



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN VISIONING

Survey Development Considerations

Questions + Answers

Q: Multiple choice questions have a limited number of choices. Doesn't this lead to biased results?

A: The process of developing and selection of survey questions was led by City staff in consultation with PRR, a firm specializing in community outreach. The survey questions were designed to be as open-ended as possible, while still be manageable to process.

The full survey consists of 15 questions: nine open-ended, five multiple-choice, and one ranked choice. Three out of five multiple-choice questions include an option to enter a personal response. The two remaining multiple-choice questions inquire to how long respondents have lived in Edmonds and whether they work in Edmonds—questions that have a definitive answer and are non-controversial. The final ranked choice question pertains to four priorities in the Climate Action Plan and asks respondents to rank the priorities in terms of importance.

By offering questions that are open-ended or multiple-choice with an option to enter a personal response, survey respondents are provided freedom to respond according to their beliefs.

Q: Limiting open-ended responses to 140 characters doesn't allow for full explanation of reasoning. What is the purpose of limiting responses?

A: Limiting the number of characters helps ensure respondents are precise in their response and allows us to better understand and code responses to specific topics in an expeditious manner. If we did not limit the number of characters, lengthy answers tend to become convoluted in their meaning and are more difficult to interpret. We are following best practices.

Q: What measures were taken to ensure surveys are not taken multiple times by a single individual?

A: Each survey allows one response per IP address. In theory, respondents can take the survey on one device and then again on another device. It is not something we typically see.

We are taking a holistic approach to our analysis and the subsequent development of a community vision. The survey is not scientific and if a few people decide they want to “stuff the ballot box” it will not affect results of our analysis.

Q: Why are people who do not live or work in Edmonds allowed to participate in the survey?

A: As the survey is designed there is no way to prevent non-residents or non-business owners from taking the survey. Anyone with the QR code or survey link can respond.

We could have controlled for this by utilizing a sample survey method where we mail out individual links to households that are representative of the entire community. Not only is the sample method much more expensive to administer, but it is better when applied to research studies. The City felt it was important to bring more voices to the table and broaden community awareness and discussion.

In addition, it is important to know why people choose to visit here too. So far only 1.5 percent of respondents indicated they “do not live in Edmonds” and 4.5 percent live in Esperance. As a quality control measure, survey responses will be cross tabulated to see if differences exist between residents and non-residents.