

ALBERTA STREET BLUE GREEN SYSTEM AND COLUMBIA PARK RENEWAL

PHASE 2 ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

JULY 2022

INTRODUCTION

What's Happening

The Cambie Corridor is growing and so are the demands on its drainage and sewer systems, parks, and public spaces. To provide critical infrastructure for the neighbourhood, the Alberta Street Blue Green System & Columbia Park Renewal Project will explore innovative ways to address stormwater capacity, enable growth, and respond to climate change in our sewer and drainage systems.

Two rounds of engagement have taken place since the project began in Fall 2021. In Phase 1, we asked how people currently use Alberta Street and Columbia Park and what should be prioritized in the future. [What we heard in Phase 1](#) helped inform the concept design options.

We presented options in Phase 2 of engagement and asked for input on what street and park concept design options best reflected the needs of this growing community.



Project Boundary

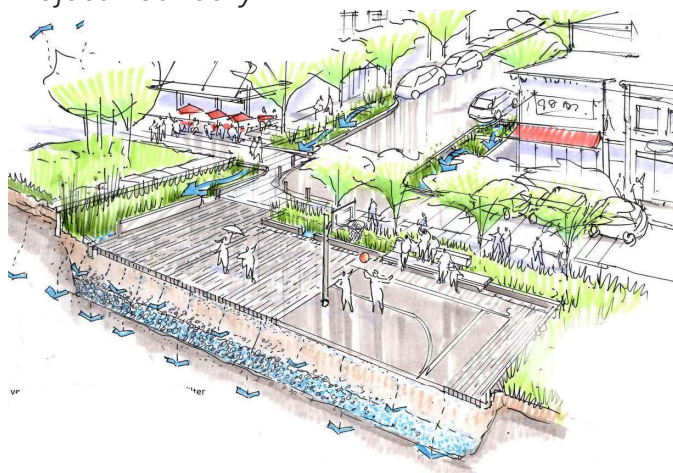
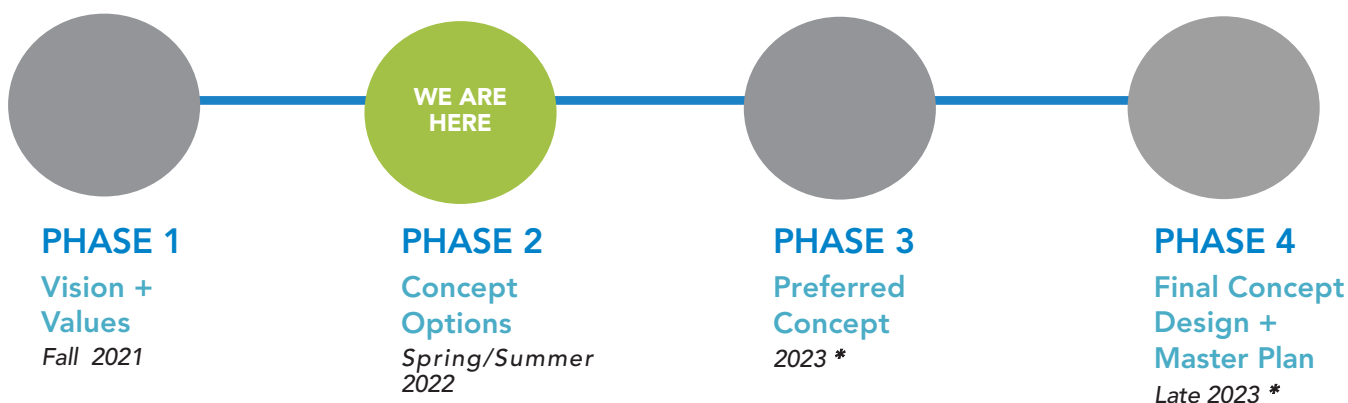


Illustration of a Blue Green System

[Visit the FAQ on our website to learn more about blue green systems.](#)

Project Engagement Timeline



* Estimated 2023, timing subject to potential grant funding

PHASE 2 ENGAGEMENT PARTICIPATION

Online Survey

The goals of the survey were to:

- Understand the experiences of the park and street as a blue green corridor
- Understand the priorities for the Alberta Street right of way options for parking, walking, cycling, socializing, trees and planting areas, and rainwater management
- Understand the the level of support for natural areas in Columbia Park
- Understand the priorities for park improvements and amenities



152

Completed surveys
between **May 18**
and **June 8, 2022**.



Pop-up event at Langara / 49th Avenue Skytrain Station.

Outreach

Outreach was done through the project's Shape your City webpage, postcards mailed to neighbourhood residents, on-site signage, pop-up events, emails, and social media.

There were a total of **4,622** people reached through social media during Phase 2 of engagement between May and June of 2022.

Public pop-up events

The pop-up events provided an opportunity for the public to meet the project team, learn about the project, and to comment on the options for the Alberta Street Blue Green System and Columbia Park Renewal.

The in-person pop-up events took place on:

- **Thursday May 26, 2022** at Langara / 49th Avenue Skytrain Station, and
- **Saturday May 28, 2022** at Columbia Park



39

Comments recorded
at the pop-ups
events.

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

For **Columbia Park**, survey respondents are split between Concept A and B. Respondents like the spaces for **organized sports** in **Concept A** (35%) and like the **good balance of spaces** in **Concept B** (34%).



There is strong support to include the following features in the **Columbia Park** park renewal:



Seating and viewing features
(85%)



Pollinator meadows
(76%)



Constructed wetlands
(50%)



Trails in the natural areas
(76%)



Bioswales/ green rainwater infrastructure
(73%)



Large open green space
(60%)

Ranked priorities for future amenities in

Columbia Park:

#1



Sports Fields

#2



Sports Courts

#3



Fitness Equipment

#4



Fenced Dog Park

For **Alberta Street**, respondents strongly prefer **Concept 3: One-Way with Carless Blocks** (47%) and like the focus on **natural areas and canopy cover** with **less cars and traffic**.



In all three options there were **concerns about the impact on traffic circulation** in the neighbourhood.



For the **Alberta Street** priorities and preferences, respondents are interested in:

- **Trees and other planting areas**
- **Separated path for cycling**
- **Sidewalks and social spaces with seating**



There is mixed feedback on the inclusion of **car-free blocks**. Some respondents were strongly in favour and others suggested that car-free blocks would be difficult to navigate and limit access for residents.

COMPARISON BETWEEN 3 PARK OPTIONS

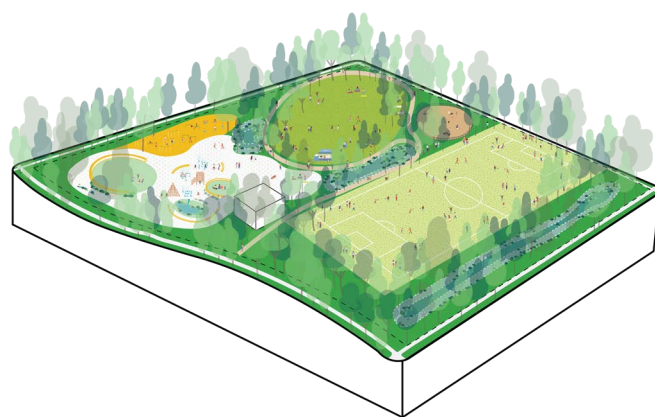
Survey respondents were presented with three park concepts and asked to select their preferred concept.* The final preferred concept for Alberta Street is likely to be a combination of these concepts. The feedback on each concept is explored further on pages 8-12.

Concept A:

35% prefer Concept A

Description:

Predominantly active recreational experience with a sports field, outdoor fitness equipment, different sport courts, and open green space with natural areas for rainwater management and habitat creation throughout the park.

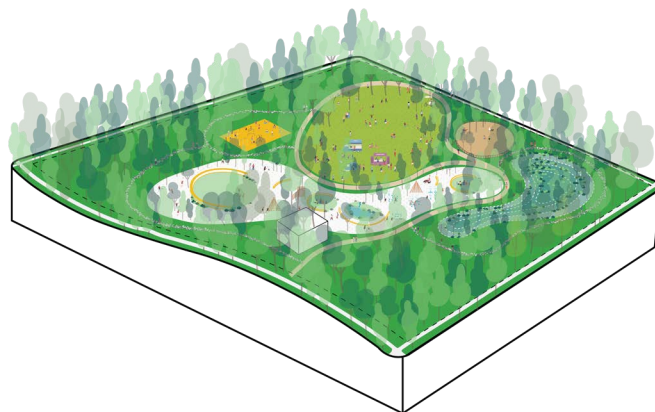


Concept B:

34% prefer Concept B

Description:

Flexible recreational experience with outdoor fitness equipment, courts for different sports, and open green space balanced with natural areas distributed on over half of the site for rainwater management and habitat creation.

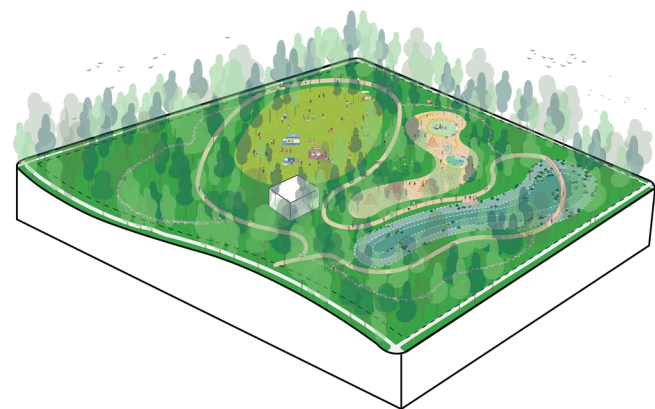


Concept C:

26% prefer Concept C

Description:

Predominantly nature experience with natural areas and trail areas on most of the site. The park features are integrated into a naturalized setting that includes wetland, urban forest, and significant habitat creation.



*5% of survey respondents did not choose a preferred concept. Pop-up attendees were similarly split between Concept A or Concept B, with the sports field being the primary reason for people choosing Concept A. The existing sports fields serve teams across the City and no decision has been made on the future of the sports fields in Columbia Park. Findings from the Park Board Sports Field Strategy, currently in progress, will inform the preferred concept design in Columbia Park.

COMPARISON BETWEEN 3 STREET OPTIONS

Survey respondents were presented with three street concepts and asked to select their preferred concept.* The final preferred concept for Alberta Street is likely to be a combination of these concepts. The feedback on each concept is explored further on pages 13-16 of this report.

Concept 1: Two-Way Traffic

29% prefer Concept 1

Description:

- The most space dedicated to motor vehicle driving lanes and staging/short-term parking areas.
- Some spaces for trees and planting areas, as well as rainwater management.
- Some spaces for social, seating and sidewalk.
- In this concept, vehicle volumes will likely be too high for this route to meet our All Ages and Abilities cycling guidelines and may not be comfortable for everyone.

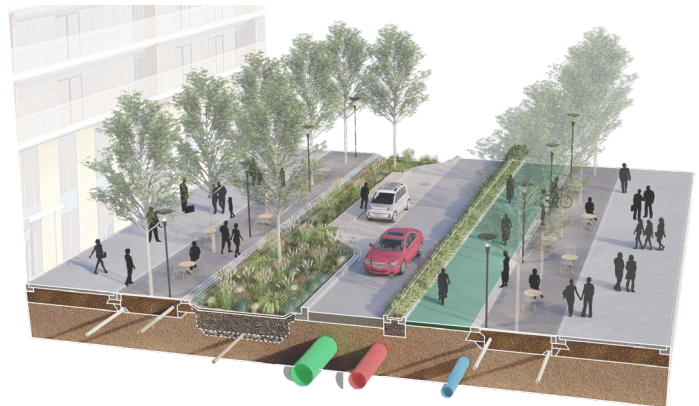


Concept 2: One-Way Traffic

18% prefer Concept 2

Description:

- More space dedicated to rainwater management
- One-way motor vehicle travel lane. One-way staging/short-term parking areas.
- A separated bike path
- More spaces for planting and trees. Better ecosystem health and climate resiliency.
- More spaces for social and seating.

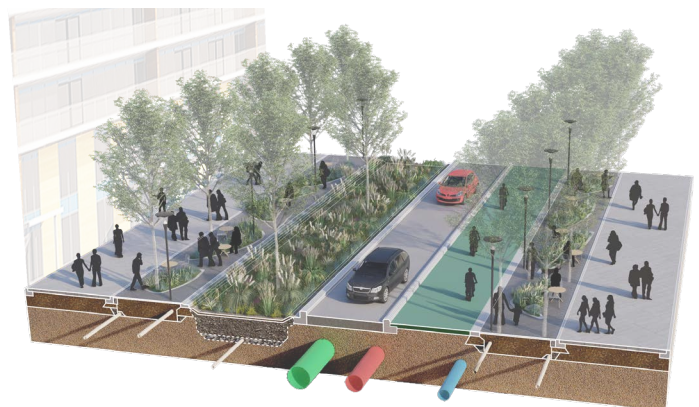


Concept 3: One-Way with Carless Blocks

47% prefer Concept 3

Description:

- The most space dedicated to rainwater management and planting areas.
- Has the least space for motor vehicle circulation and access and staging/short-term parking areas.
- There are blocks where vehicle access would be for emergency access only.
- A separate bike path
- The most spaces for planting and trees. Best ecosystem health and climate resiliency.



Note: 6% of survey respondents did not choose a preferred street concept. Pop-up attendees had similar responses with Concept 3 receiving the most support.

NEXT STEPS

Next Steps

A preferred design concept for Alberta Street, West 43rd Avenue and Columbia Park will be developed based on Phase 2 engagement outcomes, stakeholder feedback and further technical analysis. The preferred design concept for Columbia Park will also consider findings from the Park Board Sports Field Strategy (to be completed in 2023). There will be an opportunity for stakeholders and the public to provide feedback on the preferred concept in 2023 *.

How to Get Involved:

Look out for a survey!



In **Phase 3** we will be asking for feedback on the **preferred concept**.

Keep up to date!



Sign up for project updates at shapeyourcity.ca/alberta-columbia

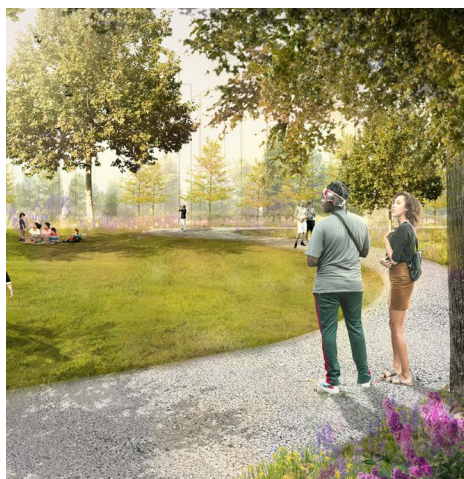
Ask a question!



For more information and to ask a question visit shapeyourcity.ca/alberta-columbia



Concept A - Illustrative View of Playground Experience



Concept B - Illustrative View of Flexible Open Space Experience



Concept C - Illustrative View of Rainwater Garden & Path Experience

* Estimated 2023, timing subject to potential grant funding



ADDITIONAL DETAILS

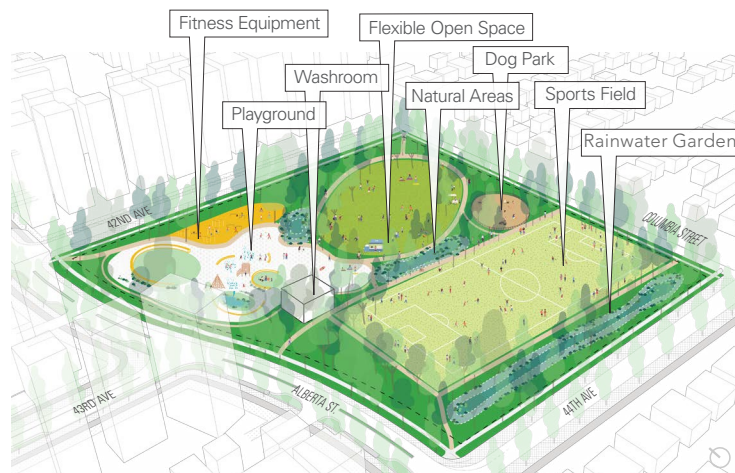
COLUMBIA PARK

The following pages 8-12 provide additional feedback about the three concepts for Columbia Park.

Concept A:

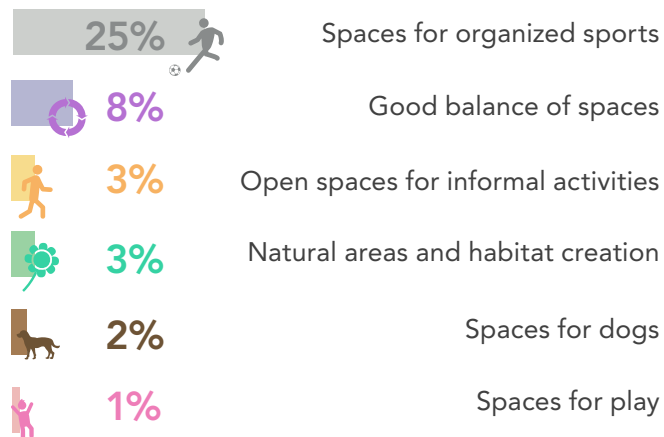
This option prioritizes a mix of recreational facilities on approximately 70% of the site which could include sports fields, green open space for pick-up games or informal play, fitness equipment, and a small, fenced, off-leash dog park.

Approximately 30% of the site provides natural areas for rainwater management and habitat creation.



35% of total survey respondents indicated that Concept A best describes the experiences that they would like to have in Columbia Park.

Those who chose Concept A liked the following design features*:



"Really like the **outdoor fitness equipment** to promote activity and the sports field while still having the natural aspects. **Good blend.**"

"Having a **sports field** is important to me. I use the sports field to play games which would be more difficult on just **flexible green space.**"

"Concept A has something for **everyone.**"

"...In the near future, many more thousands of people will be living in close proximity to Columbia Park. This park will need to do a lot of 'heavy lifting' for recreation for the neighbourhood... and should allow for **a variety of passive and active recreation uses.** I love trees and natural areas, but I think this park is going to be under a lot of pressure to **meet all the needs of the future residents** for playground, sports activities, etc. and should be as versatile as possible."

*Percentage responses represent the number of open ended comments for each topic.

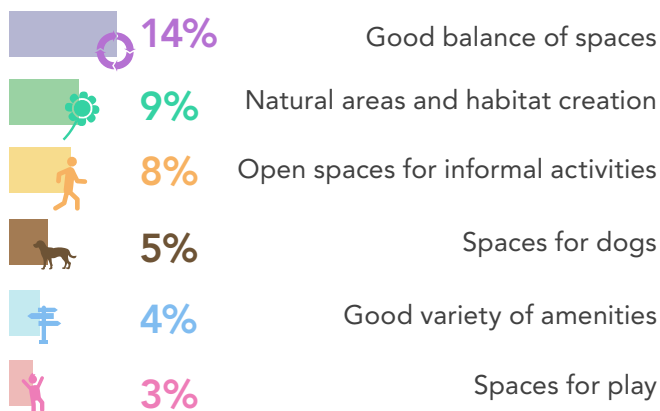
COLUMBIA PARK

Concept B:

This option concentrates recreational features on approximately 40% of the site leaving the remainder as natural areas for rainwater management and habitat creation. Recreational features could include fitness equipment, sports court, green open space for pick-up games or informal play, and nature play.

34% of total survey respondents indicated that Concept B best describes the experiences that they would like to have in Columbia Park.

Those who chose Concept B liked the following design features*:



"**Sport fields** take up too much space. We like the area for **playgrounds** and **kite flying**."

"Good **balance** between **active recreational** and **open green space** "

"It contains a **dog park** and as a renter without yard access nor a car, an **off leash park** for my dog to play in walking distance would be nice with benches to relax and watch her play."

"Allows for the greatest amount of **flexibility** and caters to a larger cross-section of the **future residents**."

"Plenty of **natural space**, but also includes **amenities** - likely to attract more people to the park in general."

*Percentage responses represent the number of open ended comments for each topic.

COLUMBIA PARK

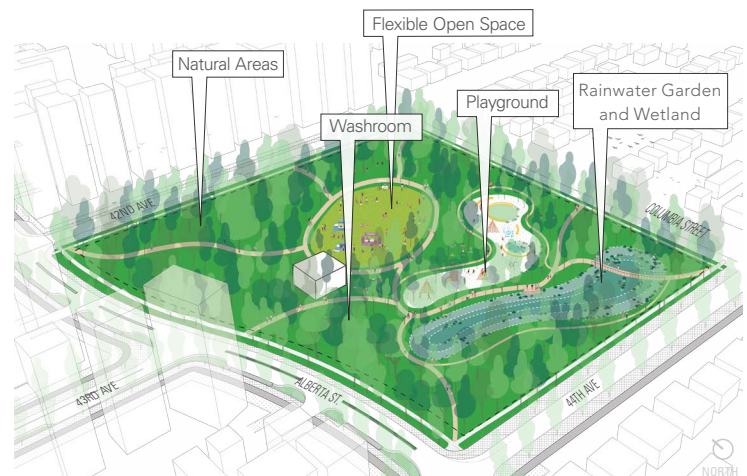
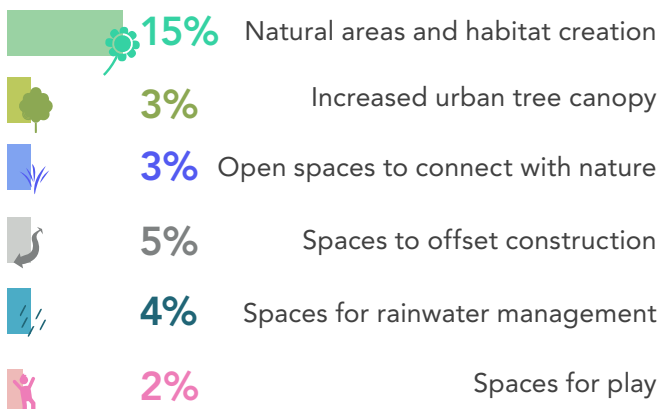
Concept C:

In this option, approximately 80% of the site is dedicated to natural areas creating an inviting nature experience.

The park features are integrated into a naturalized setting that includes wetland, urban forest, and signification habitat creation.

26% of total survey respondents indicated that Concept C best describes the experiences that they would like to have in Columbia Park.

Those who chose Concept C liked the following design features*:



"Lots of **children in area**...Would make a wonderful place for **nature, teaching, play and recreation for all.**"

"We have so few **natural areas in the city**. They are essential for **wildlife**, great for **mental health** and very enjoyable **places to spend some quiet time.**"

"I feel the space is **too small for sports activities** and it would be nice to have a **more natural park like setting.**"

"I like that it uses 80% of the space for **nature and rainwater management**. The others are not as good for the **environment.**"

"We live in a rapidly urbanizing city and nature will help **ground and connect** everyone to a **quiet and healthy** place to walk, run and have fun outside with the family. "

*Percentage responses represent the number of open ended comments for each topic.

OPTIONS FOR FOR COLUMBIA PARK

The following pages are a summary of the online survey results. The final preferred concept for Columbia Park is likely to be a combination of these concepts.

Park Amenities

Ranked priorities for future amenities in Columbia Park:

#1



Sports Fields

#2



Sports Courts

#3



Fitness Equipment

#4



Fenced Dog Park

Trail Surfaces

There is **not yet consensus** on **trail surfaces** types within the park as 38% of respondents prefer hard trail surfaces like pavement, 36% prefer natural surfaces like mulch and 26% like natural hard surfaces like gravel.

Public Art

There is **not yet consensus** on the inclusion of **public art** within the park. 37% of respondents are not supportive, 32% are supportive, and 31% are neutral of including public art in Columbia Park.

Play Spaces

When asked about what they wanted to see for play spaces, those who responded to the question preferred:



Natural Play
43%

Urban Play
31%

Informal Play
26%

Open Spaces

When asked about what they wanted to see for open space design, those who responded to the question preferred:



Large open
green space
60%

Mix of green areas
and hard surface
35%

Larger hard surface
areas 5%

OPTIONS FOR FOR COLUMBIA PARK

Natural Areas

When asked about what they wanted to see for natural areas, those who answered the questions were supportive of the following features*:



Pollinator
Meadows
76%



Bioswales/
Raingardens
76%

There was lower support for Constructed Wetlands (50%).

Natural Area Amenities

When asked about their preferences for natural area features, those who answered the question were supportive of the following features*:



Seating
and Viewing
Features
85%



Trails
70%

There was lower support for Interpretive Signage (37%).

Example Comments About Columbia Park

"Keep **as natural as possible**. Too much hard scaping developing in this neighbourhood. Need **places to breathe**."

"I think it is important that the park offers a **versatile balance of uses: nature, gathering, active recreation, informal activities**, pets, food trucks, expansive views, ample places to catch some sun and exercise, meet friends, with **quiet places** to read and **loud places** for gatherings and birthday parties. "

"Columbia Park is not very big, therefore don't try to **cram too much into the limited space**. It should mainly support some recreational/sports activities, playground and green space for relaxation and socializing."

"With **so few fields** in the Vancouver region it is **essential that fields be included** in this park, anything not including fields would be detrimental to the city."

*Respondents were asked about their support for each natural feature and natural area amenity separately.

ALBERTA STREET

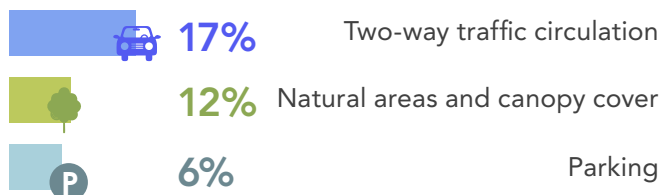
The following pages 13-16 provide additional feedback about the three concepts for Alberta Street.

Concept 1: Two-way Vehicular Traffic

This option has the most space dedicated to motor vehicle space, followed by rainwater management. Full implementation of Concept 1 does not provide safe and comfortable cycling facilities for people of all ages and abilities.

29% of survey respondents prefer Concept 1.

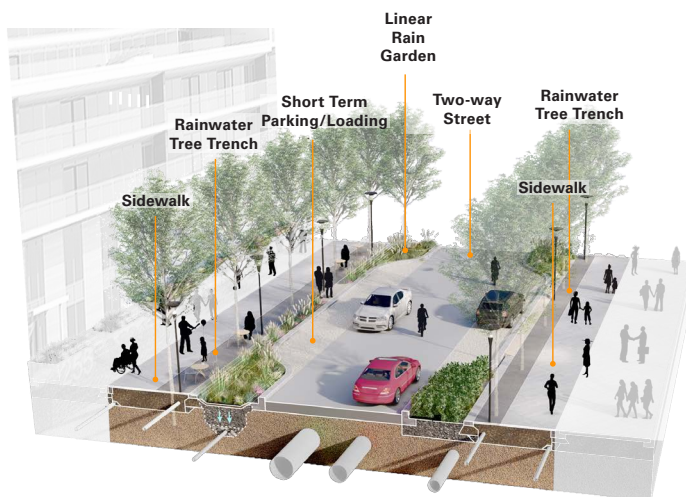
Those who chose Concept 1 liked the following design features*:



"Having **lots of room to drive** would allow the road to be **less crowded**."

"Even with the **two-lane road** there are still spaces for **rainwater gardens** and **plants...**"

"The most space dedicated to motor vehicle **driving lanes** and **staging/short-term parking areas**."



Top concerns about Concept 1*:

Concerns about congestion and increased traffic
18%

Safety concerns
10%

Car-centric design concerns
14%

"Too much vehicle traffic."

"We have an opportunity to build a **transportation network** that does **not cater to cars** and we should take advantage of it."

"Cars allowed will make it **more dangerous** for an area meant to have more foot traffic."

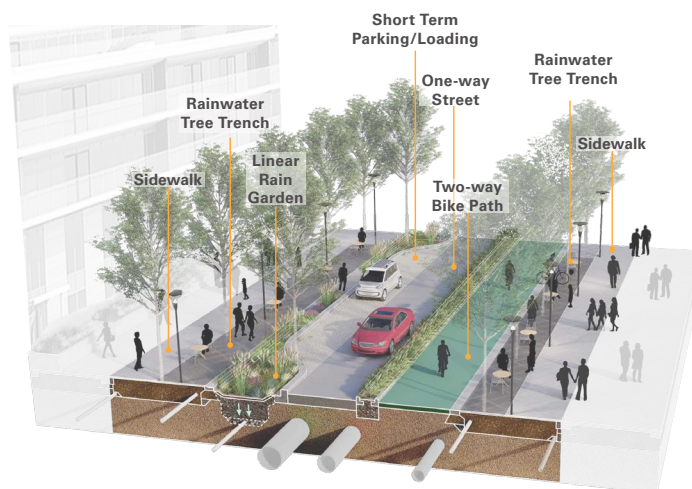
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ALBERTA STREET

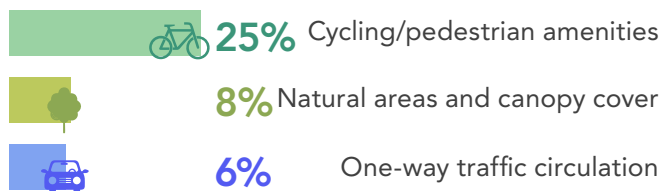
Concept 2: One-way Vehicular Traffic

This option has the most space dedicated to rainwater management, followed by motor vehicle space. This option includes a separated bike path and staging/parking area.

18% of survey respondents prefer Concept 2.



Those who chose Concept 2 liked the following design features*:



"There is **more space for social and ecological activities**. A **good mix** between vehicles, walkers, cyclists, and environmental preferences."

"A **separated bike path, rainwater management** and more spaces for **trees**."

"Simpler, less traffic, **one way!**"

Top concerns about Concept 2*:

One-way traffic concerns
22%

Bike path concerns
8%

Car-centric design concerns
6%

Parking concerns
6%

"**One-way** motor vehicle traffic will **not be enough to handle the increased number of cars** on the road."

"**Bike path is unnecessary** since Alberta street is already a small street with little traffic."

"**Still too car friendly.**"

*Percentage responses represent the number of open ended comments for each topic.

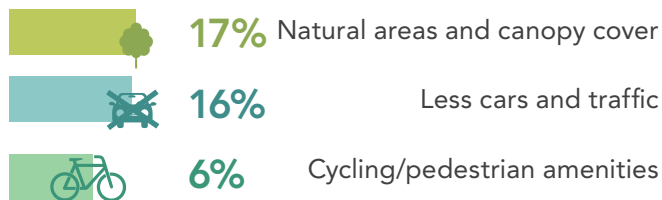
ALBERTA STREET

Concept 3: One-way Vehicular Traffic with Carless Blocks

This option has the most space dedicated to rainwater management, and has the least space dedicated to motor vehicles of the three options. This option includes a dedicated bike path and space for bioretention.

47% of survey respondents prefer Concept 3.

Those who chose Concept 3 liked the following design features*:



"Much less prioritisation of motor vehicular traffic, **separate bike path** and **space for rainwater management, trees and planting areas.**"

"I love that this concept **centers on people**, not cars and allows ample space for **meeting**, improves **walkability**, and creates another needed **cycling corridor**. Love this concept. "

"Keeps the area around the park **quieter** which is **safer for pedestrians and cyclists** in the area. "



Top concerns about Concept 3*:

Traffic circulation
concerns
22%

Parking
concerns
9%

Concerns about
resident access
6%

"There may be **traffic problems** due to the little space devoted to traffic space."

"No short term parking area, potential for **congestion.**"

"One way traffic **reduces flexibility for resident access**"

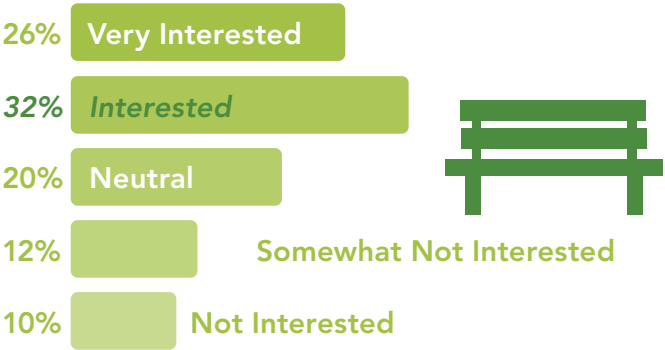
*Percentage responses represent the number of open ended comments for each topic.

OPTIONS FOR ALBERTA STREET

The online survey asked respondents their level of interest in a few specific design elements. The feedback for each design element is summarized below.

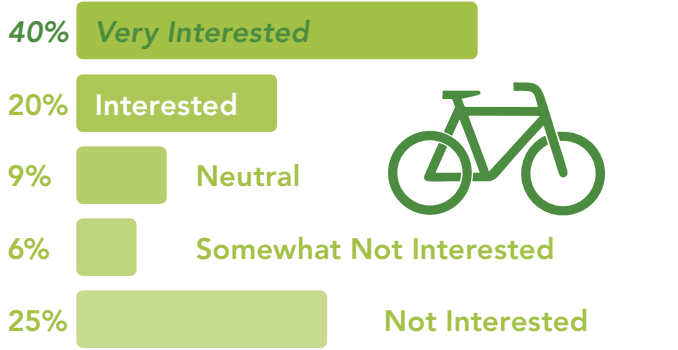
Social Spaces

Level of interest in **sidewalks and social spaces with seating**



Cycling path

Level of interest in a **separated path for cycling**



Planting Areas

Level of interest in **trees and other planting areas**



Traffic

Level of interest in a **two-way motor vehicle traffic**

