

## NEW DATA SHOWS MOST VISITS TO DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER IN 2020 WERE BY YOUNG SINGLES AND COUPLES

**Vancouver, BC, April 15, 2021**— The Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA), in collaboration with Environics Analytics (EA), recently examined the impact of COVID-19 on visits to the downtown core. The DVBIA examined the impact of the pandemic on visits to Granville Street, West Hastings Street, Alberni Street and the 300-900 block of Robson Street. The analysis found that most visitors tended to be young singles and couples. As well, a larger proportion of total downtown business area visits were by downtown peninsula residents between June and December 2020 compared to the same period in 2019; this is exclusive of office workers.

This analysis leveraged Environics Analytics' anonymized and privacy-compliant MobileScapes database, which captures total visits for a specific date and time using permission-based [mobile movement data](#). The analysis also used EA's PRIZM segmentation system that groups Canadians into 67 unique lifestyle types. PRIZM insights shed light on the demographics, behaviours and preferences of visitors to downtown Vancouver based on their home postal code. The findings present a more robust representation of downtown mobility compared to pedestrian counters, which only capture foot traffic when a person moves past a fixed sensor on a particular section of a street.

### KEY FINDINGS

- Total downtown visits decreased by 37% between June and December 2020 (post-lockdown) compared to the same period in 2019. **West Hastings**, home to hotels, English Language schools and SFU's Harbour Centre campus, saw the greatest drop in visits (-46%), **Granville and 300-900 Robson** visits dropped 37%, and **Alberni** saw the lowest drop in visits (-26%).
- The percentage of total downtown visits by downtown peninsula residents grew from 11% in 2019 (June-December) to 16% in 2020 for the same period. Downtown visits by downtown peninsula residents only decreased by 11%, which is relatively low compared to total visits by Vancouverites (-28%) and visits from Surrey (-44%) and Burnaby (-45%) residents.
- Most downtown visitors were singles and couples under the age of 40. This group also saw the lowest drop in visits between June and December 2020 (- 27%) compared to visits from large, diverse families (-40%) and middle-aged families (-41%) for the same period in 2019.

- Downtown’s average daytime workforce population was 116,000 in 2019 and ranged between 12,000 and 35,000 in 2020 depending on the month, COVID-19 case counts and public health restrictions.

“Knowing who visited the downtown core pre-pandemic, and who continued to visit throughout, will help inform our recovery efforts over the coming weeks and months,” says DVBIA President & CEO Charles Gauthier. “This data set highlights opportunities for our member businesses to target their marketing campaigns to downtown peninsula residents, which will be a helpful tool as they begin safely welcoming customers to their establishments.” He added, “we’re confident that with eventual the return of festivals and events to the downtown core, we’ll see more families visiting once again.”

Downtown arts and cultural events will be a key element of downtown’s economic recovery. The DVBIA will continue to promote local businesses to residents, work with members to inform them of possible target audiences and support innovative placemaking initiatives and future public events.

“MobileScapes mobile movement data helps us to differentiate resident family groups and recognize that a larger proportion of the post COVID-19 audience is comprised of younger singles and couples,” says Edward Yu, Sales Consultant from Environics Analytics. “This data can help the Downtown Vancouver BIA support their business members to engage with this local audience. Our analysis showed that residents that are younger singles and couples are well-integrated into the Downtown Core, which presents an opportunity to inform relevant placemaking events, support local businesses, and keep the area vibrant in light of the circumstances.”

### **About the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association:**

The Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA) supports, promotes and represents the shared interests of over 7,000 businesses and property owners in the central 90-block area of Vancouver’s downtown core. We focus on priorities voiced by our members: programs and services in the areas of advocacy, accessibility, cleanliness, beautification, business support, marketing and mobility.

For more information on the DVBIA, please visit [www.dtvancouver.ca](http://www.dtvancouver.ca).

### **Environics Analytics**

Environics Analytics (EA) is the premier marketing and analytical services company in North America, helping thousands of customers across every industry sector turn data and analytics into strategy, insights and results. Established in 2003, we specialize in using best-in-class data, analytics expertise and purpose-built software to address key challenges in areas such as

consumer profiling and segmentation, multichannel media planning and execution, trade area analysis, merchandising strategies and site location decision-making. Our ENVISION platform provides quick and easy access to our comprehensive and privacy-compliant databases—including the latest mobile movement data—to generate deep consumer and market insight, authoritative reports and detailed maps. Environics Analytics' team of 200 statisticians, modellers, geographers and business strategists help organizations develop data-driven solutions and achieve success along every phase of their analytics journey.

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