



## **Dieppe resident attitudinal survey**

**June 2011**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



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MarketQuest-Omnifacts Research (MQO) was commissioned by the City of Dieppe to conduct an attitudinal survey among its residents. The primary objective of this study was to examine public opinion and sentiment among residents with regards to the services they receive from their municipality as well as perceptions towards municipal administration. This unprecedented study involved 400 telephone interviews with adults aged 18 or older residing within Dieppe's municipal boundaries. Data was collected between May 17<sup>th</sup> and May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2011, in both official languages.

Dieppe residents are extremely proud of their community. Practically every single resident of Dieppe considers himself or herself at least 'somewhat' proud of his/her community (98%). Given this exemplary sense of pride, it is no surprise to find that Dieppe is regarded as an ideal community for raising a family, offering great quality of life, and where residents can feel safe. This sense of pride is the root to feelings of belonging and social inclusion.

All is not perceived quite as favourably, however. Few are of the opinion that Dieppe's economic or financial situation is in great shape. Most, however, do believe things have improved over the past few years. Generally speaking, residents tend to have a highly optimistic attitude towards their community's future. In fact, approximately two-thirds of residents mention they would strongly recommend the City of Dieppe to an outsider looking to move to New Brunswick, and believe Dieppe to have a very promising future.

Dieppe residents exude a strong grasp of the importance of municipal services. All of the 18 specific municipal services that were examined as part of this study were deemed important by Dieppe residents. Some, such as public works (particularly those services related to the maintenance of streets and traffic movement) are found to be even more critical. In fact, when it comes to Dieppe's streets and roads, more than 90% of residents identify snow and ice removal, good traffic circulation and road maintenance/repair to be critically important. Notable also is the strong level of importance attributed to economic development efforts among Dieppe residents, more so than is typical measured among general adult populations.

While the majority of residents are generally satisfied with the municipal services delivered by the City of Dieppe and believe to be receiving good 'value' for taxes paid, Dieppe fails to meet residents' expectations when it comes to road/street maintenance, snow removal (roads and sidewalks) and traffic circulation. These services are rated among the least satisfactory, on a scale of 1 to 10, with road maintenance/repair receiving the strongest 'dissatisfaction' score at 22% (score of 1 to 4 on 10-point scale).

When examining public opinion towards municipal services, it is important to consider both the *importance* of a specific service as well as *satisfaction* levels. Specifically, services with which residents are not highly *satisfied* yet are deemed relatively *unimportant* should be of less concern to City Council. Rather, priorities should be aimed towards *unsatisfactory services* that are deemed *highly* important. In order to determine this, MQO undertook a GAP analysis of satisfaction scores. Specifically, the GAP score calculates the proportion of residents rating a service as highly important (8 or higher on a scale of 1 to 10), and holding less than satisfactory scores for that same service (score of 7 or lower). This exercise highlights residents' concerns over the City's street maintenance/snow removal and traffic circulation services. With GAP scores of between 51% and 66% for these 4 services (road maintenance/repair, snow removal on roads, snow removal on sidewalks and traffic circulation), Dieppe residents' desires are loud and clear.

With regards to communications and information, residents believe they are quite informed when it comes to what's going on in their community. The vast majority (89%) mentioned being 'very or somewhat' informed of activities and events in Dieppe, with more than one-quarter (26%) being 'very' informed. This level of awareness is quite remarkable for a municipal government. The city's Dieppe MAG is a very important source of information for residents. Indeed, the publication (a quarterly newsletter published and distributed by Dieppe each quarter) is deemed residents' most important source of information regarding events in the community.

However, when it comes to the involvement of residents in municipal decisions, there is room for improvement. Despite the community's strong sense of being informed and aware of what's going on in Dieppe, when questioned on whether or not "*Dieppe's municipal government involves its residents when making decisions for the City*", a significant level of uncertainty and disagreement is noted. Stronger or improved involvement tactics are required if City Council wishes to stand out as an inclusive government.

Community involvement and participation in Dieppe is remarkably strong. Residents frequently get involved in their community and participate in scheduled events and activities. Annual participation in Dieppe's Kite Festival reaches nearly three-quarters of the population (71%) each year. Although less popular, the '15 août' festivities, the Harvest Festival ("*Festival de la récolte du marché*") and the Winter Carnival boast significant participation from residents (with 59%, 45% and 41% annual participation rates, respectively).

The Dieppe City Market, open to the public each Saturday morning, is another important community activity among residents. Nearly two-thirds (64%) mention visiting the City Market at least once per month. Among activities and events examined in this study, visits to Dover Park, to the « Centre des arts et de la culture » and public transportation services are the least frequently pursued activities among Dieppe residents. Also notable is the portion of residents that *volunteer* their time for community causes. One-third (33%) mention being involved in volunteering efforts at least a few times per year.

When it comes to recreation and green spaces, Dieppe residents are unquestionably highly active. This is evident by the strong use of walking and cycling trails. The vast majority of Dieppe residents (85%) use these trails each year (not counting winter months), with nearly one-half (47%) doing so at least once per week. The Aquatic Centre attracts about one-quarter of the population each month, particularly young families (with a 44% monthly visitation rate).

There exist significant differences in attitudes and perceptions across Dieppe's two linguistic groups. Dieppe's francophone community tends to earn slightly higher household incomes, is slightly younger (both in terms of age and in terms of residency), and is more likely to have children in the household. Opinions and attitudes among this group with regards to their community tend to be generally more favourable. Regardless of language, however, a large majority of Dieppe's population is in favour of the by-law regulating the use of language on external commercial signs in Dieppe (76%).