

**City of Ottawa's Lansdowne Park Proposal—
Polls Shows 5:1 for Postponement or Outright Rejection**

**Public Alarm about Traffic, Sewage and Other Risks;
Fear of Impact on Taxes;
Anger at Absence of Open Competition;
Concern about Lansdowne's Inaccessibility to Rest of City**



**COMPAS Inc.
Public Opinion and Customer Research
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The Poll

By a resounding majority, residents of the City of Ottawa reject their municipal government's plan for redeveloping Lansdowne Park. Less than a fifth back the plan, according to a poll carried out by COMPAS Research for *Friends of Lansdowne Park*, a city-wide coalition of citizens with a keen interest in the park (see Fig. 1).

Just over two-fifths of residents want consideration of the proposal postponed until the costs of light rail are known or until it is clear that the global recession has come to an end, as shown in table 1. Just over one-third of residents favour outright rejection of the proposal.

Four factors are key to residents' distress about the specific proposal for redevelopment being advocated by the City:

- ❑ Alarm about Traffic, Sewage and Other Risks—residents do not trust city officials to manage the risks that could confront or derail the project (table 2);
- ❑ Fear of Impact on Taxes—by an immense majority, they do not believe that the \$ 130 million development will not affect taxes (table 3);
- ❑ Anger at Absence of Open Competition—they are upset that the City failed to hold a transparent competition (table 3); and
- ❑ Concern about Lansdowne's Inaccessibility to Rest of City—a strong feeling that \$ 130 million is a lot to spend on a site not readily accessible to most of the city (table 3).

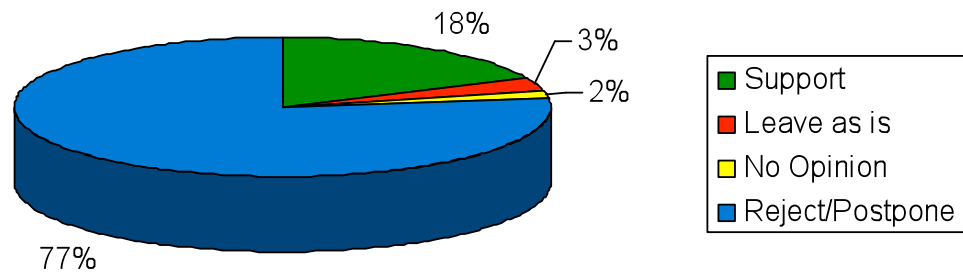
A representative sample of n=360 residents 18 years of age or older was interviewed by professional interviewers using CATI¹ November 7-9, 2009. By convention, samples of this size are deemed accurate to within 5.2 percentage points 19 times out of 20. The principal investigator on this project was Dr. Conrad Winn.

¹ Computer-assisted telephone interviewing technology.



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Fig. 1: Summary of Ottawans' Attitudes to Lansdowne Proposal



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Table 1: (Q4) All things considered, which of the following opinions is closest to your own? RANDOMIZE

	%
Decline the current proposal and have the kind of open, transparent competition that people have a right to expect from their governments	35
Postpone any decision until the city's needs for light rail are fully satisfied and taxpayers can know all the costs	23
Postpone making any high cost decision on Lansdowne until it is clear that Canada is coming out of the recession	19
Go ahead with the current proposal	18
Leave Lansdowne as it is	3
UNPROMPTED Don't know/Refused	2

Table 2: (Q2) Using a 7 point scale where 7 means strongly agree and 1, strongly disagree, please tell me how much you agree with each of the following reasons in favour of accepting the current development proposal. RANDOMIZE

	Mean	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	DNK/REF
The stadium needs repair	6.0	61	12	9	4	3	2	5	4
The present site is unappealing	4.6	30	13	13	9	8	6	16	5
The City will save about \$ 2 million annually on maintenance	4.3	15	9	14	11	7	7	11	26
The details of the proposed development are outstanding	4.1	9	11	14	12	10	7	12	25
The City's political leaders and officials	3.3	6	5	13	14	20	13	23	6



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can be trusted for having examined with great care the financial, traffic, sewage, and other risks associated with this large project									
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Table 3: (Q3) Using a 7 point scale where 7 means strongly agree and 1, strongly disagree, please tell me how much you agree with each of the following reasons against accepting the current development proposal. RANDOMIZE

	Mean	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	DNK/REF
The claim by local politicians and officials that the \$ 130 million redevelopment proposal will not jack up taxes cannot be believed given the City's poor record of estimating the costs of light rail	5.5	44	18	9	6	5	4	7	5
The City failed to hold a competition, which is the only honest, fair, and effective way of protecting taxpayers	5.0	34	12	12	8	9	5	10	10
City officials never spelled out in an open, clear, and transparent way what should be done with the	5.0	28	18	16	9	8	6	8	8



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Lansdowne site									
If the City is to spend \$ 130 million, this should be where it is accessible to all Ottawans equally and not in the Glebe, where the streets are narrow and already congested	4.8	33	17	10	7	9	10	12	3
Going ahead with the expensive Lansdowne proposal creates three big risks for taxpayers—preventing Ottawa from being able to afford light rail, creating a Lansdowne site that most Ottawans wont be able to reach, and jacking up taxes anyway	4.7	26	12	15	12	7	8	11	9
The farmers at the Lansdowne farmers' market say that the farmer market proposal is poorly thought out	4.7	18	11	11	15	9	5	5	26

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