

# Markham survey shows residents unafraid of change

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Staff Writer

Markham is a 'shop 'til you drop' community, not afraid of change, and residents value their own quality of life more than high-profile town projects.

Those are just three of the community characteristics that have emerged from the results of a 1,000-resident Enviro-nics survey — the first values-based survey ever conducted at the municipal level.

On Monday night, Enviro-nics staff will interpret results for residents at a

Markham Theatre event dubbed Markham Revealed.

Survey results will help Markham Council decide what the town's top priorities should be as it forms a strategic plan.

"It's the best thing we've ever done," said Ward 1 Councillor Stan Daurio, chair of the strategic planning committee.



STAN DAURIO: Survey "gives us the mandate to set priorities."

"If we know why people feel the way they do, we can measure it. It will tell us what people want, the services that could be better.

"It gives us the mandate to set priorities

according to how people feel. It will have an enormous impact on the strategic plan."

Compared to other GTA municipalities, Markham residents have a greater adaptability to the complex and a greater sense of belonging to a global village.

"People feel Markham is an example to the world in cultural fusion and they feel it contributes to their quality of life," Councillor Daurio said.

Generally, residents fall

into four categories — small-town boosters, big-city-feeling promoters, low-tax activists and pro-market enthusiasts.

"We will spend days going over this, translating what it means for us and the future of the town," Councillor Daurio said.

"Some numbers are very close — for example, tough environmental bylaws versus freedom of residents.

"So we'll have to be careful in that area because now we know the community is

divided. One message that came through loud and clear is the citizens do not feel they are involved in the planning process.

"We take out advertisements and have (public) meetings, but they still don't feel involved. So we'll have to work on that."

Enviro-nics staffer and motivational speaker Michael Lipton will present survey results and compare Markham responses with those in the GTA, Canada and North America.

The event begins at 7 p.m. at the theatre, 171 Town Centre Boulevard (in the Warden Avenue-Hwy. 7 area).

Reserve seats by calling the town at 905-477-7000.

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