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## **NIMBYISM SOARS IN CANADA: ETHANOL PLANTS, LOCAL AREA DEVELOPMENT, TARGETS OF INCREASED OPPOSITION**

TORONTO, JUNE 16, 2008 — According to the second annual ***Saint Index Canada 2008*** survey, the popularity of ethanol as an alternative energy source is dropping among Canadians, as 53 percent oppose the development of a local ethanol plant, compared to 45 percent in 2007, an 18 percent increase. More interesting, disenchantment with local ethanol plant development grew most dramatically among rural Canadians — from just 36 percent opposed in 2007 to 51 percent opposition in 2008. Opposition also grew among urban (48% in 2007 to 57% this year) and suburban (43% in 2007 to 49% in 2008) residents.

The survey also found that 75 percent of Canadians say their communities are “fine the way they are” or are already overdeveloped (which was the same in 2007), while only 24 percent say they are underdeveloped. Canadians continue to oppose casino development, as 83 percent of respondents cited opposition (which was the same in 2007). Similarly, three out of four respondents continue to oppose a nuclear power plant or a landfill. More interesting, opposition to a local Wal-Mart increased 9 percent over the last year, and now stands at 63 percent.

“The new scrutiny on ethanol production and widespread speculation about its impact on world food supplies has clearly weakened Canadians’ appetite for new ethanol development projects,” said Paul Devlin, Vice President of Saint Consulting Group’s Toronto office. “However, Canadians still support development of wind and hydroelectric plants, as they look to procure energy in a clean and less intrusive manner. Meanwhile, in the commercial real estate development world, the NIMBY — Not In My Back Yard — attitude is alive and well in Canada, despite a slow economy.”

These findings are from the ***Saint Index Canada 2008***, a national survey that quantifies and tracks the politics of land use and alternative energy projects, spotlighting who actively opposes and supports real estate and energy-related projects and why. It was first conducted in the US in autumn of 2005, in the UK in April 2006, and in Canada in Spring 2007. The Saint Index Canada 2008 is based on an independent survey of 1,023 Canadian adults conducted May 14-27 by the Logit Group of Toronto. It is accurate to within 3.06 percent at the 95 percent confidence level.

Other major findings of the ***Saint Index Canada 2008***:

- **Wind Powers Up.** Wind power developments remain the most popular energy projects with Canadians, with 80 percent saying they would support a local wind proposal, compared to 82 percent in 2007. Only 17 percent oppose local wind energy projects, compared to 16 percent in 2007.

- **Nuclear Power Is Nixed.** As noted above, nuclear power still faces strong opposition from three out of four Canadians. Opposition is lowest in Ontario (69 percent), where nuclear power already exists, and highest in Quebec (88 percent). British Columbia is the only province where opposition to a local nuclear project declined, from 78 percent in 2007 to 73 percent in 2008.
- **Other Alternative Energy Projects.** The Saint Index found varying levels of opposition to local energy projects in 2008, including biodiesel (52 percent compared to 51 percent in 2007), incineration/gasification (49 percent compared to 53 percent in 2007) and hydroelectric (32 percent compared to 33 percent in 2007). Interestingly, opposition to natural gas development projects fell from 42 percent in 2007 to 38 percent in 2008.
- **Reasons Against Real Estate Development.** Additionally, the survey found that one-in-six Canadians or a family member have actively opposed a real estate development project (17 percent) in their lifetime. The main reasons cited were to protect green space (24 percent) and to protect against “too much traffic” (14 percent).
- **Support for Development.** Only 13 percent of respondents or a family member has supported a development. Of those who supported a development, reasons for support include community improvement (33 percent), job creation (20 percent), and a need for housing (11 percent). What kind of developments do people want? A quarter of Canadians say “none,” 15 percent say a recreation facility, 13 percent say single-family housing and nine percent say parks/green space.
- **NIMBYs and Housing.** The NIMBY phenomenon is clearly illustrated when it comes to housing, as single-family homes are the most supported type of local development (87 percent), while apartments/condos obtained 64 percent support. But housing is the very type of development targeted by most Canadians who have actively fought a project, the Saint Index reveals. Housing projects accounted for 32 percent of the projects opposed.
- **Issues With Development Laws.** Over a quarter (26 percent) of Canadians say development laws in Canada are not strict enough, while over half (52 percent) say they are just right. Only 13 percent say they are say too strict.
- **Governmental Concerns.** Canadians are still cynical about the relationships between local officials and developers, as over half (55 percent) say that the relationships make the process unfair, compared to 60 percent in 2007. Over four-fifths (82 percent, compared to 87 percent in 2007) say a candidate’s position on new development and growth is important when they consider for whom to vote.

#### **About [The Saint Consulting Group](http://www.saintconsulting.ca)**

The Saint Consulting Group began operations in 1983 and today is the global leader in land-use political consultancy. We have organized, managed and won local development battles in Canada, 43 U.S. states and the United Kingdom. Saint Consulting has 10 offices around the US [including its headquarters near Boston], one in the UK, and one in Toronto. Among the industries that use its services are aggregates, casinos, grocery and retail, healthcare, landfills, mixed-use developments, housing, resorts, heavy industry and utilities. For more information, visit <http://www.saintconsulting.ca>

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