

City of Vancouver

Safeway Plaza Consultation

SYNOPSIS OF COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

June 23, 2017

Introduction/ June 8th Event Summary

The recently approved Grandview-Woodland Community Plan requires that an on-site plaza be provided as part future redevelopment of the Safeway site. In conjunction with a preliminary rezoning enquiry for the Safeway site, a development team comprised of Safeway/Crombie Reit, Westbank, and Bing Thom Architects, have proposed an alternative location for the plaza - located over the Grandview Cut, to the east of Commercial Drive.

On Thursday, June 8, the City of Vancouver held an evening event to gather community feedback on the proposed alternative plaza location. The community provided feedback both at the event, and in the week following. A total of 150 feedback forms and emails were received (95 at the event and 55 electronically).

Of the 150 responses, 138 (92%) people indicated their support/non-support for the alternative plaza location proposed by the development team. The results indicate that a majority of respondents (51%) do not support the City considering an alternative plaza location:

	Number	Percent
Opposed or Strongly Opposed	70	51%
Support or Strongly Support	46	33%
Neutral or Not Sure	22	16%

These figures, along with additional information obtained through the feedback form, are discussed in the following sections.

Background

The City of Vancouver approved the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan in June 2016. The Plan sets out policies to guide community growth and change over the next few decades by outlining policy on land-use activities, housing, transportation, public spaces, local economy and more.

The Safeway site at Broadway and Commercial has an array of site-specific policies that are found in s.6.7.1 of the Plan. In addition to outlining allowable heights and densities for future residential and commercial development, the policy allows for the renewal of the Safeway store, and in conjunction with the creation of a plaza on site Other policy in the Community Plan further describes expectations around the plaza. A complete summary of these can be found on the Display Boards used at the June 8 event (see Appendix A).

Seek a generous, centrally-located public plaza at grade, ideally located near the middle of the site. Ensure the following considerations are taken into account:

- *Building arrangement to optimize the use of public open space*

- *Ensure the site design supports vibrancy in the plaza with varied, grocery and small-scale retail space, office and residential entrances fronting and/or overlooking the open space*
- *Shading/solar access*
- *SkyTrain noise mitigation*
- *Range of programming and uses*
- *Accessibility, sight lines and design considerations to address public safety*
- *Highest building forms will be situated adjacent to the Grandview Cut to minimize shadowing of the plaza*

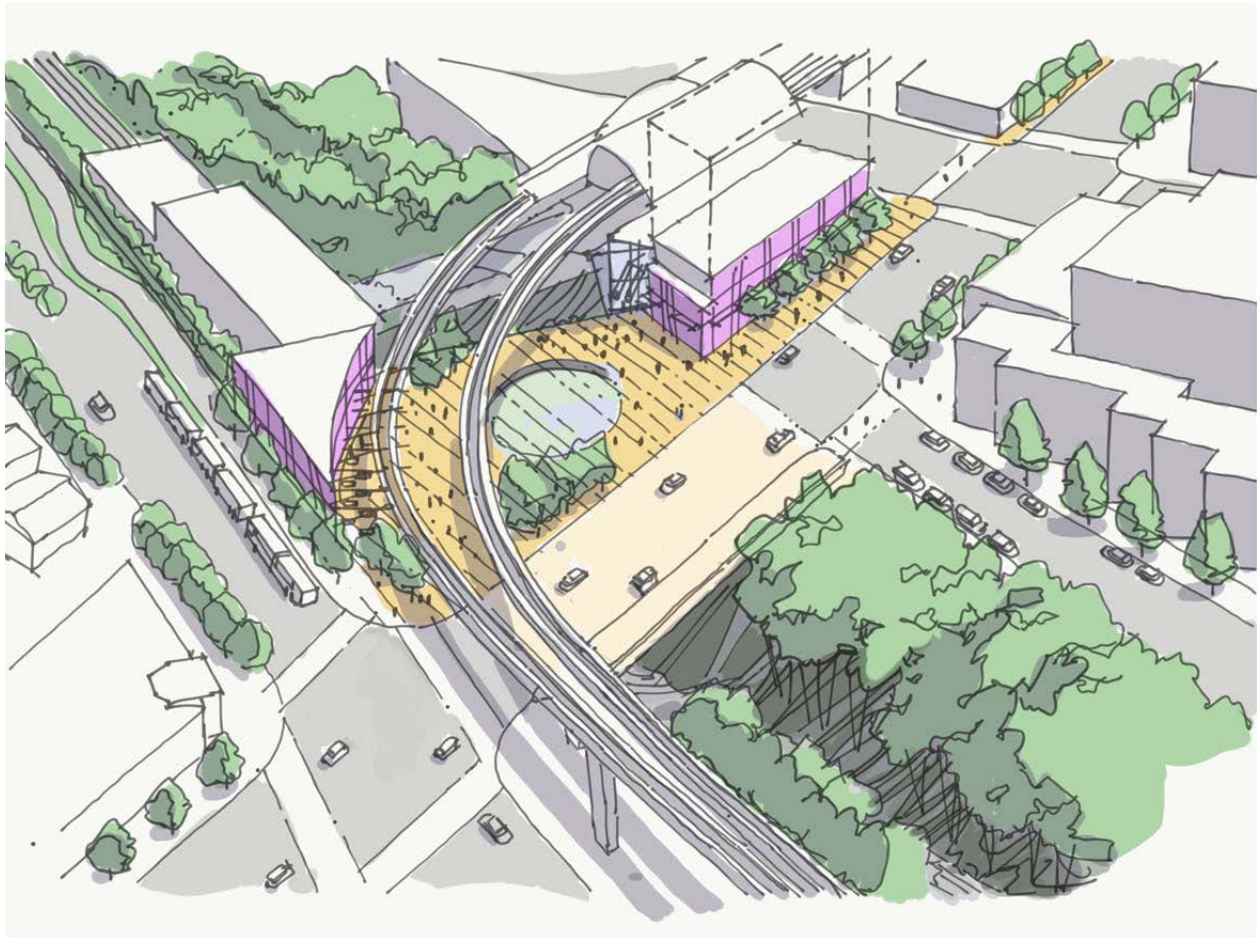
An illustrative concept of the anticipated plaza on the Safeway site was prepared for the June 8 event:



As noted earlier, the City has been approached by a development team to consider an alternative plaza location - over the Grandview Cut- as part of a preliminary rezoning enquiry for the Safeway site. According to the development team, the main reason for the change to the Community Plan directions for the plaza, are due to conditions Safeway has imposed on the redevelopment of their store and include a desire to have a single -storey format, with no more than one level between the store and its associated parking.

The development team also suggested that a secondary benefit of relocating the plaza over the Grandview Cut would improve the urban design aspects of the plaza through its proximity to Commercial Drive and the Skytrain station.

An illustrative concept of the -over the Grandview Cut- alternative plaza location was prepared for the June 8 event:



June 8, 2017 Community Event

On June 8, the City held an event to share the alternative plaza location with the community and determine whether the City should consider this idea further. The format for the event included:

- Presentation material illustrating Council’s adopted Grandview Woodland Community Plan directions for a plaza at the Safeway site, an alternative plaza location suggested by the development team for the Safeway site, and key considerations/criteria for successful public open spaces.
- A short presentation by an expert panel on public open spaces showing examples of successful open spaces around the world, including key considerations (“factors”) for plaza design, programming and social use;
- A moderated Q and A session with questions from event participants regarding the presentation material. (A full list of questions submitted by the audience during the Q&A session is found in Appendix B).
- Community feedback questionnaire on the alternative plaza location and plaza design in general. (A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix C).

Further detail on community feedback is provided on the following pages.

Question 1 | 'Should the City Consider an Alternative Plaza Location?' (n=138)

Of the total number of respondents to this question, just over half (50.7%) indicated that they were Opposed or Strongly Opposed to the alternative location, while one third (33.3%) indicated that they supported consideration of the alternative. A further 16% of respondents indicated that they were either neutral (8%) or not sure (8%).

Support/non-support - All Responses(n=138)

	Number	Percent
Opposed and Strongly Opposed	70	50.7
Support and Strongly Support	46	33.3
Neutral and Not Sure	22	15.9
	138	100

Responses were coded in terms of the method of input (e.g. event, or via email), along with various demographic variables.

- In aggregate, the 91 attendees of the event who answered this question were more likely to support than oppose the alternative location (44% support or strongly support vs. 34.1% opposed or strongly opposed).
- A very high proportion of the 47 email respondents who answered this question were opposed or strongly opposed to the alternative location (83% opposed or strongly opposed vs. 12.8% support or strong support). However, for email respondents, connection with the neighbourhood does not appear to be a distinguishing variable in revealing support/non-support.

Connection with neighbourhood was a notable variable.

- A total of 102 respondents indicated that they either “live” or “live and work” in the neighbourhood. This group was more inclined to oppose the alternative location than support it (combined 55.9% vs 27.5%). The remaining 37 respondents who either indicated they work (only) in the neighbourhood, or who did not indicate what their connection to the neighbourhood, were highly supportive of the alternative (48.6% support and strongly support vs. 37.8% opposed or strongly opposed).

Where demographic information was provided, additional details about the nature of support/non-support can be identified (a breakdown of these figures can be found in Appendix C).

Respondents were able to qualify their support/non-support by providing additional comments. Many of the themes identified overlap with material that will be covered in Question 2.

RATIONALE - OPPOSITION/STRONG OPPOSITION

- Concern about the size of the alternative plaza (seen as too small), and that location adjacent to the SkyTrain and over the Cut will be able to provide full range of desired programming because of proximity to/use by station commuters. Additional concerns related to transit noise/acoustics, adjacent traffic, impact on Cut.
- Suggestion that on-site plaza will enhance the overall redevelopment of the Safeway site, activate the space, and provide public space for new development
- Concern that a required obligation for on-site plaza was being transferred offsite to an already public/quasi-public space, and that developer will obtain additional density by transferring the plaza offsite.
- Concern about developer-led alternative proposal vs community process. Specific frustration in reference to lengthy Community Plan and Citizens' Assembly process being set aside

RATIONALE - SUPPORT/STRONG SUPPORT

- Suggestion that the proposed alternative ensures that the plaza is not 'tied' to a private development, is more visible, and inclusive, safer, and more likely to get used
- Some support for using land over the Cut because it is seen as underutilized
- Alternative location also seen as a way to support connection between different parts of the neighbourhood, or to serve as a better gateway to The Drive
- Additional comments note related opportunity for the alternative plaza to improve the Station or Broadway Commercial intersection.

RATIONALE - NEUTRAL/DON'T KNOW

- Some respondents felt that they did not have enough information to make an informed decision - noting that more details would be helpful concerning, cost, ownership, impact on Grandview Cut, nature of how 'benefits' for development team
- Other respondents question whether or not it would be possible to achieve both plazas - as both would be beneficial, but also likely support different activities by virtue of their location.

Question 2 |

‘The most important considerations for evaluating a plaza?’ (n=107)

As part of the consultation and even materials, a series of 11 Plaza Factors were presented. Each factor stands as a potential point of consideration with which to evaluate plaza location, design, programming or social use. The identified factors were

- Edges
- Connectivity
- Sun/Shade/Weather
- Acoustics
- Amenities
- Sustainable Design
- Views and Visibility
- Safety
- Stewardship
- Activities and Programming
- Publicness

Details on how each factor is defined can be found in Appendix A.

Participants were invited to review the factors and indicate, through an open-ended response, what they felt are “the most important considerations for evaluating a plaza.” 107 responses were received specifically to this question, which were coded based on the use of the 11 terms and/or variants.

Based on this, a relative sense of perceived importance for the different factors can be established.¹ Considerations around **acoustics**, **activities and programming**, **connectivity/accessibility**, and **safety** rank highest in importance for respondents. Key points connected with all factors are as follows:

Acoustics (55 References)

- Considerable concern about the volume of noise associated with the alternative location - principally connected with SkyTrain (overhead tracks or tracks underneath), BCNF rail transport, or nearby automotive traffic. Related concern that noise attenuation efforts would be insufficient or unable to respond to the concern.
- Concern that volumes would negatively impact the sorts of programming and activities that could take place on the site.

Activities and Programming (52 References)

- General desire among respondents to see a wide array of activities in the plaza - including actively programmed events (e.g. music, festivals, cultural activities, markets), and more casual every activities (e.g. sitting, meeting friends, enjoying a coffee, lingering, accessing retail).

¹ Owing to the fact that the coding process involves some subjective assessment of open-ended answers, figures should not be interpreted as absolute measures of relative importance, but rather, as being illustrative of general priorities. Further, in some instances, respondents provided input on Question 2 question through their commentary in Question 1. Where this took place, details were included in the analysis of this question.

- For supporters of the alternative location, suggestion that the plaza would better connect people to these opportunities (i.e. on the Drive)
- For those opposed, concern that factors such as acoustics (SkyTrain and BCNF), or high volumes of pedestrian flow (in and out of the station) would compromise the ability to program the plaza for the desired activities.

Connectivity/Accessibility (51 References)

- Strong desire to see the future plaza well-connected to the neighbourhood - especially for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users, as well as drivers.
- Supporters of the alternative location noted that a plaza over the Cut could support better connections along the Drive. Some noted concerns that the approved plaza location would be “tucked away.”
- For alternative “over the Cut” location - mixed responses about nature of connectivity related to SkyTrain station, with some noting that the adjacency to the transit would allow for direct access to the plaza, while others noted that that this adjacency could make the plaza more of a thoroughfare (i.e. less programmable)
- Supporters of the on-site plaza noted connections to the Station, E 10th Ave bikeway, and new future development in the vicinity, as well as general proximity to the Drive.

Safety (46 References)

- Desire to ensure that future space is safe for all users
- Mixed opinions regarding natural surveillance - with supporters of the alternative “Over the Cut” location suggesting this would be achieved via high degree of visibility on Commercial Drive, and proponents of the approved location suggesting that surrounding residential and office uses would put more eyes on the plaza at the Safeway location
- Specific concerns noted around ensuring that the plaza is inclusive, doesn’t become “turf”, limits opportunities for social disorder. Night time safety identified as a particular concern.
- Additional concern noted about traffic safety on arterials.

Publicness (30 References)

- In general, a desire to see a high degree of publicness - public “feel”, inclusiveness, ability to be accessed and used by the neighbourhood - in the future plaza.
- For supporters of the alternative location - suggestion that visibility of plaza adjacent to the Drive as a factor supporting publicness.
- For respondents wanting the plaza to remain on the Safeway site, desire to ensure that Safeway site has ‘strong public space,’ public access, and site activation by plaza.

Amenities (29 References²)

- Desire to see an array of amenities as part of the plaza space - including seating, public bathrooms, water fountains, weather proofing features, public art (sculptures, meeting points), trees and greenspace features.
- Additional identification of role of retail - e.g. shops at Safeway - and cafes as a form of amenity.

Sustainable Design (20 References)

- Concern about the impact of the alternative plaza location on the Grandview Cut - (e.g. concern about loss of greenspace, impact on trees, wildlife); desire to understand the environmental impact of building over the Cut .
- In general, a desire to see the use of natural building materials, “green” features, landscaping, trees, shrubs.

Sun/Shade/Weather (18 References)

- General agreement on the importance of good solar access and weather protection (including shade, rain-proofing and drainage).
- Regarding approved location - desire to ensure that plaza is not negatively impacted by shadowing from adjacent development.
- Mixed opinion about whether alternative “over the Cut” location would have better solar access, too much sun, or too much shade. Specific concern that alternative location would receive too much shade (from proposed adjacent development).

Stewardship (15 References)

- Comments relating stewardship mostly related to the desire to see the plaza well-managed, well-maintained, and, in particular, kept in a good state of cleanliness.

Views & Visibility (14 References)

- General desire for good site lines in plaza location, and good overall visibility.
- Some respondents noted that the alternative “over the Cut” location would be more visible from the Drive, and that the location would offer good views to the west (i.e. downtown).

Edges (11 References)

- Minimal discussion of edge conditions amongst respondents. Beyond general support, where edges are mentioned it is in support of the sense of containment they provide, and for the role they can play in fostering greater safety. Street/car traffic is not seen as a desirable edge condition.
- Some concern that the alternative location is not as well “bounded”, and has insufficiently ‘active’ edges, compared to the approved location.

²In discussing desired activities in Question 3, a considerable number of respondents referenced design elements - seating, tables, public art, bathrooms, etc. that would likely be considered amenities but were not explicitly identified as such. These were not counted towards Question 2 results.

Question 3 | 'The type of activities desired for a future plaza?' (n=97)

Respondents were asked to identify the sorts of activities they wanted to see in a future plaza (regardless of location). A total of 97 responses were received to this question. Answers were coded from open-ended responses; however, unlike Question 2, there were no pre-established factors or other considerations.³

	No. of References
Music, Culture, Art	
Cultural events, festivals, art shows	37
Buskers, street performers, "listening to music"	35
Larger performances, theatre, concerts	20
Indigenous activities	2
Sitting, Hanging Out, People Watching	
Seating, sitting	36
Hanging out, quiet, picnics, reading, meeting, informal gathering	22
People watching	3
Food and Drink	
Restaurants, food trucks	26
Drinking coffee, café, independent coffee shop	23
Pubs, beer garden	3
Retail / Commercial	
Markets, farmers markets, art markets, night markets	21
Shops, retail, pop-up stores	12
Age-specific activities	
Activities for children, kids, kid-friendly	13
All ages	2
Recreation	
Sports, parkour, skating, etc.	6
Dancing	6
Games - Mahjong, chess, etc	6
Civic and Community services	
Health, social services, education, government outreach, civic engagement	5

³ With regard to raw scores, similar caveats apply to the interpretation of this data as with Question 2. Further, results represent single-count allocations (e.g. individual answers are only counted in one category, regardless of whether there is overlap with another category).

Political activity		
	Protests, rallies, voting	4
Night time activities		
	Outdoor movies, other nighttime activities	4
Online activities		
	WiFi	1

Question 4 | 'Favourite public plazas and squares in Vancouver and beyond?' (n=85)

Respondents were invited to share their favourite public plazas or squares. 85 (57%) respondents answered the question, identifying a total of 126 plazas or related areas.

Vancouver

The most commonly cited plazas or squares in Vancouver were as follows:

800-Robson / Art Gallery / North Plaza / Robson Square	19
Olympic Village (South East False Creek)	18
Jack Poole Plaza (Vancouver Convention Centre)	10
Library Square	7
Woodwards	4
Granville Island (various plazas)	4
Roundhouse Community Centre (Turntable Plaza)	3
Napier Greenway	3

Additional mention was made of Terry Fox Plaza, Marine Gateway Plaza, David Lam Park, Victory Square, Gaolers Mews, Blood Alley, Park Place (Burrard St), Cathedral Place, Seawall, Morton Park (West End), Block 98 (Hornby and Hastings), Shangri-La Plaza, and in Grandview-Woodland, Grandview Park, and Woodland Park.


National and International

A wide array of national and international examples were identified, with only a few discernable clusters of responses. The most commonly cited was the High Line in New York (8). Comments of a more general nature ("European squares", "Italian squares," "Mexican" or "South American" squares) were also more common (2-4 responses each). For the most part, all other responses were one-off. Examples of specific squares include:

- Main square (presumably Neumarkt)- (Dresden, Germany)
- Syntagma Square (Athens, Greece)
- Spui Square (Amsterdam, Netherlands)
- Place des Vosges (Paris, France)
- Spanish Steps/Piazza di Spagna (Rome, Italy)
- Zocalo (Mexico City, Mexico)
- Union Square (San Francisco, USA)
- Yorkville Park (Toronto, Canada)
- Kultorvet (Copenhagen, Denmark)
- Piazza del Campo (Sienna, Italy)
- Plaza de la Barceloneta and Ramblas (Barcelona, Spain)

Other suggestions included squares and plazas in Tbilisi (Rep of Georgia), Cusco (Peru), Zurich (Switzerland), Tel Aviv (Israel), as well as British Columbia, and various US cities.

Appendix A: Display Boards - June 8 event



Welcome

The City of Vancouver has been approached by a development team (developer, architect, and property owner) about a potential redevelopment of the Safeway site located at 1780 East Broadway, at Commercial Drive.


The Grandview-Woodland Community Plan provides guidance about how this site should be redeveloped and sets a requirement to provide a new at-grade public plaza on the site. The development team is proposing that the plaza be located at an alternative location, over the Grandview Cut.


Community feedback will be used to inform next steps in the process, as the City considers the rezoning enquiry.

This Event Will Discuss:

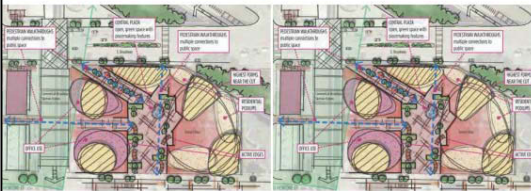
- The approved policies for the safeway plaza
- The proposed alternative
- Factors to consider when assessing plaza location, design, programming and use.

We want your feedback!
Should the City of Vancouver explore an alternative location for the plaza?





Grandview-Woodland Community Plan Policy



Safeway Site Plaza (s.6.7.1):
Seek a generous, centrally-located public plaza at grade, ideally located near the middle of the site. Ensure the following considerations are taken into account:

- Building arrangement to optimize the use of public open space
- Ensure the site design supports vibrancy in the plaza with varied, grocery and small-scale retail space, office and residential entrances fronting and/or overlooking the open space
- Shading/solar access
- SkyTrain noise mitigation
- Range of programming and uses
- Accessibility, sight lines and design considerations to address public safety
- Highest building forms will be situated adjacent to the Grandview Cut to minimize shadowing of the plaza


Approved Community-Wide Policy - Plazas (s.9.2):

- Create new plazas to support public gathering and enhance existing gathering spaces
- Pursue new and improved hard-surfaced plaza areas as part of key new developments. Programming should consider cultural programming, markets, outdoor theatre, kid's festivals, and weather-proofing measures
- Priority locations include the Broadway and Commercial Safeway Site

General Community Plan References to the On-Site Plaza Describe its Intent as:

- A new social heart of the community
- The primary gathering and social place at the southern end of Grandview-Woodland
- A sunny, welcoming, delightful and people-friendly civic plaza

* This conceptual diagram is for illustrative purposes only. It is not intended to be prescriptive but to clearly illustrate one concept that could fulfill the intent of this plan. Detailed project design could alter the elements of the concept plan.
(Page 10-115 of the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan, July 2016).





Proposed Alternative Location Over the Grandview Cut

A local development team (Crombie REIT/ Safeway, Westbank and BTA Architects) has approached the City with an interest in rezoning the Safeway site. As part of early discussions, they have indicated that the potential redevelopment of a new grocery store on the existing Safeway will limit their ability to provide a centrally located public plaza.

They are proposing an alternative location for the plaza, which would bridge over the Grandview Cut on the east side of Commercial Drive, adjacent to (and under) the Skytrain guideway.

While is only conceptual, the development team has suggested that the alternative plaza will:

- Maximize community use and positive impact on the surrounding urban environment
- "Heal the divide" created by the Grandview Cut.
- Serve as a true community gathering area
- Offer space for temporary performances, markets, and other programming opportunities (including patios, kiosks, and other seating areas)
- Have a meaningful connection to Commercial Drive and contribute to its energy
- Offer a generous meeting area for people travelling to and from transit
- Accommodate the major flows of people entering the Skytrain station at its north and south entrances.



Approved Plaza Location Per Community Plan Policy

Conceptual rendering of the plaza, located per approved Community Plan policy



Conceptual rendering of the plaza, in proposed alternative location



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Community Input

Community Plan Process

- Early community planning process & Emerging Directions (2013)**
 - Creation of plaza area at NE corner E 10th and Commercial (Emerging Directions)
- Broadway & Commercial Workshop #1 (2013)**
 - Strong support for the idea of a plaza; however, no consensus on location. Possibilities discussed Broadway and Commercial, Broadway and E 10th, or located near station (e.g. within the area bounded by Commercial, E 10th, Broadway and Victoria)
- Broadway & Commercial workshop #2 (2015)**
 - Strong support for the idea of a plaza in the Broadway & Commercial area; however, divergent opinions about where the plaza should go, including at the intersection of Broadway & Commercial, near the bridges, near the station area, near 10th Avenue; and on the Safeway site.
 - There was also the opinion that multiple plazas and gathering areas are needed.
- Citizens' Assembly Final Report (2015)**
 - Citizens' Assembly members assessed the aforementioned feedback and recommended locating the plaza on the Safeway site, as part of future redevelopment.
 - The Assembly tested a draft version of this recommendation with the community during a public open house, and a refined version was incorporated as part of their final report (presented to City Council in June 2015).
 - Citizens' Assembly recommendations were then used as a basis for the Community Plan.

Citizens' Assembly Recommendation 16.1. We expect the City to create a welcoming viable public plaza at the Safeway site. This south-oriented plaza should be visible to pedestrians at the main intersection and have multiple pedestrian access points... The plaza should have an open feel and must connect to the SkyTrain Greenway... [It] is intended as a pedestrian area... and must be vibrant and safe for everyone...

Good public plazas: factors to consider

Edges

To encourage the creation of an 'urban room,' plazas can have defined edges. These can include surrounding buildings, or other features (landscaping, stairs, art, water features, etc.) which can help to define the perimeter and help to infuse the space with public life. A sense of 'containment' creates an intimate, social environment.

Edges can include surrounding buildings, which can help to define the perimeter and help to infuse the space with public life. Other features, such as roads, landscaping, and water can serve this purpose as well. Stronger, more defined edges, are generally considered desirable. A sense of 'containment' creates an intimate, social environment.

Classic plaza design (found in places like Europe, south and central America), generally incorporates well-defined edges - often multi-storey buildings with a variety of ground floor uses: cafes and bars, stores, etc. Other surrounding buildings can include places of worship, civic buildings, and cultural institutions. To a lesser degree, streets and other transportation infrastructure can also be used to define edges.

Approved Community Plan Policy	Proposed Alternative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building arrangement to optimize the use of public open space. Site design that ensures vibrancy in the plaza with varied, grocery and small-scale retail space, office and residential entrances fronting and/or overlooking the open space. Conceptual diagrams note opportunity for 'active edges' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed concepts suggest a more open space, with a smaller retail "edge" in the NE corner of the site SkyTrain tracks and Commercial Drive also comprise a type of "edge condition"

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Good public plazas: factors to consider

Connectivity

In order for a plaza to be well-used it has to be both easy to get to, and easy to move through. It can benefit from having connection with other public spaces.

Classic plaza design typically features multiple ways to enter and leave an open space, as well as various pathways through a given space. These sorts of linkages can be realized through the addition of connecting pathways, arcades and other features (including pedestrian walkways, steps, and bridges) - each of which can be reinforced through features such as landscaping and trees, signage, and paving patterns. As noted in the City's Plaza Design Guidelines, "a plaza should be linked to other surrounding open spaces, as well as interior spaces such as lobbies, to create a dynamic pedestrian network."

With regard to the Safeway plaza, both the approved location described in policy, and proposed alternative locates, locate a plaza near the region's largest transit hub.

Approved Community Plan Policy	Proposed Alternative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility and sight lines - which support goals of connectivity Conceptual diagrams note pedestrian walkways - and other connections to surrounding public spaces - including the station, Commercial Drive, Broadway, and the E10th Avenue bikeway The on-site plaza would likely front E 10th Avenue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The plaza would front onto Commercial Drive, and face a high-volume pedestrian sidewalk Plaza location is seen as a way to "heal the cut" and bridge north-south connections along Commercial Drive

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Good public plazas: factors to consider

Sun, shade & weather

Access to sun is important. Warmth and sunshine are major attractions in public plazas. When the weather is inclement, protection from rain, excess heat, or wind is also key.

As suggested by designers Clare Marcus and Carolyn Francis, "a plaza should be located so as to receive as much sunlight as its surrounding environment will permit. The seasonal movement of the sun and the existing and proposed structures must all be taken into account so that the plaza will receive the maximum amount of summer and winter sunshine."

In addition to a good weather forecast, solar access is also a consequence of the surrounding buildings. Buildings located to the south/south-west of a plaza can be designed to ensure that they don't cast a shadow over the open space. Additional design features - such as canopies, arcades, glazing and building design, can be used to provide shade, protection from rain, and minimization of high winds.

Approved Community Plan Policy	Proposed Alternative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings on the Safeway site are required to take shading and solar access into account. Proposed concepts locate higher buildings to the north where shadowing will impact Broadway, and lower buildings to the south to minimize loss of sun onto the Safeway site New buildings to the south of the site (south side of E 10th) must consider public realm enhancements that support adjacent plazas, bike routes, or shared spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A plaza on the east side of Commercial will have minimal shadowing based on the current height of surrounding buildings The building (2-storey office/retail) on the NE corner of Broadway & Commercial is zoned for 10-storey office development - which could create shadowing impacts on the proposed site.

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Good public plazas: factors to consider



How noisy, or quiet should a plaza be? It depends on what kind of functions are envisioned. A comfortable level of background noise can encourage people to talk, linger, and laugh. In other cases, the volume of noise is louder with the hustle and bustle of activity.

The City's Plaza Design Guidelines suggest that "high levels of traffic, industrial and other ambient noises detract from the enjoyment of a plaza." Similarly, urban theorist Jan Gehl says that "being able to hear and talk are important qualities in urban public space." While this may seem straightforward, a normal conversation is about 60 decibels (dB), and every 8 decibels more than that, is actually perceived as a doubling of volume.

Noise can be partially mitigated by detracting attention from the noise source through the introduction of such elements as fountains or waterfalls.

Approved Community Plan Policy

- The community plan suggested an at-grade plaza "ideally located" in the middle of the Safeway site. This location would assist with buffering against SkyTrain and traffic noise.
- Current noise conditions mid-site, mid-afternoon are approximately 71 decibels (dB).

Proposed Alternative

- The alternative concept proposes a plaza located adjacent to, over, and under, the SkyTrain tracks, and facing Commercial Drive.
- Acoustic testing is required to fully understand the implications; however, current volumes adjacent to the proposed site range are approx. 82 dB.* Under the SkyTrain guideway during train pass-overs the volume is approx. 85-90 dB.
- Buffering of SkyTrain noise may be possible in this location (to be determined).

* Figures shown reflect the average for a min 10+ minute average sample taken between 2-3:30pm on Wednesday, June 7th, 2017.



Good public plazas: factors to consider



Plazas can benefit from an array of supporting amenities, such as seating (moveable or fixed), tables, bathrooms, drinking fountains and more. These sorts of features can encourage people to linger, meet friends, and ensure a space is a comfortable for users of all ages.

As part of general policies for the public realm, the Community Plan calls for the provision of "more and better public seating and tables ... with a focus on shopping streets and other destination areas such as parks and plazas." Other policies call for public art, improved public bathrooms, drinking fountains, waste and recycling receptacles, and other features (see Grandview-Woodland Community Plan, section 9.3 - Public Realm Features, p.161).

It is expected that specific public realm features would be identified through more detailed design work and concept refinement later in the process.

Approved Community Plan Policy

- No site specific policies around amenities on the site; requires planning around a "range of programming and uses."

Proposed Alternative

- No specific amenities or features noted at this time.



Good public plazas: factors to consider



Plaza design can incorporate principles of sustainability, and in so doing, support a range of 'green' goals. This can include enriching the surrounding landscape, making use of natural materials, and supporting the use of sustainable transportation options.

While sustainability can be a general consideration at this point, there is an expectation that the environmental performance of a given plaza option would be further assessed when the initial plaza concept is designed in more detail.

Approved Community Plan Policy

- No specific sustainable design concept to evaluate at this time.
- The site is located adjacent to the SkyTrain station, and on the E 10th bikeway. It is close to Commercial Drive - proposed for Complete Street design improvements.

Proposed Alternative

- No specific sustainable design concept to evaluate at this time.
- The alternative plaza extends over the Grandview Cut, which was identified by the community as a valued greenspace.
- The site is located adjacent to the SkyTrain station, and is close to Commercial Drive - proposed for Complete Street design improvements.



Good public plazas: factors to consider



Plazas can be designed to consider the visual environment in two ways: by enabling views of the surrounding landscape (buildings, street life, or natural setting) and by ensuring that the plaza itself is visible from nearby areas.

As the City's Plaza Design Guidelines note, "good street-to-plaza visibility announces the plaza's internal attractions. It signifies that it is a public space." This is further enhanced by opportunities to have a visual connection with adjacent streets, which reinforces safety. The Guidelines further suggest that "a plaza should ... take advantage of distant views to the mountains, ocean and other landmarks wherever possible."

Approved Community Plan Policy

- Identifies requirement for "accessibility, sight lines and design considerations to address public safety concerns."
- Conceptual diagrams suggest focus on interior plaza space and surrounding stores/buildings, with additional visual connections to adjacent streets.

Proposed Alternative

- Would have strong visual connections to Commercial Drive.
- Support views down to the West and East along the Grandview Cut.



Good public plazas: factors to consider

Safety

In order for a plaza to be well-used, it has to feel safe and comfortable for everyone.

Key elements of safety include the opportunity for "natural surveillance," which involves good sightlines, and the opportunity for casual observation (this is the sort of feature that Jane Jacobs referred to as "eyes on the street").

A second element includes a sense of territoriality - enough of a feeling of public ownership over the space that people will act in times of need (e.g. offering assistance, calling for help). While it may seem obvious, both of these are further premised on a key ingredient: the presence of other people. As the old maxim goes, there is **safety in numbers**.

Safety can be further supported through careful design (minimizing places to hide, providing multiple entrances and exits), lighting, a variety of surrounding uses (see Edges) and barriers to protect plaza users against adjacent street traffic.

Approved Community Plan Policy

- Policy identifies requirement for "accessibility, sight lines and design considerations to address public safety concerns."
- Conceptual approach would encircle the plaza with residential, office, and retail uses - supporting natural surveillance and "eyes on the plaza"

Proposed Alternative

- Would front Commercial Drive and benefit from pedestrian, cycling and car traffic on Commercial Drive, along with "eyes on the plaza" via adjacent buildings.



Good public plazas: factors to consider

Stewardship

Plazas are about more than just design and use. They can benefit from stewardship approaches that attend to some or all of the following: overall management, the organization or scheduling of activities and events, maintenance, fundraising, among other operational considerations.

There are a variety of stewardship models that can be used to enhance the operation of a plaza, ensuring that it responds to the needs of the local community (no one-size-fits-all approach works for every space). Often times, stewardship programs will involve one or more management structures (e.g. local government, a non-profit, or management board, a committee stakeholders, a local "friends-of" group, business association, or combination of these and/or other entities).

It is anticipated that a discussion around stewardship approaches would take place at a later stage in the development process.

Approved Community Plan Policy

- No specific stewardship approach identified at this time

Proposed Alternative

- No specific stewardship approach identified at this time



Good public plazas: factors to consider

Activities & programming

Along with more casual day-to-day activities (such as sitting, eating, people-watching), a good, flexibly designed plaza can be designed to support a variety of special events.

Special events require particular considerations: an appropriate setting, flexible performance space, loading and unloading, seating, staging and back-of-house areas, on site storage, additional event facilities (food, washrooms, etc.). These may vary depending on the event (e.g. concert vs. street festival vs. farmers market), and plazas that are designed for flexible use will incorporate some or all of the aforementioned features. In addition, other features identified - such as ambient noise levels, weather-proofing, etc. - will also impact what sorts of events are able to take place.

The broader community plan calls for the creation of plaza spaces that:

- support community events, such as markets, performances, and festival activities; and, related activities.
- Programming should consider cultural programming, markets, outdoor theatre, kid's festivals, and weather proofing measures.
- Maximize opportunities for cultural use of plazas, through the provision of festival/event infrastructure such as power, water, grey water disposal, and loading, and secure storage and back of house space.

Approved Community Plan Policy

- A range of programming and uses on site
- The location of the plaza could make it a factor in neighbourhood events

Proposed Alternative

- Initial concept discussions suggest various programming opportunities (performances, patios, kiosks, seating)
- the position of the plaza could make it a factor in neighbourhood events



Good public plazas: factors to consider

Publicness

Plazas have a long history of informal and formal social and democratic functions. In addition, plazas can play an important role in fostering social inclusion - ensuring a public space that is open to all, regardless of age, gender, income, ability, or background.

As a forum for public life, plazas serve as gathering areas, supporting meetings, protests, celebrations, vigils, flashmobs, and spontaneous gatherings of all sorts. They can also be a relaxing space in which to watch other people, listen to a busker, or meet a date or co-worker for a coffee.

The idea of "publicness" refers to the degree to which a plaza "reads" as public space (versus private property). The overall sense of publicness can affect the level engagement that community feels with the space. It can be influenced by the presence (or absence) of amenities, programming, welcome signage, advertising, security features, and any other features that welcome (or discourage) the use of the space.

Approved Community Plan Policy

- No specific policies around publicness; however the Plan describes the Safeway plaza as "[a] new social heart for the community"; "the primary gathering and social place at the southern end of Grandview Woodland" and "a ... welcoming, delightful and people friendly civic plaza."

Proposed Alternative

- No specific policies around publicness.



Appendix B: Q&A Session - Questions submitted via Cue cards

Audience members at the July 8 were invited to submit written questions during the Q&A component of the event. Five questions were discussed during by panellists. The following is a list of the full array of questions that were submitted.

Impact on density, massing, etc. of Safeway redevelopment (18 questions)

- How would moving the plaza away from the Safeway site affect the density and storey height on the Safeway site? More 25-storey buildings?
- If the plaza moves from Safeway site (to the Cut) will the Safeway towers (up to 24-storeys) be continued?
- What happens to Safeway site if plaza leaves?
- If the plaza moves, what will the space be used for at the original site? What led to this request?
- How is the massing of the Safeway site being broken up/handled with the plaza elsewhere?
- How will FSR and building massing be affected at the Safeway site if Alternative 1 is selected and if Alternative 2 is selected?
- What effect would the absence of an on-site plaza have on the form of development of the project in the Safeway site? Is it possible that most of the site will be covered by a podium, like the site at 2220 Kingsway (Canadian Tire site)?
- Will this proposal increase the amount of total building development?
- What is the developer doing with their other hand? Increase in footprint? Increase in density?
- Include housing? Originally the proposal was for a moderately high apartment building - have you given up on this? Is this a foot hold for establishing resources and services and community spaces and the beginning of the transformation of Broadway/Commercial to become another Brentwood and Metrotown?
- Will this proposal be a significant financial benefit to Safeway and/or the developers?
- What will moving the plaza permit the developers to do? More buildings? Density? Height?
- What is the benefit to Safeway with this alternative proposal? i.e. How would this change height/density zoning for the Safeway site?
- Will the move mean more density on Safeway site?
- How high will the tallest building be? I know the focus here is the “plaza,” but nobody here wants a tower on the site, so please comment on this.
- What is proposed for over (above) the Safeway site, and will this differ depending on which proposal is successful?
- How high are the towers that are currently planned, and will this vary depending on the proposal?
- Is this project considered to be “spot zoning” and, if so, the concern is that this will be the first of many to come, thus completely altering the intent of the Community Plan vis-à-vis the community’s voices and wishes.

Motivation/Rationale (13 questions)

- What is the motivation of the Safeway Site owner to look for other location?

- Why does the design team feel an alternative location is required?
- What is the motivation of Westbank for moving the plaza over the Causeway?
- What are the challenges on the Safeway site?
- Why no discussion about simply getting on with the plaza approved in the Plan? Why can't Sobey's agree to this?
- What happens to the open space at Safeway? Are we then talking about two plazas?
- Why is the original plan changing?
- What difficulties to placing the plaza on the Safeway site are Safeway talking about?
- Can you provide specifics on the difficulties encountered when trying to incorporate the plaza into the proposed development?
- It sounds as though there are two main goals for the Safeway site: (1) the much discussed plaza to benefit the public, (2) the design/density goals of the proponent group. Why is item (1) being reviewed to accommodate item (2), and not the reverse?
- What is the major motivator for looking at an alternative site? Why not Safeway?
- Is the advantage of moving the plaza only for the developer to fit more town homes on the Safeway site and make more money? If not, what is the advantage?
- How does the surrounding context - Commercial Drive, SkyTrain Station (beside and overhead) provide the best possible location for the largest public space in the neighbourhood plan?

Noise (12 questions)

- Over the Cut option: how will the SkyTrain noise be dealt with?
- Commercial Drive is a busy street. How is the noise mitigated?
- Will there be SkyTrain noise reduction mitigation with the proposed alternative?
- The new plaza is directly below the SkyTrain. Would that not make it very noisy?
- Has consideration been given to mitigating the noise of the metal guideway of the SkyTrain directly overhead?
- In the new proposed plaza how will the noise be dealt with as it is located directly under SkyTrain tracks
- The alternative location seems to be located under the Skytrain bridge. How will you mitigate noise?
- How noisy is the alternative? SkyTrain (above and below), freight and passenger trains, buses?
- Are they going to relocate the SkyTrain above?
- Skytrain noise?
- Is it possible for some sort of roof structure to be attached to the portion of the guideway above the plaza to provide shade and filter noise?
- How will we insulate the sound of the train in or for the plaza to be used for cultural programming?

Size (7 questions)

- Is the sq ft area of the alternative smaller than the original plan? If not, can it be enlarged?
- Site may not be large enough [for] plaza
- What is the change in area between the original and proposed plaza?

- The proposed location seems much smaller. What is the ratio between the two [i.e. approved and alternative location] for: seating areas? Number of businesses? Sq ft?
- What is the difference of footprint between sites?
- Will the alternative have the same sq metres as Safeway location?
- The plaza on the Safeway site could really work if it can cross E 10th Av and include the space of the medical building. Unrealistic?

Cost (4 questions)

- This would obviously be very expensive as an alternative. What's the benefit to Safeway?
- Who pays for Alternative 2 - the City or the developer of the Safeway site?
- Who pays for alternative as no longer on private land?
- What is the budget?

Publicness (3 questions)

- Is there a difference in the sense of publicness/ownership between two options?
- Does the architect feel that this site would create a more public feeling of ownership as oppose to the Safeway site that may convey a feeling that it is private or belongs to the residents of the development?
- Public spaces should be public, not hidden away

Activities and Programming (3 questions)

- How will the movement of commuters be balanced with the peaceful and social enjoyment of the plazas? These uses will conflict.
- Are you seeing this as a 24hr/day plaza or something that will be closed off during the night? Place for overnight shelter for homeless?
- We already have many areas suited to what you foresee as usage, these already existing spaces are scattered throughout the community and local people use them a lot in our area. This would really be more for people using transit, Safeway and other shops as it takes quite a long time for these plazas to be integrated, if ever (e.g. International Village).

Amenities (3 questions)

- How much green space would be left or created? Hoping for more green space.
- Given there is no new park space in the neighbourhood plan, how can this plaza provide a green, natural place for everyone.
- Will public toilets be a component of the plaza?

Both Plazas? (3 questions)

- Is having both locations become a plaza a possibility that may be best for the area?
- Why can't there be two plazas? One over Cut, one in "centre" and connected to each other?
- Why not both?

Connectivity (2 questions)

- How will plaza connect to 10th Avenue bike route?
- How will SkyTrain foot traffic be handled on the South side.

Environment (2 questions)

- How much of the Cut will be covered and therefore how much wildlife habitat will be destroyed?
- Could we count on some originality in design to make it a vibrant, modern space, encompassing a green ecological space to reflect the interests of the residents?

Stewardship & Management (2 questions)

- What strategies will be put forward to discourage the homeless from potentially “living” at the plaza?
- What are the plans for graffiti, garbage, and homeless?

Safety (2 questions)

- What are the plans to provide safety and maintenance? The Hub is getting worse!
- Has the Fire Department seen this alternative proposal? Years ago there was discussion of covering parts of the Grandview Cut. VFD objected. The concern was with train fires - i.e. transportation of dangerous goods.


Timing (2 questions)

- How long will this project take?
- Is there some sense of timeline to greenlighting an appropriate proposal?

Other (6 questions)

- What site are the experts (City and 3 speakers) leaning towards?
- Is the proposed plaza below grade?
- How beholden is the Safeway Development Team to providing these “plaza factors” in their space selection? How can the City enforce them?
- How will parking availability/spaces be affected at the Broadway/Commercial location vs alternative location?
- Will there be the same number of office/retail spaces at the Broadway & Commercial space and at the alternative location?
- How will overhead Skytrain limit use of plaza? (i.e. do you need permission from Translink for every event below?)

Appendix C: Feedback Form / Questionnaire

**Safeway Plaza Discussion Feedback Form**

The City of Vancouver has been approached by a development team (developer, architect, and property owner) about a potential redevelopment of the Safeway site located at 1780 East Broadway, at Commercial Drive.

The Grandview-Woodland Community Plan provides guidance about how this site should redevelop and sets a requirement to provide a new at-grade public plaza on the site. The development team is proposing that the plaza be located at an alternative location, over the Grandview Cut.

Community feedback will be used to inform next steps in the process, as the City considers the rezoning enquiry.

Please email your answers to the following questions to grandviewplan@vancouver.ca by Friday, June 16th, 2017.

An Alternative Plaza Location?

1. Should the City consider an alternative location? Please indicate your level of support for the proposed alternative location over the Grandview Cut.

☐ Strongly support
☐ Support
☐ Neutral
☐ Opposed
☐ Strongly Opposed
☐ Not sure

Additional comments:

2. Based on your review of the Factors, what do you think are the most important considerations for evaluating a public plaza?

Please turn over

Good Plaza Design and Plaza Activities?

3. Setting aside the question of location, what sorts of activities would you like to see in a future plaza?

4. Do you have a favourite public plaza or square (in Vancouver or elsewhere)? If yes, which one and why?

Tell us about yourself

5. Which of the following describes you?
Please select all that apply

☐ I live in Grandview-Woodland Plan area
☐ I work in the Grandview-Woodland Plan area
☐ I go to school in the Grandview-Woodland Plan area
☐ I was involved in the community plan process

6. What's the closest intersection to your place of residence?

7. Which age group do you belong to?

☐ 19 or younger
☐ 20-29
☐ 30-49
☐ 50-65
☐ 66-79
☐ 80 or older

8. What do you identify as?

☐ Female
☐ Male
☐ Transgender
☐ Prefer not to say
☐ Other: _____

Thank you for your feedback!
Please email your answers to the following questions to grandviewplan@vancouver.ca by Friday, June 16th, 2017.

Appendix D: Detailed Breakdown of Questionnaire Qualitative Responses

Question 1: Level of Support/Non-Support for Consideration of the Alternative Plaza Location.

Support/non-support - All Responses(Event + Email) (n=138)

	Number	Percent
Support and Strongly Support	46	33.3
Opposed and Strongly Opposed	70	50.7
Neutral and Not Sure	22	15.9
	138	100

Connection with Neighbourhood

Residents could indicate if they Live or Work in the neighbourhood. Multiple responses were allowed.

Support/non-support -LIVE in the neighbourhood (Event + Email) (n=84)

	Number	Percent
Support and Strongly Support	19	22.6
Opposed and Strongly Opposed	51	60.7
Neutral and Not Sure	14	16.7
	84	100

Note: Includes answers where respondents selected “Live” only

Support/non-support - LIVE and WORK in the neighbourhood (Event + Email) (n=18)

	Number	Percent
Support and Strongly Support	9	50.0
Opposed and Strongly Opposed	6	33.3
Neutral and Not Sure	3	16.7
	18	100

Note: Includes answers where respondents selected “Live”and “Work”

Support/non-support - WORK in the neighbourhood (Event + Email) (n=10)

	Number	Percent
Support and Strongly Support	7	70.0
Opposed and Strongly Opposed	2	20.0
Neutral and Not Sure	1	10.0
	10	100

Note: Includes answers where respondents selected “Work” only

No Specified Connection to Neighbourhood (Event + Email) (n=27)

	Number	Percent
Support and Strongly Support	11	40.7
Opposed and Strongly Opposed	12	44.4
Neutral and Not Sure	4	14.8
	27	100

Note: Includes answers where respondents did not select either "Live" nor "Work"

Sex

A total of 120 respondents (Event and Email) indicated their sex. Of these, 116 answered the first question regarding level of support/non-support for the alternative plaza location.

Support/non - Support - Males (n=62)

	Number	Percent
Support and Strongly Support	23	37.1
Opposed and Strongly Opposed	28	45.2
Neutral and Not Sure	11	17.7
	62	100

Support/non-Support - Females (n=54)

	Number	Percent
Support and Strongly Support	16	29.6
Opposed and Strongly Opposed	30	55.6
Neutral and Not Sure	11	14.8
	54	100

Support/non-Support - Sex - No Answer/Prefer Not to Say (n=22)

	Number	Percent
Support and Strongly Support	7	31.8
Opposed and Strongly Opposed	12	54.5
Neutral and Not Sure	3	13.6
	22	100

Age

A total of 105 respondents (Event and Email) indicated their age. Of these, 101 answered the first question regarding level of support/non-support for the alternative plaza location.

	Number	Percentage
Under 19	0	0
20 to 29	5	4.8
30 to 49	48	45.7
50 to 65	30	28.6
66 to 79	21	20.0
80 or over	1	1.0
TOTAL	105	100

Support/non-Support - Under 50 Years(n=51)

	Number	Percent
Support and Strongly Support	21	41.2
Opposed and Strongly Opposed	19	37.3
Neutral and Not Sure	11	21.6
	51	100

Support/non-Support - Over 50 Years (n=50)

	Number	Percent
Support and Strongly Support	20	40.0
Opposed and Strongly Opposed	20	40.0
Neutral and Not Sure	10	20.0
	50	100

A total of 45 respondents did not indicate an age. Of these, 37 answered the first question on level of support/non-support for the plaza

Support/non-Support - No age specified (n=37)

	Number	Percent
Support and Strongly Support	5	13.5
Opposed and Strongly Opposed	31	83.8
Neutral and Not Sure	1	2.7
	37	100