



breathe

EDMONTON'S GREEN NETWORK STRATEGY

What We Heard Report
Phase 2: Strategic Framework
October 2016

Project Website

www.edmonton.ca/breathe



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PROJECT OVERVIEW



What is Breathe?

Edmonton's Green Network Strategy

Parks and open spaces are vital to a community's health. These open spaces provide places for people to play, gather, grow food, learn about nature and celebrate.

Because Edmonton Metro is projected to nearly double in population from 1.2 million people to 2.1 million people by 2050, the City has embarked on a process to plan the city's green network to meet the needs of growing communities.

A Multi-Functional Green Network

Edmonton's Green Network Strategy will examine how open space in the City of Edmonton functions as an integrated network of public spaces that provide real, measurable value to Edmontonians. Open spaces contribute to human health and wellness, improve the urban environment, and provide places for people to come together. These contributions are the central themes of the Green Network Strategy, and provide the organizing framework for assessing open space.

ECOLOGY

Supports and enhances the environment by sustaining healthy and resilient ecosystems.



CELEBRATION

Connects people to each other and builds a sense of place by providing places for communities to thrive, gather and celebrate.



WELLNESS

Promotes healthy living and fosters well-being through diverse kinds of recreation, mobility and environments.



What is the goal of the project?

BREATHE is a transformative strategy to make sure that each neighbourhood in Edmonton will be supported by an accessible network of open space as the city grows.

The Green Network Strategy builds on the Urban Parks Management Plan and the Natural Connections Strategic Plan, and aligns with the goals identified in the City's strategic planning documents ("The Ways").

The Green Network Strategy will support the City of Edmonton commitment to:

- » Transform Edmonton's urban form
- » Enhance the use of public transit and active modes of transportation
- » Improve Edmonton's liveability
- » Preserve and sustain Edmonton's environment
- » Ensure Edmonton's financial sustainability
- » Diversify Edmonton's economy

What is included in the green network?

In Edmonton, the green network is all of the city's outdoor land and water that is publicly owned or publicly accessible.

Some examples include:

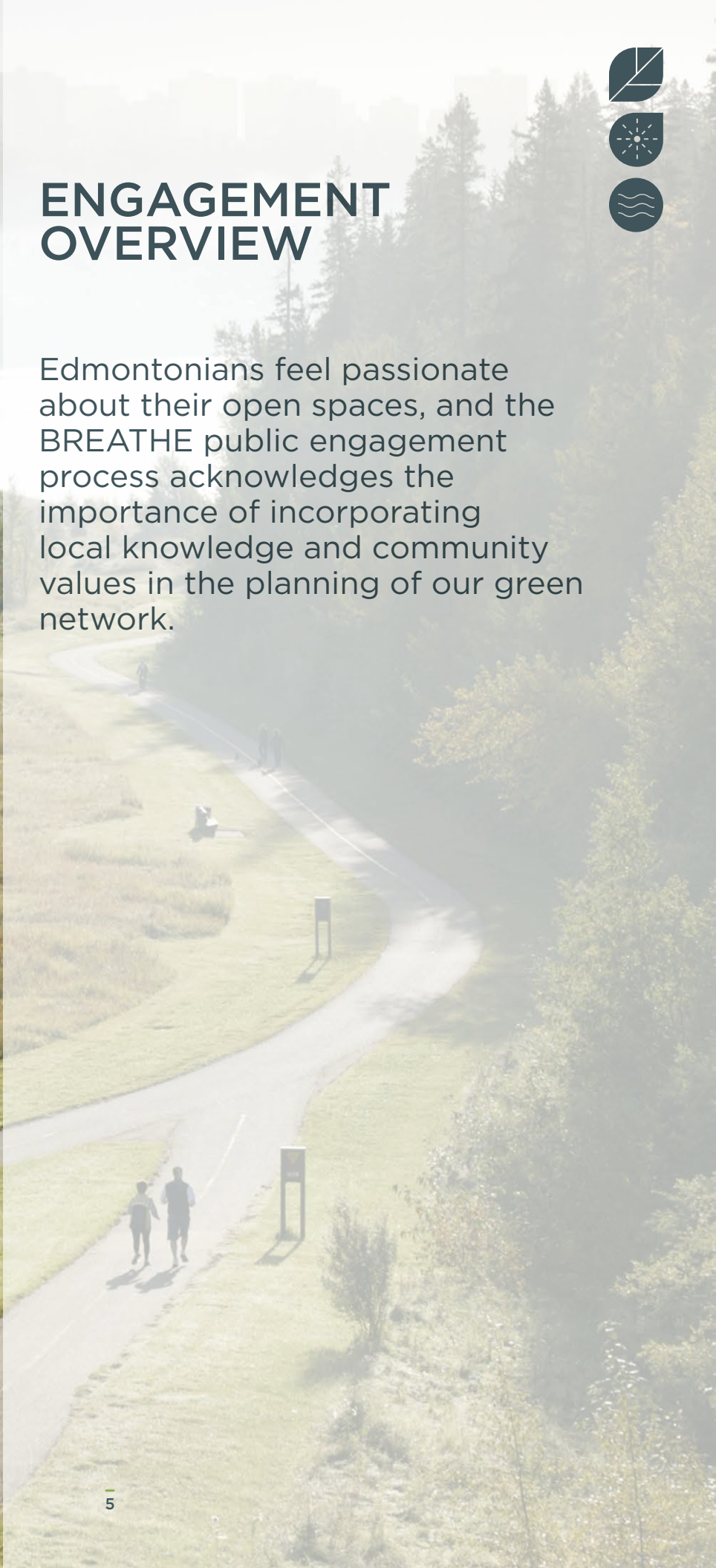
- » Parks and plazas, like Coronation Park and Churchill Square
- » Main streets, like Jasper Avenue
- » Natural areas, like the North Saskatchewan River Valley and Ravine System
- » Corridors and linkages, like Mill Creek Ravine
- » Green infrastructure, like the bioswale at Ellerslie Fire Station, green roofs, and the rainwater gardens at Government House Park





ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Edmontonians feel passionate about their open spaces, and the BREATHE public engagement process acknowledges the importance of incorporating local knowledge and community values in the planning of our green network.



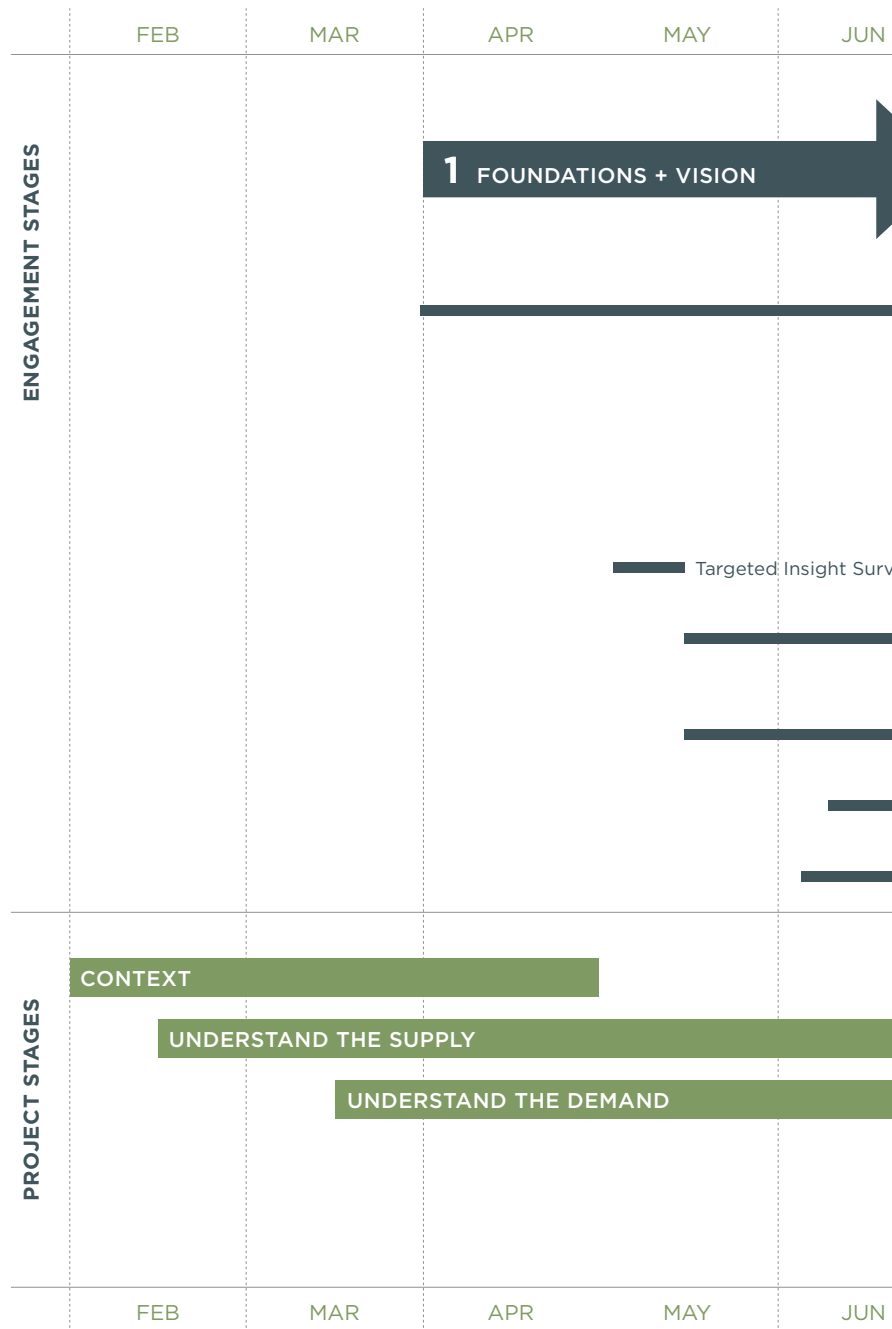
Phases of Engagement

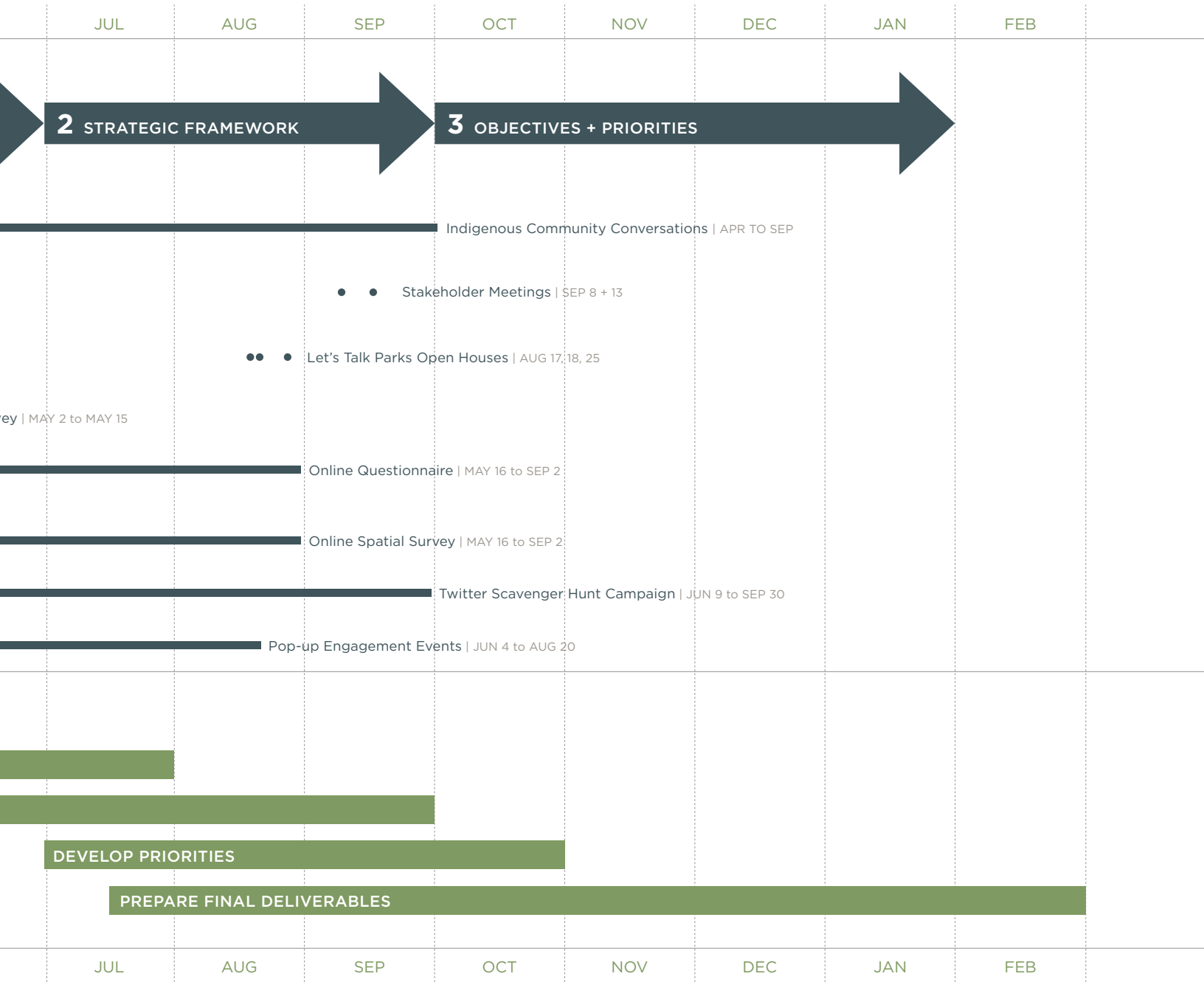
The engagement process is structured in three phases, which each inform project development in different ways:

PHASE 1: FOUNDATIONS + VISION is designed to identify demands, opportunities and barriers to use. Input will provide the foundation for developing strategic objectives and priorities.

PHASE 2: STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK is designed to validate the results of the supply analysis (Project Stage 2). Major components of the Green Network Strategy will be developed based on feedback gathered during this phase.

PHASE 3: OBJECTIVES + PRIORITIES is designed to present the proposed objectives and priorities for Breathe. Public input will inform the development of a draft Strategy, which will be presented for final feedback from stakeholders and citizens.





Communications

A thorough and varied program of communication supported and promoted the various engagement activities. In some instances, the engagement activities themselves (Pop Up Engagement and Twitter Scavenger Hunt) also served as communication vehicles for other engagement activities. Specific communication tactics included:

- » Project website on the City's site
- » Facebook and Twitter
- » E-newsletters
- » Print material: posters and postcards
- » Road signs
- » Media: public service announcements, media advisory, newspaper advertisements
- » City Hall displays
- » City of Edmonton Public Events and Public Engagement Calendars
- » Direct emails & communiques to project stakeholders (internally and externally)

About this Report

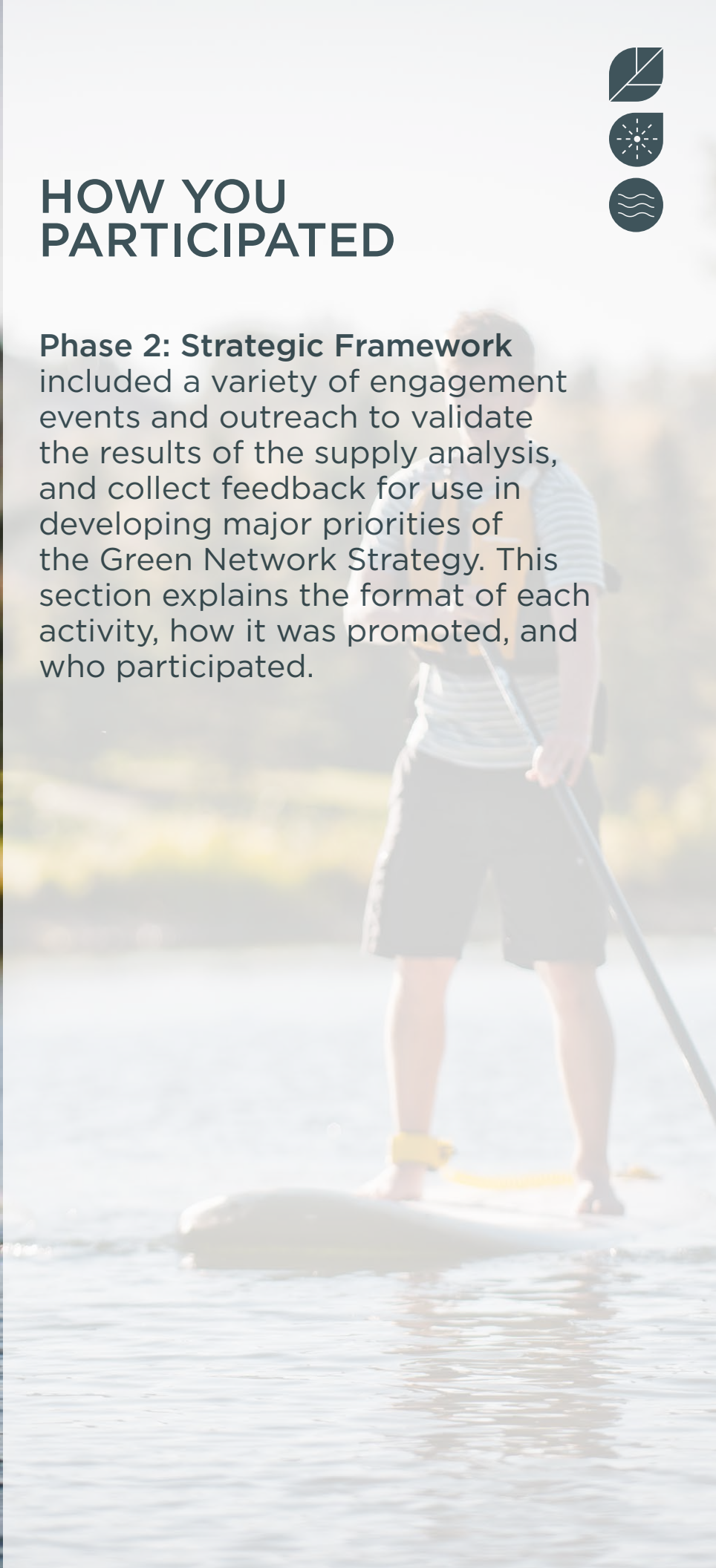
During the second phase of engagement, the BREATHE team presented the results of Project Stage 2 (Supply Analysis), and asked Edmontonians for more detail about the supply of open spaces in their city.

This report presents the findings from the Phase 2: Strategic Framework engagement activities. Also included are the findings from activities that started in Engagement Phase 1 - e.g. Twitter Scavenger Hunt Campaign, Pop-Up Engagement Events, Indigenous Community Conversations, and online Questionnaire and Spatial Survey - but that terminated in Phase 2. It includes a description of the consultation activities including when they occurred, who participated, and the findings from each. The Report concludes with a summary of the findings of all engagement activities discussed herein.



HOW YOU PARTICIPATED

Phase 2: Strategic Framework included a variety of engagement events and outreach to validate the results of the supply analysis, and collect feedback for use in developing major priorities of the Green Network Strategy. This section explains the format of each activity, how it was promoted, and who participated.



3

SESSIONS

69

PARTICIPANTS

Let's Talk Parks Open Houses

Three open houses were convened at diverse locations across Edmonton: Clareview Recreation Centre, City Hall and the Valley Zoo. Attendees were able to review project goals, the definition of the green network, and open space functions. They were also asked to review the preliminary results of the supply analysis that illustrated how well areas of Edmonton are serviced by the different types of open spaces. Twenty-two participants shared their comments using a Local Insight Card (see Appendix A for a sample). Comments were also captured using a giant map, the results of which were subsequently aggregated with the results of the online spatial survey.

Stakeholder Meetings

Three meetings were structured with organizations identified as having a significant interest in the project: Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues; Urban Development Institute; and the Edmonton Francophone School Board and Edmonton Public School Board. (The Edmonton Catholic School Board representative was unable to attend.) The meetings consisted of a presentation from the Breathe project team followed by a discussion in which attendees could ask questions, raise concerns, and bring forward ideas.

3

MEETINGS

4

ORGANIZATIONS

Pop-Up Engagement Sessions

A booth was set up at various festivals and events across Edmonton (e.g. Canada Day at the Legislature Grounds, the Dragon Boat Festival at Louise McKinney Park, National Aboriginal Day at Borden Park, etc.). The booth included information about the project. It also provided an opportunity for people to share what they love / would like to change about Edmonton's open spaces by placing comments on a giant map and speaking with staff in the booth. The output from these sessions was aggregated with the results of the online spatial survey.

17

SESSIONS

535

PARTICIPANTS

14
ENTRIES

Twitter Scavenger Hunt

“Did you know” facts were tweeted weekly with an invitation for participants to share a photo of a favourite open space. Using the hashtag #breatheYEG, the intent of this engagement was to generate interest in the project and encourage people to participate in the online survey hosted on the project website.

Online Questionnaire

The online questionnaire asked participants a series of questions about their use of Edmonton open spaces, and their opinions about environmental quality, accessibility, safety, and many other topics.

2,274
COMPLETED
QUESTIONNAIRES

Online Spatial Survey

Through the online project website, respondents were asked to comment on specific open spaces in Edmonton by using an online mapping tool to virtually place pins and share what they love / would like change about different spaces.

1,261
COMMENTS
281
PARTICIPANTS

Indigenous Communities

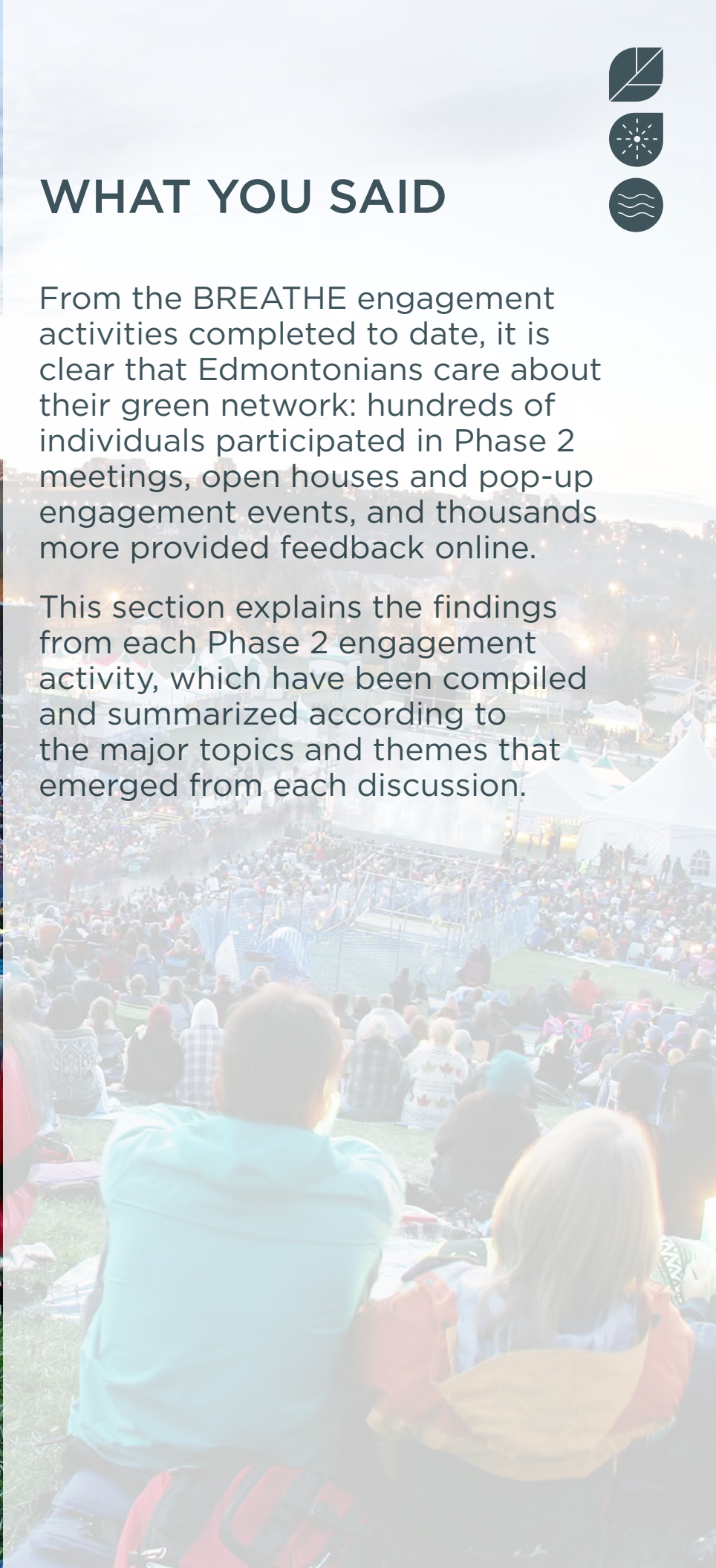
Meetings were convened with Indigenous communities with connections to Edmonton. The City has reached out to First Nations communities in Treaty 6; the Métis Nation of Alberta; communities from Treaty 7 and 8 with traditional territories in the Edmonton region; and urban Indigenous peoples. Meetings were held to share project information, gather input, and continue to engage in an open dialogue with the Indigenous communities. Input from Métis and First Nations stakeholders is important to identifying key uses, needs, goals and strategies for open spaces, and specifically to develop a greater understanding of how Indigenous needs and interests can be incorporated and served in the future.



WHAT YOU SAID

From the BREATHE engagement activities completed to date, it is clear that Edmontonians care about their green network: hundreds of individuals participated in Phase 2 meetings, open houses and pop-up engagement events, and thousands more provided feedback online.

This section explains the findings from each Phase 2 engagement activity, which have been compiled and summarized according to the major topics and themes that emerged from each discussion.



Let's Talk Parks Open Houses

WHAT IS THE BEST THING ABOUT EDMONTON'S GREEN NETWORK?

- » The river valley is the best element of the green network.
- » Generally there is good variety of types of space.
- » The City and residents care about the green network. Spaces are generally well maintained and accessible.

WHAT WOULD MAKE AN IDEAL GREEN NETWORK?

- » Better accessibility for active transportation and public transit.
- » Well maintained, clean, and safe open spaces.
- » More education and engagement opportunities for people, especially children.
- » More open space furniture throughout the network, particularly for sitting.
- » Public art.
- » Opportunities for equestrian use.
- » Wildlife connectivity.
- » More trees downtown.
- » More pathways through neighbourhoods.

OPEN SPACE SUPPLY

- » Supply in neighbourhoods is generally good and people are well served.
- » Older areas of Edmonton seem better served than new areas but infill is impacting this, as trees are being removed and vacant lots redeveloped.
 - Concern about the disposition of the University of Alberta farm on South Campus and the loss of this space.
- » More greening downtown would be beneficial.

ACCESSIBILITY

- » There can be some challenges to accessing the river valley. The slopes are steep and difficult to navigate.
- » To access many parks, people have to utilize personal vehicles because of the long distances to travel.
- » Access to the Alberta Legislature can be difficult due to road crossings.

DIVERSITY OF OPEN SPACE FUNCTIONS (NEIGHBOURHOOD LEVEL)

- » More unstructured and unprogrammed leisure opportunities.
- » Protect viewscales (including top of bank views) into the valley.
- » Additional trees along major corridors can help enhance ecological functions.
- » Downtown needs more open green spaces and parks.
- » Trail connectivity needs improvement.

DIVERSITY OF OPEN SPACE FUNCTIONS (CITYWIDE)

- » More animated plaza space.
- » Improved maintenance and care of open spaces.
- » Ensure greater connectivity of open spaces.
- » Protection of river water quality and more natural features.
- » Planning to ensure adequate open spaces for an increasingly densified city.
- » Universal access to open spaces.
- » Consider energy management and the use of solar power.
- » Retain farmland in the city.

OPEN SPACE THEME: ECOLOGY

- » Community gardens can assist with this. Consideration should be given to edible landscapes and urban orchards.
 - A food strategy is needed for the City.
 - **Note** *fresh: Edmonton's Food and Urban Agriculture Strategy was developed by the City in 2012.*
- » Protect and support the use of native species in plantings and areas across the city. Non-native and invasive species need to be monitored.
- » Improving connectivity in the open space network can provide ecological corridors.
- » Plan for flood mitigation, storm water management and slope stability. Addressing water issues and erosion can help protect and enhance the ecological function of open spaces.
- » Some concerns were expressed about the impact of people living in the river valley, and the management of their garbage and waste.

OPEN SPACE THEME: CELEBRATION

- » Enhanced support facilities and amenities would improve our spaces (e.g. lighting, washrooms).
- » Engage the community more in managing and supporting the open spaces. This could strengthen communities and make spaces safer.
 - Additional enforcement and monitoring of events could help make spaces safer and more welcoming.
- » Preservation and celebration of heritage aspects including urban farming and Indigenous history.
- » Additional tree plantings can improve the aesthetics of a place as well.

OPEN SPACE THEME: WELLNESS

- » Improve non-motorized access to park spaces. Support amenities for bicycles (e.g. bike pumps).
- » Additional programs at neighbourhood parks including nature based programs that are low cost. This could be facilitated through greater support of Green Shack program.
- » Improved access to the river and generally to park spaces for all. People with mobility issues can have difficulties using the trail system.
- » Add outdoor fitness and activity areas along pathways.
- » Consider outdoor winter activities too.
- » Ensure there are some quiet areas in open spaces in an increasingly noisy world.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- » Current infill and development is compromising the open space network for many years, as trees are removed and density places increased pressure on the existing open space supply.
- » Consider the long term impacts on population growth in Edmonton.
- » Engage with capital region partners on the green network.
- » Green space should be dedicated for recreation and not used for other public buildings (e.g. fire stations, libraries).
- » Too much public land is being used to support the use of cars. Where neighbourhoods are serviced by both front streets and back lanes, some land should be turned from roads into parks.
- » There needs to be a recognition of the value of the existing mature tree canopy as well as the University of Alberta farm in south central Edmonton.
- » The older neighbourhoods in downtown Edmonton need green corridors.

Stakeholder Meetings

Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues

BASE LEVEL AMENITIES

- » Need seed money so communities can determine what is needed
- » Grass fields leave room for future park development opportunities to be identified by the community
- » Plan corridors for walking/access (easements) to ensure connectivity of neighbourhoods to parks
- » Retaining natural topography instead of leveling presents unique opportunities (e.g. toboggan hills)
- » Trees should not be removed; natural elements should be preserved
- » Spaces for gathering (designated)
- » Think about what will happen in the space in the winter
- » Concern about the extensive, ongoing fundraising efforts required to fund playgrounds for new neighbourhoods
- » Difficult for community leagues to meet the expectations/demands of residents who were told by developers that they would have access to community garden plots and other "treats" that the developer proposed or promised in order to entice buyers

POLICY REQUIRED TO ACCOMMODATE NEIGHBOURHOOD DIVERSITY + CONTEXT

- » City wants infill, higher density - need to consider that these people may not have backyards
- » Diversity - consider what's needed to accommodate many cultures, new Canadians
- » Pocket parks are important local neighbourhood space - e.g. easily accessed by kids

- » Best for City to continue maintenance - good standards - but may be an opportunity to strengthen relationships with community leagues in this (volunteers)
- » Finely distributed parks - smaller, spread out, close to people's homes - important for community building and equitable access to open space
- » Reduce "specialized" parks (e.g. just for soccer)
- » Development on surplus school sites presents a major challenge to "living local"
 - Sites are being used for purposes that remove open space from the neighbourhood supply, so less open space is available for area residents to use locally
- » Ensure that MR land not used for purposes other than parks (libraries, emergency services, etc.) - open space is the easiest to lose and needs protection
- » Look at how "accessible" is defined - ensure open spaces not cut off by a major physical barrier
- » Concerned about cemeteries being identified as open space as they don't offer the same level of function as other open space

School Boards

HOW MUCH SPACE IS REQUIRED FOR SCHOOL SITES?

- » Depends on the size of school and enrolment - these fluctuate over the lifetime of a school but there is a need for spaces for both structured and unstructured play
- » School boards do not get funding from province for playgrounds
 - In some cases, parents work with community members to get a playground developed within the school site envelope - other community members can access the playgrounds outside of busy lunch hour/recess times
- » Would be good to have easements in place for trails connecting schools with rest of neighbourhood from the beginning
- » Some land saved in having two schools on one site
- » Significant efficiencies can come from a school sharing a space with a community league, e.g. shared parking

Urban Development Institute

MAINTENANCE

- » Developers often go above and beyond Base Level Development (BLD) but that can revert to base level when the City does not have sufficient maintenance dollars for a greater level
- » Invasive plants are a serious problem - developers are not permitted to spray and City not able to address the issue
- » Operations/maintenance staff need to be at the table during the development of high-level strategies - to be part of the solution and to speak to any maintenance issues

TIMELINE + PROCESS

- » Parkland development process is cumbersome - it is difficult to get approval for initiatives beyond standard items. It can appear that there are disincentives to developers for things beyond "standard" items.
- » Need staff champions to support new ideas, work internally on process to facilitate their implementation

QUALITY VERSUS QUANTITY

- » Need to look carefully at the quality of parks and connections

INNOVATION

- » The green network strategy should not be heavily prescriptive, but should address barriers to implementation
- » There is an opportunity to recognize and celebrate developers for innovations that are in line with City policy (e.g. The Hills at Charlesworth - sustainability plaza)

POLICY

- » Basic parkland and amenity supply standards reduce innovation - need to tailor a neighbourhood park to meet the needs of the community. It's okay for neighbourhoods to be different
- » City policies don't support/allow many of the innovations they are encouraging
- » Opportunities through Neighbourhood Renewal to accommodate more interesting amenities
- » Need to bring down barriers between departments and look at land as public land to support a vibrant public realm
- » Some feel it's easier now to get a creative plan approved than it used to be

Indigenous Communities

The City of Edmonton acknowledges the significant contributions of the First Nations and Métis people to our city's past, present, and future. Indigenous peoples who have inhabited the region for thousands of years prior to the arrival of European settlers generously shared their knowledge and wisdom of an intimate relationship with the land and nature. These contributions by Indigenous Peoples helped set the stage for the growth of Edmonton into a thriving urban centre. Today, Edmonton is home to over 61,000 Indigenous people making it the second largest Indigenous population in Canada. As we plan for the next additional million people in the region, Indigenous people will be an important part of this growth.

Through the Memorandum of Cooperation and Dialogue with the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations and the Memorandum of Shared Recognition and Cooperation with the the Métis Nation of Alberta; the earlier Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Accord and Declaration; and ongoing work related to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, the City of Edmonton is committed to keeping First Nation and Métis communities informed and engaged.

Since April 2016, the City has facilitated several one-on-one and small group meetings with Indigenous communities regarding the Breathe project to share project information, gather input and continue to engage an open dialogue with Indigenous communities. The following (see Table 1.1) is a brief summary of some of the important topics that have emerged from discussions with Indigenous communities to date. These topics are important to identify key uses, needs, goals and strategies for open spaces, and specifically to develop a greater understanding of how Indigenous needs and interests can be incorporated and served in the future.

Some of the other topics that were discussed include: employment, procurement, Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, governance, burial site protocols, environmental assessments, and traditional knowledge. These topics have been recorded and will help the City with future projects and its ongoing engagement with Indigenous communities.

TABLE 1.1 Key Themes from Indigenous Community Conversations

PRIMARY TOPIC	SUB-TOPIC
TRADITIONAL USES	Some areas of the city and region have and could be used for traditional / harvesting activities such as berry picking, fishing, trapping, and collection of medicinal plants.
CULTURE	Need for more appropriate, accurate and public interpretation of Indigenous culture and history. It needs to be accessible, shared, recognized, acknowledged and celebrated. Safe, designated cultural areas are needed for people to practice cultural activities.
ENVIRONMENT	Greater environmental protection measures are required, especially around rivers and natural areas.
ENGAGEMENT	There are multiple Indigenous communities with many voices, young and old, that need to be engaged early. Future consideration should be given to funding advisory boards, community liaisons and champions to gather community input for projects.
RELATIONSHIPS	The City needs to develop relationships with surrounding Indigenous communities.

Online Questionnaire

2,247 people participated in the online questionnaire, which consisted of both multiple-choice and open (long-form) questions. The demographic of participants is summarized below. (Note that demographic figures do not include those participants who declined to answer the relevant demographic questions.)

Respondents use open spaces for a number of reasons as illustrated in Table 1.2. Ninety percent (90%) use open space to enjoy nature.

FIGURE 1.1 Demographic Summary of Participants (Questionnaire)

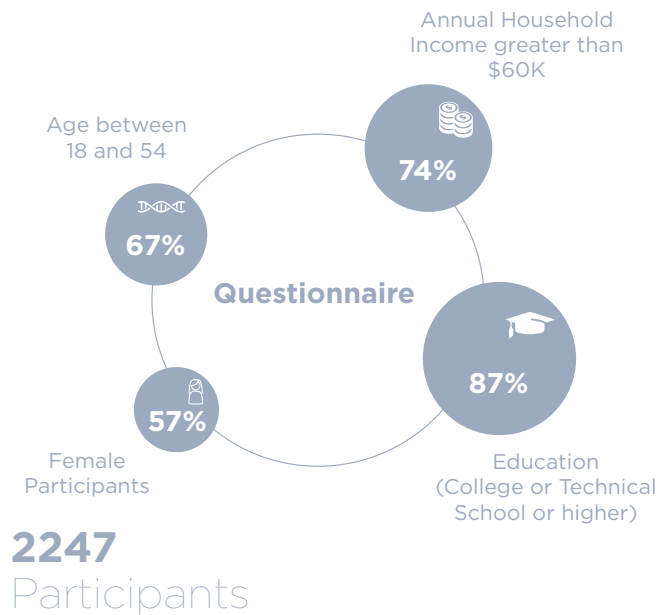


FIGURE 1.2 Age-gender Profile of Participants (Questionnaire)

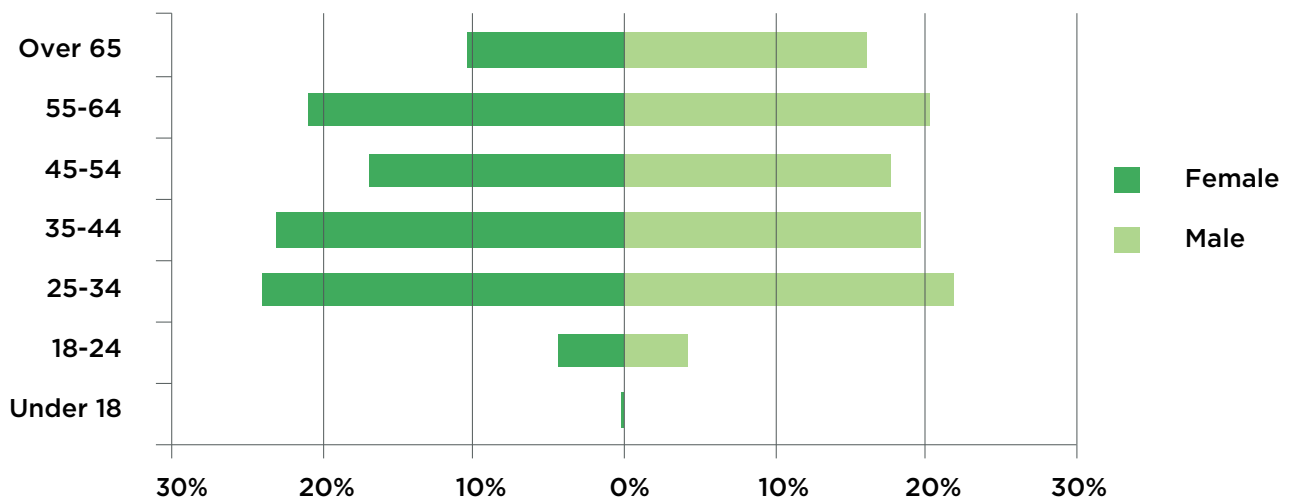
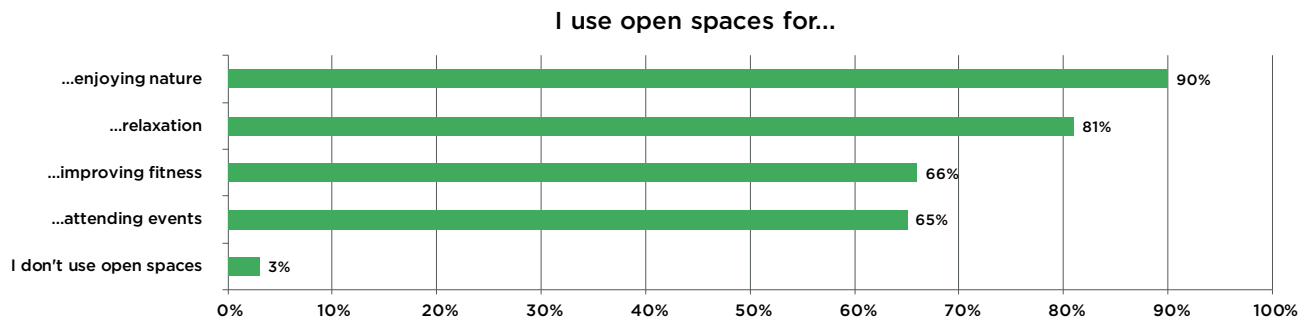


TABLE 1.2 How respondents use open spaces



Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with their ability to enjoy activities in Edmonton's open spaces. As illustrated, 88% were satisfied (50% very satisfied, 38% somewhat satisfied) with their ability to walk or run in Edmonton's open spaces.

TABLE 1.3 Satisfaction with recreational activities

How satisfied are you with your ability to enjoy these activities in Edmonton's open spaces?

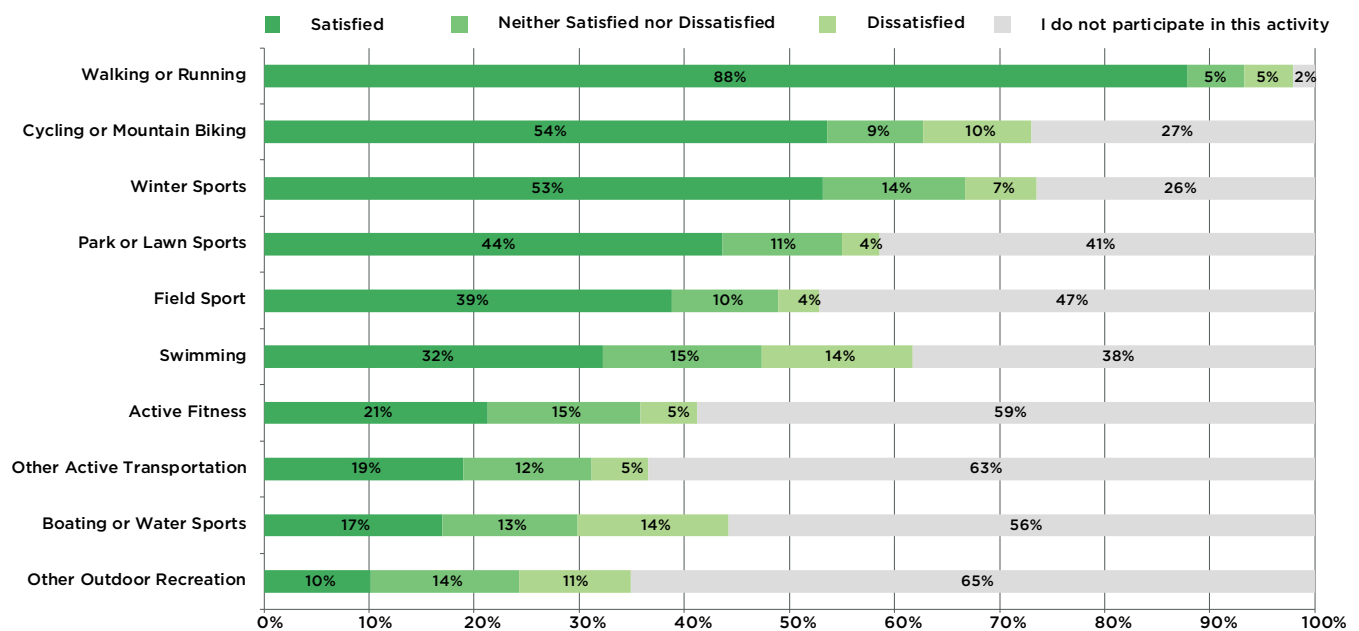


TABLE 1.4 Satisfaction with recreational activities

	Other Outdoor Recreation	Boating or Water Sports	Other Active Transport	Active Fitness	Swimming	Field Sports	Winter Sports	Park or Lawn Sports	Cycling or Mountain Biking	Walking or Running
Very Satisfied	3%	5%	6%	8%	12%	15%	17%	18%	22%	50%
Somewhat Satisfied	7%	12%	13%	14%	21%	24%	36%	26%	32%	38%
Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	14%	13%	12%	15%	15%	10%	14%	11%	9%	5%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	8%	10%	4%	5%	5%	3%	6%	3%	8%	4%
Very Dissatisfied	2%	4%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%
Do not participate in this activity	65%	56%	63%	59%	59%	47%	26%	41%	27%	2%

Respondents were provided with another series of activities and asked again to indicate their level of satisfaction with their ability to enjoy activities in Edmonton's open spaces. As illustrated, 71% were satisfied (31% very satisfied, 40% somewhat satisfied) with their ability to participate

in mental health activities (such as picnicking, reading a book, playing chess) in Edmonton's open spaces.

TABLE 1.5 Satisfaction with other activities

How satisfied are you with your ability to enjoy these activities in Edmonton's open spaces?

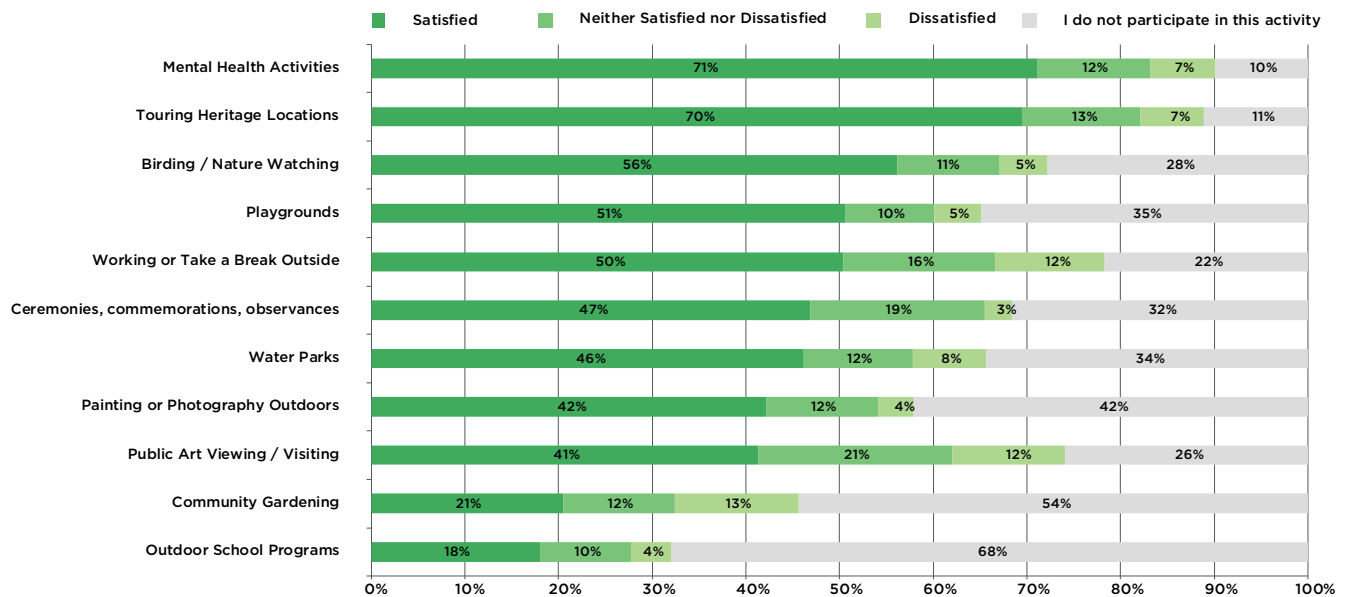


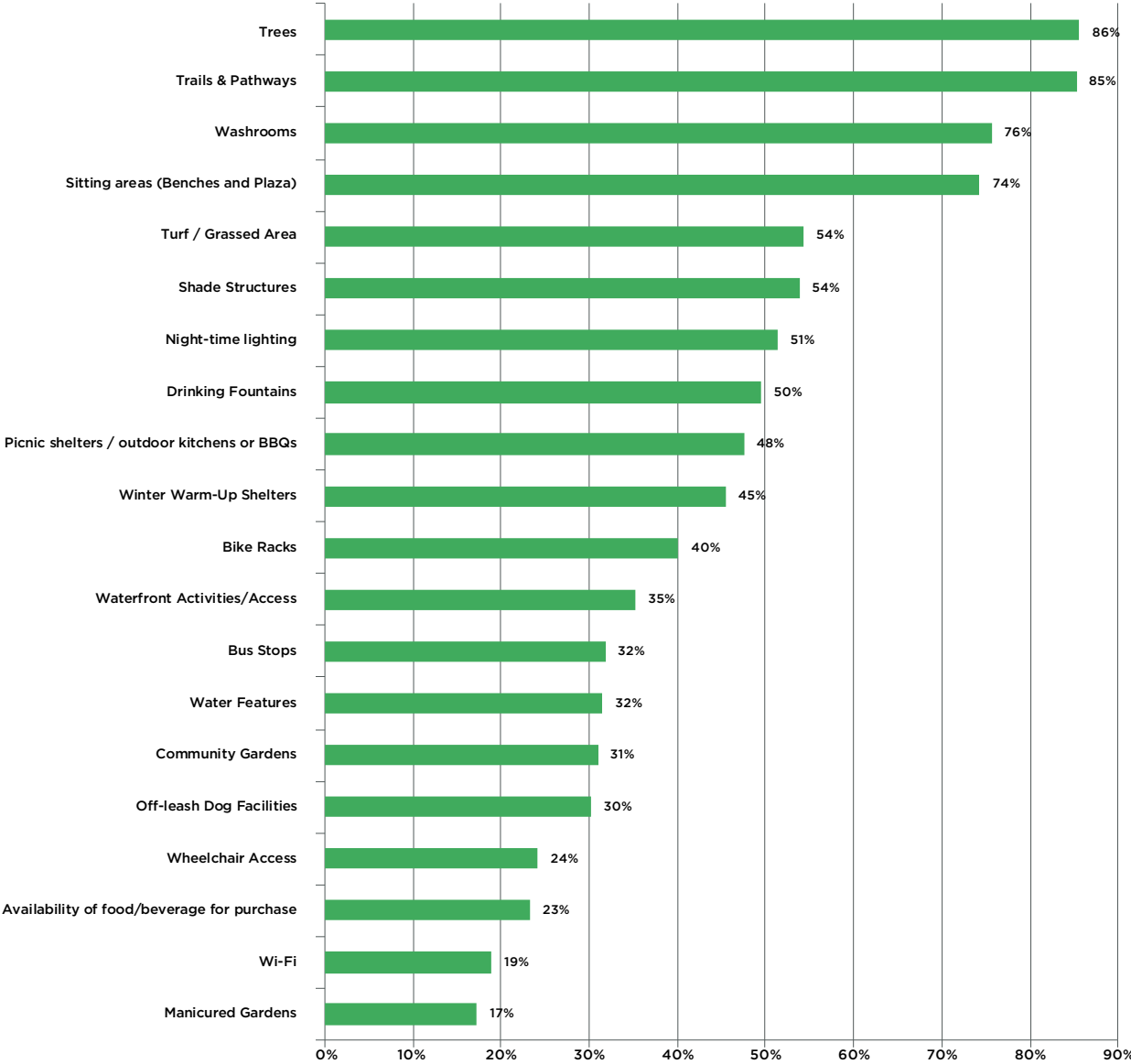
TABLE 1.6 Satisfaction with other activities

	Mental Health Activities	Touring Heritage Locations	Birding + Nature Watching	Playgrounds	Working or Taking a Break Outside	Water Parks	Painting or Photography Outdoors	Ceremonies, commemorations, observances	Public Art Viewing + Visiting	Community Gardening	Outdoor School Programs
Very Satisfied	31%	30%	23%	23%	19%	19%	18%	16%	13%	7%	7%
Somewhat Satisfied	40%	39%	33%	28%	31%	27%	24%	30%	29%	14%	11%
Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	12%	13%	11%	10%	16%	12%	12%	19%	21%	12%	10%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	6%	5%	4%	4%	9%	6%	3%	2%	10%	10%	3%
Very Dissatisfied	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	3%	1%
Do not participate in this activity	10%	11%	28%	35%	22%	34%	42%	32%	26%	54%	68%

Given a list of features and amenities that support outdoor activities, respondents were asked to identify those that are the most important to their use of open spaces. As illustrated in the graph, trees (86%) and trails & pathways (85%) were considered the most important amenities for respondents' use of open spaces. Approximately three-quarters of respondents (76%) identified washrooms and sitting areas (74%) as important.

TABLE 1.7 Importance of open space amenities

Which features and amenities are most important to your use of open spaces?



Respondents were asked to rate the quality of several environmental aspects of Edmonton's outdoor spaces. As illustrated below, 82% agreed (31% strongly agree, 51% somewhat agree) that the quality of Edmonton's natural areas is good.

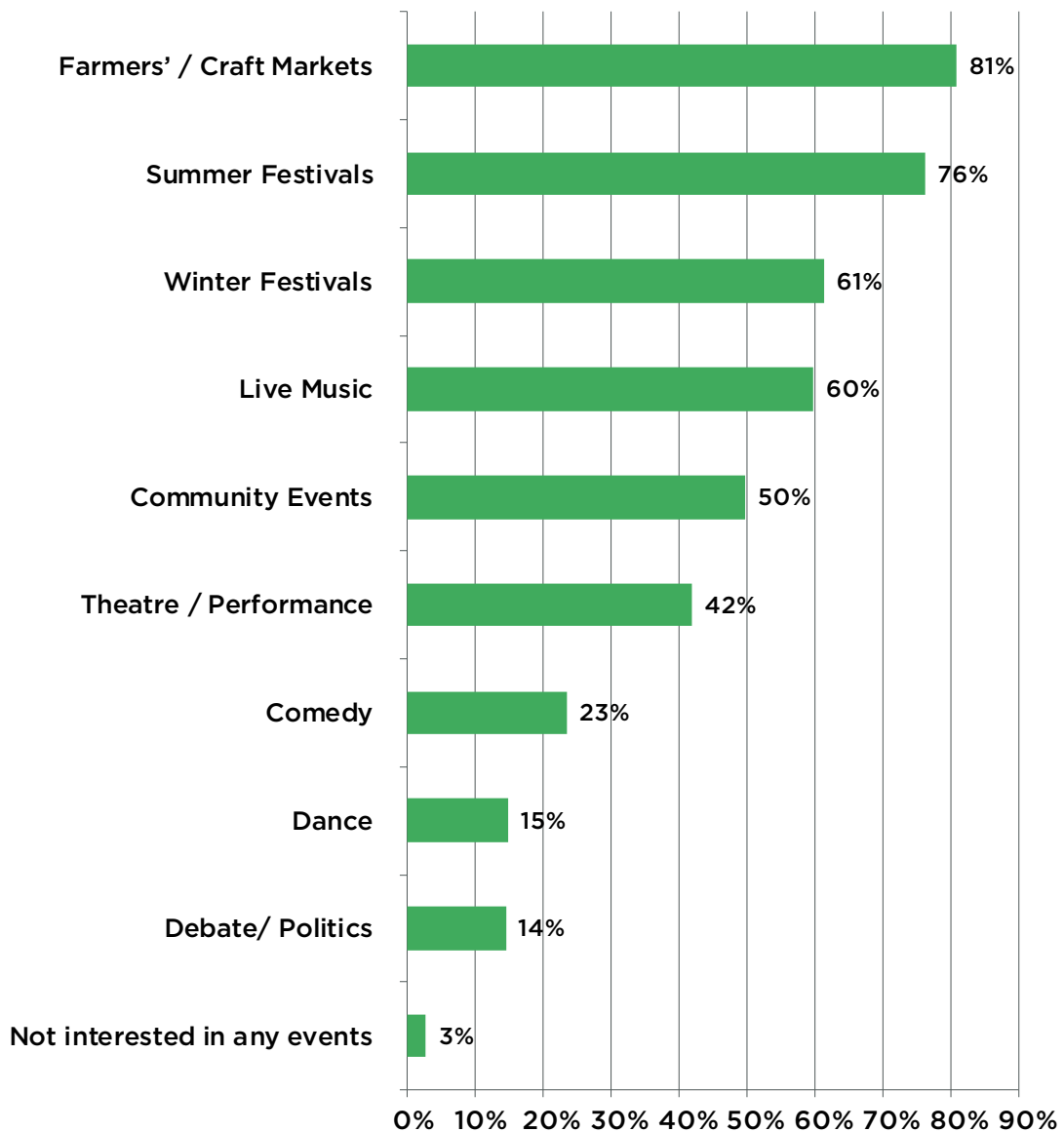
TABLE 1.8 Satisfaction with environmental quality

	I find the water quality in ponds and reservoirs to be good.	I find the water quality in the North Saskatchewan River to be good.	I find the air quality in the Edmonton downtown core to be good.	I find the air quality for the rest of Edmonton (outside the downtown core) to be good.	I find the quality of Edmonton's natural areas to be good.
Strongly Agree	5%	9%	12%	25%	31%
Somewhat Agree	26%	27%	40%	47%	51%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	17%	18%	20%	13%	10%
Somewhat Disagree	21%	20%	20%	11%	6%
Strongly Disagree	7%	8%	4%	3%	1%
Don't know	25%	18%	4%	2%	1%

When asked about events, 81% expressed an interest in Farmers' / Crafts markets, while 76% were interested in Summer Festivals (Edmonton Pride, Edmonton Fringe Festival, Edmonton Folk Music Festival).

TABLE 1.9 Interest in different types of events

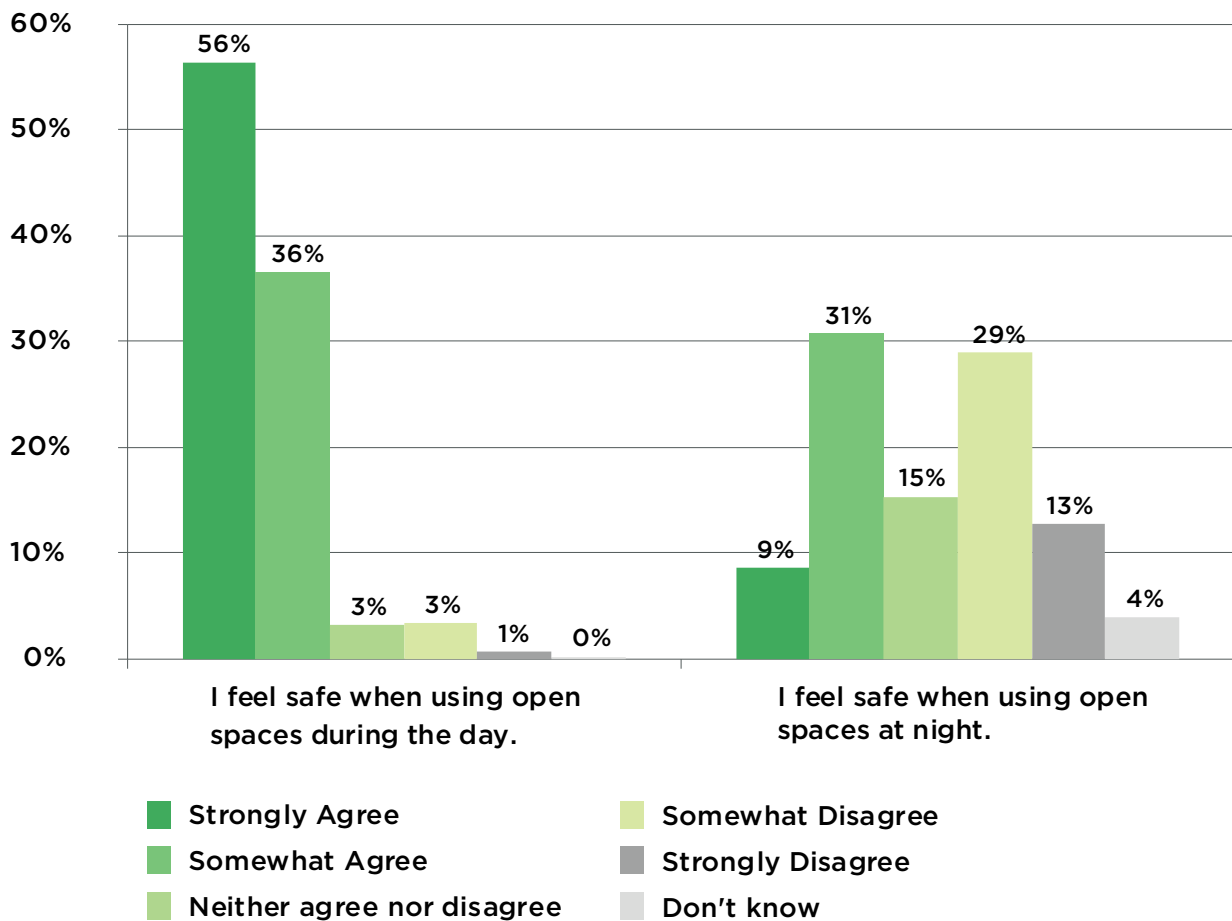
In what kinds of events are you most interested?



Next, respondents were asked to comment on their feelings of safety when using open spaces. As illustrated, they feel much safer using open spaces during the day (92% agree that they feel safe) than at night (40% agree they feel safe). Approximately half (47%) of respondents said they have observed safety issues when using open spaces.

TABLE 1.10 Satisfaction with safety of open spaces

Safety: To what extent do you agree?



Private vehicle is the means by which respondents generally travel to participate in activities in open spaces (for the majority of the trips). When further asked about all the ways people travel, private vehicle was identified most frequently. However, other means of transportation were used by many respondents.

TABLE 1.11 Primary mode of transportation to different activities

	Recreational Activities e.g. field sports, golfing, yoga, cycling, or other activities you might enjoy at a local park	Enjoying a natural setting or participating in activities that require ecological services, e.g. bird watching, boating, fishing	Events e.g. festivals, concerts, other gatherings
Private vehicle	50%	50%	41%
Public transit	5%	4%	38%
Cycling	16%	10%	9%
By foot (walk, run, jog)	20%	25%	8%
Vehicle for hire (taxi, Tappcar)	0%	0%	2%
Don't participate in this activity	8%	11%	3%

TABLE 1.12 All other modes of transportation to different activities

	Recreational Activities e.g. field sports, golfing, yoga, cycling, or other activities you might enjoy at a local park	Enjoying a natural setting or participating in activities that require ecological services, e.g. bird watching, boating, fishing	Events e.g. festivals, concerts, other gatherings
Private vehicle	55%	55%	54%
Public transit	26%	21%	54%
Cycling	31%	28%	20%
By foot (walk, run, jog)	43%	42%	32%
Vehicle for hire (taxi, Tappcar)	3%	2%	9%
Don't participate in this activity	9%	10%	3%

Online Spatial Survey

Approximately 344 people participated in the online spatial survey (including people who were engaged during open house and pop-up events). Participants supplied 1,261 unique comments. The demographic of participants is summarized below. (Note that demographic figures do not include those participants who declined to answer the relevant demographic questions.)

FIGURE 1.3 Demographic Summary of Participants (Online Spatial Survey)

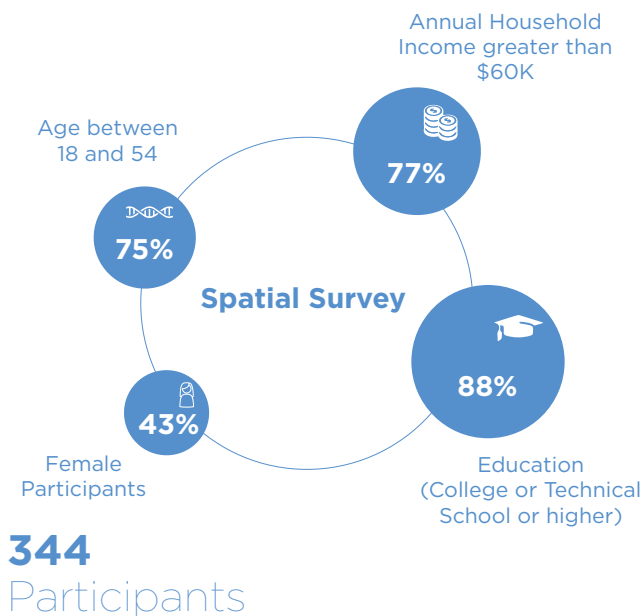
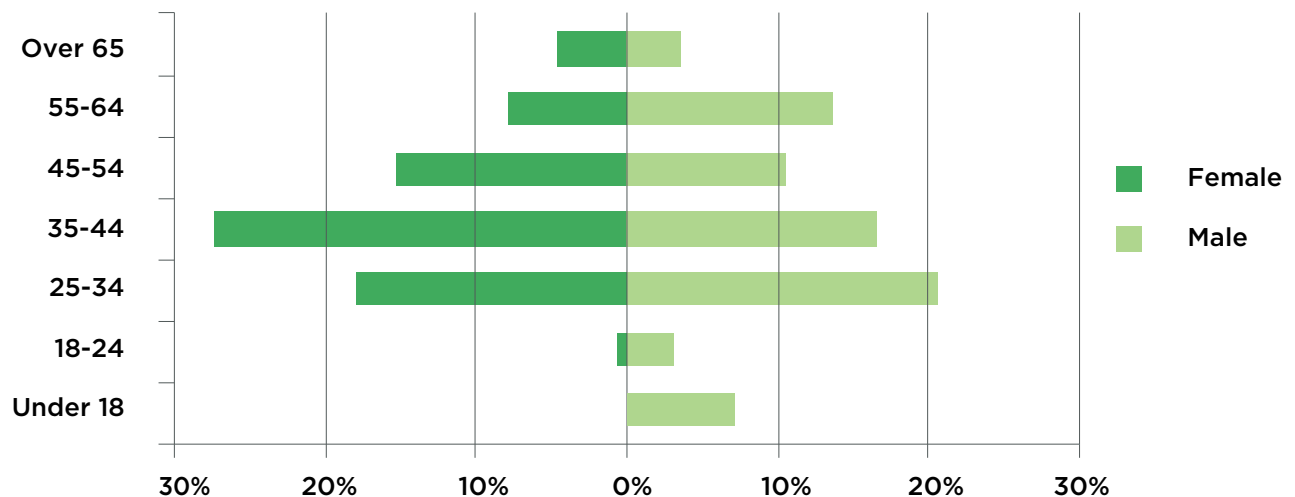


FIGURE 1.4 Age-gender Profile of Participants (Online Spatial Survey)



The findings of the spatial survey are presented according to theme: Celebration, Ecology, Wellness. General comments gathered from the online spatial survey are noted as follows according to major themes.

Celebration

LIKE

- » The amenities in the spaces make the space good (e.g. gazebos, benches, playgrounds).
- » The Legislature grounds are very attractive, accommodate a great variety of uses and can host large crowds.
- » Some open spaces are easy to get to, are walkable, and there are nearby shops and cafes.
- » Good viewpoints and vistas make some spaces very appealing.
- » Some spaces promote community activities and are well used by the community.
- » A nice playground in a park can draw a lot of use. Seating for parents provides places to rest and helps foster community cohesiveness.
- » Skateboard parks ensure youth use the space.
- » Including interpretive signage is good. It can explain the history of an area.
- » Multipurpose spaces provide opportunities for many people in the community to come together.

WISH

- » Interactive, online wayfinding maps would be helpful as would improved signage.
- » Conflicting uses in some open spaces makes them difficult to use.
- » There needs to be more bookable spaces for groups and families to use for private functions.

- » The City could put up large screens for special events (including sporting events) to facilitate people gathering to view.
- » More adjacent cafes and businesses would draw people to open spaces.
- » Ensuring open spaces are pedestrian friendly would help draw people there.
- » Sufficient support amenities can help ensure that people use the spaces. This includes washrooms, seating, etc.

Ecology

LIKE

- » The availability of natural “wild” areas in Edmonton is highly valued. There are many parts of the city, including downtown, that have nearby access to natural areas.
- » Many comments about the kinds of wildlife that has been viewed including: coyotes, moose, beavers, many birds, etc.
- » There is an ability to completely immerse oneself into a natural state, on dirt trails, completely surrounded with trees and forget that one is in the city.
- » The river valley and its ravine system is considered invaluable.
- » Ecostations in Edmonton are very good and help people protect the environment as do the many garbage cans throughout the parks system.
- » Natural wetlands are a key element of the water management system.
- » The smaller pocket parks along with the tree canopy are key contributors to a healthy ecology across the city. These components can help people across Edmonton to connect with the natural world.

WISH

- » Limit the amount of trees removed when development occurs.
- » The city core needs more trees and green space.
- » More signage to and in the river valley including notice boards to communicate about emergent issues (e.g. coyotes in the area).
- » More green roofs.
- » Open grassed fields are not great spaces.
- » Native plants should be used more.
- » Some areas should be considered primarily natural areas for the use of the wildlife. Limited access by pets, cyclists, etc. may be warranted.
- » Some concern was expressed about the City's use of pesticides.
- » Mapping of the trails system and open space network is needed.
- » Better connections into the river valley are needed and should be promoted and publicized.
- » Community gardens are good and could be encouraged more. Efforts could be expended to beautify vacant lots.

Wellness

LIKE

- » Many positive comments on a variety of outdoor elements in Edmonton including: off leash parks; trail system; river valley, playgrounds, spray parks; disc golf; tennis courts; sport fields; parks; ski tracks; outdoor rinks; outdoor exercise equipment; etc.
- » The open space system offers venues for the breadth of activities across all age groups.
- » The maintenance of the trails and open spaces was considered generally good.






WISH

- » Pathways and trails need to be extended. There needs to be an integrated trail system that enables non-motorized transportation across Edmonton.
- » Designated bicycle lanes would make cycling around Edmonton safer.
- » Areas and corridors for wildlife need protecting.
- » More walking and sitting areas are needed in high density areas. Ensure there is sufficient park space in high density areas.
- » Planting of trees, even around the perimeter of green fields is positive.
- » Signage is needed to communicate trail use etiquette, wayfinding, and interpretation of natural and human history.
- » Additional locations to access the river itself is desirable.
- » There are many golf courses in the river valley. Greater public use of that space would warrant the repurposing of one / some courses.
- » Offering play equipment that could be used by adults for fun and fitness would be a good addition.
- » Having access to bathrooms in the river valley and at park / field spaces would be helpful. In some instances these could be portable washrooms.
- » Additional emergency stations / phones in the river valley would be a good safety initiative.
- » The availability of green space and play structures in the downtown core was questioned.
















KEY TAKEAWAYS

Each engagement activity added a new and unique perspective on Edmonton's green network and how it should be planned in the future. In addition, a number of common findings emerged. This section presents the conclusions from **Engagement Phase 2: Strategic Framework**, and relates these conclusions to the key themes of BREATHE.




What Works Well

-  North Saskatchewan River Valley
-  Variety of open spaces
-  Many open spaces support multiple activities
-  Ability to interact with nature
-  Availability of open space throughout the city
-  Maintenance of open spaces

Opportunities for Improvement

-  More greening is needed downtown
-  Accessing the river valley
-  Accessing open space using active transportation or public transit
-  Support the use of native plant species
-  Improve the connectivity of open spaces
-  Enhance support facilities and amenities in open spaces, e.g. furniture, washrooms
-  Celebrate and promote history and heritage
-  Consider four season use
-  Continue efforts to protect the environment including land, water and air
-  Ensure connectivity for wildlife
-  Conserve tree stands and wooded areas where possible
-  Ensure people have nearby access to green space
-  Recognize the value of involving stakeholders in planning processes
-  Consider retail and commercial opportunities in open spaces
-  Wayfinding and interpretive signage is needed

NEXT STEPS

-  **Analysis of Open Space Supply + Demand**
What will we need for open space over the next 5 years? 10 years? 30 years?
-  **Develop Indicators**
Are we meeting our goals?
What should our open space targets be?
-  **Final Consultation**
Did we get it right?

BREATHE IS ONLINE



Visit edmonton.ca/breathe to keep up to date on the project and stay involved!

HAVE QUESTIONS?

 breathe@edmonton.ca

 @PlanEdmonton

 311



APPENDIX A: LOCAL INSIGHTS CARD





EDMONTON'S GREEN NETWORK STRATEGY

Based on your own knowledge and experience of open spaces in Edmonton, please share your comments on the results of our analysis. Let us know what you think!

Which neighbourhood/reporting unit are you providing comments for?

What do you do in this reporting unit?

- Live Work Play

Supply of Open Space

Do you feel that you have enough open space in your neighbourhood?

- Yes No

Comments:

Accessibility of Open Space

How long does it usually take you to walk to your favorite open space?

- Up to 5 min 5-10 min More than 10 min

Are there any open spaces in your area that are difficult to walk to or access? If so, which ones?

Ecology Functions

Which ecology functions do you think your local open spaces could support better?

- Water Management Risk Mitigation
 Climate Regulation Waste Management
 Biodiversity Food Production

How would you improve these spaces?



Celebration Functions

Which celebration functions do you think your local spaces could support better?

- Aesthetic Value Heritage
 Community Building Destination & Tourism
 Public Safety

How would you improve these spaces?



Wellness Functions

Which wellness functions do you think your local open spaces could support better?

- Recreation Mental Health & Wellbeing
 Active Transportation Learn & Play

How would you improve these spaces?



Diversity of Open Space

In your neighbourhood/reporting unit, are there open space functions missing that you would like to see? If so, which ones?

In the green network as a whole, are there open space functions missing that you would like to see?

Imagining the Future

What do you think is best about Edmonton's green network of open spaces?

What would your ideal green network include?

Please provide any additional comments you may have on what you have learned at today's engagement session:



EDMONTON'S GREEN NETWORK STRATEGY

edmonton.ca/breathe