

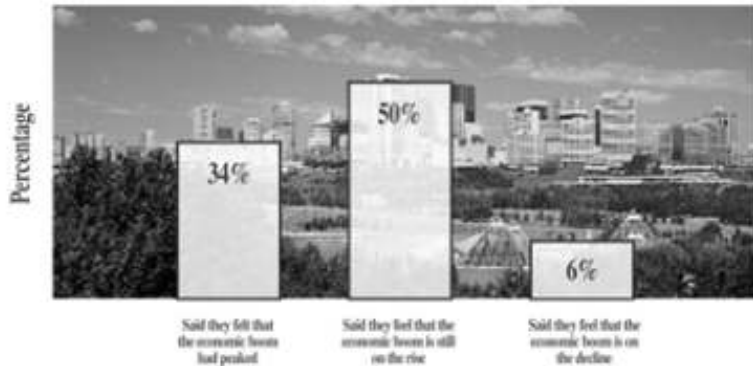


Poll STATION

With Linda Banister

For the better part of this decade, Alberta has experienced some of the strongest economic growth in all of Canada. This month's *Poll Station* asked Edmontonians for their perspectives on the state of the economy, including the boom's impact on our quality of life.

HAS THE ECONOMIC BOOM PEAKED, AND WHAT ARE THE SIGNS?

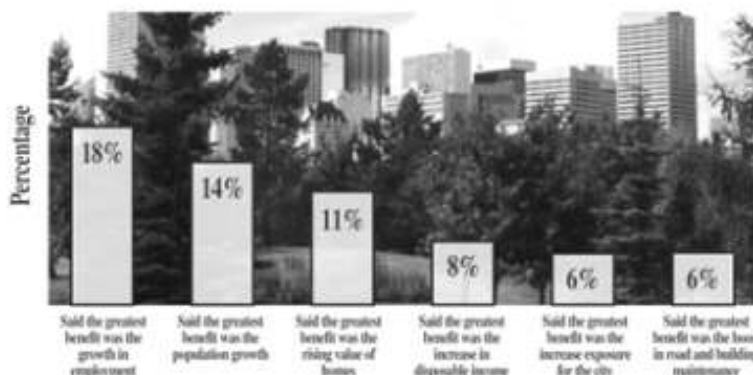


To begin the survey, respondents were asked if they felt the economic boom in Edmonton has reached its peak. One-third (34 percent) felt that the economic boom has peaked, while half (50 percent) felt the boom is still on the rise, and six percent thought the economy is on the decline.

Respondents who believed the economy had peaked were asked what signs suggest this. The slowed growth of the housing market, including falling prices and longer listing times were mentioned by close to three-quarters (74 percent) of respondents, followed by the city's decreasing population (12 percent), employers being less desperate for workers (12 percent), and oil sands production tapering off (nine percent).

Those who thought the economy was still on the rise most frequently mentioned the abundance of jobs, including the need to import workers from overseas (36 percent), more people moving to Edmonton (24 percent), the strength of the oil patch including the price of oil (24 percent), and the lack of affordable housing (24 percent).

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS AND DOWNSIDES OF THE BOOM?



Respondents were then asked to identify the single greatest benefit the booming economy has had on Edmonton. The growth in employment opportunities (18 percent) was most frequently mentioned, followed by the population increase (14 percent), the rise in housing values (11 percent) and the increase in disposable income for Edmontonians (8 percent). In addition, more publicity for Edmonton and a boost in road and building maintenance were each mentioned by 6 percent of respondents, while 14 percent felt there was no benefit generated from the boom.

Edmonton has faced a number of issues regarding the economic boom and respondents were asked to indicate how concerned they were with these issues. The majority cited crime (80 percent), price inflation (75 percent) and the labour shortage (72 percent). Although still concerned, respondents were slightly less worried about the housing shortage (69 percent), the increased cost of construction (68 percent), and increased real estate prices (60 percent).

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO PREPARE FOR A DOWNTURN IN THE ECONOMY?

When asked what precautions they are taking to prepare for an economic downturn, one-third indicated they were not concerned and, therefore, were not taking any actions to protect themselves. One-quarter indicated they are saving money, while 15 percent are paying off debts, and 13 percent are spending less.

HAS YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE CHANGED?

Respondents were then asked if the overall quality of life in Edmonton has increased, decreased or remained about the same as a result of the booming economy. Two-thirds (67 percent) felt their quality of life had remained the same, while 18 percent felt it had decreased and 15 percent believed their quality of life has increased. ✓

The *Poll Station* surveyed 100 City of Edmonton residents on the topic and, while the results of the research are not statistically reliable, they do provide a qualitative indication of what Edmontonians are thinking.

New to the Edmontonians website: Monthly Poll Station Online Question

Visit www.edmontonians.com to register your opinion

Want a question included in the Edmontonians Poll?

Contact Linda at 780.451.4444 or e-mail lbanner@edmontonians.com.

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