



Ipsos Public Affairs



Quality of Life and Financial Planning in the City of Red Deer

May 2008



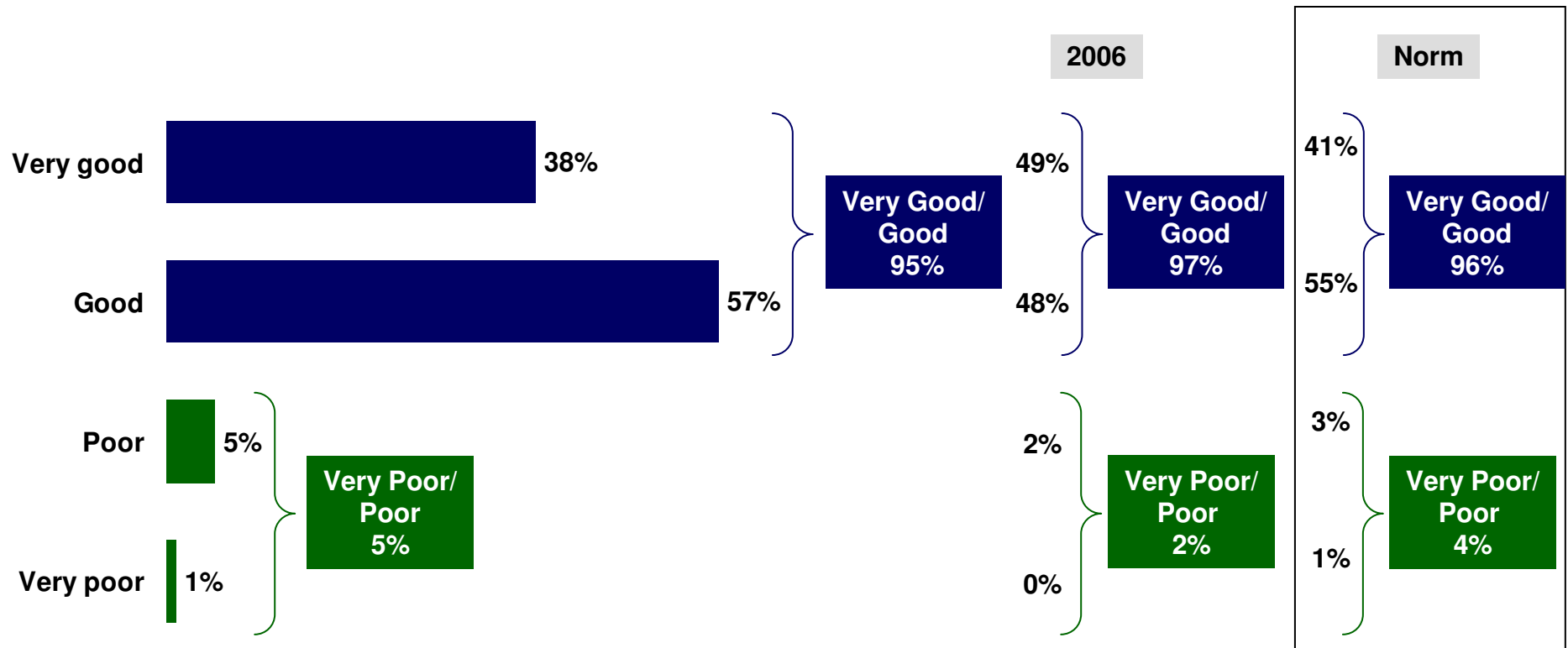
Methodology

- ◆ Telephone survey conducted April 17 to 28, 2008.
- ◆ Random sample of 300 Red Deer residents aged 18 years or older.
- ◆ Margin of error: $\pm 5.7\%$, 19 times out of 20.
- ◆ Overall results are weighted to ensure the age/gender distribution reflects that of the actual Red Deer population according to the 2006 Census data.
- ◆ Where comparable, this year's results have been tracked and reported against similar surveys conducted by the City of Red Deer in previous years.
 - Tracking allows the City to understand how citizens' attitudes and priorities are changing, identify new or emerging issues facing Red Deer, and assess the progress the City is making in addressing key issues.
- ◆ In addition, results have been compared to Ipsos Reid's database of municipal norms, where appropriate.
 - These norms are derived from work conducted with other Canadian municipalities, and are based on nearly 43,000 observations in more than 45 different municipalities representing a mix of community sizes and urban/rural locations across the country.
 - Normative comparisons provide additional insight, context, and benchmarks against which the City can evaluate its performance.



Perceptions of quality of life in Red Deer are favourable – overall on par with 2006 but intensity has gone down

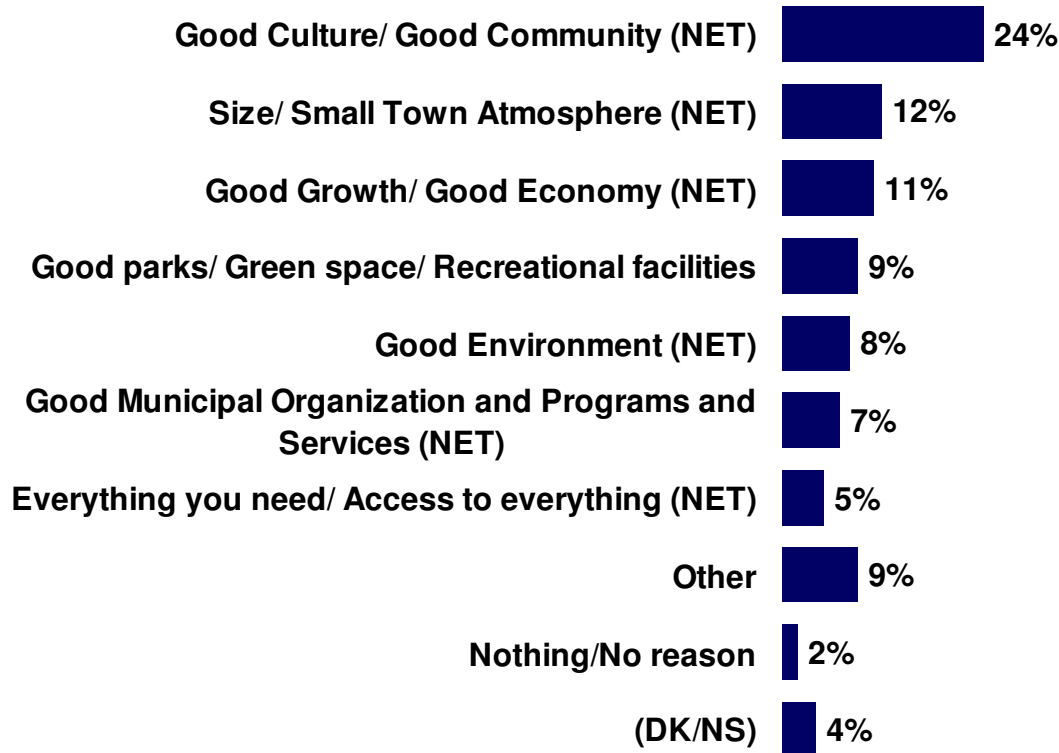
“How would you rate the overall quality of life in the City of Red Deer today?”





Citizens offer a number of explanations for rating the quality of life in Red Deer favourably – different from those reported in 2006

“Why do you say the overall quality of life in the City of Red Deer today is good?”



2006 Top Mentions	
Economy	15%
Good amenities	11%
Enjoy living here/happy/never had any problems	11%
Nice community/nice place to live	9%
Right size	5%
Good parks/green space	5%

**Includes mentions of 3% or more only.*



The few citizens who rate Red Deer's quality of life poorly have the following things to say

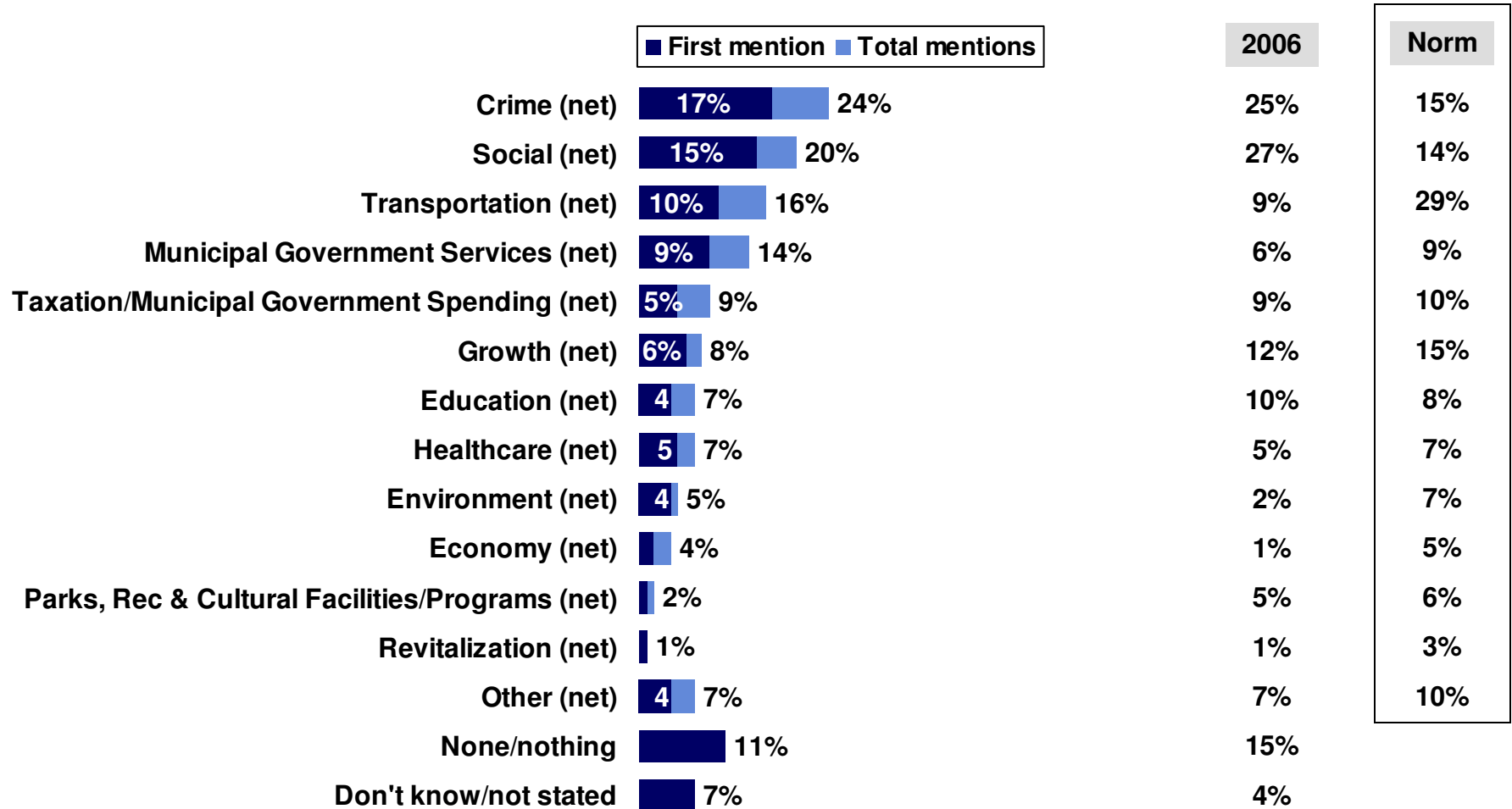
"Why do you say the overall quality of life in the City of Red Deer today is poor?"

<i>Been here for 10 years and have seen it degrade with drugs and violence over the years.</i>
<i>I don't think our actual local government does a good job. They need to listen to people. They need to have some accountability.</i>
<i>The rent is so high, it's very, very hard to live in Red Deer now.</i>
<i>I am just saying that because I don't like living here. Just the area.</i>
<i>Everything is so high yet you can hardly survive with what people are making.</i>
<i>I'm a gay person. There's no gay networking, nothing. For me, it's not good.</i>
<i>It seems a bit stingy and has a lot of problems like drug issues, alcohol issues.</i>
<i>People aren't getting paid enough. People have to work two jobs.</i>
<i>Crack heads wandering the street, prostitutes everywhere.</i>
<i>You cannot trust people anymore, you cannot safely go out at night.</i>
<i>Because I got robbed last night. At the bank machine. I got into a fight with him. And then he took off with my money. I grabbed him and he tried to grab me back, and he took off. And he took all my money. Jobs. There's not too many jobs around. Food and stuff like that too. Grocery shopping, stuff like that. Everyone's got to eat.</i>
<i>The cost of living is going up.</i>
<i>Crime statistics.</i>
<i>I work, I give my time, I'm a volunteer, and people grumble about the food they're getting and they're eating banquets compared to a lot of other places, like Africa and stuff like that, all over in Europe there, in the countries way over there where they don't have McDonald's over in them places.</i>



Crime tops the public issue agenda – social issues are also a concern, but down from 2006

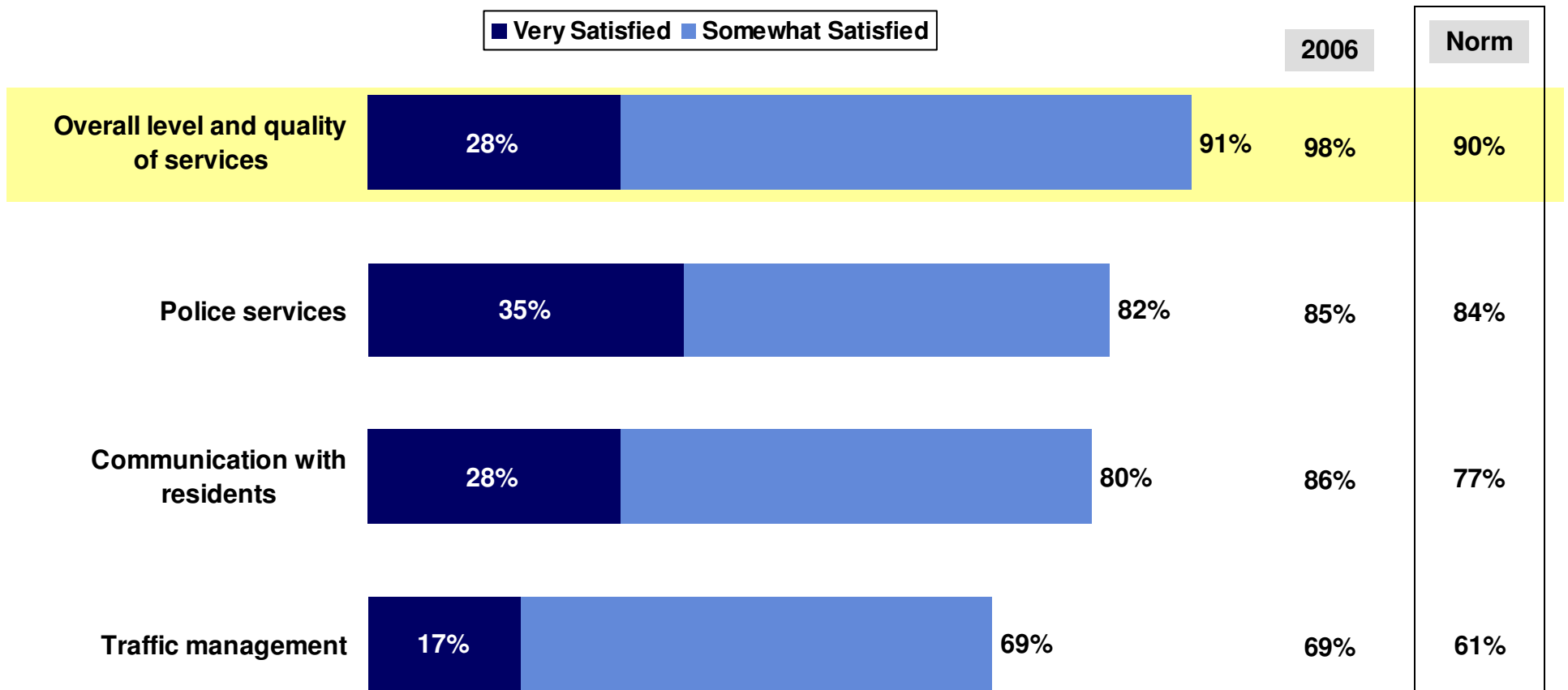
“In your view, as a resident of the City of Red Deer, what is the most important issue facing your community, that is the one issue you feel should receive the greatest attention from your local leaders? Are there any other important local issues?”





Citizens are satisfied with all of the services tested – however, satisfaction has gone down from 2006

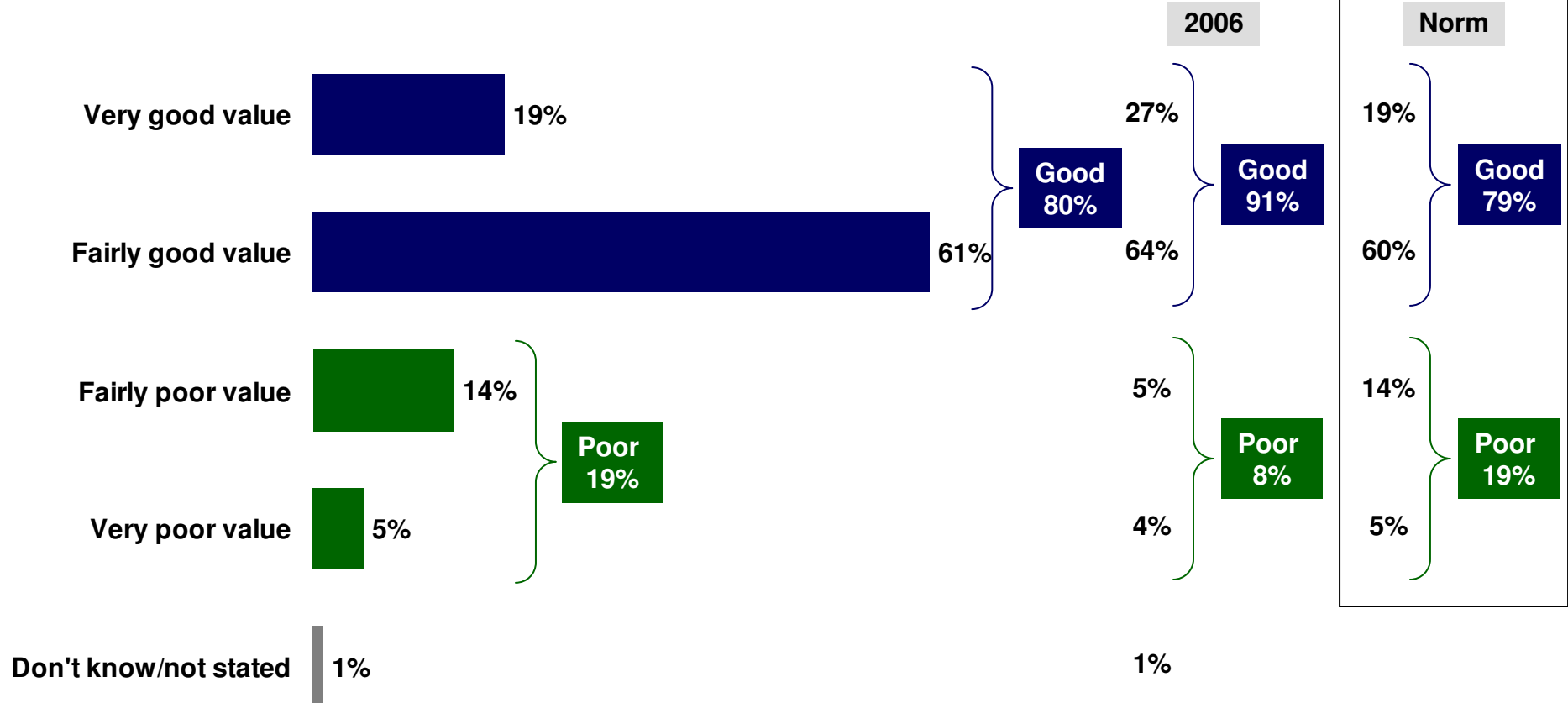
“Please tell me how satisfied you are with each of the following services provided by the City of Red Deer. Our scale is very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied.”





Most citizens think they receive good value for their municipal tax dollars – but less so than in 2006

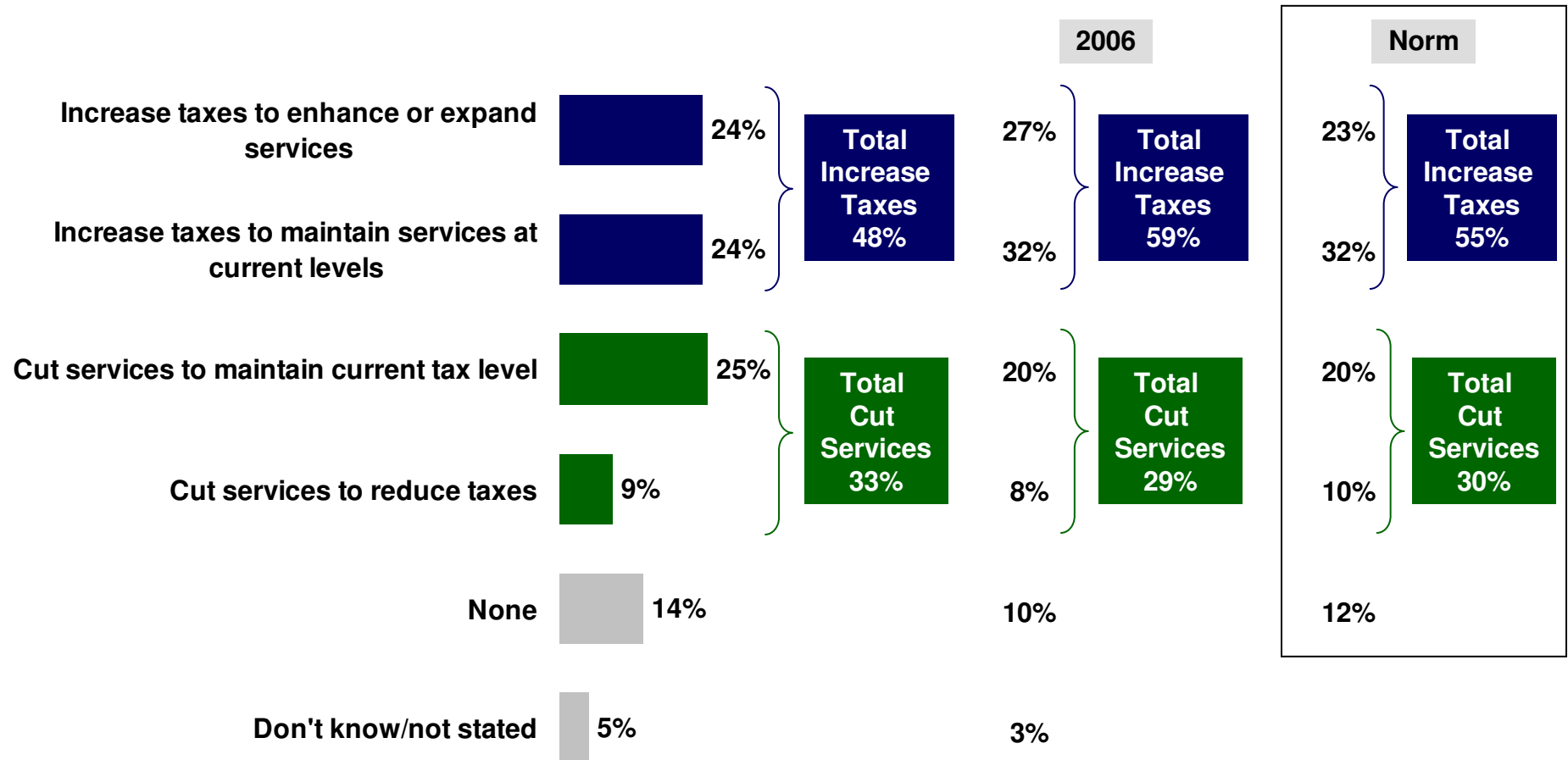
“Thinking about all the programs and services you receive from the City of Red Deer, would you say that overall you get good value or poor value for your tax dollars? Is that very or fairly?”





Citizens would prefer tax increases over service cuts – tolerance for tax increases has dropped since 2006

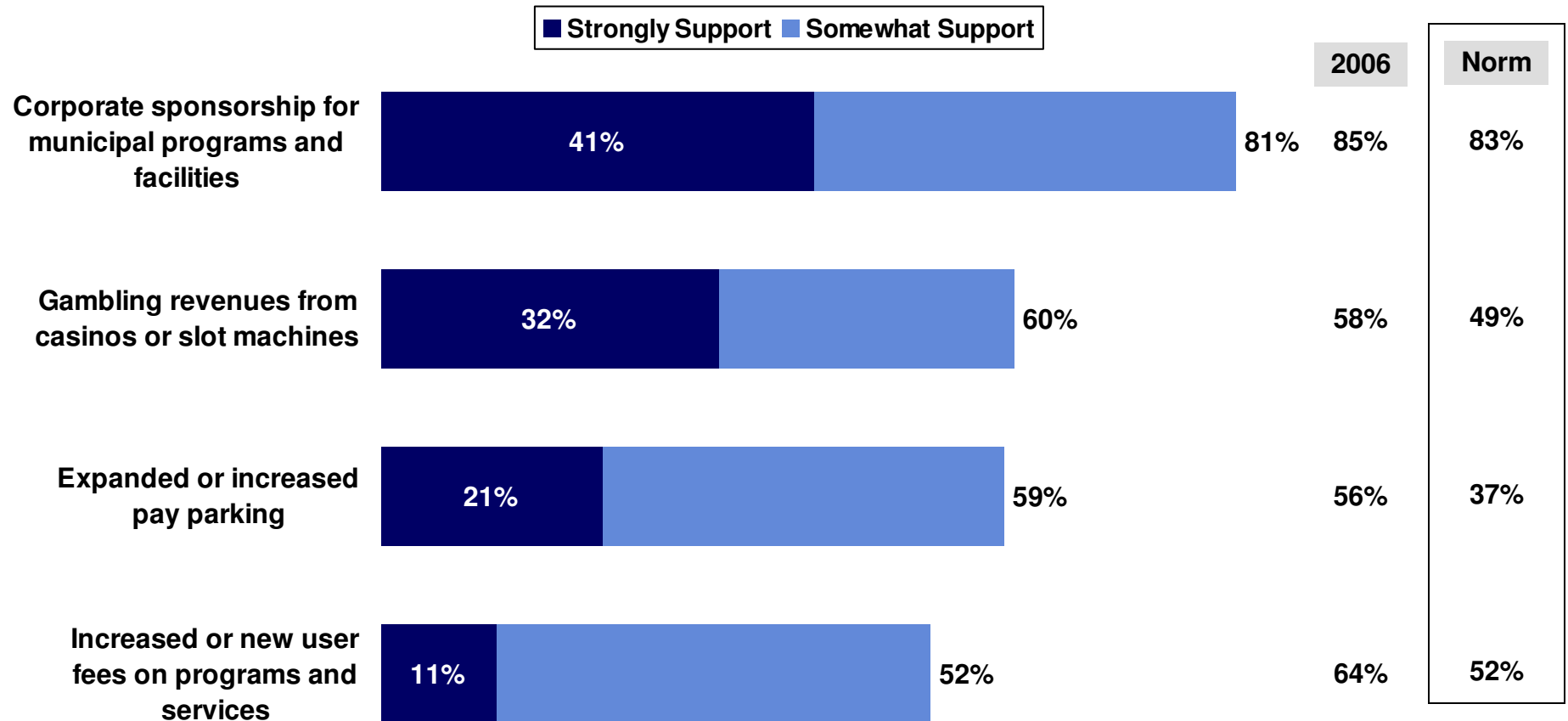
“Municipal property taxes are the primary way to pay for services provided by the City. Due to the increased cost of maintaining current service levels and infrastructure, the City of Red Deer must balance taxation and service delivery levels. To deal with this situation, which of the following four options would you most like the City of Red Deer to pursue?”





Citizens most likely to support corporate sponsorship – support for user fees has dropped this year

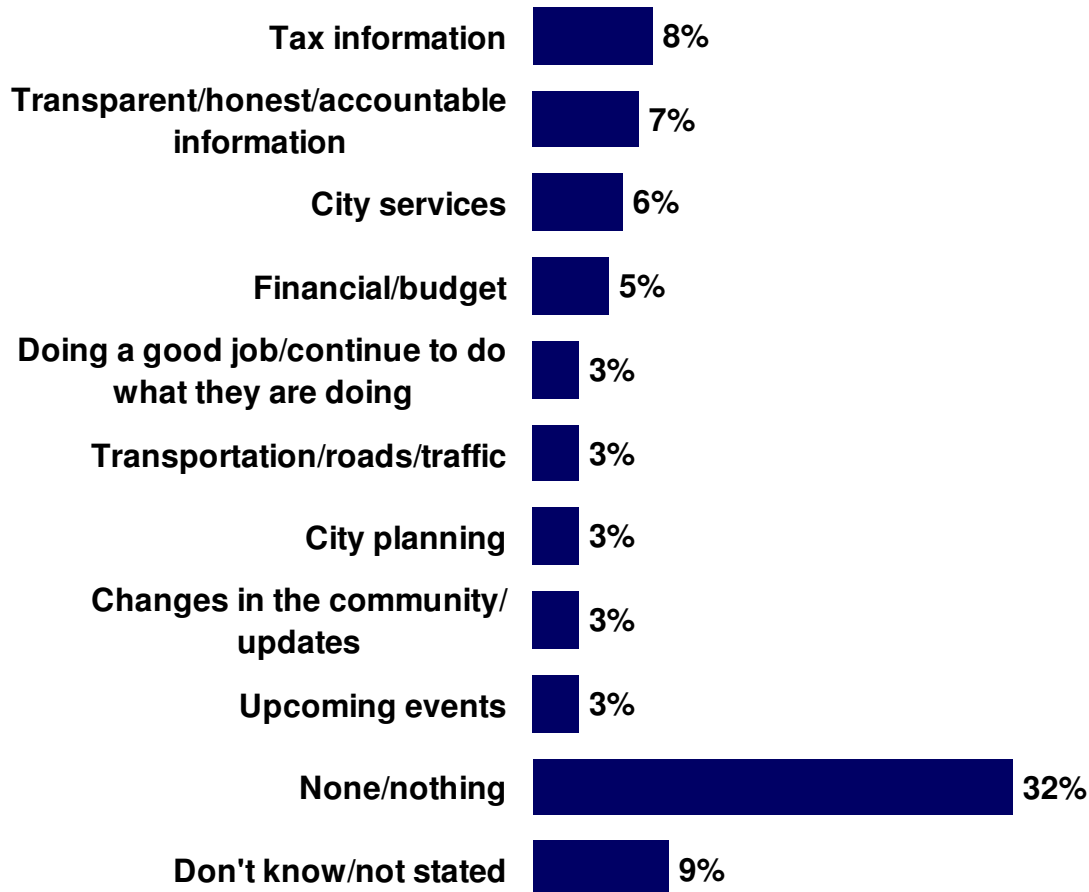
“In addition to adjusting the property tax/service delivery balance, the City of Red Deer has the option to generate other forms of revenue. Please tell me whether you would support or oppose using each of the following to pay for municipal services and programs.”





Information needs are diverse and varied – one-third are not interested in receiving any information from the City of Red Deer

“Thinking about your information needs, what kinds of information do you want the City of Red Deer to provide you with? Any others?”



2006 Top Mentions	
Tax information	11%
Financial/budget	8%
Everything/any information	5%
Recreational and cultural services/events	5%
City planning/future direction of City	4%
Transportation	4%
More up-to-date information	4%

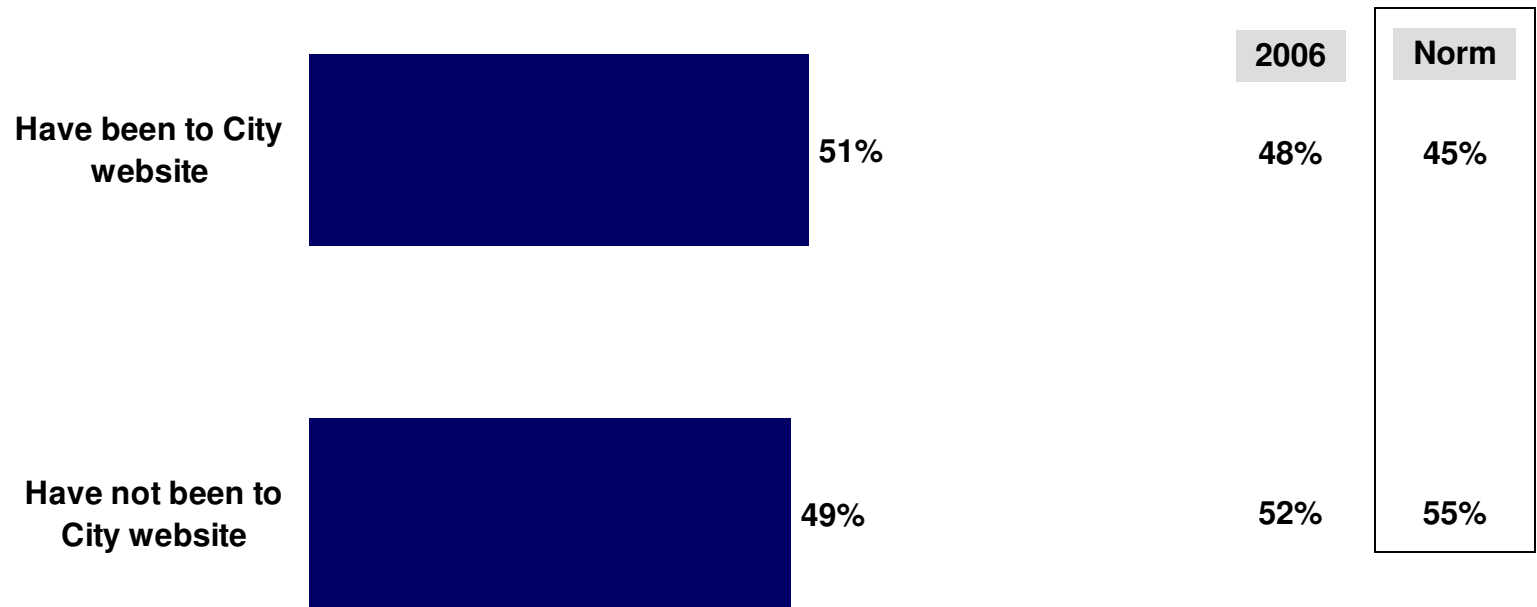
Norm Top Mentions	
Tax information	8%
Financial/budget	7%
Upcoming and current events	7%
City planning and zoning	6%
Parks, recreation, and culture	5%
Building and development projects	5%

*Includes mentions of 3% or more only.



Seven-in-ten have visited the City's website in the past twelve months – on par with 2006

"Have you been to the City of Red Deer's website in the last twelve months?"





Demographics

	Total Respondents (n=300) %
Gender:	
Male	50
Female	50
Age:	
18 to 24	7
25 to 34	30
35 to 44	19
45 to 54	18
55 to 64	13
65 or older	11
<i>Mean</i>	<i>43 years</i>
Household Composition:	
With children under 18 years of age	38
Without children under 18 years of age	62
Responsible for Property Taxes or Rent:	
Yes	92
No	8



Demographics (cont'd)

	Total Respondents (n=300) %
Homeownership:	
Own	68
Rent	31
Number of Years Living in Red Deer:	
Less than 1	1
1 to 5	25
6 to 10	21
11 to 15	11
16 to 20	9
21 to 25	7
26 to 30	8
31 or more	16
<i>Mean</i>	<i>16.6 years</i>



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