

What We Heard Report

Options to Address the Retail Sale of Knives

Business Licensing
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Edmonton

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	PG 3
2. Public Engagement Approach	PG 4
a. Who Was Engaged	PG 4
b. How We Engaged	PG 8
c. What We Asked - Public Survey	PG 9
d. What We Asked - Business Survey	PG 10
3. Public Engagement Summary and Results	PG 13
a. What We Heard - Public Feedback	PG 13
b. What We Heard - Business Feedback	PG 28
c. What We Heard - Affected Communities	PG 34
d. What We Did	PG 34
4. What Happens Next	PG 35

Introduction

At the April 9, 2024 Urban Planning Committee meeting, community stakeholders spoke to issues and concerns in their communities regarding knives. Some of the speakers shared concerns around the types of stores that are selling knives, specifically convenience stores. They shared pictures of the stores, and the types of knives that are being sold in them, which they perceive to be knives that have no purpose other than to harm a person. At this meeting, the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) also presented data around knife incidents for the Downtown Division and the 118 Avenue area. The data for downtown shows that between January 2022 - February 2024, there were a total of 532 knife-related events. In 2023, the 118 Avenue area, between 104 Street and 78 Street saw a significant 30 percent increase in violent and weapons-related occurrences compared to 2022. Between January - April 2024, there has been a 13 percent reduction in overall violent crime and weapons events compared to the same 2023 period; however, there was a small increase in assaults with a weapon resulting in bodily harm.

In April 2024, EPS also executed a search warrant and seized multiple illegal weapons from a convenience store in the 107 Avenue area - including knives that are prohibited under the Criminal Code of Canada.

EPS continues to investigate the sale of illegal knives and other weapons through the use of search warrants, and to encourage the removal of legal types of knives from convenience and corner stores through outreach and education. This has led to some voluntary removal of knives from stores, though the ability to compel businesses to remove knives is limited to only those that are prohibited under the Criminal Code of Canada. In June 2024, the 107 Avenue EPS Beats Teams canvassed the 107 Avenue area and out of 11 convenience stores they visited, three were openly selling knives. EPS also canvassed the 118 Avenue area and of the 19 convenience stores they visited, 14 of those were openly selling knives and other weapons.

Due to the timeline of this report, more data was not able to be gathered. There is also no known data source available on the number of knives being sold in convenience stores, or the degree to which the specific knives sold at convenience stores have been used in the commission of a crime. However EPS stressed that this is a city-wide problem.

City of Edmonton (Administration) worked with EPS between May 2024 - July 2024 to develop potential options to address the retail sale of non-prohibited knives. Surveys were distributed to the public and retail businesses to ask for their thoughts on the retail sale of knives. The engagement findings were used by Administration to refine potential options to regulate the retail sale of knives under the Business Licence Bylaw. These options will be presented to either the

Community and Public Services Committee on September 16, 2024 or to the Urban Planning Committee on September 17, 2024.

Public Engagement Approach

Who Was Engaged

Knives have many different practical purposes, including for cooking, outdoor activities, or crafting. They are used daily by many people, and sold at many different businesses across Edmonton, and also by online retailers. While the report timeline did not allow for in-depth engagement, Administration sought input from both businesses and the public.

Business Survey

The business survey was shared with over 2,100 retail businesses in Edmonton. These businesses had opted in to receive engagement invitations from the Business Licensing team. The survey was also shared with the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce and the Business Improvement Areas.

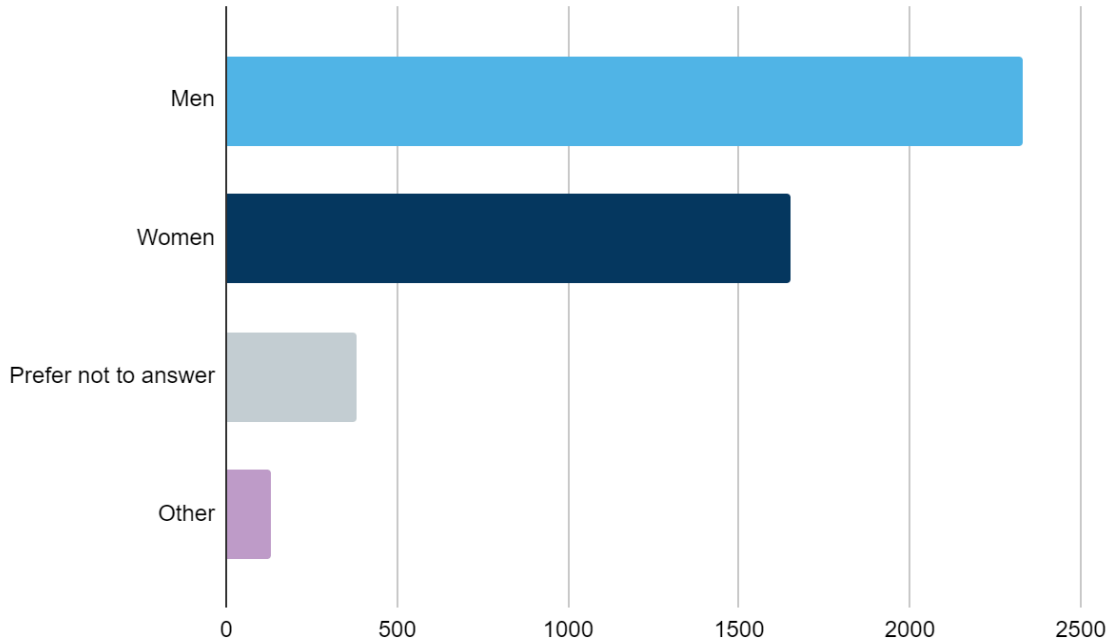
Of the 65 businesses that responded, 26 disclosed that they sell knives at their store. The businesses that sell knives represented many different neighbourhoods across Edmonton, including industrial areas, South Edmonton Common, Calgary Trail South, Belvedere, Inglewood, and Downtown, among others.

Public Survey

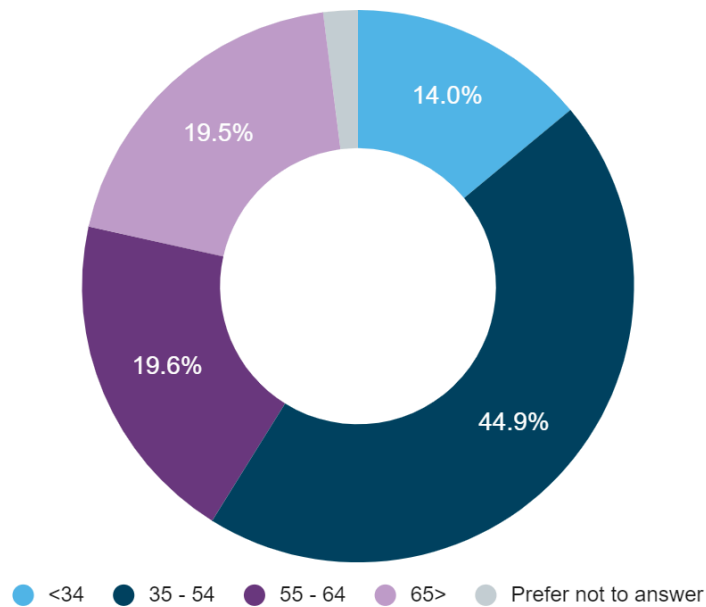
The public survey was distributed through the Edmonton Insight Community, which consists of approximately 18,000 members. It was also advertised on the City's website and through social media ads on Meta (Facebook / Instagram).

Summary of Public Survey Demographics

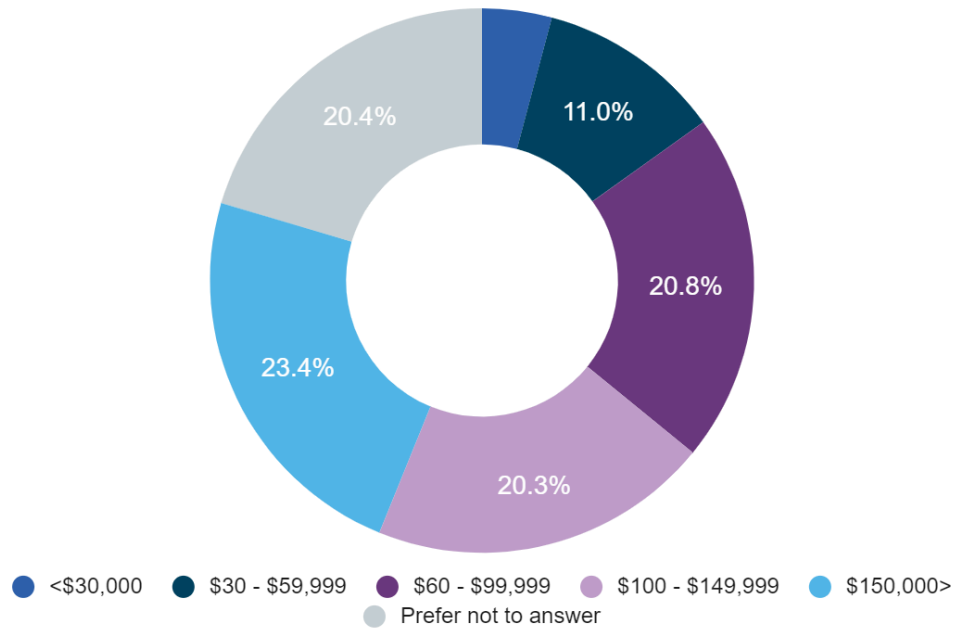
Gender: The respondents consisted of 2,332 men, 1,651 women, and 132 who identified as two-spirit, transgender, non-binary, or other. 379 respondents preferred not to answer.



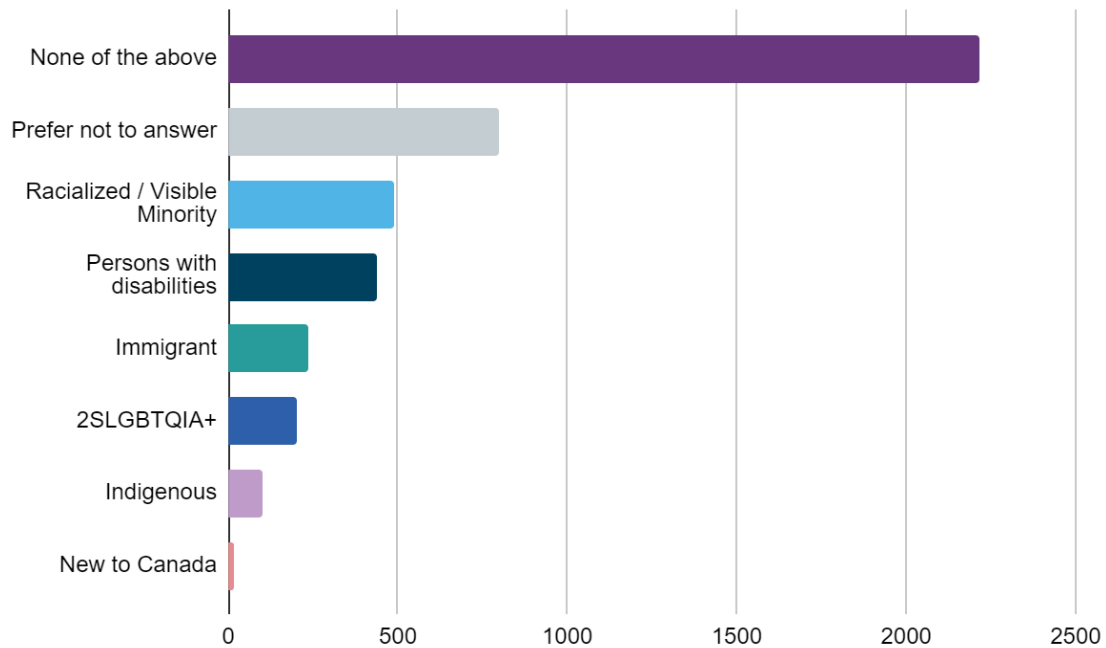
Age distribution: The age range of the respondents was from 15 - 65+. The majority of respondents were between ages of 35 - 54 (2,017), followed by 55 - 64 (881), 65 or more (877), under 34 (628), and prefer not to answer (91).



Income: Respondents represented different annual incomes with the majority of respondents with household income over \$150,000 (1,053), \$60,000 - \$99,999 (934), \$100,000 - \$149,999 (911), \$30,000 - \$59,999 (493), less than \$30,000 (186), and those who preferred not to answer (917).



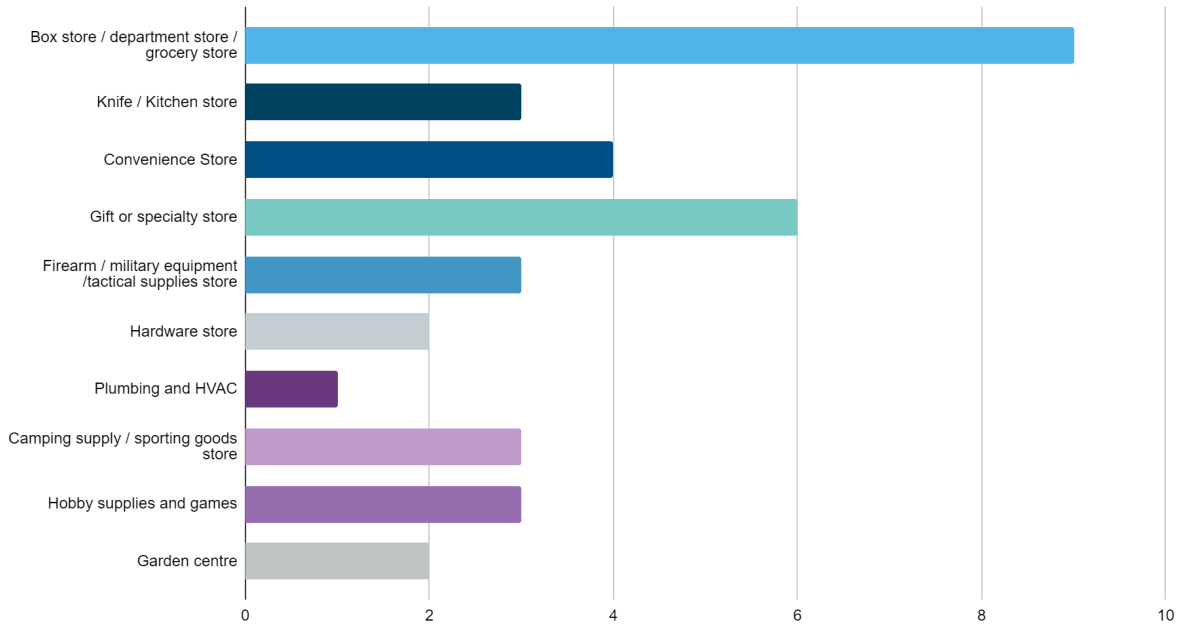
Identity: The majority of respondents did not identify with any particular group (2,215), followed by those who preferred not to answer (538). The remaining respondents represented racialized / visible minorities (488), persons with disabilities (439), those born outside of Canada (234), 2SLGBTQIA+ (200), Indigenous (100), and new to Canada (18).



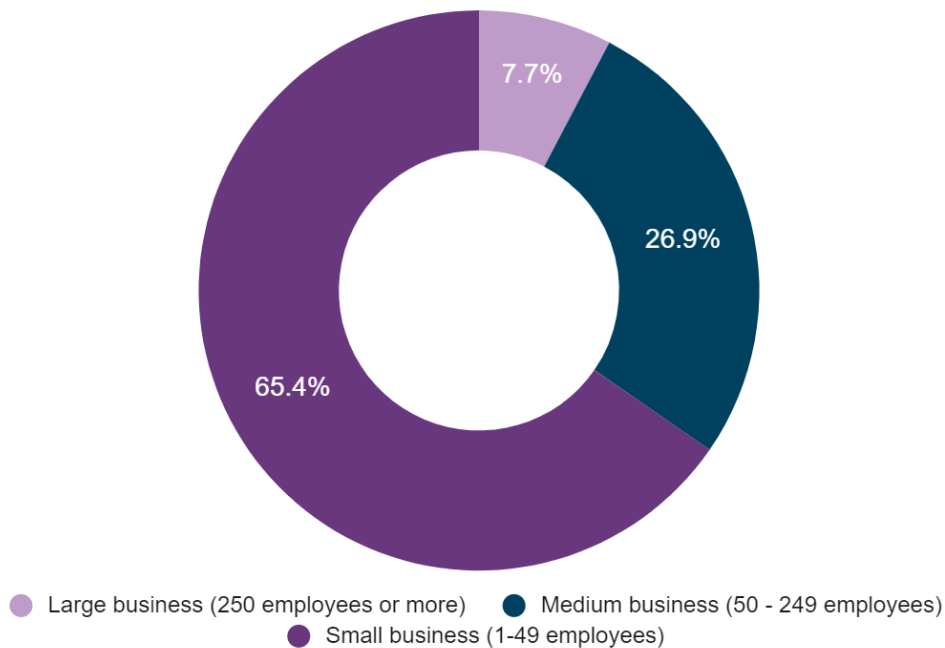
Summary of Business Survey Demographics

Note: These demographics only represent the 26 businesses that sell knives. Two of the businesses have four locations across Edmonton, seven stores have two locations across Edmonton, and 17 stores only have one location in Edmonton.

Store types: Businesses were able to select all of the relevant store types, including 'other', that represented their business.



Size of business: Two of the businesses represent large businesses (250 employees or more), seven businesses represent medium businesses (50 - 249 employees), and the remaining businesses represent small businesses (1 - 49 employees).



How We Engaged

Administration used two separate surveys as the primary methods of engagement. The goal of the surveys was to understand how regulating knife sales in retail stores could impact both retail store operators and the public at large. Due to the report timelines, the only feasible engagement option was online surveys.

Survey	Methodology
<p>Online Public Survey</p>	<p>Why: This survey was intended to gather feedback from the public on how they would perceive knife regulations.</p> <p>Who: This survey was shared with the Edmonton Insight Community and posted on the City's website. Targeted online ads were also used to reach more people. The ad campaign reached approximately 35,000 unique individuals and had approximately 2,000 link clicks to the website.</p> <p>Timing: This survey was available from May 29, 2024 to June 9, 2024.</p> <p>Response rate: 4,494 responses were received.</p> <p>Limitations: Due to the report timelines, prior research was limited and data and information was not able to be shared with the public to help inform their responses at the time of the survey being published.</p>
<p>Online Business Survey</p>	<p>Why: This survey was intended to gather feedback from businesses on how they would be impacted by potential operating requirements.</p> <p>Who: This survey was shared with over 2,100 businesses on the Business Licensing stakeholder list - specifically those with the Retail Sales (Major) and Retail Sales (Minor) categories on their business licence. It was also shared with the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce and the Business Improvement Areas.</p> <p>Timing: The business survey was open from May 29, 2024 to June 12, 2024.</p> <p>Response rate: 65 responses were received, however only 26 of respondents sell knives.</p> <p>Limitations: Due to the report timelines, prior research was limited and data and information was not able to be shared with businesses to help inform their responses at the time of the survey being published.</p>

What We Asked - Public Survey

What We Asked	Why We Asked
<p>Q1. Have you purchased a knife/knives in Edmonton within the last year?</p> <p>For the purposes of this survey, the definition of 'knife' and 'knives' is any type of sharp-edged metal blade made of various materials, and attached to handles.</p>	<p>To understand the demographic that answered the survey questions.</p>
<p>Q2. What type of knife/knives have you purchased within the past year? Select all that apply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Household knife (e.g. kitchen knife) ● Non-Household knife (e.g. knives for hunting or camping) ● Other (please specify) 	<p>To gather data on what types of knives are most commonly being purchased in Edmonton.</p>
<p>Q3. Currently, Edmontonians are able to purchase any type of household or non-household knife that is legally permitted under the Criminal Code, at various locations - for example, at grocery stores, convenience stores, and many other types of retailers. How do you feel about the current accessibility of purchasing knives in Edmonton?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. I like that a variety of knives are accessible at various types of retailers in Edmonton. b. I think it is too easy to get a knife, and that knives should only be available at certain types of retailers in Edmonton. c. Other (please specify) d. I have no opinion. 	<p>To gather data on how residents feel about the accessibility of knives in Edmonton.</p>
<p>Q4 (a -f). The City is considering bylaw amendments to regulate the sale of knives in retail stores. As of now, no decisions have been made and any bylaw amendments would be subject to approval by City Council. These next few questions will give you an idea of what kinds of amendments are being considered.</p> <p>The City is considering a regulation that would prevent retail stores from selling a knife to a minor (anyone under the age of 18). Please tell us if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. I would feel safer in my community if minors could not purchase knives. b. Restricting the sale of knives to minors would prevent them from buying knives for committing crimes. c. Restricting the sale of knives to minors would prevent them from buying knives for self-defense. d. Minors should not be allowed to purchase any kind of knife without an adult present. e. Minors should not be allowed to purchase knives without an adult present unless they are household knives (e.g. kitchen knives). f. I don't feel that it is necessary for the City to restrict minors from purchasing knives. 	<p>To gather data on how residents would feel about restrictions on minors purchasing knives.</p>

<p>Q5. The City is considering a regulation in which a government-issued photo identification (e.g. a driver’s licence) may be needed to confirm the purchaser is at least 18 years of age when purchasing a knife from a retail store. Which of the following statements best describes how you would feel about providing identification to purchase a knife from a retail store?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I agree with the proposed regulation for all types of knives • I agree with the proposed regulation, but only for non-household knives (e.g. knives for hunting or camping) • I do not agree with the proposed regulation, but I am willing to provide identification for all types of knives • I do not agree with the proposed regulation, but I am willing to provide identification only for non-household knives (e.g. knives for hunting or camping) • I do not agree and am not willing to provide identification under any circumstances • I have no opinion 	<p>To gather data on how residents would feel about having to provide identification if they were to purchase a knife.</p>
<p>Q6 (a-e). The City is considering a regulation that would require retail stores to keep knives behind a locked display case or in a secure room. You would need to ask a store associate for help with purchasing a knife. Please tell us if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. I would feel safer in my community if knives in retail stores were locked up. b. Having knives in retail stores locked up would prevent people from buying them for committing a crime. c. Having knives in retail stores locked up would prevent people from buying them for self-defense. d. I would be willing to ask a store associate for help with purchasing any type of knife. e. I would be willing to ask a store associate for help with purchasing knives, except for household knives (e.g. kitchen knives). 	<p>To gather data on how residents would feel about knives being in a secure enclosure and having to ask store associates for help.</p>
<p>Q7. Is there anything else you would like to share about the sale, purchase, use or possession of knives in Edmonton?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Open-Ended response with 300 character cap. 	<p>To provide residents an opportunity to share any other thoughts on potential regulations for the sale of knives.</p>

What We Asked - Business Survey

What We Asked	Why We Asked
<p>Q1. - Q6. Introductory questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type of retail store do you operate? (Small, medium, or large) • Which of the following best describes your store? (Box store / grocery store / hardware store / knife store/ camping supply store / military equipment store / convenience store / other) • How many store locations do you have in Edmonton? • What neighbourhood is your retail store located in? If you operate more than one store, please select all neighbourhoods that apply. • Does your retail store sell knives? <p>Note: Retailers that do not sell knives were asked one open-ended question about their thoughts on regulating the retail sale of knives. A</p>	<p>To gather data on the types of businesses that responded to the survey.</p>

<p>note was included at the beginning of the survey redirecting people to the public survey if they still wanted to provide feedback.</p>	
<p>Q7. Please tell us what business practices your store currently has in place when displaying knives that are for sale.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Knives are sold in packaging B. Knives are on store shelves where customer can access C. Knives are kept in a locked display case D. Knives are kept in a locked room or cabinet 	<p>To gather data on what businesses are currently doing when it comes to displaying knives for sale.</p>
<p>Q8. Please tell us what business practices your store currently has in place when selling knives to customers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Knives are not sold to customers who are under 18 years old B. Customers under 18 must show photo ID to purchase a knife C. All customers must show photo ID to purchase a knife D. Information about the customer (name, date of birth, description) is recorded when the customer purchases a knife 	<p>To gather data on what businesses are currently doing when it comes to selling a knife to a customer.</p>
<p>Q9. Please tell us about any other business practices your store currently has in place when displaying or selling knives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open text response 	<p>To provide businesses a space to tell us anything else we may not have considered.</p>
<p>Q10. - Q13. Please tell us how potential regulations applied to the retail sale of knives may impact your business, including whether the impact would be positive or negative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City is considering a regulation that would prohibit retailers from selling knives to minors (anyone under the age of 18). This would require retailers to obtain photo identification from purchasers who appear to be under 25 years of age. How would this impact your business? • The City is considering a regulation that would require businesses to keep knives behind a locked display case or in a secure room and only accessible by staff (meaning customers would have to ask for help). How would this impact your business? • The City is considering a regulation that would require retail businesses that sell knives to post signage with City-approved messaging where it is visible to customers. The content of the signage would correspond with other requirements where customers would be impacted - for example, to explain that knives cannot be sold to a person under 18 years of age, or that knives are required to be secured. How would this impact your business? • Please tell us how a requirement to post signage with City-approved messaging would negatively impact your business. Select all that apply. 	<p>To gather data on how regulations will impact businesses.</p>
<p>Q14. - Q17. The following questions were asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the City were to amend the bylaw based on the potential regulations in the previous section, please tell us if each regulation should apply to the sale <u>of all types of knives</u>, or only to “Dangerous Knives”: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Knives cannot be sold to a person under 18 years of age, and ID is required for customers who appear under 25 years of age. ○ Knives must be kept behind a locked display case or in a secured room 	<p>To inform whether potential regulations should only apply to ‘dangerous knives’ and what a potential definition of ‘dangerous knives’ could entail.</p> <p>Note: the survey explained that there was no existing definition for ‘dangerous knives’. For the purposes of the survey, respondents should consider a ‘dangerous knife’ as one that is</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Signage with City-approved messaging about knives must be posted on the business premises where it is visible to customers. ● What types of knives do you think should be considered a “Dangerous Knife”? Please select all that apply from the checklist: Kitchen knives; utility knives; hunting knives; outdoor survival knives; pocket knives; folding knives; combat knives. ● Other than butterfly knives and switchblade knives, are there any other types of knives that the City should consider a “Dangerous Knife”? (<i>Open text answer</i>) ● Are there any other characteristics of knives that should be considered in defining a “Dangerous Knife” (e.g. blade length, handle design, intended use, features, etc.)? (<i>open text answer</i>) 	<p>not designed and intended for typical household or commercial purposes.</p>
<p>Q18. & Q19. The following questions were asked, including whether the impact would be positive or negative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Please tell us how your business would be impacted if <u>knives of any kind</u> were not permitted to be sold at a business that also sells each of the following items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tobacco and vaping products ○ Alcohol ○ Cannabis ○ Grocery items ○ Pharmaceuticals ● Please tell us how your business would be impacted if <u>“Dangerous Knives”</u> were not permitted to be sold at a business that also sells each of the following items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tobacco and vaping products ○ Alcohol ○ Cannabis ○ Grocery items ○ Pharmaceuticals 	<p>To understand the impacts of potential limitations on the sale of knives in combination with other retail items.</p>
<p>Q20. Do you have anything else that you would like to share with us regarding the sale of knives at retail stores?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Open text response 	<p>To provide businesses with an opportunity to share any other thoughts on the potential regulation on the sale of knives.</p>

Public Engagement Summary and Results

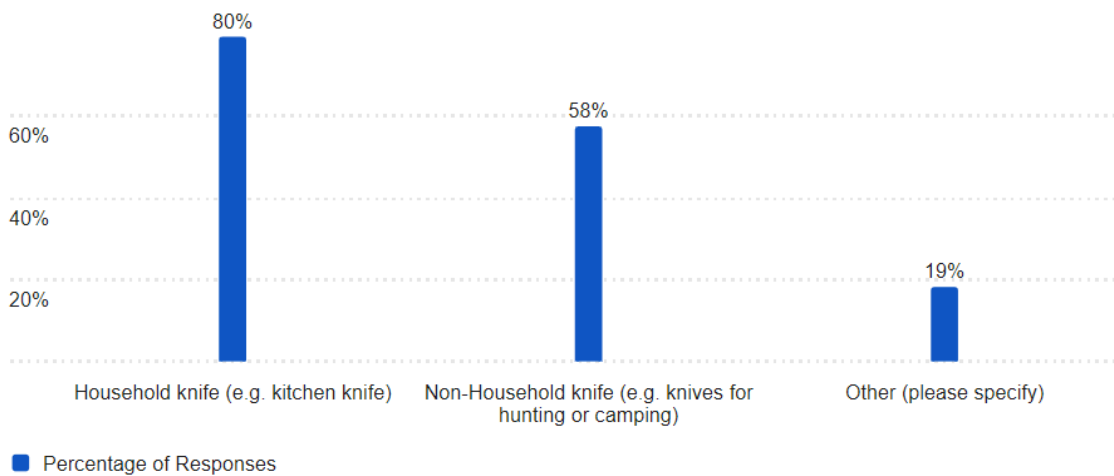
What We Heard - Public Feedback

Administration received a total of 4,494 responses to the public survey.

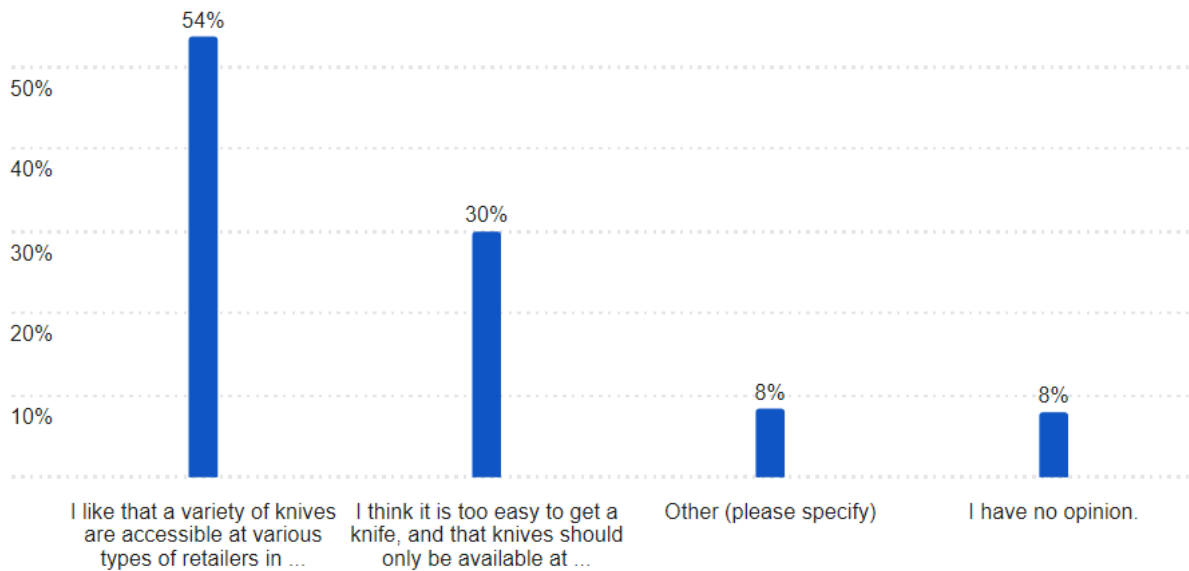
Q1. In response to the first question, 55 percent of respondents purchased a knife in the past year and 45 percent have not purchased a knife. *(4,494 responses)*



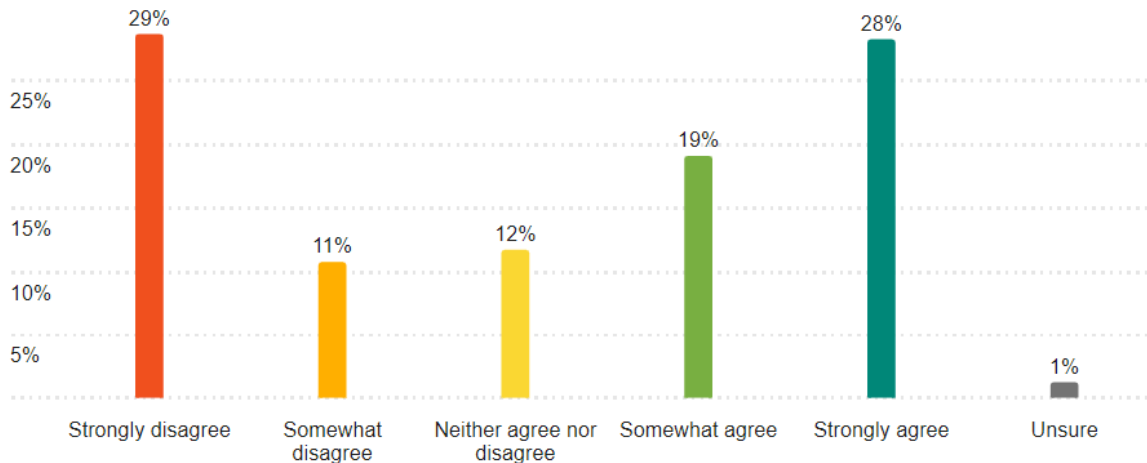
Q2. Among those who have purchased a knife, 80 percent have purchased a household knife in the last year and 58 percent have purchased a non-household knife. Those that selected 'other' specified box cutters, construction knives, pocket knives, among others. *(2,459 responses)*



Q3. Feedback on availability of knives shows that 54 percent of respondents like that they have access to a variety of knives at different types of retailers, while 30 percent think that it is too easy to get a knife and their sale should be restricted to certain types of stores, and eight percent have no opinion. The remaining eight percent that responded to the ‘other’ option had varying opinions, including that knives should not be available to those under 18, convenience stores should not be selling knives, that they do not support restrictions on purchasing knives and that these laws do not belong at the municipal level. (4,494 responses)



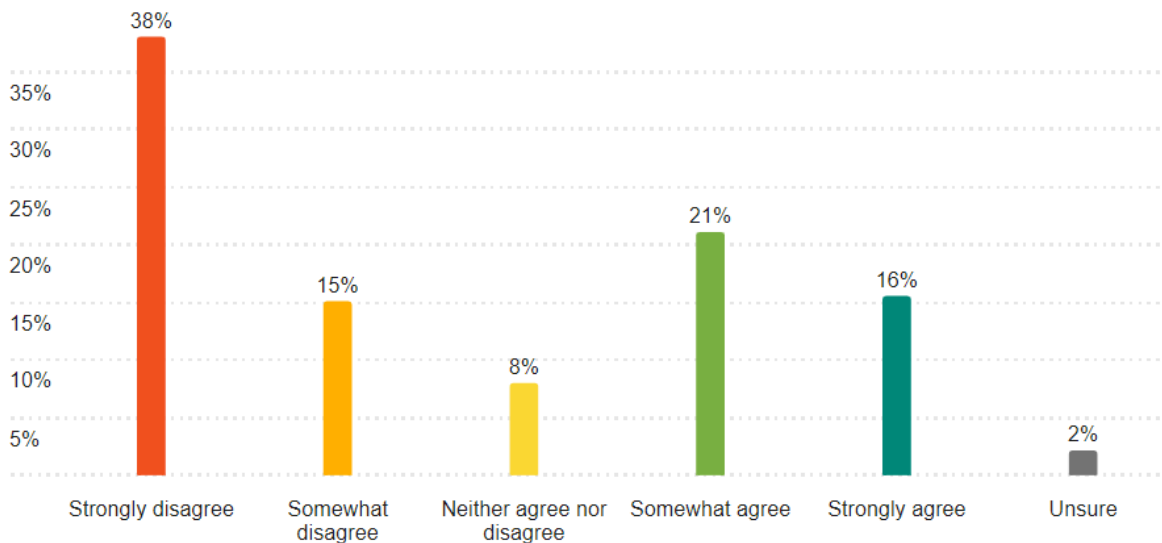
Q4a. In response to the question about whether or not they would feel safer in their communities if minors could not purchase knives, 40 percent of respondents either strongly or somewhat disagree with this, while 47 percent strongly or somewhat agreed. The remaining 13 percent neither agree nor disagree, or were unsure. (4,494 responses)



The following observations were made from the sub-group analysis:

- 41 percent of respondents over the age 65 strongly agree they would feel safer, compared to 19 percent of respondents under the age of 35 that strongly agree they would feel safer if minors could not purchase knives.
- 37 percent of female respondents strongly agree, compared to 25 percent of male respondents that strongly agree.
- 35 percent of respondents that identify as immigrants strongly agree.
- 46 percent of respondents that identify as Indigenous and 42 percent of respondents that identify as racialized / visible minority strongly disagree they would feel safer.

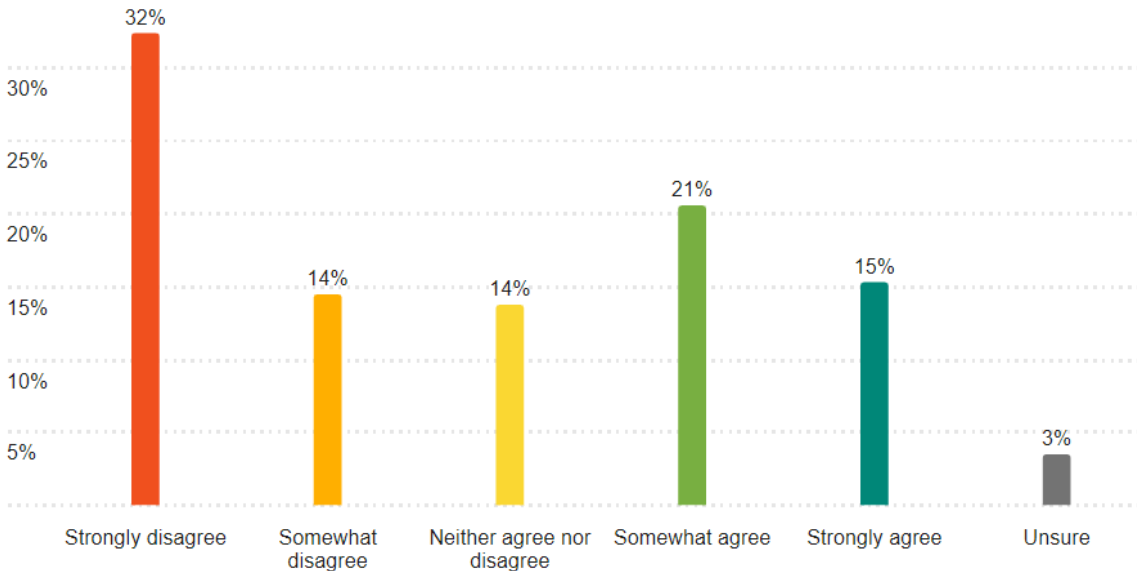
Q4b. When asked whether restricting the sale to minors would prevent them from buying knives for committing crimes, 53 percent of respondents strongly or somewhat disagree, and 37 percent strongly or somewhat agree. The remaining 10 percent neither agree nor disagree, or were unsure. (4,494 responses)



The following observations were made from the sub-group analysis:

- 24 percent of respondents over the age of 65 strongly agree this would prevent minors from committing crimes, compared to 9 percent under the age of 35 that strongly agree.
- 52 percent of respondents that identify as Indigenous and 53 percent of respondents that identify as racialized / visible minority strongly disagree this would prevent minors from committing crimes.

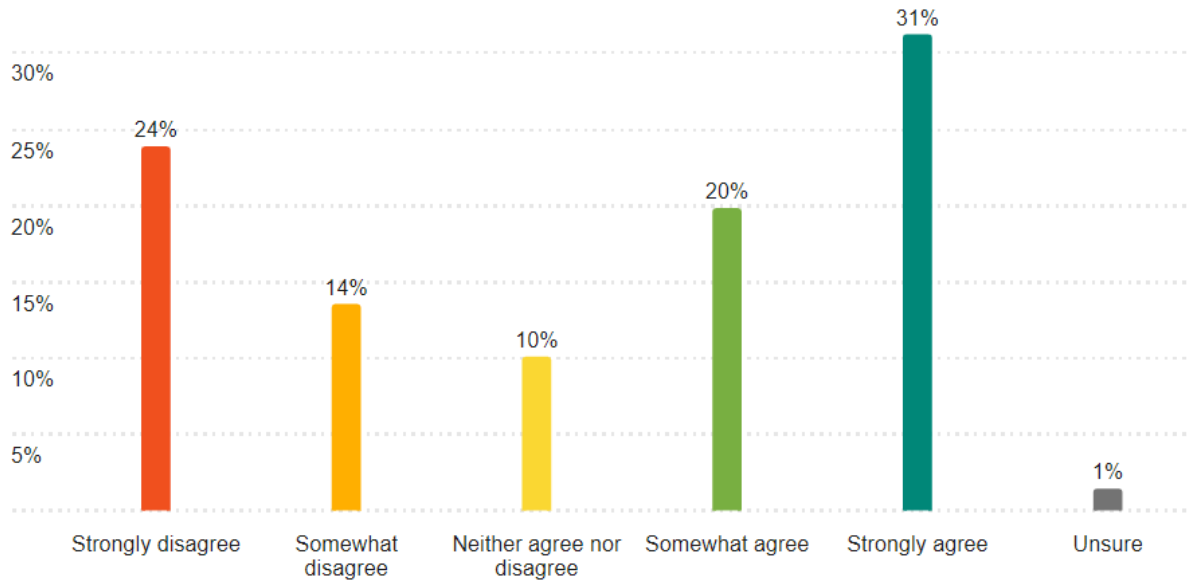
Q4c. When asked about whether restricting the sale to minors would prevent them from buying them for self defense, 46 percent strongly or somewhat disagree, and 36 percent strongly or somewhat agree. The remaining 17 percent neither agree nor disagree, or were unsure. (4,494 responses)



The following observations were made from the sub-group analysis:

- 49 percent of respondents that identify as Indigenous and 44 percent of respondents that identify as racialized / visible minority strongly disagree this would prevent minors from purchasing knives for self defense.

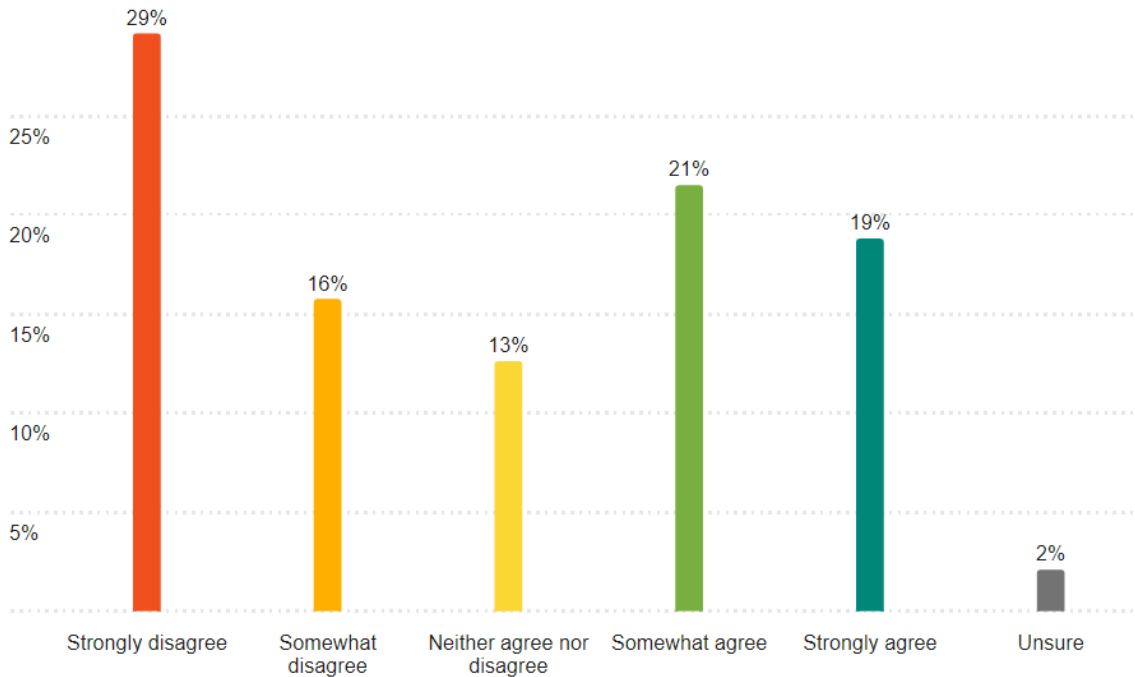
Q4d. When asked whether minors should not be allowed to purchase any type of knife without an adult present, 38 percent strongly or somewhat disagree, and 51 percent strongly or somewhat agree. The remaining 11 percent neither agree nor disagree, or were unsure. (4,494 responses)



The following observations were made from the sub-group analysis:

- 46 percent of respondents over the age of 65 strongly agree, compared to 21 percent of respondents under the age of 35 strongly agree that minors should not be allowed to purchase a knife without an adult present.
- 40 percent of female respondents strongly agree, compared to 29 percent of male respondents that strongly agree.
- 39 percent of respondents that identify as Indigenous and 34 percent of respondents that identify as racialized / visible minority strongly disagree.

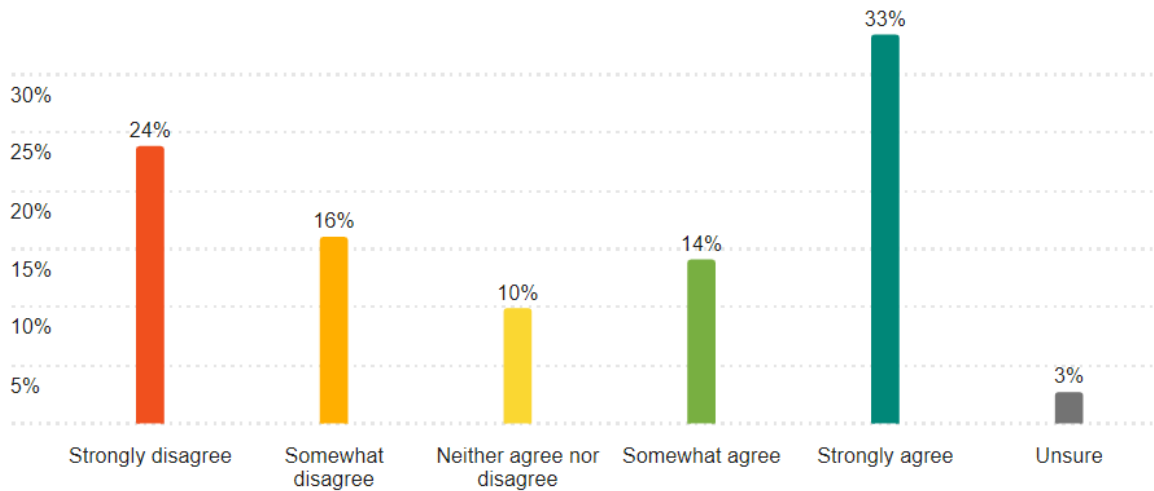
Q4e. When asked about whether there could be an exception for minors to purchase household knives (i.e. kitchen knives), 45 percent strongly or somewhat disagree, and 40 percent strongly or somewhat agree. The remaining 15 percent neither agree nor disagree, or were unsure. (4,494 responses)



The following observations were made from the sub-group analysis:

- 40 percent of respondents that identify as Indigenous and 41 percent of respondents that identify as racialized / visible minority strongly disagree that minors should be allowed to purchase household knives without an adult, but require an adult present for any other type of knife.

Q4f. The last question in this section was a statement: "I don't feel it is necessary for the City to restrict minors from purchasing knives". In response to this, 40 percent strongly or somewhat disagree, and 47 percent strongly or somewhat agree. The remaining 13 percent neither agree nor disagree, or were unsure. (4,494 responses)

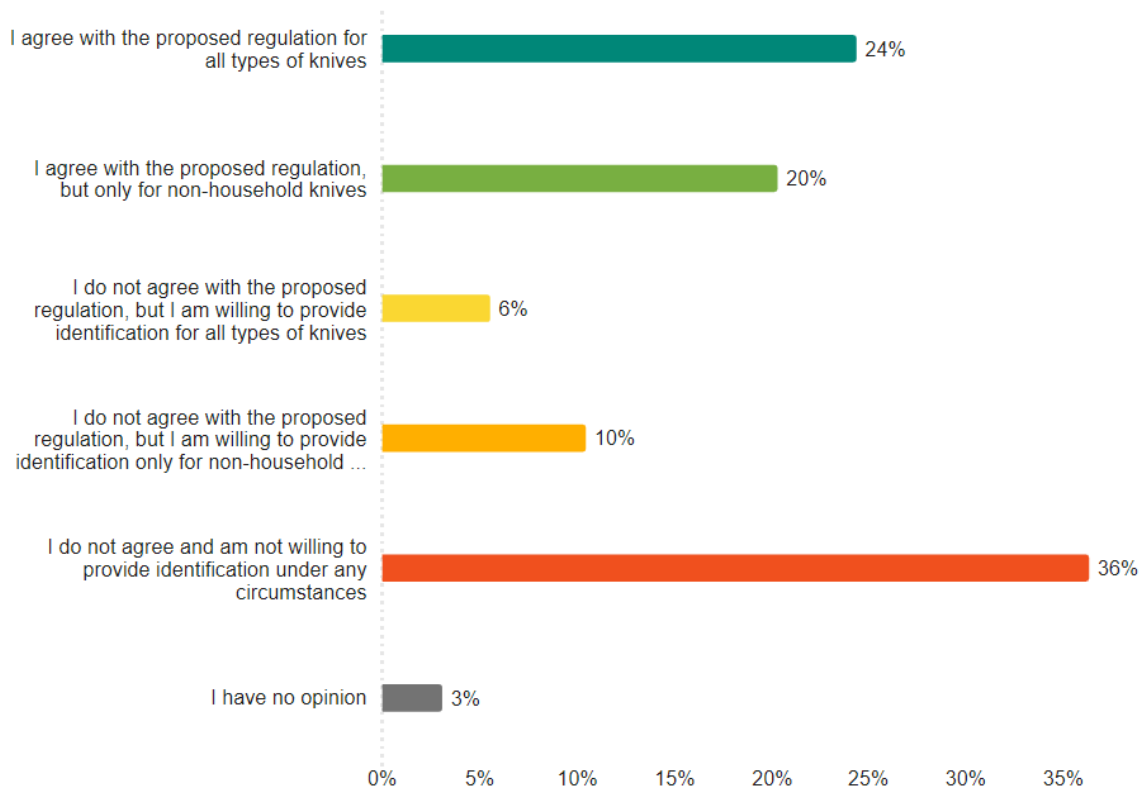


The following observations were made from the sub-group analysis:

- 37 percent of male respondents strongly agree, compared to 20 percent of female respondents that strongly agree.
- 48 percent of respondents that identify as Indigenous and 46 percent of respondents that identify as a visible minority strongly agree.
- 36 percent of respondents over the age of 65 strongly disagree, compared to 14 percent of respondents under the age of 35.

Q5. Respondents were then asked about how they would feel when it comes to providing identification to purchase a knife at a retail store. (4,494 responses)

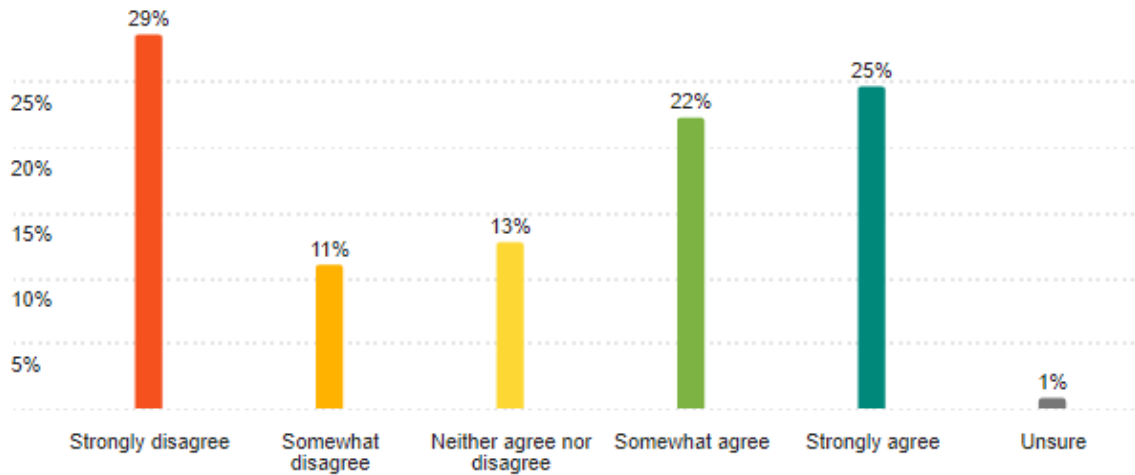
- 36 percent do not agree with the regulation and are not willing to provide identification under any circumstance.
- 10 percent do not agree with the proposed regulation, but are willing to provide identification only for non-household knives.
- Six percent do not agree with the proposed regulation, but are willing to provide identification
- 20 percent agree with the proposed regulation, only for non-household knives (hunting or camping knives)
- 24 percent agree with the proposed regulation for all types of knives.
- Three percent have no opinion.



The following observations were made from the sub-group analysis:

- 32 percent of female respondents agree with the proposed regulations for all types of knives.
- 60 percent of respondents that do not identify as male or female do not agree with the proposed regulations and are not willing to provide identification under any circumstance.
- 51 percent of respondents that identify as Indigenous and 50 percent of respondents that identify as racialized / visible minority do not agree and would not be willing to provide identification under any circumstance.

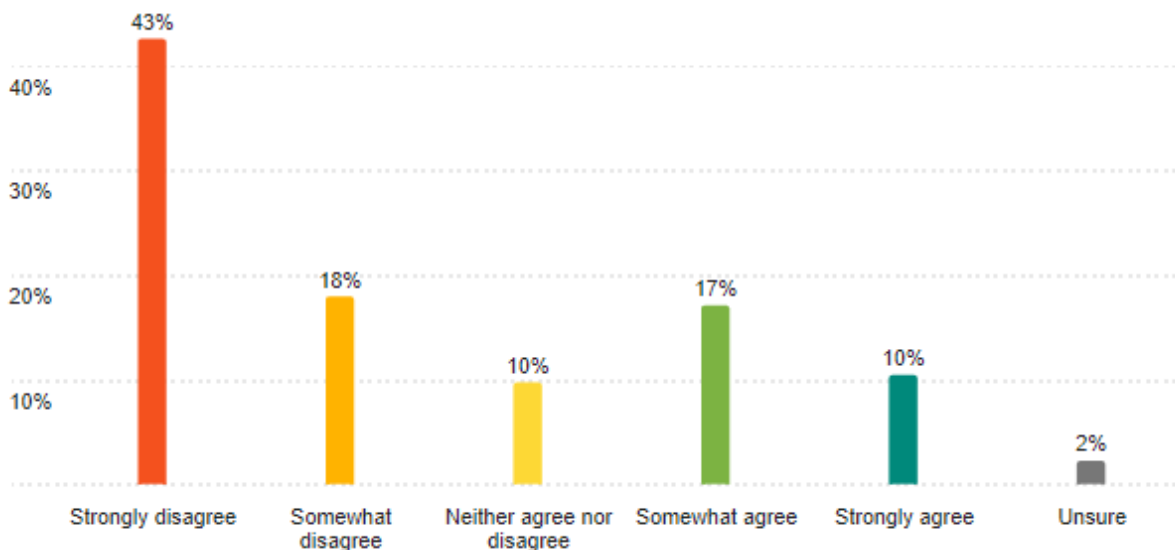
Q6a. When asked if they would feel safer in their communities if knives were locked up in retail stores, 40 percent strongly or somewhat disagree, and 47 percent strongly or somewhat agree. The remaining 14 percent neither agree nor disagree, or were unsure. (4,494 responses)



The following observations were made from the sub-group analysis:

- 36 percent of respondents over the age of 65 strongly agree they would feel safer, compared to 21 percent of respondents under the age of 35.
- 41 percent of respondents that identify as Indigenous and 42 percent of respondents that identify as racialized / visible minority strongly disagree they would feel safer.

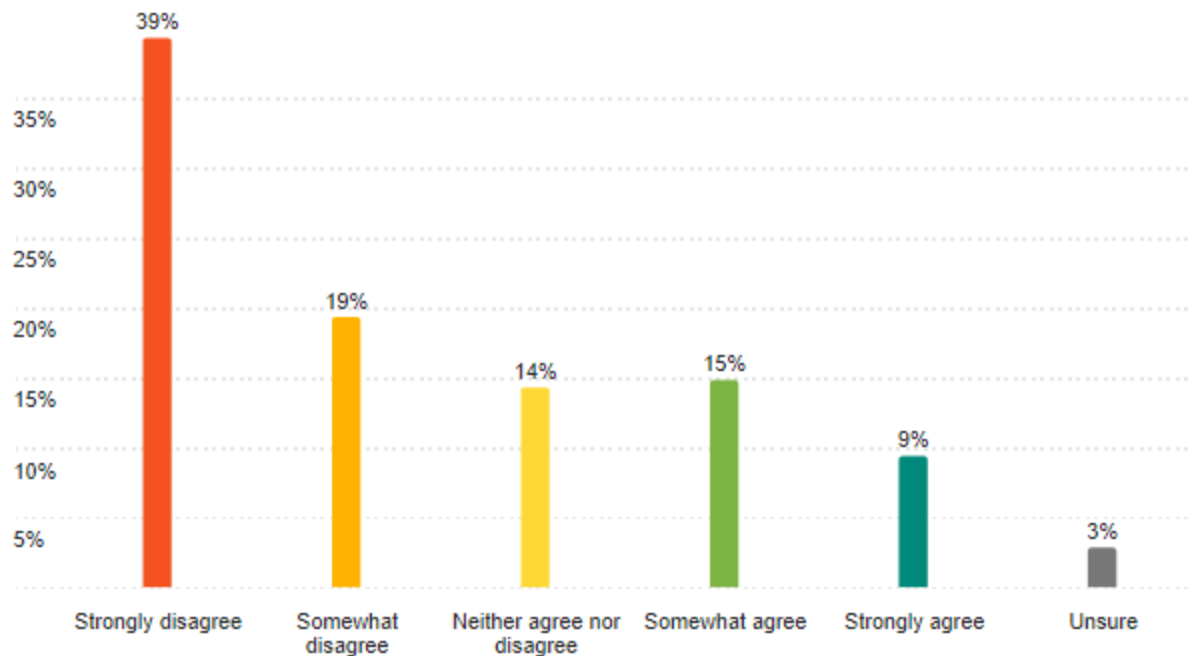
Q6b. When asked if having knives locked up in a retail store would prevent people from purchasing them to commit crimes, 61 percent strongly or somewhat disagree, 27 percent strongly or somewhat agree, and the remaining 12 percent neither agree nor disagree or were unsure. (4,494 responses)



The following observations were made from the sub-group analysis:

- 62 percent of respondents that do not identify as male or female strongly disagree.
- 57 percent of respondents that identify as Indigenous and 54 percent of respondents that identify as racialized / visible minority strongly disagree.

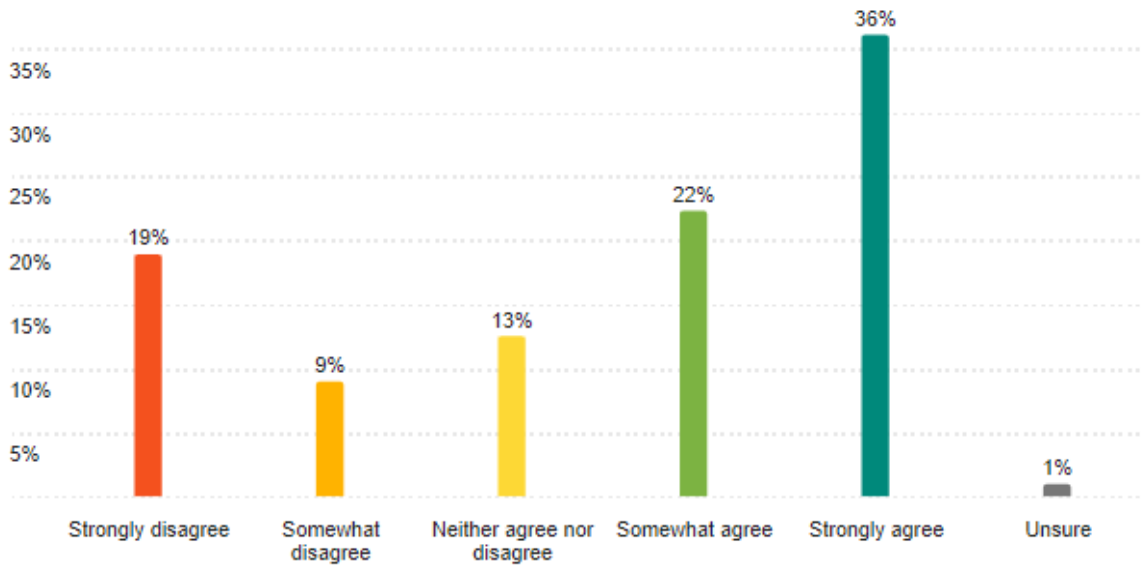
Q6c. In response to the question on whether knives locked up in a retail store will prevent people from purchasing them for self defense, 58 percent strongly or somewhat disagree, 24 percent strongly or somewhat agree, and the remaining 17 percent neither agree nor disagree, or were unsure. (4,494 responses)



The following observations were made from the sub-group analysis:

- 52 percent of respondents that do not identify as male or female strongly disagree.
- 54 percent of respondents that identify as Indigenous and 49 percent of respondents that identify as racialized / visible minority strongly disagree.

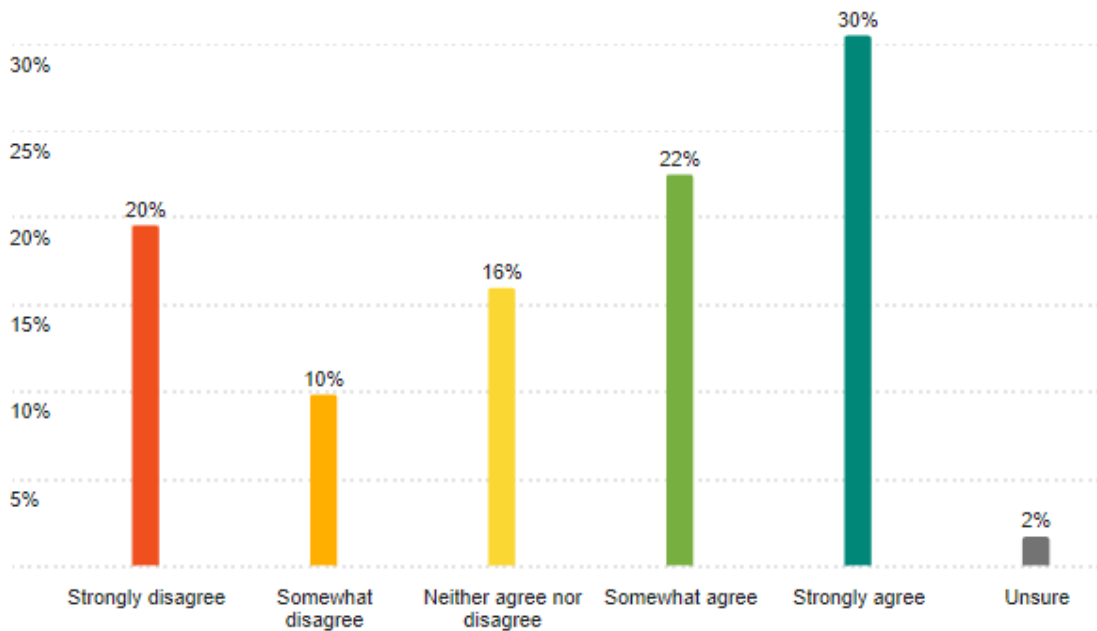
Q6d. Respondents were asked if they would be willing to ask a store associate for help with purchasing any type of knife. 28 percent strongly or somewhat disagree, and 58 percent strongly or somewhat agree. The remaining 14 percent neither agree nor disagree, or were unsure. (4,494 responses)



The following observations were made from the sub-group analysis:

- 35 percent of respondents that identify as Indigenous and 31 percent of respondents that identify as racialized / visible minority strongly disagree.

Q6e. The last question in this section asked respondents if they would be willing to ask a store associate for help purchasing knives, except for household knives (i.e. kitchen knives). 30 percent of respondents strongly or somewhat disagree, 52 percent strongly or somewhat agree, and the remaining 18 percent neither agree nor disagree, or were unsure. (4,494 responses)



The following observations were made from the sub-group analysis:

- 40 percent of female respondents strongly agree they would be willing to ask for help for non-household knives.
- 34 percent of respondents that identify as Indigenous and 33 percent of respondents that identify as racialized / visible minority strongly disagree.

Q7. The last question in the public survey was an open-ended response, which allowed respondents to provide any other opinions on the potential regulation on the sale of knives. Of the total 4,494 respondents, 2,707 left a text response to this question. Of these responses, approximately 2,017 expressed unfavourable opinions about regulations on the retail sale of knives. These comments can be broken down into the following themes. *Note: some comments may have fit into more than one theme, however, for the purposes of this report the theme that was most heavily emphasized in the response was selected. Some comments have also been paraphrased.*

Theme	Number of respondents	General comments
Regulation will be ineffective	903	<p>Many respondents feel that any municipal regulation on knives will be ineffective and will not be enforceable. Some comments mention that knives are already very accessible, can be taken from anyone's kitchen and that regulating the sale will not solve possession of knives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I just want to point out that a minor could easily obtain a knife at home and so such a regulation in my opinion would not change anything but add an additional regulatory burden on both customers and businesses." • "Restricting knives doesn't solve the problem. Anything sharp can be used as a weapon. This problem is only restricting law-abiding people, and causing businesses to pay staff or changes to the store for them to enforce a law." <p>A few comments also made reference to regulations in the United Kingdom and how they have not been successful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Hasn't worked in England, why do you think it will work here." • "Anyone willing to commit a crime will be unaffected by these regulations. This type of law has already been tried and failed in the UK."
Waste of taxpayer money and resources	220	<p>Some respondents think any regulation on the sale of knives would be a waste of taxpayer dollars and resources. They think money could be more effectively spent elsewhere.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I am surprised that City time and resources are being spent on this. This does not address root cause of the problem." • "Edmonton has enough issues not being resolved. Homelessness, potholes, high taxes, etc. Fix that"

		<p>first, criminal code is federal. UK has done this "illegal to buy a knife" experiment and it doesn't work."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Criminals won't follow your rules. Knives can be bought online. This is a waste of taxpayer time and money"
Government overreach	215	<p>Some respondents feel that any regulation on knives is overreach by the government, and that it infringes on their freedoms. They think the City needs to focus on other issues, and not take away freedoms with regulations and laws.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "This is absolutely ridiculous. The City should stay out of our business." • "City regulations are creeping into freedoms. Not municipal business." • "I think the COE has bigger concerns like balancing the Municipal Budget than directing us on how to live our lives. This current government is continually overstepping their mandate." <p>Many of these comments also include negative opinions of the City Council and Administration.</p>
Deal with crime	205	<p>Respondents suggested that more needs to be done when it comes to penalties for crimes, harsher prison sentences, and active law enforcement. Many suggested the City needs to hire more police officers, and that EPS needs to do more proactive enforcement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Police need to be more proactive in arresting and charging youth with knives." • "Ban crime not objects, force the justice system to punish criminals not average law abiding citizens." • "Banning the sale of knives will do nothing to reduce criminal use. The bail release needs to be changed. Violent criminals need to be kept locked up."
Addressing the root cause	199	<p>Respondents suggested that not enough is being done to address the root cause of the problems, and that regulating the sale of knives would not be a solution. Many respondents suggested more needs to be done to address drug problems, affordable housing, mental health supports, education to youth, and addressing the underlying issues before jumping to something that will not address the issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "This type of bylaw will not solve the crime issue regarding youth committing crimes on the streets. Tackle the root or societal problems." • "Help the mental health of a community by putting more money into that area of our lives in Edmonton. People are struggling to feed families and you are worried about knives." • "Deal with the underlying issues like poverty and drugs instead of passing more laws that do little

		<p>to affect crime and only make life more difficult for the law abiding.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I feel like knife restrictions don't actually get to the root causes of why youth are using knives as weapons/self defense.”
Knives will be purchased elsewhere	114	<p>Some respondents referenced the fact that knives can be purchased through many online retailers and by going to other jurisdictions, which would only hurt local businesses in Edmonton.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Making it harder for Edmonton retailers to sell knives won't change anything, internet sales cross municipal borders.” • “The internet exists. People will buy knives regardless of regulation and requirements in stores. This is useless red tape.” • “People will travel out of Edmonton to purchase knives or buy them online resulting in loss of revenue. It adds a cost burden to the city and retail businesses for implementation and monitoring. It also encourages crime (stealing). For me this is a hard NO.”
Anything can be a weapon	96	<p>Some respondents suggested that anything can be a weapon if enough force is used, and many asked what the City would be regulating next, citing examples of objects such as screwdrivers, hammers, pencils, nail guns, among other things.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What about an axe? Or a hammer? How about a big stick? A board? How far are you going to take this? How about a fireplace set? A piece of rope? This is dumb. People that are willing to use weapons will find a way. Stop wasting our time debating this crap!” • “What's next? Banning pointy sticks? Bats? Broom handles? We need more cops enforcing existing laws not more “restrictions”!” • “This is a useless potential initiative and a complete waste of time and effort by City management. What's next, restrictions on purchase of claw hammers or gutter spikes? ”
Not municipal jurisdiction	65	<p>Respondents also suggested that this is a provincial or federal matter, and that it is not municipal jurisdiction to try to regulate knives. A number of comments refer to the Criminal Code and suggest that the City does not belong in this space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The only regulations required for knives are the ones present in the criminal code already. It is not the obligation of the city of Edmonton to bypass the criminal code of canada” • “Don't restrict the sale of knives. This isn't a municipal issue. Stay in your lane.” • “There is no guarantee that restricting the sale of knives would reduce the availability of knives for use in crime. There are already restrictions on

		knives in the criminal code, and knives beyond a certain length are considered restricted."
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Of the remaining 690 comments, 571 were generally in favour of some amount of regulation on knives. These comments can be broken down into the following themes. *Note: Some comments have been paraphrased.*

Theme	Number of respondents	General comments
Suggestions for regulation	302	<p>A number of respondents showed support for regulation, while also providing suggestions for regulation, including suggestions that stricter regulation is necessary, some suggesting that second hand stores be included, and others that think length or type of knife should be considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Everyone at any age should have to show identification when purchasing a knife." • "They should be locked up like tobacco products. Even better, you can only buy them in knife stores behind a counter. Behind a counter prevents THEFT of them as well." • "Don't forget that thrift stores often have kitchen knives for sale in the departments. For example, [name of second hand store removed] uses masking tape to cover the blade, but leave them out in bins in the Housewares department for anyone to purchase; these are also easy to conceal and shoplift." • "Yes. We shouldn't just be focusing on minors. We should be focusing on the type of knives that are being sold in retail stores and making sure that those that are designed as weapons can only be sold by stores that have obtained a license to sell these types of knives." <p>Some of these respondents also suggested that more statistics and information should be provided to support any new regulations.</p>
General support of regulation	142	<p>Some respondents had general comments showing support for the proposed regulations in the survey, including having knives in locked enclosures, restricting sale to minors, requiring photo identification, and having to ask a store associate for help.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I think putting light restrictions on knives could only help and will not disrupt retail sales. I do think knives should be locked up." • "As a person who carries a knife daily, I feel like the ability to purchase knives should never be removed, however I have zero issue with needing the assistance of an associate to purchase a knife or knives."

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I live by the street where the stabbing occurred that inspired this movement. I am an avid owner and a trained user of all kinds of knives but I still support it.” • “I agree that Edmonton should restrict the sale of knives from minors under the age of 18 to help prevent potential harm or misuse. It is important for individuals to understand the laws and regulations surrounding knife ownership in Edmonton to help promote safety within the community.”
<p>Convenience / Corner Stores</p>	<p>127</p>	<p>A few respondents left comments denouncing knives being sold in convenience or corner stores. Many respondents believe having immediate access in these stores to knives that are intended to harm people is causing significant harm to vulnerable communities, and suggest that it should not be allowed for convenience or corner stores to sell knives. Some respondents suggest that sporting goods stores or hunting / camping stores are appropriate places for knives to be sold.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Convenience stores have no business selling hunting or military knives, we know people are not purchasing those to cut tomatoes or onions.” • “Another approach would be to prohibit the sale of knives from convenience stores. Don't allow them to carry knives at all. This would be fairest to all. It does not make sense that anyone needs to purchase a knife from a convenience store.” • “I don't support any knives being sold in convenience retailers only in specialty hunting stores or specialty stores. It should be controlled, no sales to minors.” • “ID should be shown to buy or look at any knife/blade. Convenience store should not sell any knife. Far too easy to access. “

The remaining 119 comments were “no comment”, general comments about knives, or were unrelated to the topic.

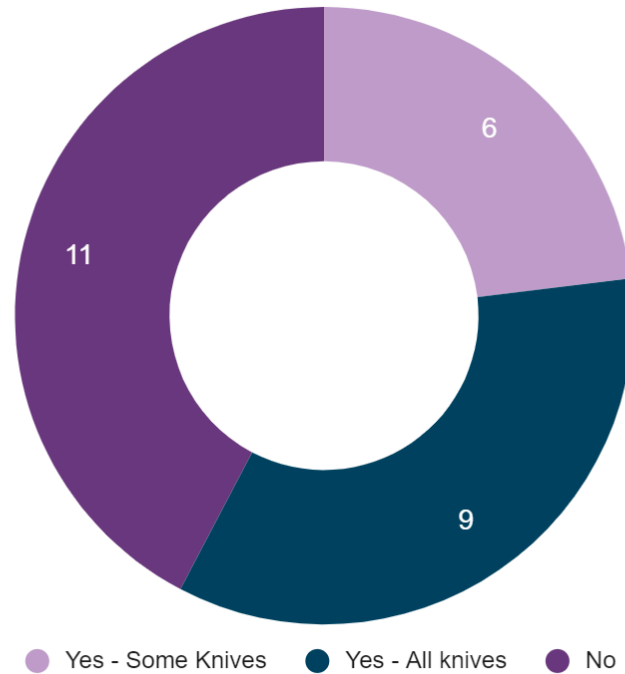
What We Heard - Business Feedback

The business survey received 65 responses, with 26 of those being businesses that sell knives. The demographic results of the business survey are presented at the beginning of this report.

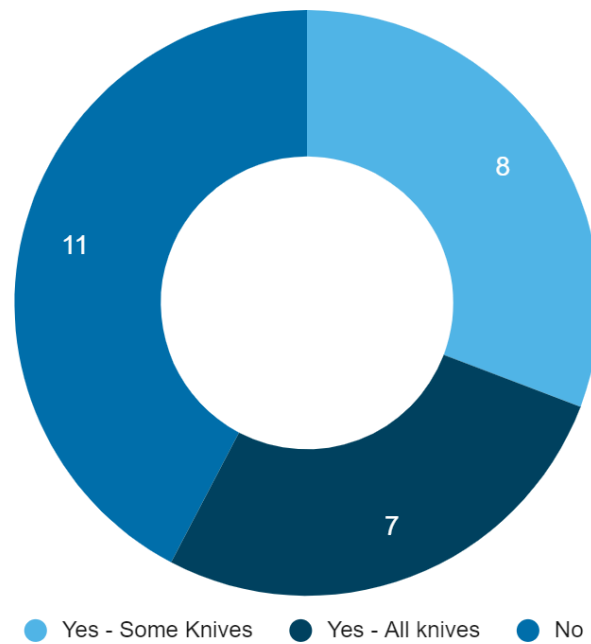
Current Business Practices (26 responses)

Q7a. In this section, businesses were asked about display practices. When asked if knives are being sold in packaging, 19 businesses responded yes for all knives, and seven businesses responded yes for some knives.

Q7b. When asked if knives are on store shelves where customers can pick them up freely without assistance, 11 businesses responded no, nine responded yes for all knives, and six responded yes for some knives.

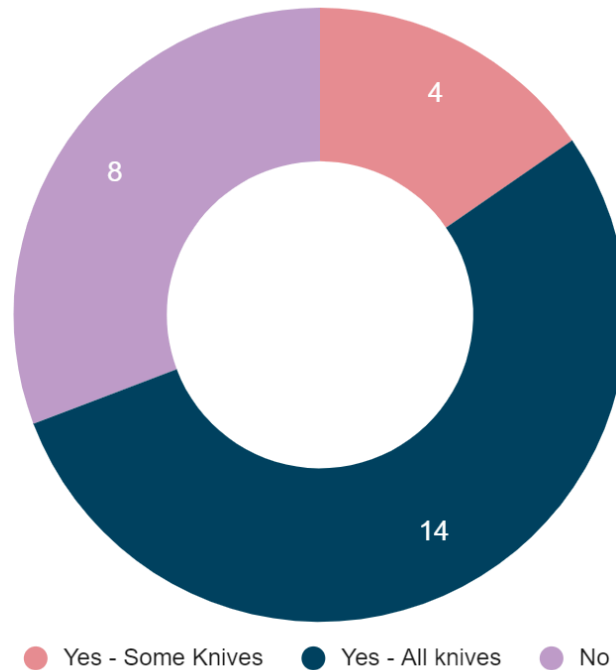


Q7c. Businesses were then asked if they keep knives in a locked display case or enclosure. 11 responded no, seven responded yes for all knives, and eight responded yes for some knives. Of the businesses that said yes to all knives, three are convenience stores, one is a firearm / military supply store, and the others are box stores, and specialty gift / art stores.



Q7d. Businesses were then asked if they kept knives in a locked room or cabinet where they are not visible. 20 responded no and six responded yes for some knives.

Q8a. In the next section, businesses were asked about selling practices. The first question asked businesses to respond to the statement “Knives are not sold to customers under 18 years of age”. eight businesses responded no, 14 responded yes for all knives, four responded yes for some knives. The businesses that responded ‘no’ include box stores, a garden centre, hardware store, gift or specialty store, and knife / kitchen store.



Q8b. Businesses were then asked if they request photo identification from customers who appear to be under 18 years of age prior to purchasing a knife. 17 responded no, five responded yes for all knives, three responded yes for some knives, and one preferred not to answer. Those that responded yes for all knives include three convenience stores, one firearm military / equipment store and a gift / specialty goods store.

Q8c. Businesses were then asked if they require photo identification from all customers, regardless of what age they appear to be. 22 businesses responded no, three responded yes for all knives, and one preferred not to answer. Those that responded yes include one convenience store, one gift / specialty goods store, and one gift and speciality store.

Q8d. When asked if they record transaction information about the customer, 24 responded no, one responded yes for all knives, and one responded yes for some knives. The stores that responded yes included a firearm / military equipment store and a garden centre.

Q10 - Q13. When asked about how potential regulations would impact their businesses, retailers that sell knives had varying opinions:

- 12 respondents felt that requiring identification from purchasers who appear under 25, and prohibiting the sale of knives to minors would either not impact, or would positively impact their business. 14 respondents felt it would negatively impact their business, though only three respondents indicated that the impact would be significant

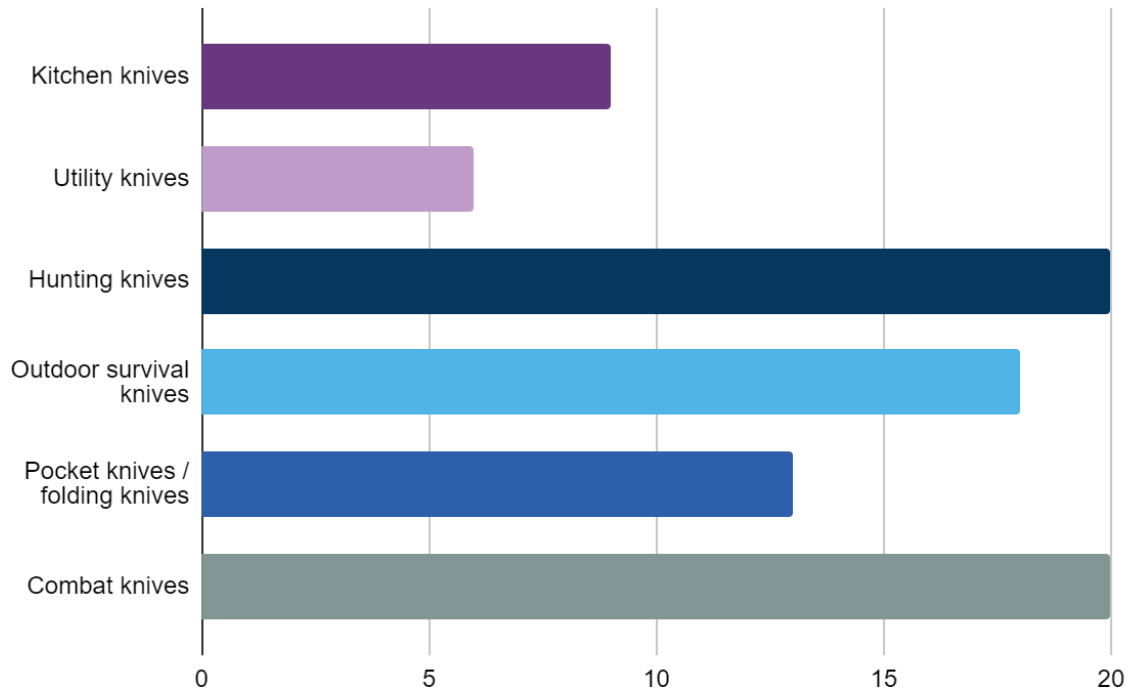
- 12 respondents felt that requiring knives to be kept in a locked display case or room would either not impact, or would positively impact their business. 14 respondents felt it would negatively impact their business.
- 18 respondents felt that posting signage with City-approved messaging pertaining to knife sales regulations would either not impact, or would positively impact their business. Eight respondents felt it would negatively impact their business, with all but one indicating they are concerned about both the aesthetics of the signage itself, and that the messaging would not be relevant or interesting to customers.

Of the four convenience stores that sell knives, opinions about the impact of requiring photo identification to verify minimum age and keeping knives in a locked display case or enclosure were evenly split. However, only one respondent felt that a signage requirement would have a negative impact on the business.

Q14 (a - c). Businesses were then asked if the potential regulations in the question above should apply to all knives, or only to 'dangerous knives'.

- 12 respondents felt that identification requirements should only apply to dangerous knives, eight respondents felt it should apply to all knives, and the remaining had no opinion or preferred not to answer.
- 14 respondents felt that only dangerous knives should be kept in a locked display case or in a secure room, three respondents felt it should apply to all knives, and the remaining had no opinion or preferred not to answer.
- Eight respondents felt that a signage requirement should apply only to dangerous knives, and 10 thought it should apply to all knives, and the remaining had no opinion or preferred not to answer.

Q15. Businesses were asked about what types of knives should be considered dangerous knives, and were provided with six general categories of knives to choose from: Kitchen knives (e.g. steak knife, butcher knife, paring knife, chefs knife, etc.), utility knives (e.g. X-ACTO knives, box cutters, craft / hobby knives, carpet knives, etc.), hunting knives (e.g. boning knives, skinning knives, gutting knives, etc.), outdoor survival knives (e.g. carving knives, bushcraft knives, machetes, etc.), pocket / folding knives (e.g. Swiss Army knives, Leatherman knives, etc.), and combat knives (e.g. karambit / claw knives, zombie knives, cyclone knives, etc.).



The most common selection for this question was hunting knives, combat knives, and outdoor survival knives. This was followed by pocket knives / folding knives, kitchen knives, and utility knives.

Q16. & Q17. Businesses were asked two more questions about dangerous knives, specifically around whether there are other types of knives the City should consider “dangerous” and if there are specific characteristics of knives that should be considered in defining “dangerous knife”. There were no relevant suggestions for types of knives to include, except for butterfly and switchblade knives, which are already regulated under the Criminal Code of Canada. In terms of defining knives, three businesses suggested blade length should be considered, and one suggested a triangular double-sided knife, such as a dagger knife or commando knife. Four businesses responded that all knives have the potential to be dangerous.

Q18. & Q19. Businesses that sell knives were also asked about potential regulations that would prohibit the sale of knives in combination with tobacco and vaping products, alcohol, cannabis, grocery items, and pharmaceuticals. 12 respondents had concerns about not being able to combine grocery items and all types of knives. When asked the same question about dangerous knives, the concern around not being able to combine grocery items with knives decreased to eight respondents. For the remaining items, the majority (between 18 - 21 respondents) said this would have no impact on their business.

Q20. The last question invited all businesses, including those that do not sell knives, to share any other thoughts on the sale of knives at retail stores (65 responses). Nine businesses had concerns around the regulation of the sale of knives and do not think it should be regulated. Ten businesses supported some form of regulation around knives, including restricting it to certain types of stores, prohibiting youth from purchasing knives, or removing them from convenience stores. Three businesses told us about the types of knives they sell. The remaining comments were not relevant to the topic, or stated 'no'.

What We Heard - Affected Communities

On June 7, 2024, Administration met with representatives from Arts on the Ave and the Alberta Avenue Community League, both of whom had spoken about this issue at the Urban Planning Committee on April 9. Administration provided an overview of the steps being taken to explore regulatory options under the Business Licence Bylaw. These community representatives expressed concerns that dangerous knives are too easily accessible, and that there is no need for these knives to be sold in convenience stores, particularly in vulnerable communities. While the accessibility of knives to minors is a concern, they asked that Administration not focus potential regulations exclusively on minors. They also expressed a strong desire for Administration to continue exploring regulatory options to address knife violence under other municipal bylaws, including the Zoning Bylaw and Public Places Bylaw. Based on the due date assigned to the Urban Planning Committee motion, depth and breadth of engagement was limited and further community consultation was not able to be undertaken.

What We Did

Administration used these engagement findings to help inform potential options for City Council to consider to regulate the retail sale of knives. Each option will be accompanied by the relevant findings from engagement with retailers, community representatives, and the general public, along with findings from a jurisdictional scan and detailed legal and operational analysis, and presented to City Council to inform their decision.

Some engagement findings are not reflected in the options that will be presented to City Council. Due to the compressed timeline for completing this work, the engagement questions were asked while analysis of potential options was still ongoing. Some engagement findings align with potential options that were explored, but subsequently determined to be legally and operationally unfeasible.

What Happens Next?

Administration will present potential options to regulate the retail sale of knives under the Business Licence Bylaw to either the Community and Public Services Committee on September 16, 2024, or the Urban Planning Committee on September 17, 2024. If Committee selects an option, Administration will draft the corresponding bylaw amendments for City Council to vote on in the fall of 2024.