

From: "Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>

To: "[Direct to Mayor and Council - DL](#)"

Date: 12/8/2024 8:05:01 PM

Subject: Memo - Road Space Reallocation

Attachments: Memo - Road Space Reallocation.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Lon LaClaire. A short summary of the memo is as follows:

- This memo provides an update on progress towards reallocating road space from vehicle travel and storage, towards public space, park space, green infrastructure and sustainable travel modes.
- Council passed the 11 per cent road space reallocation target in May 2020. Since then, the City has completed over 140 projects that have reallocated road space in some way.
- These projects have collectively contributed to 4 per cent of the target, leaving 96 per cent to go.
- Staff will refine the way road space reallocation is measured to better take into account temporary spaces such as seasonal patios.
- Progress towards the target will be reported out on annually.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lon LaClaire at 604-873-7336 or lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca.

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver
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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.



ENGINEERING SERVICES
Lon LaClaire, M.Eng., P.Eng.
City Engineer/General Manager

MEMORANDUM

December 6, 2024

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Maria Pontikis, Chief Communications Officer, CEC
Teresa Jong, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy, Mayor's Office
Trevor Ford, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Steve Jackson, General Manager, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

FROM: Lon LaClaire
General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Road Space Reallocation

RTS #: N/A

This memo provides an update on progress towards reallocating road space from motor vehicles towards public space, green infrastructure and sustainable travel, further to the Council briefing on October 21, 2024.

Background

Better use of street space can enable efficient resident and business mobility, to ensure a thriving economy and robust daily life. As the city grows, our ability to increase the capacity of the transport system is primarily through shifting trips to more space-efficient modes such as walking, cycling, and transit.

Streets are one of the City's biggest assets and there is limited ability to acquire new land. The City has reallocated street space for many years. A notable example was in the 1970s with the West End mini parks. With intensification of land use, the delivery of public space, green space and rainfall management requires more significant road space reallocation.

Council set a 11 per cent road space reallocation target in May 2020. This target is equivalent to approximately 110,000 parking stalls or 4,500 Jim Deva Plazas. This direction was further refined in Vancouver Plan, and Council also identified road space reallocation as a Strategic Priority in 2024.

Measuring Road Space Reallocation

For the purposes of this work, road space is broadly defined as any street space between the curbs that is used for the travel or storage of private motor vehicles. Laneways have been excluded as they offer very limited opportunity for reallocation and play a critical role in service delivery in the City. Roads in parks are also excluded as they are outside the City's jurisdiction.

The uses include:

- Plazas and parklets
- Green infrastructure
- Park space
- Wider sidewalks
- Patios
- Bus lanes and bus bulbs
- Protected active travel lanes

The area of road space reallocated is measured, including daily time-limited reallocations of space. For example, for a 12-hour bus lane, 50 per cent of the surface area of the bus lane is included. Time-limited school street closures are included in a similar way; seasonal closures that are renewed annually, including summer patios, will be added to this calculation.

Progress to Date

Since 2020, the City has transformed over 140 locations that have reallocated road space in some way. These projects have collectively contributed to 4 per cent of the target, leaving 96 per cent remaining. On an individual project basis, significant transformations can occur. For example, the St George Rainway project will reallocate approximately 45 per cent of the local street within its project boundary. The permanent Bute-Robson Plaza project will reallocate around 60 per cent of the original road space within its project boundary to public space. These projects and others make significant improvements to their local neighbourhoods. Appendix A includes more examples.

Staff are also working to deliver more, faster. Beginning as a response to the pandemic in 2020, more road space reallocation projects have been piloted with temporary materials as a method of community engagement and batching similar projects for streamlined delivery.

Ongoing Work and Next Steps

Staff will refine how road space reallocation is measured to better take into account temporary spaces such as seasonal patios. Additionally, staff are working on a framework to align projects and capital planning, using reallocation as a key opportunity identification and prioritization tool. Progress towards the target will be reported out annually.

Staff also continue to develop a number of complementary plans such as the Healthy Waters Plan and the Ecology Land Use Planning Project, both of which explore bringing ecology and water management into the public right of way and diversifying how road space is used.

Please contact me directly if you have any questions on this matter.



Lon LaClaire, M.Eng., P.Eng.
General Manager, Engineering Services

604.873.7336 | lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca

Appendix A: Example Projects

PROJECT:

St George Rainway

ROAD SPACE REALLOCATION FOR PROJECT AREA:

45% (once completed)



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Phase 1 under construction;
- Improves rainwater management;
- Creates new public spaces of high quality;
- Accommodates safe active transportation;
- Reduces the amount of asphalt in the street which participates in mitigating the Heat-Island effect.

NOTES:

Although this project contributes only a tiny fraction towards our overall city target, it is a significant change for the street and the community. Effective engagement was key to the project's success.

PROJECT:

Richard St Green Complete Street

ROAD SPACE REALLOCATION FOR PROJECT AREA:

33% (completed)



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Completed in 2021;
- A 1.7km safe and comfortable protected bike path for people cycling and scootering across Downtown.
- Delivered with green infrastructure and public realm improvements.

NOTES:

This project delivered a significant transformation for people cycling and scootering along the corridor, as well as creating a more pleasant environment for people walking. It represents a small fraction of the citywide target, but is a significant addition to our safe bike network.

PROJECT:**Bute-Robson Plaza****ROAD SPACE REALLOCATION FOR PROJECT AREA:****60% (once completed)****KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:**

- Under Construction, complete for 2025;
- Unique location, intersecting the heart of a Greenway, with one of the City's busiest commercial streets;
- Includes sidewalks widening, extending to Robson St;
- Delivers opportunities for new trees and plantations;
- Creates new public space and accommodates a high level of pedestrians crossing in the area.

NOTES:

After going through pilot projects, the new Bute-Robson Plaza will permanently reallocate around 60% of the road space within the project scope, which includes part of Robson St.

PROJECT:**Bus Speed and Reliability****BUS LANE KMS:****67km (2024) + 28km (by 2027)****KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:**

- Focused on five major corridors: Hastings St; Granville St; 49th Ave; Marine Dr; and, Kingsway.
- Will add between 390 and 480 new bus lane-km-hours (km of bus lanes / the hours in a weekday). This is a 75-90% increase from the bus lanes that exist today.
- Will also include new bus bulbs and bus stop balancing.

NOTES:

Over the next 3 years a major reallocation of road space from vehicles to transit is planned in the form of new bus lanes, as well as the extension of the hours of existing bus lanes.

The 28km of new bus lanes by 2027 will represent a 42% increase in bus lane kms in the span of 3 years. On an individual corridor the difference will be significant: for example, a six-lane road converting the curb lane to a 12-hour bus lane will represent a third of the space reallocated for half the time, which is 17%.

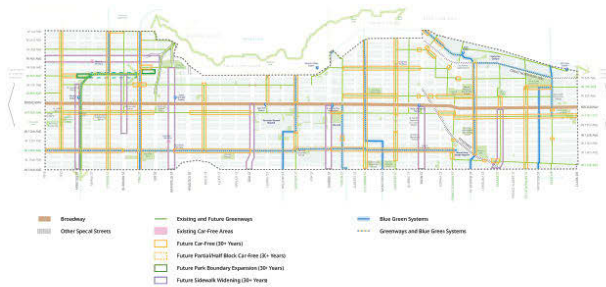
PROJECT:**Davie Village Sidewalks****ROAD SPACE REALLOCATION FOR PROJECT AREA:****25% (once completed)****KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:**

- Widens sidewalks on Davie St between Jervis St and Thurlow St;
- Creates more space for walking and “building side” patios to support local street life;
- Provides opportunities for new trees and larger soil volumes while replacing the ones in poor condition, offering shelter and shade in all seasons.
- Creates major GI components with sub-surface rainwater tree trenches, to manage urban runoff and keep trees moisturize.

NOTES:

Sidewalks on Davie St are currently narrow, uneven and in need of repair. After construction, approximately 25% of road space will have been reallocated along the two blocks.

Engaging with the local businesses and the community was vital to landing on a successful project.

PROJECT:**Broadway Public Realm Implementation****ROAD SPACE REALLOCATION FOR PROJECT AREA:****10-15% (once completed)**

An Implementation Strategy will guide how the streetscape improvements will be coordinated over time. This will be completed through a combination of development opportunities and City-led construction over many years.

**KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:**

- Plans for an increase public space such as plazas and linear parks;
- Identifies new car-free/ car-light streets and greenways;
- Prioritizes streets for green infrastructure and rainwater management;
- Provides opportunities for new trees and landscaping.

NOTES:

For Broadway itself:

- Will be reduced from six to four lanes, resulting in significant amounts of new public space.
- Once full build out is achieved, this will represent approximately 25% of the current street space reallocated.
- Change will take time. Implementation will occur alongside adjacent redevelopment.

PROJECT:

Sunset Park

ROAD SPACE REALLOCATION FOR PROJECT AREA:

70% (completed)

**KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:**

- Provides a tree canopy for shade and better air quality;
- Treats 4 million litres of urban rainwater runoff annually, through green rainwater infrastructure management.
- Improves the public realm and accommodates active transportation, with a bi-directional protected bike lane.

NOTES:

The permanent closure of this section of Prince Edward Street in 2021 effectively expanded Sunset Park and provided many benefits for the community. The bioswale filters pollutants out of urban rainwater runoff, improving water quality, and protects river and ocean wildlife. It also reduces flooding, and preserves the capacity of our drainage pipes to handle bigger storms brought by climate change, while providing important habitat for bees, butterflies, and birds.

PROJECT:

Woodland and 2nd

ROAD SPACE REALLOCATION FOR PROJECT AREA:

80% (completed)

**KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:**

- Opened in 2022;
- Transformed 200 sq. metres of pavement into a bio-retention area, mitigating the heat-island effect and providing habitat that increases biodiversity.
- Created a unique design with native species, green infrastructure and existing trees integrated to the project;
- Improved the public realm and accommodates active transportation, with a bi-directional protected bike lane.

NOTES:

With the Grandview Woodland Community Plan, the increased density to allow for more affordable housing units will add pressure to the sewer and storm system. This bioswale helps to capture close to 3,000 sq. metres of rainwater runoff, keeping 3.8 million litres of rainwater runoff out of the sewer annually, freeing capacity for higher density development. In addition, this project also addresses other key objectives such as creating sustainable transportation options, and enhancing the accessible green space within Alice Townley Park.