



# ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN PUBLIC PLAZAS POLICY

Presentation to Council  
Engineering Services  
March 30, 2022



# Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Background: 2020 and 2021 Pilots
3. Proposed Policy
4. Recommendation + Next Steps

# Introduction | Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas Policy

## For Council's consideration:

- Proposal for a long term alcohol consumption in plazas program
  - Builds on the success of two pilot seasons
  - Enables new public space programming that can enhance community enjoyment and support businesses



# Background | Overview of Pilots

## 2020 pilot

- Council motion in late June 2020
- Intended to support residents and businesses during pandemic
- Ran Aug 10 - Oct 12, 2020 at four sites

## 2021 pilot

- Council motion to expedite second pilot in March 2021
- Council approval mid-May
- Launch of first three sites on May 31
- Launch of three additional sites on July 15
- Pilot ended on Oct 11, 2021



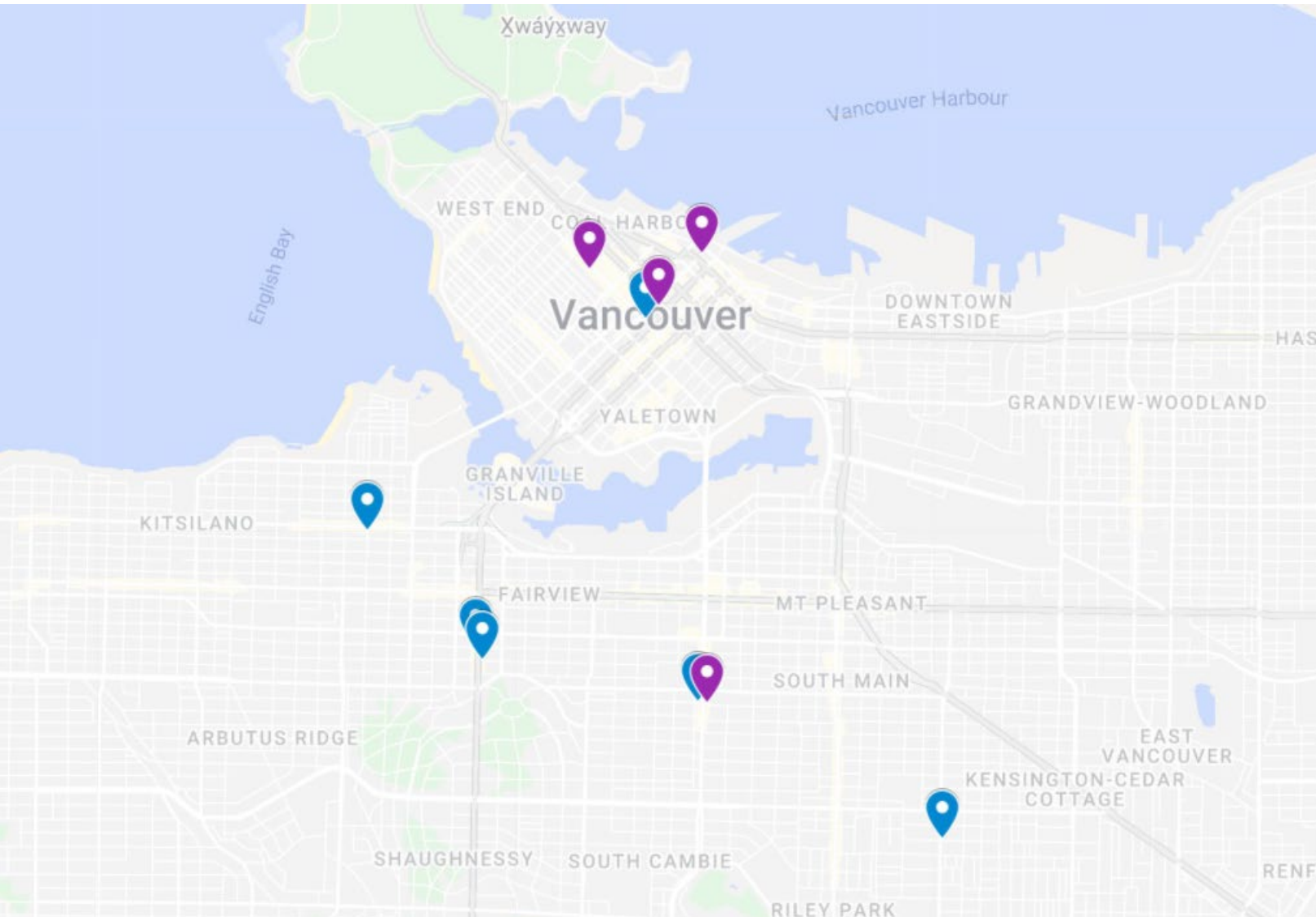
### ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN PUBLIC PLAZAS (2021 PILOT)

### PILOT PROGRAM

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST  
FOR BIAs, BUSINESSES &  
COMMUNITY PARTNERS



# Background | Pilot Sites



## 2020 Pilot Sites

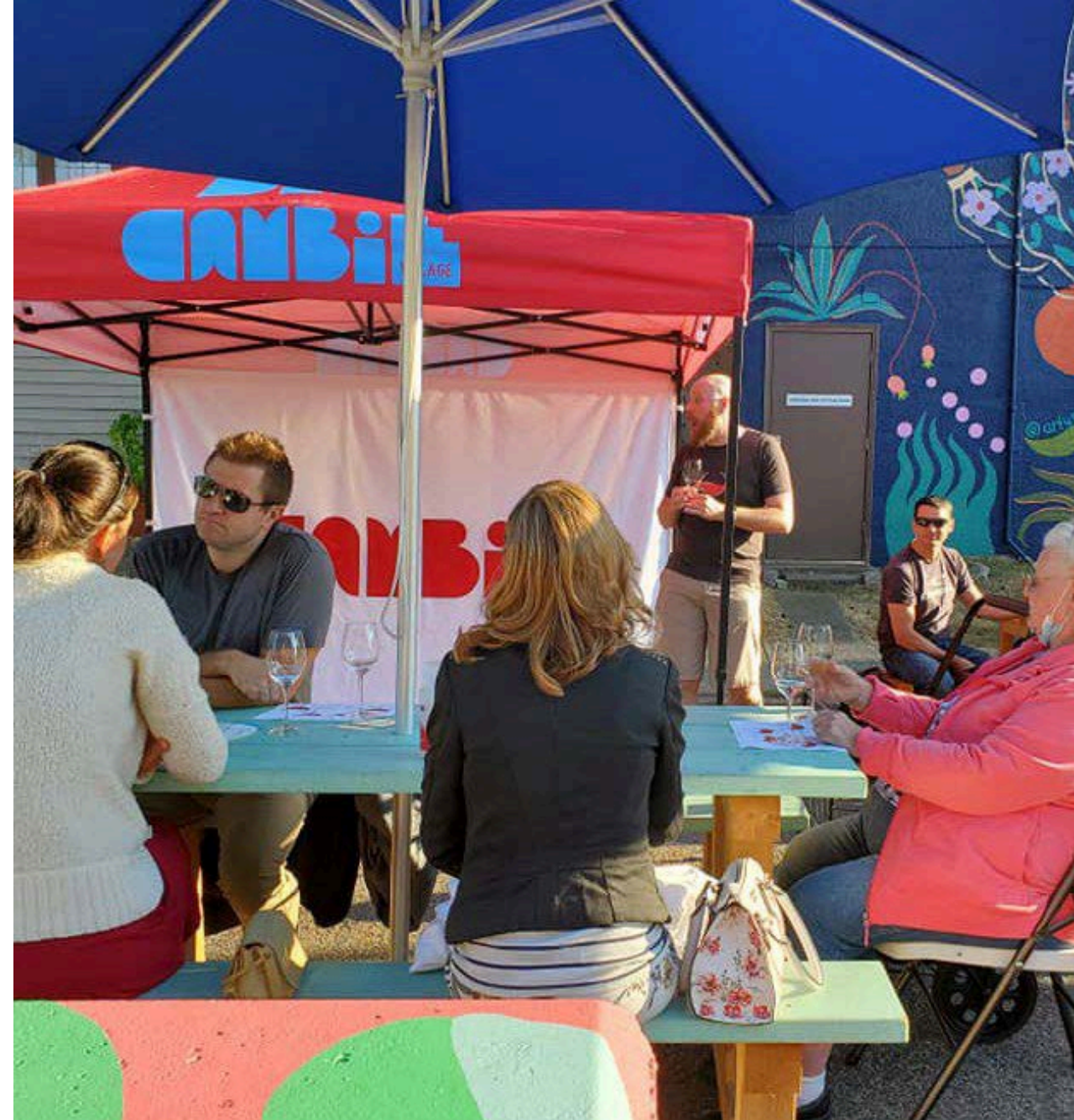
- Bute-Robson Plaza
- Cambie-17<sup>th</sup> Pop-up Plaza
- Lot 19 Plaza
- ʔənənəq Xwtl'e7eńk Square

## 2021 Pilot Sites

- 800 Robson Plaza
- Cambie-17<sup>th</sup> Pop-up Plaza
- Fraser-27<sup>th</sup> Pop-up Plaza
- Granville-13<sup>th</sup> Pop-up Plaza
- Granville-14<sup>th</sup> Pop-up Plaza
- Maple-4<sup>th</sup> Pop-up Plaza

# Background | Pilot Findings

- Strong public **support** (92% in 2021 public survey)
- Working with **plaza steward partners** is key to program success
- Stewards saw benefit of **community enjoyment** and expressed **high interest** in future participation
- Plazas offer an alternative to parks and beaches – **close proximity to retail streets** and local food/beverage businesses
- No **health or safety issues** reported through monitoring





## Vancouver Police Department

- While overall public drinking has increased, no issues specific to the pilot or the sites were raised during either pilot
- **VPD calls for service at pilot sites did not show any pattern of increase during the pilot periods**
- Limitations: not all crime/safety issues result in a call for VPD service, surrounding radius not included



## Vancouver Coastal Health

- **No significant changes in alcohol-related Emergency Department (ED) visits during the pilots as compared to non-pilot periods**
- Limitations: analysis doesn't account for long-term impacts of alcohol consumption; cases with mild symptoms may not present at EDs

# Proposed Policy | Approach

## Build on success of pilots to develop a long-term program

- Opportunity to offer benefits beyond pandemic response
  - Lower-cost, flexible socializing option
  - Contributes to plaza programming
  - Supports food and beverage businesses

## Manage program within existing resources

- Start modestly with EOI intake process
- Continue with a partner-based approach
- Maintain flexibility for future expansion

## Coordinate with Parks staff on next steps for Alcohol in Parks initiative





# Proposed Policy | Implementation

- Begin with an annual, seasonal program
- Identify sites based on expressions of interest from plaza stewards and established criteria
- Review proposed sites with VPD
- Bring recommended sites to Council for consideration
- Manage collaboratively with plaza stewards, according to existing stewardship agreements
- Provide and cover costs of portable washrooms if partners are unable to provide public washroom access near sites (e.g. businesses, APTs, parks)
- Issues-based monitoring as required
- Considerations:
  - Staff and budget impacts
  - Steward capacity
  - EOI limited to existing plazas



# Proposed Policy | Future Considerations

## Opportunities for future development of the program:

- Opportunity for **broader geographic reach** as plaza program expands
- Seek synergies for **washroom solutions** with citywide Washroom and Water Strategy

In parallel, continue to work with ACCS to **strengthen partnerships** with community-based organizations, **align with alcohol harm reduction initiatives**, and work collaboratively to **create safer places** for illicit drinkers



## Recommendation to Council

*THAT Council approve the Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas Policy as generally described in the report and attached in Appendix A.*

## Next Steps

If Policy is approved, staff will bring forward recommended summer 2022 sites to Council later this spring