



2017 Community Satisfaction Survey

Final Report

May 17th, 2017

Banister
Research & Consulting Inc.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	3
1.0 STUDY BACKGROUND	7
2.0 METHODOLOGY	8
2.1 Project Initiation and Questionnaire Design	8
2.2 Survey Population and Data Collection	9
2.3 Data Analysis and Project Documentation	10
3.0 STUDY FINDINGS	11
3.1 Quality of Life	11
3.2 Community Identity	16
3.3 Strategic Plan	18
3.4 Retention and Attraction of Residents	27
3.5 Satisfaction with County Services, Programs, Facilities and Infrastructure	32
3.6 Summary of Importance Ratings Regarding Programs and Services	51
3.7 Overall Importance and Satisfaction Ratings	52
3.8 Potable Water	54
3.9 Internet and Mobility	56
3.10 Contact with Saddle Hills Employees	58
3.11 Property Taxes and Financial Planning	62
3.12 County Communications	65
3.13 Respondent Profile	74
Appendix A – Survey Instrument	

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In 2017, Saddle Hills County contracted Banister Research & Consulting Inc. (Banister Research) to conduct a resident satisfaction survey amongst adult residents living within Saddle Hills County. Surveys were completed via web, telephone, and hard-copy with members of the County's general population. A total of 288 respondents completed the survey, providing a margin of error no greater than $\pm 4.9\%$ at the 95% confidence level, or 19 times out of 20.¹ Key findings of the 2017 Resident Satisfaction Survey included:

Quality of Life

- In terms of contributing to a high quality of life, the top reasons reported were the good roads/road maintenance (20%), the country atmosphere (19%), and the reasonable taxes (14%).
- Conversely, the top reasons contributing to a lower quality of life were poor and/or lack of road maintenance (45%), followed by long distance to access services and/or facilities (11%).
- Respondents were given a number of different aspects in regards to living in Saddle Hills, and asked to rate each using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 meant "very poor" and 5 meant "excellent". Respondents provided the following high (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) ratings:
 - As a place to raise a family (85% rated highly);
 - As a place to live long term (more than 20 years) (83%);
 - Being a safe place to live (82%);
 - The overall quality of life (77%);
 - The quality of the environment (72%);
 - Cleanliness and neatness of the County (69%); and
 - Value received for taxes (55%).

Community Identity

- Nine percent (9%) of respondents reported that sense of community, and farming/agriculture were the first thing that comes to mind in terms of community identity in Saddle Hills.
- For County strengths and unique features, respondents most often (14%) considered the oil and gas industry.

Strategic Plan

- Sixty percent (60%) of respondents agreed (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with the County's vision, "a thriving rural municipality with: a growing population, safe, active communities; and a strong, sustainable, diverse economy".
- Similarly, 62% of respondents agreed (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with the County's mission, "to enhance our communities by providing and supporting quality services and regional initiatives".
- Sixty-two percent (62%) of respondents also agreed (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with the County's values.

¹ Based on a record of 1,074 eligible respondents provided by the Client.

- Over half (55%) of respondents were somewhat familiar with the County's strategic plan, while 37% of respondents were not at all familiar, and only 6% of respondents were very familiar.
- When asked to rate the importance of each component of the County's strategic plan, respondents rated the importance (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) of each component as follows:
 - Municipal services and infrastructures (84% rated important);
 - Community Development (80%);
 - Governance and Leadership (76%); and
 - Environmental Stewardship (76%).
- When asked if there was any focus area missing from the strategic plan, the majority (80%) of respondents did not specify any. Six percent (6%) specified road repairs and/or maintenance.
- When asked to rate their satisfaction with the County's overall direction, as outlined by the Strategic Plan, nearly half (49%) of respondents were satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5).
- The most important issue facing Saddle Hills County Council reported was poor and/or lack of road maintenance (18%).

Retention and Attraction of Residents

- The greatest barrier to attracting new residents reported was the lack of employment opportunities (19%). The greatest barrier to retaining current residents mentioned was also the lack of employment opportunities (23%).
- Only 7% of respondents reported that they are very likely to move from their current home, in the next 2 years, while 19% of respondents were somewhat likely. Seventy-two percent (72%) were not at all likely to move from their current home.
 - Over one-quarter (27%) of respondents who were very or somewhat likely to move (n=73) reported that they would move to another province.
 - Respondents who were likely or somewhat likely to move (n=73) specified that the main reasons for moving to each respective community was that it was closer proximity to hospitals or health care facilities such as seniors centres (22%).

Satisfaction with County Services, Programs, Facilities and Infrastructure

- When asked to rate their satisfaction, overall, with County services, programs, facilities, and infrastructure, over half (58%) of respondents were satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5).
- More than half of respondents were satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with the following County programs and services:
 - Emergency and fire services (81% were satisfied);
 - Recreational facilities (66%);
 - Solid waste management (62%);
 - Bylaw enforcement (58%);
 - Weed control (53%);
 - Winter road maintenance (52%); and
 - Land use planning and zoning (51%).
- Conversely, fewer than half of respondents were satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with the following County programs and services:
 - Summer road maintenance (43% were satisfied); and
 - Gravel road repair (35%).

Overall Importance and Satisfaction Ratings

- Services viewed as **primary areas of improvement** by respondents (i.e., services that garnered ratings of higher than average importance, but lower than average satisfaction) included:
 - Gravel road repair, including ditch maintenance and right of ways;
 - Summer road maintenance; and
 - Winter road maintenance, including snow removal (snow and ice control).
- The following areas were determined to be key strengths or successes by respondents (i.e., services that garnered ratings of higher than average importance and satisfaction):
 - Emergency and fire services; and
 - Solid waste management (Transfer Stations and Waste Bin Sites).

Potable Water

- The vast majority (92%) of respondents had not used either of the two new water reservoirs.

Internet and Mobility

- When asked about the cellular service within their homes, one-quarter (25%) of respondents provided a high (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) rating.
- When asked about the internet service within their homes, nearly one-third (29%) of respondents provided a high (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) rating.

Contact with Saddle Hills Employees

- Sixty-four percent (64%) of respondents had been in contact with a Saddle Hills County employee in the past year.

- Over three-quarters (78%) of respondents who had contact with County staff (n=183) were satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with the service provided by the employee they last contacted.
- At least three-quarters of respondents who had contact with County staff (n=183) agreed (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with the following:
 - The employee was courteous (89% agreed);
 - The employee showed interest in your needs (84%);
 - The employee was accessible (83%);
 - The employee was knowledgeable about the services they provide (81%); and
 - The employee was responsive to your needs (78%).

Property Taxes and Financial Planning

- The vast majority (96%) of respondents owned their home in Saddle Hills County.
 - Homeowners (n=275) were asked to indicate which of three (3) tax strategies they would support for the County, thinking about the County and its services over the next five (5) years. Homeowners most commonly supported a cost of living tax increase to maintain the current level of services from the County (33%). Seventeen percent (17%) supported a tax increase, above inflation, to enhance or increase the level of services, and 14% supported a tax decrease to reduce the level of services.

County Communications

- Half (50%) of respondents agreed (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) that County communications provide residents with a general awareness and understanding of priorities and projects.
 - Over half (57%) of those who disagreed (ratings of 1 or 2 out of 5; n=51) disagreed because of a lack of communication and/or information (in general).
- When asked to indicate how effective various communication methods would be, in terms of getting information about County programs, services and facilities, respondents rated as “very effective” or “somewhat effective” the following:
 - Central Peace Signal (95%);
 - Conversation with others (89%);
 - Roadside signs (77%);
 - Brochures (71%);
 - County website (61%);
 - County social media pages (Facebook, Twitter) (40%); and
 - Attend Council meetings (42%).
- When asked if there were any other effective ways of getting information, 72% of respondents provided no additional ideas. Six percent (6%) of respondents specified email.
- When asked to rate the likelihood of using a variety of methods to obtain information about the County, nearly half (47%) respondents were likely (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) to use an emailed electronic newsletter, followed by 26% who were likely to use Facebook.
 - For additional methods respondents would use to obtain information about the County, the most commonly method specified was telephone (11%).

1.0 STUDY BACKGROUND

In 2017, Saddle Hills County contracted Banister Research to conduct a Community Satisfaction Survey in order to collect valuable information to County Council and Administration. Survey results are anticipated to be used to improve County programs and services, and will help inform decision making. Mail out opportunities were sent to respondents on March 28th, 2017, and the survey was available to be completed through three modes:

- **By phone.** Enclosed in the mail out opportunity was a 1-800-toll-free line for respondents to contact if they wished to conduct the survey via telephone. Respondents were able to schedule a date and time convenient to the respondent to complete the survey. Non-respondents with a publically available telephone number were also contacted via telephone From April 10th, 2017 to April 21st, 2017.
- **By web.** Each mail out opportunity included a unique Personal Identification Number (PIN) which allowed access to the online survey opportunity. Each PIN was assigned per record to ensure no duplication of household completes.
- **By mail.** Residents were given the opportunity to request a hard copy of the survey from the County, to be completed and mailed, faxed, or scanned and emailed to Banister Research².

A total of 288 surveys were completed with residents of Saddle Hills County:

- 78 surveys were completed via the web-link;
- 189 surveys were completed via telephone; and
- 21 surveys were completed via hard-copy.

This report outlines the results for the 2017 Saddle Hills Community Satisfaction Survey.

² At the beginning of data collection, concerns were raised with 32 residents regarding the early deadline for hard copy surveys and difficulties filling out the online survey. The County mitigated these concerns by providing these residents with hard copies and providing further instructions on completing the survey. All concerns were addressed by the County within 24 hours of the concern being brought to their attention, and the data collection deadline was extended to accommodate all interested respondents.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

All components of the project were designed and executed in close consultation with Saddle Hills County (the County; the Client). A detailed description of each task of the project is outlined in the remainder of this section.

2.1 Project Initiation and Questionnaire Design

At the outset of the project, all background information relevant to the study was identified and subsequently reviewed by Banister Research. The consulting team familiarized itself with the objectives of the County, ensuring a full understanding of the issues and concerns to be addressed in the project. The result of this task was an agreement on the research methodology, a detailed work plan and project initiation.

Banister Research worked closely with the County in designing the survey instrument. All draft versions were submitted to the County for review and approval. A copy of the final questionnaire is provided in Appendix A.

2.2 Survey Population and Data Collection

A total of 288 surveys were completed. Telephone interviews were conducted from April 10th, 2017 to April 21st, 2017 at the Banister Research Call Centre. A total of 189 telephone interviews were completed with adult residents of Saddle Hills County.

To maximize the sample, up to five (5) call back attempts were made to each listing, prior to excluding it from the final sample. Busy numbers were scheduled for a call back every fifteen (15) minutes. Where there was an answering machine, fax, or no answer, the call back was scheduled for a different time period on the following day. No calls were made on Sundays.

The following table presents the results of the final call attempts. Using the call summary standard established by the Market Research and Intelligence Association, there was a 53% response rate and a 36% refusal rate. It is important to note that the calculation used for both response and refusal rates is a conservative estimate and does not necessarily measure respondent interest in the subject area.

Summary of Final Call Attempts	
Call Classification:	Number of Calls:
Completed Interviews	288
No Answer/Answering Machine	97
Respondents Unavailable/Appointment set	14
Refusals	203
Fax/Modem/Business/Not-In-Service/Wrong Number	137
Communication Problem/Disqualified ³	78
Total	817

At the outset of the fieldwork, all interviewers and supervisors were given a thorough step-by-step briefing to ensure the successful completion of telephone interviews. To ensure quality, at least 20% of each interviewer's work was monitored by a supervisor on an on-going basis.

The questionnaire was programmed into Banister Research's Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system. Using this system, data collection and data entry were simultaneous, as data was entered into a computer file while the interview was being conducted. Furthermore, the CATI system allowed interviewers to directly enter verbatim responses to open-ended questions.

³ May have already completed on the web when phoned.

2.3 Data Analysis and Project Documentation

While data was being collected, Banister Research provided either a written or verbal progress report to the Client. After the interviews were completed and verified, the lead consultant reviewed the list of different responses to each open-ended or verbatim question and then a code list was established. To ensure consistency of interpretation, the same team of coders was assigned to this project from start to finish. The coding supervisor verified at least 20% of each coder's work. Once the responses were fully coded and entered onto the data file, computer programs were written to check the data for quality and consistency.

Data analysis included cross-tabulation, whereby the frequency and percentage distribution of the results for each question were broken down based on respondent characteristics and responses (e.g. length of residency, demographics, etc.). Statistical analysis included a Z-test to determine if there were significant differences in responses between respondent subgroups. Results were reported as statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. The reader should note that any discrepancies between charts, graphs or tables are due to rounding of the numbers.

3.0 STUDY FINDINGS

Results of the survey are presented as they relate to the specific topic areas addressed by the survey. It is important to note when reading the report that the term *significant* refers to “statistical significance”. Only those respondent subgroups which reveal statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence level (19 times out of 20) have been reported on.

3.1 Quality of Life

To begin the survey, respondents were asked in their opinion, what are the three most significant factors that contribute positively to Saddle Hills’ quality of life. The top reasons reported were the good roads/road maintenance (20%), the country atmosphere (19%), and the reasonable taxes (14%). See Table 1, below.

Table 1

In your opinion, what would you say are the three most significant factors <u>contributing positively</u> to your quality of life in Saddle Hills County? (Total Mentions)	
	Percent of Respondents* (n=288)
Good roads/road maintenance/repairs	20
Rural/country atmosphere (in general)	19
Reasonable/affordable taxes	14
Friendly/kind/good residents (in general)	13
Sense of community/community spirit	11
Is quiet/peaceful	10
Location/location is convenient (in general)	8
Good schools/educational facilities	7
Good recreational facilities/activities/programs	7
Nature/natural surroundings/wildlife	6
Good water quality/new water treatment plant	5
Good job/employment opportunities	5
Farming/agriculture	5
Good County staff/amenities/services (in general)	5
Other (4% or less of respondents)	36
Don't Know/Not stated	15

*Multiple responses

Similar to the previous question, respondents were then asked what three things contribute to a lower quality of life in Saddle Hills. The top reasons contributing to a lower quality of life that were reported were poor and/or lack of road maintenance (45%), followed by long distance to access services and/or facilities (11%). See Table 2, below.

Table 2

What would you say are the three most significant factors that <u>contribute to a lower</u> quality of life in Saddle Hills County? (Total Mentions)	
	Percent of Respondents* (n=288)
Poor/lack of road maintenance/repairs/upgrades	45
Long distance to access services/facilities	11
Poor Internet/Wi-Fi service	6
Too much industry/industrial growth	6
Poor County Council/staff/management	6
Lack of/poor cell phone service	5
Poor/lack of snow removal services	5
Poor water quality	5
Misallocating/overspending of County budget/poor spending	5
Lack of/poor recreational facilities/activities/programs	4
Lack of job/employment opportunities	4
Poor weather/climate	3
Other (2% or less of respondents)	30
Nothing/no suggestions	3
Don't Know/Not Stated	18

*Multiple responses

Next, respondents were given a number of different aspects in terms of living in Saddle Hills. Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 meant “very poor” and 5 meant “excellent”, respondents were asked to rate how Saddle Hills is in terms of these aspects. At least three-quarters (75%) of respondents rated the following aspects highly (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5):

- As a place to raise a family (85% rated 4 or 5 out of 5);
- As a place to live long-term (more than 20 years) (83%);
- Being a safe place to live (82%); and
- The overall quality of life (77%).

See Figure 1, below. Table 3, on the following page, provides a comprehensive breakdown of results.

Figure 1

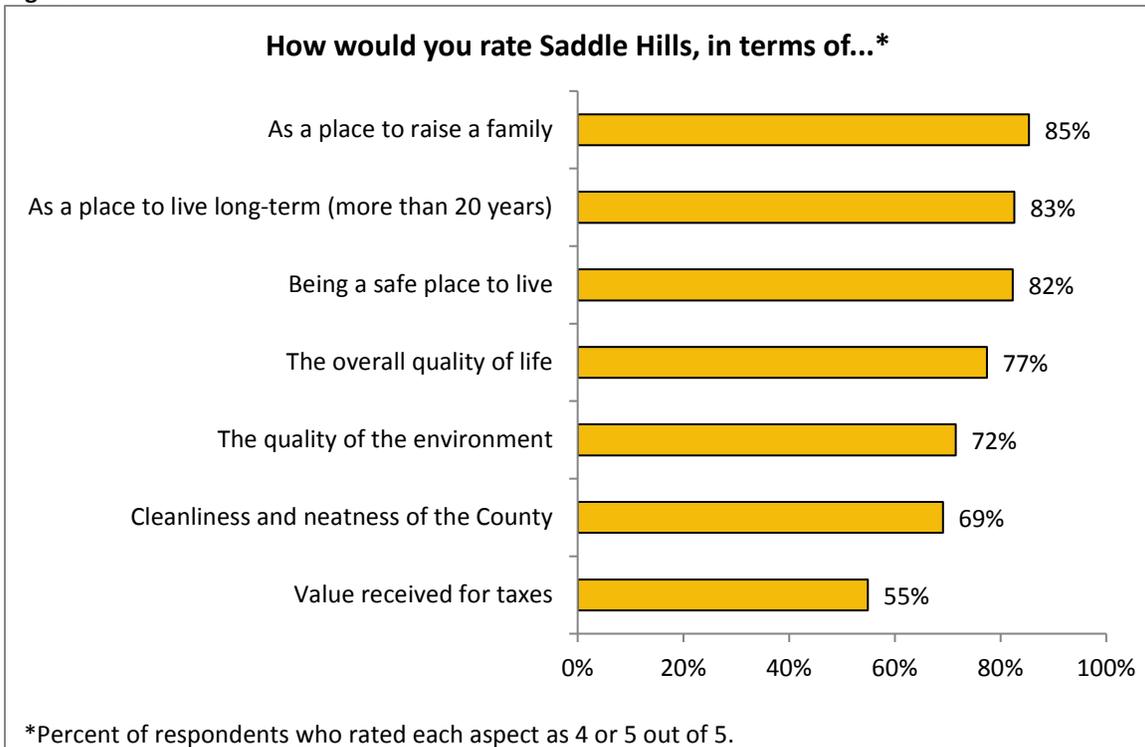


Table 3

How would you rate Saddle Hills in terms of...?							
	Percent of Respondents (n=288)						
	(1) Very Poor	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5) Excellent	Don't Know/Not Stated	Mean (out of 5)
As a place to raise a family	1	2	9	39	47	2	4.30
As a place to live long-term (more than 20 years)	2	3	11	38	45	1	4.21
Being a safe place to live	1	1	15	43	39	1	4.19
The overall quality of life	1	2	18	51	27	1	4.01
The quality of the environment	2	5	20	43	28	2	3.93
Cleanliness and neatness of the County	2	7	23	48	21	-	3.80
Value received for taxes	6	9	28	30	25	2	3.59

Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to have rated Saddle Hills County highly (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) in terms of the **overall quality of life** included:

- Those who had contact with County staff in the past year (82%, versus 71% of those who did not have contact with County staff);
- Those who supported a cost of living tax increase to maintain current levels of services (87%, versus 71% of those who supported a tax decrease); and
- Those who were working full time (84%, versus 66% of those who worked part time).

Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to have rated Saddle Hills County highly (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) in terms of **being a place to raise a family** included:

- Those who have lived in Saddle Hills County for 25 years or more (89%, versus 70% of those who have lived in the County for 15 to 24 years); and
- Those who were working full time (91%, versus 73% of those who worked part time).

Those who supported a tax increase, above inflation, to enhance or increase the level of services (83%) were significantly more likely to have rated Saddle Hills County highly (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) in terms of the **quality of the environment** versus those who supported a tax decrease (61%).

Those who supported a cost of living tax increase to maintain current levels of services (79%) were significantly more likely to have rated Saddle Hills County highly (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) in terms of the **cleanliness and neatness of the County** versus those who supported a tax decrease (55%).

Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to have rated Saddle Hills County highly (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) in terms of **as a place to live-long term (more than 20 years)** included:

- Those who supported a cost of living tax increase to maintain current levels of services (90%, versus 76% of those who supported a tax decrease); and
- Males (87%, versus 78% of females).

3.2 Community Identity

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked a series of questions regarding community identity within Saddle Hills County. When asked about the first thing that comes to mind when they think about Saddle Hills County, 9% of respondents reported that the sense of community and farming/agriculture (9%) were the first things that comes to mind.

Table 4

In terms of community identity, when you think about Saddle Hills County, what is the first thing that comes to mind?	
	Percent of Respondents (n=288)
Sense of community/community spirit	9
Farming/agriculture	9
Rural/country atmosphere	7
Large/vast/spacious area	6
Poor/lack of road maintenance/repairs/upgrades	6
Friendly/kind/good residents (in general)	5
Is home/where I live (in general)	5
Quiet/peaceful	5
Oil and gas industry	5
County looks nice/is scenic/beautiful	4
Misallocating/overspending of County budget/poor spending	4
Wealthy/rich (in general)	3
County office	3
Community events/programs/services	2
Family-oriented/good place to raise family	2
Good quality of life (in general)	2
Is a good place to live (in general)	2
Other (1% or less of respondents)	17
Nothing	6
Don't Know/Not Stated	15

*Multiple responses

In regard to the County’s strengths and unique features, respondents most often (14%) considered the oil and gas industry to be the County’s strength and unique feature. See Table 5, below.

Table 5

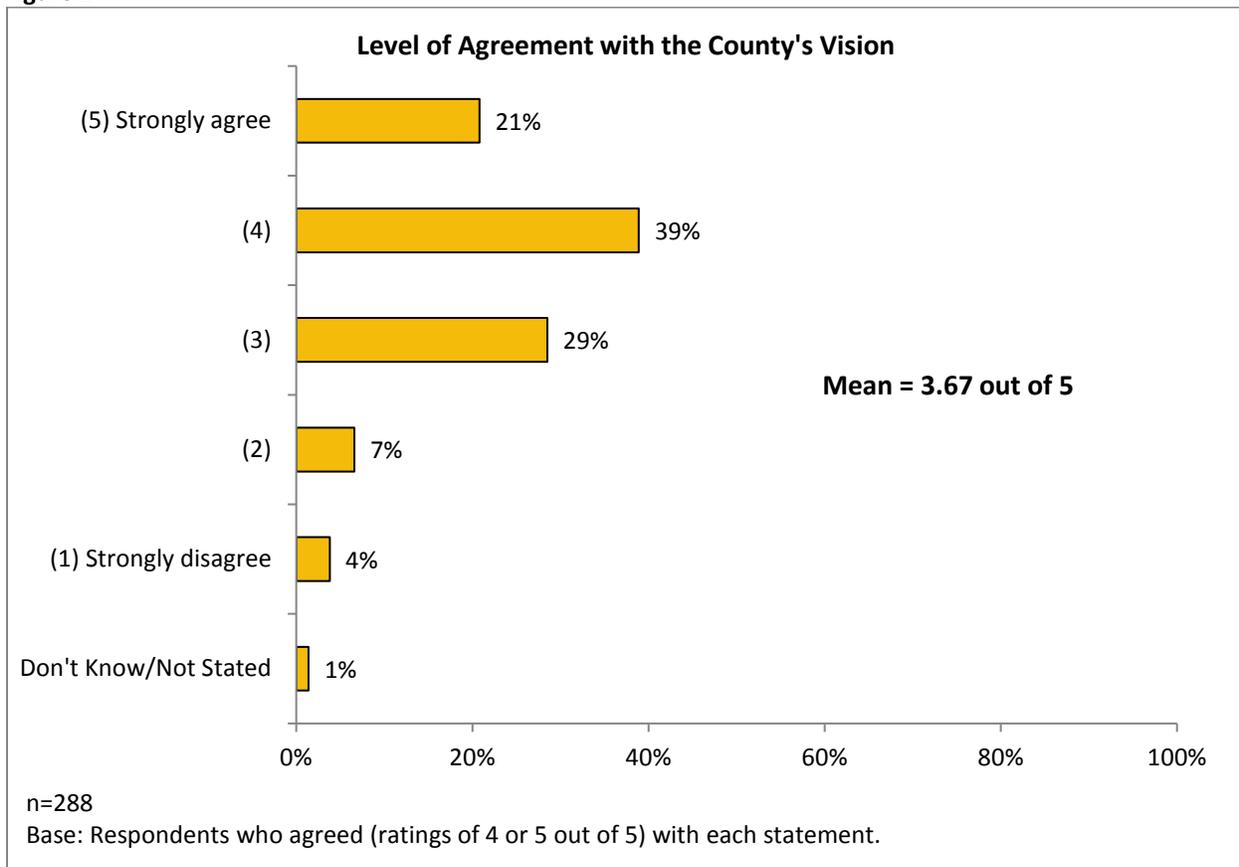
What do you consider to be the County’s strengths and unique features?	
	Percent of Respondents* (n=288)
Oil and gas industry	14
Good County staff/management/Council	10
Farming/agriculture	10
County has lots of resources/is wealthy/rich (in general)	10
Sense of community/community spirit	8
Nature/natural surroundings/wildlife	6
Large/vast/spacious area	5
County lakes/rivers/green spaces/parks	5
Friendly/kind/good residents (in general)	4
Rural/country atmosphere	4
Low/affordable taxes	3
Recreational facilities/activities/programs	3
County amenities/services (in general)	3
Other (2% or less of respondents)	25
Nothing	6
Don’t Know/Not Stated	23

*Multiple responses

3.3 Strategic Plan

Saddle Hills County’s vision is “a thriving rural municipality with: a growing population, safe, active communities; and, a strong, sustainable, diverse economy.” As shown in Figure 2, below, respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with the County’s vision, using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 meant “strongly disagree” and 5 meant “strongly agree”. Nearly two-thirds (60%) agreed (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with the County’s vision.

Figure 2

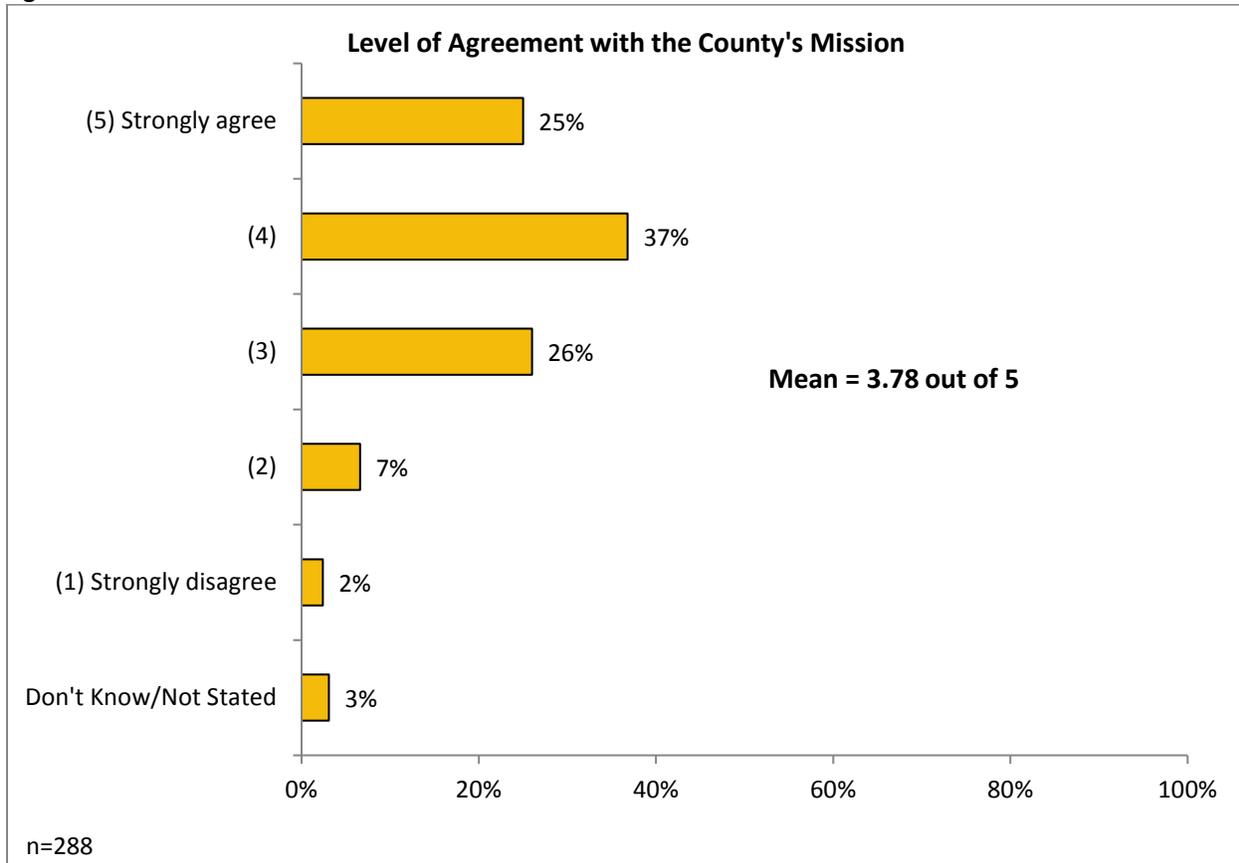


Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to have agreed (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with the County’s vision included:

- Those who supported a cost of living tax increase to maintain current level of services (74%) or supported a tax increase, above inflation, to enhance or increase the level of services (64%) versus those who supported a tax decrease (40%); and
- Those who completed the survey through web (69%, versus 55% of those who completed the survey through phone).

Saddle Hills County’s mission is “to enhance our communities by providing and supporting quality services and regional initiatives.” Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with the County’s mission, using the same 1 to 5 point scale where 1 meant “strongly disagree” and 5 meant “strongly agree”. Sixty-two percent (62%) of respondents agreed (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with the County’s mission. See Figure 3, below.

Figure 3

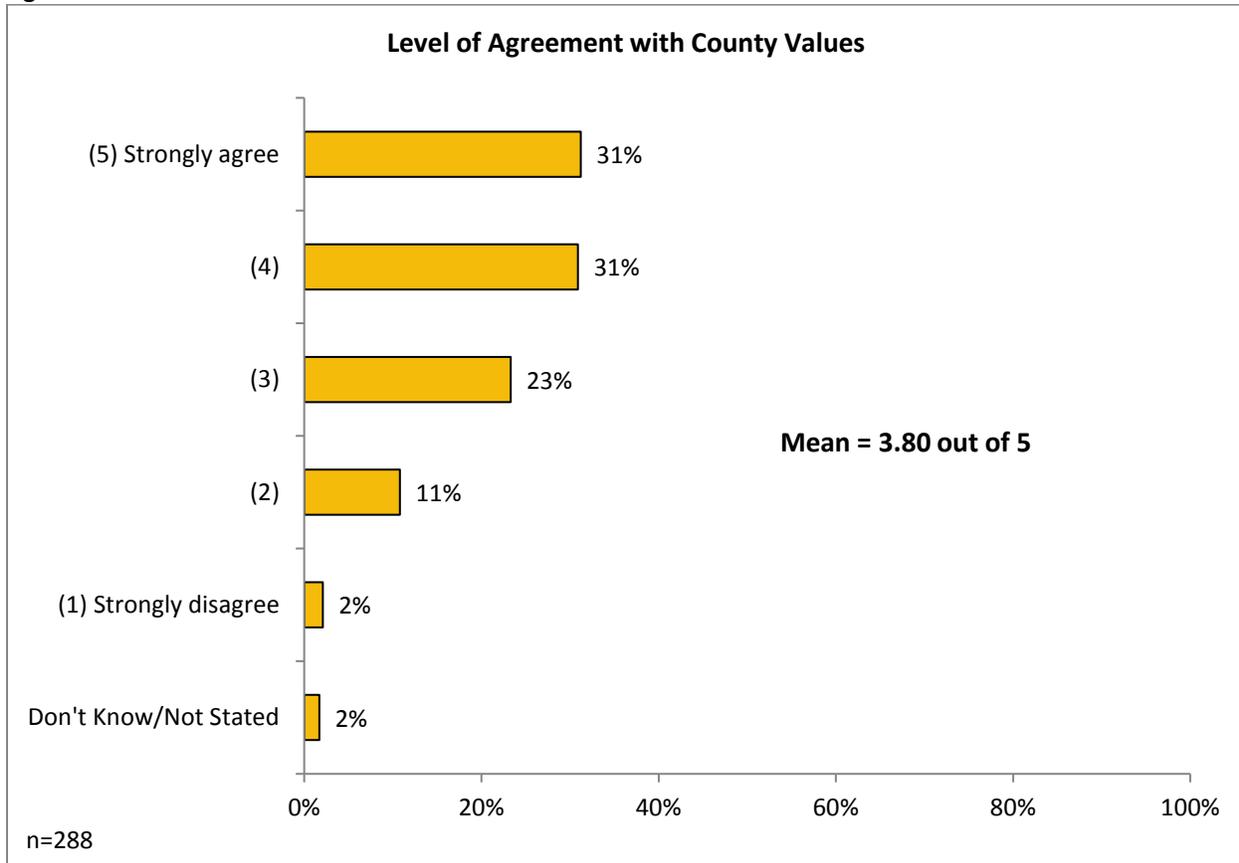


Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to have agreed (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with the County’s Mission included:

- Those who supported a cost of living tax increase to maintain current levels of services (76%, versus 45% of those who supported a tax decrease); and
- Those who were working full time (65%) or were retired (69%) versus those who worked part time (45%).

Council and staff of the County believe that the following seven values must govern their behaviours' in all that they do; respect, adaptability, accountability, equality, excellence, collaboration, and community spirit. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with County values, using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 meant "strongly disagree" and 5 meant "strongly agree". Sixty-two percent (62%) of respondents agreed (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with County values.

Figure 4

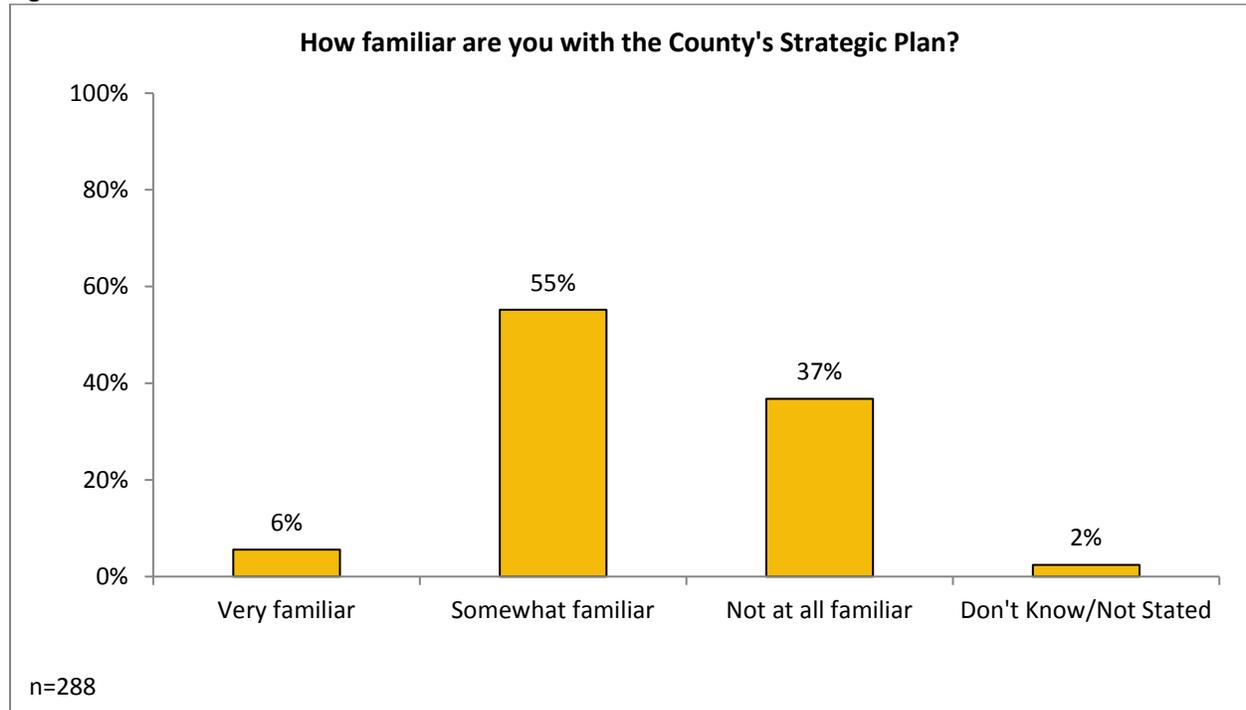


Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to have agreed (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with the County's values included:

- Those who supported a cost of living tax increase to maintain current level of services (78%) or supported a tax increase, above inflation, to enhance or increase the level of services (66%) versus those who supported a tax decrease (40%);
- Those who were working full time (65%) or were retired (71%) versus those who worked part time (46%).

When asked about their familiarity with the County’s Strategic Plan, over half (55%) of respondents were somewhat familiar with it. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of respondents were not at all familiar, and only 6% of respondents were very familiar. See Figure 5, below.

Figure 5



Those who have had contact with County staff in the past year (8%) were significantly more likely to be very familiar with the Strategic Plan versus those who have not had contact with County staff (1%).

Those who were working part time (66%) were significantly more likely to be somewhat familiar with the Strategic Plan versus those who were working full time (51%).

Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to be not at all familiar with the Strategic Plan included:

- Those who have not had contact with County staff in the past year (44%, versus 32% of those who have had contact); and
- Those who were working full time (42%, versus 23% of those who were working part time).

Respondents were next asked to rate the level of importance with each component of the County's Strategic Plan, using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 meant "not at all important" and 5 meant "very important". At least four-fifths (80%) of respondents felt the following components of the Strategic Plan were important (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5):

- Municipal Services and Infrastructure (84% rated important); and
- Community Development (80%).

See Figure 6, below. Table 6, on the following page, provides a detailed breakdown of results.

Figure 6

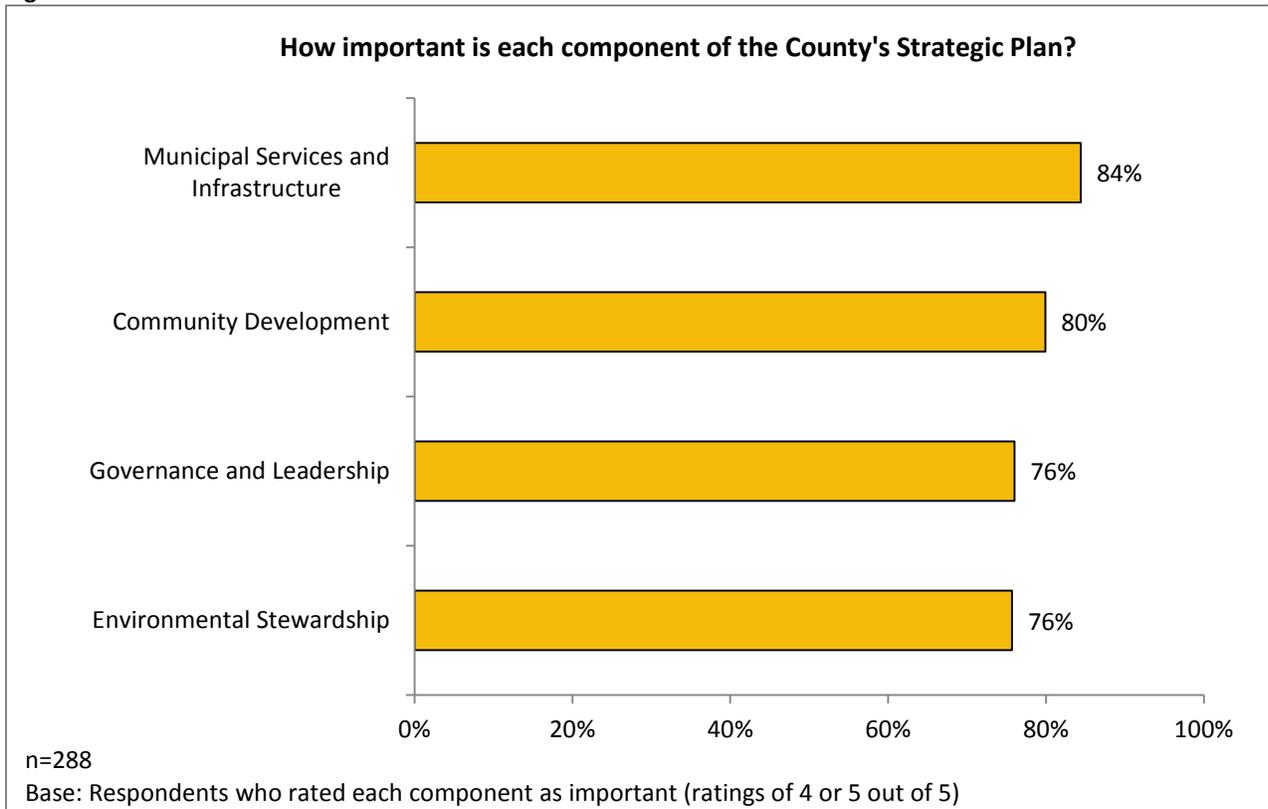


Table 6

How important is each component of the County's strategic plan?							
	Percent of Respondents (n=288)						
	(1) Not at all important	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5) Very important	Don't Know/Not Stated	Mean (out of 5)
Municipal services and infrastructure	<1	4	10	27	58	2	4.40
Governance and Leadership	2	3	17	31	45	2	4.16
Environmental stewardship	1	3	18	34	41	2	4.15
Community development	2	4	14	39	41	1	4.15

Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to have rated **Governance and Leadership** as important (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) included:

- Females (82%, versus 71% of males); and
- Those who supported a cost of living tax increase to maintain current levels of services (82%, versus 66% of those who supported a tax decrease).

Those who supported a tax increase, above inflation, to enhance or increase the level of services (85%) were significantly more likely to have rated **Environmental Stewardship** as important (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) versus those who supported a tax decrease (66%).

Those who supported a cost of living tax increase to maintain current level of services (88%) or supported a tax increase, above inflation, to enhance or increase the level of services (89%) were significantly more likely to have rated **Community Development** as important (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) versus those who supported a tax decrease (66%).

When asked if there was a focus area that was missing from the Strategic Plan that they would like to add, the majority (80%) of respondents did not specify any missing focus area. The most mentioned focus areas were that road repairs are missing (6%), and services and/or facilities for seniors are missing (4%). See Table 7, below.

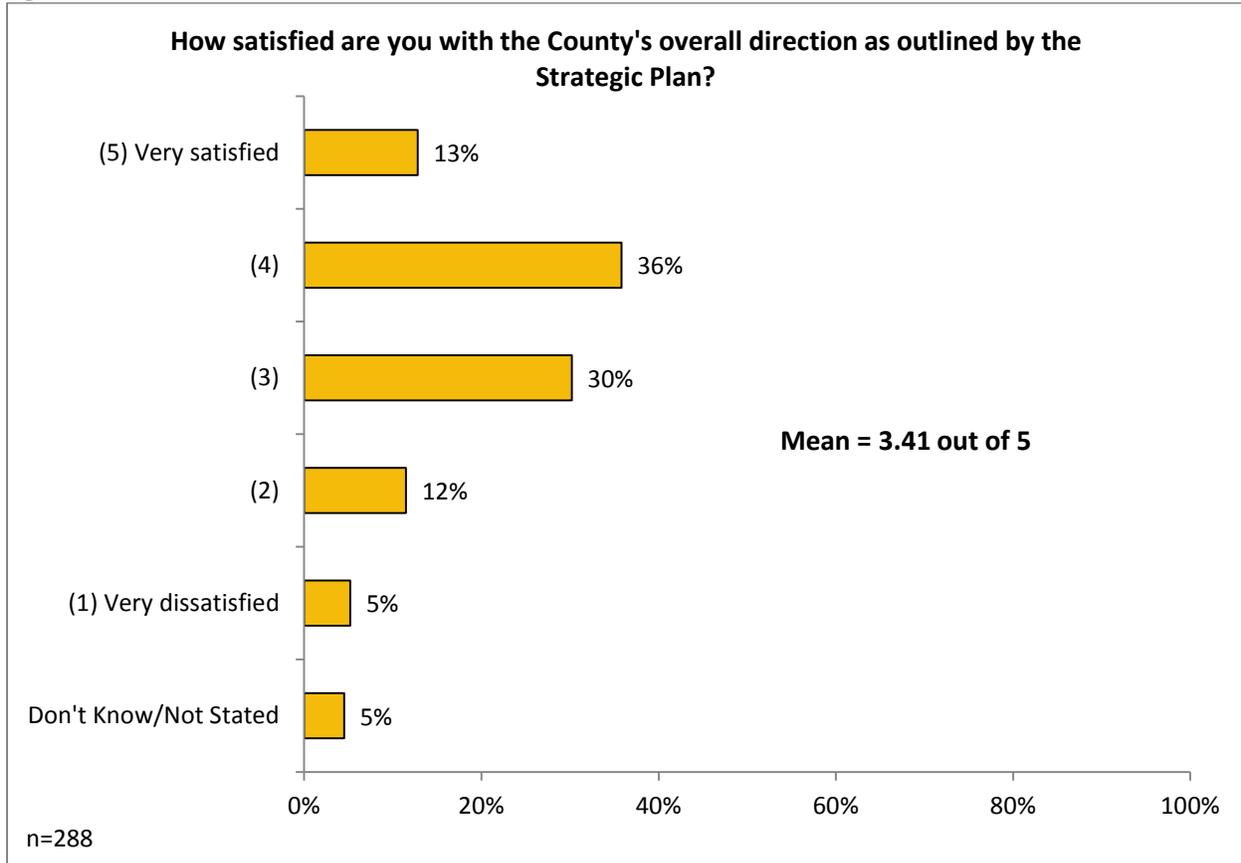
Table 7

Is there a focus area that is missing in this list that you would like to add?	
	Percent of Respondents* (n=288)
Road repairs/maintenance/upgrades	6
Services/facilities for seniors	4
Schools/educational facilities	1
Policing/reducing crime	1
Local job/employment opportunities	1
Recreational services/facilities/programs	1
County farming/agriculture	<1
County growth/development	<1
Internet/Wi-Fi services	<1
No/nothing is missing	80
Don't Know/Not Stated	7

***Multiple responses**

Respondents were next asked to rate their satisfaction with the County’s overall direction as outlined by the Strategic Plan, using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 meant “very dissatisfied” and 5 meant “very satisfied”. Nearly half (49%) of respondents were satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with the County’s overall direction. See Figure 7, below.

Figure 7



Those who were working full time (49%) or were retired (62%) were significantly more likely to have been satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with the County’s overall direction, as outlined by the Strategic Plan versus those who worked part time (29%).

When asked what the most important issue facing Saddle Hills County Council is, the most common (18%) issue reported was poor/lack of road maintenance, followed by misallocating of the County budget (9%). See Table 8, below.

Table 8

What is the most important issue facing Saddle Hills County Council today?	
	Percent of Respondents* (n=288)
Poor/lack of road maintenance/repairs/upgrades	18
Misallocating/overspending of County budget/poor spending	9
Lack of/poor communication with County residents	5
Economic growth/diversity/attracting more businesses (in general)	4
Water supply/water quality/water treatment	4
Infrastructure expansion/development (in general)	4
Managing County growth/development	4
Poor Council/County staff/County not well managed (in general)	3
Lack of listening to/addressing resident concerns/issues/feedback	3
Other (2% or less of respondents)	25
No/nothing	6
Don't Know/Not Stated	21%

*Multiple responses

3.4 Retention and Attraction of Residents

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked a series of questions regarding the retention and attraction of residents. First, respondents were asked what the greatest barrier to attracting new residents to Saddle Hills County was. Nearly one-fifth (19%) of respondents reported that the lack of employment opportunities was the greatest barrier to attracting new residents. See Table 9, below.

Table 9

What is Saddle Hills County's greatest barrier to attracting new residents?	
	Percent of Respondents* (n=288)
Lack of employment opportunities	19
Long distance to other towns/cities	13
Poor/lack of road maintenance/repairs/upgrades	9
High cost of living	7
Lack of shopping	6
Location is poor/inconvenient (in general)	5
Lack of available housing	5
Lack of County services/amenities (in general)	4
Lack of youth person culture	3
Rural/country setting	3
Lack of water/access to water	3
Lack of recreational facilities/activities/programs	3
Other (2% or less of respondents)	20
Nothing/no barriers	1
Don't Know/Not Stated	29

Similarly, respondents were asked what the greatest barrier is to *retaining* current residents. Nearly one-quarter (23%) of respondents reported that the greatest barrier to retaining residents was also the lack of employment opportunities. See Table 10, below.

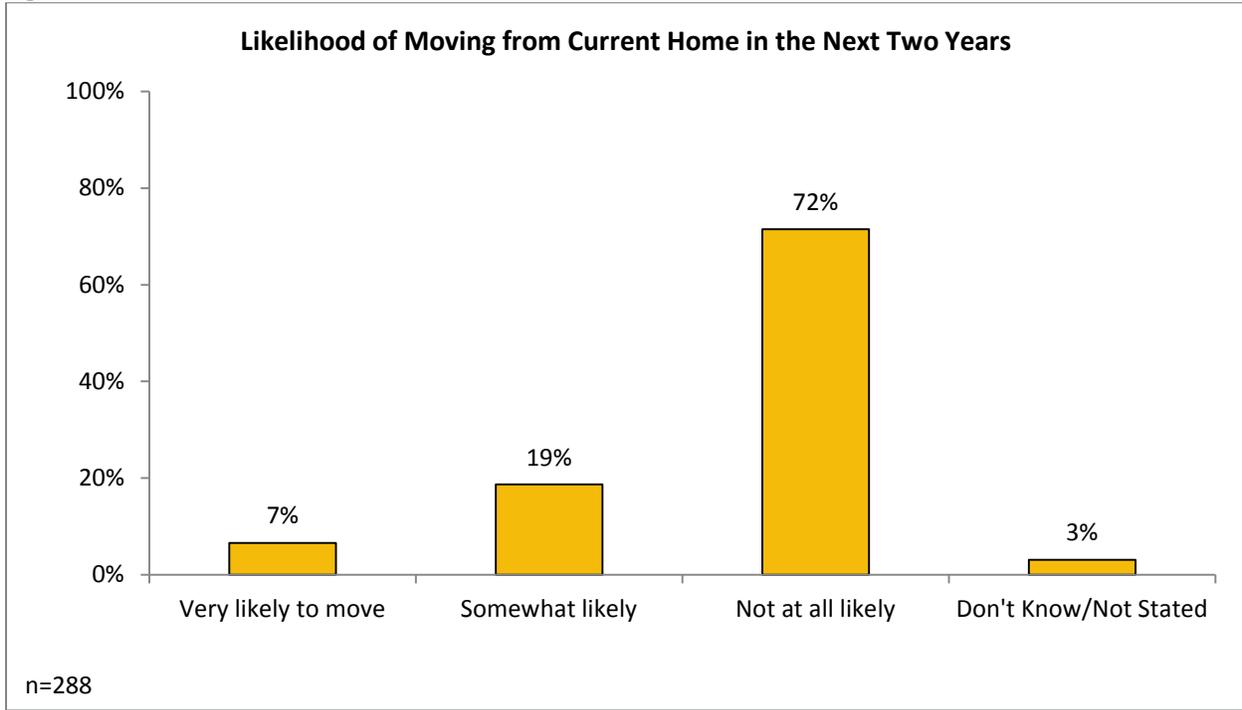
Table 10

What is Saddle Hills County's greatest barrier to retaining current residents?	
	Percent of Respondents* (n=288)
Lack of employment opportunities	23
Lack of programs/services/facilities	9
Poor/lack of road maintenance/repairs/upgrades	7
Long distance to other towns/cities	6
Lack of County services/amenities (in general)	5
Lack of shopping	4
Lack of healthcare options	4
Old/aging population	3
Lack of/poor schools/educational facilities	3
Lack of recreational facilities/activities/programs	3
Rural/country setting	2
High taxes	2
Oil and gas industry	2
Big farms buying out small farms/loss of small farms	2
Lack of poor/communication with County residents	2
High cost of living	2
Lack of youth person culture	2
Other (1% or less of respondents)	16
Nothing/no barriers	2
Don't Know/Not Stated	29

*Multiple response

When asked about their likelihood of moving from their current home in the next two (2) years, nearly three-quarters (72%) of respondents reported that they were not at all likely to move, while 19% were somewhat likely to move. Only 7% of respondents indicated that they were very likely to move. See Figure 8, below.

Figure 8



Respondents who were very or somewhat likely to move (n=73) were asked what community or city they would consider moving to. Over one-quarter (27%) of these respondents reported that they would move to another province. Eleven percent (11%) reported that they would consider moving to Grande Prairie, and 7% would consider moving to Spirit River. See Table 11, below.

Table 11

What community or city would you consider moving to?	
Base: Respondents who are “very” or “somewhat” likely to move in the next two (2) years	Percent of Respondents* (n=73)
Other province	27
Grande Prairie	11
Spirit River	7
Other country/outside of Canada	4
Edmonton	3
Calgary	3
Fairview	3
Hinton	1
Sexsmith	1
Lethbridge	1
Medicine Hat	1
Red Deer	1
Don't Know/Not Stated	38

*Multiple response

When asked what the main reason respondents were looking to move to each respective community, those who were very or somewhat likely to move (n=73) most commonly indicated to be closer to hospitals or health care facilities such as seniors centres (22%). See Table 12, below.

Table 12

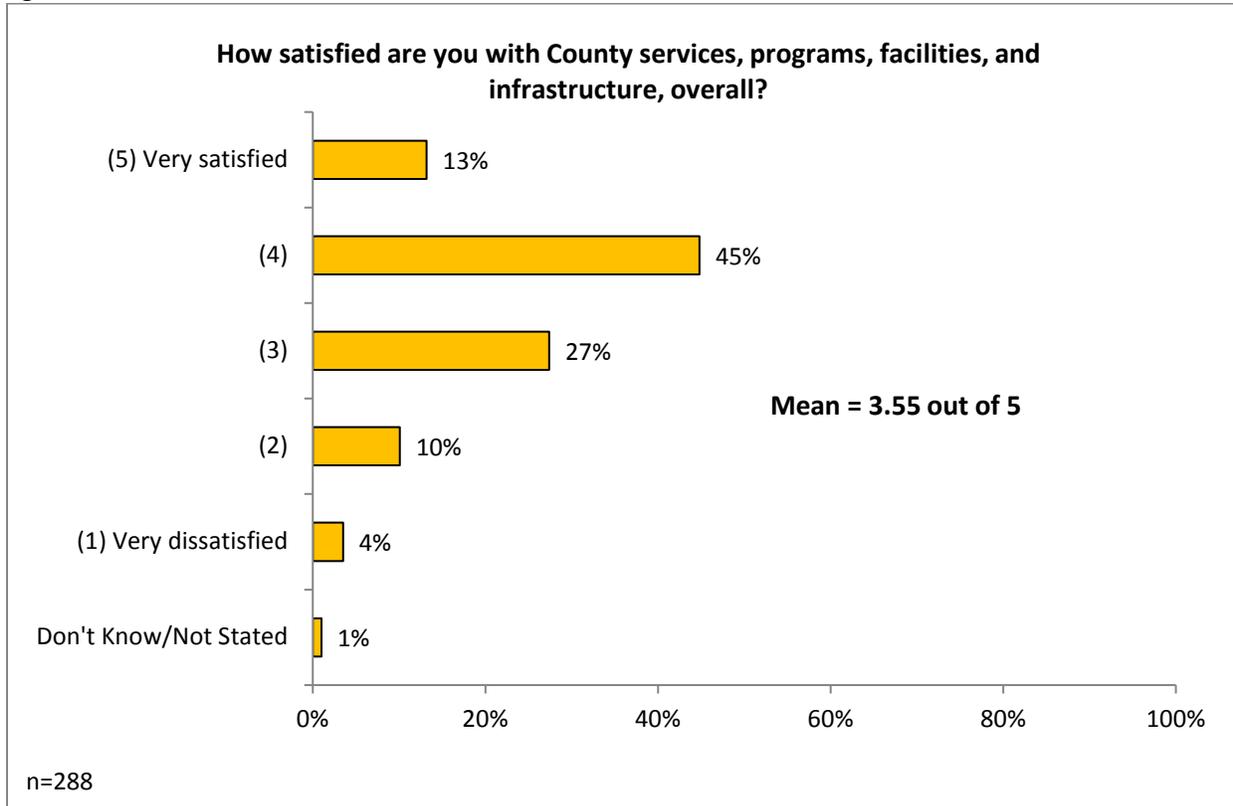
What is the main reason you would move to that community?	
Base: Respondents who are very or somewhat likely to move in the next two (2) years	Percent of Respondents* (n=73)
Close proximity to hospitals or health care facilities such as seniors centres	22
Closer to friends and family	14
To retire/retirement	14
Closer to work	11
Better weather/climate	11
Better/more services/amenities	10
Wide variety of shopping or retailers	8
Recreation and sports opportunities	8
Better quality of living	4
Better schools	3
Green space or parks and recreation	3
Lots of activities for families and youth	3
Better roads/road maintenance	3
Better/more job opportunities	3
Lack of oil and gas industry/development	3
Other (single mentions)	15
Don't Know/Not Stated	8

*Multiple response

3.5 Satisfaction with County Services, Programs, Facilities and Infrastructure

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction, overall, with County services, programs, facilities and infrastructure, using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 meant “very dissatisfied” and 5 meant “very satisfied”. Over half (58%) of respondents were satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with County services, programs, facilities, and infrastructure, overall. See Figure 9, below.

Figure 9

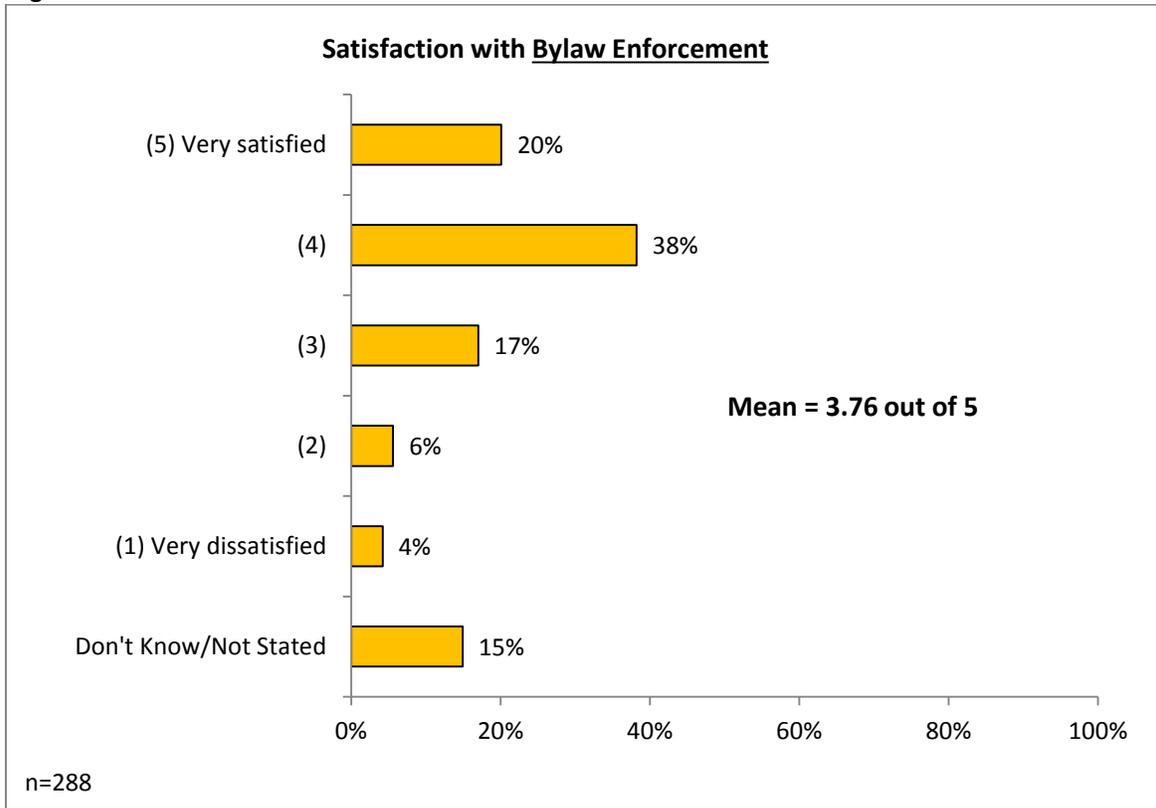


Respondent subgroups significantly *more likely* to have been satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with County services, programs, facilities, and infrastructure, overall, included:

- Those who supported a tax increase, above inflation, to enhance or increase the level of services (70%, versus 47% of those who supported a tax decrease); and
- Those who were working full time (61%) or were retired (64%) versus those who worked part time (41%).

Thinking now about *specific* programs, services, and facilities provided by Saddle Hills County, respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with each, either based on their own experiences or on their general perceptions of the service. Over half (58%) of respondents were satisfied, providing ratings of 4 (38%) or 5 (20%) out of 5. with bylaw enforcement. Seventeen percent (17%) of respondents provided a neutral rating (3 out of 5). The mean satisfaction rating was 3.76 out of 5. See Figure 10, below.

Figure 10



Females (65%) were significantly more likely to have been satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with **bylaw enforcement** versus males (53%).

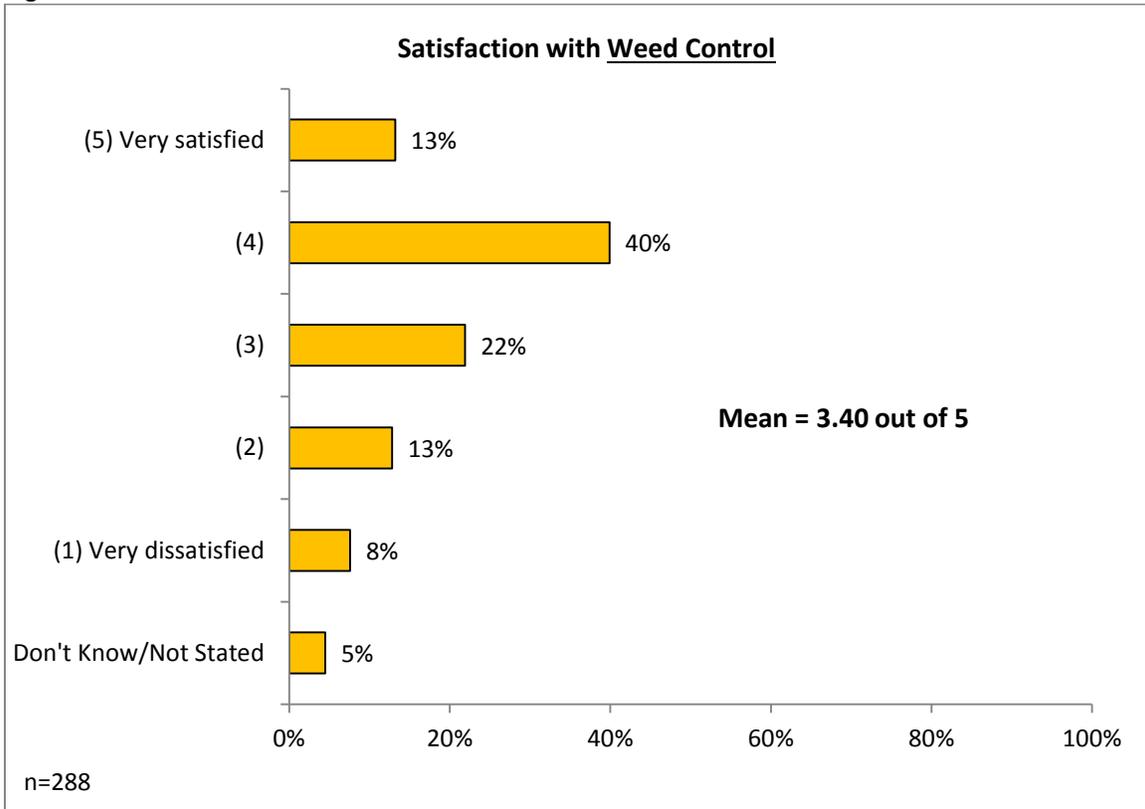
Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5; n=77) with Bylaw Enforcement most often stated that there is a lack of and/or poor bylaw enforcement, in general (26%). See Table 13, below.

Table 13

Reasons for Dissatisfaction with <u>Bylaw Enforcement</u>	
Base: Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5) with <u>Bylaw Enforcement</u>	Percent of Respondents* (n=77)
Lack of/poor bylaw enforcement (in general)	26
Service is not needed/necessary (in general)	13
Service/department is understaffed/lack of resources	9
Lack of bylaw officer patrols/visibility	4
Lack of bylaw related information/awareness	3
Inconsistent bylaw enforcement	3
Lack of speeding enforcement	3
Poor/slow response time	3
Lack of parking availability	3
Other (single mentions)	5
Don't Know/Not Stated	33

With regards to weed control, 53% of respondents were satisfied, providing ratings of 4 (40%) or 5 (13%) out of 5. Nearly one-quarter (22%) provided a neutral rating (3 out of 5). The mean satisfaction rating was 3.40 out of 5. See Figure 11, below.

Figure 11



*Those who have lived in Saddle Hills County for 15 to 24 years (70%) were significantly more likely to have been satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with **weed control** versus those who have lived in the County for 25 years or more (47%).*

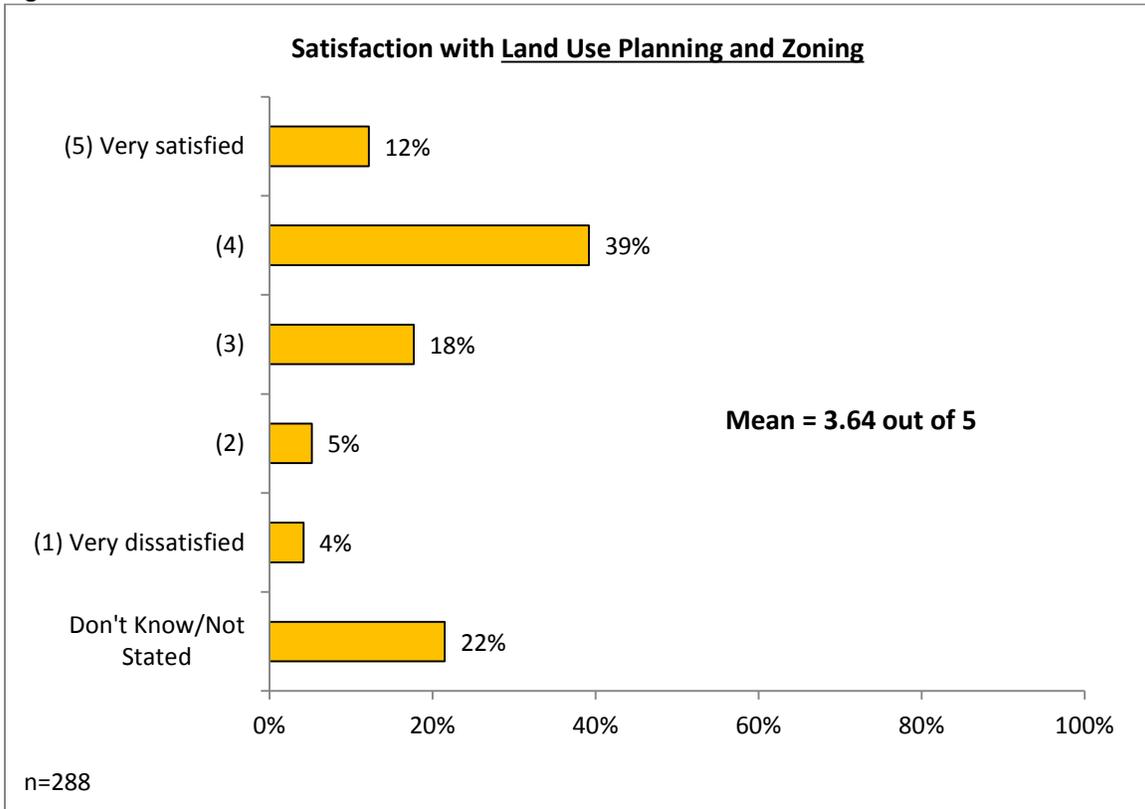
Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5, n=122) with weed control most often stated that there is a lack of or poor weed control services, in general (42%). See Table 14, below.

Table 14

Reasons for Dissatisfaction with <u>Weed Control</u>	
Base: Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5) with Weed Control	Percent of Respondents* (n=122)
Lack of/poor weed control services (in general)	42
Weeds are not removed from roadside/ditches	25
Weed control staff are poor/unproductive/not doing job	5
Weeds are not removed from fields/green spaces	4
Poor/slow response time	3
Industrial companies do not remove weeds from their property	2
Dislikes chemicals used to spray weeds	2
weed control services are inconsistent (in general)	1
Concerned about spraying chemicals near water supply/source	1
Don't Know/Not Stated	19

Fifty-one percent (51%) of respondents were satisfied with land use planning and zoning, providing ratings of 4 (39%) or 5 (12%) out of 5. Eighteen percent (18%) of respondents provided a neutral rating (3 out of 5). The mean satisfaction rating was 3.64 out of 5. See Figure 12, below.

Figure 12



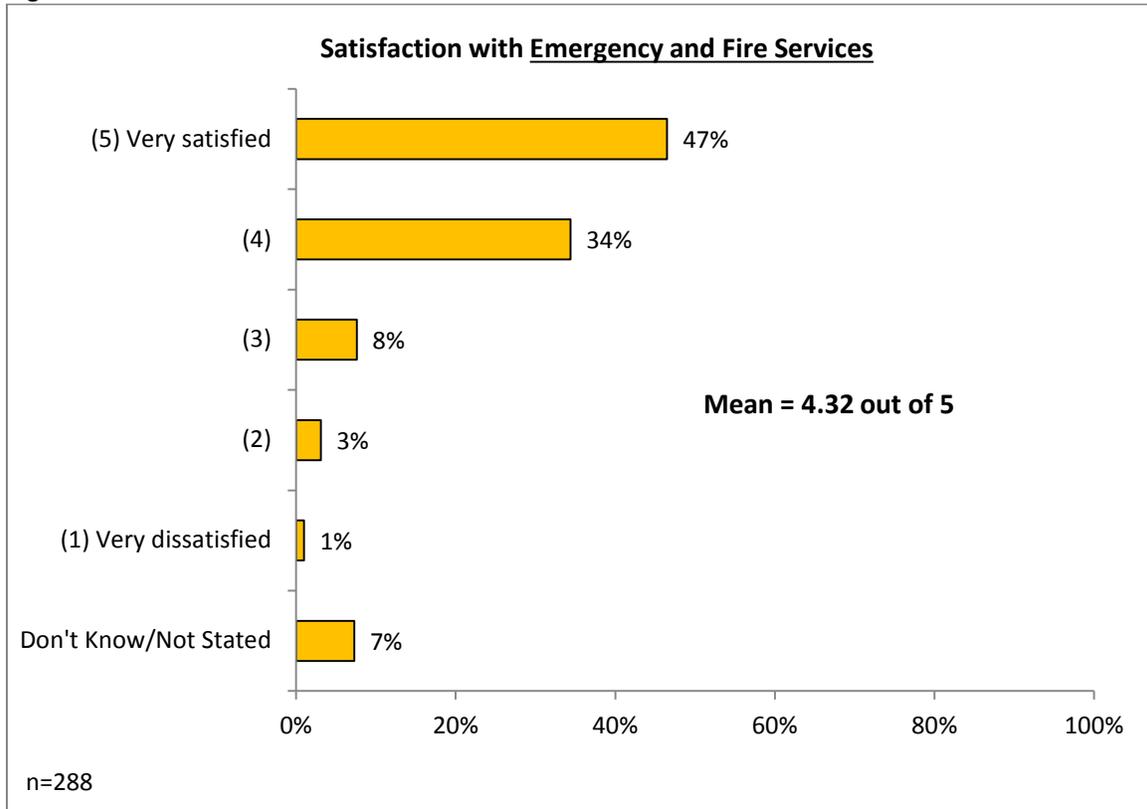
Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5, n=78) with land use planning and zoning most often stated that there is a lack of or poor land use planning and zoning, in general (14%).

Table 15

Reasons for Dissatisfaction with Land Use Planning and Zoning	
Base: Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5) with Land Use Planning and Zoning	Percent of Respondents* (n=78)
Lack of/poor land use planning and zoning (in general)	14
Land use rules/regulations are too strict/not flexible	13
Overspending/misallocating funds to this department/service	8
County does not listen to residents/lack of public consultation/input	5
Lack of land use planning and zoning information (in general)	4
Concerned about industrial growth/development on County land/farmland	4
Lot sizes are too small	4
Concerned about tax increase	3
Other (single mentions)	12
Don't Know/Not Stated	36

The majority (81%) of respondents were satisfied with emergency and fire services, providing ratings of 4 (34%) or 5 (47%) out of 5. Only 8% of respondents provided a neutral rating (3 out of 5). The mean satisfaction rating was 4.32 out of 5. See Figure 13, below.

Figure 13



*Those who were working full time (86%) were significantly more likely to have been satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with **emergency and fire services** versus those who worked part time (70%).*

Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5, n=34) with emergency and fire services most often stated that there is a slow response time and/or that wait times are too long (27%).

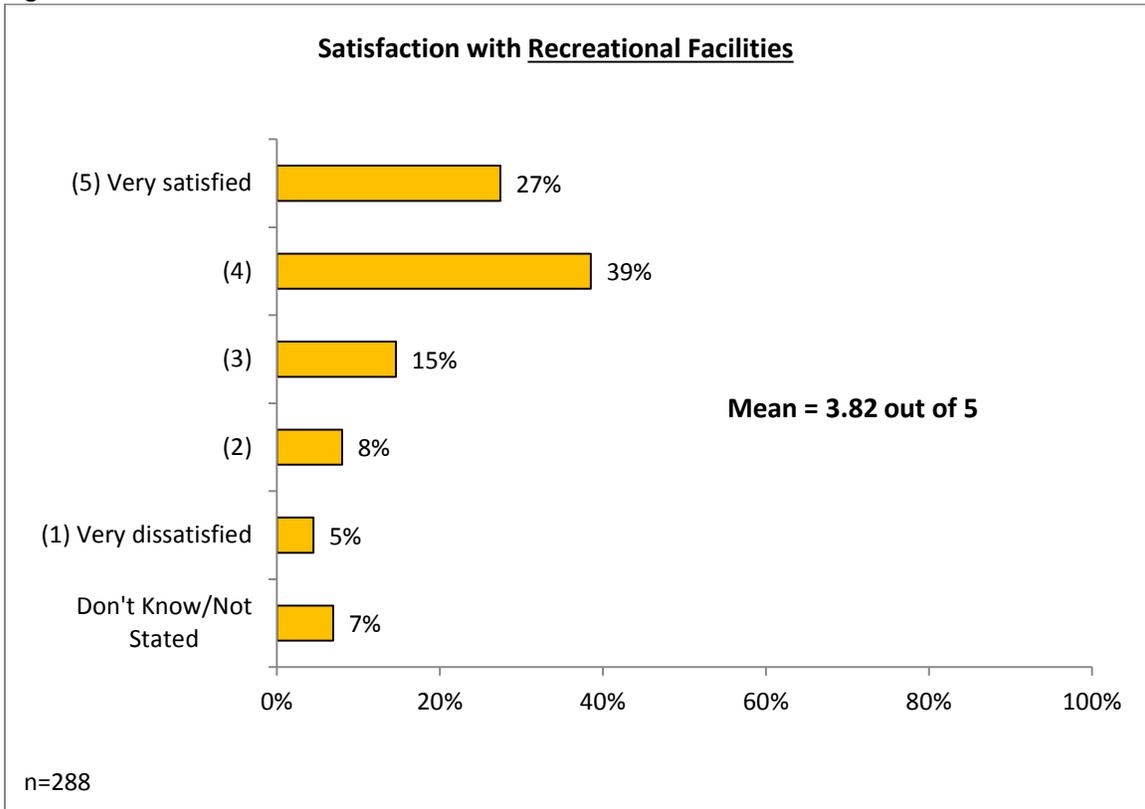
Table 16

Reasons for dissatisfaction with <u>Emergency and Fire Services</u>	
Base: Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5) with Emergency and Fire Services	Percent of Respondents* (n=34)
Slow/poor response time/wait times are too long	27
Fire hall is too far away	9
Lack of emergency and fire services in County (in general)	6
Overspending/misallocating funds to this department/service	6
Lack of communication (in general)	3
Need more fire halls in County	3
I have not used/accessed/needed this service (in general)	3
Staff are inexperienced/poorly trained	3
Lack of volunteers/volunteer staff	3
My home does not have address signage	3
Lack of/poor wildfire planning	3
Ambulance staff should be allowed to administer pain medication	3
Don't Know/Not Stated	29

*Multiple response

Two-thirds (66%) of respondents were satisfied with recreational facilities, providing a rating of 4 (39%) or 5 (27%) out of 5. Fifteen percent (15%) of respondents provided a neutral rating (3 out of 5). The mean satisfaction rating for recreational facilities was 3.82 out of 5. See Figure 14, below.

Figure 14



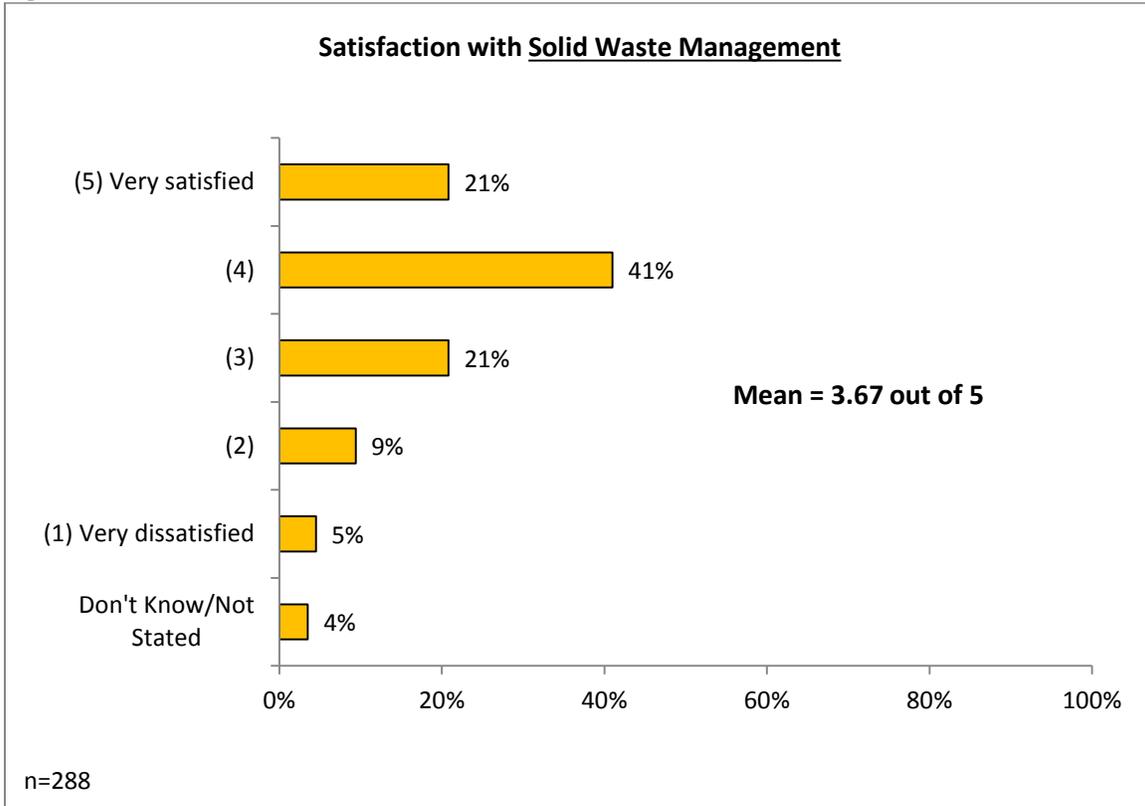
Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5, n=78) with recreational facilities most often stated that there is a lack of or poor recreational facilities, in general (44%). See Table 17, below.

Table 17

Reasons for Dissatisfaction with Recreational Facilities	
Base: Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5) with Recreational Facilities	Percent of Respondents* (n=78)
Lack of/poor recreational facilities/lack of variety (in general)	44
I have not used/accessed/needed this service (in general)	5
Lack of playgrounds	3
Lack of advertising/public awareness of recreational facilities	3
Recreational facilities are too far away	3
Lack of designated camping areas	3
Lack of indoor swimming pool facility	3
Lack of gym/fitness facility	3
Lack of recreational programs/activities for children	3
Other (single mentions)	14
Don't Know/Not Stated	27

With regards to solid waste management (Transfer Stations & Waste Bin Sites), nearly two-thirds (62%) of respondents were satisfied with this service, providing ratings of 4 (21%) or 5 (21%) out of 5. Twenty-one percent (21%) of respondents provided a neutral rating (3 out of 5). The mean satisfaction rating was 3.67 out of 5. See Figure 15, below.

Figure 15



Those who were retired (76%) were significantly more likely to have been satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with **solid waste management** versus those who worked full time (60%) or part time (55%).

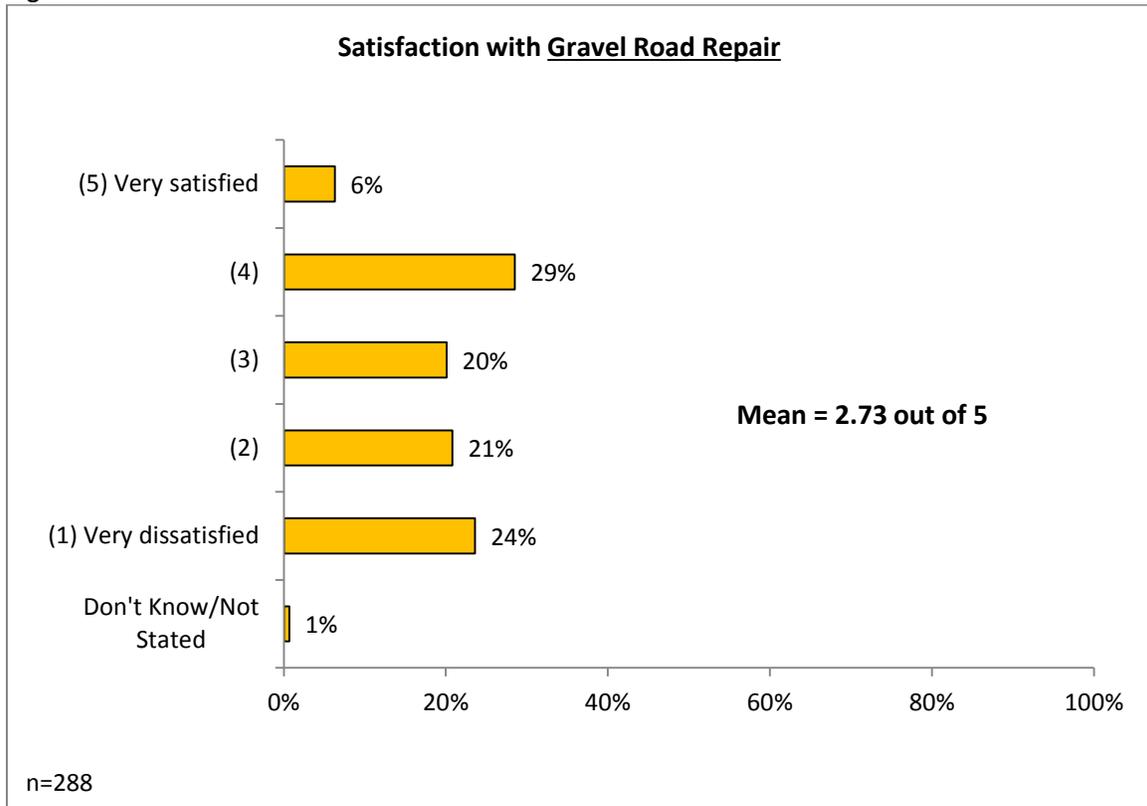
Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5, n=100) with solid waste management most often stated that there are not enough garbage bins at the waste transfer station (25%). See Table 18, below, for a list of reasons for dissatisfaction.

Table 18

Reasons for Dissatisfaction with Solid Waste Management (Transfer Stations and Waste Bin Sites)	
Base: Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5) with Solid Waste Management (Transfer Stations and Waste Bin Sites)	Percent of Respondents* (n=100)
Not enough garbage bins at waste transfer station/bins are full/overflowing	25
Poor/inconvenient location of waste transfer station/is too far away	15
Poor/inconvenient hours of waste transfer station	13
Lack of/poor solid waste management services/facilities (in general)	9
Waste transfer station does not accept enough items/materials	6
Lack of/poor waste transfer station accessibility (in general)	5
Garbage bins are poorly maintained/in poor condition	5
Garbage bin lids are too heavy/difficult to open	4
Waste transfer station is dirty/too messy	3
Dislikes that garbage bins were taken away	3
Garbage bins are too high/difficult to reach	2
Waste transfer station is not fenced in	1
Lack of/poor County cleanliness (in general)	1
Don't Know/Not Stated	17

Over one-third (35%) of respondents were satisfied with gravel road repair, providing ratings of 4 (29%) or 5 (6%) out of 5. One-fifth (20%) of respondents provided a neutral rating (3 out of 5). Nearly half (44%) of respondents were dissatisfied, providing ratings of 1 (24%) or 2 (21%) out of 5. The mean satisfaction rating was 2.73 out of 5. See Figure 16, below.

Figure 16



Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to have been satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with **gravel road repair** included:

- Those aged 65 and older (44%, versus 28% of those aged 35 to 54);
- Those who have not had contact with County staff in the past year (42%, versus 31% of those who have had contact); and
- Those who were retired (48%, versus 32% of those who worked full time and 23% of those who worked part time).

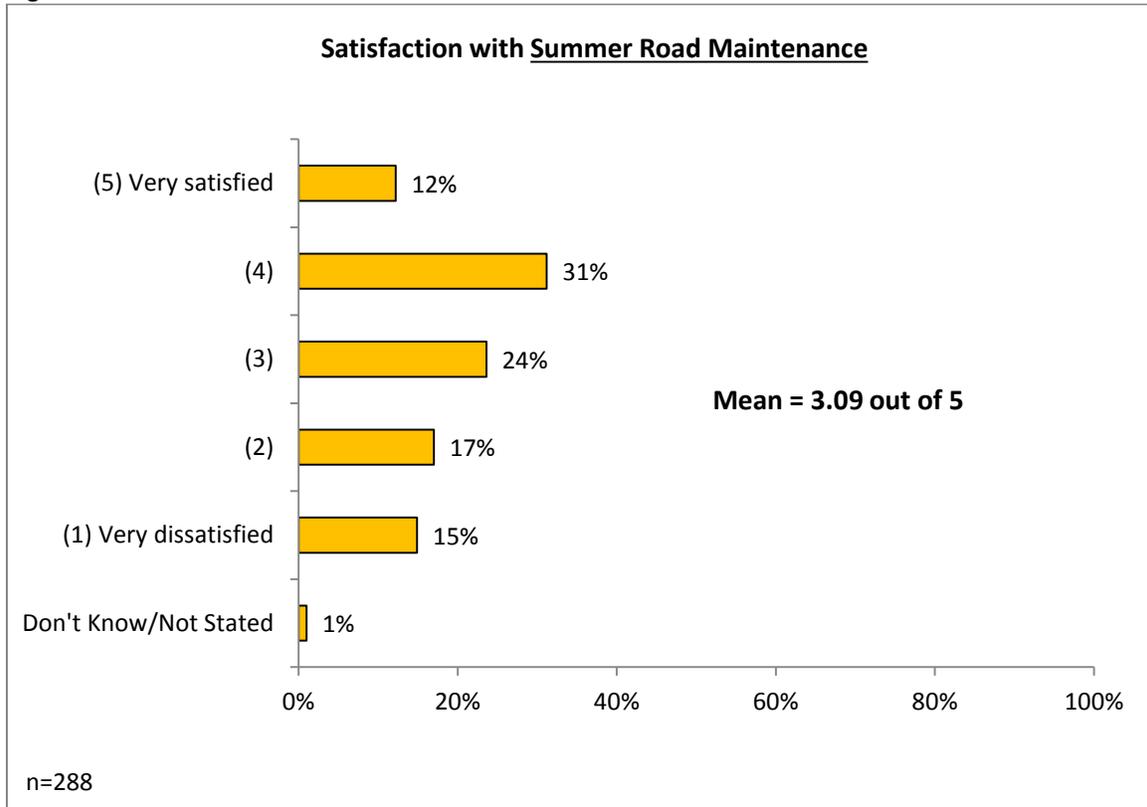
Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5, n=186) with gravel road repair most often stated that there is a lack of or poor gravel road repair, in general (51%). See Table 19, below, for a list of reasons for dissatisfaction.

Table 19

Reasons for Dissatisfaction with <u>Gravel Road Repair</u>	
Base: Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5) with Gravel Road Repair	Percent of Respondents* (n=186)
Lack of/poor gravel road repair/maintenance (in general)	51
Lack of/not enough gravel on roads	17
Lack of/poor ditch maintenance	12
Too many ruts/bumps/potholes on gravel roads	11
Some areas of County receive better/more gravel road repairs	2
Gravel used on roads is poor/low quality	2
Lack of/poor dust control	1
Other (single mentions)	4
Don't Know/Not Stated	11

Forty-three percent (43%) of respondents were satisfied with Summer Road Maintenance, providing ratings of 4 (31%) or 5 (12%) out of 5. Nearly one-quarter (24%) of respondents provided a neutral rating (3 out of 5). The mean satisfaction rating was 3.09 out of 5. See Figure 17, below.

Figure 17



Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to have been satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with **summer road maintenance** included:

- Those aged 65 and older (53%, versus 37% of those aged 35 to 54); and
- Those who were retired (64%, versus 38% of those who worked full time and 34% of those who worked part time).

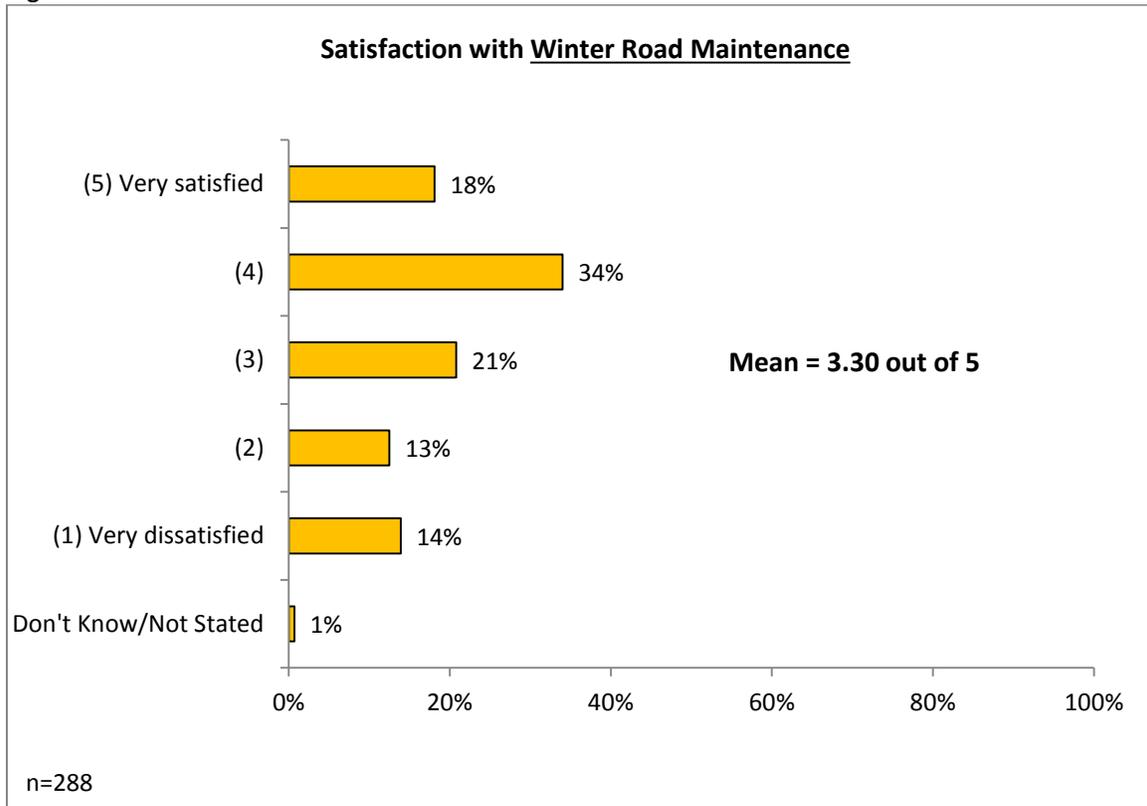
Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5, n=160) with summer road maintenance most often stated that there is a lack of or poor summer road repair, in general (49%). See Table 20, below, for a list of reasons for dissatisfaction.

Table 20

Reasons for Dissatisfaction with Summer Road Maintenance	
Base: Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5) with Summer Road Maintenance	Percent of Respondents* (n=160)
Lack of/poor summer road repair/maintenance (in general)	49
Lack of/not enough gravel on roads	16
Too many ruts/bumps/potholes on roads	16
Lack of/poor dust control	5
Road maintenance staff are inexperienced/poorly trained	4
Roads are impassable/too dangerous to drive on	2
Some areas of County receive better/more summer road repairs	2
Lack of/poor road maintenance equipment	2
Roads are poorly built/designed	1
Gravel used on roads is poor/low quality	1
Roads are too muddy/dirty	1
High level of traffic volume	1
Road maintenance department is understaffed	1
Inconsistent repairs/maintenance	1
Don't Know/Not Stated	13

Over half (52%) of respondents were satisfied with Winter Road Maintenance, including snow removal (snow and ice control), providing ratings of 4 (34%) or 5 (18%) out of 5. Twenty-one percent (21%) of respondents provided a neutral rating (3 out of 5). The mean satisfaction rating was 3.30 out of 5. See Figure 18, below.

Figure 18



Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to have been satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with **winter road maintenance** included:

- Males (61%, versus 42% of females);
- Those who supported a cost of living tax increase to maintain current levels of services (68%, versus 45% of those who supported a tax decrease); and
- Those who were working full time (58%, versus 41% of those who worked part time).

Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5, n=136) with winter road maintenance most often stated that there is a lack of or poor snow removal services, in general (36%). See Table 21, below, for a list of reasons for dissatisfaction.

Table 21

Reasons for Dissatisfaction with <u>Winter Road Maintenance</u>	
Base: Respondents who were not satisfied (ratings of 1 to 3 out of 5) with Winter Road Maintenance	Percent of Respondents* (n=136)
Lack of/poor snow removal services (in general)	36
Snow removal services are slow/not responsive/lack of timely service	15
Roads are too icy/lack of sanding roads	12
Snow is not cleared frequently/often enough	9
Road maintenance staff are inexperienced/poorly trained	4
Driveway is blocked with windrows/piles of snow	4
Some areas of County receive better/more winter road maintenance	3
Lack of/poor snow removal equipment	2
Inconsistent snow removal/winter road maintenance	1
My personal property was damaged	1
Road maintenance department is understaffed	1
Don't Know/Not Stated	17

3.6 Summary of Importance Ratings Regarding Programs and Services

Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 meant “not at all important” and 5 meant “very important”, respondents were asked to rate the level of importance of the 9 programs and services offered by Saddle Hills County. See Table 22, below, for a detailed breakdown of results.

Table 22

Importance of City Programs, Services, and Facilities					
	Percent of Respondents (n=288)				
	Important (4 or 5 out of 5)	Neutral (3 out of 5)	Unimportant (1 or 2 out of 5)	Don't Know/Not Stated	Mean
Winter road maintenance	97	2	<1	<1	4.76
Emergency and fire services	93	5	1	1	4.69
Gravel road repair	94	5	1	<1	4.64
Summer road maintenance	92	4	3	1	4.58
Solid waste management	88	8	3	1	4.38
Weed control	76	19	5	<1	4.12
Land use planning and zoning	62	22	8	8	3.83
Recreational facilities	66	24	9	1	3.82
Bylaw enforcement	53	25	18	4	3.53

3.7 Overall Importance and Satisfaction Ratings

In conducting satisfaction and importance assessments, programs or services with the lowest levels of satisfaction ratings or lowest importance ratings may not necessarily be the areas where improvement is most desired or needed. By mapping the following areas, priority areas in terms of Saddle Hills County program and service improvements are identified:

- Higher importance and lower satisfaction, or areas primarily perceived as needing improvements;
- Higher importance and higher satisfaction, or service strengths;
- Lower importance and higher satisfaction; and
- Lower importance and lower satisfaction.

All respondents were questioned as to the level of importance they placed on each of nine (9) Saddle Hills County services and programs investigated, using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 meant “not at all important” and 5 meant “very important.” Respondents’ importance and satisfaction ratings were plotted on grids whereby the axes intercepted at the **average importance** rating (mean = 4.26) and the **average satisfaction** rating (mean = 3.53) across services measured. Figure 19, on the following page, maps the average importance and satisfaction ratings for each program or service measured.

Programs/services in the upper left quadrant are of **higher than average important, but of lower than average quality**. These services are viewed as **primary areas of improvement** and included:

- (7) Gravel road repair, including ditch maintenance and right of ways;
- (8) Summer road maintenance; and
- (9) Winter road maintenance, including snow removal (snow and ice control).

Improvements to these services/programs would do most to increase residents’ satisfaction with overall services provided by the County.

Programs/services in the lower left quadrant are **of lower than average importance and lower than average quality**. These services are viewed as **secondary areas of improvement** and included (2) weed control.

Programs/services in the lower right quadrant are viewed as lower than average in importance and higher than average in quality. In other words, while respondents are generally satisfied with the quality of these programs/services, the importance placed on them is lower in comparison to other County programs/services evaluated. These services are viewed as **secondary strengths** and included:

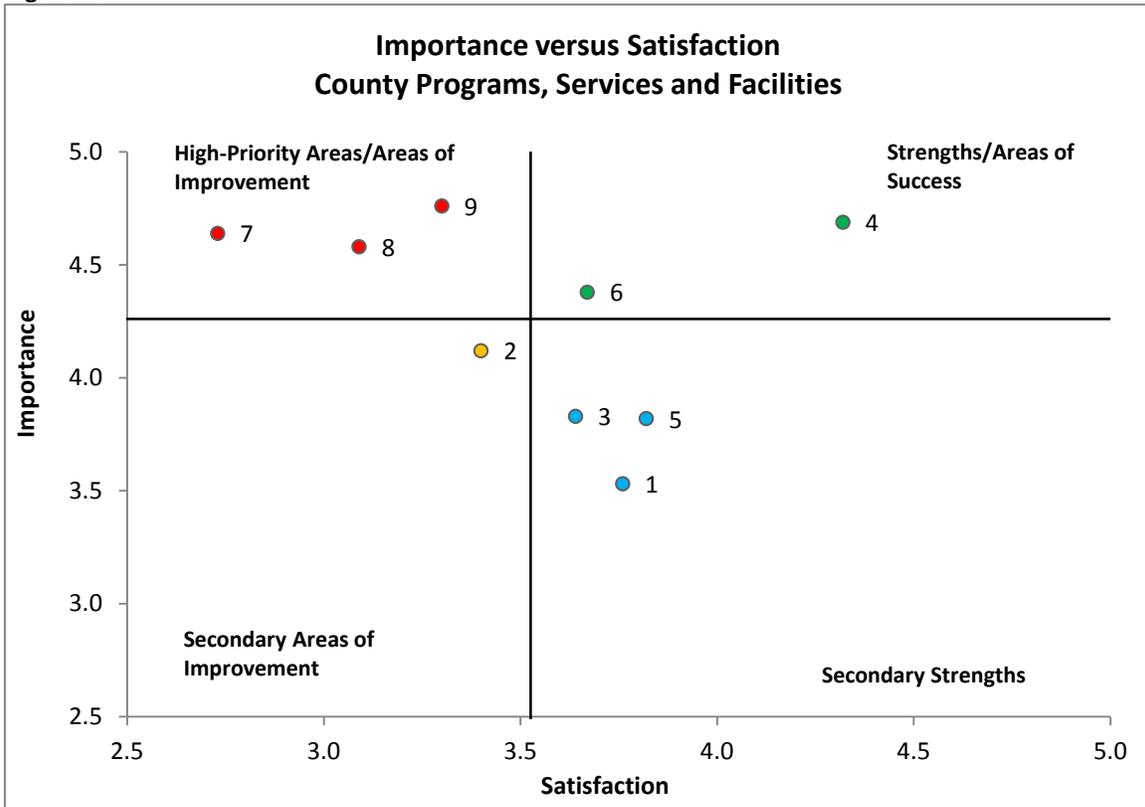
- (1) Bylaw enforcement;
- (3) Land use planning and zoning; and
- (5) Recreational facilities.

Programs/services situated in the upper right quadrant are viewed as **higher than average in importance and as higher than average in quality**. In other words, respondents consider these programs/services as

being important and are generally satisfied with their quality at this time. Programs/services are viewed as **primary service strengths** and included:

- (4) Emergency and fire services; and
- (6) Solid waste management (Transfer Stations and Waste Bin Sites).

Figure 19



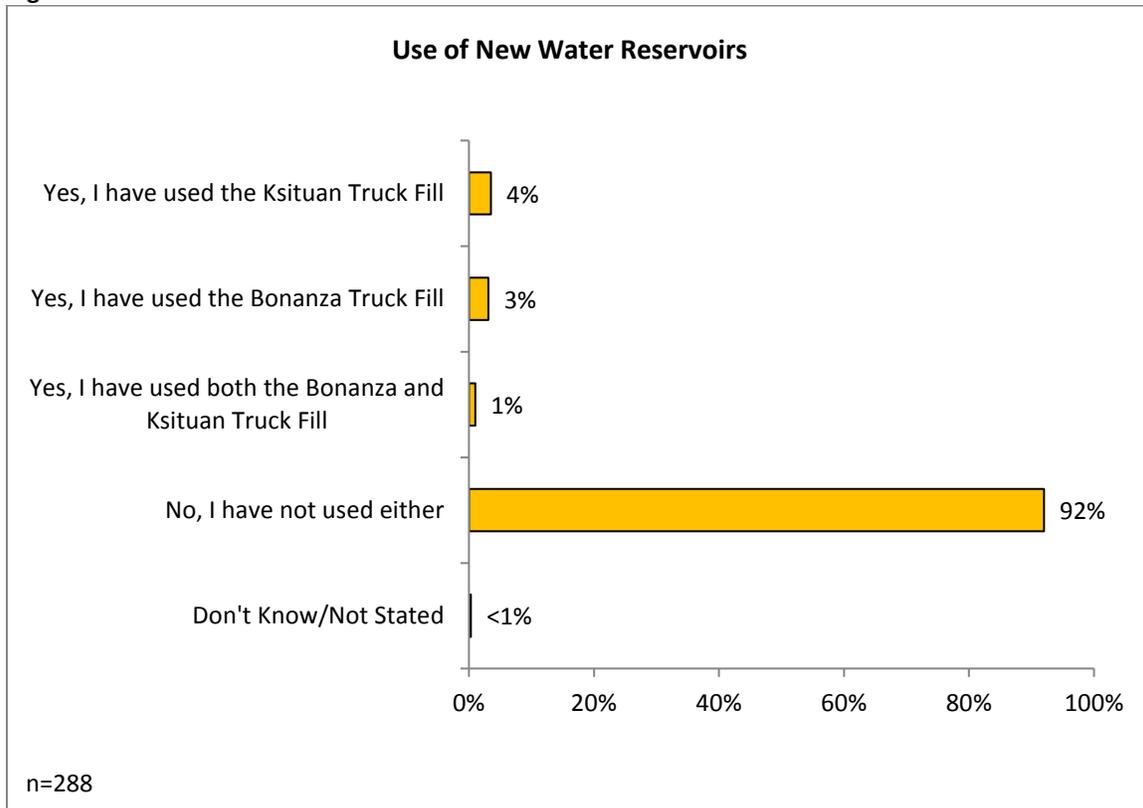
1. Bylaw enforcement
2. Weed control
3. Land use planning and zoning
4. Emergency and fire services
5. Recreational facilities
6. Solid waste management (transfer stations and waste bin sites)
7. Gravel road repair, including ditch maintenance and right of ways
8. Summer road maintenance
9. Winter road maintenance, including snow removal (snow and ice control)

Mean Importance and Quality Ratings*		
	Importance	Satisfaction
1. Bylaw enforcement	3.53	3.76
2. Weed control	4.12	3.40
3. Land use planning and zoning	3.83	3.64
4. Emergency and fire services	4.69	4.32
5. Recreational facilities	3.82	3.82
6. Solid waste management (transfer stations and waste bin sites)	4.38	3.67
7. Gravel road repair, including ditch maintenance and right of ways	4.64	2.73
8. Summer road maintenance	4.58	3.09
9. Winter road maintenance, including snow removal (snow and ice control)	4.76	3.30
Mean Rating (out of 5)	4.26	3.53

3.8 Potable Water

Next, respondents were asked about the two new water reservoirs. As shown in Figure 20, below, respondents were asked if they have used either of the reservoirs, and the vast majority (92%) of respondents had not used either water reservoir. Four percent (4%) of respondents have used the Ksituan Truck Fill, while 3% have used the Bonanza Truck Fill. Only 1% of respondents used both water reservoirs.

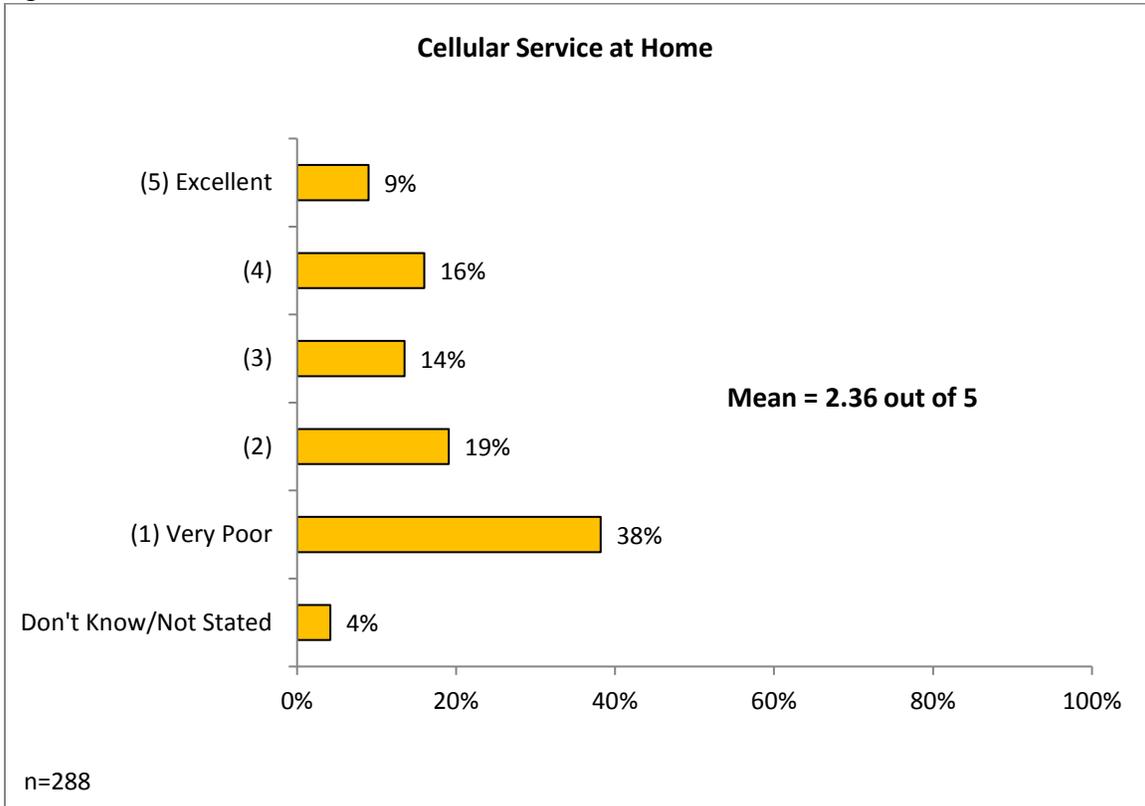
Figure 20



3.9 Internet and Mobility

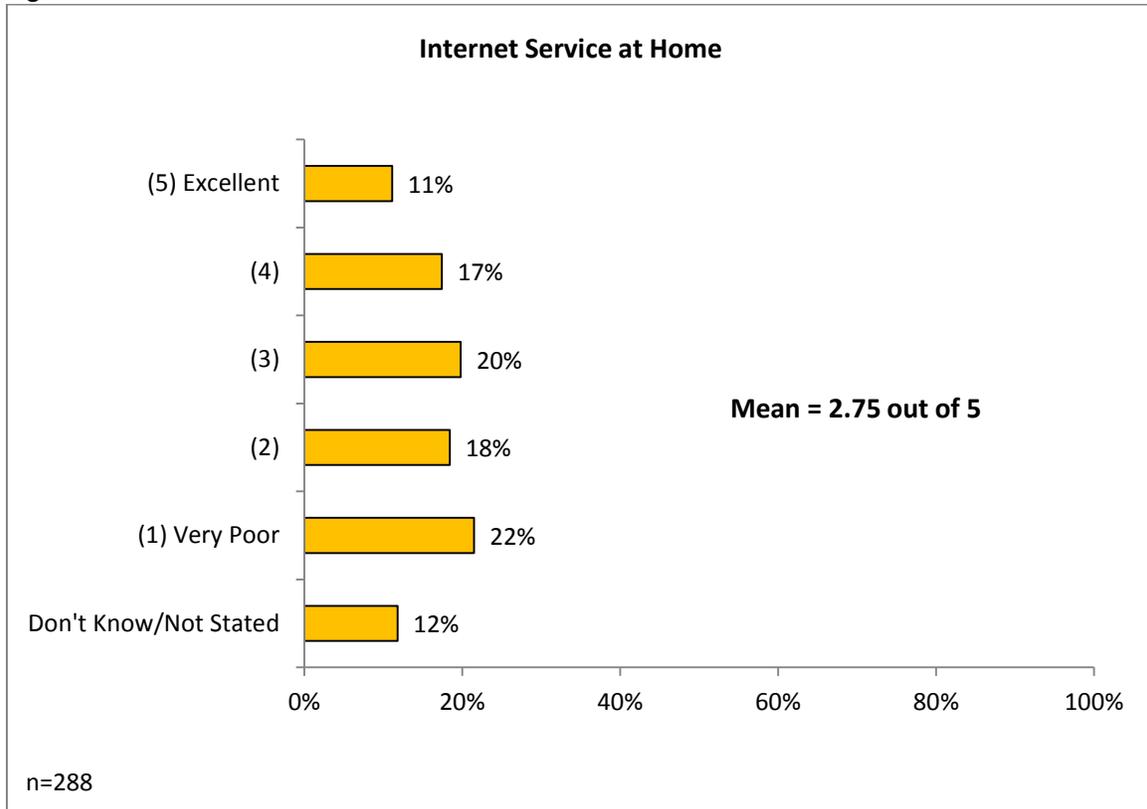
Next, respondents were asked about internet and cellular services, within their homes. First, respondents were asked to rate the cellular service at their homes, using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 meant “very poor” and 5 meant “excellent”. One-quarter (25%) of respondents provided a 4 (16%) or 5 (9%) rating for the cellular service at their home. See Figure 21, below.

Figure 21



Using the same 1 to 5 scale, respondents were asked to rate the internet service at their home. Nearly one-third (29%) of respondents provided a rating of 4 (17%) or 5 (11%). See Figure 22, below.

Figure 22

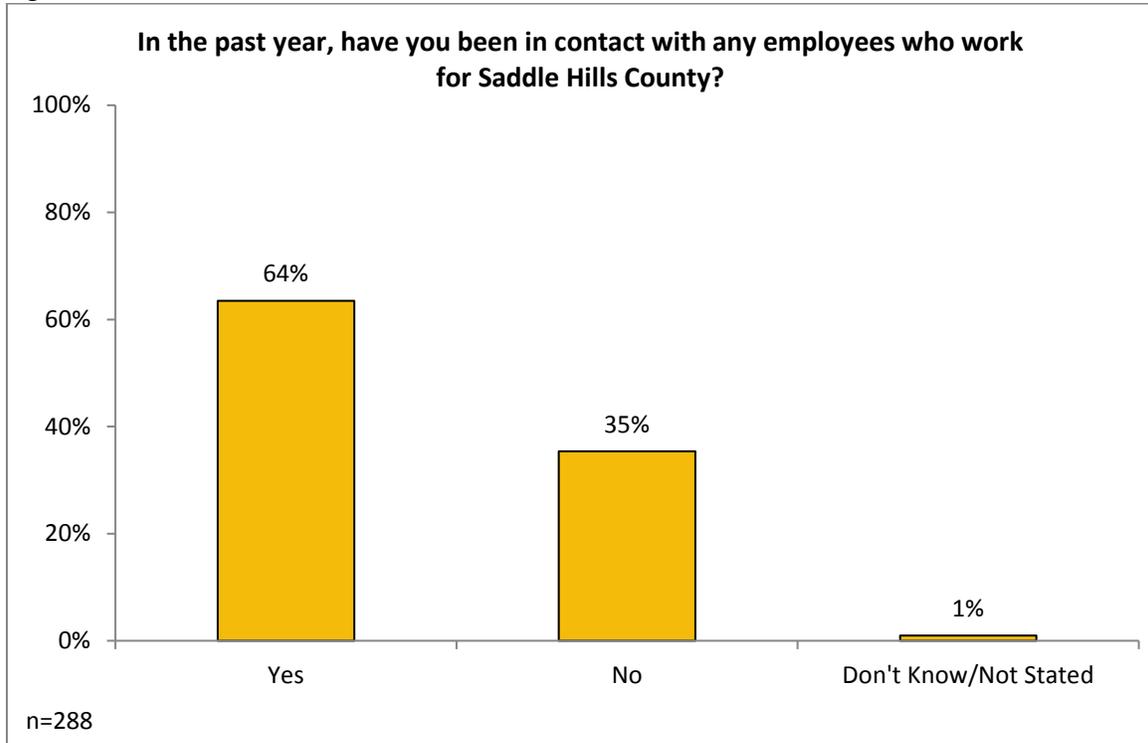


Those who have had contact with County staff in the past year (33%) were significantly more likely to have rated their internet service highly (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) versus those who have not had contact with County staff (22%).

3.10 Contact with Saddle Hills Employees

Next, respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their contact with any employees of Saddle Hills County. First, respondents were asked if they have had any contact with Saddle Hills County employees in the past year. As shown in Figure 23, below, nearly two-thirds (64%) of respondents reported that they have had contact.

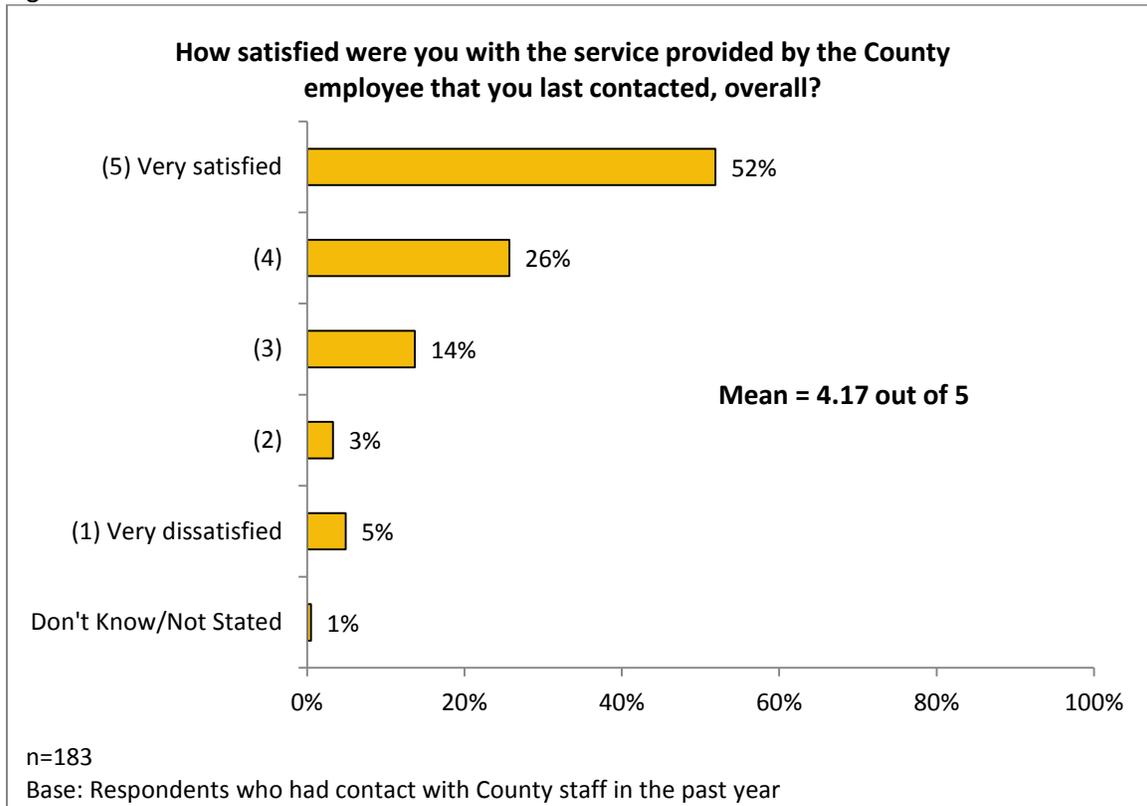
Figure 23



Those who completed the survey through web (78%) were significantly more likely to have had contact with County staff versus those who completed the survey through telephone (56%).

Respondents who had contact with a County employee (n=183) were asked to rate their satisfaction with the service provided by the employee they contacted, using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 meant “very dissatisfied” and 5 meant “very satisfied”. Over three-quarters (78%) of respondents provided ratings of 4 (26%) or 5 (52%) out of 5. See Figure 24, below.

Figure 24



Next, respondents who had contact with Saddle Hills County staff (n=183) were asked if they agreed with various statements regarding Saddle Hills County staff. At least three-quarters of respondents agreed (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) with the following statements:

- The employee was courteous (89% agreed);
- The employee showed interest in your needs (84%);
- The employee was accessible (83%);
- The employee was knowledgeable about the services they provide (81%); and
- The employee was responsive to your needs (78%).

See Figure 25, below. Table 23, on the following page, offers a detailed breakdown of results.

Figure 25

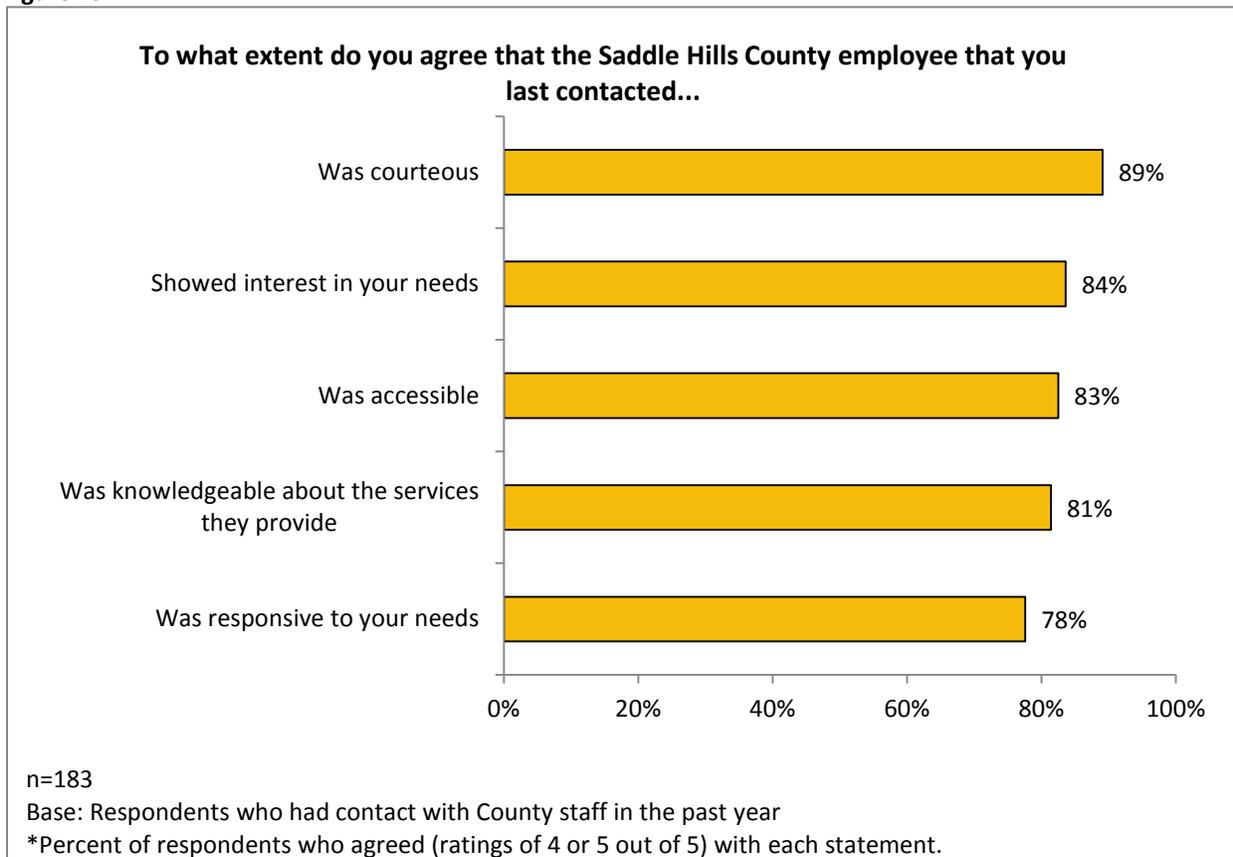


Table 23

To what extent do you agree that the Saddle Hills County employee that you last contacted...?							
Base: Respondents who had contact with County staff in the past year	Percent of Respondents (n=183)						
	(1) Strongly Disagree	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5) Strongly Agree	Don't Know/Not Stated	Mean (out of 5)
Was courteous	3	1	7	23	66	1	4.49
Was accessible	2	3	12	26	57	1	4.33
Showed interest in your needs	4	3	9	28	56	1	4.29
Was knowledgeable about the services they provide	3	3	11	33	48	1	4.21
Was responsive to your needs	4	6	12	26	51	1	4.16

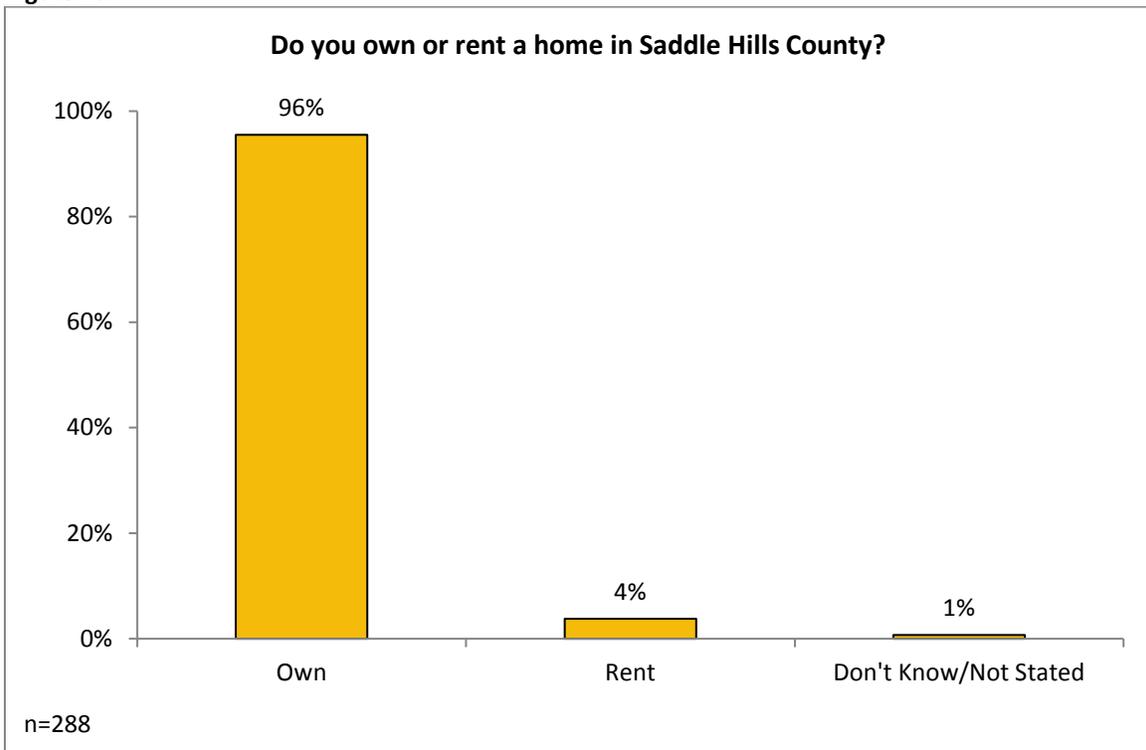
Those who supported a cost of living tax increase to maintain current levels of service were significantly more likely to have agreed (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) that County staff...

- *Was accessible (95%, versus 68% of those who supported a tax increase, above inflation, to enhance or increase the level of services);*
- *Was Courteous (98%, versus 84% of those who supported a tax increase, above inflation, to enhance or increase the level of services); and*
- *Was knowledgeable about the services they provide (95%, versus 74% of those who supported a tax increase, above inflation, to enhance or increase the level of services).*

3.11 Property Taxes and Financial Planning

In the next section of the survey, respondents were asked about Saddle Hills County’s property taxes and financial planning. First, respondents were asked if they owned or rented their homes. The vast majority (96%) of respondents reported that they own their home, while 4% rented. See Figure 26, below.

Figure 26

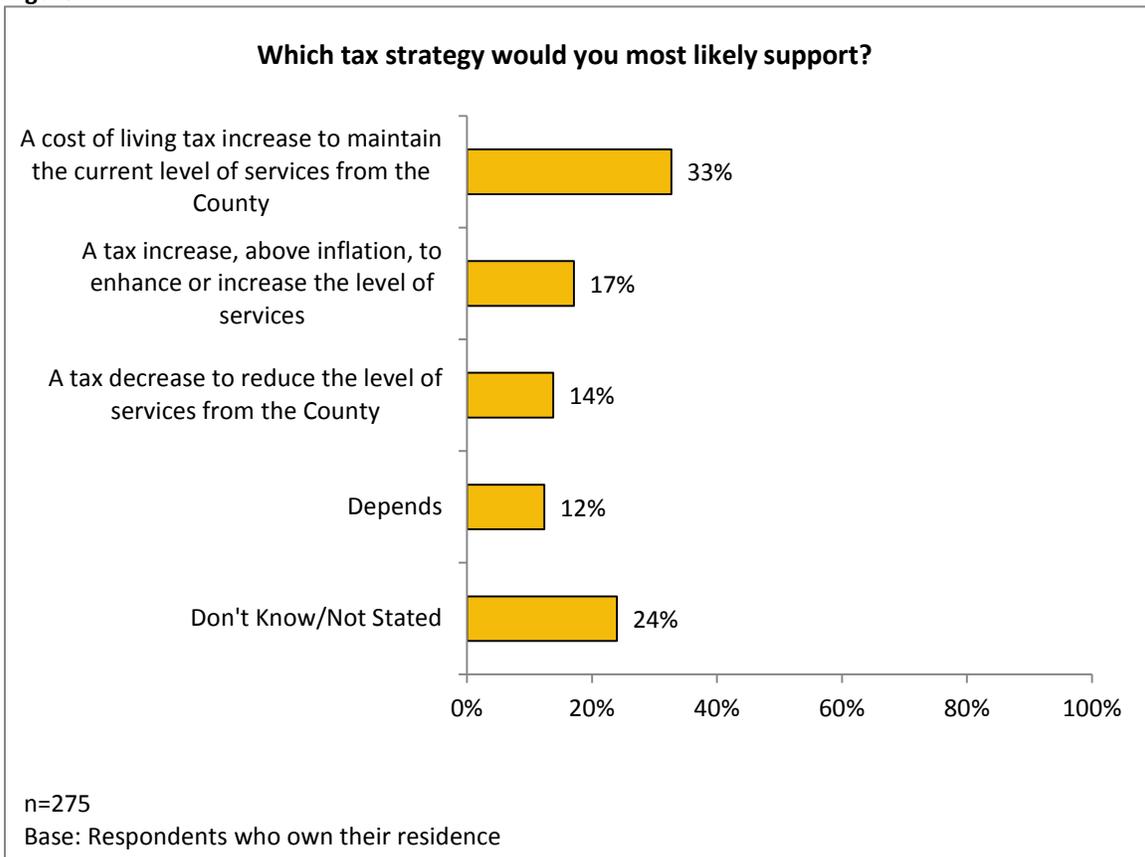


Respondents who reported that they own their residence (n=275) were then asked to indicate which of three (3) tax strategies they would support for the County, thinking about the County’s services over the next five (5) years. As shown in Figure 27, below, one-third (33%) of respondents supported a cost-of-living tax increase to maintain the currently level of services from the County, while 17% of respondents supported a tax increase, above inflation, to enhance or increase the level of services, and 14% supported a tax decrease to reduce the level of services.

Respondents who reported “depends” (12%) specified the following:

- Do not increase taxes, in general (4%);
- Maintain current service levels with no tax increase (3%);
- Depends on which services are increased/enhanced (3%);
- Increase level of services with no tax increase (1%); and
- Other (single mentions) (1%).

Figure 27



Those who completed the survey through telephone (24%) were significantly more likely to have supported a tax increase, above inflation, to enhance or increase the levels of service versus those who completed the survey through web (5%).

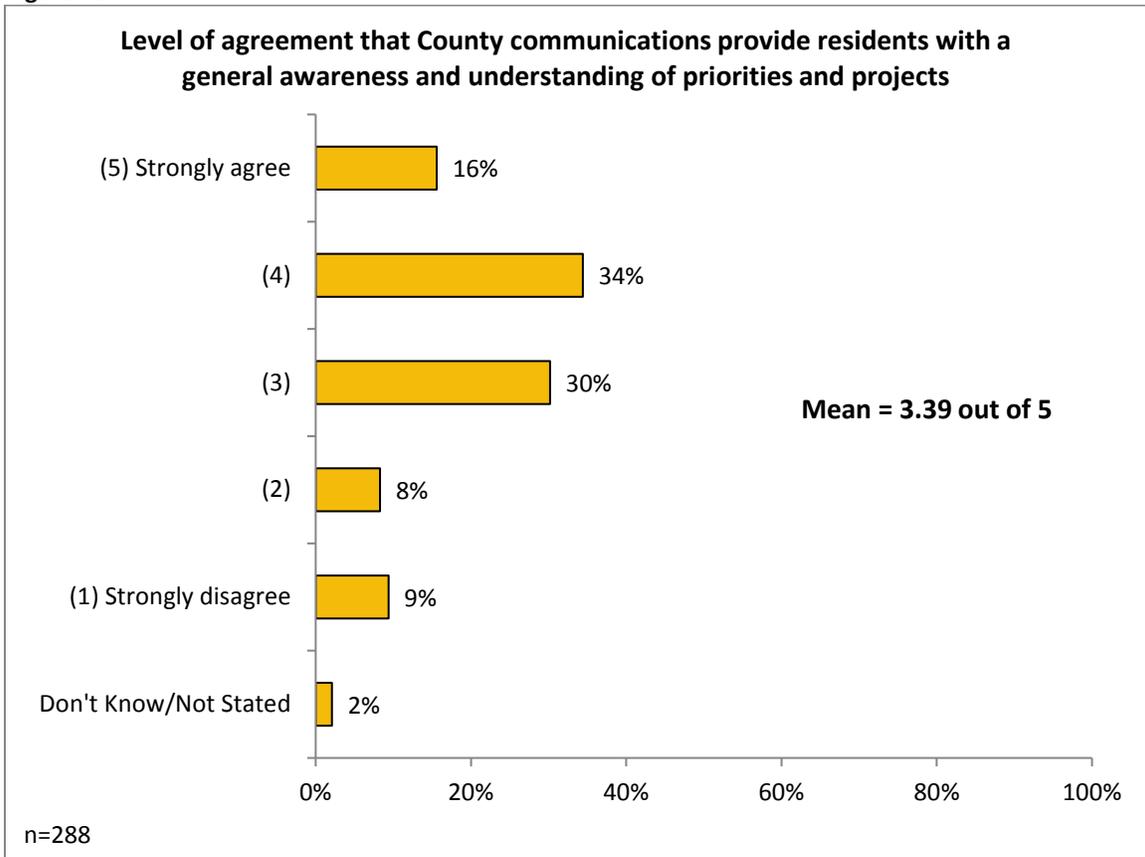
Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to have supported a tax decrease to reduce the level of services from the County included:

- Males (18%, versus 9% of females);
- Those who have not had contact with County staff in the past year (20%, versus 11% of those who have had contact); and
- Those who completed the survey through telephone (20%, versus 2% of those who completed the survey through web).

3.12 County Communications

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked about the County’s communications. First, respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement that County communications provide residents with a general awareness and understanding of priorities and projects. As shown in Figure 28, below, half (50%) of respondents agreed (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) that County communications provide residents with a general awareness and understanding of priorities and projects.

Figure 28



Those aged 65 and older (56%) were significantly more likely to have agreed (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) that County communications provided general awareness and understanding of priorities and projects versus those aged 35 to 54 (41%).

Respondents who disagreed (ratings of 1 or 2 out of 5; n=51) most often stated a lack of communication (57%), while over one-quarter (26%) of respondents felt that decisions are made without consulting with County residents. See Table 24, below.

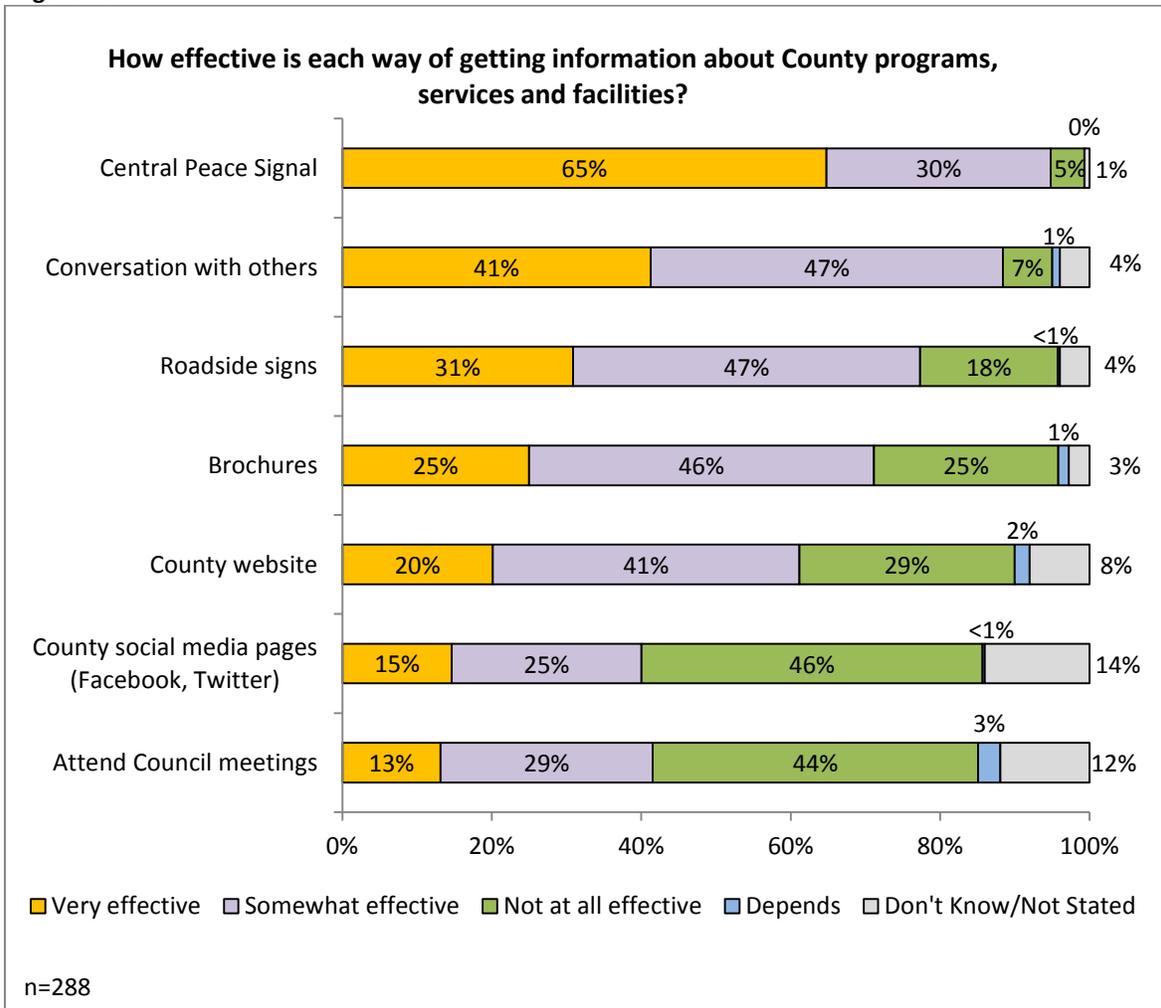
Table 24

Reasons for disagreement that County communications provide residents with a general awareness and understanding of priorities, projects and initiatives undertaken by the County	
Base: Respondents who disagreed (ratings of 1 or 2 out of 5) that County communication to residents provides general awareness and understanding of priorities, projects and initiatives undertaken by the County	Percent of Respondents* (n=51)
Lack of communication/information/keeping residents informed (in general)	57
Decisions are made without asking/consulting with County residents	26
Lack of listening to/addressing resident concerns/issues/feedback	4
County staff do not return call/email/lack of follow up	4
County employees are poor/lack training/inexperienced	2
Lack of online access to Council meetings	2
Misallocating/overspending of County budget/poor spending	2
Don't Know/Not Stated	6

When asked to indicate how effective various communication methods would be, in terms of getting information to them about County programs and services, at least three-quarters of respondents rated the following as either “somewhat” or “very” effective:

- Central Peace Signal (95%);
- Conversation with others (89%); and
- Roadside signs (77%).

Figure 29



Respondent subgroups significantly *more likely* to have rated the **Central Peace Signal** as **very effective** included:

- Those aged 55 to 64 (72%, versus 56% of those aged 35 to 54);
- Those who supported a cost of living tax increase to maintain current levels of services (71%, versus 53% of those who supported a tax decrease); and

- Those who completed the survey through web (75%, versus 59% of those who completed the survey through telephone).

Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to have rated the **Central Peace Signal** as **somewhat effective** included:

- Those aged 35 to 54 (38%, versus 24% of those aged 35 to 54); and
- Those who supported a tax decrease to reduce the current level of services (45%, versus 24% of those who supported a cost of living tax increase and 23% of those who supported a tax increase above inflation).

Those who have had contact with County staff in the past year (16%) were significantly more likely to have rated **attending Council meetings** as **very effective** versus those who have not had contact with County staff (8%).

Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to have rated the **County website** as **very effective** included:

- Those aged 55 to 64 (24%, versus 12% of those aged 65 and older); and
- Those who have had contact with County staff in the past year (25%, versus 13% of those who have not had contact).

Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to have rated the **County website** as **somewhat effective** included:

- Those aged 35 to 54 (48%, versus 30% of those aged 65 and older);
- Those who were working part time (50%, versus 26% of those who were retired); and
- Those who completed the survey through web (51%, versus 36% of those who completed the survey through telephone).

Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to have rated the **County social media pages** as **very effective** included:

- Those aged 35 to 54 (19%, versus 7% of those aged 65 and older); and
- Those who were working full time (16%, versus 5% of those who were retired).

Those who completed the survey through web (34%) were significantly more likely to have rated **County social media pages** as **somewhat effective** versus those who completed the survey through telephone (21%).

Those aged 35 to 54 (30%) were significantly more likely to have rated **brochures** as **very effective** versus those aged 65 and older (17%).

Those aged 65 and older (53%) were significantly more likely to have rated **brochures** as **somewhat effective** versus those aged 35 to 54 (37%).

Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to have rated **roadside signs** as **very effective** included:

- Females (40%, versus 24% of males);
- Those who supported a cost of living tax increase to maintain current levels of services (44%, versus 21% of those who supported a tax increase above inflation); and
- Those who completed the survey through telephone (36%, versus 21% of those who completed the survey through web).

Those who completed the survey through web (55%) were significantly more likely to have rated **roadside signs** as **somewhat effective** versus those who completed the survey through telephone (42%).

Those aged 55 to 64 (47%) were significantly more likely to have rated **conversations with others** as **very effective** versus those aged 65 and older (31%).

Males (54%) were significantly more likely to have rated **conversations with others** as **somewhat effective** versus females (39%).

When asked if there were any other effective ways of getting information about County programs, respondents most often reported that email was effective (6%), followed by mailed information (5%), and newsletter (4%). Seventy-two percent (72%) of respondents reported that there are no other effective ways of getting information. See Table 25, below.

Table 25

Are there any other effective ways of getting information to you about County programs?	
	Percent of Respondents* (n=288)
Email	6
Mailed information/mailouts	5
Newsletters	4
Telephone contact	2
Radio	2
In person contact/County staff talking to residents	<1
Television	<1
No/none	72
Don't Know/Not stated	10

When prompted for the likelihood of using a variety of online methods to obtain information about the County, nearly half (47%) of respondents were likely (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) to use emailed electronic newsletters, followed by 26% who were likely to use Facebook. See Figure 30 and Table 26, below.

Figure 30

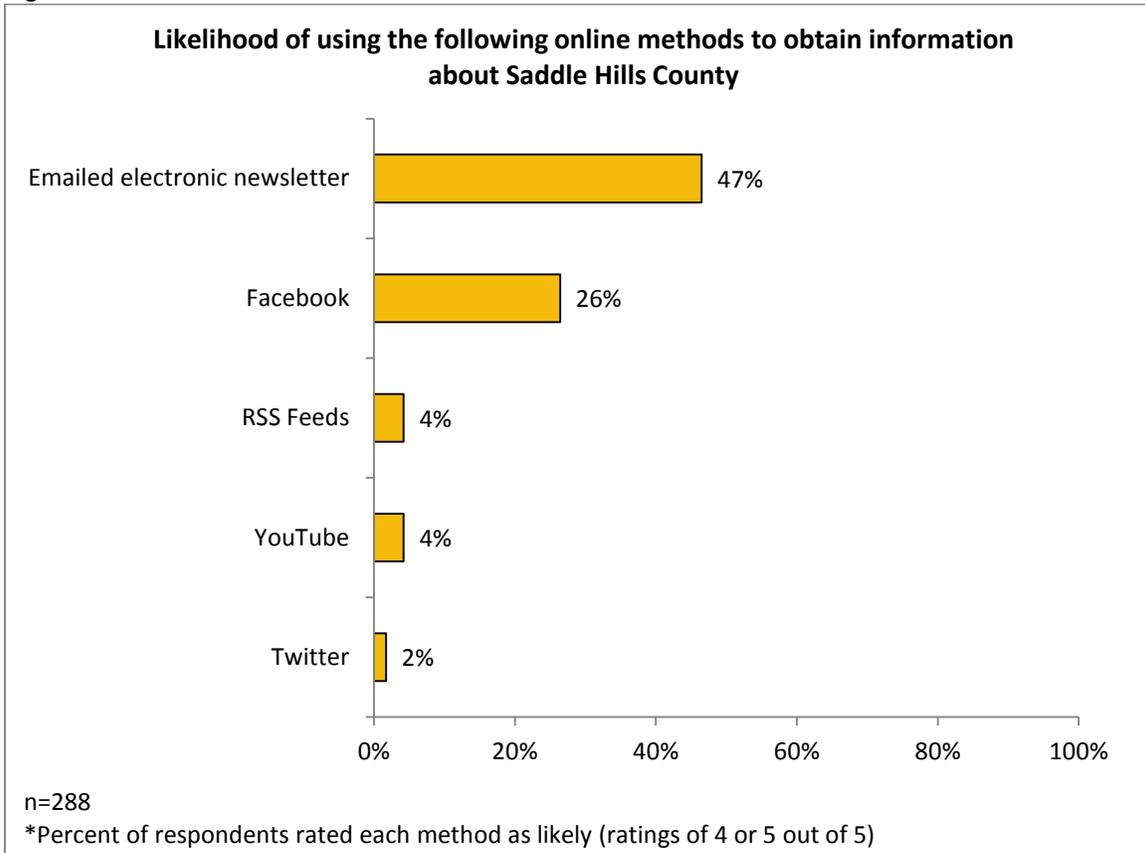


Table 26

Likelihood of using the following online methods to obtain information about Saddle Hills County							
	Percent of Respondents (n=288)						
	(1) Not at all Likely	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5) Very Likely	Don't Know/Not Stated	Mean (out of 5)
Emailed electronic newsletter	29	7	15	22	25	4	3.08
Facebook	57	4	9	12	14	3	2.20
RSS feed	66	5	10	3	1	16	1.45
YouTube	79	8	4	2	2	5	1.33
Twitter	90	2	2	1	<1	4	1.13

Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to be likely (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) to use **Facebook** to obtain information about Saddle Hills County included:

- Females (37%, versus 17% of males); and
- Those aged 35 to 54 (34%, versus 18% of those aged 55 to 64, and 20% of those aged 65 and older); and
- Those who completed the survey through web (34%, versus 22% of those who completed the survey through telephone).

Respondent subgroups significantly more likely to be likely (ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5) to use **emailed electronic newsletter** to obtain information about Saddle Hills County included:

- Those aged 35 to 54 (59%, versus 36% of those aged 65 and older);
- Those who have had contact with County staff in the past year (51%, versus 37% of those who have not);
- Those who supported a cost of living tax increase to maintain current levels of services (54%, versus 32% of those who supported a tax decrease); and
- Those who completed the survey through web (57%, versus 41% of those who completed the survey through telephone).

When asked if there were any other methods used to obtain information about the County, nearly two-thirds (60%) of respondents reported that there were no other methods used. The most common method used to obtain information was telephone (11%). See Table 27, below.

Table 27

Are there any other methods you would use to obtain information about Saddle Hills County?	
	Percent of Respondents (n=288)
No/None	60
Telephone	11
Mailed information/mailouts	6
Newspaper	4
County website	3
Word of mouth/conversations with residents	2
Posters/postings on bulletin board	2
Radio	2
Other (1% or less of respondents)	3
Don't Know/Not Stated	10

Finally, respondents were asked if they had any additional comments regarding services provided by the County. The majority (63%) did not have any additional comments. The most common feedback provided was that respondents were satisfied with County and/or County services (11%). See Table 28, below.

Table 28

Do you have any additional comments about the services provided by Saddle Hills County?	
	Percent of Respondents (n=288)
No additional comments	63
I am satisfied with County/County services	11
Need to improve road maintenance/repairs	6
Need to be more fiscally responsible/stay within budget	4
Need to improve cell phone service	1
Improve/increase level of communication with County residents	1
Apply more gravel on roads	1
Need to improve solid waste management services	1
County is overstaffed/should address overstaffing issues	1
Need to improve Internet/Wi-Fi service	1
Need to upgrade/improve water treatment facility	1
Need to improve snow removal services	1
Taxes are too high/should be lower	1
Need better trained/more experienced County staff	1
Other (single mentions)	4
Don't Know/Not Stated	7

3.13 Respondent Profile

Tables 27 and 28, below and on the following page, provide a demographic profile of the respondents surveyed for the 2017 Saddle Hills County Community Satisfaction Survey.

Table 29

Respondent Demographics	
	Percent of Respondents (n=288)
Gender	
Male	53
Female	45
Don't Know/Not Stated	2
Length of Residence	
6 months to less than one year	<1
1 to 2 years	2
3 to 5 years	4
6 to 9 years	5
10 to 14 years	9
15 to 24 years	13
25 years or more	66
Percent of households with at least one (1) person in each age group (n=285)*	
Under 13 years old	22
Between 13 and 18 years old	13
Between 19 and 44 years old	34
Between 45 and 64 years old	54
65 years and older	35
Mean household size	2.62 people
Level of Education	
Less than high school	22
Graduated high school	27
Some college, technical or vocational school	8
Graduated college, technical or vocational school	24
Some university	2
Graduated university	11
Don't Know/Not Stated	5

*Base: Respondents who provided a valid response

Respondent Demographics (cont'd)	
	Percent of Respondents (n=288)
Employment Status	
Full-time, including self-employment	51
Part-time, including self-employment	19
Homemaker	6
Not employed	2
Retired	20
Don't Know/Not Stated	1
Do you work in Saddle Hills County? Base: Respondents who are employed (n=202)	
Yes, all the time	71
Sometimes	14
Never	13
Don't Know/Not Stated	2
Household Income	
Less than \$25,000	5
\$25,000 to \$49,999	15
\$50,000 to \$99,999	24
\$100,000 to \$149,999	16
\$150,000 to \$199,999	9
\$200,000 or greater	10
Don't Know/Not Stated	21
Age	
18 to 24 years	<1
25 to 34 years	9
35 to 44 years	13
45 to 54 years	17
55 to 64 years	29
65 years of age or older	31
Mean	56.6 years

Appendix A Survey Instrument

SADDLE HILLS COUNTY

2017 RESIDENTIAL SURVEY

Telephone Introduction

Hello, my name is _____ with Banister Research, a professional research firm. We have been contracted to conduct a survey on behalf of Saddle Hills County to ask your opinions about services provided to residents by the County. Your household has been randomly dialed to participate in this study. I would like to assure you that we are not selling or promoting anything and that all your responses will be kept completely anonymous. Your views are very important to the successful completion of this study and will be used to evaluate Saddle Hills County services.

***[Interviewer Note:** If residents have questions about the study they can be referred to Michael Archer, at marcher@saddlehills.ab.ca or (780) 864-3760, at Saddle Hills County.]*

A. For this study, I need to speak to the (**ALTERNATE:** male/female) in your household who is 18 years of age or older and who is having the next birthday. And is that person available?

1. Yes, speaking
2. Yes, I'll get him/her
3. Not now

Continue
Repeat introduction and continue
Arrange callback and record first name of selected respondent

B. **Record Gender:**

1. Male
2. Female

C. This interview will take about 12 to 15 minutes. Is this a convenient time for us to talk, or should we call you back?

1. Convenient time
2. Not convenient time

Continue
Arrange callback

Web Landing Page:

Saddle Hills County is interested in your opinions about services provided to residents by the County. This survey should take about 15 minutes to complete.

All responses will be collected and analyzed by Banister Research to ensure confidentiality of your feedback and the objectivity of the analysis. All information will be reported in aggregate form, responses will NOT be reported in a manner that identifies any individual.

Please enter the code/PIN provided in the letter that was mailed to you.

If you have any **technical issues** while accessing the survey, you may contact Dayna Tumbach, of Banister Research, at (780) 451-4444, or by e-mail, at dtumbach@banister.ab.ca.

If you have any questions regarding the study, you may contact Michael Archer, at marcher@saddlehills.ab.ca or (780) 864-3760, at Saddle Hills County.

Please note that the deadline for submissions of your completed survey is April 21st, 2017.

Overall Perceptions/Quality of Life

A. Do you live within the County limits of Saddle Hills? **[MANDATORY]**

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Thank and end interview

B. How long have you lived in Saddle Hills County?

- 1. Less than 6 months
- 2. 6 months to less than one year
- 3. 1 to 2 years
- 4. 3 to 5 years
- 5. 6 to 9 years
- 6. 10 to 14 years
- 7. 15 to 24 years
- 8. 25 years or more
- F5 Not stated

1. In your opinion, what would you say are the three most significant factors **contributing positively** to your quality of life in Saddle Hills County? (**Probe**)

- 1. Other – **Specify**
- 2. Nothing
- F5 (Don't know)

2. And, what would you say are the three most significant factors that **contribute** to a **lower quality** of life in Saddle Hills County? (**Probe**)

- 1. Other - **Specify**
- 2. Nothing

F5 (Don't know)

3. Next, please rate each of the following aspects of life in the County using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means 'very poor' and 5 means 'excellent'. First, how would you rate Saddle Hills in terms of.....? (**Read list. Ask Q3a first. Randomly rotate Q3b –g**)

1. Very poor
2. ...
3. ...
4. ...
5. Excellent
- F5 Don't know

- a) the overall quality of life
- b) as a place to raise a family
- c) value received for taxes
- d) being a safe place to live
- e) the quality of the environment
- f) cleanliness and neatness of the county
- g) as a place to live-long term (more than 20 years)

Community Identity

- 4.A. In terms of community identity, when you think about Saddle Hills County, what is the first thing that comes to mind? (**Probe key words or images**)

1. Other – **Specify**
2. Nothing
- F5 Don't know

- 4B. What do you consider to be the County's strengths and unique features?

1. Other – **Specify**
2. Nothing
- F5 Don't know

Strategic Plan

5. Saddle Hills County's **vision** is "A thriving rural municipality with: a growing population; safe, active communities; and, a strong, sustainable, diverse economy." Using a 5 point scale, where 1 means strongly disagree and 5 means you strongly agree, please rate your level of agreement with the County's vision.

1. Strongly disagree
- 2 ..
- 3 ..
- 4 ..
5. Strongly agree
- F5 Don't know

6. The County's **mission** is "To enhance our communities by providing and supporting quality services and regional initiatives." Using the same five-point scale where 1 means strongly disagree and 5 means you strongly agree, please rate your level of agreement with the County's mission,
1. Strongly disagree
 2. ..
 3. ..
 4. ..
 5. Strongly agree
 - F5 Don't know
7. Council and staff of the County believe that the following seven values must govern their behaviors' in all that they do; respect, adaptability, accountability, equality, excellence, collaboration, and community spirit. Using the same five-point scale where 1 means strongly disagree and 5 means you strongly agree, please rate your level of agreement with the County's values.
1. Strongly disagree
 2. ..
 3. ..
 4. ..
 5. Strongly agree
 - F5 Don't know
8. How familiar are you with the County's Strategic Plan? Would you say you are...?
1. Very familiar
 2. Somewhat familiar
 3. Not at all familiar
 - F5 Don't know/Not stated
9. Thinking of the 4 components of the County's strategic plan, how important are each of these to you, using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means 'not at all important' and 5 means 'very important'..?
- a. Governance and Leadership
 - b. Municipal Services and Infrastructure
 - c. Environmental Stewardship
 - d. Community Development
1. Not at all important
 2. ..
 3. ..
 4. ..
 5. Very important
 - F5 Don't Know
10. Is there a focus area that is missing in this list that you would like to add?
1. Yes: Specify
 2. Nothing
 - F5 (Don't know)

11. Using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 means 'very dissatisfied' and 5 means 'very satisfied', how satisfied are you with the County's overall direction as outlined by the Strategic Plan?
[**READ IF NECESSARY:** The 4 components of the County's strategic plan are Governance & Leadership, Municipal Services & Infrastructure, Environmental Stewardship, and Community Development]

Would you say you are... **(READ LIST)**.

1. Very dissatisfied
2. ...
3. ...
4. ...
5. Very satisfied
- F5 Don't know

12. What would you say is the most important issue facing Saddle Hills County Council today?

1. Other – **Specify**
2. Nothing
- F5 Don't know

Retention and Attraction of Residents

13. What is Saddle Hills County's greatest barrier to attracting new residents? (**Pre-code Do not read; Multiple Responses Permitted**)

1. Lack of employment opportunities
2. Community not self-sufficient
3. High cost of living
4. Lack of shopping
5. Lack of youth person culture
6. Lack of broadband – not accessible for business community
7. Lack of healthcare options
8. Other – **Specify**
- F5 Don't know

14. What is Saddle Hills County's greatest barrier to retaining current residents? (**Pre-code: Do not read; Multiple Responses Permitted**)

1. Lack of employment opportunities
2. Community not self-sufficient
3. High cost of living
4. Lack of shopping
5. Lack of youth person culture
6. Lack of broadband – not accessible for business community
7. Lack of healthcare options
8. Other – **Specify**
- F5 Don't know

15. In the next 2 years, how likely is it that you will move from your current home? Would you say you are...? (**Read list**)
1. Very likely to move
 2. Somewhat likely
 3. Not at all likely (**GO TO Q18**)
 - F5 Don't know (**GO TO Q18**)
16. What community or city would you consider moving to? (**Do not read**)
1. Grande Prairie
 2. Peace River
 3. Edmonton
 4. Calgary
 5. Other – **Specify**
 6. Other province
 - F5 Don't know
17. What is the main reason you would move to that community? (**Do not read. Allow for multiple mentions**)
1. Closer to work
 2. Closer to friends and family
 3. Better schools
 4. Better quality of living
 5. Small town atmosphere
 6. Affordability of housing
 7. Choice of housing
 8. Lower cost of living
 9. Green space or parks and recreation
 10. Wide variety of shopping or retailers
 11. Wide variety entertainment and restaurants
 12. Access to post secondary facilities
 13. Recreational and sports opportunities
 14. Close proximity to hospitals or health care facilities such as senior centres
 15. Lots of activities for families and youth
 16. Access to recreational and cultural facilities
 17. Lots of playground and picnic areas
 18. Lots of ball diamonds and sports fields
 19. Access to wetlands and natural habitat
 20. Other – **Specify**
 - F5 (Don't know)

Satisfaction with County Services, Programs, Facilities and Infrastructure

18. Using a scale of 1 to 5 where, 1 mean 'very dissatisfied' and 5 means 'very satisfied', and taking into consideration all Saddle Hills County services, programs, facilities and infrastructure, overall, how satisfied are you with the services provided by the County to residents?

1. Very dissatisfied
2. ..
3. ..
4. ..
5. Very satisfied
- F5 (Don't know)

19. Thinking about the specific **services and programs** provided by Saddle Hills County, how satisfied are you with each of the different services. First, based on your own experiences or your general perceptions of the service, how satisfied are you with...? (**Read list. Randomly rotate.**)

1. Very dissatisfied
2. ..
3. ..
4. ..
5. Very satisfied
- F5 (Don't know)

- a) Bylaw enforcement
- b) Weed control
- c) Land use planning and zoning
- d) Emergency and fire services
- e) Recreational facilities
- f) Solid waste management (Transfer Stations & Waste Bin Sites)
- g) Gravel road repair, including ditch maintenance and right of ways
- h) Summer road maintenance
- i) Winter road maintenance including snow removal (snow and ice control)

- 19.b. (**If ratings of 1-3 in Q.19, ask for each:**) What specific aspects of the (**insert service from Q.19**) dissatisfied you?

1. Other - **Specify**
- F5 Don't know

20. Thinking, again, about the specific **services and programs** provided by Saddle Hills County, how important are each of these to you on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means 'not at all important' and 5 means 'very important'...? (**Read list. Randomly rotate.**)

1. Not at all important
- .
5. Very important
- F5 Don't know

- a) Bylaw enforcement
- b) Weed control
- c) Land use planning and zoning
- d) Emergency and fire services
- e) Recreational facilities
- f) Solid waste management (Transfer Stations & Waste Bin Sites)
- g) Gravel road repair, including ditch maintenance and right of ways
- h) Summer road maintenance
- i) Winter road maintenance including snow removal (snow and ice control)

Potable Water

In 2016, two water treatment plants and truck fills were constructed in Bonanza and Ksituan (directly to the East of the County Complex at the Junction of Highways 49 and 725). Both are designed to provide potable water to residents and businesses in the County. The water treatment plants are a key ingredient in the evolving story of economic development in the County and are playing a big part in the County's plans for growth.

Since February 13th of this year, potable water sales have been available from Saddle Hills County's two new truck fills. Truck fills at each plant are available for residential and commercial hauling at a rate of \$4.00 per cubic meter (220 UK gallons).

21. Have you used either of the two new water reservoirs since they have opened?
- 1. Yes, I have used the Bonanza Truck Fill
 - 2. Yes, I have used the Ksituan Truck Fill
 - 3. Yes, I have used both the Bonanza and Ksituan Truck Fill
 - 4. No, I have not used either
 - F5 Don't Know

Internet and Mobility

Saddle Hills County has recognized the importance of quality, reliable internet and mobility services and has implemented initiatives to enhance both.

22. How would you rate the cellular service at your home using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 means "very poor" and 5 means "excellent"?
- 1. Very poor
 - 2. ..
 - 3. ..
 - 4. ..
 - 5. Excellent
 - F5 Don't know

23. How would you rate the internet service at your home using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 means “very poor” and 5 means “excellent”?
1. Very poor
 2. ..
 3. ..
 4. ..
 5. Excellent
 - F5 Don't know

Contact with Saddle Hills Employees

24. In the past 12 months, have you been in contact, either by phone, in person, by mail, email or through the Internet, with any employees who work for Saddle Hills County?
1. Yes
 2. No **GO TO Q.27**
 - F5 Don't know **GO TO Q.27**
25. **(If yes in Q.24, ask)** Thinking about your last contact with a Saddle Hills County employee, overall, how satisfied were you with the service provided by the County employee that you last contacted using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 means ‘very dissatisfied’ and 5 means ‘very satisfied’? Would you say you were...?
1. Very dissatisfied
 2. ...
 3. ...
 4. ...
 5. Very satisfied
 - F5 Don't know
26. Still thinking about your contact with a County employee, using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 means ‘strongly disagree’ and 5 means ‘strongly agree’, to what extent do you agree or disagree that the Saddle Hills County employee that you last contacted... **(Read list, randomly rotate)**?
1. Strongly disagree
 2. ...
 3. ...
 4. ...
 5. Strongly agree
 - F5 Don't know
- a) Was accessible
 - b) Was courteous
 - c) Was knowledgeable about the services they provide
 - d) Was responsive to your needs
 - e) Showed interest in your needs

Property Taxes and Financial Planning

27. Do you own or rent a home in Saddle Hills County?

- 1. Own
- 2. Rent **GO TO Q.29**
- F5 Not stated **GO TO Q.29**

28. Thinking about the County's services over the next five years, which of the following tax strategies would you most likely support? Would you most likely support ...? (**Read list**)

- 1. A cost of living tax increase to maintain the current level of services from the County
- 2. A tax increase, above inflation, to enhance or increase the level of services
- 3. Or, a tax decrease to reduce the level of services from the County
- 4. Depends – **Specify**
- F5 Don't know

County Communications

29. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means 'strongly disagree' and 5 means 'strongly agree'. Please rate your level of agreement that the County's communication to residents provides you with a general awareness and understanding of priorities, projects and initiatives undertaken by the County.

- 1. Strongly disagree
- 2. ..
- 3. ..
- 4. ..
- 5. Strongly agree
- F5 Don't know

30. (**If 1 or 2 in Q.29 Ask:**) What is the main reason you feel that way?

- 1. Other - **Specify**
- F5 Don't know

31. For each of the following, please tell me if this would be a very, somewhat or not at all effective way of getting information to you about County programs, services and facilities. The first way would be... ?

1. Very effective
2. Somewhat effective
3. Not at all effective
4. Depends
- F5 Don't know

- a. Central Peace Signal
- b. Attend Council meetings
- c. County website
- d. County social media pages (Facebook, Twitter)
- e. Brochures
- f. Roadside signs
- g. Conversations with others

31.B. Are there any other effective ways of getting information to you about County programs?

1. Yes-**Specify**
2. No
- F5 Don't know

32. There are now a variety of different online methods that people use to obtain information about people and events. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means not at all likely and 5 means very likely, the likelihood of you using one of the following to obtain information about Saddle Hills County?

1. Not at all likely
2. ...
3. ...
4. ...
5. Very likely

- a. Facebook
- b. Twitter
- c. YouTube
- d. Emailed electronic newsletter
- e. RSS Feed

32.B. Are there any other methods you would use to obtain information about Saddle Hills County?

1. Yes – **Specify**
2. No
- F5 Don't know

33. Finally, do you have any additional comments about the services provided by Saddle Hills County?

1. Yes – **Specify**
2. No
- F5 (Don't know)

Respondent Characteristics

In order for us to better understand the different views and needs of citizens, the next few questions allow us to analyze the data into sub-groups. Nothing will be recorded to link your answers with you or your household.

D1. In what year were you born?

- _____ **RECORD YEAR**
F5 (Don't know/refused)

D2. Including yourself, how many people in each of the following age groups live in your household? How many are (**Read list. Record actual number**)

1. Under 13 years old
2. Between 13 and 18 years old
3. Between 19 and 44 years old
4. Between 45 and 64 years old
5. 65 years of age or older
- F5 Don't know/refused

D3. What is the highest level of education you have achieved to date? (**Read list if necessary**)

1. Less than high school
2. Graduated high school
3. Some college, technical or vocational school
4. Graduated college, technical or vocational school
5. Some university
6. Graduated university
- F5. Not stated

D4. And, what is your current employment status? (**Read list**)

1. Working full time, including self-employment
2. Working part time, including self-employment
3. Homemaker
4. Student
5. Not employed
6. Retired
- F5 Not stated

D5. (If codes 1 or 2 in Q.D4, ask) Do you work in Saddle Hills County?

1. Yes, all of the time
2. Sometimes
3. Never
- F5 Don't know

D6. Into which of the following categories would you place your total household income before taxes for last year that is for 2016? (**Read list if necessary**)

1. Less than \$25,000
2. \$25,000 to less than \$50,000
3. \$50,000 to less than \$100,000
4. \$100,000 to less than \$150,000
5. \$150,000 to less than \$200,000
6. \$200,000 or more
- F5 Refused

D7. Gender:

1. Male
2. Female
3. Other
4. Prefer not to say

Thank you very much for your participation in this study, your feedback is greatly appreciated.