

Cambie Corridor: Youth Engagement Workshop (Phase II) Churchill Secondary School October 25, 2010

The youth engagement process, as part of the Cambie Corridor Planning Program aims to engage youth leaders in the Cambie Corridor; in part, it helps ensure that the City's policy incorporates youth views and needs as directed in the City of Vancouver's Civic Youth Strategy.

On October 25th a workshop was held at Churchill Secondary to have youth leaders come together to talk about public realm elements; 22 youth participated in this session. Leading up to the workshop, youths were provided with background information on the planning program, disposable cameras, placed in groups and instructed to explore their neighbourhood through the camera lens. Student participants took photographs up and down the Cambie Corridor, focusing on streets, lanes and parks.

At the workshop, using examples of the photos they took, the youth leaders discussed issues related to key problems with the space, some of the successes, and how the space could be improved. Keeping in mind the City's goals of environmental sustainability, livability and affordability, the role of walking and cycling trips, especially those integrated with transit, were keenly discussed.

The workshop also provided additional capacity building through the planning process and video technology. The workshop was videotaped in order to capture the youth feedback and ideas about the Cambie Corridor, and the footage will be used to develop a short video about the process and content of the workshop. The editing of the video is being conducted by youths from Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House who were involved in a previous planning process. They will share their knowledge and act as video mentors with key youth from Churchill Secondary School while gaining employment skills and training.

Below are the key comments from each of the three groups. The notes reflect the use of photo logs and discussion groups at the workshop:

STREETS

Problems:

- No crosswalks
- Too much greenery
- Too much time waiting for buses
- It is dangerous and there are safety issues for cars and pedestrians
- There is limited access and free movement for pedestrians in certain areas
- No enough public washrooms
- Too crowded for people to bike along Cambie and 19th
- In rush hour, it is hard for cars to turn out of lane at 22nd
- Need crossing light at 43rd

- Not enough bike locks
- The buildings are very dull
- Not many places that appeal to youth
- There are some 'wasted' buildings and sites
- Many people jaywalk at 49th and Cambie area
- The feeling while walking along Cambie is:
 - Dark
 - Dangerous
 - Nothing to do
 - Boring

Successes:

- Many tree lined streets
- Visible biking lanes and designated bike areas
- There are bike racks in most places
- There is access and free movement of cars
- There are car sensors on the road to activate the lights
- There is some lighting in some locations
- Oakridge mall is a destination that has many shops and services
- The Canada Line connects the Corridor
- There is a feeling of neighbourhood in some areas
- People walk and cycle

Opportunities

- It would be great to promote activities such as: eating, hanging out, shopping, café with games, sports, skatepark, swimming pool and ice rink
- To have more shops and services along the street
- Make buildings brighter and more welcoming
- More restaurants
- More garbage cans
- More lively and fun places
 - Public art (interactive art)
 - Colour
 - Restaurants
 - Attractions
 - Theatre
 - Stores
 - People
 - Lights
 - Parks
 - Plazas
 - Flowers
- It is hoped that Cambie becomes somewhere people go, rather than people go through. Cambie should become a destination location.

PARKS

Problems:

- Columbia Park - road comes in at cross section
- Large areas without lights or main attractions (i.e. concession)
- Wooden Gate around Langara golf course is dangerous and pathways are narrow

- Sign at Langara was dirty and hard to read
- Having no lights around trail at Langara Golf course is dangerous
- Ash and 45th park lacks garbage cans
- Queen Elizabeth park is narrow and has winding roads which are not accessible for people with disabilities. Some area's too steep for wheelchair access
- Random tree debris is messy and ugly
- The Queen Elizabeth benches have bar in the middle which restricts the use of the bench
- There is no play area or playground for kids in Queen Elizabeth Park
- Some pathways in Queen Elizabeth are too steep for seniors

Successes:

- Queen Elizabeth is well kept and flowering
- Queen Elizabeth's shelters are good and well positioned
- Queen Elizabeth restaurant is in a convenient location and one doesn't have to travel for food. Build on this by making additional affordable food options available
- The waterfall is relaxing
- Cambie and Langara pathway is a good shortcut
- Tisdal Park - there is a play area for kids and fitness for others and is welcoming for all ages
- Benches without bars in some parks are still available
- Some parks provide a place for wildlife to live

Opportunities:

- Build more paths through parks - less muddy paths
- Perhaps bike paths in parks could be slightly curved so that water rolls away instead of creating water pools in the centre (minimise hydroplaning)
- Have group events held in parks - free fun stuff
- Need more family friendly facilities at Queen Elizabeth park
- Advertise parks on more public streets
- Winona Park - wide empty area that could be made better with the use of the soccer nets and facilities
- Change policy so public can book the use of the park when not in use
- Have accessibility signs, and do not build too steep of grades for wheelchairs
- Have more picnic areas; and the ones that exist should have better signage so that a newcomer to the park can find them easily.
- Keep messy areas clean
- More places for 'cultured' food in parks (ice cream, taquitos, japadog) that are also affordable, and vending machines for drinks
- More water fountains
- To have more people year round in the parks
- It would be great to have parks used more as communal community space
- More lights at night for night life
- Plant more trees
- Preserve and enhance historical objects
- More statues

LANES

Problems:

- There are many rough surfaces and puddles
- There's no where to sit
- Lanes are often barren
- There's limited lighting
- There's a feeling of being unsafe - open garages, dark spaces
- There's lots of garbage
- Often there is not enough space for 2 people to walk side-by-side
- There is confusing signage
- Not much space for cars to park
- There is graffiti in some lanes

Successes:

- Lots of light
- There are trees in some areas providing colour (this good because it provides contrast from grey and asphalt)
- Some lanes have good width
- Some lanes have alternative road treatment
- They are on-route to school

Opportunities:

- There are opportunities for adding and enhancing lanes
 - greening (planting trees and bushes)
 - resurfacing
 - art
 - 3D drawings
 - Use as parking
 -
 - Lighting
 - Flowers
 - Paint fences, garages
 - Repave
 - Add colour
- Plan trees, flowers at edge of property
- Add small playgrounds
- Add a concession area
- Speedbumps to slow down cars and make it safer for pedestrians
- Have better drainage
- Improve the lighting in some areas

Safety:

- Improve lighting
- Create activity on street - lane will feel safer
- The sense that people are lurking in corners is unsafe
- Slow drivers (creepy)
- Fast drivers (unsafe)
- Ensure cleanliness - garbage brings racoons
- Ensure there are smooth surfaces

Shortest Way:

- Ensure the lanes are quick and easy for pedestrians
- No need to go to the stoplight

- Opportunity for pedestrians to cut through
- Don't like sharp turns
- Four-way streets that do not have lights are scary to cross
- Small pedestrian-only walkways between property should be encouraged
- Have lanes as a thoroughfare to destinations: store, place with washroom, mall
- Cutting through parks
- Meeting places

Roomy:

- Ensure there is enough personal space
- Need the ability to walk in the lanes and feel pleasant
- Not have cars in 'my' space
- Ensure there are well designated pedestrian areas
- Lanes should not be like a school hallway - closed-in and busy