



Our File: 2110-00327-00

UFS ENGAGEMENT - PH1 RESPONSE MEMO

To From

Michelle Baski, Project Manager Clover Mei, Planner Agriculture and Environment, City of Pitt Meadows Planning Division

Re Date

Urban Forest Strategy (UFS) Phase 1 Engagement December 15, 2023 Summary

This memo is produced to provide summary of the Public Consultation #1 (Phase 1 Engagement), which aims to assist in the design and production of the draft Urban Forest Strategy for the City of Pitt Meadows.

The goal of this series of engagement opportunities is to provide the public with information about the purpose of the Urban Forest Strategy, general benefits of forests and trees, and, having provided that knowledge, to obtain public feedback on challenges, opportunities, and visions that would inform the framing of the draft Urban Forest Strategy.

The following engagement methods and outreach efforts have been utilized as part of Phase 1 Engagement:

- ➤ In-person informative booth at the Pitt Meadows Farmer's Market on September 5th
- Online engagement platform (Have Your Say Pitt Meadows, or HYS) where survey and mapping questions are provided, intended as the main feedback collection tool
- Open-house, in-person engagement opportunity at Pitt Meadows Family Recreation Center on September 20th
- Flyers provided to local schools to inform students who may be interested in the topic and the online engagement platform
- Park signage along trail paths to encourage participation in the topic and the online engagement platform



Figure 1: Park signage



Figure 2: Open-house

> The Katzie First Nation were contacted via formal letter from the City, notifying them of this Urban Forest Strategy and Implementation Plan project and inviting them to engage or contribute if they desired. As of the date of this memo, no response has been received.

This memo will discuss the feedback received from the Online Engagement Platform, and the Open House.

1. Online Engagement - Have Your Say Pitt Meadows

The main tool for collecting feedback is via the City's online engagement platform "Have Your Say Pitt Meadows" (HYS). The platform was live between September 5th – October 5th inclusive. Links and QR codes leading to the platform were distributed via all visual communications including signages, flyers, and poster boards used in other outreach methods.

Table 1: Engagement Communications Summary

Objective	Measure & Metrics			
Inform	Social media			
	o 12 posts each on Facebook, Instagram (IG), Twitter			
	o 2 paid social ads			
	 15 IG stories (including intro to Urban Forest and a quiz) – 34 link clicks 			
	123 <u>Website</u> site visits			
	706 <u>Have Your Say project page</u> visits			
	News Release to local media resulting in one story			
	Seven large signs throughout the community			
	Two newspaper ads in the Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows News			
	Homepage spotlight on <u>pittmeadows.ca</u>			
	Inclusion in <u>September City Talks</u> (newspaper, social media)			
	Inclusion in City's internal staff email			
	Digital sign at City Hall			
Engagement	 51 QR code scans (on signs and newspaper ads) 			
	209 survey responses			
	54 map pins			

At the time of the survey conclusion, 209 survey responses and 54 mapping entries have been received. The 54 mapping entries were contributed by 15 total participants.

The following sections will discuss the responses from the public. A summary of received survey and mapping entry data is included as Appendix A, with additional long-answer responses of the survey results included as Appendix B.

1.1. SURVEY DATA SUMMARY

The HYS survey consisted of approximately 15 questions, and a total of 209 survey participants have provided responses.

1.1.1.Importance of urban forest benefits

Through the survey results, it was evident that an overwhelming majority of participants agrees with the statements pertaining to environmental as well as financial/infrastructural benefits of urban forests (through indicating moderately/very important). A notable exception to the above is regarding property value increase benefits of urban forest, where 104 (49.8%) of participants felt neutral or believes this to be an urban forest benefit of low or no importance.

Opinions varied more widely when asked about the social/cultural benefits of the urban forest compared to the other two categories of statements. Beauty and improved mental health benefits are noted to be important/very important to participants. Benefits such as food production and historical/cultural value received a larger proportion of neutral opinions (approx. 25% for each statement), but overall has also been noted to be of importance.

1.1.2. Urban forest challenges experienced by participants

Participants appear to experience a minimal number of challenges associated with having trees in Pitt Meadows; however, 104 respondents noted that ongoing maintenance of trees is a somewhat frequent or a frequent challenge while 89 respondents noted that roots uplifting sidewalks or driveways has presented somewhat frequent or frequent issues. In addition to the choices provided by the survey, participants also listed challenges that included the following (summarized from the open-ended responses):

- · needing more protection of existing trees,
- more replacement trees for new developments,
- · poor choice of tree species and sap from trees,
- homelessness issues in green/treed areas,
- invasive plant species,
- lack of shade in recreation areas,
- a lack of diversification of trees species, and
- trees being planted under hydro lines.

1.1.3. Canopy coverage and management practices

169 (80.9%) of participants responded that Pitt Meadows' current canopy coverage is inadequate, while 18 (8.6%) believes it is adequate, and 22 (10.5%) unsure. When asked about the importance of increasing canopy cover in various areas, participants overwhelmingly reported the importance of coverage on parks



and natural areas. This result is also supported by some participant comments from other sections of the survey, including additional description of the inadequate shade in parklands and open spaces for enjoyment of these public spaces.

There are more participants who feel neutral (25.4%) regarding increasing coverage on private property compared to the other two categories. However, in general, participant responses indicate a majority who feels it is important or moderately important to increase tree canopy coverage on private lands as well (66.5%).

1.1.4. Urban forest management

A significant majority of participants (199 responses, 95.2%) would like to see introduction of other types of urban forest/green infrastructure features and initiatives.

A majority of respondents placed importance on the City to require minimum tree targets for new housing developments, to provide forested or shaded recreational spaces and walking/cycling pathways, to focus on retaining or increasing the total number of trees, and to focus on retaining large, mature trees or mature forested areas.

When asked how important it is for the City to manage certain aspects of the Urban Forest, participants responded that trees in parks and landscape in public areas are most important followed by trees in natural areas, street trees, trees in agricultural areas not being farmed, and trees on private land within the Urban Boundary, respectively. The majority of participants also noted that they would like to see initiatives to introduce other forms of green infrastructure. Appendix A provides additional comments from residents on urban forest management in Pitt Meadows as well as locations of significant trees to be protected.

1.1.5. Demographics

The demographic questions are noted at the end of the survey and are optional questions intended to assist in providing internal information to staff and the consultant team. Very few participants have skipped these questions (2-5 participants, varied per question) and the resulting data is considered appropriate to elicit further discussion.

The majority of participants (189, 91.3%) reside within Pitt Meadows' Urban Containment Boundary. It is noted that only 12 participants (5.8%) reside outside of the Urban Containment Boundary, and 6 are not residents of Pitt Meadows (2.9%). It is understood there are urban forest interfaces with adjacent jurisdictions, as well as community organizations who are interested in the topic that would have resulted in interest and participation from those who are not residents of the City. Overall, the geographic array of participants is reflective of and consistent with prior contextual understanding that the topic of engagement would include relatively lower participation of residents outside of the Urban Containment Boundary and non-City residents.

The majority of participants (197, 94.3%) indicated to be within ages 20-79. It should be noted that the composition of the three age brackets (20-39, 40-59, and 60-79) is relatively evenly split, indicating that the

engagement efforts received equal interest from participants across most age groups. While flyers had been distributed to schools, it is uncertain whether the 3 participants under 19 years of age is a direct result of this outreach effort or a result of other types of efforts or reasons.

1.2. MAPPING DATA SUMMARY

The HYS platform also offered Pitt Meadows' residents the opportunity to tag specific areas on a map to ask questions and identify tree locations. There were 15 participants in the mapping exercise and together the participants made 54 entries on the map. 31 places were identified as "improvement needed" and 23 were identified as "valued place". Detailed comments and corresponding locations are provided in Appendix A.

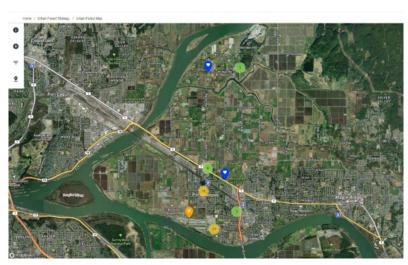


Figure 3: Screenshot of mapped pins at end of engagement period.

Mapped pins covered various areas

around the City. Positive comments included appreciation of existing parkland and open space, notably comments mentioning tree stands and canopy coverage in various areas within neighbourhoods and adjacent to recreational facilities. Comments for improvements included desire for more canopy and maintenance of forested areas that have observed dumping behaviours.

2. Open House

The open house took place in the lobby of the recreation centre from 5-7 pm on a Wednesday. On the date of the open house, most of the lobby was a construction safety zone and so the open house was only able to be staged in the front entry portion of the lobby.



Figure 4: Citizens participating at Open House

Despite the setup, most people attending the open house seemed to be visiting the recreation centre specifically to attend the open house. Many people visited the rec centre throughout the evening, but those appearing to be dressed for physical activities did not generally step further into the lobby or pause to read the boards. It's possible there was some benefit to them seeing that there is an urban forest strategy, but it's unlikely to have resulted in additional survey participants.

Of the people who engaged in the open house, many had concerns about

urban forestry. The most common seemed to be questions about whether the Urban Forest Strategy would address observed negative changes – such as climate change and/or invasive species – to forested areas within the city. Other questions were formed around requests including:

- stewardship program and/or other volunteer opportunities,
- selecting appropriate tree species for planting, i.e. avoid large conifers in boulevards, and
- > enacting a tree bylaw to prevent neighbours from cutting down trees without the city's review or input.

Wildfire/urban interface fire was also a relatively common concern, as was the question of where funding will come from to hire new staff to implement the strategy.

Feedback was mostly positive, and attendees primarily attended to ensure that their concerns about the urban forest would be addressed through this strategy. Overall it's estimated that we had about 15-20 attendees during the 2-hour open house. It should be noted that most attendees had either already filled out the online survey and map, or already knew about the ongoing engagement and intend to fill the survey after visiting the open house and receiving extra information/discussion.

Notably, the engagement boards with maps were helpful because many attendees pointed out their home location on the aerial map, which gave excellent context to their discussions about various neighbourhood areas. It has been reflected through discussion with participating citizens that the city is already well developed and so tree canopy growth cannot rely primarily on new land developments. Trees will have to strategically be planted into existing built environments. More than one attendee brought informational printouts from various sources across the Lower Mainland, which they wanted to pass along as useful for the Strategy. For example, a printout of New Westminster's replacement tree list, with handwritten notes on it about recommendations for Pitt Meadows' future replacement tree list. Another example was information about invasive species treatments and native shrub planting guidelines.



Figure 5: Some of the interactive and map boards presented at open house

3. CLOSING

Phase 1 of the engagement is aimed to gather resident feedback and aspirations based on a shared understanding of benefits of urban forests to facilitate the draft of the Urban Forest Strategy. The data gathered from the participants through engagement efforts reflected a desire for the Strategy to place focus on maintaining existing canopy coverage, to increase opportunities for additional canopy on public and City lands, as well as to place emphasis on the mental/physical, environmental, and beautifying benefits of the Urban Forest.

From the survey results, there is a desire for the City to take on a greater role in managing the urban forest, as many of the long-answer comments indicated challenges that may not be resolved through citizen or community efforts alone. The open house discussions provided understanding of some of the technical challenges to be resolved and considered.

The engagement efforts have highlighted the challenges and opportunities related to the urban forest within the City. From the received feedback, citizens and participants have provided valuable information that will shape the directions for the Urban Forest Strategy.

Sincerely,

McElhanney Ltd.

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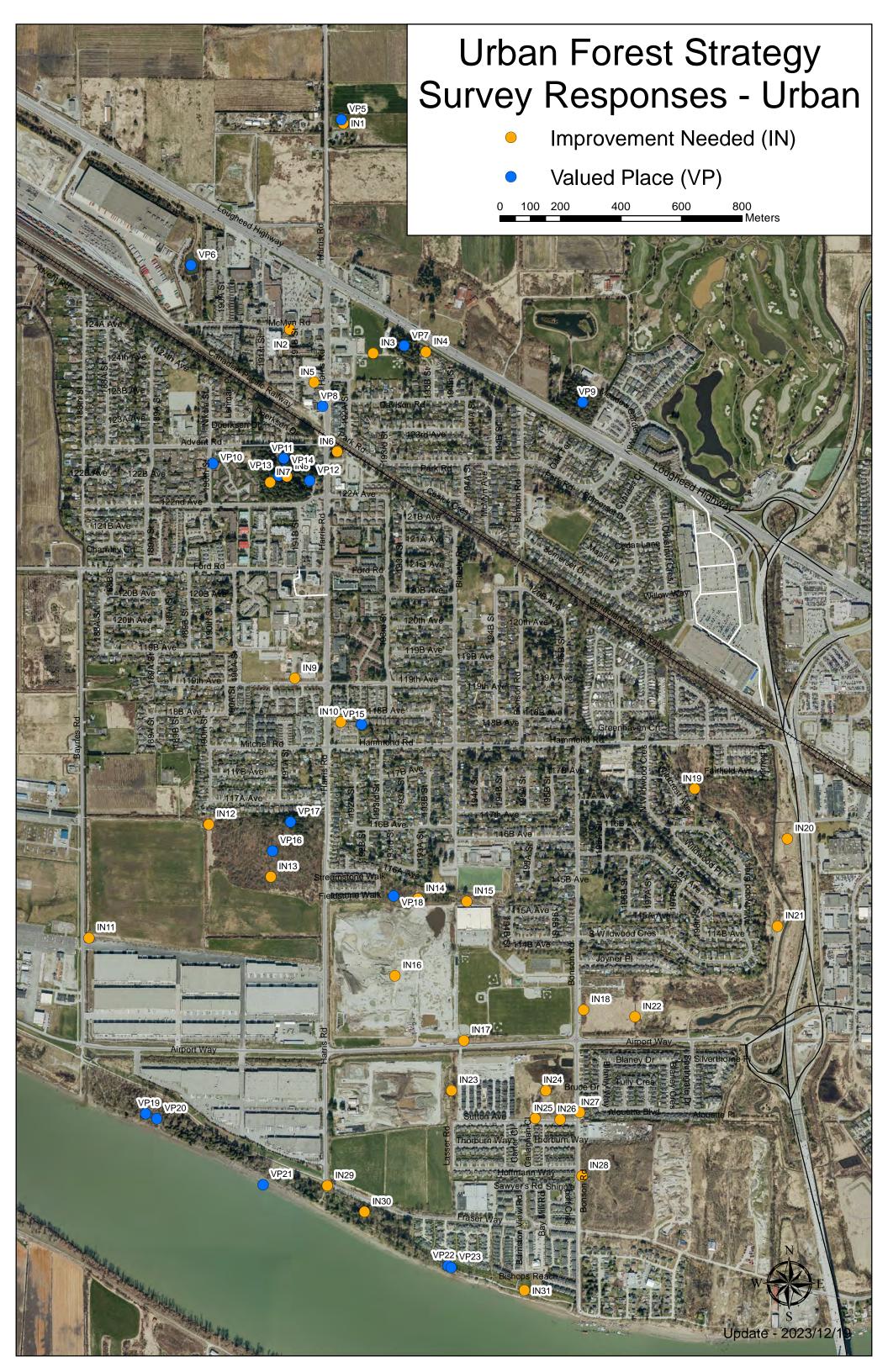
- > Appendix A Map Survey Responses
- > Appendix B Survey Responses

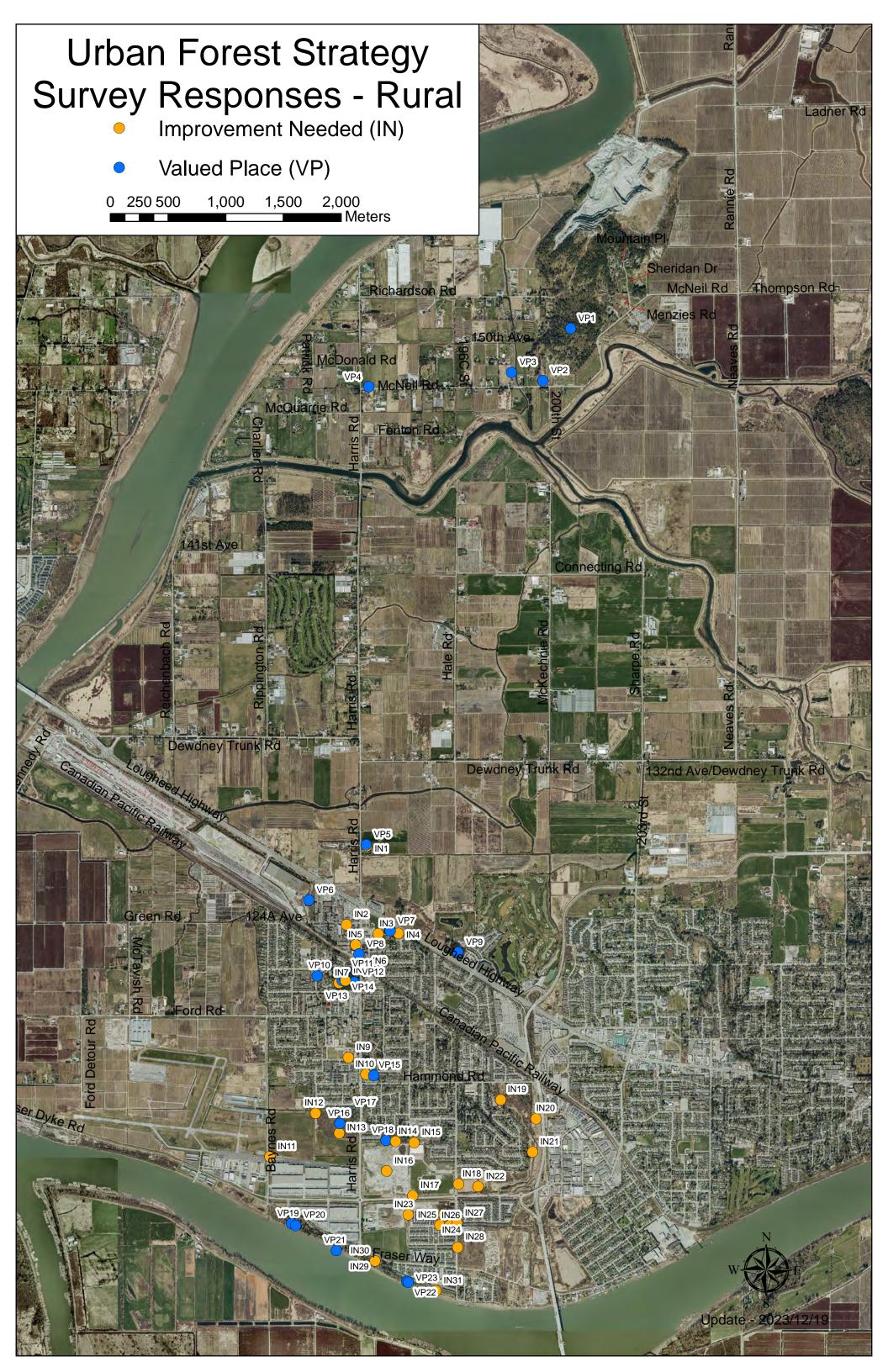
	Marker Details		
Date of contribution	Category		Your Comment
Oct 01 23 08:24:22 am	Improvement Needed	IN01	Would love to see slower traffic and more access options (pathway/cycling infrastructure/bus stops) so that ALL citizens can access & support farmers & farmland safely.
Sep 08 23 11:19:56 am	Improvement Needed	IN02	This stretch of McMyn needs a lot more tree coverage. The west end of McMyn is nice and shaded but once you approach Shoppers there is no shade until you cross Harris. This is hard to families walking with young kids and pets who rely on the shade for safety and comfort.
Sep 08 23 11:23:37 am	Improvement Needed	IN03	More tree coverage to shade the footpath through the park would be great for families heading to the pool / water park / playground.
Oct 01 23 08:01:06 am	Improvement Needed	IN04	More trees please, between traffic and pathway.
Sep 08 23 11:27:00 am	Improvement Needed	IN05	More tree coverage is needed around the shell station to make this area comfortable for pedestrians
Sep 11 23 04:43:16 pm	Improvement Needed	IN06	What's going to happen to the majestic trees surrounding our fabulous museum?
Oct 01 23 07:53:29 am	Improvement Needed	IN07	User groups have dug out soil & greatly exposed tree roots, chalked and painted trees, spread plastic craft pieces (such as glitter/sequins) and left toys throughout, broken branches off of fruit bearing trees, used force to destroy logs/stumps/tree bark, and so forth throughout this forest, particularly in the past few years. The big species in forests (owls/woodpeckers), need to eat the little species in forests (bugs/worms). Forest space should be self-sustaining, but eating pieces of plastic, bugs covered in paint/chalk, or smashing living spaces, that should be left to naturally break down and nourish the forest floor; does not support the biodiversity we need for our City centre forest.
Oct 01 23 07:57:17 am	Improvement Needed	IN08	Smoking and garbage here and all forests & park spaces: 100's of cigarette butts are picked up monthly & buckets of garbage. Neither supports the biodiversity of the forest. Cigarette butts, many left to smoulder, could easily ignite this forest and homes surrounding, for blocks. Bylaws clear. Garbage cans at exits. Smoking & garbage is never permitted in any forest/park/public space.
Oct 01 23 07:46:38 am	Improvement Needed	IN09	We need more greening & tree canopy in all school yards. In the early 2000's school trees were removed @PME because of loiterers. The loiterers are still there. Any and all plant life provides immense learning opportunities for children, no better place than a school yard. Children should be active in planting and caring for a wide variety of gardens, trees, and green landscaping for their educational benefit, the filtering of exhaust from parent vehicles idling always, & the beatification and shade provided. The current dirt with little grass remaining, drags mud & dust into the schools, & is a slippery mess for children and adults. Grass might not be the best option any more in high traffic areas. Worked well 20 years ago, lots of biodiversity to look at
Oct 01 23 07:59:42 am	Improvement Needed	IN10	Many city playgrounds are scorching hot in the summer. They all need much more tree coverage, which could also help with air quality in a playground like this one, on a major traffic route.
Oct 01 23 07:34:53 am	Improvement Needed	IN11	Hot spot for neighbours dumping garden plants into biodiverse wetland/forest space. We all have green waste pickup,
Sep 08 23 02:17:12 pm	Improvement Needed	IN12	Extend forest and plant along here. Trees were lost in storms and need to replace.
Sep 07 23 01:40:05 pm	Improvement Needed	IN13	Possibility to add walking trails or a ring around the outside of this area, or expand to the open field.

Sep 17 23 11:53:03 am	Improvement Needed	IN14	Trees need to be replaced to offset the paved path through the area.
Sep 06 23 04:27:27 pm	Improvement Needed	IN15	The new path cut through the bottom area of this green space. Add trees here to improve the massive amount of concrete that was added.
Sep 17 23 11:59:59 am	Improvement Needed	IN16	Onni has created a huge urban heat island and impermeable area that requires some kind of ecosystem service.
Sep 07 23 01:37:12 pm	Improvement Needed	IN17	Trees were removed from here, there need to be large mature trees added back to create a sound and sun barrier.
Sep 07 23 01:29:27 pm	Improvement Needed	IN18	There are trees on one side of the street, would look great to add trees on this side as well.
Sep 10 23 06:18:57 am	Improvement Needed	IN19	
Sep 08 23 10:59:41 am	Improvement Needed	IN20	With all the work that was done here recently, I was surprised that the road built here was not turned into a walking trail.
Sep 07 23 01:31:03 pm	Improvement Needed	IN21	There is currently no shade or wind cover in this area.
Sep 07 23 01:31:36 pm	Improvement Needed	IN22	Great area to add a park or walking trails
Sep 06 23 04:04:36 pm	Improvement Needed	IN23	Please ensure that whatever green berm Onni is placing here actually offsets the detriments of residential interfacing with a business park.
Sep 06 23 03:59:51 pm	Improvement Needed	IN24	During the atmospheric river some of airport way flooded. This area appears to be zoned for public institutional use, but please ensure that there is preservation of some of the green space to assist with flood mitigation and general aesthetics.
Oct 01 23 07:36:19 am	Improvement Needed	IN25	Large accumulation of cigarette butts in this space which is pollution and not supported of biodiversity in this wetlands space
Oct 01 23 07:37:28 am	Improvement Needed	IN26	Hot spot for neighbours dumping garden plants into biodiverse wetland/forest space, throughout this road/ditch space. We all have green waste pickup
Oct 01 23 07:35:20 am	Improvement Needed	IN27	Hot spot for neighbours dumping garden plants into biodiverse wetland/forest space. We all have green waste pickup,
Sep 06 23 04:13:14 pm	Improvement Needed	IN28	Another business park now. Can the landscaping buffer at least include some tall trees.
Oct 01 23 07:39:39 am	Improvement Needed	IN29	Many citizens dumps of freezers/arm chairs, barbecues, household waste, seasonal trash, unwanted pets (bunnies), etc in all directions of this area. Some hauled into park, and along roadways and ditches in all directions.
Oct 01 23 07:41:17 am	Improvement Needed	IN30	Hot spot for neighbours dumping garden plants into biodiverse wetland/forest space. We all have green waste pickup Also ditch space used for dumping unwanted household items.

Sep 07 23 01:42:52 pm	Improvement Needed	IN31	More Mature trees, all the new ones planted there are too small and will take years to make any significant impact on creating a natural shade canopy.
Sep 07 23 08:38:19 pm	Valued Place	VP01	please save what remains of Sheridan Hill
Sep 10 23 01:58:43 pm	Valued Place	VP02	
Sep 10 23 02:06:16 pm	Valued Place	VP03	
Sep 11 23 04:45:10 pm	Valued Place	VP04	
Oct 01 23 08:22:27 am	Valued Place	VP05	Every single farmland space, in every direction, is. valued space. We need to preserve the spaces, promote environmentally sensitive practices, and limit building/roadway intrusion.
Sep 08 23 11:17:05 am	Valued Place	VP06	McLean Park is an extremely valuable location. As with other parks, no-smoking should be better enforced to prevent fires.
Sep 08 23 11:21:50 am	Valued Place	VP07	We love all the tree coverage on the east end of Harris Park near the playground. This is a popular area for families.
Sep 16 23 08:42:47 am	Valued Place	VP08	
Sep 25 23 11:00:52 am	Valued Place	VP09	Preserve the eagle habitat
Sep 16 23 08:45:46 am	Valued Place	VP10	
Sep 08 23 11:17:48 am	Valued Place	VP11	
Oct 01 23 08:20:19 am	Valued Place	VP12	Love our CityCentre Forest and all natural spaces in Pitt Meadows. I/we visit them every single day, for the pure enjoyment they offer. We need as many green spaces as we can sustain, even if just small spots here and there, scattered around the city, such as on a bump out, or in a parking lot space or two. The effect of nature on human beings is very well studied and documented. *Very, very small children (toddlers) can walk 10+km per day, moving themselves, happily & respectfully, to engage in our natural spaces.
Sep 14 23 11:01:12 pm	Valued Place	VP13	We love being able to explore the forest without having to leave our neighbourhood
Sep 05 23 11:07:34 am	Valued Place	VP14	This is an extremely important forested place, but have concerns about fire safey with so many smokers in the park and how quickly a fire here could threaten houses nearby.
Sep 20 23 05:23:19 pm	Valued Place	VP15	Large Stand of Native Trees that support each other during windstorms and could form part of the Lions Park through the redevelopment process.

Sep 16 23 09:35:30 am	Valued Place	VP16	
Sep 06 23 04:28:49 pm	Valued Place	VP17	Province Adjac - Mark transmiss report of the Section Section 1999
Sep 06 23 04:28:23 pm	Valued Place	VP18	
Sep 06 23 04:14:37 pm	Valued Place	VP19	Pease continue protecting the Pitt River Regional Greenway
Sep 06 23 04:24:52 pm	Valued Place	VP20	Bank erosion is taking a lot of mature trees down, it would be important to replace the forest.
Oct 01 23 08:13:18 am	Valued Place	VP21	MetroVan Greenway offers everything green spaces should have: Immense biodiversity (things are left to feed species, removal at appropriate times), no harvesting guidelines, Occasional onsite/educated staff, occasional on site education events, washroom facilities cleaned daily, a designated smoking areas, clear garbage options, very clear signage/education/patrols/ticketing, very immediate followup solutions to situations that come up. Still adults try to break the rules, but they do face followup. More of everything would be extra awesome! Great community of regular users of this space and watch out for its health and wellness.
Sep 06 23 03:12:18 pm	Valued Place	VP22	
Sep 28 23 05:38:03 pm	Valued Place	VP23	







Urban Forest Strategy Survey

SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT

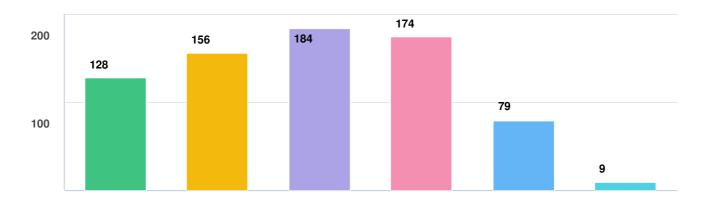
05 September 2023 - 05 October 2023

PROJECT NAME: Urban Forest Strategy





Q1 What do you value most about Pitt Meadows' Urban Forest? Select all that apply.



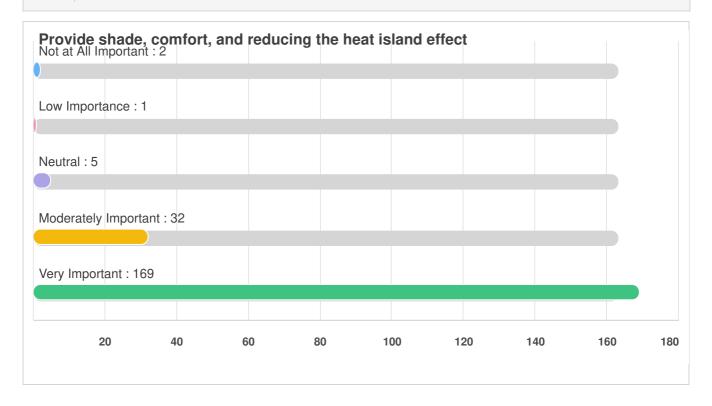
Question options

- Recreation and social activities
 Mental and physical well-being
- Environmental benefits like habitat, pollinator support, biodiversity
- Olimate change benefits like temperature control, air quality improvements, stormwater run-off, carbon storage
- Financial benefits like increasing property value and reducing costs of heating/cooling Other (please specify)

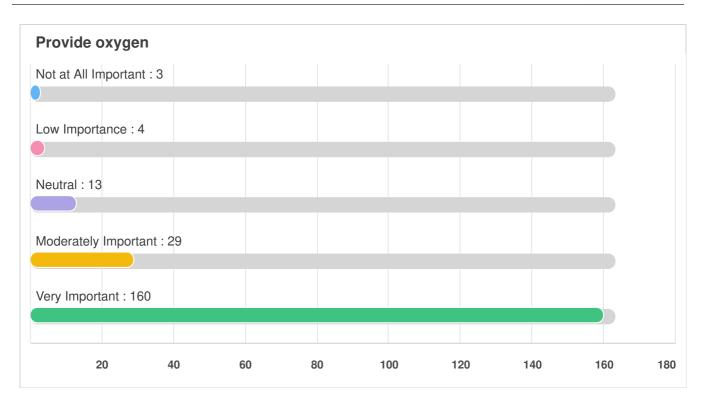
Mandatory Question (209 response(s))
Question type: Checkbox Question



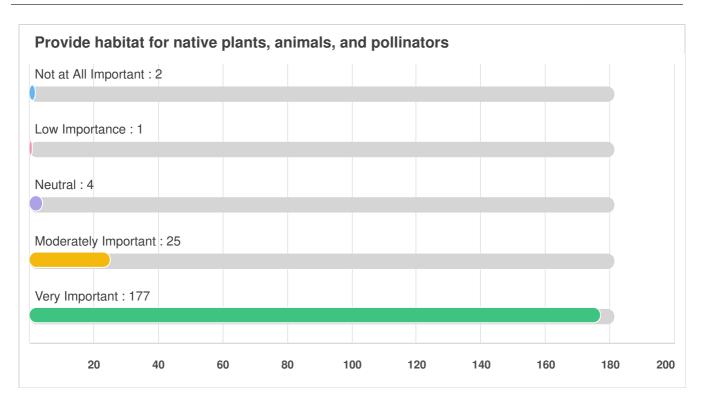
Q2 Environmental / Climate Change Benefits



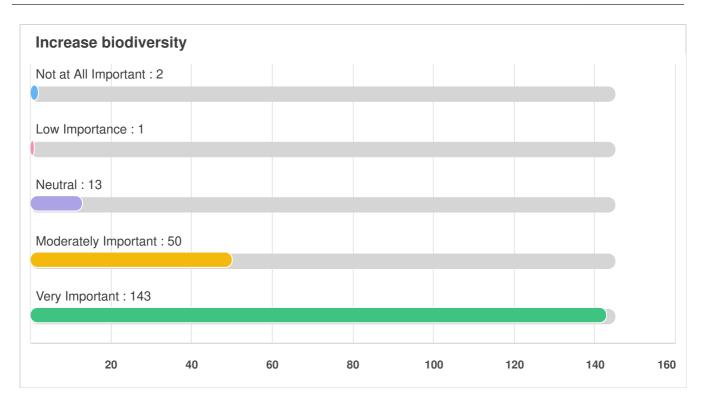




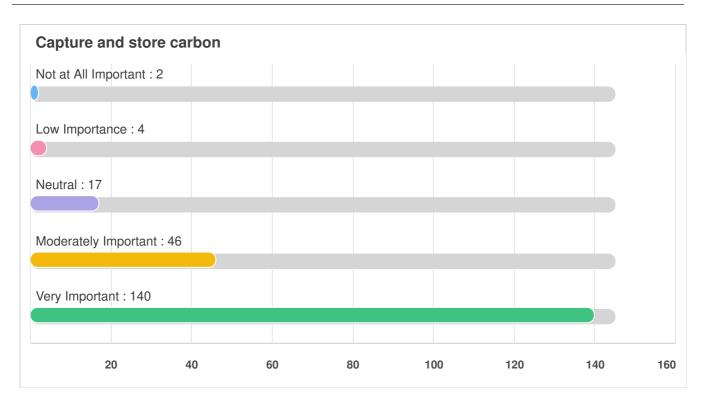




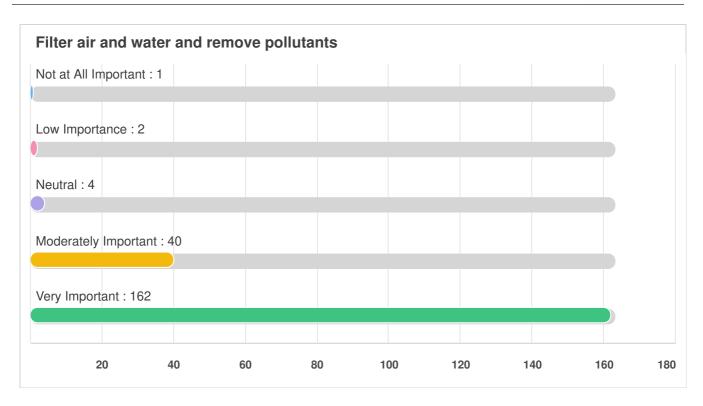






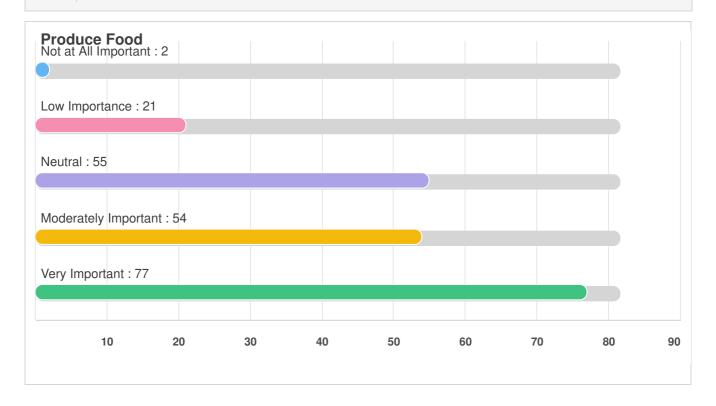




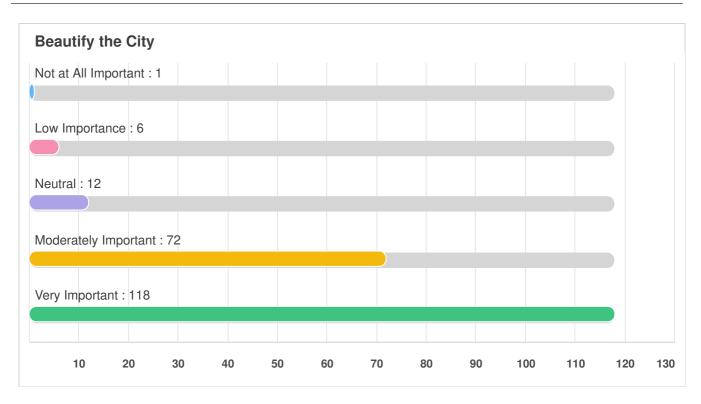




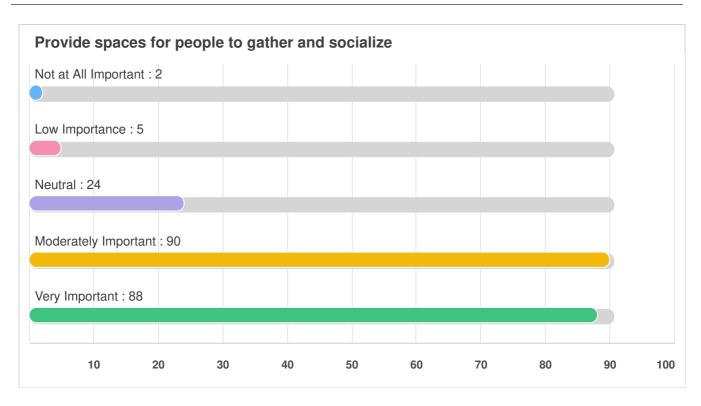
Q3 Social / Cultural Benefits



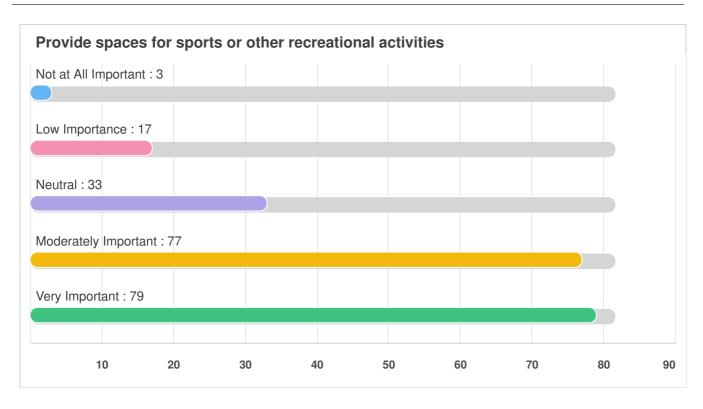




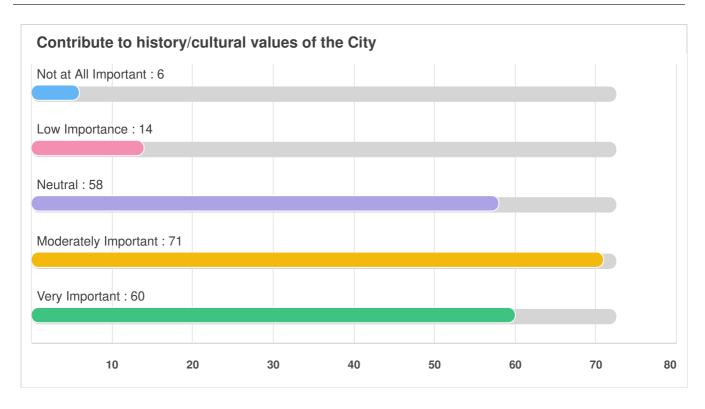




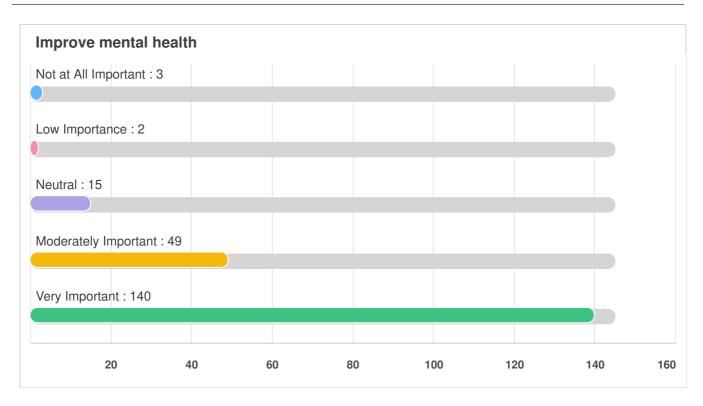






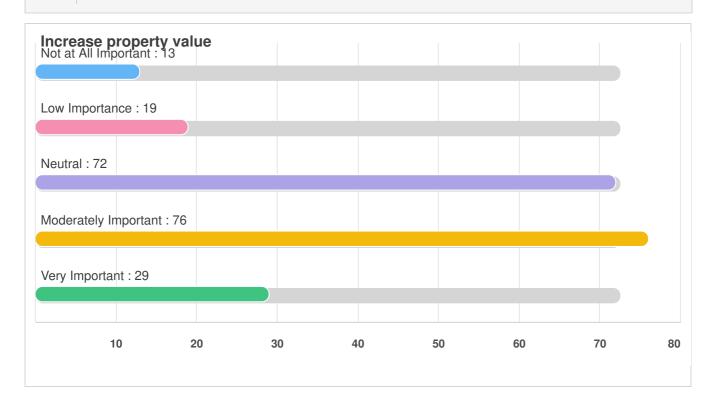




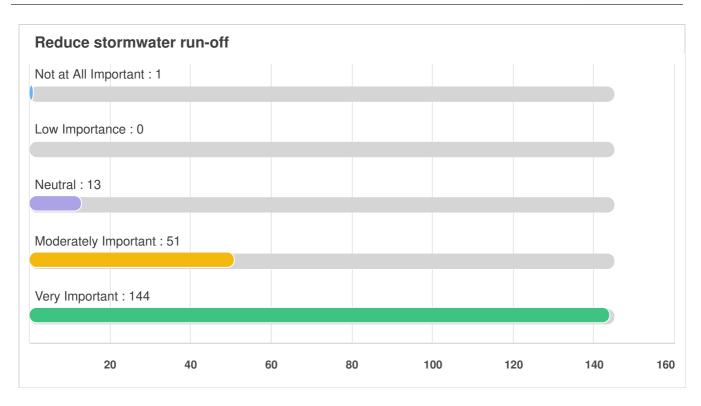




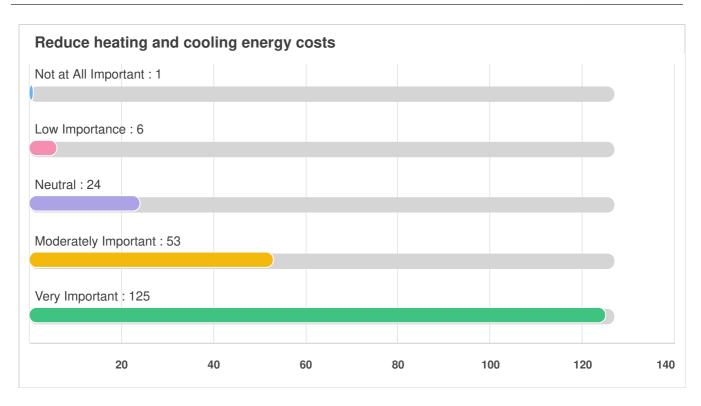
Q4 Financial / Infrastructure Benefits



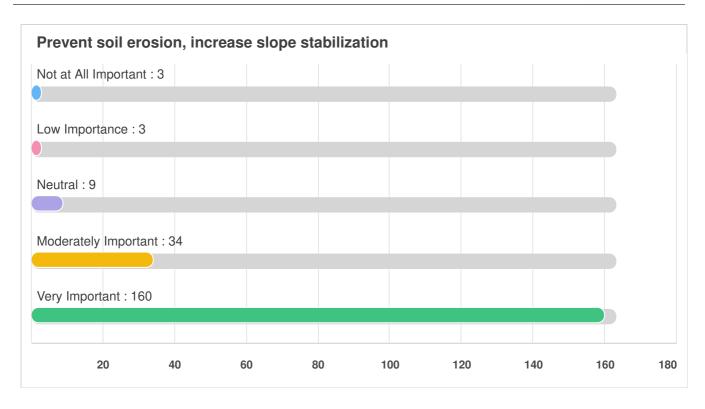




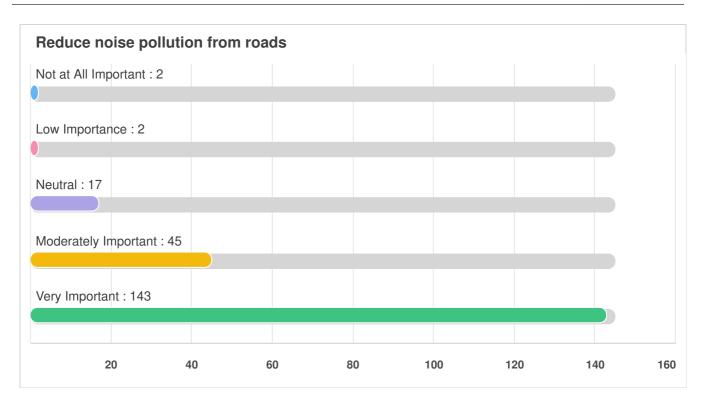






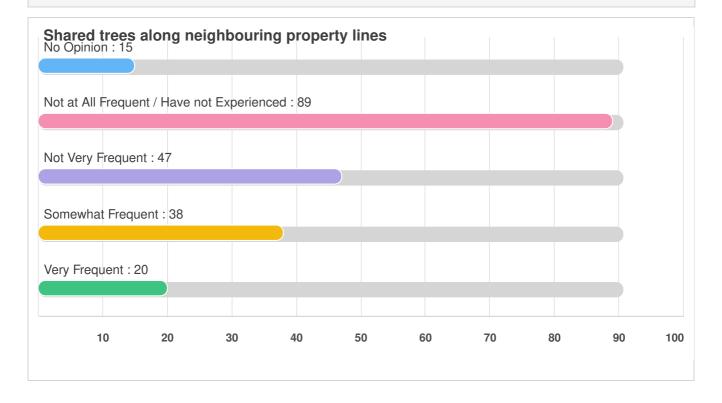




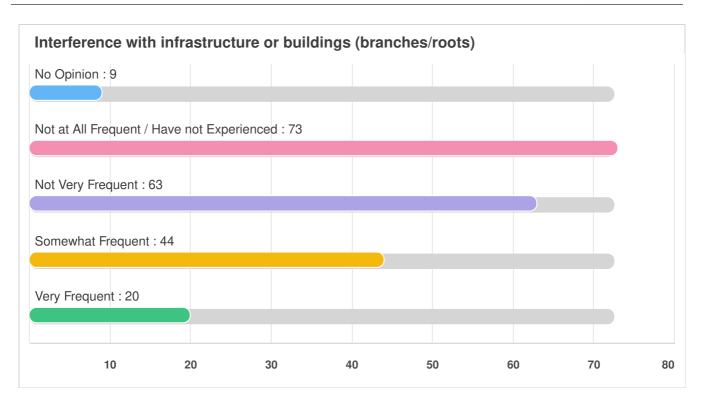




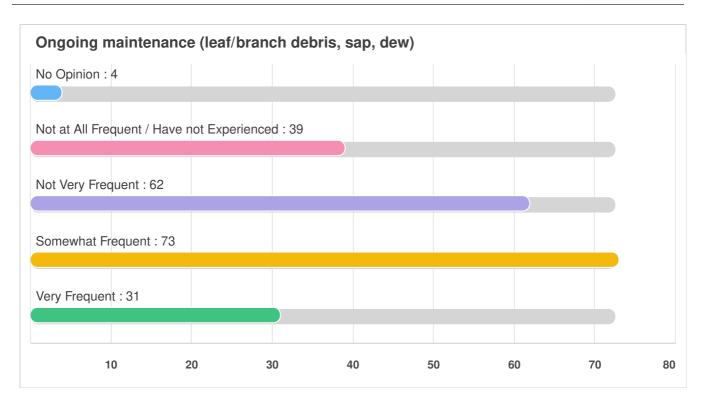
Q5 What challenges have you experienced with trees in Pitt Meadows?



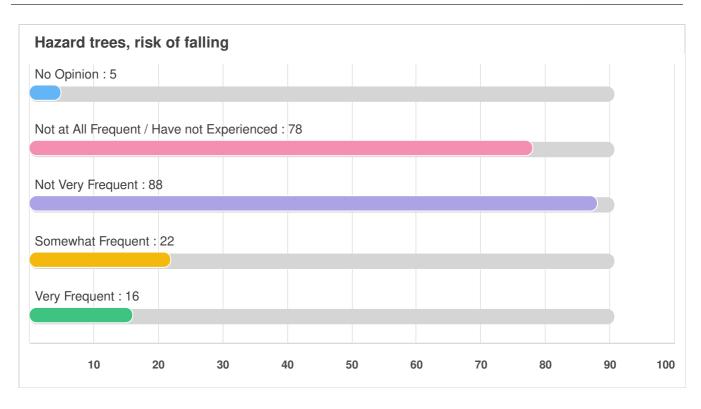




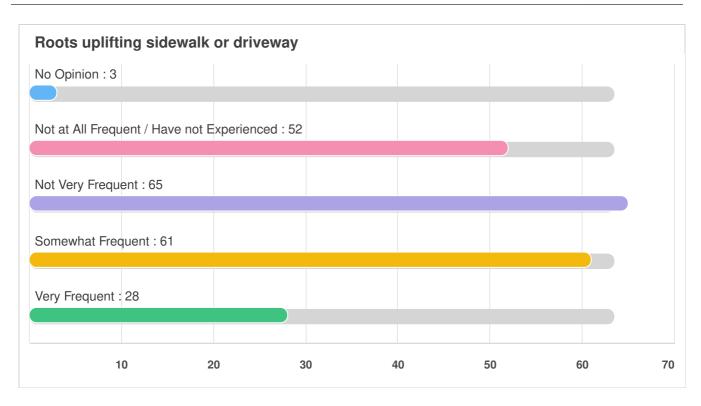




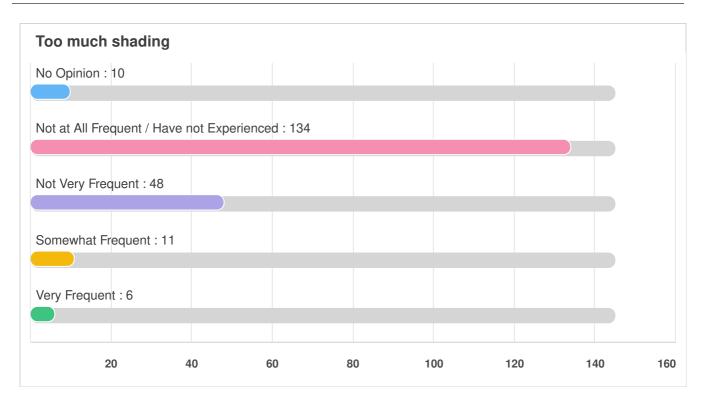




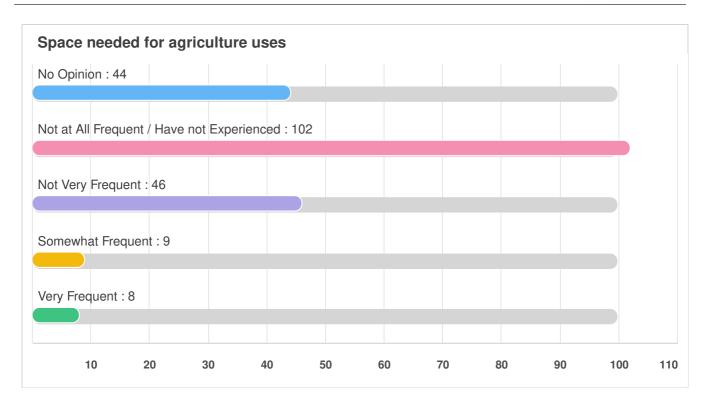




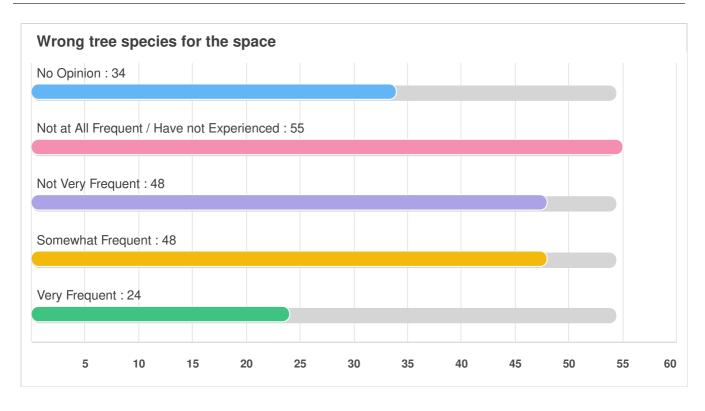








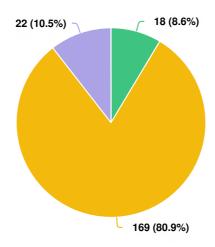




Q6 (Optional) Are there any other challenges you've experienced that were not listed in the above?



Q7 Do you feel that the current tree canopy cover in Pitt Meadows is:

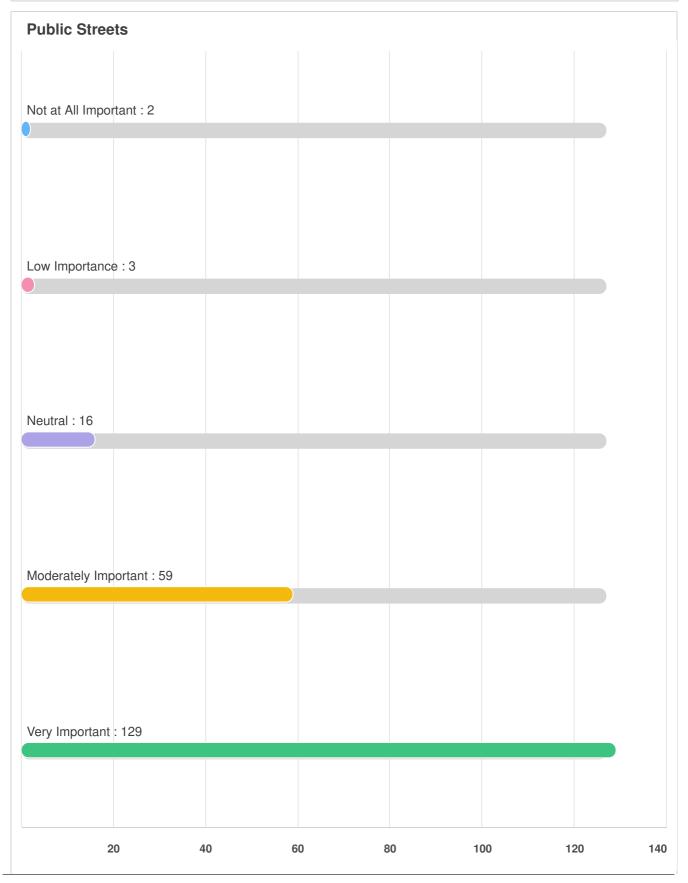




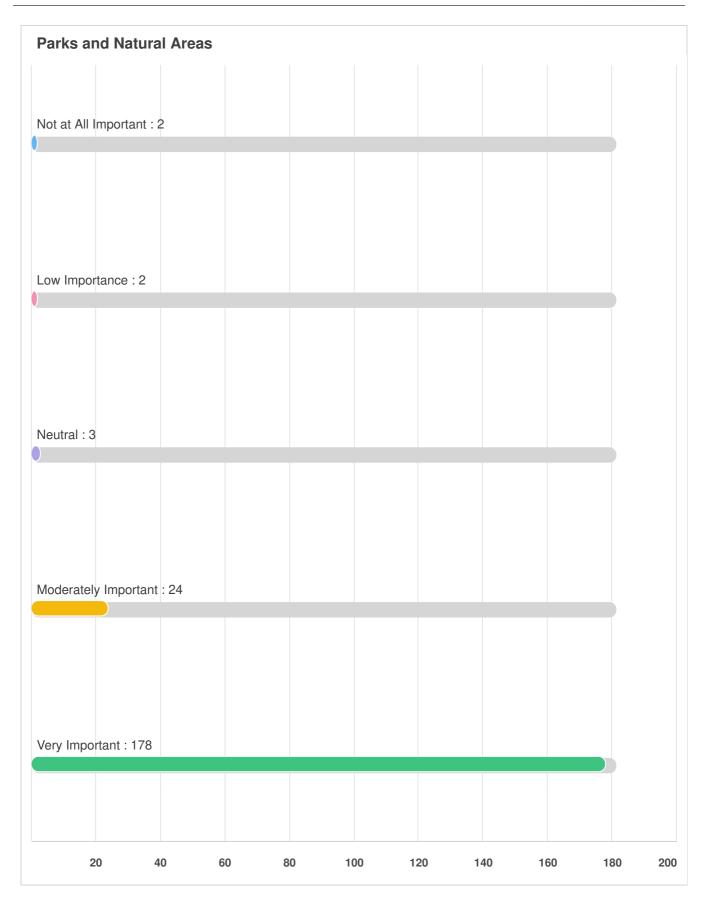
Mandatory Question (209 response(s)) Question type: Radio Button Question



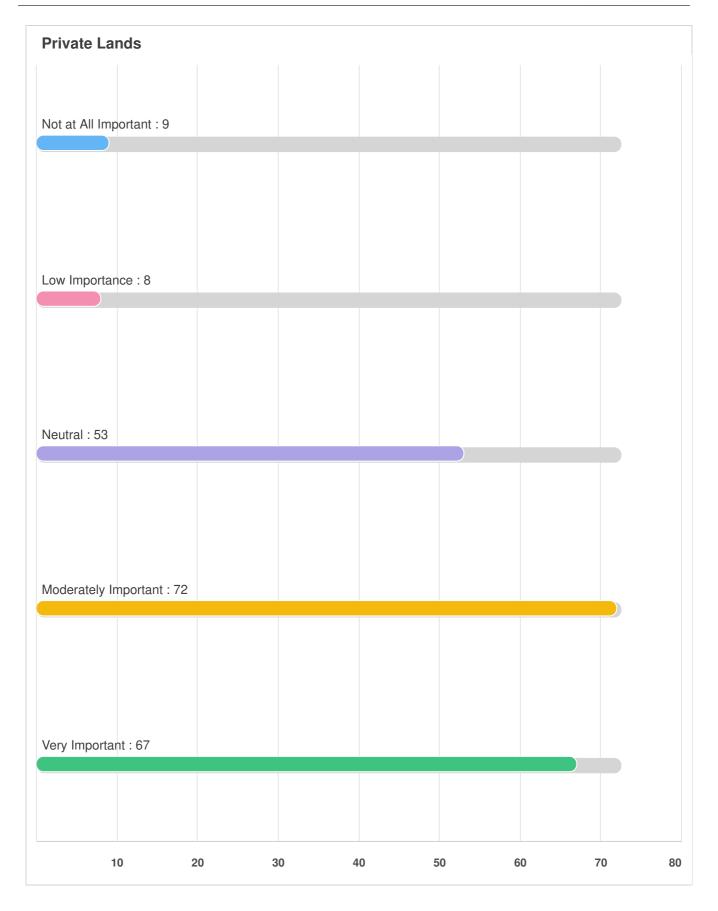
Q8 How do you feel about the following statements on managing the Urban Forest?The City should aim to increase tree canopy cover on:









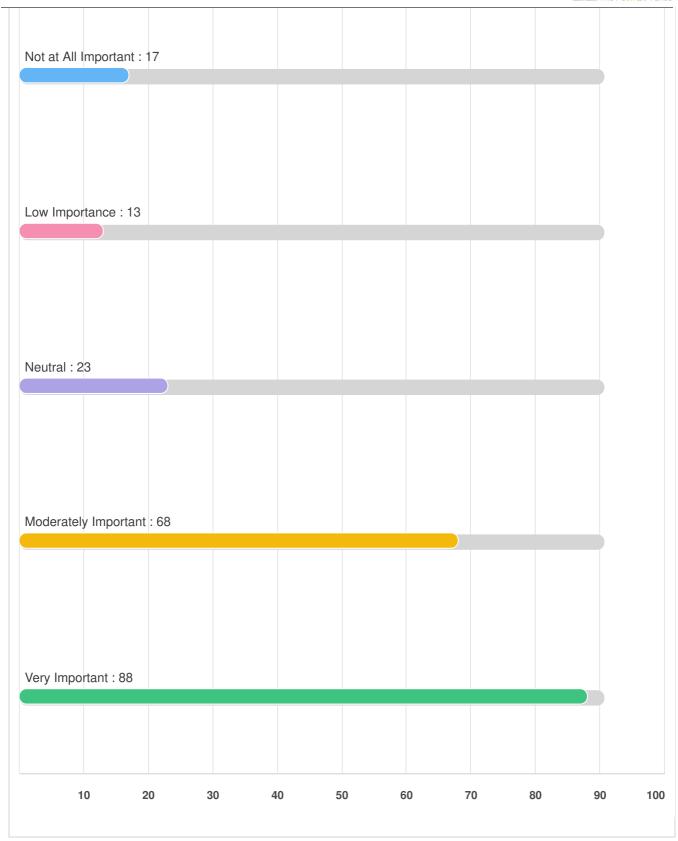




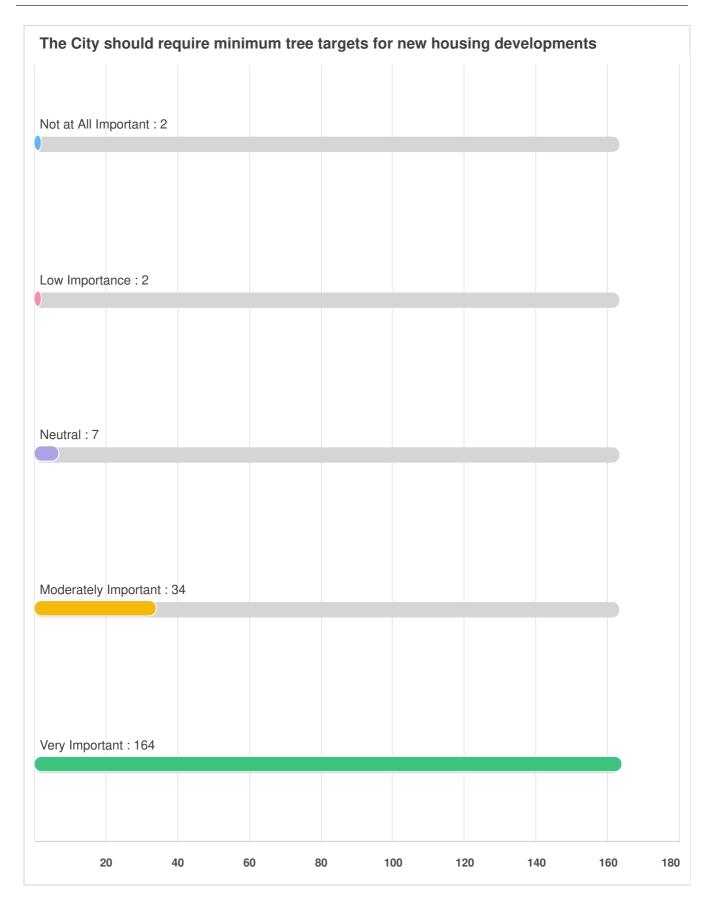
Q9 How do you feel about the following statements on managing the Urban Forest?

ŀ	The City should introduce policies and bylaws to protect trees on private property and keep record of what trees are removed										

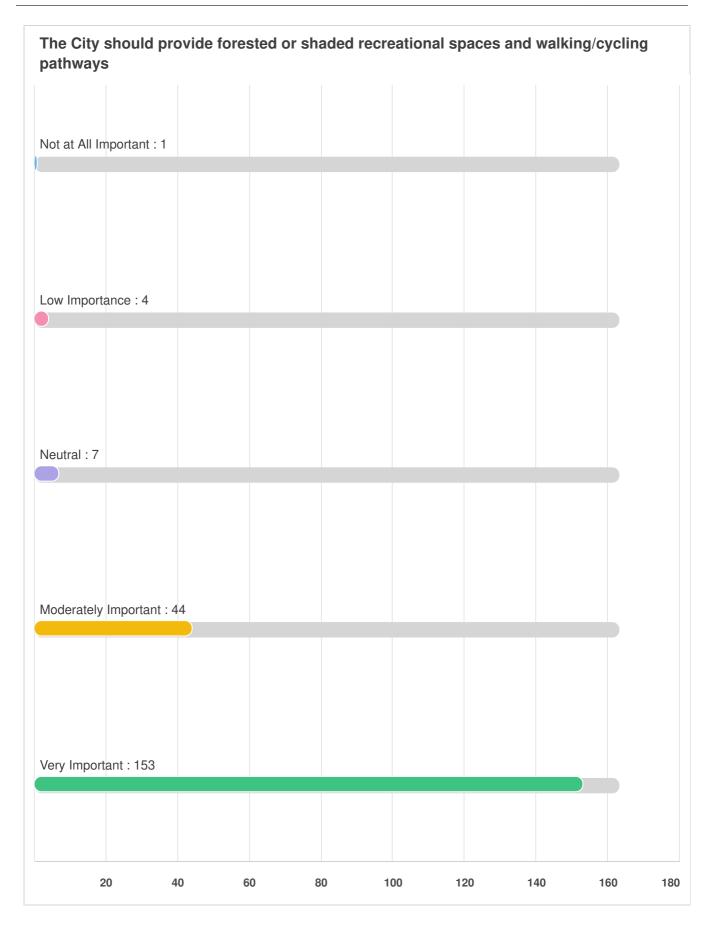




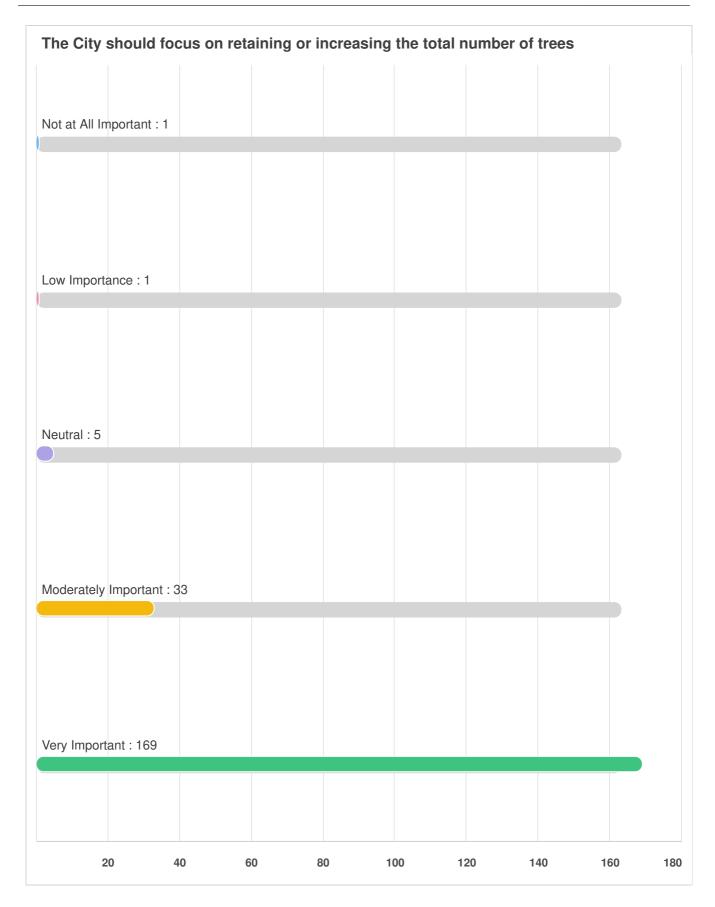




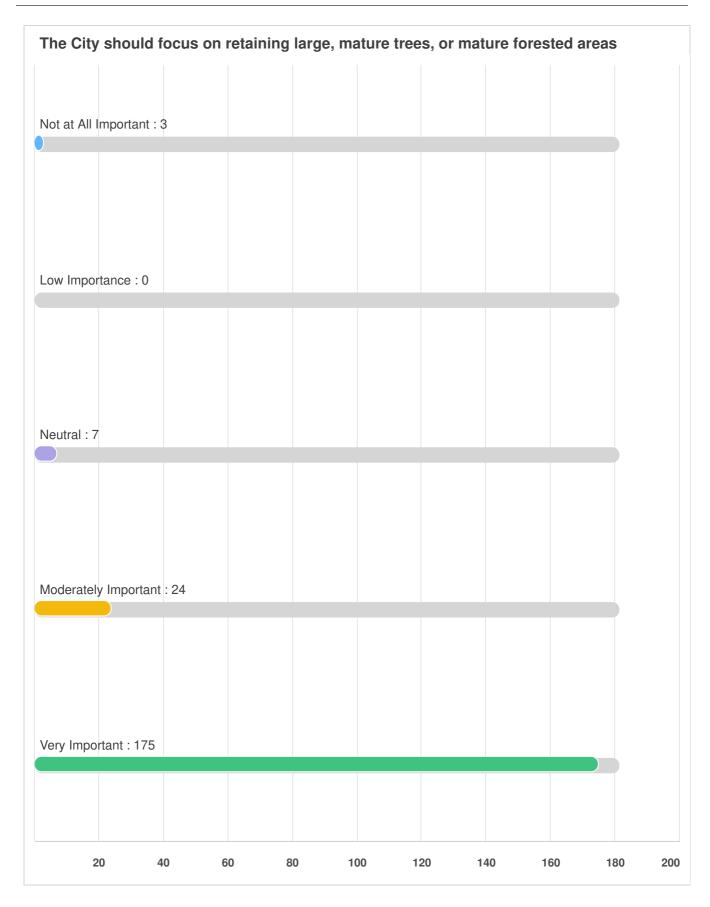






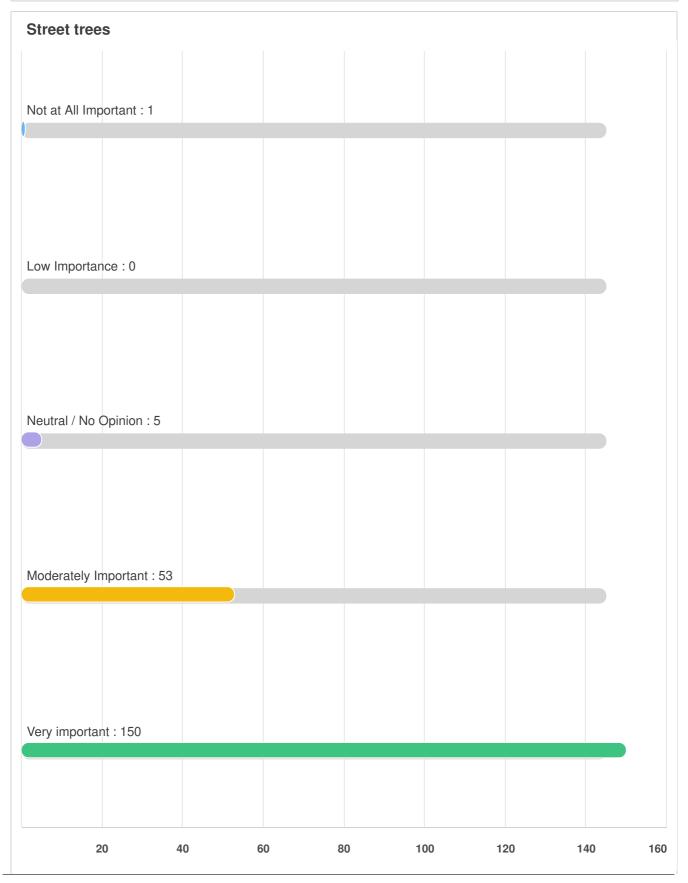




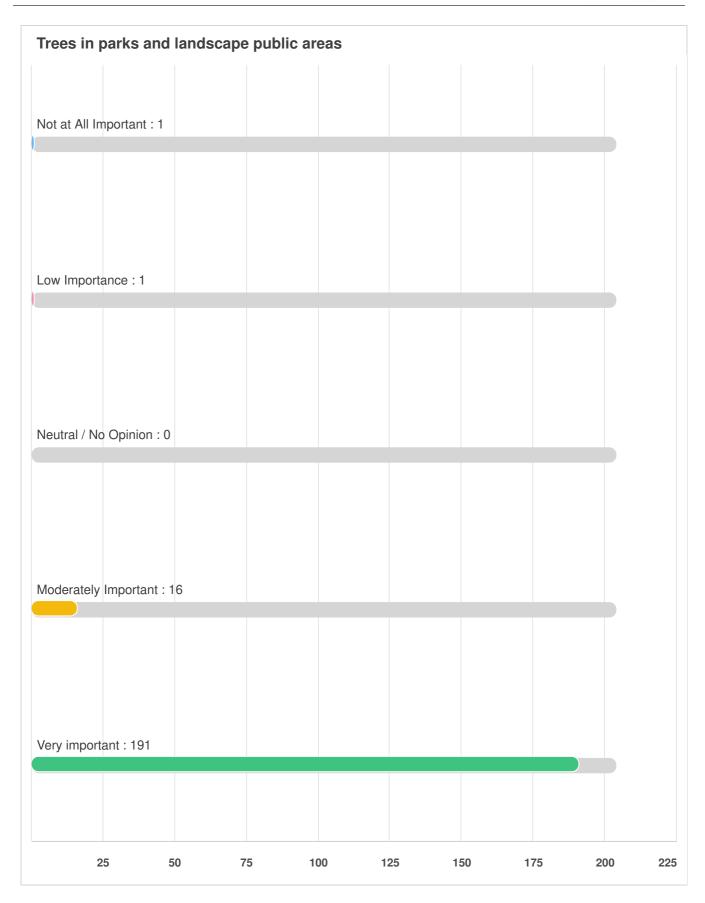




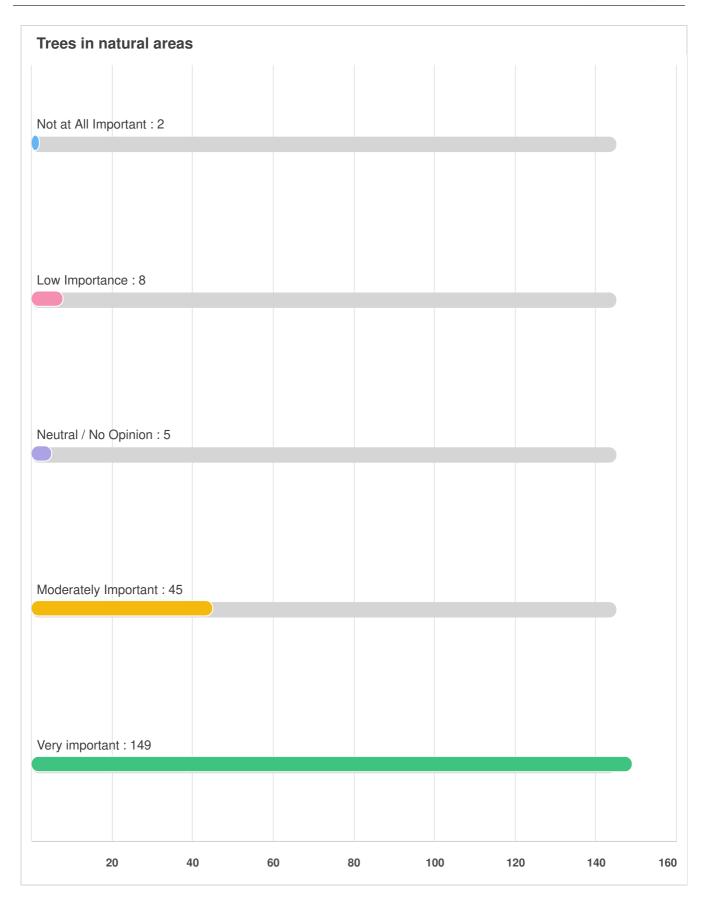
Q10 In your opinion, how important is it for the City to manage the following aspects of the Urban Forest?



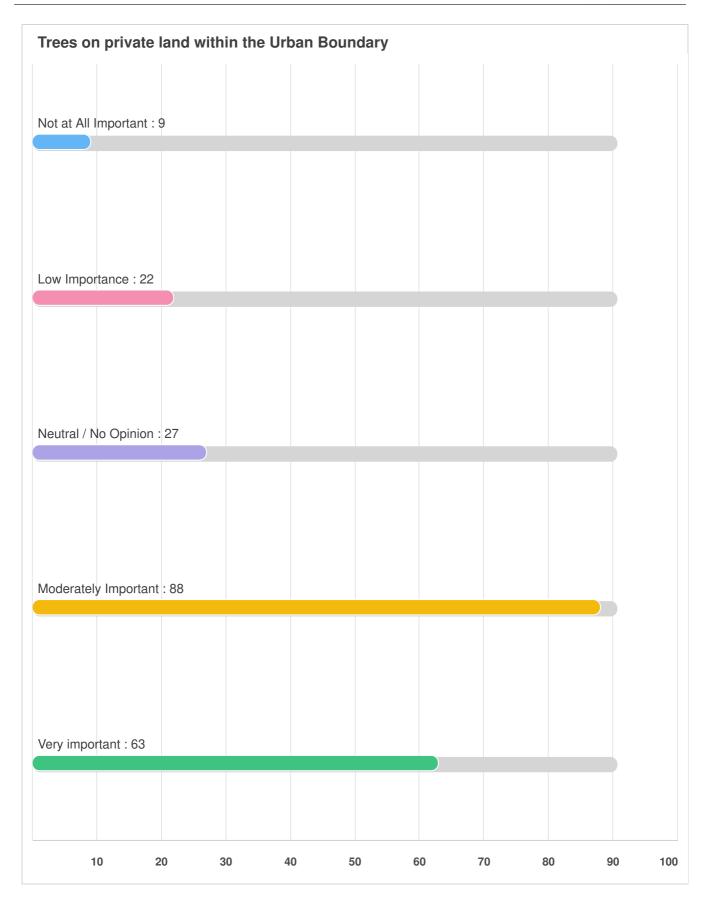




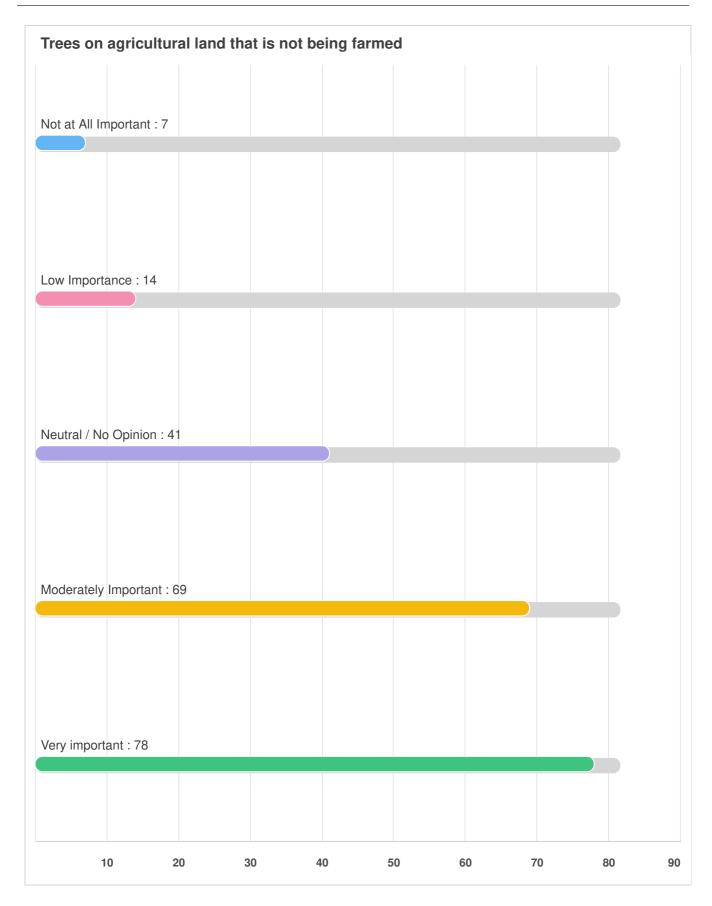






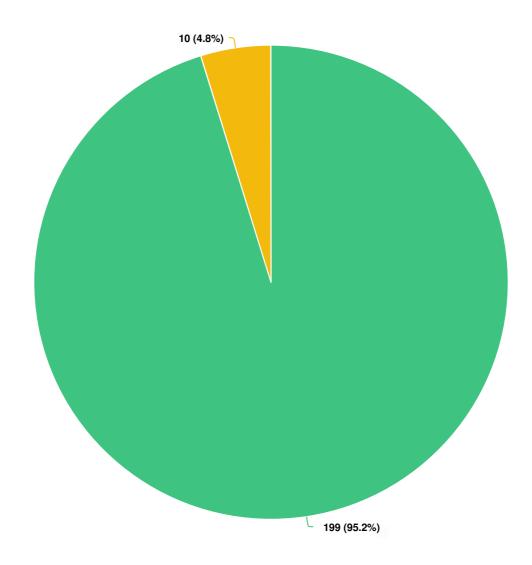








Q11 Would you like to see initiatives to introduce other urban forest/green infrastructure features to your community, such as roof gardens and green walls on public and private buildings, naturalized ponds, planting of drought-resistant trees and plan...





Mandatory Question (209 response(s)) Question type: Radio Button Question