

METRO VANCOUVER RESIDENTS DIVIDED OVER DOWNTOWN CASINO-HOTEL PROJECT

Majority Expect Significant Economic Benefits AND Significant Social Costs



Ipsos Reid

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Vancouver, BC – Metro Vancouver residents are sharply divided in their views of the proposed expansion and relocation of the downtown Vancouver Edgewater Casino. A new Ipsos Reid poll shows that 48% of residents support proceeding with the casino-hotel project and 46% oppose proceeding with the project. While total support and opposition are roughly equal, strong opposition (26% ‘oppose strongly’) is 10 points higher than strong support (16% ‘support strongly’).

- Support for the project is slightly higher among men (51% support) than among women (44% support).

The proposal is currently being reviewed by the City of Vancouver, whose residents (n=250) are also split in their opinions, but tend to side more with opposing the project (53% oppose) than supporting the project (43% support).

Support for Casino-Hotel Project

As you may know, Paragon Gaming has proposed an expansion and relocation of its downtown Vancouver Edgewater Casino. The proposal calls for 150 games tables, 1,500 slot machines and off-track betting. It would be the biggest casino in Western Canada at an estimated cost of close to \$500 million. The proposal includes a hotel complex and spaces for small-scale concerts, banquets and exhibitions. The proposal is currently being reviewed by the City of Vancouver.	Metro Vancouver (n=900) %	City of Vancouver (n=250) %
Overall, do you support or oppose proceeding with this casino-hotel project?		
Support strongly	16	14
Support somewhat	32	29
Oppose somewhat	20	20
Oppose strongly	26	33
Don't know	6	4
Total Support	48	43
Total Oppose	46	53

While Metro Vancouver residents are divided equally in their overall assessment of the project, nearly two-thirds (64%) do agree that it will provide significant economic benefits to the region. One-third (32%) of residents disagree that the project will provide significant economic benefits.

Six-in-ten (59%) City of Vancouver residents also agree the project will provide significant economic benefits to the region, while 37% disagree with this assessment.

Agreement that Project will Provide Significant Economic Benefits

<i>Supporters of the proposal point to the economic benefits of the project (e.g. jobs, construction, taxes). Do you agree or disagree that this casino-hotel project will provide significant economic benefits to our region?</i>	Metro Vancouver (n=900) %	City of Vancouver (n=250) %
Agree strongly	21	19
Agree somewhat	43	40
Disagree somewhat	15	14
Disagree strongly	17	23
Don't know	4	4
Total Agree	64	59
Total Disagree	32	37

Metro Vancouver residents see more than economic benefits to the project – they also see the social costs. Six-in-ten residents (60%) say they agree that this casino-hotel project will result in significant social costs to the region. Nearly four-in-ten (36%) residents disagree with this assessment.

- Agreement is higher among women (64% agree) than among men (56% agree).

Among City of Vancouver residents, two-thirds (67%) agree the project will result in significant social costs, while three-in-ten (31%) disagree.

Agreement that Project will Result in Significant Social Costs

<i>Opponents of the proposal point to the social costs of the project (e.g. crime, problem gambling). Do you agree or disagree that this casino-hotel project will result in significant social costs to our region?</i>	Metro Vancouver (n=900) %	City of Vancouver (n=250) %
Agree strongly	28	33
Agree somewhat	32	34
Disagree somewhat	27	24
Disagree strongly	9	7
Don't know	4	2
Total Agree	60	67
Total Disagree	36	31

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid online poll fielded March 17-21, 2011 with a representative sample of 900 adult Metro Vancouver residents. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of ± 3.3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20 (City of Vancouver $n=250$, ± 6.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20). The margin of error will be larger for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Metro Vancouver population according to 2006 Census data. The polling was conducted using Ipsos Reid's "Voice of the West Interactive Forum" – an online panel of more than 6,500 British Columbians who have been recruited to match the overall characteristics of the adult residents of the province.

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