

WEST VANCOUVER PUBLIC SAFETY SURVEY RESEARCH RESULTS



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Introduction

This report describes the results of a public safety and police satisfaction survey conducted by the Centre for Public Safety and Criminal Justice Research in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of the Fraser Valley for the District of West Vancouver. The purpose of this project was to assess West Vancouver residents' feelings about their own personal safety, victimization experiences over the past 12 months, and levels of satisfaction with the West Vancouver Police Department (WVPD). The overall aim of the survey was to provide the District of West Vancouver and its police department information helpful for improving the quality of local police services.

Methodology

The methodology used in this project involved delivering a questionnaire (see Appendix A) to a randomly selected sample of 5,000 households in West Vancouver in October 2016. Given that there are 18,703 households registered with Canada Post¹, the randomly selected sample of 5,000 households represented approximately 27% of all households in the District of West Vancouver. The survey package was mailed to residents in an WVPD envelope that contained the survey, an instruction sheet, a cover letter from Deputy Chief Constable Shane Barber, and a pre-paid return envelope to the University of the Fraser Valley. The instruction sheet detailed the nature, purpose, and structure of the survey, the instructions for completing and returning the survey, the survey's return date, and information about consent, anonymity, and how to contact the university if the respondent has any questions or concerns. The information sheet also included a link for those who preferred to complete the survey online.

The methodology for this project included telephoning all residents who had been sent a survey to inform them about the project and the requested return date for the survey, and to answer any questions they may have about the research project. Phone calls were made to the 5,000 households over a six-day period in October. Each household received a single phone call where the researcher either spoke to an individual from the household or left a voice message following a script that provided key information about the survey. The researchers recorded whether they spoke to a person, left a voicemail, were hung up on, or were unable to connect with the household, either due to a busy signal or a number that was not in service. Overall, of the 5,000 phone calls made, our research team spoke to 1,862 residents and left 2,361 voice messages. In total, 104 people hung up on our researchers, 444 calls received no answer with no option to leave a voice message, 225 phone numbers were not in service, and four respondents called us and asked to be taken off our call list.

¹ <https://westvancouver.ca/home-building-property/planning/facts-and-stats>

Nonetheless, of the 5,000 surveys that were mailed out, the researchers received back 2,294 completed surveys, either through the mail or online, resulting in an 46% response rate, which is an extremely high response rate.

Characteristics of Respondents

The sample was comprised of residentially stable, older respondents (see Table 1). More specifically, a slight majority of respondents were male (53 per cent), while nearly all respondents (91 per cent) were Caucasian. Of note, 4% of the sample self-identified as being of Asian descent, and only 5 respondents self-identified as Aboriginal. By way of comparing these findings to the general population of West Vancouver, in 2011, males were 47% of the population and Caucasians were 72% (West Vancouver, 2014).² The mean age of the sample was 71 years old with a range of 20 years old to 101 years old. Of note, while the 2011 Census data reported the median age of the population to be 49.9 years old, there was a noticeable shift in the last several decades towards an older population, as a quarter of the residents in West Vancouver were 65 years of age and older (West Vancouver, 2014).³

Less than one-quarter of the sample (17 per cent) had no post-secondary education. This is an important factor because of the well-established relationship between lower levels of education and more frequent police contacts. Approximately one-fifth of the sample (19 per cent) reported having some college or university education, but slightly less than two-thirds (64 per cent) had a college or university degree or diploma. Given the mean age of the sample, it was not surprising that nearly three-quarters of respondents (71 per cent) reported that they were married, while only 4% reported being single and 9% reported being divorced or separated. However, the mean age of the sample also contributed to 16% reporting that they were widowed.

The average older age helped explain the finding that nearly two-thirds of the sample (65 per cent) reported being retired, while only 13% reported being employed full time. A small proportion of respondents (5 per cent) reported that they were employed part-time, but a larger proportion (15 per cent) indicated that they were self-employed. In effect, only 1% of respondents stated that they were unemployed.

Of note, there was not an even distribution of respondents based on where they lived in West Vancouver. The three largest concentration of respondents were from Ambleside (22 per cent), Dundarave (18 per cent), and Caulfield (11 per cent). These three neighbourhoods contributed a slight majority (51 per cent) of respondents. Critical for several of the issues explored in this study,

² West Vancouver. (January 2014). *Facts & Stats: Our Community by the Numbers*. <https://westvancouver.ca/sites/default/files/dwv/assets/gov/docs/facts-and-stats/Age%20and%20Gender%202011.pdf>

³ West Vancouver. (January 2014). *Facts & Stats: Our Community by the Numbers*. <https://westvancouver.ca/sites/default/files/dwv/assets/gov/docs/facts-and-stats/Age%20and%20Gender%202011.pdf>

respondents lived in their current community for a substantial amount of time ($X = 22$ years). The benefit to this study of this high average amount of time lived in the community is that it should provide enough time for respondents to develop an opinion about safety and crime in their community, have interactions with and establish an opinion about their local police, and have a sense of how their feelings of safety, fear of crime, and police performance have changed or remained stable over time.

Table 1: Respondent Characteristics

Avg. Number of Years Living in the Community	22 Years
% Retired	65%
% Male	53%
Avg. Age	71 Years Old
% Married	71%
% Caucasian	91%
% With No Post-Secondary Education	17%

Sense of Personal Safety

In general, residents perceived themselves to be safe in several different contexts (see Table 2). In fact, more than four-fifths of all respondents (83 per cent) reported feeling very safe in their homes and an additional one-third (12 per cent) indicated that they felt somewhat safe in their homes. Three-quarters of respondents indicated that they felt very safe in their neighbourhood, while an additional 19% reported that they felt somewhat safe in their neighbourhood. Similarly, nearly three-quarters (71 per cent) reported feeling very safe in West Vancouver generally, and an additional 24% indicated that they felt somewhat safe in West Vancouver generally.

Table 2: Feelings of Personal Safety

	Somewhat or Very Safe
In Your Home	95%
In Your Neighbourhood	95%
In West Vancouver Generally	95%

When comparing these results by gender, a consistent pattern was that a slightly larger proportion of males felt very safe across the three aforementioned dimensions compared to females, but a slightly larger proportion of females felt somewhat safe compared to males. There were no statistically significant differences on feeling unsafe by gender. There was a statistically significant correlation between age and feelings of personal safety. In effect, as one gets older, there is a slight reduction in their feelings of safety across all three contexts (see Table 3). It should be noted that the correlations were not particularly strong. In general, these results suggest that people generally feel very safe in their homes, in their neighbourhood, and outside of their neighbourhood, but still in West Vancouver. There was no statistically significant difference on safety by neighbourhood.

Table 3: Correlation Between Age and Feelings of Safety

	Age
In Your Home	-.050*
In Your Neighbourhood	-.053*
In West Vancouver Generally	-.080**

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < .001$

When asked to compare their personal sense of safety in their neighbourhoods to one year ago, 85% reported no change, and only 8% reported feeling somewhat or much less safe than one year ago. Of note, when just considering those respondents who stated that they felt somewhat or much less safe in their neighbourhood compared to one year ago ($n = 171$), 59% were female. When respondents were asked to compare their safety in the neighbourhood to five years ago, among those who lived in the same neighbourhood for at least five years, a slightly smaller proportion of people (75 per cent) reported no change. Similarly, 56% of those who stated that they felt less safe in their neighbourhood compared to five years ago were female. When asked to compare their level of safety in their neighbourhood compared to the other neighbourhoods in West Vancouver, only 5% reported that they felt much or somewhat less safe in their neighbourhood. In fact, 64% reported that their sense of personal safety was unchanged regardless of where they were in West Vancouver, while nearly three-quarters felt more safe in their neighbourhood when compared to the other areas of West Vancouver (see Table 4).

Table 4: Feeling Somewhat or Very Unsafe in your Neighbourhood...

	Somewhat or Very Unsafe
Compared to One Year Ago	5%
Compared to Five Years Ago	8%
Compared to Other Neighbourhoods in West Vancouver	24%

When asked to compare how their general sense of personal safety has changed in West Vancouver overall, as opposed to just in their neighbourhood, from one year ago and from five years ago, only 6% of respondents felt somewhat or much less safe in West Vancouver generally than one year ago, while 7% felt somewhat or much safer. When thinking about five years ago, 13% of respondents felt somewhat or much less safe in West Vancouver today, while 9% felt somewhat or much safer. As expected, for both time frames, the largest proportion of respondents reported no change in their sense of personal safety (86 per cent and 75 per cent, respectively).

Comparing 2015 to 2016, the violent and property crime rate in West Vancouver increased by 15%. More specifically, there was a 20.6% increase in property crime, but a 11.6% decrease in violence crime over that time. Importantly, given the generally low crime rate, in terms of real numbers, the increase in property crime represented 290 more incidents in 2016 compared to 2015, and the decrease in violent crime represented 34 fewer incidents in 2016 compared to 2015. In just considering the monthly averages, in 2015, there was an average of 117 property crimes per month compared to 142 property crimes per month in 2016. For violent crime, the monthly average was 24 in 2015 and 22 in 2016. The two most common property crimes in 2016 were shoplifting ($n =$

403) and theft from auto (n = 361), and the most common violent offences were non-criminal domestic and family violence (n = 195) and assault (n = 124).

Regardless of these facts, when asked to compare the overall level of crime in their neighbourhood from one year ago, 71% reported no change. Interestingly, 2% reported that they thought it had increased a lot, 21% thought it increased a little, 4% thought it decreased a little, and 1% thought it had decreased a lot. While not statistically significant, females in the sample were slightly more likely to think that the crime rate had increased a little in their neighbourhood, while males were slightly more likely to think that it had either stayed the same or decreased a little over the past year. There was also a positive correlation between age and thinking that the crime rate had decreased ($r = .141^{**}$) suggesting that older people were more likely to think that crime had gone down in their neighbourhood compared to one year ago. Interestingly, this pattern was more evident in several West Vancouver neighbourhoods, with the strongest relationships between age and perception of decreasing crime appearing in the Queens ($r = .420, p = .001$), West Bay ($r = .420, p = .001$), and Altamont ($r = .326, p = .031$) neighbourhoods, while significant, but weaker relationships, were found in the Gleneagles ($r = .249, p = .042$), British Properties ($r = .235, p = .002$), Eagle Harbour ($r = .216, p = .044$), and Caulfield ($r = .181, p = .005$) neighbourhoods.

Perceptions of Crime

In addition to safety, respondents were asked a series of questions about crime problems, both in their neighbourhoods and in West Vancouver generally. The results indicated that virtually everyone in the sample (97 per cent) did not rate crime as a serious issue in their neighbourhood (see Table 5). In fact, of the 2,242 people who answered the question, only 78 respondents felt that crime was a serious problem in their neighbourhood, and only 15% believed that crime had increased in their neighbourhood over the previous year. As well, respondents evaluated their specific neighbourhoods very positively in relation to the rest of West Vancouver, as evidenced by the finding that, for the entire sample, 96% of respondents judged their neighbourhood to have less crime than other parts of West Vancouver. This corresponds well to the finding that virtually all respondents (98 per cent) believed that crime was lower in West Vancouver than in other parts of Metro Vancouver. In general, the perception is that the incidence of crime in West Vancouver is very low, but people seem to feel that “other” parts of West Vancouver are more of a crime problem than their neighbourhood.

Table 5: Agree or Strongly Agree with Perceptions of Crime

	% Agree or Strongly Agree
Crime is a serious problem in my neighbourhood	3%
In the last year, the rate of crime in my neighbourhood has increased	15%
There is more crime in my neighbourhood than in other parts of West Vancouver	4%
The incidence of crime in West Vancouver is higher than in other parts of Metro Vancouver	2%

To further explore this issue, respondents were asked to consider if there were any places or neighbourhoods in West Vancouver where they would not feel safe walking at night. This question

was open-ended to allow respondents to self-identify one or more locations. Of note, only a minority of respondents provided a location and the vast majority of locations were only provided by one or two respondents. However, the most commonly reported locations were Ambleside Park, the shopping mall area around Park Royal, the bar area around Horseshoe Bay, and the Seawall. Rather than providing a specific location, it was much more common for respondents to provide a more general statement, such as “locations with poor lighting”, “dark neighbourhoods”, or “the parks”. In addition, many respondents indicated that they stay away from areas that are known to have bears or cougars. Rather than there being a few specific locations that are commonly recognized as being more dangerous at night in West Vancouver, respondents indicated that they tend to avoid places in the District at night that have poor lighting, the risk of encounters with wildlife or animals, and the bar district.

Although they are important, perceptions of crime are often also associated with feelings of safety. Table 6 demonstrates several significant negative associations between perceptions of crime and feelings of safety. The more respondents believed crime to be a serious neighbourhood problem, the less they felt safe in all contexts, such as in their homes, neighbourhoods, and West Vancouver generally. These same respondents also sensed that their level of safety had deteriorated over time. Similar links were found between perceptions that neighbourhood crime rates had increased and levels of crime comparative to other part of West Vancouver. In general, and consistent with previous research, more negative impressions of crime were commensurate with heightened concerns about safety. However, it should be noted that the correlations were very small.

Table 6: Spearman’s Correlations – Perceptions of Crime and Feelings of Safety

	Safe in Home	Safe in Neighbourhood	Safe in West Vancouver	Safe vs. 1 Year Ago	Safe vs. 5 Years Ago
Crime is a serious problem in my neighbourhood	-.126**	-.150**	-.152**	-.086**	-.070**
In the last year, the rate of crime in my neighbourhood has increased	-.119**	-.169**	-.154**	-.207**	-.179**
More crime in my neighbourhood than in other parts of West Vancouver	-.082**	-.125**	-.088**	-.081**	-.025
Crime in West Vancouver is higher than in other parts of Metro Vancouver	-.057**	-.101**	-.106**	.015	.031

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < .001$

Collective Efficacy

In addition to considerations such as crime, it is also possible that perceptions of safety reflect how people feel about their communities. In particular, Sampson’s theory of collective efficacy posits that neighbourhoods vary in their capacity to organize and execute actions that benefit residents, such as keeping them safe from crime. It follows that people who feel that their neighbourhoods are deficient in collective efficacy are less likely to feel safe. Respondents were asked a series of questions designed to measure the two dimensions of collective efficacy. The first dimension, *social cohesion*, is related to impressions of shared values, closeness, and trust, while the second dimension, *informal social control*, gauges the willingness of neighbours to intervene in a number of scenarios. Regarding social cohesion, respondents overwhelmingly agreed that people in their

neighbourhoods generally get along, are trustworthy, and are willing to help one another (see Table 7). A smaller proportion, although still a large majority (78 per cent), felt that their neighbours shared the same values, while fewer still (59 per cent) maintained that they lived in “close-knit” neighbourhoods. Respondents also indicated that they would anticipate that their neighbours would likely intervene in a variety of circumstances, suggesting a moderately high degree of informal social control in these areas.

Table 7: Agree or Strongly Agree with Elements of Collective Efficacy

	% Agree or Strongly Agree
Social Cohesion	
In general...	
People in my neighbourhood can be trusted	86%
People in my neighbourhood generally get along with each other	94%
People in my neighbourhood share the same values	78%
People in my neighbourhood are willing to help their neighbours	87%
I live in a close-knit neighbourhood	59%
Informal Social Control	
In general, one or more of my neighbours could be counted on to intervene if...	
Children were spray painting on a local building	83%
Children were showing disrespect to an adult	73%
The fire station closest to our homes was threatened with budget cuts	76%
A fight broke out in front of our homes	72%
Children were skipping school and hanging out on a street corner	54%

To evaluate the degree of collective efficacy across West Vancouver neighbourhoods, the five items comprising each of the two dimensions were combined to create two indices, referred to as *social cohesion* and *informal social control*. As anticipated, collective efficacy was found to have a small, but statistically significant correlation with both feelings of safety and perceptions of crime. As indicated by Table 8, respondents who assessed their neighbourhoods as having higher social cohesion and informal social control felt safer in their homes, neighbourhoods, and in West Vancouver generally. As well, more positive evaluations of collective efficacy were related to more positive outlooks on crime. That is, respondents were less likely to see crime as a serious problem and less likely to feel that crime was increasing in areas perceived to be higher in collective efficacy.

It is worth noting that the association between collective efficacy and temporal assessment of safety (compared to 1 and 5 years ago) were quite weak. It is possible that changes in feelings of safety are related less to present collective efficacy and more to trends in collective efficacy. There has been very little empirical research on collective efficacy in Canada. By establishing a baseline, the present study will allow the research team to track the potential effects of changes in collective efficacy over time.

Table 8: Spearman's Correlations – Collective Efficacy and Feelings of Safety

	Social Cohesion	Informal Social Control
Feelings of Personal Safety		
In Your Home	.100**	.076**
In Your Neighbourhood	.145**	.102**
In West Vancouver Generally	.129**	.099**
Compared to 1 Year Ago	.183**	.032
Compared to 5 Years Ago	.199**	.078**
Perceptions of Crime		
Crime is a serious problem in my neighbourhood	-.200**	-.160**
In the last year, the rate of crime in my neighbourhood has increased	-.166**	-.106**
More crime in my neighbourhood than in other parts of West Vancouver	-.212**	-.155**
Crime in West Vancouver is higher than in other parts of Metro Vancouver	-.166**	-.166**

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < .001$

Victimization

In total, 2,248 respondents indicated whether they were the victim of a crime in the past 12 months. In this sample, only 11% (n = 241) reported that they were the victims of a crime in West Vancouver in the past 12 months. As respondents could select more than one crime type that they were the victim of, less than 1% of respondents (n = 10) indicated that they were the victim of at least one personal or violent crime, 8% (n = 168) indicated that they were the victim of at least one property offence, and 3% (n = 71) reported that they were the victim of at least one other type of crime. In effect, when considering just those who were the victim of a crime in West Vancouver in the past 12 months, more than two-thirds (70 per cent) of victims were property crime victims, while only 4% were victims of a violent or personal offence. Of those who reported being a victim of a crime in West Vancouver in the past 12 months, 54% were female.

Of note, and like the finding from other surveys conducted by these researchers, approximately three-quarters (77 per cent) indicated that they reported their victimization to the WVPD. Interestingly, only seven of the ten victims of a personal or violent crime reported their victimization to the police, while 79% of the property crime victims and 69% of the other crime victims reported their victimization to the police. Among these respondents, a slight majority (52 per cent) reported being very satisfied with the response of the WVPD, and an additional 24% reported being fairly satisfied. In fact, only 6% reported being fairly dissatisfied and another 8% reported being very dissatisfied with the response of the police to their victimization. Additionally, only one respondent who reported being the victim of a violent offence and contacting the police about the incident indicated that they were fairly dissatisfied with the WVPD's response. As expected given the data presented above, most of those who were dissatisfied with the response of the WVPD were reporting being the victim of a property crime.

Among the minority of victims who did not report their victimization to the WVPD, the most common reasons were a feeling that the West Vancouver could not do anything about the incident (63 per cent), that the incident was too minor or not important enough (56 per cent), and because they felt the police could not help (28 per cent) (see Table 9). It should be noted that this order of reasons is consistent with most of the other public safety surveys conducted by these researchers. Moreover, given that the most common form of victimization reported in this survey was a property offence, the findings presented in Table 9 are not particularly surprising as they likely

represent very minor property offences. Again, only three respondents who were the victims of a violent offence in the past 12 months did not contact the WVPD about their victimization. Of those three, two stated that they did not contact the WVPD because they did not believe the police could do anything about it, while one respondent stated that they did not want to get involved with the police or the courts, and one respondent believed that the incident was too minor or not important enough to contact the police.

Table 9: Reasons for Not Contacting WVPD As a Result of Victimization

Reason	%
Did not think the WVPD could do anything about the incident	63%
Incident was too minor or it was not important enough	56%
The WVPD could not help	28%
Dealt with the incident in some other way	9%
Incident was a personal matter that did not concern the WVPD	9%
Did not want to get involved with the WVPD or the courts	6%
Did not want a child or children to get arrested or jailed	4%
Did not want anyone to find out about the incident	2%
Family member(s) put pressure on you to not contact the WVPD	2%

Regardless of whether the respondent indicated that they had been a victim of crime in West Vancouver in past 12 months, all respondents were asked how many times in the past 12 months they had contact with the WVPD for any reason. In total, nearly one-third of the sample (32 per cent) indicated that they had had at least one contact with the police. Among those who had contact with the WVPD, the average number of contacts in the past 12 months was 1.6, with a range of one to 10 times.

When respondents were asked why they had any contact with the WVPD in the past 12 months, the most commonly provided reasons were to report a property crime (23 per cent), to request information (17 per cent), and to report a suspicious person (16 per cent). Very few respondents indicated that they had contacted the WVPD to complain about police services (2 per cent) or to report a violent crime (1 per cent) (see Table 10).

Table 10: Reasons for Having Any Direct Contact with the WVPD in the Past 12 Months

Reason	%
To Report a Property Crime	23%
To Request Information	17%
To Report a Suspicious Person	16%
To Report a Traffic Accident	10%
To Be Questioned about a Possible Crime	8%
As Part of a Police Traffic Enforcement Action	7%
Application to Volunteer	7%
To Complain About Police Services	2%
To Report a Violent Crime	1%

Respondents' Rating of and Satisfaction with the West Vancouver

Respondents were asked to assess how satisfied overall they were with the WVPD using a 4-point scale anchored by very unsatisfied and very satisfied. The mean score was 3.1 out of 4. In effect, 55% of the sample reported being mainly satisfied and 33% reported being very satisfied. Conversely, only 7% (n = 150) reported being very unsatisfied with the WVPD. Considered by gender, 87% of males and 89% of females reported being either mainly or very satisfied with the WVPD, although this difference was not statistically significant. There was no correlation between age and satisfaction. There was also no relationship between satisfaction with the police and the length of time that one lived in the neighbourhood. There was also a statistically significant difference in satisfaction based on whether one was a victim of crime in the past 12 months, but not in the expected direction. Unlike other public safety surveys conducted by these researchers, where victimization experiences have been associated with lower levels of satisfaction with the local police, in the West Vancouver sample, 81% of non-victims compared to 89% of victims reported being mainly or very satisfied with the police.

To further explore respondents' satisfaction with the WVPD, respondents were asked a series of questions about the WVPD. As demonstrated in Table 11, the WVPD scored extremely high among respondents. For example, virtually all of those who provided an answer were either mostly or very satisfied with the WVPD's level of service to the community, their contributions to preventing crime, the overall professionalism of the department, and the range of services provided by the department. It is important to note that, for most of the issues presented in Table 11, most respondents reported that they did not know. As such, the data presented in Table 11 are the results once all the missing data and "don't know" responses were removed from the analysis.

Table 11: The Proportion of Respondents Who Were Mostly or Very Satisfaction with Various Aspects of the WVPD

	%	# of Respondents Who Answered "Don't Know"
Their level of service to the community	96%	622
Their contributions to preventing crime	96%	929
The overall professionalism of the department	95%	624
The range of services provided by the department	95%	1347
The level of competence in solving crimes	94%	1306
Being responsive to the needs of the community	94%	622
The professionalism of the front counter	93%	1280
The department's speed in responding to your requests	93%	1157
Their use of volunteers	93%	1658
The number of officers in the department	91%	1413
The headquarters' hours of operation	91%	1496
Their level of engagement with the community	91%	787
Their visibility in the community	89%	367
Communicating with the public	85%	600
Their speed in responding to calls for service	85%	974
Seeking public input on crime and safety issues	84%	965

It should be noted that the data presented in Table 11 does not provided any specific mandate for an area where the WVPD needs to improve; however, if there was one area that scored slightly lower than the others, it would be the relationship between the police and the public. For example,

again, while the scores were very high, the four lowest scores were for the visibility of the WVPD in public, communication with the public, their speed in responding to calls for service, and seeking the public’s input on crime and safety issues. The relative lack of familiarity with the activities of the WVPD among the public was further demonstrated by the aforementioned number of respondents endorsing the “don’t know” option for the various aspects of the WVPD’s work.

Similarly, these themes were echoed in another set of questions focusing on other programs and services that the respondents would like the WVPD to offer. While the overwhelming response to this question was a greater focus on traffic services, many respondents also indicated that they would like to receive more information from the WVPD about their activities, their successes in these activities, overall crime trends, and public safety-related education. They also indicated that they would like the police to be more visible in the community, including more foot and bicycle patrols in their neighbourhoods.

These themes will be discussed in more depth later in this report. Importantly though, it appears from the consistent responses to multiple questions in the survey that the community would like to be more engaged with their local police. When directly asked if they would like to access or receive information from and about the WVPD, virtually all respondents (91 per cent) indicated that they would. The most commonly reported preferred method of receiving information was indirectly, as nearly two-thirds (63 per cent) stated that they wanted their information via traditional news media, such as newspapers, radio, and TV (see Table 12). A substantial minority indicated that they wanted police information provided to them in email (48 per cent) and printed material (42 per cent). Moreover, one-third (32 per cent) reported that they would use the WVPD website while only 10% preferred social media as the way in which they received police information⁴. One possible explanation for these results might be the older mean age of the sample.

Table 12: What are the Preferred Methods for Accessing or Receiving Information about the WVPD and its Activities

	%
News Media (Newspaper, Radio, Television)	63%
Email	48%
Print Materials	42%
WVPD Website	32%
Social Media (Twitter, Facebook)	9%
In Person	5%
Telephone	5%

In terms of the type of information that respondents wanted to receive, more than four-fifths wanted information on crime in their neighbourhood (87 per cent) and another large proportion (78 per cent) wanted information about crime occurring in the District of West Vancouver. Most respondents also wanted information about crime prevention and community safety material (59

⁴ As respondents were asked all the ways they preferred to access or receive WVPD information, the totals in Table 11 exceed 100%.

per cent) and community policing programs and services (53 per cent). A large minority of respondents (41 per cent) also wanted information about WVPD community engagement activities, while slightly less than one-quarter of respondents (24 per cent) were interested in information about potential volunteer opportunities with the police.

In terms of a rating of the WVPD, respondents were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements about the WVPD. As demonstrated in Table 13, the clear majority of respondents either agree or strongly agree that the WVPD consistently demonstrate professionalism, respect, and competency when dealing with the public and in conducting their duties. Of note, approximately one-quarter of the sample did not provide any answers to the statements presented in Table 13.

Table 13: Assessment of WVPD by Respondents

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The WVPD treats all citizens with respect	1%	6%	69%	24%
The WVPD takes time to listen to people	1%	5%	72%	22%
The WVPD treats all citizens fairly	1%	6%	72%	21%
The WVPD respects all citizens' rights	1%	4%	73%	22%
The WVPD are courteous to citizens they come into contact with	1%	4%	67%	28%
The WVPD treat everyone with dignity	1%	7%	69%	24%
The WVPD makes decisions based on the facts	1%	5%	77%	18%
When the WVPD deal with citizens, they always behave according to the law	1%	5%	73%	20%
If I were to talk to WVPD officers in my community, I would find their values to be similar to my own	1%	6%	73%	21%
The WVPD acts in ways that are consistent with my own moral values	1%	5%	73%	22%
The WVPD provides the same quality of service to all citizens	1%	8%	70%	21%
The WVPD enforces the law consistently when dealing with citizens	1%	6%	73%	20%
The WVPD makes sure citizens receive the outcomes they deserve under the law	1%	8%	74%	17%

Respondents were also asked to report how effective they felt the WVPD was in managing a range of crime and safety issues. As demonstrated in Table 14, virtually all respondents felt that the WVPD was either mostly or very effective in managing various crime and safety issues, particularly violent crime (96 per cent), nuisance behaviour or public disorder issues (93 per cent), young offenders (91 per cent), and auto theft (90 per cent). While the proportion of respondents who felt the WVPD was mostly or very effective on all issues was extremely high, the items with the lowest scores were economic crimes, such as fraud or identity theft (82 per cent), traffic safety (83 per cent), and prostitution and solicitation (84 per cent).

Table 14: Proportion of Respondents Reporting that the WVPD were Mostly or Very Effective

	% Mostly or Very Effective
Violent Crimes	96%
Nuisance Behaviour / Public Disorder	93%
Youth / Youth At-Risk / Young Offenders	91%
Auto Theft	90%
Break and Enter	89%
Mischief (Vandalism / Graffiti)	88%
Street Level Drug Activity (Drug Use / Dealing)	88%
Organized Crime / Gang Activity	87%
Grow Ops / Clandestine Drug Labs	85%
Prostitution / Solicitation	84%
Traffic Safety	83%
Economic Crime / Fraud / identify Theft	82%

When asked to rate the policing value that respondents got for the money WVPD spends on policing, 21% rated the value as excellent and 53% rated the value as good. An additional 24% rated the value as average, while only 2% rated it as below average and 11 respondents rated it as terrible. Interestingly, while not statistically significant, the females in the sample tended to report getting a slightly greater value from the police for money the District of West Vancouver spends on policing (3.94 out of 5) compared to the males (3.88 out of 5). There was virtually no correlation between age and the rating one gave to the value of the police for the money spent ($r = 0.29$; $p = .201$). However, while there was not a statistically significant correlation between neighbourhood of residence and the value for money rating, there was a strong correlation to the amount of time that the respondent had lived in their current neighbourhood ($r = .653$; $p = .010$). In other words, the longer one lived in their current neighbourhood, the higher they rated the policing value they received for the money the District of West Vancouver spent on policing. There was also a significant relationship with being the victim of crime in the past 12 months, as those who reported past year victimization rated the value for money slightly, but significantly, lower ($X = 3.8$) than non-recent crime victims ($X = 3.9$), $t(245.6) = -2.5$, $p = .034$. Nonetheless, even though respondents generally recognized that they got good value for their policing dollars, only a minority of respondents (42 per cent) indicated that they would be willing to pay for an increase in police services, such as an increase in the number of officers on the streets.

The rating of value for the money spent on policing in West Vancouver was statistically significantly correlated with all ratings of the WVPD previously provided in Table 11, and replicated below in Table 15. In other words, a more positive endorsement of the WVPD was associated with a higher rating of value for money spent. Conversely, those who were less satisfied with aspects of the WVPD were less likely to support spending more money for an increase in police services. Several relationships stood out. First, two-thirds (65 per cent) of those who were dissatisfied with the number of officers in the department were willing to pay more money for an increase in police services compared to a minority (41 per cent) of those who were satisfied with the number of officers in the department, $\chi^2(1) = 11.2$, $p = .001$. Similarly, dissatisfied with the visibility of officers in the community was positively associated with being willing to pay more money for an increase in police services (54 per cent), whereas a minority of those who were satisfied with the visibility of officers in the community endorsed paying more for police services (41 per cent), $\chi^2(1) = 8.5$, $p = .004$.

In contrast, those who were dissatisfied with the professionalism of the front counter were significantly less likely (27 per cent) to support paying more for an increase in police services compared to those who were satisfied with the professionalism of the front counter (46 per cent), $\chi^2 (1) = 6.6, p = .010$. Lastly, those who were dissatisfied with the WVPD's level of competence in solving crimes were significantly less likely (57 per cent) to support paying more for an increase in police services than those who were satisfied with this aspect of the WVPD (89 per cent), $\chi^2 (1) = 36.8, p = .000$.

Table 15: Respondents Rating of Value of Policing and Level of Satisfaction with the Police

	Correlation with Rating of Value for Money Spent on Policing	% of those Dissatisfied or Strongly Dissatisfied Willing to Spend More Money
Their level of service to the community	.442**	51%
Their contributions to preventing crime	.453**	35%
The overall professionalism of the department	.473**	34%
The range of services provided by the department	.394**	49%
The level of competence in solving crimes	.386**	40%
Being responsive to the needs of the community	.459**	41%
The professionalism of the front counter	.286**	27%
The department's speed in responding to your requests	.380**	42%
Their use of volunteers	.338	50%
The number of officers in the department	.360**	65%
The headquarters' hours of operation	.289**	55%
Their level of engagement with the community	.443**	41%
Their visibility in the community	.425**	54%
Communicating with the public	.440**	40%
Their speed in responding to calls for service	.380**	46%
Seeking public input on crime and safety issues	.479**	42%

Using a 5-point scale, respondents were also asked to indicate whether a series of issues were a problem in their neighbourhood that they believed the WVPD should devote more resources and attention to. The scale was anchored from not a problem to a definite problem. As demonstrated in Table 16, the issue with by far the highest mean score was traffic issues (3.09). This was followed by impaired driving (1.92) and property crime (1.90). Those issues with the lowest mean scores were prostitution (1.10), unlicensed bars and clubs (1.11), and unlicensed or unregulated recovery homes (1.17). Interestingly, while traffic issues had the largest proportion of respondents (25 per cent) identify it as a definite problem, conversely, this issue was also only one of two issues that a minority of respondents reported was not a problem at all. The only other issue, surprisingly, was property crime (47 per cent of respondents gave this issue a rating of 1 out of 5).

Table 16: Proportion of Respondents Indicating that an Issue Was or Was Not a Problem in Their Neighbourhood that Police Should Devote More Attention and Resources To

	Avg. Rating	% Not A Problem	% A Definite Problem
Traffic Issues	3.09	20%	25%
Impaired Driving	1.92	51%	5%
Property Crime	1.90	47%	3%
Unightly Properties	1.71	61%	5%
Motor Vehicle Theft	1.71	58%	2%
Drug Dealing	1.51	74%	4%
Litter, Broken Glass, Trash, or Graffiti	1.51	72%	3%
Loitering Youth / Groups of Youth Gathering in Public Places	1.45	71%	1%
Grow Operations (Marijuana)	1.43	77%	3%
Homelessness	1.39	76%	2%
Illegal Suites	1.39	76%	2%
Mentally Ill Persons	1.37	76%	2%
Organized Crime / Gang Activity	1.35	81%	2%
Domestic Violence	1.34	79%	1%
Transit / Transit Exchanges	1.32	82%	2%
Public Intoxication	1.32	79%	1%
Public Disorder / Causing a Disturbance	1.29	82%	1%
Personal or Violent Crime	1.28	81%	1%
"Crack Houses"	1.23	89%	2%
Panhandling / Begging	1.22	86%	1%
Unlicensed or Unregulated Recovery Homes	1.17	91%	1%
Unlicensed Bars or Clubs	1.11	94%	1%
Prostitution	1.10	94%	1%

When asked to identify the most important issue for the WVPD to devote more resources and attention to, the most commonly provided response was traffic issues, such as speeding and distracted driving (39 per cent). This was followed by property crime (8 per cent) and drug dealing (4 per cent).

As previously noted, West Vancouver residents were provided with an opportunity to indicate what other programs or services they would like the WVPD to offer. Overwhelmingly, the most common theme was an increase in traffic-related enforcement and activities. Many residents indicated that there were major issues with traffic in West Vancouver, including a high number of dangerous drivers who exceeded the speed limit, ran through stop lights, engaged in illegal U-turns, and who engaged in distracted driving, such as driving while using a mobile phone. Interestingly, respondents also identified that bicycles were a common traffic concern, as cyclists ignored the traffic rules, such as by failing to stop at stop signs. Traffic congestion, particularly on the highways, was also a concern. Some of the suggestions made by respondents to remedy the situation included more police visibility in areas where speeding was common or where it was particularly dangerous, such as school zones, issuing more fines against drivers and bicyclists who disregarded the rules of the road, ticketing the riders of noisy motorcycles, and more traffic education about the rules and practices for motorists and cyclists. Given the views of respondents, the WVPD may want to explore establishing additional partnerships to develop, design, and delivery targeted traffic safety campaigns and targeted enforcement programs.

Somewhat related, another common theme was more direct engagement with youth. Examples given by respondents included the WVPD offering traffic safety education to high school students, as well as other public safety awareness initiatives, including talking to students about drugs. While

the WVPD has a Youth Section, including a Youth Liaison Team, and School Liaison Officers, there are several ways the WVPD could increase its overall engagement with youth, including offering public forums for youth and their parents on topics of interest, such as the current drug crisis involving fentanyl, or developing a youth cadet program where at-risk and non-at-risk youth could participate in a variety of weekly activities with WVPD officers to develop better relationships between youth and police, increase the understanding among youth about what police do, and provide additional opportunities for police officers to serve as mentors and role models for youth.

As previously discussed, West Vancouver residents commonly reported that they would like more information on the activities their police engaged in, and how effective those activities are at reducing crime and increasing public safety. They also indicated a desire to be more informed about crime trends and patterns in their communities, and would appreciate tips from the WVPD on how to prevent victimization. For instance, many respondents identified that they would be interested in public meetings where police provided practical information about crime prevention strategies, such as how to protect oneself against identity theft, auto theft, or other types of property-related and fraudulent crimes. Some respondents felt that this would be particularly useful when offered at seniors' groups, given their increased vulnerability for fraud-related crimes. In response to these concerns, the WVPD may consider hosting a yearly public event that community members can attend to receive an overview on major police initiatives completed over the year and an update on the next year's initiative, like the "Breakfast with the Chief" held by the Abbotsford Police Department. Alternatively, the Community Services Unit could offer neighbourhood briefings, where they debrief with concerned citizens or business owners about ongoing concerns and offer crime prevention tips, such as how to reduce the vulnerability of empty homes or how to protect oneself against identity fraud. The WVPD should also consider having their analysts create public documents on neighbourhood crime patterns when it appears that there is a developing trend. This information could be posted on the WVPD website in the *Breaking News* section, be disseminated to the public through social media, or be otherwise posted in the relevant neighbourhoods. Of note, while the WVPD has a Community Services Unit, the department may want to assess the value in opening a Community Policing Office in the District to increase police visibility and present more opportunities for engagement with the public. The WVPD may also want to consider working with the District to introduce elements of crime prevention through environmental design, such as more lighting in areas of concern to residents.

The final major theme that was expressed by respondents was to increase the visibility and accessibility of the WVPD. Respondents felt that they rarely saw or interacted with the WVPD. Many respondents suggested that the WVPD should engage in more foot or bicycle patrols, where they would be visible to community members and present opportunities for interaction with them. In addition, as expressed above, respondents would appreciate more opportunities to work with the WVPD on crime prevention initiatives.

At the end of the survey, respondents were provided with a place to provide any comments they wanted about the WVPD and personal safety. While most respondents did not provide any additional comments, for those who did, the overwhelming majority indicated that they were extremely satisfied with their police force. Many wrote positively about specific encounters they had with the WVPD and expressed satisfaction and thanks for the service they received from the

police. Among those respondents that provided specific recommendations, there were two broad themes that emerged. Unsurprisingly, the first theme was about traffic enforcement. There was a general feeling that the WVPD was not aggressive enough in dealing with speeding and distracted driving, especially in residential and school zones. The second main theme was related to the relationship between the WVPD and the public. Many respondents wrote that they would like to see the police out of their cars more interacting with the public. They wanted a greater police presence in the community with better communication between the police and the public, especially victims. In effect, these respondents were interested in enhancing the police's engagement with the public.

Conclusion

The results of this survey indicate that nearly all respondents felt safe in their homes, neighbourhoods, and throughout the District. The main areas of the District that respondents did not feel safe walking through at night were those characterized by poor lighting or where bears and cougars have been spotted. In addition, their general feelings of personal safety were consistent with their reports of victimization, and respondents reported high levels of collective efficacy. Specifically, only 11% of respondents reported being victimized in the previous 12 months and the overwhelming majority of this victimization was related to property crime. The nature of victimization may also explain the proportion of respondents who did not report their victimization to the WVPD and their main reasons for not reporting their victimization. Regardless of the number of contacts that respondents had with the police or the reasons for these contacts, satisfaction with the WVPD was very high, irrespective of whether the respondent had been a victim of crime in the past 12 months. Most respondents felt that members of the WVPD exhibited many of the behaviours that one should expect from a police organization and its officers. The findings and the general comments made by respondents indicated a high level of trust and respect for the WVPD. Still, respondents did identify a few problems in their neighborhoods that they felt police should devote more resources and attention to. Topping the list were traffic issues, impaired driving, and property crime.

In conclusion, the results of this survey suggest that one area that the WVPD could attempt to improve is in communicating and engaging with the community to a greater degree. Moreover, the WVPD should look for ways to enhance and increase the interactions between the police and the public, particularly the relationship between the police officer and victims of crime. As mentioned above, while respondents indicated a general satisfaction with their police, several respondents indicated the need to improve the police's visibility in the community. A final key issue for respondents was a greater focus on traffic issues and property crime, especially given the large number of unoccupied homes and condos. Still, respondents felt very satisfied with the level of police service they receive and reported feeling safe in their neighbourhoods. Given these findings, the WVPD might consider developing policies and practices to increase their public profile, share their successes with the public, in addition to providing accurate and timely information about crime in West Vancouver.

