



MODUS

planning design engagement

NOVEMBER 2015

PHASE 3 ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY



MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

SHAPING OUR FUTURE



STRATHCONA
COUNTY



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INTRODUCTION

Strathcona County is updating its Municipal Development Plan (MDP) which is the County’s plan for the future. It sets out a clear vision for how Strathcona will grow and develop over the next 20 years or more, and guides decisions on key issues like conservation of the natural environment and investment in infrastructure and services.

Since the MDP was last updated in 2007, the County has added over 10,000 new residents. This growth means we need to ensure that development of urban and rural communities is sustainable and maintains a high quality of life for current and future residents. The updated MDP will also reflect recent studies, as well as key trends and best practices.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

Over a 14 month period, we are asking residents, business owners, and community stakeholder groups to share what they value most about Strathcona County and to weigh in on how the County can build on our strengths while planning for the future.

This report summarizes what we did, what we asked participants, and what we heard in Phase 3.



ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

In Phase 1 we engaged participants on their core values as well as a range of topics including agriculture, industry, environment, affordable housing, nature based and agri-tourism, sustainability, and urban design.

In Phase 2, we looked closer at some of these key topics to better understand why these topics are important to the future of the County, which topics align or clash with each other, and what other topics may be important for the MDP to address.



In Phase 3, we began looking at potential policy directions and options, engaging with residents and stakeholders to get their feedback on the following key topics:

- Agriculture
- Commercial Development
- Community Housing
- Rural Residential
- Sustainable Development & Urban Design
- Sustainable Tourism
- An 'other' topic was also added to ensure participants had a chance to discuss any additional topics they had an interest in.

To share information and gather feedback on the potential policy directions and options, the County hosted a series of engagement activities to hear from stakeholders and community members:

- **Stakeholder Sessions:** Held October 7th, 2015 (10 a.m. – noon and 6 – 8 p.m.) at the County Community Centre. Stakeholder representatives from a range of local organizations were invited to participate in discussions on the key topics. A total of 23 people attended these sessions including members from the Chamber of Commerce, Museum, Beaver Hills Initiative, County Committees, community groups and developers.
- **Public Open House:** Held October 8th, 2015 (drop-in 6 – 8 p.m.) at the Gibson Room in Millennium Place. Participants at this drop-in event reviewed the potential policy directions and options, talked to County staff and the consultant team, and provided feedback through questionnaires. Approximately 60 people attended this event.
- **Questionnaire:** Available from September 28th to October 23rd, 2015. The questionnaire was available online and paper copies were available at the Stakeholders Sessions and Public Open House. A total of 78 responses were received.

A summary of feedback is provided in the following section. The input received will help to refine policy options into policies for the draft MDP update in Phase 4.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

In addition to the policy-related engagement activities in Phase 3, the planning team also reached out to youth in the County to get them involved in planning for the future. This involved a Youth Photo Contest and a series of youth workshops at a local high school:

- **Youth Photo Contest:** Over the summer we asked Strathcona County youth to send us photos of their favourite places in the County. We received over 50 entries that are displayed on the online HUB and in the Community Centre from Sept 14th to November 1st, 2015. Some of these photos will be featured in the updated MDP.

A random prize draw selected 5 winners who were announced at the premiere of the Strathcona County Youth Documentary (developed by Family & Community Services).



- **High School Youth Workshops:** The planning team hosted a series of youth workshops between October 8th and October 29th, 2015 with a number of leadership classes at Archbishop Jordan Catholic High School. A total of 5 workshop sessions engaged over 165 students and included a visit from the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

These workshops included an introduction to the MDP, the purpose of public engagement, and activities to increase students' understanding of urban design and planning. This was also an opportunity to enable youth to share their experiences of spaces and places in Strathcona County and their ideas for the future.

A summary of feedback is provided in the 'Youth Engagement' section. While this input did not focus on policy development, student feedback will be used to help shape the direction of the draft MDP update in Phase 4.

PROMOTION & OUTREACH

To raise awareness about the project and Phase 3 activities, the County used the following:

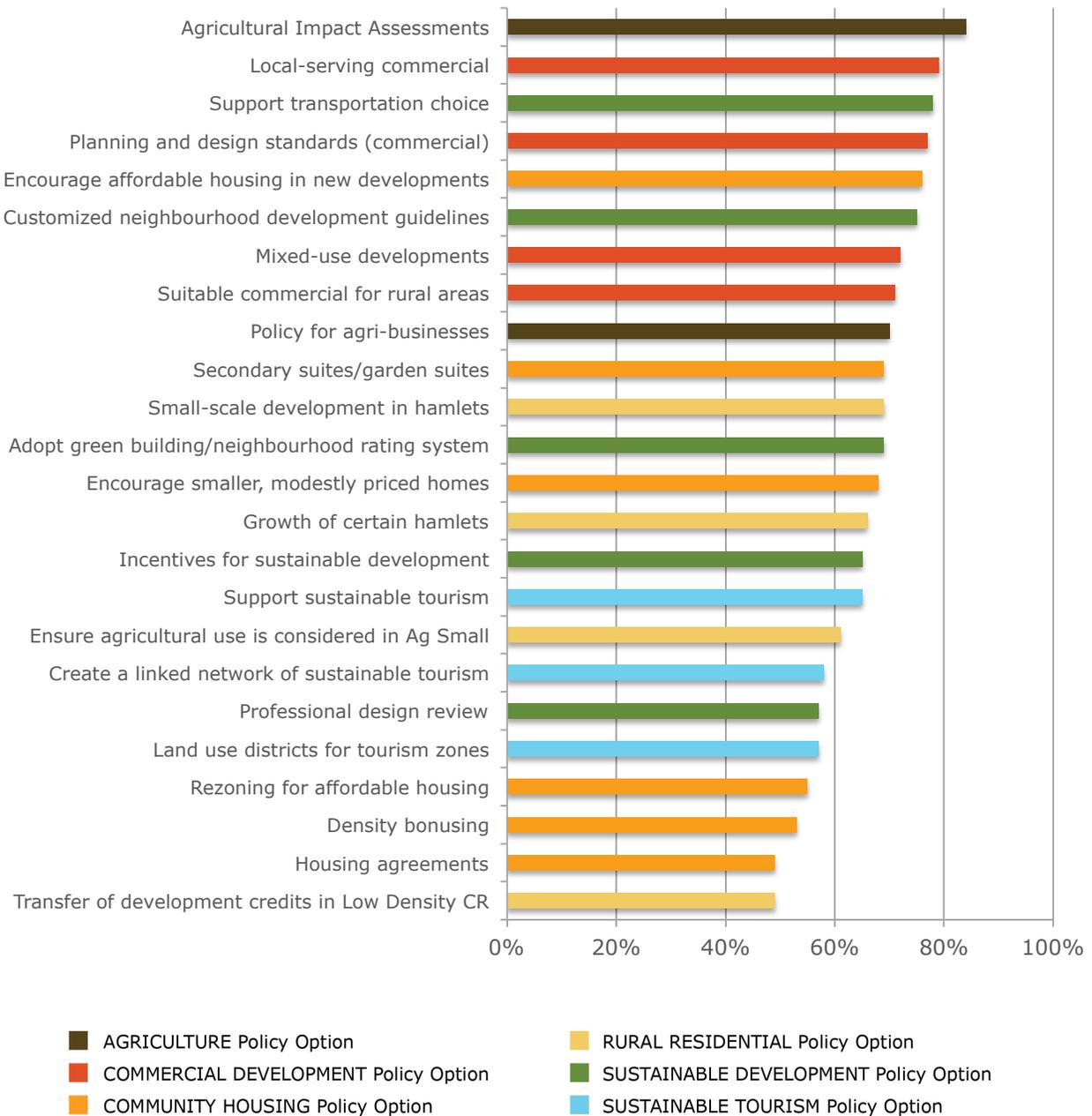
- Project website and Engagement Hub announcements
- County website (main page) announcements
- MDP Project newsletters
- Postcards, newsletters and Policy Options Papers at various locations throughout the County and distributed by hand at Millennium Place
- County digital displays at various locations throughout the County
- Newspaper ads in Sherwood Park News on September 25th and October 2nd, 2015
- Newspaper article in Sherwood Park News on October 5th, 2015
- County staff distributed event information at 4 Farmers' Markets including Sherwood Park (x2), Salisbury and Baseline
- County staff rode with the Bookmobile to distribute information to rural areas including Ministik School, Hastings Lake Community Hall, South Cooking Lake Community Hall, Strathcona Olypiette Centre, Fultonvale Arena, North Cooking Lake Community Hall, Brookville Community Hall, Ardrossan Recreation Centre, Collingwood Cove (mailboxes), Country Mercantile Store (Uncas) and Antler Lake Community Hall
- Social Media including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- Road signs at the County Community Centre and Millennium Place
- Direct invitations to stakeholders



OVERVIEW OF FEEDBACK

The majority of questionnaire respondents supported the potential policy options for each key topic area.

The following chart shows the percentage of people who agreed or strongly agreed with each policy option.





The most supported policies were Agricultural Impact Assessments, local-serving commercial, and supporting transportation choice through more efficient development. Other popular topics included commercial and neighbourhood planning standards/design guidelines, affordable housing and mixed use developments. These policies clearly reflect what we heard in earlier stages of the process, that residents want to protect agricultural lands and create more sustainable, attractive, walkable communities that are affordable and provide a range of shops and services.

Policies that received the least support included transfer of development credits as well as housing agreements and other strategies under the topic of Community Housing. However, it is important to note that many respondents for these 'less supported policies' were neutral and less than 25% disagreed or strongly disagreed with any policy options under any topic areas. Neutral responses may indicate a lack of understanding of certain concepts rather than a lack of support.

The following section provides a detailed summary of feedback for each individual topic and policy.

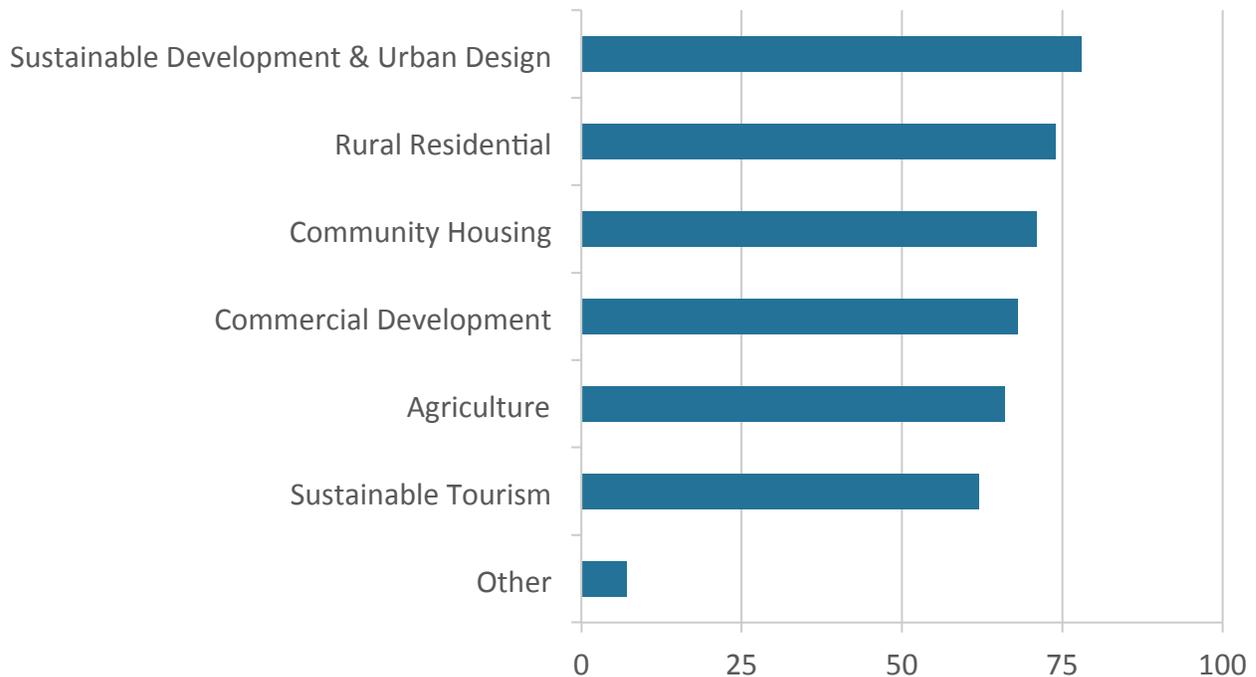


SUMMARY OF PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK ON POTENTIAL POLICY DIRECTIONS AND OPTIONS

The following section provides a summary of stakeholder and community input on potential policy directions and options from the engagement activities in Phase 3.

A total of 78 responses were received in total.

Stakeholders and members of the public were invited to provide feedback on any or all topics of their choice or propose ideas on 'other' topics. The following chart illustrates the number of people who reviewed or commented on each of the key policy topics.



Feedback on these key topics is presented below in alphabetical order of the topics.

It is important to note that some comments regarding specific uses or applications cannot be addressed at the MDP level but could be addressed in other planning processes such as Area Structure Plans, rezonings or issuing of development permits. The County will take these comments into consideration for other processes and work to incorporate them into future planning initiatives.



AGRICULTURE

In previous phases, participants emphasized the importance of agriculture to the County’s identity and stressed the need to protect reduce the spread of urban development into prime farmlands. They also felt there was a need for more education and promotion of agriculture as well as promotion and development of agri-tourism, market gardens, community gardens and equestrian facilities.

In spring of 2015 the County approved an updated Agriculture Master Plan which recommends “policies that allow for and encourage a wide range of commercial agricultural activities on agricultural land to allow for on-farm sales and other activities that draw people (services, events) should be pursued by Strathcona County – particularly for sectors such as equine where there seems to be considerable promise.”

POTENTIAL POLICY OPTIONS

Based on this feedback as well as existing MDP policies and other plans and background research, the following policy options were developed and presented to stakeholders and the public for comment and feedback.

Agricultural Impact Assessments: the MDP should require an agricultural impact assessment for certain development proposals on agricultural lands to identify and reduce any potential impact on surrounding agriculture. This requirement would depend on the type of development, Policy Area, zoning and soil classification.

Agri-business: the MDP should create a policy for agri-businesses such as agriculture supply, equestrian supply, or food processing businesses.

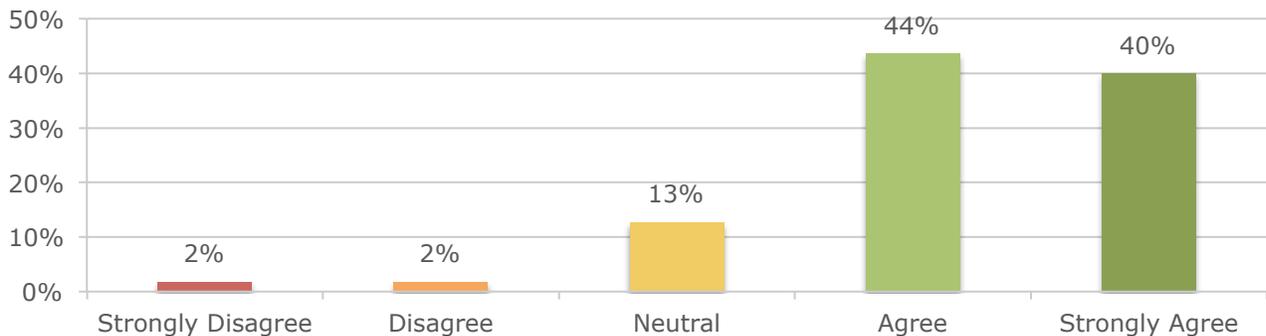
Additional details on these policy options can be found in the Agriculture Policy Options Paper at www.strathcona.ca/MDP.



PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK ON POLICY OPTIONS

Agricultural Impact Assessments: the MDP should require an agricultural impact assessment for certain development proposals on agricultural lands to identify and reduce any potential impact on surrounding agriculture. This requirement would depend on the type of development, Policy Area, zoning and soil classification.

A total of 55 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (84%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 2 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Should be mandatory and include assess cumulative impact of development at a regional/provincial level – the benefits of development should be weighed against the benefits of preserving farmlands
- Preserving prime agricultural lands is essential for the MDP - stop using our agricultural lands for housing and development
- Ensure any development is sustainable and protects our farm lands for the future
- Type of development, zoning and soil classifications are important factors – Class 1 soils should be protected for agricultural use
- Would like a publicly available database of soil classifications in the County that can be used as part of the development permit process
- Clarify what “certain developments” are
- Should be limited to major development/projects that are likely to impact existing residents
- Consider non-agricultural development that supports agri-tourism such as retail or accommodations
- Preserve prime agricultural lands only if they have high yield crop potential



- Development on agricultural lands is already controlled by land use bylaws
- Using agricultural lands for other purposes cannot always be avoided
- Market economies should dictate development – reluctant to add more assessment, the ASP process is already cumbersome for developers

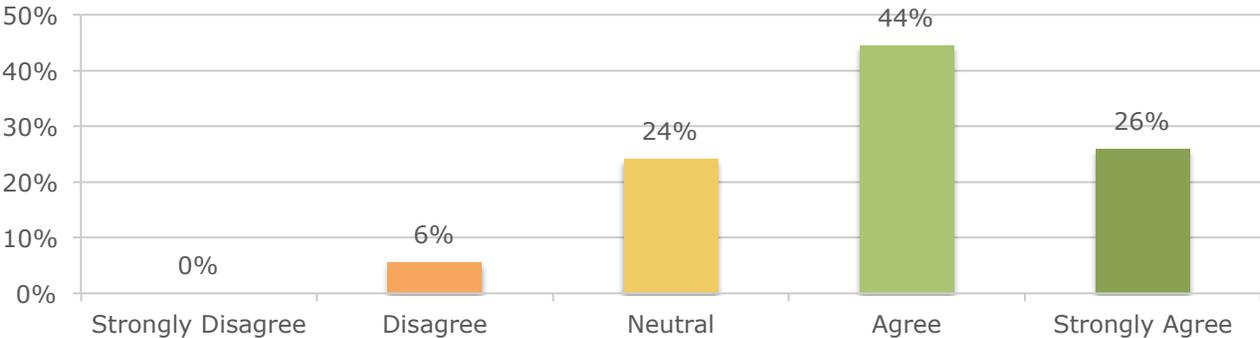
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Look at the Land Management Framework created for Beaver Hills
- Agriculture also has impacts if not properly managed – should be more holistic “development impact assessments” that look at impact on the environment as well
- Agree to Agricultural Impact Assessments but not where industry is already planned
- May be more appropriate for intensive agricultural areas (such as livestock)
- New provincial regulations may be more restrictive



Agri-business: the MDP should create a policy for agri-businesses such as agriculture supply, equestrian supply, or food processing businesses.

A total of 54 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (70%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 3 people disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Good for business and local employment
- More agri-business specific uses permitted (farm-gate sales, events, accommodations, farm sales/markets)
- Help remove barriers to selling local food in large stores
- Given enough local demand, support businesses will fill this niche
- Make sure these consider environmental impact, soil conservation
- Agri-businesses may be more useful outside agricultural lands, consider agri-business clusters in light industrial/commercial areas or the industrial Heartland
- Include details on density transfer from C6 zones to agricultural lands to allow for commercial subdivision of equestrian stalls
- Agri-business requires independent assessment – determine what we need to support local industry and what can supply regional/national industries
- Clearly define what types of business would fall in this category
- Maintain productive lands for agriculture

Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

Stakeholders generally supported this policy option. No specific comments were raised during discussions.



OTHER COMMENTS ON AGRICULTURE

Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Support agriculture in sustainable ways that benefit nearby residents and protect the environment – this is an important part of the County
- The MDP should align with the Agriculture Master Plan (AMP)– fully implement the AMP as soon as possible
- Protect productive soils, can be used for community gardens, urban gardens
- Offer credits to landowners for protecting prime agricultural lands (to offset value for not developing their lands)
- Need a mechanism to identify alliances between landowners in small and large holdings – could be problematic for policies
- Certain agricultural operations have huge negative impact on the environment and emissions – opposed to any intensive/contained animal operations in the County

Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Should there be requirements to farm on agricultural parcels?



COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

In previous phases, many participants expressed the need for a greater variety of shopping and local services close to where they live. Urban residents suggested increasing density to create “European village-style” walkable neighbourhoods while rural residents suggested more small local amenities where residents could walk to meet their day-to-day needs and socialize with their neighbours.

Residents in both urban and rural communities noted they would like to see more small, locally-owned shops that fit with the character of the area rather than “big box” retailers or strip malls.

POTENTIAL POLICY OPTIONS

Based on this feedback as well as existing MDP policies and other plans and background research, the following policy options were developed and presented to stakeholders and the public for comment and feedback:

Mixed-use developments: the MDP should encourage development that mixes commercial shops and services with residential, office or institutional uses and encourage existing commercial areas to redevelop as mixed-use neighbourhoods to meet a greater variety of needs.

Local-serving commercial: the MDP should require new residential developments (in urban areas and hamlets) to incorporate local-serving shops and services.

Suitable commercial for rural areas: the MDP should specify the appropriate type and scale of commercial development for different rural areas to ensure developments ‘fit’ with their surroundings.

Planning and design guidelines: the MDP should provide direction for the development of detailed design guidelines for commercial and mixed-use developments to describe desired building forms, mix of uses, building orientation, public realm design, parking and green development standards.

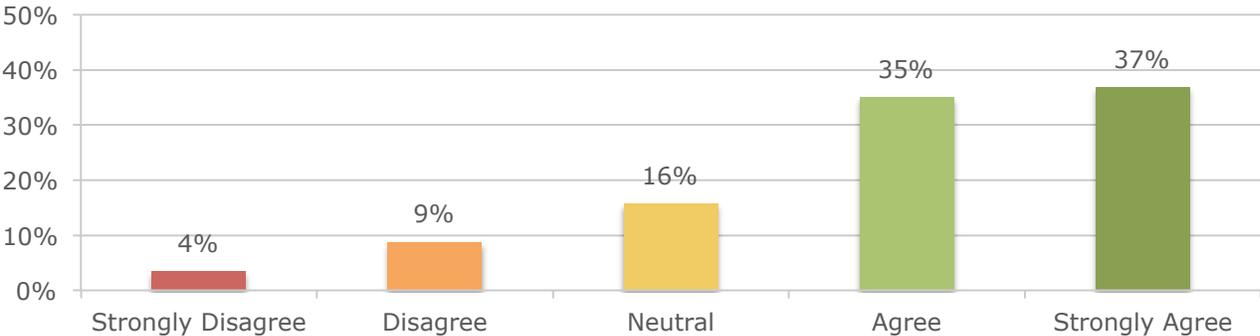
Additional details on these policy options can be found in the Commercial Development Policy Options Paper at www.strathcona.ca/MDP.



PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK ON POLICY OPTIONS

Mixed-use developments: the MDP should encourage development that mixes commercial shops and services with residential, office or institutional uses and encourage existing commercial areas to redevelop as mixed-use neighbourhoods to meet a greater variety of needs.

A total of 57 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (72%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 7 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Mixed use would support more livable, walkable communities, pedestrian-oriented development good for health, quality of life, and social connections/sense of community, creates character
- Combining commercial and residential uses less of a footprint, helps to reduce sprawl and reduce the need for driving, good use of limited space
- More mixed use would help our community grow and be seen as more than just a bedroom community to Edmonton
- Incorporate a mix of housing types in mixed use developments to allow for greater variety/choice
- All for more mixed use in subdivisions – allow for split zoning
- Apartments on top of businesses to accommodate store owners
- Consider housing above big box stores
- Okay to put residential in commercial areas but not commercial into residential neighbourhoods
- Should be encouraged rather than required – let the market decide



- Should be assessed based on needs of different areas – variety is good as long as the ratio of commercial/residential is appropriate
- Small local businesses may not be as feasible for mixed use

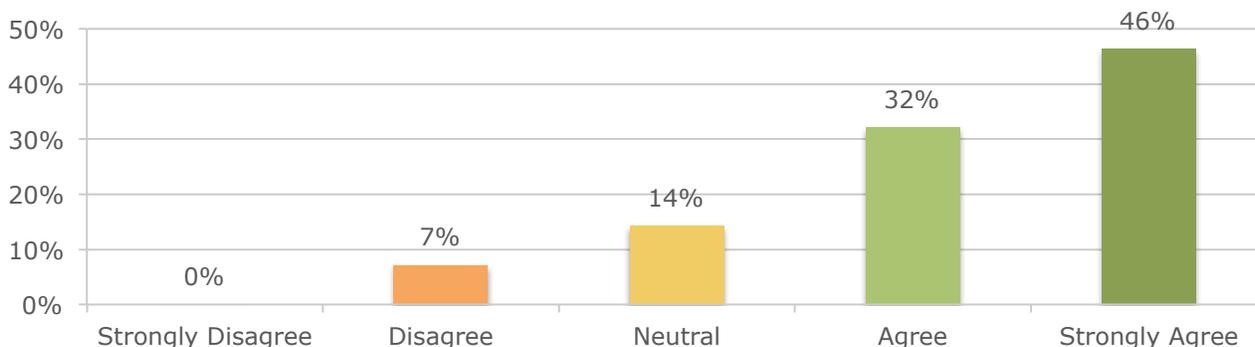
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Encourage “messy” commercial streets with on street parking and pedestrian connections rather than large segregated blocks of commercial with huge parking lots (parking and traffic standards are currently a barrier to this type of development)
- Certain types of businesses work better in mixed use developments than others



Local-serving commercial: the MDP should require new residential developments (in urban areas and hamlets) to incorporate local-serving shops and services.

A total of 56 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (79%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 4 people disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Very important to provide shops/services for new development – create livable communities with convenient local services and employment opportunities
- Turn hamlets into destinations – make businesses viable, add character and diversity to these areas (rather than just being bedroom communities)
- Consider existing small businesses!
- Don't restrict development to urban areas and hamlets – resort development could be appropriate for other areas
- "Encourage/allow/support" rather than "require" commercial as there may not be sufficient customer base or people may not want commercial
- Ensure there isn't too much of any one type of business in each neighbourhood
- What is considered local-serving? Would this involve larger/national chains?
- It is up to people to choose where they live – people will choose to live next to amenities that are important to them

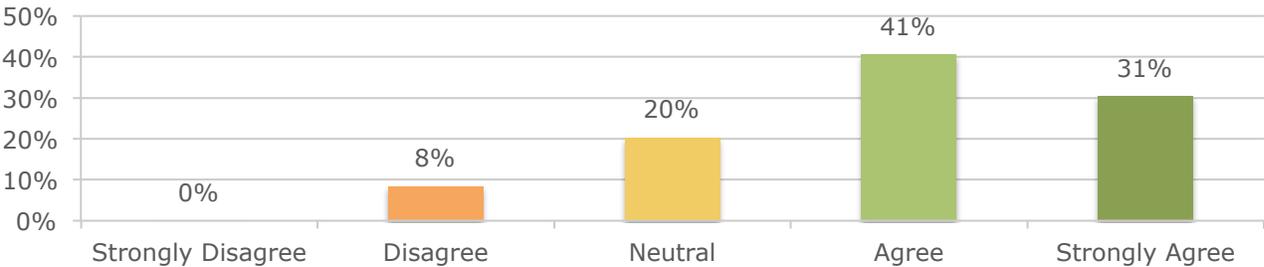
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Services/restaurants better for neighbourhoods rather than retail
- Need better pedestrian connectivity to existing commercial – create shortcuts
- Commercial should be integrated into neighbourhoods but must be visible to traffic
- Integrated commercial needs assessment into the planning process to ensure the right amount is allocated to the right areas – need continual market analysis to know what is in demand
- Infill in existing neighbourhoods may be easier for independent businesses; commercial leases in new developments are often too expensive for start-ups



Suitable commercial for rural areas: the MDP should specify the appropriate type and scale of commercial development for different rural areas to ensure developments 'fit' with their surroundings.

A total of 59 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (71%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 5 people disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- As long as residents agree it is a good fit for the area
- Ensure proper size/ratio of development
- Important for businesses to 'fit' but make sure commercial/services are needed/supported so they are viable
- Suitable commercial for rural areas should be determined through a Hamlet Revitalization Strategy and promoted through Economic Development & Tourism – nature-based tourism could be a major theme/driver
- Need an overarching policy/vision to guide future development
- Market should determine appropriate size, scale and use for rural areas

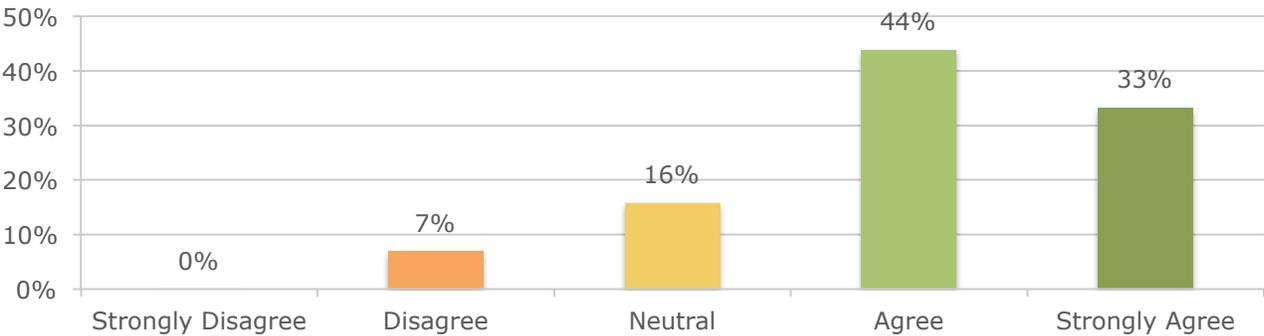
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Could include space for artists, commercial tourism operations, home-based businesses, start-up incubators for new entrepreneurs
- Desire for small-scale, locally-owned grocery stores so rural residents can shop closer to home



Planning and design guidelines: the MDP should provide direction for the development of detailed design guidelines for commercial and mixed-use developments to describe desired building forms, mix of uses, building orientation, public realm design, parking and green development standards.

A total of 57 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (77%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 4 people disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- A good idea – look at Edmonton’s Transit Oriented Development Guidelines
- Use guidelines to design a range of commercial – mixed use, small and medium scale, not just big box stores
- Guidelines for more creative, efficient buildings– energy/water conservation, building orientation, snow/stormwater collection, rain gardens, bioswales, shade trees, solar windows and overhangs, heated paving, geothermal heating, etc.
- Consider winter design/architecture
- Guidelines for dark sky preservation
- Incorporate green space throughout (in parking areas, green roofs, green walls and sitting areas)
- Good to have a similar community character but not have everything look the same
- Provide more specific guidance about what is required’ and what is ‘encouraged’
- Some guidelines are required but ensure there is some flexibility
- Include guidelines for adequate off-street parking – this is an issue for certain developments (like community centres, apartments)
- Make sure these aren’t developed by planners/administrators but by people who understand development (designers, developers, end users)
- Too many regulations may scare away businesses/developers



Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- It's important to maintain the visual character of urban and rural areas
- Support regulations for chain stores and big box retailers – this would help to create developments that are more in character with the community - but need more flexibility for small/independent businesses to allow for creativity
- On-street parking for commercial (rather than just having large on-site parking lots) would help create more walkable neighbourhoods
- Requires a fine balance - too many regulations could affect cost of commercial development and discourage new businesses from locating here

OTHER COMMENTS ON COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Avoid sprawl, big box stores are a blight on our community and destroy smaller businesses
- Development is all over the place – we need stronger policy supported by our politicians
- Make sure there is enough parking for newly developed areas

Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Find ways to accommodate/encourage locally owned, independent businesses rather than franchises
- Commercial either needs high traffic areas or affordable lease rates which are hard to come by which is why we end up with so many big box stores rather than local businesses
- Some commercial businesses are using quasi-industrial spaces as its more affordable – do we want to encourage this?



COMMUNITY HOUSING

In previous phases, we heard that affordable housing is a key issue for the County, particularly for seniors, youth and young families. Participants suggested a greater variety of housing such as smaller homes, suites, rental housing, seniors housing, and denser housing (smaller lots, apartments) would help to provide options for people to stay in their community or neighbourhood as they get older and more affordable entry-level homes for young people/families.

Residents suggested that creative and innovative solutions would be needed to address the significant gap in both urban and rural areas. Suggestions included County policies, density transfers, incentives, subsidies and provincial grants/funding.

POTENTIAL POLICY OPTIONS

Based on this feedback as well as existing MDP policies and other plans and background research, the following policy options were developed and presented to stakeholders and the public for comment and feedback:

Encourage smaller, modestly-priced homes: the MDP should require a specific mix of housing types and lot sizes to allow for more affordable homes in new developments / subdivisions.

Encourage affordable housing in new developments (inclusionary zoning): the MDP should require a certain amount of affordable housing in new developments.

Secondary suites / Garden suites: the MDP should support suites (in appropriate urban areas or hamlets where adequate servicing is in place) and encourage homeowners to create suites to increase the supply of affordable rental housing.



Density bonusing: the MDP should allow landowners to build at a higher density in return for specific community amenities which can include affordable housing (in locations where affordable housing is desired and additional density is appropriate).

Rezoning for affordable housing the MDP should allow rezoning of specific parcels (or types) of land on the condition that the land will be developed specifically for affordable housing.

Housing agreements: the County should enter into housing agreements with developers of affordable housing to help control the resell price/rental costs of the housing.

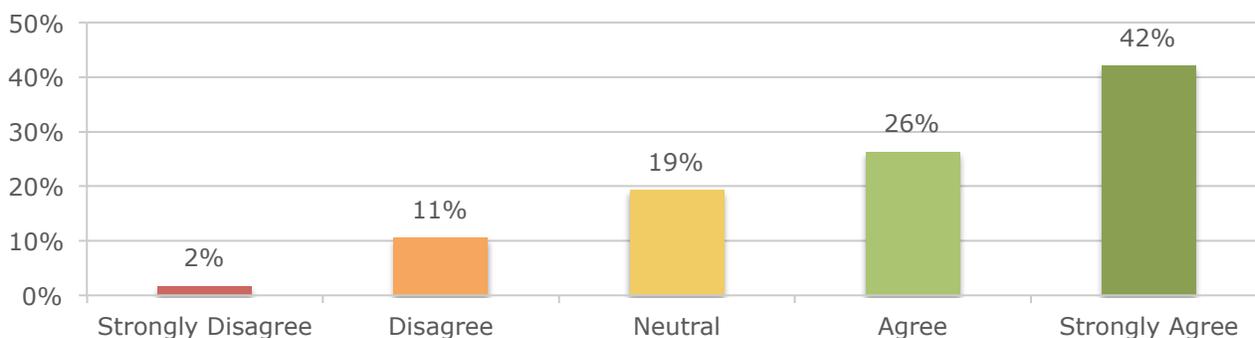
Additional details on these policy options can be found in the Community Housing Policy Options Paper at www.strathcona.ca/MDP.



PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK ON POLICY OPTIONS

Encourage smaller, modestly-priced homes: the MDP should require a specific mix of housing types and lot sizes to allow for more affordable homes in new developments / subdivisions.

A total of 57 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (68%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 7 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Yes, support a good mix of housing to avoid “rich” and “poor” areas
- Incorporate a blend of affordable homes into every area plan
- Consider mixed use development too – works better with a mix of housing types
- Keep lots larger but allow smaller housing
- Consider parking issues
- Link to density transfer so you can put affordable housing elsewhere– don’t put affordable housing in a high end community

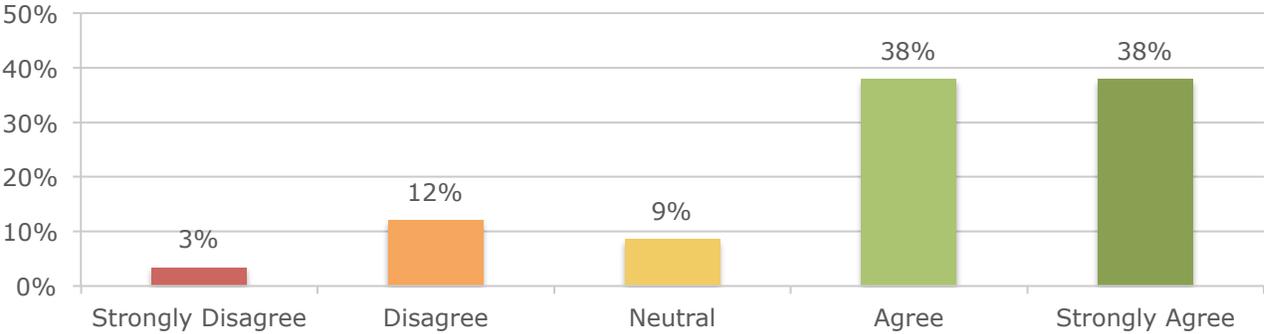
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Encourage denser, more walkable, transit-oriented neighbourhoods with less parking (or underground parking)
- Encourage affordable rental housing
- Balance accessibility with affordability (improving accessibility can often increase cost)
- Allow for flexibility and innovation (especially on smaller lots), avoid a “cookie cutter” approach where all houses look the same
- Provide a regulatory environment that allows for smaller homes/greater diversity of sizes rather than mandating a certain amount



Encourage affordable housing in new developments (inclusionary zoning): the MDP should require a certain amount of affordable housing in new developments.

A total of 58 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (76%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 9 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Do more than encourage, make affordable housing an integral part of new development
- Every new development area should include affordable housing
- Need to promote this type of development as there are limited options and young families are moving away
- Include seniors housing
- May not be appropriate for all development sites

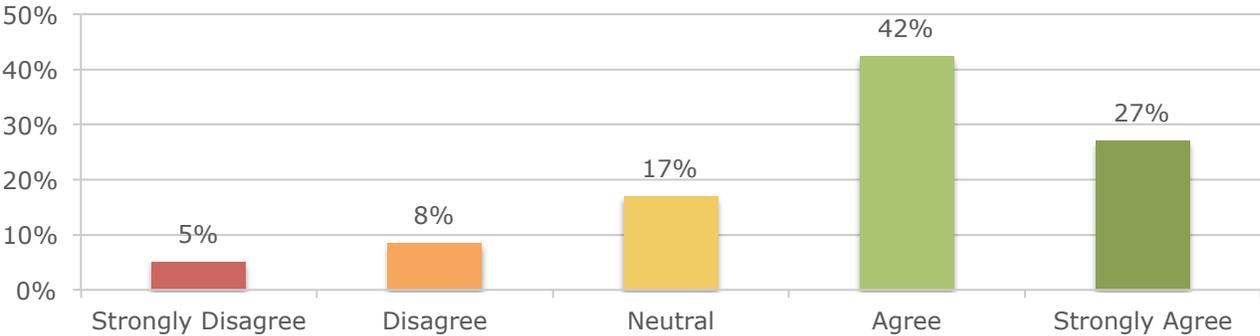
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Support for neighbourhoods that are inclusive
- Include affordable rental units in new developments
- General support for this policy option but there are financial challenges
- Need to ensure this is fair for everyone (i.e., doesn't raise costs of regular housing to offset the costs of affordable units)
- Local government strategies like this alleviate provincial/federal governments from what should be their responsibility, essentially "letting them off the hook"



Secondary suites / Garden suites: the MDP should support suites (in appropriate urban areas or hamlets where adequate servicing is in place) and encourage homeowners to create suites to increase the supply of affordable rental housing.

A total of 59 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (69%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 8 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Should be allowed everywhere
- A good policy to allow families to stay together – better quality of life for seniors who get to remain with their family/in their community
- This is the way to create affordable housing – helps to support homeowners
- Make it easier for families to have multiple homes or granny suites on farm sites
- Assess the build out capacity of all neighbourhoods to determine maximum number of suites
- Ensure there is adequate parking
- Consider servicing, noise, light, density, neighbourhood character, etc.
- Requires strict guidelines, especially on larger lots
- Mixed thoughts about this – must be done right
- Likely some opposition/concerns from neighbours

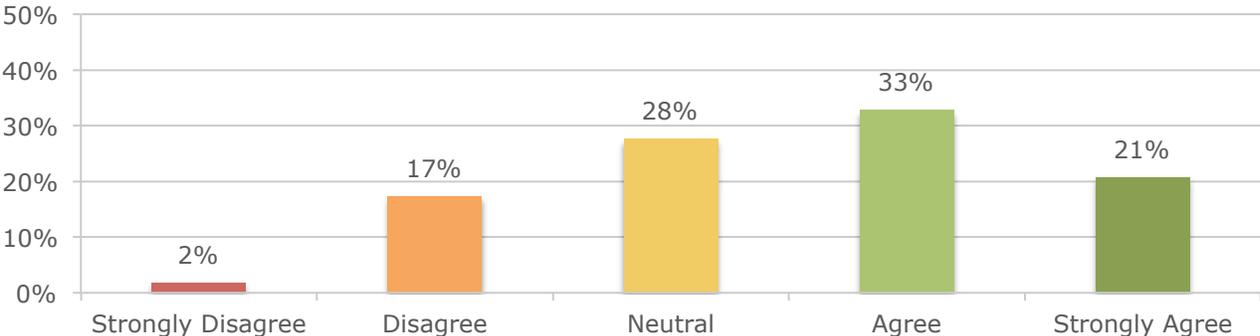
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- A good way to offset mortgage for homeowners and provide more rental units
- Costs to meet building codes can be prohibitive for homeowners – County should advocate provincial government to review/relax building regulations that impact the cost of creating suites



Density bonusing: the MDP should allow landowners to build at a higher density in return for specific community amenities which can include affordable housing (in locations where affordable housing is desired and additional density is appropriate).

A total of 58 questionnaire respondents answered this question. Over half of respondents (53%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option and over a quarter were neutral. A total of 11 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Good way to encourage affordable housing without spending tax dollars
- Consider European style commercial centres (mixed use)
- Ensure there is a good mix of housing (don't overdevelop any one type)
- Ensure proper ratios for all mixed use development
- Higher density housing must not be cheaply/poorly built
- The key is to make sure density is located in appropriate places
- If density increases so should green space and other community amenities
- Should require developers to offset increased density by conserving lands (for environment, agriculture or recreation) in the same area or another area
- Don't support higher density – parking issues, traffic, fire/safety

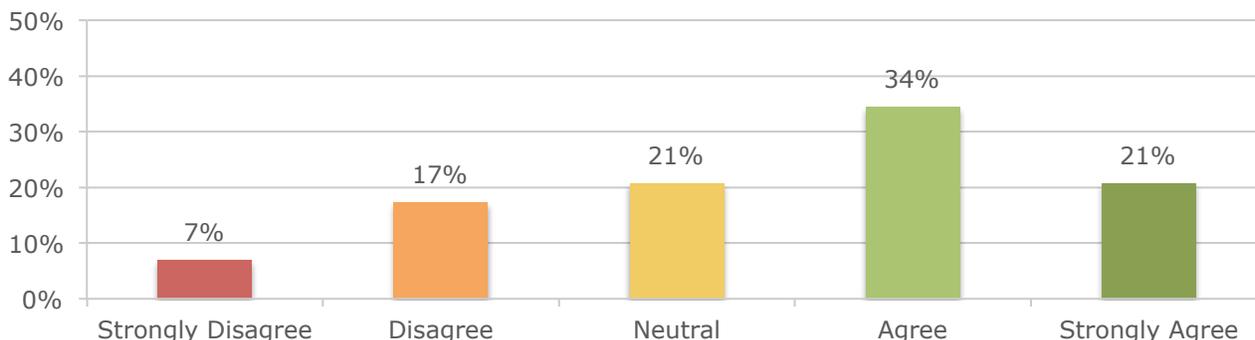
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Density targets in the region are already too high for developers although this strategy may work for infill development
- Maximum allowable density in Sherwood Park is lower than other areas so developers don't create smaller units (like bachelor suites) as they don't want to use up density on less expensive units



Rezoning for affordable housing the MDP should allow rezoning of specific parcels (or types) of land on the condition that the land will be developed specifically for affordable housing.

A total of 58 questionnaire respondents answered this question. Over half of respondents (55%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 14 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Need to redefine affordable – often affordable housing isn’t really affordable
- As long as there is a mix of housing, ensure proper ratios based on the location/size of development
- As long as it is quality construction – very difficult to make it financially viable to build affordable housing
- Ensure some green space is retained
- May be appropriate in some areas but make sure to address neighbours’ concerns
- Will there be a market for housing in undesirable locations?

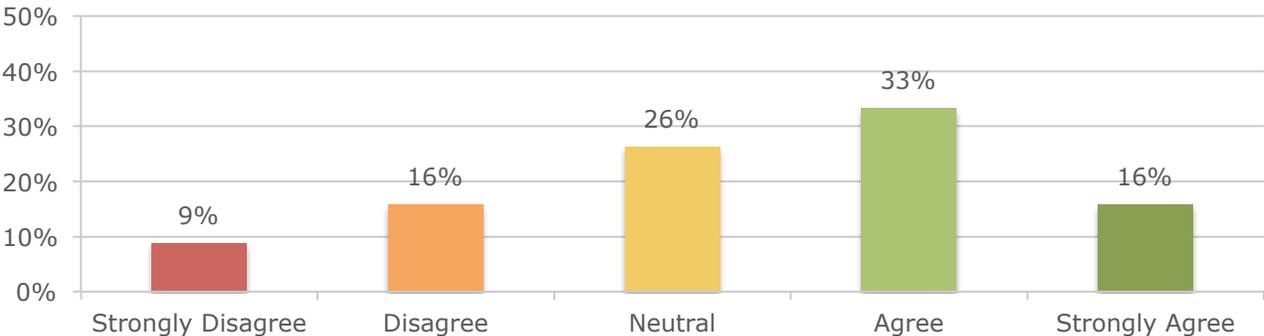
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- This is a good policy as it broadens the scope for housing associations or seniors organizations to be effective by developing affordable housing
- Our community is changing – the standard is no longer a “dual income family with 2 kids and a picket fence” – we need to provide more diverse housing options, even in older neighbourhoods
- People in affordable housing need access to transit and amenities so this would work better in urban areas; small-scale solutions would be best for hamlets
- Look at using Municipal Reserve lands for affordable housing
- Potential issues for infill development – lands are often not large enough to be feasible, parking issues, NIMBY complaints from existing residents



Housing agreements: the County should enter into housing agreements with developers of affordable housing to help control the resell price/rental costs of the housing.

A total of 57 questionnaire respondents answered this question. Around half of respondents (49%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 14 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- This would be the only way to keep developers honest in providing affordable housing – must be tied to policy or density transfer
- Not sure how this would be done? Could it be enforced?
- Housing should be based on market conditions – let customers decide what they are willing to pay, up to developers to control cost of housing
- Not necessary, government should stay out of business (protect residents by setting guidelines), there are other social programs to provide rent subsidies

Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

Stakeholders generally supported this policy option. No specific comments were raised during discussions.



OTHER COMMENTS ON COMMUNITY HOUSING

Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- If we want a strong/sustainable community we must provide a greater range of housing – otherwise young people and seniors will have to leave – concerned our kids won't be able to afford to live here
- More housing options will benefit everyone in the County - greater housing diversity will increase our community diversity
- Follow through – let's make it happen!
- Be creative about housing options to meet a range of needs
- Many social housing agreements set to expire in 2017 which could result in an influx of people in need of affordable housing
- Consider "tiny homes" in core areas of Sherwood Park (not just on acreages – this defeats the purpose of small/dense sustainable housing)
- Consider building housing on top of big box stores – make use of rooftops
- Use land close to Sherwood Park instead of sprawling into rural areas
- Consult current residents for infill development
- Some new infill development has not been well done and doesn't fit with existing neighbourhoods, concerns about parking/traffic/crowding
- Concerned about not having enough large homes for the middle class
- Concerned about crime, urban "ghettos"

Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- What is the County's role in ensuring a variety of housing for all residents? MDP policies should address this.
- Need a clear definition of affordable in MDP policy
- Create opportunity for infill, supply, market competition, and affordability
- The County should advocate for more support for affordable housing from provincial/federal governments and work with them to create incentives for building affordable housing, rental units and seniors housing
- Incentives for developers to create affordable/rental housing
- Focus on infill over greenfield development
- Build affordable housing first to avoid 'NIMBYism' from new residents
- Include policy to thoroughly review all development standards and their impact on affordability (parking requirements, building codes, etc.)
- Need reasonably priced rental apartments (especially for seniors and singles) – significant shortage in Sherwood Park
- Supply and demand affects housing affordability – MDP policy should ensure supply is addressed so prices don't skyrocket



RURAL RESIDENTIAL

In previous phases many participants expressed concern about urban and rural sprawl and stressed that development should be concentrated in existing areas such as urban areas or hamlets to limit the fragmentation of farmlands and natural areas. Participants also identified the need for more complete rural communities with small-scale local amenities where residents can meet their day-to-day needs.

Infrastructure and servicing was raised as one of the biggest challenges with rural development. Participants noted that the cost of connecting to municipal water and sewer systems is a significant issue. Some suggested rural development did not necessarily require piped water or sewer, while others pointed out that most rural wells are not safe for drinking and individual septic systems have their own challenges such as leaks, odours and maintenance. Also, the cost of running water/wastewater trucks and wear and tear on rural roads was seen as being unsustainable.

POTENTIAL POLICY OPTIONS

Based on this feedback as well as existing MDP policies and other plans and background research, the following policy options were developed and presented to stakeholders and the public for comment and feedback:

Ensure agricultural use is being considered in the Agricultural Small Holdings Policy Area: the MDP should require landowners looking to subdivide in this policy area to consider different forms and scales or agricultural uses on their lands.

Transfer of development credits in the Low Density Country Residential Policy Area: the County should explore the idea of allowing landowners to transfer density from one property to another in order to maximize rural development on less sensitive lands within a defined area.



Small scale development in hamlets: the MDP should enable small-scale development that caters to the local community (in appropriate locations).

Growth of certain hamlets: the MDP should allow certain hamlets to expand their boundaries to enable further urban development.

Servicing of Rural Residential Development: Currently the MDP requires rural residences in the Country Residential Policy Area to connect to municipal piped water and sewer systems. However, the MDP does allow consideration for on-site private systems for rural residences in the Agricultural Small Holdings Policy Area (as long as environmental conditions are suitable).

Options:

- The County should keep current requirements for rural servicing
- The County should allow private on-site water and sewer systems for all rural residences
- The County should modify current rural servicing requirements to provide for a variety of water and sewer systems depending on the form/scale of development, soil conditions, location, etc.

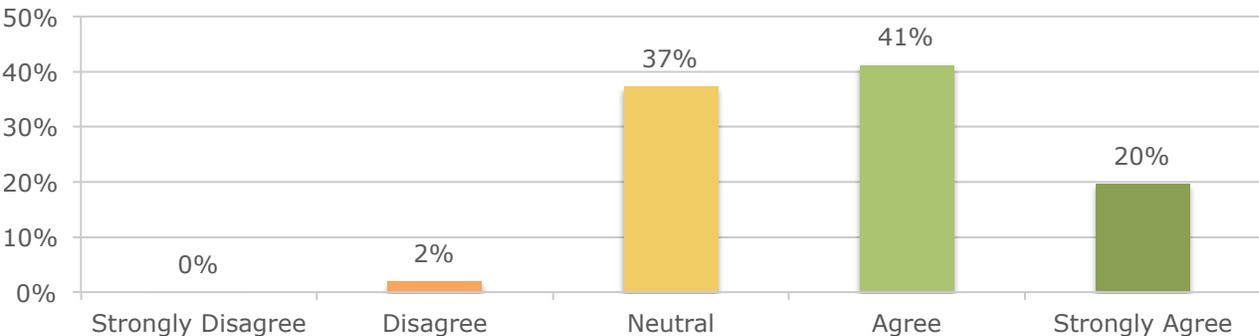
Additional details on these policy options can be found in the Rural Residential Policy Options Paper at www.strathcona.ca/MDP.



PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK ON POLICY OPTIONS

Ensure agricultural use is being considered in the Agricultural Small Holdings
Policy Area: the MDP should require landowners looking to subdivide in this policy area to consider different forms and scales or agricultural uses on their lands.

A total of 51 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (61%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option and a significant proportion of respondents were neutral. Just 1 person disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Agree, need to look at what is best for the environment, not just personal gain
- We need to protect agricultural land
- Focus on developing around hamlets to avoid the need to subdivide agricultural lands
- Should allow subsistence farming (without off-farm sales)
- Often small holdings are rented to larger operations – need a way to track this
- Intent is good but need to recognize that sometimes proposed agricultural uses don't work out for various reasons – consider age/illness and other factors
- Small holdings should allow multi-generational housing to allow aging in place without subdividing
- People are subdividing to make profit – requiring landowners to justify why they are subdividing will not change this, just make it harder to sell

Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

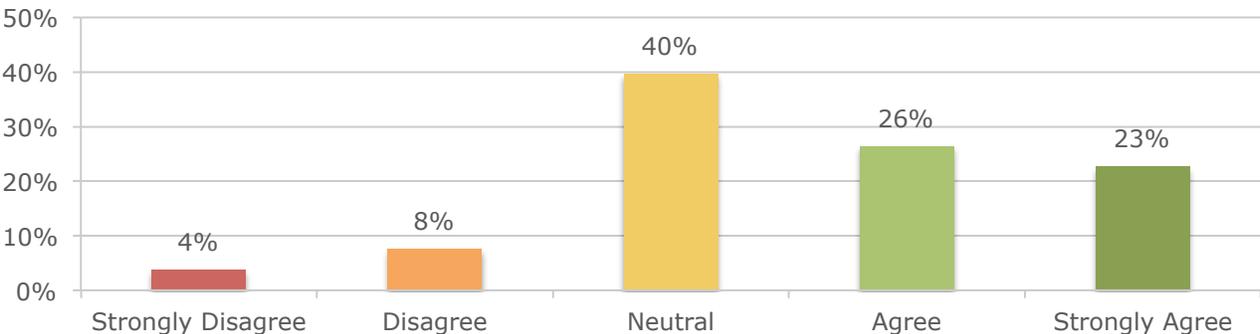
- Agree, this policy area was intended for agriculture



Transfer of development credits in the Low Density Country Residential Policy

Area: the County should explore the idea of allowing landowners to transfer density from one property to another in order to maximize rural development on less sensitive lands within a defined area.

A total of 51 questionnaire respondents answered this question. Around half of respondents (49%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option and a significant proportion of respondents were neutral. A total of 6 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Don't limit this concept to rural residential only – apply to all policy areas
- Clearly define the purpose – conserve agriculture/environment and ensure the receiving area has capacity to accept the additional density
- Transfer density from hamlet to hamlet rather than parcel to parcel
- Should be used to protect prime farmlands (as proposed in the Agriculture Master Plan) - allow some development in less productive areas

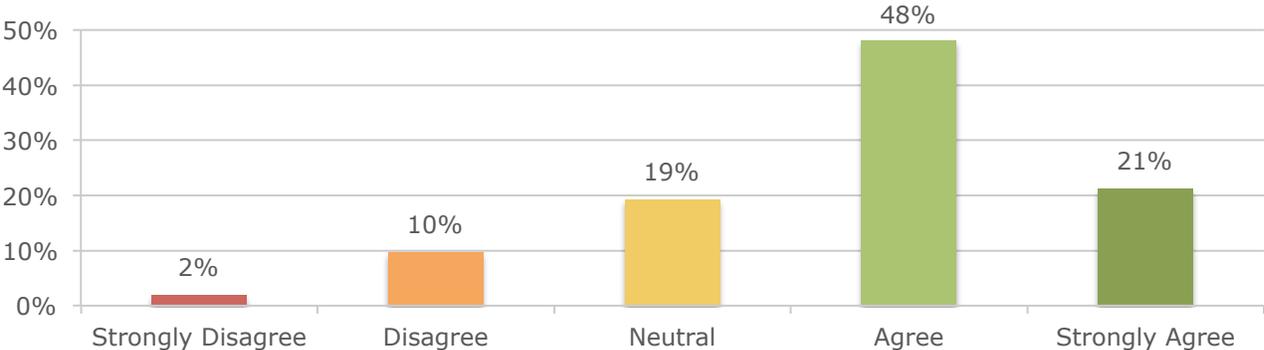
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Agree – developers have been wanting this for years, allows more efficient development and protection of natural areas



Small scale development in hamlets: the MDP should enable small-scale development that caters to the local community (in appropriate locations).

A total of 52 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (69%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 6 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Yes, allow small-scale development without requiring an Area Structure Plan
- Create attractive hamlets/destinations with architectural themes to reflect hamlet’s unique character and history – will make businesses more viable
- Need to know which hamlets and what is considered “appropriate locations” and what “caters to the local community” – who decides what is appropriate?
- Encourage/allow but don’t subsidize to make development happen in hamlets
- Disagree, market should dictate what type of development happens where

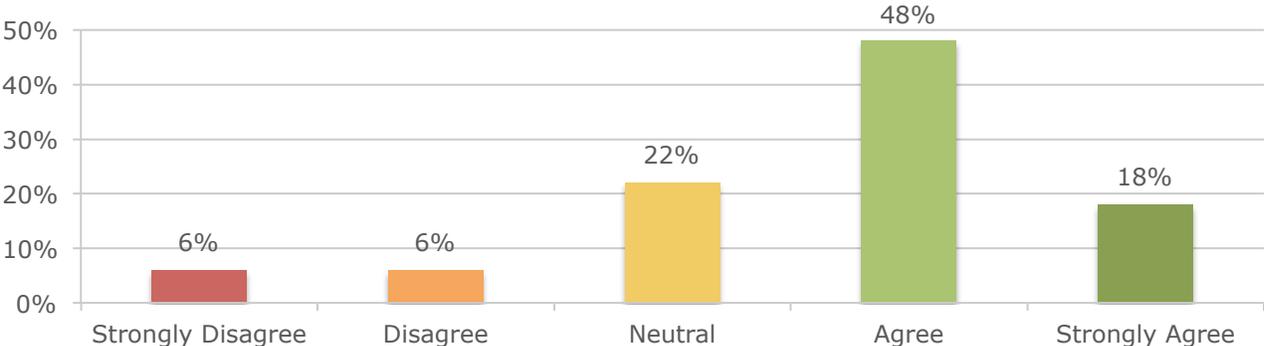
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

Stakeholders generally supported this policy option. No specific comments were raised during discussions.



Growth of certain hamlets: the MDP should allow certain hamlets to expand their boundaries to enable further urban development.

A total of 50 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (66%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 6 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Each hamlet should have the option to grow – support our existing communities and stop making new ones
- Ardrossan a good area for development
- Ensure older areas aren’t left behind/forgotten
- Protect agricultural lands/natural areas and avoid urban sprawl
- Integrate affordable housing
- Develop areas with poor soils first
- As long as servicing/infrastructure is in place

Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

Stakeholders generally supported this policy option. No specific comments were raised during discussions.

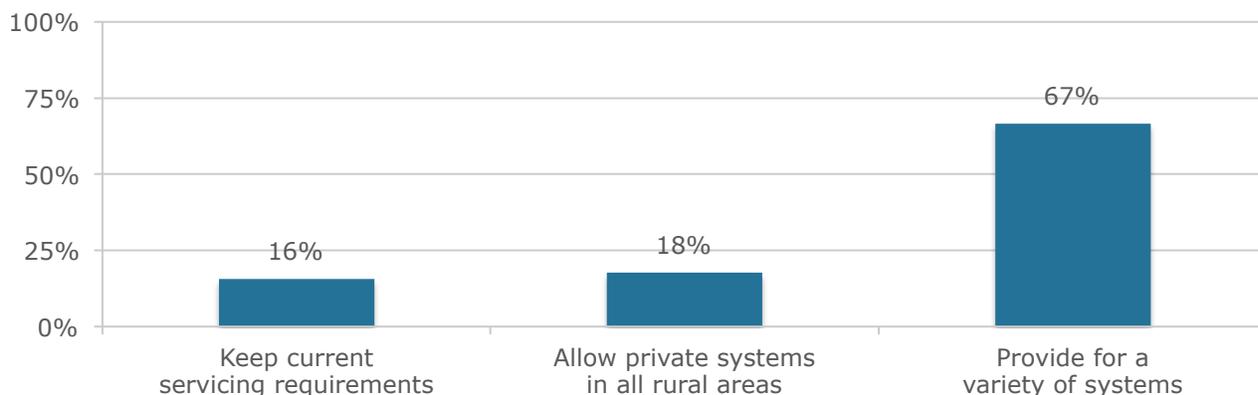


Servicing of Rural Residential Development: Currently the MDP requires rural residences in the Country Residential Policy Area to connect to municipal piped water and sewer systems. However, the MDP does allow consideration for on-site private systems for rural residences in the Agricultural Small Holdings Policy Area (as long as environmental conditions are suitable).

Options:

- The County should keep current requirements for rural servicing
- The County should allow private on-site water and sewer systems for all rural residences
- The County should modify current rural servicing requirements to provide for a variety of water and sewer systems depending on the form/scale of development, soil conditions, location, etc.

A total of 51 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (67%) agreed that the County modify its current rural servicing requirements to provide for a variety of water and sewer systems depending on the local context.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Allow for development that is suited to different areas
- Servicing should be determined by soil conditions, proximity to piped systems, etc.
- Landowners should not be forced to use one type of service if viable options exist
- On site systems are allowed in Alberta – why would we be different? Why require Country Residential subdivisions to be serviced? This essentially froze development
- Safer sewage treatment facilities more effective and less costly than County systems
- Need private systems as it could be years before hamlets (like South Cooking Lake) have enough residents to meet capacity for a system



- How much do piped systems cost tax payers in the long run? Is it viable to provide service to low density areas?
- Should not be paid for by government funds

Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

Stakeholder opinions varied on servicing options for rural areas. Participants generally agreed that current requirements are unrealistic for developers and expensive for existing residents.

- Standards need to be clear to reduce uncertainty for developers (even if the County allows a variety of systems, make sure standards are clear for specific areas or types of development)
- Some communities have on-site systems and want to connect to municipal systems - consider creating a reserve fund or developing/selling Municipal Reserve lands (that are not being used) to provide funding for upgrading/connecting to municipal systems to reduce the huge cost to residents
- The County's requirements for oversizing utilities is excessive
- Current requirements for municipal servicing make Country Residential development unfeasible
- Need better accountability – County should assess and monitor older on-site systems – some failing systems in older neighbourhoods are causing off-site consequences
- Need a complete review of servicing standards to ensure requirements are reasonable for developers and homeowners

OTHER COMMENTS ON RURAL RESIDENTIAL

Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- County should determine what type of residential development is appropriate outside Sherwood Park – too many subdivisions with small lots and large expensive homes, no variety to provide for a mix of residents
- Support 65 parcels per quarter

Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Need a balance of supply and demand – create opportunities for infill and greater density in urban areas with existing services
- Where are we headed with rural residential? Need a holistic view
- Country Residential is becoming less desirable – people want to be closer to amenities and don't want to maintain large lots



In previous phases participants stressed the need for more sustainable, walkable and connected communities. Residents expressed concern about urban and rural sprawl and the impact of a “bigger is better” approach to growth and development. Residents noted they want a greater choice and variety of local amenities in their communities, greater transportation choice (including transit), more sustainable buildings, and more attractive and livable neighbourhoods.

Some participants also emphasized the need for to avoid the “cookie cutter” look of new subdivisions that takes away from neighbourhood character and the small town charm of hamlets.

POTENTIAL POLICY OPTIONS

Based on this feedback as well as existing MDP policies and other plans and background research, the following policy options were developed and presented to stakeholders and the public for comment and feedback:

Adopt a green building/neighbourhood rating system: the County should introduce a rating system for interested developers to help improve environmental performance of buildings/neighbourhoods.

Develop customized guidelines / standards for neighbourhood development: the MDP should develop a custom set of guidelines for all new development to ensure new neighbourhoods are sustainable and provide a high quality of life for residents.

Provide incentives for sustainable development: the County should provide incentives for developers who provide certain land uses / housing types and high quality sustainable



development (this could include awards, density bonuses, expedited approvals or reduced fees).

Support transportation choice: the MDP should emphasize the relationship between land use, density and transportation. This could include developing higher density urban nodes to support better transit service, locating shops and amenities close to where people live, and enhancing pedestrian and cyclist environments and bus stops.

Professional design review: the County should introduce an Advisory Design Review Panel (made up of urban designers, architects, landscape architects and planners) to advise the County on the quality of urban design for proposed developments.

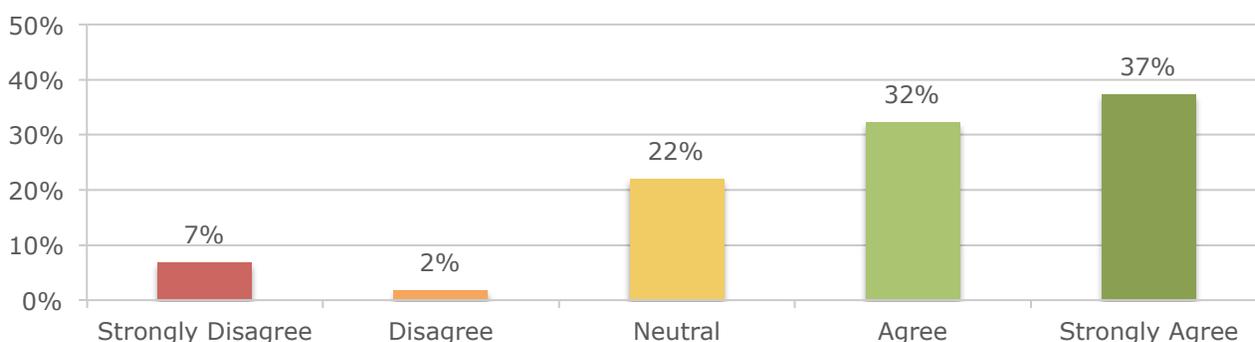
Additional details on these policy options can be found in the Sustainable Development & Urban Design Policy Options Paper at www.strathcona.ca/MDP.



PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK ON POLICY OPTIONS

Adopt a green building/neighbourhood rating system: the County should introduce a rating system for interested developers to help improve environmental performance of buildings/neighbourhoods.

A total of 59 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (69%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 5 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Urban areas need to be sustainability leaders to make progress on climate change
- LEED Platinum, net zero buildings – lots of models exist
- Seek out innovative/sustainable developers
- Encourage renewable energy – solar panels
- Green space in neighbourhoods is critical
- Provide incentives (cost reduction) for developers
- Need more inspectors to ensure building codes/construction standards are met
- County doesn't need to create its own standards, just decide the standard/level we want to achieve and require developers to build to this standard
- Waste of tax dollars

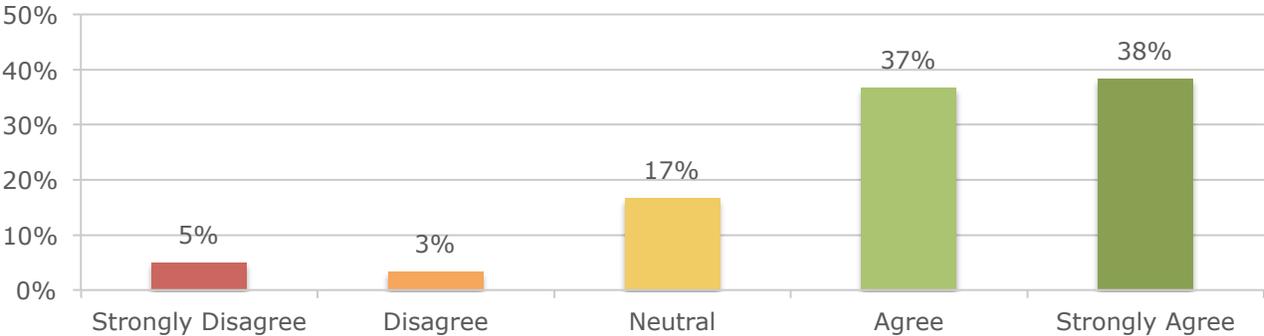
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- The focus should be on existing buildings as new buildings are already built to "green" standards
- Why would this be a part of the MDP? Ensure wording is not too specific
- Concerned about costs for developers (note: the proposed policy is for a voluntary program, not required or mandated by the County)



Develop customized guidelines / standards for neighbourhood development: the MDP should develop a custom set of guidelines for all new development to ensure new neighbourhoods are sustainable and provide a high quality of life for residents.

A total of 60 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (75%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 5 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Agree – encourage more creative/attractive development, more natural facades, more interesting communities to improve curb appeal, sustainability and livability
- Encourage more walkable development – we need oversight so we don’t end up with poorly designed communities
- Ensure flexibility to allow for technological changes/innovations/trends over time
- Provide guidelines for existing residents too (redevelopment)
- Too much regulation can be costly

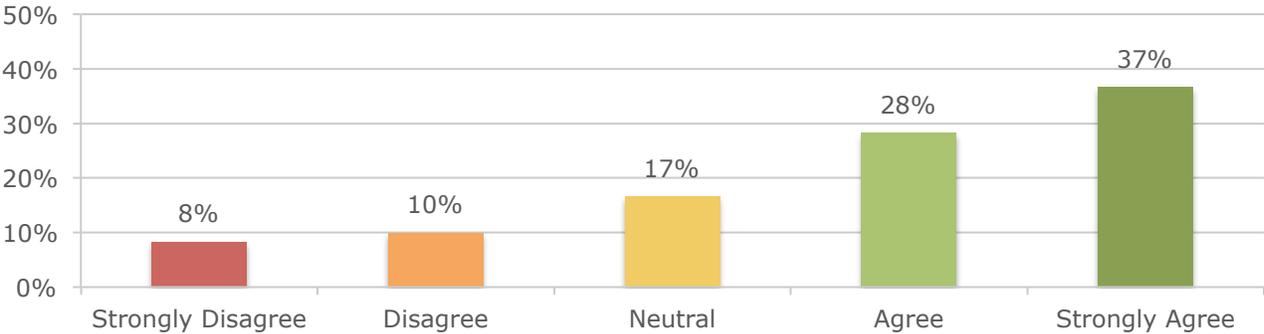
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Include high level principles in the MDP – for example, if we want to be transit-oriented, ensure 80% of homes are within 400 meters of a transit stop
- Allow some flexibility for different contexts - create a menu of options for development rather than strict design guidelines
- Need clear conditions to reduce uncertainty for developers
- County needs to remain competitive in the region, policies should encourage growth and development – ensure guidelines are not too restrictive and allow a variety of development (supply and demand change and influence development)



Provide incentives for sustainable development: the County should provide incentives for developers who provide certain land uses / housing types and high quality sustainable development (this could include awards, density bonuses, expedited approvals or reduced fees).

A total of 60 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (65%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 11 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Incentives make developers want to build better
- May work for affordable housing but ensure quality construction
- Link to density transfer policy across all areas
- Vague – depends on the details
- No density bonuses in areas that are already crowded
- County should just require high standards for all development – no incentives
- Development is already lucrative, should not be subsidized with incentives, let the market pay

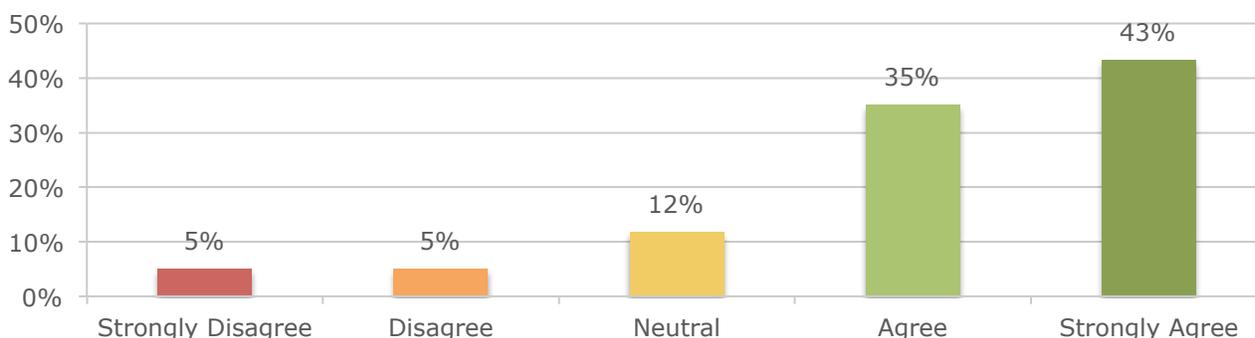
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- There are times where incentives are useful but be careful what is incentivized - expedited approvals are a dangerous precedent that could cause controversy between developers/applicants
- Density targets in the County are already quite high so density bonusing may not be effective – reducing density requirements would be a real incentive for developers as people will pay more to live in less dense neighbourhoods (although this does not help with sustainability objectives)



Support transportation choice: the MDP should emphasize the relationship between land use, density and transportation. This could include developing higher density urban nodes to support better transit service, locating shops and amenities close to where people live, and enhancing pedestrian and cyclist environments and bus stops.

A total of 60 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (78%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 6 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Support - will help developers make more sustainable land use decisions
- Create urban growth nodes that are designed for pedestrians/cyclists/transit
- Develop walkable communities where people can live/work
- Support LRT extension from Edmonton
- Transit in Sherwood Park needs improvement – expensive buses running with few riders, not convenient or appealing to use, too expensive for average users
- Develop more bus lanes
- Transit not an option outside of Sherwood Park
- Be careful about bike lanes, hasn't worked well for Edmonton
- Too broad – need more details
- Denser development can impact transportation options – parking, traffic, bus access (especially in winter when lanes are blocked with snow)
- Dislike denser development and infill, concerned about parking issues

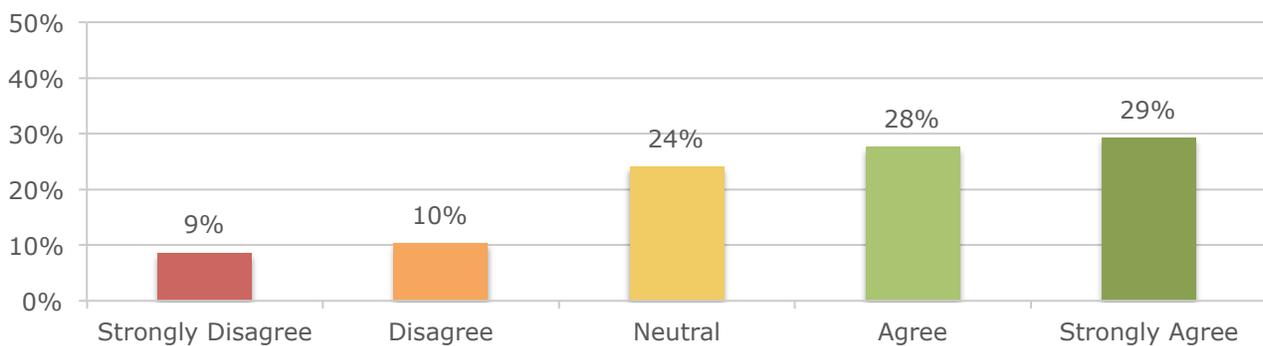
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Need better choices in the County
- Technology is changing, remain open to innovative solutions like on-call transit, Uber vans vs. buses (especially in rural areas)
- The community is divided with commercial on one side and residential on the other which limits transportation choices



Professional design review: the County should introduce an Advisory Design Review Panel (made up of urban designers, architects, landscape architects and planners) to advise the County on the quality of urban design for proposed developments.

A total of 58 questionnaire respondents answered this question. Over half of respondents (59%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 11 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Support anything that will help to avoid traffic and parking problems with new development
- Have the Planners Working Group fill this need
- Look into best practices for winter cities/design
- Expand the panel to include community development representatives, local stakeholders and other perspectives (like artists)
- Support if panel members are independent (not political), elected and reviewed regularly with direct access for developers
- The more panels we have the more confusion there is – will their ideas actually be taken into consideration or will reviews happen after decisions are already made?
- More red tape, concerned about political motivations of panel members
- Don't support – developers don't need input from planners, architects, etc.
- Concerned about cost, waste of tax dollars

Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Need high caliber design experts with detailed knowledge of costs/materials to ensure recommendations are realistic for developers
- May be useful for infill development



- Could create a committee for key locations like quasi public space
- Effectiveness of a design committee/panel depends who sits on it
- Concerned that panel members would feel the need to “provide comments for comments sake” to justify their participation
- Creates uncertainty/more red tape for developers
- Not an issue for the MDP

OTHER COMMENTS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & URBAN DESIGN

Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- All these policies are a great start – will significantly benefit the County
- Yes, let’s make it happen!
- We are building over some of the best farmland in the word, let’s be a leader in sustainable planning and be more careful and what and where we develop

Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- How can we encourage compact, complete, *multi-generational* communities?
- Ensure policies are effective and don’t over-regulate development



SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

In previous phases, participants talked about the amazing assets that Strathcona County has but noted that not everyone knows about them. They suggested the County could be a leader in sustainable tourism and should promote existing natural areas, agri-tourism and heritage/cultural tourism to celebrate what we have, share our history, raise awareness about environmental/agricultural protection, and re-connect people with nature.

Participants noted the delicate balance of sustainable tourism, suggesting that we should build off what we have already and that any new tourist development should be small-scale and carefully designed so it does not detract from the natural beauty of the area.

Most of the policies in the existing MDP are high-level and focus on promotion, general support and partnership efforts but do not deal directly with land use and development issues.

In 2012, partners from government, industry and environmental groups came together to complete a Tourism Development Opportunity Assessment for the Beaver Hills Moraine area. This comprehensive study identified several opportunities for building the region as a sustainable tourism destination focusing on three distinct categories:

- **Agri-tourism:** direct involvement between the tourist/consumer and the agricultural community.
- **Nature-based tourism:** any tourism activity/experience directly related to natural attractions or the natural environment whether for relaxation, discovery or adventure.
- **Heritage/Cultural tourism:** involves places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present, including historic, cultural and natural attractions.



POTENTIAL POLICY OPTIONS

Based on this feedback as well as existing MDP policies, recommendations from the Beaver Hills Tourism Development Opportunity Assessment, and other plans and background research, the following policy options were developed and presented to stakeholders and the public for comment and feedback:

Support sustainable tourism: the MDP should include policy and direction for sustainable tourism such as agri-tourism, nature-based tourism and heritage/cultural tourism.

Land use districts for tourism zones: the MDP should support the creation of a new land use district for sustainable tourism activities and develop design standards, guidelines and location criteria to ensure new developments are a good fit for the area and environment.

Create a linked network of sustainable tourism activities: the MDP should recommend a strategy for creating a County-wide network of agri-tourism, nature-based tourism and heritage/cultural tourism activities that are linked through a designated rural trail system.

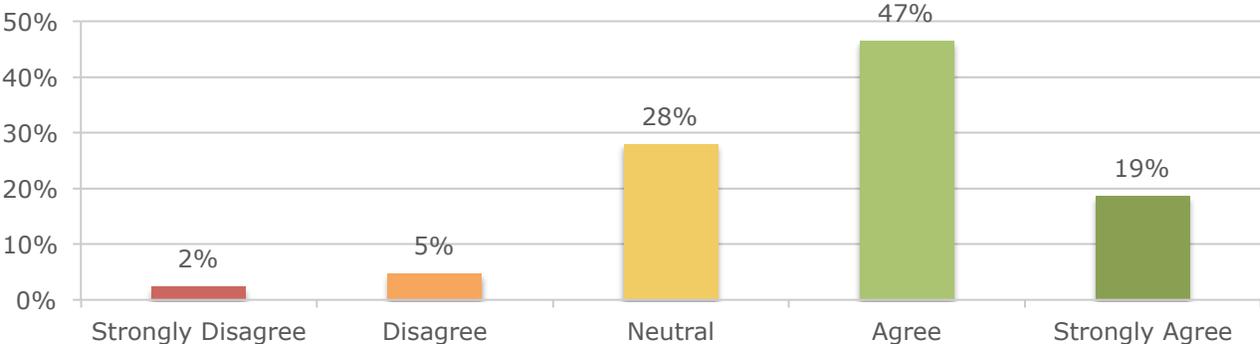
Additional details on these policy options can be found in the Sustainable Tourism Policy Options Paper at www.strathcona.ca/MDP.



PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK ON POLICY OPTIONS

Support sustainable tourism: the MDP should include policy and direction for sustainable tourism such as agri-tourism, nature-based tourism and heritage/cultural tourism.

A total of 43 questionnaire respondents answered this question. The majority (65%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option. A total of 3 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Sustainable tourism is the best way to celebrate our nature, culture and heritage
- Good to know where we’ve come from and protect what we have today
- Beaver Hills an asset that is currently under promoted
- Do this carefully, support tourism to develop organically but be conscious of scale and environmental impact
- C6 zoning poses a challenge to eco-tourism development; should allow bareland condominium subdivision
- Clearly define what nature-based/agri/heritage tourism includes – for example, could agri-tourism include intensive livestock operations? Zoning may be more appropriate
- Is this in tandem with the provincial tourism program or is it a duplication of effort? At what cost?

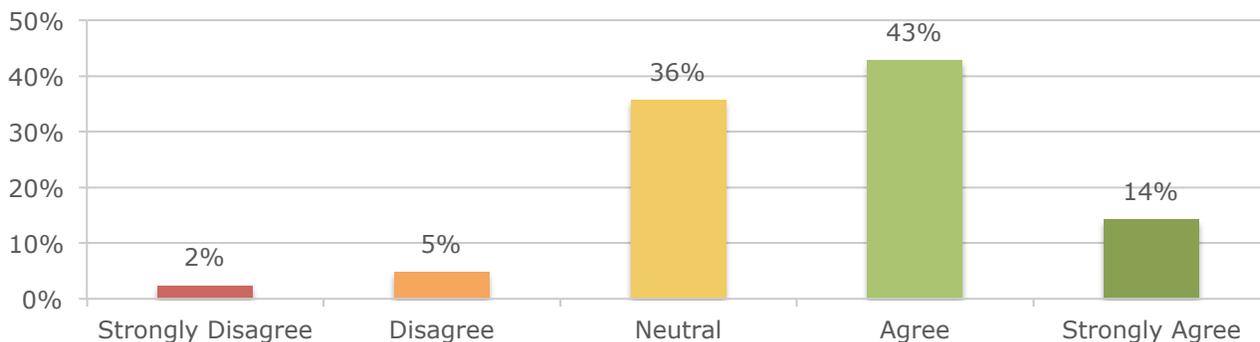
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Strong interest in agri-tourism, nature-based tourism and heritage/cultural tourism
- Beaver Hills Moraine Area submitted to be a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve - would show the world our stewardship of natural areas and be a significant opportunity for sustainable tourism/development
- Ensure authentic experiences rather than artificial “Disney-ification” of our culture/history



Land use districts for tourism zones: the MDP should support the creation of a new land use district for sustainable tourism activities and develop design standards, guidelines and location criteria to ensure new developments are a good fit for the area and environment.

A total of 42 questionnaire respondents answered this question. Over half of respondents (57%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option and a significant proportion of respondents were neutral. A total of 3 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Support tourism at sustainable levels – interesting work opportunities and protects our environment for future generations
- Develop design standards and guidelines that align with international standards for Biosphere Designation Criteria for Beaver Hills – work with the Beaver Hills Initiative to develop
- As long as development does not impact the environment
- Any new tourism districts should include C6 zoned lands
- Ensure developers can’t build large developments around our lakes and parks – this will take away from natural experiences
- Need more clarity about what is meant by “tourism zone” – would this allow flexibility to have tourist activities in any location?

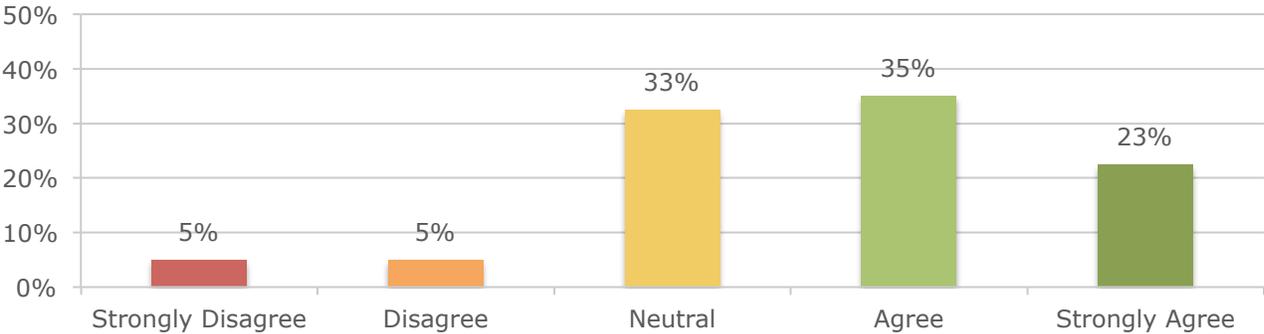
Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Support as long as it’s voluntary for landowners (note: this would be an option for landowners to propose tourism districts for their lands and would not be imposed on any existing landowners)



Create a linked network of sustainable tourism activities: the MDP should recommend a strategy for creating a County-wide network of agri-tourism, nature-based tourism and heritage/cultural tourism activities that are linked through a designated rural trail system.

A total of 40 questionnaire respondents answered this question. Over half of respondents (58%) agreed or strongly agreed with this policy option and a significant proportion of respondents were neutral. A total of 4 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- Good to have natural areas that people can explore at their own pace
- Create a support network for tourism activities that involves infrastructure, marketing support, etc.
- Network of trails would be great but ensure they are useful for people to walk/bike/hike and not just from one large retreat to another
- There are many existing trails that need to be linked (such as Lost Lake)
- More important to link acreage developments and communities with a safe trail system to support active transportation in rural areas
- Define "rural trail system"
- Not good value for tax dollars, too widespread, maintenance expensive

Summary of Stakeholder Discussions:

- Link theme areas to create a tourism "experience" accessible by car/bike/horseback
- Partner with other government agencies and municipalities to create a regional tourism network



OTHER COMMENTS ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Summary of Questionnaire Comments:

- People (adults and children) are losing touch with their food – provide more opportunities for farm-work, volunteering or farm tours – however, this should be drive by farmers, not the County
- Focus on improving quality of lakes
- Blanket policies/zoning should not be considered



OTHER

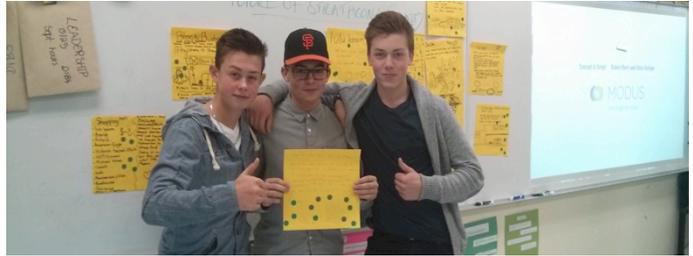
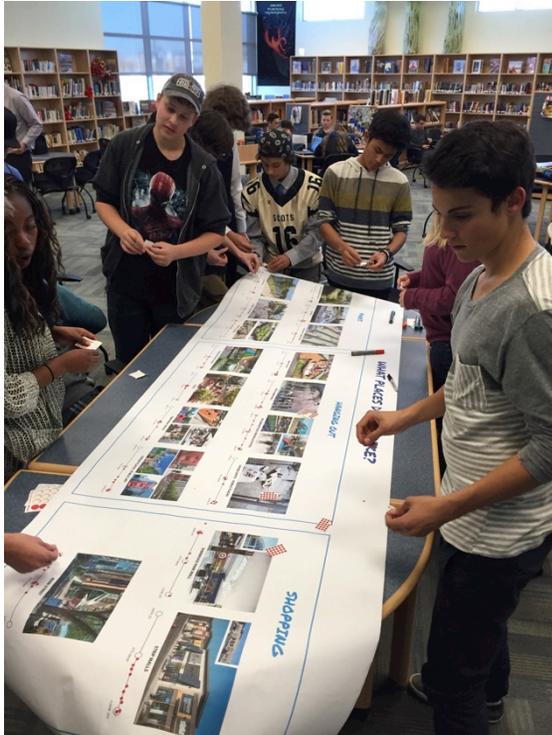
Stakeholders and members of the public were also invited to provide feedback or suggest ideas on 'other' topics:

- The MDP should broaden it's focus to include climate change and resiliency – consider municipal tree planting programs, flood mitigation strategies.
- The MDP should include commitments and broad guidelines for improving air quality.
- There should be stronger support for transit and alternative transportation.
- Culture, heritage and parks draw people to live in an area and contribute to healthy active living, social well-being and environmental management. We have a perception that industry/growth pay the bills but they really create debt. Infrastructure (roads, maintenance, schools, hospitals, emergency services, utilities) are not free – what aspects are developers paying for? We need to ensure all of these elements match the growth and development being planned for in the MDP.
- Concerned about integrating the Country Residential Area Concept Plan (ACP) into the MDP. When the ACP was originally adopted there were a number of areas that required further study over the next few years – has this been done? The MDP also notes that Country Residential is currently being evaluated as a part of the Capital Regional Growth Plan – which aspects are under review and what may need to be deferred? Will there be a public process for updating Country Residential or will it be directed by the Regional Growth Plan? There were no plans mentioned for a buffer between Country Residential and urban development – this is a problem and will become more significant when hamlets expand into adjacent Country Residential areas.
- Ensure bylaws/design standards are enforced - otherwise they are pointless.
- If the MDP changes use for any lands, adjacent landowners and landowners of any new subdivisions should receive specific notification prior to the public hearing.
- Upon completion of the MDP update, a summary of all changes should be available to residents.



SUMMARY OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

The following provides an overview of feedback received from the high school youth engagement workshops in Phase 3.





The workshops began with a brief introduction to the MDP, the purpose of public (and youth) engagement, and how feedback will be used to shape the direction of the final plan.

FAVOURITE/LEAST FAVOURITE PLACES

Students were then asked to explore maps of Sherwood Park and identify their favourite and least favourite places and explain why they felt that way. Feedback varied from group to group but some common elements included:

- Many students identified indoor spaces (such as their homes, sports complexes, recreation centres, the library, or shopping centres) as places they liked to spend time; few identified public spaces that are outdoors although in later activities they noted they would like to hang out in parks and natural spaces and wanted more of these in the County.
- Students noted that many activities in the County are geared towards younger and older audiences and there are not many places specifically designed for teens.
- Nearly all students commented that there is a lack of contemporary stores in the County, strip malls provide more options than the Sherwood Park Mall but many students go to shop in Edmonton.

SPACES FOR YOUTH

In the next activity, students looked at a range of photos of different types of places including parks, recreation spaces/activities, and shops. Students were asked to vote individually to show which places they liked the best and explain why. Results varied from group to group but common favourites included:

PARKS

- **Lounge spots in parks/plazas:** students liked interesting outdoor public spaces where they could hang out with friends.
- **Natural parks and trails:** students liked getting out in nature and found these spaces relaxing and refreshing.
- **Bike trails:** students liked safe and convenient trails to get around.
- Other favourites included community gardens and skate parks.

HANGING OUT

- **Comfy spots:** students liked comfortable and relaxing outdoor spaces but also shared spaces to hang out with other people and build community.
- **Millennium Place:** students liked having a range of indoor activities in one place.



- Other favourites included sidewalk patios and creative public spaces such as public art plazas and unique urban parks with a variety of landscapes.

SHOPPING

- **Main Street:** students liked the unique 'vibe' of Main Streets (such as Whyte Ave in Edmonton) that allow you to walk outside while you shop and add interest and character to a community.
- **Strip Malls:** students noted these areas provide the greatest variety of stores and are convenient as they are close to where they live and go to school.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Finally, we asked students to work in small groups and think about what they wanted for the future of Strathcona County – what did they want more or less of, where things should be located, and why. Students came up with a range of creative ideas but there were some clear themes that emerged including:

- A greater variety of shops that are convenient and accessible – Main Street, farmers markets, more independent shops – students wanted places to shop and hang out but also places to work
- More parks, trees and natural spaces, large forested areas
- More youth lounges or places 'just for teens' to hang out
- More attractive, unique public spaces in Sherwood Park - more street art, sculptures, music showcases
- More relaxing/comfy spaces to hang out, outdoor places to lounge, patios, library
- Updated/new sports facilities like multi-use athletic parks, hockey arenas, gyms, indoor/outdoor fields, golf courses, rock climbing walls, skate parks, basketball courts, dance studios, outdoor pools
- A greater variety of restaurants (cafes, international foods, healthier options, more family-owned restaurants and non-fast food places)
- A greater variety of entertainment for younger people (like drive-in movie theatres, outdoor concert venues, places for recreational vehicles, water parks, amusement parks, museums, art exhibits/centres, holiday activities/events for teens)
- Better/more convenient transit (regular schedules, weekend transit, later bus service), LRT/Metro
- More pedestrian paths and bike trails
- More mixed use streets with apartments connected to local food/art vendors



OVERVIEW OF YOUTH FEEDBACK

Overall, feedback from students reflected what we've heard from community members throughout the project. While youth input focused more on places and activities rather than larger topics like housing or agriculture, their ideas clearly show a desire for a more livable, sustainable community. Students emphasized a need for more attractive and walkable places, more interesting streets with a greater variety of shops and venues, more natural spaces and parks/green spaces in urban areas, more public spaces for people to get together, more opportunities for recreation, and better connections for transit, pedestrians and cyclists.

This feedback will be used to help shape the direction of the draft update of the Municipal Development Plan in Phase 4.

NEXT STEPS

Over the winter the planning team will refine the potential policy directions and options based on the feedback received to date as well as information from other County plans and background research. The completed draft plan will be brought back to the public for review and comment in the New Year.

PHASE 4 ENGAGEMENT

Join us in Phase 4 as we ask for feedback on the draft MDP. Your input will help to refine the plan into the final version to present to Council for approval.

Stay tuned for more information about engagement events in the New Year. The best way to stay up to date on the project is to sign up to the project mailing list at www.strathcona.ca/MDP. You can also visit this website to learn more about the MDP update, check out our whiteboard video, find out about upcoming engagement activities, and view input as it is gathered.