

HOW DO WE FUND THE STEWARDSHIP OF PUBLIC PLAZAS?

Exploring opportunities + challenges of financing the programming, maintenance and management of public plazas

Prepared by Sasha van Stavel | Summer 2017



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This GCS project was conducted under the mentorship of City staff. The opinions and recommendations in this report, and any errors, are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the City of Vancouver or The University of British Columbia.

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Executive Summary

For centuries plazas have functioned as communal gathering places for everyone irrespective of age, background or status. They are locations that spark cultural, economic, and environmental growth while simultaneously developing social resilience.

Vancouver is internationally known as one of the world's most liveable cities and prides itself on its abundant collection of accessible greenspaces. Historically, Vancouver's approach to public spaces has been to leverage the majestic views of the ocean, mountains, and natural elements that contribute to the city's beauty.

Despite having a limited number of publicly owned plazas, public space is everywhere. Vancouver's streets make up 35% of the city's land area; more space than all the public parks combined. As Vancouver continues to densify and more of its residents are residing in a growing number of vertical communities our public spaces are becoming even more valuable and are increasingly being referred to as 'outdoor living rooms'. Realizing this deficiency, the city of Vancouver launched several strategies that address enhancing public spaces including transportation 2040, Places for People and a Plaza Stewardship Strategy.

The Plaza Stewardship Strategy is a new approach for how the City will work both internally and with external stakeholders on the stewardship of City-owned Plazas. Approved on December 16, 2016 Council agreed that

a grant of up to \$100,000 from the City's Innovation Fund would go to preparing the Stewardship Strategy for City-owned Plazas. Council's directions included; addressing gaps in plaza stewardship, developing models for Stewardship governance, proposing potential partners, devising a stewardship agreement and researching best practices on stewardship funding models.

It is the intent of this report to provide best practices on stewardship funding models and to identify potential opportunities for funding the stewardship of City owned plazas. Framed as a toolkit this document provides community organizations and City decision makers with models, case studies and ready-to-use tools for supporting the stewardship of our public plazas. Given the wide range of both existing and proposed plaza typologies in Vancouver, there

is no one size fits all funding model that can be implemented to ensure a successful plaza. Especially when the word "success" itself means very different things depending on the space. For example, plazas such as 800 Robson and the Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG) North Plaza will most likely require significant funds for their stewardship, meanwhile, other plazas such as Leg and Boot Square might need little to no stewardship funding.

This document will provide a portfolio of funding opportunities that can be mixed and matched to provide adequate revenue streams for a spectrum of plazas.

11% PARKS

35% RIGHT-OF-WAYS
(Streets, sidewalks, alleys)

TOTAL LAND AREA:
114.97 KM²

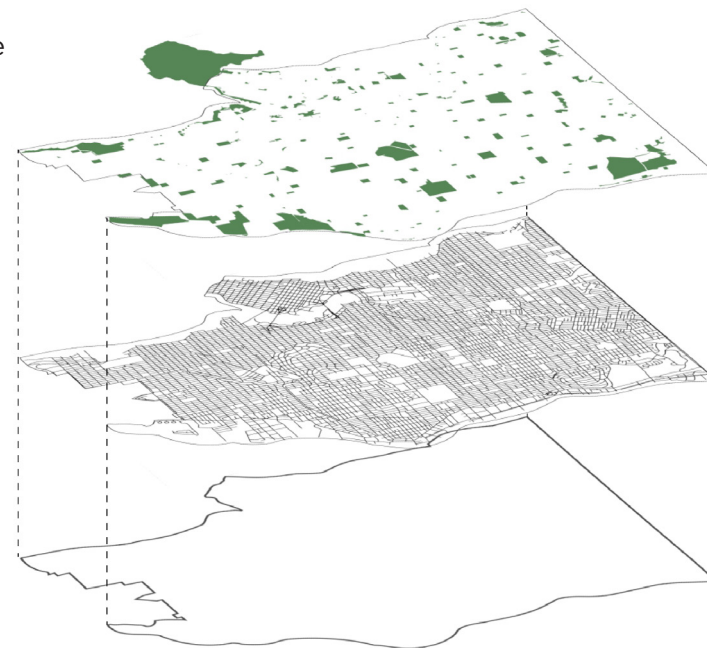


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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the framework for the purpose of the report, how it is organized and the values that shaped it.

This foundation is then built on through establishing the big questions for plaza stewardship, value-based objectives and the methodology used to reach them.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to explore best practices for funding the stewardship of City owned plazas. As part of Council's direction for preparing a Plaza Stewardship Strategy, this report will assist in providing research on funding opportunities that could be implemented towards the stewardship of plazas citywide. Given the diversity of existing and proposed plaza typologies, this report will provide a portfolio of financing mechanisms that can be mixed and matched to provide adequate revenue streams for a spectrum of plazas.

By better understanding the funding opportunities for the stewardship of city owned public plazas/public spaces, the City of Vancouver will be in a better position to set policy, guidelines and criteria towards the stewardship of not only plazas but city wide public spaces. Ultimately, this work will help inform staff in the creation of a Plaza Stewardship Strategy.



Scope

Chapter 1 will provide an introduction to plaza stewardship values, the big questions, the guiding objectives, and the methodology used for conducting the work. **Chapter 2** will set the stage for what is involved with funding plaza stewardship. Beginning with the driving values, key attributes of plaza stewardship, existing gaps, what needs to be funded and the varying levels of stewardship. With the foundation of plaza stewardship in place, **Chapter 3** introduces the potential funding models for plaza stewardship and explores best practices. **Chapter 4** focuses on four local cases of existing funding and stewardship models in Vancouver. Formatted as plaza profiles these four case studies include: Napier Square Greenway, Lot 19, Jim Deva Plaza, and 800 Robson. Finally, **Chapter 5** will summarize lessons learned and provide a series of recommendations for how best to fund the stewardship of City owned Plazas.

PLAZA STEWARDSHIP VALUES



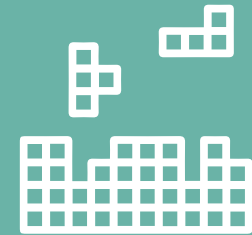
Inclusiveness

Plazas that reflect the diversity of our communities and ensure programming, design and amenities that are affordable, safe and healthy for all citizens.



Accessibility

Plazas should be accessible for people of all ages and abilities and encourage sustainable and safe transportation choices.



Flexibility

Plaza amenities, design and programming that is adaptable to facilitate various uses and special events at different times of day, week, or season.



Community Collaboration

Collaboration between city entities, public and private partnerships to best cultivate welcoming spaces for social, cultural and community growth.



Resilient Environments

Improve local ecology, such as enhancing stormwater management and increasing the number, size, and health of street trees, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, all while supporting compact communities.



Learning through Practice

We need to track the success of our plazas, to best address spaces for improvement, while supporting areas of conviviality, and communicate the results.

The Big Questions

What is Plaza stewardship?

Plaza stewardship consists of the ongoing care of a plaza for the benefit of the community. It consists of the long-term management, maintenance and programming of the space.

Why does plaza stewardship require funding?

Public spaces have internationally been recognized as a powerful tool to increase neighbourhood connections and people's sense of belonging. While initial design and construction costs are often covered by the city or developers the expenses associated with managing, maintaining and programming these spaces commonly remains undetermined. Similar to infrastructure, plazas require general maintenance and in some cases, funding for programming to support community gathering, creativity, connection and expression.

What needs to be funded?

In order for our public plazas to remain clean, accessible, and inviting, a varying degree of upkeep has to occur. This can be anything from removing garbage to fixing furniture. Organizing events to planting new trees. While there is a significant variation of tasks and frequency at which they occur, each of which call for either financial or in-kind support.

When does plaza stewardship require funding?

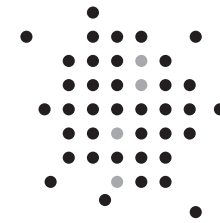
Plazas are unique spaces that vary significantly between their location, design and usage. These factors often influence the degree of funds required to manage, maintain and program them. Plazas located in a downtown core often require more cleaning, and repairs, and play host to numerous events. Meanwhile, a plaza located in a quiet residential neighbourhood might require significantly less resources to function as an inviting public space.

How do we fund plaza stewardship?

New and innovative finance mechanisms for these spaces are emerging, such as crowdfunding, community bonds, public-private partnerships, self-governing districts, leveraging local funds and matching City money. There is significant potential to use these innovative funding models to finance the operational cost of our plazas.

Plaza Characteristics

Places for Gathering



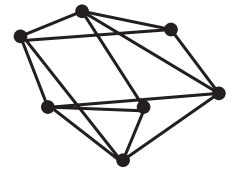
Public Spaces



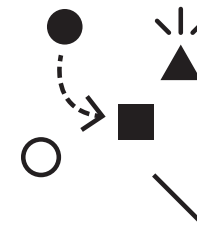
Inward Focused



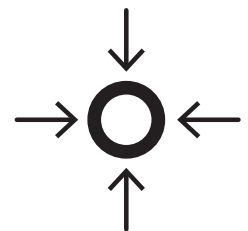
Complex Spaces



Encourage Diverse Activities



Destinations



Guiding Objectives

Address the levels of funding needed for Plaza Stewardship

Explore North American funding models for plaza stewardship

Discuss local case studies of plaza stewardship

Identify local opportunities for funding plaza stewardship

Provide recommendations for funding plaza stewardship in Vancouver

Methodology

The methodology for creating this document included a study of the stewardship of several of Vancouver's plazas, a best practice review of funding mechanisms across North America and 30 interviews with city staff, existing stewards, experts in other cities, and key community stakeholders around plaza stewardship funding successes and gaps.



“As much as we complain about other people, there is nothing worse for mental health than a social desert. The more connected we are to family and community the less likely we are to experience heart attacks, strokes, cancer and depression. Connected people sleep better at night. They live longer. They consistently report being happier.”

- Charles Montgomery



CHAPTER 2

SETTING THE STAGE

This chapter will discuss the background behind this report and the citywide Plaza Stewardship Strategy. In doing so it will unpack what stewardship means in the context of public spaces, its varying levels and the emerging stewardship models that are shaping how we address the management, maintenance and programming of our civic plazas

Background

As the number of vertical communities in Vancouver continues to grow, the need for spaces where people can gather, converse, relax and play becomes increasingly more apparent. Vancouver's Healthy City Strategy recognizes that social connectedness and community belonging are important elements for residents' health and well-being. However, only 54% of Vancouver's residents have a strong sense of community belonging according to a recent survey conducted by the Vancouver Foundation (City of Vancouver, 2015).

A common theme amongst interviews with City staff and active public space stewards was how plazas and other public spaces can be instrumental in helping combat this feeling of isolation and disconnect. Recognizing this, the City of Vancouver has begun addressing the issue by adopting two public realm strategies, Places for People Downtown and a Plaza Stewardship Strategy. A key component of the City's Plaza Stewardship strategy is to address mechanisms for funding the management, maintenance and programming of these plazas in order to utilize their full potential as places for enhancing community connections and residents sense of belonging.

In order to fully understand what is meant by the term 'funding plaza stewardship', it is important to first address what a plaza is, what stewardship entails and its various levels.

What is a Plaza?

“A plaza is an open space designed for public use and defined by surrounding buildings and or streets. Its primary functions are to encourage a diversity of opportunities for social interaction and activities, to provide relief and relaxation, to expand and reinforce the public realm and to contribute to the livability and general amenity of the downtown and other developing parts of the city.”

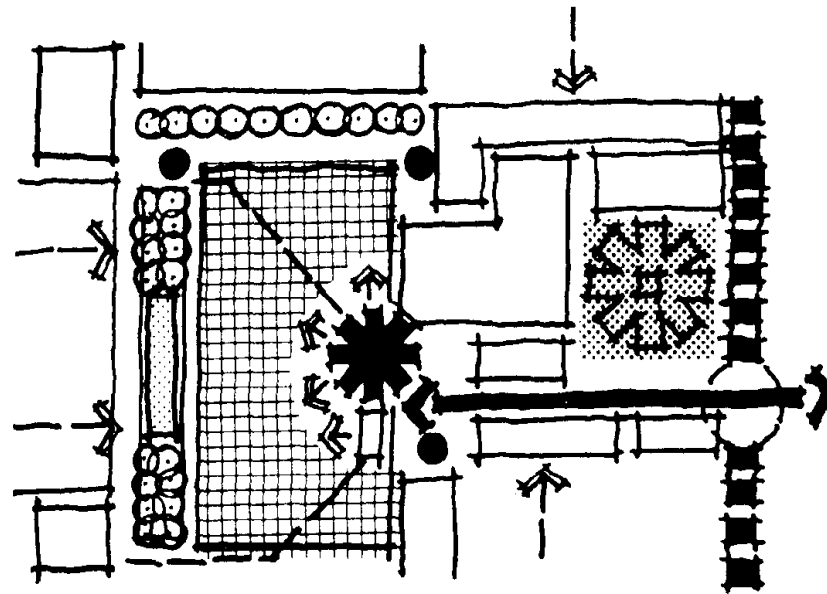
(Plaza Design Guidelines, City of Vancouver November 1992)

“The Plaza is intended to be an activity focus, at the heart of some intensive urban area. Typically, it will be paved enclosed by high-density structures and surrounded by streets or in contact with them. It contains features meant to attract groups of people and to facilitate meetings.”

Kevin Lynch (1981)

“A plaza is an urban form that draws people together for passive enjoyment”

J.B. Jackson (1985)



“A well-designed plaza or terrace not only reduces upkeep costs, it also attracts tenants, stimulates local economy, and enhances outdoor space.”

Hoffman architects (2009)

“An animated gathering place flanked by a public street with predominantly hard surfaced landscape features.”

City of Toronto (2014)

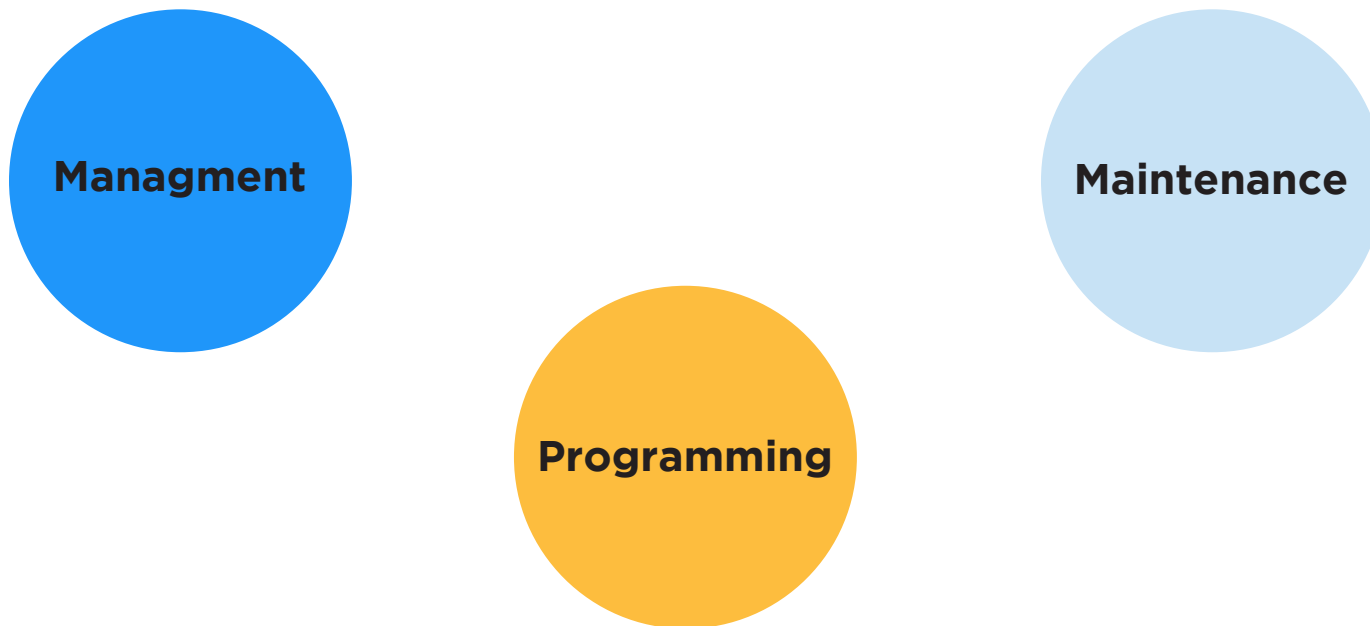
“A public plaza is a community amenity that serves a variety of users including building tenants and visitors and members of the public.”

Whole building design guide (2013)

“Spaces that form focal points in the public space network, providing a forum for exchange, both social and economic, and a focus for civic pride and community expression.”

Department of Architecture, Xi'an Jiaotong University, China (2014)

What is Stewardship?



Management:

There are many forces behind the scene that ensure the non-physical dimensions of partnerships, governance, funding, policy and evaluation are taken care of. 'Management' within the context of this report will be used to refer to these complex tasks. If done well, it will ensure a plaza remains an accessible, convivial and safe space for all.

The degree to which a plaza is 'managed' will vary. The presence of a local champion overseeing some form of upkeep can lead to a cleaner, safer and inviting space. This 'local champion' can take many different forms including local government, non-profit organization, private sector funders or community groups. As there are benefits and drawbacks to each one of these approaches, this funding toolkit will focus on a spectrum of potential revenue streams in order to provide a portfolio of options for various management models. For example, city matching funds may be appropriate for a grassroots group with minimal capacity, whereas a crowdsourcing campaign might work better for a business or BIA with a larger network of supporters and resources.

The specific roles and responsibilities around the maintenance, programming and management may vary between the plaza and management approach, it is important that an agreement is reached between the city and stewards clearly defining each party's contribution. From best practices to interviews with city staff and existing stewards, a common

theme of successful plaza management is involving potential stewards in the entail design and construction phase as it fosters the opportunity to build a connection with the space and a feeling of accountability that will encourage stewards to take greater ownership and pride in the space.



Cover Photo Credit: Paul Krueger,
Flickr

Programming

In William H Whyte's book *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*, he highlights one of the most important features of activating a space is providing seating (Whyte, 1980). Movable seating in particular he argued provided more than just its intended purpose, but also a sense of place and ownership as individuals can move tables and chairs to their desired position to work on their tan, sit at a table, retire to a shaded corner or join a group.

Programming public spaces can include movable furniture, art installations, live music, games, food and special events. Above all, the activities planned and programmed for a site should be made accessible, inclusive and reflect the needs and demands of the community it serves.

The level of programming will often vary between plazas, the time of day and the season, funding its planning and implementation is often easiest through collaborative efforts with non-profits, local residents and businesses.



Maintenance

Every plaza requires a degree of maintenance. This could be simply removing litter and watering plants to fixing furniture or repaving a surface. Good maintenance plays a vital role in the success of a plaza as it determines whether a space feels welcoming and safe.

The presence of litter, vandalism, poorly maintained paths or dead vegetation can all be contributing factors to a perceived lack of safety. This is because they suggest that the area has minimal care and supervision. If ignored further, a cycle of abuse is likely to occur in which individuals no longer feel comfortable or safe using the space. It is for these reasons that the ongoing maintenance of a plaza is so important towards providing a space that people feel safe to spend time in.

Since the scope of this document deals with publicly owned plazas the responsibility of basic garbage and repair tasks often falls into City hands. Finding a potential steward to be responsible for the maintenance of a plaza can often be a challenge as third parties usually prefer to be involved in the programming aspect of stewardship.

There are groups of businesses, residents and non-profits who wish to take on the day to day maintenance of public spaces. In these situations the issue often becomes how does the City enable these groups?

Moving forward the City aims to structure a program that assists potential stewards in maintaining their adopted plaza as there are often tasks and repairs that fall outside of the stewards capacity. This reiterates the importance of defining clear roles and responsibilities with potential stewards in order for plazas to consistently be safe and welcoming spaces.



What are we funding?

Now that we have a better understanding of what stewardship involves. We can take a closer look at what specific tasks within management, programming and maintenance require funding.

This list is not exclusive to all plazas as there are many factors influencing the level of stewardship a plaza receives, instead this list is an example of common items that require funding in order to ensure the ongoing vibrancy of a plaza.

Management

- Event organization
- Budgeting
- Partner coordination
- Marketing/ promotion
- Day-to-day management
- Security

Programming

- Movable tables and chairs
- Events
- Photography
- Lighting
- Music
- Art

Maintenance

- General cleanup, spot cleaning, sweeping, etc...
- Additional Event Setups/Cleanup
- Furniture repairs
- Graffiti removal
- Pest Control
- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Power supply
- Plumbing/ Drainage

Levels of Stewardship

It is important to understand the level of stewardship will change from plaza to plaza. Factors influencing the degree of stewardship include **local context** and **plaza design, size, and objectives**.

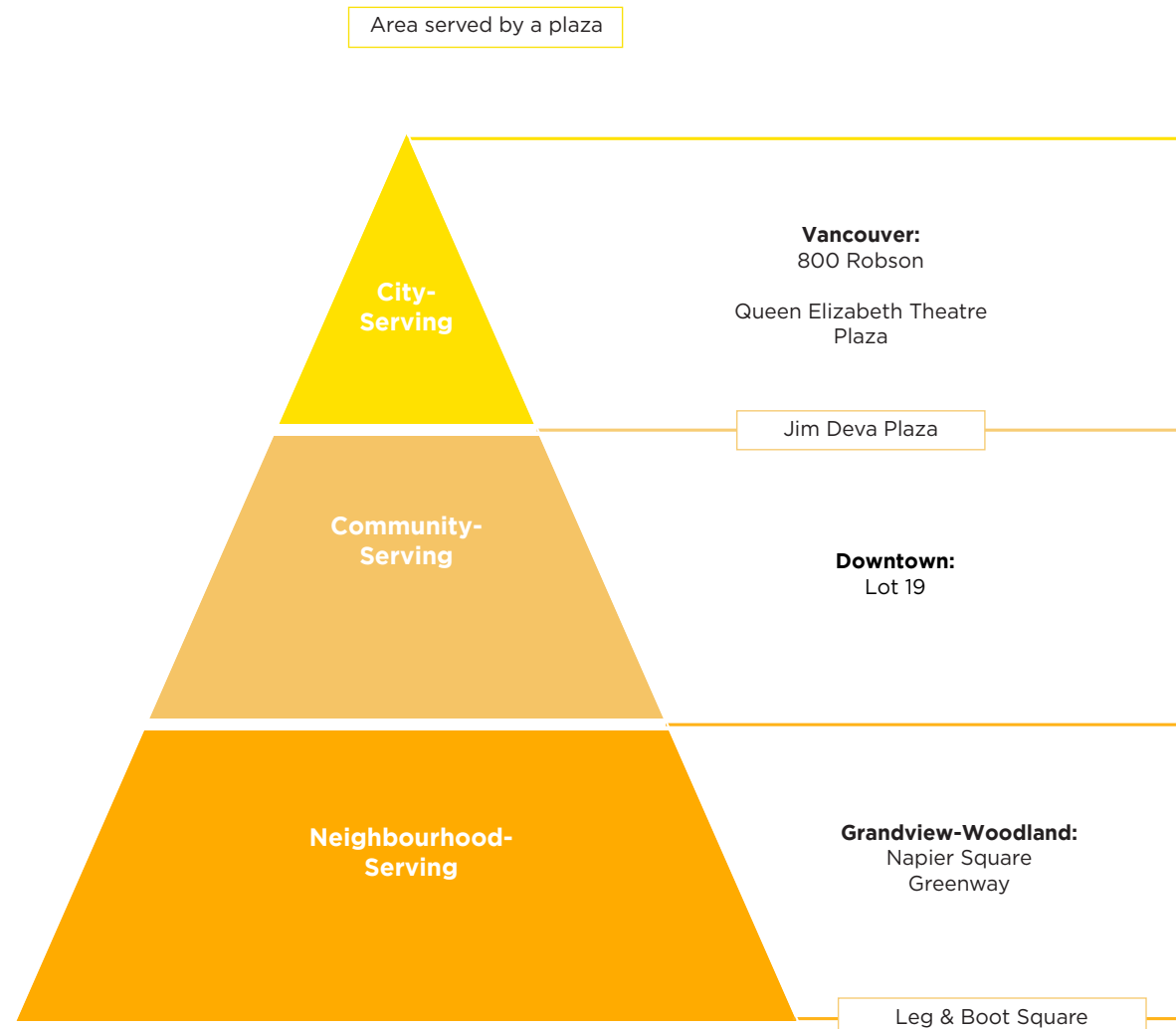
The following diagram speaks to several examples of plazas in Vancouver that serve different areas and purposes as a result of these influencing factors. City serving plazas are at the top as they serve a larger role in the context of the city, however, there are a fewer of them. Meanwhile, there are more neighbourhood plazas, however, they often serve a smaller network of people. Within each of these plazas a spectrum of stewardship will occur. This spectrum will be further explored in chapter 4's plaza profiles.

Local context

- adjacent land use, community values, user groups
- types and intensity of activities
- presence or absence of local champions & community groups
- capacity of stewards

Plaza design, size, & objectives

- large-scale civic events vs quiet contemplation
- formal vs passive activation
- Regional, city, or local community serving



Stewardship Models

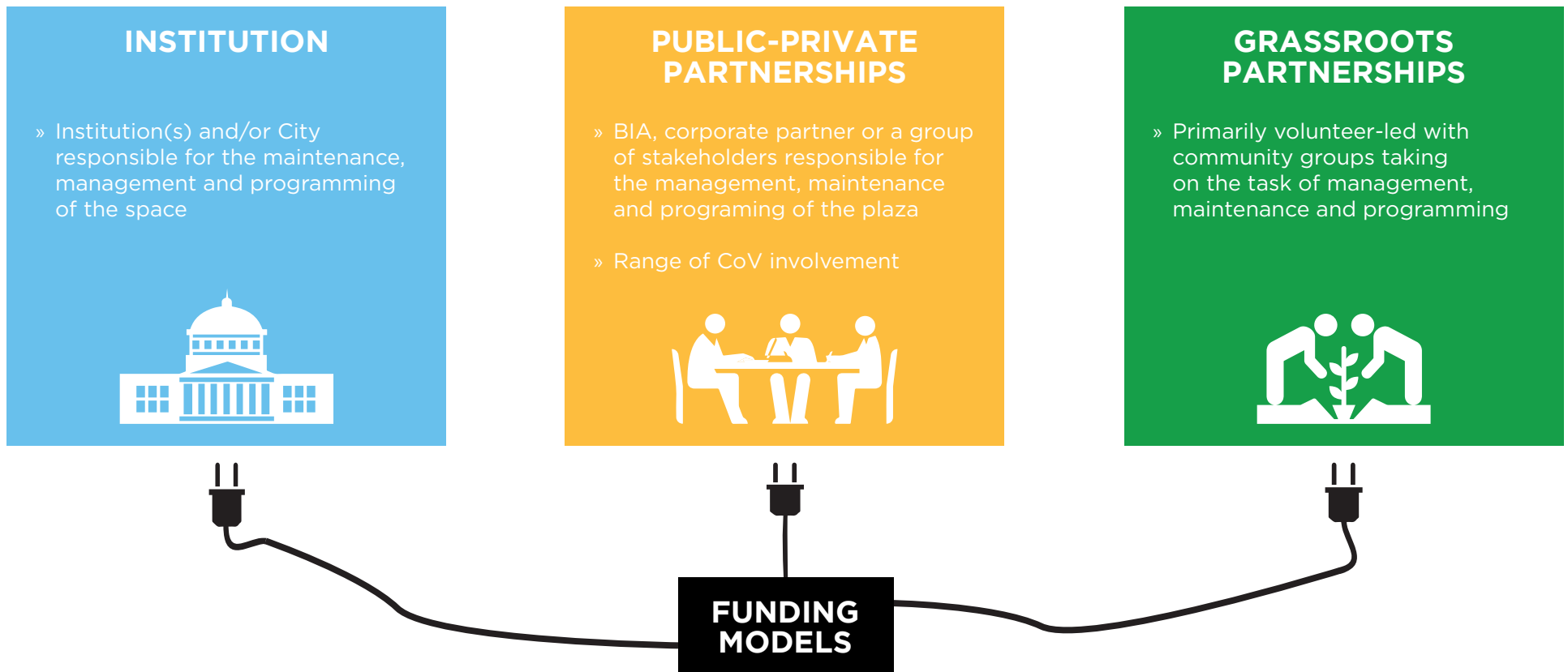
When council approved the City's Stewardship Strategy, one of their directions, in addition to exploring funding models was to also develop stewardship models that address the management, maintenance and programming of City-owned plazas.

From interviews with city staff, key stakeholders and current plaza stewards, the takeaways have formed three models; Institution based, Public Private Partnerships, and Grassroots Partnerships.

While the scope of this report is to address funding opportunities for stewardship it is crucial to establish the governing frameworks for which revenue streams will go to.

It is also important to note that within each of these governance models there is a medley of potential funding mechanisms meaning that there is no one fit solution to funding the operation of these stewardship models but instead a portfolio of options to best tailor a consistent source of revenue.

"The intent is to develop models for the stewardship and funding of City-owned plazas (generally on City right-of-way (ROW) and unique sites like the VAG North Lawn) that can be applied across the city."



CHAPTER 3

FUNDING MODELS

This chapter will unpack nine funding models actively being used to fund both the capital and ongoing stewardship of public spaces. Each model will explore several best practices, highlighting their strengths, weaknesses, how they work, who implements them and what they fund. At the end of each model's section, several recommendations can be found in the form of actions for Vancouver.

Funding Models

The following models encapsulate various financial mechanisms for funding both the capital and stewardship of public spaces. These models will help to better understand potential revenue streams for funding stewardship in Vancouver's public plazas.

LEGISLATIVE/ MUNICIPAL

- » Financing mechanisms implemented at a government level
- » Pages 24-28

PARTNERSHIP

- » Partnerships created to enhance levels of stewardship in public spaces.
- » Pages 33-37

VOLUNTEER/ IN-KIND SUPPORT

- » Cases of Public Space stewardship carried out by primarily volunteer-led efforts.
- Pages 47-50

SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT

- » Areas with an earmarked tax to fund additional services to augment (but not duplicate) what local government already provides as a baseline.
- » Pages 29-32

SPONSORSHIP

- » Public spaces that have received stewardship funding through sponsorship
- » Pages 38-40

BONDS

- » Bonds enabling non-profits to leverage community members to help finance social innovation projects.
- » Pages 41-43

GRANTS

- » Grants specializing social change and enhancing community connections
- » Pages 51-54

CROWDFUNDING

- » Digital fundraising campaigns for public space projects
- » Pages 55-57

DONATIONS/ CONSERVANCIES

- » Non-profit agencies that are formed to operate/maintain a public space and funded through voluntary contributions such as donations.
- » Pages 44-46

LEGISLATIVE/MUNICIPAL MODELS

SPACE TYPES

Plazas, parks and street right-of-ways

CASE STUDIES

People in Plazas
San Francisco, CA

Georgetown Festival Street
Seattle, WA

High Line
New York City, NYS

Background information

For there to be consistent sources of municipal funding to cover the operational costs associated with our plazas, greater support, education and awareness of the benefits of these unique public spaces has to occur.

Engaging the public through more temporary plazas, linking public space projects with other Greenest City Strategies or earmarking a percent of a levy or tax for placemaking are all avenues worth investigating in order to garnish support for funding plaza stewardship. The following case studies will explore how several municipalities have taken innovative approaches to establishing legislation that acts as either a source of revenue for the capital or stewardship costs associated with public space.

Strengths

- » Can address equity of plaza funding
- » Can be a dependable source of funding

Weaknesses

- » No one size fits all model
- » Often requires Council or tax payers' approval



People in Plazas

People in Plazas is a small non-profit organization that organizes free musical concerts in San Francisco's outdoor spaces. The organization's mission is to activate urban open spaces through events that bring community members together for social congregation. Each year over the course of the summer and fall People in Plazas hosts an average 170 free musical performances in outdoor public spaces. More than 45,000 people attend the concerts each year.

The non-profit arts organization programs these spaces with the financial support of the government's Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund.

Established in 1961, as a way to promote arts in the city the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund (GFTA) was grounded through a combination of municipal and state legislation that earmarked 2.9% of the 14% tax on hotel rooms to the San Francisco arts commission (San Francisco, 2016). In 2015 the fund's \$12.7 million budget saw \$450,000 go towards celebrations and parades while another \$45,000 supported other public events related to art.

Through close partnership with the city, People in Plazas have been able to leverage funds from this revenue stream to program public spaces throughout the city.

FUNDING MECHANISM

» Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax

GOVERNANCE MODEL

» Municipal + non-profit

LOCATION

» San Francisco, Ca

SPACE TYPE

» Plazas

NEEDS ADDRESSED

» Free musical concerts in San Francisco's outdoor spaces.



People in Plazas is a non-profit organization that produces free musical concerts in San Francisco's public spaces. (Photos via the People in Plazas Facebook page.)

Georgetown Festival Street

In 2011 Seattle's City Council approved The Seattle Department of Transportation's (SDOT) Festival Street program as a way to generate momentum towards implementation of the City's Pedestrian Master Plan. The program defines a festival street as a public place that has been designated for recurring temporary closure to vehicular traffic for the purpose of pedestrian-oriented special activities. This includes streets, avenues, boulevards, drives, places, alleys, sidewalks, planting strips, squares, triangles and rights-of-way.

Seattle's most recent festival street project, is the Georgetown Festival Street. The project required capital upgrades that would raise the road to grade level. The finished street now functions as a "woonerf" or "shared space" still remaining open to vehicular traffic. The new design discourages

cut-through traffic, slows vehicles down, and provides new parking amenities (San Francisco Planning, 2016). Additionally, Festival Street features infrastructure that supports events and programming, including new bike racks and an outdoor power sources.

Funding for this project was secured through a \$1,130,000 grant administered through the Seattle's Neighborhood Street Fund program (NSFP). This Neighborhood Street Fund program is in part funded by the 9-year "Bridging the Gap" levy that Seattle voters passed in 2006.

The \$365 million levy covers roughly 30% of the City's budget for transportation maintenance and improvements. The funding source is a commercial parking tax that funds a variety of transit orientated projects including the

implementation of the cycling and pedestrian master plans. The commercial parking tax affected all motor vehicles in a commercial parking lot within the City of Seattle that is operated by a commercial parking business. The tax was imposed at a rate of five percent effective in 2007, which increased to 7.5% in 2008 and then reached a maximum of 10% July in 2009.

FUNDING MECHANISM

» Seattle Parking Tax

GOVERNANCE MODEL

» Municipal + non profit

LOCATION

» Seattle, WA

SPACE TYPE

» Streets, boulevards, alleys, sidewalks, plazas

NEEDS ADDRESSED

» Makes fast progress towards city-wide pedestrian safety and livability goals

» Consistent source of funding



Georgetown Festival Street in Seattle Washington. Photo credit by City of Seattle.

High Line

In 2006 New York City began repurposing an elevated section of the New York Central Railway to an urban park. The intention was to preserve the meadow-like wild-scape of the railway and enhance public realm within the West Chelsea District.

Municipal funding, fundraising, and volunteer support were significant contributions to the success of the High Line. Several zoning policies and amendments were enacted to incentivize developers to investment in lots that were adjacent to the space. Guidelines were established to ensure that light, air and views were preserved along the elevated park.

The High-line Improvement Bonus area enabled developments adjacent to the High Line (between West 16th and 19th streets) to receive additional floor area through the provision of

significant improvements to the elevated park (NYC Planning, 2005). Improvements included major capital projects such as new stairs and elevator access on all three blocks, public restrooms and maintenance space at West 16th Street, as well as a creation of an at-grade public plaza on 10th Avenue (ibid, 2005). Given that Vancouver currently has density bonus zoning this model of leveraging a "bonus area" to fund capital improvements to a public space may be worth consideration in Vancouver.

Similar to bonusing, is the mechanism of value capture where municipal spending on public infrastructure and subsequent zoning decisions increase, in some instances, the commercial value of holdings of private landowners (Ibid, 2005).

A value capture levy permits a municipality to acquire some of the revenues accruing to the private sector that have been created via the local public infrastructure.

Value-capture levies have traditionally been used around major capital projects such as transit stations and regional parks, however, this model could be explored for new larger scale plazas and public spaces being built.

FUNDING MECHANISIM

- » High Line Bonus Area

GOVERNANCE MODEL

- » Municipal

LOCATION

- » New York City, NYS

SPACE TYPE

- » Streets, boulevards, alleys, sidewalks, plazas

NEEDS ADDRESSED

- » Leveraging new public space benefits to attract developers



High Line in New York City.

Actions for Vancouver

- » Vancouver should explore the potential of earmarking a percentage of its Hotel Tax for arts and culture. Currently Vancouver's hotel tax known as the Municipal and Regional District Tax is 2%. This is in addition to the 8% PST that applies to sales of short-term accommodation provided in BC. This additional 2% goes towards funding local tourism marketing, programs and projects. With increased revenue sources for arts and culture in the public realm both locals and tourists would stand to benefit from the enhanced curation of our more regional plazas.
- » Vancouver should continue to monitor the West End Parking Strategy and the implementation of a participatory budgeting strategy as a method for redistributing revenues gained from the new parking passes and meters. The idea for a potential parking benefit district is currently being explored within Vancouver's West End, this strategy could function as a pilot for Vancouver introducing other parking levies/taxes in strategic areas around the city.

CoV West End Parking Strategy
Recommendation



3. Create a parking benefit district

← PREV NEXT → ×

Recommendation

Report back to City Council on the possibility of doing a participatory-budgeting trial.

What changed?

We clarified that the community will help decide how to spend any new permit revenue through participatory budgeting (a democratic process requiring we work with community members that's been used successfully around the world).

Why we think this is a good idea

It will help improve the West End

Revenue will be used to help deliver amenities identified by the community.

What we heard in fall 2015

This is a new idea from people who filled out the survey.



× Close

SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT MODELS

SPACE TYPES

Plazas, sidewalks, street right-of-ways

CASE STUDIES

Pasadena Parking Benefit District
Pasadena, CA

Bryant Park Business Improvement District
New York City, NYS

Background information

Special assessment districts also known as Business Improvement Areas (BIA), or a Business Improvement District (BID), are designated areas in which property owners agree to pay a specific charge or levy for additional services beyond what their local government already provides. This levy goes to funding streetscape improvements, events, promotional services and a variety of other enhancements within the area. This section of the guide discusses self-governing assessment districts as a model for managing and funding public spaces.

Strengths

- » Can engage a variety of stakeholders
- » Can be a strong source of funding
- » Consistent source of funding
- » Enabling legislation is in place

Weaknesses

- » May lead to “corporate branding” in public space
- » No one size fits all model
- » Often requires tax payers’ approval
- » Governance may not include the broader community



Concession at Bryant Park

Old Pasadena

Similar to a BIA's model of receiving a levy from property owners within a district, a parking benefit district (PBD) involves an area where a surcharge is placed on local parking meter rates. Residents of a community vote to determine the surcharge, of which half of the revenue stays within the community to fund pedestrian, bicycle, streetscape, and maintenance programs, while the other half goes to citywide programs. Often formed through municipal legislation the funds are managed through the city, local business improvement association or a community managed participatory budgeting committee.

These districts could provide valuable funds for public space maintenance. The Downtown San Jose Association is one example of an organization that manages funds collected via a PBD. These funds are then reallocated to be used for advocacy, marketing, and events.

“To reassure businesses and property owners that the meter revenues stayed in Old Pasadena, the city mounted a marketing campaign to tell shoppers what their meter money was funding.”

Another example is The Old Pasadena Parking Improvement District, which was formed in 1993 to fund improvements to Downtown Pasadena's streetscape. The City worked with the existing Business improvement district (BID) to establish the boundaries of the PBD, while also creating a PBD Advisory Board, consisting of business and property owners. In turn the annual revenue average from the PBD was \$1.2 million and went to improve streetscapes, alleyways as well as pay for street furniture, trees and restoration of lighting infrastructure. Another key advantage of the PBD is that it funds daily sidewalk sweeping, trash collection, steam cleaning, and graffiti removal (Kolozvri and Shoup, 2003).



FUNDING MECHANISM

- » Parking Benefit District

GOVERNANCE MODEL

- » Municipal

LOCATION

- » Old Pasadena

SPACE TYPE

- » Variety of public spaces

NEEDS ADDRESSED

- » Consistent source of funding
- » Improved public infrastructure + awareness of active transportation

Bryant Park

One of the most renowned governance models of a privately operated publicly owned space is New York City's Bryant Park. After continuous debate around the park's closure in the 1970s the Bryant Park Restoration Corporation (BPRC) was formed to address its dilapidated state. In order to raise funds for this restoration project a Business Improvement District (BID) was created as well as a management agreement with the city. With a combination of public, charitable, and private investment sources the BPRC was able to raise \$17 million for the project.

The success of the restoration project led to the BPRC obtaining full management and financial control of the park. A key reason the city agreed to these terms was the BPRC status as a non-profit, allowing the city to remain the primary owner while also liberating them from managerial and maintenance rolls of the park.

Another key term within the agreement that led to Bryant Park's operating success, was that the BPRC was given complete independence from City structures and procedures, allowing them employment flexibility. This included temporary kiosks that would remain on a trial basis to determine their operational success, mobile chairs and tables were distributed to provide seating, and hawks were deployed to combat the pigeon problem.

Fast forward several decades and the park has become one of the crown jewels of New York's public spaces, remaining publicly owned and operating without any funds from the city. In 2010 the Park had an annual operating budget of \$8.8 million with 15% of revenues coming from the BID levy of local business and building owners, while the other 85% came from sponsorships, events and concession rents. In order to ensure equity and inclusivity to the park all events are free and open to the public with the one exception of New York's Fashion week shows.



Movable furniture at Bryant Park

FUNDING MECHANISM

- » Business Improvement Levy

GOVERNANCE MODEL

- » Self Assessment District

LOCATION

- » New York City, NYS

SPACE TYPE

- » Park

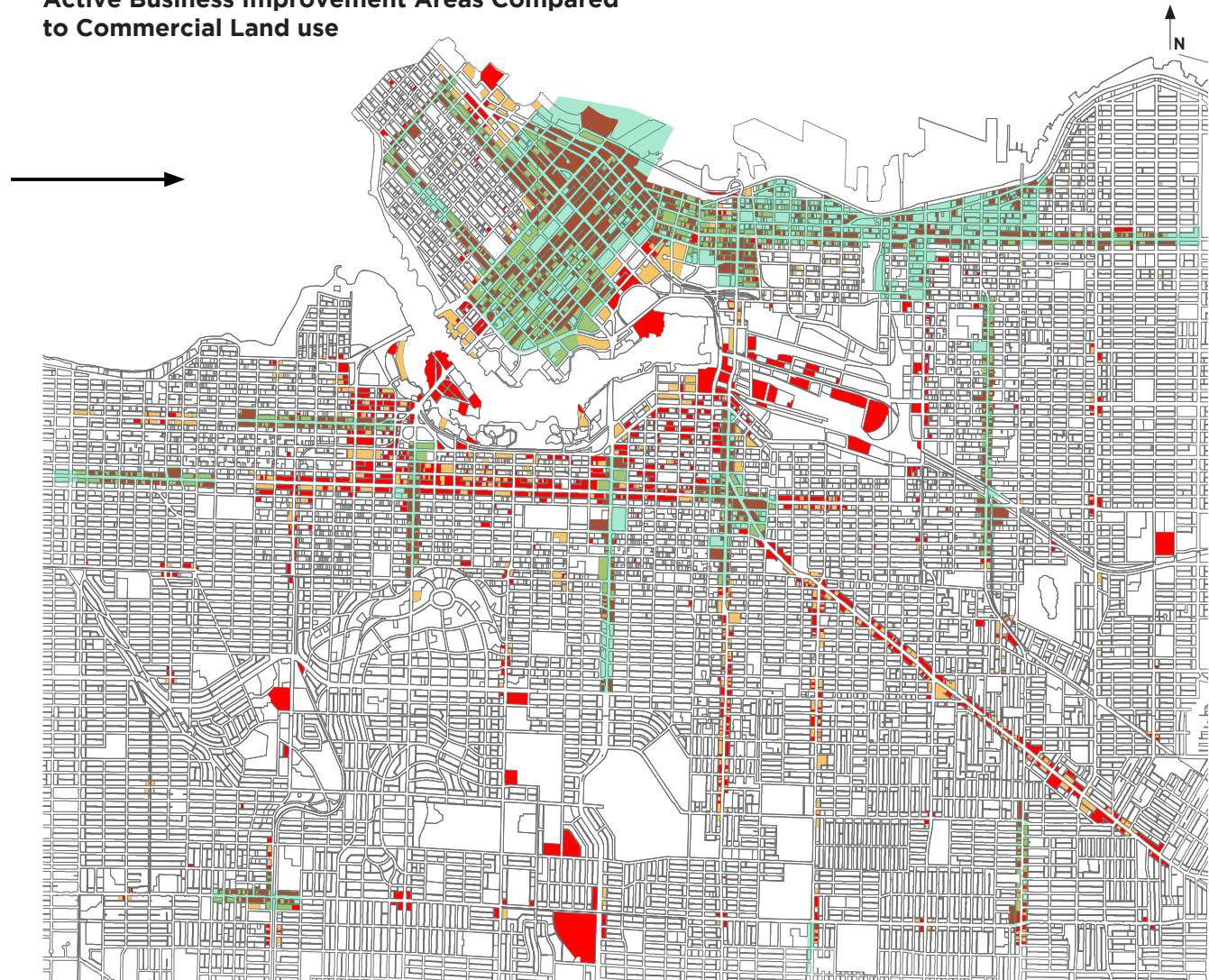
NEEDS ADDRESSED

- » Consistent source of funding
- » Makes fast progress towards programming and maintaining park

Actions for Vancouver

- » Vancouver should continue to enable the formation of Business Improvement Areas.
- » Provide open-source tool kits or guides to community groups interested in creating a business Improvement Area.
- » The City should explore opportunities for bundling contracts for services or coordinate shared resources amongst different BIAs, such as office space, equipment, and administrative staff.

Active Business Improvement Areas Compared to Commercial Land use



This map depicts that there are plenty of commercial areas within Vancouver that do not currently have a BIA. There is significant potential for the formation of new BIAs along Main street, the Mount Pleasant Industrial Lands, Broadway, West 4th Street and Kingsway.

- Active Business Improvement Areas
- Commercial
- Mixed Commercial and Residential

PARTNERSHIP MODELS

SPACE TYPES

Any type of public space

CASE STUDIES

Neighbourhood Plaza Partnership
New York City, NYS

Yonge-Dundas Square
Toronto, ON

Background information

While there is no one size fits all partnership arrangement, plazas which are fortunate enough to have a local champion often flourish. Partnership agreements are often formal in nature and work best when all parties have agreed to a contract defining roles and responsibilities, allowing for a high level of accountability. The following case studies explore two unique partnerships that have provided consistent forms of revenue for the stewardship of plazas.

Strengths:

- » Can effectively address financing of active and passive programming, maintenance, and management costs
- » Plaza's with large corporate partners may benefit from significant financial resources
- » If the partnership involves a number of small local businesses, the project typically benefits from a diversity of stakeholders

Weaknesses:

- » Potentially viewed as public space becoming privatized
- » Low income neighbourhoods have less capacity to pursue partnerships



Movable furniture in a Seattle plaza

NYC Plaza Program

In 2008, New York City Department of Transportation's (NYC DOT) Plaza Program was created to refurbish underutilized public spaces into vibrant public plazas. The mission of the program is to ensure that all New York City residents have an accessible open space within a 10-minute walk from their home. In order to reach this target, the program engages all organizations operating within City limits as partners in managing, maintaining and programming the plazas.

Over the last several years, the NYC DOT has worked with neighborhood partners to develop more than 71 plazas across New York City. Beginning as temporary installations, the plazas use low-cost materials to enhance the space allowing for various elements to be tested before major capital investments. In addition to temporary materials sponsoring organizations can apply for a temporary 29-day vending permit to explore whether or not the space would be economically viable to have a permanent vending space within the plaza.

However, for this to take place an operating budget as well as programming terms and conditions have to be reached between the city and sponsor. Even with minimal amenities though, new responsibilities arise for the plaza sponsoring partners. This brought an issue of equality up very shortly after launching the program as many of the plazas began sprouting up in more affluent neighbourhoods.

It became clear that if the program was going to equitably increase access to open space throughout all of the boroughs, plaza stewards in less affluent neighborhoods would require extra help. In order to establish a response to these needs the city partnered with a non-profit called the Horticulture Society of New York to provide technical assistance around plaza maintenance.

In 2013, The Neighborhood Plaza Partnership (NPP) was launched as a program to provide service and advocacy support for community-based organizations serving as plaza stewards in neighbourhoods of high-needs. Operating under a "work force development" or "equal employment" model the NPP trains individuals facing mental health issues or who were formerly incarcerated as a form of transitional employment through plaza landscaping and maintenance jobs.

As employees are learning new skills the NPP is able to offer subsidized maintenance and landscaping to plaza stewards. While the NPP was initially launched with a catalyst grant of \$800,000 from the JP Morgan Chase Foundation, the NPP has been able to attach the transitional employment model with the City's OneNYC Strategy which focuses on the equitable city allowing the Neighborhood Plaza Partnership to acquire 85% of its funding through the mayor's budget.

In addition to maintenance the Director of the NPP Laura Hansen states "they are increasing efforts to provide training for the nonprofit organization plaza managers to build their marketing/vending base and acquire new sponsorships in order to be more self-sufficient."



NYC Plaza Program

NPP's model is an innovative response to resource disparities that impact a community organization's ability to thrive in the role of public space steward. If Vancouver is looking to adopt a plaza program it will be worthwhile exploring methods of providing, community organizations with technical assistance that is focused on building their internal capacity to fundraise, secure sponsorships, and develop revenue streams that will allow them to pay for maintenance on an ongoing basis.

“New York’s public plazas have brought many new responsibilities to the communities that manage them. The Neighborhood Plaza Partnership provides services to support plaza managers in high- need areas.”



FUNDING MECHANISM

- » Public-Private Partnership

GOVERNANCE MODEL

- » Municipal + non profit

LOCATION

- » New York City, NYS

SPACE TYPE

- » Plazas, street right-of-ways

NEEDS ADDRESSED

- » Makes fast progress towards programming and maintaining plazas
- » Builds technical capacity of non profits in order for them to be more self sustaining

Yonge and Dundas Square

In 2006, the City of Toronto Act established a unique governing body called the Yonge-Dundas Square Board of Management. It is a City board whose structure and mandates are determined by City Council. However, unlike other city-owned public spaces, Yonge-Dundas Square's board of management has been approved to operate more as a business in partnership with the City of Toronto and the local business and residential communities, including the Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area (City of Toronto, 2006).

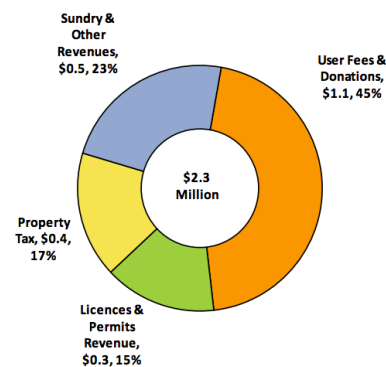
Leveraging the fact that Yonge and Dundas is the busiest intersection in the city the board has built up a consistent stream of revenue sources for their day to day operations. Acting as both a local and regional attraction the square averages 300 events a year providing them with their largest revenue stream. In order to keep 99% of their events free to the public the Board has been very open to corporately sponsored events.

Even with permit fees being waived for community group event hosts, 45% of their annual revenue come from user fees associated with events. Outside of permit fees, the board has a vast inventory of event assets from stages, to AV equipment, to lighting, to advertisement screens for event hosts to rent. Additionally, each event requires the event host to hire a Yonge-Dundas event programmer and operations team who assist in the set up and take down.

Furthermore, the board has brought in two major sponsors who have access to show advertisements on the square's digital signage screens during any event as well as be the exclusive sponsor of weekly events including Indie Fridays sponsored by Chevrolet and City Cinema sponsored by NOW magazine.

This advertisement revenue has been made possible in part by Toronto's special sign districts which permit large digital advertisement screens both within the square as well as on and above adjacent commercial buildings. For times when no events are occurring there remains an element of passive programming including movable tables and chairs as well as a single 10'x10' promotion tent that businesses/non-profits are able to rent out to promote and distribute pre-approved product.

Yonge-Dundas 2016 Budget by Funding Source



Yonge Dundas Square Operating Budget, City of Toronto. (2016)

Another unique aspect of the governance model is that they are in charge of their own calendar thus instead of the city's Film and Special events department issuing event permits the Board of Management themselves process all event applications and issue permits accordingly.

FUNDING MECHANISM

- » Public Partnership with Board of Management

GOVERNANCE MODEL

- » Municipal

LOCATION

- » Toronto, ONT

SPACE TYPE

- » Regional plazas

NEEDS ADDRESSED

- » Board is able to focus on the stewardship of one plaza
- » Large variety of free programming

Actions for Vancouver

- » Vancouver should consider replicating NPP's model. Vancouver's Clean Streets program is similar and could be expanded to provide more opportunities for individuals in need of transitional work. This program could be coupled with Vancouver's Greenest City strategy, as a green job contributing to low barrier employment.
- » Vancouver should consider partnering with non-profits that are involved with low barrier employment to help address resource disparities between neighborhoods. This would increase capacity in high-need areas through workforce training, marketing assistance and citywide plaza promotion. Existing organizations, such as the VPSN and MOSAIC, could be key partners in helping the city build on established programs to replicate NPP's model.
- » Continue to monitor the stewardship approach Toronto has taken with Yonge-Dundas Square. The Stewardship may be relevant to large scale plazas such as 800 Robson and VAG North Lawn.

Social enterprises that are currently helping create job opportunities and reduce barriers to employment.

These agencies could be partnered with to assist in training and employing plaza stewards as a form of transitional work.

- » EMBERS
- » LEDlab
- » MOSAIC
- » S.U.C.C.E.S.S.
- » Coast Mental Health Foundation
- » Greater Vancouver Business Leadership Network
- » ACCESS

SPONSORSHIP

SPACE TYPES

Parks, plazas, parklets, street right-of-ways

CASE STUDIES

Powell Street Promenade
San Francisco, CA

Background Information

Sponsorship can be provided in a variety of different ways from a name on a piece of furniture to an event acknowledgment to the naming of a plaza.

It is important to keep in mind community engagement and transparency are essential components to arranging a private sponsor of public space, because the public might be opposed to the idea of “branding” or privatization of public space. Therefore, sponsorship should be guided by a broader city policy.

Strengths

- » Flexible source of revenue that can be in the form of labor, finance or materials
- » Can be a consistent source of revenue
- » Can support public space and local business

Weaknesses

- » Potential conflicts around the privatization of public space
- » Requires policy around roles and responsibilities
- » City has to be cognizant of who they partner with.
- » Requires a clear contract as to promotional,



Powell Street Promenade San Francisco, CA

Powell Street Promenade

Powell Street in downtown San Francisco is the busiest pedestrian corridor in the City, resulting in sidewalk overcrowding. This has become both a safety issue as well as a transportation concern.

In December of 2009, the City, the Union Square Business Improvement District (BID), local merchants and property owners collaborated to conduct a pilot to experiment with wider sidewalks along Powell Street. The results from the study led to a proposal for a permanent sidewalk extension along the busiest commercial section of the street.

In 2011, the partners agreed to take on Audi of America as a sponsor for the new sidewalk extension known as the Powell Street Promenade. The new public space provides six additional feet of pedestrian walkway adjacent to the sidewalk and adds amenities such as benches, planters, tables, rails, landscaping, bike parking, and free wi-fi (San Francisco Planning, 2016). This sponsorship approach to funding the project saw Audi providing \$890,000 for construction of the Promenade. In return Audi received a small “stamp” of the Audi logo on a plaque along the Promenade.

While this may raise concerns regarding about the privatization of public space, the Promenade remains publicly owned and has a negligible to non-existing appearance of being “branded”.

Another key attribute to this sponsorship agreement was that Audi provide an additional \$33,000 annually for 5-years towards the operational costs including maintenance, plant replacement, and repair of the promenade.



Powell Street Promenade, SF

FUNDING MECHANISIM

» Sponsorship

GOVERNANCE MODEL

» Public-Private Partnership

LOCATION

» San Francisco, Ca

SPACE TYPE

» Parklet

NEEDS ADDRESSED

- » 5 years of operational costs covered
- » Privately funded Public space built and maintained with little corporate branding



Audi Sign at Powell Street Promenade, SF

Actions for Vancouver

» Continue to explore various mechanisms and levels of sponsorship that have a minimal corporate presence. When forming a sponsorship agreement Vancouver should designate funding for ongoing project maintenance, as was done with the Powell Street Promenade project in San Francisco.



Parklett in San Francisco, CA.

BONDS

SPACE TYPES

Parks, plazas, parklets, street right-of-ways

CASE STUDIES

Toronto's Centre for Social Innovation
Toronto, On

Better Denver project
Denver, CO

Background information

Functioning as a form of 'debt' a bond is essentially a loan made by the bondholder to the bond issuer. Community bonds are an innovation in social finance that allow charities and non-profits to leverage community members to help fund a project with a social mission. In the instance of these case studies a social mission includes a project that maximizes improvements in human and community well-being.

Strengths

- » Generates revenue as well as awareness
- » Integrates community and financial returns in the same investment vehicle
- » Powerful tool for leveraging communities with strong existing ties

Weaknesses

- » Requires significant management capacity to address legal and financial frameworks
- » Public uncertainty on how bonds can create social and financial benefits
- » Lengthy

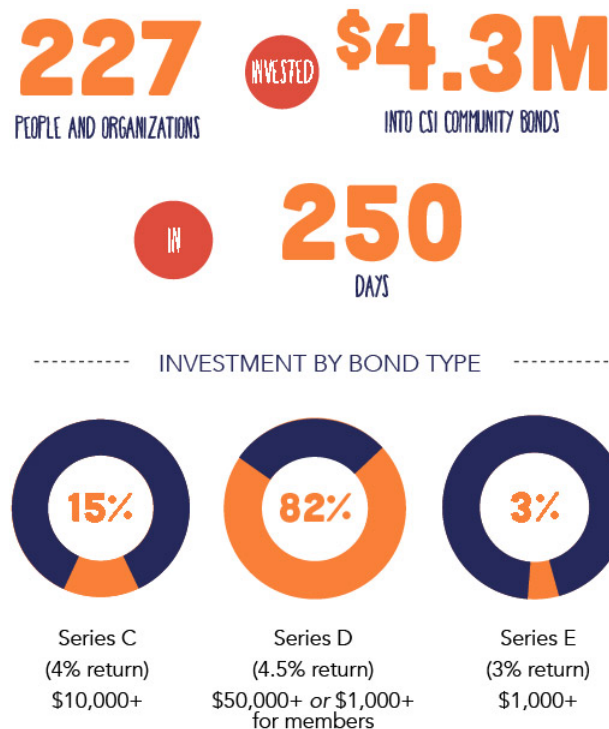


Toronto's Centre for Social Innovation

Community Bonds are an existing financial tool which is emerging within the non-profit sector as an innovative way for non-profit organizations to fund projects. They are a marriage of financial and social returns that provide investors with a return of their original capital, a financial return on that invested capital and a social return in the form of the community benefit outcomes of the non-profit organization (Capacity Build Consulting, 2013). By seeking an investment rather than a donation the pool of available funds often becomes much larger.

Toronto's Centre for Social Innovation (CSI) is a social enterprise with a mission to catalyze, inspire and support social innovation. In 2004, CSI acquired a 5,000 ft² shared workspace in the Robertson Building in downtown Toronto with 14 organizations that were built around enhancing social capital.

Within five years their success led them to acquire another 17,000 ft² of shared office spaces accommodating 175 organizations committed to social change. With the waitlist growing they decided to leverage the only asset they had - their community. Community Bonds allowed them to offer an RRSP-eligible investment opportunity to their network of supporters and within five-months they raised \$4.3 million to purchase more office spaces and simultaneously welcomed 227 new organizations to their new shared space project (Centre for Social Innovation 2014).



Source: Centre For Social Innovation, 2014.

FUNDING MECHANISIM

» Bonds

GOVERNANCE MODEL

» Non profit

LOCATION

» Toronto, ONT

SPACE TYPE

» Shared office space

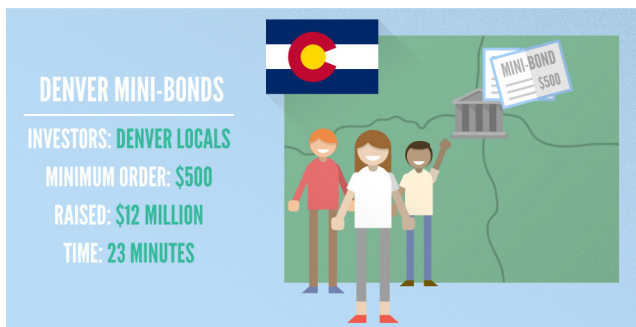
NEEDS ADDRESSED

- » Employment opportunities for organization involved in social change
- » Building community ties through investment

Better Denver Municipal Bonds

Typically used in the United States, municipal bonds are another example of a debt finance tool used to fund public projects. They are often exempt from federal, provincial and municipal taxes making them attractive to individuals in a high-income bracket. However, offering bonds in smaller denominations can often provide access to greater levels of capital and engage more citizens in public space development (Kitchen, 2017). Denver, Colorado, is an example that has leveraged this financial tool to issue small-denomination municipal bonds (also known as muni-bonds).

In an effort to help finance the Better Denver projects which included a series of improvements to the city's cultural facilities. The City of Denver offered \$500 mini bonds for any resident of the City. Free of state and federal income tax a loan of \$500 to the city for nine years saw a 50% return, while a 14 year loan saw a 100% return at its maturity date. Selling out within one hour, the 2014 Denver Mini-Bonds campaign raised a total of \$12 million and an immeasurable amount of social capital.



Source: City of Denver, 2014.

FUNDING MECHANISM

- » Municipal Bonds

GOVERNANCE MODEL

- » Municipal

LOCATION

- » Denver, COL

SPACE TYPE

- » Streets, cultural facilities and parks

NEEDS ADDRESSED

- » Tied financial investment with social returns
- » New and improved public spaces

Actions for Vancouver

- » Explore the potential for issuing community bonds or 'muni-bonds' for public space projects. This could be used to not only raise revenue, but awareness, emotional investment and attachment to enhancing community assets throughout the city.
- » Provide a toolkit for non-profit groups to learn more about how the process works and how to use community bonds as a financial tool.

DONATIONS & CONSERVANCIES

SPACE TYPES

Typically parks, but could be implemented for large plazas

CASE STUDIES

The Bentway
Toronto, Ont

Background information

Donations have been one of the oldest funding mechanism supporting a vast spectrum of projects. However, traditionally public space philanthropic causes have slipped through the cracks until recently with projects such as the High Line and the Bentway. Over the last several years placemaking is finally being recognized as a powerful way to coalesce and address disparate causes of philanthropy. This section of the report discusses donations and conservancies as a model for funding and managing public spaces.

Strengths

- » Can fund capital as well as operating costs
- » Can be a form of tax relief for charities
- » Quick way to generate revenue
- » Potential to lead to sponsorship

Weaknesses

- » Inconsistent
- » Requires an established network
- » Organization requires significant capacity to attract large donors



Concept sketch of the Bentway in Toronto, Ontario.

The Bentway Conservancy

Conservancies are private non-profit agencies that either partner with a city to maintain, manage and program a public space or to operate on its own. Traditionally operating under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the city, they usually involve the private sector through sponsorships and programming. Additional sources of funding come from voluntary contributions, permit fees, and grants with contributions from the city including the city maintaining ownership of the land. New conservancies continue to be formed out of growing concerns around insufficient financial support from city budgets.

In 2015, Toronto's city council approved a project to transform a 10-acre, 1.75-kilometre linear area beneath the elevated Gardiner Expressway into a new east-west multi-use trail and network of public spaces extending from west of Strachan Avenue to Spadina Avenue. Linking over 70,000 residents through seven adjoining neighbourhoods, the project will include pedestrian and cyclist pathways, an outdoor skating rink, performance stages, plazas as well as several other programming components.

The project's establishment was made possible through several key elements. First, a \$25 million donation from the Judy and Wilmot Matthews Foundation (the "Donor"). Secondly, the project partners, the City of Toronto, Waterfront Toronto and the Donor came to agreement that in order to best meet the governance objectives of the public

and each project partner a new independent not-for-profit charitable corporation "The Bentway Conservancy" be established. Thirdly, the approval of a post construction plan (stewardship strategy agreement) addressing the roles and responsibilities around the ongoing maintenance, management, and programming for the next eight years. Lastly, a matching contribution of \$10 million from the City of Toronto towards capital costs.

A key aspect within their post construction plan was the formation of a financial strategy for the Bentway Conservancy in order for the non-profit to establish sufficient and predictable funding sources through fundraising, sponsorships, earned income, grants and philanthropy.



Concept sketch of the Bentway in Toronto, Ontario.

FUNDING MECHANISIM

- » Donations and municipal matching funds

GOVERNANCE MODEL

- » Non profit

LOCATION

- » Toronto, ONT

SPACE TYPE

- » Plazas, ice-rink, promenade,

NEEDS ADDRESSED

- » Reclaiming underutilized public space
- » Attaching public spaces to donations

Actions for Vancouver

- » Explore methods of connecting more public space projects with donors. Be it through creating or partnering with a platform that educates and promotes awareness about public spaces. While Vancouver hospitals and universities are full of philanthropists' generosity, public spaces are rarely on philanthropists' radar.
- » Establish a bench or other public space furniture sponsorship program. Donors would receive a plaque on the furniture. E.g. The Vancouver Parks Board Bench Program.

Non profits, charities and conservancies that build awareness, have a donation program and are involved with enhancing urban public spaces.

- » Park People
- » The Vancouver Foundation
- » The Bentway
- » VPSN
- » Keys to the Streets

VOLUNTEER/IN-KIND SUPPORT

SPACE TYPES

Any type of public space

CASE STUDIES

Adopt a block
Vancouver, BC

Friends of Duboce Park
San Francisco, CA

Background Information

This funding method usually consists of a group of residents, non-profits or other grassroots organizations stewarding a public space. Varying in structure, they are often volunteer-run and exist on a much smaller scale than larger stewardship organizations (such as a parks conservancy).

Often associated as a “Friends of” groups, these entities have traditionally been effective stewards of parks, however, more recently an increasing number of them are taking on the role of stewarding plazas, greenways and small-scale community public spaces.

Strengths

- » Low operating budget
- » Small size allows for management flexibility
- » Big impact at a low cost
- » Great at building community ownership over a public space
- » Strengthens ties between neighbors

Weakness

- » Lack organizational systems
- » Limited capacity/resources
- » Individuals time can be inconsistent
- » Equity (high resource communities are often better positioned)



City of Vancouver Adopt A Block Program

In an effort to build community links while keeping Vancouver clean, the city of Vancouver established an adopt the block program as part of their Keep Vancouver Spectacular Strategy. Interested neighbours, business owners or organizations take on the role of cleaning their street with supplies provided via the city. Once the garbage has been collected the City sends a truck to remove and dispose of the waste. There are currently 25,000 volunteers in the program cleaning everything from parks, plazas, streets to alleys. 65% of the volunteers are students from elementary and high schools taking part in neighborhood cleanups.

Major corporations such as Telus and Vancity are also beginning to partner with the program to promote sustainable communities and host beach and park cleanups. The Keep Vancouver Spectacular Strategy is also finding success with single day events such as Recyclefest. This annual event is carried out in partnership with the Trout Lake Community Centre's Youth Council and ElectroRecycle to encourage residents to drop off their old electronics to ensure their recycled accordingly and kept out of the landfill.

FUNDING MECHANISM

In-kind Labour

GOVERNANCE MODEL

Non profit

LOCATION

Vancouver, BC

SPACE TYPE

Street

NEEDS ADDRESSED

- » Block is kept clean and safe by local stewards
- » Building community connections through group cleanups



Keep Vancouver Spectacular Program, Vancouver, BC.

Friends of Duboce Park

The Friends of Duboce Park is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1997 by a group of neighbours from surrounding the park. The volunteer run group is a vital source of maintenance, care and programming of the park. While the city of San Francisco provides basic maintenance services such as garbage removal and capital infrastructure repair, the majority of stewarding derives from the friends of Duboce Park.

Operating on a budget of \$2,000 a year the group is able to fund organizational infrastructure (insurance, website, etc.), movie nights, as well as small purchases for park enhancements, such as benches and plants (SF Planning, 2016). In order to fund their annual operating costs the Friends of Duboce Park host one major fundraising event per year.

This event is an annual community Tag Sale in the park. Similar to a neighbourhood garage sale, community members are invited to bring items to sell in the park, and all proceeds benefit the organization. This event has raised anywhere from \$3,000-6,000, safely covering the organization's annual operating costs.

Another innovative method of raising funds from residents who wish to contribute to the stewardship of the park includes the option of registering for the Friends of Duboce Park membership program. This \$25 annual membership is not a significant source of funds for the organization, but has proven to be an effective way to engage people who may not

have time to volunteer (ibid). Monthly park clean-up days have become a community bonding activity, building connections and emotional investment in the park. Neighbours with more time attend monthly meetings involving a potluck dinner at the home of a volunteer board member. Another key to their success has been having a "key anchor" of core volunteers.

It is important to note Duboce Park is located in a "high resource" community with the median income of residents between \$85,000-\$100,000 per year.

"Although the Friends of Duboce Park operates on only ~\$2,000/year, the group has a significant impact on the park."



Duboce Park San Francisco, CA.

FUNDING MECHANISIM

» Volunteer

GOVERNANCE MODEL

» Non profit

LOCATION

» San Francisco, CA

SPACE TYPE

» Park

NEEDS ADDRESSED

- » Engaged community taking on the role of stewarding a public space
- » Self sustaining through fundraisers

Actions for Vancouver

- » Vancouver should work to grow awareness of fiscal sponsorship sources amongst grassroots groups looking to be self sustaining. Current sources in the City could be Green Streets, VIVA Vancouver, the City's matching neighbourhood fund program.
- » Vancouver should explore re-designing their website or creating other platforms for connecting organizational knowledge and best practices among grassroots groups as well as potential funding opportunities.
- » Vancouver should explore options around combining resources or packaging information for programs such as Green Streets, Adopt A Street, and the Street Cleaning Grant Program. Currently, the city's website has each of these programs within different headings, categories and labels often resulting in navigational challenges.



GRANTS

SPACE TYPES

Any type of public space

CASE STUDIES

Activation of Underutilized
Vancouver Civic Theatres Spaces
Vancouver, BC

Canada Cultural Spaces Fund
Any city in Canada

Background information

Grants are not always the most consistent approach to funding operating costs of city owned public spaces, however, they can be the difference between getting a project off the ground or covering temporary enhancements to a space.

The City of Vancouver offers a variety of grant streams for infrastructure, programming, and maintenance of public spaces. Additionally, there are numerous charities, institutions and corporations that offer grants for events and initiatives that build and strengthen culture, heritage and equity in public spaces. Within the appendix of this report you will find a table of grants, organizations offering them, what they will fund and links for more information.



Strengths

- » Builds capacity for non-profit organizations
- » Good way to build your organization's visibility and credibility

Weaknesses

- » Requires time and capacity to locate and write grant applications
- » Not always a reliable source of funding

Activation of Underutilized Vancouver Civic Theatres Spaces Grant

Civic Theatres has identified that a major barrier for arts and culture within the city are the costs associated with acquiring spaces to host an event. Their efforts to address this issue include offering grant money for not-for-profit community groups, arts organizations and artists, to program one of their three institutional spaces.

This Activation of Underutilized Vancouver Civic Theatres Spaces Grant is aimed to close the gap between the city's rental rates and the ability of a group to pay rent and in turn animating and providing vibrancy to important public spaces. With revenue generated through events, liquor and food sales Civic Theatres grants a total of \$150,000 annually to groups wishing to take on a variety of activations.



Queen Elizabeth Theatre Plaza activation, Vancouver, BC.

Canada Cultural Spaces Fund

One example of a federal granting stream is the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund. The fund is aimed to increase awareness and accessibility for Canadians to performing arts, visual arts, media arts, cultural collections and heritage displays. In order to reach these goals, the federal government offers to contribute up to 50% of a project contributing to improved physical conditions for arts and heritage through funding infrastructure and specialized equipment intended for professional arts and/or heritage activities.

Not-for-profit arts and/or heritage organizations as well as municipal and provincial governments are all eligible recipients and have traditionally received funding for projects ranging between \$10,000 to \$1,000,000.

June 26th 2017, The Museum of Anthropology at UBC received the grant to construct a new public education center inside the museum along with hosting performances open to the public.



Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver, BC.

FUNDING MECHANISIM

» Grants

GOVERNANCE MODEL

» Municipal + non profit

LOCATION

» Accross Canada

NEEDS ADDRESSED

- » Activiates underutilized public spaces
- » Activations encourage public to interact with public spaces

Actions for Vancouver

» Vancouver should consolidate grant opportunities for stewarding public spaces to one webpage. Similarly to finding programs for stewarding public space on the City’s website, navigating through the user face is challenging. For example, there are public space programming grants in the arts and culture category, other programming grants in the parks, recreation and culture category, and then maintenance grants in the streets and transportation category.

» Vancouver should, continue to build and promote awareness of existing grant opportunities for stewarding public spaces through social media streams, community hubs, and special events.



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Social Innovation Project Grants



Expressions of interest for projects to support social innovation

We are currently accepting expressions of interest (EOI) for projects that explore:

- How to support social innovation in Vancouver’s urban aboriginal community
- How non-aboriginal focused projects can apply an aboriginal perspective to social innovation

In 2014, City Council designated Vancouver as a “City of Reconciliation”. In 2015, staff developed the City of Reconciliation overarching vision:

As a City of Reconciliation, the City of Vancouver will form a sustained relationship of mutual respect and understanding with local First Nations and the urban aboriginal community, including key agencies, to incorporate a First Nations and urban aboriginal perspective into the work undertaken and decisions made by the City of Vancouver and, ultimately, to provide services that benefit members of these communities.

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Current status | Closed |
| Next application deadline | Spring 2018 |

What is a socially-innovative approach?

There is no single, universally-agreed upon definition of social innovation. In general, a socially innovative approach:

- Addresses social issues by applying new learning and strategies to positively affect change
- Has a measurable impact on the broader social, political and economic contexts that created or support continuation of the issue being addressed
- Is designed to explore what might work to trigger longer term systems, rather than implementing “program models” with known actions and clear end points
- Recognizes that, while the long-term goals of a social innovation might be well defined, the path to achieving those goals may be much less clear

In the context of Indigenous communities, “social innovation” may often take the form of looking back to old traditions and rediscovering how those teachings show Indigenous communities the way forward. The Waterloo Institute for Social Innovation and Resilience offers this working definition:

“Indigenous innovations are a unique type of social innovation continually informed by the application of indigenous knowledge to promote the resurgence of indigenous knowledge and practices, as guided by the wisdom of the ancestors.”

CROWDFUNDING MODELS

SPACE TYPES

Any type of public or private space

CASE STUDIES

707 Market
Toronto, Ont

Ackery's Alley
Vancouver, BC

Background information

Crowdfunding is the practice of funding a project or venture by fundraising through donations from a large number of people. Crowdfunding enables citizens to contribute money towards the completion of a particular project, most recently through Internet platforms. Various platform models currently exist. For example, the money given may be pure charity, may result in a small symbolic return, may pre-purchase a particular product, or may involve large-scale recognition and branding (Action Canada, 2015). Crowdfunding platforms are becoming an increasingly popular avenue for funding civic projects.

Given the implications of soliciting citizens for additional funds many governments are often hesitant towards taking on crowdfunding campaigns.

However, given the rapidly growing tech community within Vancouver there are many opportunities for raising money when municipal funds go dry.

Strengths

- » Quick way to generate revenue
- » Donations can be Flexible
- » Can be a valuable form of marketing
- » Sharing ideas can often result in feedback

Weaknesses

- » Requires awareness around campaign
- » If the funding target isn't met, finances that have been pledged are usually returned investors



Market 707 patio, Toronto, Ont.

Market 707 Public Patio

Scaddeling Court Community Centre's SCCC Market 707 is a series of shipping containers repurposed as food vendor stalls for low income entrepreneurs. The market is located in the Dundas Street West neighbourhood. The market was created to enhance local employment opportunities while simultaneously enhancing the vibrancy of the neighbourhood. Given the SCCC's limited funding they were only able to cover the cost of the renovated shipping containers, and were unable to provide additional programming amenities such as seating, tables, planters and art.

Their innovative response was to partner with crowdfunding company Projexity to source designs, volunteers and donors for a new patio space. The Market 707 patio campaign successfully raised \$6,500 to commission a

design competition for the market's patio and deliver a finished product to the marketplace vendors within just five months.

The Market 707 patio harnessed community resources independent of the political actors or granting organizations that usually dictate the pace of a project.

The founder of Projexities, Nicolas Koff stated "providing the public with a source to monitor and contribute to the initiative allowed the money to generate excitement around the project." Once the designs came in, "it helped people develop their imagination for the site.

Market 707 is a great example of how speedy and efficient crowdfunding is as a source of

fundraising. Not only is it financially beneficial, crowdfunding also results in the community feeling more involved and connected to the project itself.



Market 707 patio, Toronto, Ont.

FUNDING MECHANISIM

- » Crowdsourcing

GOVERNANCE MODEL

- » Non profit

LOCATION

- » Toronto, ONT

SPACE TYPE

- » Public Patio

NEEDS ADDRESSED

- » Provides public gathering place for shoppers at Market 707
- » Built social investment through crowdfunding campaign

Ackery's Alley

This kickstarter campaign for a downtown Vancouver alley provides another great example of how crowdfunding can be utilized to raise both funds and community interest in public space projects. From the same team that brought the Alley Oop project to Downtown Vancouver a second public space project is in the works for a laneway located behind the Orpheum on Granville Street known as Ackery's Alley.

The Kickstarter Campaign was created by 'We are More Awesome Now' a collective formed between DV BIA and HCMA architects to reshape underutilized urban land spaces into engaging, accessible public spaces. This innovative collective has partnered with municipal departments VIVA Vancouver and Vancouver CIVIC Theatres to tackle the job and once again demonstrate how advantageous public-private partnerships can be towards planning, funding and executing public space projects.

This unique approach for raising project funds for this laneway activation included creating a Kickstart Campaign. Within a month of launching the Ackery Alley Kickstarter campaign the project had received \$64,736 nearly doubling its target goal of \$35,000. By offering a series of pledging perks such as tote bags, guided tours with the designer and placemaking toolkits, the campaign has been wildly successful at engaging the public, mustering excitement for public space and vastly exceeding their financing goals.

Setting aside the financial benefits, crowdfunding campaigns are increasingly building the public's knowledge and connection to public space and are proving to be a great community engagement tool.



Image credit: HCMA Architects

Ackery Alley, Vancouver, BC.

Actions for Vancouver

- » Vancouver should continue to explore opportunities for both spearheading and supporting crowdfunding campaigns around public spaces.

FUNDING MECHANISM

- » Crowdsourcing

GOVERNANCE MODEL

- » Public + Private Partnership

LOCATION

- » Vancouver, BC

SPACE TYPE

- » Alley

NEEDS ADDRESSED

- » Revitalizing underutilized public space
- » Built social investment through crowdfunding campaign

CHAPTER 4

PLAZA PROFILES

This chapter will unpack the stewardship approaches to four plazas within Vancouver. Functioning as pilots for the City's Plaza Stewardship Strategy, the stewardship methods used in these four plazas all fall under one of the proposed Stewardship Models of Institution, Public-Private Partnership and Grassroots Community Partnership.







Each plaza profile will discuss the influencing local context, design and objectives; examine the existing stewardship approach and operational costs associated with it; propose funding opportunities for each.

NAPIER SQUARE GREENWAY



Neighbourhood Context



-  Napier Greenway Square
-  Commercial
-  Mixed Residential & Commercial
-  Residential High Rise
-  Residential Low Rise
-  Single Detached & Duplex
-  Institution
-  Parks & Public Space

Neighbourhood Character

- » Range of Single family and low rise residential
- » Commercial Drive shopping, restaurant, studio and bar district
- » Elementary/High School, Vancouver Public Library and Community Centre
- » Diverse range of residents, artists, students, tourists, workers

Site Context

Location

- Napier and Commercial Drive

Size

- 674 m² (Approx.)

Features

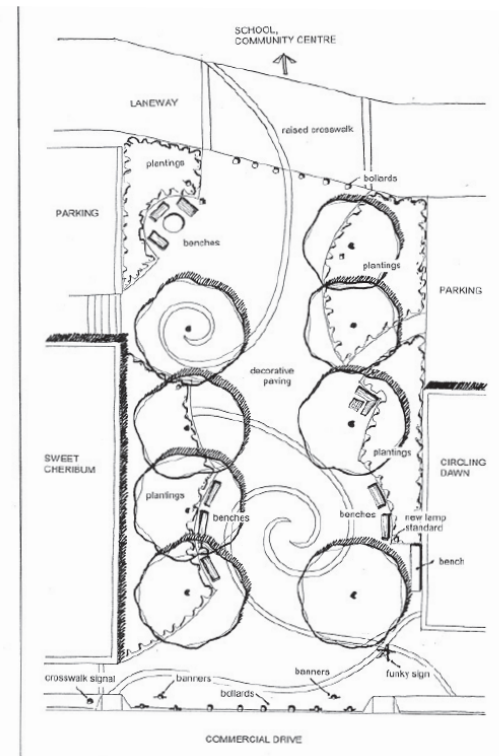
- » Fixed benches
- » Trees
- » Gardens
- » Lighting

Primary Stewards

- Britannia Neighbours & Britannia Community Centre

Design

- » Originally a vehicle right-of-way; became pedestrianized and opened in 2002
- » 60% Hardscape
- » 40% Softscape; gardens lining the North and South sides of the square, extensive canopy cover
- » Main entrance from Commercial Drive to the Britannia Library, Community Centre and Elementary/High School



Background

In July 1995 Council adopted the Vancouver Greenways Plan. The plan was centered around community initiated and developed greenways that enhance local connections and reflect local character.

With these principles, the Napier Square Greenway was established to enhance the pedestrian link between Commercial Drive and Britannia; including the School Board, Vancouver Public Library and Community Centre facilities, and to provide an open community garden space that is inviting for tired shoppers, school children, and neighbourhood gardeners. Its hardscape design also acts as a space to host a variety community celebrations and festivals.

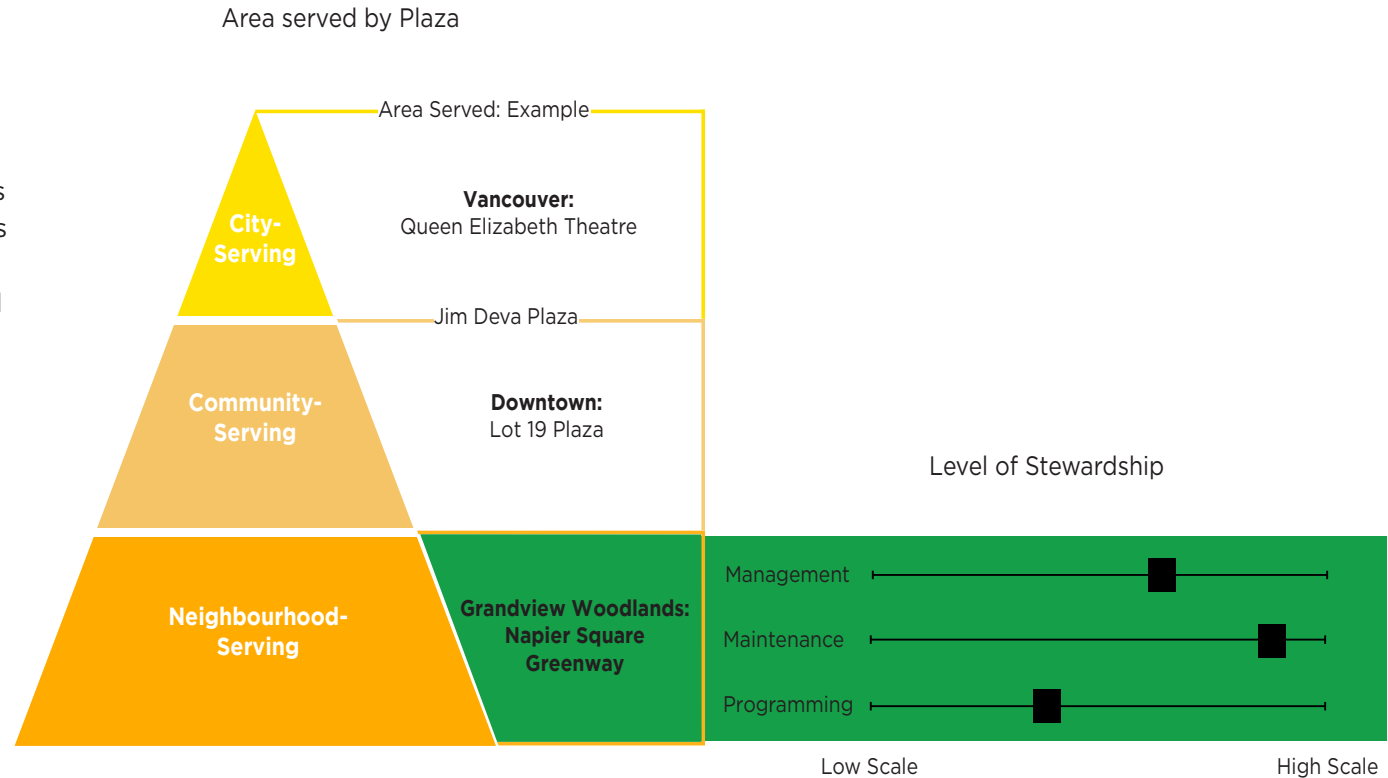
oversight of the space, while the Community Centre provides light programming in the forms of a Sunday art market in the summer and an annual food security festival. This partnership between the Vancouver Park Board (Britannia Community Centre) and the Britannia Neighbours has blossomed into a shining example of how citizen led groups can take on a key role in the stewardship of public spaces.



Napier Square Greenway, Vancouver, BC.

Grassroots Partnership Model

The Britannia Neighbours are a volunteer run community group acting as the local champions for the Napier Square Greenway. As the square’s primary stewards they undertake weekly gardening in addition to managing a contracted micro cleaner who tends to the site several times throughout the week. The Britannia Neighbours handle the maintenance and



2016 Estimated Budget for Napier Square Greenway

| Budget Item / Primary Funder | Initial Item Cost | Additional Notes |
|---|-------------------|--|
| Maintenance / Britannia Neighbours | Total \$1000 | Requested Maintenance |
| Landscaping: Tree Pruning, gardening etc. | | Pruning of city trees recommended every two years Automatic sprinkler system |
| Cleaning: micro-cleaning | | Graffiti removal needed pest control needed Power washing needed Garden waste bag removal schedule needed |
| Ice & snow removal | | Ice & snow removal (ENG or REFM)? |
| Supplies: garden waste bags, plants, gardening tools, watering equipment, tarps, etc. | | |
| Managment / Britannia Neighbours | Total \$700 | |
| Operational | | Organize East Vancouver Garden Tour (fundraiser maps, posters, tickets) |
| Programming / Britannia Community Centre & Britannia Neighbours | Total \$1000 | Requested Programming support: |
| Hiring local artists (murals & totem poles) | | Consultation with Britannia Neighbours before events/ filming |
| Event Staffing (Community Centre) | | includes sponsored events by 3rd parties, buskers, games etc. |
| Events (Stones Soup festival and Artful Sundays x5) | | costs to develop a brand and original design and platforms \$5000. Annual costs include design and print work for signage and collateral |
| Total Cost | \$2,700 | |

Current Funding

The Britannia neighbours take on a variety of tasks that require funding and at this point are not the recipients of any grants or receive any supporting finances from the City. Despite this they are able to raise enough funds to cover gardening equipment, pay a micro cleaner, purchase plants, and hire local artists for murals within the space.

The group's expenses are raised through an annual garden tour which in 2016 raised \$3,500 with 100% of the profits going to funding the stewardship of the square. An additional approach the volunteer-led group has taken to funding art installations within the space is partnering with businesses on both sides of the square to fund murals and paintings that line both sides of the greenway.

Source: Britannia Neighbour's and Britannia Community Centre's income and expenses for the Napier Square Greenway.

Funding Recommendations

Municipal Funding

- » Neighbourhood Matching Fund program

Grants

- » COV-Community Arts Grant
- » COV-Emerging Artists Grant
- » Vancouver Foundation- Neighbourhood Small Grants

Crowdsourcing

- » Wayblaze
- » Kickstarter

Self-assessment Districts

- » Commercial Drive BIA

Partnerships

- » Equal Employment Partnerships
- » Partnership with local businesses

Stewardship Recommendations

As the Britannia Community Centre moves forward with their renewal project it would be beneficial for the City of Vancouver to:

- » Reach out to the Britannia Neighbours regarding the future of Napier Square Greenway.
- » Build a working relationship with this grassroots group in order to learn from and collaborate with other volunteer groups looking to steward public spaces.



LOT 19



Neighbourhood Context



Lot 19



Commercial



Mixed Residential & Commercial



Rail, Rapid Transit or Other Transportation



Institution



Parks & Public Space

Neighbourhood Character

- Downtown business district, surrounded by office buildings, hotels and retail
- Near Waterfront and Burrard Skytrain Stations
- Office workers, tourists, residents

Site Context

Location

- North side of Hastings and Hornby Intersection

Size

- 2,287.5 m² (Approx.)

Features

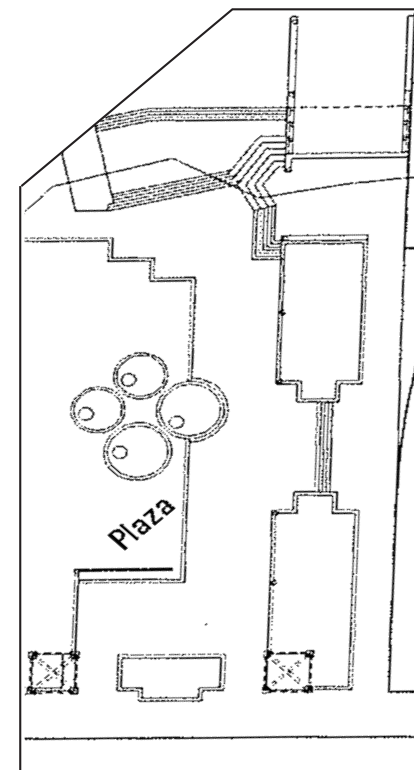
- Movable chairs and tables
- Fixed benches
- Trees
- Gardens
- Lighting

Primary Stewards

- DVBIA & EasyPark

Design

- Originally part of the regular road network; became a car-free public space in 2002
- 70% Hardscape
- 30% Softscape; light/medium canopy cover
- Pedestrian thoroughfare between Hastings and the Waterfront



Hastings Street

Background

Lot 19, also known as Hornby Street Plaza, is a small car free plaza sandwiched in between the 33-storey Terminal City Club building which includes a hotel, office, club and residential spaces and the heritage designated Vancouver Club building. With views of the ocean and snowy north shore mountains, the plaza acts as a refuge for office workers, shoppers and tourists.

Public Private Partnership Model

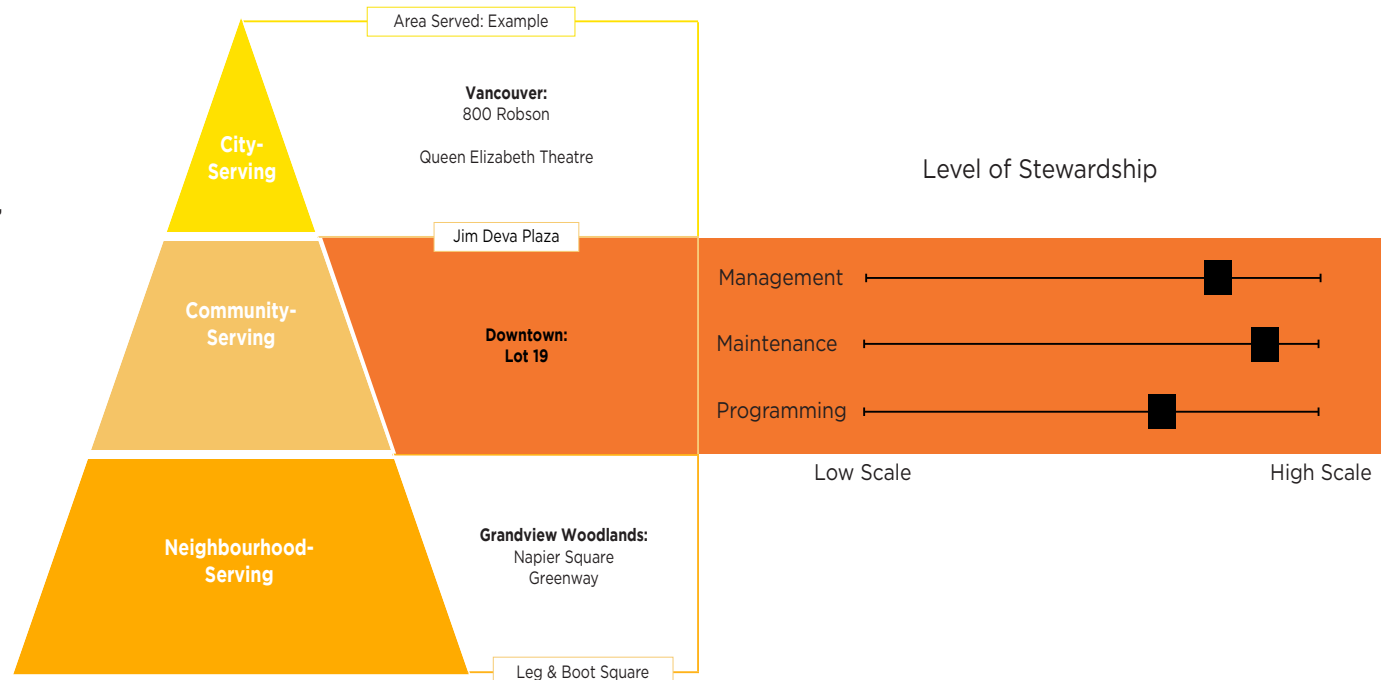
Lot 19’s location above a City-owned parkade and within The Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association’s (DVBIA) district has positioned it to be stewarded by a strong partnership between the DVBIA and the City of Vancouver’s Easy Park. Spearheaded by the DVBIA sponsorship and special events lead Barbra Fairbrother, the DVBIA takes on the primary governance and programming role of Lot 19 through their Perch Program. Meanwhile, Easy Park is responsible for the day to day maintenance including garbage, security, landscaping and repairs.

The plaza’s location above Easy Park’s parkade means there is janitorial and security staff on-site allowing for easy and frequent monitoring of Lot 19. The distribution of costs and responsibilities amongst partners has provided Lot 19 with excellent care and activations transforming it into a vibrant plaza while simultaneously overcoming some of the capacity and funding gaps public space stewards often face.



Lot 19 Perch activation, Vancouver BC.

Area served by Plaza



DVBIA's Perch Program

In hopes to activate and enhance the public realm surrounding their partners' businesses the DVBIA has created a noteworthy patio project. With support from their partners the DVBIA led Perch Program adds temporary bistro tables and chairs to publicly accessible plazas in the downtown. They're free and available for anyone to use. The program also sponsors buskers, a comic library, an art card, yoga sessions, SFU Public Dialogues and other special events. The conviviality of Lot 19 has benefited drastically as a result of these activations and proves to be a great example of how BIAs can be a great stewarding resource for programming our plazas.



Funding

As a result of Lot 19 being stewarded by a partnership between a BIA and a City agency, it has accessed a generous source of funding through small contributions from a variety of businesses and a municipal source covering the costs of maintenance. In addition to being within the DVBIA's district, Lot 19 is also within a voluntary merchant district known as West Hastings Street Association which while similar

to the broader DVBIA's tax, businesses within this West Hastings district pay an additional levy to fund street improvements, programming in Lot 19 and other promotional services.



2016 Estimated Budget for Lot 19

| Budget Item / Primary Funder | Initial Item Cost | Subsequent Years | Additional Notes |
|--|-------------------|------------------|--|
| Maintenance / EasyPark Staff & Contractors | Total | \$40,800 | |
| Landscaping: Tree Pruning, gardening etc. | \$21,600 | \$21,600 | Gardening and landscaping, approx \$1800/mo; Tree pruning bi-annual |
| Cleaning: Garbage/graffiti removal, pest control, furniture repair | \$7,200 | \$7,200 | |
| Ice & snow removal | | | Ice & snow removal (ENG or REFM)? |
| Electrical: Lights, power, etc. + upgrade (\$3,000) | \$12,600 | \$9,600 | |
| Plumbing + Drain install | \$3,000 | \$0 | |
| Security | \$2,000 | \$2,000 | |
| Storage | \$2,400 | \$2,400 | Storage for chairs and table sets, \$200/mon |
| Managment / DVBIA | Total | \$54,800 | |
| Strategic (5%) | \$3,300 | \$3,300 | Oversight of program and high-level decision making, strategic goals. |
| Coordinator (20%) | \$3,500 | \$3,500 | Oversight of programming budgets and operational staff, 1/3 of the year |
| Programmer (40%) | \$14,000 | \$14,000 | Day-to-day operational activities and programmed activities, 1/2 of the year |
| Operational (35%) | \$20,000 | \$20,000 | Day-to-day labour for setup/teardown, all year |
| Programming / DVBIA & Contractors | Total | \$9,500 | |
| Tabels and Chairs (30) | \$7,500 | \$0 | costs for bistro sets range from \$100-\$500 and have a life span of 3-4 years |
| Activations | \$5,000 | \$5,000 | includes sponsored events by 3rd parties, buskers, games etc. |
| Marketing Material | \$7,000 | \$2,000 | costs to develop a brand and original design and platforms \$5000. Annual costs include design and print work for signage and collateral |
| Photography | \$500 | \$500 | for marketing purposes |
| Decorative lighting | \$17,000 | \$2,000 | ecorative lighting lifespan is about 5 years, annual adjustments/maintenance needed |
| Total Estimated Cost | \$138,600 | \$105,100 | |

Source: Downtown Vancouver BIA & EasyPark's expenses for Lot 19.



Funding Recommendations

Municipal

- » Neighbourhood Matching Fund program

Grants

- » COV-Community Arts Grant
- » COV-Emerging Artists Grant
- » Vancity Community Partnership Program

Crowdsourcing

- » Wayblaze
- » Kickstarter

Partnerships

- » Equal Employment Partnership
- » Partnership with local businesses

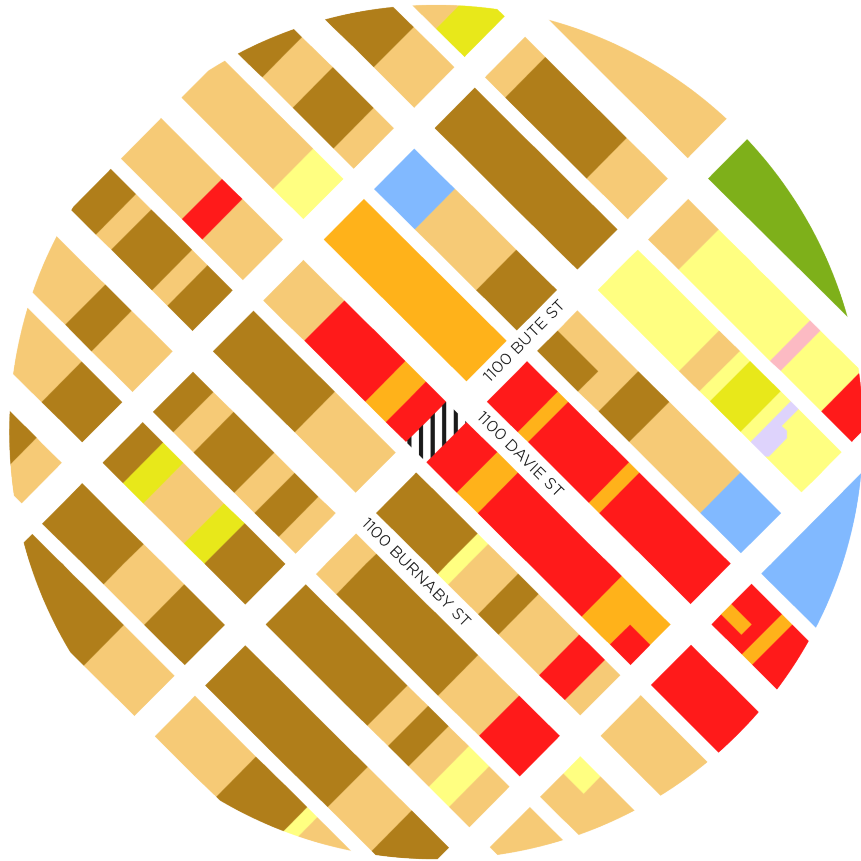
Stewardship Recommendations

- » Create a memorandum of understand (MOU) in order to clearly establish uncertainties around specific roles and responsibilities. Currently, coordination around stewardship is all verbal.
- » Continue to monitor the DV BIA's Perch Program to see if other BIAs or businesses would partner with the City to establish similar programs

JIM DEVA PLAZA



Neighbourhood Context



// Jim Deva Plaza

Commercial

Mixed Residential & Commercial

Residential High Rise

Residential Low Rise

Single Detached & Duplex

Institution

Parks & Public Space

Neighbourhood Character

- Davie street shopping, restaurant and bar district
- Mixed low to high density residential buildings
- Workers, shoppers, tourists, students and residents
- Rapidly growing population

Site Context

Location

- South West Side of Davie and Bute intersection

Size

- 789 m² (Approx.)

Features

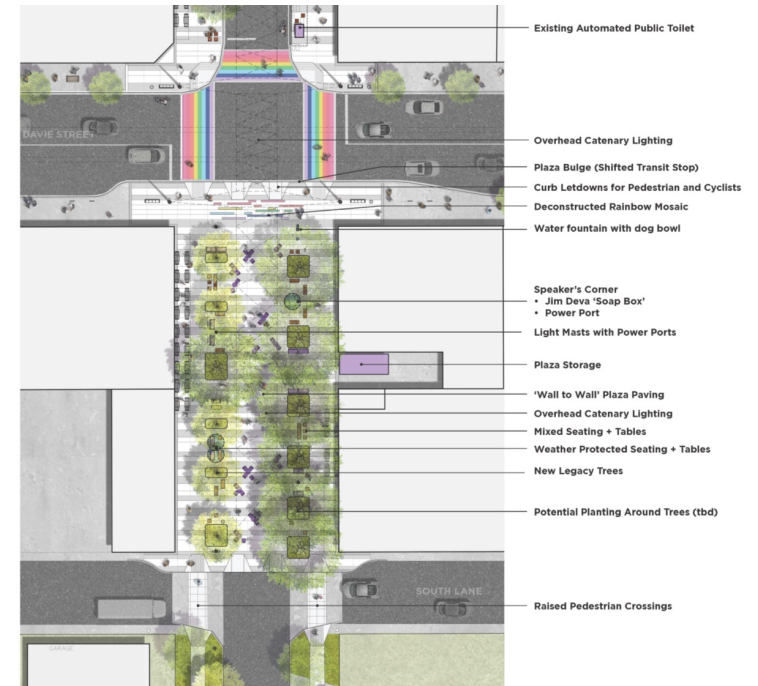
- Movable chairs and tables
- Fixed benches
- Trees
- Lighting
- Megaphone

Primary Stewards

- WEBIA, COV, Hollyburn Properties, LGBTQ Community

Design

- LGBTQ community hub
- 80% Hardscape
- 20% Softscape; light canopy cover
- Pedestrian thoroughfare linking West End residential area to Davie street
- Informally used by cyclists



Background

Jim Deva Plaza is one of the first ‘pavement-to-plaza’ initiatives undertaken by the City of Vancouver. The aims of the project were to: improve walkability while maintaining cycling connectivity; create space for gathering and programming; support local business; identify Davie and Bute Street as the distinctive “Heart” of Davie Village, and help recognize the Village as the cultural and historical hub of Vancouver’s LGBTQ community (City of Vancouver, 2015). Since its inception it has been a great model for how a street right-of-way can be reclaimed for people to gather celebrate, and connect.

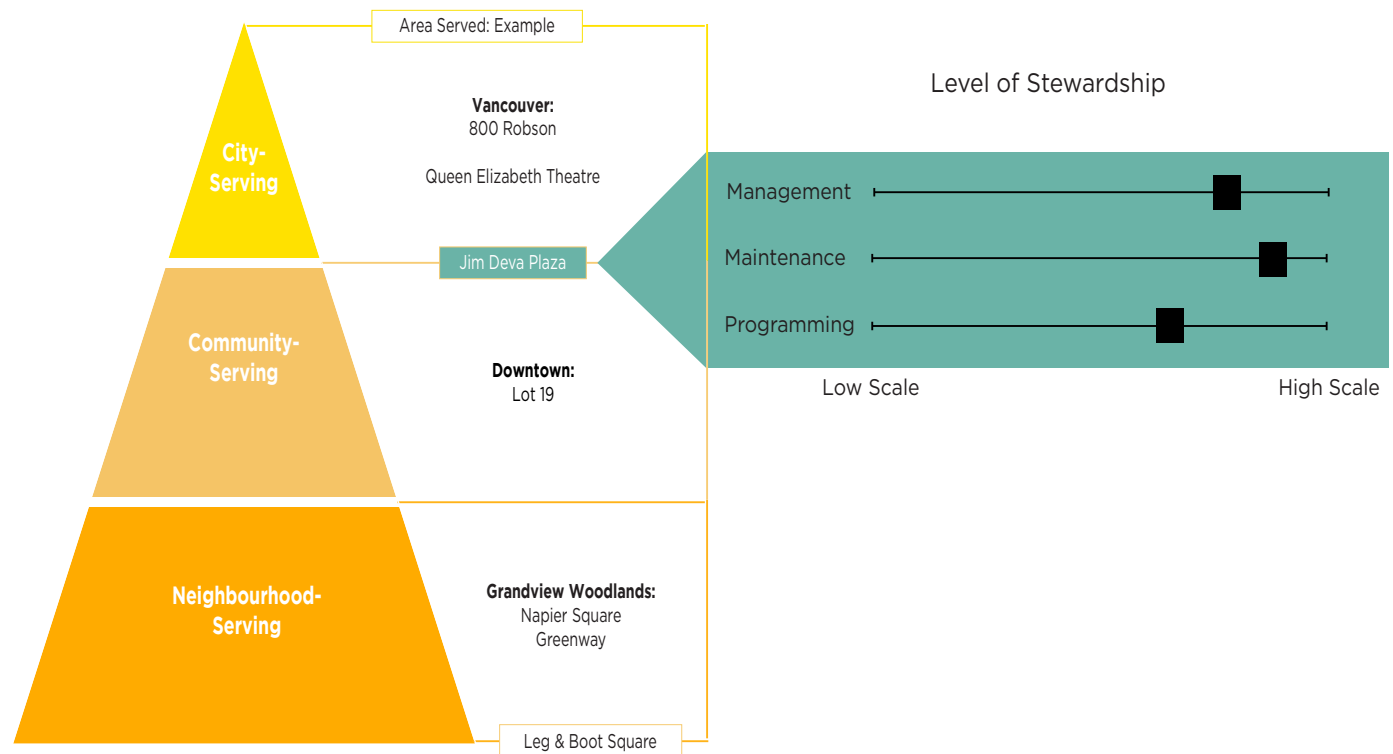
Partnership with Oversight Model

Jim Deva Plaza being one of the City’s first pavement-to-plaza projects, combined with the diverse community groups within the Davie village led to a unique stewardship approach. In order to maintain the ongoing health and functionality of the plaza an Oversight Committee was formed to ensure residents, businesses, members of the LGBTQ community and Jim Deva’s Legacy were well represented (ibid, 2015). Meeting monthly during the construction and launch phases was key towards addressing unforeseen issues and ensuring the space was representative of the community.

The stewardship approach for Jim Deva plaza was a great learning exercise for all stakeholders involved especially for the city moving forward with a citywide stewardship strategy.

The project surfaced several key elements around plaza stewardship models. Firstly, having an oversight committee comprised of a diverse group of stakeholders helps build credibility and trust and gives people the opportunity to

be involved with the process of placemaking. Secondly, when constructing new public spaces a stewardship strategy for it should be concurrent, as involving future stewards from the design stage will build capacity and involve the people wanting to be part of it for the long term. Lastly, creating a stewardship agreement with clear roles and responsibilities amongst the partners is crucial for ensuring accountability.



2016 Estimated Budget for Jim Deva Plaza

| Budget Item / Primary Funder | Item Cost | Additional Notes |
|--|-----------------|--|
| Maintenance / City of Vancouver | Total \$10,000 | |
| Landscaping: Tree Pruning, gardening etc. | | Landscaping is subcontracted to Parks; REFM & Parks? |
| Cleaning: Garbage/graffiti removal, pest control, furniture repair | | |
| Ice & snow removal | | Ice & snow removal (ENG or REFM)? |
| Electrical: Lights, power, etc. | | Equipment maintenance and basic on/off; no events lighting. Need light programmer for special events |
| Plumbing | | |
| Other: DDC, Paving, Miscellaneous | | |
| Managment / City of Vancouver WEBIA | Total \$20,000 | |
| Maintenance Coordinator | \$5,000 | Oversight of day-to-day micro cleaning |
| Programming Coordination | \$8,000 | Daily operational + programmed activities |
| Promotion | \$7,000 | WEBIA exploring a 'Venue Coordinator' role to assist with event logistics, communications |
| Programming / WEBIA & Hollyburn Properties | Total 10,000 | |
| Site orientation for event organizers | | WEBIA exploring a 'Venue Coordinator' role to assist with event logistics, communications |
| Set-up/take down of furniture | | |
| Total Estimated Budget | \$40,000 | |

Funding

Similar to Lot 19, Jim Deva plaza has benefited significantly from having several partners contributing to its stewardship. However, unlike Lot 19 the City agreed to match the contributions made by sponsoring partners which included the West End BIA, Hollyburn Properties and the Vancouver Foundation.

This matching funds approach has provided the plaza with funding for the first two years of stewardship, however, future funding has yet to be determined.

Source: Partnerships in the Stewardship of Public Space, Tess Munro, 2016.



Funding Recommendations

Municipal

- » Neighbourhood Matching Fund program

Grants

- » CoV-Community Arts Grant
- » CoV-Emerging Artists Grant
- » CoV-Cultural Grant Program
- » CoV-Public Arts Grant

Crowdsourcing

- » Wayblaze
- » Kickstarter

Partnerships

- » Equal Employment Partnership
- » Partnership with local businesses

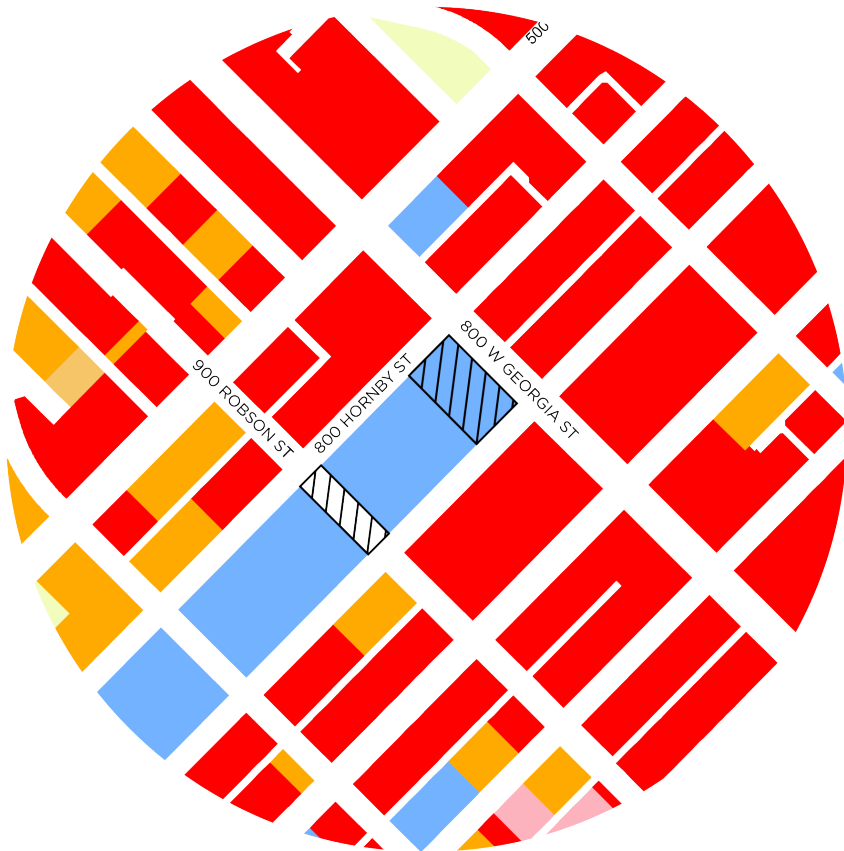
Stewardship Recommendations

- » A completed stewardship agreement establishing roles and responsibilities amongst partners.
- » Given the usage of Jim Deva's movable furniture, success with programming, and frequency of events, the position of a 'venue coordinator' is highly recommended.

800 ROBSON & VAG NORTH PLAZA



Neighbourhood Context



/// 800 Robson

/// VAG North Plaza

Commercial

Mixed Residential & Commercial

Residential High Rise

Residential Low Rise

Rail, Rapid Transit or Other Transportation

Institution

Neighbourhood Character

- Heart of downtown
- Large mix of residential employment and economic activity.
- 80,000 residents mixed with 46,000 individuals working nearby.
- Provincial law courts, Vancouver Art Gallery, City of Vancouver, University of British Columbia

Site Context

Location

- VAG North Plaza - 800 W Georgia
- 800 Robson (named after location)

Size

- VAG North Plaza 4,000 m²
- 800 Robson Plaza 1,920 m²

Features

- Movable chairs and tables
- Fixed benches
- Trees
- Lighting
- Planters

Primary Stewards

- Block 51 Stewardship Group

Design

- Large central gathering spot
- 80% Hardscape
- 20% Softscape; light canopy cover
- Pedestrian thoroughfare linking Robson shopping district to Granville shopping district
- Bike lane on west side of plazas along Hornby.



Background

The street right-of-way at 800 Robson has seen seasonal street closures for public space activations for the last three years. Its success as a place for people to gather and connect has recently led to 800 Robson being permanently closed off to vehicle traffic. This decision was in part to enhance the pedestrian experience for the second busiest pedestrian route in the city as well as to create a permanent plaza to serve the residents and visitors of the City.

The North side of the Art Gallery is also undergoing a similar transformation into a public plaza. Nearly doubling the surface area of 800 Robson the Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG) North Plaza is being designed to function as the central plaza for the city offering a place for passive programming, public demonstrations and large-scale events. These two public spaces are part of an entire block owned by the province, known as Block 51.

The plazas function as two vital additions to the second largest public space in the downtown peninsula next to the Sea Wall. However, unlike the Sea Wall, 800 Robson and the North Plaza offer a unique experience to celebrate the diverse and convivial urbanism of Vancouver.

Current Stewardship

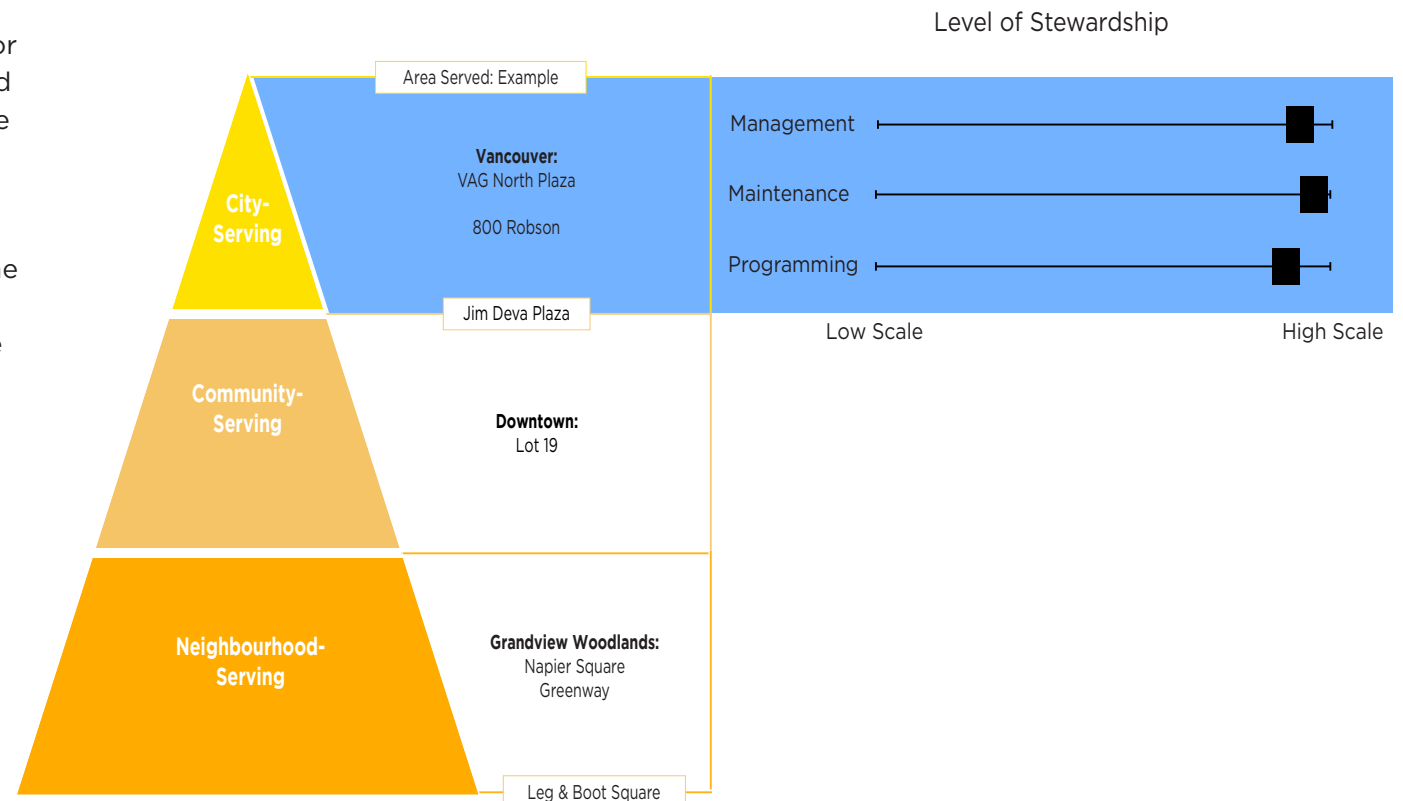
Given that both these projects are occurring simultaneously, a Block 51 stewardship group was formed to tackle issues around how the plazas will function individually as well as together.

This involves significant logistical work to establish both the physical space as well as a sound stewardship approach to ensure the plazas receive a level of management, programming and maintenance that serve the entire city.

The group consists of representatives from the Province, Art Gallery, DVIBA, City of Vancouver and UBC. They are currently in discussions regarding the future roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders. For example, the city's Real Estate and Facility's Management (REFM) department is currently responsible for the maintenance of the VAG North Plaza, however,

the Block 51 stewardship group is actively exploring an agreement towards REFM also being responsible for 800 Robson.

Meanwhile, discussions around programming include whether the City should take on a curator roll and have third parties submit applications to program the space or whether the City itself should be the main programmer. Additionally, the stewardship group is exploring the idea of a Venue Coordinator who would oversee events, organize the calendar, ensure the plazas are being maintained and act as the primary liaison between partners, event hosts and the public.



Funding

The approach to funding 800 Robson and the VAG North Plaza has been slightly different as 800 Robson is a street right-of-way and has a significantly smaller footprint. To date, 800 Robson sees more informal programming from civic demonstrations to buskers, while the VAG North Plaza hosts large scale events, markets and film shoots. In turn, these uses affect the types of funding each plaza receives.

During the recent summer closures of 800 Robson VIVA Vancouver has financed the programming and maintenance of the space. For example, VIVA hosted a design build competition called Robson Redux to which they provided \$40,000 for the month-long activation. The project functioned as a place making exercise to create a vibrant public space that fosters social connections.

Funding for stewardship in the VAG North Plaza is also still in discussion. However, to date the majority of funds have been covered by various City Agencies. Film and Special Events (FASE) has taken on the role of organizing and funding programming within the North Plaza through permitting film shoots, food truck festivals and large-scale events such as the Jazz festival. Meanwhile, funding for maintenance of the plaza has been tackled by REFM.

Annual Estimated Budget for 800 Robson & VAG North Plaza

| Budget Item | Item Cost | Additional Notes |
|--|------------------|--|
| Maintenance | | |
| Landscaping: Tree Pruning, gardening etc. | \$96,942 | dependent on number and types of trees |
| Cleaning: Garbage/graffiti removal, pest control, furniture repair | \$296,042 | |
| Security: 200 days of year | \$62,802 | |
| Electrical: Lights, power, etc. | \$8,642 | |
| Plumbing | \$16,610 | |
| Other: DDC, Paving, Miscellaneous | \$22,110 | |
| Managment | | |
| Venue Coordinator | \$54,314 | |
| Programming | | |
| 2014 Robson Redux (1 month) | \$40,000 | |
| Total Estimated Budget | \$597,462 | |

Source: Estimated from previous City events and maintenance costs for 800 Robson and VAG North Plaza.

Funding Recommendations

Municipal

- » Neighbourhood Matching Fund program

Grants

- » CoV-Community Arts Grant
- » CoV-Emerging Artists Grant
- » CoV-Cultural Grant Program
- » CoV-Public Arts Grant

Crowdsourcing

- » Wayblaze
- » Kickstarter

Self-assessment Districts

- » Downtown BIA
- » Voluntary Merchant Tax

Partnerships

- » Equal Employment Partnership
- » Partnership with local businesses

Stewardship Recommendations

- » A completed stewardship agreement establishing roles and responsibilities amongst partners.
- » A 'venue coordinator' to manage both the maintenance and programming.



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter will summarize the report, explore next steps and provide several recommendations for how Vancouver can best provide resources for programming, maintaining and managing the stewardship of our public plazas.

Conclusion

As Vancouver continues to densify, plazas will increasingly play a major role as a community's open-air living room. This will continue to drive the exploration of innovative approaches towards financing the ongoing maintenance, management and programming of these spaces.

Through an evaluation of best practices, interviews with city staff, active stewards and key stakeholders as well as several Vancouver based case studies actively addressing plaza stewardship, this report will help municipalities, decision makers, non-profits and any other organizations identify potential funding mechanisms for the stewardship of these spaces.

As Vancouver moves forward with its Plaza Stewardship Strategy this document will provide guidance towards identifying gaps in funding the ongoing stewardship of public spaces and provide mechanisms for addressing the financing of a variety of Plaza Stewardship models. It is important to reiterate that no one funding model will work for financing the stewardship of every plaza, which is why this document offers a portfolio of options that can be implemented by grassroots organizations to municipal governments.

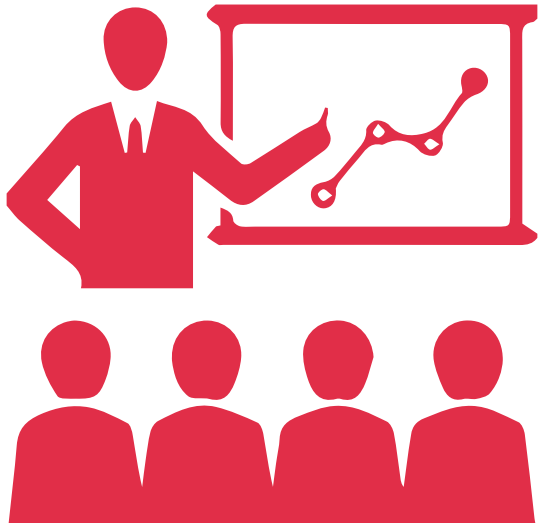
Next Steps

Securing reliable funding for the long-term stewardship of public plazas often comes with numerous challenges. In order to address these challenges, the City of Vancouver is actively devising a framework to prioritize and coordinate the delivery of plazas and plaza stewardship initiatives, including opportunities for programming and partnerships.

The following recommendations have been the key lessons learned from this document and will help advise the City of Vancouver's Plaza Stewardship Strategy to address the challenges that have traditionally been associated with acquiring the financial or in-kind labor necessary to best maintain, manage and program our public plazas.



RECOMMENDATIONS



Attach public space stewardship initiatives with healthy cities strategies.

The following City policies support public space creation and enhancement:

- » West End Plan
- » Transportation 2040
- » Healthy City Strategy
- » Mayor's Engaged City Task Force
- » Greenest City Action Plan
- » Vancouver Economic Action Strategy
- » VIVA Vancouver initiatives

Connect stewards with partners

Becoming a self-sufficient steward can often take time, however connecting stewards with volunteers or organizations wishing to donate or sponsor events, enables stewards to fund stewardship while simultaneously growing their network.

Explore crowdfunding campaigns

The City's brand has a significant network which could be leveraged to fundraise public space projects. Continuing to partner with community groups who have significant networks to spearhead a crowdfunding campaign can be a strong funding avenue for the city that does not include using public money.

Package grant and financial opportunities

Currently there is no webpage on the City's website that consolidates all of the financial and logistical supports for stewarding public spaces.

Build stewardship partners capacity

Be it a business or a non-profit the capacity of stewards often has its limits. Vancouver should build off of this report and create a toolkit of funding supports, technical advice and logistical guidance for existing and potential public space stewards.

Identify and enable local champions

Building education and awareness is key towards plaza stewardship. Many individuals and organizations are unaware of why and how to become public space stewards.

Create a Plaza Conservancy

Having a conservancy stewardship model could leverage high profile locations such as VAG North Plaza and 800 Robson to attract large donors.

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Interviews:

Andrew Pask | Planner III, City of Vancouver, Midtown Department.
Interviewed June, 2017

Annette Oshea & Nicole Corrado | Yaletown BIA.
Interviewed June, 2017

Barbara Fairbrother | Sponsorship & Event Lead, Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association. Interviewed: May 25, 2017.

Britannia Neighbours | Interviewed: May 25, 2017.

Jenny Jung | Director of Film and Special Events, Board of Park and Recreation.
Interviewed June, 2017

Julian Sleath | The Bentway, Toronto.
Interviewed May 25, 2017

Julie Flynn | Project Manager for StreetPlans, San Francisco.
Interviewed June 23, 2017

Kate McIntyre | Civil Engineer I, City of Vancouver, Street Activities Department.
Interviewed August 8, 2017

Krisztina Kassay | Planner, City of Vancouver.
Interviewed July 20, 2017

Larissa Deneau | Planner, City of Toronto.
Interviewed: June 10, 2017.

Laura Hansen | The Plaza Partnership Program Director, New York City.
Interviewed June, 2017

Lil Ronalds | Planner III, City of Vancouver, South Vancouver Department.
Interviewed May 25, 2017

Little Sister Bookstore | Ken and Don.
Interviewed June, 2017

Mark Garner | Director of Downtown Yonge Street BIA, Toronto.
Interviewed June 12, 2017

Michelle Schouls | Real Estate & Facilities Management, City of Vancouver.
Interviewed July, 2017

Helen Maw | Planner II, City of Vancouver, Downtown East Department.
Interviewed: May 11, 2017.

Sandra Gajic | Director of Civic Theatres, City of Vancouver.
Interviewed: May 14, 2017.

Sandi Swanigan | Director of Film and Special Events, City of Vancouver.
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Teri Smith | Director of Robson BIA.
Interviewed May 24, 2017

Paola Qualizza | Vancouver Public Space Network Chair, Vancouver.
Interviewed June, 2017

Peter Vaisbord | Planner II, City of Vancouver, Planning Department.
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Stephen Regan | Director of West End BIA.
Interviewed June, 2017

Taylor Raths | Director of Young-Dundas Square, Toronto.
Interviewed June, 2017