

**Public Consultation Summary Report
Downtown Eastside Draft Local Area Plan
Emerging Directions Questionnaire**

February 2014

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1. Context

As Vancouver and the Downtown Eastside (DTES) continue to grow, a local area plan will help guide growth in a way that meets the needs of the community, Vancouver as a whole, and the region. The goal of the DTES Local Area Plan (LAP) is to create a vision and plan for the DTES that will focus on ways to improve the lives of DTES residents and community members, many of whom are low-income. Since the launch of the DTES LAP process in April 2012, the City has worked with the Local Area Planning Process (LAPP) committee and connected with residents, businesses, and other stakeholders. Based on a wide range of feedback and technical analysis, emerging directions were drafted under ten broad themes: neighbourhood roles; housing; health and well-being; local economy; land use, built form, and development; heritage; arts and culture; transportation; parks and open space; and public benefits.

2. Engagement and Consultation

Between July 18 and August 16, 2013 public consultation and engagement was held to present and discuss the emerging directions with the public, provide information and support the public in learning about the emerging directions and the plan, enable discussion, hear feedback, and share next steps. A variety of methods were used to help raise awareness and encourage participation, including direct emails, advertising online and local newspapers (including Chinese language media), mailed and hand-delivered postcards, posters throughout the neighbourhood, community centres, libraries, and local shops. Of particular note was the hand-delivery of postcards to the Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotels, which are home to some of the most vulnerable low-income residents in the DTES. It is challenging for some of these residents to receive conventional mail and flyers as many SRO buildings lack mailboxes. The postcards were hand-delivered by EMBERS, a social enterprise that employs low-income residents in the DTES.

The DTES LAP website at vancouver.ca/dtes includes a comprehensive overview of the emerging directions consultation process, the full set of information boards, a Chinese language overview, information on how to get involved, as well as an online questionnaire in English and Chinese. Two open houses, six smaller outreach sessions, and two Chinese language workshops were held. The emerging directions were also presented at three City advisory body meetings. Printed hard copies of the questionnaire were available in English and Chinese at each consultation event and at libraries and communities centres in the DTES, with the online questionnaire being available throughout the duration of the consultation period. Printed hard-copy questionnaires were provided in English, and Chinese when appropriate, to the Business Improvement Associations for distribution to their members.

3. Participation

Approximately 732 people participated in the public consultation events, and 318 feedback questionnaires were submitted. 114 printed hard copy questionnaires were submitted at in-person events, collected from community centres and libraries, and received by mail or directly. 204 questionnaires were submitted online. At the two main community events, participants were invited to 'dot' a map to show where they lived, worked, or owned businesses. Blank flip chart paper was available for participants to provide general comments on the consultation events. Children and youth also provided feedback on a map.

4. Questionnaire Summary

Questionnaire Format	Number of Questionnaires Received
Printed hard copy	114
Online	204
Total Questionnaires	318

5. Community Events

Event	Number of Participants
Vancouver Japanese Language School	232
Strathcona Community Centre	268
Ray-Cam Co-operative Centre	3
Woodwards Atrium	28
Chinatown Plaza Foyer	31
Carnegie Centre	52
Ray-Cam Co-operative Chinese-language workshop	56
Strathcona Community Centre Chinese-language workshop	62
Total Participants	732

6. Methodology

The consultation process was designed to gather public feedback on emerging directions for the DTES LAP. This report summarises feedback received through the questionnaire, noting:

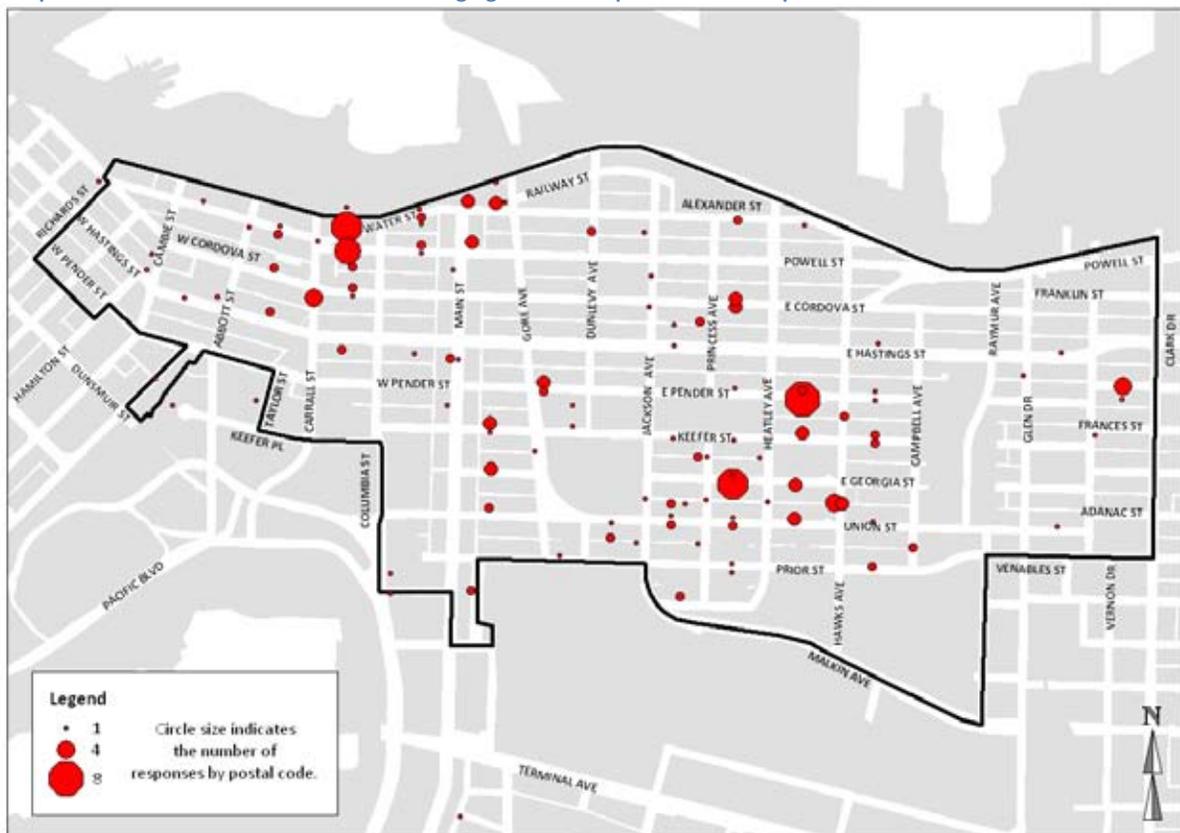
- Responses to closed-ended questions have been quantified, noting this consultation is not market research or statistically-based analysis. Although some results are presented in the form of percentages, there are no margins of error for this data as there is no probability sample. The sample is based on self-selection and is not representative.
- Responses to open-ended comments have been summarised into key themes. The summary does not attempt to quantify the number of comments received per topic. The information presented is reflective of what was shared through the consultation questionnaire and is not representative. A full record of open-ended response data can be found in the DTES LAP Emerging Directions Questionnaire Response Data document.
- Surveys were received online and hard copy collected at all in-person events, as well as provided to local businesses through Business Improvement Associations, and available at local community centres and libraries, creating the possibility for more than one submission person.
- Where “xxx” appears in the responses to open-ended survey questions, words have been redacted that are offensive or that compromise privacy regulations.

7. Questionnaire Respondents

Based on the home postal code or nearest intersection information supplied as part of the questionnaire, 204 of survey respondents live or live and work/volunteer/own a business or property in the DTES. 52 respondents work/volunteer/own a business or property in the DTES but live outside the neighbourhood. 25 respondents do not live, work, volunteer, or own a business or property in the DTES. 37 did not enter a valid postal code, nearest intersection information, or respond.

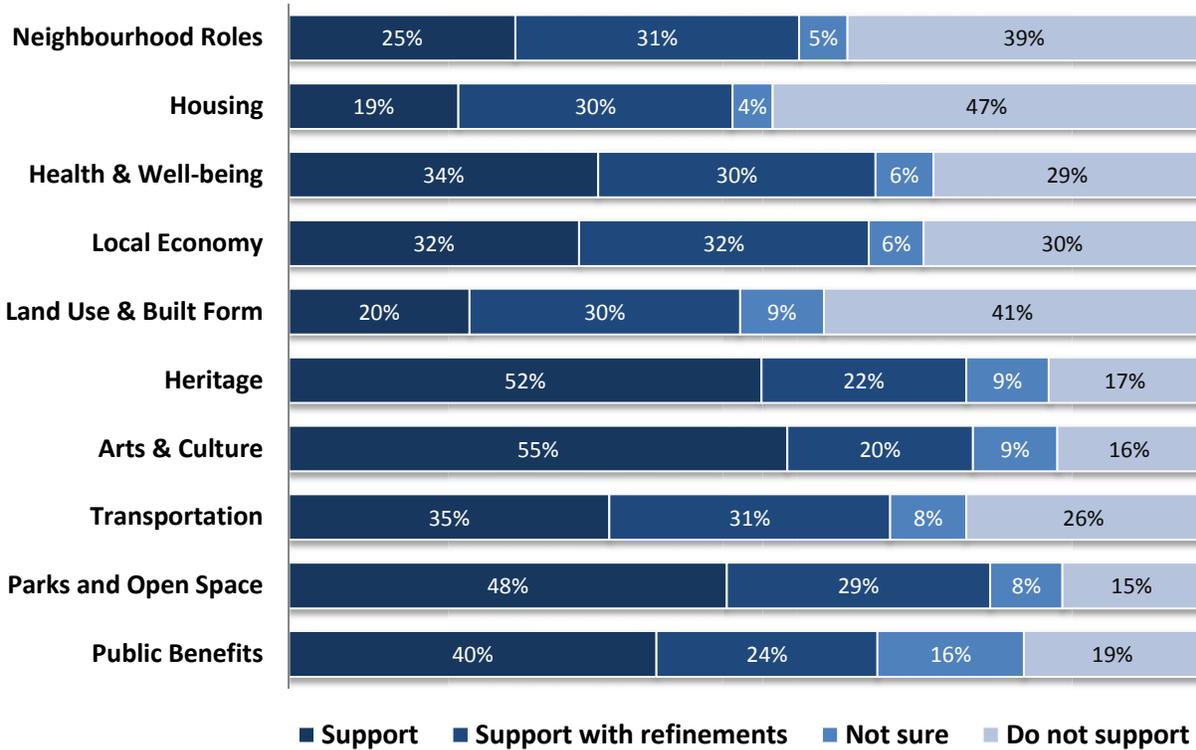
It appears that responses were generally distributed across the DTES, with a greater concentration of responses in the Gastown and Strathcona neighbourhoods.

Map 1: Location of Downtown Eastside Emerging Directions questionnaire respondents



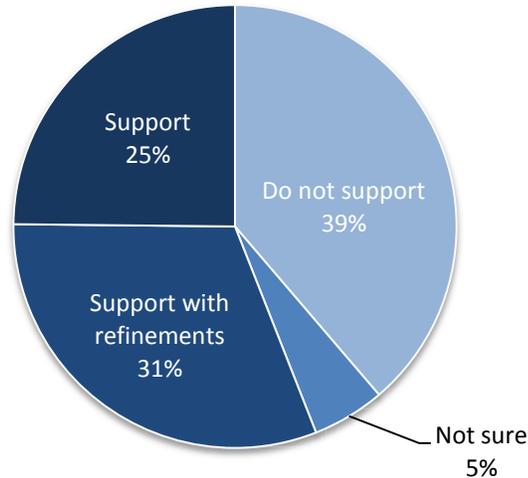
8. Summary of Responses

The following table provides a summary of the 318 responses to the emerging directions for the DTES LAP. A full record of the open-ended responses can be found in the DTES LAP Emerging Directions Questionnaire Response Data document.



Neighbourhood Roles

Generally, how do you feel about the emerging directions for Neighbourhood Roles and how they reflect the character and roles of the diverse neighbourhoods in the Downtown Eastside?

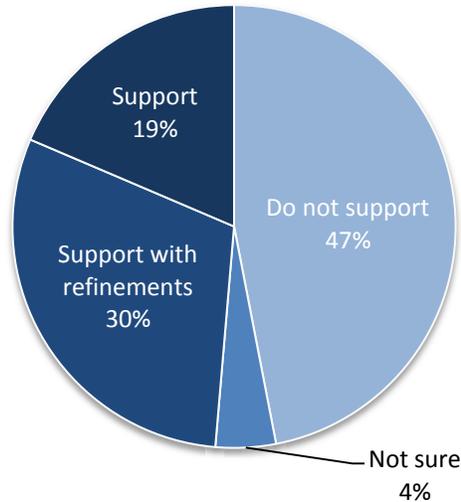


A diverse range of feedback was heard. The following is a sample of this feedback:

- “Need to emphasize / enhance linkages between / among the neighbourhoods.”
- “Definitely not enough attention paid to the role of light industrial businesses, which can provide jobs for local residents.”
- “Chinatown needs to stay Chinese and small-scale. Do not make this into a hip, modern commercial hub.”
- “we need more social housing. We need more measures to prevent gentrification”
- “Too much focus on social housing throughout. Social Housing needs to be spread throughout the city, otherwise lower-income singles and families will be ghettoized.”
- “The focus must not be entirely on the poor, addicted, mentally ill. It must include a diversity of needs for the remainder of society.”
- “The DEOD will continue to be derelict if a mix of market strata & ownership housing along side social housing is not permitted. While I agree that this area should continue to have a high percentage of low income and social housing, regulatory changes ensuring the absence of new residents who own their homes and who have incomes to support new business in this area will only serve to compound the existing problems in this area.”
- “It disregards business owners who have strived to make the environment and community a better place to live, and have made large investments to do so.”
- “Heritage must be protected.”

Housing

Generally, how do you feel about the emerging directions for Housing and how they reflect the future needs of the Downtown Eastside?

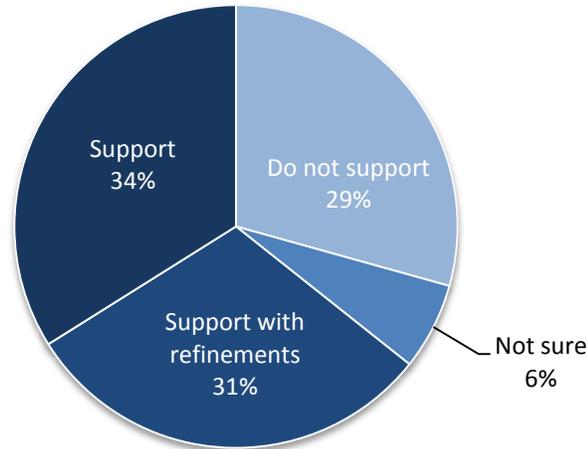


A diverse range of feedback was heard. The following is a sample of this feedback:

- “Victory Square, Gastown and Chinatown should be areas where more family oriented housing is considered.”
- “I support the concept of low income housing. I love the idea of mixing it all socio-economic platform, My concern is the height of the buildings for sure”
- “Solving problems related to homelessness will first require acknowledging the mental health issues that cause much of it. This simply addresses housing and not any of the issues related to why there currently is so much homelessness in the area such as drugs and mental health.”
- “reservations. Need to have federal and provincial support to make projects viable. Deep concern about the definition of social and affordable housing - many recent housing projects are unaffordable for many including recent co-op housing in South Shore False Creek. - Please consider coop housing as a viable model to preserve diversity of n'hood / income levels.”
- “The plan will make the area a ghetto. It is too focused on social housing. The focus should be on developing a mixed neighbourhood. Right now the area is already way out of balance with far too much social housing already. I do not think any more should be allowed in the area, but instead it should be built in other areas of the city.”
- “Overall it sounds good, but 800 social housing units in 10 years is woefully inadequate. This next 10 year period will make or break the city's vision of revitalization without displacement. A target of 4000 units of new social housing over a ten year period is more realistic in order to really preserve the low income character and considering the likely pace of market development in that same period.”
- “it would be nice to look at more flexibility in building types to give the place more spunk”

Health and Well-being

Generally, how do you feel about the emerging directions for Health & Well-being and how they reflect the future needs of the Downtown Eastside?

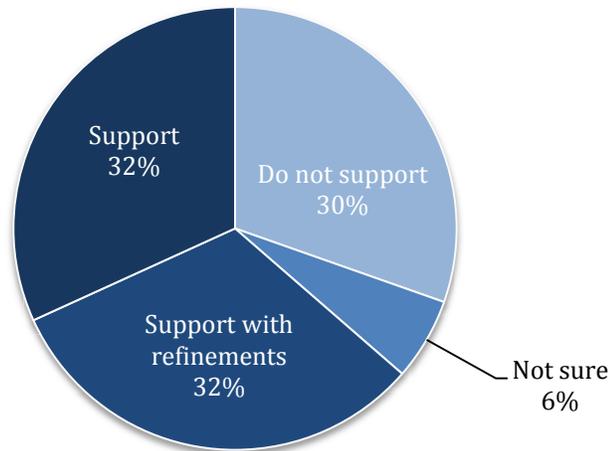


A diverse range of feedback was heard. The following is a sample of this feedback:

- “It appears that many of the low income people who live in DTES struggle with drug and/or mental issues. What we have been doing is clearly not working and so a focus on rehabilitation would be beneficial to all. Everyone needs to sense and actually be safe here. The corner of Hastings and Main is not safe for anyone.”
- “I think what is important to consider as density increased in the DTES, is that people have very limited communal spaces. The idea of serving more meals to people in SROs, for instance, is a great idea in regards to convenience and elimination large communal feeding programs. However, those communal meals currently serve as an important factor in community building. One of the most difficult things about living in poverty is the social isolation it creates. We need improved community spaces (parks, hangouts, establishment that welcome people of all income levels, libraries, etc.)”
- “Significant new mental health and addictions facilities are needed and there is no mention of them at all. Providing greater access to nutritional food is a great idea but there are no specifics as to how the City will do this. Simply providing a grant to a nonprofit is not good enough. What's the actionable plan?”
- “Childcare needs need to factor in high rate of development along Hastings and in Chinatown. Childcare for middle class almost impossible to secure locally.”
- “There needs to be better integration with the provincial health authority since the city cannot deliver health care. Unless there is coordinated planning with the full involvement of the provincial government in the outcomes, then health and well being does not have a lot of substance. The City needs to be more transparent about what mechanisms are being explored with the province to ensure positive outcomes over the next 10 years in this area.”
- “Of course good support needs to be provided in the DTES but these programs need to be city wide and not reinforce the notion of Vancouver concentrating its troubled people in one area.”

Local Economy

Generally, how do you feel about the emerging directions for Local Economy and how they reflect the future needs of the Downtown Eastside?

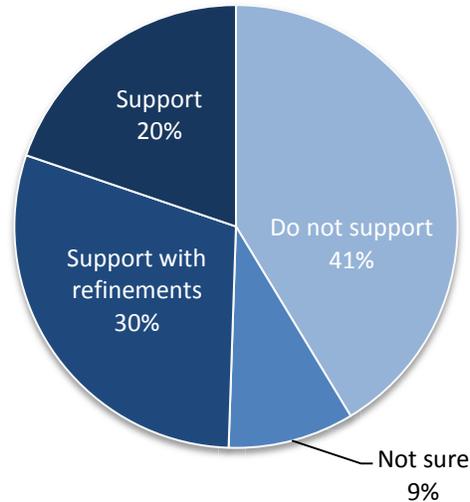


A diverse range of feedback was heard. The following is a sample of this feedback:

- “What is special about this area is that there are still places where artists can work, woodworkers and seamstresses can share spaces, bands can perform, and families can live amongst this. To encourage this, I'd like to see more emphasis on cooperative business spaces for up and coming small businesses. I'd like to see more protected artist studios, shared work spaces, cooperative artisan/DIY areas, and a community commercial kitchen. “
- “All businesses should be welcome to develop in the DTES. But if all the social housing and low income residents are in one place, it is going to be difficult to support the businesses. Thus, we need to encourage market value growth with a social component, in order to bring up the economic viability of the neighborhood. It works best to integrate low income with full tax paying businesses and residents in order to have a solid tax base and infrastructure to support the community.”
- “Do not allow large businesses to push local businesses out. These make the neighbourhood what it is. They care because they live here”
- “Needs more ways to ensure that new business does not result in the gentrification that continues to raise rents and land prices, making it difficult, if not impossible, for local businesses to sustain themselves and for businesses that accommodate the low-income community to remain.”
- “Adding additional businesses serving low-income people in the DTES will only spread the same limited income over more businesses making each of those businesses less sustainable. Instead, spread out and integrate the different income levels to make one community rather than a low-income and a "market"-income community, support businesses that serve some of all of that single community and supervise and mold market forces in a sustainable way.”
- “There needs to be a focus on reviving and revitalizing East Hastings as our commercial high street. I like the idea of reviving Japantown commercial and retail core but East Hastings has huge potential to be revived.”

Land use, Built form, and Development

Generally, how do you feel about the emerging directions for Land use, Built form, and Development and how they reflect the future needs of the Downtown Eastside?

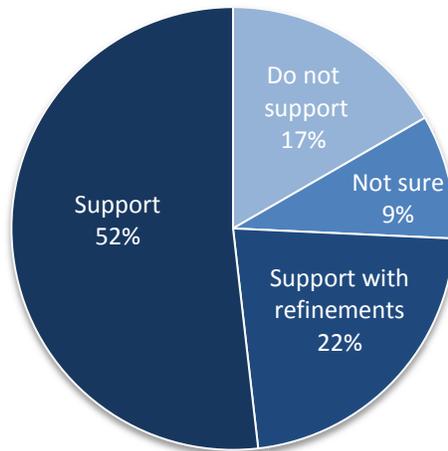


A diverse range of feedback was heard. The following is a sample of this feedback:

- “As long as height of buildings is kept 10 storeys or less. Don’t want large units of low income housing together. Should be mixed income, families, seniors, singles, etc.”
- “I always recommend building higher as it generally provides more apartments and a larger split of apartments that can be built for SROs and family supportive units, also be creative with amenities offered, like in parts of Asia, where they have an ice rink on a 20th floor of a building (again just an example) “
- “I can see developers saying they will add 5 stories to accommodate social housing - this will happen and the area then becomes about high-rises.”
- “Huge condos do not foster community, it causes more silos. We need to think of other ways to promote density without high rises everywhere. Also there are already way too many empty condos in Vancouver as nobody can afford to live there!”
- “PRESERVE "INDUSTRIAL USE" in the DEOD; many industries can coexist with housing; the many industries already in the DEOD and those which may move there in the future will provide jobs we can walk to; DON'T TURN ALL OF THE DEOD INTO HOUSING or jobs will be lost”
- “I don't support the increased building heights. It ruins the historic quality of Gastown and the Hastings corridor.”
- “There should be a transition zone in Strathcona and Kiwassa allowing for heights up to 70 feet.”
- “The Hastings and Main height limits should be lowered to 90 feet. The two 150 foot sites should be scaled back to 120 feet.”
- “Do not support directions within the DEOD which provides for 100% social housing. What happened to mixed use communities one of the pillars to successful sustainable urban development? No more than Point Grey should be 100% market housing that the DEOD should be 100% social housing.”

Heritage

Generally, how do you feel about the emerging directions for Heritage and how they reflect the future needs of the Downtown Eastside?

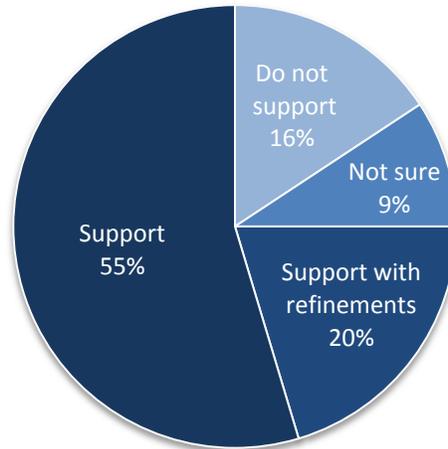


A diverse range of feedback was heard. The following is a sample of this feedback:

- “Balancing heritage conservation with social and affordable housing priorities will be difficult, especially in that there are few opportunities to generate capital out of redevelopment to pay for heritage conservation. I’d suggest exploring some other funding mechanisms as well.”
- “Heritage is about “the people” and there is not enough protection of existing housing to merit acceptance of the city’s heritage proposal. The DTES, with this less than ambitious plan to protect low-income housing, could end up protecting the facades of buildings, and memorialize people with plaques and cultural art -- but it will become one dimensional if “the people” who represent those cultures, including working class, are not present physically in tenure and actively participating in creating cultural meaning through daily life.”
- “Protecting and celebrating heritage must be one of the most important things for this part of the city to focus on. It is what sets these neighborhoods apart and makes them very special. We must be extremely careful that new developments are not destroying important assets as well as changing the feel and life of the neighborhood”
- “I support revitalization grants for Chinese Benevolent societies to maintain and improve the heritage aspect of Chinatown.”
- “Would like to see Japantown keep its character, but also recognize the need to renovate (+ use!) these buildings”
- “not enough mention of indigenous heritage”
- “I am in favour of keeping heritage including places like Chinatown. I think Heritage protection sometimes gets traded for density. Buildings are preserved, but the historic character of Chinatown as a unique and historic and low income is gutted. My street is Georgia street has become a bizarre mixture of very rowdy drinkers, snotty rich people, who hold the poor in contempt. Its Gastown = Yaletown. Its sure is xxxx has nothing to do with historic and unique character of community.”

Arts and Culture

Generally, how do you feel about the emerging directions for Arts & Culture and how they reflect the future needs of the Downtown Eastside?

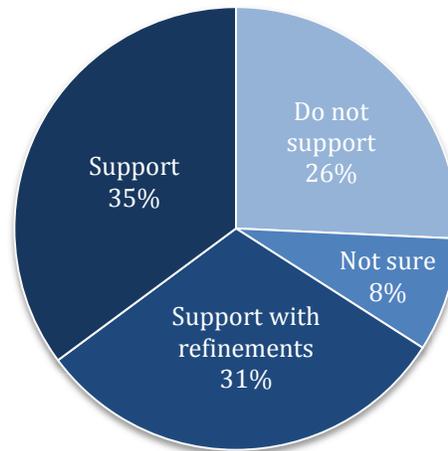


A diverse range of feedback was heard. The following is a sample of this feedback:

- “ABSOLUTELY support. Feel more emphasis should be put on this piece! Spaces for artists - live/work and simply work - to create art, and the support of places like small cinemas, galleries, and bookstores to showcase art are a perfect fit for this area.”
- “this is one of the things I love about this area but I do not think taxes should be used to subsidize low income artists”
- “Arts groups are often subject to displacement, and several in the DTES already have been. The Arts & Culture emerging directions could also clearly relate to the Heritage and Land Use and Built Form directions, particularly in the proposed Community Based Development Area. A clear strategy to retain and create affordable arts space needs to be communicated. Same should go for small businesses in need of affordable space.”
- “These are nice goals but, again, insofar as public money is required in this we need to be realistic about what is available. Culture funding has suffered in the past few years. Studios and artist’s spaces are natural uses in areas on their way to renewal, but you cannot freeze a neighbourhood in those uses. They move about as part of the normal renewal cycle and that is as it should be.”
- “Needs to include First Nation heritage and direct involvement of the Coast Salish people”
- “Support for the arts in these neighbourhoods must be associated with affordable living and working spaces to create a workforce that is not commuting into the city; when they are the participants in the venues you are creating.”
- “There are some great examples out of Toronto (Brewery District) and other places around supporting lower cost rents/ spaces for arts. I worry, because I live in a building full of artists who can afford \$600,000 lofts. I don't just want industrial photographers in my neighbourhood, I want experimental artists and musicians and venues for them to use.”
- “The process neglects everyone except the low income residents.”

Transportation

Generally, how do you feel about the emerging directions for Transportation and how they reflect the future needs of the Downtown Eastside?

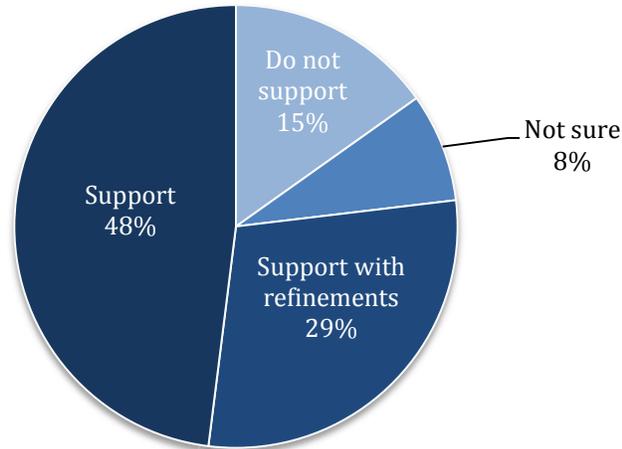


A diverse range of feedback was heard. The following is a sample of this feedback:

- “Need traffic calming/pedestrian improvements on key main streets. The 30 km/h speed limit on Hastings does not work. Need physical changes to the street to improve safety.”
- “Make Gastown pedestrian and cycle only please, and I love the idea of more direct access to the sea from here.”
- “I think the pending removal of the viaducts and the new Powell overpass would have significant impact on traffic and transportation patterns. The transportation plans should perhaps be revisited after council's decision on viaducts (that is, if their removal is approved).”
- “Improve sidewalks to help the large number of disabled in the area. More trees on our roads - tree-lined streets should not be exclusive to 'nice' neighbourhoods.”
- “This is a walking area. Please make this a priority.”
- “Restore the historic streetlights from Strathcona that were removed by the city for wealthier neighborhoods. Ensure that Bike path upgrades which are a good idea for safety, also take into account the needs of the residents and businesses of Strathcona who are starting to feel like the bike path has priority over all else. Encourage ways for bike traffic and bike paths to be better integrated into the neighborhood and encourage ways for the biking community and residents to respect each other.”
- “Pedestrian safety along the Adanac/Union bikeroute is being put further at risk with the ramping up of the bikepath. It may be a bikepath through our neighbourhood, but first and foremost, it is a neighbourhood street. The needs of residents and businesses in the neighbourhood need to be given as much or more weight than those of cyclists and motorists rushing through the neighbourhood. In no way should Union east of Gore be closed to incoming car and truck traffic.”
- “1) Should close off more streets to cars. 2) Provide free public transit to all within the DTES. See for example, Portland Oregon.”

Parks and Open Space

Generally, how do you feel about the emerging directions for Parks & Open Space and how they reflect the future needs of the Downtown Eastside?

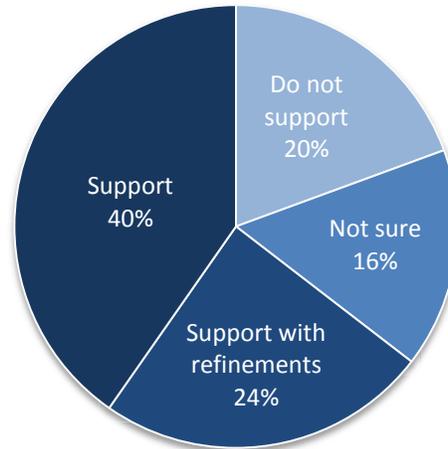


A diverse range of feedback was heard. The following is a sample of this feedback:

- “I believe park spaces are important to all residents, not just low income residents. Most people in the Downtown Eastside live in areas with little or no outside space themselves. Parks, squares that can be used by ALL neighbours would be excellent.”
- “Perhaps a few smaller pocket parks in areas not near Oppenheimer, small spaces in railtown or Japantown or anywhere to add more green space.”
- “Mandate developers to include greenspaces”
- “Access to C.R.A.B. Park from the Carall Street Bikeway would improve safety and accessibility.”
- “Prior to renewing Blood Alley, Trounce Alley, and Maple Tree Square (all pretty expensive projects) think about closing off Jackson Street between Cordova and Alexander and making it into a usable plaza. Oppenheimer Park is becoming crowded.”
- “Please keep the existing ratio of population to parks: adding more parks to accommodate the growing numbers in the neighbourhood. Protect view corridors. And add more greenways connecting existing parks. I'd like to see more interesting, challenging play structures for both children and adults to use! We love the water feature at MacLean but it would be wonderful to add some more play elements like the beautiful new park at Trout Lake or the one on Commercial Drive. These are interesting, natural, and inspiring playgrounds. What about some play structures for adults even? A place to do pullups, an outdoor exercise bike (they have one in the heart of Chilliwack as well as an outdoor exercise bike).”
- “Not just improving parks but also greenery along the streets themselves, those beautiful tree lined streets in the West End make the area so peaceful looking, this area could do with many more trees and patches of grass.”
- “Did not see any new park space for the 10,000 new residents”

Public Benefits

Generally, how do you feel about the emerging directions for Public Benefits and how they reflect the future needs of the Downtown Eastside?



A diverse range of feedback was heard. The following is a sample of this feedback:

- “If CACs and DCLs are used to pay for social housing, and increased low income population housed here will increase need for social services and amenities - who pays for that...?”
- “We need at least one more community centre in this area of the quality seen in other areas of the city. The children and families are completely underserved, as are everyone else.”
- “I think there should be a bigger push for child services. They will be the ones who can have the largest benefit to the area in the future. The higher the chance of them getting out of poverty, the higher chance for a better economy.”
- “Public benefits for market housing residents, of which you will still see a significant number of new units, needs thinking along the lines of your boards. Public space, community centres, childcare all real issues not well handled today. Public benefits for homeless should really be focused on the things they want like park space, treatment centres, job training, shelter, etc.”
- “CACs and DCL must not be waived. they should be at MAX amount. developers want the land. new community centre is needed with density increases with a proper swimming pool”
- “You've got to be more aggressive with extracting benefits from developers”
- “I fundamentally oppose the idea of extracting public benefits from developers. Developers should be taxed heavily and 3 levels of governments should fund all amenities. Public benefits through market development fuel unsustainable growth”
- “This is complex topic, so it is hard to give it a broad approval of support. Stepping back and looking at the big picture I think it is important that we try ensure the DTES is integrated with the city as a whole. Right now it is considered by many as a bit of a social pariah. So when you talk about Public Benefits I think one of those should be raising the DTES up to equal footing with other neighbourhoods in the city. We have so much to offer, but we need a plan in place that allows us to develop it.”