



REPORT

The City of Red Deer Citizen Satisfaction Survey 2024



DATE 2024-04-22



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Background & Methodology



Background and Objectives

In December 2023, The City of Red Deer contracted Leger to conduct a Citizen Satisfaction Survey with its residents to support their informed decision-making regarding their approach to serving the community. Specifically, the research aims to understand their residents' opinions and perceptions on:

- Top issues in the community
- Quality of life
- Level and quality of City services
- City infrastructure maintenance
- City's communication and engagement with residents

Methodology



Method

Telephone survey with n=400 residents of Red Deer aged 18 years or older from March 5, 2024, to March 20, 2024.



Margin of error

A probability sample of this size yields a margin of error no greater than $\pm 4.9\%$, (19 times out of 20).



Weighting

Results were weighted according to **age, gender, and region** to ensure a representative sample of the City of Red Deer.



Analysis

Results with statistically significant variances across demographic groups are denoted in the report. Key metrics, whenever applicable, are benchmarked against Leger's City Index Norms for municipalities with populations of 100,000 to 249,999, based on data collected from October 30, 2023, to November 9, 2023. Comparisons are conducted nationally (sample size: n=553) and within Western Canada (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba; n=229).

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Key Insights



Executive Summary

The City of Red Deer Citizen Satisfaction Survey reveals a strong sense of community pride and belonging in Red Deer, paired with an overall moderately high quality of life, despite pressing concerns over safety, homelessness, healthcare, housing, and a less optimistic economic outlook. However, most residents report stagnant or declining quality of life, mainly attributed to rising crime rates and living costs.

Satisfaction with municipal services and engagement levels vary, pointing to the need for enhanced communication and targeted improvements in service delivery and infrastructure maintenance. Residents seek more transparent and effective communication and a more inclusive decision-making process to boost community cohesion and satisfaction.

Key Insights: Overall Impression and Quality of Life



Almost half residents show a **strong sense of pride** (48%) and **belonging** (45%) to Red Deer, despite a less optimistic outlook on the city's economic prospects and modest participation in community events. Satisfaction with Downtown events is moderately strong (49% rating 8-10 out of 10).



Safety (18%) and **homelessness** (17%) are considered the **top issues facing Red Deer**, followed by healthcare (9%). Visible minority groups are most concerned about housing while drug issues are more prevalent in central areas.



While **overall quality of life in Red Deer is deemed moderately high** (47% rating 8-10 out of 10), a majority report either worsened (44%) or the same (43%) level of quality over the past three years. The perception of a deteriorating quality of life exceeds Canada's and Western Canada's benchmarks, highlighting an immediate need to tackle safety and affordability issues, the primary factors contributing to the decline. Conversely, improvements in quality of life are often linked to more community events and business growth post-COVID pandemic.

Key Insights: City Services and Financial Planning



Overall satisfaction with City services is moderate (34% rating 8-10 out of 10), with **fire services (58%)** and **recreational programs (49%) receiving highest marks**. Snow clearing services (24%), the weakest attribute yet a key satisfaction driver, represent the key area for improvement.



The City's performance on infrastructure maintenance largely meets resident satisfaction, most notably in the upkeep of parks and trails (67%), and indoor recreational facilities (65%). However, road maintenance (31%), the least satisfied area, requires extra attention.



The majority believe they receive good value for their tax dollars (71%). Nonetheless, there is division on the approach to municipal property taxes, with nearly equal support for service cuts to maintain or reduce taxes (48%) or tax increases to sustain or enhance services (43%).

Key Insights: Public Engagement and Communication



Satisfaction with the City's public communication (28% rating 8-10 out of 10) **and engagement efforts is moderate**, revealing residents' desire for greater transparency and involvement in decision-making processes. Residents primarily seek information on municipal/property taxes, budget details, and community updates, with a preference for communication via email, social media, and traditional mail.



Three in ten (30%) residents have contacted or interacted with a City of Red Deer representative in the past year most commonly via telephone. **Overall satisfaction with most recent interactions is moderately high** (48% rating 8-10 out of 10).

REPORT

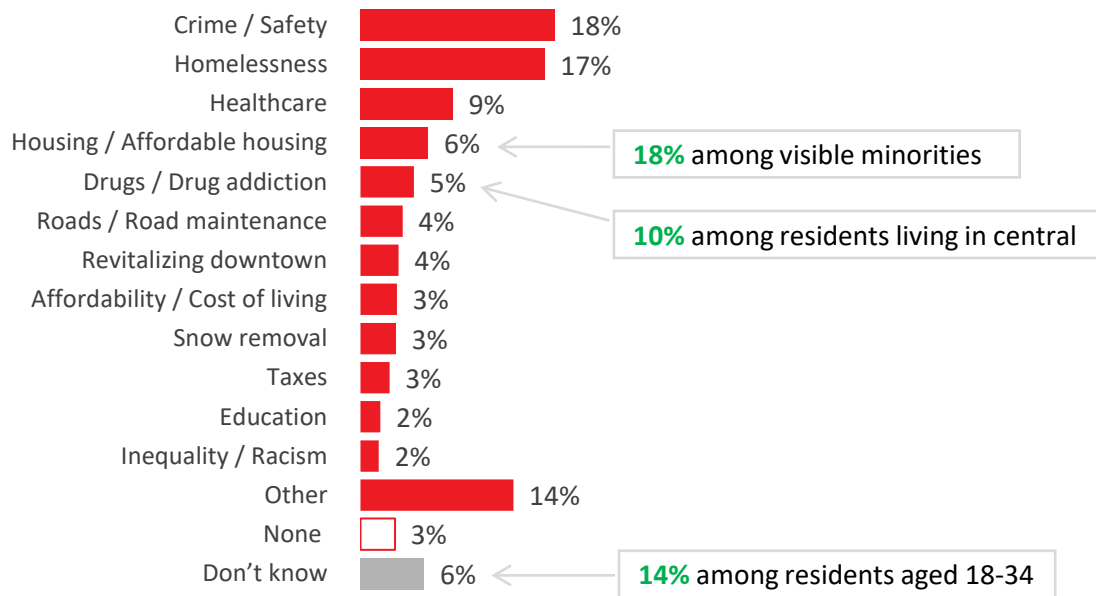
Detailed Results



DETAILED RESULTS

Issue Agenda and Quality of Life

Most Important Issues Facing the Community



Safety and homeless issues are viewed as the most important issues facing the communities in the City of Red Deer, followed by healthcare, housing, and drug issues.

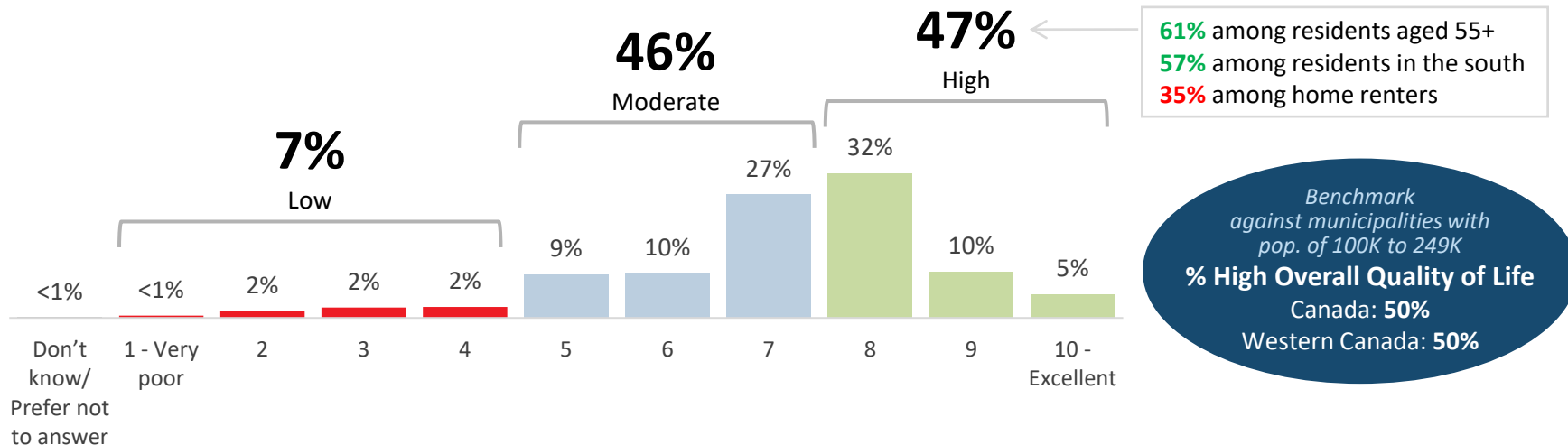
Noteworthy, housing stands out as the foremost concern among visible minority groups.

Drug addiction is perceived as a more pressing issue in the central region compared to other regions.

Statistically significantly **higher/lower** than the overall level

Overall Quality of Life

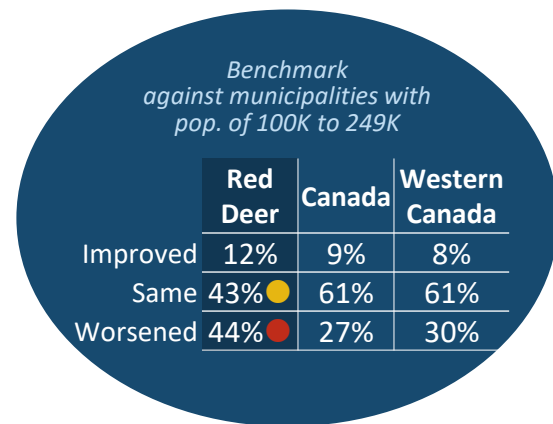
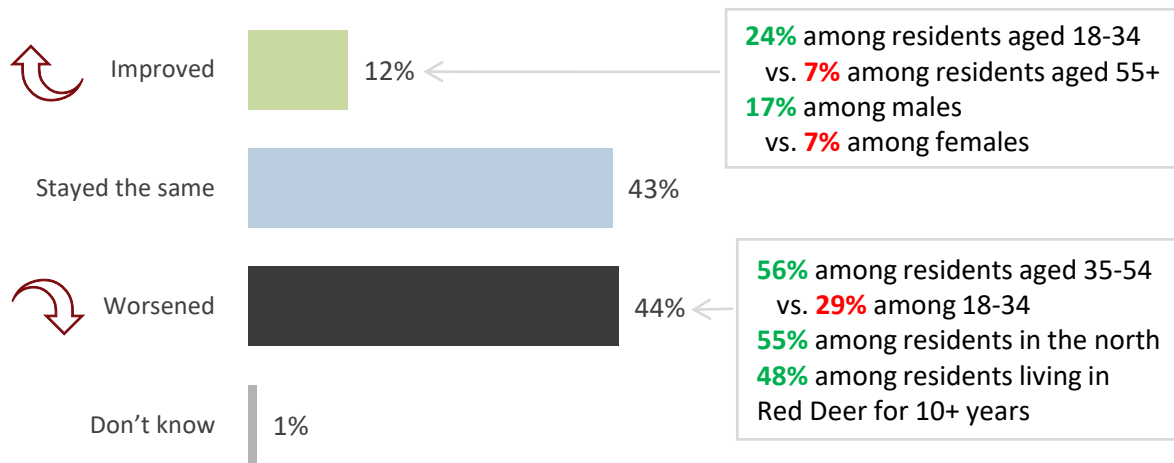
Perceived overall quality of life in the City of Red Deer is moderately strong, with almost half rating 8 or higher out of a 10-point scale. This is comparable to the averages observed in similar-sized municipalities across Canada and Western Canada. The ratings are particularly high among Red Deer residents aged 55 and above and those living in the south, while home renters tend to perceive a lower overall quality of life than the average level.



Statistically significantly **higher/lower** than the overall level

Trend in Quality of Life

Over four in ten feel their quality of life in the City of Red Deer has either worsened or stayed the same in the past three years, nearly four times as much as those who report improved quality of life. Individuals aged 18 to 34 are more inclined to report improvements in their quality of life compared to older groups. Those aged 35 to 54 and residents in the north are more likely to experience a decline. Reports of a worsened quality of life in the City of Red Deer exceed national and Western Canada averages for comparable sized municipalities.



Statistically significantly **higher/lower** than the overall level

●/● Statistically significantly **higher/Lower** than both the national and Western Canada's benchmarks

Reasons for Life Quality Improvement

Increased availability of community events/activities and growth of businesses are the most cited reasons for improved overall quality of life in Red Deer.



Downtown/the City is trying to hold more activities and bring more people for events.

Government has done a good job dealing with the effects of COVID and the economy seems to be on the rebound.

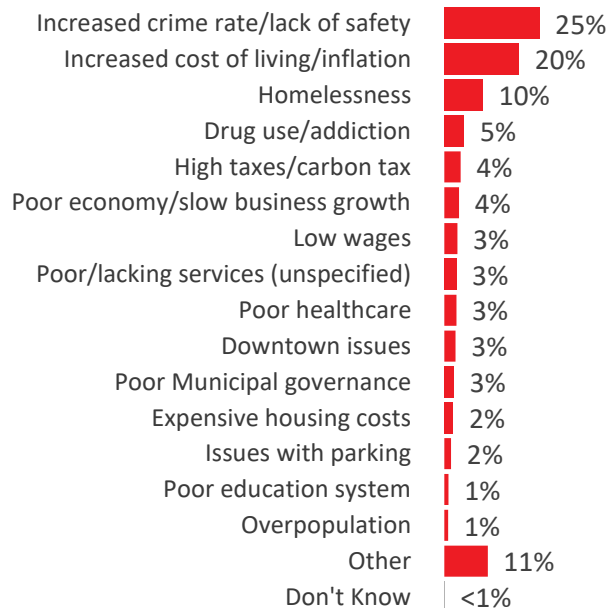
I think it is improved because of retail development lots of housing development. I think there is a nice emphasis on parks, biking and hiking trails. I think there is a lot of sports facilities as well.

Community. Lot of community events. Parks are very well cared for. Street maintenance is good compared to other places.

I think people are more aware. I know that the City is certainly trying to make it safer for everybody in the neighborhoods. I think a lot of things have come to light with issues of homelessness and the City is trying hard to get back on its feet.

Reasons for Life Quality Decline

Residents most commonly attribute their worsened quality of life to the increased crime rate/lack of safety, high cost of living/inflation, and homelessness.



All the theft, crime, drugs and homeless people. Find needles all over the place.

Just generally inflation, cost of living, stagnant wages.

Since COVID we lost a lot of businesses and prices have gone crazy.

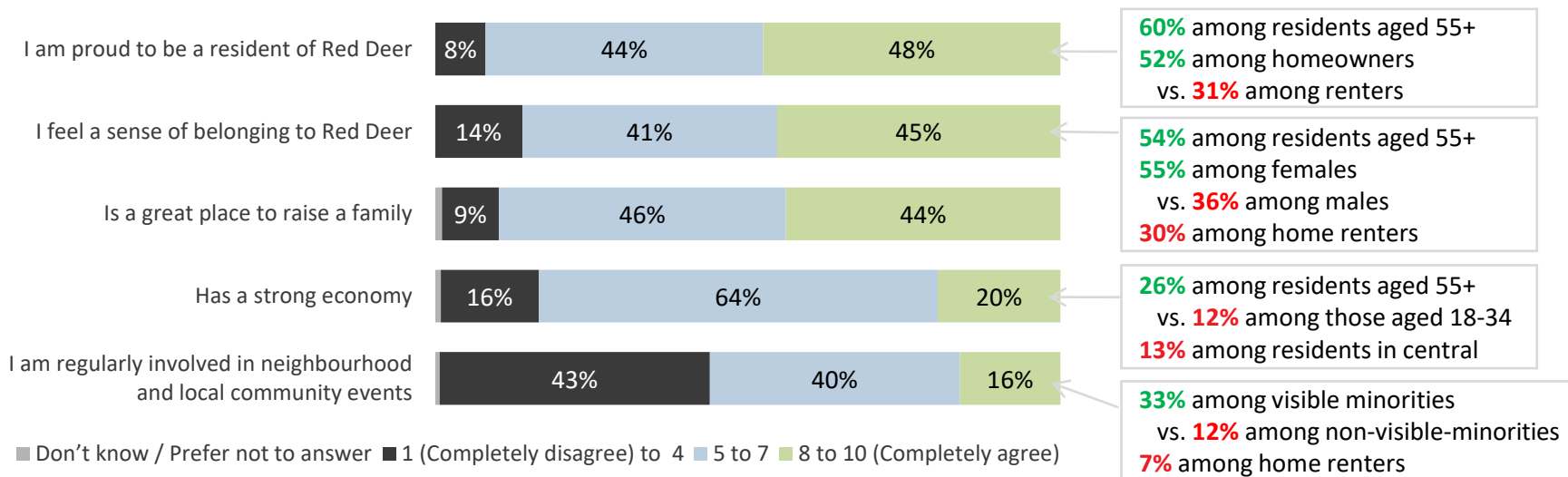
Increase in taxes. City offers less services. They charge you more and do less for you.

Healthcare isn't what it used to be. Half the people I know don't have doctors anymore.

Downtown goes to wreck. We need to start helping people who ask for help.

Value Statement

Nearly half of residents feel a strong sense of pride and belonging to Red Deer, especially those aged 55 and older, though this sentiment is less pronounced among those who rent their homes. Over four in ten believe Red Deer is a great place to raise a family. However, impressions of Red Deer's economy is much less positive, with only one fifth considering it strong. Involvement in neighbourhood and community events is generally low, yet notably higher among visible minorities.



Statistically significantly **higher/lower** than the overall level

Items below 3% are not labelled

Q12: Next, I'm going to read you a series of statements that some people have made about Red Deer. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement. Base: All respondents (n=400)

Value Statement - Benchmark

Compared to similarly sized municipalities across Canada and Western Canada, Red Deer residents show a directionally higher sense of pride and belonging. While the perception of Red Deer as an ideal place to raise a family is lower than the national level, it is slightly above the average in Western Canada.

Benchmark against municipalities with pop. of 100K to 249K (% 8 to 10)	Red Deer	Canada	Western Canada
I am proud to be a resident of [Red Deer/other municipality]	48%	44%	40%
I feel a sense of belonging to [Red Deer/other municipality]	45% ●	39%	34%
[Red Deer/other municipality] is a great place to raise a family	44% ●	48%	39%

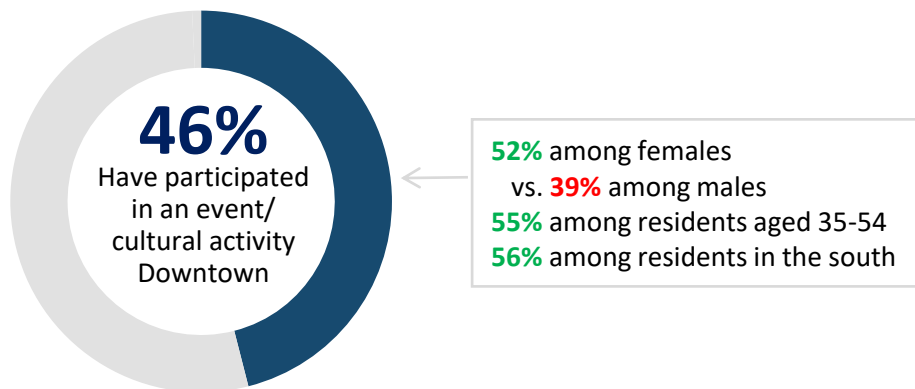
↑/↓ statistically significantly **higher/lower** than the benchmark

● Statistically significantly **HIGHER** than Western Canada's benchmark, ● Statistically significantly **Lower** than the national benchmark

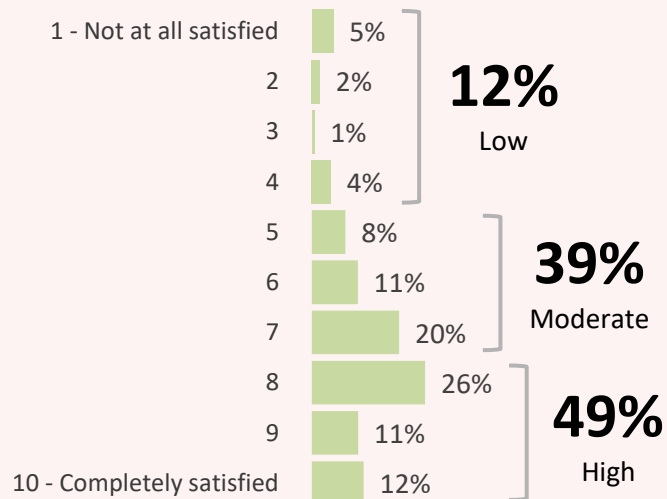
Participation in Downtown Events and Satisfaction

Almost half report they have participated in an event or cultural activity Downtown in the past 12 months, with notably higher participation rates among females, residents aged 35 to 54 and those living in the south. Half of the participants are highly satisfied with the events or cultural activities.

Participation Rate



Event Satisfaction*



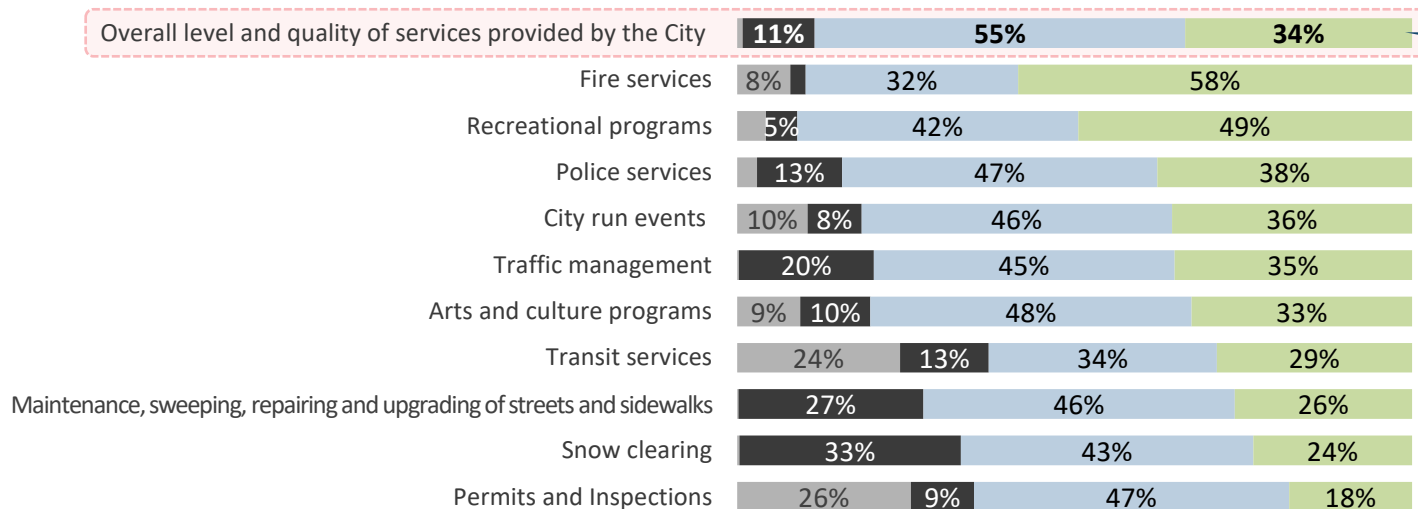
Statistically significantly **higher/lower** than the overall level

DETAILED RESULTS

Satisfaction with City Services

Satisfaction with City Services

Satisfaction with the level and quality of the services provided by the City of Red Deer is moderate, with a third being highly satisfied, which is directionally above the averages for similarly sized municipalities across Canada and Western Canada. Residents of Red Deer are most satisfied with the City's fire service and recreational programs, followed by policy services and City-run events. Perceptions of traffic management, and maintenance and upgrading of streets and sidewalks are more divided. Snow-clearing services receive the lowest satisfaction ratings.



Benchmark
against municipalities with
pop. of 100K to 249K

**Overall Service
Level & Quality**

(% 8 to 10)

Canada: 27%

Western Canada: 28%

■ Don't know / Prefer not to answer ■ 1 (Not at all satisfied) to 4 ■ 5 to 7 ■ 8 to 10 (Completely satisfied)

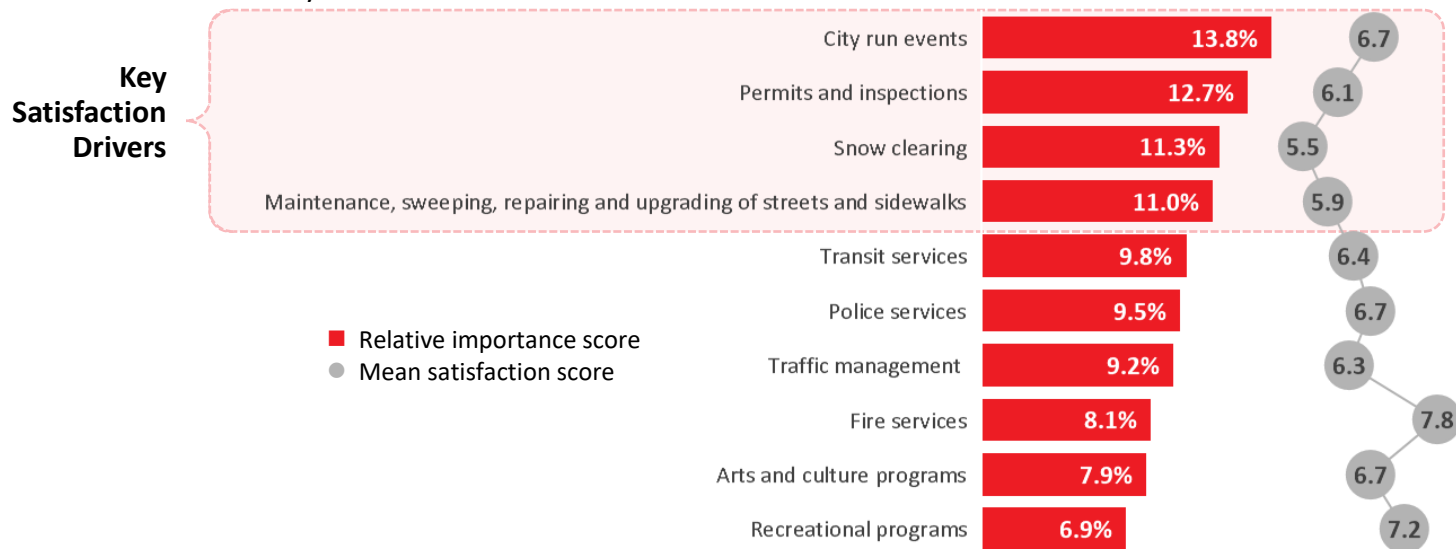
Satisfaction with City Services – by demographics

Residents who rent their homes and those living in Red Deer for over a decade tend to be less satisfied with the overall level and quality of City services. Women generally show higher satisfaction with recreational programs, city-run events, and arts and culture programs compared to men. Police services receive highest ratings from residents aged 55 or older and homeowners.

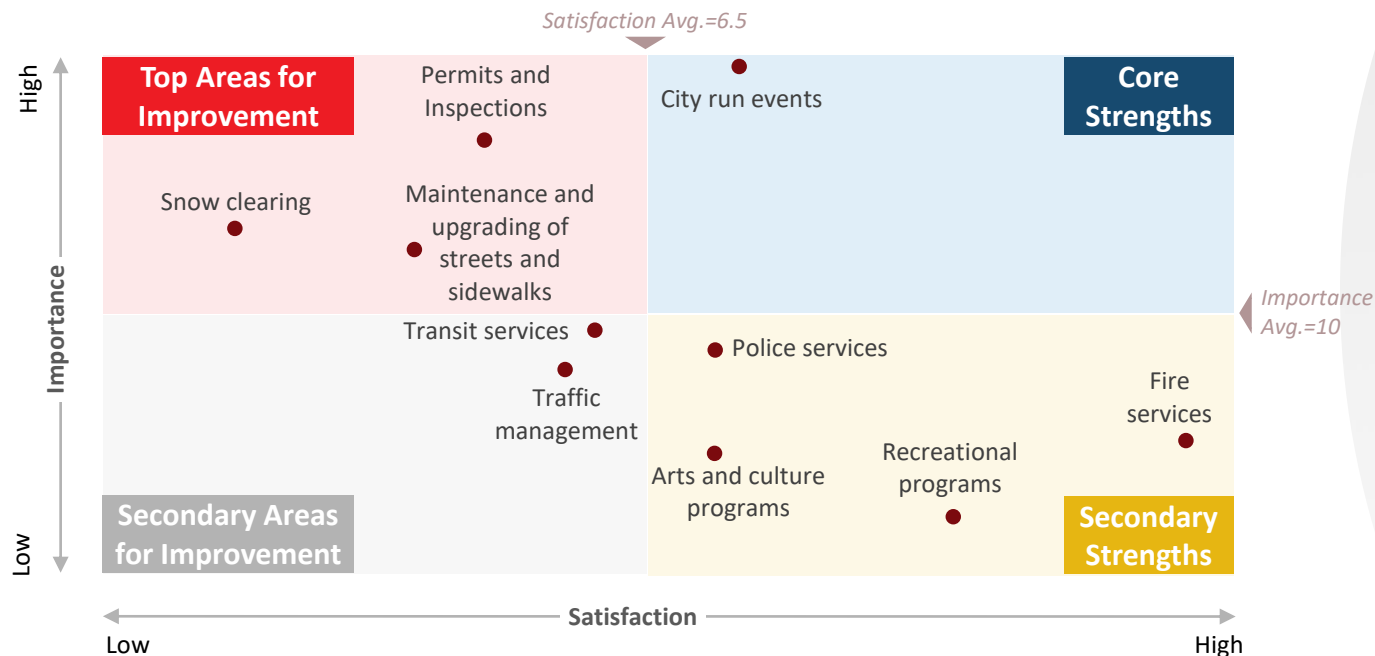
% 8 to 10	Total	Gender		Age			Region			Accommodation		# Years living in Red Deer			Visible minority	
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Central	North	South	Own	Rent	<5	5-10	10+	Yes	No
Base (n=)	400	178	221	42*	88	270	143	113	139	328	64	24*	33*	342	45*	337
Overall level and quality of services provided by The City	34%	32%	36%	36%	26%	39%	33%	30%	39%	36%	22%	57%	39%	30%	41%	33%
Fire services	58%	61%	57%	50%	62%	62%	57%	60%	57%	60%	53%	61%	51%	59%	67%	58%
Recreational programs	49%	43%	56%	57%	46%	47%	46%	49%	53%	51%	43%	47%	44%	50%	45%	51%
Police services	38%	34%	42%	33%	28%	51%	33%	40%	40%	42%	23%	44%	36%	37%	47%	37%
City run events	36%	28%	43%	43%	34%	32%	34%	35%	37%	36%	30%	41%	46%	34%	47%	34%
Traffic management	35%	31%	40%	38%	36%	32%	34%	33%	37%	35%	34%	67%	36%	31%	43%	34%
Arts and culture programs	33%	25%	40%	36%	32%	31%	31%	44%	26%	32%	33%	25%	41%	33%	34%	34%
Transit services	29%	29%	30%	36%	30%	22%	30%	34%	25%	26%	37%	37%	22%	29%	34%	28%
Maintenance, sweeping, repairing and upgrading of streets and sidewalks	26%	23%	30%	26%	22%	30%	24%	20%	33%	27%	21%	34%	32%	25%	24%	27%
Snow clearing	24%	24%	23%	21%	24%	25%	20%	25%	26%	24%	22%	31%	26%	22%	13%	25%
Permits and Inspections	18%	21%	16%	17%	17%	21%	14%	24%	19%	16%	19%	22%	26%	17%	27%	17%

Key Satisfaction Drivers

A key driver analysis (KDA) based on the Shapley value regression model, using satisfaction score of “Overall level and quality of services provided by The City” as the dependent variable and satisfaction scores of other attributes as predictors, was conducted to identify the key drivers of residents’ overall satisfaction with the City’s services. The KDA results reveal City run events, permits and inspections, snow clearing, and maintenance and upgrading of streets and sidewalks to be the key service satisfaction drivers. Continual monitoring and targeted investment aimed at enhancing resident experiences in these areas could result in increased overall satisfaction with City services.



Importance vs. Satisfaction



The City of Red Deer has the core strength (high importance and high satisfaction) in City-run events. Enhancing awareness and participation in these events could boost satisfaction with municipal services and residents' quality of life.

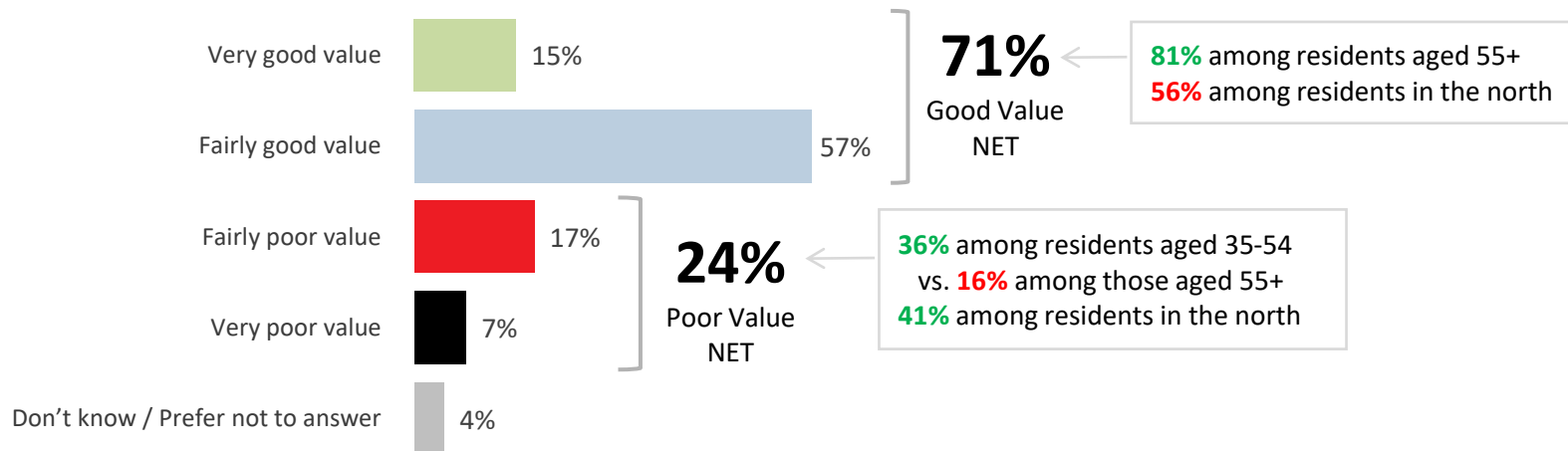
Snow clearing, maintenance and upgrading of streets and sidewalks, and permits and inspections are highly important but garner relatively lower satisfaction. These are the areas the City should focus on moving forward.

DETAILED RESULTS

Financial Planning

Perceived Value of Tax Dollars

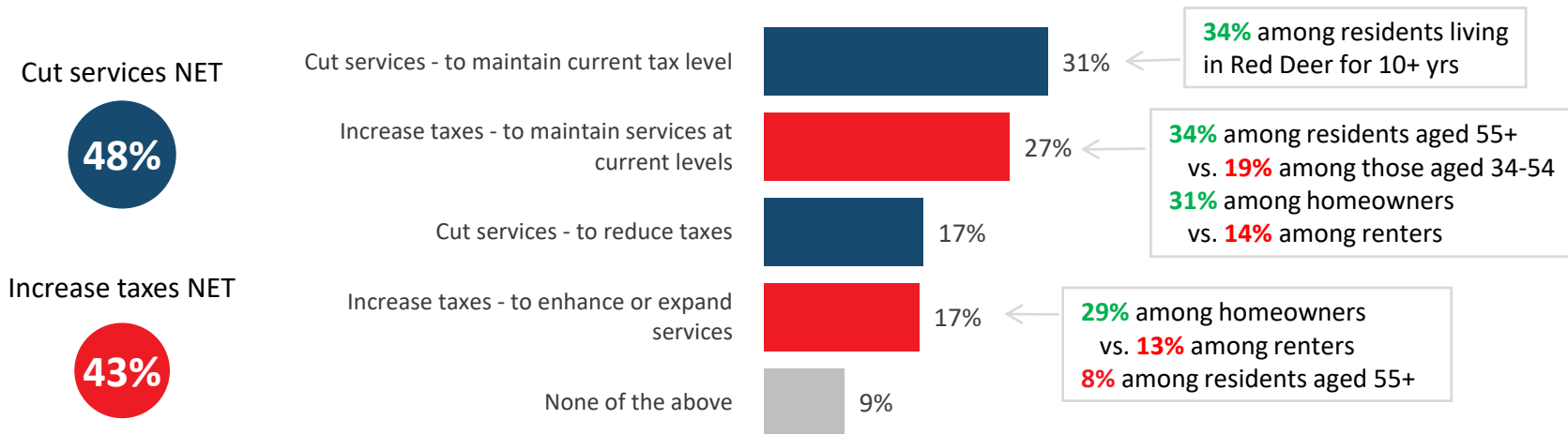
Thinking about all City programs and services, over seven in ten residents believe they get good value for their tax dollars, with this sentiment most strongly felt among those aged 55 and older. Conversely, residents aged 35 to 54 and those living in the north are more inclined to perceive the value they receive as poor in comparison to other demographic groups.



Statistically significantly **higher/lower** than the overall level

Tax and Service Preferences

Residents are split on whether to increase municipal property taxes or reduce services, with almost half endorsing either approach. Over three in ten support service cuts to maintain the current tax level, while nearly as many are in favour of increasing taxes to keep services at their current levels. Nearly one-fifth either prefer cutting services to reduce taxes or increasing taxes to enhance or expand services. Residents aged 55 and above and homeowners are more likely to support tax increases to maintain current service levels compared to other demographic groups.



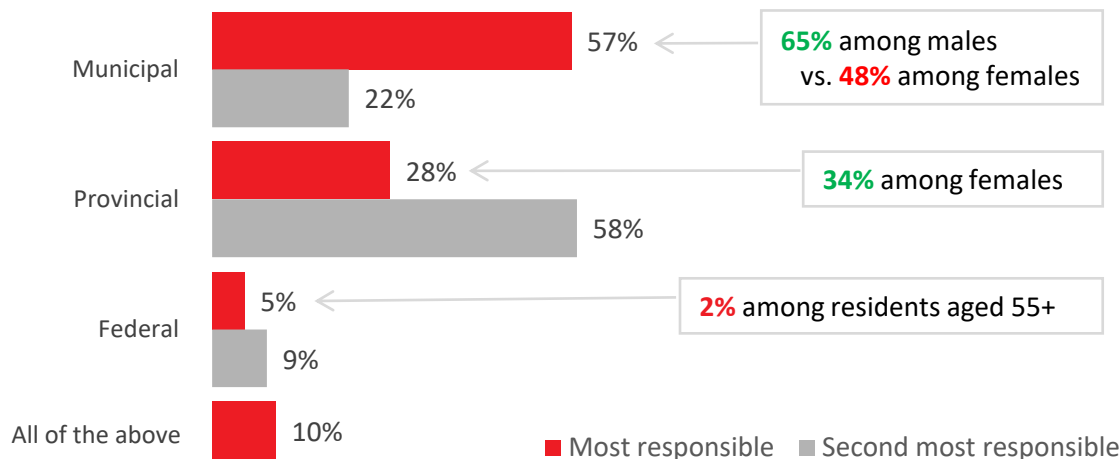
Statistically significantly **higher/lower** than the overall level

DETAILED RESULTS

Infrastructure Maintenance

Responsible Government for Infrastructure Maintenance

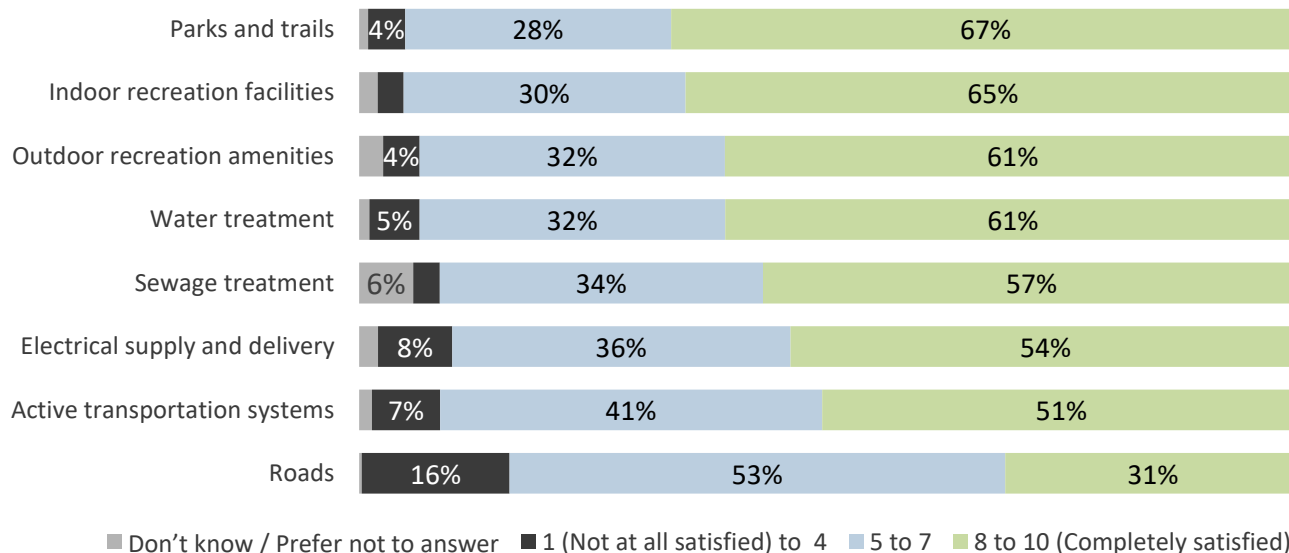
Almost six in ten residents believe the municipal government has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of infrastructure in their community while the provincial government holds secondary responsibility. The federal government is rarely seen as holding either primary or secondary responsibility in this area.



Statistically significantly **higher/lower** than the overall level

Satisfaction with Infrastructure Maintenance

The city's maintenance of parks and trails, as well as indoor recreation facilities, garners the highest satisfaction levels, with outdoor recreation amenities and water treatment following closely behind. Road maintenance falls at the lower end of satisfaction, indicating a need for increased focus in this area.



Satisfaction with Infrastructure Maintenance – by demographics

Residents aged 55 or older tend to be less satisfied with the maintenance of indoor recreation facilities in their community compared to the younger. Satisfaction with water treatment maintenance is notably lower among those residing in central areas, whereas residents in the south show higher satisfaction levels with the maintenance of electrical supply and delivery than those in other regions.

% 8 to 10	Total	Gender		Age			Region			Accommodation		# years living in Red Deer			Visible minority	
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Central	North	South	Own	Rent	<5	5-10	10+	Yes	No
Base (n=)	400	178	221	42*	88	270	143	113	139	328	64	24*	33*	342	45*	337
Parks and trails	67%	68%	66%	71%	68%	62%	63%	63%	74%	65%	70%	74%	49%	68%	64%	69%
Indoor recreation facilities	65%	67%	65%	71%	70%	56%	64%	62%	69%	63%	70%	73%	61%	65%	60%	68%
Outdoor recreation amenities	61%	62%	61%	62%	61%	60%	59%	63%	64%	60%	63%	71%	54%	61%	56%	62%
Water treatment	61%	60%	63%	67%	53%	64%	53%	67%	65%	63%	55%	85%	38%	61%	57%	62%
Sewage treatment	57%	57%	58%	59%	53%	59%	51%	64%	58%	59%	55%	66%	33%	59%	57%	57%
Electrical supply and delivery	54%	54%	55%	64%	44%	57%	48%	48%	66%	56%	48%	71%	37%	54%	54%	56%
Active transportation systems	51%	44%	58%	55%	50%	48%	47%	55%	51%	53%	45%	72%	38%	50%	51%	50%
Roads	31%	31%	32%	29%	29%	36%	29%	36%	30%	33%	24%	38%	35%	30%	39%	30%

Statistically significantly **higher/lower** than the overall level

Q18: How satisfied you are with how The City is maintaining each of the following infrastructure assets in your community? Base: All respondents (n=400)

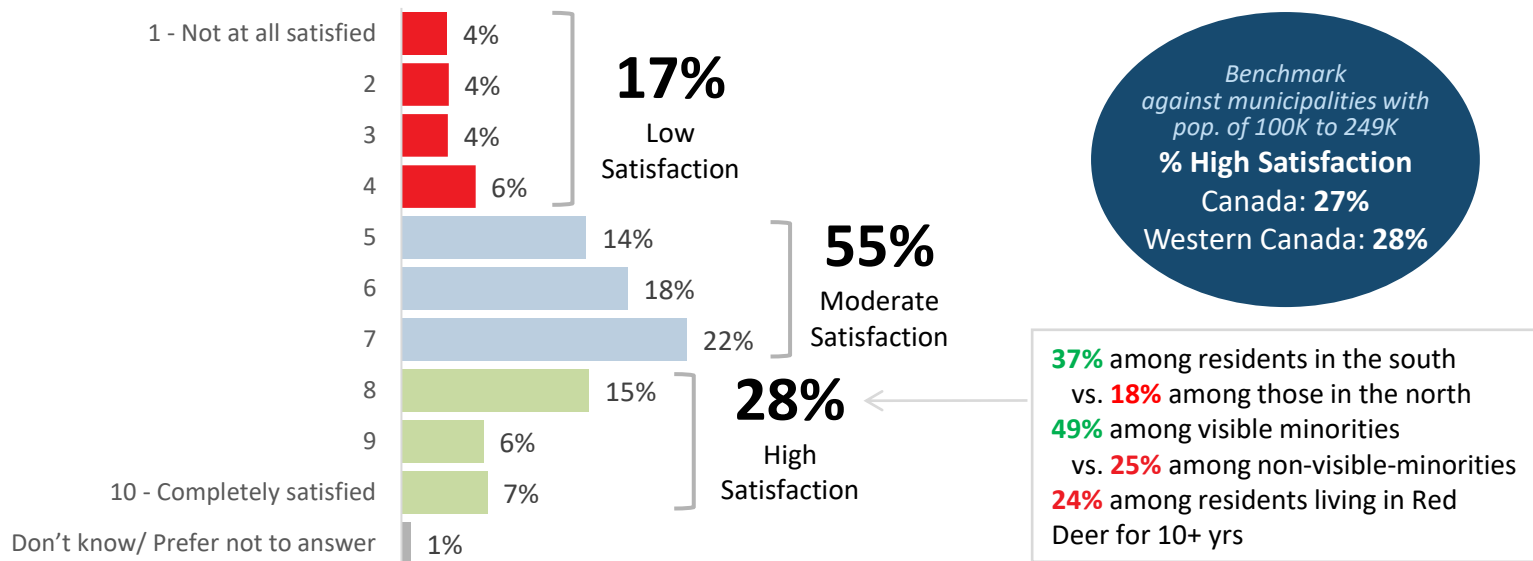
*Small sample size caution

DETAILED RESULTS

Communication and Engagement

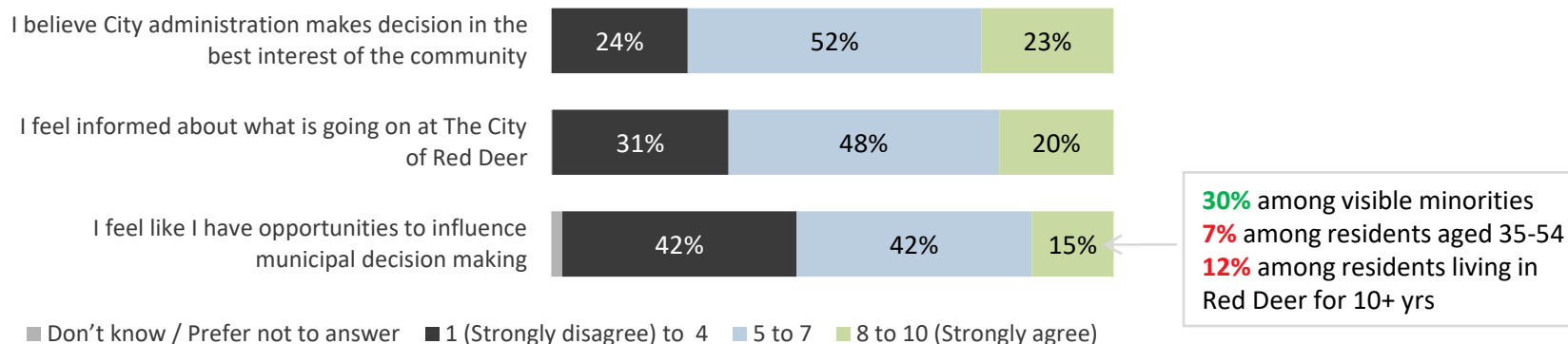
Satisfaction with the Quality of City's Communication

Overall satisfaction with the quality of the City's communication with its citizens is moderate, with nearly three in ten being highly satisfied, on par with national and Western Canada levels among municipalities of similar size. Residents living in the south and visible minorities tend to feel more satisfied compared to other demographic groups.

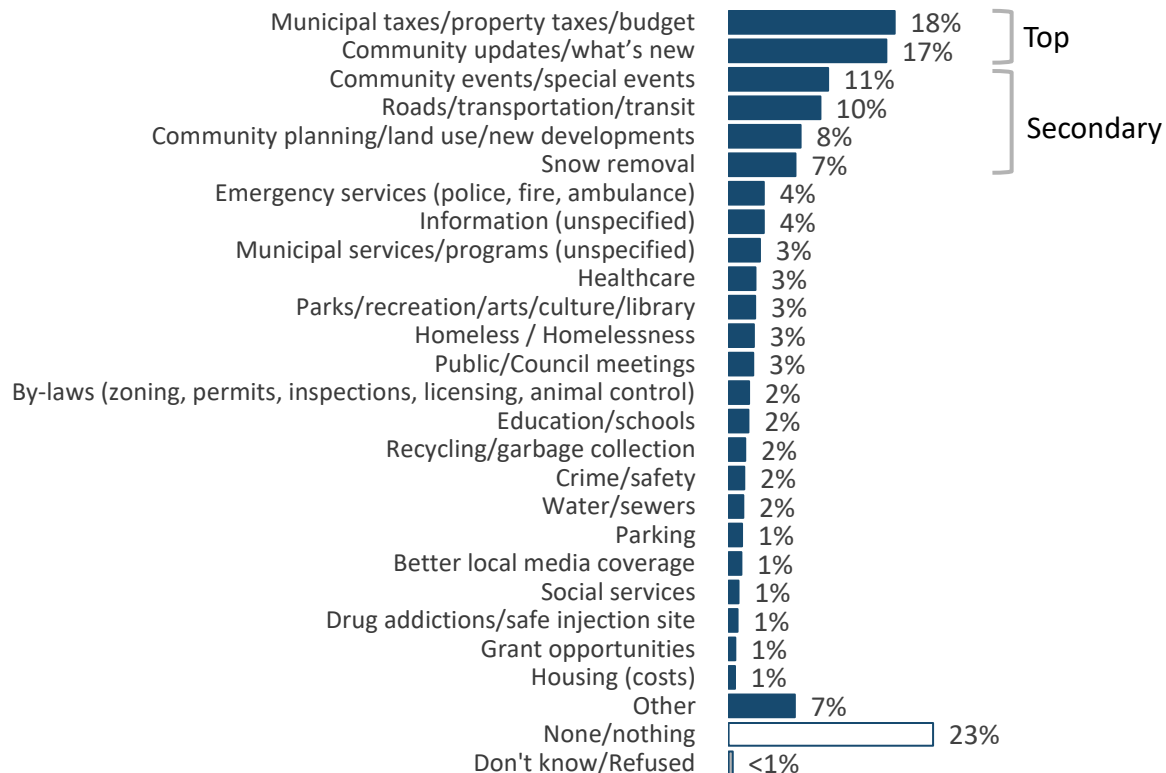


Perceptions about City Decision Making

Opinions are split regarding whether the City administration makes decisions in the community's best interest, with nearly a quarter of residents leaning to disagree or agree. Just one in five feel they are informed about what is going on at the City, and even an even smaller proportion believe that they have opportunities to influence municipal decision making.

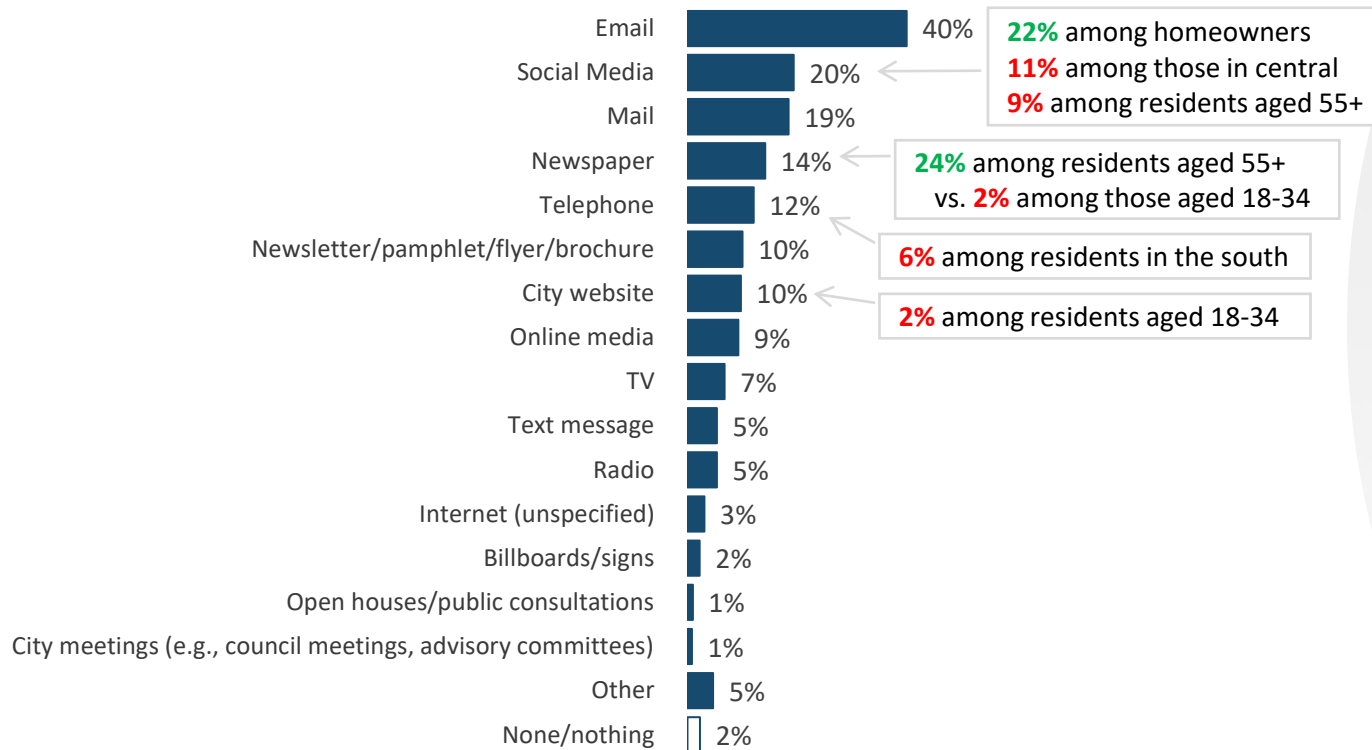


Information Needs from the City



Nearly a fifth of residents prioritize receiving information on municipal/property taxes and budget, as well as community updates. Secondary information needs such as community events, and details on roads, transportation, transit, community planning, and snow removal are sought after by approximately one-tenth.

Preferred Communication Methods from the City

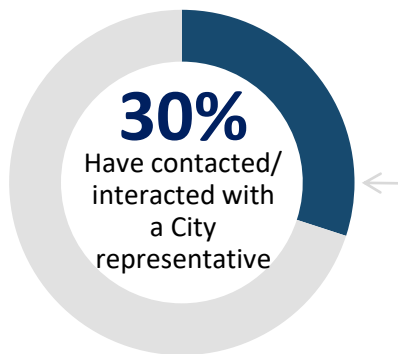


Email stands out as the most preferred method for receiving information from the City, with two-fifths favouring it twice as much as the second and third preferences- social media and traditional mail.

Newspaper is notably more popular among residents aged 55 and older, in contrast to those between 18-34, who also exhibit minimal interest in the City website for information.

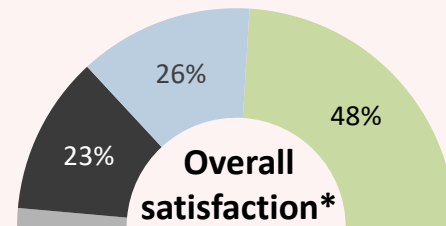
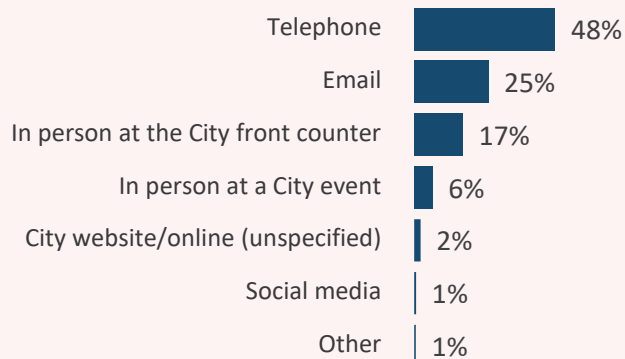
Interaction with City Representatives

Three in ten residents have contacted or interacted with a City of Red Deer representative in the past year. Nearly half of the most recent interactions occurred via telephone, a quarter by email, and almost one-fifth in person at the City front counter. The overall level of satisfaction with most recent interactions is strong, with almost half being highly satisfied.



37% among residents aged 55+
36% among homeowners
vs. **13%** among renters

Interaction Format*



■ Don't know / Prefer not to answer
■ Low (1-4)
■ Moderate (5-7)
■ High (8-10)

Statistically significantly **higher/lower** than the overall level

REPORT

Respondent Profile



Respondent Profile

Percent of Respondents (%)	
Gender	
Male	48%
Female	51%
Transgender	1%
Age	
18 to 34	29%
35 to 54	35%
55+	36%
Region	
Central	36%
North	29%
South	34%
County	1%

Percent of Respondents (%)	
Length of Residency	
Less than 5 years	10%
Less than 1 year	1%
1 to just below 5 years	9%
Between 5 and 10 years	9%
More than 10 years	80%
Prefer not to answer	<1%
Accommodation Arrangement	
Own	74%
Rent	24%
Prefer not to answer	2%
Visible Minority	
Yes	16%
No	80%
Prefer not to answer	4%

Our Services

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- **Customer Experience (CX)**
Strategic and operational customer experience consulting services
- **Leger Analytics (LEA)**
Data modelling and analysis
- **Leger Opinion (LEO)**
Panel management
- **Leger Communities**
Online community management
- **Leger Digital**
Digital strategy and user experience
- **International Research**
Worldwide Independent Network (WIN)

600
EMPLOYEES



185
CONSULTANTS



8
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