

Edmonton Downtown Arena Public Consultation Open-ended Questions

Background

This report contains a summary of the results of the open-ended questions in the Questionnaire on a Proposed Downtown Arena. The open-ended portion of the questionnaire was designed to give people the opportunity to express their views on the proposed arena in longer form, or to provide feedback on issues not covered in the close-ended portion of the questionnaire.

The three open-ended questions asked were:

1. Do you have further input on the concept of a new arena in Edmonton, the site, or the community use component? (1500 characters max)
2. Do you have further input on the issues City Council should consider on a funding model? (1500 characters max)
3. Do you have further input on the impact of a new downtown arena in Edmonton? (1500 characters max)

This summary includes answers from the entire period in which the questionnaire was available to be completed, Thursday, October 28, 2010 to Saturday, November 20, 2010. 13,702 responses to the open-ended portion of the questionnaire were received.

This summary shows how the responses to the open-ended questions were coded for analysis, the raw number and the percentage of responses that fell into each of the 20 codes, and a few examples of the types of responses that fell under each code.

The online questionnaire was not a statistically accurate survey method. Instead, the objective of the questionnaire was to enable people to share their views as a part of the arena consultation even if they could not or did not wish to attend one of the in-person public consultation sessions. There was no mechanism used to prevent the same person from completing the questionnaire multiple times, though there was a written request shown at the start of the questionnaire asking that people only complete it once. Though there were likely some people who completed the questionnaire more than once, 71 percent of the completed questionnaires came from unique IP addresses.

2011CSS003 Attachment 1 - Appendix 3
Online Questionnaire Open Ended

CODE	DESCRIPTION	COUNT	PERCENT
1	<p>Do not support the concept of a new arena</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edmonton does not need a new arena • Too expensive: refurbish the existing arena • Already have arena with good transit access, parking • Save our/Oilers' history by keeping our arena 	1586	12%
2	<p>Completely support the concept of a new arena</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up-to-date and downtown arena is necessary • Edmonton needs to look like a serious hockey city • Edmonton has the worst rink in the NHL • The Oilers want it and they are necessary to our city • Keep the best elements of Rexall Place 	5071	38%
3	<p>Support the concept of a new arena, with conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a new arena but NOT downtown (e.g. at Municipal Airport or Rexall Place site or SW of city near Anthony Henday) • Prefer another site downtown (the Quarters or on Jasper Ave) • Community use will be extremely limited and arena is principally for professional hockey • make sure infrastructure is in place for increased traffic, parking needs (enlarged roads, more road access) • has to be on-site LRT station, underground connection to other facilities (e.g. City Hall, malls) • ensure public security and safety are addressed; increased policing downtown • make it bigger (a lot more seats, bigger seats with cupholders, bigger washrooms) • construction and design to be done by locals • build it to last for 100 years 	2042	15%
4	<p>Critical to consider design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development has to be carefully planned and designed; pedestrian friendly so no over-the- street pedways • Present design is really ugly • Needs to be cutting edge and really fantastic • Make sure it is well integrated with present downtown buildings, like City Hall, Winspear Centre, Alberta Gallery of Art • Hold a design competition for tasteful design, welcoming public spaces • Civic oversight and contribution to design to ensure beauty and appeal • Include Oilers' history (museum, memorials, banners) 	448	3%

5	<p>Positive impact on downtown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sports district is a really good way to encourage an end to urban sprawl • develop attractive public spaces downtown to encourage more city living • it will revitalize downtown, if it is done properly • encourage independent, local retailers and restaurants, not more chains • it will be great to turn a hockey outing into a night on the town • has to be a multi-use complex and not rely solely on Oilers games; • it will boost Edmonton's image as a city 	3171	24%
6	<p>Negative impact on downtown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will discourage people from visiting downtown • Coliseum is proof that it doesn't work as a revitalization tool • more bars only means more drunks on the streets late at night • Congestion, insufficient and expensive parking • Inaccessibility of transit routes; crowded public transit when events occurring 	851	6%
7	<p>Community benefits/engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arena has to meet diverse needs of Edmonton citizens • Accessibility for people with disabilities • True community inclusion (i.e. spaces for festivals; use it for display of student art, literary events) • Make it "green" • Low-cost and subsidized housing have to be included in the development • Community-use components have to be more than an ice surface for minor hockey (e.g. soccer and lacrosse fields, curling) 	606	5%
8	<p>Impact on surrounding communities downtown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown revitalization is needed but should not include arena; downtown needs to be liveable, attract residents and arena cannot contribute to that • arena will be a destination, not a starting point for wider downtown visits • arena won't be used as much as forecast and will just mean more tumbleweeds across downtown streets • development will only displace homeless and crime to outlying neighbourhoods • consider the impact on current entertainment districts (Whyte Ave, West Edmonton Mall); have a plan to minimize this impact 	612	5%

9	<p>Impact on future of Rexall Place and surrounding communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • let neighbourhoods around Rexall Place benefit from its refurbishment and downtown from other projects • what happens to the already suffering neighbourhoods around Rexall Place if it is shuttered? • Rexall Place and Northlands grounds cannot be left abandoned. Plans have to be in place for their continued use. 	325	2%
10	<p>Against any public funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No taxpayer money: for-profit venture should be paid for by those making the profit • No tax breaks for Katz Group or other businesses • Only tax breaks, not tax dollars • users should pay, not every tax payer • only tax money for community use components of facilities • Other budget priorities come well ahead of an arena e.g. roads, homelessness, neighbourhood renewal • It will only shift businesses from other areas to downtown, with no net benefit to the city 	3183	24%
11	<p>Support public funding ONLY, with conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully funded or mostly funded by the City since it will reap great benefits for all of Edmonton • A well planned and developed downtown core will be of major benefit to all of Edmonton and tax dollars invested now will be repaid many times • Borrow or raise taxes to ensure it belongs to the City • Katz Group must provide guarantee that the Oilers remain in Edmonton 	97	1%
12	<p>Support creative mix of private and public funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e.g. public bond issue, IPO/shareholders • approach surrounding communities for investment • Katz Group has to put more in, first • funding from other levels of government • Combine tax dollars with surcharge and public offerings • Use a lottery • City can offer tax breaks for various levels of private investment 	1406	11%
13	<p>Support mix of private and public funding, with conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Okay to use tax dollars, as long as the City gets repaid • City contribution has to be carefully monitored • If tax dollars are used, then the City should gain a shareholding in the Edmonton Oilers hockey franchise, other profit-generating events • Portion of tax money should be limited (e.g. 50% of cost only) • If entertainment district generates the tax revenue as promised, then City tax payers should get a refund at that time • Northlands has to be included if City money is invested 	1314	10%

14	<p>User pay revenue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ticket prices have to be within reach of most people • No ticket surcharge • Only ticket surcharge for Oilers' tickets • Exemption from surcharge for Oilers' tickets • User fees must be time limited and cannot be revenue-generating 	614	5%
15	<p>Support Community Revitalization Levy (CRL) funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRL has to be borne by the arena and its immediate neighbours only; • CRL has to be guaranteed by private developers, who will make up any annual budget shortfalls 	127	1%
16	<p>Against CRL funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRL would be borne by a downtown population that includes some of our poorest citizens; too much for downtown businesses to bear 	200	2%
17	<p>Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't like questionnaire/questions or consultation process • would have liked opportunity to first discuss question of downtown development then whether arena fits into that; • Need more information about the financial impacts and economic potential • designed as a "push poll" to arrive at a desired conclusion • need a plebiscite, not an opinion survey 	226	2%
18	<p>Trust of proponent (Oilers, Katz) (Positive or negative)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • this is just a way for a really rich man to get what he wants at someone else's expense • what guarantee is there that Katz won't move the Oilers even if we build this arena? • Katz has Edmonton's best interests in mind and needs our support 	220	2%
19	<p>Trust of City of Edmonton (Positive or negative)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our City council can't be trusted with our money • City council never listens to tax payers • This is a great idea but our council has no vision 	115	1%
20	<p>Trust/perception of Northlands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northlands absolutely should not be included • Only involve Northlands if they are bringing money to the table • There are better facility managers which the City can bring in • Should be Katz-owned and operated 	575	4%