



2007 Public Satisfaction Survey



Research Results

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2007 Public Opinion Survey on Services and Life in Strathcona County was undertaken in December 2007 to obtain perceptions on the quality of life of residents living in Sherwood Park and rural parts of Strathcona County. This is the tenth 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 (85.9% rated very high or high). This was followed by *a safe community* (78.2% rated very high or high), *balancing needs and interests of people living throughout the County* (62.8% rated very fair or fair) and *the quality of the natural environment* (58.4% 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 19 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 2006. 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 type of breakdowns can be found in the main body of the report.

FIGURE A
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Helping Services in 2007

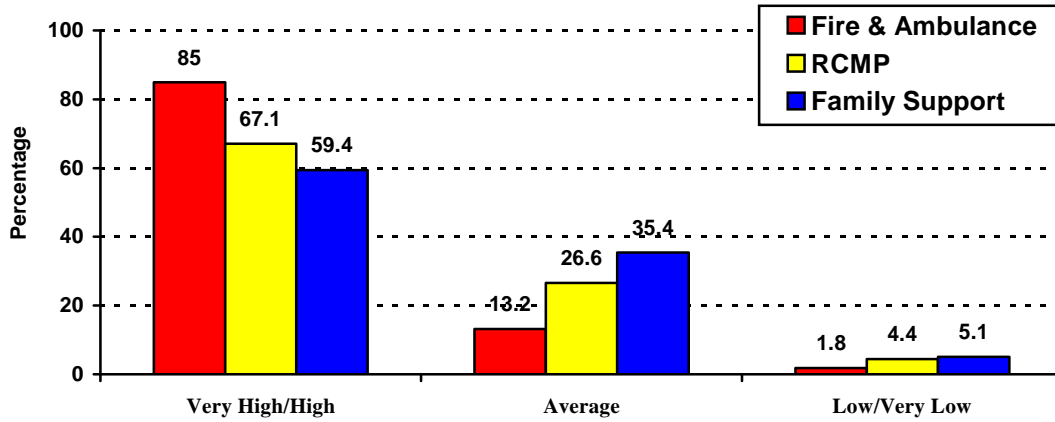


FIGURE B
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Recreation, Library & Volunteer Information Services in 2007

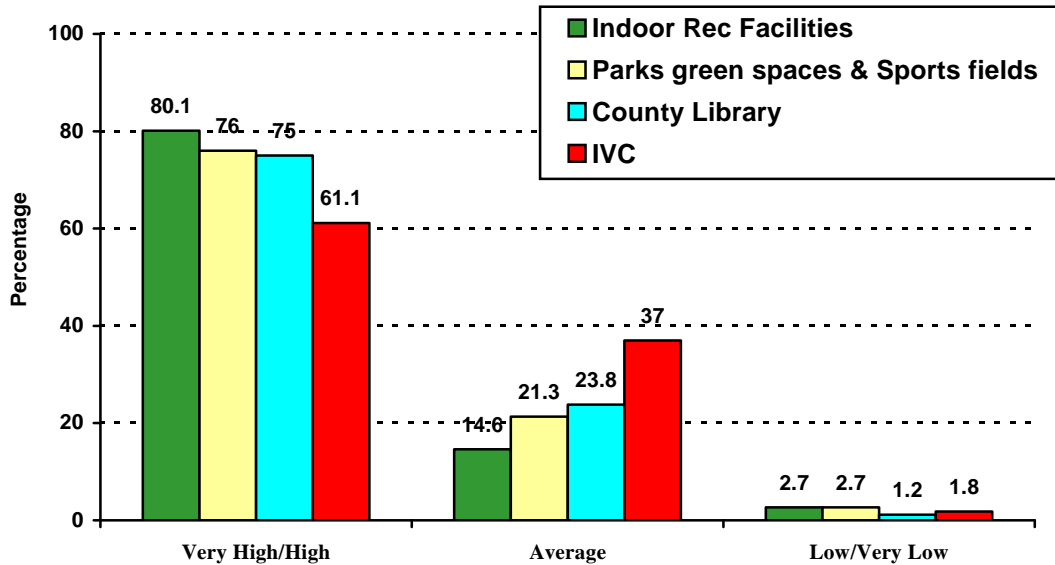


FIGURE C
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Waste & Water Services in 2007

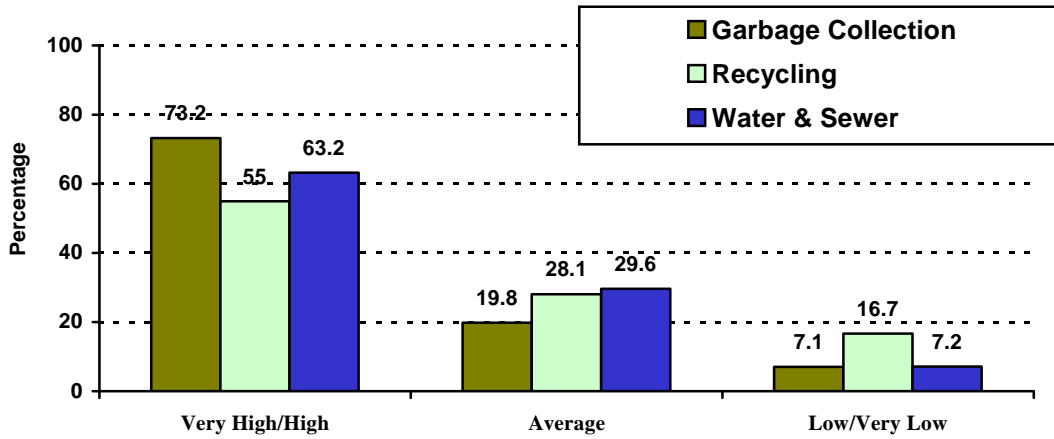


FIGURE D
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Different Inspection, Planning and Land Related Services in 2007

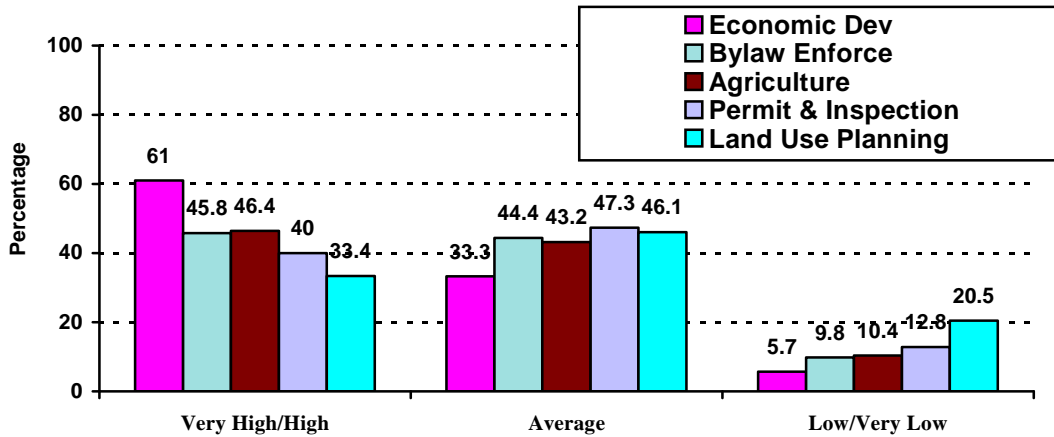
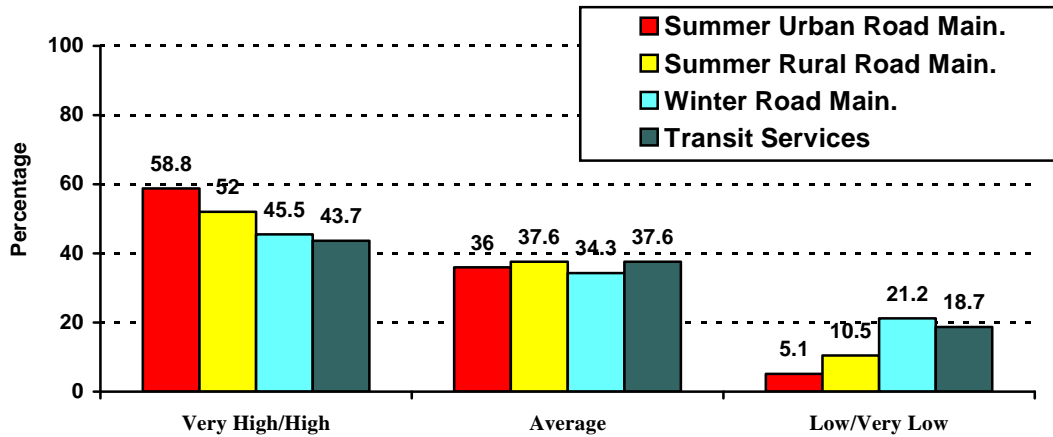


FIGURE E
Overall Ratings of Different County Services – Roadwork and Transit Services in 2007

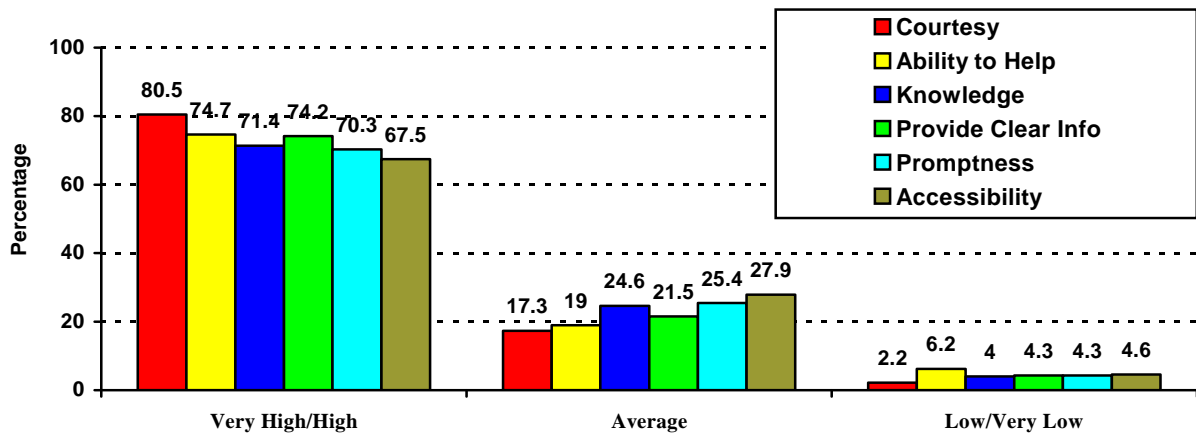


3. It should be noted that in this survey, as in previous years, when residents rated all 19 services, there were no additional questions asked about other aspects of these County services. Individual departments can utilize the results from this survey as an overall perceptual measurement. However, 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 with residential developments (48.1% *very high/high* ratings), followed closely by commercial developments (50.6% *very high/high* ratings), while 45.2% of residents gave industrial developments a positive rating in 2007. 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 (44.2%) felt that there may be too many residential developments occurring within the County as of 2007. 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 50.3% in 2007, which was slightly lower than how residents felt in 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 4 years of tracking this item. For rural residents, the perception that one is getting *good* or *very good* value for the tax dollars was 29.8%, which is considerably lower than what was reported for urban residents. From a tracking perspective, this finding for 2007 is almost identical to what was reported in 2006. However, the percentage of rural residents who believe they are getting *poor* or *very poor* value for their tax dollars was 29.2%, which is higher than 2006's findings of 24.6% dissatisfaction.
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 methods of service delivery, particularly *courtesy*. However, the positive ratings for each of these were slightly lower for each of the ratings found in the previous 2005 and 2006 surveys. It should be noted that the approval ratings are ranging between 67% and 75% 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 -2007 Results



8. Residents were asked several questions assessing how they get information from Strathcona County. A variety of methods were used, but the most prevalent ones were to either phone someone (noted b 62.8% of residents) or seek out information via the Internet (37.8%). Residents were also asked to rate some existing sources of information. 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.

9. Overall, close to 60% of residents took the time to visit the County website. Of those who visited the site, the majority of residents gave the website *very high or high* ratings.

10. A majority of residents gave Strathcona County a positive rating on its overall communication with residents, while just under 50% were satisfied with having opportunities to express opinions about municipal issues.

11. In terms of getting information about Strathcona County via a newspaper, the local *Sherwood Park/Strathcona County News* continues to be the number one choice

among residents, with *The Edmonton Journal* and *The Edmonton Sun* distant alternatives. The *Fort Record* was another positive alternative, but it was read by only a small number of County residents.

I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In December 2007, 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 tenth 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 (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 5th and December 16th, 2007. 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

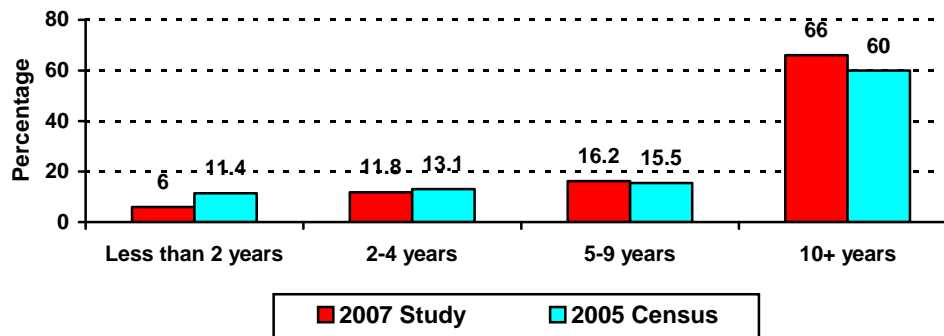
This section of the report presents a summary of the results associated with the perceptions and awareness of residents. Socio-demographic comparisons, where significant, are also highlighted. Comparisons will also be made with data collected from the previous year's survey when significant differences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

A. Demographic Overview

This section of the report presents an overview of the type of residents who were surveyed in the year 2007. 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%), while the remaining residents were renters.

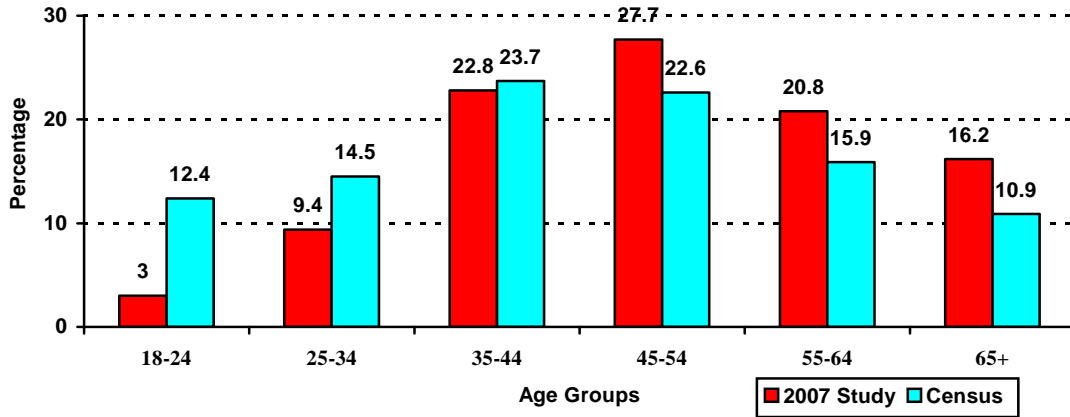
The majority of people who took part in the survey indicated that they were long term residents in the County. Figure 1 presents a breakdown of length of residence. It can be seen the majority of respondents have lived in the County for more than 10 years, much like the findings from the 2005 municipal census. The average number of years that people lived in Strathcona County was 18.8 years.

Figure 1
Length of Time Living in the County (Current 2007 Study & 2005 Census)



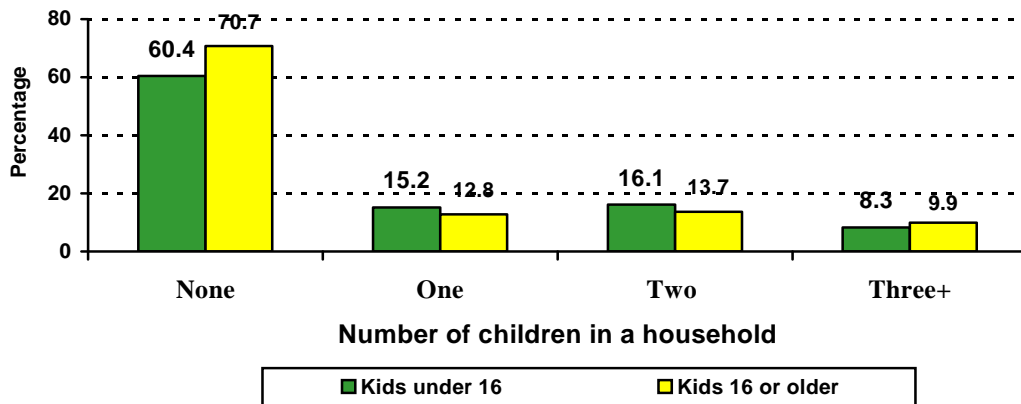
A breakdown of the age of the respondents is shown in Figure 2. There was a relatively good representation from all age groups, though in comparison to the 2005 census, the 18-24 year age group was under-represented.

FIGURE 2
Age of Respondents
(Current 2007 Study and 2005 Census Comparison)



A breakdown of children in the household from the current study is shown in Figure 3. These findings have been consistent over the past few years when conducting the satisfaction survey.

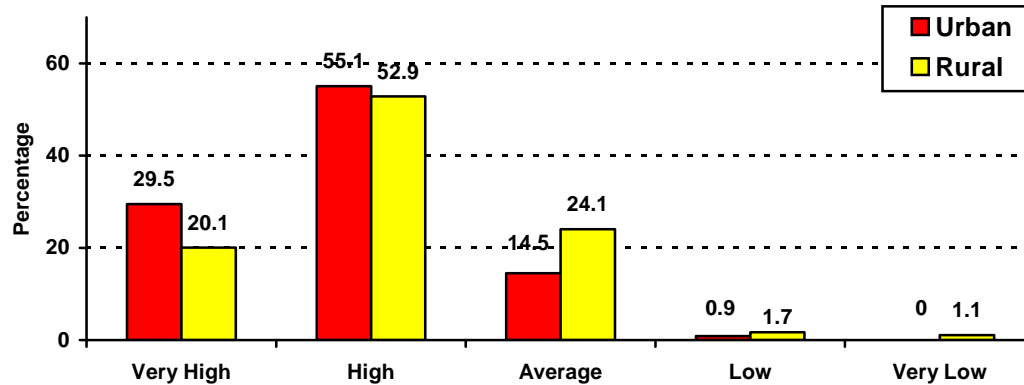
FIGURE 3
Number of Children in Household



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 4.

FIGURE 4
Quality of Life in Strathcona County
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2007



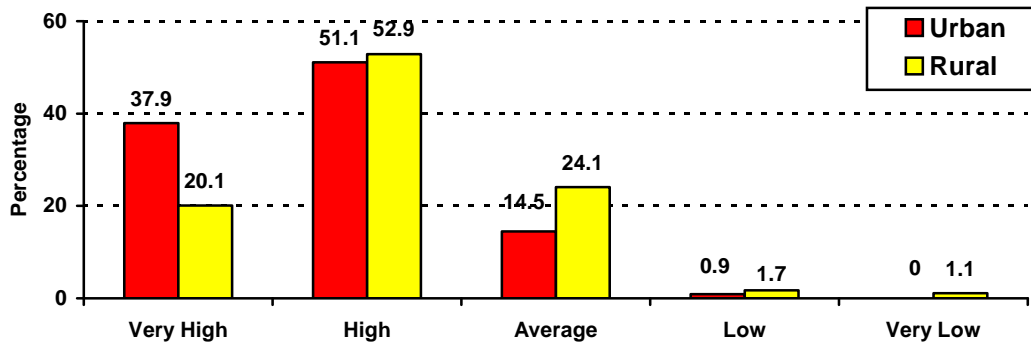
Highlights from Figure 4

- Although 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 *high* quality of life ratings were higher for urban residents than rural residents.⁴
- A further analysis revealed that no significant differences were found among gender or age for this item.
- A further analysis revealed that the level of satisfaction with the quality of life in Strathcona County for all residents was similar to past surveys conducted from 2000-2006.
- 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, some of the 8 residents (1.6% of the sample) who did cited increased housing development and a perception that taxes were too high as reasons for their dissatisfaction. Other individual reasons included a concern with the speed of traffic near an elementary school in rural Strathcona and a concern with the number of permits necessary to build on one's property.

⁴ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between perception of how satisfied residents with life in the County on the basis of where they live in Strathcona County ($\chi^2 = 25.26$, 4 df, $p=.000$).

Figure 5 presents a breakdown of urban and rural residents' ratings of Strathcona County as a place to raise children.

FIGURE 5
Strathcona County as a Place to Raise Children
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2007



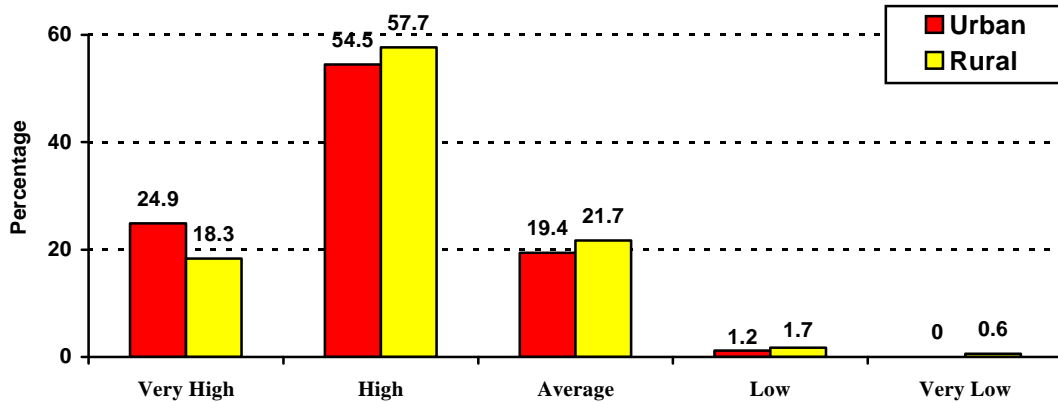
Highlights from Figure 5

- 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*.
- Even though the ratings are high for this item, it can be seen in Figure 7 that more Sherwood Park residents give a very high rating for this item compared to those living in rural Strathcona.⁵
- No significant differences were seen within age groups or between genders for this item.
- Respondents who rated this item as low or very low were asked to indicate what improvements could be considered. Only 1.6% of the sample (8 respondents) felt this way, and only three reasons were put forward – one person questioned the quality of education in rural schools, another felt that there were not enough activities for children outside of school hours, while a third perceived that increased growth limited opportunities for children living within Strathcona County.

Figure 6 presents a breakdown by region pertaining to people's ratings of Strathcona County as safe community to live in.

⁵ This is further substantiated by a chi-square procedure, which determined that there is a relationship between perception of raising children within the County with where they live in Strathcona County ($\chi^2 = 10.05, 4 \text{ df}, p=.04$).

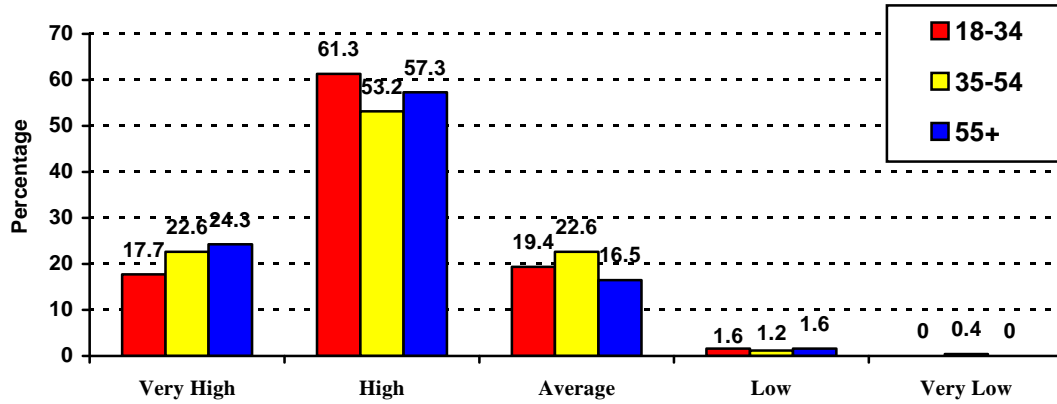
FIGURE 6
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2007



Highlights from Figure 6

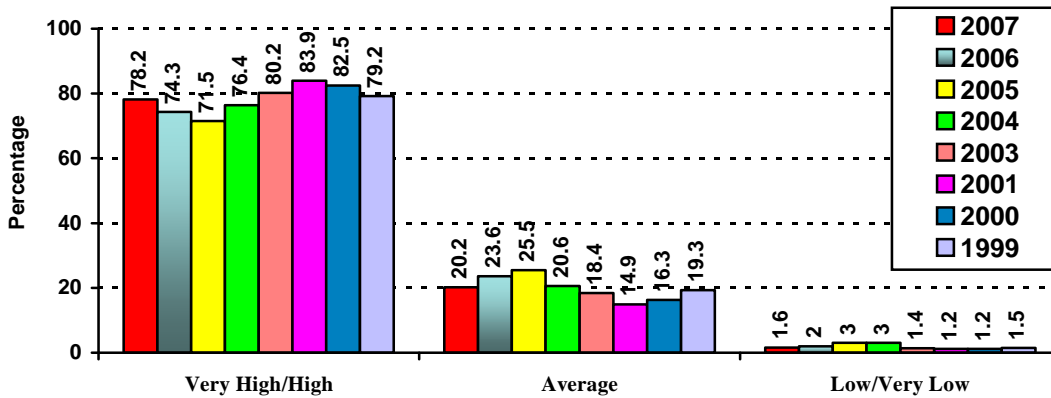
- The majority of people felt that Strathcona County was a safe community to live in. The percentage of residents who gave a *very high* rating for this question has increased over the past three years. Furthermore, the majority of residents, regardless of age, felt quite safe living in Strathcona County in 2007 (see Figure 7 on the next page).
- In 2007, the percentage of females who rated safety in the County as high or very high (76.7%) was almost the same as males (79.8%). This is a large increase among females in 2007 compared to 2006 (where 70% of females gave safety a high rating). In 2006, 78.7% of males gave safety in the community a high rating.
- Overall, only 1.6% of residents (i.e. 8 respondents) gave safety in Strathcona County a low rating. Of these, the only suggestion put forward for improving safety was to increase police presence through visible patrols in the urban and rural community.

FIGURE 7
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Age Group Comparisons - Year 2007



It can be seen from Figure 8 that perceptions of safety in Strathcona County have been on the rise over the past three years after taking a dip in 2005. Moreover, it can be seen that the percentage of people who gave safety in the community a low rating has been very small over any of the years where this has been monitored.

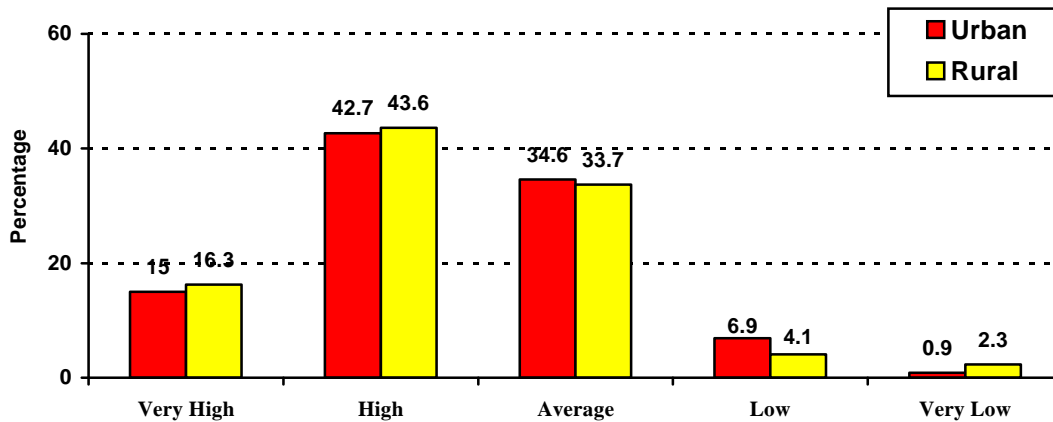
FIGURE 8
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Study Comparisons (1999-2007)⁶



⁶ There was no satisfaction study conducted in 2002.

Figure 9 presents a breakdown by region pertaining to people's ratings of the quality of Strathcona County's natural environment.

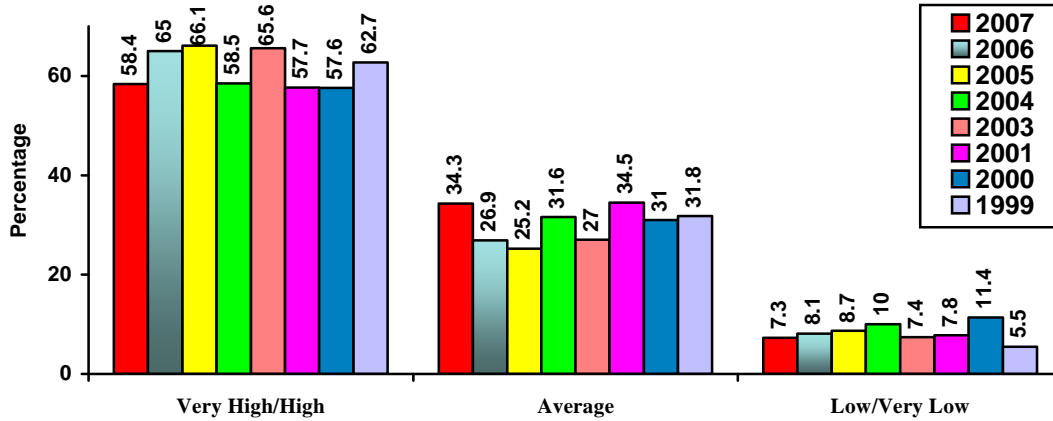
FIGURE 9
Rating the Quality of Strathcona County's Natural Environment
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2007



Highlights from Figure 10

- It can be seen that almost 58% of the urban and 60% 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 2007 by 6% to 7% (urban/rural, respectively) compared to 2006 ratings.
- Overall results (depicted in Figure 10 below) show that the combined very high and high ratings that people gave to the quality of Strathcona County's natural environment has dropped back down to ratings noted in 2000, 2001 and 2004. It should be noted, however, that the shift has been toward an "average" rating for the environment as opposed to increased perceptions for the quality of the environment being "low" or "very low."
- None of the demographic characteristics were factors in influencing how people rated the quality of the natural environment in Strathcona County.
- The 7.3% (or 36 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).

FIGURE 10
Rating the Quality of Strathcona County’s Natural Environment
Study Comparisons (1999-2007)



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 11, with overall trends shown in Figure 12.

FIGURE 11
Balancing the Needs and Interests of People Living in Strathcona County
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2007

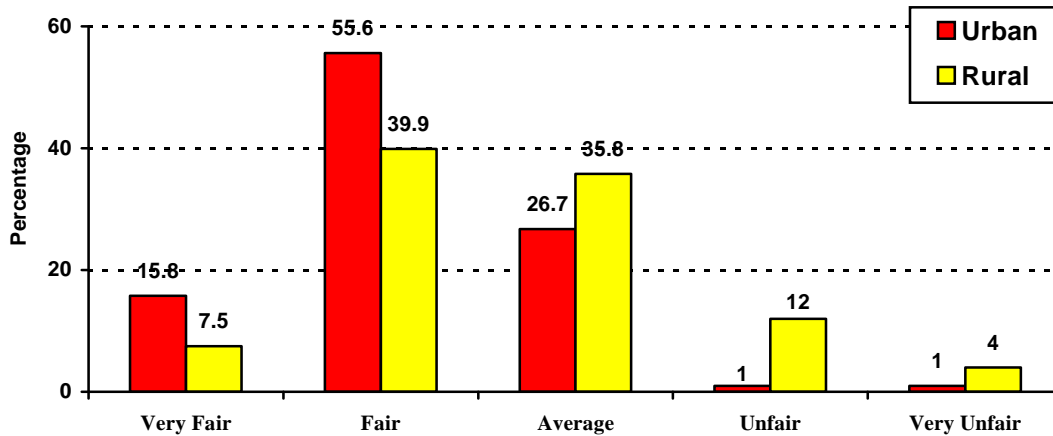
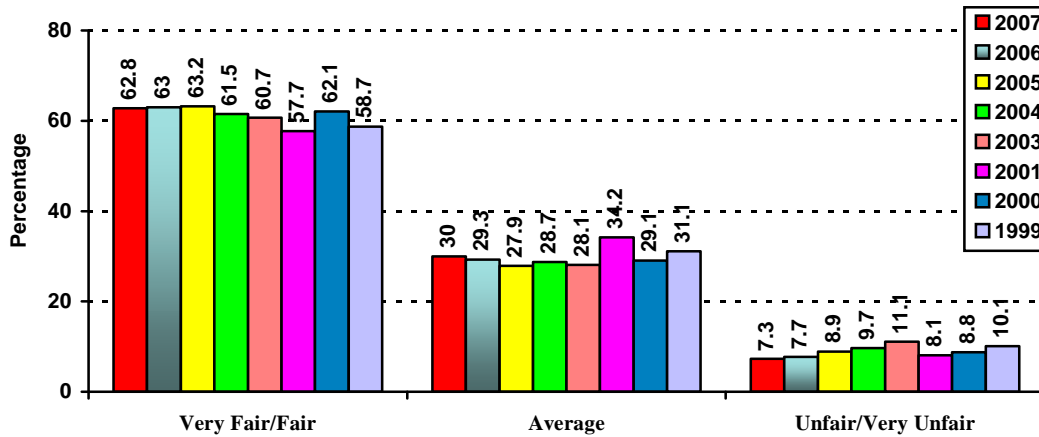


FIGURE 12
Balancing the Needs and Interests of People Living in Strathcona County

(1999-2007 Comparisons)



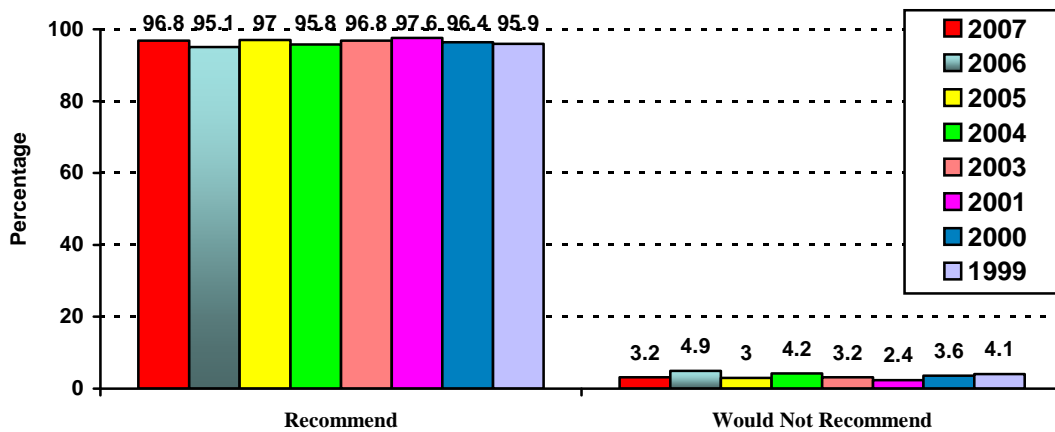
Highlights from Figure 11 & Figure 12

- 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.⁷
- 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 12 that overall perceptions of fairness in balancing the needs and interests of people living in the County has not varied considerably over the past 8 years that this survey has been conducted.
- The 35 residents in 2007 (7.3% 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. There were also complaints from both urban and rural residents pertaining to County bus service and to the building permit process.

⁷ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between perception of balancing needs and interests of people within the County on the basis of where they live in Strathcona County ($\chi^2 = 49.34, 4 \text{ df}, p=.000$).

It can be seen in Figure 13 that almost all of the respondents would recommend Strathcona County to others as a place to live. This was virtually identical to the satisfaction surveys done in previous years. The small percentage of people (3.2% or 16 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, many of these stemming from personal incidents that occurred from neighbors. There were a couple of residents who felt that there was too much amount of growth occurring throughout the County, or that the taxes were too high. A few others reiterated a perceived deterioration in the air quality within the County.

FIGURE 13
Recommendation of Strathcona County as a Place to Live
Study Comparisons (1999-2007)



C. Quality of Services Provided by Strathcona County

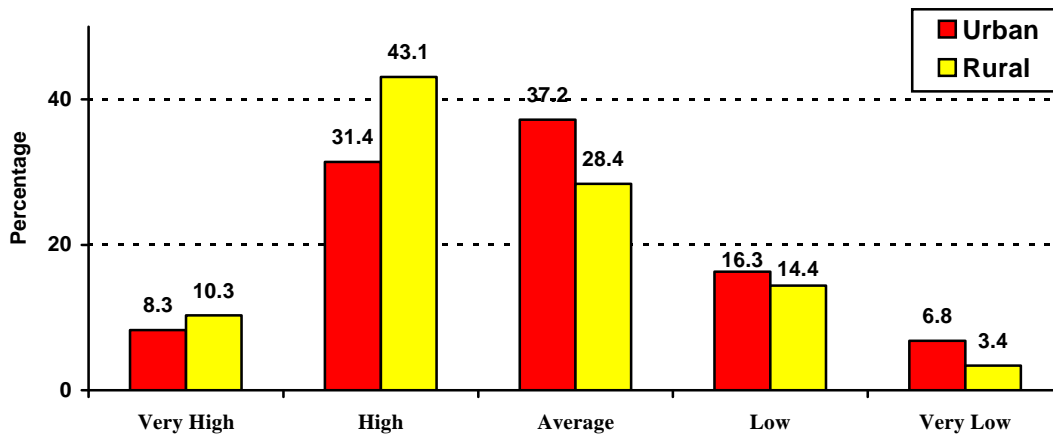
Residents of Strathcona County were asked a series of questions about what they thought of various services provided to them. Overall, respondents were asked to rate 19 different services. For each question, respondents rated the service using a 5 point Likert Scale, where a score of 1 was designated as very high and a score of 5 was designated as “very low.” Unless otherwise noted, the level of satisfaction that was found in 2007 for these services was similar to the data collected in 2006.

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 14. There was a statistical difference in perception between rural and urban residents on winter road maintenance⁸ 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 14
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2007



A further analysis revealed that positive perceptions of winter road maintenance among residents increased between 2006 and 2007. It can be seen in Figure 15 that almost 40% of urban residents felt the winter road maintenance work was “very high or high” in 2007 compared with just over 32% in 2006 who felt this way. The increase between 2006 and 2007 was similar among rural residents. It can be seen in Figure 16 that 53.4% gave this service a “very high or high” rating in 2007 compared with close to 46% in 2006 who felt this way.

⁸ 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 ($\chi^2 = 9.80, 4 \text{ df}, p=.044$).

FIGURE 15
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance as noted by Sherwood Park Residents
2007 and 2006 Study Comparisons

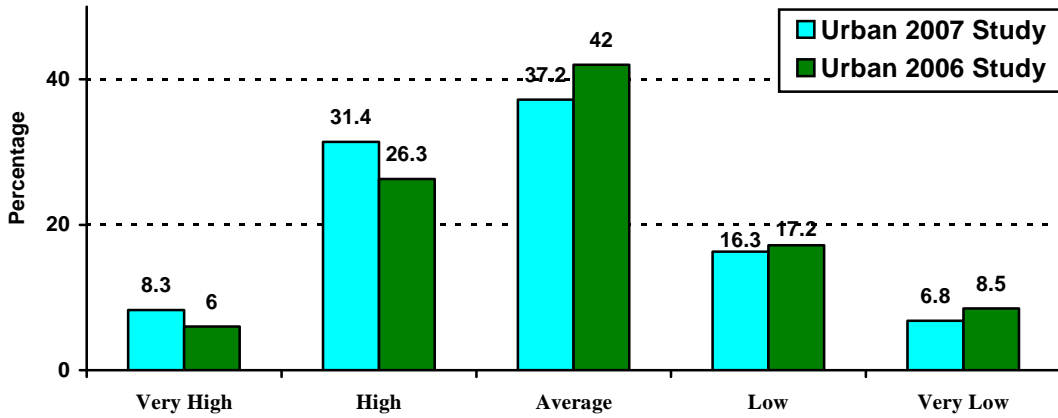
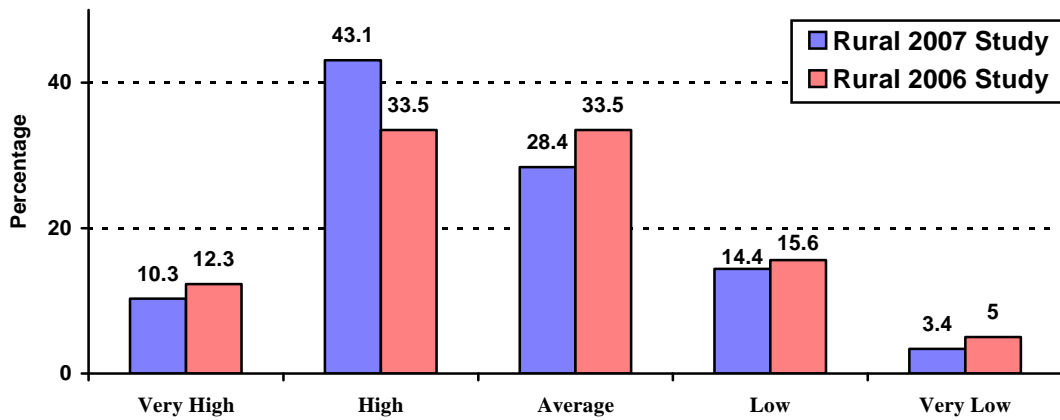


FIGURE 16
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance as noted by Rural Strathcona Residents
2007 and 2006 Study Comparisons

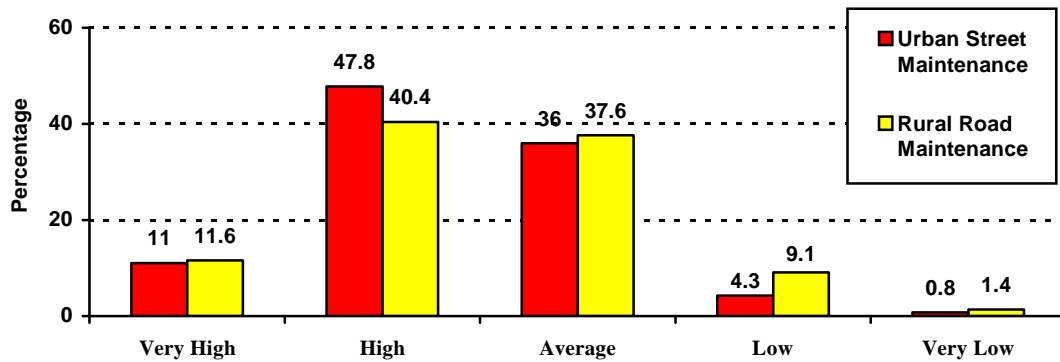


No differences for this service were seen among age groups or gender and a further analysis of the data revealed that length of residency did not have a measurable effect on perceptions toward the quality of winter maintenance.

Overall, 106 residents (20.2% of the sample) were not happy with the winter road maintenance, and were asked to suggest ways on how this could be improved. The two main frequent complaints were for snow removal to be done for residential side streets in Sherwood Park, and for secondary roads in rural areas to be cleared and sanded.

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 17.

FIGURE 17
Quality of Summer Road Maintenance of Urban and Rural Roads
in the Year 2007 – All Residents



Highlights from Figure 17

- 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.⁹ It can be seen in Figure 18 that more people living in the rural areas felt the quality of summer rural road maintenance was lower than those living in the urban area.

⁹ 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 ($\chi^2 = 16.76$, 4 df, $p=.002$). There was no statistical difference seen among residents with respect to perceptions of summer urban road maintenance.

FIGURE 18
Quality of Summer Road Maintenance of Rural Roads
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2007

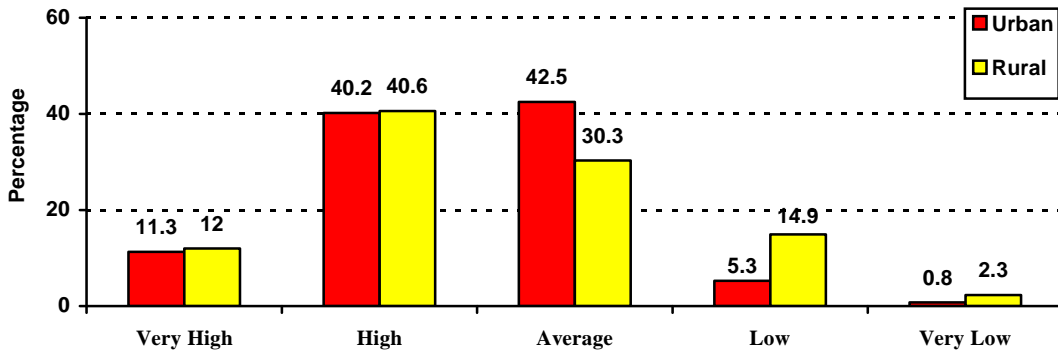
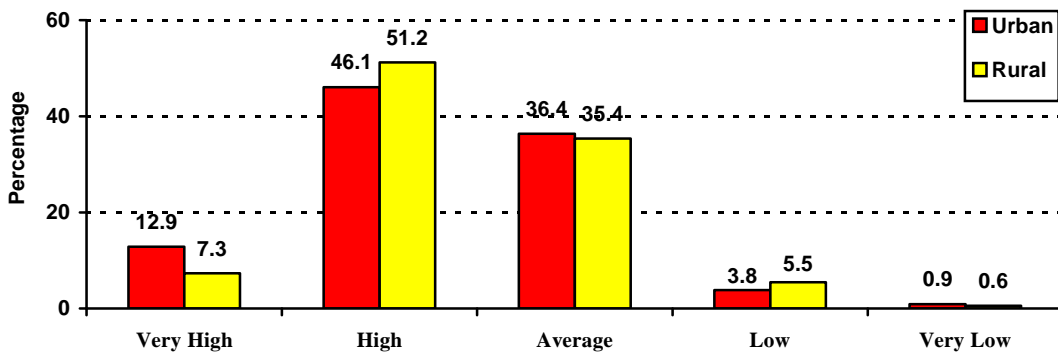


FIGURE 19
Quality of Summer Road Maintenance of Roads in Sherwood Park
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2007

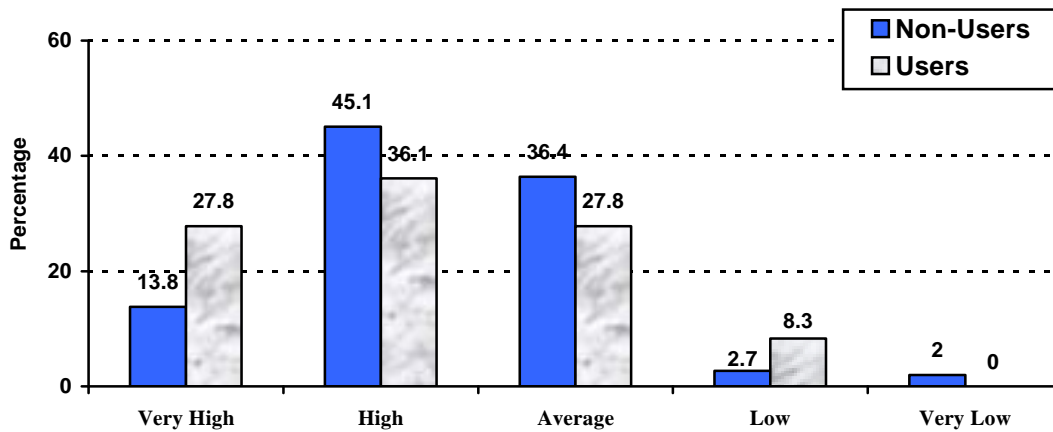


- Overall, 5.2% of residents (N=25) were unhappy with the summer maintenance of urban roads. Almost all of these residents reflected on the need to fill in the potholes in the roads and a perceived lack of action on the part of the County to do necessary repairs in what they considered to be a timely fashion. A few people wondered about the logic in resurfacing roads that, in their opinion, did not need to be done.
- Overall, 10.4% of residents (N=46) 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. Another repeated comment was to oil the gravel roads in portions of the rural area.

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 20 presents the satisfaction level that people have for family support services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample that utilized these services¹⁰ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should be noted that 167 respondents (33.4% of the sample) did not comment on the quality of the family support services because they did not know anything about them.

FIGURE 20
Quality of Family Support Services – 2007 Results

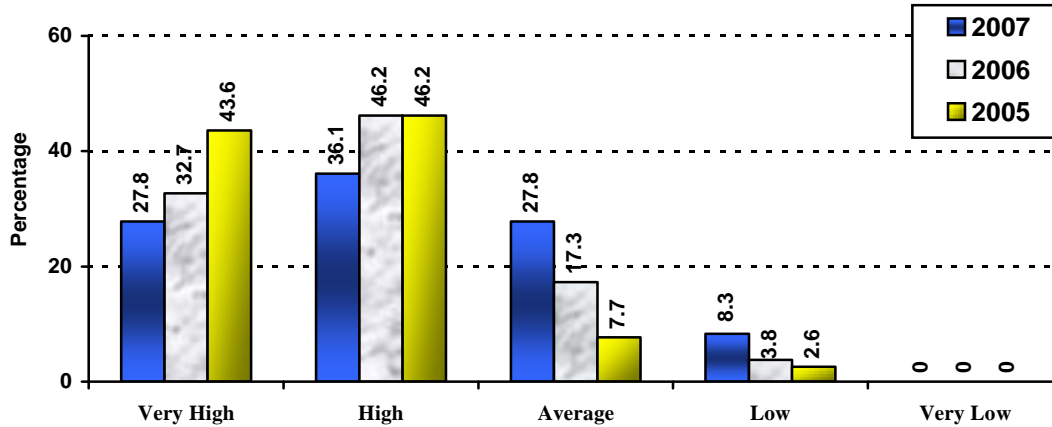


Highlights from Figure 20

- It can be seen from Figure 20 that both resident users and non-users have a positive view toward family support services in Strathcona County. Unlike previous years, in 2007 there was no statistically significant difference in the impression of the quality of family support services between users and non-users of this service.
- The actual number of residents who used (and rated) the services in the past 12 months was low (N=36), and while it can be seen that among these people, close to 59% of these people gave *high* or *very high* satisfaction ratings with the services, the combined *very high/high* ratings of family and community services has dropped considerably in 2007 compared to 2006 and 2005 (Figure 21).

¹⁰ Overall, 7.8% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had used family support services within the past 12 months. This is 3.2% lower than 2006 and about the same usage noted in the 2005 and 2004 studies.

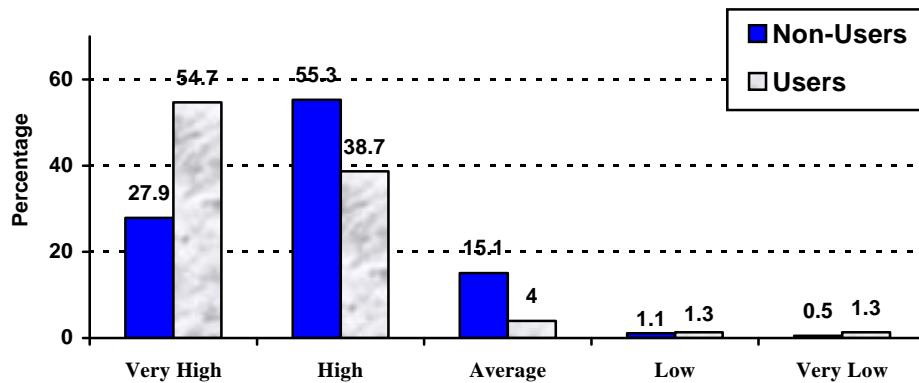
FIGURE 21
Quality of Family Support Services
User Trends 2005 - 2007



- As in previous surveys, the percentage of users rating the service as *low or very low* is small. However, in 2007, 8.3% were dissatisfied, which was a higher percentage compared to what was reported in 2005 and 2006.
- The 17 people who gave family support services a low rating in 2007 (5.1% 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, though many people also thought that this likely wouldn't happen because of a shortage of qualified staff. In fact, many of the comments from residents who rated the service as low did so because of a perceived labor shortage within Alberta for these types of workers. No one attributed their dissatisfaction to any of the current work being done by FCS.
- There were no differences found for any socio-demographic characteristic for this item in 2007.

Figure 22 presents the satisfaction level that people have for fire and ambulance services, based on the portion of the sample that utilized these services¹¹ 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 22
Quality of Fire and Ambulance Services – 2007 Results



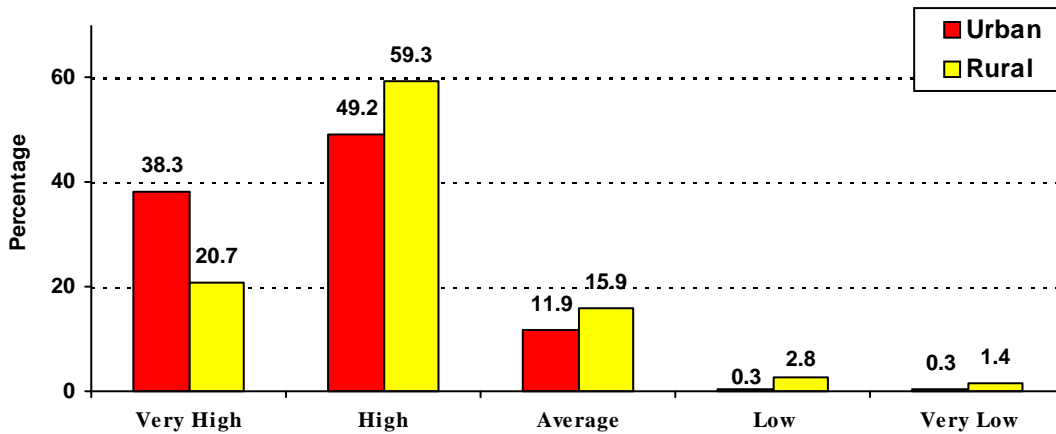
Highlights from Figure 22

- It can be seen from Figure 22 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. This demonstrates that recipients were pleased with the quality of the services that they received when these services were needed. 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 ($\chi^2 = 23.34, 4 df, p < .001$). A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -3.80, 438 df, p < .001$) statistically confirms that users of fire and ambulance services rated these services higher than non-users.
- Overall, 8 people (1.8% 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 more fire halls. One person hoped that the County would examine and assess response times to emergencies.

¹¹ Overall, 15.4% of respondents in 2007 indicated that they had used the fire and ambulance services within the past 12 months. This reported usage is slightly higher than results previously noted in the 2006 survey (14% usage), and about the same as what was reported in previous studies.

As seen in Figure 23, a further analysis of this service revealed that more Sherwood Park residents (regardless of use) were satisfied with the service (87.5% *very high or high*) compared with those living in rural areas (80% *very high or high*).¹² 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. On a positive note, however, 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 considerably lower in 2007 (and 2006) compared to earlier years when satisfaction studies were conducted.

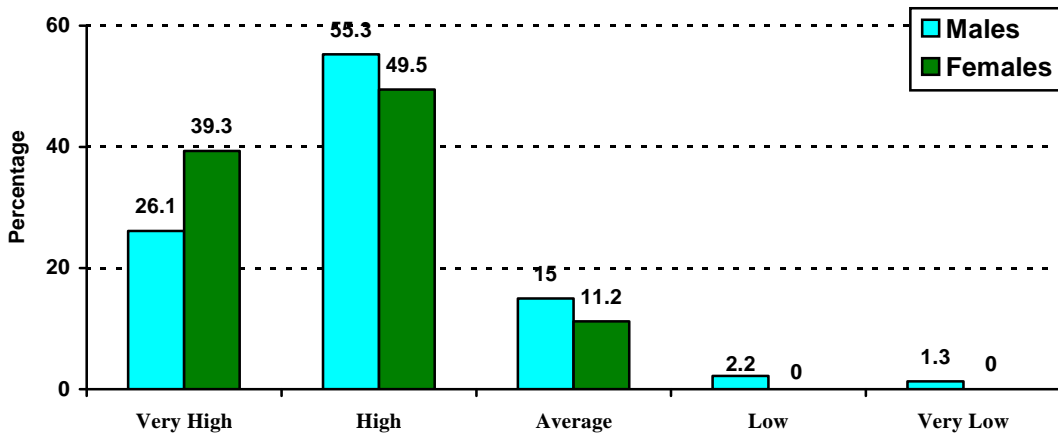
FIGURE 23
Quality of Fire and Ambulance Services
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2007



¹² A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between perception of fire and ambulance services on the basis of where they live in Strathcona County ($\chi^2 = 18.92, 4 \text{ df}, p=.001$).

There was also a difference in perception noted on the basis of gender. As seen in Figure 24, a further analysis of this service revealed that a greater percentage of female residents (regardless of use) were satisfied with the services (88.8% *very high or high*) compared with male residents (81.4% *very high or high*).¹³

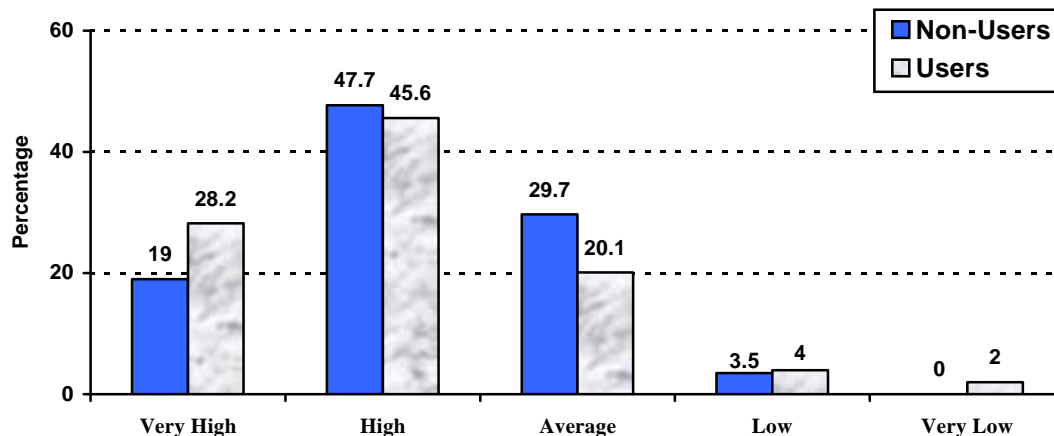
FIGURE 24
Quality of Fire and Ambulance Services
Gender Comparisons - Year 2007



¹³ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between perception of fire and ambulance services and gender ($\chi^2 = 15.34, 4 \text{ df}, p=.004$).

Figure 25 presents the satisfaction level that people have for RCMP services, based on those who used these services¹⁴ in the past 12 months and those who did not.

FIGURE 25
Quality of RCMP Services – 2007 Results



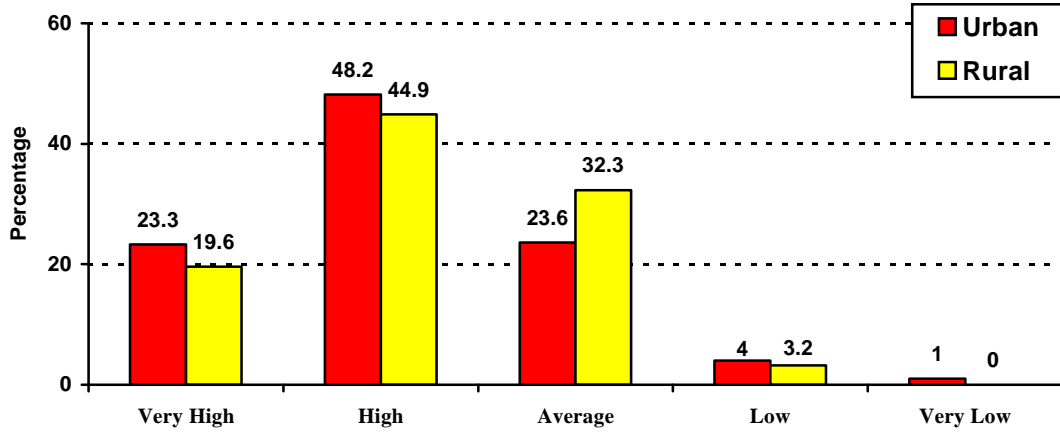
Highlights from Figure 25

- It can be seen from Figure 25 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 ($\chi^2 = 13.68$, 4 *df*, $p = .004$).
- The ratings provided by both users and non-users in 2007 were very similar to trends found in 2006.
- The 17 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 attitude problems among officers when they interacted with residents. There were several people who felt that the RCMP should do more regular patrolling throughout the County (in both the rural and urban areas).
- A further analysis of this service revealed that residents were relatively happy with the RCMP services, regardless of where they live (Figure 26). The 2007

¹⁴Overall, 150 respondents (30% of the 2007 sample) indicated that they had used the RCMP within the past 12 months. This reported usage is slightly lower than the 2006 survey, and about the same as what was reported in 2005, 2004 and 2003. It should also be noted that 41 people (8.2%) did not rate the service in 2007 on the basis that they did not know enough about the RCMP to give a rating.

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

FIGURE 26
Quality of RCMP Services – Urban and Rural Comparisons (2007)

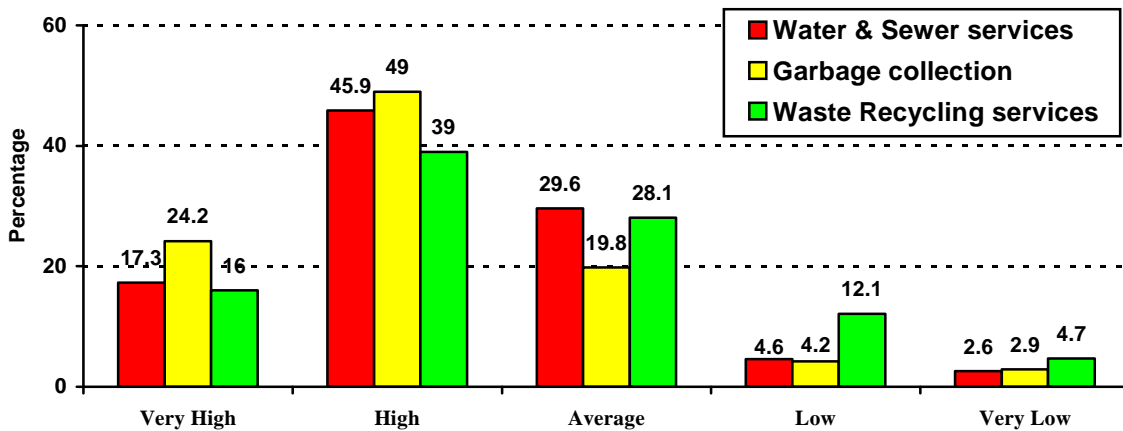


- No differences were seen with RCMP services with any demographic variable.

Water and Waste Management Services in Strathcona County

People were asked to rate the quality of water, garbage and recycling services in Strathcona County. Figure 27 presents the satisfaction level that residents have for these services, regardless of where they live.¹⁵

FIGURE 27
Level of Satisfaction with Water and Waste Management Services – 2007 Results



Highlights from Figure 27

- It can be seen from Figure 27 that residents were generally satisfied with these services. A further examination of the ratings revealed that 73.2% gave *very high/high* ratings for garbage collection (similar to the 2006 ratings). The ratings for water & sewage services also remained similar to 2006 findings, with 63.2% giving this a *very high* or *high* rating. The combined *very high/high* ratings for waste recycling services was slightly lower in 2007 (55%) compared to 2006's combined *very high/high* ratings (59.6%).
- A further analysis by geographic area revealed that rural residents in the County were not as satisfied with their *water service*, *garbage collection* (and to a lesser extent, *waste recycling* services) compared to 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 each of these

¹⁵ Overall, 108 people (21.6%) did not rate water & sewer services, 45 people (9%) did not rate garbage collection and 13 people (2.6%) did not rate waste recycling services. These 2007 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.

services.¹⁶ A depiction of the differences in perception is shown in Figures 28, 29 and 30.

FIGURE 28
Level of Satisfaction with Water Services
Urban & Rural Comparisons - 2007

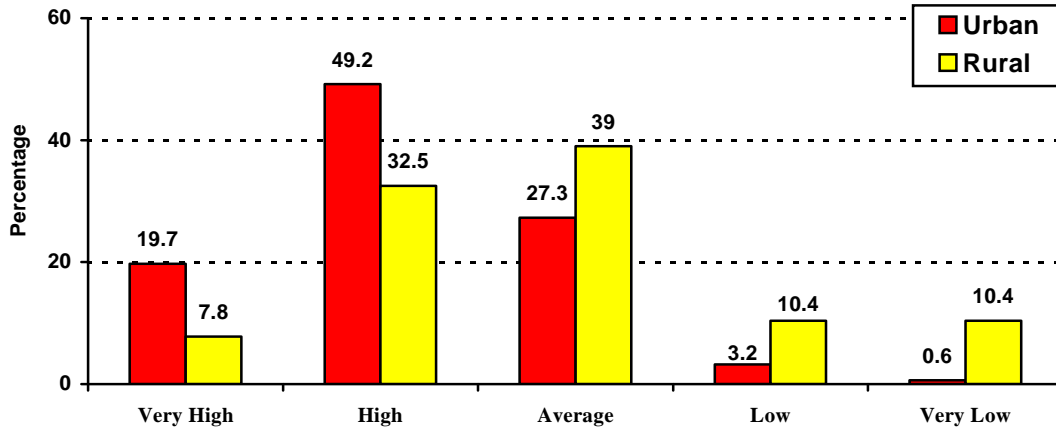
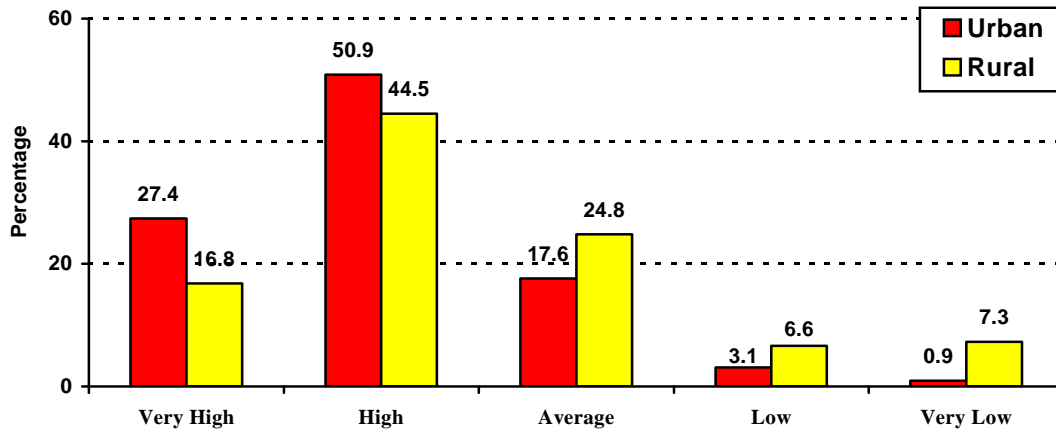
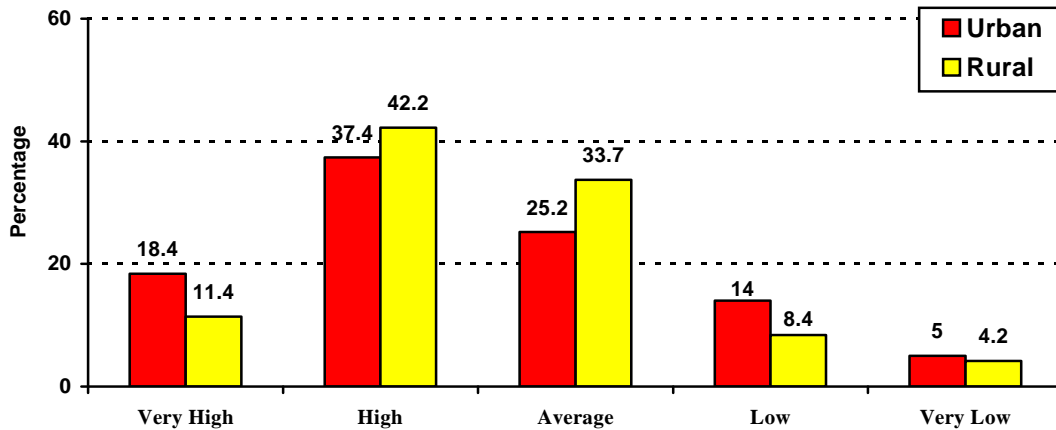


FIGURE 29
Level of Satisfaction with Garbage Collection Service
Urban & Rural Comparisons - 2007



¹⁶ For water and sewage services ($\chi^2 = 41.76$, 4 df, $p = .000$); garbage collection, ($\chi^2 = 23.97$, 4 df, $p=.000$); waste recycling, ($\chi^2 = 9.69$, 4 df, $p=.046$).

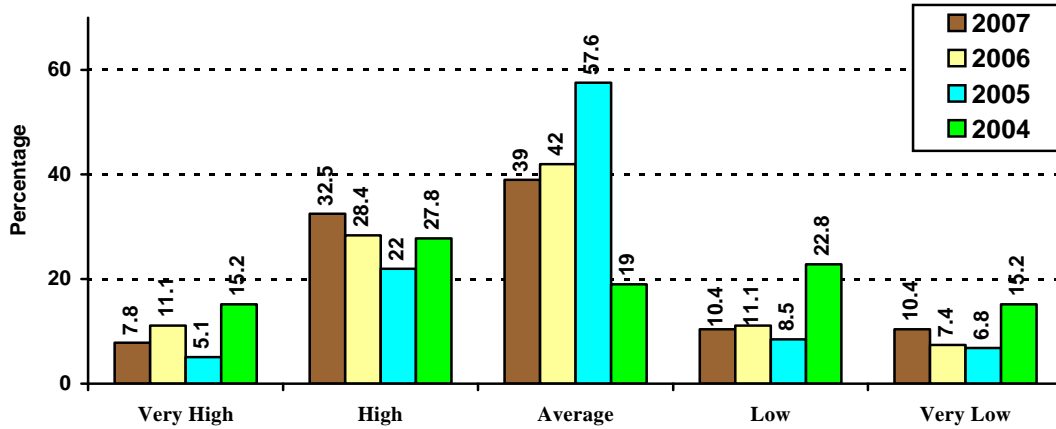
FIGURE 30
Level of Satisfaction with Waste Recycling Service
Urban & Rural Comparisons - 2007



- 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, 28 people (7.2% of the sample) made comments. A variety of thoughts were put forward, including several from people in rural areas who thought that the County should run sewer and water lines out to acreages.
- With respect to garbage collection services, 32 residents (7.1% of the sample) who rated the service as *low* or *very low* had comments. Many of the residents who commented here complained about the inconsistency of garbage pickups (e.g. time of day, consistent calendar schedule, etc.) and the quality of the contractors/workers (e.g. collection workers' attitudes, courtesy with resident trashcans, etc.).
- With respect to recycling services, 82 residents (16.8% of the sample) who rated the service as *low* or *very low* had comments. As in previous years, the majority of the comments focused on getting the County to consider a curbside recycling service similar to what is done in Edmonton. A major complaint noted by many of these residents was not being able to recycle plastics (this was also mentioned by residents in the last two satisfaction surveys dating back to 2003).
- The trends (for garbage collection and waste recycling services) by region of the County were similar to what was seen in 2006. For water services, though, while the urban residents rated this similarly since 2004, there has been a shift in the "very high/high" ratings in the rural region in this same time span. It can be seen in Figure 31 in the current study that perceptions have increased to 40.3%, which is slightly higher than 2006 (where the combined rating was 39.4%). The 2007 ratings are also higher than 2005's

27.1% rating, but still slightly lower than what was seen in 2004 (43%). The dissatisfaction with the service is slightly higher than the ratings seen in 2006 and 2005, and is considerably lower than what rural residents reported in 2004.

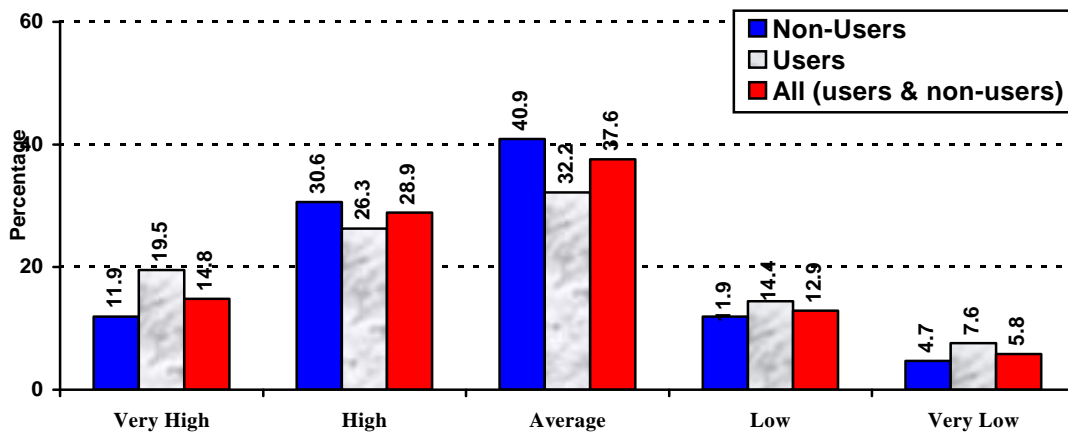
FIGURE 31
Level of Satisfaction with Water Services in Rural Strathcona County
2004 - 2007 Comparisons



Transit Services in Strathcona County

People were asked to rate their satisfaction with transit services in the County. Figure 32 presents the satisfaction level that people have for transit services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample that utilized these services¹⁷ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 189 residents (37.8% of the sample) did not rate transit service on the basis that they did not know anything about the service.¹⁸

FIGURE 32
Satisfaction with Strathcona County Transit Service – 2007 Results



Highlights from Figure 32

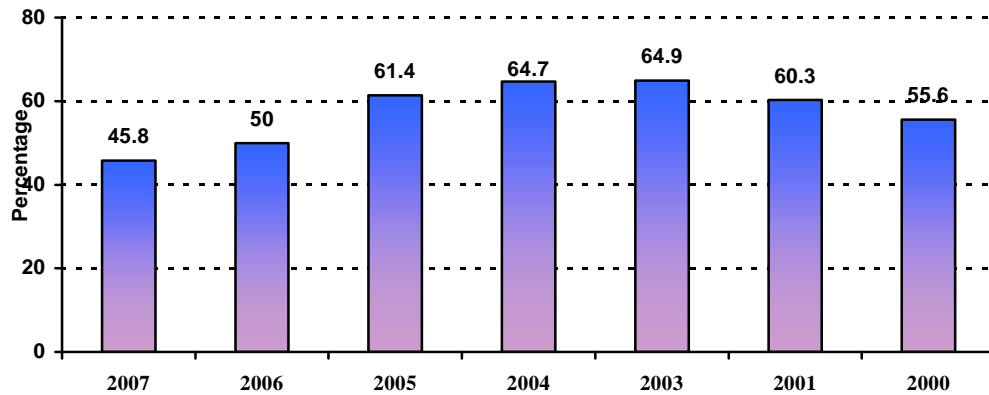
- It can be seen from Figure 32 that around 44% of residents (regardless of use) have a positive view toward transit services in Strathcona County. There were no statistically significant differences noted between any demographic items and how residents rated transit services.
- It can also be seen that 22% of users of the transit service have low or very low levels of satisfaction with the service. This is 5.5% higher than last year's 2006 study results).
- In comparison to previous surveys, it can be seen in Figure 33 that the percentage of users rating this service as *very high/high* has decreased in 2007

¹⁷ Overall, 24.2% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had used transit services within the past 12 months. This is about 2% higher than what was seen in 2006.

¹⁸ The percentage of those who said "don't know" was about the same as the 2005 and 2006 surveys.

to its lowest point in seven years of measurement (45.8%) compared to 50% in 2006, 61.4% in 2005, 64.7% in 2004, 64.9% in 2003, 60.3% in 2001 and 55.6% in 2000.

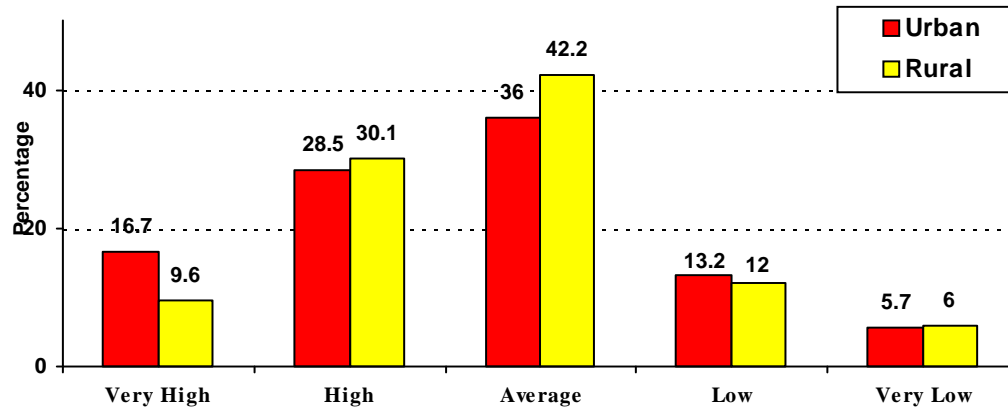
FIGURE 33
User “Very High/High” Combined Satisfaction Ratings with Strathcona County Transit Service 2000 – 2007 Comparisons¹⁹



- A further analysis found that the majority of transit users (80.2%) live in Sherwood Park. This is about the same urban/rural ratio as last year’s 2006 survey.
- Although it can be seen in Figure 34 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.

¹⁹ There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

FIGURE 34
Satisfaction with Strathcona County Transit Service – 2007 Results
Urban and Rural Comparisons

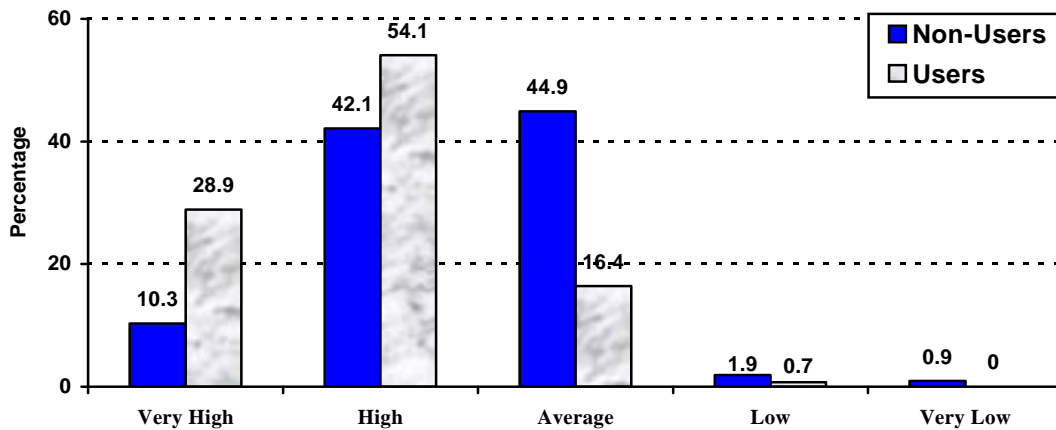


- The 58 people (18.7% of the sample) who gave transit services a *low/very low* rating were asked to suggest ways on how this could be improved. A variety of ideas were put forward, including a suggested increase in the number of buses, an improvement of frequency of buses on routes within Sherwood 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.

Library Services in Strathcona County

Figure 35 presents the satisfaction level that people have with the Strathcona Public Library, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample that utilized these services²⁰ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 88 people (17.6% 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 35
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library – 2007 Results



Highlights from Figure 35

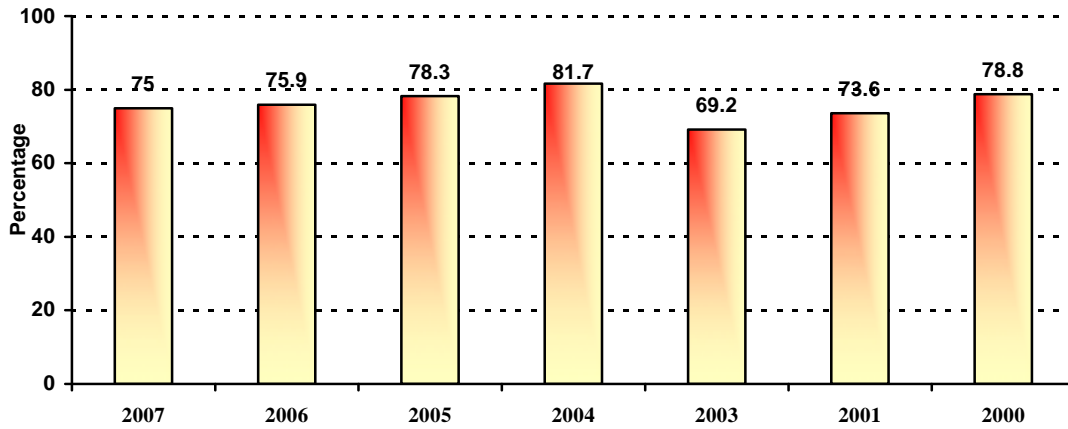
- It can be seen from Figure 35 that most residents have a positive view toward the library, regardless of whether they use it. Nevertheless, a chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between use and how one rated library services.²¹ A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences revealed a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between users and non-users ($t = -6.66, 410 \text{ df}, p < .001$), 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 2007.
- A further investigation revealed that overall *very high/high* satisfaction level with the Strathcona Library (regardless of use) remains solid, but is slightly

²⁰ Overall, 61% 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 2006.

²¹ For library services, ($\chi^2 = 44.66, 3 \text{ df}, p=.000$).

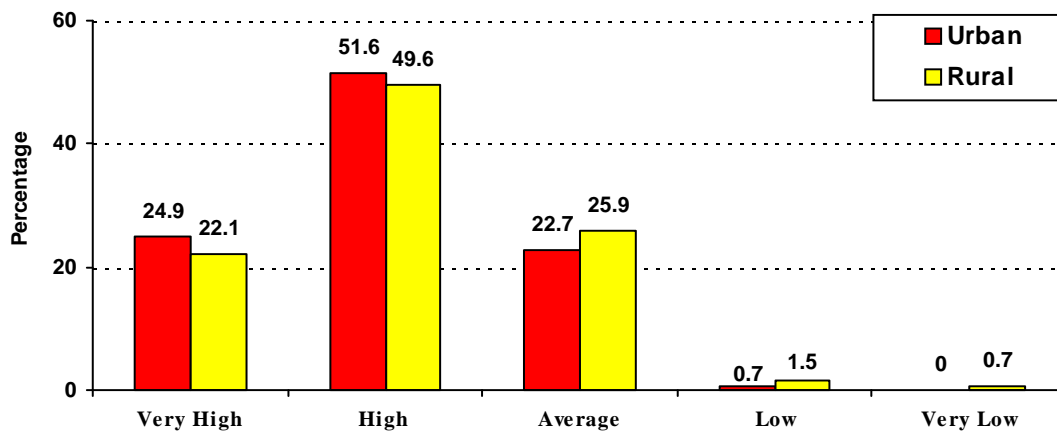
lower than some previous years. In 2007, this combined rating was 75%, while it was 75.9% in 2006, 78.3% in 2005 and 81.7% in 2004. The *very high/high* rating for the library from previous years is shown in Figure 36.

FIGURE 36
Combined “Very High/High” Satisfaction Ratings with Strathcona County Library
2000 – 2007 Comparisons²²



- The majority of library users surveyed live in Sherwood Park (70.5%), while the remaining 29.5% 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 37, where it can be seen that the perceptions did not vary considerably between rural and urban area residents.

FIGURE 37
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library – 2007 Results
Urban and Rural Comparisons



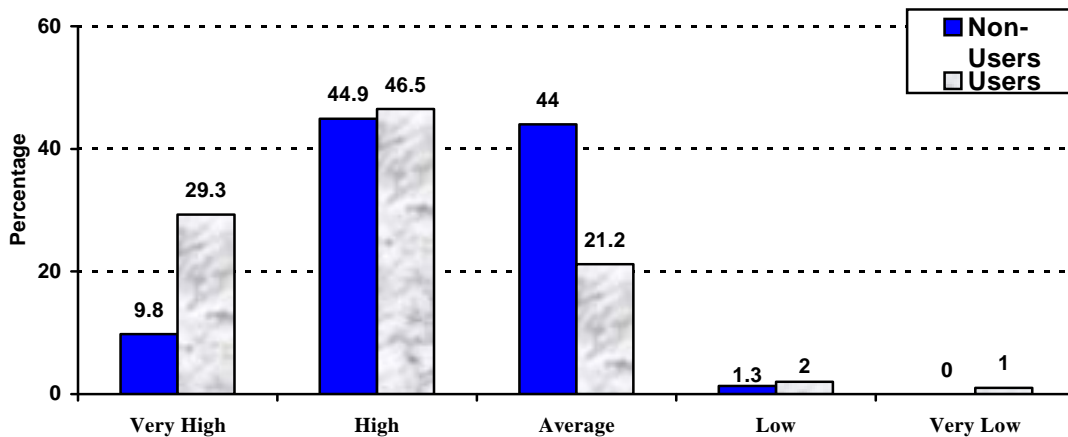
²² There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

- There were 5 people (1.2% of the sample) who rated the library service as *low* or *very low*. Two suggestions on how the library could be improved included allowing box number addresses (for rural residents) to be valid addresses for patron information and increase the number of books in the collection.

Information and Volunteer Centre Services in Strathcona County

Figure 38 presents the satisfaction level that people have with the Information and Volunteer Centre (IVC), based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample that utilized these services²³ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 35.2% of residents (n=176) did not rate the Centre on the basis that they did not know anything about it.

FIGURE 38
Satisfaction with the Information and Volunteer Centre – 2007 Results



Highlights from Figure 38

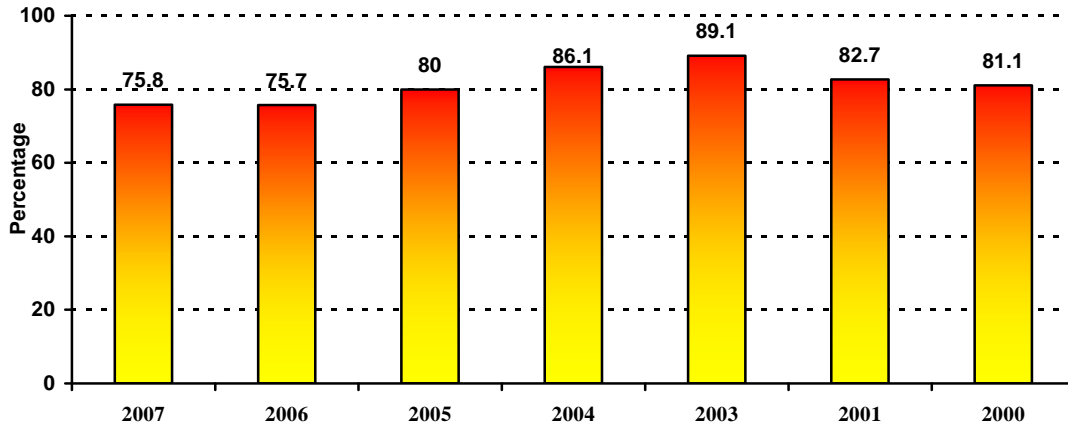
- It can be seen from Figure 38 that most residents have a positive view toward the Information and Volunteer Centre, regardless of whether they use it. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between use and how one rated the IVC.²⁴ A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences revealed a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between users and non-users ($t = -4.33, 322 \text{ df}, p < .001$), where users are more likely to give the IVC a higher rating than those who did not use it.

²³ Overall, 22.6% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had used the Information and Volunteer Centre within the past 12 months. This is the same figure that was reported in the 2005 and 2006 surveys.

²⁴ For the IVC, ($\chi^2 = 28.79, 4 \text{ df}, p = .000$).

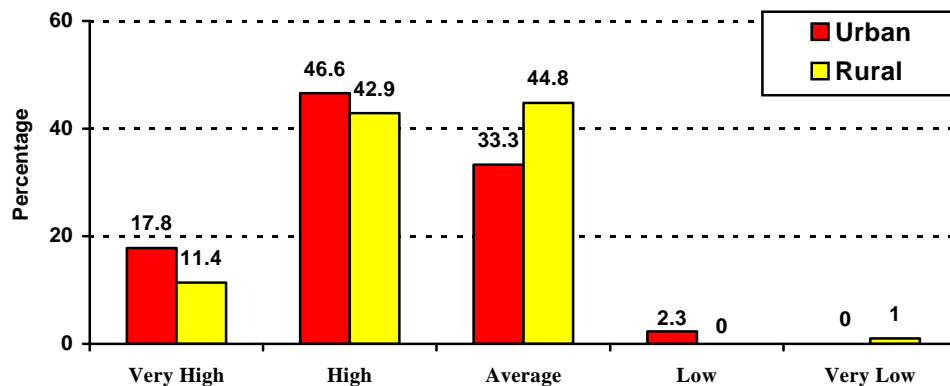
- A further investigation revealed that overall *very high/high* satisfaction levels with users of the IVC, while positive, is holding steady at 75.8%, which is almost identical to 2006. This is lower than previous years, when it was 80% in 2005 and 86.1% in 2004. The *very high/high* rating provided by users of the IVC between 2000 and 2007 is shown in Figure 39.

FIGURE 39
User “Very High/High” Combined Satisfaction Ratings with the Information and Volunteer Centre 2000 – 2007 Comparisons²⁵



- Among users of the IVC, the majority live in Sherwood Park (77%) while the remaining 23% live in rural parts of Strathcona County. The satisfaction ratings for the IVC were slightly higher among urban area residents (Figure 40), though the variation between urban and rural was not statistically significant.

FIGURE 40
Satisfaction with the Information and Volunteer Centre – 2007 Results
Urban and Rural Comparisons



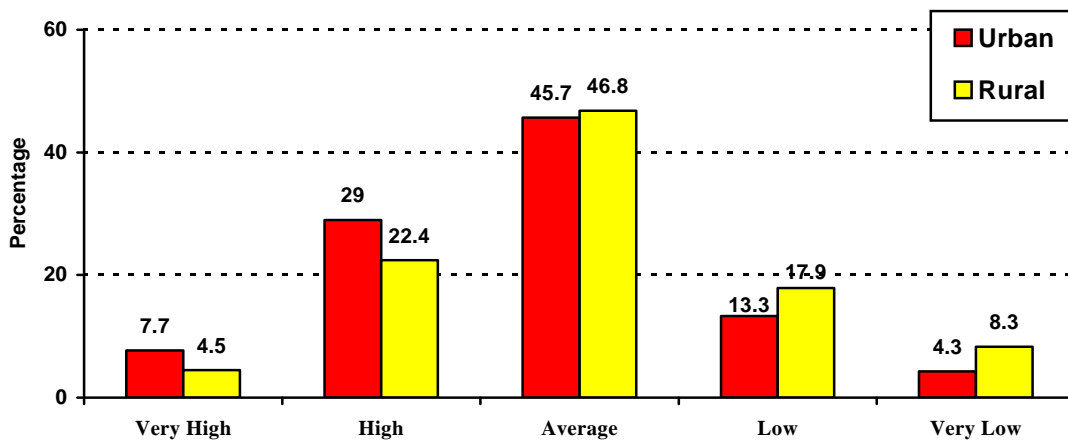
²⁵ There was no satisfaction survey conducted in 2002.

- A total of 176 people (35.2%) 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 the same as 2006 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 6 people gave the Information and Volunteer Centre a *low* or *very low* rating. Most of the comments focused on the need for the IVC to improve its profile – one person thought that maybe it should move its location to Festival Place or a place where the community is coming and going.

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 41 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.²⁶

FIGURE 41
Satisfaction with Land Use Planning in Strathcona County – 2007 Results

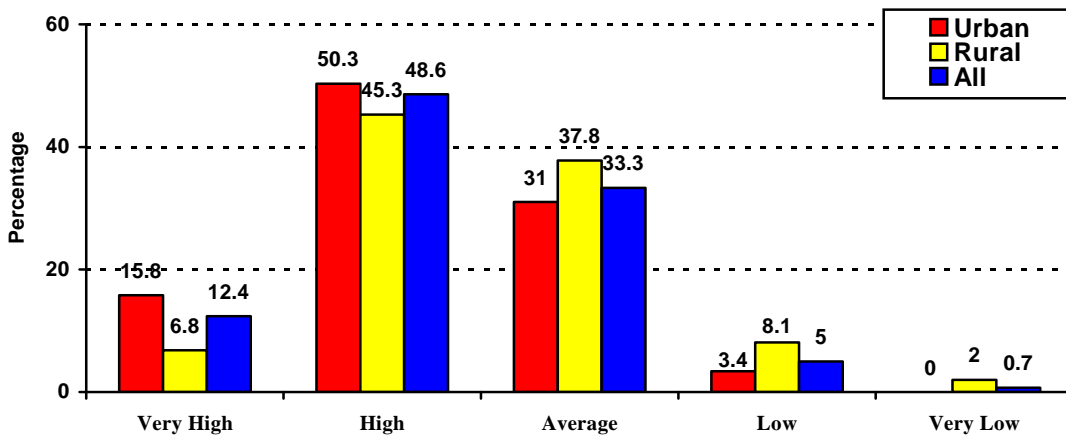


Highlights from Figure 41

- It can be seen from Figure 41 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, 94 people (20.6% 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. Other comments included multiple concerns with the width of streets in particular (and design of roadways in general), the housing density in some parts of the County, the need for better parking designs associated with retail businesses, more thought into long term/future planning, and ongoing concerns with the amount of building within the County.

Figure 42 presents the satisfaction level that people living in rural and urban parts of the County have for economic development, which includes attracting new businesses into the County.²⁷

FIGURE 42
Satisfaction with Economic Development in Strathcona County – 2007 Results



²⁶ Overall, 44 people (8.8% of the sample) did not rate this service. This was higher than the 2006 survey.

²⁷ Overall, 58 people (11.6% of the sample) did not rate this service, which is higher than the 2006 survey.

Highlights from Figure 42

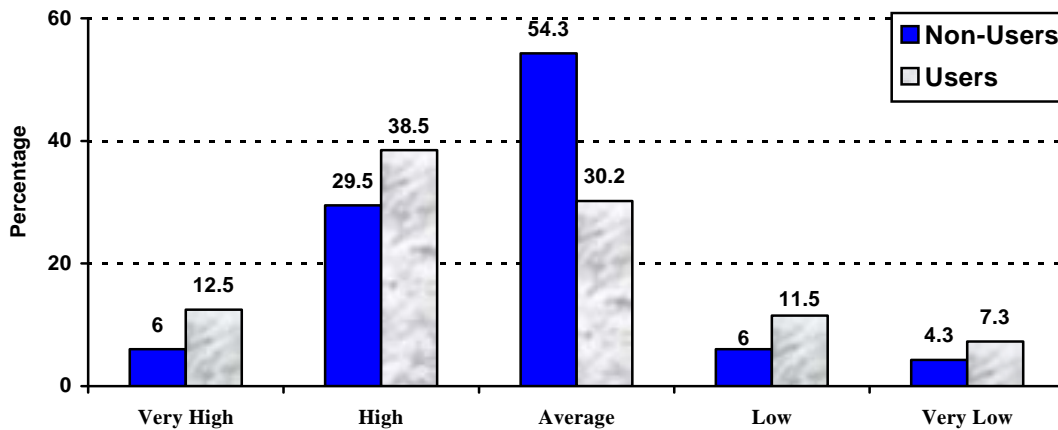
- It can be seen from Figure 42 that the perception of residents toward economic development by the County was positive, regardless of where people live. Overall, 61% of all residents gave *very high/high* ratings for the economic development that is being done at the present time. This combined rating is slightly higher than what was posted in 2006.
- Upon further analysis, a chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between the rating of economic development and where people lived in the County.²⁸ A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences revealed a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between rural and urban residents ($t = - 3.99, 440 \text{ df}, p < .001$), where urban residents are more likely to give economic development a higher rating than those living in rural parts of the County.
- No differences were seen among any socio-demographic variables with respect to perceptions of satisfaction toward economic development.
- Twenty-five residents throughout the County (5.7% 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 developing more businesses on Wye Road (and less on Baseline Road), less fast food outlets and more quality stores, and try to control the square foot rental rates for new small stores.

²⁸ For economic development, ($\chi^2 = 18.05, 4 \text{ df}, p=.001$).

Permit & Inspection Services in Strathcona County

Figure 43 presents the satisfaction level that people have with building permit and inspection services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample that utilized these services²⁹ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 170 people (66% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it, which is about 7% lower than last year's survey.

FIGURE 43
Satisfaction with Building Permit and Inspections Services in Strathcona County – 2007 Results



Highlights from Figure 43

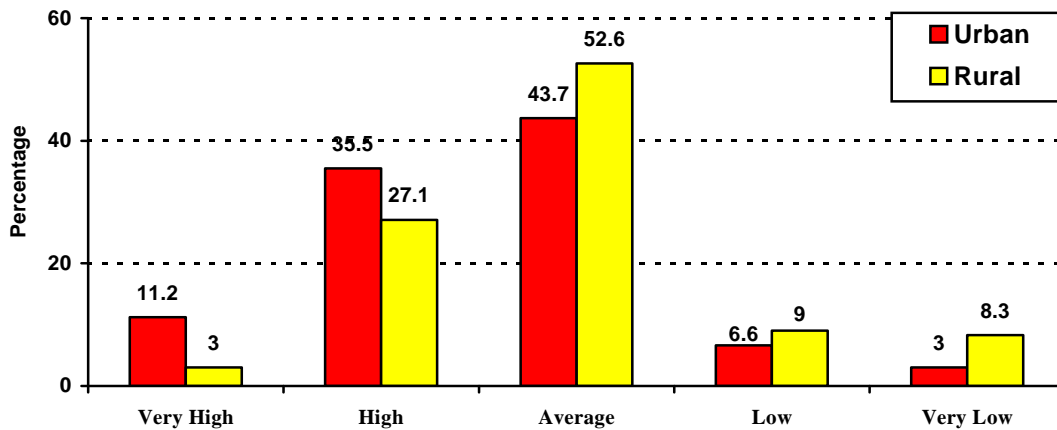
- A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between one's use of building permit & inspection services and the rating that one gave to the service.³⁰ A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences, however, failed to pinpoint precisely where the differences lie, as it can be seen from Figure 43 that while some users gave higher ratings for the service than non-users. One can also see that other users gave lower ratings for the service than non-users and that a larger proportion of non-users rated the service as "average" compared to users.
- A comparison of trends between the 2006 and 2005 surveys revealed an increase in the combined percentage of users who gave the service a *very high/high* rating (51% in 2007 compared to 47.8% in 2006).

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 $\chi^2 = 17.64$, 4 df, $p = .001$.

A comparison of perceptions by location (regardless of use/non-use of the service) is shown in Figure 44. 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 ($t = - 3.75, 328 \text{ df}, p < .001$), where urban residents are more likely to give building permit and inspections services a higher rating than those living in rural Strathcona.

FIGURE 44
Satisfaction with Building Permit and Inspections Services in Strathcona County –
Urban & Rural Comparisons - 2007



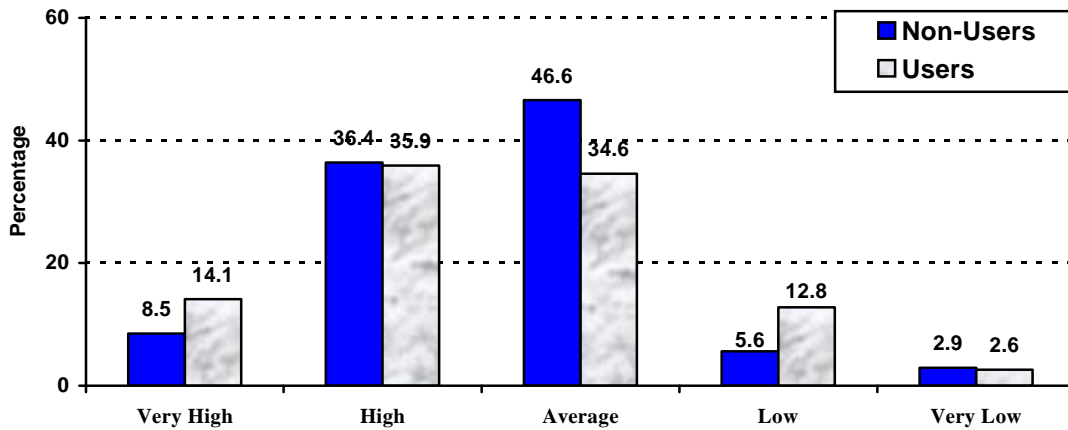
- The 42 people (12.8% of the sample) who rated this service as *low* or *very low* were asked to suggest ways on how this could be improved. Many of these people were concerned with the length of time and requirements necessary to get a permit through the County. Some residents were upset with the costs associated with permits, a shortage of inspectors and the quality of inspections when they were done.

³¹ For building and inspection services, ($\chi^2 = 14.66, 4 \text{ df}, p=.005$).

Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County

Figure 45 presents the satisfaction level that people have with bylaw enforcement, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample that utilized these services³² in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 81 people (16.2% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it.

FIGURE 45
Satisfaction with Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County – 2007 Results



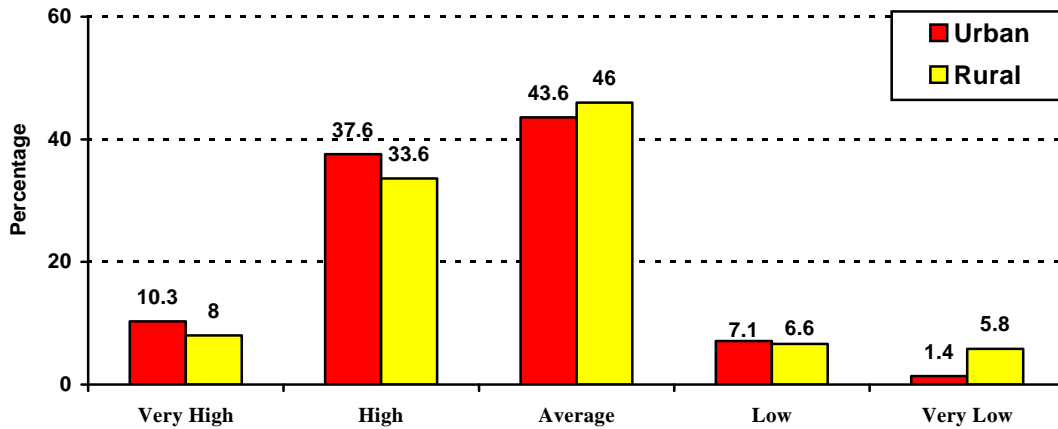
Highlights from Figure 45

- It can be seen from Figure 45 that the perception of residents toward bylaw enforcement services was somewhat similar between user and non-users, though it can be seen that a few of the users were more critical of bylaw enforcement than those who hadn't made use of it. However, the spread between users and non-users was not statistically significant.

³² Overall, 17% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had utilized bylaw enforcement services within the past 12 months. This is about 2% lower than what was reported in the 2006 survey.

A comparison of perceptions by location (regardless of use/non-use of the service) is shown in Figure 46. There was no difference in perceptions between those living rural part of Strathcona County and those living in Sherwood Park.

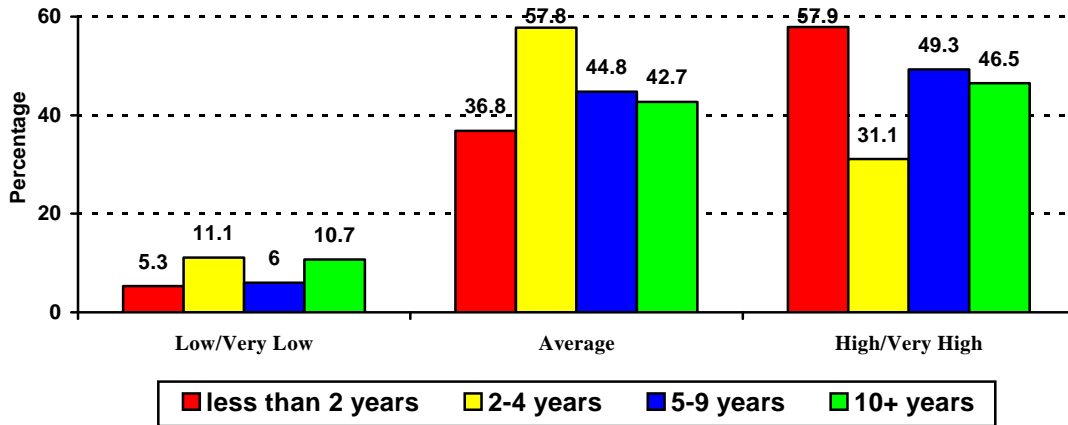
FIGURE 46
Satisfaction with Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County – Urban & Rural Comparisons – 2007 Results



- Both of the urban and rural ratings for Bylaw Enforcement services in 2007 were similar to ratings found in 2006.
- The 41 residents (9.8% of the sample) who had a low level of satisfaction with this service were asked to suggest ways on how this could be improved. Many of the bylaws that appear to be lax include weed control, pet control (including roaming pets and barking dogs), and no citations for unsightly property.

- There was some variation in perception of bylaw enforcement on the basis of length of time people lived in the County. It can be seen in Figure 47 that high satisfaction with bylaw enforcement decreased as the length of residence in the County increased, especially among those who have lived in the County for 2 to 4 years.

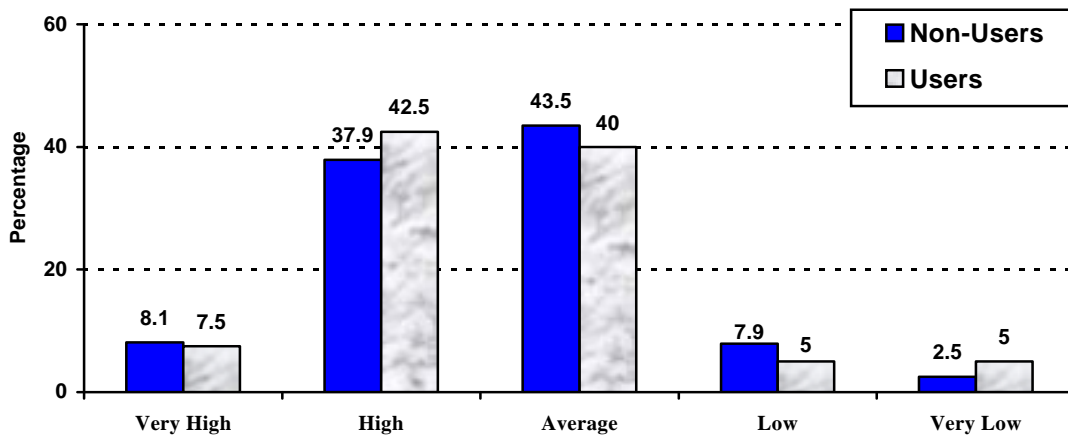
FIGURE 47
Satisfaction with Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County
Comparisons by Length of Residence - Year 2007



Agricultural Services in Strathcona County

Figure 48 presents the satisfaction level that people have with weed control and other agricultural services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample that utilized these services³³ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 67 people (13.4% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it.

FIGURE 48
Satisfaction with Weed Control, Soil Management, Wildlife Problems
and other Agricultural Services in Strathcona County – 2007 Results



Highlights from Figure 48

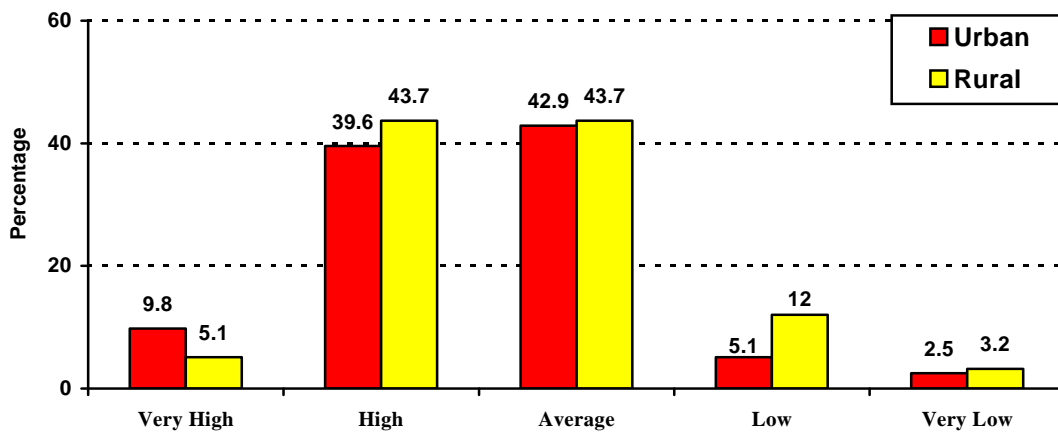
- It can be seen from Figure 48 that the perception toward agricultural services was similar among residents, regardless of whether or not they actually used them.
- A comparison of this year's results with the 2005 and 2006 studies revealed that the percentage of users who gave the service a *very high* or *high* rating was 46% in 2007, which was higher than the 40% rating given in 2006 but lower than the 51.4% rating given by users of the service in 2005.

A comparison of perceptions by location (regardless of use/non-use of the service) is shown in Figure 49. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a

³³ Overall, 8% 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 2006.

relationship between where the respondent lived in the County and how one rated this Strathcona County service.³⁴ It can be seen that a higher percentage of people living in the rural part of Strathcona County gave this service somewhat lower ratings than those living in Sherwood Park. This is confirmed through the *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = - 2.52, 431 \text{ df}, p < .02$).

FIGURE 49
Satisfaction with Weed Control, Soil Management, Wildlife Problems and other Agricultural Services – Urban & Rural Comparisons 2007



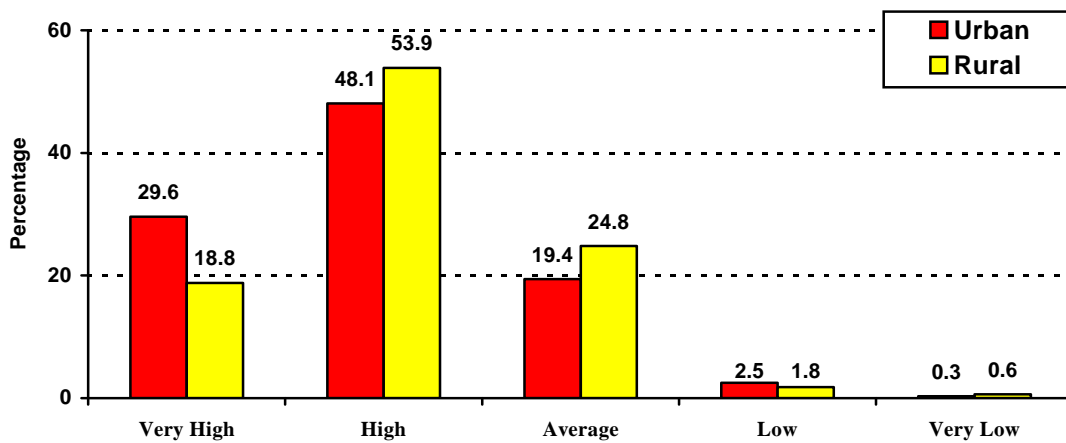
- A comparison of this year's results with the 2006 study revealed that the percentage of rural residents who gave the service a *very high* or *high* rating was 48.8% in 2007, which was considerably higher than the 36.2% rating given in 2006.
- Overall, the 42 residents (10.4% of the sample) who had a *low/very low* level of satisfaction with this service were asked to suggest ways on 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 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. Animal control concerns were minimally mentioned in this year's survey.

³⁴ For this service, ($\chi^2 = 9.62, 4 \text{ df}, p=.047$).

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 50 presents the satisfaction level that people have with the various parks, green spaces and sports fields. Only a small handful of residents (4.2%) did not rate this item.

FIGURE 50
Satisfaction with Parks, Green Spaces and Sports Fields in Strathcona County – 2007 Results

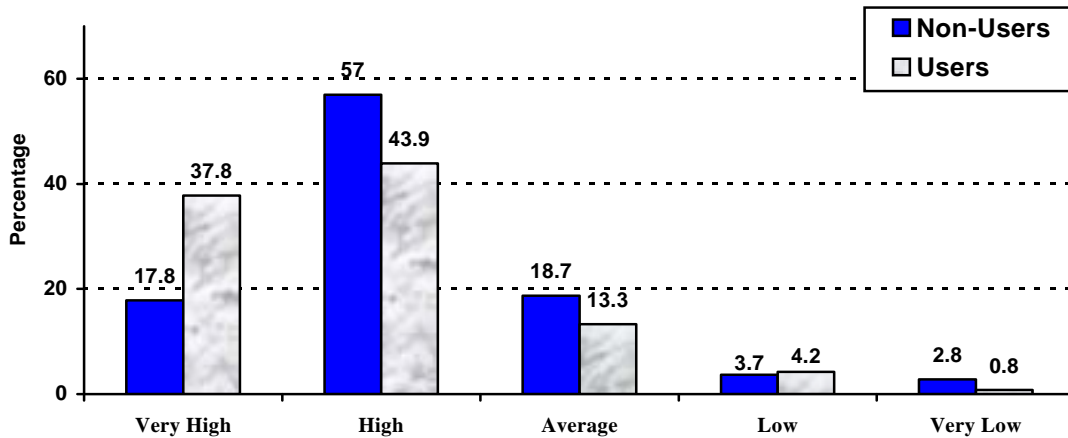


Highlights from Figure 50

- It can be seen from Figure 50 that the perception of residents toward various outdoor green spaces was similar, regardless of where they lived.
- A comparison of this year's results with last year's study pertaining to the combined *very high/high* ratings were similar in the urban area in 2007 (77%) compared to 77.2% in 2006. Rural residents rated this item higher in 2007 (72.7%) compared to 2006 (67.6%).
- The 13 people (2.7% 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. One person felt the playgrounds should be routinely inspected, as the resident found broken bottles in the play area. One specific request was for a new playground (that wasn't boring) in Fountain Creek.

Figure 51 presents the satisfaction level that people have with indoor recreation facilities in the County, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample that utilized these facilities³⁵ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 33 people (6.6% of the sample) did not rate these facilities on the basis that they did not know enough about them.

FIGURE 51
Satisfaction with Indoor Recreation Facilities in Strathcona County – 2007 Results



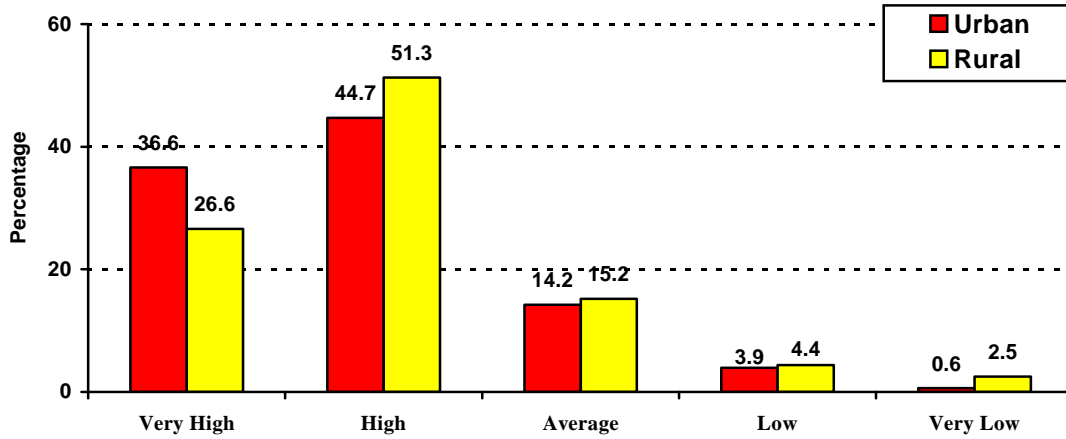
Highlights from Figure 51

- It can be seen from Figure 51 that the perception of residents toward indoor recreation facilities was somewhat dependent on past user patterns. Overall, people who used indoor recreation facilities were slightly more satisfied than those who had not used these facilities. This was confirmed by a chi-square procedure ($\chi^2 = 17.20$, 4 df, $p = .002$) and a *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -3.22$, 465 df, $p = .001$).
- A further analysis revealed that 76.3% of Sherwood Park residents used the indoor recreation facilities at least once in the past 12 months, while 65.1% 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 52).
- The 25 people (5.4% of the sample) who had a low level of satisfaction with the facilities were asked to suggest ways on how these could be improved.

³⁵ Overall, 72.4% 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 the same usage noted in the 2006 survey results.

Most of the complaints focused on the lack of recreation facilities (particularly arenas) in rural areas. One person specifically requested that the County consider building an outdoor pool.

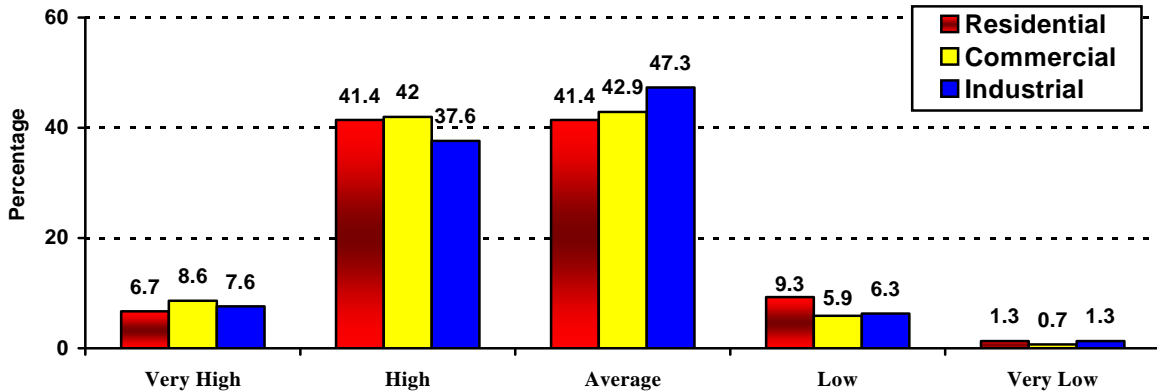
FIGURE 52
Satisfaction with Indoor Recreation Facilities in Strathcona County – 2007 Results



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 53 below.

FIGURE 53
Quality of Various Developments throughout Strathcona County – 2007 Results



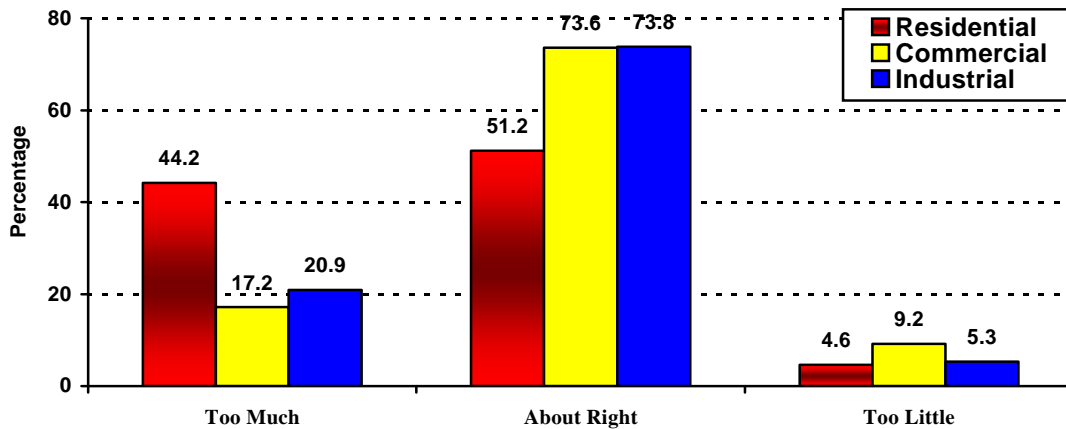
Highlights from Figure 53

- Overall, respondents who rated the different types of developments within the County were satisfied with the quality of residential and commercial development to a slightly larger extent than industrial developments. It should be noted, however, that a considerable number of residents (n=117 or 23.4% of the sample) did not rate the quality of industrial developments.³⁶
- The trends noted in this figure are very similar to trends found in last year's study.
- No differences in perceptions were seen between those living in Sherwood Park and those living in other parts of Strathcona County with respect to quality of residential, commercial or industrial development.
- Those who rated the quality of any of these developments as *low* or *very low* were asked to indicate why they felt that way. Many residents used this section 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 49 people (10.6% of the sample) who rated the quality of residential developments as low. Several felt that the houses seemed crammed too close together with a lack of green space in new neighborhoods, and that many of the houses looked the same. Many residents also questioned the workmanship on new houses and others felt that the roadways in new neighborhoods were too narrow to accommodate increased traffic.
 - For commercial developments, a variety of concerns were put forward by the 29 people (6.6% of the sample) who rated the quality of development as low. Comments mentioned by residents who were dissatisfied were varied and included problems with parking areas associated with commercial strip mall development and a lack of "style" to the architecture associated with new commercial developments. One person mentioned a lack of department stores (such as the Bay or Sears) within Strathcona County.
 - For industrial developments, among the 29 people (7.6% of the sample) who rated the quality of development as low, most of the comments centered on safety and pollution concerns for residents, particularly with respect to air quality.

³⁶ Overall, 36 residents (7.2% of the sample) did not rate the quality of residential developments and 57 residents (11.4% of the sample) did not rate the quality of commercial developments.

A comparative rating pertaining to the perception of the quantity (i.e. amount) of new types of developments is shown in Figure 54.

FIGURE 54
Quantity of Various Developments throughout Strathcona County – 2007 Results

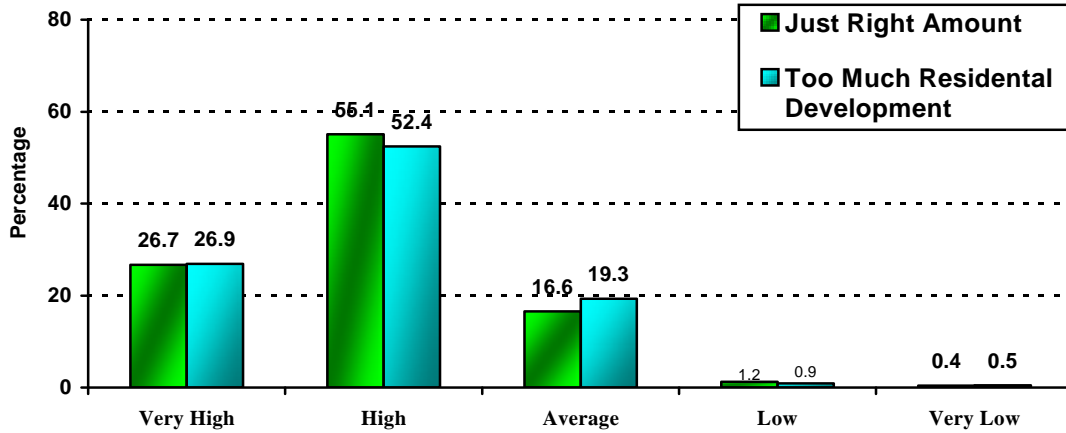


Highlights from Figure 54

- 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 2007 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, just over 44% of residents have a perception that there is too much residential development. A further analysis (as seen in Figure 55) 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 (79.3% *very high/high*) compared to those who felt that the amount of residential development was about right (81.8% *very high/high*).³⁷ 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.

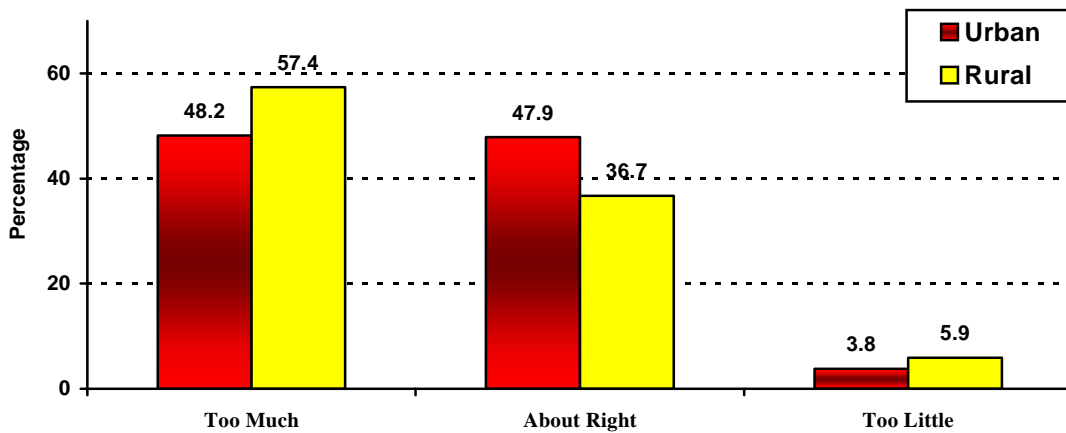
³⁷ These percentage comparisons were almost identical to what was found in 2006.

FIGURE 55
Perception of the Quality of Life in Strathcona County as a Whole – Comparisons Based on Perceptions of Amount of Residential Growth - 2007 Results



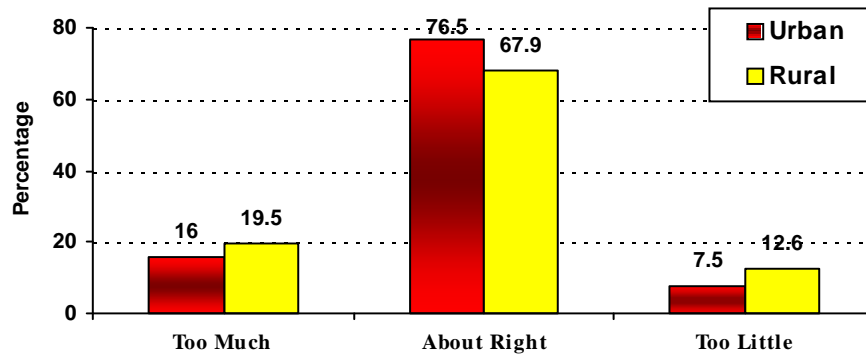
- No differences in perceptions were seen between those living in Sherwood Park and those living in other parts of Strathcona County with respect to amount of industrial development. However, it can be seen in Figure 56 that people living in rural Strathcona were less likely to feel that there was *the right amount of residential development* in the County compared to those living in Sherwood Park, with a greater proportion of rural residents feeling that there was too much residential development in the County compared to urban residents.

FIGURE 56
Quantity of Residential Developments throughout Strathcona County – Urban and Rural Comparisons in 2007



- It can be seen in Figure 57 that people living in rural Strathcona felt a little more strongly that there was *too little commercial development* in the County compared to those living in Sherwood Park.

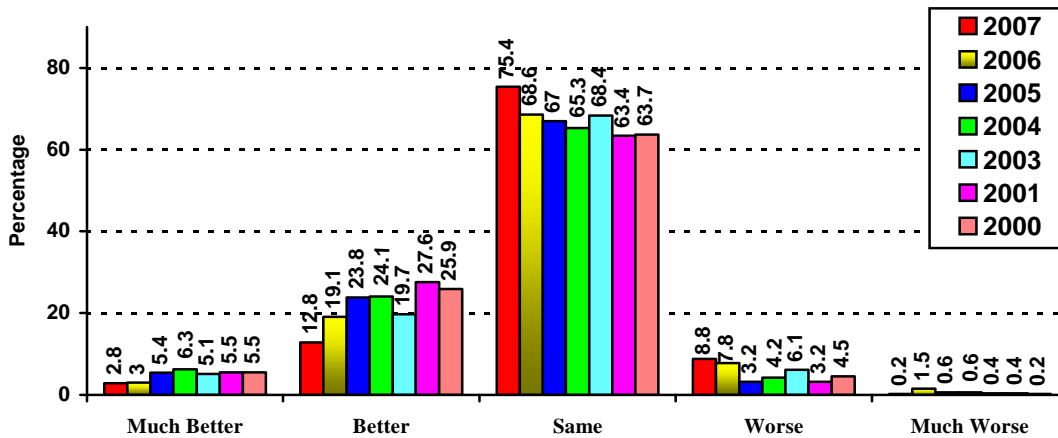
FIGURE 57
Quantity of Commercial Developments throughout Strathcona County – Urban and Rural Comparisons in 2007



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 2007 survey results are compared with the results found in 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2001 and 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
Trends from Previous Surveys

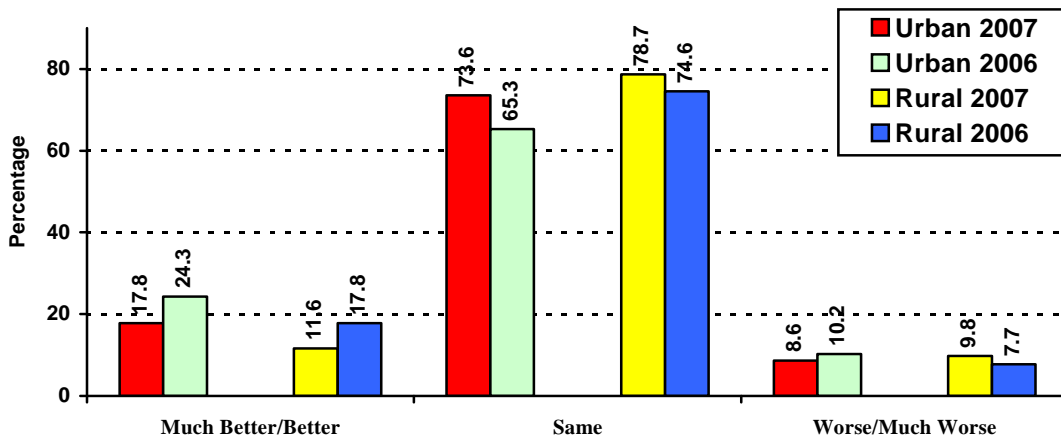


Highlights from Figure 58

- 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 took a jump in 2007 compared to previous years.
- Conversely, it can be seen in 2007 that the percentage of residents who thought things had gotten better compared to 2 years ago dropped slightly compared to previous years.
- The 42 people (9% 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, and delays with County infrastructure (e.g. construction, maintenance, issuing of permits and responses to complaints) possibly due to a lack of skilled workers (or to a general labour shortage).

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 2007. However, a comparison between 2007 and 2006 findings for the urban area reveals a drop in the *much better/better* ratings between 2006 and 2007.

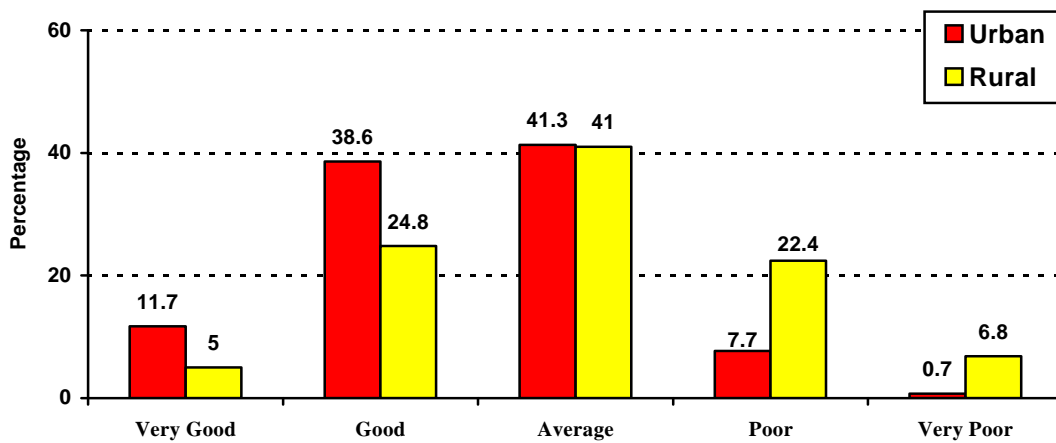
FIGURE 59
Quality of Services Now in Strathcona County Compared to 2 years ago
Urban and Rural Comparisons – 2007 & 2006 Results



F. Question on Taxes within Strathcona County

Residents of Strathcona County who were taxpayers³⁸ were asked to rate the value they receive for their tax dollars. Residents were told that 59% 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 2007



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 ($\chi^2 = 42.42$, 4 df, $p = .000$), and a *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -6.30$, 457 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 (15.7% of the sample, N=72) 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 the complaints came from rural residents who felt that there was an inequity between the amount of money they paid in taxes and the amount of services they were receiving in return (especially no water and sewage service). Residents living within

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

Sherwood Park who were dissatisfied with the taxes spent and services received often cited a lack of snow removal, particularly in the residential areas where there were no bus routes as the source of their dissatisfaction.

A comparison of trends from 2000 - 2007 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 remained relatively constant since 2001. 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 (2000-2007)

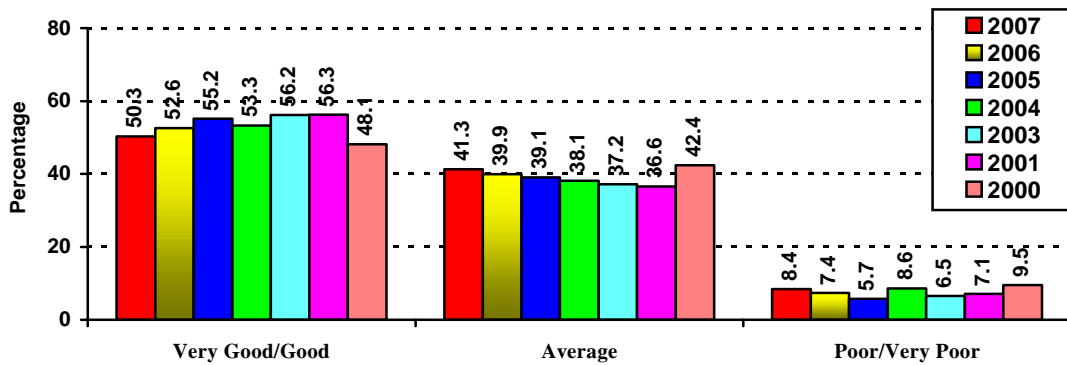
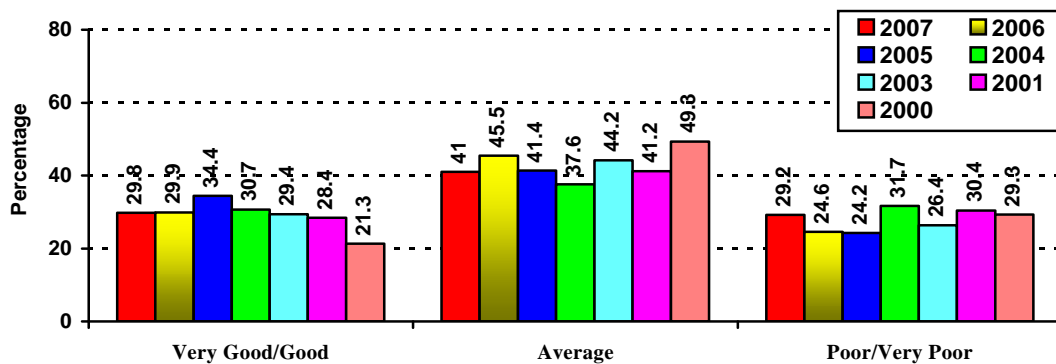


FIGURE 62
Value of Tax Dollars Spent in Strathcona County – Rural Residents (2000-2007)



G. Services Provided by Strathcona County Employees

Residents were asked to indicate which County services they had used in the past 12 months. Most survey respondents had used at least one County service during this time period.³⁹ It can be seen in Table 1 that *recycling services* were the most frequent service used in 2007 among those surveyed, and is seen as having a substantial increase in use over the past 4 years. 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 – 2007 vs. 2004 to 2006

Type of Service	N of Users (2007)	% Use 2007	% Use 2006	% Use 2005	% Use 2004
Recycling Services	435	87.0%	81.6%	83.4%	77.7%
Indoor Recreation Facilities	362	72.4%	71.0%	74.0%	67.9%
Strathcona County Library	305	61.0%	59.2%	60.2%	58.7%
RCMP	150	30.0%	34.6%	33.2%	29.7%
Public Transit Services	121	24.2%	22.6%	28.6%	20.5%
Information & Volunteer Centre	114	22.8%	22.8%	22.0%	18.4%
Building Permit & Inspection Services	99	17.0%	19.2%	17.0%	18.0%
Bylaw Enforcement	85	19.8%	19.8%	19.2%	18.4%
Fire & Ambulance Services	77	15.4%	14.0%	16.4%	10.6%
Family Support Services	41	8.2%	11.0%	9.0%	7.2%
Agriculture Services	40	8.0%	9.0%	5.0%	7.0%

With the exception of *recycling services*, all the other municipal services had minor increases or decreases in use by residents in 2007 compared to previous years.

³⁹ 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).

A comparison of services used between urban and rural residents for 2007 and 2006 is shown in Table 2.⁴⁰ It can be seen that in 2007, among residents who were surveyed, urban residents used *recycling services, indoor recreation facilities, the public library, the RCMP, 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* compared with urban residents. This was the same pattern found in 2006, with the exception of *RCMP* usage, which was a very similar reported usage by both rural and urban residents in 2006 compared to 2007.

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	2007		2006	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Recycling Services	<u>91.7%</u>	78.3%	87.5%	70.9%
Indoor Recreation Facilities	<u>76.3%</u>	65.1%	74.8%	64.2%
Strathcona County Library	<u>66.2%</u>	51.4%	62.6%	53.1%
RCMP	<u>33.5%</u>	23.4%	34.9%	34.1%
Public Transit Services	<u>29.8%</u>	13.7%	28.7%	11.7%
Information & Volunteer Centre	<u>26.8%</u>	14.9%	23.4%	21.8%
Building Permit & Inspection Services	18.5%	22.3%	19.3%	19.0%
Bylaw Enforcement	16.6%	17.7%	18.7%	21.8%
Fire & Ambulance Services	16.0%	14.3%	15.0%	12.3%
Family Support Services	8.6%	6.3%	11.5%	10.1%
Agriculture Services	3.1%	<u>17.1%</u>	4.4%	17.3%

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

Respondents were asked to think of their most recent contact that they had with County staff 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 2007

Type of Service	N	%
Indoor Recreation Facilities	136	28.6%
Recycling Services	127	26.5%
Strathcona County Library	96	20.0%
RCMP	32	6.7%
Building Permit & Inspection Services	20	4.2%
Public Transit Services	17	3.5%
Fire & Ambulance Services	15	3.1%
Bylaw Enforcement	7	1.5%
Family Support Services	7	1.5%
Information & Volunteer Centre	6	1.3%
Agriculture Services	3	0.6%

FIGURE 63
Quality of Services provided by County Staff -2007 Results

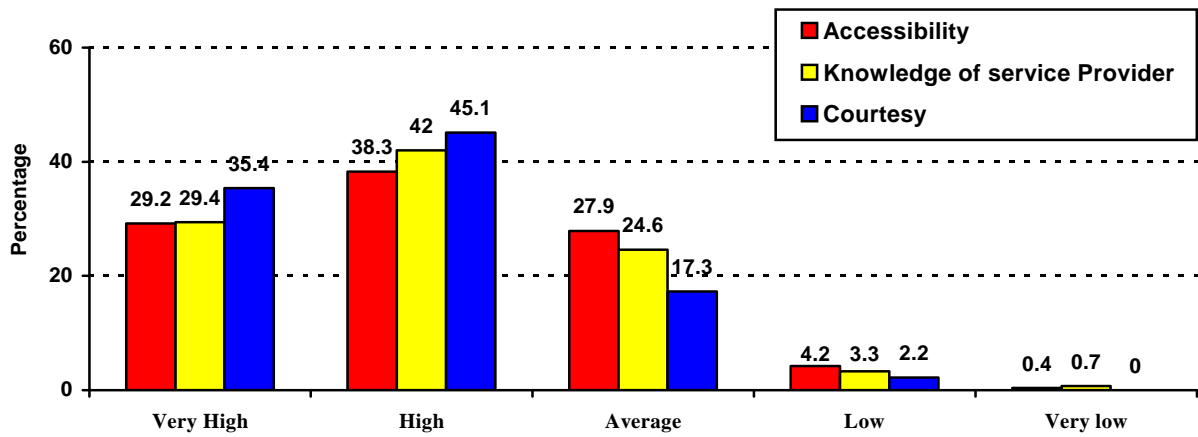
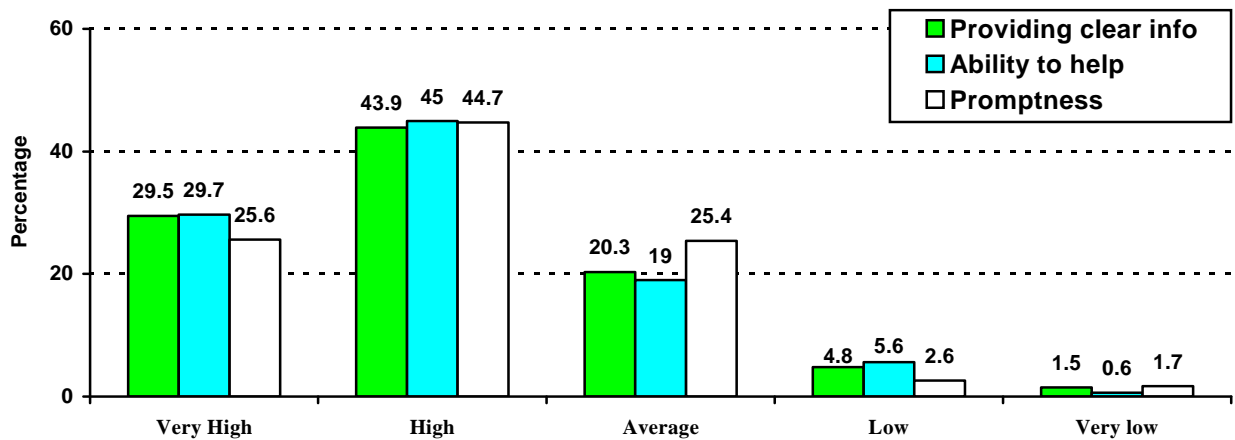


FIGURE 64
Quality of Services provided by County Staff – 2007 Results



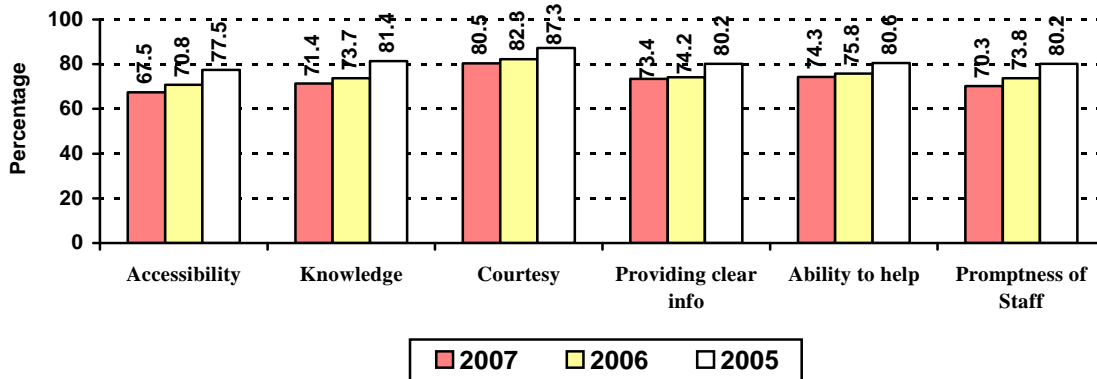
Highlights from Figure 63 and Figure 64

- 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* (80.5%). The remaining staff aspects were all rated relatively similar, with the *ability of the staff to help you* being second highest at 74.3%, followed closely by *being able to provide clear information* (73.4%), *knowledge of the service provider* (71.4%), *promptness of staff* (70.3%), and *accessibility of staff* (67.5%).

- All respondents were given the opportunity to provide any comments about the service that they had received from County staff. Overall, 33.8% of the respondents (N=169) provided additional comments. Of these 169 residents, the majority of the comments (124 or 73.4% of these 169 residents) were positive descriptors, including *good and/or helpful, professional knowledgeable staff, efficient and friendly/courteous*. Almost 9% of these residents had additional positive perceptions toward departments that were particularly helpful to them.
- Not everyone was pleased, however, as 21.9% of the 169 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.

Figure 65 presents a comparison of overall results between this year’s survey and the 2005 and 2006 surveys for these 6 items. It was found that the combined *very high/high ratings for staff* were slightly lower in 2007 compared to 2006 for all items, and considerably lower than what was found in 2005.

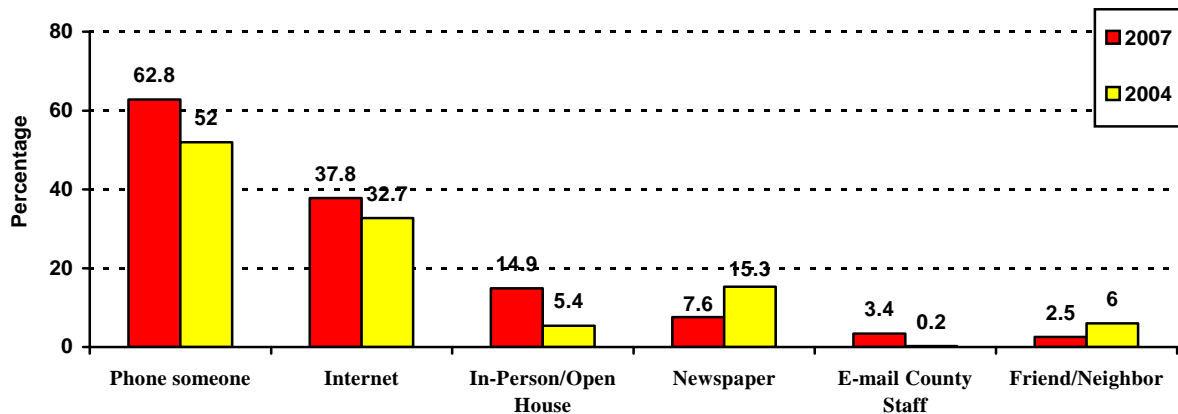
FIGURE 65
Quality of Services provided by County Staff - 2007 with 2006 & 2005 comparisons on the combined *Very High/High* percentages



H. Assessment of County Communication and Information Services

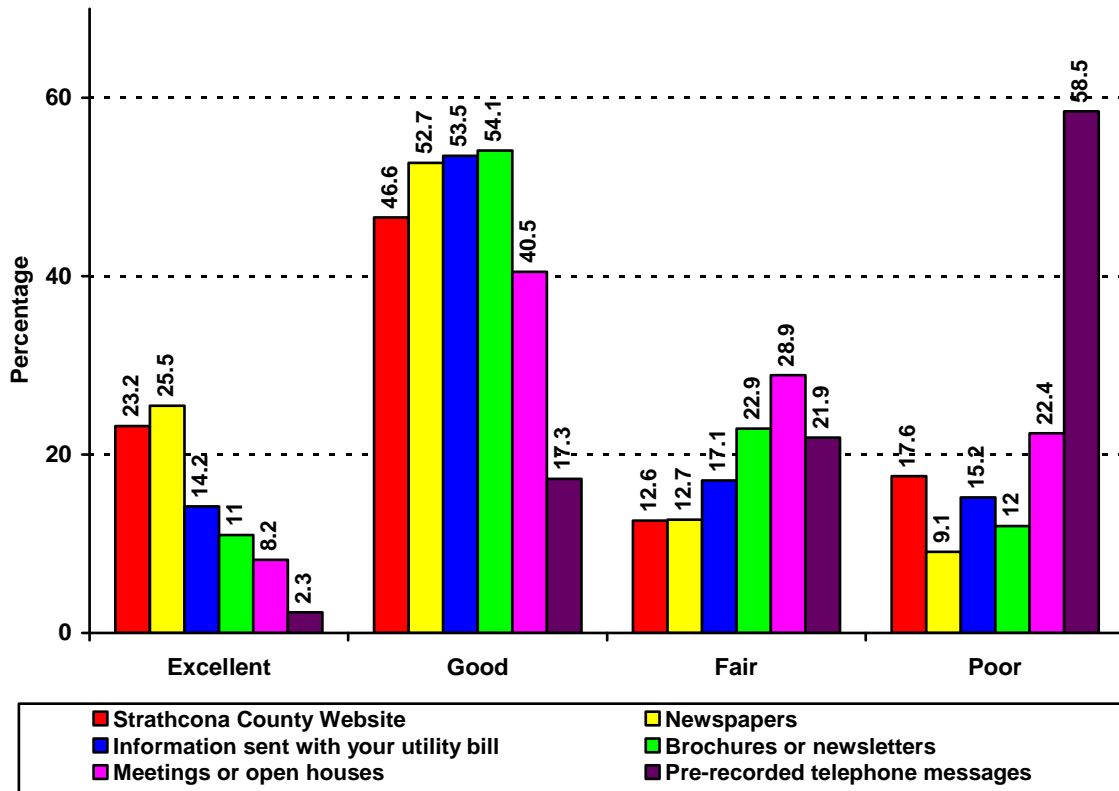
Residents were asked to a series of questions about how they get information from Strathcona County. Initially, they were asked to state, in their own words, how they would go about seeking information on an issue and/or a service from the County. The results are shown in Figure 66 (along with comparisons from a communications study done in 2004). It can be seen that phoning someone was the most popular method, followed by seeking information on the Internet. Going in-person or to an open house was the third most popular method (and considerably more popular than in 2004). The local newspaper, which was the third most popular method in 2004, was a distant fourth in 2007.

FIGURE 66
Ways that Residents get Information from Strathcona County
2007 & 2004 Comparisons Results



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 67.

FIGURE 67
Rating Existing Methods Used to Inform the Public about Municipal Services



It can be seen in Figure 67 that the *County website* and *newspapers* received solid ratings from residents. Overall, 78.2% of residents gave newspapers an excellent or good rating, while 69.8% gave the website an excellent or good rating. *Information sent to residents through the utility bill* (69.7% excellent/good) as well as *newsletters and brochures* (64.1% excellent/good) also received acceptable ratings.

Two methods that received considerably lower ratings from residents were *meetings/open houses* (48.7% excellent/good) and *pre-recorded telephone messages* (19.6% excellent/good).

Figure 68 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 68
Percentage of Residents who Visited the County Website

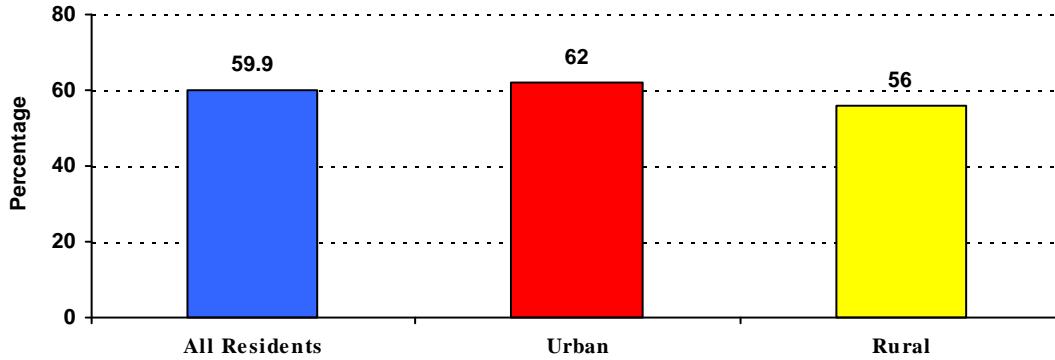
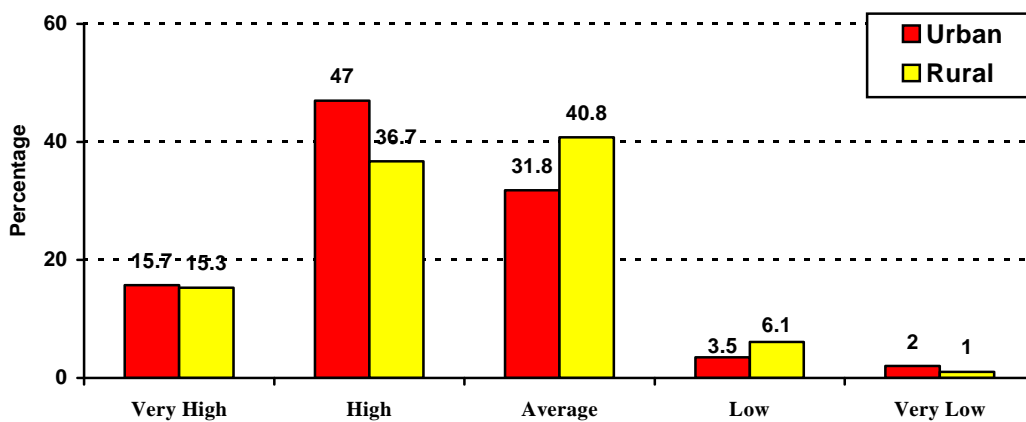


Figure 69 presents the satisfaction level that people have with the Strathcona County website.⁴¹ It can be seen that the satisfaction level was higher among urban residents compared to those living in rural Strathcona, but the spread was not statistically significant.

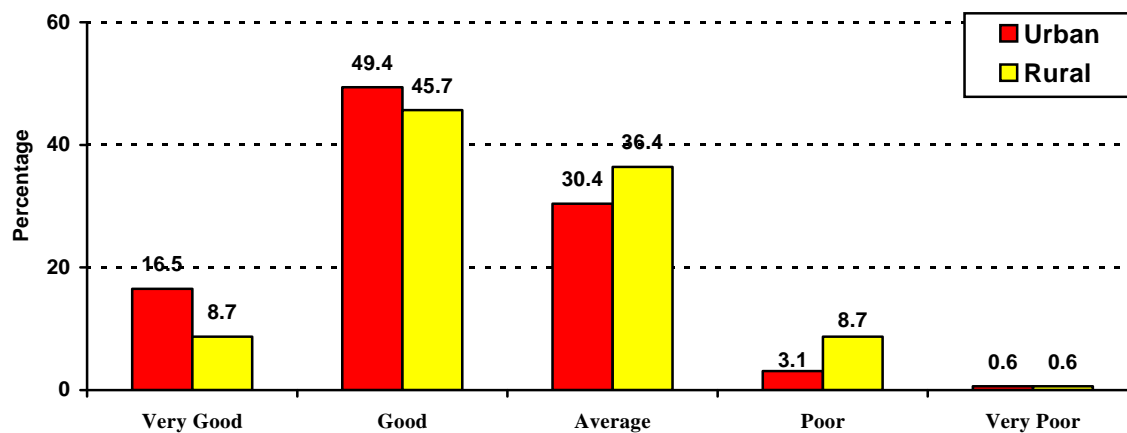
FIGURE 69
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Website – 2007 Results



⁴¹ This figure excludes 40% of the residents who had not ever gone to the County website.

Figure 70 presents the overall rating that residents have with how the County communicates with its citizens.

FIGURE 70
Rating of how well Strathcona County Communicates with Residents – 2007 Results

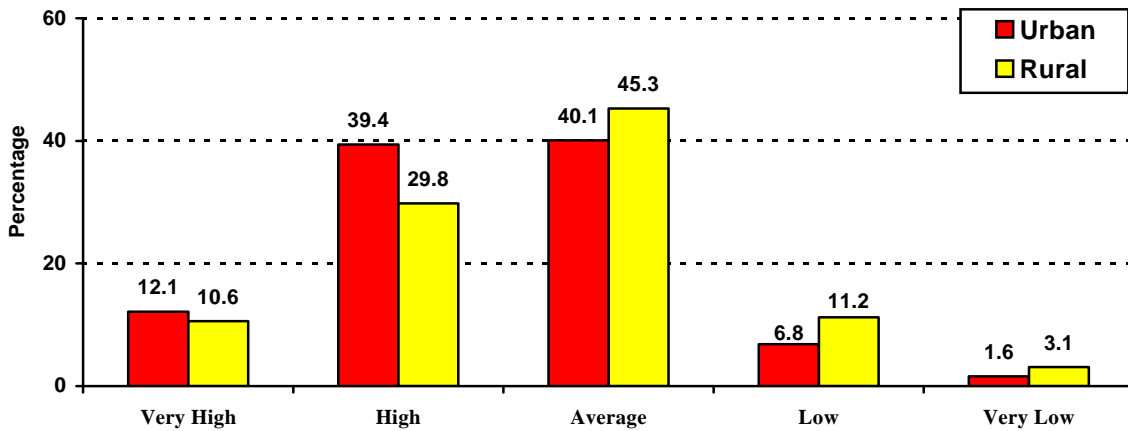


Highlights from Figure 70

- Statistically, there was a difference between urban and rural residents with respect to how well they felt the County communicated with its residents. This was confirmed by a chi-square procedure ($\chi^2 = 13.44$, 4 df, $p = .009$) and a *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -3.36$, 493 df, $p = .001$). It can be seen that a higher percentage of people living in the rural area felt that communication from the County was average or poor compared to those living in Sherwood Park.
- Overall, almost 65% of those living in Sherwood Park felt that the County was doing a good or very good job conveying information to residents. Just over 54% of rural residents felt this way.
- No differences were found among any other demographic variables for this question.
- The 28 people (5.7% of the sample) who felt that communication efforts by the County were poor or very poor were asked to provide potential ways that the County could improve. Many of the suggestions were associated with councillors either sending out regular newsletters or making personal appearances at open houses or other community meetings. A few people thought that the County could make better use of the local newspaper, while others had hoped for councillors and the mayor to listen to citizens.

Figure 71 presents the overall satisfaction rating that residents have with having opportunities to express opinions about municipal issues in Strathcona County.

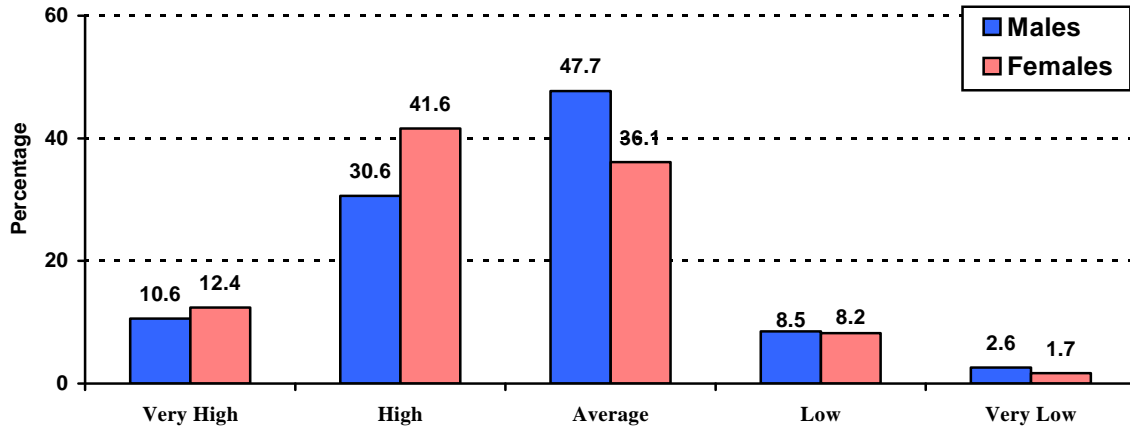
FIGURE 71
Rating of being able to have Opportunities to Express Opinions– 2007 Results



Highlights from Figure 71

- There was a statistical difference noted with respect to where one lived, as those who lived in rural Strathcona County were more dissatisfied with being able to express opinions compared to those living in Sherwood Park. This was confirmed by a *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = - 2.33, 466$ *df*, $p = .02$).
- There was also some variation in this question with respect to gender. It can be seen in Figure 72 that the satisfaction level among females was considerably higher than men. This was confirmed by a *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = 2.05, 466$ *df*, $p = .04$).
- Overall, 49 people (10.4% 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. There were other people who felt frustrated at times that they could not get through to someone in charge to talk about their concerns.

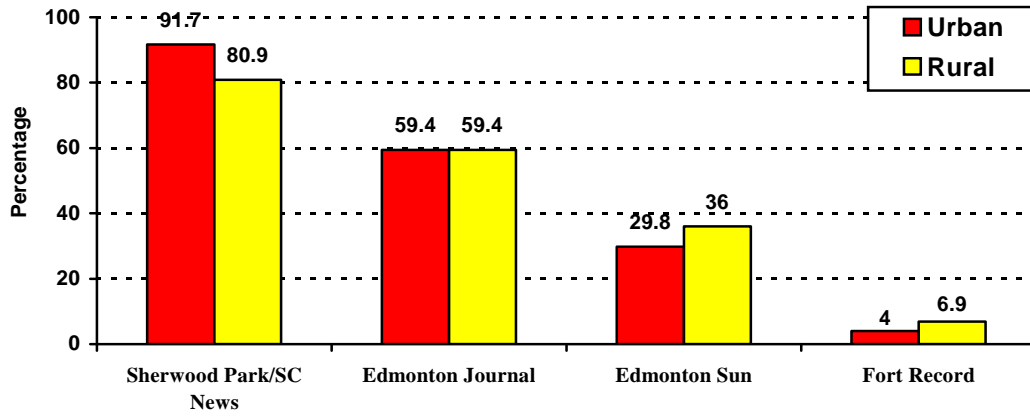
FIGURE 72
Rating of being able to have Opportunities to Express Opinions
Gender Comparisons



I. Newspaper Readership

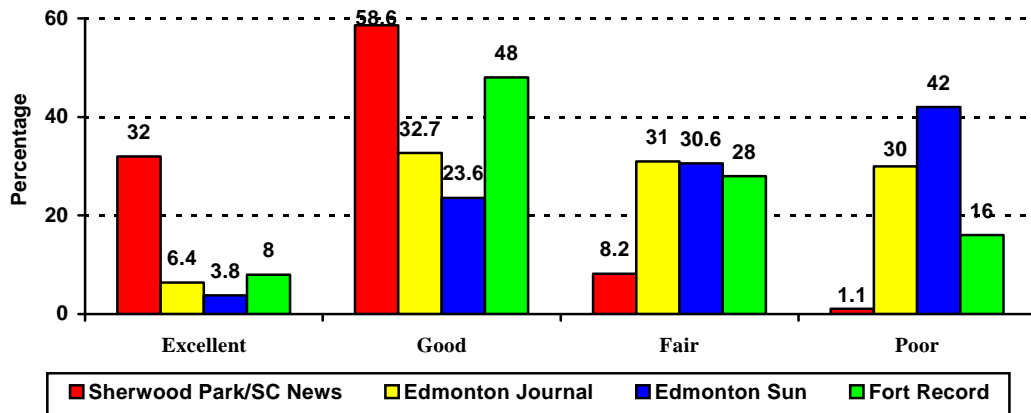
All respondents were asked to indicate what newspapers they read, and to rate the ones that they read on how good the newspaper was as a source of information about Strathcona County. A breakdown of readership for four different newspapers is shown in Figure 73. The local County newspaper, *The Sherwood Park/Strathcona County News* had a strong readership in both the urban and rural regions, with the *Edmonton Journal* being a distant second. A smaller percentage of residents read the *Edmonton Sun*, while only a fraction read the *Fort Record*.

FIGURE 73
Newspapers read by Strathcona County Residents – 2007 Results



A breakdown of the quality of the newspapers⁴² as a source of information about Strathcona County is shown in Figure 74. Most respondents felt that *The Sherwood Park/Strathcona County News* was the best. It should be noted that while ratings of the *Fort Record* as a source of information about Strathcona County were quite positive, this newspaper is read by only a small percentage of County residents.

FIGURE 74
Quality of Newspapers read by Strathcona County Residents – 2007 Results



⁴² Please note that the quality that respondents were rating pertained strictly to information presented about Strathcona County. The quality ratings noted here are not a reflection of the quality of the newspapers themselves.

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, 41.4% of respondents provided additional comments.⁴³ Just over 25% percent of these comments were positive, with most of these comments 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; no curb-side recycling and limitations of acceptable products for recycling; various bylaw enforcement issues (or lack thereof); and RCMP response time (31.9%).
- Tax concerns (11.6%).
- Various building and infrastructure issues, including roadway work and maintenance of man made lakes in the County (11.1%).
- Concern with regional issues (8.7%).
- Growth and development within the County (8.2%)

⁴³ 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 that the municipality is responsible for.

APPENDIX A: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Strathcona County Year 2007 Client Satisfaction Questionnaire

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

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

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

Great, but before we begin I need to know:

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

 If not 1 or 2 – Thank and terminate

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

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

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

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

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

	very high	high	average	low, or	very low	DO NOT READ: DK
3. 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
4. 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
5. 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?

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

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

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

1. Very High 2. High 3. Average 4. Low 5. Very Low | 9. Don't Know

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

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

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

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

1 2 3 4 5 9

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

b. Thinking of **urban street maintenance in the summer** (potholes filled, streets in good repair)...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? very high high average low,or very low **DO NOT READ: DK**

1 2 3 4 5 9

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

c. Thinking of **rural road maintenance in summer** (potholes, grading, dust control)...is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? very high high average low,or very low **DO NOT READ: DK**

1 2 3 4 5 9

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

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

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

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

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

- f. Thinking of **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 garbage collection ...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 waste recycling 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?

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------|------|---------|--------|-------------|----------------------------|
| l. | 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?

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------|------|---------|--------|-------------|----------------------------|
| m. | 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?

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------|------|---------|--------|-------------|----------------------------|
| n. | Thinking of public transit services here in the County ...is | very
high | high | average | low,or | very
low | DO NOT READ:
DK |
|----|---|--------------|------|---------|--------|-------------|----------------------------|

your satisfaction level very high, 1 2 3 4 5 9
 high, average, low or very low?

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

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

- How would you rate the quality of:
- | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|------|---------|---------|----------|------------------------|
| | very high | high | average | low, or | very low | DO NOT READ: DK |
| 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 |

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

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

IF WORSE OR MUCH WORSE, ASK:

What changes have you noticed about the quality of service?

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

1 Yes – **Go to Q-11b**

2 No | 9 Don't know
skip to q-12

b. 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.

12. 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 services
 - 8 Agricultural services
 - 9 Information and Volunteer Centre
 - 10 Strathcona County Library
 - 11 The RCMP
 - 12 Any Others – Please indicate: _____
-
- 98 None (**do not read**) - **Go to Question 14 on the next page**
- 99 Don't know (**do not Read**) – **Go to Question 14 on the next page**

If one or more of these services are mentioned, please go to Question 13

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

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

- 1 Yes **Skip to Q-16**
- 2 No **Ask Q-15 below**
- 9 Don't know

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

- 1 Very good
 - 2 Good
 - 3 Average
 - 4 Poor, or
 - 5 Very Poor
-
- 9 Don't know

Go to Question 17

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

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

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

18. If you wanted to get information about an issue facing County residents, or find out more about a County service, how would you go about doing this? *(Do not read list! Note all answers below and ask respondent, "Any other way?" Multiple answers are accepted)*

1. E-mail someone at Strathcona County
2. Telephone someone at Strathcona County
3. By a written letter to someone at Strathcona County
4. In person / open-house
5. Internet
6. Library
7. Ask a neighbor, friend or family member
8. Newspaper
9. Other _____

99. Don't know

19. 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	Method	DO NOT READ: 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

20. Have you ever visited the Strathcona County website?

1. Yes

2. No	Skip to Q-22
9. Don't know	Skip to Q-22

21. 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

22. 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

IF COMMUNICATION IS RATED POOR OR VERY POOR (4, 5), ASK:

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

23. There are different newspapers that may be read by County residents. I'd like to read a short list to you, and for each paper that you read, I'd like you rate how good the newspaper is as a source of information about Strathcona County. There are no right or wrong answers.

Rotate list

Do you read: _____?

(If Read, ask... Is this an:

- a. The Sherwood Park/Strathcona County News, which is published twice a week
- b. The Fort Record
- c. The Edmonton Journal
- d. The Edmonton Sun

Excellent Source

Good Source

Fair Source, or

Poor Source of Information?

Don't Know

Don't Read

1

2

3

4

9

0

1

2

3

4

9

0

1

2

3

4

9

0

1

2

3

4

9

0

24. In conclusion, 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...

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

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

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

26a) How many of these people are children aged 15 or younger? _____

26b) How many are children aged 16 or older? _____

27. 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

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

29. 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 #: _____