

Strathcona County



2005 Public Satisfaction Survey

Research Results

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2005 Public Opinion Survey on Services and Life in Strathcona County was undertaken in December 2005 to obtain perceptions on the quality of life of residents living in Sherwood Park and rural parts of Strathcona County. This is the eighth 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 (88.3% rated very high or high). This was followed by *a safe community* (71.5% rated very high or high), *the quality of the natural environment* (66.1% rated very high or high) and *balancing needs and interests of people living throughout the County* (63.2% rated very high or high).
2. The positive views that people had toward the living in the County as a whole extended to the general satisfaction level for 19 specific services offered by County staff. The overall results, sorted by mean score, are shown in Table A on the next page. Services that residents were particularly rated highly included the *indoor recreation facilities, fire & ambulance services* and *the County Library*. The services that received lower satisfaction ratings were *land use planning, building permit & inspection services, weed control & other agricultural services, winter road maintenance* and *bylaw enforcement*. Even here, however, one can see the mean score gives these services an “average” rating among residents.
3. It should be noted that in this survey, as in previous years, residents rated all 19 services as a whole. 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.

Table A
Overall Satisfaction Levels with Municipal Services by County Residents¹

| | Mean Score ² | Level of Satisfaction | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|------|---------|------|----------|
| | | Very High | High | Average | Low | Very Low |
| Indoor recreation facilities (arenas and pool) | 4.34 | 47.4 | 41.7 | 8.5 | 2.3 | 0.0 |
| Fire and ambulance services | 4.21 | 40.3 | 44.2 | 11.9 | 3.3 | 0.2 |
| Strathcona County Library | 4.09 | 34.6 | 43.7 | 18.7 | 2.5 | 0.5 |
| Parks, green spaces and sports fields | 4.03 | 26.9 | 54.0 | 14.9 | 3.6 | 0.6 |
| Garbage collection | 3.96 | 27.8 | 48.8 | 16.9 | 5.0 | 1.5 |
| RCMP services | 3.95 | 28.9 | 45.1 | 19.5 | 5.4 | 1.1 |
| Information and Volunteer Centre | 3.88 | 20.8 | 51.7 | 23.3 | 3.1 | 1.0 |
| Family support services | 3.78 | 17.6 | 47.9 | 30.0 | 3.6 | 1.0 |
| Water and sewer services | 3.77 | 19.7 | 46.2 | 27.6 | 4.1 | 2.4 |
| Urban street maintenance in summer | 3.73 | 14.5 | 52.3 | 26.7 | 5.0 | 1.5 |
| Economic development | 3.72 | 14.5 | 52.3 | 26.1 | 5.1 | 2.0 |
| Waste recycling services | 3.61 | 20.7 | 38.8 | 25.1 | 11.6 | 3.7 |
| Rural road maintenance in summer | 3.56 | 11.2 | 45.4 | 34.4 | 6.4 | 2.5 |
| Public transit services | 3.52 | 18.2 | 38.2 | 26.0 | 12.9 | 4.7 |
| Agricultural services (weed control and wildlife mgmt) | 3.46 | 10.8 | 40.6 | 35.6 | 9.9 | 3.1 |
| Winter road maintenance, snow removal and ice control | 3.46 | 16.3 | 34.5 | 32.1 | 13.1 | 4.0 |
| Bylaw enforcement | 3.46 | 10.2 | 41.4 | 36.2 | 8.2 | 4.0 |
| Permit and inspection services | 3.33 | 7.8 | 38.4 | 38.4 | 9.9 | 5.4 |
| Land use planning | 3.09 | 3.7 | 30.2 | 42.8 | 17.9 | 5.4 |

¹ Please note that in this table, percentages add up to 100% for each item (by rows).

² The mean score is based on a five point scale, where the higher the mean score, the higher the satisfaction level with the particular service.

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 commercial developments (59.1% very high/high ratings), followed closely by residential developments (56.5% very high/high ratings). Just under half of the residents gave industrial developments a positive rating in 2005 (49.3% very high/high ratings). The majority of people felt that the number of commercial and industrial developments in the County was about right at the present time. However, a large percentage of residents (44.1%) felt that there may be too many residential developments occurring within the County as of 2005. 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 very good or 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 55.2% in 2005, which was slightly higher to the 53.2% of residents who felt this way in the 2004 survey, but lower than what residents felt in 2003 (56.2%) and 2001 (56.3%). 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 3 years of tracking this item. For rural residents, the perception that one is getting very good or good value for the tax dollars was lower than urban residents, but has shown signs of increasing since 2000 (at 21.3%), bouncing up to 28.4% in 2001 and continually increasing to 29.4% in 2003, 30.7% in 2004 and now 35.1% in 2005. The percentage of rural residents who believe they are getting poor or very poor value for their tax dollars was 24.2% in 2005, which is lower than previous year (e.g. 31.7% dissatisfaction rate in 2004 and 26.4% in 2003).
6. Ratings of County staff on the provision of services to the public were favorable on all methods of service delivery, particularly *courtesy*. Moreover, the positive ratings

for each of these were slightly higher than the ratings found in the previous 2004 survey (with the exception of *accessibility*, which was minutely lower in 2005).

I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In December 2005, 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 eighth year that a formal satisfaction study of residents has been conducted. 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 the same instrument used in 2000 and subsequent years. The questions in the survey were retained in order to make valid comparisons with the previous year. A copy of the questionnaire is located in Appendix A.

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 urban¹ 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, 66% of the sample was drawn from the urban area, while 34% came from rural parts of Strathcona County. The sample frame provided overall results² 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 2nd and December 9th, 2005. Strathcona County derived telephone numbers from the Select Phone Canadian Edition database and randomized them for this study. Trained interviewers from Banister

¹ In this report, the urban component of Strathcona County is Sherwood Park.

² 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.

Research & Consulting Inc. made all telephone calls under supervised conditions. Each questionnaire took an average of 10 minutes to complete. The data was analyzed by Strathcona County's Corporate Planning Secretariat using SPSS for Windows.

III. RESULTS

This section of the report presents a summary of the results associated with the perceptions and awareness of residents. Socio-demographic comparisons, where significant, are also highlighted. Comparisons will also be made with data collected from 2000 through 2004 when significant differences occur.³

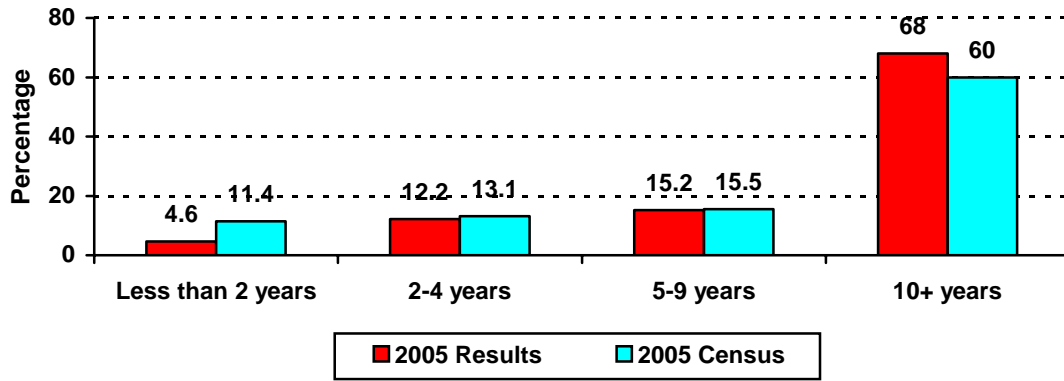
A. Demographic Overview

This section of the report presents an overview of the type of residents who were surveyed in the year 2005. As indicated in the previous section of this report, part of the sampling criteria was to survey the county by population density. The other sampling criteria was to obtain answers from approximately equal numbers of males and females. As such, in the sample, responses to the survey came from 47.4% of males and 52.6% of females. Almost all of the people interviewed were homeowners (92.2%), 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 17.7 years.

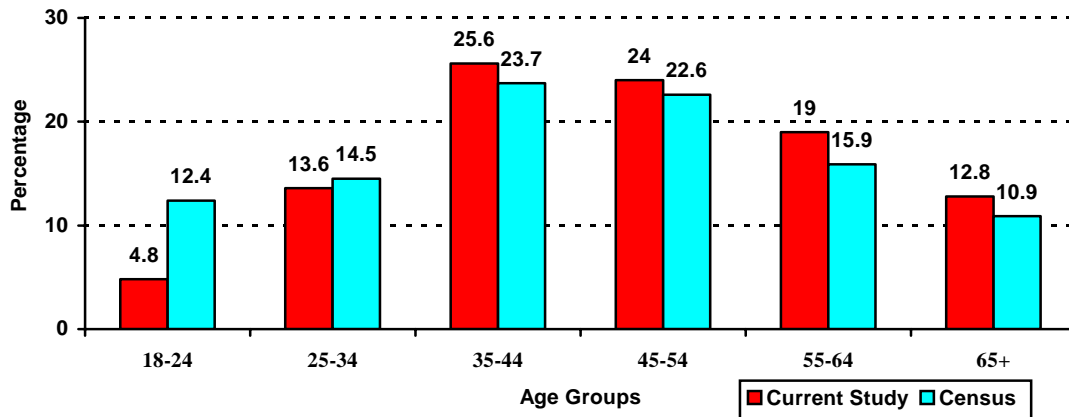
³ It should be noted that no satisfaction study was conducted in 2002, as this was the year that the county-wide Community Consultation project was done.

Figure 1
Length of Time Living in the County
(Current 2005 Study and 2005 Census Comparison)

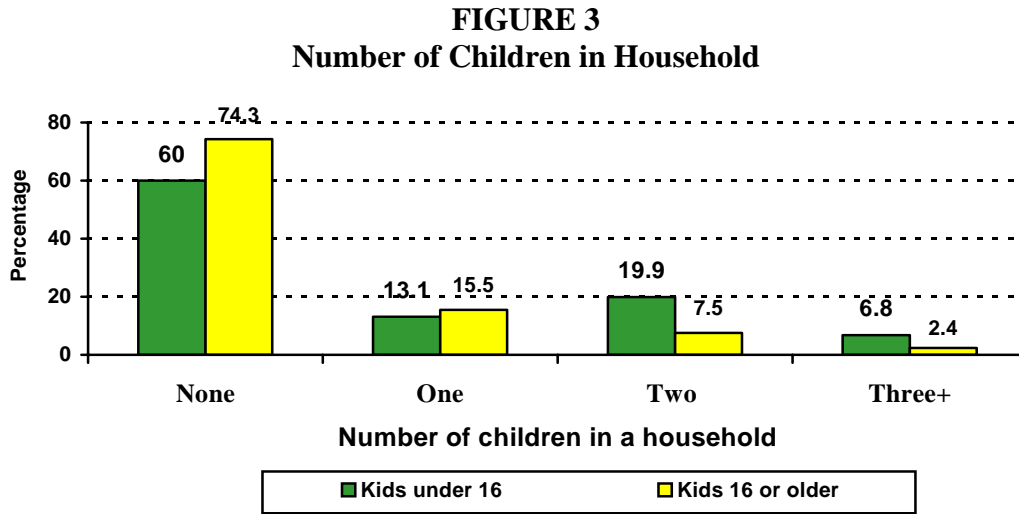


A breakdown of the age of the respondents by location in the County is shown in Figure 2. There was a relatively good representation from all age groups, though in comparison to the 2003 census, the 18-24 year age group was under-represented.

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



A breakdown of children in the household from the current study is shown in Figure 3.



In this year's survey, respondents were again asked if they presently did any volunteer work in Strathcona County. Overall, it was found that 27.4% of residents are volunteers, which is an increase of almost 3% from 2004. A further analysis revealed the following:

- On the basis of geographic location, in 2005, 29.1% of Sherwood Park residents volunteer compared with 24.1% of rural residents. There were 3% more urban residents and 1.1% more rural residents doing volunteer work in the community compared to 2004);
- Of the basis of gender, in 2005, 30.4% of females said they volunteered, while 24.1% of males volunteered; and
- Volunteers came from all age groups, particularly those aged 35 to 44 years of age.

In the latest study, it was found that 89.2% of Strathcona County residents had one or more members of the household who had access to the Internet in 2005. Figure 4 shows the internet access trends from 2000 to 2005, where it can be seen that internet access has increased steadily from 2000 to 2005. There is a solid increase of rural residents who are accessing the Internet in 2005 compared to previous years.

FIGURE 4
Internet Access Trends (2000-2005)

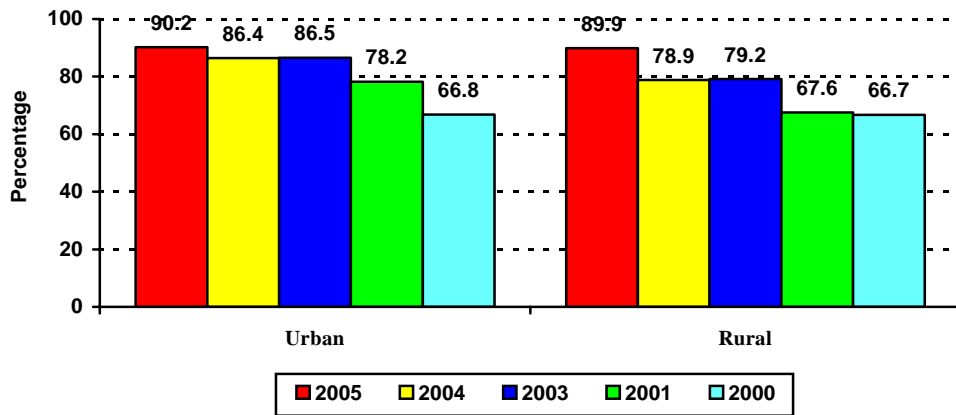
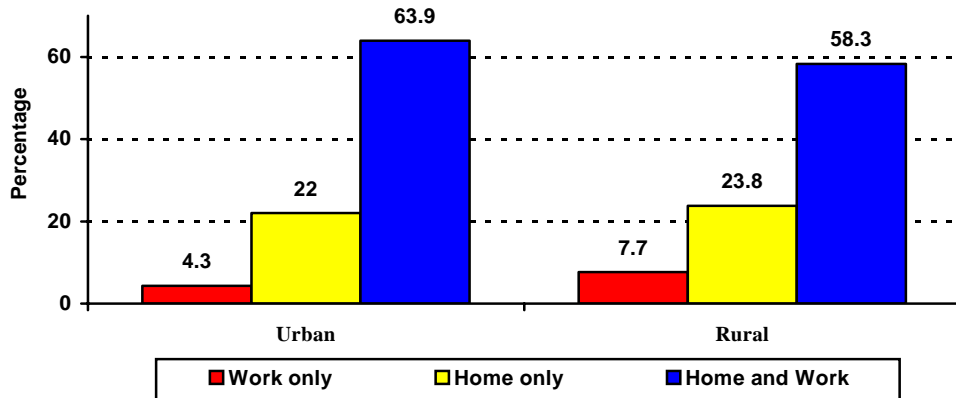


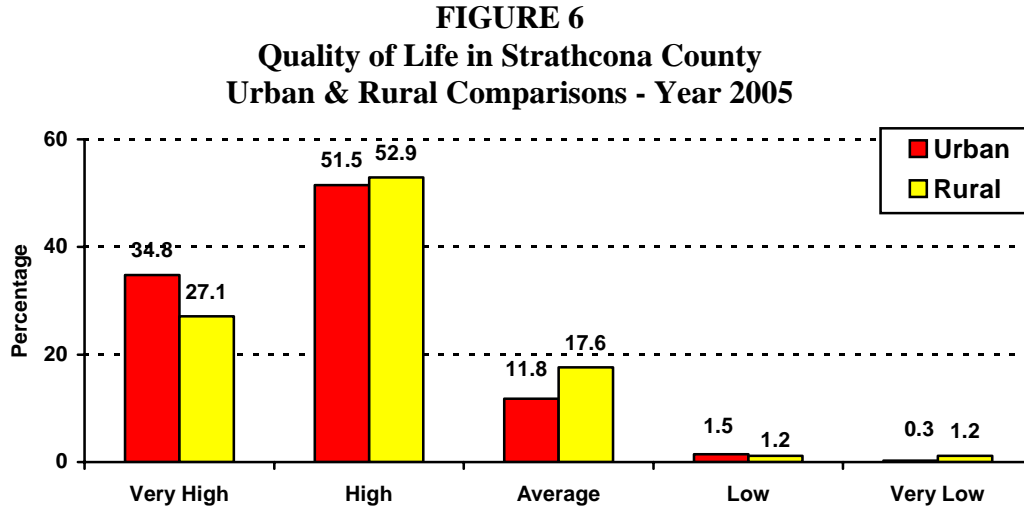
Figure 5 shows where residents are accessing the internet. It can be seen that most residents access the internet from both work and home settings, regardless of where they live within the County.

FIGURE 5
Where are Residents Using the Internet (2005)



B. Quality of Life in Strathcona County

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



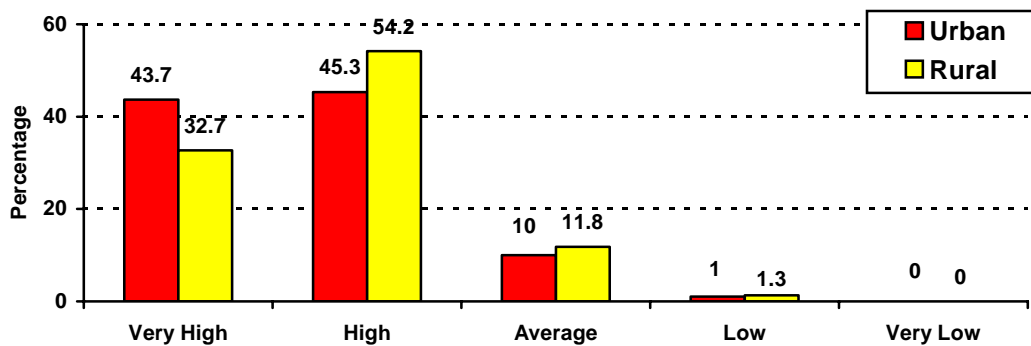
Highlights from Figure 6

- Although the overall rating of Strathcona County was very positive regardless of where one lived in the County, it can be seen in Figure 8 that the “very high” quality of life ratings were slightly higher for urban residents than rural residents.
- 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 2000-2004.
- 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, the ten residents (2.0% of the sample) who did had the following comments:
 - Bylaw complaint - get rid of the smoking bylaw;
 - Shopping limitations - more stores, more variety of men’s clothing stores;
 - Lack of weed control;

- High property taxes for pensioners;
- Need a bylaw to deal with excessive snowmobile usage;
- Reduce the amount of pollution and the smell from industry.

Figure 7 presents a breakdown of people's ratings of Strathcona County as a place to raise children by region.

FIGURE 7
Strathcona County as a Place to Raise Children
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2005

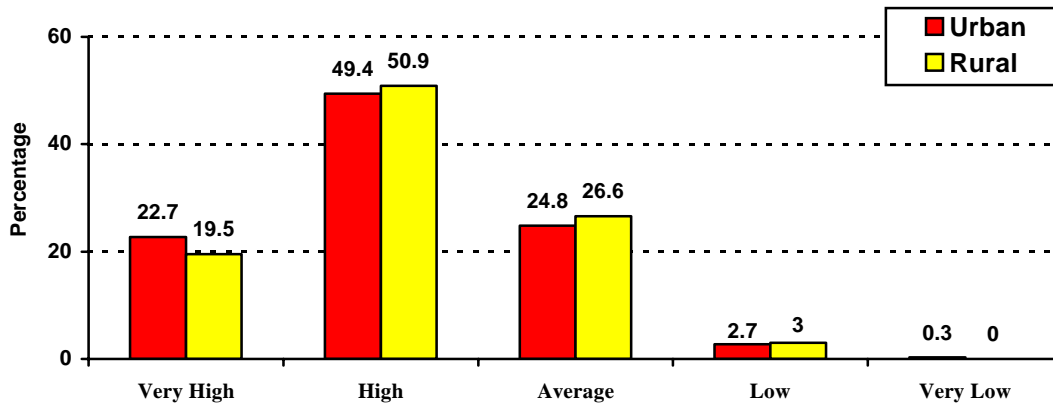


Highlights from Figure 7

- The majority of people, regardless of where they live, perceive that Strathcona County was an excellent place to raise children, as the majority felt it was “high” or “very high.”
- Even though the ratings are high for this item, it can be seen in Figure 9 that more Sherwood Park residents give a “very high” rating for this item compared to those living in rural Strathcona.
- No significant differences were seen within age groups or between gender groups for this item.
- Respondents who rated this item as low or very low were asked to indicate what improvements could be considered. Residents (1.1% of the sample) who did made the following comments:
 - Concern with drugs in the schools and an increase in teen gangs;
 - Perception that there is nothing for kids to do in the County

Figure 8 presents a breakdown by region pertaining to people's ratings of Strathcona County as safe community to live in.

FIGURE 8
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2005



Highlights from Figure 8

- The majority of people felt that Strathcona County was a safe community to live in. The percentage of residents who gave a “very high” rating for this question has dropped compared to previous years. Nevertheless, the majority of residents, regardless of gender or age, felt quite safe living in Strathcona County.
- The main suggestion on how to make the County safer (noted from most of the fifteen people or 3% of the sample who gave safety in Strathcona County a “low” rating) was for an increased number of police to be visible in the County, particularly with respect to petty crime and vandalism. Some of the people who felt the County was unsafe attributed this to teens out on the streets late at night as a potential problem. Other people felt that drivers and road conditions needed to be better enforced.

It can be seen from Figure 9 that there has been a drop in perceptions of safety in Strathcona County being “very high” between 2001 and 2005, and that people who perceive the safety in the county as “average” has steadily increased over the past few years.

FIGURE 9
Strathcona County as Safe Place to Live
Study Comparisons (1999-2005)

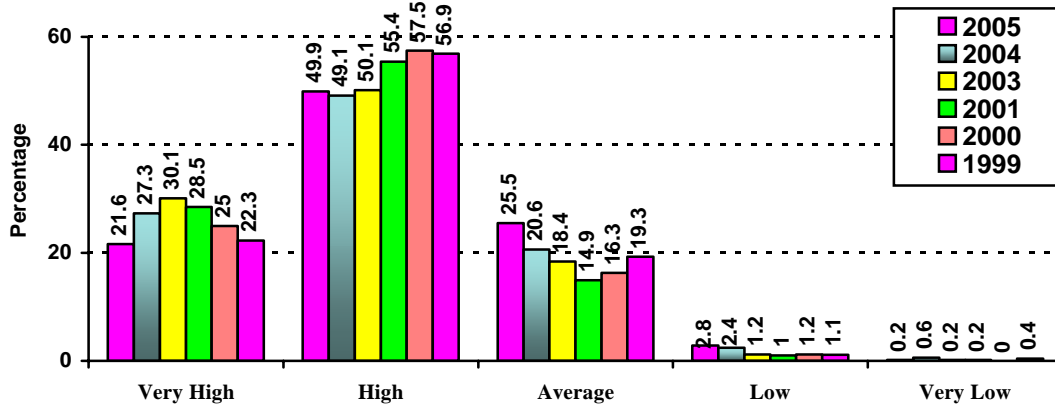
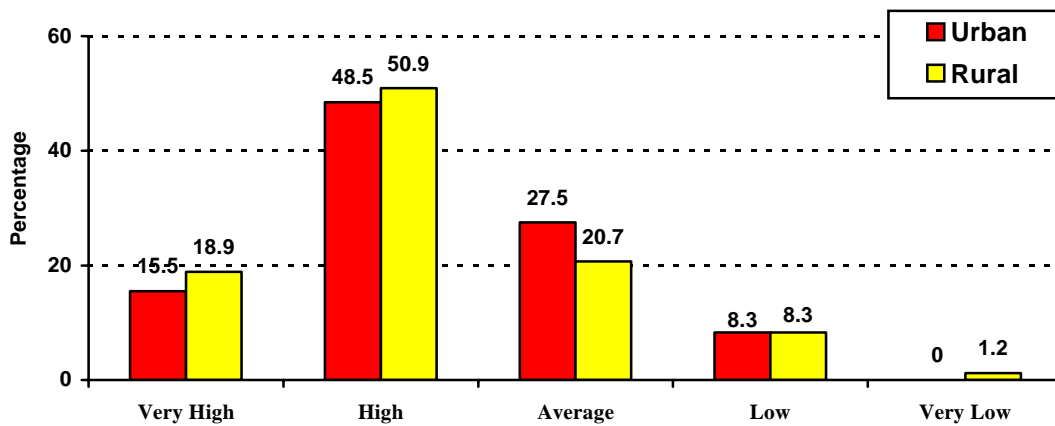


Figure 10 presents a breakdown by region pertaining to people’s ratings of the quality of Strathcona County’s natural environment.

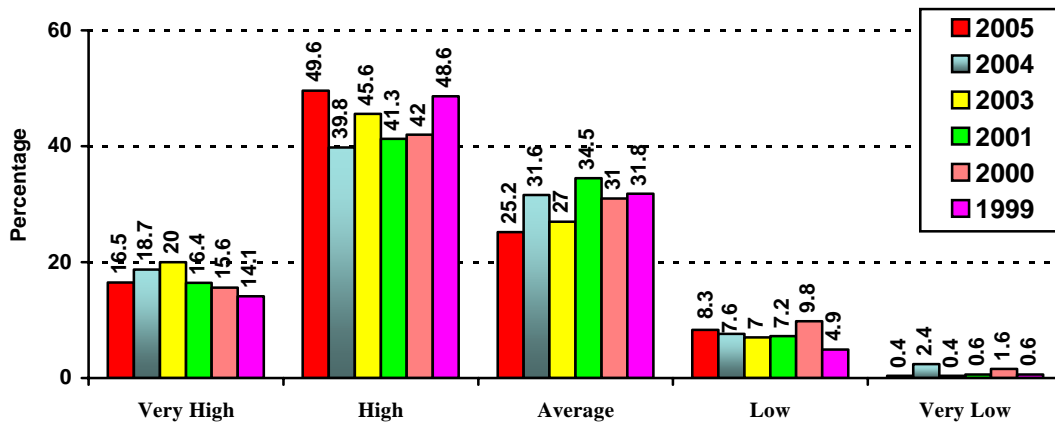
FIGURE 10
Rating the Quality of Strathcona County’s Natural Environment
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2005



Highlights from Figure 10

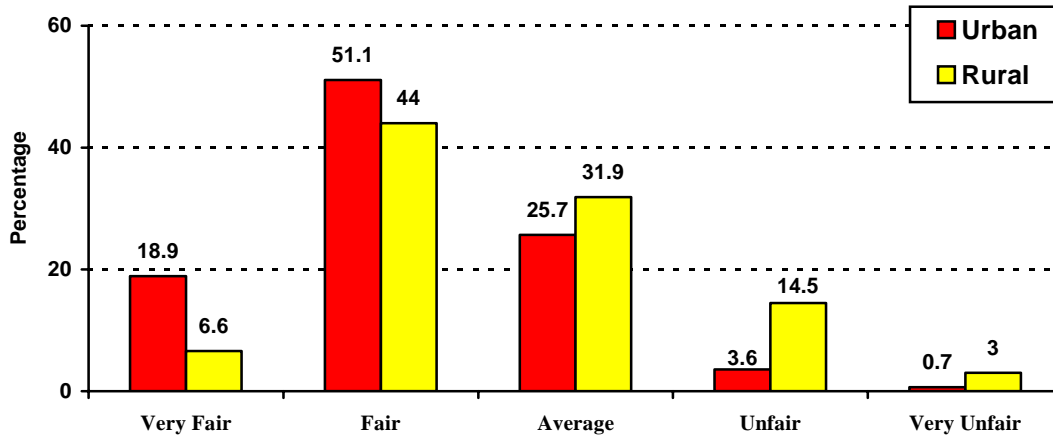
- It can be seen that 64% of the urban and just over 69% of the rural population gave “very high” or “high” ratings for the quality of the County’s environment. This pattern is considerably higher than last year’s satisfaction survey.
- Overall results (depicted in Figure 11 below) show that the combined “very high” and “high” ratings that people gave to the quality of Strathcona County’s natural environment is at its highest peak since tracking of this issue began back in 1999.
- None of the demographic characteristics were factors in influencing how people rated the quality of the natural environment in Strathcona County.
- The 10% (or 43 residents) who gave “low” or “very low” ratings were asked to indicate their reasons for the rating. The most common concern conveyed by these residents was the loss of natural areas and minimal or no replacement of trees as a result of residential and commercial growth throughout the County, particularly in Sherwood Park. 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). There were also a couple of residents who felt that the County could do better work on water management of streams, marshes, small bodies of water and lakefronts (in the latter case, to deal with a “lake that is disappearing” in Ward 7).

FIGURE 11
Rating the Quality of Strathcona County’s Natural Environment
Study Comparisons (1999-2005)



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 12.

FIGURE 12
Balancing the Needs and Interests of People Living in Strathcona County
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2005



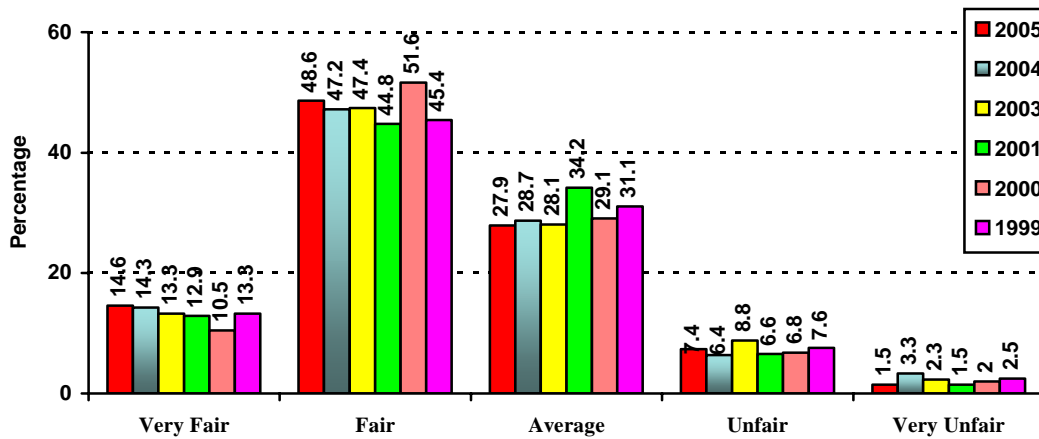
Highlights from Figure 12

- 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 regions.⁴
- 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.
- The 42 residents (8.9% 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 value for the tax dollars compared to urban residents, even though they were paying the same rate (or perceived that they were paying the same rate) as those living in Sherwood Park. A couple of rural residents in the southeastern part of the County also felt that a fire hall was needed. There were also a few

⁴ 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 ($\chi^2 = 35.01, 4 \text{ df}, p=.000$).

residents who were unhappy with the attention paid by the County to road maintenance and snow removal.

FIGURE 13
Balancing the Needs and Interests of People Living in Strathcona County
(1999-2005 Comparisons)

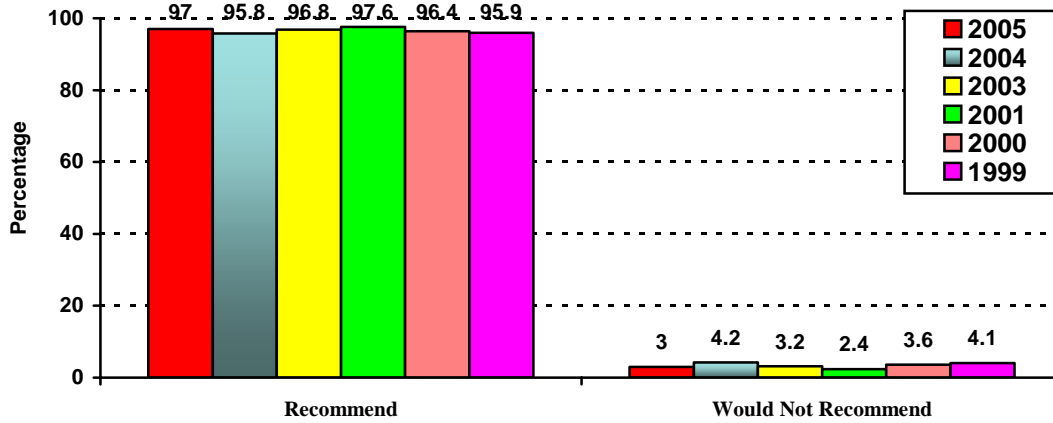


Highlights from Figure 13

- There has been an increase in positive perception among County residents as a whole between 1999 and 2005 on the issue of balancing the needs and interests of people living in Strathcona County. It can be seen that the overall ratings have maintained a similar pattern since 2003.

It can be seen in Figure 14 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% or 15 residents) who would not recommend the County as a place to live were asked to indicate why they felt that way. Some residents who were dissatisfied had a perception that there was too much amount of growth occurring throughout the County, or that the taxes were too high. There were also some residents who felt that County’s bylaws were too strict.

FIGURE 14
Recommendation of Strathcona County as a Place to Live
Study Comparisons (1999-2005)



C. Quality of Services Provided by Strathcona County

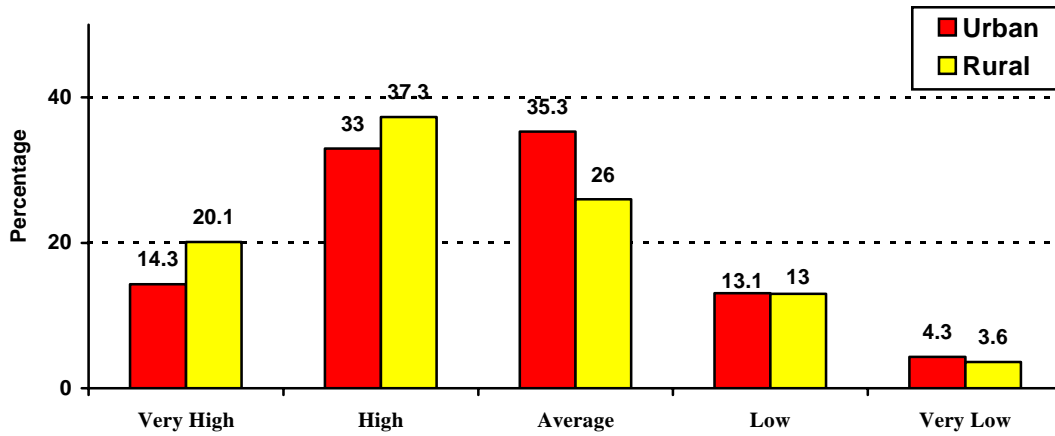
Residents of Strathcona County were asked a series of questions about what they thought of various services provided to them. Overall, respondents were asked to rate 19 different services. For each question, respondents rated the service using a 5 point Likert Scale, where a score of 1 was designated as “very high” and a score of 5 was designated as “very low.” Unless otherwise noted, the level of satisfaction that was found in 2005 for these services was similar to the data collected in 2004.

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 15. While there was no statistical difference in perception between rural and urban residents on winter road maintenance, 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.

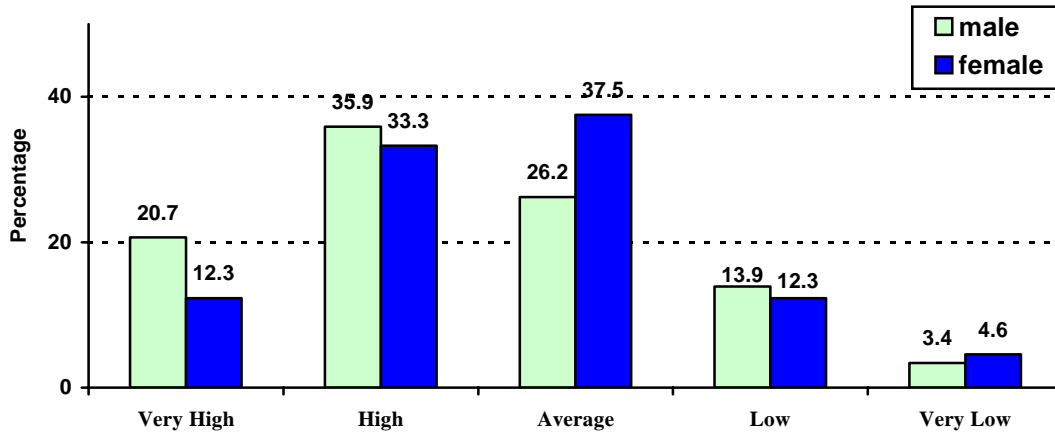
FIGURE 15
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2005



No differences for this service were seen among age groups 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. However, it was found that in 2005, males were more satisfied with the quality of winter road maintenance in 2006 compared to females.⁵ The differences in perceptions for this service are shown in Figure 16.

⁵ A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between gender and how satisfied one is with the winter road maintenance in Strathcona County ($\chi^2 = 11.38, 4 \text{ df}, p < .03$).

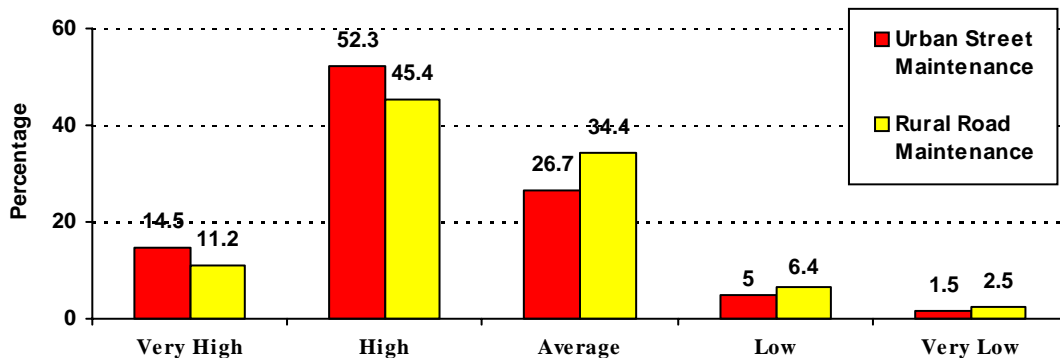
FIGURE 16
Quality of Winter Road Maintenance
Gender Comparisons - Year 2005



Overall, 85 residents (17.1% of the sample) were not happy with the winter road maintenance, and were asked to suggest ways on how this could be improved. The main complaint was that snow removal should be done quicker in general, and that time should be taken to clear residential side streets in Sherwood Park and secondary roads in rural areas. Many people also felt that there was more of an ice buildup on the roads, with less sanding done compared to previous years.

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 2005 – All Residents



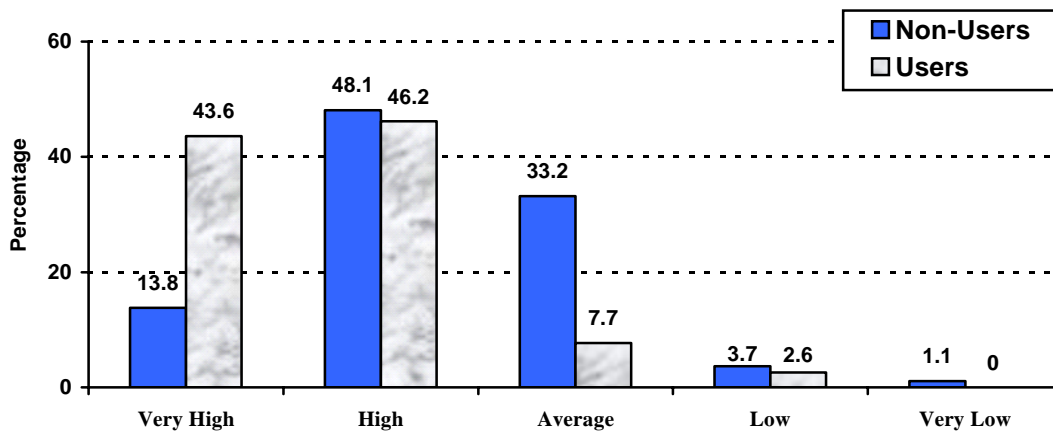
Highlights from Figure 17

- 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 similar to last year's findings.
- It should also be noted that satisfaction ratings with summer maintenance among residents were slightly higher in 2005 compared to 2004. The combined "very high/high" ratings were 66.8% for urban streets and 56.6% for rural roads. In 2004, the combined "very high/high" ratings were 63.4% for urban streets and 53.4% for rural roads.
- None of the demographic characteristics were factors in influencing how people felt about summer urban and rural road maintenance.
- Overall, 6.5% of residents (N=31) were unhappy with the summer maintenance of urban roads. Almost all the residents reflected on an increased number of potholes in the roads and a perceived lack of action on the part of the County to do necessary repairs. A few people also felt that some sidewalks were in need of repair.
- Overall, 8.9% of residents (N=39) 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.

Helping Services in Strathcona County

People were also asked to rate the quality of family and emergency services in Strathcona County, including family support services, fire and ambulance services and the RCMP. Figure 18 presents the satisfaction level that people have for family support services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample that utilized these services⁶ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should be noted that 233 respondents (45.6% of the sample) did not comment on the quality of the family support services because they did not know anything about them.

FIGURE 18
Quality of Family Support Services – 2005 Results



Highlights from Figure 18

- It can be seen from Figure 18 that the residents (users and non-users) have a positive view toward family support services in Strathcona County. However, a chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between one's use and how satisfied one is with family services County ($\chi^2 = 25.16$, 4 df, $p < .001$). A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -4.52$, 305 df, $p < .001$) confirms that users of family support services rated these services higher than non-users.
- Although the actual number of residents who used the services in the past 12 months was low (N=43), it can be seen that among these people, almost 90% of them gave high or very high satisfaction ratings with the services.

⁶ Overall, 8.6% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had used family support services within the past 12 months. This is 1.3% higher than 2004 and 3.3% higher than the user rates found in 2003.

- In comparison to last year’s survey, the percentage of users rating the service as *low or very low* continues to drop. In 2005, 2.6% were dissatisfied, compared to 3.1% in 2004, 3.8% in 2003, 4.8% in 2001 and 16.1% in 2000.
- It can be seen from Figure 19 that considerably more females are rating Family support services as *very high* or *high* (73.2%) compared to males in the community (56.7%). A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between gender and how satisfied one is with family support services County ($\chi^2 = 10.89, 4 \text{ df}, p < .03$). A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = 3.27, 305 \text{ df}, p < .01$) further confirmed that females rated these services higher than males.
- No differences were found for any other socio-demographic characteristics for this item.
- The 14 people (4.6% of the sample) who gave family support services a low rating were asked to suggest ways on how this could be improved. A variety of suggestions were put forward, including extending hours of service, having more things for youth to do, and informing the public about groups and services available for the disadvantaged residents living in the community.

FIGURE 19
Quality of Family Support Services – Gender Comparisons (2005)

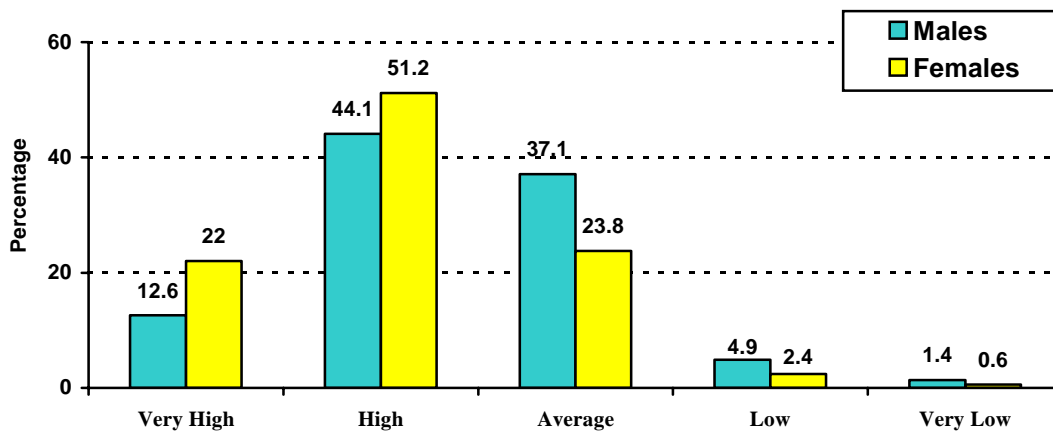
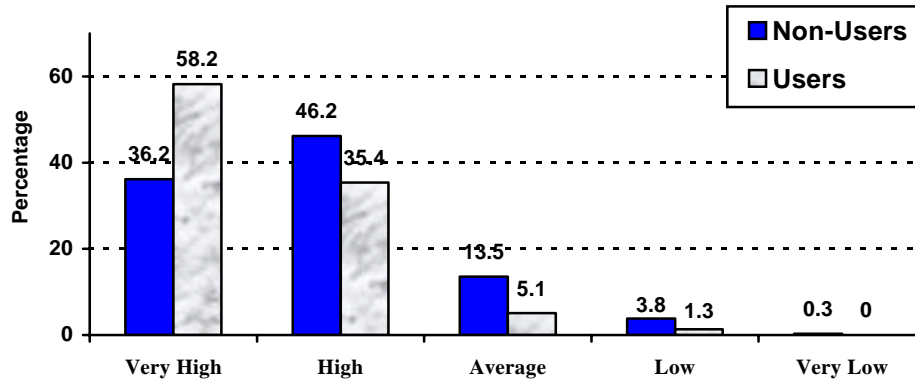


Figure 20 presents the satisfaction level that people have for fire and ambulance services, based on the perspective of the portion of the sample that utilized these services⁷ in the past 12 months, and those who did not use these services. It should be

⁷ Overall, 16.4% 10.6% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had used the fire and ambulance services within the past 12 months. This reported usage is higher than results previously seen in the 2004, 2003, 2001 and 2000 surveys.

noted that 81 respondents (16.2% of the sample) indicated that they “did not know” enough about these services to rate them.

FIGURE 20
Quality of Fire and Ambulance Services – 2005 Results



Highlights from Figure 20

- It can be seen from Figure 20 that most residents (regardless of use) have a positive view toward the fire and ambulance services in Strathcona County. However, the strong positive feelings were 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 ($\chi^2 = 14.74$, 4 *df*, $p < .01$). A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -3.72$, 417 *df*, $p < .001$) confirms that users of fire and ambulance services rated these services higher than non-users.
- Overall, 15 people (3.5% of the sample) were not satisfied with the services. Many of these people felt that response time needs improving, and there was a perception among rural residents that existing fire halls are too far away to be effective. A couple of residents speculated that the presence of a hospital in the County in future years may improve things.

As seen in Figure 21, 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 (73.9% *very high or high*). 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.

FIGURE 21
Quality of Fire and Ambulance Services
Urban & Rural Comparisons - Year 2005

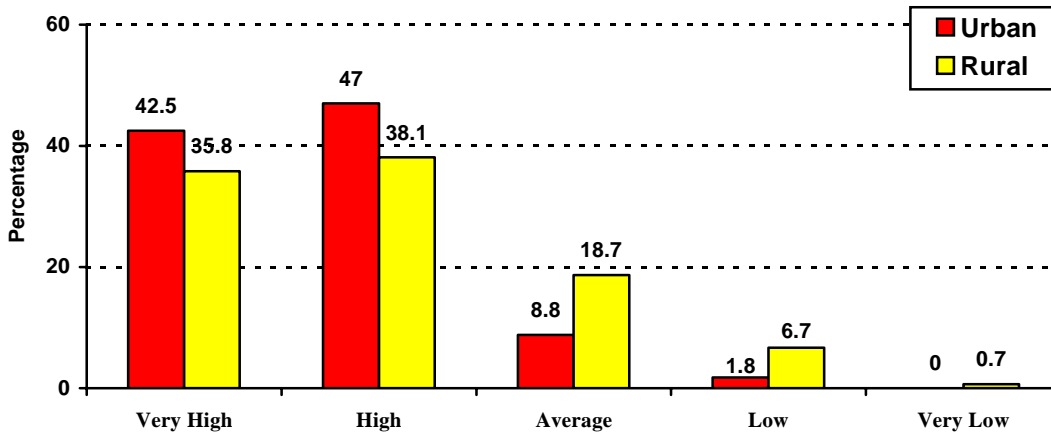
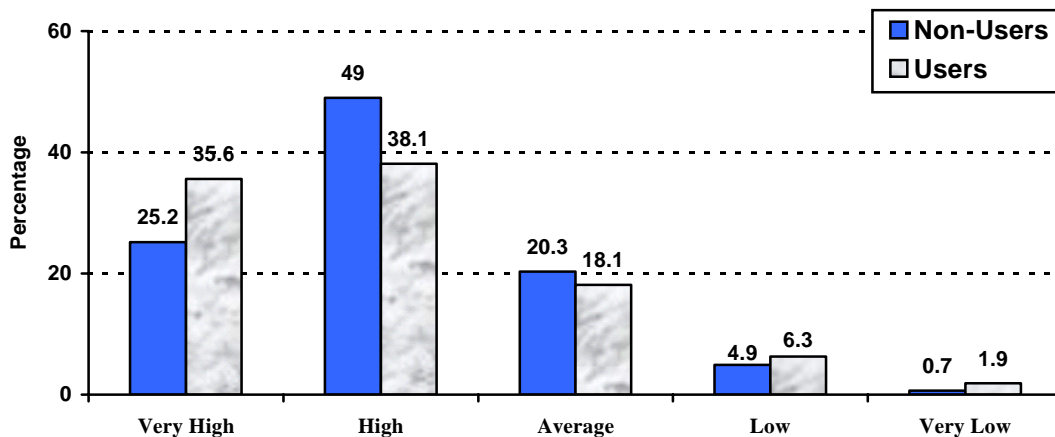


Figure 22 presents the satisfaction level that people have RCMP services, based on those who used these services⁸ in the past 12 months and those who did not.

FIGURE 22
Quality of RCMP Services – 2005 Results

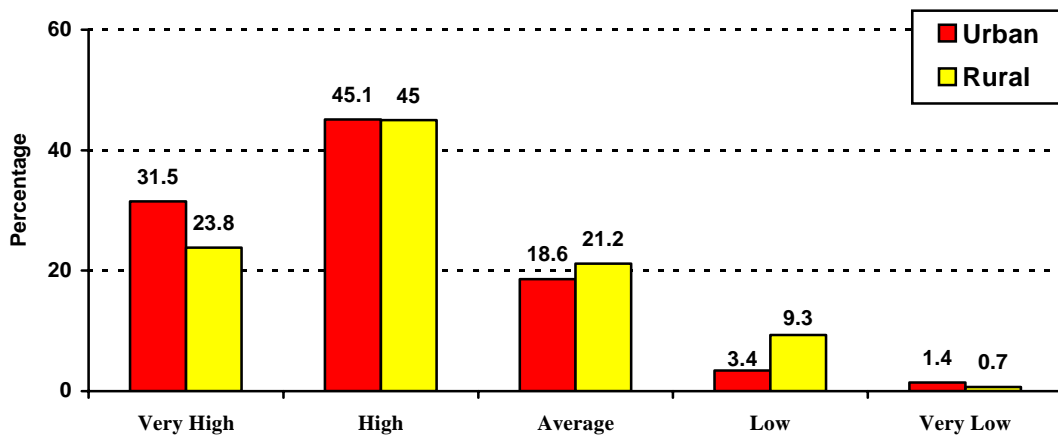


⁸Overall, 33.4% 29.7% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had used RCMP within the past 12 months. This reported usage is about 4% higher than what was found in 2004 and 2003, and almost 11% higher than the user rates noted in the 2001 survey. It should also be noted that 54 people (10.8 %) did not rate the service in 2005 on the basis that they did not know enough about the RCMP to give a rating.

Highlights from Figure 22

- It can be seen from Figure 22 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 revealed no differences in perceptions on how users and non-users rated the service.
- The percentage of users who gave the service a *very high* rating is a bit stronger in 2005 than it was in 2004 (31.6%).
- The 29 users and non-users (or 6.5% of the sample) who rated RCMP services as *low or very low* were asked to comment on ways that the service could be improved. A variety of reasons were put forward, with some people citing a discontent toward the continued use of photo radar and issuing speeding tickets in the community. Some people felt that the RCMP needed to be involved more with community programs in general and make their presence known in the rural areas in particular.
- A further analysis of this service revealed that residents were relatively happy with the RCMP services, regardless of where they live (Figure 23).

FIGURE 23
Quality of RCMP Services – Urban and Rural Comparisons (2005)

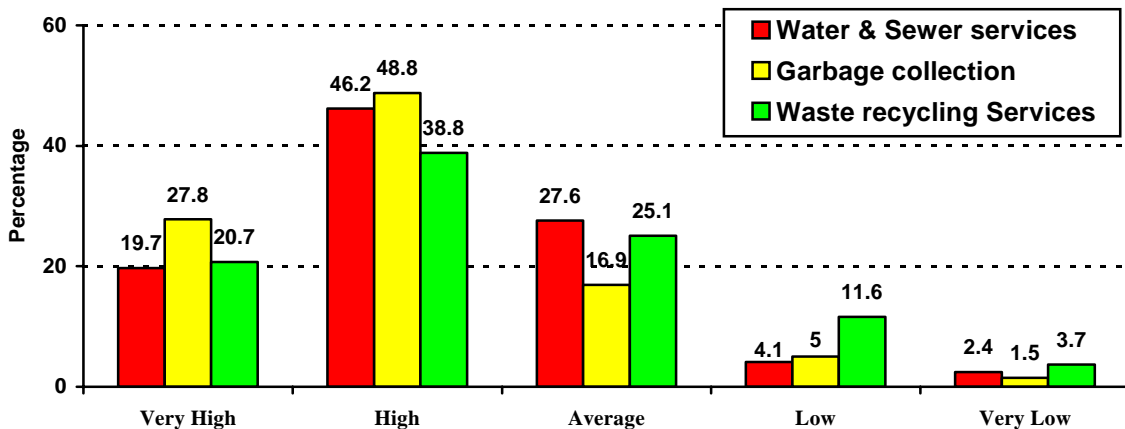


- No differences were seen with RCMP services with any demographic variable.

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 24 presents the satisfaction level that residents have for these services, regardless of where they live.⁹

FIGURE 24
Level of Satisfaction with Water and Waste Management Services – 2005 Results



Highlights from Figure 24

- It can be seen from Figure 24 that residents were generally satisfied with these services. A further examination of the “very high” and “high” ratings revealed that 76.6% gave these ratings for garbage collection (about the same as the 2004 ratings). The ratings for water & sewage services also remained similar to 2004 findings, with 65.9% giving this a “very high” or “high” rating. The combined very high/high ratings for waste recycling services were exactly the same as last year, at 59.5%.
- A further analysis by geographic area revealed that rural residents in the County were not as satisfied with their water service and garbage collection 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 these services.¹⁰ A depiction of the differences in perception is shown in

⁹ Overall, 130 people (26%) did not rate water & sewer services, 39 people (7.8%) did not rate garbage collection and 18 people (3.6%) did not rate waste recycling services. These 2005 patterns are smaller compared to the number of residents who did not rate these services in the 2004 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.

¹⁰ For water and sewage services ($\chi^2 = 48.36$, 4 df, $p < .001$); for garbage collection, ($\chi^2 = 23.25$, 4 df, $p < .001$).

Figures 25 and 26. Perception toward waste recycling services was very similar in both urban and rural areas in 2005 and is shown in Figure 27.

FIGURE 25
Level of Satisfaction with Water Services
Urban & Rural Comparisons - 2005

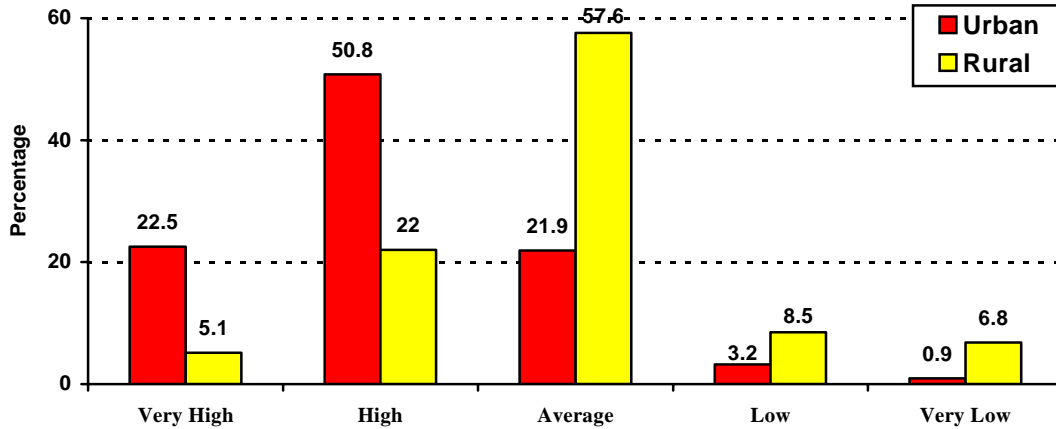


FIGURE 26
Level of Satisfaction with Garbage Collection Service
Urban & Rural Comparisons - 2005

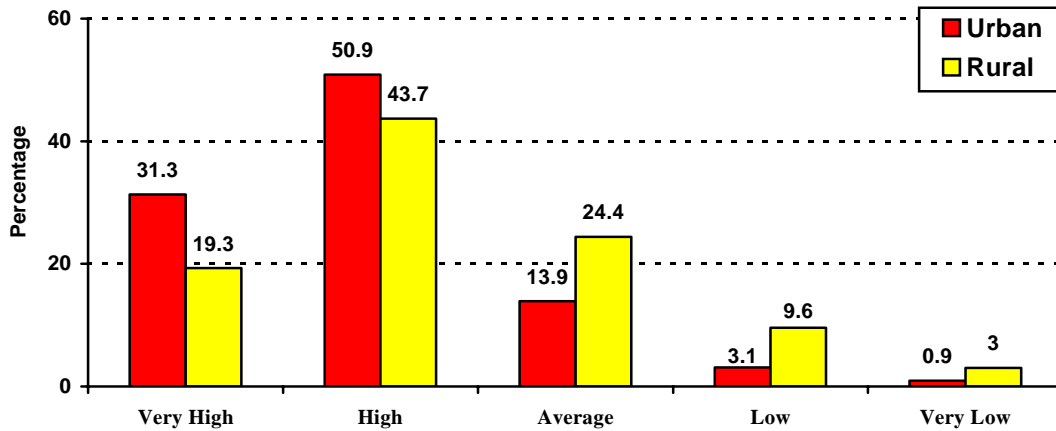
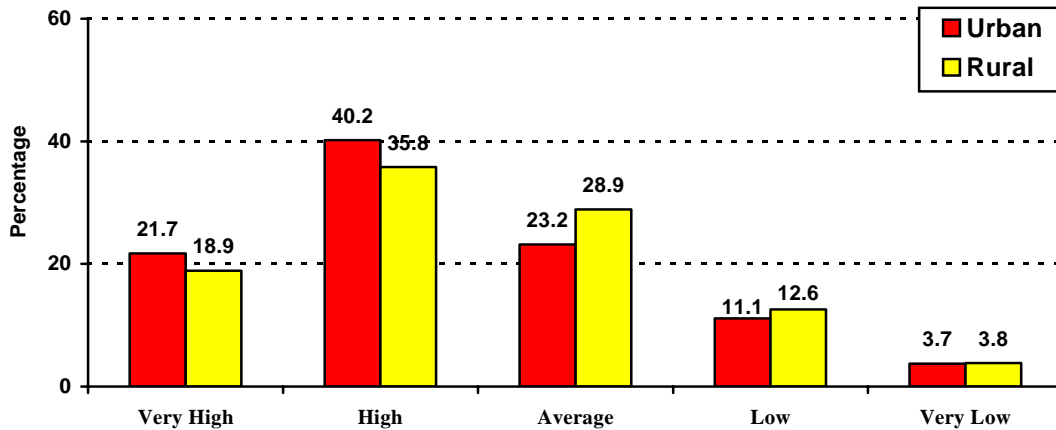


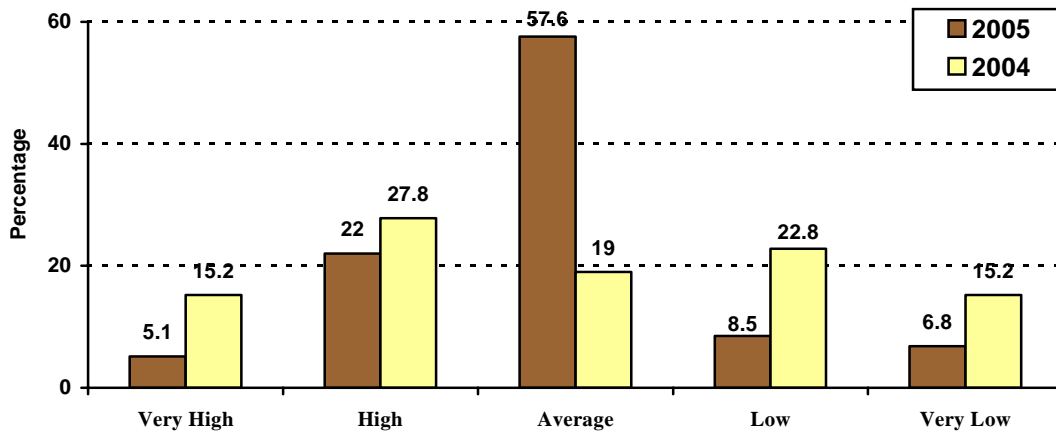
FIGURE 27
Level of Satisfaction with Waste Recycling Service
Urban & Rural Comparisons - 2005



- 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, 24 people (13.9% of the sample) made comments. A variety of thoughts were put forward, including several who complained about the cost for water services. Other comments focused on personal problems encountered with the sewage system, drainage, and the approach taken with water conservation in the summer months. There were also a few residents who indicated instances where the water pressure was too low for their liking.
- With respect to garbage collection services, 30 residents (6.5% of the sample) who rated the service as “low” or “very low” had comments. Many of the residents who commented here were upset with what they perceived as some sloppiness and poor attitude displayed by those doing the garbage collection. Some people would like to have curbside recycling pickup of all recyclables. There were also a few residents who complained about paying for garbage pickup through taxes but not actually getting the service.
- With respect to recycling services, 74 residents (15.3% of the sample) who rated the service as “low” or “very low” had comments. Many of the residents would like the County to consider a blue box or blue bag 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). There were also residents who indicated that they did not like having to pay an extra fee for recycling.
- The trends (for garbage collection and waste recycling services) by region of the county were similar to what was seen in 2004. For water services, though,

while the urban residents rated this similarly between 2004 and 2005, the “very high/high” ratings in the rural region was considerably smaller in the current study (at 27.1%) compared to 2004 (43%). However, the “average” rating given to this service by rural residents was considerably higher in 2005 (at 57.6%) compared to 2004 (where it was 19%), and dissatisfaction with the service is actually lower in 2005 compared to 2004. A graph on perceptions among rural residents for water services in 2004 and 2005 can be found in Figure 28.

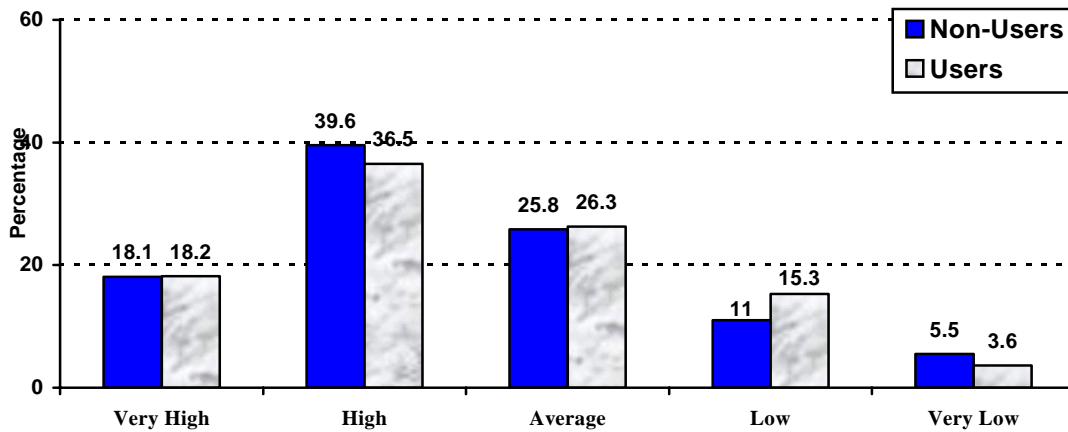
FIGURE 28
Level of Satisfaction with Water Services in Rural Strathcona County
2005 & 2004 Comparisons



Transit Services in Strathcona County

People were asked to rate their satisfaction with transit services in the County. Figure 29 presents the satisfaction level that people have for transit services, based on the perspectives of the portion of the sample that utilized these services¹¹ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 181 residents (36.2% the sample) did not rate transit service on the basis that they did not know anything about the service.¹²

FIGURE 29
Satisfaction with Strathcona County Transit Service – 2005 Results



Highlights from Figure 29

- It can be seen from Figure 29 that close to 60% 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, outside of residence (noted below).
- The majority of transit users (79.7%) live in Sherwood Park. It can be seen in Figure 30 (next page) that those living in Sherwood Park had higher satisfaction ratings with transit compared to those living in the rural area. A chi-square procedure determined that there is a relationship between residence location and how satisfied one is with transit services ($\chi^2 = 12.27$, 4 df, $p <$

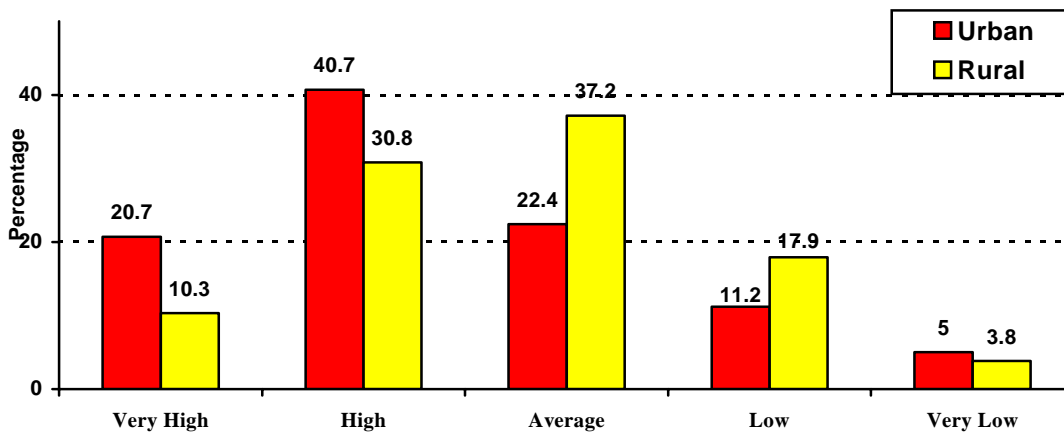
¹¹ Overall, 20.5% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had used transit services within the past 12 months. This is about 3% lower than the 2003 survey.

¹² The percentage of those who said “don’t know” was 11% lower than the 2004 survey.

.02). A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = - 2.55, 317 \text{ df}, p < .02$) further confirmed that Sherwood Park residents rated transit higher than rural residents.

- In comparison to previous surveys, the percentage of users rating this service as *very high* decreased in 2005 to 18.2%, compared to 21.6% in 2004, 34.2% in 2003, and 22.8% in 2001.
- It can also be seen that 16.5% of users of the transit service have low or very low levels of satisfaction with the service (which is about 5% lower than the 2004 study).
- The 56 people (17.6% of the sample) who gave transit services a low rating were asked to suggest ways on how this could be improved. A variety of ideas were put forward, though the majority of people wanted more buses at all times of the day, particularly maintaining service in the evenings, especially with routes going from Sherwood Park to Edmonton. A few of the residents thought that the County should have regular bus service throughout the community to Millennium Place, especially for the kids, as well as to the industrial sections. Some residents thought there should be some buses connecting Sherwood Park to other hamlets (such as Ardrossan or South Cooking Lake).

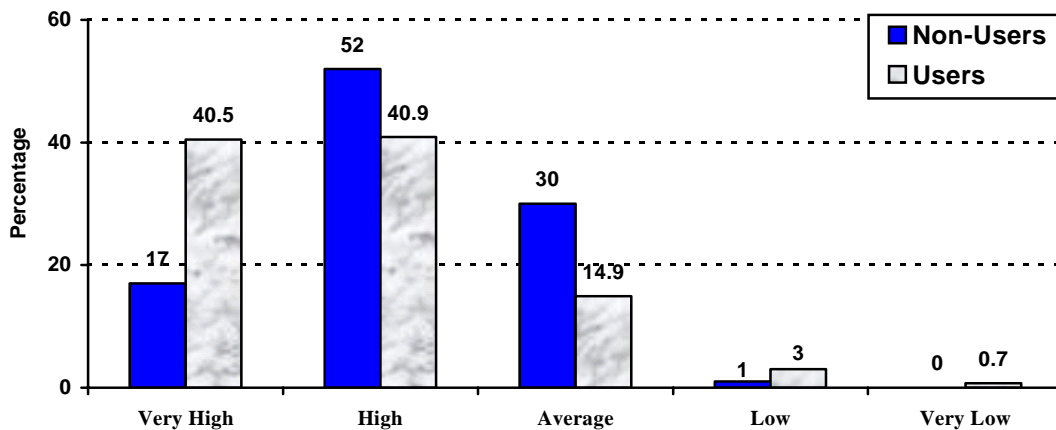
FIGURE 30
Satisfaction with Strathcona County Transit Service – 2005 Results
Urban and Rural Comparisons



Library Services in Strathcona County

Figure 31 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 services¹³ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 104 people (20.8% 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 31
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library – 2005 Results



Highlights from Figure 31

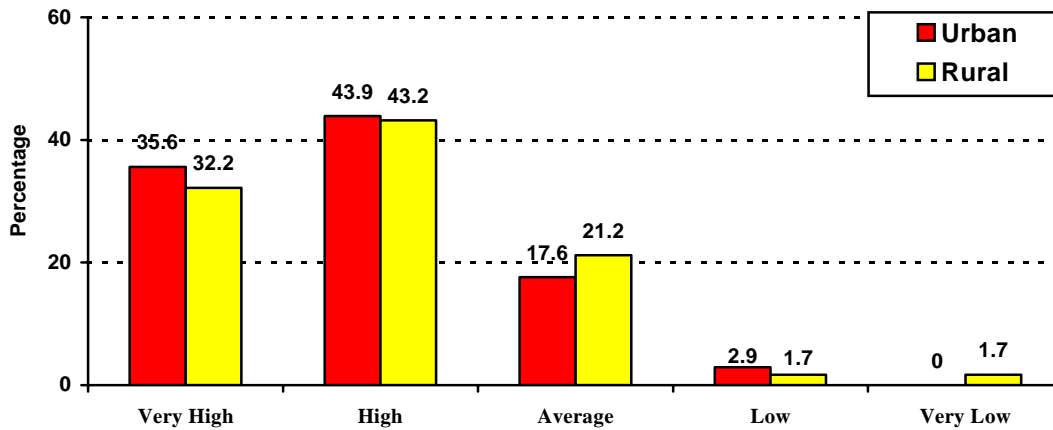
- It can be seen from Figure 31 that most residents have a positive view toward the library, regardless of whether they use it. Nevertheless, a chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between use and how one rated library services.¹⁴ A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences revealed a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between users and non-users ($t = - 3.48, 394 \text{ df}, p < .001$), where users are more likely to give the library a higher rating than those who did not use it.
- No other differences were seen with respect to any of the socio-demographic variables and perceptions of satisfaction toward the library.

¹³ Overall, 60.2% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had used the library within the past 12 months. This is slightly higher than what was reported in 2004.

¹⁴ For library services, ($\chi^2 = 25.16, 4 \text{ df}, p < .001$).

- A further investigation revealed that overall “very high/high” satisfaction levels with the Strathcona Library (regardless of use) of 78.3% decreased slightly compared to 2004 (81.7%).
- The majority of library users surveyed live in Sherwood Park (70.7%), while the remaining 29.3% 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 32, but it can be seen that the perceptions did not vary considerably between rural and urban area residents.
- There were 12 people (3% of the sample) who rated the library service as “low” or “very low.” These residents were asked to suggest ways on how the library could be improved. The main suggestion was to increase the size of the inventory of books in the library, and extend the hours of use.

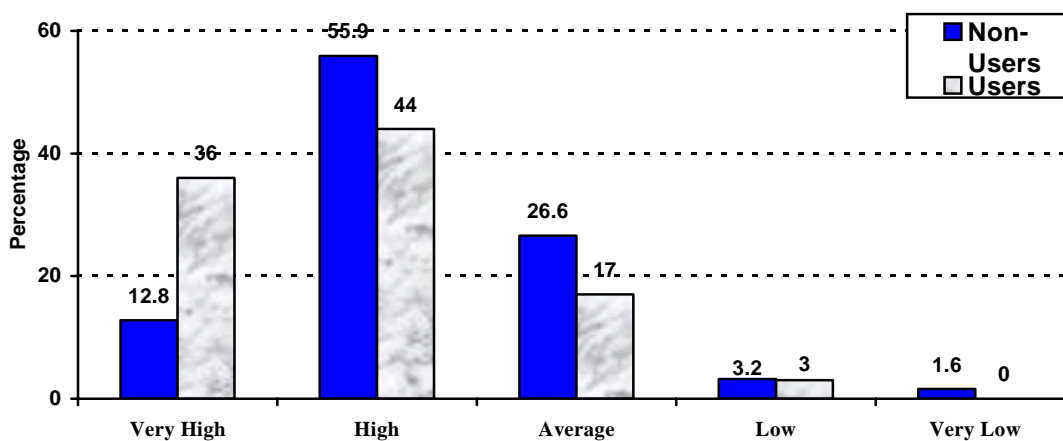
FIGURE 32
Satisfaction with the Strathcona County Library – 2005 Results
Urban and Rural Comparisons



Volunteer Center Services in Strathcona County

Figure 32 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 services¹⁵ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 42.4% of residents (n=212) did not rate the Centre on the basis that they did not know anything about it.

FIGURE 32
Satisfaction with the Information and Volunteer Centre – 2005 Results



Highlights from Figure 32

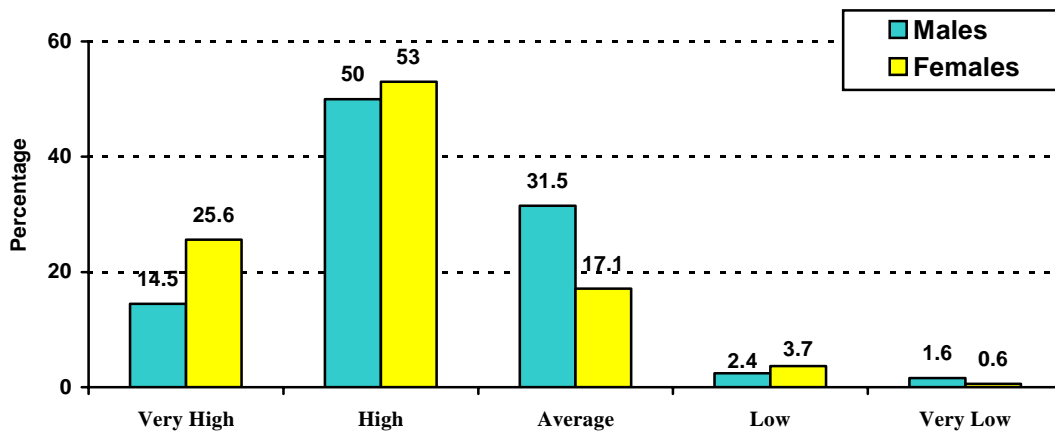
- It can be seen from Figure 32 that most residents have a positive view toward the Information and Volunteer Centre, regardless of whether they use it. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between use and how one rated the IVC.¹⁶ A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences revealed a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between users and non-users ($t = -3.91, 286 \text{ df}, p < .001$), where users are more likely to give the IVC a higher rating than those who did not use it.
- A further investigation revealed that overall “very high/high” satisfaction levels with users of the IVC was lower in 2005 (80%) compared with results obtained in 2004 (86.1%).

¹⁵ Overall, 22% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had used the Information and Volunteer Centre within the past 12 months. This is about 4% higher than what was reported in the 2004 survey.

¹⁶ For the IVC, ($\chi^2 = 22.87, 4 \text{ df}, p < .001$).

- Among users of the IVC, the majority live in Sherwood Park (65.5%) while the remaining 34.5% live in rural parts of Strathcona County. The satisfaction ratings for the service did not vary considerably between rural and urban area residents.
- A total of 212 people (42.4%) 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 considerably better than the 2004 results, when 256 people (50.1%) did not rate the IVC. This implies that the Centre and its services have increased awareness among residents; it is recommended that this be continued on a periodic basis.
- With respect to socio-demographic variables, a chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between gender and how one rated the IVC ($\chi^2 = 11.60, 4 \text{ df}, p, .03$). A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences revealed a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between males and females ($t = 2.75, 286 \text{ df}, p < .01$), where females are more likely to give the IVC a higher rating than males. This difference can be seen in Figure 33.
- Only 12 people gave the Information and Volunteer Centre a “low” or “very low” rating. Some of these residents were simply not aware of the services at IVC; however, there were other residents who commented that some of the staff there either could not answer the questions posed to them, or passed them onto other personnel (who unfortunately were also not helpful).

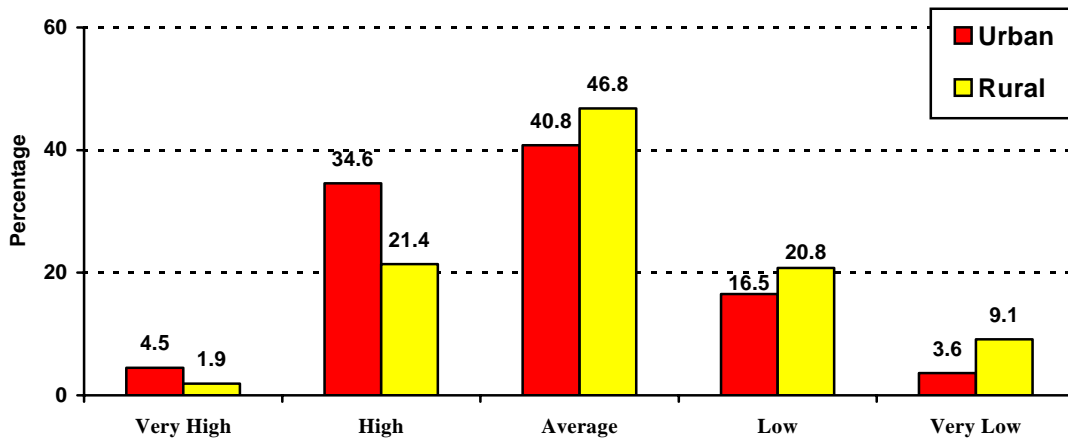
FIGURE 33
Satisfaction with the Information and Volunteer Centre – Gender Comparisons



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 34 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.¹⁷

FIGURE 34
Satisfaction with Land Use Planning in Strathcona County – 2005 Results



Highlights from Figure 34

- It can be seen from Figure 34 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. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between where one lived and how one rated land use planning.¹⁸ A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences revealed a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between urban and rural residents ($t = -3.79, 461 \text{ df}, p < .001$), where urban residents are more likely to give land use planning a higher rating than those who living in rural areas.
- The patterns found in this year's survey were almost identical to the results found in the previous satisfaction surveys.
- Overall, 108 people (21.6% of the sample) gave a "low or very low" rating of the land use planning service and were asked to suggest ways on how this

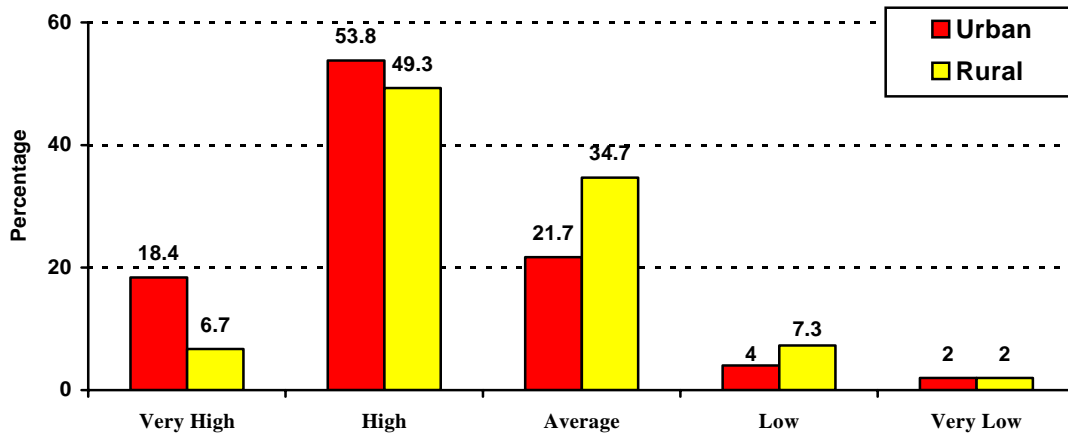
¹⁷ Overall, 37 people (7.4% of the sample) did not rate this service. This was lower than the 2004 survey.

¹⁸ For land use planning, ($\chi^2 = 15.52, 4 \text{ df}, p < .01$).

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, playgrounds. Some people expressed concerns about subdividing farmland, or turning farmland over for commercial and/or non-farming industrial development. Another common theme was that development was occurring too rapidly for some residents. Other concerns in this regard were a perceived increase in traffic flow problems resulting from increased development.

Figure 35 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.¹⁹

FIGURE 35
Satisfaction with Economic Development in Strathcona County – 2005 Results



Highlights from Figure 35

- It can be seen from Figure 35 that the perception of residents toward economic development by the County is very similar, regardless of where people live. While the majority of residents were relatively satisfied with economic development that is being done at the present time, a chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between where one lived and how one rated economic development.²⁰ A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences revealed a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between urban and rural residents ($t = - 3.75, 447 \text{ df}, p < .001$), where urban residents are more likely to give economic development a higher rating than those who living in rural areas.

¹⁹ Overall, 51 people (10.2% of the sample) did not rate this service, which is lower than the 2004 survey.

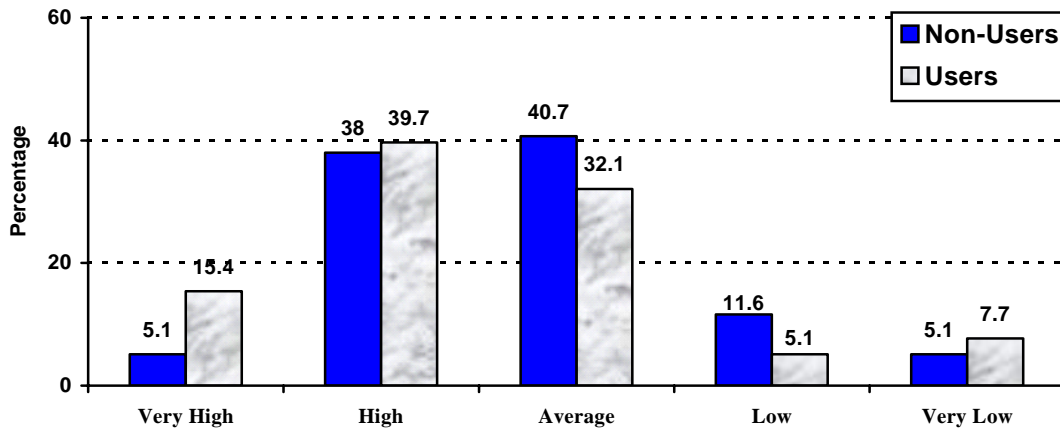
²⁰ For economic development, ($\chi^2 = 18.44, 4 \text{ df}, p < .002$).

- Thirty-two residents throughout the county (7.1% of the sample) expressed a low or very low level of satisfaction with economic development in the County. In this year’s study, the complaints or concerns stemmed around new businesses and were equally divided in terms of pro-business development or slow down/ stop any new commercial developments.

Permit & Inspection Services in Strathcona County

Figure 36 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 services²¹ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 294 people (58.8% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it, which is about 15% higher than last year’s survey.

FIGURE 36
Satisfaction with Building Permit and Inspections Services in Strathcona County – 2005 Results



Highlights from Figure 36

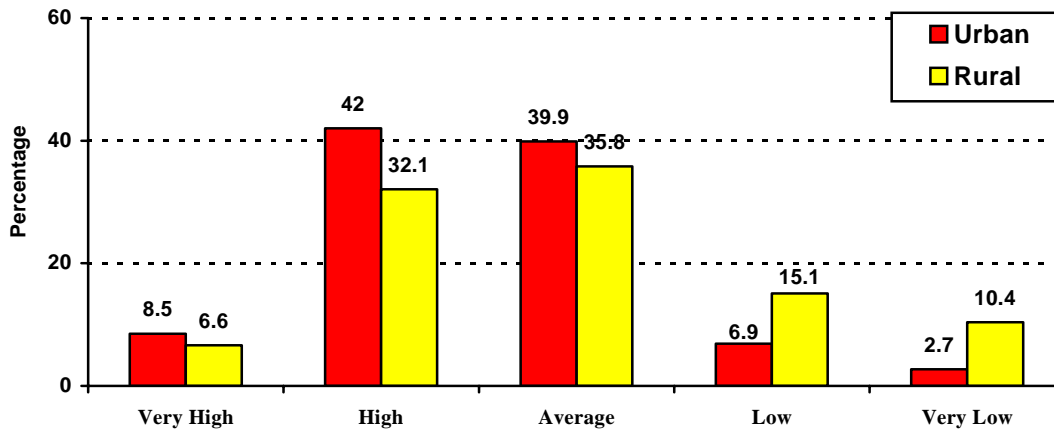
- It can be seen from Figure 36 that the perception of residents toward building permit and inspection services was relatively similar, regardless of whether or not people used the services. Although users had a stronger “very high” rating for the services, there was not a statistically significant difference between users and non-users in the overall evaluation of this service.

²¹ Overall, 17% 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 the 2004 survey results.

- A comparison of trends between the 2005 and 2004 surveys revealed an increase in the percentage of users who gave the service “very high or high” ratings (55.1% in 2005 compared to 45.1% in 2004).

A comparison of perceptions by location (regardless of use/non-use of the service) is shown in Figure 37. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between where one lived and how one rated these services.²² A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences confirmed a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between urban and rural residents ($t = -3.29, 292 \text{ df}, p < .001$), where urban residents are more likely to give building permit and inspections services a higher rating than those living in rural Strathcona.

FIGURE 37
Satisfaction with Building Permit and Inspections Services in Strathcona County –
Urban & Rural Comparisons - 2005



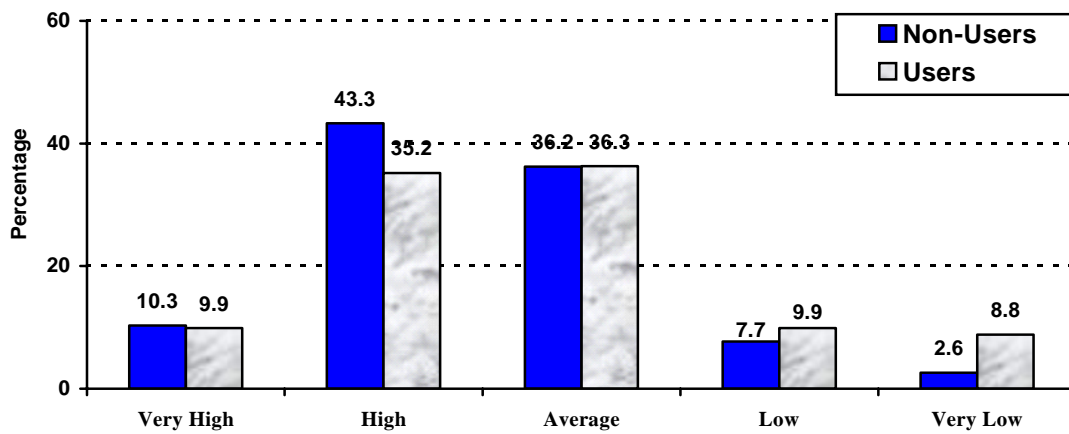
- The 45 people (15.3% of the sample) who rated this service as “low” or “very low” were asked to suggest ways on how this could be improved. Many people felt that there was too much “red tape” associated with getting permits and inspections. Some residents were upset with the costs associated with permits and inspections as well as the length of time it took to get inspections into place.

²² For building and inspection services, ($\chi^2 = 14.36, 4 \text{ df}, p < .01$).

Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County

Figure 38 presents the satisfaction level that people have with bylaw enforcement, 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 97 people (19.4% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it.

FIGURE 38
Satisfaction with Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County – 2005 Results



Highlights from Figure 38

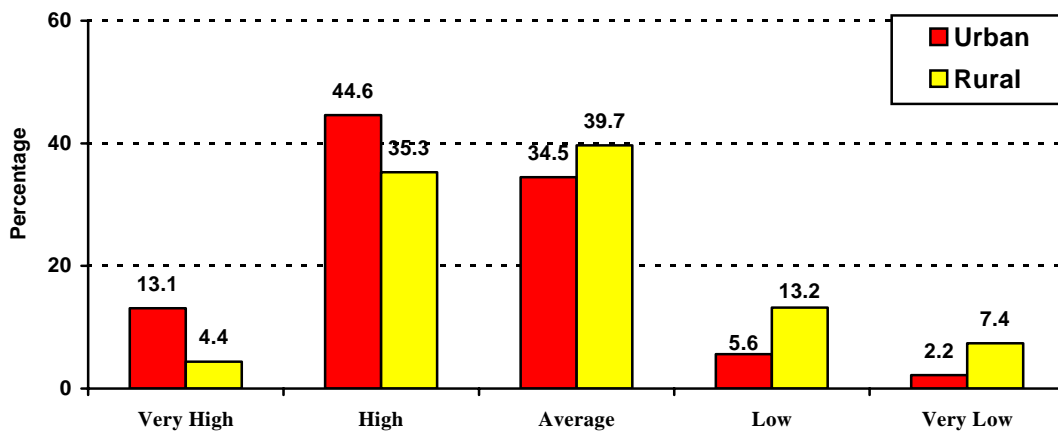
- It can be seen from Figure 38 that the perception of residents toward bylaw enforcement services was somewhat dependent on past user patterns. It can be seen that on a proportionate basis, a higher percentage of people who used the service **gave bylaw enforcement services a very low rating** more often than those who had not used the service. However, the spread was not statistically significant.
- The patterns shown in this figure were very similar to patterns found in the 2004 survey.

A comparison of perceptions by location (regardless of use/non-use of the service) is shown in Figure 39. 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. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a

²³ Overall, 19.2% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had utilized bylaw enforcement services within the past 12 months. This is about the same percentage as what was reported in the 2004 survey.

relationship between where residence and how one rated bylaw enforcement.²⁴ A *t-test* measurement for mean score differences revealed a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between urban and rural residents ($t = -4.68, 401 \text{ df}, p < .001$), where urban residents are more likely to give bylaw enforcement a higher rating than those who living in rural areas.

FIGURE 39
Satisfaction with Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County – Urban & Rural Comparisons – 2005 Results

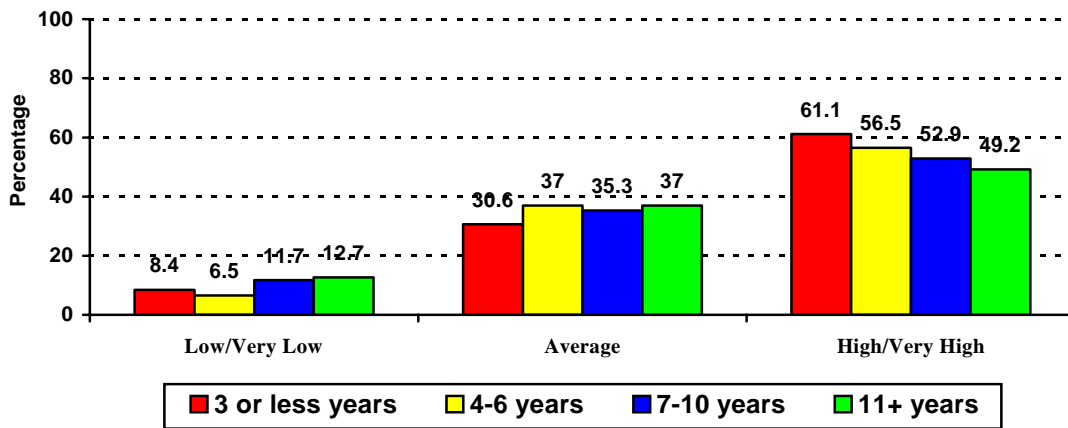


- The 49 residents (12.2% of the sample) who had a low level of satisfaction with this service were asked to suggest ways on how this could be improved. Many of these residents claim that the bylaws that are in place are not actively enforced by the County, particularly loose dogs, noise violations, and a perceived lack of action by bylaw officers in rural parts of the County. The illegal use of snowmobiles was also mentioned in this year's survey.

²⁴ For bylaw enforcement, ($\chi^2 = 21.56, 4 \text{ df}, p < .001$).

A further analysis of the data revealed some differences in perception of bylaw enforcement on the basis of length of time people lived in the County. The results are shown in Figure 40. It can be seen that there is a pattern, whereby the higher levels of satisfaction with bylaw enforcement services decreases as the length of time one lived in the County increased. However, the differences between residents in terms of length of residence are not statistically significant.

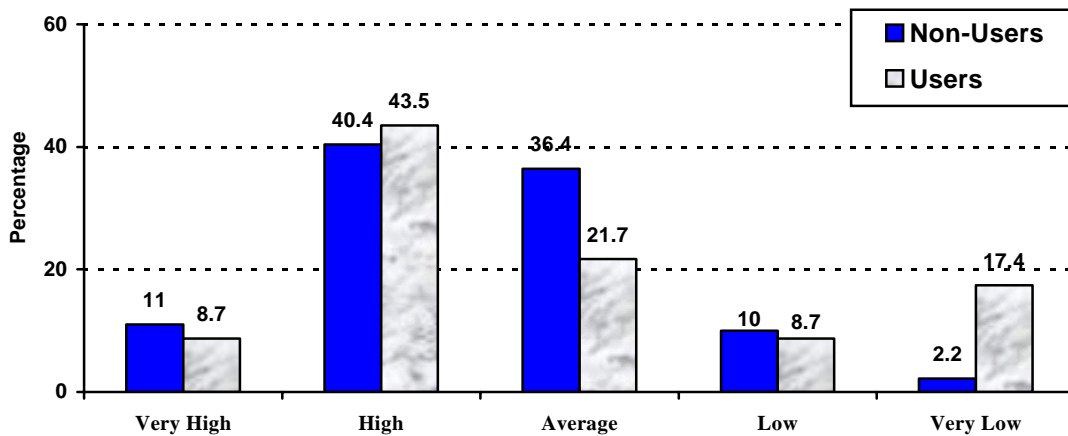
FIGURE 40
Satisfaction with Bylaw Enforcement Services in Strathcona County
Comparisons by Length of Residence - Year 2005



Agricultural Services in Strathcona County

Figure 41 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 services²⁵ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be noted that 76 people (15.2% of the sample) did not rate this service on the basis that they did not know enough about it.

FIGURE 41
Satisfaction with Weed Control, Soil Management, Wildlife Problems
and other Agricultural Services in Strathcona County – 2005 Results



Highlights from Figure 41

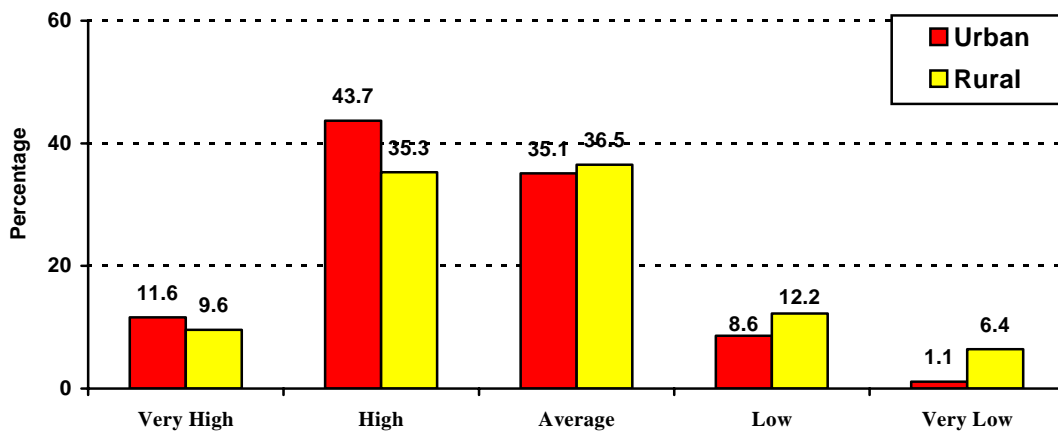
- It can be seen from Figure 41 that there was a contingent of users of agricultural enforcement services who were very dissatisfied with this service compared to those who did not use the service. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between the use of the service and how one rated it.²⁶ However, it should be kept in mind that only a few people within the sample (N=23) indicated that they had made use of the service within the past 12 months.
- A comparison of this year's results with the 2003 study revealed that the percentage of users who gave the service a "very high" or "very high" rating was 51.4% in 2005, which was almost the same as the 2004 rating for this service.

²⁵ Overall, 4.6% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had utilized agricultural services within the past 12 months. This is a slightly smaller percentage of users compared to the 2004 survey results.

²⁶ For this service, ($\chi^2 = 17.78$, 4 df, $p < .001$).

A comparison of perceptions by location (regardless of use/non-use of the service) is shown in Figure 42. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between where the respondent lived in the County and how one rated this Strathcona County service.²⁷ 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 ($t = - 2.88, 422 \text{ df}, p < .01$).

FIGURE 42
Satisfaction with Weed Control, Soil Management, Wildlife Problems and other Agricultural Services – Urban & Rural Comparisons 2005



- Overall, the 55 residents (13% of the sample) who had a 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. Many residents were concerned with the type of herbicides and pesticides that the County was using with respect to the weed control that was done and wondered if organic solutions were an option. Another issue that was raised by a few people was with respect with the manner in which geese, deer and other wildlife were managed (or not managed) within the County.

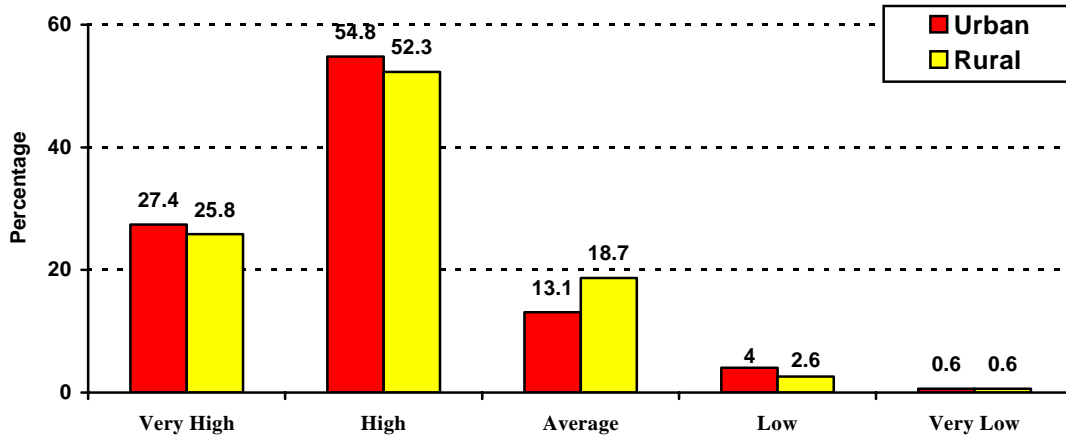
Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Services in Strathcona County

People were asked to rate their satisfaction with the various outdoor and indoor recreation opportunities offered by the County. Figure 43 presents the satisfaction level

²⁷ For this service, ($\chi^2 = 12.41, 4 \text{ df}, p < .02$).

that people have with the various parks, green spaces and sports fields. Only a small handful of residents (4.8%) did not rate this item

FIGURE 43
Satisfaction with Parks, Green Spaces and Sports Fields in Strathcona County – 2005 Results



Highlights from Figure 43

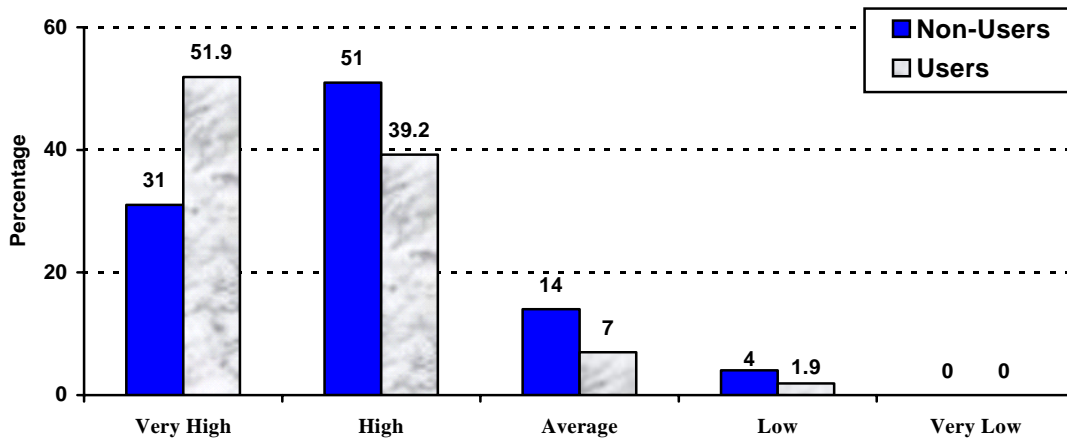
- It can be seen from Figure 43 that the perception of residents toward various outdoor green spaces was similar, regardless of where they lived.
- A comparison of this year's results with the 2003 study showed an increase in the percentage of residents who gave the service a "very high" or "very high" rating (82.2% urban and 78.1% rural) compared to 2004 (77.9% urban and 72.3% rural).
- The 20 people (4.2% 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 that occurred included a need for better maintenance of the existing green spaces and sports fields, and to plant more trees in the existing parkland.

Figure 44 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 facilities²⁸ in the past 12 months and those who did not. It should also be

²⁸ Overall, 74% of respondents to the survey indicated that they had been to an indoor recreation facility in the County of Strathcona within the past 12 months. This is a 6% increase from the 2004 findings.

noted that 30 people (6% of the sample) did not rate these facilities on the basis that they did not know enough about it.

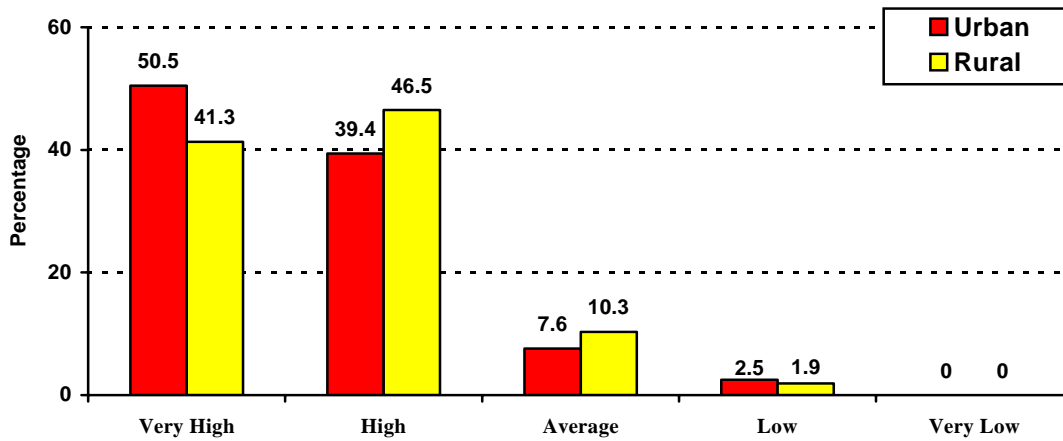
FIGURE 44
Satisfaction with Indoor Recreation Facilities in Strathcona County – 2005 Results



Highlights from Figure 44

- It can be seen from Figure 44 that the perception of residents toward indoor recreation facilities was somewhat dependent on past user patterns. Overall, people who used indoor recreation facilities were more satisfied than those who had not used these facilities. This was confirmed by a chi-square procedure ($\chi^2 = 15.87$, 4 df, $p < .001$) and a *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -3.94$, 468 df, $p < .001$).
- A further analysis revealed that 76.7% of Sherwood Park residents used the indoor recreation facilities at least once in the past 12 months, while 68.8% 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 45).
- The 11 people (2.3% of the sample) who had a low level of satisfaction with the facilities were asked to suggest ways on how these could be improved. Most of the complaints focused on the lack of recreation facilities (particularly arenas) in rural areas.

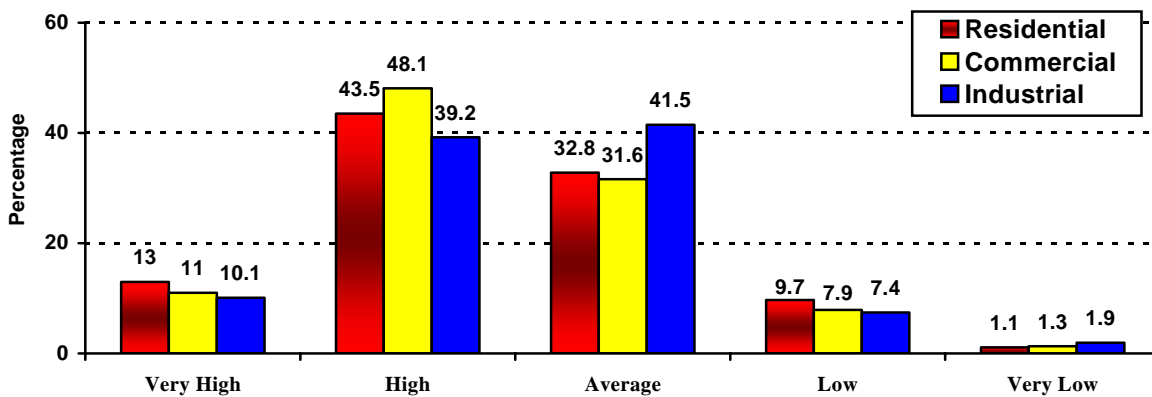
FIGURE 45
Satisfaction with Indoor Recreation Facilities in Strathcona County – 2005 Results



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 46 below.

FIGURE 46
Quality of Various Developments throughout Strathcona County – 2005 Results

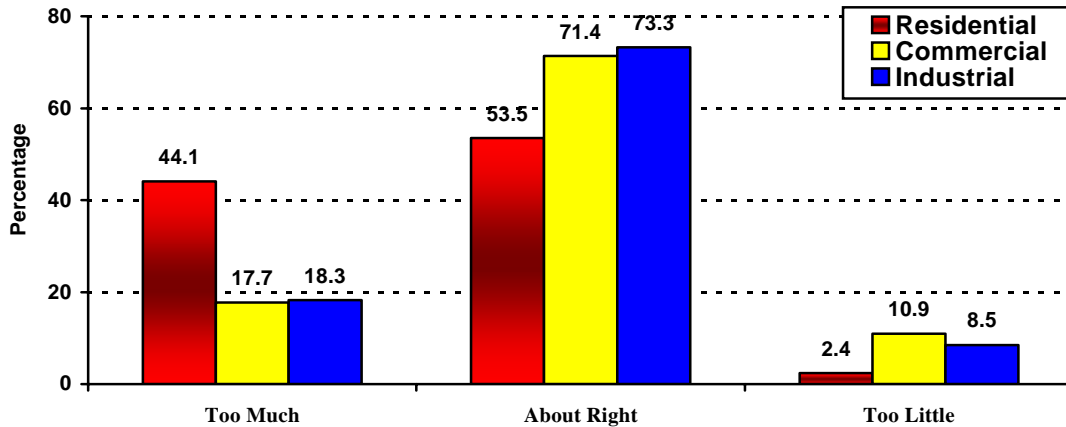


Highlights from Figure 45

- Overall, respondents were satisfied with the quality of residential and commercial development to a slightly larger extent than industrial developments.
- 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. A common theme expressed among residents was that there was too much development of all three types. Other comments specific to each type of development are noted below:
 - A variety of concerns were expressed among the 51 people (10.8% of the sample) who rated the quality of residential developments as low. There were a variety of concerns expressed, ranging from the lots for housing being too small with many of the new homes being too close to one another, to a lack of affordable housing for young people starting out (or people on fixed incomes). Others were concerned with the lack of green space in new neighborhoods at the expense of "cramming housing developments too close together."
 - For commercial developments, a variety of concerns were put forward by the 42 people (9.2% of the sample) who rated the quality of development as low. Comments mentioned by residents who were dissatisfied were varied and included a perception that there were too many strip malls, yet also a lack of department stores (such as the Bay or Sears).
 - For industrial developments, among the 35 people (9.3% 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.

A comparative rating pertaining to the perception of the quantity (i.e. amount) of new types of developments is shown in Figure 47.

FIGURE 47
Quantity of Various Developments throughout Strathcona County



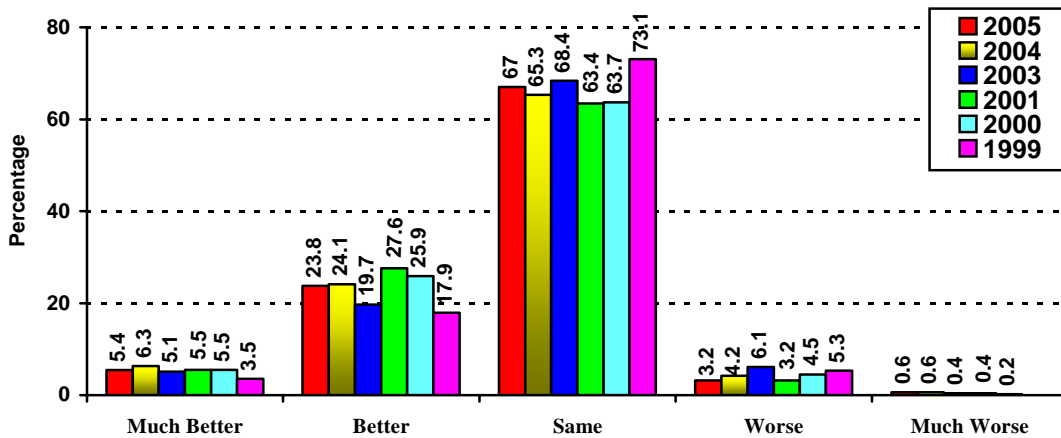
Highlights from Figure 47

- 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 2005 was almost identical to the 2004 and 2003 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 development.
- 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, almost half of the residents have a perception that there is too much residential development, which is supported by many who have expressed a concern as to the loss of a “small town” atmosphere in the county. However, a further analysis revealed that these people **still gave similar high ratings** to the quality of life in Strathcona County as a whole. As such, while there continues to be some concerns about continued development, it still has not gotten to the point where the quality of one’s life in Strathcona County has been adversely affected.

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 2005 survey results are compared with the results found in 2004, 2003, 2001, 2000 and 1999 when this same question was asked and are shown in Figure 48 below.

FIGURE 48
Quality of Services Now in Strathcona County Compared to 2 years ago
Trends from Previous Surveys

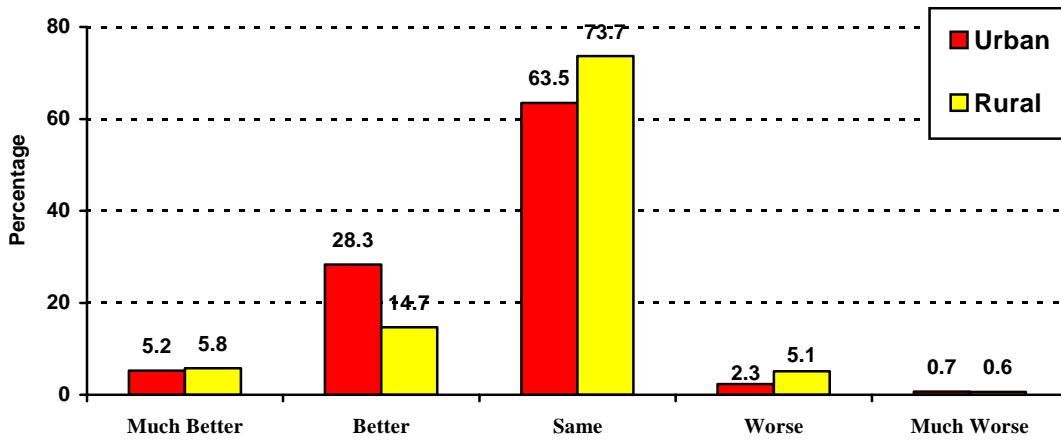


Highlights from Figure 48

- Overall, the majority of respondents were of the opinion that the quality of services offered by Strathcona County was the same as they were two years ago. It can be seen from Figure 48 that there has not been much variation in this opinion from residents for several years now.
- The 18 people (3.8% 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. For the most part, dissatisfied residents felt that County representatives are not reacting fast enough to reported problems, particularly road maintenance or waste management.

A comparison of urban and rural residents with respect to perceptions of the quality of services is shown in Figure 49. A chi-square test of association reveals that there is a relationship between where the respondent lived in the County and how one rated this Strathcona County service.²⁹ It can be seen that a higher percentage of people living in Sherwood Park rated the quality of services as “better” to a greater extent than those living in rural areas. This is confirmed through the *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = - 2.41, 461 \text{ df}, p < .02$).

FIGURE 49
Quality of Services Now in Strathcona County Compared to 2 years ago
Urban and Rural Comparisons – 2005 Results

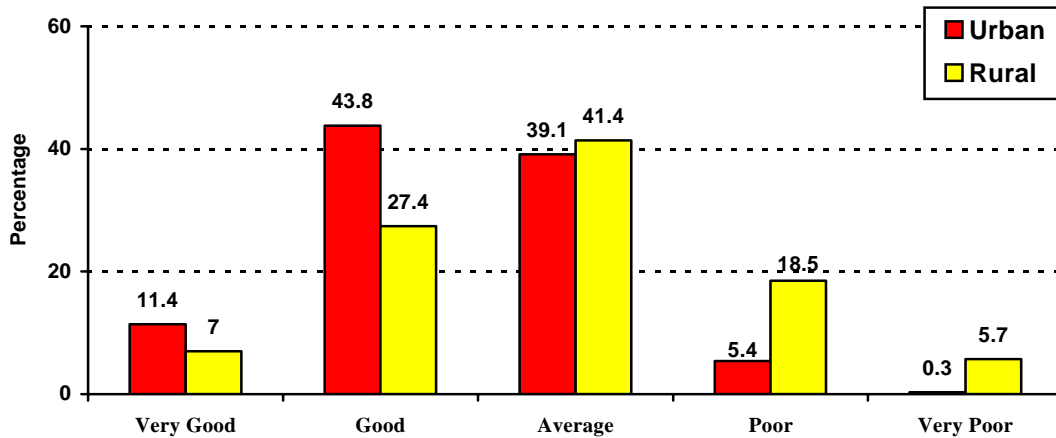


²⁹ For this service, ($\chi^2 = 12.30, 4 \text{ df}, p < .02$).

F. Question on Taxes within Strathcona County

Residents of Strathcona County who were taxpayers³⁰ were asked to rate the value of their tax dollars. Residents were told that 58% 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 50 below.

FIGURE 50
Value of Tax Dollars Spent in Strathcona County
- Urban and Rural Comparisons 2005



Highlights from Figure 50

- 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 ($\chi^2 = 40.73$, 4 df, $p < .001$) and a *t-test* measurement for mean score differences ($t = -5.86$, 452 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 (12.1% of the sample, N=55) 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, with the most common answer being that they felt that there was an inequity between the amount of money they

³⁰ It was found that 92.2% of the respondents owned property in Strathcona County and as such, were taxpayers

paid in taxes and the amount of services they were receiving in return. People living in rural parts of the County particularly pointed this out and felt that the only service they received was with respect to road maintenance (and some were not even satisfied with this).

A comparison of trends from 1999- 2005 with respect to perceptions of the value of services for tax dollars are shown in Figure 51 (Urban) and Figure 52 (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 constant since 2001. Rural residents, on the other hand, have a much higher negative perception of the value that they get for their tax dollars. However, it can also be seen that perceptions of a positive view toward tax dollars increased slightly between 2004 and 2005.

FIGURE 51
Value of Tax Dollars Spent in Strathcona County – Urban Residents (1999-2005)

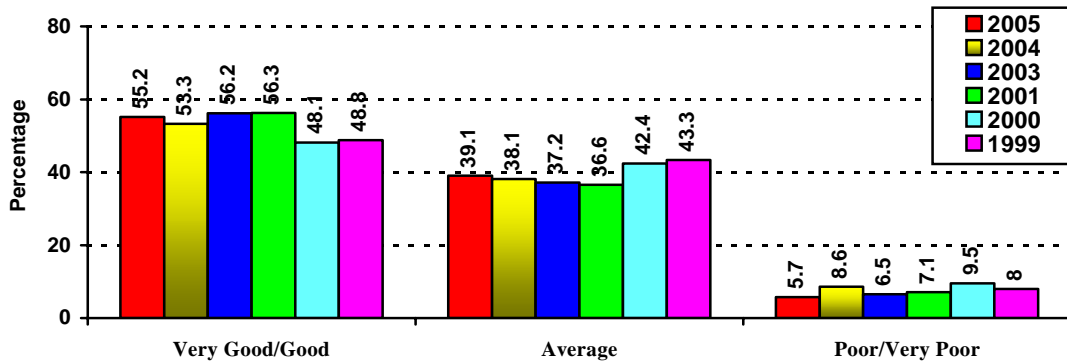
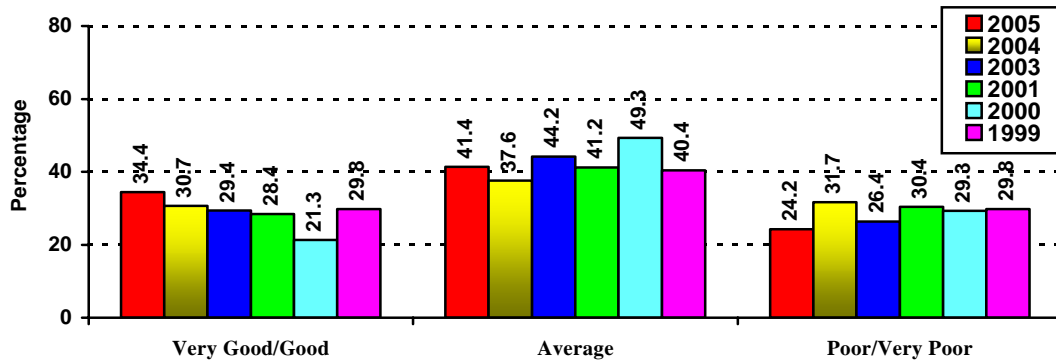


FIGURE 52
Value of Tax Dollars Spent in Strathcona County – Rural Residents (1999-2005)



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.³¹ It can be seen in Table 1 that *recycling services* were the most frequent service used in 2005, followed by *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 – 2005 vs. 2004 and 2003

| Type of Service | N of Users (2005) | % Use 2005 | % Use 2004 | % Use 2003 |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Recycling Services | 417 | 83.4% | 77.7% | 80.7% |
| Indoor Recreation Facilities | 370 | 74.0% | 67.9% | 71.3% |
| Strathcona County Library | 301 | 60.2% | 58.7% | 61.0% |
| RCMP | 166 | 33.2% | 29.7% | 31.9% |
| Public Transit Services | 143 | 28.6% | 20.5% | 23.7% |
| Information & Volunteer Centre | 110 | 22.0% | 18.4% | 23.5% |
| Bylaw Enforcement | 96 | 19.2% | 18.4% | 17.3% |
| Building Permit & Inspection Services | 85 | 17.0% | 18.0% | 15.1% |
| Fire & Ambulance Services | 82 | 16.4% | 10.6% | 12.9% |
| Family Support Services | 45 | 9.0% | 7.2% | 8.6% |
| Agriculture Services | 25 | 5.0% | 7.0% | 6.2% |

With the exception *agriculture services* and *building permit & inspection services*, all the other municipal services had varying degrees of increases in 2005 compared to 2004. Services having the largest jump between these years were *public transit services*, *indoor recreation facilities*, *fire and ambulance services* and *recycling services*.

A comparison of services used between urban and rural residents for 2005 and 2005 is shown in Table 2. It can be seen that in 2005, urban residents used *recycling services*, *indoor recreation facilities*, the *public library*, and *public transit services* to a greater extent than rural residents. Rural residents, on the other hand, made greater use of *agricultural services* and *bylaw enforcement* services than urban residents. This was the

³¹ 18 respondents (3.6% of the sample) indicated that they had not used any county services in the past 12 months and another 11 residents indicated services that were not municipal services (e.g. health care, etc).

same pattern found in 2003. In a comparison between years, it can be seen that use of the *indoor recreation facilities* and the *Information & Volunteer Centre* increased for rural residents in 2005 compared to 2004.

Table 2
County Services in Strathcona County Used by Urban and Rural Residents
in the Past 12 Months – 2005 vs. 2004

| Type of Service | 2005 | | 2004 | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | Urban | Rural | Urban | Rural |
| Recycling Services | 88.5% | 73.5% | 82.5% | 72.4% |
| Indoor Recreation Facilities | 76.7% | 68.8% | 76.2% | 57.1% |
| Strathcona County Library | 64.5% | 51.8% | 64.4% | 51.7% |
| RCMP | 34.8% | 30.0% | 30.4% | 29.1% |
| Public Transit Services | 34.5% | 17.1% | 25.4% | 13.8% |
| Information & Volunteer Centre | 21.8% | 22.4% | 20.8% | 15.3% |
| Building Permit & Inspection Services | 17.6% | 15.9% | 17.8% | 18.7% |
| Bylaw Enforcement | 17.3% | 22.9% | 15.2% | 23.6% |
| Fire & Ambulance Services | 17.3% | 14.7% | 10.2% | 11.3% |
| Family Support Services | 9.7% | 7.6% | 7.3% | 7.4% |
| Agriculture Services | 2.1% | 10.6% | 3.3% | 12.8% |

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 53 and 54.

Table 3
County Departments in Strathcona County Used as the Basis for Rating the Service of County Staff in 2005

| Type of Service | N | % |
|---------------------------------------|-----|-------|
| Indoor Recreation Facilities | 146 | 30.4% |
| Recycling Services | 100 | 20.8% |
| Strathcona County Library | 87 | 18.1% |
| Public Transit Services | 34 | 7.1% |
| RCMP | 30 | 6.2% |
| Fire & Ambulance Services | 21 | 4.4% |
| Building Permit & Inspection Services | 16 | 3.3% |
| Bylaw Enforcement | 14 | 2.9% |
| Family Support Services | 9 | 1.9% |
| Information & Volunteer Centre | 7 | 1.5% |
| Agriculture Services | 2 | 0.2% |

FIGURE 53
Quality of Services provided by County Staff -2005 Results

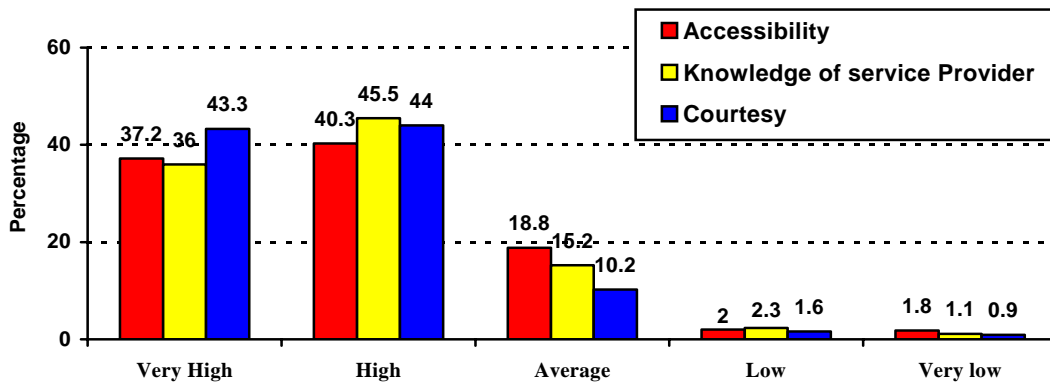
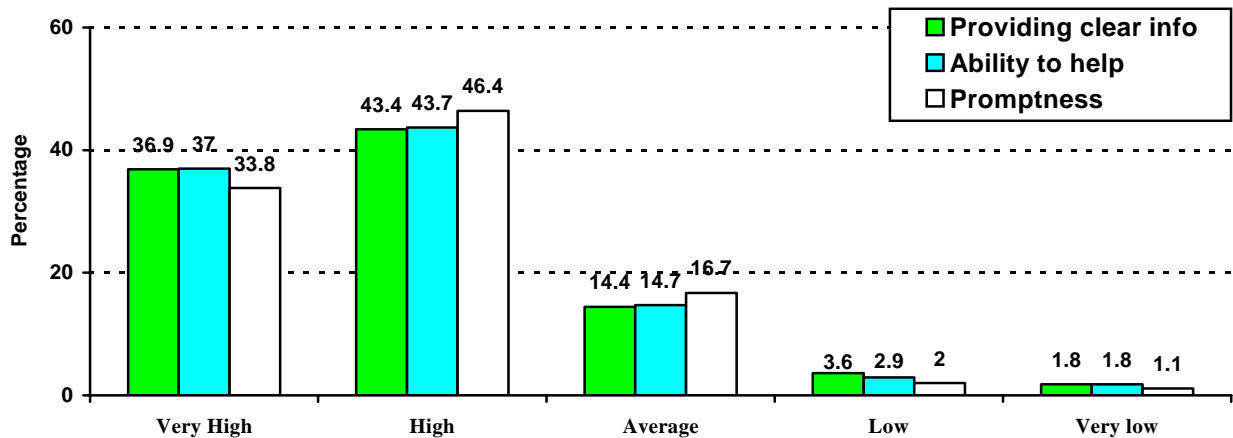


FIGURE 54
Quality of Services provided by County Staff – 2005 Results



Highlights from Figure 53 and Figure 54

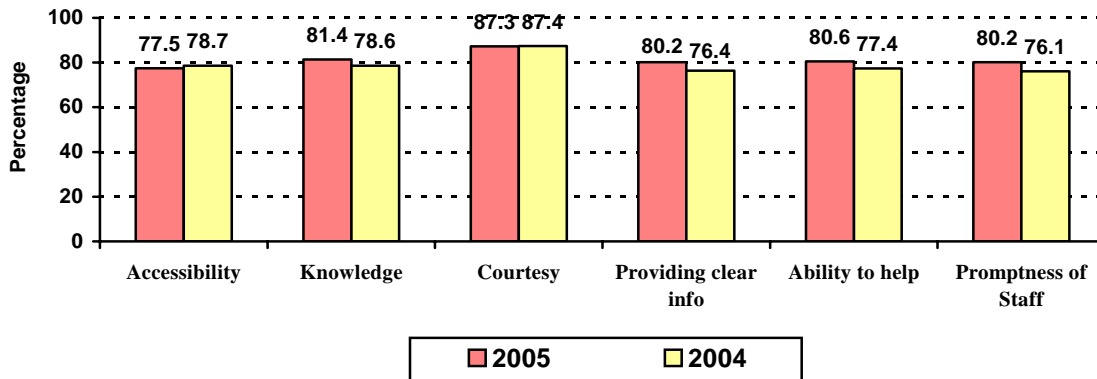
- Overall, residents had a very positive perception of county staff on the basis of all 6 criteria.
- Based on the combination of the “very high” and “high” scores, the strongest criteria was *courtesy* (87.3%). The remaining staff aspects were all rated relatively similar, with *knowledge of the service provider* being second highest at 81.4%, followed closely by the *ability of the staff to help you* (80.6%), *being able to provide clear information* (80.2%), *promptness of staff* (80.2%) and *accessibility of staff* (77.5%).
- All respondents were given the opportunity to provide any comments about the service that they had received from County staff. Overall, 38.4% of the

respondents (N=192) provided additional comments. Of these 192 residents, the majority of the comments were positive descriptors, including *good and/or helpful, professional knowledgeable staff, and friendly/courteous* (27.0%). Just over 10% of these residents had positive perceptions toward particular departments that were helpful to them.

- Not everyone was pleased, however, as 22.9% of the 192 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 returned to residents by County staff; a small number of residents encountered staff that, in their opinion, were not as friendly as they could be; and
 - Some departments should consider having longer hours of service.

Table 55 presents a comparison of overall results between this year’s survey and the 2004 survey for these 6 items. It was found that the combined *very high/high ratings for staff* were slightly higher in 2005 compared to 2004 for all items with the exception of *courtesy and accessibility of staff*, both of which were found to be virtually the same as 2004.

FIGURE 55
Quality of Services provided by County Staff - 2005 & 2004 comparisons on the combined *Very High/High* percentages



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, 45.2% of respondents provided additional comments. Sixteen percent of the comments were positive, either with respect to facilities such as the library or millennium Place, or of services such as *fire & ambulance, recycling* or a

general satisfaction with all municipal services. The remaining comments primarily reiterated concerns they had with specific services. The services mentioned most often included:

- Lack of proper road maintenance (year round);
- Problems with traffic flow, including too many traffic lights, congestion, higher density problems, particular intersection problems (e.g. access onto Wye Road in general, a need to twin Hwy 21);
- Speed traps set by the RCMP;
- Some bus service issues (e.g. some buses not heated properly, perceived need for another main transit centre in the east end of Sherwood Park);
- Issues with what is accepted at recycling depots;
- There were also some residents who felt that the County was in immediate need of a hospital or medical facility. Others had comments about the local newspapers and a lack of high-speed internet services in rural areas. All of these concerns, however, are not responsibilities of the municipal government

APPENDIX A: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Strathcona County Year 2005 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. 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 removal 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 | very | | | | | very | DO NOT READ: |
|----|---------------------------------------|------|--|--|--|--|------|---------------------|
-

| | | | | | | |
|--|------|------|---------|--------|-----|-----------|
| services... is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? | high | high | average | low,or | low | 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 | very high | high | average | low,or | very low | DO NOT READ: DK |
|---|-----------|------|---------|--------|----------|------------------------|

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

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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 your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? very high high average low,or very low **DO NOT READ: DK**
1 2 3 4 5 9

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

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

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

What could Strathcona County do to improve in this area?

- q. Thinking of the **Information and Volunteer Centre...** is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low. very high high average low,or 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?

- r. Thinking of the **Strathcona County Library...** is your satisfaction level very high, high, average, low or very low? very high high average low,or low **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?

- 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 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?

8. Now I'd like to know how you feel about new residential, commercial and industrial developments in

Strathcona County. To begin with...

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

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

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

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

9. 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?

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

- 1 Yes – **Go to Q-10b**
 - 2 No
 - 9 Don't know
- skip to q-11**

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.

11. 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: _____

If one or more of these services are mentioned, please go to Question 12

98 None (**do not read**) - **Go to Question 13 on the next page**

99 Don't know (**do not Read**) – **Go to Question 13 on the next page**

12. Of the County services that you've used, which one did you use most recently? _____
Go To Question 15

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

1 Yes **Skip to Q-15** 2 No 9 Don't know
Ask Q-14 below

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

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

Go to Question 16

9 Don't know

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

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

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

17. Are there any comments you would like to make about any Strathcona County services or the way the County is managed?

18. This past spring, Strathcona County did a municipal census by interviewing residents in person at their house. In future years, the County is considering using other approaches to collect basic census information. In this regard, would you be willing to do the census: (Read list and circle all numbers that respondent says "yes" to)
1. By mailing a form back to the County in a postage paid envelope?
 2. By doing the census on a secure Internet website? or
 3. By calling a special telephone number and completing the census by phone?

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...

19. Which neighbourhood or subdivision do you live in? (eg, Nottingham, Sherwood Heights)
-

DO NOT READ: IF NOT KNOWN, ASK FOR STREET NAME OR CLOSEST RANGE ROAD AND TOWNSHIP ROAD.

20. Including yourself, how many people live in your household? ____ (*If "One" Go to Q-21*)

20a) How many of these people are children aged 15 or younger? _____

20b) How many are children aged 16 or older? _____

21. 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

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

23. Do you presently do any volunteer work in Strathcona County?

1. Yes 2. No | 9. Don't know

24. In order to assist Strathcona County in providing information to residents, can you tell me whether you or any members of your household presently have access to the Internet:

- | | | | |
|------------------|--------|-------|---------------|
| a) At your home? | 1. Yes | 2. No | 9. Don't know |
| b) At work? | 1. Yes | 2. No | 9. Don't know |

25. There are two weekly newspapers that may be read by County residents. I'm going to give you the name of each paper, 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: _____? <i>(If Read, ask... Is this an:</i> | Excellent Source | Good Source | Fair Source, or | Poor Source of Information? | Don't Know | Don't Read |
|--|---------------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| a. Strathcona County This Week, which is published on Fridays | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0 |
| b. The Sherwood Park News, which is published on Wednesdays | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0 |

26. 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 #: _____