



CITY OF  
**CHILLIWACK**

City of Chilliwack

# Climate Action Plan Engagement Summary Report

August 16, 2022

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Figure 1: Engage Chilliwack project webpage

## Engagement Summary

Following two staff workshops, the greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets and potential actions were brought forward for public engagement in spring 2022.

Table 1 summarizes the engagement events that occurred between March-May 2022.

Table 1. City of Chilliwack Climate Action Plan(s) engagement events

Date	Event	# of participants
March 17	Transportation Advisory Committee	9
April 2	Cottonwood Mall Booth	68
April 12	Virtual Townhall	12
April 26	Stakeholder Workshop	7
April 27	Affordable Housing and Development Advisory Committee	10
April - May	Engage Chilliwack Website	298 survey submissions

Across all engagement activities, there was agreement that action should be taken within the City of Chilliwack to reduce GHG emissions.

At the Cottonwood Mall Booth, residents were supportive of the notion that the City should do more to reduce emissions, and the only concerns raised were that the actions taken wouldn't do enough to impact the changing climate. Participants at the virtual townhall and stakeholder workshop were concerned that the City of Chilliwack wouldn't set high enough targets and goals, and urged the City to demonstrate leadership on climate action.



Figure 2: April 2 consultation booth

Engagement through the City's online consultation platform, Engage Chilliwack, gleaned the most amount of information/comments from residents of Chilliwack. The following is a summary of the survey results:

- As of May 12, 2022, a total of **298 submissions** were received with responses from 257 residents and 38 business owners (of which, 36 are also residents) in Chilliwack, and 4

people who live near the city boundary or are concerned about climate change issues in the region.

- About **eight-in-ten (86%) respondents have some level of concerns about the effects of climate change on Chilliwack**. More than half (55%) say they are “extremely concerned”, 18% “moderately concerned”, and 13% “somewhat concerned”.
- **Almost half (46%) of the respondents believe the targets “don’t go far enough (e.g. we should be reducing emissions faster)** - 31% say the targets are “about right” - a quarter think the targets are “too ambitious (e.g. we don’t need to reduce emissions by this much/this fast)”.
- **64% are willing to support additional property tax dollars going toward initiatives and measures that aim to reduce GHG emissions**. 25% are unwilling and 11% are not sure.

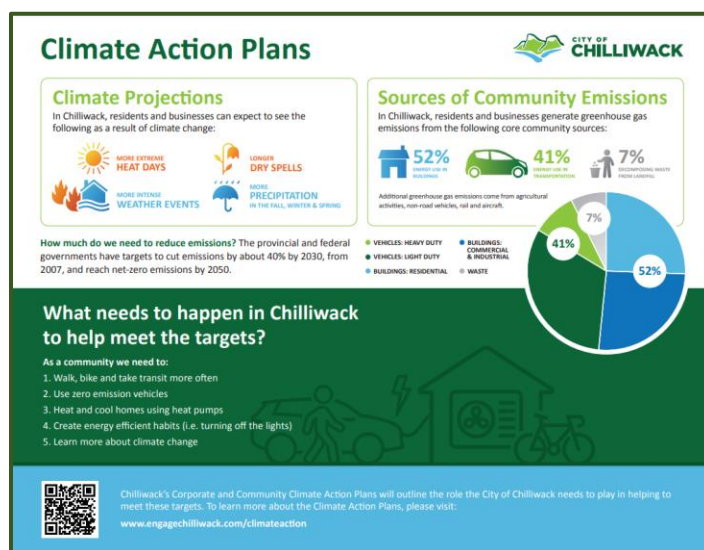


Figure 3: Infographic handout provided online and at consultation booth

## Transportation

When asked about the types of actions the City should take to reduce GHG emissions from transportation, respondents surveyed were most supportive of “increased transit services including additional scheduling and routes” (197 responses) and “investing in safe and accessible cycling and walking routes” (197 responses). 167 respondents voted to “expand public electric vehicle infrastructure in the community with increased charging stations in more locations”. Additionally, new ideas were proposed and summarized below:

- Fix and expand infrastructure, such as investments in road upgrades and requirements for EV charging stations in new builds, to reduce road congestion and allow easy access to EV charging stations.
- Reduce the need to travel for basic necessities through purposeful City planning:
  - Density neighbourhoods, reduce separation of residential development from businesses, services, and recreation.
  - Incentivize the development of compact neighbourhood nodes.
  - Intentionally design walkable neighbourhoods.
  - Increase safety for walking/cycling.

- Encourage the adoption of renewable fuel vehicles in areas where EVs are not feasible.
- Promote ride share programs.
- Increase school bus access.
- Take punitive measures, such as taxation, to discourage the unnecessary use of certain types of vehicles.
- Reduce vehicle idling through regulation, road upgrades, and increasing left turn lanes.
- Apply incentive-based approaches to encourage behaviour change.
- Consider vulnerable populations, such as seniors with mobility issues and displaced people, when planning actions.
- Invest in research and consult with scientific experts on actions the City should take.

## New Buildings

When asked about the types of actions the City should take to reduce GHG emissions from new buildings, respondents surveyed were most supportive of “partnering with grant providers and energy companies to deliver and promote energy conservation education and grant programs for new buildings (e.g. CleanBC Better Homes New Construction Program)” (219 responses) and “Working with the building industry to build capacity to accelerate energy efficiency requirements for new buildings (e.g. Adopt the BC Energy Step Code to reduce GHG emissions faster)” (194 responses). Additionally, new ideas were proposed and summarized below:

- Promote and subsidize passive house technologies and certification.
- Encourage low carbon design, material use, and construction practices.
- Integrate solar panels and utilize passive solar heating; allocate areas within the community for solar farms.
- Better insulate new builds with triple glass pane windows.
- Increase developments that promote walking/cycling.
- Mandate green spaces within new developments.
- Promote green roofs, green walls, forested park space or grounds in developments.
- Limit deforestation for new construction.
- Offer financial incentives for buildings with efficient heating sources such as heat pumps, thermal heating/cooling etc.
- Prohibit the installation of natural gas connections and wood burning heating appliances.
- Build energy efficient homes in consideration of affordable housing.
- Accelerate adoption of the Step Code ahead of the provincial schedule.
- Improve local building code requirements.
- Consult with scientific experts and Passive House Canada about ways to accelerate energy efficiency requirements in new construction.
- Include renewable energy sources such as solar panels and wind turbines in public buildings.
- Accelerate permit approval process for developers with better net zero building plans.

- Improve energy efficiency training for tradespeople, building inspectors, City officials and other stakeholders.

## Existing Buildings

When asked about the types of actions the City should take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from existing buildings, respondents surveyed were most supportive of “Educating and raising awareness on the importance of energy efficiency in the home among residents and building owners” (190 responses) and “Partnering with grant providers and energy companies on the delivery and promotion of programs that help residents switch their heating sources to an energy efficient heat pump (e.g. CleanBC Better Homes Rebate)” (189 responses). “Looking into new ways to finance residential retrofits” and “Providing top ups on existing grants made available through utility companies to support residential retrofits” were supported by 175 respondents and 172 respondents respectively. Additionally, new ideas were proposed and summarized below:

- Accelerate renovation approval processes for applications which include energy efficiency upgrades.
- Prohibit the use of natural gas appliances.
- Encourage the adoption of heat pumps and passive home technologies.
- Repurpose Bitcoin mining heat for building heating.
- Incentivize solar and wind power options.
- Allocate incentive funding based on each building’s specific needs to incentivize energy efficiency upgrades.
- Increase property taxes on energy inefficient buildings.
- Provide financial aid to lower income families to retrofit housing.
- Reduce red tape required to qualify for funding for energy conservation projects and upgrades.
- Include apartment buildings in rebate and grant programs.
- Increase the number of prequalified tradespeople.
- Provide education programs to home and building owners to motivate the adoption of green solutions and encourage positive changes.
- Ban new and replacement installation of air conditioning.
- Lobby the provincial government to reduce the cost of electricity.
- Support strata councils and property management companies with resources to accelerate transition to energy efficient retrofits.
- Upgrade windows and lighting in all City buildings.

## Natural Areas

When asked about the types of actions the City should take to help protect and expand green spaces to remove carbon from the air, respondents were most supportive of “Restoring streamside areas by reclaiming green space and planting native species” (236 responses) and “Planting more street trees along urban walkways and roads” (235 responses).

211 respondents voted to “Encourage stewardship of trees on private land to achieve mature tree canopy”. Additionally, new ideas were proposed and summarized below:

- Encourage densification of city core to reduce development in forested areas surrounding Chilliwack.
- Increase green space requirements for new developments.
- Develop and enforce tree removal bylaw.
- Provide funding to encourage land owners to plant trees.
- Create more protected green spaces and increase tree protection.
- Promote community gardens and the knowledge of organic gardening practices.
- Increase park areas and greenways connecting park spaces.
- Promote community forests and urban forest parks.
- Build and restore wetlands and increase protected areas.
- Reduce grass areas and plant low growing species.
- Ensure the variety of trees planted to avoid species specific insect infestation.
- Increase native pollinator spaces.
- Consult with scientists and professionals on land clearing activities.
- Prohibit herbicides from private use.



Figure 4: Summary of completed climate actions handout provided online and at consultation booth

## Appendix A

### Engage Chilliwack: Ideas & Questions

Through the Engage Chilliwack platform, residents were able to share their ideas, and ask questions on the proposed targets and actions. Tables 2 and 3 summarize these results.

During the public engagement period for Chilliwack’s Climate Action Plans, a total of 8 respondents provided 40 key ideas or suggestions on the actions the City could take to combat climate issues and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The ideas and suggestions are summarized by sector and listed in the table below:

Table 2. Ideas from Engage Chilliwack

THEME	IDEAS
<b>BUILDINGS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Converting and retrofitting City buildings</li> <li>• Providing incentives to builders who include Compact City principles in their plans, such as multi-use residential/commercial buildings</li> <li>• Incentivize and subsidize in-fill housing, including waiving permit fees, utility hookups, etc.</li> <li>• Net zero new builds</li> <li>• Diversify zoning, such as ending single family zoning or trialing tiny homes on larger R1-A lots</li> <li>• Incentivize and subsidize infill housing</li> </ul>
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the necessity of commuting across the city or to other cities for work or shopping by:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focusing on Compact City principles</li> <li>○ Attracting new businesses</li> <li>○ Developing neighbourhoods with housing, services and employment</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Encourage active transportation and transit usage and reduce reliance on personal vehicle commutes by:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reducing transit services wait time</li> <li>○ Subsidized bus passes or free transit</li> <li>○ Build bike lanes with barriers for protection</li> <li>○ Dedicated cross-city trails for walking/cycling</li> <li>○ Reduce parking spaces</li> <li>○ Eliminate parking minimums from zoning bylaws</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Support EV uptake by:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Purchase electric school buses</li> <li>○ Switching City fleet to EV</li> <li>○ Install EV charging stations at retail areas</li> <li>○ Add EV charging stations to City light posts</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Support E-bike uptake by adding more cycling infrastructure:</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bike lanes</li> <li>○ Locking stations</li> <li>○ Charging stations</li> <li>○ Retailers and mechanics</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Build autoluw streets (nearly car-free) downtown</li> </ul>
<b>WASTE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Include thrift store item pick up on garbage day</li> </ul>
<b>NATURE SPACES/ ECOSYSTEMS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Protect the forests, stop tree cutting practices</li> <li>● Incentivize densification over outward expansion to maintain forests</li> <li>● Incentivize green roofs/rooftop gardens in new builds</li> <li>● Reform parks by switching to native plants and ground cover to reduce maintenance needs and reduce GHG emissions from mowers, trimmers, etc.</li> <li>● Develop resilient ecosystems by fostering collaboration with community groups that have adopted parks and streams and worked on conservation and restoration projects</li> <li>● Add shade and coverings to public areas</li> <li>● Mapping and compiling inventory of all natural assets</li> <li>● Stop herbicide and pesticide use in schools, City lots and privately owned spaces that are near waterways and ditches by using nature-based practices</li> <li>● Encourage the use of native plant species on City properties</li> </ul>
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● EV owners and businesses should provide EV charging infrastructure, not the City</li> <li>● Restore sloughs and waterways with riparian vegetation and fish friendly infrastructure</li> </ul>
<b>FOOD/ AGRICULTURE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Build food resilience by connecting food produces with consumers</li> <li>● Run farmers’ markets year-round with local food and reduce importing and exporting</li> <li>● Provide incentives to farmers to encourage the use of sustainable farming methods by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Offering grants for nature-based pest control and weed management</li> <li>○ Providing grants for compost, tools and expansions to local farmers markets and local organic farms</li> <li>○ Encouraging healthy farming educational campaigns and practices</li> <li>○ Changing social perception of farming gender stereotypes by including more female farmers</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>GENERAL/ OTHER</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a guidebook for residents that helps them measure their GHG emissions and create a personal plan to reduce them</li> <li>• Regularly report on GHG emission reduction actions</li> <li>• Support businesses adopting GHG reducing practices by:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Providing funding to businesses to help them shift from natural gas space heating</li> <li>○ Supporting the development of infrastructure to upgrade electrical services</li> <li>○ Updating restrictive bylaws</li> <li>○ Hosting a city-wide energy efficiency challenge</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Educate residents about GHG reduction programs and options through educational and promotional presentations and learning sessions</li> <li>• Hire messenger to spread and communicate meaningful climate action; messages with people at events, markets, churches, schools and festivals</li> <li>• Collaborate with and learn from Indigenous people</li> <li>• Set more ambitious goals with shortened timelines and increased GHG emission reduction targets</li> <li>• Have adaption strategies in place</li> <li>• Add fun activities to do within the City</li> </ul>
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The Engage Chilliwack platform provided a location for residents to ask questions to the City of Chilliwack about climate action – the following questions were asked through this portal.

Table 3. Questions from Engage Chilliwack

<b>THEME</b>	<b>QUESTIONS</b>
<b>BUILDINGS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the climate action summary under the density section one of the points is Revitalization Tax Exemption Bylaw, what is it and how does that help?</li> </ul> <p><i>Thank you for your question. Revitalization Tax Exemption Bylaw 2004, No. 3012 allows for tax exemptions on particular types of developments in areas designated by Council. It enables the City to encourage high density development in particular neighbourhoods. For example, in the case of this bylaw, it encourages high density, multi-family buildings in the downtown core, an area with walking access to stores and public transit, which result in lower greenhouse gas emissions per person in this neighbourhood. More information can be found in the bylaw on the <a href="#">City's website</a>.</i></p>
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can EV chargers be added to destination locations such as malls, the Cultural Center, the pools, sports fields etc.?</li> </ul>

**GENERAL/ OTHER**

*Thank you for your question! The City is planning on expanding access to EV chargers at [City owned facilities](#). The decision to install chargers at other destinations, such as malls, is up to the property owner.*

- What is Chilliwack's per person GHG emission?

*Thank you for your question! Chilliwack's per person GHG emissions will vary year by year. In 2018, they were approximately 41 tCO<sub>2</sub>e/person.*

- How do we compare with other Fraser valley communities?

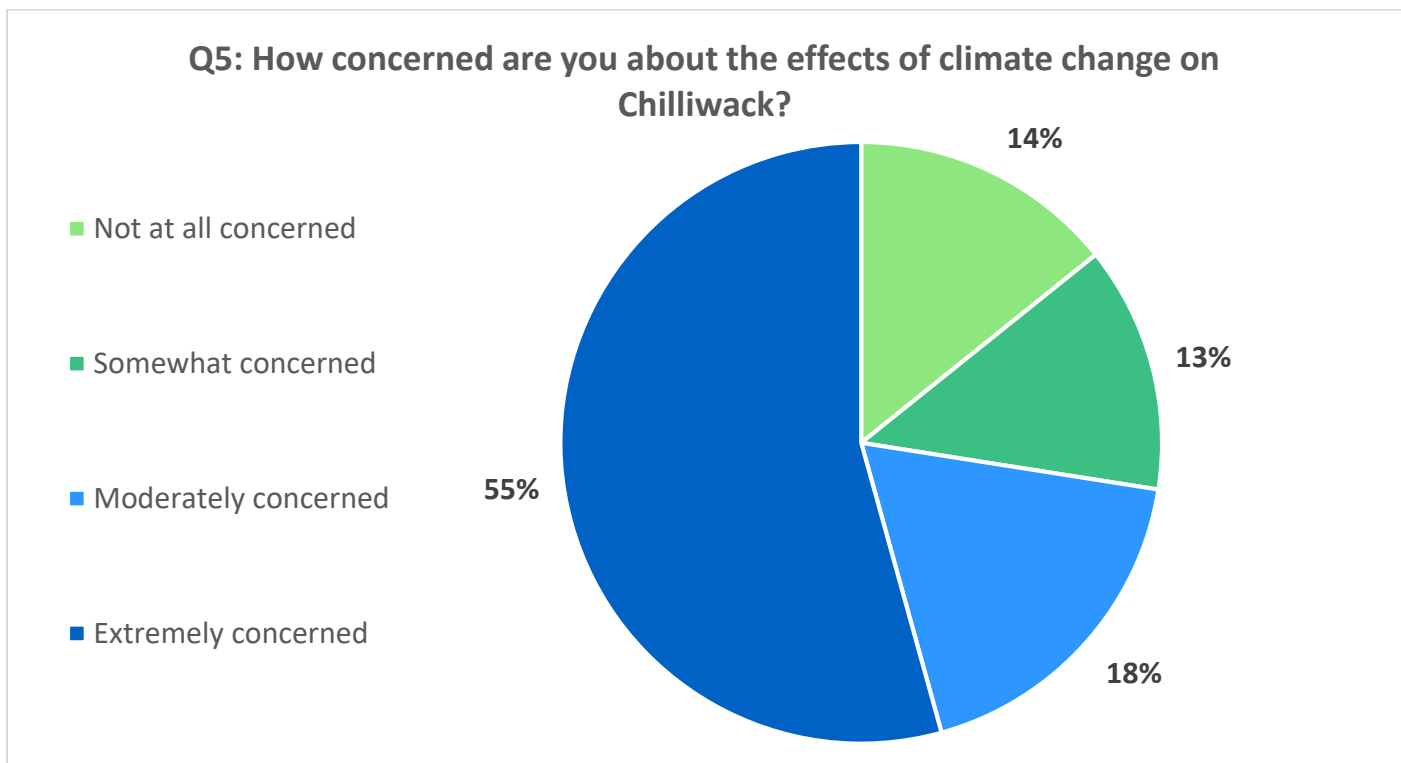
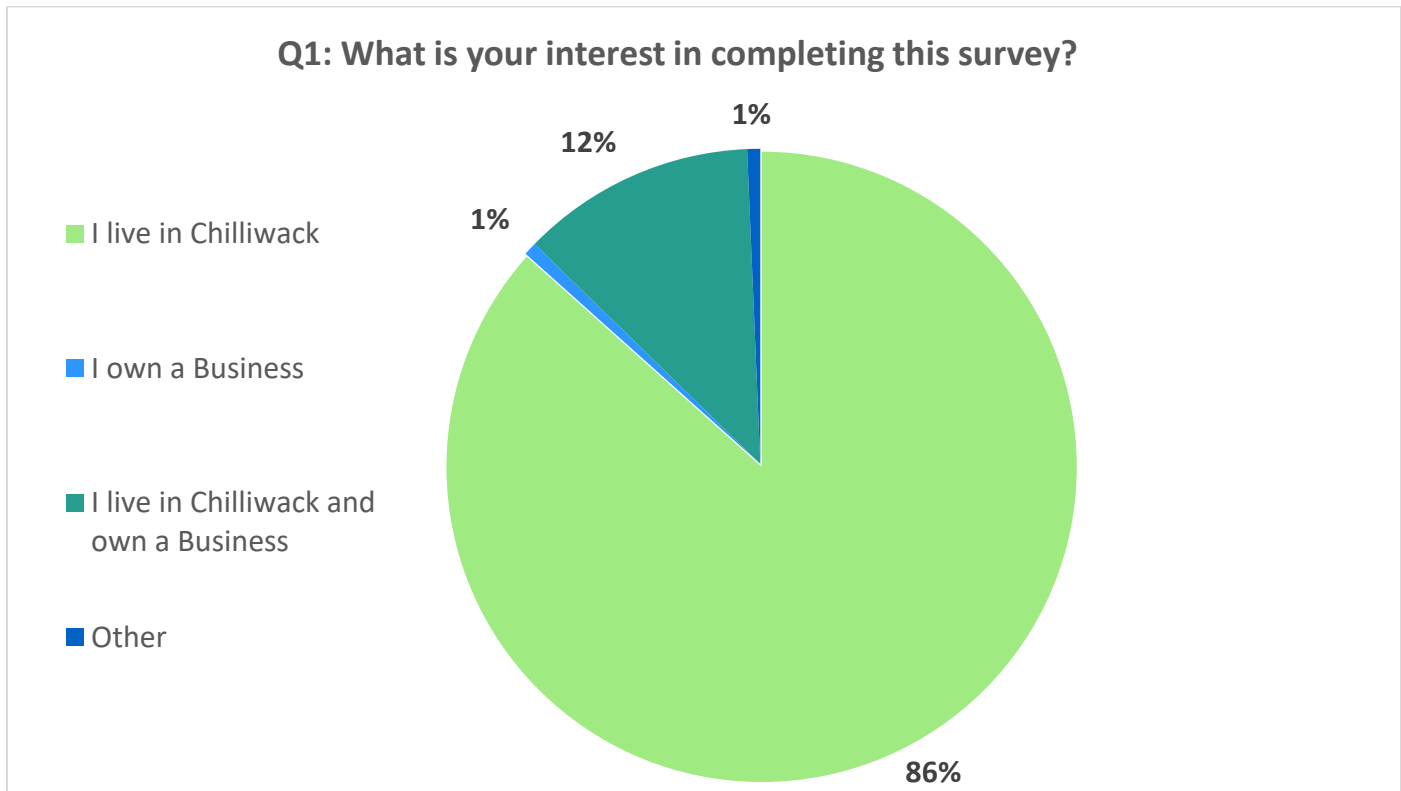
*Thank you for your question! Chilliwack does not have community emissions data from neighbouring communities. Furthermore, the types of businesses and intensity of agricultural production will vary from community to community, which will have a large impact on per capita emissions and make direct comparisons difficult.*

- Shouldn't we be targeting largest most in efficient emitters first?

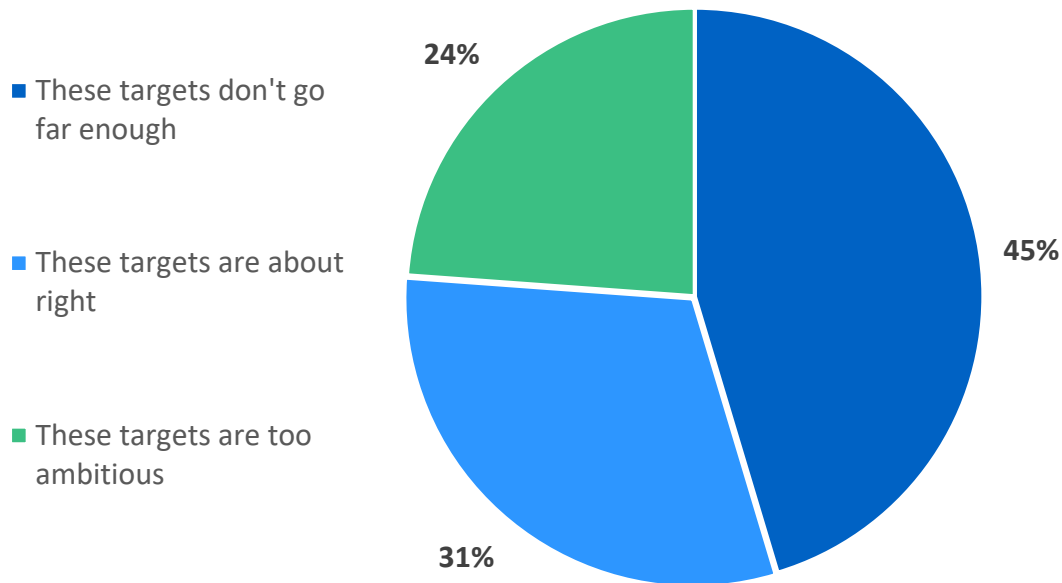
*Thank you for your question! This is precisely why most of the proposed actions target transportation and buildings, as these two sectors are the largest emitters in Chilliwack.*

## Appendix B

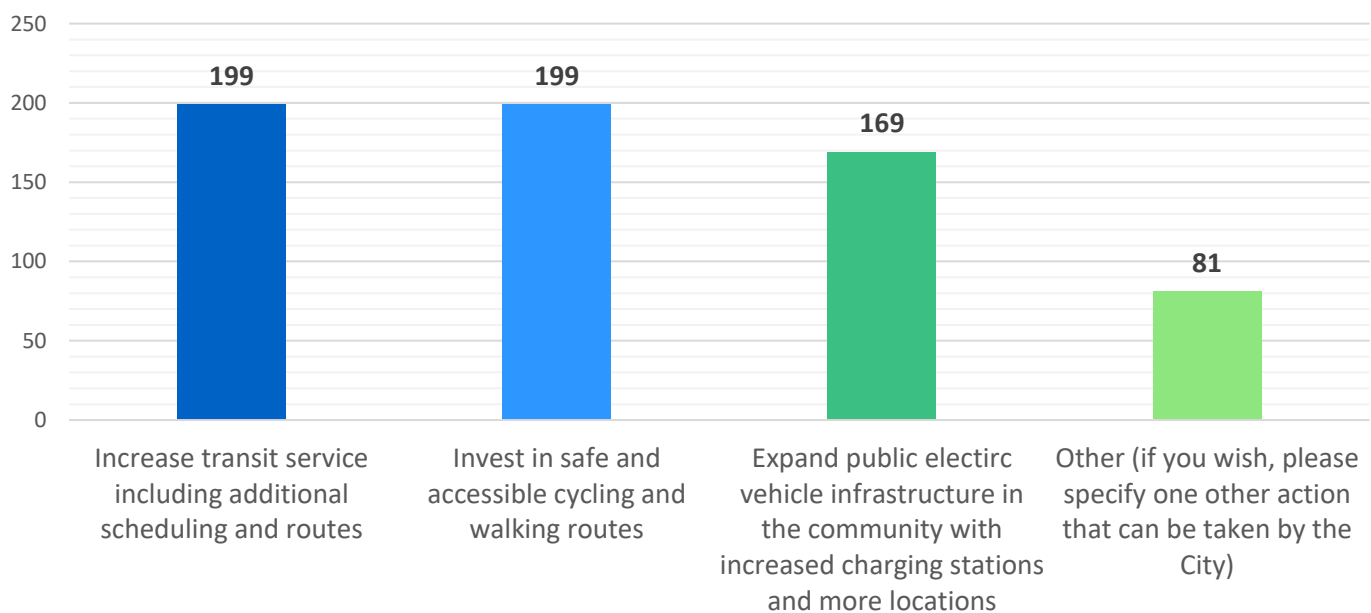
### Engage Chilliwack Survey Results



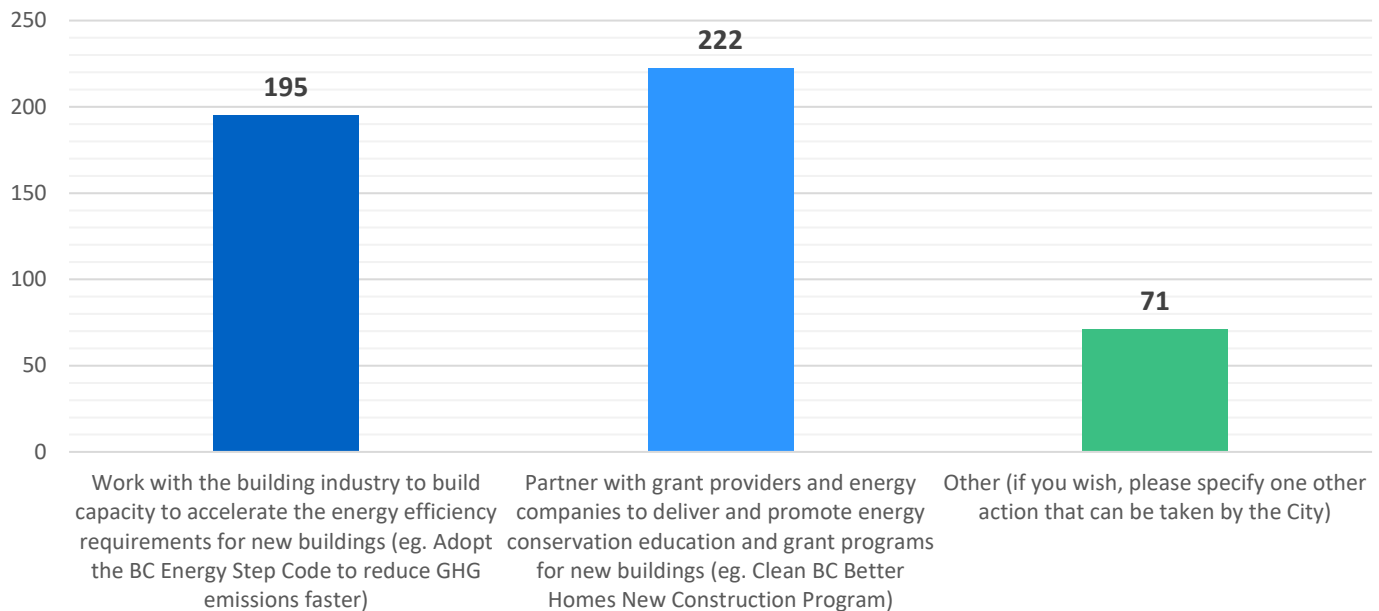
**Q6: The City is considering a Community Climate Action Plan that aims to reduce community greenhouse gas emissions by 30-45% by 2030 from 2007 levels, and reach net zero emissions in 2050 to align with provincial and federal targets. What do you think?**



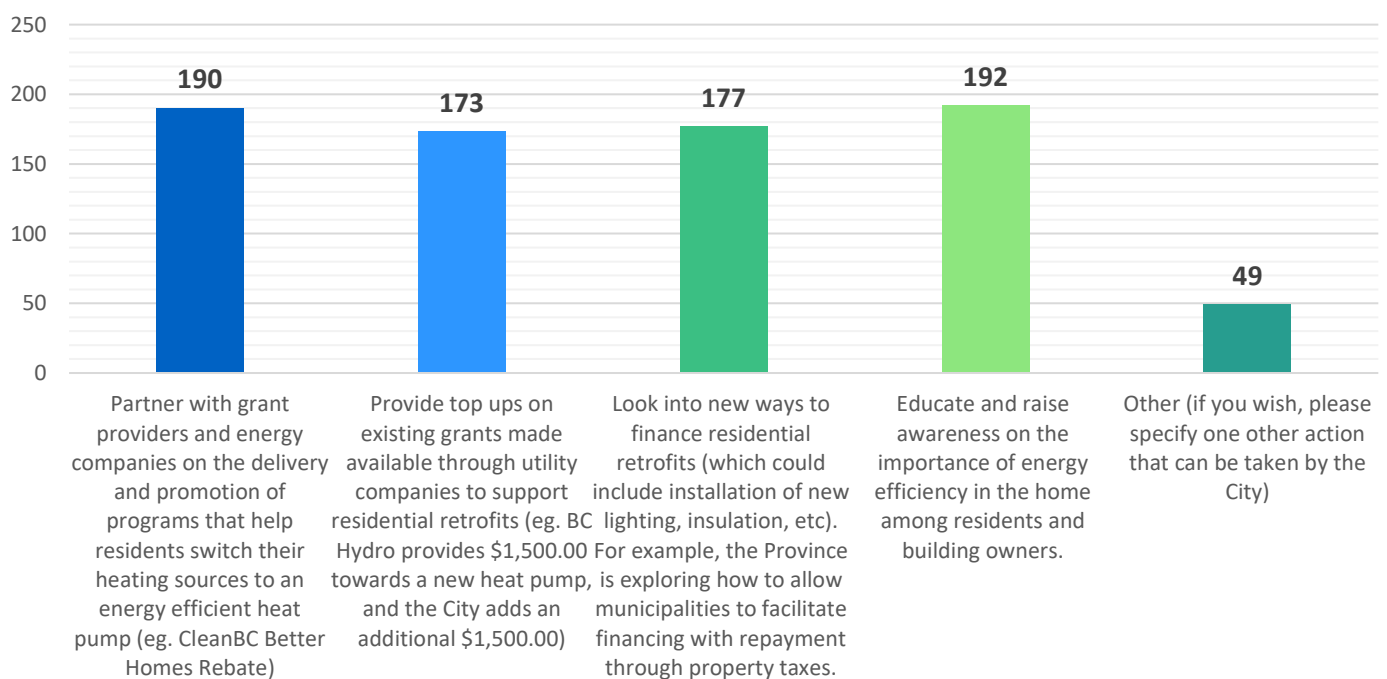
**Q7: What types of action should the City take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation?**

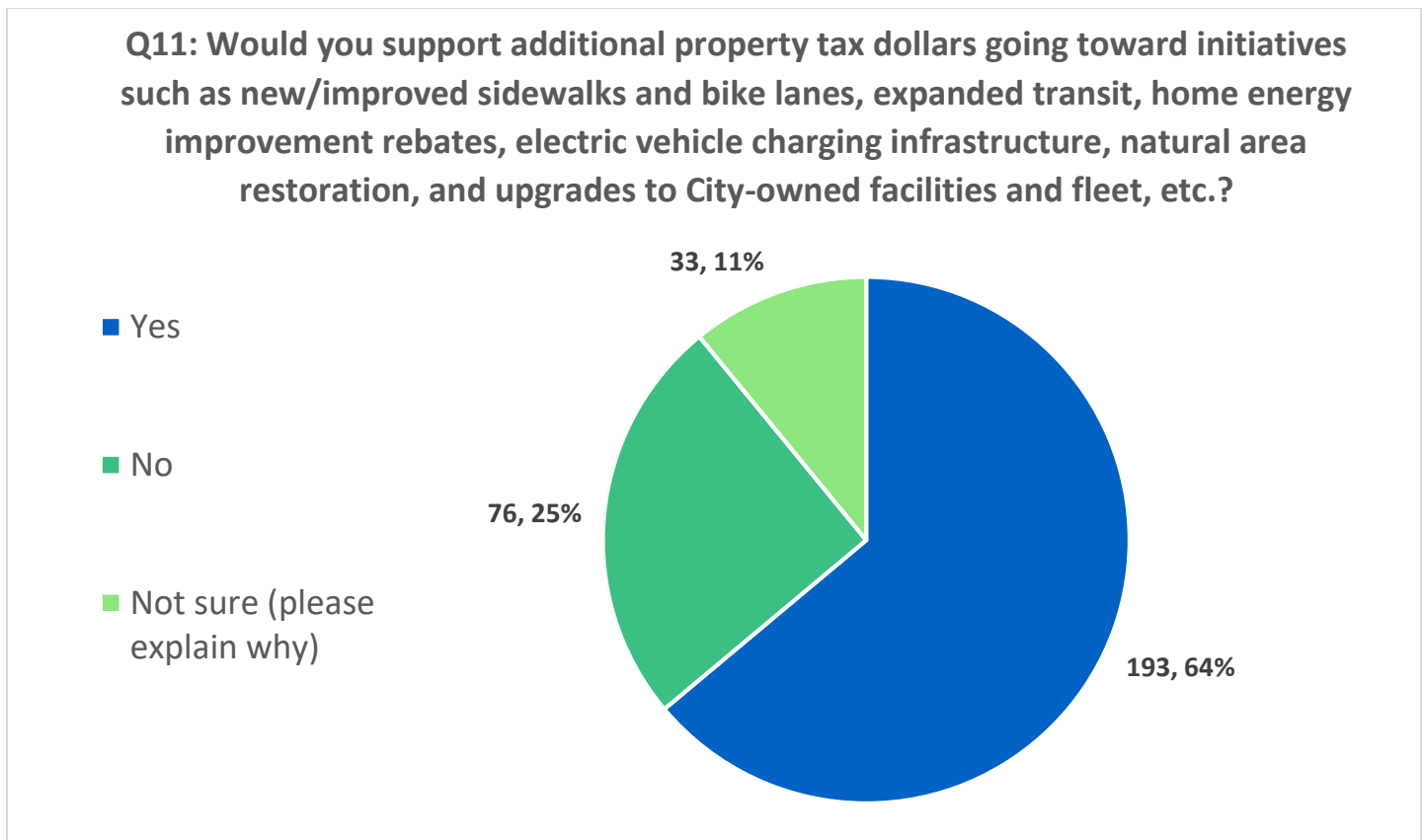
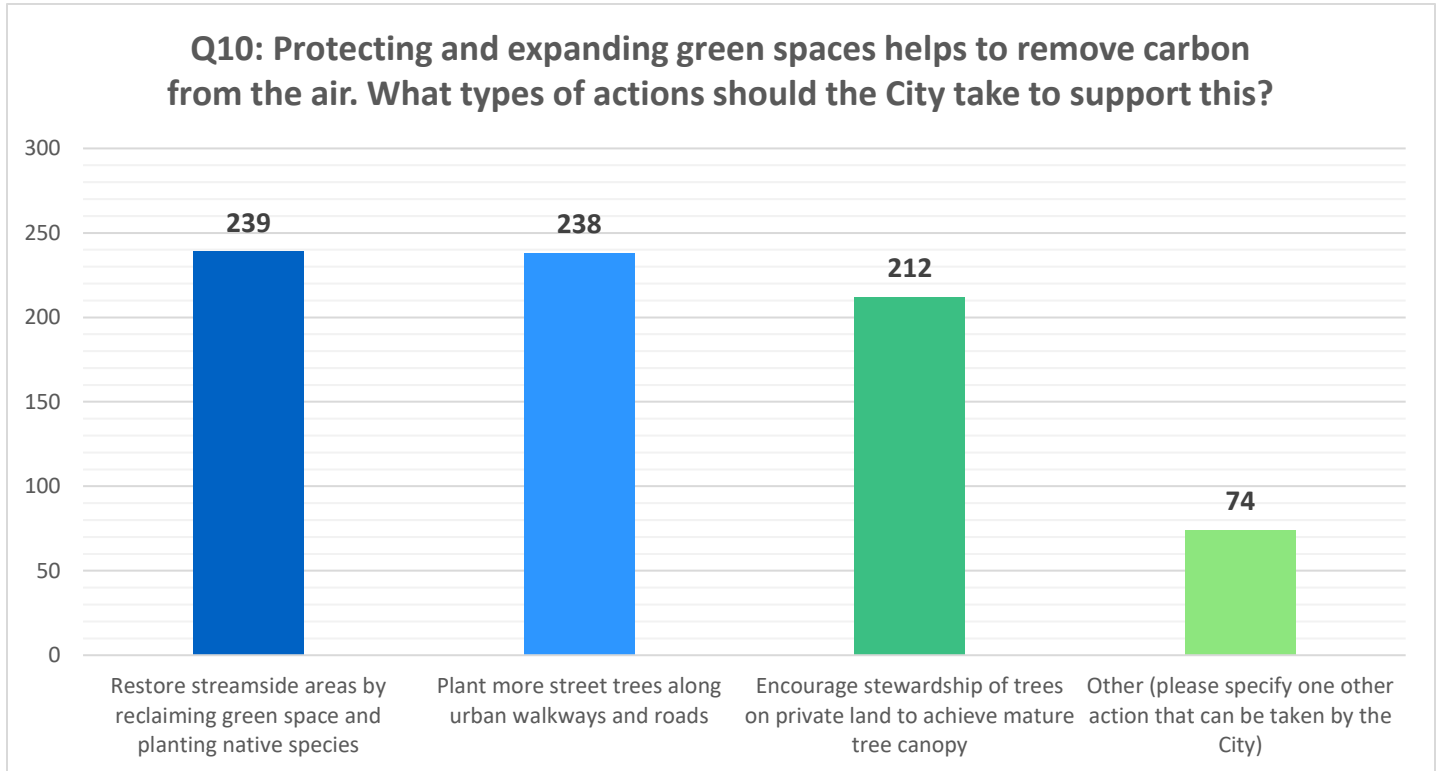


**Q8: The Province has committed to requiring all new buildings in BC to be net zero carbon starting in 2030, which will help reduce our GHG's. What additional types of actions should the City take to reduce GHG emissions from new buildings?**



**Q9: What types of actions should the City take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from existing buildings?**





### Q13: What do you think is the most important action that the City of Chilliwack can take in reducing emissions?

In total, 241 answers were provided to Q13:

- Many (100+) identified transportation as a key area for action, including walking and cycling infrastructure, better transit services within and outside of the city, and supporting the switch to electric vehicles.
- Some (~40) highlighted the need for actions around new and existing buildings.
- Some (~25) highlighted the need for education and advocacy.
- A few respondents indicated the need to focus on all areas (i.e. transportation, infrastructure, waste, etc.).
- Several respondents also highlighted other areas of action that should be considered, including agriculture, renewable energy and green technology, leadership from the City, climate adaptation strategies and new policy.
- Eight respondents felt that the City should not be engaging in work related to climate action.