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**OPPOSITION TO WAL-MART FALLS  
LANDFILLS AND CASINOS TOP UNWANTED LIST  
RECESSION INFLUENCING ATTITUDES  
— NEW SAINT INDEX® RESULTS —**

HINGHAM, MA — January 13, 2009 — America's NIMBYs may be losing enthusiasm for fighting their most-hated retail enemy.

Of 1,000 adults interviewed nationwide, 56 percent said they oppose a Wal-Mart development in their hometown — the lowest level of opposition in four years of [Saint Index®](#) surveys. Two years ago, 68 percent of Americans said they'd oppose a local Wal-Mart project.

The new Saint Index® survey on U.S. attitudes toward real estate development finds the world's largest retailer no longer alone as the retail project Americans most oppose for their community.

Wal-Mart fell into a tie with a mall or large shopping center as the most opposed retail development project. (Opposition to a local mall or large shopping center project fell slightly from 58 percent a year earlier.)

Landfills (78%) are the most-opposed type of local development project, followed by a casino (77%) and an aggregate quarry (62%).

Fifty-nine percent of Americans say they are more likely to support new commercial projects in their hometown given the current economic situation.

Not In My Back Yard (NIMBY) attitudes remain strong, however, with 74 percent of adults opposed to new development in their community.

“Twenty years of media reports chronicling community opposition to real estate projects such as big box stores have changed attitudes, and residents today believe you can fight development and win,” said [P. Michael Saint](#), CEO of The Saint Consulting Group, the international political land use consultancy that conducts the Saint Index© to track attitudes about development.

One in five American families have actively opposed a development project, the fourth annual Saint Index found.

Asked what type of development project they’d most like to see in their community, one in three Americans (31%) said, “none” — by far the most common response.

“The influence of the recession on people’s willingness to support local development shows NIMBYism isn’t a totally knee-jerk response. It is possible to overcome,” Saint Consulting President [Patrick Fox](#) said. “The problem for developers is that even good projects draw fierce opposition if neighbors are convinced their own property values will be hurt — and the politicians who decide what gets built listen to voters who elect them.”

## **MORE SAINT INDEX FINDINGS:**

### **Attitudes on development**

- 78% of American adults oppose a landfill development in their hometown, making it the most unwanted type of local real estate project in America
- A casino is the second most unwanted local project — 77% opposed.
- The following uses all had drops in opposition from a year ago:
  - Department Stores (-7%)
  - Wal-Mart (-5%)
  - Power Plants (-4%)
  - Large Shopping Centers/Mall (-2%)
  - Quarries (-2%)
  - Home Improvement Stores (-1%)

- A nuclear power plant (60% opposed) is the least-favored type of power plant but would still be preferable as a local development project to a landfill, a casino, or an aggregate quarry, the survey results show.

### **Who fights development and why**

- The Northeast is the most actively NIMBY region of the U.S., followed by the West and Mid-Atlantic.
- The Midwest is the region most welcoming to local development, the Saint Index© found.
- The most active NIMBYs are age 46-55, college or post-grad educated, own their home, and have an annual household income of \$75,000 to \$99,000.
- Nationwide, the level of anti-development activism is nearly identical among urban, suburban and rural residents.
- Key reasons for opposition to a project are protecting the environment (22%) and protecting the value of a home or real estate (21%). Other reasons for opposition include fear of too much new traffic (19%) and protecting community character (18%).
- One in three Americans uses the internet (blogs, emails, chat groups) to research and stay informed on local land use issues. One in five (21%) use the internet to communicate with neighbors and public officials regarding local land use issues. Among those who have graduate degrees, earn over \$100K, or are under the age of 35, these numbers are significantly higher.
- Americans are cynical about the relationship between developers and politicians. Nearly seven out of 10 Americans (69%) believe the relationship between developers and elected officials makes the land use approval process unfair.
- 7 out of 10 Americans (72%) would grade their community C or worse when it comes to deciding what does and does not get built.

- 25 percent of Americans say their local planning and zoning regulations are not strict enough.
- 87% of Americans say that a candidate's position on development and growth is important when deciding for whom to vote.

### **About the Saint Index®**

The Saint Index® tracks attitudes toward real estate development projects in the U.S., Canada and United Kingdom. It is the only primary research tool that quantifies and tracks the politics of land use, spotlighting who actively opposes and supports real-estate related projects and why. It was launched in 2005 by The Saint Consulting Group, the global leader in land use political consultancy.

The U.S. Saint Index® survey involved interviews with 1,000 American adults nationwide. One thousand respondents were randomly selected from the United States, including Alaska and Hawaii. The maximum margin of error is plus or minus 3.1 percent at the 95 percent confidence rate.

### **About The Saint Consulting Group**

The Saint Consulting Group began operations in 1983 and today is the global leader in land use political consultancy. Saint has 10 offices around the U.S. and international offices in London and Toronto. As experts in land use politics, Saint Consulting provides political campaign expertise to win complex or controversial planning decisions. Among the property sectors that use its services are: aggregates, food retail, shopping centers, hospitals, landfill, mixed-use developers, housing, heavy industry and utilities.

### **Graphics and Interviews**

Graphics illustrating the Saint Index results are available by contacting us. You may also download them at: <http://www.tscg.biz/survey/graphics.html>

Saint Consulting experts on development issues are available for interviews on the Saint Index results and the latest news involving land use politics.

### **On the web:**

The Saint Consulting Group: <http://www.tscg.biz>

The Saint Report forum on land use politics: <http://www.thesaintreport.com/>