

THE VANCOUVER SUN

We like our libraries, but not our roads

Firefighters get best marks in poll

By Kelly Sinoski, Vancouver Sun December 6, 2011

Residents of Metro Vancouver's four largest cities are very satisfied with their libraries, community centres and fire services, but aren't as pleased when it comes to public transportation, road maintenance and property taxes, according to a recent survey.

The national poll, by Forum Research, found that on average only one of four Canadians are very satisfied with the municipal services provided by their city.

Residents of Quebec City were significantly more satisfied overall with their municipal services, at 51 per cent, followed by Mississauga (43 per cent), and Burnaby (37 per cent).

Only 22 per cent of Richmond residents were very satisfied with overall municipal services, while 51 per cent were also "somewhat satisfied."

This compares with Vancouver, where 25 per cent were very satisfied, and Surrey (26 per cent).

Burnaby, Vancouver, Surrey and Richmond were the only Metro Vancouver cities included in the poll, which surveyed 12,388 randomly selected residents aged 18 or older of the 30 largest cities in Canada.

"These results show that Canada's largest cities have a great deal to accomplish in order to increase Canadians' satisfaction with municipal services," Forum Research president Lorne Bozinoff said.

"With only a quarter of Canadians happy with their municipal services, and less than one in 10 happy with the amount of taxes and fees paid to support those services, municipal officials are facing an uphill battle."

When it comes to satisfaction with individual municipal services, most residents surveyed in Metro Vancouver appeared to feel the same way as others across the country.

Fire services, public libraries, and ambulance and emergency services were ranked the highest in regards to resident satisfaction (67 per cent, 55 per cent, and 52 per cent were very satisfied respectively), while residents were least satisfied with road maintenance and repair (16 per cent), social services (22 per cent), and snow plowing (23 per cent).

Satisfaction with police services trailed slightly, with just fewer than four of 10 respondents very satisfied with the services provided. Vancouver, with just 28 per cent very satisfied, and Surrey (30 per cent) were among the least satisfied.

Surrey and Vancouver were among the least satisfied with social services. Satisfaction was lowest with residents of Halifax (11 per cent), Winnipeg (12 per cent), and Surrey, Gatineau, Saskatoon, and Regina (15 per cent each) and Vancouver (19 per cent). Those in Quebec City and Sherbrooke were most satisfied (35 per cent).

Only 18 per cent of Surrey residents very satisfied with public transit, followed by Richmond (24 per cent), Vancouver (25 per cent) and Burnaby (30 per cent). However, when it comes to healthy activities, Metro Vancouver residents appear to be more satisfied than others across Canada. Just fewer than four out of 10 Canadians polled were very satisfied with the parks and recreation services provided in their city (39 per cent), compared with 45 per cent in Richmond, Vancouver and Burnaby and Surrey (37 per cent).

About half of Richmond residents were very satisfied with their community centres (49 per cent), followed by Burnaby (43 per cent), Vancouver (38 per cent) and Surrey (34 per cent).

The poll was conducted Nov. 18 to 30. The results are considered accurate within 0.9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

ksinoski@vancouver.sun.com

© Copyright (c) The Vancouver Sun