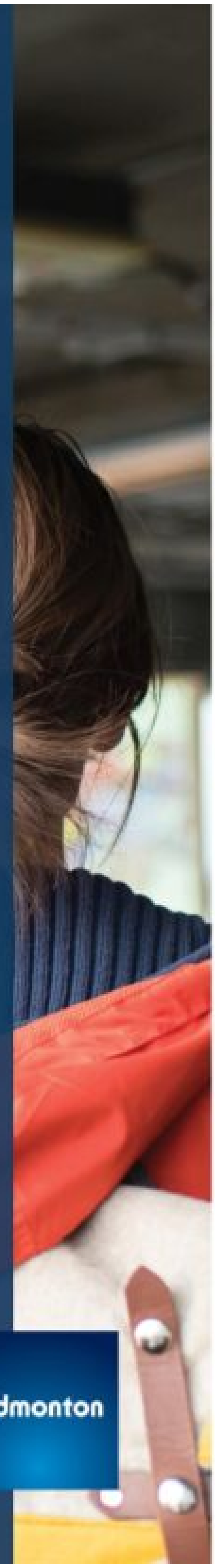
ROAD TO RECOVERY

Edmontonians' well-being amidst COVID-19



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SHARE YOUR VOICE
SHAPE OUR CITY

Edmonton

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INTRODUCTION

The following report contains perception data from Edmonton residents on a number of topics from a number of individual studies. The City of Edmonton received thousands of responses across these studies. Information in this report is focused on the impacts COVID-19 had on Edmonton residents and what they need for a successful recovery on the road to a new normal. This information represents a snapshot in time (June & July 2020) and has likely evolved with new information on the virus and recovery being updated daily across the globe. The Corporate Research team compiled data from multiple studies in addition to coding thousands of opened responses for this document.

For any questions or further information on the data, please contact Corporate Research Unit at research@edmonton.ca

STUDIES AND METHODOLOGY

Four Cities Report - Municipal Benchmarking study - Leger Online Panel
An online survey was conducted from June 11 -17, 2020. The questions were jointly developed by the City research teams in Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver and Winnipeg. The same questions were used in all locations. The current report therefore shows comparisons between the three prairie cities and against the aggregate (NET) mean scores for all four cities. N=1900 (Census Metropolitan Areas)

- Calgary (n=500; Margin of error (MOE) = ±4.4%, 19 times out of 20)
- **Edmonton (n=500; MOE ±4.4%, 19 times out of 20)**
- Winnipeg (n=400; MOE ±4.9%, 19 times out of 20)
- Vancouver (n=500; MOE ±4.4%, 19 times out of 20)

Statistics Canada estimates were used to generate a demographically representative sample by gender and age for those 18 years or older. This was applied individually for each of the four cities.

June Mixed Topic - Edmonton Insight Community Panel
An online survey was conducted between June 9 and June 16. The survey was open to all members of the Insight Community. The survey was also posted on the City website edmonton.ca/surveys and public engagement website. **3,098** respondents completed the survey.

ETS Customer Recovery - Edmonton Insight Community Panel
A survey with Insight Community members was conducted between June 25 and July 8. The survey was open to all members of the Insight Community, however, the majority of the questions were focused on past users of ETS. **3,427** respondents completed the survey.

July Mixed Topic Survey - Edmonton Insight Community Panel
An online survey was conducted between July 14 and July 22. The survey was open to all members of the Insight Community. The survey was also posted on the City website edmonton.ca/surveys and public engagement website. **6,004** respondents completed the survey.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CURRENT STATE OF WELL-BEING

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the physical, mental and financial health of survey respondents across multiple studies. Many are still feeling positive overall but there is worry among Edmonton residents about a second peak of illness (85%) and that we are opening too soon and will need to shut down again (76%).

SURVIVING THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

While the majority of respondents feel they are able to do what they want and get what they need during the pandemic, many indicate that they are now less comfortable in public (69%).

When it comes to finances, 42% of respondents indicate their household income has worsened, and 47% indicate that their savings have worsened.

Thinking about the next few months, respondents are most worried about their financial health (35%), and physical health (25%). They also have worries related to COVID-19, e.g., fear of the second wave and complacency to follow recommended health measures.

PERCEPTION OF CITY'S RESPONSE

Overall, most respondents were satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the City's response (83%) and City's relaunch plans (69%).

83% of the respondents are aware of the current efforts made by the City. The majority also agree that they have enough information (80%), know where to find information (74%), and the information has been clear (70%). Respondents who are more aware of the City's efforts or have received timely and clear information about the efforts are also more likely to have more trust in the City's efforts.

When asked about trusted sources of information, ETS users indicate that Dr. Hinshaw is the most trusted source of information. The other sources considered by the ETS users are news from AHS, the City of Edmonton website, news from municipal government and the local media.

RECOVERY

Across studies, there is a balance of respondent perspectives on returning services. As expected, some are nervous about returning to services due to the fear of contracting the virus, while others can't wait to have the services reopen.

Just under two-thirds of respondents (61%) trust their City government to make the right choices to re-open services and a similar number (58%) believe we are using the right amount of caution to re-open City services. Respondents were asked what would make them feel more comfortable to start using City services and facilities. The topmost measures include installing more hand sanitizing stations (75%), limiting the number of customers (73%), and enforcement of physical distancing, seat blocking, placement markings (65%).

When specifically asked about masks, 76% of respondents indicate that wearing a mask should be mandatory while visiting any indoor public places. When asked in more details as to where masks should be made mandatory, 71% respondents indicate that masks should be mandatory in any situation where physical distancing is not possible irrespective of whether it is indoor or outdoor. 65% respondents indicate that masks should be mandatory in all indoor places, and 12% say that masks should not be mandatory anywhere.

ETS users identified wearing masks as a key factor for them to consider returning to using ETS.

During this recovery phase, Edmontonians want to connect back with their family and friends, but believe it is important to do so safely. On their part, the majority (84% to 95%) are at least somewhat likely to follow all the health measures. Though the majority agrees, likelihood to comply with wearing a face mask is on the lower end of the spectrum (72% somewhat/strongly likely).

GBA+ LENS

"I'm not worried for myself (apart from some degree of job security) but I'm more worried for at-risk and vulnerable populations in Edmonton. Particularly ones with little or no technological support that can help them access additional physical/mental supports."

~Insight Community survey participant

Women report feeling less positive about their mental health in the current pandemic compared to other gender identities. They would want to see more public health measures in place to feel comfortable to return to using services. Edmontonians who are born outside Canada or those who identify as visible minorities also indicate a higher need for preventative health measures.

The need for measures also increases with the educational level; possibly a function of higher awareness, expectation and ability to conform with the measures.

While Edmontonians are worried about future complacency in following health measures, current compliance rates are higher among Edmontonians with higher household incomes (except wearing masks) and those with children in their household. Those with higher household incomes want to see more public health measures in place to feel comfortable to return to using services. Edmontonians with lower household incomes and those who are currently facing unemployment have reported a lower ease to access the activities they want to during the pandemic, e.g., getting groceries easily, easily being able to go where they want, etc. They also report feeling less positive about their current physical, financial and mental well-being. Edmontonians with lower household incomes tend to comply with the public health measure of wearing a mask in the public places.

Edmontonians show concern about their financial health in terms of job losses and lack of certainty about the future job market. However, those who fall under the older age categories (55+) tend to feel positive about their financial health.

The younger demographic (less than 34 years old), are less likely to indicate a need for physical distancing measures (placement markings, limit number of customers, enforcement of physical distancing), likely driven by the type of activities they might engage in.

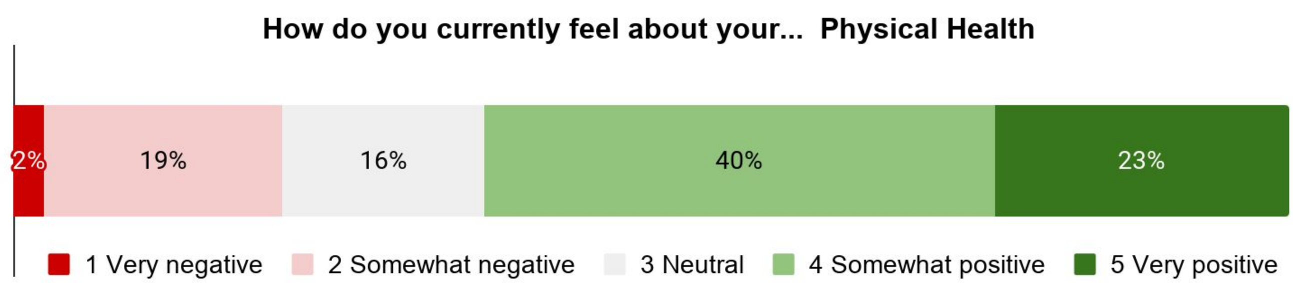
CURRENT STATE OF WELL-BEING

PHYSICAL HEALTH

"Medical care - cataract surgery has been postponed; difficult to get through to the doctor's office; prescriptions only for one month."

~Insight Community survey participant

63% of Insight Community members feel positive (very or somewhat) when asked how they currently feel about their physical health.



Source: Edmonton Insight Community Survey on Wellbeing (Sample size: 3,098 respondents)

Demographic differences:

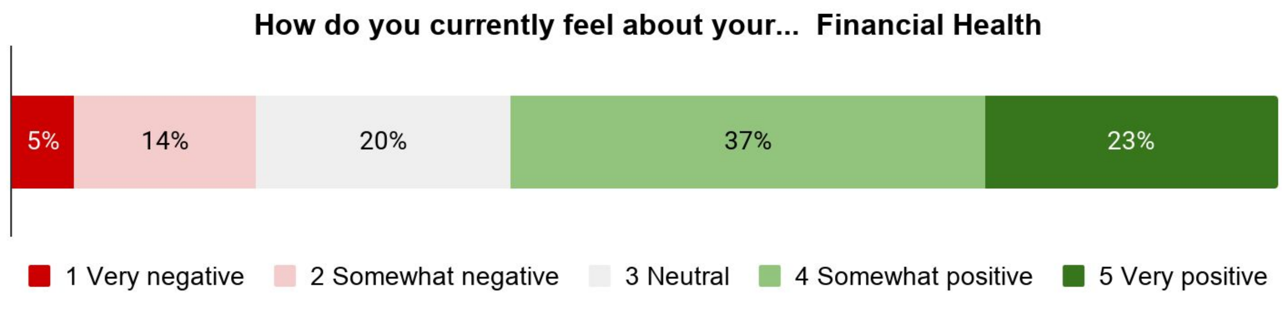
- Those making under $20,000 (n=89) have the lowest rates of positivity (48% somewhat or very positive) regarding their physical health. While those making over $150,000 have the highest positivity (71% somewhat or very positive)
- Higher educated respondents trend to have a more positive feeling towards their physical health

FINANCIAL HEALTH

"I'm worried about income, I was unemployed and looking for work when COVID-19 happened. My chances of finding work now have greatly diminished. I'm not convinced I'll find work soon."

~Insight Community survey participant

60% of Insight Community members feel positive (very or somewhat) when asked how they currently feel about their financial health.



Source: Edmonton Insight Community Survey on Wellbeing (Sample size: 3,098 respondents)

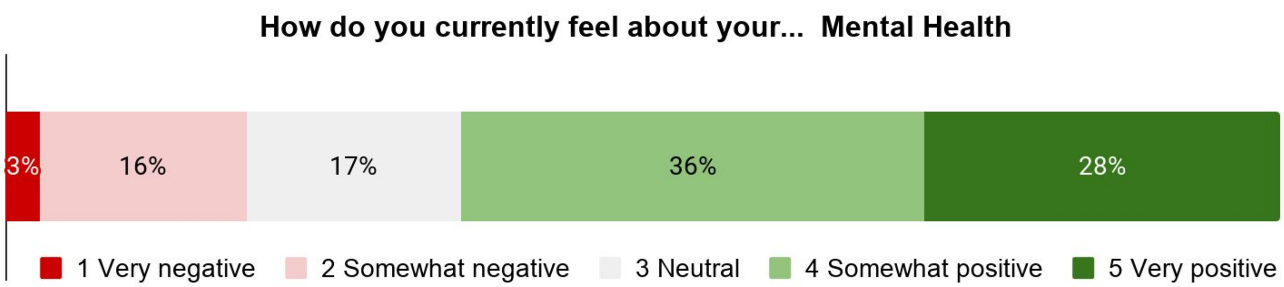
Demographic differences:

- Respondents that are unemployed (n=58) have the lowest positivity when it comes to their feelings towards financial health.
- Those making under $20,000 (n=89) have the lowest rates of positivity (33% somewhat or very positive) regarding their financial health.
- Higher educated respondents trend to have a more positive feeling towards their financial health
- Older respondents (55 and over) have the highest positivity among age groups about their financial health

MENTAL HEALTH

"Not being able to do the things we normally could do, like going to the rec centre or shopping or going to a restaurant. Not being able to de-stress or avoid constant reminders of COVID-19 on TV, radio, and internet."

~Insight Community survey participant



Source: Edmonton Insight Community Survey on Wellbeing (Sample size: 3,098 respondents)

As shown in the figure, 64% of Insight Community members feel positive (very or somewhat) when asked how they currently feel about their mental health. 62% of municipal benchmark survey respondents who indicate that their mental health had worsened disagree that the worst of the pandemic is behind us. Also, 76% respondents indicate that they are worried about opening too soon and needing to shut down again, and 85% are worried about a second peak of illness.

"... My workplace will struggle to accommodate the health regulations for re-opening, but they want to start bringing people back soon. Already, in many public places and stores, many people in my neighbourhood are no longer following the suggested health advice to physically distance, wear PPE, and limit the size of their gatherings."

~Insight Community survey participant

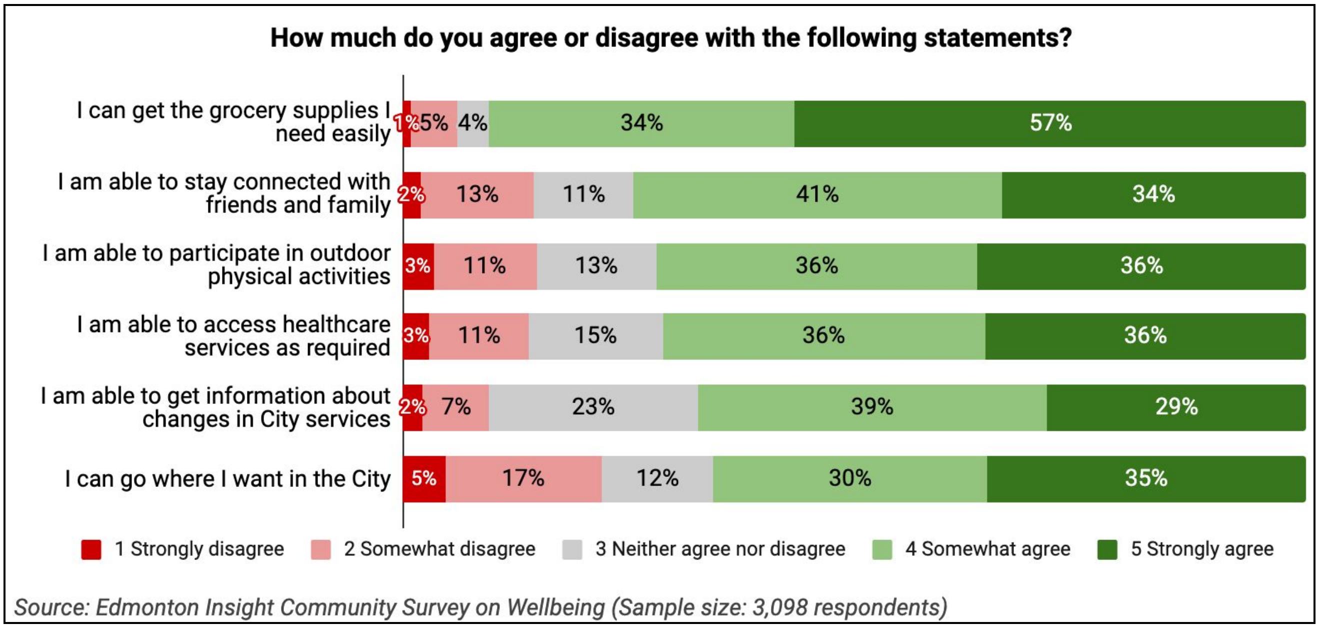
Demographic differences:

- Higher educated respondents trend to have a more positive feeling towards their mental health
- Respondents identifying as Men have a higher positivity (75% somewhat or very positive) towards their mental health versus women (59% somewhat or very positive).
- Those making under $20,000 (n=89) have the lowest rates of positivity (46% somewhat or very positive) regarding their financial health.

SURVIVING THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

ABILITY TO DO WHAT'S NEEDED

The majority of Insight Community respondents agree or somewhat agree that they are able to do what they want or need to in the current pandemic.

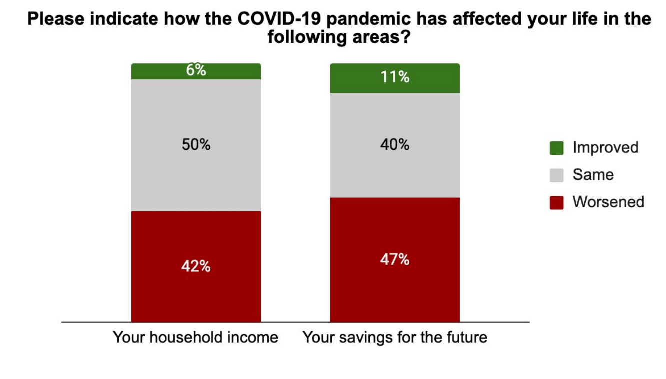


Demographic difference: Those from lower income households expressed relatively lower ease of being able to do what they wanted (in the context of the activities provided) during this period.

CHALLENGES FACED

"I am nearing retirement and the market reaction to the pandemic reduced my savings by about 30%. If the market doesn't recover quickly I will have to work longer (possibly much longer) than I had hoped. I also worry about my wife's health, since a very expensive treatment for her chronic health condition, which is only available in the USA, may no longer be affordable."

~Insight Community survey participant



Source: Municipal Benchmark Survey (Sample size: 500 respondents).

69% of municipal benchmark survey respondents indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic has worsened their level of comfort in public.

When it comes to finances, 42% of municipal benchmark survey respondents indicate their household income has worsened, and 47% indicate that their savings have worsened.

WORRIES ABOUT THE FUTURE

"Worries about kids going back to school and what that impact will be. Worried that many institutions including the city will open too soon and cause a second wave that is worse than the first infections."

~Insight Community survey participant

Thinking about the next few months, Insight Community respondents are most worried about their financial health (35%), and physical health (25%). They also have worries related to COVID-19, e.g., fear of the second wave and complacency to follow recommended health measures.

Thinking of the next few months, what are you worried about the most for you and your family?	
FINANCIAL HEALTH	**35%**
Financial health / ability to pay bills/rent/ mortgages/ services/ recreation/ Loss of employment / ability to find work / Loss of retirement investments / savings	28%
State of the economy overall / Impact on local economy / small business	3%
Increase in taxation	2%
Ability of the economy to recover / Long term burden on economy	1%
PHYSICAL HEALTH	**25%**

Getting infected - self / family / friends	17%
Physical health (non infection)	5%
Health of elderlies / Impact on seniors' healthcare system	2%
Access to regular healthcare services / Shortage of medical supplies	2%
COVID RELATED WORRIES	**24%**
Fear of another round / second wave	12%
COVID complacency, people not following social distancing practices / Lack of education on social distancing measures / Lack of enforcement of social distancing measures	7%
Spike in cases after reopening	4%
Lack of data sharing about COVID / Lack on contact tracing	<1%
Privacy (Data Tracking, etc.) / Excessive rules and governance	<1%
MENTAL HEALTH	**13%**
Inability to meet friends / family / kids / grandparents / grandchildren /Social isolation	5%
Mental health	4%
Everything is uncertain /Unable to plan long term	2%
Unable to enjoy the summer/ weather / outdoors / going out / Being locked up in house in winter	2%
No big events / sporting events / concerts etc / festivals / music fest / etc	<1%
IMPACT ON SOCIETY AND SERVICES	**12%**
Impact on education / students / Schools not opening	6%
Negative social impact Food security / Rising poverty / Increased crime rate / increased racism/ Cuts in essential services / calls for more austerity/ Increase in addiction / alcoholism	2%
Lack of access to physical activities / fitness centres	2%
Lack of childcare	1%
Unable to travel abroad for emergencies / Unable to travel abroad for trips	1%
Reduced transit service	1%
CITY AND SERVICES	**2%**
City spending money inefficiently / on non essential projects	1%
City not taking enough measures	<1%
OTHER	**6%**
NO COMMENTS/ NO WORRIES	**15%**

Source: Insight Community Wellbeing Survey (Sample size: 3,098 respondents). Multiple responses allowed

PERCEPTION OF CITY'S RESPONSE

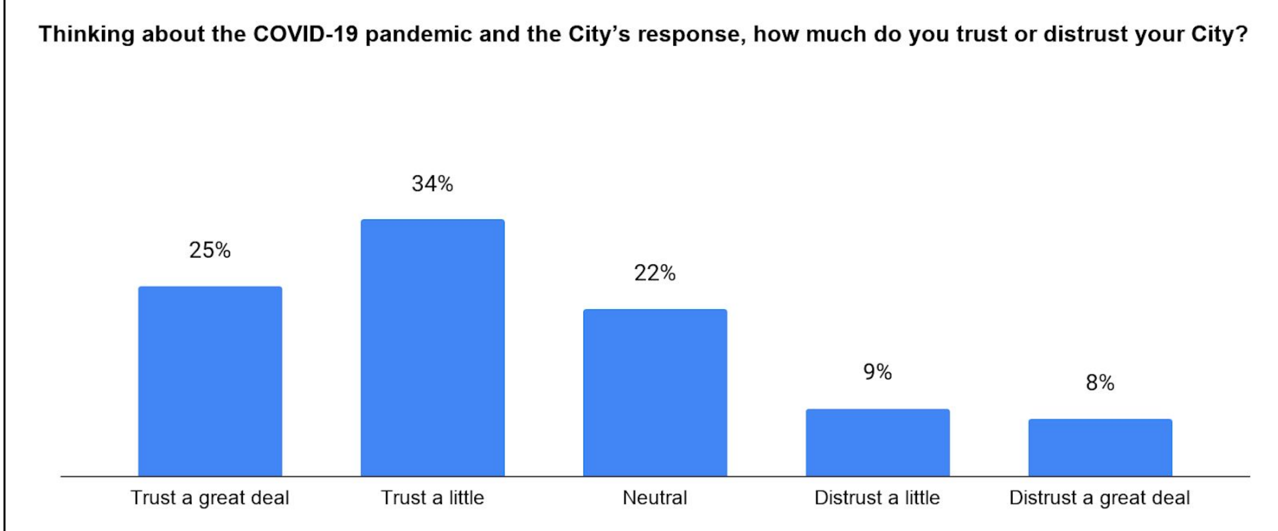
SATISFACTION WITH MEASURES TAKEN BY THE CITY

Though the majority of municipal benchmark survey respondents are at least somewhat satisfied with their City's response (83%) and their City's relaunch plans (69%), some participants express their worries.

"...That restriction will be lifted too soon, too fast. I have immuno-compromised family members. I fear that the COVID-19 numbers will start to spike again......"

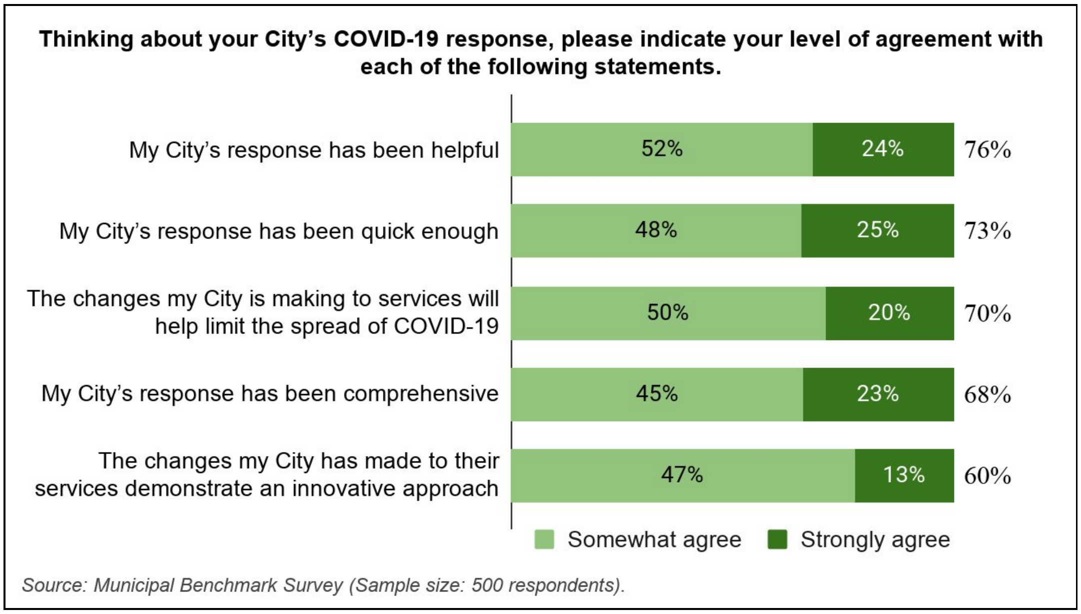
~Insight Community survey participant

As shown in the graph below, 59% of municipal benchmark survey respondents trust (a little, a great deal) the City of Edmonton in their response to the pandemic. Respondents who are more aware of the City's efforts or have received timely and clear information about the efforts are also more likely to have more trust in the City's efforts.



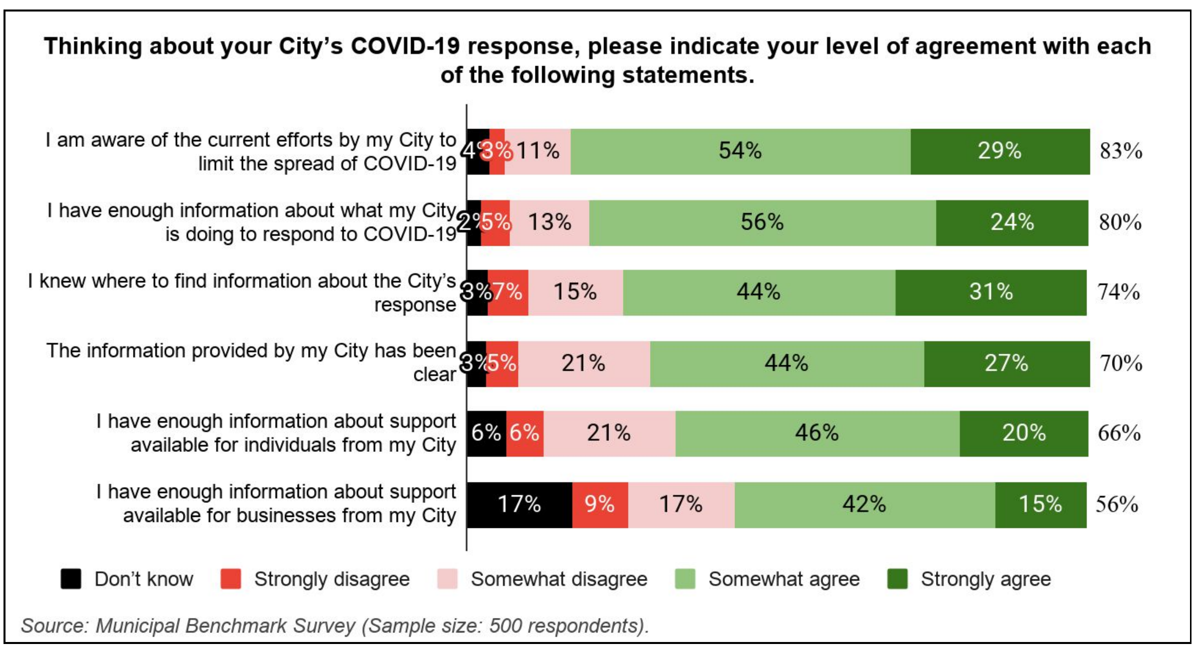
Source: Municipal Benchmark Survey (Sample size: 500 respondents).

The majority of municipal benchmark survey respondents agree with various statements about the City's response to the pandemic.



SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED FROM THE CITY

The municipal benchmark survey also explored the awareness and satisfaction with the information provided by the City. 83% of the respondents are aware of the current efforts made by the City. The majority also agree that they have enough information (80%), know where to find information (74%), and the information has been clear (70%).



Some participants mentioned their concerns about education regarding COVID-19 and the compliance associated with that.

"... I fear the general public is not well educated enough to understand basic pathogen transmission."

~Insight Community survey participant

The perceptions of the response from the City of Edmonton is on par when compared to other municipalities like Winnipeg, Calgary and Vancouver. There are some areas where the City of Edmonton performed on the higher end of the average of all the cities, e.g., the response has been helpful, quick, respondents have enough information about what the City is doing to respond, and they know where to find information about the City's response.

In some areas, the City of Edmonton performed on the lower end of the average of all the cities, e.g., the changes City is making to services will help limit the spread of COVID-19

Based on a survey conducted via the Edmonton Insight Community, ETS users indicate that Dr. Hinshaw is the most trusted source of information. The other sources considered by the ETS users are news from AHS, the City of Edmonton website, news from municipal government and the local media.

	Q17. When it comes to health and safety on transit, which information source do you trust the most?	Q18.What other sources of information would you consider?
Dr. Hinshaw	**40%**	52%
News from Alberta Health Services	15%	**61%**
City of Edmonton website	13%	51%
Local news media	8%	41%
News from municipal government	5%	43%
Stories from other transit users	5%	21%
News from the Government of Canada	3%	38%
News from the Government of Alberta	3%	36%
Stories from public transit use in other cities/around the world	2%	15%

Source: Edmonton Insight Community ETS Survey (Sample size: 3,107 ETS users).

RECOVERY

"I just don't want to get sick - and as other people relax it increases the risk for people like myself and husband - who are both susceptible. Until a vaccine exists I have no desire to interact with people in public situations."

~Insight Community survey participant

While some participants are nervous about returning to services due to the fear of contracting the virus, others can't wait to have the services open.

"I'm most worried that the world will stay masked and sanitized and that the businesses and activities we love most won't reopen."

~Insight Community survey participant

RETURN TO CITY SERVICES

Overall Perceptions

- 61% of municipal benchmark survey respondents trust their City government to make the right choices to re-open services
- 58% of municipal benchmark survey respondents believe we are using the right amount of caution to re-open City services

Returning to specific activities: Outdoor Activities

- Among all the activities presented to the respondents, comfort levels of resumption are highest for the outdoor activities.
- The majority of the users (those who find these activities relevant to them) of **parks and pathways, golf, and public sports fields** are likely to resume these activities once restrictions are lifted.
- While still indicated "comfortable" by a majority of users, the potential of resumption is lower for **outdoor recreation facilities, and playgrounds.**
- Among outdoor activities, spray pads garner the least comfort level, with one-in-three users comfortable to resume.

Returning to specific activities: Indoor Activities

- Comfort level of returning to specific activities is notably lower for indoor activities with less than one-third of the respective users indicating that they are comfortable coming back to public transit, indoor recreation facilities or attending a theatre or indoor performance.

Returning to specific activities: Public Pools

- Comfort level of returning using public pools (indoor or outdoor) is even lower than the indoor activities in general with one-quarter or less of the users indicating comfort to return.

Returning to specific activities: Large Gatherings

- Comfort level is the least(among all the activities presented to the respondents) for large gatherings with close to one-in-ten of the users indicating that they are comfortable returning to large gatherings.

Returning to specific activities: Other services

- Among the services presented to the respondents, the majority of the users are comfortable taking materials back to a landfill or recycling facility while just less than half of the users are comfortable going back to a library.

As restrictions continue to be lifted, how comfortable are you/would you feel doing the following public activities?		
	All respondents	**Users***
Outdoor recreation activities		
Using parks and pathways	81%	84%
Golfing at a public golf course	44%	78%
Using a public sport field (ball diamond, soccer field, etc.)	51%	71%
Using an outdoor recreation facility (basketball courts, skate parks, tennis courts)	47%	63%
Using a playground	35%	51%
Visiting an outdoor spray pad	23%	36%
Indoor Activities		
Using public transit	24%	29%
Visiting a recreation centre or arena (fitness, ice rinks)	24%	28%
Attending a theatre or music performance	22%	24%
Public Pools		
Using an outdoor public pool	17%	23%
Using an indoor public pool	14%	19%
Large Gatherings		
Attending a large public gathering like a sporting event, concert, or festival	15%	16%
Other Services		
Taking materials to a landfill or recycling facility	72%	83%
Visiting a library	39%	45%

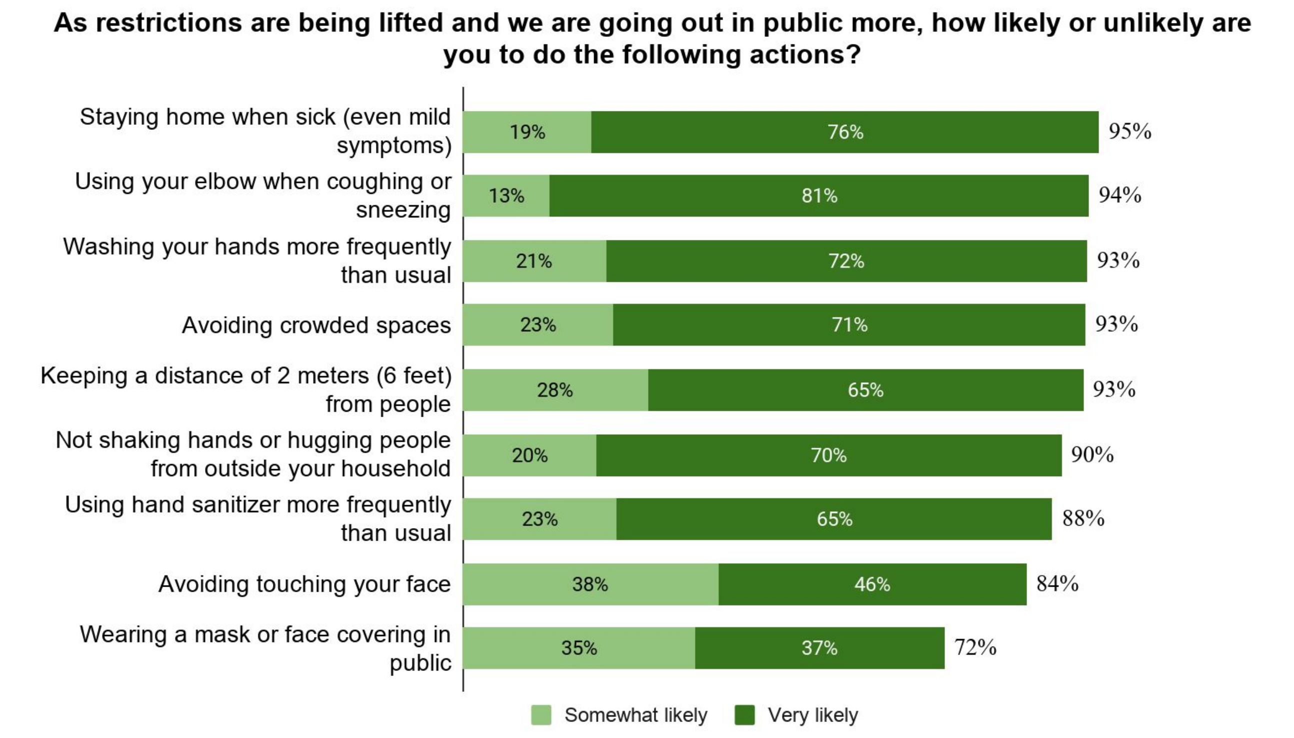
Source: Municipal Benchmark Survey (Sample size: 500 respondents).
**Reanalysed focusing on respondents who normally participate in the specific activity*

RECOMMENDED HEALTH MEASURES

"Being able to visit each other safely, especially considering that about half of us use public transit. I'm afraid of going to visit my mother or siblings across town for fear of coming in contact with someone with COVID-19 and then passing it unintentionally on to them."

~Insight Community survey participant

While Edmontonians want to connect back with their family and friends, it is important to do so safely. Municipal benchmark survey respondents were asked how likely they were to follow the health measures when the restrictions are lifted. The majority (84% to 95%) are at least somewhat likely to follow all the health measures. Though the majority agrees, likelihood to comply with wearing a face mask is on the lower end of the spectrum (72% somewhat/strongly likely).

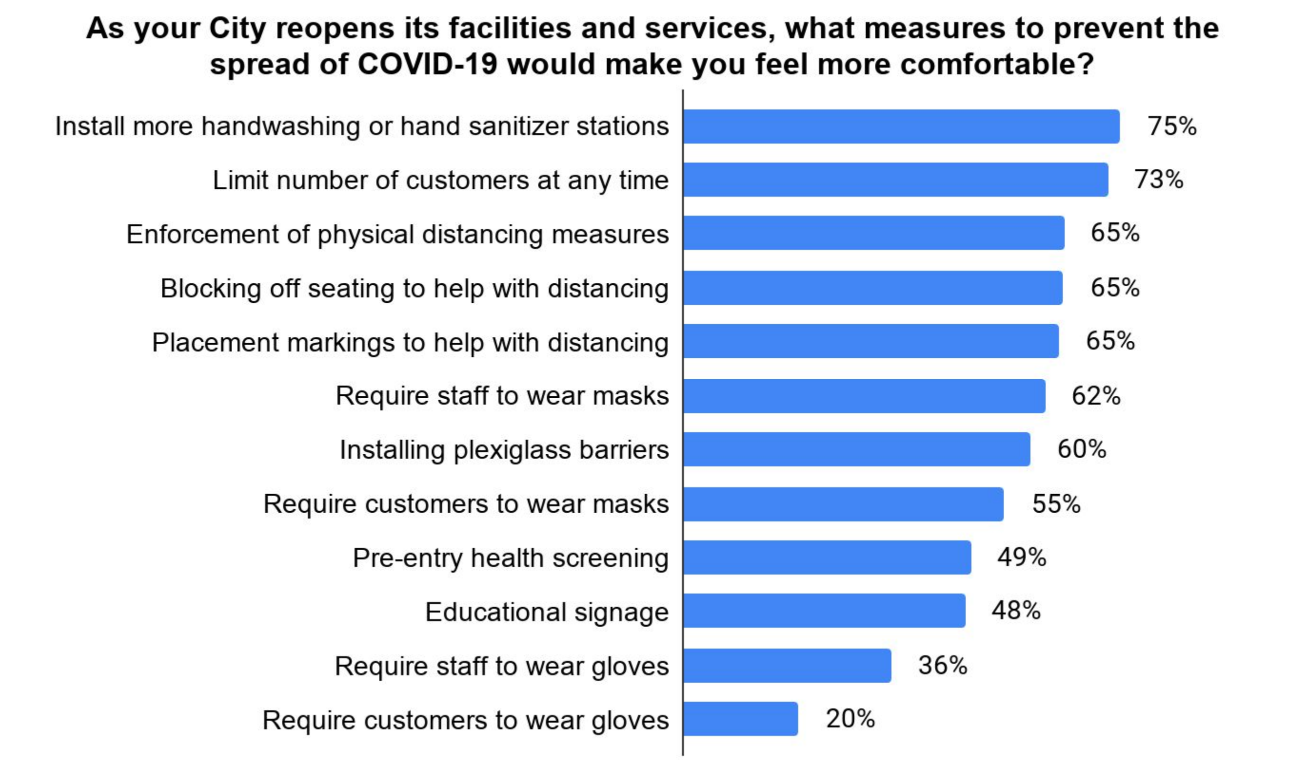


Source: Municipal Benchmark Survey (Sample size: 500 respondents)

Notable demographic trends:

- Likelihood of following the actions tend to increase with higher household income (a function of ability to conform?), with the exception of wearing a mask or covering face which is the highest among those from lower household income (less than $40K per annum)
- Those with children in the household are more likely to follow most of the measures

Municipal benchmark survey respondents were also asked what would make them feel more comfortable to start using City services and facilities. The topmost measures include installing more hand sanitizing stations (75%), limiting the number of customers (73%), and enforcement of physical distancing, seat blocking, placement markings (65%).



Source: Municipal Benchmark Survey (Sample size: 500 respondents). Multiple responses allowed

Notable demographic trends:

- Generally, women indicate a higher need for measures to make them more comfortable
- The younger demographic (less than 34 years old), are less likely to indicate a need for physical distancing measures (placement markings, limit number of customers, enforcement of physical distancing), likely driven by the type of activities they might engage in.
- The need for measures also increases with education level and household income level of the respondents - possibly a function of higher awareness, expectation and ability to conform with the measures
- Those not born in Canada and / or identified themselves as visible minorities indicate also indicate a higher need for measures

WEARING MASKS IN PUBLIC

July 2020 Mixed Topic Survey

In July 2020 (July 14th - July 21st), an online survey was conducted to ask about respondents' usage and perceptions of wearing masks. The survey was open to the Insight Community members and was posted on the City website.

Current Practices

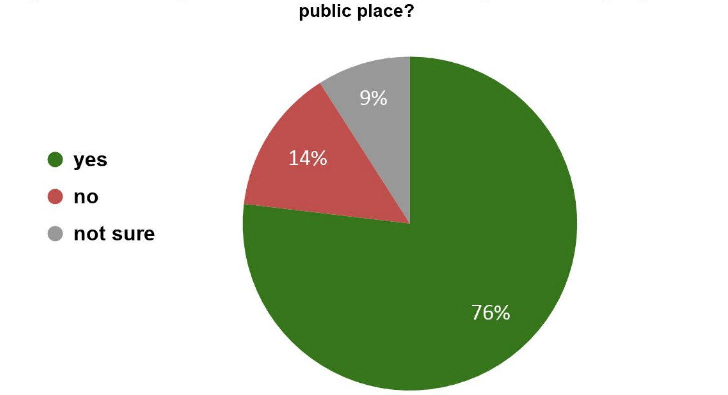
Majority of respondents who do the respective activities are wearing face masks at least sometimes for the following activities..

- going for appointments, doctor, massage, etc. (92%).
- shopping at stores (83%)
- using public transit (81%),
- using an indoor recreation facility (60%)

Current use of masks is less prominent (at least sometimes) for the following activities..

- sending kids to daycare or school (47%).
- dining out in a restaurant (37%),
- when going for an outdoor walk (23%),

Opinion about Mandatory Masks



Source: July Mixed Topic Survey (Sample size: 6,004 respondents).

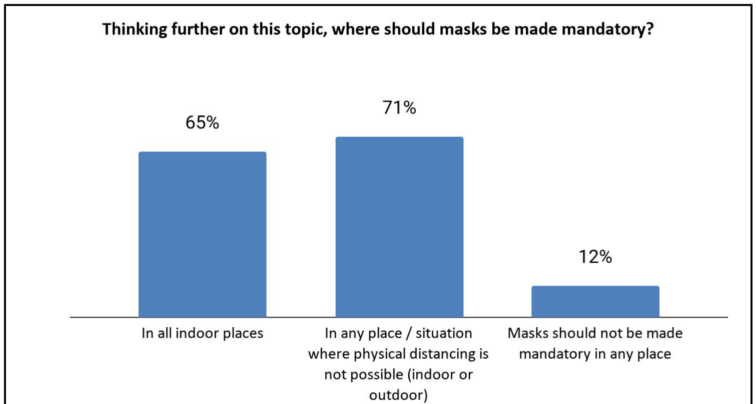
76% of respondents indicate that wearing a mask **should** be mandatory while visiting any indoor public places.

According to these respondents, the main reasons that masks should be mandatory are to stop the spread of infection (94%), because they will protect the people most vulnerable to COVID, e.g, those with underlying medical conditions or elders (91%), everyone needs to wear a mask for it to be effective (83%), and that they will will keep everyone safe (81%).

14% of respondents indicate that wearing a mask **should not** be mandatory while visiting any indoor public places. According to these respondents, the main reasons that masks should not be mandatory are because it takes away their choice (51%), it creates further barriers for those with disabilities (for example, barriers for those who communicate by reading mouth movements e.,g., those hard of hearing) (40%), they are not suitable for those with any breathing issues (38%), and that masks are not effective protection (36%).

Respondents were also asked where masks should be made mandatory.

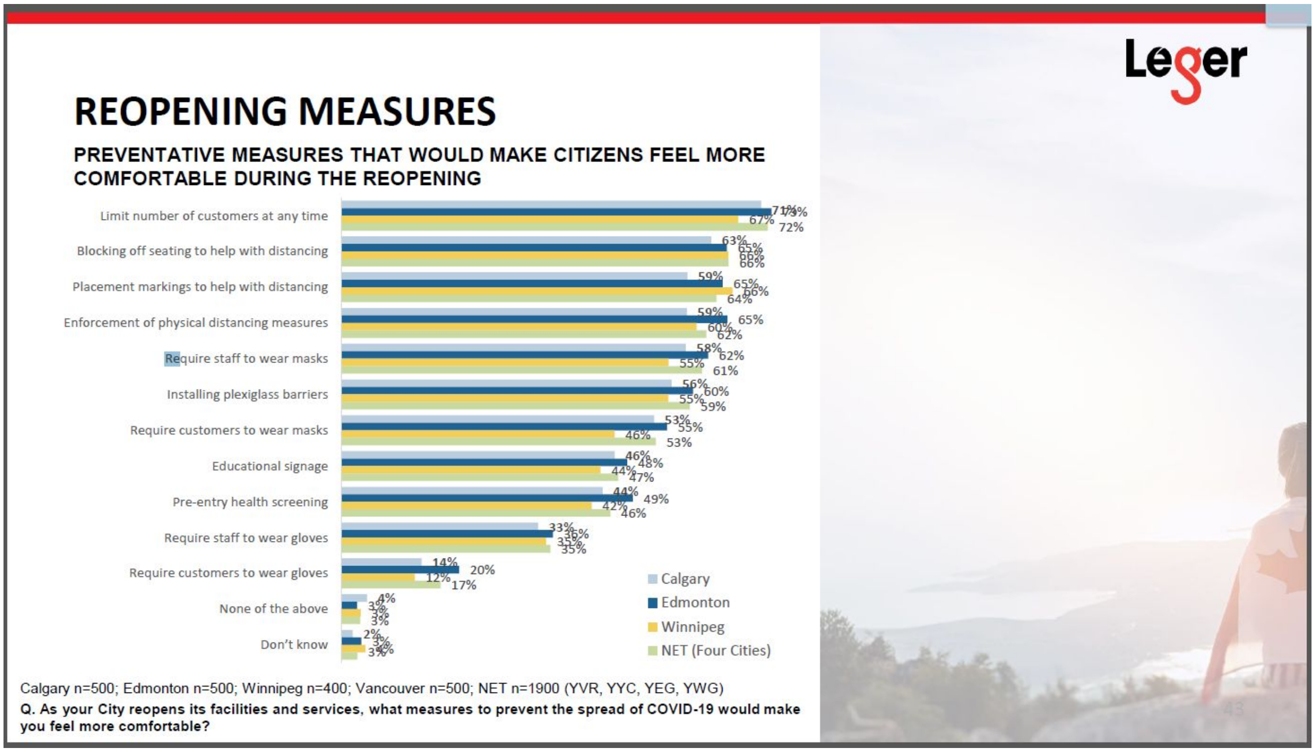
71% respondents indicate that masks should be mandatory in any situation where physical distancing is not possible irrespective of whether it is indoor or outdoor. 65% respondents indicate that masks should be mandatory in all indoor places, and 12% say that masks should not be mandatory anywhere.



Source: July Mixed Topic Survey (Sample size: 6,004 respondents).

Municipal Benchmarking Survey

Respondents from the municipal benchmark survey were asked about the preventative measures that would make them comfortable during reopening, 62% of Edmontonians identified staff to be required to wear masks and 55% Edmontonians identified customers to wear masks.



ETS Customer Insight Community Survey

Based on the perceptions of 3,107 current / past users of ETS from the Edmonton Insight Community survey, masks are identified as the most critical factor that is likely to make ETS users return to transit.

Considering the current pandemic….	*Q13. what would make you likely to return to public transit?*	*Q14.What is the **one thing** that will make you likely to return to public transit?*
Limit the number of passengers on board	62%	18%
Making masks highly recommended	***71%***	***31%***
Hand sanitizer stations at transit centres	67%	6%
Stickers (marking one-way pedestrian flow and where to stand) at transit centres	47%	1%
Escalator limitations - number of people who can be on the escalators simultaneously	29%	0%
Staircase limitations - number of people who can be on the staircase simultaneously	27%	0%
All doors should have clear signage indicating specific sides for exit and entrance	53%	1%
Automatic opening of doors at transit centres	60%	2%
Automatic opening of doors in LRT when possible	64%	3%
Reduced peak hour crowd	42%	8%
Other (specify)	32%	30%

Based on a high level qualitative review of the open end responses in the question above, ("Others") the following themes exist as key factors that can make people consider transit.

- Making masks mandatory

- Higher frequency of service
- More cleaning / sanitizer stations
- Clear guidelines to follow physical distancing
- Cure or vaccine
- Contactless payment
- Free transit
- Need to travel for work / schools

"Public transportation demand is rising and no news regarding changes to schedules and frequency to be able to arrive at work on time. Before Covid-19, the bus I used to take was always full, now that there is a social distancing requirement and wearing facial masks are not mandatory I am worried about health risks and not being able to arrive on time or get back home as easy as it was before."

~Insight Community survey participant

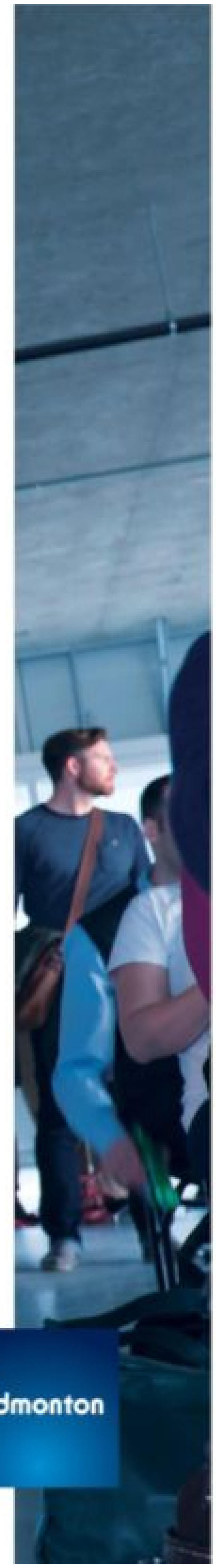
RESOURCES

1. Municipal Benchmark survey - Leger Research Panel - June 2020
2. June Mixed Topic Survey - Edmonton Insight Community - June 2020
3. July Mixed Topic Survey - Edmonton Insight Community - July 2020
4. ETS Customer Recovery Study - Edmonton Insight Community - July 2020

Questions?
E-mail research@edmonton.ca for more information, or visit www.edmonton.ca/surveys

Interested in the Edmonton Insight Community?
Go to www.edmontoninsightcommunity.ca to join or learn more.

Looking for Data?
Visit data.edmonton.ca to find this and other City of Edmonton data on the Open Data Portal.



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