



Vulnerable Social Infrastructure By-law Survey

Final Findings Report

Prepared for the City of Ottawa

Supplier: EKOS RESEARCH ASSOCIATES INC.

Date: October 21, 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables	3
List of Charts	3
Summary	4
1. Detailed Findings	7
A. Negative impacts from demonstrations	7
B. Participation in demonstrations	10
C. General views regarding demonstrations	12
D. Acceptable behaviour at demonstrations	14
E. Support for safe access by-law	16
2. Appendices	23
A. Methodology	23
B. Survey Questionnaire	26

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Reasons for Support/Opposition to By-law

Table 2: Sample Characteristics

LIST OF CHARTS

Chart 1: Negative impacts from demonstrations

Chart 2: Types of negative impacts

Chart 3: Avoiding facilities due to demonstrations

Chart 4: Participation in demonstrations

Chart 5: Participation in demonstrations near public facilities

Chart 6: Considering facility access when demonstrating

Chart 7: General views regarding demonstrations

Chart 8: Acceptance of types of behaviour during demonstrations near social service facilities

Chart 9: Support for safe access by-law based on type of organization/service

Chart 10: Support for safe access by-law

Chart 11A: Impact of distance of protective zone on support/opposition

Chart 11B: Impact of protective zone on support/opposition

Chart 12: Reasons for impact on support/opposition

SUMMARY

To assist the City's Public Policy Development Services (EPS Department), EKOS Research carried out an online survey of residents of Ottawa who are 18 years of age or older, related to a potential new by-law in Ottawa that would regulate protests and demonstrations occurring within a prescribed distance of designated vulnerable social infrastructure facilities. The purpose of the by-law is to address harassment and hate speech and generally prevent behaviours that obstruct individuals' safe access for staff and patrons of such facilities with the aim of ensuring a safe access or "bubble" zone around these facilities. Such infrastructure facilities would likely include places of worship, schools, healthcare facilities, retirement homes and care facilities, and potentially cultural facilities. The objectives of the study are to measure residents' attitudes, including support or opposition to such a by-law or other regulatory measures. The survey also explored the range of public attitudes based on the types of facilities and segments of the population typically using these facilities, as well as the behaviours they consider to be acceptable or unacceptable in the context of protests or demonstrations near these facilities.

This eight-minute survey was conducted between September 12 and 21st, 2025. A total of 1,041 cases were included, with a response rate of 23% using our in-house Probit panel of randomly recruited Canadians. The margin of error associated with this sample size is up to +/-3% at a 95% confidence level, with margins as wide as +/-6% to 9% for most sub-groups. The survey included an oversample of inner urban residents in order to ensure sufficient cases for sub-group analysis. The final sample was weighted to population proportions for region types, age, and gender based on 2021 Census figures for the City of Ottawa.

Key Results

Sample Characteristics

- In the sample of 1,041 residents, close to half (47%) live or regularly travel downtown.
- One in four residents reported experiencing a negative impact as a result of one or more demonstrations in the past two years (September 2023 through August 2025). The most commonly reported impacts are a reduced ability to travel downtown, reduced desire to come downtown, or a reduced sense of safety and security. One in four also reported avoiding accessing facilities that provide healthcare, education, social services, or are faith-based institutions due to concerns about demonstrations nearby.
- 12% of residents in the sample reported that they have organized or participated in a demonstration in the past two years. This was reported more often among members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community, residents of the inner urban core, and those under 35 years of age. Among those residents who have been involved in one or more demonstrations, one in four

said this has been at or near a facility offering health, education, or social services on at least one occasion. When they participate in a demonstration, just over half said that they always or often consider the impact on individuals accessing services at nearby facilities.

Views about Demonstrations

- Residents expressed the greatest consensus about demonstrations through agreement that they should never interfere with access to health, community, and social services (77% agreeing, 13% disagreeing).
- Two in three agree that demonstrations need to command public attention to be effective, although 15% disagree. However, when this statement adds the phrase “even if it causes disruption”, agreement drops to 45%, while disagreement increases to 35%.
- Six in 10 residents believe that demonstrations are an effective way to advocate for social change, although 20% disagree.
- Naturally, the views of residents who have been involved in demonstrations, those living in the inner core, and younger residents are more positive. There is a fairly significant age divide at 55, with older residents and those living in suburban areas typically expressing stronger negative views about demonstrations.
- In terms of the perceived acceptable or unacceptable nature of some behaviours during demonstrations outside a school or facilities offering religious, health, or social services, distribution of materials (e.g., leaflets) and chanting or shouting without amplification are generally considered to be acceptable (84% and 71% respectively, although 15% and 28% find these to be unacceptable). Use of amplification through megaphones or loudspeakers, however, reduces acceptance to 52%, with 46% saying this is unacceptable.
- Other behaviours tested were judged as unacceptable including preventing access to public facilities, use of fireworks, smoke devices and lasers, intentionally damaging property, abusive or intimidating/harassing behaviour or intentional obstruction of emergency services during a demonstration outside schools or facilities offering religious, health, or social services.

Support for a By-Law Ensuring Safe Access to Public Facilities

- Residents indicated significant support for a by-law aimed at ensuring safe access to these types of facilities, with 84% indicating support when applied to facilities delivering health care services, and 78%-79% in the case of schools, daycare, and retirement and care homes. Support is slightly lower for a by-law applied to community and social service agencies (71%, with 15% opposed), and lower still for a by-law applied to faith institutions (60%, with 19% opposed).

- Overall, 76% of residents participating in the survey said they support the development of a by-law to protect safe access to these types of facilities, while 18% said they oppose such a by-law.
 - As expected, support is strongest among those who have previously avoided facilities because of nearby demonstrations (88%), and opposition is greatest among those who have been involved in demonstrations at some point in the past two years (33%).
 - There are also regional, age, and gender gaps related to support and opposition:
 - Greater support among women (82%), older residents (55 or older; 86%), and those living outside and/or working outside of the urban core (82%)
 - Higher likelihood of opposition among those who are between 35 and 45 (28%), individuals who work or regularly travel downtown (23%), and men (23%).
- Reasons for opposition to the proposed by-law include concerns about the restriction of free speech, decreased effectiveness to hold demonstrations in relevant locations, and mistrust of government authority not to use the power of the by-law to restrict demonstrations. Other reasons include a lack of necessity, believing that existing by-laws are sufficient and that the municipal government is not the right level of government to address the issue.
- Reasons for support of the by-law include objections to demonstrators infringing on the rights of others (e.g., to feel safe, move freely, be able to access public spaces); and the right of citizens to not be pressured, harassed, or bullied. Others listed how basic or critical services are the top priority and concerns for vulnerable populations.
- The size of the protective zone (i.e., distance to the property line) was tested in terms of impact on support or opposition to this type of by-law. One of three distances (20, 50, or 80 meters) was also randomly assigned in the question to each respondent to see if additional information about the distance would make a difference to views about the by-law, and what difference, if any, might exist based on the size of the buffer zone.
- Overall, adding information about the distance did not have an impact on roughly half of residents; however, among those who were moved by this information, it was more likely to increase support (among those supportive) or decrease opposition (among those opposed). Relatively few became more opposed, although the distance of 80 meters seemed to move a small segment of respondents toward greater opposition. Of the three distances, 20 meters is somewhat less likely to have had an impact on support or opposition.
- While some respondents became less supportive because the distance was too short, both the supportive and opposed were moved toward less support or greater opposition because the distance was too large. Among those providing a different reason, this was more often those opposed to the idea of a by-law, most often because they did not see it as necessary.

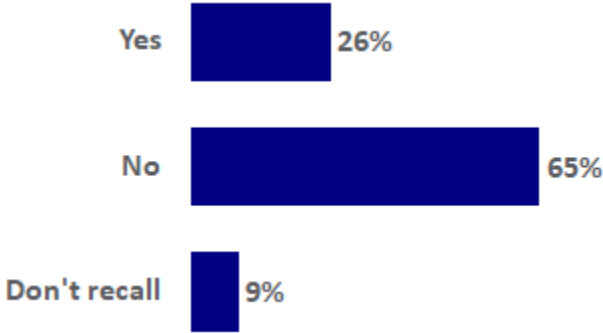
DETAILED FINDINGS

A. NEGATIVE IMPACTS FROM DEMONSTRATIONS

Among survey respondents who do not live downtown, 15% said they travel downtown daily and another 23% said they do so weekly. One in five (19%) travel downtown less than weekly but at least once per month, while 42% are downtown less than once per month. Overall, 47% of the sample either live, work, or regularly travel downtown.

One in four Ottawa residents (26%) report having been negatively affected by demonstrations at some point in the past two years (i.e., since September 2023).

Chart 1: Negative impacts from demonstrations



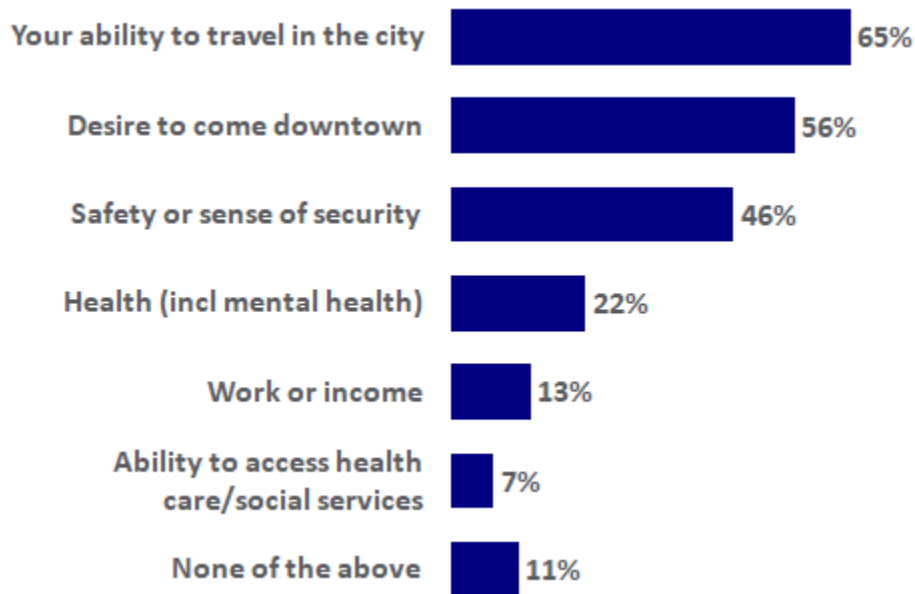
Q5. Have you been negatively impacted by demonstrations in the past two years?

Base: n=1,041

- Those who live or regularly travel downtown are more likely than others to report a negative impact (32% compared with 22% of other residents).
- This is also the case among residents identifying themselves as having a religious affiliation (31%).

Among those reporting a negative experience, most identified (from a list provided) an impact on their ability to travel in the city (65%), their desire to come downtown (56%), or their safety and sense of security (46%). One in five (22%) indicated a negative impact on their physical and/or mental health, while fewer pointed to an impact on their work or income (13%), or their ability to access healthcare or social services (7%). Only 11% of those reporting a negative impact did not cite one of these areas.

Chart 2: Types of negative impacts



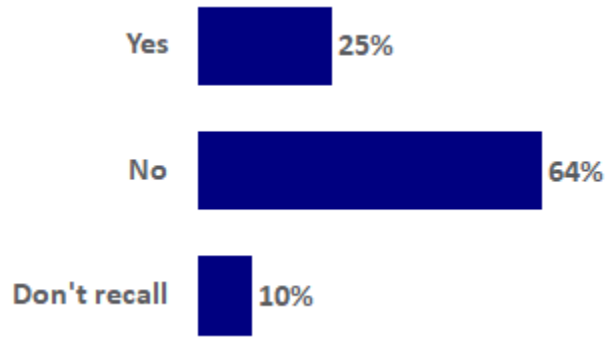
Q5b. Have you experienced a significant negative impact in any of these areas as a result demonstrations in the past 2 years?

Base: n=358 (negatively impacted)

- Those who are 55 to 64 years of age are more likely than other age cohorts to indicate a negative impact on their desire to come downtown (71%), sense of safety and security (58%), and health (31%).
- Individuals identifying themselves as having a religious affiliation are also more apt to point to a negative impact on their health (32%) compared with other residents.

One in four residents has avoided accessing health, education, or social services at some point in the past due to concerns about nearby demonstrations.

Chart 3: Avoiding facilities due to demonstrations



Q14. Have you ever avoided accessing these types of facilities due to concerns about demonstrations nearby?

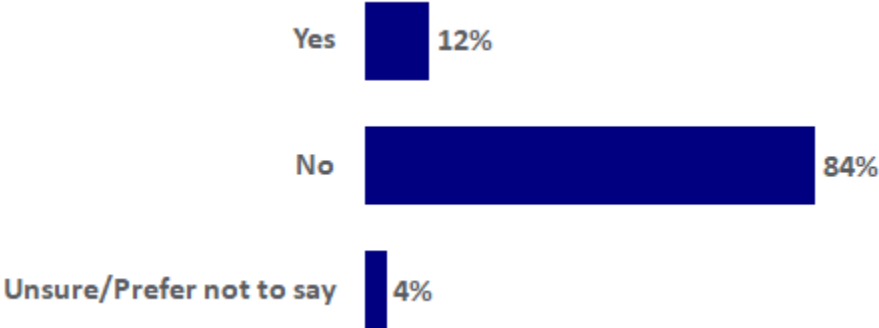
Base: n=1,041

- This is slightly higher among those who live or regularly travel downtown (29%), as well as among those with a religious affiliation (29%).
- Naturally, it is much higher among those who report having experienced a negative impact in the past two years (48%).

B. PARTICIPATION IN DEMONSTRATIONS

One in eight residents (12%) said they have organized or participated in a demonstration in the past two years (September 2023 through August 2025), and another four per cent preferred not to respond.

Chart 4: Participation in demonstrations



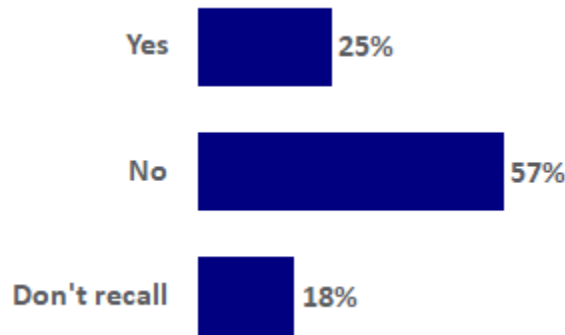
Q10. Have you organized or participated in a demonstration in the past two years?

Base: n=1,041

- Individuals identifying as members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community are considerably more likely than others to have been involved in demonstrations (28%; 31% if those preferring not to respond are included).
- The incidence is marginally higher among those living in the inner urban core (18%; 21% if those preferring not to respond are included).
- The incidence may also be higher among those under 35 if those preferring not to respond are included (19% versus 14% - 15% of those 35 to 64). The proportion is lowest among those 75 or older (7%; 8% with those preferring not to respond).

Among the 12% who have been involved in a demonstration in the past two years, one in four (25%; 3% of all residents) have been involved in a demonstration close to or at a facility offering health, education, and social services.

Chart 5: Participation in demonstrations near public facilities

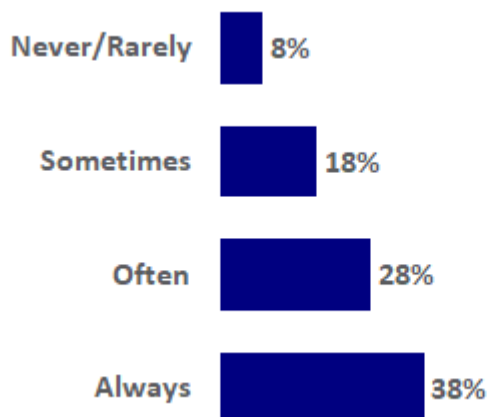


Q11. Have you organized/participated in a demonstration at/close to facility offering health, education, social services?

Base: n=132 (involved in demonstrations)

Just over half (56%) of those involved in a demonstration said they always (38%) or often (28%) consider the impact on individuals accessing nearby facilities. One in four (26%) said they do so only sometimes (18%), or never or rarely do (8%).

Chart 6: Considering facility access when demonstrating



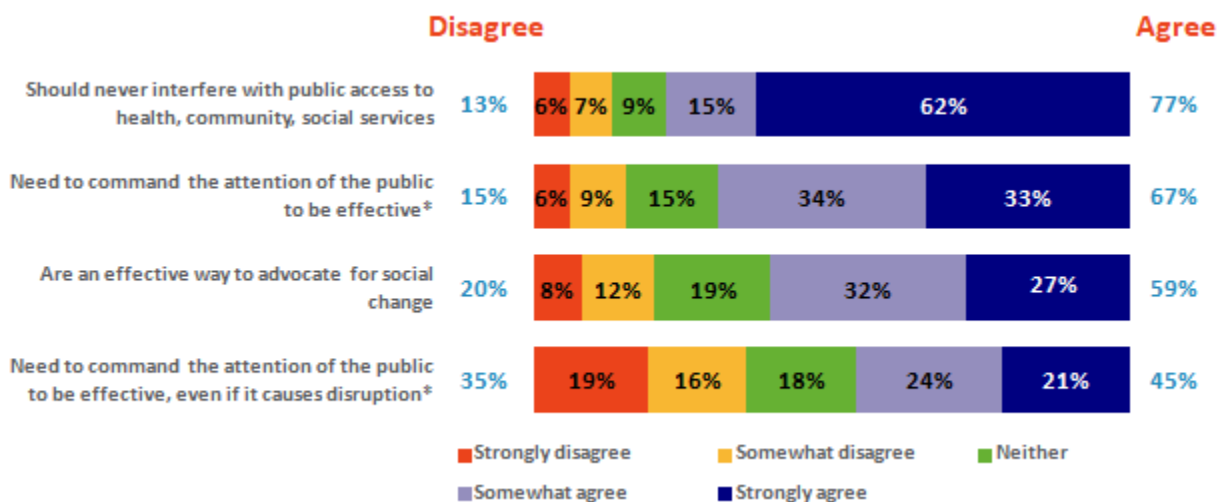
Q12. When you participate in a demonstration, do you consider the impact on individuals accessing nearby facilities?

Base: n=132 (involved in demonstrations)

C. GENERAL VIEWS REGARDING DEMONSTRATIONS

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with three statements related to demonstrations. For half of the sample (randomly assigned), the statement “Demonstrations need to command the attention of the public to be effective” also included the phrase “even if it causes disruption” in order to test the difference. More than three-quarters of residents agree (77%; 62% strongly) that demonstrations should never interfere with public access to health, community and social services, although 13% disagree; 6% strongly). Two-thirds of residents agree (67%; 33% strongly) that public attention is necessary for demonstrations to be effective, although 15% disagree (6% strongly). Much fewer agree, however, that it is necessary for the attention to cause disruption (reduced from 67% to 45% where 21% agree strongly). In this case, 35% disagree (19% strongly). Six in 10 residents also agree (59%; 27% strongly) that demonstrations are an effective way to advocate for social change, although 20% disagree (8% strongly).

Chart 7: General views regarding demonstrations



Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?
 Demonstrations...

Base: n=1,041 (*split sample n=500-541)

Need to command attention to be effective

- Agreement is stronger among residents of the inner urban core (76%), as well as those who live or regularly travel downtown (72%).
- Agreement is generally higher among those under 55 (71%) compared with those who are 55 or older (61%).

- Those reporting previous negative impact as a result of demonstrations are least likely to agree (54% compared with 73% of others), while those involved in demonstrations are most likely to agree (82% compared with 65% of others).
- Patterns are similar in the presence of the phrase “even if it causes disruption”, with an even wider gap in most patterns (e.g., 55% of those under 55 agree compared with only 30% of those 55 or older, 55% among those who live or work downtown compared with 34% among others).

Effective Way to Advocate for Social Change

- Patterns are also similar with regard to the value of demonstrations to affect change. Agreement is higher among those in the inner urban areas (69%) and those who live or regularly travel downtown (63%), as well as among those under 55 (62% compared with 55% of those who are older).
- Those negatively affected in the past are least likely to agree (48% compared with 65% of others) while those involved in demonstrations are the most likely to agree (85% compared with 54% of others).

Should Never Interfere with Access to Services

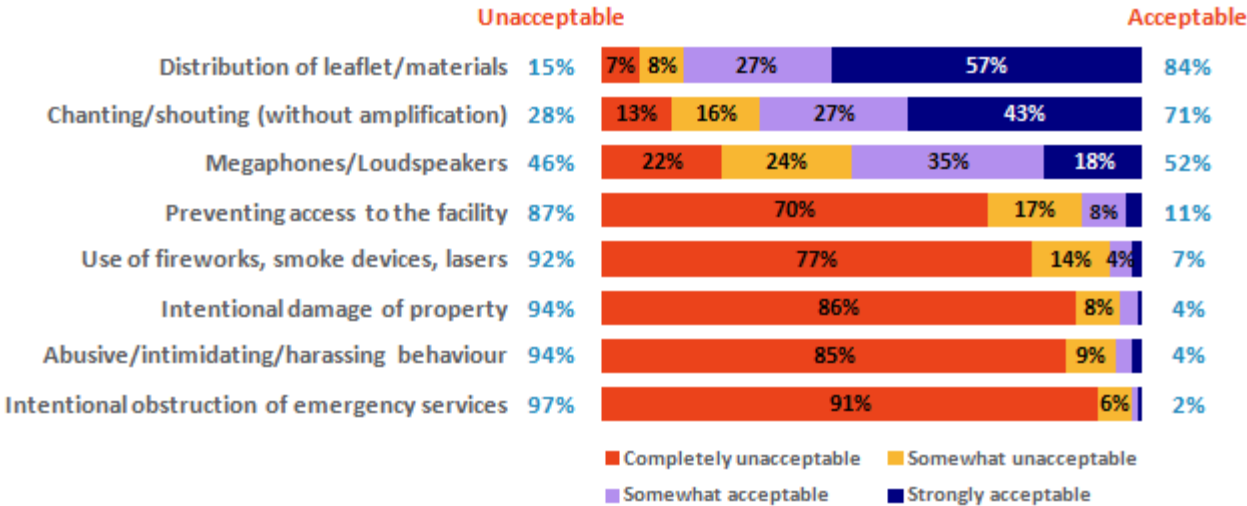
- Those agreeing that demonstrations should never interfere with access to services are more likely to have avoided facilities in the past because of nearby demonstrations (84%), or be 55 or older (84% compared with 73% of those under 55).
- Individuals less likely to agree are residents of the inner urban core (72%), those who reside or regularly travel downtown (72%), those 35 to 44 (69%) or under 35 (72%), and residents who have been involved in demonstrations (63%). Also, least likely to agree are those who feel it is necessary to command attention (72%), and in particular residents who agree even if it causes disruption (67%). Similarly, those who feel demonstrations are an effective means to change are also less apt to agree (73%).

D. ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR AT DEMONSTRATIONS

Respondents were also asked whether they see each of a number of behaviours as acceptable or unacceptable during demonstrations held near schools, or facilities offering religious, health, or social services. Residents generally view distribution of leaflets and other materials as acceptable (80%; 57% seeing this as completely acceptable). While chanting and shouting without amplification is seen as acceptable among 71% of residents (43% saying this is completely acceptable), 28% do not see it as acceptable (13% saying it is completely unacceptable). In the case of volume levels augmented through the use of megaphones or loudspeakers, acceptance drops to 52% (18% seeing this as completely acceptable), with nearly as many residents seeing this as unacceptable (46%; 22% seeing it is completely unacceptable).

There is a clear consensus that fireworks, smoke devices or lasers, intentional damage of property, abusive, intimidating or harassing behaviour, or intentional obstruction of emergency services are unacceptable, accordingly to 92% to 97% of residents. Preventing access to a public facility is also seen as unacceptable although to a marginally lesser degree, (87% seeing it as unacceptable; 70% completely unacceptable), while only 11% see it is acceptable.

Chart 8: Acceptance of types of behaviour during demonstrations near social service facilities



Q6. Do you believe the following activities are acceptable or unacceptable during a demonstration outside schools/facilities offering religious, health, or social services?

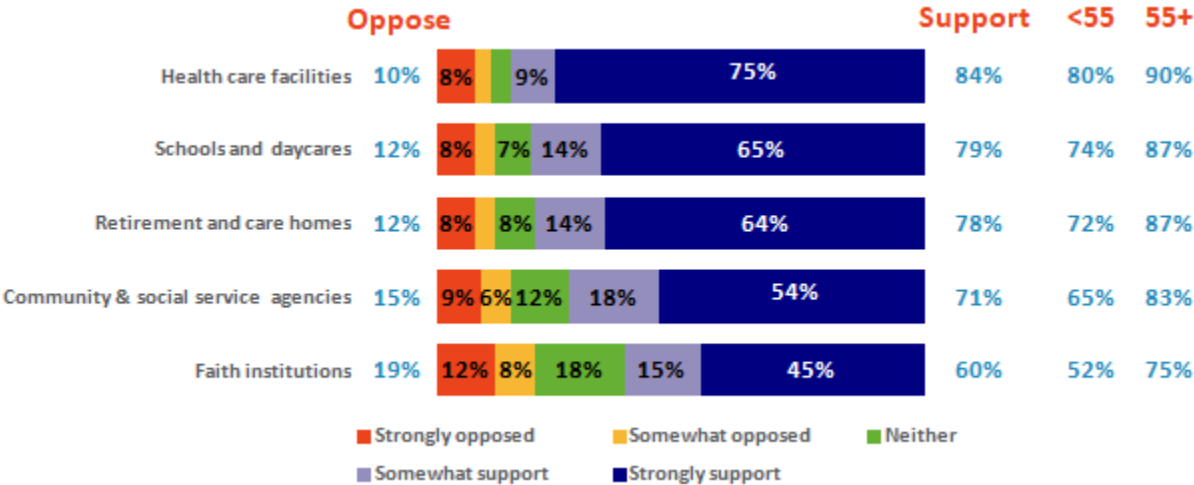
Base: n=1,041

- Preventing access to facilities is more likely to be seen as acceptable among those involved in demonstrations (20%), individuals who disagree that demonstrations should never interfere with access (26%), and residents who believe that public attention is necessary even if it causes disruption (18%).
- Because of the high degree of consensus regarding intentional obstruction of emergency services and abusive or intimidating behaviour, there are no remarkable differences although 15% of those who disagree that demonstrations should never interfere with access see abusive, harassing, or intimidating behaviour as acceptable.
- Similarly, responses are also generally consistent across most segments with regard to intentional damage to property, although 10% of residents under 35 and those who disagree that demonstrations should never interfere with access see this as acceptable.
- Use of fireworks, smoke devices, or lasers without a permit are somewhat more likely to be seen as acceptable among those 35 to 44 (13%), residents involved in demonstrations (14%), and individuals who disagree that demonstrations should never interfere with access (19%).
- There is greater division with regard to use of megaphones or loudspeakers. Higher proportions of residents of the inner urban area (59%), those under 45 (64% among those under 35, and 59% among those 35 to 44), as well as members of the 2SLGBTQ+ and ethnocultural minority communities (68% to 69%) say this is acceptable. This pattern is also true for those involved in demonstrations (69%), residents who disagree that demonstrations should never interfere with access (73%), and/or who agree that public attention is necessary even if it causes disruptions (74%), and that these actions are an effective mechanism for social change (65%).
- The pattern is similar in terms of acceptance of chanting and shouting (i.e., greater acceptance among those 35 to 44, individuals involved in demonstrations, and expressing supportive views about demonstrations). Residents who are most likely to see this as unacceptable are 55 or older (40%) or have previously avoided accessing services as a result of a demonstration (41%).
- Distribution of materials is largely seen as acceptable across segments, although those who have avoided accessing services in the past (24%), and individuals disagreeing that demonstrations are effective ways to effect change (31%), and require public attention (36%) are more likely than others to see chanting or shouting as unacceptable.

E. SUPPORT FOR SAFE ACCESS BY-LAW

Residents were asked to indicate their level of support for or opposition to a by-law that ensures safe access to five types of facilities during a demonstration. Support is highest for access to healthcare facilities (84% supporting this; 75% strongly), although 10% are opposed (8% strongly). Similarly, support is higher for ensured access to schools and daycares (79%: 65% strong), and retirement and care homes (78%; 64% strongly). Support is slightly lower for access to community and social agencies (71%; 54% strong), although 15% are opposed (9% strongly) to such a by-law. Support is lower for a by-law ensuring safe access to faith institutions (60%; 45% strongly), with 19% indicating opposition (12% strongly).

Chart 9: Support for safe access by-law based on type of organization/service



Q7. To what extent do you support/oppose a by-law to ensure residents can safely access the following types of facilities during a demonstration?

Base: n=1,041

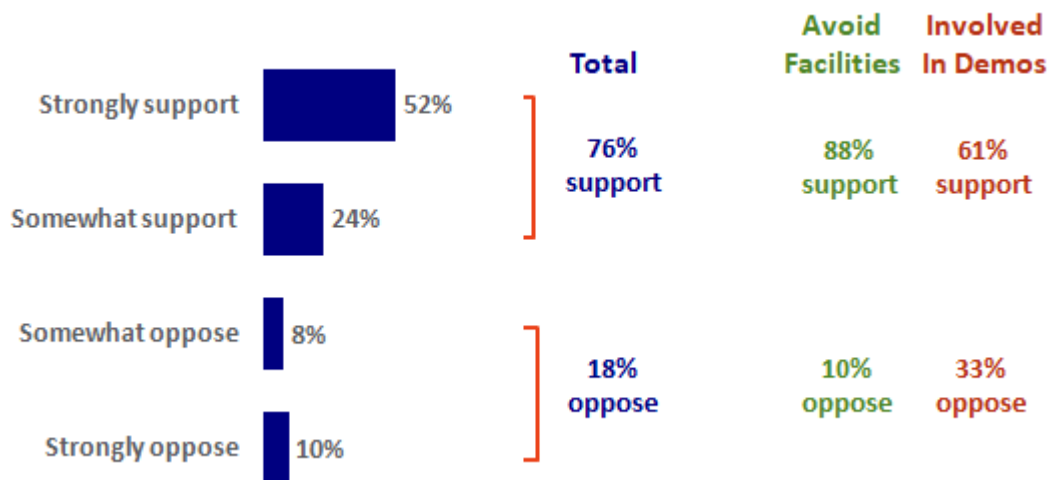
- Patterns of support and opposition are similar across the five types of facilities.
- Residents who are 55 or older are more supportive than those under 55. This is particularly true of those who are 34 to 44 who are more likely than other age groups to oppose it.
- Women are typically more supportive than men, particularly when it comes to safe access to faith-based institutions, and community and social agencies where the gender gap is the widest.
- Those with a religious affiliation are typically more supportive than others, as are residents who report having avoided accessing services as a result of demonstrations.

- Residents who have been involved in demonstrations are somewhat more likely than others to oppose a by-law at each of the types of facilities. This is particularly true for faith institutions, where these residents as well as members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community or an ethnocultural minority are more often opposed to a by-law.
- Individuals disagreeing that there should never be interference with access are the most likely to disagree with such a by-law, particularly related to faith institutions or facilities delivering community or social services (50% opposed). The same (but less pronounced) pattern exists for those who feel it is important to command public attention even if there is disruption. On the other hand, residents indicating more negative views about demonstrations are much more supportive of a by-law across each of the types of facilities.

A strong majority of Ottawa residents (76%) say they strongly (52%) or somewhat (24%) support the development of a by-law to protect safe access to facilities providing health, education, and social services to the public. Just under one in five (18%) strongly (10%) or somewhat (8%) oppose the idea. Five per cent were undecided based on the information available.

Residents who have avoided accessing services because of nearby demonstrations are the most likely to support such a by-law (88%), while 61% of those involved in demonstrations in the past two years support this idea, and 33% oppose it.

Chart 10: Support for safe access by-law



Q8. Thinking about the different types of sites, to what extent do you support or oppose Ottawa developing a by-law to protect safe access to these types of facilities during demonstrations?

Base: n=1,041

- Residents reporting a negative impact from a demonstration are more likely than others to support the proposed by-law (81%). Support is most concentrated among those who describe the negative impact in terms of their desire to come downtown.
- Support is also higher among women compared with men (82% versus 72%), and those who are 55 or older (86%). Opposition is highest among those between the ages of 35 and 44 (28%), followed by those under 35 (22%).
- Individuals who do not agree that demonstrations need public attention to be effective (with or without disruption) are among the most supportive of the proposed by-law (86% to 89%), as are those who disagree that demonstrations are an effective form of advocacy (87%) or agree that demonstrations should never interfere with access to community facilities (86%).
- Those who are more supportive of the necessity of demonstrations to garner public attention, possibly with the need for disruption or interference with access, and see demonstrations as effective are much more likely to oppose such a by-law (25% to 37%, and up to 58% among those who disagree that demonstrations should never interfere with access).
- Similarly, those least accepting of some behaviours during demonstrations (e.g., chanting, distributing materials, use of megaphones) are more supportive of a by-law, while the reverse is true of those most accepting of these behaviours. The patterns are the same with regard to access to all types of facilities, with the widest gap related to safe access to faith institutions, as well as community and social services.
- Residents who live or regularly travel downtown are more likely to oppose such a by-law (23% compared with 14% among others). While 72% support this type of by-law, support is at 82% among other residents.
- Those identifying as members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community are more likely than others to oppose the by-law (32%).

Among those opposed to the development of a by-law, more than half expressed concerns about restrictions. Most said that it would restrict the right to freedom of speech through demonstrations (see Table 1), with some indicating concerns about decreasing opportunities to hold effective demonstrations in the most relevant places. Others described their mistrust of government authority not to use the power of the by-law to restrict demonstrations, with some talking about a slippery slope of restrictions. Another common theme among those opposed to the by-law believe it is not necessary, saying that there are already laws in place to address poor behaviour, that there are currently too many by-laws, or that organizers of demonstrations already build in safeguards to ensure reasonable behaviour during these events. A few said that the municipal level is not the right level of government to address the issue. A smaller number said that the City has many issues to address, and this is not a priority. A few said that the by-law is too broad, groups too many (different) types of facilities together,

there are many factors that may not be easy to weigh with one by-law, or that the by-law may not be enforceable in the courts.

Among supporters of the by-law, close to half said that demonstrators certainly have the right to express their views, but that right does not extend to infringing on the rights of others. Often this was expressed in terms of others' right to feel safe, move freely in the city, and be able to access any public space. Some said that any disruption to others is not an acceptable part of the right to demonstrate. Some further spoke of the right of citizens to not be pressured, harassed, or bullied. In a related but slightly different theme, close to a third said that basic or critical services is the top priority and ensuring access should supersede demonstrations. Others expressed concerns for vulnerable populations, arguing that this segment of society should be protected to ensure that they have access to services they need and are not made to feel harassed or unsafe. A few of those indicating moderate support said they did not feel they have enough details, the by-law is vague, or that it may not be enforceable.

Among the relatively small number of residents who were undecided about the by-law, most said that they did not have sufficient detail or that the by-law seems vague, is too broad (i.e., grouping too many different types of services and facilities), or is unenforceable. Some also expressed concerns about the potential misuse of authority given by the by-law to restrict opportunities for protest (e.g., a daycare in City Hall restricting the opportunity to hold demonstrations there).

Residents were asked about the impact of the size of the protective zone on their support or opposition to a by-law. For example, those supporting the idea of a by-law were asked if a proposed distance from the property line would increase or decrease their support (or not have an impact on their position). Similarly, those opposed were asked about the impact on their opposition. Three distances (20, 50, and 80 meters) were randomly assigned among those supportive and those opposed.

Among those supportive of a by-law, 35% said the proposed distance would increase their level of support, and only 10% said it would make them less supportive (48% said the distance would have no impact on their level of support). The view among those opposed was more evenly split, with 29% saying the distance would increase their opposition, and 24% said it would decrease their opposition (45% indicated no change in their view).

The following table provides an overall indication of the types of themes expressed in comments provided in the survey. It should be noted, however, that percentages should be viewed as broad indications of sentiments expressed rather than precise in nature, as there was significant overlap in comments, that expressed several ideas, or they were not sufficiently specific to be clearly allocated under one theme. Therefore, results should be viewed as directional and caution should be used in interpreting the numbers.

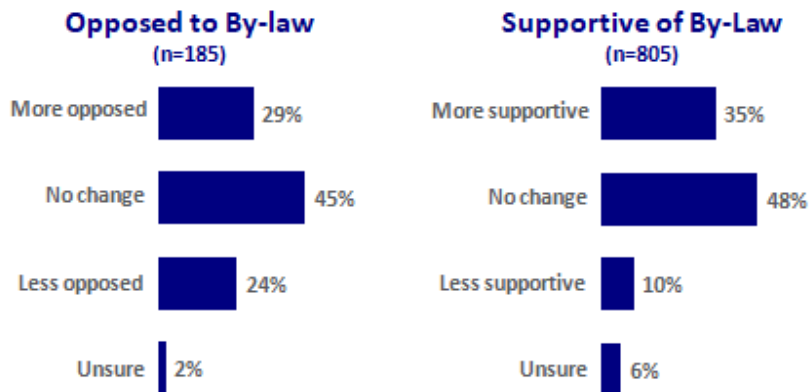
Table 1: Reasons for Opposition/Support of the By-law

	Oppose	Support	Unsure
Please explain why you <oppose/support/are unsure about> a by-law to protect safe access to vulnerable infrastructure sites?	<i>n=185</i>	<i>n=205*</i>	<i>n=51</i>
Restricts right to demonstrate (freedom of speech)/Limits opportunities to demonstrate at relevant sites	36%	1%	5%
Distrust/Misuse of power to restrict demonstrations (slippery slope, unintended outcomes)	14%	1%	12%
Unnecessary (already laws to address behaviour)/Too many by-laws/Demonstrators build in rules for behaviour/not a priority	24%	-	11%
Too broad (different types of facilities)	4%	--	2%
Insufficient detail/Too many factors for 1 by-law /Not enforceable	2%		29%
Demonstrators do not have the right to infringe on/disrupt others rights/safety/access)	--	46%	--
Critical/basic services / vulnerable members of society are most important / priority	--	29%	--
Not enough detail		5%	
Other	10%	8%	
Unsure / No response	10%	10%	38%

* A randomly assigned subset of supporters was selected

While results are similar across the three distances tested, 50 and 80 meters sees a similar degree of increased support (36% and 39%) compared with a 29% increase at 20 meters, with 63% saying this would not have an impact on their position. The degree of increased opposition is similar across the three distances, although a fraction higher at 80 meters. Among the small segment who are unsure about a by-law (5%), half were still undecided with additional information about the distance to the property line, although 38% said they would be supportive of and 10% said they would be opposed to such a by-law.

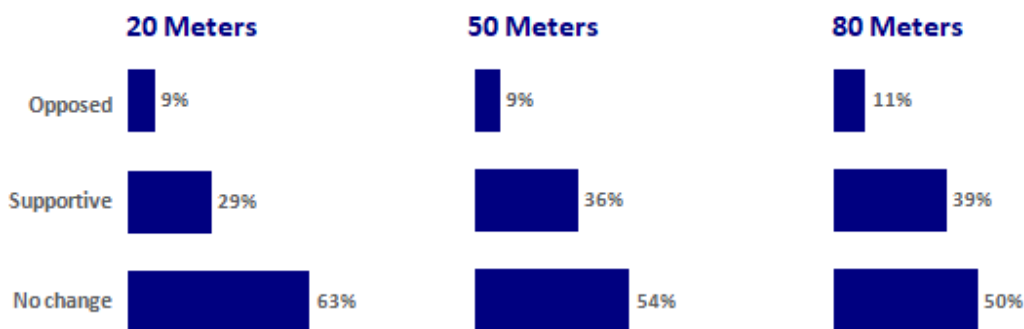
Chart 11A: Impact of protective zone on support/opposition



Q13. If the protective zone were <20/50/80> meters from the property line, how would this change your support/opposition to such a by-law?

Base: n=1,041

Chart 11B: Impact of distance of protective zone on support/opposition



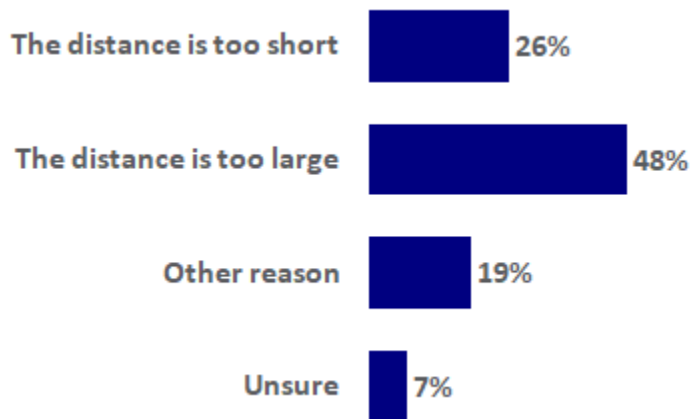
Q13. If the protective zone were <20/50/80> meters from the property line, how would this change your support/opposition to such a by-law?

Base: n=335-354 (full sample randomly assigned to one of three distances)

- Among those who support the idea of a by-law, residents under 35 (16%) are somewhat more likely to reduce their support with additional information about the distance. This is also the case among those involved in demonstrations (17%), and among individuals disagreeing that these events should not interfere with access (18%).

Among residents indicating reduced support or opposition for a by-law based on the distance, nearly half (48%) said this was because the proposed distance is too large. This is most often the case when the proposed distance was 80 meters (60% said this was too large). Individuals indicating another reason were most often those opposed to a by-law seeing it as unnecessary and/or unconstitutional.

Chart 12: Reasons for impact on support/opposition



Q13b. Does this change your view because:

Base: n=122 (support/opposition decreased by distance of protective zone)

APPENDICES

A. METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted online, using our randomly-recruited, national hybrid panel. A total of 1,041 cases were completed with residents of Ottawa who are 18 years of age or older. The sample source used is *Probit*, a probability-based sample assembled and maintained by EKOS Research, using a random digit dialing (RDD) process for sampling from a blended landline cellphone frame, which provides full coverage of Canadians with telephone access. The distribution of the recruitment process is meant to mirror the actual population in Canada as defined by Statistics Canada. As such, our panel of more than 135,000 members can be considered representative of the general public in Canada (meaning the incidence of a given target population within our panel very closely resembles the public at large) and margins of error can be applied. All households/individuals in the *Probit* panel are contacted by telephone and the nature of the panel and our privacy policies are explained in greater detail, and demographic information is collected. At this time the online/offline, as well as landline/cellphone status is ascertained in order to determine the method of completing surveys (i.e., online, telephone, or mail).

This randomly recruited probability sample carries with it a margin of error of +/- 3.04 % at a 95% confidence interval.

The eight-minute questionnaire was developed in close collaboration with the Project Authority and programmed by EKOS. Following translation and testing of the survey, responses were collected between September 12th and 21st, 2025. Respondents were informed in the email invitation that all responses would be completely confidential and that no responses would be linked to individual names. While respondents were informed of the sponsor and that it was a survey of issues of importance to Ottawa residents, the specific topic was not introduced in the invitation to minimize the potential for non-response bias. EKOS maintained technical support for the survey throughout the data collection period, through both a 1-800 telephone number and an email address, provided in the invitation. Although the survey was largely collected online, a small number of cases were completed with panel members by telephone.

A total of 5,604 email invitations were sent, followed by several email and telephone reminders, in order to complete the 1,041 cases. The overall response rate was 23%¹.

Following the conclusion of the survey, the data were reviewed for consistency edits (e.g., cleaned) and weighted based on age, education and province to ensure that survey results are as representative of the population as possible. A few items invited open end responses, which were subsequently post-coded for analysis. Data tables were generated to examine results overall and by demographic pattern.

Characteristics of the Samples

Following are the key characteristics of the sample by city region, gender, age, households with children in the home, and minority group. The proportions of the sample for region, gender, and age have been presented unweighted and have been used in the weight to increase representativeness of the sample and results.

Table 2: Sample demographics

<i>Area (Unweighted)</i>	Total (n=1,041)
Inner urban	26%
Outer urban	18%
Suburban	39%
Rural	15%
<i>Gender (Unweighted)</i>	Total (n=1,041)
Male	48%
Female	48%
Other	1%
Prefer not to say	3%

¹ 5,604 invitations sent/contacted by telephone, minus 851 that bounced as undeliverable for a valid sample of 4,753. 1041 completed cases plus 44 considered ineligible over the valid sample of 4,753 is 22.8%

<i>Age (Unweighted)</i>	Total (n=1,041)
16-34	20%
35-44	16%
45-54	22%
55-64	20%
65+	21%
Parent of child under 18	Total (n=1,041)
Yes	26%
No	72%
Prefer not to say	1%
Age	Total (n=1,041)
Religious affiliation	20%
Person with disability	15%
Member of 2SLGBTQAI+	12%
Member of ethnocultural minority	12%
None of the above	50%
Prefer not to say	7%

It should be noted that the sample underrepresents those under 35 (20% compared with 29% in the population) and over represents residents living in the inner urban area (26% compared with 18% in the population), while underrepresenting those living in outer urban areas (18% compared with 27% in the population).

Q2A

Region calculation	
Kanata/Stittsville	1
Nepean	2
West end	3
Central	4
East end	5
South end	6
Orleans	7
Rural	8
Unknown	99

Q2C

Region calculation	
Inner Urban	1
Outer Urban	2
Suburban	3
Rural	4
Unknown	99

Q3

If... Q2A not = 4

How frequently do you travel downtown for work or pleasure?

Daily	1
Weekly	2
More than once a month	3
Less than once a month	4
Unsure	99

ROTQ4

Rotation for Q4B

Sees "even if it causes disruption"	1
Does not see "even if it causes disruption"	2

PREQ4

For the purposes of these questions, the word "demonstrations" is used, although they may also be referred to as protests or marches.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: <[Phone version](Please answer on a scale where 1 is strongly disagree, 5 is strongly agree and 3 is neither)>

Q4A

Demonstrations are an effective way to advocate for social change.

Strongly disagree 1	1
2	2
Neither 3	3
4	4
Strongly agree 5.....	5
Unsure	99

Q4B

Demonstrations need to command the attention of the public to be <Rotate: effective, even if it causes disruption/effective.>

Q4C

Demonstrations should never interfere with public access to health, community or social services.

Q5

Have you been negatively impacted by demonstrations in the past two years, between September 1st, 2023 and August 31, 2025?

Yes.....	1
No	2
Don't recall	99

Q5B [1,6]

If... Q5 = 1,99

Have you experienced a significant negative impact in any of the following areas as a result of demonstrations in the past two years?

Select all that apply

Your ability to travel in the city	1	
Your work or income	2	
Your desire to come downtown.....	3	
Your health, including mental health	4	
Your safety or sense of security.....	5	
Your ability to access health care or social services	6	
None of the above.....	98	X
Don't recall	99	X

PREQ6

Do you believe the following activities are acceptable or unacceptable during a demonstration outside schools or facilities offering religious, health or social services?

Q6A

Behavior that is abusive, intimidating, or harassing

Completely unacceptable.....	1
Somewhat unacceptable.....	2
Somewhat acceptable.....	3
Completely acceptable.....	4
Unsure	99

Q6^B

Chanting/shouting (without amplification)

Q6C

Distribution of leaflets/materials

Q6D

Intentional obstruction of emergency services

Q6E

Intentional damage to property

Q6F

Preventing individuals from accessing or leaving the facility
(Hover definition: Schools or facilities offering religious, health or social services.)

Q6G

Use of fireworks, smoke devices, or lasers (without permits)

Q6H

Use of megaphones/loudspeakers

PREQ7

To what extent do you support or oppose a by-law to ensure residents can safely access the following types of facilities during a demonstration? <[Phone version](Please answer on a scale where 1 is strongly opposed, 5 is strongly support and 3 is neither)>

Q7A

Schools and daycares	
Strongly opposed 1	1
2	2
Neither 3	3
4	4
Strongly support 5	5
Unsure	99

Q7B

Faith institutions

Q7C

Healthcare facilities

Q7D

Community and social service agencies

Q7E

Retirement and care homes

Q8

Thinking about the different types of sites just described, overall, to what extent do you support or oppose Ottawa developing a by-law to protect safe access to these types of facilities during demonstrations?

(Hover definition: Refers to places of worship, schools and daycares and other health and social service providers.)

Strongly opposed	1
Somewhat opposed	2
Somewhat supportive.....	3
Strongly supportive	4
Unsure	99

Q9

If... Q8 = 1,2,99

Please explain in your own words why you are <[Q8 = 1]strongly opposed to[Q8 = 2]somewhat opposed to[Q8 = 3]somewhat supportive of[Q8 = 4]strongly supportive of[Q8 = 99]unsure about> a by-law to protect safe access to the vulnerable social infrastructure sites.

(Hover definition: Refers to places of worship, schools and daycares and other health and social service providers.)

Please specify 77
Unsure 99

Q10

Have you organized or participated in a demonstration in the past two years, between September 1st, 2023 and August 31, 2025?

Yes 1
No 2
Unsure 98
Prefer not to say 99

Q11

If... Q10 = 1

In the past two years, have you organized or participated in a demonstration at, or in close proximity to, a facility that offers spiritual, health, education or social services?

Yes 1
No 2
Unsure 98
Prefer not to say 99

Q12

If... Q10 = 1

When you participate in a demonstration, to what extent do you consider the impact of your activities on individuals accessing nearby facilities?

(Hover definition: Refers to places of worship, schools and daycares and other health and social service providers.)

Never 1
Rarely 2
Sometimes 3
Often 4
Always 5
Not applicable 98
Unsure 99

Q13

If a by-law established a protective zone around social infrastructure at a distance of <Rotate: 20 meters/50 meters/80 meters> from the property line, to allow for meaningful demonstration while ensuring safe access, <[Q8 = 3,4]how would it change your level of support[Q8 = 1,2]how would it change your level of opposition[ELSE]how would you rate your level of support/opposition> with such a by-law?

(Hover definition: Refers to places of worship, schools and daycares and other health and social service providers.)

Q8 = 1

Even more opposed	11
No change.....	12
Somewhat less opposed	13
Much less opposed	14

Q8 = 2

Much more opposed	21
No change.....	22
Somewhat less opposed	23
Much less opposed	24

Q8 = 3

Much more supportive.....	31
No change.....	32
Somewhat less supportive	33
Much less supportive	34

Q8 = 4

Even more supportive	41
No change.....	42
Somewhat less supportive	43
Much less supportive	44

Q8 = 99

Strongly opposed	51
Somewhat opposed	52
Somewhat supportive.....	53
Strongly supportive	54

Unsure	99
--------------	----

Q13B

If... Q13 = 11,21,33,34,43,44

Does this change your view because:

The proposed distance is too short	1
The proposed distance is too large	2
Other reason (specify).....	77
Unsure	99

Q14

Have you ever avoided accessing these types of facilities due to concerns about demonstrations nearby?
(Hover definition: Refers to places of worship, schools and daycares and other health and social service providers.)

Yes.....	1
No	2
Don't recall	99

QAGE

These final few questions are for classification purposes only.

In what year were you born?

77	77
Prefer not to say.....	99

QAGEB

If... QAGE = 99

May we place your age into one of the following general age categories?

16-17 years	1
18-20 years	2
21-24 years	3
25-34 years	4
35-44 years	5
45-54 years	6
55-59 years	7
60-64 years	8
65-69 years	9
70-79 years	10
80-89 years	11
90-99 years	12
100 years or older	13
Prefer not to say.....	99

QCHILD

Are you responsible for any children under the age of 18?

Yes.....	1
No	2
Prefer not to say.....	99

QGENDR

How do you identify or express your gender?

Man	1
Woman.....	2
Transgendered man.....	3
Transgendered woman	4
Non-binary (including gender fluid, genderqueer, androgynous)	5
Two-spirited	6
Other	77
Prefer not to say.....	99

QMINOR [1,4]

Do you identify yourself in any of the following ways?

Select all that apply

Religious affiliation	1	
Person with a disability.....	2	
[QGENDR not = 3,4,5,6] Member of the 2SLGBTQAI+ community.....	3	
Member of an ethnocultural group	4	
None of these.....	98	X
Prefer not to say.....	99	X