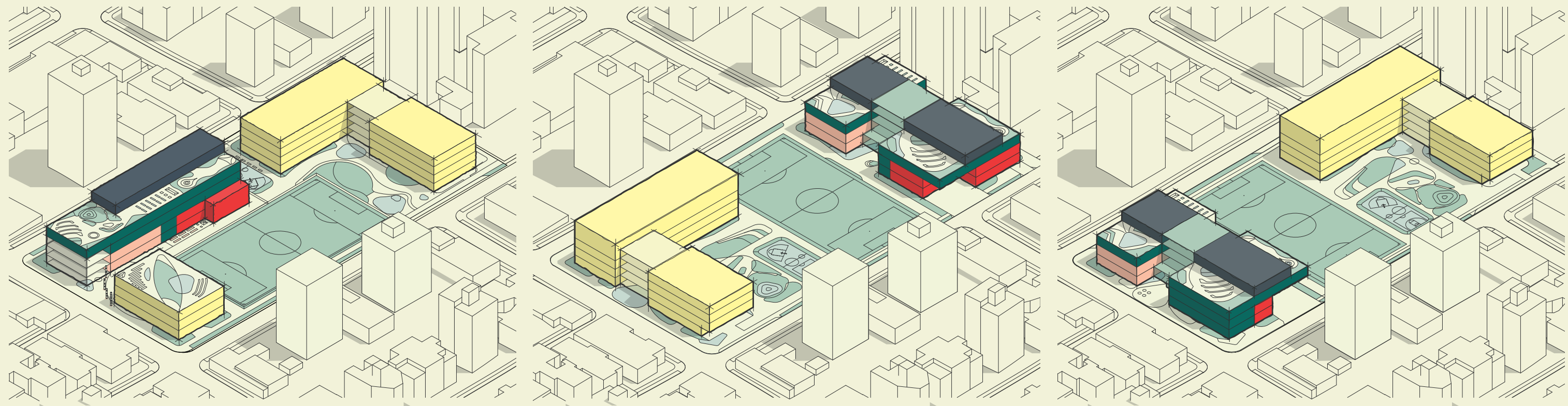


# West End Community Hub Renewal Plan



## Phase 3 Engagement Report: Site Scenarios

Published September 2023



## Introduction

In the heart of Vancouver’s West End neighbourhood is a site that includes the West End Community Centre, Joe Fortes Branch of the Vancouver Public Library (VPL), King George Secondary School (KGSS) and other important facilities.

The West End Community Hub (WECH) Renewal Plan is a collaborative effort to set a comprehensive direction and dynamic vision for the renewal of this site. This project is a partnership between:

- City of Vancouver (CoV)
- Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation (VPB)
- Vancouver Public Library (VPL)
- Vancouver School District (VSB)
- West End Community Centre Association (WECCA)

The WECH Renewal Plan will be a document to guide and direct the future of the site, including land use, relationships between buildings and outdoor spaces, neighbourhood connections, key views, accessibility, connectivity and phasing.

In addition to replacing and expanding the existing public amenities and services on site, the renewal plan will include other uses that could improve services in the West End, including the relocation of Firehall No. 6, full-time childcare facilities (0 to 5 years), seniors’ spaces, and arts and culture facilities.

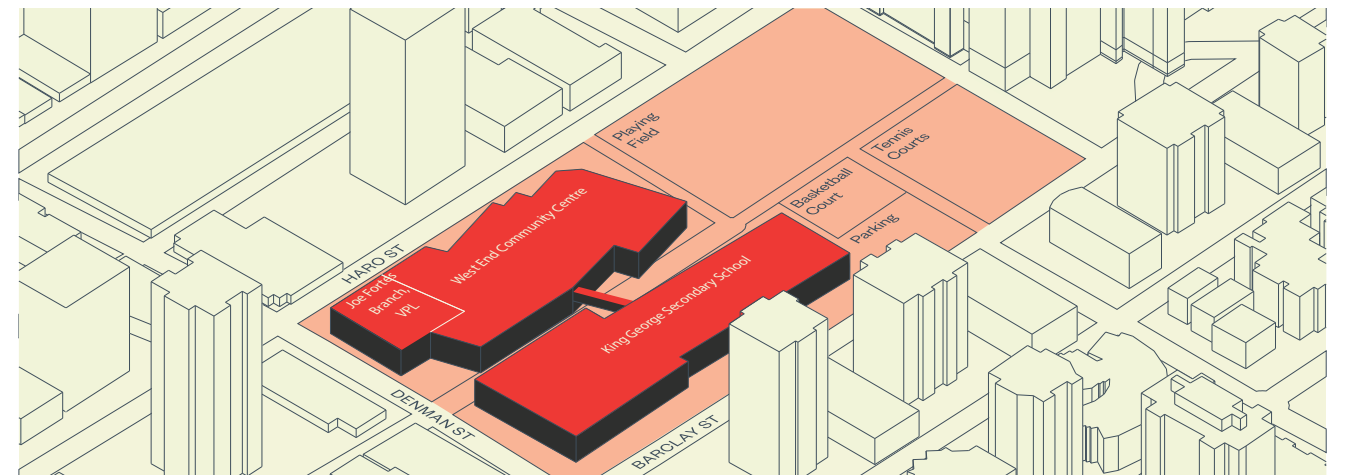
## About the site

The site for the future West End Community Hub is bounded by Haro and Barclay Streets to the east and west, and Denman and Cardero Streets to the north and south.

Currently, the 4.4 acre site includes the following amenities:

- A secondary school with an official capacity of 375 students and sports amenities, including a non-regulation size sport field, basketball and tennis courts
- A community centre that includes a non-regulation sized ice rink
- A public library
- A combination of underground and surface parking

The Vancouver School District owns and operates educational facilities on the majority of the land—approximately 70 per cent. The City of Vancouver owns the remainder of the land. The West End Community Center is currently jointly operated by the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation and the West End Community Centre Association. The Vancouver Public Library operates the Joe Fortes branch.



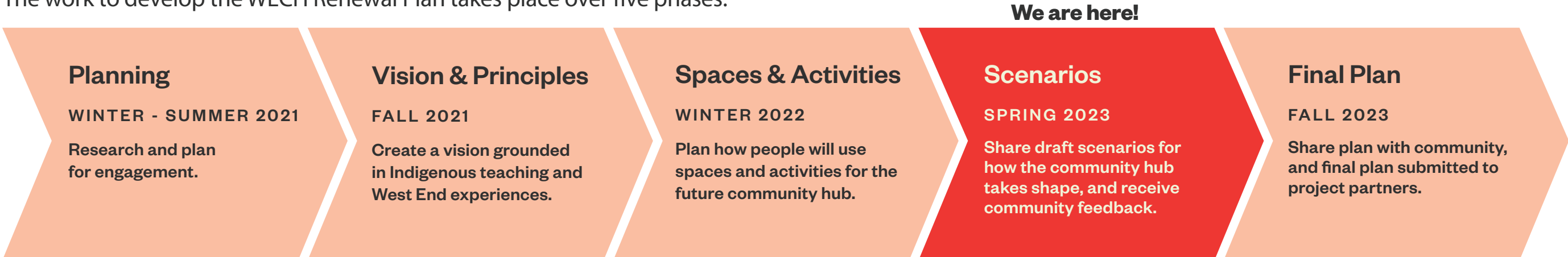
### Renewal funding

Renewing and expanding community amenities and services on this site are an important part of the partners’ commitments to support a growing West End community.

The creation of WECH Renewal Plan was funded by the City’s 2019-2022 Capital Plan. The redevelopment and construction phases of the Plan will take place as funding is secured, and will be planned to minimize community disruption. The Vancouver School District has initiated a capital funding request for both the expansion and seismic funding streams, with the goal of a renewed and expanded secondary school to accommodate the minimum forecasted 1000 student capacity.

### Project timeline

The work to develop the WECH Renewal Plan takes place over five phases:



Learn more about our previous phases:

[WECH Vision and Principles report](#): explore the Renewal Plan’s Framework for Indigenous Reconciliation, Vision for the future, and Principles to guide the plan

[WECH Activities and Spaces report](#): learn about the spaces and activities being planned for the renewed West End Community Hub.

Reports are also available at [shapeyourcity.ca/weconnect](https://shapeyourcity.ca/weconnect).

## Reconciliation and co-creation of the Renewal Plan

The West End Community Hub Renewal Plan respects the presence and Knowledges of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. The Renewal Plan is committed to fostering more inclusive spaces for all.

### Coast Salish project associates

Three local Coast Salish project associates have been involved in developing the Renewal Plan as artists and Knowledge Holders from the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. These Nations have strong historical and cultural ties to the West End.

Coast Salish project associates:

- Chrystal Sparrow – x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), artist, carver
- Cory Douglas – Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), West End resident, architectural technologist and civil engineering technologist, artist
- Angela George – Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Coast Salish weaver and artist, representing səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) knowledge

### Reconciliation commitments of project partners

The WECH Renewal Plan is guided by the project partners' ongoing commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, including policies and commitments such as:

- City of Reconciliation, City of Vancouver – Vision and Goal
- Vancouver School District Reconciliation commitments
- Vancouver Public Library Reconciliation commitments
- Park Board Reconciliation Strategies TRC Update 2018

For more details about these project partner commitments, [view the report from the WECH's visioning stage](#), or visit the partner websites.

### Engagement on WECH site scenarios

During spring 2023, community members provided input on how they would like to see the future WECH buildings and spaces take shape.

Community members shared their views on the strengths and challenges of three potential site scenarios. All three scenarios included the same spaces, activities and outdoor spaces, and each responded to valuable community feedback, planning research and project partner priorities. The primary difference among the scenarios was the location of spaces and activities on the site.

Feedback gathered during this phase builds on the input of hundreds of West Enders and the larger community, who helped create the WECH Vision and Principles in spring 2021 and who, in winter 2022, identified the kinds of spaces and activities there might be in the future West End Community Hub.

### Engagement opportunities

Between May 17 and June 19, 2023, community members were invited to share their feedback about the three site scenarios for the future community hub. Engagement opportunities included:

- **An online survey** hosted on [shapeyourcity.ca/weconnect](https://shapeyourcity.ca/weconnect), including translated versions in Korean, Spanish and Farsi.
- **2 open houses and 3 pop-up events** with information boards, physical models and opportunities to share feedback and talk to project partners.
- **Paper surveys**, information leaflets and binders with detailed information about the scenarios, including large-print material distributed by the West End Seniors' Network and translated surveys and leaflets available in Korean, Spanish and Farsi.
- **School community focused engagement** including a presentation to the Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) from King George Secondary School (KGSS) and its surrounding elementary schools, and two workshops with an urban studies class at KGSS.
- **Self-paced engagement materials** were located in the display case of the West End Community Centre with information boards and site scenario models.
- **Large-print informational posters** were installed on the Denman-facing windows at the Joe Fortes branch library.




Who participated

Survey 390 participants


Open Houses 175 participants

Pop-ups 250 visitors


School community



17 students in the high secondary school’s urban studies class



16 high school parents



34 local elementary school parents and principals



▲ Self-paced information boards, open house and pop-up events held at West End Community Centre



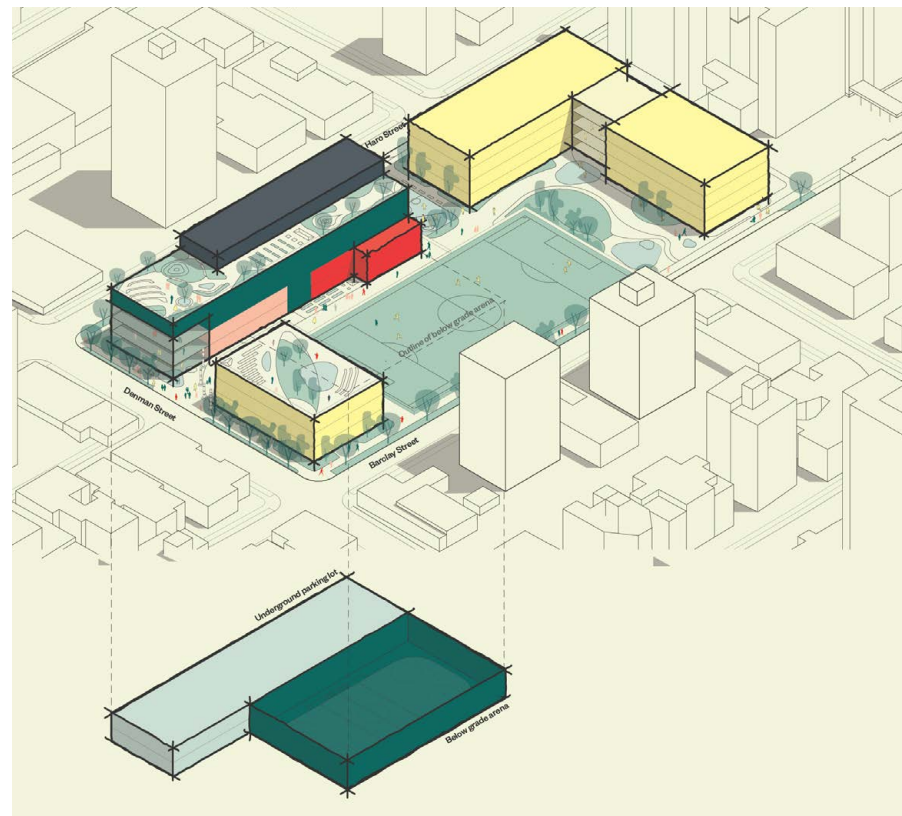
## About the WECH site scenarios

Each scenario responds to valuable community feedback, planning research and project partner priorities.

For details about the scenarios, visit the [project website](#) or [review the site option information boards](#).

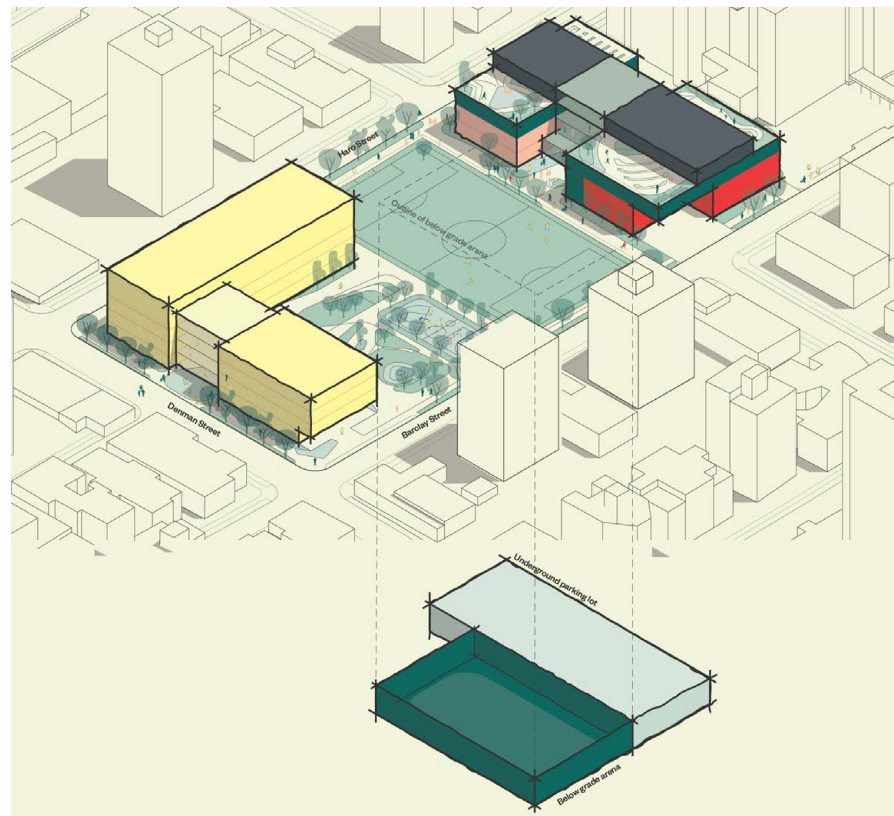
### Scenario A

Community uses on Denman, Education uses on Barclay & Denman



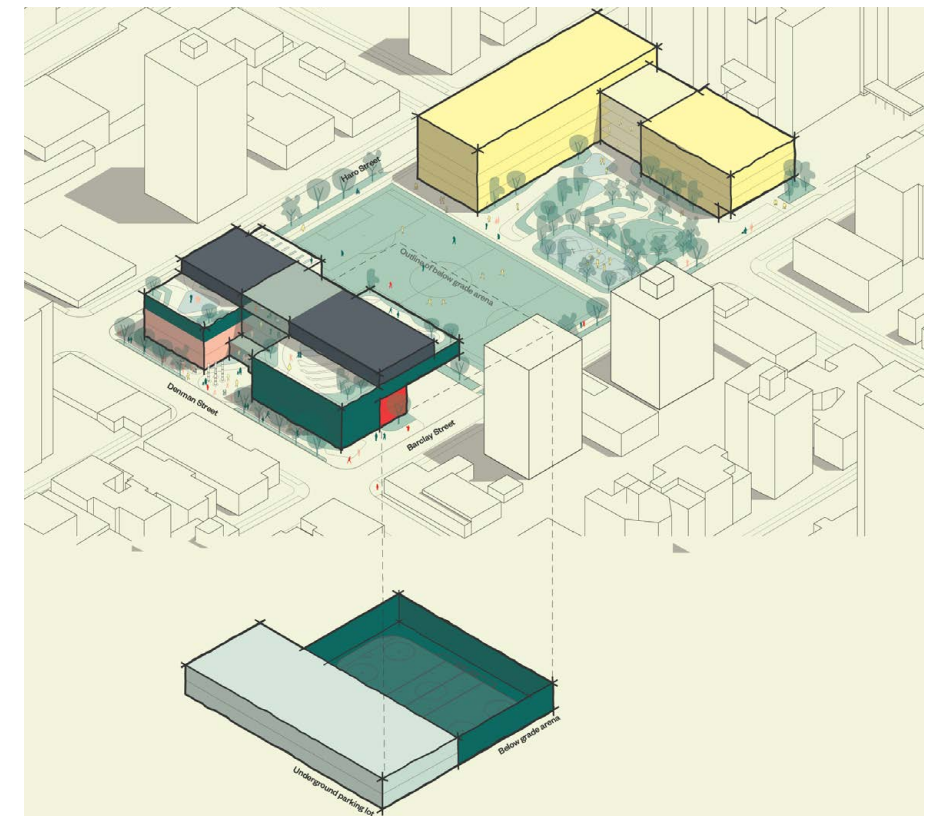
### Scenario B

Community uses on on Barclay, Education uses on Denman



### Scenario C

Community uses on Denman, Education uses on Barclay





## What we heard from the community

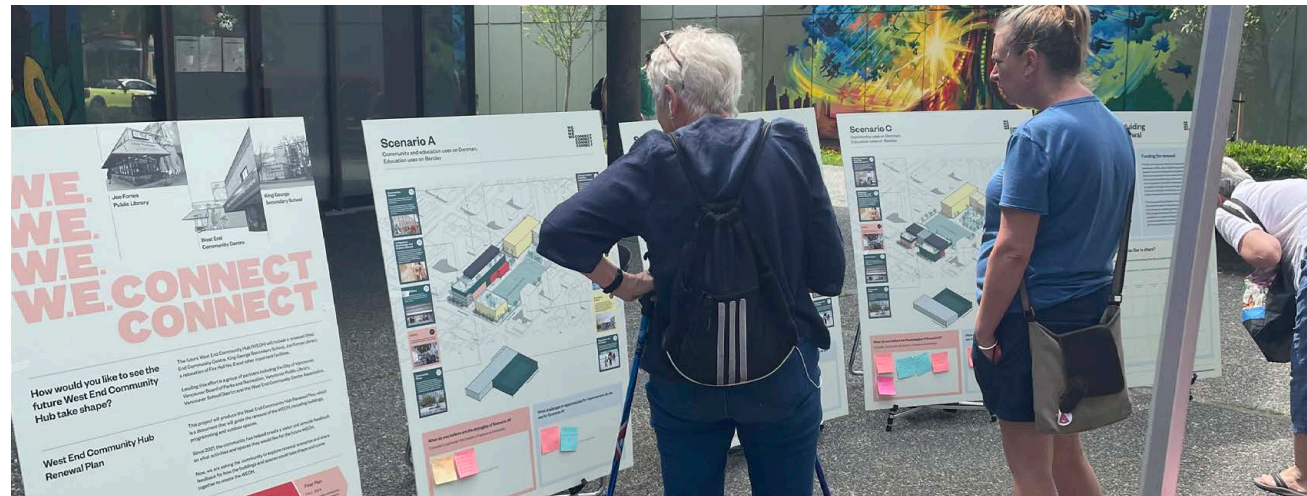
The community was asked to consider three scenarios for how the future West End Community Hub's buildings and spaces could take shape. All three scenarios include the same spaces, activities, and outdoor spaces, differing primarily in where the spaces and activities are located on the site. Participants provided feedback by identifying each scenario's strengths, challenges and opportunities for improvement.

The online survey asked participants to identify strengths for each scenario from provided lists, with an option to add additional strengths. At the open houses and pop-ups, as well as in the online survey's challenges section, participants expressed any ideas they wanted to share. Results of this input are provided below.



▲ Open house, high school's urban studies workshop and pop-up events held at West End Community Centre and King George Secondary School





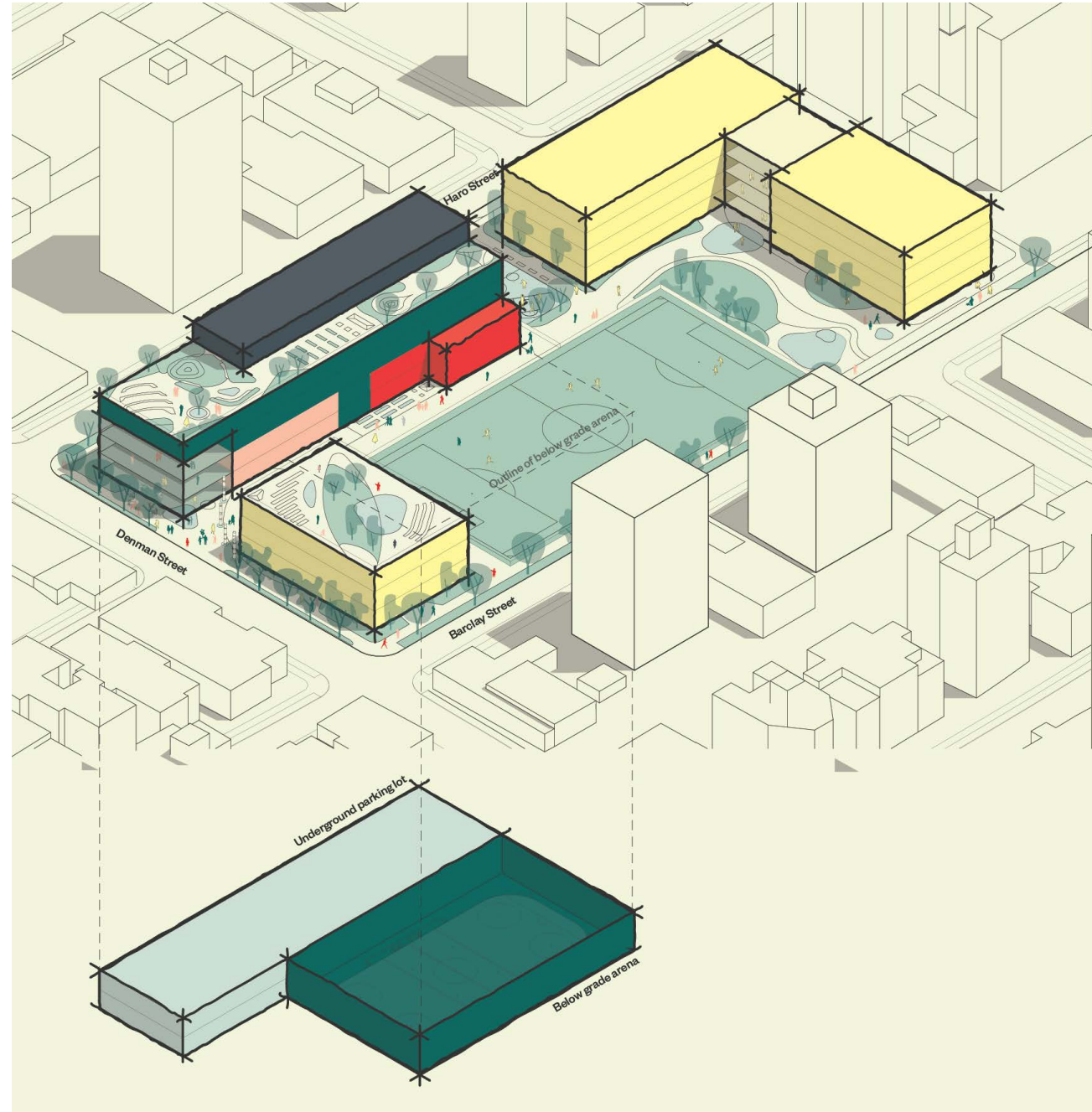
▲ Open houses and pop-ups held at West End Community Centre

▲ Open house, high school's urban studies workshop and self-paced information boards at West End Community Centre and King George Secondary School



### Scenario A feedback:

Community uses on Denman, Education uses on Barclay & Denman



### Strengths of Scenario A

When asked about the strengths of Scenario A, about half of all survey respondents selected the following options:

- *Denman Street location of an expanded community plaza*
- *Denman location of the library*
- *Denman location of the community centre*
- *Denman connection to the community centre lobby or social space*

Pop-up and open house comments about the strengths of Scenario A were mainly about the Denman-facing aspects of this scenario:

*Atrium facing onto Denman Street, which would act as a combined entrance for the library and community centre, as it could:*

- Allow for easy accessibility for patrons of the future community hub, whether it be for the library, community centre, or childcare facilities

*Expanded community plaza located on Denman Street, as it could:*

- Create public space in a high profile location and help integrate the various uses of the site



## Challenges and opportunities for improvement for Scenario A

All participants (survey, open house, and pop-up) provided their feedback about challenges and opportunities for improvement through open-ended comments. The main themes about challenges or areas to improve Scenario A were:

*Separation of school buildings between the east side of site and along Denman, as it could:*

- Lead to logistical constraints due to the lengthier time for travel between the buildings
- Divide the school community if used for a special program or unique classes
- Might be awkward or inconvenient to travel between buildings
- Raise safety considerations due to increased school access points

*Haro Street location of Firehall #6, as it could:*

- Interfere with other Haro Street users, which is a traffic-calmed and designated cycling street
- Impede fire truck manoeuvrability and efficiency
- Create challenges for merging onto connecting key roads, Denman Street and Robson Street
- Not align with the site's community-oriented objectives
- Disrupt patrons of the community hub, especially the library and childcare facility

*Denman Street location of a part of the school, as it could:*

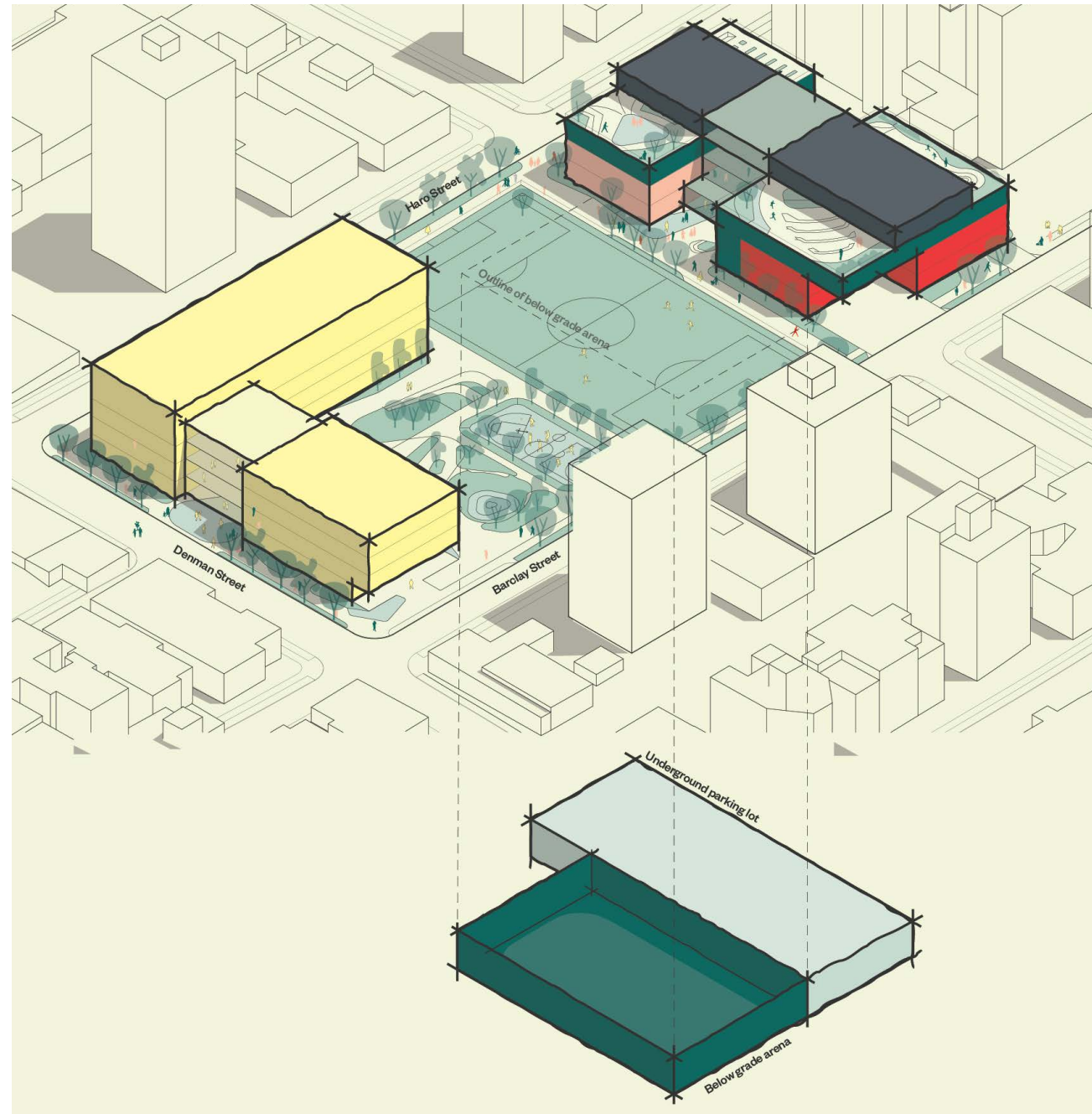
- Lead to incompatibility with the commercial and social nature of the rest of Denman Street

*Denman Street location of the expanded community plaza, as it could:*

- Face challenges to be both safe and inclusive

### Scenario B feedback:

Community uses on Barclay, Education uses on Denman



### Strengths of Scenario B

Scenario B had lower overall levels of public support in comparison to the other scenarios. When asked about the strengths of Scenario B, survey respondents identified moderate support and approximately one quarter of survey respondents identified:

- *Haro Street Greenway location of a community plaza*
- *Barclay Street connection to Firehall #6*
- *Movement of foot traffic around buildings*

Comments about the scenario strengths were collected at the pop-ups and open houses. The relatively moderate strengths about Scenario B identified by the community were:

*The Barclay Street connection to Firehall #6, as it could:*

- Allow for more options for how firetrucks can exit the firehall
- Cause less disruption to the surrounding community

*The Haro Street location of the community centre and library, as it could:*

- Be insulated from noise pollution and more distracting aspects of Denman Street
- Allow for easy connection to Robson Street via Bidwell Street
- Offer a village feel by having a community hub nestled within the neighbourhood

*The Denman Street location of secondary school, as it could:*

- Allow for increased accessibility and more dynamic liveliness for student experience

*The Haro Street Greenway location of community plaza, as it could:*

- Allow for a more tranquil and scenic path for patrons to move across the site



## Challenges or opportunities for improvements for Scenario B

The main challenges or opportunities for improvements identified by survey respondents, open house attendees, pop-up visitors and other streams of input were:

*The Denman Street location of secondary school, as it could:*

- Be noisy and potentially disrupt the school environment
- Reduce opportunities to further activate Denman Street, and may create a passive space on Denman Street
- Produce security and safety challenges
- Reduce integration of the hub with the rest of the West End community

*The Barclay Street connection to Firehall #6, as it could:*

- Face challenges with fire trucks exiting the firehall in a quick manner during peak traffic periods
- Interfere with and disrupt community uses of the site

*The Haro Street locations of the community centre and library, as it could:*

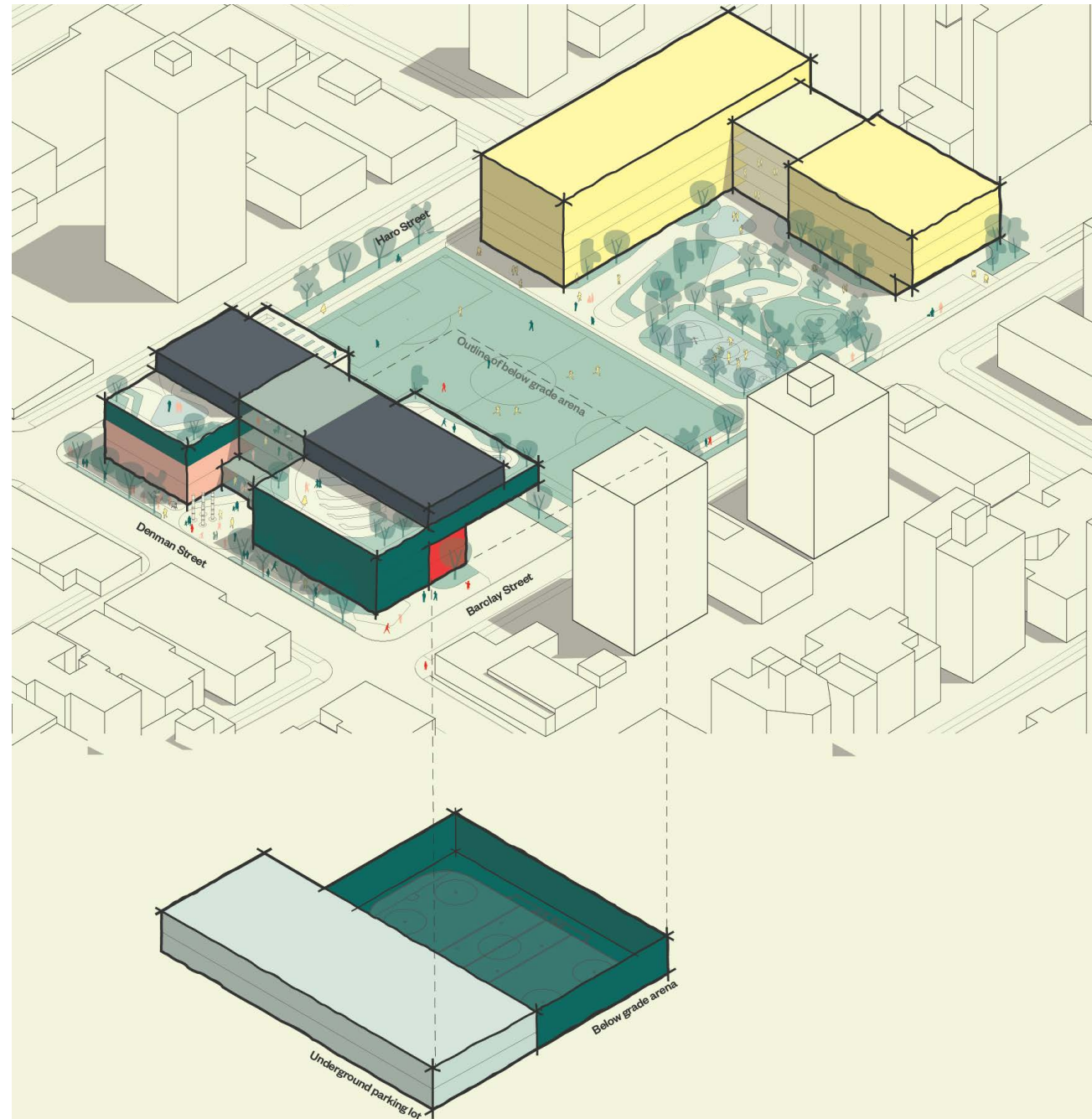
- Be less accessible for a wide range of people in the community
- Be harder to discover for passersby and newcomers if community resources are “hidden”
- Not support the site’s objective as serving as a community hub

*The Haro Street Greenway location of the community plaza, as it could*

- Be hard to discover and access from the main areas of foot traffic in the community
- Be too narrow to create a meaningful public space for community connection

### Scenario C feedback:

Community uses on Denman, Education uses on Barclay



### Strengths of Scenario C

When asked about the strengths of Scenario C, approximately two-thirds of survey respondents identified:

- *Denman location of the community centre*
- *Denman location of the library*
- *Denman location of the community plaza*
- *Denman location of the community centre lobby or social space*
- *The secondary school's location on the east side of the site*

About a third of respondents supported the remaining elements of this scenario.

Pop-up and open house participants shared additional perspectives about the strengths of Scenario C. The main strengths identified by the community were:

*Denman locations of the library and community centre, as together they could:*

- Offer easy exposure and discoverability for passersby and newcomers to the community in a welcoming way
- Integrate well with the community due to having continuity with the foot traffic on Denman Street
- Be accessible and safe for a wide range of people in the community
- Activate the sidewalk and continue the liveliness along Denman Street

*The secondary school located on the east side of the site, as it could:*

- Be protected from disruptions and noise pollution
- Be a safer and more secure environment for students
- Offer easier pickup logistics for parents

*Denman connection to the community centre lobby/social space, as it could:*

- Be more welcoming and inviting to patrons and passersby alike

*The Denman location of an expanded community plaza, as it could:*

- Serve as a central public space for social gatherings, while being a welcoming area to the rest of the community hub



## Challenges or opportunities for improvements for Scenario C

The main challenges or opportunities for improvements identified by survey respondents, open house attendees, pop-up visitors and other streams of input were:

*The Barclay location of Firehall #6, as it could:*

- Disrupt community hub patrons and the wider residential community
- Prevent easy manoeuvrability and efficiency for exiting fire trucks

*The Denman location of the expanded community plaza, as it could:*

- Be restricted in space and flow
- Be unattractive to some users by being adjacent to a busy commercial street

*The location of the childcare spaces, as it could:*

- Be disruptive for the childcare users

## Additional input on the future WECH

Beyond feedback on how the buildings and spaces could take shape for the future West End Community Hub, we received additional input, such as:

- Desire for clarity on the need for the firehall at the WECH and information on its impacts on local noise and traffic
- Questions on future school capacity, accessibility and the school experience
- Interest in construction phasing and continuity of services during construction
- Urgency for a new and bigger secondary school in the West End
- Considerations for outdoor spaces, landscaping and access to the outdoor spaces

## Next steps

Project partners are reviewing all of the valuable feedback received about the site scenarios.

A finalized Renewal Plan for the West End Community Hub will be shared publicly in fall 2023.

**W.E. W.E. W.E. CONNECT CONNECT CONNECT**

**How would you like to see the future West End Community Hub take shape?**

The West End Community Hub will include a renewed West End Community Centre, King George Secondary School, Joe Fortes Library and the relocated Fire Hall No. 6.

Translations available in Korean (한국어), Farsi (فارسی) and Spanish (Español).

**Get involved**

- **Fill out the survey**  
Survey available online and at the community centre front desk  
(Complete survey for a chance to win a prize)
- **Visit a pop-up event**
- **Attend an in-person open house**

JUNE 4, 2:00 - 5:00 PM  
West End Community Centre

JUNE 5, 3:00 - 6:30 PM  
King George Secondary School

For survey, pop-up locations and full details visit: [shapeyourcity.ca/weconnect](https://shapeyourcity.ca/weconnect) or call (604)-257-8333

VPL Vancouver Public Library VSB Vancouver School Board CITY OF VANCOUVER VANCOUVER BOARD OF NEIGHBOURHOODS AND RECREATION West End Community Hub Association





## W.E.CONNECT

For more information, please visit [shapeyourcity.ca/weconnect](http://shapeyourcity.ca/weconnect)

Questions? Please contact [weconnect@vancouver.ca](mailto:weconnect@vancouver.ca)

