

Retail/ Commercial District Small Business Study

**Project Update Presentation
City Council: Feb. 11 2020**





1. Overview of the Retail/Commercial Small Business Study
2. Findings to date
3. Next Steps

Context – Employment Lands & Economy Review (ELER)



Why Study Retail/Commercial Areas?



- Public and business **community concern** regarding closures of independent small businesses and storefront vacancies
- Perceived **impact on neighbourhood character** and diversity, shopping area vibrancy and resilience
- **Vancouver BIA Partnership** and City agreed on need for data to better understand small business trends prior to undertaking policy work or other initiatives

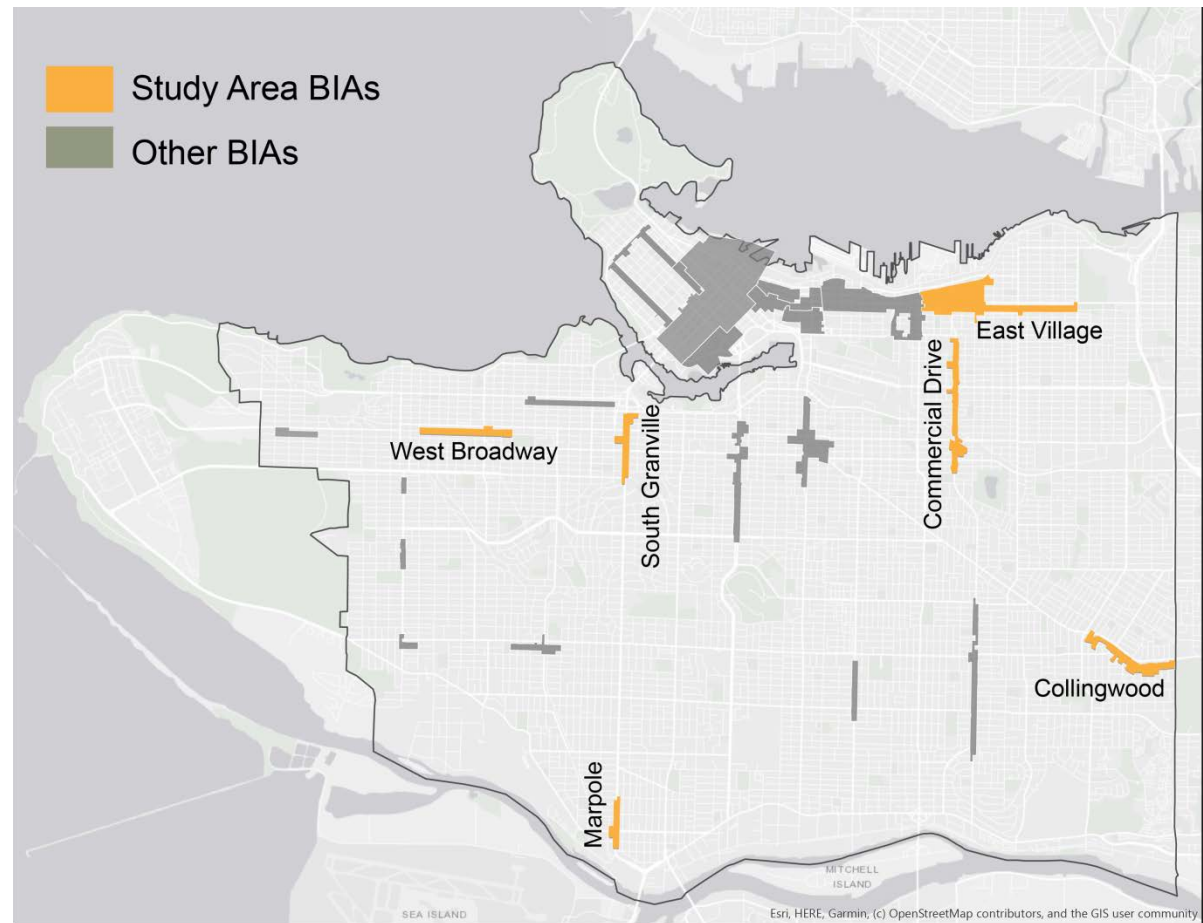
Study Goals

- Gauge the health and viability of independent small businesses by **studying business change** in six representative areas
- Recommend a methodology / **indicators** for regular data tracking
- Identify priority **areas for future work**



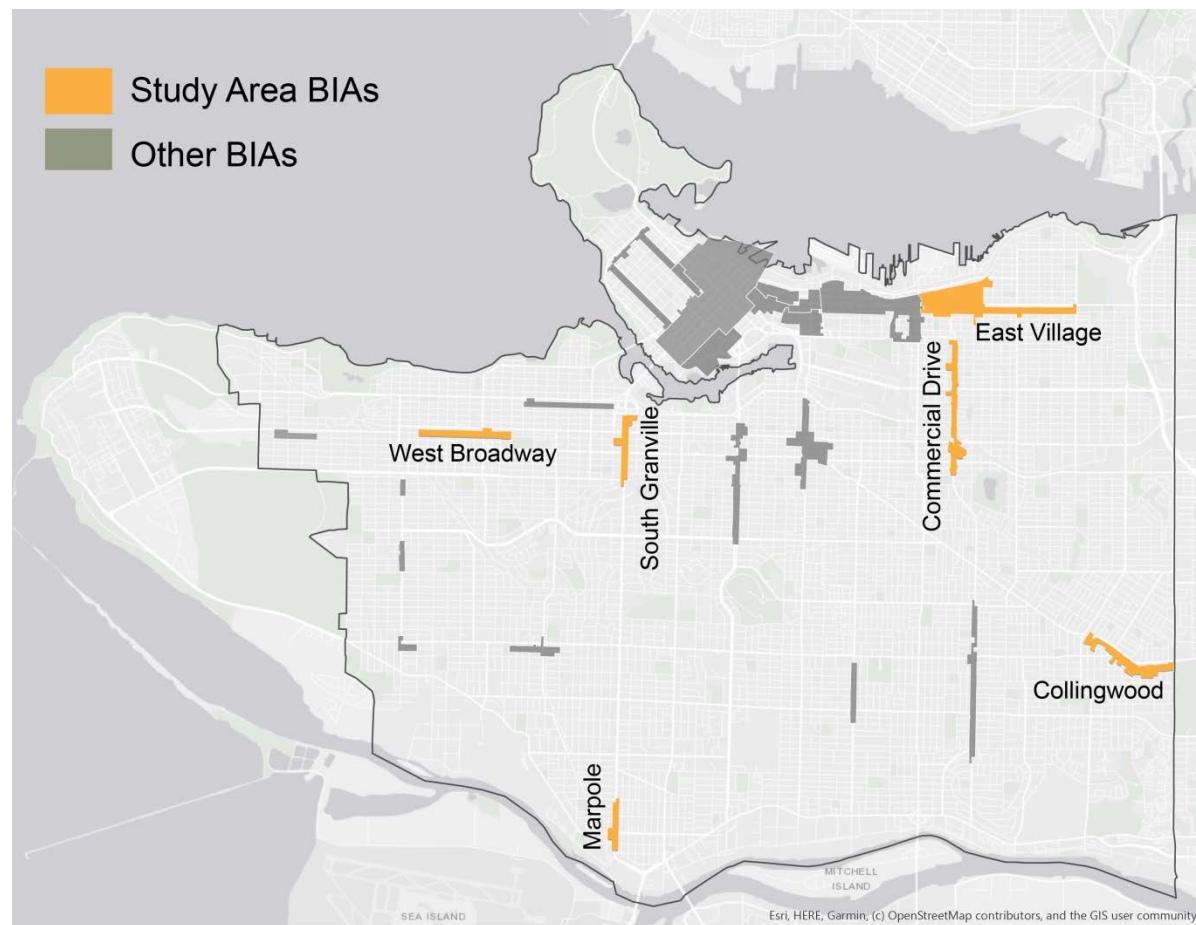
Selection of 6
representative BIA
neighbourhood
shopping districts:

- Collingwood
- Commercial Drive
- Hastings North
- Marpole
- S. Granville and
- W. Broadway



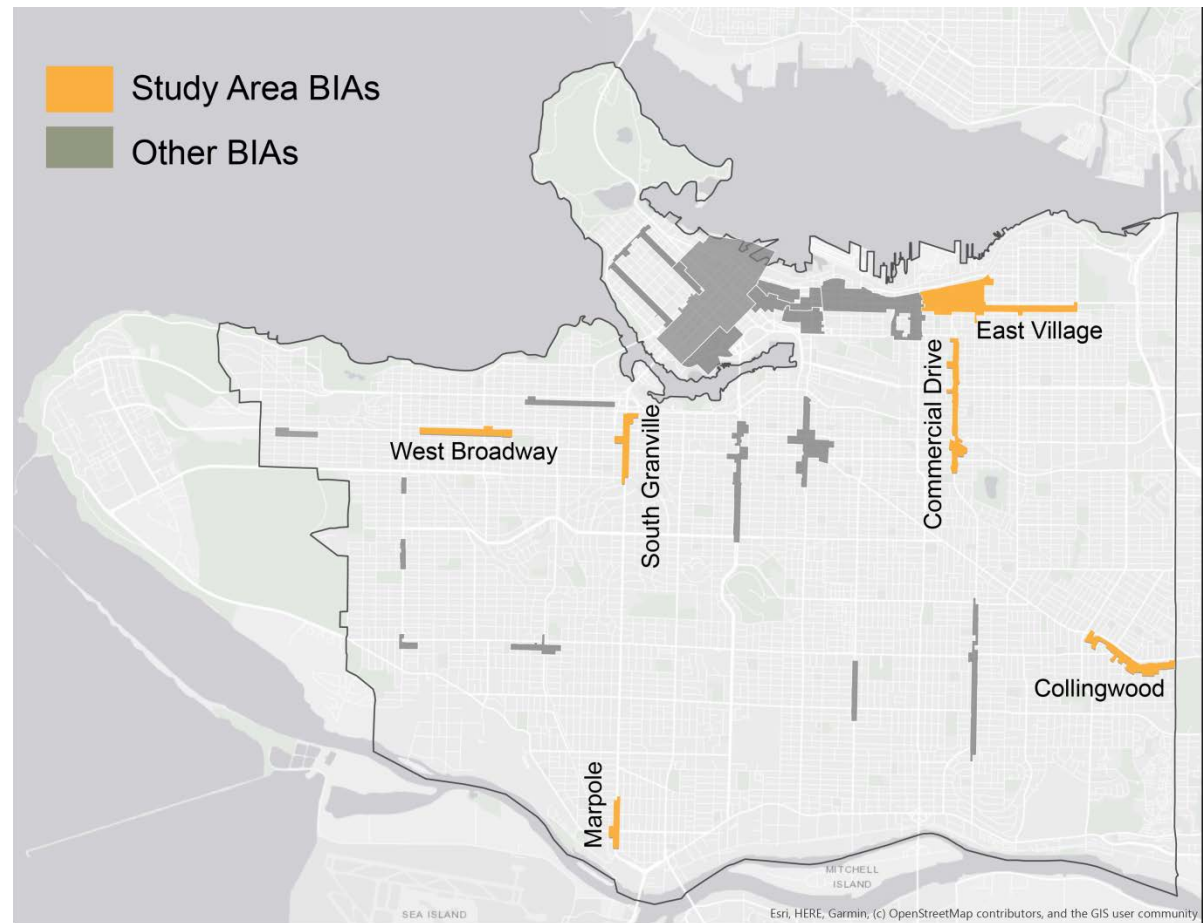
Criteria for selection:

- North-south coverage
- East-west coverage
- 4 areas evidencing change including 2 “Community Plan” areas
- 2 “stable” areas
- Relatively similar zoning



Quantitative analysis of change in the 6 study areas:

- Inventories of street level retail commercial businesses
- Comparison of existing data sets
- Baseline versus current



Qualitative research on the *key challenges* for small business:

- Facilitated roundtables
- Paper and online surveys
- One-on-one interviews



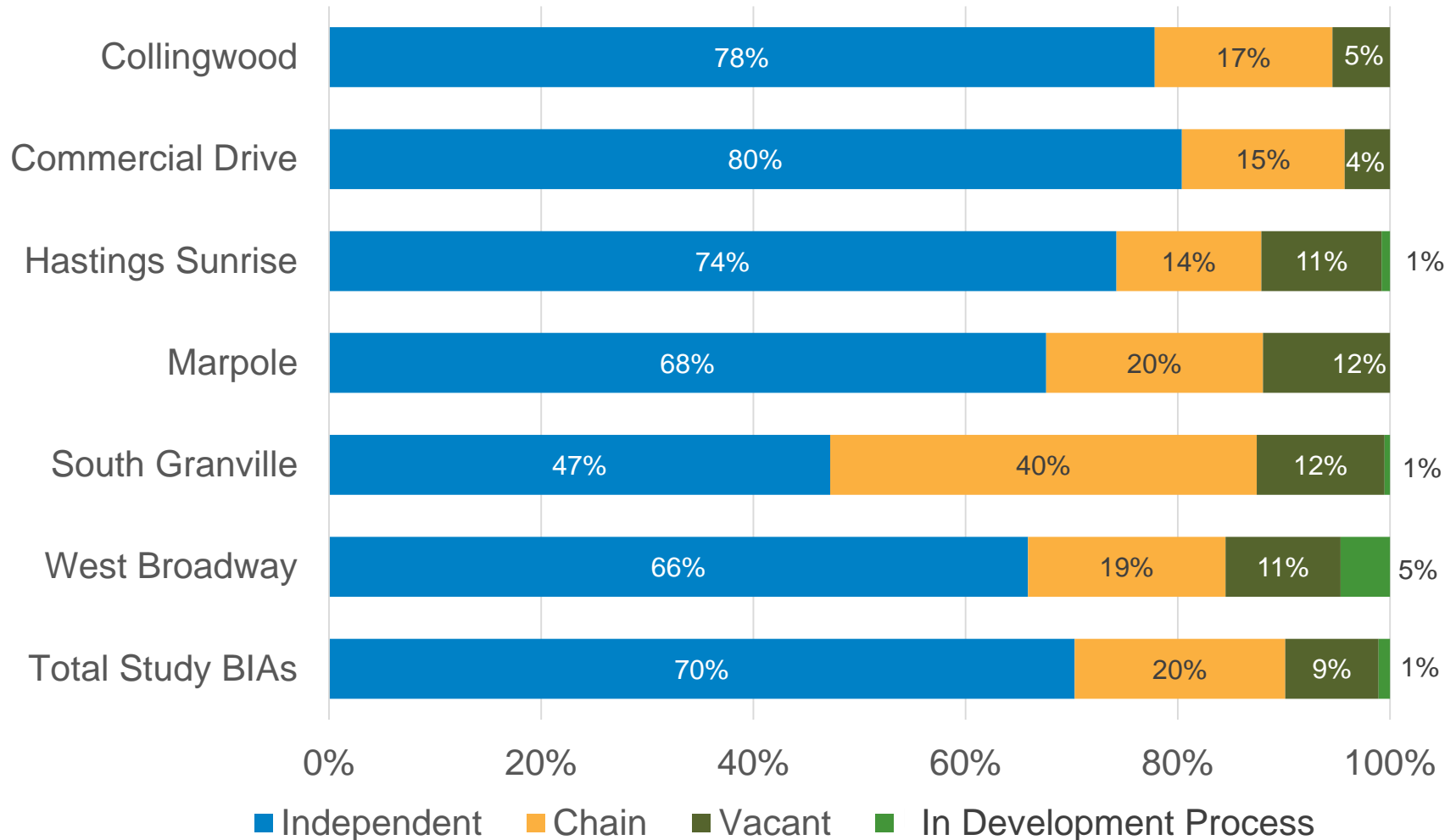
Key Definition:

Chain vs Independent

Statistics Canada, a “chain” is:

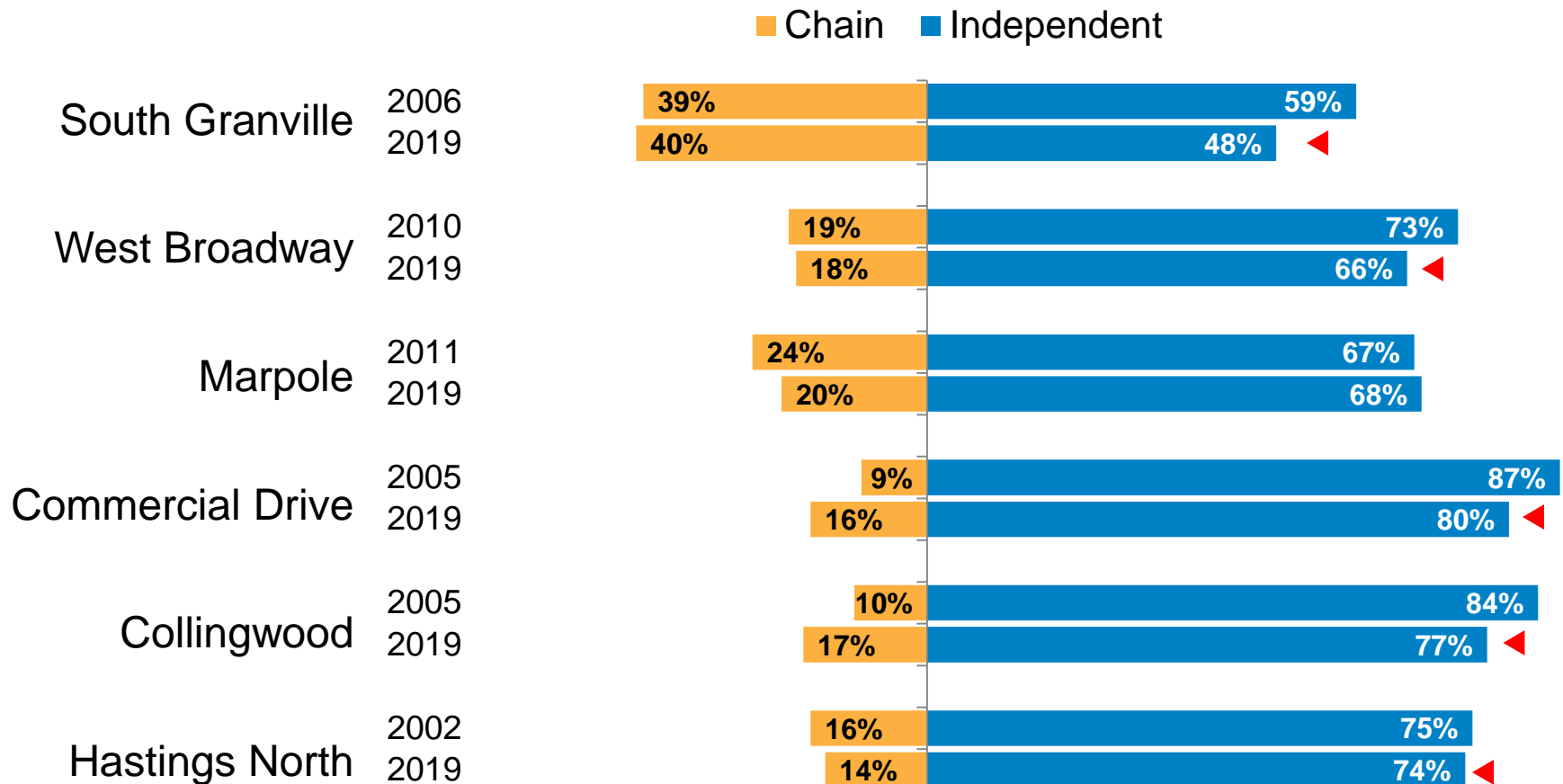
An organization operating four or more outlets in the same industry class under the same legal ownership at any time during the survey year

Initial Data: Current Snapshot



Change Over Time: Independents vs. Chains

**Some decreases in independent businesses relative to chains
(varies by area)**



NOTE: Baseline year and total number of businesses changes for each area

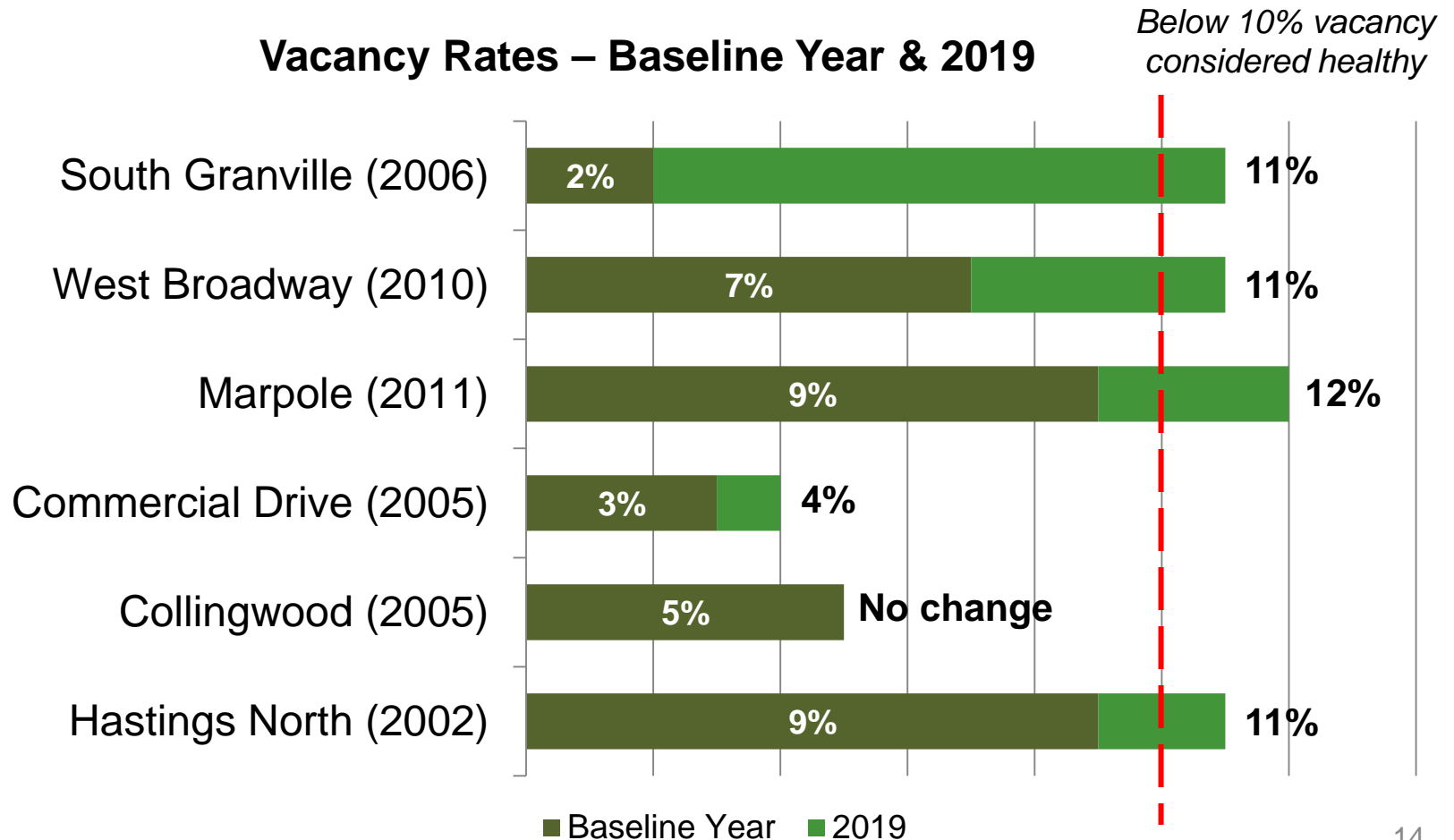
Change Over Time: Property Ownership

General decrease in *individual* property ownership (-16% owner/operator; -6% individual) vs *increase* in numbered corporations (+41%) & developers (+71%)

Aggregate of All Study Areas Ownership, 2012 and 2019

	2012	2019	% Change
Bank	7	3	-57%
Business	95	67	-29%
Developer	68	116	71%
Gov't	0	2	200%
Holding Company	275	301	9%
Individual	301	284	-6%
Non-Profit	7	7	0%
Numbered Corp	54	76	41%
Owner-occupied	64	54	-16%
Union / Utility / Other	34	12	-65%

Vacancy rates generally increased



Business Challenges

1. Affordability: Property Taxes & Assessments; Lease Rates
2. Public Realm: Safety, Place-making & Quality
3. Parking, Streets/Access, Transit
4. Permitting & Licensing: Time, Complexity
5. Labour costs / employee recruitment and retention
6. Leasing Issues: Triple Net, Demolition Clauses
7. Changing Neighbourhood Demographics



Next Steps

1. Integration of outcomes into the Employment Lands and Economy Review, Broadway Plan and Vancouver Plan policy processes and strategies
2. Expansion of Data Collection and Ongoing Monitoring



Thank you