

2020

Places for People **Downtown Public Space Strategy**

City of Vancouver



Council Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve the Downtown Public Space Strategy, as outlined in this report and attached in Appendix A.
- B. THAT staff be directed to apply the principles of the Downtown Public Space Strategy to public life and local business COVID-19 pandemic recovery initiatives, and related policy and planning initiatives.
- C. FURTHER, that staff be directed to adapt the Strategic Directions to input into city-wide policy, including the Vancouver Plan and community and area plans.



06.09.2020



Agenda

- 01 Public Space & Public Life
COVID-19 Pandemic
- 02 Places for People: Downtown
Public Space Strategy
- 03 Implementation
 - i. Short-term: Public Life, Local
Business & Mobility Recovery
 - ii. Long-term: Building the
Downtown Public Space Framework
and Supporting City-wide Recovery

Economic Development

**Attracting &
Retaining Talent**

Affordability

**Civic
Engagement**

Opportunity

Trust

Public Life

Health

**Equity &
Access**

Resilience

**Local
Identity**

**Social
Capital**

Safety

Sustainability

Public Space



COVID-19 Response & Recovery

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that **Public Space and Public Life are more important than ever** to our communities and the function of our city.



Queuing in front of grocery stores



Creating room for social connection and wellness



Physical Distancing

COVID-19 Response & Recovery

Public space and park use has significantly increased in many parts of the city.



Jonathan Rodgers Park



This strategy
is the first
initiative to
come out of
**Places for
People**

Places for People **Downtown Public Space Strategy**



Places for People

A New Approach to Public Space Planning and Design

- **People First**

A focus on public life.

- **Public Life Data**

Measuring what people do,
where they are.

- **Participatory
Engagement**

Invitation for people to
directly participate.

- **Intentional
Improvement**

Finding gaps in public spaces
and public space functions.



Building on A Legacy of Placemaking and Livability





Mural Programs



VIVA Vancouver



City Studio

and Innovative Programs & Partnerships



Uninterrupted



Pavement to Plazas



Green Streets

Rich First Nations History and Cultural Foundation

Continue to work with the Musqueam Indian Band, the Squamish Nation, the Tsleil-Waututh Nation and urban Indigenous communities to inform the creation, design and programming of public spaces.



Strategy Objectives

1. Establish clear **Vision and Values** for a holistic public space network.
2. Provides **Strategic Directions** on the delivery, design, use and stewardship of public space.
3. Establish a **Public Space Framework** for short and mid-term actions to accelerate the transformation of the public realm.



Missing high level policy for Downtown.

Map of Downtown Victoria showing various colored zones and street names. The map includes labels for English Bay, Burrard Bridge, Granville Bridge, False Creek, Cambie Bridge, and numerous streets such as Lagoon, Gorge, Cassin, Bowell, Cordano, Hinch, Barclay, Nelson, Jervis, Duke, Thurlings, Burford, Kirby, Howe, Granite, Seymour, Richards, Homer, Hamilton, Nelson, Expo Blvd, Pacific Blvd, and others. The map also shows the Burrard Inlet and the city's waterfront area.

14

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14

Demand

Downtown Growth & Increasing Use

The public realm will
need to work harder
to accommodate
more people



137,000
residents

+30,000
residents by 2041

150,000
jobs

+75,000
jobs by 2041

Tourism growth

+ 1000s
of visitors
daily

Developing the Strategy

Diverse Public and Stakeholder Engagement



500+

attendees at speaking events



4,800+

people at pop-up events



6 Public Walking Tours

meeting and ongoing commitment to
Framework for City of Reconciliation



150 kids

are new Urban Explorers



2,500+

people took the online survey



1,200+

participants at Hot Tea - Rain City

13,000+
people engaged at
events & online

Analysis

Public Space & Public Life Study

- 115 locations across the Downtown
- Measuring a diversity of public spaces and activity
- Largest study of its kind completed in North America
- +500 volunteers!



Study Public Life in Public Space

Study Seasonality

Summer & Winter



2 Snapshot Days

Weekday + Weekend

Diversity of Spaces

Plazas, parks, streets,
laneways, seawall and beaches



Observe how people
use public space

Survey people on
their experience of
public space

Count movement
through public space

Observe who is and who
is not using public space

Measure Public
Space Quality

Downtown
Public Space
Strategy

Strategic Directions



**For All,
by All**



**The “Right”
Supply**



**Design for
People**



**Day-long,
Year-long**



**Nature and
Resilience**



**Connecting
Places**

1

For All, by All

Provide public space that feels welcoming and safe for people of all ages, genders, backgrounds and abilities. Encourage people to create, activate and be stewards of public space.



1 For All, by All



Objective

Work with MST Nations and urban Indigenous communities to create opportunities for their **leadership in the creation, design and use of public space.**



Ray Harris of Stz'uminus First Nation led the ceremony



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Square

Recent Success

City of Reconciliation Plaza Naming Project



Objective

Engage women, persons of colour and others who are traditionally under-represented in public space. Develop principles for applying an intersectional lens to public space design and stewardship.

Canada Day - Robson Street, Vancouver

1 For All, by All

Objective

Develop and adopt **universal accessibility design guidelines** for transportation design and public realm projects (in progress).



Objective

Explore opportunities to **improve access to public restrooms**, drinking fountains, and other public hygiene amenities.





For All, by All

Objective

Ensure ongoing engagement with those who most regularly use public space, including persons who are **street-involved, to foster more inclusive design and management of public space, and mitigate potential displacement.**

2

The “Right” Supply

Provide an ample,
appropriate and equitable
supply of public spaces
across neighbourhoods.



Jim Deva Plaza (Pavement-to-Plaza), Vancouver

2

The “Right” Supply

**Objective**

Provide a **variety of spaces** in each neighbourhood, to meet a full range of functions such as socializing, rest and contemplation, commerce, play, celebration, and cultural and civic expression.



2

The “Right” Supply

**Objective**

Continue to **innovate, test & create new forms** of public space in street right-of-way, such as pavement-to-plazas, parklets & curbside patios.

Parklet - Main Street, Vancouver

2

The “Right” Supply

Objective

Update **POPS** policy to help **secure, retain & improve** these spaces as an integral part of the public realm.

POPS:

Privately owned public space

Park Place Plaza, Vancouver



3

Design for People

Provide high-quality, well-designed and well-managed public spaces to support public life.





Design for People

Objective

Foster **people-first streets** by using the street-right-of-way **efficiently and creatively, to maximize public space** and support a vibrant public life, while maintaining transportation functions.



Shared Street - Copenhagen, Denmark

3

Design for People

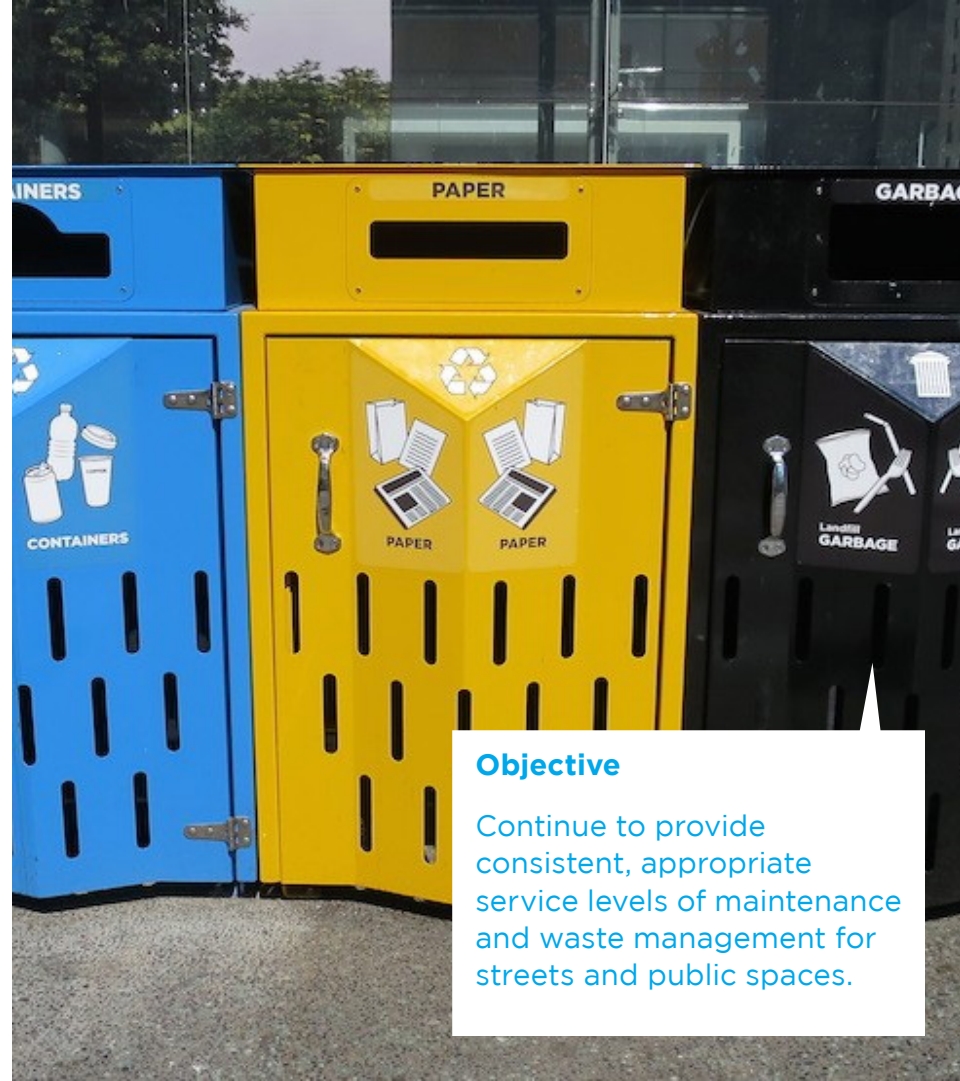
Objective

Supporting infrastructure for zero emissions vehicles.



Objective

Ensure public space use to support the film industry.

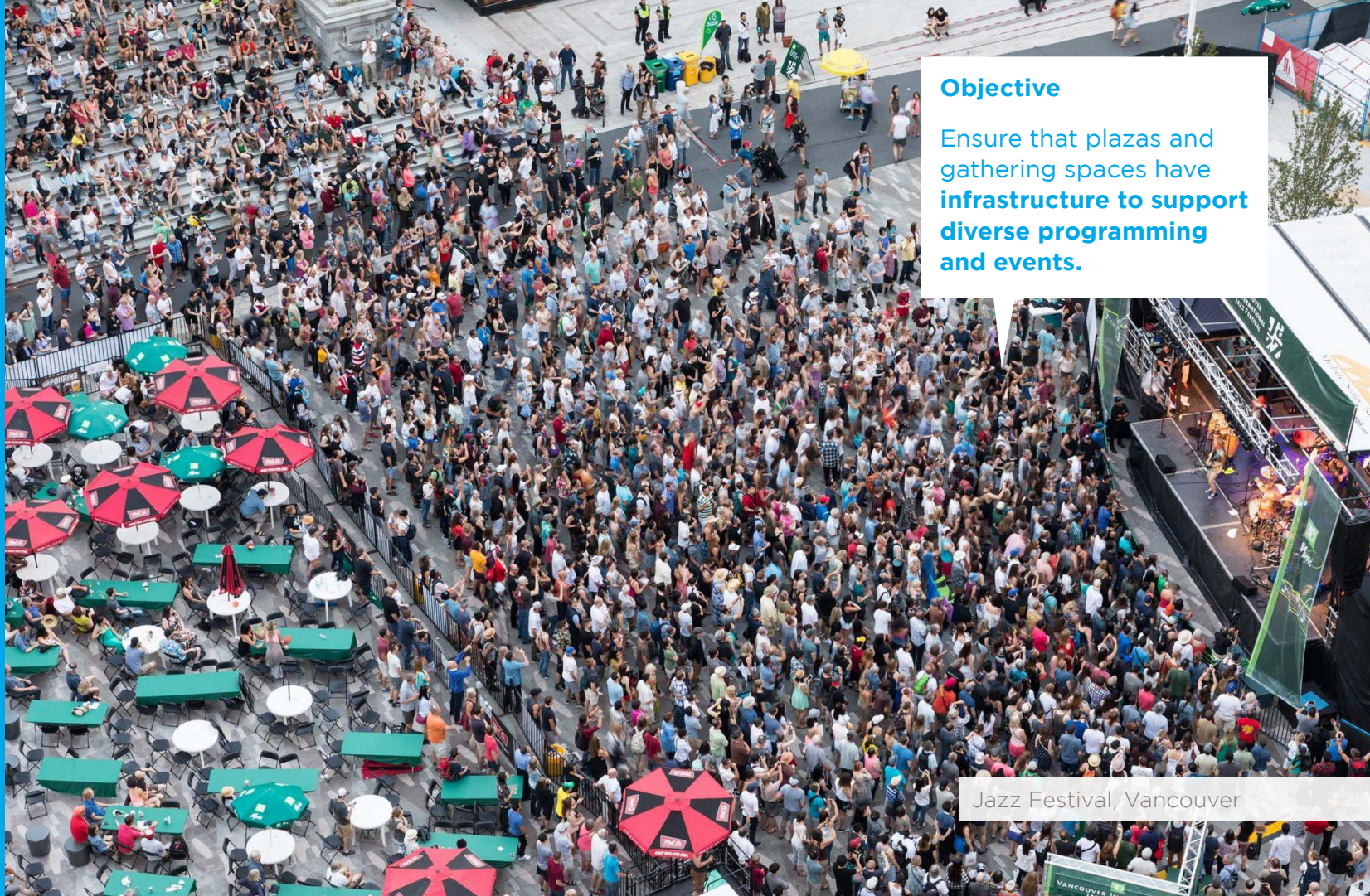


Objective

Continue to provide consistent, appropriate service levels of maintenance and waste management for streets and public spaces.



Design for People



Objective

Ensure that plazas and gathering spaces have **infrastructure to support diverse programming and events.**

Jazz Festival, Vancouver

4

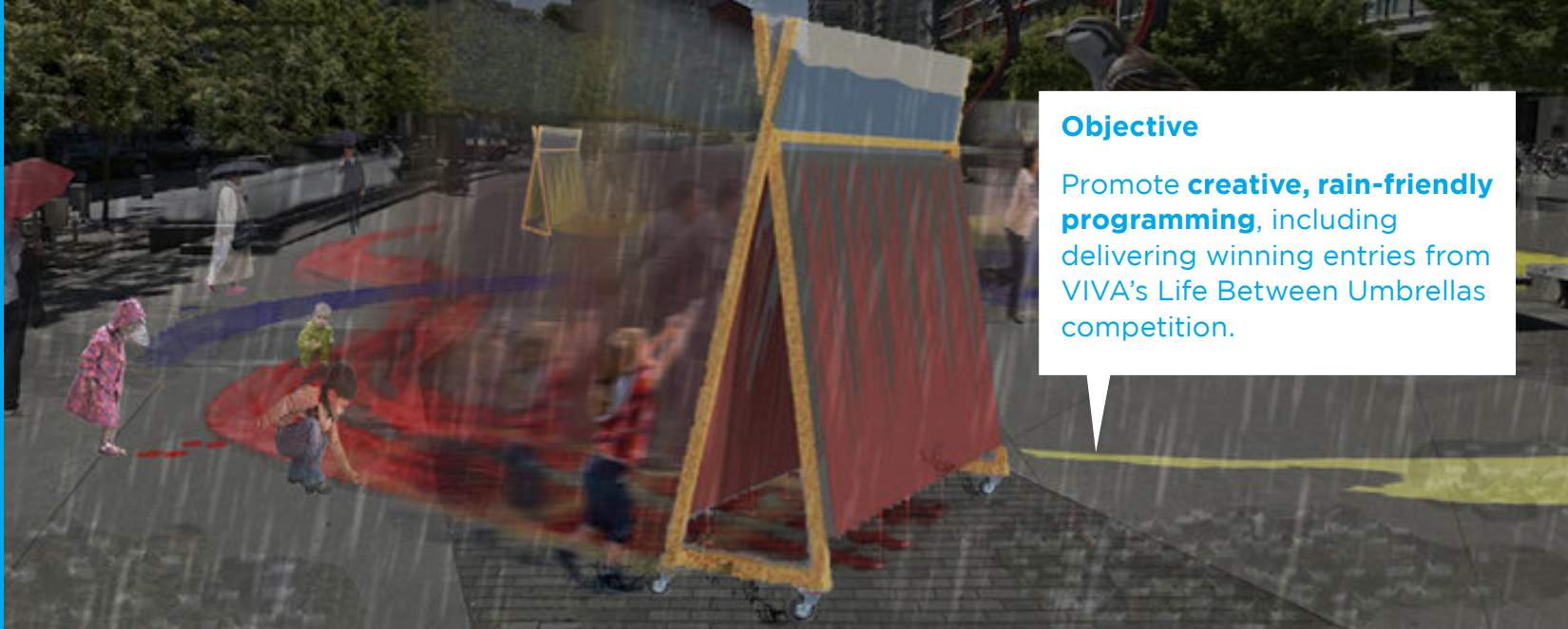
Day-long, Year-long

Provide safe,
welcoming and
enjoyable public spaces
through all seasons,
both day and night.



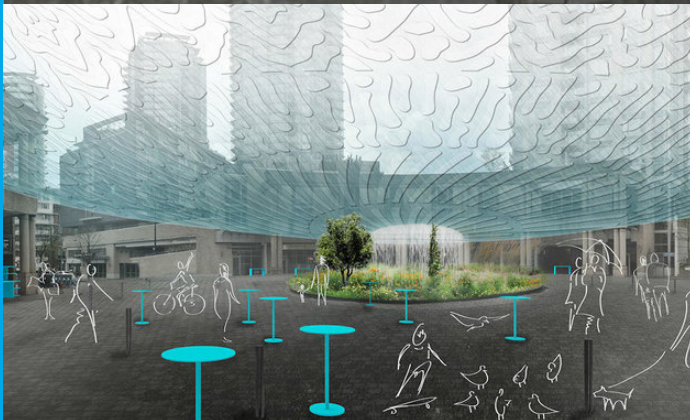
4

Day-long, Year-long



Objective

Promote **creative, rain-friendly programming**, including delivering winning entries from VIVA's Life Between Umbrellas competition.



Life Between Umbrella Submissions

4

Day-long, Year-long



Objective

Invite a greater variety of people to night life areas, by introducing

new day-time and early-evening uses, and adding amenities for safety and comfort (e.g. washrooms and support services).

Uninterrupted - Cambie Bridge

5

Nature & Resilience

Consider the natural environment, urban hydrology, disaster response and climate resiliency when planning the public realm.





Nature and Resilience



Objective

Create **“blue-green” corridors** that manage rainwater, contribute to the urban forest, and provide active transportation routes.

Bute Street, Vancouver



Nature and Resilience

Objective

Explore the **harvesting and reuse of water** from private property as a source of street tree irrigation.

Encourage **interactive and educational elements** to engage the public on the function of rainwater.



Swales and rain garden landscaping, Seattle

6

Connecting Places

Ensure that the public space network is well connected and easy to navigate for people walking, rolling and cycling.





Connecting Places

Objective

Integrate **transit stations** **into the public realm** and establish them as **gateways** to the Downtown.



Odenplan Station, Stockholm



Connecting Places



Objective

Strengthen **'shore-to-core connections'** by providing enhanced routes for walking, cycling and rolling across the peninsula.

Section 2

Next Steps: Stages of Implementation

- ① Apply to **recovery work by phasing**
- ② Integrate into **capital projects and future planning**
- ③ Adapt into **city-wide planning**, including Vancouver Plan and key area plans

Next Steps

1. COVID Recovery Response

Updates

1. Temporary Murals
2. Temporary Expedited Patio Program (TEPP)
3. Temporary Plazas / Flexible Use Spaces
4. Room to Queue/Move
5. Slow Streets



Response Update

Temporary Murals

- Over 8 weeks
- 122 Storefronts
- 128 Artists
- **Partners:**
 - Independent Artists and Arts Organizations
 - Independent Property Owners/Tenants
 - Gastown BIA
 - VMF (partnered with Downtown Vancouver BIA, South Granville BIA, Robson BIA, VanCity, Goodbye Graffiti)



Response Update | Temporary Patios



Temporary (June-Oct)
No permit fees
Within 2 business days



Temporary Expedited Patios



Response Update

Temporary Recovery Plazas

- **22 BIAs** Project Coordinator assigned to each interested BIA.
- Ideas range from single temporary patios to multi-block public plazas.
- **9 side street plazas** in development. Linear plazas (curb lane closures) being scoped in 11 BIAs.
- First plazas installed **this week**.
- Close coordination with Translink and other recovery work (R2Q/M, Slow Streets)



Response Update

Flexible Use Spaces

NEW – Commerce in Public Space

Developing new ways to allow business activity in plazas

- **Exclusive Use:** Allow businesses to use parking spaces retail, services or commerce (ie. 'non-restaurant' patios)
- **Shared Use:** Allow businesses to hold activities in 'open space' in side street plazas (ie. fitness classes, market stall, etc.)

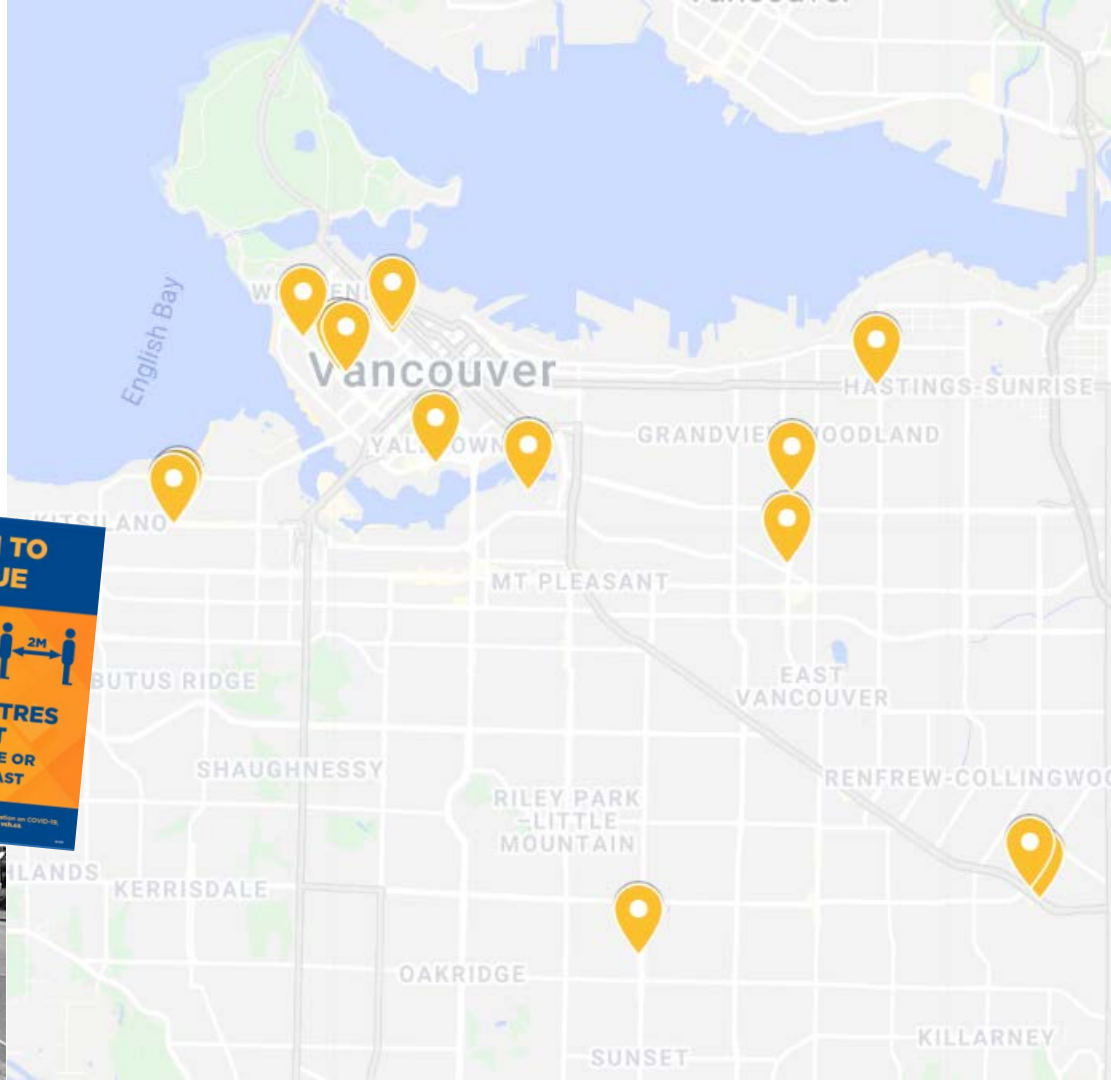
License Agreements to allow BIAs to manage, program & steward recovery plazas



Response Update

Room to Queue

- 15 installed
- Coordinated approach with BIAs and considering requests in non-BIA areas



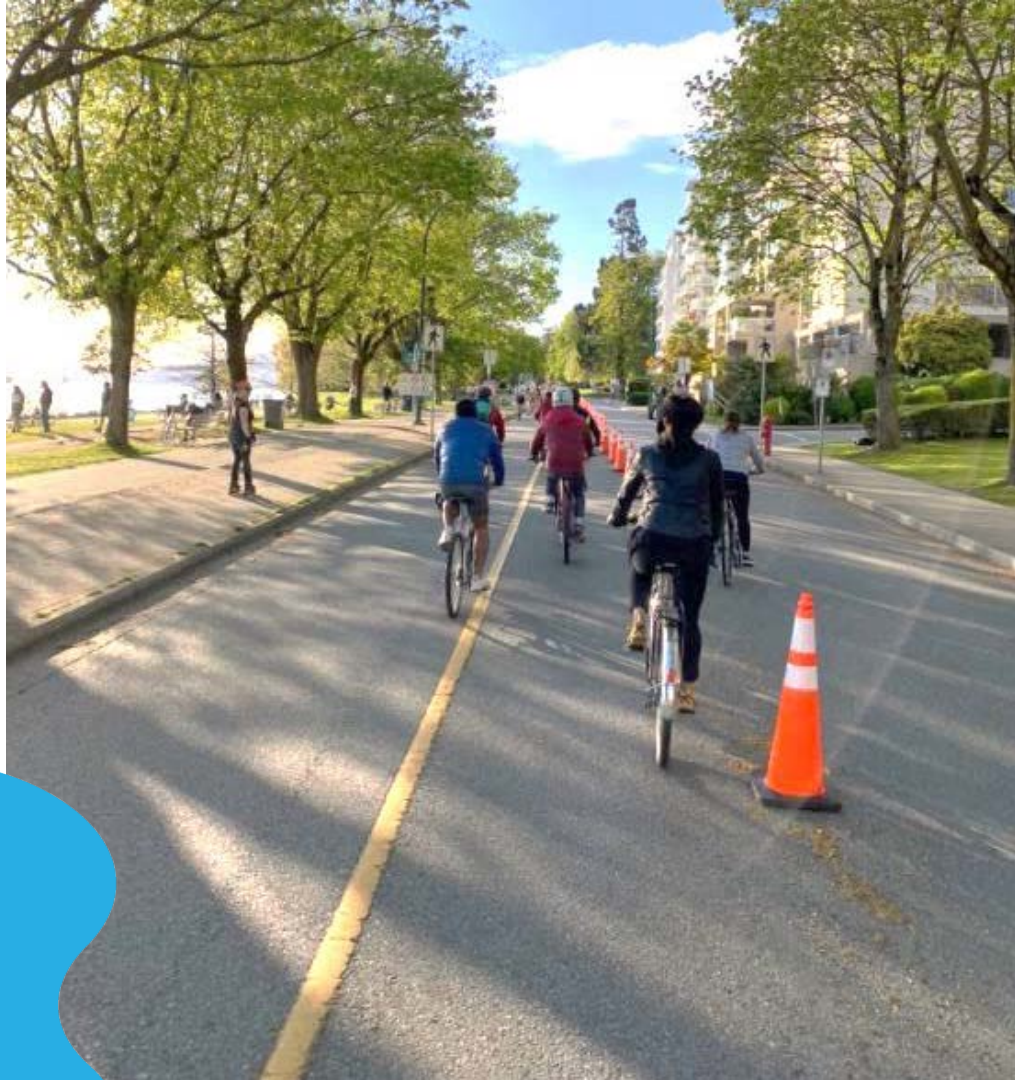
Response Update

Room to Move

- 2km cycling path on Beach Avenue to complement Stanley Park road closures
- Creates more space for people walking along seawall



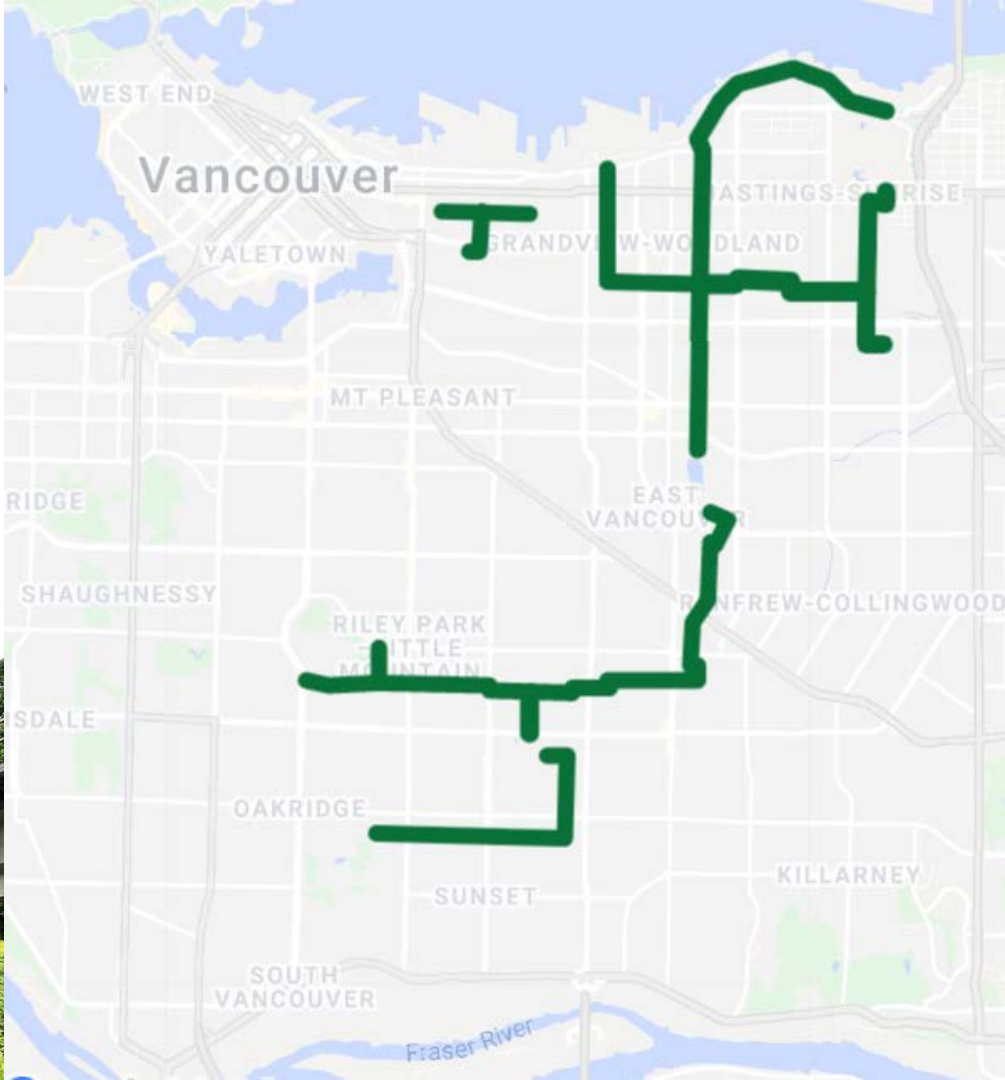
5,100 cycling trips per day (average) on Stanley Park Drive at Second Beach



Response Update

Slow Streets

- 24km routes with barriers and signs; ongoing planning to expand.
- Focus on **tactical traffic calming** to reduce motor vehicle volumes on existing routes



Next Steps

2. Integrate into Capital Projects & Future Planning

- Inform better results and coordination of ongoing and planned projects
- No new funding



Examples of Previously Approved Projects

- Bute Street Greenway
- Robson Village Public Realm Improvements
- Waterfront Parks Master Planning

Next Steps

3. Foundation for City-wide Planning



- City-wide and Neighbourhood Public Space Public Life Planning and Studies
- Broadway and Station Area Planning
- Economic Lands & Economy Review
- Climate Emergency Action Plan

Strategic Directions

Provide a foundation for the city-wide public space, public life strategy



1. For All,
by All



2. The “Right”
Supply



3. Design
for People



4. Day-long,
Year-long



5. Nature &
Resilience

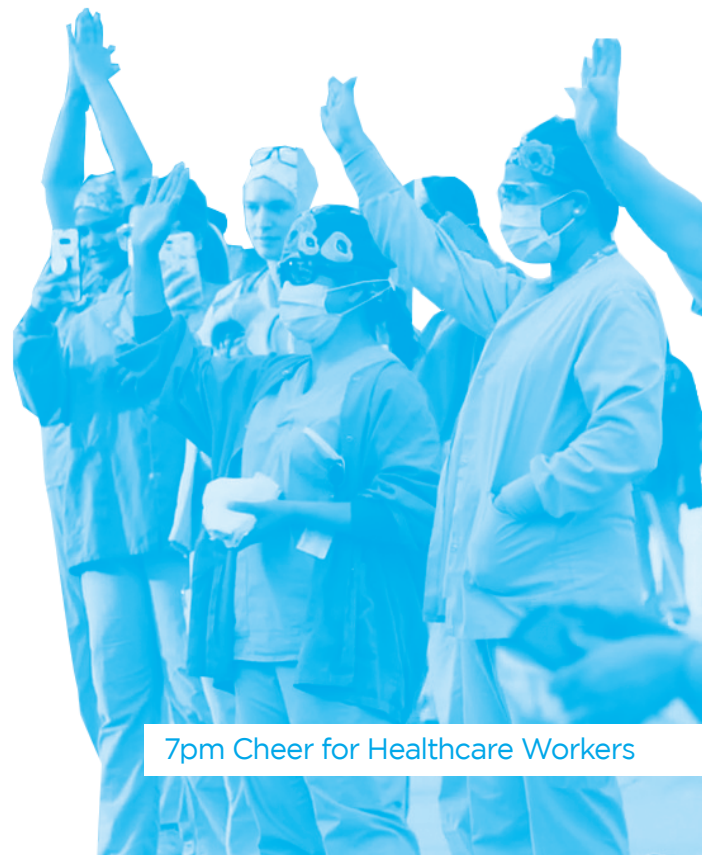


6. Connecting
Places



Thank
You!

Questions



7pm Cheer for Healthcare Workers