

2012 Citizen Panel

C/o Centre for Public Involvement
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Dear members of City Council and the CWFAS Advisory Committee,

In the spring of 2012, citizens of Edmonton were offered the opportunity to deliberate on issues relevant to the development of a robust and forward thinking policy for food and agricultural planning and decision-making in the City of Edmonton. Sixty-six citizens took up the challenge, and met regularly over a 6 week period to discuss issues related to urban food and agriculture, deliberate over identified goals for this policy, and develop (and debate!) strategies for implementing activities to foster these goals.

We are pleased to present you with this report summarizing the work of the Citizen Panel input into the City Wide Food and Agriculture Strategy. This document describes our process, our people, and communicates our passion for this important topic.

Most importantly, however, it contains our recommendations. We intend this to be an action document. We hope that you, as key decision-makers in the City of Edmonton, will work for changes that ensure a more resilient food and agricultural system for both present and future generations.

We understand that the implementation of these recommendations might be difficult. It will take time. There will be costs involved, and trade-offs to make. Some might be politically contentious, or even unpopular. However, as citizens of Edmonton, we believe these are the best and most desirable courses of action.

We hope that you, as readers, will be inspired by our recommendations, and that when necessary, changes will be made to ensure a more resilient food and agriculture system for both present and future generations.

We urge you to consider and begin implementing these recommendations.

Sincerely,

2012 Citizen Food and Agriculture Panellists

City-Wide Food and Urban Agriculture Strategy
Report on Citizen Panel Process &
Recommendations

July 26, 2012

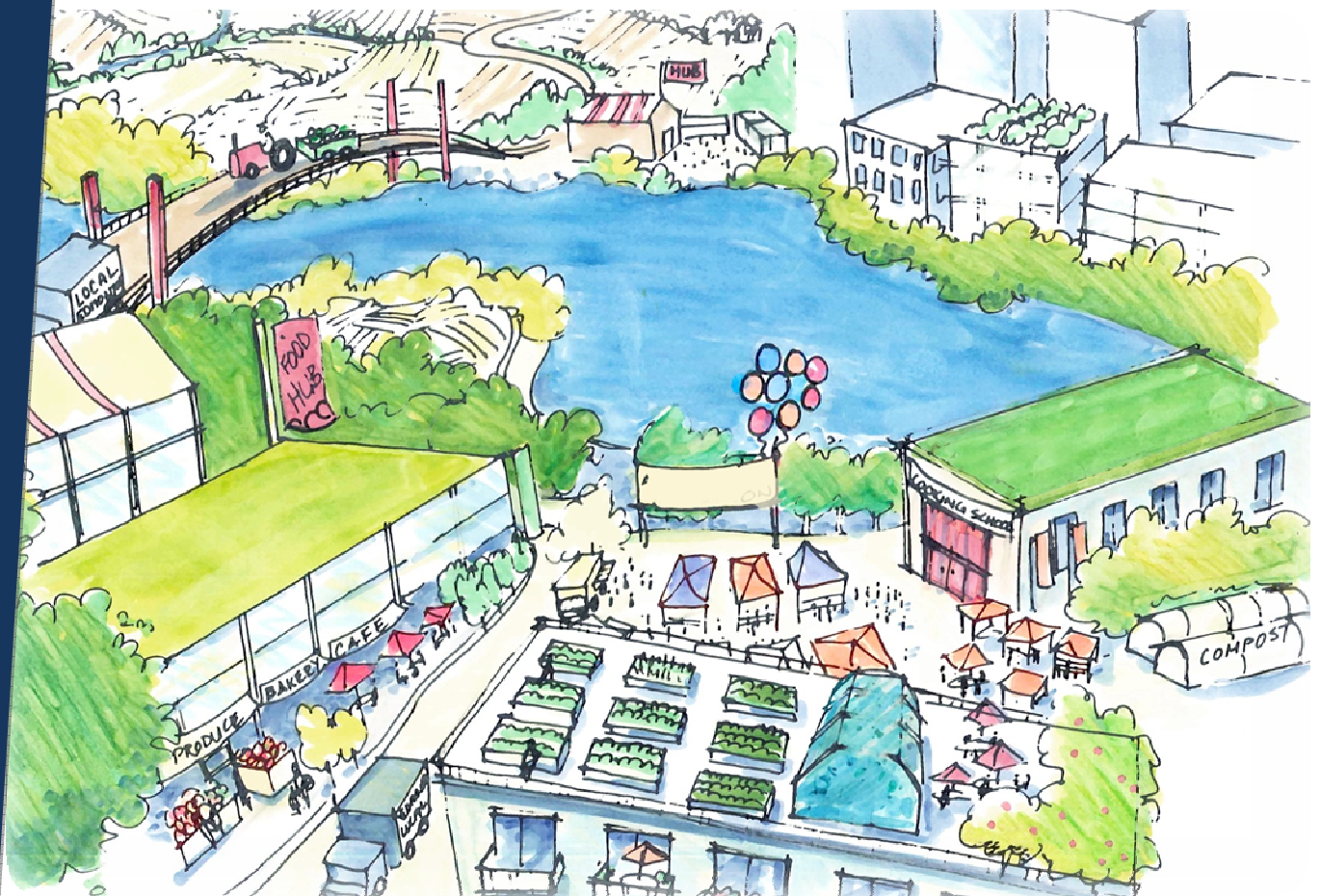


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Executive Summary

Edmontonians are passionate about their food. This passion is evident in the diversity of food products and ingredients available throughout the city, the growing support for farmers' markets in the city and surrounding areas, and the extensive food choices available in restaurants, from food trucks and take away stands, and at festivals throughout the City.

Edmonton is also a thriving, growing city, with an opportunity to take action now to foster a progressive food future that will benefit all citizens of Edmonton. Edmonton is developing a City Wide Food and Agriculture Strategy (CWFAS) to achieve the vision of, *a resilient food and agriculture system that contributes to the local economy and the overall cultural, financial, social and environmental sustainability of the City*. The City of Edmonton strove to engage citizens in the development of the strategy and, opportunities were provided for citizens to participate in the process, engage in dialogue about the future of urban food and agriculture and share their ideas and priorities with municipal leaders.

In the spring of 2012, the Centre for Public Involvement, in collaboration with the City of Edmonton, set out to consult with Edmontonians about food and agriculture in Edmonton. An innovative Citizen Panel process was developed to engage a broad and diverse group of citizens in this dialogue, and solicit their ideas and strategic insights. Drawing on the collective wisdom of a diverse group of sixty-six Edmonton citizens, Citizen Panels met six times over a two month period to deliberate, in a structured and rigorous way, issues related to food and agriculture in the city of Edmonton. While this process generated multiple outcomes, a priority was the development of a comprehensive and coherent set of citizen-generated recommendations as input into the development of Edmonton's City Wide Food and Agriculture Strategy (CWFAS).

Through the course of the Citizen Panel process, participants listened, learned, deliberated and discussed. Ultimately, they developed a number of creative and viable strategies to address the goal areas identified within the CWFAS. In the final session, participants came together to examine the set of strategies developed through the process, and used keypad technology to vote, in a multi-stage process, on their collective top 10 strategies.

The “best of the best” strategies, as prioritized by Citizen Panellists, are as follows (percentage indicates number of participants who chose this strategy as one of their top two.).

- **STRATEGY 1 (39%)**
Create and/or amend zoning, bylaws, fees, and taxes to prohibit developments on good fertile agricultural land, particularly the northeast farmland.
- **STRATEGY 2 (37%)**
Maximize spaces and places within the City of Edmonton for urban growing and food production. Develop systems for permanent and ongoing identification, inventory, and assessment of urban spaces for urban growing. The inventory includes identifying the water and soil suitability for a variety of local crops. Create accountable and objective monitoring.
- **STRATEGY 3 (37%)**
Create a daily and year-round locally-supplied market space (similar to Lonsdale Quay in Vancouver or ByWard Market in Ottawa) or hub (similar to, The Stop, Community Food Centre in Toronto) that provides a variety of healthy, local, and culturally appropriate food options.
- **STRATEGY 4 (35%)**
Develop and expand local food production and distribution in Edmonton through an innovative urban growing system to increase access and affordability of healthy, locally grown or raised, food. Improve urban agriculture opportunities through education and policy. City must provide adequate resources and incentives.
- **STRATEGY 5 (35%)**
Preserve and expand the number of unique and vibrant spaces within the City.
- **STRATEGY 6 (35%)**
Address the prevalence of food waste using multiple strategies.
- **STRATEGY 7 (26%)**
Encourage the expansion of renewable energy (e.g., wind, solar, ethanol, etc.) production and use.
- **STRATEGY 8 (22%)**
Create strategies and policies for education, awareness and involvement (City excited about the strategy) of diverse communities and individuals in pursuit of the vision and goals of the CWFAS.
- **STRATEGY 9 (15%)**
Promote small scale community-level food and agricultural initiatives such as community gardens, community kitchens, community markets, and canning businesses.

- **STRATEGY 10 (11%)**

Improve and expand the City's composting initiatives in order to increase awareness about consumption and reduce overall waste.

The Citizen Panel participants were varied and diverse. Panellists ranged in age from 20 to over 75, came from different backgrounds, and had different levels of understanding about local food and agriculture in Edmonton (See Appendix A for more information on the panel composition). Some were new to Edmonton, and some were new to Canada. They participated in the process as interested and engaged citizens, and as volunteers, rather than as identified experts in the area.

Panellists were not always in agreement and throughout the Citizen panel there was in depth discussion, dialogue and areas of disagreement. However, the panellists did agree to put forward the overall strategies as outlined in this document. They also clearly articulated a critical need for political will and leadership on issues related to food and agriculture, and the importance of using municipal policy tools to protect existing agricultural land within Edmonton's city boundaries. Participants also repeatedly expressed, in the strongest possible terms, their desire to see these recommendations treated as high-priority action items.

This report presents an overview of the Citizen Panel process, details of their key recommendations, and a brief discussion of the what, who, how, and why of these recommendations. It provides a sense of the breadth and depth of discussion that was held, and highlights the desire of Edmontonians to engage in deliberation on the topical and important issues, that impact them.

Introduction

Edmonton is an agricultural city. Edmonton is an innovative city. Edmonton is a city with a rich tradition of volunteerism and community engagement. The combination of these characteristics provides an invaluable base for the growth and development of a vibrant and sustainable food culture in Edmonton. The creation of a municipal policy framework positions Edmonton as a national leader in this emerging and important area. This report, and its recommendations, is intended as one important input into the growth of a dynamic food culture in Edmonton. The content comes from people who are actively engaged in building and promoting a prosperous and sustainable Edmonton both now and in the future – its citizens.

The Citizen Panel process was developed and implemented by the Centre for Public Involvement, as part of the Centre's larger mandate of supporting excellence, building capacity and advancing research in public involvement. This process employed a deliberative approach, which required that participants showed willingness to understand the values, perspectives and interests of others and openness to the possibility of reframing individual interests and perspectives in the process of a search for common interests and mutually acceptable solutions.

A highlight of the Citizen Panel process was the identification of many excellent initiatives already taking place in Edmonton, and the potential for sharing these 'good news' stories widely, both inside and outside Edmonton. The city is home to many innovative and exciting food-related projects, taking place at many levels – individual, community, municipal, among others – and Citizen Panellists spoke compellingly of the need to raise awareness amongst Edmontonians about the many exciting initiatives already under way.

This report presents an overview of the Citizen Panel process, a summary of the "best of the best" strategies developed through this process as prioritized by participants, and a discussion of key thematic elements that emerged from this deliberative process.

Overview of Citizen Panel Process

Working with the CWFAS project team, the University of Alberta-based Centre for Public Involvement (CPI) developed a Citizen Panel process to provide a unique opportunity for Edmonton residents to share their thoughts and ideas about urban food and agriculture and provide input into the policy development process.

Through this process a forum was created for citizens to discuss, learn about and make recommendations on issues related to the production, distribution and consumption of food in Edmonton. This process is an innovative addition to other types of public engagement activities typically undertaken as part of Edmonton's municipal policy development process. Participants were recruited through phone calls using a list of randomly generated numbers and through targeted outreach to inner city residents and organizations serving immigrants. The goal of the Citizen Panel recruitment was to recruit a group of individuals with broad and diverse interests, and ideally, a group that would be representative of the Edmonton citizenry.

Under the capable guidance of Fiona Cavanagh, Project Manager CPI; University of Alberta researchers Dr. Marco Adria and Dr. Kalina Kamenova; lead facilitator Janet Fiero, Ph.D., an expert in the field of civic engagement, a team of 35 volunteer facilitators and note takers supported this process. Members of the Citizen Panel Project Team, which included representatives from the City of Edmonton, the Centre for Public Involvement and post-secondary educational institutions, also provided input and guidance throughout the process.

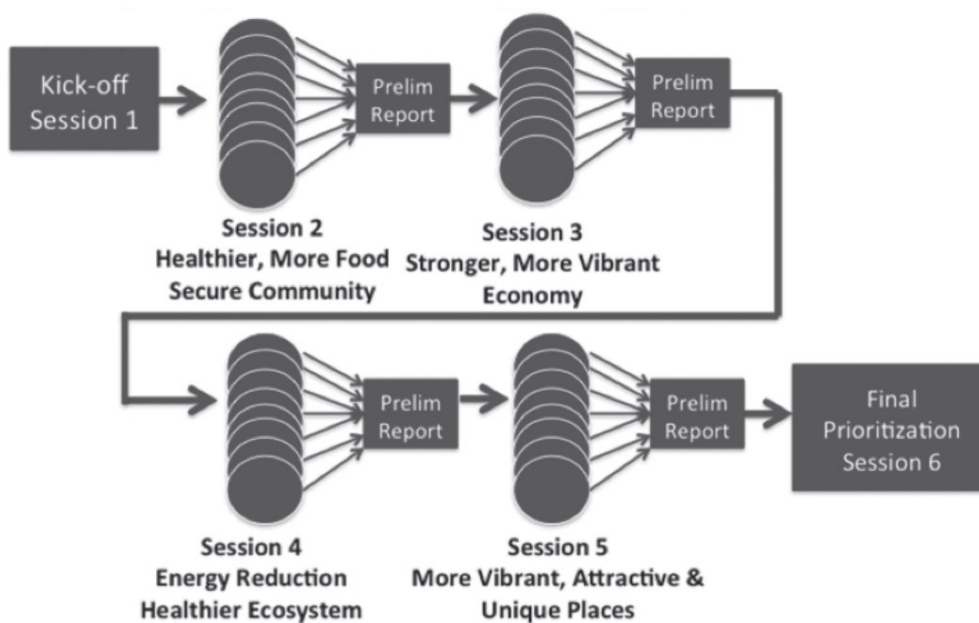
In the first session, Citizen Panellists identified values they wanted to see protected throughout the process, as well as ground rules for deliberation amongst panellists. The values highlighted by individuals as being important include: environmental sustainability; safe, quality food production with ethical treatment of animals; accessible education on food and agricultural for all citizens; 'food justice' with attention to issues of equity, self-sufficiency, transparency, inclusivity and accessibility; building community; commitment to inclusivity and cultural diversity; and protecting local production.

Through this process, Citizen Panellists attended six half day sessions and during each of these, explored one of the overall goal areas of the CWFAS strategy. A Discussion Primer and Practice Example Guide were used to provide context and examples to enrich these discussions. For four of the six sessions, panellists worked in small groups.

Every week, each group was asked to generate, through dialogue and deliberation, up to 4 strategies to meet a particular goal or goals of the CWFAS. These goals focussed on ensuring food security, strengthening the local economy, protecting the environment, minimizing waste, and creating vibrant, attractive places. At the end of each week, the list of strategies was submitted to a master writer, and compiled into a weekly report that was given to all participants to review at the beginning of the next

session. A summary of this process is shown in Diagram 1.

Diagram 1: Summary of Citizen Panel Process



In the final session, Citizen Panellists reviewed and examined all of the strategies developed for each goal area, assessing these in terms of their potential for achieving the goal area, and also in terms of the strategies the City could best implement or impact. Participants then used keypad technology to vote in real time, with immediate results, on their top 2 strategies for each goal area. The top 2 from each area were then compiled into one list and participants were asked to vote again for their top 2 selections and the results of this voting comprise the 'best of the best' strategies coming from citizen deliberation, and form the basis of the recommendations section of this report.

Diagram 2: Prioritizing Process



This report focuses on the strategies identified by Citizen Panellists as the “best of the best” in the final deliberation session. These reflect the diversity of ideas and rigorous process of strategic analysis from a group of committed, engaged and often passionate citizens, who deliberated long and hard to contribute to a sustainable, just and secure food future in Edmonton.

A more detailed description of the Citizen Panel process, along with analysis and reflection, can be found in the “CWFAS Citizen Panel Process Discussion Paper” (Forth coming, fall 2012, from the Centre for Public Involvement).

1.1. Research on the Citizen Panel Process

The Citizen Panel process was not only a unique approach to public participation, but is also the subject of academic research into deliberative democracy. The Edmonton Citizen Panel on Food and Agriculture utilized an innovative technique for engaging citizens, which emphasized shared learning through “Conversation, Information, and Transformation” (CIT). Research activities were carried out in conjunction with Citizen Panel processes to evaluate how this deliberative method could contribute to the suite of methods and approaches to public involvement used by municipal governments for involving the public in policymaking.

Survey questionnaires were used to assess changes in public opinion on food and agriculture issues in the priority areas of the CWFAS. The questionnaires tracked the participants’ opinions and learning on urban food and agriculture, broader questions of democratic citizenship and participation, and their knowledge of the Citizen Panel process and outcomes. The research design included a second (control) group of randomly selected Edmontonians. This research will measure changes in citizens’ opinion in the population beyond the micro-public of the Citizen Panel, as well as to assess the impact of the Citizen Panel deliberation on shaping a broader public’s knowledge about food production and distribution in Edmonton. Preliminary data collection is complete and final research publications and report will be available in the fall of 2012.

Citizen Panel Recommendations

CWFAS is intended to create a policy framework for food and urban agriculture that will support the development of dynamic, sustainable food system in Edmonton. A great policy framework has the potential to position Edmonton as a national leader, and recognizes the contribution of urban food and agriculture to community wealth, community health, environmental stewardship and the creation of vibrant places. The results in this section comprise the “best of the best” strategies identified by participants in the Citizen Panel process, and are presented as citizen recommendations for policy development on urban food and agriculture.

A key issue for Citizen Panellists, expressed repeatedly throughout the process, was the importance of protecting existing agricultural land within Edmonton boundaries from further development. The top recommendation of the Citizen Panels is that municipal leaders create or amend municipal policy tools, including zoning, by-laws, fees and taxes, to prohibit future development on good fertile agricultural land, particularly the Northeast farmland.

This section also provides an overview of the topics discussed in Citizen Panel sessions and illustrates both the breadth and depth of dialogue that took place as part of the process. It is comprised of two separate, but related, parts: first, a summary of the top 10 strategies as prioritized by Citizen Panel participants, plus two additional strategies that received a high percentage of votes. This is followed by a thematic analysis which draws on the range of ideas and strategies explored throughout the Panel process.

(Please note, due to the way the voting process was structured for the selection of the, "best of the best", the percentage total reflects the number of participants who chose each one of their top two strategies).

1.2. “Best of the Best” Strategies

1.2.1 Best of The Best Strategy 1

Create and/or amend zoning, bylaws, fees, and taxes to prohibit developments on good fertile agricultural land, particularly, the northeast farmland.

- Amend city bylaws, zoning, fees, and taxes to encourage and promote production of local food which could be sold for profit. Ideas noted for doing this include:
 - Using municipal and private land to grow food for local sale.
 - Allowing hybrid residential agricultural zoning which permits limited agricultural activity within residential areas.
 - Examine potential for using incentives - such as waiving business license or other fees - for those spearheading local food production initiatives.
- Legally protect agriculturally viable lands from being used for non-agricultural purposes.
 - Change land ownership bylaws and zoning to encourage organic farming of plants, animals, and medicinal products, and include restrictions on pesticides and commercial fertilizer use within city.
- Identify a neutral, third party to identify and assess good farmland.
- Foster ‘cluster developments’ which groups mixed use and residential development in new subdivisions to protect open space for farmland, ecological conservation, and recreational use.
- Encourage and incentivize agricultural families to continue utilizing their land for agricultural purposes.

Strategy 1

39%

1.2.2 Best of The Best Strategy 2

Maximize spaces and places within the City of Edmonton for urban growing and food production. Develop systems for permanent and ongoing identification, inventory, and assessment of urban spaces that could be used for growing. The inventory includes identifying the water needs and soil suitability for a variety of local crops. Create accountable and objective monitoring.

Strategy 2

37%

- reserve agricultural land and allocate land for urban growing uses and more green space.
- City can allocate places for growing and enforce bylaws to prevent developers from developing arable farmland.
- Establish permanent and ongoing identification and reclamation of urban spaces for growing food. This can include converting underused empty lots and other spaces to, "repurpose with a purpose".
- Ensure there is land use accountability: business accountability, monitoring, and transparency. The City needs to be an objective watchdog and be proactive not reactive.
- Create new spaces and opportunities for urban growing through polices and bylaws that mandates that a certain percentage of new developments (and potentially existing ones) to include urban spaces and places for growing (For example, rooftop gardens).

P

1.2.3 Best of The Best Strategy 3

Create a daily and year-round locally-supplied market spaces or hub that provides a variety of healthy, local, and culturally-appropriate food options.

Strategy 3

37%

- Re-evaluate the Strathcona Farmer's Market so that it is open later, longer, and on both weekdays and weekends. Also ensure that it is open to a variety of vendors and that the space is utilized more effectively. This has the potential to be a major tourist attraction as well as a local food market.
- Develop year-round, daily, local farmer supplied market spaces with an emphasis on organic products and provide a variety of food, including ethnic items prepared with locally-grown ingredients. Food samples would be available. Meeting spaces would be provided to encourage and foster socialization. This would also include educational displays and material on why local and organic food is good.
- Strive to shorten the chain between producers and consumers by creating direct opportunities for restaurants and cafes to operate within farmers' markets. Food could be supplied by the market vendors and consumed by farmers' market patrons either in the form of prepared take-away meals or opportunities for on-site consumption (e.g., a market restaurant, cooking classes at the market using local foods and local teachers, etc.). Offer other places within the market that provide education and information about food and agriculture.
- Implement a food hub—an "all in one" locale that serves local, healthy food options, has education programming, urban growing space, food bank (low income); and provides gathering spaces. This would be similar to, *The Stop Community Food Centre* (Toronto) (www.thestop.org). This place or hub would need to reflect diversity and multiculturalism in Edmonton.
- Create and encourage more and different types of farmer's markets and other local food outlets such as kiosks in LRT stations or transit Hubs. Also develop and expand the number of mobile markets to increase access to local and healthy food.

1.2.4 Best of The Best Strategy 4

Develop and expand local food production and distribution in Edmonton through an innovative urban growing system to increase access and affordability of healthy, locally grown or raised, food. Improve urban agriculture opportunities through education and policy. City must provide adequate resources and incentives.

Strategy 4

35%

- Use city landscaping to support a culture of urban growing. This could include the development of a strategy for creating edible landscaping (i.e., planting self-maintaining trees and shrubs that produce edible fruit) on City lands and in parks. This should focus on species that require minimal resources and are not prone to pests.
- Create an urban growing program. This program will include the development of a “toolkit” for those who are interested but inexperienced, and who want to explore different ways of growing food in their communities. The toolkit could also provide access to information about growing seasonal fruit and vegetables in Edmonton. This program will also help to ‘normalize’ the use of new spaces for growing food (such as front yards, boulevards and back alleys) and support a cultural change around growing within City limits. It will also support skill sharing and capacity building.
- City should review and possibly amend current bylaws to facilitate urban growing. Incentives and bylaw/policies amendments could be used to foster new building design that incorporates roof top, courtyard or community gardens in the planning phase. Ensure the policy framework is in place so that it is easy to create these urban growing spaces.
- Subsidize local farmers, home owners and urban growers who are growing food at home to make local produce more affordable. City could offer reduction in property taxes to promote this.
- Amend bylaws to allow citizens to keep small farm animals and bees. Draw on experiences and knowledge of other municipalities who have implemented this.
- Create opportunities and the ability for the sale of produce within the city by citizens.
- Public/private partnerships, sponsorships and subsidies for urban growing to foster food innovation through the creation of incubators that include entrepreneurs, engineers, and agricultural people.
- Develop a City food procurement policy to support supporting and increase local food production.

1.2.5 Best of The Best Strategy 5

Strategy 5

35%

Preserve and expand the number of unique and vibrant spaces within the city.

- Promote and permit community gardens, permanent food forests and incubator farms on fence lines of public property adjacent to current activity locations. Establish this in every community and close to a school or community league to support food education and learning.
- Create incentives to encourage low impact landscaping and gardening in urban and Brownfield sites. This could include promotion of tree farms and community gardens.
- Provide green spaces throughout city for well-being and ensure access to green spaces for people's mental health.
- Preserve and improve existing unique places and agricultural land while curtailing and managing urban sprawl and developing green spaces/agricultural land for new development.
- Incentives should be provided to holders of underdeveloped and/or vacant land to encourage owners to turn these spaces into community gardens and/or local fresh food markets.
- Create pockets of vibrant communities throughout the city by:
 - Using creative infill development in older central areas (e.g., by using laneways, unused portions of lots, higher density, multiple zoning) for residential and commercial spaces.
 - Utilizing existing infrastructure of city spaces to facilitate and expand more farmers' markets and other food related places (e.g., pedway cafes, old schools, LRT stations, City Hall, etc.).
 - Outdoor restaurants and food distribution sites such as food vendors should also be developed. Atriums and greenhouse food outlets could help extend the season of these types of businesses.

1.2.6 Best of The Best Strategy 6

Strategy 6

35%

Address the prevalence of food waste using multiple strategies

- Establish an organization that collects, monitors, and distributes food that might otherwise be wasted (collect food from restaurants for rapid distribution). This would provide a use for excess and surplus produce, and ensure that food that is still safe to eat can be used. Differentiate between food that can be used for human consumption and food that can be used for biofuel.
- Support the creation of comprehensive gleaning initiative (for example, expansion of Operation Fruit Rescue) that would develop registries of owners with food, and volunteer pickers, to ensure that those with food are connected to those who want to pick it. Promote this initiative through online media, local TV announcements, and information on utility bills. There could also be the development of an app (smart phone application) to facilitate this.
 - Involve food banks and other organizations in picking and receiving.
 - Could provide community service hours credit
- Create a market for grade B and C produce (Produce that has irregular shapes, bruises or other aspects that prevent it from getting purchased, and not considered Grade A). This could be sold at a different price and not wasted.
- Identify a location such as a community centre, in each community, where unmarketable, unused, or food produced in excess, can be processed in a community kitchen or distributed as is.
- Make it mandatory that commercial (restaurants) and institutions (hospitals, nursing homes) separate waste so that organic waste can be collected and processed for urban agricultural uses. (Need to create compost that is usable for food growing).
- Improve collection and distribution mechanisms for existing and underutilized food resources in order to reduce waste by:
 - Developing guidelines for excess, wholesome food from events to be used by others and ensure public awareness.
 - Encouraging redistribution of unused and surplus food from restaurants and food stores (amend bylaws accordingly).
 - Facilitating collection and distribution of home fruit tree and garden surpluses.

- Set a City target to minimize food waste and provide incentives to meet the target (perhaps through a compost pickup service).

1.2.7 Best of The Best Strategy 7

Encourage the expansion of renewable energy (e.g., wind, solar, ethanol, etc.) production and use.

- Encourage energy conservation by facilitating community greenhouses, and encouraging the use of solar and geothermal energy.
- Create and publicize a central resource for healthier ecosystem creation and waste reduction in food and agricultural activities.
- Increase energy efficient practices within the city at the food production level. This could include:
 - Greenhouse use of waste/geothermal heating and solar panels.
 - Continuous examination of technology options for energy efficient food production.
 - Promote/foster energy farming(solar/wind power).
 - Raise awareness of excessive and non-environmental packaging (including retail and fast food, etc.).
- Focus on initiatives that “shorten the chain” of energy use, and minimize transportation of food and agricultural products.
- Promote and provide incentives for use of solar panels in residential, commercial and industrial.
- Encourage heat energy produced by landfill diversion and at waste management centres be put towards powering local greenhouses to promote year-round food production.
- Encourage commercial farms, enterprises, and institutions, including local businesses, restaurants and educational institutions to use eco-waste (i.e., organic waste from commercial and institutional outlets and animal waste) for power generation, including solar and wind generators.

Strategy 7

26%

1.2.8 Best of The Best Strategy 8

Create strategies and policies for education, awareness and involvement of diverse communities and individuals in pursuit of the vision and goals of the CWFAS. This includes multiple components.

Strategy 8

22%

- Develop a marketing campaign to sell, brand and promote the CWFAS.
- Develop and increase food and agricultural literacy of Edmonton residents. This could be done by incorporating skill building and learning into existing City programs such as the, *Green Shack* program, City summer camps, and recreational programs. This could also be incorporated into programming of churches, non-profits and community leagues. As Edmonton is a multicultural city, food literacy activities need to incorporate a mix of languages and cultures.
- Ensure that those who access food aid or support are provided with dietary and food preparation education (For example, simple and quick recipes using easily available local foods).
- Teach residents about aspects of Edmonton’s food system. This would include production and consumption issues. It would also focus on creating a sense of community between different generations and cultures (i.e., give citizens an understanding of what’s in it for them). Work with local media outlets to ensure participation of new and long term residents. Look for innovative ways for seniors to share ideas with youth.
- Support experiential agricultural practice and science in school curriculums. Develop intentional partnerships between the City and K-12 schools or adult education sites, to increase awareness and understanding of healthy food practices, local food production, nutrition, agriculture, food security, and multicultural food. Drawing on the vast array of multicultural knowledge and experience in Edmonton is critical for all education programming.
- Create a public education campaign to raise awareness about the risks of unhealthy eating and also to raise awareness of existing programs that are potentially underutilized.
- Develop City policies to reduce and eliminate access to unhealthy food in City run facilities, and encourage schools to do the same.
- Create bylaw and zoning restrictions that reduces access to unhealthy food. For example do not allow zoning of fast food outlets near schools.

1.2.9 Best of The Best Strategy 9

Promote small scale community-level food and agricultural initiatives such as community gardens, commercial grade community kitchens, community markets, and canning businesses through various means.

Strategy 9

15%

- Create a number of paid community food animator positions that support current and potential community-level initiatives using their grassroots knowledge, experience, and connections. These positions would utilize existing capacity and create more capacity for new local businesses, which would provide support to the local economy. Community food animators could support local canning businesses, community gardens, community markets and neighbourhood-level food fairs and other activities.
- Encourage, promote and support community gardens and urban growing within Edmonton by:
 - Celebrating local growers through sponsored awards (e.g., Edmonton City in Bloom Awards).
 - Developing and promoting tours and events related to food (similar to the way Candy Cane Lane is promoted at Christmas) through local tasting events or as a part of existing festivals such as Capital Ex.
 - Through local tasting events, and by piggy-backing local food events and activities into existing or new festivals.

1.2.10 Best of The Best Strategy 10

Improve and expand the City's composting initiatives in order to increase awareness about consumption and reduce overall waste.

Strategy 10

11%

- Restructure waste collection process to raise awareness about consumption.
 - Encourage citizens to think about how much waste they are producing by charging for volume of waste produced, or limiting garbage pickup. Encourage source separation to increase waste management efficiency. Educate citizens about waste and where it goes. Change how people think about waste by incorporating compost bins into pickup service and limiting frequency of black bag pickup.
- Expand waste management to include composting system.
 - Use of community or neighbourhood compost bins would encourage composting by citizens. Cost of this system could be offset by the sale of compost, as more would be produced, and it would be of a higher grade. Offer incentives for composting, for example, no fees for pickup of compost bags.
- Ensure the organic waste is collected and processed for urban agriculture.

1.3. Additional strategies

These are the additional top strategies that did not make it into the Best of the Best.

1. Create an urban Agriculture Innovation Centre and Hub

The centre could conduct research, provide practical skills and expertise in the urban agriculture sector, and bring research, commerce, culture, and education together.

2. Create an City Food and Agricultural website

Create a portal that is integrated with the City's website and provides information about all aspects of the local food system (e.g., job opportunities, data on local agricultural economics, etc.) to consumers, producers, industry, and other stakeholders, as well as facilitates exchanges of excess food (food coops).

1.4. Discussion

The previous section highlighted the “best of the best” and additional strategies emerging from the Citizen Panel process. This section provides a synthesis of the ideas and themes that emerged through the deliberation process, in order to highlight the breadth and depth of Citizen Panel discussion. It is divided into 4 separate, but connected, sections.

The first section looks at the “what” of the Citizen Panel discussions, and provides a brief thematic analysis of the issues discussed by panellists over the 6 working sessions. This is followed by a brief discussion of the “how”, and highlights tools identified that participants felt would support identified activities. The third part of this discussion focuses on “who” needs to be involved for action to be taken on these ideas including a brief discussion of governance, and the section concludes with a summary of the benefits participants identified as arising from the implementation of citizen-generated recommendations (“the why”).

1.4.1 “The What”

Participants spoke passionately of the importance of creating a cultural and policy environment to enhance food production within Edmonton boundaries, and improve access to local food for all. Within their discussions certain themes emerged, crossing the boundaries of sessions and discussion of particular goals.

First and foremost, participants identified the need for **clear planning guidelines** to address conflicting development priorities, particularly the conflicts between land development and agricultural preservation within City boundaries. Related to this was the need for political leaders to address this issue now, before more arable land disappears. This issue was raised each week, in every session,

regardless of the specific topic under deliberation. There is a need for more creative, far-sighted City planning that ensures the important balance between utility, design, and livability for residents and businesses.

There was much discussion about the topic related to **growing** food within City boundaries. This included the importance of protecting fertile agricultural lands within City boundaries as a means of increasing potential for local food production and food security for Edmontonians, but also extended to other ideas. These include fostering local-level food and agricultural activities at multiple scales, including individual and community gardens, increasing the number of atriums and greenhouses in the City, and maximizing spaces for urban growing.

There was extensive discussion of issues related to the **processing and distribution** of local food. Several participants spoke about the importance of creating a year-round site which could include restaurants featuring local products, mobile food trucks, food sales, urban gardens, community kitchens, meeting space, and educational activities at one site. Existing facilities such as schools or community centres could be used for this purpose.

The importance of **protecting people and environments** and of **fostering community health and wealth** was featured in many discussions. It was felt that shortening the chain between producers and consumers through the production, processing, distribution and consumption of more local foods, would have multiple benefits, including increased access to fresher, healthier food, decreased transportation costs (and related environmental impacts), and a stronger and more vibrant local economy. The specific climate, and Edmonton as a northern City, was also articulated as a key factor in the types and forms of urban growing best suited for this City.

There was extensive discussion about the potential for food and food-related activities to contribute to **creating great places and building community** in Edmonton. Ideas suggested include creating food-related opportunities for people to meet and socialize. Participants also suggested working with community and neighbourhood groups to better utilize existing places and raising awareness about underutilized programs that already exist. Many participants spoke of Edmonton's vibrant multicultural heritage and the potential to build on this with food-related activities and initiatives.

The importance of creating a local food system that was **equitable and accessible to all**, was highlighted throughout the panel process. Of particular concern were low income individuals and organizations and those with access and mobility issues.

Throughout all the sessions, participants spoke in multiple ways about the importance of **increasing education and awareness** about urban food and agriculture issues. This included raising awareness around all aspects of food and agriculture, including nutrition and the economic benefit of producing and shopping locally, and facilitating the sharing of knowledge around local gardening and growing. It was also noted that many new immigrants have a wealth of agricultural knowledge and that using food to connect new immigrants with longer term residents to share knowledge could be a win-win approach.

1.4.2 “The How”

Many suggestions were generated regarding ways to foster concrete action towards the goals identified in the CWFAS. These include using **municipal policy tools** such as zoning, by-laws, fees and incentives to increase production of local foods and promote urban growing activities.

It was felt the City could provide leadership through activities such as: using city procurement policies to support local food production; developing City policy to reduce or eliminate access to unhealthy food in City-operated facilities; using by-law and zoning restrictions to prevent the siting of fast food outlets near schools; providing incentives to minimize food waste; and providing community or household level compost bins for recycling organic waste.

The idea of **branding Edmonton** as a site of cool local food and a leader in the area of ‘local food’ was also a theme that was articulated across sessions and an important part of the achievement of the CWFAS. This could include incorporating food production into City’s festivals, or develop a ‘local food’ designation for local products. Other ways or moving forward on these initiatives include: identifying best and promising practices from other cities (nationally and internationally) for relevance in Edmonton context and the development of creative, new partnerships around food and agricultural activities.

Panellists highlighted that there are many opportunities for the City of Edmonton to **forge intentional partnerships** with the excellent post-secondary institutions in Edmonton, including universities, colleges, technical institutes, all of which have a variety of expertise in agriculture, food production, and processing as well as a wealth of ongoing research in world-class facilities.

Throughout the Citizen panel, participants stressed the importance of using existing resources and programs as much as possible, and the importance of creativity to be as cost effective as possible. However in the last session, citizens were also polled to see if they were willing to pay extra (through taxes, and other means) to see the "best of the best" strategies implemented. 69% participants agreed or strongly agreed that they would be willing to do so.

1.4.3 “The Who”

Participants also discussed overall ideas for governance, although time did not allow for substantial development of ideas. When asked whether a Food Policy Council should be established (comprised of citizens, developers, farmers, academics, doctors/health specialists; city staff, non-profits, and independent, action oriented and accountable to the City), 88% of participants indicated that they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with this option. When asked how members of the Food Policy Council should be selected, the option receiving the most support was that “members of the Food Policy Council should be applicants from representative stakeholders, with each representative having one vote on the Council.”

Participants noted that the development a dynamic, forward-looking, “made in Edmonton” strategy for urban food and agriculture would require extensive collaboration. While it is important for the City of Edmonton to take a leadership role, especially in the area of municipal policy development and coordination, participants commented that creating a sustainable and vibrant food culture, requires multiple points of engagement, and a diverse group of stakeholders. It may also require the intention of specific and intentional partnerships to address particular issues. Potential partners include Edmonton residents, but also communities, educational institutions (including post-secondary), non-profit organizations, the business community, property developers, food producers, municipal administrators, municipal politicians, and in some cases, provincial and federal governments as well.

Many of the key recommendations in this report, while requiring leadership from one group or sector, can only be successfully and sustainably accomplished with broad-based participation, across all sectors of Edmonton. Each of these recommendations has roles for many different types of engagement, and if the citizen panels are any indication of the enthusiasm that exists for going forward, there are many citizens who would happily and willingly commit their time and energy to foster the CWFAS vision.

Citizen Panellists also articulated across the sessions, the importance and value of well-designed, sustained citizen involvement in the achievement of the CWFAS. The Citizen Panel process demonstrated the benefit and opportunity to use the knowledge, skills and energy of citizens and this is a critical component of the overall, “how”.

1.4.4 “The Why”

Citizen Panel participants identified many benefits accruing from the development of a vibrant food and agricultural policy in Edmonton. Panellists noted this could lead to: increased local food production, leading to higher levels of food security and self-sufficiency; healthy food being more widely available, and more accessible to low income individuals and groups; neighbourhood revitalization and the creation of more liveable city, with more ‘great places’ and ‘great spaces’; and increased opportunities for social contact around food and agricultural initiatives.

Other benefits noted include: a stronger local economy with more year-round jobs for those employed within the food and agricultural sector; increased sustainability of Edmonton food system, and corresponding decreased environmental impact on air, land and water quality; better health outcomes for Edmonton citizens; and increased and more diverse opportunities for staff and volunteer engagement in food related activities.

Finally, it was noted that developing a robust CWFAS, in alignment with other key City of Edmonton policy documents (such as *The Way we Grow* and *The Way we Move*) could highlight Edmonton as a **‘food and agriculture innovator’** and increase Edmonton’s national and international profile.

Conclusion

Throughout the Citizen Panel process, participants spoke eloquently and passionately about the importance of food in their lives, and of wanting to see Edmonton have a lively food culture that embraces the City's agricultural heritage and multicultural diversity. They also spoke of wanting the City's food system to be just and equitable for all, and of wanting to support, as much as possible, the production and distribution of locally-grown food. Panellists highlighted the importance of minimizing the environmental footprint of the food system, and drawing on the communal nature of food to create more opportunities for social and cultural activities.

By the end of the process, participants indicated a high level of satisfaction with the Citizen Panel process. All participants indicated they had learned things through the process, with the majority indicating they learned "quite a lot". A significant number indicated that participating in the Citizen Panel process had changed or shifted their perspectives or opinions.

Citizen Panellists expressed a strong desire to see the momentum generated by this process continue. They also expressed interest in further discussion and engagement on issues related to urban food and agriculture. There is clearly passion for engagement with food and food policy development at the citizen level that can and should be tapped into.

Any experienced farmer or gardener will tell you that producing a bumper crop requires many things – high-quality fertile soil, a good mix of seeds, a supportive climate, the right fertilizer at the right time, careful stewardship, lots of hard work and energy, and a little bit of timing and good luck. The same can be said for innovative policy development – it takes the right pre-conditions, a good mix of stakeholder interests, a supportive environment, lot of cooperation, some creative collaboration, hard work and energy, and also timing and good luck.

Through the panel process, Edmonton citizens were offered a unique opportunity to engage in the process of policy development for urban food and agriculture in Edmonton through active deliberation. They responded with enthusiasm, commitment and focussed attention. This document, and the strategies contained within, is a testament to the creative, thoughtful and innovative ideas that reside within Edmonton's diverse citizenry.

2. Next Steps

1. The potential development of a comprehensive guide of practice examples and existing programs within Edmonton, created by citizens and stakeholders. This could involve graduate students through the Centre for Public Involvement or other organizations.
2. The production of a discussion paper on the Citizen Panel Process by the Centre for Public Involvement, including a detailed description of the process used, analysis of strengths and challenges of this approach, and lessons learned.
3. Feedback to the Citizen Panellists regarding how their input has been used and taken up in the development of the CWFAS.
4. Continued research and advancement of citizen involvement to strengthen citizen capacity, innovation and overall decision making.

3. Resources

1. 2012 Citizen Panel video links

- Video #1- <http://youtu.be/9swXTLI0y2Q>
- Video #2- <http://youtu.be/9W5zJSO2tts>
- Video #3- <http://youtu.be/sXdHVVGK-EY>
- Video #4- <http://youtu.be/lrdskCqWmrQ>
- Video #5- http://youtu.be/Tp_ITDfhDTI

2. Centre for Public Involvement- www.centreforpublicinvolvement.com

4. Acknowledgements

- CWFAS Advisory committee
- Janine De La Salle, HB LANARC
- Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta
- City of Edmonton
- Sherrill Johnson (Final report development)

- Citizen Panel project team (below)
- 2012 CWFAS Citizen Panellists

5. Appendix A-Citizen Panel Composition

Diagram 1- Age distribution

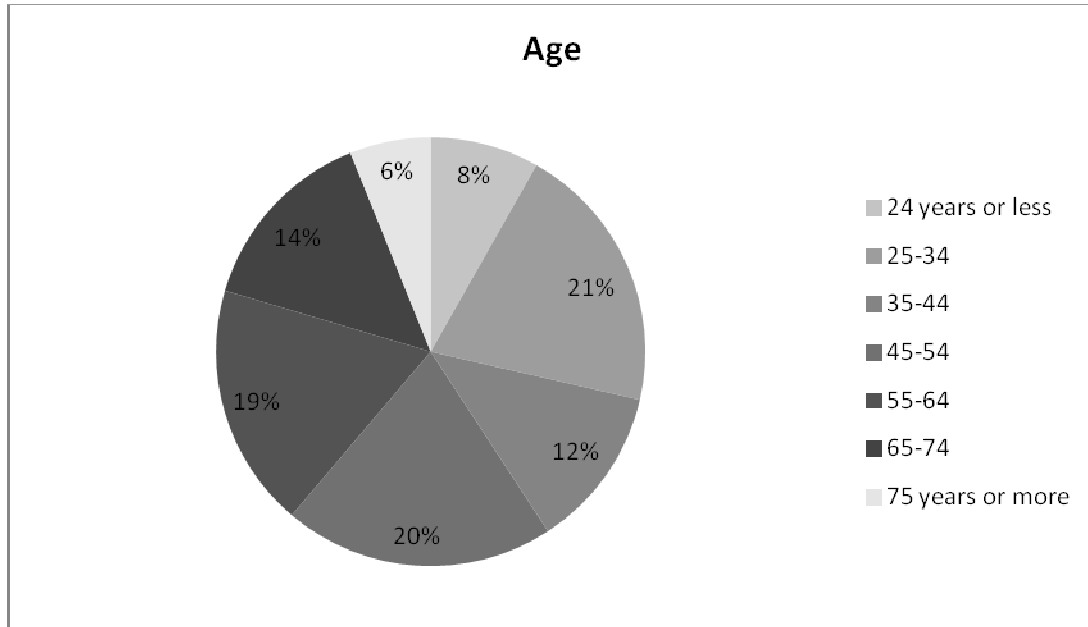
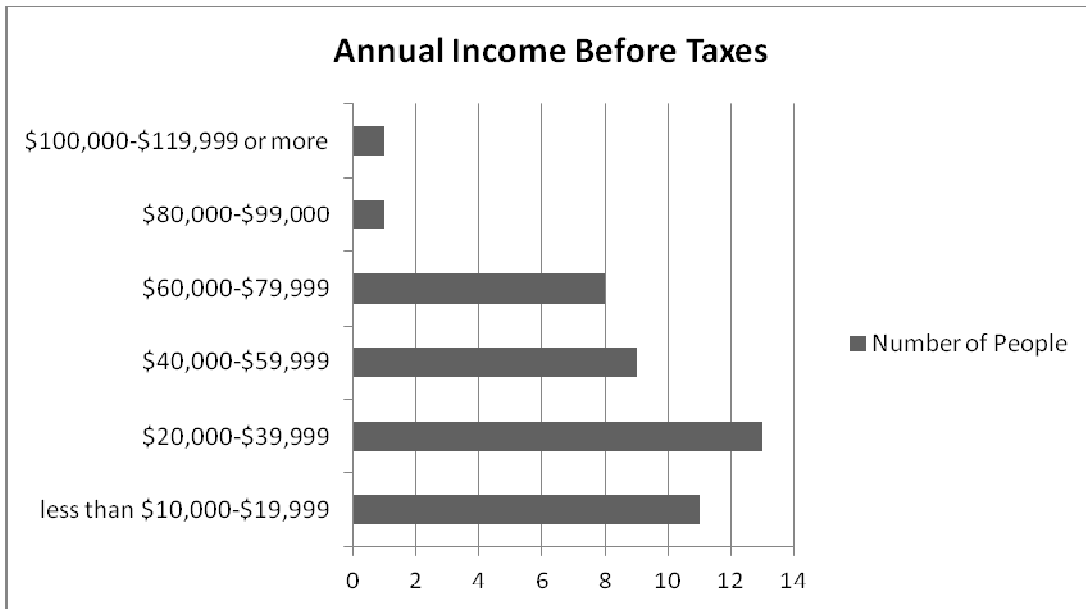


Diagram 2. Income distribution*



**Not all participants provided a response to this question.*

Diagram 3. Ethnic and cultural origins

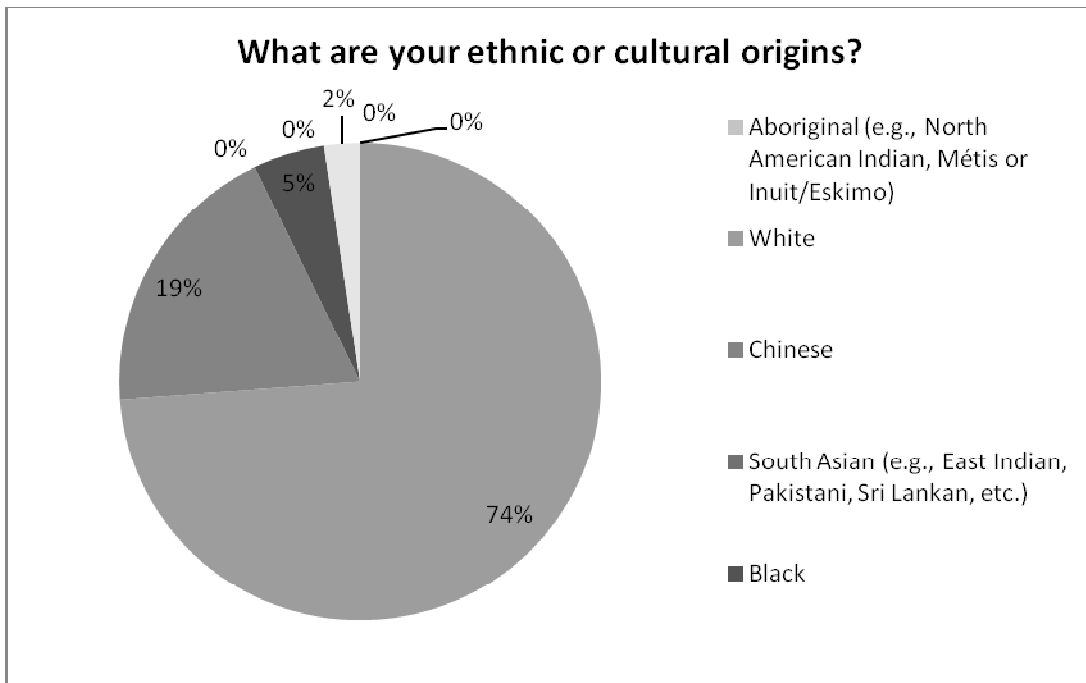


Diagram 4. Educational attainment

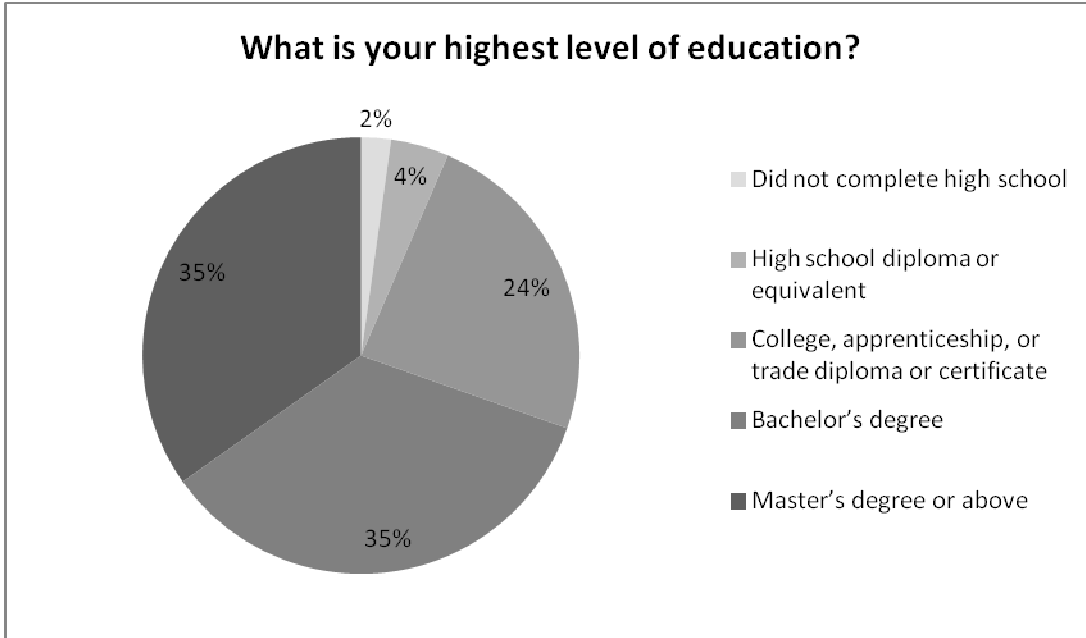


Diagram 5. Occupation

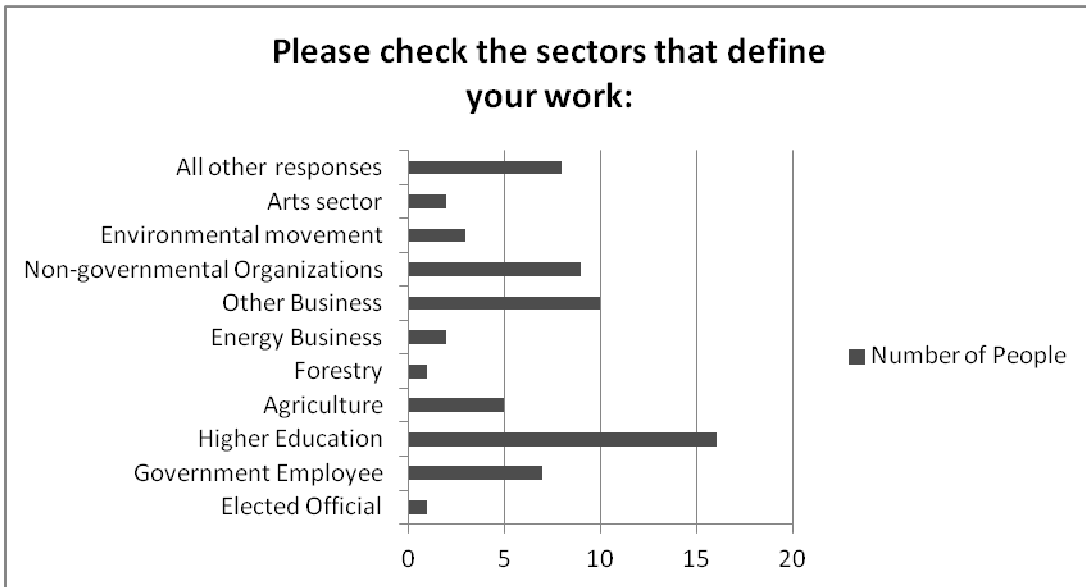


Diagram 6. Political views

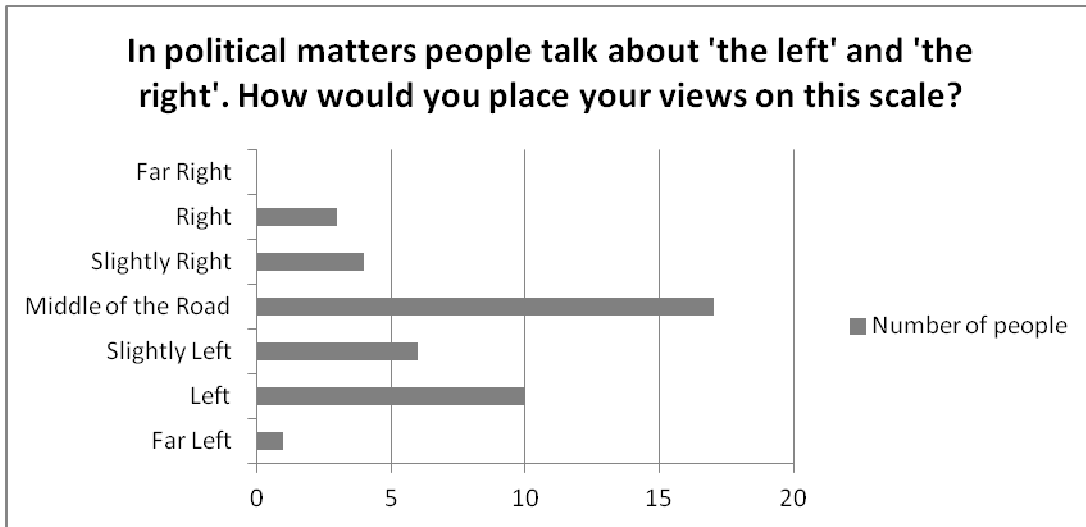


Diagram 7. Additional Demographic

Demographic	Targeted Percentage	Actual Percentage
Residents for less than 3 years	20%	10.5%
Women	51%	57%
Persons with disabilities	5%	4%
Each ward	All 12 wards represented	All 12 wards represented

6.

7. Appendix B-Citizen Panellists

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 Adriana Blanco
 Loren Bunn
 Gilles Cadrin
 Jordan Bunn
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 Patsy Conroy
 Louise Cook

Peter Crnogorac
 Jacqueline Devlin
 Clifford Edwards
 Birte Evans
 Susan Fraser
 Esther Fuller
 Fabian Gonzalez
 Sue Goss
 Anita Gregoire
 Karmel Greter
 Enoch Henry

Maureen Hill
 Connie Kerekes
 Denise Kirkpatrick
 Helena Kozlowski
 Carissa Kratchmer
 Kathryn Lennon
 Na Li
 William Loveday
 Nhan Lu
 Wesley Manning
 Wesley May

Chelsey Milligan
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Nargees Moumand
Omar Moumand
Mitenga Mulongoyi
Michael Noble
Josh Noble
Merin Oleschuk
Kory Orban

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Rong Rui
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8. Appendix C-Citizen Panel Team

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