

# CHINATOWN MEMORIAL SQUARE REDESIGN

PHASE 2 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS



## PHASE 2 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Between October and December 2021, participants were asked to review and share their feedback on the DRAFT Vision and Goals for the redesign of Chinatown Memorial Square to identify what works well and what could be improved.

### INPUT SHARED THROUGH:



#### **193 RESPONSES**

Shape Your City online and paper surveys  
(172 English; 21 Chinese)



#### **3 WORKSHOPS (41 PARTICIPANTS)**

Virtual workshops with community groups and the project team to discuss DRAFT Vision and Goals (Memorial Square Redesign Community Advisory Group, Chinese Canadian Military Museum Society/Army, Navy & Air Force Veterans, Chinatown Concern Group)



#### **1 MEETING (8 PARTICIPANTS)**

In-person meeting with Advisory Body (Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee)



#### **PHONE CALLS / EMAILS**

Dedicated voicemail and email to capture questions, comments and/or concerns



#### **906 SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS**

Likes, shares, comments or clicks through City of Vancouver social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)

## WHO WE HEARD FROM (survey portion only)

**193**  
RESPONDENTS

**54% ARE CHINESE**  
**33% IDENTIFY AS WHITE**

**32% ARE 31-45 YEARS**  
**26% ARE ≥ 65 YEARS**

**57% WOMEN**

**6% IDENTIFY AS NON-BINARY/  
GENDER DIVERSE**

Top reasons for visiting Chinatown:  
Dining ♦ Shopping ♦ Activities/Events ♦ Running Errands

**29%** of respondents  
live in Chinatown  
or the DTES

**41%** visited the square  
7+ times in the 12  
months prior to  
COVID

**37% SOCIAL MEDIA**  
**32% WORD OF MOUTH**  
**31% NEWSLETTER**

## THE DRAFT VISION

*“The renewed Chinatown Memorial Square will further strengthen significant moments in the community’s history and its resilience in rising above adversity.*

*It will be a vibrant place where young people and people of all backgrounds can learn, appreciate, and reflect upon the contributions of the early Chinese people in Canada, including veterans and railway workers.*

*It will also be a place to renew relationships based on a common understanding of our shared past and cultures, and work towards a better tomorrow.*

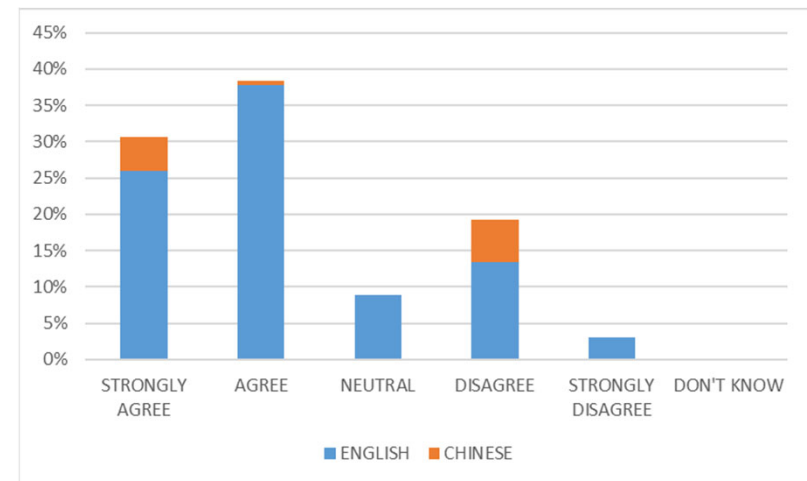
*At the Square, the Chinese community will come together to observe and practice cultural traditions all year-round, and welcome all to celebrate and share their cultures.*

*The Square will be an inspirational space in the heart of Chinatown, befitting of Chinatown’s role as a cultural destination for Vancouver and the world.”*

# THE DRAFT VISION

## Survey Results

- **69%** of survey participants “Strongly agree” or “Agree” that the DRAFT Vision reflects the future they imagine for Chinatown Memorial Square
- Of the 22% that responded “Disagree” or “Strongly disagree”, **37%** stated that they ***agree or generally agree with the DRAFT Vision***, but felt it should have included a museum, community centre or the adjacent private property for expansion (which are beyond the scope of this project)



## THE DRAFT VISION – What we heard

### People

*Who is this space for?*

- Need to acknowledge:
  - Unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations
  - All age groups (including seniors, youth & children) and people (Chinese, Indigenous, women, neighbouring communities and others who have contributed to Chinatown's legacy and/or share similar histories and traditions, and those who may access the square)

### Place

*Sense of place*

- Dynamic, safe and welcoming public space for everyone to gather, connect and enjoy
- Cultural hub to continue Chinatown's living heritage through its buildings, historic businesses, food, art and language
- Living vs. static place for structured/unstructured activities, including public programming and observation
- A symbol of resiliency and strength of the Chinese community

### Design

*Physical elements*

- Desire to incorporate both practical and aesthetic elements (shade/protection, seating, greenery, lighting, art, water feature)
- Prioritize pedestrian safety
- Implement temporary measures for quick benefits

# THE DRAFT VISION

## **OTHER FEEDBACK (including from workshops, meeting, phone and email)**

- *Language* – Emphasis on the future and strengthening culture and heritage
- *Size of the Square* – Should be larger to realize more holistic vision as a community hub and reflect important contributions of the community
- *Public Safety and Security* – A must to achieve goals and objectives for the Square

## THE DRAFT GOALS

*Enhance Memorial Square as a special place that honours and commemorates the contributions of Chinese Canadians, including veterans and railway workers; celebrates Chinatown's rich culture and living heritage; and provides opportunities to learn about Chinatown's past and practice cultural traditions.*

*Create a safe, accessible, inclusive and welcoming space for visitors and residents that allows for a range of cultural programming and activities throughout the year, taking into particular consideration the needs of Chinese seniors.*

*Enhance the Square's prominence in the heart of Chinatown and its connection to adjacent cultural assets and Andy Livingstone Park and its redesign.*

*Provide recommendations on the future stewardship of the space.*

*Continue to facilitate access into, through, and around the project area for people walking or using assistive devices, cycling, and driving.*

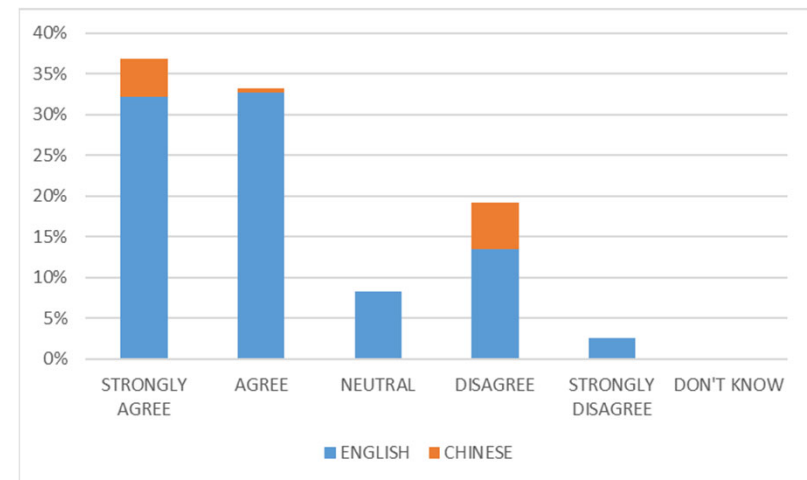
*Ensure the local transportation network continues to enable goods movement, reliable transit and access for emergency vehicles.*



# THE DRAFT GOALS

## Survey Results

- **70%** of survey participants “Strongly agree” or “Agree” that these GOALS reflect what they would like to see for Chinatown Memorial Square in the future
- **31%** of those who responded “Disagree” or “Strongly disagree” said they ***supported the GOALS***, but similar to the DRAFT Vision, thought they should have included things beyond the scope of this project



## THE DRAFT GOALS – What we heard

### WHAT IS MISSING?

- Consider needs of *ALL* Chinatown residents
- How will needs of Chinese seniors be met?
- Opportunities for additional functions/activities and supporting amenities
- A place for people to gather and connect with other parts of Chinatown
- Stronger commitment to define place/better spatial definition
- Make space more appealing/attractive to people
- Relevance to *all* Canadians of Chinese descent
- Celebrate living heritage, not just the past
- Environmental sustainability



### IMPROVEMENT IDEAS

- Community-led stewardship
- Increase pedestrian focus of area
- Further expansion of the square by acquiring adjacent properties
- Include community centre/museum

# IDEAS TO INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE SQUARE

Participants were also asked to provide feedback on two ideas to increase the size of the Square:

## IDEA 1

Close the lane to the north and remove the existing tourist bus stop



## IDEA 2

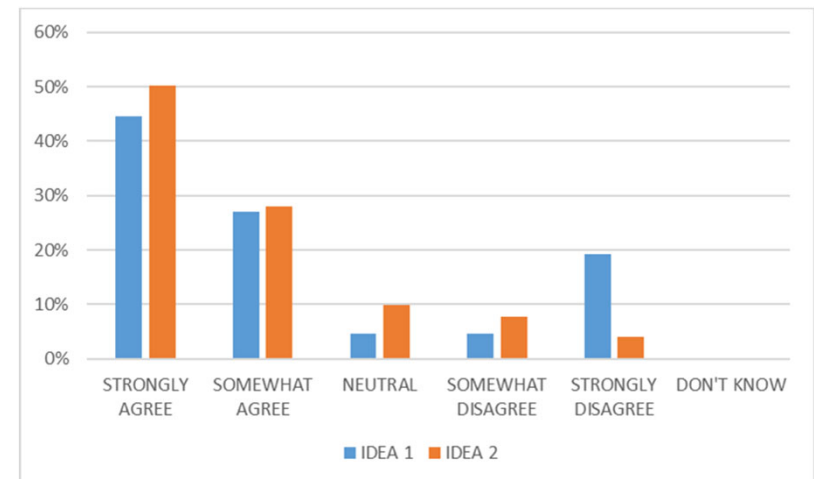
Close lane to the north, remove existing tourist bus stop and expand into existing road space by reducing lane widths, shifting lanes and moving curbs



# IDEAS TO INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE SQUARE

## Survey Results

- **78%** of survey respondents “Strongly agree” or “Somewhat agree” with IDEA 2 to achieve a larger area for the Square



## IDEAS TO INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE SQUARE – What we heard

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Continue bike lane north along Columbia
- Increase outdoor public space to accommodate small and large gatherings/variety of activities
- Environmental improvements by reducing car dependence/local traffic
- Safer/more welcoming environment by providing better lighting, places to sit and eat
- Expand site further by reducing two lanes along Keefer/closing Keefer to Columbia and/or acquiring adjacent properties
- Link up to existing points of interest
- Support Indigenous presence/reconciliation and long-term investment in community
- Enhance pedestrian access
- Increase foot traffic by providing overhead walkway to connect with Chinatown Plaza

### CHALLENGES

- May limit access to vehicles serving the plaza
- Size of site is still too small to fulfill vision and goals and accommodate range of activities
- Maintenance and safety of space
- Potential conflict with future users of adjacent properties
- Permitting costs
- Proximity to Downtown Eastside
- Traffic/parking impacts

## ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS & ACTIVITIES PEOPLE WANT TO SEE

A number of survey respondents expressed a desire to use the space to highlight Chinese culture:

- **LEARNING** through classes, demonstrations, lectures and workshops on history, tai chi/qigong, dance, crafts, cooking, gardening, painting, calligraphy, language, music, martial arts and lion dancing
- **ART** exhibitions, pop-up installations, displays, craft fairs and murals by local artists
- **ACTIVITIES** and events including public/summer markets, movie nights, plant/garden sales, interactive games (chess, mahjong), outreach and engagement
- **PERFORMANCES** such as live music, Cantonese opera, storytelling, poetry reading, puppet shows
- **FOOD** related festivals, stalls and events
- **CELEBRATION** of traditions, customs and history such as Lunar New Year, Spring and Mid-Autumn Festivals, Remembrance Day, Night Market, Ching Ming, Hungry Ghost and Dragon Boat Festivals

## ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS & ACTIVITIES PEOPLE WANT TO SEE

Respondents also expressed a desire for the following:

- Passive and active space for rest/reflection and social gatherings
- Contemporary and traditional activities and functions
- Weekends/nighttime, formal/informal, planned/pop-up/drop-in, year-round activation
- No/low cost, participatory and inclusive events
- Theatre, art, music and food not specific to Chinese culture
- Intergenerational, cross-cultural and community-wide exchanges and interactions
- Opportunity to learn about environmental stewardship and neighborhood biodiversity
- Destination vs. place to walk through
- Activities for residents and neighboring areas
- Supporting amenities such as low-cost parking and public washrooms
- Road closures



## WHAT'S NEXT?

We will retain a design consultant who will use feedback we've received to work on conceptual design options for the square.

We'll be presenting these options for your feedback when they're ready.



## MORE INFORMATION

### PROJECT LINKS:

1. <https://shapeyourcity.ca/memorial-square-redesign>
2. <https://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/chinatown-memorial-square-redesign.aspx>

### CONTACT US:

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