



*imagine*  
**AMBLESIDE**

— A COMMUNITY VISION FOR AMBLESIDE —





## IMAGINE AMBLESIDE

With over one thousand responses in the span of a couple months, Imagine Ambleside was both inspiring and informative. This data has enabled the Ambleside Dunderave Business Improvement Association to identify high-level visioning goals put forth by the community as well as actionable solutions for getting there.

***“There needs to be thoughtful development to enable this growth and vibrancy and we hope to be able to use the results of this survey to help make this happen.”***

*- Shannon Walker, Chair, ADBIA*



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## A FOREWORD

From September to December 2020, the Ambleside Dundarave Business Improvement Association (ADBIA) set up shop at the corner of 15th and Marine. We created a survey inviting community members to voice their wants, concerns, and visions for the future of Ambleside. The process has offered a rewarding opportunity for the ADBIA to collaborate not only with West Vancouver Council and staff, but with the people that support and frequent our businesses.

An outstanding success, the initiative garnered over one thousand responses and a lot of enthusiasm from the local community and beyond. Sifting through the many imaginative solutions, thoughtful responses, and extensive positive feedback, we were able to identify three key priorities: ***Diversity, Charm, and Locality.***

This document is a summary of what we have learned through this process, identifying high-level visioning as well as actionable solutions.



**WE NEED TO INVIGORATE THE COMMUNITY THAT EXISTS.**

We don't want to completely change the feel of it, but conserve its charm while making it more youthful, energetic, and vibrant.

We need fresh energy, while maintaining that small, community feeling.

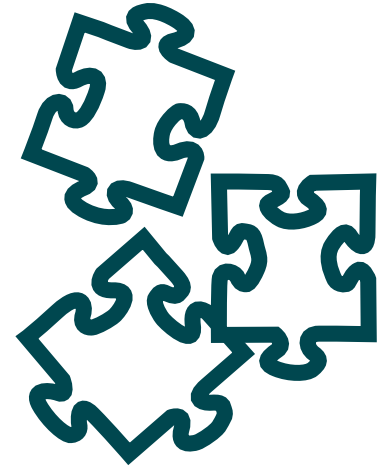


# PRIORITIES FOR OUR FUTURE

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## DIVERSITY

Increasing commercial diversity within and between sectors. Ambleside is a service heavy neighbourhood and while that's part of its appeal for many, it's also a cause for concern for people who want to see more balance between the sectors and options that allow for leisure. This improvement will aid in creating a community inclusive of the range of demographic groups who call it home.



## CHARM

In the future, Ambleside has undergone aesthetic and experiential updates that respectfully preserve but creatively enhance the quaint “village atmosphere” of Ambleside. With a focus on cleaner, harmonized building facades and getting people out in intentional ways, the village creates vitality and leans into its natural charm.

## LOCALITY

Going above and beyond to invite, attract, and support independent, small scale, and local businesses as well as foster a deeper connection to our locale through public offerings that engage with our geographic landscape. An umbrella for both **Diversity** and **Charm**, the goal of **Locality** is to build a community with a distinct sense of place through both commercial and natural means.



# MOVING FORWARD

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## ACTIONABLE SOLUTIONS

Using the parameters of **Diversity**, **Charm**, and **Locality**, the ADBIA suggests the following solutions to help us move toward these goals with efficiency and intentionality.

1

*While waiting for the LAP and given the need for improvements in Ambleside, we would appreciate individual projects be considered on their own merits.*

2

*Expedite the Local Area Plan (LAP) with a goal of completion within 2021. The ADBIA is willing and ready to commit resources to get this finished in a timely manner.*

3

*Co-sponsor a resource and work with district staff to develop a process for expediting approvals, permits, and rezoning applications allowing businesses the best chance to succeed.*

4

*Advocate for the creation of a job position specifically to manage business permits and rentals, ensuring a timely process.*

5

*The ADBIA will solicit and invite entrepreneurs and small businesses to Ambleside, offering resources and act as liaison to help through the administrative phases of opening a business.*



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# 6

***Put forward broader and more definitive amendments to the Good Neighbour Bylaw, requiring an increased level of cleanliness and upkeep on properties by landowners. Prioritizing, but not limited to: clean laneways, clean awnings, and regular upkeep of outward facades.***

# 7

***Do more to observe and monitor the bylaws of the Ambleside Centre zones (AC1 and AC2) which restricts the amount of banks, financial services, and real estate offices on each block to a maximum of 20%. Consider amendments that also limit the amount of these institutions at ground floor retail level.***







## AMBLESIDE IMAGINED

A vibrant yet peaceful community, Ambleside Imagined is a place to visit and to call home. Complementing our gorgeous landscape are destination businesses, diverse eateries, and a wealth of hidden gems for you to discover.

Local or guest, young or old, Ambleside village welcomes all with an exciting waterfront scene, and bustling business and community town centre.

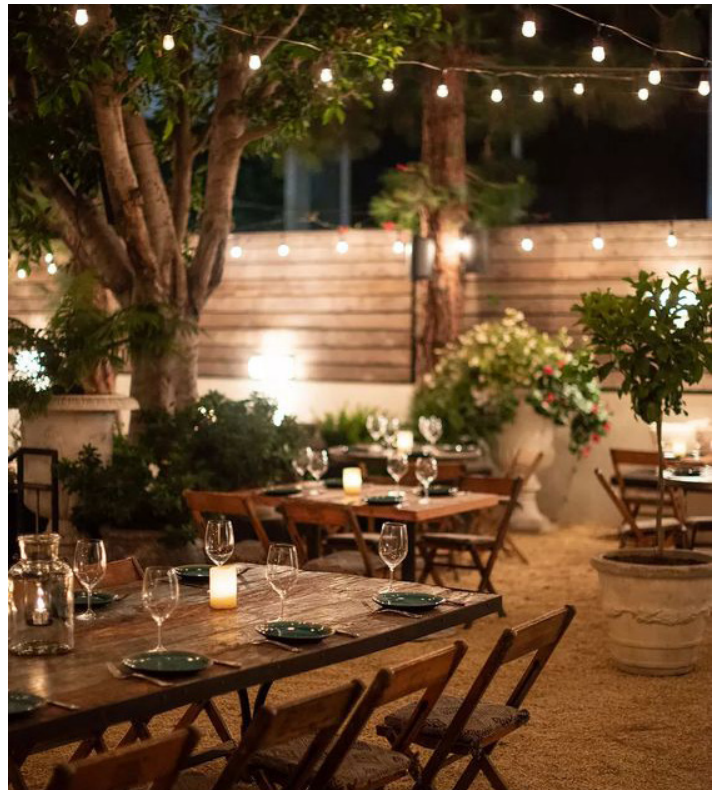
***“We asked the questions, and the response was overwhelming. It said to me that the community is ready for a more vibrant Ambleside that includes boutique shops, a brewery, a hotel, waterfront activation and so much more.”***

*- Maureen O'Brien, Executive Director, ADBIA*

# A DAY IN AMBLESIDE

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# DIVERSITY

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**Make it a destination for unique, one-off services. It's time to elevate and maximize our incredibly under-utilized commercial and waterfront area.**

**Let's fill it with boutique style bars, shops, restaurants and capitalize on waterfront activities. With our beautiful waterfront we should be leaders in this area!**



## WITHIN AND BETWEEN SECTORS

A staggering 72% of survey respondents [Appendix II: Figure 2] called for increased commercial diversity in Ambleside.

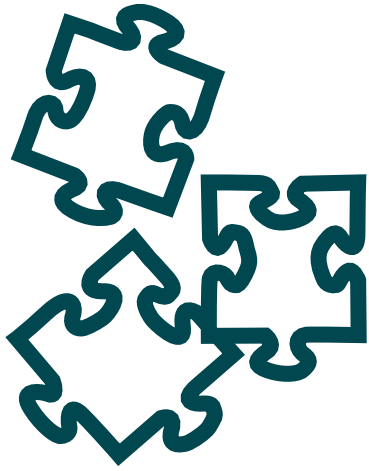
Many wanted to see an increase in options within sectors such as retail, food, and beverage while others cited a need for more balanced diversity between sectors. Ambleside is currently a service heavy neighbourhood and while that's part of the appeal to many, it's also a grievance to others who want to see more options that allow for leisure.

The want for increased diversity within sectors complements a vision for Ambleside that is more inclusive to the range of demographics that call it home. More options and the purposeful curation of those options can help us get there, providing a space that invites families, youth, seniors and everyone in between to enjoy what Ambleside has to offer.



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## DIVERSITY



### *Goals for diversifying the Ambleside business sector*

- **Balance the service heavy reputation of the neighbourhood** with an increased range of options in other sectors
- Purposefully curate options to be **more inclusive to the different demographics** that frequent Ambleside
- Curate a **stroll-and-shop experience**
- Attract and encourage a diverse set of casual eateries and drink spots
- Make **space and allowances for increased outdoor dining opportunities** whether waterfront, sidewalk dining, or intimate back patios
- **Incentivizing landowners to curate the tenant mix**, creating more variety on blocks and more “shopping for leisure” options
- **Move services out of prime street front locations**



“Ambleside has the potential to be a unique, welcoming, and vibrant experience! I believe landlords should put more effort towards maintaining the charm of “the village” by making the exteriors appealing and working together towards a theme.”

## PRESERVE AND ENHANCE

Many of the survey respondents used terms such as “quaint” and “village-like” to describe the charm they admire in Ambleside. However 38% [Appendix II: Figure 4] used such disparaging words as “tired, dirty, old, rundown, shabby” to describe its appearance.

Its ability to capture both attitudes is a testament to the enduring charm of the village with its walkability, small scale, and community feel. Luckily, the disapproval toward its appearance paints an easy and obvious way forward in augmenting and elevating Ambleside’s natural appeal.

Alongside these aesthetic upgrades, experiential changes can provide vibrancy by getting people out onto the street in enjoyable and intentional ways - adding vitality and happiness to the Ambleside streetscape.





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## CHARM



### *Goals for increasing and augmenting the charm of Ambleside*

- Aesthetic **updates and maintenance to building facades** and streetscapes
- **Cleaned up laneways** appeal to the pedestrian crowd and provide an easy first step towards increasing the charm of our neighbourhood
- Pedestrianized laneways
- **Vacancy breeds vacancy to the detriment of charm and vibrancy** - in the community vision for Ambleside, empty storefronts are a thing of the past
- **Getting people out onto the street in intentional ways**, adding vitality and happiness to the Ambleside streetscape
- Implementation of standards and general **design guidelines** for facades aid in creating a distinctly **beach front village look and feel**



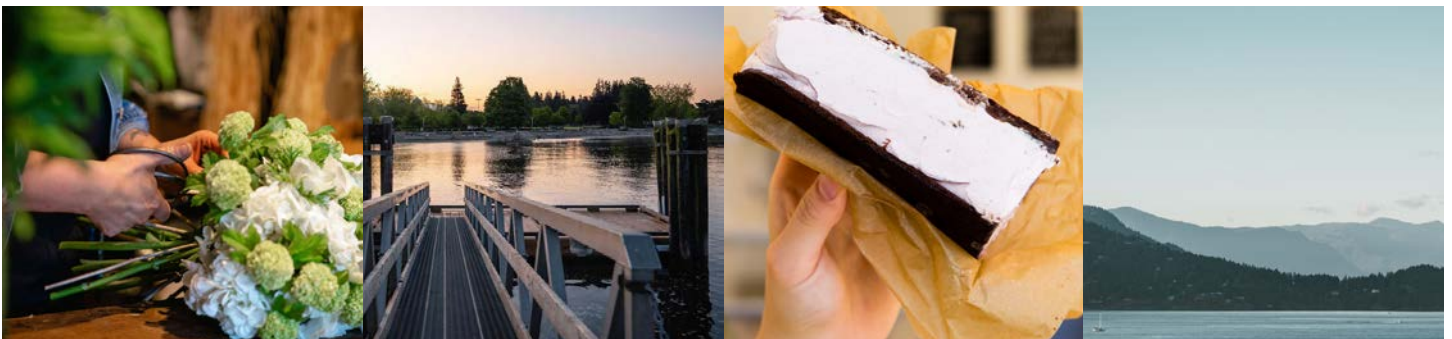
I love Ambleside and I believe that we have a very unique healthy pedestrian lifestyle here. I believe that the suggestions for adding more activity on the waterfront to encourage pedestrian engagement with dining or water sports activities are wonderful.

## COMMERCIALLY AND GEOGRAPHICALLY

An umbrella for both **Diversity** and **Charm**, the goal of *Locality* is to build a community with a distinct sense of place through both commercial and natural means.

From a commercial perspective this means ensuring our tenant mix is made up of mostly local, small-scale, and independent businesses, cited as a main priority by 47% of survey respondents [Appendix II: Figure 5]. A goal that emphasizes the community feel of Ambleside results in the natural increase of **Charm** in the village.

Geographically, survey respondents want to see Ambleside lean into its waterfront aspect, fostering a deeper connection to our locale with public offerings that engage with our landscape. Enthusiasm for this ranged from beach activation, new transportation methods, and more opportunities for waterfront dining.



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## LOCALITY



*Goals for emphasizing the Ambleside locale and creating a heightened community feel*

- Going above and beyond to **invite and attract small-scale, independent, and local businesses or entrepreneurs**
- **Incentivizing landlords to accept independents** despite the added risk of business failure
- Increased support for our current independent retailers
- **Waterfront activation** through paddle board, kayak, and waterbike rentals
- Easy access to downtown via **local passenger ferry appeals to residents** wanting to venture out without the hassle of the bridge and invites visitors to Ambleside without the added burden on parking
- Look to other waterfront locales such as **Carmel by the Sea and Sausalito for inspiration** as well as other vibrant areas such as California wine country, Edgemont Village, Steveston, and classic European streetscapes







# APPENDIX I

Methodology

# GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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## GOALS

- To conceptualize and summarize community visions for Ambleside.
- Provide actionable solutions for achieving the goals and visions identified in this survey.
- Engage with community residents for increased understanding of ideas and concerns.
- To inspire and imagine.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Listen without agenda.
- Adapt based on feedback and responses for accurate representation.
- Engage and communicate.
- Bridge community, business, and owners.
- Provide pathways for collaboration.

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**“ I want to thank you for asking me for my input. Please let’s keep talking and working to make Ambleside a special, diverse, environmentally, and socially friendly place to thrive together. ”**

# ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

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## ONLINE

Most data was gathered through an online survey set up on the ADBIA website which was promoted through various social media channels and news outlets.

## IN-PERSON

The pop-up storefront set up at 15th and Marine Drive encouraged individuals to come in and engage in discussions. With an abundance of imaginative visuals and interactive elements to fuel conversation, the in-person aspect provided depth to our data and insights.

## SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

Both the survey and initiative were promoted through the ADBIA Instagram and Facebook pages as well as through the social media pages of affiliate persons.









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Ambleside  
Dundarave

## APPENDIX II

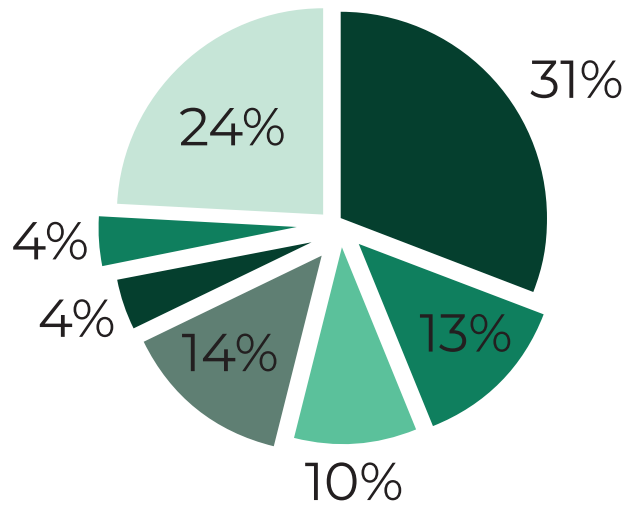
Facts, figures, data, and thoughts.

# RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

## AGE

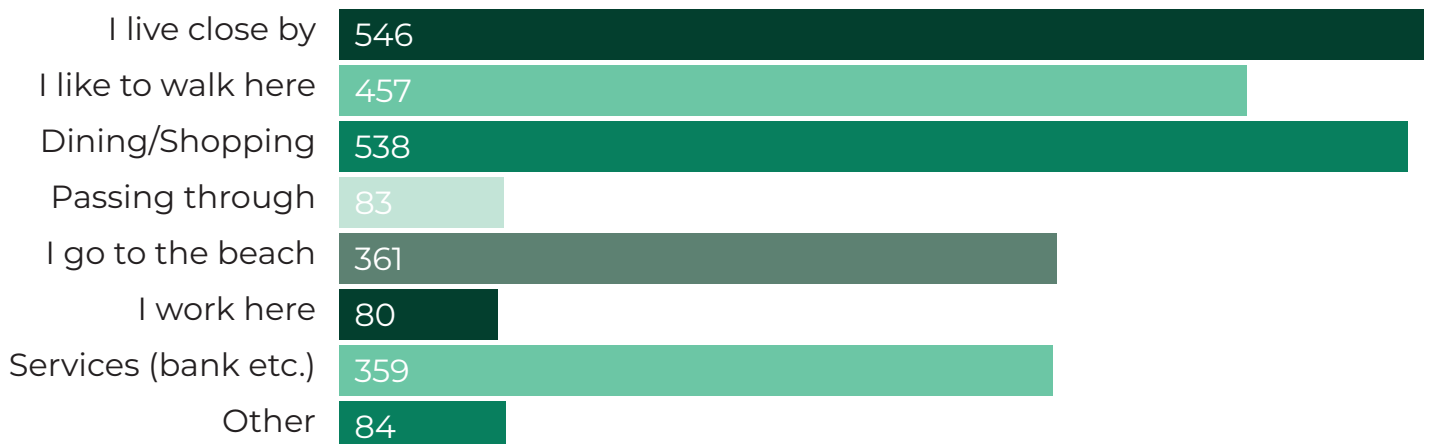


## BY NEIGHBOURHOOD



## REASON FOR VISITING

Please pick all that apply.

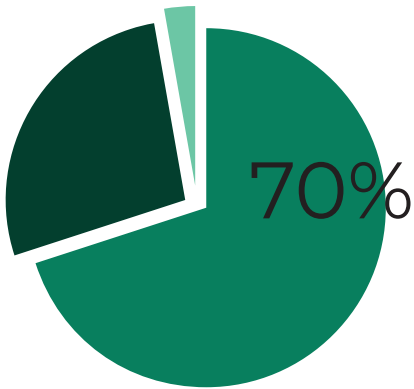


# CURRENT CONNECTIONS

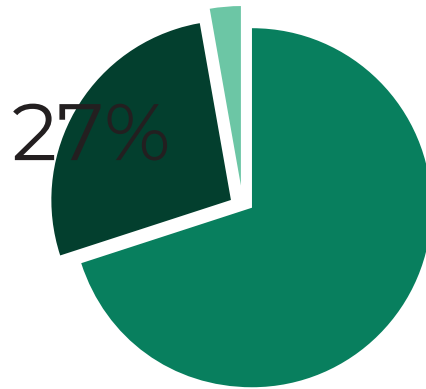
Please describe what you love about Ambleside today.

FIGURE 1: CURRENT CONNECTIONS TO AMBLESIDE

## WATERFRONT



## LOCAL BUSINESS



Unsurprisingly 70% of respondents connect to our waterfront locale first and foremost. Citing the seawall, beachfront, and walkability of our waterfront as highlights of coming into Ambleside.

This greatly contrasts the 27% who mention Ambleside's local businesses as a source of connection. This statistic is compounded by the responses themselves. Of the 27%, few named more than two to three places they frequented or loved.

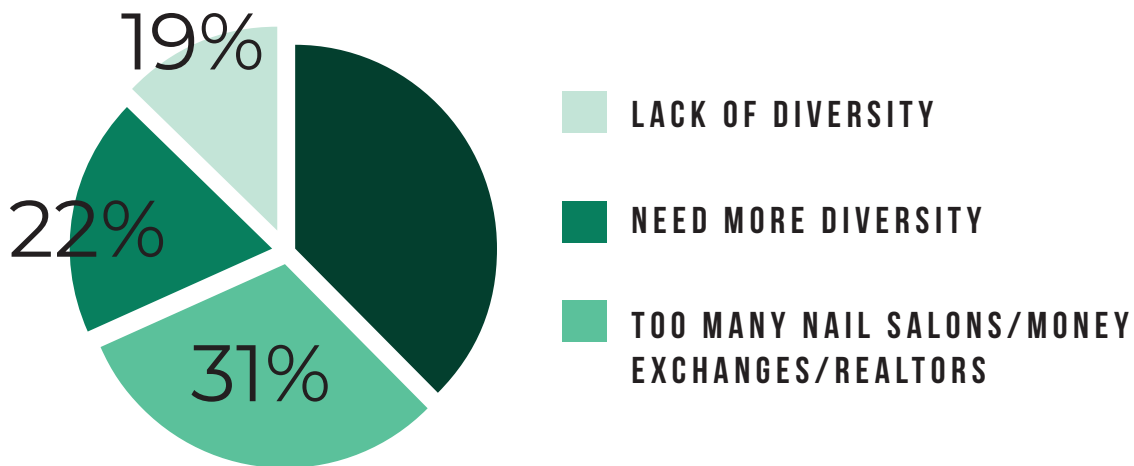
While our waterfront will most likely remain Ambleside's defining feature, this divide proves a need to upgrade the commercial sector.

\*The remaining 3% of responses mentioned outlying connections to Ambleside or stated they didn't like anything about it.

## DIVERSITY

While some voiced concern over potential changes to Ambleside, most were either in favour of, or accepting of upgrades to our infrastructure to attract and allow for more diversity in businesses throughout the village.

FIGURE 2: DIVERSITY WANTED



### SAMPLE RESPONSES

**“We don’t have shops that draw you to browse much** - other than the odd outlier. We used to have a kitchen shop, gift shops. **It was more varied. There should be by laws limiting the number of “like” businesses within a certain distance from each other.** There seems to be no vision for Ambleside. And it’s for sure NOT a “seaside village.”

“Narrow sidewalks, feels dated, and **would like more diversity in types of businesses.**”

“Not enough diversity in dining options. More options by the sea. Patios.”

“Most of the retail shops look rundown with dirty awnings - **Fresh paint and renovation needed on several decaying stores.** Too many shops closed for far too long due to need for renovation. Entire shopping areas need more attention to cleanliness and polish to look more appealing.”

**“Infrequently used businesses should not occupy street level store front.** They kill the neighbourhood vibe. I find less reason to stop in Ambleside now that these types of businesses are proliferating. They should be in the neighbourhood but on the second floor. There should be **serious rent control for smaller businesses (gift shops, small restaurants, boutiques, bakeries, green grocers etc) at street level as they add vibrancy to Ambleside.**”

# DIVERSITY

## OTHER SERVICES

Let us know if there are any other services you would like to see in Ambleside or have suggestions for ones not listed.

Please pick all that apply.



### Notable Mentions

BOOKSTORE    HOMEWARE    KITCHEN SUPPLY    CANNABIS    ART SUPPLY  
WINE SHOP & TASTING ROOM    ART GALLERY    PAPER

Would you enjoy an artisan ice cream shop in Ambleside?



Would you like to see an affordable childcare centre in Ambleside?



# DIVERSITY

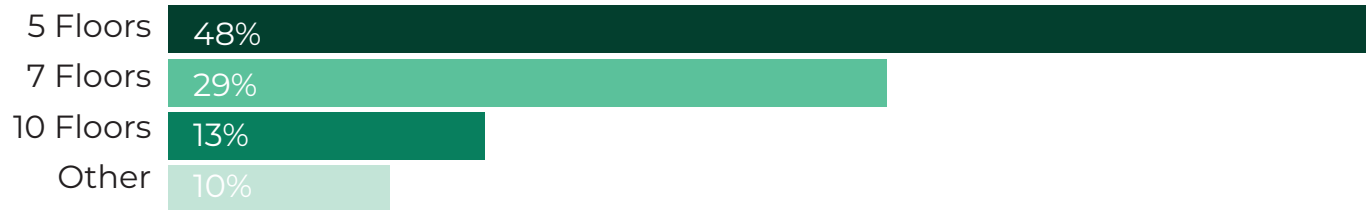
## HOTEL

Would you like to see a boutique hotel in Ambleside?



How many floors would you want?

Of the people that responded yes to the above question.



## RETAIL

Would you like to see more boutique shops in Ambleside?



Are there any specific stores or brands you would like to see here?

“Clothing (more **in line with some of the cool new places on 4th Ave in Vancouver, Main St. Or South Granville** that are destinations for shoppers. Vincent Park, Gravity Pope, etc.)”

“Small gift and **design shops.**”

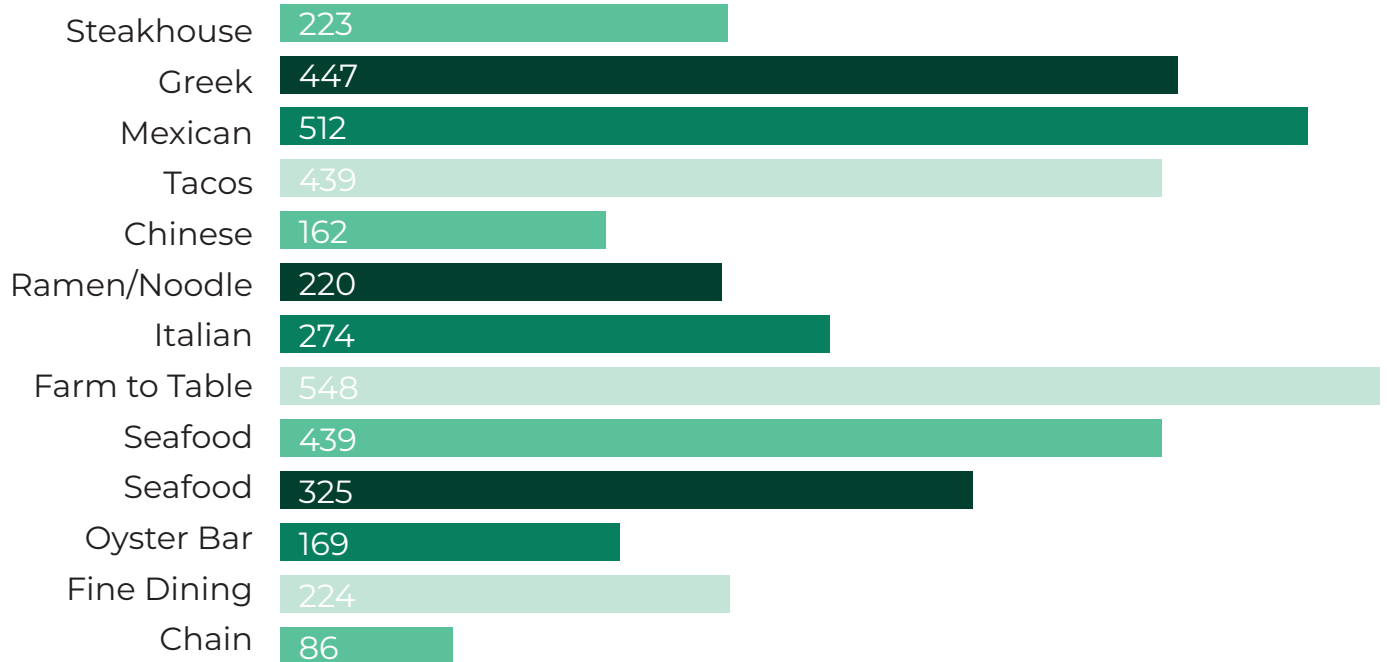
“Needs to create a unique differentiated look and feel. **Art boutiques, bookstore, ceramic shops, more clothing** like Ami or Scoop in Dundarave, **home decor, kitchen wares, boutique jewelry**”.

# DIVERSITY

## FOOD RETAIL

Amleside is home to some great dining choices. Which types of foods would you like to see added or more of in Amleside?

Please pick all that apply.



Three main themes became apparent in the written responses to this question with the majority of respondents addressing 1 to 2 of the following themes per response: an absence of outdoor dining, missed waterfront opportunity, and the need for more casual dining options.

FIGURE 3: THREE MAIN THEMES WITHIN RESPONSES TO FOOD DIVERSITY

### OUTDOOR ASPECT

“Nook, Orto, Tacofino - **All restaurants with a bar** as well as dining area, **and patios!**”

“**A good mix** - but it’s important to make sure they **contribute to street vibe (patios, etc.)**”

“**Patios!**”

### WATERFRONT OPPORTUNITY

“**Absence of waterfront dining** is a **missed opportunity** for locals and tourists.”

“I think we could make our neighbourhood **cooler and more lively** with a **mix of chain and privately owned restaurants and breweries.**

BelleVue Ave could be used in a much better way for a **‘restaurant row’ with small bars and restaurants.**”

### TRENDY CASUAL

“I would like to see **mid-scale small, individual restaurants.** Earls is a great option but would like to see **more local options with the same atmosphere on a smaller scale.**”

“Need more **casual & affordable yet fun** restaurants.”

# DIVERSITY

## BEVERAGE RETAIL

How would you feel about a boutique wine bar?



How would you feel about a jazz club or bar?



How would you feel about a micro distillery?



How would you feel about a brewery or taproom in Ambleside?



### SAMPLE RESPONSES

**“Yes absolutely!”**

“We always just go to Lonsdale - would love a brewery option here.”

**“Good food and a good beer would ideal!”**

“For someone young living in WV, I would **love to see a few bars** spring up - close proximity, tasteful bars with each a different vibe. **Something to bring energy to Ambleside, so that it's a place worth going just to hang out. Needs more youthful excitement.**”



## CHARM

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Survey respondents describe the charm of Ambleside as stemming from its “village-like” atmosphere or small town feel thanks to the small scale of its buildings, walkability, and beachfront access. Just as many worry that Ambleside is quickly losing that charm to repetitive businesses and increasingly rundown or closed up facades.

### SAMPLE RESPONSES

“Safe, **village neighborhood ambiance.**”

“Charm and quaint feeling.”

“The **walkability and beachfront access.**”

“Quaint village style atmosphere.”

“I would say I’m currently visually irritated by 70-80% of Ambleside. The **large amount of storefronts that are harshly lit, or stale, static, dull and boring.** And the increasing number of storefronts using harsh white interrogation lights completely ruins the experience of going for a quiet evening walk through the village. Improvements could be creating more active spaces, particularly in the laneways with interesting shops, a brewery with an outdoor area for tastings and dining. Eliminate some vehicle traffic on side streets and create pedestrian/biking only green spaces. A community apple orchard. A wine bar with live jazz/music. An annual street garden competition. A Mural Festival. **Re-evaluating commercial signage and the stores relationship and responsibility to the street and its community.**”

“I am **distressed by the number of empty shop fronts,** which gives an air of tiredness and neglect to the Village.”

“The shops and types of business and store fronts on Marine are looking so run down and terrible. Dirty, unkempt, too many nail salons, hair salons and money exchanges. **So few landlords or tenants seem to care about the look of their premises.**”

## SIDEWALKS

How do you feel about wider sidewalks throughout Ambleside?  
This would allow for options such as open storefronts and sidewalk/  
window-front dining?



### SAMPLE RESPONSES

“I am **generally in favour** of wider sidewalks, but would need to **understand this in the context of impact on roads, bus routes, bike access**. Also, I’d be in support of **leveraging wider sidewalks for some outdoor seating / displays of local businesses.**”

How do you feel about increased sidewalk dining options?



### SAMPLE RESPONSES

“This would add a **tremendous amount of value to our businesses, and to the happiness of our community.**”

“**Yes yes yes!!!** Like in old Montreal!!!! Or like the streets are in Europe!”

“**Love it**, but **how would it impact** the existing street parking and 4 lanes?”

# CHARM

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## LANEWAYS

While generally in favour of improving our laneways to become more pedestrian friendly zones, many of the 76% who responded “Yes” still had hesitations on how this would impact parking, delivery, and garbage disposal of businesses. The main agreement was that while it would be great to have laneways worth strolling down, residents would settle for having the backs of businesses cleaned up and made to be more sightly.

**Would you like to see improved laneways throughout Ambleside such as Clyde and Ambleside Lane?**



**Would you like to see these laneways become pedestrian zones?**



### SAMPLE RESPONSES

“This would add a **tremendous amount of value to our businesses, and to the happiness of our community.**”

“**Yes yes yes!!!** Like in old Montreal!!!! Or like the streets are in Europe!”

“**Love it,** but **how would it impact** the existing street parking and 4 lanes?”

## DESIGN AND APPEARANCE

38% of respondents described Ambleside’s appearance in unfavourable terms, while the majority agreed that it would benefit from some general design guidelines. Being careful not to create a cookie cutter effect, 60% would like to see certain standards in place for exterior facades and create a cleaner, beach-front village aesthetic.

FIGURE 4: PERCEPTIONS OF CURRENT BUILDING APPEARANCE AND DESIGN



Some have suggested creating general guidelines for the exterior of our Ambleside businesses to create a more coherent effect. Do you generally agree with this statement?



Would you want to see more consistency in awnings throughout Ambleside?



## DESIGN AND APPEARANCE CONTINUED

### How do you feel about storefronts that open out onto the street?

While many were in favour of this idea to create vibrancy during the warmer months, there was concern on the environmental impacts due to loss of heating during our colder season.



### Would you like to see brighter storefronts throughout Ambleside?



### Would you like to see improved lighting throughout Ambleside?

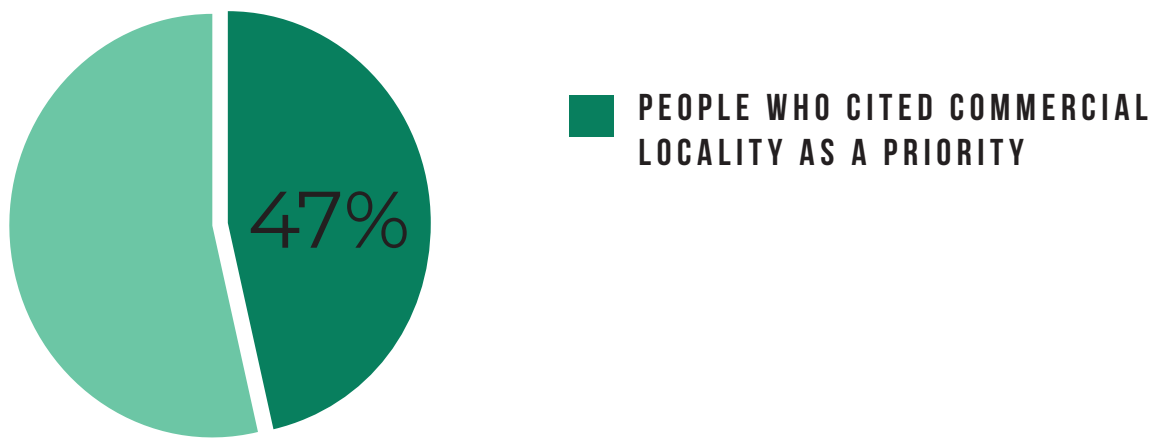


# LOCALITY

## COMMERCIAL

Using data from the three questions where it was most relevant, 47% of respondents voiced commercial locality as a primary goal for Ambleside. While 44% agree Ambleside could benefit from a larger brand anchor the general agreement is that we limit Ambleside’s big-store brands to one or two, focusing instead on smaller independent retailers.

FIGURE 5: IN FAVOUR OF COMMERCIAL LOCALITY



### SAMPLE RESPONSES

“Its time to elevate and maximize our under-utilized commercial and waterfront area. Let’s fill it with **one-off, boutique style bars, shops, restaurants etc.** With our beautiful waterfront we should be leaders in this area!”

“**Mostly local is preferable** with only one chain type store.”

Do you think Ambleside would benefit from a brand name anchor?  
For example, Williams Sonoma, Crate and Barrel, Oak and Fort?



# LOCALITY

## GEOGRAPHICAL

Many others throughout the survey were in favour of leaning into our position as a beachfront village through various means.

Would you like to see increased waterfront activation through kayak, paddle board, canoe rentals, etc. on the Ambleside beach?



Do you think a small passenger ferry with stops downtown and in Kitsilano would benefit our Ambleside community?



Do you think a small day marina would benefit our Ambleside community?



## PLACES TO EMULATE

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People had many requests for places they wanted Ambleside to take inspiration from. Ranging from other waterfronts towns to European destinations, all feedback suggested a distinct sense of place and a stroll-and-shop mentality.



ABBOT KINNEY, CA  
PORTLAND, OR  
CANNON BEACH, OR  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA  
SANTA MONICA, CA  
LA JOLLA, CA  
MANHATTAN, NY  
CHARLESTON, SC  
VENICE BEACH, CA

AMSTERDAM, NL  
PARIS, FR  
AMALFI COAST, IT  
AVIGNON, FR  
STOCKHOLM, SE  
COPENHAGEN, DK  
CAPETOWN, SA  
MEWS, LDN  
FAIRHAVEN, WA

DUNDARAVE, BC  
LOWER LONSDALE, BC  
WHISTLER, BC  
DEEP COVE, BC  
QUEBEC CITY, QC  
MONTREAL, QC  
FORT LANGLEY, BC  
GRANVILLE ISLAND, BC  
NIAGARA ON THE LAKE, ON



## ABOUT US

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Established in 2016, the Ambleside Dundarave Business Improvement Association (ADBIA) is an independent, non-profit association that provides a strong, unified voice for local businesses. The ADBIA highlights the unique shopping, dining and cultural experiences offered by our communities, as well as our spectacular waterfront.

We partner with the District of West Vancouver to improve our neighbourhoods, grow our communities and ensure businesses thrive. Our goal is to make the Villages of Ambleside and Dundarave the shopping, dining and services choice for West Vancouver.



### OUR BOARD

#### SHANNON WALKER

Chair

#### ROMAN BECCIU

Vice Chair

#### MIKE RICHMOND

Secretary

#### PAUL WINSTANLEY

Treasurer

#### SIMON BIANCARDI

Director

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#### REZA KOHAN

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#### JOSH MCLEAN

Director

#### SHAWN READ

Director

#### MARK SAGER

Director

### STAFF

#### MAUREEN O'BRIEN

Executive Director, ADBIA

#### EMMA BROWN

Project Coordinator, Imagine Ambleside





**Imagine  
AMBLESIDE**

**Ambleside  
& Dunderave**  
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

**“Amazing brain-storming to give us such great questions and get us thinking. There has been revitalization talk since I moved here in 1982, but little has been done. Its time to get on with it.”**



