

City of Vancouver

Walkable

Communities

The future of Vancouver's sustainability is in Millennials' hands.



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WHAT IS IT?

The City of Vancouver states that “[it is] already experiencing the impacts of 1°C of warming, including more severe storms, flooding, and forest fire smoke” (Administrative Report, 2019a).

“Walkable communities help people remain at home, get access to essential services, and stay connected” (Canada Walks-Benefits, 2015)

In this project we helped the City of Vancouver gain an understanding of what a “walkable community” means from the perspective of Millennials ages 20-34 and identified key aspects of such communities that the City of Vancouver should incorporate into its 30-year ‘Vancouver Plan’.

WHY IS IT NEEDED?

Understanding Millennials’ needs and wants is crucial to designing walkable communities, since the outcome of the ‘Vancouver Plan’ will directly affect the lives of this population segment.

In this project we assisted the City of Vancouver with determining and measuring:

- what a walkable community means to Millennials and what they value in the neighbourhoods they live in, and
- what Millennials define as key aspects, features and amenities of a walkable community.

KEY FINDINGS



Majority of Millennials are willing to reduce their impact on the environment.



The City of Vancouver wants **90%** of people to live “within an easy walk and roll of their daily needs” by 2030.

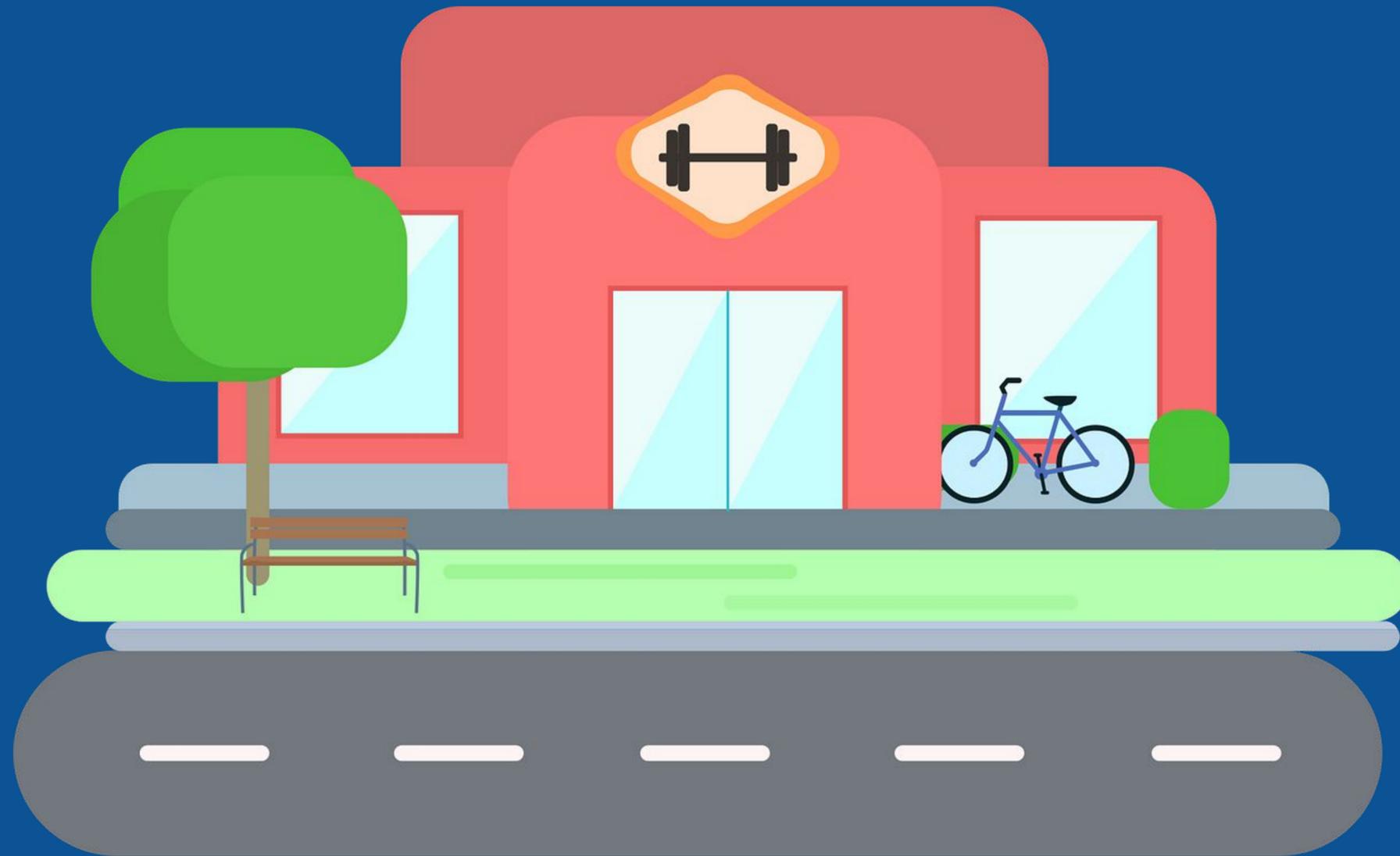


Millennials were most concerned about safety and high living costs in walkable communities.



Millennials would choose to not live in a walkable community because of high density and crime near transit hubs.





OUTCOMES

We conducted in-depth interviews with industry professionals (such as planning technicians, developers, and personal realtors) and members of the Millennial target market. Further, an online survey of 887 Millennials was conducted.

Key insights from the survey include the following:

- Females are more concerned about climate change (81% females and 74% males).
- The majority of respondents (64%) own a gas powered motor vehicle, only 4% own an electric vehicle.
- The majority of respondents hold street safety as the most important characteristic of a walkable community with equitable financial accessibility a close second.
- For a majority of respondents, having sports clubs, public parks, plazas, cafes, restaurants, grocery stores, drug stores, walking paths and public transits are key amenities when choosing a neighbourhood to live in.
- The best ways for the City to communicate with Millennials about the Vancouver Plan are Instagram, email, Facebook and news channels.

NEXT STEPS

After analyzing the concerns about the environment, neighbourhood choices, walkable communities & its important facilities, and communications, we recommend that the City of Vancouver:

- Continues moving forward with the development of walkable communities as there is strong support among Millennials.
- Overcomes key barriers to living in a walkable community comfortably, such as safety, costs and high density.
- Establishes lines of communication with Millennials as the City of Vancouver moves forward with developing walkable communities.

This study was completed on Wednesday, December 2, 2020. Results will be provided to the City of Vancouver.