

SCOOP

Community Gardens, Public Engagement and Group Fitness Programs

DATE: Summer 2020



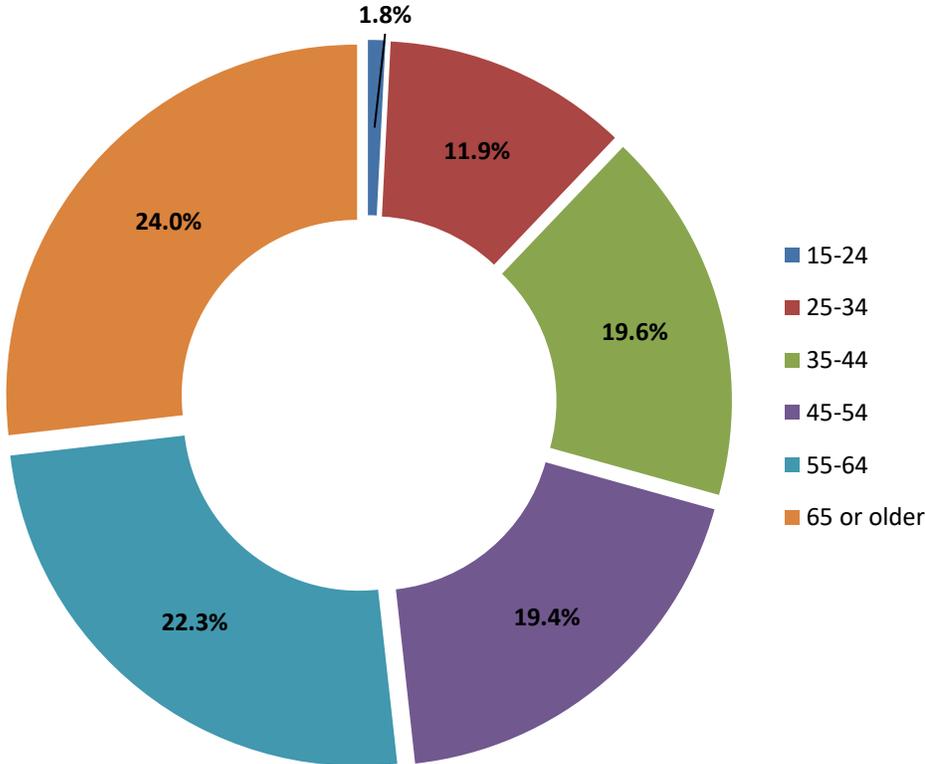
In Summer 2020, Strathcona County conducted a regular online survey as part of its Strathcona County Online Opinion Panel (SCOOP) initiative. This project consisted of different survey topics with a number of questions asked within each topic area. This survey was exclusive to residents who signed up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

Survey Highlights

The Summer mixed-topic survey consisted of questions on community gardens, in-person public engagement and group fitness programs in County facilities. There were 693 responses to the mixed-topic survey.

WHO RESPONDED?

- 72.6% of the participants lived in Sherwood Park, 24.8% came from rural parts of Strathcona County, and the remaining 2.6% worked in Strathcona County but did not live there.
- 65.7% of the participants were female while 34.3% were male.
- The age group breakdown of the survey respondents is shown below.



Community Gardens

- A series of questions were asked about the community gardens in Strathcona County. Overall, 62.1% indicated that they were trying to grow more food at home compared to what they did in previous years, while 20.4% said they were not, but were interested in doing so. The remaining 17.5% were not and had no interest in doing so.
- The majority of respondents were not interested in joining a community garden (51.5%). However, 19.1% were interested in doing so, while the remaining 29.3% were not sure.

In-Person Public Engagement

- When asked about participating in a public in-person engagement session while COVID-19 was still active in the community, 32.8% said that they would. The majority (46.1%) would not, while the remaining 21.1% were not sure.
- When asked about participating in digital engagement while COVID-19 remains an issue in the community, 42% thought that the County should just focus on this on its own, while 58% thought the County should consider a mix of digital and in-person opportunities.
- Respondents were asked to rank six safety strategy protocols associated with holding in-person public engagement sessions, where “1” was considered to be the most important and “6” would be the least important. The ranking results are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Ranking in-person protocols

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ensure that all advice and provincial protocols are implemented	56.8%	12.4%	11.4%	8.4%	4.7%	6.3%
Consider live streaming in-person meetings for people who are unable to attend or don't feel comfortable attending	19.2%	14.1%	10.0%	19.2%	29.5%	8.1%
Set up the room to maintain physical distancing	11.4%	30.8%	25.8%	18.7%	8.0%	5.4%
Adhere to attendance limits	7.0%	21.4%	27.4%	21.8%	16.3%	6.0%
Implement a registration process. Drop-ins would not be allowed	6.1%	13.3%	18.9%	21.8%	15.0%	24.9%
Consider options for people to call in to in-person engagement events	3.5%	10.7%	8.4%	10.2%	24.5%	42.7%

- It can be seen from Table 1 that the most important priority for restarting in-person public engagement is that the County must ensure that all advice and provincial protocols are implemented. This includes ensuring things like hand washing is done by participants, that hand sanitizer is available, that the County is doing enhanced cleaning protocols, that all participants and employees at the events are wearing masks, and so on. The second strongest thing that the County can do is to set up the room to maintain physical distancing. The remaining order of other options were less clear, though it should be noted that considering options for people to call in to in-person engagement events was the lowest (6th picked option).
- When asked to indicate the extent of agreement with the statement *In-person engagement should be used when there are no other options available that can meet the objectives of the public engagement process*, 79.1% agreed with this, while the remaining 20.9% disagreed.

Group Fitness Programs

- 62.1% were aware that Strathcona County had recently reopened adult group fitness classes (including aqua fitness).
- The majority of respondents (66.4%) were aware that they could register for classes either online using Rec Online or doing this by telephone.
- While many people are aware of that group fitness programs have returned to County facilities, very few of them have actually attended one. Overall, only 4.1% of the respondents have done so, though all of them would be likely (29.4) or very likely (70.6%) to recommend the class to a friend.
- Overall, 9.4% had planned to register for an indoor group fitness class this fall, while 31% were not sure. The remaining 59.6% of respondents were not planning to register for any group fitness classes at this time.
- The classes that people have gone to included: aqua-fitness/aquasize, bootcamp, various yoga classes, turning back the clock, and muscle maker.

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 September 2020 release.