

CITY PERSPECTIVES PANEL COMMENTS:
West Point Grey (WPG) Community Vision
April 15, 2008

As the City Perspectives Panel (CPP), it is our responsibility to advise Council on how well the West Point Grey Community Vision fits with city-wide goals and policy directions outlined in CityPlan.

We'd like to begin by highlighting the outstanding community participation and touch on many positive results in this Vision that will be invaluable in moving forward on CityPlan directions. In particular, the community took great strides in seeking to reduce single-occupancy car use through their support of transit, bikeways, improved pedestrian environments, and an overall embrace of innovation and green technologies in transportation. In particular, we'd like to commend the community for endorsing a rapid transit line as a valuable tool for moving Vancouver residents through their neighbourhood to UBC. While the overall support of alternative transportation was encouraging, the CPP is concerned with the negative messaging contained within the language of Direction 5.1 "Address Negative Impacts of Public Transit", and urges that the implementation phase not accept any reduction of overall transit service in WPG as a result of these reservations.

Other commendable successes of the West Point Grey Community Vision that we would like to highlight include: support for the creation of two Neighbourhood Centres (Point Grey Village and Jericho Village); support for creating more centrally located and accessible community facilities; and support for environmental initiatives and improved community safety.

Another positive aspect of the Vision was the community's approval of two new housing types: infill and duplex.

While support of these housing types was commendable, it is the view of the CPP that the overall Vision for West Point Grey fell substantially short of outlining sufficient locations for new housing to develop. It is here, in the realm of housing, where the most glaring shortcomings of the WPG Vision are apparent. The inability of the WPG vision to make room for the diverse demographic and housing needs currently impacting the community and the City as a whole is highly problematic. The goal of CityPlan to "*increase housing variety in neighbourhoods that have little variety now [...] to help meet the housing needs of neighbourhood residents as they age, and to work toward regional goals of reducing sprawl and auto use*" found little support, while the direction to "*provide more affordable housing*" has no foundation from which to develop within the restrictive framework of acceptance set out in this Vision. A lack of community responsibility to a city-wide issue, coupled with inability to house even their own residents as they move through life-stages is seen as highly problematic and it is here where the future Vision Implementation Committee will need to seek further consensus in areas of uncertainty if West Point Grey is to grow in stride with the directions of CityPlan.

As the ninth and final Community Vision comes to close the City Perspectives Panel has much to be optimistic about in the work of the West Point Grey Community Vision. Despite this however, we feel that for the WPG Vision to truly build upon the foundation of CityPlan, a great deal of work lies ahead for the community as they seek to address and gain support for the directions classified as “Uncertain” in housing types and locations. It is only through an honest evaluation of these uncertainties that we see the community of West Point Grey successfully moving in the direction of CityPlan.