

Grand-Lakeshore Retail Advisory Group Survey

The GLRAG Retail Advisory Survey is an all-volunteer, community effort that focuses on the Grand-Lakeshore business district just north of Highway 580. The survey ran from July 9, 2008 through September 1, 2008. 710 questionnaires were completed, most of which were filled out online.

Though GLRAG made every effort to publicize the survey widely, we suspect that nearby homeowners and those who are more active in the community are over-represented in the results. This is reflected in the demographic data with 69% home-ownership and 57% of the households earning in excess of \$100,000. Both figures are above what would be expected within a .5 mile radius - an area with an estimated 11,000+ residents.

Despite these limitations, we believe the results of the survey provide valuable guidance about filling gaps in the existing retail/restaurant mix. Trader Joes and Arizmendi came to our neighborhood at least in part because of passionate and widespread community support. Judging by their resounding successes, it seems quite clear that it pays to listen to community input.

GLRAG plans to work with merchants, property owners and the City of Oakland to implement suggestions generated by the survey in order to make the business district even more attractive and pedestrian-friendly.

For more information please visit www.glrags.org, which includes a listing of current vacancies in the Grand-Lakeshore district, or email us at info@glrag.org.

Question 1

The area encompassed by this survey includes Lakeshore, Grand, Lake Park and Santa Clara Avenues above Highway 580. How often, on average do you patronize any of the businesses in this district?

Frequency	# Responses	
Almost daily	238	34%
Three or four days per week	247	35%
Weekly	201	29%
Monthly	19	3%
Rarely or never	0	0%
Total responses	705	
Total skips	5	

Question 2

When you visit the Grand-Lakeshore commercial district, what are your 5 most frequent stops?

Business	# of Mentions	
Trader Joes	528	16%
Arizmendi	368	11%
Peets	251	8%
Lakeshore Produce	110	3%
Farmers Market	108	3%
Safeway	108	3%
Grand Lake Theater	105	3%
Longs	91	3%
Walgreens	78	2%
Ace Hardware / Garden Center	74	2%
Starbucks	73	2%

Grand-Lakeshore Retail Advisory Group Survey

Lakeshore Natural Foods	72		2%
Walden Pond	71		2%
Washington Mutual	71		2%
Noahs	57		2%
Urban Indigo	52		2%
Gap	49		1%
Papyrus	47		1%
Lakeshore Cafe	45		1%
Post Office	43		1%
The Burrito Shop	35		1%
Spettros	31		1%
Di Bartolo Café/Restaurant	29		1%
Mezze	28		1%
Wells Fargo (ATM)	27		1%
Bank of America	26		1%
Maribel	25		1%
Rolling Dunes	25		1%
Flavors Of India	24		1%
L'Amyx	24		1%
Blockbuster	20		1%
Bank Of The West	18		1%
Cheese Steak Shop	18		1%
Grand Bakery	17		1%

Total # of Mentions 3297

Total responses 707

Total skips 3

Only those establishments that were mentioned at least 17 times (1%) are shown here. The total number of mentions (3297) includes the 34 business listed here and 147 businesses that were mentioned 16 or fewer times.

The business with the most severe name recognition problem is Lakeshore Produce. They are the 4th most popular business, but more than half the participants referred to them as "that fruit and veggie store near Peets."

It was impossible to distinguish between the Ace Hardware store and the Ace Garden Center, and between Café DiBartolo and DiBartolo Restaurant. The results show combined mentions.

Question 3

Which of the following modes of transportation do you use to access the Grand-Lakeshore commercial district?

Transportation mode	Sometimes	Often	Total
Walking	28%	69%	96%
Automobile	33%	59%	96%
Bicycle	24%	12%	36%
Public Transportation	12%	6%	18%
Motorcycle or scooter	3%	1%	4%

Grand-Lakeshore Retail Advisory Group Survey

Total responses **709**
Total skips **1**

Question 4

Please rate Lakeshore Avenue on the following characteristics:

Lakeshore Characteristic	N/A	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Exterior appearance	0%	5%	36%	54%	5%
Merchandise quality	0%	4%	35%	55%	5%
Store hours	1%	5%	34%	57%	3%
Mix of retail and services	0%	6%	34%	55%	5%
Parking	5%	24%	43%	26%	2%
Safety	3%	21%	47%	28%	2%
Landscape and cleanliness	0%	14%	51%	33%	2%
Public transportation	36%	7%	19%	31%	8%
Pedestrian amenities	3%	30%	46%	19%	1%

Total responses **704**
Total skips **6**

Summary of 264 Comments

As illustrated in the comparison chart posted between Questions 6 and 7, Lakeshore surpasses Grand and Lake Park Avenues on virtually every measurement, but still suffers in comparison to Rockridge, Piedmont Avenue and Montclair. Despite the services provided by the Lakeshore BID, the comments and numerical data both indicate a need for some improvements.

The need for improvements applies to infrastructure: The very first sentence in this comment section reads, "Sidewalks are disgusting". This sentiment is echoed, although not quite so emphatically, by 27 other individuals. In addition to grime and dirt, there were many complaints about trash piled up in front of stores and trash cans overflowing. 6 people singled out the area in front of Starbucks and Noahs as the worst offenders. 5 also noted that the sidewalks are uneven and in need of repairs and 1 other noted that the steel plates embedded in the sidewalks become slippery and hazardous when wet.

7 people complimented the landscaping. "I like the informal, non-institutional landscaping in the tree wells," but 17 objected to the maintenance and/or choice of plants. "It looks like someone is trying to achieve landscaping along the sidewalks but it never looks well kept & watered." Several complimented the new pocket park next to Long's, but complained that it is not properly maintained. 4 people noted a raw sewage odor in the area around Blockbuster.

The need for improvement applies to safety: 3 people thought safety had improved, but 22 decried a lack of adequate police presence. 17 said safety concerns made them less likely to shop particularly during the evening hours. 8 called for heavier traffic enforcement to prevent illegal left turns into a parking space.

The need for improvement applies to pedestrian convenience and amenities: 5 people objected to additional public seating. "Do NOT want to see more benches as it attracts loitering." But most of the respondents didn't agree and view the bench in front of Peet's and the sidewalk tables elsewhere as part of the people-friendly atmosphere that makes Lakeshore so popular. Accordingly, 35 people requested more places

Grand-Lakeshore Retail Advisory Group Survey

to sit down including "public benches" as opposed to those provided by individual businesses for their customers. There were a number of innovative proposals along these lines. One would create a space beneath the mural on the Burrito Shop wall that would provide seating for customers of the adjacent restaurants and for pedestrians.

Pedestrians' displeasure is evidenced by these comments:

- It seems the traffic lights are weighted heavily towards cars
- A median would go a long way toward improving safety and attractiveness
- Safer pedestrian crossings are needed at the 76 gas station and intersection of Mandana and Lakeshore.

The need for improvement applies to store façades and interiors: Many of these complaints were with regard to signage. 5 people described window displays as ugly with huge signs that don't match and are not consistent with the architecture. 5 wrote that they would like to see some guidelines/standards for signage. One comment suggested that shops seek professional guidance for signs and window displays.

Some stores were described as "looking tired" or in "need of a facelift". One person wrote, Lakeshore is a mix of old and new shops, some fabulously maintained and some tacky/rundown. Another viewed the less than pristine character as a virtue, I know some of the signage and exteriors look a bit run down, but I greatly prefer this to a super-polished look (like, for example, in the Emeryville mall)."

The need for improvements applies to the retail mix, as well, but with an added dimension. Despite the enthusiasm that greeted Trader Joe's arrival, survey respondents strongly favor independents over chain stores, particularly if the latter carry a product line that doesn't serve the neighborhood. "Do we need ANOTHER giant cell phone store? Happy to see the space filled, but that's the best we can do?" "Emeryville covers big chains quite nicely and has parking, too; I'd rather keep my neighborhood unique, with special character that'll draw."

This last sentiment is part of a recurring theme that underscores the pedestrian-friendly, small-town qualities that were cited in 20 comments:

- I feel very fortunate to live in a neighborhood where I can walk, and am on a first name basis with the merchants.
- The quality of the shops that relate to everyday needs has turned the Grand Lake into my favorite shopping destination.
- Attractive, charming area
- Stores are more upscale" and have a nice semi-urban, neighborly feel

There were a variety of other complaints. 10 respondents complained about parking and traffic flow, and 3 complained about the inconvenience and price of the new parking meters. But 3 shoppers thought the parking was good since you could park in one spot and visit many stores. 6 individuals mentioned excessive panhandling, 7 objected to the homeless man in Mandana Park, and 4 complained about organizations perpetually gathering petition signatures.

Ideas for Improvements:

- 9 people want expanded bus service and buses running from the hills to Lakeshore
- 11 people want more bike racks and safe, family friendly bike lanes
- There was a big variety of requests for new restaurants and retail establishments, but those are covered in detail in questions 8, 9 and 10.
- 7 people suggested extended shop hours particularly when the days are longer with 1 request for Trader Joe's and Arizmendi to stay open later 1 or 2 days a week.

Grand-Lakeshore Retail Advisory Group Survey

- Convert old meter posts to bike racks, provide a shuttle service to Bart.

Businesses with the most positive mentions

Urban Indigo (6)

Trader Joe's (5)

Starbucks, Noah's, and Trader Joe's for making restrooms being available to the public

Businesses that were mentioned negatively

Too many dry cleaners / nail salons. (5)

Noise, smoke and litter emanating from Easy Lounge. (5)

Our Trader Joe's is too small - doesn't offer the merchandise of other Trader Joe's.

Question 5

Please rate Grand and Santa Clara Avenues on the following characteristics:

Grand Characteristics	N/A	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Exterior appearance	1%	31%	56%	11%	0%
Merchandise quality	1%	28%	52%	18%	0%
Store hours	6%	9%	45%	39%	1%
Mix of retail and services	2%	27%	44%	26%	1%
Parking	5%	28%	46%	20%	1%
Safety	5%	34%	46%	15%	1%
Landscape and cleanliness	1%	42%	45%	12%	0%
Public transportation	36%	7%	23%	28%	6%
Pedestrian amenities	6%	53%	34%	8%	0%

Total responses **681**

Total skips **29**

Summary of 245 Comments

As a retail and entertainment destination, Grand Avenue is competing with two initial handicaps. For starters, it suffers in comparison to Lakeshore Avenue where the Lakeshore BID provides monthly, sidewalk steam-cleaning, daily litter pick-up, landscaping, private security and a promotional budget.

Just as importantly, Grand suffers from some inherent geographical considerations combined with the existing imbalance between service and retail oriented businesses. These issues were delineated in the 2008 Conley Consulting report commissioned by the city - "This node has a large representation of personal service outlets such as beauty shops and nail salons that interrupt the retail frontage. The distance between the larger convenience anchors (Safeway and the Ace Hardware) and the retail near the Grand Lake Theater discourages cross shopping and pedestrian activity throughout the node. The greatest challenge is its length and the fact that the auto oriented anchors are too isolated to provide a customer draw to the smaller storefronts in the pedestrian oriented portion."

These combined handicaps are reflected in the above Question 5 survey results, in the comments and even quite graphically in the responses to Question 2 that provides a list of which destinations are visited most frequently. Only 7 of the 34 businesses listed are on Grand Avenue. To some extent, this may reflect a sampling bias towards the Lakeshore neighborhoods as evidenced by Safeway's unrealistic ranking below Lakeshore Produce, but it's equally apparent that Lakeshore overall is the much bigger draw - "We spend less

Grand-Lakeshore Retail Advisory Group Survey

time on Grand versus Lakeshore, because the mix of businesses are less to our liking, and the ambiance is not as neighborly." "Even though I love Grand and it's closer to me, it does seem to be Lakeshore's neglected step-sibling or something."

44 comments expressed the following or similar sentiments: Grand Avenue is tired and needs perking up: the quality of the shops is "cheap, dumpy, neglected, drab and needs pride of ownership. 9 people pointed to the awnings covered with mold and bird droppings alongside the theatre as the most obvious example. 30 want better landscaping and public spaces. 26 compared Grand unfavorably to Lakeshore, and 22 pointed out that the sidewalks are dirty and in need of repair). 11 complained about pothole quality, garish signage, and 3 cited the beauty supply store as the worst offender.

Commenters confirmed the Conley report's conclusion that diversity of businesses is an important issue. 5 people mentioned that, in general, there are too many service businesses and a lack of variety. 26 specifically pointed to an excess of nail salons, 4 to an excess of copy shops and 4 to an excess of dry cleaners.

In addition to the above, Grand shares a number of other concerns more or less equally with Grand and Lake Park. 21 respondents feel that Grand is unsafe and needs more police presence. 13 complained about aggressive panhandlers.

As is the case elsewhere, traffic and parking are problematic. 8 people noted the difficulty in finding automobile parking and others complained about the inconvenience of the new pay stations. 6 complained about a lack of parking for bicycles and motorcycles.

Despite the complaints, there were quite a few positive comments: 10 people noted that the Grand Lake Theatre anchors the neighborhood. "It is a jewel. I love it." Others said they love the funkiness and noted that the buildings are quite beautiful with tons of charm. 3 were encouraged by the new restaurants. One comment summed up the pluses and minuses well: "On one hand, Grand Avenue...has terrible landscaping, run down buildings, poor signage and no cohesion. On the other hand, with the right kind of beautification, this could easily surpass Lakeshore AND Piedmont Avenue in quality and accessibility."

Ideas for Improvement

A center divider would increase pedestrian safety and appeal, lessening the sense of Grand Avenue being a highway (14).

Need more sidewalk cafes, sitting areas, wireless access (12)

Blank theater side could use a mural (2) - trompe l'oeil of shops

Maintain or restore the beautiful mural under the freeway, it appears shabby these days.

Businesses that were mentioned positively

Walden Pond (15)

Di Bartolos (8)

Ace Hardware (8)

Michael Mischner (7)

Grand Bakery (5) Love the painting on the Jewish bakery: "Every Day is a Challah Day!"

Vacuum Cleaner Store (5)

Mijori (5)

Banks (5)

Safeway (4)

Milanos (4)

Camino (4)

Grand-Lakeshore Retail Advisory Group Survey

Bike Shop (3)

Mimosa (3)

Plus a special mention for Jenny's Café - "great food, run by the nicest family in the universe."

Businesses that were mentioned negatively

That beauty supply store (6)

Mattress store (6)

Question 6

Please rate Lake Park Avenue on the following characteristics:

Lake Park Characteristics	N/A	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Exterior appearance	6%	67%	22%	5%	0%
Merchandise quality	6%	63%	25%	5%	0%
Store hours	22%	18%	37%	22%	0%
Mix of retail and services	8%	60%	23%	8%	0%
Parking	11%	35%	31%	21%	3%
Safety	10%	41%	39%	9%	1%
Landscape and cleanliness	5%	60%	26%	9%	1%
Public transportation	31%	7%	17%	32%	13%
Pedestrian amenities	9%	42%	28%	17%	3%

Total responses **681**

Total skips **29**

Summary of 275 Comments

Respondents have very strong opinions about Lake Park Avenue. On the positive side, people adore the Farmers' Market (28), Splash Pad Park (26), Gelato Firenze (27), the Grand Lake Theater (12) and Chao Thai (9). There were also positive mentions of Bank of America (15) and the Post Office (20), although the commenters liked the fact that banking and postal services were available more than they liked these two particular businesses.

On the negative side there was overwhelming dismay and distress about the abandoned Kwik Way site (103) and its associated parking lot. People do not like the Serenader Bar (40) or the KFC (13). Many people (32) feel unsafe walking on Lake Park. People characterized the street as unattractive, dirty, scuzzy and blighted (82). In general, Lake Park elicited more negative comments than either Lakeshore or Grand. Such perceptions are unfortunate in their own right, but even more so in terms of the repercussions on the entire district. As one commenter noted, "Sadly, it's the street that connects, or disconnects, Lakeshore and Grand Avenue."

Suggestions for improving the Kwik Way site include: tear it down; restore and reopen it; make the site an anchor location for business and pedestrian traffic with seating, bike racks and public restrooms; install a business that complements and relates well with the Farmers' Market; replace it with Taylors Refreshers, Jupiters, Catos, In-N-Out Burgers, Barneys, Fat Burgers or an outdoor cafe; condos with retail below.

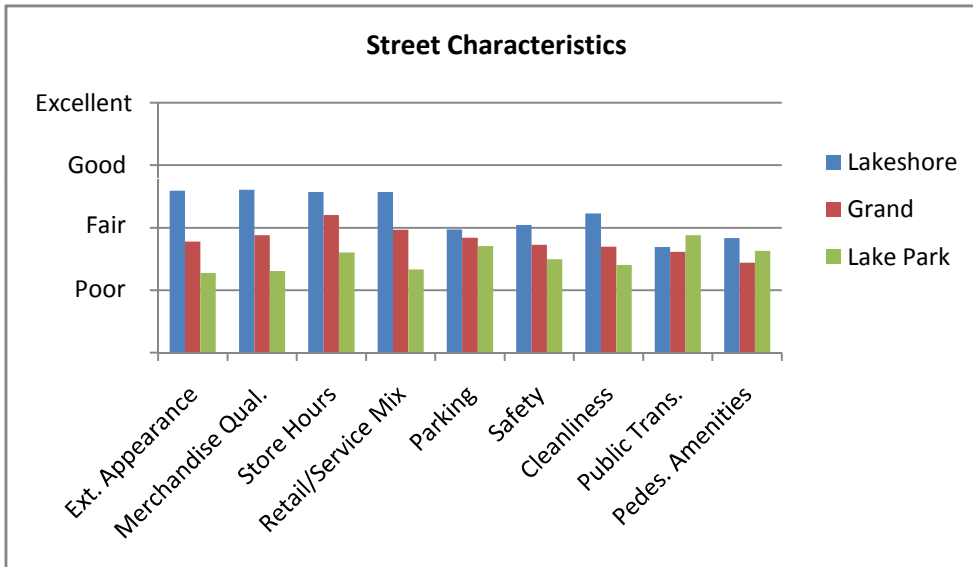
Other suggestions include:

- Improve exterior appearance of Serenader Bar and Thai restaurant
- Improve Chao Thai's "courtyard" by adding more colorful plants and painting the outside walls.

Grand-Lakeshore Retail Advisory Group Survey

- Install pedestrian and seating areas with European approach
- Widen and repave sidewalks
- Install plants and shade trees (not palms)
- Make neighborhood center more visible
- Remove and replace ad benches
- Provide bus service past 7:30PM
- Increase lighting for security.
- Remove weeds around freeway ramps to create good first impression at entrance to neighborhood
- New development should have living space included
- Contact police to remove unlicensed vendors selling items from cars or on tables at sidewalks in front of the Serenader and shops
- Close Lake Park Avenue and re-route traffic around freeway.
- Relocate Busy Body and cell phone store on the two most visible corners and replace with good restaurant, bar or art gallery.

Lakeshore, Grand and Lake Park Characteristics Compared



Question 7

In deciding where to shop, how important is it that a business be locally owned versus a large regional or national chain?

Importance	# Responses
Not at all important	74 10%
Somewhat important	377 53%
Extremely important	257 36%
Total responses	708
Total skips	2

Question 8

Looking at the Grand-Lakeshore business district as a whole, what products should be added to the existing retail?

Grand-Lakeshore Retail Advisory Group Survey

Product	# Responses	
Meat, poultry, seafood	361	53%
Shoes: men's, women's, children's	274	40%
Art and craft supplies	249	37%
Specialty grocery	229	34%
Wine shop	206	30%
Art gallery	194	28%
Office supplies	181	27%
Bakery	179	26%
Clothing: Women's	175	26%
Clothing: Vintage and/or consignment	170	25%
Furniture and home accessories	163	24%
Pet Supplies	161	24%
Homeopathic pharmacy	150	22%
Clothing: Men's	148	22%
Fabric and sewing supplies	145	21%
Thrift shop	122	18%
Clothing: Children's	120	18%
Antiques and collectibles	118	17%
Sporting Goods	118	17%
Other	98	14%
Toys	70	10%
Total responses	681	
Total skips	29	

Summary of 330 Comments

The majority of comments were food-related with meat, poultry and seafood topping the list followed by bakeries serving sweets and desserts. Many respondents want more gathering places, particularly pubs or cafes that are kid friendly and offer outdoor seating. Among non-food products, shoppers want more stores offering clothing, shoes and books. No one, however, wants another nail shop. Several opined that we have quite enough already.

32 people mentioned meat, poultry, seafood - "We really need a great butcher like Ver Brugge or Baron's- full service, with poultry and especially fish/seafood." 7 people cited Ver Brugge with 2 votes for Baron's and single votes for Magnani and Brian's.

32 individuals also commented on bakeries - "I love Arizmendi, but there is no dessert/sweets bakery (think Bakesale Betty or Sweet Adeline)." The most popular recommendation was La Farine with five votes. Bake Sale Betty's got two votes while Panera, Neldams, Acme, Semifreddis, Sweet Adeline, Katrina Rozelle, Montclair Bakery and Mariposa each received one.

Next on the want list was a delicatessen with 22 comments. A. G. Ferrari garnered 10 votes followed closely by Genova with 6.

19 individuals suggested a wine shop. 16 recommended cheese. Included in these two totals were 7 requests for a combination cheese/wine store. Of this number, 3 specifically cited Farmstead Wine and Cheese. 3 individuals complimented the wine selection at Buckingham Liquors and 1 said "I say wine shop, but I also

Grand-Lakeshore Retail Advisory Group Survey

love Buckingham Wines."

19 people also commented on shops that fall under the "specialty grocery" rubric. Market Hall earned 12 mentions - far more than any other business in the Question 8 comments. One person volunteered "The vacant Three Day Blinds shop on Grand Avenue would be the perfect spot for a scaled-down version of Market Hall..." There were also 4 mentions of The Pasta Shop.

13 individuals (of whom 5 specified "organic") requested a new produce shop.

Totally in keeping with the food bent, 8 people requested a cooking or kitchen supply store and 3 of those specified Sur La Table.

Although this question was targeted specifically at retail establishments, a sizable number of respondents took this as an opportunity to discuss eateries. This subject is discussed more extensively in questions 9 and 11, but we will note that 11 people asked for ice cream citing Ici, Fenton's and the old Lakeshore Creamery as examples - "Ice cream parlour (with seating and ambience--not a throw and go establishment)."

In addition 3 individuals requested a Tumble and Tea Café that combines children's activities with a place to socialize eat.

In terms of non-food retail products, there were a couple of surprises including two types of businesses (bookstores and homeopathic pharmacies) that ranked high in the number of comments, but weren't listed in our original check list.

30 people suggested a bookstore. Of these, 2 specified "children's books" and several others "used". Pendragon received 2 votes while Green Apple, Clean Well Lighted Place, Books Inc. and Diesel all received one. One unique and enthusiastic suggestion was for a business similar to Bus Boys and Poets, a Café/Bar/Bookstore located in Washington, DC.

13 survey-takers requested a homeopathic pharmacy. Of these, 11 specifically cited Elephant Pharmacy.

Clothing prompted the largest number of comments for a non-food item with 43 requests. These were divided into a variety of categories:

- Women's clothing earned 14 comments with several specifying good quality clothes for mature women. There were 4 requests for McCaulous and 3 for Anthropologie.
- Various clothing chains offering men's and women's clothing were mentioned by 10 people but none received more than one or two votes.
- 10 people recommended vintage clothing with 2 specific requests for Buffalo Exchange and 2 for Rockridge Rags.
- There were 6 requests for children's clothes and 6 for exercise clothing with 3 specifying Lululemon.

Shoes for men, women and children was the second most requested product in the Question 8 graph, but only garnered 24 comments. 10 were for shoes in general. 7 were for women's shoes and several others specifically for kids. The Walk Shop and A Step Forward were each requested twice.

16 comments included requests for an art or crafts gallery, but 2 of those simultaneously expressed reservations about whether one could succeed in the Grand Lake area. One possible solution was proposed - "An art gallery (would be) viable if it were combined with A) classes, B) other arts / entertainment / event

Grand-Lakeshore Retail Advisory Group Survey

Caribbean	208	33%	33%
American	181	29%	29%
African	179	28%	28%
Asian	176	28%	28%
Other	112	18%	18%
Total responses	629		
Total skips	81		

Summary of 297 Comments

While the survey results and the comments paint slightly different pictures, the two in combination strongly suggest that a brewpub would probably attract crowds, particularly if it included outdoor seating and entertainment. There is also a clear demand for one or more vegetarian, Mediterranean and Mexican restaurants.

The biggest factor, however, is "quality" which is mentioned in 41 different comments including 5 times in just one. One respondent put it succinctly - "I'm less concerned with type of food vs. quality." Many of the respondents noted that they saw progress in this direction with expressions of gratitude for new restaurants including Flavors of India with 10 positive mentions, 7 for Camino, 2 for Neecha Thai. Other more established quality restaurants were also singled out for praise including Spettro with 7 votes, Mezze with 5 and La Taza with 3.

The emphasis on quality has, as its corollary, an antipathy towards fast-food chains. Aside from isolated longings for In-N-Out Burger or Sonic, there were virtually no requests for fast-food restaurants.

Latin

More commenters suggested Mexican than any other cuisine, with 40 requests - mostly accompanied with a modifier such as "good" or "better" or "quality". Of those requests a significant portion was for a taqueria. 8 mentioned Cactus Taqueria with 3 votes for Picante and 2 each for La Pinata and Gordos. In addition there were 3 mentions of Dona Tomas and 5 requests for tapas.

American

The next most requested venue (25 respondents) was for a brewpub. 7 people listed Cato's. Other cited include Ben & Nicks, Jupiter, Beer Garden, and Pyramid Brew.

The 18 requests for burgers overlapped significantly with the requests for a pub, but the overwhelming favorite (8 mentions) was Barneys followed by Bongo Burgers (2).

In addition, there were 16 requests for cafes, 10 for a deli, and 10 for a diner. Some of the many examples cited include Fenton's, Fat Apples, Rockridge Café, A.G. Ferrari and DiBartolos Café.

Vegetarian

In the survey results, vegetarian ranked the highest, but in the comments section there were only 22 requests for vegan or vegetarian cuisine. Mimosa, on Santa Clara, was mentioned as a good example by one respondent - as was Vegan Soule, which sells at the Saturday Market and now has a restaurant downtown. In addition, there were 4 suggestions for restaurants featuring salads.

Other

There were some 20 requests for an Italian restaurant - "Good made-from-scratch French/Italian food (not

Grand-Lakeshore Retail Advisory Group Survey

pizza, not smothered in cheese) with good vegetable sides."

On the other hand, an equally large contingent specifically requested pizza. Zachary's was the number one choice with 5 votes followed by 3 for Pizzaolo, 2 for California Kitchen and 2 for Rustica.

There were 18 requests for middle-eastern and Mediterranean food including 8 requests for La Mediterranee. Other restaurants earning positive mention include Holy Land, Shawna Falafel and A Cote.

35 people requested additional Asian restaurants, but half a dozen though there was a sufficient number already. Of the 35 requests, the biggest percentage was for Thai with 13 mentions. 8 people were interested in "Asian Fusion". 5 in Japanese plus 2 who specifically recommended the Manpuku Noodle Shop and another 4 who requested sushi.

Implicit in some of the requests for new Asian restaurants was an assertion that many of the existing Chinese restaurants don't serve the "right kind" of food. This was most evident with the Grand Lake Express which received negative comments from 5 individuals.

12 commenters mentioned Soul Food / Barbeque. Only 1 restaurant, Everett & Jones, was mentioned with 3 positive and 1 negative comments.

There were only 5 comments regarding Caribbean cuisines, but one individual made a good case for..." tropical drinks and jerked chicken and conch fritters".

10 people requested an Indian restaurant.

Question 10

Which, if any, of the following kinds of restaurants would you like to see added to the existing restaurant mix?

Restaurant Type	# Responses	
Breakfast	263	40%
Sit-down lunch	168	26%
Fast take-out or eat-in	122	19%
Entrees under \$10	244	37%
Entrees \$10-\$20	342	52%
Entrees over \$20	117	18%
Kid friendly	169	26%
Quality food at affordable prices	519	79%
Total responses	657	
Total skips	53	

Question 11

Do you think the Grand-Lakeshore District would benefit from a more active night life and more entertainment venues?

Answer	# Responses	
Yes	394	61%
No	251	39%
Total responses	645	

Grand-Lakeshore Retail Advisory Group Survey

Total skips 65

Summary of 319 Comments

Yes

More than 100 respondents mentioned music, with the majority of those specifying "live". While tastes in music vary widely, jazz was mentioned by 40 participants.

Many recommended cafes that stay open late and offer live music. L'Amyx, with entertainment on Saturday nights, Mezze, with jazz on Sunday nights, Coffee Mill, with jazz on Sunday afternoons, and Gaylords were cited as examples. Commenters stressed that these are good starts but more music on more days of the week would be welcome.

Family-friendly brewpubs were a popular choice favored by 27 people - reinforcing the results seen previously, particularly in question 9. Cato's was again the most popular with 7 votes, followed by Ben & Nicks (2), Circus (2), Barclays, Trappist and Triple Rock.

Many people requested outdoor dining and activities in conjunction with entertainment venues.

No

Those opposed to a more active night life expressed concerns about increased alcohol consumption, noise and pedestrian traffic. Some suggested that any new entertainment venue should be located away from the main residential areas and take into account the fact that there are many young families in the neighborhood.

Question 12

How often do you shop at the Saturday Farmers Market in Splash Pad Park?

Frequency	# Responses	
Never	44	6%
Sometimes	290	41%
Usually	370	53%
Total responses	704	
Total skips	6	

Question 13

If you shop at the Saturday market, do you patronize neighborhood restaurants and merchants at the same time?

Answer	# Responses	
Yes	533	81%
No	124	19%
Total responses	657	
Total skips	53	

Summary of 143 Comments

81.1% of those who answered this question did so in the affirmative. Most of the comments were filed by the minority who answered "no". The content consists largely of their reasons for not patronizing local merchants on Saturdays, suggestions as to how merchants could better capitalize on the success of the Farmers Market,

and ideas for improving the market itself.

Almost half of the comments were from people who stated that they live in the neighborhood but shop at the local merchants on other days of the week when stores are not as busy and when they're not loaded down with Farmers Market purchases.

Key concerns, according to 21.9% of those who registered comments, revolved around safety as well as pedestrian and traffic issues. Respondents repeatedly cited a lack of adequate parking as well as narrow and congested sidewalks, and crosswalks connecting to Grand and Lakeshore that are not safe for foot traffic.

Proposed solutions include regular police patrols on Saturdays, wider sidewalks, reducing the number of cars through temporary street closure, adding more bike lanes and providing a shuttle from adjacent neighborhoods directly to the Market.

30.3% of those who registered comments talked about what the merchants could do to make shoppers more likely to visit Grand and Lakeshore on Saturdays. Of these comments, about half mentioned businesses they would like to see added-replicating to a great extent the information provided in greater depth in Question 8. However, it is worth noting an emphasis on more restaurants, (particularly those serving breakfast) and "higher quality" stores.

The more interesting comments were those that provided concrete ideas existing businesses might consider to boost sales:

- Incentives to shop on Saturdays such as coupons, discounts and special sales.
- Opening earlier on Saturdays to take advantage of early pedestrian traffic.
- Sidewalk tables in front of restaurants offering "quick serve" items and (at retail stores) samples or items on sale.
- Tables at the market to generate foot traffic to their respective neighborhood locale.
- Featuring items purchased at the Farmers Market.

Three survey participants mentioned Easy, the bar on Lakeshore, as the best example of the last approach and one wrote about restaurants that do much the same. "Easy Lounge's cocktail specials with produce from that day's market are great, other restaurants & cafes could profit from similar tie-ins."

Another person opined that this kind of mercantile reciprocity benefits both the Market and the merchants. "Both...can coexist and grow organically with each other."

On the other side of the coin, some felt regulation of the market was important to maintain a sense of fair competition. These people were concerned about potential loss of revenue from a passerby who patronizes the Farmer's Market, and ignores a merchant on Lakeshore or Grand who might carry the same product, e.g., flowers sold at Farmer's Market vs. the flower shop on Grand Avenue.

The comment section also included a number of suggestions for improvements to the Market itself including these:

- A drop-off point to leave bags.
- A service to transport produce and other purchases to their homes.
- A place to leave their dogs while shopping.
- A designated location for strollers.

Grand-Lakeshore Retail Advisory Group Survey

Although most of the comments were filed by people who do not combine Farmers Market shopping with shopping in the adjacent business district, there were quite a few exceptions – “I have met persons who make an entire day of shopping. They come from Marin, Castro Valley, etc. to shop the farmers market, buy coffee at Peet's, have lunch or ice cream on Grand Ave.”

Question 14

In which neighborhood do you live?

Neighborhood	# Responses
Grand Lake	204 ██████████ 29%
Crocker Highlands	161 ██████████ 23%
Adams Point	80 ████████ 11%
Haddon Hill	70 ████████ 10%
Rose Garden	68 ████████ 10%
Glenview	34 ████ 5%
City of Piedmont	14 █ 2%
Eastlake	10 █ 1%
Other	64 ████████ 9%
Total responses	705
Total skips	5

Question 15

Do you own or rent your current residence?

Residence	# Responses
Own	484 ██████████ 69%
Rent	214 ██████████ 31%
Total responses	698
Total skips	12

Question 16

Do you have individuals in your household in the following age brackets?

Age Bracket	# Household Members
5 or under	164 ████████ 10%
6 through 12	101 ██████ 6%
13 through 20	85 ████ 5%
21 through 40	546 ██████████ 32%
41 through 60	637 ██████████ 37%
61 or older	175 ████████ 10%
Total household members	1708
Total responses	702
Total skips	8

Question 17

What is your gender?

Grand-Lakeshore Retail Advisory Group Survey

Gender	# Responses	
Male	254	37%
Female	444	64%
Total responses	694	
Total skips	16	

Question 18

What is your approximate annual household income?

Income	# Responses	
Under \$20,000	11	2%
\$20,000 - \$75,000	134	20%
\$75,000 - \$100,000	145	22%
\$100,000 - \$150,000	158	24%
Over \$150,000	223	34%
Total responses	664	
Total skips	46	

Question 19

The Grand Avenue Business Association (GABA) and the Lakeshore Business Improvement District (BID) both hold annual events including this year's Lakefest 2008 street festival on Lakeshore, August 2 and 3, and a National Night Out celebration on Grand, August 5. Which of the following events have you attended in the past or expect to attend in the future?

Event	# Responses	
Lakeshore Street Festival	469	90%
Grand Avenue National Night Out	218	42%
Lakeshore Tiny Tots Halloween Parade	140	27%
Lakeshore Easter Derby	75	14%
Lakeshore Christmas Caroling	44	8%
Grand Avenue Proud Parents Stroll	27	5%
Total responses	523	
Total skips	187	

Summary of 330 Comments

The most frequent comment was "I have never heard of these events" (20), or "These events need more publicity" (10).

Some people adore the events (16) and want them to be bigger, better or more often (8). Others don't like the events because they don't feel safe (5), think the events interfere with normal shopping and travel (4), or just aren't interested (3).

Lakefest received mixed reviews. "We enjoyed the Lakefest 2008 festival this year! A nice mix of vendors, info, entertainment. (8)" "Lakefest was dissapointing. Nothing of quality, same old stuff. (8)" There were many suggestions for improving Lakefest.

- Why were all the stores closed on Sunday during the festival? It should be a blend of the street fair and open stores so that each could benefit.

Grand-Lakeshore Retail Advisory Group Survey

Total 204

What I like about the neighborhood

Other	29		50%
Retail	16		28%
Community	6		10%
Farmers Market / Splash Pad	5		9%
Pedestrian Access	2		3%
Total		58	

Summary of 349 Comments

This open-ended question prompted diverse and far ranging responses that likely represent a desire to get in one last word on a given subject or to express an opinion or idea not broached previously. Most of these comments have been covered in greater depth earlier in the survey, but some comments are new or particularly well-expressed or otherwise worth repeating.

Regarding existing retail and suggestions for improvements:

- I love the Grand Lakeshore area because you can find both affordable and upscale items. The mix is great. Let's continue to keep it both humble and chic."
- I think it's a great district that needs its holes filled, not something where radical change is necessary. The key is to figure out what will complement the major attractors."
- We love this area and think it can become as much a destination as Piedmont Ave or College but with a little more variety and flavor."
- We would love to shop more in our own area but frequently have to go further afield to get the quality products such as meat, poultry and fish that we would love to buy here."

Regarding cleanliness and suggestions for physical improvements:

- GABA and BID need to address visual blight in the area by creating ordinances for signage and storefronts. Landscaping is desperately needed and chronic attention needs to be paid to litter clean-up/graffiti removal."
- I don't understand why Lakeshore has flourished and attracted so many nice stores and restaurants, while Grand lags behind."

Regarding safety:

- High profile robberies have made the area appear dangerous. Regular Police foot patrol may make folks feel more comfortable. Aggressive panhandling needs to be controlled."

Regarding thank-yous and loving this neighborhood:

- Thanks for taking the time to solicit our feedback. We're lucky to live in a neighborhood where so many people care!"

Regarding what areas Grand-Lakeshore should emulate:

- We love living in Crocker Highlands and would like to do more of our shopping on foot in our own village. Why is it that Monclair, Piedmont Ave., and Rockridge have such a variety of shops and we have empty store fronts and dirty sidewalks?"
- The formula for success is not rocket science. Look at College Avenue and Fourth Street as examples. A well designed streetscape and diverse retail mix attracts customers and tenants."

Conclusions

About a third of the people who responded to this question did so to either thank GLRAG for the opportunity to provide input or to express how much they like the neighborhood. This is indicative of strong community support for a vibrant Grand-Lakeshore business district and suggests that ongoing community support is likely.

About one third of the responses in the "improvement" category were related to wanting all of the areas to be cleaner, safer and more green. As was the case elsewhere in the survey results, most commenters seemed to recognize obvious disparities between Lakeshore, Grand and Lake Park, and, as one person noted, Lakeshore benefits from the many services provided by their Business Improvement District.

Another had a brighter outlook: "Street beautification such as new sidewalks, mid-street planters, trees, street arch, better street lights. This kind of investment will lead to better stores. Grand Ave., with its large sidewalks, is truly a diamond in the rough!"

Regarding crime and safety issues, the survey coincided with a series of restaurant take-over robberies in Oakland and adjacent East Bay cities. As a result, the numbers (and immediacy) of the comments on these issues was undoubtedly higher than they would have been otherwise. Nonetheless, the presence of walking beat and other officers is an essential element in creating a safe, pedestrian-friendly shopping environment.