

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

SHARE YOUR VOICE SHAPE OUR CITY

Edmonton

What We Heard – Phase 1

SHARE YOUR VOICE SHAPE OUR CITY

This is your city.

We welcome your input on how we maintain, grow and build Edmonton.

We believe engagement leads to better decision-making.

We are committed to reaching out to our diverse communities in thoughtful and meaningful ways.

We want to understand your perspectives and build trusting relationships with you.

We will show you how you help influence City decisions.

Share your voice with us and shape our city.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Policy – Phase 1 Engagement

March 2019

Project/Initiative Background The Integrated Pest Management Policy C501, adopted in 2004, directs the pest management activities, including appropriate use of pesticides by the City of Edmonton. The City has routinely sought multiple options for every pest problem to reduce the overall use of pesticides. In 2017, the Office of the City Auditor reviewed the existing policy and recommended the policy be updated to ensure City operational staff have clear direction on pest management activities and that the public is adequately informed of such activities. As a result, feedback is being requested from stakeholders and the public to update the policy.	
Name Date Location	Phase 1 Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Policy Priorities Online Survey September 11-18, 2018 Online via Edmonton Insight Community
Contact information	ipmpolicyupdate@edmonton.ca
Level of public engagement	
Description	In Phase 1, stakeholders and the public were engaged to receive initial feedback on existing programs and the IPM policy as per ADVISE in the City's Public Engagement Spectrum.

What We Heard – Phase 1

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Phase 1 survey was to better understand the public's priorities regarding pest management.

Information from the Phase 1 survey informed the development of a draft IPM policy. The key elements of this draft were shared in the Phase 3 public and stakeholder engagement which took place January and February 2019.

WHAT WAS DONE

Phase 1 involved an online survey that was delivered through the Edmonton Insight Community from September 11-18, 2018. More than 2,400 responses were received.

The Edmonton Insight Community is an inclusive and accessible online citizen panel made up of diverse Edmontonians who provide feedback on City policies, initiatives and issues. Members complete surveys and participate in discussion forums on a wide range of topics at least twice a month. Many City projects conduct online surveys with the Edmonton Insight Community. As of the time of this survey in September 2018, the Insight Community has 9,522 members.

ENGAGEMENT RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Participant survey results: The survey contained five quantitative questions covering both policy-related and demographic questions and provided an opportunity for general comments. Questions were posted on pest management program awareness, satisfaction with current practices, and pest management priorities. The following summarizes the results. The general comments were assessed using a technique called sentiment analysis. This allowed a balanced view of the content of the responses and the feelings conveyed through each respondent's choice of words.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

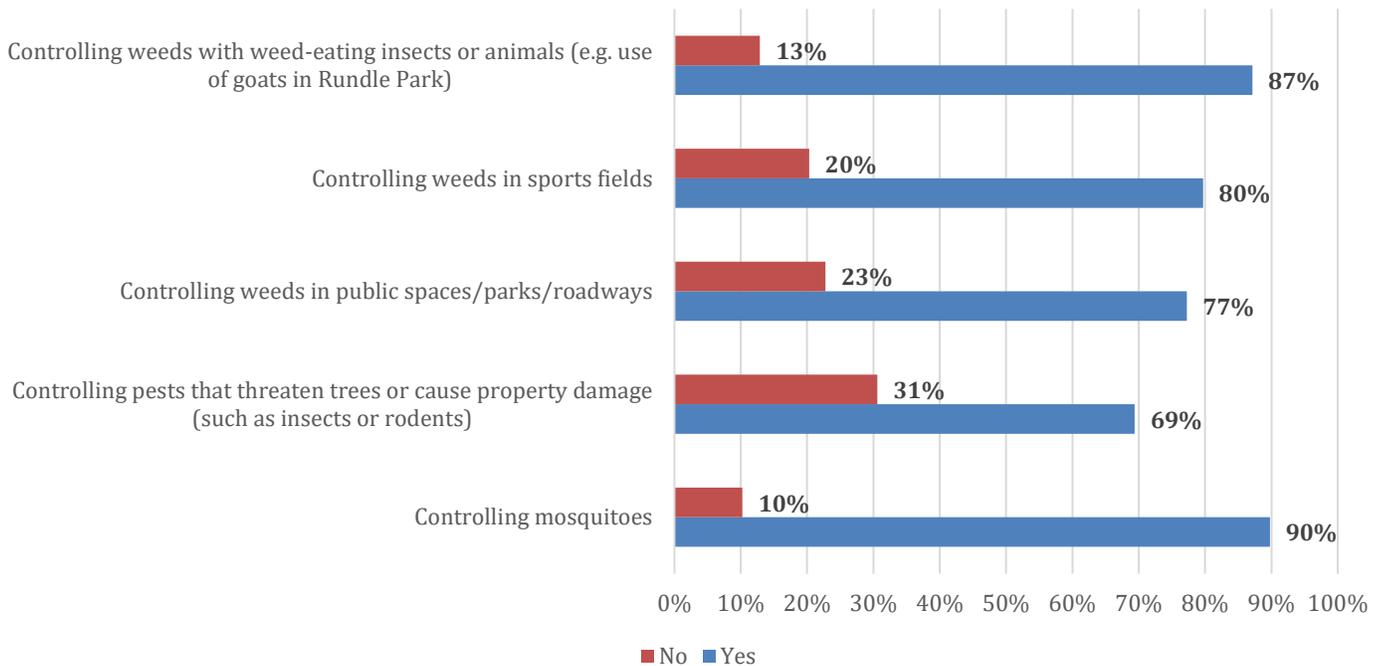
SHARE YOUR VOICE SHAPE OUR CITY

Edmonton

What We Heard – Phase 1

The City of Edmonton is updating the Integrated Pest Management Policy (C-501). This policy outlines when and how City staff use pesticides in the management of pests. Pests are described as “an animal, plant, insect or other organism that is injurious, noxious or troublesome, whether directly or indirectly”. These questions will help us gain a better understanding of what is important to citizens for managing pests and will be considered in the development of policy and procedure changes.

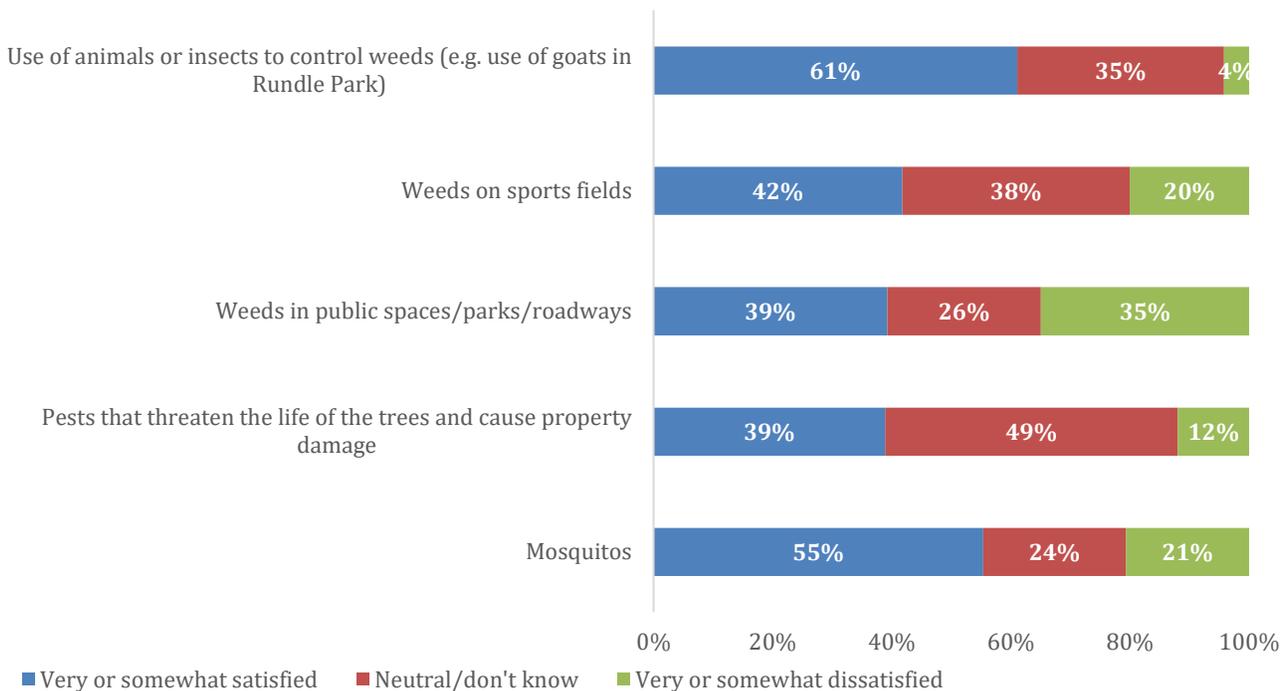
Question 1 - Are you aware the City has programs for:



Overall, the respondents showed a high level of awareness for all current pest management programs. Greatest awareness was for controlling mosquitoes and lowest awareness was for controlling pests that threaten trees or cause property damage.

What We Heard – Phase 1

Question 2 - How satisfied are you with the results of the city's management of pests...:

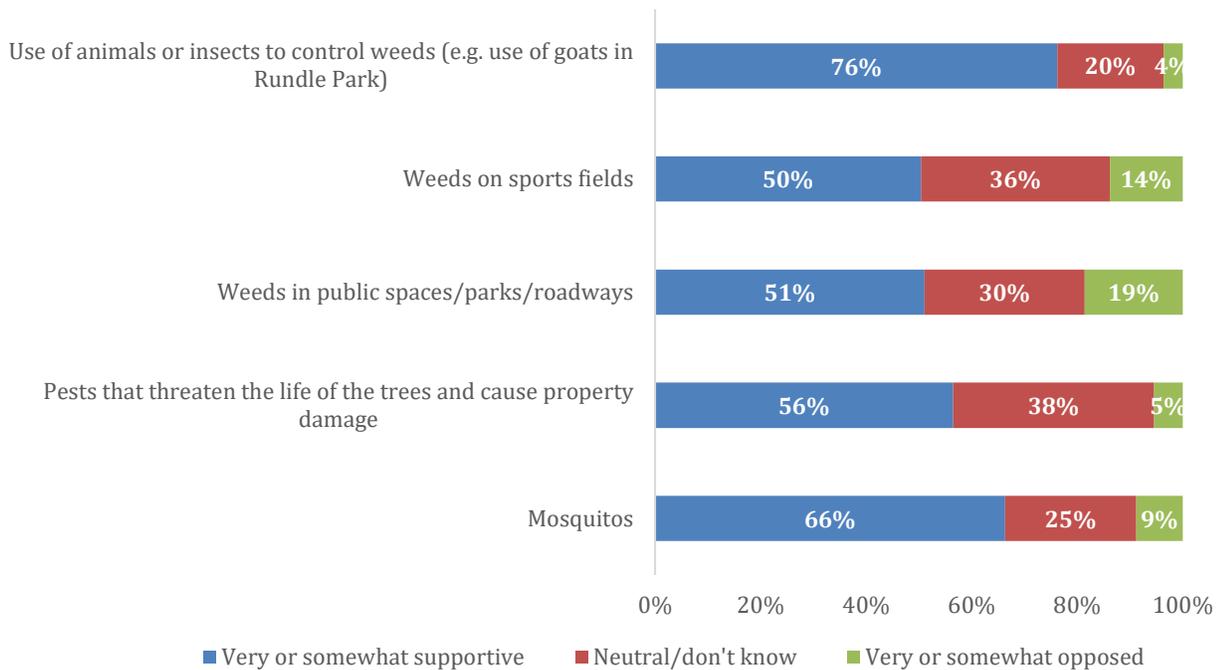


Respondents recorded highest satisfaction with the use of animals or insects to control weeds and lowest satisfaction with the current level of weeds in public spaces/parks/roadways and pests that threaten the life of the trees and cause property damage. Respondents were 55% very or somewhat satisfied with of the results of the mosquito management program.

In the general comments, the most important topic was about spraying pesticides for mosquito control in the city. The responses used positive language when speaking about this topic. Responses to questions on weed control in the urban and park setting generally used negative language. This suggests that people are generally satisfied with the city's efforts to control mosquitos but not with the efforts to control weeds. Examples of negative language around weeds included their perceived damage, their effect on property values, how they make play on sports fields more difficult, encouraging noxious weeds, damaging trees, and being considered ugly.

What We Heard – Phase 1

Question 3 - How supportive are you of the city's current approach to manage...



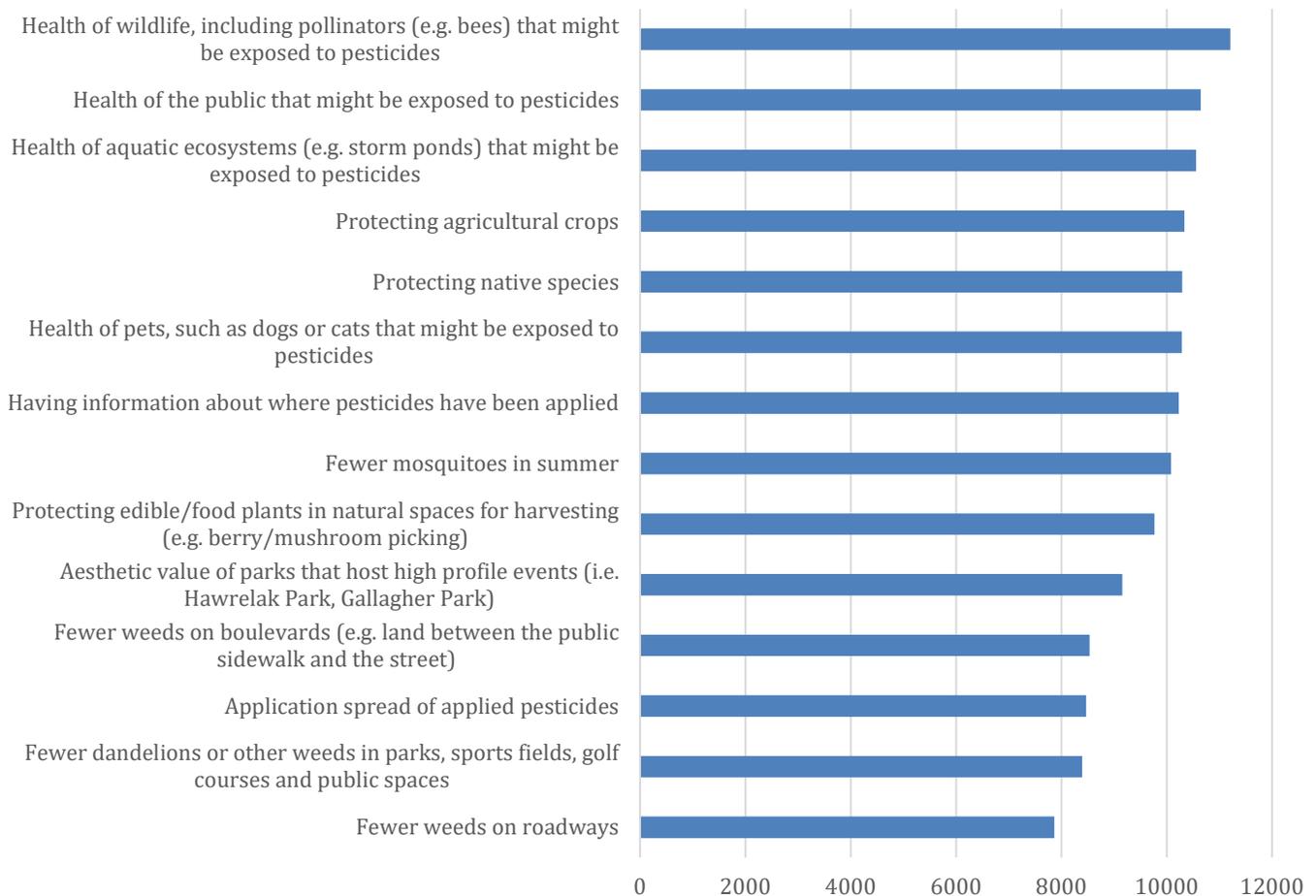
Respondents were at least 50% very or somewhat supportive of the City's current approach to manage weeds on sports fields and most supportive (76%) for use of animals or insects to control weeds.

Respondents used positive language regarding spraying pesticides for mosquitos in the city and negative language when discussing weeds on public property. Respondents had a slightly positive sentiment regarding weeds in sports fields. These results suggest that people don't feel that the current programs do enough to control mosquitos and weeds on public property.

Examples of negative language included dissatisfaction with the use of pesticides and chemicals, perceived lack of results, lack of naturalization, and too many mosquitos.

What We Heard – Phase 1

Question 4 - Thinking of how the City manages pests and weeds, how important are the following aspects to you?



Respondents were asked to prioritize 14 specific pest management outcomes with a ranking of 5 being very important and a ranking of 1 being not important at all. The results were weighted and aggregated to come out with total scores ranked from highest to lowest priority. The top three priorities related to health of wildlife, public, and aquatic ecosystems. The next six priorities scored almost as high and included protecting agricultural crops, protecting native species, health of pets, having information about where pesticides have been applied and fewer mosquitos in summer. The lowest priority was for fewer weeds on roadways.

What We Heard – Phase 1

Question 5 – Please tell us your preference of level of weeds (low, medium, high - as demonstrated in the photos) in the following locations:



	1 - Low Weeds	2 - Medium Weeds	3 - High Weeds
On sports fields	53%	23%	25%
Around playgrounds	44%	28%	28%
In natural areas	10%	47%	43%
Around trees and shrub beds	31%	33%	36%
Along roadsides/entrances to communities	34%	32%	34%

Survey participants were shown a series of three pictures that represented different levels of weed infestation and were asked to provide feedback on whether this level was acceptable at a particular location. Preferences were for low weeds on sports fields and around playgrounds. Medium to high weeds were acceptable in natural areas. The results were equally divided around trees, shrub beds, roadsides and entrances to communities.

Question 6 - Would you like to share anything else on this topic?

Question 6 was an opened ended question. There is general support for the mosquito control programs that the city currently uses. People are more divided on the issue of weeds, especially dandelions with the public space: some are opposed to the existing programs; while others seem to be very supportive of it. Respondents had various tolerance for weeds and the use of pesticides to remove weeds. Concerns with pesticides included children with allergies, their potential to limit pollination, and their effects on living organisms. Alternatives to pesticides were provided including

What We Heard – Phase 1

native species, hand weeding, and planting clover. Others recommended managing weeds and mosquitos earlier in the season for greater beautification of the city and reduction of mosquitos.

BASED ON THIS FEEDBACK, WHAT WAS DONE

The input from this survey informed development of the draft policy by identifying:

- the perceived gaps in the current results of the City's current pest management activities
- the wide range of participant's priorities related to pest management activities

Based on these key results the draft policy was developed to incorporate:

- an evidence-based decision-making process and a commitment to innovation and continuous improvement in pest management activities
- guiding principles for pest management that reflect a balanced approach to managing pests

WHAT'S NEXT

The next step in the IPM Policy update is the completion of the draft revised policy. Phase 2 and Phase 3 provided additional opportunities for stakeholders and the public to participate in the project through a series of workshops, two public drop-in sessions, and two more surveys. Further details on the project are available on the webpage at www.edmonton.ca/pests

Thank you for participating in sharing your voice and shaping our city.

For more information on City of Edmonton public engagement, please visit www.edmonton.ca/publicengagement