

Public Attitude Research Regarding the Port Hope Area Initiative

Port Granby Project

Wave 2

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Prepared for: Low-Level Radioactive Waste
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the Port Granby Project, the Port Hope Area Initiative (PHAI) has commissioned periodic public attitude research to monitor public awareness of the PHAI, identify issues and concerns, determine communications needs of the public, and provide data regarding public attitudes and preferences. Ward 4 Clarington studies were conducted in 2002, 2004 and 2005 using a telephone survey among the general public who lived in the postal code areas that received the Port Granby Project communications.

The sample and methodology changed in 2007 to focus more on the households who live closer to the proposed site. The primary boundaries were: South border is Lake Ontario; Mill Street on the west; on the north, Highway 401 from Mill Street to Morgans Road, north to Concession Rd 4, east to McCullough Rd, south to Concession Rd 3, east to 4th Line and along 4th Line; on the east the boundary followed Morrish Church Rd. and Wesleyville Rd south to the lake. The PHAI wished to conduct a second tracking study of these residents in 2011. All homeowners in the area received a package by mail that contained a cover letter from IntelliPulse inviting them to participate in the survey, a questionnaire with a postage-paid reply envelope, and a reply card to mail if they wished to receive a summary copy of the findings. A reminder post card was mailed to all households by IntelliPulse during the week of May 16, 2011, and the PHAI issued a press release announcing the survey that was picked up by the local media one week before the return mail-in deadline.

Questionnaires were mailed to 754 home owners on May 6, 2011 and the cut-off date for accepting returned questionnaires was May 27, extended to May 31, 2011. Households were offered the option of completing the survey by mail, on-line or by telephone. In total 138 residents completed the survey, 123 by mail, 1 by phone, and 14 on-line. The confidence interval for 138 respondents is $\pm 7.5\%$, 19 out of 20 times. The Technical Appendix provides a description of the sampled areas.

Due to the 2007 changes in methodology and sample area, this report presents the findings for the 2007 and 2011 studies only. The report highlights areas where there are statistically significant changes from 2007 to 2011.

KEY FINDINGS

Key findings from the 2011 survey include:

- Satisfaction with living in the community continues to be high, with 64% stating that they are "very satisfied", similar to 2007. (Table 3.1-1)
- Self-assessed knowledge about the presence of low-level radioactive waste in the community is high. Similar to 2007, eight-in-ten respondents (83%) claim to know at least something about it. (Table 4.2)

- 31% of respondents still think about “living in a community dealing with radioactive waste management facilities” often or very often, but this proportion is significantly lower than in 2007. (Table 4.1)
- Half of the respondents (52%, similar to 2007) are at least “somewhat” confident that the waste can be safely managed at the recommended facility for the long term, however 36% are still “not at all confident” and 13% are “not sure”. (Table 5.1-1).
- The presence of the waste remains a top community issue.
 - The Port Granby Project and radioactive waste is the top issue in the community with 26% mentioning “Port Granby Project/ relocation/ moving of the waste/ radioactive waste clean-up”. A further 19% name “the Port Granby Project / radioactive waste” as what they like least about their community, and 37% name this topic as what most negatively affects the image of their community. (Tables 3.2, 3.3-2, 3.3-3)
- Awareness of the Port Granby Project (85%), the Port Hope Area Initiative (72%) and the Port Granby Waste Management Facility (69%) continues to be high. (Table 4.3-1)
- Two-thirds of the respondents (64%) are familiar with the proposal for the long-term safe storage of the waste at a new Port Granby waste management facility, a significant increase over 2007. (Table 4.3-2)
- Half of the respondents (53%) say they own property within the Property Value Protection Program (PVP) Zone. However, more information about the Program is needed. Only 19% say they are familiar with the PVP program, and 48% “do not know” how to assess the Program. Only 22% of all respondents who answered the question are somewhat or very satisfied that the program will adequately protect owners. (Tables 4.4-1, 4.4-2, 4.4-3)
- Concerns about the proposed facility are diverse, although one is uppermost. The top concern is “contamination (soil, water, air), proximity to Lake Ontario, and effect on wildlife / environment” (28%). Roughly similar proportions (11%-13%) mention safe transportation, effect on property values, safety and security of the facility, and spillage or leakage. (Table 5.2-1)
- Compared to 2007, the desire is growing stronger for long-term testing, monitoring / daily testing (37%) and ongoing information for the public (32%) to make them feel more confident about the safety of the facility. (Table 5.2-2)
- Communications about the Port Granby Project appear to have a positive impact on people’s attitudes towards the Project. The Port Granby newsletter provides a strong communication vehicle for increasing public acceptance of and confidence in the Port Granby Project.
 - Respondents are satisfied with PHAI MO’s efforts to provide information (65%) and to provide adequate opportunities to offer input to the Project (58%), although only one in ten is “very satisfied” on both measures. (Tables 6.1, 6.1-2)

- Seven out of ten read the *Port Granby Project* newsletter “always” (46%) or “sometimes” (23%). (Table 6.2-1)
- The primary sources seen to provide “accurate and complete information” about the Port Granby Project are independent qualified scientists (28% “first choice”), a committee of local citizens (27%), and staff and consultants of the PHAI (20%). (Table 6.3-2)
- The Municipality of Clarington (41%) and real estate agents (40%), followed by the PHAI website (25%) and PGP staff (23%) are the preferred information sources about the PVP Program. (Tables 4.4-4)
- Brochures / newsletters mailed to residents (mentioned by 43% as their first choice) are the preferred sources of information about the Port Granby Project. (Table 6.3-1)
- Computer usage is high in the Port Granby survey area, and it is not just the domain of young residents. 83% of respondents use a computer, and almost all of them (98%) have access to the Internet. Two-thirds of the Internet users have access to high speed Internet (69%). Twenty percent (20%) use Facebook, but only 2% have a Twitter account. (Table 6.5)
- Several points emerge as to how people receive their local news. The most prominent medium is print (80%), with 66% of respondents reading *Clarington This Week*. 50% watch local news on television, with the largest proportion (42%) watching CTV. 47% listen to local news on the radio, with 24% naming KX96 New Country, 17% naming Classical 103 FM/96.3, 15% naming 107.9 The Breeze, and 10% naming 94.9 The Rock. 16% receive their local news via the Internet with 3% naming Durhamregion.com. (Tables 6.4-1 to 6.4-5)