

National Place Brand Research Results Highlights

City of Edmonton

November 2019



This document provides a high-level overview of the place brand national research results to address the following three objectives:

1. Indicate, in reference to the [2013 Image and Perception Studies done by Longwood International](#) (2013 Longwoods), the changing themes and perceptions of where Edmonton stands, in terms of awareness and image versus other Canadian cities among Edmontonians and those outside of Edmonton.
2. Find out the top attributes that motivate Edmontonians and those outside to move to/live in, visit, study and invest in a city and how Edmonton compares.
3. Understand how the two segments of audiences (Canadians and Canadian businesses) resonate with Edmonton being described as open, inventive, courageous and cooperative, or other descriptors.

For detailed research results, please refer to the [Comprehensive Report on City of Edmonton Place Brand Research](#).

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A QUICK COMMENTARY BY THE CITY OF EDMONTON

Lacking Awareness while Perceptions Improved

While this national place brand research is not a direct comparison to the [2013 Image and Perception Studies](#), awareness of Edmonton is still lacking among Canadian residents and businesses. However, perceptions of Edmonton have improved, hitting those top drivers of a desirable city. More specifically, Edmonton is now perceived as a welcoming place and a “good-sized city for me”. Meanwhile, Canadian businesses (who are familiar with our city) consider Edmonton a place with easy access to customers. Opportunities exist to build on Edmonton’s attractions and make our city more known to our nation and the world.

SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY

Leger utilized both qualitative and quantitative research methods to gather perceptions and sentiments:

Qualitative Phase:

- 11 Interviews with local stakeholders who have an impact on Edmonton's brand
- 4 Focus groups with 8-10 participants each from entrepreneurs, newcomers and those who have lived in Edmonton for at least 20 years

Quantitative Phase:

- Online survey with n=3,600+ aged 18+ Urban Canadians in 15 major cities¹
- Online survey with n=150 owners or senior Administration of Canadian businesses (excluding those in Edmonton)

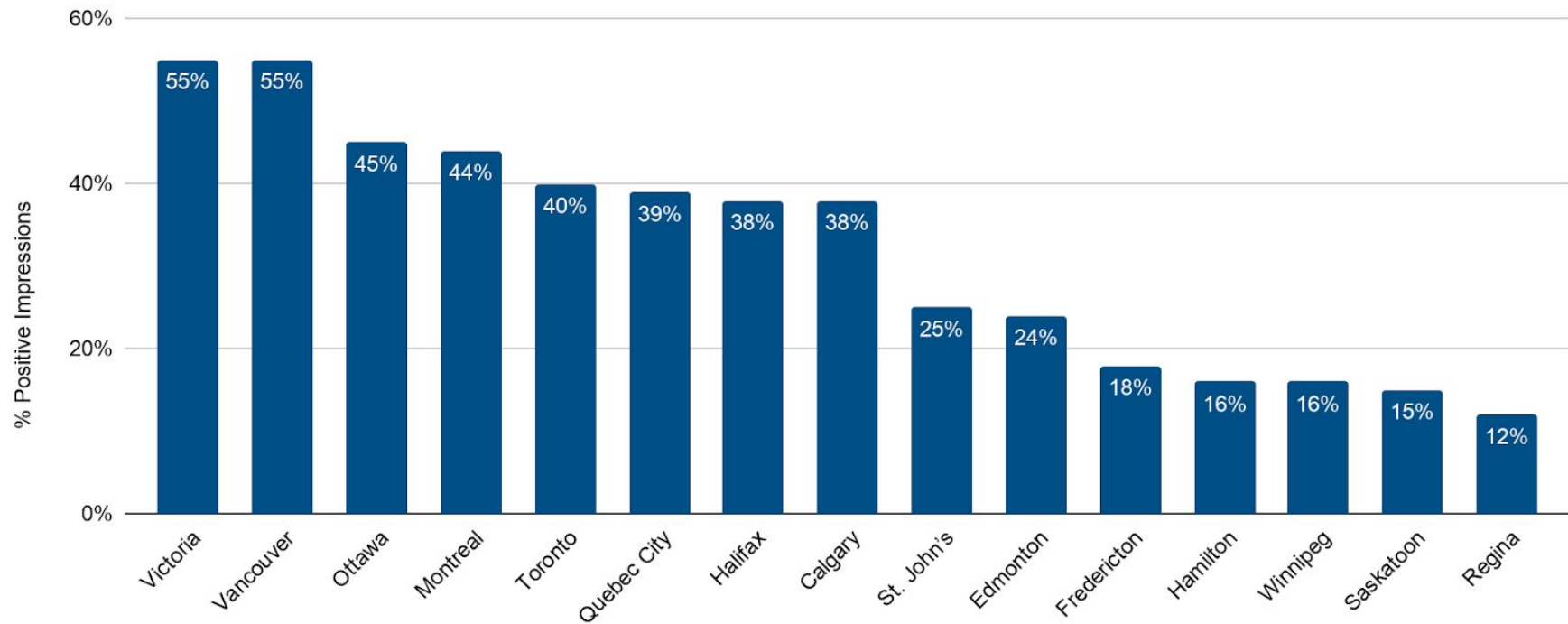
RESEARCH RESULTS

Objective 1:

Indicate, in reference to the [2013 Image and Perception Studies done by Longwood International](#) (2013 Longwoods) the changing themes and perceptions of where Edmonton stands, in terms of awareness and image versus other Canadian cities among Edmontonians and those outside of Edmonton

In terms of overall impressions, the following chart provides a ranking of 15 Canadian cities according to Urban Canadians:

¹ Urban Canadians in the 15 major Canadian cities refer to residents in Edmonton, Calgary, St. John's, Fredericton, Halifax, Montreal, Quebec City, Toronto, Hamilton, Ottawa, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Regina, Victoria, and Vancouver.



Note: Due to differences in research methodology, this chart is not a direct comparison with the 2013 Longwoods commissioned by the City of Edmonton. Instead, it provides a snapshot of where Edmonton stands among other cities.

Areas that Edmonton scored highest among Urban Canadians:

- A good sized city for me
- A place with beautiful parks and scenery
- A place with excellent sports and recreation opportunities
- Easy access to outdoor recreation opportunities

Areas that Edmonton scored highest among Edmontonians:

- A place with interesting festivals, fairs, and events
- A place with excellent post-secondary institutions
- A very multicultural city

Objective 2:

Find out the top attributes that motivate Edmontonians and those outside to move to/live in, visit, study and invest in a city and how Edmonton compares.

The City and Leger did not conduct the research to understand what motivates Edmontonians and Canadians to move to/stay in, visit, study and invest in any city. Instead, we used the overall top drivers from the 2013 Longwoods, assuming that the drivers would remain similar.

URBAN CANADIANS

2013 Longwoods

Overall Perceptions of Edmonton* (Top 5 mentions)	TOP DRIVERS OF ANY CITY	
	To live	To visit
Excellent job opportunities	The right size city for me	A unique and interesting place
Booming economy	An exciting/ vibrant place	An exciting/vibrant place
Popular with vacationers	Place with a great future	Popular with vacationers
Interesting neighbourhoods	A great place for young single	Interesting neighbourhoods
Lots to see and do	Would personally feel welcome	Lots to see and do

2019 Leger

Overall Perceptions of Edmonton*	What Urban Canadians, excluding Edmontonians, think of Edmonton		
	To live/move to	To visit	To study
A good-sized city for me	A place I would feel welcome	A place I would feel welcome	A place I would feel welcome
A place with beautiful parks, scenery	A unique and interesting place	A good-sized city for me	A good-sized city for me
A place with excellent sports/recreational opportunities; easy access to outdoor recreation opportunities	A place that is affordable to live in	A unique and interesting place	A unique and interesting place
A place with high quality/ accessible health care; a place I would feel welcome; a place with lots of city pride; a place with a good variety of restaurants	An exciting and vibrant place	A place with a good variety of restaurants	An exciting and vibrant place
A place with excellent post-secondary institutions; a great place to explore; a clean city; a place with a high quality of life; a place with warm and friendly people	A place with exciting nightlife/ entertainment	A great place to explore	

*Due to question wording and scale changes in 2019, caution should be used when comparing overall results.

Highlights

- 24% of Urban Canadians cite having a positive impression (8-10 ratings) of Edmonton.
- 56% of Urban Canadians (excluding Edmontonians) feel that they would really enjoy visiting Edmonton, and 27% feel that they would really enjoy living in Edmonton. 9% indicate they would be likely to move to, or study or go to school in Edmonton.
- Survey respondents most strongly feel that Edmonton is a good sized city for them, has beautiful parks and scenery, and has excellent sports/recreational opportunities.
 - Having new/different places to visit, shop (e.g., West Edmonton Mall) and dine are the top mentions of those who enjoy visiting Edmonton.
- Urban Canadians least associate Edmonton with being a place that has excellent museums/art galleries, a vibrant art community, and having exciting nightlife/entertainment -- it's worth noting that 24% to 42% of Urban Canadians do not know if these offerings exist in Edmonton.
- Not knowing enough about Edmonton is the top mention among Urban Canadians (excluding Edmontonians) who neither agree nor disagree they would enjoy living in or visiting Edmonton. Too cold and/or long winters, being boring and/or not much to do, and being not interested are other top mentions
- Recall of advertising and familiarity
 - Only 9% of Urban Canadians recall any advertising for Edmonton, while 10% recall learning about Edmonton in the news (with the greatest proportion indicating the majority of what they recall as favorable).
 - 26% of Urban Canadians say they are familiar with Edmonton.

CANADIAN BUSINESSES

Leger surveyed 151 owners or senior administrator of Canadian businesses (excluding Edmonton) and drew the following perceptions:

Impression statements	Criteria for locating or expanding business in any city	Overall, Edmonton is	Those unfamiliar with Edmonton	Those familiar with Edmonton	Consider opening a business in Edmonton because	Consider expanding a business in Edmonton because	Would recommend Edmonton as a place for business because
A place with an excellent reputation							✓
A place with a strong economy		✓		✓			
A place with high quality of life				✓			
A place that is affordable to live in			✓				
A place where my business could be successful		✓		✓			✓
A place easy to make ideas/ business happen					✓	✓	
A place with a friendly business environment	✓						
A place with easy access to customers	✓					✓	
A place with low taxes				✓			
A place with a sufficiently large, diverse workforce			✓				
A great location logistically					✓	✓	

Highlights

- 21% of Canadian business respondents indicate having positive impressions (8-10 ratings) of Edmonton, while Toronto garners the greatest proportion of positive impression ratings.
- 50% of Canadian business respondents indicate being familiar with Edmonton, while 33% are not.
- Canadian business respondents cite that
 - access to business professionals, followed by a place that is affordable to live in, are the statements that most apply to Edmonton.
 - diversity of the city and having good business potential as the main reasons for their intention to somewhat or very likely open a business in Edmonton.
 - cold weather and being too far/too far north are the drawbacks for operating a business in Edmonton.

Aside from businesses outside of Edmonton, Leger also interviewed those in Edmonton. Entrepreneurs/local businesses had trouble pointing to the 'secret sauce' that made Edmonton a place for entrepreneurs. They did, however, have a clear understanding that there is a deep seeded risk tolerance here and that there is a lot of support for new businesses. They did not seem to feel that the City got in their way of success. Below are highlights of the sentiments:

- Things that make Edmonton a good place to open a business:
 - Very easy
 - Rewards hard workers
 - Less cliquey
 - Eager to give new businesses a chance
 - Welcoming to non-traditional revenue streams
- Strengths of Edmonton:
 - Perseverance
 - River Valley
 - Festivals- second largest Fringe Festival in North America
 - Loyalty
 - Food scene - lots of restaurants, lots of ethnic restaurants

- Diversity
- Diverse arts community
- Standard of living
- Working class city- want to work
- People are open-minded
- Everyone accepted
- Limitations of Edmonton:
 - Preconceived notions
 - Too much urban sprawl
 - City is a pushover for businesses wanting to leave

Objective 3:

Understand how the two segments of audiences (Canadians and Canadian businesses) resonate with Edmonton being described as open, inventive, courageous and cooperative, or other descriptors or drivers.

The core brand characteristics of Edmonton from the Make Something Edmonton brand work are open, inventive, cooperative and courageous. The following illustrates how Urban Canadians feel about applying each statement to Edmonton:

- 52% of Urban Canadians feel the statements about being open apply to Edmonton.
- 42% of Urban Canadians feel the statements about being inventive apply to Edmonton.
- 35% of Urban Canadians feel the statements about being cooperative apply to Edmonton.
- 34% of Urban Canadians feel the statements about being courageous apply to Edmonton.

Canadian businesses feel most strongly toward following statements about Edmonton:

- Access to business professionals (48%)
- A place that is affordable to live in (44%)
- A place with a sufficiently large workforce (38%)
- A place that is easy to get around (35%)