



2 0 1 2 C I T I Z E N
SURVEY

HRM Council working with citizens to build strong,
healthy, safe and vibrant neighbourhoods.



Halifax Regional Municipality

2012 CITIZEN SURVEY

Thank you for taking this survey to help guide Halifax Regional Municipality administrators in their long-term planning.

This survey should take about 20 minutes to complete, and for your cooperation in completing all questions in the survey, you will receive a chance to win one of 40 gift cards from your choice of Empire Theatres or Sobey's, each valued at \$25.

All responses to this survey will be kept confidential and results will only be reported in aggregate. Your identity will not be associated with any responses you provide. You can view our privacy policy at http://www.novainsights.ca/Privacy_Policy.php

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact:

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Nova Insights
Telephone: 1-8888-888-8888

QUALITY OF LIFE

Q1. How many years have you lived in the HRM? _____
(Please include years prior to amalgamation)

Q2. How would you rate the overall quality of life in HRM?

Please check only one

- Very Poor
 - Poor
 - Good
 - Very Good
-

Q3. In the past five years, the quality of life in HRM has ...

Please check only one

- Improved
 - Worsened
 - Stayed the same
-

Q4. If HRM could do 3 things to improve the quality of life for residents, what would they be?

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Please provide your PASSCODE (found on letter from the Mayor):

PASSCODE: _____

Q5. When it comes to Municipal decision-making, do you believe you have ...

Please check only one

- Sufficient opportunities to participate
- Too many opportunities to participate
- Too few opportunities to participate

Q6. What could HRM do to help you become more involved in Municipal decision-making?

Q7. The HRM is able to pursue various initiatives simultaneously. However, funds and other resources are limited. For that reason, it would be valuable to understand the broad priorities of citizens. Please rank the following broad initiatives to reflect the priority with which you believe resources should be allocated in the HRM. A “1” represents your top priority, and a “4” represents your lowest priority.

- ___ Community development through a focus on arts, culture, and recreational services
- ___ Economic development through attracting investment and keeping and growing business in the Municipality
- ___ Environmental progress through investment in greener technologies and initiatives
- ___ Transportation improvements through investments in public transit, active transportation, and street, road, and sidewalk work

VALUE FOR TAXES

Q8. The Municipality provides a wide range of services, including police and fire protection, garbage collection and disposal, recreation facilities and programming, transit, road and street maintenance, etc.

Thinking about all the programs and services you receive from the Municipality, please indicate the degree to which you believe you receive good or poor value for the level of property taxes that you currently pay?

Please check only one

- Very poor value
 - Somewhat poor value
 - Somewhat good value
 - Very good value
 - No opinion
 - Don't pay property taxes
-

Q9. What specific change(s) could be made to provide better value for the property tax you pay?

Q10. When the Municipality is creating the municipal budget, do you think it is more important to not increase property taxes or keep municipal services the same or higher?

Please check only one

- Not increase property taxes
- Keep municipal services the same or higher

Q11. Please consider each of the following possible changes to tax and service levels in HRM, and check all that would be acceptable to you?

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

- Small increase in taxes for a small improvement / increase in service levels
- Moderate increase in taxes for a moderate improvement / increase in service levels
- Large increase in taxes for a large improvement / increase in service levels
- Small decrease in taxes for a small decrease in service levels
- Moderate decrease in taxes for a moderate decrease in service levels
- Large decrease in taxes for a large decrease in service levels
- Same taxes with same level of Municipal services
- Same taxes but shift funds between services
- No opinion

Q12. In an effort to reduce reliance on landfill capacity, HRM must consider ways to reduce the amount of waste going into the landfill. Of the following options, which would you be most likely to support?

Please check only one

- Bag limits (maximum number of black bags per household per pick-up)
- User pay (fee charged based on the number of black bags picked up)
- Diversion “incentives” (rebates for green bin and black bin use)
- A combination of Bag Limits and User Pay
- A combination of User Pay and Diversion “incentives”
- A combination of Bag Limits and Diversion “incentives”
- A combination of all three

THE ECONOMY

Q13. In your opinion, who should be responsible for promoting and attracting new commercial businesses and industries to the HRM?

Please check only one

- Government (HRM/Province/Federal)
- Private Sector (business groups/property owners/developers)
- Both Government and Private sector in partnership

IF YOU CHECKED “GOVERNMENT OR BOTH GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR ABOVE”

Q14. What level of government do you believe should have primary responsibility for attracting new commercial businesses and industries to the HRM?

Please check only one

- HRM
- Province
- Federal

Q15. If you were given the choice of where to focus spending over the next five (5) years to improve ECONOMIC PROSPERITY in the HRM, what would be your TOP THREE priorities?

**Please place a
1 beside your top priority,
2 beside your second highest priority, and
3 beside your third highest priority**

- Change in tax structure
- Improvements in the appearance / beautification of the Municipality
- Improvements to HRM's roadway system / road conditions
- Increased cleanliness of the Municipality (graffiti removal, vandalism, etc.)
- Increased efforts to attract immigrants / new residents
- Increased efforts to attract and retain young workers/professionals
- Increased marketing of HRM as a destination of choice for business
- Increased public safety
- Increased emphasis on major events (concerts, sporting events, etc.)
- Investments in environmental protection and sustainability
- Investments in public transit system
- More emphasis on arts and culture
- More emphasis on downtown growth
- More emphasis on 'rural' growth
- More emphasis on recreation facilities
- More emphasis on recreation programs
- Nothing
- No Opinion
- Other (please specify): _____

INFRASTRUCTURE

Q16. The Municipality spends a portion of its yearly budget on buildings, facilities, and infrastructure to meet both growth requirements and community expectations.

For each category, please rank your TOP THREE (3) projects in order of their importance to you.

Q16a. We will start with transportation infrastructure projects. Please rank the top three projects that you would like to see the Municipality pursue over the next 5 years.

Please place a
1 beside your top priority,
2 beside your second highest priority, and
3 beside your third highest priority

Transportation Infrastructure Projects

- Active transportation improvements (e.g. trails, sidewalks, bike lanes)
- Expand the harbour ferry service
- Improved / additional public transit facilities
- Maintenance of existing sidewalks
- Maintain existing streets and roads
- More buses on existing routes
- More buses so that service can be expanded to new areas
- Upgrade major roadways to provide increased capacity (e.g. road widening, reversing lanes)
- Other (please specify): _____

Q16b. Now let's consider community infrastructure projects. Please rank the top three projects that you would like to see the Municipality pursue over the next 5 years

**Please place a
1 beside your top priority,
2 beside your second highest priority, and
3 beside your third highest priority**

Community Infrastructure Projects

- Public restrooms
- Arenas / ice surfaces
- Arts and cultural facilities
- Beaches and waterfront areas
- Community centres
- Improving existing recreation facilities
- New outdoor recreation facilities (e.g. playgrounds / skate parks / sports fields)
- New / refurbished community branch libraries
- Outdoor skating facilities
- New stadium
- Other (please specify): _____

Q16c. Finally, let's consider **environmental infrastructure projects**. Please rank the top three projects that you would like to see the Municipality pursue over the next 5 years.

**Please place a
1 beside your top priority,
2 beside your second highest priority, and
3 beside your third highest priority**

Environmental Infrastructure Projects

- __ Build landfill cells (garbage waste site)
- __ Develop capability to reduce waste program costs and flexibility in waste program to reduce the demand for additional land fill cells.
- __ Invest in expanding recycling infrastructure
- __ New compost plant to meet capacity and regulatory requirements
- __ Renewable energy projects (e.g. wind farms / solar power / etc.)
- __ Water / Wastewater facilities
- __ Other (please specify): _____

Q17. Now, given all of the choices listed in Question 16, what would you consider your TOP 3 priorities for the Municipality when it comes to capital projects?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Q18. If forced to choose, which of the following would you rather see the HRM focus on, with respect to spending on facilities, assets, and infrastructure:

Please check only one

- Invest a greater proportion toward new facilities, assets, and infrastructure
- Invest a greater proportion toward fixing and maintaining the existing facilities, assets, and infrastructure

PLANNING AND GROWTH

Q19. What can HRM do to make the downtown more attractive for residents and businesses?

Q20. As the Halifax Regional Municipality continues to grow, traffic congestion is expected to increase. To help mitigate this problem, what priority would you assign to each of the following strategies? Please indicate for each strategy whether you would consider it a very low priority, somewhat low priority, somewhat high priority, or very high priority.

Please place an X in the cell to indicate your response

		Very low priority	Somewhat low priority	Somewhat high priority	Very high priority
A	Add vehicle lanes on congested roads				
B	Create more reversing lanes on major routes				
C	Encourage residents to consider sustainability when making their choices				
D	Establish tolls into downtown to encourage commuters to use public transit				
E	Improve bike lane network				
F	Improve public transit system				
G	Increase population density in city centres to reduce amount of driving required to commute and access services				
H	Install high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) lanes				
I	Invest in commuter rail if feasible				
J	Do nothing				
K	Other (please specify)				

Q21. “Quality of place” describes how livable and functional a neighbourhood is, and includes the variety and accessibility of natural, recreational, and lifestyle amenities.

In looking at the following Quality of Place indicators, please indicate the level of importance each would have for you **if you were moving to a new neighbourhood**.

On a 5-point scale, rate the **overall importance to you** of this indicator.

Please circle a number
Importance
1 = Very Unimportant
5 = Very Important

About your Neighbourhood

A	The look and feel of your street (is it a nice place to be?)	1	2	3	4	5
B	Presence of trees and greenery in your neighbourhood	1	2	3	4	5
C	How much traffic is on the street	1	2	3	4	5
D	Your streets friendliness to walking and biking	1	2	3	4	5
E	How safe your neighbourhood feels	1	2	3	4	5
F	Sense of community (knowing your neighbours)	1	2	3	4	5
About your home						
G	Affordability of housing options	1	2	3	4	5
H	Ability to work out of your home	1	2	3	4	5
I	Ability to have a rental unit in your home to lower mortgage costs	1	2	3	4	5
J	Quality of the design and construction of area homes and structures	1	2	3	4	5
About where your home is located						
K	Proximity to schools	1	2	3	4	5
L	Proximity to your place of work	1	2	3	4	5
M	Proximity to recreational facilities	1	2	3	4	5
N	Proximity to commercial / retail resources	1	2	3	4	5
O	Proximity to transit	1	2	3	4	5
P	Proximity to bike paths and walking trails	1	2	3	4	5

Q22. Now looking at these “Quality of Place” indicators again, please indicate your level of satisfaction with each in the neighbourhood where you **currently live**.

On a 5-point scale, rate your **overall satisfaction** with each indicator.

Satisfaction 1 = Very Dissatisfied 5 = Very Satisfied
--

About your Neighbourhood

A	The look and feel of your street (is it a nice place to be?)	1	2	3	4	5
B	Presence of trees and greenery in your neighbourhood	1	2	3	4	5
C	How much traffic is on the street	1	2	3	4	5
D	Your streets friendliness to walking and biking	1	2	3	4	5
E	How safe your neighbourhood feels	1	2	3	4	5
F	Sense of community (knowing your neighbours)	1	2	3	4	5

About your home

G	Affordability of housing options	1	2	3	4	5
H	Ability to work out of your home	1	2	3	4	5
I	Ability to have a rental unit in your home to lower mortgage costs	1	2	3	4	5
J	Quality of the design and construction of area homes and structures	1	2	3	4	5

About where your home is located

K	Proximity to schools	1	2	3	4	5
L	Proximity to your place of work	1	2	3	4	5
M	Proximity to recreational facilities	1	2	3	4	5
N	Proximity to commercial / retail resources	1	2	3	4	5
O	Proximity to transit	1	2	3	4	5
P	Proximity to bike paths and walking trails	1	2	3	4	5

Q23. The cost of delivering municipal services is rising, and even the cost of *maintaining* some service levels is increasing. Maintaining or increasing some service levels without additional revenues may require reducing or eliminating other services. For each of the following service areas, please indicate whether you believe the Municipality should increase the level of service, maintain the level of service, reduce the level of service, or eliminate the service.

Please place an X in the cell to indicate your response

Service Area		Increase service levels (+\$\$)	Maintain service levels (+\$)	Reduce service levels (-\$)	Eliminate this service (-\$\$)
A	Animal control services				
B	Arts and cultural programming				
C	Bike path / walking trails maintenance				
D	By-law enforcement				
E	Cleanliness and litter control				
F	Communications / Public affairs				
G	Community beautification (e.g. landscaping / floral displays)				
H	Community branch libraries				
I	Community grants				
J	Composting (green bin) programs (increased pick up)				
K	Economic development				
L	Environmental protection and management				
M	Festivals and community events				

Service Area		Increase service levels (+\$\$)	Maintain service levels (+\$)	Reduce service levels (-\$)	Eliminate this service (-\$\$)
N	Firefighting services				
O	Garbage collection				
P	Graffiti removal				
Q	Harbour Ferry service				
R	Major street improvement projects (e.g. reconstruction / traffic safety measures)				
S	Ongoing regular parks maintenance				
T	Park / playground maintenance				
U	Parking enforcement				
V	Police protection and patrols				
W	Processing garbage before going to land-fill				
X	Public transit service				
Y	Publicly supervised beaches				
Z	Recreation programs				
AA	Recycling programs				
BB	School crossing guards				
CC	Sidewalk maintenance				
DD	Snow and ice removal				
EE	Youth drop-in services				

LIFESTYLE OPPORTUNITIES

Q24. In the past 12 months, approximately how often did you participate in each of the following activities?

Please place an X in the cell to indicate your response

		Once or twice per year	Once every 2 to 3 months	At least once per month	At least once per week	Never
A	Swam at a local beach					
B	Used one of HRM's trails, walkways or pathways for leisure					
C	Went for a bicycle ride					
D	Went for a walk or run in a major park (Shubie, Point Pleasant, Halifax Public Gardens)					
E	Visited a local playground					
F	Skated at the Oval					
G	Skated on a lake or pond					
H	Visited a local skate park / bike park					
I	Visited an outdoor gym					
J	Participated in a community garden					

Q25. Now for each of these same activities, please indicate any possible reason(s) why you do not participate more often.

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

		None within reasonable distance from home	No transit service to get me there	Concerned about safety	Quality of facilities not acceptable	Not accessible (not disabled-friendly)	Not of interest to me	Not applicable I did participate
A	Swam at a local beach							
B	Used one of HRM's trails, walkways or pathways for leisure							
C	Went for a bicycle ride							
D	Went for a walk or run in a major park							
E	Visited a local playground							
F	Skated at the Oval							
G	Skated on a lake or pond							
H	Visited a local skate park / bike park							
I	Visited an outdoor gym							
J	Participated in a community garden							

PUBLIC SAFETY

Q26. How satisfied are you with the peace and order in your local neighbourhood?

Please check only one

- Completely satisfied
 - Mostly satisfied
 - Mostly dissatisfied
 - Completely Dissatisfied
-

Q27. In general, how safe do you feel in the community where you live? Do you feel:

Please check only one

- Completely safe
 - Very safe
 - Not very safe
 - Not at all safe
-

Q28. How safe do you feel in the local areas you go for shopping, recreation, and work?

Please check only one

- Completely safe
 - Very safe
 - Not very safe
 - Not at all safe
-

Q29. Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality of policing provided in your community?

Please check only one

- Completely satisfied
 - Mostly satisfied
 - Mostly dissatisfied
 - Completely Dissatisfied
-

Q30. Overall, how satisfied are you with the police visibility or presence in your community?

Please check only one

- Completely satisfied
 - Mostly satisfied
 - Mostly dissatisfied
 - Completely Dissatisfied
-

Q31. How confident are you in the ability of the police to respond to emergency calls in a timely and efficient manner?

Please check only one

- Completely confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not very confident
- Not at all confident

COMMUNICATION

Q32. We'd now like to understand where you get the majority of information about HRM (not including entertainment).

Please rank each of the following sources of information where 1 represents the most important source of information to you, 2 is the next most important, etc. Please enter a 0 if you do not use that source.

- __ Newspapers
- __ News/talk radio
- __ Traditional network television news
- __ Cable news channels on television
- __ Blogs online
- __ Newspaper sites on the internet
- __ News aggregators online that gather headlines from various sources
- __ Social networking services (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Google+)
- __ Other (please specify): _____

Q33. What is your most common source of information on what's happening in HRM?
Please be specific about station, paper, internet site/service)

Q34. What aspects of the Municipality would you like more information about?
(Please check all that apply)

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure projects | <input type="checkbox"/> Public transit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Culture | <input type="checkbox"/> Employment / volunteer opportunities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mayor and Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Budget / financial / taxes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Events and festivals | <input type="checkbox"/> Community safety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation services | <input type="checkbox"/> Public consultations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grant / funding information | <input type="checkbox"/> Resources to improve your neighbourhood |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recycling / garbage collection | |

Q35. Would you want the ability to receive email notifications from the Municipality on topics of interest to you?

Please check only one

- Yes
 - No
-

Q36. Would you use social networking sites to communicate with the Municipality about topics of interest to you?

Please check only one

- Yes
 - No
-

Q37. What social networking services do you use?

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

- Facebook
- Google +
- YouTube
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Other: *(specify)*
- None

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

Q38. What do you like most about living in HRM?

Q39. In your opinion, what are the top three issues facing the HRM over the next 5 years that you feel should receive the greatest attention from your Municipal leaders?

1.

2.

3.

Q40. Are there any additional things you can think of that have not been addressed in the survey that you think HRM should consider when attempting to balance the expectations of residents with the need to deliver critical programs and services?

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Our last questions are about you and your household. As a reminder, your response to this survey is anonymous, and the results of the survey will be reported in aggregate only.

Q41. What are the first 3 digits of your postal code? _____

Q42. Are you female or male?

- Male
 - Female
-

Q43. How old are you?

- 18 – 24 years old
 - 25 – 34 years old
 - 35 – 44 years old
 - 45 – 54 years old
 - 55 – 64 years old
 - 65 – 75 years old
 - Older than 75 years
-

Q44. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Less than high school graduate
- High school graduate
- Some community college / technical school
- Completed community college / technical school
- Some university
- Four-year university degree
- Post-graduate

Q45. What was your 2011 total household income, before taxes?

Your best estimate is fine.

- Under \$25,000
 - \$25,000 - \$49,999
 - \$50,000 - \$74,999
 - \$75,000 – \$99,999
 - \$100,000 - \$124,999
 - \$125,000 - \$149,999
 - Over \$150,000
-

Q46. Do you own or rent your home?

- Own home with mortgage
 - Own home without mortgage
 - Live in parent(s) home
 - Rent
-

***IF YOU OWN YOUR OWN HOME WITH OR WITHOUT MORTGAGE**

Q47. For how much was your most recent annual property tax bill?

- Under \$1,000
- Between \$1,000 and \$1,500
- Between \$1,500 and \$2,000
- Between \$2,000 and \$3,000
- Between \$3,000 and \$4,000
- Over \$4,000
- Don't Know
- Prefer not to answer

COMMENTS OR FEEDBACK

Is there something missing from the survey that you would like to see addressed in the future, or is there any feedback that you would like to provide the Municipality?

PRIZE DRAW:

Please enter your contact information to be eligible to win one of 40 gift cards to your choice of Empire Theatres *or* Sobeys's, each valued at \$25.

To be eligible for the contest, you must answer all of the questions on the survey.

Name: _____

Tel. #: _____

Address: _____

THANK YOU

Thank you very much for your participation. Your time and effort is appreciated, and we will take every effort to ensure that your input is reflected in the decision-making efforts for the Municipality.

Results will be presented to Council once analyzed, and a full report on the results will be available on HRM's website.

<http://www.halifax.ca/citizensurvey>

In accordance with Section 485 of the Municipal Government Act, any personal information collected on this survey will only be used for purposes relating to the 2012 HRM Citizen Survey and for prize selection. The information obtained through the survey will not be presented or compiled in a manner that could potentially identify any respondent. If you have any questions about the collection and use of this information, please contact HRM's Access and Privacy Office at 490-4390 or accessandprivacy@halifax.ca

Thank you very much for taking the time to provide your opinions and feedback.

