



RTS 012136

# Program Update

## VIVA Vancouver

Presentation to Council | Nov 29, 2017

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## VIVA Vancouver

Background and Goals

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## 2017 Initiatives

VIVA Refresh & Other Street Activities Initiatives

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## Bute-Robson Trial Plaza

Recommendation for permanent plaza

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## Looking Forward

Looking ahead to 2018







1. Work with partners to identify, test, and monitor potential **new public spaces**
2. Activate and help people reimagine **existing underused spaces**
3. Foster a culture shift to enliven public spaces by **removing barriers** to public life and **building community capacity**
4. **Pilot new programs and policies** to enable more and better public spaces & public life





**VIVA's monitoring program builds on best practices and is tailored to each year's activities**

## 2017 highlights:

- Community partnerships with VPSN, City Studio, Vancouver Design Week, and Happy City
- Coordination with Planning department on Gehl-led Public Life Study
- Observations at specific locations

## Happy City research:

- VIVA's tactical urbanism projects:
  - Increase happiness & trust
  - Foster social connections
  - Build stronger care of place



These projects can't happen without our amazing partners.

## Thank you partners!

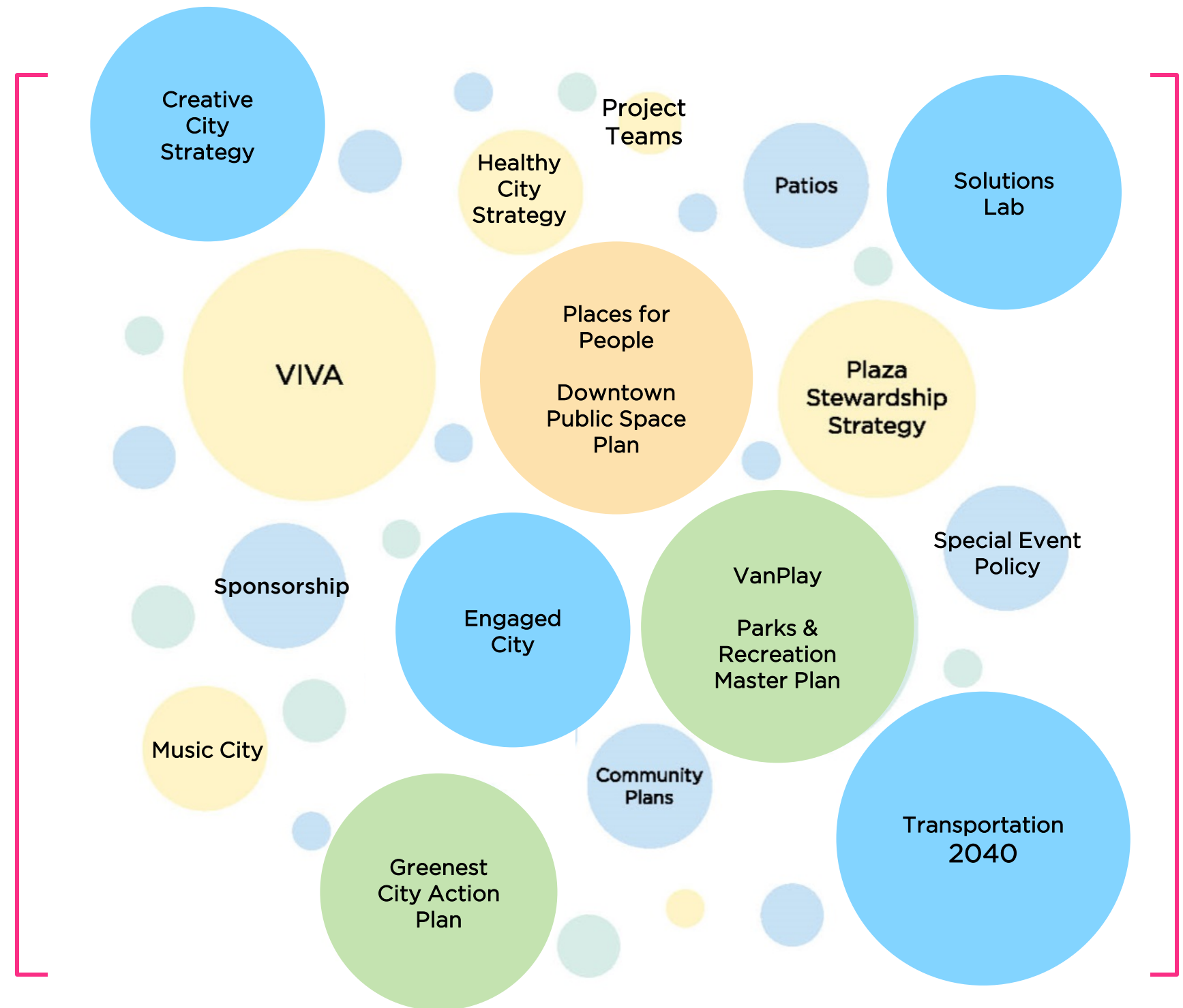




## A Variety of Public Space Policy, Projects & Programs

Led by Planning, Engineering & Parks

**Coordination is key**







**INNOVATE**



**INCUBATE**



**INTEGRATE**



A **VIVA Refresh** and other exciting **new initiatives**  
launched or expanded in 2017



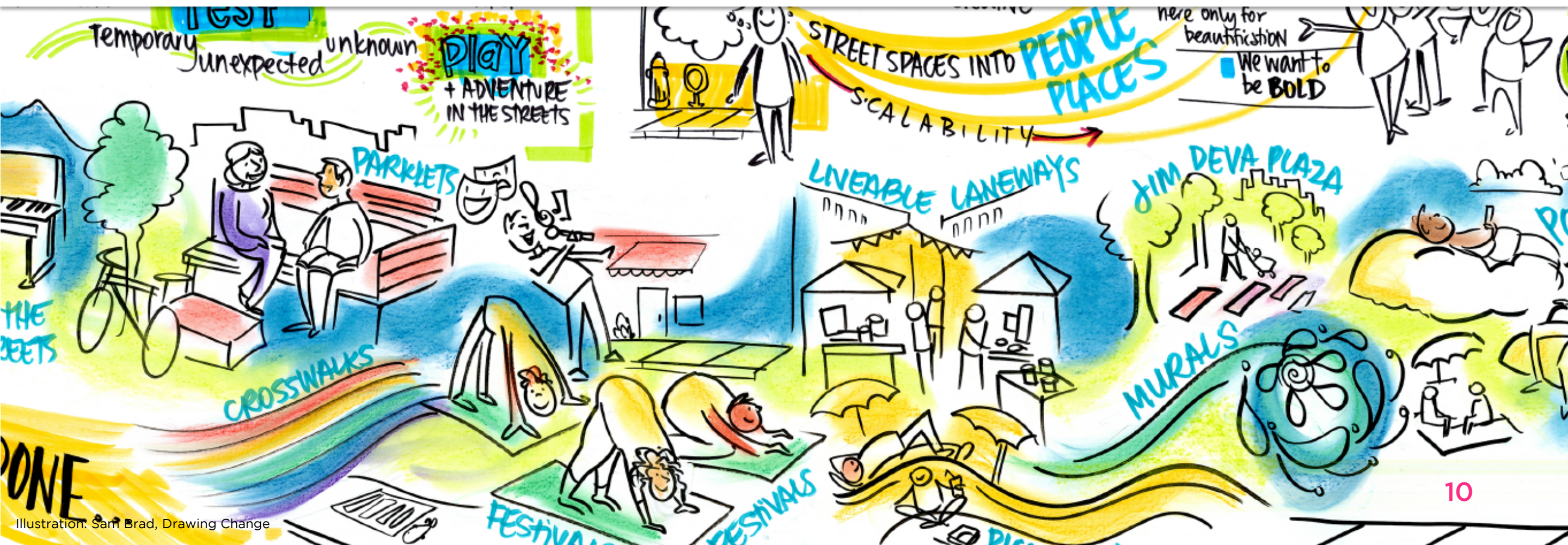
# VIVA: 2017 Pop-Up Activations

VIVA worked with community partners to enliven & reimagine public spaces, test new ideas, & provide input on future public space directions

WE ARE HERE



APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN
Call to Partners	Project and Partner Selection	Launch Projects and Engage Community						Lessons Learned & Next Steps	





# VIVA Vancouver – 2017 Pop-up Activations



1. **3 Piece Band**  
participatory sculpture & music stage

2. **Active Streets to Active Spaces**  
bike-powered block party activator

3. **Enigmatic Colouration**  
bridge underside illumination

4. **Face the Music**  
interactive musical furniture (deferred-2018)

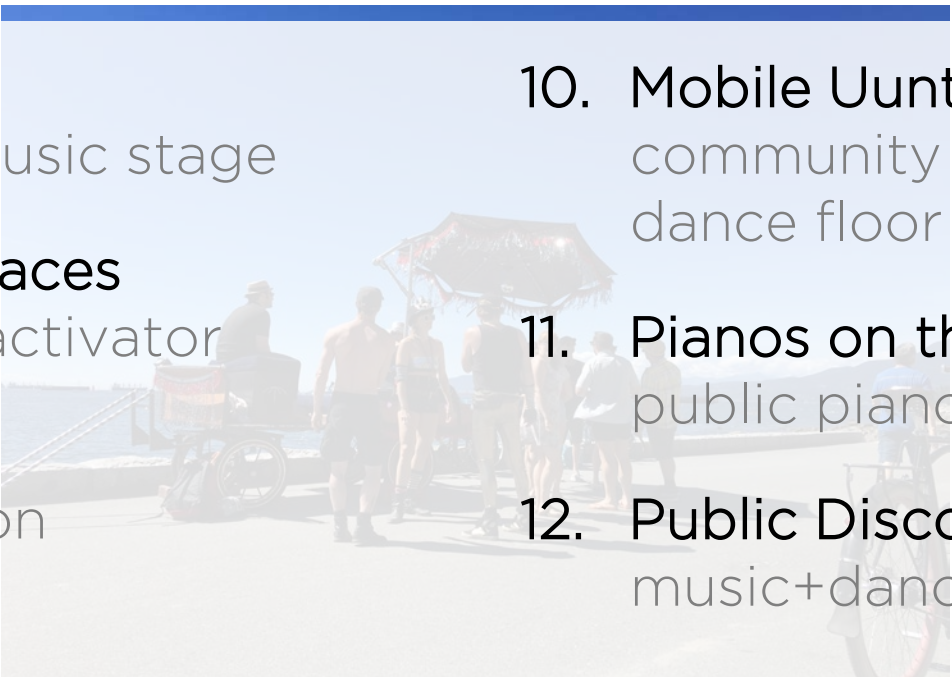
5. **Freestyle Focus Group**  
roving participatory hip-hop activations

6. **Hot+Noisy Chinatown Social**  
mahjong block party testing new space

7. **Laneway Living Room**  
lighter+quicker+cheaper laneway activations

8. **Light Up Experiment**  
façade projection experiment (deferred-2018)

9. **Luminescent Spaces**  
interactive light sculpture (deferred-2018)



10. **Mobile Uuntzbrella**  
community activated, all weather, mobile dance floor

11. **Pianos on the Street**  
public pianos

12. **Public Disco**  
music+dance transforming public spaces

13. **Street Beats**  
interactive music wall of upcycled instruments

14. **The Tables Have Turned**  
pop-up ping pong +++

15. **Vancouver Bubble**  
Inflatable & interactive public space

16. **CityStudio Bridge Warming**  
exploring possibilities under Cambie Bridge



**over 60  
activations  
so far**



# Pop-up Activations: Ping Pong





# Roving Activations: Freestyle Focus Group





# Seasonal Installation: Street Beats Interactive Music Wall





# Roadway Transformations: Hot+Noisy Chinatown





# Laneway & Plaza Activations: Public Disco







VIVA works with partners to transform streets into public spaces

## 2017 Highlights:

**Bute @ Robson (south side)** - trial plaza, launched on June 30

**Vernon @ Adanac** - low-cost interim plaza, launched in June

**Maple Tree Square** - significant new public space & seating through bollard relocation in June

**800 Robson Interim Improvements** - surface leveled to improve usability and flow (August)

**McSpadden @ Commercial (east side)** - two-day pop-up plaza in August



# Streets to Plazas: Bute-Robson Trial Plaza





# Streets to Plazas: Adanac-Union Junction @ Vernon





# Streets to Plazas: Maple Tree Square



**Old bollard line**  
Similar changes on opposite side





## 800 Robson Plaza

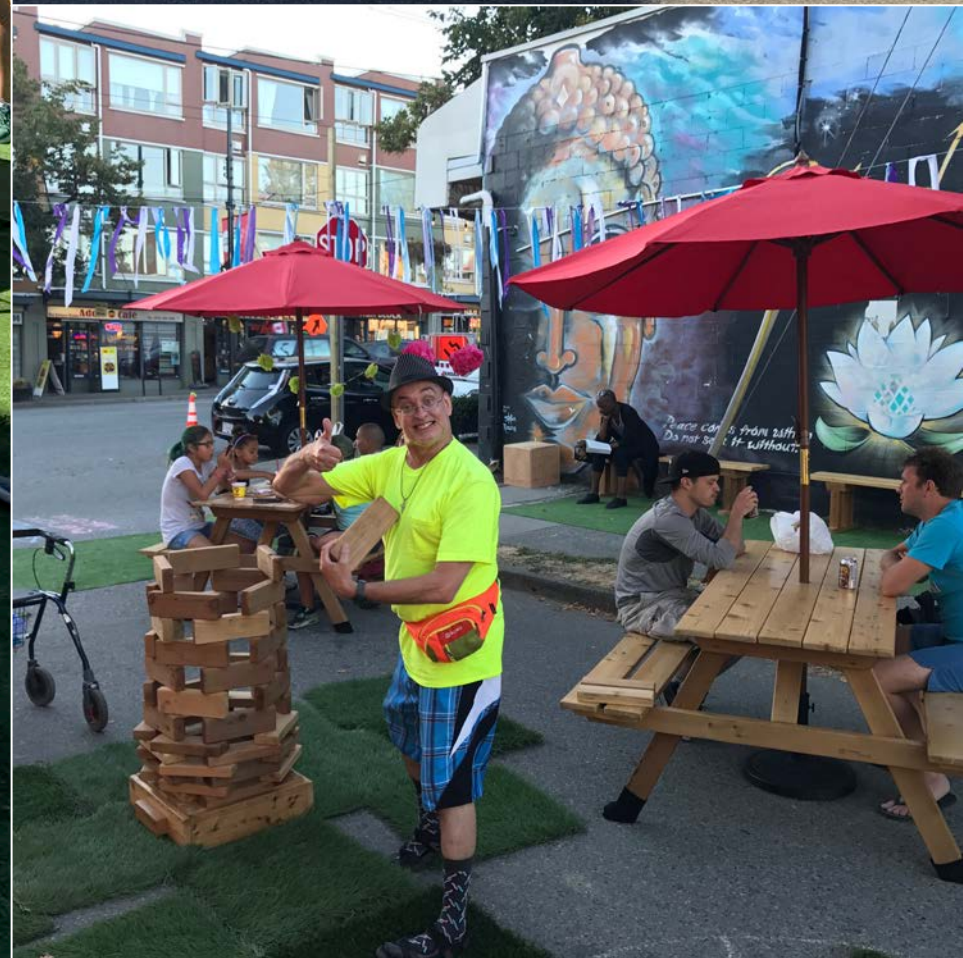
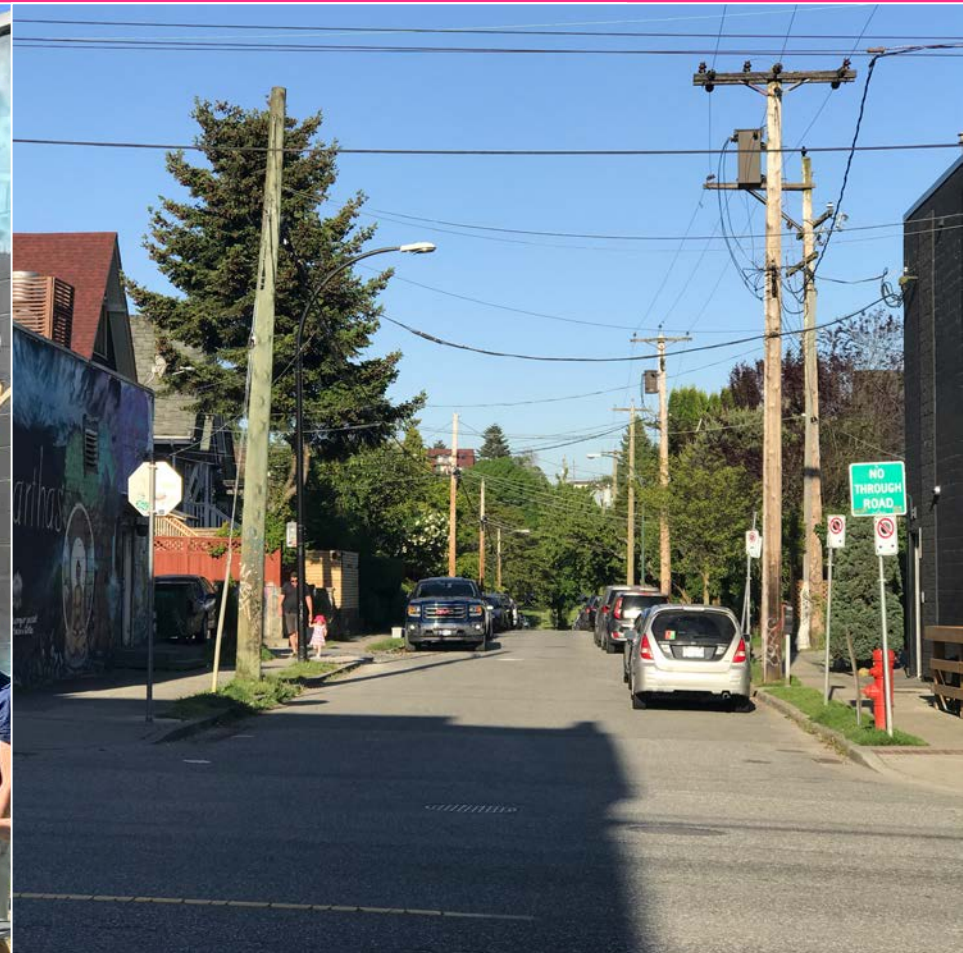
- 2011-2015 - 'Robson Redux' seasonal transformations
- 2016 - Council approves permanent transformation & conceptual design
- 2017 - plaza leveled to enhance functionality in interim
- 2018 - Additional enhancements & stewardship pilot
- 2019 - Construction of permanent plaza

## North Plaza

- 2017 - Completed permanent plaza



# Streets to Plazas: McSpadden Pop-up Plaza







Council approved the conversion of up to 3 laneways (2016)

## Progress:

1. **Alley Oop** - opened 2016, finishing details in 2017
2. **Ackery's Alley** - open 2018
3. **Alberni Laneway** - planning underway 2018

Plus Vancouver Mural Festival and 2017 VIVA activations targeting laneways:

- Livable Laneways (VPSN)
- Public Disco (Groundwerk)



# Mt Pleasant Laneway Transformation: Mural Festival





# Laneway Living Room: Commercial Drive





# Laneway Living Room: Gastown







## Transforming parking spaces into public places

### Progress:

**2011-2013: Tested idea**  
(city-initiated locations)

**2013-2015: Pilot Program**  
(sponsor-initiated locations)

**2016: Adopted citywide program**

**2017:**

- **Refurbished 4 parklets**
- **Built 3 new parklets**



# New Parklet: Fraserhood @ Pizza Carano



before

4241 Fraser Street | Partner: Pizza Carano >

after





Council directed staff to report back on a patio program and conduct a three year pilot study

## Progress:

**Launched Patio Program Review:** heating, music, weather protection, washrooms, extended patios hours, and application processing

**Launched curbside patio pilot:** 5 pilot locations in 2017, more planned for 2018





Pilot: modular elements



Pilot: curbside patio location





## Progress:

- Launched Street Vendor Collective with approximately 20 vendors at up to 6 vending locations downtown
- Exploring partnerships with other non-profits (Craft Council)



## Focus on **Bute-Robson Trial Plaza**



# Bute-Robson Trial Plaza



## Supported by:

- Transportation 2040 Plan (2012)
- West End Community Plan (2013)
- Robson BIA







Bute-Robson: Before



Bute-Robson: After





**Plaza activity and use**

**Traffic volumes**

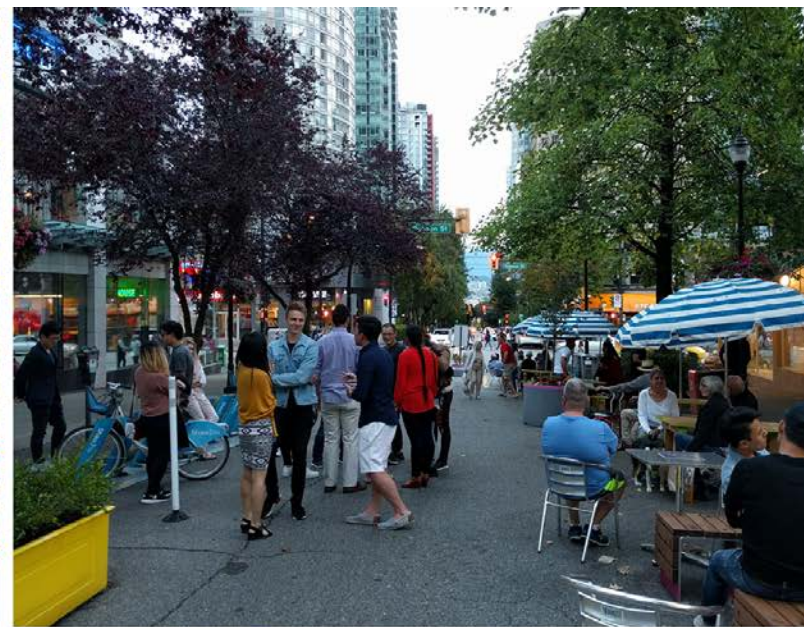
**Cycling speeds, interactions  
and Mobi station use**

**On-site engagement**

**Online survey**

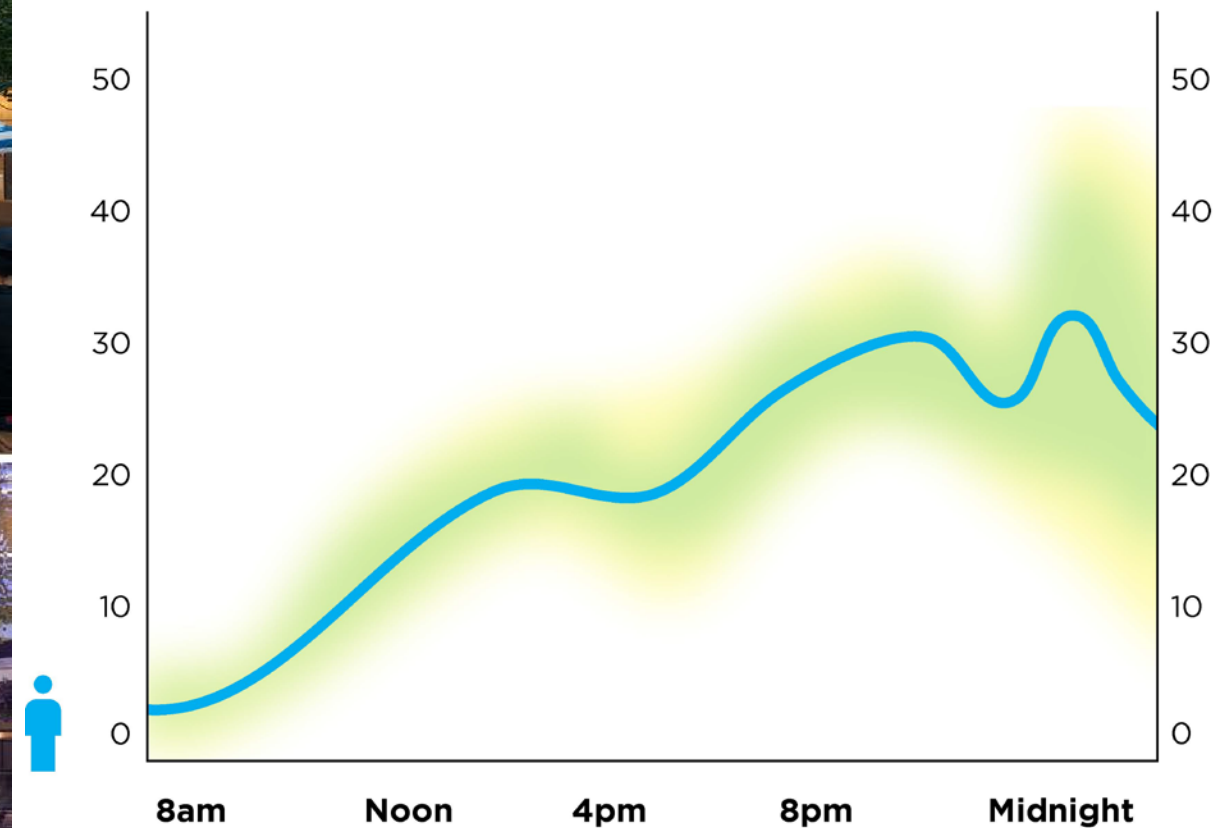


# An incredibly well-used public space



## Avg. Number of People Using Plaza

\*Mid-July to Early- Sept Based on 150 spot observations



\* Includes people sitting or standing in the plaza (between or along the curbs). Does not include people walking or cycling through the space, or sitting on adjacent private patios.



# Traffic Impacts



	Location	Before	During	Net Change
A	Bute North of Haro	2400	300	-2100
B	Jervis North of Haro	1900	2100	+200
C	Broughton North of Haro	1650	1750	+100
D	Nicola North of Haro	3000	2850	-150
E	Haro East of Bute	2350	1350	-1000
F	Haro West of Bute	2050	1450	-600
G	Lane East of Bute	1150	1150	0
H	Lane West of Bute	550	1000	+450

Preliminary analysis suggests traffic impacts to nearby streets & lanes are manageable.





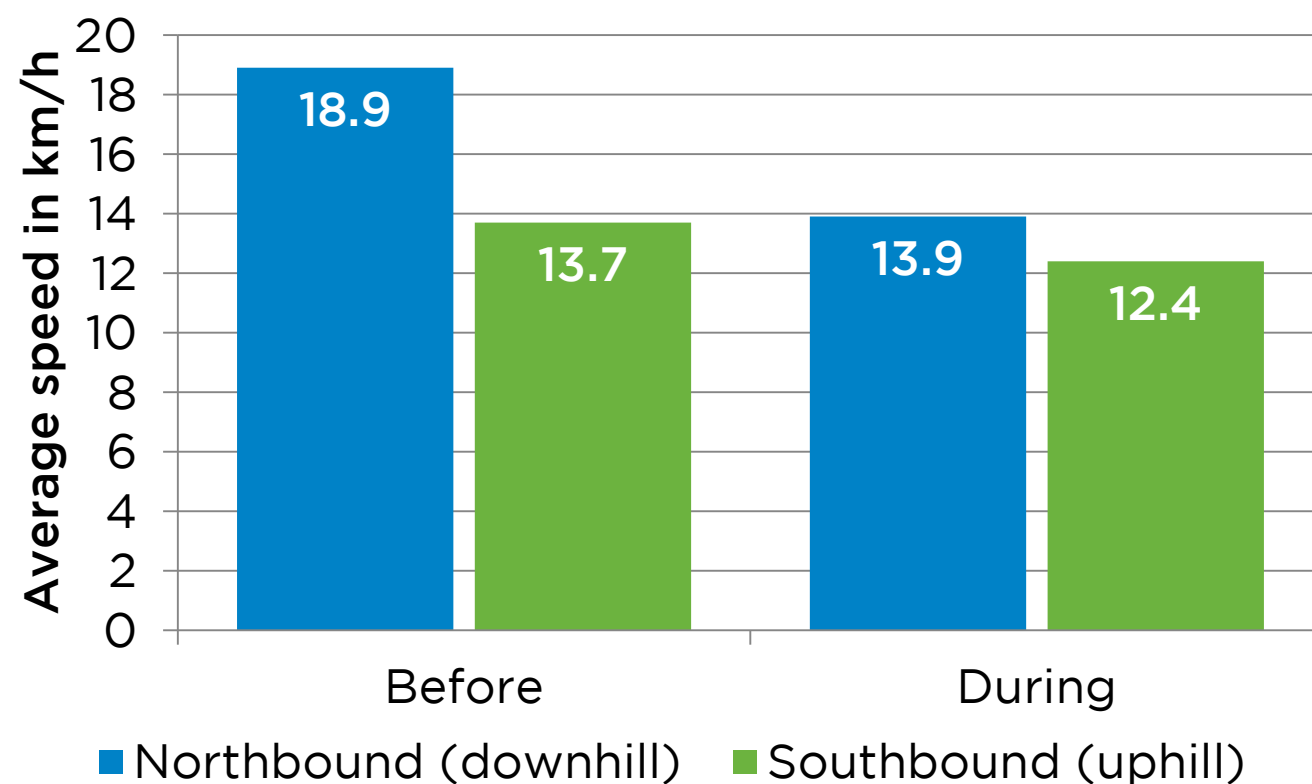
## Design intent

- Emphasis on comfortable, flexible seating
- Permeable design allows gentle and respectful flow for people moving through the space

## Measured impacts

- Motor vehicle volumes on Bute have dropped significantly, making it more attractive as a local greenway
- Cycling speeds have slowed, particularly in the downhill direction
- High level of comfort observed
- Bike share station: over 100 trips per day in July (top 10 station citywide)

### Cycling speeds have slowed down







**Over 700 responses**

**Strong community support for making the plaza a permanent public space**

**Support from Robson Street Business Association**

**Key future considerations:**

- Designing for all seasons
- Ensuring the plaza is clean and well-maintained





**“My new favourite place in the West End”**

**“My mother is over 80 and visits nearly every day with her friends. She especially loves playing and listening to the piano.”**

**“I LOVE LOVE LOVE this space”**

**“... Already the BEST PLAZA in the city”**

**“This space is AWESOME!”**

**“A great place to make new friends... my best friend even met her new boyfriend here, playing piano.”**

**“It blocks my usual driving route.”**

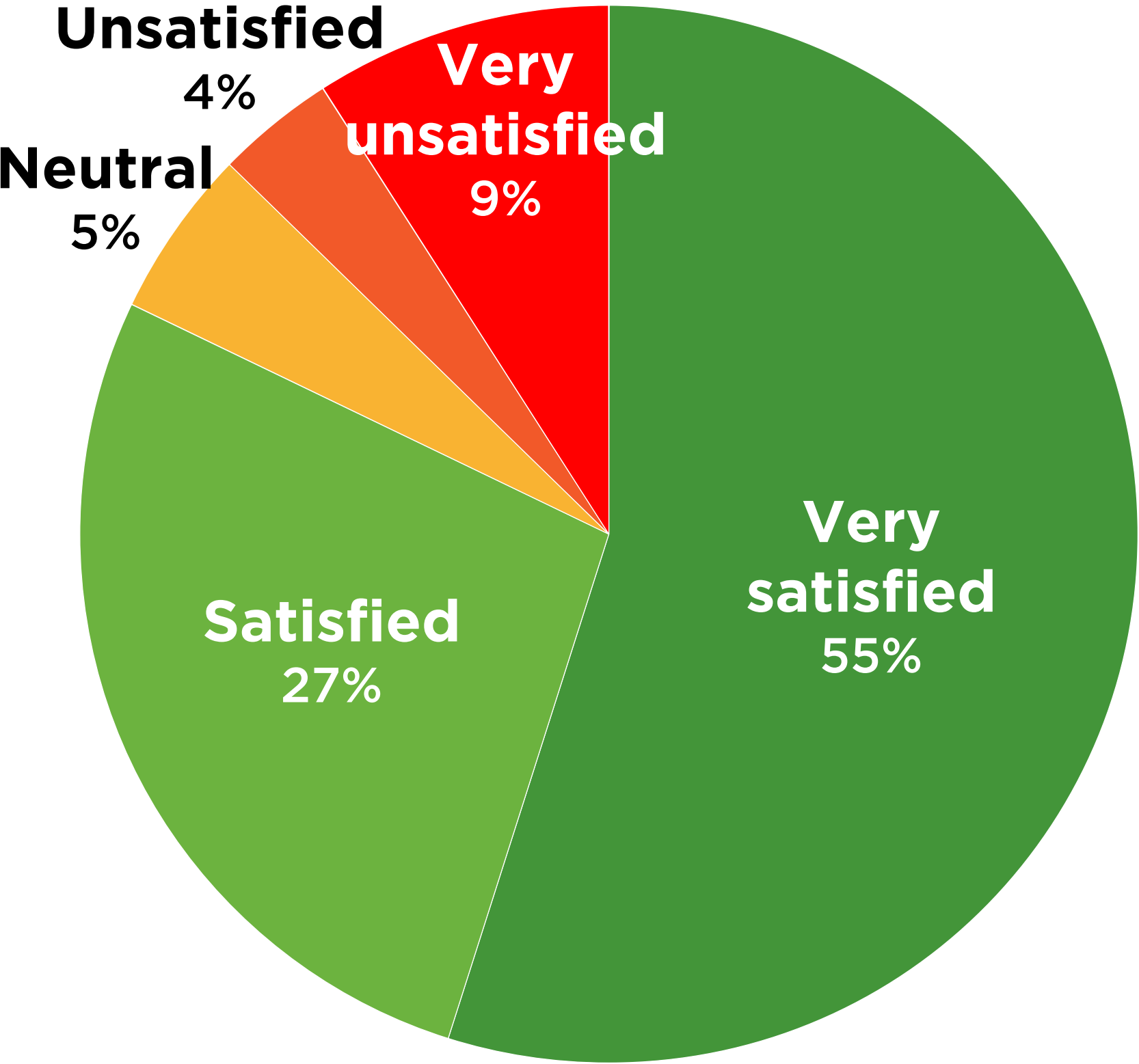
**“Love the space! Fosters a sense of community that can be difficult to establish downtown.”**

**“Please make it permanent! Such a great place for tourists and locals to relax.”**



# Overall, how satisfied are you with the plaza?

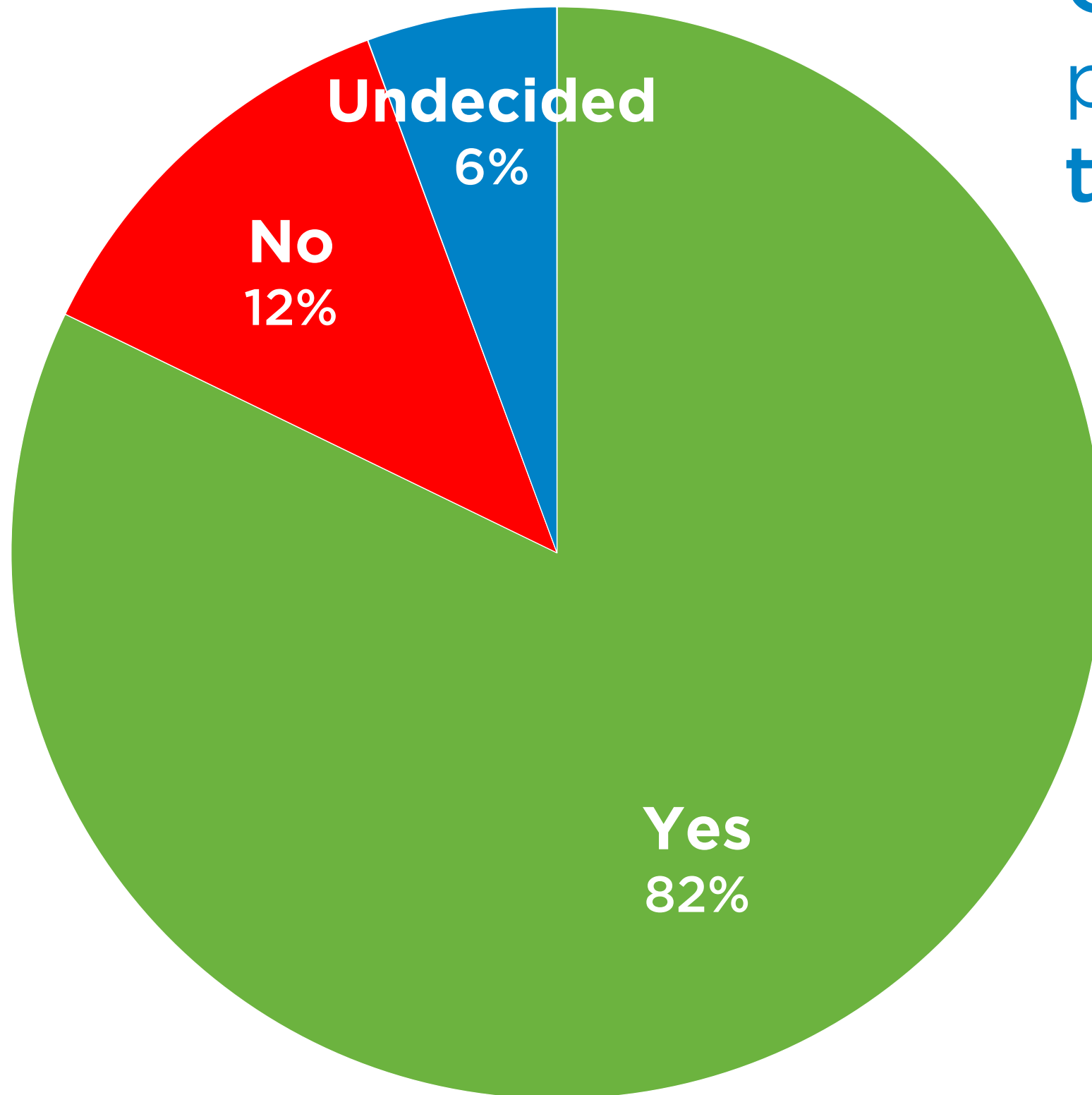
Over 80% are satisfied or very satisfied with the plaza.



661 survey respondents



# In your opinion, has the plaza improved the neighbourhood?

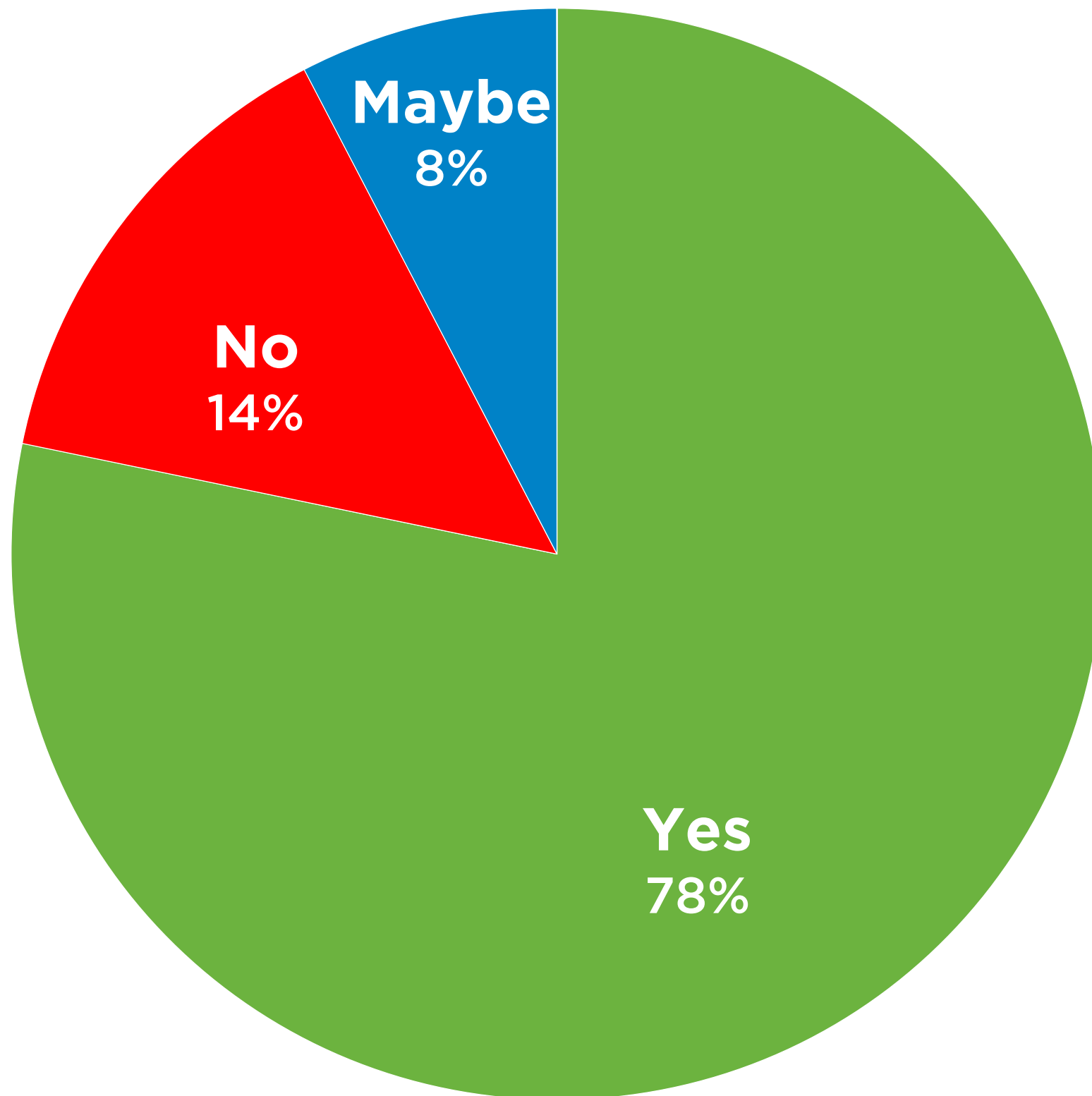


Over 80% feel the plaza has improved the neighbourhood.

657 survey respondents



# Do you like the idea of the plaza becoming a year-round public space?\*



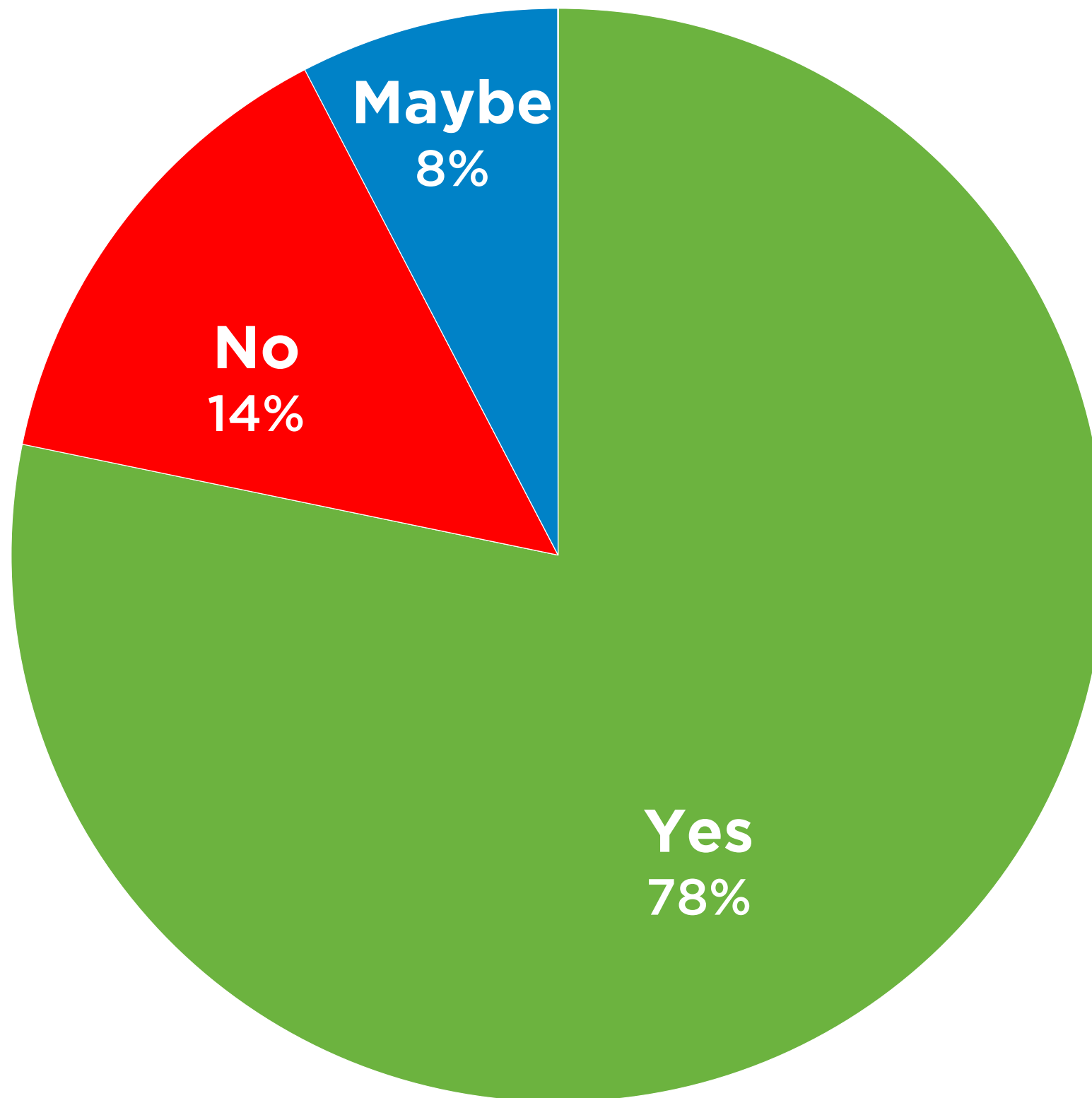
There is **strong public support** to make the plaza a **year-round space**

653 survey responses

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



# Do you like the idea of the plaza becoming a year-round public space?\*



653 survey responses

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

## Very strong support overall

### “Maybe if...”

#### common responses:

- It were cleaned more frequently
- It had weather protection for winter
- It were designated ‘no smoking’

### “No because...”

#### common responses:

- It rains in the winter
- It makes driving in the West End more inconvenient
- It restricts car access / roads are for cars
- People are too noisy



# What could be done to improve the plaza?



## Plus many constructive comments on how to make the plaza a great place year round

- Weather protection
- Continuous surface
- More bike racks
- Public fountains and restrooms
- Wifi + electrical outlets
- ...



## Recommendation:

That Council approve a permanent plaza at Bute and Robson Street and extend the current trial as an interim plaza until a final plaza is designed and constructed.

## Next Steps:

- Interim improvements (e.g. enhanced stewardship, seasonality)
- Community engagement on future design

**Project to be funded through existing sources (CACs)**



# Looking ahead





## Highlights include

- Design competitions (e.g. bike racks, seating)
- Engagement and activations at new and temporary plazas
- Focus on seasonality and stewardship
- More parklets and curbside patios
- Thingery pilot to support sharing economy
- Monitoring impact through partnerships





