

GVRD MUNICIPAL ISSUES

JANUARY 2002

CITY OF VANCOUVER SELECTED AS BEST PLACE TO LIVE IN GREATER VANCOUVER; ONE-IN THREE (35%) GVRD RESIDENTS WANTS TO LIVE IN ANOTHER MUNICIPALITY

GVRD RESIDENTS (77%) OPPOSE AMALGAMATION; TWO-THIRDS (64%) "STRONGLY" OPPOSE

TRANSPORTATION (47%) MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR ATTENTION FROM ELECTED MUNICIPAL LEADERS



Ipsos Reid

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This BC Ipsos-Reid poll is based on the BC Reid Express provincial omnibus telephone survey conducted between December 4th and 11th, 2001 among a representative cross-section of 800 British Columbia adults, including 427 residents of the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD). These data are statistically weighted to ensure the GVRD sample's municipal, age and sex composition reflects that of the actual GVRD population according to 1996 Census data. With a GVRD sample of 427, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the overall results are within ± 4.8 percentage points of what they would have been had the entire adult GVRD population been polled. The margin of error will be larger for other sub-groupings of the survey population.

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Vancouver, B.C. January 16, 2002 – The City of Vancouver is the best municipality in which to live in all of Greater Vancouver, according to a new BC Reid Express Survey conducted with residents of the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD). Twenty-one percent of GVRD residents think the City of Vancouver is best, more than twice as many who select the second choice, West Vancouver (10%). The municipalities of Burnaby and Richmond share third place, at 9% each. One-in-three (35%) residents chooses a different municipality than where they live now, as the best place to live. “As the region’s largest municipality and the home of our main business district, it’s to be expected that the City of Vancouver should come out on top,” says Araceli Mallen, Senior Research Manager in Ipsos-Reid’s Vancouver office. “Much more interesting is the contrasting news for Surrey and the City of West Vancouver. Residents of Surrey won’t be happy their municipality is chosen by only 6% as best, despite the fact Surrey makes up 17% of the region’s population. Meanwhile, City of West Vancouver residents should be proud that with only 2% of the population, it finishes second at 10%, ahead of many larger municipalities.”

Despite the interest of many GVRD residents to live in another municipality, the vast majority (77%) opposes increasing links between the region’s more than 20 municipalities through the creation of a single megacity. Two-thirds (64%) “strongly oppose” amalgamation in Greater Vancouver. Comments Ms. Mallen, “The intensity of public opinion on this issue is incredible. It would be a mistake for municipal leaders to even raise a discussion on the possibility of amalgamation.”

Transportation, not amalgamation, is the top priority local issue among GVRD residents. Nearly half (47%) want their elected municipal leaders to pay the greatest attention to transportation issues, especially traffic congestion, transit services and street conditions. Observes Ms. Mallen,

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“Transportation issues impact people on a daily basis in their own lives, and lately they’ve dominated local issues in the media because of the recent transit strike and TransLink’s financial woes.”

CITY OF VANCOUVER SELECTED AS BEST PLACE TO LIVE IN GREATER VANCOUVER; ONE-IN-THREE (35%) GVRD RESIDENTS WANTS TO LIVE IN ANOTHER MUNICIPALITY

GVRD residents select the City of Vancouver (21%) more often than any other municipality as the best place to live in all of Greater Vancouver. The City of West Vancouver ranks in second place at 10%, despite its relatively small population (2% of GVRD). The municipalities of Burnaby and Richmond finish in a tie for third place at 9%. Meanwhile, Surrey is selected by only 6% as best, despite the fact it makes up 17% of the GVRD’s population.

- ◆ The City of Vancouver is most popular with younger GVRD residents. Twenty-eight percent of younger residents (18 to 34 years) select the City of Vancouver as the best place to live, compared with 16% of those aged 35 and older.
- ◆ A preference for the City of Vancouver also increases with education. Twenty-eight percent of university graduates select the City of Vancouver, compared with 19% of residents with some post-secondary education and 9% of residents with a high school education or less.

Not everyone chooses their own municipality as the best place to live in Greater Vancouver. In fact, one-in-three (35%) residents chooses another municipality as the best place to live. Overall, 60% of GVRD residents say that their own municipality is the best place to live. Five percent are undecided about the best municipality.

- ◆ Younger residents are more likely to want to live in another municipality (42% vs. 32% among 35+ years).

GVRD RESIDENTS (77%) OPPOSE AMALGAMATION; TWO-THIRDS (64%) “STRONGLY” OPPOSE

Municipal leaders would be wise to avoid raising the subject of amalgamation. Residents of the GVRD soundly reject the suggestion that Greater Vancouver’s more than 20 separate municipalities should be amalgamated into a single megacity, with one government, mayor and city council. Nearly eight-in-ten (77%) GVRD residents oppose the amalgamation of Greater Vancouver’s municipalities into a single megacity, including 64% who “strongly oppose” amalgamation. Support for amalgamation stands at just 21%, including 11% who “strongly support” amalgamation.

- ◆ Support for amalgamation, while weak with all demographic groups, is highest with City of Vancouver residents (31%) and with men (25% vs. 16% women).

TRANSPORTATION (47%) MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR ATTENTION FROM ELECTED MUNICIPAL LEADERS

GVRD residents select transportation concerns as the most important top-of-mind local issue for attention from elected municipal leaders. Nearly half (47%) of GVRD residents think transportation is the most important or second most important local issue facing residents of their municipality. The most pressing transportation issues include traffic congestion (15%), transit concerns (13%) and the condition of streets (7%).

Crime is the number two local issue, with only about a third as many mentions (17%) as transportation. And, despite the question’s focus on local issues, health care (12%) and education (12%) tie for third spot for attention from elected municipal leaders. Social/housing problems (11%) and environmental concerns are the only other issues mentioned by more than 10% of GVRD residents.



- ◆ City of Vancouver residents are somewhat more concerned about transportation issues (54% vs. 47% overall) and with social/housing problems (21% vs. 11% overall).
- ◆ Residents with lower household incomes (<\$30K) are relatively more concerned with crime issues (28% vs. 15% \$30K+) and less concerned with transportation issues (31% vs. 50% \$30K+).

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