**With right to approve, many Ontario municipalities will still accept new landfill sites, survey says**

Chief concerns are environmental, site location, and financial considerations

TORONTO, Ontario ---- May 23, 2019. If the Provincial Government’s new environment legislation provides municipalities with the right to approve new landfill sites, four out of ten municipal leaders would still agree to host new landfills in their communities. The survey, conducted by Public Square Research, found that the chief concerns of municipal leaders for new landfill approvals are environmental, site location, and financial. In November 2018, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks published its *Made-in-Ontario Environmental Plan.* The plan included a proposal to provide municipalities with the right to approve new landfills. Further details of the proposed change were released for public comment in the follow-up *Discussion Paper on Reducing Litter and Waste in Our Communities,* published in March 2019.

The survey was commissioned by the Demand the Right Coalition of Ontario Municipalities ([www.demandtheright.ca](http://www.demandtheright.ca)). The group of over 75 upper, lower, and single tier municipalities have each passed motions demanding that the Ontario government provide municipalities with the right to approve new landfills. Under current legislation, if a private sector waste management company wants to develop a new landfill site, the company need only proceed through an environmental assessment process – one that does not include municipal approval. The private sector operators are on record as being against this change, believing that it will put an end to any new landfills in the province.

“We ca now confirm that municipal approval will improve landfill operations, not eliminate them,” said Ted Comiskey, Mayor of Ingersoll and Chair of the Demand the Right Coalition. “By placing municipal governments on a level playing field with private waste management companies, councils and staff can negotiate for enhanced environmental protections, better site selections, and improved financial considerations on costs such as tipping fees and municipal services.”

Comiskey said, “Municipalities want the right to say yes or no, as we do with casinos, cannabis stores, and nuclear waste sites. This will be good for all concerned, as it means that communities will be given real choices. There will also be a cost impact on waste management. If the cost of landfill goes up, there will be a financial incentive for companies to reduce their waste. Currently, there is none.”

The survey involved a random selection process, with 325 participants. Invitations to participate in the survey were sent to a list of over 1700 mayors, reeves, councillors and chief administrators in Ontario. The margin of error for a response rate on a population of this size is +/-4.89.

Highlights of the survey:

* Nine of ten municipal leaders support the Government of Ontario providing municipalities with the right to approve new landfills
* Four of ten would still support hosting new landfill in their communities, if certain conditions were met
* Top conditions for approval include Environmental (27%) location of site (19%) financial considerations (15%) resident opinion (9%) odour controls (9%) and public safety (8%)

Further details about the coalition and a full list of its members are available at [www.demandtheright.ca](http://www.demandtheright.ca).

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For information contact:

Ted Griffith

Campbell Strategies

[tedg@campbellstrategies.com](mailto:tedg@campbellstrategies.com)

416.518.8308