



# BUTE GREENWAY PHASE 1

## SHORE-TO-SHORE CONNECTION

### Share your feedback!

Please read the information guide and share your input by taking a survey. The survey will remain open until **December 13, 2021**.

Webpage: [vancouver.ca/bute-greenway](http://vancouver.ca/bute-greenway)

Project Email: [butegreenway@vancouver.ca](mailto:butegreenway@vancouver.ca)

## What is this guide?

This document provides an overview of the supporting policies, opportunities, and draft goals for walking, cycling, rolling and public space improvements along Bute Street.

It is intended to support the Bute Greenway public and stakeholder engagement that will inform the design of Bute Greenway and a permanent design for Bute-Robson Plaza.

For more information on the project, including open house materials, visit [vancouver.ca/bute-greenway](https://vancouver.ca/bute-greenway).

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## What's Happening?

Bute Street was identified as a potential new or improved walking, rolling and cycling route by the West End Community Plan and Public Benefits Strategy. Again in 2020, the City's 2020 Downtown Public Space Strategy identified Bute Street as a key shore-to-shore connection. That same year, Council also adopted 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.

### A Shore-to-Shore Connection

Staff are exploring different approaches to improve and prioritize Bute Street for:

- » Walking, rolling, and cycling for people of all ages and abilities; and,
- » Providing a variety of public spaces to play, sit, relax, socialize, enjoy food or drink, or host small community events

As part of this project, we will also advance a conceptual design for a permanent Bute-Robson Plaza.

A map of the project area is shown on the right.

*\*Private buildings are not part of the project scope.*

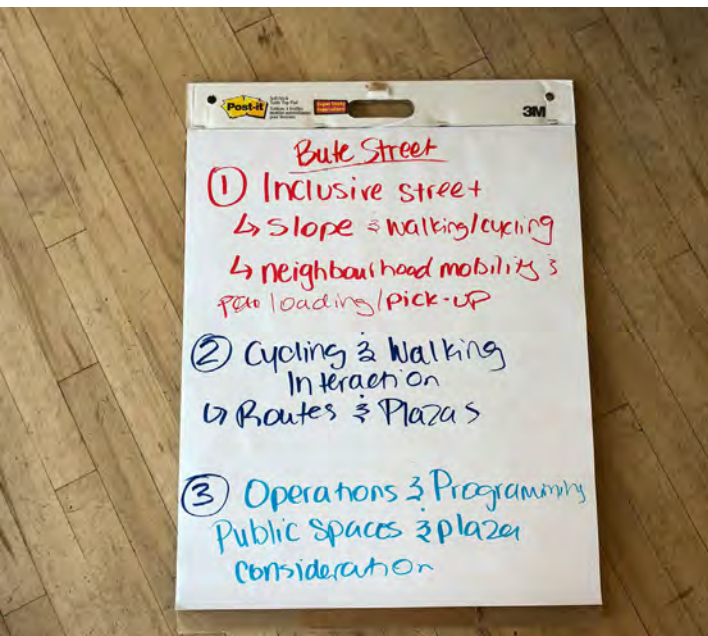
### LEGEND

- PROJECT AREA\*
- BUTE STREET
- PLAZAS
- POP-UP PLAZAS
- BUTE-HARO MINI-PARK
- ACTIVE LANEWAY
- VIEW POINTS
- SEAWALL/ MINI-PARKS
- AMENITIES: SCHOOL, COMMUNITY CENTER, SKYTRAIN STATION
- DOWNTOWN/WEST LOOP

*\*private buildings are not part of the project scope*



# Previous Engagements



2017 AND 2019

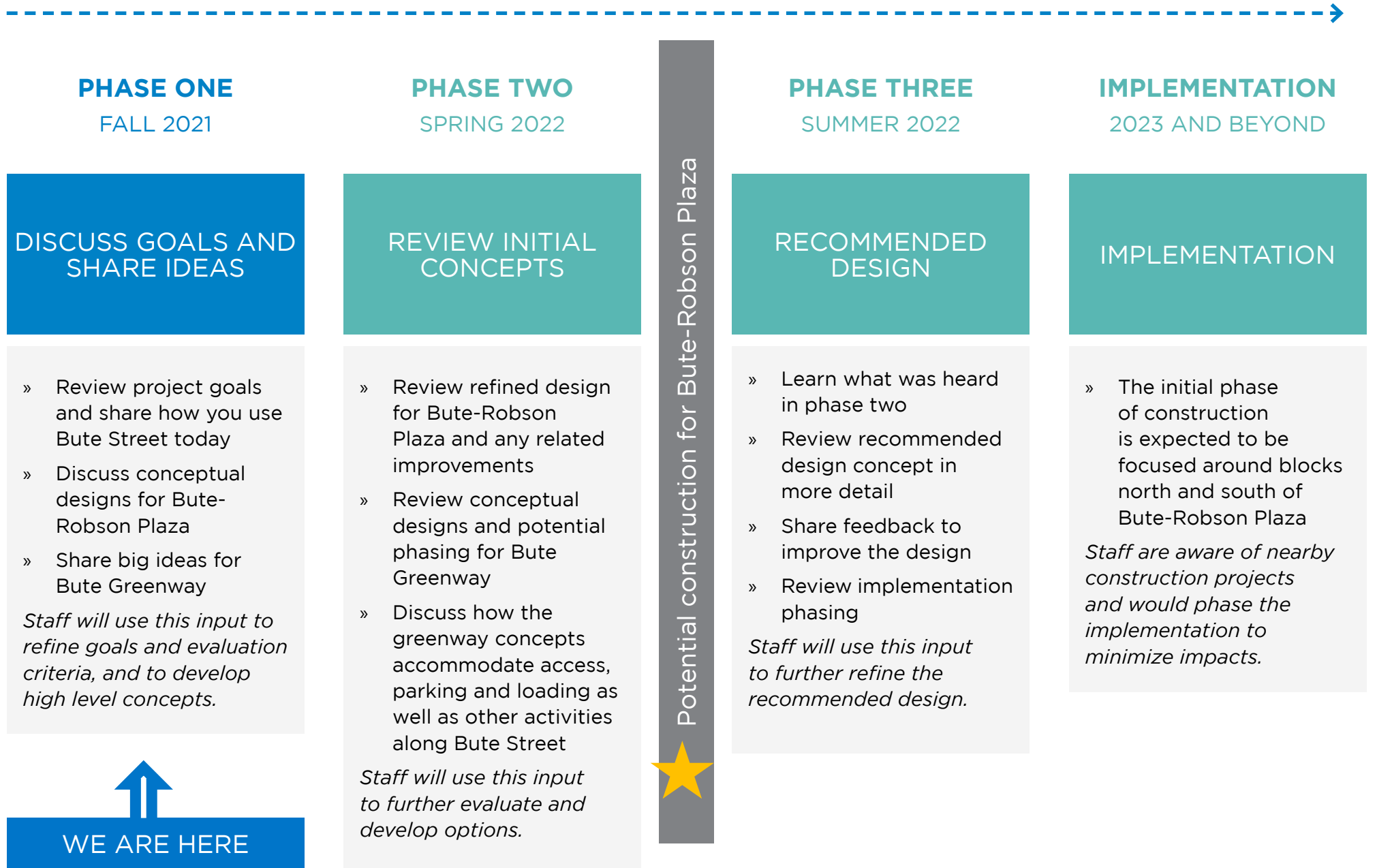
## PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENTS

- » Public engagements for trial and interim phases of Bute-Robson Plaza.
- » Series of workshops with youth, seniors and key stakeholders to identify opportunities for public space and walking, cycling and rolling improvements along Bute Street.
- » Pop-up engagement through Places for People Downtown Strategy to learn what's working what can be improved at Bute-Robson Plaza and big ideas for Bute Greenway.

*Staff used this input to create draft project goals for Bute Greenway and develop a draft concept for a permanent design of Bute-Robson Plaza.*



# Stakeholder and Public Engagement Timeline







Bute Street is an important 1.5 kilometre north-south route through the Downtown peninsula. It connects Burrard Inlet to False Creek through various neighbourhoods like the West End, the Central Business District, and Coal Harbour and links popular destinations like Sunset Beach Park and Harbour Green Park. It also supports diverse land uses with places to play, shop, and work along with civic facilities and a variety of housing types.



# History of Bute Street Since Colonial Settlement of the West End



**1862**  
District Lot 185 is purchased for \$550.75



**1957**  
Six storey height limit lifted, high-rise rental construction begins



**1980**  
Bute identified as having the most north-south foot traffic through a traffic calming process. Overwhelming support voiced for the option with the most mini-parks and traffic diverters, but proposed road widening to a standard 8.5m that would have impacted trees and sidewalks on Bute Street



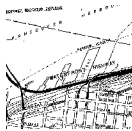
**2002**  
Harbour Green Park opens at the Burrard Inlet end of Bute Street



**2015**  
Bute identified on the five year cycling map



**1886**  
City of Vancouver incorporated



**1960**  
Proposal to build a freeway through the West End.



**1987**  
Bute road widening abandoned, other elements of traffic reduction plan implemented largely as proposed



**2003**  
Mole Hill renovation for heritage preservation completed with mid-block pedestrianized connections



**2016**  
Bute-Davie reopens as the now-permanent Jim Deva Plaza



**1887**  
Initial subdivision and development of the West End begins



**1971**  
Revised freeway/third crossing proposal, West End Community Council joins in formal opposition



**1982**  
Bute road widening abandoned, other elements of traffic reduction plan implemented largely as proposed



**2003**  
Bute from Melville to Cordova is established as a Neighbourhood Commercial Centre in planning policy



**2017**  
Bute-Robson Pavement-to-Plaza opens



**1906**  
Construction of houses completed on the block that would become Mole Hill



**1973**  
First mini-parks and diverters implemented west of Denman to calm traffic



**1985**  
"The Centre," now QMUNITY, opens its Bute location as BC's queer, trans, and Two-Spirit resource centre



**2004**  
Terry Wallace annual memorial breakfasts instated at Pride as example of community activations of Bute Street at Davie



**2017**  
West End Summer Art Markets begin at Jim Deva



**1927**  
Introduction of six storey height limit



**1974**  
Revised proposal to widen Bute Street to accommodate motor vehicle traffic as part of a Bute-Thurlow couplet in a tunnel under Nelson Park.



**1990**  
Coal Harbour Official Development Plan adopted, which extends Cordova Street to create a new Bute Street northern end with expanded water view



**2005**  
West End Bicycle Friendly Streets modifies existing diverters along Bute to encourage cycling



**2020**  
Haro-Bute water main construction begins



**1940**  
Small apartment buildings constructed in significant numbers



**1975**  
Gordon Neighbourhood House letter of opposition specifically cites impacts of motor vehicle traffic on children, families, and seniors.



**1996**  
Mole Hill designation and policy planning begins



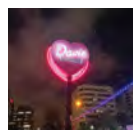
**2013**  
West End Community Plan adopted, interim Heart of Davie Village Plaza and rainbow crosswalks installed on Bute Street



**1950**  
City begins purchase of blocks that would eventually become Nelson Park and Mole Hill



**1978**  
First Pride Parade, Davie Street. Centre near Bute, emerges as a gay neighbourhood



**1999**  
"Davie Village" name adopted by businesses



**2015**  
Community campaign for a new playground on Bute Street at Lord Roberts Annex

## Bute Street intersects two key villages - Robson and Davie

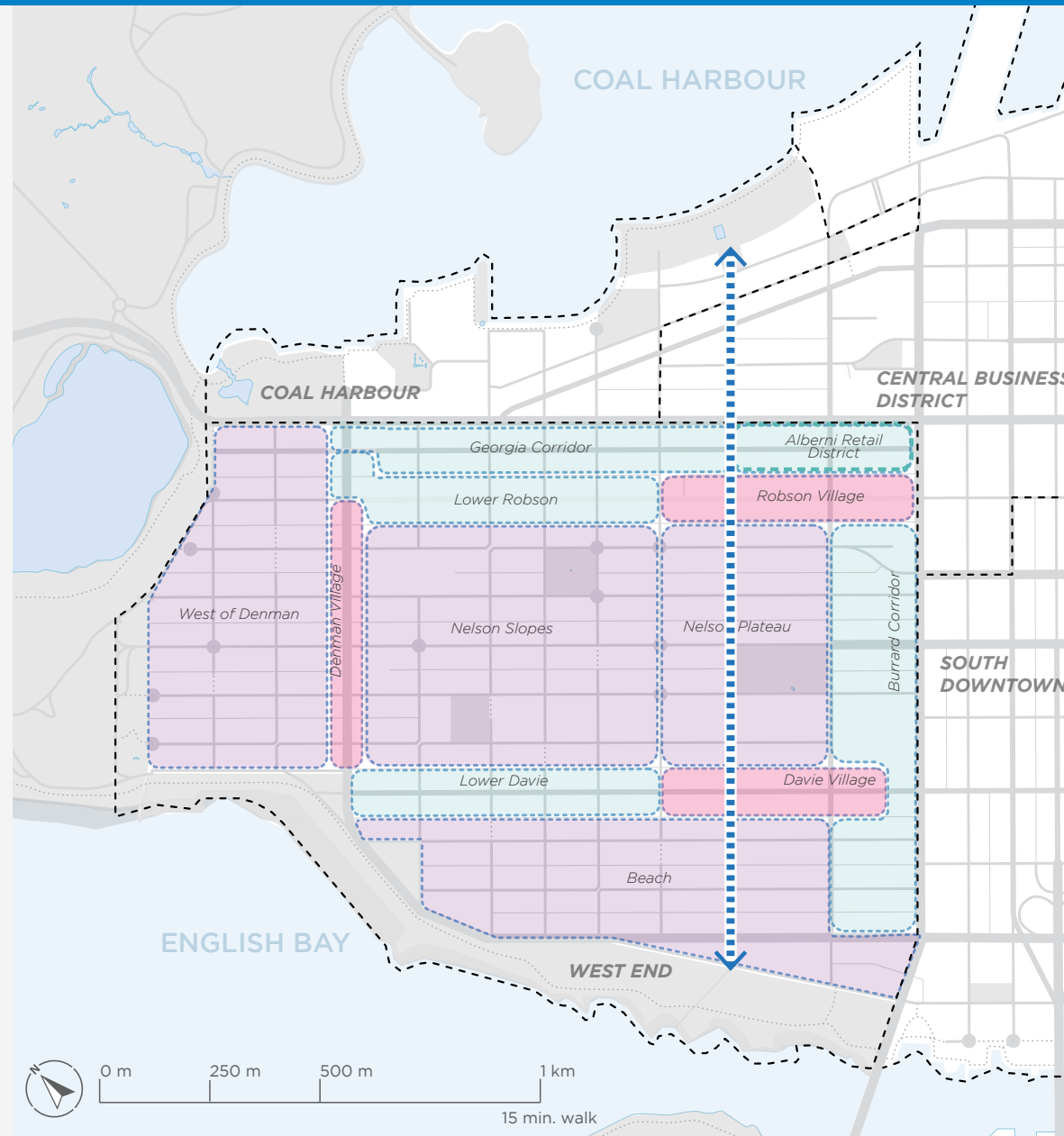
The West End is one community, but is made up of several distinct areas that help define its character including Robson and Davie Villages.

**Robson Village** serves as a major regional shopping and entertainment district, with primarily low-rise buildings built between the 1960s and 1990s. It provides a strong connection between the older the West End neighbourhoods and the Central Business District. The sidewalks in Robson Village have some of the highest pedestrian volumes in the downtown.

**Davie village** supports local businesses, an active nightlife, and serves as a hub for the LGBTQ community. It is a vibrant district catering to locals and visitors alike during the day and late into the evenings.

It is a walkable place with primarily low-rise buildings that embraces celebration, socializing and having fun. Situated at the crest of a hill rising from English Bay, the Village itself is relatively flat and helps knit together the surrounding high density neighbourhoods in the West End and Downtown South. It's distinct flavour is recognized and celebrated through the use of colour and lighting, and enhanced as a space for local celebration, events, and gathering.

Read more: *West End Community Plan*





## Related Plans and Policies



### Climate Emergency Response

In November 2020, Council approved the Climate Emergency Action Plan to increase our efforts to address climate change.

One of the six 'big moves' to reduce Vancouver's carbon pollution is to accelerate the target of making two-thirds of trips by active transportation and transit to 2030, advancing the Transportation 2040 mode share target by 10 years.

### COVID-19 Mobility Response and Recovery

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and Council's 'Reallocation of Road Space to Support Shared Use During Pandemic' direction in May 2020, staff have been re-shaping how we use our streets and public spaces to help residents physically distance and provide opportunities to exercise and travel more comfortably.

Improving sustainable mobility options, more places for people to sit, socialize, play, exercise and access local businesses will support Vancouver's recovery and help our transition back to normal.

## The West End Community Plan

In the **West End Community Plan and Public Benefit Strategy** Bute St was identified as a potential new/improved walking/cycling route. The intersecting high streets - Robson and Davie were identified as routes for potential pedestrian and public realm improvements.

The West End Public Benefits Strategy and the **current Capital Plan** have identified the Bute Greenway as a priority project, particularly in the context of an increasing number of the West End residents and demand for a diversity of public spaces.





## Places For People Downtown Public Space Strategy



**1**  
**For All,  
by All**



**2**  
**The “Right”  
Supply**



**3**  
**Design for  
People**



**4**  
**Day-long,  
Year-long**



**5**  
**Nature and  
Resilience**



**6**  
**Connecting  
Places**

After engaging on Places for People Downtown six strategies (shown above) and the three key moves (shown below) we heard the interest in and potential for changes along Bute Street. The strategies and key moves represent a set of integrated spatial transformations that build on the Downtown assets, guide how the public space network will be expanded, improved and connected. Read more about Places for People Downtown at [vancouver.ca/home-property-development/places-for-people-downtown](https://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/places-for-people-downtown)



**Complete the Loops**



**Connect Shore-to-Shore**



**Fill in the Gaps**

## Rain City Strategy: Blue-green systems

Bute Street is identified as a blue-green system corridor in the Places for People Downtown Strategy. **Blue-green systems** first emerged as an action in the Streets and Public Spaces Action Plan, published as part of the **Rain City Strategy**. Blue-green systems are networks of park-like corridors that manage water, contribute to the urban forest, and provide active transportation routes.

These systems seek to protect the ecological, hydrological, and social values of the urban landscape and water cycle, and to provide resilient measures to address climate change and flood management, increase connectivity, and enhance access to nature.



Sunset Park



Richards Green Complete Street

**Green rainwater infrastructure** is an approach to urban water management that protects, restores, or mimics the natural water cycle. It uses soils, plants, trees, and built structures such as green roofs, bioswales and rain gardens to capture, store, and clean rainwater before returning it to our groundwater, atmosphere or waterways. It increases the city's resilience to climate change, and supports neighbourhood livability and biodiversity.



## Active and Green West End and Downtown Connections

Approved by Council in 2012, **Transportation 2040** is a long-term strategic vision for the city that helps guide transportation and land use decisions and public investments for the years ahead. The plan identifies portions of Bute St as a “Potential Pavement-to-Plazas Project” and “Existing Pedestrianized Street”.

The Bute St connection was also identified on the **5-Year Cycling Network: Additions & Upgrades (2018-2022) Map**.

**Greenest City Plan** suggests, supports active travel and that: “All Vancouver residents live within a 5-minute walk of a park, greenway, or other green space.”



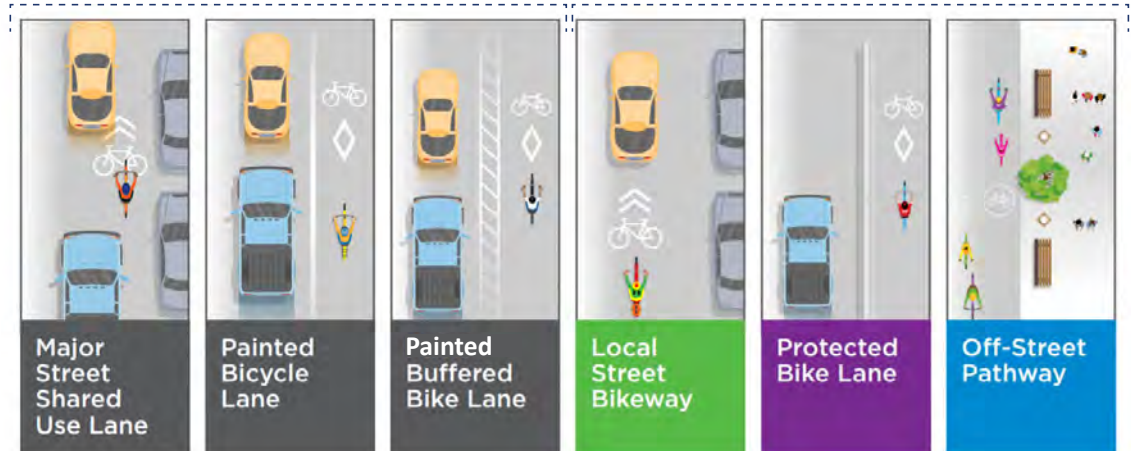
Examples of traffic calming and pedestrian improvements in West End

On busy streets, the All Ages and Abilities walking and cycling network improves comfort and safety with protected bike lanes, traffic calming measures and thoughtfully designed intersections.

Filling the gaps between existing All Ages and Abilities routes is an effective way to improve comfort, convenience and safety for people walking, cycling and rolling to progress towards our Climate Emergency targets.

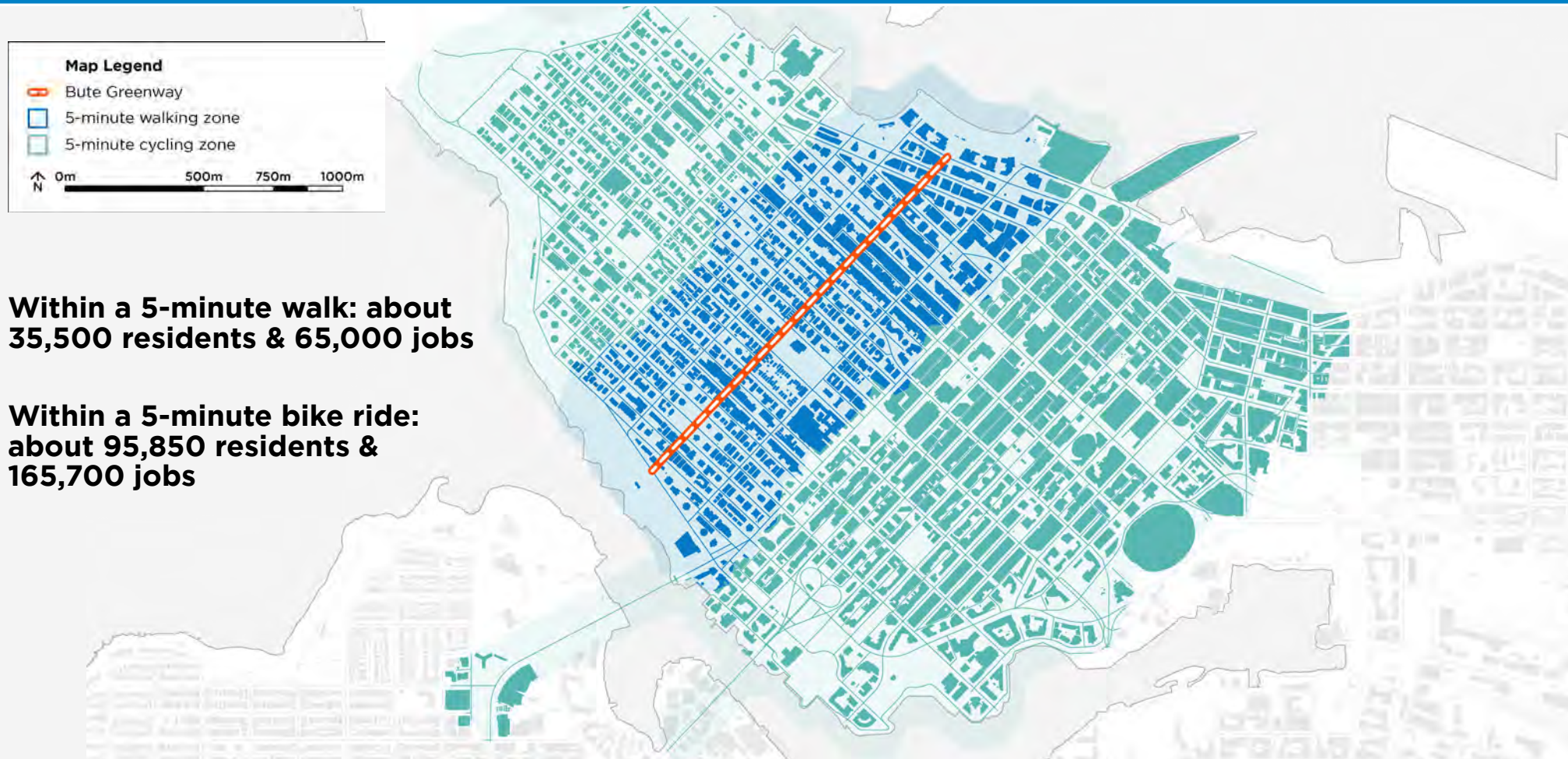
*Unsuitable for AAA*

*Suitable for AAA*





## Serving Many People Living & Working in the West End & Downtown



**Within a 5-minute walk: about 35,500 residents & 65,000 jobs**

**Within a 5-minute bike ride: about 95,850 residents & 165,700 jobs**

The West End is one of the densest neighbourhood in the city and is home to over 47,000 people (census 2016). At 38%, the The West End has the highest walk to work mode share of any other neighbourhood in the City, making connections like Bute Street an important part of the walking network.

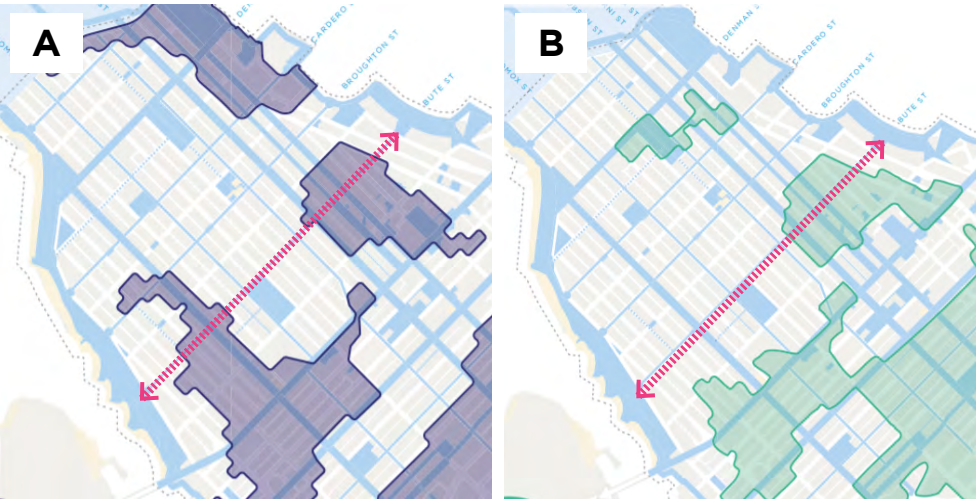
A shore-to-shore greenway would serve many people living and working nearby and fill a gap in the city's walking and cycling networks. The project would also serve people further away who visit the area for recreational purposes.



## Limited Public Spaces

### Downtown Public Space Strategy - Gap Analysis

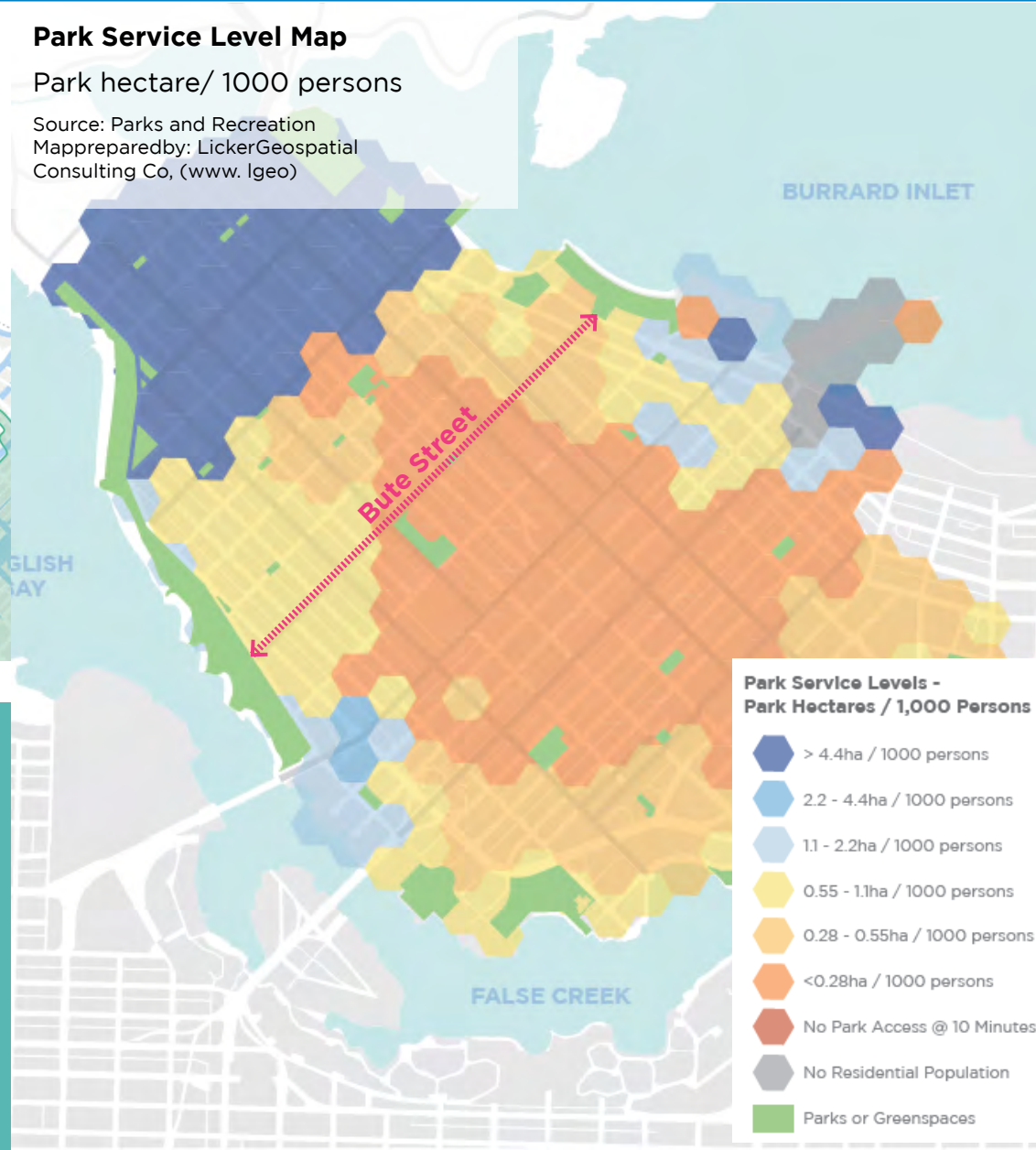
The maps below show areas in the Downtown that are 5 minutes or more away from (A) formal play activities (B) streets or open spaces that offer a place for contemplation, rest or some shelter from urban noise.



### Park Service Level Map

Park hectare/ 1000 persons

Source: Parks and Recreation  
Map prepared by: LickerGeospatial  
Consulting Co, (www. lgeo)



20% of the City's population lives within the downtown core which comprises only 4% of the total land within Vancouver. Due to this high population density, the area is home to some of the hardest working parks and green spaces in the City.

Vancouver's Downtown is active and growing fast, and the public realm will need to work harder to accommodate more people in the future.

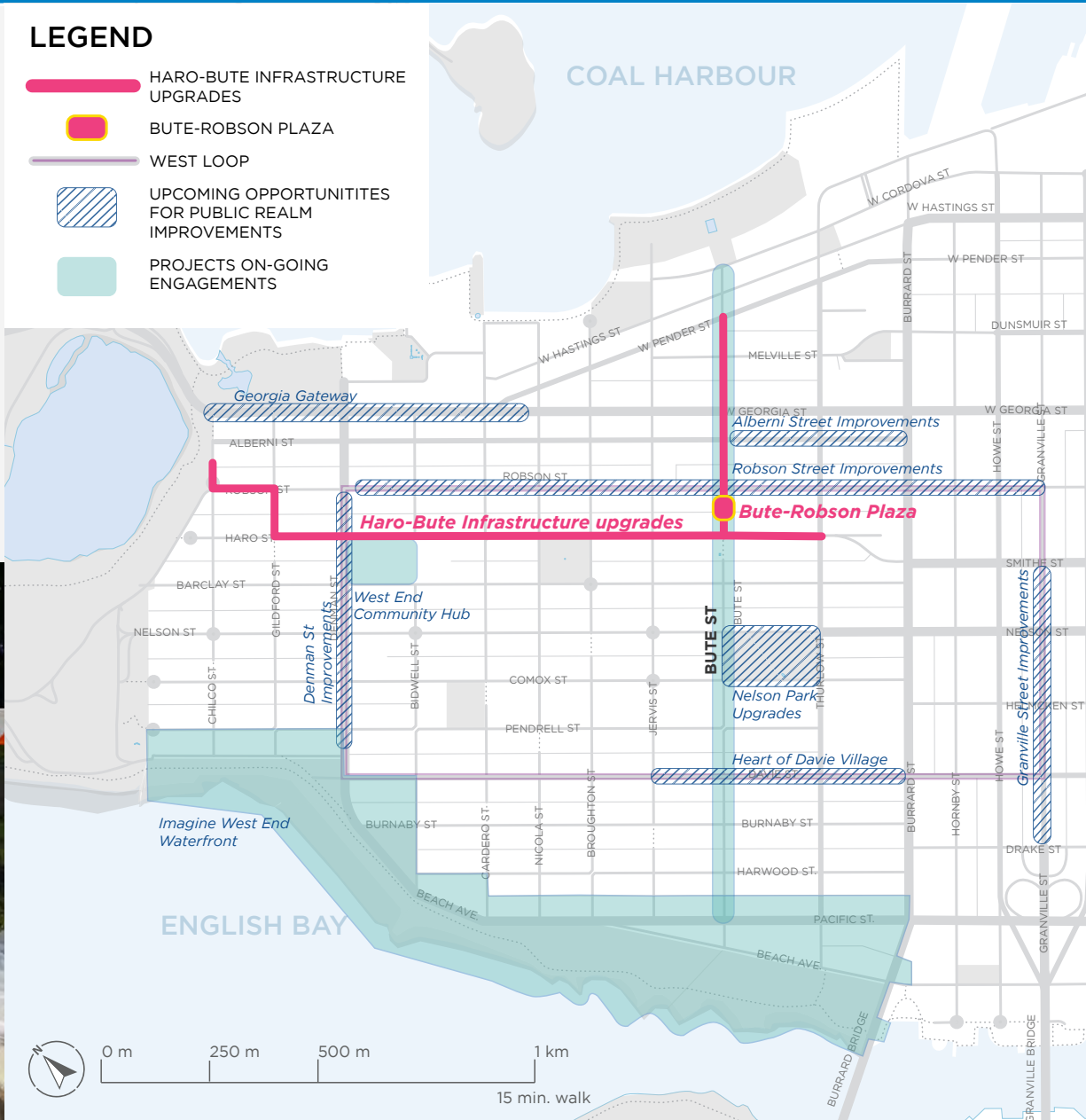
The map on the right shows there is limited (<0.28 ha/ 1000 persons) park space within walking distance for the West End and Downtown residents.

# Coordination with Nearby Projects

We're currently upgrading critical water infrastructure and improving safety for all users along sections of Haro, Bute, Denman, Gilford, and Chilco streets. Work includes replacing the existing water main below Haro and Bute (between W Pender St, and Haro St) with a larger-capacity system.

**We have an opportunity to coordinate Bute-Robson Plaza's permanent design with water-main upgrades, to minimize the disruption and begin construction in summer 2022.**

Read more about Haro and Bute Infrastructure Upgrades at [vancouver.ca/harobuteupgrades](http://vancouver.ca/harobuteupgrades).





# Draft Project Goals

1. Create a shore-to-shore connection that provides intuitive **links to key destinations** and enhances the **continuous pedestrian experience**.
2. Make Bute Street **accessible, safe, and comfortable** for people of all ages and abilities to **walk, roll and cycle**.
3. Improve the ability of the street to **manage urban rainwater runoff** and its **ecological function**.
4. Accommodate **emergency access** and **motor vehicle circulation** in the neighbourhood.

## BUTE GREENWAY PHASE 1

### SHORE-TO-SHORE CONNECTION

## Share your feedback!

We have developed four potential goals for the re-design of the Bute Street, which are based on previous conversations with stakeholders and the City's broader transportation plans and policies. Help us refine these goals and generate big ideas for the future Bute Greenway.

## Draft Goal 1



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

*Some ways to achieve this goal:*

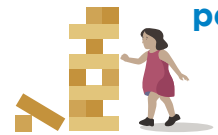
- » Provide a **comfortable walking route** that **links key destinations** like parks, waterfront, shopping streets, plazas, schools, offices etc.
- » Integrate more **seating options** along the corridor to **improve comfort** and **accessibility**.
- » Explore opportunities to include **playful** and joyful elements, public art, **places for rest** and reflection, and other **community-identified priorities**.
- » Utilize the slopes and **celebrate views** (e.g. North Vancouver, mountains, English Bay).
- » Create or enhance **existing plazas** and **public spaces** along the corridor so that each reflect the character of their area and **support community aspirations**.
- » Foster **welcoming public spaces** that invite **all people** to participate fully in public life.



Example: Seaside Greenway, Vancouver



Example: Ontario Greenway, Vancouver





## Neighbourhood Spirit

The West End is well-known for its distinctive character and charm. It is a home to a wide range of cultural spaces that add to the livability, character and identity of the community. Formal public art in the West end are generally concentrated along the waterfront but there are some examples within the neighbourhood. Examples include murals, memorial pieces and other contributions either through community or private development.



The West End houses with boulevard gardens



Murals by local artists



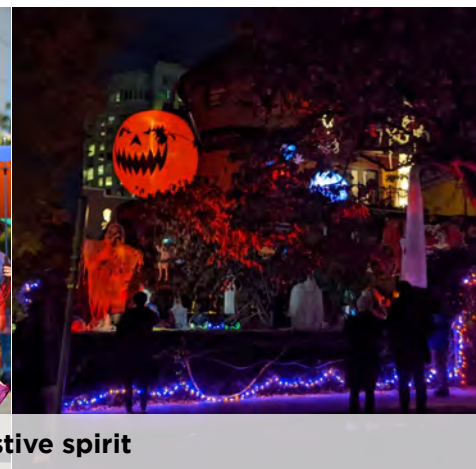
Chihuly art work



Community art - "The Four Elements" mushroom, bird houses/memorial, the West End arrows

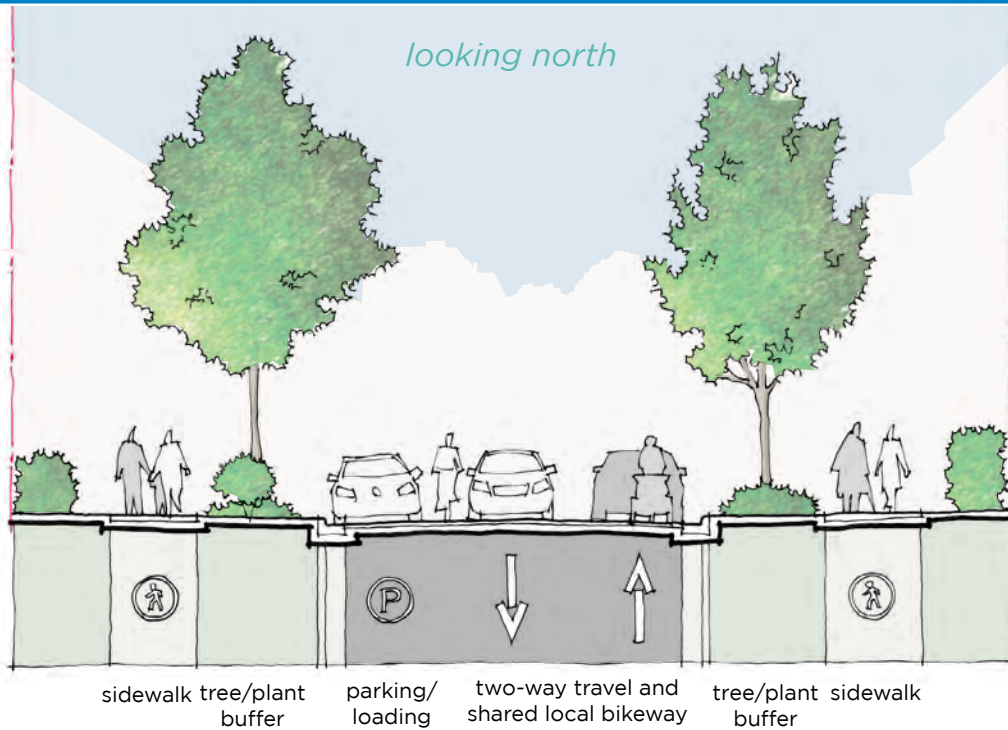


Festive spirit





## Street Experience



The current design of Bute Street includes:

- » A local two-way transportation corridor
- » Narrow sidewalks on both sides
- » A shared local bikeway
- » A mix of residential permit parking, metered parking and some passenger/loading zones
- » A variety of plants and trees as a buffer

### Variety of land uses and facades



**Mixed use with patios**



**Mole Hill houses**



**Seniors' housing**

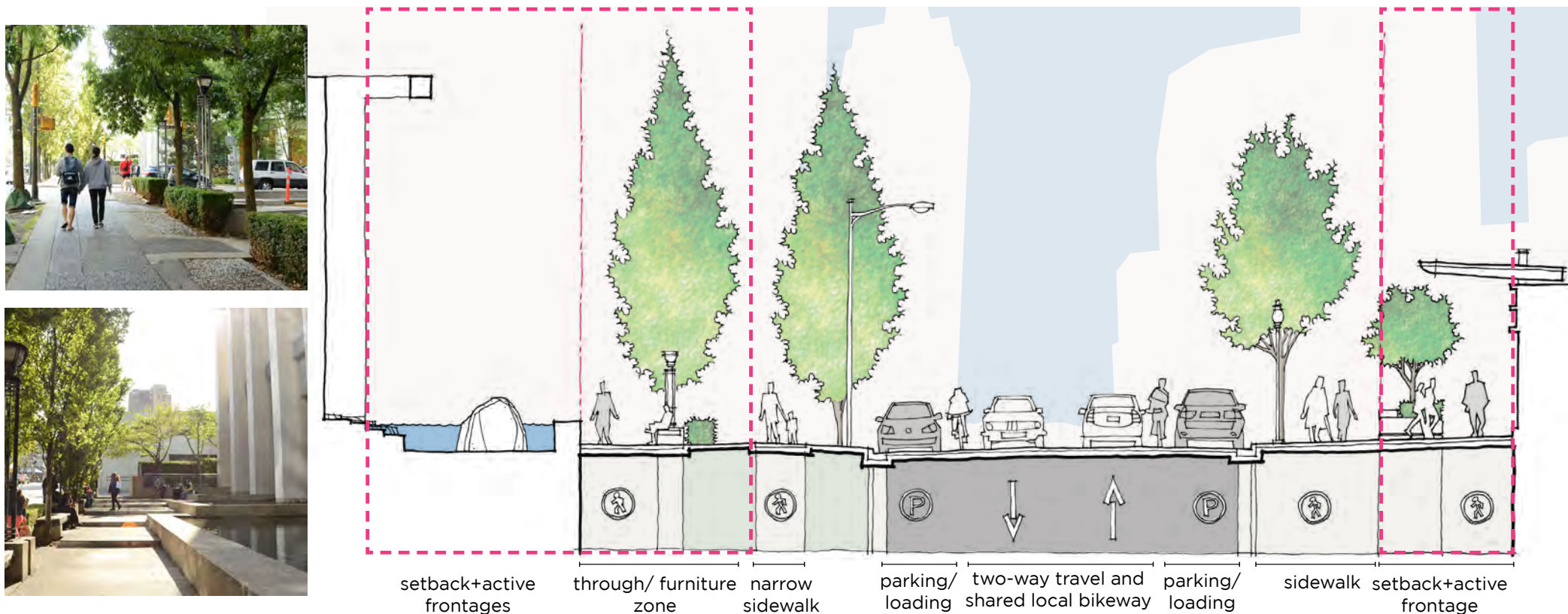


**Converted houses**



## Street Experience

Some building typologies along Bute Streets have setbacks which come in many types and sizes and are often part of the streetscape. Some setbacks create a buffer between public and private realms, while others seem like they are part of the public realm but don't invite use. Residential setbacks on Bute St add character to the public space. Many entrances, detailing, stoops and planting add to the street-life experience. Commercial setbacks could be utilized more to create more opportunities to stop and stay.



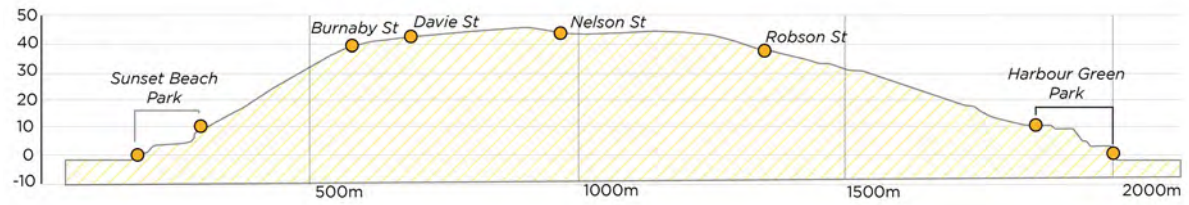
What are your big ideas for these setback spaces along Bute Greenway?

# Bute Street Today

## Views

Bute Street has hills at north and south ends. These natural slopes offers incredible and sometimes unexpected viewpoints that can contribute to enhanced travel experience, identity, character, and sense of place along the future greenway.

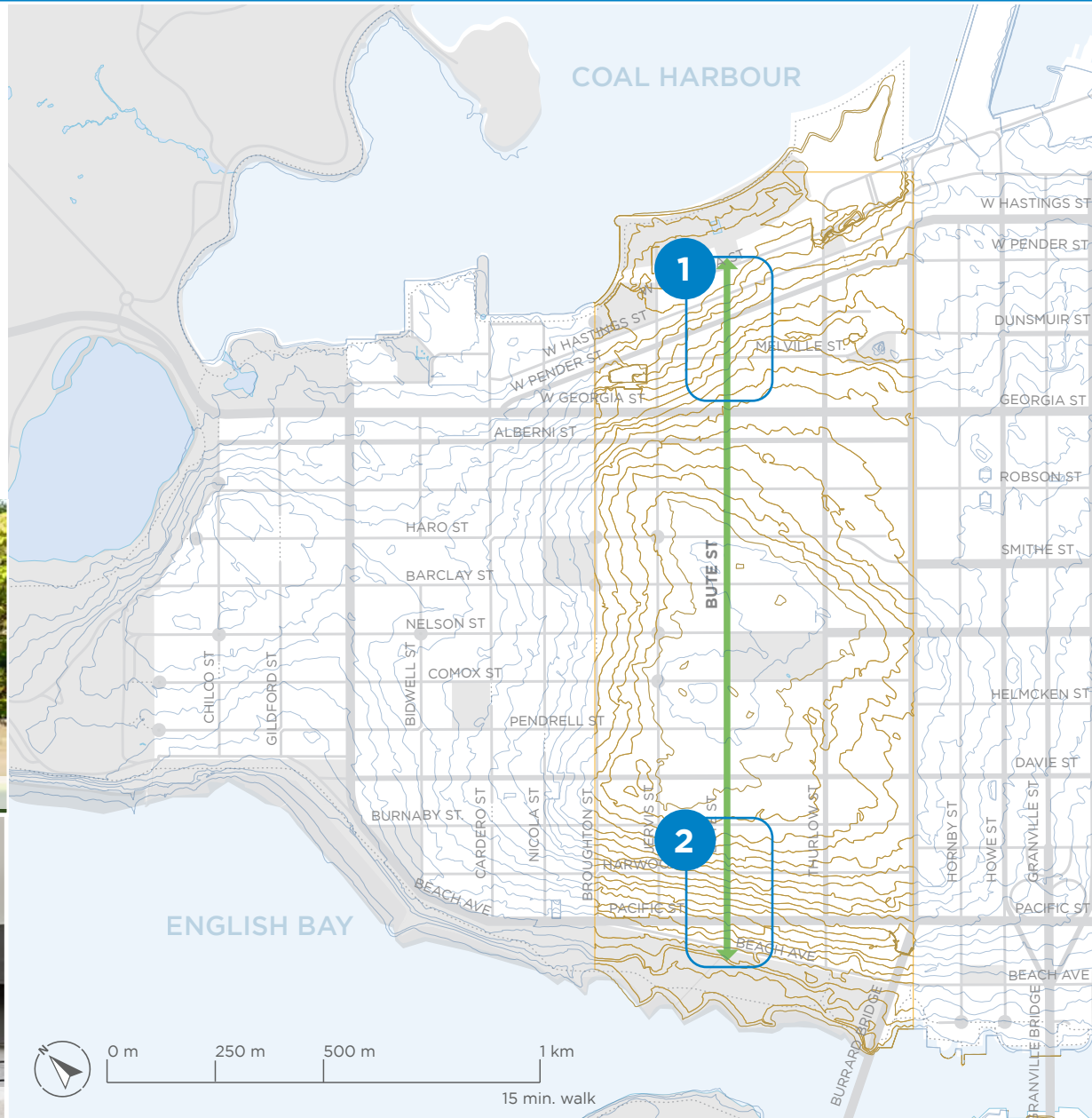
These views can be enhanced with seating at strategic locations and the natural slopes also provide an opportunity to implement rainwater management and improve ecological function.



North shore views from Harbour Green Park



English Bay views from Bute St - south of Pacific St





## Link Key Destinations - Parks, Waterfront, Shopping Streets, Plazas etc.



1. Harbour Green Park



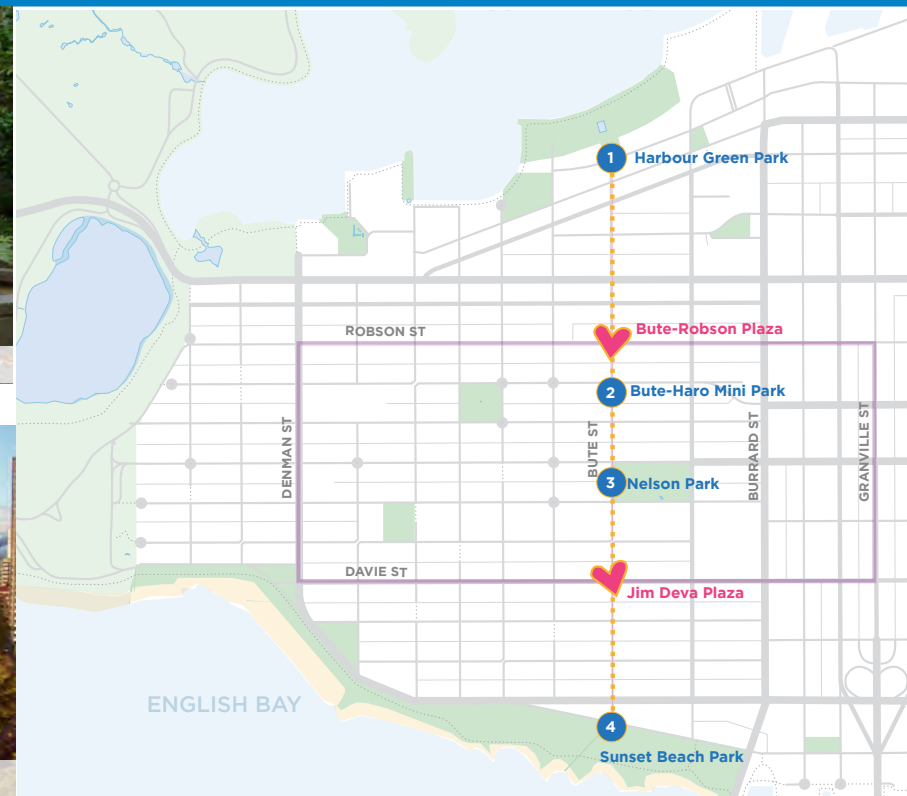
2. Bute-Haro Mini Park



3. Nelson Park



4. Sunset Beach Park & English Bay



Bute Street weaves the existing public realm network and links key high streets - Davie, Robson and Alberni Streets - with other public and community spaces along the stretch such as Nelson Park, Jim Deva Plaza, and Bute-Robson Plaza. Creating a continuous pedestrian experience would enhance the link to these active community spaces.

**(1) Harbour Green Park** offers north shore views, has a fountain for water play and varied seating options. The majority of the activity observed is people sitting in commercial seating areas. **(2) Bute-Haro Mini-Park** functions as a walkway within the neighbourhood. It offers public seating for residents and by-passers to stop and stay. **(3) Nelson Park** is a community meeting place offering a wide range of things to do in the summer. In the winter, activity is mostly related to the dog park and the play area by the school. A local farmers' market that operates from May to October invites hundreds of people out shopping alongside community gardens, play areas and the dog park. **(3) Sunset Beach Park and English Bay** are local and metropolitan destinations. These are two of the busiest public spaces in the summer.



## Link Key Destinations - Robson and Davie Streets

**Bute-Robson Plaza** and **Jim Deva Plaza** are both neighbourhood hubs forming the hearts of the villages. Building upon traffic calming measures along Bute Street, the plazas convert the roadway into places for people to gather while supporting walking, cycling, and rolling. While some of the public spaces do not cater to everyday life, these plazas show all-day activity on both weekdays and weekends. They offer places to stop, linger and stay along with public seating that does not require you 'pay to stay'. These spaces support retail streets that lack public seating. This typology is dependent on community buy-in and stewardship. Having partners to help maintain and support programming is crucial for the success of the space.

To mark the **"Heart of Davie Village"**, permanent **rainbow crosswalks** are painted at the intersection of Davie and Bute Streets to celebrate the 35th anniversary of Pride and to mark the historical and cultural importance of Davie Village.

### Bute-Robson Plaza



### Jim Deva Plaza





# Covid-19 Mobility & Public Life Recovery Initiatives

In 2020, the City of Vancouver launched its Restart Smart Vancouver program for recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of the community and economic recovery response, we transformed streets to create public space for safe physical distancing, community life, and to support local businesses.

The City collaborated with Business Improvement Areas (BIAs), local businesses and communities to re-purpose street space or extend sidewalks in busy areas to support the accelerated reopening of local businesses and communities. Read more about the initiatives at [vancouver.ca/making-streets-for-people-program](http://vancouver.ca/making-streets-for-people-program) and [vancouver.ca/pop-up-plazas](http://vancouver.ca/pop-up-plazas).

Along with two existing plazas - Jim Deva Plaza (permanent), Bute-Robson Plaza (semi-permanent), we installed two COVID-19 response pop-up plazas:

- » **Bute-Alberni (removed July 2020)**
- » **Bute-Davie (North)**

We also made some temporary changes on:

- » Robson Street (between Jervis and Burrard streets) to create more room for people to move, wait for transit, and access local business by expanding sidewalks
- » Davie Street to support nearby businesses by adding temporary patios



## What We Did

In the context of an overall vision for Bute Greenway, we have an opportunity to learn from these temporary pop up plazas. To advance the goals of the Bute Greenway project, we will need to consider traffic calming along the corridor, especially the busier section north of Robson, and yet maintain local access to residences and businesses. Plazas are one way to achieve this goal, but not the only one. We can also explore traffic calming with passive landscaping and green infrastructure, recurring event spaces, or other features that reflect the character of the area and community aspirations.



**Bute-Alberni: Room to Queue transition to Pop-up Plaza**  
(Photo: Downtown Vancouver BIA)

### Steward Partner:

Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association  
(provided planters, coordinated art, manages furniture)

### Improvements made:

- » Planters, painted mural, and fabric art

### Site characteristics:

- » Adjacent to businesses and residential buildings; used primarily for additional queuing and seating space



**Bute-Davie (North): Room to Queue transition to Pop-up Plaza**

### Steward Partner:

The West End Business Improvement Association

### Improvements made:

- » Planters, and benches

### Site characteristics:

- » Located at Davie Village node, includes public bike share station and two washrooms; used primarily for movement space and some seating

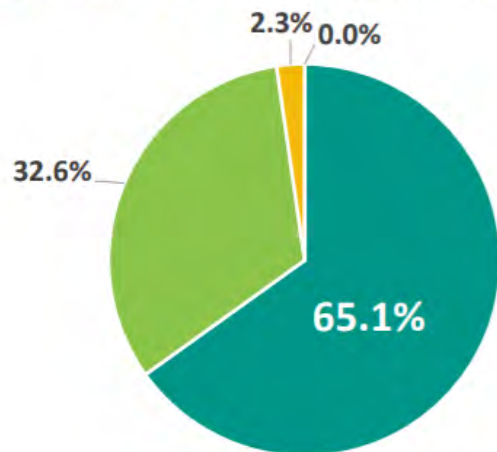


## What We Heard

Source: 2020 Pop-up Plaza survey

### Bute-Alberni Plaza

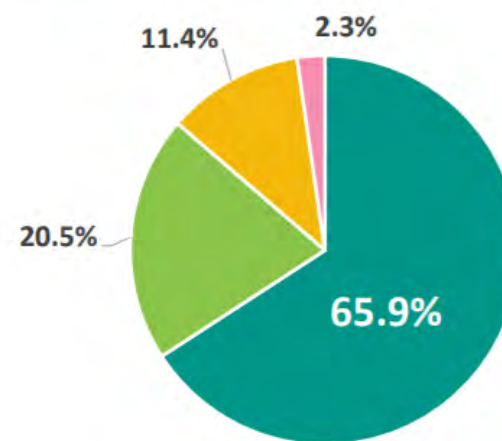
■ Yes ■ No ■ Somewhat ■ No opinion / don't know



43 responses

### Bute-Davie North Plaza

■ Yes ■ No ■ Somewhat ■ No opinion / don't know



44 responses

#### Benefits

- » Makes area more car-free and pedestrian-friendly
- » Need for more public spaces
- » Improves volume of foot traffic to businesses
- » Important for mental health

#### Challenges

- » Restricts parking for local businesses
- » Concerns about noise or late night use from nearby residents and businesses
- » Impacts to motor vehicle traffic and access

#### Benefits

- » Makes area more car-free and pedestrian-friendly
- » Need for more public spaces
- » Important for mental health

#### Challenges

- » Limited area for seating
- » Impacts to circulation in the laneway
- » People using plaza and nearby empty storefronts to sleep, drink or use drugs\*

*\*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.*

## Greenway Corridors and Features - Local Expressions

**According to 1995 Greenways Plan,** “Greenways are “green paths” for pedestrians and cyclists. Their purpose is to expand the opportunities for urban recreation and to enhance the experience of nature and city life. They can be waterfront promenades, urban walks, environmental demonstration trails, heritage walks and nature trails.”

Greenways range from traffic-calmed local streets to car-free spaces such as the Seawall to car-lite spaces such as Ontario Greenway. Public space considerations help inform the character of the street - including how and how much roadway to repurpose, how to prioritize, and how to arrange the street.

Some of the greenway features that we have tested in Vancouver include improvements like expanded parks, pocket plazas, increased landscaping, improved rainwater management, public art, seating, and drinking fountains.



What is your vision for Bute Greenway?



# Inspirations



**Unexpected spaces**  
(Image: HCMA Architecture)



**Variety of seating - parklets, plazas, patios**

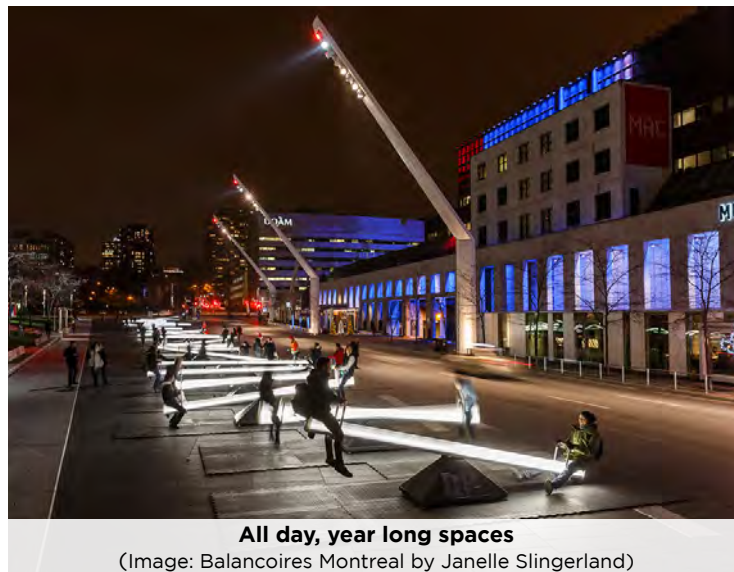


**Whimsical spaces on slopes**  
(Image: Superkilen by Karen Mardahl)

What are your big ideas to achieve this goal?



**TULIP - Your Place at the Table! - Community dining space**  
(Image: ADHOC architectes)



**All day, year long spaces**  
(Image: Balancoires Montreal by Janelle Slingerland)



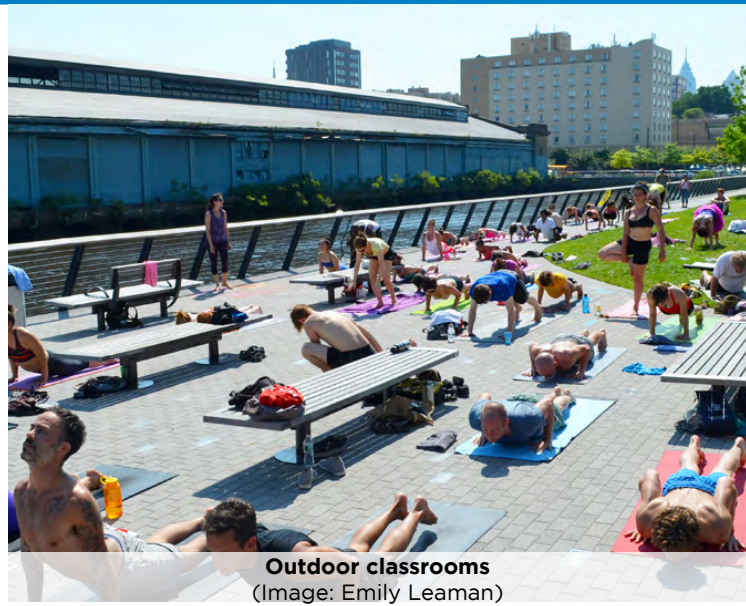
**Programmable space**  
(Queen Elizabeth Park, Vancouver; Image: Steve Chou)



# Inspirations



**Busking zones**  
(Image: Ted McGrath)



**Outdoor classrooms**  
(Image: Emily Leaman)



**Water slide along slopes**  
(North Vancouver)

## What are your big ideas to achieve this goal?



**Colourful play and rest spaces**  
(Montreal)



**Continuous pedestrian street**  
(Montreal)



**Splash Areas**



## Draft Goal 2



# 2

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

*Some ways to achieve this goal:*

- » Provide a **link to** the rest of the **sustainable transportation network** including Comox Greenway, Burrard Bridge etc.
- » Provide **sufficient space, accessible paths** to accommodate high volumes of users of varying abilities.
- » **Minimize conflicts** between people walking, cycling, lingering, and driving.
- » **Improve accessibility** and **safety** at key intersections.



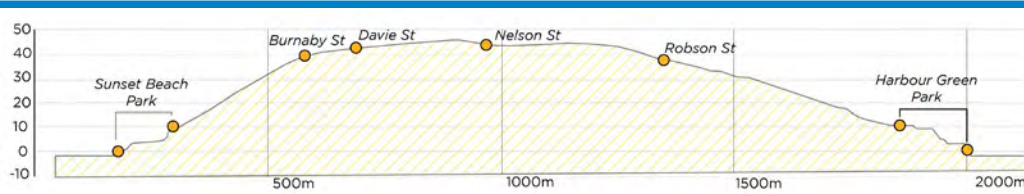
**Example: 7th Avenue at Oak St**



**Example: Prince Edward at 10th Avenue**



## Challenges



**Steep grades make walking, cycling and rolling difficult**

Most north-south streets in West End and Downtown have steep hills closer to the shores. Steep hills can be very challenging, particularly for young riders, seniors, people who are new to cycling, and some people with disabilities.

In new construction, a maximum sustained slope of 5% (or 8% with breaks) is generally considered wheelchair accessible. This can be particularly challenging while rolling on longer sections of street.

Most people cycling can maintain a speed of 10 km/hr—a speed that helps to maintain balance—on a grade of 4% or less. At grades above 8%, many people have a hard time keeping their balance and have to dismount.



**Narrow sidewalks sometimes force people to walk on the roadway**



# Challenges



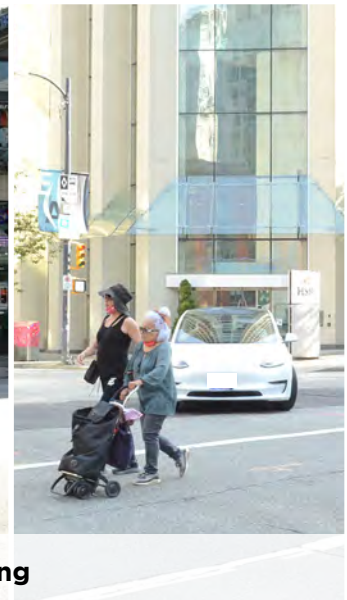
Lack of cycling facilities force people cycling to mix with traffic



Intersection street corners are challenged by high pedestrian volumes



Unprotected intersections feel unsafe and contribute to conflicts between road users especially while turning



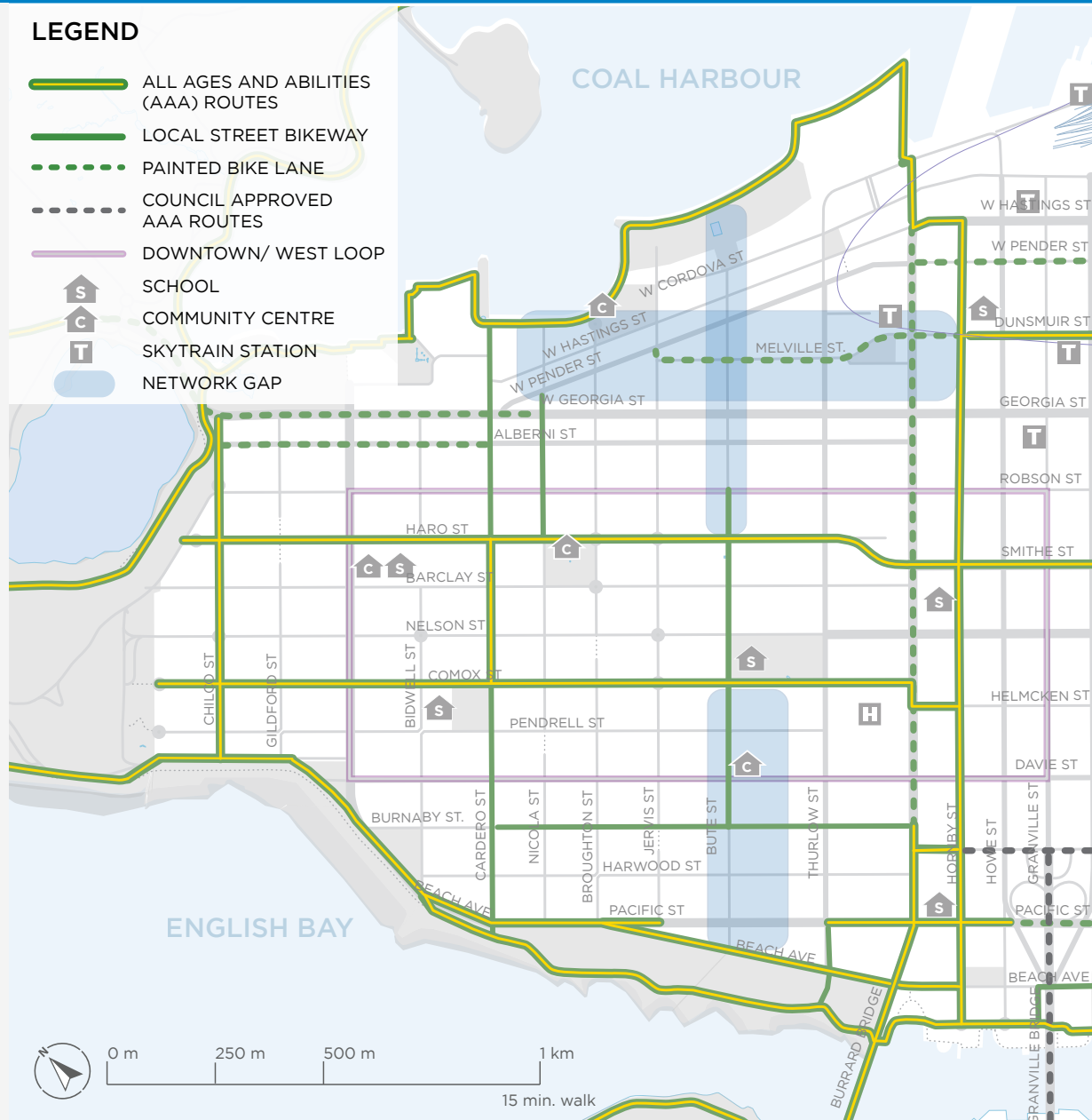
# Network Planning

Upgrading Bute Street and providing a shore-to-shore connection will fill a major gap in the existing walking and cycling network and would help better connect facilities like:

- » **Cycling facilities:** Seaside Greenway, Comox greenway, Haro-Smithe bikeway
- » **Bridges:** Lions Gate Bridge, Granville Bridge, Cambie Bridge, Burrard Bridge and Skytrain Station
- » **Commercial streets:** Robson, Alberni, Davie
- » **Public Spaces:** Bute-Robson Plaza, Jim Deva Plaza, nearby schools and offices
- » **Parks:** Harbour Green park, Bute-Haro mini-park, Nelson park, Sunset Beach park and English bay

## Important Connections

Connections from Bute Street to Burrard Bridge from Sunset Park and Burnaby St are important but the steep grades and lack of cycling facilities, north of Robson St and south of Burnaby St, make walking, rolling and cycling challenging.





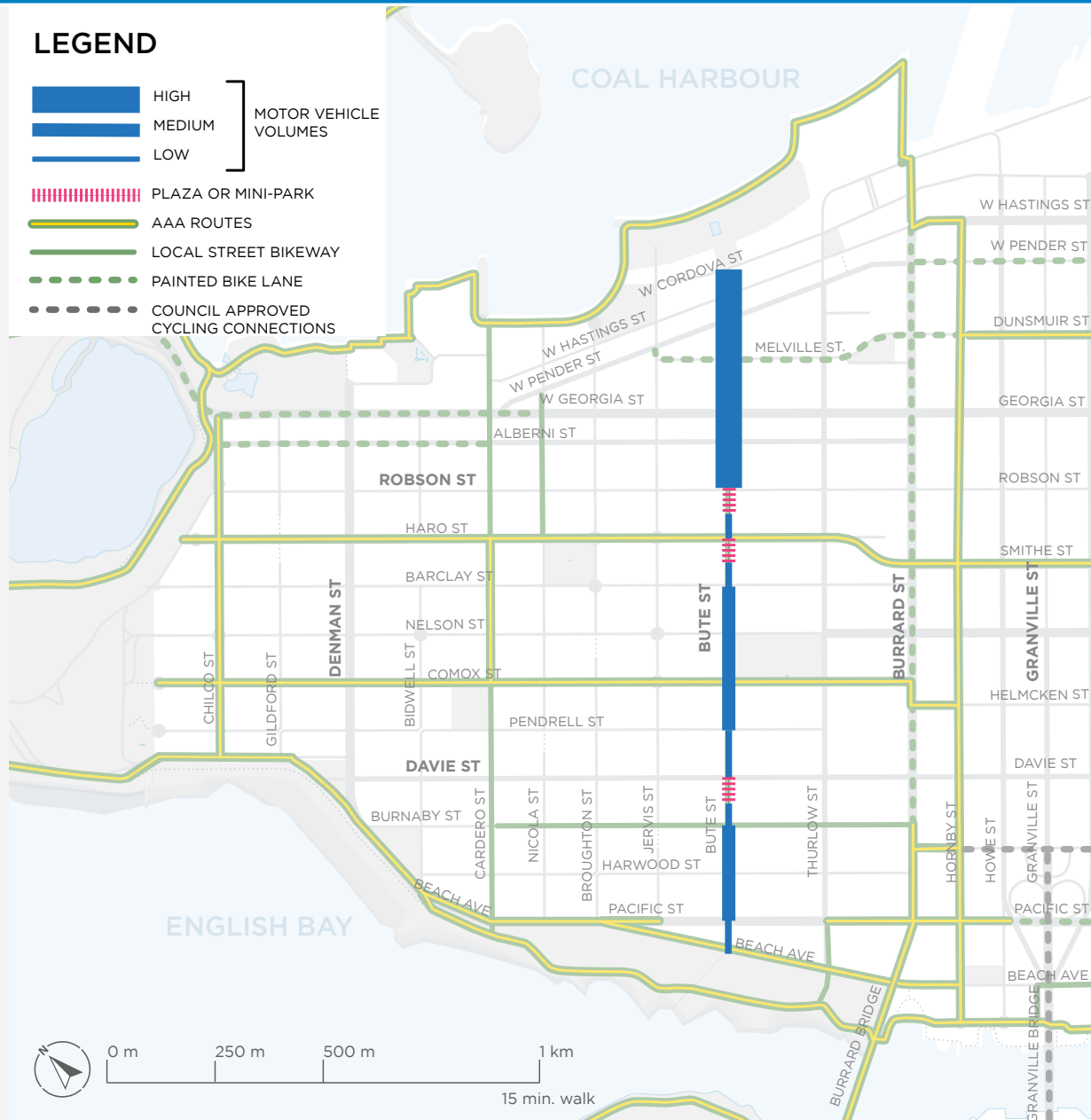
# Motor Vehicle Volumes

Bute Street south of Robson is a car-light section and north of Robson there are high motor vehicle volumes.

Bute Street - north of Robson intersects high streets and links to the Central Business District and North Shore via Georgia, Pender and Cordova streets.

The motor vehicle volumes in this segment exceed the City's All Ages and Abilities guidelines (500 vehicles/hour) by up to **10 times**.

Staff have begun collecting data all along Bute Street, as well as parallel and connecting streets and alleys, and will share more detail in future phases.



# Bute Street Today

## Walking, Rolling and Cycling Priority Street

### Pedestrian Volumes

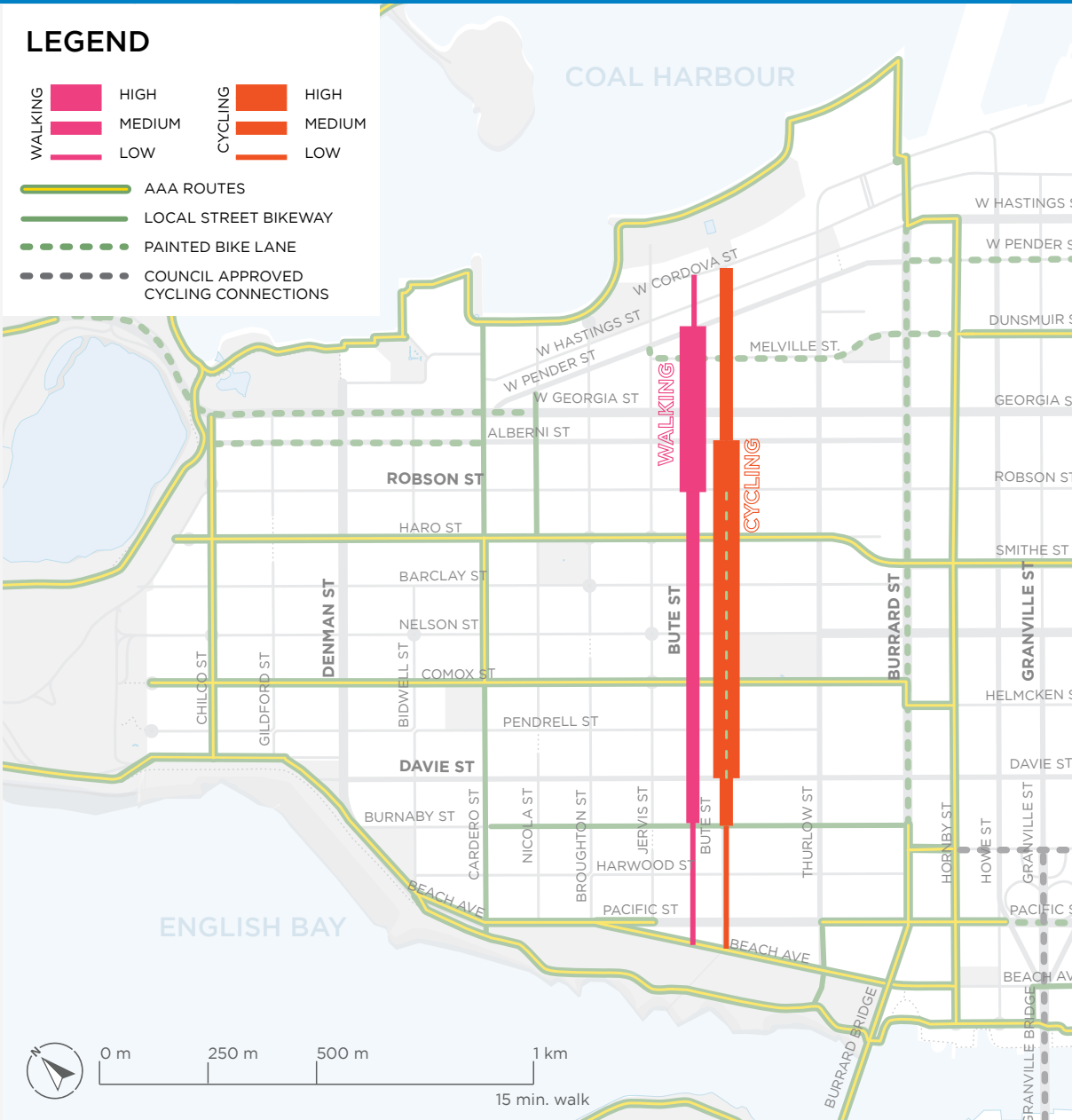
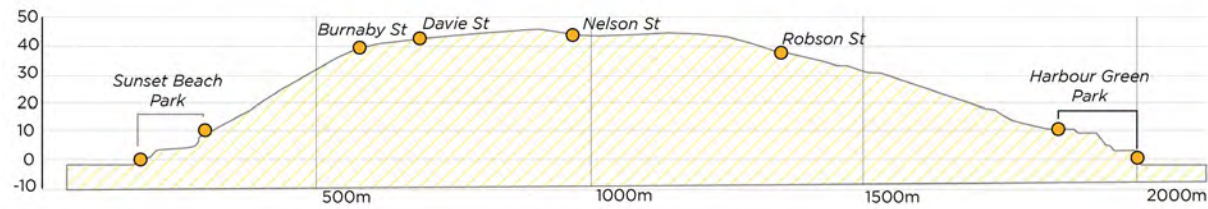
The pedestrian volumes are much higher (between 4000 to 8000 pedestrians/ day) around commercial streets like Robson, Georgia, Pender.

### Cycling Volumes

The cycling volumes are higher (400-800 bikes/day) on the signed local bikeway on Bute Street between Robson and Burnaby streets and particularly near the only existing AAA connection around Comox Greenway. The cycling volumes north of Robson are between 200-400 bikes/day but are mixed with high traffic volumes leading to uncomfortable situations between cyclists and drivers. These volumes are typical of downtown streets without specific cycling provisions, whereas the cycling volumes on AAA network are several times higher.

### Demand for All Ages and Abilities Cycling Facilities

The City's most recent pre-COVID (2018 and 2019) Transportation Panel Surveys confirm that cycling mode share in the West End, at 6%, was lower than other inner city neighbourhoods that have better cycling infrastructure, such as Kitsilano at 14% and the Strathcona/Grandview-Woodland area at 16%. Nevertheless, the demand is clear: 15% of West End respondents generally used a bicycle two or more times a week in fair weather, and 65% would like to travel by bicycle more often (the highest in the City). More than half of all trips from the West End are short with destinations on the downtown peninsula. The West End also has the highest total walk/bike/transit mode share, at 72%, the lowest private vehicle ownership, and the second highest percentage of resident bike share membership. Through COVID-19 mobility initiatives, the West End's Beach Avenue bikeway became the City's all-time busiest cycling route. In addition, a new east-west cycling connection is about to open along Haro and Smithe between the West End, Downtown, and the Cambie Bridge.





## Demand for Cycling Facilities and Public Bike Share

There are **8 public bike share stations** with about **160 bike stalls** along Bute street. The Public Bike Share data shows high demand of cycling facilities and public bike shares in the neighbourhood.

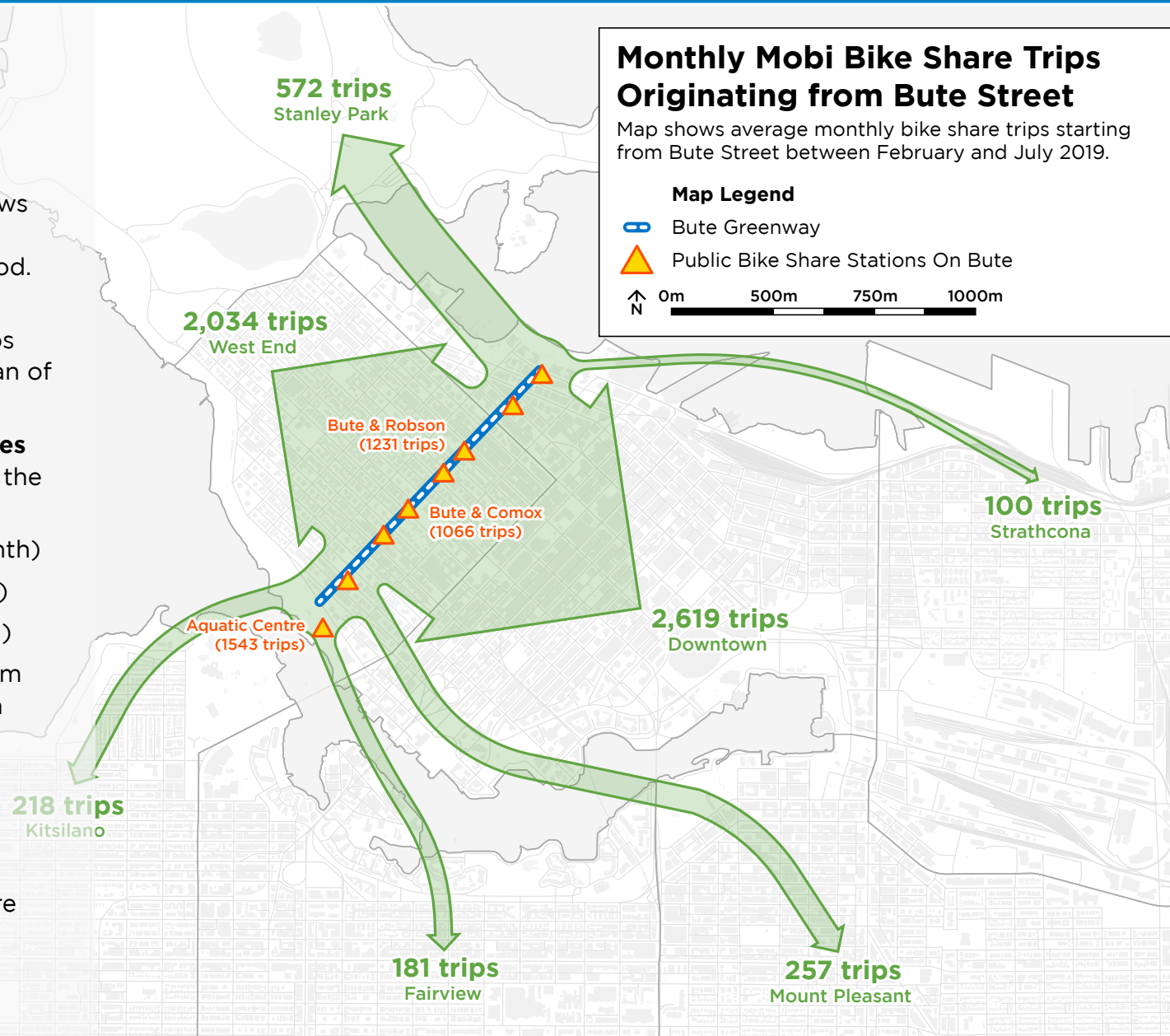
Over 36,000 trips originated from Bute Street and more than 27,000 trips terminated at Bute Street over the span of six months in 2019 (Feb to July).

The **average trips are about 20 minutes long** and the busiest origin stations in the network include:

- » **Aquatic Centre** (1543 trips/month)
- » **Bute-Robson** (1231 trips/month)
- » **Bute-Comox** (1066 trips/month)

Most popular destinations for trips from Bute Street (excluding destinations on Bute) are:

- » Stanley Park (all stations)
- » Comox & Denman
- » Hornby & Pender
- » Coal Harbour Community Centre





# Inspirations



**Accessible bike lift and ramps for steep slopes**  
(left: Trondheim; right: Amsterdam)

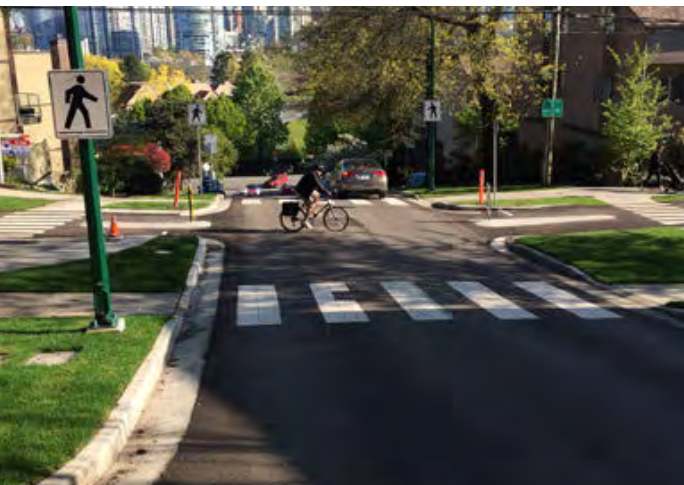


**Wider and shaded walking and cycling paths**  
(Hornby St, Vancouver)



**Curb ramps between sidewalk and street +  
Tactile walking surfaces for directional guidance  
+ Accessible pedestrian signals**  
(Richards St, Vancouver)

What are your big ideas to achieve this goal?



**Minimal grades and cross-slopes ( $\leq 5\%$ )**



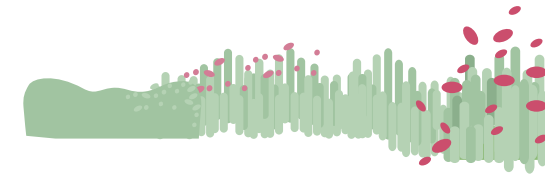
**Benches for rest and/or enjoy the views**



**Smooth, stable, and unobstructed surfaces**



## Draft Goal 3

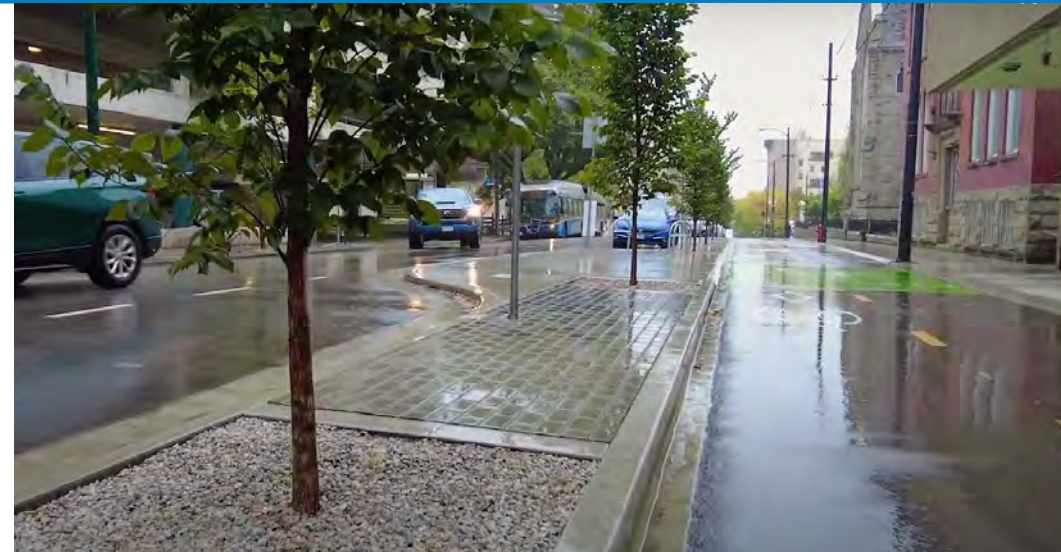


# 3

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

*Some ways to achieve this goal:*

- » Maximize **tree soil volumes** and increase the overall **urban tree canopy**.
- » Enhance connectivity for birds, insects and pollinators by using **appropriate plant species**.
- » **Integrate rainwater management** processes that store and clean storm water runoff.
- » Prioritize the use of **rain gardens** and **permeable hardscape materials**.
- » Prioritize the use of **native** and **adapted trees, shrubs** and **ground cover species** in the public realm.



**Example: Richards Green Complete Street, Vancouver**



**Example: Sunset Park, Vancouver**





## Ecology

The green, leafy residential streets contribute greatly to the The West End's distinctive character, with an important element being the mature street tree canopy. Street trees also enhance pedestrian comfort on major streets by providing a buffer from motor vehicles and a sense of enclosure. **Trees are important for biodiversity, as well as managing rainwater run off, urban cooling, mitigation of urban heat island effect.**

**There are over 200 trees along Bute street out of which 25% are large canopy trees mostly in the middle section of Bute from Robson to Burnaby.** The northern section of Bute Street has more newly planted trees while the south end tends toward more small canopy trees.



Map: Tree canopy and historic streams



## Existing Plants and Trees



**Big leaf maple**  
(*Acer macrophyllum*)



**Tulip tree**  
(*Liriodendron tulipifera*)



**Sword fern**  
(*Polystichum munitum*)



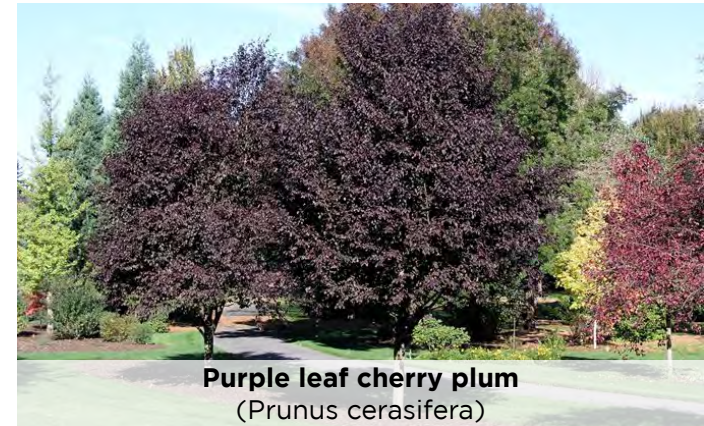
**Flowering Cherry**  
(*Prunus* spp.)



**Western red cedar**  
(*Thuja plicata*)



**False Solomon's-Seal**  
(*Smilacina racemosa*)



**Purple leaf cherry plum**  
(*Prunus cerasifera*)

Seasonal variation in rainfall sustains many beautiful and dynamic spaces that create diverse experiences throughout the year. As temperatures and sun exposure rises in the spring and rainfall starts to decline, much of the vegetation along the corridor enters into an active growth phase that creates shaded areas in the hotter summer months.

There are a large number of flowering trees, *Prunus* sp. and *Prunus cerasifera*, along the corridor between Haro and Burnaby. Both of these trees are loaded with pink and white blossoms in early spring.

**Some of the boulevards in the middle section of Bute Street are beautifully cared for by residents and benefit from the shade that the larger canopy trees provide in the hotter summer months.**



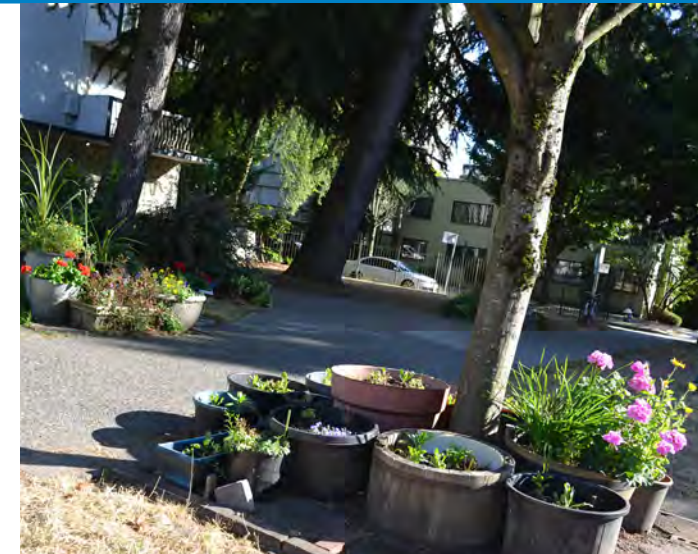
## Existing Gardens

Community gardens help get individuals out of their homes and into spaces that foster socialization, playing a vital role within high density areas such as the West End. During The West End Planning process, seniors expressed the need for more wheelchair accessible gardens, designed with an aging population in mind.

A distinctive feature of the West End is its network of wider than normal laneways. While maintaining their primary function for servicing, the extra width provides opportunities for better pedestrian lighting, landscaping and gardens, seating, and other public realm improvements. **Mole Hill lane (now known as Jepson-Young Lane)** completed in the 1980's is an early example of some of the green rainwater infrastructure practices that the City is now using extensively to better manage urban rainwater runoff.



**Community garden - Nelson Park**  
(Freiburg, Deutschland)



**Green Streets Program**  
(Gardening on boulevards, West End, Vancouver)



**Farmer's market**  
(Comox St, Vancouver)



**Mole Hill lane**  
(West End, Vancouver)



# Inspirations

**Permeable paving treatments and absorbent landscapes allow urban rainwater runoff to soak into the ground.** Depending on the permeability of the subsurface soils this water either slowly percolates through to groundwater or is captured, treated and slowly released into the existing storm water pipe system through various subsurface green rainwater infrastructure practices.

Rain gardens are one example of a surface expression of a green rainwater infrastructure practice that can be a biologically diverse ecosystem. **These visible green rainwater infrastructure elements can also be playful and informative.**



**Play Area + Education and Experience**



**Play Feature**  
(Garden City park - Richmond)



**Rain Garden + Bee and insect hotels**



**Bioswale**  
(The City of Paso Robles)



**Permeable Material**  
(Richards St, Vancouver)



**Green Rainwater Infrastructure**  
(Sunset Park, Vancouver)



**Sidewalk Seating Features with Rain Gardens**  
(Tofino, BC)

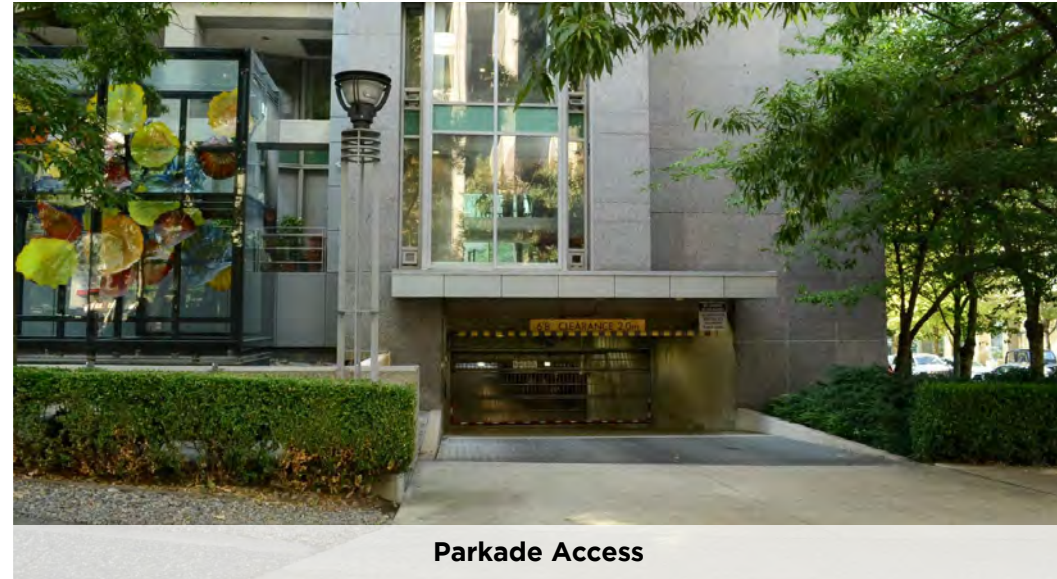


## Draft Goal 4

# 4 Accommodate emergency access and motor vehicle circulation in the neighbourhood.

*Some ways to achieve this goal:*

- » Maintain parkade/driveway access.
- » Accommodate loading zones and passenger pick-up/drop-off where needed.
- » Ensure access for maintenance and emergency vehicles.



**Parkade Access**



**Emergency Service Vehicle**



# Motor Vehicle Circulation

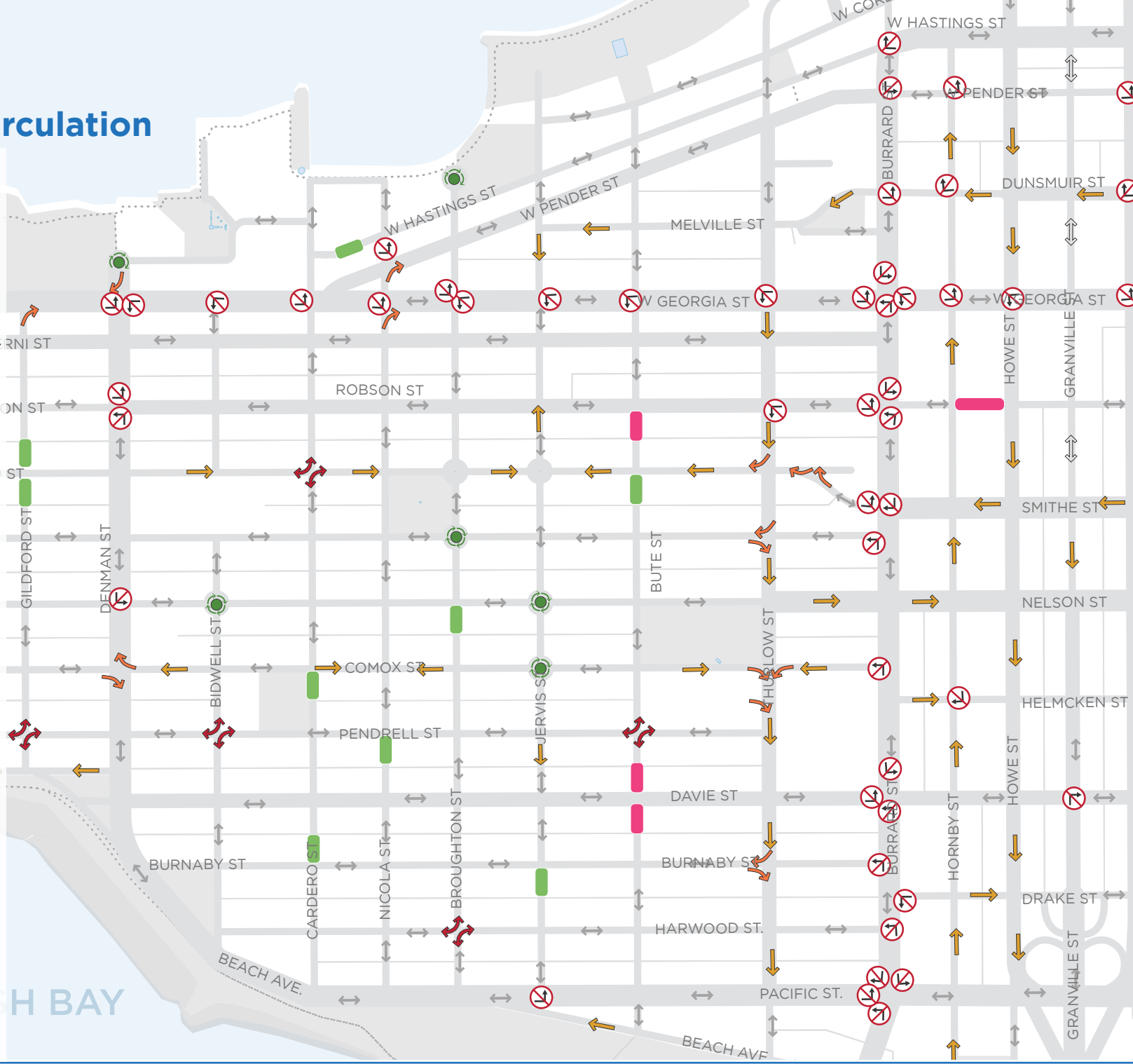
## LEGEND

-  DIAGONAL DIVERTER
-  RIGHT IN RIGHT OUT
-  RIGHT OUT DIVERTER
-  ONE WAY STREET
-  TWO WAY STREET , BUS ONLY
-  TWO WAY STREET
-  TRAFFIC CIRCLE
-  CUL-DE-SACS
-  MINI-PARK
-  PLAZA
-  RESTRICTION

The West End was the first neighbourhood in Vancouver where traffic calming was implemented. Street closures were originally implemented for traffic calming purposes. Through landscaping, seating areas and public art, mini-parks have become important public spaces for West End residents.

Over the years with the growing population, we have been hearing concerns about the motor vehicle flow in the neighbourhood being circuitous along certain blocks near Bute Street especially north of Robson and along parallel street.

Staff are studying the traffic patterns to better understand how we can address these concerns as part of Bute Greenway.





# Parking

## On Street Parking

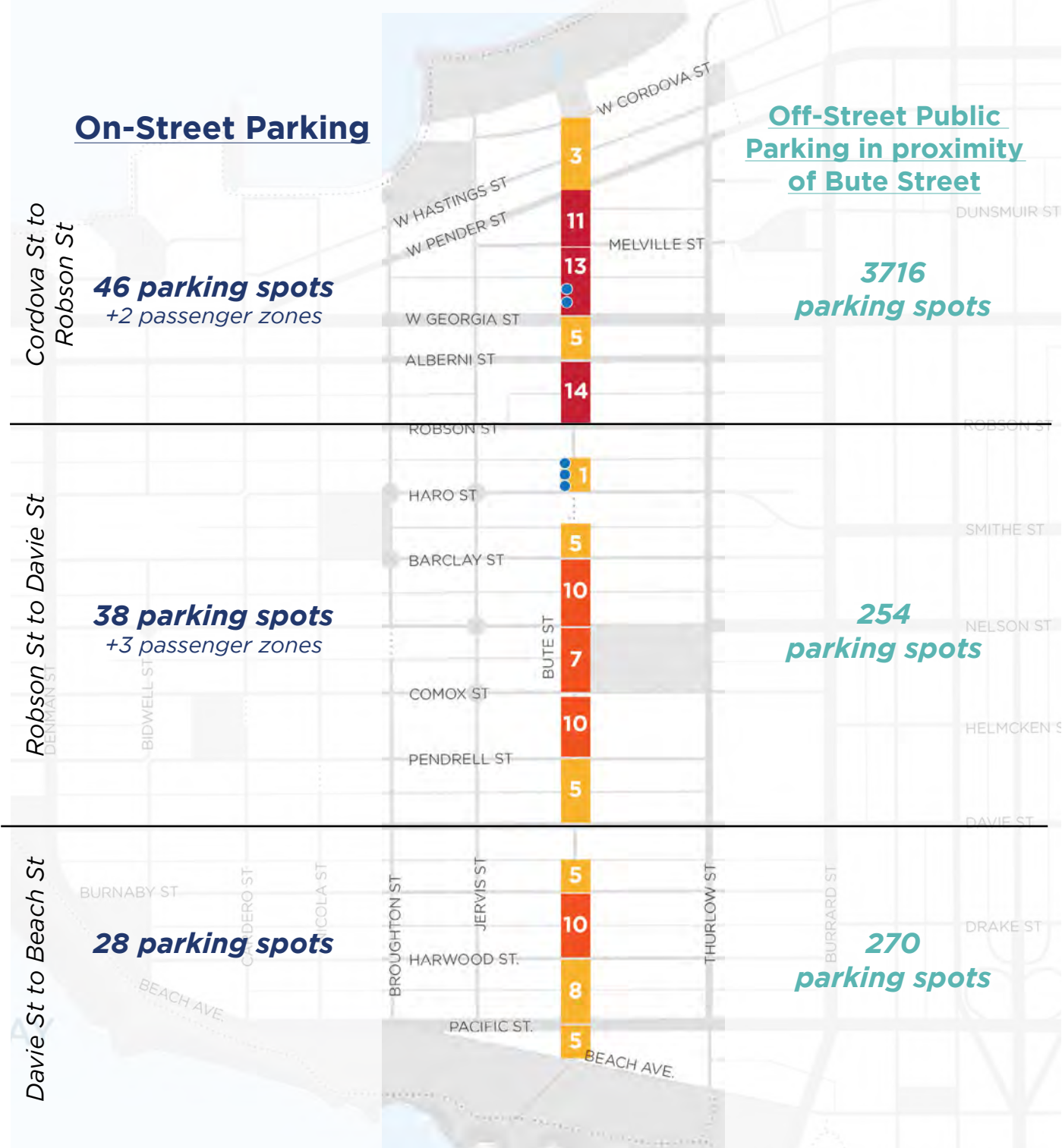
There is a limited amount of on-street parking provided on Bute Street primarily because Bute St has shorter block lengths than intersecting streets. For example, there are only three parking spaces on Bute St between Cordova St to Pender St, but almost 194 on-street parking spaces along the intersecting streets (1 block radius).

## Publicly Listed Off-Street Parking

In addition to on-street parking, and private off street parking such as residential buildings, there are more than 4,200 publicly listed parking spaces in proximity to Bute Street.

## Access to Parkade/Loading

There are only 11 private parkade access from Bute Street and only five loading/passenger zones along the street. The West End laneways are wider compared to other laneways in Vancouver. As such, their primary function is to serve as service corridors for loading, parking, parkade access, garbage storage and collection, and utilities.







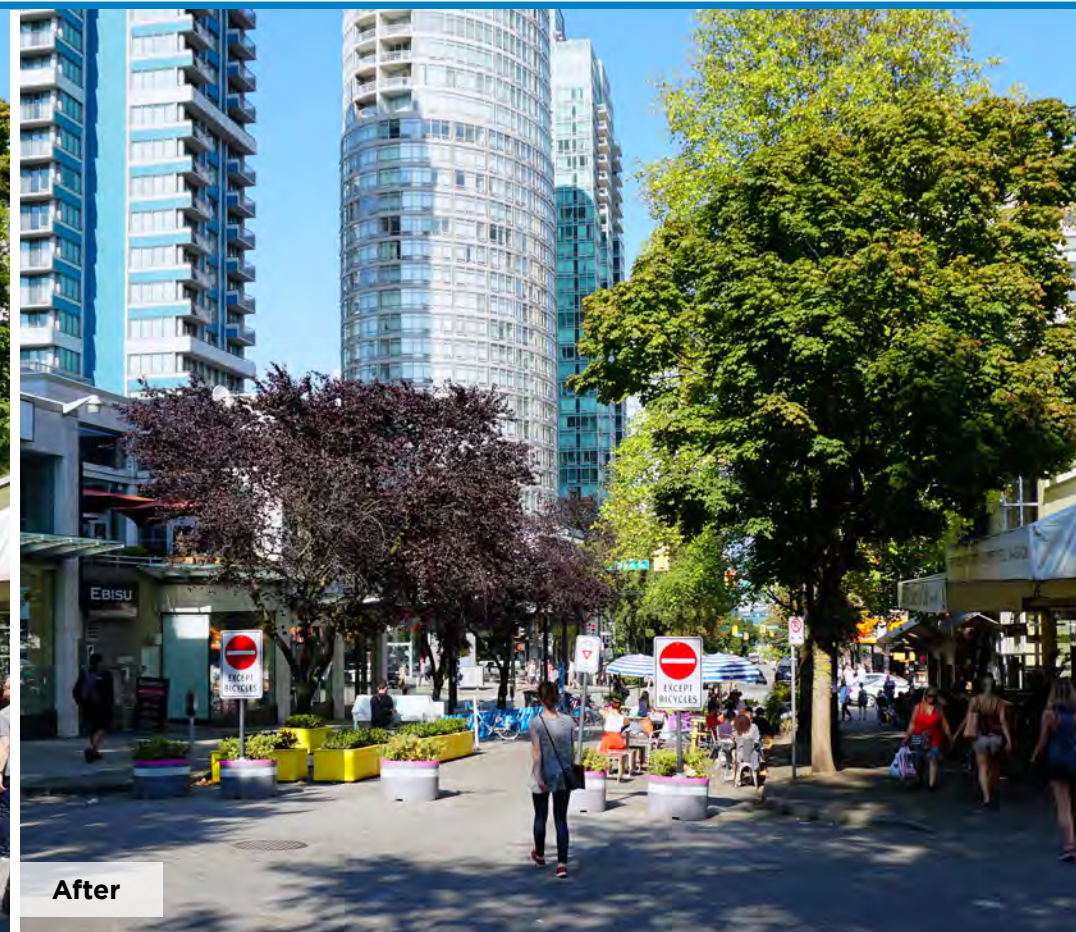
# BUTE-ROBSON PLAZA

The City of Vancouver is developing a new permanent plaza design at Bute-Robson, to build on the success of trial and interim phases of the plaza, and help address the need for “social” public spaces in the Downtown area.

In 2017 and 2019, we asked the public what is working and what can be improved in Bute-Robson Plaza. Based on the previous feedback, we have developed a draft conceptual design for the future permanent plaza. Your input will help us develop a detailed design. There will be opportunities to provide feedback on the recommended design next year.



## Bute-Robson Trial Plaza



In summer 2017, the City of Vancouver implemented a trial pavement-to-plaza on Bute Street south of Robson Street, **in partnership with the Robson Street Business Association** by re-purposing road space. The addition of street furniture such as seating with umbrellas, a piano, playful elements and planters, invited people to stop and stay, which resulted in strong support for the plaza. This project is supported by the Transportation 2040 Plan, West End Community Plan, 2019-2022 Capital Plan, and Places for People, all of which encourage the creation of public plazas and gathering spaces across Vancouver.



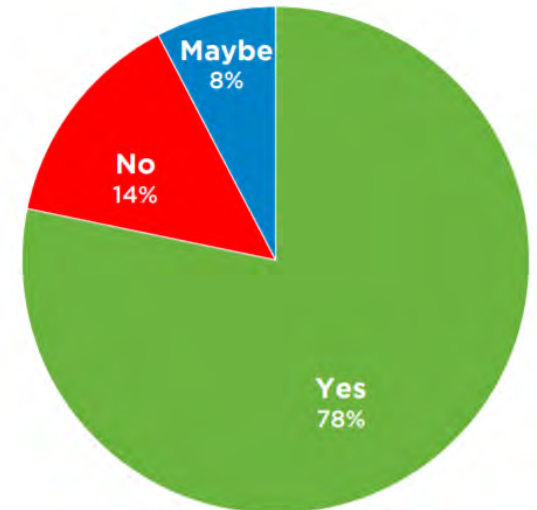
## Council Direction



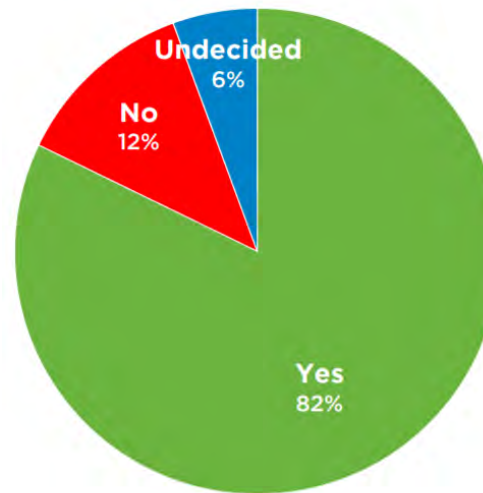
In November 2017, with strong community support, Council voted unanimously to approve a permanent plaza and extend the current trial as an interim plaza until a final plaza is designed and constructed.



**Over 75% support a year-round plaza.**



653 survey responses  
\*Excluding responses from people who never visited the plaza.



657 survey respondents

**Over 80% of survey respondents feel the plaza has improved the neighbourhood**



## Previous Engagements

In 2017 and 2019, we asked the public what is working and what can be improved in Bute-Robson Plaza. The Places for People six emerging strategic directions are common themes we heard from Bute-Robson Plaza survey respondents.

### What do you like to do in the plaza?

Eat and or drink

59%

Hang out with friends/family

44%

Relax and people watch

60%

Play or listen to the piano

33%

Go to special events

8%

Pass by my way through the neighbourhood

75%

Other

10%

2017 survey; total responses 672



### The “Right” Supply



#### What is working:

- Public space for the neighbourhood to enjoy
- Meet new people in the community
- Active business frontages

#### What can be improved:

- Remain public, not exclusive
- Distribute seating across plaza.

### Design for people



#### What is working:

- Mix of fixed and movable seating
- Community space, not overly programmed

#### What can be improved:

- Leveled seating
- Designated area for special events and performances
- Enhanced weather protection

### For all, by all



#### What is working:

- Place to sit, rest, and relax
- Hangout for friends and family
- Safe zone / no cars

#### What can be improved:

- Playful features with games
- Encourage local art and music
- Universally accessible seating

### Day-long, year-long



#### What is working:

- Lightly programmed (e.g. public piano, tree lights)
- Free and social events
- 24/7 seating

#### What can be improved:

- Winter-friendly features
- More pop-up activities
- More umbrellas

### Nature and Resilience



#### What is working:

- Planters help soften edges
- Street trees compliment car-free space

#### What can be improved:

- More nature and vegetation
- Water feature

### Connecting people and places



#### What is working:

- Calms traffic into the neighbourhood
- Accommodates both walking and cycling
- Access to public bike share

#### What can be improved:

- Clear cycling separation
- More traffic calming on Bute



## Modifications Within and Around The Plaza Since 2017

Over the years, in partnership with the local Business Improvement Association, the City has tested different layouts, measured traffic impacts, observed behavior in the space, and asked for input from community members.



**Accessible seating pods**



**Art wrapped planters**



**Raised platform for seating with playful elements**



**Expanded crosswalk on Robson St, north of plaza to create more space for people to walk and roll.**



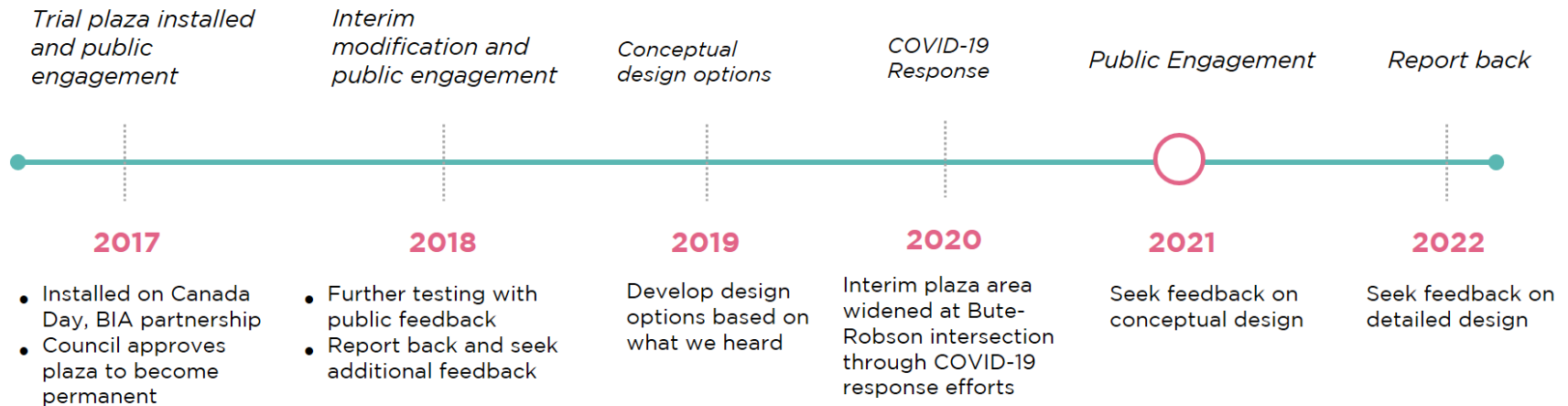
**Solar in-ground lights**



**Year-round flexible seating**



## Engagement Timeline and Objectives



As part of the Bute Greenway project, we are developing a permanent design for Bute-Robson Plaza based on public and stakeholder feedback. Our draft concept design objectives include:

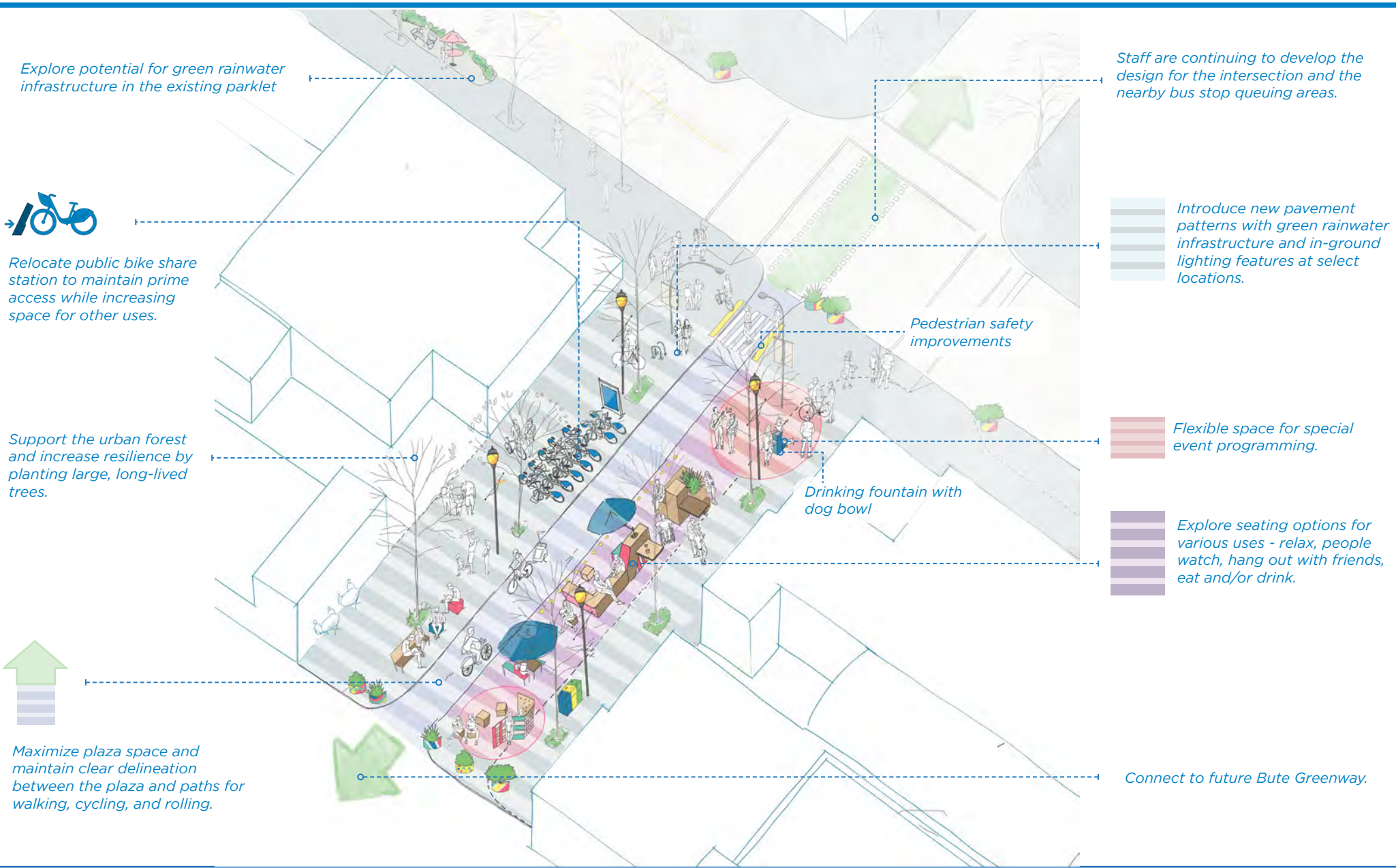
- » Explore seating options for various uses - relax, people watch, hang out with friends, eat and/or drink.
- » Introduce new pavement patterns with green rainwater infrastructure and in-ground lighting features at select locations.
- » Design for a variety of passive, spontaneous, and programmed activities
- » Maximize plaza space and maintain clear delineation between the plaza and paths for walking, cycling, and rolling
- » Support the urban forest and increase resilience by planting large, long-lived trees

There are also opportunities to explore improvements that would integrate Bute-Robson Plaza to the north onto Robson St and to the South towards Haro St. **Take the survey** and tell us how what you think about these potential improvements ideas:

- » Extend Bute-Robson plaza onto Robson St with widened sidewalks wrapping around each corner
- » Enhance the Bute-Robson intersection to improve pedestrian crossings and create more space for public gathering, particularly on the northside of the intersection
- » Enhance connectivity between the Bute-Robson Plaza and the Bute-Haro mini-park



## Draft Concept





# Inspirations



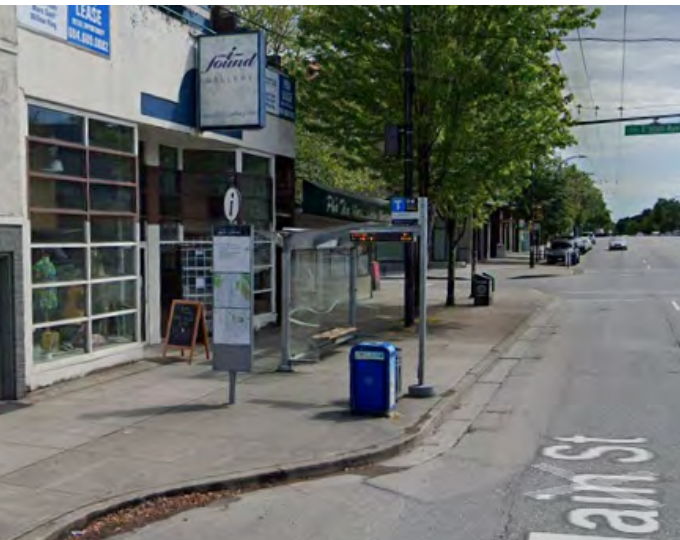
**A clear delineation between seating, bike share station and paths for walking, cycling, and rolling**  
(Ontario Greenway, Vancouver)



**Resting space**  
(Yorkville Park, Toronto)



**Mix of seating options**  
(Picurbia at 800 Robson, Vancouver)



**Intersection improvements - Bus bulges**  
(Main Street, Vancouver)



**Space for community events**  
(Jim Deva Plaza, Vancouver)



**Permeable pavement with rainwater tree trenches**  
(Richards Street, Vancouver)





## BUTE GREENWAY PHASE 1

### SHORE-TO-SHORE CONNECTION

# Share your feedback!

Please read the information guide and share your input by taking a survey. The survey will remain open until **December 13, 2021**.

Webpage: [vancouver.ca/bute-greenway](https://vancouver.ca/bute-greenway)

Project Email: [butegreenway@vancouver.ca](mailto:butegreenway@vancouver.ca)