

# SCOOP

## **Post-Secondary Opportunities in Strathcona County, the Environmental Sustainability Framework and the use of Driveway Curb Ramps**

DATE: **October 2020**



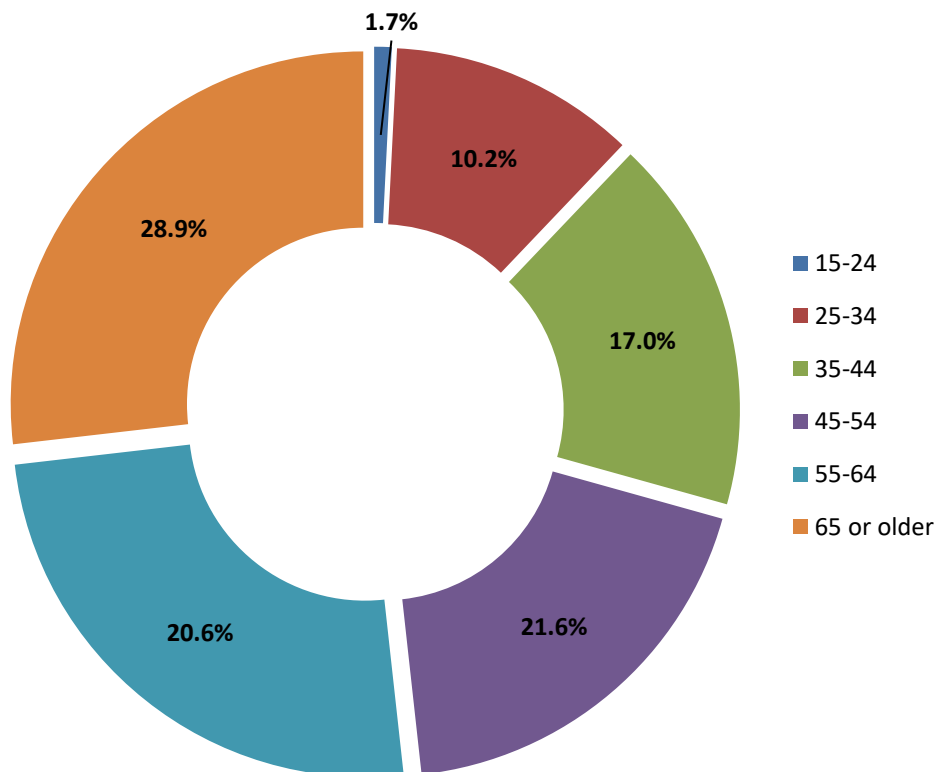
In October 2020, Strathcona County conducted a regular online survey as part of its Strathcona County Online Opinion Panel (SCOOP) initiative. This project consisted of different survey topics with a number of questions asked within each topic area. This survey was exclusive to residents who signed up to be part of SCOOP.

## Survey Highlights

The October mixed-topic survey consisted of questions on post-secondary opportunities in Strathcona County, the environmental sustainability framework and the use of driveway curb ramps. There were 546 responses to the mixed-topic survey.

### WHO RESPONDED?

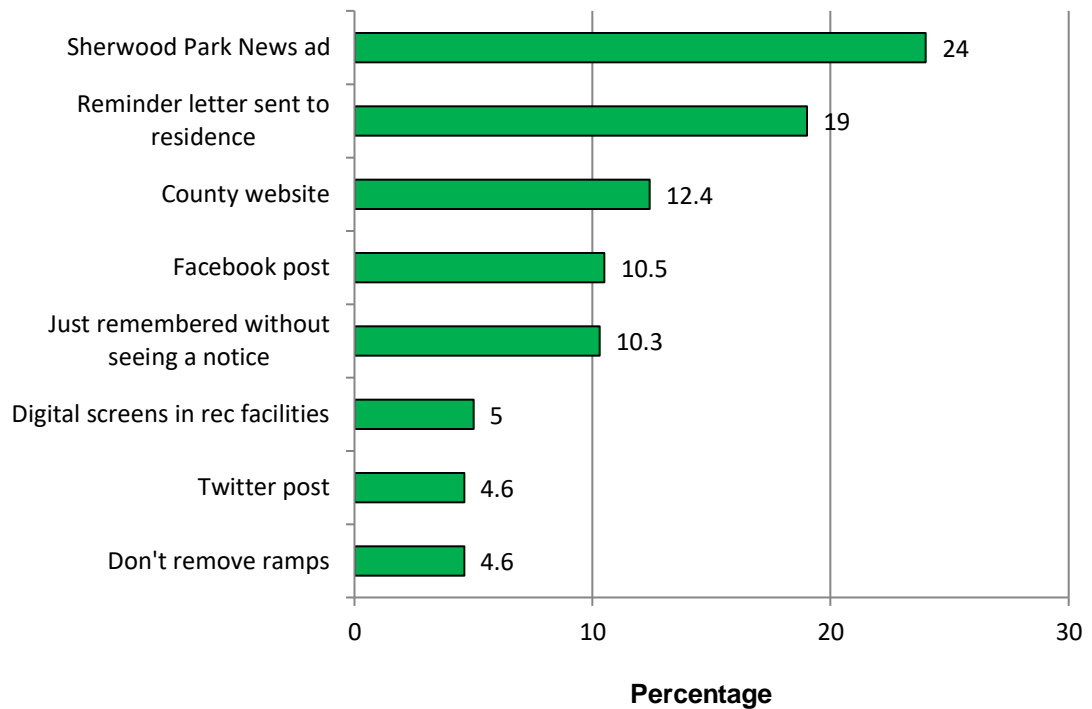
- 75.8% of the participants lived in Sherwood Park, 21.2% came from rural parts of Strathcona County, and the remaining 2.9% worked in Strathcona County but did not live there.
- 58.8% of the participants were female while 41.2% were male.
- The age group breakdown of the survey respondents is shown below.



## Driveway Curb Ramps

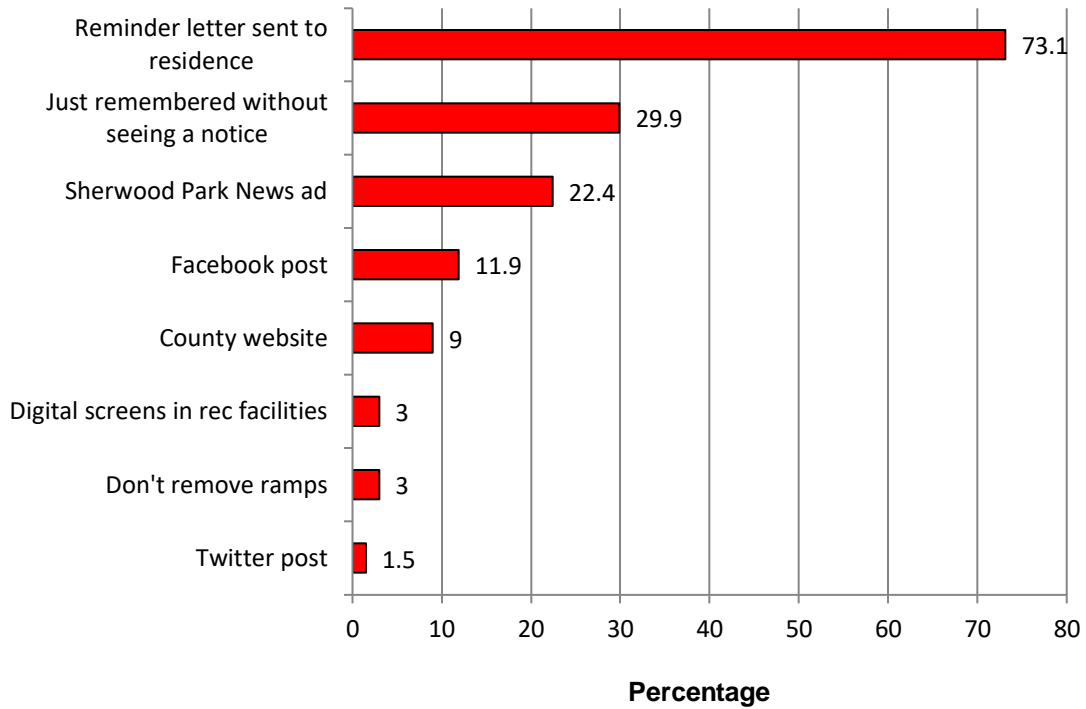
- All of the respondents were then asked to indicate if they had curb ramps (or some other obstruction such as a basketball net) on the roadway. Overall, 14.9% said that they did, while the remaining 85.1% did not. All respondents were then asked to indicate which communication methods used by the County helped them to remember to remove the ramps before November 1<sup>st</sup> (in previous years), regardless of whether they actually had ramps. The results are shown below.

### Communication methods associated with removing curb ramps



- A breakdown of which communication methods used by the County helped people to remember to remove the ramps before November 1<sup>st</sup> (in previous years), for those who actually owned ramps is depicted on the next page. It now can be seen that the reminder letter sent to the residence was the most effective method of communication. Just under 30% of curb ramp users remembered to remove these without any reminders, with 22.4% noting the ad in the Sherwood Park News was useful. Electronic media (Facebook/County website) was lower down the list.

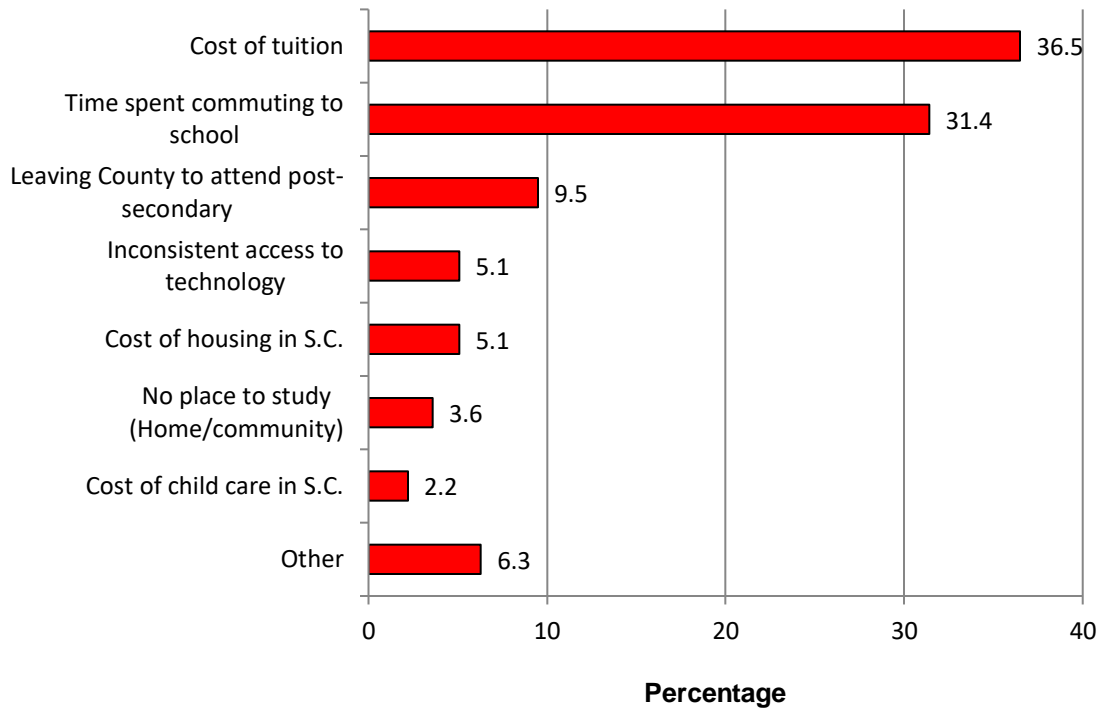
**Communication methods associated with removing curb ramps  
Curb Ramp Users Only**



**Post-Secondary Opportunities in Strathcona County**

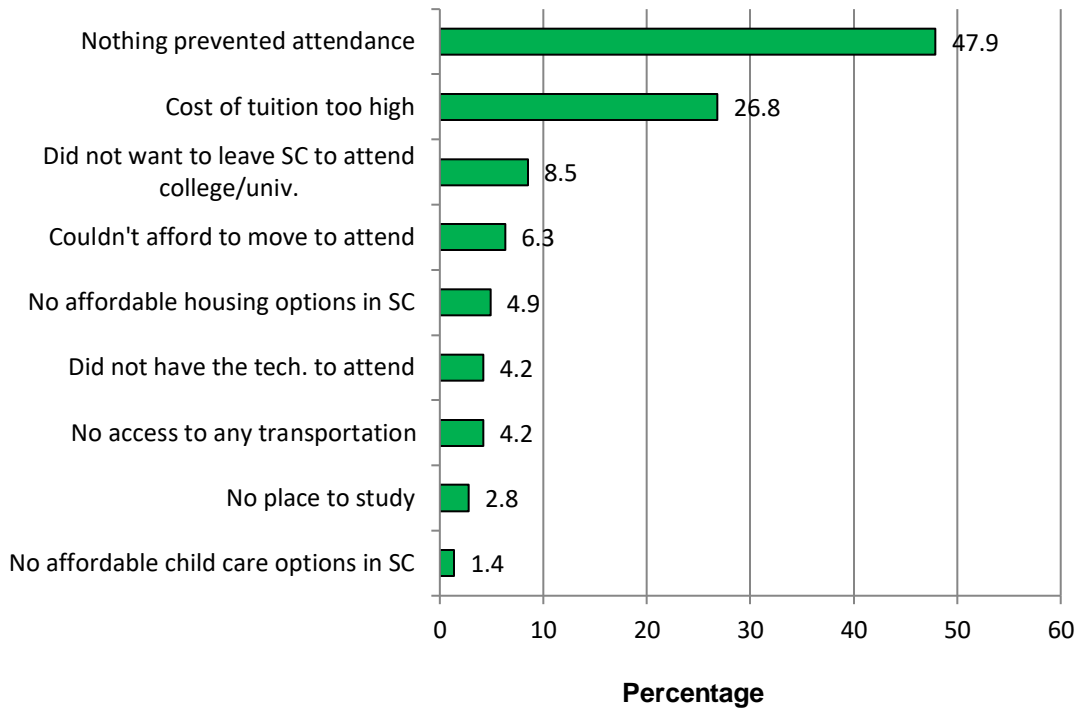
- 29.7% of respondents were currently attending a post-secondary institution or had done so within the past 10 years. The remaining 70.3% had not. Please note, however, that those who have not attended a post-secondary institution within the past 10 years may have done so in 2010 or earlier.
- Those respondents who had attended a post-secondary institution within the past 10 years were then asked a series of questions about their experiences. A comparison of the top issue faced during one’s most recent post-secondary experience is shown on the next page. It can be seen that the top issues were the cost of tuition and the time spent commuting to the post-secondary institution.

### Top issue faced when attending post-secondary school



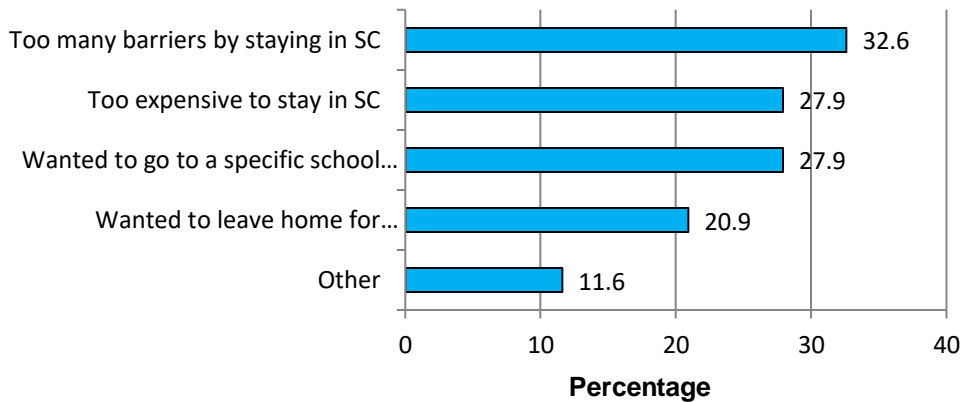
- Other reasons cited by respondents included working full time while attending school, time commitment, issues with transit connections and availability and bouts of depression brought on by stress of graduate studies.
- Respondents were then asked to indicate from a list as to what aspects (if any) prevented them from attending college or university. As seen on the next page, nearly half of the respondents reported that there were no barriers preventing attendance. The other factor that was most prevalent was that the cost of tuition was too high (at some point in their schooling). The other potential barriers were noted by a small percentage of respondents.

## Barriers that prevented college/university attendance



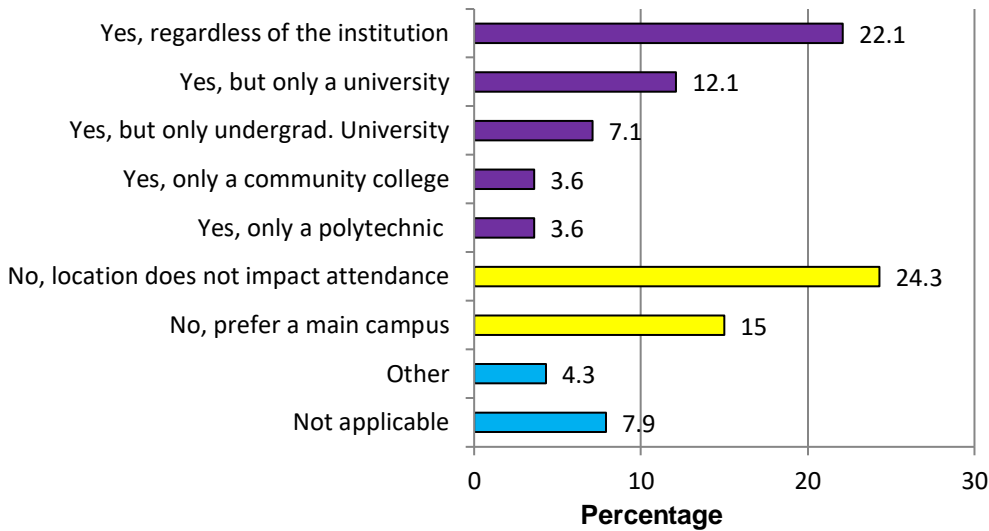
- Overall, 69.7% of the respondents did not move out of Strathcona County to attend a post-secondary institution. For the remaining respondents who chose to leave Strathcona County, it can be seen below that there were either multiple barriers associated with staying in Strathcona County and attending school, or specific reasons such as costs, wanting to leave home to attend school or that the college/university was located outside of the Edmonton region were cited. With respect to other reasons, most of the comments were associated with the schools that people were attending, including factors such as entry requirements.

## Reasons for leaving Strathcona County to attend college/university



- The last question that respondents were asked in the survey was whether they would be more likely to do post-secondary education if a campus was located in Strathcona County. Overall, people were somewhat divided on this, with 48.2% saying yes and 39.7% saying no. A more specific breakdown of the “yes” and “no” responses is shown below.

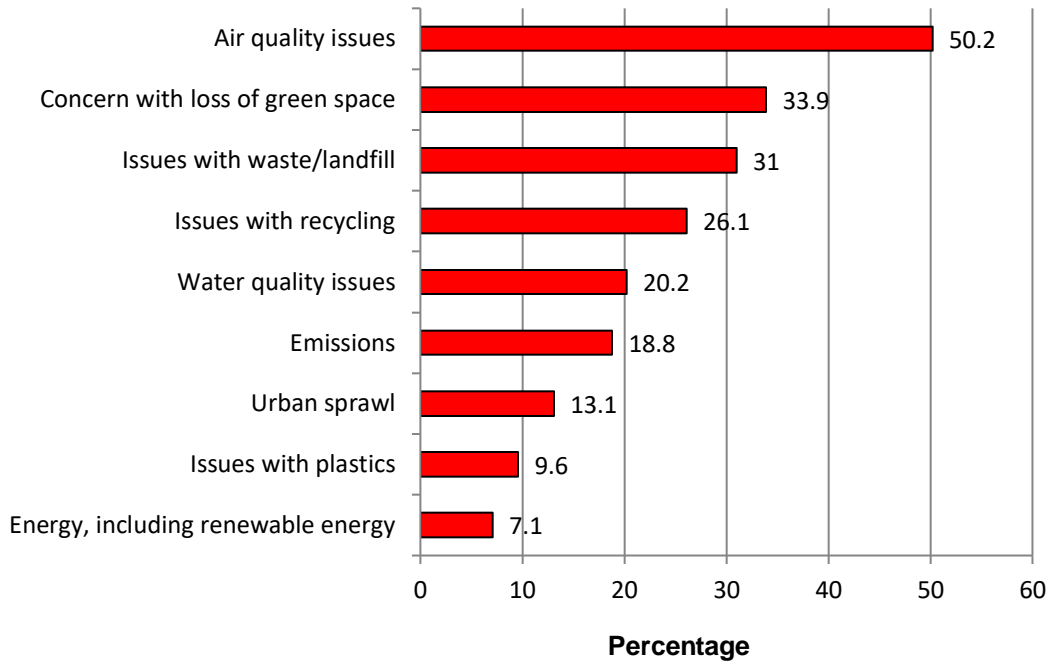
**Should a post-secondary campus be located in Strathcona County?**



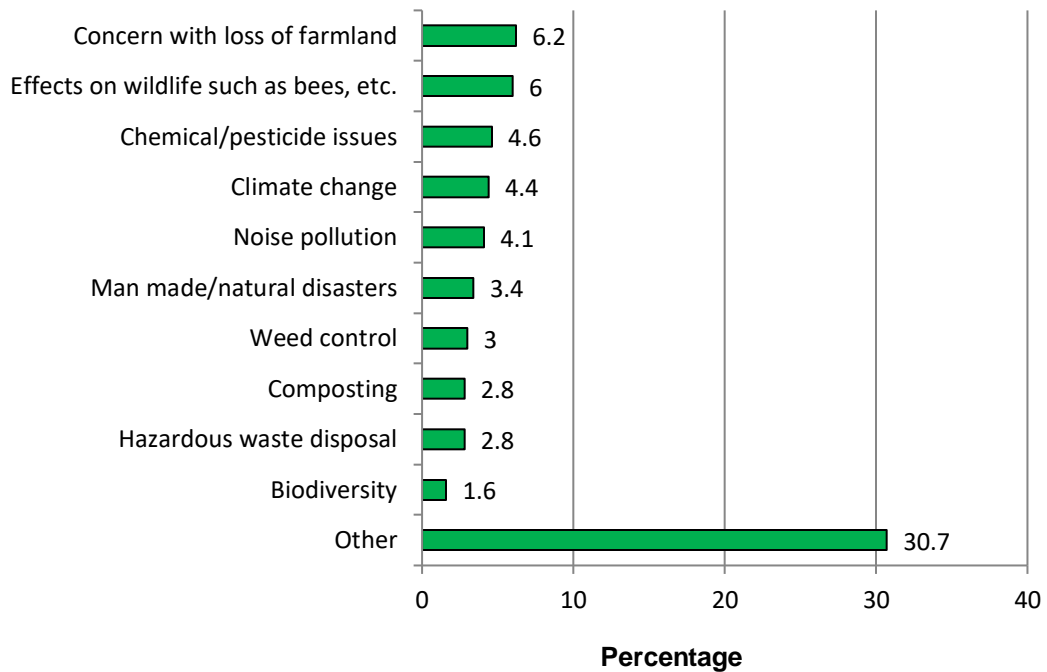
**Strathcona County`s Environmental Sustainability Framework**

- 32.1% were aware that Strathcona County had this framework; 49.9% were not aware of this, while the remaining 18.1% were not sure.
- All of the respondents were asked to indicate in their own words what they felt were the top three environmental concerns for Strathcona County. Overall, 88.3% put forward at least one concern. A general summary of the concerns raised by residents is depicted on the next page.
- Air quality issues made the top of the list. If this were combined with emissions, this would increase the percentage to 69%. One could also combine the concern with the loss of green space with urban sprawl, which would increase the percentage to 47%.
- Other concerns mentioned less often by respondents included loss of farmland, effects on wildlife, chemical and pesticide issues and climate change. The “other” category includes concepts such as cleanliness, renewable resources and environmental education.

## Top Environmental Concerns



## Other Environmental Concerns



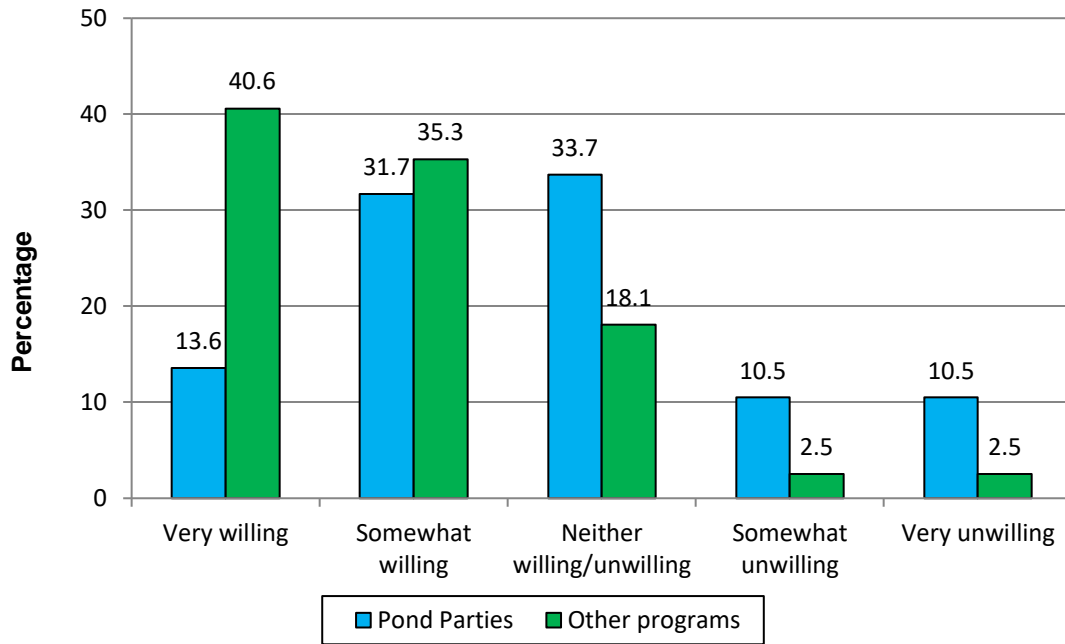


- Respondents were asked to pick their top three priorities when it came to air quality issues. Overall, 3% of the respondents did not know. For the remaining people, the issues, ranked by respondent preference, are listed below:
  - Industrial emissions – 72.7%
  - Particulate matter – 41.9%.
  - Transportation emissions – 36.8%
  - Energy efficiency – 34.6%
  - Wildfires – 22.7%
  - Monitoring – 22.5%
  - Idling – 19%
  - Ozone – 13.2%
  - Safe shelters – 3.6%
  - Other, which includes smells in the air from things such as what the neighbours are doing and/or rendering plants and lack of carbon captures – 3.2%
  
- Next, respondents were asked to pick their top three priorities when it came to biodiversity conservation issues. Overall, 3.8% of the respondents did not know. For the remaining people, the issues, ranked by respondent preference, are listed below:
  - Wildlife habitat corridors – 50.2%
  - Wildlife habitat restoration – 45.7%
  - Tree planting – 32.8%
  - Soil conservation – 25.5%
  - Increasing biodiversity in our parks – 23.9%
  - Acquisition of conservation land – 20.2%
  - Living with wildlife programs – 17.4%
  - Nature education – 17.2%
  - Decreasing turf and lawn – 13%
  - Light pollution – 12.6%.
  - Monitoring – 9.5%
  - Lake stewardship groups – 6.5%
  - Other, which includes allowing for residential bee keeping, keeping the natural areas natural and developing bylaws to protect flora and fauna – 2%

- Next, respondents were asked to pick their top three priorities when it came to energy conservation issues. Overall, 5.5% of the respondents did not know. For the remaining people, the issues, ranked by respondent preference, are listed below:
  - Renewable energy technology – 39.9%
  - Energy retrofits – 32%
  - Green construction standards – 22.1%
  - Solar ready buildings – 20.4%
  - Energy plans for municipal buildings – 20.4%
  - Energy education program – 19.4%.
  - Decreasing CO2 emissions from municipal operations – 18.6%
  - Decreasing CO2 emissions from municipal buildings – 13%
  - Electric vehicle charging stations – 11.7%
  - Green renovation standards – 10.9%
  - Smart bus technology – 10.5%
  - Green ratings systems for municipal buildings – 8.9%
  - Microgeneration technology – 8.3%
  - Parking design standards – 7.1%
  - Green ratings systems for municipal operations – 5.9%
  - Purchasing green energy – 5.5%
  - Other, which includes comments on consideration of costs for the various programs– 6.1%

- A gauge of the willingness that respondents would have for participating in environmental programs such as pond parties and the willingness to consider changing behaviors after attending other environmental based programs is shown below.

**Willingness to participate in pond parties / change behaviours after attending other programs**



- It can be seen that the majority of respondents were definitely willing to change their behaviours when it came to other programs such as decreased mowing, mulching grass clippings, decreasing pesticide use and so on. When it came to participating in pond parties, the percentage of people willing to do this was considerably smaller.

### What's Next?

The SCOOP Mixed Topic Surveys usually run monthly and cover a variety of topics. Our next Mixed Topic Survey results will feature topics covered in our November 2020 release.