



2020 May SCOOP Mixed Topic Survey: Accessibility Assessment



Research Results

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Communications

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY	1
II. METHODOLOGY	2
A. THE QUESTIONNAIRE	2
B. SAMPLING DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE	2
III. SURVEY RESULTS: ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENTS	4
Barriers with County Facilities	6
Barriers with Trails, Walkways or Sidewalks	9
Barriers with Programs, Activities or Events	12
Barriers Applying for Employment with Strathcona County	13
Barriers with Strathcona County Transit.....	14
Barriers Obtaining Accessible Housing	16
Top Three Ways for Improving Services.....	16
Number 1 Priority for Improving Accessibility in the County.....	17

I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In May 2020, Strathcona County conducted an online survey as part of its Strathcona County Online Opinion Panel (SCOOP) initiative. This project, entitled *the Mixed Topic Survey*, consisted of different survey areas whereby only a limited number of questions were asked within one or more topic areas and was exclusive to residents who signed up to be part of SCOOP. The May 2020 mix topic survey consisted of questions pertaining to accessibility assessments within Strathcona County and a series of questions pertaining to how residents are coping with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Obtaining primary data from residents directly will provide Strathcona County departments with information and enable County officials to make decisions that accurately reflect the perspectives and attitudes of residents. This report will provide a comprehensive review of all steps undertaken in the development and implementation of the survey, as well as a detailed summary of the results. The results from this study were prepared by Phil Kreisel, Ph.D. (Communications) in July 2020; SPSS was used for the data analysis.

This report covers questions pertaining to Strathcona County's in-person public engagement events. A review of the methodology associated in the development and implementation all aspects of the survey can be found in the next section of this report.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. The Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in this study was new, using questions that were submitted by department representatives from Family and Community Services and the Council accessibility committee. Using these questions, the survey was created, reviewed and modified where necessary by members of Survey Central for wording, question ordering and general understanding. This included a final check of the content by FOIP¹ prior to the release of the survey to the public.

B. Sampling Design and Data Collection Procedure

The sample frame used in this study consisted of 429 people who had previously signed up to be part of SCOOP, Strathcona County’s online opinion panel. Overall, 72.7% of the participants lived in the urban area, 24.5% came from rural parts of Strathcona County, and the remaining 2.8% worked in Strathcona County but did not live there.

The sample frame provided overall results² accurate to within $\pm 4.7\%$, 19 times out of 20. The data was gathered via the online SCOOP platform in May 2020 during restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

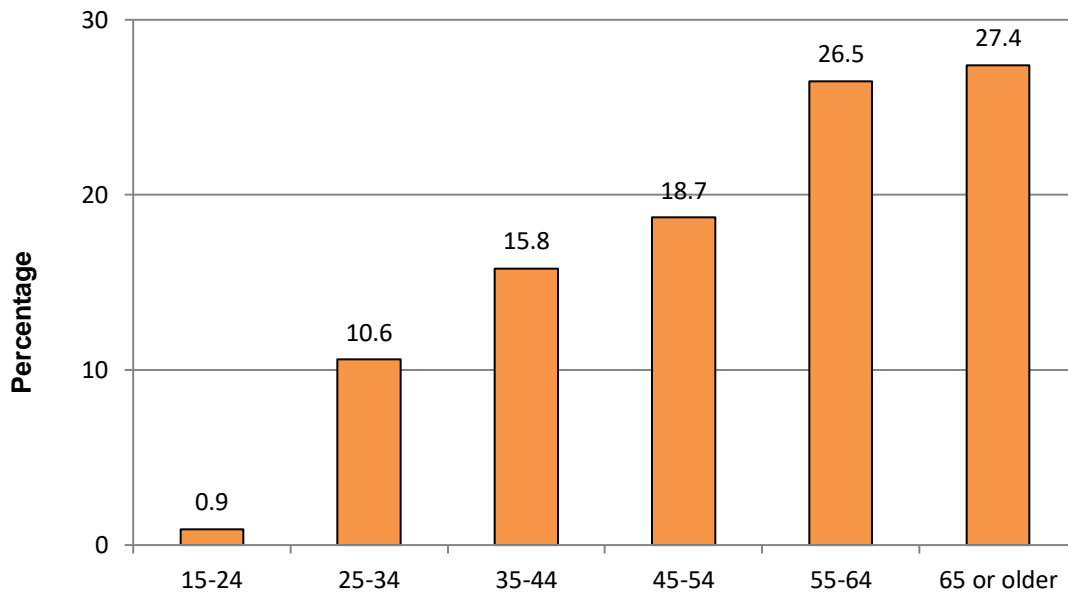
During the fielding of the survey, respondents had the option to skip a section if they felt that the topic had no relevance to them.

¹ FOIP stands for Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy and was reviewed by selected members from Strathcona County’s Legislation and Legal Department (LLS).

² The $\pm 4.7\%$ is the *margin of error* associated with this study and refers to the potential percentage spread that exists within answers to particular questions. This means that an answer could be up to 4.7% higher or lower than what is reported. Please note, however, that the data was gathered through an online survey and no controls were undertaken to make this a random sample.

As seen in Figure 1, the majority of respondents who participated in the survey are over the age of 44, with 26.4% of the participants between the age of 25 and 44. Only a very small percentage of participants were under 25. Overall, 60.6% of participants were female while 39.4% were male.

FIGURE 1
Age of Respondents



III. SURVEY RESULTS: ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENTS

Respondents were asked if they would like to answer a series of questions about accessibility in Strathcona County. Overall, 68.5% of the participants opted to answer questions on this topic.

Initially, people were asked to indicate if they had some sort of disability. Overall, most of the respondents did not have a disability (74.5%). Of the remaining 25.5%:

- 10.5% experienced pain resulting from their disabilities;
- 10.2% had mobility issues;
- 6.1% had a hearing disability;
- 2.0% had some form of mental health disability;
- 1.7% had a vision disability;
- 1.4% had some sort of learning disability;
- 0.7% had some form of memory disability;
- 0.7% had some form of speech disability;
- 0.7% had some form of behavioural disability;
- 0.3% had some form of developmental disability; and
- 3.4% had another form of disability, which included MS, COPD, an autoimmune disease and a variety of other medical conditions.

People were also asked to indicate if they lived with someone who had disability, and if so, what the disability was. Overall, most of the respondents did not live with someone with a disability (69.4%). Of the 30.6% who did:

- 12.2% of these people had mobility issues;
- 7.5% experienced pain resulting from their disabilities;
- 4.1% had a hearing disability;
- 4.1% had some sort of learning disability;
- 3.7% had some form of mental health disability;
- 3.1% had some form of developmental disability;
- 2.0% had a vision disability;

- 2.7% had some form of speech disability;
- 2.4% had some form of behavioural disability;
- 1.4% had some form of memory disability; and
- 2.7% had another form of disability, which included other medical conditions.

Respondents were then asked to indicate what barriers, if any, they and/or members of their household face when going about their day-to-day activities in Strathcona County from a designated list. The majority of respondents (71.8%) did not encounter any barriers. As for other problems:

- 11.9% encountered physical or structural barriers;
- 9.5% experienced attitude barriers (such as talking to an individual's support person instead of the individual with a disability or assuming someone with a speech problem also has an intellectual disability);
- 9.2% encountered service barriers, such as a service provider's lack of understanding of the needs of people with disabilities;
- 5.8% encountered policy or systems barriers; and
- 3.4% experienced technology barriers.

Respondents were then asked to indicate the extent that Strathcona County is accommodating to the needs of residents who have specific problems. It can be seen from Table 1 that the areas where people perceive that the County is *not at all accommodating* occurs with those residents (and/or members of their household) who experience pain, memory or behavioral issues. It should be noted that many of these problems may not be visibly obvious to those front line staff working at various facilities.

Table 1
Extent that the County accommodates residents with health issues

	Extent of Accommodation				
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Extremely
Pain	30.0%	25.0%	20.0%	15.0%	10.0%
Memory	27.0%	24.3%	24.3%	16.2%	8.1%
Behavioural	20.3%	26.6%	25.0%	20.3%	7.8%
Speech	14.3%	25.0%	17.9%	30.4%	12.5%
Hearing	11.7%	27.3%	31.2%	18.2%	11.7%
Developmental	11.5%	19.2%	21.8%	35.9%	9.7%
Mental health	8.7%	24.0%	20.2%	29.8%	17.3%
Seeing	8.6%	16.1%	30.1%	35.5%	9.7%
Mobility	7.1%	12.4%	30.8%	33.1%	16.6%
Learning	6.7%	21.3%	22.5%	28.1%	21.3%

Barriers with County Facilities

A further analysis revealed that most of the respondents (84.5%) did not face any barriers in accessing any Strathcona County owned facility or building. An additional 4.8% indicated that they had not accessed any County facility/building. As such, there were 10.6% who had encountered barriers. Issues that continually were mentioned included problems with power doors (either not installed or not working), problems with parking, and problems with curbs, the specific problems were as follows:

- At GARC one of the problems is that since the family member has only 10% of his sight left, he seems okay but does carry a cane or hold onto my arm. The stairs are an issue because he can't see the transition/contrast between stairs very well and most people are in a rush so he becomes a barrier. The ramp at the entrance is great, but most people use the ramp and it is narrow for a shared coming and

going ramp. I have also noticed people with walkers and wheelchairs have issues as well due to the same thing (I pay attention because he also has mobility issues that will require the need for these in the future). The stairs down to the ice rink have the same contrast issues, but he goes slow and is okay. It would be nice if there was more room or had less people congregating at the elevator doors on the rink level as I've seen someone with a walker get blocked at the elevator when trying to access that level. It would be great if all facilities had "Caution" wet floor signs that were moveable, not the sandwich board type. They could then move a little if bumped and not be knocked over."

- Buttons for power doors are not in many accessible places. Unable to get into some businesses due to curbs.
- Could not establish where parking was compared to where we had to go. Then parking was quite a ways away from the office we needed.
- Curbs, no understanding of disabilities, no accommodation.
- Doors that are too heavy to open.
- Getting to be a spectator at Millennium Place
- I attended a movie screening in the Strathcona County council chambers. There is a sign on the door to the chambers that indicates it is accessible for persons with hearing loss. I requested an assistive listening device from the security guard, since there was no one else available. They did not seem to know what I was talking about, but finally found one in a drawer. Unfortunately, the assistive system was not adequate for me because there was only a headset available. What works for me is a neck loop because of the cochlear implant that I have. I was disappointed in this lack of accessibility and sent an email to my councillor regarding this issue and after further follow up I have yet to receive a response.
- I struggle with mobility, pain and hearing somewhat. But my biggest problem is with locker rooms, where benches are either too low or they move around too easily (to provide easier floor cleaning) where I can fall as I lean on the bench or can't get up from the bench without help. Also the lockers are hard to use as most are very narrow and small. Buildings that provide seating which is too low or too soft/laid back to get out of
- I was disabled for a while and could not get into the doors of county buildings. I was in a wheel chair and my hands were too sore to open heavy doors. Am ok now.
- Inadequate parking
- It is often a long walk from parking lots to facilities. Doors are heavy too.
- Lack of parking

- Most handicapped parking does not have its ice removed, so as to make it safe to leave ones vehicle! Not all employees of the county are trained to deal with or even notice persons with disabilities! There is a lack of sensitivity by many employees to persons with a handicap!
- My daughter has struggled with mental health since she was 15, it is almost impossible to see anyone in a timely manner to help her with her issues.
- Not enough Disabled Parking spots. Also sometimes people without a Disability Card are parked in the too few spots. Automatic doors if not working properly are very heavy to open manually.
- Not enough Handicapped parking at the gym.
- Outside doors that have assist feature - when not working these are difficult to open or close.
- Rugs difficult to maneuver with wheelchair elevator closed too quickly
- Sherwood Park's layout is hostile to anyone who has difficulty walking. Apparently the car is king.
- Shoveling the snow from the roads to piles that block the crosswalks
- stairs are closer and quicker elevators are farther away and takes longer
- The accessible stall in front of the City hall has signage right on the sidewalk and wheelchairs cannot get around them. Accessibility in the winter has barriers, as some houses never clear their sidewalks and when you want to go to a facility sometimes you cannot make the bus because the going is very slow.
- The power-assist door was not working correctly, could not get the door open. The issue occurred many years ago and has since been fixed.
- Uneven concrete pads make for easy stumbling. I often assist my 91 year old mother on her errands or visits & while she walks with a cane, the uneven and irregular surfaces are a hazard for both of us.
- Using crutches for broken ankle and mom with walker. So many places not accessible and so many door buttons broken. Very hard to enter places.
- Usually the washrooms in all facilities are improper for disabled persons. If there is a washroom, majority of time the toilet is not raised for a disabled person, or the door and knob are incorrect, and the sinks are not lowered. Examples are at Millennium Place, Kinsmen Pool, the Arena, Broadmoor, Festival Place and Ardrossan Rec Center.
- When elevators break down

- With a stroller not a wheel chair but I imagine if it's difficult for one it is for the other. It's not always easy to turn around on change rooms or bathrooms when needed.

Barriers with Trails, Walkways or Sidewalks

Respondents were then asked if they faced barriers accessing any trails, walkways or sidewalks in the County. Overall, 80.1% did not, 7.4% indicated that they had not accessed these, while 12.4% had encountered barriers. Issues that were continually mentioned included problems with parking near parks and trails, and issues with accessibility and use due to a lack of maintenance, especially during the winter months. The specific problems were as follows:

- A lot of people parking in crosswalks. I know it's probably not in your department, but there have been a lot of issues with crosswalks being blocked in my area.
- Access from parking areas to trails can be difficult. Also some trails are in poor condition making it difficult to use
- Again, uneven surfaces are a huge hazard for seniors, whether it's concrete slabs that have dropped, or tree roots they have grown into walking trail asphalt. One's eyesight as well as flexibility isn't as agile as we age, so tripping and stumbling happen more frequently.
- Cobble stone walkways (such as Festival place) do not work well for people with walkers, wheelchairs, etc. Ramps and sidewalks needed in the London Drug area; witness people with disabilities having difficulties maneuvering there all the time
- Cracks in sidewalks and on walking trails. Steepness of paths
- Curb access to some paths and when the barriers are closed during the summer months wheelchair access is more tricky especially on a sloped path
- Difficulty accessing walking trail to school when it has snowed.
- Goes from wide to narrow, lack of slanted curbs
- I am new to mobility problems but it is not easy when pushing a walker to go on some of the trails in our parks.
- I find that for large parks people don't seem to think that there is a need for handicap parking and those with mobility needs would never want to use a dog park? For example, Deer Mound Dog park has the WORST PARKING IN ANY COUNTY FACILITY, aside from a TERRIBLE

pot holed, wash board, WAY TOO SMALL gravel parking lot. THERE IS NO HANDICAP PARKING AT ALL. So as this is the WORST parking lot in the County and can easily handle a few hundred people and dogs every day, I end up parking as far away from the entrances as it could be and trying to work my way across a rutted, pot holed gravel mess to a gate some 30-60 yards away. On some nice weekends I can't ever find a parking spot, as hundreds of families are using this GREAT PLACE (but VERY POORLY MAINTAINED) with the family and their dog, and either end up parking on the highway or across the 4 lanes in the subdivision across the road. No different that the Sally Stewart Dog Park, there is only 12 parking spaces with only 2 handicap spots. Does the County think that disabled people don't own dogs??

- Iciness, which we understand.
- In the winter months I find that my ability to go for daily walks is hampered by uncleaned and/or icy sidewalks and trails. Both my husband and I fall at least once during our walks over the winter and icy/snowy conditions can result in us being house bound for long periods of time.
- In winter, snow piled on medians or ramped sidewalk at intersections and crossings is difficult for anyone who is walking, pushing a stroller, etc. It is difficult, for the same reason, to reach the button to activate the signal for crossing the road. Just being a pedestrian is a barrier to accessibility!
- Lack of snow and ice removal. More rest spots and benches along trails and public sidewalks would be nice.
- More benches along the ways to sit and rest a bit
- Mostly in winter/spring. Snow clearing on ALL paths needs to be priority every snowfall. Why do roads get more of a priority? Those that use the trails as recreation or transportation rely on them to be clear - to move a wheelchair or be stable on the ground (i.e. clear of snow and ice). And spring, there is lots of gravel that could be cleared earlier.
- Non-contiguous sidewalks or trails. It was a problem when my kids were too small to ride their bikes on the road.
- Often curb drops are not level with road and there is still a lip to navigate. This is rough and inconvenient as a cyclist. For people using wheelchair and scooters, I would imagine it would be quite difficult.
- Parent is 85 yrs. old -- some areas have no walkways and then must cross busy streets to get to access, so more difficult than not able.
- Parking in cul-de-sacs prevents Strathcona County disabled transit from parking in front of my home and providing proper service for my son. Parking in bulbs should be prohibited as they are just too small

- and people have far too many cars and trucks and do not park these in their own garages.
- The trails are often dangerously slippery and icy in winter and sometimes muddy due to inadequate gravel in other seasons. Even special footwear and walking sticks are inadequate to prevent falls.
 - There are people who chronically do not shovel their walks in winter. We need a proper snow clearing policy for residents.
 - Sidewalks are not all for disabled persons in entering onto or leaving properly.
 - Sidewalks are often treacherously icy in winter, limiting ability to access transit. Mobility bus is "full" for taking clients to Robin Hood. So my son is unable to access services virtually all winter.
 - Sidewalks that go up and down to accommodate driveways leave walkers stepping up and down like curbs. There are no gentle slopes. Very hard to walk and worse on a walker or pushing a wheelchair.
 - Snow and ice issues on sidewalks in the neighborhood
 - Sometimes sidewalks are very bumpy or cracked. This causes my mother to trip. Some pathways also have uneven ground - same thing can happen.
 - The county has been spreading gravel on some of the walkways which is totally not required, a case in point is the trail along the wetlands off Highland Way, it is purely featherbedding, and the trail now looks like a country road that can accommodate road vehicles.
 - There are not always appropriately located curb cuts for wheelchairs.
 - Trails often come to a dead end. Especially between Fountain Creek and Sherwood Park. Have to use very busy streets/roads. Unsafe
 - Non-cleared sidewalks, snow piled up at crossing so you cannot reach the walk button,
 - Walking trail in Lakeland Ridge (presumably other areas as well) has stairs leading down to the beautiful decks on the manmade drainage ponds. Impossible to access when I'm pushing my infant in the stroller and of course completely inaccessible for someone on a scooter or in a wheelchair etc.
 - We are shocked by how many people don't shovel their snow all winter long! At least a third of sidewalks were not shoveled, meaning we often had to walk the dogs on the roads in winter.
 - What sidewalks?
 - With outdoor events, there is usually no concession made for people with physical handicaps!

Barriers with Programs, Activities or Events

Next, respondents were asked if they faced barriers when participating in any County programs, activities or events. Overall, 79.4% did not experience any problems, while an additional 13.7% did not participate in any of these programs, activities or events. There were, however, 6.9% who had encountered barriers. Issues that were continually mentioned included problems with a lack of parking for the disabled and limitations due to places where the events were held. The specific problems were as follows:

- Any activities, such as those for "seniors", whether fitness/arts/etc. related, should not have a fixed age range. For example, if a 'senior' fitness class is for 60+ ages, perhaps a 55 year old is best suited for that class rather than an adult class because of skill level or self-confidence. So, just as it's written in the leisure guide that if you require financial assistance to get a Millennium card, you can, this sort of information should also be included.
- At the Highland games the ability to move around the event was hampered by the grass. They could have utilized the track and had the tents situated around there, allowing for easier access. Parking should have been closer to the event, allowing a person with a disability to spend their energy around the event and not getting to the event.
- Class at Salisbury High where no auto door was available to enter.
- Excluded because I was not able to be as active as I wish that I could.
- I walk assisted with a cane, previously crutches, while at Millennium Place an employee not watching where they were walking accidentally kicked my cane! I have several friends that are in wheelchairs, they have mentioned that events outdoors are not accessible to them!
- Many activities & instructors don't know how to work with those with disabilities.
- more mobility washrooms
- No alternatives to long line ups for children with autism at community events - makes it untenable to bring children with no patience for excessive lineups.
- Not enough disabled parking
- Parking and benches
- Parking for Highland Games extremely far from available parking and grass surface was not good for walker, cane or wheelchair access
- Parking issues

- Require wider parking spots & when attending grandchildren's sporting events, not enough handicapped parking spots.
- same as before - outside doors
- So many people (for example New Year's Eve) that the lineups were huge, kids activities ran out of supplies, too many people. I expect that other areas (Edmonton, etc.) were in attendance.
- Some activities fill up pretty fast and/or do not have enough space to accommodate individuals. For example, pickleball.
- Sometimes in focus groups, meetings, the speaker doesn't repeat the participant's question into the mic, so that I can hear it. Other examples: Sometimes the sound system is not adequate or not available; sometimes receptionists on the phone speak too softly and it is difficult to hear /understand; sometimes recorded messages are softly spoken and I have to get another family member to listen and tell me the issues
- The place the event was held at was difficult because the ground was very hilly and hard to walk on. This was difficult for us as walking in these conditions hindered the enjoyment of the event.
- The provision of captioning for movies and other events is lacking. Hearing access in general seems to be lacking.
- Will be nice to have busses going to hamlets on regular schedule
- With Crohn's disease events access to bathroom facilities are difficult.
- Youth recreation programs are not offered for children with mild developmental challenges. As well staff may not have understanding/knowledge of all diagnosis so my son was never signed up for county programming.

Barriers Applying for Employment with Strathcona County

Overall, 45.4% did not experience any problems, while an additional 51.4% had not applied for any employment with the County. There were, however, 3.2% who had encountered barriers. Specific problems were as follows, though it should be noted that most of these comments are likely not associated with accessibility issues:

- Blatant bias during interview process.
- Emails to HR staff have gone unanswered. HR should not ignore direct emails when the person has been met with in the past.

- Have applied for multiple positions over an extended period of time and have always applied on time, correctly and have exceeded minimum criteria but have never received so much as an email to say why? Clearly Strathcona County are adopting barriers that restrict qualified applicants from even being interviewed, very disappointing but also suspect that something like this will not be acknowledged.
- My son has a mental disability that causes him to act up sometimes and not have much patience. He is also not very worried about his personal hygiene. This makes it impossible to work in the public sector, like food services, so he needs something like warehouse work but can't find one. He can't stand for long periods either. Although he has a higher than normal intellect, he has the social skills in the opposite direction. Makes life very difficult for him
- Not informed if we didn't get the job
- The only way you get a job in the County is to know someone or be a family member to an employee.
- They always hire internally, never able to get a job

Barriers with Strathcona County Transit

Overall, 53.2% did not experience any problems, while an additional 40.1% had not used Strathcona County transit services. There were, however, 6.7% who had experienced some sort of barrier with the service. Specific problems were as follows:

- A driver indicated it was a hassle to help a person in a wheelchair onto the bus (lower the bus)
- All age groups with or without barriers could use a dial-a-bus in rural Strathcona.
- Bus area at Wye makes it really hard to catch bus on crutches. Windrows to climb over and auto door broken.
- Bus too crowded -- had to stand.
- Due to mobility issues she can't walk far distances to get to the bus stop anymore.
- I love the buses but find the ones that are what I would call a travel motor coach very hard for me to enter or leave. Stairs at the front are too narrow - very scary. Love the buses where the entrance lowers to ground level.
- My child needs a high level of support so purchased transportation support through Robin Hood transportation. This costs more than

what he would pay for bus pass through the county. I would like the County to contribute to Robin Hood transportation sine they are providing service to Strathcona residents that can't access county transportation. Services such as Mobility bus need to be improved and enhanced!

- No path to the bus stop on some of the stops.
- Our double Thule was quite difficult to get on and off the bus. I believe we had to take out son out and fold it and open it again later. It should be easier for parents with two kids to take the bus with them. One adult with two small children or baby would not be able to safely take both out and fold it.
- Parking in cul-de-sacs is insane! Far too many cars and trucks parked in the bulbs prevent the mobility bus from accessing our home. Bulbs in Sherwood Park need to be prohibited for street parking (ambulances, garbage, and mobility buses). People should use their garages instead of filling them up with crap and parking everywhere else on the street.
- SCATS buses taking an hour to go to and from Therapy that is 5 - 10 minutes away.
- Sidewalks are often treacherously icy in winter, limiting ability to access transit. Mobility bus is "full" for taking clients to Robin Hood, so my son is unable to access services virtually all winter.
- Seeing the bus numbers...not big enough and sometimes only on the front of the bus
- Steps getting on and off.
- The double decker buses are the most uncomfortable seats and hard to move around > forget accessing the upper deck.
- Transit services, even minimal, should include Ardrossan.
- We tried to get information from Transit on whether he would qualify for mobility bus with his CNIB card, but they told us to call the number instead. The number then only gives you voicemail. Due to his mobility issues on top of the sight issues walking a long distance to the nearest bus stop is rarely an option but he wants to be independent.

Barriers Obtaining Accessible Housing

Overall, 73% of respondents had not tried to obtain accessible housing, and 25.2% did not experience any problems. There were a small number (1.1%) who had experienced some sort of problem. Specific problems mentioned were as follows:

- All housing supported by the county should be built with universal accessible features. It should be part of planning and development bylaws.
- Not enough housing options, cost is prohibitive.
- When my adult disabled granddaughter lived with me she was unable to obtain accessible housing. None available.

Top Three Ways for Improving Services

Respondents were then presented with a list of potential ways that Strathcona County could implement to improve services to people with disabilities. The results are presented in Table 2 and organized based on the top (first) ranked percentages. The last column indicates the number of people (from a maximum number of 294 respondents) who provided a ranking for an item. Please also note that each option was not picked by respondents.

As such, it can be derived from Table 2 that *training staff to interact and communicate with people with different types of disabilities* was the top ranked improvement that should be considered, with 59.6% picking this as their number one choice.

The second ranked priority (incorporating the number of people who picked the item for ranking) was *making sure that accessibility is considered when planning events and invite attendees to tell you if they have specific accessibility needs*, with 43.1% picking this as their number two choice.

The third ranked priority (incorporating the number of people who picked the item for ranking) was taking into account the *accessibility design, criteria and features when planning policies, services or events, facilities and spaces*, with 44.8% picking this as their number three choice.

Table 2
Potential improvements in services for people with disabilities

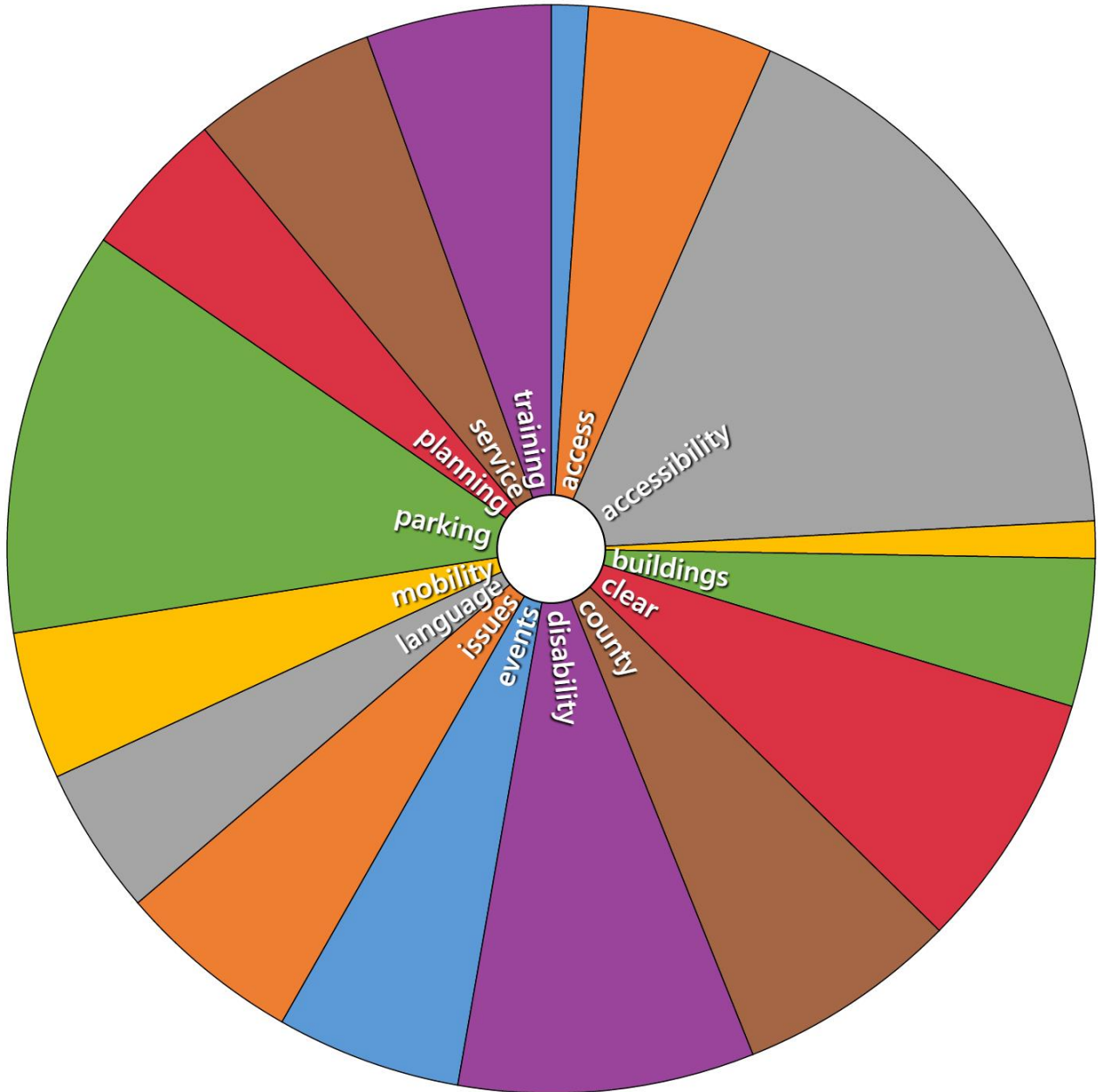
	Ranked #1	Ranked #2	Ranked #3	N who provided a ranking
Train staff to interact and communicate with people with different types of disabilities.	59.6%	18.4%	21.9%	114
Use plain language in written materials. Use symbols and pictures to help get your message across.	40.9%	38.6%	20.5%	89
Make everyday documents easy to read by making sure the print is legible for most people.	40.0%	43.6%	16.4%	55
Provide a way for citizens to identify barriers they have experienced in accessing services or facilities in Strathcona County (either on the County website or paper form).	32.7%	29.6%	37.8%	98
Incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when planning policies, services or events, facilities and spaces.	28.0%	27.3%	44.8%	143
Make sure that accessibility is considered when planning events and invite attendees to tell you if they have specific accessibility needs.	27.5%	43.1%	29.4%	109
Include captions when producing videos. When this is not possible, provide a text transcription of the video.	23.1%	33.3%	43.6%	39
Use assistive listening or amplification devices as appropriate.	16.7%	50.0%	33.3%	24
Create accessibility checklists for all County departments to use in their planning and service delivery.	15.7%	40.0%	44.3%	70

Number 1 Priority for Improving Accessibility in the County

The last question asked in the survey was for respondents to indicate in their own words how accessibility could be improved in the

County. Overall, 67.3% provided input, with the most common themes depicted in Figure 2, as derived from the NVIVO software.

**FIGURE 2
Age of Respondents**



Descriptions of the major themes shown in Figure 2 are as follows. It should be noted that there are often common crossovers between themes. Apart from the themes in Figure 2 that are self-explanatory

(*parking, planning, services, mobility, issues and access*), the other major themes include the following descriptions:

- **Accessibility:** This theme includes identifying major needs and creating checklists and other measures for dealing with any issues or barriers; creating accessibility within existing structures, such as parking, in playgrounds and other areas in the County. Other accessibility issues include online access and paying particular attention for wheelchair access.
- **Buildings:** This theme includes identifying any problems with accessing buildings, whether they are County owned or other public buildings.
- **Clear:** This theme includes making information accessible through plain language, understandable policies, or signage.
- **County:** This theme includes identifying accessibility issues associated with County buildings, documents, events, offices and those noted by residents. Most of these also occur in other themes noted in Figure 2.
- **Disability:** This theme highlights a variety of issues associated with disability, including physical issues, developmental issues, mental issues, visual and audial issues.
- **Events:** This theme includes identifying accessibility issues associated with the planning and staging of community, sports and County events.
- **Language:** This theme is a crossover, which incorporates issues associated with not dealing with plain language.
- **Training:** The emphasis behind this theme was to ensure that all staff received appropriate training to handle various accessibility issues, including awareness training, understanding of mental disabilities, and having the right attitude to deal with those with accessibility issues.