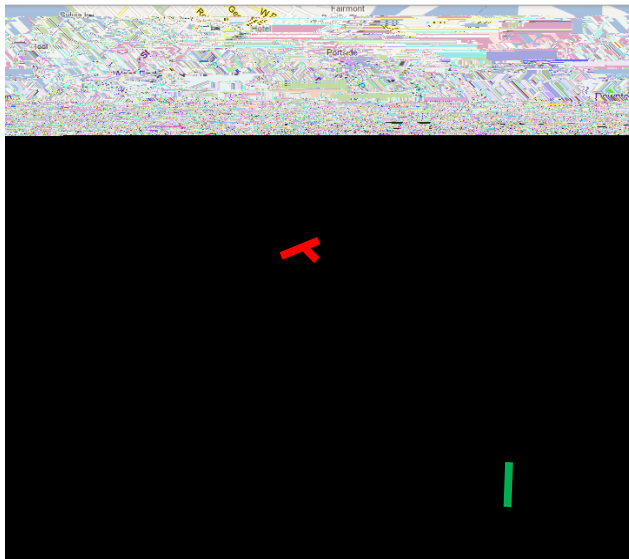


Executive Summary

The objective of this research study is to investigate the relationships between street life characteristics of street environment by comparing and evaluating commercial areas in Vancouver. One of the study areas is located in Yaltdown, a community developed according to the



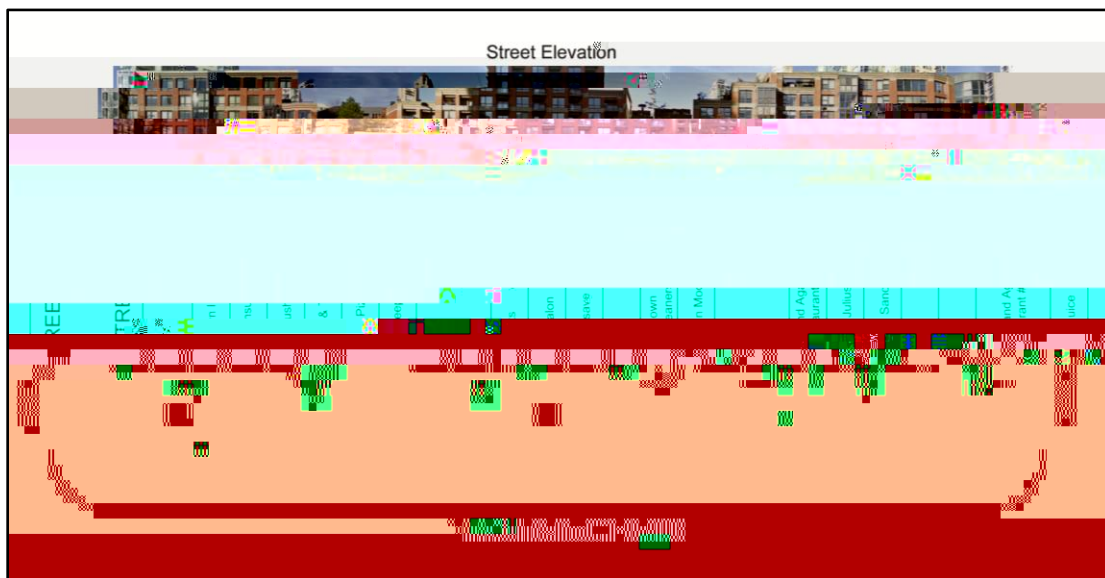
Research Methodology and Evaluation Framework

Eleven evaluation criteria provided the framework for investigating the street life and street environment characteristics of Yaletown and Mount Pleasant. They were derived largely from a research methodology developed by Mehta (2006) using direct observation methods such as pedestrian counts, structured observations, and walkability observations. The evaluation of the two study areas took place over four days in January 2011. The primary measurement of street life was the number of people engaged in stationary activities, which are optional leisure activities that can also involve social interaction. The evaluation of street environment characteristics involved observing attributes such as building heights, the variety of distinct uses, and sidewalk widths.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the evaluation of the study areas is summarized in the adjacent table. The quantitative nature of most of the findings facilitated comparisons between the study areas although subjective and qualitative analyses were also integral to identifying relationships between street life and street environment characteristics. Behavioural maps like the one below were used to display where stationary activities were recorded.

	YALETOWN	MOUNT PLEASANT
	Study Area	Study Area
Street Life		
Stationary Activities	184 people	242 people
Social Activities	118 people	163 people
>5 Minute Stay	43 people	62 people
Avg. Hourly Pedestrians	859 people	864 people
Street Environment Characteristics		
Building Height Range	2 to 38 storeys	1 to 4 storeys
Access Points/100m	7.5	8.7
Distinct Uses/100m	5.5	5.9
Indep. Businesses/100m	3.0	4.3
Seats/100m	17.2	14.7
Physical Artefacts/100m	20.5	20.2
Avg. Sidewalk Width	5.7 metres	4.4 metres



Locations of stationary activities on Pacific Boulevard between Drake St. and Davie St. (Yaletown)

Conclusions and Recommendations

Yaletown

Over the observation period, the street environment in Yaletown was found to be highly supportive of street life. Unexpectedly, the areas with the most favourable street environment characteristics were not necessarily where street life concentrated. People who were engaged in stationary and social activities were most likely to be near three specific uses: the Urban Fare grocery store, the Starbucks coffee shop, and the Roundhouse Turntable Plaza. These uses were located on blocks that exhibited good, but not particularly favourable characteristics in terms of street front permeability, the variety of goods and services, sidewalk width. This suggests that uses with significant retail or functional appeal pedestrians have greater capacity to influence stationary and social activities than street environment characteristics.

In general, the quality of the street environment in Yaletown was high, and supported street life despite the prevalence of tall buildings. The comfortable pedestrian environment provided evidence by regulating building orientation, spacing, and size. The recommendations for Yaletown address weak points such as weather protection, and leverage existing strengths in order to provide even stronger support for street life.



Social activity in front of Urban Fare grocery store on Davie Street

Recommendations:

- x Improve Weather Protection
- x Encourage the Establishment of Commercial Tenants that Contribute to Street Life
- x Activate Roundhouse Turntable Plaza with Programming

Mount Pleasant

The total amount of stationary and social activities observed in Mount Pleasant was greater than that of Yaletown. However, it was strongly concentrated within certain parts of the study area. 50% was observed on a single block on Main Street between E.13 and E.14.

