



**Marleen Morris & Associates**  
shaping the future

# Town of Okotoks Social Wellness Framework

*September 2010*





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# 1. Executive Summary

Social wellness is one of three components of community sustainability, integrating and overlapping with economic and environmental sustainability. The Town of Okotoks has embraced a commitment to a sustainable future, which is embodied in its Vision Statement:

*In the year 2030, Okotoks is a leader in sustainability, driven by an involved, connected and creative community. Through visionary leadership, citizens are engaged in maintaining a safe, caring and vital community that honours our culture, heritage and environment.*

In January 2010, the Town of Okotoks embarked on a process to develop a Social Wellness Framework. Working with the Social Wellness Framework Steering Committee, Marleen Morris & Associates designed and implemented a process that included:

- A literature review undertaken to explore the range of definitions and approaches to social wellness. The review focused on the academic literature on the subject, as well as on plans and reports from other jurisdictions.
- A review of past reports undertaken for and by the Town of Okotoks in order to ensure that the Social Wellness Framework considered related priorities and directions.
- An environmental scan to provide a profile of the demographic characteristics of Okotoks and insight into the types of pressures and opportunities it is facing in the coming years.
- A survey of Okotoks residents to obtain feedback about priorities with regard to the seven components of community social wellness and to gauge how well they feel Okotoks is doing on those priorities. This research included a survey designed specifically for youth (ages 13-19).
- An inventory of programs and services that have an impact on social wellness. This included the identification of the extent and nature of unmet demand for programs and services.
- Focus groups with a broad cross-section of residents including youth, young families, seniors, the business community and new immigrants to probe more deeply the seven aspects of social wellness.

The process to develop the Social Wellness Framework has resulted in:

- A set of indicators that may be tracked over time to monitor and report on the state of social wellness in Okotoks.
- A framework for action on social wellness that includes recommendations to address the issues and concerns related to social wellness.
- A clear understanding of community values with respect to the aspects of social wellness identified.
- A map of programs and services offered in Okotoks that have an impact on social wellness, including the nature and extent of unmet demand for programs and services.

### *Social Wellness and Sustainability*

The concept of social wellness and sustainability operates at two levels: at the individual level and at the level of the community. Social wellness implies that the basic needs of residents are being met and that individuals enjoy a satisfactory level of wellbeing. In addition, it requires resources and capacity at the community level to support the collective actions necessary to protect its natural resources, plan for and weather changes in the economic environment and rebound from adversity. As such, a framework for social wellness and sustainability requires a focus on both individual values and community resources. The components to be addressed by the Social Wellness Framework, as outlined in the Request for Proposals, set the foundation for the development of a comprehensive approach to social wellness. The components identified were:

- Playing: leisure activities, arts and culture, parks, sports, recreation;
- Working: employment and the supports required for it, income, volunteerism and unpaid work, job skills and training;
- Learning: formal and informal education, literacy, skills training, lifelong learning;
- Moving: movement of people and goods by various modes of transportation (public and private), and the associated infrastructure;
- Engaging: public processes for a civil society, accessibility of and opportunities for people to provide input into decisions that affect them;

- Living: shelter and housing, individual health and well-being, personal safety, the fulfillment of basic needs for all; and
- Sense of place: community identity, history and heritage, public art, public spaces, and community events.

### *Research Findings*

The community consultation conducted for this project resulted in a rich body of data and information, which was analyzed to identify the values and issues related to social wellness. The analysis conducted allowed the values and issues to emerge from what was heard from the people of Okotoks through the surveys and focus groups. This analysis yielded the following findings:

- Sense of community: For many, the sense of community found in Okotoks defines the town and its people. Three key elements are core to this identity: a sense of neighbourliness, access to natural spaces, and a vibrant downtown core.
- Children and youth in Okotoks: People in Okotoks place a high value on and are concerned about children and youth in the community. Their hope is to see children and youth provided with opportunities to explore their interests and potential and be positively engaged in the community.
- Working and the economy: There is both high value and significant concern regarding working and the economy in Okotoks. People expressed a desire to have a diverse and vibrant economy and business sector; one that includes a strong professional and financial sector and a wide range of career-oriented job opportunities.
- Cost of living: This was identified fairly consistently as an issue and concern in Okotoks. Many families and individuals are struggling financially, due in part to the costs of housing and commuting, and the higher than average number of children in each family. This is making it difficult for them to take advantage of community programs, as most of these have a cost attached.
- Transportation: The lack of public transportation emerged as an issue primarily from seniors, youth, and low-income residents, and was recognized as a concern even by those who travel by automobile and are, therefore, not directly impacted. A public transportation service within Okotoks was seen as an immediate need by all groups, while

seniors expressed a need for improved service to travel to medical appointments in Calgary. Commuter service to Calgary and the surrounding area is not an immediate concern, but indications are that it will become an issue within the next ten years.

- **Growth:** Community growth is a concern for people in Okotoks and the issue has the potential to become highly divisive. For some, the quality of life in Okotoks is tied to maintaining the population cap that limits the number of people living in the town; others believe that the town can maintain the quality of life and grow beyond the population cap at the same time.
- **Access to health services:** There is a high value placed on access to health services and support, and residents feel that Okotoks is doing well in this regard. There is, however, insufficient capacity in a number of program areas, all of which serve vulnerable populations, as well as a shortage of family physicians in the community.
- **Seniors in Okotoks:** There are a number of issues facing seniors in Okotoks, which given the age profile of community will grow in significance over the next ten years. These concerns are related to the availability of a full range of housing and support options in Okotoks and the lack of public transportation.

### *A Social Wellness Framework for Okotoks*

The community consultation and background research for this project informed the development of the Social Wellness Framework for Okotoks. The function of this conceptual framework is to connect and bring coherence to the factors identified as playing a key role in social wellness in Okotoks. As well, the framework is a decision-making and planning tool that can be used by Council, administration, service providers and other community stakeholders.

The Social Wellness Framework for Okotoks is guided by four principles which form the foundation for six community values. These values come to life through the seven components of social wellness identified earlier. The Social Wellness Framework for Okotoks is consistent with and furthers the Vision for Okotoks.

The Town of Okotoks Social Wellness Framework is guided by four principles:

- Sustainability: ensuring that the decisions and actions taken today will not negatively impact the quality of life available to future generations.
- Engagement: enlivening and deepening the connection that residents feel for the community and other people in the community.
- Integration: understanding the nature and implications of the inter-relatedness inherent in all systems, and putting that understanding into practice.
- Diversity: encouraging and welcoming the involvement and contributions of all individuals and groups in the community, recognizing that while we are all unique we are also all alike.

These principles are the foundation for six community values:

- Personal growth: supporting education, lifelong learning and personal development.
- Natural environment: preserving the natural environment and adopting sustainable environmental practices.
- Sense of community: fostering connected and caring neighbourhoods.
- Economic vitality: providing a range of opportunities to engage in meaningful work that benefits the individual and the community.
- Social inclusion: providing the community infrastructure that allows all residents to meet their basic needs and be engaged in and make a meaningful contribution to the community.
- Health and wellbeing: supporting individuals and families to realize physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health and wellbeing.

These values come to life through the seven components of social wellness listed and described earlier: playing, working, learning, moving, engaging, living, and sense of place.

### *A Framework for Action on Social Wellness*

The rich body of data and information that emerged from the research can be utilized by organizations throughout the community to take action to improve social wellness. The Framework for Action on Social Wellness in Okotoks, however, focuses on those actions that will have multiple impacts

across more than aspect of social wellness. The Framework for Action on Social Wellness consists of fourteen recommendations for action.

*Develop programming and make funding available to strengthen the sense of community at the neighbourhood level.*

Given that a sense of community and neighbourliness are at the heart of the town's identity, it is recommended that programming be developed and funding made available to strengthen the sense of community at the neighbourhood level. This programming should focus on bringing neighbours together in a way that fosters the formation of ongoing relationships.

*Continue to include neighbourhood parks in the design of new communities.*

Neighbourhood parks play a key role in fostering a sense of community in Okotoks and are ideal venues for delivering the programming recommended in the previous section. Although there is currently a strong commitment to planning for neighbourhood parks in the design of new communities, this recommendation has been included as a reminder of the important role that they play in making Okotoks a desirable place to live.

*Continue the commitment to preserving and providing access to natural spaces.*

Access to natural spaces, particularly through the trail and path system is a key factor contributing to the sense of community that exists in Okotoks. This, along with neighbourliness, provides the foundation for the community's identity. Although there is currently a strong commitment to preserving and providing access to natural spaces, this recommendation has been included as a reminder that this factor plays an important role in making Okotoks a highly livable and desirable community.

*Make available a wide range of after school programming for students.*

People in Okotoks are very supportive of engaging children and youth in positive activities that foster health, wellbeing, and creativity, as well as a connection to the community. At the same time, they are concerned that many children and youth, in the period between the end of the school day and dinner, are neither with a parent or other adult or involved in a community program. It is recommended, therefore, that a wide range of

after school programming be made available with the goal of engaging as many students (grades 1-12) as possible.

*Make after school programming financially accessible for all students.*

Despite a high median household income, the community consultation suggests that many families in Okotoks may be financially stretched and the children, therefore, unable to participate fully in community programs. The purpose of this recommendation is to ensure that all students in Okotoks, especially those from families that are struggling with cost of living issues, are able to participate in the after school programs and activities proposed in the previous recommendation. Making programs and activities financially accessible would mean that they would either be free of charge or a subsidy would be available to those who need it.

*Develop strategies that provide reduced costs for enrolling in multiple recreation, sport and cultural programs.*

In exploring further the impact that being financially stretched may have on families living in Okotoks, it was recognized that many are forced to make difficult choices when it comes to enrolling children in recreation, sport and cultural programs. This recommendation, to offer a discount for multiple enrolments for recreation, sport and cultural programs in Okotoks would allow families and individuals to stretch their budget and participate in more programs and activities than would normally be possible.

*Increase programming for preschool aged children.*

Data from the program and service inventory, as well as input from the community consultation identified insufficient capacity in the area of programming for preschool aged children. At the same time, research has shown the importance of early childhood education and development, and the significant benefits that children realize when they are involved in playing and learning with other children. The objective of this recommendation is to increase the amount of programming available for the preschool age group.

*Develop a strategy to attract one or more niche business sectors to Okotoks.*

There is significant concern with the lack of career-oriented job opportunities available in Okotoks, and the predominance of retail and service positions. Youth particularly are concerned about this and many indicated that they expect to have to leave Okotoks to pursue a career. The lack of strong professional, career and financial sectors in Okotoks means that a large segment of the population is commuting to Calgary and other communities to work. The purpose of this recommendation is to attract and establish one or more niche business sectors in Okotoks. This would not only diversify and strengthen the local economy, but would also enable more people to work, as well as live in Okotoks.

*Consider and further community social wellness when developing and implementing strategies to maintain a vibrant downtown core.*

It is known that plans have been developed and efforts are underway to maintain a vibrant downtown core. The input gathered during this project would support those initiatives. A vibrant downtown core contributes to creating a sense of community through being a 'community hub'; a place that draws residents and visitors alike. It would also serve to create an environment that would attract new businesses to Okotoks. The purpose of this recommendation is to ensure that community social wellness is considered in the development and implementation of strategies to maintain a vibrant downtown core.

*Consider and further community social wellness in the development and implementation of the transit feasibility study.*

There is significant concern about the lack of public transportation in Okotoks. The groups most affected by the absence of public transportation are seniors, those with mobility and health challenges, youth, and low-income residents. The Town of Okotoks is in the process of conducting a transit feasibility study to assess the demand for a local transit service as well as an inter-city express service to Calgary. This recommendation is intended to encourage the Town of Okotoks and the transit consultant to consider the social wellness implications of a public transportation service.



*Monitor community housing needs and develop land use, sub-division and housing plans that will address those needs.*

Housing emerged as an issue from several perspectives and all age groups. Generally speaking, there exists a perception that the cost of housing in Okotoks is high, and that the town lacks a range of housing options. Currently, the key issues are lack of affordable or entry level housing and housing with support services for seniors. The purpose of this recommendation is to ensure that through land use, sub-division and housing plans, the range of housing available in Okotoks addresses community housing needs. Given that housing issues will likely change over time, this recommendation also includes the development of a framework for monitoring and assessing housing need in the community on an ongoing basis. The framework should include existing, as well as proposed residential stock, as existing housing stock is usually less expensive.

*Address the critical gaps in health services.*

People in Okotoks place a high value on access to health services and support. While there is overall satisfaction with this aspect of social wellness, the research for this project identified insufficient capacity in a number of programs that serve vulnerable populations in the community. In addition, input from the community consultation would suggest that there is a shortage of general practitioners in Okotoks, which has made it difficult for new residents to find a physician. This recommendation suggests that a community effort, led by those organizations and individuals involved in health care and those who require these services, be mounted to address the gaps in health services identified.

*Develop specific strategies and consider and further opportunities to address issues identified by youth (e.g. working, housing, engagement, transportation, and post-secondary education).*

While most youth indicate that Okotoks is a great place to live, many expect to move away after high school graduation to pursue an education and develop a career. For older youth and young adults there are no opportunities in Okotoks: no post-secondary education, no career-oriented jobs, and no appropriate and affordable housing. Retaining older youth and young adults in the community would be beneficial for both the family and the community. The purpose of this recommendation is to encourage the

retention of youth and young adults in the community through an ongoing effort to identify and address the factors that work against this.

### *Develop a framework and strategies to nurture multiculturalism in Okotoks.*

Community concern about multiculturalism is very low at this time, undoubtedly a reflection of the demographics of the current immigrant population; the vast majority of immigrants living in Okotoks have come from the United States or the United Kingdom. This situation, however, is beginning to change, and there are an increasing number of immigrants arriving from Asia. This recommendation, to develop a framework and strategies to nurture multiculturalism in Okotoks, would allow the town to be prepared for new immigrant populations and able to adapt more quickly and seamlessly to changing demographics.

### *Social Wellness Indicators*

In order to track progress and reveal where the reality of life in Okotoks may be departing from the vision for social wellness, a series of indicators were developed. The indicators correspond to those aspects of social wellness that the residents of Okotoks rated as 'most important'. Effort was made to identify methods of data collection that are economical and not overly labour intensive. Where new data collection is suggested, indicators have been framed so as to be aligned and comparable with data being collected in other jurisdictions or at larger geographies. Taken together, the social wellness indicators will monitor the state of social wellness in Okotoks.

#### *Playing*

- Percentage of the population participating in parks and recreation programs.
- Percentage increase in the number of free/low cost recreation, events, and celebrations relative to the increase in population.
- Percentage of the population indicating 'very satisfied' with (a) community programming; (b) outdoor recreation facilities; (c) indoor recreation facilities; and (d) cultural and historical services.

### *Working*

- Percentage of the population considered to be low income.
- The difference between the average employment income and 'living wage' income.
- Degree of diversity in occupations in the labour force.
- Employment rate – adult and youth.
- Percentage of the population that lives and works in Okotoks.

### *Learning*

- High school graduation rates.
- Percentage of respondents indicating 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the school system.

### *Moving*

- Percentage of the population indicating 'very satisfied' with parks and pathways.
- Percentage of the population rating pedestrian and road safety 'very good'.

### *Engaging*

- Percentage of the population indicating a 'strong' or 'somewhat strong' sense of belonging to the local community.

### *Living*

- Percentage of the population with a regular medical doctor.
- Percentage of the population indicating 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their life.
- Percentage of the population rating community safety 'very good'.
- Percentage of the population in 'core housing need' (i.e. spending 50% or more of their gross household income on housing).

### *Sense of Place*

- Hectares of green field development.
- Percentage change in hectares of green field development.
- Percentage of the population who report knowing their neighbours well.



## 2. Introduction

The Town of Okotoks enjoys many assets that have made it a very desirable community. It is located south of Calgary in the rolling foothills that mark the beginning of the climb to Alberta's Rocky Mountains. The Sheep River runs through the town, and the municipality has designated both sides of the river as park land.

Okotoks has a long and vibrant history. It was incorporated as a village on October 31, 1899 and as a town on May 31, 1904. The first year for which Alberta census records are available, 1913, lists Okotoks as having a population of 625 people, while the 2000 census records a population of 9,953. It took 87 years for the population of Okotoks to grow by 9,328 people. Then, in 10 years, between 2000 and 2010, the population grew by more than 13,248 people to 23,201.

The Town of Okotoks has expressed a commitment to sustainable development, which is embodied in its Vision Statement:

*In the year 2030, Okotoks is a leader in sustainability, driven by an involved, connected and creative community. Through visionary leadership, citizens are engaged in maintaining a safe, caring and vital community that honours our culture, heritage and environment.*

The town enjoys a reputation as a neighbourly community with high quality schools and civic amenities, making it a very family-friendly place to live.

In January 2010, the Town of Okotoks embarked on a process to develop a Social Wellness Framework. As is evident from its Vision Statement, the town has adopted a definition of sustainability that incorporates and balances social, economic and environmental components while improving life for present and future generations. As stated in the Request for Proposals for the project, the emphasis on the social aspect of sustainability is timely given the opportunities and challenges that have accompanied the Town's rapid growth.

The Request for Proposals outlined the components to be addressed by the Social Wellness Framework as follows:

- Playing: leisure activities, arts and culture, parks, sports, recreation;
- Working: employment and the supports required for it, income, volunteerism and unpaid work, job skills and training;
- Learning: formal and informal education, literacy, skills training, lifelong learning;
- Moving: movement of people and goods by various modes of transportation (public and private), and the associated infrastructure;
- Engaging: public processes for a civil society, accessibility of and opportunities for people to provide input into decisions that affect them;
- Living: shelter and housing, individual health and well-being, personal safety, the fulfillment of basic needs for all; and
- Sense of place: community identity, history and heritage, public art, public spaces, and community events.

The process to develop the Social Wellness Framework has resulted in:

- A set of indicators that may be tracked over time to monitor and report on the state of social wellness in Okotoks.
- A framework for action on social wellness that includes recommendations to address the issues and concerns related to social wellness that emerged through the community consultation and research for the project, including recommendations regarding the strategic direction for funding priorities related to social service delivery and culture and recreation needs within the community.

- A clear understanding of community values with respect to the aspects of social wellness identified.
- A map of programs and services offered in Okotoks that have an impact on social wellness, including the nature and extent of unmet demand for programs and services.





### 3. Project Methodology

In order to develop the Social Wellness Framework for the Town of Okotoks, the following work was undertaken:

- A literature review was undertaken to explore the range of definitions and approaches to social wellness. The review focused on the academic literature on the subject, as well as on plans and reports from other jurisdictions.
- A review of past reports and findings undertaken for and by the Town of Okotoks was completed in order to ensure that the Social Wellness Framework considered related priorities and directions.
- An environmental scan was completed to provide a profile of the demographic characteristics of Okotoks and insight into the types of pressures and opportunities it is facing in the coming years.
- A survey of Okotoks residents was undertaken to obtain feedback about priorities with regard to the seven components of community social wellness and to gauge how well they feel Okotoks is doing on those priorities. This research included a survey designed specifically for youth (ages 13-19). The survey was conducted online, with access to both surveys provided through the Town of Okotoks website.
- An inventory of programs and services that have an impact on social wellness was conducted. The inventory identified: the number of programs and services by type; the type and number of programs and services by age group; the type and number of programs and services by identified target group; and the nature and extent of unmet demand for programs and services.
- Focus groups with a broad cross-section of residents including youth, young families, seniors, the business community and new immigrants were held to probe more deeply the seven aspects of social wellness. The questions focused on both values and experience with programs and services.



## 4. Literature Review

### 4.1 Background and Purpose

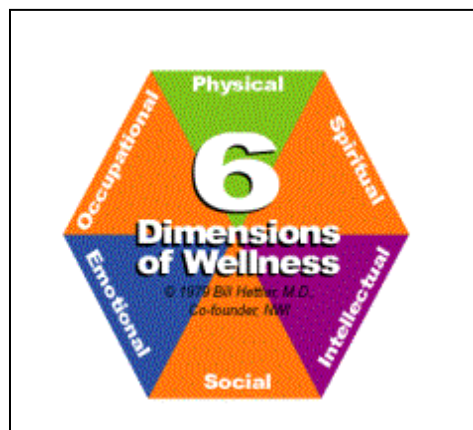
This literature review focuses on definitions and approaches to social wellness. It draws from academic literature on the subject as well as from documents and plans from other jurisdictions. The objective is to establish foundations for understanding the different dimensions of wellness as well as different approaches to characterizing these dimensions and framing the issues for action.

The search prioritized Canadian examples with a particular focus on frameworks devised by and for cities and towns. The intent was not to provide an exhaustive review of frameworks but rather to present a select, diverse sample of relevant approaches to inform the process of developing a social wellness framework for Okotoks.

### 4.2 Definitions of Social Wellness

There is no universal definition of social wellness. At the same time, it is widely accepted as an important component of individual health, quality of life and community wellbeing.

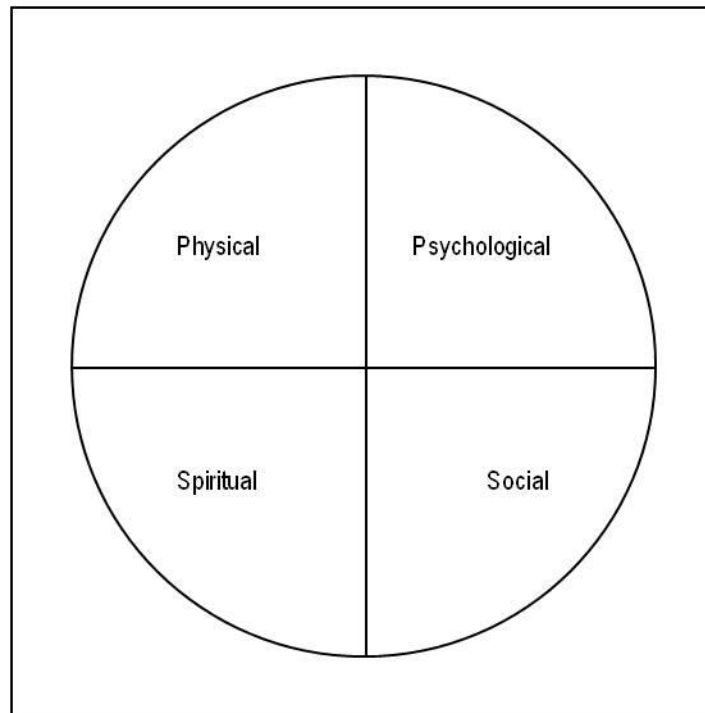
Figure 4-1 - Six Dimensions of Wellness



Similar in concept and often used interchangeably with the terms 'social sustainability', 'social inclusion', and 'quality of life', social wellness is seen as

being both a process and an outcome. It is commonly understood as having both an individual and a community dimension and relevance. However, in both the literature and in practice, the term 'social wellness' tends to relate mainly to the wellbeing of individuals.

**Figure 4-2 – Wellness Wheel (2004)**



At this personal level, social wellness typically refers to people's ability to maintain positive, supportive relationships, live in harmony with others and participate in community life. Particularly in more affluent societies where people's basic needs are widely met, aspects of social well being – safety, interpersonal relationships, and personal supports – are at the base of our hierarchy of needs. It is one of the six dimensions of wellness, as conceived by Hetler (1976) in relation to life balance, the others being emotional wellness, intellectual wellness, occupational/vocational wellness, physical

wellness, and spiritual wellness.<sup>1</sup> It is also one of the four quadrants of the 'wellness wheel', along with physical, spiritual and psychological wellness.<sup>2</sup>

At the community level, social wellness is commonly conceptualized in terms of social capital: 'the norms and networks that facilitate collective action.'<sup>3</sup> Some use the term to refer to a community's stock of social and human resources. Where it is operationalized, however, it has been done primarily within frameworks of social inclusion, social sustainability, or quality of life.

These frameworks approach social wellness from slightly different perspectives.

- Notions of social inclusion and exclusion focus centrally on differences in character (individual, cultural, geographic; ascribed and achieved) and differences in opportunity (to be and to do), as dictated by background, environment and poverty, but also by agency.<sup>4</sup>
- Social sustainability frameworks are focused more on balancing social priorities with those of the environment and the economy. Social sustainability mandates aim to facilitate a way of life and living together in a way that meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.<sup>5</sup>
- Quality of Life frameworks tend to focus on people's enjoyment of life as afforded by access to a wide range of goods and opportunities.

Social wellness is at the heart of all three approaches. As such, these ways of defining and operationalizing social wellness hold relevance for Okotoks' efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> Hetler, Bill. 1976. "Six Dimensions of Wellness". National Wellness Institute.

[http://www.nationalwellness.org/index.php?id\\_tier=2&id\\_c=25](http://www.nationalwellness.org/index.php?id_tier=2&id_c=25)

<sup>2</sup> Travis, John W. MD, and Regina Sara Ryan. 2004. Wellness Workbook, 3rd edition. Celestial Arts: Berkeley, CA. [www.wellnessworkbook.com](http://www.wellnessworkbook.com)

<sup>3</sup> Putnam, Robert. 2000. Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community. New York: Simon and Schuster.

<sup>4</sup> L'Insitut Roehrer Institute. 2003. Policy Approaches to Framing Social Inclusion Exclusion: An Overview. Toronto. <http://www.philia.ca/files/pdf/SocialInclusion.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Brundtland Commission

## 4.3 Social Sustainability

Like social wellness, there is no consensus around a definition of social sustainability. A UNESCO report on social sustainability in cities defines the concept as ‘policies and institutions that have the overall effect of integrating diverse groups and cultural practices in a just and equitable fashion.’<sup>6</sup> Harris and Goodwin propose that ‘a socially sustainable system must achieve fairness in distribution and opportunity, adequate provision of social services, including health and education, gender equity, and political accountability and participation.’<sup>7</sup> Another definition, put forward by the Oxford Institute of Sustainable Development, defines social sustainability as ‘how individuals, communities and societies live with each other and set out to achieve the objectives of development models, which they have chosen for themselves taking also into account the physical boundaries of their places and planet earth as a whole....’<sup>8</sup> A number of cities and towns have also formulated definitions and frameworks of social sustainability.

### 4.3.1 City of Vancouver Social Sustainability Framework

The City of Vancouver’s definition and framework of social sustainability centers around three key components. It is guided by four principles; and plays out through seven themes.

The three components of social sustainability are:

1. Fulfillment of basic needs, i.e. the things we need to function, participate and be productive in society.
2. Individual or human capacity, i.e. the attributes and resources, such as education, skills, health, values and leadership, that individuals can

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<sup>6</sup> Polese, Mario and Richard Stren. 2000. *The Social Sustainability of Cities: Diversity and the Management of Change*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

<sup>7</sup> Harris, Jonathan M., Neva R. Goodwin. 2001. “Volume Introduction” in *A Survey of Sustainable Development: Social and Economic Dimensions*, edited by Jonathan M. Harris, Timothy A. Wise, Kevin P. Gallagher and Neva R. Goodwin. Washington, D.C.: Island Press. Page xxix.

<sup>8</sup> Colantonio, Andrea. 2009. “Social Sustainability: Linking Research to Policy and Practice”. Presentation made at ‘Sustainable Development - a Challenge for European Research’, 26-28 May 2009, Brussels. Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development (OISD): Oxford Brookes University. [http://ec.europa.eu/research/sd/conference/2009/presentations/7/andrea\\_colantonio\\_-\\_social\\_sustainability.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/sd/conference/2009/presentations/7/andrea_colantonio_-_social_sustainability.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> City of Vancouver. Policy Report: Social Development: May 2005. [http://vancouver.ca/sustainability/documents/social\\_sus\\_p1.pdf](http://vancouver.ca/sustainability/documents/social_sus_p1.pdf)

contribute to their own wellbeing, and to the wellbeing of the community as a whole.

3. Social or community capacity, i.e. the relationships, networks and norms that facilitate collective action to improve upon quality of life and to ensure that such improvements are sustainable

These components are underpinned by the following four guiding principles:

1. Equity
2. Social inclusion and interaction
3. Security
4. Adaptability

**Figure 4-3 - City of Vancouver Social Sustainability Framework**



They play out through the following seven aspects or themes relating to community:

1. Playing
2. Moving
3. Engaging
4. Living
5. Sense of Place
6. Learning
7. Working

This definition of social sustainability provides a framework to guide the city's plans and actions to help ensure they are continuously implemented in a way that enhances and supports the social infrastructure of the city and the social aspects of community life.

#### 4.3.2 City of Calgary Social Sustainability Framework<sup>10</sup>

The City of Calgary has developed a social sustainability framework focused on strengthening neighbourhoods and increasing social inclusion. This framework is based on three pillars:

- Social Infrastructure: Network of systems and policies addressing education, recreation, health, safety/security, housing, employment that builds self-sufficiency and care for those unable to get by on their own;
- Individual and Family Capacity: Skills, abilities, resources and knowledge to enhance wellbeing, functioning in society, and self-sufficiency across the lifespan; and
- Community capacity: Collective ability of community members to engage in decision making, find solutions to particular problems, increase civic engagement and collectively influence higher-level change.

It seeks to achieve these different capacities by way of a prevention approach:

- Prevention through policies and systems;
- Prevention through community development; and
- Prevention through programs and services.

#### 4.3.3 County of Strathcona Social Sustainability Framework<sup>11</sup>

The County of Strathcona, Alberta defines a socially sustainable community as one that 'offers a sense of community, tolerance and respect for cultural diversity, opportunities for cultural, leisure, community and civic activities for

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<sup>10</sup> City of Calgary. 2009. Social Sustainability Framework and Funding Priorities for FCSS. Presentation: Supporting Vibrant, Healthy, Safe and Caring Communities - Strengthening Neighbourhoods and Increasing Social Inclusion. Framework Kick Off: November 23, 2009.

[http://www.calgary.ca/docgallery/bu/cns/fcss/fcss\\_indicators\\_kickoff.pdf](http://www.calgary.ca/docgallery/bu/cns/fcss/fcss_indicators_kickoff.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Strathcona County. 2007. Strathcona County's Social Sustainability Framework.

<http://www.strathcona.ab.ca/files/att-FCS-Social-Sustainability-Framework.pdf>



all residents, a strong sense of safety and security and a socially inclusive environment with life opportunities for all. There is effective engagement with neighbourhoods; strong partnerships between government, business and community; a strong sense of civic values; personal and community responsibility; and community pride.

**Figure 4-4 - Strathcona County's Social Sustainability Framework**



Strathcona's framework is premised on the belief that in order for a community to function and be sustainable, residents must first be able to meet their basic needs including an income sufficient for the support of themselves and their family, appropriate and affordable housing, appropriate and affordable health care, access to nutritious and affordable food, access to jobs that utilize their skills and abilities, and safe communities and workplaces. These are necessary before social capacity can be built. The County defines a socially sustainable community as having the ability to maintain and build on its own resources and the resiliency to address problems or prevent their occurrence.

Strathcona's social sustainability framework is guided by four main principles:

1. Social inclusion
2. Community connectedness
3. Health and wellbeing
4. Social responsibility

#### 4.4 Social Inclusion

Social inclusion is another common framework used to foster and prioritize social wellness at the community level. Again, there are a range of different definitions for the concept. Some see social inclusion as a 'social lens through which to understand social wellbeing, equality and citizenship.'<sup>12</sup>

The Laidlaw Foundation commissioned a series of working papers on social inclusion from which the definition that emerged was: 'social inclusion is the capacity and willingness of our society to keep all groups within reach of what we expect as a society – the social commitment and investments necessary to ensure that all people are close to (within reach of) our common aspirations, common life and its common wealth.'

The Inclusion Project of the Atlantic Centre for Excellence in Women's Health proposed that: 'social and economic inclusion reflects the need to address poverty and exclusion by including the voiceless and powerless in shaping the policies that affect their lives. It welcomes these individuals and groups into the planning, decision-making and policy-development processes in their community. And it empowers them by offering the opportunities, resources and support they need to participate.'<sup>13</sup>

As an endpoint, Amartya Sen defines inclusion as 'characterized by a society's widely shared social experience and active participation, by a broad equality

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<sup>12</sup> Gilbert, Nathan. 2003. Laidlaw Foundation's Perspective on Social Inclusion. Laidlaw Foundation. <http://www.ccsd.ca/events/inclusion/papers/gilbert.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Atlantic Centre for Excellence in Women's Health, Inclusion Project Information Kit, Halifax, 2000. [www.medicine.dal.ca/acewh](http://www.medicine.dal.ca/acewh)

of opportunities and life chances for individuals and by the achievement of a basic level of wellbeing for all citizens.<sup>14</sup>

#### 4.4.1 Inclusive Cities Canada Social Inclusion Framework<sup>15</sup>

Inclusive Cities Canada has put forward a framework for social inclusion that is based on five dimensions:

- *Institutional recognition of diversity*: The adoption and implementation of policies, plans and concrete actions by key public institutions that provide valued recognition to individuals and groups and reflect and respond to the full diversity of the population.
- *Opportunities for human development*: A focus on the development of talents, skills and capacities of everyone from early childhood through the transition years into and including adulthood.
- *Quality of civic engagement*: Strategies and actions to promote participation of individuals and groups in the full range of civic and community life to enhance social interaction, harmonious neighbourhoods and active citizenship.
- *Cohesiveness of living conditions*: Provisions for personal and family security (food/nutrition, income and employment, housing, community safety) that minimize disparities in community living conditions within the population.
- *Adequacy of community services*: A well-coordinated system of public and community support services connected to strong networks of informal and personal support to address the diverse circumstances of vulnerable people.

#### 4.4.2 Shookner's Social Inclusion Lens Framework<sup>16</sup>

Shookner has developed a 'social inclusion lens' as a tool for analyzing legislation, policies, programs, and practices to determine whether they promote the social and economic inclusion of individuals, families, and

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<sup>14</sup> Amartya Sen, 2001. *Development as Freedom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

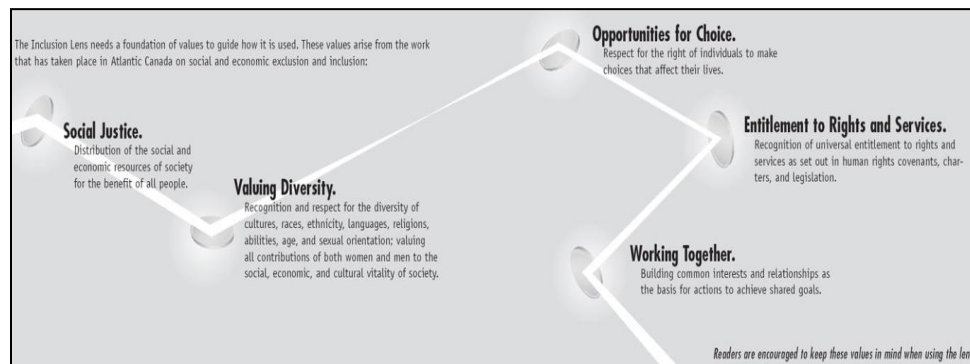
<sup>15</sup> Siemiatycki, Myer. 2006. *The Municipal Franchise and Social Inclusion in Toronto: Policy and Practice*. [http://www.cdhalton.ca/pdf/icc/ICC\\_Municipal\\_Franchise\\_and\\_Social\\_Inclusion\\_in\\_Toronto.pdf](http://www.cdhalton.ca/pdf/icc/ICC_Municipal_Franchise_and_Social_Inclusion_in_Toronto.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Shookner, M. (2002). *An inclusion lens: Workbook for looking at social and economic exclusion and inclusion*. Produced by Malcolm Shookner, Population Health Research Unit, Dalhousie University, for the Population and Public Health Branch, Atlantic Regional Office, Health Canada. [http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/canada/regions/atlantic/Publications/Inclusion\\_lens/inclusion-eng.php](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/canada/regions/atlantic/Publications/Inclusion_lens/inclusion-eng.php)

communities. This lens is guided by five values. These values arose out of work on social and economic inclusion and exclusion conducted in Atlantic Canada. They are:

- Social justice: the distribution of the social and economic resources of society for the benefit of all people;
- Valuing diversity: recognition and respect for the diversity of cultures, races, ethnicity, languages, religions, abilities, age and sexual orientation; valuing the contributions of both women and men to the social, economic and cultural vitality of society;
- Opportunities for choice: respect for the right of individuals to make choices that affect their lives;
- Entitlement to rights and services: recognition of the universal entitlement to rights and services as set out in human rights covenants, charters and legislation; and
- Working together: building on common interests and relationships as the basis for action to achieve shared goals.

**Figure 4-5 - Values: The Foundation for Inclusion**



## 4.5 Quality of Life

Quality of life (QOL) is another common explicit and implicit policy goal which lacks a universal definition. Often used to evaluate both the components and the determinants of the general wellbeing in societies, 'quality of life' is a term used to encompass a number of dimensions.

At the individual level, QOL is used to describe one's personal level of enjoyment and satisfaction with life, health, personal relationships, the environment, the quality of working life, social life and leisure time. At the

community level, it typically includes the general status of physical and mental health in a population, education levels, recreation and leisure opportunities, wealth and employment, levels of social belonging and the quality of the air, water and environment more generally. However, as with the other terms, there are many different frameworks and indicators of QOL.

#### **4.5.1 University of Toronto Centre for Health Promotion QOL Model<sup>17</sup>**

A QOL framework advanced by the Centre for Health Promotion at the University of Toronto, focused primarily on QOL at the individual level, breaks the concept into three main domains and nine sub-domains, as follows:

- Being: who one is
  - Physical being
  - Spiritual being
  - Psychological being
- Belonging: the connection with one's environments
  - Physical belonging
  - Social belonging
  - Community belonging
- Becoming: achieving personal goals, hopes and aspirations
  - Practical becoming
  - Leisure becoming
  - Growth becoming

#### **4.5.2 Federation of Canadian Municipalities QOL Framework for Reporting<sup>18</sup>**

Looking at QOL from more of a community perspective, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities maintains a Quality of Life Reporting System (QOLRS) aimed at helping cities to address quality of life issues by monitoring and reporting on the state of QOL in Canada's largest cities. This reporting system is comprised of ten different aspects of QOL:

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<sup>17</sup> Centre for Health Promotion, University of Toronto. The Quality of Life Model. <http://www.utoronto.ca/qol/concepts.htm>

<sup>18</sup> Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Quality of Life Reporting System. <http://www.fcm.ca//CMFiles/QofL%20Indicator%20En1MPC-4172009-1702.jpg>

1. Affordable and appropriate housing
2. Civic engagement
3. Community and social infrastructure
4. Education
5. Employment
6. Local economy
7. Natural environment
8. Personal and community health
9. Personal financial security
10. Personal safety

The QOLRS collects data on a number of indicators in each of these categories.

#### 4.5.3 City of Winnipeg QOL Framework<sup>19</sup>

The City of Winnipeg has also developed a framework for taking action on and evaluating QOL at the community level. This framework contains five main categories and numerous subcategories, as follows:

I. Urban environment	Natural environment
	Land use management
	Infrastructure and services
	Consumption and conservation
II. Urban economy	Employment
	Municipal finance
	Economic vitality
III. Community assets	Housing
	Culture, arts and entertainment
	Recreation and leisure
	Government services
	Education
	People
	Neighbourhoods

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<sup>19</sup> City of Winnipeg Quality of Life Indicators. <http://www.iisd.org/pdf/wpg.qoli.pdf>

IV. Individual wellbeing	Safety
	Equity
	Education
	Wealth
	Health
V. Community leadership and pride	Leadership and governance
	Image and identity
	Citizenship





## 5. Review of Past Reports and Relevant Findings

Some of the individual aspects of social wellness have been explored as components of other projects conducted by various community organizations and the Town of Okotoks. The findings and outcomes of this previous work have provided a useful starting point for the current project to develop a social wellness framework. This section of the report consists of a brief summary of the relevant research findings and plans.

### 5.1 Town of Okotoks Strategic Plan (1995)

The strategic plan for the Town of Okotoks, completed in 1995, included a mission statement of the Town's purpose and function, and a vision statement of what the town wanted to become. The plan established the Town's future direction as well as the principles to guide the growth and character of Okotoks over the next 15 years.

### 5.2 Sustainable Okotoks – the Legacy (1998)

In 1998, the Town of Okotoks became one of the first municipalities in the world to establish growth targets linked to infrastructure development and environmental carrying capacity. Encompassed within its Municipal Development Plan - *The Legacy Plan*, these growth targets were informed by extensive public consultation as well as facts about the region's environment and carrying capacity. The targets supported a community vision of a town that is safe and secure, maintains small town atmosphere, preserves and protects a pristine river valley, provides housing choices, employment opportunities and quality schooling, and caters to all ages and cultures. This vision also saw Okotoks becoming a leader in sustainability.

The plan established development path with a population cap and municipal boundary for build-out defined by the licensed limits of the Sheep River aquifer (approx. 30,000). It defined four pillars of sustainability:

1. Environmental Stewardship
2. Social Conscience
3. Economic Development
4. Fiscal Responsibility

The plan also defined a comprehensive set of targets and initiatives to ensure that the build-out population would be reached in an environmentally, economically, socially, and fiscally responsible way.

### 5.3 Okotoks Outdoor Recreation Facility Master Plan (2006)

The *Okotoks Outdoor Recreation Facility Master Plan* is an expression of the Town's desire and commitment to meet the outdoor recreation needs of its residents while keeping in step with the long term strategies outlined in the Municipal Development Plan. Developed in 2006, the plan was based on a study and consultation with the community with a focus on active outdoor recreation activities and facilities. This study revealed the following salient points:

- A need exists for policies on outdoor recreation facility development and maintenance standards.
- A need exists for the Town to work with stakeholders to understand the development and maintenance standards and how they impact facility construction and operating costs.
- School Board fields are an important asset to the Town's provision of outdoor recreation facilities. Unless the Town takes over responsibility for them they will not be built or maintained to the required level.
- Some amenities have a regional use component. Cost sharing with the Municipal District of Foothills is needed for these facilities.
- Consideration needs to be given to a regional athletic park, and the opportunity to develop this as a partnership between Okotoks and the surrounding areas.
- As growth occurs the Town will need to keep pace through the development of new outdoor recreation facilities and amenities and the redevelopment of some existing facilities.

It outlined strategies in the following ten areas:

1. Development Standards
2. Maintenance Standards
3. Outdoor Facility Needs to 30,000 Town Build-out Population
4. Joint Use Agreement with Schools – Playfields
5. Municipal District of Foothills participation in Town Programs

6. Development of a Major Athletic Park
7. Redevelopment Requirements for Playfields
8. Rates and Fees
9. Partnership Model for Facility Development and Operation
10. Linking New Outdoor Recreation Facilities to the Trail System

#### **5.4 Town of Okotoks 2030 Financial Sustainability Plan (2007)**

In 2007, Council identified the need for a key strategic direction for managing growth, requiring the development of a long term financial sustainability plan to take the community to the year 2030. This Plan was the first to be based on the newly adopted Community Vision for 2030:

“In the year 2030, Okotoks is a leader in sustainability, driven by an involved, connected and creative community. Through visionary leadership, citizens are engaged in maintaining a safe, caring and vital community that honours our culture, heritage and environment.”

The aim of the *Financial Sustainability Plan* was to present a financial picture of the Corporation going forward to 2030. It represents the results of work of the Town’s 22 business centres’ assessment of services types and levels being provided in 2007; the needs and requirements of the community as Okotoks grows to build-out and beyond; and the financial revenue and expenditure streams for both operating and capital budgets to meet these needs.

#### **5.5 United Way/Okotoks Partnership 2008 Investment Framework (2008)**

The *2008 Investment Framework* was developed based on a research project conducted in January and February 2009 to gain a better understanding of the needs in the community, how those needs were being met, and if there were any gaps in service. This research highlighted a number of priorities for programming along with some identified needs and/or issues:

- families in vulnerable situations
- family violence
- shortage of mental health services

- need to strengthen the community as a healthy and enriching environment for children
- childcare especially for school age children (recognizing that many parents commute)
- parenting skills
- economic strain
- youth at risk
- healthy recreation options
- need to continue to develop Youth Centre programs
- seniors
- limited spaces and long wait list for seniors residences, lodges and nursing homes
- isolation (recognizing the potential to link with children needing care and mentorship)

It was recommended that investments be targeted to families, in particular children and youth, with an emphasis on supporting and building the capacity of parents of young children and building healthy behaviours in children and youth. Other areas of focus that emerged from the study were:

- Building community with and among new and diverse residents;
- Building a coalition of service providers to support families that allows for coordination of services and mutual learning;
- Promoting healthy lifestyles; and
- Developing indicators and a framework to measure improvement.

Priority issues for the United Way/Okotoks Partnership were identified as follows:

- Support for troubled teens: prevention programs and more positive activities for youth.
- Drug and alcohol use: a tremendous stressor on families and health care.
- Too many “latchkey kids”: commuting parents, not a lot of extended family. Need for more after school care and affordable activities.
- Safe environment for children (bullying prevention).
- Affordable facilities for children's agencies.
- Groups in town are not growing at same rate as population.
- Quality of child care (day homes in particular).
- Shortage of volunteers in some areas.

- Support for divorcing or separating families.
- Better cooperation between agencies.
- Provide awareness of existing programs and encourage new programs.
- Provide long-term funding (not an immediate priority, need to establish relationships with agencies first).
- Provide funding for operations and staff as opposed to capital.
- Perform annual strategic review of terms of reference, vision, etc.
- Training for volunteers.

## 5.6 Foothills Community Immigrant Services Evaluation Report (2009)

This evaluation, conducted in 2009, indicated that a number of service providers in Okotoks had reported an increase in families from diverse cultural backgrounds in Okotoks and a growing need for services and supports for newcomers, i.e. English as a second language programs. This report also identified a number of gaps related to services and supports for immigrants, which is relevant to overall social wellness. It was recommended that a community settlement needs assessment be conducted in Okotoks to help strengthen relationships between service providers within the community and build bridging strategies.

## 5.7 Sustainable Okotoks – Where to From Here? (2009)

In the Spring of 2009, the Town of Okotoks initiated a series of community consultations named *Sustainable Okotoks – Where to From Here?* to solicit input on the decision of whether or not to support the proposed long term Calgary Regional Land Use Plan. These consultations sought input on three different scenarios. Input received addressed issues related to community size, the annexation of land for strategic growth management, water supply, transit, density, housing mix, tax base and revenues. It led to the following decision by Council regarding Okotoks' development plan to:

- Maintain the growth management plan of the 1998 Legacy Plan (for growth of approximately 30,000 people to, but not beyond existing municipal boundaries based on Sheep River carrying capacity) and asked Calgary Regional Partnership to protect nine adjacent quarter

sections for potential future growth should local water solutions be found;

- Explore sub-regional water supply solutions which enable Okotoks to continue to live within the natural carrying capacity of the Sheep River watershed rather than a regional water pipeline; and
- Work with the Municipal District of Foothills during the CMP transition period to determine appropriate growth and development patterns in and around Okotoks into the future and consult with the public if a growth model beyond the 1998 MDP is to be considered.

## 5.8 Okotoks Sustainability Planning Framework (2010)

The *Okotoks' Sustainability Planning Framework*, completed in March 2010, is comprised of a series of plans and documents from the past 20 years that directly relate to the Town's four foundations of sustainability.

## 5.9 Municipal District of Foothills and Town of Okotoks Joint Planning Agreement (2010)

This Agreement, signed in January 2010, saw the Municipal District of Foothills and the Town of Okotoks commit to a long term partnership that understands and appreciates the different perspectives as a point of strength in growing toward a strong future together and:

1. Expands the appreciation of local history and culture;
2. Respects individual distinct identities and jurisdictions;
3. Retains and protects the rural character and small town character;
4. Protects the Natural Capital of the area;
5. Develops mutually beneficial growth and servicing strategies;
6. Creates an atmosphere of support and cooperation in managing the social, natural, and economic resources of this rich sub-region;
7. Is collaborative in areas of common land interest; and
8. Manages growth within the Development Management Strategy Area.

The outcomes of this Agreement were:

1. A framework for proceeding with the Development Management Strategy within the Development Management Strategy Area followed by amendment of the Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP);
2. A framework and methodology to address cost sharing arrangements for the delivery of services followed by cost sharing agreement(s);
3. A communication protocol and improved process for both Councils, the IDP, and Staff; and
4. An action plan to implement the Development Management Strategy and the revised IDP.

## 5.10 Okotoks Community Settlement Needs Assessment (2010)

The *Community Settlement Needs Assessment* was initiated in response to the recommendations of the Foothills Community Immigrant Services Evaluation Report of 2009 referenced above. The aim was to initiate a community development discussion regarding the community settlement needs of newcomer populations in Okotoks. The project engaged a wide range of service providers, individuals, schools, faith groups, businesses, and other key stakeholders in a consultation process around the current and future needs of immigrants in Okotoks. This consultation revealed a number of gaps in services and supports for immigrants in Okotoks, and recommended that these be addressed through the following:

- Dedicated settlement and integration services
- An expanded Welcome Wagon program
- English as a second language programs and outreach
- A drop-in centre or space for immigrants/newcomers to gather and meet
- Increased employment services for immigrants

The consultation corroborated findings of the 2009 evaluation report regarding the growing number of immigrants and newcomers in Okotoks. It noted that, as the number of more visible immigrants increases in Okotoks, issues of discrimination, lack of acceptance, tolerance or understanding should be part of the planning and educational process. Recommendations included:

- Work to increase the number of immigrants accessing existing programs.
- Identify existing associations and groups and develop outreach and coordinating strategies including the existing Welcome Wagon Program and Volunteer Services program.
- Develop links with the Chamber of Commerce and business community a) to access employment for immigrants b) to become informed of their future employment needs, trends and opportunities c) provide support for Temporary Foreign Workers and their families if required.
- Consider an outreach position to build strategies with existing community services and programs.
- Engage current service providers in strategies to identify attract and encourage newcomer participation in existing programs and services.
- Review existing ESL services and consider expansion if the demand for language training increases.
- Seek funding to hire paid settlement staff to provide settlement and integration services in Okotoks.
- Develop Volunteers to support the office and programs
- Identify support for Temporary Foreign Workers in Okotoks.
- Introduce Family Fundays in partnership with immigrant families, the community, churches or other interested groups in Okotoks. Seek resources to support the programs.
- Develop opportunities to introduce a HOST volunteer program in Okotoks for families and a HOST or immigrant mentorship program for immigrant youth in schools in Okotoks.
- Expand the mentorship program that has been developed by CCIS into Okotoks to support workplace transitions for newcomers.
- Consider drop-in support groups for immigrants in Okotoks.
- Consider events such as International Women's Day, Human Rights Day, citizenship ceremonies and others as opportunities for involvement and raising awareness.
- Provide cultural diversity training within businesses, schools and other organizations in Okotoks.



## 5.11 Culturally Vital Okotoks: The Cultural Master Plan 2010-2030 (2010)

The Cultural Master Plan 2010-2030 followed from a planning process involving a review of best practices and a community consultation. This plan:

- Defines the arts and heritage needs of the community;
- Outlines future services and facilities within a regional, national and international context; and
- Addresses the needs of the citizens of different ages and abilities.

The plan outlined a number of capacity building needs. Those of particular relevance to the development of a social wellness are as follows:

- The need to provide financial and development support to volunteer-run organizations to build capacity;
- The need to present and interpret the heritage of the community in new ways including the use of technologies;
- The need to strengthen educational programming in the arts and culture at the elementary, secondary and post-secondary levels;
- The need to build new creative infrastructure;
- The need to cultivate a new generation of volunteers to replace the aging baby boomers; and
- The need to create mentorships, cultural incubators and other vehicles for strengthening creative industries.

It included recommendations in ten areas:

1. Bridging the past and the present;
2. Building and strengthening structures for regional collaboration and partnership;
3. Nurturing and supporting individuals, institutions and organizations;
4. Sharing and promoting Okotoks' talents in the arts;
5. Data capture and management to support a leadership role;
6. Educating for the future by cultivating arts and heritage training in schools and as lifelong learning opportunities;
7. Developing creative physical infrastructure for both current and future generations;
8. Place emphasis on branding and marketing to ensure a dynamic and vital image for Okotoks;

9. Building the human resources capacity of the community to address the needs of the creative economy; and
10. Expanding Okotoks' horizons to include the international/global community.

## 6. Environmental Scan

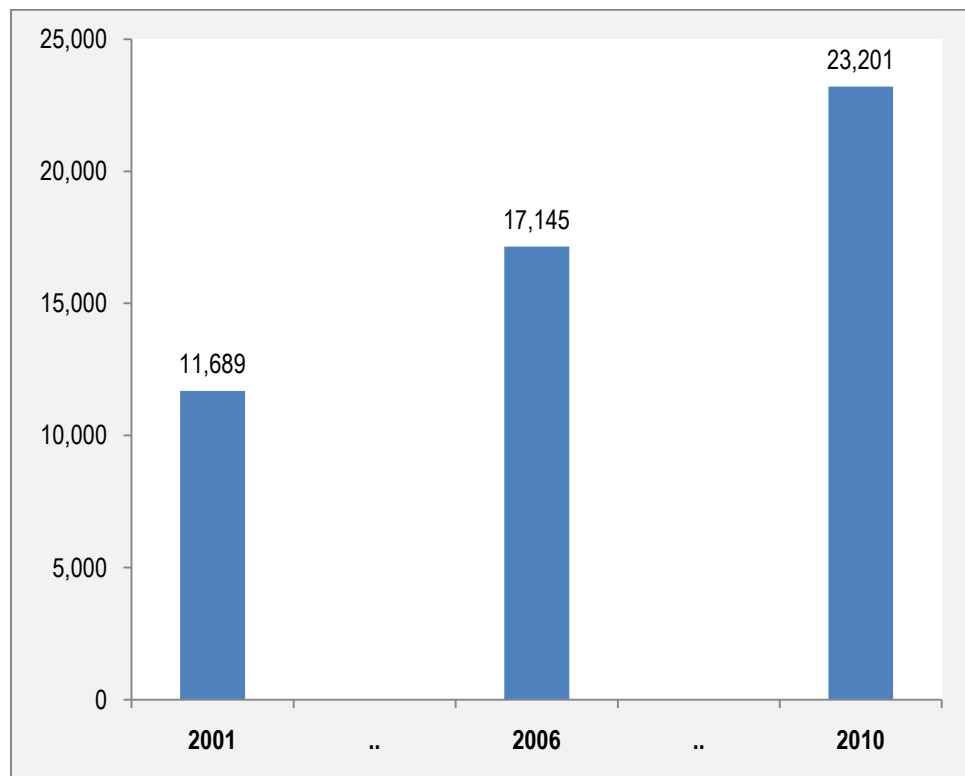
### 6.1 Background and Purpose

This section provides a high level profile of the demographic characteristics of Okotoks and some insight into the types of pressures and opportunities it is facing in the coming years.

The majority of the data has been gleaned from Statistics Canada and the 2006 Census, which is the most current and accurate population statistics available. Additional information was obtained from local reports and documents from the Town of Okotoks.

### 6.2 Population

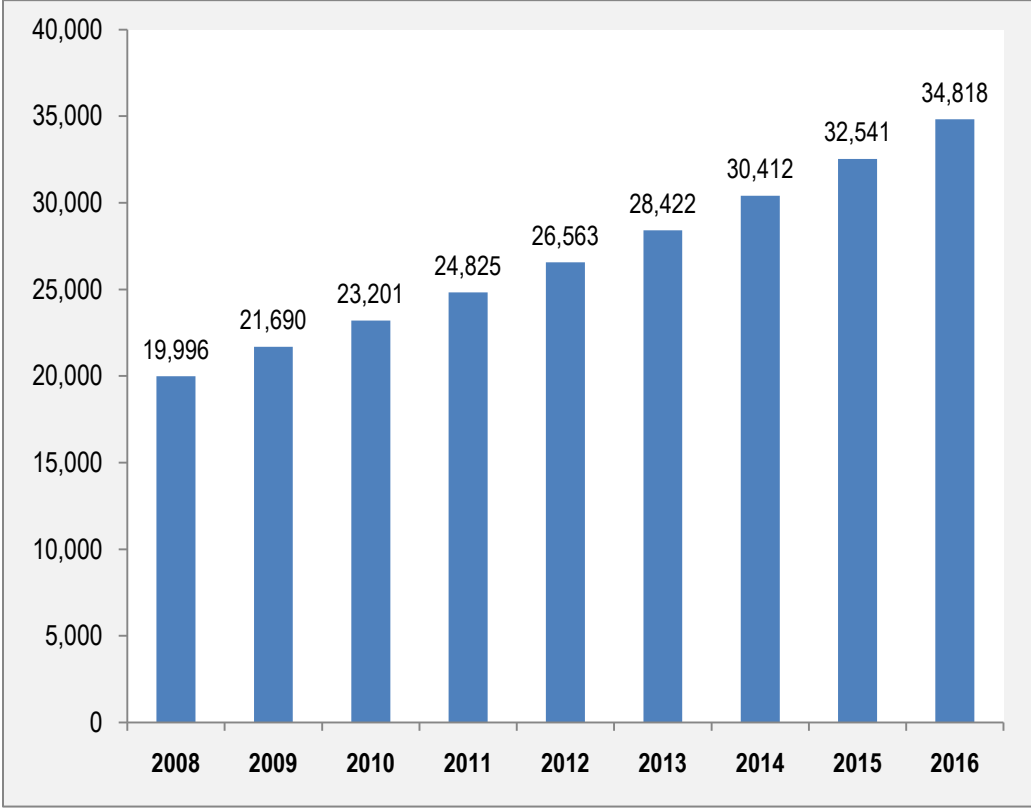
Figure 6-1 - Population Growth, 2001-2010



As of 2010, the population in the Town of Okotoks was 23,201. This represents a marked 35% increase since the 2006 Census and almost a doubling of the population since 2001. Between the 2001 and 2006 Census

counts, the population of Okotoks grew by 46%, compared to 11% in Alberta overall. This rapid growth made Okotoks the second fastest growing community in Alberta and among the fastest growing mid-size urban centers in Canada.

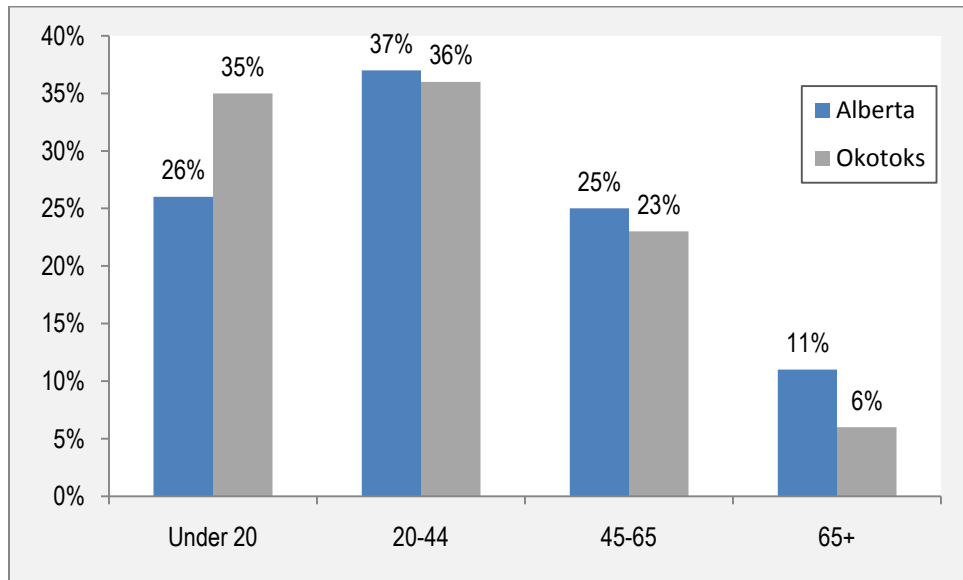
Figure 6-2 - Population Growth, 2007-2019



This population growth shows no signs of slowing; however, Okotoks has established a population cap for the community. This number, 30,140, is the maximum believed to be supportable by the Town and the surrounding environment. The expectation is that this maximum population will be reached in 2014. The growth beyond 2010 has been estimated at an average of 7% each year over six years.

Okotoks has a younger than average population. The median age of the population in the Town of Okotoks is 32.4 years as compared to 36.0 in Alberta overall. In addition, while approximately a quarter of the Alberta population is under the age of 20, in Okotoks, the under 20 segment represents 35% of the Town population.

Figure 6-3 - Population by age

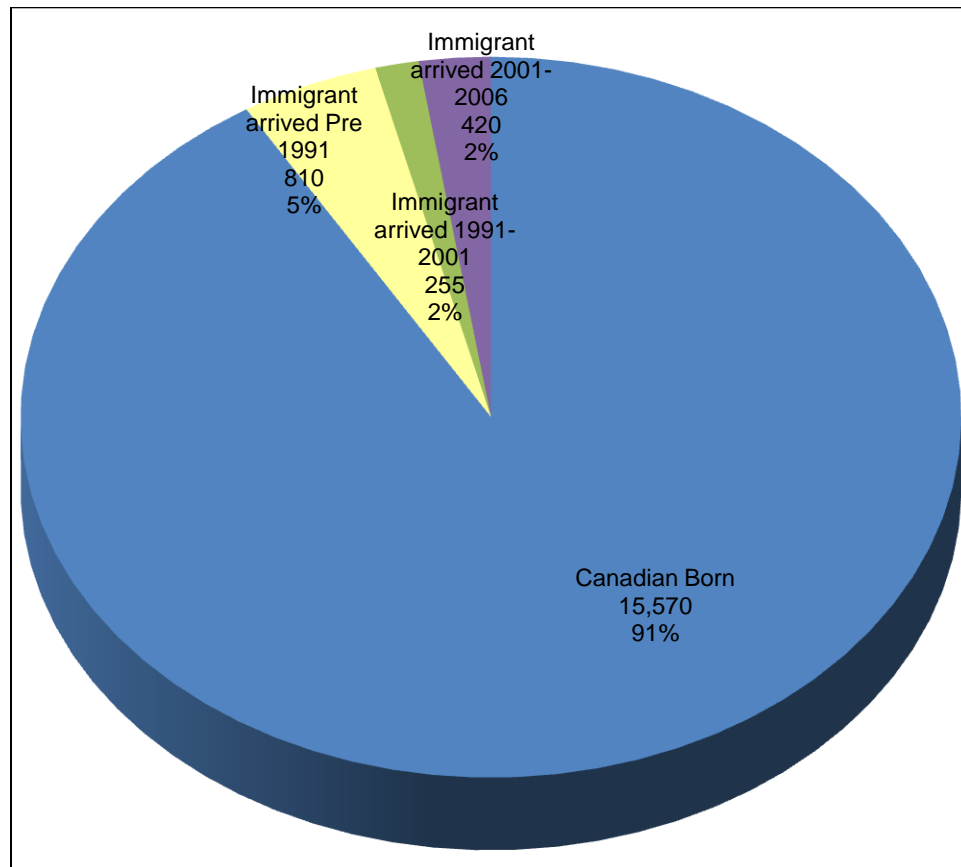


As in the province and nation more generally, the population in Okotoks is aging. Therefore while the proportion of the population in the 45-64 and 65 plus cohorts are still smaller than provincial averages, the numbers of older adults and seniors are increasing at a faster rate than the younger segments of the population.

As of 2006, there were 4,855 families residing in the Town of Okotoks. The average family was comprised of 3.2 individuals, which is just slightly above the provincial average of 3.0. The majority of families (86%) were either married or common law couple families. 650 were lone parent families, 89% of which were led by women.

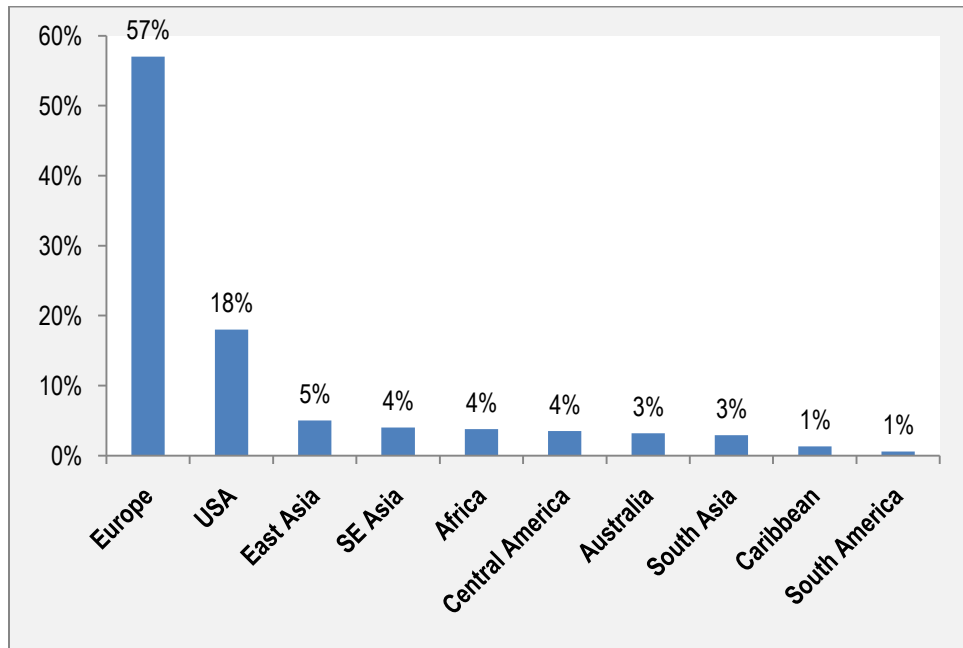
### 6.3 Immigrant Population

Figure 6-4 - Immigrant Population



Most of the population of Okotoks is Canadian born. As of 2006, there were only 1,485 immigrants in the community, representing 9% of the population. 28% of these individuals have arrived since 2001 and have therefore been living in Canada for five years or less.

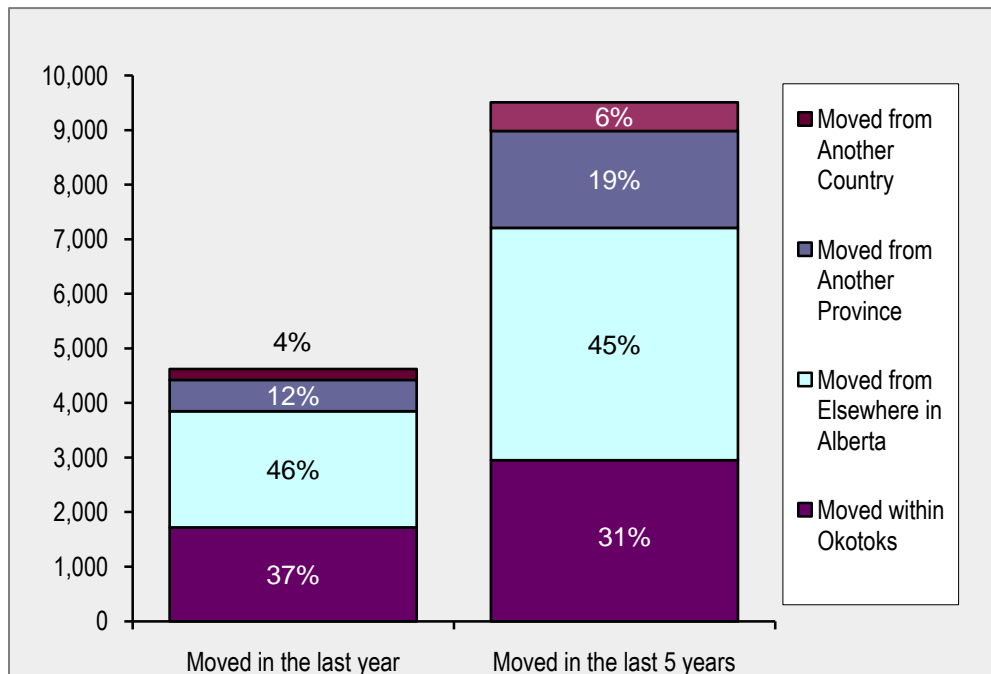
Figure 6-5 - Immigrant places of origin



The majority of these individuals (57%) came to Canada from Europe or the USA (18%), and therefore are likely to have English as a dominant language.

## 6.4 Mobility Within and to Okotoks

Figure 6-6 – Mobility



Although the proportion of Okotoks residents from outside Canada is relatively small, a significant number of residents are new to town.

This is relevant given that it generally takes time for individuals to feel a part of their community, to become aware of the services and resources available and to form relationships with their neighbours.

As of 2006, 27% of individuals living in Okotoks had moved in the previous year: 37% moved addresses within Okotoks; 46% had moved from elsewhere in Alberta; 12% had moved from another province; and 4% from another country.

Sixty per cent of the population had moved in the previous five years: 31% within Okotoks; 45% from elsewhere in Alberta; 19% from another province; and 6% from outside of Canada.

## 6.5 Commuting and Place of Work

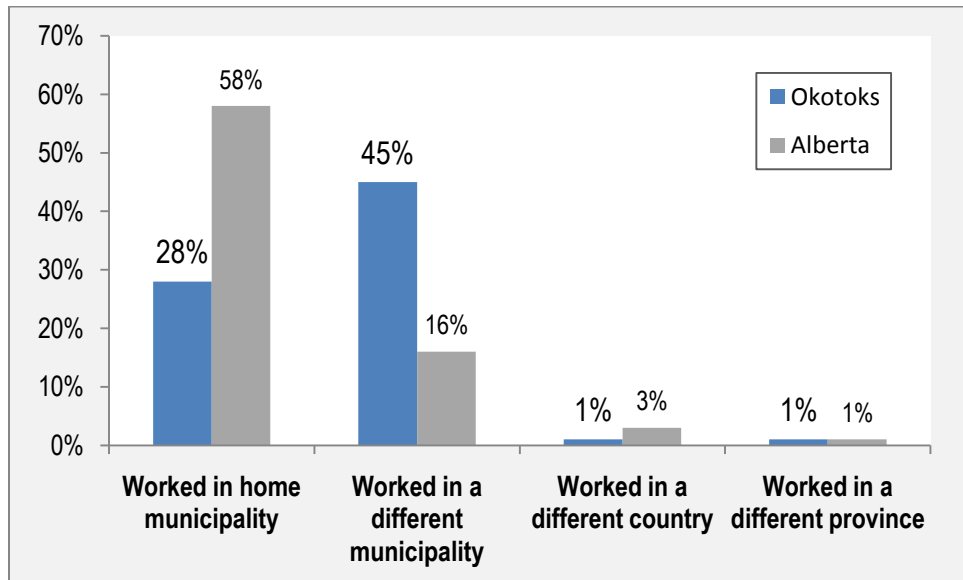
As of 2006, only a minority (28%) of Okotoks residents worked in the Town of Okotoks: 45% worked in a different municipality; 1% worked in a different county and 1% worked out of province. This represents a sharp contrast with Albertans generally. On average, 58% of the province works in the same municipality in which they live; 16% work in a different municipality; 3% in a different county and 1% out of province.

Looking at distances travelled to work, it follows that the majority of Okotoks residents (41%) commute 30 kilometres or more to work. In Alberta generally, all but 10% of workers commute less than 30 kilometres.

The median commuting distance of Okotoks workers is 25 kilometres. The median commuting distance of Albertans generally is 7.6 kilometres.



Figure 6-7 - Place of work

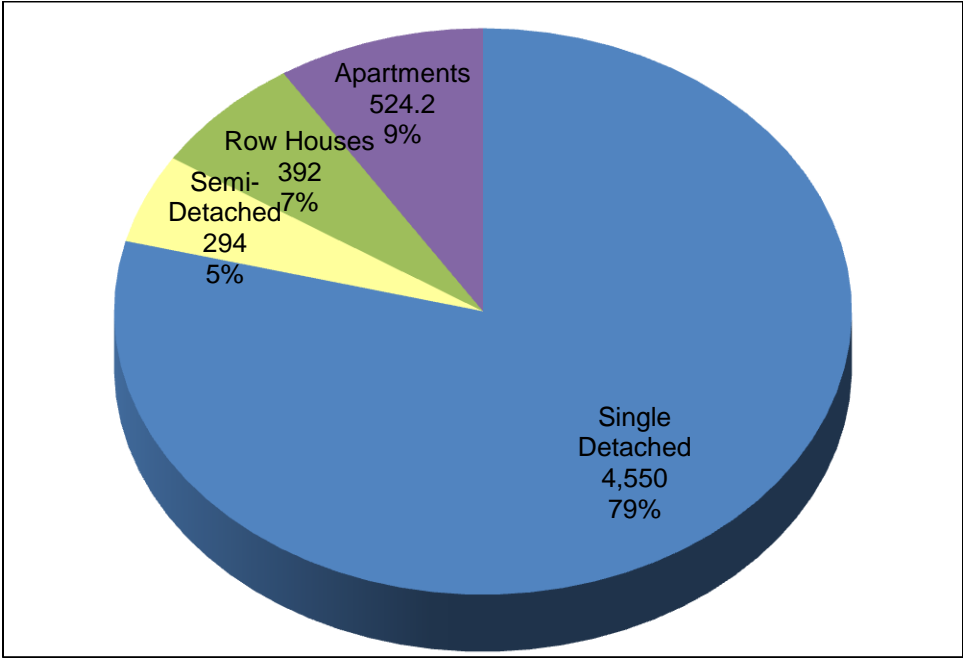


## 6.6 Housing

As of 2006, there were 5,760 private dwellings in the Town of Okotoks. This represents an increase of 56% since 2001: 2,123 new dwellings in just five years.

Between 2001 and 2006, population density in the town rose from 651.3 per square kilometer to 924.4 per square kilometer.

Figure 6-8 - Housing Stock

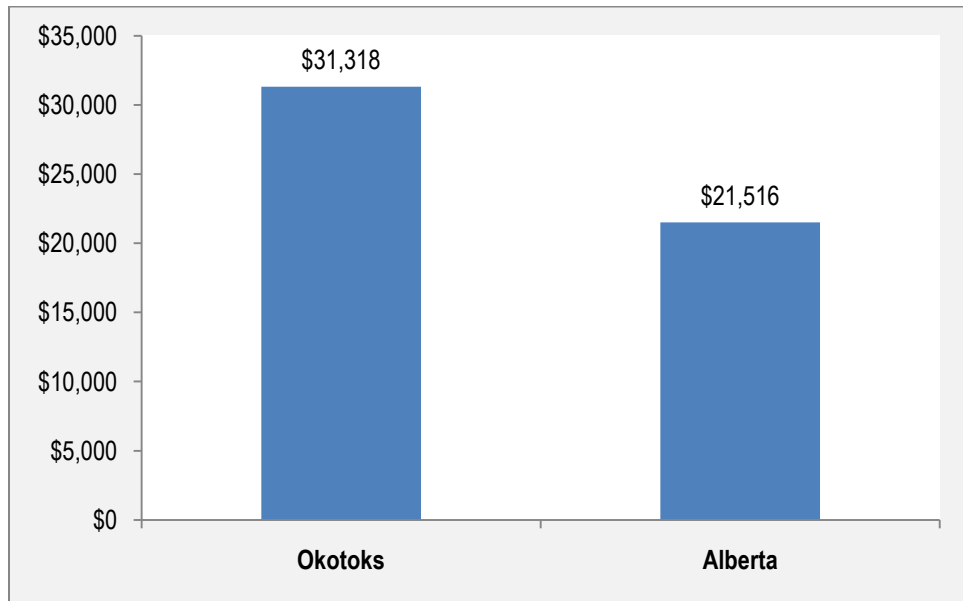


The majority of dwellings are occupied by permanent residents. Seventy-nine per cent of dwellings are single detached; 9% are apartments; 7% are row houses and 5% are semi-detached.

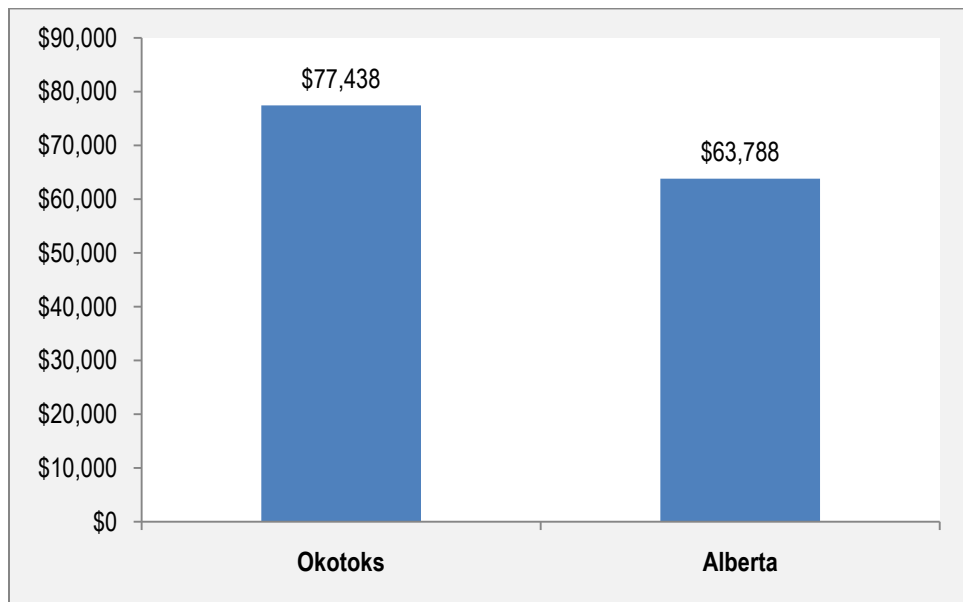
**6.7 Income**

Okotoks is a financially well-off community. As of 2005, the median income of individuals in the town was \$31,318—a full 46% higher than the median income of \$21,516 in Alberta overall.

**Figure 6-9 - Median individual income**



**Figure 6-10 - Median household income**

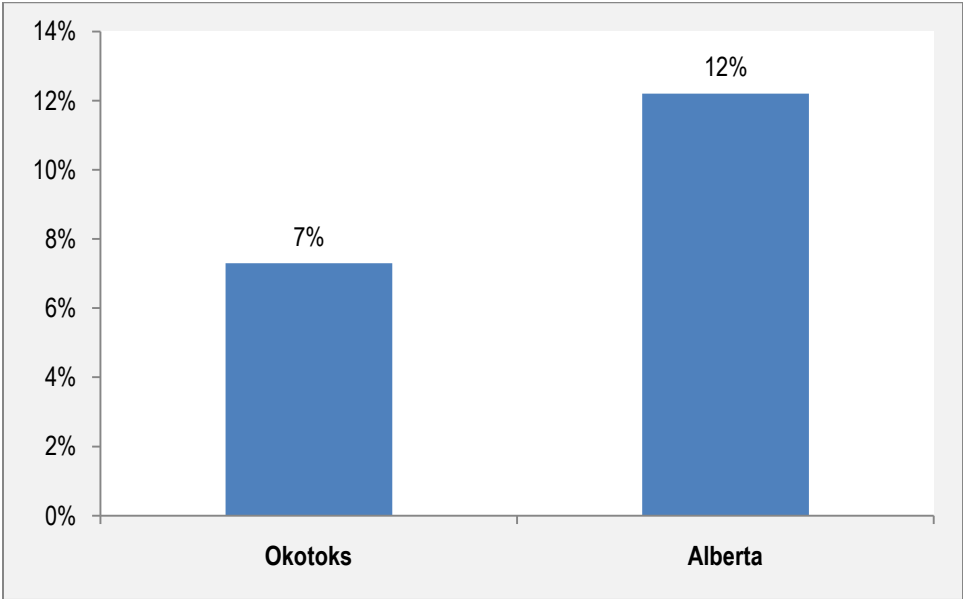


Household incomes are also higher in Okotoks: \$77,438 annually as compared to \$63,788 in Alberta generally.

Okotoks also has a lower proportion of individuals that would be considered low income. In Alberta, 12% of individuals are classified as low income based

on their financial situation. In Okotoks, this vulnerable, at risk population represents 7% of the population.

**Figure 6-11 - Proportion of low income individuals**



### 6.8 Business and Industry

There are currently 25 hectares of developed industrial land in the Town of Okotoks and an additional 185 hectares of industrial land is planned. There is a focus on attracting industries that are compatible with the local economic vision and community environment with respect to land requirements, goods and services provided, skills required and the draw on community resources, (i.e. water, sewer, energy).

Figure 6-12 - Business licences

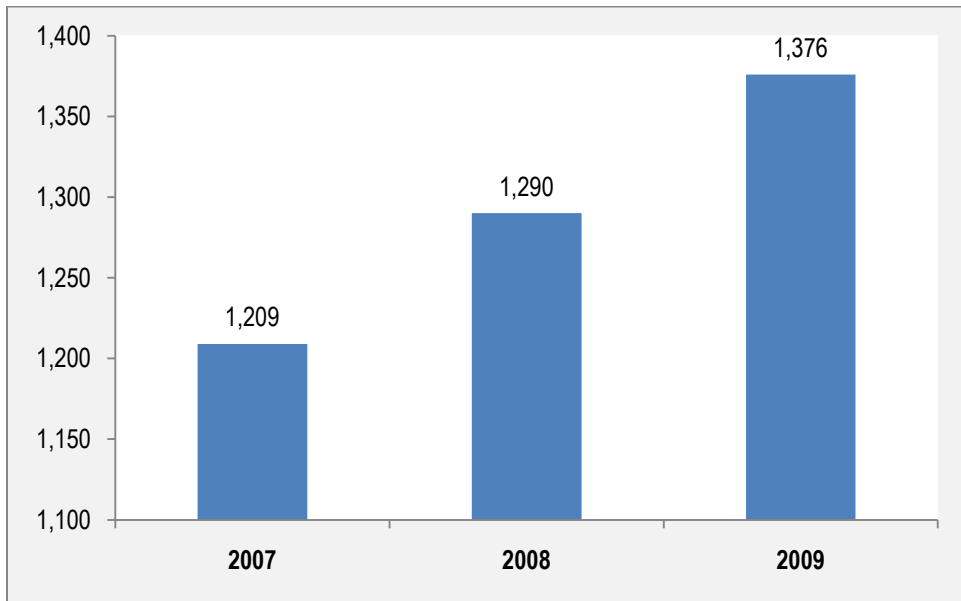
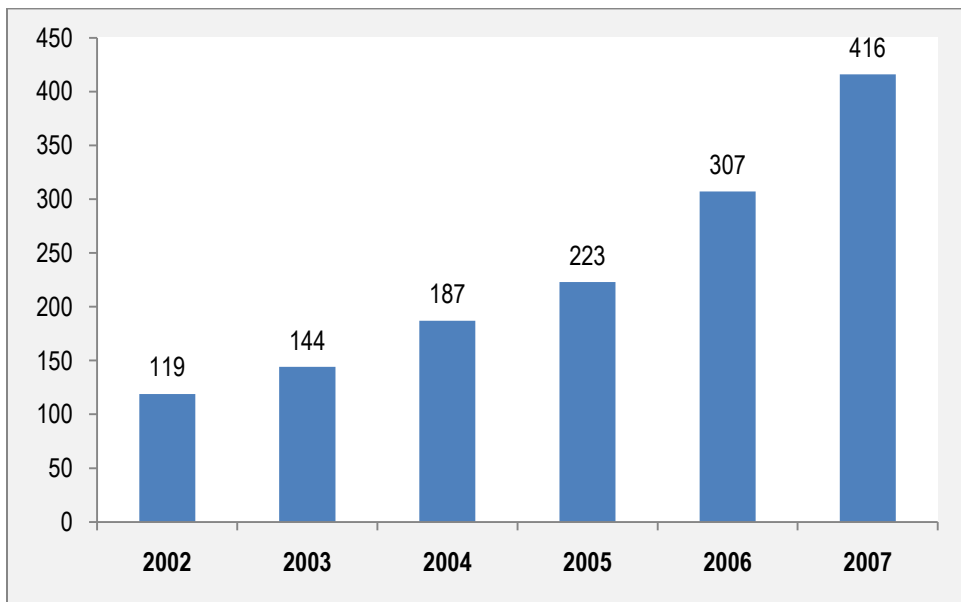


Figure 6-13 - Home-based businesses



In 2008, the Town was ranked in the top ten of Alberta's 'best communities for business'<sup>20</sup> and the increase in business licenses suggest a healthy and growing stock of local businesses. Between 2007 and 2009, the number of

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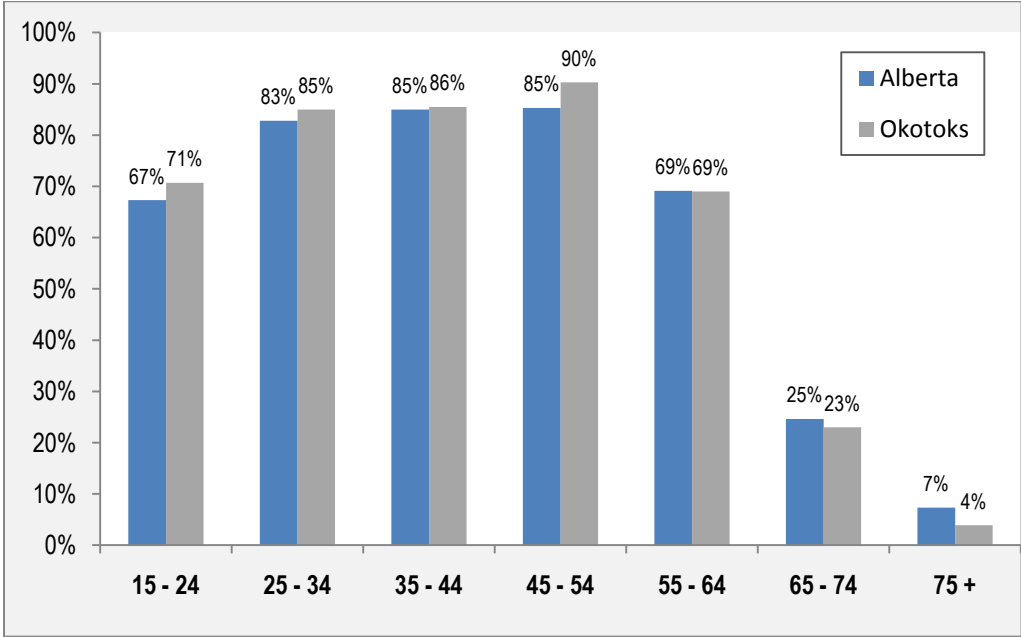
<sup>20</sup> Alberta Venture Magazine, 2008.

business licenses issued by the Town grew by 14% from 1,209 to 1,376. In 2009, 356 business licenses were issued, 126 of which were for new businesses.

Presently, employment in Okotoks is concentrated in agriculture, education, construction, transport, trade, professional services and retail. Home-based businesses also represent a significant and growing component of the local economy. Between 2002 and 2007, the number of home-based businesses Okotoks more than tripled, growing from 119 to 416.

### 6.9 Employment

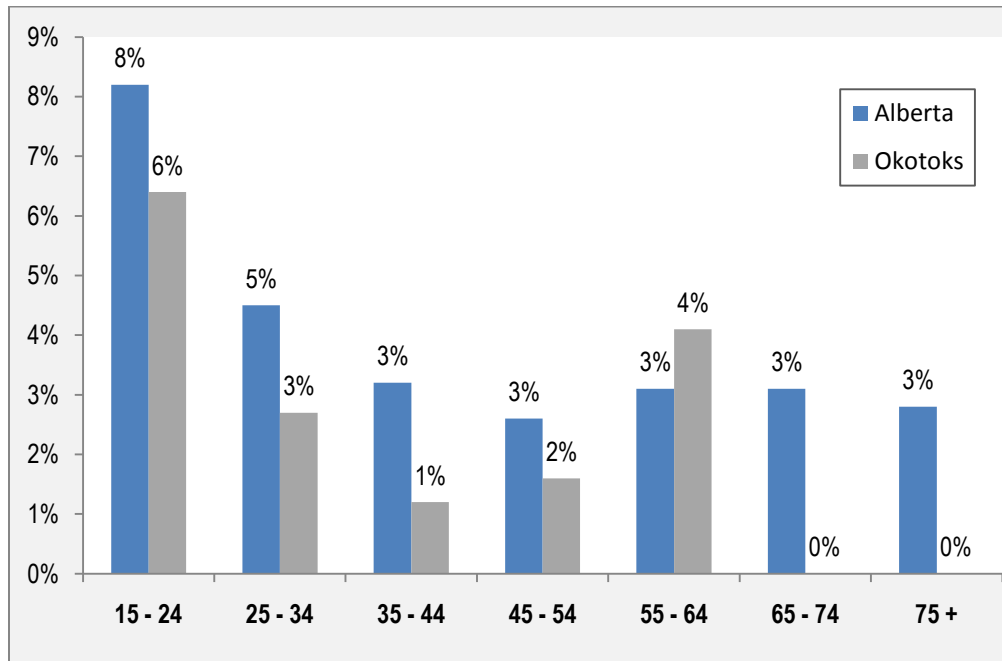
Figure 6-14 - Employment rates by age



Employment rates in Okotoks are higher than provincial average. As of 2006, the employment rate was 76.5% as compared to 70.5% in Alberta generally. Rates in Okotoks were also higher than average for every age category under 55.

It follows that unemployment rates in Okotoks were lower than the Alberta average. As of 2006, the unemployment rate in Okotoks was 2.9% compared to 4.3% in the province generally.

Figure 6-15 - Unemployment rates by age



The lower than average unemployment rate was consistent for all age groups, with the exception of the 55-64 age cohort.

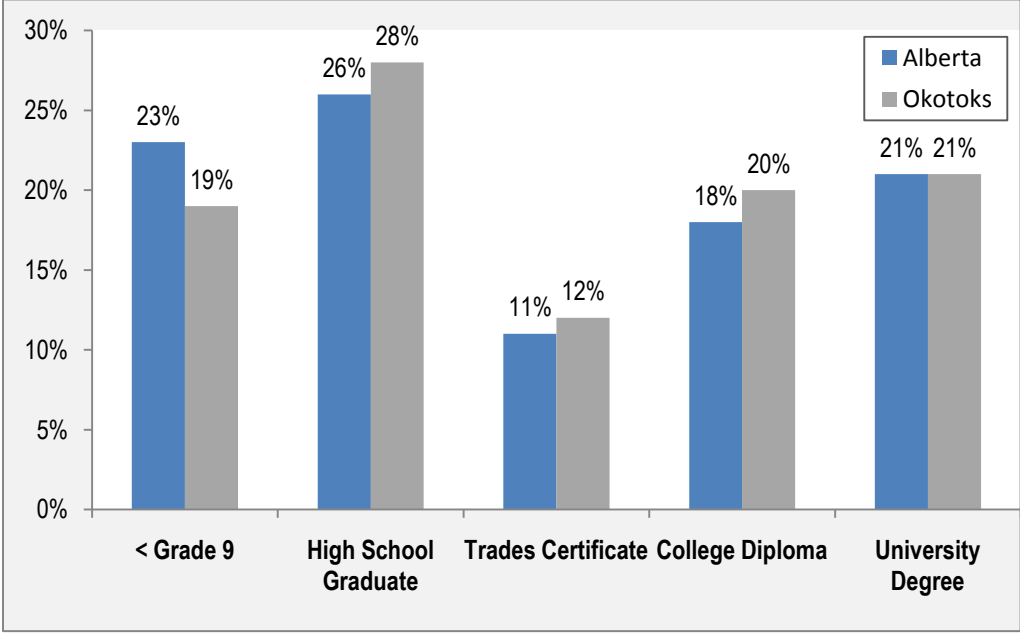
## 6.10 Education

Okotoks has a highly educated population. As of 2006, 53% of population over the age of 15 has some level of post-secondary education compared to 50% in Alberta overall.

Similarly, while 23% of individuals over 15 in Alberta have less than a grade 9 level of education and are thus considered challenged with respect to employment options, only 19% of the population in Okotoks falls into this category.

Roughly one in five Okotoks residents over the age of 15 (21%) have a university degree and the approximately same proportion (20%) hold a college diploma. 12% of the population possess a trades certificate.

Figure 6-16 - Educational attainment





## 7. Okotoks Adult Social Wellness Survey

The aim of the Okotoks Social Wellness Survey was to gain a community perspective on social wellness. The survey was designed to obtain feedback from residents 20 years of age and older about priorities with regard to the seven components of community social wellness, and to gauge how well they feel Okotoks is doing on key aspects of social wellness.

### 7.1 Synopsis

The analysis of the adult social wellness survey revealed that, generally speaking, respondents feel that Okotoks is a very good place to live. With regard to the overall rating of social wellness, 74% of respondents gave Okotoks a ranking of 4 or 5 (the highest rankings), while only 7% of respondents gave the town a ranking of 1 or 2 (the lowest rankings).

The 10 most important aspects of social wellness are listed below along with the percentage of respondents rating that aspect in the top three, and the percentage of respondents that rated Okotoks as doing 'very well' or 'well'.

**Figure 7-1 - Top 10 aspects of social wellness**

<b>Aspect of Social Wellness</b>	<b>% ranking aspect in top 3</b>	<b>% indicating 'very well' or 'well'</b>
Access to a quality school system	83%	72%
Preservation of and access to natural spaces	76%	47%
Access to health services and support	65%	50%
Range of housing available at costs in keeping with household incomes	64%	15%
Well-planned walking and bike trails	63%	52%
Neighbourhoods designed to promote social interaction	61%	23%
Spaces for community use and gathering	59%	38%
Safe neighbourhoods and streets	58%	54%
Opportunities for lifelong learning	58%	41%
Wide range of opportunities for sport and recreation for all	54%	59%

The 5 aspects of social wellness that received the highest number of 'very well' or 'well' ratings were:

- Access to public libraries: 85%
- Access to a quality school system: 72%
- Opportunities for volunteering: 66%
- Support for active lifestyles: 63%
- Equitable distribution of parks and recreation facilities throughout the community and safe and respectful workplaces: 60%

The 5 aspects of social wellness that received the highest number of 'not very well' or 'poorly' ratings were:

- Accessible and affordable public transit: 88%
- Locally delivered post-secondary education: 68%
- Housing for young people: 60%
- Shelters and housing for women and children fleeing violence: 57%
- Transportation support for persons with mobility challenges: 54%

**Figure 7-2 - Top 3 aspects in each social wellness component and their average rating**

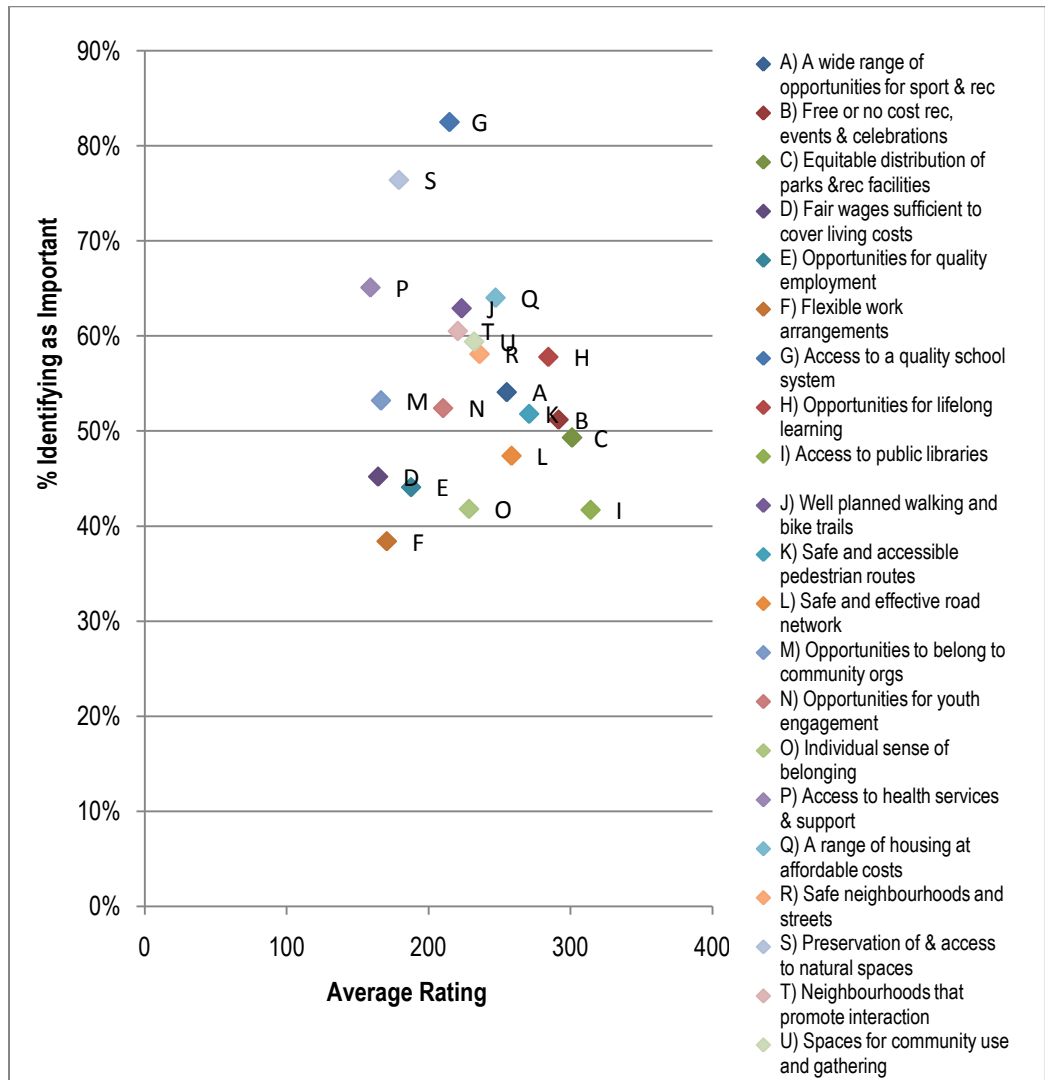


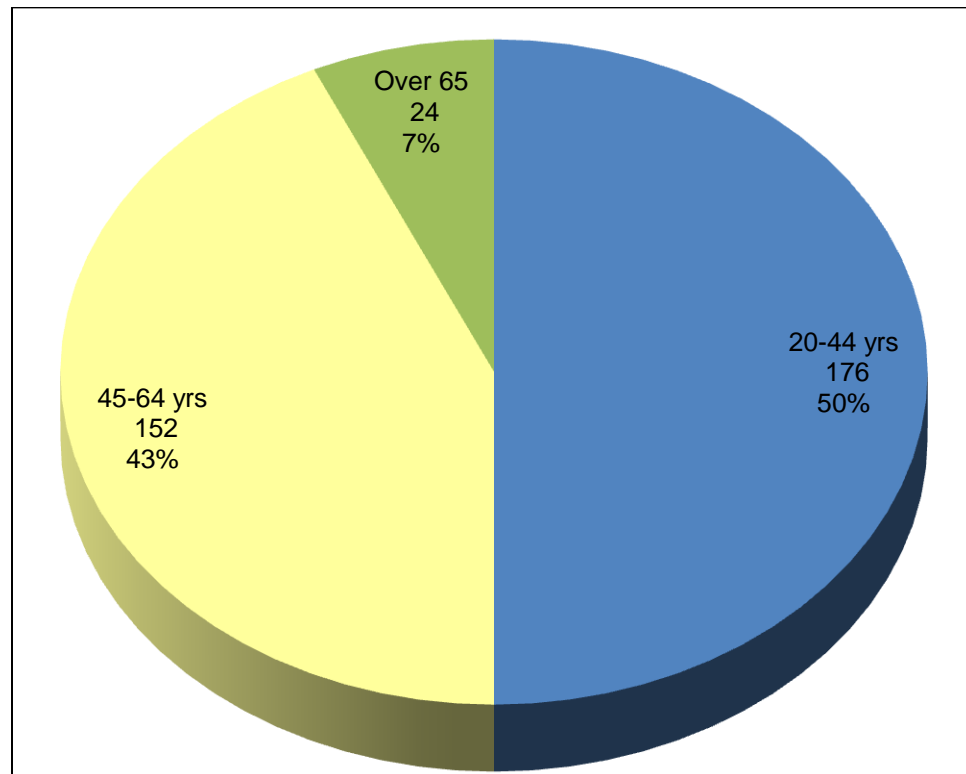
Figure 6-2 plots the top three aspects in each social wellness component and their average rating. It provides a snapshot of the percentage of people who ranked the aspect in the top three and the average rating it received from all survey respondents. The average rating was arrived at by assigning 5 points for each 'very well', 4 points for each 'well', 3 points for each 'acceptable', 2 points for each 'not very well', and 1 point for each 'poorly' and dividing the total by the number of respondents.

## 7.2 Respondent Profile

418 individuals 20 years of age and older completed the Okotoks Social Wellness Survey. The majority of respondents (50%) were between the ages of 20 and 44; 43% were between 45 and 64; and 7% were over 65 years of age. The distribution of survey respondents maps relatively well to that of the population, although a slightly greater proportion from the 45 to 64 age group and smaller proportions from the 20-44 and over 65 cohorts responded. The Okotoks adult population is split as follows: 56% between the ages of 20 and 44; 36% between 45 and 64 years of age; and 9% over 65.

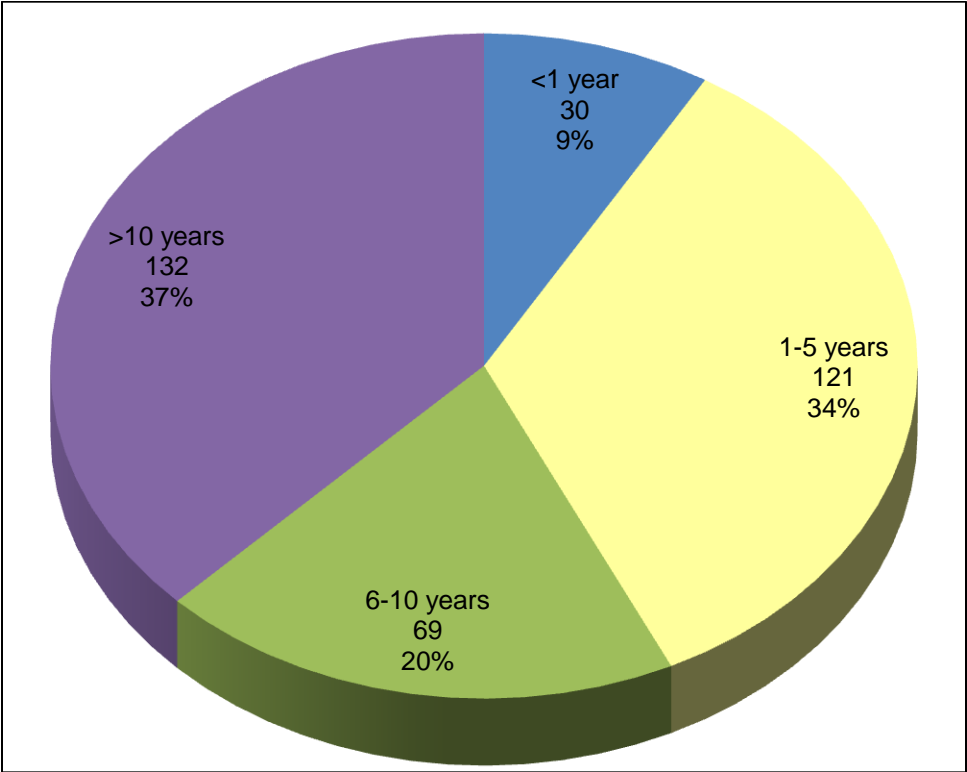
Of the survey respondents, 70% were female and 30% were male. This inequity in gender representation is typical for a survey of this nature.

Figure 7-3 - Age profile of adult survey respondents



With regard to time living in Okotoks, the survey did not capture as many very recent movers to the town as are in the general population. Whereas the 2006 Census found that approximately 17% of Okotoks residents had moved to the town in the past year, only 8% of survey respondents indicated that they had lived in Okotoks for less than a year. However, while the Census results indicate that 41% of residents in 2006 had moved to Okotoks in the previous 5 years, 42% of survey respondents indicated that they had lived in the town for either 1 to 5 years or less than one year.

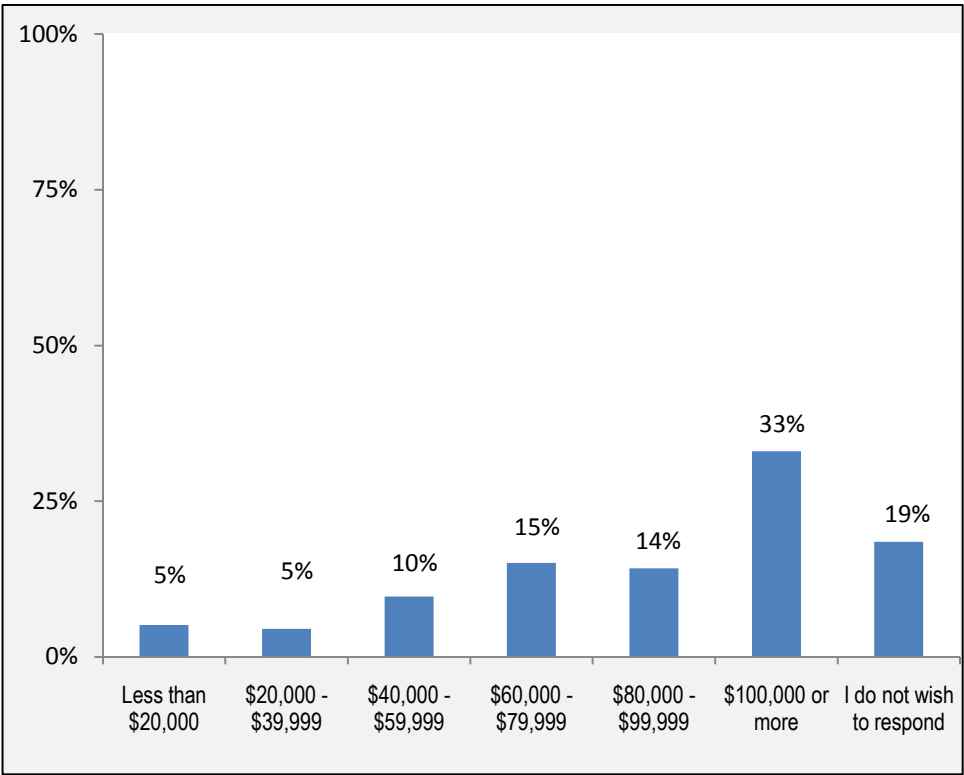
Figure 7-4 - Time living in Okotoks – adult survey



Of the 418 respondents, 352 (82%) chose to provide their household income.

- One-third (33%) indicated that their household income was more than \$100,000.
- The percentage of respondents with incomes of less than \$20,000 and \$20,000-\$39,999 was the same at 5%.
- 10% of respondents had incomes between \$40,000 and \$59,999.
- 15% had household incomes of \$60,000-\$79,999, while 14% had incomes of \$80,000-\$99,999.
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Figure 7-5 - Respondent profile: household income

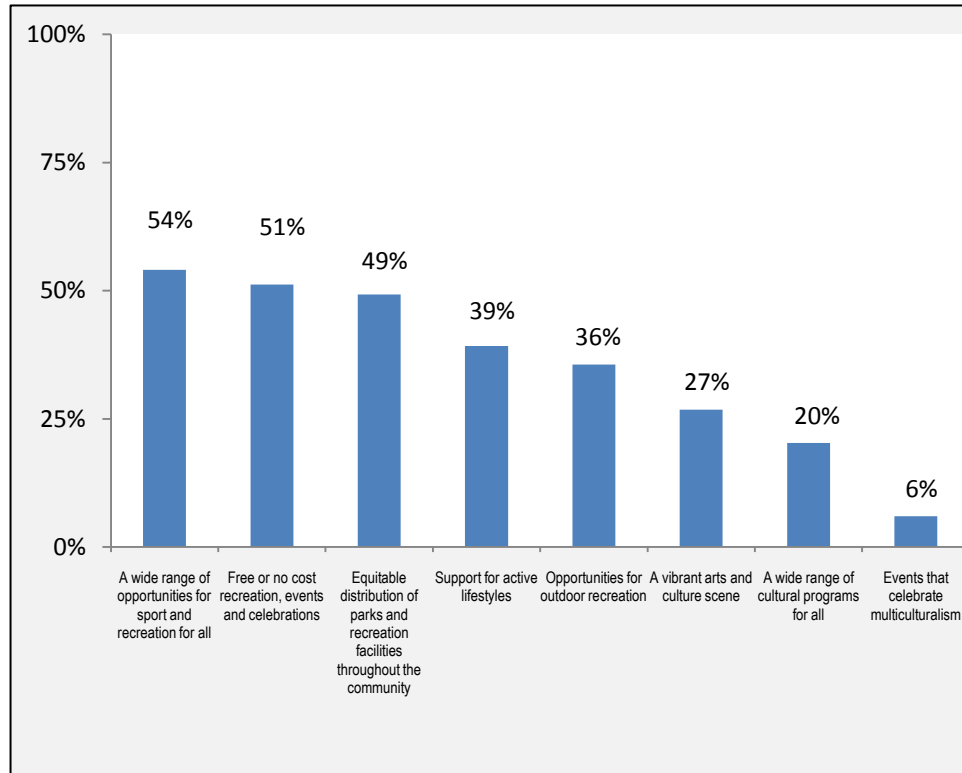


### 7.3 Social Wellness Component 1: Playing

The survey asked that respondents choose the three aspects related to *playing* that they thought were most important to social wellness in Okotoks.

- Approximately half of all respondents chose a wide range of opportunities for sport and recreation for all (54%), free or no-cost recreation, events and celebrations (51%) and equitable distribution of parks and recreation facilities throughout the community (49%).
- Free or no-cost recreation, events and celebrations and a wide range of opportunities for sport and recreation were given particular importance by lower income respondents (61% among respondents with incomes less than \$20,000 as compared to 51% overall).
- Free or no-cost recreation, events and celebrations was also more commonly deemed to be of high importance by respondents in the 20-44 age range (61%).
- In contrast, equitable distribution of parks and recreation facilities was seen as being more important by higher income groups.
- Closely ranked were support for active lifestyles (39%) and opportunities for outdoor recreation (36%).
- Support for active lifestyles was most commonly seen as important among older respondents: 63% of those in the 65 plus age range identified this as among the most important aspects of playing.
- Priorities related to arts and culture were next for the 65 plus age group, with 27% choosing a vibrant arts and culture scene as a priority and 20% choosing a wide range of cultural programs for all.
- Events that celebrate multiculturalism was selected as a priority by 6% of respondents, the majority of whom were in the low to middle income brackets.

Figure 7-6 - Aspects of *playing* seen to be most important to the social wellness of Okotoks



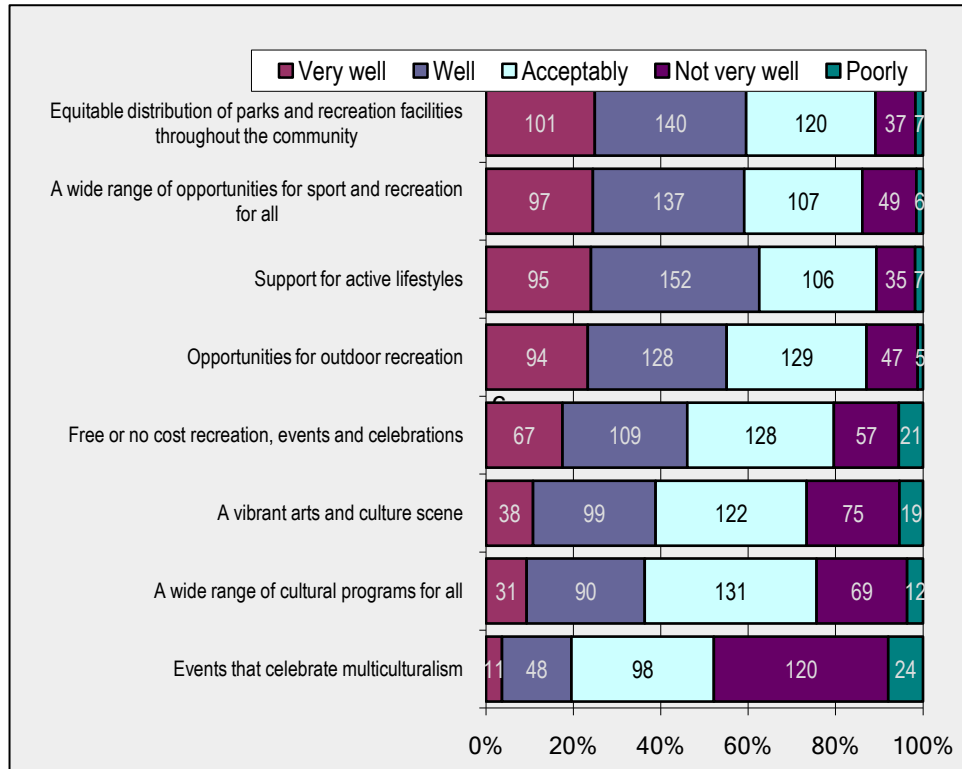
Those aspects of *playing* deemed to be most important received relatively positive ratings from survey respondents.

- 60% of respondents indicated that Okotoks was doing ‘very well’ or ‘well’ with regard to equitable distribution of parks and recreation facilities throughout the community, while 59% gave providing a wide range of opportunities for sport and recreation for all and 46% gave free or no-cost recreation, events and celebrations these ratings.
- A majority of respondents registered a ranking of ‘very well’ or ‘well’ for support for active lifestyles (63%) and opportunities for outdoor recreation (55%).
- Fewer respondents gave positive ratings to aspects related to arts and culture; 39% indicated Okotoks was doing ‘very well’ or ‘well’ with respect to a vibrant arts and culture scene, while 36% gave these ratings to the range of cultural programs available to all.
- The most negative rating registered by respondents was with respect to events that celebrate multiculturalism; with 48% of respondents indicating that Okotoks is doing ‘not very well’ or ‘poorly’ in this regard. It is worthy to note that up to a quarter of respondents across



all income groups indicated that they did not know how well Okotoks was doing in this regard.

**Figure 7-7 - How well different aspects of *playing* are being supported and promoted in Okotoks**



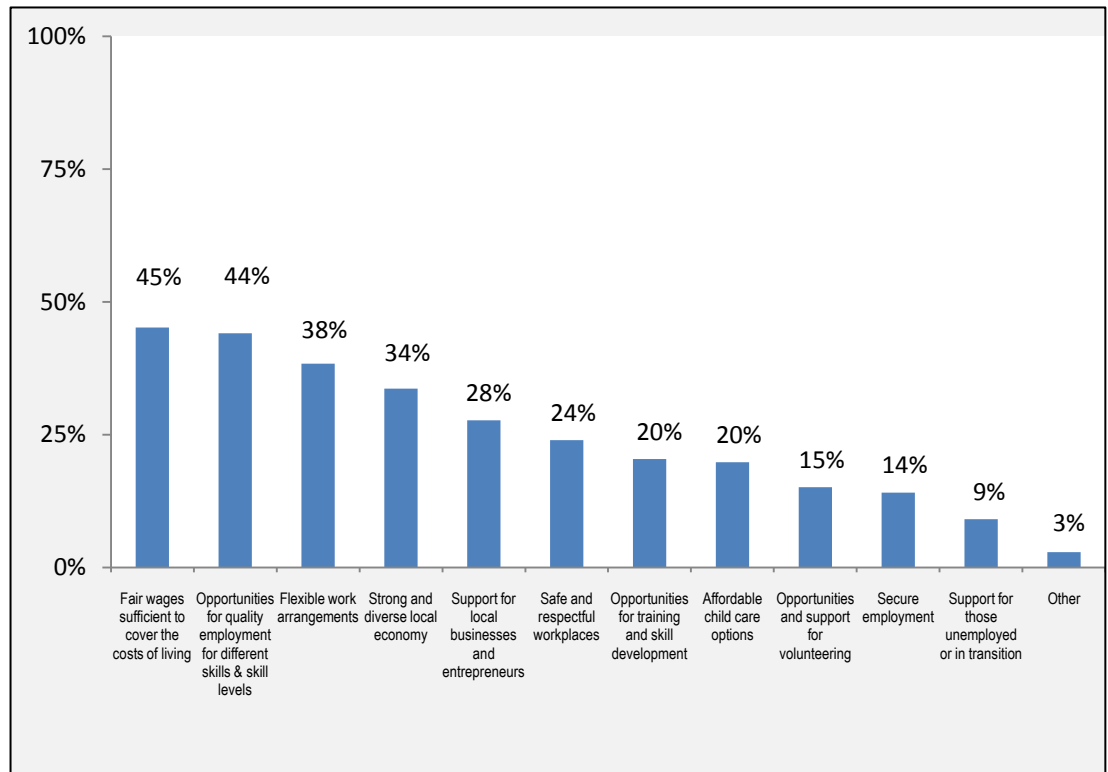
## 7.4 Social Wellness Component 2: Working

The survey asked that respondents choose the three aspects related to *working* that they thought were most important to social wellness in Okotoks.

- 45% of respondents chose fair wages sufficient to cover the costs of living. This value was seen as particularly important by lower income respondents. For example, 80% of respondents in the \$20,000-\$39,999 income bracket indicated that this was most important.
- Flexible work arrangements was also given high importance by lower income respondents. Overall, this value was selected by 38% of respondents; however, among respondents in the less than \$20,000 income bracket, 61% chose it as most important.

- Both of these aspects of working were also more commonly selected as most important by younger respondents: 55% of those 20-44; 37% of those 45-64; and 22% of those over 65 identified fair wages as most important. For flexible work arrangements, the corresponding proportions by age group were 42%, 36% and 35%.
- 44% selected opportunities for quality employment for different skills and skill levels as one of their top three choices.
- A strong and diverse local economy was chosen by 34%, the majority of these being in the higher income brackets and in the over 65 age range.
- 28% of respondents, again mainly seniors with higher incomes, chose support for local business and entrepreneurs.
- Safe and respectful workplaces, opportunities for training and skill development and affordable child care were given equal importance by all income groups, with 24%, 20% and 20% of respondents selecting these as important priorities.
- Other less common choices were opportunities and support for volunteering (15%), secure employment (15%) and support for those unemployed or in transition (9%).
- Opportunities for volunteering were seen as particularly important among older respondents.

Figure 7-8 - Aspects of *working* seen to be most important to the social wellness of Okotoks

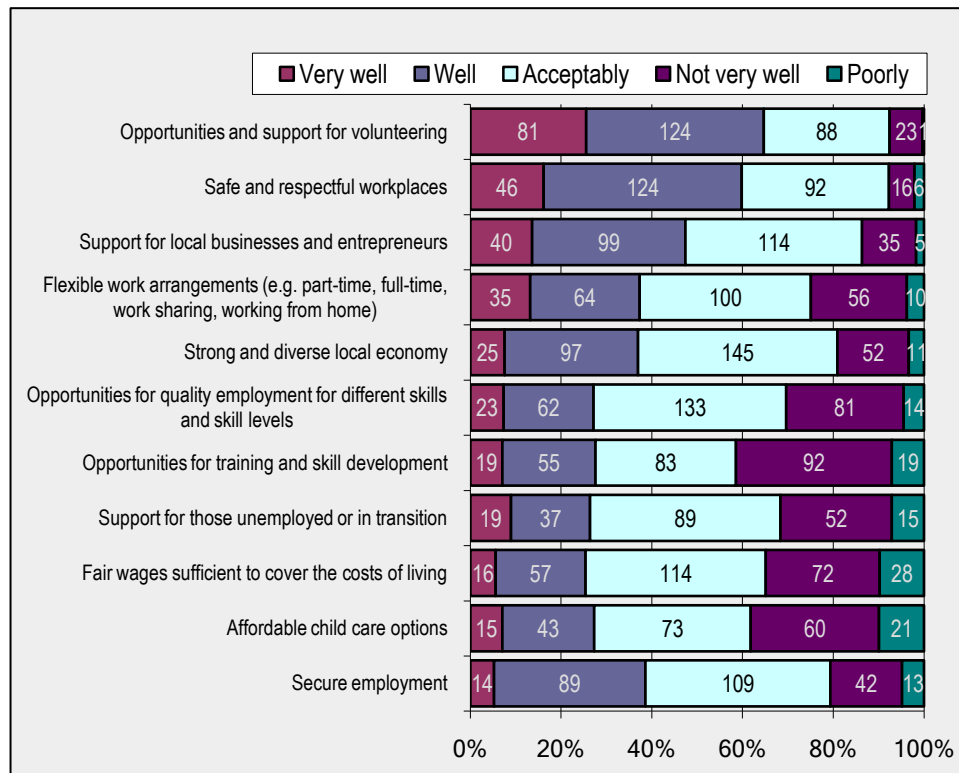


The aspects of *working* deemed to be most important received relatively low ratings, while those that were less important were rated more highly.

- Only 25% of respondents indicated that that Okotoks was doing ‘very well’ or ‘well’ with regard to fair wages sufficient to cover the cost of living. A large number of respondents (35%) felt that Okotoks was doing ‘not very well’ or ‘poorly’ in this regard.
- 28% responded that Okotoks was doing ‘very well’ or ‘well’ with regard to opportunities for quality employment for different skills and skill levels. A large number of respondents, mainly those from lower income brackets (30% overall and 43% in the \$20,000-\$39,999 income group) felt that Okotoks was doing ‘not very well’ or ‘poorly’ in this regard.
- 37% felt Okotoks is doing ‘very well’ or ‘well’ with regard to flexible work arrangements, while 25% felt the town is doing ‘not very well’ or ‘poorly’.
- A majority of respondents felt that Okotoks is doing ‘very well’ or ‘well’ in the areas of opportunities and support for volunteering (65%) and safe and respectful workplaces (60%).

- Only the other hand, many respondents felt that Okotoks is doing 'not very well' or 'poorly' in the areas of opportunities for training and skill development (41%) and affordable child care options (38%).

Figure 7-9 - How well these different aspects of *working* are being supported and promoted in Okotoks



## 7.5 Social Wellness Component 3: Learning

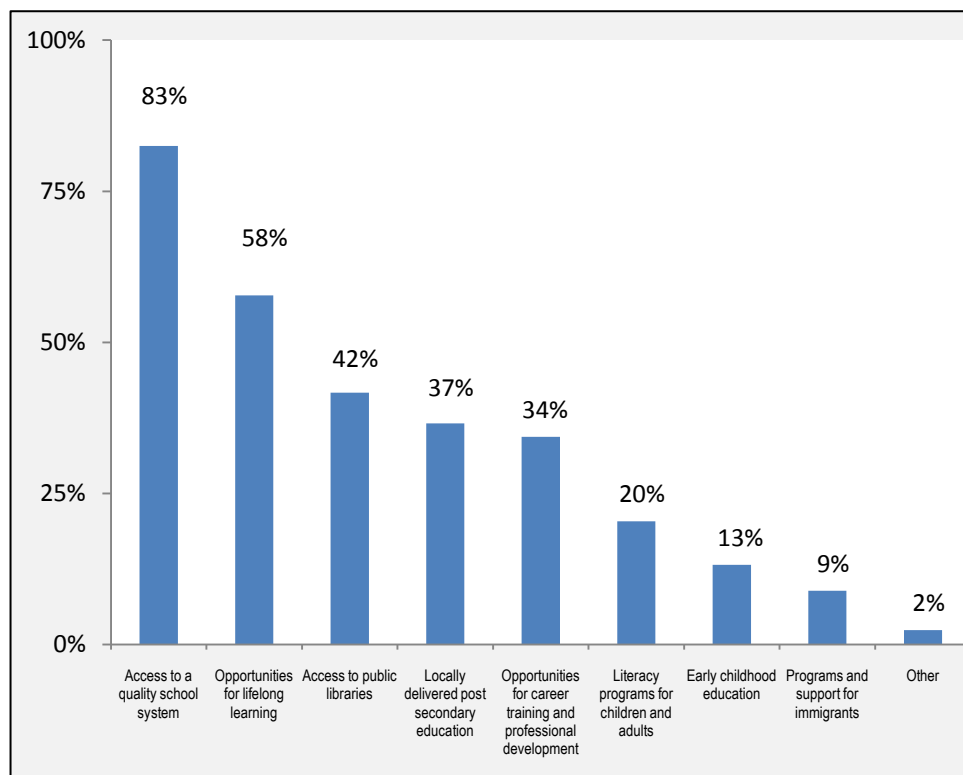
The survey asked that respondents choose the three aspects related to *learning* that they thought were most important to social wellness in Okotoks.

- A vast majority (83%) chose access to a quality school system as being an important priority for community social wellness, while 58% chose opportunities for lifelong learning and 42% selected access to public libraries.
- In all three of these cases, more importance was placed on these values by respondents in the higher income brackets. Access to a quality school system, for example, was seen as important by 88% of

respondents in the \$80,000-\$99,000 income category, but only 47% of respondents with incomes less than \$20,000.

- In contrast, while opportunities for career training and professional development were seen as important by only 34% of respondents overall, 71% of respondents in the lowest income bracket selected this value as most important.
- Locally delivered post-secondary education was deemed as important by 37% of respondents.
- Other less common choices were literacy programs for children and adults (20%) and early childhood education (13%).
- Overall, only 9% of respondents chose programs and support for immigrants as most important. It is worthy to note, however, that 29% and 18% of respondents in the two lowest income groups selected this value. It was also deemed as important more commonly by younger respondents in the 20-44 age range (14%).

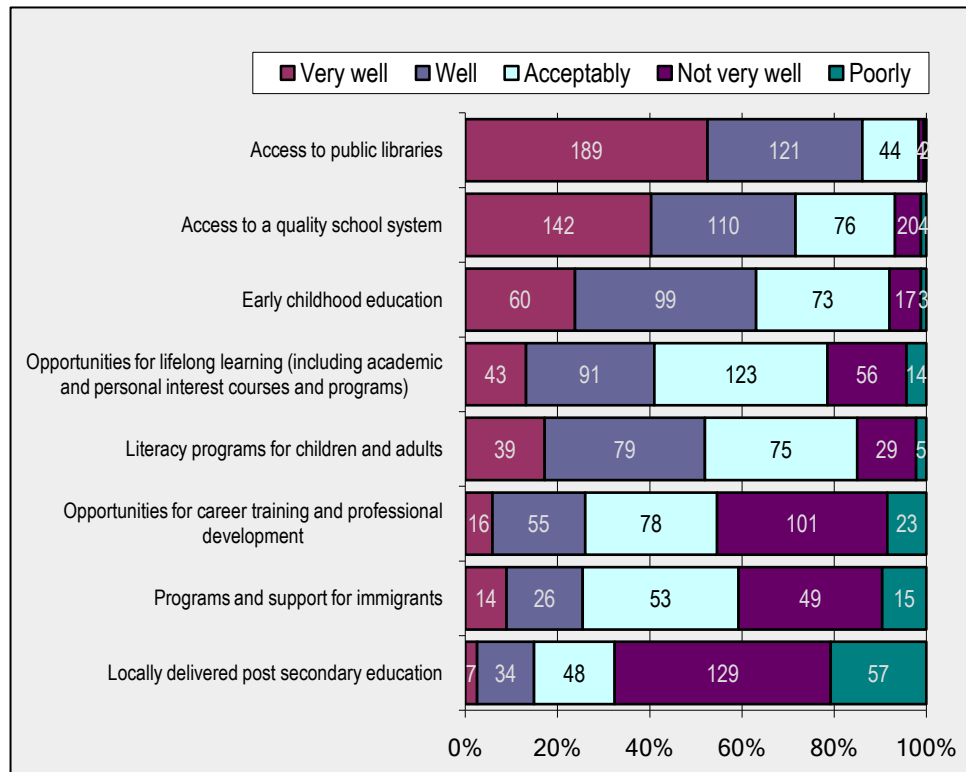
**Figure 7-10 - Aspects of *learning* seen to be most important to the social wellness of Okotoks**



There was both strong correlation and wide variation in the ratings that were registered by respondents with respect to the aspects of *learning* identified.

- A vast majority indicated that Okotoks was doing ‘very well’ or ‘well’ with respect to access to public libraries (85%) and access to a quality school system (72%). Ratings for these two aspects of learning were more positive among higher income respondents. For example, while 43% of respondents in the \$60,000-\$79,999 income bracket indicated that Okotoks was doing ‘very well’ in supporting and promoting access to a quality school system, only 27% of those in the lowest income bracket indicated such; and 11% of this group indicated that Okotoks was doing ‘not very well’ in this regard.
- 41% gave opportunities for lifelong learning a rating of ‘very well’ or ‘well’.
- The most negative rating registered by respondents was with respect to locally delivered post-secondary education which ranked fourth in the list of priorities, with 68% of respondents indicating that Okotoks is doing ‘not very well’ or ‘poorly’ in this area.
- 45% of respondents gave opportunities for career training and professional development a rating of ‘not very well’ or ‘poorly’.

**Figure 7-11 - How well these different aspects of *learning* are being supported and promoted in Okotoks**



## 7.6 Social Wellness Component 4: Moving

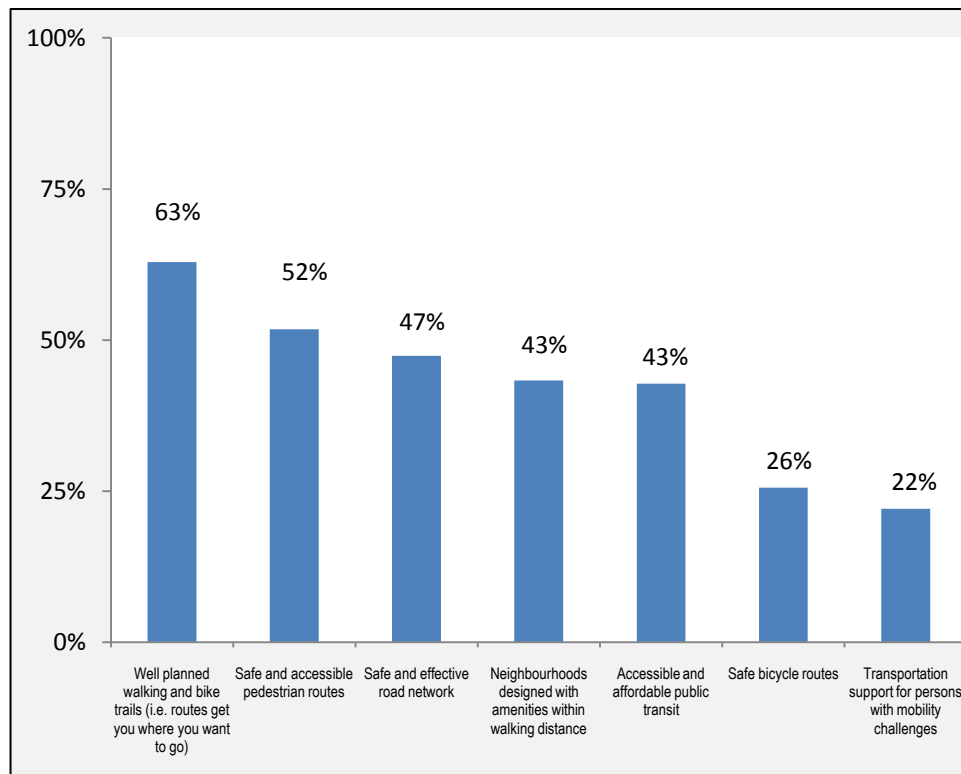
The survey asked that respondents choose the three aspects related to *moving* that they thought were most important to social wellness in Okotoks.

- A strong majority (63%) chose well-planned walking and bike trails as being an important priority for community social wellness, while 52% chose safe and accessible pedestrian routes and 47% selected a safe and effective road network.
- Neighbourhoods designed with amenities within walking distance and accessible and affordable public transit were both selected by 43% of respondents. While walkable neighbourhoods was more commonly selected as important by younger respondents (53% in the 20-44 age range), older respondents were more likely to select affordable public transit as among the most important aspects of moving.
- 26% of respondents chose safe bicycle routes and 22% selected transportation support for persons with mobility challenges as

priorities. The latter was deemed as particularly important by senior respondents over the age of 65 (33%).

- Affordable public transit and transportation support for persons with mobility challenges were more commonly deemed as important by respondents from lower income groups.

**Figure 7-12 - Aspects of *moving* seen to be most important to the social wellness of Okotoks**



Those aspects of *moving* deemed to be most important received relatively positive ratings from survey respondents.

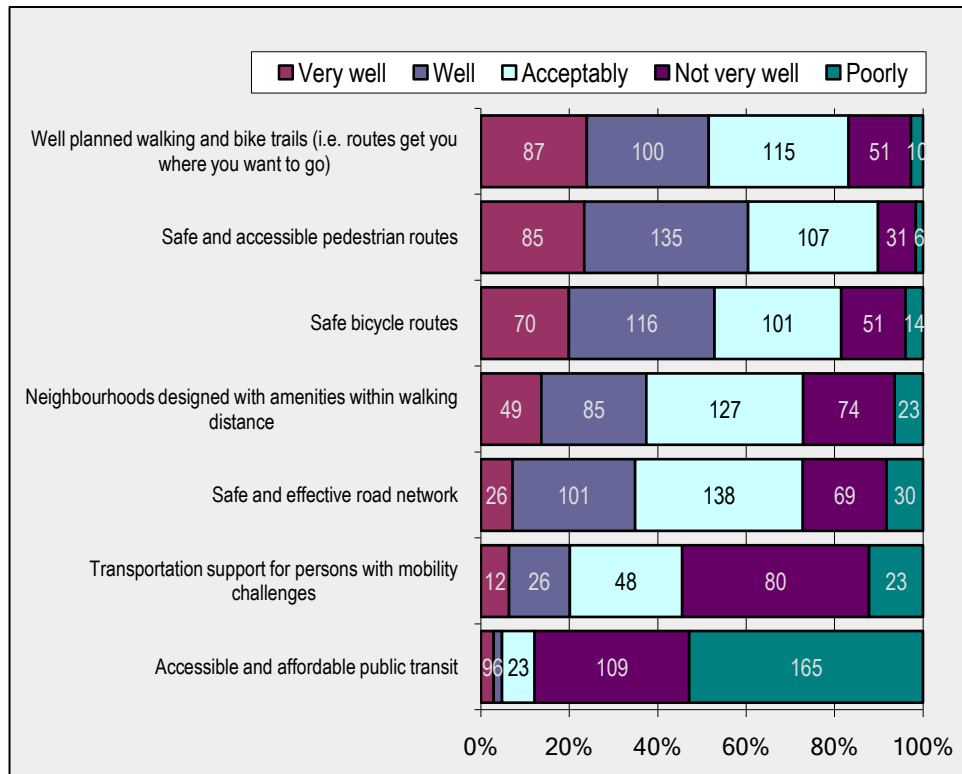
- 52% of respondents indicated that Okotoks was doing ‘very well’ or ‘well’ with respect to well planned walking and bike trails, while 60% indicated the same for safe and accessible pedestrian routes.
- 35% indicated that Okotoks was doing ‘very well’ or ‘well’ in providing a safe and effective road network, however a large number of respondents (27%), particularly those in higher income groups, selected ‘not very well’ or ‘poorly’ in response to this question.
- The most negative rating registered by respondents was with respect to accessible and affordable public transit, with 88% indicating that



Okotoks is doing ‘not very well’ or ‘poorly’ in this area. Fully 53% of respondents indicated that Okotoks is doing ‘poorly’ on this aspect of social wellness.

- 54% of respondents gave transportation support for persons with mobility challenges a rating of ‘not very well’ or ‘poorly’.

**Figure 7-13 - How well these different aspects of *moving* are being supported and promoted in Okotoks**



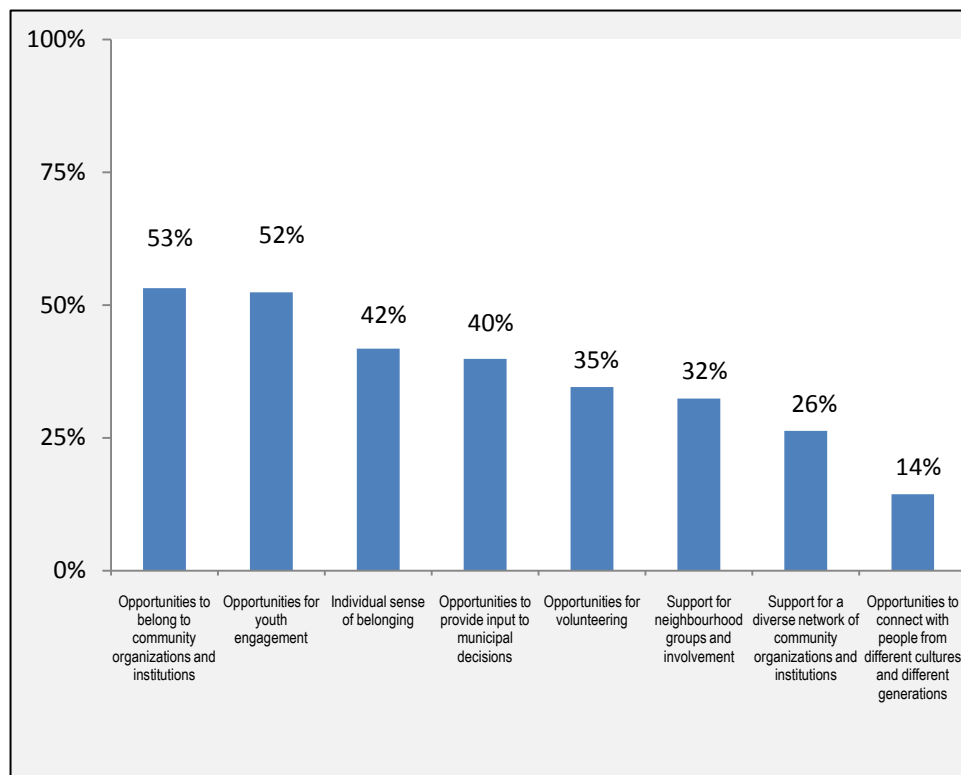
## 7.7 Social Wellness Component 5: Engaging

The survey asked that respondents choose the three related to *engaging* that they thought were most important to social wellness in Okotoks.

- 53% of respondents chose opportunities to belong to community organizations and institutions, while 52% selected opportunities for youth engagement as being priorities for Okotoks.
- An individual sense of belonging was selected by 42% of respondents and opportunities to provide input to municipal decisions was chosen by 40%.

- 35% of respondents, and a particularly large proportion of respondents over 65 years (63%), chose opportunities for volunteering as a priority.
- 32% selected support for neighbourhood groups and involvement as a priority, while support for a diverse network of community organizations and institutions was chosen by 26% of respondents.
- Opportunities to connect with people from different cultures and different generations was selected by 14% overall and up to one-third of respondents in the two lowest income brackets (33% of those with incomes less than \$20,000 and 31% of those with incomes between \$20,000 and \$39,999)

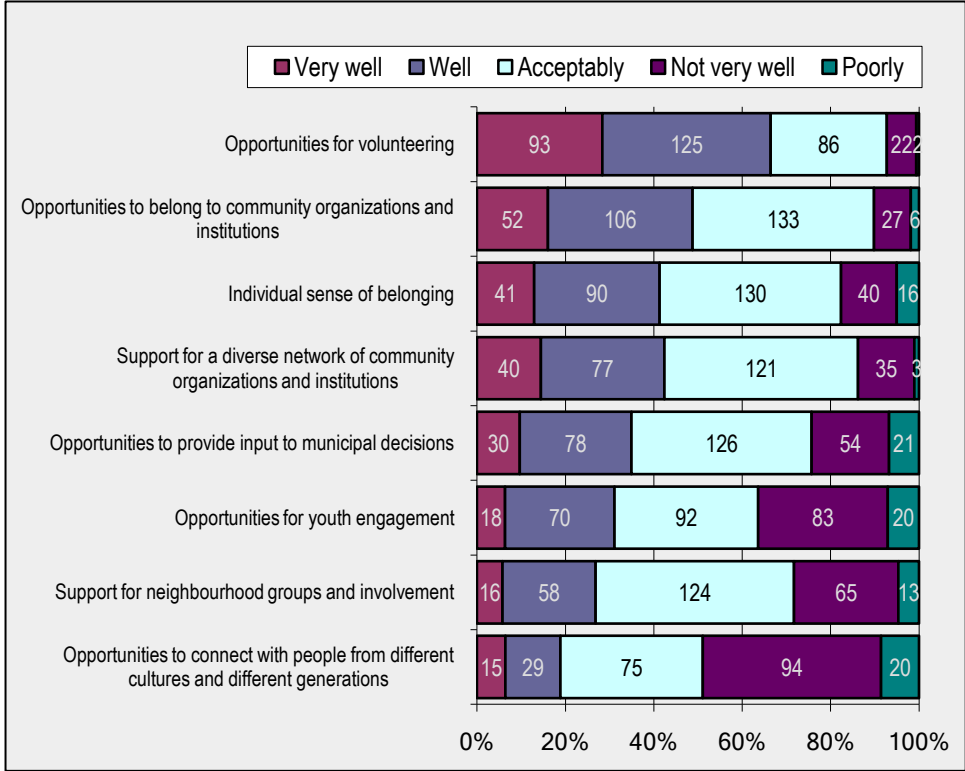
Figure 7-14 - Aspects of *engaging* seen to be most important to the social wellness of Okotoks



There was not a strong correlation between the aspects of *engaging* identified as important and the assessment of how well Okotoks is doing in these areas.

- Opportunities to belong to community organizations and institutions exhibited the strongest positive correlation, with 49% of respondents indicating that Okotoks was doing 'very well' or 'well'.
- On the other hand, the second highest priority, opportunities for youth engagement, received a more negative assessment: 'not very well' or 'poorly' from 36% of respondents, while receiving a rating of 'very well' or 'well' from only 31%.
- 41% expressed satisfaction with the individual sense of belonging experienced in Okotoks. Ratings with respect to how well Okotoks is doing to support and promote individual sense of belonging were higher from respondents from lower income groups: 46% of respondents with incomes of less than \$20,000 felt that Okotoks was doing either 'well' or 'very well' in this regard, whereas only 27% of those in the \$40,000-\$59,999 and 34% of those in the \$60,000-\$79,999 income brackets felt as such.
- 66% of respondents indicated that Okotoks is doing 'very well' or 'well' in terms of opportunities for volunteering. Again, respondents from lower income groups gave Okotoks higher ratings in this area.
- 49% of respondents indicated that Okotoks is doing 'not very well' or 'poorly' with regard to opportunities to connect with people from different cultures and different generations.

**Figure 7-15 - How well these different aspects of *engaging* are being supported and promoted in Okotoks**



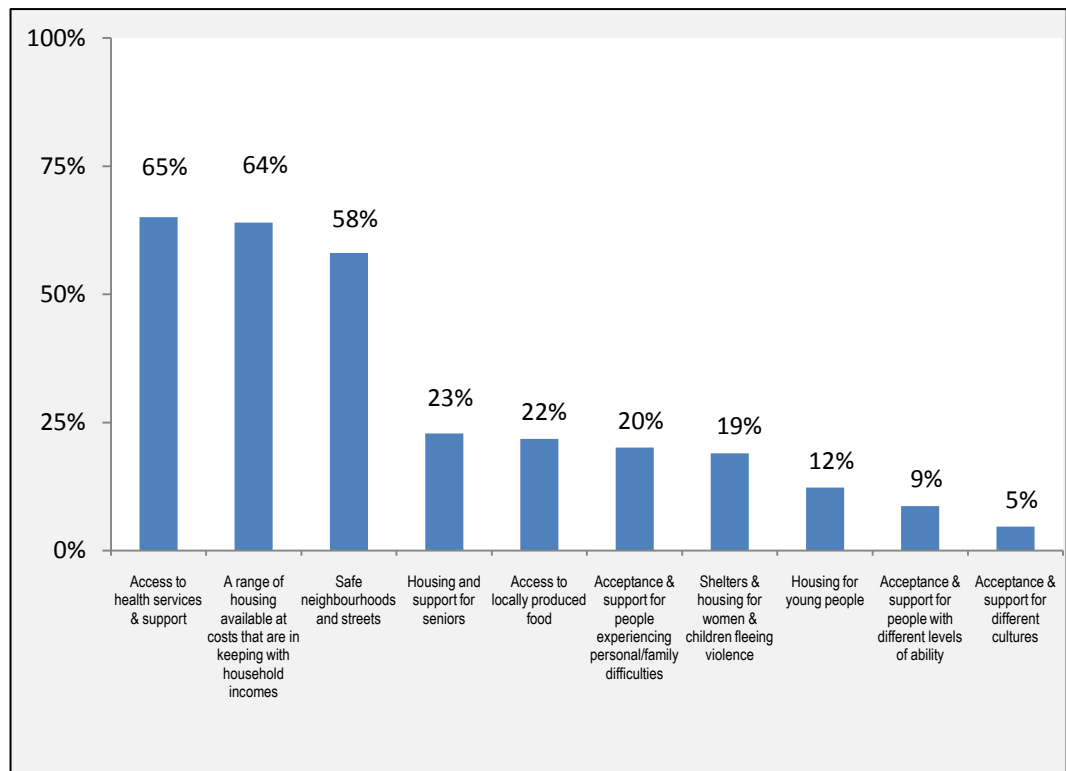
### 7.8 Social Wellness Component 6: Living

The survey asked that respondents choose the three aspects of social wellness related to *living* that they thought were most important to social wellness in Okotoks.

- The top three aspects stood significantly above the other choices in this component with 65% of respondents naming access to health services and support and 64% choosing a range of housing available at costs that are in keeping with household incomes.
- Interestingly, middle income respondents (\$40,000-\$59,999) were particularly emphatic about the importance of the availability of housing at costs in line with incomes, with 82% of respondents in this income bracket deeming this aspect of living as most important.
- 58% of respondents overall selected safe neighbourhoods and streets as priorities; this was seen as particularly important among respondents of higher income groups.

- Other less common choices were housing and support for seniors (23%), access to locally produced food (22%), acceptance and support for people experiencing personal/family difficulties (20%), and shelters and housing for women and children fleeing violence (19%).
- Access to locally produced food was more commonly deemed as important by younger respondents (30% of respondents in the 20-44 age range). In contrast, older respondents (38% of those 65 years and older) selected shelters and housing for women and children fleeing violence as among the most important aspect of living.
- Housing for young people (12%), acceptance and support for people with different levels of ability (9%), and acceptance and support for different cultures (5%) were also chosen by fewer respondents overall, although it is worthy to note that all three of these areas were more likely to be deemed important by lower income respondents. For example, selections in these areas from respondents with incomes of less than \$20,000 were 28%, 22% and 17% respectively.

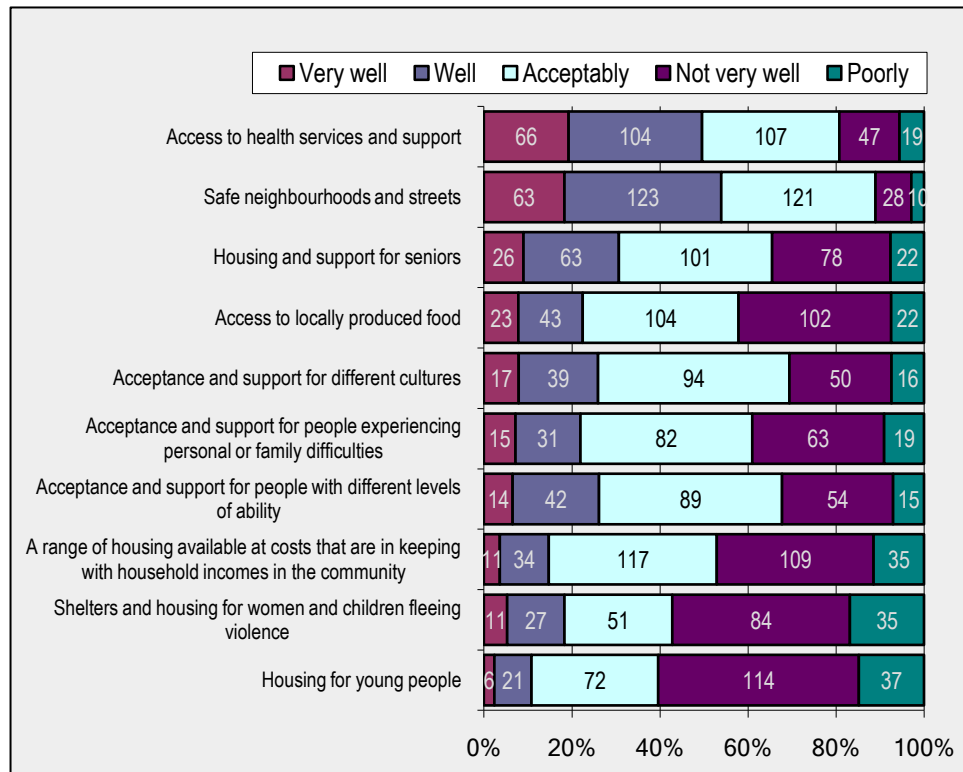
**Figure 7-16 - Aspects of *living* seen to be most important to the social wellness of Okotoks**



Generally speaking, survey respondents did not feel that Okotoks is doing very well on the aspects of *living* identified in the survey.

- Two notable exceptions were the positive ratings given to two of the top three priorities, with 50% of respondents indicating that Okotoks was doing 'very well' or 'well' with regard to access to health services and support and 54% indicating the same for safe neighbourhoods and streets.
- For the other top priority, a range of housing available at costs that are in keeping with household incomes, only 15% of respondents indicated that Okotoks is doing 'very well' or 'well' in this regard, compared with 47% of respondents indicating that the town is doing 'not very well' or 'poorly'. Respondents from lower income brackets indicated that Okotoks was doing particularly poorly in this regard.
- Large numbers of respondents gave low ratings to housing for young people (60%), shelters and housing for women and children fleeing violence (57%), and access to locally produced food (42%). In all of these cases, respondents from higher income brackets were more likely to rate Okotoks as doing either 'not very well' or 'poorly'.

**Figure 7-17 - How well these different aspects of *living* are being supported and promoted in Okotoks**



## 7.9 Social Wellness Component 7: Sense of Place

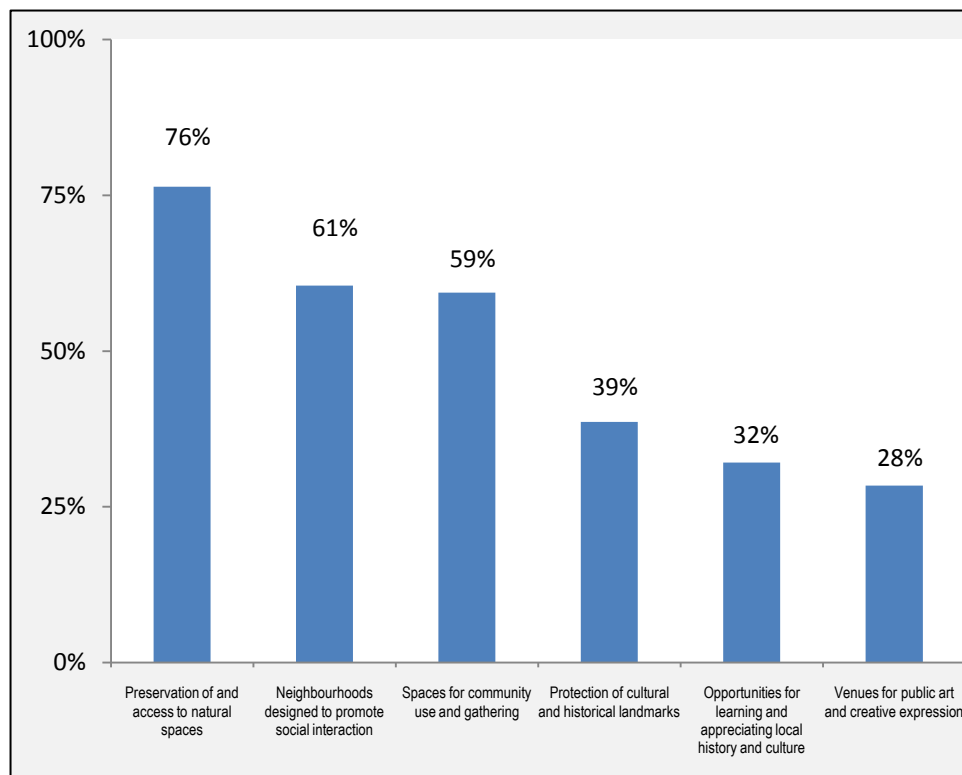
The survey asked that respondents choose the three aspects related to *sense of place* that they thought were most important to social wellness in Okotoks.

- A vast majority of respondents (76%) named the preservation of and access to natural spaces as a priority. This was, however, deemed relatively less important by lower income respondents. Only 44% of those with incomes of less than \$20,000 chose this as among the most important aspects of sense of place.
- Neighbourhoods designed to promote social interaction (61%) and spaces for community use and gathering (50%) were commonly identified as important. Younger respondents were considerably more likely to select neighbourhoods designed to promote social interaction: 70% of those 20-44 years.
- The top three aspects stood above the next three choices, protection of cultural and historical landmarks (39%), opportunities for learning

and appreciating local history and culture (32%), and venues for public art and creative expression (28%).

- Venues for public art and creative expression and opportunities for learning and appreciating local history and culture were both seen as particularly important among lower income respondents (44% and 56% of respondents with incomes of less than \$20,000 indicated these as most important). In contrast, higher income residents deemed spaces for community use and gathering as more important.
- Opportunities for learning and appreciating local history and culture was more commonly deemed as important by older respondents: 42% of those 65 years and older.

**Figure 7-18 - Aspects of *sense of place* seen to be most important to the social wellness of Okotoks**



There was not a strong correlation between the aspects of *sense of place* identified as important and the ratings of performance indicated by respondents.

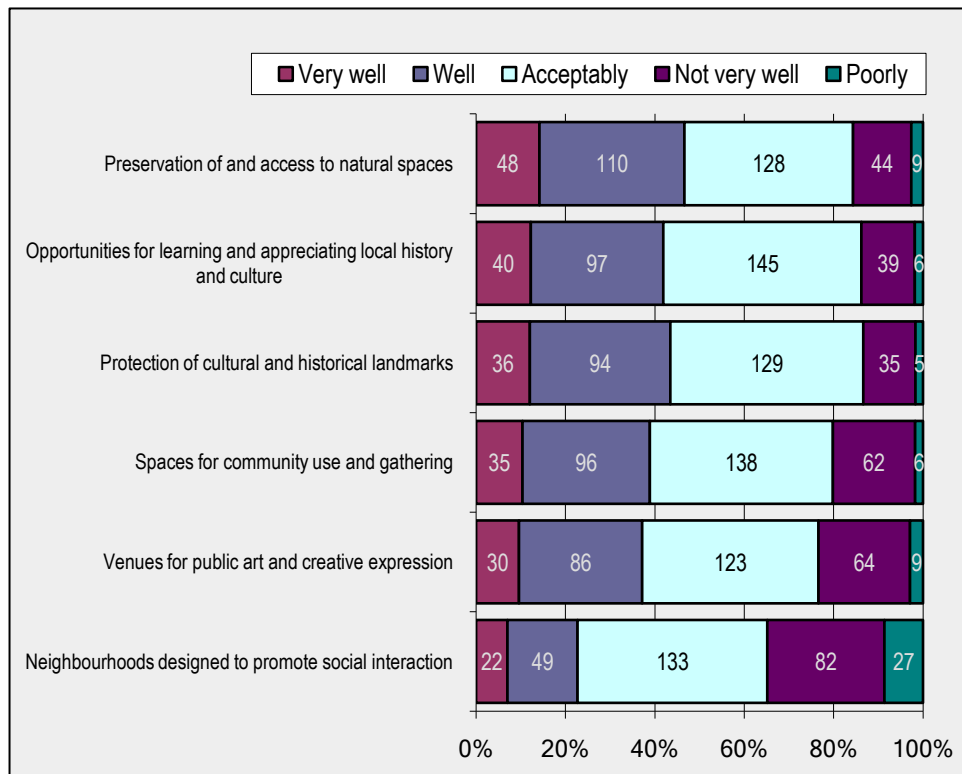
- 47% of respondents indicated that Okotoks was doing ‘very well’ or ‘well’ in the area of preservation of and access to natural spaces,



while 38% said the same thing with regard to spaces for community use and gathering. In both cases, respondents aged 65 years and older were more likely than younger respondents to give Okotoks higher ratings in these areas.

- On the other hand, 35% of survey respondents indicated that Okotoks is doing ‘not very well’ or ‘poorly’ on the second highest priority, neighbourhoods designed to promote social interaction, while only 23% gave this aspect a rating of ‘very well’ or ‘well’.
- Other areas where the town received positive ratings were protection of cultural and historical landmarks (43%), opportunities for learning and appreciating local history and culture (42%), and venues for public art and creative expression (37%).

**Figure 7-19 - How well these different aspects of *sense of place* are being supported and promoted in Okotoks**



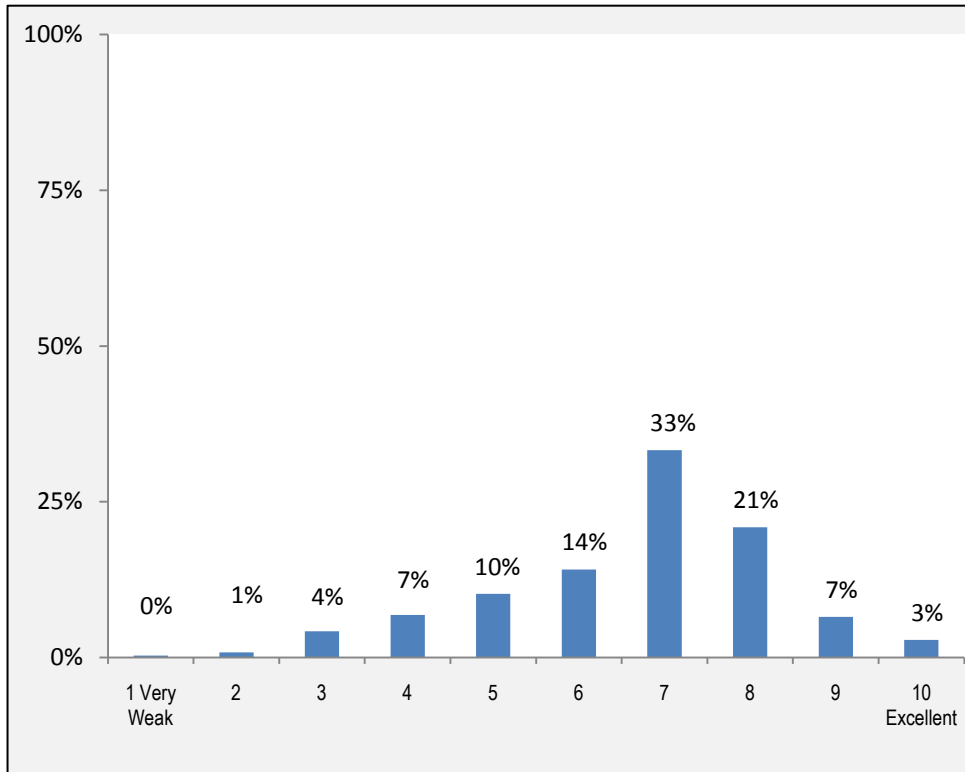
## 7.10 Overall Rating of Social Wellness

Respondents were then asked to consider all seven components of social wellness and give Okotoks an overall social wellness ranking on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is very weak and 10 is excellent.

A strong majority of respondents expressed strong overall satisfaction with the components of social wellness in Okotoks.

- 64% of respondents gave Okotoks a ranking of 7 or higher.
- Only 12% of respondents gave the town a ranking between 1 and 4.
- 24% of respondents chose the middle ground, giving Okotoks a ranking 5 or 6.
- Encouragingly, respondents in the lowest income groups were the most likely to give Okotoks the highest ratings with respect to overall social wellness. 28% of respondents in the less than \$20,000 income bracket and 19% of those in the \$20,000-\$39,999 gave Okotoks either a 9 or 10 out of 10.
- Older respondents were also more likely to give Okotoks higher ratings for overall social wellness. 54% of respondents 65 years and older gave Okotoks ratings of 8, 9 or 10, as compared to only 30% of those 20-44 years and 27% of those 45 to 64.

Figure 7-20 - Ten Point Scale Ratings of Social Wellness in Okotoks





## 8. Okotoks Youth Social Wellness Survey

The aim of the Okotoks Youth Social Wellness Survey was to gain a perspective from youth ages 13 to 19 on the seven components of social wellness. The survey asked youth to rate Okotoks on each component and then to give the town an overall rating.

### 8.1 Synopsis

A majority of youth gave Okotoks a positive rating (rating 4 and 5) as a place to learn (72%) and to live (66%). They also gave Okotoks a strong positive rating for creating a sense of place for youth (64%).

The components of social wellness that youth felt most negatively about (rating 1 and 2 ) were moving (25% negative), working (24% negative), and engaging (24% negative).

### 8.2 Respondent Profile

164 youth between the ages of 13 and 19 completed the survey. The largest number of respondents were 13 years of age, with 16 and 17 year olds comprising the next largest groups. Of the youth respondents, 60% were female, while 40% were male.

With regard to time living in Okotoks, the youth survey followed the same pattern as the adult survey. 12% of survey respondents indicated that they had lived in Okotoks less than a year, while 34% indicated that they had lived in Okotoks from 1 to 5 years.

Figure 8-1 - Age profile of youth survey respondents

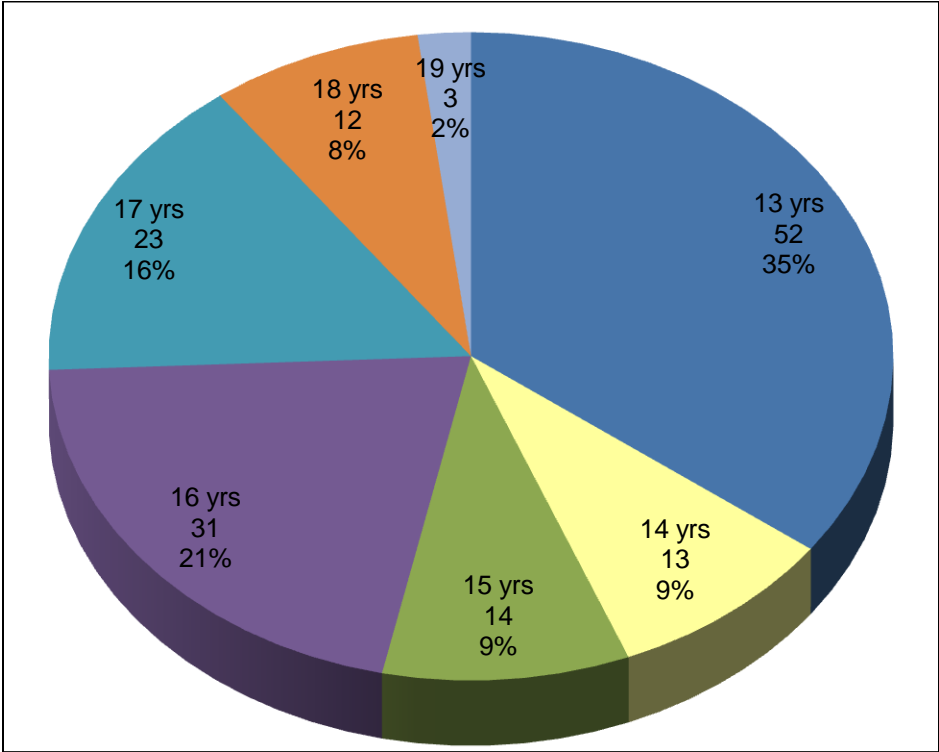
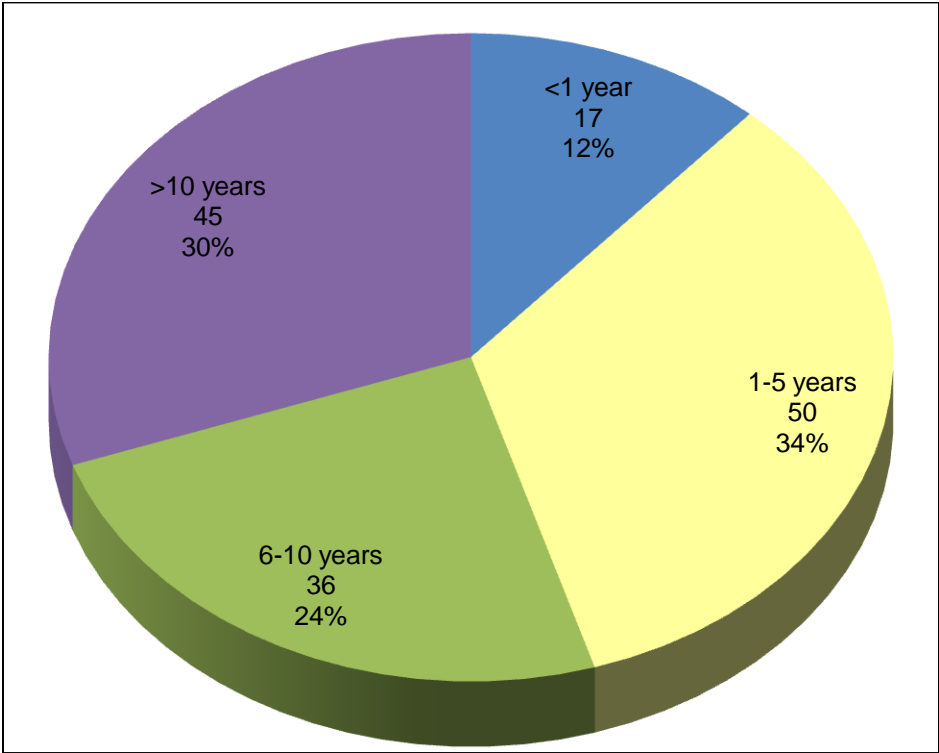


Figure 8-2 - Time living in Okotoks – youth survey

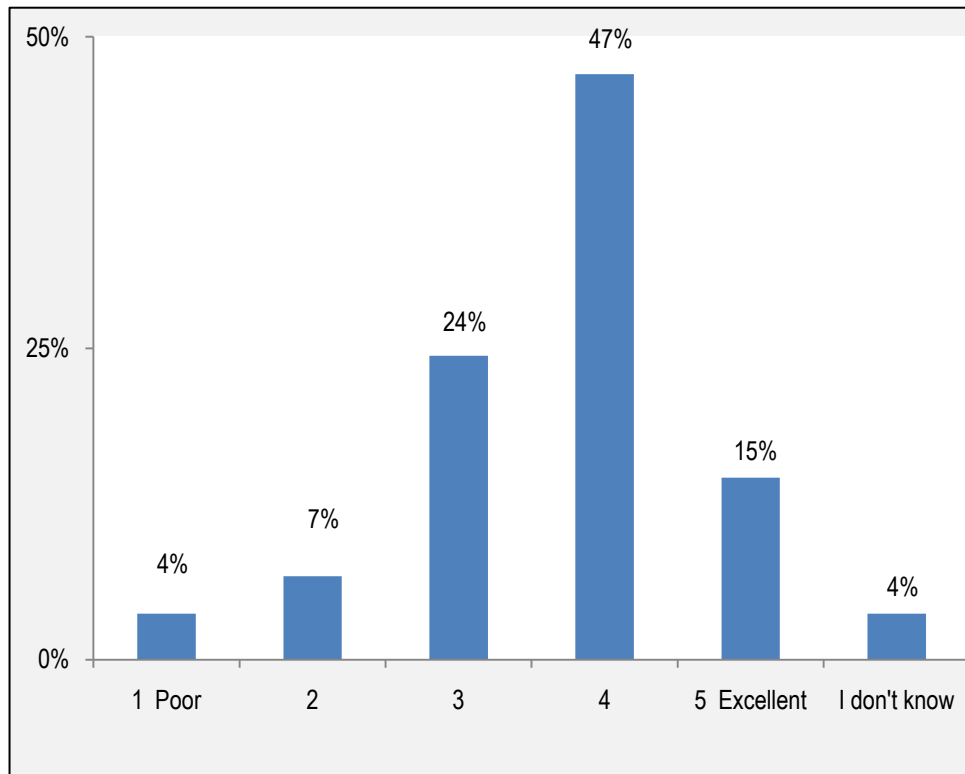


### 8.3 Social Wellness Component 1: Playing

The survey provided a context for thinking of Okotoks as a place to play, asking youth to think about the sport, recreation, cultural, and community programs and events available. Youth were then asked to rate Okotoks as a place to play for young people.

62% of respondents gave Okotoks a rating of 4 or 5 (positive ratings) as a place to play for youth. Only 11% expressed gave Okotoks a negative rating (rating 1 and 2). *Playing* was tied with *Learning* in registering the lowest level of negative ratings in the youth survey.

Figure 8-3 - Ratings of Okotoks as a place to play for youth

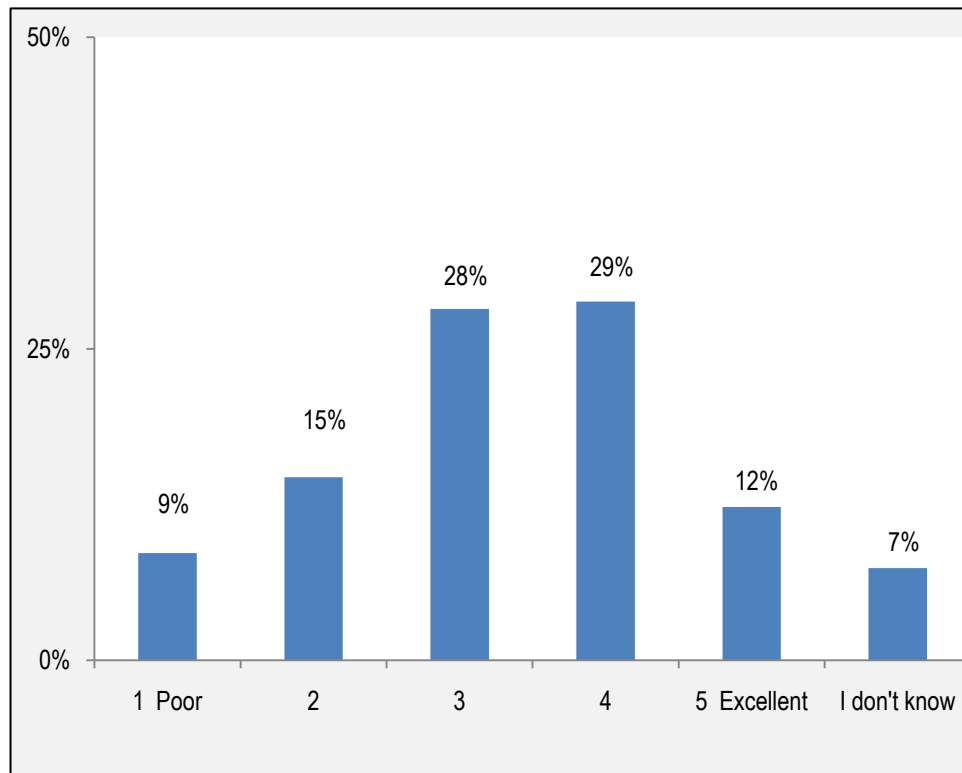


## 8.4 Social Wellness Component 2: Working

The survey provided a context for thinking of Okotoks as a place to work, asking youth to consider the job and volunteer opportunities available to them as students and after graduation. They were also encouraged to reflect on the quality of positions available, considering factors such as potential for career advancement and salary. Youth were then asked to rate Okotoks as a place to work for young people.

Okotoks received a positive rating (rating 4 and 5) from 41% of survey respondents as a place to work for youth. Fully 24% gave Okotoks a negative rating (rating 1 and 2). This was the second highest negative rating in the youth survey. A large number of youth (28%) selected the middle position, indicating that they feel that the town is doing neither well or poorly in this regard.

Figure 8-4 - Ratings of Okotoks as a place to work for youth



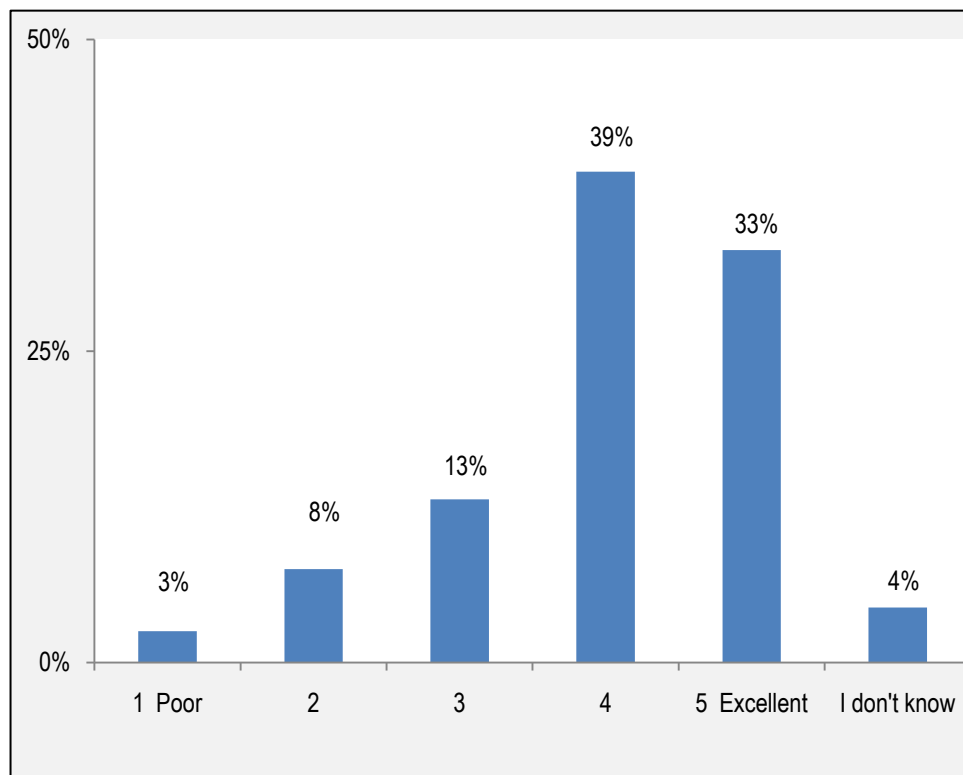


## 8.5 Social Wellness Component 3: Learning

The survey provided a context for thinking of Okotoks as a place to learn, asking youth to think about their school, the public library, learning programs, and opportunities for college and university. Youth were then asked to rate Okotoks as a place to learn for young people.

Fully 72% of respondents gave the town a positive rating (rating 4 and 5) as a place to learn for youth. This was the highest positive rating in the youth survey. Only 11% expressed gave Okotoks a negative rating (rating 1 and 2). *Learning* was tied with *Playing* in registering the lowest level of negative ratings in the youth survey.

Figure 8-5 - Ratings of Okotoks as a place to learn for youth

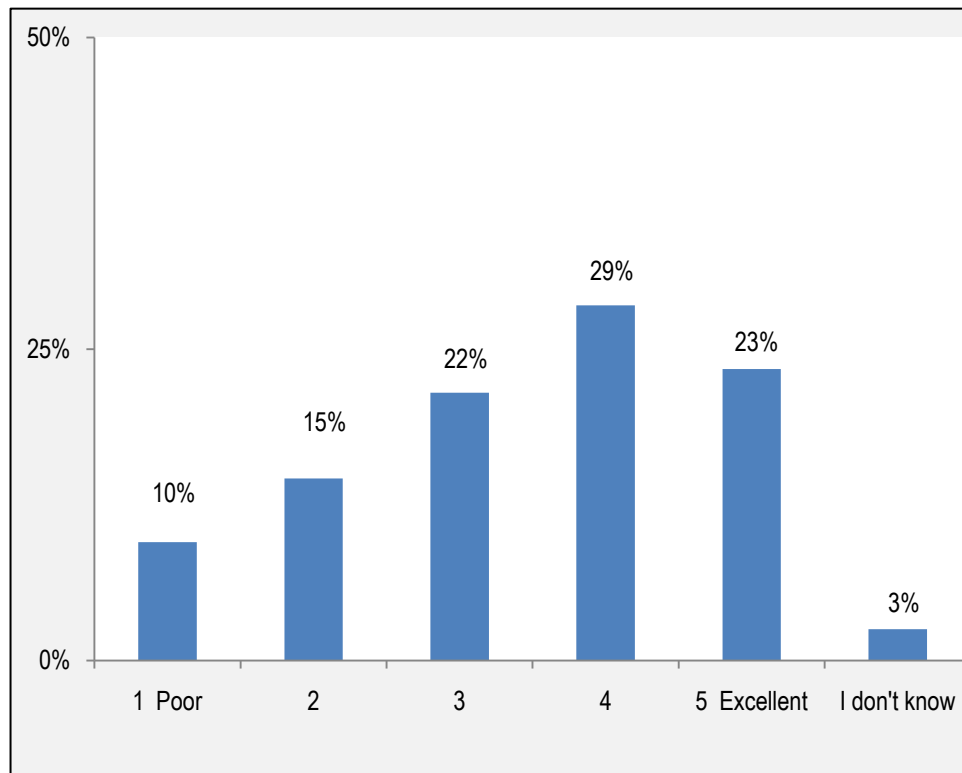


## 8.6 Social Wellness Component 4: Moving

The survey provided a context for thinking of Okotoks as a place to get around, asking youth to consider the road system, the availability of public transit, and bicycle and walking paths. Youth were then asked to rate Okotoks as a place to get around for young people.

52% of respondents gave Okotoks a rating of 4 and 5 (positive rating) as a place to get around for youth. Fully 25% gave the town a negative rating. This was the highest negative rating in the youth survey. A large number of youth (22%) selected the middle position, indicating that they feel that the town is doing neither well or poorly.

Figure 8-6 - Ratings of Okotoks as a place to get around for youth

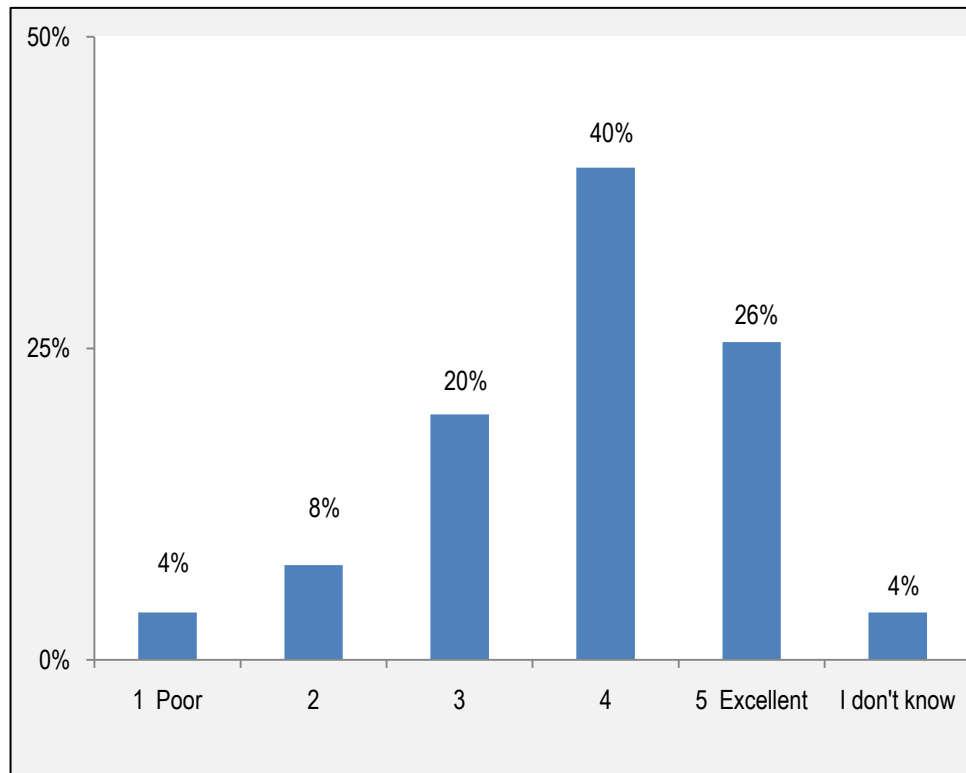


## 8.7 Social Wellness Component 5: Living

The survey provided a context for thinking of Okotoks as a place to live, asking youth to consider whether there are things to do, services provided and places to live for young people in Okotoks. Youth were then asked to rate Okotoks as a place to live for young people.

66% of respondents gave Okotoks a rating of 4 and 5 (positive ranking) as a place to live for youth. Only 12% gave the town a negative rating.

**Figure 8-7 - Ratings of Okotoks as a place to live for young people**

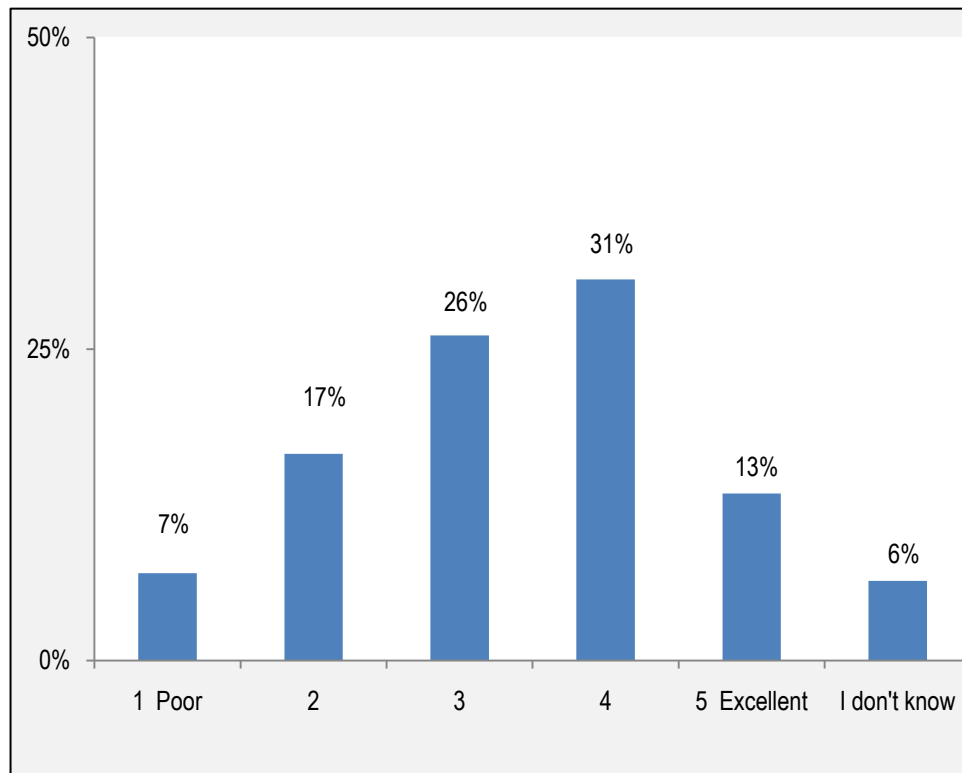


## 8.8 Social Wellness Component 6: Engaging

The survey provided a context for thinking of Okotoks as a place to be involved, asking youth to consider whether there are opportunities to join groups and organizations, participate in planning and organizing community events and have a say in issues that matter to youth. Youth were then asked to rate Okotoks as a place to be involved for young people.

The town received a positive rating (rating 4 and 5) on this question from 44% of respondents. Fully 24% registered a negative rating. A large number of youth (26%) selected the middle position, indicating that they feel that Okotoks is doing neither well or poorly in this area.

Figure 8-8 - Ratings of Okotoks as a place to be involved for youth

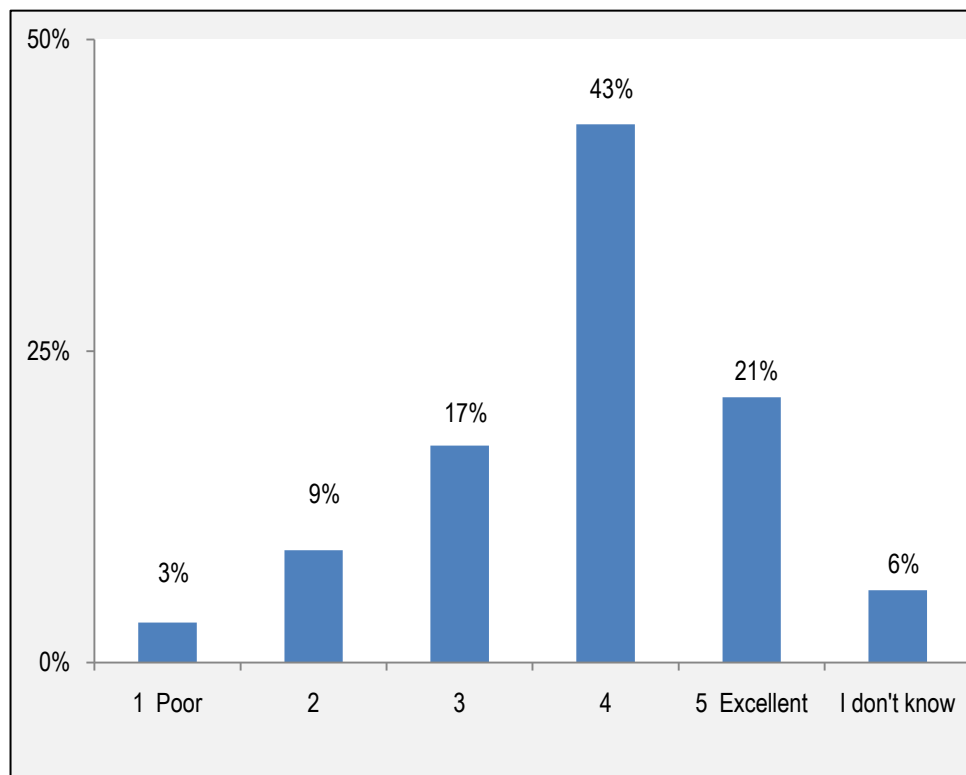


## 8.9 Social Wellness Component 7: Sense of Place

The survey provided a context for thinking about sense of place in Okotoks. They were encouraged to consider the places and spaces that they feel attached to or where they just hang out. They were also asked to reflect on community facilities such as the recreation centre, art gallery, museum, and parks. Youth were then asked to rate the places and spaces in Okotoks from a youth perspective.

Okotoks received a positive rating (rating 4 and 5) on this question from 64% of youth respondents. Only 12% gave the town a negative rating on this aspect of social wellness.

Figure 8-9 - Ratings of the physical aspects of Okotoks



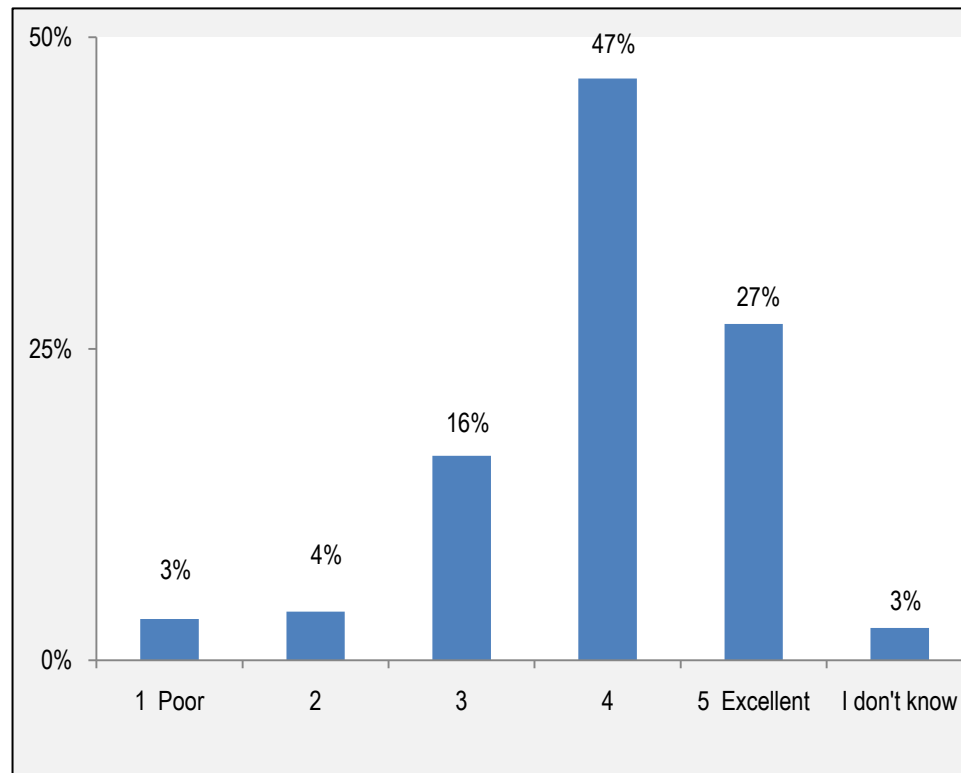
## 8.10 Overall Rating of Social Wellness

Respondents were then asked to consider all seven components of social wellness and give Okotoks an overall social wellness ranking on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is 'poor' and 5 is 'excellent'.

The vast majority of youth respondents expressed strong overall satisfaction with the components of social wellness in Okotoks.

- 74% of respondents gave Okotoks a ranking of 4 or 5.
- Only 7% of respondents gave the town a ranking of 1 or 2.
- 16% of respondents chose the middle ground, giving Okotoks a ranking a 3.
- 15 year olds were the most likely to give Okotoks a rating of 4 or 5: 86%. In contrast, only 58% of 16 year old respondents gave the town these top ratings.

Figure 8-10 - Overall ratings of social wellness by youth



## 9. Programs and Services in Okotoks

A key component of the project was to review and analyze the current program and service delivery model in light of demand. To this end, a program and service inventory was conducted with the objective of establishing a snapshot of the type and number of programs and services offered. The inventory identified the following:

- The number of programs and services by type;
- The type and number of programs by age group;
- The type and number of programs by identified target group; and
- The nature and extent of unmet demand for programs and services.

The inventory also identified the number of programs that are available at no cost as compared with programs that have a cost attached, as well as the number of organizations that offer opportunities to volunteer.

### 9.1 Synopsis

The inventory identified 532 programs and services related to community social wellness offered in Okotoks. The analysis of the inventory data indicates that generally speaking there is a very good fit between program and service offerings and demand in Okotoks.

- For 57% of the programs and services offered, enrolment always matches space available.
- 9 programs and services (2%), reported that they are always over-subscribed, which would indicate a service gap in these areas. These are seniors housing (Sandstone Lodge), Victim Services, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Language Therapy, minor hockey, volleyball, all-nighters hockey and Beerwolves hockey.
- 43 programs and services (10%), reported that they are sometimes over-subscribed, which would indicate that additional programs and services in these areas may be warranted. Fully 67% of the programs

and services in this category were recreation programs targeted to preschool children.

- The inventory identified a total of 106 programs and services targeted to one of the identified population groups. This accounts for 20% of the total program and service offerings in Okotoks. Of these programs and services, 3 are always over-subscribed and a further 8 are sometimes over-subscribed.

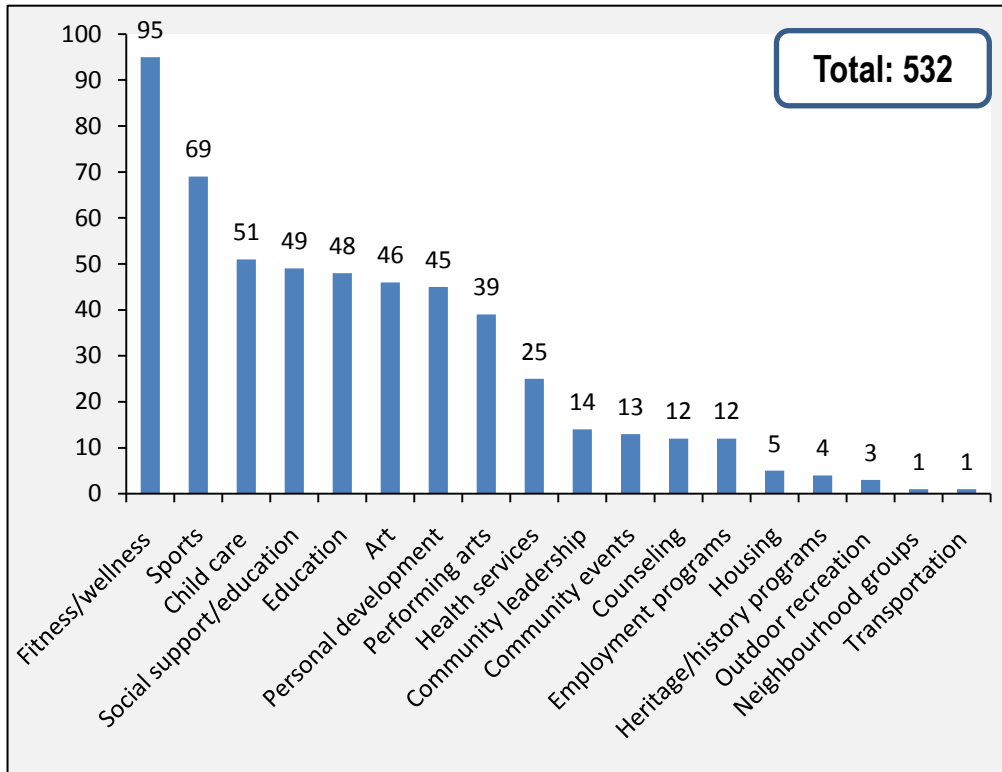
## 9.2 Program and Service Type

The inventory identified a total of 532 programs and services in Okotoks. Not surprisingly, the categories with the largest number of programs or services are those that are fairly universal in the appeal and use. The categories with the smallest number of programs and services are those that are targeted to very specific groups and needs.

- The largest number of programs (95) fell into the fitness and wellness category, followed by sports programs (69).
- The next six programs on the list were fairly close in number: child care (51), social support/education (49), education (48), art (45), personal development (45), and performing arts (39).
- There is a significant drop between performing arts (39) and health services (25); however, the next four programs and services on the list are, again, fairly close in number: community leadership (14), community events (13), counseling (12), and employment programs (12).
- The following categories had the smallest number of programs: housing (5), heritage/history programs (4), outdoor recreation (3), neighbourhood groups (1), and transportation (1).



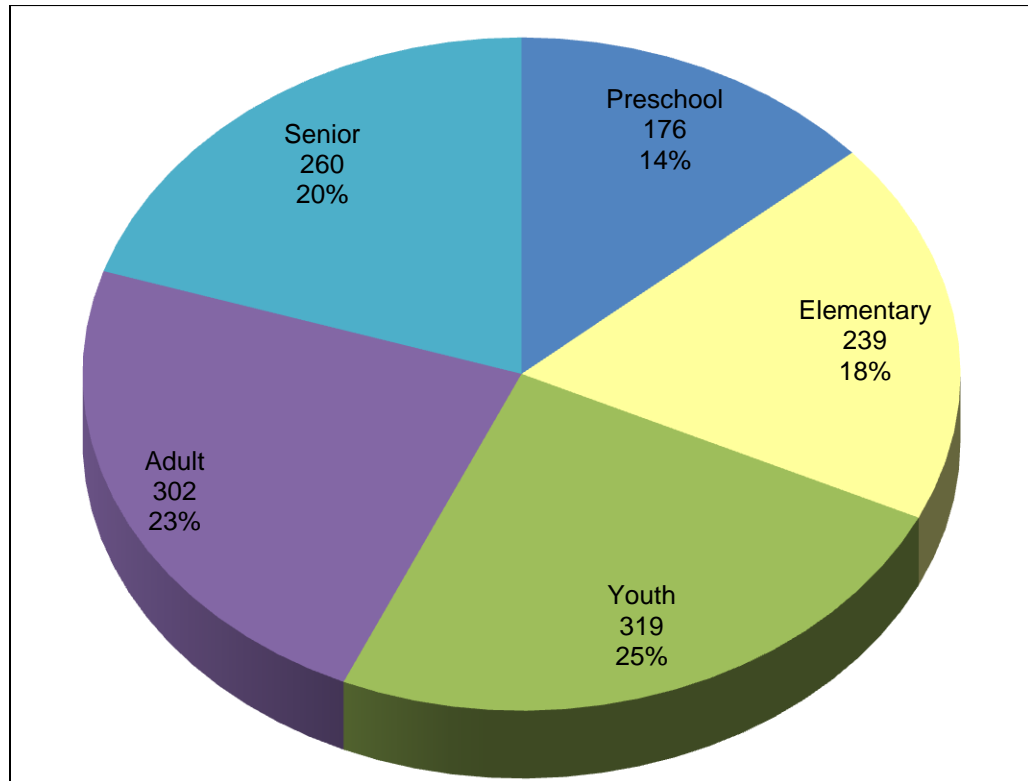
Figure 9-1 - Total programs by service type



### 9.3 Programs by Age Group

The inventory identified the number and type of programs and services by age group.

Figure 9-2 - Programs by age group



#### 9.3.1 Preschool Age Children

There are a total of 176 programs and services in Okotoks targeted to the preschool age group; this accounts for 14% of all programs and services.

- The largest number of programs and services (50) fell into the child care category, 30 were sports programs, 23 were social support/education programs and services and 20 were health services.
- Other programs and services fell into the following categories: performing arts (14), community events (9), education (8), counseling (7), art (7), community leadership (3), fitness/wellness (2), and

housing, heritage/history programs and personal development (1 program each).

### 9.3.2 Elementary School Age Children

A total of 239 programs and services in Okotoks are targeted to the elementary school age group, which accounts for 18% of all programs and services.

- 50 programs and services fell into the sports category, 44 into child care, 31 into performing arts and 20 into the arts category.
- Other programs and services fell into the following categories: health services (15), social support/education (12), personal development (12), community events (8), community leadership (8), counseling (7), fitness/wellness (4), heritage/history programs (2), outdoor recreation (2), and housing (1).

### 9.3.3 Youth

There are a total of 319 programs and services in Okotoks targeted to the youth age group; this accounts for 25% of all programs and services.

- Almost one-third of the programs and services for this age category (93) fell into the fitness/wellness category, while 37 were classified as personal development, 35 as sports, 33 as education, 24 as art and 23 as health services.
- Other programs and services fell into the following categories: social support/education (18), performing arts (15), counseling (11), community events (10), community leadership (8), employment programs (5), heritage/history programs (2), outdoor recreation (2), and housing, child care and transportation (1 program each).

### 9.3.4 Adult

A total of 302 programs and services in Okotoks are targeted to the adult age group, which accounts for 23% of all programs and services.

- Close to one-third of the programs and services (93) fell into the fitness/wellness category; 34 programs and services fell into the social support/education category, 34 into education, and 32 into personal development.
- Three categories form the next cluster: health services (20), sports (18) and art (18).

- Other programs and services fell into the following categories: counseling (11), employment programs (10), community leadership (10), performing arts (4), housing (3), heritage/history programs (2), outdoor recreation (2) and neighbourhood groups, child care and transportation (1 program each).

### 9.3.5 Seniors

There are a total of 260 programs and services in Okotoks targeted to the seniors' age group; this accounts for 20% of all programs and services.

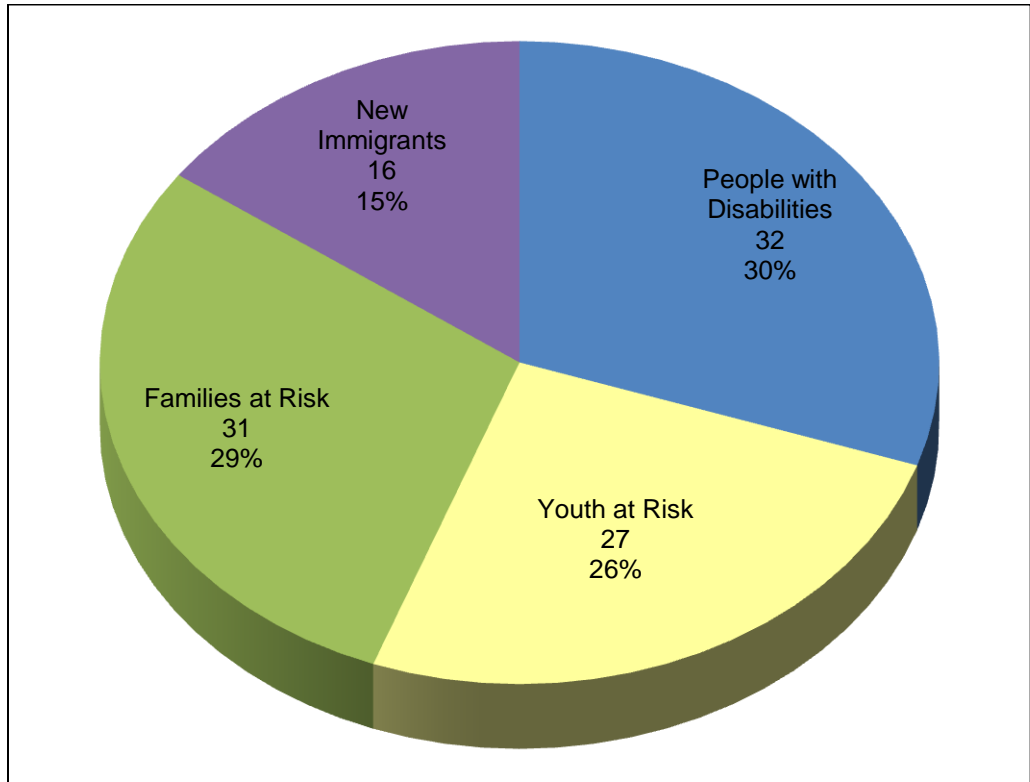
- More than one-third of the programs and services for this age category (94) fell into the fitness/wellness category, while 32 were classified as personal development, 29 as education, 21 as social support/education, 16 as art, 15 as sports, and 12 as health services.
- Other programs and services fell into the following categories: employment programs (9), community events (9), counseling (8), community leadership (5), housing (3), heritage/history programs (2), outdoor recreation (2), performing arts, neighbourhood groups and transportation (1 program each).

## 9.4 Programs by Identified Target Population Group

In earlier research conducted by the Okotoks United Way Partnership, four population groups were identified as being at higher risk: people with disabilities, youth at risk, families at risk, and new immigrants. Based on that identification, the inventory queried service providers about programs and services targeted specifically to those groups.

The inventory identified a total of 106 programs and services targeted to one of the four identified population groups. This accounts for 20% of the total program and service offerings in Okotoks. Of these programs and services, 3 are always over-subscribed and a further 8 are sometimes over-subscribed. Keeping in mind that some of the programs serve more than one identified target population, 8 of the over-subscribed programs serve families, 4 serve people with disabilities, and 2 each serve youth and new immigrants.

Figure 9-3 - Programs by target group



#### 9.4.1 People with Disabilities

There are a total of 32 programs and services in Okotoks targeted to people with disabilities, accounting for 25% of all programs and services targeted to identified populations.

- Of these programs and services, 8 fell into the health services category, 7 were employment programs, 5 fell under social support/education, 4 were education programs and services, and 2 were counseling services. The housing, fitness/wellness, community leadership, personal development, child care and transportation categories had one program each.
- 3 of the health services for people with disabilities are always over-subscribed: Speech Language Services, Occupational Therapy Services and Physical Therapy Services.

### 9.4.2 Families at Risk

There are a total of 31 programs and services in Okotoks targeted to families at risk, which accounts for 29% of all programs and services targeted to identified populations.

- Of these programs and services, 9 fell into the social support/education category, 7 were counseling services, 7 were health services, and 3 were education programs. There was 1 program in each of the following categories: housing, employment programs, fitness/wellness, personal development and child care.
- 8 of the programs and services for families at risk are sometimes over-subscribed: First Years for Families, Rowan House Emergency Shelter, Rowan House Outreach, Back to School Funding, Adopt a Family (Christmas), Summer Camp Registration, Youth Addiction Services, and Addictions and Community Mental Health Services.

### 9.4.3 Youth at Risk

In Okotoks, there are a total of 27 programs and services targeted to youth at risk, accounting for 26% of all programs and services targeted to identified populations.

- The programs and services identified fell into the following categories: health services (6), employment programs (6), counseling (5), education (4), and social support/education (2). There was 1 program in each of the following categories: housing, outdoor recreation, fitness/wellness and child care.
- 2 of the health services for youth at risk are sometimes over-subscribed: Youth Addiction Services, and Addictions and Community Mental Health Services.

### 9.4.4 New Immigrants

In Okotoks, there are a total of 16 programs and services targeted to new immigrants, which accounts for 15% of all programs and services targeted to identified populations.

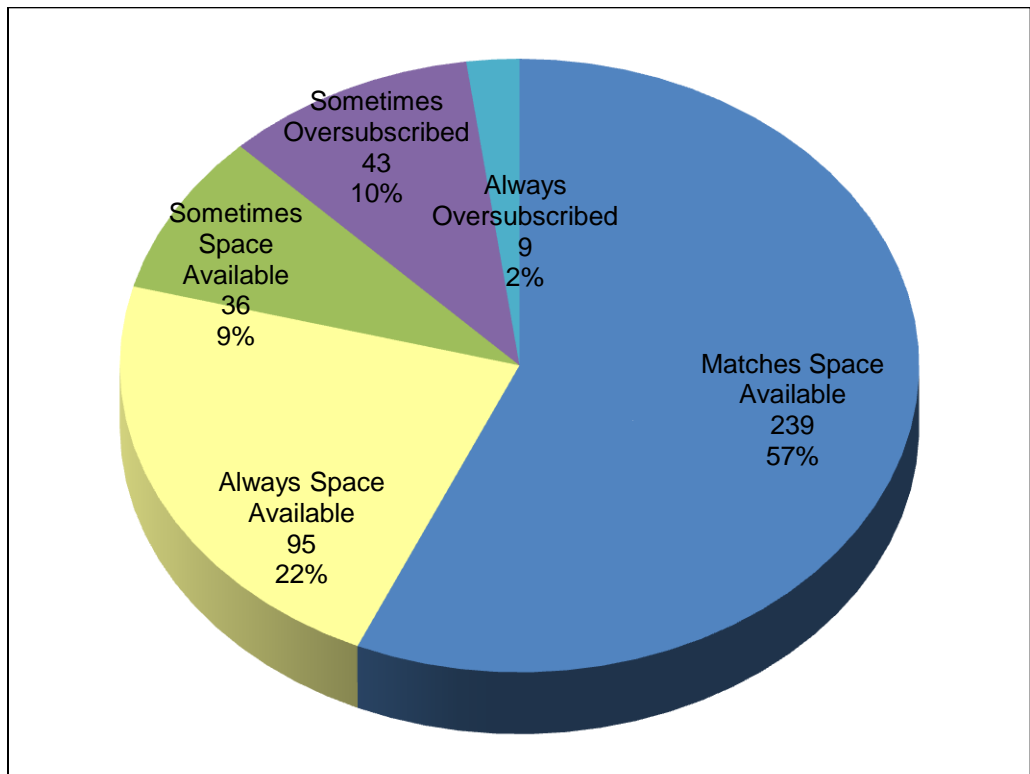
- The programs and services identified fell into the following categories: health services (4), education (4), employment programs (3), counseling (2), social support/education (2) and personal development (1).

- 2 of the programs and services for new immigrants are sometimes over-subscribed: Adopt a Family (Christmas), and Addictions and Community Mental Health Services.

## 9.5 Programs and Services by Enrolment

The inventory queried service providers about how well the enrolment in their programs and services matches the number of spaces available. The objective was to identify potential unmet needs and program and service gaps.

Figure 9-4 - Programs by enrollment



### 9.5.1 Enrolment Matches Space Available

For 57% of the programs and services in Okotoks (239 of 532 programs and services) enrolment matches the space available.

- 89 of these programs are in the fitness/wellness category, 44 in personal development, 39 in art, 34 in education, 34 in child care, 31 in performing arts and 29 in sports.
- Other categories that registered programs and services where enrolment matches spaces available were community events (9), counseling (3), health services (2), community leadership (2), employment programs (1) and heritage and history programs (1).

### 9.5.2 Always Space Available

For 22% of the programs and services in Okotoks (95 of 532 programs and services), enrolment is always below the spaces available.

- 25 of these programs are in the social support/education category, while 16 are in health services, 14 in sports and 10 in community leadership.
- Other categories that registered programs and services that always have space available were employment programs (5), education (5), fitness/wellness (4), community events (4), counseling (3), heritage and history programs (2), and outdoor recreation, performing arts, art and neighbourhood groups at 1 each.

### 9.5.3 Sometimes Over-Subscribed

43 of the 532 programs and services in Okotoks (10%) are sometimes over-subscribed.

- 14 of these are in the child care category, 10 in sports, and 4 each in counseling and performing arts, 3 each in social support and art, 2 each in housing and outdoor recreation and 1 in fitness/wellness.
- 29 of the 43 programs and services in this category (67%) are targeted to preschoolers.
- Of the 10 sport programs in the sometimes over-subscribed category, 8 are targeted to preschoolers; only 2 are targeted to other age groups, soccer and fencing.

### 9.5.4 Sometimes Space Available

For 9% of the programs and services in Okotoks (36 of the 532 programs), enrolment is sometimes below the spaces available.

- 13 of these programs are in the sports category and 4 in the employment programs category.



- A number of categories had fewer than 4 programs that sometime have space available: social support/education and performing arts categories had 3 each; housing, art, community leadership and education had 2 each; and counselling, fitness/wellness, personal development, child care and transportation categories had 1 each.

### 9.5.5 Always Over-Subscribed

Only 9 programs out of 532 (2%) are always over-subscribed.

- 4 of these are in the sports category: minor hockey, volleyball, all-nighters hockey and Beerwolves hockey.
- 3 are in the health services category: Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Speech Language Services.
- 1 is in the housing category, Sandstone Lodge; and 1 is in the counselling category, Victims Services.

## 9.6 Cost or Free-of-Charge

The inventory asked service providers whether their programs involved a cost or fee for the user or whether they were free-of-charge. The responses determined that 77% of programs and services have a cost attached for the user; 33% are free of charge. The vast majority of recreation, sport and culture programs are fee based. The free-of-charge programs and services are primarily in the health and counseling fields.

## 9.7 Opportunities for Volunteering

The inventory asked service providers whether their organization accommodated opportunities for volunteer involvement. From the responses it was discovered that 82% of the organizations responding to the inventory offer opportunities for volunteering; 18% do not.



## 10. Focus Group Consultations

As part of the research for the Okotoks Social Wellness Framework, nine focus groups were held with a broad cross-section of residents including: youth, young families, seniors, the business community and new immigrants. A number of the focus group participants were from groups considered to be at risk.

The focus groups concentrated on learning more about the participants' lived experience of Okotoks. Participants discussed questions regarding social wellness values, as well as program and service delivery in Okotoks.

As would be expected, the participants' length of residency in Okotoks varied widely; from over 60 years to less than 12 months. As a result, much was learned about the perception of change in the community.

The input from the focus groups was analyzed to identify the perceptions, experience and opinions related to the seven components of social wellness.

### 10.1 Synopsis

The analysis of the focus group consultations revealed that, overall, participants generally feel that Okotoks is a very good place to live. There was strong validation for the following aspects of life in Okotoks:

- The wide range of recreation and sports programs and facilities available;
- The quality of schools;
- The trail and pathway system;
- The volunteer program; and
- Neighbourhood parks.

Focus group participants also expressed a number of concerns with regard to aspects of life in Okotoks, of which the following were most widely held:

- Enhancing youth engagement;
- Lack of career and professional job opportunities;
- Absence of public transportation;

- Need for a broader range of housing options (i.e. for seniors, young adults and low-income residents); and
- Need to work on the viability of the downtown core.

People also commented on the degree of neighbourliness in Okotoks, however, opinion on this matter was split between those who find the community very neighbourly and those who do not.

## 10.2 Social Wellness Component 1: Playing

In all focus groups, access to leisure activities was seen as very important. The quality of programming and facilities was strongly linked to the quality of community life in Okotoks across all age groups.

There was a high level of support and praise for the recreation and sports programming available in Okotoks, and there was a general sense that the programs and facilities are popular and well-used. In fact, a number of participants felt that the Okotoks Recreation Centre had become a community 'hub'. There were however, a few concerns and issues expressed with regard to recreation and sports:

- The cost to participate in programs and use facilities is a barrier for many. This is especially true for larger families and those who work in lower-paying jobs or who are on fixed incomes.
- Most recreation and sports programs are located at the Recreation Centre, which creates a transportation issue for many seniors and some families. For seniors, the issue emerges when they no longer feel comfortable driving in winter or at night, or when they lose their drivers licence. For many families, the transportation issue arises because both parents work, and are therefore unable to drive children to and from the Centre. Many focus group participants who saw this as a concern suggested that programming be distributed around the community or supported the introduction of public transit as a way of addressing the larger issue of transportation in the community.
- Several parents of young children expressed frustration with the enrolment policies and procedures for sports and recreation,

indicating that they had experienced being turned away because the program was full and later discovered that children from out of town were participating. These parents also felt that out-of-town residents should be charged higher fees to participate in programs and use facilities because they do not contribute to the tax base. These parents would like to see enrolment limited to Okotoks residents only for a longer period of time and consideration given to a two-tiered pricing structure.

Arts and culture programming was also seen as an important component of community leisure programming. There was praise for the programming and facilities that do exist, but people also suggested that this area needs to be strengthened and expanded. It was interesting to note that several people in the focus groups admitted that they really do not have a sense of what is offered in Okotoks in terms of arts and culture programming. Most felt that given a choice between enrolling in a sports program or in an arts and culture program most children and parents would choose sports. And while they might also wish to participate in arts and culture, if cost is an issue, this is the area that will be dropped.

There was strong support across all focus groups for making youth engagement in leisure programming a priority. Keeping youth engaged in leisure activities, including sports, recreation, arts and culture was seen as being good for the community, the family and the youth.

### **10.3 Social Wellness Component 2: Working**

Focus group participants expressed a number of concerns regarding Okotoks as a place to work. One of the most significant was the lack of professional and career-oriented businesses and job opportunities in Okotoks. Firms operating in fields such as engineering, design, accounting, law and consulting are almost non-existent. For these jobs, people must commute to Calgary. In fact, most people described the employment opportunities available in Okotoks as low-paying service and retail jobs; the exceptions being positions in the health, education and government sectors. Several focus group participants wondered how the people who worked in the retail and service sectors could afford to live in Okotoks.

Youth participants echoed these concerns. When asked whether they see Okotoks as a good place to build a career, most said that they do not. Most see the jobs currently available to young people in Okotoks as being 'dead-end' positions. Many suggested that they might move back to Okotoks once they were married and had children, but young people seeking to build a career have to move away.

#### **10.4 Social Wellness Component 3: Learning**

Most focus group participants, including the youth participants, expressed a high level of satisfaction with the school system in Okotoks. That said, there was also a perception that the schools are overcrowded, which is a significant concern. Several people suggested that there needs to be better planning and collaboration between the Town of Okotoks and the Foothills School Division and the Christ the Redeemer Catholic School Division to ensure that the school capacity will be there as the Town expands.

A number of people suggested that Okotoks should place a priority on attracting a post-secondary institution to the community. Several suggested that young people might stay at home rather than leave Okotoks if this option were available. Others felt that this would be desirable in terms of meeting a need for professional and career training and lifelong learning. It was also recognized that a post-secondary institution would create stable and desirable jobs in Okotoks.

#### **10.5 Social Wellness Component 4: Moving**

Focus group participants expressed a high level of support and praise for the trail and pathway system in Okotoks. Almost all participants had used the system either on foot or on bicycle. The system was characterized as a multi-generational resource; and that people of all ages can feel safe.

Other aspects of moving around in Okotoks did not enjoy the same positive feedback. Many people commented on the rapidly increasing traffic congestion, particularly along Southridge Drive and around schools, which is having an impact on traffic and pedestrian safety. The completion of the new 32<sup>nd</sup> Street bridge crossing of the Sheep River is expected to relieve much of this problem.

Several people commented on the lack of public transit in Okotoks. This was a particular issue for seniors, youth and low-income residents, with seniors citing the cost (even with subsidy) and difficulty in scheduling the seniors' taxi service and youth focusing on the difficulty of getting around town in winter (in summer many youth use bicycles). There were a small number of participants who did not support the introduction of public transit in Okotoks, citing noise and pollution concerns.

Regular and affordable transportation to Calgary was raised as an issue. Some participants were concerned that if direct and efficient transportation was available, more people would want to move to Okotoks, which would turn Okotoks into a bedroom community. Others, particularly seniors and low-income residents, were in favour of such a service. Many of these individuals are faced with having to travel to Calgary relatively frequently for medical appointments, and find the current options expensive, inconvenient or both.

## 10.6 Social Wellness Component 5: Engaging

With respect to engaging, there was a strong emphasis across all focus groups on the importance of engaging youth. Many expressed concern that the high number of families in which both parents commute to Calgary would mean a growing number of 'latchkey' children, who they felt could be at greater risk for getting into trouble. Youth participants highlighted the need to offer programs that would be of interest to youth, and to remember that not all youth are into traditional sports and recreation. Examples of non-traditional programs that would be of interest were skateboard and BMX trick riding, hip hop dance and music, environmental stewardship, paintball or laser tag, and bungee jumping.

Several focus group participants mentioned volunteering as a way that many residents become engaged in the community. The Town of Okotoks volunteer program received praise from many participants who felt that, without this program, many community services, activities and events would not be possible.

A number of focus group participants also highlighted the high level of faith-based involvement in Okotoks and characterized this as a way that people become engaged in the community. There were also several mentions of the volunteer work that the faith communities in Okotoks undertake.

## **10.7 Social Wellness Component 6: Living**

There was strong agreement across all focus groups that Okotoks is a very good place to live. Participants cited the amenities available, the natural setting, and the friendliness of the people as key factors in this regard. People also feel that Okotoks is a safe place to live. The crime rate is low and the crime that does exist tends to be 'nuisance' crime that is often youth related: vandalism, excessive noise and bad behavior.

Focus group participants did, however, indicate that living in Okotoks does have challenges. Housing is a challenge for seniors, low-income residents and young adults not living at home. For seniors, the concern is the lack of seniors housing and housing with support and care services in Okotoks. There are long waiting lists at Sandstone Lodge and many people who need higher levels of care are forced to leave the community. For low-income residents and young adults the issue is the availability and cost of rental housing.

Another challenge identified was the lack of 'non-emergency' health services. Many participants, especially those who have moved to Okotoks recently, indicated that they have been unable to find a family physician in town. While the urgent care centre is seen as a great resource in an emergency, finding a general practitioner who can perform an annual physical and look after routine health needs has been impossible for many.

## **10.8 Social Wellness Component 7: Sense of Place**

With regard to aspects relating to a sense of place, focus group participants characterized the trail and path system and the neighbourhood parks as the primary determinants of sense of place in Okotoks. They spoke of neighbourhood parks as being places where they were most likely to bump into their neighbours. The fact that these parks are within easy walking distance of any home in the neighbourhood was seen to be important in



their success. With regard to the trail and path system, people spoke of how well the system fit with what they perceived as the community's values: access to Nature and the natural environment, health and wellness, and a commitment to being environmentally progressive.

Focus group participants also spoke of the feeling of neighbourliness in Okotoks as being important to the character of the community. In this regard, however, there was a mix of perceptions and opinions, many that could be traced to the length of time people had lived in Okotoks. For example, a number of long-time residents, people who have been in Okotoks more than 50 years, recalled a time when they would go shopping downtown and know the name of everyone they met on the street. Participants who have lived in Okotoks since before the rapid population growth spurt in the early part of the decade characterized Okotoks and their neighbourhood as friendly and close-knit. Several recent arrivals, however; people who have settled in the newer neighbourhoods, indicated that people in their areas are not connecting with one another. Many homes seem to be empty most of the day, people are not out on the front street on weekends and evenings, and no one seems to be making the first move to bring people together. Several indicated that they chose to move to Okotoks over other communities in and around Calgary because it had a reputation for neighbourliness, and had made a commitment to staying small, a reference to the population cap. A number of these people also indicated that the community's commitment to being environmentally responsible played a role in their decision to choose Okotoks.

Participants across several of the focus groups expressed concern about the future of downtown Okotoks. These people spoke of the negative impact a 'decaying or dead' downtown core can have on a community the size of Okotoks and the difficulty of turning this situation around once it had occurred. In their opinion, the large retailers that had settled on the other side of the river had contributed to the demise of mainstream retail in the downtown core, but they also felt that trying to compete with these stores would not be the approach to take. Instead, they hoped that the Town would develop an innovative and creative strategy to ensure that the downtown remained vital.



## 11. Research Findings

This section of the report presents the findings from the research conducted for this project. They were arrived at through an analysis and synthesis of the information gathered through the community consultation supplemented by the data collected in the environmental scan. The analysis was conducted to find common themes running throughout the research information and data. The synthesis was undertaken to identify connections between the themes. The findings identify the values and issues related to social wellness that emerged as being most important.

### 11.1.1 Sense of Community

People in Okotoks place a high value on a sense of community; in fact the sense of community in Okotoks was found to be at the heart of the town's identity.

This value emerged in several ways, for example the priority placed on: neighbourhood design, including the importance of neighbourhood parks and spaces for community use and gathering; opportunities to belong to community organizations and institutions; a wide range of sport and recreation programs available; opportunities for volunteering; community safety; community events and celebrations; and the commitment to remaining a small centre as expressed by the population cap.

Three aspects emerged as being central to creating a sense of community: community neighbourliness, preservation of and access to natural spaces and a vibrant downtown core.

People defined community neighbourliness as knowing and interacting with neighbours and other residents, and characterized it as a quality that fosters a sense of connection and belonging in the community. Access to natural spaces through the trail and path system was described as one of the best things about living in Okotoks, and people commented that these spaces are used by residents of all ages and from all neighbourhoods in town. People feel safe in these areas. With regard to the downtown core, people spoke of the importance of the area, but felt that it is not currently living up to its

potential as a community hub. They highlighted the success of Light Up Okotoks as an example of the potential, and indicated that more should be done to make it a destination for residents and visitors.

It is important to recognize that there is a strong possibility that Okotoks' image as a town where people will find a sense of community has become a market brand, drawing people to choose Okotoks as a place to live over other communities in and around Calgary. This, along with the commitment to environmentally sustainable practices has appealed to young families looking for a place to raise their children.

### **11.1.2 Children and Youth in Okotoks**

People in Okotoks place a high value on and are concerned about the children and youth in the community. By extension, this value also recognizes and concerns itself with the realities and challenges facing parents. While the community has done a great deal to provide opportunities for children and youth, it is an area that many people feel needs to be strengthened. Their hope is to see children and youth engaged in the community in ways that allow them to explore their interests and potential.

This value emerged in several ways, for example through the priority placed on: access to a quality school system; access to public libraries; locally delivered post-secondary education; opportunities for youth engagement; and opportunities to participate in a wide range of recreation, sport and cultural programs. There was also wide spread recognition of the issues and challenges related to children and youth such as the lack of affordable child care, public transportation, and jobs and housing for older youth and young adults, and the consequence of large numbers of disengaged youth, specifically youth nuisance crimes (e.g. vandalism, excessive noise). In terms of programs and services available for children and youth, the analysis of the inventory data identified a potential shortage of programs targeted to the preschool age group.

Placing more emphasis on children and youth fits with the demographic profile of the community; about 35% of the population is under 20 years old. Addressing the key aspects of social wellness for this segment of the population would also benefit their parents, a group that accounts for another large segment of the population.

### 11.1.3 Working and the Economy

People in Okotoks place a high value on and are concerned about aspects of working and the economy. This is a complex and multi-faceted issue that has an impact on many of the components of social wellness and is central to Okotoks' identity.

This value emerged in several ways, for example the priority placed on: local professional and career opportunities; employment opportunities for people with different skills and skill levels; and access to ongoing education, including post-secondary education, skills training, professional development and lifelong learning.

People in Okotoks, particularly those who have lived in the community for more than ten years, describe it as an independent community. In fact, there is strong concern and resistance in this group to the notion that Okotoks may be evolving into a bedroom community. For this group, one of the key differences between a bedroom community and an independent community is that the latter has a diverse economy and business sector; one that includes a strong professional and financial sector and a wide range of career-oriented job opportunities. An independent community is economically, professionally and academically vital. The economy of a bedroom community, on the other hand, was described as being dominated by the retail and service sectors, because commuters tend to conduct their business where they work, not where they live. The jobs available in a bedroom community are, therefore, predominantly low-paying positions that lack opportunities for career advancement.

Youth in Okotoks are particularly concerned about the availability of career-oriented positions. Most described the positions available in Okotoks as "low-paying, dead-end jobs". Many indicated that they expect have to leave Okotoks in order to pursue a career and that if and when they return to Okotoks, they would likely be working in Calgary.

Given these perceptions, it would be tempting to say that Okotoks has already become a bedroom community. If this is not the future vision, and many people said they hoped that it was not, then the first priority would be growth in the business sector, not in the residential sector.

#### 11.1.4 Cost of Living

Cost of living emerged fairly consistently as an issue and is a concern in Okotoks. Families and individuals struggling financially are not able to participate in the life of the community to the same degree as those who are not, which has an impact on the strength of the connection they have to the community, as well as their own health and wellbeing.

Cost of living emerged as an issue in several ways, for example the priority placed on free or no cost recreation, events and celebrations; fair wages sufficient to cover the cost of living; and availability of a range of housing options that are in keeping with household incomes. It was interesting to note that those with lower incomes were more likely to identify public transportation as an issue. In addition, those in the lowest income bracket were much more likely than other respondents to indicate that Okotoks is doing 'not very well' or 'poorly' in terms of access to a quality school system.

A first glance, this finding, that cost of living is an issue for households in Okotoks, would seem to be at odds with the statistics on income which place the median household income at \$77,438, \$13,650 above the provincial median, and the median individual income in Okotoks at \$31,318, \$9,802 above the provincial median. The community consultation, however, pointed to the costs of housing and commuting, as well as the higher than average number of children in each family as likely reasons for this apparent discrepancy. This means that many families in the community may struggle to enroll children in programs or take advantage of other opportunities for engagement that are available in Okotoks, as most of these have a cost attached. For lower-income families in the community, these considerations would be even more pronounced.

#### 11.1.5 Transportation

People in Okotoks recognize that the lack of public transportation is an issue. This issue is of greatest concern to seniors in the community, and is also a priority for low-income residents and youth. Even residents who are not directly impacted by the lack of public transportation recognize it as a concern for other groups in the community.

This issue emerged primarily through the concerns expressed about lack of transportation options and flexibility for seniors, those with mobility challenges, youth, and low-income residents. There was particular concern with the ability of seniors to travel to medical appointments in Okotoks and Calgary. There was also recognition that the lack of public transportation has an impact on youth, especially in winter, and may prevent those without a parent to provide transportation after school from participating in programs.

Transportation between Okotoks and Calgary, as well as other destinations in the surrounding area, while not a primary concern at this time, will undoubtedly become more of an issue over the next ten years. Currently, significantly more Okotoks residents work in Calgary and other surrounding municipalities than work in Okotoks, and the majority of commutes are more than 30 kilometres.

#### **11.1.6 Growth**

It is clear that Okotoks is at cross-roads. The town has grown phenomenally in the past decade, and as a result may be in danger of losing many of the characteristics that have defined the town as a desirable place to live, particularly the sense of community and the commitment to sustainability. How the town moves forward will have a significant impact in determining its future social wellness.

For some people, maintaining these characteristics is dependent on the population cap remaining in place. They feel that the absolute number of people living in Okotoks will determine its livability. These people also associate the population cap with Okotoks' commitment to environmental sustainability. Others believe that the town can maintain the sense of community and the commitment to sustainability and grow at the same time. This group of people generally believes that if Okotoks does not grow housing will be developed just beyond the town limits, and the people living in those developments will impact the quality of life in the town without being part of the town. Only a few participants indicated that the issue was not a concern for them.

Given the level of concern with the issue and the wide range of opinions expressed, this topic has the potential to be highly divisive and will likely capture public attention over the coming years.

### **11.1.7 Access to Health Services**

People in Okotoks place a high value on access to health services and support. While there is a sense that Okotoks is doing well on this aspect of social wellness, a few areas of concern did emerge.

The program and service inventory revealed that there is insufficient capacity in five health service areas, all serving vulnerable populations. In addition, input from the community consultation would suggest that there is a shortage of general practitioners in Okotoks, which has made it difficult for new residents to find a physician.

### **11.1.8 Seniors in Okotoks**

The concerns and issues facing seniors in Okotoks emerged primarily from seniors themselves; very few of their concerns were rated as important for the community at large. That said, their perspectives and issues are important as many people in the 20-64 year old age group are heavily vested in Okotoks and will likely wish to remain in town after they retire.

The two most pressing challenges facing seniors in Okotoks are housing and transportation. With regard to housing, the critical issue is the availability of housing with support options included. Currently, Sandstone Lodge is the only seniors' residence that provides support services, and it is always over-subscribed. People requiring more care than Sandstone Lodge can provide must leave Okotoks. For those requiring less care, private market residences will be available, but there are no immediate plans for a publicly-funded residence. As indicated in an earlier section, transportation is an issue for seniors, particularly transportation to medical appointments in Okotoks and Calgary and for running errands such as banking and shopping.



## 12. A Social Wellness Framework for Okotoks

This section of the report presents the social wellness framework for Okotoks. This framework emerged from the priorities identified by the people of Okotoks and considers the current and projected demographic characteristics that define the town. The function of this conceptual framework is to connect and bring coherence to the factors identified as playing a key role in social wellness in Okotoks. As well, the framework is a decision-making and planning tool that can be used by Council, administration, service providers and other community stakeholders.

The Town of Okotoks Social Wellness Framework is guided by four principles:

- **Sustainability:** ensuring that the decisions and actions taken today will not negatively impact the quality of life available to future generations.
- **Engagement:** enlivening and deepening the connection that residents feel for the community and other people in the community.
- **Integration:** understanding the nature and implications of the inter-relatedness inherent in all systems, and putting that understanding into practice.
- **Diversity:** encouraging and welcoming the involvement and contributions of all individuals and groups in the community, recognizing that while we are all unique we are also all alike.

These principles are the foundation for six community values:

- **Personal growth:** supporting education, health and wellness.
- **Natural environment:** preserving the natural environment and adopting sustainable environmental practices.
- **Sense of community:** fostering connected and caring neighbourhoods.
- **Economic vitality:** providing a range of opportunities to engage in meaningful work that benefits the individual and the community.
- **Social inclusion:** providing the community infrastructure that allows all residents to meet their basic needs and be engaged in and make a meaningful contribution to the community.
- **Health and wellbeing:** supporting individuals and families to realize physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health and wellbeing.

These values come to life through the seven components of social wellness:

- Playing: leisure activities, arts and culture, parks, sports, recreation;
- Working: employment and the supports required for it, income, volunteerism and unpaid work, job skills and training;
- Learning: formal and informal education, literacy, skills training, lifelong learning;
- Moving: movement of people and goods by various modes of transportation (public and private), and the associated infrastructure;
- Engaging: public processes for a civil society, accessibility of and opportunities for people to provide input into decisions that affect them;
- Living: shelter and housing, individual health and well-being, personal safety, the fulfillment of basic needs for all; and
- Sense of place: community identity, history and heritage, public art, public spaces, and community events.

## 13. Framework for Action on Social Wellness

The research conducted for this project resulted in a rich body of data and information that can be utilized by organizations throughout the community to take action to improve social wellness. The Framework for Action on Social Wellness in Okotoks, however, focuses on those actions that will have multiple impacts across more than aspect of social wellness.

The Framework for Action on Social Wellness consists of fourteen recommendations for action. Some of the recommendations include examples of potential strategies and approaches. These examples are not intended to be prescriptive. They are intended solely as illustrations of the possibilities, whose only purpose is to encourage innovation and creativity.

### 13.1 Recommendations for Action

#### 13.1.1 Develop programming and make funding available to strengthen the sense of community at the neighbourhood level.

When people who have lived in Okotoks for some time describe the town, they often start by talking about the sense of community that exists. They speak to the fact that, in Okotoks, people know their neighbours and that they look out for one another and for one another's children. These neighbourhood connections create a sense of belonging that bonds people to the community and to other people.

People who are fairly new to the community agree that Okotoks has a strong reputation for being a neighbourly community, and most indicated that they chose Okotoks over other communities in and around Calgary because of this. For many, however, their experience living in Okotoks has not been what they expected in this regard. These more recent arrivals to Okotoks, most of whom have settled in the newer neighbourhoods, indicated that people in their areas are not connecting with one another; people are not out on the front street on weekends and many homes seem to be empty during the day.

Given that a sense of community and neighbourliness are at the heart of the town's identity, it is recommended that programming be developed and funding made available to strengthen the sense of community at the neighbourhood level. This programming should focus on bringing neighbours together in a way that fosters the formation of ongoing relationships.

If resources are limited, it is suggested that funding be targeted primarily to new neighbourhoods as a way of building connections within the neighbourhood and between neighbourhoods. It should be recognized that in these neighbourhoods external organizers, volunteers or staff from a community organization, may be required to initiate the process.

This is an area where neighbourhoods could be encouraged to be creative. Neighbourhood gatherings could include block parties, Halloween parties, a snow sculpture contest, an old fashioned field day with three-legged races and egg and spoon contests, or 'hang out in the park' summer activities. Neighbourhood parks are ideal venues for these types of activities.

One way of enabling neighbourhood level programming would be to foster and support the formation of neighbourhood associations. These associations would then be charged with developing programming that meets the objective of this recommendation. However, in neighbourhoods where there are a large number of households in which both parents work and commute, there may not be enough volunteer energy to establish and maintain a neighbourhood association. Another model, therefore, might be to assign a neighbourhood programmer from Community Services to each neighbourhood to develop programming and organize events.

### **13.1.2 Continue to include neighbourhood parks in the design of new communities.**

Neighbourhood parks play a key role in fostering a sense of community in Okotoks. Adults spoke of meeting and bumping into their neighbours in these parks. For them, neighbourhood parks transform outings such as walking the dog, playing with the children, or going for a walk into a community gathering. Children and teens also use these parks. Some play on the equipment provided while others just hang out.

Neighbourhood parks would also be the ideal venue for the neighbourhood programming and events described in the previous section.

Although there is currently a strong commitment to including neighbourhood parks in the plans for new neighbourhoods, the recommendations for social wellness are designed to provide guidance to the community for the next ten years. In that time, land will undoubtedly become more valuable and the pressure to include more units per hectare in new communities will increase. This may lead people to press for fewer neighbourhood parks and less neighbourhood park space. This recommendation has been included as a reminder of the important role that these parks play in creating a sense of community and making Okotoks a desirable place to live.

### **13.1.3 Continue the commitment to preserving and providing access to natural spaces.**

Access to natural spaces, particularly through the trail and path system, is another important factor contributing to the sense of community that exists in Okotoks. In essence, natural spaces, along with neighbourliness, provide the foundation for the town's identity.

People spoke of walking, running or cycling along the river or through wooded areas as one of the best things about living in Okotoks. As such, the trails and paths can also be seen as one of the ways that the Town contributes to supporting active and healthy lifestyles. Importantly, people of all ages enjoy the trails and paths. Old and young alike commented on the fact that people are respectful in their use of the trails, paths and natural environment. Furthermore, people are respectful of and acknowledge one another on the trails and paths and as a result people feel safe when they are in these areas.

Preserving and providing access to natural spaces is a natural fit with the town's commitment to sustainability. The woods and the river provide an environment where people can explore and gain an appreciation of Nature and local ecosystems. One person described Okotoks as a place where children can grow up having the experience of wading in the river and have the water come up over their boots as they look for fish or tadpoles.

As with the previous recommendation, it is recognized that there is currently a strong commitment to preserving and providing access to natural spaces. However, it is important that this recommendation be included in order to ensure that over the course of the next decade, this commitment does not wane. The goal is that this recommendation serves as a reminder of the high value that people in Okotoks place on preserving and providing access to natural spaces.

#### **13.1.4 Make available a wide range of after school programming for students.**

Children and youth emerged as a priority for people living in Okotoks. Specifically, they expressed strong support for engaging children and youth in positive activities that foster health, wellbeing, and creativity, as well as a connection to the community.

In doing so, they recognized and are concerned about the challenges facing families with children in Okotoks, including the growing number of two-parent commuter families, which leaves children home alone until dinner; and the lack of public transportation in Okotoks, which means that many children and youth cannot participate in programs because they have no way of getting to the program location. People saw getting children and youth involved and engaged through community programming as a way of helping kids stay away from negative influences and out of trouble. As such, they see this involvement as being positive for the child or youth, the family and the community.

The purpose of this recommendation is to engage in community programming as many children and youth as possible (students from grades 1-12) during the time period between the end of the school day and 5:30 or 6:00 pm. In order to engage as many students as possible, there must be a wide range of programs and activities available, including for example, arts, performing arts, music, outdoor activities, computer clubs, science clubs, book clubs, leadership development, community service activities, and homework help, as well as sports and recreation. Students and adults alike stressed the importance of offering programs and activities that students are interested in, and several suggested involving students in identifying and planning the programs.

Ideally, these programs and activities would be offered where students are at: in schools. This approach would make it easier for youth to participate, help eliminate the transportation barriers that exist for many students, and give working parents comfort in knowing that their children can participate in programs and activities without having to leave the safety of the school. The agreement and participation of the Foothills School Division and Christ the Redeemer Catholic School Division would, of course, be required, however, given that in-school after school programming would create a significant benefit for their students and families, it is hoped that they would be partners in making this recommendation a reality. It should be noted that many of the programs and activities, although based out of the school, may take place in the community, for example a running or cycling club that uses the trail and path system or a BMX trick riding group that uses the BMX park.

If offering these programs and activities in schools is not possible, other potential community locations should be identified.

### **13.1.5 Make after school programming financially accessible for all students.**

The research conducted for this project suggests that, despite high household incomes, many families in Okotoks may be financially stretched. It was suggested that this may be due to a combination of several factors: the high cost of housing, the cost of commuting and the fact that families in Okotoks tend to be larger than average.

The purpose of this recommendation is to ensure that all students in Okotoks, especially those from families that are struggling with cost of living issues, are able to participate in the after school programs and activities proposed in the previous recommendation. Making programs and activities financially accessible would mean that they would either be free of charge or a subsidy would be available to those who need it.

Ideally, all after school programs and activities would be free of charge for all students. This approach would be consistent with a large body of research that indicates that universal access builds community and social cohesion. Community and social cohesion increase when people see themselves as equal. Creating universally accessible after school programming would help eliminate the barriers that contribute to community stratification. This

stratification, which is often tied to family income, is something many children and youth feel acutely.

Several strategies could help offset the cost of this recommendation. For example, older youth could provide instruction and/or supervision to younger children and apply this to the community service or work experience hours they require to graduate. Adult volunteers from the community could also become involved in a similar capacity. Finally, some of the programs and activities may be suitable for post-secondary students seeking practicums or cooperative work experience in recreation or teaching.

### **13.1.6 Develop strategies that provide reduced costs for enrolling in multiple recreation, sport and cultural programs.**

In exploring further the impact that being financially stretched may have on families in Okotoks, it was recognized that many may be forced to make difficult choices when it comes to enrolling children in recreation, sport and cultural programs. In some cases some of the children in the family may be denied, and in others, children who would like to participate in more than one program may not be able to do so.

This recommendation, to offer a discount for multiple enrolments for recreation, sport and cultural programs, would allow families and individuals to stretch their budget and participate in more programs and activities than would normally be possible. For example, parents who enroll children in three programs could get a certain amount off the price of a fourth program.

This strategy could also be used to draw more people into cultural programs and activities. People agreed that generally speaking, parents and children who have to make a choice between a sports/recreation program and a cultural program will usually opt for sports/recreation. Linking enrolment in a sports or recreation program to a discount for a cultural program may be a way of increasing interest in cultural programs. This would help strengthen cultural programming, a need identified by the research.



### **13.1.7 Increase programming for preschool aged children.**

The program and service inventory revealed that of the 43 programs and services that are sometimes over-subscribed, 29 (67%) are targeted to preschool aged children. This finding corroborates the input received from the community consultation with families with young children, which highlighted the shortage of programs and program spaces available to this age group.

This recommendation aims to increase the amount of programming available for the preschool age group. Research has shown the importance of early childhood education and development, and the significant benefits that children realize when they are involved in playing and learning with other children. Furthermore, getting young children and their parents engaged in community programming has the potential to set a positive pattern for later years. It should be noted that this recommendation, combined with the recommendation in the previous section, could draw more children into cultural programs and activities.

### **13.1.8 Develop a strategy to attract one or more niche business sectors to Okotoks.**

The research conducted for this study identified a concern with the lack of career-oriented job opportunities available in Okotoks. The perception is that the jobs available in Okotoks are predominantly low-paying retail and service positions that have very few opportunities for advancement. This is a particular concern for young people who feel that they must leave Okotoks to establish a career.

People who mentioned this also pointed out that having a more robust and diverse business sector, with a greater number of professional and career-oriented positions, would mean that more people could live and work in Okotoks. Families could be together much earlier after work, would have more time and energy to be involved in the community and would contribute to environmental sustainability through shorter commutes. It is interesting to note that only a minority (28%) of Okotoks residents work in Okotoks. In the rest of the province, 58% of residents live and work in the same community. In Okotoks, 41% of residents commute 30 kilometres or more to work. In Alberta generally, all but 10% commute less than 30 kilometres.

Some residents also expressed concern that if Okotoks continues to develop the retail and service sector and does not take action to build a more diverse business sector it would become just another bedroom community of Calgary. They regard having a strong core of diverse businesses, including those with a high percentage of professional, financial or career-oriented positions, as an indicator that Okotoks has a robust and vibrant local economy, one that can support and maintain a vibrant and engaged community.

The purpose of this recommendation is to attract and establish one or more niche business sectors in Okotoks in order to diversify and strengthen the local economy. Building on the strengths and reputation that Okotoks has developed over the last 15 years, it is suggested that the town has the potential to develop a sector that has enough critical mass to attract the support businesses, as well.

For example, Okotoks has developed a strong reputation in the area of environmental sustainability. This strength could be used to develop a strategy to attract businesses that also have an interest in this area: environmental consultants, planners and designers; architectural partnerships with an interest in green building technology; landscape design firms that work with the architects on green roofs and xeriscaping (water conservation through landscaping); green energy firms; and engineering companies that focus on green technologies. The strategy could also attract support businesses such as graphic designers, illustrators, printers and model builders. Okotoks' commitment to sustainability would fit well with the corporate and quite likely the personal philosophies of the people in these firms, which would make Okotoks a very attractive location for the firm and its families. While located in Okotoks, these firms would likely do work across the country and possibly all over the world. As such, their market would not be tied to the local market size. The direct access to Calgary International Airport via Deerfoot Trail would likely be an asset for these firms.

At the same time, this strategy could explore opportunities to attract post-secondary and research institutions related to the sector. These institutions would be attracted by the proximity to practicing professionals and the

opportunity this provides for collaborative research, as well as student practicums and cooperative learning terms.

### **13.1.9 Consider and further community social wellness when developing and implementing strategies to maintain a vibrant downtown core.**

From the review of existing documentation conducted for this project, it is known that plans have been developed and efforts are underway to maintain a vibrant downtown core. The input gathered during this project would support those efforts.

A vibrant downtown core is connected to several social wellness priorities identified through the research for this project. People spoke about the downtown core being a 'community hub'; a place that draws residents for work and for leisure for example dining, cultural events, shopping and community events. They also saw the downtown core as having the capacity to draw visitors; a place where they can experience the character of Okotoks. In this way, they identified a vibrant downtown core as playing a key role in creating a sense of community in Okotoks.

A vibrant downtown core was also seen as important to the town's ability to attract and establish new businesses. People realized that a dead or decaying downtown would make the community less attractive to potential business settlers. The recommendation to attract one or more niche business sectors to the town could include a strategy to attract some of those businesses to the downtown core, which could help establish a positive upward spiral.

Transportation was also mentioned as a key issue. People identified the need to ensure that the downtown core is pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly. They also highlighted the need to make the downtown accessible by public transit.

Given the proximity of the river and the trail system, one possible approach to downtown development would be to create links between downtown and the natural environment. The objective would be to create an appealing destination for residents and a unique day-trip destination for visitors. People would find places to: rent bikes to cycle the trail system, rent inflatables to float down the river, rent cross-country skis to ski the winter trails, buy a picnic lunch to take away, or have lunch on a restaurant patio.

Eco-programs and tours might be developed and promoted, for example a guided or self-guided river or eco-system hike or a permanent or semi-permanent nature and ecosystem display/centre. The arts and culture community could become involved through programming outdoor art exhibits, concerts, buskers and other entertainers (musicians, magicians, etc). The heritage community could link their walks and tours into this programming. All of these would build on and reinforce Okotoks' reputation as a town with a sense of community and a commitment to sustainability.

#### **13.1.10 Consider and further community social wellness in the development and implementation of the transit feasibility study.**

The Town of Okotoks is in the process of conducting a transit feasibility study to assess the demand for a local transit service as well as an inter-city express service to Calgary. The input received during this project supports this initiative.

There is significant concern about the lack of public transportation in Okotoks. Even residents who are not directly impacted by the lack of public transportation recognize that it is a significant concern for other groups. The groups most affected by the absence of public transportation are seniors, those with mobility and health challenges, youth, and low-income residents.

For seniors, the primary concern is the ability to travel to medical appointments in Okotoks and Calgary. Feedback suggests that the current system presents scheduling and cost challenges, despite the travel subsidy available. There is also concern about the availability of transportation to attend to errands such as banking and shopping, or to participate in programs such as those at the seniors centre.

For youth, the lack of public transportation prevents those without a parent to provide transportation from participating in programs or obtaining part-time work, unless they are within walking distance of their destination. This is particularly true in winter; in summer many youth use bicycles to move around the town.

For low-income residents, the lack of public transportation means that many walk, rely on friends or pay for a taxi to travel to work or attend to errands.

Transportation between Okotoks and Calgary, as well as other destinations in the surrounding area, while not a primary concern at this time, will undoubtedly become more of an issue in the next ten years. As indicated earlier, significantly more Okotoks residents work in Calgary and other surrounding municipalities than work in Okotoks and the majority of commutes are more than 30 kilometres.

This recommendation is intended to encourage the Town of Okotoks and the consultant doing the transit feasibility study to consider the social wellness implications of a public transportation service, keeping in mind that the people most affected by this decision are those who are most vulnerable: seniors, people with mobility and health challenges, youth and low-income residents. Furthermore, unless a significant number of Okotoks residents begin to work, as well as live in town, commuting will become a larger transportation concern in the future.

#### **13.1.11 Monitor community housing needs and develop land use, sub-division and housing plans that will address those needs.**

Housing emerged as an issue from several perspectives and all age groups. Generally speaking, there exists a perception that the cost of housing in Okotoks is high, and that the town lacks a range of housing options.

The primary community concerns are: the availability of a range of housing at costs in keeping with household incomes, housing for young people, and housing with support options for seniors.

The research done for this project would indicate that the first two concerns, a range of housing at costs in keeping with household incomes and housing for young people, are both related to the availability of affordable housing. The housing profile for Okotoks indicates that fully 79% of the housing stock in Okotoks is single family dwellings. Generally speaking, this is the least affordable type of housing. The remaining 21% is made up of semi-detached housing (5%), row housing (7%), and apartments (9%). Again, generally speaking, apartments are the most affordable form of housing, but there are only 524 units available in Okotoks, compared with 4,550 single family dwellings.

For seniors, housing issues and concerns are related to the absence of a range of housing and support options. Sandstone Lodge, currently the only publicly-funded residential facility in Okotoks, is always over-subscribed. Seniors requiring more care than Sandstone Lodge can provide must leave Okotoks. Those requiring less care will soon have private market options available, but publicly-funded options do not exist.

It should be noted that, given community demographics, the need for housing options for seniors and young people will likely grow in the next 10 years.

The purpose of this recommendation is to ensure that the range of housing available in Okotoks addresses community housing needs. Currently, the key issues are lack of affordable or entry level housing and housing with support services for seniors, suggesting that the Town should use its land use planning and sub-division approval processes to encourage construction of housing that would meet these needs. Over time, however, the issues may change, therefore, this recommendation includes the development of a framework for monitoring and assessing housing need in the community on an ongoing basis and to use that information to develop and/or assess land use, sub-division and housing plans against those needs. The framework should include existing, as well as proposed residential stock, as existing housing stock is usually less expensive.

#### **13.1.12 Address the critical gaps in health services.**

People in Okotoks place a high value on access to health services and support. While there is a sense that Okotoks is doing well on this aspect of social wellness, a few areas of concern did emerge.

The program and service inventory revealed insufficient capacity in five health service areas: Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Language Therapy, Youth Addiction Services, and Addiction and Community Mental Health Services, all of which serve vulnerable populations. In addition, input from the community consultation would suggest that there is a shortage of general practitioners in Okotoks, which has made it difficult for new residents to find a physician.

The purpose of this recommendation is to suggest that a community effort be mounted to address the critical service gaps in health services identified. The effort would logically be led by those organizations and individuals involved in health care, for example Alberta Health Services and Sheep River Health Trust and involve patient groups and individuals who require these services. This group may also wish to work with other interest groups, for example the local medical community and business community, as well as provincial medical associations to address the issue of access to family physicians in Okotoks. An endorsement from the Town of Okotoks would be valuable to this effort, as would any assistance and advice they could provide.

### **13.1.13 Develop specific strategies and consider and further opportunities to address issues identified by youth (e.g. working, housing, engagement, transportation, and post-secondary education).**

While most youth indicate that Okotoks is a great place to live, many expect to move away after high school graduation to pursue an education and develop a career. For older youth and young adults there are no opportunities in Okotoks: no post-secondary education, no career-oriented jobs, and no appropriate and affordable housing. Without these core opportunities, this age group does not feel that there is a place for them in the community.

Retaining youth the community has several benefits. First, it contributes to family stability. It means that young adults will have parents close by to help them with their children; that aging parents will have adult children close by to help them; and that children will have the advantage of growing up in a multi-generational family. Retaining youth and young adults also has the potential to benefit the community, as they are more likely to give back to the community that nurtured them.

The purpose of this recommendation is to encourage the retention of youth and young adults in the community. This report has described the factors currently at play, however, these factors will likely change over the next ten years. This recommendation has been included as a reminder of the need to engage in an ongoing effort to identify and address the factors that work against the retention of youth and young adults.

Three of the current factors working against youth retention, the lack of career-oriented positions, the shortage of affordable and appropriate housing and absence of public transportation, have been addressed in other recommendations in the report. They are included again in this recommendation so that the community does not lose sight of the youth-related aspect of these issues.

One factor that has not been addressed elsewhere is the lack of access to locally delivered post-secondary education. A local post-secondary institution would allow young adults to remain in Okotoks where they would continue to have the support of family and friends. It could also attract new young adults to the community. If the post-secondary institution is linked into the business community, particularly the niche business sectors mentioned earlier, it would be possible for some graduates to move directly into local career positions. Furthermore, the post-secondary institution itself would be a desirable employer.

Identifying the factors that work against, and for the retention of youth and young adults will require ongoing monitoring and assessment. This is an area where collaboration between the Town of Okotoks, the Okotoks Chamber of Commerce, and the two local school divisions could be explored. It is also an area where youth and young adults should be directly involved, perhaps through an advisory committee to Council.

#### **13.1.14 Develop a framework and strategies to nurture multiculturalism in Okotoks.**

The demographic research conducted for this project indicates that the vast majority of new immigrants living in Okotoks have come from the United States or the United Kingdom, and that English is their first language. However, this situation is beginning to change, and there are an increasing number of immigrants arriving who have come from Asia. Over the next decade, this pattern is anticipated to continue.

Community concern about multiculturalism is very low at this time, undoubtedly a reflection of the demographics of the current immigrant population. However, while multiculturalism is not a priority, the aspects of



social wellness related to multiculturalism recorded some of the lowest rankings on the adult social wellness survey.

These two factors suggest that it would be timely to begin working on developing strategies and approaches that will nurture multiculturalism so that the town is ahead of this issue as it emerges.

At one level, the strategies and approaches developed must enhance understanding of and respect for the people who settle in Okotoks and their culture. This should be part of the school curriculum and be included in employee orientation and training by major town employers.

In addition, the strategies and approaches developed should identify opportunities that may emerge as a result of a growing immigrant population. For example, the business community should be encouraged to identify opportunities to serve new immigrant communities by providing goods and services such as foodstuffs, restaurants, and educational and tutoring services. The arts and culture sector may wish to incorporate new programming, exhibits and performances that would appeal to and profile these new communities. The recreation community may wish to introduce new immigrants to various Canadian sport and recreational activities, and at the same time monitor the demand for their national games (e.g. cricket).

Developed in the near-term, a framework and strategies for multiculturalism would enable the community to be prepared for new immigrant populations and adapt more quickly and seamlessly to changing demographics.

## **13.2 Timeline for Implementation**

A timeline for the implementation of the Recommendations for Action has been developed. The timeline considers the both priority of the issue and the degree of complexity in implementation. The time frames: up to 12 months, 12-36 months, and over 36 months, indicate when the community should expect to see action taking place or changes being made as a result of the recommendation coming into force. The period prior to that will likely be devoted to research and planning. It must be recognized that many of the recommendations will be ongoing, and as a consequence, no end date has been identified.

The timeline for implementation also identifies a lead organization for each recommendation, as well as other organizations that could be involved. This list may not be fully inclusive, and at the same time, may identify organizations that will ultimately choose not to be involved.

**Figure 13-1- Timeline for implementation and organizational involvement**

Recommendation	Lead Organization	Partner Organizations
Short-term Implementation (up to 12 months)		
Develop programming and make funding available to strengthen the sense of community at the neighbourhood level	Town of Okotoks <sup>21</sup>	Service clubs (e.g. Kinsmen, Rotary) Community organizations Chamber of Commerce/Local businesses Faith-based organizations
Continue to include neighbourhood parks in the design of new communities	Town of Okotoks	
Continue the commitment to preserving and providing access to natural spaces	Town of Okotoks	
Develop strategies that provide reduced costs for enrolling in multiple recreation, sport and cultural programs	Town of Okotoks	Community youth groups (not-for-profit) Cultural organizations Sport organizations Service clubs Local businesses
Increase programming for preschool aged children	Town of Okotoks	Okotoks Public Library Parent Link Literacy for Life Okotoks Toy Library Faith-based organizations

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<sup>21</sup> Reference to the Town of Okotoks encompasses all functions of Town government, including, but not limited to Okotoks Town Council, Administration and Committees of Council.

Recommendation	Lead Organization	Partner Organizations
Mid-term Implementation (12-36 months)		
Make available a wide range of after school programming for students	Town of Okotoks	Foothills School Division Christ the Redeemer Catholic School Division Okotoks Public Library Community youth groups (e.g. Scouts, Guides, 4-H) Faith-based organizations
Make after school programming financially accessible for all students	Town of Okotoks	Foothills School Division Christ the Redeemer Catholic School Division
Consider and further community social wellness in the development and implementation of the transit feasibility study	Town of Okotoks	
Monitor community housing needs and assess plans against needs	Town of Okotoks	Foothills Foundation Okotoks Chamber of Commerce Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Address the critical gaps in health services	Alberta Health Services	Healthy Family Resource Centre Sheep River Health Trust Community agencies
Develop a framework and strategies to nurture multiculturalism	Foothills Community Immigrant Services	Town of Okotoks Okotoks Chamber of Commerce Foothills School Division Christ the Redeemer Catholic School Division Healthy Family Resource Centre

Recommendation	Lead Organization	Partner Organizations
Long-term Implementation (over 36 months)		
Develop a strategy to attract one or more niche business sectors to Okotoks	Town of Okotoks	Okotoks Chamber of Commerce
Consider and further community social wellness when developing and implementing strategies to maintain a vibrant downtown core	Town of Okotoks	Okotoks Chamber of Commerce
Develop specific strategies and consider and further opportunities to address issues identified by youth (e.g. working, housing, engagement, transportation and post-secondary education)	Town of Okotoks	Okotoks Chamber of Commerce Foothills School Division Christ the Redeemer Catholic School Division

### 13.3 Linkages between the Recommendations for Action, Research Findings and Community Values

The following table was developed to provide a snapshot of the linkages between the Recommendations for Actions, the Research Findings and the Community Values outlined in the Social Wellness Framework for Okotoks. The intent is to illustrate the degree of integration and connectedness between the findings, values and recommendations and the areas of impact for each recommendation.

**Figure 13-2 - Linkages between the recommendations for action, research findings and community values**

Recommendation	Research Findings	Community Values
Develop programming and make funding available to strengthen the sense of community at the neighbourhood level	Sense of community Children and youth in Okotoks	Sense of community Social inclusion
Continue to include neighbourhood parks in the design of new communities	Sense of community Children and youth in Okotoks	Sense of community
Continue the commitment to preserving and providing access to natural spaces	Sense of community	Sense of community Natural environment Health and wellbeing

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Research Findings</b>	<b>Community Values</b>
Make available a wide range of after school programming for students	Children and youth in Okotoks Transportation	Personal growth Health and wellbeing Social inclusion
Make after school programming financially accessible for all students	Children and youth in Okotoks Cost of living	Social inclusion
Develop strategies that provide reduced costs for enrolling in multiple recreation, sport and cultural programs	Children and youth in Okotoks Cost of living	Personal growth Social inclusion Health and wellbeing
Increase programming for preschool aged children	Children and youth in Okotoks	Personal growth Health and wellbeing
Develop a strategy to attract one or more niche business sectors to Okotoks	Working and the economy Growth Transportation	Economic vitality Natural environment
Consider and further community social wellness when developing and implementing strategies to maintain a vibrant downtown core	Sense of community Growth Working and the economy Transportation	Economic vitality Natural environment Sense of community
Consider and further community social wellness in the development and implementation of the transit feasibility study	Transportation Seniors in Okotoks Children and youth in Okotoks Cost of living	Social inclusion Natural environment Economic vitality
Monitor community housing needs and assess plans against needs	Cost of living Seniors in Okotoks Children and youth in Okotoks Access to health services	Economic vitality Social inclusion Health and wellbeing
Address the critical gaps in health services	Access to health services Seniors in Okotoks	Health and wellbeing Social inclusion
Develop specific strategies and consider and further opportunities to address issues identified by youth (e.g. working, housing, engagement, transportation and post-secondary education)	Children and youth in Okotoks Working and the economy Cost of living Transportation	Personal growth Economic vitality Social inclusion
Develop a framework and strategies to nurture multiculturalism	Sense of community	Sense of community Social inclusion



## 14. Okotoks Social Wellness Indicators

Indicators are a key component the Framework for Action as measures of success; to track progress and reveal where the reality of life in Okotoks may be departing from the vision for social wellness. The indicators suggested below have been identified so as to correspond to those aspects of social wellness that the residents of Okotoks indicated in the survey to be ‘most important’. So as to be most effective, the indicators selected also follow the “SMART” rule for indicators, meaning that they are:

- S – Specific
- M – Measureable
- A – Achievable
- R – Relevant
- T – Time-bound

While there may be some interest in collecting information on a broad number of variables, the list of suggested indicators has been limited to 20 so as to be manageable and feasible as a regular activity. Consideration has been made to sources of information, drawing where possible from existing pools of data (e.g. National Census and Town of Okotoks Community Household Survey) and utilizing existing survey instruments for the obtaining data not already collected. Effort has been made to identify methods of data collection that are economical and not overly labour intensive. Where new data collection is suggested, indicators have been framed so as to be aligned and comparable with data being collected in other jurisdictions or at larger geographies.

Taken together, the social wellness indicators will monitor the state of social wellness in Okotoks.





## 14.1 Okotoks Social Wellness Indicators

COMPONENT	PROPOSED INDICATORS	RATIONALE	EXISTING/SUGGESTED DATA SOURCE	FREQUENCY	NOTES
<b>PLAYING</b>  <i>Leisure activities, arts and culture, parks, sports, and recreation</i>	% Population Participating in Parks & Recreation Programs	This indicator responds to the community value of having a 'wide range of opportunities for sport and recreation for all', seen as the most important aspect of playing by 54% of survey respondents.	Suggested Source: Town of Okotoks, Snapshot of Parks & Recreation registration data	As desired	Population engaged in regular physical activity is collected by Statistics Canada's Canadian Community Health Survey, Indicator Profile, for Canada, Provinces and Health Regions, Cansim Table 105-0501 However, data only available for health regions. Also collected by the Alberta Centre for Active Living, Alberta Survey on Physical Activity, but data only available for Metro Calgary.
	% Increase in Number of Free/Low Cost Recreation, Events and Celebrations Relative to Increase in Population	This indicator responds to the community value of having 'free or no cost recreation, events and celebrations', deemed as most important aspect of playing by 51% of survey respondents. More venues and opportunities for youth recreation was also the most common recommendation from youth for improving Okotoks as a place to play for young people.	Suggested Source: Town of Okotoks, Culture, Parks & Recreation data	As desired	

COMPONENT	PROPOSED INDICATORS	RATIONALE	EXISTING/SUGGESTED DATA SOURCE	FREQUENCY	NOTES
<b>PLAYING</b>	% of Population 'Very Satisfied' with (a) Community Programming; (b) Outdoor Recreation Facilities; (c) Indoor Recreation Facilities; (d) Cultural & Historical Services	This indicator responds to the community value of having an 'equitable distribution of parks and recreation facilities throughout the community' deemed as most important aspect of playing by 49% of survey respondents.	Existing Source: Community Household Survey	Every 3 years	
<b>WORKING</b> <i>Employment and the supports required for it, income, volunteerism and unpaid work, job skills and training</i>	% of Population Considered to be Low Income	These indicators respond to the community value of having 'fair wages sufficient to cover the costs of living', seen as the most important aspect of working by 45% of survey respondents.	Existing Source: Statistics Canada Census	Every 5 years	Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives has developed a methodology for calculating the 'living wage', i.e. the hourly rate at which a household can meet its basic needs, once government transfers have been added to the family's income (such as the Universal Child Care Benefit) and deductions have been subtracted (such as income taxes and Employment Insurance Premiums).
	Difference between average employment income and 'living wage' income		Suggested Source: Town of Okotoks	As desired	
	Degree of Diversity in Occupations of Labour Force	These indicators respond to the community value of having 'opportunities for quality employment	Existing Source: Statistics Canada Census	Every 5 years	
	Employment Rate - Adult and Youth		Existing Source: Statistics Canada Census	Every 5 years	

COMPONENT	PROPOSED INDICATORS	RATIONALE	EXISTING/SUGGESTED DATA SOURCE	FREQUENCY	NOTES
	% of Population - and Youth - that Live and Work in Okotoks	for different skills and skill levels', seen as the most important aspect of working by 44% of survey respondents.	Existing Source: Statistics Canada Census	Every 5 years	
<b>LEARNING</b> <i>Formal and informal education, literacy, skills training, lifelong learning</i>	Graduation Rates	These indicators respond to the community value of having 'access to a quality school system', seen as the most important aspect of learning by 83% of survey respondents.	Existing Source: School District	Annual	Ministry of Education conducts province-wide surveys on the quality of the education system; potential to administer their survey instrument in Okotoks. An alternative would be to track the number of Okotoks schools that rank in the top 10 of schools in Alberta, assuming that this ranking holds credibility with the population.
	% Satisfied/Very Satisfied with the School System		Suggested Source: School District Data Collection/Add question to Community Household Survey	As desired/ Every 3 years	
<b>MOVING</b> <i>Movement of people and goods by various modes of transportation (public and private), and the associated infrastructure</i>	% 'Very Satisfied' with Parks and Pathways	This indicator responds to the community value of having 'well planned walking and bike trails', seen as the most important aspect of moving by 63% of survey respondents.	Existing Source: Community Household Survey	Every 3 years	There was strong support for the creation of a transportation system in Okotoks, particularly among youth. If such a system were to be established, an additional question to survey satisfaction with that system should be considered.
	% Rating Pedestrian and Road Safety 'Very Good'	This indicator responds to the community value of having 'safe and accessible pedestrian routes', seen as the most important aspect of moving by 52% of survey respondents.	Suggested Source: Add question to Community Household Survey	Every 3 years	

<b>COMPONENT</b>	<b>PROPOSED INDICATORS</b>	<b>RATIONALE</b>	<b>EXISTING/SUGGESTED DATA SOURCE</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>ENGAGING</b> <i>Public processes for a civil society, accessibility of and opportunities for people to provide input into decisions that affect them</i>	% of Population (12 yrs+) Strong/Somewhat Strong Sense of Belonging to Local Community - by Age	This indicator responds to the community value of having 'opportunities to belong to community organizations and institutions', seen as the most important aspect of engaging by 53% of survey respondents.	Suggested Source: Add question to Community Household Survey for adult data; School District to survey youth	Every 3 years	Individual 'sense of belonging' is collected by Statistics Canada's Canadian Community Health Survey, Indicator Profile, for Canada, Provinces and Health Regions, Cansim Table 105-0501 However, data only available for health regions.
<b>LIVING</b> <i>Shelter and housing, individual health and wellbeing, personal safety, and fulfillment of basic needs for all</i>	% of Population with a Regular Medical Doctor	This indicator responds to the community value of having 'access to health services and support', seen as the most important aspect of living by 65% of survey respondents.	Suggested Source: Add question to Community Household Survey	Every 3 years	Data on access to health services is collected by Statistics Canada's Canadian Community Health Survey, Indicator Profile, for Canada, Provinces and Health Regions, Cansim Table 105-0501 However, data only available for health regions.
	% of Population (12 yrs+) Satisfied/Very Satisfied with their Life	This indicator provides a general sense of people's satisfaction and wellbeing in Okotoks.	Suggested Source: Add question to Community Household Survey	Every 3 years	Data on access to health services is collected by Statistics Canada's Canadian Community Health Survey, Indicator Profile, for Canada, Provinces and Health Regions, Cansim Table 105-0501 However, data only available for health regions.

COMPONENT	PROPOSED INDICATORS	RATIONALE	EXISTING/SUGGESTED DATA SOURCE	FREQUENCY	NOTES
	% Rating Community Safety 'Very Good'	This indicator responds to the community value of having 'safe neighbourhoods and streets', seen as the most important aspect of moving by 58% of survey respondents.	Suggested Source: Add question to Community Household Survey	Every 3 years	
	% Population in 'Core Housing Need', i.e. % households spending 50% or more of their gross household income on housing	This indicator responds to the community value of having 'a range of housing available at costs that are in keeping with household incomes', seen as the most important aspect of living by 64% of survey respondents.	Existing Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)	Annual	Smallest geography available for free is for Calgary. Suggested that Okotoks work with CMHC to generate community-level data.
<b>LIVING</b>					
<b>SENSE OF PLACE</b>	Hectares of Green Field Development	These indicators respond to the community value of 'preservation of and access to natural spaces', seen as the most important aspect of sense of place by 76% of survey respondents.	Suggested Source: Town of Okotoks	As desired	
<i>Community identity, history and heritage, public art, public spaces,</i>	% Change in Hectares of Natural Areas Preserved				

COMPONENT	PROPOSED INDICATORS	RATIONALE	EXISTING/SUGGESTED DATA SOURCE	FREQUENCY	NOTES
<i>and community events</i>	% of Population who Know Their Neighbours Well	This indicator responds to the community value of 'neighbourhoods designed to promote social interaction', seen as the most important aspect of sense of place by 61% of survey respondents.	Suggested Source: Add question to Community Household Survey	Every 3 years	

## 15. Appendix 1 – Adult Social Wellness Survey

# Okotoks Community Social Wellness Survey

## Introduction

**You have told us that Okotoks is a great place to live: safe, caring and vital. How do we keep it that way? This community social wellness survey seeks to find out.**

Social wellness refers to the well-being and quality of life of a community and its members. Where there is social wellness in a community:

- The basic needs of all people are met;
- There are strong relationships and social networks between people and between groups;
- Individuals feel safe and secure; and
- The community uses, maintains and builds on its resources in order to maintain and improve on quality of life while responding to change.

The Town of Okotoks is committed to becoming a sustainable community that balances its social, economic, and environmental components while improving the quality of life for present and future generations. Achieving social wellness is an important part of this vision. As our community grows, it is important that resources and opportunities related to our social wellness be supported.



## Introduction



# Okotoks Community Social Wellness Survey

**The goal of this survey is to understand what social wellness means to the people of Okotoks. We'd like to know what matters to you about social wellness in Okotoks today and in the future.**

To this end, this survey asks questions about seven different components that contribute to social wellness:

- A. Playing
- B. Working
- C. Learning
- D. Moving
- E. Engaging
- F. Living
- G. Sense of place

This survey consists of 19 questions. It will take approximately 12 minutes to complete.

**Your responses are greatly appreciated.**

This survey is being conducted by Marleen Morris & Associates on behalf of the Okotoks Social Wellness Steering Committee.

**Confidentiality:** *Information from this survey will only be used for the purposes of this study and will not be disclosed or released to anyone else for any other purpose. All responses will be completely anonymous.*



## Playing

The 'playing' component of social wellness refers to the opportunities for individuals to participate in sports, arts and culture, leisure and recreational activities. Playing is enabled through community support for these activities and widely accessible facilities where they can be enjoyed.

# Okotoks Community Social Wellness Survey

## 1. What aspects of 'playing' do you see as most important to the social wellness of Okotoks? Please select your top three.

- Equitable distribution of parks and recreation facilities throughout the community
- Opportunities for outdoor recreation
- A wide range of cultural programs for all
- Free or no cost recreation, events and celebrations
- Events that celebrate multiculturalism
- A wide range of opportunities for sport and recreation for all
- Support for active lifestyles
- A vibrant arts and culture scene

Other (please specify)

## 2. How well do you think these different aspects of 'playing' are being supported and promoted in Okotoks?

	Poorly	Not very well	Acceptably	Well	Very well	I don't know
Equitable distribution of parks and recreation facilities throughout the community	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Opportunities for outdoor recreation	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
A wide range of cultural programs for all	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Free or no cost recreation, events and celebrations	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Events that celebrate multiculturalism	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
A wide range of opportunities for sport and recreation for all	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Support for active lifestyles	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
A vibrant arts and culture scene	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

## Working

The 'working' component of social wellness refers to the availability of a wide range of quality employment and volunteering opportunities in a community. It also relates to the availability of support for those without work and resources to assist individuals gain the skills they need to obtain employment.

# Okotoks Community Social Wellness Survey

## 3. What aspects of 'working' do you see as most important to the social wellness of Okotoks? Please select your top three.

- Opportunities for quality employment for different skills and skill levels
- Flexible work arrangements (e.g. part-time, full-time, work sharing, working from home)
- Fair wages sufficient to cover the costs of living
- Support for those unemployed or in transition
- Safe and respectful workplaces
- Affordable child care options
- Secure employment
- Strong and diverse local economy
- Opportunities for training and skill development
- Opportunities and support for volunteering
- Support for local businesses and entrepreneurs

Other (please specify)

# Okotoks Community Social Wellness Survey

## 4. How well do you think these different aspects of 'working' are being supported and promoted in Okotoks?

	Poorly	Not very well	Acceptably	Well	Very well	I don't know
Opportunities for quality employment for different skills and skill levels	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Flexible work arrangements (e.g. part-time, full-time, work sharing, working from home)	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Fair wages sufficient to cover the costs of living	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Support for those unemployed or in transition	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Safe and respectful workplaces	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Affordable child care options	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Secure employment	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Strong and diverse local economy	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Opportunities for training and skill development	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Opportunities and support for volunteering	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Support for local businesses and entrepreneurs	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

## Learning

The 'learning' component of social wellness refers to opportunities for formal and informal education in a community. Social wellness is enabled through a variety of learning activities for personal and professional development at all stages of life. This includes an accessible and quality school system that meets the needs of the community's children and young people. It also encompasses public libraries, skills training and educational supports for individuals of all ages, levels of ability and experience.

# Okotoks Community Social Wellness Survey

## 5. What three aspects of 'learning' do you see as most important to the social wellness of Okotoks? Please select your top three.

- Access to a quality school system
- Opportunities for lifelong learning (including academic and personal interest courses and programs)
- Opportunities for career training and professional development
- Access to public libraries
- Early childhood education
- Locally delivered post secondary education
- Literacy programs for children and adults
- Programs and support for immigrants

Other (please specify)

## 6. How well do you think these different aspects of 'learning' are being supported and promoted in Okotoks?

	Poorly	Not very well	Acceptably	Well	Very well	I don't know
Access to a quality school system	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Opportunities for lifelong learning (including academic and personal interest courses and programs)	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Opportunities for career training and professional development	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Access to public libraries	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Early childhood education	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Locally delivered post secondary education	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Literacy programs for children and adults	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Programs and support for immigrants	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

## Moving

The 'moving' component of social wellness refers to the systems and resources in a community that allow people to get around. Social wellness is enabled by environments that allow individuals to move about easily and safely within the community. It includes having access to a range of modes of transportation and support for those with mobility challenges.

# Okotoks Community Social Wellness Survey

## 7. What aspects of 'moving' do you see as most important to the social wellness of Okotoks? Please select your top three.

- Safe and accessible pedestrian routes
- Safe bicycle routes
- Neighbourhoods designed with amenities within walking distance
- Well planned walking and bike trails (i.e. routes get you where you want to go)
- Transportation support for persons with mobility challenges
- Accessible and affordable public transit
- Safe and effective road network

Other (please specify)

## 8. How well do you think these different aspects of 'moving' are being supported and promoted in Okotoks?

	Poorly	Not very well	Acceptably	Well	Very well	I don't know
Safe and accessible pedestrian routes	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Safe bicycle routes	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Neighbourhoods designed with amenities within walking distance	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Well planned walking and bike trails (i.e. routes get you where you want to go)	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Transportation support for persons with mobility challenges	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Accessible and affordable public transit	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Safe and effective road network	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

## Engaging

The 'engaging' component of social wellness refers to opportunities for participating in and contributing to civic life in a community. Social wellness is enabled through public processes that encourage the involvement of all members of the community. It is facilitated through a strong and diverse network of community organizations that engage individuals as members and volunteers. It is also enhanced by physical environments that consider the needs of all community members and promote neighbourliness.

# Okotoks Community Social Wellness Survey

## 9. What aspects of 'engaging' do you see as most important to the social wellness of Okotoks? Please select your top three.

- Opportunities to provide input to municipal decisions
- Opportunities to belong to community organizations and institutions
- Opportunities for volunteering
- Support for a diverse network of community organizations and institutions
- Opportunities for youth engagement
- Opportunities to connect with people from different cultures and different generations
- Support for neighbourhood groups and involvement
- Individual sense of belonging

Other (please specify)

## 10. How well do you think these different aspects of 'engagement' are being supported and promoted in Okotoks?

	Poorly	Not very well	Acceptably	Well	Very well	I don't know
Opportunities to provide input to municipal decisions	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Opportunities to belong to community organizations and institutions	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Opportunities for volunteering	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Support for a diverse network of community organizations and institutions	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Opportunities for youth engagement	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Opportunities to connect with people from different cultures and different generations	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Support for neighbourhood groups and involvement	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Individual sense of belonging	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

## Living

The 'living' component of social wellness refers to opportunities and capacity for community members to meet their basic needs such as shelter and food. Acceptance, diversity and safety are key to the 'living' component of social wellness. It is enabled through a broad range of supports for individuals and families in need, universal access to health services and a range of housing types.



# Okotoks Community Social Wellness Survey

## 11. What aspects of 'living' do you see as most important to the social wellness of Okotoks? Please select your top three.

- Housing and support for seniors
- Housing for young people
- Shelters and housing for women and children fleeing violence
- A range of housing available at costs that are in keeping with household incomes in the community
- Acceptance and support for people experiencing personal or family difficulties
- Acceptance and support for people with different levels of ability
- Acceptance and support for different cultures
- Access to locally produced food
- Access to health services and support
- Safe neighbourhoods and streets

Other (please specify)

	5
	6

# Okotoks Community Social Wellness Survey

## 12. How well do you think these different aspects of 'living' are being supported and promoted in Okotoks?

	Poorly	Not very well	Acceptably	Well	Very well	I don't know
Housing and support for seniors	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Housing for young people	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Shelters and housing for women and children fleeing violence	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
A range of housing available at costs that are in keeping with household incomes in the community	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Acceptance and support for people experiencing personal or family difficulties	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Acceptance and support for people with different levels of ability	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Acceptance and support for different cultures	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Access to locally produced food	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Access to health services and support	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Safe neighbourhoods and streets	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

## Sense of Place

The 'sense of place' component of social wellness refers to a community's sense of identity and residents' connection to the place where they live. It speaks to opportunities for community members to learn about and appreciate their heritage. It is also enabled through spaces in which individuals in a community can come together to interact, celebrate their past and think about their future.

# Okotoks Community Social Wellness Survey

**13. What aspects of 'sense of place' do you see as most important to the social wellness of Okotoks? Please select your top three.**

- Opportunities for learning and appreciating local history and culture
- Preservation of and access to natural spaces
- Venues for public art and creative expression
- Spaces for community use and gathering
- Protection of cultural and historical landmarks
- Neighbourhoods designed to promote social interaction

Other (please specify)

5

6

**14. How well do you think these different aspects of sense of place are being supported and promoted in Okotoks?**

	Poorly	Not very well	Acceptably	Well	Very well	I don't know
Opportunities for learning and appreciating local history and culture	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Preservation of and access to natural spaces	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Venues for public art and creative expression	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Spaces for community use and gathering	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Protection of cultural and historical landmarks	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Neighbourhoods designed to promote social interaction	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

## Social Wellness Overall

**15. Thinking about all aspects of social wellness discussed above—playing; working; learning; moving; engaging; living; and sense of place...**

**How would you rate social wellness in Okotoks overall? Please rate on a scale of 1 to 10, in which 1 is 'very weak' and 10 is 'excellent'?**

1   
  2   
  3   
  4   
  5   
  6   
  7   
  8   
  9   
  10  
 Very Weak Excellent

Any other comments?

5

6

# Okotoks Community Social Wellness Survey

## About You...

### 16. Please indicate which of the following age ranges you fall into:

- 0 -19
- 20 - 44
- 45 - 64
- Over 65

### 17. How long have you lived in Okotoks?

- Less than 1 year
- 1 – 5 years
- 6 – 10 years
- More than 10 years

### 18. Are you:

- Male
- Female

### 19. Which of the following best describes your total household income last year?

- Less than \$20,000
- \$20,000 - \$39,999
- \$40,000 - \$59,999
- \$60,000 - \$79,999
- \$80,000 - \$99,999
- \$100,000 or more
- I do not wish to respond

Thank you very much for your time!

## Focus Group

### Still more to say? Participate in a focus group!

In addition to the survey, we will be conducting a number of focus group discussions with the residents to hear their views about social wellness in our community. The focus groups will be approximately 1 hour in length.

If you are interested in participating in a focus group, please provide your name, email address and phone number.

# Okotoks Community Social Wellness Survey

**20. Name:**

**21. Phone Number:**

**22. Email Address:**

**23. Please also indicate which of the following age groups you belong to:**

13 to 19 years old *(Parental consent will be required for participants who are under 18 years of age)*

20 to 55

56 to 65

Over 65

Someone from Marleen Morris & Associates will be in touch soon to confirm.

Thank you for your interest!



## 16. Appendix 2 – Youth Social Wellness Survey

# Okotoks Youth Social Wellness Survey

## Introduction

**Are you 13 to 19 years of age? If so, this is a chance for you to have your say!**

This is a survey designed to find out what you like about life in Okotoks.

- *Do you think Okotoks is a good place to grow up in?*
- *Is Okotoks a place that you see yourself living in the future?*
- *Do the programs and services in this community meet your expectations?*

The Town of Okotoks is doing a project on social wellness. We'd like to understand what social wellness means to the youth of Okotoks and what matters to you today and in the future.

It's an opportunity to help make this town a better place for youth, now and in the future. There are just 11 questions and it will only take a few minutes of your time. Your responses are greatly appreciated.



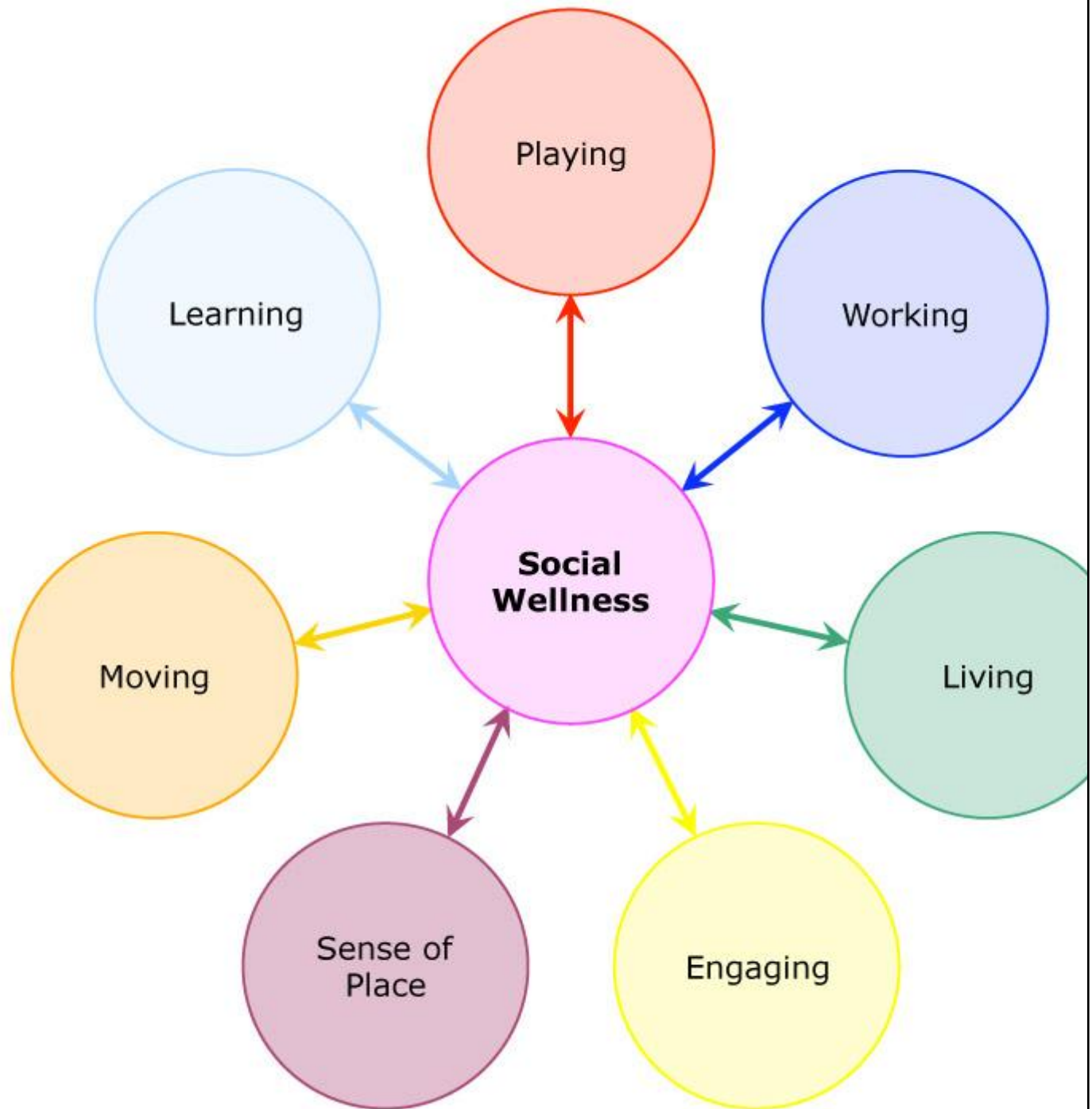
- *This survey is being conducted by Marleen Morris & Associates on behalf of the Okotoks Social Wellness Steering Committee.*
- *Information from this survey will only be used for the purposes of this study and will not be disclosed or released to anyone else for any other purpose.*
- *All responses will be completely anonymous.*

## Introduction



# Okotoks Youth Social Wellness Survey

Social wellness is part of what makes a community a great place to live. There are seven parts to social wellness:



Playing

# Okotoks Youth Social Wellness Survey

## *Is Okotoks a good place to play?*

Think about the sports, recreational, arts and cultural opportunities for youth in Okotoks. Think about the places and programs available. Also think about the events and celebrations...

### **1. How would you rate Okotoks as a place to play for young people, on a scale of 1 to 5?**

1 Poor       2       3       4       5 Excellent       I don't know

Any ideas for making it a better place to play?

## Working

## *Is Okotoks a good place to work?*

Think about opportunities for youth to work and volunteer in Okotoks, as students and after graduation. Think about the availability of jobs that are interesting and pay a good wage as well as the resources to help you find work and apply for jobs...

### **2. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate this town as a place to work for youth?**

1 Poor       2       3       4       5 Excellent       I don't know

Any ideas for making it a better place to work?

## Learning

## *Is Okotoks a good place to learn?*

Think about opportunities to learn in Okotoks. Think about school, the public library and programs outside of school. Also think about college and university options...

### **3. How would you rate Okotoks as a place to learn for young people on a scale of 1 to 5?**

1 Poor       2       3       4       5 Excellent       I don't know

Any ideas for making it a better place to learn?

## Moving

# Okotoks Youth Social Wellness Survey

## *Is Okotoks a good place to get around in?*

Think about transportation and getting around in this town. Think about the roads if you drive and transit options if you don't. Think also about the availability and safety of walking and biking routes...

### **4. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate Okotoks as a place to get around for youth?**

1 Poor       2       3       4       5 Excellent       I don't know

Any ideas for making it a better place to get around?

## Living

### *Is Okotoks a good place to live?*

Think about life in Okotoks. Is it a place you would recommend to other youth? Think also about whether or not you see yourself staying in this community in the future. Does Okotoks have services, things to do and places to live for young people who are living on their own...

### **5. How would you rate Okotoks as a place to live for young people, on a scale of 1 to 5?**

1 Poor       2       3       4       5 Excellent       I don't know

Any ideas for making it a better place to live?

## Engaging

### *Is Okotoks a good place to be involved?*

Think about opportunities to participate in community life, join different groups and organizations and help out with events. Think about opportunities for you to have your voice heard on issues that you care about...

### **6. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate Okotoks as a place to be involved for youth?**

1 Poor       2       3       4       5 Excellent       I don't know

Any ideas for making it a better place to be involved?

## Sense of Place

# Okotoks Youth Social Wellness Survey

## *How do you feel about the places and spaces in Okotoks?*

Think about the outdoor and indoor places in the community that you feel attached to as well as different spaces for community gathering or just for hanging out. Think also about the facilities in town such as the recreation center, museums, parks, theatres, art gallery...

### **7. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the physical aspects of the Town of Okotoks?**

1 Poor

2

3

4

5 Excellent

I don't know

Any ideas for improving the physical aspects of Okotoks?

## Social Wellness Overall

### **8. What do you think about social wellness in Okotoks overall?**

Now, think about all of the different aspects of social wellness discussed in this survey—playing; working; learning; moving; engaging; living; and sense of place...

### **How would you rate Okotoks overall?**

1 Poor

2

3

4

5 Excellent

I don't know

Any other comments?



About You...

# Okotoks Youth Social Wellness Survey

## 9. How old are you?

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

## 10. How long have you lived in Okotoks?

Less than 1 year

1 – 5 years

6 – 10 years

More than 10 years

## 11. Are you:

Male

Female

*Thank you very much for your time!*

## Focus Group

### Still more to say? Participate in a focus group!

In addition to the survey, we will be conducting focus group discussions with young people to hear their views about social wellness in our community. The focus groups will be approximately 1 hour in length.

If you are interested in participating in a focus group, please provide your name, phone number and email address and tell us how old you are.

### 12. Name:

### 13. Phone Number:

### 14. Email Address:

# Okotoks Youth Social Wellness Survey

## 15. How old are you?

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

*Note: Parental consent will be required for those under 18 years of age*

Someone from Marleen Morris & Associates will be in touch soon to confirm.

**Thank you for your interest!**





## 17. Appendix 3 – Program & Service Inventory: List of Organizations

- 1st Okotoks Scouts - Scouts Canada
- Aboriginal Family Support Services
- Addiction and Mental Health-Addiction Services, High River
- Addictions and Community Mental Health Services
- Alberta Health Services - Public Health
- Alberta Health Services - Youth Addiction Services
- Alberta Lacrosse Referees Association
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- All - Nighters Hockey Club
- All Canadian Karate Union
- Autism Aspergers Friendship Society (AAFS)
- Big Rock Runners
- Canadian Parents for French - Okotoks Public Chapter
- Community Futures Highwood
- D.A.R.E. Works Foothills Society
- Dr Morris Gibson School
- Foothills Advocacy in Motion Society
- Foothills Community Immigrant Services
- Foothills School Division (Family Schools Liaison Counsellors)
- Foothills Victim Services
- Heritage Heights School
- High River & District Parent Link Centre
- High River Montessori Preschool & Kindergarten
- Journeys/Mcman
- Literacy for Life Foundation
- McBride Career Group
- Natural High Fitness & Athletics
- Newcomers Club of Okotoks
- Okotoks 4H Beef and Multiclub
- Okotoks Ambulatory Care
- Okotoks Art Gallery
- Okotoks Beerwolves Hockey Club
- Okotoks Block Parent Program

- Okotoks Dayhome Providers
- Okotoks Gladiators Fencing
- Okotoks Healthy Family Resource Centre
- Okotoks Lions Club
- Okotoks Masters Swim Club
- Okotoks Minor Ball Association
- Okotoks Minor Basketball Association
- Okotoks Minor Hockey Association
- Okotoks Minor Soccer Association
- Okotoks Montessori Preschool & Kindergarten
- Okotoks Museum and Archives
- Okotoks Public Library
- Okotoks Referee Association
- Okotoks Skating Club
- Okotoks Synchro Sea Queens
- Okotoks Urgent Care Department
- Okotoks Vision Impaired Support Group
- Okotoks Volleyball Club
- Optimal Outcomes Mediation Services
- Pediatric Rehab(SLP, OT, PT)
- Rowan House Emergency Shelter
- Rural Palliative Care
- Sandstone Lodge
- Sheep River Health Trust
- Skotoko Housing
- Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
- St. Peter's Anglican Church Okotoks
- Town of Okotoks
- Town of Okotoks - KinderCare
- Town of Okotoks - Okotoks School Aged Care
- Town of Okotoks - Youth Centre
- Town of Okotoks Family and Community Support Services
- W.H.E.N. Program (Seniors Aquatic Fitness Class)
- Wild Rose Community Connections

## 18. Appendix 4 – Program & Service Inventory: Data Graphs

Figure 18-1 - Programs by age - preschool

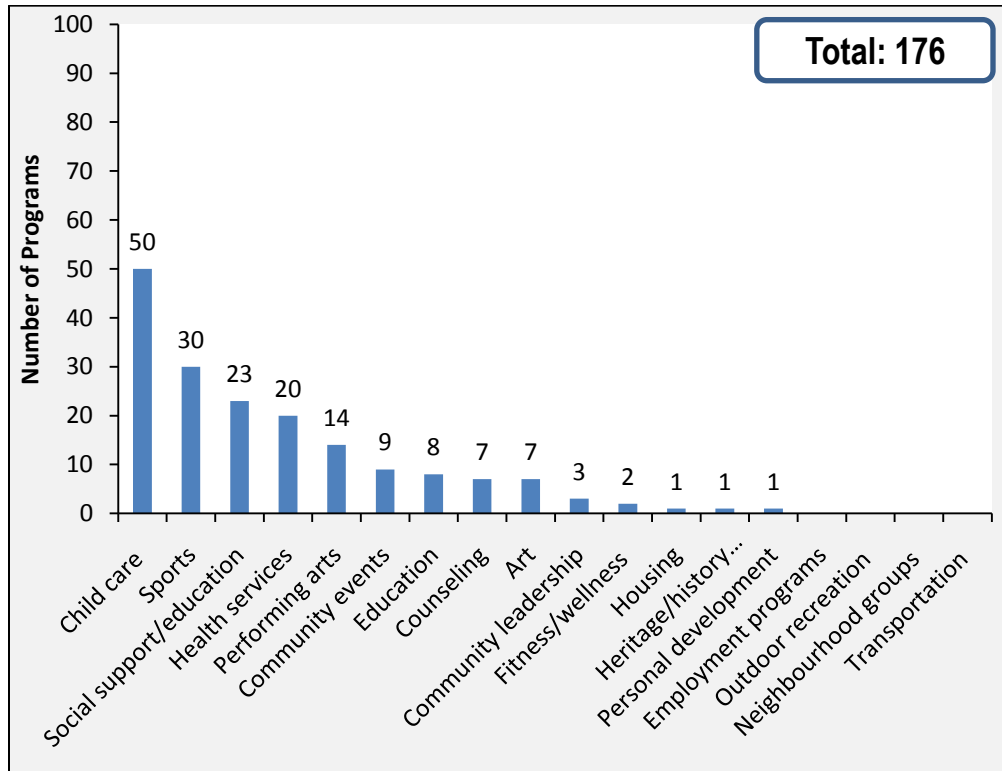


Figure 18-2 - Programs by age – elementary

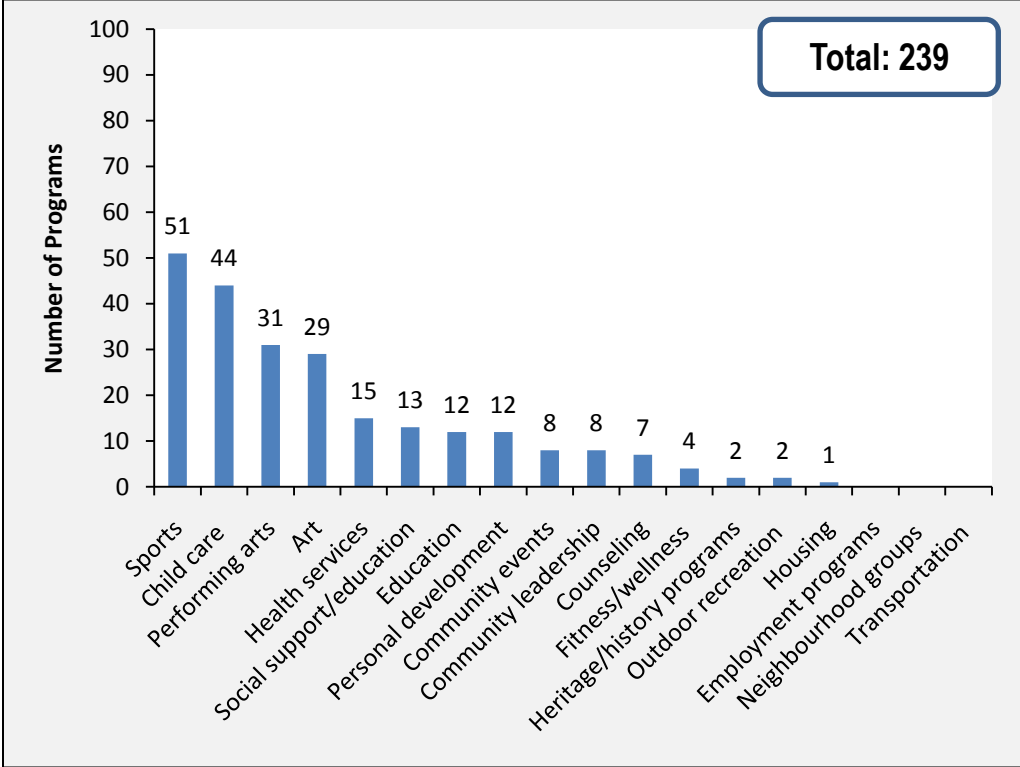


Figure 18-3 - Programs by age – youth

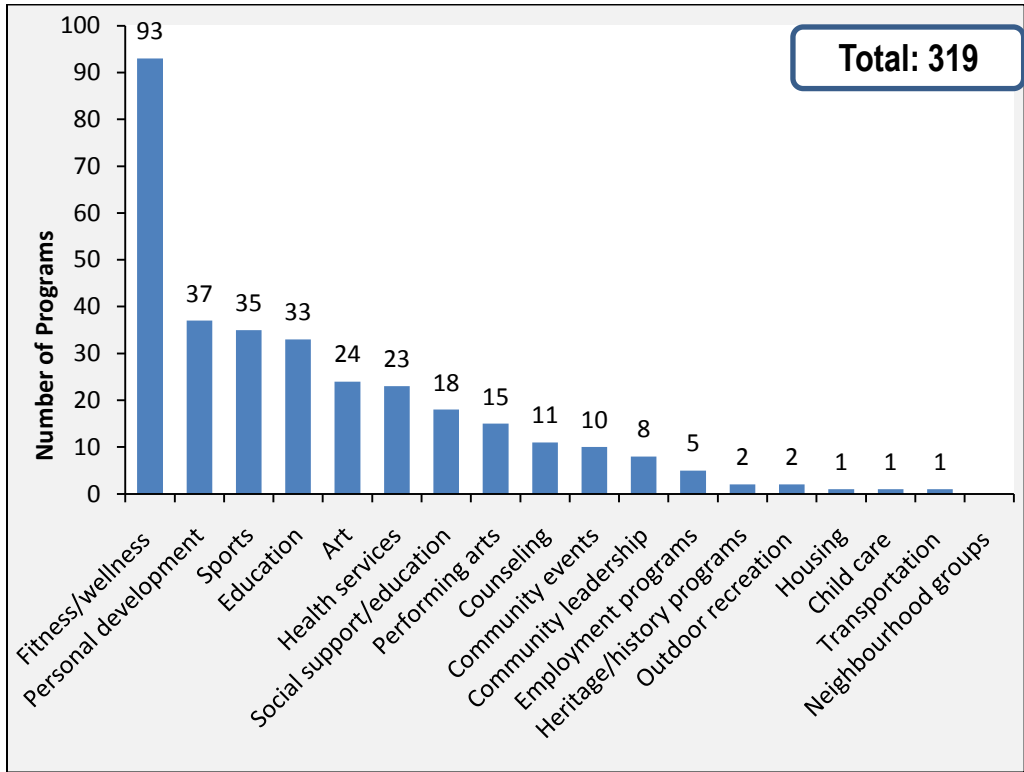


Figure 18-4 - Programs by age – adult

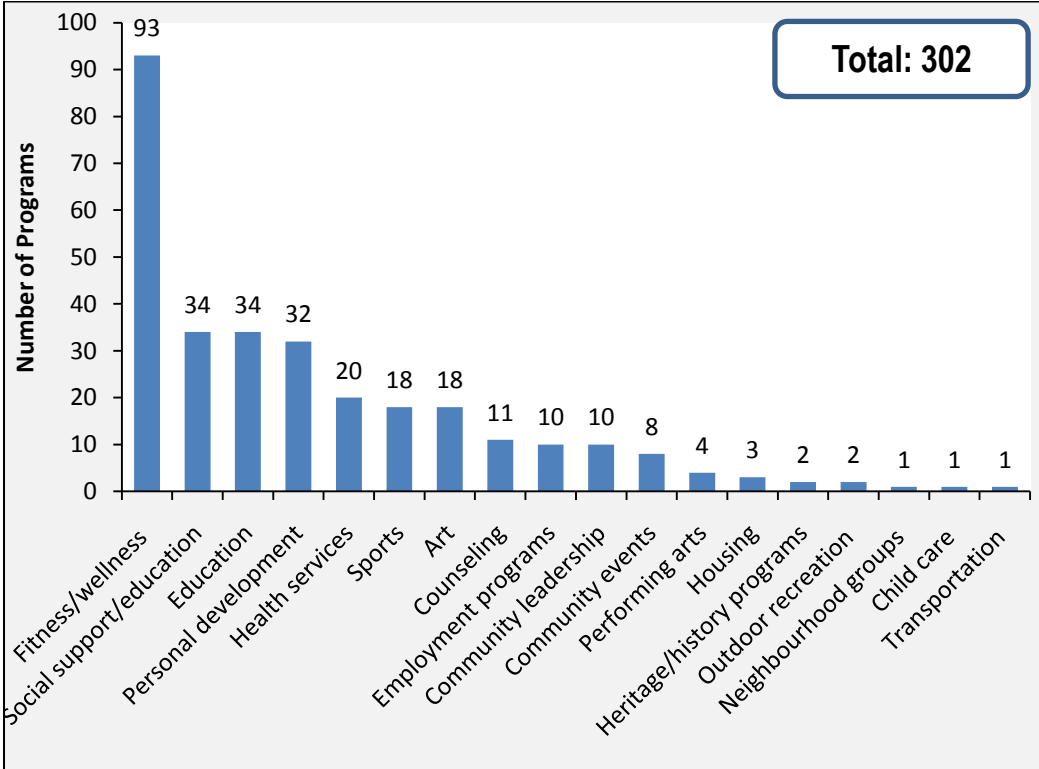


Figure 18-5 - Programs by age – senior

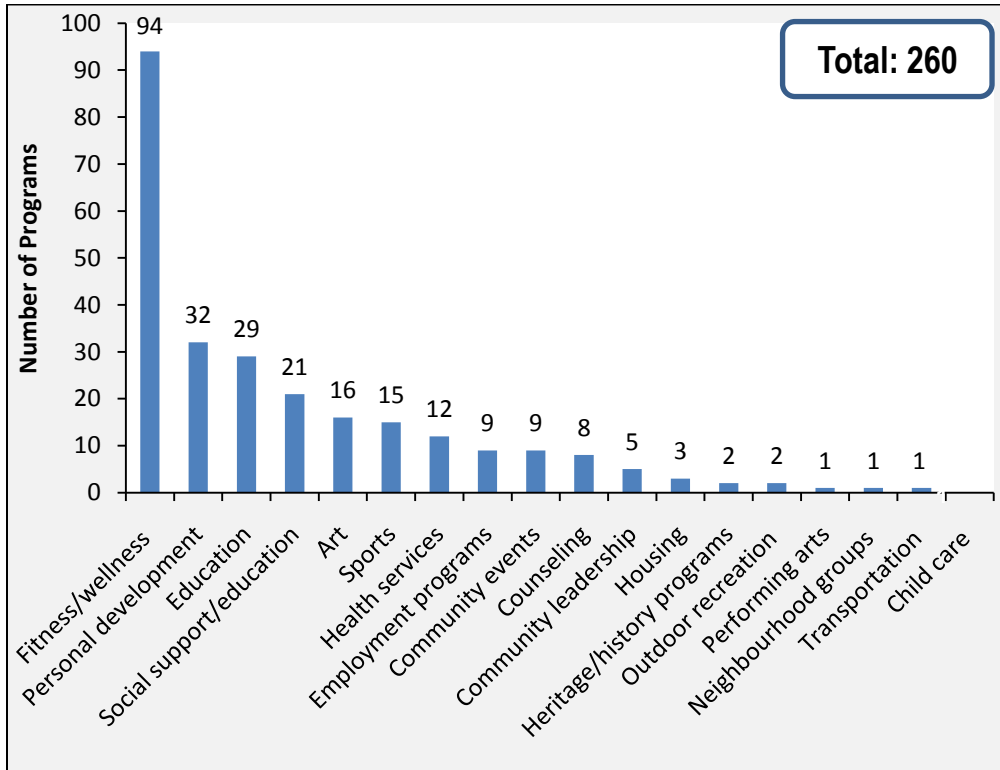


Figure 18-6 - Programs by target group – people with disabilities

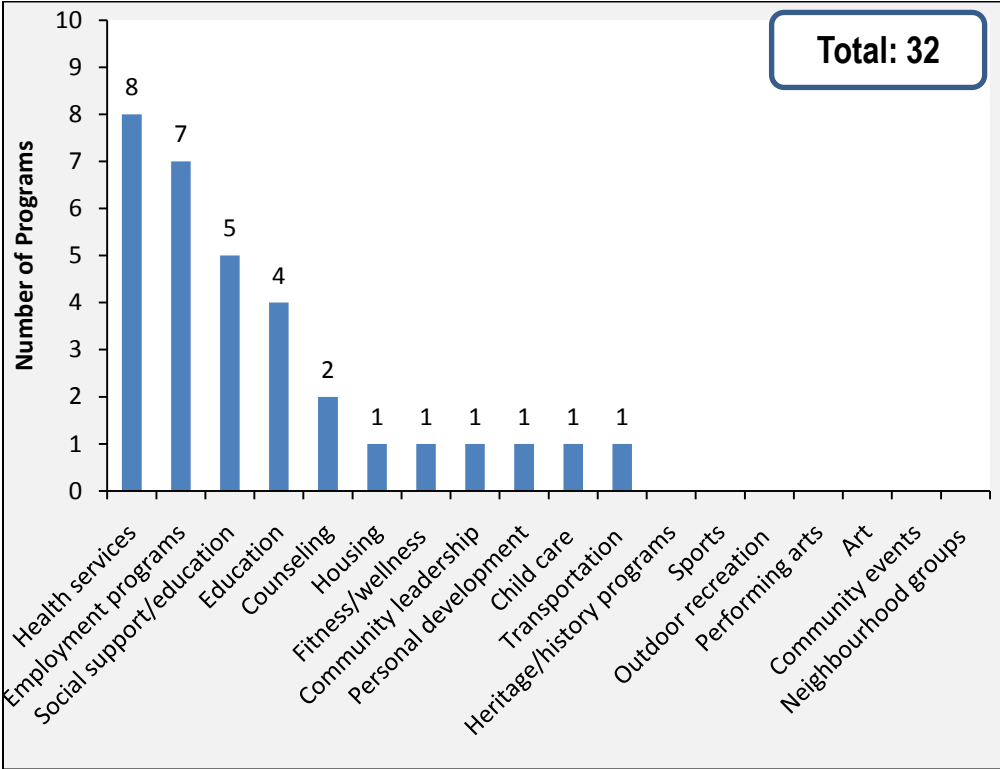




Figure 18-7 - Programs by target group – youth at risk

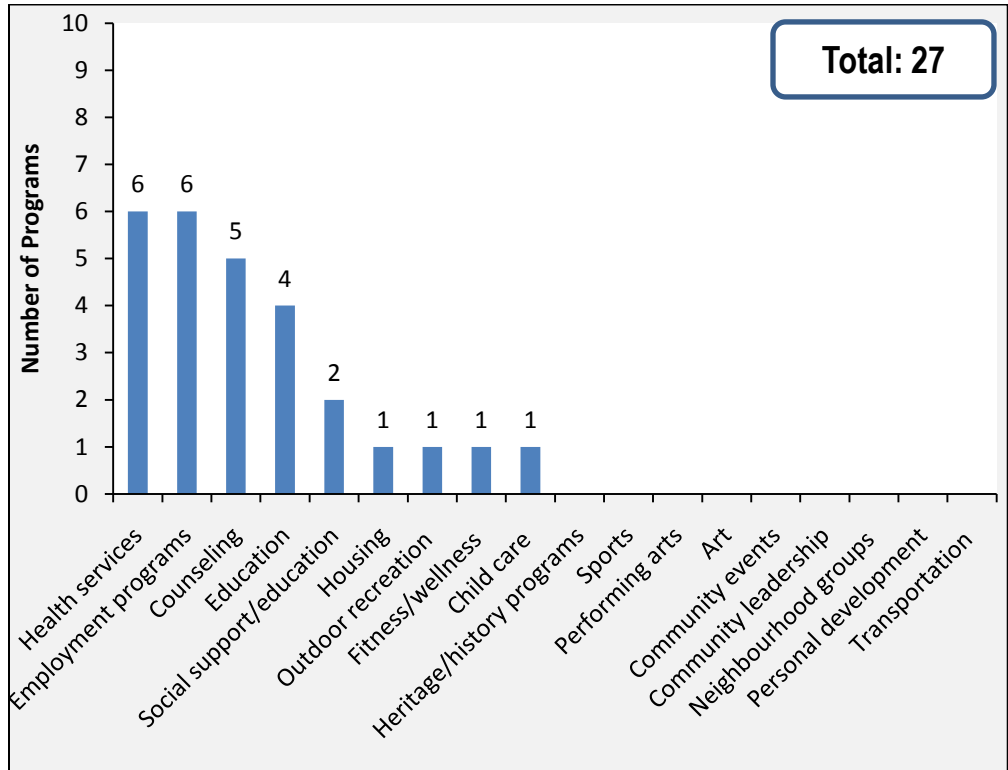


Figure 18-8 - Programs by target group – families at risk

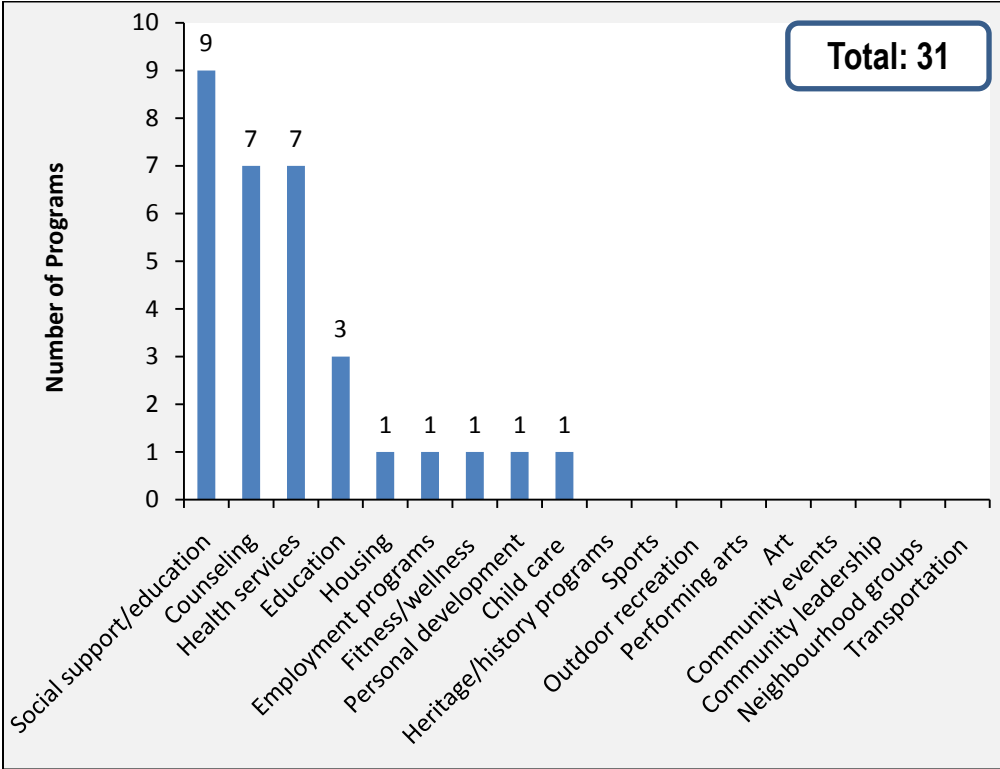


Figure 18-9 - Programs by target group – new immigrants

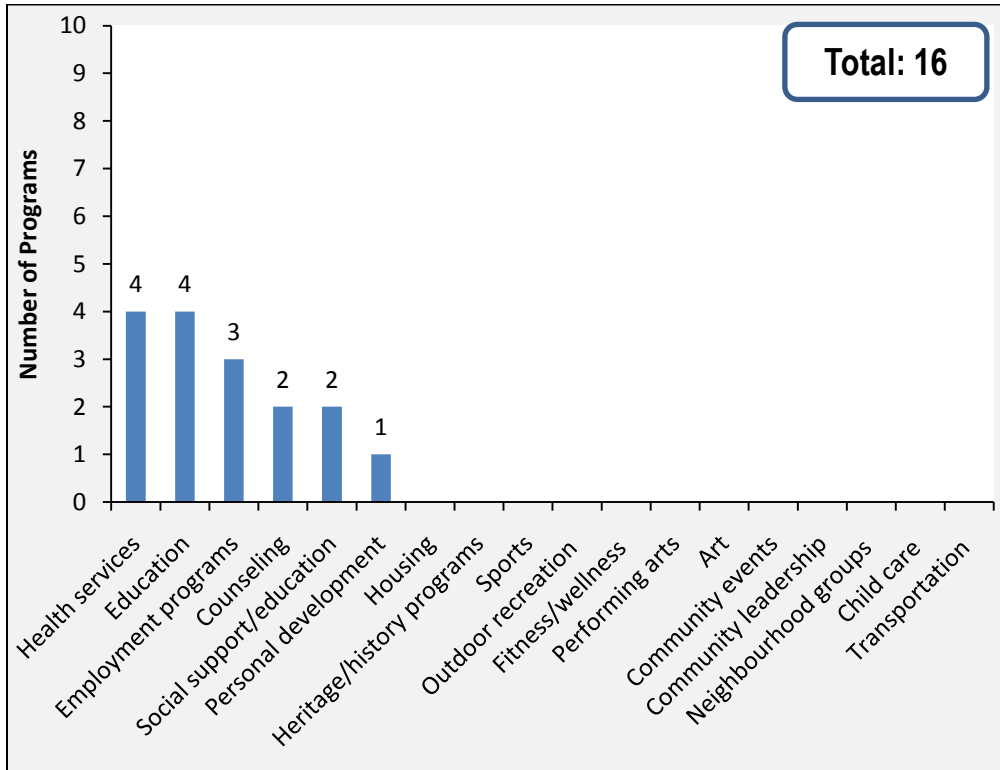


Figure 18-10 - Programs by enrollment – matches space available

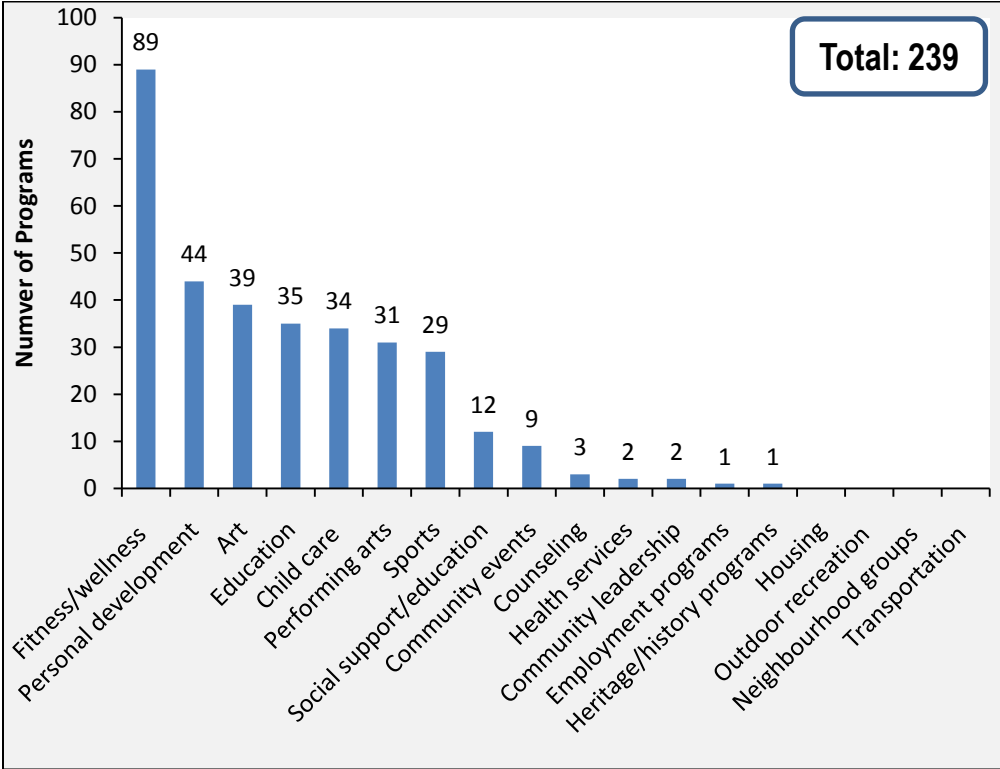


Figure 18-11 - Programs by enrollment – always space available

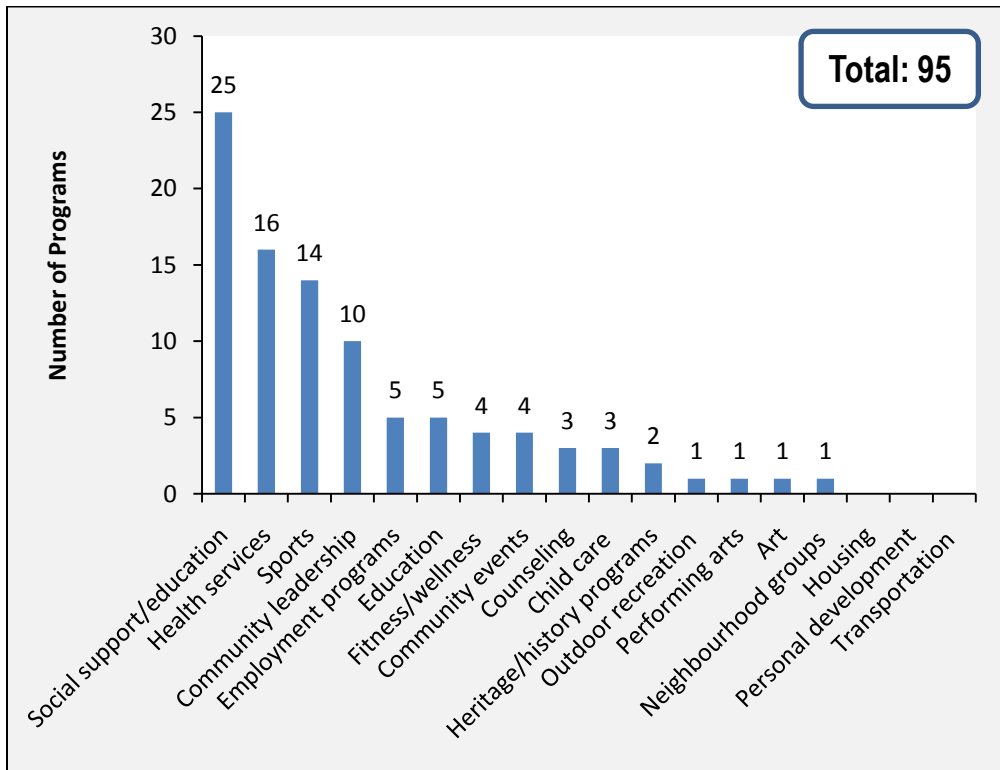


Figure 18-12 - Programs by enrollment – sometimes space available

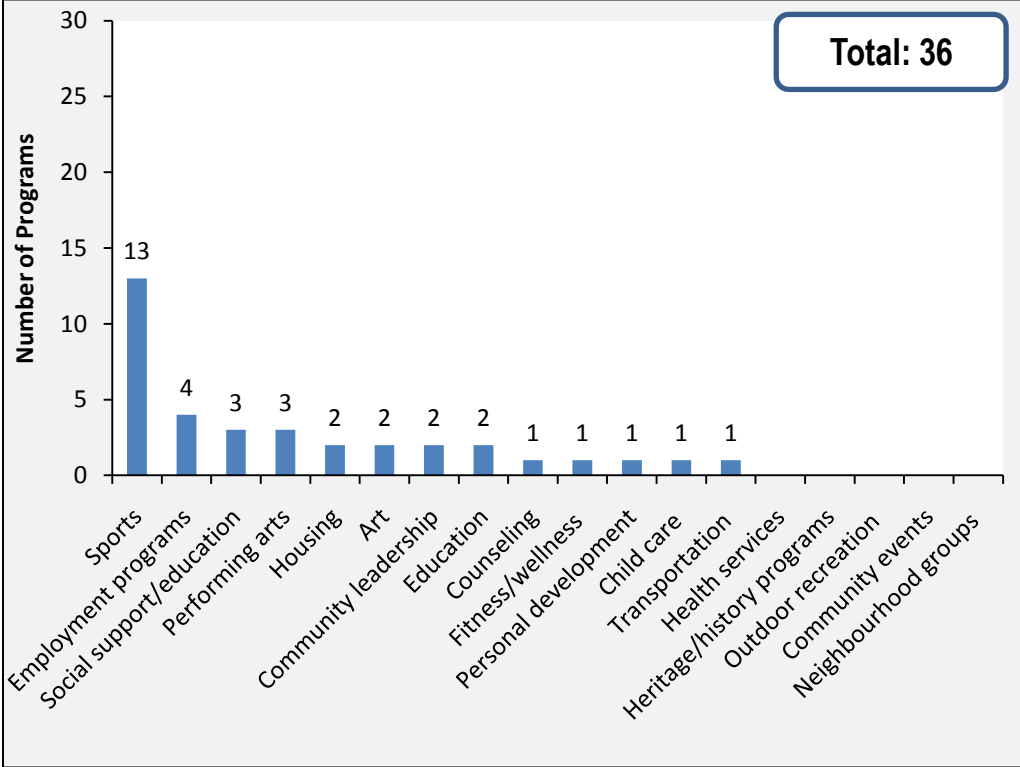


Figure 18-13 - Programs by enrollment – sometimes oversubscribed

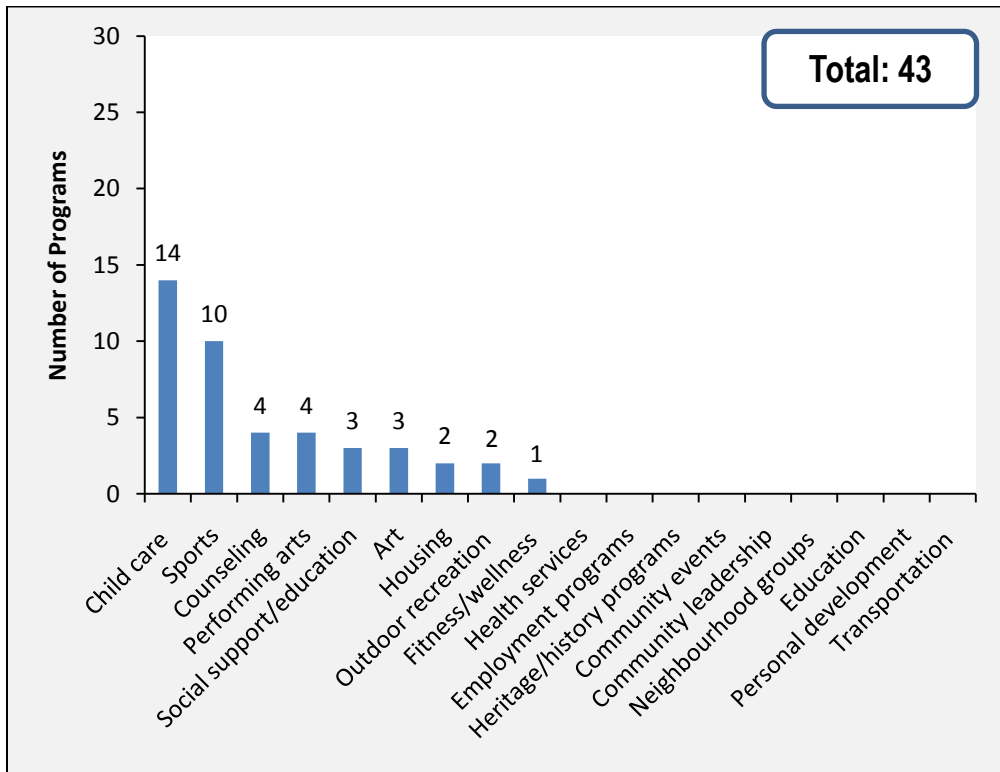


Figure 18-14 - Programs by enrollment – always oversubscribed

