Engagement Highlights
Phase 2

GRANVILLE BRIDGE
CONNECTOR

CITY OF
VANCOUVER

Granville Bridge Connector

Phase 2 Engagement Highlights

City of Vancouver staff are conducting a three-phase engagement process on the *Granville Bridge Connector* to provide new walking, rolling, and cycling connections across the Granville Bridge, as directed by Council in January 2019. This report summarizes feedback from the second phase of engagement.

A summary of Phase 1 engagement is available online at *vancouver.ca/granvilleconnector*.

Overall Engagement Approach

Public and stakeholder engagement is taking place throughout 2019 and early 2020. This work informs ongoing design efforts and includes:

- targeted discussions, walking tours, and workshops with key user groups and stakeholders that are most directly affected; and
- a three-phase public engagement process including open houses, workshops, walking tours, and surveys for the broader public to share their ideas and concerns.

The three phases of public engagement are described below.

1. In **Phase 1 (April 2019 – completed)**, staff sought input on the draft project goals, and invited the public to share how they currently use the bridge, along with specific ideas and concerns.
2. In **Phase 2 (September 2019 - completed)**, staff reported back on Phase 1, and provided the public with an opportunity to review and comment on a range of options at a conceptual level.
3. In **Phase 3 (early 2020)**, staff will report back on what was learned in previous phases, and provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the preferred option in more detail.

The engagement will culminate with a report to Council on recommended design option(s) in 2020.

Phase 2: What We Did

Stakeholder Engagement

In Phase 2, staff continued to reach out to key stakeholders for personalized discussions, presentations, and walkshops.

Stakeholders included those identified prior to the project launch, including groups representing local resident and business associations; transportation, seniors, accessibility, and placemaking organizations; emergency service providers; Granville Island; Vancouver Coastal Health; and others.

Staff also broadened stakeholder engagement to include relevant citizen advisory bodies once they were re-established by Council, including those representing transportation, seniors, families and children, and persons with disabilities.

From August through the end of 2019, staff conducted 33 meetings, including presentations and walkshops with over 400 participants representing the following groups:

Internal Stakeholders

- Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
- Vancouver Fire and Rescue Service
- Vancouver Police Department

External Stakeholders

- BC Emergency Health Services
- Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (B.E.S.T.)
- Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee
- Coast Mountain Bus Company
- Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association
- Granville Island Corporation (Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation)
- Granville Island Head Lease Tenants
- HUB Cycling's Vancouver-UBC Local Committee
- Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee
- Seniors' Advisory Committee
- SFU City Conversations
- South Granville Business Improvement Association
- South False Creek Neighbourhood Association
- Tourism Vancouver
- TransLink
- Transportation Advisory Committee
- West 4th Avenue Business Improvement Association
- West End Seniors Community Planning Table
- West End Seniors' Network
- Vancouver Board of Trade
- Vancouver Board of Trade's Regional Transportation Committee
- Vancouver Coastal Health

- Vancouver Public Space Network

Staff also reached out to Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-waututh First Nations through the City liaison, presenting at the September 2019 intergovernmental meeting and offering additional engagement opportunities should there be interest.

Targeted stakeholder engagement will continue to take place throughout design development.

Intersectional Workshop

An intersectional lens is being applied to this project, aligning with larger efforts to develop a citywide framework to ensure an inclusive city that is safe and welcoming for all people.

From the outset, the project goals included directions that the connector should feel safe to use for people of all ages and abilities, support all modes of transportation and connect places people want to go, and create inclusive spaces that feel comfortable at all hours of the day and times of the year. Engagement and promotional tactics strive to reach a broad and diverse audience, and allow people to provide input at different levels and ways that reflect their level of interest.

The City is working with intersectionality expert Jay Pitter to further enhance this approach and ensure the project is as inclusive as possible. Her initial contribution included a workshop in November 2019 with a focus on groups that often have less of a voice in traditional engagement methods. This work will continue in 2020, providing for continued dialogue and further informing the detailed design should the project be approved by Council.

Public Engagement

Phase 2 of public engagement launched on September 5 and completed at the end of 2019. In this second phase, staff sought input on shortlisted design options to help develop a recommended approach.

Outreach Tactics

A communications outreach plan was developed at the project outset to support the engagement process by ensuring diverse public awareness of the scope, timeline, and opportunities for input. The plan includes an extensive print, digital, and radio campaign to ensure a broad, multilingual, and regional reach across all modes of transportation.

Phase 2 for the Granville Bridge Connector project began with a media technical briefing on September 6, with open houses, workshops, and an online survey running through September.

A total of 30 unique pieces of coverage were identified across all media formats (print, web, TV and radio), during the period of September 1-30.

Specific tactics mirrored those from Phase 1 and are highlighted below.

- **Notification letters:** sent to 25,727 residents and businesses near the Granville Bridge.
- **Electronic signage:** changeable message boards installed at each bridge access point, targeting people driving or taking transit across the bridge.
- **Poster signage:** eye-level signs installed at each end and along the span of the bridge, as well as nearby bike network intersections, targeting people walking or cycling in the area.
- **Print:** advertisements in 16 papers across Vancouver and the Lower Mainland including Chinese-language print, with a total circulation of over 1 million people.
- **Radio:** 36 spots aired over a two-week period across 14 stations with over 216,000 impressions, which refers to the number of times an ad was heard.
- **Social Media:** organic and paid posts across the City's Instagram, Facebook and Twitter platforms. The paid campaign reached over 7,200 people, and organic posts reached over 102,500 people.
- **Digital Ads:** Google advertisements on The Weather Network app and their network of publishers with over 216,000 impressions.
- **Earned media:** a combined total of 30 unique pieces of coverage were identified across all media formats (print, web, TV and radio) during the month of September. Of these, 17 were print and/or online stories, and 13 were TV or radio broadcasts (not including re-runs).
- **Partner networks:** stakeholders were encouraged to share engagement opportunities with their membership.
- **Transit Shelters:** Three transit shelter advertisements displayed over a four-week period in the vicinity of Granville Bridge with an estimated total of 970,000 impressions, which refers to the number of times an ad was seen.
- **E-Newsletter:** over 2,000 subscribers to date.

Engagement Events and Surveys

City staff created a variety of events and methods for the public to learn about the project and provide feedback during the second phase of engagement. Participation levels were very high overall, with **over 1,200 participants** in the three public events and workshops, and **over 2,600** completed surveys.

Full details are summarized in the following table:

Engagement Events and Feedback Tools	*Purpose*	*Participants*
Phase 2 Open Houses (x3) • Dates: September 13, 14, and 17, 2019 • Locations: CityLab x2 (511 W Broadway), Central Library	Provide opportunity for public to learn about Phase 1 feedback, review six shortlisted options and eliminated options through dialogue and mapping exercises, and complete survey in person or online	1150+
Phase 2 Deep Dive Workshops (x3) Three hour sessions • Dates: September 19 and 21, 2019 • Location: CityLab (511 W Broadway)	Provide opportunity for public to discuss in detail the six shortlisted options and review other eliminated options	64
Phase 2 Survey • Dates: September 13 to 30, 2019	Provide opportunity for public to share how they use the bridge today, discuss challenges, comment on draft goals, and share specific ideas and concerns	2513 (Online) 73 (Paper)
Other Submissions (individual and organizational) • Dates: September 1 to Dec 31 2019	Provide opportunity for public to share additional comments	100

Who We Heard From

Over 2,600 people responded to the public survey. While the responses were fewer in number than for Phase 1, this was to be expected as the content was more detailed.

As with Phase 1, self-reported postal code data indicated responses from across the city and region (*see Figure 1*):

- 27% of respondents live on the Downtown peninsula
- 65% live elsewhere in the City of Vancouver
- 4% live elsewhere in Metro Vancouver
- 4% live outside the Metro region

Respondents were more likely to identify as male (52%) than female (43%), with 4% identifying as transgender or other, or preferring not to say. A diverse range of ages was represented (*see Figure 1*).

As with Phase 1, respondents reported broad experience in having previously crossed the bridge using a wide variety of travel modes (see Figure 2):

- 59% had walked on the bridge at least once (20% indicated they walk across it at least once a week)
- 31% had biked on the bridge at least once (9% indicated they bike across it at least once a week)
- 72% had taken transit on the bridge at least once (33% indicated they take transit across it at least once a week)
- 82% had driven on the bridge at least once (43% indicated they drive across it at least once a week)

When asked about their main way of travel in everyday life, respondents reported a broad mix (note that people could select up to two responses) (*see Figure 2*):

- 50% walk
- 32% bike
- 41% take transit
- 41% drive
- 4% use other ways as a main way of getting around

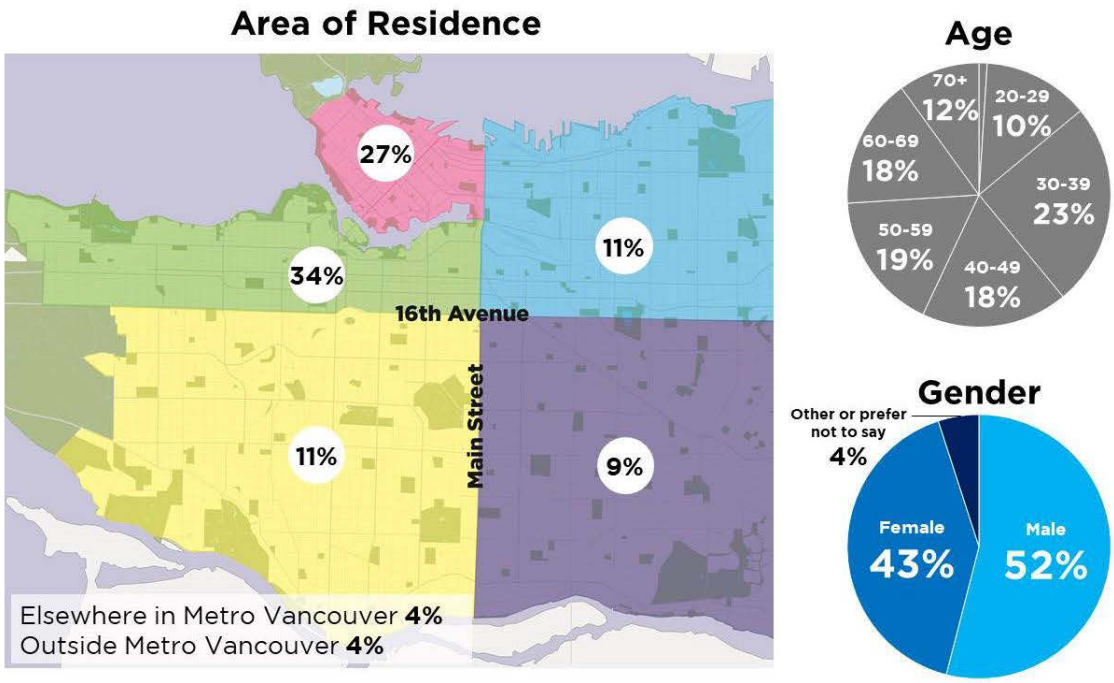

Figure 1: Phase 2 survey participants by area of residence, age, and gender.[1]

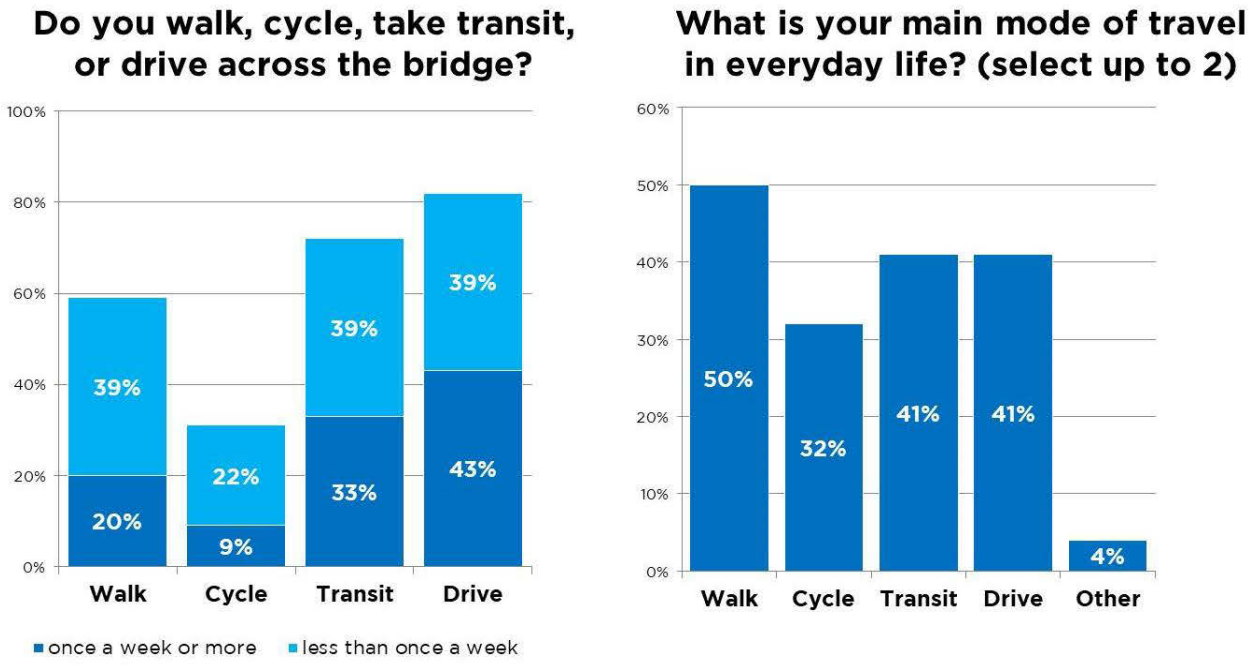

Figure 2: Phase 2 survey responses by experience using different modes of travel across the Granville Bridge and preferred mode of travel. [2]

[1] Based on all 2,608 responses.
[2] Based on all 2,608 responses.

What We Heard

This section highlights key findings and themes from stakeholders and the general public.

Key Findings

- The 'West Side Plus' option emerged as the consensus preferred option among stakeholders and the general public
- At workshops, there was also interest in the idea of an enhanced 'Both Sides' option if additional connections could be added similar to the 'West Side Plus' and 'East Side Plus' options
- The 'Raised Centre' was the least preferred option
- General preferences tended toward:
    - Sidewalks and bike lanes on the sides of the bridge rather than the middle
    - West side views over east side views
    - Options that improve walking on both sides of the bridge
    - Options that provide additional cycling connections using the on-/off-ramps
    - Options which are more flexible to allow for a phased implementation or design adaptations in the future
- Many ideas were shared on how to refine and improve the design, including:
    - Ensuring bike lanes are wide enough to support safe passing
    - Balancing movement and placemaking by focusing on specific locations, including at the bridge apex
    - Providing additional connectivity, in particular to Granville Island, the South False Creek Seawall, 10th Avenue, and Off-Broadway
    - Ensuring means prevention fencing contributes to the experience by maintaining views and incorporating lighting
    - Creating more space for the Connector by removing the centre median between northbound and southbound traffic
- About 10% of survey respondents indicated that they did not like any option. Concerns included:
    - Potential for increased congestion by reallocating travel lanes
    - Potential for increased congestion by adding new signals at the north and south end of the bridge
    - How municipal capital funding is allocated and spent

These findings are discussed in more detail on the following pages.

Six shortlisted options were shared for detailed review

In the lead up to Phase 2, staff explored dozens of options for the Granville Bridge Connector, with the design concepts informed by staff expertise, public and stakeholder feedback, and consultant input. The long list was shortlisted to six options based on overall feasibility and their ability to meet core project objectives.

In Phase 2, the six shortlisted options were shared with stakeholders and the public for detailed comment and review:

1. **West Side**: a wide sidewalk and two-way bike lane on the west side of the bridge
2. **West Side Plus**: a slightly narrower version of the West Side option, with additional sidewalk improvements on the east side of the bridge and Hemlock on-ramp, plus an additional two-way cycling connection on the Fir off-ramp to 10th Avenue
3. **East Side**: a wide sidewalk and two-way bike lane on the east side of the bridge
4. **East Side Plus**: a slightly narrower version of the East Side option, with additional sidewalk improvements on the west side of the bridge and 4th Ave off-ramp, plus an additional two-way cycling connection on the Hemlock on-ramp to 7th Avenue
5. **Raised Centre**: a wide sidewalk and two-way cycling lane down the centre of the bridge, with the path elevated about 1m above the bridge deck
6. **Both Sides**: similar to the Burrard Bridge design, slightly widening the existing sidewalks on both sides of the bridge, with one-way bike lanes on each side between the widened sidewalk and the general traffic lane

Staff also shared material on options that were considered but did not make the shortlist due to critical flaws, including an 'underside option' and design options that used the on-/off-ramps in different ways.

More detail on both shortlisted and eliminated options is available online in the Phase 2 Supplemental Design Guide at *vancouver.ca/granvilleconnector*.

'West Side Plus' emerged as the consensus preferred option

The 'West Side Plus' emerged as the consensus preferred option at public open houses and workshops, and in the public survey.

This preference is reflected in survey responses shown in Figures 1 and 2 below, which ask (a) 'what do you think of each option' and (b) 'what is your favourite option' respectively. The West Side Plus option was the top-ranked option for each question. The general rationale expressed behind these preferences is summarized in Figure 3.

A number of stakeholders have also expressed their preference for the 'West Side Plus' option, including the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association, the South Granville Business Improvement Association, HUB Cycling, and Vancouver Public Space Network.

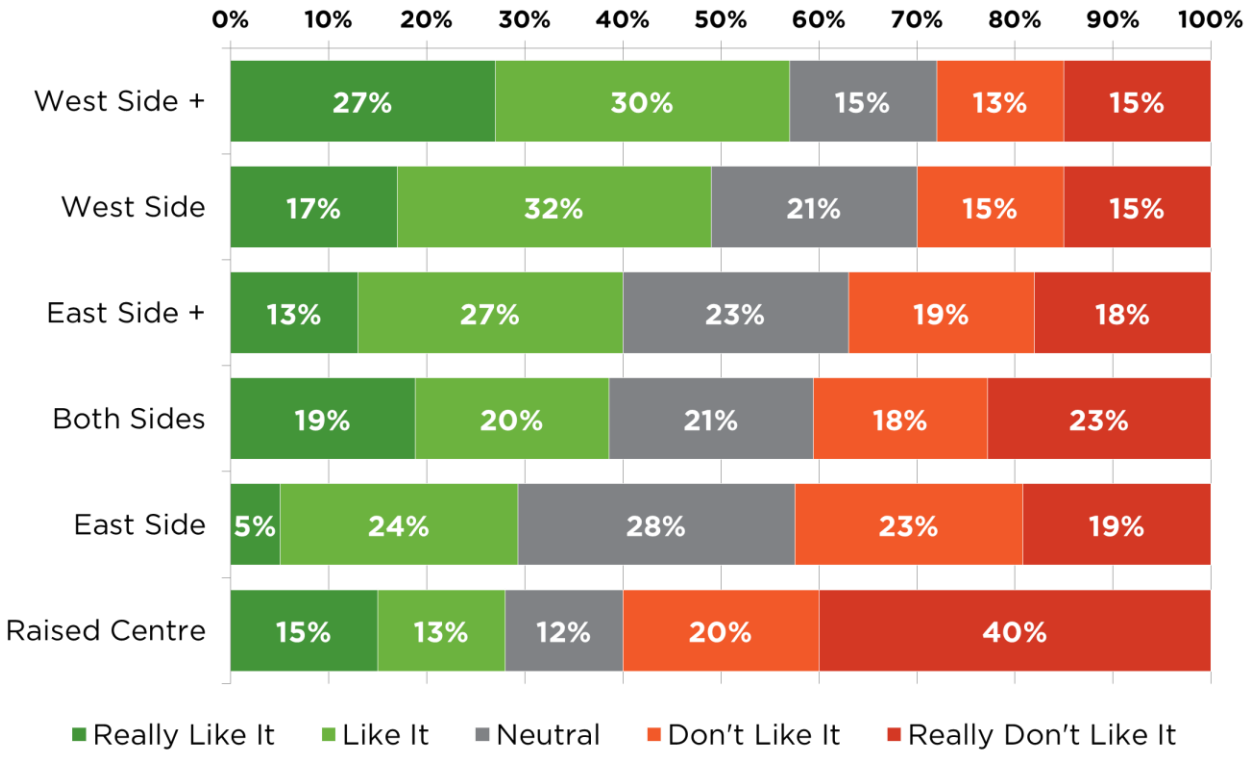

Figure 3. Overall, what do you think of each option? Based on 2602 survey responses.

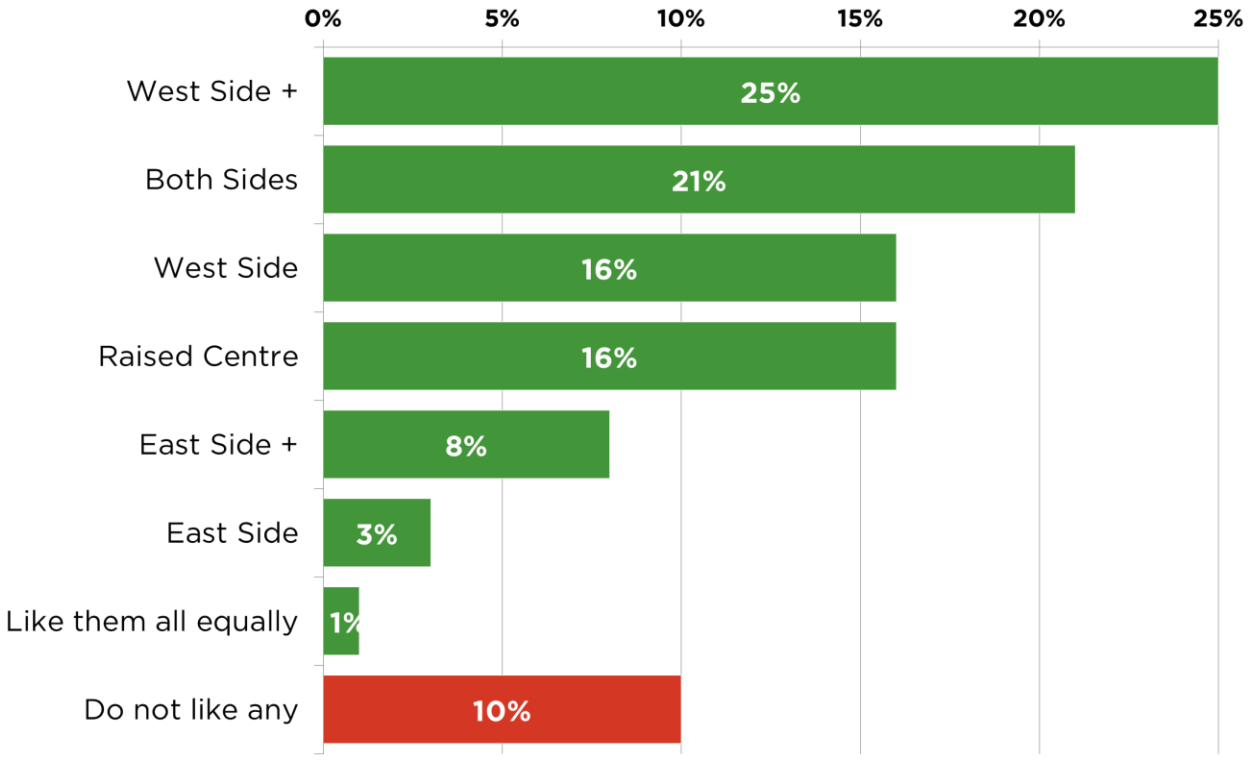

Figure 4. What is your favourite option? Based on 2602 survey responses.

Public Preference	Reasoning	West Side	West Side +	East Side	East Side +	Raised Centre	Both Sides
Side path(s) over centre path	• Unobstructed water views • Additional space from motor vehicle traffic • Potential to access path from on- and off-ramps • General concern that centre path might feel uncomfortable with traffic on both sides	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
West side views over east side views	• Preference for westerly views toward Burrard Bridge, English Bay, and mountains • West Side and West Side + options allow for more placemaking on west side	✓	✓		✓		✓
Improving sidewalks on both sides	• Many people noted sidewalks on both sides will continue to be used, because of different connections offered by south end on- and off-ramps		✓		✓		✓
Additional bike network connections	• Additional cycling connections on south end on- and off-ramps provide significant benefit by providing relatively flat connections to rest of bike network • Fir ramp connection with 10th Ave generally considered more valuable than Hemlock connection		✓		✓		
Options which are more adaptable to all future enhancements	• Side options more adaptable than raised centre option due to use of floating barriers rather than raised structure • West Side and West Side + options have highest compatibility with future transit improvements, and for enabling additional ramp enhancements	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

Figure 5. General public preferences expressed by stakeholders and public in Phase 2 engagement.

Interest in other options

Although less popular than the 'West Side Plus' option, there was considerable interest in an enhanced version of the '**Both Sides'** option, particularly at the public workshops. Specifically, many people were interested in pursuing this alignment further if enhanced walking and cycling connections could be added to the Fir and/or Hemlock on-/off-ramps (as featured in the 'West Side Plus' and 'East Side Plus' options). Those recommending pursuing the 'Both Sides' design concept cited symmetry of the design and predictability for road users as key considerations, and suggested that one-way bike paths allow for safer passing. They also noted that while the 'Both Sides' option did not allow much space for placemaking or special 'moments', the bike lanes would equitably buffer the sidewalk from traffic on both sides of the bridge.

During and subsequent to the workshops, staff further explored the feasibility of a 'Both Sides' option with additional pedestrian and/or bike connections on the on-/off-ramps, however, it was determined this would be challenging due to:

- Expanding the 'Both Sides' option by adding a southbound Fir off-ramp connection to 10th Ave (as featured in the 'West Side Plus' option) would likely lead to significant wrong-way cycling on the bridge deck, unless a corresponding northbound cycling connection was also added to Hemlock Street. However, adding the latter would preclude pedestrian improvements to the Hemlock Ramp, and require removing most parking from Hemlock St, converting it to one-way, and adding right-turn bays in order to manage conflicts between right-turning vehicles and people biking northbound downhill.

- The motor vehicle restrictions necessary to ensure safe operation of the additional cycling connections on Hemlock Street would likely have significant local traffic impacts.

The raised centre option was the least preferred option by the public and stakeholders given that it does not meet the five criteria cited in Figure 3, and because it was estimated to be the most expensive of the shortlisted options. Those who did prefer this option often cited concerns that signalizing one or more on-/off-ramps on the bridge could adversely impact traffic or pose safety concerns.

Ideas for improving and refining the preferred option

Staff heard many ideas for refining and improving the design. These included:

- **Ensuring that two-way bike lanes are wide enough to accommodate safe passing.** The rapid growth in e-bikes, cyclelogistics which includes the use of cargo cycles, and other new mobility devices was often cited as a reason for needing wider paths that can comfortably accommodate a greater speed differential between the two directions of cycling. Suggestions included wider bike lanes throughout, or a variable path width with long passing zones.

- **Balancing the need for safe, comfortable, and accessible movement with opportunities for special places.** Suggestions included focusing primarily on a path that provides comfortable and safe movement with excellent views and places to rest along the way, while considering opportunities to create special places at key locations. Oft-cited key locations on the bridge deck included the bridge apex and the potential future interface with an elevator to Granville Island. Local business improvement

associations suggested 'gateways' at each end of the bridge, which could simultaneously provide wayfinding to announce both the path and the retail districts.

- **Ensuring means prevention fencing contributes to the experience and does not detract from it**. Suggestions included designs that preserve views and integrating colourful lighting to provide ambiance while improving safety.

- **Ensuring the on- and off-ramp crossings are safe while managing impacts to transit and traffic.** There was a desire to see more detail as to how signalized ramp crossings could work, to ensure they are safe for people walking, cycling, and driving. Some drivers expressed concern that signalizing the ramps could cause safety issues if people speeding over the crest of the bridge unexpectedly came across a queue waiting for a signal change, or that people might change lanes erratically.

- **Improving walking and cycling connections between the Granville Bridge and Granville Island/South False Creek Seawall**. Suggestions included elevators and/or staircases at Granville Island and/or the Seawall, more direct walking and cycling paths, and improved wayfinding. There were specific suggestions on possible alignments, including consideration for how a walking and cycling path could link with a redesigned Anderson Street leading into Granville Island.

- **Addressing a cycling network gap to/from the Off-Broadway bike route in the east.** Suggestions included connecting to 7th via Granville Street or via 5th Ave/Hemlock, or shifting the Off-Broadway route from 7th to 8th Ave, so that a connection could be made at the Fir off-ramp.

- **Considering how people will connect to the future Granville-Broadway SkyTrain station.**

- **Removing the centre median currently separating north- and southbound motor traffic.** It was suggested that removing the median would encourage safer motor vehicle speeds, allow more space to be allocated for walking, cycling, and public space, and improve emergency response by allowing emergency vehicles to travel in the counterflow direction when necessary.

- **Prioritizing transit over general traffic**. Some people suggested dedicated transit lanes and/or transit priority measures at either end of the bridge to ensure reliable transit travel times. Others expressed concerns about potential traffic impacts of such measures.

- **Considering how the project could adapt over time**. Suggestions included reallocating additional road space to provide additional amenities and connectivity as the city continues to become less car-dependent, adding measures to further prioritize transit, and adding additional features such as public art or staircases as the budget allows.

Next Steps

Phase 3 public engagement is scheduled for early 2020. Staff will share what was heard in Phase 1 and 2, including how that feedback has informed the recommended design option that

will be shown during Phase 3 to solicit further public and stakeholder feedback. As with Phase 1 and 2, a variety of tactics will be used to reach a broad range of people and allow for different levels of participation, including open houses, workshops, and an survey.