



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### Findings from the Survey of Residents in the Centres and Downtown

<b>Date:</b>	February 23, 2012
<b>To:</b>	Planning and Growth Management Committee
<b>From:</b>	Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning
<b>Wards:</b>	4, 5, 16, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 37, 38
<b>Reference Number:</b>	Pg12015

#### SUMMARY

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This report and the attached Profile Toronto bulletin present findings from a survey of residents in the Centres and Downtown undertaken to support the 5-year review of the Official Plan.

The survey's results provide strong support for the Official Plan's policies for the Centres and Downtown. The Profile Toronto bulletin is available at [www.toronto.ca/opreview](http://www.toronto.ca/opreview).

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

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**The Chief Planner and Executive Director City Planning recommends that:**

1. The Planning and Growth Management Committee receive this report and the attached Profile Toronto Bulletin, *Living in Downtown and the Centres*, for its information.

#### Financial Impact

This report has no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the current year's budget.

#### ISSUE BACKGROUND

The City Planning Division is currently conducting the 5-year review of Toronto's Official Plan. The Centres and Downtown are a key component of the Official Plan's approach to managing growth in the City. In order to help us assess the present policies

for Downtown and the Centres and to understand the housing needs and quality of life issues of people living in these areas of the City, staff undertook the survey in the Spring of 2011.

In particular, surveying residents enables us to ask questions not covered by the Census, such as:

- why people choose to live in the Centres and Downtown;
- why they chose their current residence;
- where they lived previously;
- how long they intend to stay in the Centre or Downtown;
- where they would move to next and into what type of housing;
- their opinion of the quality of life in the Centre or Downtown, particularly in terms of the services and amenities available and the public realm.

## COMMENTS

### How the survey was carried out

The survey was conducted in Spring 2011. The questionnaire was sent to 33,746 households in Downtown Toronto, and the centres in Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough and Yonge-Eglinton. A total of 5,199 surveys were returned for a response rate of 15.4%. This produced an overall margin of error of 1.3% at a 95% level of confidence. Details for each area are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Survey sample size and responses**

Survey Area	Sample Size	Returned	Response rate
Downtown	7,575	1,301	17.2%
Etobicoke	6,240	1,093	17.5%
North York	7,215	993	13.8%
Scarborough	5,956	722	12.1%
Yonge-Eglinton	6,760	1,090	16.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,746</b>	<b>5,199</b>	<b>15.4%</b>

### Summary of the results

A detailed report on the results of the survey with accompanying maps, charts and tables is attached to this report.

The survey's results provide strong support for the Official Plan's policies for Downtown and the Centres. Residents are very satisfied with the areas in which they live. These areas offer good access to transit links to other parts of Toronto and the GTA, and they provide many of the necessities of daily life at their doorstep. Downtown and the Centres offer many amenities and services that allow local residents to live, work and play close to home. Although few residents of the Centres work in the area where they live, significant numbers use transit to get to work and school.

Households in Downtown and the Centres are typically small and have no children. Many are also young, although there is a significant cohort of middle-aged and older households. Some services and amenities will be more important for these households than others. This 'profile' is likely to remain stable as households looking for larger housing units move out and younger adults continue to move in. Although their present homes are typically small and relatively expensive, they provide these households with good access to transit and other services. As their family needs evolve, many of them will place a higher priority on larger more affordable housing and this may mean moving away from Downtown or the Centre in which they live.

The survey results showed strong similarities between the Centres and Downtown, but also revealed important local variations in their population profiles, roles in the housing market, and resident satisfaction with their quality of life in their area. Each is a unique place, and this should be recognized in their ongoing planning and development.

The survey reveals areas in which the quality of life in Downtown and in each of the Centres areas can be improved by addressing traffic congestion in some areas, improving the public realm, or providing more grocery stores in others. As Toronto continues to grow more people will soon call these areas home. The findings of the Living in the Centres survey provide important feedback for the five year review of the Official Plan and will help to inform future policy directions to ensure an exceptional quality of life for future Downtown and Centre residents.

## **CONTACT**

Kerri A. Voumvakis, Acting Director  
Policy and Research, City Planning Division  
Phone 416-392-8148,  
[kvoumva@toronto.ca](mailto:kvoumva@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

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Gary Wright  
Chief Planner and Executive Director  
City Planning

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Profile Toronto Bulletin: 'Living in Downtown Toronto and the Centres, 2011'

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