



MEMO

TO: FACILITIES AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLANNING COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY RESULTS

FROM: FORREST J. MANDEVILLE, AICP – CONTRACT PLANNER

DATE: NOVEMBER 4, 2019

From October 7 through the end of the month, the County opened a public opinion survey to help gather and solicit comments from the public on the facilities and capital improvements discussion. The survey availability was discussed at each of the seven community meeting held around the County, and was made available online through SurveyMonkey and as a hard copy. 160 responses were collected. Results of the survey are discussed below.

Question #1: Stillwater County needs new County office space:

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed with this statement, with nearly 69% stating they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. About 15% said they disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Question #2: Stillwater County needs new fairgrounds/event center facilities:

This statement also saw wide support, with about 2/3^{rds} of respondents saying they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. However, about 25% said they disagreed or strongly disagreed. In fact, this statement had the highest level of strong disagreement on the entire survey.

Question #3: Stillwater County needs new court/law enforcement facilities:

This statement had a large amount of support as well, with about 64% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing.

Question #4: Stillwater County needs to preserve the current courthouse:

This statement had some of the most support on the survey, with nearly 75% reporting they agree or strongly agree with the statement, including over 40% saying they strongly agreed with the statement, the 2nd highest instance on the entire survey.

Question #5: Stillwater County needs a new library:

This statement had some of the most striking disagreement on the survey, with strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, and disagree all being chosen by more than 20% of respondents. A plurality of respondents reported they strongly agreed with the statement, a result also shown by the amount of open-ended responses that mentioned the library, but this was one of two questions that failed to gather agree/strongly agree of more than 50%, with nearly 28% reporting some level of disagreement.

This statement had more agreement in the Columbus area, with over 53% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement, compared to less than 43% from respondents in other communities.

Question #6: Rank the following (new County office space, new fairgrounds/event center, new court/law enforcement facilities, preserving courthouse, new library, none of the above) in the order of importance:

New County office space ranked first in this question, with a weighted score of 4.71 and nearly 38% of respondents ranking this as the top priority. New court/law enforcement facilities was 2nd at 4.12, followed closely by preserving the courthouse at 4.10. Preserving the courthouse had the 2nd most top priority responses, while new court, law facilities had the most 2nd and 4th priority rankings, and the 2nd most 3rd priority rankings. New fairgrounds/event center had a score of 3.96, with new library at 3.33. New library was ranked 5th priority by the most people by a wide margin. None of the above was only ranked by 41 respondents, with over 70% of those ranking it last.

This question also saw some differences between respondents from Columbus and those in other communities. Respondents in the Columbus area scored new office space at 4.64, compared to 4.81 in other communities. New court/law facilities was nearly identical with 4.12 from Columbus compared to 4.13 elsewhere. Preserving the Courthouse scored at 3.96 from Columbus versus 4.27 from other communities. New fairgrounds/event center was also very similar at 4.00 from Columbus and 3.96 from other communities. New library scored significantly higher from Columbus at 3.66 than from the other communities at 2.78.

Question #7: Stillwater County is doing an adequate job at allowing for economic development:

This statement had the highest level of disagreement and the lowest level of agreement, scoring just about 30% at each. It also had the highest level of neither agree nor disagree at nearly 40%. This may be attributable to a lack of understanding of what economic development is, the nebulous nature of economic development in general, and/or the County's Economic Development Coordinator position being unfilled at the time of this survey.

Question #8: The land north of the Interstate would be a good location for a new fairgrounds/event center:

This statement garnered agree/strongly agree from nearly 56% of respondents, with nearly 24% reporting they disagreed/strongly disagreed with the statement.

Question #9: The current fairground area would be a good location for new County offices:

This statement had support from nearly 53% of respondents. About 20% reported disagreement, with nearly 27% stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Columbus-area

respondents agreed/strongly agreed with this statement at 48.5%, with nearly a quarter disagreeing/strongly disagreeing. In contrast, respondents from other communities agreed or strongly agreed with this statement by over 60%.

Question #10: When considering facility planning, the County's focus should be on (planning for future growth, creating opportunities for economic development, addressing current deficiencies, improving/streamlining service, improving existing facilities, fiscal sustainability, consolidation of County-owned buildings):

Addressing current deficiencies was the most selected option with almost 68%, followed closely by planning for future growth with 64%. Fiscal sustainability had just over 58%, and creating opportunities for economic development was the only other option with more than 50%, at about 53%. Improving existing facilities had just more than 42%, consolidation of County-owned buildings had a little more than 40%, while improving/streamlining service was just under 38%.

Columbus area respondents ranked addressing current deficiencies (68.32%), planning for future growth (68.32%), fiscal sustainability (65.35%) and creating opportunities for economic growth (57.43%) as the highest, with other options not topping 50%. Respondents from other communities, however, only selected addressing current deficiencies (65.52%) and planning for future growth (55.17%) above 50%.

Question #11: How often do you use the Fairgrounds facilities?

This question shows that respondents don't necessarily use the fairgrounds often, but a significant amount do utilize the facilities. At least once a week (2.55%), once a month (6.37%), and once every other month (5.10%) were the three least selected responses. However, over 41% stated they use the fairgrounds 2 or 3 times a year, by far the highest response. Altogether, over 55% of respondents reported they use the fairgrounds facilities multiple times a year, with another 16.56% saying they use them once a year. Nearly 20% stated they use the fairgrounds facilities less than once a year, and over 8% said they never use the fairgrounds.

Columbus-area respondents reported more frequent use of the fairgrounds, with 63% reporting they use the facilities multiple time a year, compared to less than 44% of respondents from other communities.

Question #12: How would new fairgrounds/event center facilities impact your use?

Nearly 65% of respondents stated there would be no change in their use, while about 1/3rd said their use would increase. Less than 2% of respondents said their use would decrease. This is especially interesting in light of Question #2, in which about 67% of respondents agreed with the statement that the County needs new fairgrounds. The difference in an apparent desire for improved facilities with an anticipated increase in use may be to programmatic unknowns, or evidence that the current facilities are sufficient other than some necessary updates.

Question #13: Stillwater County residents would benefit from having County services consolidated on one campus:

This question had strong agreement, with nearly 73% signaling that they agree/strongly agree with the statement. However, the responses to Question #10 show consolidation of County-owned

buildings to be a relatively low priority when weighed against other factors. One explanation for this may be that County residents would generally support consolidation of services, but are used to a certain amount of decentralization.

Question #14: There will be an economic benefit to Stillwater County in providing multi-use facilities that can be used year-round:

Over 70% of respondents reported they agree/strongly agree with this statement, including about 41.5% saying they strongly agree, the highest instance of that response in the survey.

Question #15: Which community do you live closest to?:

Respondents were spread throughout the County, though over 62% reported they were from the Columbus area. Two respondents said they own land but do not live in the County. The survey results were also broken out by Columbus-only responses and other communities within the County to show potential regional differences.

Question #16: Are you male or female?:

Females made up over 61% of total respondents. However, Columbus-area respondents with nearly 70% female, while respondents from other communities we almost 53% male.

Question #17: What is your age?:

Respondents were typically older, with almost 32% reporting they were 65 or older and 23.5% 55-64. The only age demographic that did not have a response was Under 18.

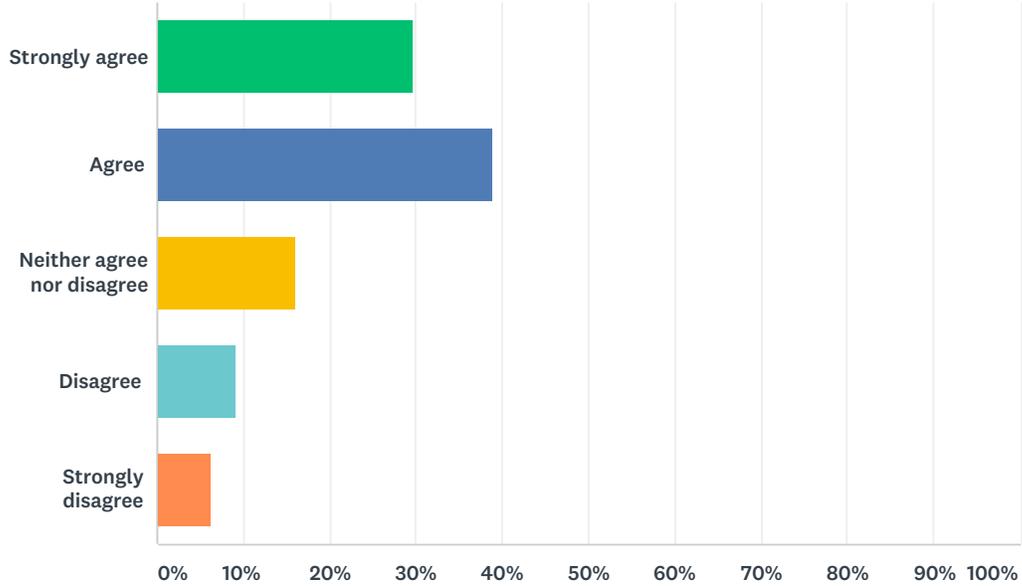
Question #18: Is there anything else you would like to tell use?

97 respondents made use of this option, and the responses were varied. A complete list of responses would cover several pages, but is available in the raw data. A word cloud is shown below:



Q1 Stillwater County needs new County office space

Answered: 162 Skipped: 0

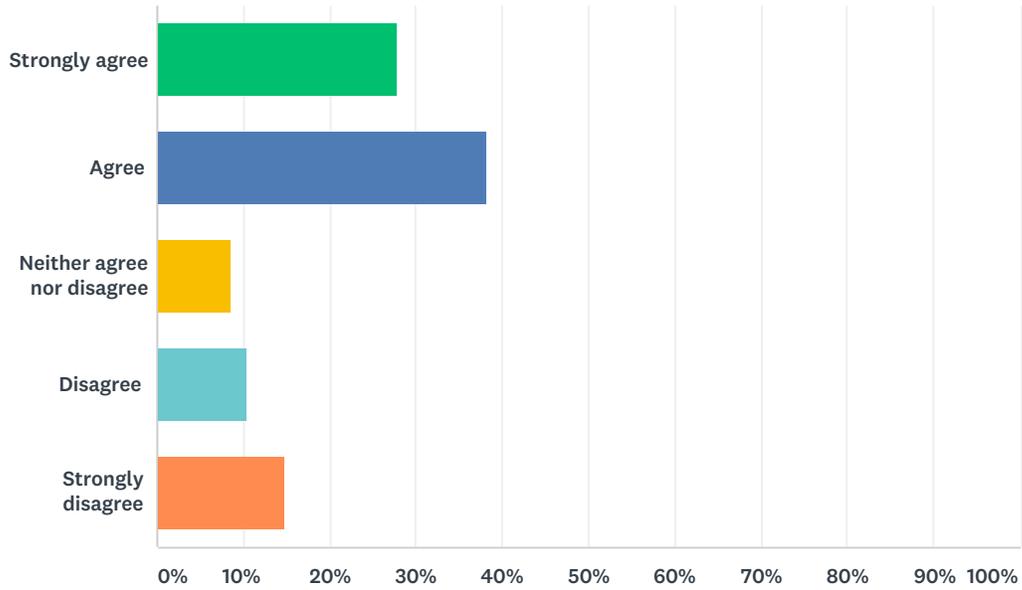


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	29.63%	48
Agree	38.89%	63
Neither agree nor disagree	16.05%	26
Disagree	9.26%	15
Strongly disagree	6.17%	10
TOTAL		162

Q2 Stillwater County needs new fairgrounds/event center facilities

Answered: 162 Skipped: 0

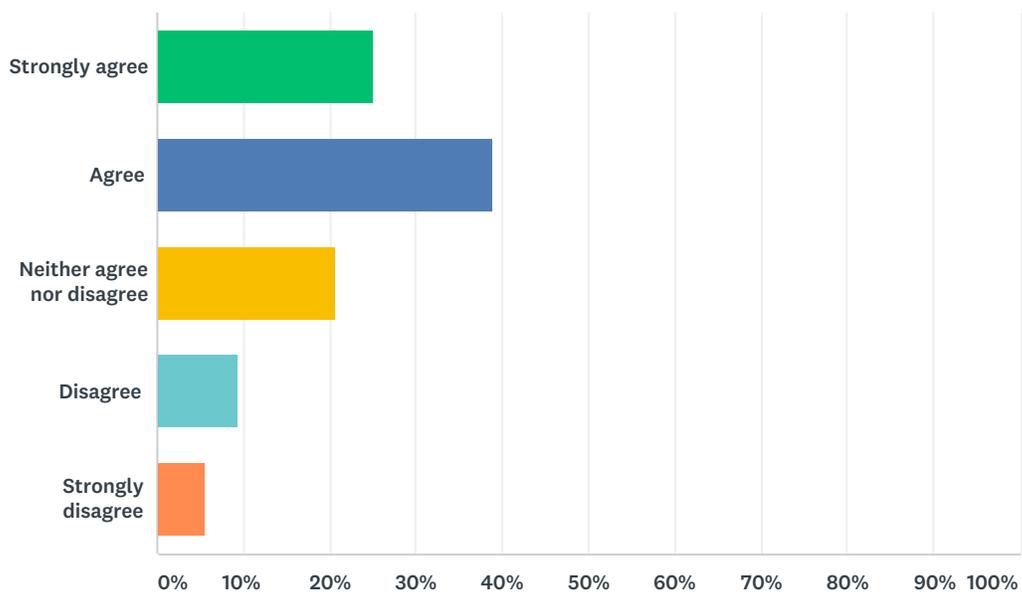
Stillwater County Facilities Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	27.78%	45
Agree	38.27%	62
Neither agree nor disagree	8.64%	14
Disagree	10.49%	17
Strongly disagree	14.81%	24
TOTAL		162

Q3 Stillwater County needs new court/law enforcement facilities

Answered: 159 Skipped: 3



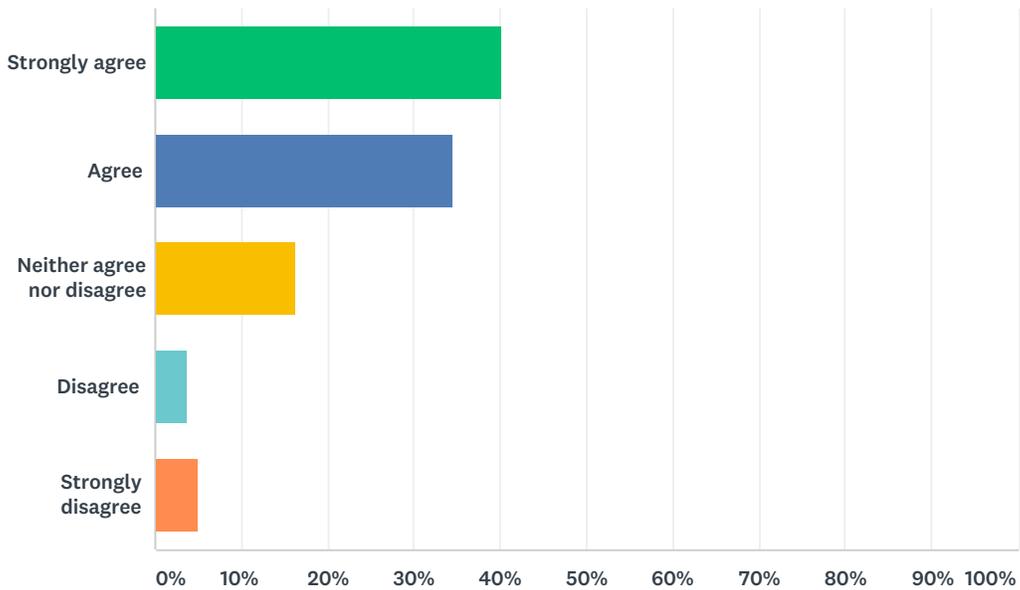
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
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Stillwater County Facilities Survey

Strongly agree	25.16%	40
Agree	38.99%	62
Neither agree nor disagree	20.75%	33
Disagree	9.43%	15
Strongly disagree	5.66%	9
TOTAL		159

Q4 Stillwater County needs to preserve the current courthouse

Answered: 159 Skipped: 3

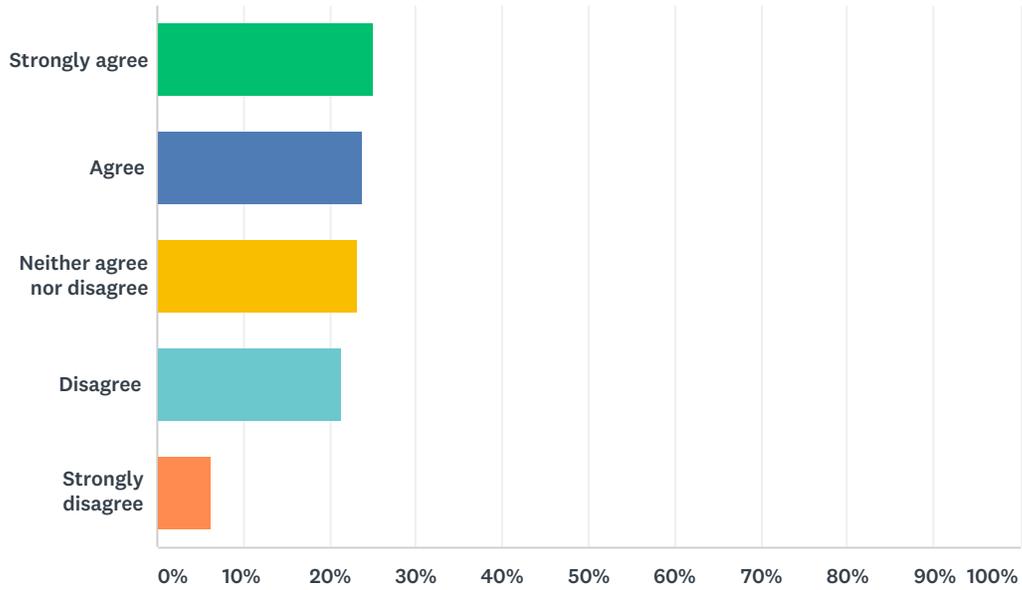


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	40.25%	64
Agree	34.59%	55
Neither agree nor disagree	16.35%	26
Disagree	3.77%	6
Strongly disagree	5.03%	8
TOTAL		159

Q5 Stillwater County needs a new library

Answered: 159 Skipped: 3

Stillwater County Facilities Survey

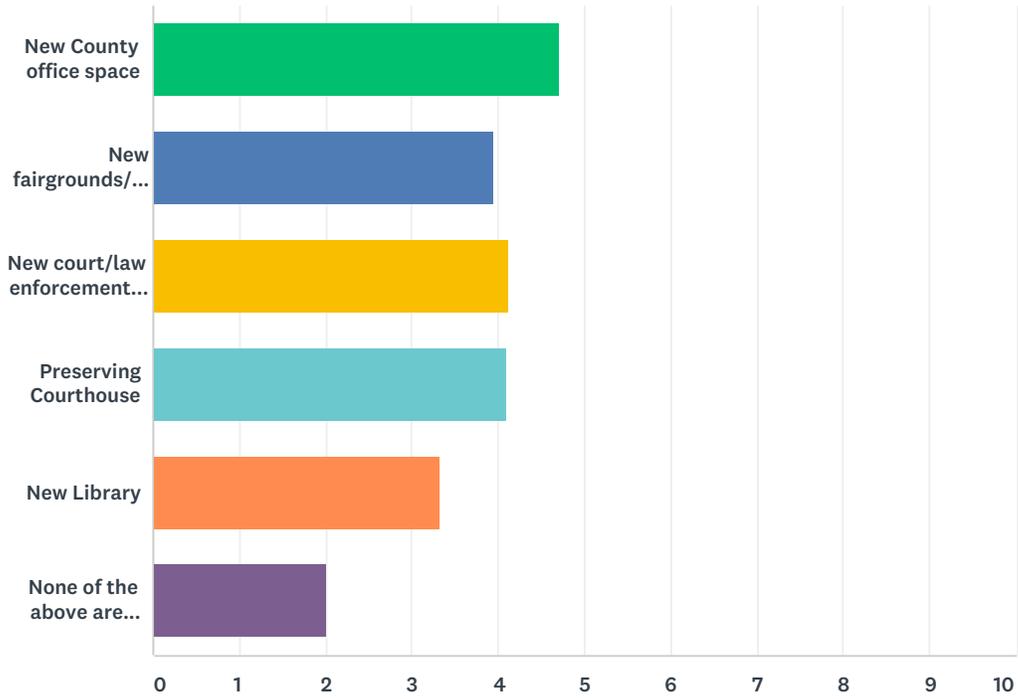


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	25.16%	40
Agree	23.90%	38
Neither agree nor disagree	23.27%	37
Disagree	21.38%	34
Strongly disagree	6.29%	10
TOTAL		159

Q6 Rank the following in the order of importance (Not every item needs to be ranked)

Answered: 156 Skipped: 6

Stillwater County Facilities Survey

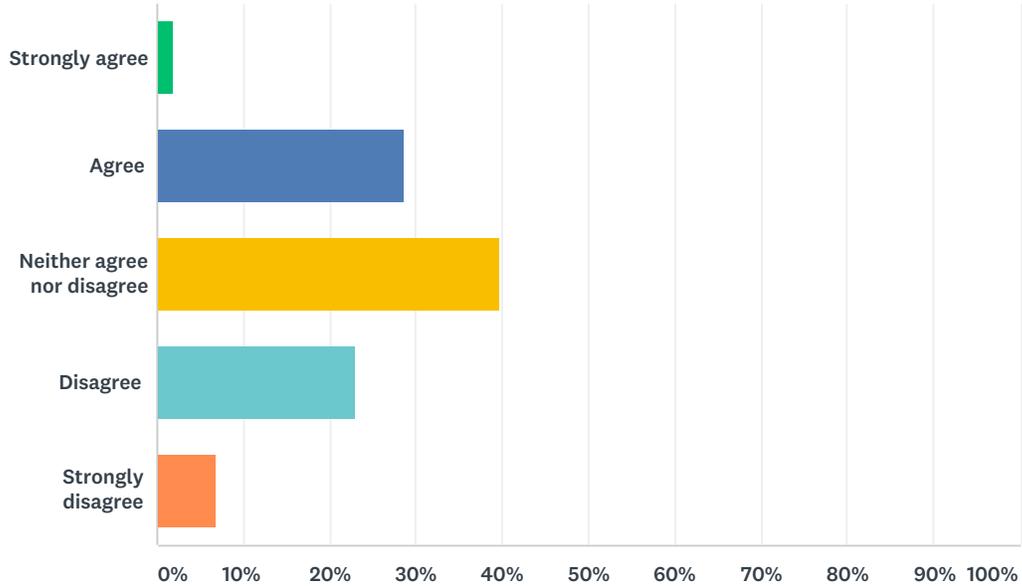


	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
New County office space	37.78% 51	25.93% 35	17.04% 23	9.63% 13	8.15% 11	1.48% 2	135	4.71
New fairgrounds/event center	16.15% 21	22.31% 29	26.92% 35	16.15% 21	13.08% 17	5.38% 7	130	3.96
New court/law enforcement facilities	15.79% 21	26.32% 35	24.06% 32	23.31% 31	9.02% 12	1.50% 2	133	4.12
Preserving Courthouse	27.07% 36	15.79% 21	21.05% 28	17.29% 23	13.53% 18	5.26% 7	133	4.10
New Library	12.31% 16	16.15% 21	9.23% 12	20.77% 27	37.69% 49	3.85% 5	130	3.33
None of the above are important	14.63% 6	0.00% 0	4.88% 2	2.44% 1	7.32% 3	70.73% 29	41	2.00

Q7 Stillwater County is doing an adequate job at allowing opportunities for economic development

Answered: 161 Skipped: 1

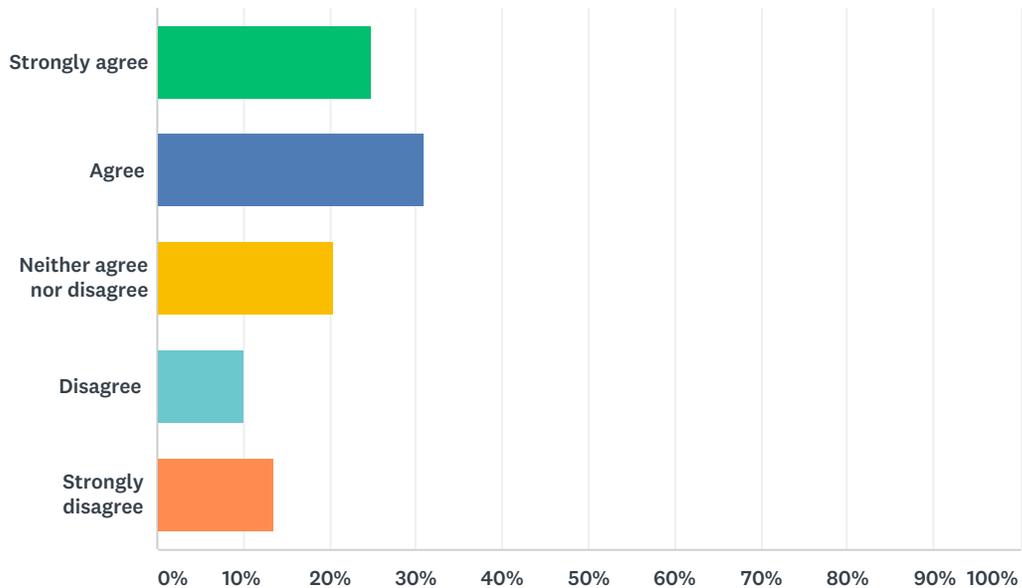
Stillwater County Facilities Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	1.86%	3
Agree	28.57%	46
Neither agree nor disagree	39.75%	64
Disagree	22.98%	37
Strongly disagree	6.83%	11
TOTAL		161

Q8 The land north of the Interstate would be a good location for a new fairgrounds/event center

Answered: 161 Skipped: 1

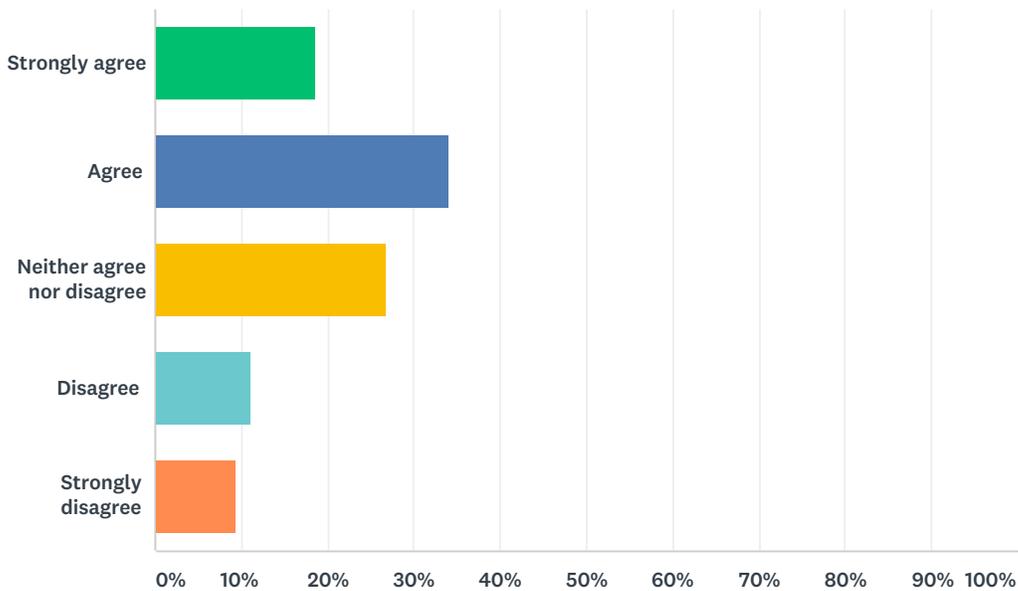


Stillwater County Facilities Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	24.84%	40
Agree	31.06%	50
Neither agree nor disagree	20.50%	33
Disagree	9.94%	16
Strongly disagree	13.66%	22
TOTAL		161

Q9 The current fairground area would be a good location for new County offices

Answered: 161 Skipped: 1

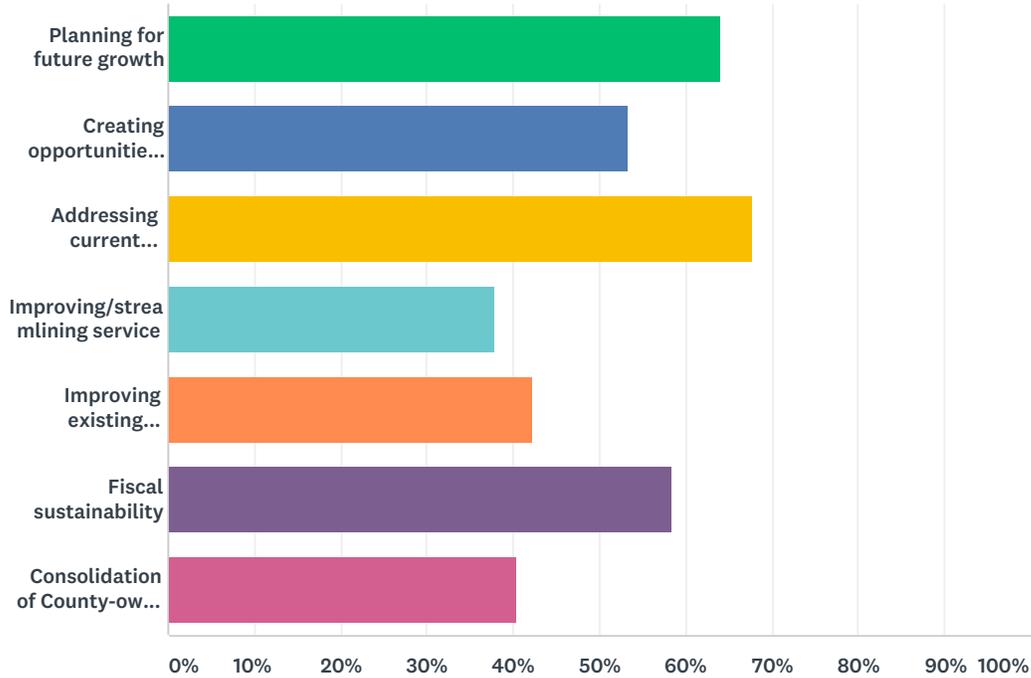


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	18.63%	30
Agree	34.16%	55
Neither agree nor disagree	26.71%	43
Disagree	11.18%	18
Strongly disagree	9.32%	15
TOTAL		161

Q10 When considering facility planning, the County's focus should be on (mark any that apply)

Answered: 161 Skipped: 1

Stillwater County Facilities Survey

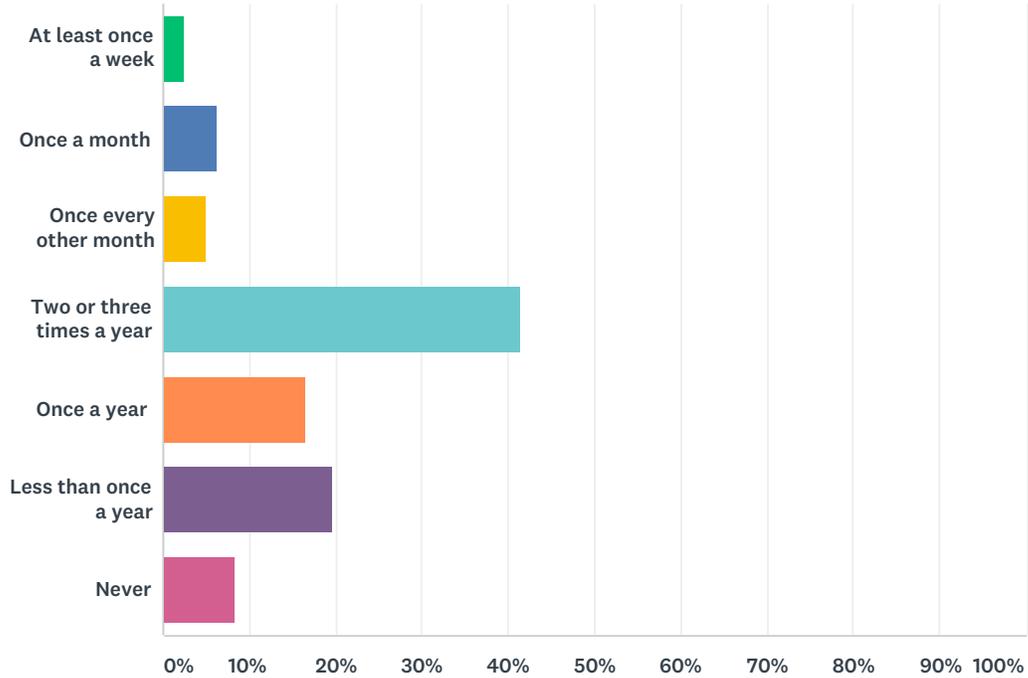


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Planning for future growth	63.98%	103
Creating opportunities for economic development	53.42%	86
Addressing current deficiencies	67.70%	109
Improving/streamlining service	37.89%	61
Improving existing facilities	42.24%	68
Fiscal sustainability	58.39%	94
Consolidation of County-owned buildings	40.37%	65
Total Respondents: 161		

Q11 How often do you use the Fairgrounds facilities (pavilion, Leuthold building, etc)?

Answered: 157 Skipped: 5

Stillwater County Facilities Survey

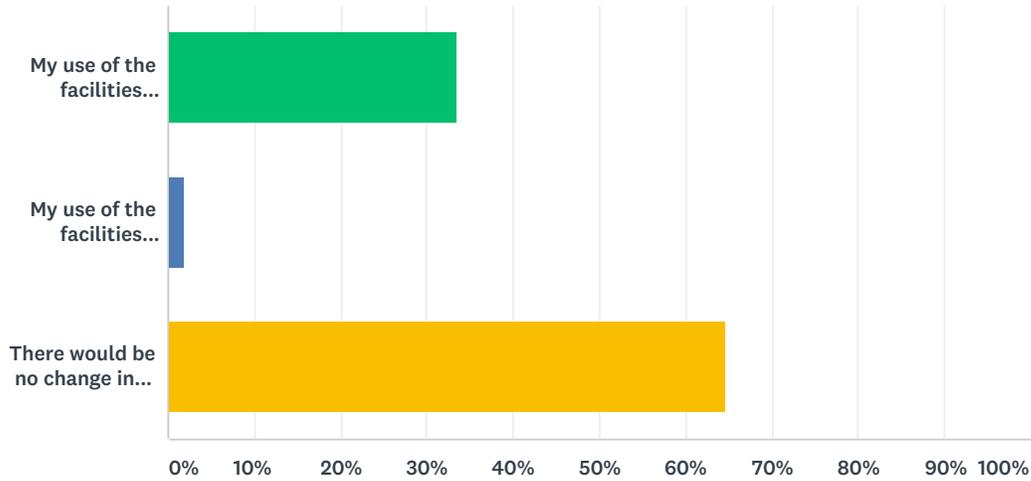


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
At least once a week	2.55%	4
Once a month	6.37%	10
Once every other month	5.10%	8
Two or three times a year	41.40%	65
Once a year	16.56%	26
Less than once a year	19.75%	31
Never	8.28%	13
TOTAL		157

Q12 How would new fairgrounds/event center facilities impact your use?

Answered: 158 Skipped: 4

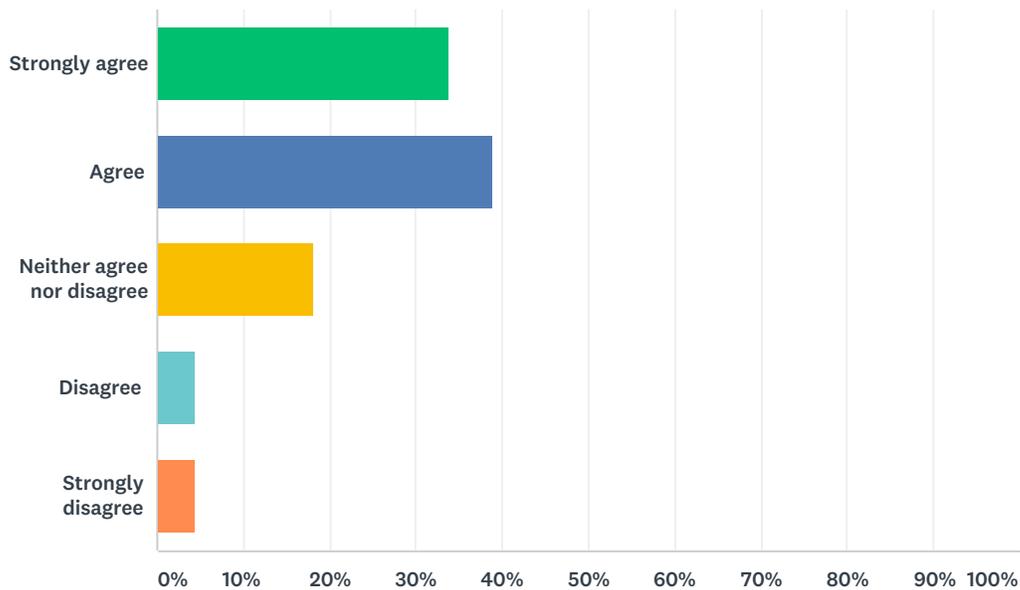
Stillwater County Facilities Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
My use of the facilities would increase	33.54%	53
My use of the facilities would decrease	1.90%	3
There would be no change in how I use the facilities	64.56%	102
TOTAL		158

Q13 Stillwater County residents would benefit from having County services consolidated on one campus

Answered: 159 Skipped: 3



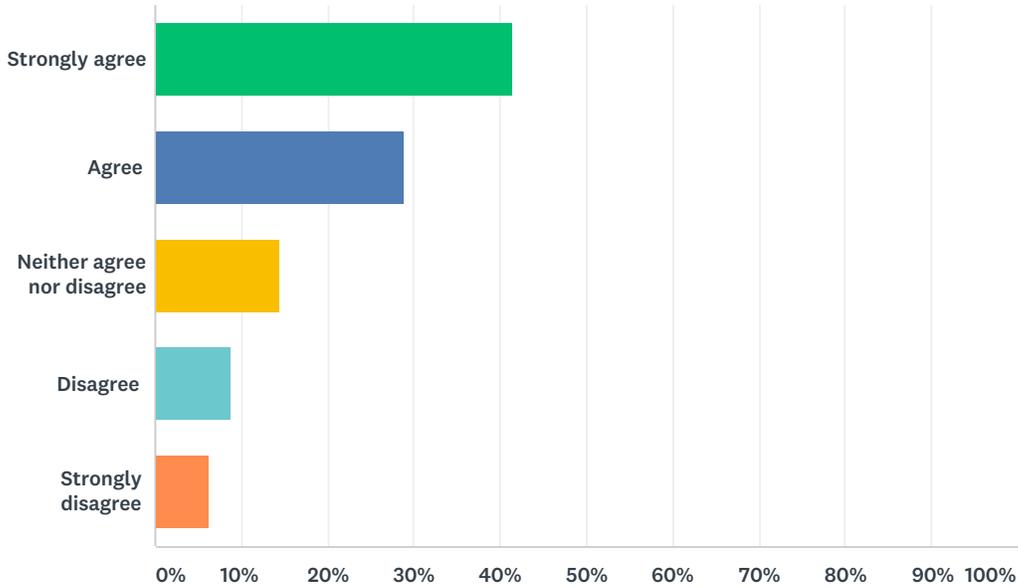
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	33.96%	54
Agree	38.99%	62
Neither agree nor disagree	18.24%	29

Stillwater County Facilities Survey

Disagree	4.40%	7
Strongly disagree	4.40%	7
TOTAL		159

Q14 There will be an economic benefit to Stillwater County in providing multi-use facilities that can be used year-round

Answered: 159 Skipped: 3

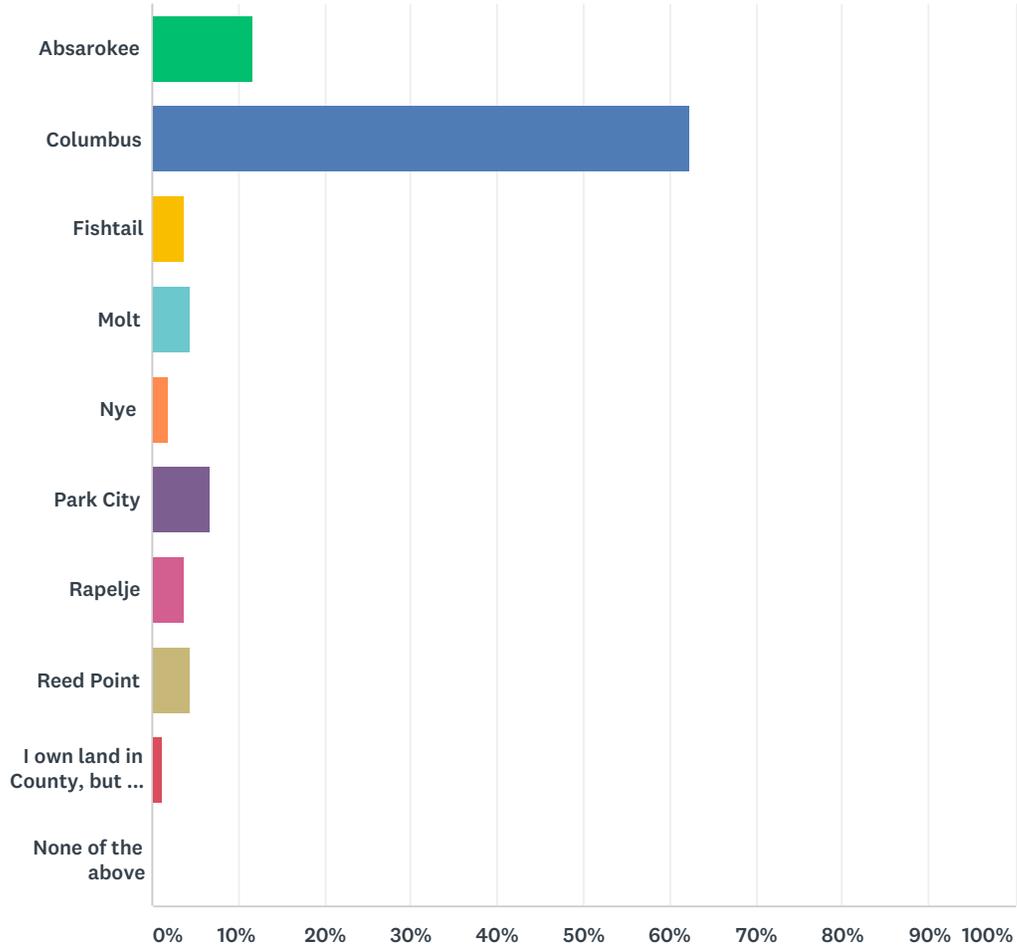


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	41.51%	66
Agree	28.93%	46
Neither agree nor disagree	14.47%	23
Disagree	8.81%	14
Strongly disagree	6.29%	10
TOTAL		159

Q15 Which community do you live closest to?

Answered: 162 Skipped: 0

Stillwater County Facilities Survey

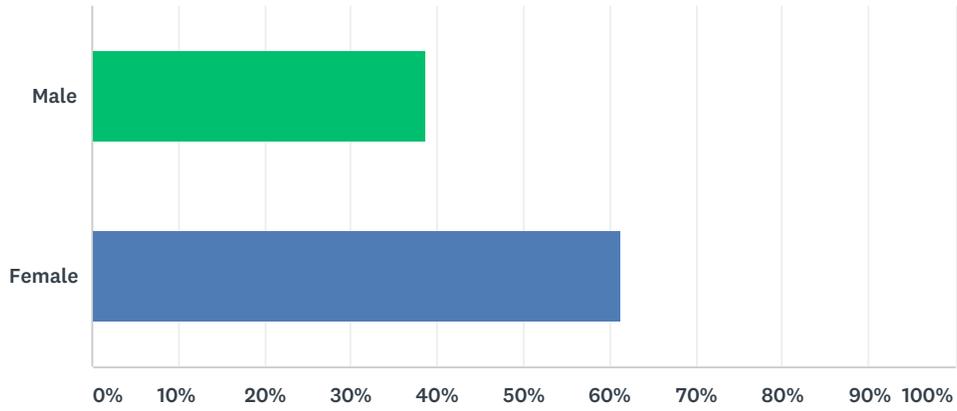


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Absarokee	11.73%	19
Columbus	62.35%	101
Fishtail	3.70%	6
Molt	4.32%	7
Nye	1.85%	3
Park City	6.79%	11
Rapelje	3.70%	6
Reed Point	4.32%	7
I own land in County, but do not live in County	1.23%	2
None of the above	0.00%	0
TOTAL		162

Q16 Are you male or female?

Answered: 158 Skipped: 4

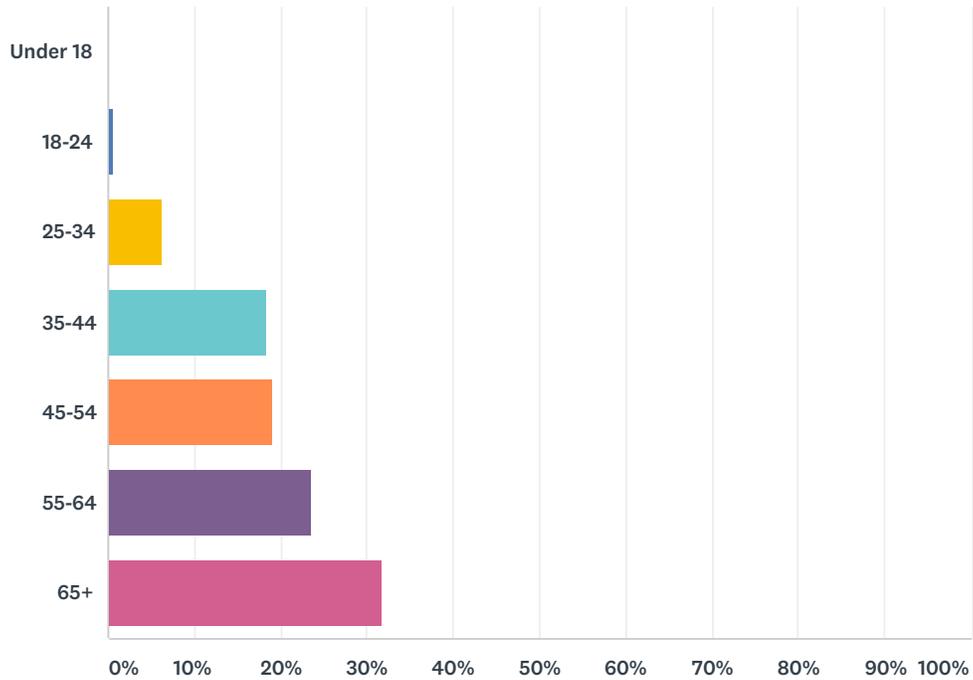
Stillwater County Facilities Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	38.61%	61
Female	61.39%	97
TOTAL		158

Q17 What is your age?

Answered: 157 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	0.00%	0
18-24	0.64%	1
25-34	6.37%	10
35-44	18.47%	29

Stillwater County Facilities Survey

45-54	19.11%	30
55-64	23.57%	37
65+	31.85%	50
TOTAL		157

Q18 Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Answered: 97 Skipped: 65

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	I think it is foolish that our county is hiring someone else to build/grade/maintain roads in our county- all these NEW GRADERS and no one can seem to grade and do a good job anymore. I would be ashamed at some of the roads that they so-call maintain.	11/4/2019 8:55 AM
2	Our County cannot afford 20+ million to build to North of I-90. I thought offices were to be in the old still. Hospital Building. a roof is cheaper that what is trying to happen here- Our taxes, and don't say they wont go up, will skyrocket and we do not need that at all.	11/4/2019 8:52 AM
3	Fix the roads and side walks	11/1/2019 5:12 PM
4	This community is full of opportunities to use or replace some of the vacant buildings in Columbus. There is no need to build an event center ever. This should not be a priority of spending taxpayer dollars. If it were that lucrative, I am sure some private enterprise would have built one. As commissioners, you folks have a fiscal responsibility to use the taxpayers dollars wisely. This is not the way to do this. If and when Stillwater Mine leaves town, you will have taxpayers leaving because they will no longer be able to afford the taxes you will have to impose on them. Be conservative and use your money for necessary instead of frivolous needs.	10/31/2019 7:08 PM
5	I believe that you are promoting an event center to attract events to town when in fact, we do not have adequate dining, motel or other services to support this. There is a private event center in the area and we should not be using government funds to build a competing building. Let no government do for man what man can do for himself. Stick to the basics and build your new office space and forget the Taj Mahal. The city built one and it is the most under used facility and I do not feel we need another. The last time I attended an event in that building was to visit with Denny Rehberg when he was US representative. That is probably the last time that that building was used any where close to capacity. Forget the event center!!!!	10/31/2019 6:57 PM
6	Speed limit 70? Aquatic center?	10/31/2019 3:11 PM
7	if you want to improve economic benefits in northern stillwater co. fix the roads! we certainly dont need to be paying more for columbus residents to have nicer offices and an event center that they would overwhelmingly be the benefactors of . i dont see anything that will benefit us from what you propose .	10/31/2019 6:58 AM
8	Fairgrounds upgrades greatly needed. excited for the potential for growth for Columbus and more local opportunities.	10/30/2019 12:37 PM
9	The purchase of land North of I90 seems to be a predetermined move by Commissioners for development of Plan A & C	10/29/2019 12:57 PM
10	Columbus is not a big enough town for facilities north of the Interstate	10/29/2019 12:34 PM
11	I feel that the library and museum would both benefit from an archive connecting the two. I know the museum currently isn't run by the county but it would be a huge benefit for the community. I also feel that the library shouldn't be the same old library with 4 new walls. The library needs to have technology incorporated so that it keeps up with the times. It needs computers etc. that will benefit kids and adults in the future. There is no point building a brand new building that is only for books.	10/29/2019 9:23 AM
12	The current commissioners are doing a great job at attempting to fix some of the problems. All of the above problems need to be addressed, the current plan for improvement seems to be feasible, over a period of years, with the support of the public.	10/28/2019 8:49 PM

Stillwater County Facilities Survey

13	No	10/28/2019 7:15 AM
14	Stop spending our money like drunken sailors. Sheeesh.....	10/25/2019 8:39 AM
15	Fiscal responsibility is to me of huge importance. The ridiculous amount currently being discussed to spend is WAY too much for this county to take on. Scale back.	10/25/2019 8:25 AM
16	solar panel, geothermal for new buildings energy needs, Fast track -hospital plan	10/25/2019 8:18 AM
17	We strongly need a family facility/rec center. Residents have to leave to other counties to really do anything. We need areas for more food options. We need more housing. Putting millions into a fairgrounds is a waste of money when the town of Columbus cant even give the residents what we need. The economy could be better if the county would allow it. We love small towns but have to leave in order to eat out, have family fun, grocery shop on a budget, etc. Honestly, not all residents want to have to pay for these new buildings when the county should be more concerned about the horrible sidewalks, and serious lack of economic growth.	10/24/2019 7:45 PM
18	New to the area.	10/24/2019 7:38 PM
19	we don't need any new facilities!!!!!!!!!!	10/24/2019 3:09 PM
20	Abandon the old courthouse	10/24/2019 2:02 PM
21	A comment on Question #11. Use of Pavilion--I marked once every other month as an average, but it is really issue/event dependent--there are times when I am in the building several times in a month, and others when I am only there once in six months. On the courthouse retention: The present courthouse is the only substantial public building in the county, and fortunately it presents both a feel of the dignity and necessity of government as well as its historic roots. And I have heard several other people say this same thing--I believe that the grounds to the south of the courthouse really give it its stately feel, so please, please retain both the courthouse, especially its outside aspects and its grounds to the south. Additionally when planning the remodel of the interior I would like to see some of the early 20th century feel restored to at least the central core of the interior, outside the offices and courtroom. Other issues: I believe the thoughtful planning of a fairgrounds/events center is the most visionary part of this public buildings expansion. In particular, the events center can turn into a center of activity that helps bring economic growth to the county. I am in my 70's and it seems to me that Columbus has largely been stagnant for 40 years or more. True, there have been some major businesses bring economic benefit to the county, e.g. Sibanye Stillwater Mining Co. and Montana Silversmiths as prime examples. But even with those additions, and the activity near the I-90 interchange, Columbus pales beside Livingston and Laurel, both of which have grown in terms of service businesses, housing, and population relative to Columbus. I think Columbus should be the business driver for the county and for a wide stretch of south-central Montana, a role that is only nodded to at present. Both growth planning and economic development have been pursued by the county in only a pro forma way--look at the bare-bones recent county growth plan, and the lack of a consistent economic development program. The new center with fairgrounds and planned event center are a good first step to changing the status quo. I also like the idea of an expanded library from the small facility in downtown Columbus. One way to generate public enthusiasm to pursue new directions is to provide a location for civic engagement. A library with sufficient conference room space for small (10-15 people) to medium (say 45-60 people) gatherings, along with a place to be able to access source materials like a library provides, I believe would add vitality to Stillwater County. Thanks for your positive efforts to improve the county; I hope you will move forward on this project with all due speed!	10/24/2019 11:43 AM
22	Get by with what we have. Do not build anything. Fix our roads for economic development.	10/24/2019 11:01 AM
23	Are there other possible locations for the fairgrounds? Is 20 acres enough? A lot of work has been done on a new library. I would like to see that work and architectural design put to good use in the plan. I am glad to see the vision and work you are doing to improve Stillwater County and make it more attractive to families and businesses, for they will want to stay or relocate here.	10/23/2019 8:46 AM
24	I am opposed to the demolition of the "old jail" communication center. I believe and addition to the East side of the courthouse is more feasible. First floor, court/law enforcement, second, third, and fourth floors for additional offices with an elevator to access the existing offices & the new addition.	10/23/2019 8:41 AM
25	Don't spread this out over 7+ years - get it done!	10/23/2019 8:36 AM
26	Keeping county services in one building is a good idea!	10/23/2019 8:33 AM
27	Improvements are great for Columbus, but let's fix the roads up in NE Stillwater, like the roads are fixed south and west of Columbus. I realize more people live in that area, but we pay our tax dollars to this county also - and - that includes road maintenance to keep them drivable.	10/23/2019 8:27 AM

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28	THANK YOU for hopefully getting this project going and not just on the planning table. GET IT DONE.	10/23/2019 8:21 AM
29	I strongly feel that some of our buildings should have a multi-use arrangement. Library/community meeting facility. Courtroom/sheriff facility. Building costs are high and then there is maintenance and upkeep. We need to get the most use for the funds invested.	10/23/2019 8:17 AM
30	I think the county should take over the museum.	10/23/2019 8:10 AM
31	LEED certification could be something the county could be proud of. I think it is more expensive and probably a nonstarter. Grants to help off-set costs?	10/23/2019 8:06 AM
32	20 years of discussion is enough. Get on with the project to bring Stillwater County into the 21st Century (and maybe beyond). Should improve county pride and strong economic development! Museum needs to be part of the county.	10/23/2019 7:59 AM
33	With the county growth projections fairly flat based on the Columbus Schools demographics study, although I would like to see a new facilities built, I believe our most urgent need is additional affordable housing. Until that problem is resolved, we will not have the labor to support economic development. I also believe that the existing courthouse is poorly utilized. A new independent space planning study should be done to determine the best use of the current spaces and the total space needed (not wanted) for Law, Justice, and County Functions, as well as a Masterplanning effort for all County Facilities. As for a Library, I believe they are becoming obsolete and typically used for research, which is also the function of the Museum. Maybe the archives, museum and library should combine into a common facility.	10/22/2019 4:15 PM
34	Need to take the time and opportunity to apply for grants. Like this sewer issue in absarokee. Why not apply for some grants. Also with the Stillwater mine growing adding another 300 jobs, it's only good for the community of you have housing available or available to build with sewer lines available to hook up to, as well as community water across expanded. People really don't want to use cisterns to bring in water. There also needs to be better options for internet. What we don't need is apartment building that brings riff raff with it. The miners can afford houses, there just need to be housed available to purchase.	10/22/2019 10:15 AM
35	The wording of these questions are "leading " and make it clear that you are going to fool some people into the results YOU want. I don't feel this is honest on your part	10/22/2019 9:54 AM
36	I agree that if we're going to do this, we should spend the money to do it correctly the first time so we don't have to try an expand again later. However, there are issues in the less populated areas of the county (road conditions, etc.) that the Commissioners are still failing to address. The new facilities will mostly benefit those living close to Columbus, while the rest of us will continue to deal with the same issues we've dealt with for years.	10/22/2019 8:00 AM
37	I could not answer the questions where you ask if I would support a new county offices and a new law and justice center. I am in full support of preserving and protecting the Stillwater County Courthouse and rehabilitating the building to continue as a functioning public building for either county offices or the law/justice center. I cannot therefore support any new building until there are some assurances that the county will retain the integrity of the courthouse and renovate it for future use. I also support the construction of a new library. Libraries are experiencing a resurgence in both urban and rural setting and are an important county anchor for so many activities, like reading, providing computer access for those without, and programing for children. It is time for Stillwater County to build a new library for all. I was surprised that the Museum of the Beartooths was not included in the survey. I know that they own their building but they have done considerable work in regards to the county archives. What is the situation with this? For the county fairgrounds/event center north of town, my first concern is traffic. It seems like the only access with be under the interstate which is already a busy and dangerous location. Is there any thought to a walk/bike path (tunnel?) (grant through MDT) to the facility? I also can't say if my use would change since have no idea what kind of events, community or otherwise would be held there.	10/22/2019 7:20 AM
38	Whatever is done, work to esurethisndoesnt have to be revisited at least for another 20 years. This situation has been kicked down the road for too long. If something is to be done, do it! Been watching this being "studied" for over 20 years.	10/21/2019 4:47 PM
39	Don't spend our money on unecessary facilities	10/21/2019 4:21 PM
40	If the improvements can be done WITH OUT raising our taxes or adding a new tax, then OK, but if there will be tax increases then NO!!	10/21/2019 4:00 PM
41	I feel the restoration of the current courthouse would benefit law enforcement, instead of new facilities.	10/21/2019 11:22 AM

Stillwater County Facilities Survey

42	Get it done, if you need to pass a bond issue to get it completed, put it on a ballot and let the voters decide.	10/17/2019 2:31 PM
43	Great job on all the work. Keep moving forward. Concept C, no need for the museum to be a part of the county. That is just another liability.	10/17/2019 9:04 AM
44	It is not only important not to raise property taxes for this project, but make sure that all other needs within the County are met and property taxes won't need to be raised for something else due to all funds going towards the facilities project.	10/17/2019 4:50 AM
45	Should limit amount spent on restoring old courthouse. Include the museum as a county entity, and adequate parking is a must.	10/16/2019 10:22 AM
46	I support the county taking over and running the museum as mentioned at the Columbus meeting.	10/16/2019 10:07 AM
47	I feel strongly that the library should be moved sooner in the phasing. The museum should also become a county entity	10/16/2019 9:46 AM
48	I feel that the museum should become a part of the county. Your plan shows it on the map in correlation with the archives between the museum and library. we should work hard to add it into this plan.	10/16/2019 9:39 AM
49	Like the concept with the library, archive, and museum attached.	10/15/2019 4:30 PM
50	1. The county commissioners seem very prepared to move forward, they are well informed and researched, please move forward. 2. The library is so important. 3. The multi -use/purpose building at the fair grounds "metra" is undersized, needs to be doubled ASAP. 4. As the commissioners do have other items to tend to, an open call for or appointment of a professionals in building/design as well as diverse community volunteer committee maybe helpful to work with architects to look at specifics of each project, as they are all major and different. Thank YOU	10/15/2019 12:41 PM
51	All of this economic benefit is centered around Columbus. Failure to allow outlying communities to benefit from this plan will contribute to the decline of those communities. It is a big county. But Absarokee has the facilities for the fairgrounds at Young's arena. Renting the arena for fair and planning other events there would reduce the need for so much spending on fairgrounds in Columbus. I am not affiliated with Young's. Also I fail to see how Absarokee benefits much from a new library. Satellite libraries would be more helpful to outlying communities. Also please address the county's cash reserves as these phases progress. How will these new facilities impact annual operating costs?	10/14/2019 7:35 AM
52	Look around at other communities. A strong community building (building together) would attract: events, visitors, creativity, income from use, community spirit and more. You are forgetting one county component: the museum should be included in the overall plan. The most vibrant offering the county has right now. The fairgrounds no longer belongs in the middle of our county seat. It is old, clobbered up, unattractive. That location done attractively would draw people in and serve county resident well. Get rid of the old hospital. What a mistake! Spend the money but spend it right. Sorry I was out of state for all your input meetings.	10/14/2019 7:10 AM
53	We need more hiking and bicycle trails	10/14/2019 6:57 AM
54	The greatest economic development effort you can accomplish will come in form of improvements to our county infrastructures, especially roads.	10/13/2019 4:21 PM
55	We need a Rec Center or Aquatic Center! There are not enough activities for kids in Columbus.	10/12/2019 2:48 PM
56	The Fair Grounds/Event Center was ranked #1 because it will be the most visible of the options, which would entice travelers to visit our County. The County Office Space and Library were ranked # 2 & 3 because they are the facilities that are most visited by the County's residents, children, business owners, ranchers, farmers, visitors, home buyers, new entities, etc. Court/Law Enforcement Facilities and Courthouse were ranked # 3 & 5 because, while greatly needed, they could be done together quicker and more efficiently. My thanks to the Commissioners and the Planning Board for all they have done for us to reach this point.	10/12/2019 1:00 PM
57	keep pushing forward	10/12/2019 8:30 AM
58	You're doing a good job reaching out to ask citizens for their views.	10/12/2019 7:08 AM
59	On a fixed income my main concern of course is tax increases along with all other services that impact my welfare	10/11/2019 12:03 PM
60	All it would do is raise taxes - me on limited income	10/11/2019 6:06 AM

Stillwater County Facilities Survey

61	Get rid of the old hospital asap! Make the decision to move forward with plan A soon.	10/11/2019 5:19 AM
62	I feel way too much money is being spent on the library and fair grounds. They may benefit Columbus but what about all the other tax payers?	10/10/2019 10:37 PM
63	I feel the suggestion to add a new building and parking to the east side of the existing court house is the best option I heard, Options A,C both seem to be a stretch for what is needed. Also Why cant the sidewalk in front of the court house be moved in 25ft and new parking be added on a 45 degree angle that would preserve the court house, and I believe make it look better then the way it does now with parallel parking. I also liked the Idea of the out of service county work vehicles being parked at the fair grounds.	10/10/2019 9:21 PM
64	As these proposals sound great with what little information that was provided although need to provide more detailed infprmation to constituents as well as financial infomation. Lastly, county and most importantly the county needs to operate within it's means and not raise my taxes and or justify too me why it should otherwise.	10/10/2019 9:04 PM
65	I would also like to see that the use of these facilities is free or low cost for ALL non profits not just certain ones. It would great to see the facility used for many different uses in the community with the adequate resources .	10/10/2019 6:14 PM
66	Let's restore or stabilize the old courthouse building and make it a library/museum. The building should stay but change the use so it won't be so expensive to remodel and the remodel could be done in phases as funds are available.	10/10/2019 5:00 PM
67	I attended your Columbus meeting and viewed the different concepts. I definitely support A and C, which involve more projects but which will prepare the county better for the future. I especially like the idea of attaching the library to the museum via an archive extension -- and that means I support the county adopting the museum as a county property, provided the museum is willing. I would prefer that a new library be built sooner than the fourth phase; I think it is of higher priority. Because these concepts involve the construction of several buildings (ie. can we consolidate three buildings at the fairgrounds into two? Can we consolidate county offices with the library, etc?) , I hope the county will work hard to see where needs overlap so that some of those needs can be consolidated for efficiency, easier public access to services and for costs. Thank you for all of your hard work to date and I hope the county can move forward with some form of these exciting proposals!	10/10/2019 3:27 PM
68	Quit farming out services to other buildings. We need more handicap accessible services. Interchange on Rapelje overpass if we bring fairgrounds north of I90. Buy Keinitz property or other land thereabouts. Also go east of town. Old courthouse is cool, but a financial burden to keep cobbling it together without an elevator, and paying for an uncentralized services.	10/10/2019 2:50 PM
69	I would love to see a couple of "center's" The fairgrounds north of town would be great, and then I would like to see a community center in town where the existing museum & little metra sit. It would be great for it to have the museum/learning center/library a coffee shop breakfast/lunch area (that could produce an income and you could provide opportunity as well as a have the county offices there - built in customers. I would love this center to have a indoor work out center large enough to be utilized by the community and groups. We need to hire an economic development coordinator as well as a county planner - ON STAFF not someone that is on a retainer. Someone that works for the people and betterment of the community. A county planner would be able to address new subdivisions with a clear vision that would include walking paths etc. connecting them with the community. Lets move forward on these items. Less talk, more action!	10/10/2019 11:29 AM
70	I feel it would be a great idea to up date and add onto the existing courthouse building using the existing yard area along the east side of the building. There is plenty of land there to create new office space, add an elevator, create a nice parking lot and still have some yard. The new building could be built to look like the existing building. Plant new trees and make half the yard interesting , like a park.	10/10/2019 8:18 AM
71	There is already the "little metro" that is rarely used. Why new exhibition space? The library is minuscule and there are no meeting rooms. A library can become a center of the community on a daily basis. Libraries and the communities that support libraries bring growth.	10/10/2019 8:06 AM
72	Regardless of any other changes, the courthouse needs an elevator and the front stairs repaired. It makes more sense to add to and improve the current courthouse than to build a newer, more expensive one.	10/10/2019 8:05 AM

Stillwater County Facilities Survey

73	Please make a new library/learning center a priority. The exhibition hall and new county office campus is also needed. The expansive new fairgrounds seems a bit over done. Yes, move the Leuthod building, build an outdoor area, and expand slightly on what we have currently but building up the fairgrounds now should not be a priority over a library or county campus. I would much rather see funds put I to a new high tech county library then into addition fairground facilities. I see the importance of acquiring the 20 acres across the interstate but put the priority in building the library and county campus and basic needs in the new fairgrounds. You can expand with expanded fairground facilities in 5-7 years after library and county campus is built. Basic needs for new fairgrounds on the 20 acres and expand on those fairgrounds after the rest in accomplished.	10/9/2019 8:28 PM
74	No	10/9/2019 4:58 PM
75	No	10/9/2019 4:58 PM
76	#10 is addressing existing facilities - why isn't "old hospital" included anywhere. It's a solid building owned by county. #7 the county is allowing for economic opportunities by offering trainings and economic development for small businesses with the economic development coordinator, she works with small business to help themselves, need permanent ED person. #2 event center presented by commission should be left to private sector not subsidized by county tax payers, Rick Young had right idea, an event center would compete with private business. #13 law and justice should be separate from other county business - unhappy people. Weeds should be sprayed by private contractors to save on labor and equipment -contract grant writer. An event center would only benefit the Columbus area - real estate prices.	10/9/2019 4:00 PM
77	The county should invest where residents have already said they would support...law and Justice and new Library!	10/9/2019 12:24 PM
78	At the Columbus meeting there was mention of moving the Museum over to a County owned/operated function. In this survey you ask about Economic Development - the museum brings in visitors from far and wide. It is the only "attraction" around. There's the opportunity to support economic development.	10/9/2019 12:20 PM
79	Multi use rec center with indoor pool would he amazing, Cody has one and it is well utilized!	10/9/2019 11:32 AM
80	The library should be more of a priority than the events center as long as the exhibit hall can be used for events now taking place in the Pavilion.	10/9/2019 9:11 AM
81	Thank you. The courthouse would make a very unique library.	10/9/2019 8:10 AM
82	I feel it would be beneficial to keep the old courthouse and build onto it. There is plenty of land for expansion.	10/9/2019 7:05 AM
83	No	10/9/2019 7:04 AM
84	I'm thrilled the county is finally building a d cent fairgrounds.	10/9/2019 4:28 AM
85	Just buy keyser creek arena for a fairground already. It's already built close enough to town and big enough for expansion...	10/8/2019 7:54 PM
86	Don't spend our tax money on a library it's a waste the county should put its number one priority in spending on maintaining our roads that are getting neglected. Next would be to get our our sheriffs department what ever they need to do do there job ,equipment,a jail, extra manpower , in the long run it will make Stillwater county a better place to live.	10/8/2019 7:09 PM
87	Stop spending money. At some point you all need to learn what the word NO means. Lots of great ideas on how to spend money that is not yours.	10/8/2019 6:31 PM
88	Plan A and C make sense, but I don't think part B benefits most of the County.	10/8/2019 5:17 PM
89	Please fill the economic development position soon!	10/8/2019 3:41 PM
90	Nope	10/8/2019 2:56 PM
91	Less government	10/8/2019 2:51 PM
92	We need the roads in my end of the county addressed.... what you are calling an agricultural road was a road that was used always as a main road but because the county has decided not to maintain it at all, it has been reduced to a mere cowpath. We now only have one main road in our area, and it isn't always that great. I live in the forgotten part if Stillwater county. I guarantee that if any of the county commissioners lived on Stiles Road, something would be done. You are so far removed from this part of the county....you truly should be working and trying to benefit everyone that lives In Stillwater....	10/8/2019 10:39 AM

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93	Tear down the old hospital.	10/8/2019 8:57 AM
94	Would building a bigger and newer facility increase the numbers of 4H kids in the County? I do not see it happening. A nicer location for a wedding or Anniversary party would be nice, but putting tons of money into a new facility just for a fair that doesn't want to get larger or do anything different from the last 30 years, not sure worth it.	10/8/2019 8:24 AM
95	A new fairgrounds could opportunity to bring event to our community, which would bring income. Our youth deserve a new fairgrounds. Do away with the old hospital offices. Waste of money. It's falling apart and still moldy smelling. Thank you for reaching out to the public for input!!	10/8/2019 7:46 AM
96	Putting a fair grounds across the interstate would eliminate the ease in which kids can get to the store, subway, etc for food while they are at the fair all day and all week. This in turn wouldn't be helpful for Columbus economically.	10/8/2019 7:30 AM
97	The museum deserves County support.	10/7/2019 7:06 PM