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## **– PULSE OF TORONTO –**

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  - Seven in ten (67%) want to get rid of squeegee kids --**
  - Torontonians split on the fate of panhandling --**
  - Taxes considered top issue for the new city of Toronto (26%) --**
  - One-third (35%) indicate that municipal services have gotten worse --**
  - Special TTC fares for students and seniors should continue (90%) --**
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This Angus Reid/CFRB/Toronto Sun poll was conducted by telephone between September 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, 1998 among a representative cross-section of 400 residents of the new city of Toronto.

These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Toronto population according to the 1996 Census data. With a sample of 400, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the overall results are within  $\pm 5.0$  percentage points of what they would have been had the entire adult Toronto population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population.

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### ***Install cameras at red lights***

As the debate surrounding red-light runners on Toronto streets picks up momentum, Toronto residents were asked how they would handle the issue. Respondents were told that in order to deal with the problem of red light runners on Toronto streets, the city could undertake a number of initiatives. Given the choice, city of Toronto residents would prefer that the city install cameras at intersections (60%) over increasing the number of police officers stationed at intersections (21%) and hiring special contracted private enforcement officers to monitor intersections (14%).

Older Torontonians (63% among those over 55) and women (62%) are more likely to choose the installation of cameras than other respondents. Conversely, younger Torontonians (31% among those between 18 and 34) and men (26%) are more likely to favour increasing the number of police officers stationed at intersections to catch red light runners.

### ***Get rid of Squeegee Kids***

While only 5 percent of Torontonians mention squeegee kids among the top issues facing the new city of Toronto, two-thirds (67%) agree that squeegee kids are both a safety hazard and a nuisance and that they should not be allowed to clean windshields on Toronto streets. Older Torontonians (83% among those over 55 years) and men (70%) are far more likely to agree that squeegee kids should not be allowed on Toronto streets than younger Torontonians (54% among those 18-34) and women (65%).

### ***Torontonians split on fate of pan handling***

Torontonians are split on whether they believe a law should be enacted to ban panhandlers from Toronto's streets. Specifically, 49 percent agree that "there should not be a law to ban pan handlers from Toronto's streets" while 48 percent disagree with this statement.

Similar to their views on squeegee kids, older Torontonians are more likely to want a law that forbids panhandling on Toronto streets than younger residents (65% among those over 55 vs. 39% among those between 18 and 34).

### ***Taxes top issue for the new city of Toronto***

On an unaided basis, residents of the new city of Toronto were asked to indicate what issues they feel should receive the greatest attention from Mayor Lastman and City Council (totals exceed 100% because respondents were invited to provide multiple responses). At the top of the list, one-quarter (26%) of Toronto residents indicate that Mayor Lastman and City Council should prioritize taxes. Notably, older respondents (29% among those over 55 years) are more likely to name taxes among the most significant issues facing the City than other respondents.

Lagging behind this omnipresent issue are homelessness (15%), transportation (13%), education and schools (13%). While younger residents are more likely to homelessness (18% among those between 18 and 34 vs. 10% among those over 55) and education (22% among those 18-34 vs. 4% among those over 55) among the issues that they feel are most pressing, older residents are more concerned about transportation matters (17% among both those over 55 and those between 35 and 54 vs. 7% among those between 18 and 34).

Among other issues mentioned are jobs/unemployment (12%), crime/violence/gangs (12%), healthcare/medicare (8%), amalgamation (6%) and cameras at red lights/red light running (6%).

### ***One-third (35%) indicate that municipal services have gotten worse***

As the one year anniversary of the new city of Toronto approaches, Toronto residents were asked if they believe that the services that they receive and the way the city works has gotten worse. One-third (35%) agree that the services that they receive and the way the city works have gotten worse, not better. Half (52%) do not agree with the statement – that is, they do not believe municipal services are getting worse.

***Special fares on TTC should continue***

Torontonians are united in their support for special fares for students and seniors. Torontonians were told that given the financial condition at the TTC it's time to end special fares for students and seniors and that they should pay the same as everyone else. Ninety percent of Torontonians disagreed with this statement. An additional 8 percent agreed with the statement. This opinion holds true regardless of the age of the respondent.

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