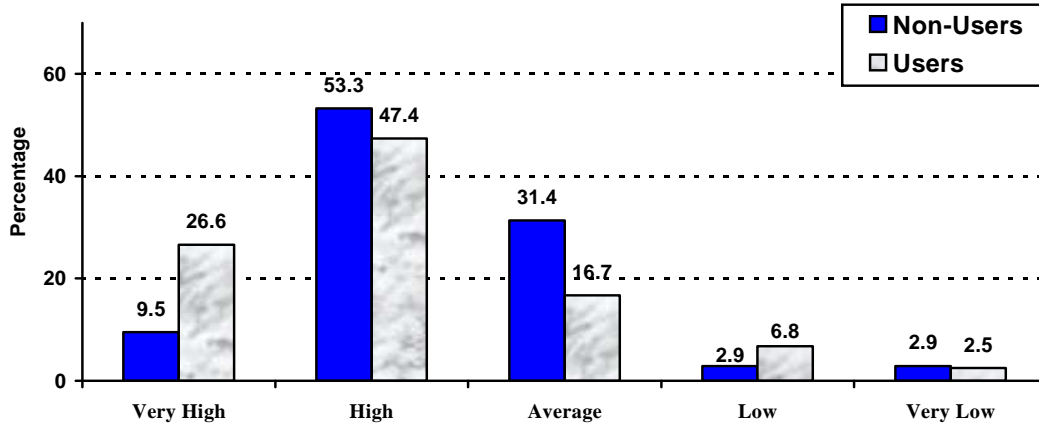
- It can be seen from Figure 52 that residents living in Sherwood Park had a higher positive perception toward various outdoor green spaces compared to those living in rural Strathcona. This was confirmed with the chi-square test of association and a *t-test* measurement for mean score differences.³⁷

³⁷ For parks, green spaces and sports fields, ($\chi^2 = 15.35, 4 \text{ df}, p=.004$); ($t = -3.09, 477 \text{ df}, p < .003$).

- This year’s combined *very high/high* ratings were slightly higher in the urban area in 2008 (79.7%) compared to 77% in 2007 and 77.2% in 2006. Rural residents, however, had lower combined *very high/high* ratings in 2008 (65.6%) compared to 2007 (72.7%) and 2006 (67.6%).
- The 20 people (4.1% of the sample) who gave the parks, green spaces and sport fields a low rating were asked to suggest ways on how this could be improved. Comments included a need for better maintenance of the existing green spaces and (especially) sports fields. A few residents felt that the County should create additional sports fields to meet increasing demand among youth. One resident wondered if the County could do more for “horse enthusiasts.”

Figure 53 presents the satisfaction level that people have with indoor recreation facilities in the County, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample who utilized these facilities³⁸ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 30 people (6% of the sample) did not rate these facilities on the basis that they did not know enough about them.

FIGURE 53
Satisfaction with Indoor Recreation Facilities in Strathcona County – 2008 Results



Highlights from Figure 53

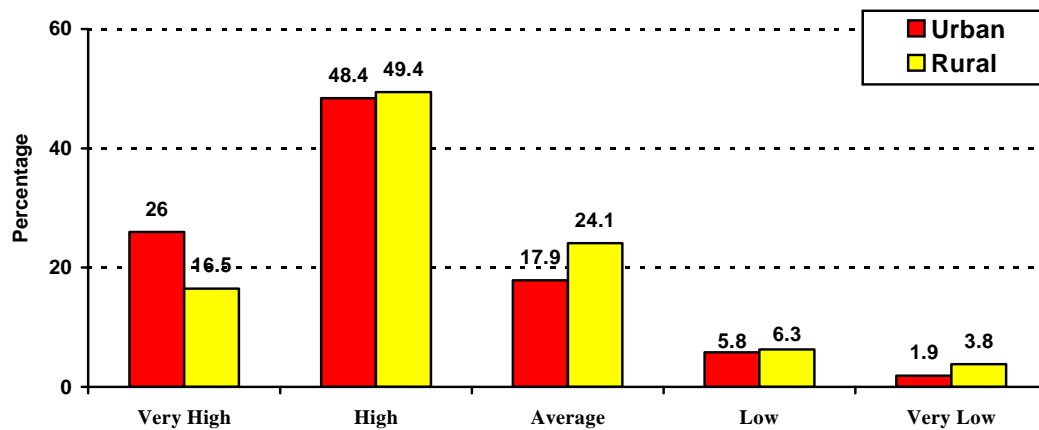
- It can be seen from Figure 53 that the perception of residents toward indoor recreation facilities was somewhat dependent on past user patterns. Overall, people who used indoor recreation facilities were more satisfied than those

³⁸ Overall, 74% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had been to an indoor recreation facility in the County of Strathcona within the past 12 months. This is about 2% higher than the 2007 survey results.

who had not used these facilities. This was confirmed by a chi-square procedure ($\chi^2 = 22.06$, 4 df, $p=.000$).and a *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = 2.43$, 468 df, $p = .015$).

- A further analysis revealed that 80.6% of Sherwood Park residents used the indoor recreation facilities at least once in the past 12 months, while 61.7% of rural residents made use of these facilities. Satisfaction levels between urban and rural residents of indoor facilities (regardless of use) were similar (and shown in Figure 54).

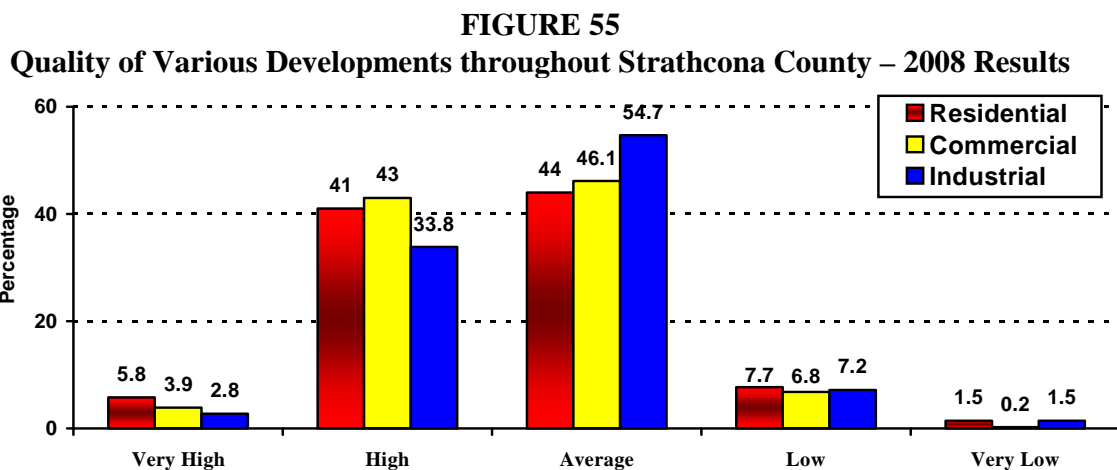
FIGURE 54
Satisfaction with Indoor Recreation Facilities in Strathcona County – 2008 Results



- The 40 people (8.6% of the sample) who had a low level of satisfaction with the facilities were asked to suggest ways on how these could be improved. Most of the complaints focused on the lack of recreation facilities (particularly arenas) throughout the County. Others felt there needed to be more swimming programs for children. A few people also felt that security needed to be improved at existing facilities.

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

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



Highlights from Figure 55

- Overall, respondents who rated the different types of developments were slightly more satisfied with the quality of residential and commercial development than industrial developments. It should be noted, however, that a considerable number of residents (n=109 or 21.8% of the sample) did not rate the quality of industrial developments.³⁹
- The trends noted in this figure are very similar to trends found in last year's study.
- No differences in perceptions were seen between those living in Sherwood Park and those living in other parts of Strathcona County with respect to quality of residential, commercial or industrial development.
- Those who rated the quality of any of these developments as *low* or *very low* were asked to indicate why they felt that way. Many residents used this section

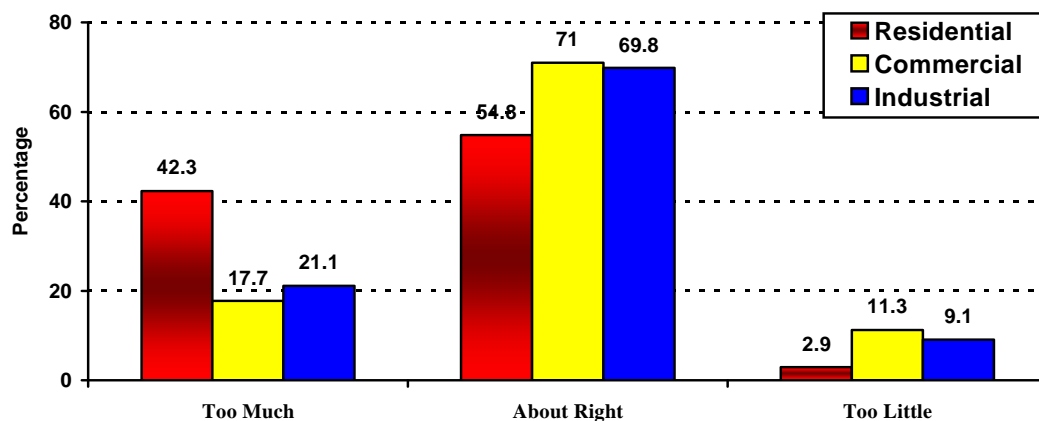
³⁹ Overall, 32 residents (6.4% of the sample) did not rate the quality of residential developments and 44 residents (8.8% of the sample) did not rate the quality of commercial developments.

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

- A variety of concerns were expressed among the 43 people (9.2% of the sample) who rated the quality of residential developments as low. A common concern was that the houses seemed crammed too close together with a lack of green space in new neighborhoods, with potential traffic problems. Others thought that many of the houses looked the same and also questioned the workmanship on new houses. There were also some who wondered why commercial developments were so close to residential ones.
- For commercial developments, a variety of concerns were put forward by the 32 people (7% of the sample) who rated the quality of development as low. Comments were varied and included a lack of planning with respect to where commercial properties were being built. Others questioned the parking spots (or lack of them) associated with new commercial developments. A couple of people wondered why there were a lack of department stores (such as the Bay or Sears) within Strathcona County, especially since the County as a whole has grown considerably larger within the past 10 years.
- For industrial developments, among the 34 people (8.7% of the sample) who rated the quality of development as low, most of the comments centered on safety and pollution concerns for residents, particularly with respect to air quality. Transportation problems associated with new industrial projects were also cited by a few residents.

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

FIGURE 56
Quantity of Various Developments throughout Strathcona County – 2008 Results

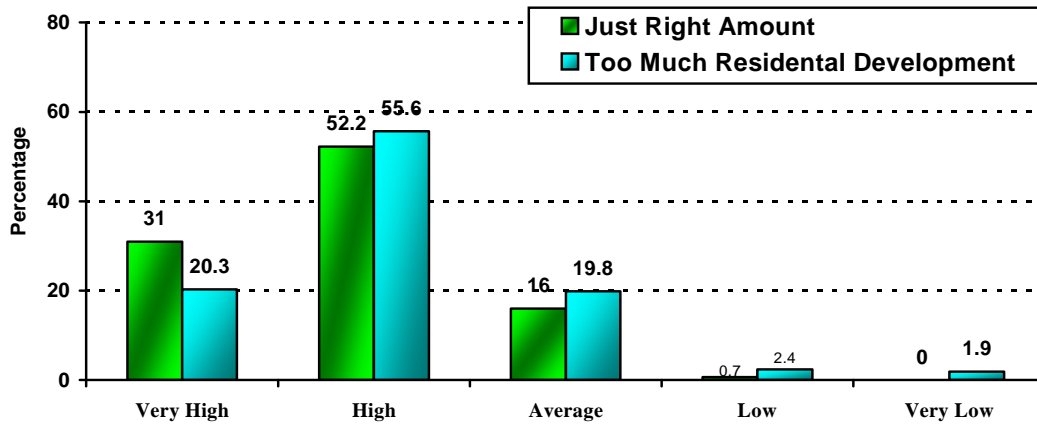


Highlights from Figure 56

- Overall, the majority of respondents were of the opinion that there were about the right amount of developments in the County at the present time. The percentage of people who felt this way in 2008 was almost identical to results found in studies dating back to 2003.
- The findings with respect to quality and quantity of development suggest a perception in the County right now that there is a good balance of commercial and industrial developments. However, approximately 42% of residents have a perception that there is too much residential development. A further analysis (as seen in Figure 57) revealed that those people who felt there was too much residential development **still had a high positive rating** on the quality of life in Strathcona County as a whole (75.9% *very high/high*) compared to those who felt that the amount of residential development was about right (83.2% *very high/high*).⁴⁰ As such, while there continues to be some concerns about continued development, it still has not gotten to the point where the perceived quality of one's life in Strathcona County has been adversely affected.

⁴⁰ These percentage comparisons are very similar to what was found in 2007 and 2006.

FIGURE 57
Perception of the Quality of Life in Strathcona County as a Whole – Comparisons Based on Perceptions of Amount of Residential Growth - 2008 Results

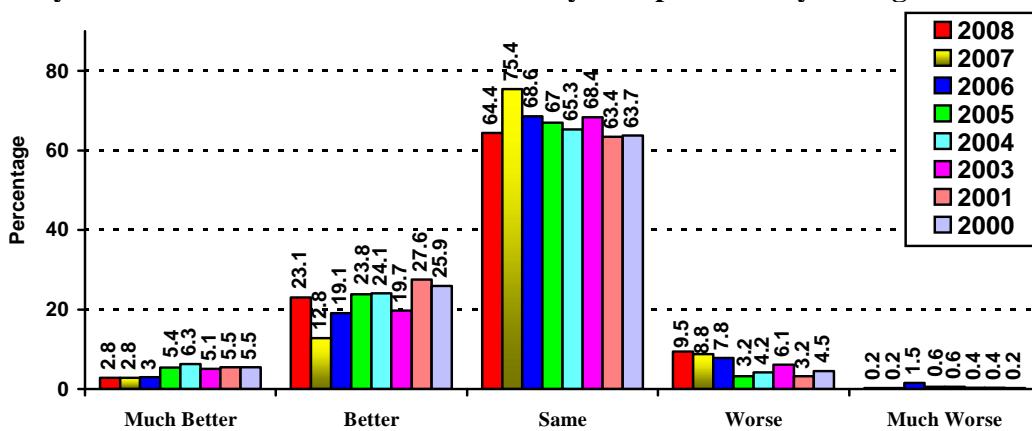


- No differences in perceptions were seen between those living in Sherwood Park and those living in other parts of Strathcona County with respect to amount of industrial development, residential or commercial development.

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 2008 survey results are compared with the results found in the previous surveys dating back to 2000 when this same question was asked and are shown in Figure 58 below.

FIGURE 58
Quality of Services Now in Strathcona County Compared to 2 years ago 2000-2008

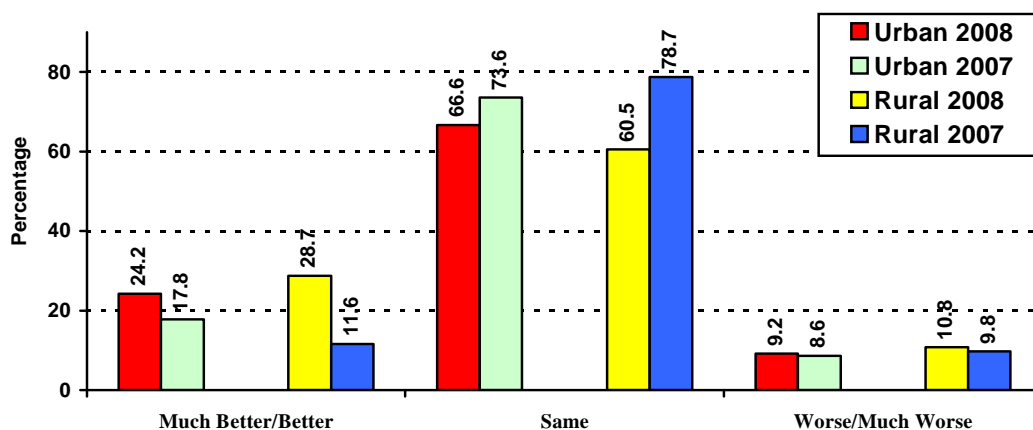


Highlights from Figure 58

- Overall, the majority of respondents were of the opinion that the quality of services offered by Strathcona County was the same as it was two years ago. It can be seen from Figure 58 that this percentage has been quite consistent over the past 10 years (with the exception of 2007).
- It can also be seen in that the percentage of residents who thought things had gotten *better/much better* compared to 2 years ago has increased to its highest level since 2005.
- The 46 people (9.7% of the sample) who felt that the quality of services had gotten worse or much worse were asked to indicate what changes they noticed about the quality of service. Common concerns put forward by residents included problems associated with increased traffic and a reduced quality of the roadways themselves. There were also general concerns that the County can't provide adequate services to meet the needs of the increased population.

A comparison of urban and rural residents with respect to perceptions of the quality of services is shown in Figure 59. There was no statistically significant difference between the urban and rural sectors in 2008. However, a comparison between 2008 and 2007 findings reveals increases in the *much better/better* ratings between 2007 and 2008 from both urban and rural residents.

FIGURE 59
Quality of Services Now in Strathcona County Compared to 2 years ago
Urban and Rural Comparisons – 2008 & 2007 Results



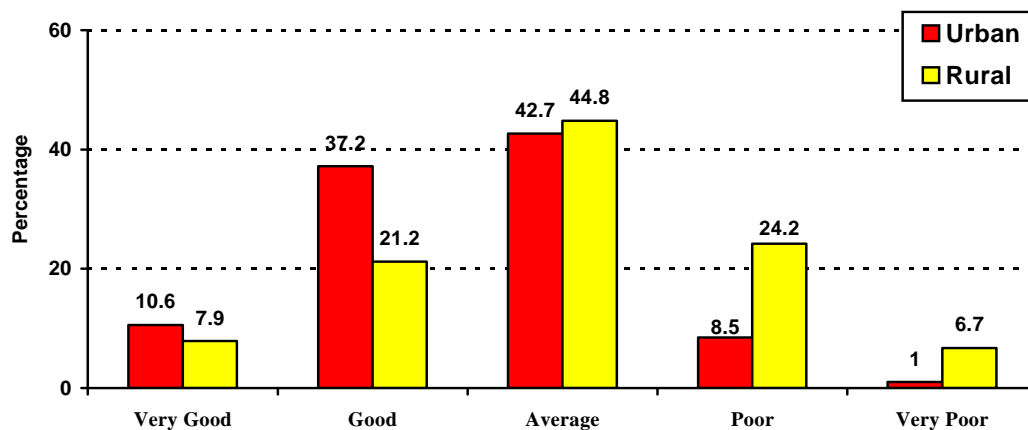
Strathcona
 County

Corporate Planning & Intergovernmental Affairs

F. Question on Taxes within Strathcona County

Residents of Strathcona County who were taxpayers⁴¹ were asked to rate the value they receive for their tax dollars. Residents were told that 62% of their taxes were earmarked for municipal services. Knowing this, residents were asked to what extent they felt they were getting good value for their tax dollars. The results to this question are shown in Figure 60 below.

FIGURE 60
Value for Tax Dollars Spent in Strathcona County
- Urban and Rural Comparisons 2008



Highlights from Figure 61

- Statistically, there was a difference between urban and rural residents with respect to how people felt about the value of tax dollars that was spent on municipal services. This was confirmed by a chi-square procedure ($\chi^2 = 45.71$, 4 df, $p = .000$) and a *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -6.91$, 456 df, $p < .001$). It can be seen that considerably more people living in the urban area felt that they were getting very good or good value for their tax dollars compared to those living in rural areas.
- Those people (17.3% of the sample, N=79) who felt that they received poor value for the taxes that they paid were asked to indicate why they felt that way. A variety of reasons were given, though many of these comments came from rural residents who felt that there was an inequity between the amount of money they paid in taxes and the amount of services they were receiving in

⁴¹ It was found that 92.6% of the respondents owned property in Strathcona County and as such, were taxpayers.

return (especially no water and sewage service). Residents living within Sherwood Park who were dissatisfied with the taxes spent and services received often cited a lack of snow removal as the source of their dissatisfaction. Overall, the comments put forward by residents here echo comments made by others in past satisfaction surveys with respect to taxes.

A comparison of trends from 2000 - 2008 with respect to perceptions of the value of services for tax dollars are shown in Figure 61 (Urban) and Figure 62 (Rural). One can see that for urban residents, the positive perceptions that residents were getting very good or good value for their tax dollars has been declining slightly since it hit its peak level of satisfaction in 2005. Rural residents, on the other hand, have consistently had a much higher negative perception of the value that they get for their tax dollars compared to urban residents each year that this has been measured.

FIGURE 61
Value of Tax Dollars Spent in Strathcona County – Urban Residents (2000-2008)

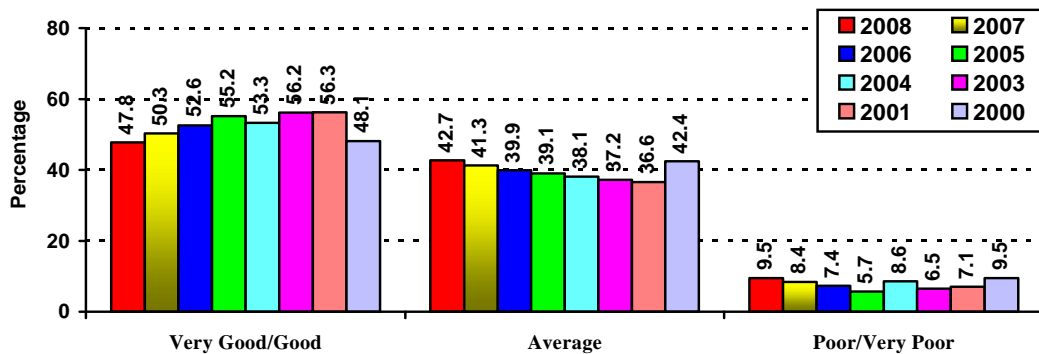
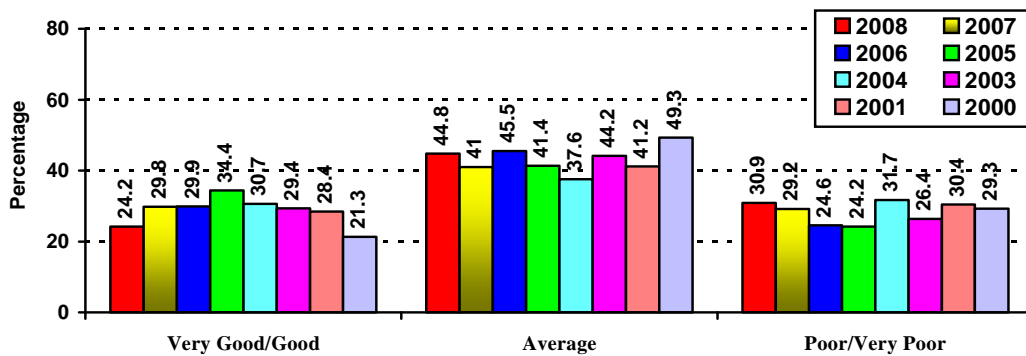


FIGURE 62
Value of Tax Dollars Spent in Strathcona County – Rural Residents (2000-2008)



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.⁴² It can be seen in Table 1 that *recycling depots* were the most frequent service used in 2008 among those surveyed. Related to this, it can be seen that 30% of households participated in an Enviroservice event in 2008.⁴³ Other services utilized by a number of County residents include *indoor recreation facilities*, the *public library*, *RCMP*, *public transit services* and the *Information and Volunteer Centre*.

Table 1
County Services in Strathcona County Used by Residents
in the Past 12 Months – 2008 vs. 2005 to 2007

Type of Service	N of Users (2008)	% Use 2008	% Use 2007	% Use 2006	% Use 2005
Recycling Depots	434	86.8%	87.0%	81.6%	83.4%
Indoor Recreation Facilities	370	74.0%	72.4%	71.0%	74.0%
Strathcona County Library	315	63.0%	61.0%	59.2%	60.2%
RCMP	194	38.8%	30.0%	34.6%	33.2%
Enviroservice event	150	30.0%	---	---	---
Public Transit Services	134	26.8%	24.2%	22.6%	28.6%
Building Permit & Inspection Services	113	22.6%	17.0%	19.2%	17.0%
Information & Volunteer Centre	105	21.0%	22.8%	22.8%	22.0%
Bylaw Enforcement	98	19.6%	19.8%	19.8%	19.2%
Fire & Ambulance Services	77	15.4%	15.4%	14.0%	16.4%
Family Support Services	57	11.4%	8.2%	11.0%	9.0%
Agriculture Services	35	7.0%	8.0%	9.0%	5.0%

⁴² 18 respondents (3.6% of the sample) indicated that they had not used any county services in the past 12 months. There were 40 residents (8% of the sample) who mentioned other municipal services that they used (water & sewer, garbage collection and outdoor recreation services, parks, planning and engineering), while another 6 residents (1.2% of the sample) indicated services that were not municipal services (e.g. health care and banks).

⁴³ 2008 marks the first year that the event has been measured as part of the Satisfaction Survey, although the event itself has been held in the County in previous years.

With the exception of *the RCMP*, which had a jump in service use in 2008, all the other municipal services had minor increases or decreases in use by residents in 2008 compared to previous years.

A comparison of services used by urban and rural residents for 2008 and 2007 is shown in Table 2.⁴⁴ It can be seen that in 2008, among residents who were surveyed, urban residents used *recycling services, indoor recreation facilities, the public library, public transit services* and the *Information and Volunteer Centre* to a greater extent than rural residents. Rural residents, on the other hand, made greater use of *agricultural services* and *building and inspection services* compared with urban residents.

Table 2
County Services in Strathcona County Reportedly Used by Urban and Rural Residents in the Past 12 Months – 2007 vs. 2006

Type of Service	2008		2007	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Recycling Services	89.5%	81.7%	91.7%	78.3%
Indoor Recreation Facilities	<u>80.6%</u>	61.7%	76.3%	65.1%
Strathcona County Library	65.8%	<u>57.7%</u>	66.2%	51.4%
RCMP	<u>39.1%</u>	<u>38.3%</u>	33.5%	23.4%
Enviroservice Event	33.2%	24.0%	---	---
Public Transit Services	30.8%	<u>19.4%</u>	29.8%	13.7%
Information & Volunteer Centre	23.7%	16.0%	26.8%	14.9%
Bylaw Enforcement	19.7%	19.4%	16.6%	17.7%
Planning, Building & Inspection Services	18.2%	<u>30.9%</u>	18.5%	22.3%
Fire & Ambulance Services	13.8%	18.3%	16.0%	14.3%
Family Support Services	12.6%	9.1%	8.6%	6.3%
Agriculture Services	4.0%	12.6%	3.1%	<u>17.1%</u>

In terms of changes between years, for urban residents, there was an increase in the use of *indoor recreation facilities* and the *RCMP* in 2008 compared to 2007. Among rural residents, there was an increase in the use of the *County library, the RCMP, public transit*

⁴⁴ All respondents were read a list of municipal services and were asked to indicate which ones they had used within the past 12 months. This is question number 13 (the exact wording is found in the questionnaire located in Appendix A).

services and building and inspection services in 2008 compared to 2007. It was also found that fewer rural residents used agriculture services in 2008 compared to 2007.

Respondents were asked to think of their most recent contact that they had with County staff⁴⁵ and to rate the service that they received on the basis of 6 criteria. The services that the residents based their ratings on are shown in Table 3. The overall rating results for all 6 criteria (regardless of the service used) are shown in Figures 63 and 64.

Table 3
County Departments in Strathcona County Used as the Basis for Rating the Service of County Staff in 2008

Type of Service	N	%
Indoor Recreation Facilities	168	34.3%
Strathcona County Library	102	20.08%
Recycling Depot	97	19.8%
RCMP	23	4.7%
Planning, Building & Inspection Services	18	3.7%
Public Transit Services	17	3.5%
Fire & Ambulance Services	13	2.7%
Bylaw Enforcement	12	2.4%
Family Support Services	11	2.2%
Enviroservice Event	6	1.2%
Information & Volunteer Centre	5	1.0%
Agriculture Services	4	0.8%

⁴⁵ In this year's study, only 4 respondents reported having no contact with any County staff in the past 12 months.

FIGURE 63
Quality of Services provided by County Staff -2008 Results

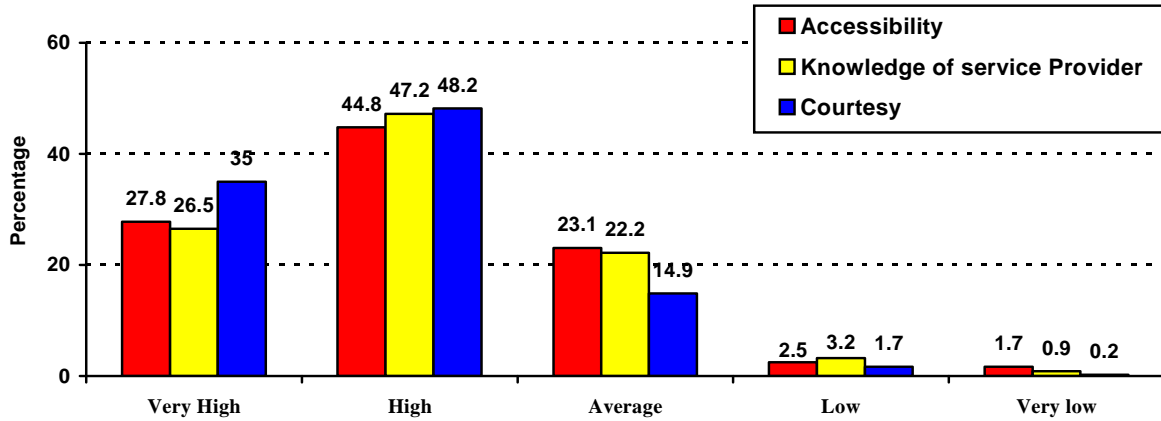
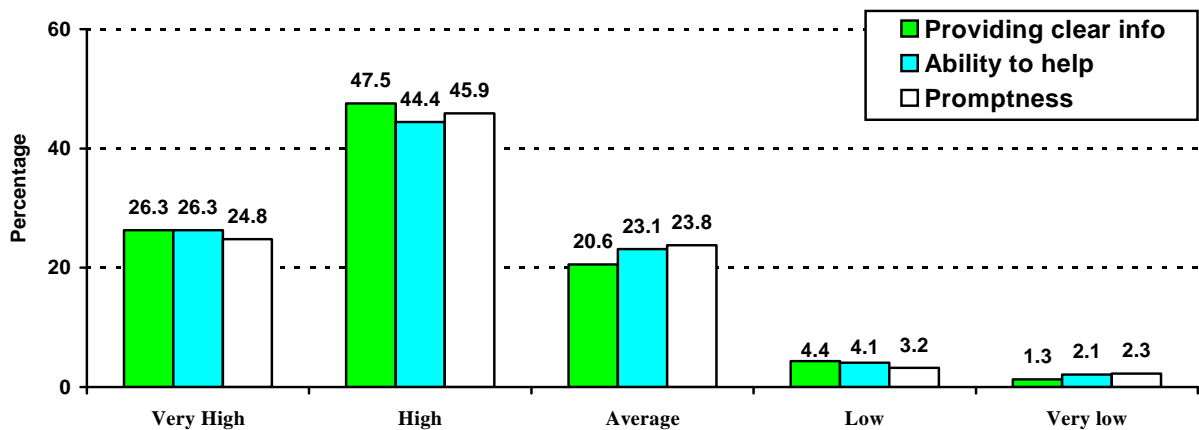


FIGURE 64
Quality of Services provided by County Staff – 2008 Results



Highlights from Figure 63 and Figure 64

- Overall, residents had a very positive perception of County staff on the basis of all 6 criteria.
- Based on the combination of the *very high* and *high* scores, the strongest criteria was *courtesy* (83.2%). The remaining attributes of service were all rated relatively similar, with *being able to provide clear information* the second highest at 73.8%, followed closely by *knowledge of the service*

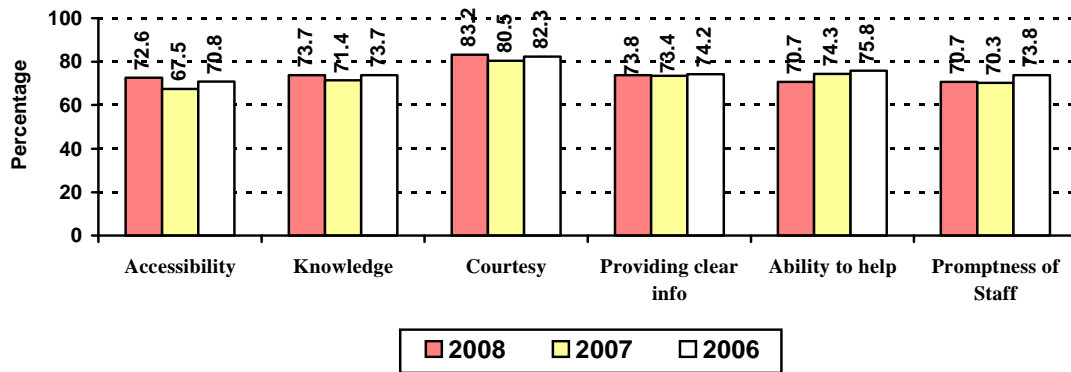
provider (73.7%), accessibility of staff (72.6%), and ability of the staff to help you and promptness of staff (both at 70.7%).

- All respondents were given the opportunity to provide any comments about the service that they had received from County staff. Overall, 40.2% of the respondents (N=201) provided additional comments. Of these 201 residents, the majority of the comments (140 or 69.6% of these 201 residents) were positive descriptors, including *good and/or helpful, professional knowledgeable staff, efficient and friendly/courteous*. Many of these residents had additional positive perceptions toward departments that were particularly helpful to them.
- Not everyone was pleased, however, as 30.3% of the 201 residents were not happy with aspects of the service that they received. While the comments did vary, some of the repeated concerns were:
 - Calls made for required services were not followed up by County staff;
 - A small number of residents encountered staff who, in their opinion, were not as friendly as they could be;
 - Lengthy waits for required services; and
 - Inconsistent information given by different departments on the same issue.

It should also be noted that many complaints were about changes to existing services (such as the Green Routine) and not directed to staff.

Figure 65 presents a comparison of overall results between this year’s survey and the 2007 and 2006 surveys for these 6 items. It was found that the combined *very high/high ratings for staff* were slightly higher in 2008 compared to 2007 and about the same as 2006 for almost all of items (except for “ability to help,” which dropped in 2008).

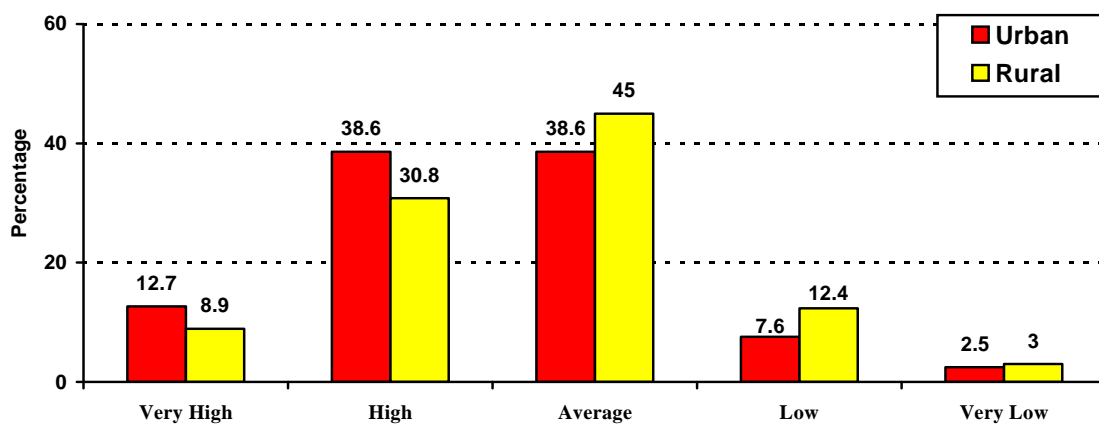
FIGURE 65
Quality of Services provided by County Staff - 2008 with 2007 & 2006 comparisons
on the combined *Very High/High* percentages



H. Assessment of County Communication and Information Services

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

FIGURE 66
Rating of being able to have Opportunities to Express Opinions– 2008 Results

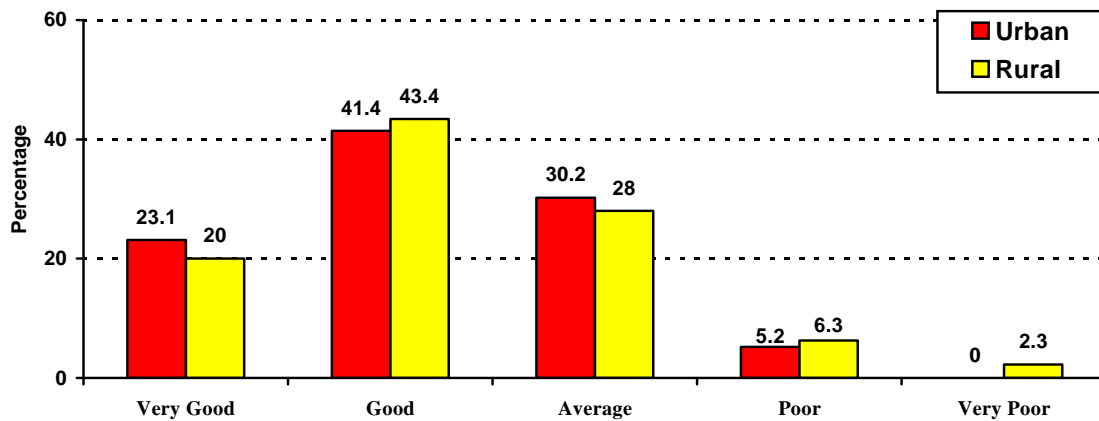


Highlights from Figure 66

- Although those living in Sherwood Park were somewhat more satisfied with the opportunities to express opinions than those living in rural Strathcona, the spread was not statistically significant. There were no differences found with respect to any demographic characteristic for this item.
- These results were very similar to those found in last year's survey.
- Overall, 58 people (12% of the sample) were not satisfied with the opportunities for expressing opinions in Strathcona County. There were a variety of reasons for this, though the most frequent concern was that elected officials and County personnel were not listening to the concerns (e.g., the new method of waste collection [The Green Routine] and changes to policies involving roads). There were also people who felt frustrated at times that they could not get through to someone in charge to talk about their concerns, and that leaving a message did not result in getting the matter resolved.

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

FIGURE 67
Rating of how well Strathcona County Communicates with Residents – 2008 Results

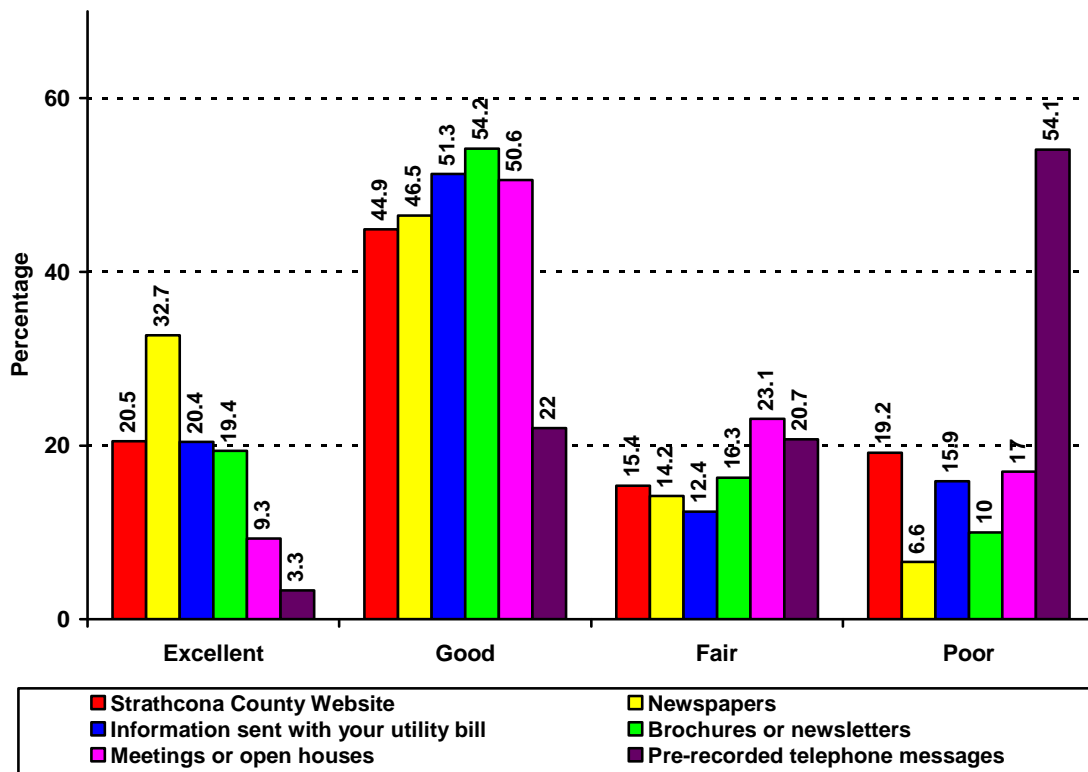


Highlights from Figure 67

- Overall, 64.5% of those living in Sherwood Park and 63.4% of those living in other parts of Strathcona County felt that the County was doing a good or very good job communicating with residents. Among rural residents, this was a substantial improvement over the 2007 results, when just over 54% of rural residents felt this way. The results for Sherwood Park residents in 2007 were about the same as 2008.
- No differences were found among any demographic characteristics for this variable.

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

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



It can be seen in Figure 68 that the *County newspapers* and *newsletters and brochures* received solid ratings from residents. Overall, 79.2% of residents gave the *newspaper* an excellent or good rating, while 73.6% gave *newsletters and brochures* an excellent or good rating (almost a 9% improvement over the 2007 ratings). *Information sent to residents through the utility bill* as well as the *County website* also received acceptable ratings (both 71.7% combined excellent/good, though the website ratings are about 4% lower than what was recorded in 2007).

Two methods that received considerably lower ratings from residents were *meetings/open houses* (59.9% excellent/good, though this is still an 11% improvement over 2007 ratings) and *pre-recorded telephone messages* (25.3% excellent/good, though this was a 6% improvement over 2007).

Figure 69 presents a comparison between urban and rural residents with respect to the percentage of residents who visited the Strathcona County website. It can be seen that a slightly larger percentage of residents living in Sherwood Park accessed the website compared to those living in rural areas, but the difference is minimal.

FIGURE 69
Percentage of Residents who visited the County Website

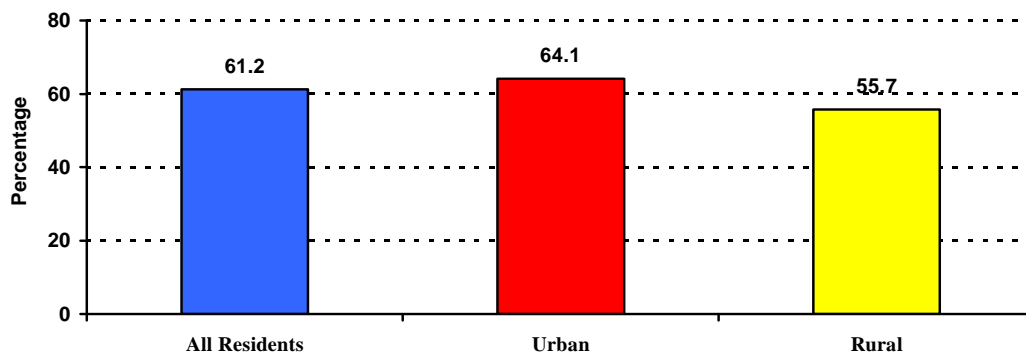
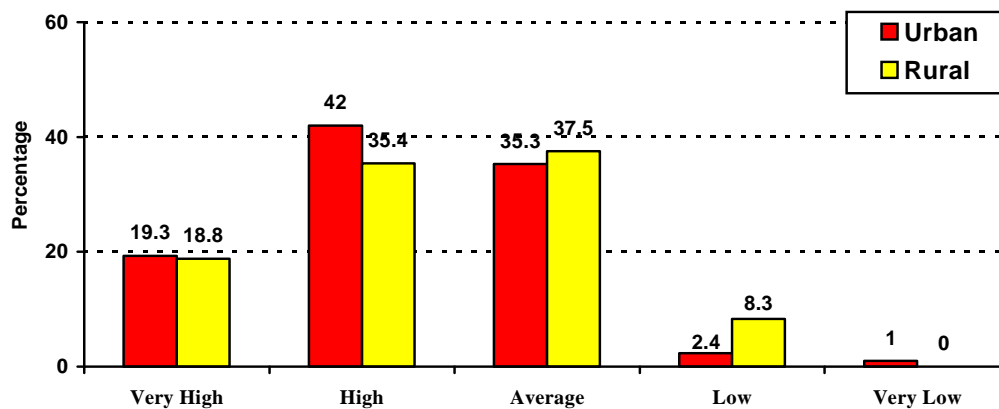


Figure 70 presents the satisfaction level that people have with the Strathcona County website.⁴⁶ It can be seen that the satisfaction level was slightly higher among urban residents compared to those living in rural Strathcona, but the spread was not statistically significant.

FIGURE 70
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Website – 2008 Results

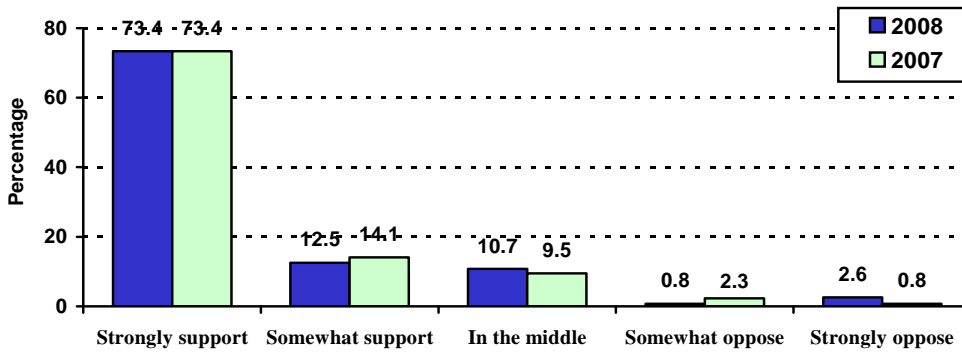


⁴⁶ This figure excludes 39.4% of the residents who never went to the County website.

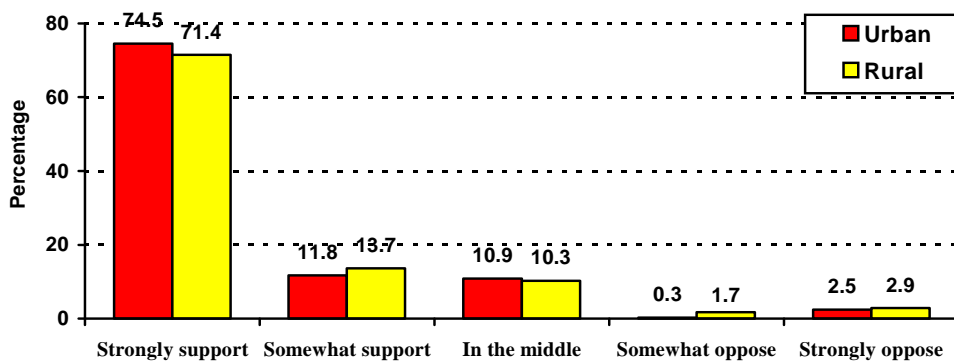
I. Relationship with Other Municipalities

All respondents were asked two questions with respect to how Strathcona County fits within the Capital Region. The first question (on regional independence) was previously asked in a study on regional relations conducted by Strathcona County in late 2007. The results for this question (and the comparison with 2007) are shown in Figure 71. It can be seen that there was virtually no change between 2007 and 2008 with respect to support shown for this. Moreover, it can be seen in Figure 72 that there is very little difference between urban and rural residents on this.

**FIGURE 71
Support for Retention of Independence**

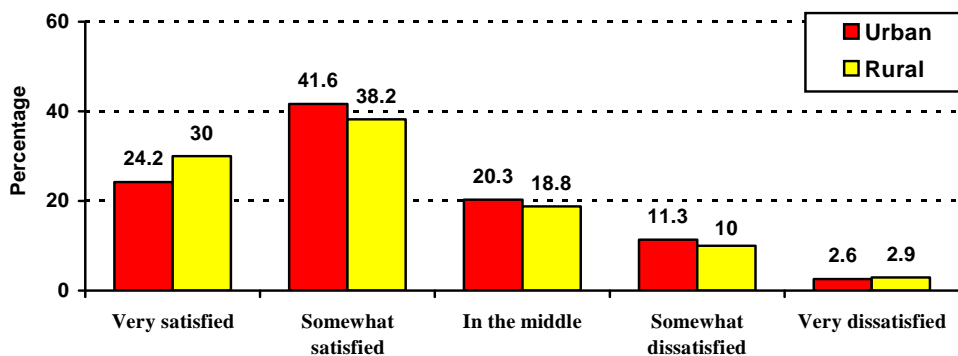


**FIGURE 72
Support for Retention of Independence
(2008 Urban & Rural Comparisons)**



Residents were also asked to indicate how satisfied they were with the way Strathcona County worked with other municipalities in the Capital Region. It can be seen in Figure 73 that the combined very/somewhat satisfied ratings reveal that the majority of Sherwood Park (65.8%) and rural residents (68.2%) are satisfied with the County's efforts.

FIGURE 73
Satisfaction with Strathcona County working with other Municipalities
(2008 Urban & Rural Comparisons)



J. Final Thoughts

The closing question directed to all residents was a general one that allowed people to provide comments about any Strathcona County service or the way that the County is managed. Overall, 41.2% of respondents provided additional comments.⁴⁷ Just over 17% percent of these comments were positive with most associated with the satisfaction of how municipal services are managed. The remaining comments focused on the following areas:

- Various department grievances, including: aspects of transit; lack of sufficient recreation opportunities; not liking aspects of *the Green Routine*; various bylaw enforcement issues (or lack thereof); lack of snow removal and RCMP response time;
- Tax concerns;
- Various building and infrastructure issues;
- Concern with regional issues ;
- Growth and development within the County.

⁴⁷ Comments from other people on newspapers, education system and hospital issues which are not part of Strathcona County's responsibilities to its residents were excluded from this section. All percentages noted in this section are based on the number of people who made valid comments about aspects of services or living in Strathcona County for which the municipality is responsible.

APPENDIX A: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

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

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

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

-
- n. Thinking of **bylaw enforcement** .. very high, high, average, low or very low? very high, high, average, low, or low 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 low 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 low 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 low 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 low 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:

Strathcona
County

Corporate Planning & Intergovernmental Affairs

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Strathcona
County

Corporate Planning & Intergovernmental Affairs

IF WORSE OR MUCH WORSE, ASK:

What changes have you noticed about the quality of service?

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

1 Yes – **Go to Q-12b**

2 No		9 Don't know
<i>skip to q-13</i>		

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

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

IF POOR OR VERY POOR VALUE, ASK:

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

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

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

- 1 Family Support Services
- 2 Fire and Ambulance Services
- 3 Building Permit and Inspection Services
- 4 Indoor recreation facilities
- 5 Public transit services
- 6 Bylaw enforcement
- 7 Recycling depots
- 8 Enviroservice event
- 9 Agricultural services
- 10 Information and Volunteer Centre
- 11 Strathcona County Library
- 12 The RCMP

<p>If one or more of these services are mentioned, please go to Question 14</p>
--

Strathcona
County

Corporate Planning & Intergovernmental Affairs

13 Any Others – Please indicate: _____

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

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

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

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

1 Yes **Skip to Q-17**

2 No 9 Don't know
Ask Q-16 below

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

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

Go to Question 18

9 Don't know

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

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

you? Would you rate this as:

- f. What about promptness? 1 2 3 4 5 9
Would you rate this as:

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

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

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

9. Don't know

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

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

9. Don't know

21. How would you rate the County overall on its communication with its citizens? Would you say that it was:

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

9. Don't Know

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

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

23. Have you ever visited the Strathcona County website?

1. Yes

2. No	Skip to Q-25
9. Don't know	Skip to Q-25

24. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Strathcona County website? Is your satisfaction level:

1. Very high

2. High

3. Average

4. Low, or

5. Very Low

9. Don't know

25. 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...

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

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

27. Including yourself, how many people live in your household? _____ (*If "One" Go to Q-28*)

27a) How many of these people are children aged 15 or younger? _____

27b) How many are children aged 16 or older? _____

28. 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

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

30. 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 #: _____