

LONG ISLAND INDEX

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NEW SURVEY REVEALS THAT LARGE MAJORITIES OF LONG ISLANDERS WANT MORE HOUSING OPTIONS TO ADDRESS HIGH HOUSING COSTS

The Urgency of the Problem is Underscored by a Record Number of Long Islanders Who Say They Are Likely to Leave in the Next Five Years

Garden City, NY – December 17, 2014 – The *Long Island Index*, a project of the Rauch Foundation, announced today the results of a public opinion survey of Long Island residents' ongoing concerns about residential life: the high cost of local housing and taxes; the development of local downtowns; the desire to move from Long Island to less expensive areas of the country, and concerns about young people leaving.

The survey – contained in a new report titled “Looking Ahead on Long Island” – was commissioned by the *Long Island Index* and conducted by the Stony Brook University Center for Survey Research during the fall of 2014. Telephone interviews were conducted with a randomly selected sample of 1050 Long Island residents.

The survey highlights Long Islanders' frustration with the current housing options:

- A majority (60%) of Long Islanders have at least some difficulty in meeting their monthly rent and mortgage payments, due to persistently high housing costs.
- High housing costs mean that over three-quarters (77%) of Long Island residents are concerned that some family members might have to leave the area.
- A record number of Long Islanders (56%) said they were somewhat or very likely to leave Long Island in the next five years. Younger residents aged 18 to 34 are most likely to say they will leave (72%). But their parents' generation is not far behind. Almost as many baby boomers, aged 50-64, want to leave (66%) as among the youngest age group.

The survey also reflects Long Islanders' preferences for addressing the current housing situation:

- A strong majority (65%) of Long Islanders support changes to zoning laws that would make it easier to install legal rental apartments in a single family home.

- A solid majority (58%) of Long Islanders support increasing height limits in local Long Island downtowns to allow apartments above stores. This is the greatest support for increasing height limits downtown since the *Long Island Index*'s surveys began in 2002.
- More than half (52%) of Long Island residents could imagine themselves or an immediate family member living in an apartment, condo, or townhouse in a local Long Island downtown. This is the first time that a majority of Long Island residents could imagine this, based on past *Long Island Index* surveys.
- A majority (53%) said that it is somewhat or very important to live within walking distance of shops and entertainment.
- A strong majority (68%) of Long Islanders support new multi-level parking garages in local downtowns in their county. This represents an increase over 2011 when 57% supported building new multi-level garages, and 2010 when 51% supported the proposal.

“This survey raises both a red flag and a solution,” said Ann Golob, Director of the *Long Island Index*. “While the number of Long Islanders likely to leave is daunting, they are making clear what government officials can and should do to address the situation.”

“Long Islanders want the same housing options that other regions provide – a mix of housing types and prices that suits their needs,” said Nancy Rauch Douzinas, President of the Rauch Foundation and Publisher of the *Long Island Index*. “If we provide that mix, our economy can be as vibrant as ever. If we don't, it's clear that Long Islanders will go where those options are available. That's a challenge that Long Islanders should embrace – and quickly. It's not as though we haven't been warned.”

The full report – containing the survey questions (23 substantive questions plus demographic ones), responses, and methodology – is available at www.longislandindex.org.

About the Rauch Foundation

The Rauch Foundation (www.rauchfoundation.org), which funds the *Long Island Index*, is a Long Island-based family foundation that invests in ideas and organizations that spark and sustain early success in children and systemic change in our communities. The Foundation was established in 1961 by Louis Rauch and Philip Rauch, Jr. Funding for the Foundation was made possible by the success of the Ideal Corporation, an auto parts manufacturer founded in 1913 by their father, Philip Rauch, Sr.

The *Long Island Index* – conducted annually since 2004 – is available for download at www.longislandindex.org. The *Long Island Index* interactive maps, an online resource with detailed demographic, residential, transportation and educational information, as well as the Build a Better Burb website, are also accessible from the Index's website.

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