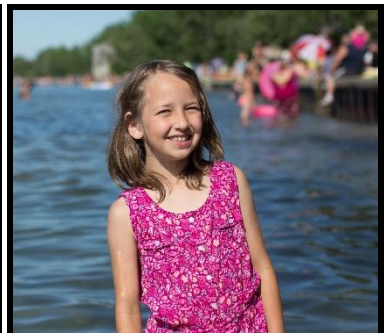


Town of Sylvan Lake 2015 Social Needs Assessment

Submitted to Town of Sylvan Lake

By Nichols Applied Management
Management and Economic Consultants
Suite 2401, 10104 – 103 Avenue NW
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 0H8

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of an assessment of the social needs in the Town of Sylvan Lake. The Town of Sylvan Lake undertook this Social Needs Assessment as a preliminary step to developing a Social Master Plan for the community. The assessment included:

- Developing a framework to guide discussion, analysis and future planning to achieve quality of life outcomes identified as being of particular importance to Sylvan Lake residents;
- Identifying Sylvan Lake's social strengths and assets;
- Identifying challenges the community may encounter in meeting social needs; and,
- Identifying priority social needs.

Nichols Applied Management Inc. was engaged to assist the Town of Sylvan Lake with its 2015 Social Needs Assessment.

The assessment involved gathering information and opinions through several channels, including:

- Reviewing background documents pertaining to social needs in Sylvan Lake including previous needs assessments, housing studies and municipal reports;
- A survey targeted at representatives of organizations with direct involvement in program and service delivery of relevance to quality of life in the community. The survey was also open to the public;
- Separate focus groups with youth, seniors, educators, affordable and low-income housing representatives;
- Focus groups with representatives from government and non-profit organizations familiar with social needs of children, youth, families, seniors, and individuals with mental health and/or addictions issues;
- Gathering and reviewing information about Sylvan Lake's population, the education and employment of residents, and community safety and wellbeing; and,
- Discussions with the Town's FCSS staff.

Kelly Smith, Alissa McDonald and Val Munro of FCSS Sylvan Lake provided valuable support and insight throughout the assessment.

KEY FINDINGS

Addressing social needs in Sylvan Lake should focus on enhancing quality of life for all residents. The quality of life components identified as being of greatest importance to the community, which are not hierarchical, are:

- Households are able to meet their basic needs. These include shelter, food, clothing and transportation to access needed supports and services;
- Residents have supports and services to meet their mental health needs;
- Residents have supports and services to maintain a healthy lifestyle and meet their physical health needs;
- Residents are engaged positively in the community;
- Residents have strong, healthy relationships;
- Residents feel safe in their homes and in the community;
- Residents have a sense of purpose, through their contributions to family, the community, work, and/or learning; and,
- Residents are able to enjoy the lake and the community's natural surroundings.

Sylvan Lake has a number of strengths and assets which provide a strong foundation for meeting social needs. There are already a number of programs and services in place to help meet the social needs of residents. Many of these programs are collaborative in nature, bringing the Town of Sylvan Lake, community organizations, service providers, and individuals together to address specific needs. FCSS plays a strong role in identifying these needs and endeavoring to bring stakeholders together to seek solutions.

Sylvan Lake's location is another strength of the community. The small, rural location on a scenic lake and the proximity to Red Deer make it an appealing place to live. The location provides unique recreational activities in a 'small-town' environment with a larger centre close by offering many needed services.

There are some challenges to meeting social needs in Sylvan Lake. Sylvan Lake has a young and growing population. While this provides opportunities for the social development of the community, it also creates challenges. It is difficult for the community to meet the increasing demand for social services, to be proactive in having services in place when they are needed, and to maintain awareness of the programs and services available in the town. As the community extends outward, accessing available programs and services is becoming more challenging for residents lacking their own transportation. Finally, the proximity to Red Deer influences the programs and services made available in Sylvan Lake. Although Red Deer is

relatively close, some residents experience challenges in getting to and from Red Deer for needed services.

There are eight priority social needs in the community. These needs are not hierarchical in nature but addressing them would enhance the overall quality of life of Sylvan Lake residents:

- An urgent care centre and low-cost recreational activities to support good physical health;
- Affordable public transportation both within Sylvan Lake and to Red Deer;
- Increased availability of housing for low-income households;
- Provision of local income and employment services;
- Increased affordable counselling and other supports for individuals with mental health needs;
- Programs to promote increased community safety;
- Family counselling, early childhood development supports for parents, and increased awareness of available parenting supports; and,
- Programs that reduce social isolation.

Four demographic groups were identified as potentially benefitting the most from enhanced social programs and services in the community. These are, in no particular order:

- Youth;
- Individuals with mental or physical health needs;
- Single parents and households where one partner is away for long periods of time for work; and,
- Seniors.

Considerations for Future Planning

The conversations that took place as this Social Needs Assessment was being prepared highlight the complex interplay among factors that can influence the quality of life of Sylvan Lake residents. These conversations need to continue so the community can move forward in a coordinated way to address the priorities that emerged through this research.

This Social Needs Assessment report will inform the development of a Social Master Plan that establishes clear quality of life goals for the community, sets out specific actions that will be taken to achieve the goals, clarifies the roles of various stakeholders in relation to each goal, and identifies how social conditions and quality of life in Sylvan Lake will be monitored.

1. Introduction

Sylvan Lake is a growing, dynamic community in an enviable location adjacent to one of the most popular recreational lakes in Central Alberta. The community's population has risen to over 14,000 in recent years, and the Town is expanding outward to accommodate its new residents.

The Town of Sylvan Lake recognizes the importance of the community keeping informed of its changing social needs, and working collaboratively with community groups and organizations and other orders of government to ensure current and emerging social needs in the community are understood and addressed.

In June 2015, the Town of Sylvan Lake engaged Nichols Applied Management Inc. to conduct the Town's 2015 Social Needs Assessment. The consulting team worked closely with the Town's Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) staff in implementing a social needs assessment process that would result in a valuable tool to support building a shared understanding of:

- The community's considerable social strengths;
- The trends and factors that may impact the quality of life of residents of Sylvan Lake;
- The social program and service assets and gaps in the community;
- The community's priority social needs; and,
- What is needed to move forward to address current and emerging social needs in the community.

The 2015 Social Needs Assessment for the Town of Sylvan Lake provides a solid foundation for the development of a Social Master Plan for the community.

2. Approach Taken for the 2015 Social Needs Assessment

A Collaborative Approach

The approach taken for the Town of Sylvan Lake's 2015 Social Needs Assessment was highly collaborative. The consulting team worked with the Town's FCSS staff as an integrated team in seeking information, insights, views and suggestions from involved organizations and individuals who are committed to Sylvan Lake offering a high quality of life for all residents. The approach emphasized engaging key stakeholders and residents in conversations about what constitutes a high quality of life for residents, the strengths of the community that contribute to creating high quality of life, the challenges the community faces and where the community should focus its efforts to improve quality of life.

Focus Groups

Five focus groups were held. The focus group discussions brought individuals from the following groups together for conversations about social trends and needs in the community:

- Educators and individuals who work with children and youth;
- Organizations familiar with housing needs in the community;
- Youth;
- Seniors; and,
- Organizations involved in providing social services in the community including representatives from municipal and provincial government and non-profit organizations familiar with social needs of children, youth, families, seniors, individuals with mental health and/or addictions, and victims of crime and domestic violence.

Survey

An online survey provided an opportunity for broader input into the 2015 Social Needs Assessment. Representatives of 71 key organizations with insights into social trends, strengths and gaps that could potentially impact quality of life in Sylvan Lake were invited to complete the survey. The survey was also posted on the Town's website to allow others wanting to provide input with an opportunity to participate. In total, 173 survey responses were received.

This approach to surveying for the 2015 Social Needs Assessment proved to be effective at obtaining informed and thoughtful input from a relatively large number of people. However, this approach does have implications in terms of how the survey results can be interpreted. As a random sample of residents was not surveyed, the results cannot be reported as "X% of residents" feel a certain way about an issue.

Community Profile

Previous reports and relevant background documents were reviewed, and data pertinent to understanding social trends and needs in the community were compiled and analyzed. Information from focus groups, the survey and the community profile were analyzed and compared to determine the priority community needs and understand the community's strengths and challenges.

3. Sylvan Lake Social Profile

This section outlines current population trends and demographics to gain a deeper understanding of how they may influence social needs in the community. The information is based primarily on data from the 2011 Statistics Canada Census and National Household Survey.

Highlights

- The population of Sylvan Lake has been growing at a rate of approximately 6% per year over the past 15 years, 4% faster than the province.
- Sylvan Lake has a young population. The average age of the population is 32, 5.5 years younger than the provincial average. About 65% of households in Sylvan Lake have children compared to 60% in the province.
- The proportion of the population 65 and over has remained constant over the past 15 years at approximately 7%. However the population of 55 – 64 year olds has been growing at a rate of about 1% every five years. This suggests that the community may see an increase in demand for seniors housing and other services in the years to come.
- Residents of Sylvan Lake are primarily of European descent. There are a small number of Aboriginal people, Filipinos, and people of other origins who have moved to Sylvan Lake for work opportunities.
- A greater proportion of Sylvan Lake residents have apprenticeship or trades certificates and diplomas than the provincial population. However, the proportion of residents of Sylvan Lake with university degrees or post-secondary diplomas is smaller. The high number of trades people in Sylvan Lake may suggest a vulnerability to economic downturns and the financial stability of households.
- Females in the community are more likely to have university degrees or post-secondary diplomas than males in the community.
- Sylvan Lake's unemployment rate rose significantly between 2006 to 2011, reflecting the vulnerability of many households in the community to economic shifts, such as Alberta experienced in 2009-2010.



- The proportion of residents employed in sales and service-related occupations tends to be higher in Sylvan Lake than in both Red Deer and the province. The sales and services jobs provide a below average earning potential and are more likely to be held by females than males. Other occupational categories with comparatively high employment in Sylvan Lake are trades, transport and equipment operators. Jobs in these categories are more likely to be filled by men and provide an average provincial earning potential. Management positions in Sylvan Lake have the highest earning potential and are filled by slightly more males than females.
- Since 2006, the percentage of residents commuting outside of Sylvan Lake, Red Deer and Red Deer County for work rose from 10% to 16%. This may influence household dynamics and social needs particularly if the person leaving the area for work is absent for long periods of time and is part of a household with children.
- In 2011, median household incomes of couples with children in Sylvan Lake was higher than the provincial median by approximately \$4,000 per year. However, the median household income of lone-parent households in the community is almost \$10,000 below the provincial median. Lone-parent households account for the largest proportion of low-income households in Sylvan Lake.
- In Sylvan Lake in 2011, the male median income was almost \$30,000 more per year than females. In addition, men in Sylvan Lake earn, on average, \$10,000 more than men throughout the province, whereas women earn on average less than \$1,000 more than women throughout the province.
- The number of private dwellings in Sylvan Lake rose significantly from 2001 to 2011 reflecting the population growth the community has experienced. While the overall number of dwellings has increased, the percentage of dwellings that are rented has been slowly decreasing, making it more challenging for households not in the market to buy a home to obtain housing in the community.
- Overall crime rates in Sylvan Lake have been declining since 2009 although they continue to be slightly higher than provincial crime rates. In 2012, both violent and property crimes spiked. Youth crime in Sylvan Lake is significantly lower than in the province and has been since 2009. While impaired driving is declining, drug violations are increasing. This is a major concern of Sylvan Lake residents.
- Sylvan Lake residents and those who live in the Sylvan Lake health catchment area tend to access emergency medical care at the Red Deer Regional Hospital which had a wait time of approximately 3.4 hours in the 2014-15 year, roughly 35 minutes longer than targeted.
- Various determinants of health show that the majority of Sylvan Lake residents fare well and are therefore less likely to experience health issues. 7% of the population experiences environmental, social and/or economic hardships as indicators of potential poor health compared to 8% for the province.

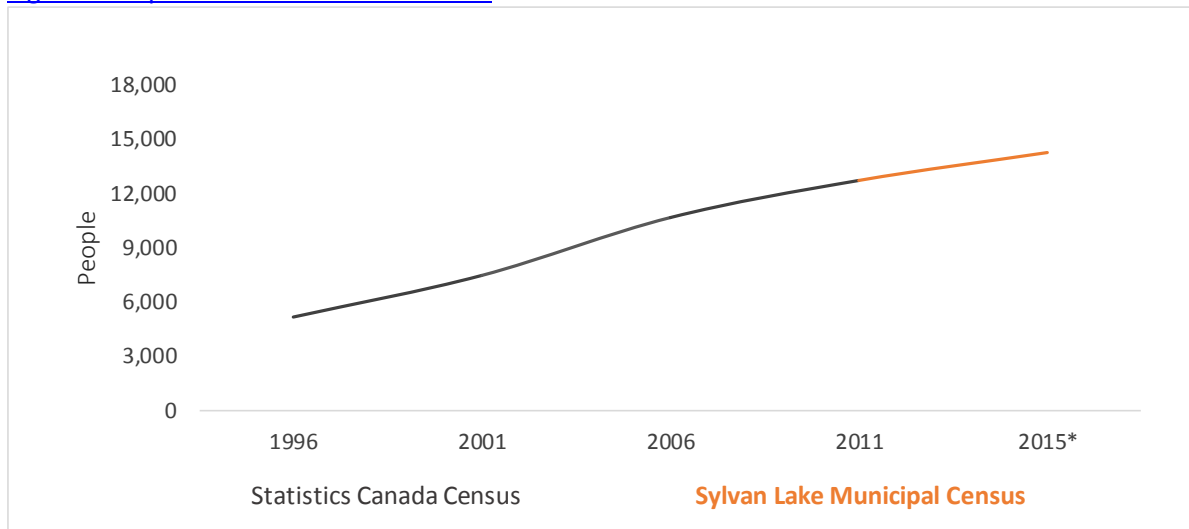
3.1 Population

The Town of Sylvan Lake has experienced strong and steady population growth at an average annual rate of approximately 6% since 1996. By comparison, Alberta's population grew at an average annual rate of 2% over that time.

Sylvan Lake's population grew by 146% between 1996 and 2011. This is significantly higher than the 35% population growth experienced by the province between those years.

The Town's 2013 Municipal Census reported a population of 13,015, up 5.6% from 2011 when the last Federal Census was conducted. Population estimates from the 2015 Municipal Census, which is scheduled for approval by the Alberta Government in January 2016, are 14,310 which is an increase of an additional 10% from the 2013 census.

[Figure 1: Population Growth 1996 - 2015](#)



[Sources: Statistics Canada: Census 2011 and the Town of Sylvan Lake 2015 Municipal Census](#)

[\(unofficial population figure as of November, 2015\).](#)

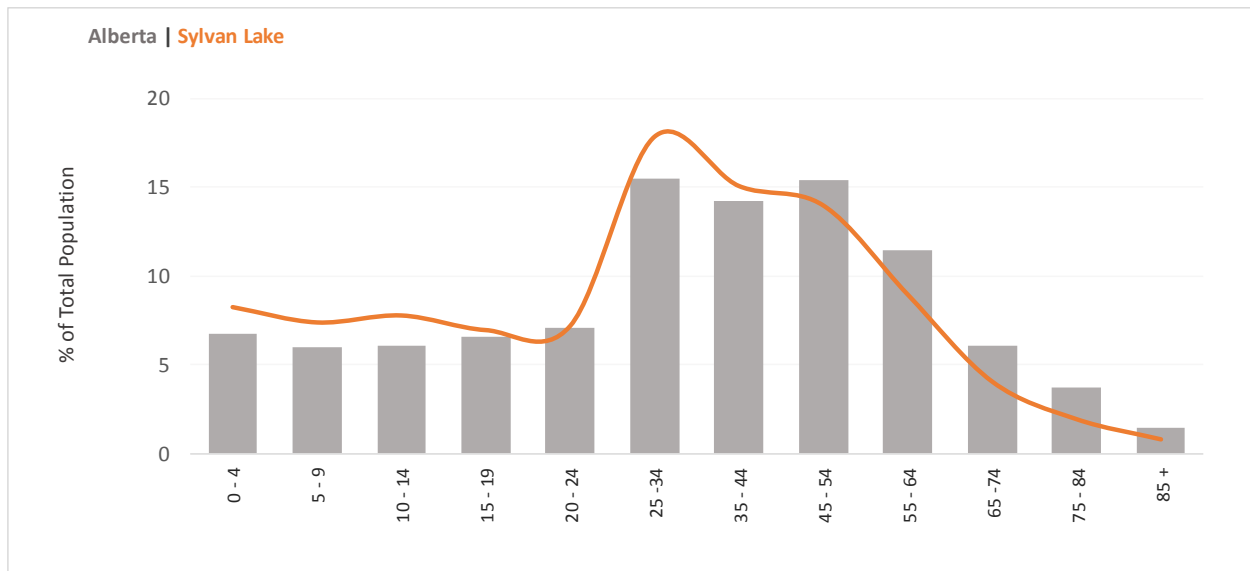
The population residing near the Town of Sylvan Lake also needs to be taken into consideration when assessing community social needs as it can be assumed that these individuals are accessing social programs and services in the town. According to the 2011 Federal Census, 435 people lived outside, but near, the town.

3.2 Age Distribution

Sylvan Lake is a relatively young community, with 54% of the population under the age of 35. The median age in the community is 32 - 5.5 years younger than the median age in the province.

Since 2001, the percentage of the population 65 and over has remained relatively constant at about 7%. However, as the overall population has increased this means that the number of residents in this group has also increased. As the percentage of the population between the ages of 55 and 64 is growing at a rate of about 1% every five years it can be expected that the percentage of residents over the age of 64 will begin to rise in the years ahead.

[Figure 2: Population by Age](#)

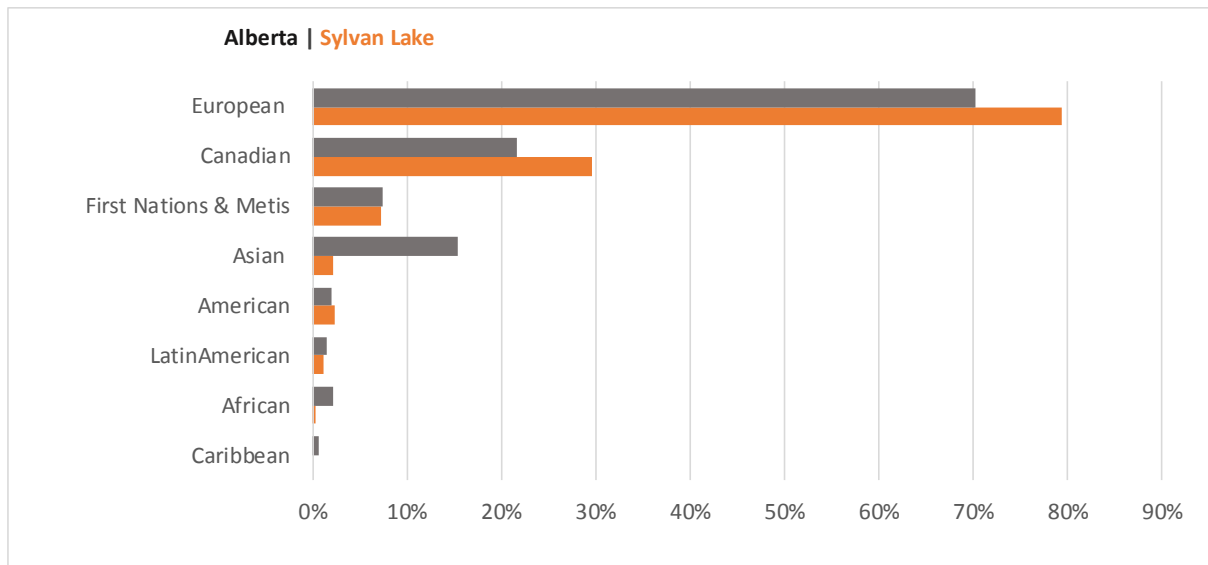


[Source: Statistics Canada: Census 2011](#)

3.3 Cultural Diversity and Language

Sylvan Lake is less culturally diverse than Alberta as a whole. The 2011 Federal Census indicates that 4% of Sylvan Lake residents considered themselves to belong to a visible minority group compared to approximately 19% of Albertans. The majority of Sylvan Lake residents identify as being of European or Canadian ethnic origin.

[Figure 3: Ethnic Origin of Population](#)



Source: [Statistics Canada Census 2011](#)

English is the first language of roughly 97% of the residents of Sylvan Lake. Among residents whose first language is not English, the largest groups are residents from the Philippines (Tagalog), the Netherlands (Dutch) and Latin America (Spanish).

[Table 1: Languages Other than English Spoken in Sylvan Lake](#)

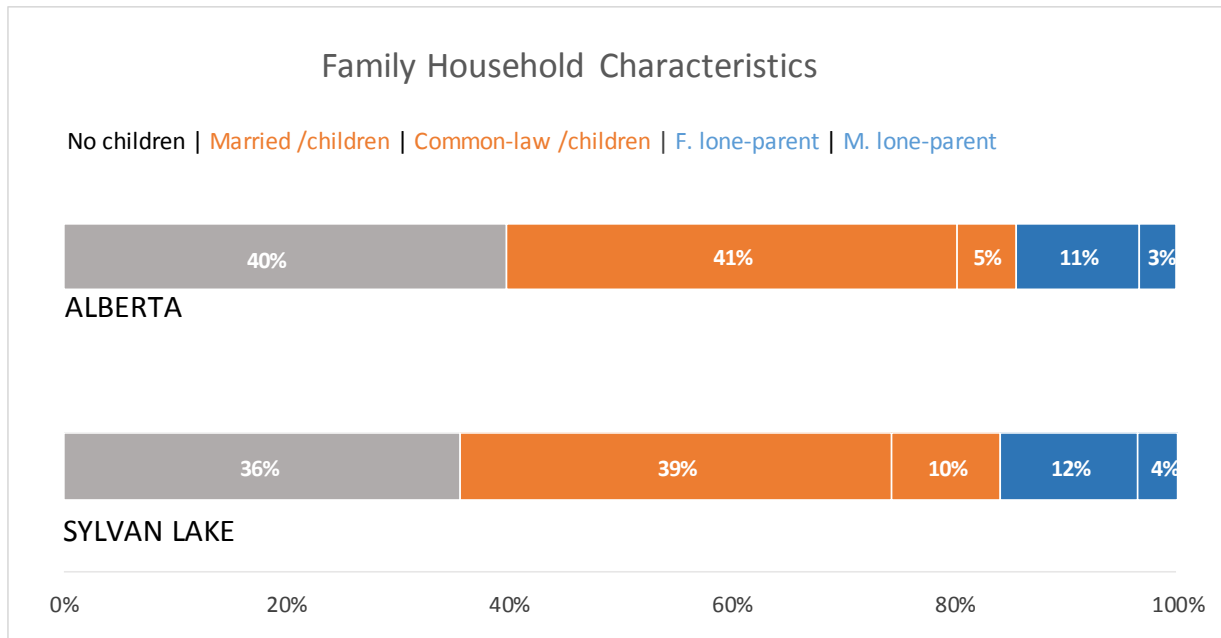
Language	Number of People	Language	Number of People	Language	Number of People
Tagalog	75	Greek	10	Hungarian	5
Dutch	45	Italian	10	Malayalam	5
Spanish	35	Russian	10	Norwegian	5
Ukrainian	25	Chinese	10	Portuguese	5
Polish	20	Arabic	5	Romanian	5
Afrikaans	15	Bantu languages	5	Swedish	5
Korean	15	Bisayan languages	5	Thai	5
Slovak	15	Danish	5	Urdu	5
Cree	10	Finnish	5	Punjabi (Punjabi)	5

Source: [Statistics Canada Census 2011](#)

3.4 Family Composition

Family composition is an important consideration in assessing social needs in a community. Sylvan Lake has a higher proportion of households with children than Alberta overall (approximately 65% as compared to 60%). The Town also has a higher proportion of common-law households with children (10% as compared to 5%) and a marginally higher proportion of lone-parent households (16% as compared to 14%).

[Figure 4: Family Composition](#)



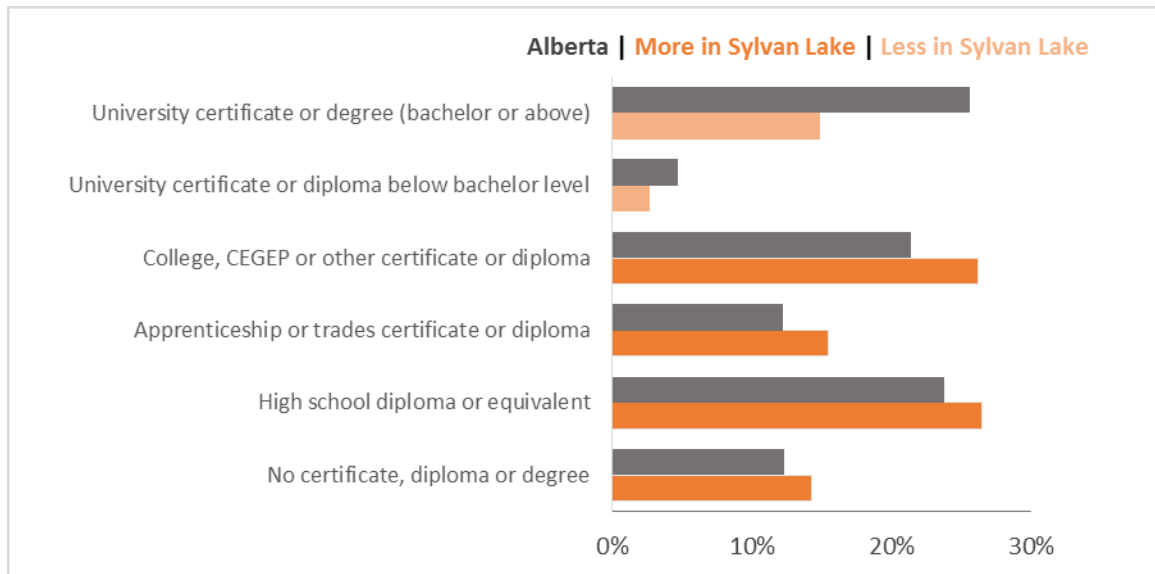
[Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2011](#)



3.5 Education

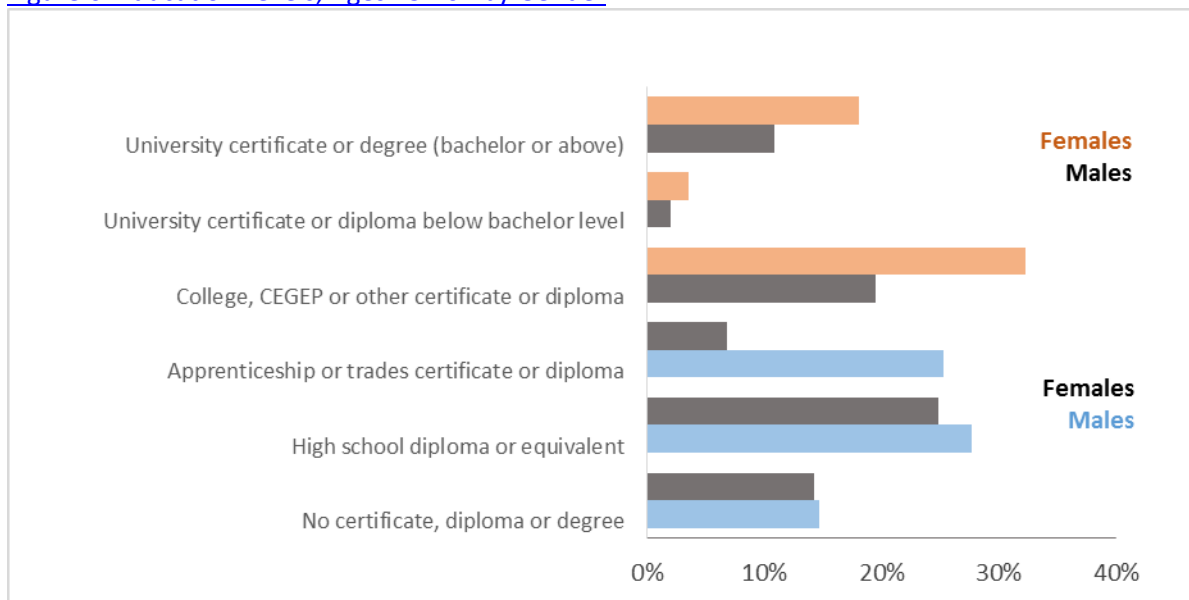
As illustrated in Figure 5, Sylvan Lake has a higher proportion of residents with college education, apprenticeship or trades training, and whose highest level of education is grade 12 or less, and a lower proportion of residents with university education than the province generally. Figure 6 illustrates a greater proportion of females having university education while a greater proportion of males have apprenticeship or trades certificates.

[Figure 5: Education Levels, Ages 25 - 64](#)



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey

[Figure 6: Education Levels, Ages 25 - 64 by Gender](#)



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey

3.6 Employment

Employment

Participation rate refers to residents 15 years and older who are either employed or actively looking for work (i.e. in the labour force) relative to the total population 15 years and older. In 2011, the participation rate of residents of Sylvan Lake (76%) was slightly higher than the provincial participation rate (73%).

In 2011, 6,730 residents (70%) indicated that they were employed while 505 individuals said they were unemployed. In 2011, the unemployment rate in Sylvan Lake was 7%, slightly higher than the provincial unemployment rate of 5.8%*.

[Table 2: Participation, Employment and Unemployment Rates 2001 - 2011](#)

	Sylvan Lake			Alberta
	2011	2006	2001	2011
Participation rate	76.1	79.1	76.5	73.2
Employment rate	70.7	75.3	70.6	69
Unemployment rate	7.1	4.7	7.7	5.8

[Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey and Census 2006, 2001](#)

Unemployment

A high proportion of Sylvan Lake households have someone employed in the energy sector. These households can be vulnerable to shifts in employment circumstances and household income when there are downturns in the economy as has been the case this past year. Taxfiler data shows that the percentage of households receiving employment insurance in the last economic downturn (2010) rose to 17.3%, up from 14.6% in 2005. It can be assumed that the recent slowdown in the economy has resulted in another increase in the number of residents collecting employment insurance in the community.

[Table 3: Total Households Receiving Employment Insurance \(2005 and 2010\)](#)

Year	Sylvan Lake Households		Alberta
	Total	%	%
2005	670	14.6	11.1
2010	940	17.3	13.9

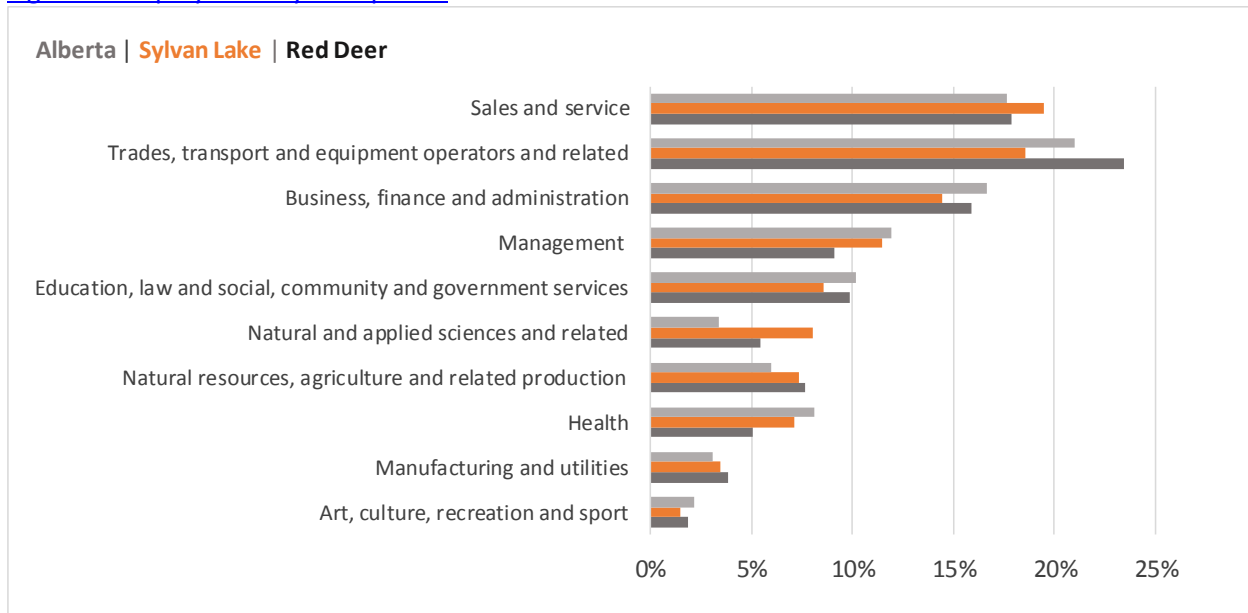
[Source: Statistics Canada Small Area and Data Division Taxfiler Data – 2005 and 2010 years \(Sylvan Lake Housing Needs Assessment Update 2013\)](#)

* Note: Employment rate plus unemployment rate does not equal participation rate as employment rate is calculated using total population over the age of 15 as the denominator while unemployment rate uses participation rate as the denominator.

Occupation

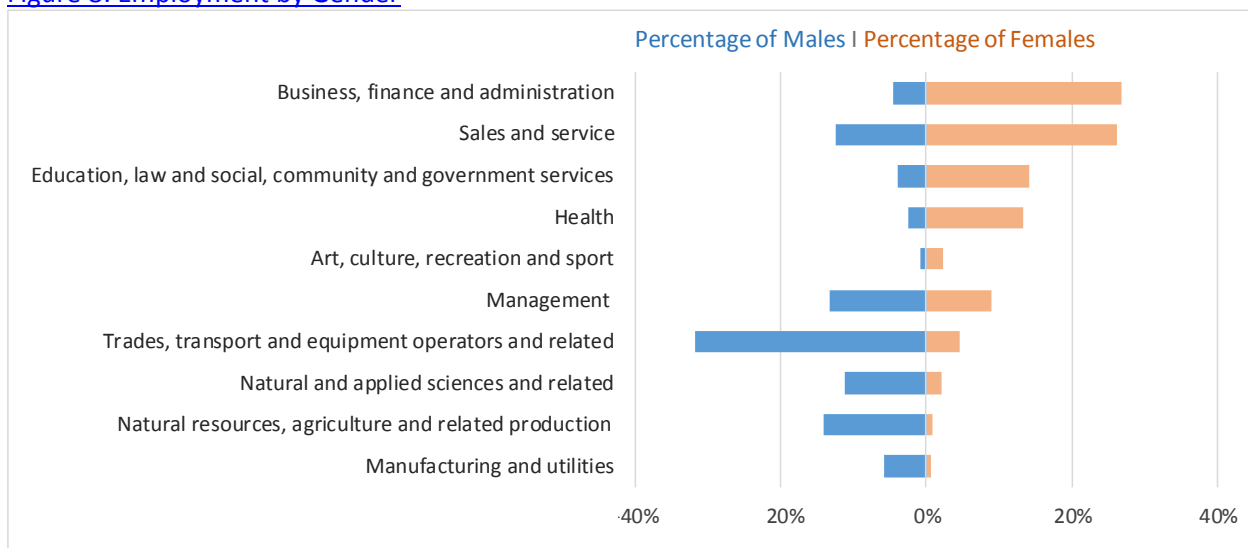
Almost 20% of employed residents of Sylvan Lake work in sales and services, which is a sector that tends to have a higher concentration of female workers. A similar proportion of residents (19%) work in trades, transport or as equipment operators – occupations that tend to have a higher concentration of male workers. Compared to both Red Deer and the province as a whole, Sylvan Lake has a higher proportion of the population working in natural resources, agriculture and related production and a lower proportion working in business, finance and administration, and education, law and social, community and government services.

[Figure 7: Employment by Occupation](#)



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey

[Figure 8: Employment by Gender](#)



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey

Thirty-seven percent (37%) of residents in Sylvan Lake are employed in occupations with below average earning potential, 20% are employed in occupations with average earning potential and 43% are employed in occupations with above average earning potential. The three occupational categories with the highest number of employees in Sylvan Lake (i.e., sales and service; trades, transport and equipment operators; and, business, finance and administration) have either average or below average earning potential.

As seen in Table 4, the two occupations most likely to be held by females and which employ the highest percentage of females in Sylvan Lake have the lowest earning potential: sales and services; and, business, finance and administration. The two occupations with the highest earning potential employ a greater proportion of males.

[Table 4: Relative Average Earning Potential by Occupation \(Alberta\)](#)

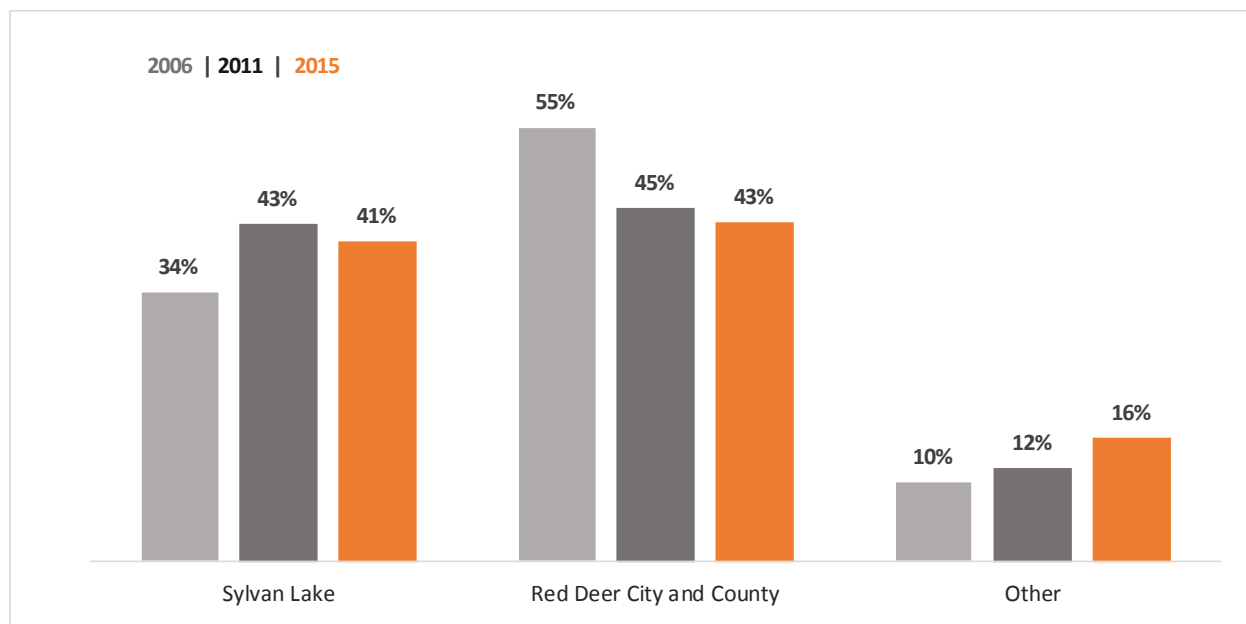
Occupation Category (in order of earning potential)	Average Earning Potential	Majority Gender Employed
Management	Above Average	Male
Natural and Applied Sciences	Above Average	Male
Health	Above Average	Female
Social Science, Education, Government Service and Religion	Above Average	Female
Primary Industry (e.g. agriculture, forestry, oil and gas extraction)	Above Average	Male
Trades, transport and equipment operators	Average	Male
Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport	Average	Female
Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities	Below Average	Male
Business, finance and administration	Below Average	Female
Sales and Service	Below Average	Female

[Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey \(2015\)](#)

Commutes to Work

In 2011, approximately 41% of employed Sylvan Lake residents worked in Sylvan Lake, up from approximately 35% in 2006. Between 2006 and 2011, the percentage of workers who commuted to Red Deer or elsewhere in the region for work decreased from 55% to 43%. At the same time, the percentage of residents working outside the region increased from 10% to 16%.

Figure 9: Commuting Flow of Sylvan Lake Residents

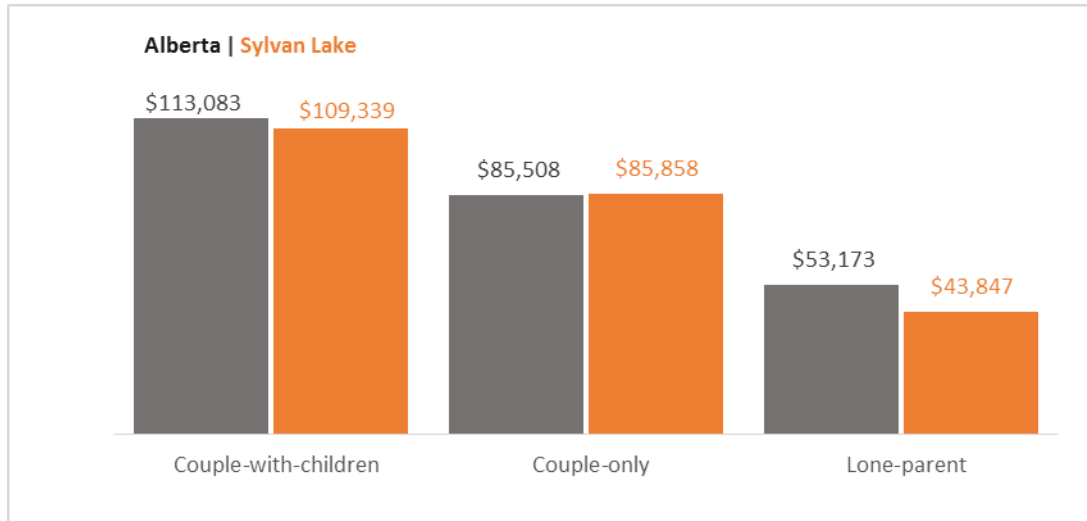


Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey

3.7 Income

According to the 2011 National Household Survey, the median family income of Sylvan Lake households was \$83,952, approximately \$5,000 higher than the provincial median of \$78,632. Couples with children in Sylvan Lake have the highest median income (\$109,300) while lone-parent households have the lowest (\$43,850).

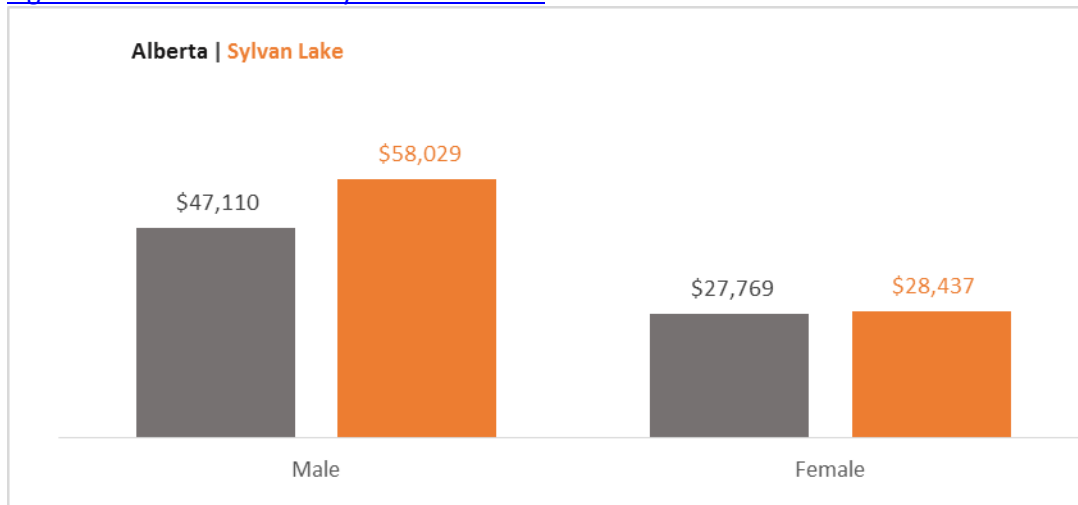
[Figure 10: Median Household Income in 2010](#)



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey

In 2011, on average, males in Sylvan Lake were earning more than males in the rest of the province. Females' earnings were on par with females in the rest of the province. Males in Sylvan Lake tend to earn more than females and the gap between male and female earnings in the community is larger than the gap provincially, with males earning on average 68% more than females. The provincial earnings gap between males and females is 52%.

[Figure 11: Median Income by Gender in 2010](#)



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey

Low Income Households

Using the timeframe from the 2011 National Household Survey income data, comparative data on Low Income Measures (LIM) was used to determine the percentage of the population of Sylvan Lake that could be considered low income. According to Statistics Canada,

...the LIM is a fixed percentage (50%) of median adjusted household income, where "adjusted" indicates that household needs are taken into account. Adjustment for household sizes reflects the fact that a household's needs increase as the number of members increases. Most would agree that a household of six has greater needs than a household of two, although these needs are not necessarily three times as costly.

Income Research Paper Series 75F0002M

As illustrated in Table 5, the percentage of households below the below-tax LIM is lower in Sylvan Lake than in the province and decreased from 2005 to 2010. These households are most likely struggling to meet their basic needs including housing, food, and transportation.

[Table 5: Households Earning at or Below the Before-Tax Low Income Measure](#)

Year	Sylvan Lake				Alberta
	Couples	Lone Parents	Singles	All Households	
2005	4.5%	43.2%	19.5%	13.0%	16.3%
2010	5.1%	36.5%	17.5%	12.1%	15.4%

[Source: Statistics Canada Small Area and Data Division Taxfiler data 2005 and 2010 \(As reported in Sylvan Lake 2013 Housing Needs Assessment\)](#)

3.8 Housing

Housing Stock

From 2001 to 2011, the number of private dwellings in Sylvan Lake increased by 73% from 3,239 to 5,595. This growth is significantly higher than the provincial increase of 19% for the same period. While the percentage of owned occupied private dwellings increased by 3%, the percentage of rented occupied dwellings decreased. The decline in the proportion of rental properties may indicate an increase in housing constraints for lower income households.

[Table 6: Owned vs Rented Dwellings in Sylvan Lake](#)

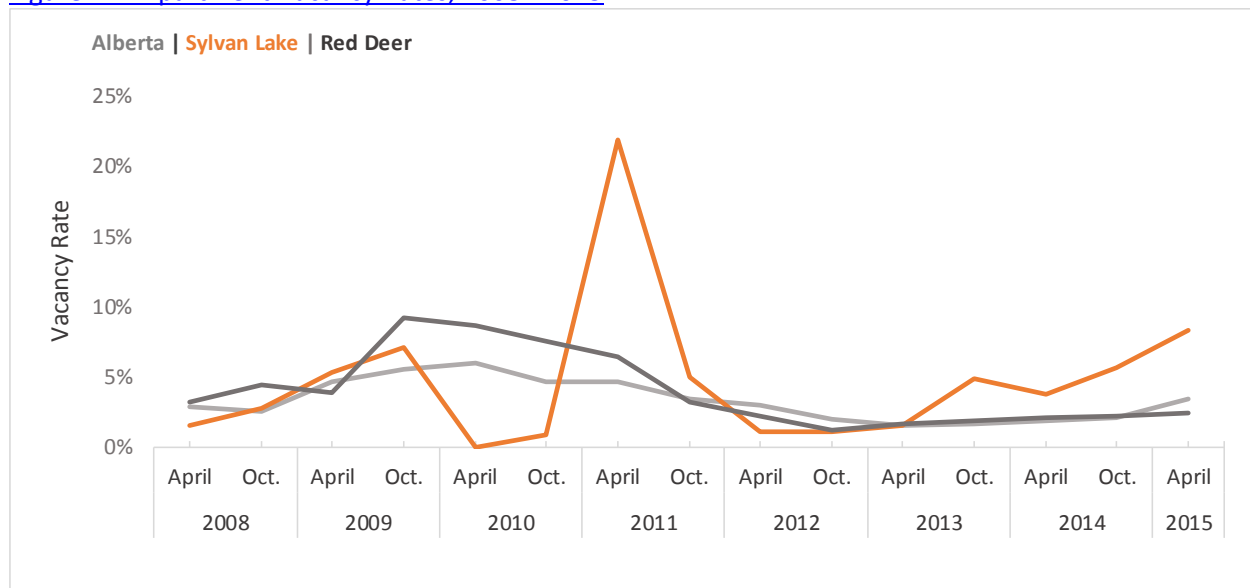
Occupied Private Dwelling Characteristic	2001	2006	2011
Number of owned dwellings	75%	77%	78%
Number of rented dwellings	25%	23%	22%

[Source: Statistics Canada 2011 National Household Survey and Census 2006 and 2001](#)

Vacancy Rates

Private apartment vacancy rates in Sylvan Lake appear to be slightly more volatile than in both Red Deer and the province as a whole. The spike in vacancy rates in the spring of 2011 occurred at the same time as the province was in a recession and a number of new apartments came on the market in the community. With the current recession, however, we can see that vacancy rates are rising and at a faster pace than the province and Red Deer.

[Figure 12: Apartment Vacancy Rates, 2008 - 2015](#)

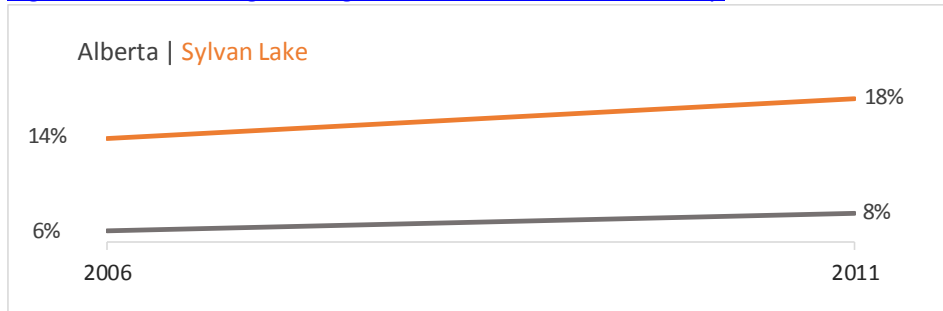


[Source: CMHC Rental Market Reports, Spring 2009 – Spring 2015](#)

Seasonal vs Permanent Ownership

Sylvan Lake has a number of seasonal home owners, some of whom use their property strictly for themselves and others who rent out their properties at times during the year. Between 2006 and 2011, the percentage of seasonal homes in Sylvan Lake has risen from 14% to 18%. Some of the seasonal homeowners use social, health and other services in Sylvan Lake or Red Deer, but provide their permanent address when receiving services. In assessing demand for services, consideration needs to be given to the added demand from seasonal residents.

[Figure 13: Percentage Change in Seasonal Home Ownership](#)

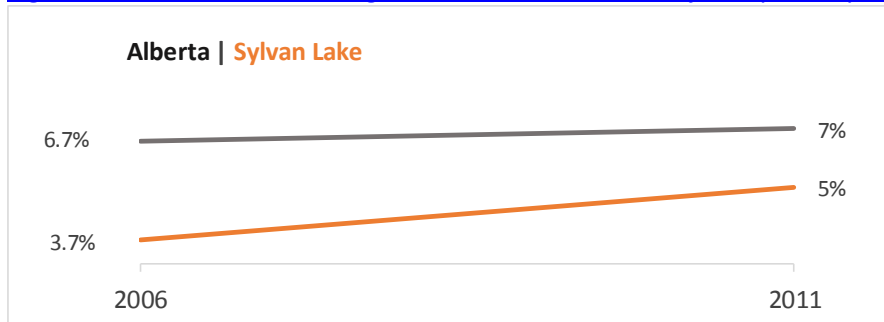


[Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2011](#)

Housing Adequacy

From 2006 to 2011, the percentage of houses in Sylvan Lake requiring major repairs increased from 3.7% to 5.0%, more than the increase provincially of 6.7% to 7.0% over the same five-year period, respectively. Some of these homes may be considered inadequate depending on the nature of the repairs required and the individuals living in these homes may be at risk of homelessness or various health and safety related problems.

[Figure 14: Estimated Percentage of Homes in Need of Major Repairs, Sylvan Lake and Alberta](#)



[Source: Census Canada National Household Survey 2011 and Census 2006](#)

3.9 Crime Rates and Severity

Between 2009 and 2013, the overall crime rate in Sylvan Lake decreased. However, violent and property crimes increased in 2012 and drug violations increased in both 2011 and 2013. The RCMP reports that the incidence of family violence is increasing in the community with 636 incidents being reported from January 2013 to October 2014. The incidence of youth crime is lower in Sylvan Lake than the province overall. There has been a marked decline in impaired driving charges in the community in recent years.

Figure 15: Crime Rates per 100,000 Population



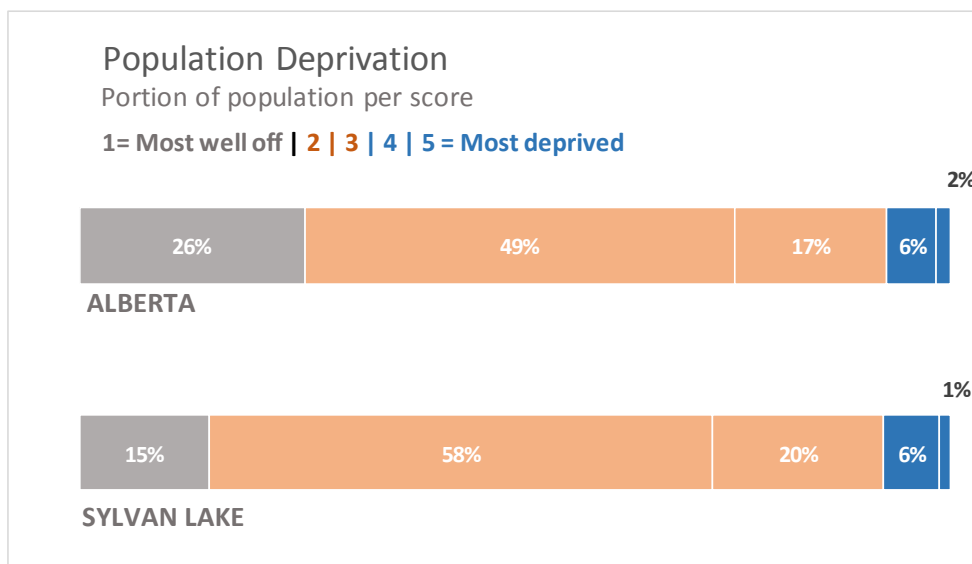
Source: Statistics Canada, Table 252-0080

3.10 Health

Population Deprivation

Deprivation indices are used to understand how social and material inequalities affect health. The indices are derived from information related to income, education, family structure and geography that factor into determinants for health. Sylvan Lake's scores are closely aligned with the rest of the province with the majority of the population faring well and a relatively small portion being deprived. Figure 16 illustrates that approximately 7% the population of Sylvan Lake are at risk of having poor health based on environmental, social and economic indicators.

[Figure 16: Population Deprivation Scores](#)



[Source: Canadian Deprivation Index 2013](#)

Emergency Department Wait Times

Residents of Sylvan Lake tend to use the emergency department in Red Deer when needed. The average wait time at the Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre in the last fiscal year (2014-2015) was 3.4 hours, slightly higher than the provincial average emergency department wait time of 3.2 hours. Since 2012, the average wait time in Red Deer has been increasing, while the provincial average wait time has remained relatively constant. In 2014-2015 the average emergency department wait time in Red Deer was about 35 minutes longer than the provincial target.

[Table 7: Emergency Department Length of Stay of Discharged Patients \(Hours\)](#)

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Q1 YTD		2015-16 Target
				2014-15	2015-16	
Provincial	3.1	3.0	3.2	3.1	3.2	2.8
Red Deer	2.9	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.1	2.8

[Source: Alberta Health Services Q1 2015-16 Performance Report](#)

4. Community Quality of Life Framework

The approach taken to this Social Needs Assessment sought to identify the specific aspects of quality of life that are important to those who live in and near Sylvan Lake. The concept of social needs has been evolving over the past 60 years. It is the third level of need in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and focuses on relationships and belonging. For the purpose of this assessment, the definition of social needs has been expanded to include other aspects of well-being which together influence quality of life.

Through the focus groups and survey, a quality of life framework unique to the community emerged. This framework was refined as work on the needs assessment progressed and helped to guide conversations about priority social needs in the community.

There was general agreement among those who participated in this Social Needs Assessment that future social planning in the community should emphasize actions that move the community toward eight specific quality of life outcomes. As illustrated in Figure 15, these outcomes which are not hierarchical in nature, are:

- Households are able to meet their basic needs. These include shelter, food, clothing and transportation to access needed supports and services;
- Residents have supports and services to meet their mental health needs;
- Residents have supports and services to maintain a healthy lifestyle and meet their physical health needs;
- Residents are engaged positively in the community. This was also a priority area identified in the Town's 2015 Community Satisfaction Survey;
- Residents have strong, healthy relationships;
- Residents feel safe in their homes and in the community;
- Residents have a sense of purpose through their contributions to family, the community, work, and/or learning; and,
- Residents are able to enjoy the lake and the community's natural surroundings.

The community recognizes that these outcomes are intertwined. Positive change in regard to one outcome can be expected to have a positive influence on one or more other outcomes. For example, increased community engagement can contribute to improved mental health, stronger relationships, sense of purpose, and feelings of safety.

The 2015 Community Satisfaction Survey indicated that the majority of residents feel the quality of life in Sylvan Lake is either good or very good. This resonates with the needs assessment survey findings which found that, on average, respondents rated quality of life in Sylvan Lake at 3 out of 5.

[Figure 17: Quality of Life Framework](#)



Highlights

- Sylvan Lake has a number of strengths that help create a good quality of life for residents. These include a culture of collaboration among a variety of organizations, informed and responsive FCSS staff, access to the lake and the various activities it provides, a small town feel with a core group of citizens who create social opportunities, proximity to Red Deer where residents can access many needed services, and a strong tourism industry.
- The community also faces some barriers to meeting social needs of residents. These include fast population and geographical growth, lack of awareness among residents of programs and services, and lack of some services locally because of the community's proximity to Red Deer. Another barrier is that there has been no concrete, coordinated community plan to address social needs.
- Groups within the community identified as being most vulnerable to social struggles include children, lone-parent households, seniors and individuals with physical and/or mental disabilities.

4.1 Community's Strengths in Meeting Social Needs

Sylvan Lake has a strong foundation upon which to build and enhance quality of life of residents. Those participating in this Social Needs Assessment mentioned the following as existing strengths:

- The relationships and collaborative approaches among organizations already in place and well attended monthly interagency meetings that facilitate a sharing of information about initiatives that address social needs;
- FCSS staff understand social needs and endeavour to address them;
- The 'small-town feel' of the community;
- Access to the lake and surrounding countryside;
- The tourism industry provided by the lake and the central location in the province;
- Proximity to Red Deer which allows for access to many services;
- The multitude of programs and services already available in Sylvan Lake; and,
- The strong core community of people who have lived in Sylvan Lake for a long time and who have wide community social circles.

4.2 Community Challenges

Those providing input to this Social Needs Assessment also identified some challenges the community faces in responding to social needs. These include:

- The lack of a concrete plan for a collaborative response to current and emerging social needs in the community;
- Rapid population growth. It has been difficult for the community to be proactive in responding to increasing demands for social programs and services. The capacity to address needs has not kept pace with population growth;
- There appears to be low awareness among residents of existing programs and services;
- The community is spreading out geographically and some residents are finding it increasingly difficult to access programs and services; and,
- Many provincial and federal services are not available locally. The availability of services in Red Deer can constrain Sylvan Lake's efforts to advocate for local services.

4.3 Population Group Priorities

Residents of Sylvan Lake do not all enjoy the same quality of life. Individuals have different social needs and are impacted differently by initiatives to enhance social wellbeing in the community. Through this Social Needs Assessment, the following four groups were identified as populations that should be given priority consideration in future social planning:

- Youth;
- Individuals with mental or physical health needs;
- Single parents and households where one partner is away for long periods of time for work; and,
- Seniors.

4.4 Observed Trends

Social needs and the ability to address them do not remain constant. Some of the trends that stakeholders feel are impacting the town's social landscape include:

- Growing population – Sylvan Lake's population is growing at a rate three times faster than the provincial growth rate;
- Aging population –the number of residents over the age of 65 is increasing at the same time as the percentage of the population between the ages of 55 and 64 is increasing;
- Decreasing housing affordability;
- Increasing need for public transportation;
- Increasing substance abuse and addiction;
- Decreasing sense of connectedness with others in community; and,
- Increasing incidences of family violence.

5. Enhancing Quality of Life in Sylvan Lake

Those who provided input to this Social Needs Assessment identified a number of priorities to enhance quality of life of residents.

Highlights

- The priority issue for Sylvan Lake residents is the need for an urgent care centre. This centre could help ease the pressure on the emergency department at the Red Deer Regional Hospital and provide a number of non-emergency health care services to residents of the Sylvan Lake catchment area.
- There is a perceived need to increase the availability and awareness of affordable 'wellness activities' including recreational activities for seniors, children and youth and increase the number of playgrounds in the town.
- Affordable transportation is a primary concern in Sylvan Lake particularly for youth, seniors and people with disabilities. As the community grows it is anticipated that the need for affordable transportation both within Sylvan Lake and to Red Deer will become increasingly important.
- Although there is a current increase in available rental properties in Sylvan Lake, the proportion of private dwellings that are rental properties is decreasing in the community. During times when there is a shortage of rental properties, it may be more challenging for low income households to find adequate housing in the community.
- There is a shortage of affordable and low income housing in Sylvan Lake. Waiting lists for housing programs are long and the population needing housing support is increasing faster than the affordable and low income housing stock.
- The number of seniors in Sylvan Lake is increasing faster than the number of seniors' residences. In some cases this may force seniors to move away from the community to access appropriate housing.
- A large number of men in Sylvan Lake are employed in the trades which are vulnerable to Alberta's economic 'boom and bust' cycle. The impact of the recent downturn in the economy is already being felt in the community, with an increase in the number of residents who are unemployed. The town is already experiencing an increase in food bank usage and requests for supports from social programs.
- Although there are mental health and addiction support services in Sylvan Lake, the survey and focus group findings indicate that community perception is that there is a shortage of these services in the community. This suggests a need to increase awareness and accessibility of these services. This is particularly important as the number of drug violations in the community has increased in recent years.

- As Sylvan Lake grows and the vulnerability of the community to economic downturns becomes more apparent, the concern for safety is increasing. Particular areas of concern include family violence, bullying, vandalism and graffiti, increased drug use and a loss of the 'small-town' feel.
- With Sylvan Lake being a young and growing community, there is a continued need for parents to have access to suitable programs and support. There are already many programs and services available in the community for parents, however there needs to be increased awareness of these programs and increased monitoring of wait lists to ensure that programs keep up with the demand.
- The growing community is creating neighbourhoods that do not have the same 'small-town' feel that the community has had in the past. Many new residents do not know their neighbours and do not have social supports in the town. In addition, residents seem to lack awareness of opportunities to volunteer which can have the added benefit of supporting new residents in building social networks.



5.1 Physical Health

The need for an urgent care centre in the community was the issue raised most frequently in both the survey and focus group discussions. This was mentioned by residents, people who work with seniors, mental health workers, and people who work with young families. Urgent care and/or improved access to health care services was also the top priority of respondents in the 2015 Community Satisfaction Survey. Residents appear to understand that this matter falls outside the mandate of the Town - decisions about health care facilities and services rest with Alberta Health Services. Nevertheless, residents feel it is important that the Town continue to lobby for the centre.

According to the Urgent Care Committee, an urgent care facility could provide health care services to the entire Sylvan Lake catchment area including Summer Villages, Benalto, Eckville and Bentley which together with Sylvan Lake have a population of approximately 22,300. An urgent care facility in Sylvan Lake would reduce the strain on the health care system in Red Deer as an estimated 10,000 emergency visits per year come from the Sylvan Lake catchment area, not including tourists who reside outside the catchment area. These visits, according to Alberta Health Services' Health Record data, account for approximately 17% of Red Deer's emergency department visits, which overall have been trending upwards.

The Urgent Care Committee is currently lobbying for a facility that will provide the following services to help ease the strain on the health care system in Red Deer, prevent emergency department visits and provide improved access to services for the Sylvan Lake catchment area:

- Medical assistance for non-life threatening injuries;
- Extended hours from 7:00am – 10:00pm, seven days a week;
- Access to Lab and X-Ray-treatment beds;
- A facility staffed by doctors, nurses, and other key health professionals with strong ties/coordination between area health service providers;
- A Mental Health Crisis Team;
- A close relationship with Children's Lifestyle Management including, as an example, exercise specialists, social workers, behavior therapists, and psychologists; and,
- Additional services for Seniors' Lifestyle Enhancement, including, for example, exercise specialists, social workers, and pharmacists.

In addition to the need for an urgent care facility, stakeholders also spoke about a need for increased health promotion to enhance overall wellbeing in the community. Particular priorities include:

- Increased availability of low-cost recreational activities for seniors, children and youth, and individuals with disabilities. This was also identified as a top priority in the 2015 Community Satisfaction Survey;
- Increased awareness of both existing recreational programs and supports for residents to access recreational programs;
- Promotion of the value of low-cost recreational activities (“low cost” does not mean “low quality and value”); and,
- Increased number of parks for children.

5.2 Transportation

Transportation needs are seen to be increasing in importance in the community as the population grows and the geographical size of the community increases. Survey respondents identified transportation as a top priority, and participants in focus groups talked about the importance of transportation for allowing access to programs and activities that enhance quality of life in the community. In particular, the Social Needs Assessment identified the following transportation priorities:



- Regular, affordable transportation to Red Deer to facilitate access to services not available in Sylvan Lake;
- Regular, affordable transportation within Sylvan Lake to facilitate access to services including:
 - Medical appointments;
 - Recreational activities; and,
 - Programs for youth.
- Affordable transportation for seniors, individuals with disabilities and low income families.

5.3 Housing

In Canada, the generally accepted understanding of affordable housing is that housing costs should not exceed 30% of household income for both affordability and reducing the risk of economic shocks. According to the Statistics Canada 2011 National Household Survey, 24% of households in Sylvan Lake (1,105) were spending more than 30% of their household income on housing. This percentage is similar to the provincial average. The National Household Survey also found that 22% of households in Sylvan Lake are occupied by renters which is slightly lower than the province (25%).

The Social Needs Assessment identified the following as key housing issues:

- There is a small homeless population in the town and few options for them. The 2013 Housing Needs Assessment estimated the number of homeless in Sylvan Lake at 20-25 individuals.
- The number of baby boomers and seniors in the community is increasing at a rate that exceeds the availability of seniors housing.
- Approximately 12% of households may be living in poverty which affects their ability to access housing.
- There are 12 'affordable housing' units provided by the Sylvan Community Housing Society. There is very low turnover in these units which results in many households who apply for affordable housing needing to pursue other housing solutions.
- There is insufficient 'low-income housing' in Sylvan Lake provided by the Red Deer Housing Authority. There are currently 22 households in subsidized housing with 17 households on the waiting list. There are also seven rent-geared-to-income family units owned by Red Deer Housing that also have a waiting list.
- The key gap in affordable housing in the community is for households with incomes below the eligibility criteria for Sylvan Community Housing Society housing, but that are placed lower on the waiting list for Red Deer Housing Authority units because other households with more urgent needs are placed higher on the waiting list.
- According to Sylvan Lake FCSS statistics, during the period September 2013 – September 2014 there were 12 requests to FCSS for affordable housing and 79 requests for low-income housing. From September 2014 to September 2015 the total requests increased by 21% - 42 requests for affordable housing and 68 for low-income housing.
- There has been limited success in Sylvan Lake's secondary suite program as an incentive to increase the supply of lower cost housing options.



5.4 Income and Employment

Employment and income have a significant impact on quality of life, especially in a community such as Sylvan Lake where there are a large number of households with a primary wage earner whose employment is vulnerable to shifts in oil prices and downturns in Alberta's economy. Some examples of financial need in Sylvan Lake are illustrated by the change in program usage between 2013-14 and 2014-15. For example:

- **FCSS** received 181 referral requests for financial assistance in 2014-15, an increase of about 100% over the 90 referral requests received in the previous year.
- **Community Partners Association:**
 - Provided financial assistance through the Compassion Fund to 206 clients in 2014-15, an increase of almost 100% over the 105 clients the previous year;
 - Provided emergency food hampers to 120 clients in 2014-15, up from 60 the previous year; and,
 - Served 215 families through the infant/toddler food bank in 2014-15, up from 127 the previous year.

Supporting residents to have an income either through employment or opportunities to participate in training programs to enhance their future employment potential and income stability is an ongoing concern in Sylvan Lake. The most pressing concern in this regard identified through the Needs Assessment is the lack of in-person support in the community to access Alberta Works income and employment supports. Residents seeking in-person Alberta Works services must travel to Red Deer for these services, which is challenging for those without a car or who cannot afford the taxi fare. There is no bus service to Red Deer. While the Alberta Works service delivery model provides other ways to access services (e.g. telephone and online), there appears to be limited awareness of these options and there continues to be a strong desire for these services to be available directly in Sylvan Lake.

5.5 Mental Health and Addictions

Based on RCMP statistics, the number of drug-related crimes has been increasing in the community, suggesting an increase in drug use and possibly addiction.

Specific mental health and addiction service needs identified through the Social Needs Assessment focus groups and survey include:

- Continued advocacy for an urgent care facility;
- Increasing the availability of local, affordable mental health, addictions supports, and suicide prevention services;
- Greater availability of services for individuals and families affected by addictions;
- Increased availability of affordable family counselling services; and,
- Mental health and mentoring programs in schools.

5.6 Community Safety

Community safety is a priority in Sylvan Lake, and has become more of a concern as the community has grown and the number of households affected by job losses in Alberta's oil and gas industry over the past year has increased. Although the overall crime rate has declined in recent years in Sylvan Lake, drug related crimes have increased. Specific community safety concerns identified through the survey and focus groups include:

- Family violence;
- Bullying;
- Vandalism and graffiti;
- Increased drug use; and,
- Lack of community engagement in addressing safety concerns (i.e. Block Parents).

5.7 Parenting

As Sylvan Lake grows, the number of children in the community is increasing, as is the proportion of households with children. With the proportion of households with children in Sylvan Lake being almost 5% higher in Sylvan Lake than it is across the province, the need for supports and services for parents is also higher. The rapid growth in the number of children and number of households with children in the community can make it difficult for organizations to keep up with the demand for programs and services for parents and children. Specific supports that were identified in the Social Needs Assessment relate to challenges in the community associated with:

- Shifting parenting roles and family dynamics when one parent is alone with children for a length of time and then the other parent returns (16% of Sylvan Lake residents travelled beyond Red Deer and County for work in 2011); and,
- Social isolation among families with preschool-aged children who are new to the community and without established support networks.

The community recognizes the needs of families and has taken a proactive approach to addressing many of these needs, including the Parent Support and Resource Centre through FCSS and the recent opening of the Lakeview Parent Link Centre. Areas where parenting supports and programs can be further strengthened include increasing awareness of programs and ensuring the supply of programs keeps pace with the increasing demand as the population grows.



5.8 Social Isolation

Similar to transportation, social isolation is an area that potentially impacts all domains of quality of life. Knowing neighbours and having strong and healthy relationships in the community can have a positive impact on an individual's or family's awareness of programs and services, ability to access services, and reduce feelings of isolation and depression. Key priorities for reducing social isolation in neighbourhoods in Sylvan Lake include:

- Fostering good neighbour relations including the implementation of neighbourhood block parties kits as of spring 2016 by the Strengthening Positive Assets & Resiliency in Communities (SPARC) committee;
- Increasing volunteer opportunities in the community and encouraging participation; and,
- Improving awareness of and access to existing programs and services that promote networking and relationship building (47% of respondents to the 2015 Community Satisfaction Survey indicated that they were not at all familiar with FCSS).



6. Summary and Considerations for Future Social Planning

Sylvan Lake is a vibrant community located in an enviable part of Alberta. It is a community that is growing both in population and in geographical size. It has a large percentage of the population under the age of 45 and the average household income is higher than the provincial average. These characteristics create both opportunities and challenges for the community as it strives to foster a high quality of life for residents.

The most important aspects of quality of life in Sylvan Lake identified by those who participated in this Social Needs Assessment are, in no particular order:

- Households are able to meet their basic needs. These include shelter, food, clothing and transportation to access needed supports and services;
- Residents have supports and services to meet their mental health needs;
- Residents have supports and services to maintain a healthy lifestyle and meet their physical health needs;
- Residents are engaged positively in the community;
- Residents have strong, healthy relationships;
- Residents feel safe in their homes and in the community;
- Residents have a sense of purpose, through their contributions to family, the community, work, and/or learning; and,
- Residents are able to enjoy the lake and the community's natural surroundings.

Key priorities were identified for enhancing quality of life in Sylvan Lake. These are not hierarchical in nature. All are considered to be important for the overall quality of life Sylvan Lake offers. However, the relative importance of priorities to individual residents will vary depending on their values and circumstances.

The results of this Social Needs Assessment point to eight priority social needs that if addressed would make a positive difference in the quality of life of Sylvan Lake residents:

- An urgent care centre and low-cost recreational activities to support good physical health;
- Affordable public transportation both within Sylvan Lake and to Red Deer;
- Increased availability of housing for low-income households;
- Provision of local income and employment services;

- Increased affordable counselling and awareness of other supports for individuals needing mental health and addiction supports;
- Programs to promote increased community safety;
- Family counselling, early childhood development supports for parents, and increased awareness of available parenting supports; and,
- Programs that reduce social isolation.

[Figure 18: Linking Social Needs with Quality of Life](#)



The conversations that took place as this Social Needs Assessment was being prepared highlight the complex interplay among factors that can influence the quality of life of Sylvan Lake residents. These conversations need to continue so the community can move forward in a coordinated way to address the priorities that emerged through this research.

This Social Needs Assessment report can inform the development of a Social Master Plan for the community. It is important that there be broad involvement of residents, community organizations, service providers, other communities in the region and the provincial government in conversations that lead to the establishment of clear goals, agreement on specific actions that will be taken to achieve the goals, role identification, and an approach for ongoing monitoring of social conditions and quality of life in Sylvan Lake.

A. Survey Instrument

Survey Introduction

Thank you for participating in this important survey. I can assure you that your input will be kept confidential by our staff. Your responses will not be attributed to you or your organization in any way in our reporting to the Town of Sylvan Lake.

If you encounter any technical difficulties with this survey, I'd be pleased to assist you. My contact information is provided below.

We're looking forward to receiving your completed survey by August 21, 2015.

Regards,

Mary McIntyre, Projects Coordinator and Office Manager
Nichols Applied Management Inc.
Direct Telephone 780-409-1754
m.mcintyre@nicholsappliedmanagement.com

1. What do you see as trends in Sylvan Lake that need to be considered in developing a Social Plan for our community for the next three years? (Please select all that apply)

- a. Growing population
- b. Increased unemployment
- c. Increased homeless population
- d. Decreased housing affordability
- e. Increased family violence
- f. Increased substance abuse and addiction
- g. Increased mental health concerns
- h. Decreased sense of connectedness within the community
- i. Increase in low income households
- j. Increased need for public transportation
- k. Other (please specify)

2. What do you feel Sylvan Lake's greatest strengths are in meeting social needs at this time? (Please choose up to 3)

- a. A collaborative approach is taken to address social needs in the community (i.e., there is collaboration among the Town, health care and education providers, the provincial government, not-for-profit organizations, businesses, churches, and residents)
- b. The community is proactive in meeting social needs
- c. FCSS understands and endeavors to respond to social needs in Sylvan Lake
- d. Residents know their neighbours and are engaged in the community
- e. Residents know what supports and services are available to them
- f. Supports and services are easy to access
- g. Other (please specify)

3. What do you feel Sylvan Lake's greatest weaknesses are in meeting social needs at this time? (Please choose up to 3)

- a. There isn't enough collaboration among organizations to address social needs in the community
- b. The community tends to be more reactive than proactive in meeting social needs
- c. FCSS lacks understanding of social needs in Sylvan Lake and therefore is unable to respond appropriately
- d. Residents do not know their neighbours and are not engaged in the community
- e. Residents do not know what supports and services are available to them
- f. Supports and services are difficult to access (e.g. are unavailable in Sylvan Lake, take a long time to get, or are too expensive for some residents)
- g. Other (please specify)

4. For each of the following statements, please indicate if you agree or disagree with the statement.

It is challenging to respond to the social needs in Sylvan Lake because:

	Agree	Disagree
a. There is not a shared understanding of social needs in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. There is lack of agreement on the social priorities in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Existing services are underfunded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Social needs are growing faster than the social services sector can respond	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. The population is growing faster than services are expanding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Residents do not have local access to some Government of Alberta services (e.g. Alberta Works income support, employment services)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. On a scale of 1 to 5, to what extent do you feel the following quality of life statements apply to the residents of Sylvan Lake?

	1 Not At All	2	3	4	5 To a Great Extent
a. Residents of Sylvan Lake have the financial resources to meet their needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Residents of Sylvan Lake have good mental health or the supports needed to promote mental well-being.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Residents of Sylvan Lake have good physical health or the supports needed to promote physical well-being.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Residents of Sylvan Lake feel safe in the community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Residents of Sylvan Lake have strong, healthy relationships with people including family and friends in the community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Residents of Sylvan Lake feel they have a voice in community decisions and the ability to affect change.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Residents of Sylvan Lake have a sense of accomplishment and purpose i.e. through employment, volunteerism, learning or participation in recreational or cultural pursuits.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. The following 9 questions seek to understand which social needs should be given highest priority in Sylvan Lakes 3 Year Social Plan.

- 1) For individuals or families experiencing low income and/or unemployment in our community, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:

	1 No Priority	2	3	4	5 High Priority
a) Having a Government of Alberta office in Sylvan Lake where residents can access income support and career counselling and employment services (i.e., a local Alberta Works office)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Increasing the availability of affordable child care to make it easier for parents to participate in employment or training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Providing training and support in money management skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expanding opportunities to build positive relationships and networks in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 2) For residents experiencing mental health challenges in our community, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:

	1 No Priority	2	3	4	5 High Priority
a) Increasing the availability of local, affordable mental health services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Increasing the availability of family counselling services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Increasing the availability of affordable child care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Increasing the availability of local addiction services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 3) For residents experiencing physical health challenges in our community, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:

	1 No Priority	2	3	4	5 High Priority
a) Having an urgent care facility in Sylvan Lake	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Increasing the availability of supports and services for people with physical disabilities and their families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Making more affordable, accessible housing available for households of limited means	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expanding opportunities to build positive relationships and networks in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Expanding opportunities to participate in social and recreational activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 4) For residents affected by addictions in our community, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:

	1 No Priority	2	3	4	5 High Priority
a) Increasing access to local supports and services for individuals and families with addictions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Increasing the availability of local, affordable mental health services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Increasing the availability of family counselling services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expanding opportunities to build positive relationships and networks in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 5) For residents experiencing difficulty accessing housing in our community suitable to their needs and financial situation, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:

	1 No Priority	2	3	4	5 High Priority
a) Increasing the supply of low-cost rental housing units (e.g., apartments, suites)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Increasing the availability of rent subsidies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Increasing the availability of 'rent geared to income' housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Increasing the availability of housing for households below the low-income thresholds for affordable housing in the community (e.g., households on income support or AISH)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Increasing access to supportive housing (congregate living with needed supports provided on-site)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Increasing the availability of transitional housing for individuals or families needing short-term housing and supports during a period of adjustment in their lives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Increasing availability of non-financial incentives to build or purchase homes (e.g. zoning/density incentives for developers to offer homes below market value, first-time buyer programs, housing coops, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Increasing access to emergency shelter spaces for individuals and/or families experiencing family violence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Increasing access to other types of shelter spaces (e.g., for those who are homeless)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 6) For residents who need affordable transportation in our community, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:

	1 No Priority	2	3	4	5 High Priority
a) Providing scheduled public transportation within the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Providing scheduled public transportation between Sylvan Lake and Red Deer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Providing transportation subsidies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Facilitating ride sharing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Establishing a volunteer driver service that could include accompaniment to appointments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 7) For residents who are socially isolated in our community, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:

	1 No Priority	2	3	4	5 High Priority
a) Expanding opportunities to build positive relationships and networks in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Increasing affordable transportation within the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 8) For residents experiencing parenting challenges in our community, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:

	1 No Priority	2	3	4	5 High Priority
a) Expanding opportunities to learn parenting skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Providing access to parenting mentorship opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Increasing access to programs and activities for children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Increasing access to relevant information and referrals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Expanding opportunities to build positive relationships and networks in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Providing access to conflict resolution supports and services for parents and children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 9) For residents experiencing family violence or bullying in our community, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:

	1 No Priority	2	3	4	5 High Priority
a) Increasing access to emergency shelter spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Increasing the availability of affordable child care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Expanding opportunities to participate in social and recreational activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Enhancing safety at home, at school, and in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Having an urgent care facility in Sylvan Lake	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Increasing the availability of local, affordable mental health services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Increasing the availability of family counselling services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Providing access to conflict resolution supports and services for individuals and families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. A number of factors that can influence quality of life in our community have been discussed in this survey. Which three should be given top priority in the three-year Social Plan? (Choose up to 3)
1. Low income and/or unemployment
 2. Mental health
 3. Physical health
 4. Addictions
 5. Housing
 6. Affordable transportation
 7. Social isolation
 8. Parenting skills
 9. Family violence or bullying



8. What priority should each of the following groups in our community be given in Sylvan Lake's three-year Social Plan to address social needs?

	1 No Priority	2	3	4	5 High Priority
Children ages 0 - 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children and youth ages 6 - 18	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Single parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Families with a parent who works outside the community for extended periods of time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seniors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Women	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Men	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aboriginal people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Immigrants and refugees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Residents with mental health challenges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Residents with physical challenges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Are there social needs not mentioned in this survey that you would like to see given priority in Sylvan Lake's three-year Social Plan?

1. Yes
2. No

10. What other social needs would you like to see given priority in the Sylvan Lake Social Plan?

11. Creating a community where all residents enjoy a good quality of life requires strong collaboration among all stakeholders (government, healthcare and education providers, business, not-for-profits, churches, residents, etc.). What specific partnering arrangements do you suggest be pursued over the next 3 years?

You are welcome to provide any further comments or suggestions in regard to social needs in Sylvan Lake.

Respondent Profile

I am responding to this survey as (select all that apply):

- a. A resident of Sylvan Lake or Summer Villages
- b. A business owner or employer in Sylvan Lake
- c. A public sector worker in Sylvan Lake (e.g. Employed by Town of Sylvan Lake, Government of Alberta)
- d. An emergency responder or protection services
- e. A representative of a not-for-profit or service organization
- f. A representative of a church or religious organization
- g. A Sylvan Lake Town Councillor
- h. Other

Are you employed in Sylvan Lake?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Do you provide services in any of the following areas in Sylvan Lake as part of your job? (Please select all that apply)

	Yes	No
a) Health Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Police, fire, ambulance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Employment Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Children, youth and families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Seniors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Mental Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Addictions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Arts and recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you volunteer in Sylvan Lake?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Do you provide services in any of the following areas in Sylvan Lake as a volunteer? (Please select all that apply)

	Yes	No
a) Health Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Police, fire, ambulance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Employment Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Children, youth and families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Seniors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Mental Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Addictions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Arts and recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What are some of the factors that motivate you to volunteer in Sylvan Lake?

What prevents people from volunteering in Sylvan Lake?

The conversation on Sylvan Lake's new Social Plan has just started! Would you like to participate in an upcoming focus group or workshop to provide more input as the Social Plan takes shape? If so, please provide your contact information below:

Name

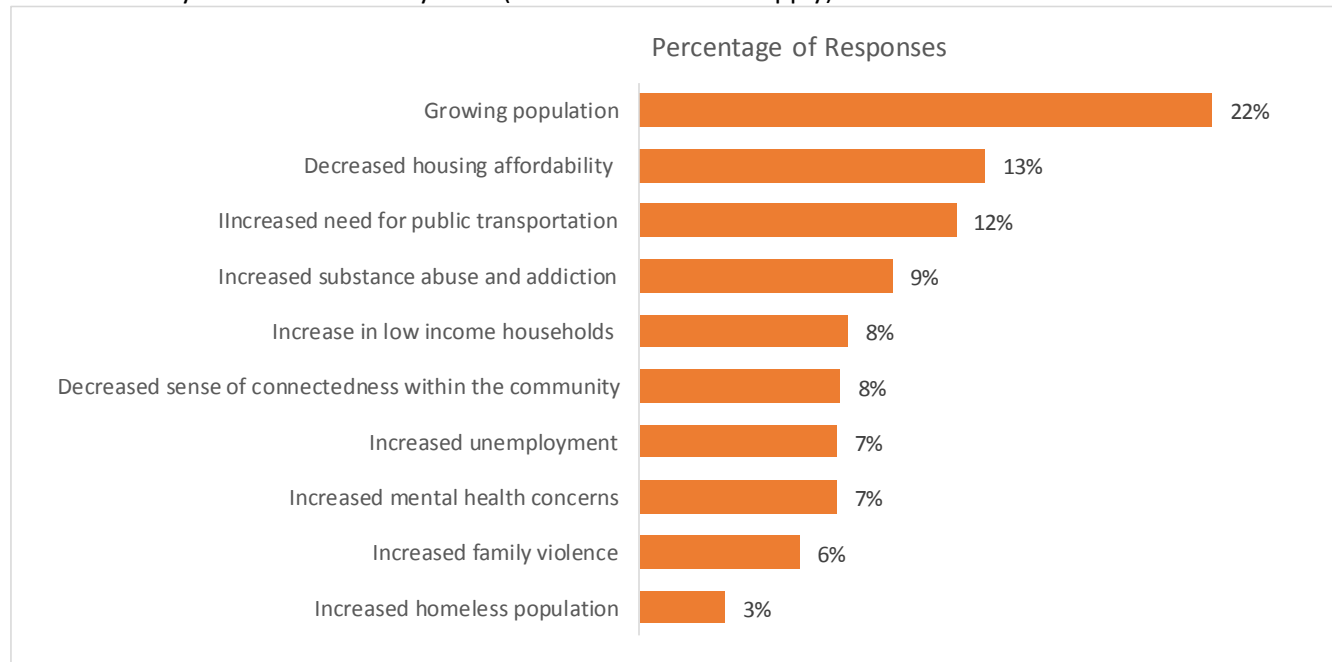
Telephone Number

E-mail Address

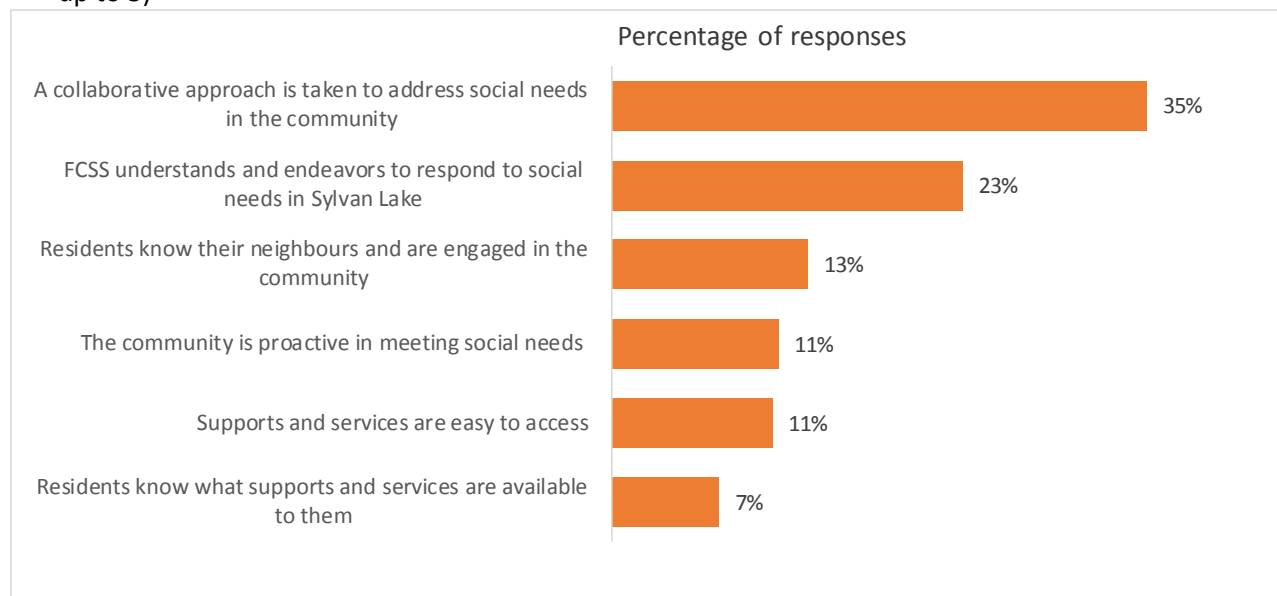


B. Key Survey Findings

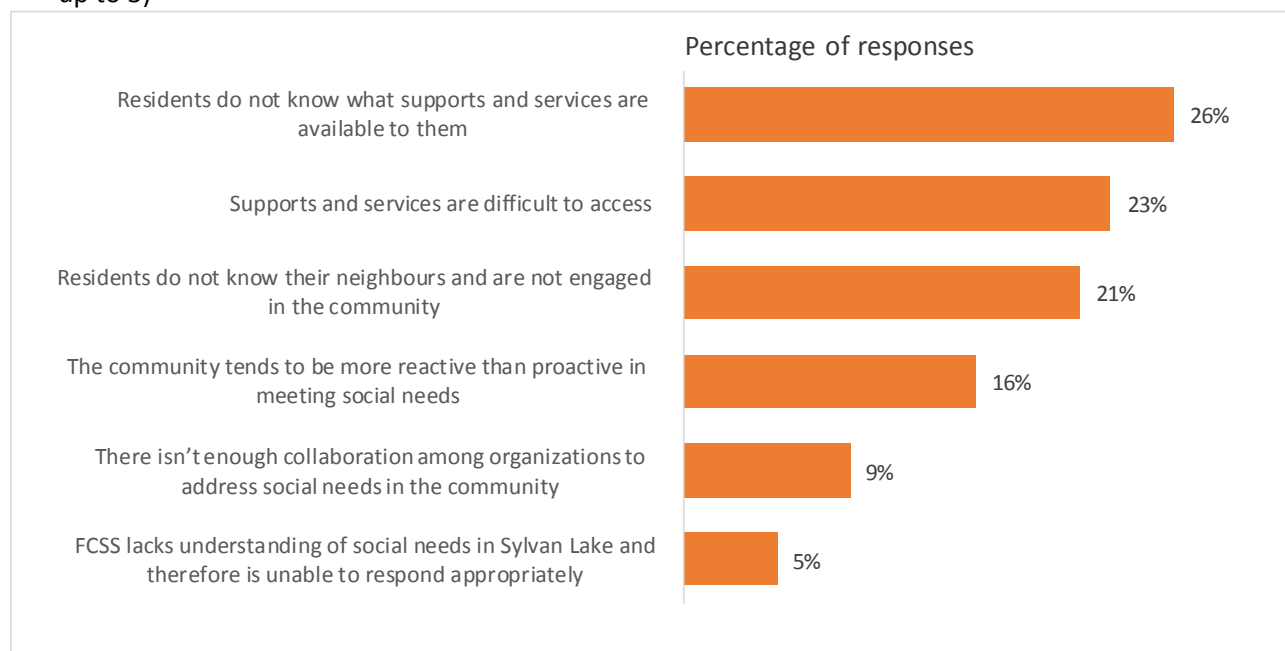
1. What do you see as trends in Sylvan Lake that need to be considered in developing a Social Plan for our community for the next three years? (Please select all that apply)



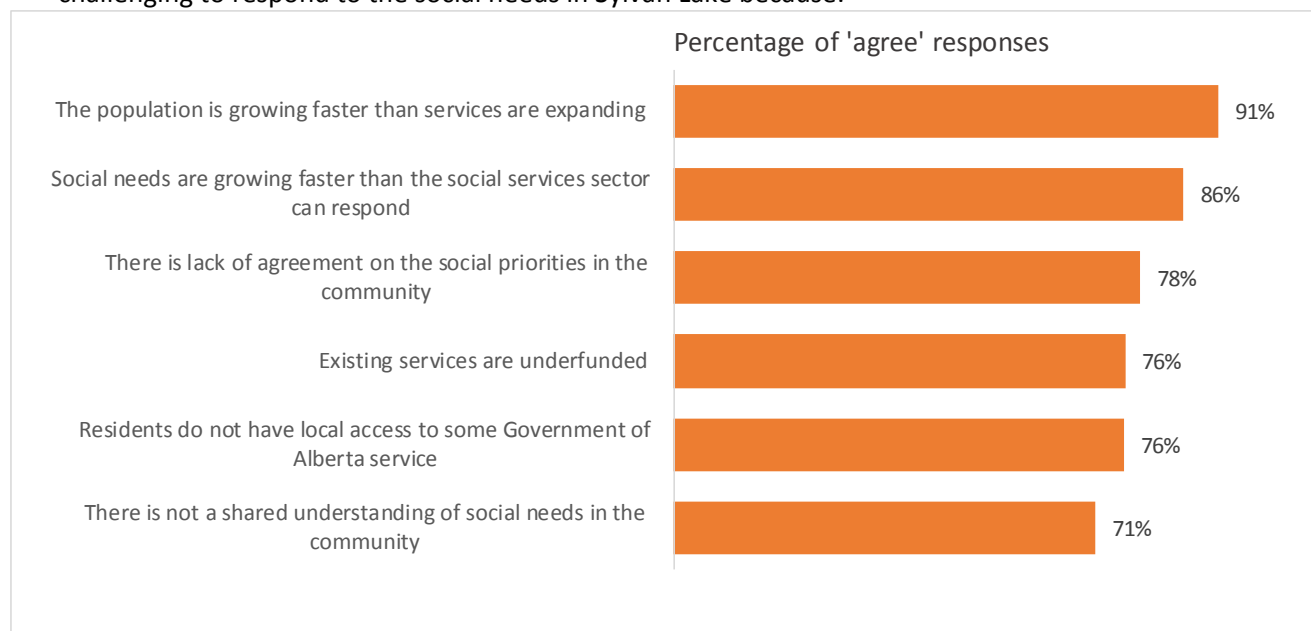
2. What do you feel Sylvan Lake's greatest strengths are in meeting social needs at this time? (Please choose up to 3)



3. What do you feel Sylvan Lake's greatest weaknesses are in meeting social needs at this time? (Please choose up to 3)



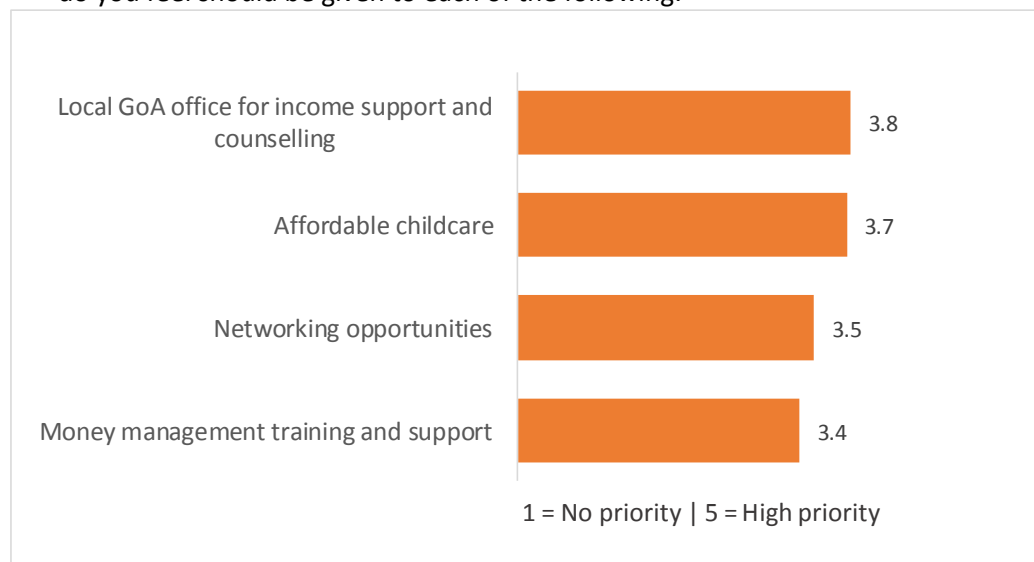
4. For each of the following statements, please indicate if you agree or disagree with the statement. It is challenging to respond to the social needs in Sylvan Lake because:



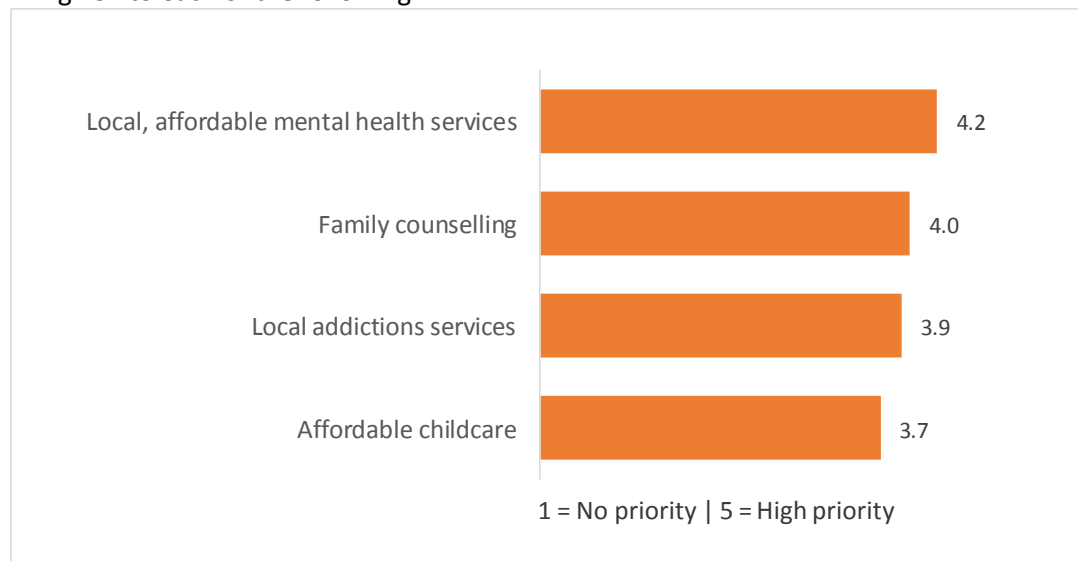
5. On a scale of 1 to 5, to what extent do you feel the following quality of life statements apply to the residents of Sylvan Lake? Residents of Sylvan Lake...

SURVEY ITEM	Are engaged in the community	Have good mental health supports	Are financially stable	Have good physical health supports	Have a sense of purpose	Feel safe	Have strong, healthy relationships
Overall rating 1=Poor 5=Excellent	2.69	2.79	3.00	2.99	3.04	3.09	3.11

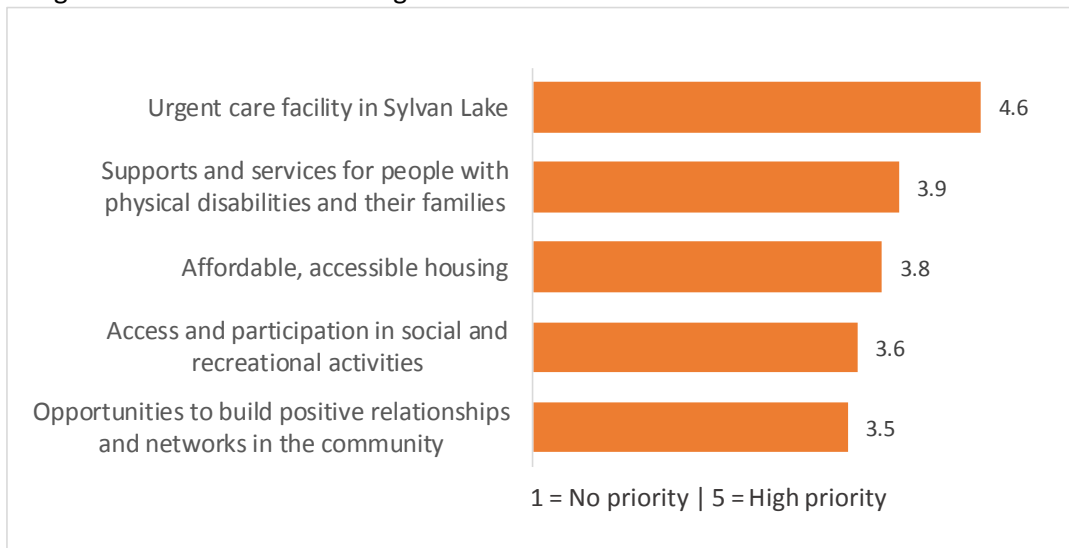
6. For individuals or families experiencing low income and/or unemployment in our community, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:



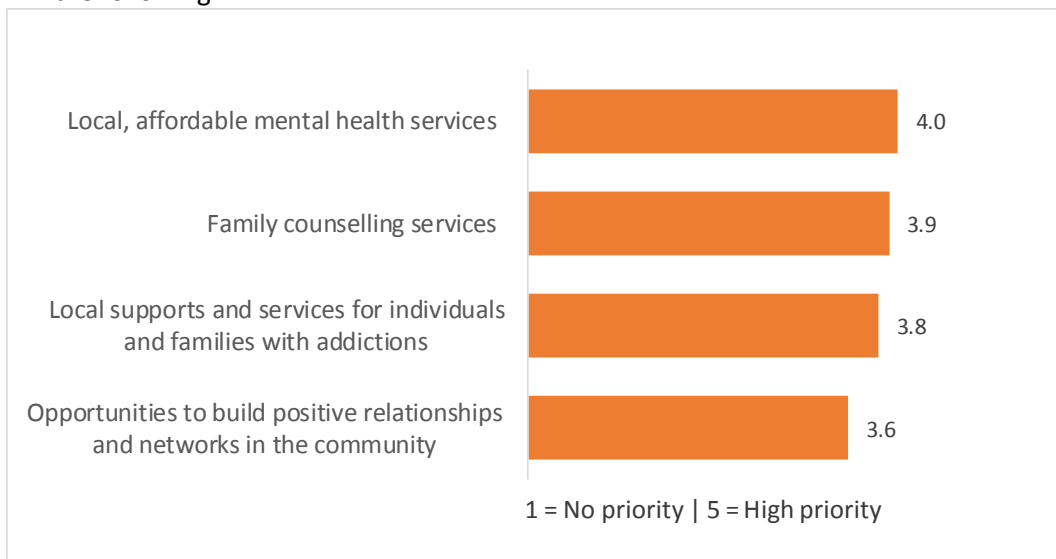
7. For residents experiencing mental health challenges in our community, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:



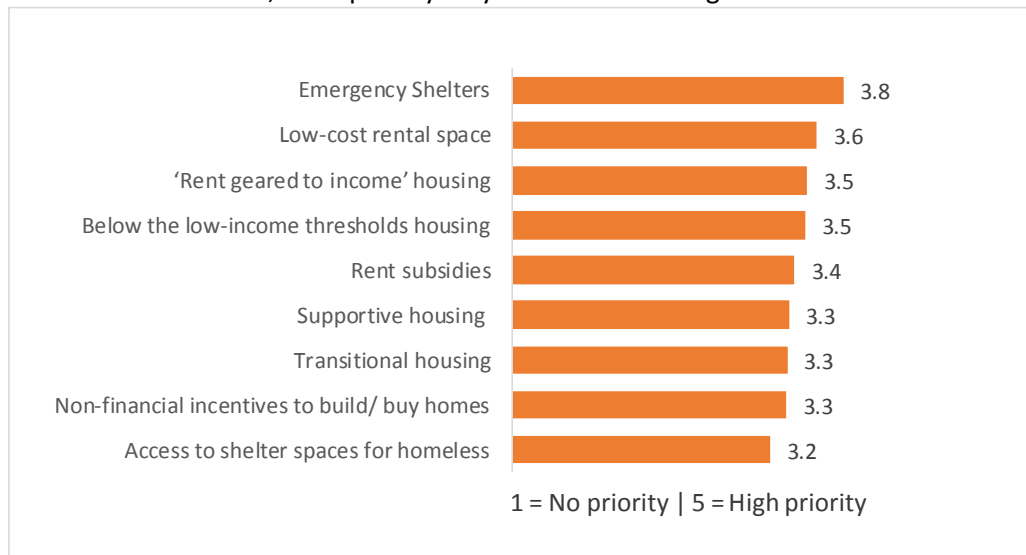
8. For residents experiencing physical health challenges in our community, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:



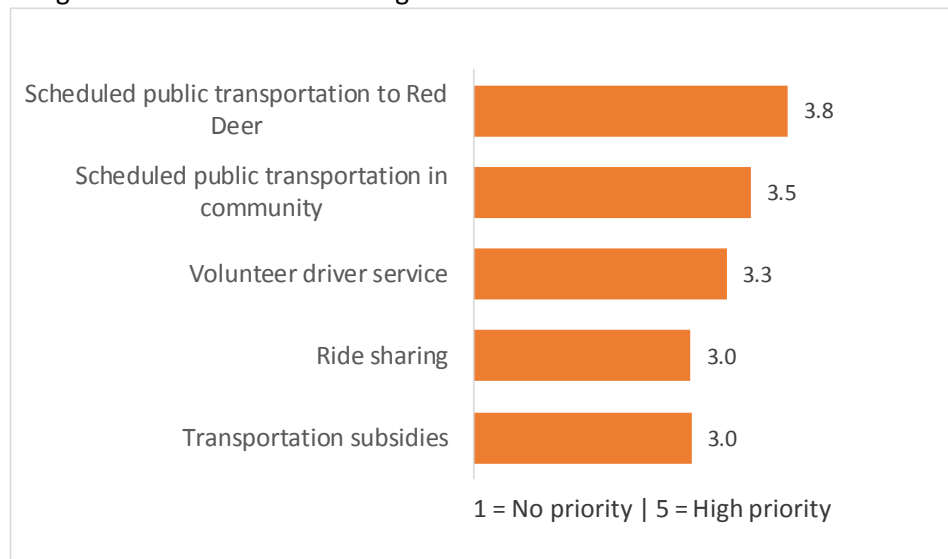
9. For residents affected by addictions in our community, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:



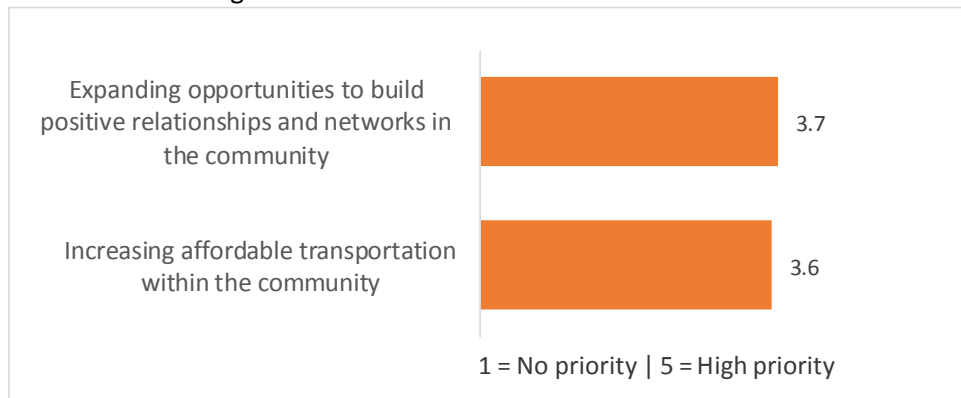
10. For residents experiencing difficulty accessing housing in our community suitable to their needs and financial situation, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:



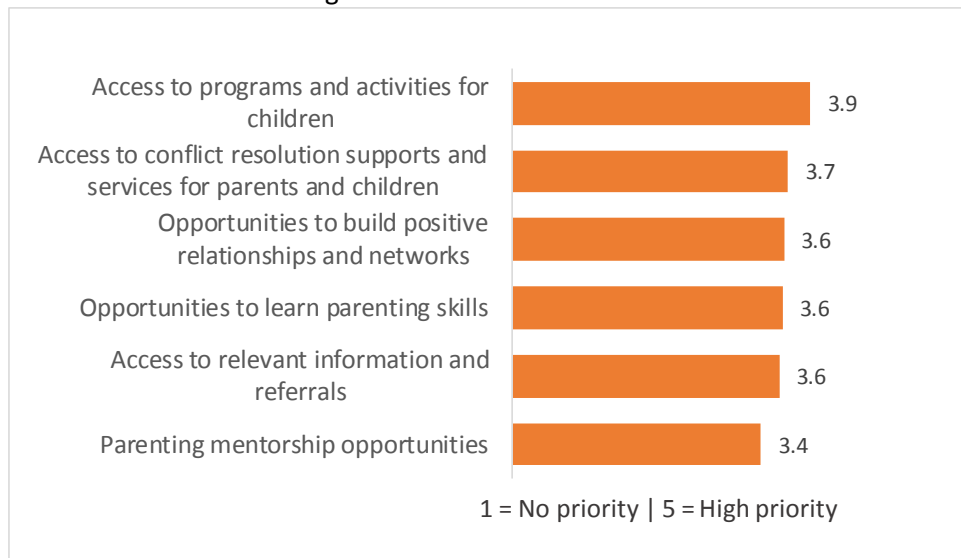
11. For residents who need affordable transportation in our community, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:



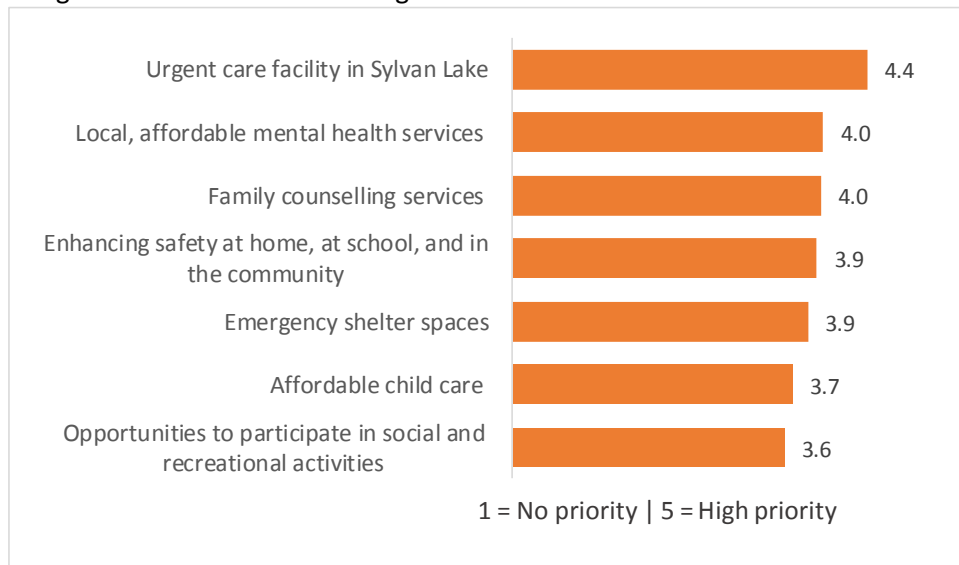
12. For residents who are socially isolated in our community, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:



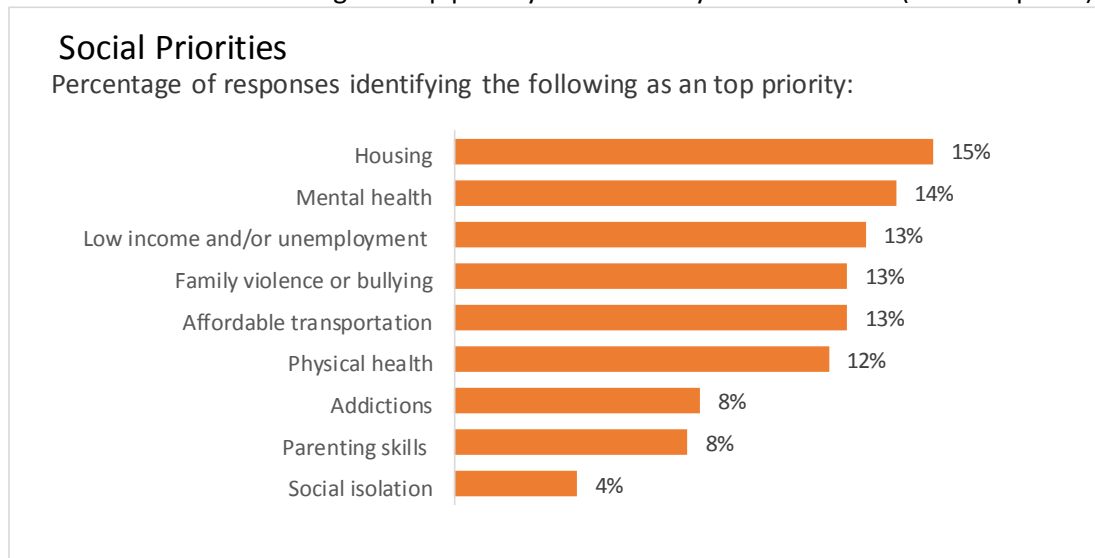
13. For residents experiencing parenting challenges in our community, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:



14. For residents experiencing family violence or bullying in our community, what priority do you feel should be given to each of the following:



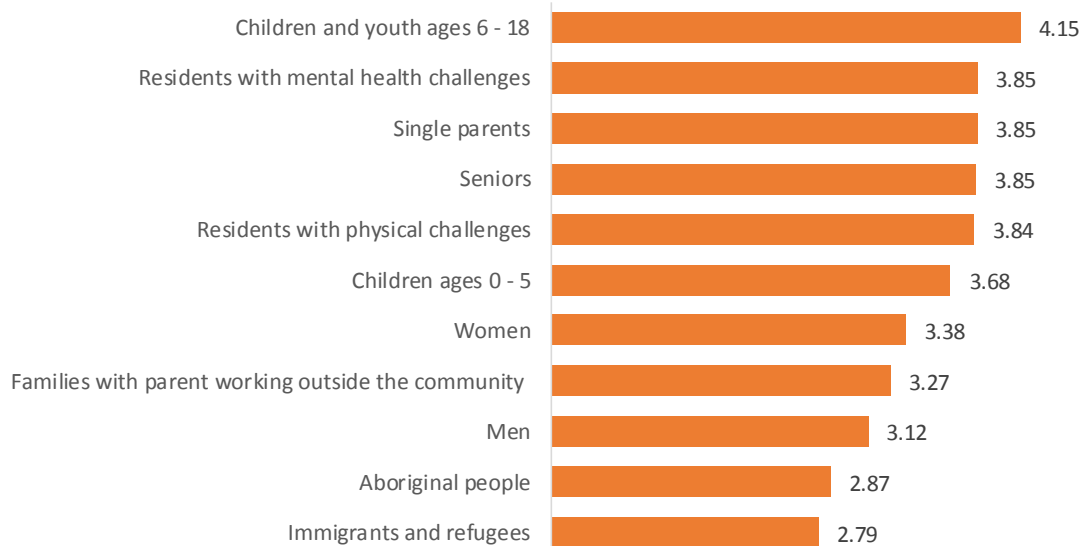
15. A number of factors that can influence quality of life in our community have been discussed in this survey. Which three should be given top priority in the three-year Social Plan? (choose up to 3)



16. What priority should each of the following groups in our community be given in Sylvan Lake's 3 Year Social Plan to address social needs?

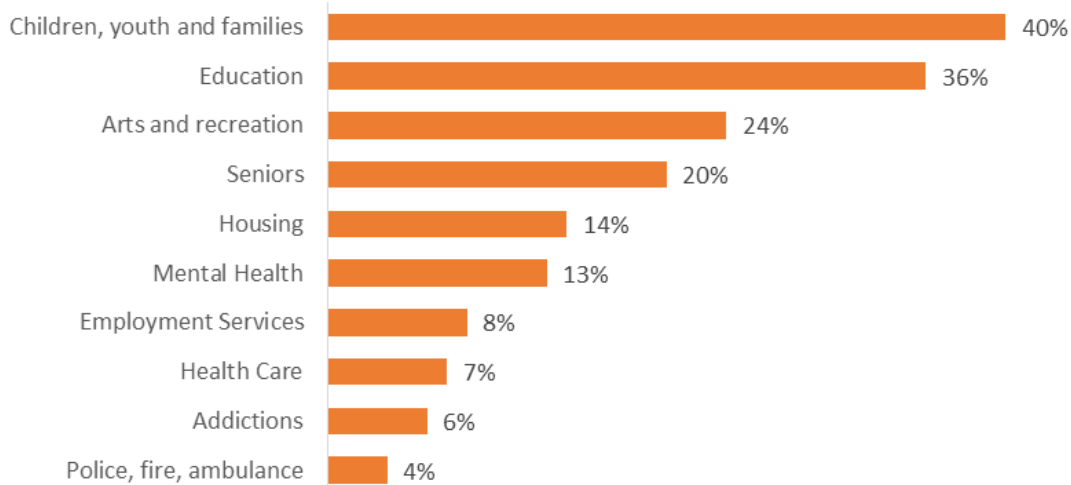
Priority Populations

1 = no priority | 5 = high priority

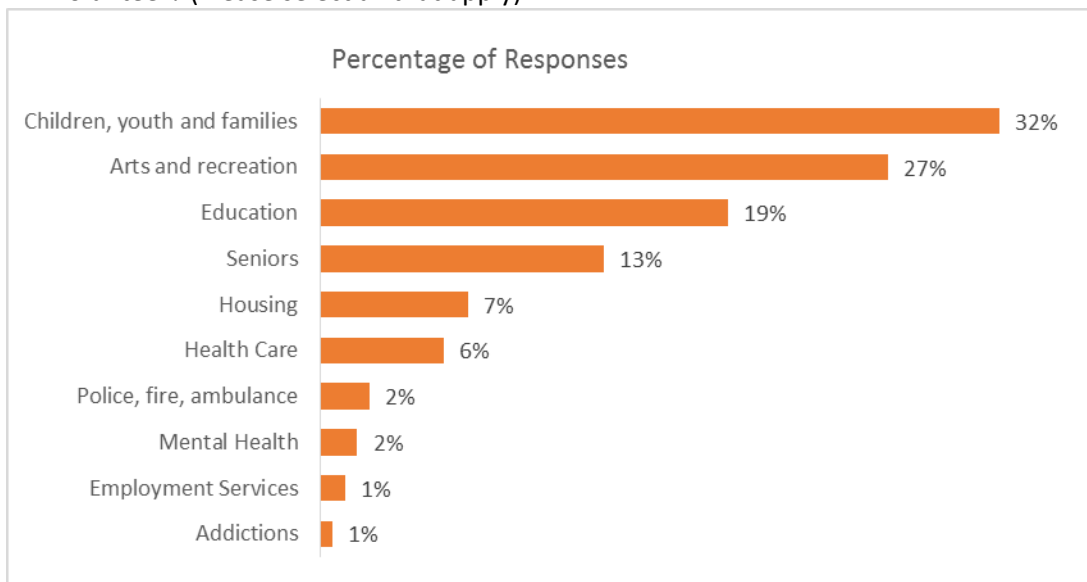


17. If you are employed in Sylvan Lake, do you provide services in any of the following areas in Sylvan Lake as part of your job? (Please select all that apply)

Percentage of Responses



18. If you volunteer in Sylvan Lake, do you provide services in any of the following areas in Sylvan Lake as a volunteer? (Please select all that apply)



19. What prevents people from volunteering in Sylvan Lake? (Choose up to 3)

