

## TAXES BECOME NO. 1 CIVIC CONCERN IN BRANDON

### *Proposed Municipal Tax Increase Rated City's Most Pressing Issue*

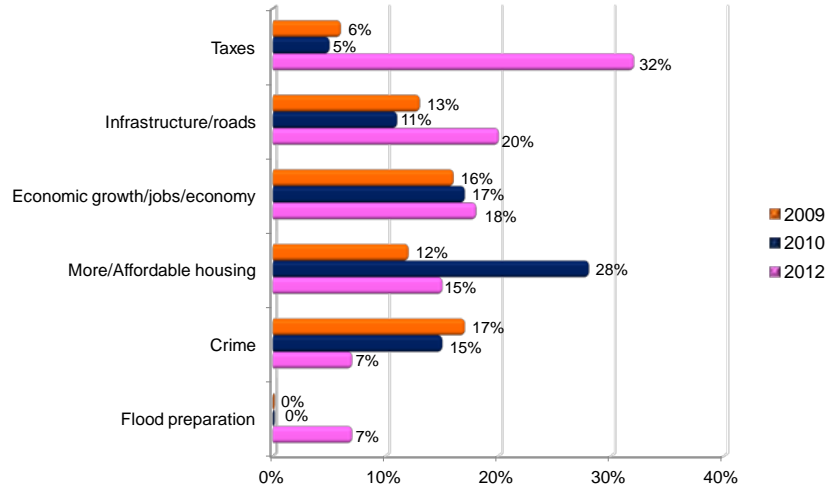
**Brandon** – The City of Brandon's 2012 budget is a major cause for concern among Brandonites, as city focus upon imminent tax increases as the most pressing concern facing the Wheat City. This finding emerges from a Probe Research survey of 400 Brandon adults conducted exclusively for the *Brandon Sun*.

After barely registering in previous years, taxation has overtaken housing and infrastructure as the most important public issue on the minds of Brandonites, with more than three-in-ten expressing concern about taxes (32%, up from just 5% in 2010). Public anxiety about infrastructure is also on the rise, with one-in-five Brandonites indicating this is the biggest issue facing their city (20%, up from 11% in 2010). Economic issues, including jobs and economic development, were deemed to be important by a slightly smaller proportion of Brandon adults (18%, +1% versus 2010).

Concern about affordable housing, meanwhile, has *decreased* significantly since this question was last asked in October 2010 (15%, versus 28% in 2010).

## Most Important Issues Facing Brandon - Year By Year Comparison -

"What do you consider to be the most important issue or concern facing Brandon today? What other issues or concerns do you think are important for your community today?" (n=400)



Base: All respondents

\*Multiple mentions, totals will exceed 100%

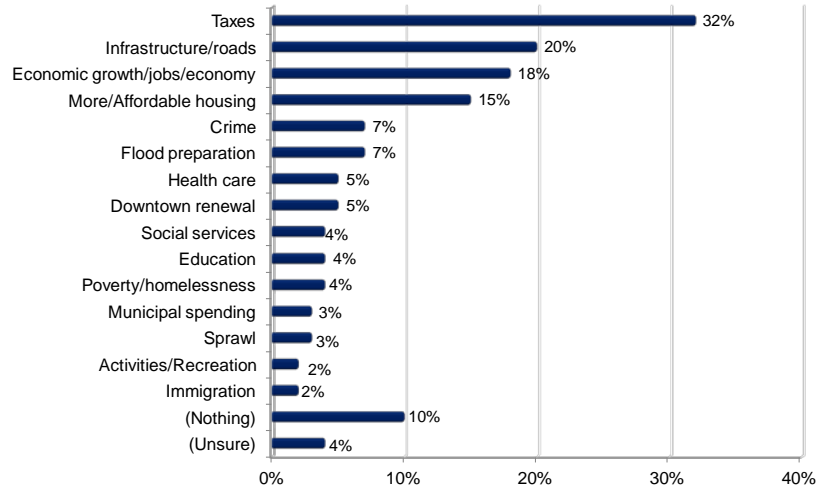
Other issues that feature prominently on the public agenda (but were mentioned by fewer than one-in-ten Brandon residents) include:

- Flood preparation/mitigation (7%, not mentioned in 2010)
- Crime (7%, down from 15%)
- Downtown renewal (5%, up from 3%)
- Health care (5%, unchanged)
- Education (4%, down from 6%)
- Social services (4%, up from 3%)
- Poverty/homelessness (4%, unchanged)

Fourteen percent of those surveyed, meanwhile, could not point to a specific issue of concern or indicated that there is no pressing civic issue that must be addressed.

## Most Important Issues Facing Brandon - All Issues Mentioned -

"What do you consider to be the most important issue or concern facing Brandon today? What other issues or concerns do you think are important for your community today?" (n=400)



Base: All respondents

\*Multiple mentions, totals will exceed 100%

Concern about *taxation* was particularly apparent among:

- Men (37%, versus just 26% of women)
- Those living west of 18<sup>th</sup> Street (38%, versus 24% among those living in the eastern half of the city)
- Older and middle-aged adults (43% of those aged 55 years and over and 34% among those aged 35-54 years, versus just 15% among those aged 18-34 years).
- Homeowners (37%, versus just 12% among renters).
- People with higher household incomes (42% of those earning more than \$80,000/year, versus just 7% of those earning less than \$30,000 annually).

Other notable variations included:

- Men were more likely to identify *infrastructure* renewal as a major civic issue (26%, versus 15% of women).
- Women, on the other hand, were more inclined to express concerns about *affordable housing* (20%, versus 10% of men).

*This Brandon-wide Omnibus survey was conducted by Probe Research Inc. via telephone interviews conducted between January 5<sup>th</sup> and January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012 among a random and representative sampling of 400 adults living in Brandon. With a sample of 400, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results are within +/- 4.7 percentage points of what they would have been if the entire population of Brandon adults had been interviewed. The margin-of-error is higher within each of the demographic sub-groups mentioned. Modified random digit dialing was used to ensure that all Brandon adults would have an equal opportunity to participate in this Probe Research survey. Statistical weighting has been applied to this sample to ensure that the age and gender balance correspond with the city as a whole.*

For more information on this survey, please contact:

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