

VANCOUVER MAYOR AND COUNCIL – ONE YEAR REVIEW

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(58%) But Both Enjoy Majority Job Approval*

*Safe Injection Site/ Four Pillar Approach is their Biggest
Achievement - Biggest Letdown is Dealing with Squatters/
Homelessness/ Panhandlers - Olympics Cuts Both Ways*

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(25%), Worse (26%) or Same (48%) Shape*



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Vancouver, BC – A new Ipsos-Reid poll shows that after his first year in office, more than two thirds (68%) of Vancouverites say they approve of the job Larry Campbell is doing as mayor. In fact, his approval is 10 points higher than that for City Council as a whole (58%). Looking back over the last year, Vancouverites are largely in agreement that the opening of the Downtown Eastside's safe injection site/commitment to the Four Pillar approach (38%) is the Mayor and Council's biggest achievement. Meanwhile, residents say the Mayor and Council's failure to deal with panhandlers/squatters and the homeless (18%) is their greatest disappointment. In fact, a majority thinks they have been too soft on dealing with issues such as panhandlers (55%), squatters (51%) and property crime (52%). Interestingly, Vancouverites are divided on Mayor and Council's handling of the Olympics/referendum with virtually equal numbers saying it is one of their biggest achievements (13%) and one of their biggest disappointments (12%). On the whole, Vancouverites are split on whether the City is in "better shape" (25%) or "worse shape" (26%) than before Mayor Campbell and City Council took office. The largest number say the City is in "the same shape" (48%).



These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid poll conducted between November 19th and 26th, 2003 among 600 adult residents of the Lower Mainland, including a representative cross-section of 400 City of Vancouver residents and 200 Rest of Lower Mainland residents. These data are statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional, age and sex composition reflects that of the City of Vancouver and Lower Mainland according to 2001 Census data. With a City of Vancouver sample of 400, one can say with 95 percent certainty that these results are within ± 4.9 percentage points of what they would have been had the entire adult City of Vancouver population been polled. The margin of error for the 200 interviews in the Rest of the Lower Mainland is ± 6.9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error will be larger for population sub-groups.

Mayor Larry Campbell (68%) Outpaces Vancouver City Council (58%) But Both Enjoy Majority Job Approval

With more than a year in office to reflect upon, Vancouverites give high marks to Mayor Larry Campbell for the job he is doing as mayor. Almost seven-in-ten (68%) say they approve of his performance including two-in-ten (21%) who “strongly approve” and half (47%) who “somewhat approve”. In contrast, only three-in-ten (28%) Vancouverites disapprove of Campbell’s performance as mayor, including one-in-ten (12%) who “strongly disapprove” and 16% who “somewhat disapprove”.

The Mayor outshines (by 10 points) City Council as a whole in job performance, although City Council still garners favourable reviews from six-in-ten (58%) Vancouverites. One-in-ten (12%) “strongly approve” of Council’s performance and half (46%) “somewhat approve”. City Council’s disapproval rating stands at 35%, with 12% of residents who say they “strongly disapprove” of Council’s performance and 22% who “somewhat disapprove”.

Larry Campbell’s 68% approval rating puts him in line with mayors across the rest of the Lower Mainland (70%). But, Vancouver City Council underperforms in comparison with other Lower Mainland councils. Their 58% approval rating is 12 points below the 70% average for the rest of the Lower Mainland.



One possible explanation for this lower approval rating compared to Mayor Campbell and other Councils in the Lower Mainland is how Vancouver's City Council decides to spend its time. Recently, there has been discussion about whether City Council should spend time on issues outside their jurisdiction such as the war in Iraq or the weaponization of space. Three-quarters (75%) of Vancouverites say "Council should not spend time on these issues because it has little power to bring about change and their time would be better spent dealing with local concerns". In contrast, one-quarter (25%) says "Council should spend time on these issues because they are important to Vancouverites and it helps ensure that Vancouver has a voice on a national and world stage".

After losing all but two seats on Council, the NPA's profile is now significantly reduced. In fact, three-in-ten (30%) residents say they do not know enough about the performance of NPA opposition councillors Peter Ladner and Sam Sullivan to assess their performance. Citywide, 43% say they approve of the NPA councillors' performance, while 27% say they disapprove of their performance. Interestingly, NPA's ratio of approval to disapproval ($1.6x = 43\% / 27\%$) is on par with City Council as a whole ($1.7x = 58\% / 35\%$).

Relevant regional, demographic and socioeconomic differences include:

- Larry Campbell's highest approval ratings are found among lower income Vancouverites (76% <\$40K vs. 64% \$40-\$69K, 65% \$70K+).
- City Council's highest approval ratings are also found among lower income Vancouverites (69% <\$40K vs. 52% \$40-\$69K, 55% \$70K+).
- NPA opposition councillors Peter Ladner and Sam Sullivan find their highest approval ratings among higher income residents (53% \$70K+ vs. 35% <\$40K, 38% \$40-\$69K).



Safe Injection Site/ Four Pillar Approach is their Biggest Achievement - Biggest Letdown is Dealing with Squatters/ Homelessness/ Panhandlers - Olympics Cuts Both Ways

Their approach to addressing the drug issue in the Downtown Eastside stands out clearly in the minds of Vancouverites as the best thing Mayor Campbell and Council have done over the last year. Four-in-ten (38%) mention “safe injection sites and the Four Pillar approach” as their top of mind biggest achievement. In contrast, there is less consensus among residents about what the worst thing Mayor Campbell and Council have done, or not done, over the last year. Two-in-ten (18%) say it is “their failure to deal with squatters, panhandlers and the homeless”.

Campbell and Council’s management of the Olympics and the holding of a referendum on the matter, has clearly been a divisive issue, with 13% saying it is the best thing they have done and 12% saying it is the worst thing they have done over the last year.

Other top achievements include “housing, poverty and homelessness” (8%) and “improved communication/more open style” (8%). Other letdowns include “their approach to the Downtown Eastside – including the safe injection site” (8%), “their handling of fiscal and economic issues” (6%) and “their approach to housing/affordable housing” (4%).

Demographic and regional differences for BEST things done include:

- Eastside/drug issues are mentioned most often by older residents (47% 55+ years vs. 34% 18-34 years, 35% 35-54 years) and lower/middle income residents (42% <\$40K, 40% \$40-\$69K vs. 34% \$70K+).
- The Olympics is mentioned most often by younger and middle-aged residents (12% 18-34 years, 17% 35-54 years vs. 7% 55+ years), higher income residents (18% \$70K+ vs. 6% <\$40K, 13% \$40-\$69K) and men (15% vs. 10% women).



Demographic and regional differences for WORST things done include:

- Dealing with squatters/homelessness/panhandlers is mentioned most often by middle/higher income residents (20% \$40-\$69K, 28% \$70K+ vs. 6% <\$40K).
- The Olympics is mentioned most often by lower income residents (17% <\$40K vs. 11% \$40-\$69K, 8% \$70K+).

Majority Thinks Campbell and Council Too Soft on Panhandlers (55%), Property Crime (52%) and Squatters (51%)

While Larry Campbell and City Council enjoy strong overall job approval ratings, a significant number of Vancouverites think they are too soft in their handling of some issues. A majority of residents thinks the Mayor and City Council's approach has been too soft in dealing with panhandlers (55%), property crime (52%) and squatters (51%).

- With respect to panhandlers, 7% think Mayor and Council's approach has been "too hard", 55% think it has been "too soft" and 33% think it has been "about right".
- With respect to property crime, 1% think Mayor and Council's approach has been "too hard", 52% think it has been "too soft" and 39% think it has been "about right".
- With respect to squatters, 10% think Mayor and Council's approach has been "too hard", 51% think it has been "too soft" and 38% think it has been "about right".

Relevant regional, demographic and socioeconomic differences include:

- Groups more likely to say the Mayor and Council are too soft on panhandlers include middle-aged and older Vancouverites (61% 35-54 years, 60% 55+ years vs. 45% 18-34 years) and middle/higher income residents (61% \$40-\$69K, 64% \$70K+ vs. 37% <\$40K).
- Groups more likely to say the Mayor and Council are too soft on property crime include middle-aged and older Vancouverites (59% 35-54 years, 53% 55+ years vs. 42% 18-34 years) and middle/higher income residents (51% \$40-\$69K, 63% \$70K+ vs. 38% <\$40K).
- Groups more likely to say the Mayor and Council are too soft on squatters include residents of Vancouver-West (57% vs. 46% East), middle-aged and older Vancouverites (56% 35-54 years, 53% 55+ years vs. 43% 18-34 years) and middle/higher income residents (54% \$40-\$69K, 62% \$70K+ vs. 32% <\$40K).



Overall, Vancouverites Split on Whether City is Now in Better (25%), Worse (26%) or Same (48%) Shape

Vancouverites have divergent views on whether their municipality is better off or worse off than before Mayor Campbell and City Council took office. One-quarter (25%) thinks Vancouver is now in “better shape” and the same proportion (26%) thinks Vancouver is now in “worse shape” than one year ago. Half (48%) of residents think their City is in “about the same shape” as one year ago.

The same balance of better versus worse is seen in the rest of the Lower Mainland, although residents are more likely than Vancouverites to think little has changed. Among residents of the rest of the Lower Mainland, 16% think their municipality is in “better shape”, 16% think it is in “worse shape” and 62% think it is in “about the same shape” as one year ago.

Relevant regional, demographic and socioeconomic differences include:

- On balance, older residents (55+ years) are more likely to think Vancouver is in worse shape (24% better vs. 36% worse). Younger residents (18-34 years) come down on the side of better shape (24% better vs. 19% worse). Middle-aged residents (35-54 years) are split down the middle (26% better vs. 25% worse).
- Lower income residents (<\$40K) are quite positive in their assessment of the changes (34% better vs. 14% worse). In contrast, middle income (22% better vs. 35% worse) and higher income residents (18% better vs. 28% worse) are more negative than positive.

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