Phase One
Engagement Results & Emerging Strategic Themes

2017
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Vancouver’s public spaces — plazas, squares, streets, laneways, pathways, parks and waterfronts — are where public life happens. These places and spaces are where we interact with the city on a daily basis, as we work, play, create, explore and connect with each other.

Places for People proposes an approach to public space planning that starts with an understanding and appreciation of public life and the people who use public space on a daily basis.

Great public spaces are Places for People!

1 Context

Places for People

Vancouver’s public spaces — plazas, squares, streets, laneways, pathways, parks and waterfronts — are where public life happens. These places and spaces are where we interact with the city on a daily basis, as we work, play, create, explore and connect with each other.

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A strategy for public life and public space in Downtown Vancouver

Downtown is the heart of the city, and home to some of the most popular public spaces in Vancouver. It’s also an area that’s growing with more residents, businesses and visitors each year. This means increased demand on the existing public space network in the future.

Since space and opportunities are limited in the Downtown core, we need to be creative and strategic in how we deliver public space.

Through Places for People | Downtown we will create a comprehensive strategy to coordinate and deliver Downtown public space over the next 30 years.

Downtown Study Area

The strategy will cover the six neighbourhood areas on the downtown peninsula, including the West End, Yaletown, Coal Harbour, Central Business District, and Northeast False Creek (ongoing planning process: vancouver.ca/nefc)

Project Timeline

The 18-month planning process consists of four main phases:

1. SUMMER 2017
   Launch: Vision, values & favourite places

2. FALL 2017
   Public space/public life study & policy testing

3. WINTER/SUMMER 2018
   Strategic directions

4. SUMMER/FALL 2018
   Draft strategy & report to council
Overview

In June 2017 the City of Vancouver’s Department of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability launched Places for People: Downtown, a planning process to create a strategy that will shape the future of public space and public life in Downtown Vancouver over the next 30 years.

Throughout summer 2017 there was a great deal of interest and input from a variety of people at a series of public events and online forums, as part of the first phase of the planning process and public engagement. Over the span of six weeks, the Places for People team installed the engagement kiosk in public spaces and special events throughout the Central Business District, Yaletown, Coal Harbour and the West End, and partnered with local community and business groups, to learn what people thought about Downtown Vancouver’s public spaces.

We connected with over 4,500 people through this process. Additionally, an online survey and asset mapping exercise were launched that received 1,925 responses. Participants provided feedback on the issues that need to be addressed for a successful strategy, as well as the ideas, opportunities and values that will help guide its delivery.

This document outlines what was heard through the process so far and will help frame the focus of the planning work as the process transitions to the next phase of our public engagement, and tools to deliver a compelling vision for the Downtown that fosters public life through an attractive public realm for all - where we work, play, create, explore and connect with each other.
Launch Events

On June 29, Places for People Downtown kicked off its summer engagement campaign in Robson Square, followed by launch events in Coal Harbour, Yaletown and the West End. Designed to be friendly, colourful and welcoming, the engagement kiosk was designed with the help of local illustrator Jeff Kulak, with seating provided by FSOARK.

Gathering ideas, opportunities and issues

Kaleido

Made from a single piece of recycled craft cardboard, FSOARK’s Kaleido is portable, ready-to-assemble furniture that can be folded into shape as easily as a paper box. The structure is derived from investigating the elemental form of the equilateral triangle.

Kaleido can be used singularly or in numbers, creating patterns of seating and open surfaces for large gatherings. Featuring illustrations by Jeff Kulak, Kaleido was commissioned by the City of Vancouver’s Places for People Downtown as multipurpose, temporary street furniture that is environmentally conscious, versatile and economical.

The word “kaleido” is a combination of the Greek words “kalos,” meaning “beautiful”, and “eidos”, meaning “form.”

Custom panels of the Kaleidos (below)
Online Survey
Between June 28 and August 7, an online survey for Places for People Downtown was launched through Talk Vancouver. The purpose of the survey was to identify issues and opportunities to improve the Downtown public realm, while testing a set of values and gathering feedback and ideas that will help shape a vision for public space and public life in the Downtown.

Asset Mapping
Asset mapping was conducted with an online format in addition to the mapping exercise at the launch and pop-up events. The asset mapping was used to collect information on favourite and challenged spaces in the Downtown, specifically asking: “What are your favourite public spaces in Downtown Vancouver, and why?” and “If you could change or add a public space in Downtown Vancouver, where and what would it be?” A total of 225 people participated in the exercise.

Street Photography Competition - Archive Magazine
Places for People partnered with local photography magazine Archive, Vancouver, as part of a street photography competition that features photos of Downtown public spaces and public life – in the October 2017 issue.

Pop-Ups & Collaborations
Places for People connected with a variety of organizations and popular summer festivals to “pop-up” at various community events over the summer, including collaborations with the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association, Tourism Vancouver, Vancouver Fanmara Market, The Drum is Calling, Vancouver Pride Festival and VIVA Vancouver.

Social Storytelling
Supported by photographer Alison Bauler and illustrator Jeff Kulak, a Places for People social storytelling campaign was launched to showcase Downtown Vancouver’s public spaces and celebrate the community of public space activators helping to animate these spaces.

Public Space Walking Tours
Through July and August, a series of public space walking tours were conducted throughout Downtown Vancouver’s neighbourhoods. Led by the City of Vancouver’s Planning staff, the events were designed to familiarize participants with Downtown Vancouver’s existing public spaces, while engaging in a dialogue to receive their feedback, ideas and opportunities for improvements, and shared experiences of the Downtown, as well as self-guided tours.

Stakeholder Meetings
The Downtown Public Space Champions, a diverse group representing a variety of interests and community organizations throughout Downtown Vancouver and citywide will convene at key moments in the process to provide advice and a stakeholder’s perspective on related issues and champion opportunities for public space in the Downtown.

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Phase One Engagement Highlights

From June to August 2017 over 6,400 people were engaged at a series of events throughout the Downtown.

500 people attended the official launch in Robson Square
29 June 2017

1700 people provided feedback through the online Public Space Survey
June 28 to Aug 7

850 people were informed about the process at one of our four project Launch Events and provided feedback and ideas on a variety of issues
6 - 13 July 2017

500 people attended the official launch in Robson Square
29 June 2017

3125 people told us their hopes and dreams for Vancouver’s Downtown public spaces at our eight Pop-Ups
20 - 22 July 2017

31 people participated in the online Asset Mapping Exercise identifying favourite and challenged spaces
June 28 to Aug 7

66 representatives from a diversity of stakeholder organizations have been invited to participate in the Public Space Champions stakeholder meetings
First meeting - 5 July 2017

40 people participated in five Walking Tours that covered Coal Harbour, the West End, Robson & Alberni Streets, Yaletown and the Central Business District
20 - 22 July 2017

66 people participated in five Walking Tours that covered Coal Harbour, the West End, Robson & Alberni Streets, Yaletown and the Central Business District
20 - 22 July 2017

225 people participated in five Walking Tours that covered Coal Harbour, the West End, Robson & Alberni Streets, Yaletown and the Central Business District
20 - 22 July 2017

Social Storytelling
A Places for People social storytelling campaign was launched to showcase Downtown Vancouver’s public spaces and celebrate the community of public space activators helping to animate these spaces.
Public Space Survey Summary

At a high level, the public space survey illustrated a desire for more public spaces that support public gathering, social connections and conversations. Participants also highlighted a strong desire for public art, natural features, community markets, enhanced eating and drinking options, and increasing patios in the public realm.

Improving weather protection, to ensure comfort year round and ensuring accessibility to all spaces were also mentioned regularly throughout the survey. The “BIG (or little) ideas on public space in Downtown Vancouver,” highlighted several responses to make sections of Downtown car-free or pedestrian only streets - including Granville Street and Robson Street, which were the clear preferences.

The following section provides a summary of the responses from each of the questions from the survey that was conducted between June 28 and August 7.

Many big ideas for downtown involved sitting & gathering, and pedestrianized streets.
Why is Public Space important to you?

Understanding why public space is important as it provides insight into the values people hold in regard to these spaces and how they experience the downtown. Feedback to this question highlighted:

- Making the city more attractive as most important, followed by places for gathering and meeting, and places to connect with nature
- Overall, there was a general balance in the responses to the public space values that were highlighted

Top Responses

- Make the city more attractive
- Offer public gathering and meeting places
- Are places to connect with nature
- Are healthy places for people of all ages and abilities
- Are spaces for special events and festivities
- Provide opportunities for artistic and cultural expression
- Support social connections and conversation
- Offer people-watching and views
- Offer places for community and civic engagement
- Provide opportunities to dine, shop and experience cultural events
- Provide safe and respectful places
- Reflect local communities, supporting a unique downtown experience
- Are inclusive places to freely express opinions and ideas
- Other (please specify)
- Public spaces are not that important to me

To make the city more attractive or connect with nature.

Support safe, equitable spaces.

Cultural and artistic events, dining & shopping.

Community engagement & space to freely express oneself

Support public gathering, social connections & conversation.
What would you like to see more of and do in public spaces generally?

Public spaces must respond to a wide range of needs and demands from vibrant activity, to passive recreation to quiet enjoyment. A mix of responses to this survey question demonstrates the diversity of uses required in Downtown public spaces and the importance of building flexibility into these spaces.

The majority of respondents identified a strong desire for public art, natural features, community markets, enhanced eating and drinking options, and spaces for festivals and special events.

Top Four Responses

1. Public Art
2. Natural Features
3. Markets
4. Eating/Drinking Options

Notable ‘Other’ Responses

Plazas
- “I love the pop up park on Bute at Robson, built in a day, and full of people immediately. We clearly need more of this form.”
- “Just space to be sitting down, like the benches on Bute and Robson near Breka. I love that!”

Places for Fun
- “Places for people to sit and interact, e.g. the urban beach that they did one year - chairs and tables are boring.”
- “Playful elements for children.”

Places for Quiet
- “Relaxation. A backyard feeling of being able to use it for your own quiet enjoyment.”
- “Quiet events - there is already too much noise in the West End/Downtown area.”

Responses and ideas to these questions and others will help us plan the right space and places for everyone to enjoy Downtown life to the fullest!
### What are top three priorities to consider when planning Downtown Vancouver's public spaces over the next 30 years?

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<tr>
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### What we heard:

#### Visually compelling!
Use a variety of colors and textures and materials to not just be useful, but be interesting as well.

#### Ensuring that public spaces are safe and pedestrian-friendly.
- Ensuring that no cyclists or skate-boarders or drivers of other sorts of vehicles are kept out of such public places, so that people feel safe and welcome and able to circulate freely there, socializing with other Vancouverites or tourists.

#### Create more all-weather spaces
- A lot of public spaces (like the beaches or parks in the west) are pretty hard to get to. Impossible in car (no parking) and little to no transit that runs out there.

#### More community space, plazas or squares
- Make sure they are environmentally conscious. Adding more greenery everywhere is great. Creating regulations for new buildings to keep it green not only keep it quick!

#### More ‘dead blocks’ should become plaza space
- Public spaces should be accessible to all people, regardless of their physical ability. Likewise, spaces should be open to people of all class, race, cultural, and economic backgrounds.

#### Public spaces should be accessible to all people
- Arts and culture. The cost of living here has put unsustainable pressure on the arts community and public spaces should be structured to facilitate arts and cultural life.

#### More ‘dead blocks’ should become plaza space
- Public spaces should be accessible to all people, regardless of their physical ability. Likewise, spaces should be open to people of all class, race, cultural, and economic backgrounds.

#### Make it easier for smaller food and drink vendors to thrive in these spaces
- Make it easier for smaller food and drink vendors to thrive in these spaces. Some of the lowest hanging fruit is reducing alcohol regulation, have shared patio space for multiple vendors, shared stages for music.
What are your ideas for how adjacent buildings, businesses, or other ‘edge features’ could enhance your experience in Downtown public spaces?

- A large number of responses dealt with comfortable long stays for eating, sitting, and interactive art
- 27% of respondents wanted more weather protection
- 20% wanted more patios
- 13% wanted more nature or more shade at public space edges

How often did you visit these Downtown Vancouver public spaces over the last year?

- Sidewalks where live music is played, along Granville St. (between West Georgia and Nelson Street).
- The problem with Vancouver is it doesn’t have enough good public spaces besides the waterfront. I struggle to come up with good examples.
- I spend time in the plaza at the Woodward’s complex daily or almost-daily, and work nearby. Victory Square, that park seems to me a poster child for a public space which reflects its local community.
- VPL indoor atrium, HSBC Georgia indoor atrium (which I was delighted to discover is a public space), Pacific Centre glass dome where Take 5 Cafe is, beside 4 Seasons Hotel. Art gallery grounds.
What are your thoughts about POPS retention?

Privately-owned public spaces (POPS) are publicly-accessible open spaces primarily found in front of office buildings and retail in the Downtown's central business district. In some cases POPS are being lost because they are used to accommodate new development, such as retail or office buildings.

Fifty percent (50%) of respondents recommended that POPS should be preserved or replaced in some form, and 39% of respondents claimed that retention of these spaces ought to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

General POPS Comments

- I work downtown, but never think to go downtown on weekends. Downtown spaces are bustling on week days, but seems pretty dead on weekends. This seems especially true for all the POPS like all the places around the Bentall Centre. Maybe there are alternative uses for weekends in these spaces that could attract people downtown.
- Cafes, restaurants and bars with patios on the edges of POPS would increase the use of these spaces. Patios encourage people to enjoy these outdoor spaces more frequently. Awnings to protect against rain (or sun) would help as well.
- POPS, once created, should never be built on. The developer obtains concessions for creating these spaces.
- Create more POPS - public spaces aren’t the only solution.
- There are some gorgeous waterfalls and fountains; they really add to the ambiance of POPS and parks. Great to sit and chat and eat lunch...
- Many POPS around downtown were designed and built around 70s and 80s, they don’t feel welcoming and inviting, often hidden from public view.
Phase One Engagement Results

What's your BIG (or little) idea for public space in Downtown Vancouver?

The responses to the BIG (or little) ideas on public space in Downtown Vancouver highlighted a desire for more green spaces as a clear preference, as well as ideas for making sections of Downtown car-free or car-light – with Granville Street and Robson Street as the clear favourites.

More opportunities to sit, gather, or actively use spaces Downtown

[Bar chart showing responses]

- Green Space
- Pedestrianize Streets
- Public Art
- Less Space for Vehicles
- Programmed Activities
- Specific Location Design ideas
- Seating
- Other Cities Ideas (Europe, Montreal)
- Cleanliness
- Specific Activity
- Gathering Spaces
- Weather Protection

# Of Respondents that had a response related to the category

The responses to the BIG (or little) ideas on public space in Downtown Vancouver highlighted a desire for more green spaces as a clear preference, as well as ideas for making sections of Downtown car-free or car-light – with Granville Street and Robson Street as the clear favourites.

What's your BIG (or little) idea for public space in Downtown Vancouver?

Your strategy should EXPLICITLY include a rainy-weather strategy for public spaces. How can we keep our spaces usable all year round?

- Make Granville Street a Pedestrian-only street, just like what has been done in many other great cities. This would provide a dark space (from vehicles and bicycles), great for people watching, great for shopping, great for special events.

Big Ideas involved adding green spaces to the city

- Fruit trees and vines would be great. Also, the artist in residence programs at rec center are great. Let's extend that concept to outdoor spaces.

- Green, diverse, live music; people watching; reminiscent of European piazzas.

- Fruit trees and vines would be great. Also, the artist in residence programs at rec center are great. Let's extend that concept to outdoor spaces.

- Green, diverse, live music; people watching; reminiscent of European piazzas.

What’s your BIG (or little) idea for public space in Downtown Vancouver?

I was in Bend, Oregon at a brewery. They had a beer garden the size of a soccer field. There they had the hanging moss gardens, wine bars, along with adirondack chairs and tables for sitting and lounging. All about were adults with their kids hanging out and laughing with their adult friends, without kids. Dogs running about would have been lovely. Why can we not create an ANYTHING GOES SPACE?

Playgrounds for all – (action parks) different types of spaces designed for physical play, including basketball, pump tracks, multi-sport courts and climbing playgrounds.

- A plaza each on Denman, Robson and Granville streets.

- Create a framework of co-designing the public spaces with the community. Maybe several parklets that foster people's creativity to "take ownership" of the space and use it in a different way.

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Imagine your own vision of an ANYTHING GOES SPACE?

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Imagine your own vision of an ANYTHING GOES SPACE?
Asset Mapping Responses

To help understand how particular public spaces function, respondents were asked to identify their favourite spaces, spaces they thought were challenged, and spaces they would like to add. Several patterns emerged with clusters around specific locations, including favourite spaces at the beaches and along the seawall, and challenged spaces in the downtown core, along sections of Granville Street and Robson Street.
This section provides a summary of the feedback on several prominent public space clusters.

**English Bay Beach**

**Changes & Additions**
- Playgrounds / watepark
- New grass
- Incorporate picnic tables
- Great use of the band stand (performances)

**Favourites**
- Great place for picnics and listening to concerts from the bandstand

**changes and Additions**
- playgrounds / watepark
- new grass
- incorporate picnic tables
- great use of the band stand (performances)

**Favourites**
- great place for picnics and listening to concerts from the bandstand

**May & Lorne Brown Park / Seawall**

**Changes & Additions**
- Noise from nearby businesses is unpleasant
- Need to fix awkward waterfront pedestrian and bike connection
- New open space here
- Add stairs to both ends of Burrard and Granville Bridges
- Expand, widen, and develop the park areas adjacent to the seawall
- Have festivals and parties along seawall to support fireworks, boat races, and Canada Day celebrations

**Favourites**
- Great place for concerts and learning from the bandstand

**Alexandra Park**

**Changes & Additions**
- Playgrounds / waterpark
- New grass
- Incorporate picnic tables
- Great use of the band stand (performances)

**Favourites**
- Great place for picnics and listening to concerts from the bandstand

**changes and Additions**
- playgrounds / waterpark
- new grass
- incorporate picnic tables
- great use of the band stand (performances)

**Favourites**
- great place for picnics and listening to concerts from the bandstand

**Nelson Park & Bute Street**

**Changes & Additions**
- Make Bute St. pedestrian only
- More exciting features
- Add a water feature
- More pedestrian shortcuts through blocks

**Favourites**
- Love the shortcuts through the blocks nearby

**Sunset Beach**

**Changes & Additions**
- Have a kids waterpark
- Expand dog park to include the west of the ferry dock
- Playground / outdoor gym
- Parking lot could be space for shops, restaurants & play spaces
- More active patio spaces for coffee/beer/food
- Have an ice area
- Have tennis courts

**Favourites**
- The sunset
- Place for volleyball, frisbee, & BBQs

**Jim Deva Plaza**

**Changes & Additions**
- Robson St. to be car free
- Make Bute St. pedestrian only from Robson St. to Davie St.

**Favourites**
- “Make it permanent”
- Pleasant cut through
- Nice place to spend time in
- Excellent improvement to the space
- Robson St. great for Vancouver shopping

**Barclay Heritage Square Park**

**Changes & Additions**
- Make lane-way into park space
- Mural painted on roadways and fences
- Have container community gardens, outdoor ping pong, and hopscotch
- Activate park space behind weeks house
- Have an outdoor exercise space, introduce a seesaw

**Favourites**
- Enjoy the Barclay Heritage Square, the West End Seniors Network and the Roedde House Museum

**Favourites, Changes & Additions**

Summary Highlights of the Asset Mapping Exercise:

- **English Bay Beach**
- **Alexandra Park**
- **May & Lorne Brown Park / Seawall**
- **Morton Park & Denman Street**
- **Nelson Park & Bute Street**
- **Sunset Beach**
- **Jim Deva Plaza**
- **Barclay Heritage Square Park**
**Phase One Engagement Results**

### Denman St. Corridor
**Changes & Additions**
- A new plaza should be built here
- Create a gathering space for buskers, snack stands, weekend craft markets and flower shops
- Have lights strung overhead of the street with unique colours
- Better intersections for pedestrians

**Favourites**
- "The bike lane is awesome"
- Great green elevated walkway acts as a getaway from the bustle of downtown street traffic

### George Wainborn Park
**Changes & Additions**
- Have a large floating platform to create a foot/bike bridge in order to allow access from Downtown to Granville Island

**Favourites**
- "Love the water feature"
- A place with free events to enjoy art, music, and dance
- Good park space

### Plaza of Nations
**Changes & Additions**
- Needs more greenspace
- Day to day users need more amenities
- Add more trees and temporary seating

**Favourites**
- Great for celebrations and events
- Enjoy the cruise ships and people watching
- Enjoy the views, benches and ocean breeze

### Waterfront Station & Water Street
**Changes & Additions**
- Water St. to Carnal St. could be pedestrian only
- Incorporate European style standing espresso bars, delis, breakfast places, and farmer’s market style stalls
- Have outdoor screens to provide Seabus and West Coast Express departure times
- Have a bike path, outdoor patios, small kiosks, and places for music

### Robson Square
**Changes & Additions**
- Better landscaping needed at Robson Square
- Public space outside the Pacific Centre has been lost to development
- Robson Square not well connected between the street level and the lower level

**Favourites**
- "The bike lane is awesome"
- Great green elevated walkway acts as a getaway from the bustle of downtown street traffic

### Coopers Park & Cambie Bridge
**Changes & Additions**
- Have skate park and basketball court underneath Cambie Bridge
- Vacant space used as playground
- Build a new outdoor and free climbing place
- Have a park with lots of shade and grass for picnics along seawall

**Favourites**
- Great views every morning

### Andy Livingstone Park & Viaducts
**Changes & Additions**
- Park needs programming
- Have a night market, street market, farmers markets and food trucks
- Could have movie nights, community festivals, and symphony in the park
- Paint the roadway
- Have stake board events

**Favourites**
- Great views every morning
Developing Emerging Downtown Public Space Themes

Coming out of the engagement process and based on what was learned from the public, a number of themes emerged, representing what people care about in terms of public space. These public space themes will continue to be refined through the process, based on further feedback received from the public, stakeholders and city staff, and will inform a vision for the Downtown public space network and the creation of the final strategy.

Emerging Downtown Public Space Themes

Inclusive of All People
Diversity is central to our civic identity, and Downtown attracts people from around the world, contributing to the rich urban experience that defines our city. Public spaces should be inclusive of all people. They should be safe, clean, welcoming, and accessible to all ages and abilities, and all income and ethnic groups.

Freedom of Expression
The free expression of ideas and the ability to exercise free speech and peaceful assembly serve as the foundation for a broad range of civil liberties and democracy. Public spaces should be places to freely express opinions and ideas.

Places to Connect
Public spaces are where we interact with the city on a daily basis, as we work, play, create, explore and connect with each other. Public spaces should support social connections, as well as community and civic engagement, with people-centered planning that encourages gathering and meeting.

Active & Attractive
The Downtown is alive with people who are moving and gathering throughout the public realm, engaged in a variety of social and recreational activities - from quieter places that provide respite, to more active and bustling areas. Public spaces should foster exceptional and memorable experiences of the Downtown with a mix of attractive spaces that balance a range of activities and uses; and support a diverse public life.

Walkable Spaces
The Downtown is a place where people have easy access by foot to the places they work, play, shop and live. Public spaces should encourage enjoyable walking experiences and be well connected, where people can walk safely, easily and comfortably on all streets and in all public spaces.

Connection to Nature
The magnificent natural setting of the city defines the Downtown. The public space network should integrate green and natural spaces with a strong connection to the natural environment, and incorporate climate resilient systems into the public realm.

Distinct Placemaking
Downtown Vancouver is comprised of distinct neighbourhoods and character areas, and multicultural communities that contribute to the rich downtown experience. Public spaces should reflect the unique qualities of the Downtown as a special place - in the city and the world, by reflecting local communities and civic identity.

Cultural Expression
Arts and cultural activities express the creativity and vitality of our city and its diverse communities. Public spaces should provide opportunities for artistic and cultural expression.

Community Partnerships
 Residents, community groups and businesses all work to improve the use and enjoyment of Downtown public spaces, and these partnerships should continue to be encouraged and supported.

First Nations Culture, History & Reconciliation
Downtown Vancouver is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. For thousands of years these lands have been their home. The public space network should recognize and reflect the history of the land on which the downtown was built by celebrating the history and culture of the First Nations.
Emerging Opportunities

These emerging opportunities reflect the feedback from the public during the first phase of engagement - including the online survey, asset mapping, walking tours and other engagement events. The highlighted opportunities that have emerged so far include:

A Downtown for People

Develop a compelling vision for the downtown that fosters public life through an attractive, lively, safe, resilient and healthy public realm; that encourages social interaction, brings community together, and contributes to a friendly and inviting city for all people, regardless of age, background or ability.

Expand and Connected Public Space Network

Create a continuous and connected network of public spaces throughout the downtown, building on the success of the existing public realm and pathways, where pedestrians move safely, easily and comfortably on all streets and where walking, supplemented by transit and cycling, is the primary means of moving around.

Hierarchy of Streets that Foster Public Life

Develop criteria for a hierarchy of great streets that differentiates each street’s role as a part of the broader public realm, reflecting function, urban design features and neighbourhood character. This would highlight ceremonial and high streets, and encourage the creation of a seamless relationship between streets and other elements of the public realm that expands the use of these spaces for pedestrians and gathering places.

Spaces for All Seasons

Create comfortable outdoor public spaces where people gather year-round through the promotion of weather protection, maximizing sun exposure, and encouraging design and lighting features that embrace all seasons and the city’s climate.

Access to Nature and Integrating Climate Resiliency

Ensure strong connections to the downtown’s natural setting, protecting and expanding green and natural spaces, while encouraging public spaces and infrastructure that is integrated with the natural systems and incorporates climate resilient features.

Lively Lanesways

Expand and build on the use of lanesways as a distinct and vital function of the downtown public space network for a variety of activities, including events and commercial activity, to foster new urban experiences, encourage unique gathering spaces and improve pedestrian connections, while protecting their unique character.

Sit-able Spaces & Gathering Places

Programme specific placemaking, including seating, landscaping, active uses at grade, way-finding, public art and programming. Encourage a diversity of seating options - movable, fixed and informal - at regular intervals throughout the downtown along streets, and in public spaces that promotes gathering and provides places to rest.

Shore-to-Core Connections

Improve connectivity between the waterfront and the downtown core with new and improved connections from the seawall and into the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Pedestrianized Streets

Identify locations for pedestrian priority streets, particularly in areas that currently support a high level of pedestrian activity, to provide safe and enjoyable walking experiences that blend the street with neighbouring public spaces and improve the connectivity of the broader public space network.

Unexpected Places and Rethinking Infrastructure

Look for opportunities for new public spaces in unexpected places, such as laneseways and parkade rooftops, and explore placemaking through the rethinking of existing infrastructure, including the use of bridges as weather protection. Encourage pilot projects to test and demonstrate the viability and benefits of these potential space and other ideas to enhance the public realm and promote public life.

Privately-Owned Public Spaces (POPS)

Existing Privately-Owned Public Spaces (POPS) should be retained and made to be more inviting, while new spaces should be encouraged, and should be located and designed to be accessible and visible while serving the local population as part of a larger public space network.

Support a Diversity of Uses & Flexibility

The downtown public space network must respond to a wide range of demands from physical activity, passive recreation to quiet enjoyment. In addition to supporting the needs of active and passive users, public spaces also need to accommodate spaces for community events and civic and cultural expression. Planning and designing flexible use of public spaces improves the overall quality of life today and allows for unforeseen future opportunities and uses.

Continue to Build and Foster New Partnerships

Truly successful public spaces require collaboration with members of the public, community and business groups, businesses and property owners. These partnerships will expand the public space network, encourage the stewardship of local public spaces, and assist the City to respond to local programming needs.

Reflect and Respect First Nations Culture, History & Reconciliation

Recognize and reflect the history of the land, on which the downtown was built, by celebrating the history and culture of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations and following the City of Vancouver Reconciliation Framework.
Stay Involved

Help us create exceptional, vibrant, and memorable public spaces, places, and experiences in the Downtown. We want to hear about your favourite public spaces, what you like or dislike about current spaces, your ideas for the future and more! Visit us online to learn about ways to get involved and provide feedback, including the upcoming Winter Public Space and Public Life Study in early 2018:

vancouver.ca/placesforpeople

Vancouver.ca/placesforpeople

#placesforpeoplevan
Appendix

Survey Questions

What’s your vision for public space in Downtown Vancouver?

Take our survey and share your thoughts on Downtown public spaces! Your feedback will help us advance the vision, values and emerging strategic direction for the Downtown Public Space Strategy.

Questions or concerns? Contact placesforpeople@vancouver.ca.

The results of this survey will be made available on vancouver.ca/placesforpeople. All responses will be kept anonymous.

1.) Why is public space important to you? (check your top five).

2.) How often did you visit these Downtown public spaces in Vancouver over the last year? (choose one)

3a) Are there any other Downtown public spaces in Vancouver you visited over the last year?

3b) What do you think should be the top three priorities to consider when planning Downtown Vancouver’s public spaces over the next 30 years?

4.) What do you think should be the top three priorities to consider when planning Downtown Vancouver’s public spaces over the next 30 years?

5.) Privately-owned public spaces (POPS) are publicly-accessible open spaces primarily found in front of office buildings and retail in the Downtown’s central business district. In some cases POPS are being lost because they are used to accommodate new development, such as retail or office buildings. What are your thoughts about POPS retention? (check all that apply)

6.) Features on the edges of public spaces (e.g. weather protection, store displays, etc.) contribute to the enjoyment of these spaces and support a vibrant public life. What are your ideas for how adjacent buildings, businesses, or other ‘edge features’ could enhance your experience in Downtown public spaces? (please note specific changes and the types of spaces/locations, if possible)

2.) How often did you visit these Downtown public spaces in Vancouver over the last year?

3.) What would you like to see and do more of in public space generally? (check all that apply)

4.) Are there any challenges or barriers that prevent your enjoyment of Downtown public spaces? (check all that apply)

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