



Dieppe resident attitudinal survey

Fall 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Corporate Research Associates Inc.

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In order to direct the development of its strategic plan, the City of Dieppe wanted to obtain the opinions of its citizens on various topics related to the municipality. To do this, Corporate Research Associates Inc. (CRA) was mandated to conduct a citizen survey. The purpose of the research was to get the pulse of the public's opinions on some current topics, as well as get an update of the views on certain topics addressed as part of the previous survey of public opinion carried out in 2011.

More specifically, the aim of the research was to:

- Measure the level of satisfaction of citizens with municipal services provided by the City of Dieppe;
- Identify the municipal government's priority services;
- Assess the long-term trends related to the desires of citizens;
- Measure the opinions and attitudes regarding current issues;
- Guide Council in terms of communication and the distribution of resources; and
- Determine and measure the shift in public opinion over the last three years.

In order to meet the objectives of the study, 400 telephone interviews were conducted with a wide population of adults (18 years of age or older) living in Dieppe. A more detailed description of the methodology is included at the end of this report.

The report includes an overview of the findings, a detailed analysis of the study outcomes as well as a detailed description of the research methodology used. Furthermore, the questionnaire and the results in the form of tables are appended. Throughout the analysis of the results, the mention of tables refers to those data tables that are appended to this report.

Summary of the results

The results of the survey conducted among Dieppe citizens in the fall of 2014 highlight a sense of community and great pride from the municipality's residents.

As noted in 2011, the town is still perceived as being able to offer an unrivaled quality of life and a safe environment, in addition to being considered as an excellent place to raise a family. Not only does the population express favorable opinions regarding the current situation, but it also sees the community's future from a positive perspective. This means it would not hesitate to boast Dieppe's qualities to those wishing to settle in New Brunswick.

Residents have noticed that the community's economy has improved over the past three years; however, views are divided regarding the overall health of the community and the Town's financial health in particular. While the financial aspect is not immediately identified by residents as being the local problem requiring the most attention, some have nonetheless expressed concerns about the increased municipal taxes and the municipal debt.

As far as services offered to residents go, the public continues to feel that Dieppe offers a good price-performance ratio in relation to municipal taxes. The overall satisfaction of residents with the municipal programs has remained moderately positive. Among the town's facilities, the cycling pathways and trails were used the most, especially from the spring to the fall, as well as the skating rinks.

In terms of municipal priorities, the public supports the efforts put forth by the municipality for promoting the Francophonie, protecting mature trees in its territory and showcasing the Petitcodiac River. Although the vast majority of citizens say they are willing to change their habits in order to counter climate change, less than half of respondents approve the installation of residential wind generators. It should be noted that Dieppe is not considered as an environmental leader, though the municipality receives the overall support of its residents in this matter. However, it should also be noted that the environment is not perceived as a local problem requiring very much attention at this time. Finally, the opinion of residents is divided regarding the rearing of chicken for recreational purposes.

While the road conditions and traffic in Dieppe remain among the top issues of concern, the efforts put forth by the municipality have been noticeable in improving the traffic flow in its territory. This said, the residents remain critical of the efforts undertaken to resolve the road maintenance problems. With regards to public transportation, only a small minority of respondents have used the services of Codiac Transpo on a regular basis in 2014. However, the views of the population are divided regarding the current bus system's capacity to meet the needs of residents, regardless of the service's usage throughout the past year. These results demonstrate the importance of implementing a road strategy in order to improve vehicular and pedestrian traffic in the municipality's territory, as well as informing the public of the changes taking place.

Dieppe is generally considered as a municipality that offers a rich artistic and cultural life. Among the activities that took place in 2014 in the town's territory, the Wednesday Show, the Kite Festival and the August 15th celebrations were the most popular with the residents. This said, while the overall attendance at the Winter Carnival and Friday skating and music evenings was lower, these activities are particularly enjoyed by families with children.

The residents seem involved in their community and they feel well informed of the activities taking place, thanks mainly to Dieppe Mag and the Town's website. In fact, the Town's website and social media were frequently accessed by the public in 2014. While residents get involved in the community by taking part in the activities and using the Town's facilities, only a third of them say they have volunteered in the community on at least a few occasions in 2014. In an emergency situation, residents generally prefer to tune in to the radio or go online to keep up to date with the latest developments. Besides, a large majority of the residents have an iPhone and most of them use social media at least a few times a week or more.

The town is still perceived as a provider of quality services that uses an open and accessible approach for the public and as a responsible decision-maker. This being said, the opinion is divided regarding the efforts put forth by the municipality for including its residence in the decision-making process.

Overall, a large minority of residents wish to have the right to vote on municipal projects (especially on budget decisions), to follow the Town's projects online and watch YouTube videos in order to keep up to date regarding municipal decisions. Generally speaking, residents express a preference for electronic communication and consultation methods rather than meeting in person, although these methods reach fewer residents aged 55 or more. Only a quarter of residents have attended at least one council meeting in person, online or via television in 2014.

The population of Dieppe remains predominantly Francophone, young and educated with a high personal income. Close to half of the residents have at least one child at home. On average, the citizens have been Dieppe residents for more than 17 years and the majority of them are currently homeowners. Just over one-third of the residents have made downtown Dieppe their home. The lack of appropriate housing, noise and traffic, and the lack of green spaces are the reasons that explain why the remainder of residents did not choose this neighbourhood as their place of residence.

In conclusion, the findings of the study show that the town of Dieppe largely meets the expectations of its citizens and remains responsive to their needs. This being said, there is an interest in an increased consultation process, which would further improve the transparency of the municipal government among its citizens.