Mainstreet Research confident in poll numbers ahead of Calgary election

- [Calgary Votes 2017](#)
- [Local](#)

by Mike Blanchard

Posted Oct 15, 2017 6:10 pm MST, Last Updated Oct 15, 2017 at 11:10 pm MST

A polling company that is predicting a Naheed Nenshi loss in Calgary's mayoral race is so confident in its numbers, it released a scorecard on Sunday to compare competing polls.

Mainstreet Research polls for Postmedia sayBill Smith has a 13 per cent lead over Nenshi with 52 per cent of the decided vote. That's in sharp contrast to polls from Forum Research and LRT on the Green that find Nenshi enjoys a strong lead. Mainstreet said there's a lot of bias among some political commentators.

"Certainly I've seen a lot of behaviour from political scientists that I would say is quite shocking in this election campaign, and some of it quite frankly is quite appalling. Especially when we see professors who are accusing Postmedia reporters of making up quotes. That, to me, is beyond the pale," said spokesperson David Valentin.

Polling Scorecard

You can be the polling analyst with our handy Calgary Election Pollster Scorecard!

Simply write the election results into the scorecard and calculate the variance. You'll find an example from the Calgary Greenway by election below. The winner has the smallest amount of total variance compared to the results.

Polls are a snapshot in time - but they should come at least somewhat close to the final election result. Here's what the ESOMAR Code has to say about pre-election surveys:

"Pre-election polls are expected to be accurate in their estimates of a voting tally or the share of the vote for parties and candidates in an election, especially if they are conducted close to the election itself."
- World Association for Social, Opinion and Market Research, ESOMAR CODE, Section 8.1

All three surveys measured voting intentions.

EXAMPLE - CALGARY GREENWAY BY ELECTION

Mainstreet Research/Calgary Herald & Calgary Sun

Mainstreet surveyed a random sample of 523 Calgary Greenway voters by Smart IVR™ on March 9th, 2016. A mixture of landlines and cell phones were surveyed. Margin of error: +/- 4.26%, 18 times out of 20. Results were weighed by age and gender based on the 2011 Canadian Census.

	All Voters	Decided & Leaning	Actual Result	Variance
NDP	22%	24%	20.17%	3.83
Wildrose	19%	22%	23.68%	1.68
PC	27%	31%	27.73%	3.27
Liberal	17%	21%	22.63%	1.63
Green	1%	1%	2.01%	1.01
Undecided	14%	N/A	N/A	N/A

3.83+1.68+3.27+1.63+1.01=
Total variance: 11.42

All numbers within margin of error!
No number has a variance greater than 4.26%

Brought to you by

RECHERCHE MAINSTREET RESEARCH

Polling Scorecard

Asking Canadians/LRT on the Green

"Field Dates: October 7-10, 2017; 1004 respondents. This online survey utilizes a representative but non-random sample, therefore margin of error is not applicable. However, a probability sample of this size would yield a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points at a 95% confidence interval." - LRT on the Green Press Release

	All Voters	Decided Only	Actual Result	Variance
Nenshi, Naheed	41%	56.94%		
Smith, Bill	26%	36.11%		
Chabot, Andre	3%	4.17%		
Other	2%	2.78%		
Don't Know/Not Sure	28%	N/A	N/A	N/A

Forum Research/Canadian Municipal Election Study

"Respondents were recruited through random digit dialing via telephone. The survey was conducted online, with a total sample size of 843 randomly selected declared Calgary voters. Results based on the total sample are considered accurate +/- 3.37%, 19 times out of 20." - Press Release from CMES. Field Dates: September 28- October 12, 2017

	All Voters	Decided Only	Actual Result	Variance
Nenshi, Naheed	49.8%	57.0%		
Smith, Bill	33.0%	37.8%		
Chabot, Andre	4.1%	4.7%		
Other	0.5%	0.6%		
Don't Know/Haven't Decided	12.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A

Mainstreet Research/Calgary Herald & Calgary Sun   (That's us!)

Mainstreet surveyed a random stratified sample of 1,500 Calgarians on October 10th & 11th, 2017 through Chimera IVR. Respondents were screened to confirm voting eligibility. Landline and Cell lines were included. Responses were weighted using demographic and geographic information to targets based on the 2016 Census. The margin of error for survey results is ± 2.53 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

	All Voters	Decided & Leaning	Actual Result	Variance
Nenshi, Naheed	36%	39%		
Smith, Bill	47%	52%		
Chabot, Andre	6%	6%		
Other	2%	3%		
Undecided	10%	N/A	N/A	N/A

Valetin points to heavy advance poll turnout, which he says signals voters are demanding change. He believes when the results roll in on Monday night, it will be payback time.

"We're going to be going through the case study and singling people out and showing what exactly it is they said and did. And I think anyone who comments to the media should expect that their comments are going to receive scrutiny after the fact. I think that's fair," he said.

Mainstreet accurately predicted the Alberta's NDP's majority election win in 2015, and at the same time, the collapse of the PC party.