



**STRATHCONA  
COUNTY**

## **2021 September SCOOP Mixed Topic Survey: Strathcona County Budget**



### **Research Results**

Report Prepared by Phil Kreisel, Ph.D.  
Communications

September 2021

**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.....4**

    A. Aspects of the business planning/budget process .....4

    B. Best approach to handle property taxes/municipal services.....5

    C. Comments and suggestions about the budget .....8

**APPENDIX A: SURVEY QUESTIONS .....11**

**APPENDIX B: BUDGET- RELATED QUESTIONS .....12**

## **I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

In September 2021, 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 September 2021 mix topic survey consisted of questions on the Strathcona County budget and public engagement in the County.

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); SPSS was used for the data analysis.

This report covers questions associated with the Strathcona County budget. 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 Corporate Planning and Communications. The survey was then 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 FOIP<sup>1</sup> 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 616 people who had previously signed up to be part of SCOOP, Strathcona County’s online opinion panel. Overall, 73.1% of the participants lived in the urban area, 24.5% came from rural parts of Strathcona County, and the remaining 2.4% worked in Strathcona County but did not live there.

Although poll-based data is derived from people who decide to participate, were not randomly selected and have access to the online poll, the margin of error for a comparable probability-based random sample of the same size is  $\pm 3.9\%$ , 19 times out of 20.<sup>2</sup> The data was gathered via the online SCOOP platform in September 2021.

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.

As seen in Figure 1, most of the respondents who participated in the survey are over the age of 44, with 27.5% of the participants between the

---

<sup>1</sup> 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).

<sup>2</sup> The  $\pm 3.9\%$  is the *margin of error* associated with this study and refers to the potential percentage spread that exists within answers to questions. This means that an answer could be up to 3.9% 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.

age of 25 and 44. Only a very small percentage of participants were under 25. Overall, of those who declared their gender, 55.8% of participants were female while 44.2% were male.<sup>3</sup>

**FIGURE 1  
Age of Respondents**

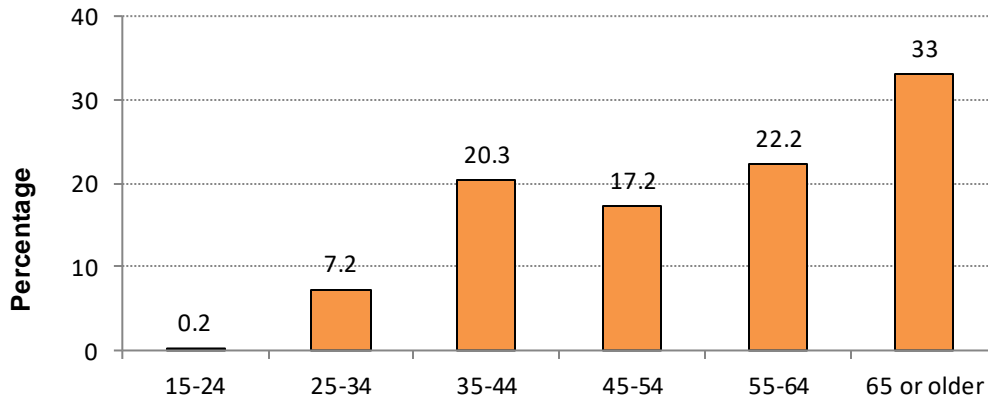
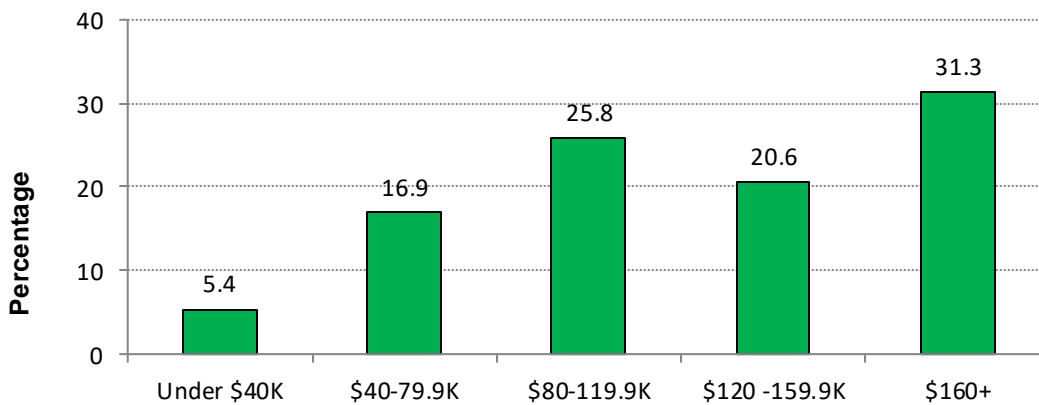


Figure 2 presents a breakdown of household income. Over 50% of respondents are earning \$120,000 or more.

**FIGURE 2  
Household Income**



<sup>3</sup> There were 0.5% who chose to self-identify, while 4.4% chose not to disclose their gender.

### III. SURVEY RESULTS

Respondents were asked if they would like to answer a series of questions about the Strathcona County budget. Overall, 97.9% of the participants (603 people) opted to answer questions on this topic.

#### A. Aspects of the business planning/budget process

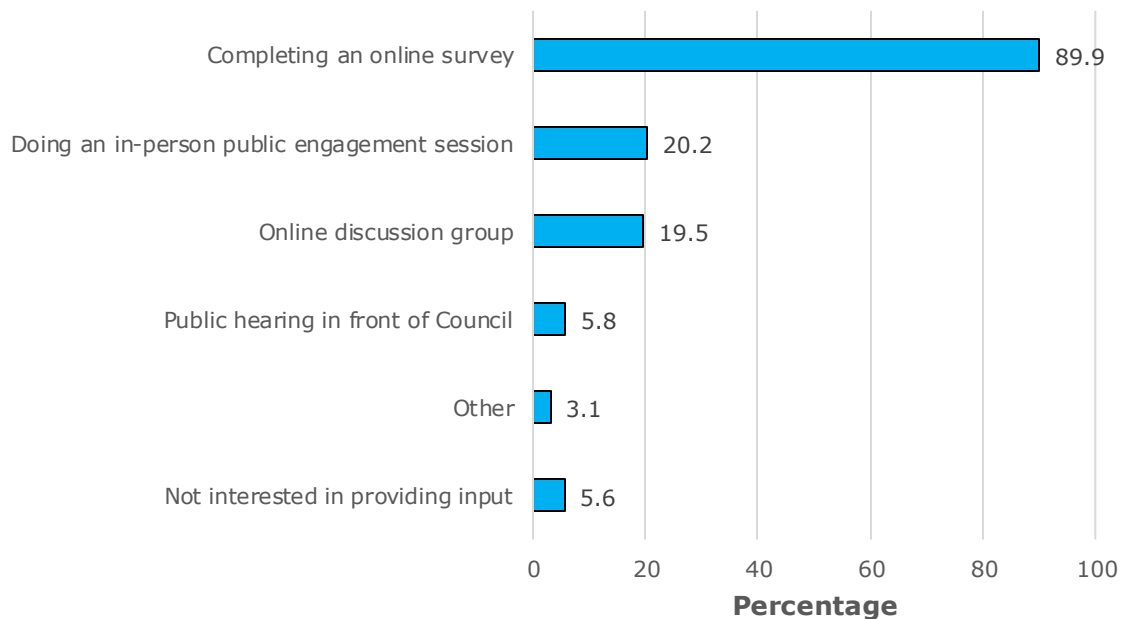
Initially, respondents were provided with a list of services done by Strathcona County and asked whether each service exceeded, met or was below their expectations. The overall results are shown in Table 1. In each instance, most respondents felt that the County met their expectations with respect to the delivery of services. However, it can be seen that there were three instances where a sizable percentage of respondents felt that the delivery of *police and bylaw services, agricultural services and planning services* were below expectations.

**TABLE 1**  
**Expectations for delivery of County services**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Exceeded Expectations</b>	<b>Met Expectations</b>	<b>Below Expectations</b>
Fire Services	521	29.4%	68.1%	2.5%
Ambulance Services	507	26.4%	66.5%	7.1%
Indoor recreation facilities and recreation programs	534	25.3%	62.9%	11.8%
Maintenance of parks and playgrounds	552	22.1%	64.1%	13.8%
Utilities (water, wastewater and waste collection)	540	19.6%	69.1%	11.3%
Maintaining County streets & roads in the winter	584	18.0%	65.6%	16.4%
Maintaining County streets & roads in the summer	578	17.1%	67.3%	15.6%
Community social programs	504	15.3%	71.2%	13.5%
Transit services	443	13.5%	74.3%	12.2%
Police and bylaw services	536	13.4%	63.4%	23.1%
Agriculture, including weed and pest control	534	7.7%	57.1%	35.2%
Planning services, which includes commercial and residential land development, building and development permits and zoning	486	6.4%	66.9%	26.7%

The next question asked respondents to indicate the ways they might provide input into the business planning/budget process. The overall results are shown in Figure 3. *Completing an online survey* was the most popular option.

**FIGURE 3**  
**Ways of providing input**



### **B. Best approach to handle property taxes/municipal services**

Respondents were then asked what the best of three possible methods would be for balancing the community's needs and wants for municipal services against the County's ability to pay for the services (or "the cost to deliver services"). Overall:

- 41.7% would support not increasing property taxes, even if this means a reduction in the current level of municipal services.
- 36.6% would support maintaining the current level of municipal services, even if this means increasing property taxes.
- 21.7% would support increasing/improving the current level of municipal services, even if this means increasing property taxes.

The level of support for the different methods varies when considerations for where people live is factored into the analysis. It can be seen from Table 3 that those who live in Sherwood Park have different preferences compared to those who live in rural areas.

**TABLE 2**  
**Preference for property taxes/municipal services based on where respondents live**

	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>
Not increasing property taxes, even if this means a reduction in the current level of municipal services.	35.8%	59.9%
Maintaining the current level of municipal services, even if this means increasing property taxes.	40.0%	26.3%
Increasing/improving the current level of municipal services, even if this means increasing property taxes	24.1%	13.9%

The only aspect that was similar between urban and rural residents is that increasing property taxes to increase or improve municipal services was not an option that was favored by either resident. The majority of rural residents did not want an increase in their property taxes, even if this meant a reduction in municipal services. Urban residents were a bit more divided on this, with slightly more wanting to maintain the current level of municipal services, even if this meant an increase in property taxes. Slightly fewer urban residents did not want property taxes raised at all.



The level of support for the different methods also varies when household income is considered. It can be seen from Table 3 that only small percentages of people in any income category were in favor of *increasing or improving the current level of municipal services, as this would mean increasing property taxes*. Furthermore, it was evident that the majority of those earning less than \$40,000 a year did not want to see *property taxes increased if this meant a reduction in municipal services*. Those earning \$40,000 or more were torn between this option and *maintaining the current level of municipal services, even if this meant increasing property taxes*.

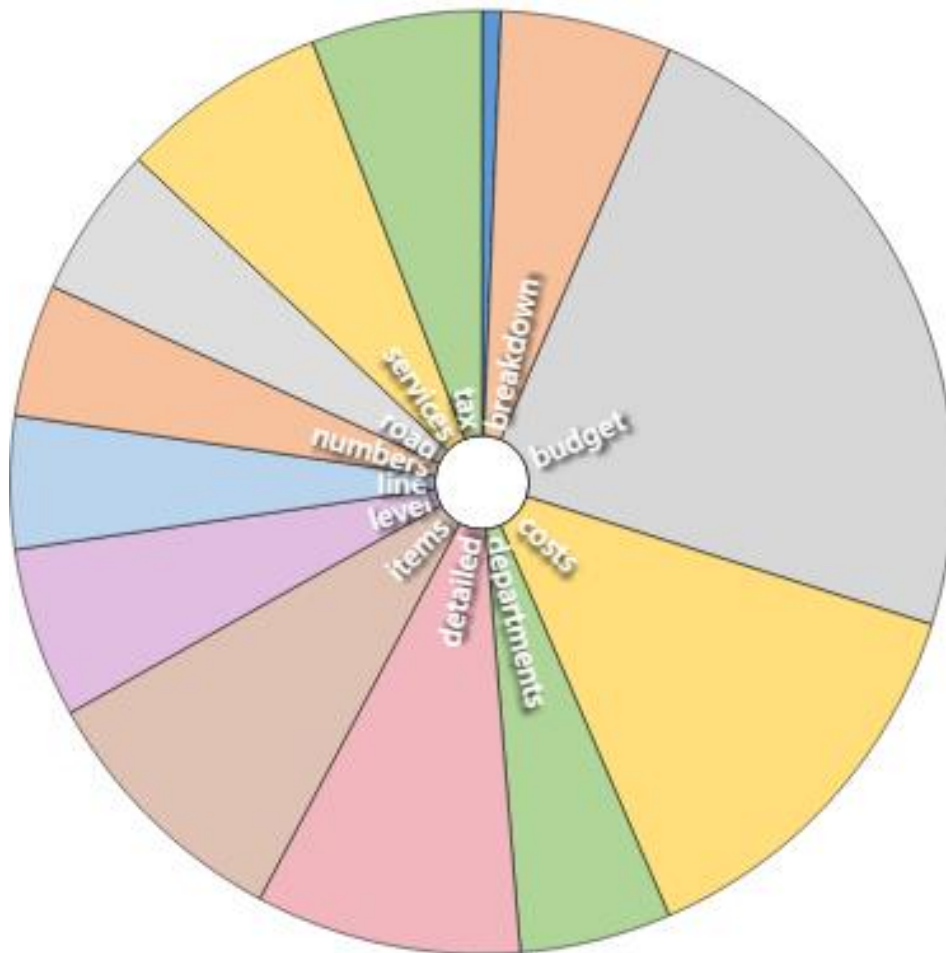
**TABLE 3**  
**Preference for property taxes/municipal services based on household income**

	<b>Under \$40K</b>	<b>\$40-79.9K</b>	<b>\$80-119.9K</b>	<b>\$120-159.9K</b>	<b>\$160K or more</b>
Not increasing property taxes, even if this means a reduction in the current level of municipal services.	60.0%	46.2%	36.7%	44.9%	36.7%
Maintaining the current level of municipal services, even if this means increasing property taxes.	20.0%	40.0%	37.8%	33.3%	40.0%
Increasing/improving the current level of municipal services, even if this means increasing property taxes	20.0%	13.8%	25.5%	21.8%	23.3%

### C. Comments and suggestions about the budget

Respondents were also asked to indicate in their own words what sort of information they would need to better understand the County's budget. Using NVIVO software, an overall breakdown via 12 categories was extracted from 273 responses (45.3% of the respondents).

**FIGURE 3**  
**Ways of understanding the budget**



Some of the categories have more explanations than others, based on the actual open ended comments. There are also crossovers of some comments into multiple categories. Here is how this breaks down:

- **Budget** – A general summary area that includes queries on rolling budgets, comparable budgets in other jurisdictions, what items go into the budget; provide a comprehensive document;
- **Breakdown** – Highlights in this category includes: a better breakdown of allocated funding such as in parks and recreation. It's great to know X number of dollars goes into a category but what exactly did it do; a breakdown as to what are wants and what are needs; a breakdown justifying some of the staff hours or lack thereof; A breakdown of the % of tax dollars for municipal services taken from my taxes. What is the cost share for services between municipal, federal and provincial funds; A breakdown of various budget categories; A breakdown of where the money is being spent by department and some sort of quantification on the value that these expenditures are delivering; A clear breakdown of the numbers; and a complete breakdown by department;
- **Costs** – includes items such as detailed breakdowns for specific departments (such as money that would go into roads, transit, various programs, procurement costs, operational costs, development costs, salary costs), priority costs and cost analysis;
- **Departments** – One of the crossover items, which includes queries into different department budget allocations, as well as general breakdowns of the budget
- **Detailed** – includes breakdowns of detailed expenses, information, line items, spending, financial details, allocation suggestions, etc.)
- **Items** – both major and minor budget items, including cost allocations and expenditures, capital costs, big ticket items (such as a new arena), etc.
- **Levels** – Another examination of breakdowns of the budget, and could include things like proportionate spending; historical spending levels; comparisons with other local counties and smaller regional cities; urban /rural funding allocation and funding sources other than property taxes;
- **Line** – Another crossover category, which would include detailed line items.
- **Numbers** – This category refers to both actual and projected figures, both overall and breakdowns;
- **Road** – This category was created since a lot of money goes into the creation, maintenance and repair of roads on a year by year basis.
- **Services** – A breakdown of the money that is allocated to various services offered by the County to residents and businesses.

- **Tax** – Various items associated with funds collected through property taxes and the industrial tax base.

Respondents were also given the opportunity to ask any budget related questions. Overall, 160 respondents (26.5%) contributed questions. These are listed in Appendix B.

## APPENDIX A: SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Strathcona County gathers public input in many ways. In what ways are you interested in providing business planning/budget input? (*Select all that apply*)
  - Completing an online survey
  - Participating in an in-person public engagement session such as an open house or a workshop
  - Presenting at a public hearing in front of Council
  - Participating in an online discussion group
  - Other (please describe)
  - I'm not interested in providing input
  
2. Every year, Strathcona County prepares a budget that is used to provide a variety of municipal services. Below is a short list of services and for each; please tell us if you think the existing services exceed your expectations, meet your expectations, or are below your expectations.
  - Maintaining County streets & roads in the winter
  - Maintaining County streets & roads in the summer
  - Transit services
  - Planning services, which includes commercial and residential land development, building and development permits and zoning
  - Fire Services
  - Ambulance Services
  - Police and bylaw services
  - Recreation facilities and recreation programs
  - Maintenance of parks and playgrounds
  - Community social programs
  - Agriculture, including weed and pest control
  - Utilities (water, wastewater and waste collection)
  
3. The challenge Strathcona County has is balancing the community's needs and wants for municipal services against the County's ability to pay for the services (or "the cost to deliver services"). Which follow of the following statements do you most align with?
  - I would support maintaining the current level of municipal services, even if this means increasing property taxes.
  - I would support increasing/improving the current level of municipal services, even if this means increasing property taxes.
  - I would support not increasing property taxes, even if this means a reduction in the current level of municipal services.

4. What kind of information do you need to help you better understand the County's budget?
5. What are your budget-related questions (if any)?

### **APPENDIX B: BUDGET- RELATED QUESTIONS**

- Would like to know budget trends over the last 5 years
- Again, why is there so much money budgeted on our county municipal roads and services.
- Are we ready for that new facility that is costing millions of dollars?
- At what point does common sense kick in and council puts the brakes on things like the Horse Palace?
- Ban any election donations from developers.
- Bremner must be stopped
- Budget vs actual expenditures
- Can I as an individual citizen look at the whole budget?
- Can more money be directed toward services for lower income citizens?
- Capital expenditures
- Cost of services per household
- Do we have reserve funds? What are the highest to lowest expenditures. What are the future high value budgeted items and what is the return on investment of these items.
- Do you have the ability to separate the must have critical" items with the nice to have "makes our lives better" items? And if so, what is that criteria? Also, do you have main goals that drive the budget i.e. clear snow on major road ways in 24 hours... and what the impact may be if that goal was changed. i.e. 12 hour
- What is the percentage of budget spent on staff?
- Emerald Hills Pool had major design flaws causing maintenance issues. These need to be addressed once and for all to lower ongoing maintenance costs and time. We need MORE swimming lesson availability for preschool-elementary age children EASILY accessible (not system crashing 7am frantic online madness) especially for families to coordinate lessons for all their kids at one time.
- employee pay and benefits
- Has there been a service level review for our community?
- How are items brought forward in budget? Why do some make the cut and others don't? Why do some projects need to be justified and others are just approved politically?
- How can we maintain the same quality while reducing costs. Innovation!
- How do Annual maintenance, servicing and interest costs of Capital projects impact future property taxes. Can certain projects be deferred or scaled down without impacting current services and maintenance provide by the county

- How do the projects rank on the priority system.
- How do you determine the breakdown of where tax dollars go?
- How is it decided to increase the upkeep of certain facilities, i.e. Emerald Hills since the facility opened there have been issues with the showers in the female change room. Sometimes the shower floods the floor, which doesn't drain quickly and is a hazard for falls, sometimes the water is too hot and it is not easy to lower the shower temperature, lately the wheelchair access shower is in need of maintenance, water is spurting out everywhere. The handgrips for the large pool had covers on them one day which made it so much easier to get out of the pool, especially since sanitizing is constant. Now those covers are gone. Why? There are pails in the foyer catching drips. Really? Did the county sign off on this building and now there are leaks!
- How is the County working to balance the budget" and live collectively within our means. I do not support deficit spending at the municipal level."
- How many decisions were influenced by campaign donations, why do we use so many outside consultants" to make decisions when there are employees with these qualifications and job descriptions that already exist?"
- How many of the projects started are completed on time and on budget, and what are the costs per service.
- How much has the pandemic affected our debt? What are recovery plans? How much can we stop spending? Not easy answers to these. Can we STOP the development of the white-elephant multi use ag facility?
- How much influence do individuals have over politicians and bureaucrats.
- How much is the new housing area North of highway 16 going to cost the average taxpayer. Will that cost ever be recovered by the taxpayer.
- How much money is the county spending responding to the whiners in the community?
- How much money was wasted on the covid hoax? How is it getting paid back to taxpayers?
- How much of the budget is covered by Provincial and Federal grants?
- How to access budget information (initial budget, forecasting, final expenditures)
- How well are services being delivered? Can performance measures be shared publicly?
- How well or not is the money spent
- How will the continued cuts by our provincial government affect our Municipal budget in the long-term?
- HR expenses per capita compared to surrounding municipalities
- I am in favour of having more community gardens and more trees planted on large grassy public spaces
- I am interested in the amount of budget assigned to supporting the arts, beautifying Sherwood Park (landscaping medians; planting trees, sculptures and murals etc. Also, the amount of budget allocated to supporting households to go green and conserve energy. Also, proportion of budget allocated to administration proportionate to service provision.

- I believe it is important that we do not over spend. In a household we ideally shouldn't budget for things beyond our means--it should be the same for the county budget.
- I don't understand the use of full-size transit busses in the neighborhoods as there is usually only one or two riders in a huge bus. The larger busses are definitely needed for the busy commuter routes.
- I like a more effective controls of noxious weed in the ditches and farmers fields. (Thistles)
- I really have very little budget information, so can't voice my thoughts.
- I think we should cut back on blue bag pickup to every second week, both to save some money as well as to reduce our carbon footprint.
- I would like to better understand plans and allocations for seniors services and projects
- I would like to know how budget priorities are established. Frankly I see activity within the county that seems to be a waste of money. For examples, retrofitting residential streets for traffic calming must be a large expenditure and I question the potential benefit.
- I would like to know how much money is allotted for road and sidewalk amelioration as there is a lot of construction going on around me.
- I would like to know how recreation and leisure activities are evaluated to ensure there is adequate participation in each a right to continue with putting money into each of the programs. I support these programs but want to make sure they are money well spent and that programs with only a few people in attendance are cancelled right away.
- I would like to see the breakdown of what our taxes are spent on.
- I would really like to see the priority-based budget expressed as simply as possible with the critical issues/decision identified for each item along with the budget impact.
- Impact of covid on service level
- In past couple years, they have completely cleared side residential streets of snow even when snow is only a couple inches deep and already melting.
- Infrastructure spending, new projects with realistic budgets, a firm commitment to affordability in budgets.
- Instead of asking if I'd like to increase or decrease property taxes and that determining the level of service, why don't look at making more efficient means of providing the service. (ie. don't have plow trucks out wasting fuel and putting wear and tear on the vehicles when there is no snow)
- Is budgeting a bottoms up or based on prior year, or blend of both?
- Is it a need or a want?
- is it balanced and how much will it effect our property taxes
- Level of admin costs
- Long range plan (5-10 years) for business development in the County. Is there a plan in place to attract new business.



- Maintenance to enhance the appearance of the county needs to be up graded
- Major expenditure programs (horse barn) are not put to public plebiscite process.
- Many. Since I have never seen the process that is used to develop the budget it is hard to answer this. What type of budgeting process does the county use? This should be as transparent a process to tax payers as possible
- My only concern is that they spend the money wisely and prudently
- My understanding is that road maintenance and construction is the largest line item in the budget. How can this be brought under control?
- Need more focus on outside community
- need to explain to people that waste services are not tax funded
- New builds and maintenance in 2020/2021 and population projections
- Please support the RCMP more.
- proper amounts for each expenditure
- Property tax decrease for seniors not using services.
- Proposed facility additions in excess of \$ 15 Million to be presented in plebiscite form for public input
- Questions about RCMP funding for new initiatives and member health. Library funding during the stress of the pandemic. Plans to maintain momentum in work with youth in the community. Plans for the future of waste management.
- Quit wasting money
- Salaries of all these employees and politicians. Kick backs to private businesses hired. Wastage,
- Service/project/program evaluation metrics. Where/when are these made known to the taxpayers? Are cost/benefit outcomes reported? To whom?
- Spending on large developments should have more input from residents
- The cost of the RCMP-I am not in favour of removing them as our police force. Do we own the building etc. A full accounting is necessary to fight the province.
- The County needs to stop catering to and subsidizing developers. The County also needs to address the serious need for additional safe spaces for women and children at risk, provide additional low-income housing for the less fortunate in our County, and ensure that single mothers in particular receive the supports they need such as affordable (\$10/day) childcare.
- The money for the proposed agriculture building.
- The need for more senior programs and the need for programming help at the log cabin
- The new arena... extremely expensive and not serving any purpose
- The percentage of the budget that is allotted to certain things
- The way money is spent should always be questioned and Incentive must be provided for suggestions. There should be a quality improvement plan that involves every employee that becomes a Productivity Improvement plan with Council approving the objectives and a reward system for actual improvements

- There were no municipal tax increases in 2021. Why did my monthly tax bill go up?
- Things are getting more expensive, yet less is being done
- too much staff. tender more out to private business
- Transit needs to be easier to use.
- Transit services not balanced
- update in new Agri complex - what is happening, what are costs projected now. What about a Senior Complex - need to look into options and costs
- Waste is the big one, are there cases where there is no bang for the buck.
- What allowance is made for hobbyists?
- What are staff sizes in Strathcona County! I believe we are too heavy with our municipal structure. I have dealt with layers of management that don't have the authority to make decisions. Totally unnecessary and a waste of budget money
- What are the rules for the County about providing services? Are you mandated to do it without borrowing, you should be?
- What is it that the county covers?
- What is overall budget for county.
- What is the actual, factual projected cost of Bremner; what is the true, factual business plan for the multi purpose agricultural facility. The information for both of these should be published in a clear format in the Sherwood Park News. All else pales until we understand the impact of these two mammoth developments. Also, would like to clearly understand who on council benefits from either the developments or from the developers, and are those council members abstaining from voting on these items.
- What is the purpose of the savings account and when is it used. How come it doesn't appear in any of the deliberations?
- What kind of evidence does the County need to get the pot holes on my street filled and fixed; letters to the County and to my Councillor along with pictures has gotten me NOWHERE.
- What kind of property tax increase are we looking at to maintain?
- What percentage of the budget is forecasted for rural roads! Taxes sure don't dictate this!! We pay probably the highest taxes for what we receive!
- What portions of our taxes went where?
- What was done to lower costs due to lack of revenue from the pandemic
- What would be the impact of holding the line at taxation levels and what has been explored to minimize impacts
- What's going to change? How do our municipal employee's pay compare to similar municipalities? Is there room to re arrange spending to keep taxes down?
- What's your budget for the above?
- Where are increases and decreases and rationale

- Where are we doing TOO much? Where can we reduce services/costs (the service level in the County is sometimes too high)?
- Where are we with climate change? What's being done for affordable housing, and transportation.
- Where budgets have been increasing and the in-efficiencies of departments
- Where cuts can be made and engaging the private sector to complete the services.
- Where is the waste money and how to eliminate it
- Who controls the purse strings for Heartland housing and other senior housing initiatives. Why is there such a push for infill in older neighbourhoods when there seems to be plenty of land to develop for more housing, is making older neighbourhoods congested with people the aim here.
- Why are only options upping taxes or providing less service. How about streamlining work?
- why are project budgets usually tremendously inflated following initial forecasts
- Why are so many project estimates out of wack? Lack of proper scopes of work? Lack of proper geotechnical assessments?
- Why are some departments manned open to close while other barely get coverage despite being important
- Why are some property owners treated like they're second class? such as receiving fewer services, despite paying high taxes.
- Why are there so many budget amendments?
- Why are we always catering financially to minority groups? Their demands cost tax payers lots of monies.
- Why are we moving forward with Bremner and Cambrian and the Multi Facility Agriculture project. Why are we not seriously looking at the reduction in provincial funding and adjusting budgets.
- Why are we spending \$100M (it's bound to continue going up) on the Donkey Dome? At what point to we pull up on the reins of this boondoggle?
- WHY ARE WE SPENDING MONEY ON BREMMNER
- Why are we spending money we don't have? Sherwood Park used to be more efficient in the use of AVAILABLE tax dollars. We should go this route again and if not, why not?
- Why are we spending so much on residential development that we don't need?
- Why are we spending so much money on development? Ag facility/rec centre. Where is all the money coming from?
- Why council doesn't survey the tax payer in the for of plebiscites, on big ticket items. eg Bremner, Horse Palace
- Why did the council reject an independent review of their pay?
- Why do rural tax payers pay so much for so little service? Wouldn't it be fairer to pay by a percentage of the service they receive?

- Why do taxes continue to go down? Is it sustainable to keep offering zero percent tax increases when most municipalities increase by 2-3% a year. Would be great to see smaller increases around 1.5% to increase service standards for snow removal, recycling programs and plastics diversion and more recreation facilities like the indoor field house.
- Why do the annual budgets not reflect previous years expenditures, as well as the projected current year expenditure and future year expenditures. As well there should be notes with multi-year projects to ensure linkage to past expenditures can be made.
- Why do the politicians get paid so much, yet tax others to provide services from their decision.
- Why do we do so many construction projects when the original construction is still in good repair?
- Why do we have such a high level of service? We offer way too many things that other municipalities DON'T offer.
- Why do we still not have a resolution on Fiber internet study with Telus PPP?
- Why does the County keep wasting money on Wye Road Construction? Why are new facilities being contemplated at taxpayer expense rather than user pay? Why is there not equal urban and rural representation on council?
- why does the county spend so much money on spraying when they could cut the vegetation it makes a greener county
- Why don't we have a policy to take the decision to the public when the dollar amount to be spent reaches a certain level ie. the new agricultural facility, Bremner, or another recreational complex.
- Why EMS is being understaffed, is it underfunded?
- Why is Council able to subvert the priority budget process (ie: multi-use field) with projects that are not in the short-term capital plan?
- Why is our budget for this County so expensive?
- Why is Sherwood Park running a municipal transit?? these big empty busses are laughable, we need a solution!!! Busses are only needed for transport to Edmonton and school hours, a uber like system would be way cheaper. busses are expensive to maintain and would reduce accidents and maintenance of expensive busses and bus stops. Also less management would be needed. Why are we making Strathcona County the most livable place in the world??? We know its awesome!!! We live here for a smaller town vibe not with high density and low income housing, and big condos.
- Why is so much money spent on policing? The county is like a police state.
- Why is the by-law department not proactive rather than reactive? They should be out looking for by-law infractions instead of only checking out infractions that are called in by concerned residents.
- Why isn't the county using true Priority-Based Budgeting? The mayor keeps pretending the county uses PBB, but it really doesn't.
- Why on earth are my taxes going to fund community parties, Easter/Halloween events etc? Subdivisions can buy their own hotdogs, setup their own parades without taxpayer dollars. Having something like this isn't going to make the

community feel better" about themselves. Its just a waste of \$. Plow my road one more time during the winter instead!"

- Why put money in Bremner?
- Why rural roads are not taken care of? Why there is no bus services for rural folks? Why rural folks pay so much and get so little?
- why spend during this economic down turn - seems County of Strathcona does not understand this concept
- Why spend so much money on the horse palace? Way too expensive.
- Why things like rural road repairs are not monitored the first time a group is hired to do them, and not paying again the following year(s) to fix them. Unless the first group hired was told to fix their mess at no cost, this would be a horrible waste of money if the first repair had been approved by Strathcona County via input from the local residents.
- Why was so much money put towards the horse facility?? It is WAY over budget...
- Why we spend so much money and why do departments not have to reduce costs, budget should be zero based from end of November actual expenditures. Departments should not be allowed to spend budget doors near end of fiscal year in the anticipation of getting the same budget for coming year. I hear of lots of unnecessary items being purchased just because they have budget left
- Why were campaign promises not kept that had huge financial impacts to the residents? Maybe these questions wouldn't have to be asked if better decisions were made that align with the wants and needs of the residents
- Why were the extra, not essential, expenses added. Why were they chosen to be added in a pandemic when we already have additional expense. Why couldn't they wait?
- With an upcoming election, the possibility of new ward councillors and mayor could be voted in. How much authority do they have to change the budget?
- With building closures and people working from home, this has to upset past current costs to operate and maintain infrastructure including utilities. These funds could be used to improve the utilization of all of the County's buildings..
- With Covid are some departments not needed (parks & rec, social service programs may need more funds due to Covid). How does County monitor productivity of employees working from home? What happened to funds allocated to pools which were shut due to Covid? Has County saved money with shift from in person services?
- wondering why we have so many councillors when Edmonton has a much larger population base, it seems we are paying out salaries unnecessarily and are over governed
- Would holding our councillors to a higher standard of understanding in terms of administration, legislation, etc. result in a reduction of costs related to these functions as departments within the County? Council meetings show that a large amount of work (and likely \$\$) goes into the teams that have to continually inform council on very routine processes.