

Summary of Engagement - What We Heard

Project overview

In December 2020, Council passed a Notice of Motion directing Administration to research, engage, and provide a recommendation report on whether a bylaw can be created to address street harassment. In the Notice of Motion, street harassment is defined as: “unwelcome comments, gestures, and actions forced on a stranger in a public place because of their actual or perceived sex, gender, gender expression, or sexual orientation, and that are disrespectful, demeaning, alarming, and/or insulting.”

As part of the recommendation, Administration collected input on the definition, existing gaps, and potential actions. This report is a summary of *what we heard* during that engagement and *what we did* based on the feedback.

Engagement overview

The engagement asked for feedback, by means of a survey, about:

- Definition: Opinion on the definition used in the Notice of Motion.
- Existing Gaps: What are the gaps in addressing street harassment.
- Potential Actions: What are the actions The City can take to address this issue.

Engage strategy was approved by Gender Equity Diversity and Inclusion – a subcommittee of Social Wellbeing Advisory Committee. The survey was shared directly with community peace officers, Calgary police officers, organizations that support victims of street harassment, the Anti-Racism Program, and the Indigenous Relations Officer. Organizations were encouraged to forward the survey to clients who are willing to share their experience. The Anti-Racism Program and Indigenous Relations Office was requested to provide input while creating the survey. They were also requested to participate in the engagement and send the survey to the Anti-racism Action Committee and the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee.

What we asked

To support the development of options, this engagement approach will keep with a system level scope i.e., it is about the government systems and sutures versus personal accountability (action) approach. We are looking to understand what The City can do versus what a person can or should do. It will connect with agencies, organizations and services providers who are able to identify system issues and needs in addressing street harassment.

What we heard

The following section is an overview of the feedback gathered from three different stakeholders (internal, organizations and clients). In comparing the three sets of feedback collected, there was no significant difference within the data although certain bias and inherent tendencies presented themselves throughout. This is most notable when pulling out the top three themes for each stakeholder group.

Top three themes between the three groups of stakeholders

ISC:UNRESTRICTED

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Questions	Internal	External	External Clients
<p>DEFINITION What is missing, should be changed or requires further clarification in the working definition? Why? (internal stakeholders) <i>or</i></p> <p>In your opinion, does this [working definition] accurately describe street harassment? Why or why not? (external stakeholders)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not inclusive 2. Additional Terminology 3. Not Enforceable and Requires further clarification (tie)¹ 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Additional terminology 2. Needs elaboration 3. Further clarification 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Additional terminology 2. Needs elaboration 3. Further clarification
<p>GAPS From an enforcement perspective, what are the gaps for addressing street harassment in Calgary? (internal stakeholders) <i>Or</i></p> <p>In your opinion, what are the gaps for addressing street harassment in Calgary? (external stakeholders)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ability to enforce 2. More bylaws/laws 3. Subjective experience 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accountability 2. Education and Awareness 3. Reporting and Societal Norms / Social services (tied) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enforcement 2. Education and Awareness 3. Societal Norms
<p>ACTIONS: What actions do you think would help address these gaps? Please check all that apply.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public Education 2. Updates to existing bylaws 3. Awareness Campaigns 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness Campaigns 2. Public education 3. Building support through community partnerships 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creation of a new bylaw specific to street harassment AND Public Education 2. Awareness Campaign 3. Building support through community partnerships AND Building support through advocacy groups

¹ There is a tie between two points.
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Please elaborate on why you think these action(s) would work to address the gaps.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased awareness 2. Behaviour won't change without enforcement 3. Multi faceted Mental health & addictions (tied) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public awareness 2. Addressing the issues/causes 3. Knowledge is power 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Education helps awareness and creates better behaviour 2. Consequences / Accountability deterrents 3. Builds a strong community

What we heard, what we did

The engagement was open for input from July to September 6, 2021. It was opened again for a week in November to include the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee members who were unable to participate in September due to a technical issue.

- In total, the internal portal page was visited 210 times and we received 31 surveys from staff.
- In total, the external portal page was visited 463 times and we received 101 surveys.

Below is a short overview of the range of input received followed by how the project has incorporated that input into the decision making, and if not, then why.

What We Heard	What We Did
DEFINITION	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not Inclusive 2. Needs clarification 3. Requires additional terminology 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feedback from engagement to use intersectionality lens was similar to the strategic direction provided by Gender Equity Diversity Inclusion subcommittee. 2. As part of creating the bylaw, a broader perspective was used to minimize leaving any person/group behind.
CURRENT GAPS	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More Bylaws 2. Accountability 3. Societal Norms 4. Education and Awareness 5. Reporting 6. Enforcement and Ability to Enforce 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amending the Public Behaviour bylaw to include street harassment as an offence and an unacceptable behaviour. 2. This amendment will make an offender accountable for their inappropriate conduct in public places. 3. This amendment makes it clear that harassment is not accepted in our community. This and other initiatives to address street harassment will gradually change societal

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	<p>norms.</p> <p>4. A pilot project is being proposed as a recommendation to increase public awareness of street harassment in collaboration with business community and other community partners.</p> <p>5. “Increasing the ability to enforce” refers to the ability of a community peace officer to take action should the perpetrator refuse to provide an ID. This bylaw falls under Municipal Government Act which is regulated by the province. It is outside the realm of this project scope.</p>
POTENTIAL ACTIONS	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public education and awareness campaigns 2. Updates to existing bylaws/ create new bylaws 3. Building support through community partnerships 4. Consequences / accountability deterrents 5. Builds a strong community 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Themes in the current gaps and potential actions are very closely linked and therefore information for ‘what we did’ for potential actions have been covered in current gaps.

Next steps

- Recommendations to address street harassment will be presented to the Community Development Committee on 2022 February 9 and to the Strategic Council on 2022 February 28.

Summary of Input

Internal City of Calgary Staff

When asked about the working definition, most thought it required revisions or none of it should be kept citing the following: it was not inclusive, non-enforceable (or not an enforcement issue), subjective, and additional terminology or elaborations was needed.

The largest gap for addressing street harassment was the ability to enforce and that more bylaws (laws) or authority was needed.

Awareness campaigns and public education along with staff training ranked high next to updating of existing City of Calgary bylaws.

External Organizations

Many respondents wanted to keep the entire working definition but felt it was incomplete and wanted further clarification or elaboration with some terminology removed and other terminology added. The definition was subjective, non-inclusive, and lacking in relevant verbiage. This group of stakeholders identified gaps in addressing street harassment were lack of social services, the ability to report as well as the consequences of reporting. They wanted more education and the creation of safe spaces for all.

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Actions to help address street harassment would create more empathy, shift public opinion, and increase knowledge for everyone. Most respondents in this group wanted initiatives to address the root causes of harassment (e.g. mental health and addictions, societal norms, etc.) and not necessarily more enforcement.

External Clients or Members

Most respondents in this group did not find the working definition of Street Harassment to be accurate or thought parts of it were accurate but required further clarification, elaboration and additional terminology.

Stakeholders believed the gaps in addressing street harassment lay within enforcement, including but not limited to reporting process, the legal system and the Calgary Police Service. The majority believe education helps to build awareness and encourages better behaviour. As well, there is a strong sentiment that consequences and more accountability would help in addressing street harassment.

Stakeholders want safe spaces and a city free from fear. There is concern most people who experience street harassment won't complete this survey (or have access to it) or are in contact with any of the partner organizations. The feedback from this group supports the knowledge that people with lived experience are often traumatized and feel they have no safe place to go – either to avoid it, find assistance, or report it.

The What We Heard Report and the outlining the findings from both the internal and external engagement. The report can also be found [here](#).