

2010 *citizen*  
**SURVEY**

February 2010  
**Key Findings**



**HALIFAX**  
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY



 **THINKWELL**  
RESEARCH  
A member of The Nanus Research Group.

# Methodology

## Survey Specifications:

- Online, mail, and telephone-based survey (respondent option)
- Scope: Randomly selected representative sample of HRM residents
- Survey conducted between December 30<sup>th</sup> 2009 and February 7, 2010.

## Survey Specifications:

- Sample size: 2,420
- Margin of error  $\pm 2\%$ , 19 times out of 20
- 23,400 random households received request to complete survey

## Completion Results:

- 88% of responses were completed online. 10% via mail survey. 2% phone
- Completion rate was 10.3%

## Rating scales

1    2    3    4    5  
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Disagree

Agree

## Gap Analysis

Average importance rating

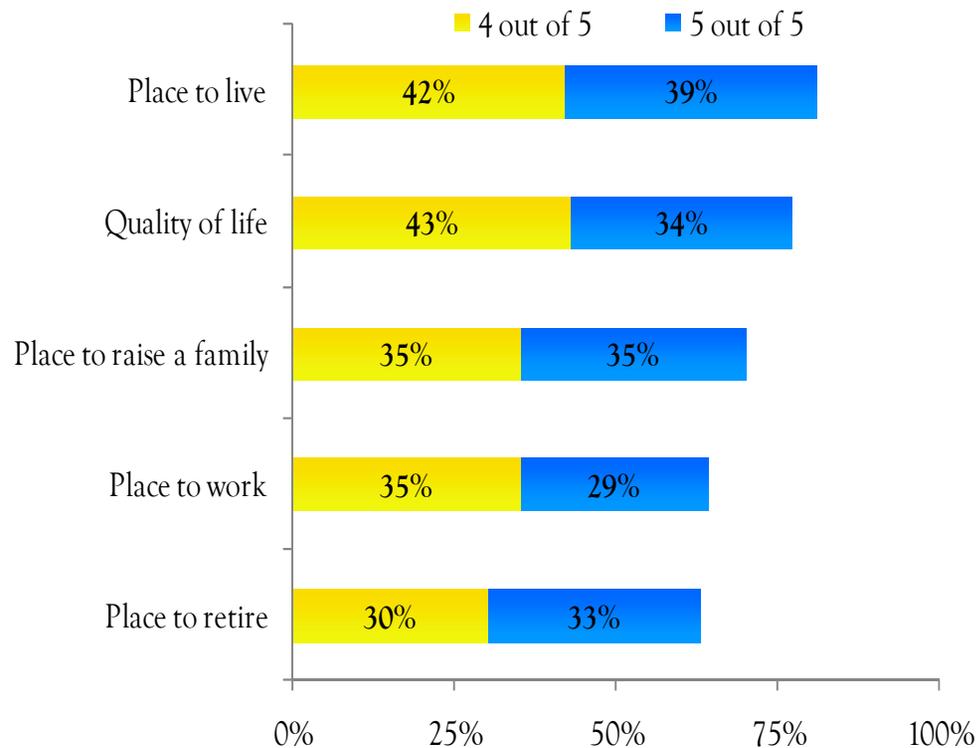
- Average satisfaction rating

= Gap score

# Key Themes

## People like the HRM

Characteristics of life in HRM - Good (4) or Very Good (5)



## People like the HRM

### Community engagement

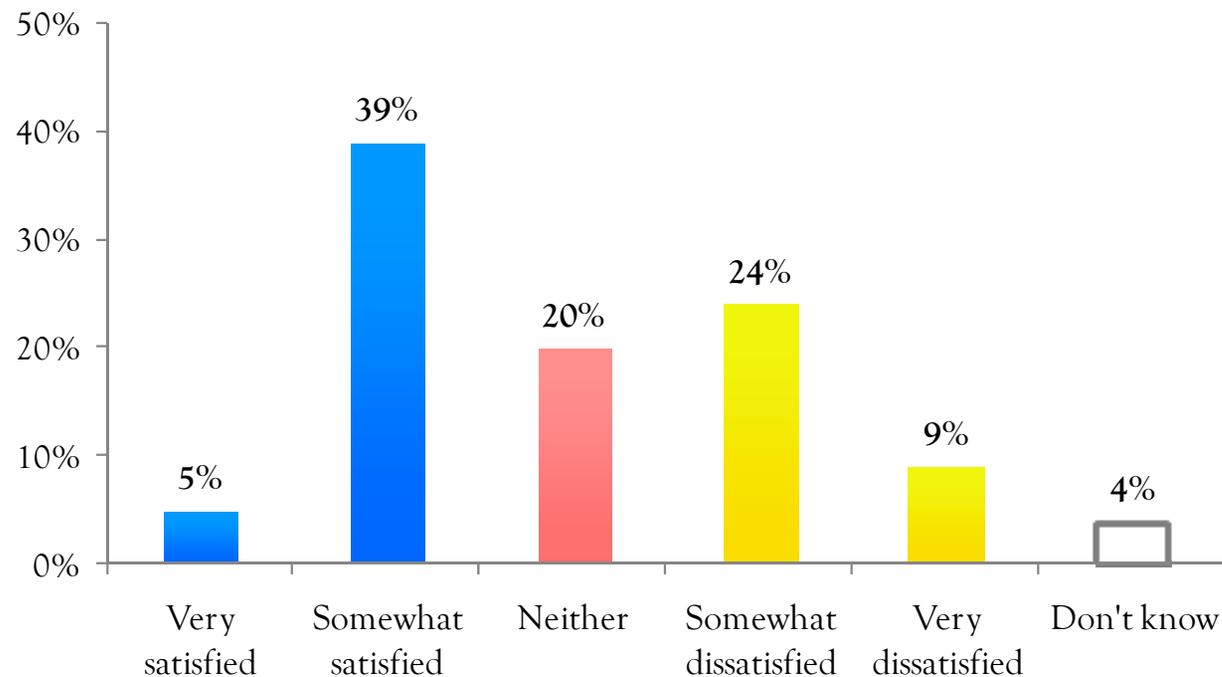
- 90% like the neighbourhood where they live
- 82% feel they belong here
- 75% believe that if they had an emergency, even those they did not know in their community would be willing to help

## People like the HRM

### Community engagement

- 73% believe their community accepts diverse cultures
- 73% believe there are always a variety of things to do in HRM
- 72% know their neighbours

## Generally content with Municipal government More satisfied than dissatisfied with the overall direction of government



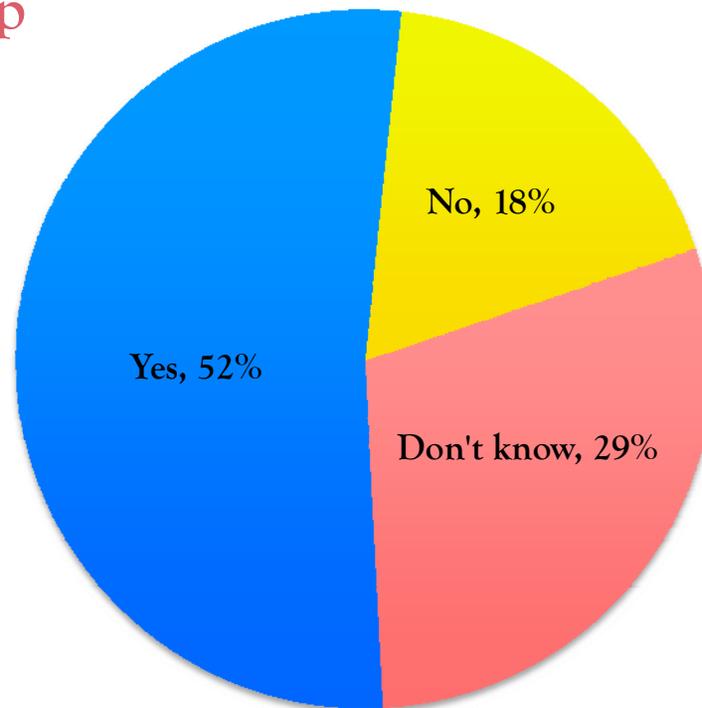
## Generally content with Municipal government

More satisfied than dissatisfied with the overall direction of government

Satisfied	44%
<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>33%</u>
NET	+11%

## Generally content with structure of Municipal government

Majority feel well represented by current council and community council makeup



## Citizen concerns of note

- 24% believe council is demonstrating effective leadership, 34% disagree
- 25% believe council successfully deals with important issues in HRM, 30% disagree
- 45% believe their voices are *not valued* or reflected in decision making, 18% believe they are

## Concern about public communications

Three lowest rankings in perceived effectiveness in communicating with the public

1. HRM's public consultations on HRM initiatives
2. Information on how to engage in community life in HRM
3. The communication efforts of the municipality

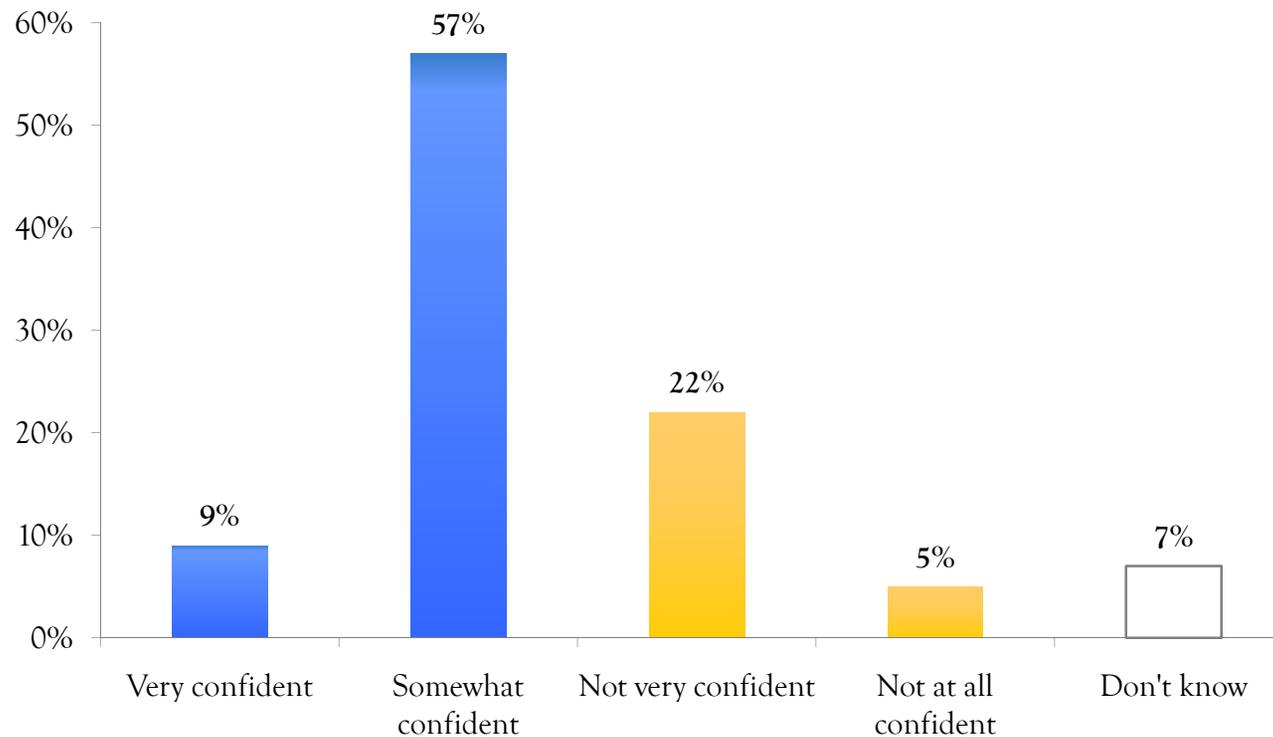
## Concern about public communications

### Gap Analysis (Importance v. Satisfaction)

- a. Communication regarding crime / criminal activity (1.1)
- b. Public consultation on planning issues (1.0)
- c. Public consultation on community issues (1.0)

## Cautiously optimistic about HRM's economic future

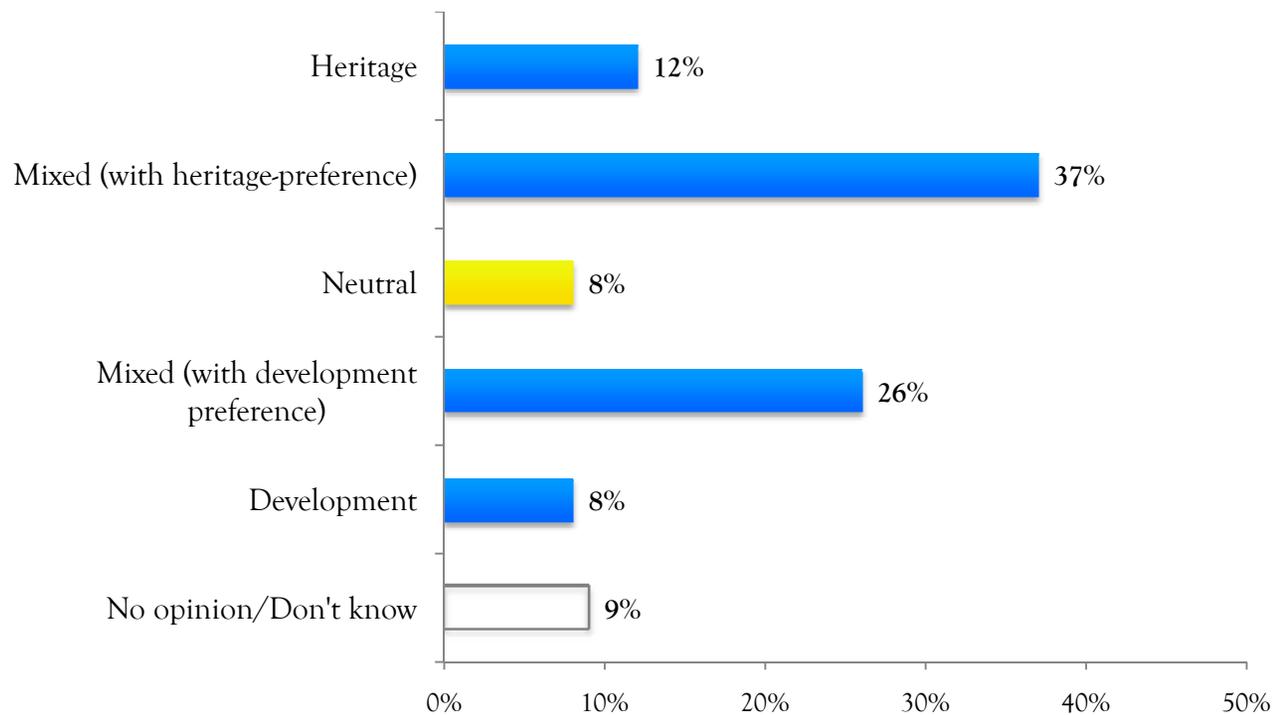
### Economic confidence



## Satisfaction with efforts to ensure economic prosperity

- 58% satisfied with efforts to attract major events, 13% dissatisfied
- 49% satisfied with efforts to attract tourism/visitors, 15% dissatisfied
- 24% satisfied with efforts to attract business, 20% dissatisfied
- 19% satisfied with efforts to attract immigrants, 17% dissatisfied
- 18% satisfied with efforts to attract young professionals, 25% dissatisfied

## Cautious approach to new development Heritage v. Development



## Cautious approach to new development

Improvements and upgrades preferred over new development

- Capital project priorities (Top 3)

Improve conditions of streets / roads	53%
Improve / upgrade / expand sewer / water infrastructure	31%
Upgrade major roadways to provide increased capacity	31%
Active transportation improvements	26%
Construction of new sidewalks / upgrades to existing	12%
Improve existing recreation facilities	12%
New indoor recreation facilities	10%
New Convention Centre	9%
New Metro Centre	9%
New outdoor recreation facilities	8%

# The Big Five

# The Big Five



## Roads

- Improved condition of streets / roads is the top capital project priority among residents (53% mention as top 3 priority)
- Improvements to HRM's roadway system / road conditions top priority to improve economic prosperity (51% mention as top 3 priority)
- Seen as 4<sup>th</sup> biggest issue facing HRM over next 5 years

## Roads

- Gap analysis (Importance v. Satisfaction)
  - a. Timely pothole repairs (2.1)
  - b. Maintenance of streets and roads (1.9)
  - c. Overall pavement condition (1.6)
  - d. Snow and ice control / removal (1.3)

## Transportation

- Improved public transportation seen as top issue facing HRM over the next 5 years
- Better public transportation seen as top reason leading to perceived *improved* quality of life
- Traffic congestion seen as 3<sup>rd</sup> most common reason leading to a perceived *worsened* quality of life
- Traffic congestion seen as 5<sup>th</sup> biggest issue facing the HRM over the next 5 years

## Transportation

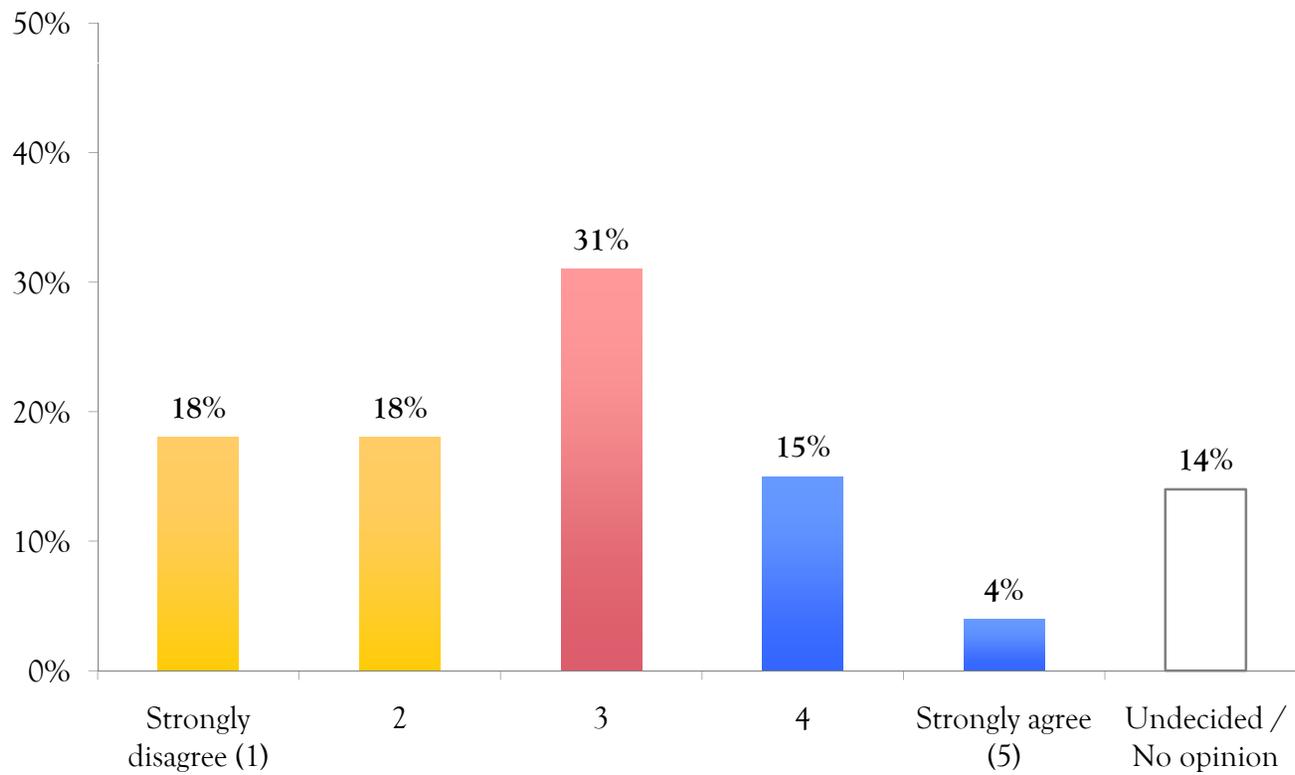
- Gap analysis (Importance v. Satisfaction)
  - a. Ease of finding parking downtown (2.0)
  - b. Parking availability (1.5)
  - c. Managing rush hour traffic (1.3)
  - d. Bus route coverage (1.1)
  - e. Bus services to rural areas (1.1)
  - f. Transit service frequency (1.0)
  - g. Active transportation routes (1.0)

## Taxes

- Seen as 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest issue facing HRM over the next 5 years
- 2<sup>nd</sup> most common reason leading to a perceived *worsened* quality of life (Higher taxes / property taxes)

## Taxes

- Perceptions of receiving good value for tax dollars



## Taxes

- Unsupportive of significant change in rates

Same taxes / shift funds between services	32%
Same taxes / same services	13%
Small increase taxes / small improvement in services	11%
Moderate increase taxes / moderate improvement in services	7%
Large increase taxes / large improvement in services	1%
Small decrease taxes / small decrease in services	5%
Moderate decrease taxes / moderate decrease in services	3%
Large decrease taxes / large decrease in services	3%
Don't know / no opinion	25%

## Crime

- Perceived single biggest reason quality of life has *worsened* in HRM (Crime/violence/feel unsafe, 53%)
- Seen as 3<sup>rd</sup> biggest issue facing HRM during the next 5 years
- Gap analysis (Importance v. Satisfaction)
  - a. Communication regarding crime/criminal activity (1.1)
  - b. Drop-in centres for at risk youth (1.1)
  - c. Community policing (1.0)

## Harbour Cleanup

- Harbour cleanup is the top environmental protection priority
- 75% believe the quality of the harbour water is poor – lowest rating among environmental areas
- Gap analysis (Importance v. Satisfaction)
  - a. Wastewater treatment (2.1)

# Final Comments

“I commend you on requesting this survey and look forward to the results and actions that will result from it. I am an optimist, but also a realist. Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinions”

“Thanks for the opportunity to do the survey, these kinds of things are very important to me and I’m glad I had a chance to participate.”

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