WALK WEST 10TH:
ENCOURAGING WALKING THROUGH
COMMUNITY-BASED SOCIAL MARKETING

by

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Date 16 December 1997
Abstract

Many transportation and other social problems would be eased or solved if the automobile dependency which is now so pervasive in North American cities were reduced. Many planners, transportation engineers, and other professionals and activists are advocating walking, among other things, as a viable transportation alternative. Various measures and programs are being applied in an attempt to get people out of their cars and onto their feet. This thesis discusses an addition to the pro-pedestrian tool kit: community-based social marketing. Adapted from marketing concepts which have been remarkably successful in influencing the consumption of goods and services, social marketing is a bundle of techniques intended to influence the adoption of socially desirable behaviours. A demonstration of community-based social marketing in the community of West Point Grey in Vancouver, British Columbia shows how social marketing can be used to encourage walking within neighbourhoods. The demonstration shows social marketing to be a promising new tool in the hand of those eager to promote walking, although more work needs to be done to verify this conclusion.
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Special thanks go to my son Dallin for loving me through the many hours I spent working on my “feecis” instead of playing with him. To quote someone else, “the only times better than when you didn’t interrupt me were when you did.”

But my deepest gratitude is reserved for my wife Rena. She suggested the name ‘Walk West 10th,’ and was my hope, my strength, my encouragement, my never-failing source of confidence. She is the real master of planning.
MOM, WILL YOU DRIVE ME INTO TOWN?

WHY SHOULD I DRIVE YOU, CALVIN? IT'S A PERFECT DAY OUTSIDE!

WHAT DO YOU THINK PEOPLE HAVE FEET FOR?

TO WORK THE GAS PEDAL.
Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

— Matthew 10:16
Chapter 1  ENCOURAGING WALKING IN NEIGHBOURHOODS

Walter is off work a little early today, so on his way home he drives to the local elementary school to pick up his young son. As the two of them get home, Walter’s teenage daughter comes running out of the house with a videotape in her hand. She hops into the family’s second car, yelling “Can’t talk, Dad, this movie is overdue!” She speeds away to the local video rental outlet. Walter steps into the house to find his wife working on supper. “I’m missing a couple of small ingredients, honey,” she tells him. “Will you pop over to the supermarket? I would go but I just got back from the salon.” As he starts out on his way to the supermarket, he cursorily notes driving past a corner store. He is busy planning how to cajole his wife into driving their son to soccer practice tonight.

This is a hypothetical story, but one that probably rings true to many people who live in Canadian cities. As Table 1 suggests, we use our cars a great deal. Many city dwellers use the automobile for most of their getting around: journeying to work, going shopping, running errands, visiting friends, and even getting to a nice place to go for a walk. Many people drive or ride in a car almost every day of their active lives. Historically considered a curiosity (ca. 1900), a plaything for the rich (ca. 1915), and a middle-class recreational device (ca. 1935), the automobile is now popularly perceived as a transportational sine qua non.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Toronto</th>
<th>Montreal</th>
<th>Vancouver</th>
<th>Edmonton</th>
<th>Ottawa</th>
<th>Quebec</th>
<th>Hamilton</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auto</td>
<td>77.1%</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
<td>76.1%</td>
<td>77.7%</td>
<td>83.0%</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
<td>86.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
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Sources: Irwin 1996; GVRD 1995
In sections of our cities this perception is, to an extent, unfortunately true. It is very difficult to live in many post-war suburban tracts without a car. Partially in response to this poverty of transportation choices, a movement to ‘fix’ the suburbs has gained tremendous momentum in the last decade. Commonly known as neotraditional planning or new urbanism, the movement is attempting to make the physical form of urban development more amenable to walking, cycling, and transit use.¹

However, in most parts of our cities, including all but the most extreme residential suburban monocultures, at least some trips can be made without the car. Transit is often an option for long trips, even if not a popular one. Cycling is frequently an option for trips less than 8 km in length (Pendakur et al. 1995). Finally, walking is often an option, especially within pre-war neighbourhoods and inner suburban rings. Neighbourhood residents often have at least some basic goods, services, institutions, and recreational destinations within reasonable walking distance. To be sure, the ‘selection’ of walkable destinations could probably be improved in most instances through intensification and redevelopment. That issue, however, is being addressed by new urbanists and other physical land-use planners, architects, and developers.

An issue which has not been seriously addressed relates to trips which could currently — i.e. with the existing urban form — be made by foot but are not. I call them possible walking trips. These are car trips within neighbourhoods which are short enough to be walked. Or they are trips (primarily non-work trips) which people make outside their neighbourhoods by car which they could, with a few minor lifestyle changes, make inside on foot. Take for example Walter’s trip to the supermarket. Assuming that the items his wife wanted could be purchased at the nearby corner store, his car trip could easily have been a walking trip.

¹ The neotraditional planning literature is voluminous. Calthorpe 1993; Langdon 1994; Crane 1996a, 1996b; Cervero and Gorham 1995; and Berman 1996 are examples that treat the transportation effects of neotraditional planning.
This thesis is focused on these trips. The goal underlying it is to increase the amount of walking in urban neighbourhoods. It is not about urban physical reconfiguration, though it complements efforts made in that direction. It is not about getting people to change their places of residence or work to reduce automobile dependence. It is about getting more walking out of existing urban geographies. It is about changing people’s attitudes and perceptions about walking. Towards these ends, it demonstrates how the concept of social marketing can be used to encourage walking within neighbourhoods, or in other words, to persuade people to walk more often when it is possible.

Social marketing is a behaviour-change methodology which has been used around the world to promote the adoption of various socially desirable behaviours. To the best of my knowledge, social marketing has never been systematically used to encourage walking. On the basis of my application of it, I strongly believe that it is a tool which those who advocate walking should add to their tool kits. Because of constraints on my research, I cannot provide quantitative evidence that social marketing can raise the modal split of walking by X percent. But what I do in this thesis is of equal importance. I provide a detailed example of how walking can be encouraged through social marketing. I explicate the social marketing process for my fellow transportation planners and pedestrian advocates. If in so doing I am persuasive about social marketing’s utility in promoting walking, so much the better.

This chapter sets the stage for the remainder of the thesis by putting social marketing into context with other, more common methods of encouraging walking. However, a review of the different ways to encourage walking is essentially irrelevant without an appreciation of why walking should be encouraged in the first place. In the following two sections, therefore, I argue that all of the serious problems associated with excessive automobile use can be mitigated by a shift towards walking.
Problems of Automobile Dependency

All technologies have costs in addition to benefits. Cultural critic Neil Postman (1992) believes that we enthusiastically embrace new technologies because we accept their advertised benefits without critically exploring their long-term costs. Postman's explanation seems to apply particularly well to the automobile. We have long enjoyed the benefits of the automobile, but are only now — now that the embrace has become a bear hug — beginning to appreciate the full extent of its countervailing costs. These costs add up to make a powerful case for efforts aimed at reducing our high levels of automobile use.

Ecological

Vehicle use has two serious consequences on the physical environment. The first is automobile-related air, water and soil pollution. Harmful chemical tailpipe emissions and microscopic particulate matter are the most obvious examples of such pollution, but atmospheric evaporation of motor oils and gasoline, contamination of water bodies and topsoil through spills and runoff of the same, and the pollution caused by manufacturing and disposing of vehicles, and extracting and refining vehicle fuels, are also part of the equation. All living creatures — people, animals, and plants — suffer as a result of automobile-related pollution. The second main ecological consequence has to do with excessive consumption of land. The automobile is a space-hungry machine; it has consumed

2 The following discussion addresses costs and benefits, but not in a strictly quantitative, economic way. Economic cost-benefit analysis of the use of transportation modes (e.g. Delucchi 1996; Litman 1996) is useful in several ways, but has limitations. Monetizing the cost of such things as ecological degradation, community disruption, and people's time, health, mood, pain, suffering, and death overly simplifies their significance. Leaving such costs out of total cost calculations, however, is misleading. Monetizing the total benefits of car use or walking — a mode of transportation which is essentially non-economic — is even more difficult than estimating the costs. Yet, the total economic costs and benefits of both driving and walking would all be necessary for a legitimate economic comparison of the two modes of transportation (Delucchi 1996). For this reason I prefer to explain the costs and benefits qualitatively, and to leave it up to the reader to make the cost-benefit trade-off. It is, incidentally, precisely because cost-benefit researchers cannot estimate all of these costs and benefits that most of them have been hesitant to express a preference for "a transportation option [like walking] that has near-zero external costs, or ... lower total social costs [than automobile use]" (Delucchi 1996, p. 9).
great amounts of land for streets, highways, and parking, and has precipitated low-density sprawl onto precious agricultural and natural land at the margin of every growing urban area.

**Economic**

It is now widely acknowledged that automobile-induced sprawl is uneconomic for the public purse. Municipalities, recognizing that new suburban developments do not generate enough tax revenues to pay for the infrastructure they require, are increasingly exacting development cost charges from developers (Altschuler and Gomez-Ibanez 1993). Even with the money collected from development cost charges, however, public authorities still cannot afford to increase roadway supply as was done in the past. While the conventional response to traffic congestion has been to increase roadway space, more transportation planners are coming to believe that increasing roadway supply merely induces more traffic, leading anew to congestion and still more investment in a perverse positive feedback loop (Tolley and Turton 1995). A new report prepared for the World Bank, bringing together data from 37 cities in developed and developing nations, finds evidence that beyond a certain point growth in car use is detrimental to an urban region’s overall economy (Kenworthy et al. 1997).

**Social**

Cars are involved in the death of approximately 40,000 people in the United States and 3,500 people in Canada every year. The combined number of vehicle-induced fatalities in the two countries in 1995 — 45,145 — is equivalent to having an Oklahoma City bombing *every weekday of the year*. The annual number of people injured in the two countries in 1995 was respectively 3,386,000 and 241,800.\(^3\) The pain and suffering experienced by automobile crash victims and their families is

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\(^3\) Sources: Transport Canada, U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.
literally comparable to that of a major war. Compare the Vietnam War. In roughly twelve years, ‘only’ 58,000 Americans were killed and 304,000 injured.

Human carnage is the most dramatic social consequence of automobile use. Other consequences are quieter but perhaps more insidious. Consider, for example, the car’s effect on personal health. Part of why the car is so popular is that it does its job — transporting people — with so little human effort. Unfortunately, this is also one of its major downsides. Perhaps more than anything except for the television, the car has contributed to the sedentary way of life now so common in our society. Sedentariness is associated with poor physical health in general, and such specific ailments as coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, and osteoporosis (“Page for Patients” 1996).

Another less obvious negative social effect of the car is its role in the wasting away of local community. People who are auto-mobile are less tied to their home communities. Car drivers and passengers are also cut off by steel and glass and speed from any significant interaction with the people and places they pass by. As well, vehicle traffic on residential streets has been shown by Appleyard (1981) to have a deleterious effect on neighbouring.

**Political**

In response to all of the reasons listed above, but especially safety and livability concerns, residents in many jurisdictions oppose wide streets and heavy traffic volumes. Well organized and vocal community groups often demand that politicians and bureaucrats calm traffic and plan for alternatives to the automobile in their neighbourhoods.
Encouraging Walking in Neighbourhoods

**The Benefits of Walking**

Walking is one of the so-called ‘alternative’ modes of transportation. It is not outrageous or weird in the way that the word ‘alternative’ (e.g. alternative music, alternative clothing, ‘alt.’ Internet newsgroups) popularly implies. Walking (and its surrogates, wheelchairing and scootering) is an all-day, everyday activity for almost every member of the population. Even if it is just four houses down the block to a neighbour’s, or down the street to a parked car, virtually all of us walk. We all are experienced pedestrians.

In many ways, walking is the perfect antidote for the problems associated with over-reliance on the automobile.

**Ecological**

Unlike the vehicular traffic, walking has virtually no negative ecological effects. A pedestrian needs no special equipment (thus requiring no resource extraction, no manufacturing, and no end-of-life disposal), produces no harmful emissions, and requires no parking space and only a small fraction of the movement space of an automobile (Pendakur et al. 1995).

**Economic**

The cost of new or enhanced pedestrian facilities — where they are needed at all — is slight compared to the cost of freeways, interchanges, and road widening. Walkable, compact land uses can also be very economical from an infrastructure point of view (Essiabre Phillips Desjardins Associated Ltd. 1995). Finally, walking makes good personal economic sense because it is free! With family financial burdens being what they are, and the average cost of operating a new car in Canada being about $7,300 a year, people who can organize their lives around walking (and cycling and transit) and make do without a second or even a first car can save a significant amount of money.
Social

Walking is healthful, offering protection against the diseases enumerated above as well as relief from emotional distress (Burke 1992; Thayer 1996). Besides the health benefits of walking, there are also community-building benefits:

Walking allows people to interact with other pedestrians, to browse the local storefronts, and to enjoy open space and observe wildlife. In a safe, pedestrian-friendly environment people can comfortably walk their neighborhoods, increasing contact between neighbors. When people walk regularly they are more likely to develop favorite places and generally notice the comings and goings-on in their communities. Undoubtedly, this activity increases communication amongst neighbours and encourages greater involvement in community issues. (WSEO 1994, p. 5)

Political

Plans to get people out of their cars and onto their feet can ameliorate political difficulties caused by community groups opposed to speeding vehicles and high traffic volumes. Except in special cases (e.g. where residents fear increased crime as a result of higher pedestrian traffic), walking tends to be politically benign — a ‘motherhood’ issue with which community groups find it difficult to disagree. This is not to say that other interests — especially automobile commuters and the powerful road lobby — will not oppose pro-walking measures that they believe are also anti-car. The point is that the people whose interests should count the most in a neighbourhood — the local residents — are likely to be happy with efforts to make walking more common and more pleasant in cities.

Ways to Encourage Walking

There are a lot of Walters out there. It will be difficult to get them to walk more and drive less. However, there is reason to be optimistic that the difficulties can be overcome. Various measures or tools are at the disposal of those who seek to bring about a change.
Physical Measures

Walking can be encouraged by manipulating aspects of the physical environment, as advocated by the new urbanists. Making settlement patterns more dense and compact, and creating a fine grain or mix of land uses and housing types are the most basic physical measures which can be taken to increase walking, since pedestrians are so distance-sensitive (Untermann 1984). Pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks and street crossings can be built or upgraded. The pedestrian environment can be made more attractive through public realm treatments and pedestrian-friendly site planning. Traffic calming devices (traffic circles, corner bulges, speed humps, diagonal diverters, etc.) can be used to bring traffic speeds and volumes down to levels less hostile to pedestrians (Hass-Klau 1992; Hoyle 1995). Roads and intersections can be designed or redesigned in ways which improve pedestrian safety. Places where pedestrians may be at a real or perceived risk of personal assault can be given Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) treatments (Newman 1972).

Physical manipulation is the ‘home turf’ of land-use planners, transportation engineers, architects, landscape architects, and urban designers — the professionals most likely to be involved in pedestrian-oriented planning. For this reason, much of the effort in encouraging walking has thus far been limited to physical measures. There are two main problems with this limitation. First, it takes a very long time to physically restructure a city to be pedestrian-friendly. Large developments or redevelopments can easily incorporate good designs, but it may take decades for already-built-up areas of the city to be redesigned. Even then, walking distances and other basic features affecting walking may remain unchanged. Second, behaviour is not totally determined by one’s environment. To paraphrase Herbert Gans (1991), people’s lives are not totally shaped by their physical surroundings, and the ideal transportation system cannot be realized simply by providing an ideal physical environment. Necessary as it is for urban areas to be configured in ways which are amenable to walking, such configurations are only part of what influences people to walk. A city could have the
best possible pedestrian environment but low levels of walking — if people disapproved of walking for one reason or another, or simply preferred driving.

**Economic Measures**

The transportation literature is replete with calls intended to reduce automobile use by increasing its direct economic price. The operative logic here is that drivers only pay a fraction of the full cost of their motor vehicle use, and that if they had to pay the full cost, or closer to it, many of them would rationally use their cars less and walk, cycle, and use transit more. Some of the potential measures in this area are increasing the gasoline tax, levying bridge tolls, pricing road use (charging motorists according to how far they drive on certain roads), prorating vehicle insurance and registration by mileage, and raising parking prices (Emmerink *et al.* 1995; Litman 1997).

To the extent that they are implemented, these measures will be effective in getting people to drive less and (among other things) walk more. Unfortunately, their real-world application will be troublesome. Raising the economic price of driving is “clearly one of the least popular measures among the public at large” (Jones 1991, quoted in Emmerink *et al.* 1995). Even though it is true that drivers do not pay the full cost of their travel, many of them feel unfairly punished by higher prices. Many of them feel that they do not have a viable alternative to their cars. People who like driving bristle at plans intended to force them out of their cars. Pricing measures also cause inequity (Emmerink *et al.* 1995); the poor are disproportionately hurt by them, while the more wealthy classes, who can absorb the price increases fairly easily, are unlikely to switch to alternative modes of transportation. As a result of all this, political support for the implementation of road pricing is weak. In any event, some economic instruments (e.g. road pricing and bridge tolls) are unlikely to affect how much people drive within neighbourhoods.
Legal Measures

Independent of physical and economic measures, laws and regulations can be enacted or changed to promote walking. Reducing speed limits is one example. To the extent that reducing speed limits actually lowers average traffic speed (enforcement also being a factor here), the pedestrian environment becomes more attractive and safe for pedestrians (Roberts et al. 1995).

Another progressive legal measure involves changing roadway right-of-way rules according to Woonerf principles, such that pedestrians and vehicles are integrated rather than separated, and pedestrians have priority over vehicles in the entire roadway area (Ben-Joseph 1995). Low speed limits and special right-of-way rules can be built into new developments fairly easily, but getting them implemented in pre-existent urban areas is difficult — unless residents want them.

Educational Measures

Education is essential if the transportation modal split is to shift significantly, especially in situations (such as assumed in this thesis) where the urban form is relatively fixed. Some people simply do not know about the negative effects automobile dependency. Most people also lack an explicit awareness of the benefits of walking. Education is the method for letting people know and building awareness.

For education to be most successful, it is important to ‘start young.’ Children can be educated at school, for example through walk-to-school campaigns, resource materials which explain in simple terms the benefits of walking and cycling, and the example of their teachers and principals. Public authorities should also, of course, create educational programs for adults. They should be

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4 These campaigns can even be pitched to students who do not live within reasonable walking distance of their schools. Students who must be driven to school can be encouraged to have their parents drop them off and pick them up a block or two from the school. This gives the children a little exercise, teaches them that walking is important, and as an added benefit enhances pedestrian safety immediately around the school.
continuously gathering and publicizing (in a variety of ways, e.g. pamphlets, posters, billboards, news releases, policy documents, messages on tax statements) data which support the case for less driving and more walking.

Education is a powerful technique for changing people’s attitudes and beliefs. Too little transportation education has been done. Education too, however, has its limits. I once observed these limits while leaving an undergraduate sociology class in which we had spent an entire hour watching a documentary on smoking. The program depicted, in great detail, the deadly health effects of smoking, and exposed some of the cunning tactics which tobacco companies have used to get people addicted to their products. As we filed out of the lecture hall, one of the students lit up a cigarette.

Social Marketing Measures

Some people may be truly ignorant of the personally harmful consequences of smoking. Many more, however, smoke even though they have been ‘educated’ about its dangers. A similar dichotomy applies in the area of transportation. Many people are essentially unaware that their car driving contributes to serious societal problems. These people badly need to be educated! But they need something else, too. How else can we explain the situation of those who have to some extent been educated but who steadfastly continue to overuse their automobiles? Clearly, people’s behaviour is influenced by more than raw educational information. They do not respond mechanically like a computer to its programmer’s code.

People have minds. This is a simple fact, but not one that gets the attention it deserves in efforts to reduce automobile dependence. Before travel behaviour comes decision, and decision is a process with strong psychological factors. People may be unwilling to accept evidence that suggests that complete automobile dependency is harmful. They may acknowledge their small but important
role in transportation-induced problems, but in a ‘tragedy of the commons’ situation be unwilling to change their travel patterns in ways which ultimately benefit society because the initial personal sacrifices seem too high (Hardin 1968). Cognitive dissonance may have set in; they may have convinced themselves that their automobile use is quite moderate when in fact it is very high. They may desire to walk more and drive less, but find the status quo too comfortable. They may be lazy. They may value the prestige they derive from driving. They may fear walking alone. They may believe (rightly so, perhaps) that environmental factors or personal commitments make walking difficult or impossible. They may doubt their abilities to walk. The automobile habit may be too engrained. All of these are psychological factors in that they factor into the mental processes people go through (or do not go through, in the case of a strong automobile habit) when deciding on a mode of transportation.

The tools we currently have for encouraging walking do not adequately address the psychological factors which stop many people from walking more. Practitioners implicitly understand that environmental manipulations, higher driving costs, etc., influence people’s travel decisions, but they rarely consider the full range of psychological motivations bound up in those decisions when making plans to get people out of their cars and onto their feet.

People need more than to be educated. They need to be convinced. Granted, education is all some people need to be convinced to walk more often for their daily outings. But usually it is not that easy. Proponents of alternative transportation would do well to consider the experience of agencies and groups pushing the adoption of such things as recycling, low-fat eating, and ‘safe’ sex. Because of the difficulties they have experienced in trying to get people to adopt these behaviours, they have moved beyond merely trying to educate the public. They have moved into social marketing.


Organization of the Thesis

In this thesis I demonstrate how social marketing, which is defined and discussed in Chapter 2, can be used, either alone or along with the other measures discussed in this chapter, to encourage walking trips in replacement of automobile trips. The demonstration features the case of a community-based social marketing plan which I developed for the West Point Grey neighbourhood of Vancouver. The purpose of the plan was to encourage residents to walk to and from to the traditional shopping street, West 10th Avenue, which forms the backbone of the neighbourhood, instead of driving to West 10th or to a more distant location. Chapters 3 to 6 report on various stages of the plan’s preparation, from background research to (possible) implementation. In Chapter 7 I summarize the project and reflect on the use of social marketing to promote walking as a mode of transportation.
Chapter 2 COMMUNITY-BASED SOCIAL MARKETING

Marketing is not a term commonly used by planners and engineers and others who advocate alternative modes of transportation such as walking. Engineering, enforcing, regulating, and (in some cases) educating: these are the words which describe our usual business. Marketing is commonly seen as something private individuals and firms do to make money. Marketing may actually be unsavoury to some people, connoting products of dubious value such as cubic zirconium or Barbie dolls. Some transportation types may even be hostile to marketing because it has cultivated the excessive car use which we are now trying to rein in. However, those who ignore or reject marketing in their efforts to alter transportation behaviour neglect what ironically may be one of their most effective tools.

For marketing is not, strictly speaking, a method for creating private profit. Marketing is a bundle of techniques for ensuring a sale. The same techniques which were developed to sell shampoo and BMWs can also be used to ‘sell’ socially desirable practices such as recycling, breast feeding, low-fat eating — and walking. From a marketing point of view, these practices can be considered ‘products.’ They cannot be purchased in a store, of course, and no one has a patent on them. The economic principle of scarcity does not apply to them; people who want to do them — ‘consume’ them — generally always can. However, they do resemble what we traditionally think of products in that they exist in ‘markets’ in which they vie with competitors for people’s loyalty. Look back at Table 1 and consider transportation planners’ attention to modal split. How different is it, really, from the regard that the Kimberly-Clark and Proctor & Gamble corporations have for the market shares of their Huggies and Pampers brands of disposable diapers? The uphill battles that socially desirable practices typically face in getting adopted are very reminiscent of those faced by new consumer products entering competitive markets. The use of marketing techniques to promote these practices is called social marketing.
**Principles of Social Marketing**

The most rigorous definition of social marketing has been provided by Andreasen (1994, p. 110, italics added):

*Social marketing is the adaptation of commercial marketing technologies to programs designed to influence the voluntary behavior of target audiences to improve their personal welfare and that of the society of which they are a part.*

This definition can be used as a springboard to discuss some of the most important principles of social marketing, and the issues which flow from these principles.

**Adaptation of Commercial Marketing**

As already mentioned, social marketing borrows from methods developed for use in the private sector. These methods include strategic planning, marketing research, market segmentation, product design, price setting, and promotion. To plan strategically is to be organizationally savvy. Strategists focus on selected issues, recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their positions, are on top of external opportunities and threats, and work to identify and overcome barriers to action (Bryson and Roering 1987). Marketing research takes several different forms. The area of research in which marketers really shine is finding out relevant information about potential adopters. Marketers research people’s demographic characteristics, their psychological profiles (attitudes, values, motivations), and their patterns of behaviour (Kotler and Roberto 1989, p. 27). Other types of research include pretesting strategies or products, and follow-up monitoring and evaluation (Andreasen 1995, p. 98). Market segmentation is the practice of dividing potential adopters into subgroups on the basis of one or more variables. Segmentation helps a marketer decide who to target and who (if anyone) not to target, and adapt marketing strategies to different audiences. Product design involves formulating and packaging a product so that it will be as attractive as possible to people. Price setting is a matter of
keeping buyers’ monetary and psychological costs as low as possible, and ensuring that the benefits they receive from the product are as high as possible. Promotion, finally, is the art and science of persuasive communication (Kotler and Zaltman 1971).

Marketing is used by virtually every successful producer of consumer goods and services; its proven utility in promoting private products is the main reason why it is being adopted by an increasing number of people and groups keen to promote social causes. One can think of other technologies which have proven their mettle in one area being embraced in another. In the middle decades of this century, for example, sociologists, psychologists, human geographers, and other social ‘scientists’ zealously adopted logical positivism, the scientific approach which had produced so many brilliant advances in the realm of natural science.\(^1\)

Even though the basic techniques of marketing can be used as well in the for-social-benefit sphere as in the for-profit sphere, social marketing has many aspects which distinguish it from conventional marketing. One of the biggest differences is that whereas conventional marketing is intended to create or maintain demand for a product, social marketing is often pursued to reduce demand. (Attempting to reduce automobile use is an excellent example of this.) These are two different problems.\(^2\) It is often much more difficult to persuade people to break old habits than to create new ones (Gallagher 1994). Other features which distinguish social from conventional marketing include the following (Kotler and Andreasen 1991, pp. 415-20; Andreasen 1995, pp. 59-60):

- Social marketers often encourage people to adopt behaviours, products, or services that are uncomfortable in certain ways (e.g. walking is less comfortable in some ways than driving) or downright unpleasant (e.g. walking in a heavy downpour on a cold, windy day).
- Social marketers may face intense public scrutiny.

\(^1\) That the infusion of science into the study of social issues has had troubling cultural side-effects (Postman 1992) is warning to social marketers that they must be very careful about how they adapt private-sector marketing techniques.

\(^2\) They are not, however, mutually exclusive problems. Social marketing intended to break old habits often encourages new, replacement habits.
• They may have to deal with unrealistic expectations of their capabilities.
• They often deal with highly sensitive issues.
• The benefits resulting from the desired behaviour change may be invisible (e.g. not getting osteoporosis because of because walking more).
• Many of the benefits of adopting the behaviour accrue to society as a whole rather than to the individual (meaning that people may need a prosocial or altruistic orientation before they will adopt the behaviour).
• The benefits which do accrue directly to the individual are rarely under the control of the social marketer. The social marketer generally cannot manipulate benefits in the same way as can a marketer of goods or services (by creating an improved flavour of toothpaste, for example). The social marketer can often only promise that the benefits will come.
• Behaviour change often involves intangibles which are difficult to portray in promotions.
• The process for achieving behaviour change often takes a long time.
• Social marketing budgets are usually very limited.
• Social marketers often work with people suspicious of marketing.

Social marketing in many ways is just a new term for what in the past has been called social advertising, propaganda, social education, social campaigning, or social reform. The ‘Loose Lips Sink Ships’ campaign of World War II, for example, was tantamount to social marketing. The one thing which sets social marketing apart from other social change techniques — the one ‘extra’ offered by the marketing approach — is its attention to people, the so-called ‘customers.’ Andreasen (1995, p. 14) says that “social marketers are fanatically customer-centered in their strategies and tactics.”

Now, the precise type of customer-orientation which Andreasen and other marketing scholars advocate can be problematic when applied in the social sphere. To Andreasen (1995, p. 14, italics added), being “customer-centered” means “recogniz[ing] that customers only take action when they believe that it is in their interests.” This is a very individualistic conception of human behaviour. It is a concept which flows directly from exchange theory (Kotler and Andreasen 1991), which tends to reduce a person’s complex set of motivations to an economic calculation of personal costs and benefits, and which reduces a potentially rich and multi-faceted relationship (in this case, between the
social marketer and the target adopter) to an association of mutual, calculated self-interest. Being “customer-centered” from the exchange mentality can lead the social marketer to neglect what is really good for people and embrace whatever means are effective in getting them to believe that they will profit from an exchange. It can also easily lead the ‘customer’ to become less altruistic, less concerned about the common good, and more self-interested (Buchanan et al. 1994). Self-interested people may be a boon to the private-sector marketer, but they are a death blow to social marketers — at least those who are trying to solve environmental problems. If people are to improve their environmental behaviour, they need to be less me-focused, not more (see for example Daly et al. 1994; Hardin 1968; Jacobs 1995).

That said, however, the insight that social change efforts should begin with an assessment of target people — their desires, needs, attitudes, beliefs, current behavioural patterns, subgroups, etc. — is a very valuable contribution of marketing. Seeking information about people — especially when that information comes directly from themselves — shows respect for their sovereignty and sets up a process in which they can be active participants more than passive recipients (Hastings and Haywood 1994). As well, it is simply more effective to first seek to understand people than to begin with the thought of making them understand something (Covey 1989).

**Behaviour Change is the End**

Andreasen’s emphasis on *behaviour* reflects a maturing of the concept of social marketing. Social marketing was first introduced over twenty-five years ago, by Kotler and Zaltman (1971). Their widely-quoted definition characterizes social marketing as being used to “influence the acceptability of social *ideas*” (Kotler and Zaltman 1971, p. 5, italics added). A car-free world is an example of such an idea. Imagine a non-governmental organization like Greenpeace carrying out a full-scale social marketing program merely to persuade people to accept the idea of world without
cars. What would change in the lives of people so persuaded? The idea would probably go into mental storage, joining other ideas, such as world peace, which the person accepts but personally does little or nothing to realize. The social marketer would have expended a significant amount of scarce resources (money, time, and effort) with little tangible results. For this reason, social marketing today aims higher up the motivational ladder than idea acceptance (one of the lowest rungs); it generally focuses on influencing actual behaviour, though in some cases the goal is to change attitudes. Andreasen (1994) calls behaviour change the “bottom line” of social marketing.

**Persuasion is the Means**

How is the social marketer to change behaviour? Andreasen (1994, p. 110, italics added) talks about “influenc[ing] ... voluntary behavior.” The application of marketing principles to social change problems should be a positive development for those who prefer persuasion to coercion, or to be more specific, non-coercive to coercive persuasion. The idea that subjects should be treated as respected ‘customers’ whom social change agents need to understand if they are to hope to ‘sell’ them a given socially desirable behaviour is radically different from traditional thinking. Too many change agents consider people who have not adopted the behaviour in question — e.g. walking, recycling, nonsmoking — to be laggards, reactionaries, or even fools. It is only too easy to wring one’s hands, pull one’s hair, and then, in exasperation, look for ways to make people behave correctly. This is what gives rise to economic ‘sticks’ and regulatory measures such as those discussed in the previous chapter. The phenomenon is not unlike that of parents who, wanting their children to ‘behave,’ control them by developing elaborate rules and systems of punishment and reward.

It is not wrong to have rules. When an individual or group (be it a family, a city, or society as a whole) is threatened, it is sometimes necessary to forcibly control or restrict behaviour. However,

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3 All coercion is persuasive, but not all persuasion is coercive.
“before we resort to control, we should be absolutely certain that less intrusive, more respectful interventions cannot work” (Kohn 1993, p. 33). Relative to regulation or economic ‘sticks,’ social marketing can be a less intrusive, more respectful technique for achieving social change. I say “can be” because social marketing is a tool which is neither innately good nor innately evil. Like the pen which can write both love letters and hate mail, social marketing can be done in either a non-coercive or (relatively) coercive way. In the remainder of this section, I will try to distinguish between the two.

It is vitally important that I do so, because one of the criticisms to which marketing, including social marketing, is most vulnerable is that in practice it often uses manipulative means (Buchanan et al. 1994).

First, a definitional point. It can be argued that any attempt to persuade people, be it through marketing or otherwise, is coercive. This argument is only tenable if every external influence on an individual is classed as coercive. Such a definition, however, is too broad to be meaningful. Every human being is continuously subject to outside influences. We cannot choose to be independent of them; we can only choose those to which we will submit (Eyring 1997). Now, if there is an influence which we have no choice but to follow, that is another matter. No choice means coercion.

According to this latter definition, in a democratic political climate such as ours social marketing is not inherently coercive. It need not restrict people’s free choice. People targeted by social marketing are just as free to choose to reject it as they are to reject a newspaper editorial or an enthusiastic movie recommendation from a friend. In fact, for those who have not previously thought of a behaviour being promoted as personally relevant, social marketing actually expands the list of possible choices. If the social marketer managed to monopolize channels of communication, people’s choices would be limited. However, other voices — contrary voices — are usually heard at least as loudly as those of a social marketing campaign. Social marketing to promote alternative modes of transportation, for example, would be more than counterbalanced in society by automobile marketing.
Within this generally non-coercive framework, however, specific social marketing applications can be more or less (ideally, non-) controlling. Controlling methods are those which tend to pressure people into a certain course of action. Resultant behaviours are not intrinsically motivated, but extrinsic motivated. In other words, controlling methods are those which lead people to do ‘right’ for the wrong reasons: reasons which are not their own, reasons which have not been integrated or reconciled with their personal value systems. Controlling external influences actually tend to inhibit people from internalizing a message. Non-controlling methods of persuasion, on the other hand, respect people’s autonomy and capacity for self-determination. Although they evidently promote a given course of conduct, they effectively encourage people to determine for themselves if they should pursue it (Ryan et al. 1996). Ryan et al. (1996, p. 12) contrast extrinsically and intrinsically motivated people in the following way:

One can be an extrinsically motivated “pawn” insofar as one is prodded into or compliantly follows unassimilated external demands. Or one can be volitional, pursuing personally valued extrinsic ends, and in so doing find a sense of meaning and identity. (Ryan et al. 1996, p. 12)

There are obvious ethical implications regarding a choice of persuasion tactics. However, social marketers should recognize that their effectiveness is also on the line. Psychological research suggests that because people who are motivated primarily extrinsically (i.e. through controlling methods) are less able to choose for themselves, they tend to have a weaker sense of intrinsic self-worth. To compensate, they tend to seek fulfillment in extrinsic aspirations like material wealth, fame, and physical attractiveness more than in intrinsically satisfying pursuits such as personal growth, healthy relationships, physical health, and contribution to community (Kasser and Ryan 1996). It should be clear that environmental problems such as excessive automobile use, the raison d’être of this thesis research, are, in part, the result of an excess of the former and a lack of the latter. In the long run, therefore, environmental social marketers who use controlling extrinsic motivation may actually be shooting themselves in the foot.
It would be impossible to detail every controlling method of persuasion. The principles in this section should be helpful for those trying to determine whether a certain method brushes into coercion. Does it try to force people into a course of action? Does it potentially subvert, even if only subtly, people's autonomy? Is it primarily oriented to extrinsic motivation?

One type of controlling method which I will discuss, because of its popularity in behaviour-change efforts and its seeming innocuity, is the use of rewards. In a social marketing campaign aimed at decreasing automobile dependency, a great number of reward devices could be used: giving people discounts at stores if they arrived on foot, bicycle, or bus; holding special give-away contests which only alternative transportation users could enter; allowing employees who did not drive to work a little extra paid vacation; publicly praising or giving achievement awards to those who parked their cars X days in a row; having children at school compete to see which classroom could walk to school the most often, the winners getting a pizza party; starting a rewards system, after the pattern of the Air Miles program, in which people could earn redeemable Green Miles for every day they get around without a car.

The widespread use of rewards is a function of the influence which behaviourism has held in psychological research. Behaviourism is a body of theory grounded in the belief that people's behaviours are shaped by repeated, exposure to stimuli. According to B.F. Skinner, the late dean of behaviourism, people do not choose; they merely respond to stimuli (Kohn 1993, p. 8). Behaviourists, thus, believe that they can 'modify' people's behaviour by manipulating the stimuli to which they (the subjects) are exposed. The most common behaviourist manipulation is to give people rewards for acting in an 'appropriate' way.

Very subtly, rewards exert controlling influence. When people engage in a behaviour simply to receive a reward, their motivation is external rather than internal. The presence of the reward
channels people into one direction, and discourages them from considering other alternatives and consulting their own selves. The reward effectively works to restrict their autonomous choice.

Incidentally, rewarding typically only works in the short run. In the long run rewards do not generally produce lasting behaviour change. Once they are removed, or sometimes even when continuing rewards are taken for granted, people often go back to their old patterns of behaviour (Kohn 1993).

In order to avoid charges of manipulation and improve the prospect for achieving lasting behaviour change, social marketers should dispense with reward programs or at least not make them central to the social change effort. Instead, the focus should be on methods which help develop people's intrinsic motivation to engage in socially desirable behaviours. Richard Ryan, Edward Deci and their associates recommend that practitioners actively support people's autonomy, and be involved with them in a warm and nurturing way. Their research shows that several techniques help support people's autonomy (Ryan et al. 1996; Deci and Ryan 1985):

- Communicating in a informational rather than a controlling way (e.g. “Excessive car use affects our neighbourhood in the following ways...” instead of “You all use your cars too much!”).
- Providing people with real choice (e.g. saying “It is up to each of us to decide how much we will drive our cars” instead of “There is only one alternative and that is to stop driving to Costco and start walking to the local grocery”).
- Seeing things from the audience’s perspective and reflecting their feelings (e.g. communicating “You’re upset about traffic” to a group of people who have a clear frustration with congestion).
- Giving affirming, competence-enhancing feedback (e.g. “You can get more things done on foot! Here’s how...”). This is a matter of (a) showing people how to carry out the recommended behaviour and (b) letting them know that they can be successful at it — if they choose to adopt it.
- Encouraging people to initiative behaviours themselves (e.g. “Give it a try and see what you think!”).
- If the desired behaviour conflicts with some people’s needs or feelings, openly acknowledging that conflict (e.g. “Some people do need to drive to work because...”).

Although the social marketer should use these techniques in promotional material to encourage a person's intrinsic motivation, it is far better when significant others in the person's life — family members, friends, neighbours — are also involved in the process (Ryan et al. 1996). Unlike the anonymous social marketer, these people can provide warm relational support for the individual's autonomous decisions.

Other methods of persuasion which are effective but which are not tinged with external control include the following (Perloff 1993; McKenzie-Mohr 1996; Andreasen 1995):

- Making information "vivid, concrete and personal" (McKenzie-Mohr 1996, p. 17). People pay more attention to vivid information and also tend to remember it more easily, which is crucial if the social marketer desires them to act upon the information.

- Targeting beliefs that are salient to the target audience. For example, a message which made an analogy between losing one's life savings/pension and decreased ecological quality due to excessive car use might be especially effective with middle-aged people, many of whom are anxious about retirement.

- Tailoring social marketing messages to be moderately challenging of the attitudes or practices of the target audience. McKenzie-Mohr (1996, p. 19) says: "Obviously, you don't want a message that is fully supported, or you will simply be communicating what people already believe. However ... if your message is too extreme, your audience will actually become less, rather than more, supportive after hearing your message."

- Conveying a sense of empowerment (e.g. "Your efforts can make a difference!")), especially if the social marketing message highlights problems which may be daunting to some people.

- Pointing out win-win solutions, if they exist.

- Stressing the benefits of undertaking the desired behaviour and attempting to reduce the perceived costs. "The social marketer simply (or not so simply) has to convince the target audience that the cost-benefit trade-off or exchange is superior for the behavior than for its competitors (including inertia)" (Andreasen 1995, p. 249). A caveat is that taken too far, this method can foster an undesirable exchange mentality (see page 18).

- Using a two-sided message (i.e. one which includes both pro- and con- arguments) when recipients are aware of both sides of the issue or initially disagree with the social marketer's position.

People who are intrinsically motivated to adopt a certain behaviour are less likely to be swayed from their intentions than those who have acted because of external control. However,
intrinsically motivated people can still have second thoughts. They can also forget to do something just as easily as if they were extrinsically motivated. For this reason, social marketers would be wise to consider two other techniques. They are not persuasive techniques per se; they are techniques intended to sustain persuasion:

- Seeking commitments (written, if possible) from people who express a desire to adopt the socially desirable behaviour. The act of making a commitment has been shown to solidify people’s resolve to do the behaviour. One study of non-bus riders found that people who made a verbal pledge to use transit ended up riding the bus just as frequently as people who were given incentives in the form of free bus tickets (Bachman and Katzev 1982).

- Using prompts (memory aids). An example of a prompt is a sign next to a light switch reminding people that it should be turned off when vacating the room. Simple, self-explanatory, noticeable, positive (i.e. reminding people to do something rather than to not do something) prompts which are compatible with the desired behaviour are effective in reminding people to do it (McKenzie-Mohr 1996).

**Well-Being is the Fundamental Objective**

As mentioned previously, the end of social marketing is lasting behaviour change. But what kind of behaviour change? An important principle of social marketing is that people’s behaviour changes are intended to “improve their personal welfare and that of the society of which they are a part” (Andreasen 1994, p. 110). Concern for individual and societal well-being is what sets social marketing apart from conventional marketing. The firm marketing Power Ranger plastic action figures is not especially concerned whether its product will affect children’s development; its fundamental objective is to profit from sales. Profit is also the main goal of firms (selling life insurance, RRSPs, etc.) which supposedly ‘care’ about their customers. The primary motive of the social marketer, on the other hand, to help bring about an improvement in the quality of people’s lives, either directly or indirectly through the mediating structures of society or the natural environment.

This motive can be criticized as paternalistic, or even dangerous. After all, “the determination of what is [socially desirable] is entirely in the hands of the social marketer” (Andreasen 1994, p. 113).
Theoretically, social marketing could have been used just as well by Hitler as by Mother Theresa. Even groups commonly seen as well-meaning can use social marketing to promote things that are later proven to be harmful. History shows that public agencies, non-governmental organizations, and helping professionals who have taken an ‘I know what’s best for you’ approach have often done more harm than good. Bloodletting by doctors, a practice which continued well into the 19th century, is perhaps the classic example. In the area of transportation, the planners and decision-makers of yesterday probably had no idea that their road-building and automobile-encouraging policies would negatively affect people’s personal health and the health of the ecology of which they are a part. In a myriad of other cases, people considered to be experts who have engaged in environmental, social, or even psychological ‘management’ have seen their efforts result in unanticipated harmful consequences. Can social marketers, then, be trusted to ‘know’ what is best for people?

It is impossible to be completely certain about the long-term consequences of a given social marketing intervention. However, factors which help legitimize a given social marketing objective are the following:

- The objective is intended to ameliorate a recognized societal problem.
- The objective fits with public policy objectives and local values.
- The desirability of the social marketing objective has been clearly established through primary and secondary research.
- Research into the problem and the objective has involved and respected the input of people whose well-being the objective is intended to improve.
- A group of ‘early adopters’ of the desired behaviour has shown the social marketing objective to be promising.

Andreasen’s (1995, p. 319, italics in original) suggestion regarding social marketing ethics is as follows:

_Social marketers must internalize society’s conscience._ Not only must they do social marketing right — they must also do the right thing! They must ask again and again: Am I doing what is
ultimately best for my stakeholders — the society? Am I respecting the rights and integrity of my target audiences? Am I resisting the temptation to cut corners even though it means I will bring about a better world a little later?

A Question of Scale: Community-Based Social Marketing

Many social issues have been tackled using social marketing. Some of the most memorable are in the area of health and safety: physical exercise (e.g. Canada’s ‘Participaction’ campaign), drinking and driving, sexually-transmitted diseases, drug abuse (e.g. “This is your brain on drugs”), breast self-examination, smoking, skin cancer (e.g. “Slip, slop, slap”). Health has been a key area for social change work because it is so well established that prevention can reduce unnecessary death, pain, suffering, and health care costs. The reason that social marketing has been a key technology in prevention efforts is that individualism is the ideological basis of most prevention policies. Prevention typically focuses on personal lifestyle changes individuals can make to improve their own physical health (Tesh 1988). Social marketing which takes the individualistic customer-centred approach recommended by Andreasen (1995) is a perfect vehicle for the expression of these policies.

Social problems which are entirely or partly ecological in nature have not received as much attention from social marketers as have health issues. One reason for this is that there is much more of a societal consensus regarding health promotion than there is about environmental protection. There are frequent conflicts in Western society between desires to protect the environment and desires to enlarge the economy or improve social justice (Campbell 1996). This makes it difficult for governments and other middle-of-the-road organizations to decide on social marketing objectives which have a meaningful effect on ecological quality. As well, many environmental problems are decidedly local. The large, well-endowed agencies who are in the social marketing business are unlikely to develop social marketing campaigns for isolated communities or small numbers of people.
Another reason, however, is that solutions to environmental issues depend primarily on people’s interest in the common good rather than on individual self-interest. Although social marketing messages can just as well promote the former as the latter, the media conventionally used in social marketing are not so flexible. Conventional social marketing takes place on a large (national, provincial, or metropolitan) scale; it therefore uses large-scale methods of communication. Unfortunately, mass media like television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and billboards are ill-suited to community building around environmental issues. They present messages without personal human contact. People do talk with each other about things they separately pick up from the mass media, but the social effect of mass communication is indirect and usually quite weak. Direct mail and telemarketing, other media used by social marketers (Kotler and Roberto 1989), are more personal than mass communication, but they also lack the meaningful human contact that seems to help people appreciate and respect their social context. The one type of direct personal communication widely used by social marketers of health is not available to social marketers of environmental causes. A broad-based network of health professionals does yeoman service in marketing preventative behaviours directly to individuals. Needless to say, there is no comparable body of ecological professionals which is well trusted and regularly visited by a large percentage of the population.

All this indicates that to be most effective, the social marketing of environmental causes should take place at a smaller scale than conventional social marketing — the community scale, the geographical level at which social connections are apt to be strongest. Recently the first book on community-based social marketing was published (McKenzie-Mohr 1996). The book claims that social marketing which is carried out at the level of the community and as much as possible by community members is most likely to effect people’s adoption of sustainable behaviour. Its author argues:

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4 Community is difficult to define (Lyon 1987), but generally refers to a neighbourhood, urban district, or small urban settlement.
Conventional social marketing often relies to a large extent upon the media to communicate with the public. The behaviors that the media are able to change tend to be simple and convenient. Complex behaviors, such as using alternative transportation or composting, are not amenable to social marketing campaigns that rely primarily on media advertising. The term 'community'-based social marketing emphasizes the importance of personal contact as the most important element of bringing about behavior change. Commitment techniques, normative appeals, and persuasive communication, are all most effective when they are carried out in person. The term 'community' was also added because it recognizes the importance of understanding the barriers that exist in a [specific] community before an effective intervention can be designed.5

Transportation is precisely the type of issue appropriate for community-based social marketing. Unlike location-non-specific social issues like prenatal education or smoking, transportation is a geographical phenomenon. Many of its negative effects are manifested in communities—the places where people live, work, shop, and recreate. As well, the transportation behaviour change which many people believe necessary requires a much greater sense of community than currently exists most places. Yes, some people will use their cars less as a result of appeals to their self-interest; after all, to promote the improved health people will receive from doing more walking is to make an individualistic pitch. Many others, however, will need an enhanced social conscience before they give up the physical comfort of the car and the mental comfort of the status quo.

In the broad area of changing human behaviour for environmental purposes, recycling and household energy conservation are ahead of alternative transportation with regards to social marketing. Mediocre results with the large-scale social marketing of waste reduction and energy conservation have lead some people to try smaller-scale, community-specific interventions (McKenzie-Mohr 1996). I argue that it is time for those interested in reducing automobile dependence to also move beyond the mass marketing approach. In the Vancouver region, marketing efforts implemented under the rubric of transportation demand management (TDM) have thus far been limited to television and radio ads encouraging commuters to “Go Green,” and to highway signs with similar messages. New plans to work directly with individual businesses and institutions to promote trip reduction programs are sure to be

5 Personal communication, Doug McKenzie-Mohr, 17 June 1997.
more effective in changing modal split (GVRD 1996). These more local TDM projects complement what I am discussing in this thesis: community-based social marketing of walking.

**The Community-Based Social Marketing Process**

So far in this chapter I have set forth some of the basic principles of social marketing and its community-based derivative. Now I outline a process in which these principles can be applied.

A community-based social marketing process normally involves the steps outlined in Table 2. Assuming that the general goal of the social marketing effort and the community in which it is to be carried out are given, the first task is to find out about the existing situation in the community through background research. This research typically begins with a literature review about the behaviour(s) in question. The literature review allows a social marketer to quickly learn what other people have discovered about the behaviour(s), and what to look for when studying the community. The usual starting point for this next step (studying the community) is gathering community demographic information — data about age, gender, family type, ethnicity, education, income, etc. — from censuses and other government statistics. Any other published community information that is relevant to the issue is also gathered. After exhausting secondary sources of data, a social marketer gathers primary information about the community and its residents. Going out into the community to observe its form and function and its inhabitants' behaviour is a valuable way of taking the pulse of the community.

Behaviour is observed qualitatively or quantitatively. Those taking a qualitative, anthropological tack must decide whether to be an invisible watcher (nonparticipant observation) or to talk openly to people and make no pretense of anonymity (participant observation) (Andreasen 1995, p. 113).
Table 2  A Generic Community-Based Social Marketing Process

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<th>Establish the basic parameters</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Determine the general social marketing goal.</td>
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<td>2. Select the community.</td>
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<th>Do background research</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Review literature.</td>
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<td>2. Collect community information, including demographics and behavioural information.</td>
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<td>3. Conduct survey.</td>
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<td>4. Conduct focus groups.</td>
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<th>Develop the community-based social marketing plan</th>
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<td>1. Assess the situation: internal environment (strengths and weaknesses), external environment, opportunities and problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Establish marketing objectives (prioritized, and as specific as possible).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Design marketing strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Select target market(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Determine appropriate marketing mix.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) Price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii) Communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv) Distribution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Test strategy with focus groups, and refine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Pilot and refine strategy.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implement and monitor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Develop detailed implementation plan and timeline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Launch the strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Track and correct problems and deficiencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Evaluate success of strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Refine strategy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


If resources permit, a survey is done to get solid quantitative data on community members' behaviour, attitudes, lifestyle characteristics, awareness of the issue, etc. Not only does this information help the social marketer in designing the social marketing strategy, but it also establishes baseline data for follow-up evaluations on the success of the social marketing endeavour. Finally,
focus groups are organized to flesh out the ‘picture’ with rich qualitative information about community members’ behaviour, feelings, perceptions, opinions, and motivations.

Informed by the background research, the social marketer sets to work developing the community-based social marketing plan. The first step here is to make sense of the social marketing research by conducting a situation analysis, which is “a thorough analysis of the internal and external environments of the [given] market” (Lovelock et al. 1987, p. 92). In essence, the social marketer develops a coherent picture of the relevant circumstances in which the marketing strategy is to take place. On the basis of this picture, marketing goals are developed. These goals break the general social marketing goal into specific, meaningful, workable objectives. If possible, they specify time frames and measurable targets. The next step is to design a marketing strategy intended to achieve the goals. This is more difficult than it sounds, as marketers will attest. Even creative people with a keen sense of the dynamics of the market in which they are working sometimes flub up. To help ensure that their strategies are effective, marketers are increasingly focusing them on specific segments of the population, i.e. target markets. For each target market, marketers try to come up with an appropriate marketing mix — an attractive product at the right ‘price’ which is promoted and distributed in the right way. Once a social marketing strategy has been developed, it is generally tested with focus groups and piloted on a small scale so that refinements can be made before it is applied in a big way.

Implementation and monitoring complete the social marketing process. Effective implementation requires the social marketer to be well organized and capable of managing various activities and following up with people in the community who are helping realize the strategy. Once the strategy is implemented, the social marketer must be on top of its progress, adjusting as necessary. Follow-up research gives a good indication of the success of the social marketing effort, and provides lessons for future refinements.
Implications for Transportation Planners and Activists

Community-based social marketing of walking is a new concept for those actively involved in urban transportation issues. In many cities, non-governmental organizations have emerged to promote alternatives to the car. Some are engaged in social marketing, but at a larger scale than what I am talking about in this thesis. For them, the progression to community-based social marketing should natural. For many public-sector transportation planners and engineers, however, community-based social marketing represents a significant shift from conventional ways of doing things.

Planning processes typically begin by identifying goals or fundamental objectives. "What do we want to achieve?" is the first concern most planners. Like private-sector marketing, however, where the paramount goal is profit, social marketing starts with the goal as given. This underlines the fact that if public agencies are to undertake social marketing, their basic goals must clearly conform to public policy objectives. Otherwise, the social marketing can be rightly criticized as undemocratic.

Another way in which social marketing differs from what most planners and engineers do is that the target of social marketing is people rather than physical structure. Although transportation planning is evidently done for people, and increasingly with ("ordinary") people, it has never been truly directed at people. Planning has been directed squarely at the physical environment —controlling its development with rigid zoning ordinances and roadway and intersection design standards. My earlier discussion of controlling versus autonomy-supporting forms of persuasion is very significant given the traditional role of planners and transportation engineers as controllers. Those who set forth in social marketing must guard against the impulse to plan for people in the same way that they plan for streets or building envelopes. People are not clay; impersonally manipulating them will fail.
Social Marketing Demonstration: ‘Walk West 10th’

In the remainder of this thesis I report how I applied the foregoing notions of community-based social marketing in an effort to promote walking in the neighbourhood of West Point Grey in Vancouver, British Columbia. The idea for this project came to me one day in March 1997 after reading a chapter of David Engwicht’s (1993) book *Reclaiming Our Cities and Towns*. In it, he speaks respectfully of neighbourhood retailing:

The local store and local shopping centre play an essential part in the social life of a neighbourhood. Shopping locally is not only important because it cuts down the amount of traffic on the roads, but also because it provides for higher levels of spontaneous exchange which further reduces the need for planned trips and improves the overall quality of life. Not to be overlooked is the effect local shopping has on a just distribution of access to goods and services for non-motorists. The regional shopping centre undermines the viability of the local corner store. The result for those who do not have the ability to access the regional shopping centre is that they have a reduced range of goods, increased prices and often further to walk for them. (Engwicht 1993, pp. 140-1)

To promote neighbourhood shopping, Engwicht suggests a ‘Shop Locally and Save the World’ marketing campaign. The concept immediately struck me as feasible for the West 10th Avenue shopping street. I had been a pedestrian advocate and walking enthusiast for some time before reading Engwicht, and had recently been exposed to notion of social marketing. In the time that I had lived on the nearby university campus I had enjoyed my walks to West 10th, the simple but attractive ‘Main Street’ of West Point Grey. I realized that if people living within walking distance of West 10th could be persuaded to meet more of their needs locally, and on foot, automobile dependence in a small way could be reduced, and health, community-mindedness, and environmental quality increased.

I wanted to apply social marketing in an attempt to so persuade the residents of West Point Grey. My problem was that I did not have the time to plan and implement a social marketing strategy in the neighbourhood; I would be moving from Vancouver in about six months. My choice at that early juncture was to either abandon the ‘Walk West 10th’ idea or pursue it on an academic, hypo-
Walk West 10th

Community-Based Social Marketing

... theoretical basis. Not wanting to drop an innovative idea, I chose the latter. I was confident that I could refine the concept enough to furnish a good exploratory example of community-based social marketing — something that I and others could learn from and perhaps someday improve and extend.

Given my lack of time (and resources) I knew I would not be able to follow every step of the process outlined in Table 2. The one aspect of the background research I completely sacrificed was the survey; while capable of delivering valuable information, surveys are expensive and time-consuming to conduct. A survey would also have been unnecessarily intrusive for West Point Grey residents, since it would only have been for an academic exercise. As for the focus group technique, I believed that it was important — in the absence of a survey, my only formal opportunity to gain information directly from the local residents. Because of my constraints, however, I felt I would only be able to organize one focus group session (four sessions are normally conducted per issue (Krueger 1988). Regarding the next general step in Table 2, developing the social marketing plan, I felt I could do everything except testing and piloting the strategy. As mentioned above, I did not plan to implement the strategy.

Despite these limitations, I wanted to make ‘Walk West 10th’ as realistic as possible. The literature review would be as thorough as if ‘Walk West 10th’ were really being implemented. In gathering community information, I would get as up-to-date data as possible from secondary sources, and would collect my own information through observations, calculations, and community contacts. Regarding these contacts, I planned to be opportunistic, talking to people as my work allowed. But I did not intend to be scattershot; the two groups I intended to work with were the West 10th Merchants’ Association and the local transportation activists. Even if I would not be staying in town, I felt that getting plugged into the West Point Grey community scene was crucial to making ‘Walk West 10th’ a meaningful project. I hoped that the community people I would meet would help me figure out how to develop an appropriate social marketing strategy for encouraging walking in the neighbourhood.
The chapters which follow are not an entirely objective examination of a social marketing process, for no such process exists separate from my research. I conceived and initiated the ‘Walk West 10th’ effort; my values, perceptions, preferences, and ethics are integral to the process. It is impossible to do a staunchly objective analysis of one’s own self. At the same time, this thesis is not entirely subjective. The process and substance of ‘Walk West 10th’ were based on current academic research on social marketing, psychology, and transportation.

Rather than relying on the objective/subjective dichotomy, I have thought of ‘Walk West 10th’ as being somewhat akin to action research. Research is traditionally undertaken to add to a body of knowledge. Action research, while it contributes to knowledge, does so not merely for the sake of knowledge, but in the process of doing something concrete: bringing about action. “If an action research project does not make a difference in a very specific way,” Stringer (1996, p. 11) writes, “then it has failed to achieve its objectives.” Also, the researcher in action research is not scrupulously detached, but integrally connected to the work. In these two regards, ‘Walk West 10th’ resembles action research. I pursued the project in an attempt to make a difference in my own small way.6

I hope that the research will provide others interested in improving urban transportation with a good sense of the potential of community-based social marketing to promote walking. I hope that the action will eventually be picked up by concerned residents, activists, and professionals. May it be continued in an effort to improve the social and physical environment of the community!

6 Other commandments of action research I transgressed. For instance, the people who in conventional research are passive subjects are supposed to be active participants and equal decision-makers in action research. Though I tried to interest and involve local merchants and residents, as can be seen in Chapters 5 and 6, ‘Walk West 10th’ never attained such a high level of participation. At one point I even met with those with whom I should have been working hand in hand primarily to sponge information from them. I expand on this point in Chapter 7.
Chapter 3  BACKGROUND RESEARCH: LITERATURE REVIEW

The fundamental objective of the ‘Walk West 10th’ effort I mounted in West Point Grey was to encourage people in the neighbourhood to fulfill more of their needs, where possible, by walking to West 10th rather than driving there or elsewhere. How to start such an enterprise? It would have been entirely possible to begin by going door to door to personally exhort community members to walk. This would have spread the message with a tremendous level of human contact, but how successful would it have been? No matter how enthusiastic I would have been, or how much I believed in the cause, I would not have properly understood the influences at play in people’s transportation-related decisions. I would have been ignorant of the physical, social, and psychological barriers which currently limit their walking to West 10th. I would not have been aware of the amount of switching from car to foot I could reasonably expect. I would have shown a fundamental lack of respect for the residents of West Point Grey.

If a social marketing strategy is to have any hope of being effective, it must begin with market research. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, it is usually best to start the research process with a review of relevant published literature. Research that others have done on the topic at hand can often be generalized to the specific case. The literature review in this chapter does not attempt to explain everything about walking within West Point Grey. Its goal is to establish a firm foundation of generally accepted fact onto which the community-specific information found in Chapters 4 and 5 can be added.

In light of my original definition of possible walking trips, this chapter focuses on two questions. First, what factors influence a person’s decision about whether to satisfy non-work needs locally or whether to go outside of the neighbourhood for them? And second, for trips within neighbourhoods, what factors influence people’s choice of transportation modes?
Inside the Neighbourhood or Outside?

A particular good or service or function must be available within the neighbourhood if a person is to even consider satisfying a need for it locally. Many products simply are not available within most neighbourhoods. Central Place Theory in urban geography explains that the more specialized a product — the less universally and less often it is used — the greater the population needed to support the business supplying it (Yeates and Garner 1980). A small area like an individual neighbourhood cannot support its own forensic radiologist, but it generally can support its own dry cleaner or post office.

History

Before World War II (i.e. before the automobile era), people walked to corner stores or nearby neighbourhood commercial streets to satisfy their basic needs, and took the streetcar downtown when they required more specialized goods or services. After the war, however, new trends significantly changed people’s activity patterns. The automobile became ubiquitous, greatly increasing the distance people could go for various purposes. The planning profession, which was just coming into its own, took advantage of this new mobility by creating large homogeneous tracts of low-density housing. Commercial land uses in these post-war suburbs were separated off into planned shopping centres or auto-oriented ‘strips’ (Berry 1967). Both were surrounded by busy arterial streets and large parking lots, which together increased people’s walking distance, even if only psychologically. Finally, store size increased dramatically. The median size of a supermarket built in 1953 in the United States was 13,600 square feet; in 1987, it was 46,892 square feet (Handy 1993). These larger stores needed larger populations to support them, and so “the distance between centers grew over time. Today’s neighborhood centres may have more to offer local residents, but they are farther away on average than before” (Handy 1993, p. 36; see also Yim 1990).
The consequence of these changes is that fewer of the goods and services which people need on a regular basis are available within the average neighbourhood. This consequence is felt not only in the suburbs, where it was hard-wired into the urban form, but also in the older neighbourhoods of the inner city. Many corner stores within traditional neighbourhoods and ‘mom and pop’ establishments on inner-city commercial streets could not compete in the new auto-oriented retail environment and closed down (see Loukaitou-Sideris 1997). Even in the older built-up areas of the city, then, some people leave their neighbourhoods to satisfy certain non-work needs simply because they have no other choice.

Accessibility

Still, many basic services are available within many neighbourhoods. When people have a choice between satisfying their needs locally or outside the neighbourhood, how do they decide? A recent paper by Susan Handy (1996), whose work, unlike that of most scholars studying the issue of reducing car traffic, focuses on non-work trips rather than work trips, suggests that it depends on the choices that the urban form makes available to the residents of an area.

Handy uses the concept of accessibility to begin to make sense of the travel choices people make. More fully than other measures, accessibility captures the complexity inherent in such choices. She explains elsewhere (Handy 1994, pp. 5-6) that accessibility is determined by the spatial distribution of potential destinations, the ease of reaching each destination, and the magnitude, quality, and character of the activities found there. Travel cost is central: the less that travel costs in time and money, the more places that can be reached within a certain budget and the greater the accessibility. Destination choice is also crucial: the more destinations, and the more varied the destinations, the higher the level of accessibility. Travel choice is equally important: the wider the variety of modes for getting to a particular destination, the greater the choice and the greater the accessibility. Accessibility is thus determined by both patterns of land use and the nature of the transportation system, although two people in the same place may evaluate their accessibility differently, as wants and tastes vary.
Handy's research indicates that accessibility is related in various ways to travel behaviour. One of her findings (Handy 1996, p. 196) is that "higher accessibility, in terms of short distances as well as qualitative factors that may lead to higher perceived levels of accessibility, is associated with a greater number of walking trips." This is significant for the 'Walk West 10th' social marketing effort because it suggests that since walking distances within West Point Grey are relatively short (see page 64, below), people's perceptions of how pedestrian-friendly the neighbourhood and the commercial area are might be successfully influenced to encourage walking to commercial areas.

If, as Handy argues, the accessibility of various destinations helps explain how people decide whether to take care of business inside or outside their neighbourhoods, then questions such as the following are important for understanding travel decisions in any given area. What are the potential destinations, both within and without the local community? Where are they? How attractive are they? How can they be reached? What is the cost, in terms of time and money, of reaching them? Some of these questions can be answered through an analysis of the urban form and transportation system in the area — and such an analysis of West Point Grey is part of what I do in Chapter 4. Others, however, are heavily dependent on people's perceptions and attitudes, which transportation research until now has largely ignored. As a result, Handy (1992, p. 267) concludes that "a more explanatory and qualitative [research] approach is needed, wherein residents are interviewed in some depth with respect to the motivations for their travel choices and the trade-offs that they make." I report on such an interview (a focus group, to be precise) with West Point Grey residents in Chapter 5.

One study that explored people's decisions about where to shop was done in Calgary, Alberta (Calgary 1994). The study included a survey of approximately 1,400 pedestrians on seven downtown or inner city commercial streets. The respondents were asked, among other things, to explain why they were shopping where they were shopping. Because researchers also learned where each respondent lived, they were able to separate the responses according to whether respondents were
shopping in their local commercial areas or on commercial streets outside their home neighbourhoods.

The responses are laid out in Table 3 and Table 4. When the last column of each table is compared, it is clear that convenience was far and away the most important factor, for both local and non-local shopping. In the Calgary study, shopping atmosphere, store type, and variety of available goods and services were also found to be important determinants of local shopping. Interestingly, however, atmosphere was overall less important, and selection and variety more important, when people were shopping outside their local areas. This suggests that, in Calgary at least, people go to shopping streets other than their ‘own’ when they are looking for specific goods or services not available locally. A limitation of the Calgary study was that the surveying all took place on downtown or inner-city commercial streets. If shoppers in malls or big box retail outlets had also been solicited, the relative importance of other factors — e.g. low prices, presence of chain stores — would surely have been quite different.

Table 3 Reasons for shopping at own local retail area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Eatons/Scotia</th>
<th>Stephen Ave</th>
<th>Chinatown</th>
<th>Kensington</th>
<th>4th Street</th>
<th>Uptown 17</th>
<th>Internatio­nal Ave</th>
<th>All areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low prices</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store type</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chains - Yes</td>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Atmosphere</td>
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<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality goods</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habit</td>
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<td>13%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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</tr>
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<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>9%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calgary 1994, Table 5.1(b)

Parking was also significantly more important for extra-neighbourhood shopping, but this is only natural — people leaving their neighbourhoods for shopping are much more likely to make the trip by car than people shopping at their local commercial streets.
Table 4  Reasons for shopping at retail area outside own neighbourhood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Eatons/Scotia</th>
<th>Stephen Ave</th>
<th>Chinatown</th>
<th>Kensington</th>
<th>4th Street</th>
<th>Uptown 17</th>
<th>International Ave</th>
<th>All areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
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<td>26%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>36%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low prices</td>
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<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety</td>
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<td>16%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store type</td>
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<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chains - Yes</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Atmosphere</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<td>9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality goods</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff courtesy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calgary 1994, Table 5.2(b)

**Walk Within the Neighbourhood or Drive?**

Suppose Walter has decided to stay within his neighbourhood in order to meet a certain need.

Will he walk, or drive? For people who do not own or have access to an automobile, the choice between walking and driving is clear. Most adults, however, can use a car if they choose. The transportation literature suggests that many different factors influence whether or not they use it for a particular trip. For my purposes, these factors can be nicely organized into three groups: environmental, personal, and social factors.3

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2 Because of the focus of 'Walk West 10th,' the following discussion is limited to the choice between only two of the possible modes of transportation: walking and driving.

3 See Berman 1996 for a similar categorization.
Environmental Considerations

People's perceptions of various qualities of the physical environment in which their travel must occur significantly influence their transportation mode decisions.

Distance

Of the environmental factors affecting modal choice within neighbourhoods, the most obvious is distance. Even within neighbourhoods, distances are often great enough to inhibit walking. How far is too far to walk? At least since the beginning of the motor-car era, neighbourhood designers have used a quarter mile (approx. 400 m) as a rule of thumb comfortable walking distance (Perry 1929; Calthorpe 1993). However, transportation researchers suggest that longer walking distances are acceptable for most North Americans. Untermann (1984), for example, claims that 690 m is the maximum length most people are willing to walk for general purposes. A recent empirical study shows that the average distance traveled by people walking to suburban light-rail transit stations in Calgary, Alberta is 649 m (O'Sullivan and Morrell 1996). The average distance of walking trips reported in the U.S. 1990 Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey (NPTS) was 1 km or 0.6 miles (Vincent et al. 1994). This figure is high because it includes recreational and commute walking trips, both of which tend to be longer than the shopping and other non-work trips being considered in this thesis. Only 27.9% of the walking trips included in the NPTS were actually over 1 km (Antonakos 1995). By way of comparison, almost half of the walking trips in the centres of selected European cities are longer than 1 km (see Table 5).
Table 5  Distance decay for walking: percentage of walking trips in central areas of selected European cities which are longer than certain distances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>longer than 0 km</th>
<th>longer than 0.5 km</th>
<th>longer than 1.0 km</th>
<th>longer than 1.5 km</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edinburgh</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonn</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dusseldorf</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munich</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Hass-Klau et al. 1993, Table II.

Acceptable walkable distance is a relative concept — it depends on the situation (Berman 1996). The purpose of the trip often determines whether a particular distance is walkable. “Walking one kilometer (0.6 miles) to get lunch or buy a newspaper is reasonable for many people. If a person is planning on buying a week’s worth of groceries, a 10 minute walk back from the supermarket carrying heavy bundles might be too far” (Wallace, Floyd, Associates, Inc. 1996).

Quality of the Built Environment

Other things being equal, people are more likely to walk in pedestrian-friendly areas than in places designed for the automobile. According to Handy (1996, p. 193), “having commercial activity within walking distance is enough to encourage at least some walking, but pedestrian-oriented design should encourage even more walking.” A great deal of work has gone into identifying design elements that make walking easier, safer, and more interesting (see for example Untermann 1984; WSEO 1994; Langdon 1994; Calthorpe 1993; Gehl 1986; Jacobs 1993; Smith 1987). Following are some of the design features that researchers generally agree help encourage pedestrian movement:

- Presence of sidewalks. It may sound simple, but sidewalks are essential. Sidewalks have not been built in many suburban areas, and are discontinuous in others (see Gassaway 1992).
- Wide sidewalks. Wide sidewalks, like wide streets, have capacity for high volumes. (The classic study on adequate sidewalk space is Pushkarev and Zupan 1975.) 1.53 m (5 ft.) is the minimum acceptable width for sidewalks on streets in relatively low-density
residential areas. In higher density residential and commercial and institutional areas, sidewalks should have a clear-through zone (barrier-free) width of at least 1.83 m (6 ft.) (Dixon 1996; Portland 1995).

- Gridded streets. The hierarchical street pattern found in most post-war suburbs “stretches out nearly every trip,” especially “local trips, which have to find their way through a collector-arterial maze instead of using direct routes like those in older grid-planned communities” (Langdon 1994, p. 34).

- Short blocks. Shorter blocks also provide pedestrians with more direct routes.

- Narrow streets. Pedestrians have a relatively easy time crossing narrow streets because of their small absolute crossing distance and because their width constrains vehicular traffic.

- Limited parking. A person who knows that it will be hard to find parking at his or her destination is more likely to make short neighbourhood trips on foot. Generous provision of parking, on the other hand, encourages automobile use (Willson 1995).

- Narrow lots. On both residential and commercial streets, narrow lots, other things being equal, bring more within the pedestrian’s reach.

- Presence of back alleys. On residential streets without alleys, garages can only be accessed from the street. The driveways which cut across sidewalks in this situation are inconvenient and potentially dangerous for pedestrians. When garages are accessed from alleys, front sidewalks need not be interrupted. Alleys also give pedestrians more route opportunities.

- Vital front yards. When front yards rather than back yards are designed as the primary places for outdoor residential leisure, streets are more alive and more engaging for pedestrians. From their sidewalks, pedestrians prefer to see adults sitting on front porches and children playing out front rather than large, impersonal garage doors. The former they can interact with; the latter they cannot. (Buckley 1992 traces social effects of the evolution of the garage and the yard.)

- Small intersection corner radii. A larger corner radius makes it easier for vehicles, especially large trucks, to turn. However, the larger the radius, the longer the pedestrian crossing distance at the intersection, and the more dangerous the crossing, because of the greater vehicle speeds.

- Corner bulges. Expanding corners out into intersections shrinks pedestrian crossing distances even more, gives pedestrians a better view of oncoming traffic, slows automobiles, and provides more public space at corners for benches or street vendors.

- Good crossing facilities. Well-designed crosswalks and traffic lights (pedestrian-activated or fully automatic) at intersections, as well as mid-block pedestrian crossings, are crucial anywhere pedestrians might need to cross busy arterial streets.

- Street trees. Trees along a street benefit pedestrians in many ways. They shield them from sun and (to an extent) rain; they absorb carbon dioxide emitted from motor vehicles; they inevitably enhance the beauty of the street; and, depending on their placement, they help separate the pedestrian environment from the roadway.

- Commercial uses well integrated into residential areas, for pedestrians’ convenience (see Handy 1996).
• Continuous retail frontages right on the street. A commercial street of narrow shops forming an unbroken streetfront right at the property line brings many more destinations within walking distance, and thus is more pedestrian-friendly, than a strip with large stores deeply set back and widely gapped by parking lots.

• Awnings over sidewalks in retail areas, for weather protection.

• Curb ramps. Ramps greatly improve a street’s accessibly for people in wheelchairs or pushing strollers.

• Benches and other streetscape amenities. Benches give older pedestrians a place to rest, and they provide places for two of most popular pedestrian activities after walking: visiting and people-watching. Other streetscape embellishments — garbage cans, water fountains, bus shelters, public art, etc. — increase the comfort and/or the beauty of the pedestrian environment.

• Maps and signage, to help pedestrians orient themselves.

• Pedestrian-scale lighting. Walking at night is facilitated by relatively low street lights which illuminate sidewalks rather than roadways.

The above design elements have a direct effect in encouraging people to walk within neighbourhoods. However, they also have an indirect effect by making walking distances seem shorter. When pedestrians are comfortable and visually stimulated, they are generally willing to walk further. This is one of the reasons why people tend to walk further in downtowns and inner city areas than in the suburbs.

Traffic Volume and Speed

People are disinclined to walk if they perceive that traffic is too heavy or too dangerous. A pedestrian survey conducted in Ontario in 1989 asked for respondents’ preferences on 31 different items. Automobile-related items were the most disliked. “Air pollution/car exhaust” was ranked #1 (the most disliked); “dangerous street crossings” was #3; and “loud traffic noise” tied for #4. “Fast moving traffic” was slightly lower on the list (#11) (Hawthorne 1989). In Chapter 1 I mentioned Donald Appleyard’s (1981) landmark study on how traffic inhibits the use of streets by pedestrians.
Weather

Because they are completely exposed to the elements, pedestrians are sensitive to climatic conditions. Rain, snow, heat, cold, and even strong wind are factors in many people’s decisions to make trips in the climate-controlled environment of the automobile rather than on foot. The Ontario survey asked respondents in three cities about weather conditions that made them decide against making a particular trip on foot. Their responses are reported in Table 6. Hard rain was the greatest deterrent to walking, followed by cold, heavy snow, and heat. These results are interesting but must be interpreted with caution. The effect of any given weather condition on the decision to walk may be different in an area where that condition is very common. In Vancouver, for instance, rain may not stop people from walking to the degree it does in Ontario, but snow may stop walking much more.

Table 6  Proportion of respondents giving up walking in various weather conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Toronto</th>
<th>Ottawa</th>
<th>Thunder Bay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None (never give up walking)</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heat</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard rain</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drizzling rain</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A forecast of rain</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy snow</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light snow</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A forecast of snow</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong wind</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Hawthorne 1989, Graph II.C.32

Topography

Although pedestrians as a rule are less sensitive to topography than cyclists, topography can be a factor in the choice between walking and using a car for intra-neighbourhood trips. Steep hills are especially daunting for seniors, wheelchair users, and people pushing strollers.
Personal Considerations

Different people have different personal situations — different attitudes, priorities, worries, commitments, family responsibilities, and so forth. Some people’s situations are more complementary to walking than others. The main personal factors which people consider when deciding whether to walk or drive are the following:

Time

In today’s busy society, time is one of the factors influencing modal choice. If people are busy, their time is precious. They are likely to walk only if walking is faster than driving, or least competitive with driving time-wise. The time it takes to walk a certain distance, of course, varies with walking speed. Walking speed generally ranges between 3 and 6 km/h; the average walking speed is about 5 km/h (Wallace, Floyd, Associates, Inc. 1996). Walking times for various distances at various speeds are calculated in Figure 1.

Figure 1  Walking times by distance and speed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Slow (3.3 km/h)</th>
<th>Average (5 km/h)</th>
<th>Fast (6.4 km/h)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 km</td>
<td>9 min.</td>
<td>6 min.</td>
<td>5 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5 km</td>
<td>18 min.</td>
<td>12 min.</td>
<td>9 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 km</td>
<td>27 min.</td>
<td>18 min.</td>
<td>14 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 km</td>
<td>36 min.</td>
<td>24 min.</td>
<td>19 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0 km</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is an acceptable amount of time to spend walking for the non-work trips considered in this thesis? The Ontario study cited earlier (Hawthorne 1989) asked respondents what they thought
was a reasonable amount of time to spend walking one way to go on an errand. The average times consistently hovered around 20 minutes. At an average walking speed, a person can walk 1667 m in 20 minutes. The study's respondents therefore seem to have over-estimated, since few people regularly walk that far for their everyday business. Just because people say that 20 minutes is a "reasonable" time does not mean that they generally have that much time for a one-way trip. The 20-minute figure, however, may be somewhat of a threshold in people's minds at which walking is a mode to consider.

**Price**

Besides the cost of time, the only other cost which tends to be considered when people are deciding whether to walk or whether to drive is the price of driving. For a short car trip within a neighbourhood, the cost of gasoline is so small that it is almost always ignored. The one cost which people may consider is parking. Because parking is paid per trip — if it is paid at all — the price of parking may be a factor influencing the mode of a given trip. Free parking, other things being equal, encourages driving.

The Ontario study (Hawthorne 1989) asked respondents how far they would walk, in good weather and without strict time constraints, to save $1.00 or $2.00, which might well be the cost of plugging a parking meter for an hour. The results are shown in Table 7. The respondents said that they would walk for over 20 minutes to save a dollar, and about 35 minutes to save two dollars.

---

4 Toronto respondents averaged 19.5 minutes; Ottawa-Carleton respondents, 21.2 minutes; and Thunder Bay respondents, 22 minutes.
Table 7  Time willing to walk to save money*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>To save $1.00</th>
<th>To save $2.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>22.6 min.</td>
<td>36.9 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ottawa</td>
<td>25.8 min.</td>
<td>33.7 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thunder Bay</td>
<td>25.8 min.</td>
<td>35.1 min.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hawthorne (1989), Table II.A.4
* Times were adjusted to take into account inflation since 1988, assumed to be 30%

**Convenience**

Walking might be very convenient for some people for some trips, and very inconvenient for others. Convenience is difficult to define; its meaning shades into some of the other categories in this section like time and comfort (Goldsmith 1992). In my mind, something that is convenient can be easily incorporated into the rest of one’s plans. A woman who eventually needs to get to the local elementary school may find it very convenient to walk to a dental appointment, if between the dentist’s office and the school is a shop she has been hoping to get a chance to patronize. A woman planning to drive to work downtown after a dental appointment would probably find it very inconvenient to walk from her home to the dentist’s office and then back home after the appointment to get her car, even if she had no time pressure.

Trip chaining is growing phenomenon which works to make walking trips less convenient. Changing lifestyle patterns and increasing time pressure (some of which is a result of increasing roadway congestion) are leading people to perform an increasing number of activities per trip, particularly on the way to or from work (Strathman and Dueker 1995; Levinson and Kumar 1995). Increasingly, if the employed people in a household make their work trips by car, their non-work activities — taking a child to day care or school, stopping at the bank, picking up a few things at the grocery store — are being taken care of as part of the journey to or from work. It is simply more convenient that way.
Security

Personal security is an important consideration for many people, especially women. People who feel unsafe are likely to use a vehicle, if they have access to one, to get to their destinations. Most non-work trips are made before sunset, when safety concerns really come to the fore. However, trips to and from restaurants, places of entertainment, and convenience or late-night grocery stores are common at night. Ironically, pedestrians are perhaps a neighbourhood’s greatest security devices. People out and about provide the casual neighbourhood surveillance that urbanist Jane Jacobs (1961) calls “eyes on the street.”

Physical Abilities

The physical ability of the pedestrian, both generally and at the specific time of the trip, has a direct impact on whether he or she will walk (Goldsmith 1992). A 26 year-old student is much more likely to walk, other things being equal, than an octogenarian. By the same token, however, the 26 year-old is much more likely to make an 8:30 a.m. trip on foot after having had a good sleep the night before than after having stayed up all night to finish a term paper.

Comfort

The comfort factor may well lead two people whose physical abilities are similar to make different transportation mode choices for the same trip under the same conditions. One may be more comfort-seeking than the other, disliking the physical effort expended in walking.

Environmental Concern

Attitudes towards the environment differ, and often play into modal choice decisions. Other things being equal, people who feel strongly about environmental protection are more likely to make a
neighbourhood trip on foot than people who are less concerned about the state of the natural world. Even though trips within neighbourhoods are short, they are more polluting per unit of distance than longer trips. This is because of the 'cold soak' phenomenon, wherein engines perform less effectively for a few minutes after start-up than they do once they are fully warmed up.

Huey and Everett (1996) argue that even people who are mindful of the environment may often drive rather than walk because the personal benefits of driving — speed, freedom, privacy, etc. — are immediate while the positive environmental consequences of not driving are temporally far removed.

**Habit**

For some people, driving is a habit, much like watching television or chewing finger nails. A habit is something done unconsciously or almost unconsciously. Gallagher (1994) speaks of habitual behaviours as having become ‘automated’ (no pun intended). Verplanken *et al.* (1994, p. 288) explain how car-driving can become a habit:

Every time a particular journey is made by car, the satisfaction of using the car reinforces car choice behaviour, and, thus, contributes to the strength of a car choice habit. Next to reinforcement of a particular behaviour, however, repetitively and satisfactorily making the same decision over and again may have another consequence namely, that there is gradually less need to consider alternative choices. In other words, the decision maker’s involvement with that particular decision decreases as they make the same decision repeatedly. When this motivation to evaluate alternatives diminishes, there is less need to deliberate actively about the pros and cons of options, search for information (internally or externally), or otherwise expend mental effort in preparation for the particular trip.

Needless to say, the stronger that driving is a habit, the less likely it is that any given trip within a neighbourhood will be made on foot.
Social Considerations

Social psychologists would be quick to point out that virtually all behaviours, travel behaviour included, are not simply a function of environmental and autonomous personal factors. Social norms also play into the equation (McKenzie-Mohr 1996). Most people are influenced, to a degree, by what they perceive people around them and society at large feel about the various alternatives.

Since its infancy the automobile has been an object of prestige. It is only the latest of a centuries-long line of urban transportation technologies which those with the means have adopted to increase their mobility and reorganize their lives away from having to walk (Fishman 1987). Driving a fancy car is a sign that a person has ‘made it.’ Walking, on the other hand, has never been very prestigious. The word ‘pedestrian’ is etymologically related to the words ‘peon’ and ‘pawn’ — neither especially flattering. They respectively derive from Portuguese and Old French terms for foot soldiers: the bumbling and awkward commoners who could neither qualify nor afford to be in the cavalry. Some people today still equate walking with being a peon.5

In recent years, however, walking has gained new respect as a antidote for the diseases and distress of our increasingly sedentary society. Books and articles have been published, walking clubs and pedestrian advocacy organizations have been formed, and a glossy monthly magazine devoted to walking is on the newsstands. The status of walking is also slowly increasing as a result of increasing awareness of its environmental benignancy. But there is still a long way to go before walking is perceived to be an unequivocally desirable transportation choice. Our social norms about personal hygiene, for instance, work against any mode of transportation that causes perspiration and body odor.

5 See Everett and Ozanne (1993) for an analogous discussion of the perceived low status of another alternative mode of transportation — transit — compared to that of the automobile.
Summary

In this chapter I have turned to the literature of various disciplines in an attempt to set forth the factors which, in general, influence the destination and mode of non-work trips. The concept of accessibility helps explain why people go where they go — accessibility being a function of both land use and transportation factors. Destinations with a greater perceived accessibility are generally chosen over those with a lower perceived accessibility. The choice of a mode of transportation for neighbourhood trips is influenced by a person’s perception of environmental, personal, and social factors. The information contained in this chapter sets the agenda for the task of gathering specific information about West Point Grey, the community of interest in the 'Walk West 10th' social marketing effort. In order to know how best to market walking to West 10th, it is crucial to have answers to questions such as the following. How accessible is West 10th compared to other destinations? How do the environmental factors influencing whether a person walks shape up in West Point Grey? The personal factors? The social? The following two chapters take up these questions.
Chapter 4  BACKGROUND RESEARCH: COMMUNITY INFORMATION

The literature on transportation mode determinants makes clear that the potential for getting people in a community to replace driving trips with walking trips depends greatly on the characteristics of that community. In this chapter, I detail characteristics of West Point Grey that are relevant to the issues of how people decide where to go for non-work trips and how to get there. This information is an essential input to the social marketing strategy in Chapter 6. I start by detailing the geography and urban form of the neighbourhood and its surrounding area, and some relevant transportation characteristics. Some of this information derived from secondary sources, and some based on primary observation. I then report the demographic characteristics of West Point Grey residents. Neighbourhood voting results, which are a quick-and-dirty attitudinal indicator, are the next type of community information I review. The last information I consider is the state of community activism in the area of transportation. The chapter concludes with a brief summary.

Neighbourhood Context and Urban Form

The most basic thing a social marketer should know about a community is its lay. West Point Grey is a 363 hectare community located at the north-western corner of the City of Vancouver (see Figure 2 and Figure 3). The scenic beaches of English Bay lie at the community’s northern edge. Immediately to the west is Pacific Spirit Regional Park, a large second-growth forest on the other side of which is the University of British Columbia (UBC) campus. The forest also forms most of the neighbourhood’s southern border. East of West Point Grey, the eclectic neighbourhood of Kitsilano reaches toward downtown. On three sides, then, West Point Grey has very sharp natural edges.
Figure 2  West Point Grey in Municipal Context

Figure 3  West Point Grey Physical Layout
West Point Grey is an attractive west side neighbourhood which was developed, beginning in the 1920s, as a streetcar suburb of the central city and also a university bedroom community. It lies primarily on top of a hill, though north of 4th Avenue the elevation drop to the water is so steep as to effectively separate the northern-most blocks from the rest of the neighbourhood. The entire community has always been a single-family dwelling preserve; most of its blocks are solely occupied by medium-sized detached homes on 33- or 40-foot lots, though larger homes have been built on blocks with a view of English Bay and in the north-western corner of the community. The cozy ‘Craftsman’ architecture of the original houses and the surprise of the occasional postmodern special combine to make the residential blocks attractive and interesting. The neighbourhood has a few churches and schools, of which Queen Mary Elementary and Lord Byng Secondary are architecturally notable. Queen Mary adjoins Trimble Park, a popular active-play park with one of the city’s greatest views of downtown Vancouver. Cutting through the community on its way to UBC is the neighbourhood’s main arterial, West 10th Avenue. The westernmost block of West 10th in West Point Grey is lined with high-rise apartment buildings, and the three blocks immediately to the east are lined with commercial establishments. These three blocks constitute the West 10th shopping street.

West 10th Shopping Street

‘West 10th,’ as the retail area is called, is primarily comprised of small one- and two-storey buildings (see Figure 4). The one building which bucks the general form is the large Safeway supermarket, whose lot takes up most of one whole block. As Table 8 shows, West 10th offers a relatively comprehensive selection of low- and middle-order services. The fact that restaurants and cafés are the most common type of establishment should not be interpreted as meaning that West 10th has a vibrant night life. Quite the opposite; the street is very quiet in the evenings, especially after 9:00 p.m. West 10th only has one tavern. Some of the West 10th businesses still close on Sundays.
Figure 4  Air photo of West 10th Avenue Commercial Area
Table 8 Commercial Establishments on West 10th Avenue between Tolmie and Discovery Street, August 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13 restaurants</th>
<th>2 dry cleaners</th>
<th>1 convenience store</th>
<th>1 optometrist office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 clothing stores</td>
<td>2 fabric stores</td>
<td>1 darkroom rental place</td>
<td>1 pet store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 cafés/coffee shops</td>
<td>2 furniture stores</td>
<td>1 flower shop/nursery</td>
<td>1 post office outlet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 financial institutions</td>
<td>2 insurance agencies</td>
<td>1 framing store</td>
<td>1 public library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 hair salons</td>
<td>2 opticians</td>
<td>1 gas station</td>
<td>1 shoe repair service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 dental clinics</td>
<td>2 pharmacies</td>
<td>1 gourmet grocery/deli</td>
<td>1 shoe store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 home decor outlets</td>
<td>2 produce stores</td>
<td>1 hardware store</td>
<td>1 sporting goods store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 medical clinics</td>
<td>2 stationery stores</td>
<td>1 health food store</td>
<td>1 supermarket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 travel agencies</td>
<td>2 toy stores</td>
<td>1 home renovation est.</td>
<td>1 tavern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 bookstores</td>
<td>2 veterinary clinics</td>
<td>1 jewelry store</td>
<td>1 used bookstore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 photo/camera stores</td>
<td>2 video outlets</td>
<td>1 law office</td>
<td>1 wine merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 antique stores</td>
<td>1 accountant office</td>
<td>1 medical lab</td>
<td>1 word processing est.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 bakeries</td>
<td>1 art gallery</td>
<td>1 movie theatre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 beauty shops</td>
<td>1 barbershop</td>
<td>1 music store</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 candy stores</td>
<td>1 comics/cards shop</td>
<td>1 news outlet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey by author

It is important to note that with a few notable exceptions, such as Safeway and Starbucks Coffee, well-known chain stores are absent from West 10th. Most of the shops are independently owned and operated. The shop-owners can sometimes be seen sweeping the sidewalk in front of their businesses. Their stores are generally not decorated in the standardized glitzy way of shopping mall outlets; their clerks (if they are not manning the cash registers themselves) do not wear standardized outfits or speak standardized lines. Independent merchants have more of a stake in their host community than chain stores do. Some merchants even live in the neighbourhood. All this gives West 10th more of a friendly, small-town feel than found in most urban commercial areas.

Merchants in many commercial areas in Vancouver have voted to create Business Improvement Associations (BIAs) to promote local economic development. BIAs have the legal authority to impose a small tax on all merchants within their boundaries in order to finance streetscape improvements, group advertising, street festivals, and other programs. West 10th does not have a BIA.
Its relatively small size barely supports a shoestring (and voluntary) West 10th Merchants’ Association. The Association’s activities are modest. In 1995 it printed an advertising pamphlet. The front of the pamphlet showed a simple but happily-coloured illustration of West 10th’s streetscape; the main message was “Stroll the tree-lined shopping district of West 10th Avenue in one of Vancouver’s oldest neighbourhoods.” Inside the pamphlet were a map showing West 10th’s location in Vancouver and a complete list of the street’s businesses. The pamphlet was intended to depict West 10th as having a sense of unassuming charm. Some merchants were dissatisfied with the pamphlet, so the Merchants’ Association chose not to reprint it.¹ In 1997 its marketing consisted of a small advertisement running in the Vancouver Courier, a free community newspaper, every week.

The businesses along West 10th obviously would like to draw customers from all over the West side of Vancouver, and to a certain extent they do — attracting people looking for specialty items or on their way to or from UBC. Still, the street’s primary customer base is its host neighbourhood of West Point Grey and the UBC/University Endowment Lands area. It competes for local residents’ patronage with other commercial streets, downtown shops and malls, Oakridge Shopping Centre, and the odd big box outlet like Superstore. Table 9 lists these locations and provides information suggestive of their respective accessibility. The information in this table is important because plans to promote walking to West 10th cannot consider West 10th in isolation. The commercial street is only one of a number of places West Point Grey residents can go to for shopping and other personal business. Without appraising what West 10th is ‘up against,’ it is hard to know how best to persuade people to come to it rather than to another location.

¹ Personal communication, Michèle Beaulieu (West 10th Merchants’ Association Marketing Director), 8 August 1997.
Table 9 Alternatives to West 10th

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Type of destination</th>
<th>Approx. distance from 10th and Sasamat</th>
<th>Approx. driving time from 10th and Sasamat*</th>
<th>Accessibility comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th &amp; Alma</td>
<td>Modest commercial street with BiLow supermarket</td>
<td>2.2 km</td>
<td>4 min.</td>
<td>Close and easy to reach; on the way to downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunbar</td>
<td>Modest commercial street with Stong’s supermarket and Shopper’s Drug Mart</td>
<td>3.5 km</td>
<td>7 min.</td>
<td>Close and easy to reach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Broadway</td>
<td>Commercial street with lots of restaurants</td>
<td>2.4 km</td>
<td>5 min.</td>
<td>On slow, congested cross-town route</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Avenue</td>
<td>Trendy commercial street with Caper’s organic grocery</td>
<td>4.5 km</td>
<td>9 min.</td>
<td>On the way to downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerrisdale</td>
<td>Upscale commercial street</td>
<td>6.5 km</td>
<td>13 min.</td>
<td>Parking abundant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakridge</td>
<td>Upscale shopping centre with two department stores</td>
<td>9.5 km</td>
<td>19 min.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superstore</td>
<td>Stand-alone big box supermarket</td>
<td>13 km</td>
<td>26 min.</td>
<td>Parking abundant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>Central business district with several department stores</td>
<td>7.7 km</td>
<td>15 min.</td>
<td>Traffic heavy; parking limited and expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granville Island</td>
<td>Public market</td>
<td>6.3 km</td>
<td>13 min.</td>
<td>Crowded with tourists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Dr.</td>
<td>‘Alternative’ commercial street</td>
<td>10.6 km</td>
<td>21 min.</td>
<td>Reached by busy arterial streets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calculated and compiled by author
* Assuming an average driving speed of 30 km/h

Transportation Characteristics

Information about West Point Grey’s urban form is useful for the ‘Walk West 10th’ social marketing strategy. However, if the goal of the strategy is to influence people’s travel decisions, it is also necessary to have a good understanding of the workings of the transportation system in and around West Point Grey.

Streets

Except for a few curvilinear streets in the exclusive north-western corner of the neighbourhood, West Point Grey’s streets are entirely gridded. Virtually all of the streets have
sidewalks on both sides, and most of them are also treed. As in any gridded network, the streets see
some 'rat-running' — drivers cutting through residential areas in order to save a little time by avoiding
slow arterials. However, the phenomenon is relatively minor because UBC, the only significant
nearby destination, is separated from West Point Grey's grid by Pacific Spirit Park, and can only be
accessed from 4th, 10th, and 16th Avenues.

Figure 5  Traffic controls on West 10th Street

By transportation engineering standards, West 10th Avenue is a modest arterial street. It has
two traffic lanes and a parking lane in each direction. Parking on many streets in Vancouver is
stripped during peak hours to provide another through-lane, but not along West 10th. The curb
parking, which is free, does much to slow traffic and buffer the pedestrian environment from the roadway. West 10th carries approximately 10,000 vehicles daily each way through the commercial area. Much of the traffic is through-traffic to and from UBC. There are full traffic signals on West 10th at both edges of the neighbourhood (Blanca and Alma Streets). In the shopping district there are pedestrian-activated signals and painted crosswalks at Sasamat and Trimble Streets, but not at Tolmie and Discovery Streets (see Figure 5). On nice days traffic along West 10th is frequently stopped for pedestrians at these two intersections. People are also often seen crossing mid-block, especially in front of Safeway. Sidewalks are approximately 15 feet wide along West 10th (relatively wide by Vancouver standards), though it should be noted that the outside 3 feet have street trees and bike racks and are not clear for walking. Light posts along the street fly modest decorative banners, but the overall level of streetscape improvements is low. There are no street benches. Even garbage cans are few and far between.

Two key bus routes run along West 10th: the #10, the main route between downtown and UBC (the two most important transit destinations in metropolitan Vancouver), and the #99, the region’s first rapid bus line. The latter, a cross-town express route, does not currently stop along West 10th, but will soon — a stop has been promised for the intersection at Sasamat Street, the ‘heart’ of the West 10th shopping street.

Walking Distances and Times

As I explained in Chapter 3, most people find a distance of between 400 m and 1 km acceptable to walk. By these standards, West 10th is within walking distance of most households in West Point Grey. Roughly half of the blocks in the neighbourhood are within 400 m (straight-line distance) of the commercial street. At the rule of thumb walking speed of 5 km/h, most of the residents in the community can walk to the intersection of 10th and Sasamat in only a few minutes.
Table 10 shows the key straight-line distances and walking times within the neighbourhood. To calculate the walking times for people who have to zigzag through the street grid, the numbers in Table 10 can simply be added. For example, from either the intersections of 16th and Blanca (the south-west corner of West Point Grey) or 4th and Blanca, 10th and Sasamat is a 12-minute walk. From 16th and Camosun, it is a 17-minute walk. Only households in the south-east corner of the neighbourhood (and thus closer to shops on Dunbar or Alma Streets anyway) and north of 4th Avenue (where street grades make walking to West 10th difficult) are beyond easy walking distance of West 10th.

**Table 10  Walking distances and times in and around West Point Grey**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Walking time (at 5 km/h)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16th Ave. to 10th Ave.</td>
<td>590 m 7 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Ave. to 10th Ave.</td>
<td>590 m 7 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blanca St. to Sasamat St.</td>
<td>420 m 5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camosun St. to Sasamat St.</td>
<td>845 m 10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma St. to Sasamat St.</td>
<td>1645 m 20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camosun St. to Blanca St.</td>
<td>1280 m 15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blanca St. to UBC (on Univ. Blvd.)</td>
<td>2200 m 26 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calculated by author

**Driving Costs**

As discussed in Chapter 3, the cost of traveling to a certain destination theoretically affects the destination’s perceived accessibility. In researching for ‘Walk West 10th,’ I thought it helpful to know how much it costs West Point Grey residents to drive to the locations listed in Table 9. In Chapter 5 I provide evidence that neighbourhood residents are unaware of transportation costs. But how many of them have taken the time to actually calculate the costs? If they were aware of the cost they incurred each time they used their automobiles, they just might drive less often.
Anticipating their possible use in the ‘Walk West 10th’ social marketing strategy, in Table 11 I have calculated the costs associated with driving from West Point Grey. I have estimated both gasoline costs and total operating costs, which in addition to gasoline factor in maintenance, insurance, and vehicle registration costs. I have not factored in the capital cost of a vehicle because capital cost does not vary by distance driven. The final column of the table indicates whether people driving to the various destinations face a charge for parking.

Table 11  Cost of driving from West Point Grey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Approx. distance from 10th and Sasamat</th>
<th>Gasoline cost of return trip*</th>
<th>Total operating cost of return trip†</th>
<th>Pay for parking?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th &amp; Alma</td>
<td>2.2 km</td>
<td>$0.27</td>
<td>$0.66</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunbar</td>
<td>3.5 km</td>
<td>$0.43</td>
<td>$1.05</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Broadway</td>
<td>2.4 km</td>
<td>$0.30</td>
<td>$0.72</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Avenue</td>
<td>4.5 km</td>
<td>$0.56</td>
<td>$1.35</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerrisdale</td>
<td>6.5 km</td>
<td>$0.80</td>
<td>$1.95</td>
<td>on 41st Ave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakridge</td>
<td>9.5 km</td>
<td>$1.18</td>
<td>$2.85</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superstore</td>
<td>13.0 km</td>
<td>$1.61</td>
<td>$3.90</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>7.7 km</td>
<td>$0.95</td>
<td>$2.31</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granville Island</td>
<td>6.3 km</td>
<td>$0.78</td>
<td>$1.89</td>
<td>in places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Dr.</td>
<td>10.6 km</td>
<td>$1.31</td>
<td>$3.18</td>
<td>north of 1st Ave</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calculated and compiled by author
* Assuming a gasoline price of $0.619/l and a generous fuel efficiency of 10l/100 km
† Assuming a vehicle operating cost of $0.15/km

Travel Patterns

The ‘Walk West 10th’ strategy would have benefited from knowing how often West Point Grey residents make trips to West 10th or other areas of the city using the various modes of transportation. Having a better fix on where they go and how would have helped me know more exactly what needed to be done to encourage people to walk to West 10th more often. Unfortunately,

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2 Suffice it to say, however, that if capital cost were factored in each trip would seem considerably more expensive.
it would have required a special survey of West Point Grey residents to determine how often they go to West 10th, Kerrisdale, downtown, etc. However, I was able to get modal split information for West Point Grey from a transportation model maintained by the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD). It furnishes good evidence that neighbourhood residents use their cars a great deal. Almost two-thirds of all trips made in the morning peak hour are by automobile. Because this hour is traditionally when automobile use is relatively low, West Point Grey’s 24-hour modal split probably more closely resembles the Vancouver-wide data found in Table 1 — which shows that a full three-quarters of trips are made by car. It should be no surprise to see that the non-motorized modes of transportation have a much higher share of the trips within West Point Grey than of the trips as a whole. The sixty percent share shown for walking and cycling is very high, but is mostly explained by children’s trips to school. If all the trips made within the neighbourhood, including ones made on the weekend, were included in this data, the non-motorized transportation share would be significantly lower.

Table 12  Modal split of trips originating in WPG in morning peak, by destination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WPG (internal)</th>
<th>Downtown</th>
<th>Rest of Vancouver</th>
<th>Outside Vancouver</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auto driver</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>83.0%</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto passenger</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk/bike</td>
<td>59.0%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of trips | 502 | 489 | 2018 | 365 | 3374 |

Source: GVRD 1996 Transportation Model

3 The GVRD is a multi-purpose regional services agency which operates by the consensus of 20 municipalities in the Vancouver metropolitan area. The GVRD’s Strategic Planning Department is one of the leaders in Canada in the area of transportation demand management, of which the ‘Walk West 10th’ social marketing project is an example.

4 Two of the model’s 445 traffic zones cover West Point Grey. The model is calibrated to data obtained in screen line counts and the 1992 Greater Vancouver Travel Survey, which sampled 2.2% of households in the entire Lower Mainland area, and thus roughly 2% households in West Point Grey. Table 12 must therefore be interpreted with caution, since it is based on a small and potentially unrepresentative number of households. Please also note that the table only include trips originating in the morning peak period of 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m., which is an uncommon time for the non-work trips considered in this thesis.
Characteristics of Neighbourhood Residents

Having reviewed land use and transportation information pertinent to 'Walk West 10th,' I now move on to examine the demographic characteristics of West Point Grey residents. A social marketing strategy would be lost without an excellent appreciation of the people it is intended to influence. Suppose Health Canada wanted to get more people exercising but failed to consider the demographics of our aging society. It might have instituted a campaign focused primarily on active sports which people generally discontinue when they get older. To avoid this sort of strategic misstep, in this section I have gathered demographic information relevant to 'Walk West 10th' from the 1991 census (the most recent available at the time of my research).

Population, Age, and Sex

The population of West Point Grey in 1991 was 12,320. Figure 6 breaks down the population by age and gender. Two details revealed by the graph are notable. First, it shows twin peaks: the twentysomething age group and the mid-40s baby-boomer age group. These generally represent current or recent university students and affluent, established professionals. Second, the senior’s population in the neighbourhood in 1991 was quite sizeable.

See Statistics Canada, Cat. No. 95-388.
Households and Families

In West Point Grey in 1991, no household size was particularly predominant (see Table 13). However, Figure 7 shows that the traditional family unit of a mother, father, and at least one child was the most common type of family in the community. When single-parent families and couples whose children have all left the nest are lumped together with traditional families, it becomes evident that West Point Grey is a relatively family-oriented corner of Vancouver. It is a geographical curiosity that West Point Grey, so close to UBC, is not especially 'swinging,' but it is an observable fact. Kitsilano, east of West Point Grey, is the singles-oriented area for young university types.

Table 13  Household size in West Point Grey, 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household size</th>
<th>West Point Grey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 person</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 people</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 people</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5 people</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 or more people</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total households</td>
<td>5055</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 7  Family types in West Point Grey, 1991*

* The terms “husband” and “wife” comprehend common-law partners.

Language

In 1991, English was the mother tongue of 82.0% of West Point Grey residents. Chinese was the second most common, at 6.0%. Six percent is a significant number, but relatively small in a city where the overall proportion of Chinese speakers was 18.4%.

Income

West Point Grey is an affluent community in an affluent city (see Table 14). The nature of the community leads one to suspect that many of its low-income households are not chronically poor, but comprised of young people such as students whose future earning power will be quite high.
Table 14 West Point Grey Income Indicators, 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>West Point Grey</th>
<th>Vancouver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median household income</td>
<td>$53,989</td>
<td>$34,174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average household income</td>
<td>$73,129</td>
<td>$45,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons in low-income households</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Home Ownership

In 1991, 59% of residences in the community were owned by their occupants; 41% were rented. The city-wide split was exactly the opposite: 59% rented and 41% owned their dwellings.

Education

Of the community population 15 years of age and older in 1991, 46% of people had a university degree. This is a very high level of formal education.

Occupation

As one would expect in a population with so much formal education, the West Point Grey labour force is overwhelmingly white-collar. Table 15 and Table 16 break down the labour force in the community by occupation and industry, respectively. The largest category in Table 15 (natural and social sciences, etc.) is the one into which most UBC professors would fall; the second largest category is that of the managers and administrators who typify white-collar work; the smallest categories are the various blue-collar jobs. The most common industries in Table 16 are education (which would include all UBC employees), health and social services, and trade — a.k.a. business.
Table 15  West Point Grey labour force, by major occupation groups, 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation Group</th>
<th>Males (%)</th>
<th>Females (%)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managerial, administrative and related occupations</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and related occupations</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupations in medicine and health</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural and social sciences, religious, artistic and related occupations</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical and related occupations</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales occupations</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services occupations</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary occupations</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processing occupations</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machining, product fabricating, assembling and repairing occupations</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction trades occupations</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation equipment operating occupations</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other occupations</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16  West Point Grey labour force, by industry divisions, 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Division</th>
<th>WPG labour force (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary industries</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing industries</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction industries</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and storage industries</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication and other utility industries</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade industries</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance, insurance, and real estate industries</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government service industries</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational service industries</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and social services industries</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other industries</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mobility

In 1991, approximately 48% of West Point Grey residents had lived in a different dwelling five years previously. This is one of the lowest rates in the City of Vancouver. For over half of those who had lived in a different dwelling, the previous dwelling was located somewhere in the Vancouver area. West Point Grey is a relatively stable neighbourhood.
Voting Results

Table 17, Table 18, and Table 19 contain the West Point Grey voting results for the most recent federal, provincial, and municipal elections. The tables are useful for 'Walk West 10th' because of what they collectively say about the attitudes and ideologies of the residents of West Point Grey. It is very helpful to know about people's political tendencies when developing a social marketing strategy directed at them. Social marketing is a tool for social change; people's political leanings generally indicate their attitudes about social change. With a knowledge of people's voting behaviour, a social marketer can more successfully develop a strategy that will be appropriate for its intended recipients. Without that knowledge, it is difficult to know whether an overall strategy or even a specific message is too radical or too conservative.

In the 1997 federal election, the Liberal incumbent, who was returned to office, garnered almost half the West Point Grey vote (see Table 17). A little-known Reform candidate, on a right-wing platform, won another quarter. The NDP and the Green Party together received barely more than the third-place Conservatives. The anti-establishment vote was very weak.

Table 17 1997 Federal Election Results, West Point Grey polls*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Voting share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>2330</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform</td>
<td>1338</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive Conservative</td>
<td>782</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Democratic</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Law</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marxist-Leninist</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>5342</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Doug Tyson, Vancouver Quadra Chief Returning Officer
* Includes Vancouver Quadra polls 23-45
In the 1996 provincial election, Gordon Campbell, the Liberal Party leader and former mayor of Vancouver, barely squeezed by a tough New Democratic challenger to win his seat. However, as Table 18 shows, Campbell easily won the West Point Grey polls. Campbell lives in the West Point Grey neighbourhood, but propinquity does not necessarily translate into voting support. West Point Grey simply seems more conservative than UBC and Kitsilano, the other two sections of the Campbell’s riding of Vancouver-Point Grey.

Table 18  1996 Provincial Election Results, West Point Grey polls*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Voting share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>3141</td>
<td>58.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Democratic</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive Democratic Alliance</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Coalition</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Law</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5415</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Elections BC
* Includes Vancouver-Point Grey polls 11-13, 30-32, 59-64, and 88-99

Vancouver also had a municipal election in 1996. As Table 19 indicates, the incumbent mayor Philip Owen received a 40% greater share of the West Point Grey vote than either of his two serious rivals. Owen represents the Non-Partisan Association, a conservative, pro-development municipal party. Allevato, who placed second, is a left-wing radical, but Baker, who placed third, is a former NPA councillor who has changed his acronym but not his political orientation.
Table 19 1996 Municipal Election Mayoralty Results, West Point Grey polls*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate (Party)</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Voting share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philip Owen (NPA)</td>
<td>2042</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmela Allevato (COPE)</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Baker (V.O.I.C.E.)</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul F. Watson (Green)</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54 others</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3456</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: City of Vancouver, City Clerk’s Office  
* Includes polls 77, 78A, 81, and 82A

The overall picture that emerges from the voting results is that of a generally conservative citizenry. A significant proportion of the West Point Grey electorate consistently votes for left-wing or radical parties (the NDP and the Greens), but that proportion is the minority. This suggests that the ‘Walk West 10th’ strategy should propound progressive ideas cautiously and hold to fairly traditional values.

Community Involvement in Transportation Issues

Although the statistics have all been summary ones, the preceding sections of this chapter have treated characteristics of West Point Grey residents as individuals. This current section briefly addresses aspects of their shared or common activities related to transportation. Because ‘Walk West 10th’ is intended to be a community-based social marketing effort, information about the status of community involvement is just as vital as any other type of community information.

The community has been fairly active in recent years in the area of transportation. The parents’ associations of the two elementary schools near West 10th are one example. In response to the danger of high traffic levels in their immediate vicinity, the associations independently started programs to encourage children to walk to school. The parent who initiated ‘Let’s Walk Queen Mary’
said, "I live two blocks from the school and had seen people living just as close drive their kids to school." At Our Lady of Perpetual Help School, the walk-to-school program was supplemented in the 1997/98 school year with a organized car-pooling program run by a parent volunteer.

In 1994, with the help of government grants, the West Point Grey Residents' Association produced the West Point Grey Healthy Neighbourhood Plan. The plan is a professionally-written document setting forth a multi-faceted vision for the community much the same way that official community plans set forth broad policy objectives for entire cities and towns. It contains sections on such things as community spirit and housing. Most important for this research, however, are sections on transportation and commerce. The plan's transportation goals are the following: (1) working with UBC to significantly reduce through traffic on West 10th, (2) establishing a "user-friendly (pedestrian-first) shopping district" on West 10th, and (3) calming traffic on side streets in West Point Grey. All aim to reduce the dominance of the automobile in the neighbourhood, though the plan does not in the least suggest that residents should get rid of their cars. Regarding business in the neighbourhood, the plan expresses the desire that "business on West 10th Avenue will be involved with area residents in improving the working, shopping, and living environments of our 'Main Street.'" Those involved in the preparation of the plan evidently wished to see West 10th become more a more attractive and pedestrian-oriented area.

After the plan was published, one of the committees established to implement it, the Transportation Working Group, began developing plans to physically improve West 10th Avenue. After the provincial Ministry of Transportation and Highways talked about reducing University Boulevard (the westward continuation of 10th) from two lanes each way to one, the Group floated the idea of likewise taking a lane of traffic away from 10th in each direction. One Group member was a

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6 Personal communication, Mary Blachut, 27 March 1997.
7 Personal communication, Lauri-Ann Fenlon, 8 March 1997.
strong advocate using the leftover space to build a boulevard in the middle of the street, though others were more in favour of using the space to increase the width of the sidewalks. Other ideas that the Group considered included planting more street trees, and adding mid-block pedestrian crossings and curb bulges. Even though the Group received some help from planners in the City of Vancouver's Planning Department, it was not able to get a coherent concept together before opposition gathered and waylaid its efforts.

One of the problems was that the Group's plans to physically change West 10th were released to the merchants of the street in too premature a form. In the absence of attractive architectural drawings and reassuring answers to concerns about economic impacts, congestion, bus and emergency vehicle movements, some of the merchants got angry with the plans. Then a new leader of the Residents' Association came out against the direction the Transportation Working Group (one of the Association's subcommittees) was going. Both he and some of the merchants went to the city's Engineering Department, which the Group had strategically avoided. When the engineers deemed the Group's ideas to be unworkable, it was effectively forced to cease operations, at least for the time being.8

In the middle of these neighbourhood politics was the West 10th Merchants’ Association. It was obviously a major stakeholder in any potential changes to the streetscape of West 10th, but tried to remain as detached as possible for a couple of reasons. First, its membership was split on the issue of physical design changes for West 10th. Second, it was wary of schisms in the wider West Point Grey population. Concurrent to the work of the Transportation Working Group in the spring and summer of 1997, two rezoning applications in the neighbourhood (including one which would have permitted relatively dense townhouses and apartments on the O'Hagan site, an empty half block just

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8 Personal communication, Christina DeMarco (Transportation Working Group member and City of Vancouver planner), 29 November 1997.
Walk West 10th

Community Information

north of the West 10th commercial area (visible on the right side of Figure 4)) raised some hot political issues. The Merchants’ Association, seeing a potential for store boycotts and other nasty tactics, did not want be perceived as taking sides in neighbourhood politics, whether it had to do with densification or physical alterations to West 10th.⁹

Summary

West Point Grey is a neighbourhood of respectability and stability. Its quiet residential streets and traditional shopping district are engaging. Over the years it has maintained a family-oriented atmosphere. Its residents tend to be well-educated, upper-middle class types. Despite the influx of immigration into Vancouver, most of the people of West Point Grey are native English speakers. They generally vote conservatively. They use their cars a great deal, but not always because the physical form of the community requires it. The healthy shopping street cutting through the neighbourhood provides a good selection of consumer goods and services, and can be easily accessed on foot by most residents — if they decide to fulfill their needs within West Point Grey. Some parents in the area have been working to encourage walking to school. Some residents have been working to make West 10th a more healthy pedestrian area. However, neighbourhood politics have thus far inhibited the Merchants’ Association from getting involved in local transportation matters. This is the context into which community-based social marketing to promote walking within West Point Grey enters.

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⁹ Personal communication, Michèle Beaulieu, 8 August 1997.
Chapter 5  BACKGROUND RESEARCH: FOCUS GROUP

Some of the information in the previous chapter was quantitative, and some of it was qualitative. Some I collected from secondary sources, and some I observed myself. All of it, however, was what I, someone from outside West Point Grey, deemed relevant to an attempt to encourage walking to West 10th Avenue. Nowhere in Chapter 4 did the people of West Point Grey speak for themselves. And yet, their voices were at least as important to the eventual success of a social marketing initiative as the rest of the information gathered in background research. Without them, there was no way of understanding how the people described in Chapter 4 actually balanced the factors discussed in Chapter 3 when making travel decisions. Without them, my picture of the residents of the neighbourhood was quite sketchy.

This chapter chronicles focus group research which I conducted in August 1997 to flesh out the picture of the community and to gather insights which were to lead to West Point Grey-specific answers to the two general questions raised in Chapter 3. A focus group typically consists of six to ten people who are chosen randomly and do not know each other. They are brought together for a discussion which is carefully focused on questions of interest to the researcher. The discussion is organized and conducted in such a way that the participants feel comfortable sharing their honest opinions and attitudes about the issues at hand. For this is the purpose of focus groups: “to determine the perceptions, feelings, and manner of thinking of consumers about products, services, or opportunities” (Krueger 1988, p. 29).

Focus groups provide rich qualitative data from a number of people at once. Marketers use focus groups extensively — not only for background research but for pretesting of products and messages, and assessments of customer satisfaction (Andreasen 1995). In order to make sure that all the relevant information is gathered, researchers generally arrange for several separate groups (four is
a common number) to discuss the same questions. Any one group may fail to discuss certain key points. Researchers using focus groups, however, do not unduly worry about statistical representativeness. Their concern is to obtain explanatory comments of the sort that are too difficult to gather in a questionnaire survey.

**Purpose and Objectives**

The focus group had a two-fold purpose: to learn about the factors West Point Grey residents consider when (1) choosing between West 10th and other locations when shopping for goods and services, and (2) deciding how to get to West 10th when they have chosen to shop in the neighbourhood.

**Focus Group Methodology**

**Getting Sponsorship**

Several months before conducting the focus group, and while my thinking about community-based social marketing was still in an embryonic state, I approached the then-president of the West 10th Merchants’ Association, Alan Drinkwater, with my idea for ‘Walk West 10th’ (see Appendix 1). He was cool to the idea because of the time he believed it would require of him and the money he believed it would require of the association. However, he said he would be willing to participate in a meeting I might organize on the subject.

At the beginning of August 1997 I decided to conduct a focus group of randomly-selected West Point Grey residents. It was clear to me that if I was going to call people out of the blue and ask them to participate in a group discussion, I needed to have greater credibility in and connection to the community than I could muster as a “researcher from UBC.” So I approached two parties — Gordon
Dungate, leader of the neighbourhood’s Transportation Research Group, and Michèle Beaulieu, newly-appointed marketing director for the Merchants’ Association — and asked them if I could organize and conduct the focus group under the auspices of their respective groups. Dungate felt that his group’s future was in doubt due to perceived opposition from the new Residents’ Association leadership. He was leery of getting involved. Beaulieu, on the other hand, was quite receptive. I faxed her and the Merchants’ Association’s new president, Michael McBride, a proposal which emphasized that if I could use the name of their association, they would receive some free market research (see Appendix 1). They granted me the permission I sought.

Getting participants

To get a list of potential participants for the focus group, I used a criss-cross telephone directory to identify just over 100 West Point Grey households within approximately 750 m of the shops of West 10th. To get 100 households evenly spaced throughout this zone, I selected every tenth household on 16th, 14th, 12th, 8th, 6th, and 4th Avenues (all the even-numbered avenues in the area except 10th), between Crown and Blanca Streets. I called these households on two successive nights about a week and a half before the focus group was to be held. My standardized script was as follows:

Hello, my name is Erik Backstrom and I’m calling on behalf of the West 10th Merchants’ Association. The Association is sponsoring a study of people’s use of the West 10th commercial area. We are bringing together a group of West Point Grey residents to discuss their use of West 10th and other commercial areas in the city. The discussion will take place on Thursday, August 28th from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the West Point Grey United Church. Would you be willing to join us at that time?

People who said that they would come, or might be able to come, were called two days before the focus group to confirm or to remind them.
Organizing and conducting the meeting

The focus group was held at the date, time, and location specified above. Of 14 people who had said they would or might be able to attend, seven actually showed up: five women and two men. I acted as the moderator of the focus group, and was assisted by my wife. We greeted participants warmly when they arrived; our goal was to establish a friendly environment and help the participants feel comfortable. Refreshments were provided to help make the experience more pleasant. After getting the participants seated, I welcomed them, provided an overview of the topic, explained the ground rules for the focus group (e.g. there are no right or wrong answers; one person speaks at a time), and then asked the first question. The meeting was tape recorded to accurately document people's comments. My wife also took detailed notes of the session.

Questioning route

The focus group technique got its name from the practice of starting a discussion with a general question and then asking questions which progressively focus in on the subject of interest. My line of questioning for the West Point Grey focus group was the following:

1. Let's find out more about each other by going around the room one at a time. Please tell us about the last time you bought something — anything! What was it, and where did you get it? (Note: this first question was an icebreaker, intended to get everyone talking.)
2. In general, what factors influence where you go to buy things? What’s important to you in deciding where to go to shop, obtain personal services, or go to restaurants or cafés?
3. When you don’t shop on West 10th, where do you most often go? What attracts you to these other locations?
4. When you are deciding between shopping at West 10th or outside the neighbourhood, to what extent is transportation cost, in money and time, a factor?
5. When you’ve decided to go to West 10th, what determines whether or not you go by car?
6. Pretend I’m a man from the moon. I’ve never been to West 10th; I don’t know anything about it. How would you describe it to me? How would you convey the essence of West 10th to me?
7. What do you most like and most dislike about West 10th Avenue?

This is a good gender balance given that women in a household tend to do more shopping than men.
Results

A full transcript of the focus group session can be found in Appendix 2. In this current section, I summarize the comments which answer questions 2 to 7.

Question 2: Factors Influencing Choice of Non-work Destinations

Convenience

Convenience seemed to be the most important factor influencing where focus group participants went to shop, run errands, and receive services. As in the Calgary study reported in Chapter 3, participants made it clear that they generally went to the most 'handy' location. Usually this was the location closest to home — the West 10th Avenue establishment. One man's comments speak for others in the group: “I like the convenience of it — being able to walk over, two minutes away, and stroll down the sidewalk with all those services.” However, West 10th was not always the most convenient for people at the focus group. Some of them talked about “swinging by” stores all over town as part of their work trips. They seemed to feel that a store which happened to be on their way as they drove home was more convenient than a store which was close to home but which might have required a 10-minute walk to reach. In other words, their automobile use often made locations farther away from home seem more convenient than those close by.

Atmosphere

Several of the members of the focus group said that they preferred to patronize traditional shopping streets over other commercial configurations — especially shopping malls. One fellow put it this way: “I shop all the way from Commercial Drive and Kerrisdale all the way across town. But all the time I’m picking places that have the traditional street layout. I probably go to Oakridge Mall once a year, and I don’t go to downtown malls.” Participants tended to like the narrow streetfronts, the old
buildings, the unique retail operations, the animated sidewalks, and the sense of place characteristic of many of Vancouver’s pre-war commercial areas. Some of the participants derided shopping malls and suburban retail strips as sterile. Said one woman:

One of the reasons I come up to this little West 10th area is for the social ambiance. I like seeing people — I needn’t actually know them, but I can recognize them by their faces. Sometimes we have conversations and we could go for years and I’d still have no idea what that person’s name is, nor she mine. But it’s part of a routine — it’s pleasant. I like that kind of informal mixing that happens. For that reasons I much prefer those smaller establishments that are preferably run by a family. I’m not totally against franchises, provided they do it well. But something like 7-11 or Mac’s Milk or such is so bleak. It’s very impersonal. You by in the car, you stop, you run in, you get something, you go out. I would never like to see that on West 10th.

This preference for traditional shopping areas does not necessarily favour West 10th. Several other west side shopping areas — Kerrisdale, Broadway, 4th Avenue, and Dunbar — also have some or all of the features which give West 10th its apparently appealing ambiance.

**Supporting Local Business**

Several of the focus group participants said that they liked to support independent (as opposed to chain-store or franchise) businesses. It was obvious that they were not just making what they knew to be socially desirable comments, for during the course of the discussion they often brought up the names of specific store-owners. They said things like, “Isn’t he great?” or “I’m delighted she ...” One of the participants mentioned that he had his film developed all the way over at a photo place on Commercial Drive because it was a family-run business run by people he admired.

**Service**

West Point Grey residents also seem to be particular about the service they receive. Although some of the focus group participants were willing to trade off good service for lower prices, most were not. The fact that the neighbourhood’s residents are relatively wealthy and well-educated is surely
associated with their demand for good service. However, West Point Grey’s distance from low-service big box retailers like Superstore and Costco must also factor into the equation. Surrounded as they are by establishments offering good service, it should be no surprise that service is important to many West Point Grey residents.

With some exceptions, people at the focus group appreciated the service they receive when they shop at West 10th. They liked being known by the merchants. One woman said, “I know the bank manager, and get treated a lot better than at other banks in the city, where you’re just a number.” People tended to equate good service with small, independent stores — which are a majority on West 10th. When asked to explain a comment she made about the “special service” available on West 10th, another woman said the following:

Okay. You need a part for a toilet. It’s about 55 years old. You go to London Drugs or Lumberland or some place like that, and everything comes in those prepackaged cellophane things and usually they don’t have the right part anyhow. You go down here to Hewer’s Hardware [on West 10th], and if they don’t have it on their rack, they’ll look around for it. At one stage they had an elderly man who would rummage around in the basement for parts. I mean, they would really go out of their way to try find the replacement thing you wanted. It’s that kind of personal service that I like.

Price

Among focus group participants, there were two general opinions about price. Some people said or implied that they are price-conscious, but others said or implied that they are not. Only one person at the focus group, a professional man with two children still at home, admitted going to big box retailers for low prices. One woman said she diligently compares the prices of stores within about 2 km of her house (e.g. comparing prices on West 10th with those on Dunbar, 4th Avenue, or West Broadway) before deciding where to go. The other focus group participants, however, did not seem especially price-sensitive.
Is West 10th perceived as an expensive area? Again, there were two different points of view. If the comments of the comparison-shopping woman are representative, older, long-time West Point Grey residents see today’s West 10th as expensive. She said that “the new stores ... tend to have higher and higher prices, so that people on modest incomes just can’t shop there.” She disliked how upscale and trendy the street has become in recent years. But others still saw West 10th as a fairly reasonably-priced place. For example, the youngest focus group participant, a university student, said:

I find West 10th is not much different [price-wise] from other places. I work in a store on 10th, and I think it’s funny when people tend to come from other parts of the city and say, “It’s so expensive up in this rich neighbourhood.” But personally, I don’t think it is more expensive — and I’m on a limited budget because I’m a student .... It’s actually way more expensive downtown. At least, everything is marked up just a little bit more downtown.

West 10th is a shopping street in transition, so both of these perspectives are accurate to an extent. Some stores on West 10th — especially the new clothing stores and the home furnishing shops — are high-end, and some are quite modestly-priced.

**Quality**

Another factor which influences where West Point Grey residents go is the quality of goods and services. Focus group participants were fairly unanimous in claiming to be discriminating in the products they choose. Granted, different people had different ideas about what qualified as high-quality. This was best exemplified by an exchange between two women over organic vegetables. The first said that quality produce, to her, meant organic produce. The second responded that her notion of quality was that the vegetables were as fresh as possible. The first woman remarked at another point of the discussion that she shopped for fish and chicken at Granville Island because that was where, in her opinion, the best of each in the whole city could be found.
Except for a few places like Mountain Equipment Co-op, the establishments people mentioned as being of good quality were all on the west side of Vancouver. One man said:

"It's a very exceptional set of choices if you live in west side Vancouver. If you live further east in the city or across the river in Richmond, suddenly all this proliferation of fairly high-end specialty bread shops, clothes shops, etc. doesn't exist in quite the same way. We live in a very exceptional part of the city."

**Old Habits**

Relatively recent arrivals to West Point Grey often use stores and services (e.g. dentists, hair salons) in Vancouver-area neighbourhoods where they used to live. At least two people at the focus group mentioned that they still frequent establishments in their former neighbourhoods.

**Question 3: Leaving the Neighbourhood**

When they do not shop at West 10th, group members often choose other west side Vancouver locations — BiLow Foods (4th Avenue and Alma Street), Stong's Supermarket (Dunbar Street), 4th Avenue, Broadway, Oakridge Mall, or the Kerrisdale district. Superstore is used by some people wanting savings on large grocery purchases. Downtown, for this group at least, does not seem to be a frequent shopping destination. West Point Grey residents probably use downtown for restaurants and entertainment more often than they do for shopping. The only east side Vancouver area mentioned by group members was Commercial Drive, another old shopping street. It does not appear that suburban areas like Richmond or Burnaby (Metrotown) receive much attention from people in Point Grey.

People in the focus group made it fairly clear that when they leave the neighbourhood, it is not primarily to save money, but to get items not available on West 10th. Community residents who prefer organic foodstuffs — like a couple of the focus group participants — are often pulled out of the neighbourhood, since West Point Grey does not have an organic grocery store. The same goes for
those who buy outdoor equipment, since Mountain Equipment Co-op and its competitors are all on the Broadway corridor. A perceived lack of fancy restaurants on West 10th takes people outside the neighbourhood. A perceived lack of entertainment — sports, the arts, and so forth — also generates trips outside the community.

Clothing, apparently, is one major category of goods for which many people feel they must leave their community. The selection of men's clothing on West 10th is poor; there is only one men's wear store. Both men in the focus group said that they do not purchase their clothes on West 10th. And even though the street has a number of women's clothing stores, they tend to appeal to a young, affluent crowd. This leaves many of the middle-aged and middle-class women with no choice but to leave the neighbourhood. One woman said: “I used to buy clothes on 10th, but now I virtually never do. I find that the clothing stores now tend to have more extreme clothes than what I would wear — at higher prices — rather than the more classic styles that they used to have.”

Most of the comments about having to leave the community to get specific items were not as critical as the one just quoted. In one way or another, most of the people at the focus group recognized that West 10th could not be all things to all people. It was natural and quite acceptable for them to have to leave West Point Grey for certain things.

**Question 4: Transportation Cost**

Most of the focus group participants apparently do not to factor transportation costs into their decisions about where to go for shopping, services, or restaurants. When I asked about factors influencing where they go, no one mentioned money. When I asked specifically about transportation costs, one woman said, “I would like to say that the expense is a deterrent, but you know, we put gas in the tank and we go.” The same sort of attitude seems to hold for the ‘cost’ of the time spent driving to
locations outside the neighbourhood. This is not to say that local residents do not watch their money, or are not busy. They just seem to have accepted driving, with its attendant costs, as a natural part of life. A secondary reason, though, is that congestion is not so much a problem for West Point Grey residents as it is for those in other parts of the metropolitan area. Traffic on the west side arterials which West Point Grey residents generally use is lighter than on key east side streets like Knight, Kingsway, or First Avenue, or on the suburban highways. Their car trips probably seem to be quite fast compared to those made across the Port Mann bridge at rush hour.

One person at the focus group, however, the university student, said that it would be “stupid” for her to go somewhere besides West 10th because of the money it would cost in gasoline or bus fare. Interestingly, she was the only one of the people at the session who did not own a vehicle. This may point to an irony: that the people who pay the costs associated with automobile use are the ones who are least aware of them.

**Question 5: Walk to West 10th, or Drive?**

Focus group members’ responses to my questioning about factors influencing their choice of transportation modes for trips to West 10th were varied but interrelated. Distance was an important factor for some; they either felt they lived so close to West 10th that only walking made sense or that they lived so far from 10th that walking was almost out of the question. It is interesting to note that one person in the latter category was a healthy-looking, relatively young man whose comments during the session showed him to be intellectually opposed to excessive automobile use. His home, I later determined from an air photo, was exactly 1 km from Safeway. He said, “I hate to say this, but I wouldn’t dream of walking home with two full shopping bags from [Safeway]. Not because I can’t — but instead I’ll just swing by [in the car] on my way home.” He did not, unfortunately, mention whether he would walk that distance if his load were lighter.
Besides distance, this man’s comment highlights two other transportation mode determinants which seemed to be key for the focus group participants. The weight of people’s purchases was one. The participants generally agreed that their trips to West 10th which include grocery shopping tended to be made by car. Why? Because the amount of groceries they bought at a time was usually more than they could carry home themselves. But why was this the case? Because most of them bought groceries only about once a week. And why was this? Apparently, to save time. “If you have a family,” one woman said, “you don’t want to go [to Safeway] every two days.”

The second factor evident in the man’s comment is trip chaining. People’s “swinging by” in the car was not confined to locations outside of the neighbourhood. Many of the people attending the focus group often drive to West 10th on the way to or home from somewhere else. Trip chaining seemed particularly common for grocery purchases — the most common non-work trips. If the comments of the focus group participants were representative, West Point Grey residents’ trips to restaurants on West 10th, to the library, or to banks are more likely to be made on foot than trips to buy groceries.

Several other factors were mentioned in the focus group. Time pressure was one. A woman who lived approximately 600 m away from West 10th said: “I always drive. I never walk. I’ve never walked to West 10th — ever.” She said she drove because of her busy schedule, a comment echoed by others in the group. However, other comments this woman expressed made it very clear to me that she thought that she would be lowering herself if she were to walk. She lived on one of the more wealthy streets in the community. My guess is that if walking were as fashionable as buying organic vegetables, she would walk. I suspect that she is not alone in the neighbourhood in this regard. Poor weather and lack of parking were two other factors people mentioned as respectively discouraging and encouraging walking to West 10th.
One final point made at the focus group deserves mention here. It is not about mode choice for trips to West 10th, but rather trip frequency. Like the other results in this section, it offers insight into how West Point Grey residents can be persuaded to use their cars less often. However, it does so by showing how residents’ need to go to West 10th can be reduced rather than by showing what would need to be done to get them to do more of their trips on foot. This is the point: The man who said he would not dream of walking home from Safeway with two bags of groceries was not as auto-dependent as he may have sounded. A few months prior to the focus group he started to have organic vegetables delivered to his home by one of the companies in Vancouver which provides such a service. He also switched to having his milk delivered by one of the dairies. During the focus group he said:

Once the vegetable delivery kicked in, my shopping patterns changed a lot. I used to buy every second day on a swing-by [drive-by] basis. Now I don’t have to go for milk — it was a big pressure to go get milk every two or three days. Having those two deliveries changes my patterns quite significantly. Now I shop at Safeway every second or third week. And that’s it.

Question 6: Describe West 10th

When asked to describe West 10th to someone who had never seen it before, several group members called up images of a small town Main Street — a friendly place with tradition. Some people mentioned that West 10th had some characteristics typical of university towns, but that on the whole it was less like a normal university-serving area than Kitsilano.

Question 7: Likes and Dislikes about West 10th

When asked for the thing they most like about West 10th, most group members mentioned its convenience: the fact that it is close and easy to access. Its atmosphere, however, was another common response. Group members liked the West 10th’s urbanity, which is a product of the street’s physical form and its social characteristics.
Not everyone, however, liked West 10th’s ‘small, simple, and friendly’ character. When asked what they most disliked about 10th Avenue, one of the focus group participants said that the street was ugly, and another said that it was dull. One woman said that West 10th would ‘do’ more for her if the street sported better urban design. One man wished that a wider range of goods and services was available, though he recognized that one neighbourhood business district could not be all things to all people. The university student in the group said that West 10th compares unfavourably to the commercial area near the University of Washington in Seattle. (The latter is busier and more active, especially at night, than West 10th.) Thus there seem to be two different attitudes about what West 10th should be. Some people in the neighbourhood want to hold onto the street’s traditional form and character; others, particularly younger people and relatively recent arrivals in West Point Grey, wish West 10th would ‘grow up’ much like 4th Avenue and Broadway have done in recent years.

The most frequently mentioned criticism of West 10th, however, had to do with traffic. Several focus group participants spoke out against the conflict between pedestrians and vehicles (“soft bodies and hard metal,” in the words of one woman) — and it was not pedestrians that they were indicting. They disliked what they perceived to be high traffic speeds and volumes on West 10th and in the Safeway parking lot. They felt that automobile traffic made the West 10th commercial area more dangerous and less enjoyable than it needed to be. In an interesting tangent which I unfortunately had to squelch, a couple of the participants tried to sell the others on the idea of traffic calming for 10th Avenue.

**Summary**

Overall, the group was very positive about West 10th. There was a good deal of unanimity that West 10th is an attractive, enjoyable place to shop. Some people had personal criticisms about its
physical form, its retail mix, or individual establishments (especially Safeway). On the whole, however, these criticisms were quite mild.

The comments made at the focus group were quite helpful in explaining how people in West Point Grey decide where to go for various goods and services. The list of factors influencing where they go is not much different from the list contained in Table 3 and Table 4. However, the statements of this small group of West Point Grey residents contain details and nuances which are very valuable for anyone planning to encourage people to purchase more of their goods and services on West 10th. In the same way, the factors which affect how (and how often) focus group participants travel to West 10th parallel those discussed in Chapter 3. Yet the focus group findings put a unique twist on the hitherto generic list of transportation mode determinants. Many of them directly lend themselves to the West Point Grey-specific social marketing strategy assembled in the following chapter.
Chapter 6 THE COMMUNITY-BASED SOCIAL MARKETING STRATEGY

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 contain background research relevant to the social marketing of walking in West Point Grey. In the present chapter, I draw this information together to develop a social marketing strategy for the ‘Walk West 10th’ effort. Consistent with a strategic marketing approach, I begin by assessing the current situation of the ‘product’ of walking to West 10th. By summarizing and organizing the information gathered in my background research, this assessment facilitates the next step: selecting strategic objectives, or to put it another way, refining the overall goal of encouraging people to walk to West 10th into more specific, actionable objectives. The heart of the chapter — and of the entire ‘Walk West 10th’ experiment, really — consists of a strategy intended to achieve these objectives. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of how this strategy might be implemented.

Current Situation

At first it sounds a little strange to examine the ‘situation’ of walking in West Point Grey. This is because walking is not generally considered from a marketing perspective. Marketers are concerned with markets — places or circumstances in which goods and services are bought and sold. They want people to purchase their products rather than someone else’s, and so they work very hard to keep on top of their situation relative to those of their competitors. You can be assured that McDonald’s Corporation is constantly evaluating whether people think that its burgers contain too much fat, whether its customer demographics are changing, whether its competitors have something new up their sleeves, etc. It does this to keep abreast of its situation in the marketplace and to gain insight on how and when to make changes that will maintain or improve its market share. Walking to West 10th can be situated in its ‘market’ in the same way as can a Big Mac. ‘Walk West 10th’ actually covers two markets; walking is a ‘product’ in the transportation mode market and West 10th is a ‘product’ in the commercial destination market. The combined product, ‘Walk West 10th,’ is only
one of many options West Point Grey residents can choose when they make non-work trips. The current dominance of these other options, of course, is what spurred ‘Walk West 10th’ in the first place.

As discussed on page 33, a strategic situation analysis consists of an assessment of the internal and external environments of the markets with which the social marketing is concerned. In what follows, walking and West 10th are treated separately. I summarize the external environments (e.g. built environment, residents’ characteristics, climate, social environment, political environment) in which walking and West 10th respectively operate, list their internal strengths and weaknesses (i.e. strengths and weaknesses inherent in walking and West 10th, respectively, relative to their competitors), and on the basis of this specify key opportunities and challenges facing the ‘Walk West 10th’ social marketing project. The situation analysis is presented in point form in Table 20 and Table 21 to minimize repetition of points made in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

Table 20  Current situation of walking in West Point Grey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Walking in West Point Grey</th>
<th>Internal Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>External Environment</strong></td>
<td><strong>Walking is strong with regards to health.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West 10th has a relatively pedestrian-friendly environment, except for seniors (no street benches).</td>
<td>It is unbeatable with regards to its environmental impact. A neighbourhood walking trip can replace the relatively more polluting short car trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Point Grey’s gridded streets and good integration of residential and commercial land uses facilitate walking.</td>
<td>Walking is the cheapest mode of transportation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic volumes and speeds on West 10th discourage walking to some extent.</td>
<td>Pedestrians are in a better position to get to know their neighbours and their neighbourhood than car-drivers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plentiful free parking in the Safeway parking lot and on 10th favours the car.</td>
<td>Walking is a good source of recreation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because of their wealth, neighbourhood residents have a high level of car ownership and use.</td>
<td>Pedestrians promote neighbourhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trip chaining seems common amongst local residents.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The political environment generally favours walking.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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recent plans at regional, municipal, and community level all put the pedestrian ahead of the car.

- Two local schools have walk-to-school programs.
- Residents are not especially price-sensitive regarding transportation costs.
- Residents, being generally conservative, are not especially environmentally-minded.
- Adults in the community are overwhelmingly employed in sedentary, white-collar jobs.
- Residents seem to be, on the whole, fairly status-conscious.
- Stay-at-home mothers constitute one of the largest groups of people who walk to West 10th.
- University students in the community are another prime walking group.
- Families tend to shop once a week, so the volume of groceries purchased requires a car trip.
- Safeway delivers groceries for a minimal charge.

security.

- Walking is weak time-wise — it is or is perceived to be slow.
- Walking is a poor choice for people who might have to carry heavy bags or bundles.
- Pedestrians lack weather protection.
- Walking is relatively hard — it requires more physical exertion than car-driving.
- People do not generally consider walking to be stylish, sophisticated, or status-giving.

Opportunities

- People having groceries delivered to their homes are more able to walk to West 10th.
- Most people in West Point Grey probably do not realize how pedestrian-friendly their neighbourhood is.
- People seem to be getting more concerned about the effects of traffic in their neighbourhood.
- Traffic congestion is increasing all over the Vancouver region, and the repugnant phenomenon of 'road rage' is becoming well-known. An excellent opportunity exists to convince sensible people that walking is a solution to both of these problems.
- The imminent construction of a stop at Sasamat Street for the rapid bus line which already runs down West 10th is another positive opportunity for promoting walking.
- Children educated about walking through programs at school can help influence their parents to use their cars less.
- The resources of various public agencies who support walking could be tapped to help the 'Walk West 10th' effort.

Challenges

- For many West Point Grey residents, car use is a habit, and walking is not a habit.
- Trip chaining privileges the car for non-work trips.
- Residents are probably not as aware as they could be about how walking contributes to good health.
- Residents do not seem to be especially concerned about the automobile's negative environmental impact.
- Residents do not seem to know or care that walking can save them money.
- Many people shop for groceries so infrequently that they think they have to use their cars for such trips.
- Some people do not walk because they do not think they have the time.
- Some people do not walk because it is not 'sexy.'
Table 21  Current situation of West 10th Avenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>West 10th Avenue</th>
<th>Internal Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>External Environment</strong></td>
<td><strong>A good variety of goods and services is available on West 10th, including most of people's general needs.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Convenience is the primary consideration when neighbourhood residents are deciding where to go.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Residents like good quality products.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Residents value good service.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Some residents don't like the upscaling of West 10th.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- At least some residents are price-conscious shoppers.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Some residents deliberately try to support local family-run businesses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The neighbourhood in which West 10th is situated is relatively family-oriented and conservative.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Many West Point Grey residents see the entire west side of Vancouver as their 'home' market.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- West side streets are not especially congested, so it's easy for residents to access destinations outside the neighbourhood.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- West 10th does not have a Business Improvement Association; the Merchants' Association only has a modest capacity for promoting the area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Some residents leave the neighbourhood because of habits developed while living elsewhere in the metropolitan area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Residents tend to leave the neighbourhood for items or brands they cannot purchase on West 10th.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Another reason why residents do not shop at West 10th is to save money.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Residents tend to be mindless of the cost of owning and operating a car.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Challenges</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- If neighbourhood residents get to know their local merchants better, they will probably be more likely to shop at West 10th rather than elsewhere.</td>
<td>- Lack of awareness of the costs of automobile use makes out-of-neighbourhood destinations such as Superstore seem inordinately attractive. People do not save as much money leaving the community as they think when transportation costs are factored in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The poor service available elsewhere in the city is an opportunity for West 10th to prove itself to be a good-service business district.</td>
<td>- West 10th cannot be all things to all people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- West 10th's atmosphere is somewhat different from those of the other west side shopping streets. It may be opportune to highlight its uniqueness.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Marketing Objectives

The above situation analysis makes clear that many factors currently work together to limit the extent to which West Point Grey residents walk to West 10th for their non-work needs. The overall goal or fundamental objective of ‘Walk West 10th’ has been stated several times in this thesis: to encourage West Point Grey residents to walk to West 10th Avenue more often instead of driving there or somewhere else. Having summarized the situation of walking and West 10th in their respective marketplaces, it is obvious that a whole host of things could be done to meet this goal. The approach taken here, however, is to be strategic rather than comprehensive in establishing objectives. From the preceding two tables I have chosen carefully to select a limited number of objectives around which I believe a social marketing strategy for ‘Walk West 10th’ should be based. These objectives are based on my own best judgement. It would have been better if objectives such as these had been determined by a community-based team, but such was not possible under the circumstances. The objectives are operationalized in the strategy which follows. They are:

1. To highlight the physical health, economic, environmental, and community-building advantages of walking.
2. To publicize the negative aspects of driving, e.g. cost, time, sedentariness, traffic danger, pollution.
3. To attempt to reduce automobile-oriented trip chaining.
4. To encourage people to shop for groceries in ways more permissive of walking.
5. To highlight the pedestrian-friendly features of the neighbourhood and of West 10th.
6. To promote walking to West 10th as a ‘fashionable’ choice.

Marketing Strategy

If ‘Walk West 10th’ is to have a hope of pulling up the walking modal share of non-work trips made by West Point Grey residents, it must be more than a waif of a program. At the same time, it would be reckless (and feckless) of me to prepare a complex and multi-faceted marketing strategy
without considering the practical realities of available resources — financial and otherwise. In what follows, I lay out the elements of a strategy I feel is ambitious but realistic. I only set forth ideas that have a reasonable chance of being accomplished, and in each case specify how I think they could be brought to fruition.

Segmentation

The first matter in developing a social marketing strategy is deciding who to target and who not to target. Perhaps the most obvious segment of the West Point Grey population is that of UBC students. University students who live in West Point Grey tend to be older and more advanced in their schooling than the average student. Whether because of their lower levels of car ownership or because their attitudes about transportation and the environment differ from those of the generations to their senior, students seem, from my observations at least, to be more likely to walk or cycle to West 10th than the average adult. Because of this, and because West 10th, despite its proximity to UBC, is not an especially university-oriented commercial area, university students should not be a special target market for ‘Walk West 10th.’

Residents of Chinese ancestry comprise another easily-distinguished segment within the community. The Chinese are an important segment in Vancouver as a whole, but because their numbers in West Point Grey are relatively small, and because West 10th has a fairly WASPy make-up, it is not advisable to develop Chinese-focused ‘Walk West 10th’ plans.

Women are an important general target for the social marketing of walking in West Point Grey. Women make more shopping trips than men because of women’s traditional role as tenders of the homefires (Vincent et al. 1994). A much larger proportion of women is employed outside the home than was the case a generation ago, but paid employment has generally been an addition to,
rather than a replacement of, their household support responsibilities such as shopping. Most of the trips which are or which could be made to shopping streets like West 10th Avenue are made by women. Women accordingly deserve special attention in plans to encourage walking to West 10th.

After gender, I believe that a second ‘slice’ of the West Point Grey population should be employment status: whether or not a person is in the labour force. Travel to and from and during work has such an important influence on the rest of a person’s travel that workers must be distinguished from non-workers in a social marketing strategy designed to encourage walking. Most of West Point Grey’s employed residents are white-collar people: professors, engineers, lawyers, doctors, business people, teachers, secretaries, or sales people. Few of their jobs are physically demanding, but many of their jobs are mentally demanding and stressful. Many people work long hours in a struggle to maintain their standards of living in a neighbourhood where real estate prices are astronomical. Most of them drive to work. Their lives differ significantly from those of the stay-at-home mothers, middle-aged retired people, and seniors who do not work. Of course, there is a great deal of variation in the lifestyles of these latter groups, but they have certain features in common. They tend to be less time-sensitive. Even if they are busy, their time commitments are generally more flexible than those of working people. Their social connections are more apt to be geographically-based (i.e. based in the neighbourhood) than those of employed people because they have not been or are no longer part of a workplace community. Their priorities tend to be more family-oriented.

Product

In its infancy, marketing was product-centred. Companies developed products, and then used marketing (primarily advertising) to convince people that they needed to purchase them. As I mentioned in Chapter 2, marketing today is more customer-centred than it used to be. Product development does not now come first; it follows an assessment of the likes and dislikes, habits and
characteristics of current or potential customers. Organizations are not slavishly devoted to their current product offerings. Quite the opposite — they willingly adapt their products to better fit people’s needs and wants (Kotler and Andreasen 1991).

As it currently stands, the product in this social marketing endeavour is walking to West 10th — plain-Jane, unadorned. The main aspects of the product are evidently fixed. It is no more going to be changed to taking the taxi to West 10th than Coca-Cola is going to be changed to an alcoholic beverage. But the formula of walking to West 10th could be altered, just like the Coke formula was in the mid-1980s. Let’s hope the results are better for ‘Walk West 10th’ than they were for ‘New’ Coke!

The pro-pedestrian comments made at the focus group I conducted lead me to suggest that modest measures to increase pedestrian safety are one aspect of the formula that should be changed. Several times at the focus group, participants spoke of the danger involved in crossing West 10th. As I brought up in Chapter 4, there are pedestrian-controlled traffic lights on West 10th at Sasamat and Trimble Streets but the intersections at Tolmie and Discovery Streets (the two ends of the shopping district) are completely unimproved. Even before I heard the focus group on this issue, I felt that because of the pedestrian volumes on West 10th, and because the neighbourhood’s long blocks limit legal crossing opportunities, every intersection on the street should have at least some level of pedestrian protection. The intersection at Tolmie is especially busy because of the high density residential buildings just to the west of it. My suggestion is that as part of the social marketing campaign crosswalks should be installed at both Tolmie and Discovery to improve the safety and visibility of pedestrians crossing there. The combined cost of the crosswalks would be quite small. It should not be too difficult to convince the City of Vancouver’s engineers that crosswalks are warranted at the two intersections. Installation of the crosswalks could be publicized to let West Point Grey residents know that something was done to make ‘Walking West 10th’ safer.
Walking to West 10th would be more *comfortable* if street benches were available for passing pedestrians. This point was not raised by people at the focus group, but seems obvious from a visual inspection of the area. Another way to improve the 'product,' then, would be to install benches like the ones which festoon the Kerrisdale commercial district. These benches are expensive, of course — cedar ones cost $600 - $700 apiece, plus installation. Who would pay for them? There are several options. The bill could be footed by the West 10th Merchants' Association. Every year the association has a little money available for special projects. One year, as I mentioned in Chapter 5, the association printed a pamphlet; another year it installed decorative banners; in 1997 it took to running a weekly ad in the Vancouver Courier. The association’s marketing director told me that although it is leery of the streetscape reconfiguration plans of the Transportation Working Group, it has recently entertained the idea of doing some physical improvements itself, for economic development reasons.1 Even if it only furnished two benches a year, it could fairly quickly enhance the pedestrian environment on West 10th. Alternately, individual establishments could be encouraged to provide benches. Safeway is a corporation with deep pockets. It would probably put benches in front of its store or even on the sidewalk in front of its parking lot if the store manager was presented with a strong 'pedestrians are good for business' argument. The numerous banks along West 10th would also be well able to afford a street bench each. Finally, the City’s planning department could be urged to require, as a condition of issuing development permits, that developers provide a street bench on the sidewalk in front of new developments on West 10th. Buildings on West 10th are not being replaced terribly often, but it does happen. In the fall of 1997 a development permit was being sought for a mixed use building on the vacant lot on the south side of 10th near Trimble Street.

Walking to West 10th would be stronger if people thought of it as more than just a functional foot trip. With the right promotion, ‘Walk West 10th’ could connote such things as good physical

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1 Personal communication, Michèle Beaulieu, 8 August 1997.
health, positive mental state, environmental protection, neighbourhood safety and security, and an enhanced sense of community. Such connotations would tremendously improve the product. One woman at the focus group talked about walking being more social than driving (she described car drivers as being enclosed in “impermeable armour”), but no one said a word about the health and environmental benefits which accrue when people get out of their cars and walk. Would more people walk if they associated walking with personal fitness or a safer environment for children? I strongly believe so. It would be especially important to convince women — particularly homemakers and busy working mothers — that walking to West 10th is just the break they need.

The product would be improved if people had a better general impression of the establishments on the street. Some of the focus group participants thought West 10th was too expensive; others claimed they disliked the products for sale on the street. Other things being equal, walking to West 10th would be more attractive to local residents if they were convinced that they could find a lot of what they wanted at reasonable prices and in good (i.e. appropriate) quality. Every person at the focus group mentioned at least one thing which he or she wished was available -- or was available in better quality, or at a better price -- on West 10th. One man expressed himself very succinctly on this point: “I like the convenience of it — being able to walk over, two minutes away, and stroll down the sidewalk with all those services. What I don’t like is the same old thing: a lot of things I just can’t get there.”

This is where social marketing meets conventional marketing. No doubt, the Merchants’ Association has been trying all along to convince residents that West 10th has good variety, prices, and quality. For ethical reasons, and to avoid degenerating into crass boosterism, ‘Walk West 10th’ would have to stay away from directly promoting individual businesses. It could, however, indirectly promote local businesses through messages which emphasized that a good selection of goods and services was available on West 10th, and which tried to persuade people that the less travel required to
reach a product, the better that product — other things being equal. Specific types of goods could
foreseeably be highlighted. Women's clothing seems to be an obvious example, since there are so
many women's clothing shops on West 10th but many women (if the focus group can be trusted) shop
elsewhere for their clothes.

The 'Walk West 10th' product should also be enhanced with a tie-in with the transit system. Transit is a
natural extension of walking since every transit trip begins and ends with a walking trip. One of the
limitations of walking to West 10th is that it is inconvenient for those who also need to make a trip to
another part of the city. Few, as I mentioned in Chapter 3, would willingly walk to West 10th if they
knew that they were going to hop in the car to drive downtown immediately after walking home. The
focus group confirmed that many local residents drive to West 10th on their way to or from somewhere
else. Given that 'Walk West 10th' might not be able to uncouple many trip chains, I recommend that it
try to persuade people to trip chain using a different mode (or combination of modes, in this case). I admit
that this would not be a 'high-percentage shot,' to borrow a sports expression. But when you're losing
the game, you have to take the shots you can get. Many people would not give up the automobile work
trips which spawn so many non-work car trips. But some probably would. The combined attraction of
getting physical exercise as a result of walking and avoiding stressful driving and high parking fees as a
result of taking the bus is strong; it might just appeal to some people! The social marketing campaign
would have to try to convince West Point Grey residents that in addition to its other benefits, walking
to West 10th also gave them excellent access to an excellent ('award-winning') transit system. The
construction of the rapid bus stop at Sasamat Street is an excellent opportunity for making the
pedestrian-transit connection in people's minds. The 'Walk West 10th' strategy should emphasize that
the rapid bus stop hooks West Point Grey into the second most important (after the SkyTrain) transit
route in the entire region, and greatly increases the speed of many bus trips from the neighbourhood. It
may be possible to persuade BC
Transit to use some of its marketing resources to contribute to a ‘Walk West 10th’ strategy that incorporated a pro-transit message.

To summarize, I propose changing the ‘Walk West 10th’ product by making a couple of simple changes to the physical environment of the street, by enhancing walking by improving people’s perceptions of the goods and services available on the street, and by connecting walking to transit and such things as health, safety, and environmental citizenship. The physical design changes proposed by the Transportation Working Group (see page 76) would also improve the product, but they are so controversial (and so costly!) that if they are ever implemented, it will be a long time down the road. Besides, right from the beginning one of the main assumptions of ‘Walk West 10th’ was that it was intended to get more walking out of the existing urban form. Its purpose was to complement rather than comprehend large-scale design interventions.

Price

Marketers’ attention to price is based one of the economic principles of supply and demand: the lower the price of a good, the greater its demand. Private-sector marketers and social marketers who deal in normal goods or services (e.g. bus service) have to consider the actual monetary price of their products. Because walking is not priced monetarily, the costs which ‘Walk West 10th’ would have to address are the indirect economic costs and (especially) the psychic costs of walking.

The focus group reported in Chapter 5 revealed that time was a real issue for some West Point Grey residents. The time it takes to walk to West 10th may therefore be a real cost to some people. “Why should I walk,” they may ask, “if I can drive there much more quickly?” A social marketing campaign could not significantly reduce the amount of time it takes people to walk to West 10th. However, there are three things it could do. The first would be to point out how much faster it is to
Walk to West 10th than it is to drive to locations like Superstore or downtown. This might work with people who make single-purpose trips to distant shopping destinations, but it would probably not work with those engaged in trip chaining. The second would be to try to alter people’s notions about how long it takes to walk to West 10th versus how long it takes to drive there. This could be done by letting people know how long it really takes to walk to West 10th from their homes. (Few people accurately estimate the time of walking trips, so something similar to Table 10 could correct their perceptions.) This could also be done by making people more aware of the time associated with various aspects of driving — starting a car, stopping at lights, dealing with traffic, looking for a parking spot, and finally walking to the destination. Emphasizing driving time might help convince people that walking is relatively quick. This approach would hopefully influence those (a large proportion of West Point Grey residents, I would suspect) who walk to West 10th on occasion but who often tell themselves that they just do not have time to walk. The third approach could be directed both to those who work and those who do not. It would involve persuading people that they could afford the time it takes to walk to West 10th. Even if it took longer to walk than to drive, people might walk if they could be convinced that by walking they could save time in other areas, such as family time or exercise time (“Feel too busy to go to the gym or go jogging? Get your exercise while you run your errands — Walk West 10th!” or “Need some quality time with your loved ones? Walk West 10th together”). This approach might also might help weaken the links of some automobile-oriented trip chains.

Walking could be made to seem relatively cheap in comparison with driving. The focus group suggested that most West Point Grey residents are mindless of transportation costs. An opportunity therefore exists to help them become mindful. The costs contained in Table 11 could be used to make people more aware of the price of car trips. This would be especially effective if the cost of several trips were added up (e.g. “Driving to Kerrisdale once a week costs over $100 a year — before parking.
Walking to West 10th is free — and fun!). Alternately, the financial costs of driving could be linked
to the environmental and personal health costs. The three sets of costs are quite distinct, but if West
Point Grey residents were presented with the ‘bill’ for all three of them at once, the savings that
walking represents should seem very attractive. ("Wanna avoid heart disease and osteoporosis, save
the environment, and save a few bucks, too? Walk West 10th!")

As the focus group made very clear, one of the main reasons why people living relatively close
to West 10th do not walk there is because of the weight and volume of what they intend to buy.
Remember the words, “I wouldn’t dream of walking home with two full shopping bags from
[Safeway]”? The perceived cost of carrying heavy bags of groceries back from Safeway is pretty
formidable! This cost, however, could be reduced in various ways. First, home delivery of groceries
could be promoted. The focus group participant who recently switched to having milk and vegetables
delivered to his home was very enthusiastic about the service. Not only does it save people time in
shopping, but it reduces the amount of groceries they would have to carry if they were to walk. A
social marketing coordinator could work with Safeway to better advertise its home delivery service.
How many neighbourhood residents know that they could walk home from the supermarket ‘empty’
for a minimal cost: $2.35 for regular customers, $1.00 for seniors buying less than $25 worth of
groceries, and free for seniors spending over $25$² In addition to Safeway home delivery, ‘Walk West
10th’ could promote the home delivery of milk, vegetables, and a variety of other products.

Second, the use of personal shopping carts could be encouraged. This suggestion comes
directly from the focus group, where one of the participants said the following:

I walk most of the time when I come up to 10th. But I have sometimes decided that I’ll just get
this, and I’ll just get this .... I’m about six blocks away, and I feel as though my arms are a lot
longer by the time I get home. Now, I’ve often thought, there’s an opportunity for an entrepreneur

² Personal communication, Safeway Customer Service, 29 September 1997. The delivery service is available at
the West Point Grey Safeway from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday to Wednesday and Saturday, and from 10:00
a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Thursday and Friday. It is not available on Sunday.
to come up with some different kinds of shopping carts, or different kinds of baskets, that would make it [easier to walk]. I think they might be able to sell them to people around here.

Right now, two-wheeled shopping carts are most often used by seniors who have a difficult time carrying even one bag of groceries. However, such carts could significantly increase the range that younger people with a moderate amount of groceries could comfortably walk. Safeway and the hardware store on West 10th could probably be persuaded to stock shopping carts if there was a demand for them; some Safeway stores already do. Another idea would be to work with the City of Vancouver to launch a special promotion to sell shopping carts. Many municipalities, Vancouver included, have bought composters in bulk and sold them to residents at reduced rates in an attempt to encourage people to cut down on the solid waste they generate. The City might be interested in a selling shopping carts in a similar manner as a proactive way of fighting automobile dependency.

A third way to reduce the cost of carrying groceries would be to entice people to shop for groceries more often. In Europe, many people shop for groceries every day; the amount of groceries they purchase at a time can be easily carried home. In West Point Grey, the shop-more-often concept would probably not be attractive to people who work. For those who are not in the labour force, however, the idea of buying a few groceries every other day as part of a walk might catch on.

A final way in which the 'price' of walking should be reduced is by making it more socially acceptable. Some people, including the one woman from the focus group, act as if walking is socially degrading. What these people need is to be convinced that walking is 'cool.' This would be difficult given the influence exerted by car-makers' multi-million dollar advertising budgets. However, a few small things could be done as part of 'Walk West 10th.' All written promotional material could be designed with an eye to making it appealing to the upper-middle class professional who is so ubiquitous in West Point Grey. All of the shops along West 10th, especially the fashionable ones, could be encouraged to post a sticker or small sign in their windows with a message like "We support
'Walk West 10th.' Please walk if you can.” Such messages would subtly work to make walking seem more socially desirable. Finally, the Vancouver Sun fashion editor could be approached about doing a feature on ‘walking fashions’ which included photos of models ‘Walking West 10th.’

Communications

How should ‘Walk West 10th’ be communicated to the residents of West Point Grey? Social marketing is more than communication, but without an effective communication strategy, any given social marketing effort is a lost cause. In Chapter 2 I explained that part of the reason for the genesis of community-based social marketing was the limited effectiveness of large-scale media advertising in changing deep-rooted behaviours like automobile use. I quoted Doug McKenzie-Mohr as saying that “The term ‘community’-based social marketing emphasizes the importance of personal contact as the most important element of bringing about behavior change.” Personal contact should be the primary element of the communication efforts in West Point Grey.

West 10th merchants and their employees would be the key contact people in the ‘Walk West 10th’ effort. To paraphrase something I wrote in Chapter 2 (see page 29), they are people who are reasonably well trusted\(^3\) and regularly visited by a large number of West Point Grey residents. They have an interest in ensuring that residents come to West 10th. They do not really have an interest in how people get to West 10th, of course. The best way to gain their support for walking is through their Merchants’ Association. The person implementing ‘Walk West 10th’ could ask to come to one of the association’s meetings, and present the following message: “If people walk, they will go to West 10th. If they get in their cars, they may go to West 10th, but there’s a lot better chance that they will go somewhere else.” Merchants would not be asked to make a ‘hard sell’ for walking; potentially offending valued customers with such an approach would be the last thing merchants would want to

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\(^3\) As I reported in Chapter 5, the focus group as a whole was very complimentary of the West 10th merchants. One of the participants said, “We all want to support them. I think they have to understand that.”
do. But they could be asked to do a little 'soft selling' — posting the aforementioned sticker or sign, casually asking customers about the mode of transportation people they used to get to West 10th, leaving a pile of 'Walk West 10th' pamphlets in a visible place in their establishments, putting together pedestrian-related displays for their store windows, etc. The public library could be asked to do a special exhibit of books related to walking. The doctor's offices and medical lab on West 10th could be asked to sport information on the health benefits of walking.

The schools in West Point Grey could be another venue in which personal contact could be used to get the 'Walk West 10th' message out. The parents associations of the two elementary schools near West 10th could be approached and asked to hook 'Walk West 10th' into the promotions for their walk-to-school programs. Children could be given 'Walk West 10th' documentation to give to their parents. Children are often more successful at persuading their parents to adopt new behaviours than other adults are. The emphasis with the school children would have to be on the health and environment benefits of walking rather than the economic benefits West 10th merchants could potentially reap.

Local boy scout troops could be a third resource for personally contacting West Point Grey residents about 'Walk West 10th.' Scouting groups have been used before to go door-to-door to solicit commitments from people to adopt environmentally-responsible behaviours (McKenzie-Mohr 1996). In West Point Grey, scouts (in company with their leaders, of course) could give residents a brief pitch about environmental protection and neighbourhood safety, and then ask them to commit to replacing one automobile trip per week with a walking trip. The scouts' activities could be planned to coincide with other neighbourhood activities related to 'Walk West 10th.' The scouts' participation would probably be fairly easy to arrange because one of the neighbourhood residents most interested in

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Mary Blachut, the organizer of the Queen Mary walk-to-school program, was very enthusiastic about the 'Walk West 10th' idea when I presented it to her. Personal communication, 9 September 1997.
transportation issues (a member of the Transportation Working Group) was a long-time scout master in West Point Grey.

Neighbourhood churches could be a final source of personal communication for ‘Walk West 10th.’ The minister of the church where I held the focus group session expressed a great deal of interest in the project, even to the point of requesting a copy of this thesis. She wanted her church to be “more relevant in the community,” and felt that transportation was an issue with which the church could get involved. The three other churches in the immediate vicinity of West 10th might also be willing to help publicize ‘Walk West 10th.’

Besides these personal means of communicating ‘Walk West 10th’ to the residents of the community, other methods could be used to get the word out. I have already mentioned pamphlets. The pamphlet is a common way of disseminating basic information to many people. If financial support could be obtained from the West 10th Merchants’ Association or organizations like Environment Canada and the VanCity Credit Union, a pamphlet capturing the essence of ‘Walk West 10th’ could be printed and distributed to every household, institution, and commercial establishment in West Point Grey. It almost goes without saying that a distinctive logo visually symbolizing ‘Walk West 10th’ would have to be designed to go on the pamphlets as well as on stickers, posters, and any other paraphernalia to be developed.

The West Point Grey Community Association, which administers programming at the West Point Grey Community Centre, regularly prints a program guide which is distributed to all households in West Point Grey, the University Endowment Lands, and UBC family housing. Every issue of the guide includes a community notices page. The Community Association would print ‘Walk West 10th’ messages on this page for free as a community service.5

5 Personal communication, Jilian Scarth (a director of the WPG Community Association), 9 September 1997.
'Walk West 10th' could also, with a little public relations effort, use newspaper and television stories to communicate with residents in the community. The Vancouver Sun, to cite an example, is distributed far more broadly than West Point Grey, but because of its high readership in the neighbourhood, stories it carried about 'Walk West 10th' would be of tremendous value in letting West Point Grey residents know about the program’s existence and status.

Because driving is such an entrenched habit for so many people, groups promoting alternative modes of transportation have taken to holding special events intended to get people to try something different \textit{just once}. B.E.S.T. (Better Environmentally Sound Transportation), a Vancouver group primarily composed of cycling advocates, held its second annual 'Bike to Work Week’ in June 1997. Such a concept could be used in West Point Grey. A 'Walk West 10th Day’ could be organized, complete with a sidewalk sale and other special activities. If sponsorship could be obtained, West 10th Avenue could be pedestrianized — closed to cars — for a couple of hours in the same way that 4th Avenue is during its annual soapbox derby.\footnote{It costs between $800 and $1000 to have an arterial street in Vancouver temporarily closed for a special event.} At the event keychains with the reminder message 'Walk West 10th instead’ could be distributed.

\textbf{Distribution}

Distribution is the matter of delivering a social marketing product to the public. It is not hard to see that a social marketer of immunization in developing countries would have to think long and hard about whether to take immunizations to the people (e.g. at public schools, workplaces) or whether to bring people to the immunization (e.g. at medical clinics or hospitals). Because walking is a service which is available to everyone, especially in areas like West Point Grey which have complete sidewalk networks, the distribution aspect of the marketing mix is not applicable to 'Walk West 10th.'
Implementation

I have written the above ‘Walk West 10th’ strategy using the words ‘would,’ ‘could,’ and ‘should.’ Such conditional language reflects the fact that ‘Walk West 10th’ has not been and may never be implemented. When I moved away from Vancouver in September 1997, I had completed the background research which forms the basis of Chapters 3, 4, and 5 of this thesis. Beyond that, I organized a meeting on 9 September 1997 to which I invited people I considered to be key stakeholders: two representatives of the West 10th Merchants’ Association, several West Point Grey alternative transportation activists, a graduate student interested in pedestrian issues, and a UBC marketing instructor who had been involved in social marketing research. I had two purposes in calling them together. I wanted to get ideas from them about specific measures that might go into a social marketing strategy for encouraging walking to West 10th — fodder for this chapter, in other words. Second, I wanted to win their support for ‘Walk West 10th.’ If it was to take off, I reasoned, people like these would have to be interested and involved. I was about to leave town permanently. I considered the meeting my opportunity to ‘pass the torch.’

The Merchants’ Association representatives did not attend, but the rest of the invitees did. My plan for soliciting ideas from them did not work because they did not agree with the agenda. They did not want to be used for something they did understand and might not agree with. So I shifted gears and more fully explained the concept of ‘Walk West 10th.’ Some of the people were a little skeptical at first. One fellow, for example, a landscape architect whose interest in West 10th lay in ‘hard’ physical redesign interventions rather than in ‘soft’ marketing ones, said that focusing on one type of trip generated in one neighbourhood in Vancouver would have virtually no effect on the region’s transportation problems. However, a community activist (the woman who had organized Queen Mary’s walk-to-school program) countered this pessimism by saying that although the idea was modest, it just might make a difference. By the end of the meeting the group had warmed to the idea.
The community activists, who were not young radicals or aging hippies (as the term might suggest) but well-to-do homemakers and senior citizens, seemed to have accepted me as one of their own. They seemed to be grateful that someone with young blood and fresh legs had joined their cause. But then I told them I was leaving.

This admission, right at the end of the meeting, took the spring out of the figurative step of 'Walk West 10th.' No one wanted to pick up where I was going to leave off. All of the people at the meeting had their own volunteer commitments; no one was prepared to spearhead something new.

My inability to interest anyone in picking up 'Walk West 10th' does not mean that it is doomed to oblivion. It could still be implemented. Four things would be required. First, just one person with strong vision and commitment. My experience with 'Walk West 10th' validates something I had been told was true but had never before personally appreciated: the most important factor in the success of a community-level initiative is the drive of one determined person. Second, a small group of able assistants — community activists willing to help carry forward various aspects of the strategy. Third, the active support of the Merchants' Association. The merchants are the gatekeepers of any social marketing plan involving West 10th Avenue; the progress of 'Walk West 10th' depends on their collective blessing. The community activists at the meeting I organized were not surprised that the Merchants' Association was not represented; they seemed somewhat resigned to the fact that the merchants would not get involved in community issues. I, however, am not so discouraged. In the case of 'Walk West 10th,' it seems to me that the onus is on community workers (such as myself) to 'market' social marketing to the merchants. The merchants are busy people; they will not subscribe to 'Walk West 10th' without being solidly convinced of its merits. The Merchants' Association gave me permission to use its name in conducting a focus group. Why? Because they were convinced that the information resulting from the focus group would be in its interest. If 'Walk West 10th' was carefully pitched to the merchants as a sophisticated but low-cost local economic
development plan — not as a transportation remedy, an environmental crusade, or a 'warm fuzzy' community-building venture — I believe that they would respond favourably to it. The fourth thing that would be necessary for the implementation of 'Walk West 10th' is money. But not a lot of money. Provided that the project could be organized without a paid supervisor, sponsorships — from the Merchants' Association, government agencies, private foundations, and the financial institutions with branches on West 10th (especially VanCity) — could easily cover the costs associated with the social marketing strategy I have laid out in this chapter. Donations in kind from merchants along West 10th could help keep the costs down.
Chapter 7  REFLECTIONS

My purpose in writing this thesis was to demonstrate how social marketing can be used to encourage walking as a mode of transportation. I wanted to provide an example for individuals or groups potentially interested in using this tool in their efforts to promoting walking in cities. In my experience, it is far easier to decide what to do than to determine how to do it. It is one thing for pedestrian advocacy groups or TDM-minded agencies to be told that social marketing is a useful tool; it is quite another for them to figure out how to use it. In a session on TDM at a recent transportation conference, a transportation planner from the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton presented a paper explaining community-based social marketing. “The principal need at the moment,” he said, “is for governments, non-profit organizations, academics and community groups to experiment with community-based social marketing, evaluate different approaches and communicate the results” (Noxon 1997, p. 5). This was my intention. I initiated ‘Walk West 10th’ as an experiment, and have written this thesis to tell others about what I did and what they can learn from it.

I am not so presumptuous as to claim that my application of community-based social marketing was definitive or ideal. Much of it, I believe, that was good and worthy of emulation, but some of it was not. Some was neither good nor bad — just noteworthy. This final chapter of this thesis serves the important purpose of reviewing what was done in ‘Walk West 10th’ and reflecting on it — so that I and others who may wish to use social marketing to encourage walking can learn from it. The spirit in which I write this chapter is best captured in a religious text with which I am familiar: “Condemn me not because of mine imperfection ... but rather give thanks unto God that he hath made manifest unto you our imperfections, that ye may learn to be more wise than we have been.”

1 Mormon 9:31 (Book of Mormon, p. 487).
'Walk West 10th' in a Nutshell

'Walk West 10th' grew out of a desire I had to persuade people to walk more often when it was reasonably possible for them to do so. West Point Grey seemed like an ideal area in which to experiment with the community-based social marketing of walking. The neighbourhood's commercial street was interesting and attractive but remained down-to-earth enough to be practical for many of residents' everyday needs. In urban form, West Point Grey was as suitable for walking as almost any other community predominantly comprised of single-family dwellings. Its residents were relatively wealthy, well-educated folk who used the automobile a great deal. Yet local activists had already taken steps (small though they were) to reduce automobile dependence. West Point Grey was where the social marketing of walking could 'start where it was easiest,' to cite Jane Jacobs's dictum.

After failing in my initial efforts to interest the West 10th Merchants' Association in my idea, I went off on my own and planned 'Walk West 10th' myself. From the work of a few important social marketing academics I cobbled together the social marketing process found in Table 2. I then conducted what marketing research I could afford in terms of time and money. I did a literature review on destination and transportation mode choice. I gathered information on West Point Grey's physical form and transportation attributes, on the nature of the West 10th shopping street, and on the characteristics of neighbourhood residents. With the sponsorship of the Merchants' Association, I conducted a focus group session. I then distilled the information I had collected into a low-cost, practical social marketing strategy.

Community-Based ...

Many of my reflections centre on the fact that 'Walk West 10th' was a 'community-based' effort. Because what follows is not a linear, unbroken narrative but a series of separate observations, it is written in question/answer format.
Is there enough interest in communities about pedestrian issues (pun intended) to justify an effort like ‘Walk West 10th’? Is there enough potential to change transportation activity patterns? These are important questions — ones that need to be answered up front. Any person or organization thinking about using community-based social marketing to encourage walking must decide ahead of time whether the expected results justify the effort. Some might have any easy time answering negatively — that the expected results do not justify the required expenditure of energy and resources. People so inclined might point out, in the case of ‘Walk West 10th,’ that West Point Grey’s share of the total population of the Vancouver region is just over one half of one percent, and that any change in modal split achieved in the neighbourhood would be just a drop out of the overflowing bucket of automobile use. They might argue that to be truly effective, social marketing campaigns would have to cover the entire metropolitan area, and that it is simply impossible to undertake the 150 or so neighbourhood-based efforts that would be required. They might say that the only areas in which a significant number of residents could reasonably be expected to become less auto-dependent are the dense inner-city neighbourhoods like the West End and False Creek where many people already walk a great deal. They might point to the prevalence of trip chaining as evidence that non-work trips are increasingly being done by car, and therefore that a social marketing endeavour like ‘Walk West 10th’ is doomed to failure.

But some might decide in favour of community-based social marketing for precisely the opposite reasons. These people might agree that ‘Walk West 10th’ is only a drop out of the bucket, but that every drop counts. They might feel that, as I said in Chapter 6, when you’re losing the game you have to take the shots that you can get. They might acknowledge that it is vexing to change transportation behaviour, but that social marketing, with its emphasis on persuasion and attitude change, is something whose time has come. These people would take encouragement from community resistance to road-building/widening and community calls for traffic safety and neighbourhood
livability improvements. If they could find a few people in a neighbourhood committed to helping push a community-based social marketing plan forward, they would jump at the opportunity. They would know that if skillfully done, the project would build grass-root support for walking whatever the amount of actual behaviour change. However, they would not acquiesce to trip chaining. In an attempt to develop as effective a strategy as possible, they would do what they could to counter the phenomenon, as I have done with my plan to market transit as a natural extension of walking.

So — the answer is that it depends. Each person or organization must decide whether or not community-based social marketing is ‘worth it.’ Different worldviews produce different answers. If those who do not believe that social marketing would be effective undertook it, they would surely be proven right. Those who believe in the idea, though, might just achieve a measure of success. I was unable to follow ‘Walk West 10th’ to its logical conclusion, so I cannot defensibly affirm whether or not the potential results of such a project justify the effort. However, I can say that what I did in West Point Grey seemed promising. I believe that if continued, it would have encouraged at least some people to get out of their cars and onto their feet. But the social marketing strategy would have to be fully implemented to know for sure.

How would community-based social marketing work — if at all — in not-so-walkable neighbourhoods? It is easiest to promote walking using social marketing in walkable neighbourhoods like West Point Grey. I was grateful that I could honestly tell West Point Grey residents that they live in a pedestrian-friendly place. I knew that residents who walked would enjoy the experience. It would have been a much harder sell to say, “Walk Lougheed Highway!”

Lougheed Highway is so ill-suited to walking that one person, on an e-mail list devoted to Vancouver-area transportation issues, whimsically said:

\footnote{Lougheed Highway is one of the Vancouver metropolitan area’s best examples of a pedestrian-hostile road. It is wide, fast, heavily traveled, and completely fronted, in a large stretch, by big box retail outlets.}
Whenever I alight from the #99 [bus] eastbound [on Lougheed] at Willingdon [Street], where there is no sidewalk at the stop and high-speed traffic, I feel there should be a sign as follows: “ATTENTION PEDESTRIANS: This environment is not designed to meet your needs. Please proceed immediately to purchase a vehicle at one of the dealers nearby.”

In areas with extremely auto-oriented land uses, social marketing intended to get people walking should not be done. Why encourage people to walk in areas which are at best unpleasant and at worst dangerous for pedestrians? Why encourage people to walk where nothing is within walking distance? In some suburban areas, the kind of social marketing strategy I have designed for West Point Grey would probably frustrate people and result in less walking, not more. However, there may still be a place for the social marketing of walking — for example, in a case where the goal would be to change people’s attitudes rather than their actual behaviour. Rather than encouraging people to walk, a social marketing campaign could attempt to convince people that walking is healthier, less stressful, more enjoyable, etc. than driving. In the long run, such a campaign might lead to increased demand for pedestrian-oriented development. That said, however, I would encourage people interested in ‘starting where it is hardest,’ walking-wise, to put more effort into physical measures (e.g. changing land-use regulations), economic measures, and public transit enhancement, than into the social marketing of walking.

In areas which are moderately pedestrian-friendly (i.e. better than Lougheed Highway but somewhat worse than West Point Grey — such as mature post-war suburbs), people could probably be encouraged to walk. The marketing strategy would have to be different, of course. Longer walking distances would have to be acknowledged and addressed; different sets of destinations would have to be promoted (e.g. schools, parks, and shopping malls rather than traditional shopping streets); and less emphasis could be placed on urban form and pedestrian-oriented design. But messages about the health, environmental, and economic benefits of walking would be just as relevant as in West Point Grey, if not more so.
Is the community scale the most appropriate one for encouraging walking? Yes. Most non-recreational walking trips are less than 1 km long. Far more than driving, riding the bus, or even cycling, walking takes place inside communities. If one is going to take a positive approach to transportation behaviour change, stressing the preferred solution (walking) more than the problem (excessive automobile use), then one should operate at the scale of the solution. After all, there is so much difference between the neighbourhoods of a modern metropolis that it would be ineffective to make blanket promotions about getting people to walk. And, as I have mentioned in this thesis, some of the benefits of walking — an enhanced sense of community and greater neighbourhood surveillance — are decidedly local. It makes sense to promote walking neighbourhood by neighbourhood. This is not to say that other efforts should not be made at other levels; the health, environmental, and economic arguments about walking I mentioned in the last paragraph apply to everyone and could well be expressed on a municipal, regional, or provincial scale.

How important is community building in the social marketing of walking? The comments of Doug McKenzie-Mohr, the man who coined the term community-based social marketing, regarding community are found on page 30. Community is important to him because behaviour change is most effectively achieved through various forms of personal contact. His book (McKenzie-Mohr 1996) is full of practical behaviour-change suggestions derived from research in social psychology, but makes no mention of community development. He advocates social marketing in communities, but not necessarily by or with communities. I doubt that McKenzie-Mohr is opposed to community involvement in the social marketing process. His main interests are household energy conservation, recycling, and composting — behaviours conducted privately within individual households. It is probably hard to build a sense of community out of decomposing carrot peelings!

My experience with ‘Walk West 10th,’ however, shows that community building is an essential aspect of the social marketing of walking. The community members and leaders who I
interested (and was trying to interest) in encouraging walking in West Point Grey were the kind of people who would have been key to getting the social marketing strategy implemented. As I mentioned in Chapter 6, one gentlemen keen on neighbourhood transportation issues happened to have been a long-time scout master. How did I discover this fortuitous coincidence? By community building: talking to a stranger at public meeting unrelated to ‘Walk West 10th.’ How did I (hopefully) set the stage for getting him on board to work with the Scouts on ‘Walk West 10th’? By community building: keeping in contact with him over the months and inviting him to the stakeholder meeting I organized. In my limited experience with community development in West Point Grey, this type of story was repeated several times. When the ‘Walk West 10th’ idea was in embryonic form I met the organizer of the Queen Mary walk-to-school program through another community contact. She responded very favourably when I told her about my intentions to organize a social marketing campaign. She, as I have said, stood up for me and for the ‘Walk West 10th’ concept at the stakeholder meeting. She would have been invaluable in getting the local elementary schools involved in the project.

These two community activists; the minister of the church where I held the focus group; another community activist I met totally at random when doing my telephone recruiting for the focus group; the leaders of the Merchants’ Association; others; and even the manager of the neighbourhood’s big corporate Safeway — developing good connections with them and among them on the issue of encouraging walking was a challenge for me, as I explain in more detail in answer to the next question. But it was no mean challenge. How ‘community-based’ would a social marketing strategy be if it did not seek to draw in key neighbourhood groups and institutions? How effective?

But what specifically does ‘Walk West 10th’ teach about doing social marketing in a community-oriented way? Two main things. First, the people a social marketer involves in developing a strategy have to feel ownership of the process if it (the strategy) is to be effective. This
does not just happen. The social marketer has to plan carefully and work hard to ensure that his or her community associates feel involved in more than a token way. In the case of ‘Walk West 10th,’ the idea for a social marketing strategy originated with me. I was not at the time affiliated with any organization or institution in West Point Grey, though I had met a couple of local activists through other channels. I tried to interest the West 10th Merchants’ Association in the idea; I wanted to work together with the merchants to bring it to fruition. It is ironic that my letter to Alan Drinkwater, then the president of the association (see Appendix 1), finished with the following sentence: “If the idea is to be realized, however, the West 10th Merchants’ Association will have to take it up as its own.” I did not, at that early juncture, understand how true those words were, and I did not fully appreciate what was incumbent on me to bring this about.

I was too easily deterred when Drinkwater responded less enthusiastically than I had hoped. It is clear to me now that I should have persisted with him. If I had understood the second point which I make below, I am sure that I could have developed a good working relationship with the Merchants’ Association. But I did not. I decided to go off on my own to refine ‘Walk West 10th’ into a workable plan before making further inroads with community groups. As I explained in Chapter 5, I later sought sponsorship for a focus group from both the Merchants’ Association and the Transportation Working Group. In doing so, however, I did not specifically mention the social marketing strategy, my larger interest (see my letter to Michèle Beaulieu in Appendix 1). The social marketing process stayed ‘mine.’

Given this history, it should not have surprised me that the stakeholders I assembled on 9 September 1997 reacted the way they did when I told them I was moving away. I had tried to get information from them for my purposes without first gaining their support; I had told them about my

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^3 To give myself credit, my associations with the Merchants’ Association regarding the focus group were very positive. They would have been good first steps if I had been staying in Vancouver to continue ‘Walk West 10th.’
idea; I had explained a little bit about how I had developed a strategy for encouraging walking in West Point Grey — and then I asked them to take it up like a relay baton and run with it! They quickly helped me realize that batons are taken up by teammates, not by strangers. Relationships have to come before business.

Community work is done by community members, not presented to them fait accompli in hopes that they will ratify it. In many ways it is easier — more efficient — for a person to primarily work alone on a project. The more people there are involved, the more meetings there have to be, the more complicated everything is to organize, and the more difficult it is to arrive at a consensus. But the community-based social marketer should never be seduced by seemingly simplifying individual effort. The biggest complication of all is when a plan or strategy fails to go ahead because it is not acceptable to the community for which it is intended.

My experience with ‘Walk West 10th’ suggests that few steps should be taken in the social marketing process before key community members and groups are involved. If a social marketer is not part of a community group, then one of his or her first orders of business must be identifying and winning the favour of community stakeholders. Even if a community organization is the one proposing a social marketing campaign, it may also need to gain support from other quarters before proceeding. For example, if in West Point Grey’s case the members of the Transportation Working Group had come up with the idea of ‘Walk West 10th,’ they would still have needed to get the Merchants’ Association on board.

Getting a healthy community-based team assembled is only half of what it takes to ensure that the community feels ownership over the social marketing process. Keeping the team working together — and working together well — is the other half. Much could be said on this score, but it all comes down to mutual respect and cooperation. There should be leadership, but no one should be dictated to.
Everyone's expertise, whether formal or informal, should be esteemed. Decisions should be made by consensus.

The second main lesson emerging from 'Walk West 10th' regarding community-based work is that the social marketer has to respect the capacities of the individuals and groups with whom he or she works. The social marketer is, by definition, generally the person who has committed the most time and energy to bringing about a social marketing strategy. He or she may well be the only one for whom social marketing is priority number one. The social marketer must therefore be cognizant of the constraints people face as a result of other commitments. Most community groups are run by volunteers. Most people's volunteer time is squeezed between work, family responsibilities, and sleep. Burnout is common to community workers.

In retrospect, my letter to Alan Drinkwater (see Appendix 1) sounds remarkably heavy. The elaborate justification I wrote for my idea feels, even to me, like a 40 pound pack one is asked to carry on a long uphill hike. No wonder that a fellow who was in his shop for long hours every day, who (I later learned) was just getting a second business started, and who devoted some of his precious free time to keep the West 10th Merchants' Association going responded the way that he did when I approached him out of the blue.

Respecting people's capacities means burdening them as little as possible. If I were doing it over again, I would make my initial contact with Drinkwater in his store or office — a comfortable place for him. I would try to build a relationship of trust with him. I would tell him about my idea in general terms, making sure that it would not come across to him as another demand on his time. To explain the idea in greater detail, I would ask to come to a Merchants' Association meeting rather than (as I actually did) asking him to come to one I would organize. Sometimes just asking someone to come to 'another meeting' spells doom for one's prospects.
Tiny seedlings need to be hardened off before they can be set out in the harsher environment of the garden. In the same way, community contacts have to be given light loads until they mature enough to be subjected to greater demands. Alan Drinkwater may well have caught the spirit of ‘Walk West 10th’ if he had not been introduced to it so bluntly. He may have willingly dedicated his time and energy. As it was, however, I lost him because I gave him too much too soon.

**Should the product, like the process, be community-minded?** Yes. A social marketing strategy should do what it can to build community spirit among its recipients. People may walk more out of personal self-interest, but they will only replace automobile trips with walking ones to the extent that their commitment to the community expands. My mind goes back to ‘Sally,’ the woman at the focus group who said that she had never walked to West 10th. She did not say how long she had lived in the neighbourhood, but from other things she said I assume that it had been less than five years. More than any of the other participants, she expressed a ‘what’s in it for me?’ attitude. A comment on the very last page of the transcript (see Appendix 2) particularly strikes me. ‘Desirée’ had just told me that the West 10th merchants needed to understand that local residents want to support them. ‘Sally’ broke in and said, “But they have to be good to us, too. They have to be loyal to us. They have to give us good service just like I have to give my clients good service.” She wanted to get what she felt she deserved. She was concerned about getting a suitable exchange. That is justifiable — to a point. The point is where a person stops ‘looking out’ for others. It may be coincidence that the most auto-friendly person at the focus group was also the most individualistic. But I doubt it. If Sally is ever to exercise greater restraint in her automobile use — if she is ever to walk the 600 m to West 10th — she will first have to stop worrying so much about being ‘taken for a ride.’ She will have to tune into the common good. Getting her and others like her to do that is the challenge of the community-based social marketer.
Social Marketing

How should social marketing research be conducted? With as much precision as possible. When starting out, I was not as clear as I should have been about what information I needed to gather for ‘Walk West 10th.’ My background research therefore lacked focus. As a result my literature review spun its wheels in the morass of transportation literature until I realized that all that was important was understanding the factors influencing people’s destination and transportation mode decisions. Likewise, my community research started out as an attempt to find out everything I could about West Point Grey and West 10th. As a result I dug up some information that proved not to be relevant to the resulting social marketing strategy, and did not have time to gather some information that would have helped the strategy.

Are focus groups useful? Yes. As a planner, I initially had my doubts about the focus group. Planning students are steeped in the Geddesian notion of ‘no plan without survey.’ In practice, ‘survey’ tends to involve geographic and demographic analyses, site visits, and an obligatory public meeting or two. Planners conventionally solicit public input primarily to make sure that they are not missing anything or going astray in their work — not to gather primary information. With ‘Walk West 10th,’ I had to remind myself that I was not researching land use or urban development but people and their decisions. Only at the focus group session did I realize how valuable a tool it was. Until then I had been making assumptions about West Point Grey residents’ decision processes based on statistics and observable behaviour. The focus group allowed me to hear about their decisions from the horse’s mouth. From my own observations, for example, I knew that some people in the neighbourhood drove their cars virtually everywhere. However, until I heard ‘Sally’ explain how she had never walked to West 10th, my understanding was limited. Her tone of voice and body language made her few short
words a more powerful explanation of auto-dependent lifestyles and attitudes than I could ever have gotten through observation alone.

I heartily agree with Krueger (1988) that four focus group sessions should be conducted using the same questions. While the one session I organized was helpful, it simply could not fully answer all of my questions in the detail I wanted. Each focus group discussion follows a different path; if I had done more sessions, points untouched by the first would probably have been addressed, and new insights would have been generated. Doing more sessions would also have given me, a first-time moderator, more experience in the art of asking questions and directing discussions.

Besides helping a social marketer understand the people of a community, the focus group is a good method for generating interest in and support for a social marketing campaign such as ‘Walk West 10th.’ In my solicitations to get focus group participants, I spoke to people at 44 households — almost 1 percent of the households in the community.⁴ Those who declined my invitation still heard that the West 10th Merchants’ Association was studying people’s use of the West 10th commercial area (see my script in Chapter 5). Even a brief plug like that would help publicize the social marketing effort. Even if all people so solicited remembered from the telephone call was that the merchants on West 10th were actively doing something, they would be sensitized to future promotion surrounding ‘Walk West 10th.’

Those actually attending a focus group, of course, get a larger dosage of the same preparation. Greater exposure does not necessarily translate into greater support, but in the case of ‘Walk West 10th’ the results were encouraging. After the focus group was finished, my wife and I stood around talking to most of the participants for several minutes. We had only spent two hours together, but we had built somewhat of a bond by sharing personal feelings in a permissive social environment. Four of

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⁴ If I had done four focus groups, I would have spoke to significantly more.
the seven participants were people I would have felt comfortable contacting again specifically about the social marketing effort, and one of them I actually did recontact. Thus the focus group can be a venue for gaining community contacts, though for ethical reasons that should not be its primary purpose if it is billed as a research tool. Another benefit is that focus group participants inevitably talk to family and friends about the experience. As long as that experience is a positive one, the social marketing project thereby gets good publicity.

Is all the marketing rhetoric necessary? Maybe not all. In this thesis I have used various marketing techniques, e.g. strategic planning, situation analysis, segmentation, and the marketing mix. People applying community-based social marketing need not necessarily do as I have done. They can tone down the marketing rhetoric as long as they maintain the marketer’s fundamental attention to the customer, and bent for persuasion instead of force.

Is social marketing really okay for environmental issues? As long as it does not cultivate the excessive individualism that deadens people’s sense of social responsibility, social marketing seems to be appropriate for environmental issues like excessive automobile use.

But is community-based social marketing really an improvement to the pro-pedestrian tool kit? It is impossible for me to say unequivocally, since I did not give ‘Walk West 10th’ its most important test: real-world implementation. On the basis of my experience, however, I can say that the community-based social marketing of walking looks promising. It is worth being refined, extended, and explored further.

As a final comparison, let me briefly consider how the other methods for encouraging walking, which I described in Chapter 1, would apply in West Point Grey. Physical measures — the O’Hagan site brouhaha shows that densification, which would bring more people to within walking distance of West 10th, is more controversial than anything else in the neighbourhood. Besides, densification
would be a slow way to change the modal split in the neighbourhood, and its impact on the transportation decisions of those living on single-family dwelling blocks would probably be small.

Another physical measure, a significant redesign of West 10th, has already sparked some opposition from merchants and others. It would be very expensive. Finally, a traffic calming treatment of the neighbourhood's internal streets is conceivable. Traffic calming devices would modestly improve the pedestrian environment of the community. This might encourage a few people to walk more often.

Economic measures — the City of Vancouver has clearly voiced its opposition to tolls on a rebuilt or renovated Lion's Gate Bridge. The prospect of road pricing, a measure which might encourage more people to walk to West 10th, seems very remote in 1997's Vancouver. Higher gas taxes are a possibility, but any potential rise would not significantly alter West Point Grey residents' transportation mode calculus. Legal measures — lower speed limits or changed right-of-way rules are not going to happen on West 10th. On the side streets? Not anytime soon. Educational measures — the parents' associations at the local elementaries have been doing a relatively good job teaching children about alternatives to the automobile. But no other organization at any level is engaged in a coherent attempt to educate people about the benefits of walking.

Social marketing promises to be a strong addition to this set of tools. Social marketing is cheaper than physical reconstruction. It is far more politically palatable than economic measures. It goes further than education but shares a respect for people's autonomous choice. It alone addresses the fact that people will not walk unless they really want to.
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major employers and public institutions (including UBC) to reduce the amount of automobile traffic they generate. The City of Vancouver’s Draft Transportation Plan strongly supports traffic calming, enhanced transit, and improved options for pedestrians and cyclists. Two aspects of the plan which should be particularly interesting for the merchants of West 10th are the following:

- “Planning and development policies for the city would support local retailing, personal, business and community services, so residents can find more of the services and jobs they need closer to home.” (Part 1, p. 19)
- “Pedestrian priority areas would be created in commercial centres, where pedestrians would be able to cross roads more easily and safely than they can today.” (Part 1, p. 23)

These points parallel a direction in CityPlan to “promote lively neighbourhood shopping streets where it is comfortable to buy, sell, stroll, relax, and perform” (p. 26). Taken as a whole, the current thrust of public policies about shopping is to discourage stand-alone, automobile-oriented retailing and to encourage traditional shopping streets which are integrated into their host communities and easily accessible by foot, bicycle, or transit.

**The Idea**

The general public desire to reduce automobile dependency is a marvelous opportunity for traditional shopping streets to reassert themselves in the retail marketplace. Why not develop a “Walk to West 10th” campaign? The goal of such a promotion would be to encourage people in West Point Grey, the UEL, and UBC to walk (or cycle) to West 10th to meet their daily and weekly needs for goods and services. To the extent that it would meet this goal, the program would:

1. serve an important city and regional objective: reducing automobile traffic by increasing the use of sustainable modes of transportation; and
2. serve an important objective of merchants along West 10th: increasing sales and profitability.

It would also have various other benefits, such as improving the physical and mental health of people in the community (walking has been shown to improve both) and strengthening the sense of community in West Point Grey (pedestrians are much better able to interact with people and settings around them than people locked inside the metal and glass of their cars).

The idea of the “Walk to West 10th” promotion came to me after reading a book written by a sustainable transportation evangelist named David Engwicht. In Reclaiming Our Cities and Towns (pp. 140-3 (I can photocopy the relevant pages for you if you are interested)), Engwicht suggests a “Shop Locally and Save the World” campaign. “Walk to West 10th” is essentially a less idealistic and more modest version of what Engwicht is talking about.

**Realization**

West 10th is already a vibrant and successful shopping street. However, a large proportion of surrounding residents drives long distances to meet needs which could be satisfied locally. How, then, could more people be encouraged to walk to West 10th?

If this idea were to be pursued, this question would need to be considered in a way that I cannot do, ivory tower-esque, on my own. However, it seems fairly clear to me that one important element of any “Walk to West 10th” campaign would be a brochure which would be distributed to local residents and available in establishments along West 10th. Here I will quote Engwicht:
“The brochure would explain that in most cases shopping at a regional shopping centre is more expensive than shopping locally, once the full running expenses of the car and the hidden costs paid in taxes for urban sprawl are taken into consideration. But it would also stress the many other things that are saved by shopping locally. The sub-headings would tell the story: Shop Locally and Save Money; Shop Locally and Save Time; Shop Locally and Save Your Neighbourhood; Shop Locally and Save the Environment.”

In other words, the brochure would educate people about the individual and societal costs of those vehicle trips to the discount superstores, and the individual and societal benefits of those walks to West 10th. It could offer suggestions on simple lifestyle changes people could make to get away from being so dependent on their automobiles. The brochure would be attractive, interesting, informative, and above all positive. I would be more than willing to help put the brochure together by getting merchants on board, gathering information, writing the copy, and even distributing the finished product. (Just so that you know, I am just completing a Masters of Planning at UBC, and have committed this coming summer to this kind of pro-walking involvement in order to benefit my community — I live in family housing on campus and use West 10th regularly — and provide good fodder for the thesis I am writing.) Of course, the West 10th Merchants’ Association would have to sponsor the brochure and cover the costs of getting it printed, although it may be possible to get some financial support from agencies such as the GVRD which are interested in cutting vehicular traffic.

In addition to the brochure, other promotional measures could be considered, including signs, banners, and special events. The West 10th Merchants’ Association could support the W.P.G. traffic and transit action group (headed by Mary Blachut) in its attempt to have the City designate West 10th as one of the pedestrian priority areas suggested in the Draft Transportation Plan. This would be tantamount to winning attractive, pedestrian-friendly streetscape improvements for West 10th.

The W.P.G. community group would almost certainly support this idea. It jives with the concepts of the neighbourhood plan they recently (1994?) prepared. Mary Blachut, for one, is very interested in the idea and said that she would like to be involved if it moved ahead. Although I have not as yet discussed the “Walk to West 10th” idea with the City’s planners, you can almost be certain of their open or at least tacit support in this matter. As a whole they strongly believe in both sustainable transportation, but as far as I can tell have thus far been frustrated that there are so few good ideas about how to positively promote it.

Please carefully consider what I have written. I think the “Walk to West 10th” is a very good idea, one with positive implications all around (except, I suppose, for auto-oriented retailers). If the idea is to be realized, however, the West 10th Merchants’ Association will have to take it up as its own. To talk more about what I have proposed, please get back to me by calling the phone number printed at the top of the first page of this letter. I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Erik G. Backstrom
School of Community and Regional Planning
University of British Columbia
Focus Group Methodology

A focus group is a group of between seven and ten people brought together for a focused discussion on questions of interest to the researcher. The beauty of the focus group is that it provides rich qualitative data from a number of people at once.

Purpose

This particular focus group has a two-fold purpose: to learn about the factors West Point Grey residents consider when (1) choosing between West 10th and other locations when shopping for goods and services, and (2) deciding how to get to West 10th when they have chosen to shop in the neighbourhood.

Getting participants

I intend to draw on some existing contacts I have in the neighbourhood (Mary Blachut of the Queen Mary Parents' Association and Gordon Dungate of the Transportation Steering Group) to identify people who may be willing to participate in the focus group. I intend to snowball from there — i.e. ask Mary and Gordon's contacts if they know anyone who might be interested, and so on.

While it is obviously important to tell people what they will be discussing in the focus group, it is better to be general when inviting people to participate, so that they don't think about the issue too much before the focus group. Therefore what I'm proposing to tell potential participants is the following: "The West 10th Merchants' Association is sponsoring a study of the shopping habits of people in the neighbourhood. We will be bringing together a group of West Point Grey residents to discuss their shopping decisions. The meeting will be held on August 28th from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at Queen Mary School. Will you please join us by attending the meeting?"

People who agree to participate will be mailed a reminder a few days before the meeting is to take place.

Organizing and conducting the meeting

I will arrange for a room for the meeting, preferably at Queen Mary School, but otherwise at the West Point Grey United Church at 8th and Sasamat. (If you know of a better location, please let me know.) I will provide coffee, juice, and cookies to help make the event more pleasant.

I will be the moderator of the focus group, and will be assisted by another student. We will greet people warmly when they arrive at the focus group; our goal will be to establish a friendly environment and help the participants feel comfortable. After getting the participants seated, I will welcome them, provide an overview of the topic, explain the ground rules for the focus group (e.g. there are no right or wrong answers, one person speaks at a time), and then ask the first, general question. The meeting will be tape recorded to accurately document people's comments, and my assistant will also take notes.

Questioning route

The focus group technique got its name from the practice of starting a discussion with a general question and then asking questions which progressively focus in on the subject of interest. Subject to
change (give me feedback if you have any concerns!), my line of questioning for the focus group will be the following:

1. Let's find out some more about each other by going around the room one at a time. Tell us about the last time you bought something — anything! What were you looking for, and where did you go to obtain it? (Note: this first question is an ice breaker — something to get everyone talking. Once people have talked once, they’re more likely to talk again.)

2. What proportion of your regular shopping and service needs can be satisfied on West 10th?

3. Think about the goods and services that are available in the West 10th shopping district (e.g. grocery shopping, clothing, household items, professional services (doctor, dentist), personal services (hair styling, travel agencies, insurance agencies, banking), restaurants and cafés). Suppose you need one of these goods or services. What determines whether you go to West 10th or to somewhere else? Probes:
   - How important is a shop's proximity to your home?
   - How important is price?
   - How important is selection?
   - How important is shopping atmosphere?

4. When you've decided to go to West 10th, what determines whether you go by car or whether you walk or cycle?
Appendix 2  Focus Group Transcript

In the transcript, my comments ("Moderator") are in a different font to distinguish them from those of the participants. To ensure anonymity, the participants’ names have been changed.

Moderator: The purpose of this discussion: we’re trying to gain information about how people in West Point Grey perceive of and also use the West 10th business district. Like I told you when I called, I’m a UBC student working with the West 10th Merchant’s Association to help find out how people in the area think of their business area. The purpose of tonight, specifically, is to find out about the factors that influence where you go for different shopping purposes. You all are experts about what we’re talking about tonight — West 10th — because you all live in the neighbourhood. I really do want to find out about your feelings about these things. There’s no right or wrong answers. Even if how you feel is different from what other people have said, it’s just a different point of view. If you’ve got critical comments — those are just as well. Sometimes disagreeing with things is more helpful than saying that you agree with everything. So feel free to share all of your comments. So, just to start out, because we’re going to be talking about shopping behaviour, I thought we could go around the room and introduce ourselves. But when you do, please tell us about the last time you bought something. What was it, and where did you get it?

Sally: Probably at the drug store, Point Grey Pharmacy. And I tried to go to the library today, but it was closed.

Desirée: Today I went to Safeway. I also went to the little grocery store across the street from Safeway because it’s cheaper. I tend to do all my shopping around here.

Mary: Yesterday I bought a bed. I bought it at the futon store. That was the last thing I bought, I think.

Moderator: That’s a big purchase.

Mary: Yeah. Well, she’s having a closing-out sale, you see. It’s the best deal I found anywhere in town as far as futons and beds are concerned.

Marjorie: The last time I was in a store to buy anything was on Saturday afternoon. It was the produce store over here on 10th, where I bought my week’s supply of vegetables and fruit. I should add that I was at the bakeshop — is it Vanessa? It starts with a V, anyhow — by the produce store, and I was also in the deli, all on Saturday afternoon.
Ivan: I’m Ivan. I’m an engineer. I guess that means most of my purchases are engineered. I like shopping on 10th because it’s very convenient and often very friendly. But I often find you can’t get what you want to find there. The last thing I bought was gas for my car, and that was from the Shell station.

Conrad: I’m Conrad — a tradesman. The last thing I bought, I have to confess, was a Pepsi. I got the wrong one; it was a diet one. It was from a corner store on about 18th. I quite specifically stop at the corner store because that’s where I would prefer to go — a small family business. And I want to slip in the previous purchase, which was made while I slept. One of the organic vegetable companies delivered organic vegetables at my door, and I left a cheque at the door, and woke up to a box of organic vegetables.

Grace: I’m Grace. I am up in this area two or three times a week buying things, but today I was in West Vancouver and bought lunch.

Moderator: Well, good. Some of your comments bring us to the meat of what we want to talk about today. What factors influence where you go to buy things? In other words, what’s important to you in deciding where to go for shopping, for cafés or restaurants, or for personal services like going to a doctor or getting insurance? What influences where you go? What’s important to you?

Sally: I go to the closest places. I went to 4th and Alma yesterday and got my insurance for the year.

Moderator: Okay, so distance?

Sally: Yes, because it’s close. It’s close here on West 10th, too. The bank here is really nice — it’s way nicer than any other bank I’ve belonged to before. I know the bank manager, and get treated a lot better than at other banks in the city, where you’re just a number.

Moderator: It obviously differs for different items. I should just explain that when I talk about shopping, I’m not talking about buying a 40-foot yacht. I’m talking about things you need on a regular basis — basic items. Okay, Sally, you talked about distance, about the way you’re treated, the atmosphere in the place ...

Sally: And the quality. It sounds like some people here like that vegetable store here on West 10th, but I don’t like it because there’s no organic. So I never go there. I’ll go all the way to Capers or Choices or something like that. I tend to go all over it seems, but I tend to go more on 4th Avenue. There are, however, some nice restaurants here on West 10th — the Indian restaurant is really good, and there’s another great restaurant just down the street that’s got the great cheesecake and homemade soups. So I go to quite a few on the restaurants on 10th.

Moderator: Okay, what about other people?

Marjorie: For me, it would be convenience.

Moderator: What do you mean by convenience? What’s convenient to you?

Marjorie: It’s easy to get to — close by. It’s in the same facility as a number of other things, so the trip can cover several errands at the same time. The attraction for me of West 10th is that it’s within
walking distance — two blocks from my house. I don’t even have to take the car out for a lot of things. When the kids were little I could send them over to get things. Now the grandchildren can come to West 10th to pick up things; it’s a block from their house. So convenience would be one key factor. Prices would be another thing, along with quality.

**Moderator:** What do other people think about the price issue?

Mary: I find West 10th is not much different [price-wise] from other places. I work in a store on 10th, and I think it’s funny when people tend to come from other parts of the city and say, “It’s so expensive up in this rich neighbourhood.” But personally, I don’t think it is more expensive — and I’m on a limited budget because I’m a student. And like I said, the futon place — that was the best deal I could find anywhere in the city. And I also go to her because it’s convenient, and to support the neighbourhood. I made a little bit of a conscious effort at that, just because I work on 10th. It’s actually way more expensive downtown. At least, everything is marked up just a little bit more downtown. They have more sales downtown, on the other hand. I find that stores here don’t have sales — it’s constant. You know what you’re going to pay for something all the time. It’s always the same price. So for me, it’s similar. It’s convenience, and price, and quality. But I don’t find the prices vary that much. But people who come from other parts of the city tend to think that they do. I don’t understand that, and I’ve never understood it. They just impose it onto the neighbourhood.

**Moderator:** There’s a number of different comments here. One think you mentioned was supporting the neighbourhood. Conrad, one thing you said in your introductory comments that you specifically went to a specific place to support that type of establishment.

Conrad: If I can swing by a family store, I’ll do that rather than drop into 7-11 or Mac’s.

**Moderator:** Why?

Conrad: It’s a principle I have. I will deviate from it quite a lot — it just depends. If I need a Coca-Cola and I’m going past Pattiserie Bordeau, I’ll go to 7-11, but by in large I’ll stop at the family store, just as a principle of supporting family businesses as opposed to big, rather faceless places.

Grace: I’ll reiterate that, too. One of the reasons I come up to this little West 10th area is for the social ambiance. I like seeing people — I needn’t actually know them, but I can recognize them by their faces. Sometimes we have conversations and we could go for years and I’d still have no idea what that person’s name is, nor she mine. But it’s part of a routine. It’s pleasant. I like the kind of informal mixing that happens. For that reason I much prefer smaller establishments that are preferably run by a family. I’m not totally against franchises, provided they do it well. But something like 7-11 or Mac’s Milk or such is so bleak. It’s very impersonal. You by in the car, you stop, you run in, you get something, you go out. I would never like to see that on West 10th. I like the smallness of it, frankly.

Marjorie: And along with that goes special service.

Grace: Yes, I do think so.

**Moderator:** What do you mean by special?
Marjorie: Okay. I need a part for a toilet. It’s about 55 years old. You go to London Drugs or Lumberland or something like that, and everything comes in those prepackaged cellophane things and usually they don’t have the part that fits your thing anyhow. You go down here to Hewer’s Hardware [on West 10th], and if they don’t have it on their rack, they’ll look around for it. At one stage they had an elderly man who would rummage around in the basement for parts. I mean, they would really go out of their way to try find the replacement thing you wanted. It’s that kind of personal service.

Grace: The other thing is — they will almost always undersell anybody at the hardware store. They’re really good that way. So we’ve got some excellent merchants. I’d like to see some support for them, and so I do try to come up here. I do try to come up here to the produce store even though it isn’t organic. I would prefer to buy organic vegetables, but because of the price difference and what we have available in the family, I just try to get the freshest stuff I can and give them a good scrub. But I certainly believe in organic methods of farming, and if we could ever get the price differential down...

Sally: The more volume, the more they’ll cut the prices.

Grace: Yes, that’s right. Exactly. I’m delighted that woman Jessie has opened up the store there. It offers some competition to Safeway, which they well need.

**Moderator: Which store is that?**

Grace: Top Ten. It used to be the pet store.

Mary: There’s another [produce store] down there, too.

Grace: That’s right. The more, the merrier.

Marjorie: It’s the produce store right across from Safeway. Safeway put three or four different grocery stores out of business in the time we’ve lived here.

**Moderator: I’ve only lived here for two years — there were others?**

Marjorie: There were four grocery stores on this street 35 years ago.

Mary: There were?

Marjorie: Yes, and Safeway very carefully ran all of them out of business. They’ve eliminated the deli twice, but each time it’s come back with new life. They’ve eliminated two butcher shops, and they’ve eliminated one bake shop.

Sally: There is a new butcher shop at the deli. I’ve bought stuff there before.

Marjorie: I know, but there hasn’t been one for over twenty years.

Grace: And they’re giving the pharmacy a real run for its money —

Mary: Oh, I know!

Grace: The man there is having a dreadful time.
Marjorie: I boycott Safeway.

Sally: I think a lot of people go to Point Grey Pharmacy because he’s got personality.

Grace: He’s a charming person.

Mary: Isn’t he great?

Grace: I do occasionally go to Safeway, but I may say that, to me, I don’t know if that’s what Ivan is talking about when he says that you can’t find what you want, but it’s very well attended, and many people go there. I actually go up to Stong’s up on Dunbar, too, because it’s a family-run store. I prefer it there if I can go there.

Moderator: This is all very interesting for me because I’m new to the area and didn’t know that were butcher shops here. I started out by asking what’s important to you in deciding where to go. There’s a lot of unanimity here. Let me ask: Are there other factors that work against West 10th? Ivan, you’ve been quiet. Do the other stores that are larger offer better prices?

Ivan: Convenience depends on what you’re getting. You’re not going to go across town to get a loaf of bread; you want to get it close. So I’ll go to Safeway. I think they’re a good store for what they have, but they’re bandits on their prices. We’ve got three teenage boys in our house, so when you go to get groceries —

Moderator: You need more than a loaf of bread!

Ivan: So we go somewhere else. We go farther because we’ve got to spend two or three hundred dollars.

Moderator: Help me understand that decision — going farther versus staying locally for groceries.

Grace: Money, money, money!

Ivan: Superstore is a terrible place to go. You don’t get any ambiance, and you don’t get any personal service, but you probably save a hundred dollars on the purchase. So that’s what we would do.

Grace: You have to when you have a big family.

Moderator: I appreciate that — it’s a different comment on the price issue.

Sally: BiLow is lower priced. When my kids were home — they’re grown up now — I used to do all my shopping at BiLow. Their prices are way cheaper than at Safeway.

Ivan: BiLow is good. Stong’s is good.
Marjorie: The other thing is shopping for the specials. If you read the Courier on Sunday you can get the specials for the week at IGA, BiLow, and Stong’s. The specials determine whether I go to IGA, BiLow, or Stong’s.

Grace: What that means for me, and probably for you people, is that I’m doing something I’d rather not do. That is taking my car through someone else’s neighbourhood and going to the store that suits me more. I’d much sooner trundle my little cart up here more frequently — and I do for vegetables, and to go to the library, and to the pharmacy. But I would be very happy if we could get our groceries from some place that wasn’t so monolithic. As I understand it, Safeway refuses to join the Merchants’ Association. So does the gas station. They’re big corporations, and maybe they don’t see an interest.

Mary: They probably think that joining the Merchants’ Association would be a conflict of interest. I don’t really know what their premise would be, but that’s probably their argument for what they do.

Grace: On the other hand, Safeway isn’t hurting. They’ve got people coming from far and wide, from up at the university —

Mary: They’re very busy!

Ivan: I think that Safeway is hurting. I don’t think they do the business they would like to do.

Grace: There seem to be huge numbers whenever I go there.

Mary: Whenever I go there it’s busy. It’s always busy before dinner time — any night of the week. Guaranteed.

Sally: If I buy juices, toilet paper, etc. I’ll go down to BiLow and buy a whole bunch at once. It’s not far — it’s in the neighbourhood, on 4th and Alma.

Grace: Right. And you live close enough ...

Sally: On 4th.

Grace: So it would be about the same distance, either way. Well, I regret driving farther — I really do. I’d like not to do that. But occasionally if I do want organic vegetables or cheeses, I do go down to Capers. Capers has made a real contribution to that street. It’s an excellent place. It’s very costly, but people go there for different reasons.

Moderator: Desirée, let me ask you — are there any other factors that you consider when deciding where to go?

Desirée: For me it’s convenience. I go to Safeway because it’s close. I don’t always go there. There seems to be two different kinds of stores on 10th: Safeway, and all the other small ones. I really support the small ones — I find the choices adequate. For clothing, I usually go downtown because I don’t like their [West 10th stores’] clothing. But for ordinary stuff, West 10th is quite good.

Moderator: Any other comments on clothing?
Sally: I love the clothing on this street. I go to three places, and I only go when they have sales. I go to BJ’s, Enda-B’s, and Wear Else. They’ve got great deals on high quality clothes. I never go to the malls downtown. I go shopping around here, because I hate shopping for clothes.

Marjorie: I used to buy clothes on 10th, but now I virtually never do. I find that the clothing stores now tend to have more extreme clothes than what I would wear — at higher prices — rather than the more classic styles that they used to have. For children, there used to be a really really excellent clothing store for children here. It was medium-priced and high-quality. When the owner died, his brother and sister decided to close out the store, and it hasn’t been replaced by anything comparable.

Mary: Carter’s — I remember that place.

Marjorie: Carter’s Clothing. And the 5 and 10 cent store used to be very good for modest-priced things.

Mary: Varsity Variety? [Laughs]

Marjorie: Yes. What I’ve found is that over the years, the new stores that have replaced those tend to have higher and higher prices, so that people on modest incomes just can’t shop there. My daughter can’t shop on 10th for that kind of thing.

Moderator: So what you’re saying is that the neighbourhood has changed in a lot of ways. The business area has changed as the neighbourhood has changed ...

Marjorie: For certain things it’s gone higher-end than it used to be.

Mary: Oh, it’s a lot more slick. It’s kind of homey, but slick. It’s a lot more polished than it used to be. I’ve lived my whole life here, so I remember all of these stores that you’re talking about. We went there all of the time, but they weren’t [very fancy]. All of the stores now have a certain amount of character and a certain amount of theme to them. There’s theme stores — there’s the gift store, there’s the card store, there are two kitchen stores. And there’s a lot of doubles of things. Why do you need two kitchen stores on one street — do people have to shop for whisks that often? These clothing stores — I shop at them, too — but they all have the same things. Wear Else mimics Enda-B’s. And then there’s that other one — Chapter X, where the teenage girls shop. It’s all very similar stuff. And it is expensive, but I shop there because it’s convenient. Because downtown isn’t cheaper, I find.

Moderator: What about selection? Is there a good enough selection on West 10th for the things that you want? It is, after all, only three blocks long.

Conrad: I range around quite a lot. My job sites are in different places, so I shop all the way from Commercial Drive and Kerrisdale all the way across [town]. But all the time I’m picking places that have the traditional street layout. I probably go to Oakridge Mall once a year, and I don’t go to downtown malls. What I’m hearing is that people like to shop in places that have the old street multi-shop thing, and occasionally go to a shopping centre or Safeway. I have a basket of things I get at Safeway — I’m not that price-sensitive. Safeway is where I always get the toilet paper and the toothpaste and so on. Everything else — I range around. There’s Capers, there’s Choices — we haven’t mentioned Choices. It’s a single destination thing, but I go when I’m driving past it. I very rarely go to Capers. Nearly all of my meat I get from McKenzie Heights. There’s a little butcher there — Doug. I get abused [friendly abuse] when I go in there. I might get something somewhere else, but I
tend to go to the smaller shops — the neighbourhood-type places. But they’re all over the West Side. I think that’s one of things we’ve got here: we’ve actually got that choice. Almost all my clothes are from Hills in Kerrisdale, or the Co-op, or Coast Mountain. We live on the side of town that has the old street plan, with the occasional Safeway, Oakridge, Arbutus Village. So we have this choice. We’re probably roaming to and fro in our vehicles anyway. It’s a very exceptional set of choices if you live in [west side] Vancouver. If you live further east in the city or across the river in Richmond, suddenly all this proliferation of fairly high-end specialty bread shops, clothes shops, etc. doesn’t exist in quite the same way. So we live in a very exceptional part of the city. We’ve got the Terra Breads — those sorts of places.

Grace: I would love to get Terra Breads or Echo II Pane up here!

Moderator: Any other comments on this?

Sally: I never go to malls. It sends me into a depression, thinking of shopping for Christmas. I never go to malls.

Grace: It’s very depressing.

Conrad: I just wonder where everyone comes from. They all seem to come! It’s not somewhere I go very often — I go for one or two things.

Sally: I’ll go to the Bay downtown, but I won’t go down below. I just go on Scratch Day — that’s about it.

Grace: When I was in West Vancouver today, there was a petition being circulated that I saw in a number of shops. It was saying, “Keep big boxes out of West Vancouver!” Apparently, there are some establishments applying for building permits or development permits in West Vancouver. There’s a citizen’s reaction to this, because there again, in Ambleside and Dundarave, the shops are right on the street, and they’re little ones, mostly. There’s a good mix — people talking to one another. What you get is a street much more interesting when you’ve got a lot of little shops. Now that’s extremely high-end over there in some areas. But it’s not as though it’s the difference between high-end and low-end. It has to do with some kind of intimacy, I think. People are reacting against the very thought of having some kind of toy company...

Marjorie: Was it Toys ’R Us?

Grace: It might have been that, but I think there’s another one, too. And then there was some other thing that was looking to knock down or knock together some shops and make something big. That is one of my major objections to Safeway, too. It’s a hole in the street, as far as I’m concerned. It’s a parking lot; it looks suburban. Some people have been concerned about older people getting across that parking lot. The ‘Ready or Not’ group here made approaches to Safeway to have yellow lines — a walking path — made over to Safeway. That did happen — they did respond — but it’s all rubbed off now and hasn’t been replaced. So I don’t think they’re that sensitive to what people actually need around here. They’re not going out of their way.

Conrad: I don’t think that’s just Safeway. For me there’s a huge problem of how traffic uses 10th. I see the police trap continually on 16th, and it’s a revenue-driven form of trapping. I know that there’s a sort of consensus that 60 km an hour is okay in a 50 km zone. I think for the most part that if you’re
driving over 50 on 10th, you’ve got very little leeway for two cars if there are two cars in a lane. There’s so many people crossing, and hesitations, and doors opening. So a traffic problem for me there is that I don’t see traffic ever disciplined in this area. Safeway has a predicament about its parking lot and traffic. But there’s a traffic problem. People drive fast in parking lots. There’s a lot of bad driving. People are trying to orientate to what’s happening where, and who’s doing what.

Grace: It’s confusing.

Conrad: So for me, I think Safeway has a fairly good eye to public relations. It’s a quality company in a sense. But that’s a problem that’s bigger than Safeway. A lot of that’s also about behaviour that’s out there.

**Moderator:** I just want to make sure I understand what you mean by “traffic problem.” Is it speed in the parking lot?

Conrad: It’s a combination — gratuitous speed, driving that’s indifferent to people who might have difficulty crossing a street or a parking lot. I think that’s a big issue to me. I’m not allowed to talk about it at home, but I think that 10th is a classic example of speeding. That’s dangerous speeding! Going along 16th at 65 is not particularly dangerous until you get to the school zone. But there’s a difference between traffic being pushed into safer driving and revenue-driven trapping. I think that most trapping is for revenue.

Marjorie: One of the residents associations in this area is working towards what they call “traffic calming” on 10th Avenue because they’re aware that now that Starbucks has gone in, and that produce store has gone in, the amount of pedestrians cutting across the middle of the block has become extremely dangerous.

Grace: Oh, there was someone killed. A student was killed.

Marjorie: No, that was down on Broadway.

Grace: No, there was one here, too.

Ivan: He wasn’t killed.

Grace: A Korean student was running across from Safeway to the produce store.

Mary: Oh, I seen someone get hit up there before. I’ve seen that. They weren’t dead ...

Ivan: He didn’t die.

Grace: He didn’t die? I thought I read it in the paper.

Marjorie: Well, what they’re hoping to do is to build something like they have down at White Rock — something going down the street that’s a median. Basically there will be single lane traffic going each direction.

Ivan: So where does the rest of the traffic go? Down our streets?
Marjorie: The idea is that the traffic going to and from UBC which is causing most of the problems will use 16th or 4th Avenue or Southwest Marine Drive ...

Sally: Oh, I don’t want that — they’ll come down my street!

Ivan: They’ll go down 12th, 14th ...

Mary: It’s already bad enough as it is!

Sally: My street is already enough of a freeway. Have you seen all of the density out in that new condo area out at UBC? It’s unbelievable!

Moderator: I want to come back to the transportation issue towards the end, but I’ve got a few things before that, if that’s okay. In previous discussion we’ve talked about different stores. I’ve been listing some of them: Capers, BiLow, Stong’s, Superstore, Oakridge, Choices, downtown. Everyone has said fairly nice things about West 10th. But I would like to talk for a minute about when you don’t shop at West 10th. What attracts you to some of these other places? What do you find attractive about these other stores or areas?

Sally: Variety. Quality. Like Granville Island and Capers. I go to Granville Island a lot, even though it’s out of the way.

Conrad: Well, Capers is an exceptional [destination]. The landlords there got their pick of tenants; they’ve got Capers, Duthies, Magic Flute, and Coast Mountain. That is one destination where I can virtually do Christmas for everybody. In Kerrisdale they put up a new building that’s sort of extended the code. Their model — they said this is what we’re going to build here, so please can we build it two floors higher — their model is the building that Capers is in. So that’s very much a multi-shopping destination. As is Kerrisdale.

Sally: Kerrisdale has the best produce store I’ve ever seen. It’s West something, and it’s just in the first block by West Boulevard, and it’s on the north side, right next to Starbucks, almost. It’s so good. It’s great. If I’m ever in the area I stop there.

Conrad: It’s fairly new. It’s been there about three years.

Marjorie: You see I’ll virtually never stop up in Kerrisdale because of the parking. I just find it’s too much of a hassle.

Grace: They do have free parking under the Legion building.

Marjorie: Well, I know there is, but usually I’m just going through anyhow. It’s just so busy along there that rather than taking the time I just don’t bother.

Conrad: I’ve never not gotten parking under the Legion.

Ivan: Kerrisdale has at least some parking lots. I mean West 10th — other than Safeway, which we all hate — doesn’t have anything.
Mary: It does above the library. There’s a parking lot above the library.

Grace: Oh yeah, but it’s crazy — dangerous up there.

Mary: Oh, I always find a spot up there! Every single time.

Desirée: Above the library?

Grace: On the roof. You have to go down the lane.

Mary: See, so many people don’t know about ...

**Moderator:** Because you can’t see it from the street.

Grace: Sometimes, though, there are delivery trucks delivering to the dry cleaner, I guess, right near there. So going down the lane, sometimes people are backing out ... What we have here — well, I’ll save it until we get to the traffic issue.

**Moderator:** What else attracts you [to these other locations]?

Grace: I was going to mention clothing, too. I don’t buy very many clothes, but when I do, I tend to go elsewhere because the sorts of clothes that are offered around here are not the sorts of clothes I tend to wear.

**Moderator:** That’s what you said, Marjorie.

Grace: So I will go elsewhere in the city for that. And I wasn’t here at the time when there was that other store you mentioned — Carter’s?

Marjorie: Carter’s was for children.

Mary: That’s for kids.

Marjorie: But there was Marvies for women, which was really quite convenient.

Mary: There used to be a lot for older women.

Grace: I guess I wasn’t here then. But anyway, yes I do go elsewhere. I’ll go all over the city or West Vancouver for clothes, which I hate .... I do not like to look for clothes!

Marjorie: Where I go depends on what I’m looking for. Right now I’m in the market for a new rain jacket. So I’ve been looking at Coast Mountain, Taiga, and several other places. We happen to have the catalogues at home, so I’ll look at them, and phone around, and then I’ll go down and examine which ones I like and don’t like, and then I’ll buy.

**Moderator:** So you don’t go to West 10th because .... Is it a specific store? Or just a type of good that you can’t get on 10th?
Marjorie: It's a specific item that I'm looking for. For general clothes and work I generally go to Tabbies — for skirts and blouses and that kind of thing. This is a Tabbie sweater; this is a Tabbie shirt. I happen to be wearing Tilly's pants. So as I say, I have certain specialty things that I go to.

Moderator: What else? What else takes you to somewhere besides West 10th?

Conrad: I go to Commercial Drive to have my film developed. It's a family business — Vancouver Photo. I know them to be community activists. I was on Commercial — I lived there for six months. Sometimes it's really inconvenient, you know. I've had to go through their file to find my stuff listed under my old phone number. But it's okay. I take my photographs there because it's a street that I like. When I'm there I'll go get coffee at Aroma and check out the bookshops and the other things there.

Grace: That's what makes a really good area.

Conrad: Yeah, it's got multiple things that I just sort of cruise by and through and see. There's a hardware store — they're the only people who understand what I'm talking about. I like that. I'm all over, not the whole city, but the west side and then Commercial Drive. But in the same kinds of areas as West 10th. And then it depends on what the stores are.

Moderator: When you say the same kind, do you mean the same form? Small stores?

Conrad: Yes. Specialty stores, old stores. I mean, Coast Mountain is a big business. Co-op is a huge thing. I go to those places. But I tend not to go to the Canadian Tires, the Home Depots.

Grace: They tend to have narrow frontages, so that a specialty store can actually almost afford it. That's what characterizes, I think, West 10th and Kerrisdale and Commercial Drive. Some [of the stores] are bigger, but a lot of them are littler places. I think that's what keeps a place lively. You go to that area, and you're going for one thing. Then you see they have something interesting over here, and something interesting over here, and you might actually buy it. The merchant here may not be able to support their stores with just us — with just our neighbourhood. So if they can draw in other people, too, from other neighbourhoods ...

Desirée: I've noticed that there's a lot of change-over also. A lot of stores open and then they close — restaurants, especially.

Moderator: You mean specifically on 10th?

Desirée: Yes. I think it's because the leases are so high that they can't afford it. I don't know what the reason is, but I suppose that's the reason.

Marjorie: Quite a lot of them have said, We're no longer going to work for the landlord. The lease comes up for renewal, and they have their rent doubled. They say, Okay, there's no way I can make a go on it.

Moderator: Are you speaking of restaurants as well, or just anything?

Marjorie: Restaurants, and all sorts of businesses on 10th have gone out of business because the rents have gone up so high that they just can't [continue].
Grace: But some other people tell me that it isn’t so much the rents as the taxes. Some people feel that commercial businesses are taxed too highly.

Desirée: It’s always depressing to see. There was a restaurant called Mamina, I think. It was quite good, but it closed after six months. I don’t know what they’re going to put there. It’s depressing when something closes down.

Sally: The donut place. I really miss that.

Mary: Do you REALLY!? 

Sally: It had all those icing sprinkles.

Mary: He was a nice guy!

Sally: He was so nice. And all of a sudden it wasn’t there one day.

Mary: Oh, yeah, but I think he retired. He was there for years.

**Moderator:** Okay, so what else? Ivan, when you go to Superstore — help me understand that a little bit.

Ivan: It’s just because we’re making such a large purchase. And they do have more variety and larger ...

[conversation truncated because tape ends]

Sally: Men don’t buy as much clothes as women, and their wives often buy it for them. My spouse, he never buys anything. I buy everything for him.

**Moderator:** I must admit, this shirt was a gift from my wife.

Sally: A lot of men don’t buy their own clothes.

Ivan: But that’s just one example. I mean, the hardware store is great ...

Marjorie: Shoes! There used to be two shoe stores over here, and both of them went out of business.

Grace: But some of them were very fashionable. I just don’t find the kinds of things I need, which I suppose are pretty plain and serviceable.

Ivan: Well, I’m usually looking more for those men’s shopping type of things. I mean, there’s no lumberyard, there’s no liquor store, and no shoes, right?

Sally: There’s a liquor store on 4th and Alma.

**Moderator:** So in part it’s just a lack of choices that you have here.

Ivan: But a small neighbourhood centre like that can’t have everything.
Conrad: Somebody said that. You go to the different neighbourhood places and they have their different strengths. I go to Hills. I go to Capers and Magic Flute — two different destinations. Usually that’s fitting into the car, being on one of those routes anyway. It would be unlikely that any one of those places could do it all.

**Moderator:** So you’re saying that Kerrisdale might be stronger in clothing, whereas 10th might be stronger in another area.

Conrad: Yes.

Ivan: 10th has the most banks of anywhere in the city.

Grace: One of them just went out.

Ivan: Yes, Royal Trust.

Marjorie: Well, actually Royal Trust didn’t move out. It moved across into the Royal Bank, so they’re combined. And Nova Scotia Trust is moving in there.

Grace: Oh, no!

**Moderator:** So there’s another bank.

Conrad: How many coffee shops are there?

Marjorie: I was going to say, I really wonder whether 10th can continue to support all of the coffee shops it has. In the last five years, it’s just gone up, up, up, up, up.

Ivan: It’s the same all over, though.

Mary: It’s the same everywhere. Dunbar has two, 10th has two, Kerrisdale has four ...

Ivan: Blame it on Sleepless in Seattle — too much coffee.

Marjorie: I also wonder how many more pizza shops they can support on West 10th. For restaurants, I think we have a good selection, but I really wonder how many pizza places we can support.

**Moderator:** You’ve got a lot of university students nearby — they like pizza.

Grace: Yeah, yeah.

**Moderator:** Let me ask a question. When you do go to other places, be it Superstore or West Vancouver, to what extent does transportation cost factor in? It costs money to cost to drive places, and it also takes time. If there was a good that you could get, or a need that you could fulfill, on 10th, but for whatever other reason you decide to go elsewhere, to what extent does transportation cost — the money as well as the time — play into your decisions?
Ivan: Sure it’s a factor. I’d say it’s less of a factor if you’re buying more stuff. And also, I’m like Conrad. I try to combine trips. If I’m somewhere else for some other reason, I’ll just stop into a store. A successful shopping trip for me is about two minutes long. It’s not a social event.

**Moderator:** So you say you do different purposes on the same trip.

Ivan: Yup.

Grace: Well, I do that, too. But the social part comes more in just encountering people in a way in which you can make contact if you wish, or not if you do not wish. I go to the library a lot ...

**Moderator:** When it’s open.

Grace: It is open most of the time.

**Moderator:** Just not this week.

Grace: The library, though, is the only public building that we have on 10th Avenue — the only thing you can claim is for the public. It’s terribly overworked.

Sally: Oh, yeah. It’s so busy!

Grace: They have hardly any room. Everybody wants some space for meetings, and we don’t have anything like that on 10th. That, to me, would be a really big thing if we could somehow manage to have a combination of the library, and meeting rooms, and other sorts of things. We need that. We have the community centre, which is lovely and charming and has great programs, but it’s way down at the bottom of the hill. And we have the schools and the churches — this church has been excellent. It lets out rooms at a more reasonable rate than the other churches do. But there isn’t that public entity. That’s what I like in a community. I like the market space — the commercial area — but I also like to have something that is there for everybody, that everyone can use. The library certainly serves that function, but it’s bursting at the seams.

Marjorie: Something else that hasn’t been mentioned are doctors and dentists and that kind of thing. For me, that’s one of the attractions of this area. I can walk to my doctor. I’m getting a blood test taken tomorrow, so I will be walking down there. I walked the other morning to my dentist. That kind of service is also right here for those who want to take advantage of it.

Sally: I went to a dentist here and I didn’t like him. So I went back all the way to North Van.

**Moderator:** That’s a good question: do people want to take advantage of the services here?

Sally: Yeah, I went back to North Van because I didn’t like the dentist here.

Marjorie: But there are three or four dentists on 10th.

Sally: But it’s such a waste of time. I don’t have the time to do that really.

Mary: [Laughing] Test them all out!
Marjorie: I’ve had the same dentist for 35 years on 10th Avenue. I’ve gone to the same doctor’s office for 35 years here on 10th.

**Moderator:** So Sally, you had gone to this dentist — did you live in North Van before?

Sally: For 18 years.

**Moderator:** Okay, so when you came [to West Point Grey] you tried the dentist, didn’t like him, and decided to go back.

Sally: Yes.

Conrad: That’s the same principle as me going to Commercial Drive for my photographs.

Sally: It sounds like you’re like me. I travel a lot within my day for work ...

Ivan: I have my little favourite places.

Sally: So I combine shopping conveniently where I am, plus do my work.

**Moderator:** I asked about transportation cost. Is the time it takes to get somewhere else a factor? Or if it’s a store you like is it worth the time and the money?

Grace: I would like to say that the expense is a deterrent, but you know, we put gas in the tank and we go. When I go downtown, I always take the bus, just trying to be a good citizen, I think. But then there’s a secondary [factor] — it’s a real hassle to get down Broadway and to park downtown. So there’s several reasons why I would not take the car downtown. But the time to get places — it really is a long time. So I would really like to have a few more amenities here. But I don’t have expectations of every community having everything — and in a way I wouldn’t even want it. I think it’s very nice to be a city person as well as a neighbourhood person. I like to go up to Commercial Drive sometimes; my daughter lives on the east side. On Sundays, as a matter of course, we try to go to different neighbourhoods just to walk around, find out what’s happening all over the city.

**Moderator:** When you do shop or seek services — I’m glad you mentioned, Marjorie, doctors and dentists, because we haven’t talked about them so far — when you leave the community for those sort of things, is it a special trip, or is it on the way to work, or part of a larger trip?

Desirée: It’s usually a special trip for me.

Conrad: Shopping tends to be a swing-by trip. I may not go to McKenzie Heights for three weeks because I’m down on 5th so I’m on a slightly different trajectory. Going to doctors is usually a specific destination. There’s another category of consumption — all the cultural events I go to are single-destination trips. Any music I go to is either at UBC or downtown. Any gallery or whatever is the same. I really like to participate in the city in that way. Sometimes the Belkin Art Gallery ... all these destinations. I bought a new bike fairly recently. I would do an awful lot more on my bike if I felt that it was secure to lock it up. I’m actually very nervous about using my new bike. It’s unfortunate we use our cars so much. I have the energy to cycle to Kerrisdale; it’s not a problem at all — it takes me 13
minutes. But I’m not going to leave my bicycle outside Hills. That’s a real pain for me. I would cycle to Capers for my bread, or Choices, but I’m not going to leave my bike locked up outside. I have to buy a second bike, a junk bike, for stealing.

Grace: Do you have some suggestions about what sort of facilities there could be and who would provide them for security?

Conrad: I think it’s difficult. I’ve thought that Mountain Equipment Co-op could mount a video camera. They could put up a sign there saying that this is a high loss of bike zone, and mount a camera and keep it monitored. But who’s going to provide that sort of security? There’s a place to lock your bike, and you know that the locks are vulnerable. That’s one form of transportation. Another thing is that, like many of us, I’m just very indulgent around the vehicle. We’ve gotten used to using it to do every second thing. Where I am on 14th, we’re about six blocks from Safeway, which I use sometimes. I hate to say this, but I wouldn’t dream of walking home with two full shopping bags from there. Not because I can’t — but instead I’ll just swing by on my way home. I’ve probably only twice gotten into the vehicle specifically to go to Safeway. It’s usually a swing-by trip. I’ve gotten very unused to walking. I do it on the bike sometimes ....

Moderator: Okay, I have a couple more questions about West 10th, but let’s take that thought right now. When you do shop at West 10th Avenue, how do you decide how to get there? What factors determine if you’re going to drive, or if you’re going to bike, or if you’re going to walk?

Desirée: It depends on what you’re going to carry.

Grace: Weight.

Desirée: If I’m going to Safeway, I’ll take my car. There’s just no way I’m going to carry everything.

Moderator: Okay, so Safeway is a car trip?

Mary: Well, not for me, but for everyone else it is!

Desirée: If you have a family, you don’t want to go every two days.

Moderator: Mary, you said that it isn’t a car trip for you?

Mary: Yeah, because I don’t buy huge amounts of food. I go to Safeway all of the time. I don’t boycott Safeway like everybody else does here. I thought that was kind of funny actually. I personally think that Safeway is really nice. I like it in there. I think that everybody is really nice and that the service is great.

Sally: They’re quite friendly.

Grace: They’re very friendly.

Mary: Transportation-wise, it would be stupid for me to go anywhere else. If I took one of my parents’ cars, it would cost me money in gas. Or it would cost me money on the bus. To go and get something that might be 50 cents less somewhere else — that’s ridiculous. I don’t buy very much ....
Moderator: You're buying the small volumes.

Mary: Very small. So I almost always walk to Tenth, or take my bike.

Moderator: How often would you go to Safeway?

Mary: Me? I maybe once a week. So it's not all the time. It's not once every three days, which is more what my mother would do.

Moderator: What about other comments — how do you decide how to get to West 10th?

Desirée: It depends on the weather.

Moderator: Weather? Yes, this is Vancouver ...

Marjorie: And whether I'm swinging by. In other words, if I'm driving through on 10th Avenue, and I'm going to have to pick up some stuff, then I'm obviously going to have the car there. If I'm already at home and need to pick up some stuff, I'm more likely to walk there. It depends on how much.

Ivan: Plus there's no ....

Conrad: You just judge your shopping according to which way it is. If you need three things, you might walk to go and get it, but you're not going to get your big shop then — you'll do that when you swing by.

Moderator: Ivan, what were you going to say?

Ivan: I was going to say that I agree with Marjorie. With the lack of parking, if you're going to make a trip there, you're not going to drive. There's nowhere to park. Unless it's Safeway.

Marjorie: But if we're going to one of the restaurants, we just walk over. If I'm just going to go to the bank, I walk over. Or if I go to the library, I walk over.

Grace: I walk most of the time when I come up to 10th. But I have sometimes decided that I'll just get this, and I'll just get this .... I'm about six blocks away, and I feel as though my arms are a lot longer by the time I get home. Now, I've often thought, there's an opportunity for an entrepreneur to come up with some different kinds of shopping carts, or different kinds of baskets, that would make it [easier to walk]. I think they might be able to sell them to people around here. But also, they do deliver. Safeway does deliver, and Strong's delivers. For those people who can plan ahead, and don't need the stuff right away, they will do that. I think that's something that should be encouraged, because there you have one truck delivering to maybe twenty different people rather than twenty cars out.

Moderator: That does take some planning ahead. Does anyone here drive because of time pressure?

Sally: I always drive. I never walk.
Moderator: Okay, tell me about it.

Sally: I've never walked to West 10th — ever.

Moderator: Okay, and you said that you live on 4th, right?

Sally: Yes.

Grace: 4th and what?

Sally: 4th and between Tolmie and Sasamat. Time is a big factor. Working — or in the middle of the day, I want to get it over with.

Grace: Time constraint, that's a big thing for people.

Sally: And sometimes I have to go to the bank for my business during the day. There's one thing I should mention about the merchants. [My patronage] depends on the service they give you. There's a nice little fish store up here with the free range eggs, and I go there sometimes, but I prefer to go to Granville Island because they're much friendlier. They know me. There's loyalty to the customer. I prefer to go to the fish store at Granville Island. And the chicken store at Granville Island, the free range one. Because they're not that friendly [at the store on West 10th]!

Grace: It's interesting that you should mention that, because I have heard [that merchant's] name mentioned [unfavourably] on other occasions.

Sally: And they're very friendly at the fish store closest to Bridges. I always go to that one on Granville Island. And Dressed to Go.— that's what it's called — I get my chicken there all the time. It's the best in the city.

Conrad: I've had quite a change in the last four months in that I get the organic vegetables delivered in the night. I also switched to having my milk delivered. Once the vegetable delivery kicked in, my shopping patterns changed a lot. I used to buy every second day on a swing-by [drive-by] basis. Now I don't have to go for milk — it was a big pressure to go get milk every two or three days. Having those two deliveries changes my patterns quite significantly. Now I shop at Safeway every second or third week. And that's it.

Moderator: Is it a fairly big shop?

Conrad: I don't actually buy much more than a grasp-basket. But having those deliveries definitely changed the number of times I go out. So it does get down to the hard stuff, the soaps and the non .... What do they call those?

Moderator: The toilet papers!

Mary: The non-perishables.

Conrad: Right.
Moderator: Other comments about getting to West 10th? Ivan, is it a walking trip, is it a driving trip?

Ivan: It’s usually a walking trip if I’m just going to it, because I’m just two minutes away. Like Marjorie said, if you’re driving by anyway, and you stop, then you drive. But otherwise I wouldn’t, because there’s nowhere to park.

Marjorie: In terms of my daughter’s family, it’s virtually 100% walking. Both the kids and my daughter.

Moderator: How far away are they?

Marjorie: A couple of blocks. They never take the car over here.

Moderator: Even when it’s raining?

Marjorie: Oh, yeah! They walk to school all of the time, and walk to the church here. The whole family walks.

Grace: It’s partly the parking, but it’s also the confusion between the pedestrians and the drivers. You mentioned the speeding. I consider this to be quite dangerous here. With people who aren’t actually stopping, there is quite a lot of speeding. I really feel that we have a conflict of soft bodies and hard metal. Sometimes I’m a driver, and I feel really anxious and so concerned that I might hit somebody that opens a car door as I’m going down the street. I don’t know how we’re going to work that out. I suspect that eventually when UBC does something about University Boulevard, which I understand is going to be made one lane each way, the volume of traffic [on West 10th] might possibly go back to what it was some years ago. So we might have some reduction there. But the speeding is the thing. The nonchalance, the non-caring. There is a conflict between pedestrians and drivers, and I feel that from both ends. Especially at Sasamat and 10th — is that the worst?

Moderator: That’s the busiest intersection.

Ivan: That’s the busiest. There is a conflict, and it cuts both ways. If somebody is late for classes at UBC, the last thing they want to do is wait for someone to open a car door. It’s a real problem. I just want to know where the traffic goes. If it goes off 10th, I don’t want it going down my street.

Grace: What I hope is that it’s reduced in volume all over. This is what I hope. I don’t want it to be diverted to be going into what I call the interior part of the neighbourhood. I would want it to stay on the arterials. But what I hope is that somehow we can reduce the volume.

Ivan: With 15,000 more residents going onto the university?

Sally: You won’t. It’s never going to be reduced.

Conrad: It’s not going to be reduced, but it may be held in check.

Mary: Unless they do something drastic to the transit system and build some type of SkyTrain thing out there, nothing’s going to happen in terms of traffic.
Grace: Unless they make that a truly complete community.

Mary: UBC? [Laughs]

Conrad: It’s always going to have huge commuting. I don’t think traffic is going to diminish. It’s whether other alternates come in. In the foreseeable future, the congestion is going to be there.

Sally: And plus look at the condos. They just build high-rises and condos like crazy over there.

Grace: The problem is that’s been made like a suburb. If it’s not made like a town, which is what they presumably hope to make it ...

Conrad: There will still be loads of commuting to and from. As I commute all over — well, I work all over, actually — I’m out there every day — it’s not going to be self-contained. There’s going to be massive commuting.

Grace: There’s supposed to be 50% of housing for ...

Moderator: My wife and I live on campus, and we’ve been involved. There’s lots of plans. Who knows exactly what will happen. If I can just draw us back to West 10th — our time is short. I want to do something a little different. I want you to pretend that I’m from the moon. I’ve never been to West 10th; I don’t know anything about it. How would you convey the essence of it to me?

Sally: Friendly neighbourhood shopping area. Easily accessible storefronts.

Grace: To me, it’s got some of the aspects — and could have more [of the aspects] — of a small town shopping area which is adjacent to a university. It’s got some of that. I grew up in a university town that did have a small shopping area. What could be done ... I would like to see some of the buildings higher. I would like to feel a sense of enclosure — a feeling that this is a public space that had a little more traditional look. And maybe reduce the speed and volume of the traffic.

Moderator: You’re telling me about the future. That is valuable, too — it’s all very interesting, and will all be helpful ... But describe it now.

Marjorie: I would describe it as a medium-sized town Main Street. One of the things that attracted me to this area — I felt completely at home the day I moved into this area — was that it was very, very similar to the town I grew up in, which has now been swallowed up by Metropolitan Toronto. A town of about 7000 people, where everything was sort of complete in it, unless there were some major purposes that you would have to go downtown to Toronto. This [West 10th] had that same kind of separate entity.

Moderator: When you moved in it did — does it still have it now?

Marjorie: It still has, to a little bit lesser extent. But it still has some of that quality to it.

Moderator: Other comments?
Ivan: I think it benefits a lot from the university relationship. Not just the varsity name, but it tends to bring more life to the area, and perhaps more reasonably-priced things, and more variety. But sometimes the merchants seem to deny that. They want to be the high-end shopping area, or the fashion centre. I think that’s wrong. I think that they should try to capitalize on what they have and not try to be something different.

Sally: I think it’s one of Vancouver’s first areas. It’s not a transient area; it’s older, established, traditional. It’s got traditions. So it’s different in that way — it’s got that air to it moreso than other areas.

Mary: I don’t know how I’d describe it. I’ve been here for too long — it’s too normal for me. I can’t compare it. I can’t say, “It’s like a medium-sized town” because I’ve never been to a medium-sized town. I don’t know what they look like. I’ve been to small towns ... and it reminds me of that. If you were to chop off at UBC and chop off at Discovery, to me it seems like the Main Street of a small town. But it does have a big city [feeling], like I said before. It seems to be slick. There’s something consistent to it that’s not unique. There’s something definitely trendy about it. Trends come here and exist here because of the area — because of the nature of the people who live here. It adopts the bigger trends of the city, so it wouldn’t be as unique as a small town would be.

Grace: I really agree with Ivan. The thing that makes West 10th different — the thing that they should really be capitalizing on — is its affinity, and its proximity, to the university. There could be a lot of services along here that help people from the university. There could be many more bookstores. There could be more copying facilities. I go up to the pharmacy and their poor machine breaks down all the time. University towns tend to have clothing stores that students and faculty can use. Come on, now — a lot of the faculty haven’t got a lot of money either. So Mary’s right: there’s something a little too slick about it.

Desirée: The problem is the leases. The leases are just too high, and they cannot just sell clothes that are not expensive, because if they do, they’ll close in six months.

Conrad: I’d like to go back to the idea of you being from the moon ... The thing that strikes me is the pattern of settlement: the urban grid, with houses on it — they’re machines for living. From the moon, that’s really going to strike you. There are nodes of bigger buildings that other things happen in. This [West 10th] is a small node; the city is a big node; UBC is an exceptional node. I like the university and the city. I really like being in an urban space. And one other thing I think a person from the moon would say, “What on earth are these things?” are all the asphalt and all the cars. You could take aerial photographs ... that just is there ... Hard cars and soft bodies — Crash’s theme — this is a huge thing. If you go to a Third World village, the cars aren’t there, and these physical structures of living aren’t there. This is the produced landscape: the cars, the houses, and these dense little nodes ... But boy, that car is a huge thing! We’re disciplined all the time to pay attention to, orientate, and give way to the car. And we’re in a corridor. It’s a big thing. I think that’s what a man from the moon is going to see what happens.

Moderator: One last thing, just before we part. I’d like to quickly go around the room once more. Tell me one thing you most like about West 10th, and one thing you most dislike.

Grace: I like the social mix. I like the fact that there are many kinds of people who use West 10th. It’s a combination of the people and the shops. I like that informal meeting-up, chance contact with people.
What I dislike — I’ve got two things I dislike. I dislike the conflict between pedestrians and cars. Now, put those pedestrians in cars, and they’re car drivers. It isn’t the cars, it’s the drivers of the cars, and the fact that they’re enclosed in this impermeable armour. The second part (which is not so much of a dislike) ... Visually, I would like to have more of a sense of enclosure, more of a sense of place.

**Moderator:** Is that what you meant about bigger buildings?

Grace: Not bigger buildings, no, no, no, no. Perhaps some of them taller; more variety in having little courtyards; more greenness in there; sidewalks wider; the road a bit narrower — that kind of thing, so that you could get more of a sense of intimacy. It would up the level of good interaction and make it a livelier place.

Conrad: What I most like? It’s funny, I don’t think people have mentioned this. It’s just a superb location for lots of things other than shopping. We have the beaches and Endowment Lands, and extraordinary open space. As an urban space, we’re hugely atypical ...

**Moderator:** You’re talking about around the neighbourhood.

Conrad: Within striking distance of this neighbourhood. Within running and biking distance. Yet it’s thoroughly urbane, between UBC and downtown — those plug into my values.

**Moderator:** Is there anything about West 10th that you dislike?

Conrad: The thing that I dislike the most is probably the conflict between dangerous driving and soft bodies.

Ivan: I’d say I like the convenience of it — being able to walk over, two minutes away, and stroll down the sidewalk with all those services. What I don’t like is the same old thing: a lot of things I just can’t get there.

**Moderator:** You also did mention the lack of parking.

Ivan: That’s not a problem to me, because I walk over.

Marjorie: For me it would be the wide variety of convenience — the convenience of a wide variety of resources and shops. What I dislike is two things. The steady gentrifying or upscaling, so that we’ve lost a variety of things that we used to have. And the speeding — particularly coming out from UBC. Generally speaking, going from the city to UBC it’s not too bad because they’re a number of stop lights and they slow down. But if they’re coming down University Boulevard, if they don’t have to stop at Blanca Street, they don’t slow down until they come to Sasamat.

Mary: I like convenience, like everybody else. What I dislike — it’s too limited, in the sense that there’s not the choices. But also, I find it really dull, is what it comes down to. Seattle as a comparison — if you go to the university district there, where they have shopping areas that are not right beside the university but are close, it’s much more entertaining. Maybe it’s because I’m new to it; I’m not used to it. But I find that there’s many more things to do. That all has to do with other things, like laws, liquor licenses, things like that. But there’s more places to go out, more places to do things, a lot more community, a lot more people around, a lot more liveliness. It’s dull — past six o’clock it’s dull over here. There’s nothing to do.
Moderator: Yeah, it's quite a contrast between around UW and around here.

Grace: So you're saying it needs more intensity.

Mary: Oh, yeah — it's really boring. Kitsilano would be comparable [to around University of Washington].

Conrad: It's the university-town interface which happens at Oxford, Cambridge, Seattle, many other universities.

Moderator: You're right. Those sort of functions do happen at Kitsilano for whatever reason.

Desirée: I also like the convenience — being close to services: doctor, dentist, the library, and one bookstore I like. What I don't like ... I really find it quite ugly, in general. They put some trees in a few years ago. But I come from Europe — I guess I have high standards. I'd like to see people living on top [of stores]. I think it would be much nicer because it would provide apartments, which are really needed. It doesn't have to high, but I think it would enhance the appearance of the street.

Grace: I wouldn't want it higher than four storeys.

Moderator: So you're talking about the kind of changes that have been happening on Broadway and 4th?

Desirée: Well, on Broadway there's some I don't like, but there are one or two I like towards the African Market. It's look better, having apartments on top and at the bottom, stores. I like Gastown, for example. You have a few little niches where you can have coffee, etc. This is pretty, and there's not much imagination in the architecture, really.

Sally: I guess I agree with that. It would be nice if it were changed a little bit that way to have more of the ambiance of Caper's courtyard, that sort of thing.

Moderator: So that's your dislike: the atmosphere is sort of lacking [on 10th]?

Sally: Maybe, but I don't dislike it that much. I kind of like it. It's convenient. It like the banks, I like the library, the cheesecake place, and some of the restaurants.

Mary: What's this cheesecake place?

Sally: Oh, it's great. It's down near BJ's.

Grace: Oh, the Chef's Secret Service!

Sally: That's right. It's good. I like it. But there's definitely room for improvement. If there was a Caper's up here it would be great. But I'm not sure we could support it up here.

Grace: Well, I don't know.
Moderator: Well, I'd like to say a big thank you to everyone for coming. I wish I had something to give you, but I'm not making any money on this venture!

Grace: Now, your report is going to the Merchant’s Association, then?

Moderator: Yes.

Grace: What are they going to do with it?

Moderator: I'm not exactly sure. I am doing some research about the dynamics in the community. The merchants, when I approached them, were also interested in finding out about what the community likes, what it dislikes, what people’s perceptions of West 10th are — that sort of thing. I don't know exactly how they're going to put it to use, but they are interested in knowing about the feelings of the community.

Desirée: We all want to support them. I think they have to understand that.

Sally: But they have to be good to us, too. They have to be loyal to us. They have to give us good service just like I have to give my clients good service. Be polite, appreciate regular customers ...

Marjorie: Something that hasn’t been mentioned here is the Fiesta Day in June. The merchants have been really behind it. That’s a very visible thing that’s brought the whole community together in a way that it had never been before. And it was really the instigation of a few of the merchants.

Moderator: How long has that been going on?

Marjorie: About five or six years.

Sally: I’ve never seen it yet. I didn’t know there was such a thing.

Marjorie: It’s about the second week of June — on a Saturday. They have a parade that starts at Blanca and goes all the way down to Trimble and then ends up at the park. And then it continues all day in the park. They have floats and that sort of thing, and quite a number of the merchants will have floats in the parade.

Mary: It’s gotten really big. I saw it the first year, and it was really small, but now it’s gotten quite big.

Marjorie: It’s brings together the Guides, and the soccer teams, and the Little League — all sorts of community events.

Grace: It’s fun.

Moderator: So — thank you. The one thing I can say is that the fact that you came shows that you are interested in your community.