



Places for People Downtown

Vancouver's public spaces—our plazas, parks, squares, streets, laneways, pathways, and waterfront—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.

Great public spaces are
Places for People!



Help shape public space and public life

Feedback from Phase 1 and 2 engagement has been used to help shape a series of public space and public life values for Downtown Vancouver. Building on these values we have developed a vision statement and set of five goals for the Downtown. The vision and goals will inform the next phases of Places for People Downtown.

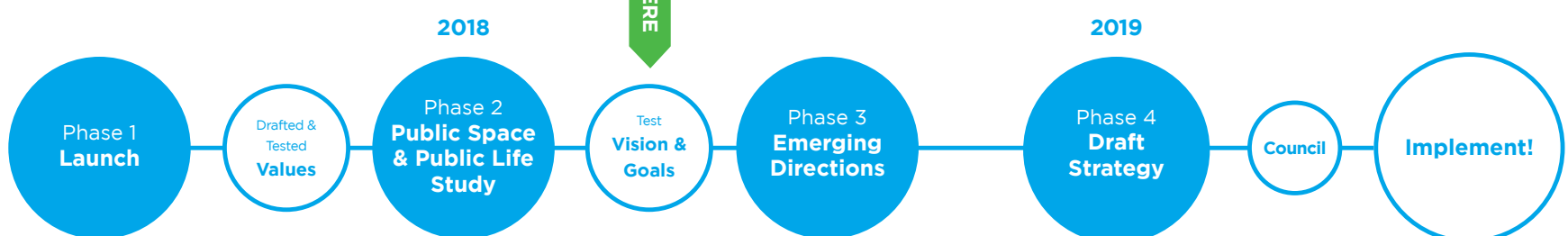
Provide Input Today

Today, we are asking you to help us test the vision and goals to determine if: "we got them right?" and "what did we miss?"

Get Involved!

Help us create exceptional, vibrant and memorable public spaces, places and experiences Downtown. We want to hear about your favourite public spaces, what you like or suggested improvements to current spaces, your ideas for the future and more! Visit us online to learn about ways to get involved and provide feedback:

vancouver.ca/placesforpeople



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A New Way to Think About Public Space

Why we need a strategy for public space in Downtown Vancouver

Downtown is the heart of our 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 our public space network in the future.

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

What will the strategy do?

Places for People Downtown will consider opportunities for public space on City-owned property, as well as privately-owned public spaces (POPS) such as office plazas.

The strategy will provide the following:

- **A clear vision**, values and principles for downtown public spaces;
- **An inventory of existing public spaces**, with an understanding of what's missing and could be improved;
- **Guidance on key public space opportunities**, such as diversity of space, programming, design, and stewardship;
- **A strategic framework** to prioritize and coordinate the delivery of public space initiatives, to shape a vibrant public space network.

What areas in Downtown are we looking at?

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 4.6 sq m Downtown Peninsula is the most densely populated area of Vancouver and home to over 100,000 people, 150,000 jobs, and a growing number of visitors.



*Ongoing Northeast False Creek planning process: vancouver.ca/nefc

Planning for Tomorrow: City Policy, Programs & Initiatives

Places for People Downtown builds on and integrates existing City policy, programs and current initiatives, including:

- West End Plan (2013)
- Northeast False Creek Plan (2018)
- VIVA Vancouver (ongoing)
- Plaza Stewardship Strategy (ongoing)
- VanPlay (ongoing)
- Transportation 2040 (2012),
- Greenest City Action Plan (2011)
- Complete Streets Policy Framework (2017)
- Creative City Strategy (ongoing)
- Music City Strategy (ongoing)
- Making Space for Arts & Culture (2018)
- Resilient City Strategy (ongoing)
- Healthy City Strategy Action Plan (2015)



Why does public life matter?

The high quality of life that we enjoy is very much interconnected with public space and public life. Successful public spaces and public life foster health and sustainability, support local business, promote social engagement and connect people to their local communities.

Public Life

Public Life is the shared experience of the city created by people when they live their lives outside of their homes, workplaces and cars. It is the everyday life that unfolds in streets, plazas, parks, and spaces between buildings.

Public Spaces

Public Spaces are all places publicly owned or of public use, accessible and enjoyable by all.

- Plazas
- POPS
- Station Areas
- Mini-Parks
- Parks
- Schoolyards
- Laneways
- Converted Laneways
- Streets
- Seawall

Public Space Public Life Study

The Public Space Public Life (PSPL) Study is a snapshot of people using public space. We talked to 878 people over the summer and 630 in the winter (2017). We counted and observed people walking, on wheels, different ages and gender, body posture, and activity at more than 115 locations.

The results of the PSPL Study will help us understand how public life unfolds in the city today and reveal future public space needs.

Key Early Findings

Through this study we affirmed our strengths, that Downtown Vancouver is:

- an outstanding walking city that invites people out walking all year
- a vibrant series of neighbourhoods, where people live, work and recreate
- providing high quality public space that is in high demand, and serves both locals, visitors and businesses
- home to a community and businesses with a strong culture of participation

Where we need to go:

Vancouver is growing and it is important that the city continue to foster public life with:

- Invitations for everyone to spend time in public spaces throughout the year> Opportunities to connect and socialize
- Public spaces that people enjoy every day, and for events and large gatherings
- Opportunities for everyone to actively participate in creating public spaces



Examples of Early Findings

What People Do When They Stop and Stay in Public Space

The majority of stationary activities observed are related to passive recreation, with many people sitting on stairs in the summer. In the winter, most people are standing and engaged in necessary activities, such as waiting for the bus.



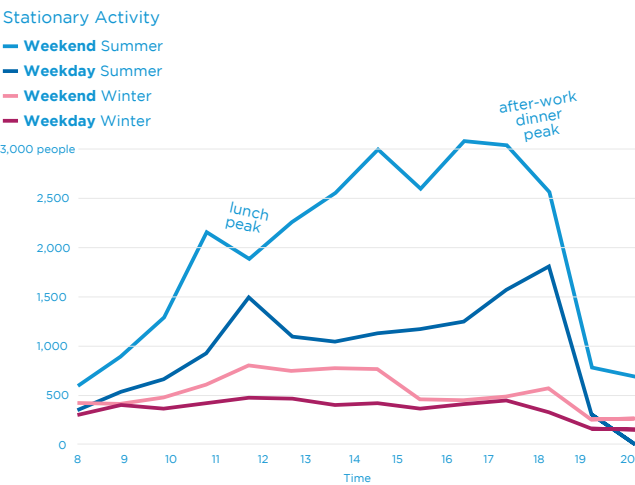
People love Downtown, but they want more!

A complete summary of the PSPL Study findings will be made available upon completion of the data review.



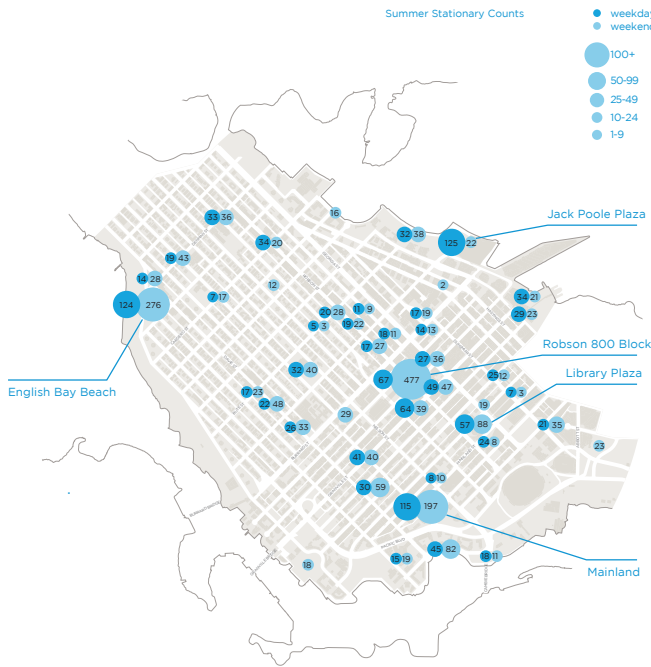
When are People Out In Public Space?

In the summer, Downtown is bustling with city life and a many people choose to stop and stay in public space. In the winter, staying activity drops by 70%.



Where are People Stopping to Enjoy Public Life?

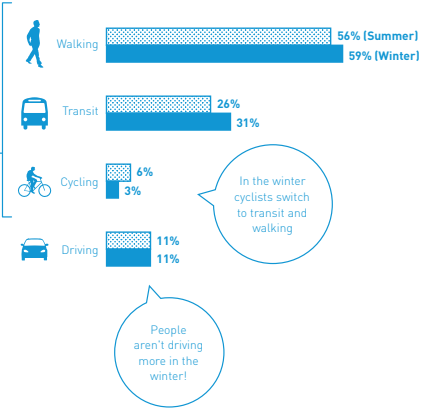
People choose to stop and stay, and participate in public life when they feel invited, safe and comfortable. Destinations that invite people to enjoy the positive aspects of climate and the beautiful natural setting surrounding Downtown see a lot of activity.



How are People Getting In and Around Downtown

Downtown Vancouver has a culture of walking that is quite unique for a North American city. The city deserves public spaces that reflect and encourages this unique culture.

9 out of 10 people choose active mobility



Vision for Public Space & Public Life

A Downtown for People

A place for all people to enjoy and participate in Downtown Vancouver's public life, with public spaces that are safe, comfortable, and inviting. These places are well-connected and offer a variety of diverse experiences.

A Downtown *by* People

A Downtown where people feel welcome and empowered to contribute in the creation and activation of public spaces.



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Expand Opportunities for Public Life

By improving options for people to move, gather and enjoy public space freely, opportunities for public life can be expanded and enhanced while meeting the needs of a growing population. With increasingly limited space in Downtown Vancouver, strategic considerations are required to create new public spaces, while retaining and enhancing existing spaces, as part of a well-connected public space network.

Here are some ideas to Expand Opportunities for Public Life:

- **Enhance and retain** public and privately owned public spaces, and pursue opportunities to add new space
- **Unexpected spaces** – Look for opportunities for new public spaces in unexpected places, such as laneways, rooftops and under bridges
- **Make streets 'Places'** – Continue to encourage creative uses of the street with a focus on public life, and create public spaces in the street right-of-way, while recognizing important transportation functions and other street uses
- **Improve connectivity** – Support a vibrant public life by making walking and cycling between and through public spaces safe, convenient, comfortable, and delightful
- **Active Edges & Lively Local Business** – Encourage fine-grained and active retail and restaurants along high streets, and around parks and plaza spaces where there are opportunities to activate frontages and seamlessly integrate a network of public spaces
- **Integrate and enhance** transit stations and bus stops as part of the public space network



Madrid, Spain



Chambar Patio, Keefer Steps, Vancouver



Alley Oop, Vancouver



Buté & Robson Plaza, Vancouver



Paradeplatz, Zurich Switzerland



Patios, Davie Street, Vancouver

What We Heard

- More space for gathering and socializing
- More sidewalk space on popular streets for walking, sitting and gathering
- Retain and enhance public and private open spaces
- Make transit stations real public spaces



Købmagergade, Copenhagen, Denmark



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Foster a Welcoming Downtown for All

Encourage welcoming, comfortable and safe public spaces for people of all ages, genders, backgrounds and abilities. The variety of public space types across Downtown Vancouver will be expanded to reflect the needs of a diverse and changing population, while encouraging civic connection and social activity.



Walk for Reconciliation, Vancouver

What We Heard

- More open and inviting experiences that are attractive to all ages and abilities
- More spaces to sit and socialize
- More universally accessible restrooms and drinking fountains
- Honour First Nations culture, history and reconciliation in public spaces



Plaza Skatepark, Vancouver



Alley Oop, Vancouver



Jim Deva Plaza, Vancouver



Seawall, Vancouver



Urban Reef, Vancouver



Granville Street, Vancouver



Waterfront Station, Vancouver

Here are some ideas and opportunities to help Foster a Welcoming Downtown for All:

- **Mix of experiences** - Provide a rich mix of public life experiences, with a variety of public space types and programs that reflects the diversity of the city
- **An inclusive city** - Provide universal services and accessible facilities, including restrooms and drinking fountains
- **A sittable city** - Encourage a diversity of public seating options – movable, fixed and informal – at regular intervals along streets and in open spaces, which promote gathering and provide places to rest
- **A socially connected city** - Foster invitations in public space for social mixing and civic togetherness, including programming that invites the chance meeting and encourages social interaction
- **Distinct character** - Define areas for unique public space design treatment that express neighbourhood character and reflects the diversity of the Downtown communities
- **Continue to engage** with First Nations and Urban Indigenous communities to explore opportunities to celebrate indigenous cultures and histories through public space naming, artistic and cultural expression, and public space design to ensure First Nations use and gathering places



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Encourage Year-round Public Life

By diversifying opportunities to enjoy public spaces day and night throughout the year, everyday public life in Downtown Vancouver will be broadened. Invitations including special events and community gatherings, will encourage more people to spend time outside during sunny days and the rainy season.

Here are some ideas and opportunities to help create to Encourage Year-round Public Life:

- **A celebration city** - Ensure that a range of special events and community gatherings can be accommodated - big and small - with quality spaces and supporting infrastructure
- **A year-round city** - Increase year-round activity by introducing more weather protection, lighting and programming
- **A patio city** - Explore opportunities to create and enhance a variety of patios on street right-of-way, private property and rooftops
- **An evening city** - Explore opportunities to encourage safe and welcoming experiences in public space through the evening, with lighting, way-finding and programming



Mural Festival, Main Street, Vancouver



Lumière Festival, Vancouver



Mainland Street, Vancouver



Bus Station Canopy, Aarau, Switzerland

What We Heard

- More space for live events, and encourage events during the winter months
- Provide all-season spaces with weather protection
- Encourage more patios to enjoy eating, drinking and people-watching
- More amenity including food and drink in public spaces



Bishops Square, London



Milan, Italy



Stanley Park, Vancouver



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Enhance Our Connection to Nature

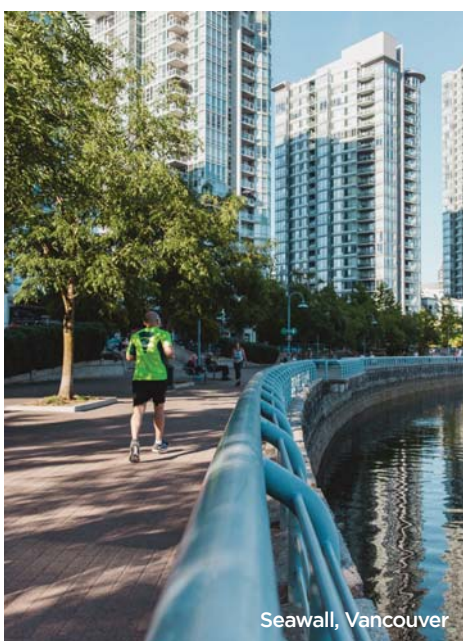
Protect and expand access to natural spaces in Downtown Vancouver through thoughtful design and landscaping that is integrated with natural systems. Incorporate climate resilient features into public spaces to mitigate the effects of changing weather patterns and sea-level rise.



Harbour Bath, Copenhagen, Denmark



La Promenade du Paillon, Nice, France



Seawall, Vancouver



Hinge Park, Vancouver



High Line, New York City

Here are some ideas and opportunities to help Enhance Our Connection to Nature:

- **An integrated city** - Encourage public space design and landscaping that is integrated with green infrastructure and incorporates climate resilient features
- **Green Connections** - Improve connectivity within the Downtown to green spaces and existing parks, including Stanley Park
- **Shore-to-core** - Improve connections between the Downtown neighbourhoods and the waterfront, such as wayfinding and improved street crossings
- **Experience water** - Create places to experience the waterfront and the bodies of water that surround the peninsula
- **Protect and preserve** access to sunlight and views in public spaces, including parks, plazas, and popular shopping and restaurant streets

What We Heard

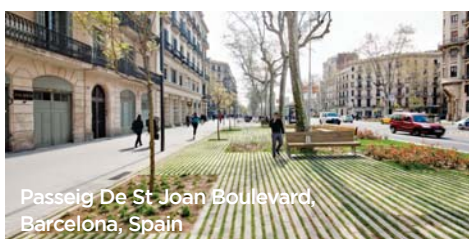
- More trees, landscaping and natural features
- Foster access to nature as places for recreation and respite
- Improve connections between the Downtown Core and the waterfront
- Incorporate green infrastructure into the design of public spaces
- Protect views access to sunlight in public spaces



Olympic Village, Vancouver



Park Place, Vancouver



Passeig De St Joan Boulevard, Barcelona, Spain



Tasinge Plads, Copenhagen, Denmark

Promote Play and Creative Expression

Encourage public spaces that stimulate whimsy and delight, while creating more opportunities for people to engage in playful activities throughout Downtown Vancouver. Empower self-expression and make it easy and attractive for people to participate in the creation, activation and stewardship of public space.



Olympic Village, Vancouver

Here are some ideas and opportunities to help Promote Play and Creative Expression:

- **An innovative approach** - Continue to test potential public space projects and other ideas to enhance public space and promote public life through VIVA Vancouver and other City programs
- **User-friendly** - Make it easy for people to activate public space,
- **Local Public Art** - Support local arts and culture through programs in public spaces and interactive public art installations

encourage more people of all ages engaged in playful recreation



Mural Festival, Vancouver



Robson Street, Vancouver



800 Robson, Vancouver

What We Heard

- More opportunities to activate spaces
- Have places to play throughout the Downtown
- More opportunities to activate spaces and hold events
- Promote a diversity of public art, with more interactive art



Off Ground, Copenhagen, Denmark



Paprocany Waterfront, Tychy, Poland



Arbutus Greenway, Vancouver



Schwetzinger Terrace, Heidelberg, Germany



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What are some ideas
and opportunities that
we missed or should
prioritize?



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