

Public Opinion Research

Methodology

- On behalf of The City, Leger conducted telephone interviews with a randomly selected sample of 504 Calgarians, aged 18 years or older, from September 23 to October 3, 2021.
- The survey sample included numbers from both landlines (31% of completed surveys) and cell phones (69%) to obtain a random and statistically representative sample of Calgarians.
- Data were weighted to be representative of adult Calgarians in terms of age, gender, and quadrant.
- The margin of error for the total sample is $\pm 4.4\%$, 19 times out of 20.
- Certain subgroups of the population are not represented in the survey due to the methodology, including those not able to complete a telephone survey (e.g., those not fluent in English, those with cognitive disabilities) and those without a phone (e.g., Calgarians experiencing homelessness, those who do not own a phone for other reasons). Calgarians under the age of 18 are also not included in this research.
- The definition of street harassment used in the survey was “Any unwelcomed comments, gestures, and actions directed at a person on a street or in a public space because of their actual or perceived gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, or religion and that are disrespectful, demeaning, alarming, and/or insulting.”

Key Findings

- Nearly two-thirds (63%) of Calgarians agree that street harassment is a serious problem in Calgary.
- Four-in-five (79%) agree The City needs to do more to prevent street harassment.
- About three-in-five (62%) Calgarians have witnessed street harassment in Calgary.
- Around one-half (53%) of Calgarians have personally experienced street harassment in Calgary. Among these citizens, about one-quarter (26%) experience it monthly or more often and three-in-five (61%) have experienced it in the past year.
- Majority of Calgarians (91%) agree that some people in Calgary are more at risk than others of experiencing street harassment.
- Top activities avoided to reduce the chances of experiencing street harassment are being in public places when dark (55%), going alone (46%), or taking transit at certain times (46%).
- Calgarians who identify as being of Asian descent are more likely than those who identify as ‘Canadian’ or of European descent to say they avoid going somewhere alone (59% vs. 40% and 44%, respectively) and being in areas where there are few people (58% vs. 39% and 43%, respectively).
- Nearly one-half (45%) of Calgarians say street harassment has a moderate (28%) or major (17%) negative impact on their quality of life.
- Residents of the Northeast are more likely than those of the Southwest and Northwest to say it has a major negative impact on their quality of life (29% vs. 13% and 13%, respectively), as are those who wear religious dress compared to others (60% vs. 43%, respectively).
- Those who wear religious dress are more likely than others to agree The City needs to do more to prevent street harassment (90% vs. 78%, respectively), and say that street harassment has a major negative impact on their quality of life (60% vs. 43%).

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- Racialized or Indigenous persons are more likely than other Calgarians to witness street harassment (74% versus 62%).
- Measures perceived to be the most effective in reducing street harassment are more lighting in public spaces (90% effective), working with school boards to educate youth (87%), emergency buttons that alert security or 9-1-1 (86%), and an increased police presence (86%).
- When asked what The City could do to make public spaces safer and reduce the chances of street harassment, the top mentions were an increased police presence (32%), more lighting (17%), and an educational awareness campaign (17%).
- Seven-in-ten Calgarians (69%) agree a bylaw will be effective in reducing street harassment.
- Those 35 years of age or older were more likely to mention an increased police presence (35% 35 to 64 and 44% 65 or older vs. 22% 18 to 34), while 18 to 34 year old were more likely than those 35 to 64 to mention an educational awareness campaign (24% vs. 12%, respectively).
- Members of the LGBTQ2S+ community are less likely than other Calgarians to think an increased police presence on streets and in public places is/would be effective (70% vs. 88% others) and more likely to say a safe walk program is/would be effective (92% vs. 80% others).
- Females are more likely than males to think more lighting in public spaces, visible security cameras, cameras, a campaign to educate people about street harassment and a bylaw to address street harassment would be effective measures.
- While Calgarians tend to feel safe on Calgary's streets and in public spaces, street harassment affects citizens overall and is disproportionately experienced by certain segments of the population such as females, racialized or Indigenous persons, people who wear clothing or symbols that indicate their religion, and members of the LGBTQ2S+ community.