



# 2018 Traffic Safety Survey



## Research Results

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

In January, 2018, Strathcona County conducted an online survey to obtain feedback from residents about aspects of traffic safety in the community. This is the third time this type of survey has been done in the County, the first having been done in 2013. The main purpose of this research was to measure different elements of traffic safety and the levels of acceptance of what residents expect driving habits to be in Strathcona County. Comparisons between the current study and results from the online data that was collected in 2015 will be shown in its own separate section of the report.

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. A review of the methodology associated in the development and implementation 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 a modified survey that was initially created in 2013 by Strathcona County's Corporate Planning and Intergovernmental Affairs and Transportation and Agricultural Services Departments.

In the latest study, the survey was only available online. In 2013, a telephone survey methodology was used and in 2015, both a telephone survey and an online survey were used to gather data from residents.

## B. Sampling Design and Data Collection Procedure

The sample frame used in this study were residents living in urban<sup>1</sup> and rural parts of Strathcona County most of whom were 18 years of age or older. Overall, 83.9% of the participants lived in the urban area, while 16.1% came from rural parts of Strathcona County.

The sample frame provided overall results<sup>2</sup> accurate to within  $\pm 2.76\%$ , 19 times out of 20.

The survey was posted on January 9<sup>th</sup> and stayed up until January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018. While it was hoped that the survey would be completed by residents who were 18 years of age or older, in actuality, there were no controls in place to prevent those under the age of 18 to do the survey. It was hoped that people doing the survey online were truthful when they filled in the age grouping category. There were some instances where people living outside of Strathcona County completed the survey; however, these people were eliminated when analysis was done.<sup>3</sup>

Overall, usable data was obtained from 1,246 people who did the survey online. This report is, for the most part, limited to overall data. Gender, age and geographic comparisons can be done later upon request.

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<sup>1</sup> In this report, the urban component of Strathcona County is Sherwood Park.

<sup>2</sup> The  $\pm 2.76\%$  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 2.76% higher or lower than what is reported. Please note, however, that this was an online survey, and no controls were undertaken to make this a random sample.

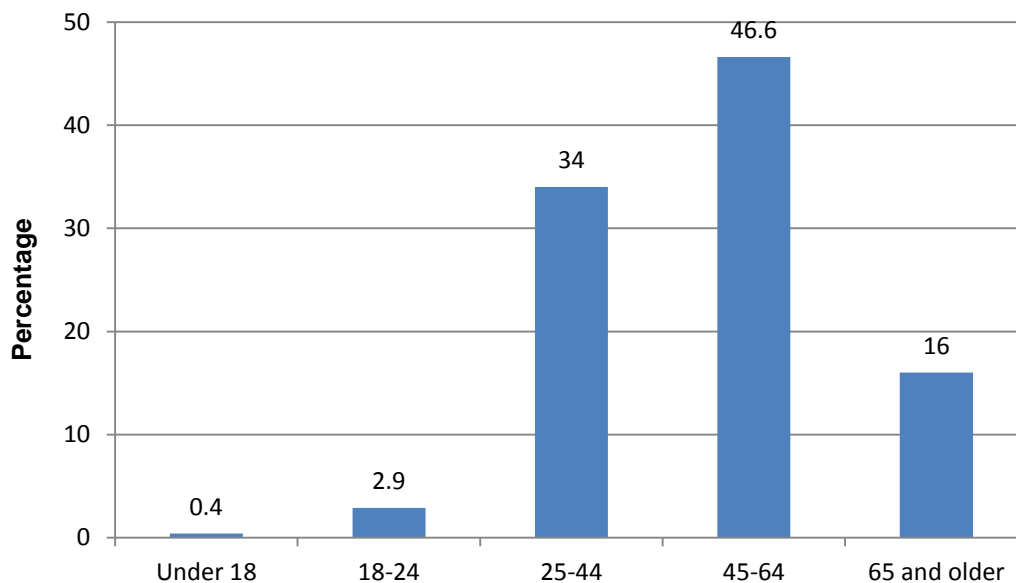
<sup>3</sup> Overall, this process eliminated 10 people from the analysis.

### III. RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

This section of the report presents a summary of the results associated with the perceptions and awareness of residents who completed the survey in 2018.

As seen in Figure 1, the majority of respondents who participated in the survey are over the age of 44, with about one third of the participants between the age of 25 and 44. Only a very small percentage of participants were under 25.

**FIGURE 1**  
**Age of Respondents**



Overall, 62.2% of participants were female with 37.8% being male.<sup>4</sup> Almost all respondents who took part in the survey indicated that they drove a motor vehicle in Strathcona County.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that 4.6% of respondents did not disclose their gender and 1% of the sample did not include their age.

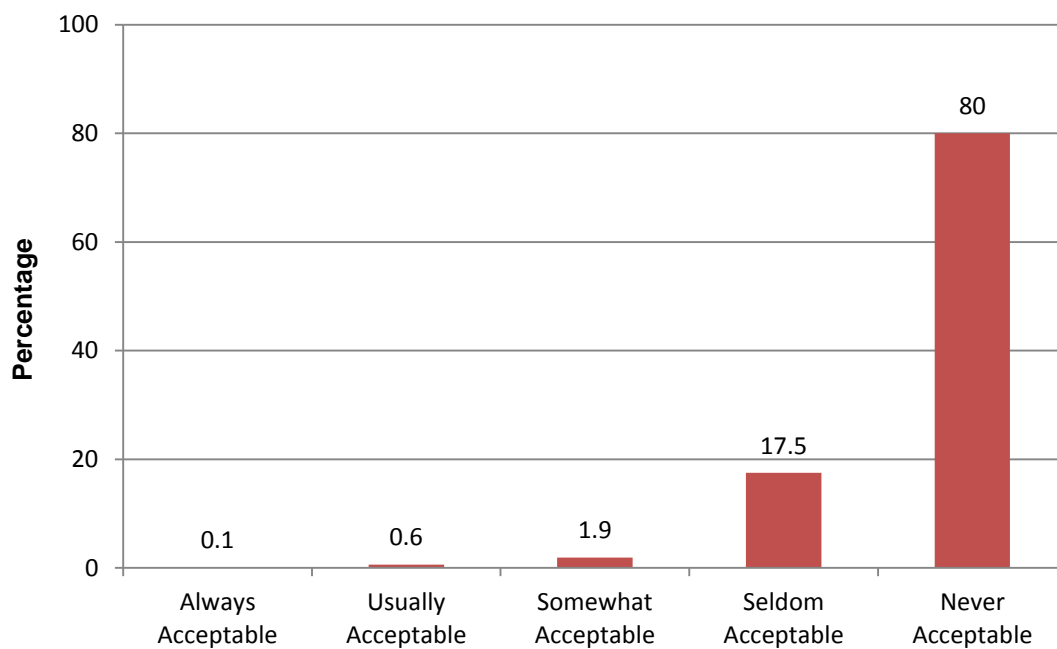
<sup>5</sup> Overall, 99.4% of the respondents drove a motor vehicle in 2018.

## IV. 2018 SURVEY RESULTS

### A. Perceptions about Driving Behavior

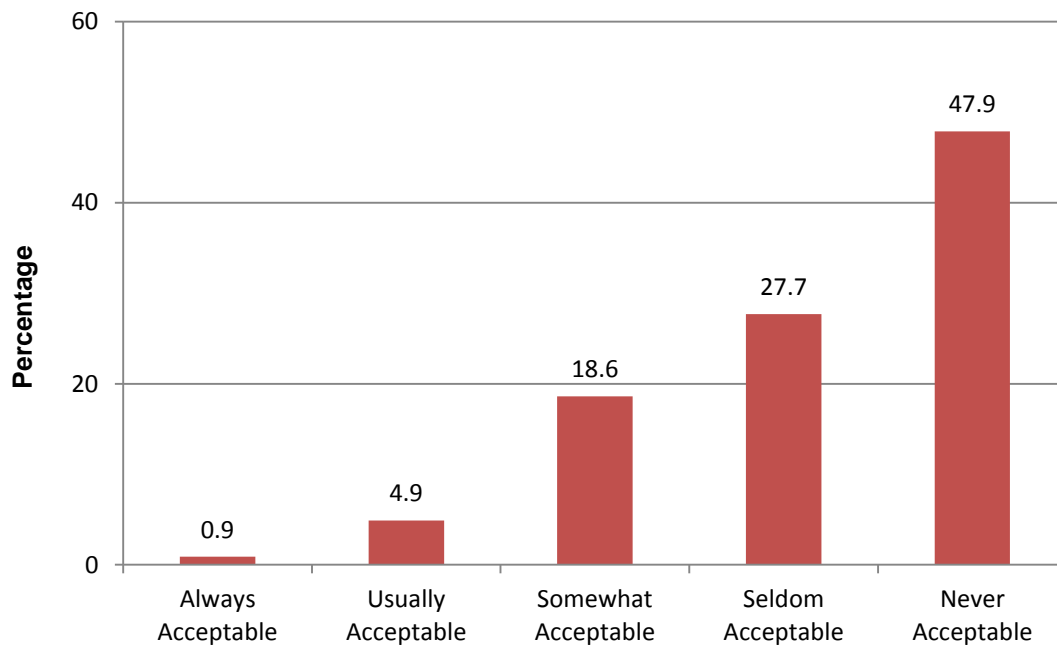
Strathcona County residents were initially asked a series of questions about driving behavior in general. Initially, respondents were asked how acceptable they thought it was to run a red light. It can be seen from Figure 2 that almost everyone felt that this was not acceptable.

**FIGURE 2**  
**Running a Red Light**



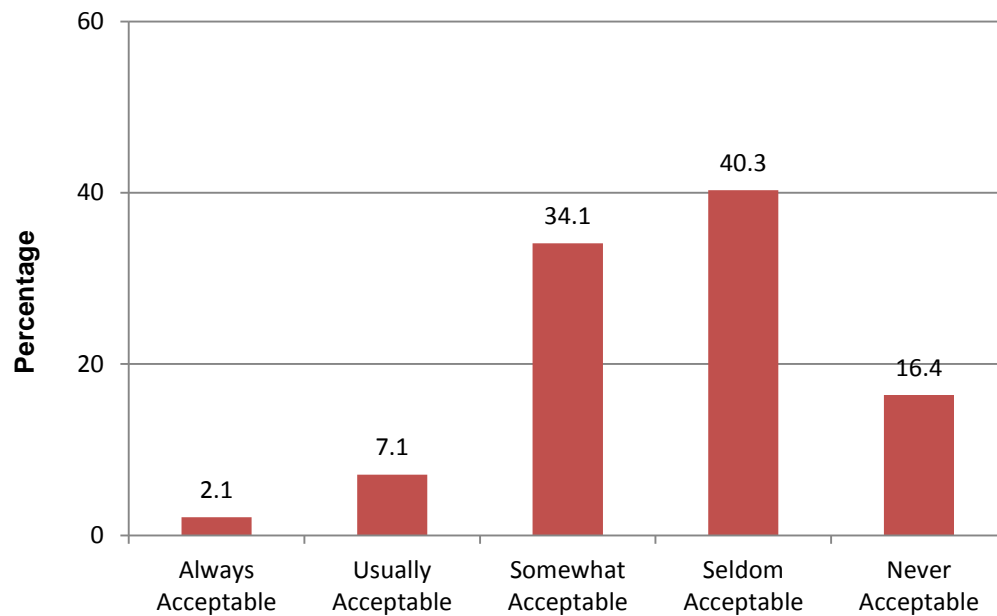
Respondents were then asked how acceptable they thought it was to roll through a stop sign. It can be seen from Figure 3 that the majority felt that this was never acceptable, although this was slightly higher among the telephone respondents than the online ones.

**FIGURE 3**  
**Rolling through a Stop Sign**



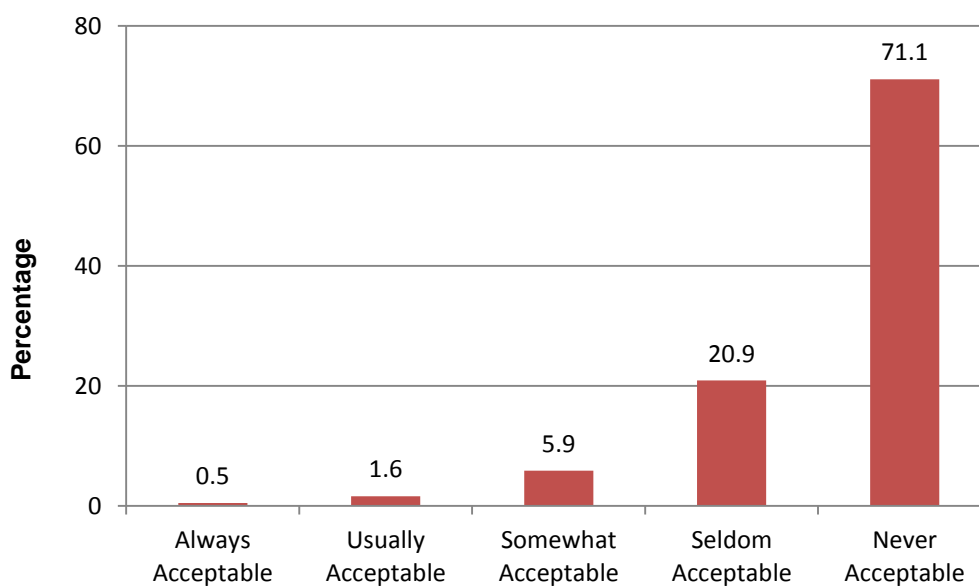
With respect to how acceptable they thought it was to speed up to get through a yellow light, it can be seen from Figure 4 that just over half of the telephone respondents felt that this was not acceptable. Considerably less of the online respondents felt this way, however. A further investigation of the online respondents showed that age was a factor here, as considerably more online residents under the age of 45 thought this was somewhat acceptable compared to those online respondents aged 45 or older.

**FIGURE 4**  
**Speeding up to get through a Yellow Light**



With respect to how acceptable they thought it was to drive over the speed limit on a residential street, it can be seen from Figure 5 that most people felt that this was not acceptable.

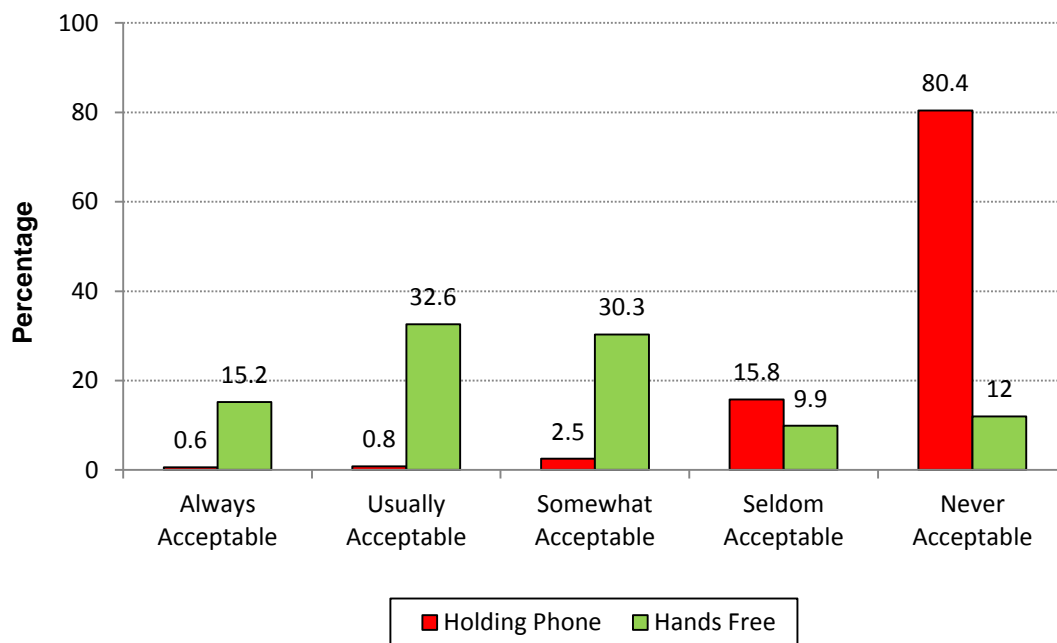
**FIGURE 5**  
**Driving over the Speed Limit on Residential Streets**





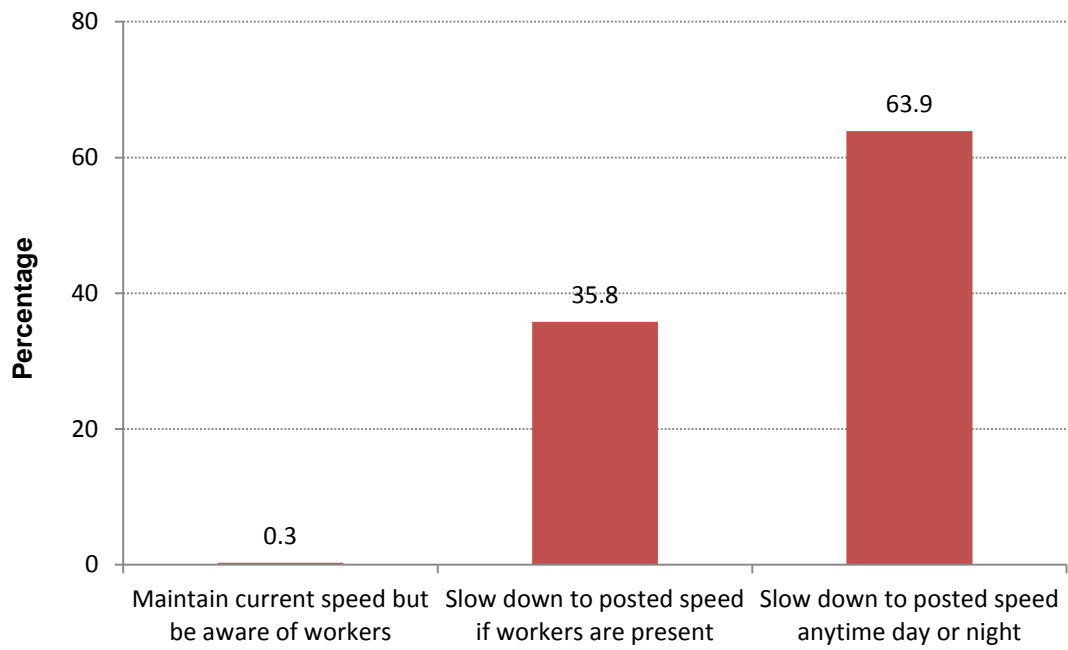
Respondents were also asked to indicate how acceptable they thought it was for a driver to talk on a cell phone while driving. It can be seen from Figure 6 that the majority felt that this was never acceptable if the driver was holding the phone, while only a small percentage of people felt it was not acceptable to do this with a hands free phone. A further analysis shows that the majority of respondents felt it was acceptable to varying degrees to use a hands free cell phone while driving.

**FIGURE 6**  
**Talking on a Cell Phone while Driving**



With respect to construction zones, it can be seen in Figure 7 that the majority of residents felt that one should slow down to the posted speed limit any time (night or day); however, a sizable percentage thought this should only be observed if workers are present. Virtually no one thought that one should maintain their current speed prior to the posted speed within a construction zone (even when one was cognizant of construction workers).

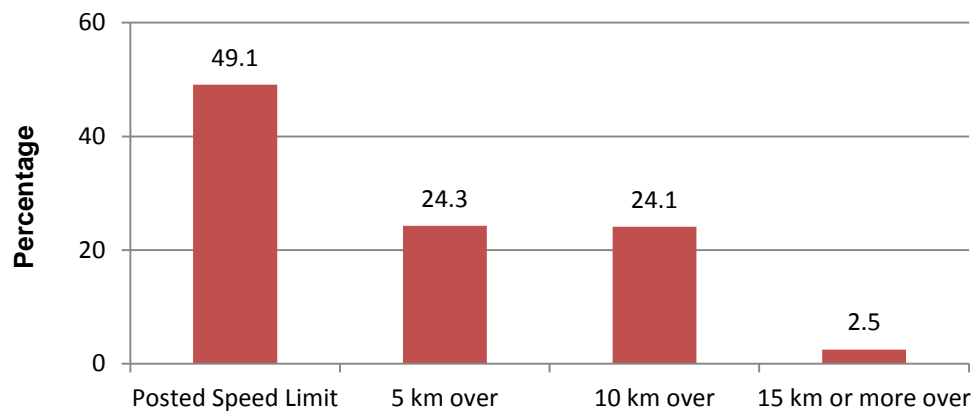
**FIGURE 7**  
**Attitudes toward Construction Zones**



## B. Perceptions about Personal Driving Behavior

Strathcona County residents were then asked some questions about their own driving habits. When asked about driving at (or over) the posted speed limit on a main road in the County (such as Baseline Road or a rural grid road), it can be seen in Figure 8 that the majority residents believed that they never drive over the posted speed limit, but that maybe 5-10 km over the limit would be okay.

**FIGURE 8**  
**Driving over the Speed Limit on a Main Road in the County**



In terms of gender differences, it can be seen in Figure 9 that a slightly higher percentage of females would never drive over the posted speed limit compared to males. More males felt it was okay to drive 10 km or more over the limit compared to females.

**FIGURE 9**  
**Driving over the Speed Limit on a Main Road: Gender differences**

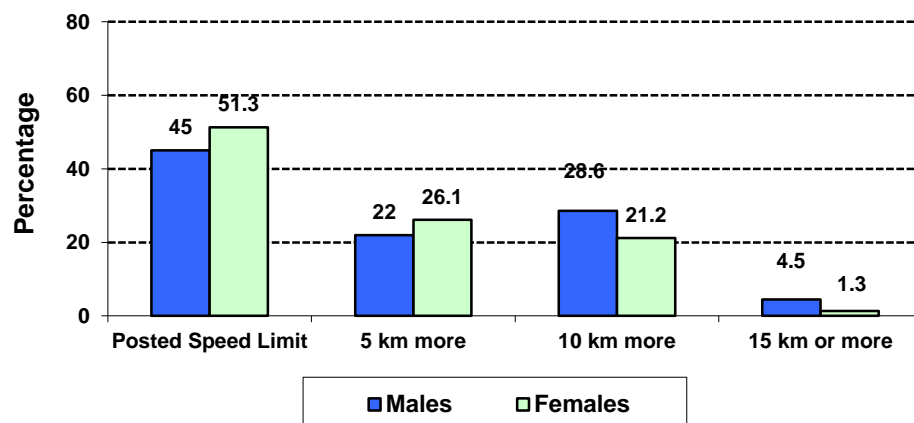
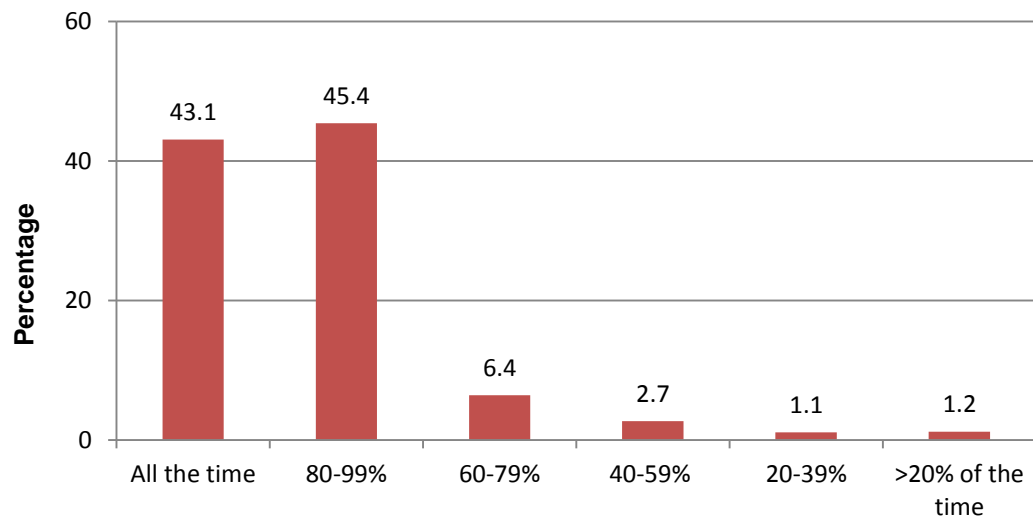


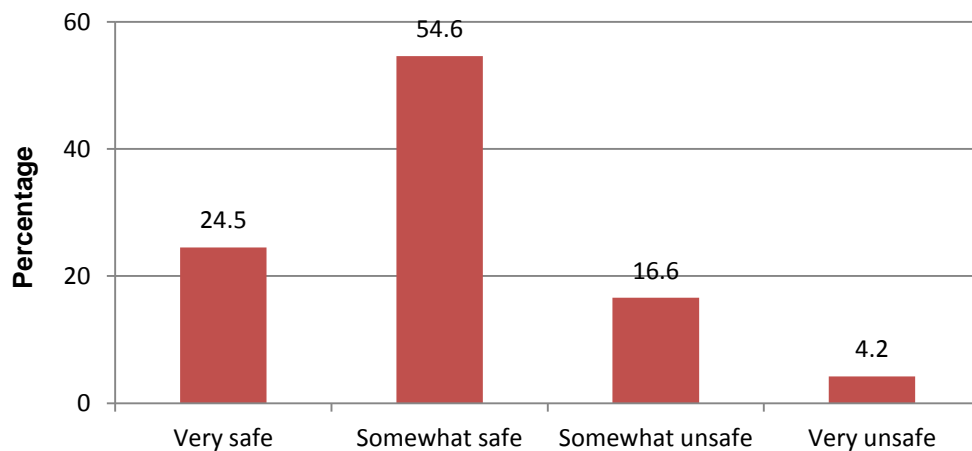
Figure 10 depicts the patterns indicated by residents with respect to coming to a complete stop at stop signs. It can be seen that there was a split between residents coming to a complete stop compared to those who will do it 80-99% of the time.

**FIGURE 10**  
**Coming to a Complete Stop at a Stop Sign**



When asked to rate the state of traffic safety in Strathcona County, the majority of residents feel somewhat safe, suggesting that there is still room for improvement.

**FIGURE 11**  
**Rating Overall Traffic Safety in Strathcona County**



With respect to traffic calming methods in Strathcona County, there is a discrepancy between those who agree with the current methods and those who disagree.

**FIGURE 12**  
**To what extent are traffic calming methods supported in Strathcona County**

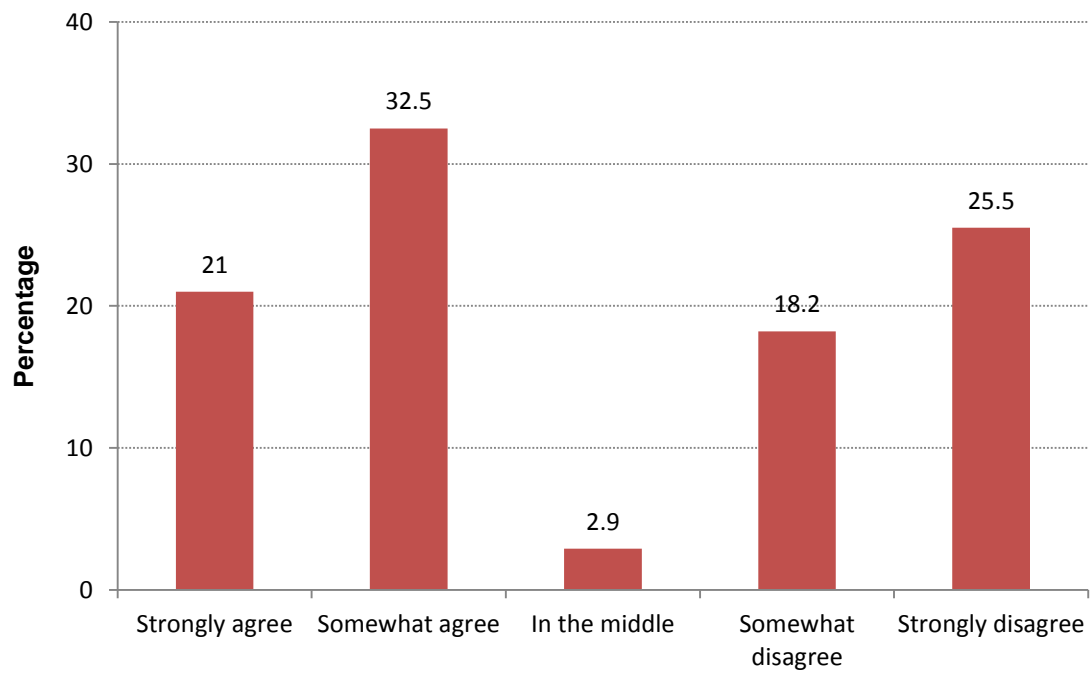
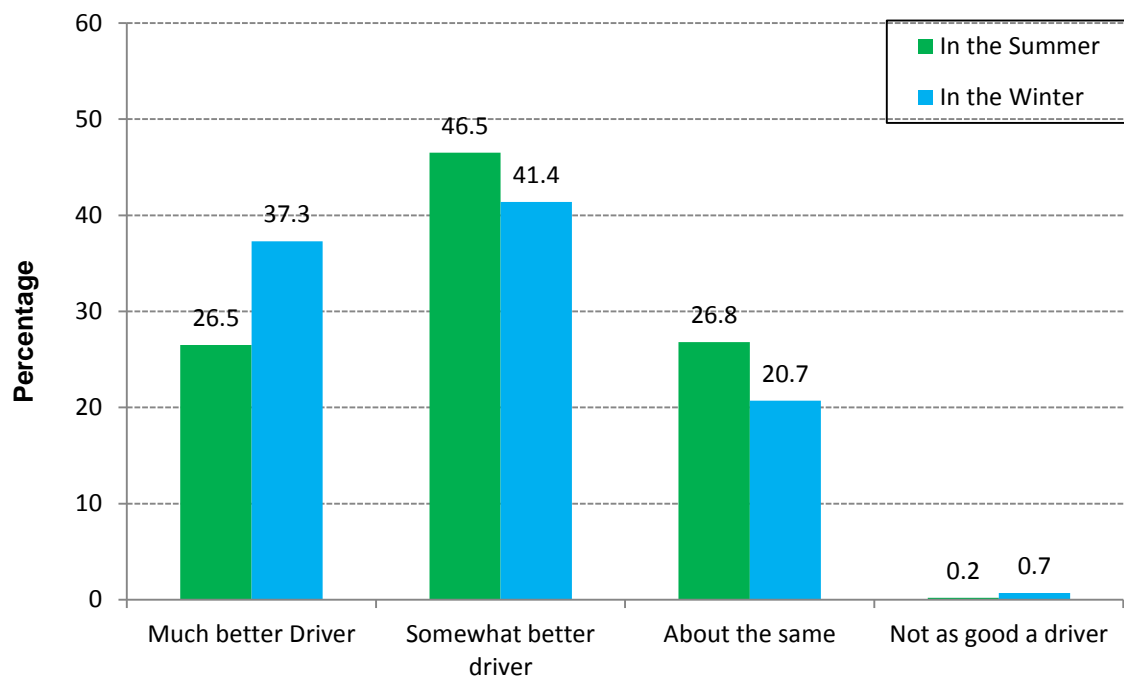


Figure 13 presents the perceptions that drivers in Strathcona County have toward their personal driving skills compared to other drivers in summer and in winter conditions. It can be seen that residents generally perceive themselves to be better drivers than others on the road, particularly during the winter season. Very few residents believe they are not as good as other drivers. In other words, they perceive any adverse driving on the road to be the fault of others, and not themselves.

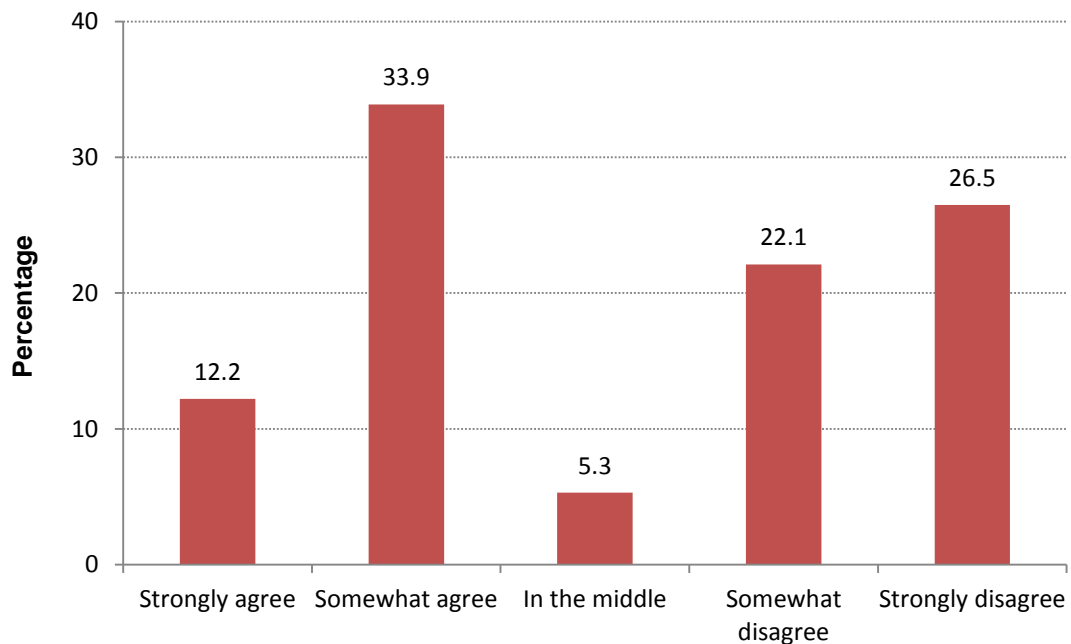
**FIGURE 13**  
**Perception of skills compared to other drivers**



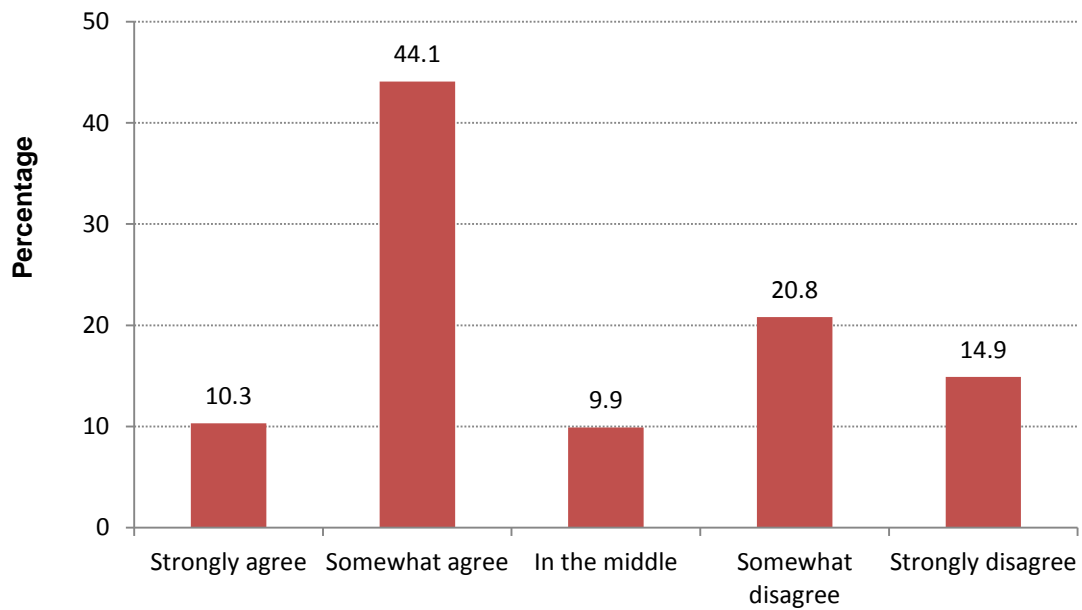
### C. Attitudes toward Traffic Safety in Strathcona County

Residents were then asked to rate a series of statements about traffic safety on the basis of how much they agreed or disagreed with each statement, which are summarized in Figures 14 through 18. In Figure 14, it can be seen residents are somewhat split in their opinions toward red light cameras. This split is also seen in Figure 15, with respect to agreement toward the County engaging its residents in addressing traffic safety.

**FIGURE 14**  
**Red light cameras make intersections safer**

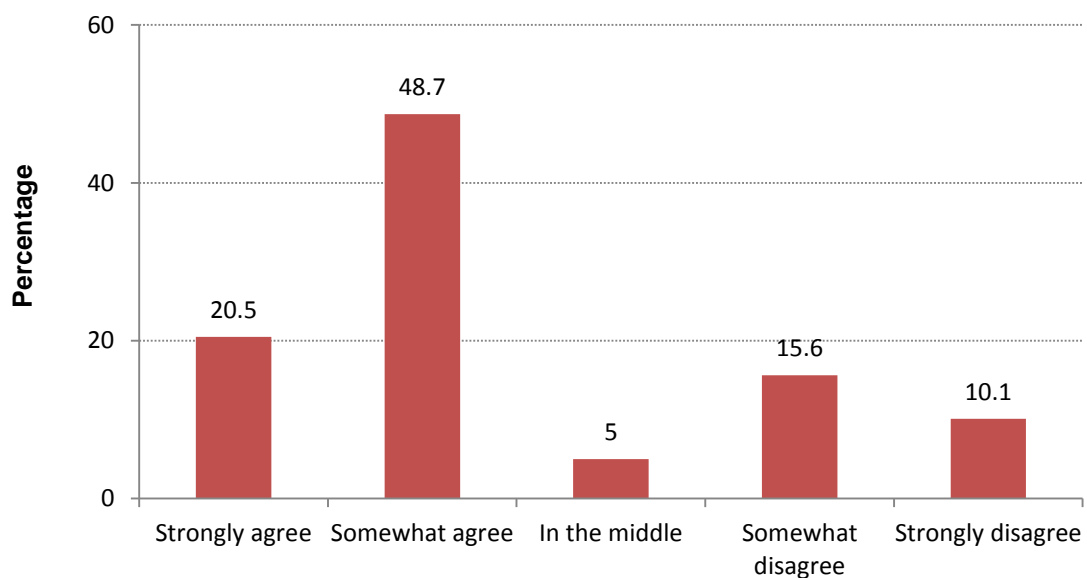


**FIGURE 15**  
**Strathcona County engages its residents in addressing traffic safety**



In Figure 16, the majority of residents agreed that traffic enforcement made Strathcona County's roads safer.

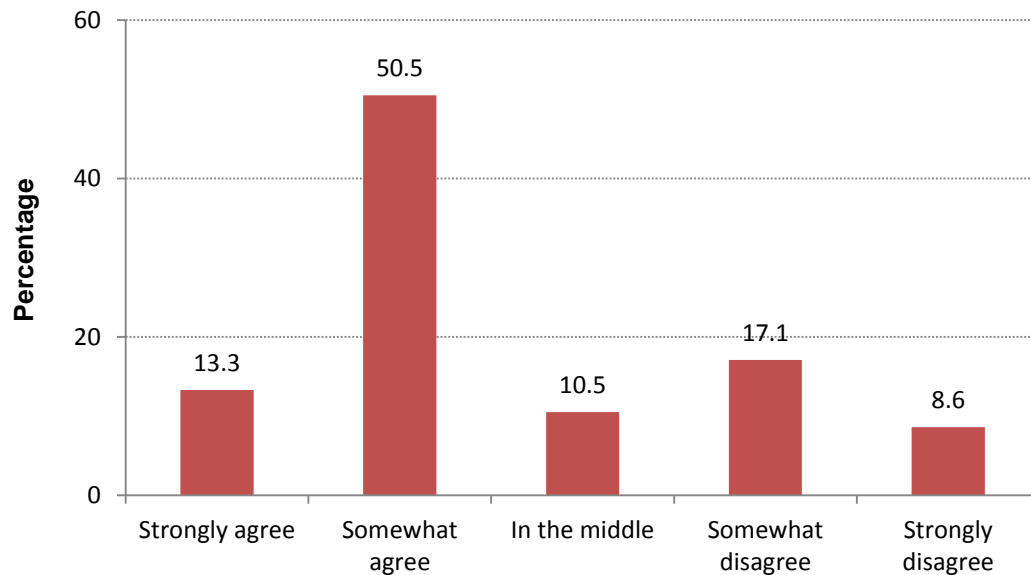
**FIGURE 16**  
**Traffic enforcement in Strathcona County makes our roads safer**



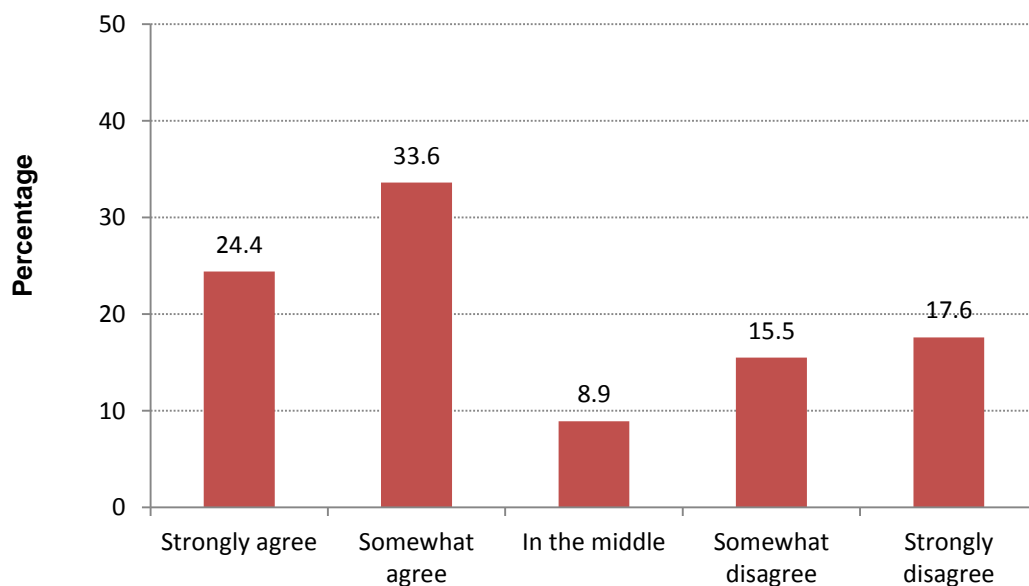


In Figure 17, the majority of residents agreed that Strathcona County was always working to improve road safety. However, Figure 18 shows that the majority of residents either strongly or somewhat agree that they are concerned about traffic safety in their neighborhood.

**FIGURE 17**  
**Strathcona County is always working to improve road safety**



**FIGURE 18**  
**Extent that residents are concerned about traffic safety in their neighbourhood**

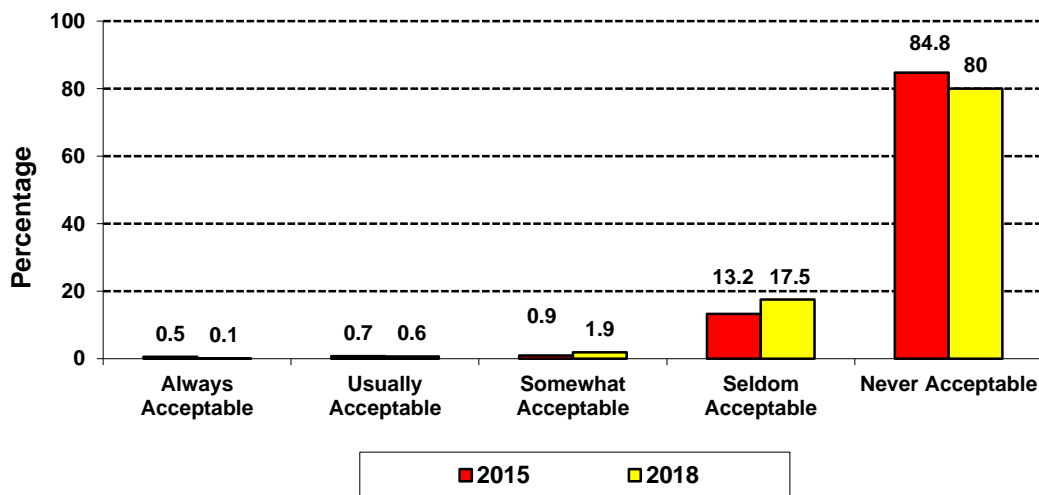


## V. TREND ANALYSIS - SAFETY PERCEPTIONS IN 2015 & 2018

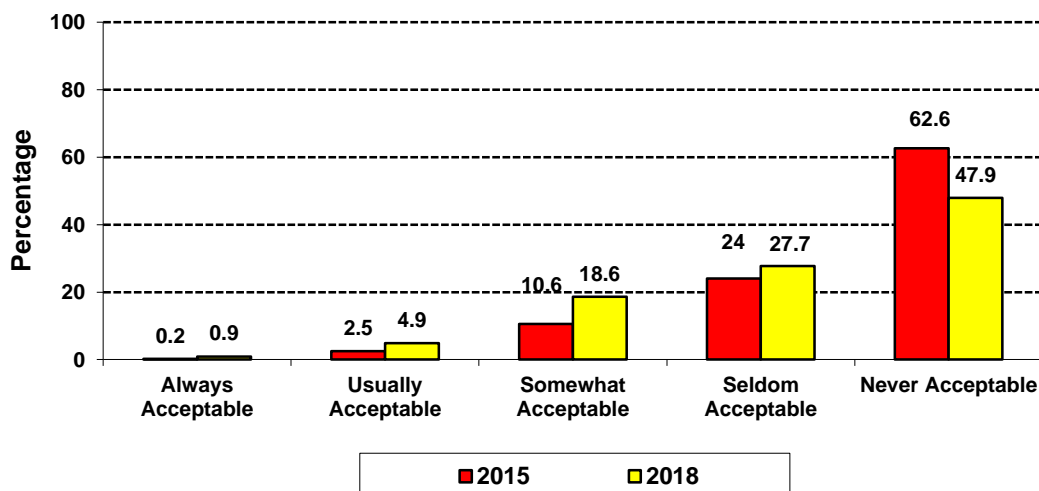
### A. Perceptions about Driving Behavior

It can be seen from Figure 19 that almost everyone felt that it was never acceptable to run a red light, though there is a slight drop between 2015 and 2018. With respect to rolling through a stop sign, it can be seen from Figure 20 that the majority felt in both years that this was not acceptable, though this perception was higher in 2015 compared to 2018.

**FIGURE 19**  
**Running a Red Light**

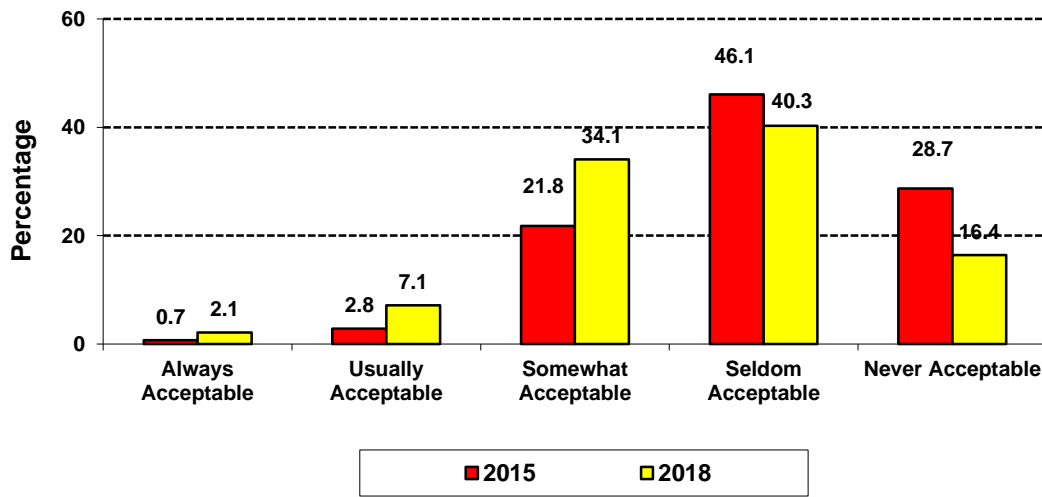


**FIGURE 20**  
**Rolling through a Stop Sign**



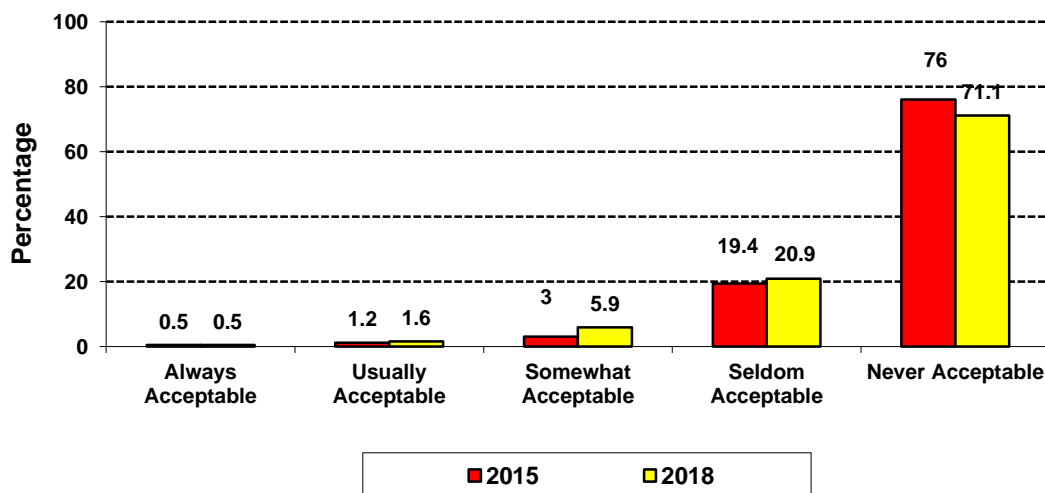
With respect to how acceptable they thought it was to speed up to get through a yellow light, it can be seen from Figure 21 that 28.7% of respondents felt that this was never acceptable in 2015, but this stance has dropped considerably in 2018, where only 16.4% of residents felt this way.

**FIGURE 21**  
**Speeding up to get through a Yellow Light**



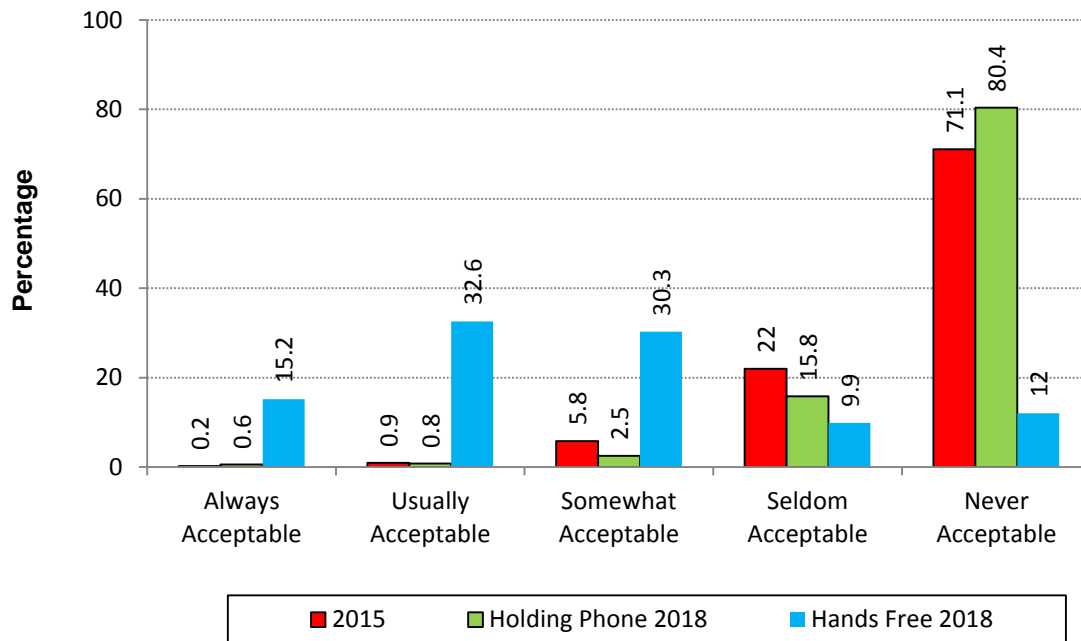
With respect to how acceptable they thought it was to drive over the speed limit on a residential street, Figure 22 shows that most people in both years felt that this was not acceptable, though this perception is slightly lower in 2018 compared to 2015.

**FIGURE 22**  
**Driving over the Speed Limit on Residential Streets**



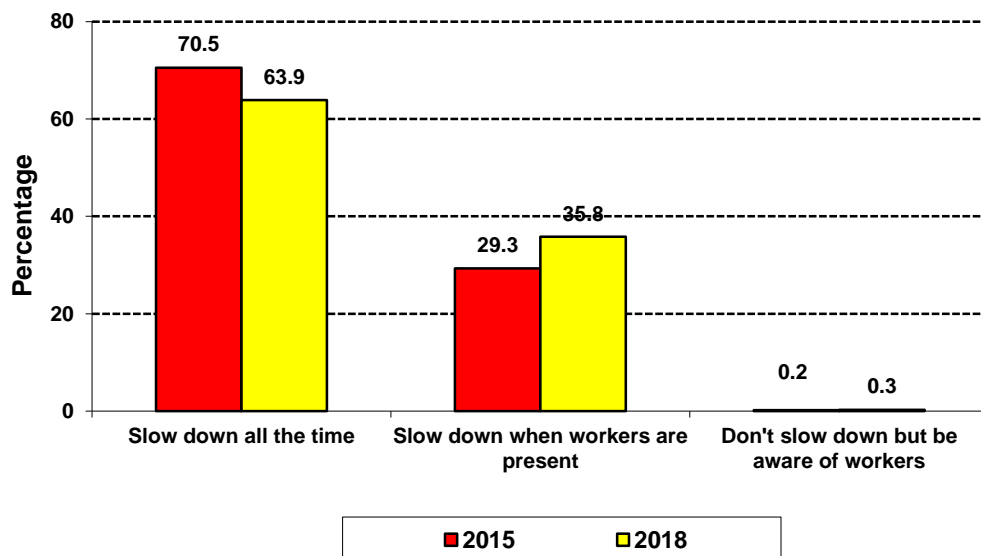
Respondents were also asked to indicate how acceptable they thought it was for a driver to talk on a cell phone while driving. It can be seen from Figure 23 that the majority in both years felt that this was not acceptable, though it should be noted that the 2015 study did not distinguish between hand held and hands free cell phones. The hands free cell phone is seen by many residents in 2018 to be acceptable to a certain degree.

**FIGURE 23**  
**Talking on a Cell Phone while Driving**



With respect to construction zones, it can be seen in Figure 24 that the majority of residents felt that one should slow down to the posted speed limit any time (night or day); however, a sizable percentage thought this should only be observed if workers are present, and this pattern has increased between 2015 and 2018. Virtually no one thought that one should not reduce one's speed in a construction zone (even when one was cognizant of construction workers). These perceptions have not changed between 2015 and 2018.

**FIGURE 24**  
**Attitudes toward Construction Zones**



## B. Perceptions about Personal Driving Behavior<sup>6</sup>

When asked about driving at (or over) the posted speed limit on a main road in the County (such as Baseline Road or a rural grid road), it can be seen in Figure 25 that the most residents stated that they would never drive over the posted speed limit in both years. There wasn't much difference as to how much over the speed limit residents would be comfortable driving between 2015 and 2018.

**FIGURE 25**  
**Driving over the Speed Limit on a Main Road in the County**

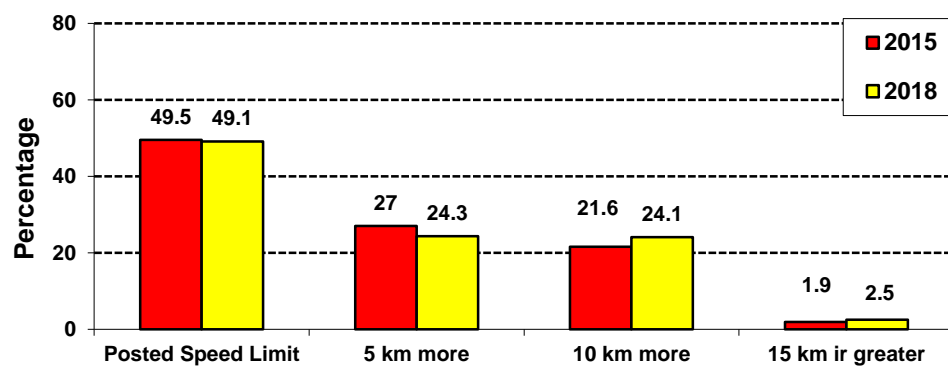
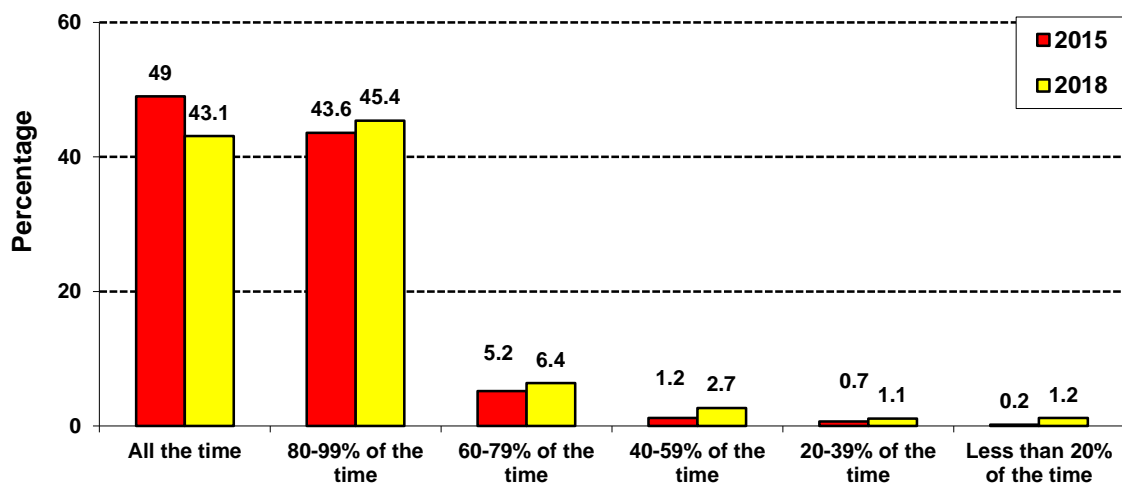


Figure 26 depicts the patterns indicated by residents with respect to coming to a complete stop at stop signs in 2015 and 2018. It can be seen that approximately the same percentage of residents would come to a complete stop all of the time or at least 80% of the time in both 2015 and 2018.

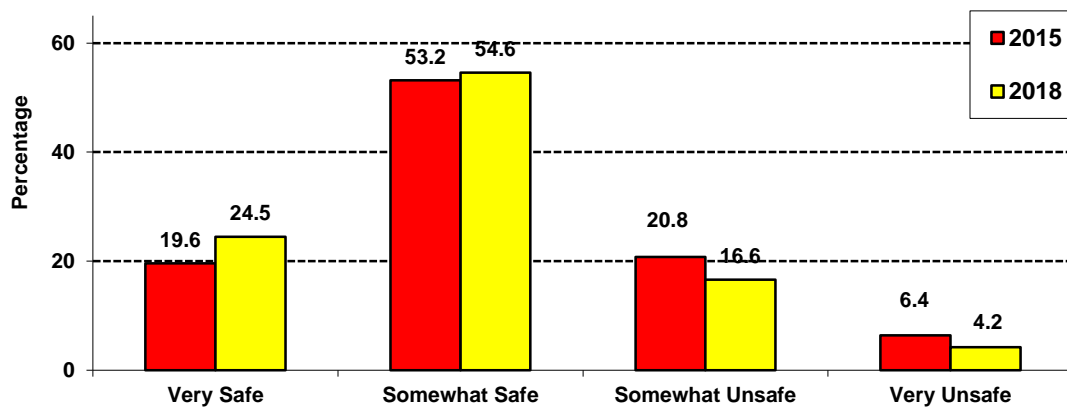
<sup>6</sup> Please note that the questions asked about comparing driving skills to others were not asked in 2015.

**FIGURE 26**  
**Coming to a Complete Stop at a Stop Sign**



When asked to rate the state of traffic safety in Strathcona County, a slightly higher percentage of residents in 2018 felt things were safer compared to 2015, though the difference is minimal (Figure 27).

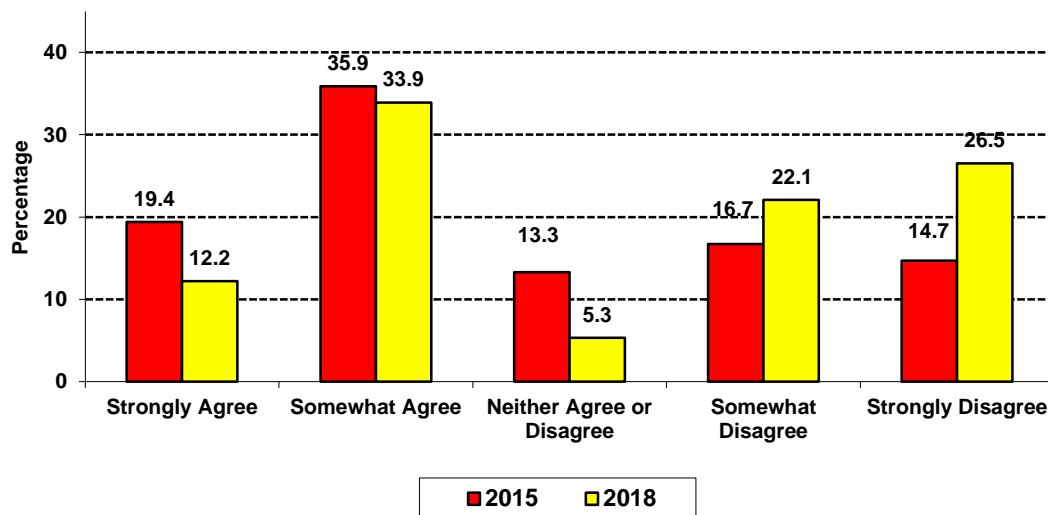
**FIGURE 27**  
**Rating Overall Traffic Safety in Strathcona County**



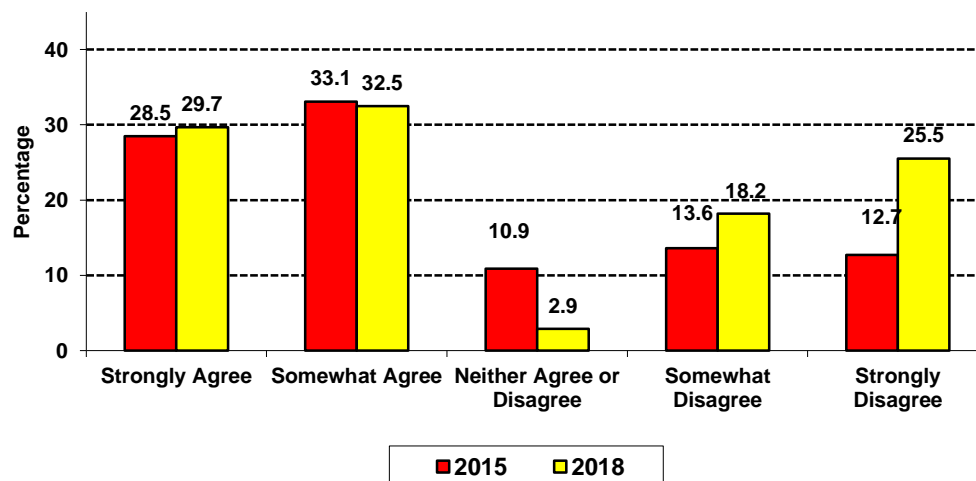
### C. Attitudes toward Traffic Safety in Strathcona County

Using the overall results both 2015 and 2018, a comparison pertaining to trending attitudes toward aspects of traffic safety is shown in Figures 28 through 33. With respect to red light cameras making intersections safer, the extent of residents' strongly agreeing has dropped between 2015 and 2018. Perceptions toward agreeing with traffic calming, have remained fairly consistent in both years, it can be seen that the percentage who either somewhat or strongly disagree with this has increased since 2015 (Figure 29).

**FIGURE 28**  
**Red light cameras make intersections safer**



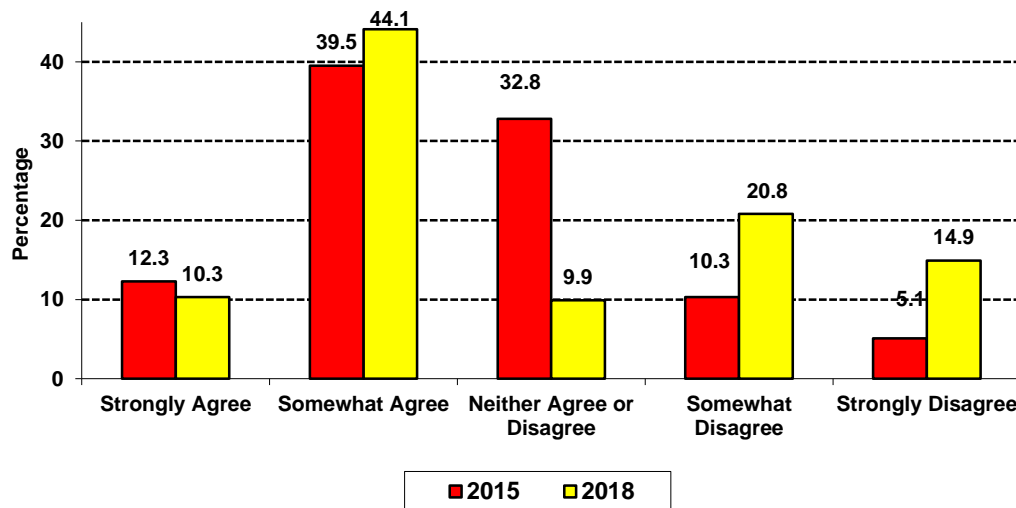
**FIGURE 29**  
**I support the use of traffic calming in Strathcona County**



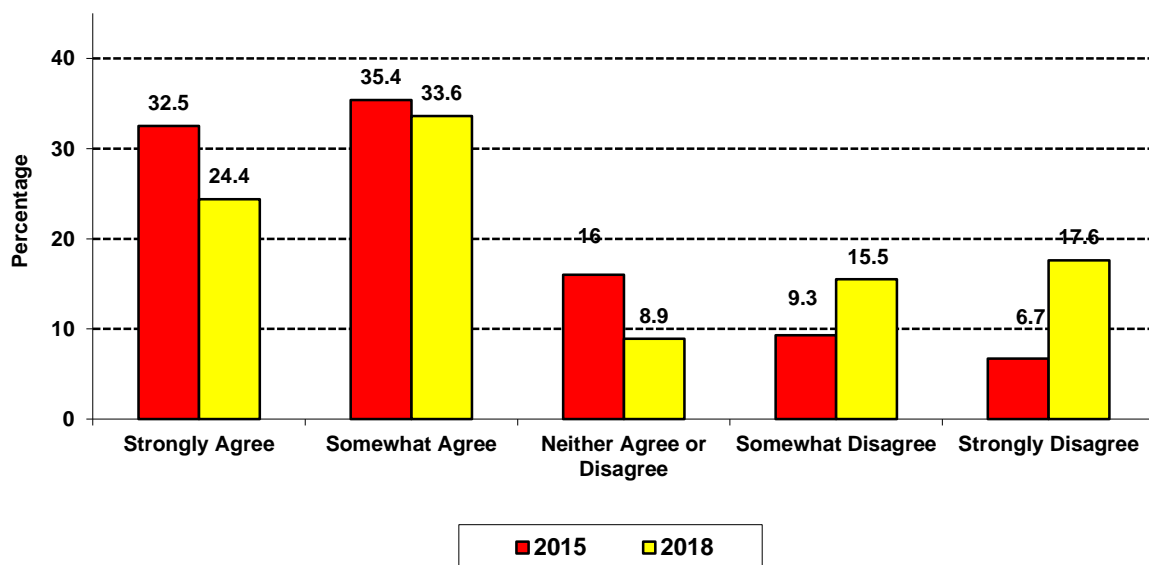


In Figure 30, there was a shift in 2018 where there was more disagreement that the County is engaging its residents in addressing traffic safety (Figure 30). Moreover, there was higher disagreement with traffic safety being a concern in the neighborhood in 2018 compared with 2015 (Figure 31). In Figure 32, there was an increase in disagreement that traffic enforcement makes the roads safer between 2015 and 2018.

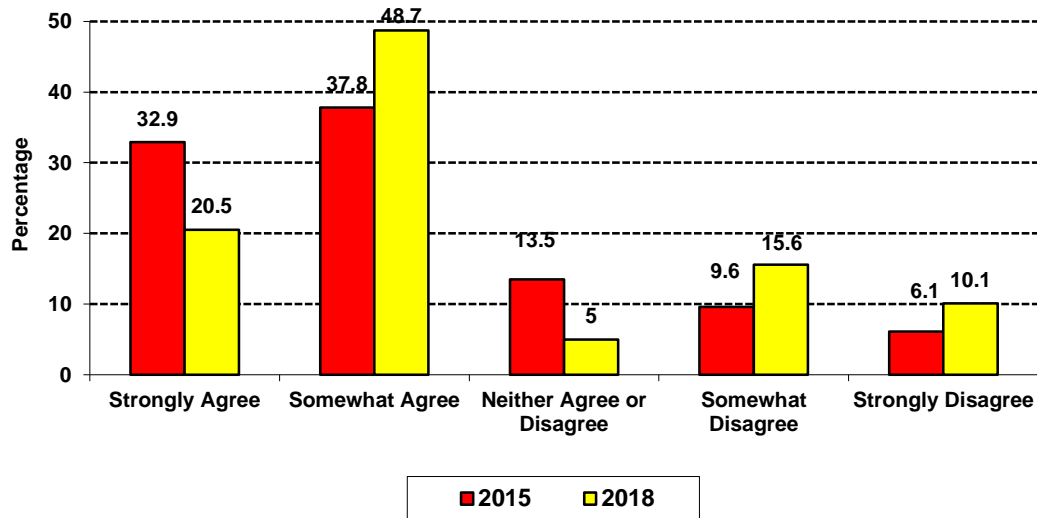
**FIGURE 30**  
**Strathcona County engages its residents in addressing traffic safety**



**FIGURE 31**  
**Traffic safety is a concern in my neighbourhood**



**FIGURE 32**  
**Traffic enforcement in Strathcona County makes our roads safer**



There was not much change toward the attitudes associated with the County working to improve road safety (Figure 35) between 2015 and 2018, although the neutral perceptions toward this dropped (but increased in terms of “somewhat agreeing” with it in 2018). There was also a larger segment of the population who disagree with this position in 2018 compared with 2015

**FIGURE 33**  
**Strathcona County is always working to improve road safety**

