



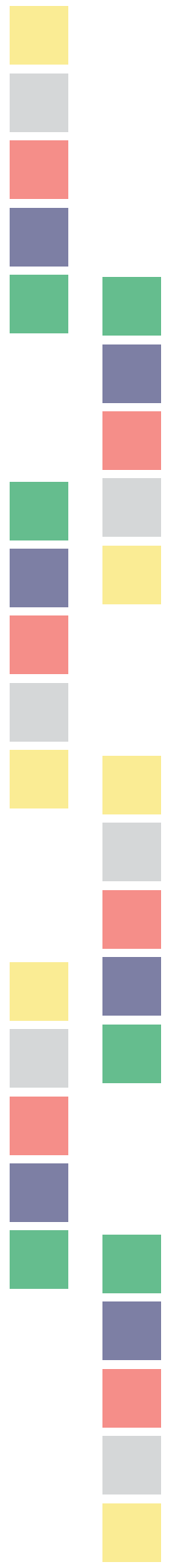
Edmonton Policing Budget: **Edmontonians speak up**

Pe Metawe Consulting on behalf of
the Edmonton Police Commission

June 2022

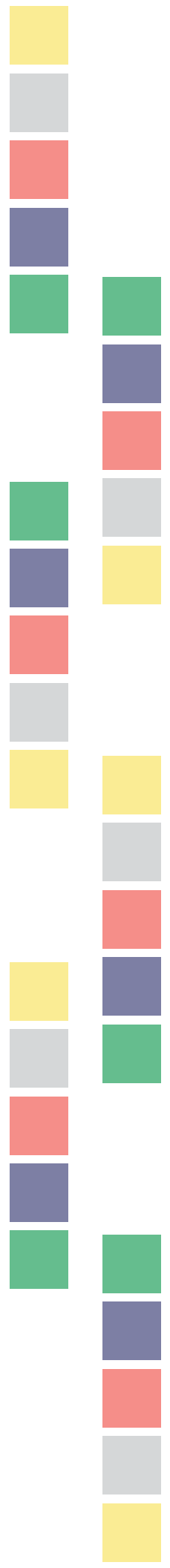
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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Pe Metawe Consulting is proud to continue the work of those that came before us in creating a better world for those that will come after us. We are located in amiskwaciwâskahikan (Beaver Hills House) located on Treaty 6 Territory and Métis Region 4, we recognize that the work we do reverberates across all of Turtle Island. As Indigenous People, we recognize the inherent issues in modern policing, but we engaged in this partnership with the Edmonton Police Commission in the spirit of reconciliation and finding a path forward that highlights the voices of historically excluded and marginalized people. This report reflects the voices of Edmontonians as a diverse and passionate group and will hopefully set the stage for meaningful dialogue and feedback between the Edmonton Police Commission, the Edmonton Police Services and the community members that they work for. As such, Pe Metawe Consulting and the Edmonton Police Commission would like to acknowledge that we are situated on Treaty 6 territory, the ancestral and modern homeland of the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene, and Nakota Sioux. We acknowledge the centuries of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples who have called this land home for centuries. We acknowledge our role in reconciliation and know that our actions today will build towards an equitable, inclusive, and unified future. Hiy-hiy & thank you.



LETTER FROM THE EDMONTON POLICE COMMISSION

In 2022, the planning and approval processes for the City of Edmonton’s four-year budget cycle begins and includes the budgets for the Edmonton Police Service (EPS). With these planning processes in mind, the Edmonton Police Commission (EPC) embarked on a comprehensive series of activities and engagements that were intended to provide Commissioners with information and data through a format that ensures effective governance of the police service is exercised.

The Commission retained Pe Metawe as the consultant to conduct this engagement on behalf of the Commission to gather information from the public on what a police budget should look like, what should be our priorities, where are the gaps, types of services, and other valuable information. The information gathered through this exercise will be leveraged by Commissioners in assessing budget proposals put forward by the police service.

Pe Metawe took on this public engagement work for EPC through focus group-style engagement sessions, and other venues in a way that ensures a comprehensive and balanced set of perspectives were gathered representing the views of all citizens. Pe Metawe’s methodology ensured that they met the Commission’s criteria of hearing input from groups and individuals who are historically underrepresented and marginalized.



INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2022, EPC hired Pe Metawe Consulting to arrange public engagement sessions with Edmontonians around the upcoming budget cycle for the EPS, with a particular emphasis on obtaining feedback from members of traditionally under-represented populations. For Pe Metawe Consulting, the methodological approach to engagements included capturing, measuring, and examining the lived experience, perceptions, and interpretations Edmontonians have of policing budgets. Pe Metawe hosted 13 in-person community engagements events and one online community engagement. The period for the engagements was brief, with all 14 engagements being held within the dates of March 26 – May 3, 2022. Pe Metawe approached leading representative organizations, not-for-profits, and associations from across Edmonton.

These groups were made up of representatives from:

- LGBTQ2S+ Community Groups and Representatives
- Business Associations
- Asian Community Groups and Representatives
- Middle Eastern Community Groups and Representatives
- Religious Groups/Religious Minorities
- Community Groups and Not-for-Profits
- Black Community Groups and Representatives
- Indigenous Community Groups and Representatives

The primary mode of inviting community groups and representatives was through a widespread email campaign. An informational email was sent to 124 different community organizations throughout Edmonton (Appendix D) inviting them to attend specific events and extending an invitation to their networks to attend on public engagement dates (Appendix C). In addition to the email campaign, Pe Metawe spearheaded a social media push on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to raise awareness of these public engagement dates. Pe Metawe's reach was expanded with targeted social media advertisements on Instagram and Facebook (Appendix E).

Pe Metawe chose a single location to hold all in-person engagements, the Edmonton Inn and Conference Centre. The Edmonton Inn and Conference Centre is centrally located and transit accessible. Due to ongoing concerns with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Edmonton Inn was also chosen for being able to host community members while practicing social distancing. Participants were encouraged to register for the event through the event platform Eventbrite, resulting in 40 registrations total. Before engaging in sessions, community

members were asked to voluntarily provide non-identifying demographic information (Appendix A). Sessions were run in a focus group-style with a predetermined set of quantitative and qualitative interview questions. Fourteen engagement sessions were completed in total, with four public engagements, one of which was held in an online format, and 10 invitation-based group sessions (Appendix C). Five or fewer participants would be partnered at a table with a skilled facilitator who walked the group through 12 budgetary questions (Appendix B) while also recording notes. Throughout the 14 engagements, 54 people participated and shared their feedback.

This turnout was lower than anticipated, however Pe Metawe did engage in a series of efforts to increase participant attendance:

- Informational interview article completed and published under Taproot Edmonton Publishing.
- Added the fourteenth event held virtually over Zoom.
- Hosted an additional in-person event with a group of Indigenous youth.

These efforts showed marginal improvement in turnout, with the final two public community engagements showing increased attendance.

The key themes from the engagement sessions include:

- the strong desire for more information on the police budget in accessible, digestible formats,
- calls for greater transparency around the decision-making process within the EPC and EPS,
- making community outreach and relationship-building a top priority in delivering police services,
- committing to ongoing, in-depth cultural sensitivity training for police officers to combat racism, and
- re-evaluating the scope of work being undertaken by the police service.

There was also an intense understanding of the role privilege has in determining personal safety within Edmonton. Participants were also passionate about the role mental health, substance use, and housing supports play in supporting the vulnerable within Edmonton, with calls on provincial and federal funding to play a larger role in funding these supports. In particular, mental health and substance use issues fall into the realm of public health and fall outside the capability and purview of the police service to address the root causes of.

As to the topic of the policing budget, opinions varied considerably. Participants

frequently called for better allocation of funding dollars within the budget, even when disagreeing as to whether the current budget is adequate or inadequate or inflated. Spending on military-style equipment and vehicles was a sticking point for many participants.

DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

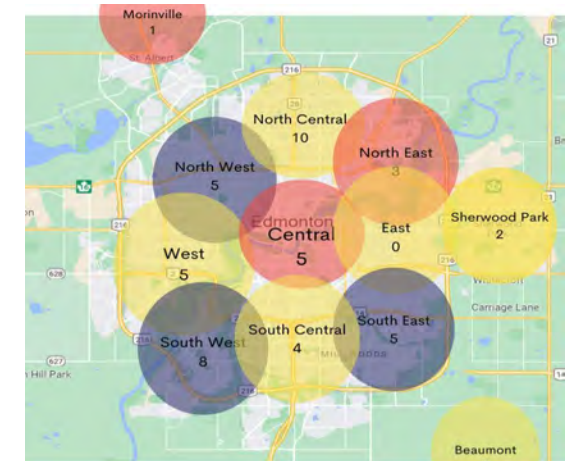
Throughout the engagements, we collected 49 participants' demographic information out of the total of 54 participants. Demographic information was asked of participants upon arrival at the engagements. Collecting information at the events ensured that participants who did not register were captured and those who registered but did not attend didn't answer these questions. Questions asked of the participants included questions on location, age, gender, cultural and ethnic background, and income (Appendix A). All participants were informed as to how their information would be used and were given options to not respond to questions. All demographic information was held privately and securely and is not tied to any personal information that could identify the participating individuals.

The total number of participants who answered demographic questions was less than the total number of participants in the engagements (91%). While participants were not asked to provide reasons for declining to provide demographic information, it is reasonable to assume participants may have had personal privacy considerations. Based on other conversations with participants, there is also a lingering issue of trust around interacting with the police that may have been a potential influence on participants' decisions to withhold their demographic information.

LOCATION

Participants were asked for the first three digits of their postal code upon registering. This data was then mapped to areas of the city so that data could be cross analyzed based on location anonymously.

Three participants do not live directly in the City of Edmonton; but rather in the greater Edmonton area. While they may not be Edmonton residents, their feedback is still relevant and is reflected



Distribution of Participants

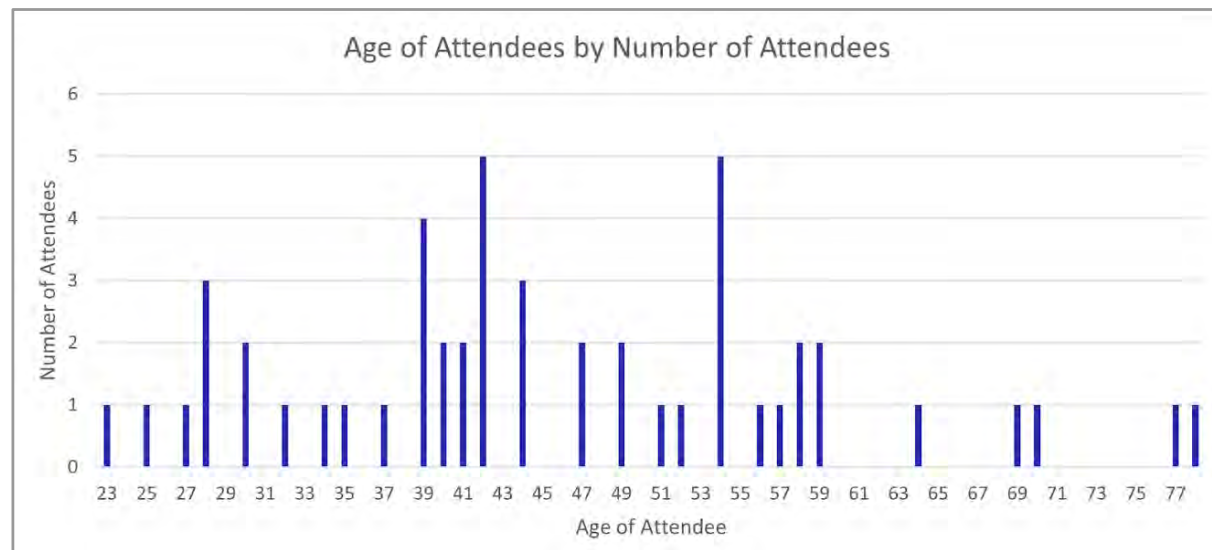
Area	Number of Participants
Central Edmonton (Downtown)	5
North Central Edmonton	10
Northeast	3
Northwest	5
South Central	4
Southeast	5
Southwest	8
West	5
Morinville	1
Sherwood Park	1
Beaumont	1

in this report. Although not directly citizens of the city, they are impacted by the EPS budget in areas such as their job, their hobbies, and their shopping.

AGE and GENDER

The ages of the participants varied throughout the engagements, ranging from 23 to 78, with the average age of participants being 45. The mode and median age of participants is 42.

Participants self-identified their genders. Attendees included 3 total non-binary persons, 26 total females, and 19 total males. One participant left this question blank. 53% of participants self-identified as female.



BACKGROUND

In terms of cultural and ethnic background, three questions were asked regarding ethnic heritage, Indigeneity, and visible minority status. Six people identified as Indigenous and First Nations, with 2 of these individuals further delineating themselves as Plains Cree and Dene/Cree. Due to a data collection error and difficulties in data extrapolation, ethnic and cultural background data is unusable. Regarding visible minority status, participants were asked to choose between 10 identities or fill in an answer (Appendix A). A total of 20 participants stated that they identified as being a visible minority, making up 40.8% of total participants

who provided demographic information. Responses are in the table.

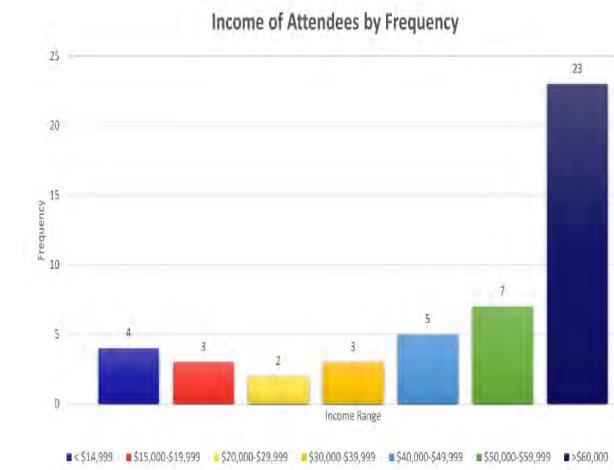
Another question asked of participants was if they were an immigrant to Canada. Six participants skipped this question. Of the respondents who did answer this question, 7 or 16.3% stated that they were immigrants, with a remaining 36 people or 83.7% stating they were non-immigrants.

Identification	No. of Attendees
Chinese	6
Black	4
South Asian	2
Disabled	2
African	1
Native	1
Middle East	1
Taiwanese	1
Mixed Ethnicity	1
Queer/Gender Non-Conforming	1

INCOME

Income	Statistics Canada 2019 data	Attendee Data 2022
Income below \$15,000	16.14%	8.51%
Income between \$15-20,000	5.44%	6.38%
Income between \$20-50,000	33.91%	21.28%
Income over \$50,000	44.50%	63.83%

Participants were asked to select their yearly income from 6 different categories, ranging from less than \$14,999 to over \$60,000. Income below \$60,000 and income over \$60,000 were almost evenly split, with 24 participants falling lower than \$60,000 and 23 falling above \$60,000. Two participants chose not to share their income data. Comparing the incomes from the small sample of public engagement participants to Statistics Canada data on the average income of Edmontonians from 2019 shows that the engagement participants experience greater affluence than Edmontonians as a whole.



RESULTS

RANGED QUESTIONS

As aforementioned, participants of the EPC engagement sessions were guided through 12 distinct interview questions in a focus group-style setting, on various facets of the EPS budget. The first four questions of the survey included quantitative data capturing questions, which utilized a Likert scale to measure participant responses. Each participant dictated their feelings and experiences as related to:

- Level of Satisfaction with Police Services
- Level of Satisfaction regarding Knowledge of EPS budgets
- Level of Personal Safety in Edmonton
- Level of Overall Safety in Edmonton

These questions were utilized to collect both qualitative and quantitative data sets. These Likert questions were graded on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest response possible and 5 being the highest response possible. Participants were asked to respond to each question with their rating and to provide general comments on why they selected the value they did. Final averages and additional numerical data were collected and compiled from all engagement events and summarized with the graphics and analysis below.

Level of Satisfaction with Police Services:

The average number for public satisfaction with EPS is 2.59 out of the 5 total range. Participants cited personal experience, community observation, third-party/anecdotal information, media and news coverage, and individual research as being the main ways in which they have formed their personal opinion on their level of satisfaction with police services. Overall, citizens cited that their personal levels of satisfaction were heavily influenced by where they live in the city and the level of safety experienced by members of these neighborhoods. The commentary on satisfaction with police services included comments related to police response times, and a general tone of dissatisfaction with EPS response times. This dissatisfaction was underscored by struggles with the automated non-emergency line and experiences waiting for EPS to respond to break-ins. Citizens highlighted a negative image or perception of the police, stating that the service has an US (EPS) vs THEM (the community) mentality, which may be a limiting factor in EPS' ability to create positive change in their communities.

Question	#1
Average mean	2.59
Median	3
Mode	3

Further comments centered around the need for increased police visibility in communities. A common thread among participants was the desire to see EPS as actively visible in their community, whether this be through an increase in beat cops, small community-based police offices, or an increased focus on police actively walking or biking through their neighborhoods. Overall, there was a desire by community members to see police officers in their community face to face, to see them physically active in the community, and to reduce the dominance of squad-car patrols. Increased positive community-centric interactions with police may work to build a more positive image of the force, as being community centric vs. being in opposition to the community. Citizens spoke of their concerns related to seeing social problems such as houselessness, poverty, mental health, and substance use disorder, increasing or being exacerbated in their communities, particularly as the city emerged from the pandemic.

Edmonton's citizens are focused and committed to their desire to aid vulnerable populations who are most greatly affected by these social problems in a way that is completely separate from policing. Overarching, Edmontonians would like to see renewed approaches, support, and funding that is separate from police budgets to support the most vulnerable in our city. Additionally, through this question, an overall sentiment from citizens was detected in terms of the need for EPS to increase community engagement, transparency, and budgetary oversight for the police service.

Level of Satisfaction regarding Knowledge of EPS budgets:

The average number for participant satisfaction with their knowledge on EPS budgets hovered around a 1.97 average response. Overwhelmingly, Edmontonians did not feel well informed on the EPS budget, cost assessments, or spending capacity of the force. Citizens are engaged and have a strong desire to learn more about policing budgets. Many citizens cited their concerns and knowledge of EPS budgets stemming from negative media releases on police spending. Broadly speaking, citizens did not know where to find EPS budgetary information. Citizens called for increased budget transparency, with clear dissemination of annual budgetary data displayed in a centralized, easily accessible webpage. Furthermore, this webpage should house budgetary information in a manner that is digestible and in a format that laypeople can easily decipher. There was general consensus that EPS required increased oversight in terms of budgetary spending.

Question	#2
Average mean	1.97
Median	2
Mode	1

Citizens made additional comments related to the well-being of police officers; these concerns mainly related to police officer mental health. Edmontonians care about the officers in their community and would like to see additional funding put into the mental health support available to active officers. Participants theorized that addressing poor mental health and burn out could be a potential solution to improve the mental health outcomes of officers as well as make the field more attractive in terms of new recruits. The most critical pieces of feedback from this section were a strong call for action in terms of increasing EPS budgetary transparency, centralization and publicization of budgetary data, greater oversight, and routine and consistent public engagement on budgetary matters.

Level of Personal Safety in Edmonton:

The average number for feelings of overall safety in Edmonton was rated as 2.92 among participants. This is significantly lower than the average rating for personal safety. Most citizens believed safety in Edmonton to be comparable to other cities of similar population sizes. But across all participants, there was a consensus and awareness that safety is not experienced evenly, with certain areas in the city being deemed 'safe' while other areas of the city could be considered 'unsafe.' Participants were aware that an individual's sense of overall safety in Edmonton was, again, heavily influenced by where they lived and how they travelled throughout the city. Poverty, Blackness, Indigeneity, minority status, and being a part of the LGBTQ2S+ community were all cited as markers for being 'un-safe' in Edmonton. Concern was raised about the vulnerability of women, particularly those living in the inner city or those experiencing homelessness.

A key commentary that developed through this question was the theme that "community keeps community safe." This comment highlights how businesses, locals, and community organizations have a keen desire to contribute to their community's safety. Many citizens do not know where to start with this desire, however, and are seeking direction and support from EPS. Educational efforts and community-led preventative measures were highlighted as possible solutions to support EPS in the reduction of crime and social disorder.

FREE ENTRY QUESTIONS

A comment on the methodology: While participants were asked a series of 12 questions, their responses touched on a wide range of topics. Accordingly, the writers of this report have assembled themes brought up broadly in discussion. The decision to leave out less discussed topics does not lessen their validity or importance. We want to thank everyone for participating and sharing their time and experiences with us. Unfortunately, there is no room to include all that was

shared with us. Many personal lived experiences and interactions were shared but cannot be included here. We want to recognize that all this information is valuable and has informed this report, even if individual details were not included.

A total of 10 events had attendees, with 4 events being unattended. Events inviting members of the South West Asian, Central/South Asian, and religious minority communities were unattended, as was one of the public events. Answers to the questions were captured by table. Tables consisted of between 1 and 5 individuals. There was a total of 19 tables across the 10 events.

SAFETY

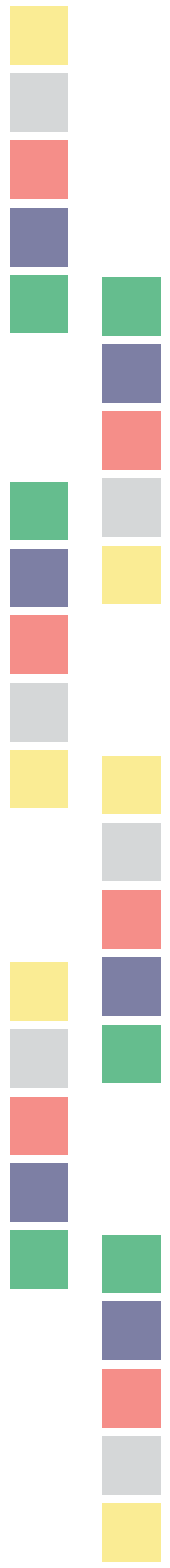
In discussions of personal safety and the safety of Edmonton as a whole, participants were keenly aware of their own privilege and how privilege affects the real and perceived safety of their fellow citizens. Individuals at 8 of 10 engagement sessions talked about how safety is uneven throughout Edmonton and is contingent on elements of identity, access to personal transportation, one's neighborhood of residence, place of work, and economic bracket. Less safety is experienced by members of visible minority groups, those who take public transit or do not drive, those who live or work in low-income neighborhoods, those who are in a low-income bracket, and those who exist at the intersections of these factors.

KNOWLEDGE

Participants attending these public engagement sessions attributed their knowledge of the EPS budget, and EPS in general, to several factors. Most prevalent was firsthand experiences followed by the experiences of their clients or communities. News stories and research into sources other than the news, such as reports and City Council meetings, were also common sources of knowledge.

BUDGET

When asked if the current budget is inadequate, adequate, or inflated, there was no consensus. Many participants were reluctant to say whether the police budget should be increased or decreased. Commonly, participants wanted to see a better argument made by EPC to justify the funding they are asking for. Rather than asking for increases, EPC should "sell the budget that they have." Increases to the budget should also correlate to improvements in communities. As one participant stated:



“Prove the efficacy of the current budget. Show us that EPS is doing their job properly, to the best of their abilities with the funding they have, and that will help to justify an increase.”

Many participants wanted to see the police budget maintained but with a reallocation of police funds internally. The purpose of this reallocation fell into three broad categories: to better address priorities highlighted by participants, to be more efficient, and to hire more social workers/mental health staff/trained supports.

MORE INFORMATION and GREATER TRANSPARENCY

Participants overwhelmingly expressed the need for more information about the EPS budget. In all but one session, participants commented on their own lack of knowledge about the budget and their desire to know more about the topic. Many blamed their lack of knowledge on an absence of digestible and accessible resources about the police budget. Accessibility was defined in terms of having information all in one place and being assembled and released for “easy reading.” Even participants who did research before attending the engagement sessions felt frustrated by the resources available. Participants also wanted to be shown metrics that track the return on investment being achieved by purchases and spending within the police budget. They had many questions about the budget but felt very limited in their ability to get answers to these questions.

Linked to the desire for more digestible and accessible information is the desire for greater transparency from both EPS and EPC. Transparency was mentioned at all 10 engagement sessions with attendees. Measured another way, transparency was brought up at 15 out of 19 total tables of participants. Several participants were concerned that the decision-making processes within EPC regarding spending and the budget and EPS regarding policing are insufficiently data-driven or evidence-based, and that there currently is not a way to tell how decisions are being made. The lack of transparency breeds mistrust, leading to the respondents repeatedly doubting that EPS is spending funding appropriately. Participants want to know the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and be assured that they are being monitored and that targets are being met. Five separate individuals called for tying the budget to performance measures. A few participants also tried to find ways to compare policing in Edmonton to policing in similar jurisdictions and were frustrated by the limited availability of comparative statistics.

But the call for transparency also extends to information about how to navigate EPC and EPS resources. Participants want clarity on who to contact in what situations and want clear definitions between resources. Business owners, in particular, asked for community resource officers or liaison officers to turn to.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND PRESENCE

One of the strongest themes to emerge from the engagement sessions is the desire for community outreach and presence. Community outreach was mentioned by participants at 9 out of 10 attended engagement sessions, by 17 of 19 tables. Participants want the EPC and the EPS to build relationships within the community. A presence in the communities also means having beat officers walking the streets, talking to residents, and learning about the communities they serve, as opposed to patrolling the community in cruisers.

In particular, Business Associations (BAs) called for stronger relationships and information sharing. Talk centered on having direct contacts to reach out to and to hear from, a call echoed by social organizations. Whether a community resource officer or a community liaison is assigned, commitment and low turnover in such a role is expected. BAs also expressed frustration at the loss of community stations. This loss represents setbacks to years of relationship building. Some participants felt neglected by EPS. They are increasingly turning to private delivery of security services. One participant described it as the transformation of community-based policing into “leaving the community to do its own policing.”

Participants from a variety of groups also commented on a reluctance in their communities to report incidents to the police, as navigating the system to reach the appropriate officers is challenging, response time is slow, and response outcomes are unsatisfactory. One person described this as the “public losing faith in police to respond.” The automated non-complaint line was singled out for criticism by multiple individuals. Assigning adequate resources within the police budget to address these service issues was seen as a way to rebuild faith and trust between the community and police services.

POLICE TRAINING

There is also broad support for funding more police training. This training includes pre-deployment, ongoing training, and more in-depth training. Cultural sensitivity training was mentioned at 8 of 10 engagement sessions. Members of traditionally marginalized communities called on police to do a better job understanding their histories and to work harder to overcome biases based on stereotypes and racial profiling. Mental health assessment and disability awareness training were also brought up by participants, as was de-escalation training. Examples included being able to better tell between a behavioral issue, a mental health crisis and being under the influence of drugs. But another example was the gap in knowledge from first responders about family violence.

CUSTOMER SERVICE and ATTITUDE TOWARDS CHANGE

Numerous participants commented that one of the changes they would make to the police force is to encourage an overall culture of service. Multiple participants shared experiences of previous interactions with officers and complained of indifferent, arrogant, or aggressive behavior and felt that officers need to be reminded of who they are there to “serve and protect.” Broader examples of how EPS handled the Freedom Convoy and counterprotests led some respondents to question who EPS represents and serves. One participant described how they do not want the “community to be seen as an inconvenience.” There were also calls for the police service to improve its relationship with change and become more willing to change. Participants frequently commented on the increasing militarization of the police force as a negative trend that needs reversing.

PREVENTION

One of the places participants would assign more budget dollars is to crime prevention, funding proactive and preventative solutions, with one participant characterizing this decision by saying that it should be the objective of the police to work themselves out of a job. These prevention initiatives are to be funded in combination with enforcement measures, not instead of.

ACCOUNTABILITY and OVERSIGHT

While not mentioned as often as the need for greater transparency, the call for greater accountability and oversight was also heard at engagement sessions. This circles back to issues of trust. With a lack of transparency, participants felt unsure that appropriate performance targets are being met, that appropriate consequences for officer behaviour are meted out, and that appropriate spending of budget dollars is occurring. Replacing internal investigations with external investigations was suggested.

Individuals also expressed concern that social agencies, that are being tasked with increasing responsibilities in their communities, be held to a high standard of accountability. Questions were raised as to the effectiveness of some agencies or programs, and as to whether metrics to evaluate the effective use of funding are lacking. Projects that demonstrate the greatest community impact should be fully funded.

LOWEST PRIORITIES

When asked to name their lowest budget priorities or the budget items they would see funding reduced to, participants commonly named vehicle purchases, with emphasis placed on aircraft purchases as being budget areas that matter

less or should be eliminated. The militarization of policing was a concern many participants brought to the engagement sessions. The purchase of military-style vehicles and advanced military equipment were frequently cited as areas of the budget that should be reduced or even eliminated. The other area that was a low budget priority for participants was traffic enforcement and speed traps.

SIGNS OF OVERFUNDING and UNDERFUNDING

Questions #9 and #10 asked participants to imagine what signs they would see if the policing in Edmonton were overfunded or underfunded. At seven tables, the participants mentioned big ticket and military-style vehicle purchases as a sign of overfunding. An overabundance of police officers and the bloating of management were also signs of overfunding that were mentioned multiple times. Outside of these points, there was little agreement as to what overfunding would be like.

Frequently suggested signs of underfunding include an increase in the crime rate, a reduced number of police officers or a reduction in presence of police officers, worn out or breaking equipment, and overworked officers with low morale. Low morale was characterized as showing signs of poor mental health, unhappiness, disinterest, having “given up,” and being less compassionate or desensitized in their work.

OFFICER MENTAL HEALTH

The mental health of police officers was also discussed by participants in a general sense. Multiple individuals expressed concern that individual officers are currently overwhelmed, perhaps suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and are not receiving the support they need. Several participants were mindful that the individuals within the institution of policing are human and that they need help to prevent burning out and being broken by their tough job.

SCOPE OF POLICE WORK and ROLE OF OTHER SUPPORTS

With question #11, participants were told non-police services, such as addiction services, mental health supports, and housing supports, can reduce crime. Then, participants were asked whether these services should be funded in place of police officers.

There was a clear understanding that issues of housing, mental illness, and substance use are separate from criminal issues and require different but complementary approaches. Every participant agreed that addiction services, mental health support, and housing support are crucial to society. Directly replacing police officers with other supports had significant favor, but it was not



the majority opinion. Complementing police officers with other supports was the preferred opinion, though opinion ranged over whether these supports should be internal to EPS or not. Heavy emphasis was placed on collaboration between policing and other supports. One participant framed the situation between service providers and EPS as being an ecosystem, where everyone has their “own space on their board” and needs “space to breathe and thrive” while also being dependent on each other. Removing one player entirely, such as police officers, is harmful to the ecosystem, but providing sufficient support to each player is necessary. Participants appreciated that police custody is not the appropriate place for those struggling with mental illness, substance use disorders, or poverty, but also understood that the number of places for police to rely on for assisting individuals from these populations is limited and under-resourced. Policing cannot fix larger societal problems in the way that it is being expected to and their role should be re-evaluated. Participants want to see adequate funding for the supports needed to help the vulnerable population of Edmonton.

A common theme among participants was the need to rely on a variety of specialized supports when responding to both emergency and non-emergency service calls. Relying more heavily on fire fighters or other first responders was suggested by some participants, while relying on a team of social workers or mental health professionals was also suggested repeatedly. There was an understanding that police officers should still respond to appropriate service calls, but not all service calls were to be best or most appropriately handled by police officers. In fact, several respondents expressed concern that the presence of uniformed police officers at some situations, especially with marginalized populations, leads to poorer outcomes and potentially escalates the situation. As one respondent put it, "You don't go in with the cops first because that is an escalation in itself."

One of the largest priorities of change in policing that the respondents identified was that they believed that the police should have an open conversation about their scope and barriers. Comments on the overly broad scope of police work were made at 8 of 10 sessions attended. Multiple participants commented that social work is specialized and that police officers are not social workers and should not be tasked with social work. Comments such as “[y]ou wouldn't give a doctor's job to the police” and “[i]f they want to be a police officer, they don't want to be an addiction support officer” dominated. Participants noted that the police are there to enforce the law, but they are increasingly called upon to deal with public health issues, such as overdoses.

FUNDING NON-POLICE SERVICES

Participants were nearly evenly split on whether non-police services should be funded independently from police or from within the police budget. As to where the funding should come from, participants called on all levels of government to fund these services, but especially the provincial and federal governments, linking the issues police are dealing with to larger health and social problems such as mental health and housing that extend beyond the jurisdiction of municipal governments. Alberta Health Services was named multiple times. With the adequate funding of non-police services, the expectation is that resources would be freed from within the police budget to be used more effectively and allow police to focus on their role of law enforcement.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Participants were pleased that EPC undertook public engagement sessions around the police budget and called on them to regularly hold engagement sessions in the future. In fact, participants would like to see more resources devoted to community consultation overall as consultations are excellent ways to build trust and relationships between EPC and communities, particularly those who have been traditionally marginalized. For some, participating in these current engagements was already an exercise in trust, with some participants expressing reservations as to how their words could potentially be used to support positions that participants themselves did not agree with. But participants were also hopeful that these engagements are a signal of a positive shift in relations with EPC and indirectly with EPS, a shift that will see community voices taken seriously.

OTHER

While not making up a large portion of engagement session participants, this report wants to draw special attention to the complaints of our BIPOC community members who reported an increase in hate-related incidents and their frustration with the EPS response. This attention is warranted both because the BIPOC community has been traditionally underserved and marginalized by police services and because the violence inherent in hate-related crimes is a particularly grave threat to safety. Responding immediately and seriously to threats made in person and online is necessary to protect members of the BIPOC and the Muslim communities of Edmonton.



CONCLUSION

If the feedback that we heard during this process could be summarized in a single word, it would be community. At its core, Edmonton's strength comes from its diverse communities, and no further would you have to look to find this strength than to this engagement process. We want to thank the community leaders and members for taking time out of their busy days to come and chat about this very important subject.

This idea of community could further be broken down into two themes, community engagement and community presence. Community members overwhelmingly discussed how they wanted to see more transparency between police and the public on budgetary matters. Recommendations included a centralized accessible public portal for Edmontonians to access up-to-date budgets and expenditure reports. Participants also strongly recommended that more dollars be put towards public education on matters of the police budget, how it's constructed, its contents and where to find the most up-to-date information on the budget. Edmontonians also saw great value in public engagement on the police budget and recommended that these types of community engagements be done on a regular basis.

Community presence was based on issues of police practices and how things could be changed in the community. Edmontonians broadly felt that having officers in their community that know members of the community and are from the community would greatly help with feelings of safety. Car based patrols made community members feel separated from the police. Community members also strongly emphasized that police need to be trained on social issues that affect communities, such as mental health, cultural sensitivity, and harm reduction among other skills. We also heard that Edmontonians wanted to see if some of the social problems, such as houselessness, mental health, and substance use could be allocated away from police and put towards dedicated trained social workers that can help address these issues better than police. Lastly, community members also wanted to see dollars put towards increasing transit safety.

In short, Edmontonians are engaged and seeking further input on EPS budgets. Citizens are seeking to obtain increased information and data on police budgets and need this information to be centralized and disseminated in a digestible format that is accessible to the average citizen. Citizens have cited an increased need for EPS to reassess how police approach vulnerable populations such as those experiencing houselessness, severe mental health conditions, and substance use disorders. Participants cited a desire to separate social problems such as those listed previously from the scope of policing duties entirely. It has been suggested, that regardless of the path forward, police officers require

increased training in the areas of mental health, working with persons with disabilities, harm reduction, cultural sensitivity, and trauma-informed approaches to the work they do. It is clear to the citizens of Edmonton that EPS requires a cultural shift which focuses on training and community-led action.

We again want to thank all the community members and leaders who took the time to join us for these discussions. Diverse communities working together is what this city was built on and to those who participated you should be proud of the work that you helped contribute to.

Thank you.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Original demographic questions

The registration questions asked to attendees were as follows:

What are the first 3 Digits of your postal code? (Open ended question)

What is your age? (Open ended question)

What is your gender identity? (Male, Female, Transgender, Gender Neutral, Etc.) (Open ended question)

Do you identify as Indigenous?

- Yes
- No

4a. Please select your identity:

- First Nations
- Métis
- Inuit

What is your ethnic heritage? (Open ended question)

Are you a member of one of the following visible minorities?

- South Asian
- Chinese
- Black
- Filipino
- Arab
- Latin American
- Southeast Asian
- West Asian
- Korean
- Japanese
- Other



What is your immigrant status?

- Non-immigrant
- Immigrant
- Non-permanent resident

What is your yearly income?

- < \$14,999
- \$15,000-\$19,999
- \$20,000-\$29,999
- \$30,000-\$39,999
- \$40,000-\$49,999
- \$50,000-\$59,999
- >\$60,000

Appendix B: Questions asked at events

The list of questions asked at the events, both in-person and online, were approved by the Commission, and were as follows:

Ranged questions. Likert scale range 1-5, 5 being best.

1. When you think about police services in Edmonton, on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being most satisfied and 1 being least satisfied, how do you feel in general?
As an open ended Follow up: What shapes this view?
2. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being most satisfied and 1 being least satisfied, how would you describe your current level of knowledge about the police budget in Edmonton?
3. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being very safe, how safe do you personally feel in your daily life in Edmonton? Participants could also answer separately as a representative of an organization.
4. And on that same 1-5 scale, how safe do you think Edmonton is overall?

Free Entry Questions

5. What are your current overall feelings on the police budget in Edmonton?

Why?

Where does your knowledge about the police budget come from?

6. If you were in charge of police budgeting, what areas would be your top priorities?

*What areas would be your bottom priorities?
 What would you increase funding for?
 What would you reduce funding from?*

7. What top three changes do you want for policing in Edmonton?

What would you fund to accomplish these changes?

8. Should the police budget in Edmonton be increased or decreased? Why?

9. How could you tell if policing is overfunded in Edmonton? (i.e.: what signs would you see?)

10. How could you tell if policing is underfunded in Edmonton? (i.e.: what signs would you see?)

11. In a city, non-police services can reduce crime. For example: addiction services, mental health supports, housing, etc.

*How should these services be funded and why?
 Should these services be funded in place of police officers? Why or why not?*

12. Would you like to provide any other thoughts on police funding?



Appendix C: List of Events and Times

The list of events and times, all held at the same location of the Edmonton Inn and Conference Center or Online, were as follows:

- Saturday, March 26, 2022, 1-3pm – Public Engagement Day
- Tuesday, March 29, 2022, 6-8 pm - LGBTQ2S+
- Wednesday, March 30, 2022, 1-3 pm - Business Associations
- Friday, April 1, 2022, 6-8 pm - SW Asia
- Tuesday, April 5, 2022, 6-8 pm - Community
- Wednesday, April 6, 2022, 6-8 pm - Religious
- Saturday, April 9, 2022, 1- 3:30 pm - Public Engagement Day
- Tuesday, April 12, 2022, 11-11:45 am – Indigenous Youth
 (Note: this was held as a bonus event with Indigenous youth in the Pe Metawe Games space)
- Tuesday, April 12, 2022, 6-8 pm - Black/Caribbean/African
- Wednesday, April 20, 2022, 6-8 pm – Indigenous
- Saturday, April 23, 2022, 1- 3:30 pm - Public Engagement Day
- Tuesday, April 26, 2022, 6-8 pm - AAPI
- Friday, April 29, 2022, 6-8 pm - Central/South Asia
- Tuesday, May 3, 2022, 4-7 pm – Online Public Engagement Day

Appendix D: List of Organizations Invited

The organizations invited to the events, to both public engagement dates and specific grouping dates, were as follows:

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, and Two-Spirit Plus (LGBTQ2S+):

1. Alberta GSA Network
2. altView Foundation
3. Edmonton 2 Spirit Society
4. InQueeries
5. Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services
6. LGBTQ2S+ Wellness Centre
7. OUTreach
8. Pride @ NAIT
9. PRIDE Centre
10. Shades of Colour
11. Team Edmonton
12. The Landing

Business Associations:

1. 124 Street Business Association
2. Alberta Avenue Business Association
3. Beverly Business Association
4. Chinatown and Little Italy Business Association
5. Crossroads Business Improvement Association
6. Edmonton Business Association
7. Edmonton Chambers of Commerce
8. Edmonton Downtown Business Association

9. Fort Road Business Association
10. French Quarter Business Association
11. Inglewood Business Association
12. Kingsway District Association
13. North Edge Business Association
14. Northwest Industrial Business Association
15. Old Strathcona Business Association
16. Stony Plain Road Business Association
17. West Edmonton Business Association
18. Winterburn Business Association

South West Asia/Middle East:

1. Iranian Heritage Society of Edmonton
2. Iranian Students' Association at University of Alberta
3. Canadian Arab Friendship Association
4. Turkish Canadian Society of Edmonton
5. Canadian-Palestine Cultural Association
6. Edmonton Kurdish Centre
7. Egyptian Students' Association
8. Arab Student's Association

Community:

1. Action for Healthy Communities Society of Edmonton
2. ASSIST Community Services Centre
3. Bissel Centre
4. Boyle Street Community Services
5. Centre for Race and Culture

6. Changing Together
7. Civida
8. Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
9. Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues
10. Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers
11. Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council
12. Elizabeth Fry
13. End Poverty Edmonton
14. Homeward Trust
15. Hope Mission
16. iHuman Youth Society
17. Inner City Youth Development Association
18. John Howard
19. Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre
20. REACH
21. SAGE Senior Association
22. Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton
23. Shaama Centre
24. Terra Centre for Teen Parents
25. YESS
26. YWCA Edmonton

Religious Minority:

1. Al Rashid Mosque/Canadian Islamic Centre
2. Hillel Edmonton Jewish Student's Association
3. Hindu Society of Alberta
4. Islamic Family and Social Services



5. Jewish Family Services Edmonton
6. Jewish Federation of Edmonton
7. Muslim Student Organization at MacEwan University
8. Muslim Student's Association
9. Muslim Students of Norquest
10. Sikh Federation of Edmonton
11. Sikhs For Humanity Edmonton

Black/African/Caribbean:

1. Africa Centre
2. African Caribbean Student Alliance
3. Afro-Canadian Student's Club
4. Black Business Ventures Association
5. Black Graduate Student's Association
6. Black Lives Matter Edmonton and Area Chapter
7. Council of Canadians of African and Caribbean Heritage
8. Eritrean and Ethiopian Students' Association
9. Igbo Cultural Association of Edmonton
10. National Black Coalition of Canada Society - Edmonton Chapter
11. Somali Canadian Women and Children Association
12. Somali Student's Association
13. University of Alberta Black Students' Association
14. YEGTheComeUp
15. Yoruba Cultural Association of Edmonton

Indigenous:

1. Aboriginal Student Council
2. Bear Clan Patrol
3. Ben Calf Robe Society
4. Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society
5. Canadian Native Friendship Centre
6. Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations
7. Enoch Cree Nation
8. First People's House
9. Indigenous Knowledge and Wisdom Centre
10. Indigenous Law Student's Association
11. Indigenous Student's Club
12. Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women
13. Métis Child & Family Services Society
14. Métis Nation of Alberta
15. Michif Cultural Connections
16. Niginan
17. Nisohkamatotan Centre
18. Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta
19. Treaty 8 Urban Office

Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI):

1. Alberta Thai Association
2. Asian Students for Students
3. Chinese Cultural Promotion Society
4. Chinese Student and Scholar Association
5. Edmonton Chinese Benevolent Association

6. Edmonton Japanese Community Association

7. Edmonton Korean Canadian Association

8. Edmonton Philippine International Centre

9. Edmonton Viets Association

10. Korean Students' Association

11. University of Alberta Philippine Student's Association

12. Vietnamese Students' Association

13. Hong Kong Student Association at the University of Alberta

14. Indonesian Student Association

15. Malaysian Students Association

Central/South Asia:

1. Alberta Gujarati Association

2. Bangladeshi Student Association at the University of Alberta

3. Edmonton Bengali Association

4. Edmonton Tamil Cultural Association

5. Indian Students' Association at University of Alberta

6. Pakistan Canada Association of Edmonton

7. Telugu Cultural Association of Edmonton

Appendix E: Social Media Outreach

Facebook and Instagram Reach Summary

Activity	Facebook	Instagram
Number of Posts	3	3 + 3 stories
Organic (unpaid) Reach	35	94
Organic (unpaid) Clicks/Engagement	2	39
Organic (unpaid) Conversion Rate	5.71%	41.49%
Paid Reach	16,320	220
Paid Clicks/Engagement	427	138
Paid Conversion Rate	2.62%	62.73%
Total Reach	16,355	314
Total Clicks/Engagement	429	177
Total Conversion Rate	2.62%	56.37%

What this tells us: While the paid reach on Facebook generated more views, there was far less interaction. The target audience for this sort of engagement is more active on Instagram, and more likely to answer calls to action sent over this platform.

