



*City of*  
**Vancouver**  
Washington, USA

# Strategic Assessment Survey

Intercept  
Research  
Corporation

May, 2007

# Research Methodology

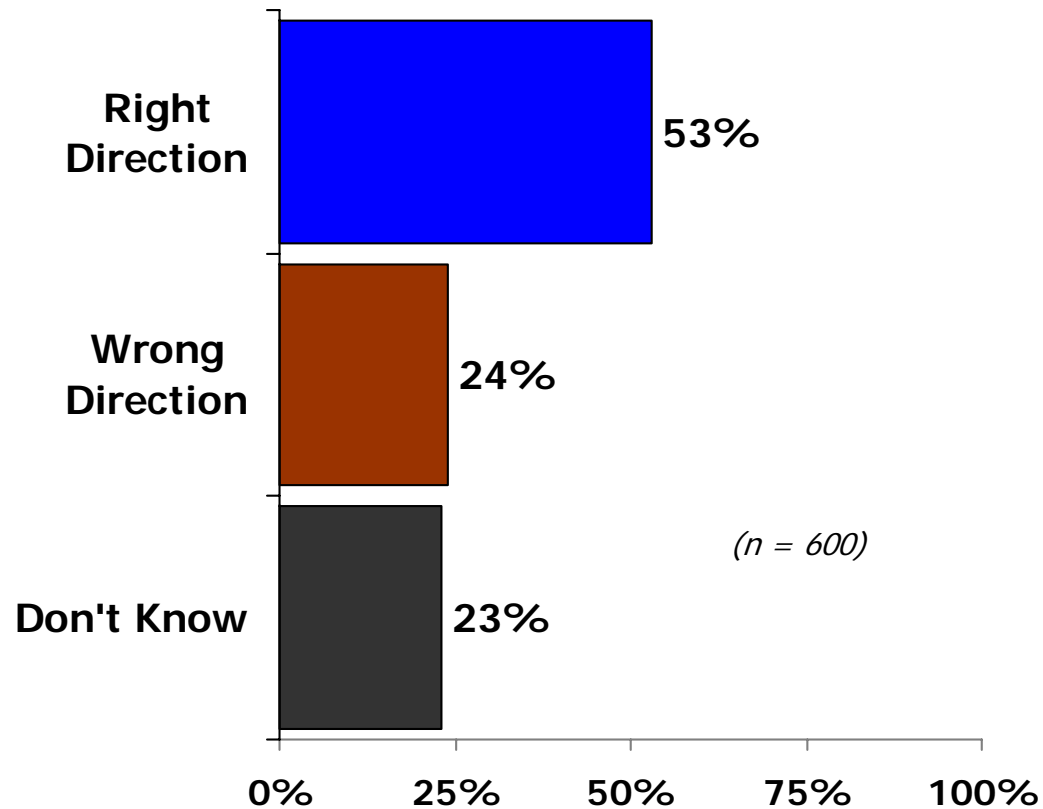
- *Telephone interviewing with 600 randomly selected respondents 18 years of age or older residing in the city of Vancouver, Washington.*
- *Sample Distribution:*

	<i>Sample Size</i>
■ West of I-5	126
■ Between I-5 and I-205	224
■ East of I-205	250
- *Surveys were conducted with equal numbers of male (300) and female (300) respondents.*
- *Data was collected April 20 through May 3, 2007.*
- *All functions related to the collection, processing and reporting of the survey data were completed in-house by Intercept Research Corporation.*
- *The margin of sampling error for the total sample is +/- 4%.*

**Question:** *When you think of or visualize the city of Vancouver today, what comes to your mind?*  
*(Multiple Response)*

<i>Responses Mentioned Most Frequently</i>	<i>(n = 600)</i>
<i>Out of control growth/overpopulated/overdeveloped/growing too fast/too crowded</i>	<i>22%</i>
<i>Positive growth/change/progress/no longer a small town/developing own identity</i>	<i>17%</i>
<i>It's a small town/homey/family-oriented/quiet/peaceful/comfortable</i>	<i>12%</i>
<i>Its livability/wonderful/nice/good place to live/work</i>	<i>12%</i>
<i>Revitalizing/improving/renovating/cleaning up downtown/Esther Short Park</i>	<i>10%</i>
<i>Traffic congestion/too much/too many cars/need more mass transit/light rail/bus system</i>	<i>9%</i>
<i>Physical beauty/environment/river/water/trees/greenery/beautiful views</i>	<i>8%</i>
<i>Bedroom community of Portland/suburb/doesn't have its own identity</i>	<i>6%</i>
<i>Park system/many/new/good parks/trails/bike paths/walkways/greenspaces</i>	<i>4%</i>
<i>Poor/incompetent/unresponsive/corrupt leadership/government</i>	<i>4%</i>

**Question:** *Do you believe Vancouver is headed in the right or wrong direction?*



**Question:** *Why do you say Vancouver is headed in the right direction? (Multiple Response)*

<i>Responses Mentioned Most Frequently</i>	<i>(n = 316)</i>
Positive growth/development/vibrant/progressive/up and coming	25%
Revitalizing/renovating/improving/downtown/Esther Short Park	22%
Developing/attracting new business/economic development	18%
Good/competent/responsive/leadership/good mayor/city council	13%
Good job of managing/handling/addressing growth of the area	10%
Good livability/quality of life/it's a good place to live/attractive	9%
Good land use decisions/zoning/strategy	9%
Good/improving transportation system/streets/roads/planning for light rail	8%
Good/added/new parks/trails/bike paths	8%

**Question:** *Why do you say Vancouver is headed in the wrong direction? (Multiple Response)*

<i>Responses Mentioned Most Frequently</i>	<i>(n = 144)</i>
Growth is out of control/overdeveloped/becoming too big/overpopulated/crowded	45%
Poor/insufficient/misdirected planning for the future/infrastructure/services	20%
Poor/unresponsive/incompetent/ineffective/city government/mayor	17%
Spend money unwisely/foolishly/poor priorities/unnecessary	14%
Loss of farmland/green spaces/open space to sprawl/expansion/overdevelopment	12%
Taxes/property taxes/fees too high/increases	9%
Traffic congestion	7%
Too much high density housing/building too much low-income/multi-family housing	6%

**Question:** *What is the single most pressing issue the City must address in the next five years?*

<i>Responses Mentioned Most Frequently</i>	<i>(n = 600)</i>
Traffic congestion/control/transportation planning	20%
Growth/manage/plan for/limit/provide adequate infrastructure/stop sprawl	17%
I-5 commute/travel between Portland and Vancouver/bridge improvements/additions	12%
Mass transit/more/improve/add light rail/more buses	7%
Maintain/repair/improve roads/streets	5%
Don't know	9%

**Question:** *What other issues or trends does the City need to pay attention to as we plan for the future?*  
*(Multiple Response)*

<i>Responses Mentioned Most Frequently</i>	<i>(n = 600)</i>
Growth/manage/plan for/limit/provide adequate infrastructure/stop sprawl	16%
Traffic congestion/control/transportation planning	12%
Schools/maintain quality/prevent overcrowding/adequately fund	10%
Mass transit/more/improve/add light rail/more/frequent buses	9%
I-5 commute/travel between Portland and Vancouver/bridge improvements/additions	8%
Maintain/repair/improve roads/streets	6%
Crime/lower crime rate/increase in the threat of crime/violence	6%
Develop/create more/good paying/family wage jobs	5%
Don't know	16%

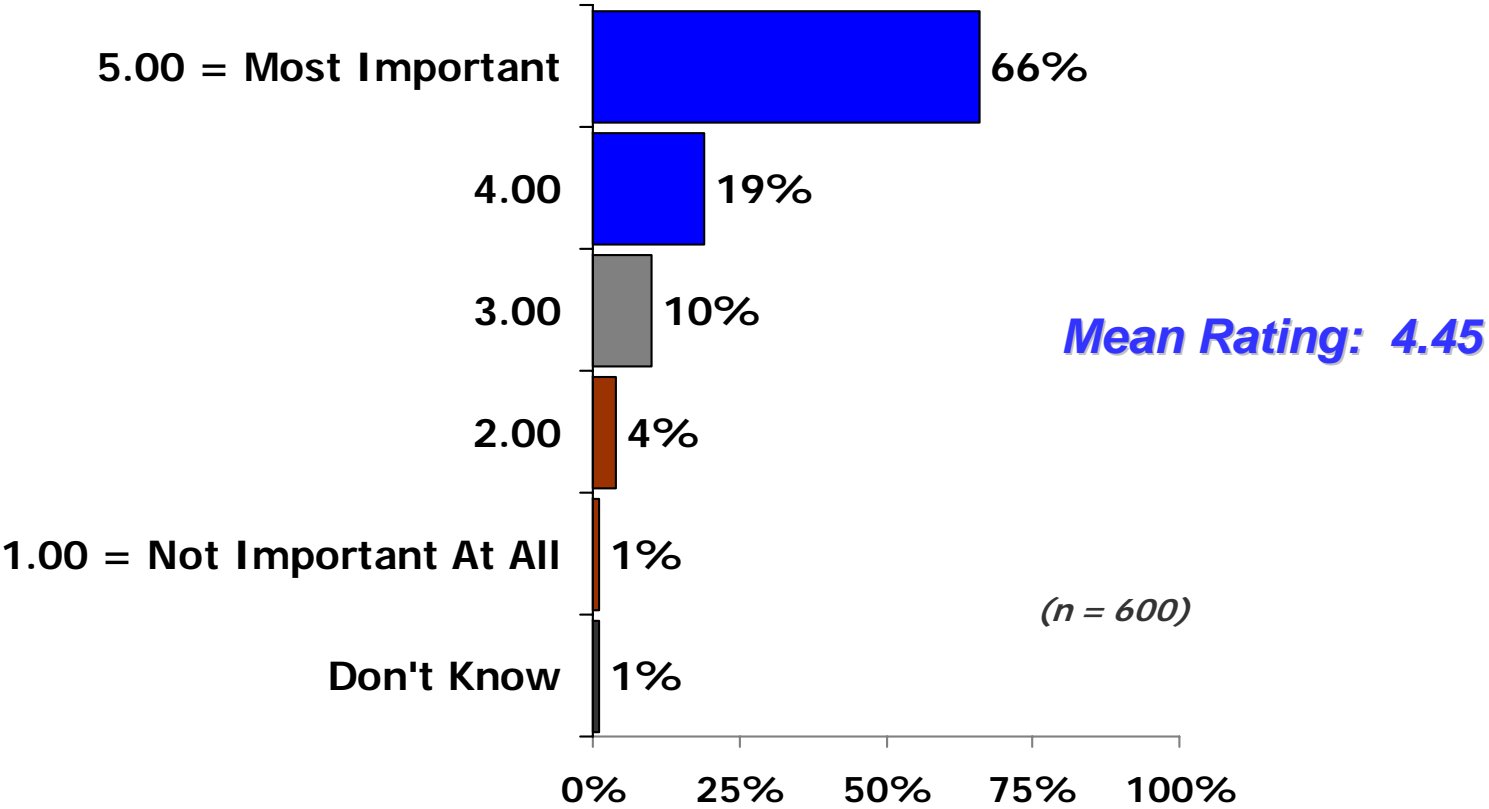
**Question:** *What hopes or dreams do you have for our city as we plan for the future? (Multiple Response)*

<i>Responses Mentioned Most Frequently</i>	<i>(n = 600)</i>
Growth is controlled/well managed/limited/no sprawl/grows in a positive/sustainable way	12%
Livability/is retained/improved/quality of life/is sustained/continues	10%
City is safe/crime rate is low/meth/drug use is lessened	10%
Retains its “small town”/friendly feel/welcoming	9%
Vancouver has its own identity/not viewed as a suburb/bedroom community of Portland	5%
The quality of schools/is maintained/improved/well-funded	4%
That we continue on the same/current path/plan/agree with what we’re doing	4%
Economy continues to grow/continue to attract business/industry	4%
Don’t know	24%

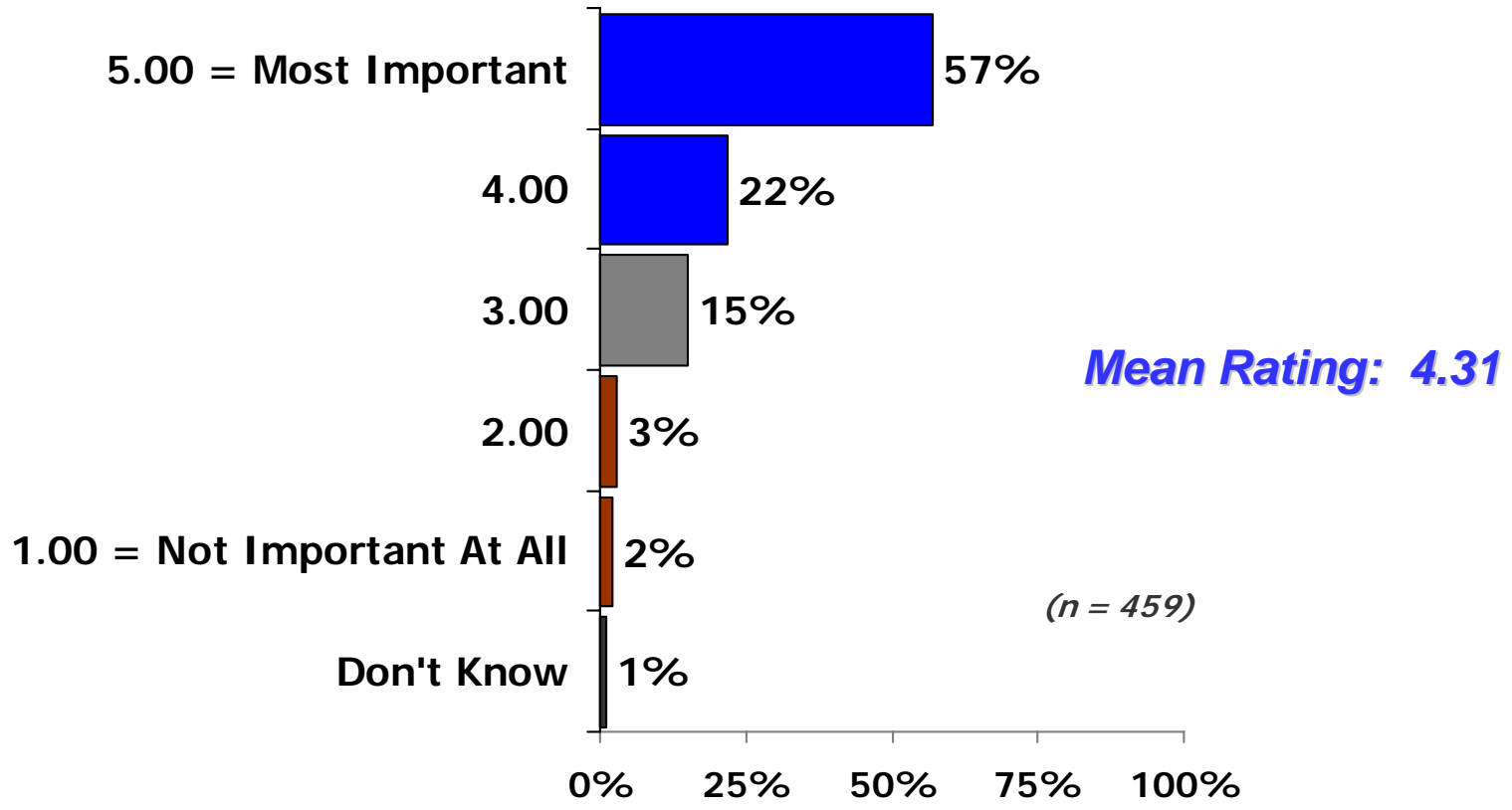
# Evaluation of Concerns for the Future

**Question:** *I would like you to evaluate a variety of challenges facing the city in the next five years. On a scale of one to five, with five - "most important," and one - "not important at all," how important are these concerns to the future of Vancouver:*

# Reducing Traffic Congestion

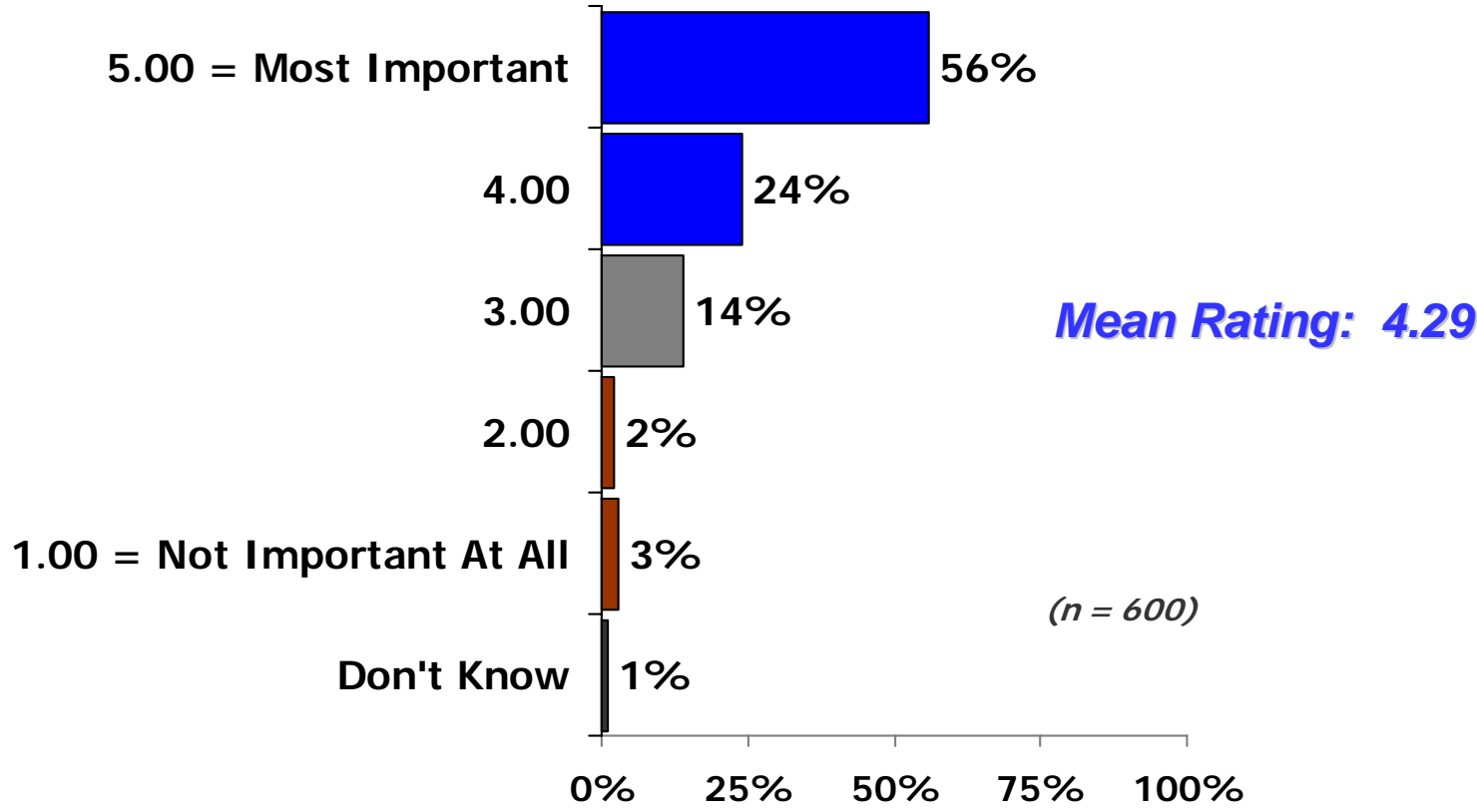


# Police Protection and Patrols



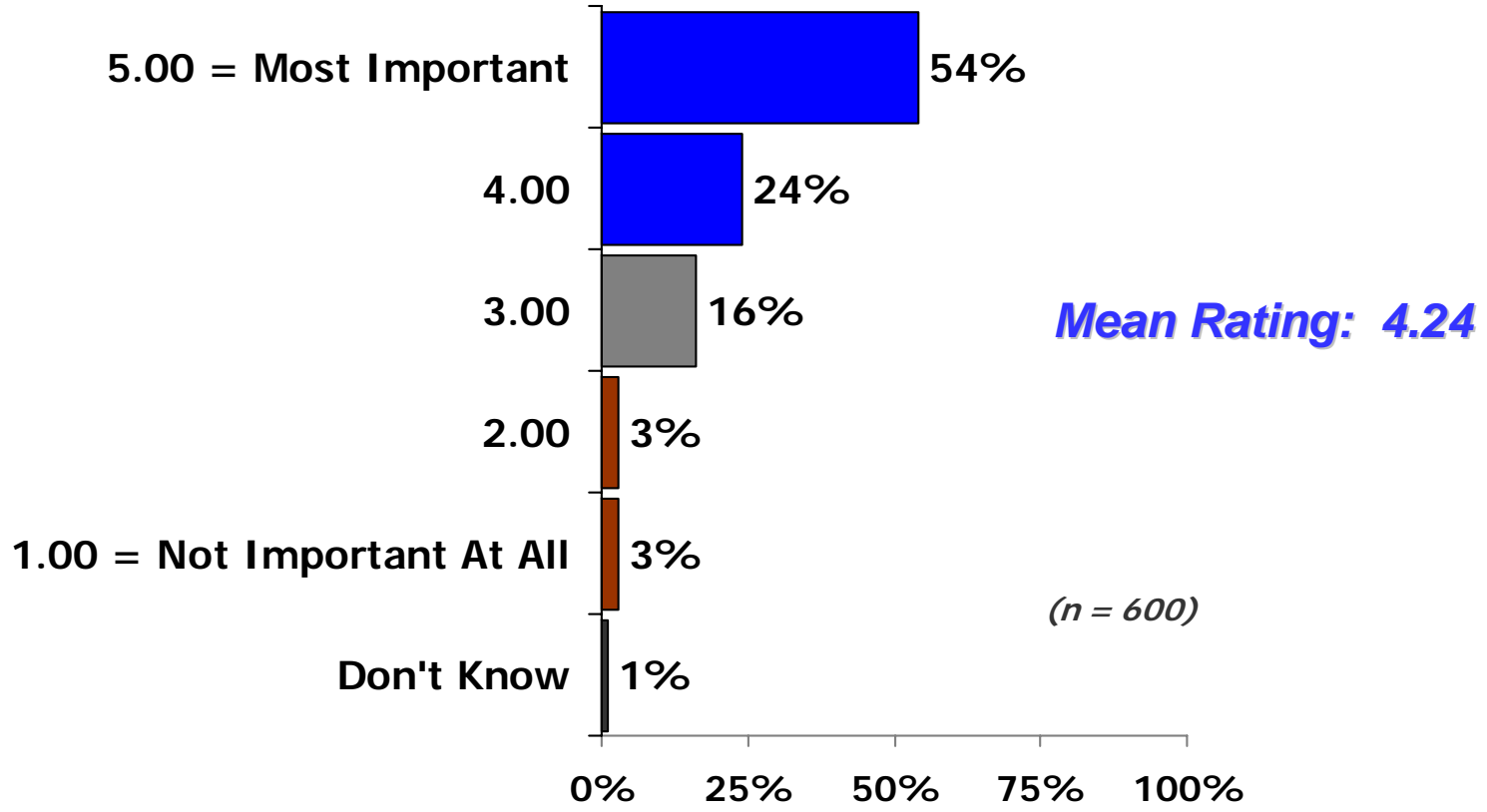
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# Community Planning and Controlling Growth

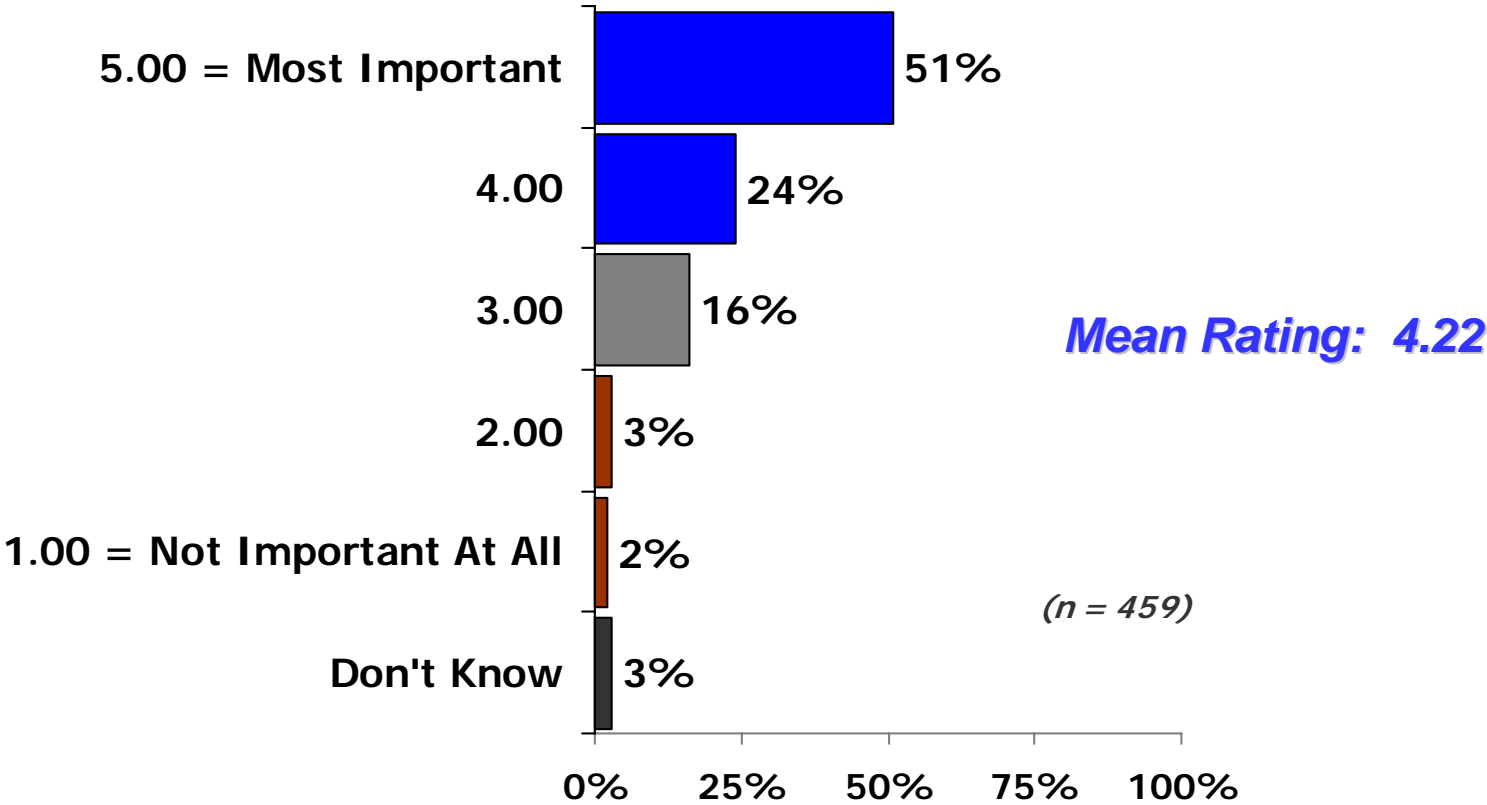


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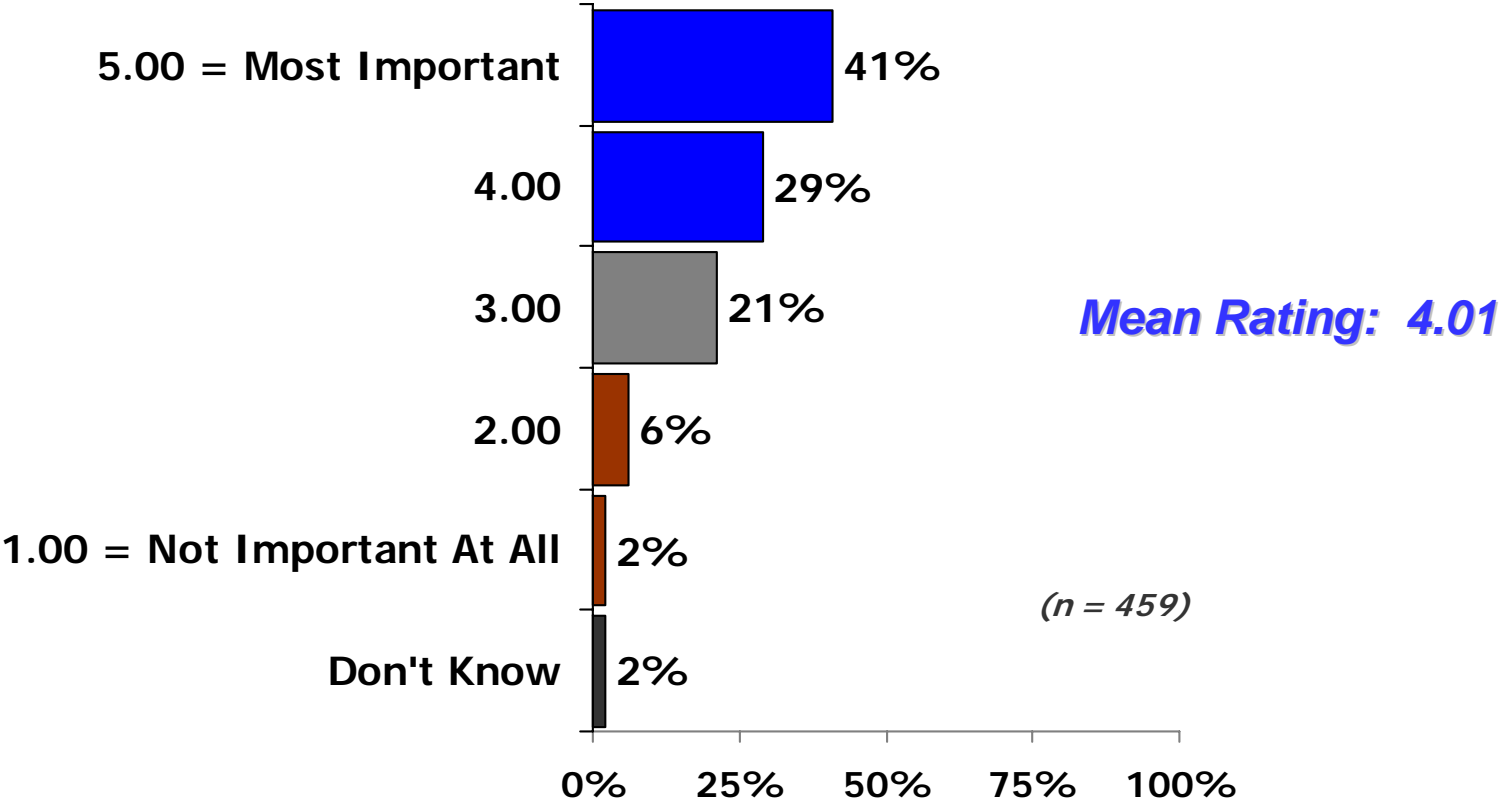
# Creating Jobs and Encouraging More Business Development



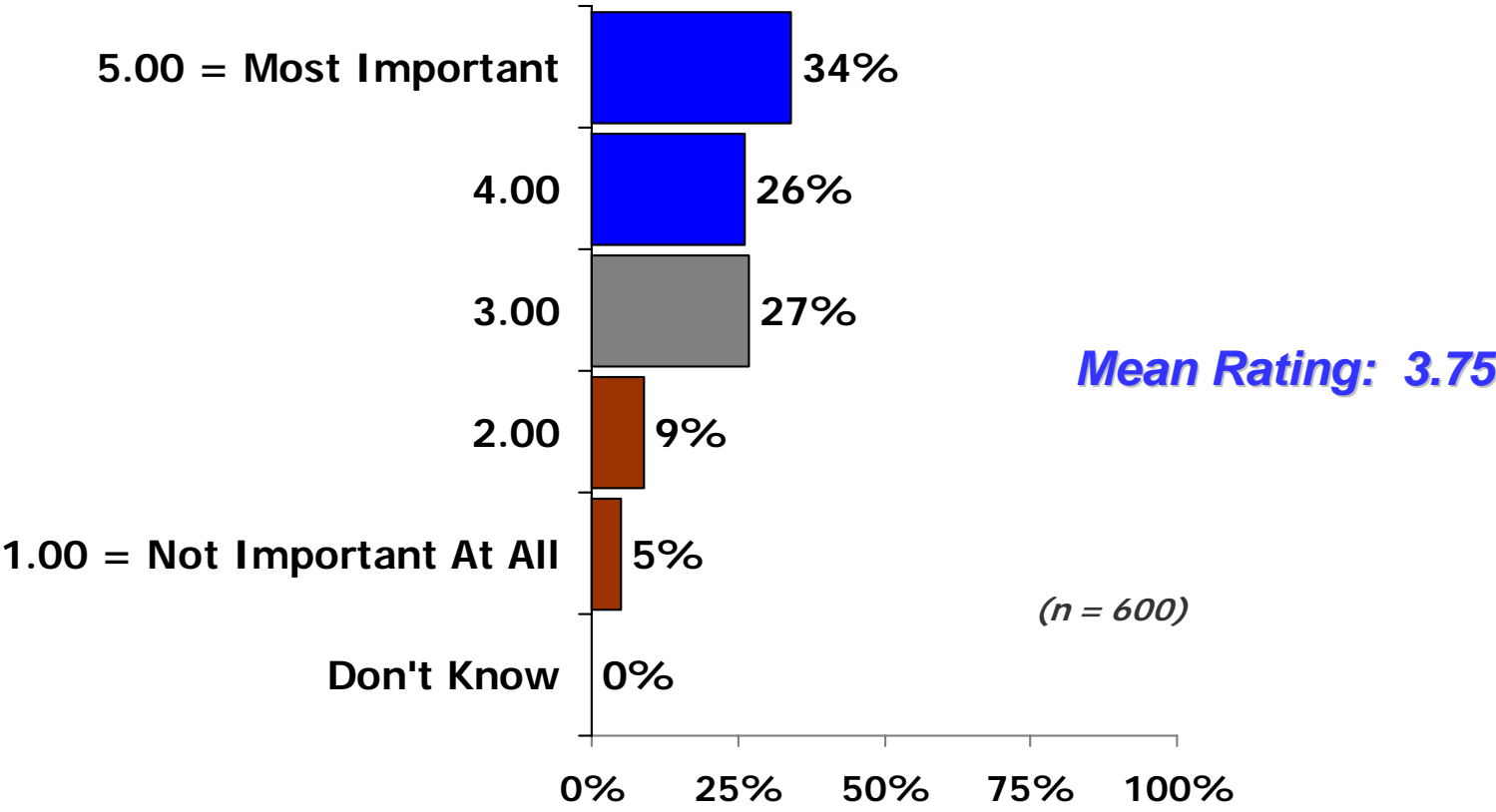
# Emergency Medical Response



# Fire Protection and Prevention

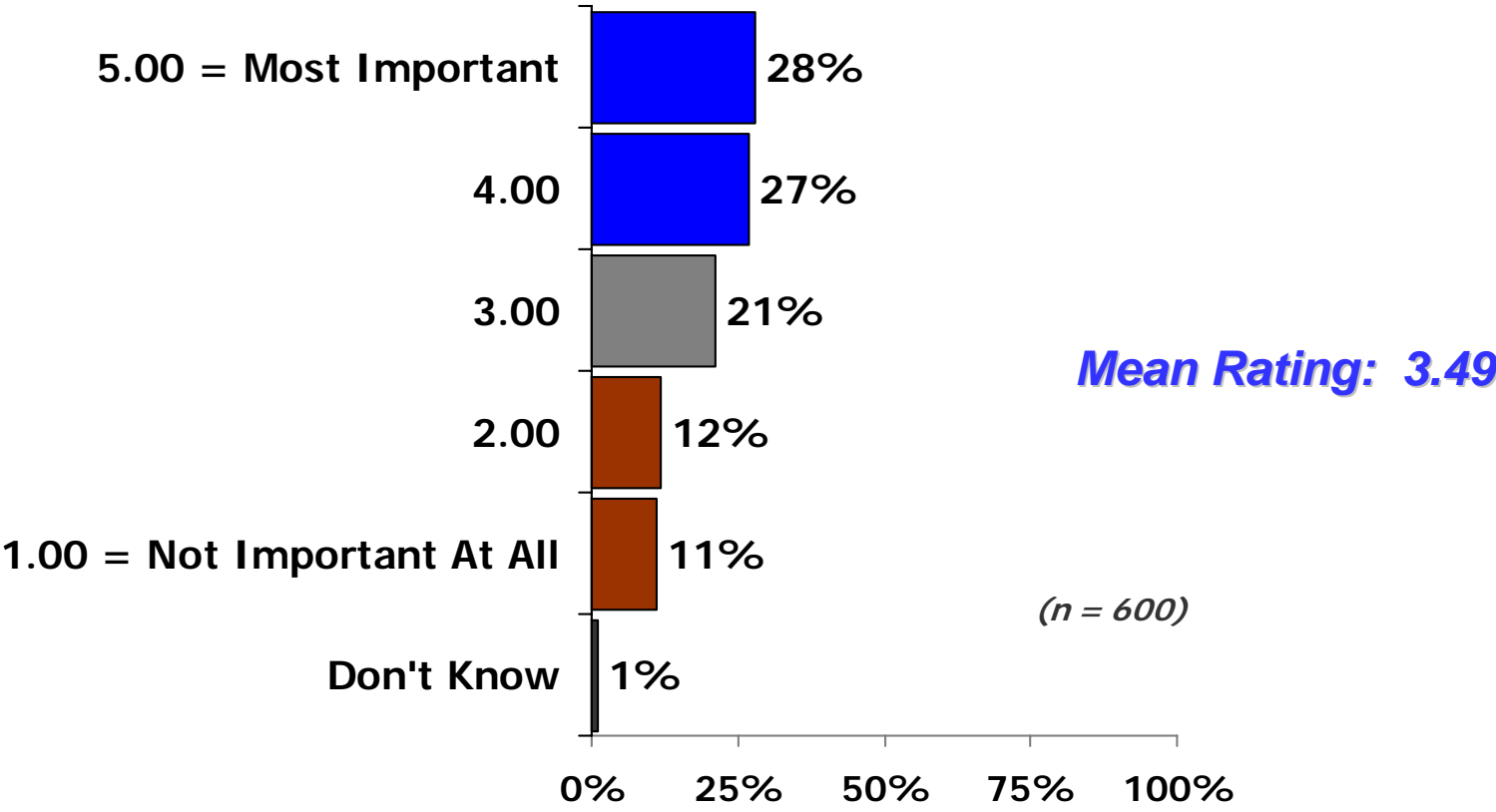


# Increasing Parks and Green Spaces



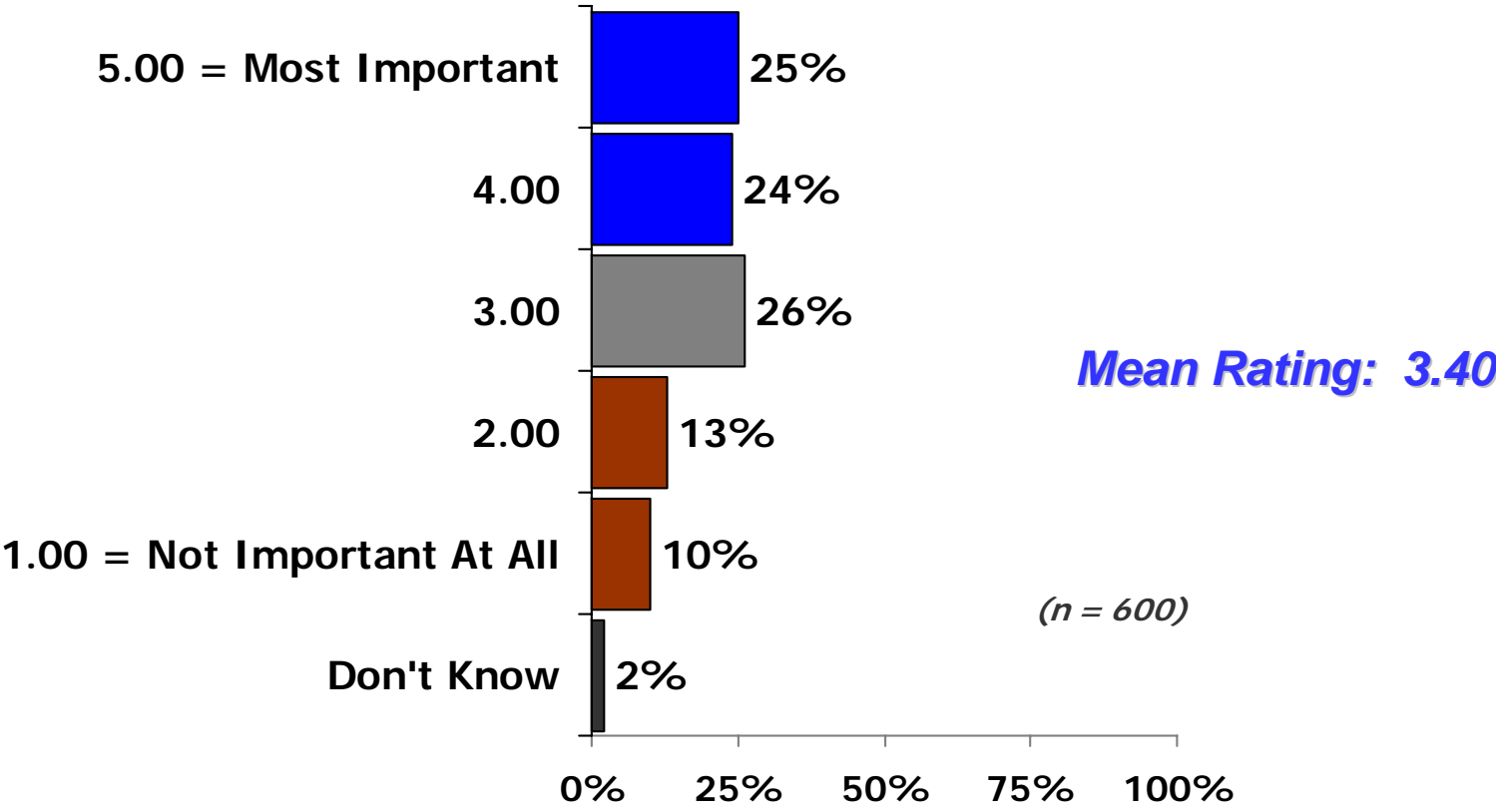
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# Revitalization of the Downtown Area

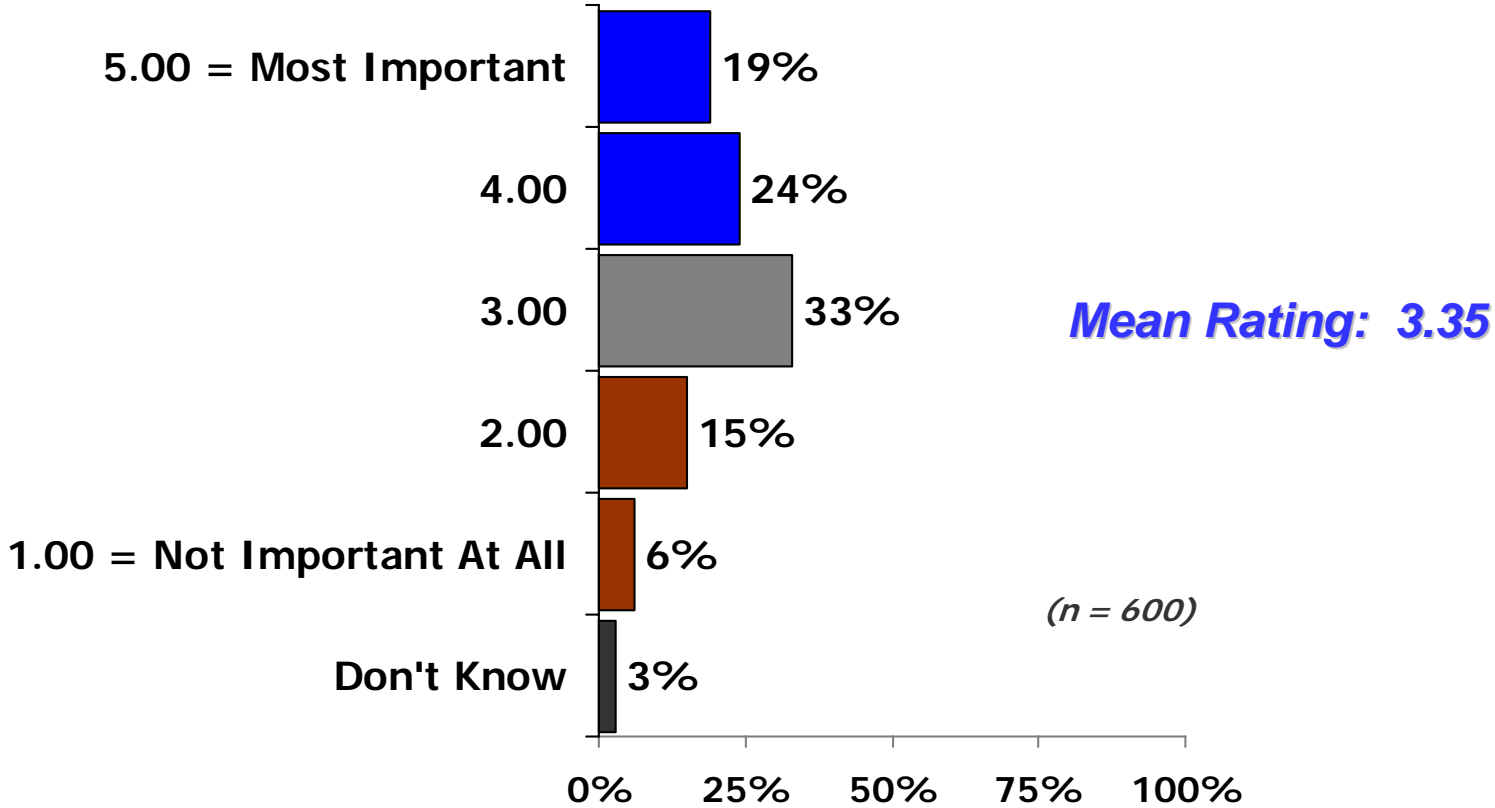


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# Continued Redevelopment of Vancouver's Waterfront

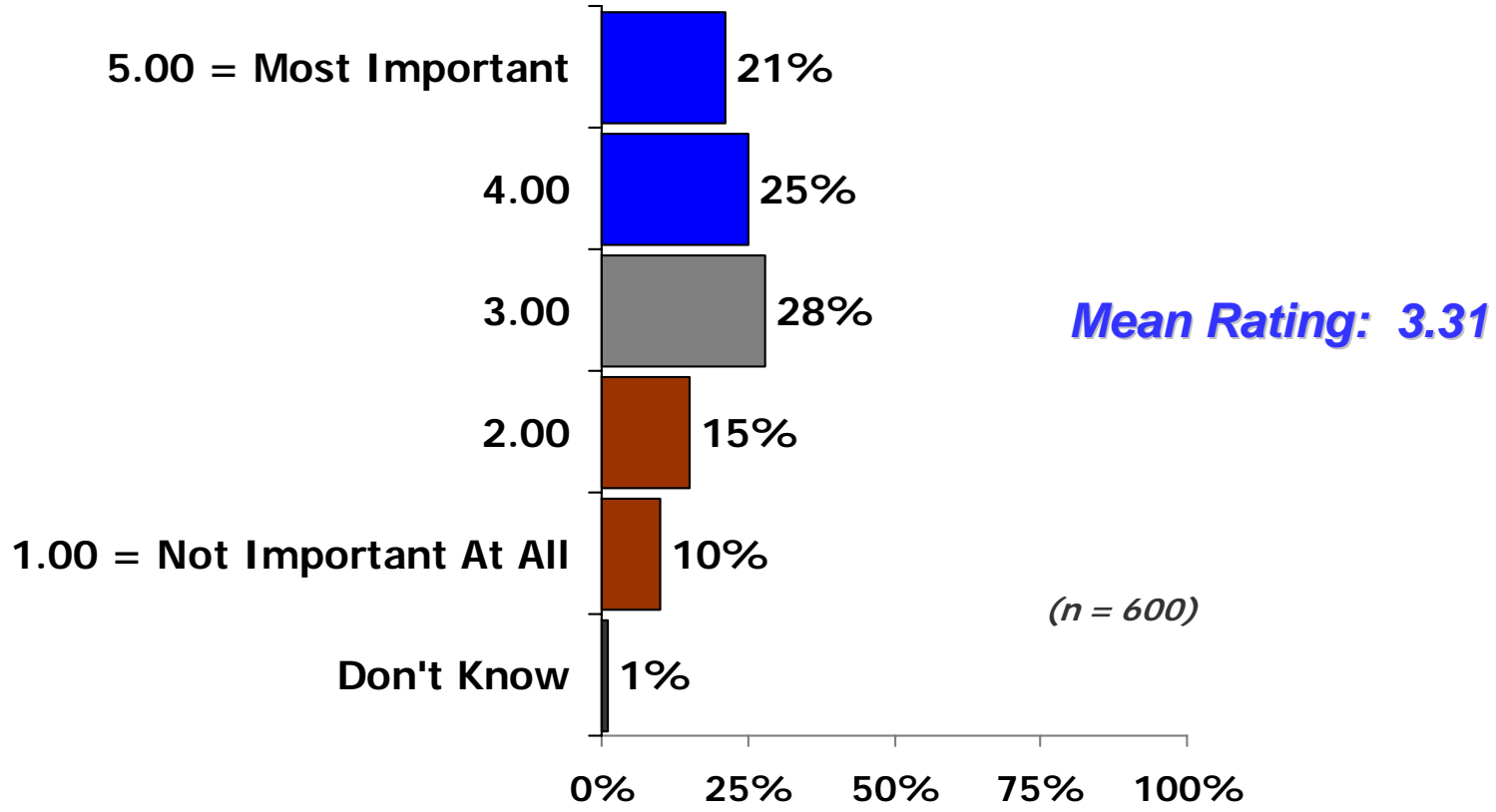


# Adding More Recreation Programs

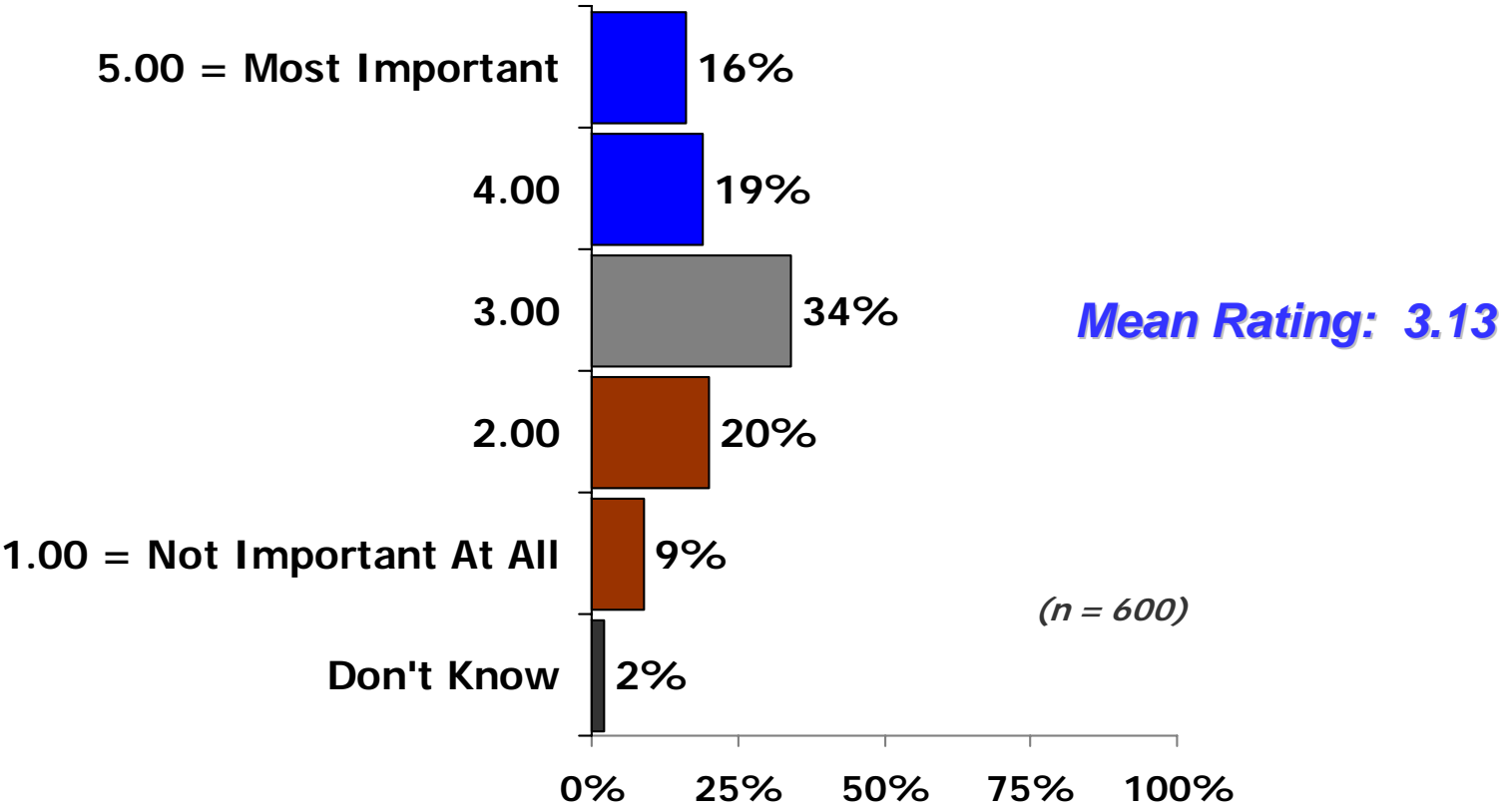


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# Adding More Walking Trails and Bike Lanes

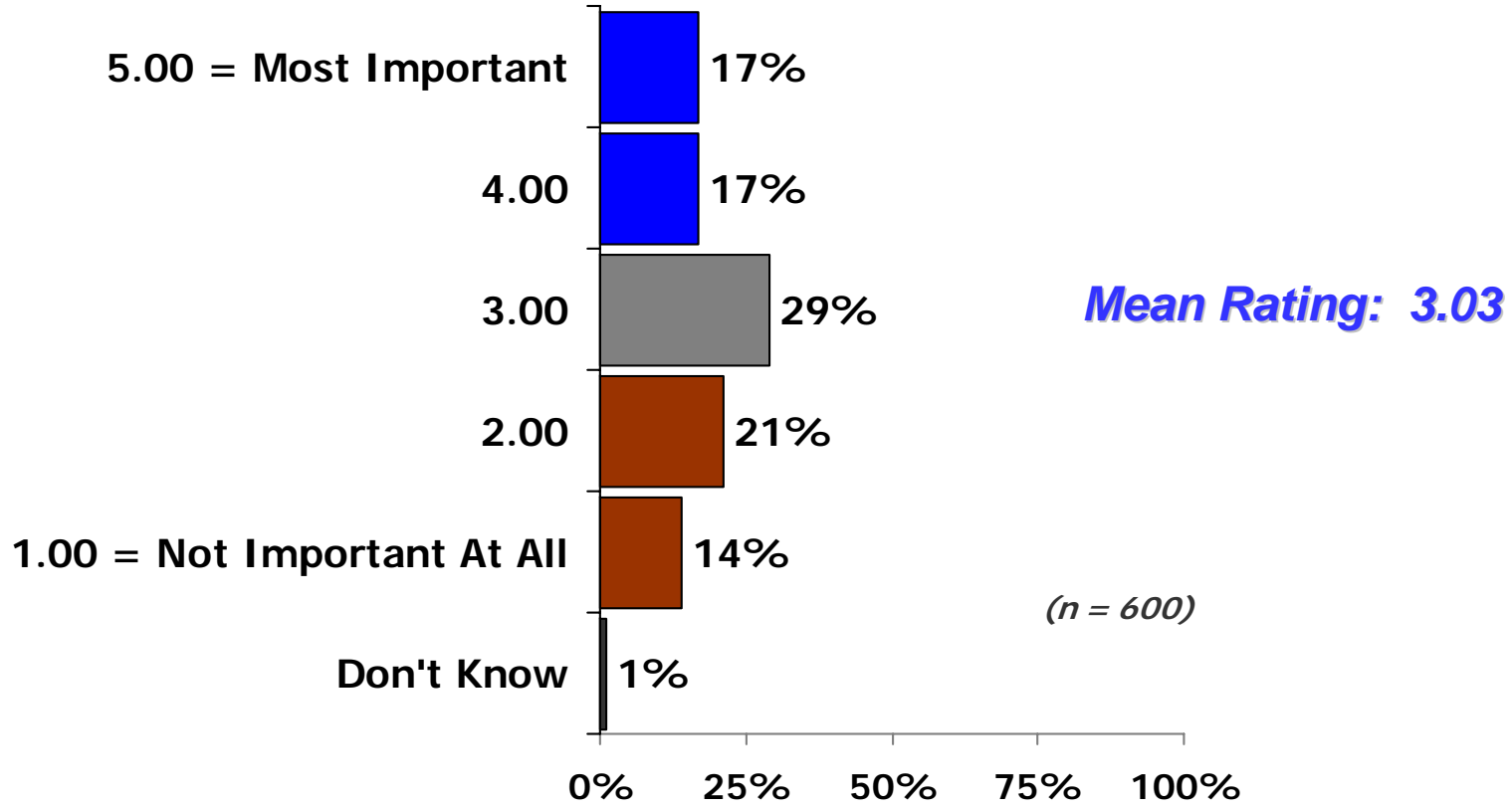


# Adding Recreation Facilities

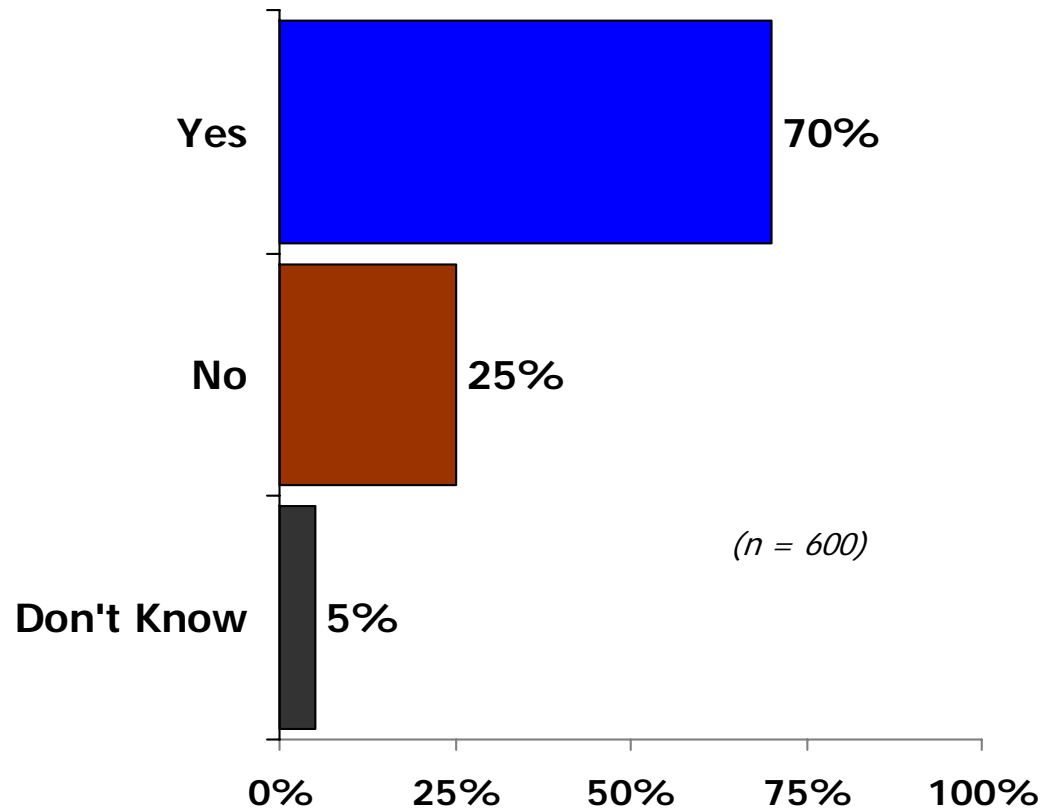


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# Adding Special Events Such as Concerts, Fairs and 4th of July Activities



**Question:** *Thinking about City of Vancouver services and facilities, do you feel you are getting your money's worth for your tax dollar or not?*



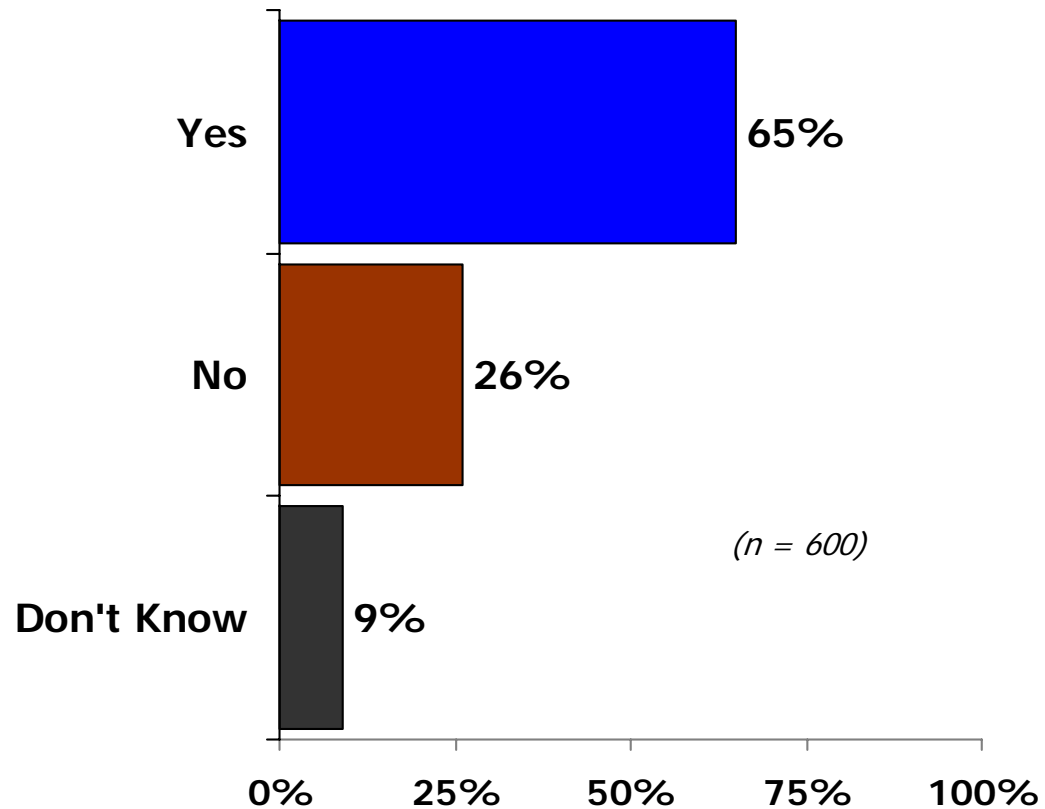
**Question:** *If you could live in any city other than Vancouver, where would it be?*

<i>Responses Mentioned Most Frequently</i>	<i>(n = 600)</i>
Other City in Washington	5%
Portland, Oregon	5%
Seattle, Washington	4%
Other City in California	3%
Other City in Oregon	3%
San Diego, California	3%
Spokane, Washington	2%
Other U.S. City	2%
Other City in Hawaii	2%
None/no other city/prefer Vancouver	18%
Don't know	17%

**Question:** *What makes this other city attractive to you?*  
*(Multiple Response)*

<i>Responses Mentioned Most Frequently</i>	<i>(n = 386)</i>
Connections to family/friends/live there/born/grew up there	23%
Small town/community/rural/less crowded/quiet/quaint	23%
Climate/weather/seasons	21%
Access to/on water/waterfront/ocean	12%
Cultural activities/art/museum/theater	10%
Physical/beauty/views/trees/greenery	6%
Outdoor activities/recreation opportunities	6%
Entertainment activities/variety of things to do	6%
Growing/vibrant economy/availability of jobs	5%
Friendly/nice people	5%

**Question:** *Do you think light rail should be brought to Vancouver?*



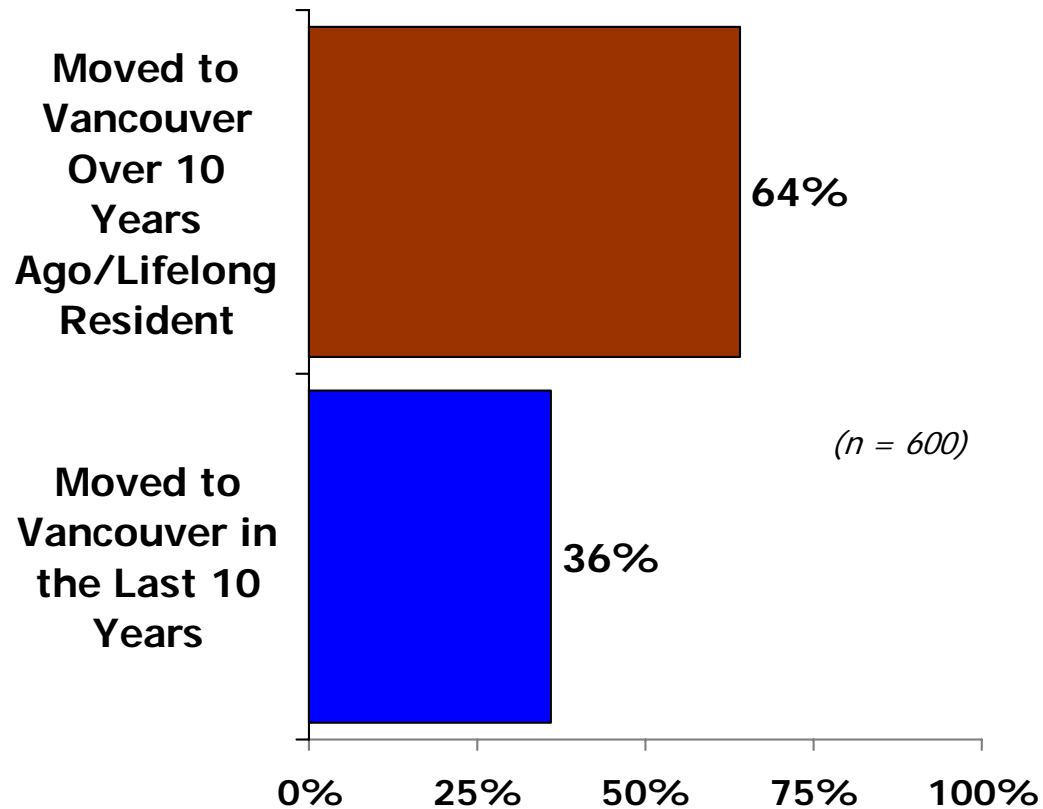
**Question:** *Why do you think light rail should be brought to Vancouver? (Multiple Response)*

<i>Responses Mentioned Most Frequently</i>	<i>(n = 390)</i>
Would reduce traffic/congestion/bring traffic relief	54%
Improve access to Portland/easy/convenient/connectivity	28%
Efficient means of travel/mass transit/good option	21%
Good for/environment/ecological benefits/would reduce pollution	17%
Necessary for Vancouver to grow/develop	9%
Would reduce dependence on gas/fuel/oil	8%
More people would use mass transit	5%
Would ease parking problems in downtown Vancouver	1%
Would help to revitalize downtown Vancouver	1%

**Question:** *Why don't you think light rail should be brought to Vancouver? (Multiple Response)*

<i>Responses Mentioned Most Frequently</i>	<i>(n = 154)</i>
Too expensive/the cost is too high	29%
Not worth the cost/benefit/waste of money/prefer other alternatives	25%
Not necessary/we don't need it	19%
Low ridership/usage	18%
Not a priority for spending tax dollars	10%
Limited accessibility	7%
Would cause traffic problems	4%
Unsafe	4%
Would bring crime/violence/drugs/to Vancouver/from Portland	2%

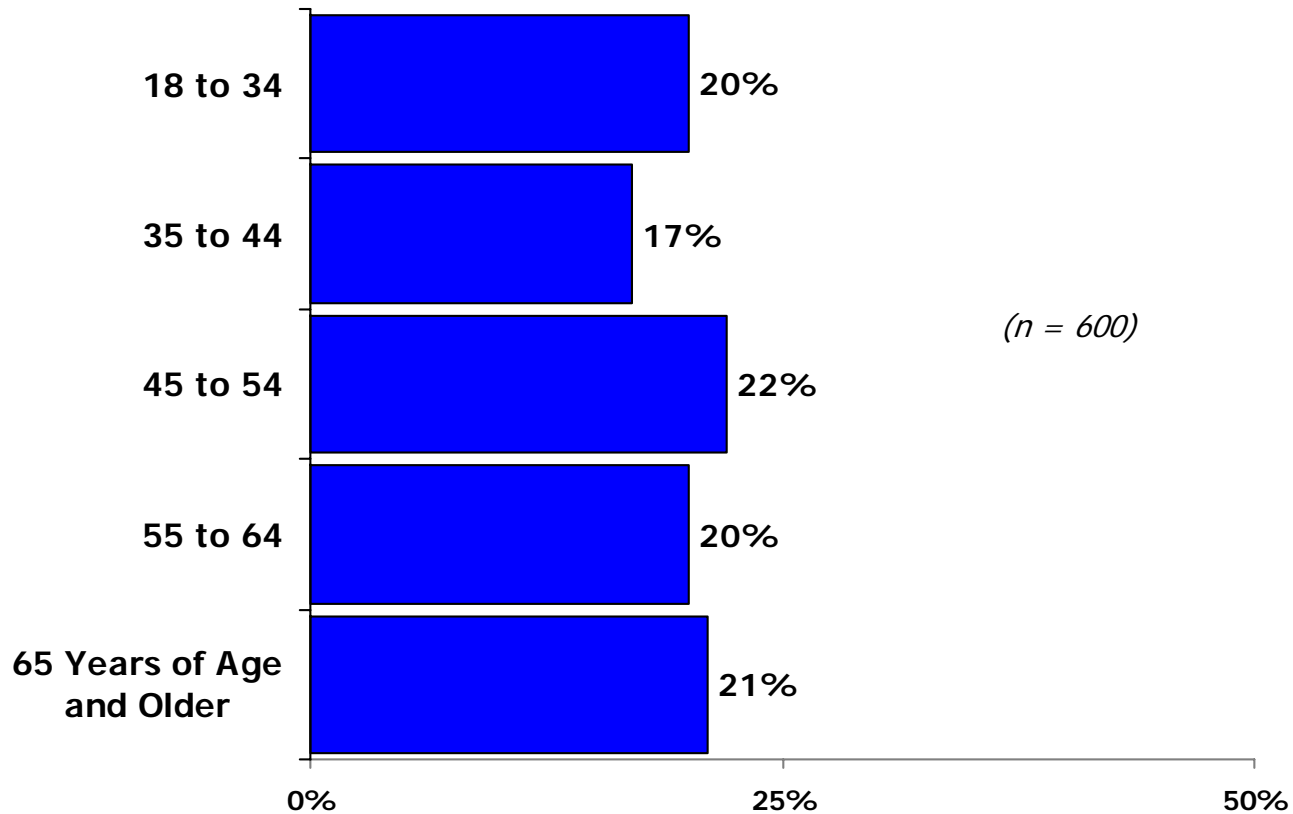
# Vancouver Residency



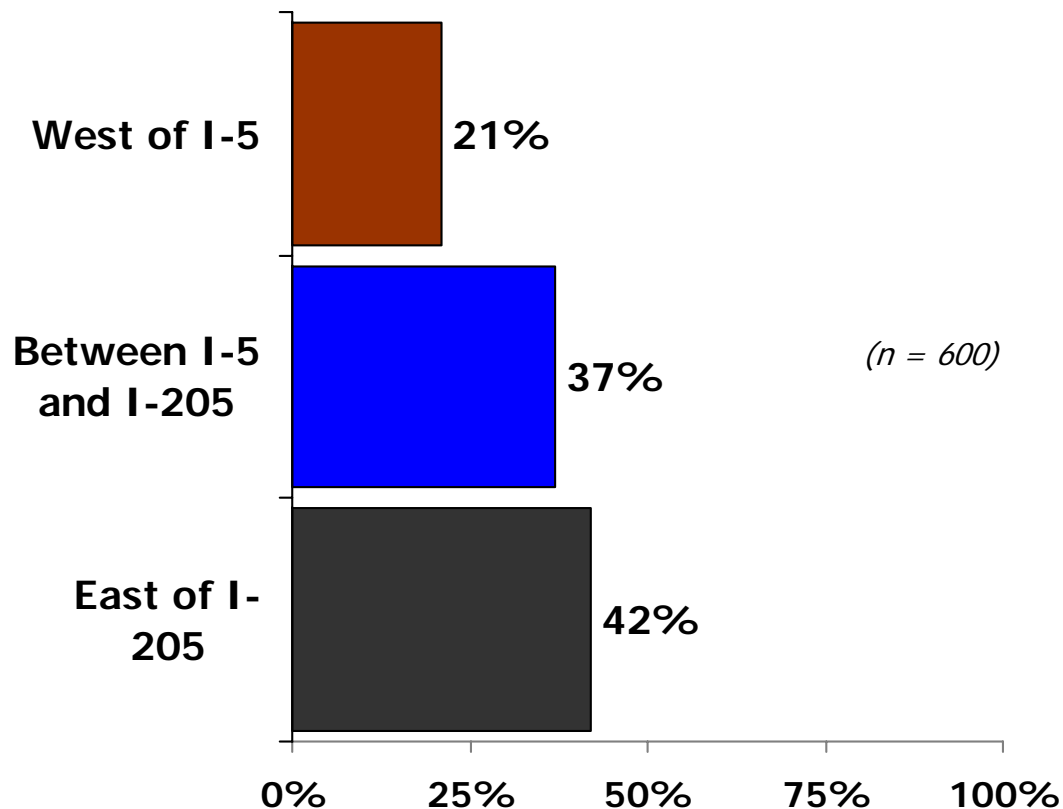
**Question:** *If you moved to Vancouver in the past ten years, why did you move here? (Multiple Response)*

<i>Responses Mentioned Most Frequently</i>	<i>(n = 214)</i>
Family/friends/relatives	41%
Employment	30%
Affordable cost of living	15%
Education/school system	9%
Small-town atmosphere	7%
Tax system	6%
Scenic beauty/open/green spaces	6%
Safety/low crime rate	4%

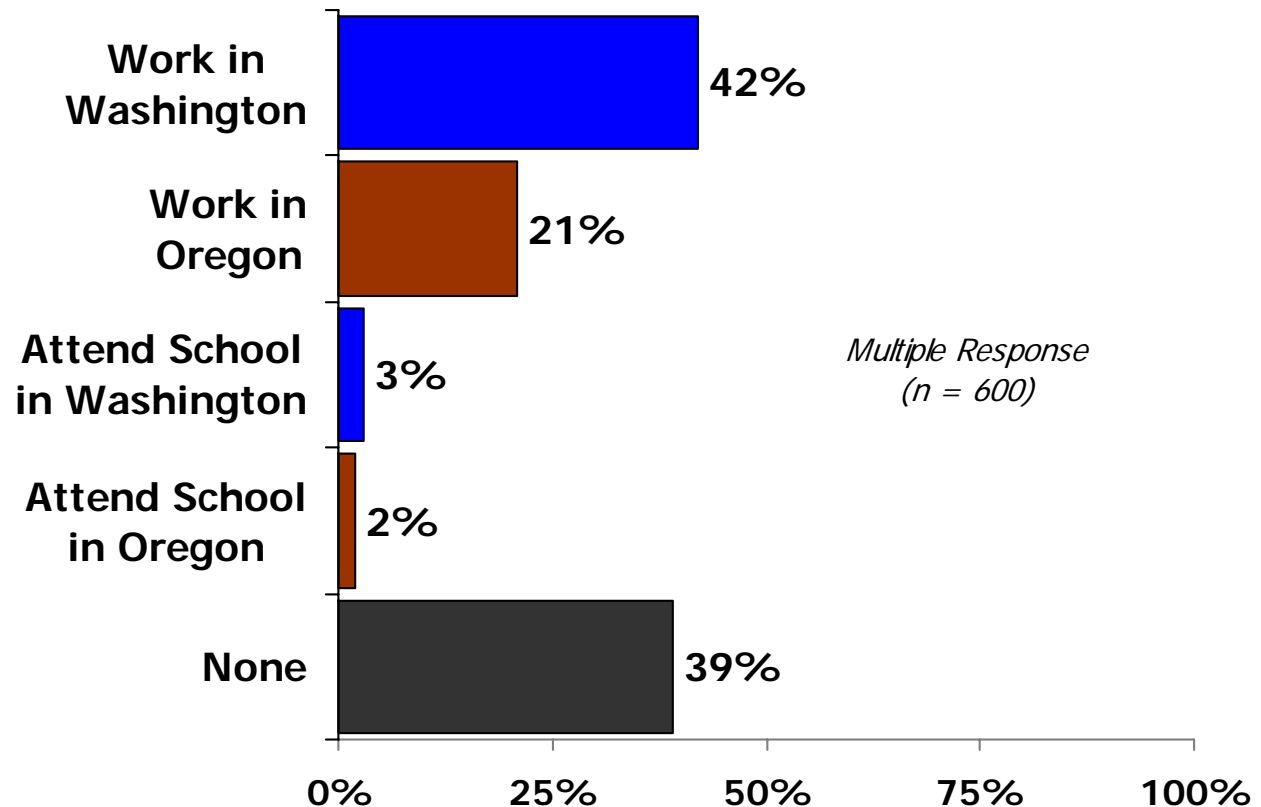
# Respondent Age



**Question:** *Is your residence located west of I-5, between I-5 and I-205, or east of I-205?*



**Question:** *Do you work or go to school in Oregon or Washington?*





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# Strategic Assessment Survey

## Summary

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# Top-of-Mind Perceptions

- 22% of Vancouver residents think of or visualize the city as growing in a negative way:
  - Out of control growth/overpopulated/over-developed/growing too fast/too crowded.
- 17% of Vancouver residents think of or visualize the city as growing in a positive way:
  - Positive growth/change/progress/no longer a small town/developing its own identity.

# Right/Wrong Direction

- Approximately one-half (53%) of those surveyed believe Vancouver is headed in the **right** direction.

Reasons for this **positive** outlook include:

- Positive growth/development/vibrant/progressive/up and coming (25%),
- Revitalizing/renovating/improving/downtown/Esther Short Park (22%),
- Developing/attracting new business/economic development (18%),
- Good/competent/responsive/leaders/good mayor/city council (13%),
- Good job of managing/handling/addressing growth of the area (10%).

# Right/Wrong Direction

- Approximately one in four (24%) residents surveyed believes Vancouver is headed in the **wrong** direction.

Reasons for this **negative** outlook include:

- Growth is out of control/over-developed/becoming too big/crowded/overpopulated (45%),
- Poor/insufficient/misdirected planning for the future/infrastructure/services (20%),
- Poor/unresponsive/incompetent/ineffective/city government/mayor (17%),
- Budgeting/spend money unwisely/foolishly/poor priorities/unnecessary (14%),
- Loss of farmland/green spaces/open space to sprawl/expansion/overdevelopment (12%).

# Most Pressing Issues for Vancouver in the Next Five Years

- Traffic congestion/control/transportation planning (20%),
- Growth/manage/plan for/limit/provide adequate infrastructure/stop sprawl (17%).

# Hopes and Dreams for the Future of Vancouver

- Growth is controlled/well managed/limited/grows in a positive/sustainable way/no sprawl (12%),
- Livability/retained/improved/quality of life/is sustained/continues (10%),
- City is safe/crime rate is low/meth/drug use is lessened (10%),
- Vancouver retains its “small town”/friendly feel/continues to be welcoming (9%).

# Evaluation of Concerns for the Future

- Of the 13 challenges evaluated, **Reducing Traffic Congestion** is considered most important to the future of Vancouver over the next five years (85%).

<i>“Important”/ 4.00 and 5.00 Ratings Combined</i>	
Reducing Traffic Congestion	85%
Police Protection and Controls	80%
Community Planning and Controlling Growth	80%
Creating Jobs and Encouraging More Business Development	78%
Emergency Medical Response	75%
Fire Protection and Prevention	69%
Increasing Parks and Green Spaces	60%

# Evaluation of Concerns for the Future

- Of the 13 challenges evaluated, **Adding Recreation Facilities** (35%) and **Adding Special Events** (35%) are considered least important to the future of Vancouver over the next five years.

<i>“Important”/ 4.00 and 5.00 Ratings Combined</i>	
Revitalization of the Downtown Area	55%
Continued Redevelopment of Vancouver’s Waterfront	48%
Adding More Recreation Programs	42%
Adding More Walking Trails and Bike Lanes	46%
<b>Adding Recreation Facilities</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Adding Special Events, Concerts, Fairs and 4<sup>th</sup> of July Activities</b>	<b>35%</b>

# Value for the Tax Dollar

- Seven out of 10 (70%) residents of Vancouver feel they are getting their money's worth for their tax dollars.

# Preference for Other City

- When asked *“If you could live in any city other than Vancouver, where would it be?”* respondents mention 205 cities, including 33 cities outside the U.S.
- 18% indicate they prefer only Vancouver and 17% have no opinion.

The primary features of other cities to which respondents are **most attracted** include:

- Connections to family/friends/live there/born/grew up there (23%),
- Small town/community/rural/less crowded/quiet/quaint (23%),
- Climate/weather/seasons (21%).

# Light Rail

- Approximately two out of three (65%) residents surveyed believe light rail should be brought to Vancouver.

Primary reasons for **supporting** light rail include:

- Would reduce traffic/congestion/bring traffic relief (54%),
- Would improve access to Portland/easy/convenient/connectivity (28%),
- Efficient means of travel/mass transit/good option (21%),
- Good for the environment/ecological benefits/would reduce pollution (17%).



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