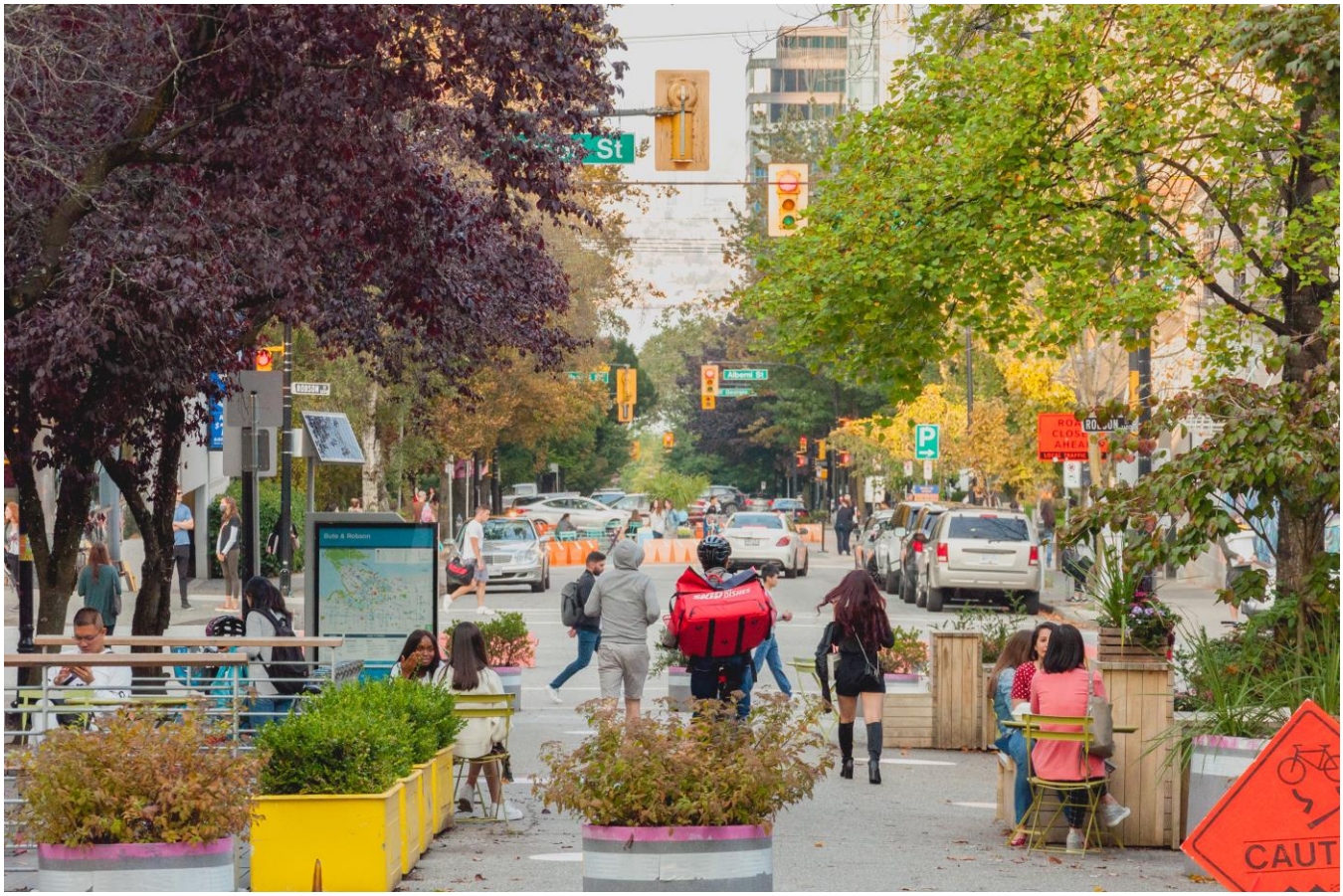


BUTE GREENWAY

PHASE ONE | ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

NOVEMBER 2021 – JANUARY 2022







CITY OF VANCOUVER

Contents

What We Did **3**
Stakeholder Engagement **3**
Public Engagement **4**
Outreach Tactics **4**
Key Findings **6**
Who We Heard From **7**
Demographic Overview **7**
What We Heard **9**
Room for Improvement **10**
Level of Support for Draft Goals **11**
Detailed Comments and Ideas Relating to Particular Goals **12**
DRAFT GOAL #1 12
DRAFT GOAL #2 13
DRAFT GOAL #3 14
DRAFT GOAL #4 15
Bute-Robson Plaza **15**
Plaza inspiration and big ideas 16
Bute-Robson and Nearby Improvements Ideas 17
Other emerging themes **18**
Bute-Davie Intersection and Jim Deva Plaza 18
Jervis Street as part of the scope 18
Motor Vehicle Circulation and Access - North of Robson 19
Connections 19
Missing goals 20
Big Ideas 21
Level of investment 21
Concerns 22
Next Steps **22**

PART ONE: OVERVIEW

Bute Street was first identified as a potential new or improved walking, biking, and rolling route by the West End Community Plan and Public Benefits Strategy in 2013. In 2020, the City's Downtown Public Space Strategy identified Bute Street as greenway and a key shore-to-shore connection. That same year, Council also adopted a foundational policy to accelerate active transportation through the Climate Emergency Action Plan, and set a target for road space reallocation with an emphasis on public spaces and greenways.

By engaging with key stakeholders and the public in 2019 through the Places for People Downtown Strategy, and consultation on nearby projects, we heard the interest in and potential for pedestrian and public space improvements along Bute Street.

Building on community working sessions from fall 2019, which focused on public realm improvements, City of Vancouver staff are conducting a three-phase engagement process on the Bute Greenway to explore ideas to improve and prioritize Bute Street for walking, biking, and rolling for people of all ages and abilities while connecting people with nature and providing public spaces for various community activities. As part of this project, we will also advance a conceptual design for a permanent Bute-Robson plaza. This report summarizes feedback from the first phase of engagement.

Engagement Timeline

The Bute Greenway public and stakeholder engagement is taking place in three phases as described below.

1. ***Phase 1 – Discussing Goals and Ideas (Fall/Winter 2021 - Completed)***
    - Sought feedback on draft goals for Bute Greenway and provided opportunities for early creative thinking on how people use the street, public spaces, and surrounding network connections.
    - Sought feedback on a draft concept design for a permanent Bute-Robson Plaza.
2. ***Phase 2 – Reviewing Initial Concepts (Late 2022)***
    - Provide an opportunity to review and comment on a range of approaches to developing the greenway, design options for proposed priority areas and timelines for implementation.
    - Provide an opportunity to review a potential design for Bute-Robson Plaza and any related improvements.
3. ***Phase 3 – Reviewing Recommended Design (Early 2023- 2025)***
    - We anticipate using a phased approach to build out the Bute Greenway, staff will identify priority areas that leverage opportunities for using interim materials, coordinate with adjacent construction and use available budgets.
    - Early 2023- Based on feedback from the previous phases, staff will provide a detailed overview of and rationale for the recommended design for the initial phases of implementation. The community will be invited to share their feedback, which will help further refine the recommended design.

What We Did

Stakeholder Engagement

Prior to launching the public engagement process, staff reached out to key stakeholders for discussions and presentations. Throughout fall 2021 and early 2022, staff met virtually with identified stakeholders including representatives from local business associations; transportation, seniors, accessibility, and placemaking organizations; and others, to better understand the needs and wants of diverse local organizations. Targeted stakeholder engagement will continue to take place throughout 2022.

Stakeholders we have met so far

- City of Vancouver Advisory Committees: Members of People with Disabilities and Accessible City Sub committee, Transportation Advisory Committee
- Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association
- Robson Street Business Association
- West End Business Improvement Association
- Jim Deva Plaza Stewardship Committee
- HUB Cycling Vancouver
- Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (B.E.S.T.)
- Vancouver Public Space Network
- West End Farmers Market

Others who were notified and expressed interest in getting involved during later engagement phases, or advised that they would complete the Phase 1 survey on their organization's behalf: Destination Vancouver, Vancouver Economic Commission, Vancouver Pride, Cycling without Age, Happy City.

Others who were notified include: West End Seniors Network, Greater Vancouver Board of Trade, BC Trucking Association, BC Taxi Association, Vancouver Taxi Association, Sustainabiliteens, Forces of Nature, West End Families in Action, West End Community Centre Association, West End Arts, Haro Park Centre Society, Nelson Park Community Garden, Robert Lee YMCA, Lord Roberts' School & Annexe, LOUD LGBT Business, QMUNITY, Vancouver Biennale, West End Neighbourhood Food Network, Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

Internal Stakeholders

Staff have had various touch points with internal stakeholders and partners including Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, Vancouver Fire and Rescue Service, Vancouver Police Department, Homelessness Outreach Team, BC Emergency Health Services, TransLink through previous engagements along or near Bute Street and will continue to engage them in the design process and as part of phase two and three.

Intergovernmental Relations

Staff are also reaching out to Musqueam Indian Band, and Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations through the City liaison to see if there is interest in intergovernmental engagement in this project.

Public Engagement

Phase one launched Nov. 15, 2021 and ended Dec. 31, 2021. In this first phase, staff sought input on the draft project goals, how people currently use the street as well as hopes and ideas related to the greenway. We also sought feedback on a conceptual design for a permanent Bute-Robson Plaza.

Outreach Tactics

A communications outreach plan was developed to support the engagement process by ensuring diverse public awareness of the scope, timeline, and opportunities for input. The plan included an extensive print and digital campaign to ensure a broad reach across all modes of transportation. Specific tactics are highlighted below:

Notification postcards: Postcards were mailed to over 23,500 residents and businesses along Bute Street.

Posters: Over 35 eye-level signs installed at each end and along the span of Bute St, as well as nearby bike network intersections, targeting people walking, biking or rolling in the area

Social media and paid ads: Organic and paid content were posted on the City's Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn platforms targeting 18-65 age group of all gender. The paid campaign reached over 27,500 people acquiring over 100,000 impressions. The social media posts had over 1,000 engagements (shares, comments etc.) and about 87,000 impressions.[1]

Project and Engagement webpages: Dedicated project pages (vancouver.ca/bute-greenway and shapeyourcity.ca/bute-greenway) were created to share information about the project and opportunities to provide feedback.

Earned media: The project received no media coverage during the Phase 1 period from November-December 2021.

Promotional video: A promotional video was posted on social media which was viewed 214 times on YouTube[2]. It was also used to develop a series of mini-videos that were viewed over 42,500 times across the City's social media platforms LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

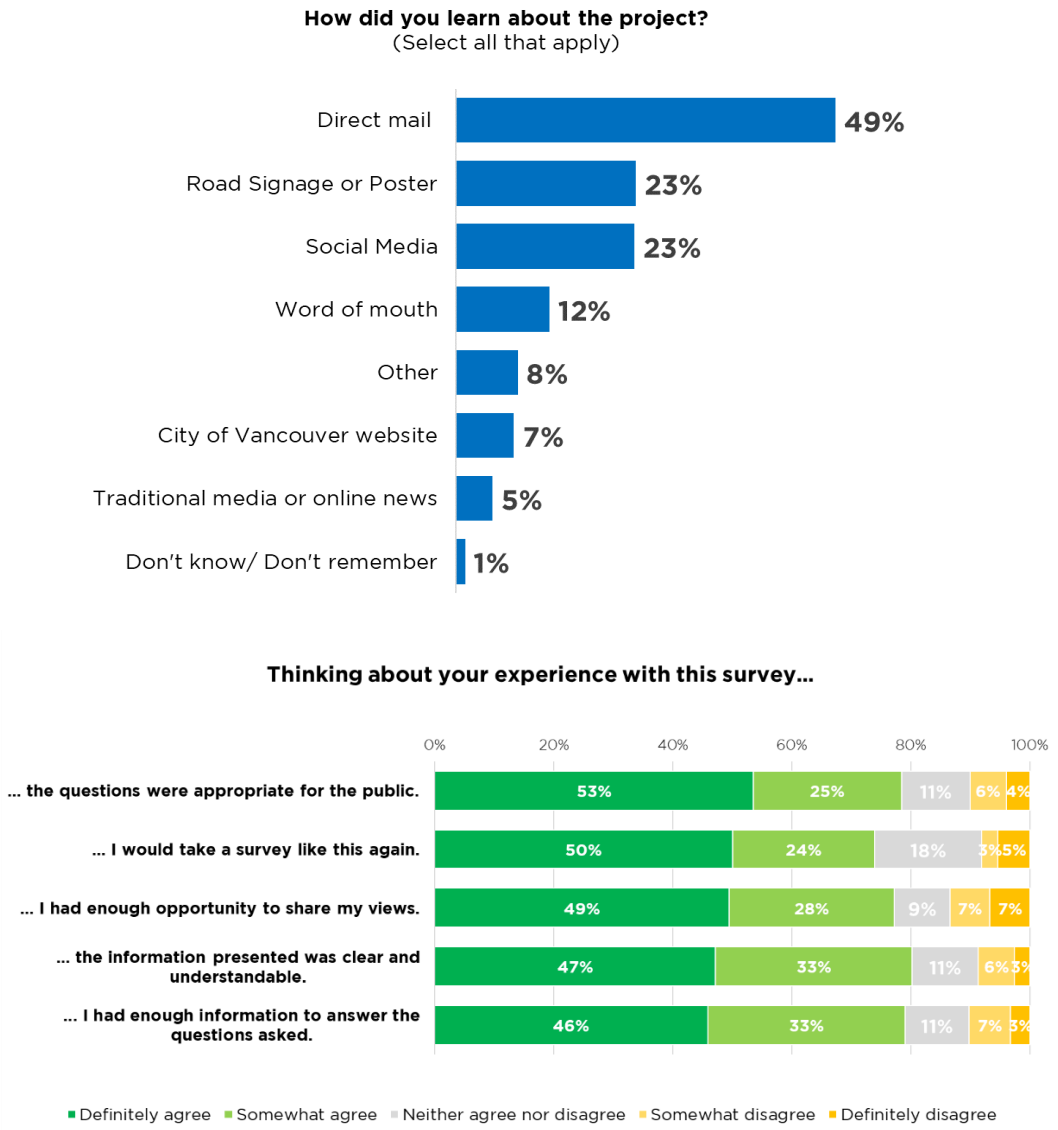
This Engagement Summary analyzes 576 survey responses that were completed from November 15 to December 13, 2021. The survey was available online on the City's Shape Your City platform. Paper copies of the survey were available at centralized community locations. The summary also includes the feedback from people who called and/or wrote to the City via email, 3-1-1 or VanConnect and social media. Most people learned about the project from direct mail (postcards) followed by street signage/posters and social media.

---

[1] Impressions refers to the number of times an ad or message was seen or heard.
Twitter posts: 513 Engagements, 24,075 Impressions; Facebook posts: 21,017 Impressions, 799 Engagements; 4 Instagram posts: 2,100 Engagements; LinkedIn: 37,625 Impressions, 387 Engagements

[2] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFOfyLrlYaI

Figure 1: Public outreach methods and survey respondents[3]



The need for physical distancing meant our engagement options were limited. Our public engagement approach had to be 'digital first', with all materials being available online and stakeholder briefings taking place virtually. As it is important for us to engage meaningfully with the public despite 'traditional'/in-person methods begin unavailable, we sought feedback on the engagement process 'design' as well as the project content.

Based on the survey, more than 85% of the participants 'definitely agree' or 'agree' that the questions were appropriate for the public. Approximately 75% of the participants suggested participating was a valuable experience and more importantly, that there was enough opportunity to share their views.

[3] Based on all 576 survey responses.

Staff will continue to explore more options for in-person engagement in phases two and three, depending on the COVID-19 health protocols.

Key Findings

After interpreting responses to the survey and from stakeholder briefing sessions staff heard the following overall sentiments about Bute Street's potential to become a greenway.

Bute Street provides an important walking and rolling connection, with 4 in every 5 survey participants advising they walk (or wheel using an assisted device like a wheelchair) on Bute Street at least once a week. Bute Street's mature tree canopy, neighbourhood feel, and relatively calm traffic contribute to the positive pedestrian experience, but there is also room for improvement through better lighting, limiting conflicts with other road users, widening narrow sidewalks and redesigning busy areas.

Fewer participants regularly cycle on Bute Street than those who walk, but the figures for cycling are not insignificant: 29% of survey respondents cycle on Bute Street at least once a week. People who cycle appreciated Bute Street's lower traffic speeds, good signage and existing car free spaces. Its limitations included steep slopes to the north and south, busier intersections and inconsistencies in the bike network.

Survey participants were **less likely to drive or be a passenger than to walk on Bute Street** (42% of respondents did this at least once a week). The feedback on driving and cars was mixed: many saw the benefits for walking and cycling with car-free or car-lite spaces, but there was some concern over the implications for drivers, including access to businesses and implications for seniors.

Generally, participants saw **opportunity in the Bute Greenway project**. Innovative and fun play-spaces; whimsical elements; water features; street art; First Nations' cultural touchpoints; event spaces; community gardens and wayfinding opportunities were just some of the 'Big Ideas' suggested.

Many were worried about the risk of people using Bute Street for **sleeping, drinking or using drugs** in existing or proposed public spaces.

Other frequently raised issues included the **knock-on effects on vehicle circulation and congestion in the West End**, maintenance burden, construction impacts and costs to the taxpayer. Some also felt the project wasn't worthwhile.

At Bute-Robson Plaza, 70% of survey responses **liked or really liked where the design was headed**, whereas only 15% didn't like it. Some responders saw themselves **meeting friends there, grabbing a coffee, checking out art displays or just sitting and enjoying a car-free space**. Design opportunities included 'rain-proofing', providing accessible seating and adding greenery or colourful elements. While some felt there was opportunity to expand the pedestrian-only space into nearby streets including Robson St, some felt the **plaza was good as it is**, or worried that its development may contribute to noise pollution if it became a late-night gathering spot.

Project Goals: **Improving walking, biking and rolling** conditions for all ages and abilities was supported, with 60% saying this was **very important**. There was similar enthusiasm for improving Bute Street's **green rainwater infrastructure** potential. While providing a 'shore-to-shore' connection and accommodating 'emergency and vehicle access' were also considered important by most, **support for these goals received less support** (19% and 23% stating they were 'not important', respectively).

PART TWO: DETAILED SUMMARY

Who We Heard From

Demographic Overview

It is important for us to understand the demographics of who we are hearing from through the online survey so that we can learn more about who is underrepresented in the survey and ensure they are heard in future rounds of engagement. We asked demographic questions related to income, where participants live, ethnicity, gender identification, age and ability. Future rounds of engagement will continue to include focussed efforts to reach underrepresented groups.

The breakdown below summarizes what we heard from the 576 survey responses.

Area of Residence and Work

Most participants live along or near Bute Street in Vancouver with more than 80% using Bute Street for commuting purpose ('passing by' or 'to access nearby services or businesses'). The survey included responses from people who live (87%[4]) and/or work (14%) along or near Bute Street. 11% of participants also said they shop/visit Bute or nearby streets, but live elsewhere.

Gender Identity and Age

Survey participants were more likely to identify as man (47%) than woman (41%); 3% identified as non-binary or gender diverse, and about 7% of respondents preferred not to say. A diverse range of age groups participated, with slightly higher representation from 25 to 54 years and lower representation of people under the age of 25 compared to the City's overall demographics.

Ethnicity and Household Income

The majority of survey participants identified as European (e.g. British Isles, German, French, Greek, etc.) (64%) followed by Asian (10%). The percentage of survey participants varied depending on household income bracket; showing underrepresentation of lower income brackets, especially those with income under 30K.

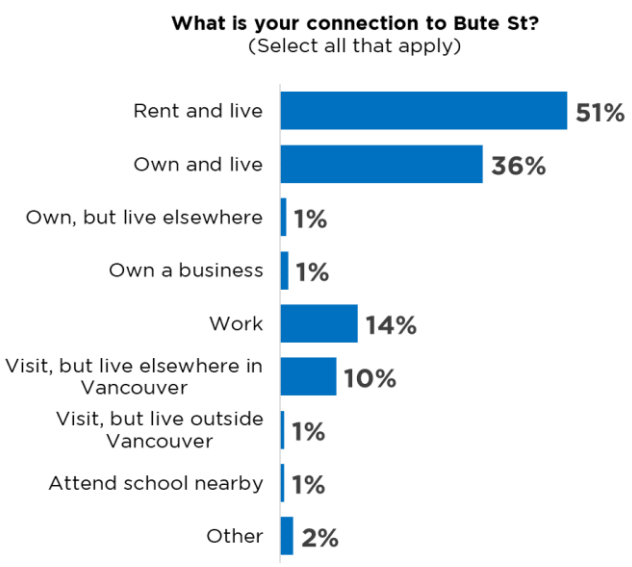
Persons with disabilities

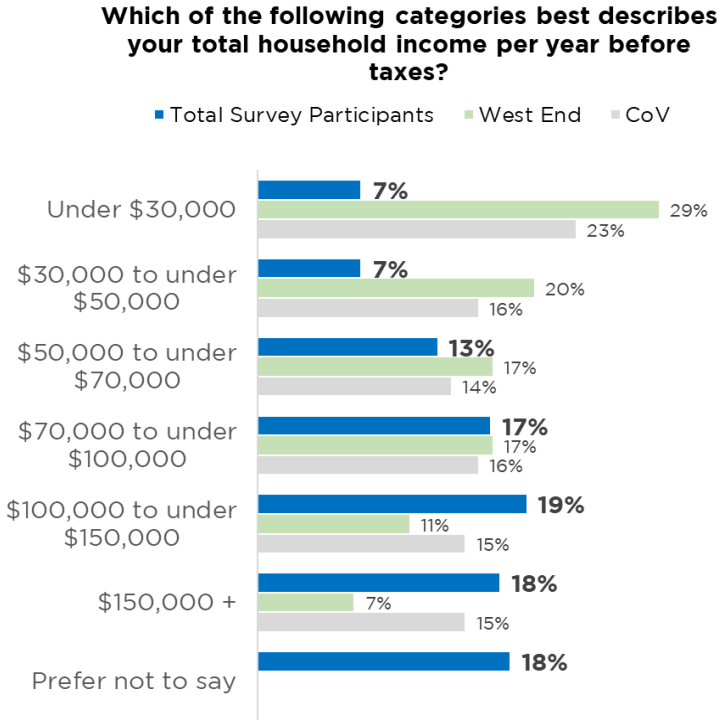
In addition to meeting with members of the Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee - Accessible City Sub-Committee, we heard from 56 (10%) survey participants who identified as persons with a disability.

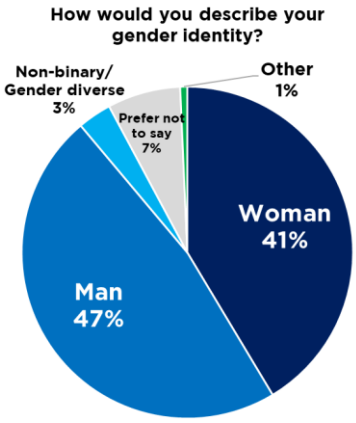
[4] 51% rent and 36% own

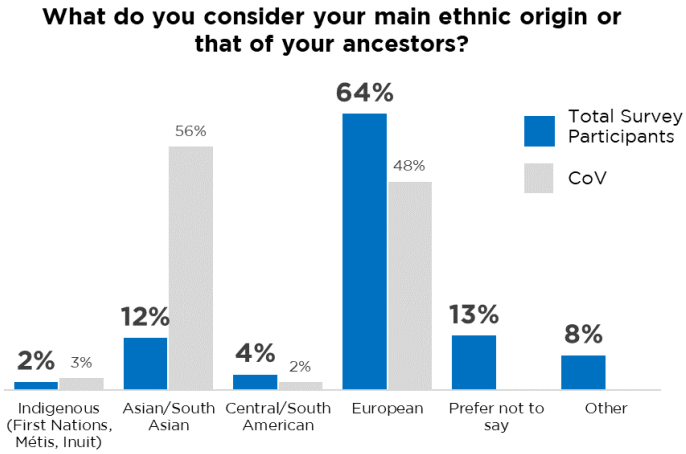
Figure 2: Demographic overview of survey participants based on where they live, age, gender, income and main ethnic origin

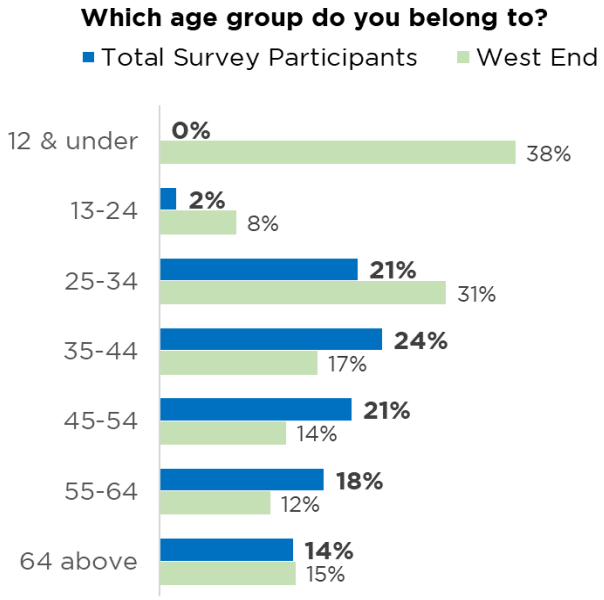
Source: Census 2016, Social Indicators and Trends: Neighbourhood Profiles 2020











What We Heard

Better Understanding of How People Use Bute Street Today

Participants reported how they normally travel along Bute Street using a wide variety of travel modes and for various purposes.

- 82% walk, or wheel using an assisted device, at least once a week.
- 29% cycle and 4% travel using in-line skate, skateboard, e-scooter, or push scooter at least once a week.
- 42% drive (or are a passenger in a motor vehicle) at least once a week.
- About 20% of people reported using transit facilities (including HandyDART, nearby SkyTrain, or bus) once a week or more on adjacent streets (e.g. Robson, Davie, Burrard)

Figure 3: Survey responses by frequency and use of different modes of travel along Bute Street.[5]

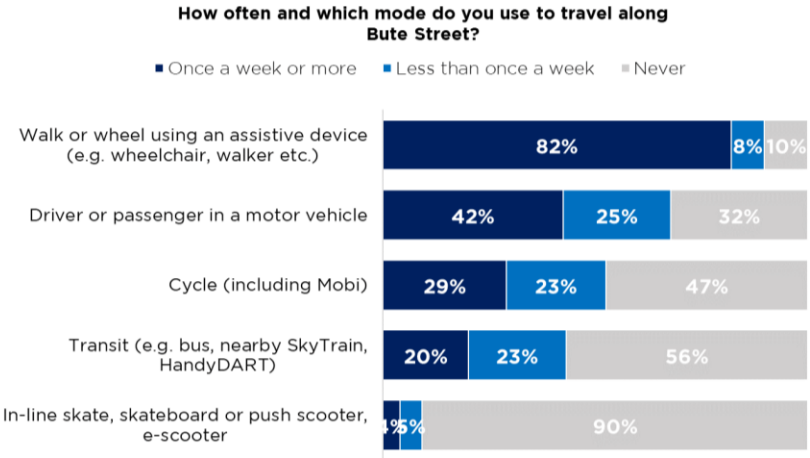
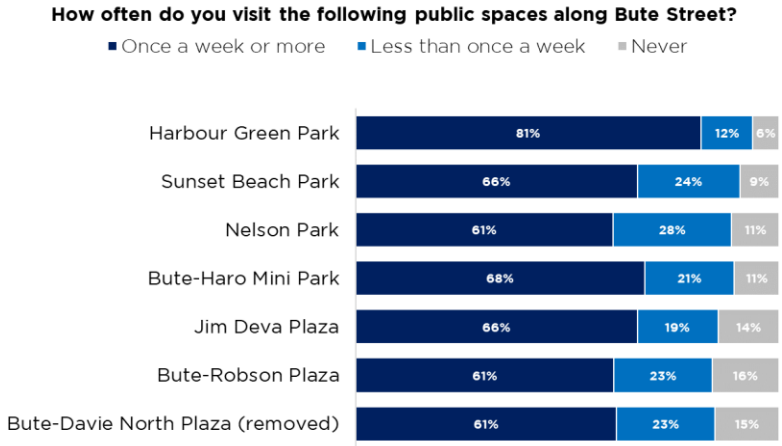


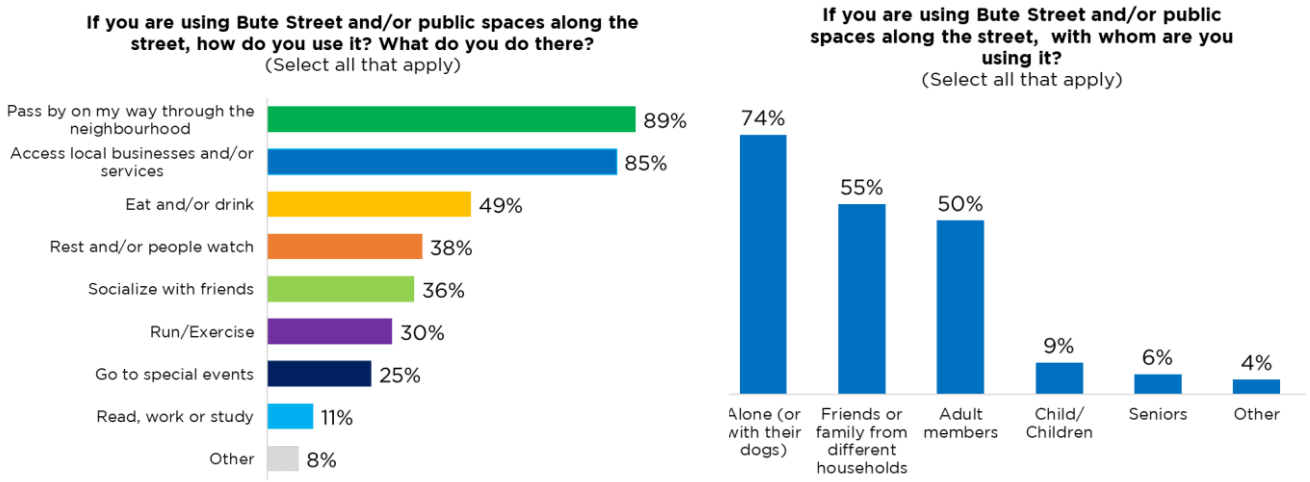
Figure 4: Survey responses by frequency and public spaces along Bute Street.



[5] Based on all 576 survey responses.

- Most participants either pass by Bute Street or through the neighbourhood (89%), or access local businesses and/or services nearby (85%). A significant percentage also use Bute Street and nearby public spaces for recreational purposes such as to eat/drink, rest, socialize, etc.
- Almost 3 in every 4 participants tend to travel along Bute Street or access its public spaces alone. Around half do so with either another adult in their household or with friends or family from different households. The figures reduce considerably for those accessing Bute St with children from their household (9%), or with seniors (6%). A few participants also mentioned they walk their dog.

Figure 5: Reasons why people use Bute Street and with whom.

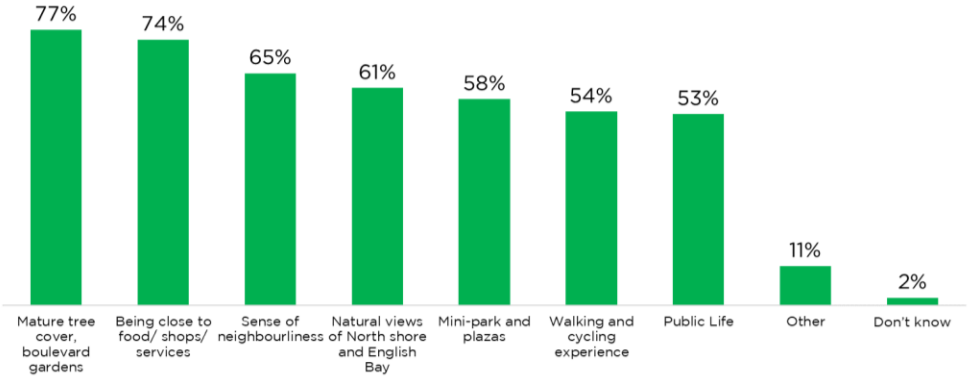


Room for Improvement

The West End has a lot to offer and so does Bute Street. It contributes to the West End's distinct character with places to rest, shop, and work along with civic facilities and a variety of housing types.

Mature tree cover, boulevard gardens, being close to shops and services and sense of neighbourliness were some of the top things participants liked about Bute Street.

Figure 6: Reasons why participants like Bute Street



Over half of participants (54%) cited their walking and cycling experience on Bute St as a reason for liking it.

Walking Safety and Comfort

On walking safety and comfort, positive attributes cited included:

- Tree coverage for shade;
- Seeing other pedestrians around, either walking or stopping to talk;
- The presence of car-free sections such as Haro Mini Park;
- The congenial neighbourhood feel;
- Fewer cars than on other streets downtown and the slow-moving traffic due to traffic calming;
- Heritage houses, historic buildings and architecture and seasonal displays.

Attributes that could be improved include:

- Safety and perceptions of safety at night;
- A disjointed pedestrian network;
- People using the street to sleep, drink or use drugs;
- Narrow sidewalks;
- Bikes or e-scooters using sidewalks;
- A lack of or inadequate lighting in some locations;
- Cyclists not following the rules of the road;
- Old or unsafe curb cuts, not fit for purpose or use by persons with disabilities;
- Busy intersections.

Cycling Safety and Comfort

On cycling safety and comfort, positive attributes included:

- Low traffic speeds and the presence of bike share and bike rental spots;
- Traffic calming features;
- Good signage for people cycling.

Attributes that could be improved include:

- Conflicts between people cycling and people parking cars;
- Busier intersections north of Robson Street;
- Steep hill from Sunset Beach;
- A disjointed bike network.

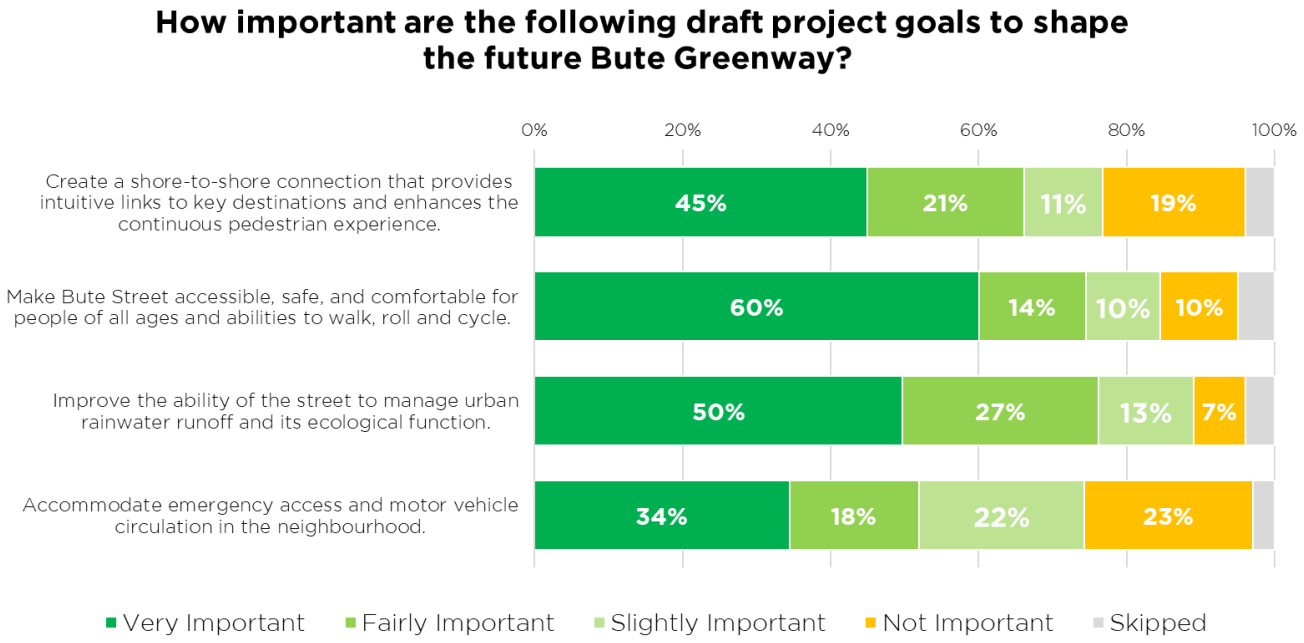
Level of Support for Draft Goals

Each of the draft goals has a good measure of public support based on the 576 responses to the survey.

- 66% feel it is fairly or very important to create a shore-to-shore connection and a continuous pedestrian experience (19% not important).

- 74% feel it is fairly or very important to improve walking, biking and rolling conditions (10% not important).
- 77% feel it is fairly or very important to improve the ability of the street to manage urban rainwater runoff and its ecological function (7% not important).
- 52% feel it is fairly or very important to accommodate motor vehicle circulation and emergency access in the neighbourhood (23% not important).

Figure 7: Survey responses indicate that each of the draft goals are somewhat to very important. [6]



Detailed Comments and Ideas Relating to Particular Goals

The highlights below reflect comments and ideas heard in Phase one through online and paper surveys, emails, phone calls and stakeholder discussions.

DRAFT GOAL #1

Create a shore-to-shore connection that provides intuitive links to key destinations and enhances the continuous pedestrian experience.

There were strong feelings by many that the street needs to be a continuous pedestrian experience that is enjoyable to pass through and it should provide links to key destinations such as parks, waterfront, shopping streets, plazas, schools and offices. Specific ideas which could help achieve this goal include:

- Adding a consistent materials palette, signage, branding or 'language' from shore-to-shore to make pedestrian connectivity obvious.

[6] Based on all 576 responses, however, 20 participants skipped the question.

- Creating and linking public space 'moments', urban 'rooms', or 'spill out' spaces for small and larger gatherings to facilitate a continuous experience.
- Adding seating options and respite spaces (e.g. chairs, benches), preferably accessible and comfortable but also modular and adaptable.
- Balancing and integrating permanent street elements and temporary short term or seasonal event spaces.
- Providing rain friendly or heated gathering spaces for year-round use of the space.
- Exploring urban cooling opportunities, using the tree canopy and/or covered spaces.
- Supporting small businesses and adding places to eat or drink e.g. food trucks, patios, eateries, picnic tables.
- Celebrating views at both ends.
- Providing opportunities and funding for community-led programming and stewardship.
- Considering amenities such as recycling stations, public washrooms, drinking fountains and safety phones/call boxes.

Read more in the 'big ideas' section

A large number of participants who both supported and did not support the project highlighted concerns around people using the plaza and nearby empty storefronts to sleep, drink or use drugs, especially near Bute-Davie.[7] Others who live nearby shared concerns around:

- Impacts to motor vehicle circulation from the existing plazas and potential greenway interventions.
- General maintenance, cleanliness and safety in or around existing car-free spaces.
- Restrictions to parking for local businesses.
- Noise or late night use of spaces disturbing nearby residents and businesses.

DRAFT GOAL #2

Make Bute Street accessible, safe, and comfortable for people of all ages and abilities to walk, roll and cycle.

There was more support for improving accessibility, safety and comfort along Bute Street, with many respondents underscoring the following specific aspects:

- Reducing grades for walking and cycling at the south end of Bute St (e.g. with winding routes).
- Exploring other connections for cycling on steep hills while providing connections to the seawall and Burrard Bridge; cycling uphill is challenging and downhill is unsafe for all road users.

[7] The City is currently working on a strategy for the Davie Village area with local partners, homelessness services, city harm reduction experts, and other City Departments to help address the needs of everyone using public spaces in the Davie Village area.

- Minimizing conflicts by separating road users by travel mode or creating comfortable shared routes by reducing speed limits.
- Adding clear markings or signage for seating, walking, and cycling paths in the plaza spaces.
- Using easy grades, smooth surfaces, wider sidewalks to ensure accessibility for everyone; especially seniors and people with disabilities.
- Improving lighting along the path to make street safer at all times (such as on Comox St and the Arbutus Greenway).
- Providing safer and accessible intersections at Barclay, Nelson, Comox, Pacific, and other busy intersections between Robson and Pender streets (e.g. stop sign at laneways, crosswalks, curb bulges, raised intersections, grade difference).
- Improving wayfinding and signage particularly at the north and south ends of Bute St, connecting the seawall and routes linked to Burrard Bridge as there can be confusion over connections to/from the West End.
- Prioritizing Mobi bike share stations at strategic locations giving more space for people to walk or drive.

We also heard specific feedback about improving accessibility for persons with disabilities and seniors. Suggestions included:

- A balance between creating longer routes at lower grades (i.e. those which are achievable in a manual chair) or shorter routes with easier-to-navigate steps (i.e. with larger stair surface area, smaller height of each stair, and railings on both sides).
- Raised intersections with minimal grade changes.

Some people supported improvements to walking infrastructure more and felt adding cycling infrastructure would increase conflicts. Some people commented that the project is unnecessary, including because they felt the other downtown connections have adequate facilities; because they do not support walking or cycling investment in general; or because they feel the resources should be diverted to housing and social planning concerns and Bute Street is good as it is.

DRAFT GOAL #3

Improve the ability of the street to manage urban rainwater runoff and its ecological function.

There was almost universal support and excitement for this goal, with ideas including:

- Integrating rainwater management processes that store and clean storm water runoff.
- Adding colour to the street with flowering plants, native plants and community gardens.
- Enhancing connectivity for birds, insects and pollinators by using appropriate plant species.
- Using raingardens/bioswales and permeable materials.
- Planting more trees, adding boulevard gardens and increasing greenery along the greenway.

Some people mentioned concerns related to accumulation of leaves near catch basins causing clogging of drains and flooding. A few people expressed concerns relating to a lack of maintenance for the existing green spaces.

DRAFT GOAL #4

Accommodate emergency access and motor vehicle circulation in the neighbourhood.

There was almost universal support for the following sentiments in this goal:

- Accommodating access for emergency vehicles, garbage trucks, deliveries and other services; suggestions like adding removable bollards or automatic access controlled bollards were mentioned.
- Adding loading, passenger zones where needed e.g. near seniors' housings.
- Slowing motor vehicle traffic and cycling traffic e.g. through regulation, enforcement, and design.
- Others hoping the project could support a more "car-lite" or "car-free" future on the street particularly in the long term.

There was a diversity of opinions regarding general motor circulation, including the following:

- People living along Bute Street were concerned about the potential greenway blocking access to their home, parkade or driveway.
- Specific concerns were raised for motor vehicle access to seniors' houses at Bute-Haro.
- Suggestions to retain access between Stovold Lane on to Nelson and between Georgia to Pender.
- A few participants were interested in improving motor vehicular circulation in the West End especially south to north, accessing to and from Burrard Bridge and Georgia St, east-west travel at Bute-Pendrell.
- Specific concerns from businesses and tenants relating to vehicular access changes at Bute/Alberni, following the temporary plaza installed there in 2020.

Bute-Robson Plaza

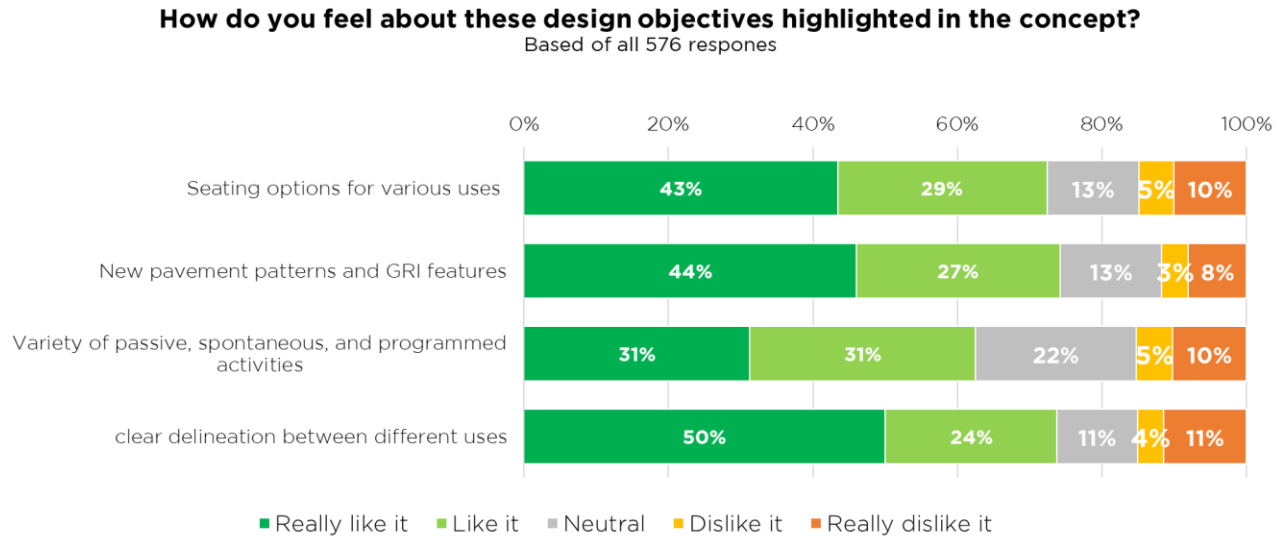
The draft objectives received a good level of support from the public, with about 70% of survey participants 'liking' or 'really liking' it, and roughly 15% expressing a negative opinion by 'disliking' or 'really disliking' it. The remainder had a neutral response.

Responses were particularly positive for design objectives centred on providing seating (72%), new paving patterns and green infrastructure (73%). Delineation between different uses (Plaza space, space for cycling) attracted the most support (74%).

People liked the objective - 'design for a variety of passive, spontaneous and programmed activities' comparatively less (62%) than the other design options, with some responders feeling the plaza is good as it is, or do not support the project mainly because of noise pollution or believe it could become a late night drinking spot, and/or cause congestion.

We received high levels of support from stakeholder groups through on-going and previous engagements, and will continue to work closely with the Robson Street Business Improvement Association and other stakeholders on the design process along with public input.

Figure 8: Level of support for design objectives



Plaza inspiration and big ideas[8]

More than 45% of participants suggested they would like to see a more 'lively and social' vibe at Bute-Robson Plaza because it is closer to Robson - a shopping street. The 'top two' other inspirations people liked were 'chill and calm' during the day time and 'celebratory and magical' during the night time.

Some participants suggested they would like to do the following at the plaza:

- Meet friends for coffee, or to read, rest, and enjoy being outside.
- Grab a bite after shopping.
- Look at local art displays.
- Walk and sit safely without fear of conflicting with cyclists, e-scooters or drivers.

Figure 9: To help design the future elements of the plaza, tell us which image(s) inspires you the most?



The space should not be too noisy, but calm and lively.

Specific design ideas include:

- 'Rain proof' and accessible seating.
- Retain West End neighbourhood image
- More greenery with additional tree canopy
- Magical in the evenings – better and dynamic lighting

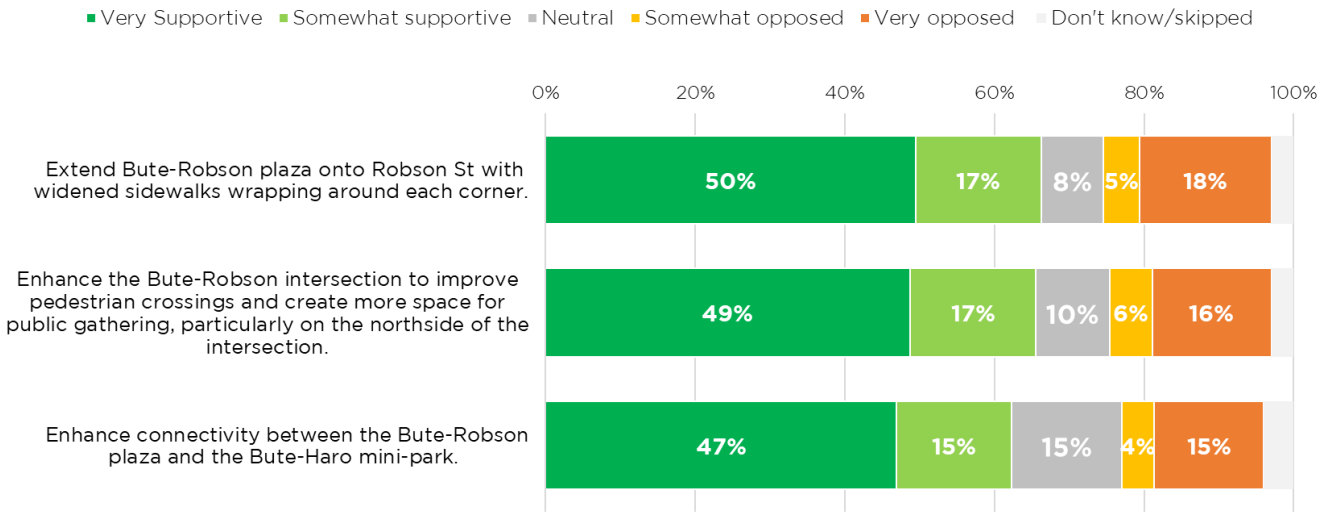
[8] Based on all 576 response, however, 65 skipped this question.

- Colourful elements
- Low maintenance

Bute-Robson and Nearby Improvements Ideas

Staff identified opportunities to explore improvements that would integrate Bute-Robson Plaza to the north onto Robson St and to the South towards Haro St. More than 60% supported the idea of expanding public space while about 20% of people felt the plaza is unnecessary and so are the nearby improvements, sharing concerns related to motor vehicle circulation and access, congestion, noise or late night use from nearby residents and businesses.

Figure 10: Level of support for potential nearby improvements.[9]



Only 40% of the participants had additional comments about Bute-Robson and nearby potential improvements. Some key themes included:

- Sidewalk extensions and/or bus bulges near high streets
- Place to sit, relax, socialize and host programmable or seasonal events (e.g. 800 Robson)
- Space for food trucks/carts and spaces for line-ups and eating
- Retractable, multi-use seating with opportunities for covered spaces on rainy days
- Access to power to reduce need for generators for events
- Improved lighting, in-ground or over-head, which is maintainable
- Stop signs at laneway south of Robson to improve safety
- Towards Haro, spaces should be 'chill and calm' whereas towards Robson, there are opportunities for 'fun and lively spaces.' This is cognisant of the more residential areas of Bute St.

[9] Based on all 576 survey responses.

- A balance between space for people cycling and walking, including delineation on-street to reduce conflicts and 'police' bike speeds
- Planters with ample room between them for wheelchairs to get through
- Amenities like public washrooms and water fountains
- Retained motor vehicle access north of Robson but explore ideas to reduce traffic to comfortable volumes or installation of protected bike lanes should be considered to improve cycling safety
- Balanced additions with traffic concerns on Robson St and the West End more widely

Some people were interested in learning future plans for Robson Street. Some suggested car-free or bus priority Robson Street and some were against the idea of making any changes at this intersection.

Other emerging themes

Bute-Davie Intersection and Jim Deva Plaza[10]

Bute-Davie 'North' transitioned from a 'Room to Queue' location to a temporary pop-up plaza during the City's COVID-19 response. The space is opposite the permanent Jim Deva Plaza and so staff are exploring ideas for the future of this space through this project. Feedback ranged from requests for its removal and a return to the pre-COVID set-up, to ideas for it to be instated permanently and having a cohesive design on both sides of Davie St. Detailed feedback included:

- The existing raised tree-wells in Jim Deva Plaza should be removed or repurposed to improve use of the space.
- Sidewalks widened to provide space for walking. The pedestrian experience should be prioritized.
- Any design should try to accommodate larger patios to enliven pedestrian space during the summer months.
- New lighting should be considered for safety, wayfinding and to enliven public spaces.
- The future of the two public washrooms at Bute-Davie north should be given further consideration.
- Place-making opportunities at Bute-Davie 'north' should be 'seasonal'.

Jervis Street as part of the scope

Questions were raised on why Jervis Street was not considered as part of the project scope. Some participants wondered if the idea can be expanded to Jervis Street by:

- Moving cycling onto Jervis St, prioritizing Bute St for walking and community gathering spaces.

[10] The City is currently working on a strategy for the Davie Village area with local partners, homelessness services, local harm reduction experts, and other City departments to help address the needs of everyone using public spaces in the Davie Village area.

- Designating Jervis for two-way motor vehicle traffic.
- Minimizing car intersections crossing Bute by directing cars down Jervis (north to Georgia or south to Davie or Beach Ave) to avoid intersections at every corner.

Motor Vehicle Circulation and Access - North of Robson

While there was some support for increasing pedestrian and cycle space north of Robson St, there was also some concern about what further impacts this would have on vehicular circulation into/out from the West End or on traffic congestion generally. Some impacts on vehicular journey times are already being experienced with the ongoing watermain works in this location.

Detailed feedback made the following suggestions:

- Prioritize general traffic circulation on Bute St north of Robson St to facilitate loading/unloading for businesses and residential/commercial vehicle movements.
- Consider segregated bikeways where traffic volumes are higher than is comfortable for shared spaces.

Connections

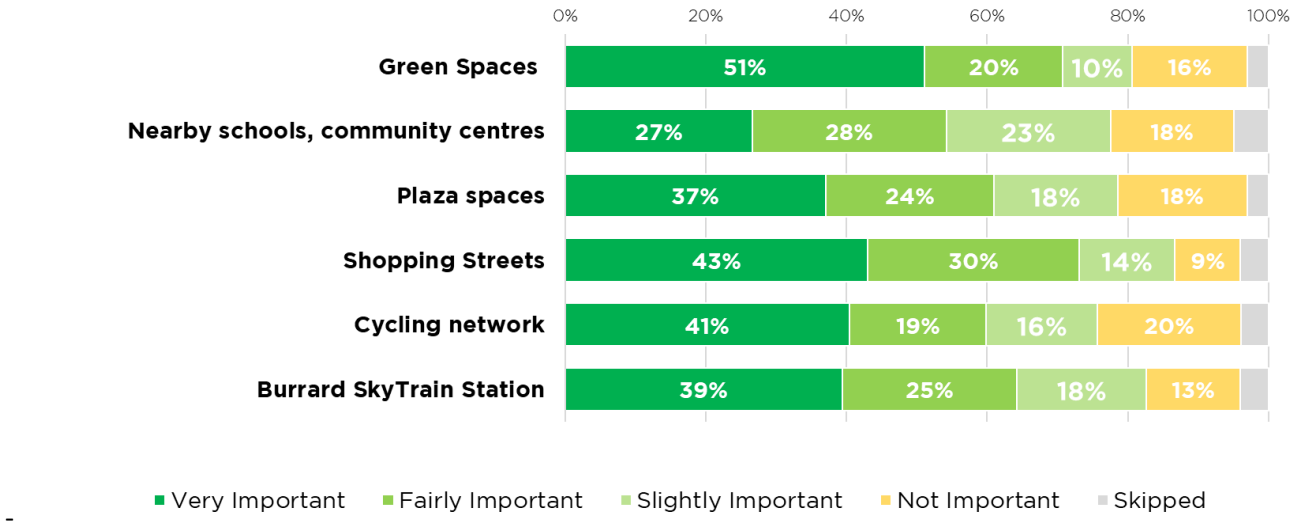
Generally, participants agreed that connections to all specific destinations listed were at least slightly important, but connections to green spaces, Burrard SkyTrain Station and shopping streets were most critical. Though in the minority, it is noteworthy that a number of survey respondents identified certain connections as 'not important', including nearby schools & community centres (18%), plaza spaces (18%) and the bike network (20%).

Of the public spaces listed, the nearby parks were visited by more participants than the Plazas were.

Specific feedback on connections included:

- At the north end of Bute Street, the 'shore-to-shore' connection should consider how to connect to Harbour Green Park, the Seawall, W Georgia Street and other downtown destinations/existing parts of the bike network.
- At the south end, connections to Beach Ave should be considered. Given the steep slope in this location, the route should be 'safe and comfortable' southbound and 'possible' northbound.
- Connections to Burrard Bridge, Granville Connector, Burrard SkyTrain Station and other existing and proposed bike links should be strengthened.

Figure 111: How important are connections to specific destinations from Bute Street?



Missing goals

When prompted as to whether any goals were missing or required special attention, approximately 50% of respondents did not have anything to add.

Many survey respondents provided comments relating to:

- Specific details as to how the City should go about achieving a goal, e.g. how to improve safety or accessibility.
- Divergent opinions on what extent to accommodate motor vehicles, ranging from 'add two-way travels lane instead of existing plazas' to 'make Bute Street car-free'.
- Diverse opinions regarding the importance of placemaking and an appropriate level of investment; and
- General feelings of support or non-support for the project.

A few comments reflected issues not covered in the draft goals. Key themes centred on:

- On-going concerns around people using Bute/Davie plazas and nearby empty storefronts to sleep, drink or use drugs.
- Protecting for potential future additions, (e.g. relating to enhanced sustainable transportation or placemaking, Bute-Alberni and Bute-Robson intersection improvements, West Loop).
- Considering ways to mitigate traffic impacts on neighbouring residents (e.g. reducing traffic noise).
- Safety at night (e.g. lighting).

Big Ideas

As part of the first phase of public engagement, people were encouraged to share their ideas for the project through the survey and the 'ideas' tool on Shape Your City. Through this, staff received a wide range of ideas to explore as a part of the design process, including:

- Play activities or child-focussed areas (e.g. Hopscotch, interactive spaces/things to touch or spin, telescopes, games, ping-pong table).
- Whimsical elements, or attractions (for the latter, things like water features or fountains; permanent public art; interactive installations; climbable sculptures; light fitness equipment).
- "Linear park" like car-free street between Robson and Davie.
- Opportunities for community participation in the street art e.g. mural at the Bute/Alberni temporary plaza, Robert's Creek mandala.
- Art or story walk to celebrate local artists and/or tell important stories or histories, integration of First Nations' cultural touchpoints.
- Event spaces (e.g. Farmers market, music events, with public electrical outlets and storage facilities).
- Colourful spaces including plazas, mini-parks, each adding flowering plants and green spaces.
- Welcoming and safer street at night by adding street lights or interactive and dynamic lighting.
- Rain-activated art, or other artistic elements, free library shelves, bicycle air pump, active transportation-powered food carts.
- Community gardens in the laneway.
- Information kiosks or boards with 'speakers' corner' for quick public information about events.
- Educational signage and information related to green rainwater infrastructure.
- Wayfinding along the path.
- Bring back the stream to flow back into Coal Harbour or Sunset Beach.

Level of investment

There was a diversity of opinions regarding the level of investment required:

- Many people were excited by the potential to transform the street into a pedestrian-centric street and a gathering place, with some noting this should be considered an investment rather than an expense as it could increase pedestrian traffic and boost local businesses along Robson and Davie.
- Other respondents wanted to only spend as much as necessary to meet core transportation, accessibility, and safety objectives as it is already pedestrian friendly and has car-free blocks like plazas and mini-parks: maintaining these spaces would be enough.
- Some suggested that the project could be phased, with basic and more functional elements introduced first, leaving room for enhancements later.

Concerns

Survey respondents were invited to share any concerns they had about the project. While the majority of respondents expressed support for the project, some expressed concerns related to:

- Potential increased congestion for vehicles and deliveries.
- Impacts to motor vehicle circulation.
- Potential impacts to emergency access.
- Costs to taxpayers.
- Construction impacts.
- Noise or late night use from nearby residents and businesses.
- Use of street, plazas and nearby empty storefronts to sleep, drink or use drugs.

Others who supported the project were concerned that the project may:

- Not be permanent (similar to Bute-Robson Plaza).
- Not be well maintained.
- Not be aesthetically pleasing.
- Not meet project goals e.g. separating different travel modes and speeds, connecting to the broader cycling network (noting that improvements beyond Bute Street itself are needed), or addressing safety concerns.

Next Steps

Phase two public engagement is scheduled to commence in late 2022. Staff will do the following:

- Share what was heard and learned in phase one and reveal refined goals based on this feedback, and a proposed design for Bute-Robson Plaza.
- Provide an update on the likely construction phasing for different parts of the Bute Greenway.
- Seek feedback on conceptual designs and options along select parts of the route.

As with phase one, a variety of engagement methods will be used to reach a broad range of people and allow for different levels of participation, including targeted stakeholder meetings, public surveys, and workshops. We expect to produce a more concise but refined information booklet to help the public and stakeholder groups better understanding the projects and the feedback requested.

We expect that Phase two will take a similar ‘digital/online first’ approach, but with more opportunities for in-person meetings, workshops or walking tours, to be informed by public health orders and the City’s policy on in-person meetings.