

## Public Opinion Survey

### Setting an Agenda

In September 2008, Community Foundations of Canada commissioned a survey of over 1,000 Canadians to ask them about the issues raised by *Vital Signs* that they would most like to see addressed.

Respondents across the country identified **Health**, the **Gap between Rich and Poor**, the **Economy** and the **Environment** as the issues that are most important to their own quality of life, the life of their communities and the country as a whole.

At the national and community level, perhaps not surprisingly, the Economy was given the highest priority. In terms of individual quality of life, Canadians put a strong priority on Health issues.

Focusing on community level priorities, there was considerable agreement across the various regions of the country with Ontarians putting added emphasis on Economic issues, Quebecers highlighting the Environment and respondents from British Columbia underlining Getting Around, or transportation, as a priority for action.

### Local Priorities

Several community foundations participating in *Vital Signs* conducted similar local surveys.

**Vancouver Foundation** asked metro Vancouver citizens "What is the most important issue facing our region?"

According to nearly half of those surveyed, metro Vancouver's most urgent quality of life issue is transportation. And 19% of citizens said better public transit is their number one issue. Social issues ranked high on the public agenda, cited by 20%, with poverty/homelessness and affordable housing being key concerns.

**The Calgary Foundation** asked the hundreds of Calgarians who graded its citizen survey to identify a key priority within each of its *Vital Signs* issue areas. Here is what they heard:

- Sustainable City - Commute time and distance
- Safety - Domestic violence
- Learning - High school drop out rate
- Arts & Culture - Inadequate art spaces
- Health and Wellness - Access to family physicians
- Work - Cost competitiveness
- Gap Between Rich & Poor - Living on minimum wage
- Getting Started - Immigrant unemployment rate
- Belonging & Leadership - Voter turnout
- Housing - Homelessness

This is a section of *Canada's Vital Signs 2008*

Visit [www.vitalsignscanada.ca](http://www.vitalsignscanada.ca)



- Environment - Recycling rate
- Valuing Diversity - Accessibility for all

**The Sudbury Community Foundation** asked local respondents to agree or disagree with certain statements about their community.

Among the more striking results, less than half agreed that: the community is an affordable place to live, has a strong a viable arts and culture base, offers rewarding career opportunities for young people, has adequate quality health care, or that Sudburians are a tolerant and accepting of Aboriginals in the community.

On the other hand, most agreed that: there is a sense of pride and spirit in the community, the City is welcoming and accepting of new immigrants, there are adequate opportunities for educational advancements and life-long learning, and there are opportunities for entrepreneurs to start up new businesses.

**The Foundation for Greater Montreal** commissioned a public opinion survey to determine how local residents perceive quality of life in the region. The results showed Montrealers are particularly concerned about road safety, the environment and poverty. When asked "What is the single most important issue or problem you would like to see addressed first to improve the quality of life in general in the Greater Montreal Area?", more than half identified four issues: quality of the environment, public transit and integration of immigrant communities.