



wemac

your community • your voice

WEST END MAYOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Community Priorities for the West End

Interim Report to Mayor Gregor Robertson: July 20, 2011

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Introduction

The information contained in this report is the result of work completed by the West End Mayor's Advisory Committee (WEMAC). It is work completed by community members for the community.

This report includes results of the WEMAC Priorities Survey as well as additional recommendations that were developed as a result of specific activities in the community where WEMAC was asked to comment.

WEMAC recognizes that considerable work has been done over the past two years to examine and identify community member priorities for the West End community. The recent work builds upon work that has been ongoing for decades in planning for this community. The WEMAC survey and this report were not developed in isolation of this important work. The sections of the survey as well as the list of choices under each section were developed based on issues of concern identified in community meetings, surveys previously undertaken, and information and reports provided by the West End Residents Association (WERA), West End Neighbours (WEN), the West End Business Improvement Association (WEBIA) and the City of Vancouver over the previous year (See Appendices). The survey sections and choices identified were not intended to be finite and survey respondents had the opportunity to identify further priorities and make additional comments in each area of the survey.

WEMAC is also aware that there is ongoing work being undertaken by various ad-hoc and city-initiated community mechanisms, groups and organizations. The contents of this report are meant to complement that work and be considered within the context of other information which may come forward to City Council from the community.

This report has been submitted to the Mayor of Vancouver in July 2011 with recommendations for consideration as City Council makes decisions that will provide direction for and help shape the future of our West End community.

Background on Mayor's West End Community Advisory Committee (WEMAC)

Overview

The Mayor's West End Community Advisory Committee is a pilot project and is intended as an interim measure to a formal planning process being undertaken for the West End. It was established by [a resolution of Council on July 8, 2010](#)  (23kb).

Mandate

The Committee is responsible for communicating community priorities to the City in its planning and policy development and for helping to communicate City policy initiatives that may be of interest to residents in the West End.

Terms of Reference

The Committee will be responsible for the following activities interim to a formal planning process be undertaken for the West End:

1. Developing and maintaining a list of community priorities for the West End.
2. Meeting with developers proposing re-zonings in the West End prior to community open houses to ensure these proposals are informed by current community priorities.
3. Providing advice to the Mayor's Office on further initiatives to increase linkages between the West End and the City in relation to development and policy.

Committee Membership

The process for appointing the West End Mayor's Advisory Committee was established by a motion of Council.

Specifically, Council appointed two interim Co-Chairs – Chair of the Planning and Environment Committee, Councillor Andrea Reimer, and Councillor Tim Stevenson – that were charged with appointing the remaining twelve (12) members using an open call nomination process, similar to that used for Type B advisory committees. It should be noted that such a process has not previously been used for mayor's advisory committees in the City of Vancouver so no precedence for procedure existed.

In addition to the open call process, Council directed the interim co-chairs to ensure that, as much as possible, the committee reflected the demographics¹ of the West End including:

- Single resident households, 40 years of age and under
- Families of young children
- New immigrants and refugees
- Seniors
- Local business owners who live in the neighbourhood
- LGBTQ community

The call for nominations closed on September 10, 2010. Eighty (80) applications were received for 12 positions. The interim co-chairs evaluated the applications against the demographic considerations provided by Council as well as against the City's Code of Conduct which requires participants on

¹ The demographic considerations were derived from the most recent census data for the community available from BC Stats at http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen06/profiles/peds/Vancouver-West%20End_BC.pdf

Advisory Committees to display Integrity, Accountability, Responsibility, Leadership, Respect, and Openness. In respect to the latter requirement, consideration was given to evidence of these qualities through previous participation in community bodies.

A short list was provided to Mayor Gregor Robertson who assisted in the final advisory committee election. In October 2010, an initial appointment of 12 members was made. Over the intervening months some members left the committee for personal reasons and subsequent appointments were made using the same process (see notes below for duration of tenure). Due to the extensive orientation sessions, and the time-limited nature of the mandate, the committee asked that no further appointments be made after April 2011.

As of the date of this interim report, the committee is composed of nine (9) individuals from the West End.

Donald Allison (October 2010 to present)

Demographics: Co-op Member, Senior

Community Affiliations (past and present): McLaren Housing Society, Sojourn Housing Co-op, Mole Hill Community Housing Society, Dr. Peter Centre

Christine Ackermann (October 2010 to present)

Demographics: Renter, Under 40, LGBTQ community

Community Affiliations (past and present): West End Residents Association, Renters at Risk

Tony Clark (October 2010 to March 2011)

Demographics: Renter, Under 40

Community Affiliations (past and present): Vancouver Rugby Association, Urban Studies Students Association, Vancouver Centre NDP

Marlann Cooper (October 2010 to present)

Demographics: Renter, Senior

Community Affiliations (past and present): Seniors Housing Advocacy Group, West End Senior Network

Jim Deva (October 2010 to present)

Demographics: Owner, Small Business Owner, LGBTQ

Community Affiliations (past and present): LGBTQ Advisory Committee, West End Community Policing Centre, West End Business Improvement Association

Michelle Fortin (October 2010 to present)

Demographics: Owner, LGBTQ

Community Affiliations (past and present): Watari Youth, Family and Community Services, Vancouver Dyke March and Festival, Out on Screen Film Festival, CCEC Credit Union

Rob Hines (October 2010 to June 2011)

Demographics: Renter, Under 40, LGBTQ

Community Affiliations (past and present): Vancouver Centre Green Party, Strathcona Community Garden, Davie Days, Vancouver Pride Parade, Car Free West End

Lena Hozaima (October 2010 to present)

Demographics: Renter, Under 40, Parent

Community Affiliations (past and present): West End Community Centre Association, Health Canada Public Advisory Committee

Tiko Kerr (October 2010 to December 2010)

Demographics: Owner, self-employed, parent, LGBTQ

Community Affiliations (past and present): West End Neighbours, Dr. Peter Centre, Vancouver Native Health Society, A Loving Spoonful

Dean Malone (October 2010 to present)

Demographics: Renter, small business owner, LGBTQ

Community Affiliations (past and present): West End Seniors Network, PINK CARP, Lesbian and Gay Aging Issues Network, A Loving Spoonful, Fillmore Family Foundation

Cherie Payne (October 2010 to present)

Demographics: Renter, under-40, self-employed

Community Affiliations (past and present): Friends for Life, Coastal Church, Vancouver Centre Liberals

Carole Reardon (October 2010 to December 2010)

Demographics: Owner, parent

Community Affiliations (past and present): West End Residents Association, Legal Action Education Fund

Duncan Wlodarczak (March 2011 to present)

Demographics: Renter, Under 40

Community Affiliations (past and present): SFU Graduate Students Society, SFU Sustainability Advisory Committee, Sustainable Space SFU

WEMAC Meetings

WEMAC held thirteen (13) public meetings between October 14, 2010 and June 23, 2011 at Vancouver City Hall. In addition to these public meetings, several sub-committees and working groups met many times in development of the priorities survey, consultation process planning, and in developing the report.

WEMAC also had an opportunity to meet with several proponents for development projects in the West End on December 14, 2010. In the absence of confirmed community priorities, WEMAC considered information presented by the developer within currently established West End development policies and utilizing the experiential knowledge that WEMAC members have of the West End Community. During these meetings, WEMAC was not expected to consider or comment on how the information provided regarding the development meets with current zoning and development bylaws. The focus of these meetings was:

- To be introduced to developers with current applications and enquiries.
- To gain a high-level understanding and current status of the development project.
- To consider how the information provided may assist in planning for community priority consultations.
- To consider how WEMAC may best inform developers for subsequent communication of community priorities.

Due to the intensity of the work required by WEMAC over the last several months, many committee members also committed immeasurable daytime, evening and weekend volunteer hours.

Executive Summary

In order to identify community priorities for the West End, the West End Mayor's Advisory Committee (WEMAC) conducted a survey of West End Residents between May 13 and June 10, 2011. There were 994 respondents to this survey providing data that was both quantitative and qualitative. Another 30 hand written surveys were not included in the quantitative data due to incomplete information but their comments are included within the appendices.

A significant number of comments were received in the survey as they relate to priorities for the community. In many instances, these comments helped to further clarify and provide context to the information provided in the data. All survey results are included in this report including all comments received from the community.

The survey covered a number of key areas that have been identified by the community in previous work and throughout the responses a high priority and recurring emphasis was placed on preserving and expanding green space, ensuring housing affordability, safety for pedestrians, and the value of small and local business owners. Specifically regarding building development - building heights, views, and shadowing impact scored relatively low as neighbourhood design priorities. In this report, WEMAC makes 23 recommendations to Mayor and Council arising from priorities identified by the community.

The three most important transportation related issues identified by West End residents were:

1. Access to transit
2. Safer intersections
3. Traffic calmed streets

The three most important housing priorities for West End residents were:

1. Increase rental stock
2. Increase subsidized housing
3. Increase co-op housing

The five most important neighbourhood design priorities identified by West End residents were:

1. Retain heritage buildings
2. Mix of commercial and residential
3. Open spaces, landscaping
4. Designs that complement surroundings
5. Buildings setback from sidewalks

The seven most important livability features identified by West End residents were:

1. Walkability
2. Self-contained community
3. Close to work and opportunities
4. Diverse recreation
5. Safety
6. Shopping and commercial district
7. Diverse cultural mix

The seven most important public space/facility improvement priorities for West End residents were:

1. Green space
2. Hospitals and health care facilities
3. Libraries
4. Laneway parks
5. Community Centres
6. Access to public fountains and washrooms
7. On street recycling

WEMAC Survey

Purpose

In order to deliver the mandate of WEMAC, a key component was a mechanism to develop and maintain a list of community priorities for the West End. As has previously been indicated a community survey was developed by WEMAC of which the basis of many recommendations in this report are the result of data analysis from the community survey completed as well as subjective data, meetings and the experiential knowledge of the community members of WEMAC (see Appendix).

This report contains the results of a survey of people who live in and/or operate a business in the West End.

The information which follows provides detailed data from the survey completed by members of the West End Community.

Data Collection

The survey was initiated by the West End Mayor's Advisory Committee (WEMAC) to collect information, observation and priorities for the West End. The survey was available to West End Residents both on-line and by paper copy for the period of May 13, 2011 to June 10, 2011.

Paper copy survey Pick-up Locations

Joe Fortes Library (also-drop off location for completed surveys)
Office of Spencer Herbert, MLA
Office of Hedy Fry, MP
Gordon Neighbourhood House

Outreach to Increase Awareness of the Survey

WEMAC also engaged in community outreach activities at the following locations:

Delaney's Coffee House (on Denman Street)
Denman Place Mall
Dr. Peter Centre
King George Secondary School
Mainstreeting
Denman Street
Davie & Bute Street
Mole Hill
Nelson Dog Park
West End Community Centre

WEMAC received support from the following organizations in distribution of the survey notifications:

Bosley's
Little Sister's
Mole Hill Community Housing Society
Pacific Co Tanning
Qmunity – Queer Resource Centre
Renters at Risk
SIT Doggy Daycars
St.Andrew's-Wesley United Church

Vancouver PRIDE Society (VPS)
West End Business Improvement Association (WEBIA)
West End Residents Association (WERA)
West End Seniors Network (WESN)
Vancouver Public Space Network (VPSN)

WEMAC also used social media, including Twitter and Facebook, to advertise survey availability.

Independently from WEMAC, the Mayor's Office emailed the survey to valid emails of West End residents on a petition related to West End priorities submitted to the Mayor's Office from the West End Neighbours (ad-hoc resident's committee).

Data Analysis

The data was considered in its entirety as well as in some instances across an additional lens of Owners and Renters. As the West End consists of 81% of the residents in rental housing, it was felt by WEMAC that it was important to consider in the findings any anomalies between these two distinct groups. It is also important to note that the considerable number of additional comments that were received were considered in tandem when considering the statistical data and in formation of any recommendations arising from the data.

In order to more visually reflect the strength of responses to certain elements of this report, a weighting scheme has been utilized. For example, in some instances, 3 points were given for the "Often" choice, 2 for "Frequently", 1 for "Rarely" and 0 for "Never". Graphs noted as "Weighted" have used a similar approach although the number of points ascribed varies with the number of choice options in each section of the survey.

Survey Limitations

In development of the survey and in engagement with the community, WEMAC recognizes that a number of limitations are evident. These limitations do not decrease the value of the results, but provide opportunities for improving future community engagement activities. Limitations included, but were not limited to:

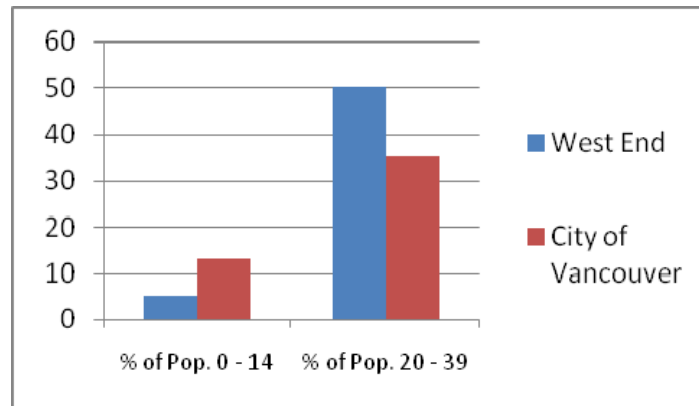
- **Technology** use for the on-line survey. Time and financial resources dictated the use of a limited use survey tool.
- Sections and **priorities listed** were choices based up on survey work that was previously completed by other organizations and may not include the full range of possibilities for these categories.
- **Engaging communities** is a challenge at the best of times. Those who often participate, often participate again, while those assuming the status-quo will prevail, remain disengaged.
- **Engaging Renters** is difficult as gaining access to rental buildings is challenging. As well, due to the transient nature of some renters, they are often less likely to become active in community issues.
- **Engaging Elementary Schools** was challenging as administration would not participate in communication initiatives with parents and children.
- **Age representation.** As is common, there was a very limited number of responses from those under the age of 30 despite this group representing a high proportion of our resident mix.
- **Timing.** The survey was available for responses from the community for 4 weeks
- **Cross-cultural/Multi-Language responses.** The survey was available in English only which likely limited the participation of some members of our community.

Who Lives in the West End?

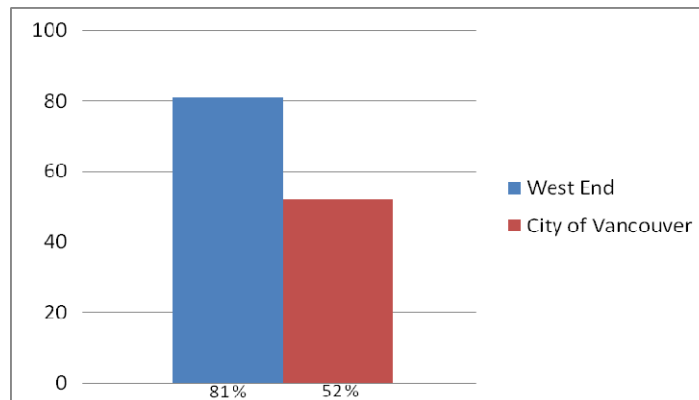
WEMAC identified early in the process that critical to the success of the WEMAC survey would be engaging members our community in representative proportions to those identified by the 2006 Census Canada Survey. In other words, we did not hear from a fully representative sample. Several demographic factors were key in consideration.

Compared to the City of Vancouver overall:

- a. The percentage of population aged 0 – 14 is lower although the density of children is higher than any other local area.(West End 5%, CoV 13%)
- b. The percentage of population aged 20 – 39 is higher (West End 50%, CoV 35%)



- c. The percentage of rented homes is much higher. (West End 81%, CoV 52%) *(Note: 18% of the city's rental stock is in the West End)*



- d. The percentage of who walks to work is much higher (West End 40%, CoV 12%)
- e. The average and median income is lower (West End \$38,500, CoV \$47,000)
- f. The West End has significantly more seniors who rent (68%) than the City of Vancouver as a whole (34%).

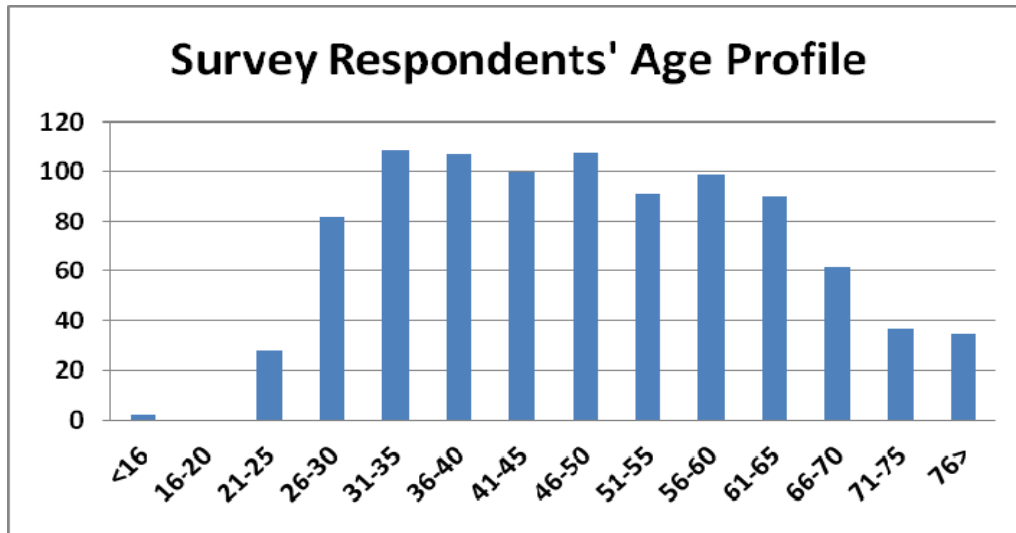
Notable demographic shifts in the West End over the past 20 years

- a. The percentage of population over age 65 has decreased (1986: 17%, 2006: 11%)
- b. The percentage of owner occupied dwellings has increased (1986: 9%, 2006: 19%)

WEMAC Survey Participation - Demographics

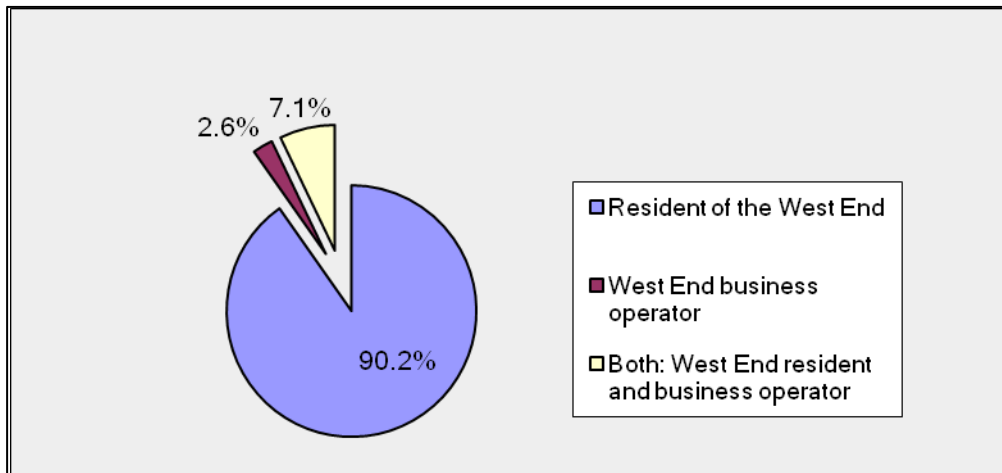
Total number² of completed surveys: 994

Responses were received with a balanced distribution across age profiles.



Resident, West End Business Operator or Both

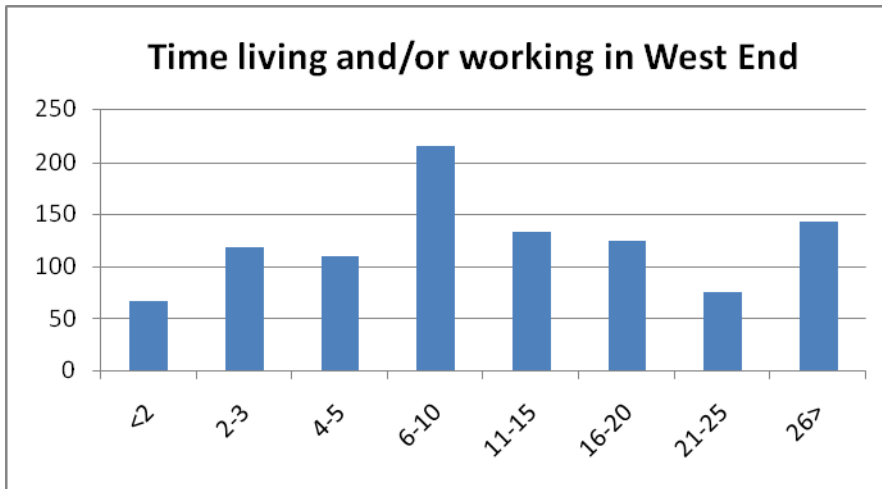
The survey was open to both residents and business owner and operators in the West End. A mix of survey respondents were received across these categories with a notable response from the business community.



Years in total lived and/or worked in the West End

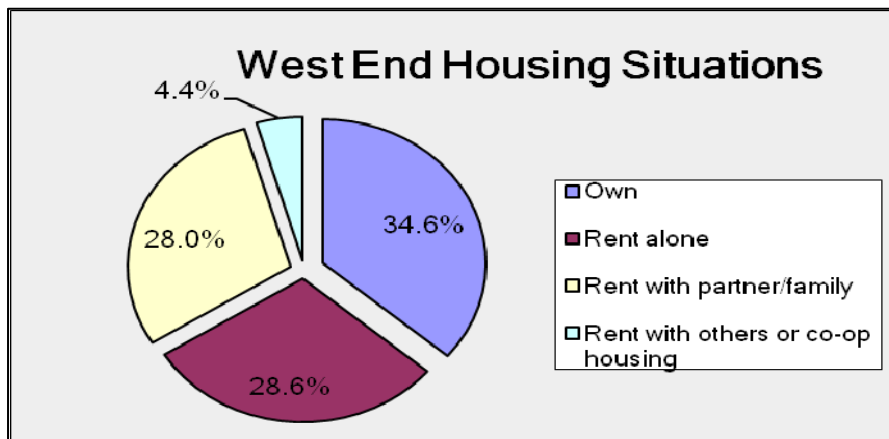
² There were also approximately 85 hand-completed surveys that could not be fully entered due to missing or invalid data completion. However the comments from these forms have been included in the detailed comments section in Appendix A.

Survey respondents were asked to share the number of years they have been living and/or working in the West End.



Housing Status

It is recognized in the survey results that there is a higher percentage of respondents from owners as opposed to renters when compared to the current mix of these two groups. As previously describe in this report the 2006 Census Canada data, indicates that 81% of residents in the West End live in rented dwellings. Only 65.4% of WEMAC survey respondents self-identified as renters.

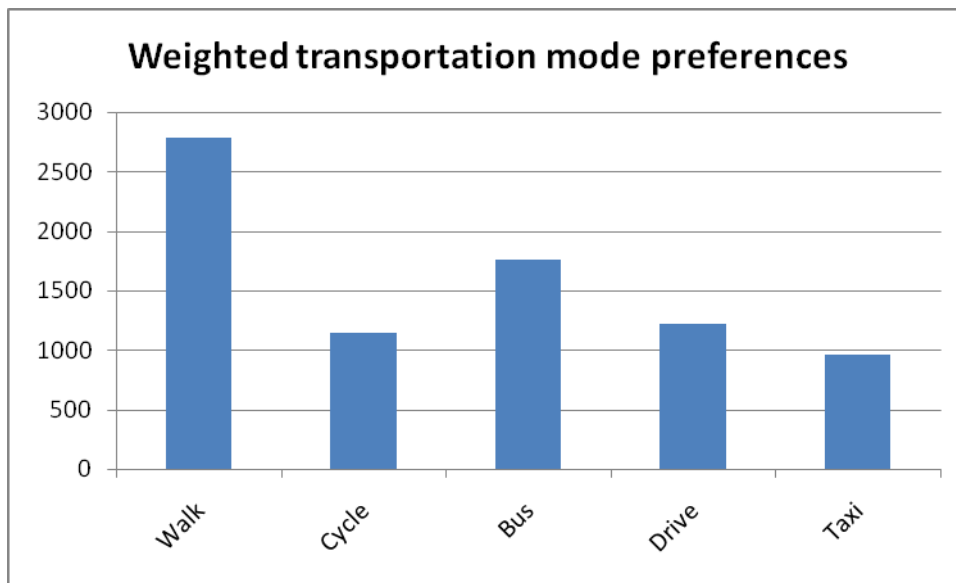


WEMAC Survey Results

Transportation

Transportation modes used to get around in the West End

Survey respondents were asked how often they use the following transportation modes to get around the West End³.



When the various modes of transportation were analyzed, the major difference between owners and renters is that owners reported that they choose driving slightly more than renters and renters, conversely, report using the bus slightly more than owners.

Other modes of transportation that were identified included, in no particular order, the following:

- SkyTrain
- car share / co-op
- roller blade
- skateboard
- scooter / motorbike
- mobility scooter

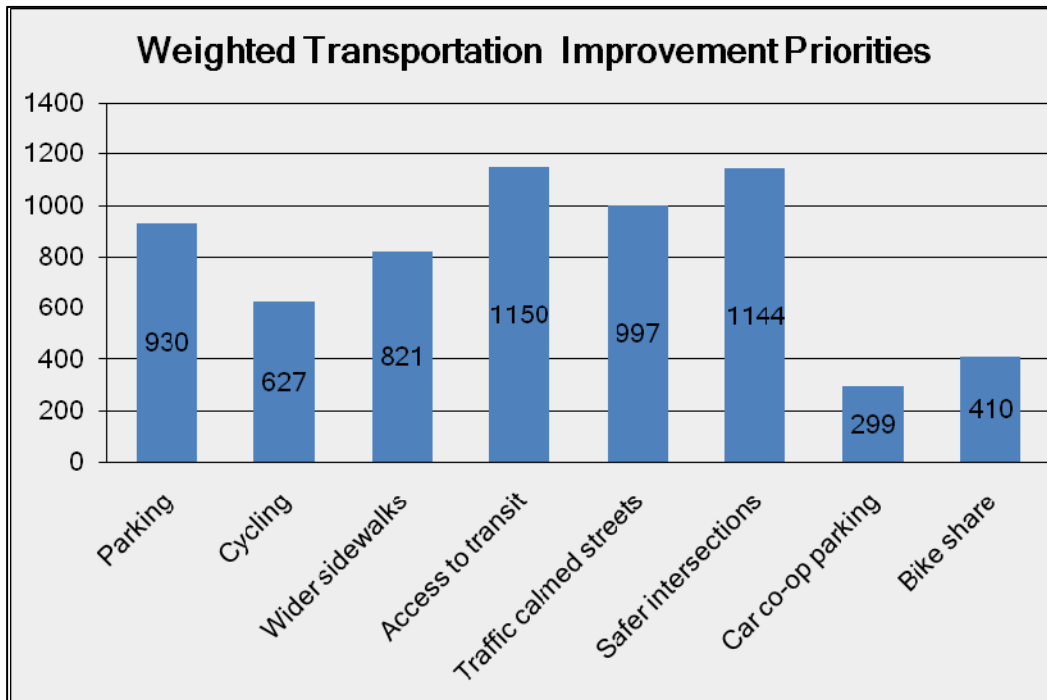
Transportation priority improvements

From a total list of eight (8), survey respondents were asked to rank in order of importance, the top three (3) transportation related issues that are most in need of improvement and/or more resources in the West End.

³ In order to more visually reflect the strength of responses to certain elements of this report, a weighting scheme has been utilized. For example, in this instance, 3 points were given for the “Often” choice, 2 for “Frequently”, 1 for “Rarely” and 0 for “Never”. Other graphs noted as “Weighted” have used a similar approach although the number of points ascribed varies with the number of choice options on the survey.

The three most important transportation related improvements identified by West End residents were:

1. Access to transit
2. Safer intersections
3. Traffic calmed streets



When the various transportation improvement priorities were analyzed, the only area with a very minor difference between owners and renters is that owners reported a slightly higher rating for the need to improve traffic calming on streets.

Other comments⁴ about transportation priorities included:

Transit

- *bus routes and scheduling do not adequately serve the needs of the West End*
- *other transit modes should be investigated for the West End in addition to buses and community shuttles*
- *TransLink is encouraged to improve the overall reliability of the transit for the West End by focusing on customer needs*



Cycling

- *There should be restrictions where cycling is allowed, particularly with respect to use of sidewalks*
- *Existing bylaws pertaining to cyclists should be better enforced*
- *Cyclists need to be more courteous and thoughtful of other people, particularly pedestrians but also drivers*
- *Many people indicated that they were opposed to the bike lanes that have been installed but there were also (though fewer) supporters of the bike lanes*

Driving

- *There needs to be better enforcement and other measures taken to make vehicular traffic safer*
- *Some of the existing traffic calming measures have also introduced safety concerns*
- *Drivers need to be more respectful of other modes of transportation, particularly of pedestrians*
- *Measures need to be taken to address traffic flow in the West End, including the consideration of traffic restrictions in places*
- *There also were some comments that reflected the ongoing reality of cars as a part of West End and need for support while also the opposite comments of the need to reduce car traffic in the West End*

Walking

- *Many of the comments pertaining to pedestrians related to the need to improve*

⁴ As the reader reviews these comments, it will be apparent that there are many perspectives and they sometimes appear contradictory. However, the comments as they appear in this section of the report are a high-level synthesis of “similar” comments from many people who agreed with each other. To get a better sense of the nuances and specific ideas in each section, the reader is encouraged to look at the detailed comments survey respondents made for this and other sections of this report in the Appendix – WEMAC Survey Comments. It is also important to point out that the graphical representations in the report are based on the numerical rankings of the surveys while the “weight” of the commentary is not statistical but rather should be treated in a way to add a more robust look at the ideas within the community.

safety conditions

- *Improvements to sidewalks are needed, particularly with respect to the blockages due to sidewalk signs*
- *Pedestrian behaviour also was noted as needing to improve with respect to other modes of transportation*

Parking

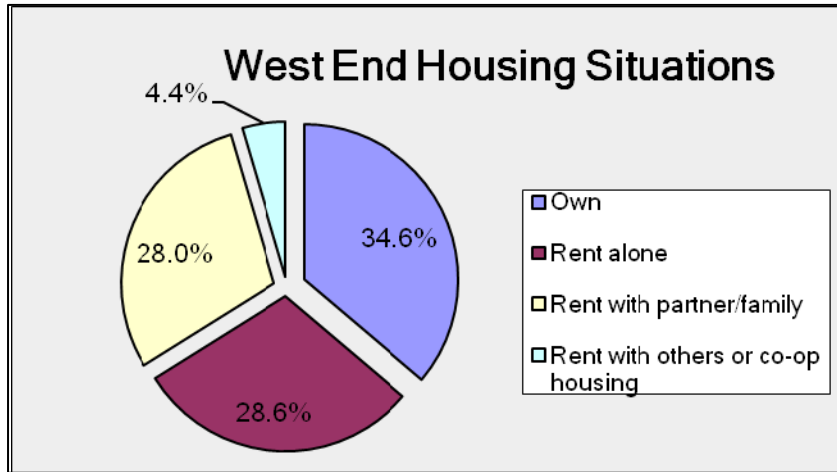
- *Many survey responses indicated that the difficulty of parking, in particular for visitors to the West End is a particular concern and in general is too restrictive*
- *However, there were also comments indicating that parking should be even more restrictive*
- *Some suggestions have been made that other parking options should be sought to increase capacity*

WEMAC Recommendations: Transportation

1. A West End Transportation Task Force be established with a mandate to make urgent recommendations on safety for pedestrians and develop recommendations regarding better access to transit. Considering the unique nature of the West End with respect to the transportation needs and exemplified by the contradictions between modes used versus issues cited in this survey (e.g. walking versus need for more parking), this advisory group should also act as a contributing body to the City of Vancouver Transportation Plan Update that is currently being undertaken.
2. WEMAC supports the establishment of a city-wide pedestrian advisory committee as requested of city staff by motion of Mayor Robertson on November 18, 2010.
3. Future development in the West End should reflect the transportation improvement priorities in the order they are reported in the table on page 14.

Housing

Survey respondents were asked to identify their current housing situation.⁵



Other housing situations that were reported included the following;

- Leasehold
- Co-op housing
- Affordable housing (subsidized)
- Rent and work in same location

It is recognized in the survey results that there is a higher percentage of respondents from owners as opposed to renters when compared to the current mix of these two groups. As previously describe in this report the 2006 Census Canada data, indicates that 81% of residents in the West End live in rented dwellings. Only 65.4% of WEMAC survey respondents self-identified as renters.

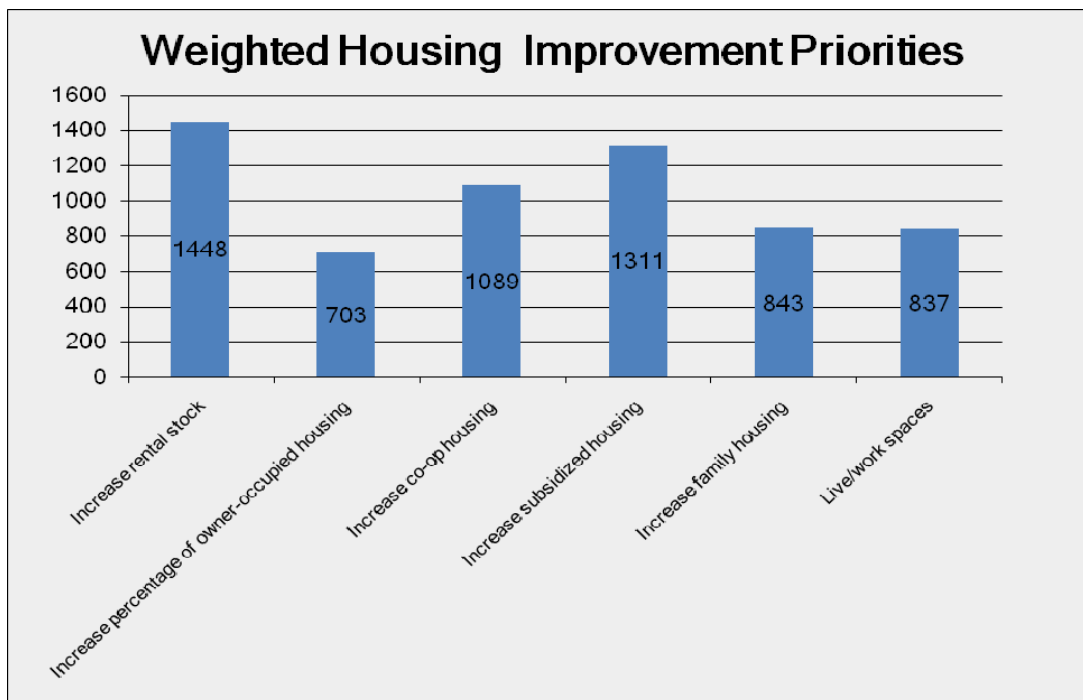
Housing priority improvements

From a list of six (6) choices, survey respondents were asked to rank the three (3) housing issues that are most in need of improvement and/or more resources in the West End.

The three most important housing improvements for West End residents were:

- 1. Increase rental stock**
- 2. Increase subsidized housing**
- 3. Increase co-op housing**

⁵ For many of the responses, additional analysis has been done to determine where owners and renters have similar and dissimilar responses to the survey.



When the various housing improvement priorities were analyzed, the only area where there was basic agreement among owners and renters was the need to increase subsidized housing which also was the second highest supported area overall. Owners had a significantly higher rating on the need to increase percentage of owner-occupied housing. Renters, on the other hand, had a higher support rating on all the other options to increase rental stock, co-op housing, family housing and live/work spaces.

While participants were asked to comment about housing improvement priorities, there is definitely a blurring of the lines with regard to preserving the character of the West End, neighbourhood design, livability issues and concerns about density and building types. The reader will see this in reviewing the detailed comments in Appendix – WEMAC Survey Comments. In summary, comments regarding housing priorities included the following:

- *Do not lose the character of the West End*
- *'Renovictions' are a significant problem and renter protection is needed*
- *It is important to preserve and improve the existing rental stock*
- *Ensure that there is a mix of building type and accommodation*
- *More rental and affordable housing is required – there were also some comments that it is important to not overbuild rental accommodation or supportive housing*



- *Affordability is a significant concern*
- *More family oriented rental housing is needed*
- *More support to develop Co-op housing should be provided*
- *Seniors and other supportive housing needs must be addressed*
- *Concerns with impacts of STIR on the community; several comments said that STIR should be discontinued*
- *There should be controls to restrict empty units and the construction/purchase of accommodation for speculative purposes*
- *More pet friendly buildings are needed*
- *Some comments called for more condos*

WEMAC Recommendations: Housing

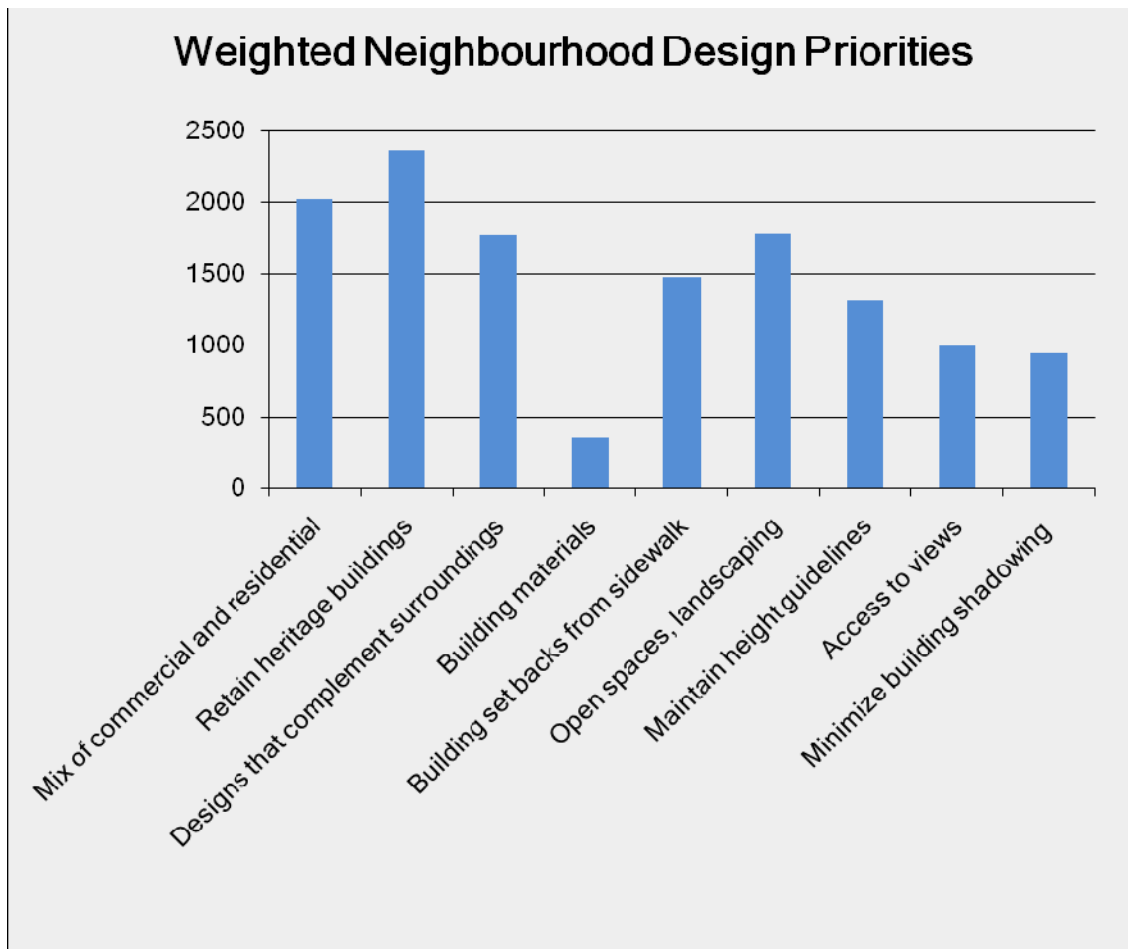
4. A West End Rental Advocacy Committee be established to develop a robust and sustainable plan for outreach to West End renters for the City of Vancouver. In light of the significant challenges in engaging renters, the committee would also address the many issues identified by this report thereby providing a reliable, cohesive voice for West End renters with other levels of government. This committee would serve as a liaison with other existing community-based rental groups and co-participate in bringing forward initiatives to address rental housing concerns.
5. All new development consideration in the West End must have a priority for maintaining rental housing stock. At a minimum, the 80/20 renter/owner ratio should be maintained with priority given to projects that increase the ratio of renters in the West End.
6. In order to encourage affordability, a designated portion of the rents in new purpose built rental developments should be targeted towards the median income of the community. (*Note: Based on 2006 Census data, median income of the West End is \$38,500*)
7. The City of Vancouver, leverage partnerships with other levels of government and examine all possible means to increase affordable housing options within the West End.
8. WEMAC meet with, and encourage all residents of the West End to meet with, local MLAs and MPs to advocate for their support and funding for a full spectrum of affordable housing options, using the survey data as evidence.
9. Support the appointment of a community-based Rental Protection Advocate at the City of Vancouver with a city-wide mandate to support renters.
10. Future development in the West End should reflect the housing improvement priorities in the order they are reported in the table on page 18.

Neighbourhood Design

Survey respondents were asked to identify from a list of nine (9), the top five (5) design ideals that should be most favoured for the West End.

The five most important neighbourhood design priorities for West End residents were:

1. Retain heritage buildings
2. Mix of commercial and residential
3. Open spaces, landscaping
4. Designs that complement surroundings
5. Buildings setback from sidewalks



When the various neighbourhood design improvement priorities were analyzed, owners were somewhat more strongly in favour of maintaining existing height guidelines. Renters were somewhat more supportive of ensuring a mix of commercial and residential as well as ensuring the complementary nature of building materials to the surrounding area. All other areas, the viewpoints were highly similar. It is noted as well that in both the data and comments, there was no unified/agreeable/common definition of “character” suggested and it remains to be a nebulous web of a number of characteristics spanning many areas of this survey.



The comments about neighbourhood design priorities included the following:

- *Maintain the current character of the West End neighbourhood*
- *Make sure that building styles compliment the existing style in that area of the West End*
- *Work to a community plan, stop spot rezoning*
- *Comments noted that there were concerns with the City’s public consultation and other processes*
- *Comments were made both on the need for density as well as a concern for the focus on density*
- *Comments were also made both in favour of and opposed to high buildings, including a call to restrict heights and high rises*
- *Ensure that natural light and viewsapes are maintained*
- *Preserve West End heritage features*
- *Ensure that there is a focus on design*

WEMAC Recommendations: Neighbourhood Design

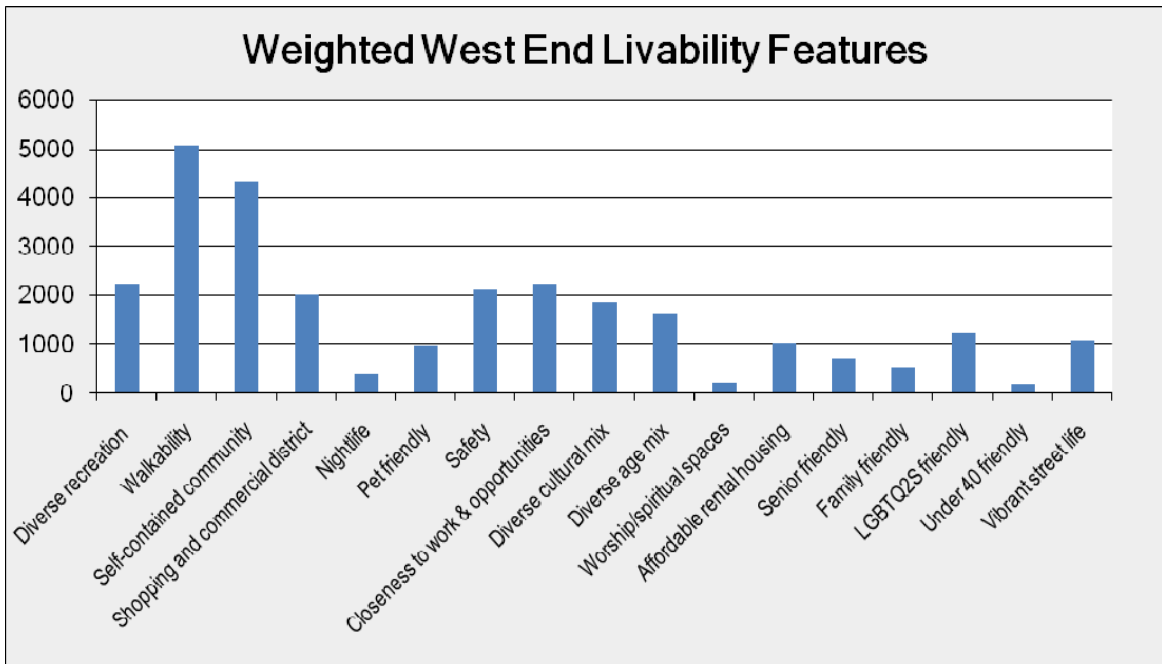
11. In consideration of a similar model already established for the community of Shaughnessy, when development applications in the West End are brought to the Urban Design Panel, the West End Community should have an equal representation of community members as voting panel members as the counterparts from the total representation of professional advisory members.
12. Future development in the West End should reflect the neighbourhood design priorities in the order they are reported in the table on page 20.

Livability

Survey respondents were asked to identify from a list of seventeen (17), the top seven (7) reasons they choose to live in the West End.

The seven most important livability features for West End residents were:

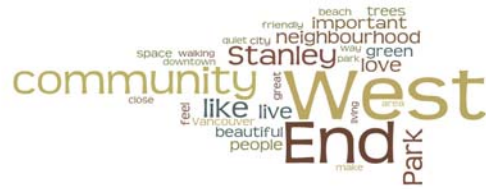
1. Walkability
2. Self-contained community
3. Close to work and opportunities
4. Diverse recreation
5. Safety
6. Shopping and commercial district
7. Diverse cultural mix



When the various reasons for living in the West End were analyzed, renters significantly more strongly valued affordable rental housing, nightlife and under 40 friendly than owners and moderately less valuing of worship/spiritual spaces. All other items showed relatively little difference between these two groups.

The comments about neighbourhood livability included the following:

- *Many comments reflecting that the West End is a beautiful, safe, diverse, accessible community*
- *Green space, access to parks and the beach is wonderful*
- *It was also noted that the West End is considered by many to be the LGBTQ community “home base”*



WEMAC Recommendations: Livability

13. Future development in the West End should reflect the livability features in the order they are reported in the table on page 22.

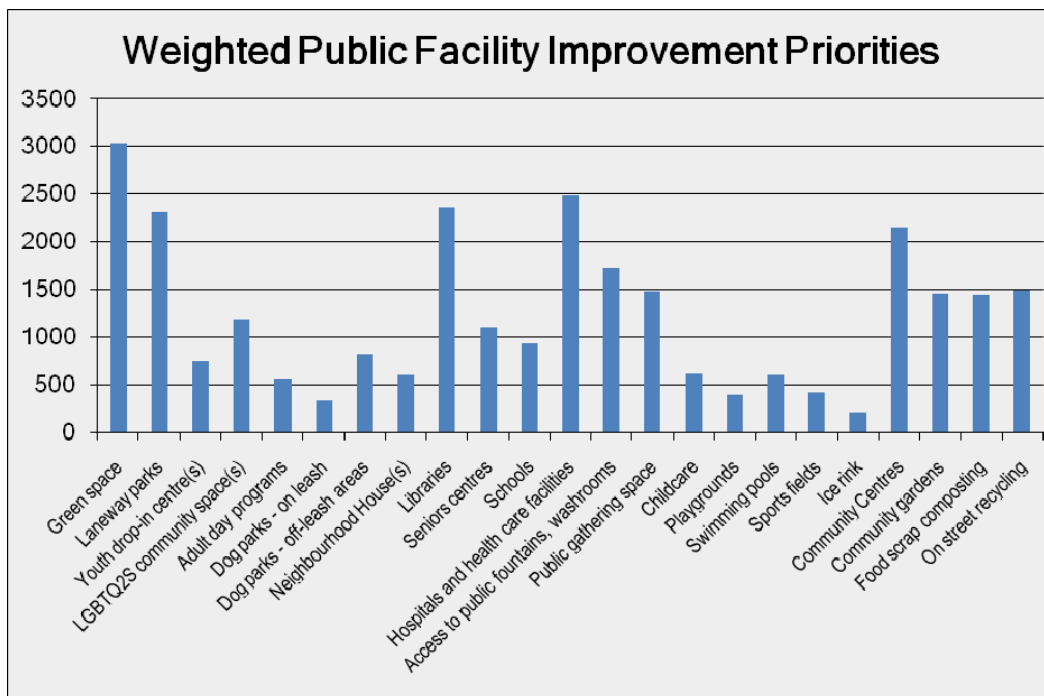
SPECIAL NOTE: Please see transportation section for other recommendations related to walkability. Additional recommendations related to self-contained community and work/opportunities are included in both the Community Facilities section and the Commercial/Retail opportunities section.

Public Space and Facilities

Survey respondents were asked to identify from a list of twenty-three (23), the top seven (7) public facilities that are most in need of more resources and/or improvement.

The seven most important public facility improvement priorities for West End residents were:

8. Green space
9. Hospitals and health care facilities
10. Libraries
11. Laneway parks
12. Community Centres
13. Access to public fountains and washrooms
14. On street recycling



When the various public facility improvement priorities for the West End were analyzed, owners were significantly stronger in feeling than renters that the ice rink needed improvement and moderately stronger in feeling need for an improvement of seniors centres. On the other hand, renters were significantly stronger in their support for improvements to on street recycling, youth drop-in centre(s) and on leash dog parks. Renters were more modestly in support of improvements to public gathering space, childcare, community gardens and food scrap composting.

The comments about public facility improvement priorities included the following:

- *There is support for “green” activities such as food composting*
- *Park, public and green space improvements and protection are required*
- *Better accessibility needed for mobility impaired*

- *Address issues with garbage and messiness*
- *Improve LGBTQ facilities and programming*
- *Improve facilities and infrastructure in general – in particular, swimming facilities, library and community centre were noted as needing improvements*
- *Concern was expressed about health care facilities and particularly the need to ensure St. Paul's Hospital is kept in the community*
- *Improve pet friendliness*

WEMAC Recommendations: Public Space and Facilities

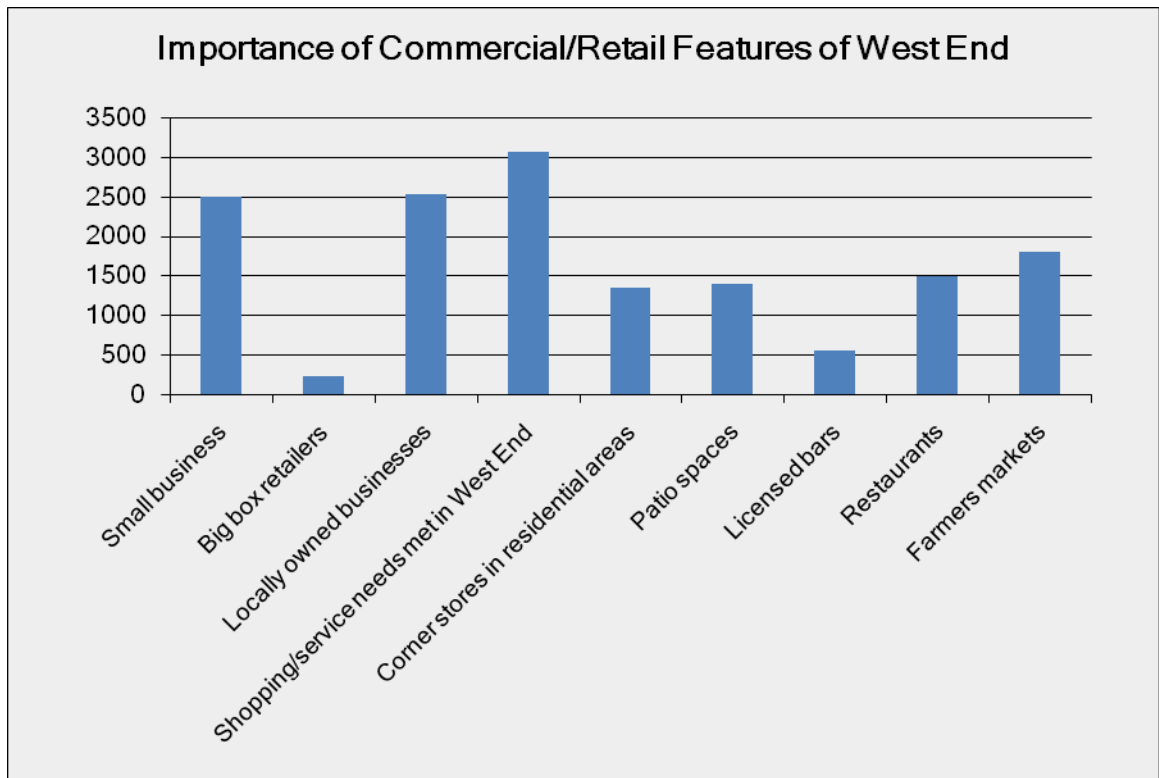
14. Prioritize the preservation of green, open and public space in the West End and that undertake the following activities:
 - City staff work with Park Board and community members to complete a green, open and public space asset map to identify immediate opportunities to increase green, open and public space
 - City staff conduct a study on repurposing laneways as green space, pedestrian thoroughfares, cycling infrastructure and other uses that emphasize West End resident priorities
 - Future development proposals be evaluated against the asset map and laneway study
15. WEMAC meet with local MLAs and MPs regarding the need for investment in healthcare and hospital facilities within the West End.
16. A community vision process be undertaken immediately to better understand the current use of and future planning for an updated/new West End Community Centre and Library.
17. Future development in the West End should reflect the public facilities improvement priorities in the order they are reported in the table on page 24.

Commercial/Retail Characteristics

Survey respondents were asked to rank from a list of nine (9) the top five (5) commercial/retail characteristics of the West End.

The five most important commercial/retail features for West End residents were:

1. **Shopping/service needs met in West End**
2. **Locally owned businesses**
3. **Small businesses**
4. **Farmers markets**
5. **Restaurants**



When the various aspects of the commercial/retail features of the West End were analyzed, renters and owners indicated very similar values.

The comments about the commercial/retail features of the West End included the following:

- *Many comments recognized that it is important to integrate businesses and services as a part of the community*
- *There were several comments encouraging improvements to the shopping, dining and*



entertainment opportunities

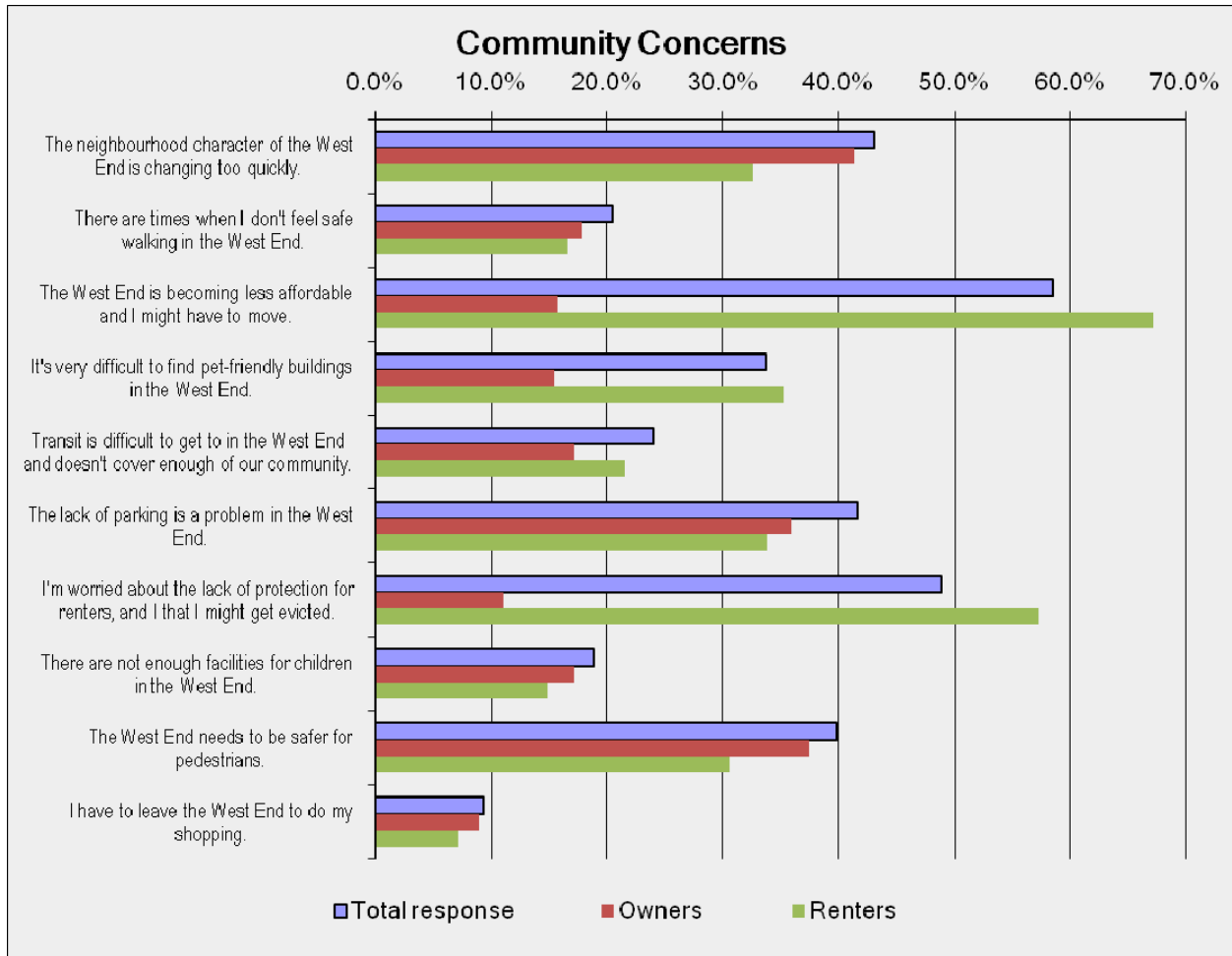
- *Numerous comments indicated a desire to put limits on some types of businesses – in particular there were concerns about big-box retailers as well as chain outlets and the number of similar types of the same business (mainly food outlets)*
- *Some survey comments call for improvements to the farmers market and street food vendors*
- *The commercial street areas, mainly Davie and Denman were seen as areas in need of clean-up*
- *Some indicated that the West End provides a good selection while others noted that the costs are too high*

WEMAC Recommendations: Commercial/Retail Characteristics

18. Review the current commercial zoning bylaws to ensure they support an eclectic and diverse mix of business in the West End.
19. Continue to press the BC Assessment Authority and the provincial government to allow Vancouver to differentiate between small business and others in property tax policy.
20. Future development in the West End should reflect the commercial/retail features in the order they are reported in the table on page 26.

Community Concerns

Survey respondents were asked to consider a number of statements and select any that they could identify with. The chart below identifies the response and also includes a reflection of similarities and differences between those concerns felt by owners and those felt by renters.



Survey respondents were also provided the opportunity to express concerns regarding the West End that were not captured in other survey items.

Comments included the following:

- *Poverty, vagrancy and homelessness need to be addressed*
- *There are calls to address safety and intolerance issues*
- *Need more opportunities for*



people to connect

- *Public events that serve the whole city but take place in the West End and the entertainment district are reported as having a negative impact on the community*
- *Noise is a problem*
- *Some people feel that “NIMBYism” is blocking community evolution*
- *Laneways are noted as needing attention – both from lack of being cared for as well as opportunities they present*
- *A few comments indicated that everything is just fine as it is*

The information provided through the Community Concerns section was intended provide contextual support and information to the mayor around community concerns, rather than in the development of any specific recommendations based on the information

Other Concerns

Some survey respondents also commented on the survey and on WEMAC. While these were not numerous, the nature of these comments included:

- *Resentment over the forced choices the items called for*
- *A feeling that the survey items reflected a bias or were designed to collect a pre-conceived idea of what the outcomes would be*
- *Distrust of WEMAC as agents of developers*

Other WEMAC recommendations

As identified within the terms of reference for WEMAC, the committee has been asked to provide advice to the Mayor's Office on further initiatives to increase links between the West End and the City in relation to development and policy. Within the data and information gathered through the survey, WEMAC meetings, and community engagement activities, and through the detailed review of comments provided by the community, WEMAC makes the following additional recommendations.

NOTE: The following represent initial recommendations of WEMAC. It is anticipated that further recommendations will be brought forward as further activities take place arising from recommendations in this report.

WEMAC Recommendations: General

21. Update and develop a Comprehensive Community Vision and Plan to reflect the updated needs and priorities of the West End Community. This is to be accomplished through the City of Vancouver Community Vision and planning processes. (See existing West End Residential Areas Policy Plan, 1987)

WEMAC Recommendations: Development Process & Policy

22. The current two-block blanket rule for notification is insufficient and must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. New tools need to be developed for notification beyond the "official" notification current received by residents. These may include leaflets, posters, information posted in community library and community centre. Social media tools will be included in the hopes of increasing citizen engagement.
23. Community input to development proposals should come earlier in the Planning Department's decision-making process. The current process does not provide for community feedback until after plans have been developed. A revised process will improve the participation of the community and developers throughout the planning process.

WEMAC: Further Activities

Meetings with Developers

As identified in the WEMAC Terms of Reference, the committee is now expected to meet with developers proposing re-zonings in the West End prior to community open houses to ensure these proposals are informed by current community priorities.

In delivery of this term, WEMAC will be immediately developing a balanced scorecard of community priorities based on those identified by our community in this report that will be applied to all currently proposed developments in the West End.

This scorecard process will provide an opportunity for WEMAC to deliver specific feedback to developers and City Council with a recommendation that it be given formal consideration by City staff and Council as decisions are taken regarding these applications. This scorecard will serve as the basis of a future feedback mechanism for development applications as they enter the process as opposed to the look back that WEMAC will now be taking with current applications.

Meetings are anticipated to take place with developers in the Summer of 2011.

Community Priorities: Areas of Focus

WEMAC will review more deeply, what areas identified within the WEMAC survey data would benefit from further exploration and investigation (e.g. parking requirements, green space ideals, public space consideration). A subsequent report will be issued that will establish an order in which to move through the further research and community engagement and discussions on community priorities.