



2022 Urban Wildlife Survey OUTCOMES REPORT

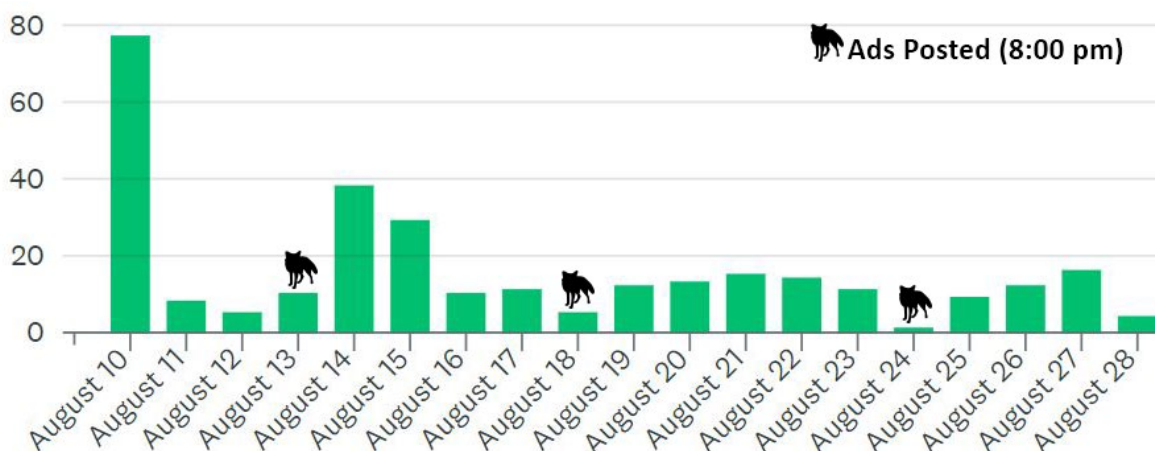
Survey Objectives

A resolution was passed by city Council requesting a review of the Nuisance Abatement Bylaw as it pertains to urban wildlife. Council requested a report with recommendations on potential amendments to that bylaw that might see added restrictions against attracting wildlife to a person's property and any penalties that would be applied, etc. To create this report with options and a recommendation, the city Clerk's office developed and issued a community engagement survey to inform the report with information regarding the public's understanding about urban wildlife and the impact it has on our residents.

Methodology & Marketing

The 2022 Urban Wildlife Survey was an online survey open from August 10 to 28 (inclusive). There were 303 responses to the survey in that time. We used a variety of communication methods to promote the survey. You will notice a marked increase in responses in the 2-3 days after social media ads were posted (see graph below). The total cost to promote the survey was roughly \$245.

- Poster at the local library
- Alert through Voyent Alert
- Notice posted on our website
- 5 distinct social media posts (3 paid ads)
- Newspaper advertisement

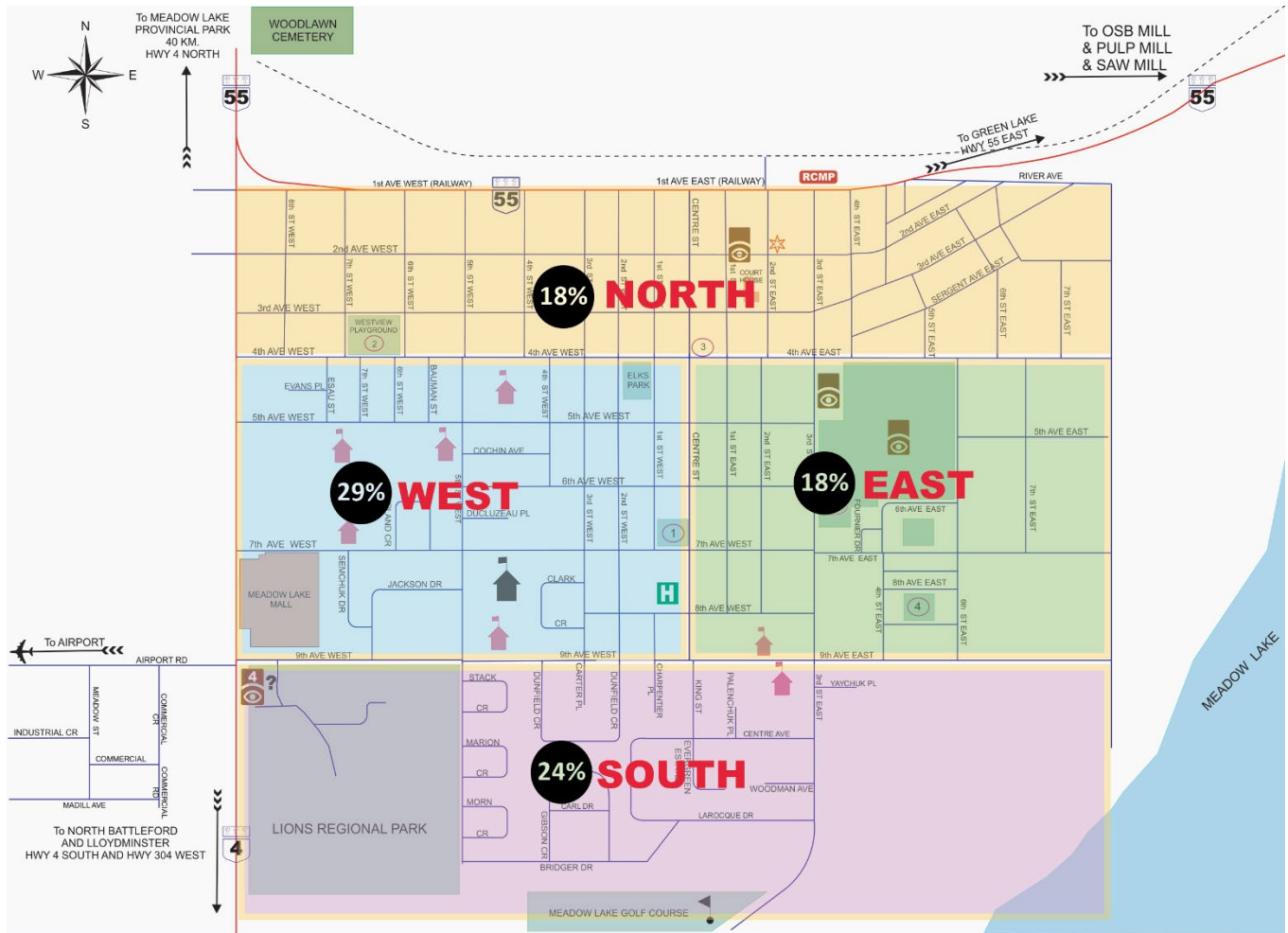


Local Respondents Targeted

The survey was not restricted geographically though was targeted to local residents with the only access being via a direct link through locally targeted marketing. The first question in the survey required the responding person to select their location and anyone who clicked “None of the Above” was automatically ejected from the survey and not permitted to complete it.

LOCATION

Out of all respondents 10% said they didn't live in the city, but out of those people, most of them said they at least visit the city on a regular basis. There were only 5 respondents who said they did not live in or visit the city, which means they were ejected from the survey and were not permitted to complete it. This question was required to be completed before moving forward with the survey.



Margin for Error

The survey did not restrict the number of times a user could use a single device to complete the survey based on their IP address. The rationale for this is that a person who does not have their own device or needs assistance taking the survey may have someone assist them in taking it from a device that has already gone through the survey, or it may be taken on a public device such as a library computer which can have multiple users using a single IP for that computer. To ensure maximum exposure and accessibility we did not restrict response by IP address.

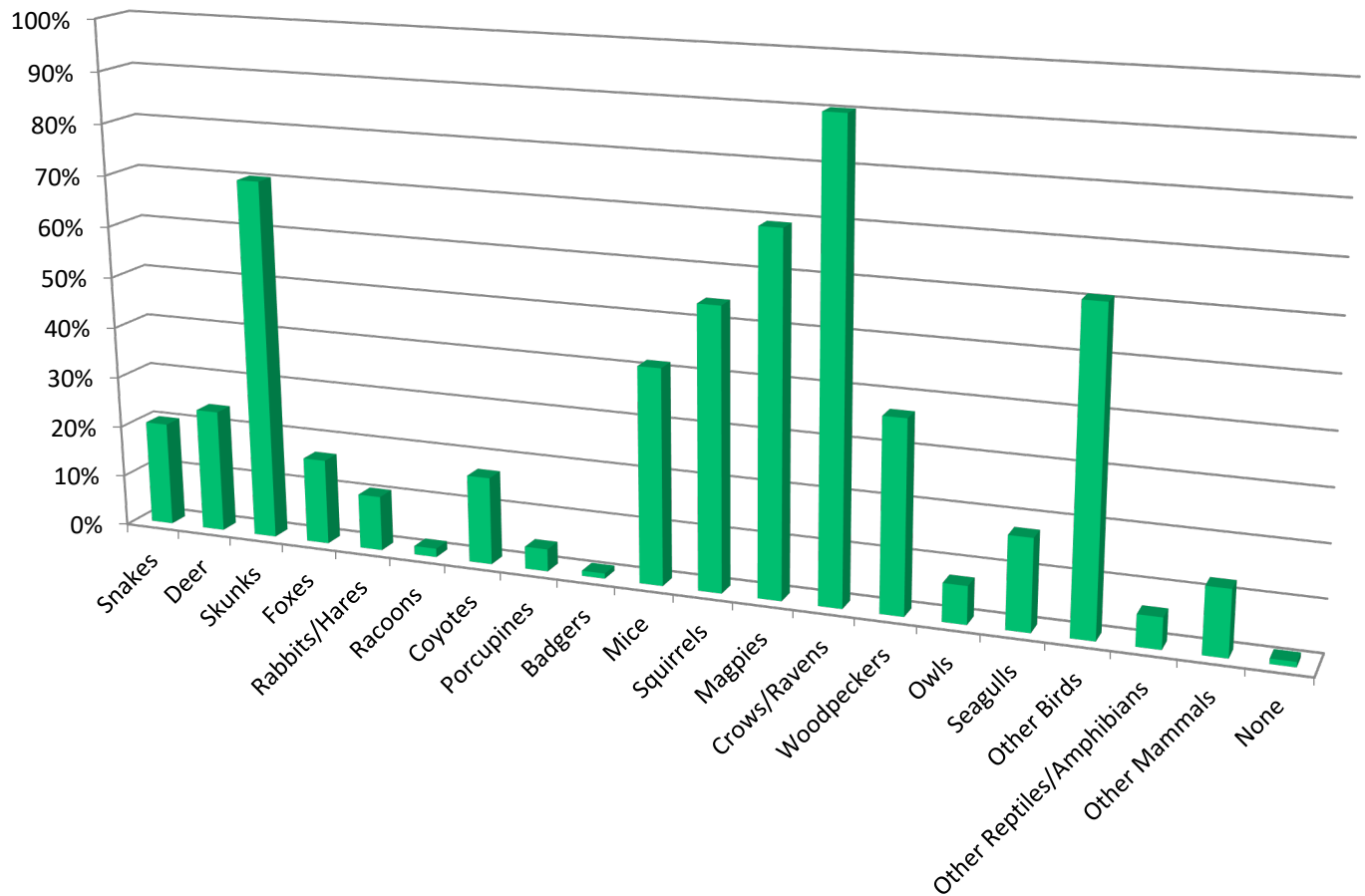
We did have the capability to reduce the risk of duplicate responses, export all responses and filter by IP address to review the duplicates. Sixty-three out of the total 303 responses came from duplicate IP addresses. However, the responses themselves were not exact duplicates and at least 60% of responses from duplicate IP addresses contained unique, individual comments. Since the duplicate responses were not identical, we have made the presumption that the majority likely came from a public computer or someone who was assisting others taking it using a single device. However, we recognize there is still a small chance that some of those could potentially have been the same person taking the survey more than once, therefore we recommend reviewing the below results using a potential duplicate margin of roughly 5%.

Outcomes

Wildlife Encounters

WHO'S COMING FOR A VISIT?

One of the goals of the survey is to understand how urban wildlife is impacting our residents and how they feel about it. A number of questions were designed to gain insight into the experiences people are having with urban wildlife in our city. When it comes to urban wildlife 90% of respondents said they regularly have crows/ravens visiting their property. The next most frequent visitors are magpies, skunks, mice and other birds. You'll note that as far as non-bird visitors around 70% of respondents say they have had skunks visiting their property. Next at just over 50% are squirrels. The percentage of residents having Coyotes visiting their property is intriguing at over 15%.

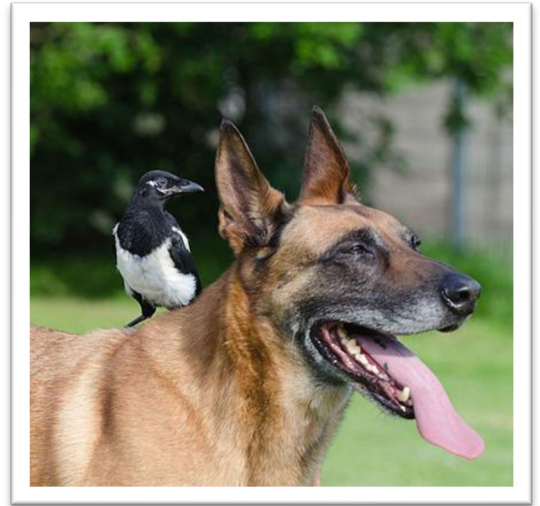


PETS AND WILDLIFE

When people and pets encounter wildlife in an urban setting it can be a nerve-racking experience. How will you respond, how will your pet respond, how will the wildlife respond? Around 55% of survey respondents own pets that go outdoors like dogs or cats. Just 14% said their pet has had a negative interaction with wildlife in the city.

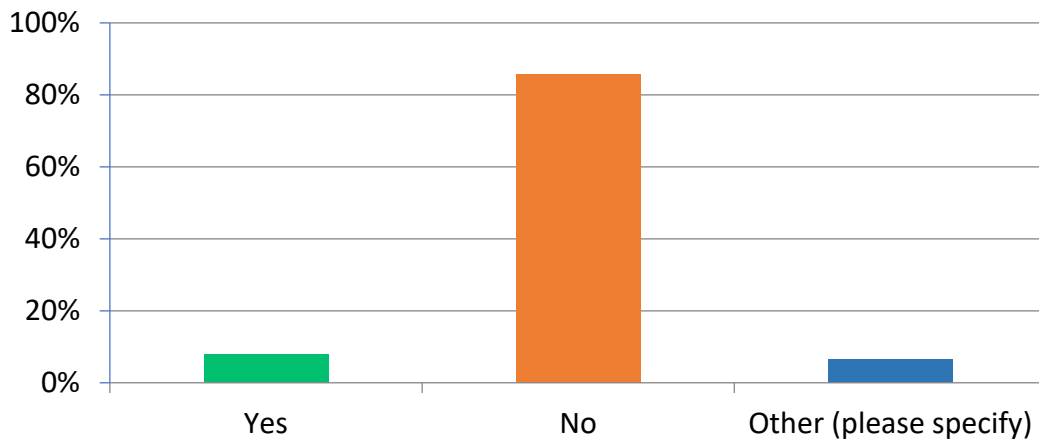
FEEDING ANIMALS

Around 42% of respondents said they feed animals (pets or birds) outdoors, and thankfully 95% of people claimed they do take care to store pet food, birdseed, household trash and other materials securely to avoid attracting unwelcome guests. The concern here, would be the 5% of people who do not. This could be seen as the residents intentionally feeding and attracting wildlife to their property.



However, with overwhelming certainty, the general consensus is that residents do not believe people should be **intentionally** feeding urban wildlife (not including birds and pets) at their property. There is some understanding among the comments on this section from respondents that some unintentional feeding of wildlife can and may happen and it is the *intentional* feeding that they disagree with.

Should people **intentionally** feed or water wildlife, excluding birds, within city limits?



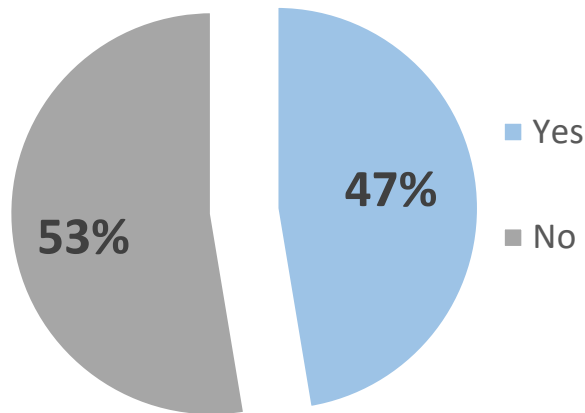
Bird Feeding

When it comes to feeding birds in the city, the majority are fine with it as long as it is not causing any harm. Interestingly around 20% of people responding say that instead of feeding them, they think it is better to plant trees and shrubs native to this area to provide food for birds. A few suggested feeding birds should only be allowed over winter. Around 5% of respondents indicated they'd rather people didn't feed birds at all. There was some concern in multiple comments that crows, magpies and seagulls scare off the songbirds and other birds that people do actually want around. People cannot really control which type of birds or other wildlife outdoor feeding will attract. All in all, around 90% of people are fine with feeding birds in the city using one method or another.

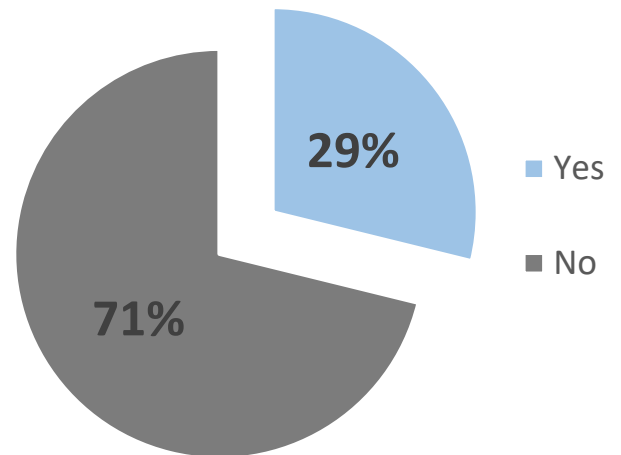
Safety

One of the most serious concerns people have is about safety, and this is a concern that the City shares. Respondents do not seem to be substantially more concerned with the safety of pets and people in an encounter, than they are about the safety of the wildlife in an encounter. As you can see in the charts below, 29% of respondents are concerned with their own safety while 47% are concerned about the safety of wildlife. That averages out to around 38% of respondents having some concern about safety in a wildlife encounter.

Are you concerned about the safety of wildlife in human-wildlife interactions?



Are you concerned about the safety of your pet, family/household members or self when encountering wildlife within city limits?

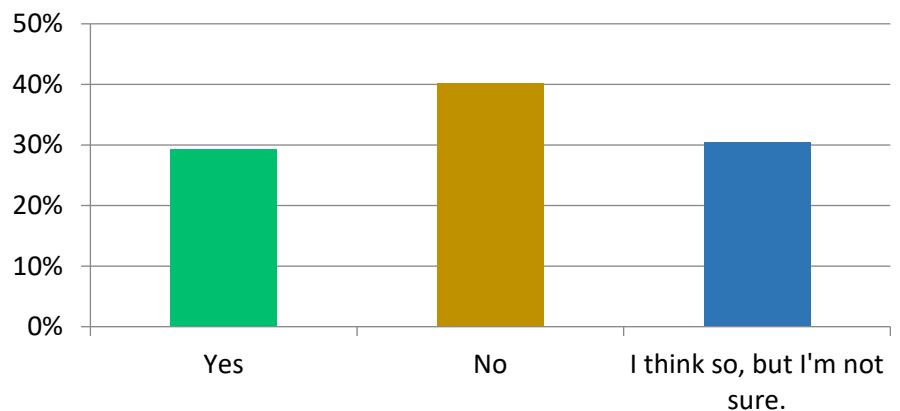


Who do I call?

One of the most interesting pieces of the survey is determining if the general public knows who to call if they encounter wildlife in the city. Who will respond to wildlife encounters? Does the city respond? Do provincial Conservation Officers respond?

30% of respondents believed they knew who to call if they encounter urban wildlife. By far the majority at 40% did not know who to call.

Do you know who to contact if you encounter urban wildlife?



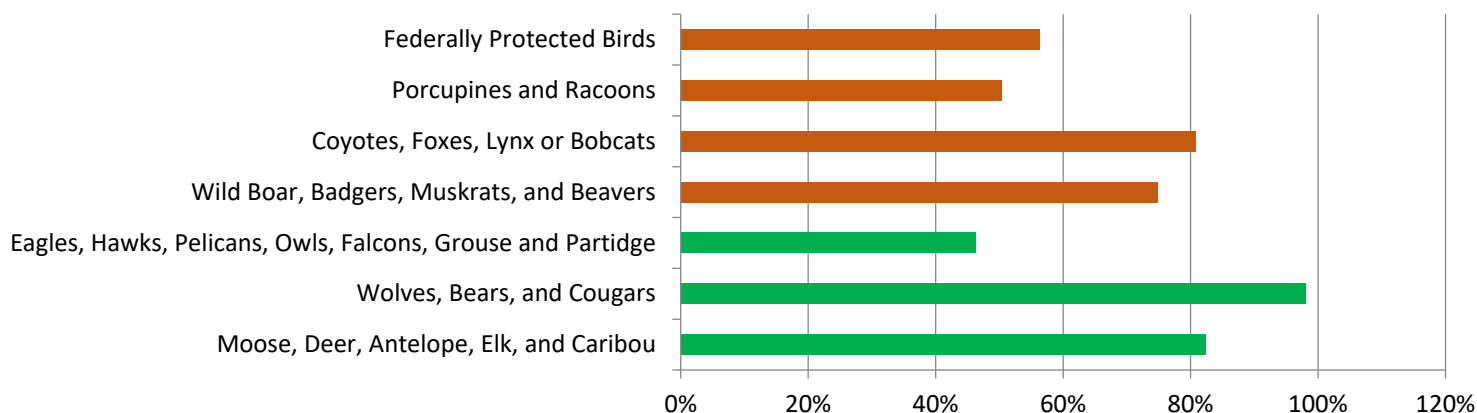
When asked who they would call and why we had a variety of answers in the over 180 comments. The majority of people recognize that it depends on what the type of wildlife is to determine who they would call to handle it. Then consensus in the comments was that for dangerous wildlife like a bear, or something like a deer, you would call the provincial Conservation Officers. Most people also noted even if they didn't know who to call for which animals, their first call (unless there was an immediate danger) would be to the city. They hope that even if the city doesn't handle that specific wildlife, they will be able to direct them to the appropriate agency who does. A few people noted they would call 911 or the RCMP if there was an immediate danger or threat to someone's

safety. There were also several people who noted that if there was an animal injury or an abandoned animal, they would likely call a local rescue agency.

Conservation Officer Response

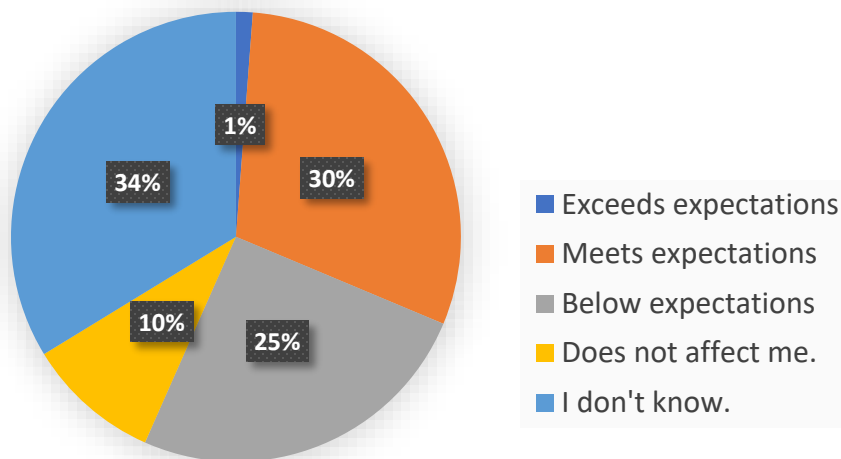
We asked the Ministry which kinds of urban wildlife Conservation Officers will respond to calls about. Then we asked the public what they thought the answer was to help us determine if there might be a need for some public education on this topic. The green are the animals that provincial Conservation officers will respond to calls about. The rest they will not respond to. There is a massive discrepancy between the types of wildlife people *think* the province will respond to and the ones they *actually will* respond to.

Which wildlife encounters do you believe that provincial Conservation Officers will respond to if called? (Check all that apply.)



Levels of Service Expectations

One of the most important things we can do as a city is review our levels of service, and what the public expectations are regarding that level of service. We asked people if they feel the city meets their expectations when it comes to managing urban wildlife. There were mixed reviews.



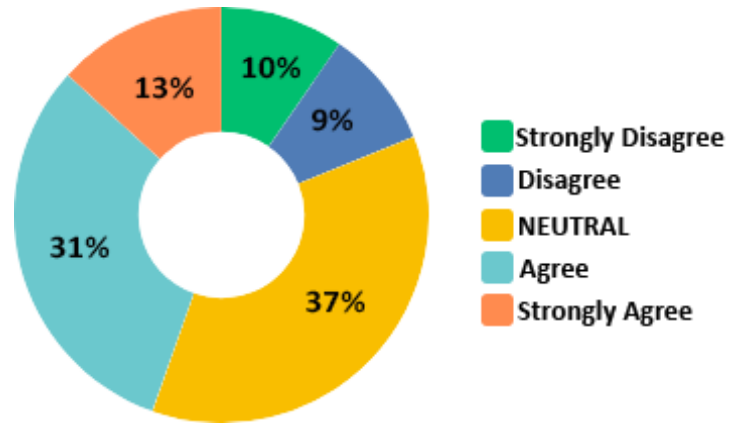
30% of respondents feel the city does meet their expectations in managing urban wildlife. A nearly equal 25% feel the city falls below expectations. A whopping 34% felt they didn't know if the city meets their expectations or not, and some of that may due to the public in general not knowing what their expectations are, or what wildlife the city actually handles.

However, when we asked people if they believed the city **should** respond to all urban wildlife not handled by another level of government, the answer was "yes" from almost 60% of respondents.

Solution Options

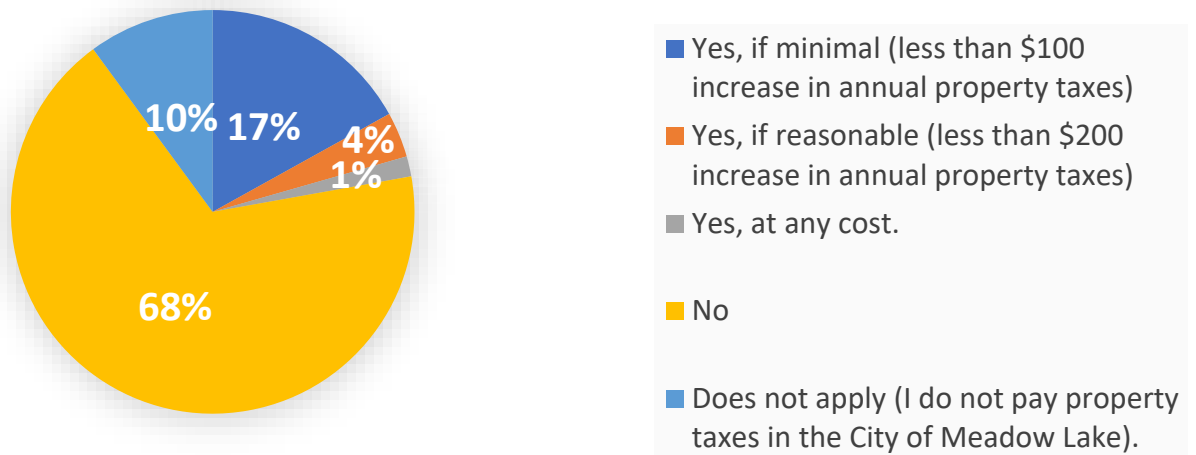
INCREASING RESTRICTIONS/FINES

When we asked respondents whether they agreed with the city increasing restrictions and increasing fines within our Nuisance Abatement Bylaw for those who feed, water, harbor or attract urban wildlife to/at their property within the city, the responses varied. Overall 81% of respondents were either neutral or in agreement. Around 19% disagreed with the city increasing restrictions and fines.



COST OF RESPONSE AND ENFORCEMENT

Improving the city's response capabilities in terms of urban wildlife means an increase to staffing, training and equipment expenses. We asked respondents if they would be willing to see an increase in property taxes to cover the increased costs involved in improving the city's response capabilities when it comes to urban wildlife. The answer was largely, "no". If the tax increase is minimal, perhaps around 21% are okay with it, but by and large respondents want the city to do more, but not if that cost it is going to be covered by property tax increases.



Furthermore, when filtering the survey, there were 98 people (just over 30% of respondents) who feel that the city should respond to all wildlife other levels of government don't respond to, and who also said an absolute "no" to an increase in taxes to pay for the resulting increase to that level of service.

Public Education

We asked a series of questions related to public education. Only 10% of people feel the city does enough to educate the public about urban wildlife. When asked if they'd like to learn more about wildlife in our area and urban wildlife, 43% of people said "yes". In response to being asked if they would like to to learn more about what you can do to help protect wildlife and/or reduce human-wildlife conflict, 48% of people said yes. It is clear that there is some appetite from the public for the city to provide more education on this topic.

