

# City of Nelson Recreational Cannabis Public Engagement Results

## Overview of Public Engagement

Nelson City Council is committed to ensuring that residents and businesses in Nelson have a voice in the development of regulations in preparation for the legalization of recreational cannabis this year. Specifically, Council wanted public feedback on the number and location of retail stores, and on public consumption and personal cultivation. A variety of public engagement activities were undertaken in February 2018 to gain public feedback:

1. Cannabis webpages were created and posted on the City's website to educate and inform on cannabis legalization, federal, provincial and municipal government roles and how residents can have a voice (Jan 30)
2. Information session with media (Feb 1)
3. Information session with City Council (Jan 22)
4. Twice-weekly advertisements in the Nelson Star (10 total) providing information to the public on cannabis legalization as well as how to provide input
5. Three information booths
  - Feb 16 Whitewater
  - Feb 24 Kootenay Coop
  - Feb 24 Chahko-Mika Mall
6. Four Open Houses
  - Feb 20 (noon and evening)
  - Feb 22 (noon and evening)
7. Eight small group meetings were held with over 50 individuals representing 10 stakeholder groups and 12 stakeholder letters were received
8. 5,645 feedback forms were distributed to households and the general public; 1779 completed feedback forms were received

## Key Messages from Stakeholder Groups

- Require separation distances from schools, youth facilities and other areas that youth and children frequent
- Follow the same regulations as Nelson's Clean Air Bylaw for smoking and consuming cannabis
- Place a cap on the number of recreational cannabis businesses
- Business community, social sector and Nelson Police Department felt there should be a limited number of stores and no public consumption in the downtown
- Health professionals and schools were most concerned with protecting youth and residents from adverse effects of cannabis
- Seniors advocated for minimum regulations
- The cannabis industry was split on the need for a cap on retail stores vs. a free market approach
- Most existing medical cannabis stores advocated for allowing their stores to transition to recreational cannabis

*The business community, social sector and Nelson Police*

*Department felt there should be a limited number of cannabis stores and no public consumption in the downtown*

## Key Messages from Feedback Forms

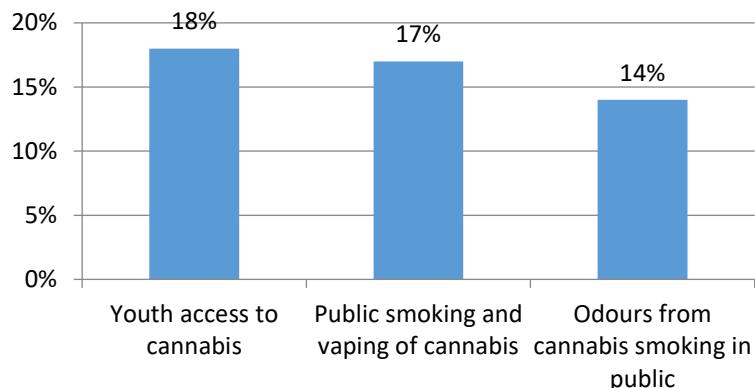
- Feedback forms were distributed to 4,959 households and 686 businesses during the first and second week of February
- Response to the feedback form was overwhelming with over 32% of households and 27% of businesses mailing back their form. Based on a confidence level of 95%, the household

responses reflect the values and desires of the population +/- 2%, 19 times out of 20, and the responses from the businesses +/- 6.2%, 19 times out of 20.

- A total of 1,779 feedback forms were received.

**Q1: Check the top three areas you are most concerned with respect to the legalization of cannabis.**

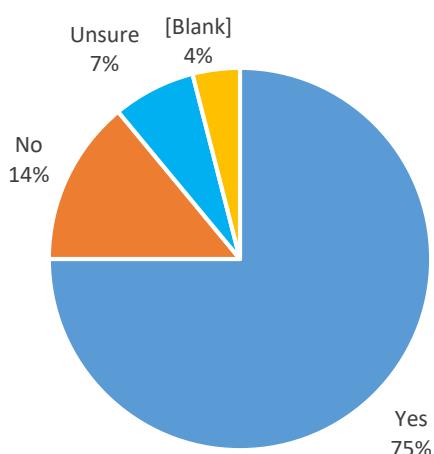
- Both businesses and the general public were in agreement on their top three concerns.
  - Youth access to cannabis was the top concern (804 responses or 18%)
  - Public smoking and vaping of cannabis was the second highest concern (750 responses or 17%)
  - Odours from cannabis smoking in public was the third highest concern (625 responses or 14%)



**Q2: Do you think there should be a maximum number of retail cannabis businesses allowed in the city, similar to liquor stores?**

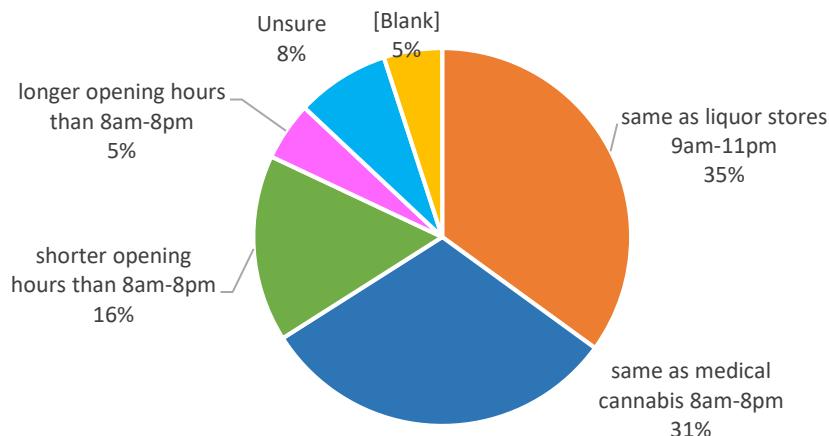
- Both businesses and the general public were very clear that there should be a maximum number of retailers allowed (1331 responses or 75%).

**Should There be a Maximum # of Cannabis Retailers?**



### Q3: Operating Hours for Cannabis Retailers

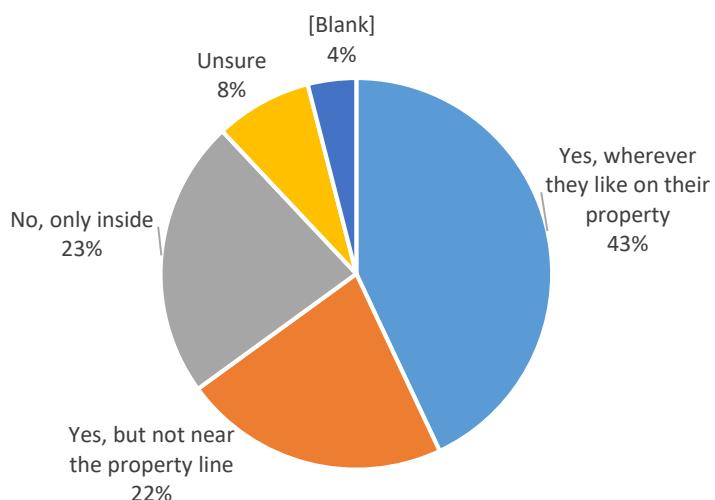
- There was no consensus/majority, but for both businesses and the general public, most were in agreement that the operating hours should be the same as liquor stores, from 9am-11pm (623 responses or 35%).
- Although slightly less, there was also strong support for more restrictive operating hours from 8am-8pm (550 responses or 31%).



### Q4: Under the new federal legislation, individuals will be allowed to grow up to four cannabis plants at home. Should people be allowed to grow their own cannabis plants outdoors?

- Nearly half of respondents, both businesses and the general public, felt that people should be able to grow it anywhere on their property (764 responses or 43%).
- Although slightly less, there was support for not being able to grow cannabis near the property boundary, as well as for only growing it indoors (22% and 23% respectively).

#### Should People Be Allowed to Grow Cannabis Plants Outdoors?



*The province has stated that plants must not be visible from public spaces off the property*

**Q5: Imagine there are no existing cannabis stores in Nelson. In your view, what areas would be the best fit for cannabis stores and how many should be permitted in each area of the city?**

Overall, people felt that four stores was the maximum number of cannabis retail stores that should be allowed in Nelson. In the downtown, people felt up to two stores should be allowed, with either zero or one store allowed in the four other commercial areas in the City.

	Majority Opinion	Highest # of responses
Downtown	0-3 stores 67%	2 stores
Nelson Av/Hwy 3A	0-2 stores 72%	1 store
Industrial/Lakeside	0-2 stores 69%	0 stores
Railtown	0-2 stores 72%	1 store
Chahko-Mika Mall	0-1 store 74%	0 stores
<b>Total Stores</b>		<b>4 stores</b>

**Downtown:**

- The strongest support for the number of stores in the Downtown was for between **0 and 3 stores** (67% of respondents).

***Highest response rate was for two stores in the downtown***

Highest responses	# of stores
24%	<b>2 stores</b>
20%	0 stores
16%	No restriction

\*In terms of the distinction between business and general public responses, 24% of businesses felt there should be no restriction, 23% 2 stores and 19% no stores. For general public responses, 24% felt there should be 2 stores, 20% no stores and 15% no restriction.

**Nelson Av/Hwy 3a:**

- The strongest support for the number of stores in the Nelson Av/Hwy 3a area was for between **0 and 2 stores** (72% of respondents).

***Highest response rate was for one store along Nelson Av/Hwy 3A***

Highest responses	# of stores
30%	<b>1 store</b>
29%	0 stores
16%	No restriction

\*In terms of the distinction between business and general public responses, 32% of businesses felt there should be 1 store, 27% no restriction and 20% no stores. For general public responses, 30% felt there should be no stores, 29% one store, and 15% no restriction.

### Industrial/Lakeside:

- The strongest support for the number of stores in the Industrial/Lakeside area was for between **0 and 2 stores** (69% of respondents).

Highest responses	# of stores
31%	<b>0 stores</b>
26%	1 store
19%	No restriction

**Highest response rate was for 0 stores in the Industrial/Lakeside area**

\*In terms of the distinction between business and general public responses, 28% of businesses felt there should be no restriction, 26% 1 store and 13% 2 stores. For general public responses, 33% felt there should be no stores, 26% one store, and 18% no restriction.

### Railtown:

- The strongest support for the number of stores in the Railtown area was for between **0 and 2 stores** (72% of respondents).

Highest responses	# of stores
38%	<b>1 store</b>
24%	0 stores
17%	No restriction

**Highest response rate was for 1 store in the Railtown area**

\*In terms of the distinction between business and general public responses, 34% of businesses felt there should be 1 store, 26% no restriction and 22% no stores. For general public responses, 39% felt there should be 1 store, 25% no stores, and 16% no restriction.

### Chahko-Mika Mall:

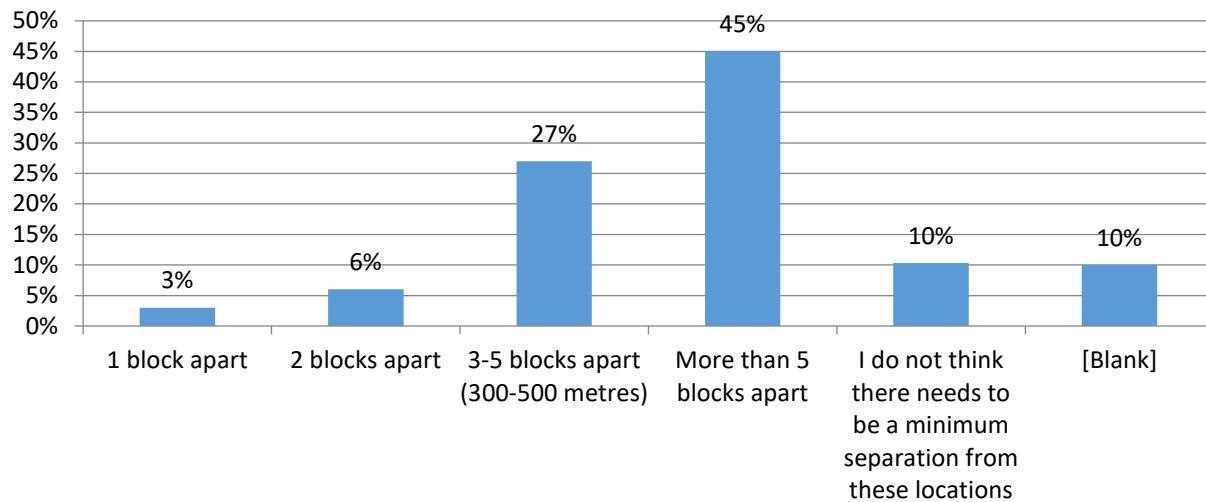
- The strongest support for the number of stores in the Chahko-Mika Mall was for between **0 and 1 store** (74% of respondents).

Highest responses	# of stores
46%	<b>0 stores</b>
28%	1 store
14%	No restriction

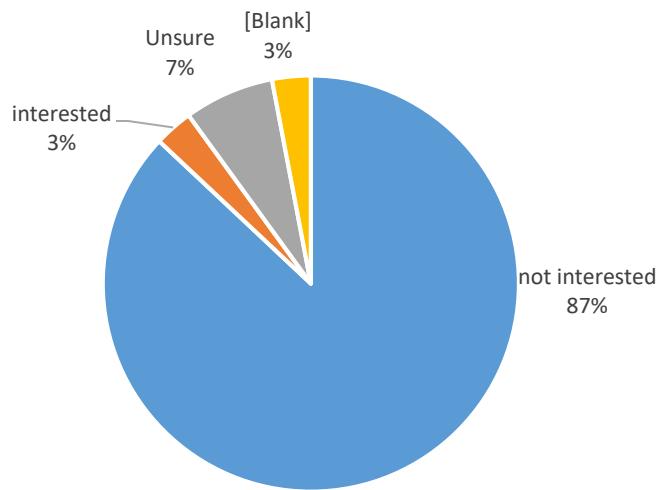
**Highest response rate was for 0 stores in Chahko-Mika Mall**

\*In terms of the distinction between business and general public responses, 43% of businesses felt there should be no stores, 25% one store and 22% no restriction. For general public responses, 46% felt there should be no stores, 28% one store, and 13% no restriction.

**Q6: How far should cannabis stores be from schools, youth facilities, parks, and playgrounds?**



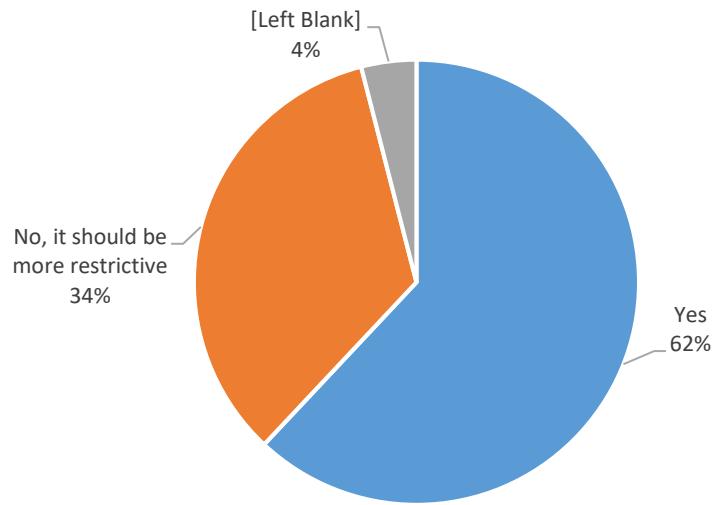
**Q7: Once cannabis is legalized, are you interested in starting a cannabis-related business?**



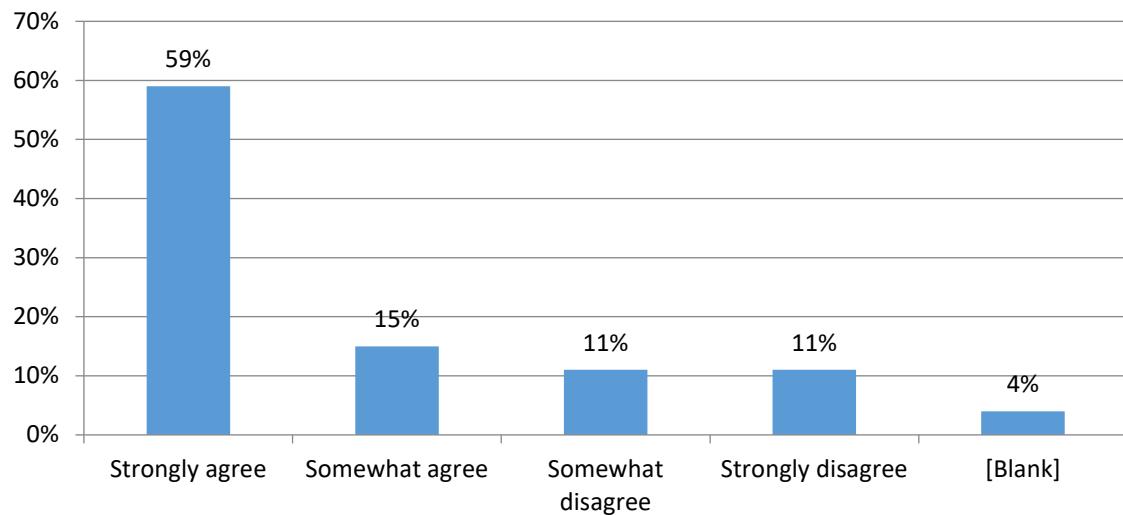
**56 respondents said they were interested in starting a cannabis business, and another 133 respondents said they were unsure**

**Q8: Should the City reconsider where cannabis may be smoked? Please respond to the following four statements.**

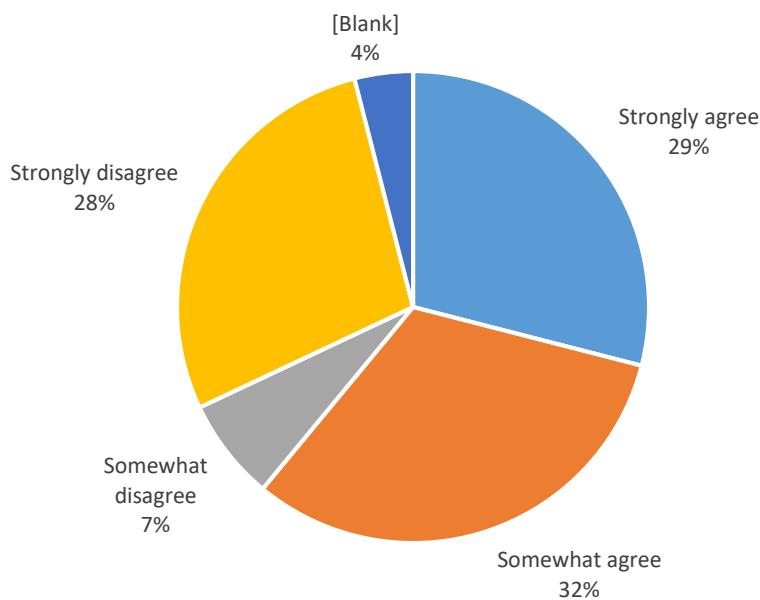
**1. Should Public Consumption of Cannabis follow the Clean Air Bylaw?**



**2. Smoking and Vaping Cannabis Should be Banned in All Public Places**

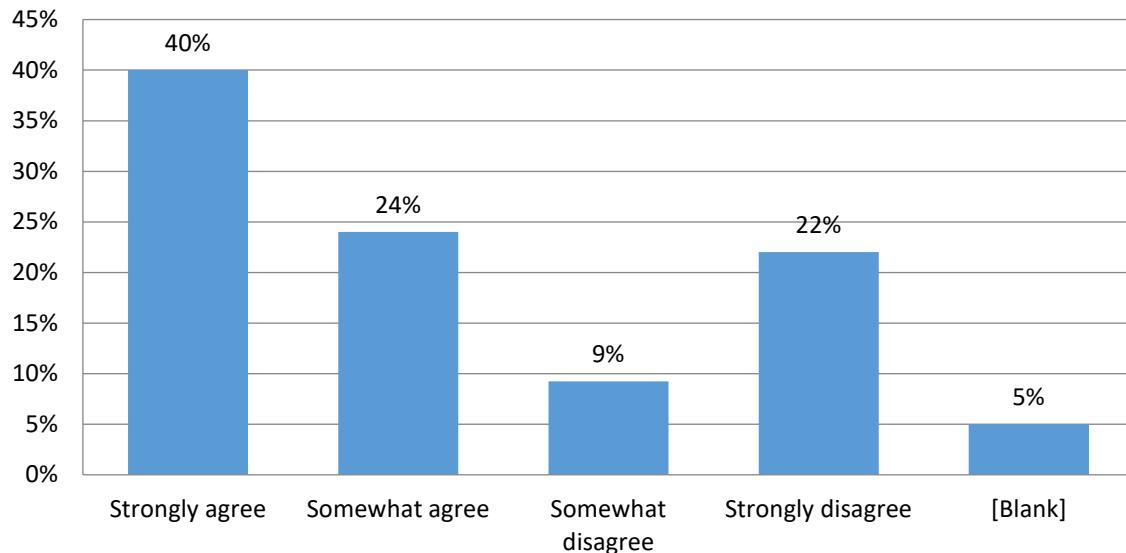


### 3. There Should be Lounges or Cafes Where Smoking or Vaping Cannabis is Allowed



*The province has said that they will be considering lounges and cafes in the near future*

### 4. The City Should Have the Resources to Enforce Smoking Cannabis in Public



**Q9: Do You Support or Oppose the Legalization of Cannabis for Recreational Use in Canada?**

