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.

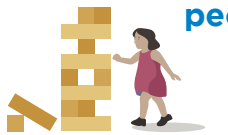
Draft Goal 1



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

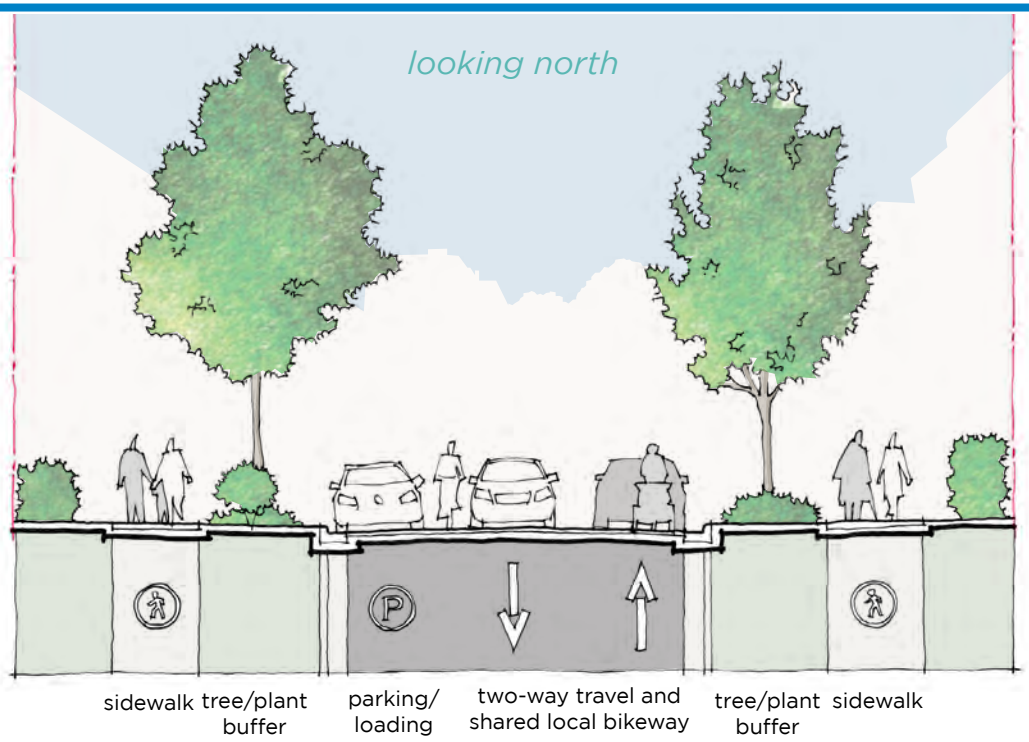


Community art - "The Four Elements" mushroom, bird houses/memorial, the West End arrows



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

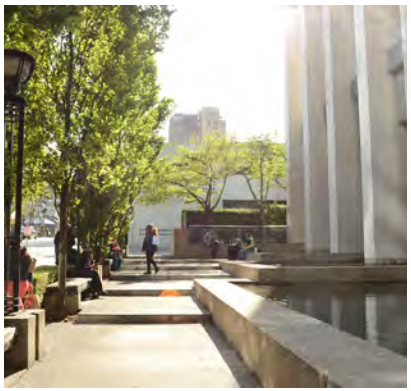

Seniors' housing

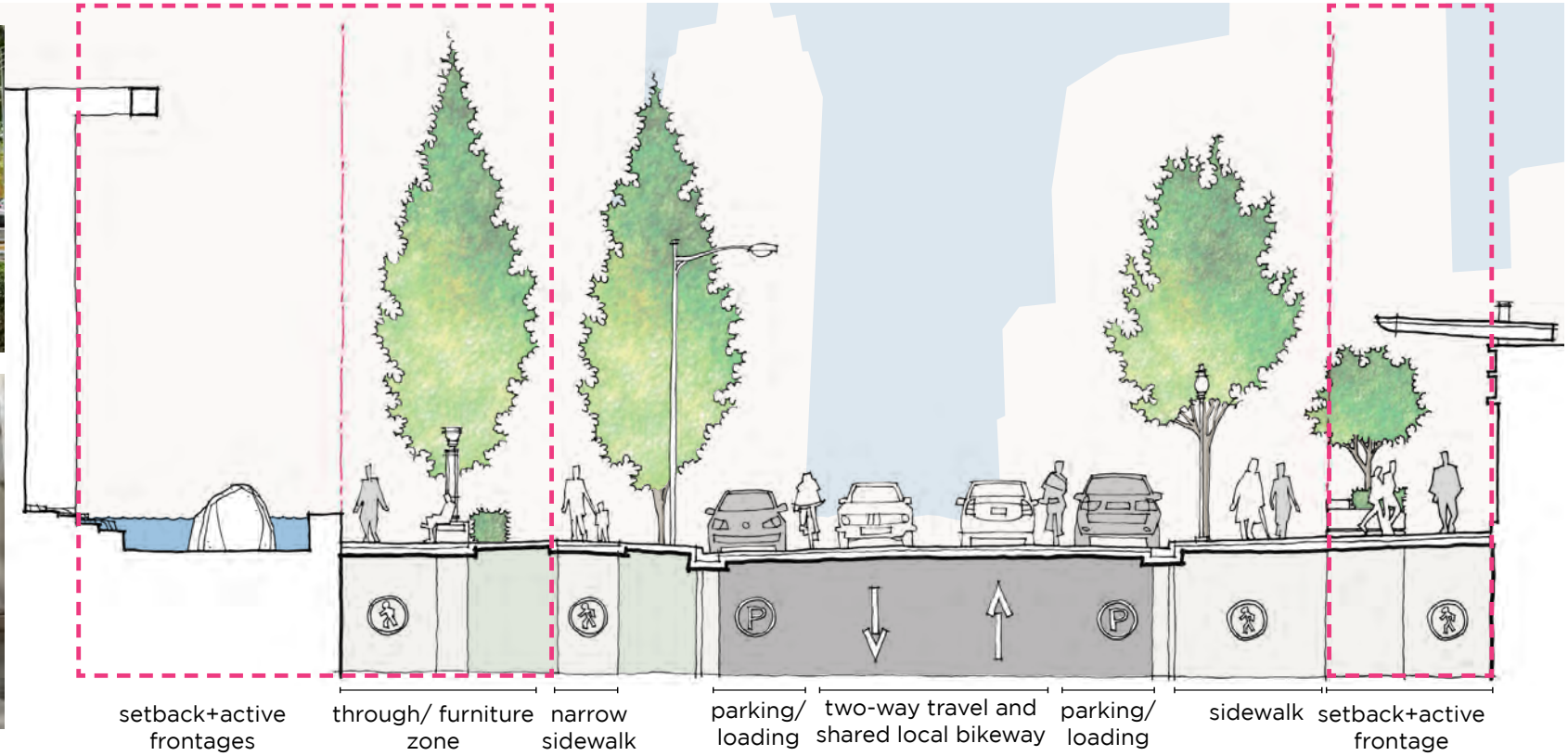

Converted houses

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 sebacks 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.

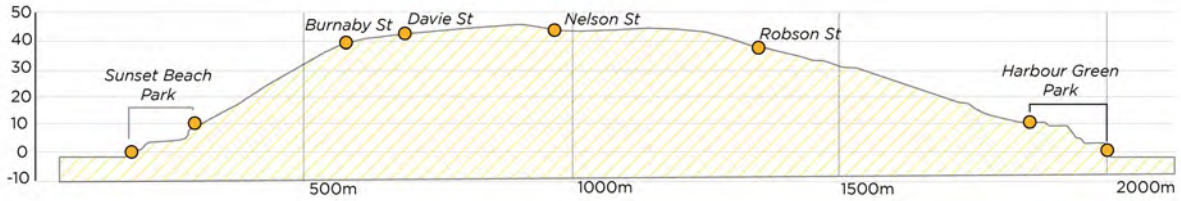






What are your big ideas for these setback spaces along Bute Greenway?

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.

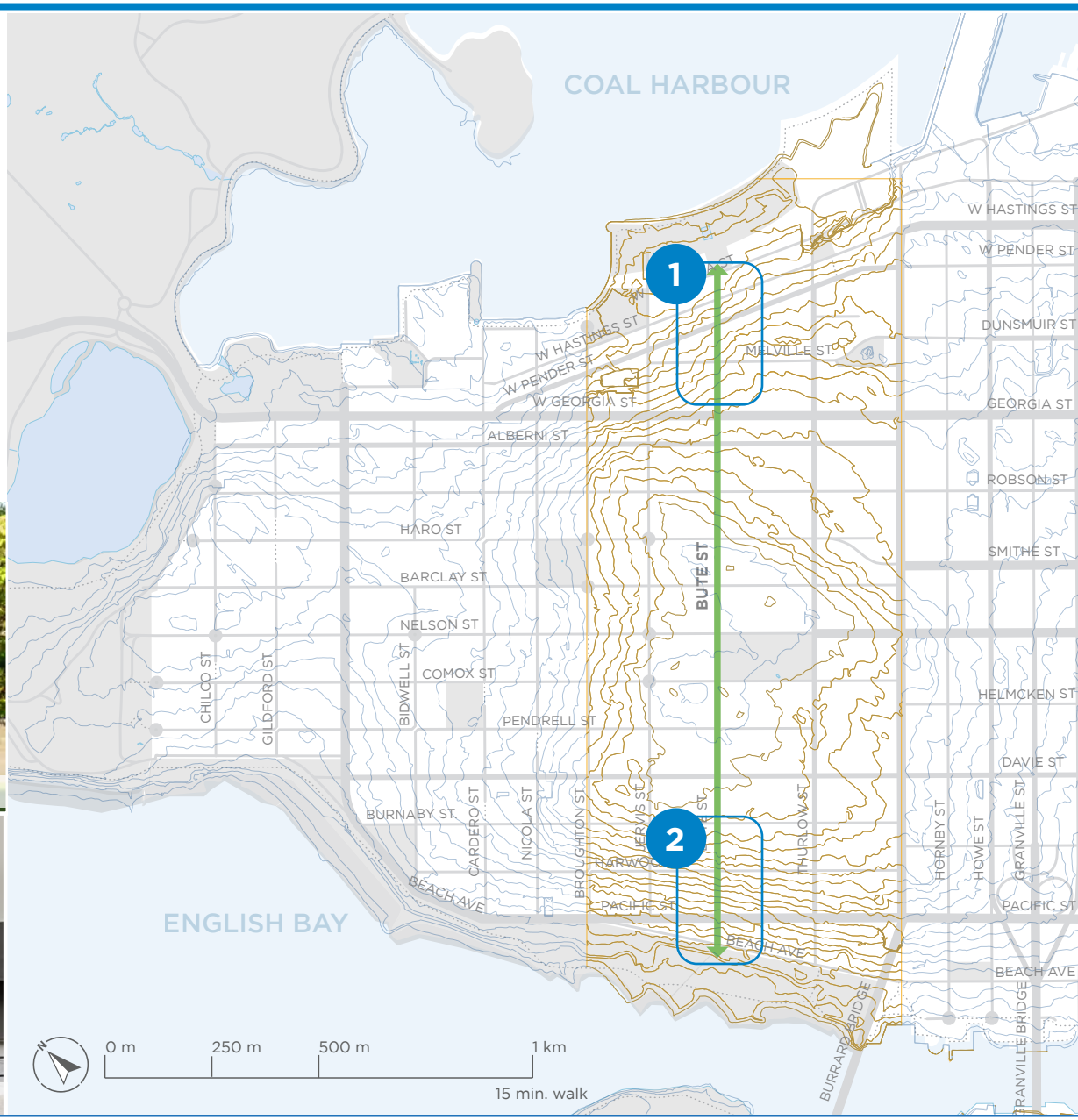
These views can be enhanced with seating at strategic locations and the natural slopes also provide an opportunity to implement rainwater management and improve ecological function.



North shore views from Harbour Green Park



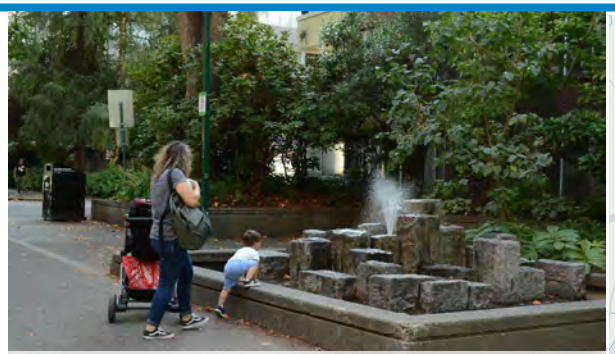
English Bay views from Bute St - south of Pacific St



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



1. Harbour Green Park



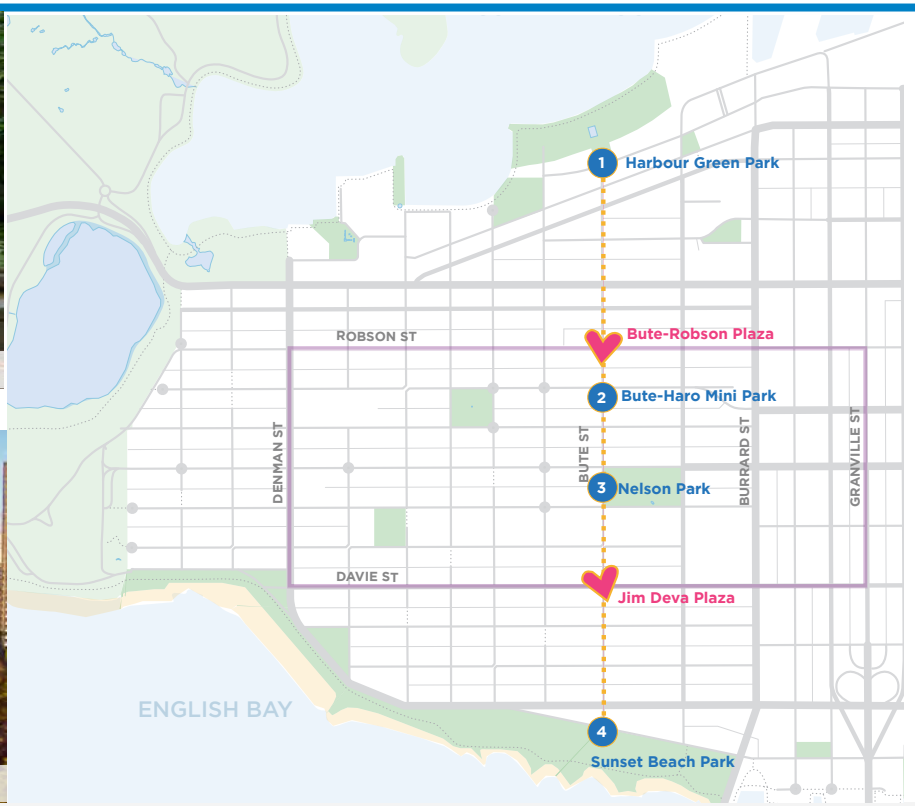
2. Bute-Haro Mini Park



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* and v*ancouver.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

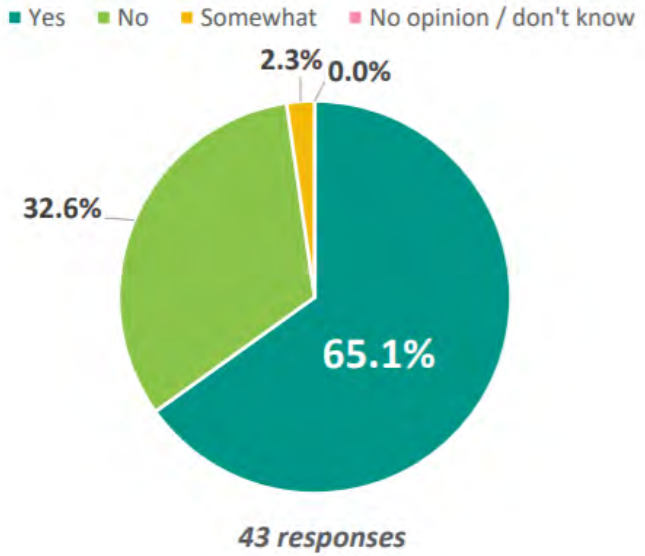
Improvements made:
- Planters, and benches

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



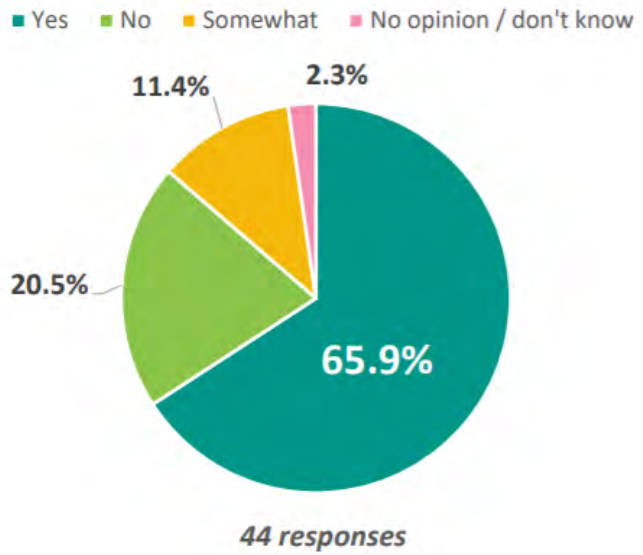
Benefits

- 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

Bute-Davie North Plaza



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.



Mini Park/Shared Path
(Ridgeway, Vancouver)



Linear Park and fountain
(Ridgeway, Vancouver)



Artist Mosaics/Murals,
(Midtown Greenway/Mosaic, Vancouver)

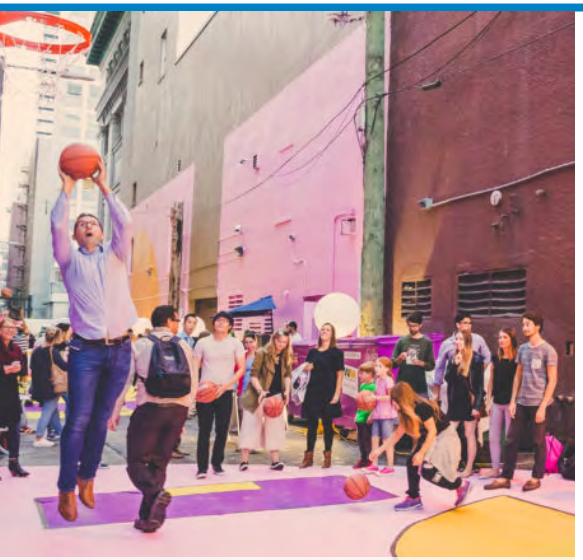


Pocket Plaza
(Ontario Greenway, Vancouver)

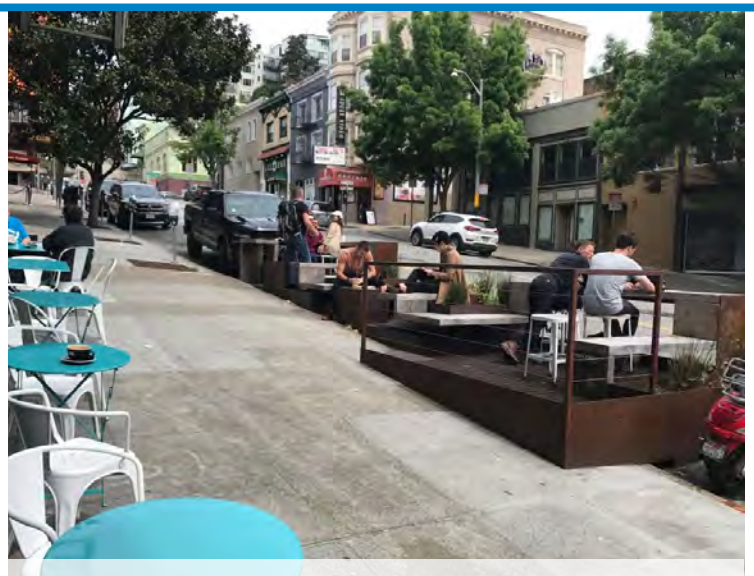


Music beats,
(Arbutus Greenway, Vancouver)

Inspirations



Unexpected spaces
(Image: HCMA Architecture)

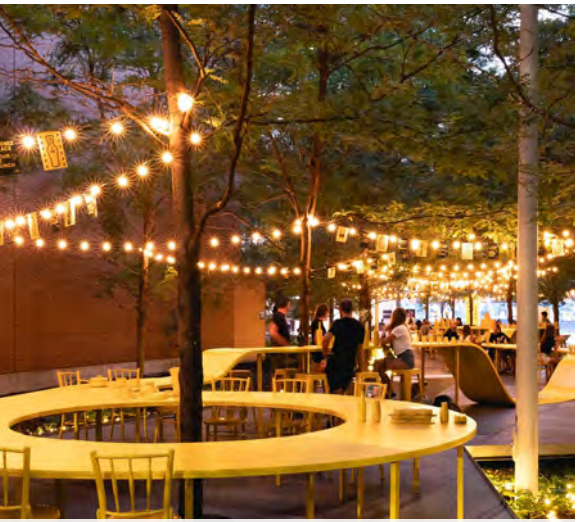


Variety of seating - parklets, plazas, patios

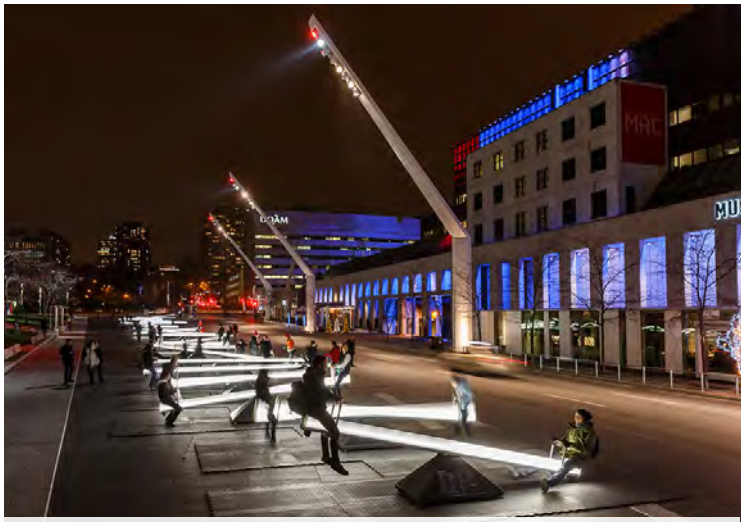


Whimsical spaces on slopes
(Image: Superkilen by Karen Mardahl)

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.



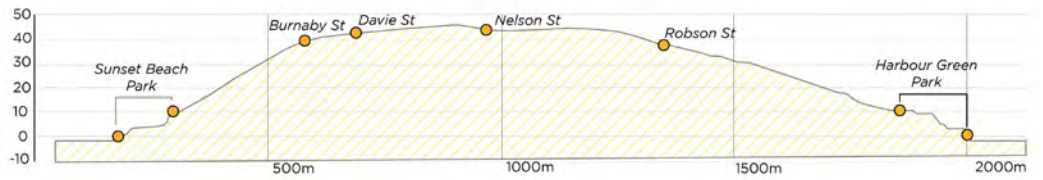


Example: 7th Avenue at Oak St



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



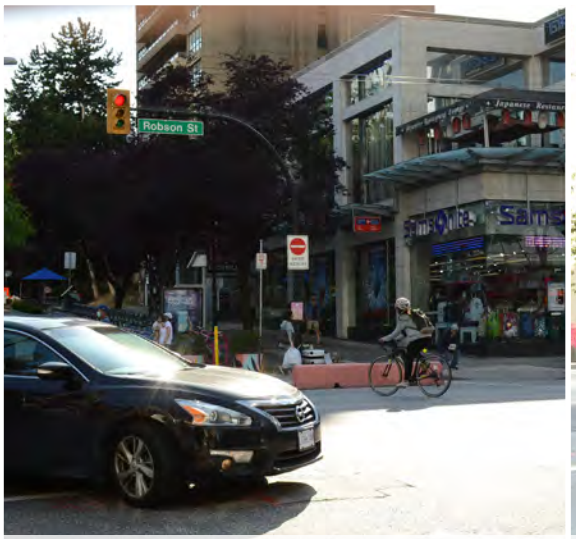
Lack of cycling facilities force people cycling to mix with traffic



Intersection street corners are challenged by high pedestrian volumes









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

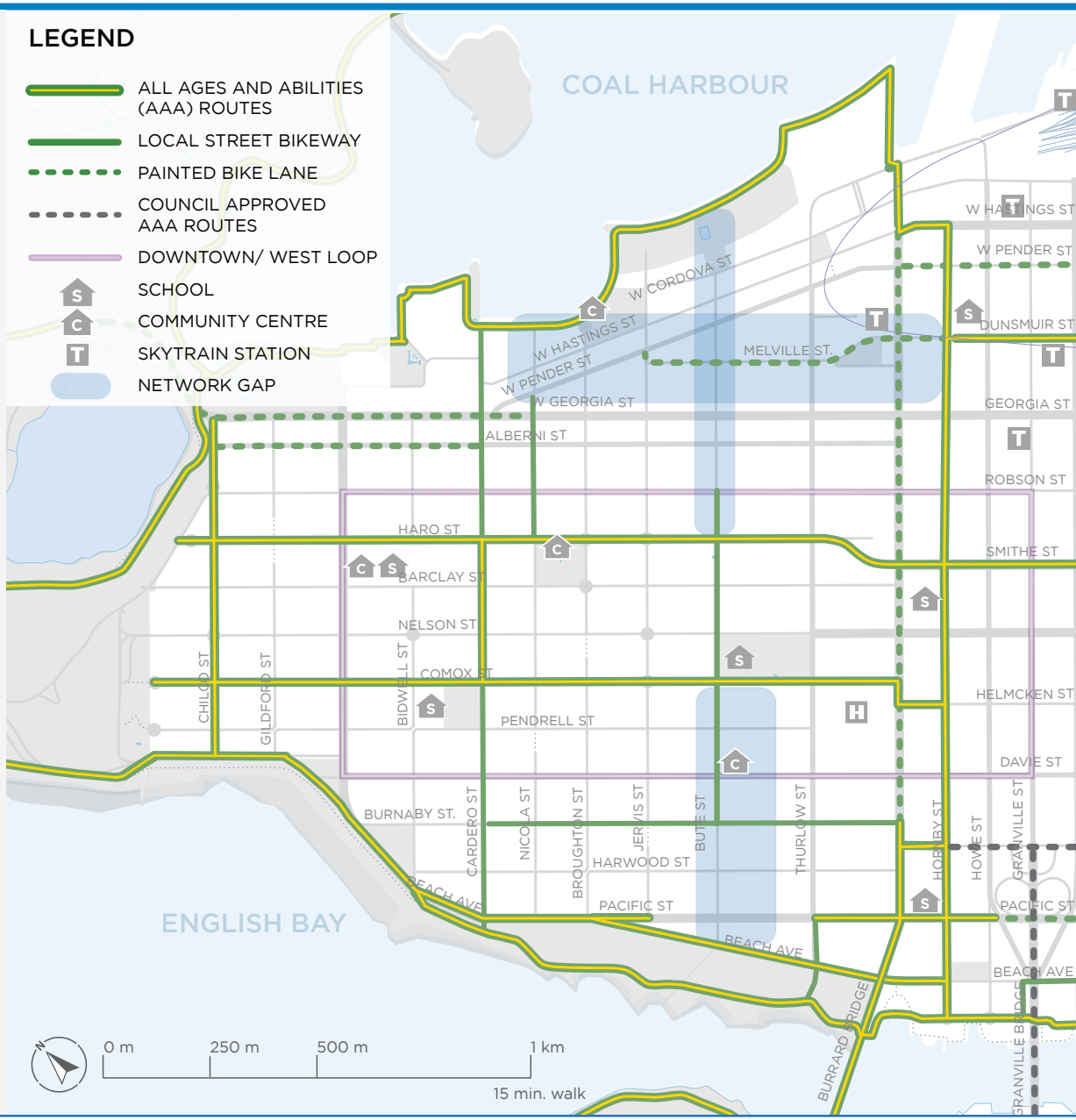
Network Planning

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, 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.

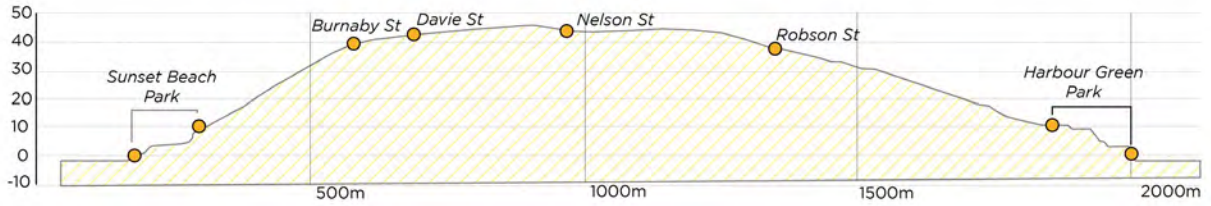
Bute Street - north of Robson intersects high streets and links to the Central Business District and North Shore via Georgia, Pender and Cordova streets.

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.



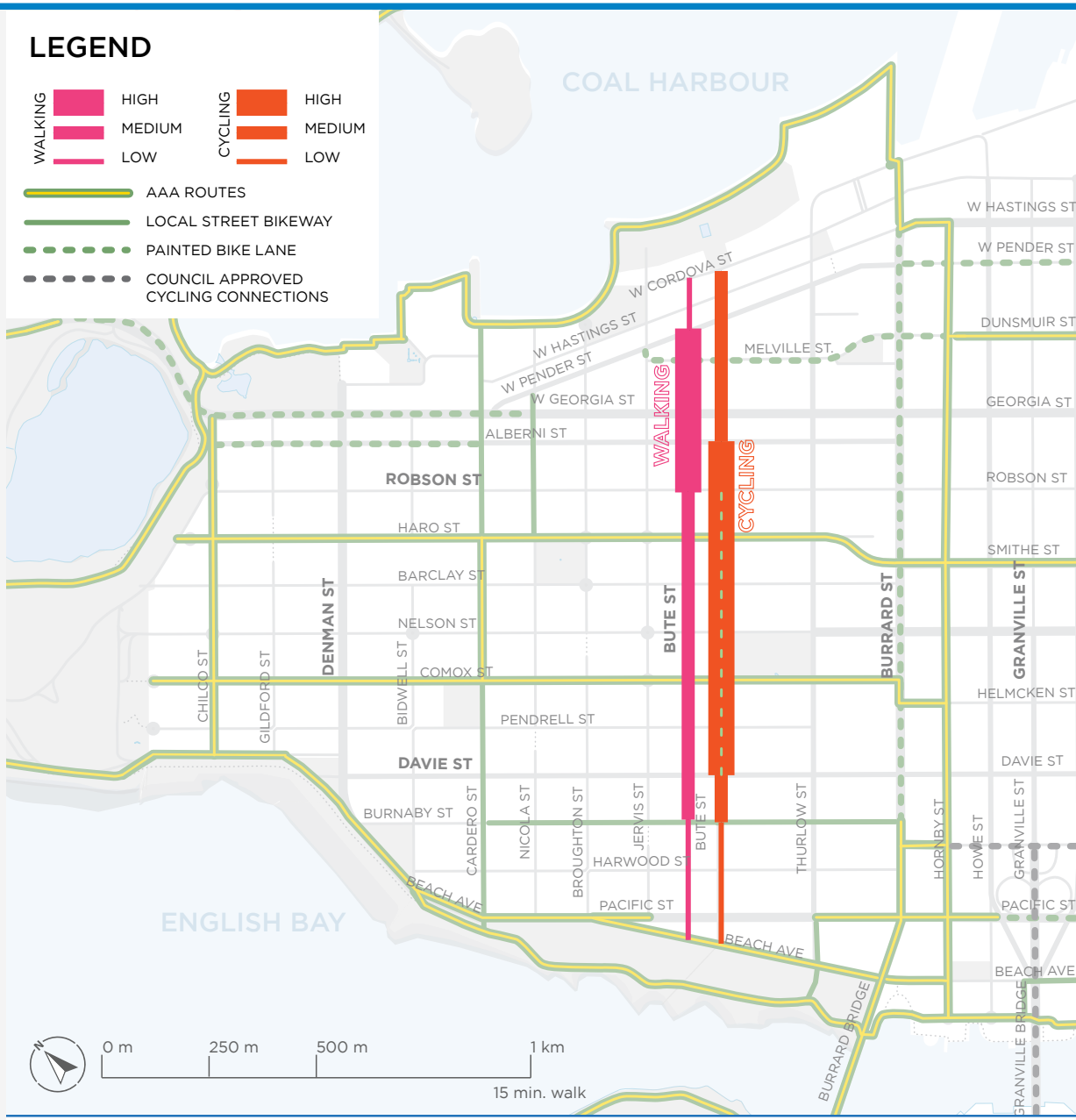
Walking, Rolling and Cycling Priority Street



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.

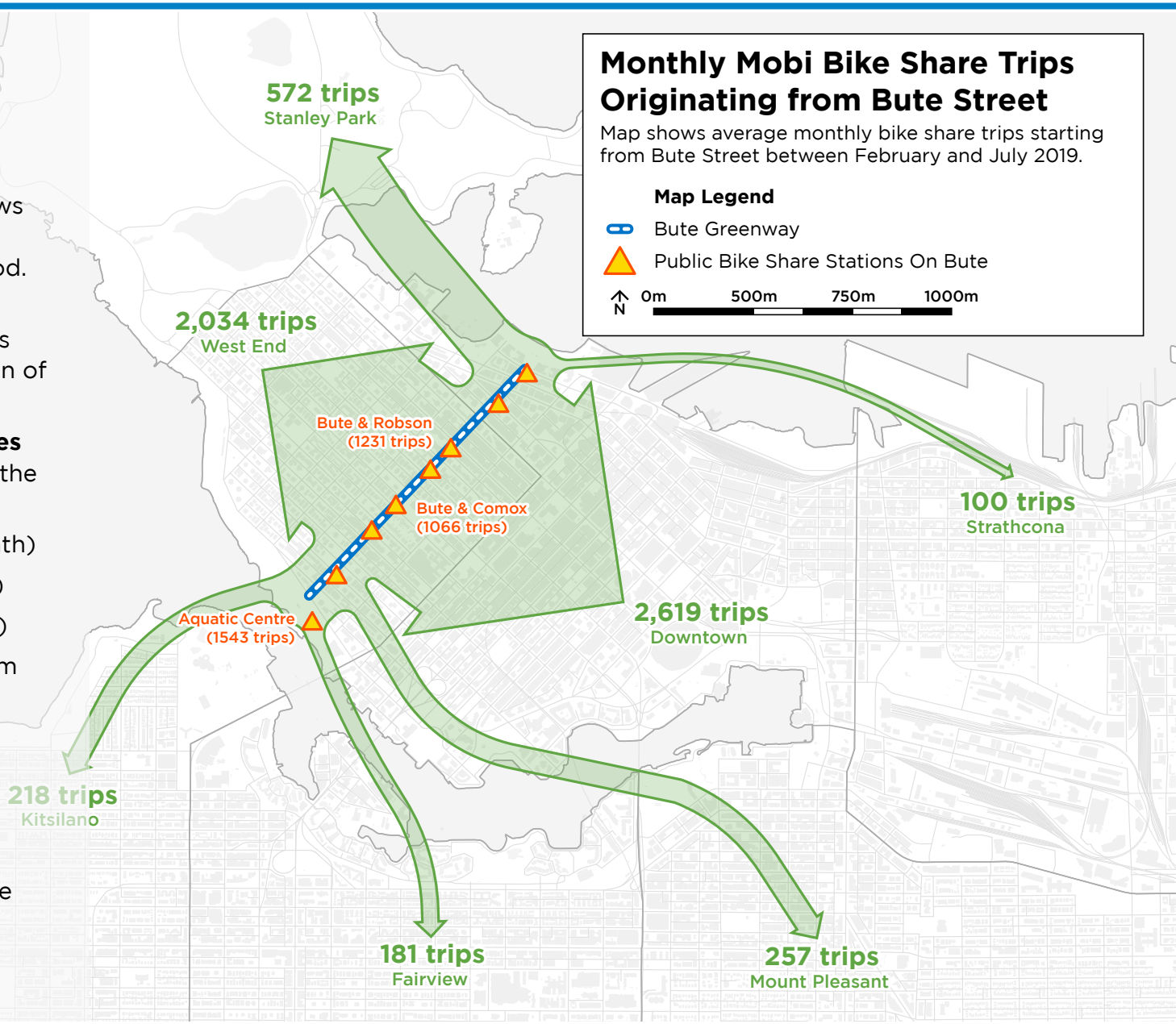
Over 36,000 trips originated from Bute Street and more than 27,000 trips terminated at Bute Street over the span of six months in 2019 (Feb to July).

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

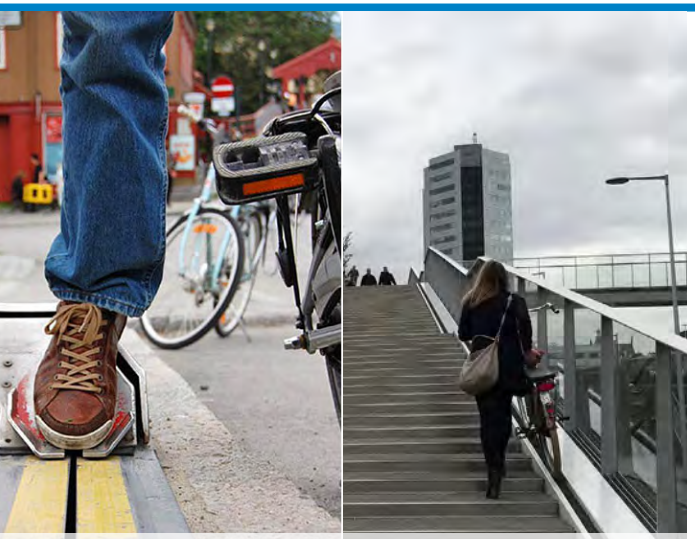
- **Aquatic Centre** (1543 trips/month)
- **Bute-Robson** (1231 trips/month)
- **Bute-Comox** (1066 trips/month)

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)

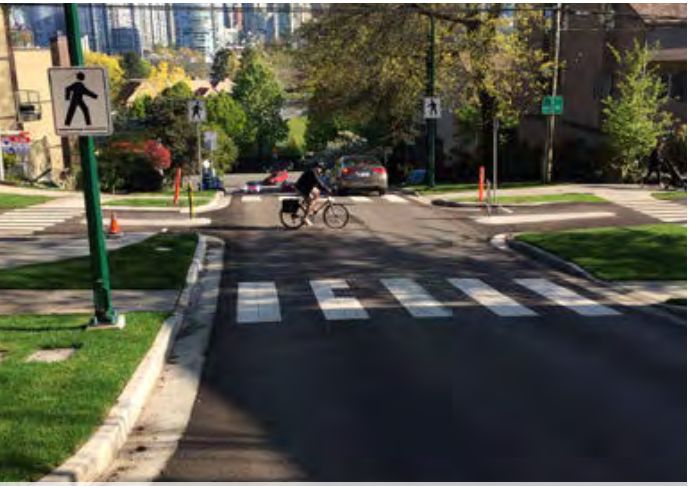


Wider and shaded walking and cycling paths
(Hornby St, Vancouver)



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 (≤ 5%)



Benches for rest and/or enjoy the views



Smooth, stable, and unobstructed surfaces

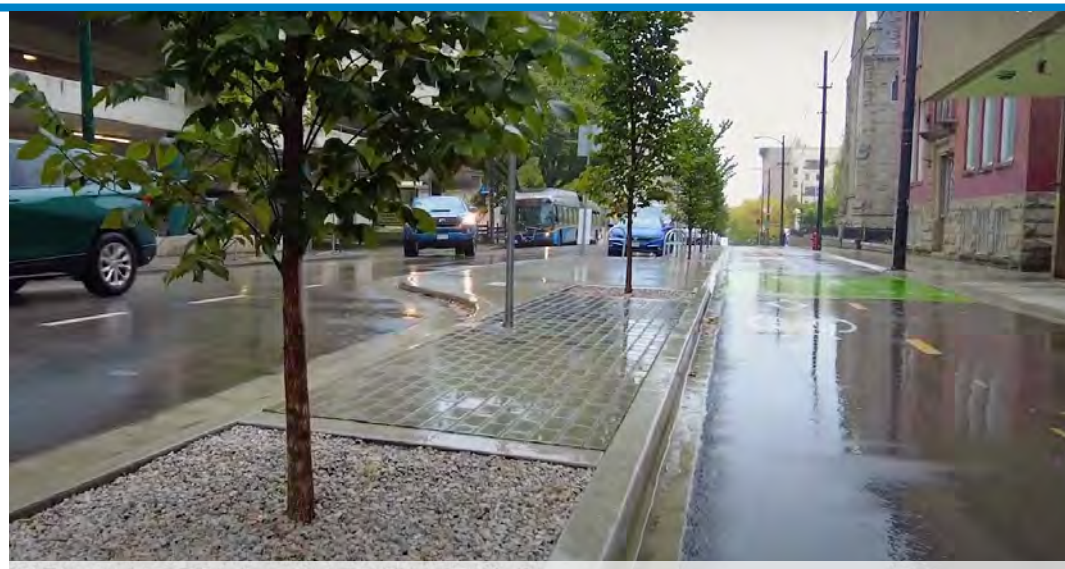
Draft Goal 3

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 biodiveristy, 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.

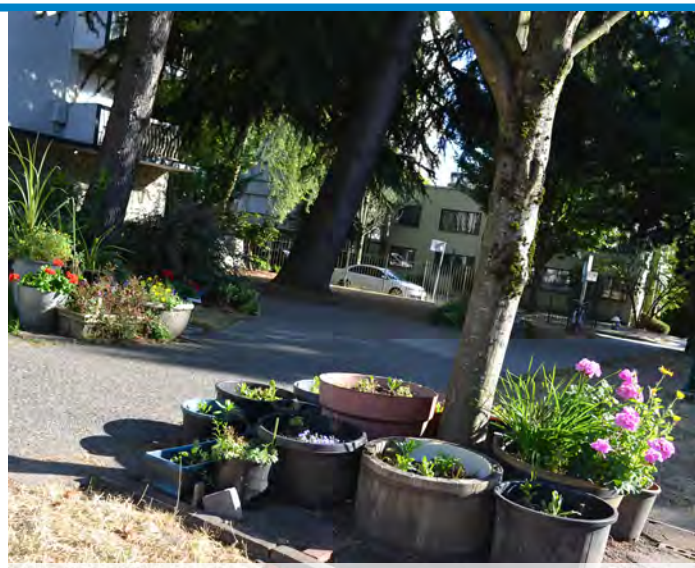
Existing Gardens

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

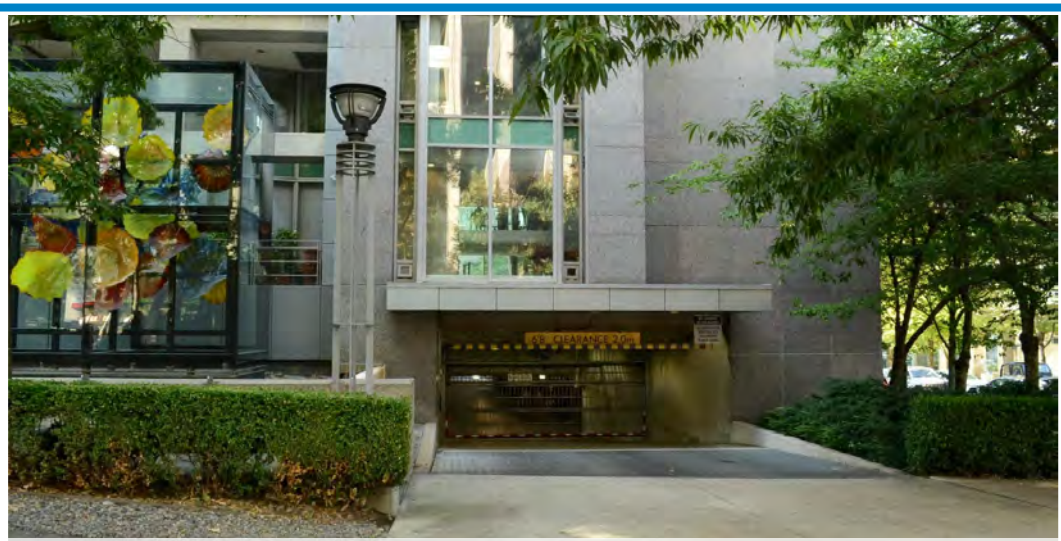
4 Accommodate emergency access and motor vehicle circulation in the neighbourhood.

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

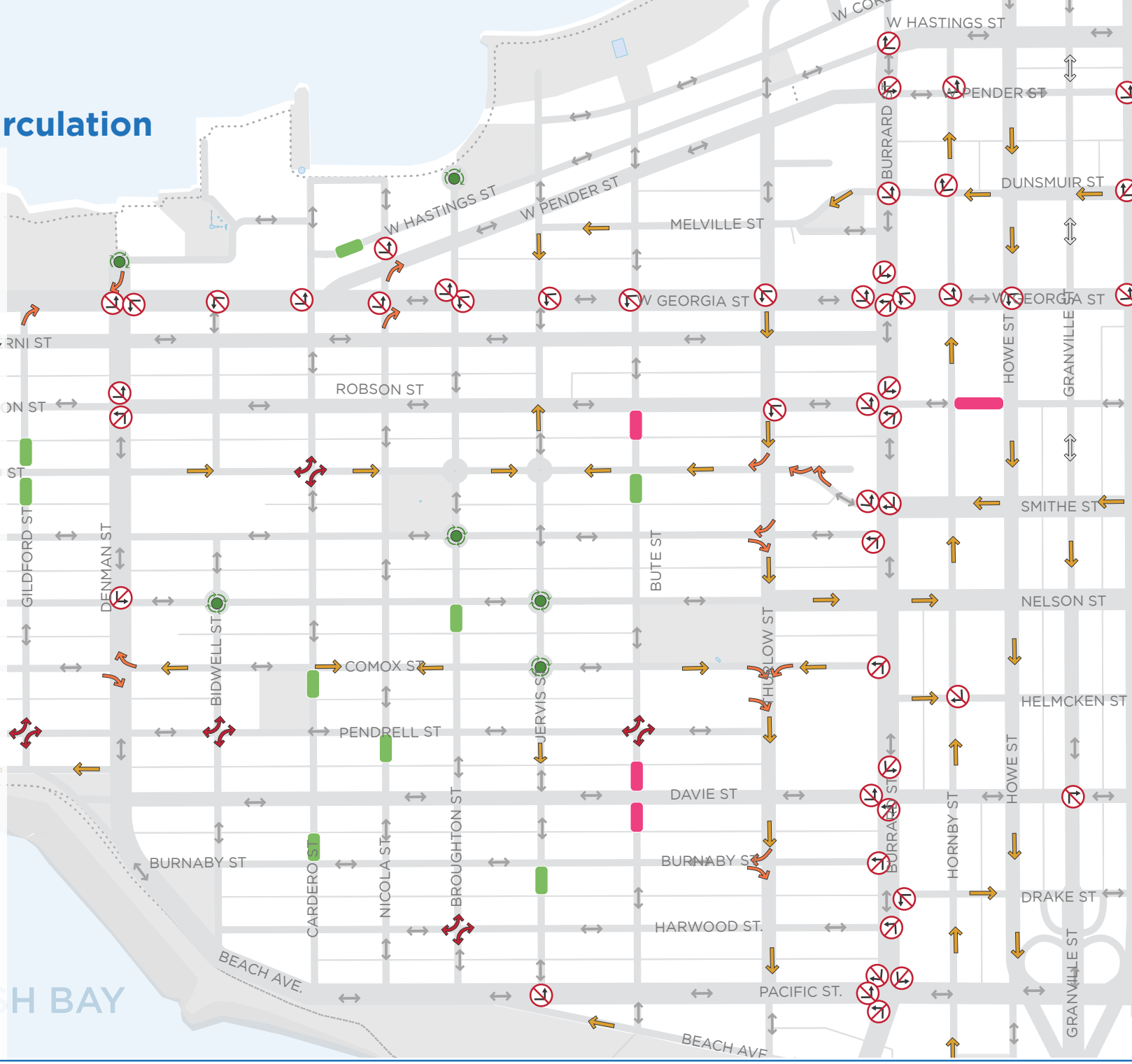
LEGEND

- 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.

