

**Exploring Food Security in Vancouver's Westside**

Heather Pottery

Adrienne Jinkerson

Prepared for Westside Food Security Collaborative

June 2007

## **Background**

The content to be discussed in this report, specifically the issues surrounding food security in Vancouver's Westside, was born of the collective concerns of a group of Westside service providers and concerned citizens. To clarify the geographical area, the Westside encompasses the neighbourhoods of Kerrisdale, Dunbar-Southlands, Arbutus Ridge, Shaughnessy, Kitsilano, West Point Grey, University of British Columbia endowment lands and Musqueam. Although it is most typically identified as a wealthy area with few needs, it has become apparent to some that Vancouver's Westside is not immune to issues of food insecurity. In fact, food insecurity more likely remains hidden due to the perceived wealth of this particular area. Therefore, having established that an increasing number of Westside residents were dealing with issues of food insecurity, it was established that a more formal needs assessment need be performed in effort to uncover the depth and scope of this issue. In other words, the food security needs that were arising anecdotally needed to be recorded in order to develop a greater sense of the nature of issues that people on the Westside were facing.

An effective way of obtaining a significant amount of data in a short period of time was determined to be holding focus groups with potentially vulnerable community members. It was further determined that Westside service providers, or community key-informants, might too be able to provide relevant data to shape this report. In the interest of providing a more thorough background to this report, a brief definition of food security will herein be provided.

What is food security?

A community enjoys food security when all people, at all times, have access to adequate amounts of safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate foods (Dieticians of Canada, 2005). Otherwise stated, food security exists when people have enough food to lead an active and health life (Martiquet, n.d.). In discerning the differences between household and community food security, the following definition proves relevant:

Whereas household food security is concerned with the ability of acquire food at the household level, community food security concerns the underlying social, economic and institutional factors within a community that affect the quantity and quality of available food and its affordability or price relative to the sufficiency of financial resources available to acquire it. (United States Department of Agriculture, USDA, 2002)

Although, this report will focus more specifically on the issue of household food security, the authors understand that food security is a broad and overarching term that spans from the individual to the global level.

Beyond what it is, there is further insight provided through what food security is not is not. Tarasuk (2005) defines household food insecurity as being a “limited, inadequate, or insecure access of individuals and households to sufficient, safe, nutritious, and personally acceptable foods” (p. 299). Food insecurity does not necessarily mean that people are going hungry, instead it means that they are not accessing the best, or most nutritious foods possible. Food insecurity refers to not having access to adequate amounts of affordable foods through normal means such as buying food at supermarkets, farmer’s markets, or even gardening.

### **Purpose**

A number of recent reports have sought to identify issues of food security at both the city and province level (Forum of Research Connections, 2005; Dieticians of Canada, 2006). Further, the City of Vancouver (2006) has recently established a food policy council whose “primary goal is to examine the operation of a local food system and provide ideas and policy recommendations for how it can be improved”.

Although there has been much initiative at the city level, there remains little documentation concerning the needs of the Westside in particular. In light of this, this report is intended to uncover and document some key themes of food security relevant to Westside residents and not to determine quantitatively the full scope of food insecurity.

### **Methods**

Having established that focus groups were the best way of obtaining qualitative data, a list of questions was compiled and abbreviated using the USDA *Community Food Security Assessment Toolkit* (2002) as a guide. From this list, seven key questions for focus group members and eight key questions for service providers were identified. A complete list of these questions is provided in Appendix A. A list of informants is provided in Appendix C.

In the interest of determining which community members to include in focus groups, a list of Westside residents speculated to be at risk for food insecurity was first compiled. From this list, specific community gatekeepers were identified, in hopes of recruiting potential focus group participants. Further, several service providers were contacted for the purpose of conducting individual interviews.

At the completion of this Westside needs assessment, information elicited from discussions with five key informants and 40 community members was established through three focus groups and four individual interviews. Respecting the data obtained, the authors believe that more in depth study and investigation is required. To reiterate, this report is to be considered a starting point. Regardless of this, important themes were nonetheless identified.

### **Key Findings**

#### **Community Households with food insecurity**

##### *Social Stigma*

The Westside service providers spoken to, acknowledged that service development was often hindered by the fact that many Westside residents cannot or do not state their needs. There is a great deal of perceived stigma associated with having financial challenges. One service provider stated that “it is okay on the Eastside to say that you have needs”, however on the Westside, many individuals are reluctant to tell their friends that “they don’t own their homes”. The providers felt that only after the development of a trustful relationship could many Westside residents begin to articulate their needs.

##### *Those in Need*

Through data collection it was identified that those individuals perceived as having the most needs concerning food security are seniors, people living in basement suites, young families, single-parent families, those with lack of accessible grocery stores, those with mobility and transportation issues, and individuals with fixed low

incomes. Our findings are in part consistent with the findings of Kurbis et al. (2006) who acknowledged that people most at risk for food insecurity are:

Lone parent families and their children, seniors, natives living off-reserve, recent immigrants, people who are unemployed, people with low levels of educational attainment, people who have ill health, people on social assistance, homeless and street-involved youth, injection drug users, and people with mental or physical disabilities.

Many individuals live in the Westside to be closer to their place of employment, as such, their incomes may not suffice in supporting the high cost of living associated with many Westside neighbourhoods. Therefore, they too may be at risk for food insecurity.

A key informant who works in the department of basic resources of a Westside social service agency identified that “everyone who walks through [her] door, 95% of the time it relates to food”. Further, there has been an increasing trend in the number of grocery store vouchers that this agency provides to community members. Although an increased client load may be seen as partially responsible for these increasing numbers, the reality is that approximately “\$11,000” in grocery store vouchers are being distributed by this agency per month. Many clients who use this agency are further said to “double dip” by using the food bank in addition to the vouchers.

A second key informant from a family service agency found that when approximately one quarter of service users were surveyed, “24% of families spent over 50% of their income on housing, and 24% spent 30-50% of household income on housing”. It is arguable that spending these amounts of income on housing are not conducive to meeting life’s other needs, including the need for adequate nourishment.

Although this agency serves only a small percentage of Westside residents, these data are near consistent with the *BC Stats* finding that nearly 40% of tenants in the Westside spend more than 30% of their income on housing (see Appendix B).

Residents from a Westside subsidized housing complex shared the many issues they routinely face concerning food security. When asked whether they had worried about running out of food in the last six months, members from this group responded “every month, every day”, that it is “always an issue”, and that due to being on fixed incomes, they may be “wealthy for one day” but after buying basic necessities they had “no money left”. In light of this finding, it is not the cost of food that is the predominant issue for these individuals, instead, when on a fixed income, there is often not enough money to buy healthy food (Dieticians of Canada, 2006).

Beyond who is at risk for food insecurity, what further needs to be determined are the possible reasons *why* they are at risk.

### **Why is household food security a problem?**

#### ***Inadequate Income and the Affordability of Food***

It has been well established that low income Canadians are at an increased risk for food insecurity (Dieticians of Canada, 2006; Kurbis et al., 2006). In the Westside, the percentage of people living in low income households ranges from 11.7% in the Dunbar-Southlands neighbourhood to 23.3% in the Arbutus Ridge area (City of Vancouver, see Appendix B). One key informant discussed that salaries have not caught up to the cost of living in the Westside where housing costs are higher on average than the rest of the City of Vancouver (see Appendix B). Some residents and service providers also perceive grocery costs to be higher in this area of Vancouver.

A fixed income routinely forces individuals to make difficult decisions. Decisions such as “do I pay my rent, or do I eat?” are reckoned with on a monthly basis and it is typically the former and not the latter that prevails. One key informant defined this phenomenon in terms of the “elasticity of the food budget”. This is a theme that emerged repeatedly throughout discussions with key informants and focus group members. Due to the elasticity of the food budget, government policies and program cuts can have a major impact on food security. What this means for individuals is that they are continually forced to ask “what [they] can scrimp back on”. Leisure activities, clothing, and household items were all identified as luxuries, unrealistic in light of inadequate monthly incomes.

Difficult decisions must also be made within the confines of the food budget itself. Many individuals stated that although they prefer to eat more fruits and vegetables, they first choose items that are inexpensive and filling such as pasta and rice in order to stretch their small food budget. In this case, caloric density is seen as taking precedence over nutritional value. According to the Dieticians of Canada (2006) “low income families eat less fruit, vegetables, and milk products because they can’t afford them”. Two key informants described what they perceived as a “food apartheid” wherein the underclass or poor go without foods that nutritionally adequate and instead rely upon calorie dense foods.

### *Deskilling and Devaluing*

It is not only insufficient income that posits individuals towards food insecurity. Two key informants discussed that, culturally, there has been a significant “deskilling and devaluing” around food preparation. To clarify, they acknowledged that many people do

not know how to prepare food from scratch, or that many people perceive they do not have time to prepare food from scratch. Individuals are therefore choosing food that is considered to be more “convenient”. These so-called foods of convenience tend to be inadequate nutritionally due to their low nutrient density and high fat and/or sugar content. Further, increased technology around food preparation is seen as leading to decreased participation in food traditions and rituals. The expectation for many people today is that families do not sit together at meal times.

The wealthy are not immune to this dimension of food insecurity. The key informants interviewed stated that for many, “cooking is beneath them” and wealth does not guarantee they have the education or skills to adequately feed their families.

### Senior-specific Issues

As previously noted, seniors are particularly vulnerable to issues of food insecurity (Kurbis et al., 2006). One of the reasons for this may be a lack of social support, especially if living alone. Although some prefer to cook their own food, others identify that they prefer not to, or are unable to, cook for themselves. Food preparation for those with health challenges or disabilities such as arthritis can be especially difficult. Other seniors find it difficult to cook just for one. Some depend on hot meal programs to obtain nutritionally adequate meals. For some this may be daily, for others, the programs provide their only adequate meal for the week.

### Accessibility of Food in the Westside

Granted its perceived wealth, much of the Westside is tailored towards transportation by motor vehicle. This presents a challenge for those individuals who rely on public transit or other methods of transportation to shop for their food. Community

members stated that they shopped at stores that were deemed as convenient, as opposed to stores that best suited their needs. In many cases, nearby stores were not seen as meeting participants' expense budgets, dietary needs, or general food preferences, however, the close proximity of these stores enticed them to shop there. In several cases, stores within walking distance were deemed a necessity, and participants who used them would often make repeat trips suitable for carrying groceries. Without vehicles, many individuals, including seniors and others with mobility issues, found themselves to be ever mindful of weather conditions. For example, the participants with motorized scooters and wheelchairs established that these devices cannot be used in the rain. Individuals suffering from chronic illness or mobility issues (including chronic pain) found their conditions to create further barriers in obtaining groceries.

### *Mobility Issues*

In addition to the fact that many places are difficult to access by bus, many buses (for example trolley buses) are not wheelchair, walker, scooter, or stroller accessible. This is seen by some as limiting their ability to take advantage of certain bus routes. Even if transit is accessible, a further issue is the ability to carry groceries or heavy packages to and from bus stops.

Mobility issues extend further than transportation. Many stores are deemed as difficult or even impossible to navigate by those requiring mobility aids such as electric scooters, walkers or wheelchairs. Beyond ramp accessibility, aisles also need to accommodate individuals who use these devices. Marketing-displays often block once navigable aisles, and high shelving is seen as further inaccessible to those in wheelchairs or scooters. Although some stores have customer service representatives who may help

retrieve inaccessible items from shelves, individuals often find themselves dependent upon the help of strangers.

### *Using Handydart*

In a focus group that consisted mainly of individuals coping with mobility issues, it was presented that chronic illness is often a predictor in accessing grocery stores routinely. These individuals stated that it was impossible to predict what days they might feel well enough to perform their shopping. In such cases, the use of Handydart was seen as impossible relative to the two to three days advanced bookings required of the service. Whereas individuals were forced to adhere to strict booking policies and to be ready before the time of Handydart arrival, they stated that they had often been left waiting for long periods.

### *Differences in Different Parts of the Community*

Service providers and focus group participants, alike identified that specific areas are seen as not having grocery stores that are easily accessible by bus or foot. For those individuals living near concentrated commercial areas, there is less of an accessibility issue. However, for those living in residential districts, of which the Westside has many, the reality is often a multiple transfer bus-ride, an exceedingly long walk, or both. For those with mobility issues, this is seen as especially problematic. A cited example includes the community of Kerrisdale, wherein the large geographical area posits only a small number of residents within close proximity to the commercial district. In addition, Kerrisdale has only one identified “supermarket” within the entire area. In discussing the neighbourhood of Kitsilano, the participants of one focus group identified that there was a definite lack of “big box stores” that are perceived as being less expensive. Smaller

grocers on Granville Island, on Fourth Avenue and on West Broadway were seen as viable options, however only if individuals could navigate their way through them.

Further, although many individuals appreciated the quality and variety offered by smaller grocers, others felt that these stores did not offer the convenience of a “one-stop shop”.

### **Coping with the Problem of Food Insecurity**

#### **Resourcefulness**

It became quite apparent that when faced with the varying challenges of food insecurity, individuals are quite adept at getting their most basic needs met. One service provider indicates that in general, individuals are “inherently quite resourceful”.

Respecting resourcefulness, individuals are extremely inventive in how they access food, how they make it last, how they store it, how they share it, and in general, how they make use of informal and community supports.

Resourcefulness has both positive and negative connotations. Several individuals found that constantly watching sales and cutting coupons created further stress in their lives. Another perceived stress is that at times individuals were unable to get to the sales, or to transport the items. One service provider identified that many individuals “force themselves to go out [and get food] even if they are unsteady on their feet”. Although the participants of one focus group expressed the wish to buy in bulk in order to stretch their dollar, they were met with insufficient storage space in this regard.

From a more positive perspective, individuals of a subsidized housing complex have been remarkably resourceful keeping their residents relatively well-fed. A fruit and vegetable delivery service is run by and provided to residents, an on-site store provides some basic low-cost necessities, and some residents have been provided with space to

grow their own vegetables. Further, residents have independently taken the initiative to buy food in large quantities, split costs, and share food, in these cases it is often the individuals who have better mobility who shop for food. In many ways, these informal supports have become central to coping with the problem of food insecurity.

### *Informal Supports*

Whether the busy family on the go, or the senior who has difficulty accessing a grocery store, many individuals rely on social supports including friends and family to help them access and prepare food. In order to take advantage of informal support, an individual first needs to have a social support network in place. Those who cannot rely on the support of friends and family, may obtain support from their neighbourhood or the buildings in which they live if there is a strong sense of community.

Even for those who identify having a strong social support network, there remains a reluctance to continually ask for help. Respecting requesting the help of friends, one participant indicated that they “don’t put on pressure and do not wish to be ‘that person’”, instead, they waited until they were “desperate” and saved relying on friends for help for when they “really needed it”. Further, there is often an expectation that all individuals *have* an informal support network. This is seen as not always reflective of reality or practicality. This expectation is seen as placing some individuals at a disadvantage.

### *Community Supports*

Beyond relying on the help of friends and family, a number of Westside residents make use of the community supports already in place. For example, food vouchers provided through social service agencies, hot meal delivery, hot and cold meal programs (be they regular cost, low cost, or free), shop-by-phone, grocery store delivery, and the

food bank. Some also depend on food that is provided through community programs and get-togethers.

A key provider from a Westside social service agency identified that increasing numbers of individuals are requesting food vouchers for local grocery stores, and “approximately 25-35% “ are requesting food vouchers more than once per month. Further, respecting food voucher provision, trends in increased use are often seen as occurring around religious and spiritual holidays wherein individuals’ expenses are often stretched further than usual, and customary traditions often revolve around food.

For families and individuals in need, there are further non-food subsidies often available through neighbourhood houses and local community centres. Although modest, these subsidies are seen to possibly increase the money available for food.

Although a number of Westside residents identified the Greater Vancouver Food Bank as a way to supplement their food sources, the lack of a Food Bank presence on the Westside was seen as highly problematic by some focus group participants and service providers. Further, the quality of food bank items was considered to be poor and often inappropriate for dietary restrictions including diabetic diets.

### Going Without

As previously stated, individuals tend to forsake nutritious foods for foods that are of low cost and perceived as “filling”. This is just one example of how individuals are seen as “going without”. Further examples include the practice of eating only one meal per day and decreasing spending on other non-food items (including clothing and leisure activities). One service provider identified that parents who are financially strained tend to feed their children first and eat less themselves. Another key informant acknowledged

that new immigrants – individuals who often remain bound to the food of their country of origin – often have difficulty obtaining foods with which they are familiar, or simply cannot afford them. Concerning this finding, new immigrants are often unable to participate fully in social, cultural, or religious customs, however, this finding is not seen as exclusive to these individuals and further includes many other Westside residents.

### **Possible Solutions**

Before identifying possible solutions, service providers and community members, alike, need first acknowledge that food insecurity is an issue in the Westside, despite many common notions to the contrary. From a service provider perspective, “the city, the province, and the federal government are not going to entertain you if you have nothing; if you’re not going to show them figures, that there is a need, or a desire, then you have nothing”. A big education piece is therefore necessary within the community in terms of the issues themselves and what community members can do about them. One operative question in framing the issue is how people themselves define food security or insecurity.

Food security in general, is a topic identified by service providers as being poorly understood. Some individuals may consider themselves to be food secure by nature of the fact that there is food in the cupboard, irregardless of its quality. As such, further education is warranted concerning the breadth and scope of food insecurity within urban Canada.

### **Grassroots and Broader Level Initiatives**

At the community level, relationships need first be strengthened between neighbourhood and community members. Several service providers suggested that you need people in a community with the knowledge and desire to make changes in their own

backyards. Neighbourhood barbeques are an example of how some communities have brought members together around food and food traditions. Readily organized public events may further provide an avenue for raising issues. Further, those directly affected by food insecurity need to be involved in the process of identifying and implementing possible solutions. Coalitions may be formed not only amongst community members, but also service providers. Local businesses may too be included as valuable collaborators. Although some such coalitions currently exist, greater communication between Westside service providers can only serve to ameliorate the issue. To draw more attention to the issue, coalitions may be best served to tie the topic of food insecurity to other issues such as healthcare, income, and housing.

### Research

The first step to addressing an issue is to get a clear picture of what the needs are. Research is necessary to get a sense of what is going on and how to get programs initiated. Considering that some work has already been completed in this regard, for example, research cited by the City of Vancouver Food Policy Council, those who conduct further research are best served to make use of and build upon the data already collected. This data may include the examination of policies and programs that have been successfully implemented in other cities and countries.

Although looking at food security in the Westside serves as an appropriate starting point, it is in the opinion of the authors as well as a number of Westside service providers that a community-by-community survey of food security is a more realistic way of determining what the needs of individuals in this area are.

### Examples

Focus group participants and key informants had a number of suggestions to address food insecurity in the Westside. Such suggestions include: opening a Westside food bank, and educating the public concerning the donation of nutritious, quality foods; utilizing food recovery operations such as *Quest*; starting an affordable Westside farmer's market; developing more community kitchens and community gardens; growing edible fruit trees on boulevards and in parks; expanding food delivery and hot meal services; initiating bulk buying clubs; and creating further community awareness concerning the *plant-a-row/grow-a-row* program and the *fruit tree project*. In addition, it was suggested that a system need be devised in order to “get people to food more often”. Cited examples included shop-by-phone and an expanded shuttle bus service.

Not only did participants identify possible solutions, they further indicated a number of barriers that would need to be considered in effort to create successful food – related programs. Some such barriers include: the need for commercial grade kitchens in community kitchen operations; the lack of available shuttle buses and qualified driver; the possibility that community members deemed most ‘at risk’ for food insecurity may still be unable to access programs; and the amount of commitment, finances, and expertise that are required to run successful programs.

### **Limitations**

Although some relevant themes have come forth out of the research herein discussed, a further avenue of exploration needs to be the scope of food insecurity in Vancouver's Westside. The time allotted for conducting this research, including conducting focus groups, was, in many ways, insufficient. For example, given the

sensitive nature of the topics discussed, there was insufficient time to develop trust between focus group facilitators and would-be participants. A further challenge was securing focus group participants who came from diverse backgrounds, whether financially, socially, or culturally. New themes continued to emerge with each interview and each focus group, therefore it is conceivable that more information may have been garnered from a larger and/or more diverse sample.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the authors would like to thank both services providers and community members who contributed to this report. The richness of information and personal anecdotes made it ever more clear that there is a great need to address food security issues in this often neglected part of Vancouver.

## Appendix A

### *Food Security*

#### *Focus Group/Key Informant Questions*

##### *Community Members*

\*\* represents key questions that will be asked

##### Starting with food stores, we have five questions:

1. \*\*At what food stores do you do the majority of your shopping?
2. Why do you use these stores most?
3. How do you get to the store?
4. \*\*Is transportation for shopping a problem?
5. Now think of the different types of stores that you shop at. Are you satisfied with the stores you use most frequently?

##### Thinking about alternative sources of food, we have five questions:

1. Let's start with home grown or produced food. How many of you grow your own food in a home garden? Why/why not?
2. How heavily, and at what times of the year, do you rely on these foods in your regular food supply?
3. Are there community gardens in your community that you are aware of?
4. Are there farmers' markets in your community? Does anyone ever go to a farmers' market to buy food? Why/why not?
5. Do you ever use delivered meals?
6. \*\*You may also have a less formal "help" network, or more specifically, people you know who will lend you money, give you food, or feed you. Can you describe some of these networks? Do you ever provide this type of support to others?

##### Thinking about food security as it relates to you personally, we have seven questions:

1. \*\*Who here would say that they either ran out of, or worried about running out of, food during the last six months?
2. To explore further, we're wondering about the frequency of these things happening. How many would say they either ran out of, or worried about running out of food every month? Did these things happen at specific times of the month? Or at certain times of the year?
3. Do these events (running out of food, or worrying about it) follow any pattern? In other words, does something happen regularly that causes you to run out of food, or to worry about it? (i.e. bills, rent, unforeseen expenses).
4. \*\*What might you do if there isn't enough food? Let's start by discussing the things you do to make the food you have last longer? (i.e. skip meals, eat cheaper foods).

5. **\*\***People sometimes go to different places to get enough food when they are running short of money. If you have used any of these services, what places have you gone to for food and how often?
6. What would you say is most important in helping you cope at times when food or food concerns are major problems?
7. **\*\***Now one last question. Imagine that you have the opportunity to do something in the community to help people have an easier time getting the types of foods that they want or need. What would you do?

(If in need of possible ideas, see below)

- Bring stores closer to homes?
- Try to get the foods you want available in the stores.
- Establish and enforce standards of cleanliness for stores.
- Provide public transportation to the large supermarkets.
- Start a food co-op.
- Start a farmers' market in the community.
- Create outreach programs for alternative resources.
- Establish a community garden

#### *Service Providers*

1. In the past six months, do you think that many households in the community have a problem with food security?
2. Why do you think that household food security is a problem?
3. In your experience, how do people cope with the problem of food insecurity?
4. Do you think that food is accessible, available, and affordable in this community?
5. Are there differences in different parts of the community?
6. How does the community address food insecurity? What resources are in place to avoid the problem if it does not exist?
7. What else could be done to improve the community's problems with food insecurity?

## Appendix B

### *Westside General Demographics*

*Age distribution (2001 Census data).*

<b>Age</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Percent</b>	
0-4	4450	3.8	
5-9	4760	4.1	
10-14	6100	5.3	
15-19	7430	6.4	
20-24	9330	8.0	
25-49	49,410	42.6	
50-64	20,440	17.6	
65-74	7015	6.0	(6.7 for Vancouver, 7.3 for BC)
75+	7125	6.1	(5.4 for Vancouver, 5.7 for BC)
<b>Total</b>	<b>116,060</b>		

*Ethnic identity (2001 Census from BC Stats).*

Total Visible Minorities	28.2%
Single Origins	27.6%
Chinese	19.8
South Asian	1.8
Filipino	0.7
Japanese	1.6
Other	3.6
Multiple Origins	0.6
Total Aboriginal People	1.0
Rest of Population	70.8

*Home language (2001 Census CHA4.)*

English	71%
Korean	1%
Chinese n.o.s	3%
Cantonese	3%
Mandarin	2%
All other	20%

*Knowledge of official languages.*

English only	83%
English and French	15%
Neither E or F	2% (6% for all of Vancouver)

Lone Parents 22.5% of families with children at home (25.7% for all of BC)  
(13.3 according to CHA 4 data 15.5 for all of BC)

*Percentage of people age 65+ living situations (CHA4 – 2001 census data).*

Age 65+ living alone	32%
Age 65+ with spouse and/or child	61%
Age 65+ living with relatives	5%
Age 65+ living with non-relatives	2%

*Income*

Male \$35,267 (median income, CHA4 – 2001 census data)

Female \$25,634 (median income, CHA4 – 2001 census data)

*Income distribution among families.*

< 20,000	8.6% (12.0% in BC)
20,000-79,999	45.1% (60.4% in BC)
80,000+	46.2% (27.6% in BC)

*Incidence of low income in economic families*

12.5% (13.9% in BC)

*Income share of bottom half (poorest) of households*

17.3% (21.4% in BC)

*Income dependency**Composition of total income – 2000*

Employment	75.4%	75.8% in BC
Government transfers	5.2%	11.8% in BC
Other	19.4%	12.4% in BC

*Income Assistance**% of population receiving IA benefits – Sept 2005*

Total (0-64)	1.0%	3.7% in BC
Children (0-18)	0.6%	3.7% in BC
Youth (19-24)	0.6%	2.8% in BC

*% of income assistance caseload that are single parent families*      8.9% (17.3% in BC)  
(0.1% are employable)

*% of Seniors receiving max Gov't income supplement – 2005*

Total	2.4%	3.5% in BC
Males	2.2%	2.8% in BC
Females	2.7%	4.0% in BC

*% of children (<19 yrs) receiving income assistance – Sept 2005*

Total	0.6%	(3.7% in BC)
And living with a single parent	0.5%	(3.0% in BC)
And living with disabled parent(s)	0.3%	(1.2% in BC)

*Employment Insurance Beneficiaries*

19-64 years of age	1131	(1.5% of population vs. 3.1% in BC)
percent female	71.6%	64.2% in BC
percent 19-24	6.0%	11.0% in BC

*Housing Costs*

Households (occupied non-farm non-reserve) – 2001

% Renting	45.4%	33.7% in BC
Gross rent or major monthly payment (\$)		
Tenants	1005	(750 in BC)
Owners	1168	(904 in BC)
% paying 30% or more of their income on housing costs		
Tenants	39.4%	(44.1% in BC)
Owners	20.6%	(20.7% in BC)
Total	29.2%	(28.6% in BC)

*Education Level % of population 20+ yrs old (CHA4 – 2001 census)*

Less than grade 9	2%	(7% in BC)
High school graduate	7%	(12% in BC)
Bachelor's degree or higher	49%	(18% in BC)

% of population age 25-54 – 2001

Without high school completion	4.5%	(17.2% in BC)
Without completed post-secondary	20.4%	(42.3% in BC)

Life expectancy at Birth – avg 2001-2005 83.5years (80.8 in BC)

*City of Vancouver – Neighborhood data 2001*

	Kerrisdale	Dunbar-Southlands	Arbutus Ridge	Shaughnessy	Kitsilano	West Pt. Grey	<b>Vancouver</b>
Age Groups							
19-	22.6 %	26.2%	21.0%	23.1%	11.6%	21.1%	<b>18.6%</b>
20-39	25.5%	25.1%	23.6%	24.6%	49.6%	28.8%	<b>36.6%</b>
40-64	36.6%	36.5%	33.6%	35.6%	30.1%	35.9%	<b>31.9%</b>
65+	15.2%	12.2%	21.8%	16.5%	8.5%	14.2%	<b>12.9%</b>
Avg. Household Income	\$112,512	\$110,698	\$88,940	\$136,252	\$66,093	\$105,383	<b>\$57,916</b>
Pop. In low income households	15.7%	11.7%	23.3%	13.1%	19.0%	14.4%	<b>27.0%</b>
Single parent families	12.9%	12.4%	14.0%	8.4%	14.7%	13.6%	<b>17.0%</b>
Rented dwellings	37.2%	20.4%	39.4%	26.8%	60.2%	38.2%	<b>56.2%</b>
Avg. gross rent	\$1077	\$1351	\$1124	\$1259	\$905	\$1075	<b>\$796</b>
Employed labor force	6570	10,365	6145	4315	26,520	6,695	<b>278,845</b>
Census population	14, 035	21,310	14,515	9,020	39,620	12,680	<b>545,671</b>

## **Appendix C**

### *List of Key Informants*

Participants at a weekly congregate meal for seniors (23)

Participants at a recreation program for seniors (3)

Residents of a BC Housing complex (9)

Participants in a parent-child drop in program (2)

Nutritionists for the regional health authority (child and youth, adult and older adult) (3)

Staff members of two social service agencies (2)



### Works Cited

- BC Stats (2005). *Local Health Area 164-Vancouver Westside: Statistical Profile*.  
Retrieved January 2007 from  
[http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/sep/van/van\\_main.asp](http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/sep/van/van_main.asp).
- British Columbia: Provincial Health Officer (2006). *Food, health and well-being in British Columbia. Provincial Health Officer's annual report 2005*. Victoria, BC: Ministry of Health.
- City of Vancouver (2005). *Community webpages Arbutus Ridge: Community statistics census data*. Retrieved March 8, 2007 from  
[http://vancouver.ca/community\\_profiles/CommunityList.htm](http://vancouver.ca/community_profiles/CommunityList.htm).
- City of Vancouver (2005). *Community webpages Dunbar-Southlands: Community statistics census data*. Retrieved March 8, 2007 from  
[http://vancouver.ca/community\\_profiles/CommunityList.htm](http://vancouver.ca/community_profiles/CommunityList.htm).
- City of Vancouver (2005). *Community webpages Kerrisdale: Community statistics census data*. Retrieved March 8, 2007 from  
[http://vancouver.ca/community\\_profiles/CommunityList.htm](http://vancouver.ca/community_profiles/CommunityList.htm).
- City of Vancouver (2005). *Community webpages Kitsilano: Community statistics census data*. Retrieved March 8, 2007 from  
[http://vancouver.ca/community\\_profiles/CommunityList.htm](http://vancouver.ca/community_profiles/CommunityList.htm).
- City of Vancouver (2005). *Community webpages Shaughnessy: Community statistics census data*. Retrieved March 8, 2007 from  
[http://vancouver.ca/community\\_profiles/CommunityList.htm](http://vancouver.ca/community_profiles/CommunityList.htm).

- City of Vancouver (2005). *Community webpages West Point Grey: Community statistics census data*. Retrieved March 8, 2007 from [http://vancouver.ca/community\\_profiles/CommunityList.htm](http://vancouver.ca/community_profiles/CommunityList.htm).
- Cohen, B. (2002). Community food security assessment toolkit. Retrieved January 17, 2007 from <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/efan02013/> .
- Dieticians of Canada (2006). *The cost of eating in BC: Annual report 2006*. Vancouver, BC: Dieticians of Canada, BC Region and the Community Nutritionists Council of BC.
- Edible Strategies Enterprises, Ltd: Sandra Mark, Frank Moreland, and Darlene Gage. (2006, October). *The good food box story*. (Volume 1, Issue 1). Retrieved January 17, 2007 from <http://www.ediblestrategies.com/gfb.html>.
- Forum of Research Connections (FORC). (2005, July). *Vancouver's food system assessment*. Vancouver, BC: Author.
- Hamm, M. W., & Bellows, A. C., (2003). Community food security and nutrition educators. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 35(1), 37-43. Retrieved January 17, 2007 from EBSCO database.
- International City/County Management Association (ICMA). (2006, August). *Community health and food access: The local government role*. Item no. (E-43398). Washington, DC: Author.
- Kurbis, et al. (2006, August). *Vancouver community food action initiative: Three year action plan*.

Martiquet, P. (no date) *Food Security*. Retrieved February 20, 2007 from  
[www.nscg.ca/pdfs/mho/070320\\_food\\_security.pdf](http://www.nscg.ca/pdfs/mho/070320_food_security.pdf).

Tarasuk, V. (2005). Household food insecurity in Canada. *Topics in Clinical Nutrition*,  
20(4), 299-312. Retrieved March 15, 2007 from Medline.

Vancouver Coastal Health (2005). *Community health area 4, Westside: A health and  
social profile, January, 2005*. Vancouver, BC: Author.

Vancouver Food Charter Subcommittee (2006, May). *Draft Vancouver food charter*.  
Vancouver, BC: Author.

Vancouver Food Policy Council. (2004). *Vancouver food policy council terms of  
reference*. Retrieved April 1, 2007, from  
[www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/socialplanning/  
initiatives/foodpolicy/policy/pdf/tor.pdf](http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/socialplanning/initiatives/foodpolicy/policy/pdf/tor.pdf)