

Recreation and Culture Strategy Project Update

May 14, 2019

What is the purpose of the Strategy?

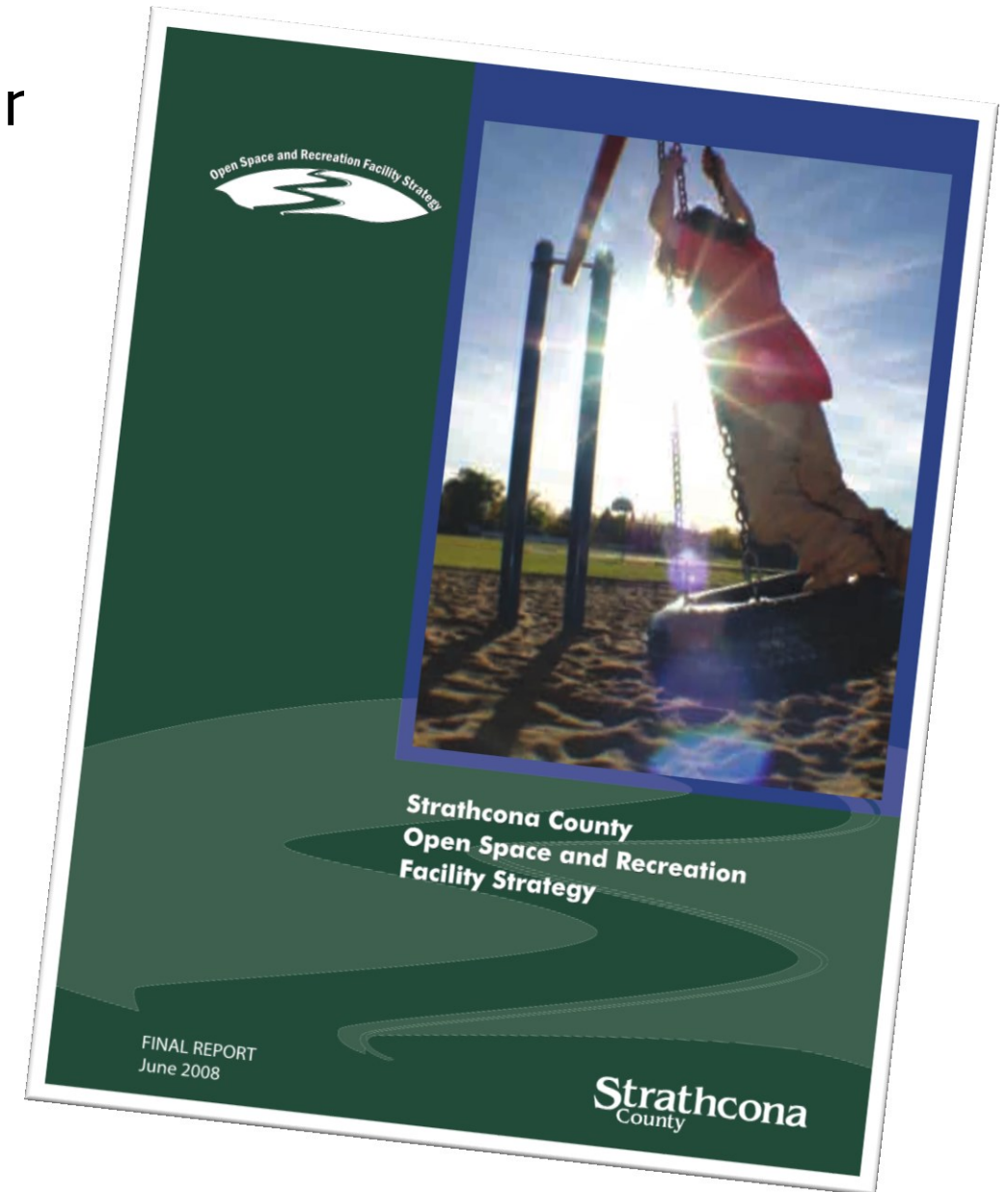
Serves as **strategic “road map”** for the provision of recreation and culture spaces, services, and opportunities in Strathcona County over the next 12+ years

Will influence public investment and effort in recreation and culture services

Picks up where the current Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy left off...

Two deliverables:

1. Recreation and Culture Strategy
 - high level, relevant to all
2. Implementation Plan
 - more detailed, relevant to County actions



Results based on current Strategy

New spaces such as:

- Emerald Hills Regional Park, Sports Pavilion and Leisure Centre (pool, artificial turf, fields, diamonds, skate path)
- Millennium Place gymnasium, youth lounge and planned revamp of skateboard park
- Art Gallery@501
- Linked to Public Art program
- Ardrossan Recreation Complex revitalization
- Broadmoor Lake Spray Park and Playground
- Bike skills park



Planning Process and Timeline

Research & Engagement

Phase I - Surveys & Research
Feb - Dec 2018

**Phase II - Refining key themes
& Community Conversations**
Jan - Mar 2019

Recreation & Culture Strategy

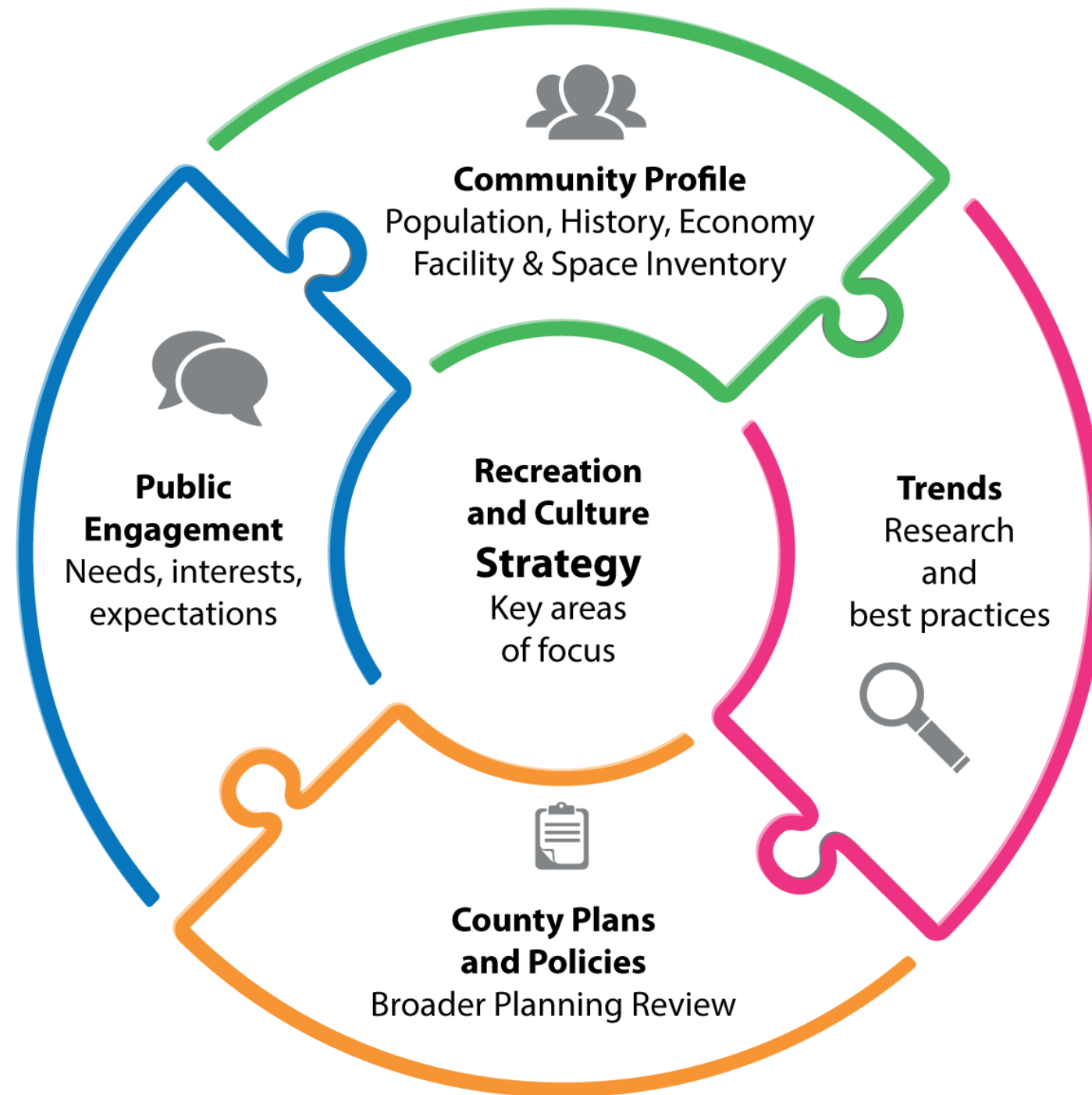
**Strategy development
for Council review**
Apr - Jun 2019

We are here

Implementation Plan

**Develop 12 year Implementation
Plan for Council review**
Jul- Nov 2019

What informs the strategy?



Trends and Best Practices

- Strathcona County is more efficient (has a higher cost recovery), spends less per capita AND has comparable levels of facility provision than benchmarked communities
- Many holistic wellness benefits come from recreation and culture services
- Physical activity levels are not high enough
- People are not spending enough time outdoors
- Unstructured and risky play is being lost
- Technologies are being incorporated into recreation and culture opportunities



County Plans and Policies

Strathcona County has a long-term vision:

...to become Canada's most livable community

Key themes from County policy and planning include

- **Affordability**
- **Accessibility and inclusion**
- **Adaptability**
- **Connectivity**
- **Partnerships**
- **Community health and wellness**

Synergies with the 2017 Social Framework and the 2019 Recreation and Culture Strategy will serve to support the long-term health and well-being of our community and our citizens.



Jurisdictional Review

Regional **partnership** opportunities

It is in the community's best interests to **get people active, connected, and outdoors**

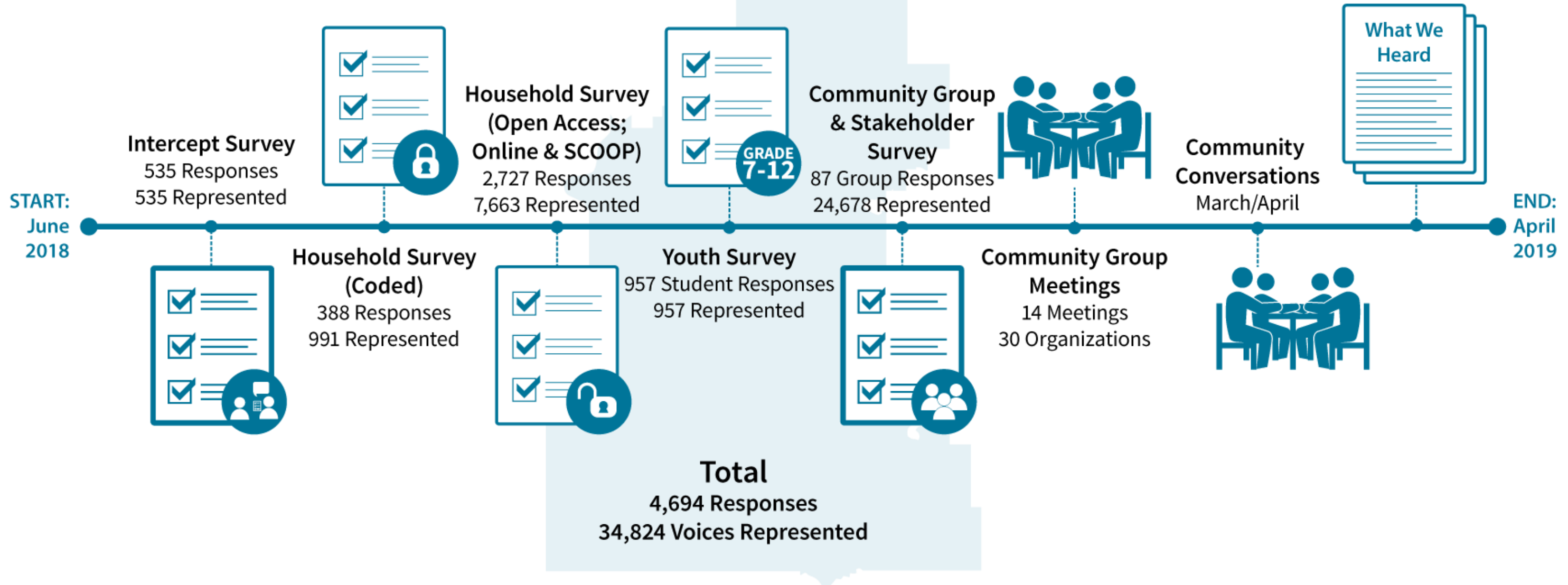
Other “agendas” can be furthered through recreation and culture:

- physical literacy and long term athlete development
- Truth and reconciliation
- Community health and wellness

Capacity building throughout the delivery system needs to be a priority



Who did we hear from?



Who did we hear from?

■ Census (2018) ■ Coded Survey ■ Open Survey (SCOOP findings not available)

Sherwood Park



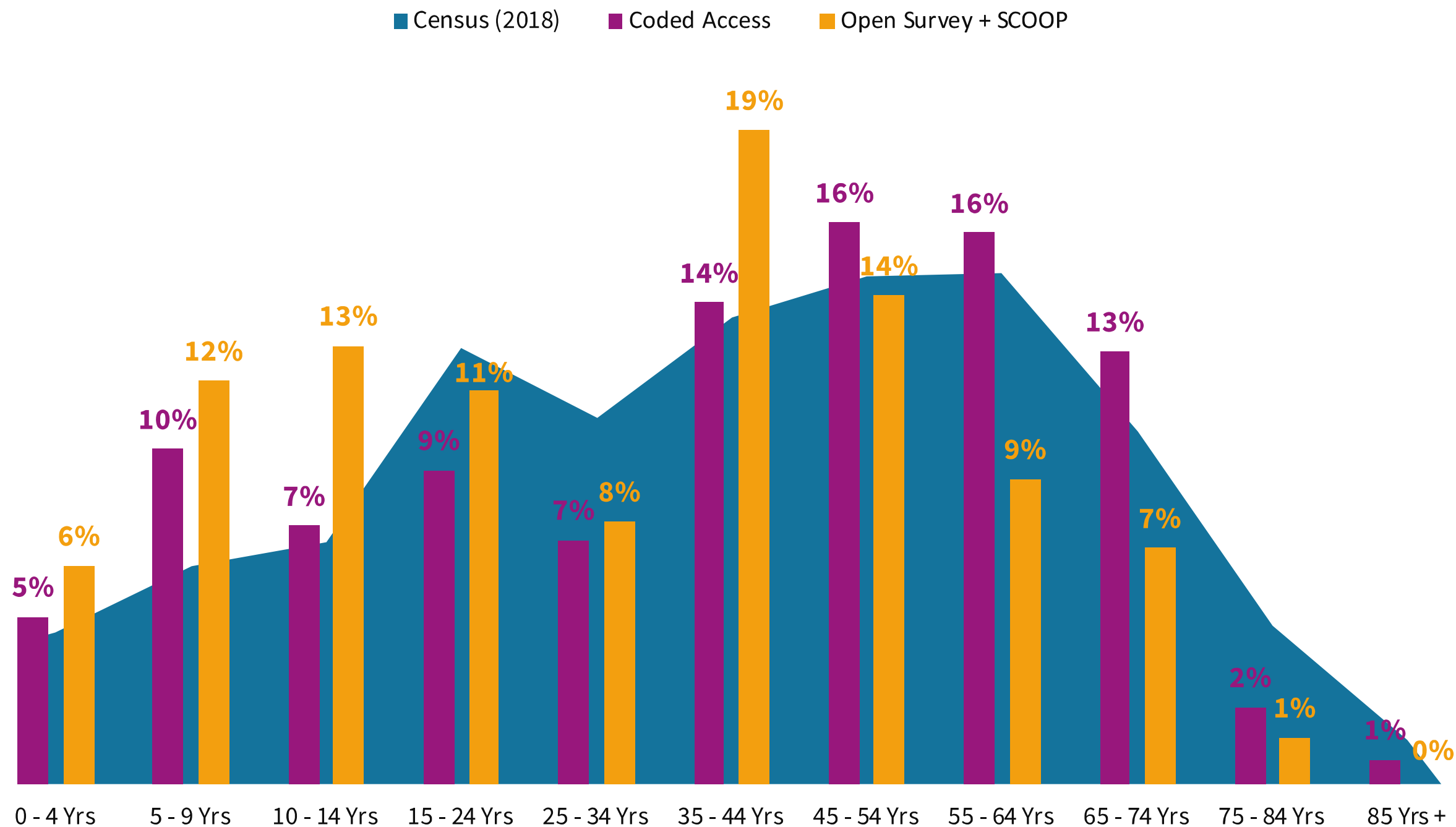
Rural Strathcona County



Outside County

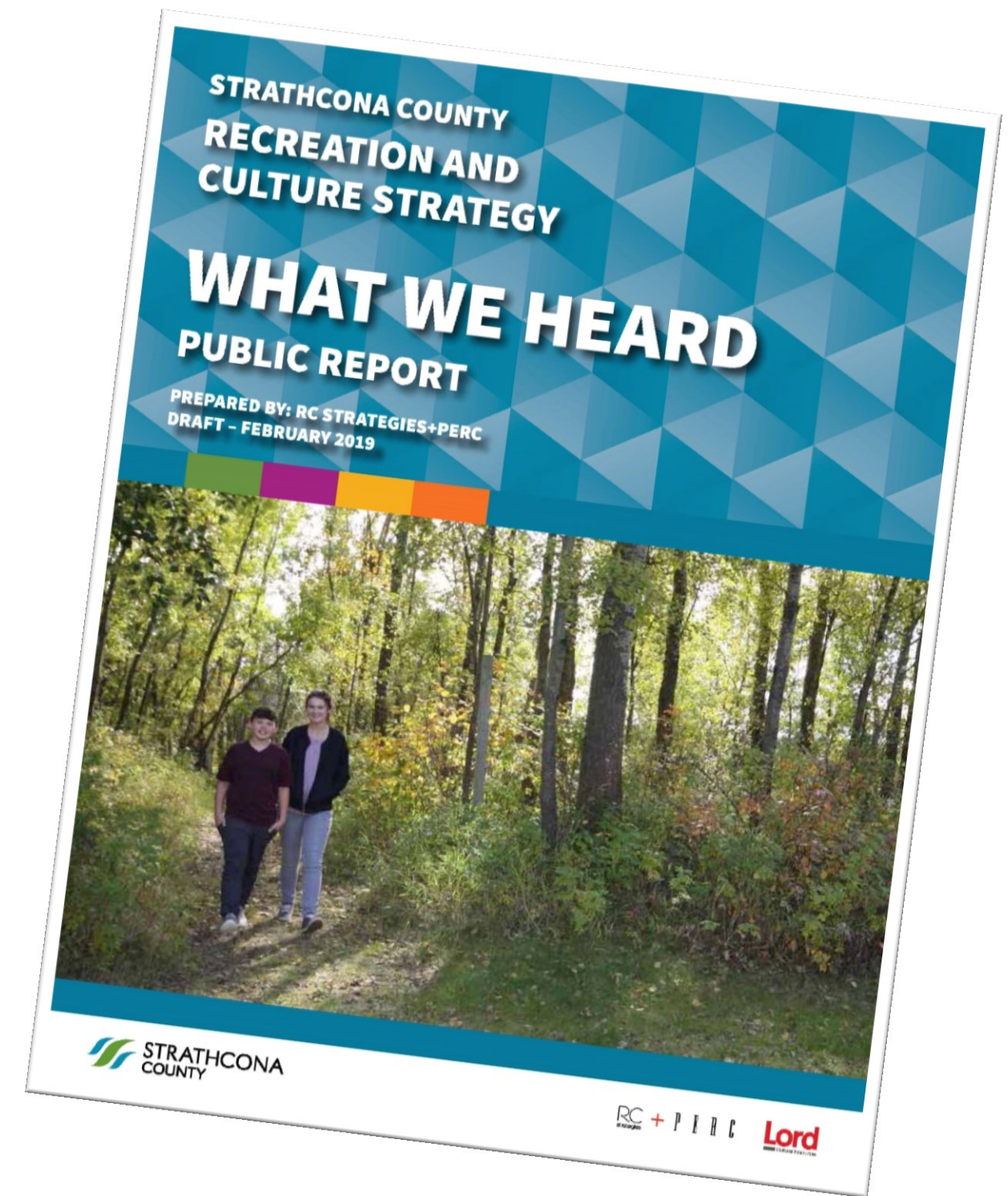


Who did we hear from?



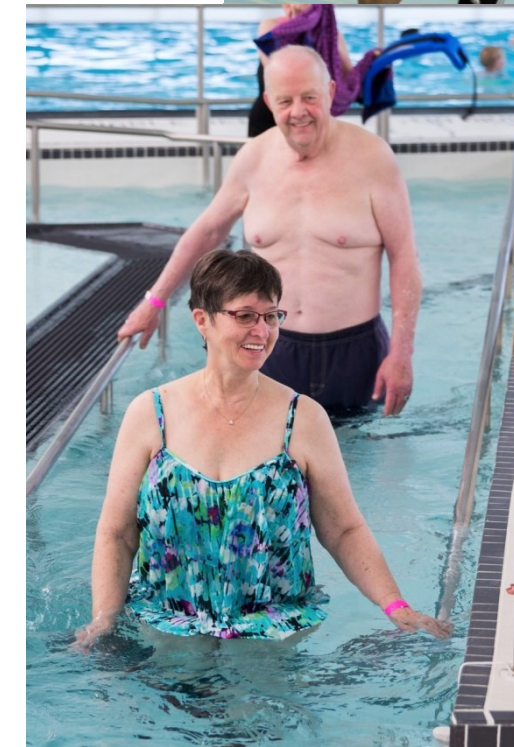
What We Heard

- **Recreation and culture are important** elements of people's lives and to the community
- There are **many recreation and culture opportunities** for people in Strathcona County, both indoors and outdoors, including facilities, programs, and events
- **People are satisfied** with the recreation and culture opportunities available to them



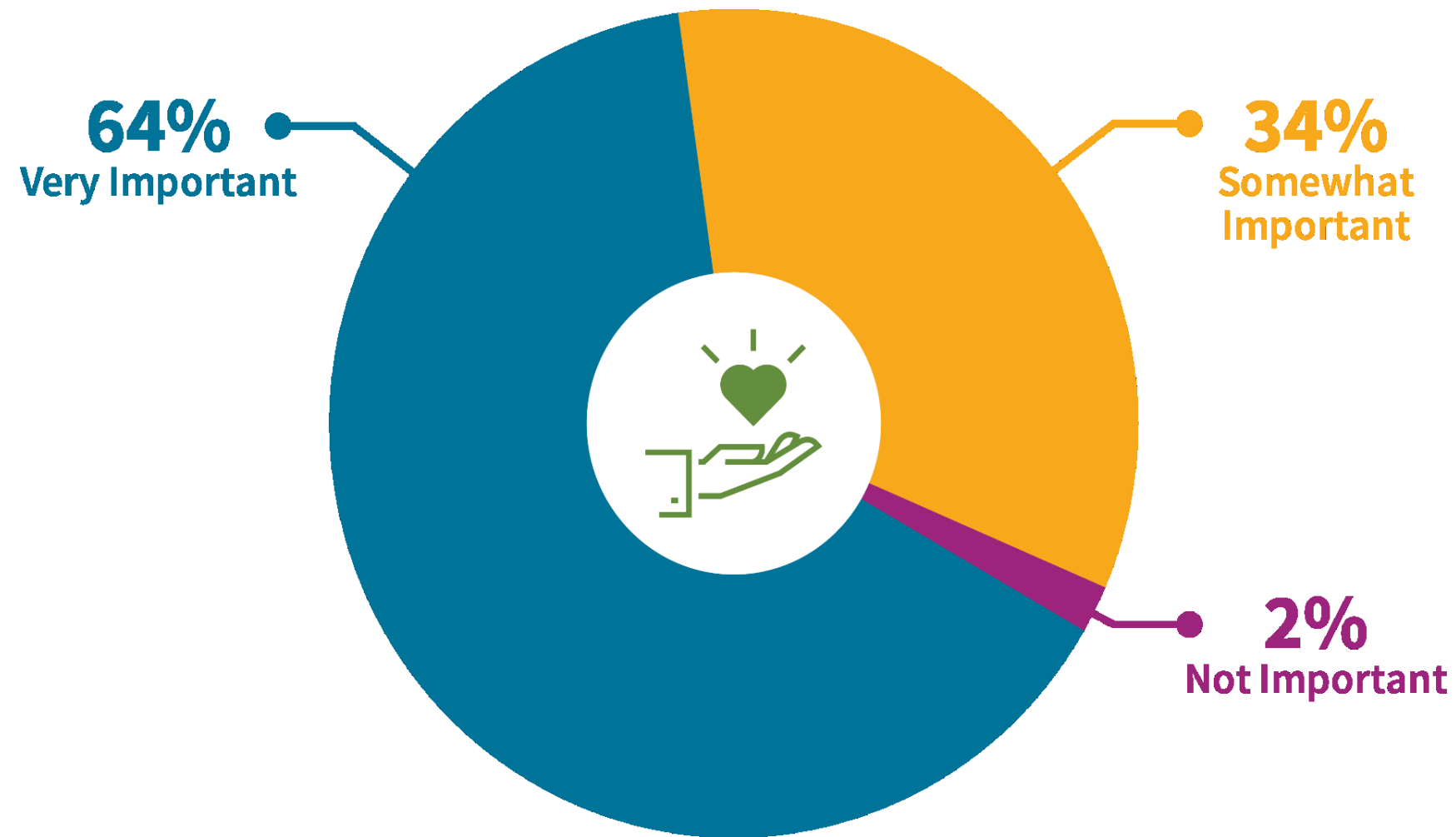
What We Heard

- **Recreation generally has a higher profile** and is seen as being more established and broadly supported than is culture
- While not everyone experiences **barriers to participation**, there is a sizeable proportion that do
- Barriers include **cost, awareness** of the opportunities, program **availability**, and physical **accessibility**



Household Resident Survey

Importance of recreation and culture opportunities to household's quality of life



Household Resident Survey

Importance of recreation and culture opportunities to household's quality of life

Recreation and culture opportunities contribute to personal health and wellness.



Recreation and culture are "must have" municipal services.



Community events can help people to develop a sense of community and connection with each other.



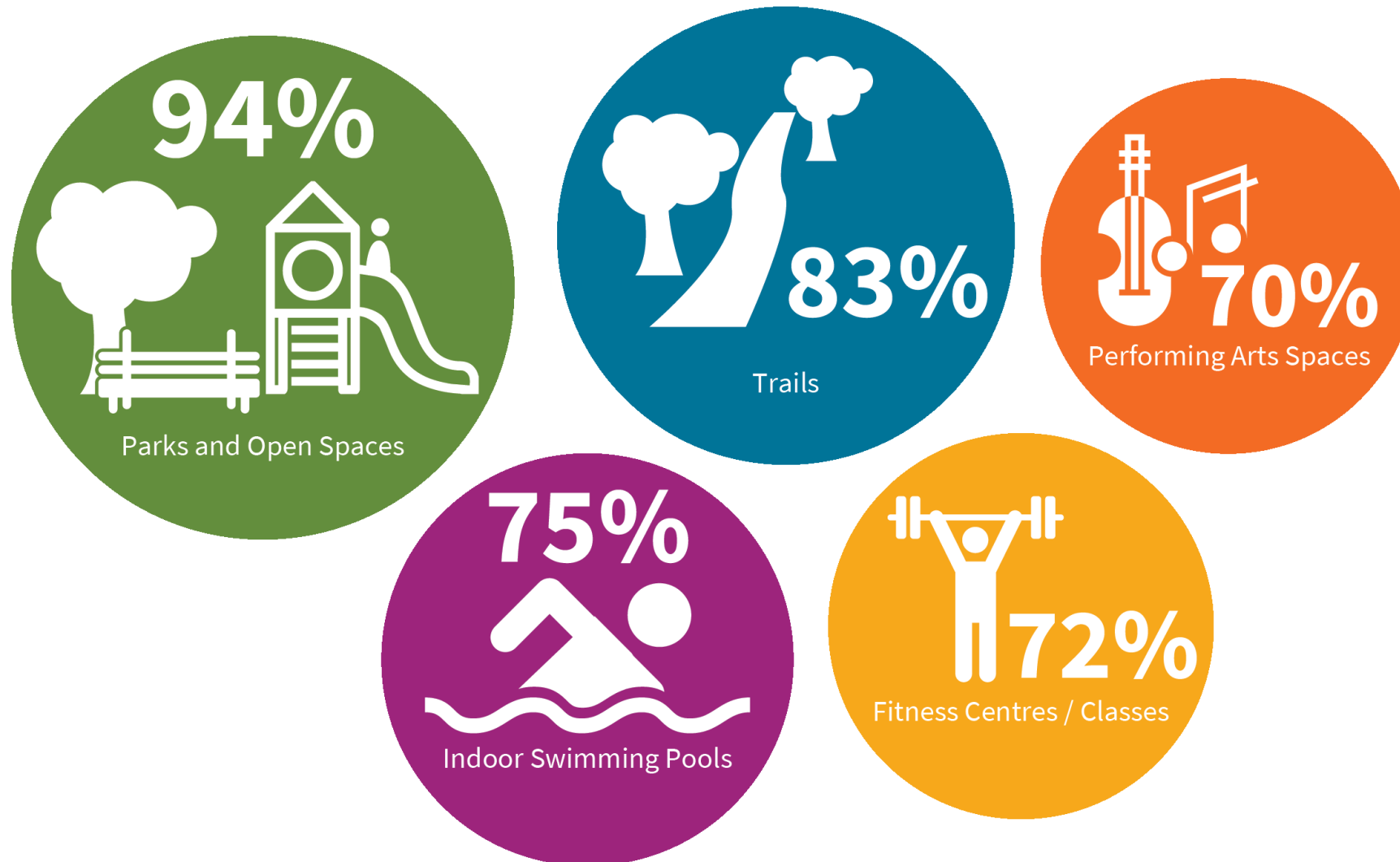
Household Resident Survey

Main reasons for participating in recreation and culture activities



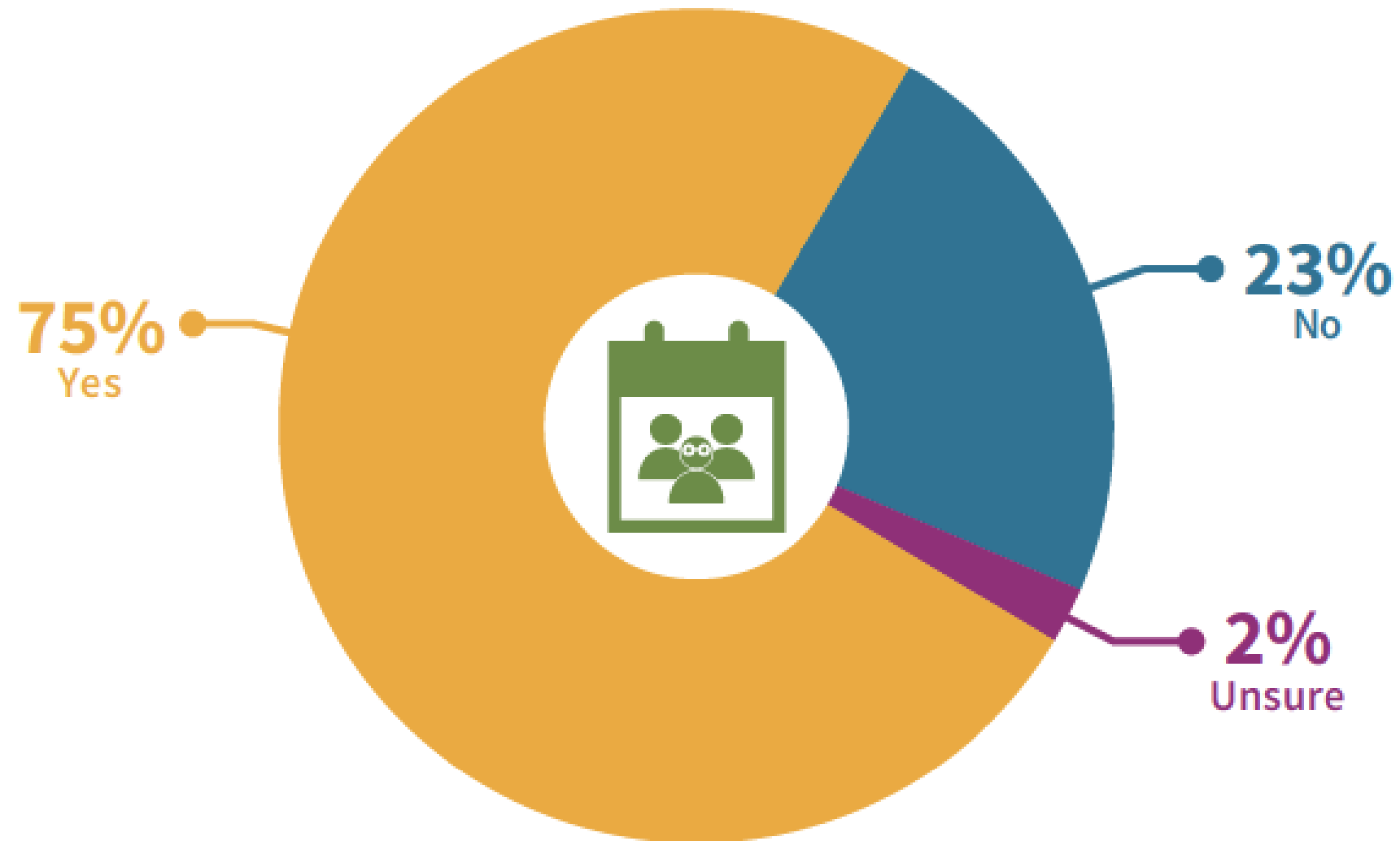
Household Resident Survey

Facilities and spaces used by the largest proportion of households



Household Resident Survey

Proportion of households that attended an event in Strathcona County in the last year



Key Areas of Focus

Guiding Principles

- **Understand benefits:** Understand and maximize the benefits from current and future investment in recreation and culture facilities and spaces
- **Demonstrate relevance:** Share and strengthen the relevance of recreation and culture as essential services in supporting holistic wellness and in making the County the most livable community in Canada



Four Key Areas of Focus



1. Addressing barriers to participation: **Fairness and Inclusion**
2. Exploring roles: **Partnerships, Capacity Building and Coordination**
3. Prioritizing needs: **Service Provision and Infrastructure**
4. Sustainability: **Environmental and Financial**

Key Areas of Focus

#1 – Addressing barriers to participation: Fairness and Inclusion

- **Fairness:** To consider reasonable access to recreation and culture opportunities for all residents in all areas of the County
- **Inclusion:** To reduce barriers to participation in recreation and culture opportunities and introduce new ways to promote inclusion and community connectedness to strengthen our social fabric

AWARENESS OF FINANCIAL AID

Only a quarter of Household Survey respondents are aware of any kind of financial assistance programs offered by Strathcona County or other organizations.

RECOGNITION OF ACCESSIBILITY, INCLUSION & AFFORDABILITY

The County's existing plans and policies lay a solid philosophic foundation in which the Recreation and Culture Strategy can build upon. Key themes found throughout existing plans highlight the importance of accessibility, inclusion, and affordability among others.

PROVINCIAL AND NATIONAL INFLUENCES

The Framework for Recreation in Canada contains a goal to increase inclusion and access to recreation for populations that face constraints to participation.

Alberta's Cultural Policy outlines a goal to ensure Albertans have access to a wide range of cultural experiences and opportunities.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

As seen in the trends research, social inclusion is being considered in facility design to create welcoming environments, promotion methods to ensure all demographics are being reached, and program planning to offer opportunities for all community members.

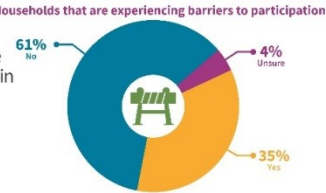
EMERGING ACTIVITIES

In regard to allocating time in municipal facilities, Canadian Sport for Life urges municipalities to not allocate based on tradition, but rather on actual requirements of all groups, including the needs of emerging sports.

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

While not everyone experiences barriers to participation, there is a sizeable proportion that do. The most common barriers identified in the Household Survey included:

- Admission costs
- Busy with other activities
- Timing of programs
- Overcrowded facilities



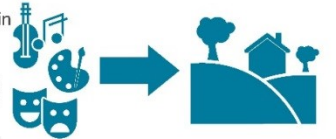
A CONSIDERATION FOR CAPITAL PROJECTS

Over three-quarters of respondents agreed in the Open Survey that a potential infrastructure project should become a higher priority if the space targets underserved segments of the population.



GEOGRAPHIC CONSIDERATIONS

An opportunity for improving cultural services, as suggested in the Community & Stakeholder Group Meetings, is to provide arts and cultural programming into the rural areas. Recreation groups mentioned that the ability to drive is critical to truly be able to access recreation services.



RENTAL & PARTICIPATION COSTS

As identified in the Community & Stakeholder Group Survey, costs to organizations to access program space and the costs for people to participate is increasing and is a concern.



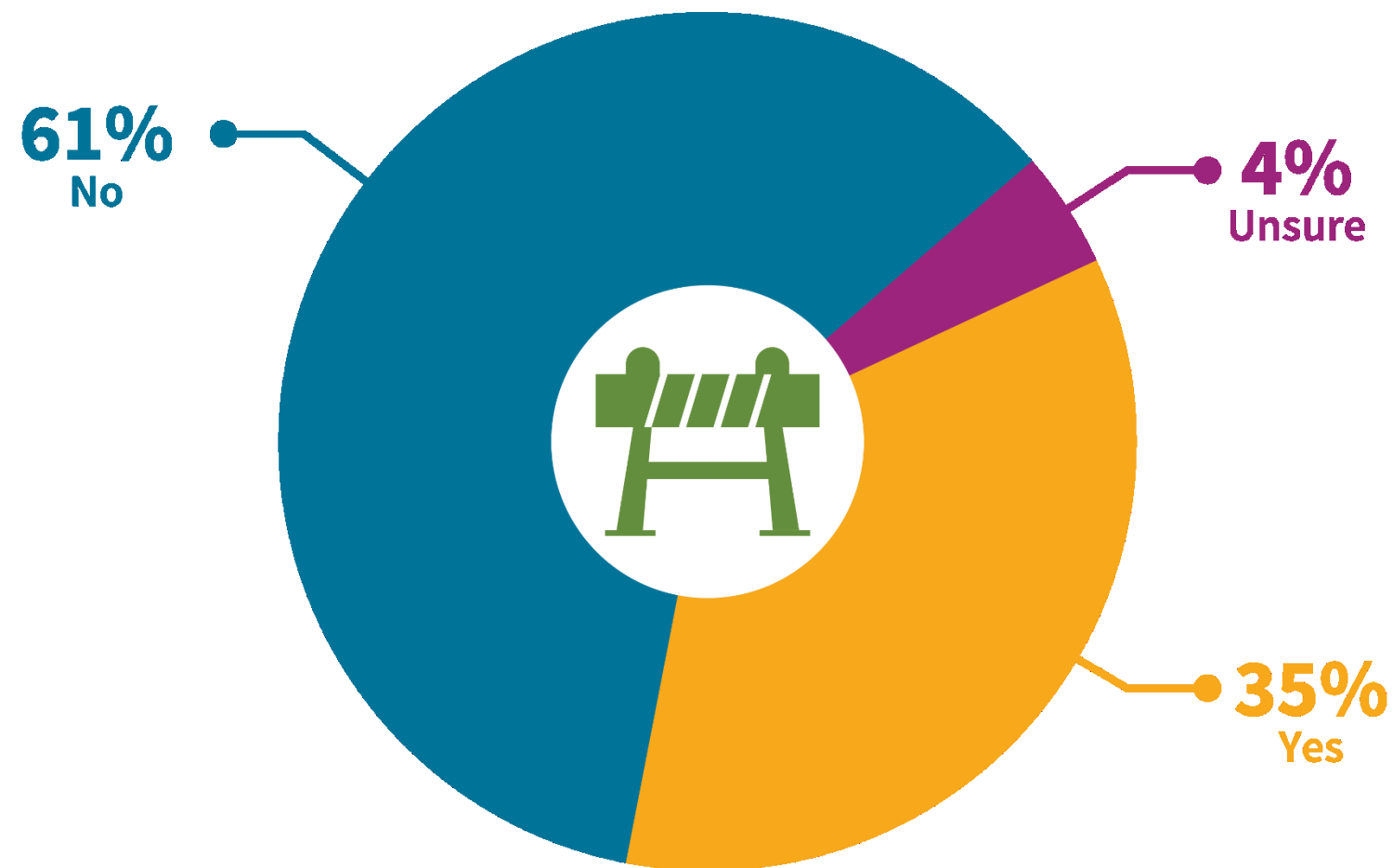
CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

Community and stakeholder groups indicated that the demographic profile of the County is changing and is becoming more diverse from all aspects (including age, ethnicity).



Household Resident Survey

Households that are experiencing barriers to participation

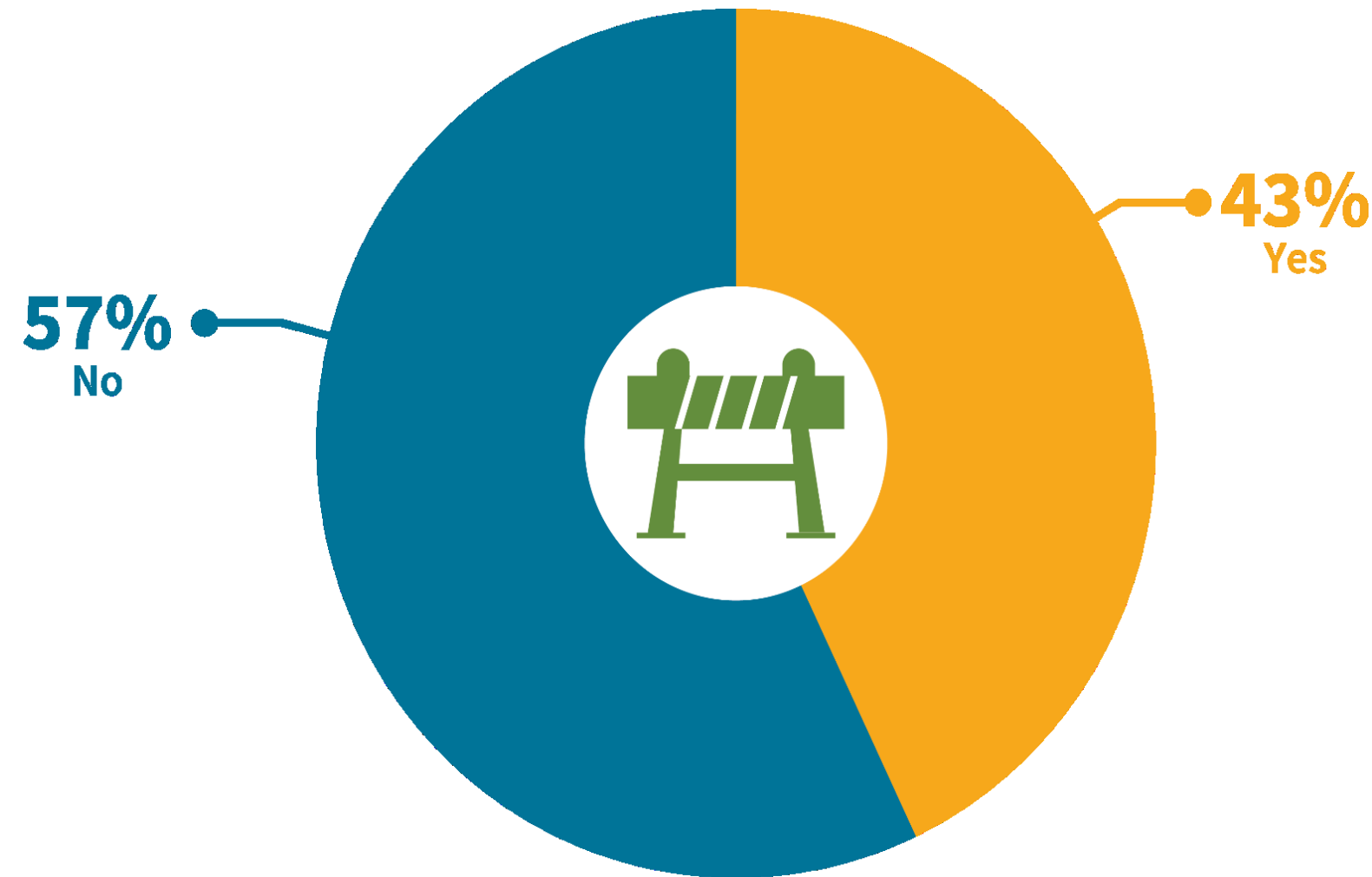


Top 3 Barriers

- Admission costs
- Program scheduling
- Overcrowded facilities

Youth Survey

Does anything prevent you from participating in any recreation or cultural activities?



Top 3 Barriers

- Busy with other activities
- Price of admission
- Timing of activities

Key Areas of Focus

#2 – Exploring roles: Partnerships, Capacity Building, and Coordination

- **Partnerships:** To explore the benefits of partnering with other municipalities in the region, local school authorities, partners in well-being and various stakeholder groups in delivering recreation and culture opportunities
- **Create capacity and coordination:** To support and learn from others who provide recreation and culture opportunities and bolster the overall delivery system

SUPPORT FOR PARTNERSHIPS

As recorded in the household survey, 90% of households agree that the County should explore partnerships to provide recreation and culture services.



SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERISM

As identified in the research of recreation and culture trends, methods to support volunteerism are varied and can include recognition events and communiqués, opportunity postings, establishing and updating a database/list of potential volunteers, training and development opportunities, and benefits for volunteers (e.g. discount to some programs/facilities).



NATIONAL INFLUENCES

The Framework for Recreation in Canada calls for increased collaborative efforts among provincial/territorial governments, local governments, voluntary organizations, Aboriginal communities, the private sector, and recreation associations to support and nurture a vibrant recreation system.

Let's Get Moving: A Common Vision for Increasing Physical Activity and Reducing Sedentary Living in Canada calls upon local governments to help organizations that have volunteer capacity issues (or face high turnover of volunteers/coaches/programmers) find meaningful solutions and support them so that quality programming is consistent and reliable.



EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS ARE CRITICAL

Community organizations, schools, and other non-profit societies currently play an integral role for the provision of recreation, park, and culture services in Strathcona County. To ensure that a wide range of opportunities continue to exist for local residents, it is in the County's best interest to support these organizations as warranted.



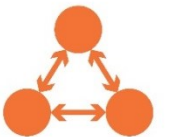
WHAT COMMUNITY GROUPS WANT

Through the community and stakeholder group meetings, increasing awareness, enhancing facilities spaces, and increasing the availability of rental opportunities were commonly mentioned as desired supports.

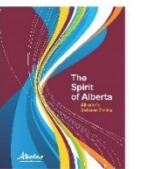


PROVINCIAL INFLUENCES

The Modernized Municipal Government Act (MGA) mandates municipalities to explore how they can work with regional neighbours in providing recreation services. The Modernized MGA will also require municipalities to develop Joint Use Planning Agreements with each school authority operating within municipal boundaries.



The Government of Alberta's Cultural Policy outlines a goal to enhance community capacity to support and promote cultural activity in addition to foster growth, sustainability and investment in Alberta's cultural industries.

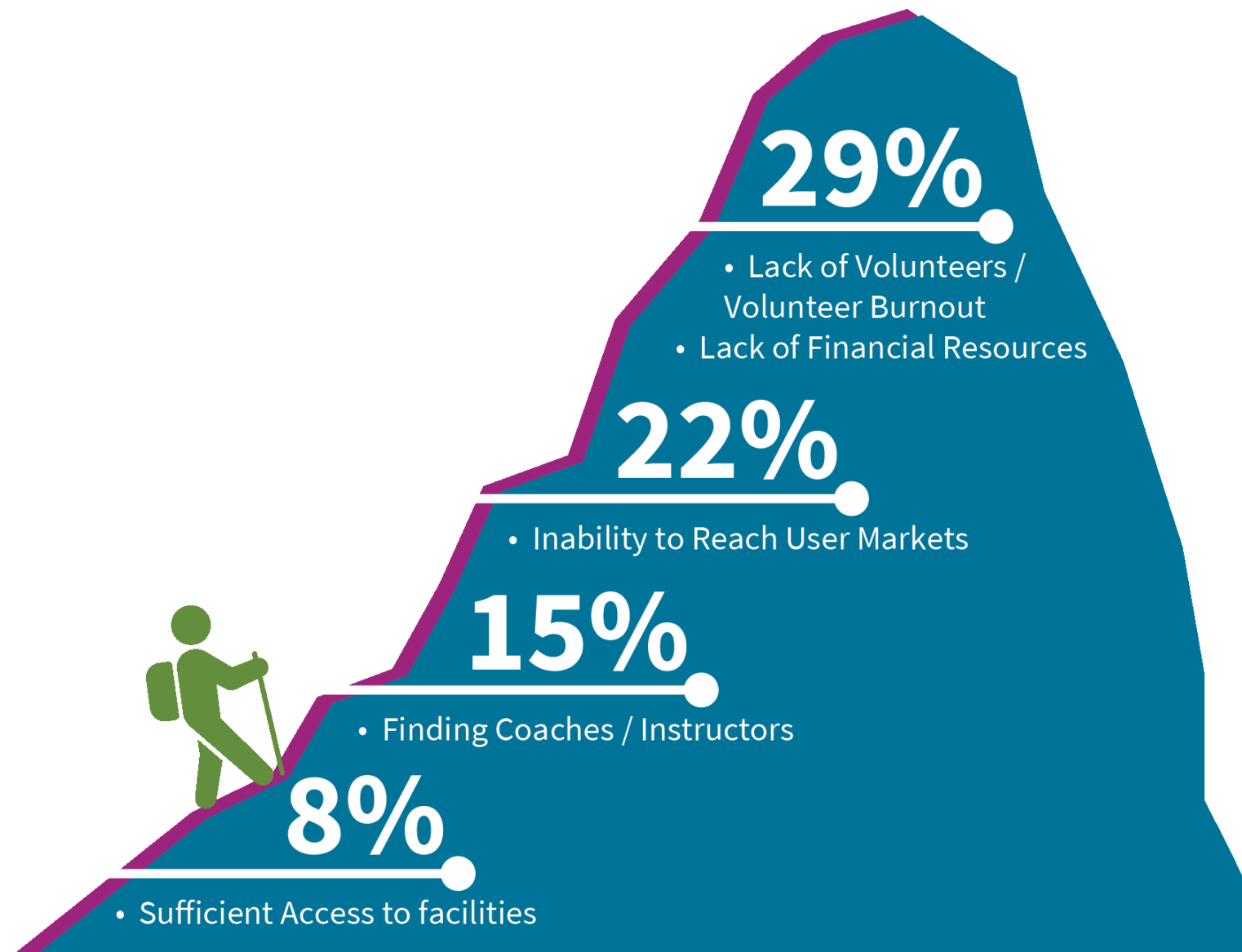


The Active Alberta policy encourages municipalities to advocate on behalf of community-based recreation, active living and sport initiatives to other levels of government, and within other service sectors as well as support the volunteer and not-for-profit sector in the provision of recreation, active living and sport opportunities.



Community Group and Stakeholder Survey

Main Challenges



Key Areas of Focus

#3 – Prioritizing needs: Service Provision and Infrastructure

- **Prioritize limited resources:** Transparently and fairly prioritize which recreation and culture amenities warrant limited resources
- **Protect existing services:** To establish reinvestment and asset management protocols to sustain existing facility and space service levels
- **Introduce new or enhanced services:** To establish protocols for investment



Community Group and Stakeholder Survey

Current County facilities and spaces meet organizational needs

Strongly Agree

😊 12%

Somewhat Agree

😊😊😊😊😊 52%

Somewhat Disagree

😐😐 17%

Strongly Disagree

😞😞 19%

Key Areas of Focus

#4 – Sustainability: Environmental and Financial

- **Environmental:**
To value and care for our assets and open spaces...through planning...employing environmental standards and practices...
- **Financial:**
To provide opportunities in a efficient manner and make sure that existing service levels where maintained (where warranted)



Household Resident Survey

Would your household be willing to pay additional property taxes to support enhancements to Recreation and Cultural opportunities?



Internal Engagement



Who:

- Family and Community Services
- Economic Development and Tourism
- Facility Services
- Transit
- Transportation and Agricultural Services
- And other related departments

Why:

To explore synergies and efficiencies that could inform the Strategy and be captured in the implementation plan.

Next steps

- Internal Engagement (Spring)
- Transitional Studies (move from existing OSRFS to new Strategy)
- Draft Strategy (Spring)
- Final Strategy presented to Council for approval (June)
- Develop 12-Year Implementation Plan (July to November)



Questions?

