

## **PRESS RELEASE #1**

### **New Study Indicates Urban Canadians Want Greater Powers and Funding for Cities**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Monday, February 17, 2003**

According to a comprehensive study of the residents of Canada's seven major cities, city dwellers want the federal government to pay more attention to cities and provide a greater share of tax dollars to urban municipalities.

Highlights of the findings of a syndicated study by Cameron Strategy Inc. and Probe Research Inc., released today, indicate 51% of Canadians are worried that unless more federal and provincial money is spent on city infrastructure, their quality of life will deteriorate "very soon." That sentiment is most pronounced in Toronto (63%). [See Figure 1.1]

Two-thirds of urban Canadians (67%) also called for increased federal spending for cities. [See Figure 1.2]

More than 2,500 Canadians living in seven major cities (Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal) were interviewed at random by telephone between Nov. 26, 2002 and Jan. 8, 2003. The study explores a wide range of issues on urban quality of life, empowerment, taxation and political representation.

Four out of five urban Canadians (80%) said federal and provincial politicians must pay more attention to the specific needs of Canada's cities. [See Figure 1.3]

Immediate infrastructure needs identified for upgrading include major streets, bridges and roadways (68%), transit system vehicles and stations (55%) and water treatment (54%) and waste management facilities (52%). [See Figure 1.4] Concerns about transportation infrastructure are more prevalent in Calgary and Winnipeg, whereas Torontonians cite concerns about water treatment and waste management more than other urban Canadians.

In terms of possible new sources of revenue for Canada's cities, 81% indicated they would like to see a portion of the current gas tax go to help pay for urban roads and bridges. Another 74% supported a portion of the same tax going to help pay for public transit.

Similar proportions (73%) supported the idea of current sales tax collected in cities going to help pay for police, fire and ambulance services. [See Figure 1.5]

**Scott MacKay, President of Probe Research**, said “this study is the first of its kind to explore Canadians’ growing focus on raising the profile of the “urban agenda” in this country, including attitudes toward quality of life and alternative funding and governance issues.”

**Bruce Cameron, President of Cameron Strategy**, said: “A majority of urban Canadians want to see federal and provincial governments acknowledge and address the urgent need for investment in infrastructure. They also support a greater role for civic leaders in governance and taxation issues at the local level.”

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“Urban Rule” is a national syndicated study conducted by Cameron Strategy Inc. and Probe Research Inc. It is the first survey of its kind to address the concerns of urban Canadians. The study explores a wide range of issues on urban quality of life, empowerment, taxation and political representation.

This survey was conducted between November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2002 and January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2003 by telephone with a random representative cross-section of over 2556 Canadians residing in seven major cities – Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal. A survey of this size is considered accurate to within +/-2.0%, 19 times out of 20. At the city level, margins of error vary from +/-4.5% to 7.1%, 19 times out of 20.

Cameron Strategy Inc. is a Calgary-based market research and strategic planning company that conducts extensive research into municipal issues across Canada. Probe Research Inc. is a fully Canadian-owned public opinion and marketing research firm based in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

For further information about these survey results or the methodology, please contact either:

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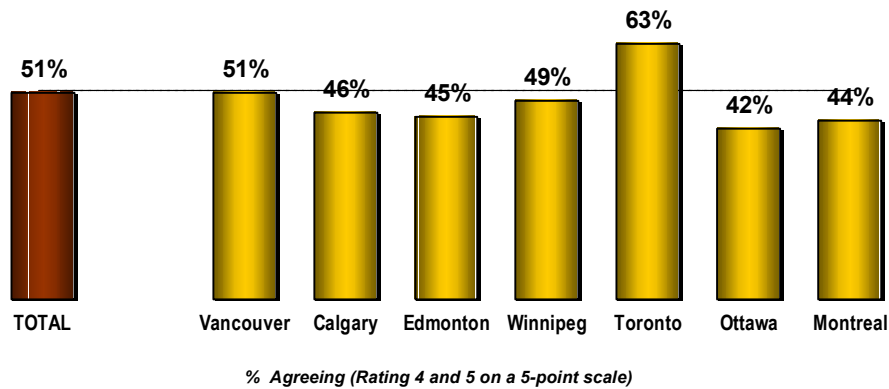
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## Figure 1.1: Concerns About Urban Deterioration

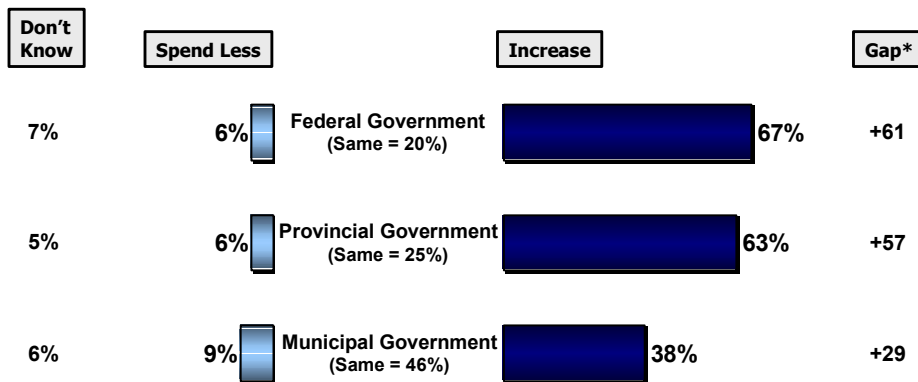
Q.14: "I'd now like to ask you about some infrastructure, social and environmental issues in your city. I want to read you a list of statements, and for each one I'd like you to tell me if you agree or disagree with that statement?"

**"Unless more federal and provincial money is spent on our city's infrastructure, the quality of life will deteriorate here very soon"**



## Figure 1.2: Attitudes Toward Urban Spending by Federal & Provincial Governments

Q.4: "All things considered, do you think that the following levels of government should be increasing the amount it spends in your city, spend less, or do you think that they are all spending the right amount in your city?"

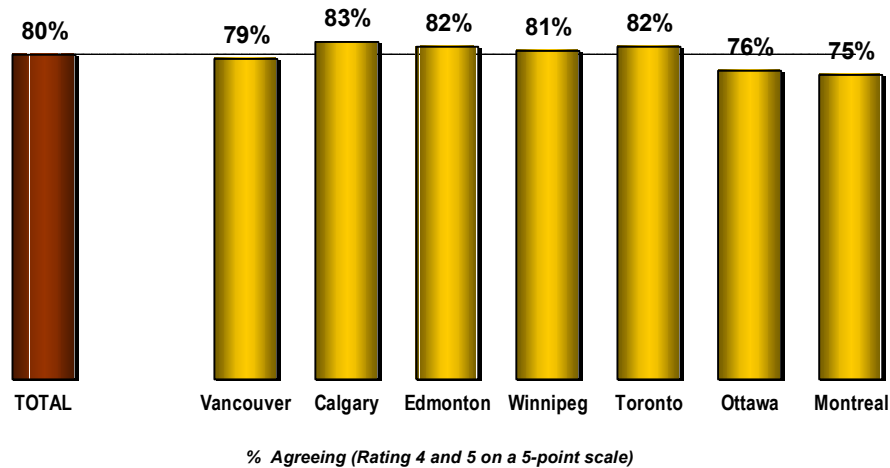


\*Gap = increase - less

**Figure 1.3:****Desired Level of Federal & Provincial Attention to Canada's Cities**

Q.17: "There are a number of different things that could contribute to the quality of life in your city. For each of the following statements, do you agree or disagree with that statement?"

"Federal & Provincial politicians need to pay more attention to specific needs of CDN cities"

**Figure 1.4:****Urban Canadian Attitudes on Infrastructure Upgrades**

Q.16: "Please indicate, by a yes or no, what infrastructure in your city you think requires upgrading?"

% saying yes	TOTAL	Van	Cgy	Edm	Wpg	Tor	Ott	Mtl
Major street, bridges & roadways	68%	61%	83%	69%	81%	65%	55%	80%
Transit system vehicles & stations	55%	60%	60%	42%	30%	67%	45%	43%
Water treatment facilities	54%	56%	38%	32%	61%	66%	36%	58%
Waste management systems	52%	41%	36%	36%	42%	70%	41%	54%

## Figure 1.5: Urban Canadians' Attitudes Toward Support for Specific Tax Initiatives

Q. 10: "Many cities in Canada are looking to reduce their dependence on property taxes as a way of funding some city services. Cities are looking at changes that will make the most sense on how city services are paid for. Would you support or oppose the use of ...?"



% Agreeing (Rating 4 and 5 on a 5-point scale)