



# What We Heard Report

## Phase 1 of 2024 Budget Engagement – *Understanding Resident Priorities.*

### Executive Summary

Each year, Rocky View County budgets, plans, and invests for the future based on resident needs and community priorities. To ensure residents are heard in the budgetary process, the County is conducting a three-phase public budget engagement.

This report offers a summary of feedback collected in Phase 1 of Budget Engagement over the spring and summer of 2023. A complete overview of feedback gathered from all three phases of engagement will be shared following the adoption of the 2024 Budget.

### Public Engagement Approach – Phase 1

To better understand resident priorities and concerns, Rocky View County elected officials and members of the management team hosted a series of Open Houses across the County where they asked residents, “*What issues should Rocky View County Focus on.*” This question was also posted on the Your View budget engagement page.

Additionally, a survey on service levels and a budget-balancing tool were offered to residents from July 24 to August 21 on the [budget engagement webpage](#).

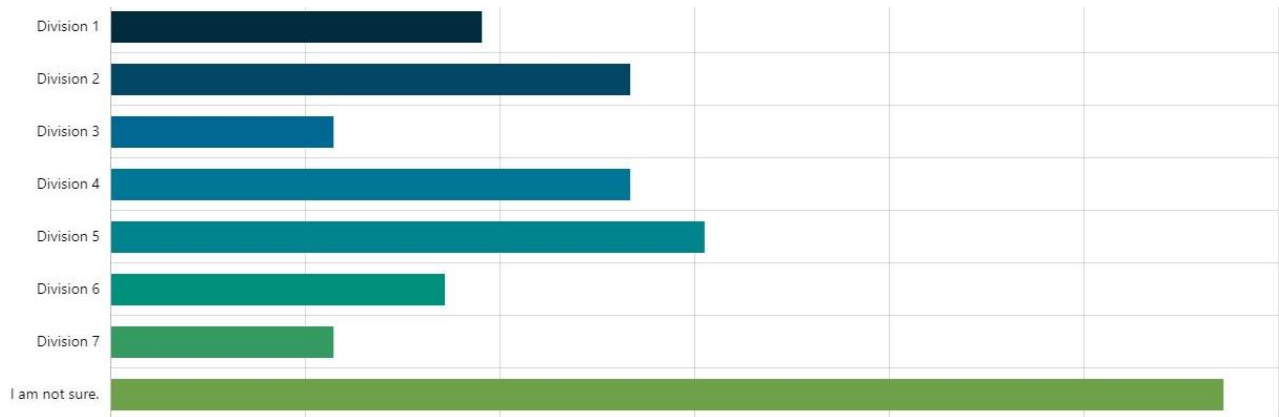
## Participation

Throughout Phase 1 of Budget Engagement, a total of 419 comments were shared with members of the engagement team — offering valuable insight into the individual priorities of residents. Additionally, 105 online surveys were completed. Results from this survey largely validated the finding of previous data gathered in the 2022 Citizen Satisfaction survey, available [here](#).

Data collected from the online survey tells us that residents from all age ranges took part. However, the 55 – 64 age range had the highest levels of participation with 31 out of 105 survey participants falling into that age range.



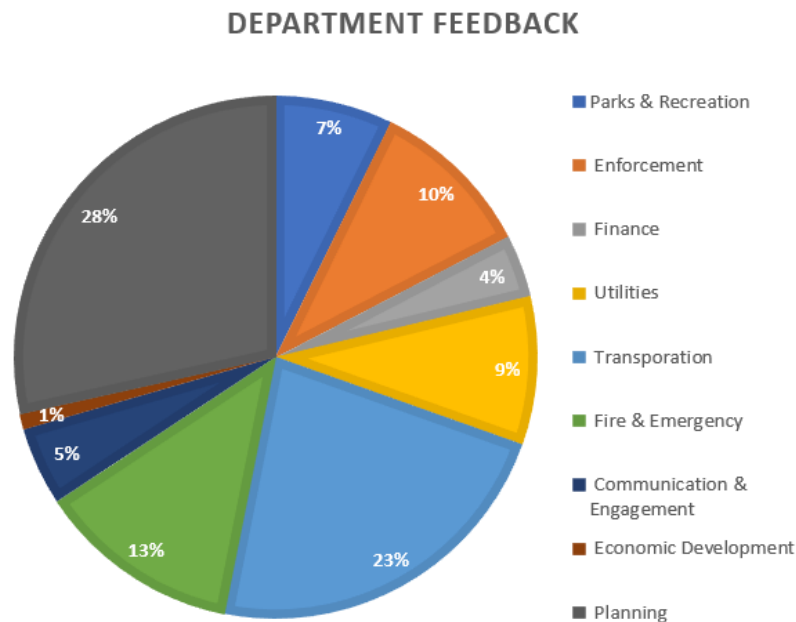
Many participants were unsure which Rocky View County division they resided in. Of those who knew, Division 5 had the most respondents, followed by Divisions 2 and 4.



## Engagement Results - What Issues Should Rocky View County Focus on?

We asked residents *“what issues should Rocky View County focus on”* during Open Houses across the County.

236 comments were shared with Planning & Development, Transportation Services, and Fire and Emergency services leading feedback.



**Planning and Development.** Participants asked the County to **preserve country residential lifestyle**, address potential **traffic concerns** caused by **visitors to the planned Costco** in Springbank, **improve communications and engagement** transparency and notification methods, **restrict gravel pits**, and ensure **developers** remain within the limits of **Area Structure Plans**.

**Transportation Services.** Feedback centered around managing **traffic congestion**, **snow removal**, **road repair**, **road maintenance**, and **road infrastructure** improvements.

**Emergency and Fire Services.** Residents strongly advocated for a **secondary egress** from west Bragg Creek and to ensure for **Fire Smarting measures** near the Prince of Peace Village.

**Enforcement Services:** Residents requested a **garbage bylaw** to protect humans, wildlife and prevent roadside dumping. **Speeding** and wildlife vehicle collisions were also shared concerns as well as **rural crime** and the **complaint and enforcement processes**.

**Parks, Recreation and Community support:** Participants called for **more recreational opportunities**, additional **active pathways**, and **designated bike lanes**.

**Utility Services.** Residents shared **positive feedback** on the new **compost pilot project** in Bragg Creek. **Infrastructure improvements** at the Bragg Creek Transfer station were **appreciated**. **Concerns** around **water** included themes of **supply**, **infrastructure** and **costs** to taxpayers.

**Communications & Engagement:** Most feedback centered on **how to promote Councillor Open Houses**, with residents voicing that the events would be more accurately called “resource fairs.” A change in tone on **social media** was noted as **positive and relatable**, and the County was encouraged to **organize information events with local experts** on issues of concern.

**Financial Services:** Residents commented on the need to **reduce or eliminate** the **local area improvement tax** for Prince of Peace Village, as well as **reduce taxes** in general and more **focus on revenue**.

**Economic Development:** This service received two comments, one on the need to **balance agriculture** with **housing development** projects, and another calling for the County to **invest in ecological goods and services** through programs like the ALUS (Alternative Land Use Services) Rocky View program.

Additional comments requested more support for green initiatives, better access to healthcare services, a long-term Environmental, Social, and Governance strategy, a proposed off-site levy, a potential dark sky policy in Bragg Creek, hindered animal access to the river in Bragg Creek, and logging by Spray Lakes Sawmills.

## Satisfaction Levels Survey

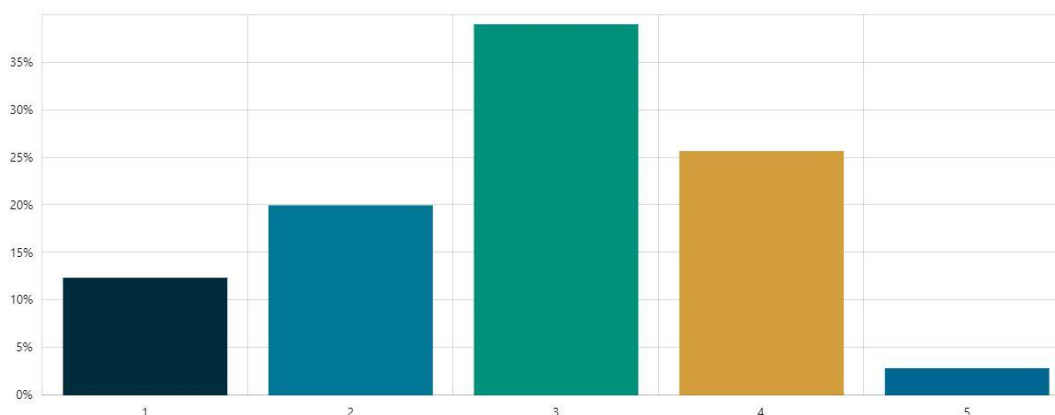
A total of 105 residents answered the following three questions with the opportunity to explain their responses:

- How satisfied are residents with Rocky View County provides for tax dollars?
- What services in the County are working well?
- What services in the County are NOT working well?

The following comments have been condensed for summary purposes. It is important to mention that certain comments touch upon recurring themes, and the calculations are based on the most prevalent themes.

### How satisfied are you with what Rocky View County provides for tax dollars?

Residents rated the County at **2.87 stars** out of five when asked to rate the services provided for tax dollars collected.



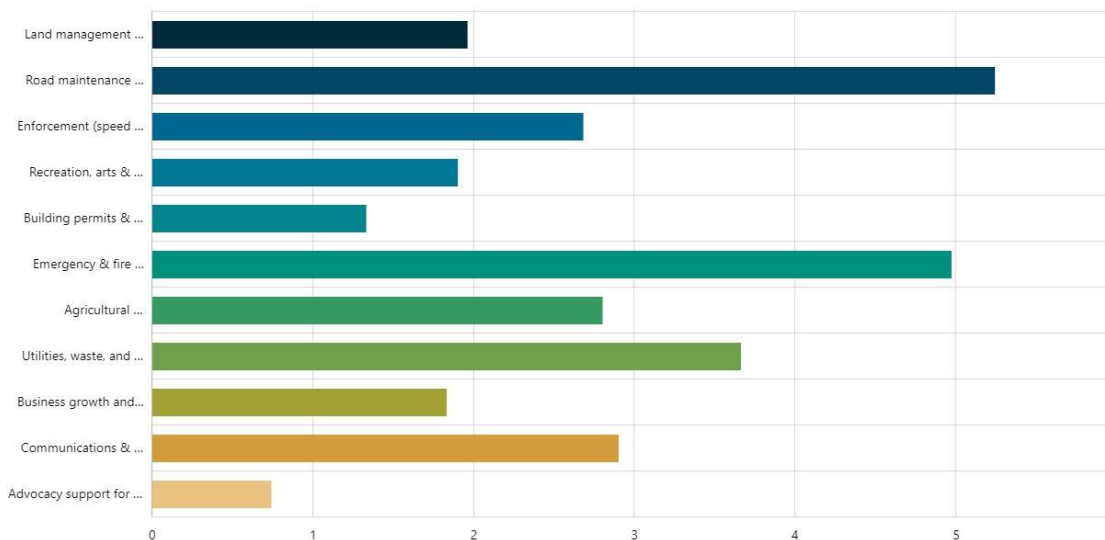
When questioned why they gave their rating, residents shared feedback, with calls to **improve road maintenance** and **snow removal**. Numerous residents felt they received **little service from the County**, and **many were satisfied with the service levels provided**. Additional comments were made on

enforcement, weed control, recreational opportunities, planning and development, permits, inspections, and support for seniors.

## What services in the County are working well?

We asked residents to pick the top three services in the County that work well. **The number one choice was Transportation Services, followed by Fire and Emergency services, and Utility Services.**

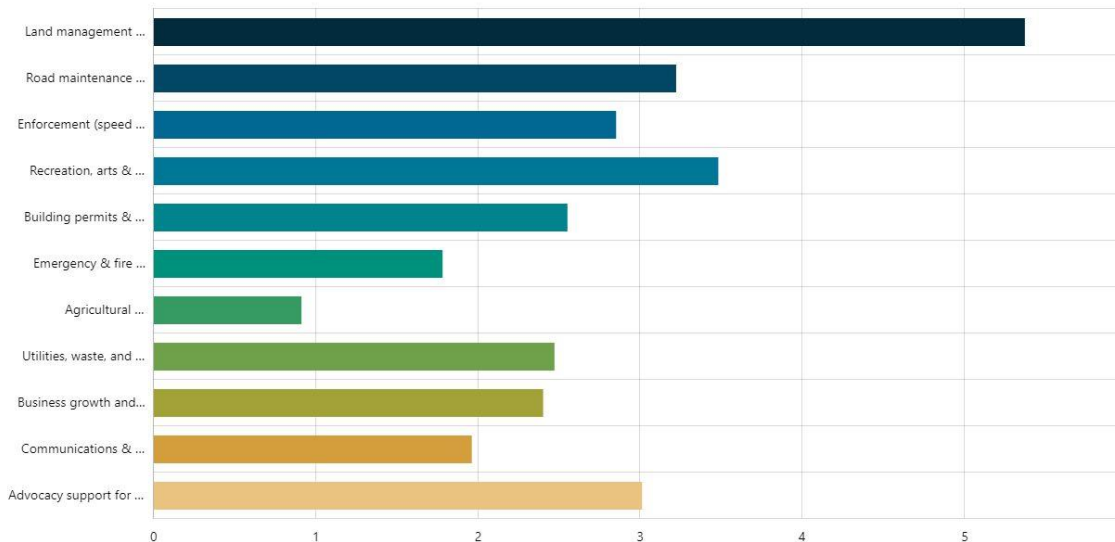
When asked what guided their choices, many respondents shared they were **satisfied with services in general**, and a comparable amount **expressed dissatisfaction with services** in general.



## What services in the County are NOT working well?

Residents were asked to pick the top three services in the County that are **not** working well for them.

**The top service of concern was Planning & Development, followed by Recreation, Arts & Community Support and Transportation Services.**



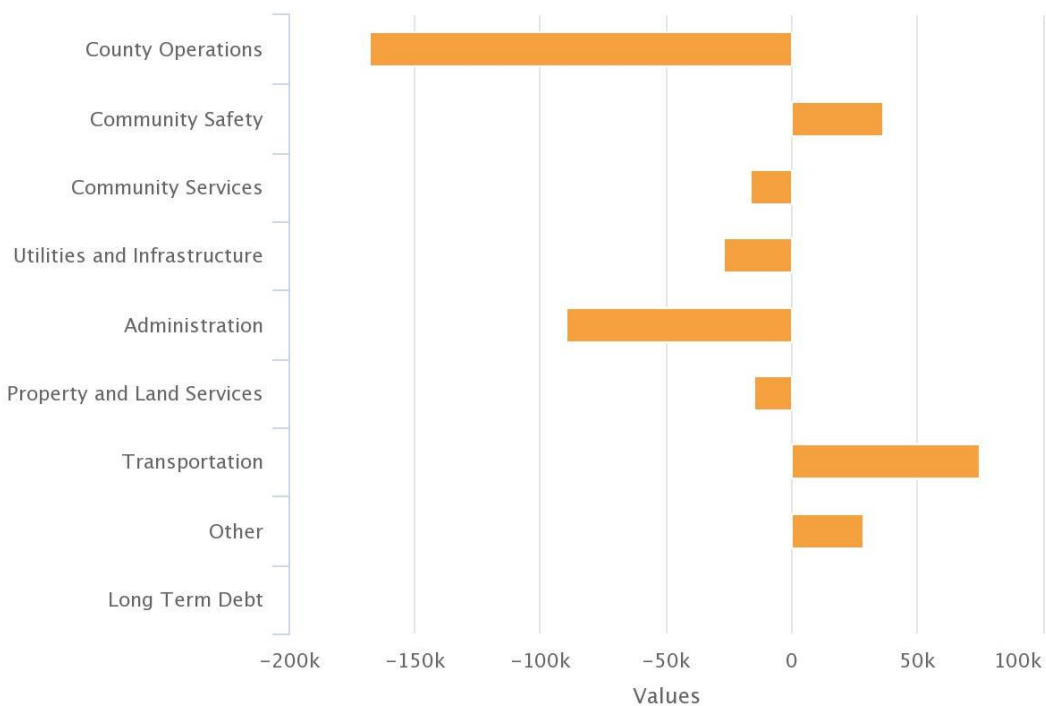
## Balancing Act – the budget allocator tool

A budget simulator tool was included in the public engagement. The tool offered residents the opportunity to allocate funding to services using numbers from the 2023 budget. Participants could then submit their mock budget to the County.

Residents spent 393 hours and 58 minutes using the budget simulator tool (an average of about 10 minutes per resident) with 2,182 total page views.

Thirty-five participants submitted their mock budgets, all with different priorities. Here is a total breakdown of amounts increased and decreased by services on average.

Balancing Act- Average Submission Increase or Decrease



## What is next?

**Phase 2 of budget engagement** will launch September 21 with an invitation to register for an information session with members of the finance team. This provides the opportunity for residents to learn more about our budgeting process. Following the information session, residents will be encouraged to share their thoughts on the budget process, the structure of past budget documents, and highlight any areas or issues of concern.

**Phase 3 of budget engagement** will encompass feedback shared from residents to Council during the November budget deliberation Special Council meeting.