



# TOWN OF OKOTOKS 2022 CITIZEN SATISFACTION SURVEY

## Results Report

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**August 2022**

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# Executive Summary

In May 2022, the Town of Okotoks commissioned Pivotal Research to collect feedback from Okotoks households as a means to measure resident satisfaction with the Town's programs, services, and facilities as well as to gain insight into other community issues. 703 Okotoks households participated in the study. Key findings of the 2022 Citizen Satisfaction Survey are as follows:

## Quality of Life

- Nearly all households (98%) reported that the overall quality of life in Okotoks is either “good” (29%) or “very good” (69%).
- Two-thirds of households (67%) felt that additional recreational opportunities would increase their social wellbeing and make Okotoks a better place to live.
- A large majority of respondents (81%) said the values of the Town of Okotoks align with the values of their own households.
- Three-quarters of respondents (75%) said that they feel connected to their neighbours.
- Roughly a quarter of respondents (24%) said they have faced discrimination on the basis of sex, age, ability, sexual orientation, or ethnicity; while four-in-ten (40%) said they had witnessed a member of another Okotoks household experience discrimination.

## Safety and Security

- Virtually all Okotoks households (96%) indicated that they feel “safe” (34%) or “very safe” (62%) on their property.
- A similar proportion of respondents feel safe in their neighbourhood (95%) and 91% said they felt safe in Town parks, playgrounds, and amenities.

## Economic Development

- Okotoks households indicated that they spend more than half (57%) of their shopping budgets at big box stores including grocery stores.
- When asked to provide suggestions on how local Okotoks businesses could improve sales, more than half (52%) of the households surveyed noted lower prices would be helpful in attracting more customers.

## Service Satisfaction and Experience

- Town of Okotoks programs and services that received the highest satisfaction scores were: parks and pathways (96%); outdoor recreation facilities such as ball diamonds, soccer fields, and playgrounds (96%); and community events (94%).
- Town of Okotoks programs and services that received the lowest satisfaction scores were: affordable housing (57%); municipal enforcement (76%); and transportation (road maintenance and snow removal)(79%).
- A majority of households were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their interactions with Town of Okotoks employees when asked about helpfulness & courtesy (84%), knowledgeability about services (83%), and speed of response (78%).



## Budget and Taxation

- A majority of Okotoks households (85%) said the value they receive for their municipal property taxes is “fair” or better.
- When asked about their preferred tax strategy for the next five years, nearly two thirds (63%) of Okotoks households would prefer to maintain the current level of services even if it results in a tax increase in line with inflation.
- A majority of Okotoks households indicated willingness to accept reduced levels of spending on: cultural and historical services (58%); subsidized taxi service (57%); and in-person services (51%).

## Communication and Public Engagement

- Slightly more than three-quarters of households (77%) indicated they are “satisfied” (61%) or “very satisfied” (16%) with communications from the Town of Okotoks.
- A majority of households (59%) indicated that they receive information from the Western Wheel.
- More than half of respondents (51%) either “agree” or “strongly agree” that they have opportunities to provide input into the decisions made by the Town of Okotoks.
- Slightly less than half of respondents (42%) said they are likely to participate in an in-person Town of Okotoks engagement; while nearly three-quarters (74%) said they would likely participate in an online engagement.
- More than half of respondents (57%) are satisfied with the level of engagement that the Town of Okotoks offers.
- A majority of respondents (53%) said they would prefer to interact with Okotoks Town Council via email, when compared to other methods of interaction.







# Introduction

Pivotal Research Inc. (Pivotal Research) was commissioned by the Town of Okotoks to conduct the 2022 Okotoks Citizen Satisfaction Survey. This report details the findings of the survey and provides a comprehensive overview of the steps taken in the development, methodology, and implementation of the research. Where significant differences occur, socio-demographic comparisons are highlighted. Additionally, this report summarizes the community satisfaction research being conducted in comparable municipalities and draws comparisons, where appropriate.

## Research Goals and Scope

The goal of this study is to gauge general attitudes towards living in Okotoks and resident quality of life. The opinions and perceptions of Okotoks residents were ascertained across a number of issues, including:

- Overall quality of life
- Satisfaction with Town services and programs
- Feelings of safety and security
- Value for property tax dollars, including preferred municipal tax strategy
- Experience with Town communications and preferred information channels

By collecting this important feedback from Okotoks residents, Pivotal Research offers some conclusions about what municipal programs and services the Town administration should prioritize to enhance citizen satisfaction, quality of life, and value for taxes.

# Research Methodology

The research project entailed fielding a statistically valid survey that relied on a mail-to-web recruitment approach.



Data collection took place between May 6, 2022 and May 30, 2022. Respondents were recruited using a mail-to-web survey that was sent to approximately 12,000 Okotoks residences via Canada Post. Recruitment activities were supplemented with a public awareness campaign that leveraged social media posts on the Town of Okotoks' social media channels along with newspaper and radio advertising.

The purpose of using a mail-to-web recruitment method was to provide all Okotoks residents the opportunity to complete the survey and, therefore, recruit a diverse sample of residents. Each survey invitation contained a unique access code, which enabled participants to log into an online survey programmed and hosted by Pivotal Research. In total, 703 responses were collected, easily exceeding the 400 responses required for a statistically valid sample size. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 5%, 19 times out of 20.

## Analytical Approach

This report contains a detailed analysis of the 2022 survey findings, as well as a comparison of results reported in the 2018, 2013, and 2009 Okotoks Community Household Surveys, where applicable. Not all the questions used in previous survey years were identical to those used in the 2022 survey year; however, where strong similarities exist, the findings from previous surveys are addressed for the purpose of comparison.

For ranking-type questions, analysis was conducted by assigning a value to each of the rankings (e.g., first choice = 100, second choice = 75, third choice = 50, etc.) and creating a weighted score, or index, that reflects the overall perception of whatever is being measured.

**Note:** Readers should note that top-two box results refer to the combination of the top two scores of either a 4- or 5-point scale—results are often shown this way throughout the report. The reader should also note that any discrepancies between individual and combined percentages, as presented in charts, tables, graphs, and/or text are due to the rounding of the numbers.

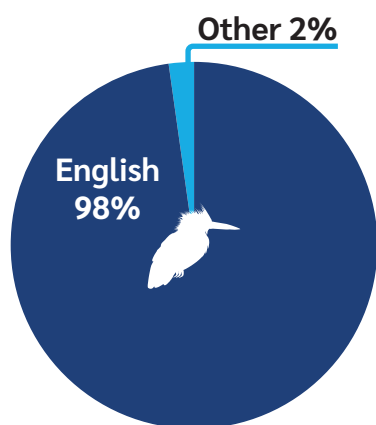
# Respondent Profile

A majority (98%) of households speak English as their primary language and most (93%) are not a member of a visible minority. Nearly three quarters (73%) of Okotoks households contain two adults and nearly seven-in-ten (69%) do not contain children under the age of 18.

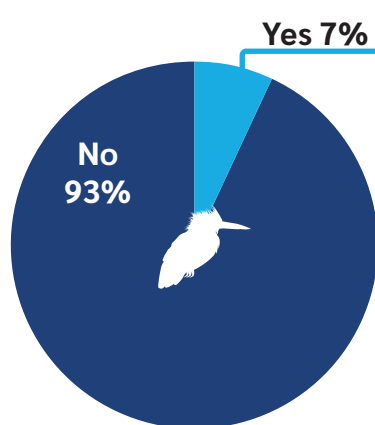
For roughly a third (36%) of households, a university undergraduate degree is the highest level of education attained—another approximately one third of households (30%) reported that vocational, technical, or trade school was the highest level of education attained.

Slightly more than a third (34%) of Okotoks households contain someone who works from home, while half (50%) contain a member who commutes outside of Okotoks for work or school.

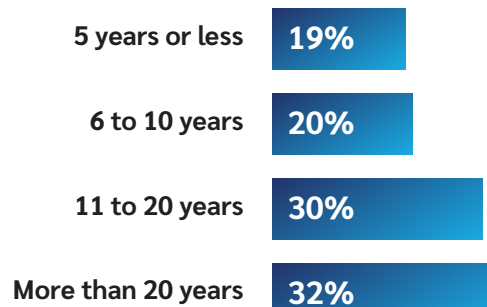
What is the primary language spoken in your household?  
(n=691)



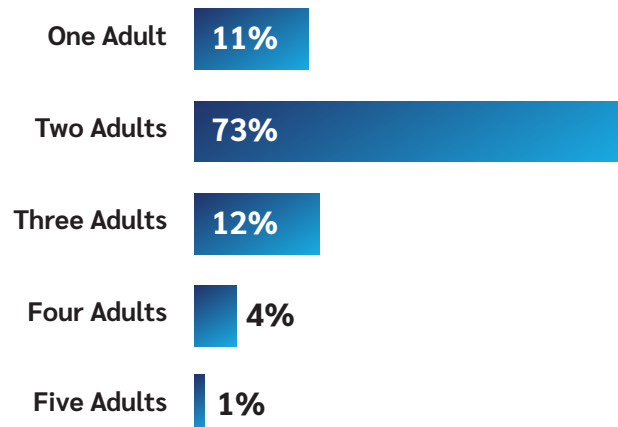
Is someone in your household a member of a visible minority?  
(n=691)



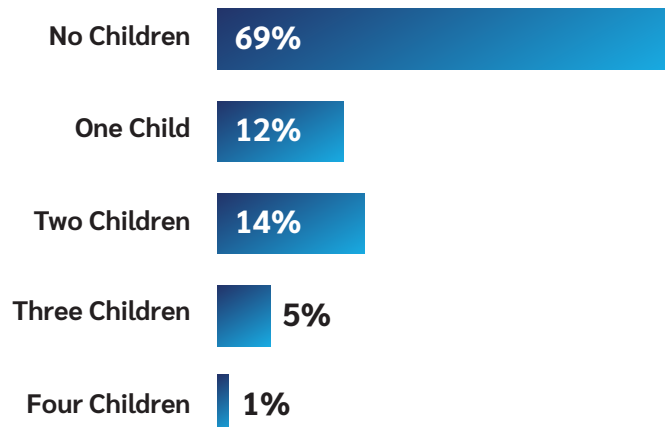
How long have you lived in Okotoks?  
(n=691)



How many adults (18 years or older) are living in your household currently?  
(n=679)

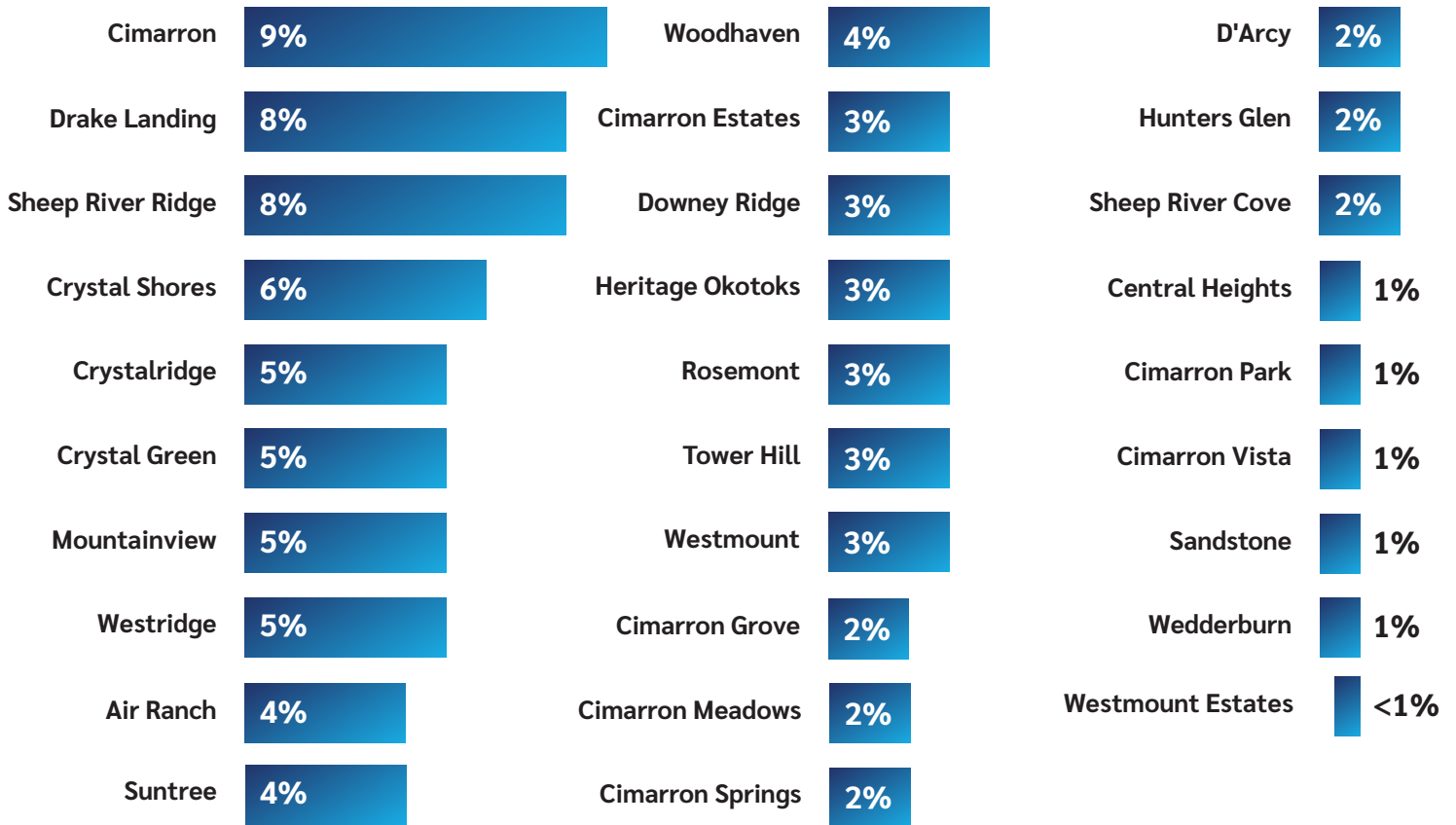


How many children (under 18 years) are living in your household currently?  
(n=682)





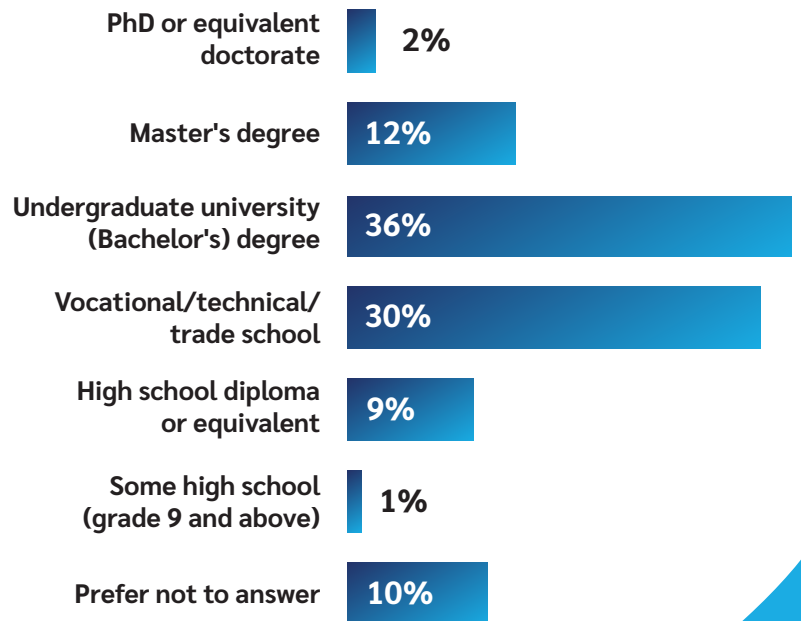
What neighbourhood do you live in?  
(n=684)



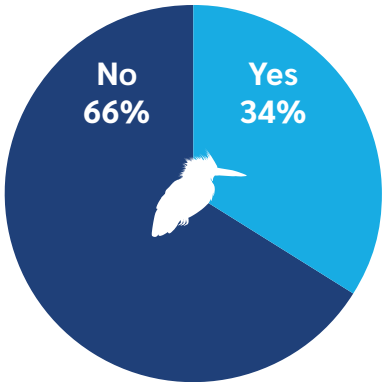
Which of the following represents your total annual household income (before taxes)?  
(n=682)



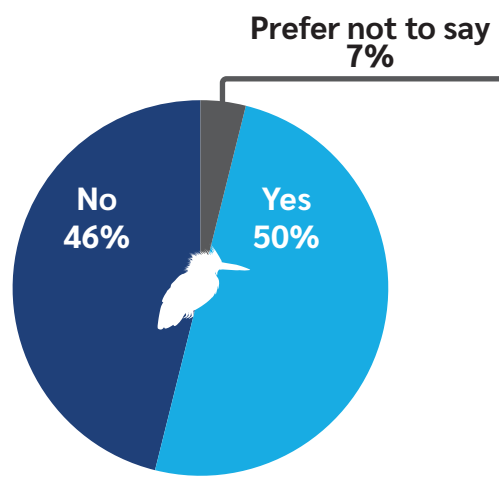
What is the highest level of education in your household?  
(n=681)



Does anyone in your household work from home?  
(n=675)



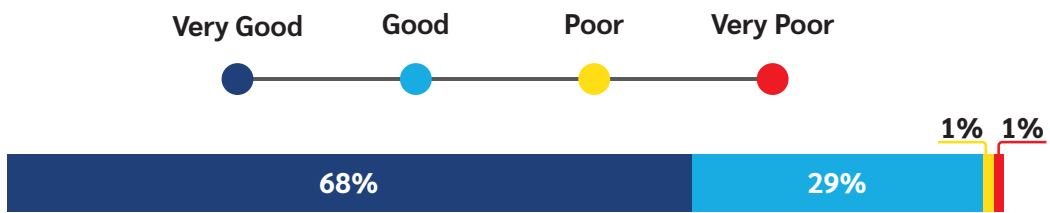
Has anyone in your household commuted to a community outside of Okotoks for work or school within the last week?  
(n=675)



# Quality of Life



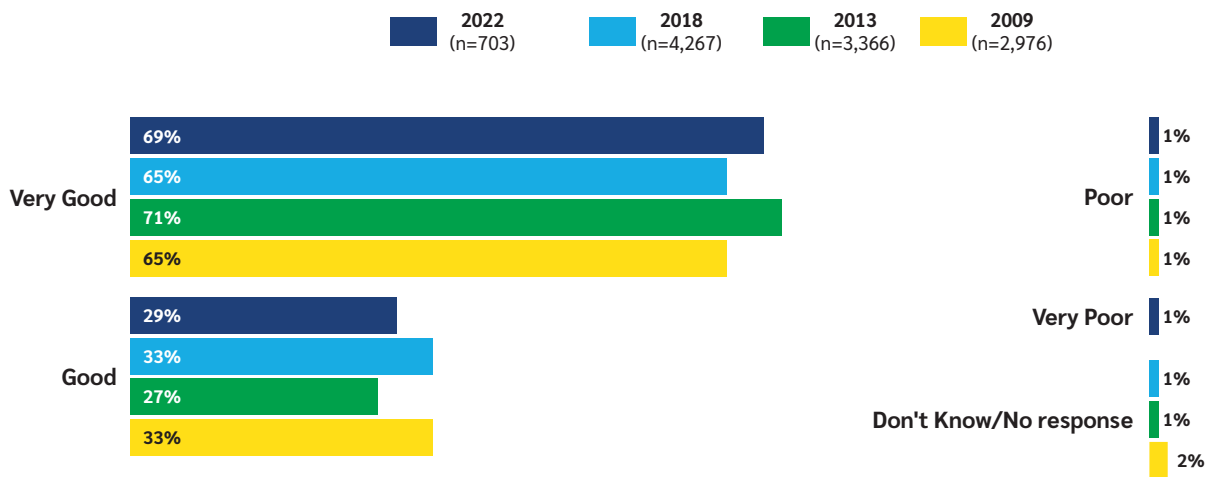
Overall, how would you rate the quality of life in Okotoks? (n=703)



## Overall Quality of Life in Okotoks

Nearly all households (98%) reported that the overall quality of life in Okotoks is either Good or Very Good, with nearly seven-in-ten households (69%) ranking their overall quality of life as Very Good.

Overall quality of life



In the figure above, this year's results are compared to 2018, 2013, and 2009. Quality of life perceptions among Okotoks residents have stayed virtually unchanged year-over-year, with top-two box scores remaining within the 98%-99% range.



## Quality of Life by Visible Minority Status

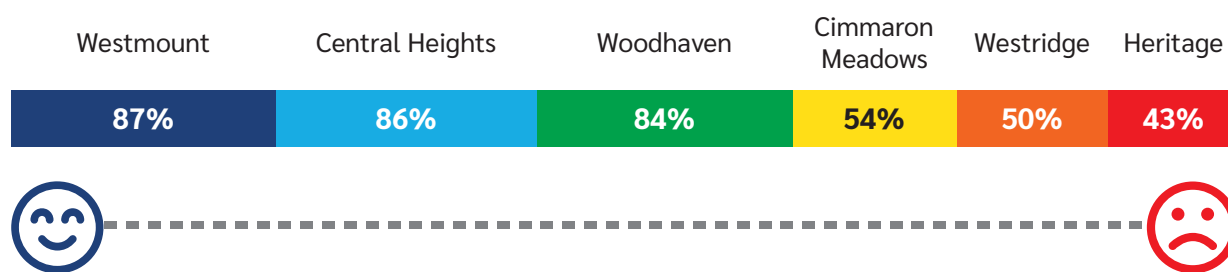
Households containing member(s) of a visible minority were slightly less likely (92%) to rate the quality of life in Okotoks as being Very Good or Good and half (52%) reported that the quality of life in Okotoks is Very Good.

## Quality of Life by Length of Residence

Those who said they have lived in Okotoks for five years or less were the most likely (99%) to report a Very Good or Good quality of life—including four-in-five (80%) who said the quality of life in Okotoks is Very Good.

## Quality of Life by Length of Residence Quality of Life by Neighbourhood

Households located in the neighbourhoods of Westmount (87%), Central Heights (86%), and Woodhaven (84%) were the most likely to report a Very Good quality of life, while those located in Cimmaron Meadows (54%), Westridge (50%), and Heritage (43%) were the least likely to report the same.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Readers should note that, due to the number of Okotoks neighbourhoods, the number of responses received from each neighbourhood is small. Therefore, these results should be interpreted with discretion.

## Reasons for Quality of Life Rating

Participants were invited to leave an open-ended response as to the reasons why they chose a particular quality of life rating. In total, 620 participants provided comments. Further details are provided in the table below.

= Positive aspect       = Negative aspect

Theme	Mentions	Percent
Small town vibe / community	248	40%
Services, facilities, and amenities	204	33%
Parks, pathways, and nature	158	25%
Recreation, arts, and culture	104	17%
Shopping / businesses	98	16%
Safe	94	15%
Accessible	43	7%
Clean	39	6%
Family-friendly	38	6%
Location	37	6%
Unsustainable growth	35	6%
Beautiful	33	5%
Good local government	32	5%
Schools	22	5%
High taxes	24	4%
Drivable	17	3%
Poor local government	21	3%
Unsafe	20	3%
Well-maintained infrastructure	13	2%
Infrastructure issues	14	2%
Traffic	14	2%
High cost of living	13	2%
Poor air quality / unclean	11	2%
Affordable	7	1%
Lack of recreation options	7	1%
Lack of retail stores	5	1%
Unfriendly	4	1%
Lack of parks, trails, and green spaces	3	<1%
Lack of parking	3	<1%

## Positive Aspects of Living in Okotoks

When asked about aspects they enjoy about living in Okotoks, 666 respondents provided their input with most choosing parks, pathways and nature. The three most commonly identified themes are provided in the following table.

Positive Aspects of Living in Okotoks - Top themes from 666 comments

Theme	Mentions	Percent
Parks, pathways & outdoor spaces	282	42%
Small town vibe / community	234	35%
Shopping/business	126	19%

## Areas of Concern Living in Okotoks

When asked about areas of concern for residents about living in Okotoks, 674 respondents provided their input with many mentioning safety, infrastructure, and traffic as issue areas.

Areas of Concern Living in Okotoks - Top themes from 674 comments

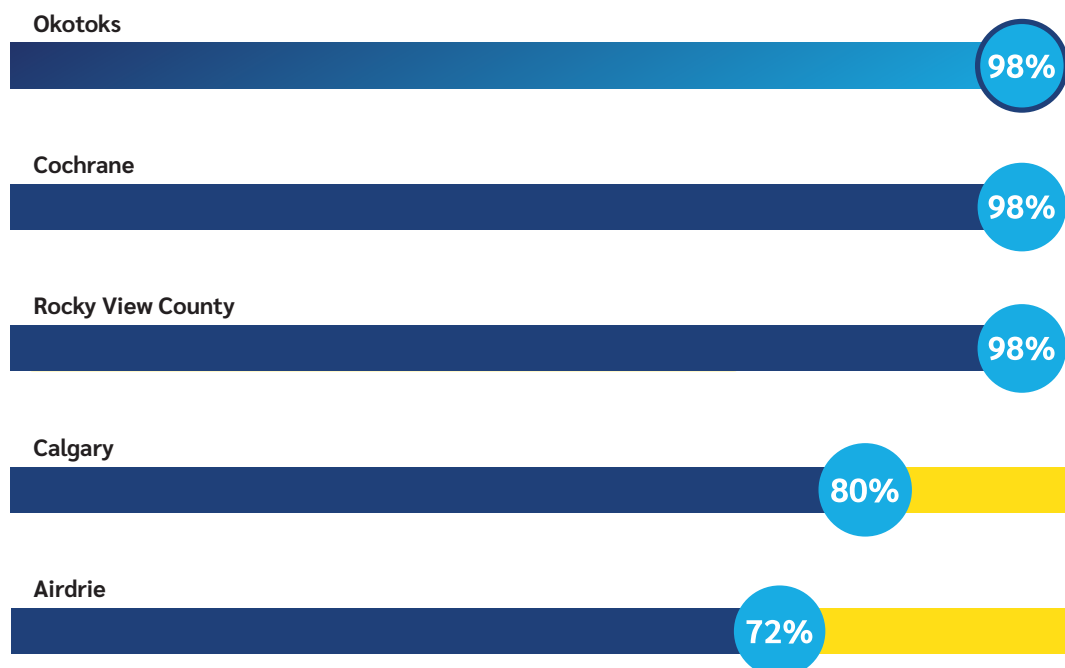
Theme	Mentions	Percent
Safety (e.g., speeding, graffiti/vandalism, wildlife)	225	34%
Infrastructure Issues	187	28%
Traffic	134	20%





## Quality of Life Regional Comparisons

Several other communities located in southern Alberta also regularly conduct resident satisfaction research. Below is a snapshot of four comparator municipalities.



The **City of Airdrie** has conducted annual Citizen Satisfaction Surveys since at least 2009, which invites residents to provide their perspectives and perceptions on subjects related to quality of life, satisfaction with City services and facilities, safety, property taxes, and top priorities for the City. In the 2022 survey, **72%** of Airdrie residents rated their quality of life as a 4 or 5 out of 5, compared to 93% in 2021. (598 responses)

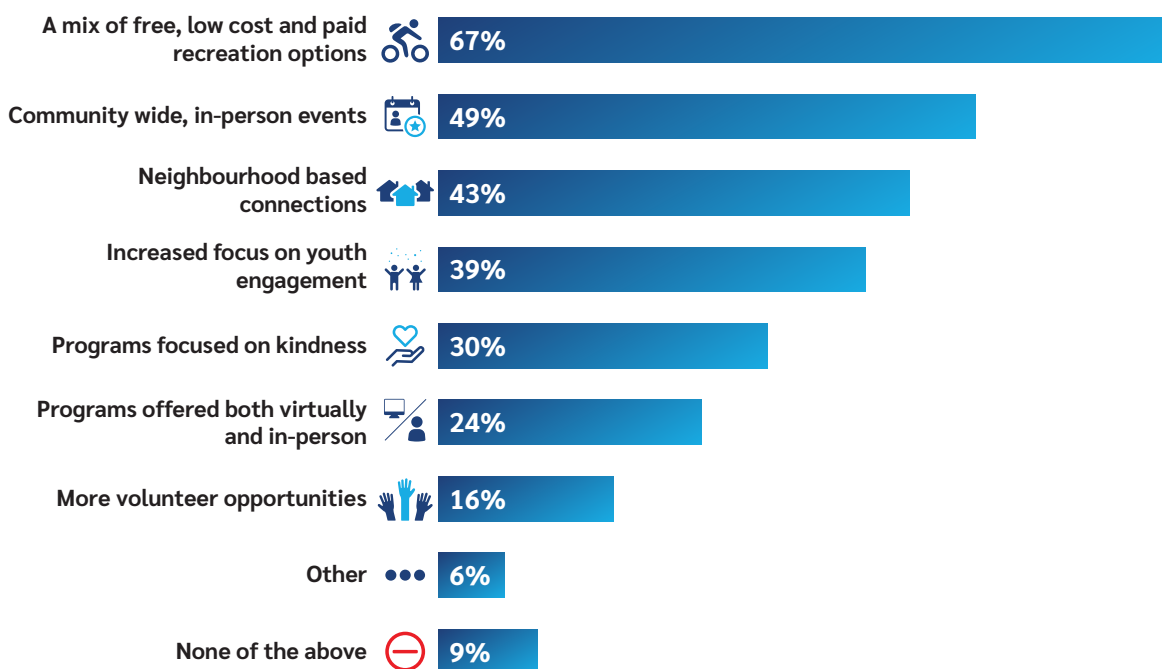
The **City of Calgary** conducts an annual Citizen Satisfaction Survey to gather residents' views and opinions on quality of life and satisfaction with programs and services, and it has done so since at least 2006. In the 2021 survey, **80%** of respondents said their quality of life was good. (2,500 responses)

The **Town of Cochrane** conducts its Community Satisfaction Survey every five years and has been doing so since at least 2009. In the 2019 survey, **98%** of Cochrane residents said their quality of life was either Good or Very Good, compared to 99% in 2014. (401 responses)

**Rocky View County** occasionally conducts a county-wide citizen satisfaction survey called Your Say to collect resident feedback on County services, communications, public engagement activities, budgets, and plans. At the time of writing, the 2022 Your Say research is still underway—the last time the survey was conducted was in 2009. In the 2009 survey year, **98%** of participants rated their quality of life as Good or Very Good. (501 responses)

## Factors Contributing to Social Well-Being

From a social wellness perspective, what Town resources and services related to social wellbeing do you think are needed to help boost the resiliency of our community over the next 12-18 months? Please check all that apply. (n=703)



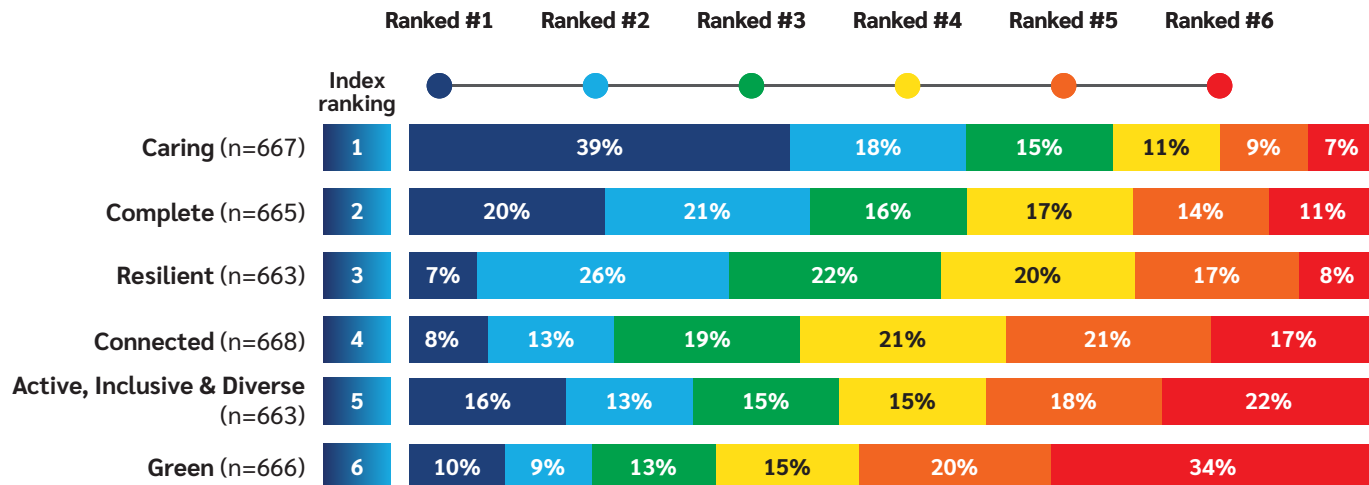
Additional recreational opportunities were cited by two-thirds (67%) of Okotoks households as a top factor that would contribute to social well-being. Nearly half (49%) said that Community-wide, in-person events are needed and about two-fifths said Neighbourhood based connections (43%) boost their sense of social well-being.

Six percent of respondents provided other suggestions. The most frequently mentioned ways to improve social well-being were as follows:

- More programs/facilities for residents of all ages, ability levels, and work schedules including more programming in the evenings (10 mentions)
- Refurbishing existing facilities and/or building additional facilities such as including pickleball courts, boarded outdoor rinks, and outdoor pools (4 mentions)
- Improving the online registration process for programs/facilities, including increasing the number of available spots and lowering prices (4 mentions)
- More clinics/hospitals and doctors (3 mentions)

## Town Values

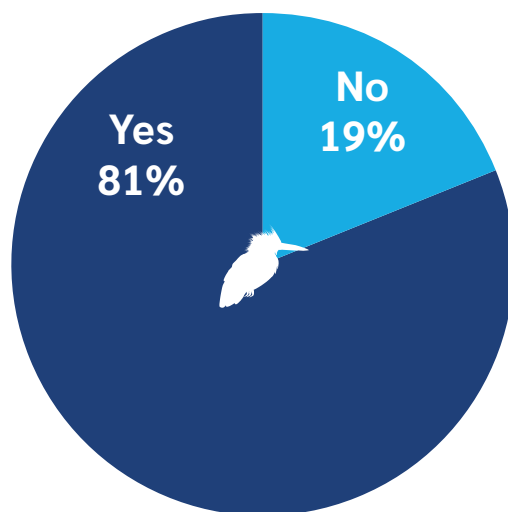
Please rank the Town's values in order of importance to you.



Participants were asked to rank the Town's six values in order of importance. Respondents consistently ranked Caring as a top value, while Green tended to be ranked the least important. The values of Complete and Resilient were also of relatively high importance to participants.

## Alignment of Town Values with Residents

Do the Town's values align with the values of your household?  
(n=703)



More than four-fifths (81%) of participants felt the values of the Town of Okotoks align with the values of their households.





### Values Alignment by Visible Minority Status

Okotoks households containing member(s) of a visible minority were slightly less likely (70%) to report the Town's values aligned with their own values.

### Values Alignment by Length of Residence

Respondents who have lived in Okotoks for less than five years were the most likely (91%) to report alignment between the Town's values and the values of their household, while only three-quarters (75%) of those who have lived in Okotoks for more than 20 years said the values aligned with their own.

### Values Alignment by Neighbourhood

Households located in the neighbourhoods of Wedderburn (100%), Mountainview (92%), and Air Ranch (90%) were the most likely to report that the Town's values align with their own values, while households located in Tower Hill (68%), Westridge (62%), and Cimmaron Vista (56%) were the least likely to say the same.

### Suggestions for Additional Town Value Themes

Participants were invited to leave an open-ended response describing any values they feel should be added to the current Town values list. In total, 243 participants provided comments.

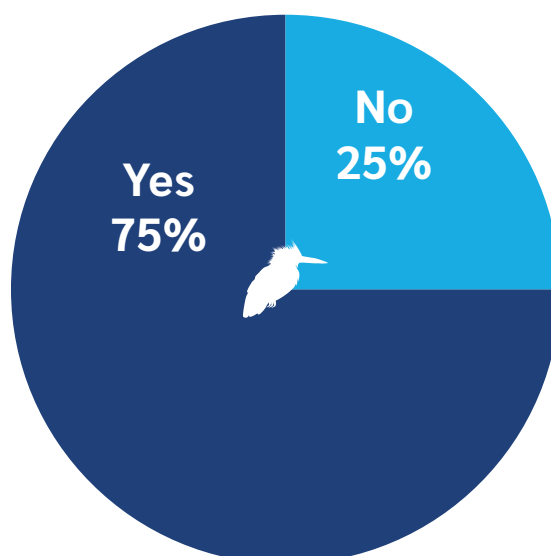
Affordability and accountability/transparency were the two most frequently mentioned values that residents of Okotoks suggested as additions to the current list of Town values.

Suggestions for Additional Town Values - Top themes from 243 comments

Theme	Mentions	Percent
Affordable / affordability	34	14%
Accountable / accountability or Transparent / transparency	32	13%
Growing / growth or Progressive / progress	20	8%
Safe / safety	20	8%

## Social Connectedness

Do you feel you are connected to your neighbours?  
(n=703)



Three-quarters (75%) of participants reported feeling connected to their neighbours.

### Social Connectedness by Visible Minority Status

Households containing member(s) of a visible minority were slightly less likely (60%) to feel connected to their neighbours.

### Social Connectedness by Neighbourhood

Households located in the neighbourhoods of Central Heights (100%), Sandstone (89%), and Woodhaven (88%) were the most likely to report feeling connected to their neighbours, while households located in Cimmaron Vista (56%), Cimmaron Meadows (54%), and Cimmaron Grove (47%) were the least likely to say the same.

### Suggestions to Improve Social Connectedness

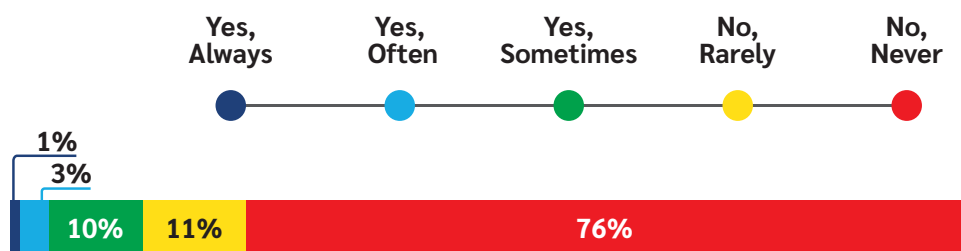
Respondents who said they do not feel connected to their neighbours were invited to leave an open-ended response describing their ideas on how Okotoks can improve connectedness between residents. In total, 128 participants provided comments.

Suggestions to Improve Social Connectedness - Top themes from 128 comments

Theme	Mentions	Percent
More activities and events	54	57%
More community spaces	5	5%
Don't know/unsure/no improvement needed	35	37%

## Experience with Discrimination

Do you or another member of your household ever face discrimination on the basis of sex, age, ability, sexual orientation, or ethnicity? (n=703)



Nearly a quarter (24%) of participants reported they face discrimination on the basis of sex, age, ability, sexual orientation, or ethnicity.

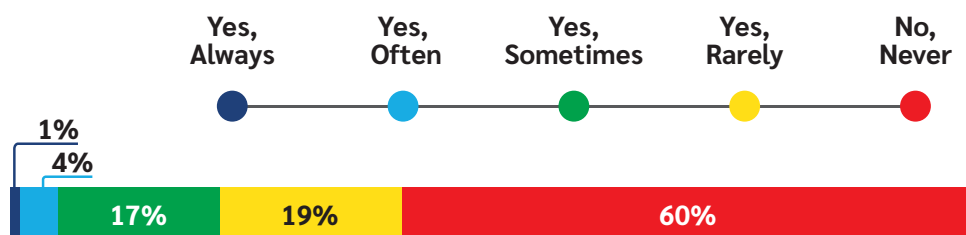
### Experience with Discrimination by Visible Minority Status

Nearly two-thirds (62%) of households containing member(s) of a visible minority said they had experienced discrimination.

### Experience with Discrimination by Neighbourhood

Households located in the neighbourhoods of Central Heights (63%) and Crystal Shores (57%) were the most likely to experience discrimination, while households located in Downey Ridge (4%) were the least likely to experience discrimination.

Do you or the members of your household ever witness other Okotoks residents face discrimination on the basis of sex, age, ability, sexual orientation, or ethnicity? (n=703)



### Experience with Witnessing Discrimination

Four-in-ten (40%) households reported witnessing a member of another Okotoks household experience discrimination on the basis of sex, age, sexual orientation, or ethnicity. Households located in the neighbourhoods of Sandstone (67%) and Central Heights (57%) were the most likely to witness discrimination, while households located in Wedderburn (20%) were the least likely to witness discrimination.



## Suggestions for a More Welcoming and Inclusive Community

Participants were invited to leave an open-ended response describing their ideas about how the Town of Okotoks can become more welcoming and inclusive. In total, 469 participants shared their thoughts and comments.

The most commonly identified themes are provided in the table below.

Suggestions for a More Welcoming Community - Top themes from 469 comments

Theme	Mentions	Percent
Affordable housing	29	6%
More public participation	21	4%
More/cleaner public spaces	12	3%

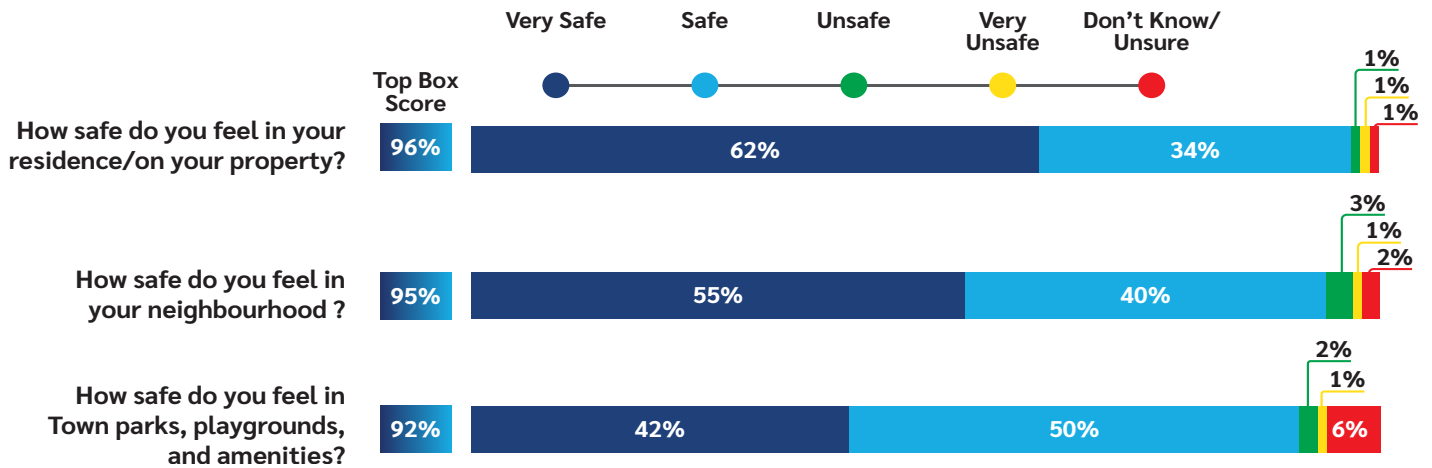


# Safety and Security

Participants were asked to rate their sense of safety in various locations within Okotoks.



How safe do you feel ..... (n=703)



## Feelings of Safety

When asked to indicate the extent to which they feel safe on their property, nearly all Okotoks households (96%) reported feeling Safe or Very Safe.

A similar share of respondents felt safe in their neighbourhood (95%) and slightly fewer respondents (91%) said they felt safe in Town parks, playgrounds, and amenities.



## Sense of Safety in Neighbourhoods

Households located in the neighbourhood of Wedderburn were the most likely to report feeling Very Safe on their property (80%), in their neighbourhood (80%), and in Town parks, playgrounds, and amenities (80%).

Households located in the neighbourhood of Central Heights were the most likely to report feeling Unsafe or Very Unsafe on their property (14%) and in their neighbourhood (14%).

Households located in the neighbourhood of Hunters Glen (18%) were the most likely to report feeling Unsafe or Very Unsafe in Town parks, playgrounds and amenities.

## Factors Contributing to a Sense of Safety

Participants were invited to leave an open-ended response describing factors that contribute to how safe they feel. In total, 531 participants provided comments.

The most frequently mentioned factor contributing to residents' sense of safety is good neighbours and community, followed by the presence of law enforcement. The three most commonly mentioned themes are provided in the following table.

Factors Contributing to a Sense of Safety - Top themes from 531 comments

Theme	Mentions	Percent
Good neighbours/community	224	42%
Law enforcement presence	106	20%
Low crime rate	80	15%

## Factors Contributing to a Sense of Unsafety

Participants were invited to leave open-ended comments regarding factors that contribute to them feeling unsafe. In total, 443 participants provided comments.

Some of the most frequently mentioned themes are provided in the following table.

Factors Contributing to a Sense of Unsafety - Top themes from 443 comments

Theme	Mentions	Percent
Increase/visible crime	126	28%
Speeding/traffic	84	19%
Growing population	69	16%

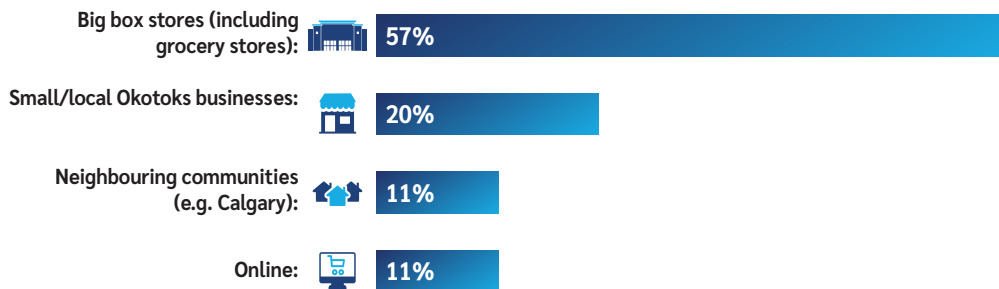
# Economic Development

Participants were invited to provide their feedback on various aspects of the Town's local economy.



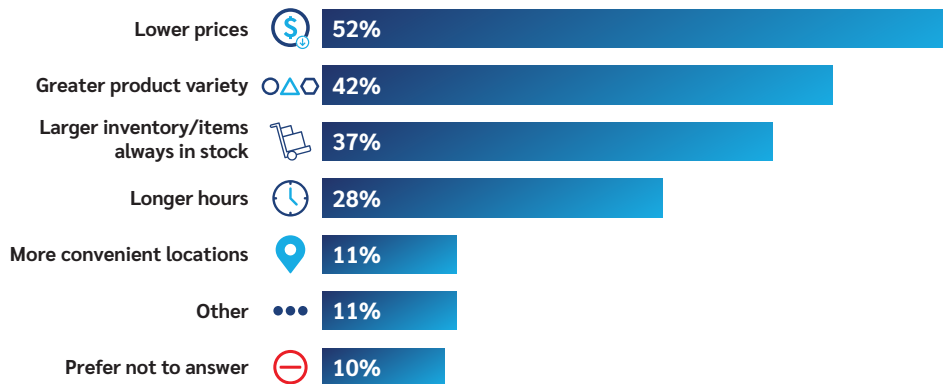
## Household Shopping Budget

Approximately what percentage of your shopping budget (e.g. food, clothing, other retail) is spent at local Okotoks businesses, big box stores, and online?  
(n=703)



Participants were asked to provide a breakdown of their household shopping budgets. On average, Okotoks households spend more than half (57%) of their shopping budgets at big box stores including grocery stores.

What would encourage you to support local businesses more? (Select all that apply)  
(n=703)



When asked to provide suggestions on how local Okotoks businesses could improve sales, more than half (52%) of the households surveyed noted that lower prices would be helpful in attracting more customers. Greater product variety (41%) was the second most commonly selected most selected option.

11 percent of respondents provided an “other” response. The most frequently mentioned themes were as follows:

- *Parking/accessibility (13 mentions)*
- *Better customer service (5 mentions)*
- *Better advertising (4 mentions)*
- *Better website/online stores (3 mentions)*
- *Better hygiene/health & safety practices (3 mentions)*

## Suggestions to Enhance Shopping Experience

Participants were invited to leave open-ended comments about how the Town can help improve or enhance the local shopping experience. In total, 496 participants provided comments.

Residents think that better marketing and support of local businesses and events, enhancing access to local shops, providing business incentives, and diversifying the local business mix would contribute to an enhanced local shopping experience.

Suggestions to Enhance Shopping Experience: Top themes from 496 comments

Theme	Mentions	Percent
Marketing / events	38	8%
Centralize shops / make accessible	35	7%
Lower taxes / provide business incentives	34	7%

## Out-of-Community Shopping

Participants were invited to leave open-ended comments on what businesses are taking them out of the community for their shopping needs. In total, 605 participants provided comments.

Residents shop out-of-community at big-box stores, especially clothing and footwear. They also leave Okotoks to shop for groceries and homeware/furniture and for dining and entertainment.

Out-of-Community Shopping Needs - Top themes from 605 comments

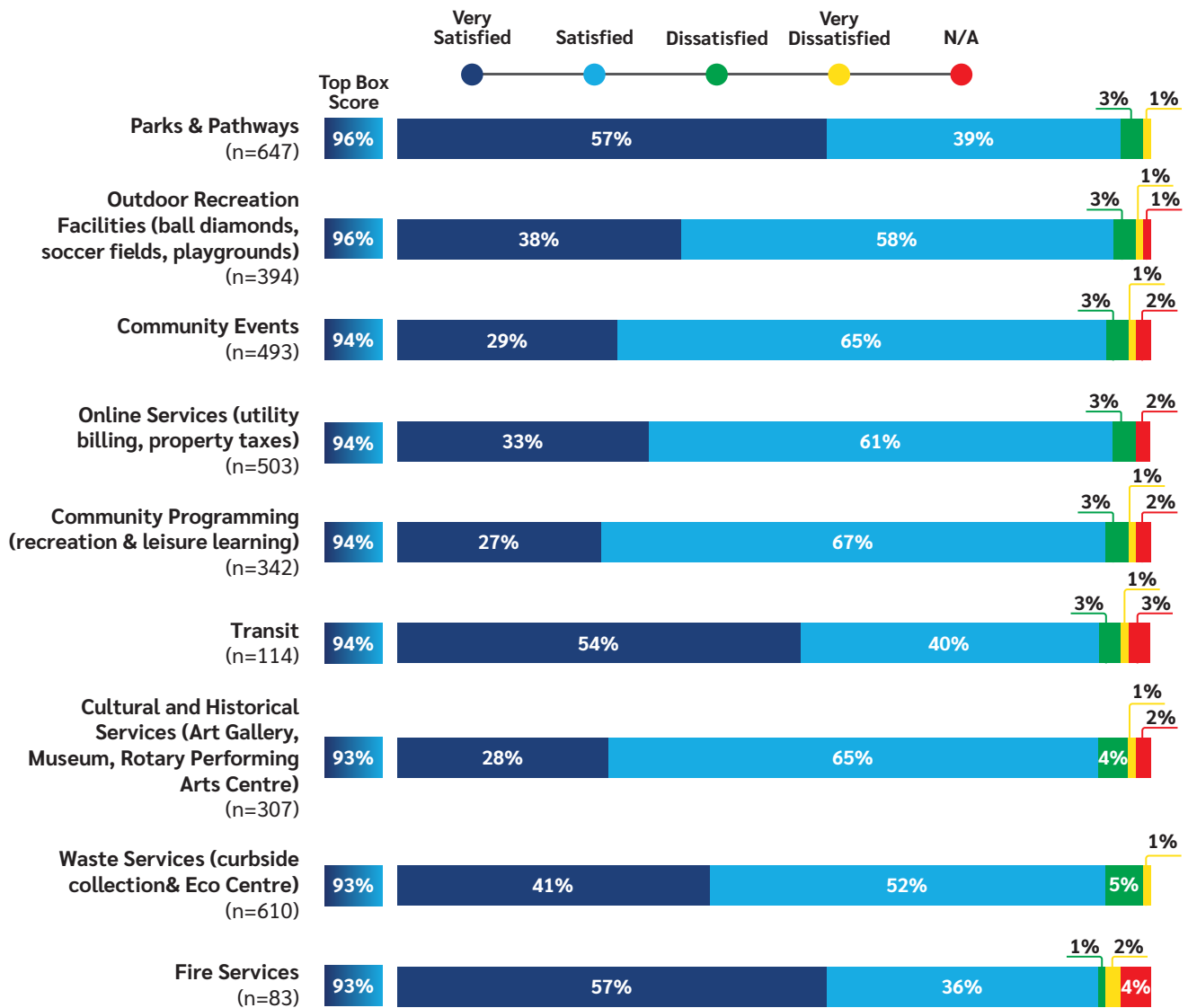
Theme	Mentions	Percent
Clothing / retail	74	12%
Groceries	41	7%
Homeware / household Items / furniture	38	6%

# Citizen Satisfaction and Experience

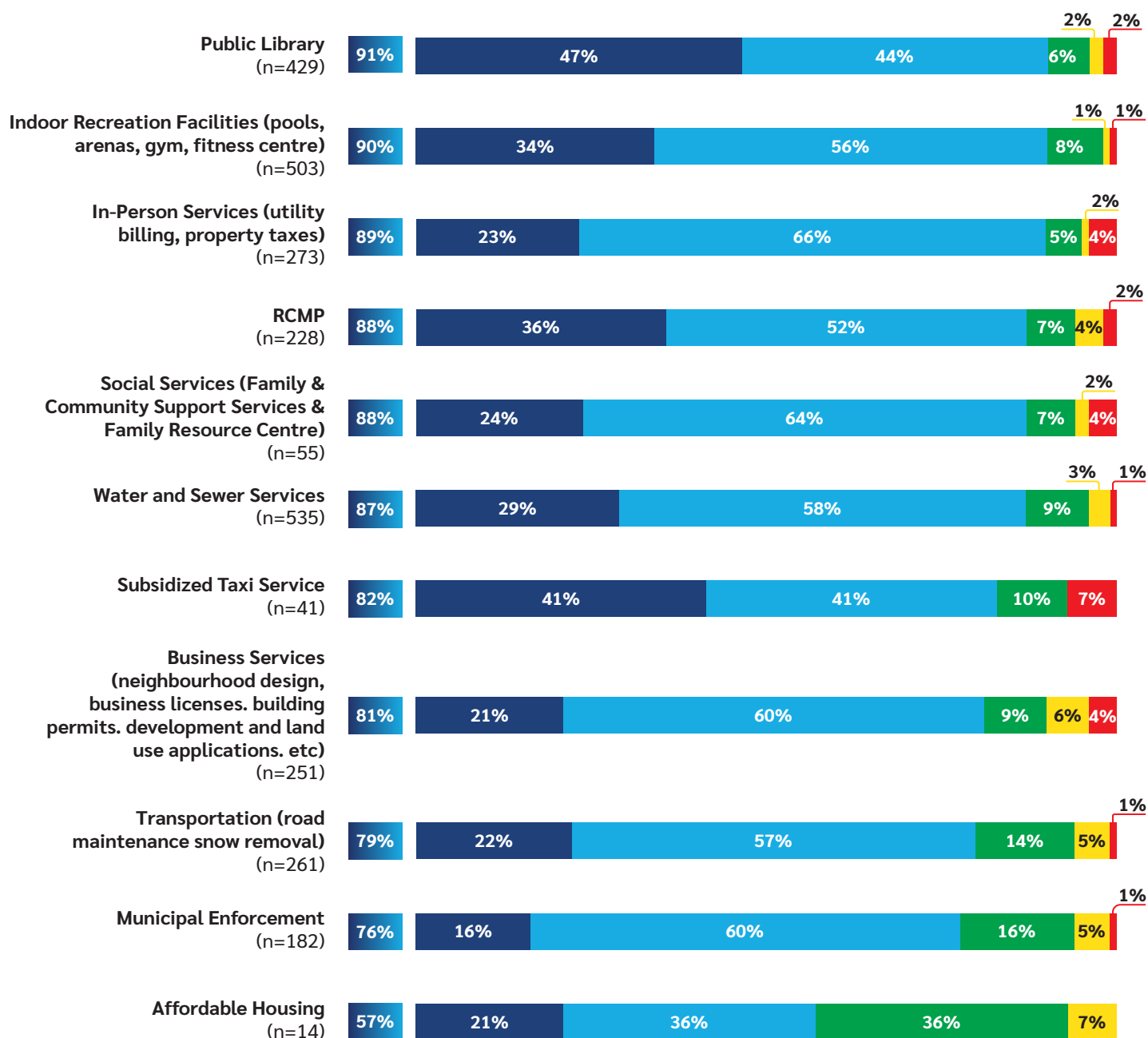
Participants were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the Town's services, facilities, and programs.



For each of the following services, please indicate your overall level of satisfaction.







The above figure shows participants' satisfaction with the Town's various programs and services, arranged in descending order based on a top-two score. Top-two satisfaction scores ranged from a high of 96% (parks and pathways) to a low of 57% (affordable housing).

Outdoor recreation facilities such as ball diamonds, soccer fields, and playgrounds (96% top-two score) as well as community events (94% top-two score) earned top marks for resident satisfaction. On the other hand, municipal enforcement received a relatively low top-two satisfaction score (76%) along with transportation (road maintenance and snow removal) which received a top-two score of 77%.

## Suggestions for Improvement

Participants who said they were Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied with a given program or service were invited to provide an open-ended comment with their suggestion(s) on how to improve that program or service. Some of the suggested improvements for each program or service are shown below.

### **Water and Sewer Services**

64 respondents provided open-ended suggestions for improvement. Those who were dissatisfied with Water and Sewer Services most frequently stated the following ways to improve this area:

- Lower the cost (58%)
- Increase the supply (30%)

### **Transportation (road maintenance and snow removal)**

51 respondents provided open-ended suggestions for improvement. Those who were dissatisfied with Transportation most frequently stated the following ways to improve this area:

- Increase the speed of maintenance and snow removal (71%)
- Reduce traffic (14%)

### **Indoor Recreation Facilities (pools, arenas, gym, fitness centre)**

44 respondents provided open-ended suggestions for improvement. Those who were dissatisfied with Indoor Recreation Facilities most frequently stated the following ways to improve this area:

- Too crowded/more facilities needed (39%)
- Increase variety of facilities/activities (23%)

### **Municipal Enforcement**

39 respondents provided open-ended suggestions for improvement. Those who were dissatisfied with Municipal Enforcement most frequently stated the following ways to improve this area:

- Increase visibility of officers in the community (62%)
- Increase enforcement of traffic safety (15%)

### **Waste Services**

39 respondents provided an open-ended suggestion for improvement. Those who were dissatisfied with Waste Services most frequently stated the following ways to improve this area:

- Garbage left in bin/workers breaking bins (54%)
- Lower costs (41%)

### **Business Services (neighbourhood design, business licenses, building permits, development and land use applications, etc.)**

38 respondents provided open-ended suggestions for improvement. Those who were dissatisfied with Business Services most frequently stated the following ways to improve this area:

- Improve customer service, including faster processing times (64%)
- Reduce fees (29%)

**Public Library**

34 respondents provided open-ended suggestions for improvement. Those who were dissatisfied with the Public Library most frequently stated the following ways to improve this area:

- Parking/accessibility (47%)
- Greater selection of books (21%)

**RCMP**

23 respondents provided open-ended suggestions for improvement. Those who were dissatisfied with the RCMP most frequently stated the following ways to improve this area:

- Improve response times (39%)
- Establish local/provincial police force (35%)

**Parks & Pathways**

22 respondents provided open-ended suggestions for improvement. Those who were dissatisfied with Parks & Pathways most frequently stated the following ways to improve this area:

- Cleanliness/maintenance (50%)
- Improve safety (36%)

**In-Person Services (utility billing, property taxes)**

18 respondents provided open-ended suggestions for improvement. Those who were dissatisfied with In-Person Services most frequently stated the following ways to improve this area:

- Increase hours of operation (50%)
- Expand payment options, including the option to pay via credit card (39%)

**Community Events**

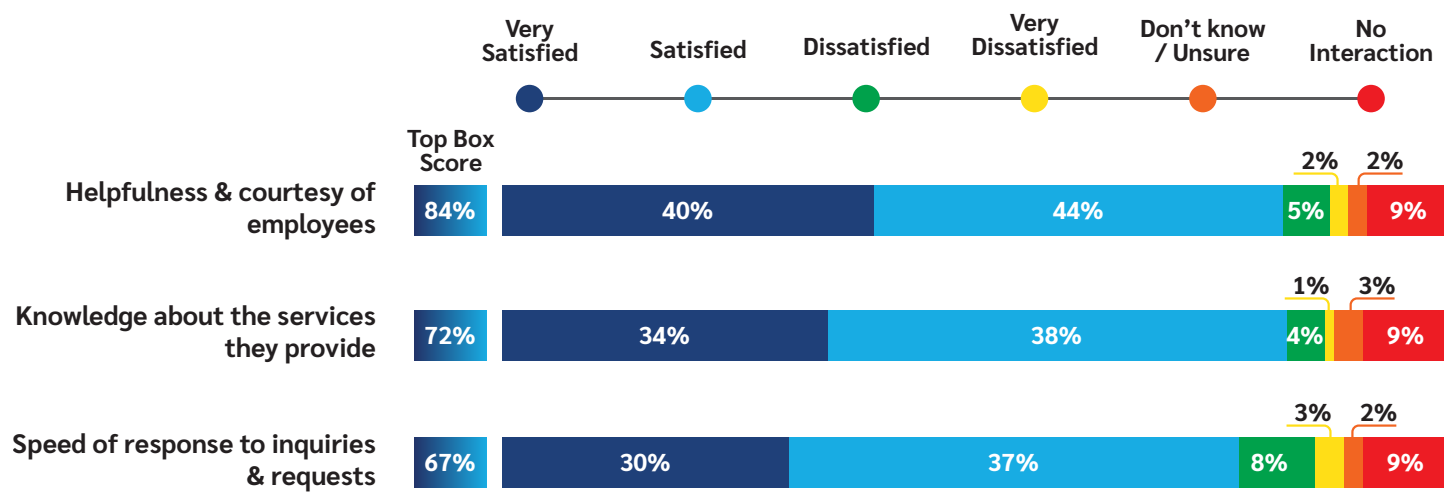
16 respondents provided open-ended suggestions for improvement. Those who were dissatisfied with Community Events most frequently stated the following ways to improve this area:

- More/wider range of events (63%)
- Improve parking/accessibility (13%)

The following service areas received 15 or fewer open-ended comments: Online Services, Community Programming, Outdoor Recreation Facilities, Affordable Housing, Social Services, Subsidized Taxi Service, Transit, and Fire Services. Please refer to the Appendix.

## Satisfaction with Service Experience

Considering the interactions you have had with Town of Okotoks employees (administration not including Council), how do you rate your satisfaction level? (n=702)



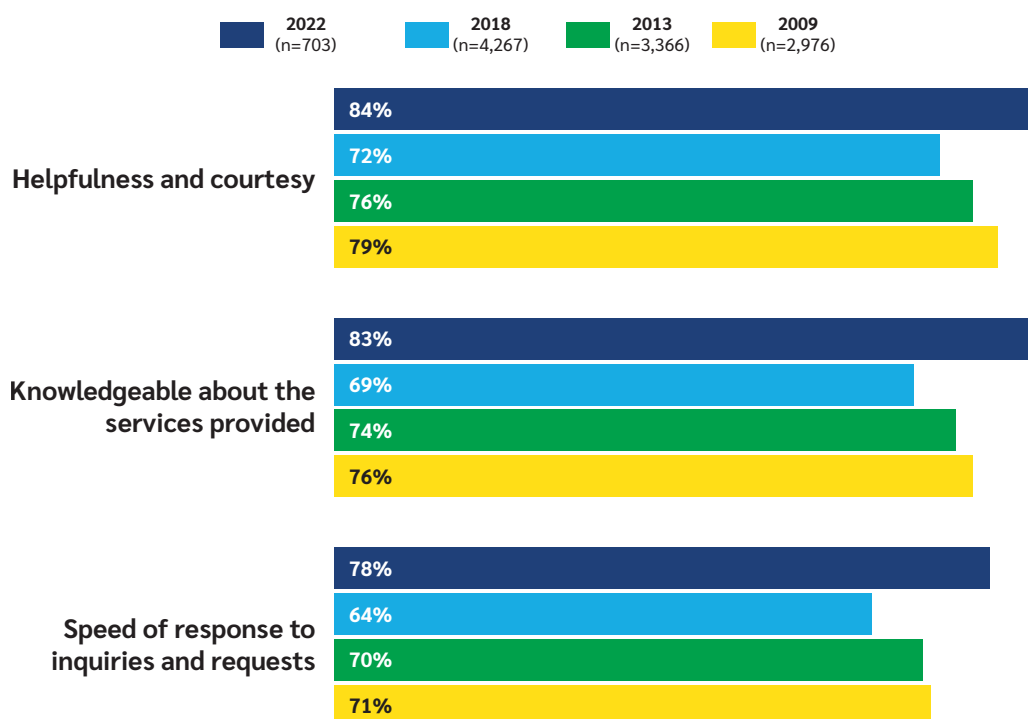
Participants were asked to rate their satisfaction with interactions with Town of Okotoks employees, and they were invited to provide suggestions for improving the customer service experience with Town of Okotoks employees.





### Satisfaction with Town Employees\*

\*percent of respondents who were "satisfied" or "very satisfied"



In the above figure, results from the 2022 survey year are compared to the results from the 2018, 2013, and 2009 survey years. Although resident satisfaction with Town of Okotoks employees had been steadily declining between 2009 and 2018, this trend ended in 2022 and satisfaction levels earned historically high marks this year.

### Suggestions to Improve Customer Service Experience

Participants were invited to leave open-ended comments on what they think the Town can do to improve their customer service experience. In total, 369 participants provided comments.

Residents think that improving information services and customer service management would shore up experience levels.

#### Suggestions to Improve Customer Service Experience - Top themes from 369 comments

Theme	Mentions	Percent
Improve information services	35	9%
Improve customer service / management	32	9%
Update parking / hours	13	4%

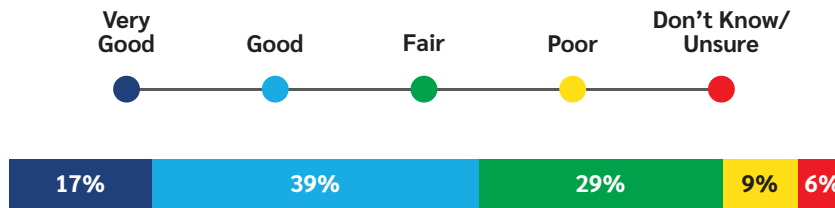
# Budget

Participants were asked about the value they receive for their municipal property taxes. They were also invited to weigh in on the Town’s municipal tax strategy for the next five years, including which Town programs and services should receive reduced levels of funding.



## Value for Property Tax Dollars

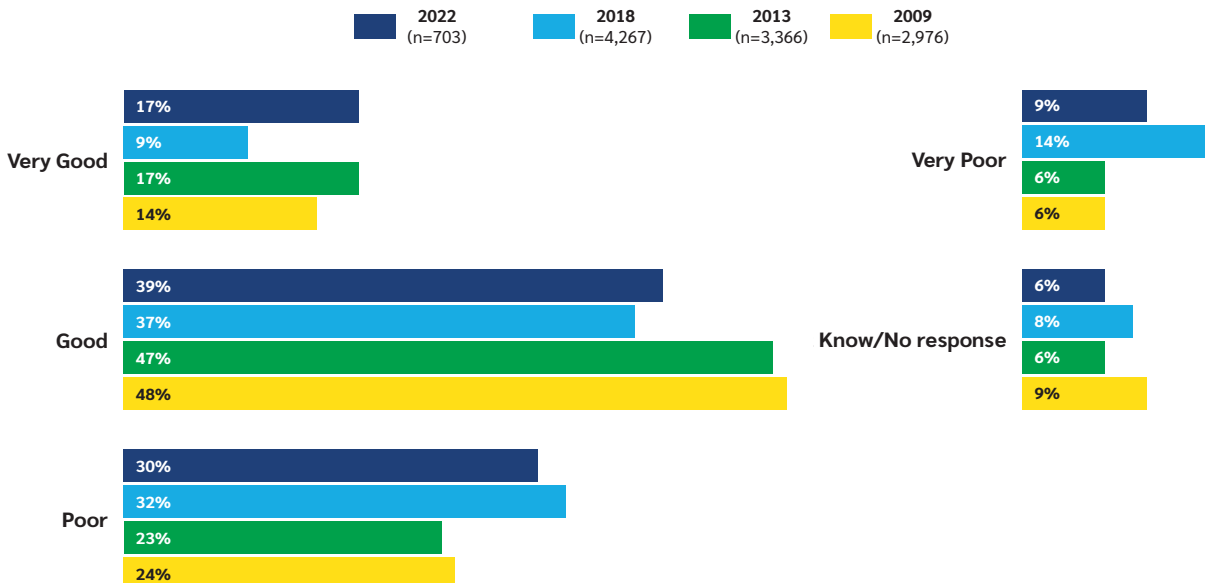
How would you rate the value of what you receive for the tax dollars the Town spends on municipal services? (n=702)



When asked about the value they receive for their municipal property taxes, 85% of respondents said the value for their taxes is “fair” or better.

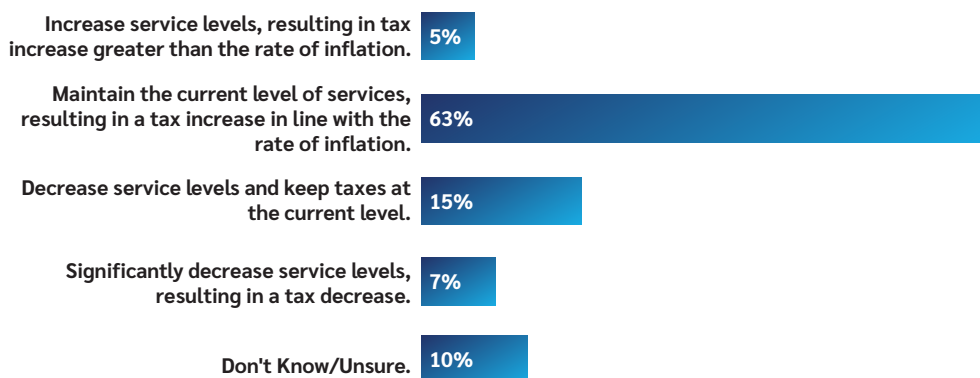
One fifth (20%) of households containing a member or members of a visible minority said they receive “poor” value for their municipal tax dollars.

Perceived value for tax dollars



In the above figure, results from the 2022 survey year are compared to the results from 2018, 2013, and 2009. Residents' perceived value for tax dollars showed improvement this year compared to the 2018 survey year, but it still trails the 2013 and 2009 survey years considerably.

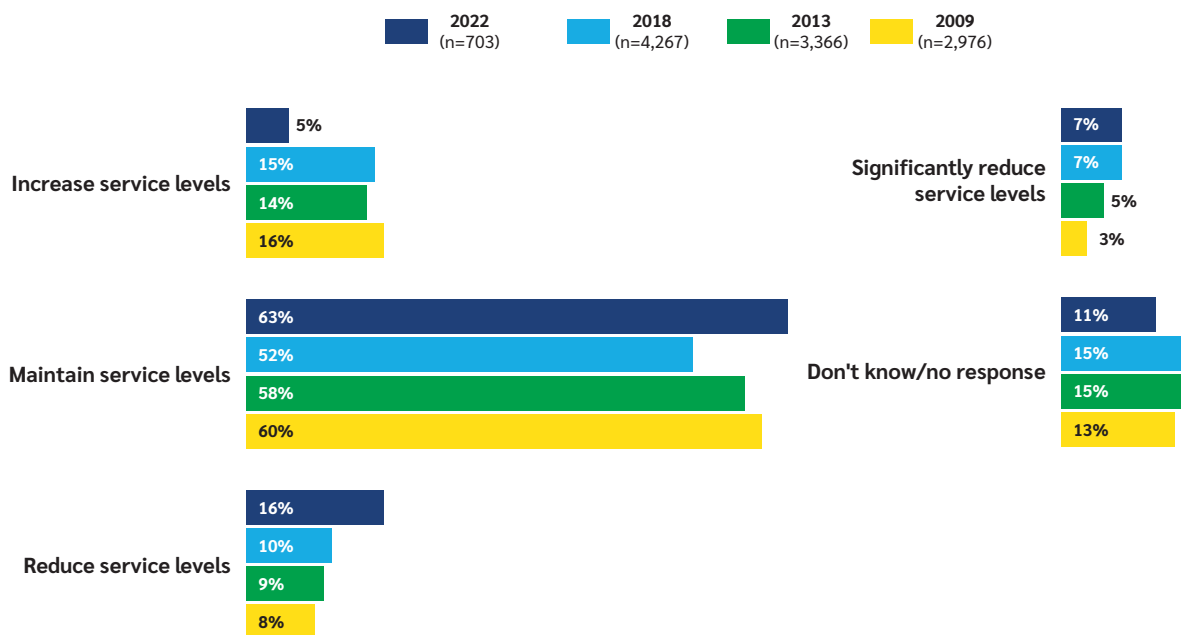
Thinking about how you rated the value for the services provided by the Town, indicate what you would like to see happen to service levels over the next 5 years. (n=702)



When asked about their preferred tax strategy for the next five years, 63% of participants said they would prefer to maintain the current level of services even if it results in a tax increase in line with inflation.

More than one-in-five households (22%) said they would prefer a tax decrease, while only five percent prefer enhancing service levels.

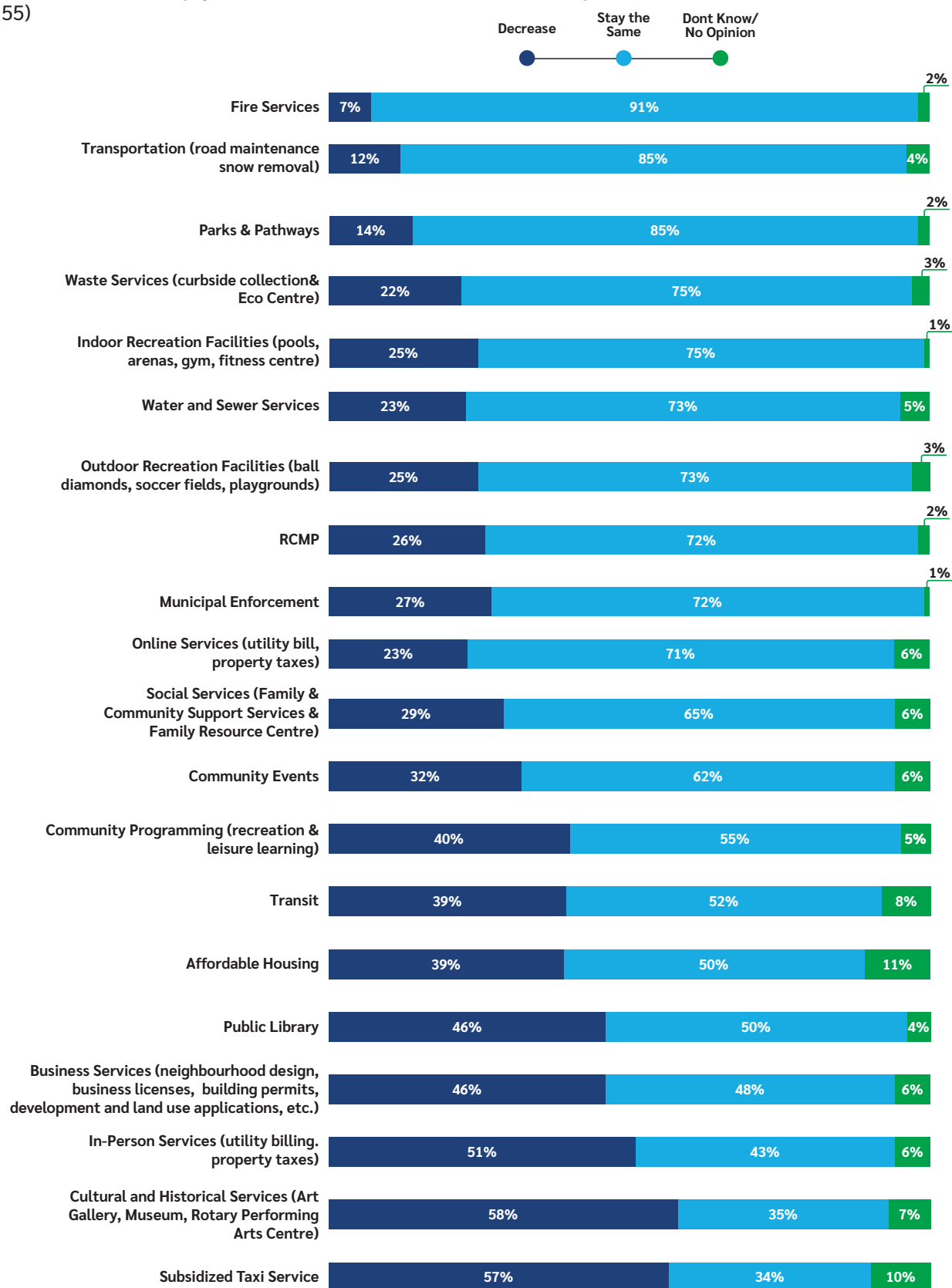
Which of the following tax strategies do you support most?



In the figure above, the results from the 2022 survey year are compared to those from 2018, 2013, and 2009. Since 2009, residents' support for reducing or significantly reducing service levels has been steadily increasing and this year is no exception.

While support for increasing service levels remained relatively and steadily high between 2009 and 2018, this taxation strategy fell out of favour in the 2022 survey year—former supporters of this plan now likely occupy the Maintain Service Levels camp, which is seeing a record high level of support, marking the reversal of a persistent downward trend.

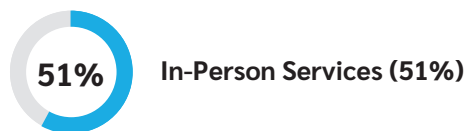
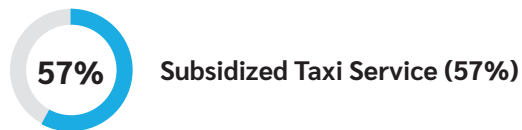
For each of the following, please indicate whether you think funding should be decreased or stay the same.  
(n=155)



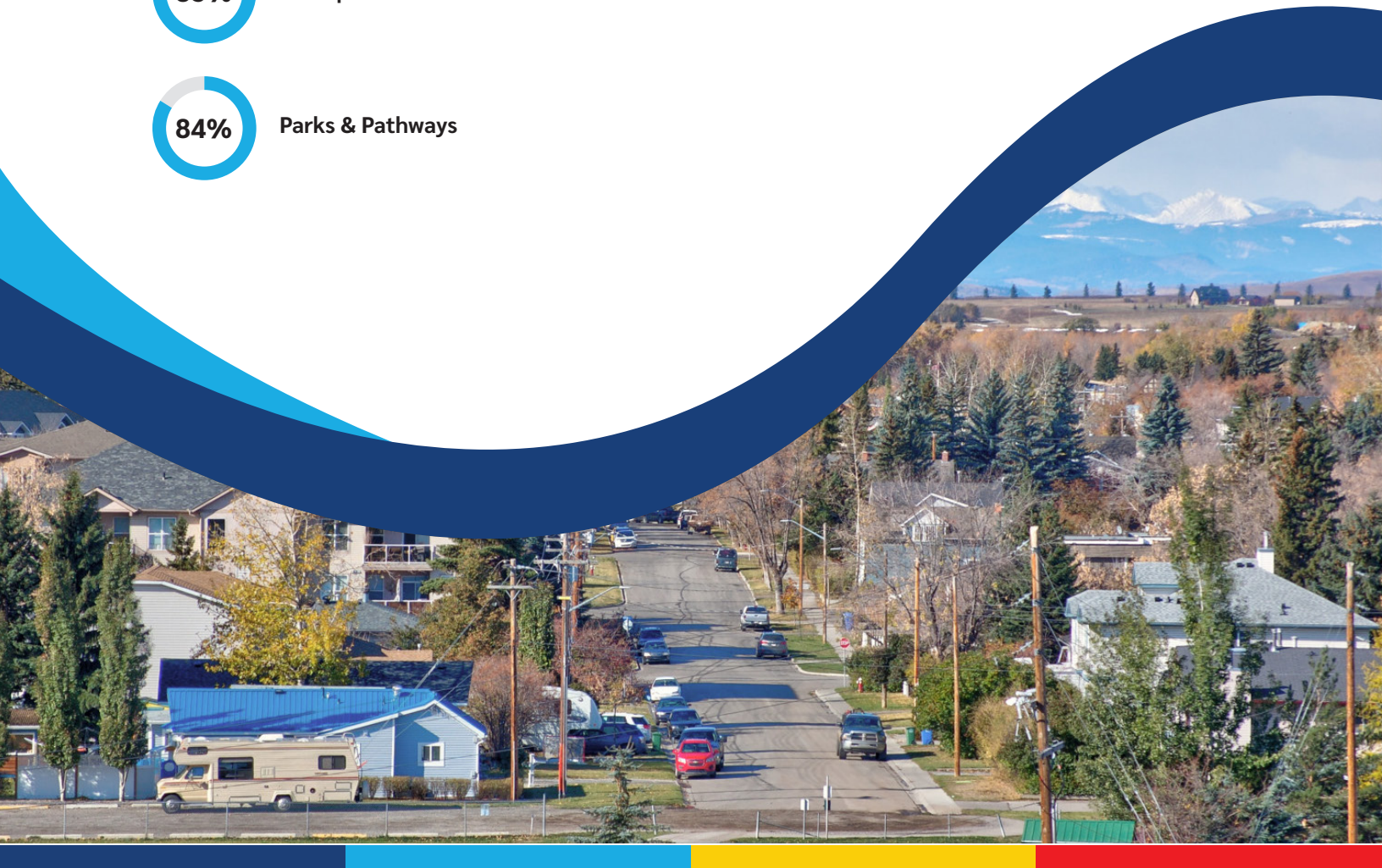


Participants who indicated their preference was to Decrease or Significantly decrease service levels were asked which services should receive less funding in a more austere taxation scenario, and which services should be protected from funding cuts if such a strategy is undertaken.

A majority indicated willingness to accept reduced levels of spending on the following services:



Conversely, many participants felt that the following services should be protected from spending reductions and should receive the same amount of funding:



## Budget Priorities

Participants were invited to provide input on what they think the next most important priority after obtaining a long-term water supply is. A total of 572 participants provided a response.

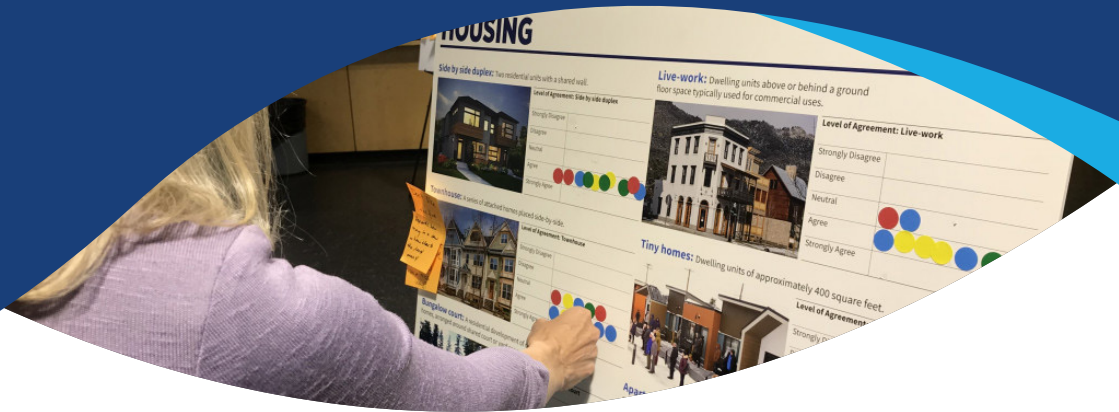
The most commonly mentioned themes are provided in the below table.

Budget Priorities - Top themes from 572 comments

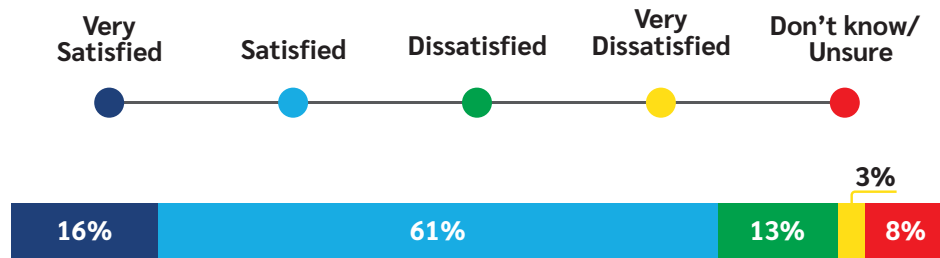
Theme	Mentions	Percent
Recreational amenities / facilities	54	9%
Road / path maintenance	51	9%
Affordable housing	36	6%

# Communications

Participants were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the quality of communications they receive from the Town of Okotoks.



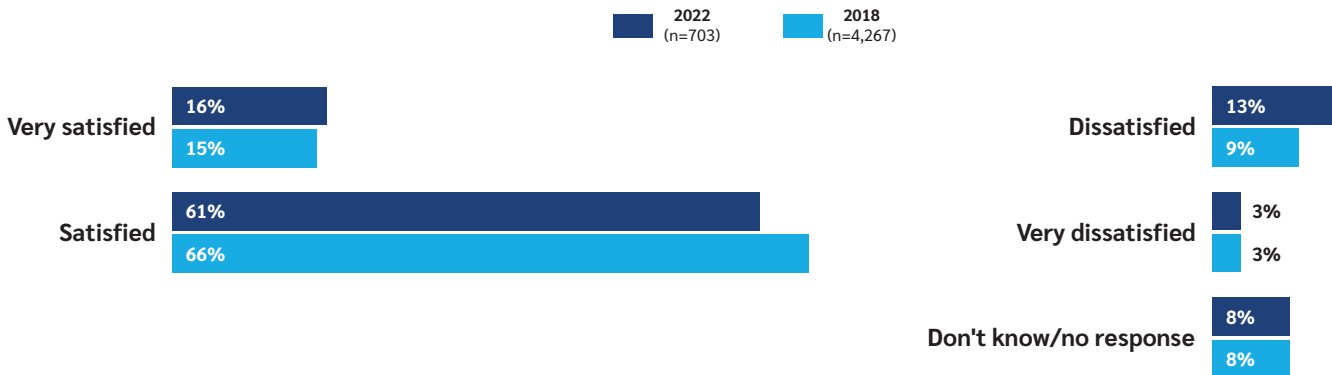
How satisfied are you with the quality of communication/notification that you receive from the Town of Okotoks? (n=702)



## Satisfaction with Town Communications

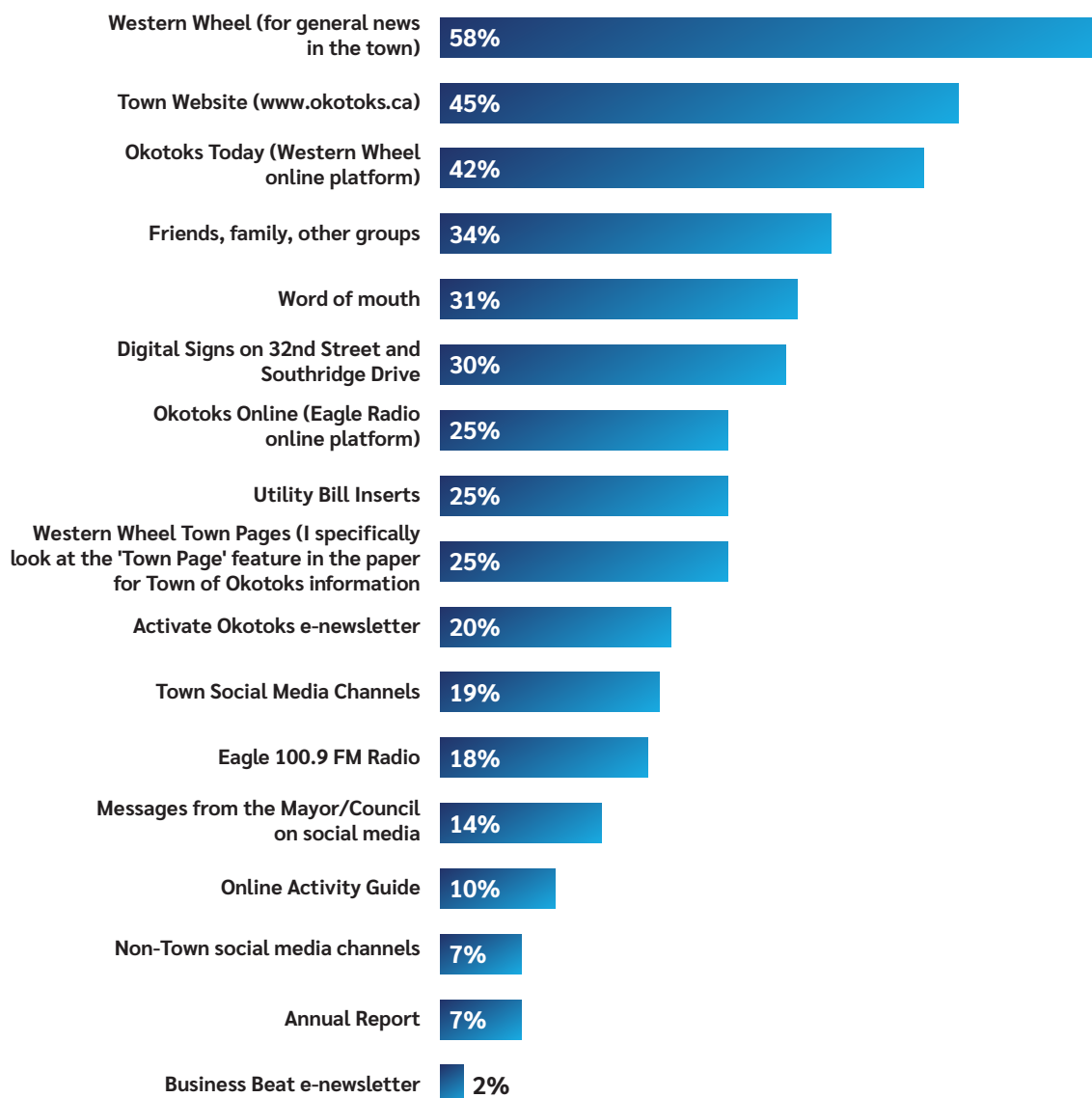
Just over three-quarters (77%) of households indicated they are Satisfied or Very satisfied with Town communications. Only six-in-ten (60%) of households containing member(s) of a visible minority said the same.

Satisfaction with Town communications



In the above figure, results from the 2022 survey year are compared to results from the 2018 survey year, illustrating a slight decline in satisfaction with communications from the Town of Okotoks. Residents were not asked this question in the Citizen Satisfaction Survey prior to 2018.

Using the list below, please select the top methods of how you receive information from/about the Town of Okotoks (Select up to 5). (n=702)



Participants were asked to identify which methods they use to receive information from or about the Town of Okotoks, to a maximum of five methods.

A majority (58%) of households indicated that they receive information from the Western Wheel, including 66% of households with zero children and 63% of respondents who have lived in Okotoks for longer than 20 years.

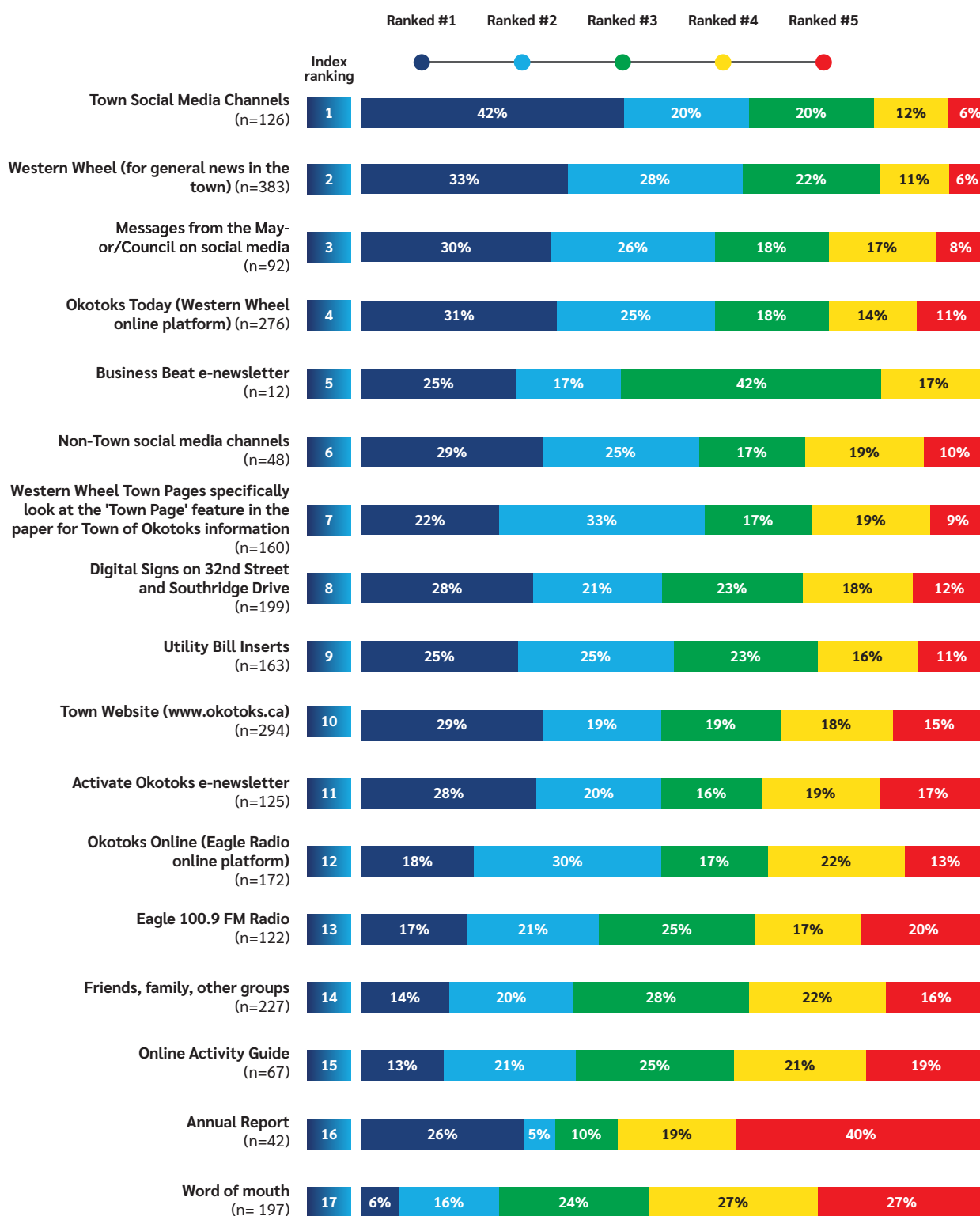
### Current Information Channel by Visible Minority Status

Households containing member(s) of a visible minority were far less likely to use the Western Wheel to receive information from/about the Town (38%) and instead tend to receive information via the Town's website (48%).

### Current Information Channel by English Language Proficiency

Households where the primary language spoken is not English were substantially more likely to receive information about the Town from friends and family (54%).

### Rank the following methods of receiving information from/about the Town of Okotoks.



Participants were also asked to rank which methods they most prefer for receiving information from or about the Town.

The Town's social media channels were consistently ranked highly. In addition to Town of Okotoks social media accounts, the Western Wheel was another top preferred method for receiving information.



## Suggestions to Improve Communications

Participants were invited to provide their insight into how the Town can improve its communications. A total of 334 participants provided a response.

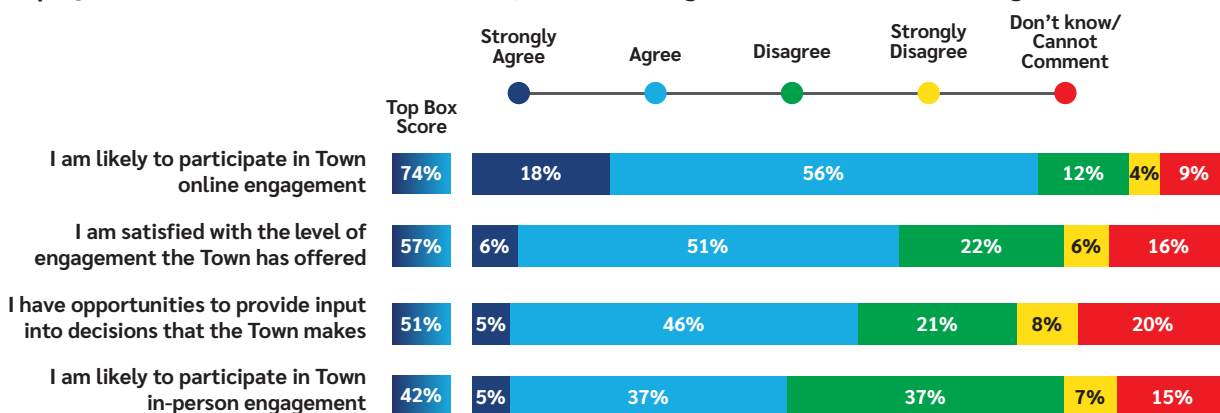
Many residents suggested enhancing communication via newsletter and mail and communicating online. The most frequently mentioned themes are provided in the following table.

Suggestions to Improve Communicatons - Top themes from 334 comments

Theme	Mentions	Percent
Update newsletter section / send out mail	66	20%
Update online communications	63	19%
Transparency / provide more information	57	17%



The Town is committed to increasing public participation and creating more opportunity for you to provide input on Town projects and initiatives. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements (n=695)



Participants were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with various dimensions of the Town's public engagement efforts.

Overall, 1 in 2 respondents are satisfied with the level of engagement offered (56.4% combined Agree/Strongly Agree).

When asked if opportunities to provide input into Town decisions are available, only 1 in 2 respondents either Strongly Agreed or Agreed (50.7%). Online engagement was the most likely to encourage participation for 3 out of 4 respondents (74.7% Agree/Strongly Agree), with 2 in 5 respondents indicating they would be likely to participate in Town in-person engagements (41.7% combined Agree/Strongly Agree). Overall, 1 in 2 respondents are satisfied with the level of engagement offered (56.4% combined Agree/Strongly Agree).

## Suggestions to Improve Engagement

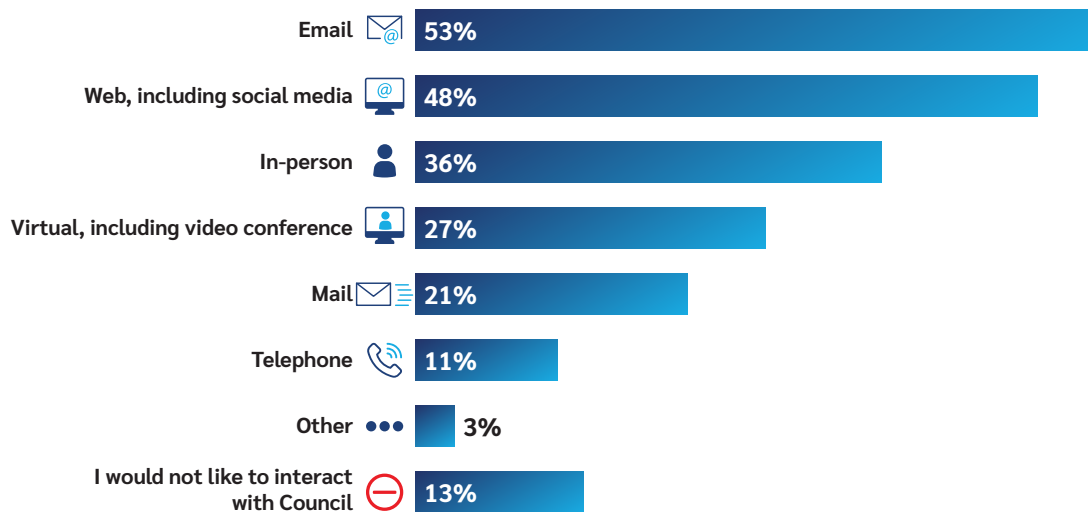
Participants were invited to leave an open-ended response on what they think the Town can do better or differently to engage them. A total of 373 participants provided a response.

Residents suggested the Town tap into online engagement, survey its residents, and be more transparent by sharing more information with the public.

### Suggestions to Improve Engagement - Top themes from 373 comments

Theme	Mentions	Percent
Online engagement	114	31%
Survey	69	18%
Transparency / more information	63	17%

### Okotoks Town Council wants to increase the frequency and engagement opportunities between themselves and residents; how would you like to interact with Council? (n=692)



Participants were asked to identify their preferred methods for engaging with the Town's Council members.

More than half (53%) indicated that their preference is to interact with Councillors via email, followed closely by interactions over the web, including social media (48%). In-person (36%), Virtual, including video conference (27%), Mail (20%) and Telephone (11%) round out the interaction options surveyed.

Approximately 1 in 10 respondents suggested they would not like to interact with Council (13%).

# Conclusions and Key Considerations



In 2022, the Town of Okotoks is performing at higher levels as compared to previous years when it comes to ensuring residents have a high quality of life and high satisfaction with their local government.

Existing channels of communicating information from the Town are generally accessible enough to meet the diverse needs of Okotokians. The survey results show that Okotoks residents are becoming more concerned about the Town's spending levels; however, there is substantial support for staying the course and maintaining the current level of services rather than adopting aggressive budget constraints.

Instead, the Town's Council and Administration may want to focus their attention towards making improvements on those service areas that are detracting from residents' quality of life and satisfaction, and those which are of highest importance to residents. Below, we identify four key municipal responsibilities that the Town may wish to prioritize.



## Safety and Law Enforcement

Law Enforcement has a relatively low perception among residents. In the open-ended responses, concerns about "safety" referenced a wide range of issues—from aggressive wildlife, to traffic safety and speeding, to mischief and property crimes that local law enforcement is simply too under-resourced to deal with effectively.



## Environmental Resilience

The lack of a reliable water supply is another area reducing residents' quality of life, and the open-ended responses showed that securing a source of water is a high-priority concern for Okotokians.



## Connected Communities

Getting around Okotoks is another top priority area that residents want to see addressed. As seen from the responses to the open-ended questions, traffic features such as traffic lights and speed limits, as well as difficulties travelling to Calgary, are weighing down quality of life and creating a negative perception of the Town.



## Support for Small and Local Businesses

The Town's ability to attract businesses, like retail stores and restaurants, as well as employment opportunities, is indicated as a low-satisfaction area. The open-ended responses indicate that residents desire a greater diversity of entertainment and shopping options.



# Thank you!



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