



Majority of Caledon residents support municipal growth plan

85% of respondents questioned believe municipal officials should resist development pressures

(Caledon, Ontario, July 8, 2008) The findings of a public opinion poll released today by the Caledon Countryside Alliance (CCA) confirm environmental issues remain a high priority for residents of Caledon. The research was conducted by Oraclepoll Research between June 13th and 19th, 2008 and was commissioned to evaluate residents' current environmental attitudes and practices. This polling data is consistent with a similar study done in 2004.

"The survey results re-confirm our understanding of Caledon residents," says Karen Hutchinson, CCA's Executive Director. "With Caledon's natural and cultural heritage, we have a head-start when it comes to environmentally friendly attitudes, but we also have a lot of hard working people who really care about what happens in the world."

There was overwhelming support for maintaining the size of Caledon and for preventing it from being overdeveloped. When residents were asked "do you want Caledon to remain a small town of 100,000 people?" 87.4% of respondents indicated that they wished Caledon remain a small town. The support was consistent across all five wards, ranging from a low of 84.1% in Ward 5 to a high of 93.5% of residents in Ward 3.

When asked if they thought "municipal officials should resist development pressures and keep Caledon a small town," average support across all wards was 85%. The lowest support was 80.3% in Ward 5.

Similarly, 46% residents polled indicated that they considered development and sprawl as the greatest environmental threat to the countryside around Caledon.

Interest in ground water protection continued to be a high priority for a near majority of those questioned (97%).

Ensuring clean air (97%), supporting action on climate change and limiting greenhouse gases (82%) as well as providing green energy (87%) were all listed as important by respondents. Support for an idling by-law - particularly in school zones climbed 72% (up from 62% in 2004).

Caledon was the first municipality in the GTA to pass a pesticide by-law which came into effect on May 1, 2004 and the decision was endorsed in the poll results. Usage of cosmetic pesticides declined from 44% in 2000 to 37% in 2004 and now 28% in 2008 (2000 data from a previous Oraclepoll survey).

The results of the poll illustrate the residents' support for Caledon's planning policies and municipal officials' current direction on growth and development. Countryside support remains strong and residents recognize the role of agriculture in the town as an important contributor to the town as 93% believe it is important to have a strong and vibrant agricultural community.

"As a community, Caledon residents are some of the most environmentally aware and engaged citizens in Canada," observed Dr. Paul Seccaspina of Oraclepoll Research. "The 2004 polling data demonstrated such a high level of environmental interest, that I regularly use it as a benchmark when assessing polling data from other communities. When the results from the 2008 poll came back, I was amazed to see such steady support across the community."

The Caledon survey was conducted by Oraclepoll Research between June 13th and 19th 2008 and is considered accurate to +/- 5.6% 19/20. To review the polling data, visit www.caledoncountryside.org

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