



**FEDERATION OF
URBAN
NEIGHBOURHOODS
OF ONTARIO**

www.urbanneighbourhoods.ca

An Umbrella Group of
Community Associations
throughout Ontario

*Communities count.
Civic matters.*

*Brampton
Cambridge
Guelph
Hamilton
Kingston
Kitchener
London
Ottawa
Markham
Mississauga
Oakville
Toronto
Vaughn
Waterloo
Sudbury
Windsor
Thunder Bay*

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SURVEY

of

Ontario Neighbourhood Associations

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Section 1: SUMMARY

The Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods of Ontario conducted an online survey of Ontario community associations in early 2011 to determine the primary issues of residents in urban areas.

128 groups, representing 18 of the most populous municipalities in Ontario, responded to the survey.

The top five issues identified by respondents to the survey were:

1. Development
2. Managing Growth
3. Traffic and Transportation
4. Parkland
5. Politicians' Accountability

The Federation intends to distribute the results broadly to all Ontario stakeholders including all levels of government, the media and to community groups province-wide. It intends to lobby governments to develop action plans to ensure that the important issues get the full attention required to generate solutions.

Further details on the process and the results are available in the balance of this report.

Section 2: BACKGROUND

The Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods of Ontario Inc. (F.U.N.) was formed in 2001 as a province-wide volunteer umbrella group of community associations. Its objectives are:

- to promote awareness of issues
- to establish a resource base for sharing of information, contacts, and expertise on neighbourhood issues.
- to represent the common interests of member organizations before the appropriate public and private bodies.
- to encourage citizens' participation in and awareness of community and civic affairs.

To further these objectives, in the fall of 2010, the Federation's Executive decided to conduct an online survey of community groups to determine their views on the most important issues facing the members of their associations.

Section 3: SURVEY DATABASE

Since a comprehensive listing of community groups is not readily available, the Federation compiled a list using its member contacts, municipality listings and general internet searches. The result was a target list of 576 community groups located in 20 of the most populous municipalities in Ontario. See Appendix I - Ontario Community Associations for a geographic breakdown. We do note that the database is not weighted accurately by municipality on a population basis. There is a particular overweight of Ottawa associations. However, the top issues identified do not vary dramatically if the Ottawa overweight is muted.

It is the Federation's intent to publish a Directory of Ontario Neighbourhood Associations as a byproduct of the survey process.

Section 4: SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The Survey was created by the Communications Committee of the Federation's Executive using the SURVEYMONKEY software and reviewed by the Executive. There were questions on the most important issues faced by association members, the challenges of their Executive, experiences they thought would be of interest to others, and the role they saw for the Federation. The Survey also gave them the opportunity to become members of the Federation. The Survey may be viewed by going to:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MLFXMRX>.

Invitations to participate in the Survey were sent via email to the associations in the database. Reminders were sent to those not responding. The survey was active from the end of January 2011 until mid-February 2011.

Section 5: SURVEY REPOSE

128 associations responded to the survey of the 432 for whom valid email addresses were identified. This represents a 29.6% response rate.

Considering that the source for the database is prone to accuracy issues and that the Federation is not well known to many of the potential respondents, the Federation considers this an excellent response rate.

Section 6: SURVEY RESULTS

Question 1. What are the major issues facing the members of your association?

The data below in columns labeled NI, I, VI, MI indicate the number of responses for each of the following choices:

NI: Not important - assigned a rating of 0

I: Important – assigned a rating of 1

VI: Very Important – assigned a rating of 2

MI: Most Important – assigned a rating of 3

RANK	ISSUE	NI 0	I 1	VI 2	MI 3	Average Rating	VI+MI %
1	Development	1	25	44	49	2.18	78%
2	Managing Growth	4	24	46	43	2.09	76%
3	Traffic/Transportation	7	22	53	38	2.02	76%
4	Parkland	4	33	56	25	1.86	69%
5	Politicians`Accountability	7	35	40	30	1.83	63%
6	Environmental Issues	9	39	44	24	1.72	59%
7	Municipal Governance	11	37	41	23	1.68	57%
8	Recreation	9	40	51	18	1.66	58%
9	Community Services	6	54	36	16	1.55	46%
10	OMB	22	39	31	24	1.49	47%
11	Taxes	18	47	34	18	1.44	44%
12	Crime	26	44	35	13	1.30	41%
13	Heritage Protection	25	44	36	11	1.28	41%
14	Education	26	40	30	13	1.28	39%
15	Healthcare	41	32	24	15	1.12	35%
16	Development Charges	33	52	18	8	1.01	23%
17	Municipal Election Reform	45	41	22	6	0.90	25%

Additional issues identified by respondents through comments:

- increasing public awareness and engagement
- managing the development of the Traditional Main Street.
- daycare services
- assure infrastructure before building
- protection of natural areas
- property tax structure
- student housing
- programs for kids and teens
- affordable housing for seniors
- sustainable economic development
- strategic planning and coordination between the various levels of government.

There was some variance of responses by municipality. For a breakdown by municipality refer to Appendix II.

Question 2. Please indicate how important the following challenges are for your Association's Executive.

The data below in columns labeled NI, I, VI, MI indicate the number of responses for each of the following choices:

NI: Not important - assigned a rating of 0

I: Important – assigned a rating of 1

VI: Very Important – assigned a rating of 2

MI: Most Important – assigned a rating of 3

RANK	ISSUE	NI 0	I 1	VI 2	MI 3	Rating	VI+MI %
1	Recruiting volunteers	3	33	51	29	1.91	69%
2	Recruiting new members	9	36	46	28	1.78	62%
3	General apathy to issues	11	36	44	22	1.68	58%
4	Communicating with members	24	31	39	15	1.41	50%
5	Renewal of members	27	30	47	12	1.38	51%
6	Understanding complex issues	14	53	34	10	1.36	40%
7	Access to/support of local councilors	35	35	28	15	1.20	38%
8	Administrative	33	52	25	5	1.02	26%

Question 3. How do you think F.U.N. can best help your Association?

The data below in columns labeled NI, I, VI, MI indicate the number of responses for each of the following choices:

NI: Not important - assigned a rating of 0

I: Important – assigned a rating of 1

VI: Very Important – assigned a rating of 2

MI: Most Important – assigned a rating of 3

RANK	ISSUE	NI 0	I 1	VI 2	MI 3	Rating
1	Providing clout on issues	3	37	49	28	1.87
2	Lobbying provincial government	7	38	39	35	1.86
3	Providing research on complex issues	5	40	48	26	1.80
4	Sharing of ideas amongs assoc.	5	41	49	26	1.79

Question 4. If your organization has some experiences that might be of interest to others please check the appropriate item(s) below and share any details in the box provided below. Or use the space to give us any background information on your group.

EXPERIENCE	# of RESPONSES
a successful membership drive	2
a popular social event	15
a local battle with a positive result	23
an interesting speaker or topic	5
a useful member survey	1
administrative work (constitution, bylaws, code of ethics, etc..)	3
website development	12
Comments	39

F.U.N. intends to share experiences of the respondents through its regular Member News communications which will be posted on the F.U.N. website:

www.urbanneighbourhoods.ca

Question 5. Please give us some feedback on the F.U.N. organization?

ITEM	# of RESPONSES
I know little or nothing about it.	61
I think it could be of great help.	26
I think it is a waste of time.	0
I want to be a member (see below).	3
I am willing to help out as a volunteer.	2
I would like to know more.	27
COMMENTS	19

The Survey has permitted F.U.N. to increase its awareness and its membership province-wide. It will be continuing to work on programs to further increase its presence.

SECTION 7 FOLLOW-UP

The F.U.N. Executive has identified the following action items with regard to the Survey:

1. Distribute this report to various stakeholders: Survey respondents, F.U.N. members, all Ontario neighbourhood associations, Ontario Government Ministries, MPPs, media
2. At its AGM in Sudbury on May 7, 2011, F.U.N. will be co-sponsoring an “Organize to Win” workshop using the survey results as input. From this workshop, F.U.N. and participating associations hope to identify specific actions that will bring further attention to the issues of greatest concern to Ontario residents.

If you wish further information or have any feedback please contact either:

Archie Campbell, F.U.N. President: president@urbanneighbourhoods.ca

Harry Eagleshm, F.U.N. Survey Administrator: membership@urbanneighbourhoods.ca

APPENDIX I

Ontario Neighbourhood Associations

MUNICIPALITY	POPULATION (2006 Census)	Associations Identified by F.U.N.	Associations Invited by Survey	Associations responding to Survey
Toronto	2,503,281	58	58	29
Ottawa	812,129	163	108	31
Mississauga	668,549	29	29	4
Hamilton	504,559	47	47	9
Brampton	433,806	1	1	1
London	352,395	25	25	9
Markham	261,573	46	46	10
Vaughan	238,866	5	1	1
Windsor	216,473	3	1	1
Kitchener	204,668	31	11	3
Oakville	165,613	21	21	6
Burlington	164,415	1		
Richmond Hill	162,704	8	5	
Sudbury	157,857	45	45	9
Oshawa	141,590	20	16	
St. Catharines	131,989			
Barrie	128,430	3	3	1
Cambridge	120,371	17	14	4
Kingston	117,207	9	8	4
Guelph	114,943	13	11	1
Whitby	111,184	3		
Thunder Bay	109,140	1	1	1
Chatam-Kent	108,177			
Waterloo	97,475	27	25	4
TOTAL		576	476	128

Appendix II Issues by Municipality

The table below shows the Survey results for Question 1 (most important issues) by municipality. We are only showing results for municipalities that had at least 6 associations responding and only identifying the TOP 5 issues for each. Note “T” indicates a tie.

ISSUE	Overall	Hamilton	London	Markham	Oakville	Ottawa	Toronto	Sudbury
Development	1	2T	3	4	2	1	1	5
Managing Growth	2	2T	4	1	1	2	3	
Traffic/Transportation	3	2T		2T	3	3T	2	
Parkland	4	1	2		4	3T		2
Politician`Accountability	5			2T			5	
Environmental Issues	6		1		5			
Municipal Governance	7		5	5		5		
Recreation	8	5						1
Community Services	9							
OMB	10						4	
Taxes	11							
Crime	12							3T
Heritage Protection	13							
Education	14							3T
Healthcare	15							
Development Charges	16							
Municipal Election Reform	17							