

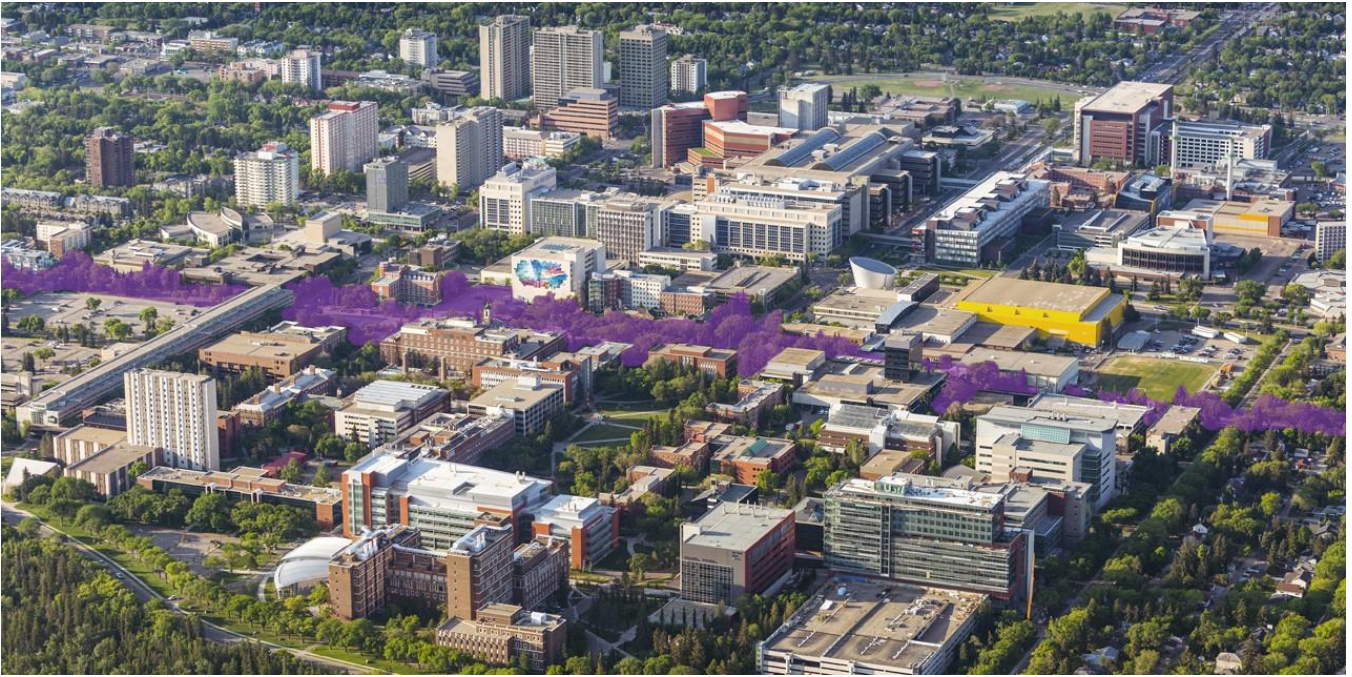


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What We Heard Report

University of Alberta | Students' Boulevard (89th Avenue) Multi-modal Concept Plan and Implementation Strategy

June 2019



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1.0 Project Background

The Students' Boulevard (89th Avenue) project seeks to develop a concept plan for 89th Avenue from 110th Street to 116th Street. When implemented, the project will create spaces that facilitate the daily life of the University and improve the student experience by providing opportunities for safe and all-season multi-modal transportation options, social activities, special events and quiet relaxation. This activated and reinvigorated Students' Boulevard aims to enhance the overall campus experience.

Feedback from community pop-up events, an online survey, input from other stakeholders within the University, and guidance from University policy documents and technical input (site analysis and design) will be used to make decisions about the project. Implementation of this project will happen over time as funding is available and in conjunction with other capital projects adjacent to the Students' Boulevard.

A concept plan was created for Students' Boulevard and it was divided into four sections:

- Area A – West Portal at 116 Street/Varsity Commons
- Area B – SUB / Van Vliet Plaza
- Area C – Tree-lined Students' Boulevard
- Area D – East Campus Village

1.1 Engagement Goals

The goals of engagement were to:

- Inform students and staff about the project and future development of Students' Boulevard (89th Avenue).
- Confirm or identify gaps in the opportunities/constraints identified through the first phase.
- Share and gather feedback on the draft concepts for Students' Boulevard (89th Avenue).

1.2 Engagement Process

In March 2019, the project team engaged with stakeholders and the public both online and in-person. The engagement activities provided an opportunity for stakeholders and the public to talk one-on-one with the project team, view the concepts, gain background knowledge and information, share their unique perspectives, and view what others said.

- Community pop-up events were held at the University on:
 - March 12, 2019 at the Student Union Building from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
 - March 13, 2019 in the Rutherford Library Atrium from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
- An online survey open from March 12 to March 27



~400
 approximate
 participants
 at the pop-up
 events



542
 online
 surveys
 submitted



2.0 What We Asked – In-Person and Online

2.1 Pop-Up Event – What We Asked

Participants were encouraged to provide feedback on the existing conditions and proposed concepts. They were specifically asked:

- How do you commute to campus?
- What amenities and services would encourage you to stay on campus?
- What are some of your favourite spaces on campus? What do you enjoy about it?
- What would make you feel more comfortable and/or safe in this space?

The following two questions were asked of Area A, B, C, D concepts:

- What excites you about the concept?
- What is missing or could be improved?

A dotmocracy map where participants could use sticky dots to indicate their choices to options was used to ask participants to rank priority areas of design elements.

2.2 Online Survey – What We Asked

The following questions were asked of participants on the online survey.

- Q1: Are you a(n)...?
 - Undergraduate Student
 - Graduate Student
 - International Student
 - Faculty Member
 - University Staff Member
 - Alumni
 - Other
- Q2: Do you have any challenges which might influence your experience on the Students' Boulevard?
- Q3: Do you live on campus?
- Q4: Where on campus do you live? *only asked if indicated yes to Q3
- Q5: How do you commute to North Campus?
- Q6: Thinking about when you are walking, cycling, taking transit or socializing in the Students' Boulevard area, what would make you feel more comfortable and safe in the area? (Consider all times of day and all seasons)
- Q7: Thinking about why you use the Students' Boulevard currently, what do you need to make it more inviting or encourage you to stay in the area longer? What additional amenities or services do you wish were included on the Students' Boulevard? (Consider all times of day and all seasons)
- Q8: Thinking about when you are walking, cycling, taking transit or socializing in the Students' Boulevard area, what would make you feel more comfortable and safe in the area? (Consider all times of day and all seasons)

The following two questions were asked of Area A, B, C, D concepts:

- Q9 through Q16:
 - What excites you about the proposed improvements made to this area?
 - What do you think is missing or needs to be improved?
- Q17: Please tell us what design elements you would prioritize when considering the future implementation of the concept? (Top 3 priorities)



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3.0 High Level Themes

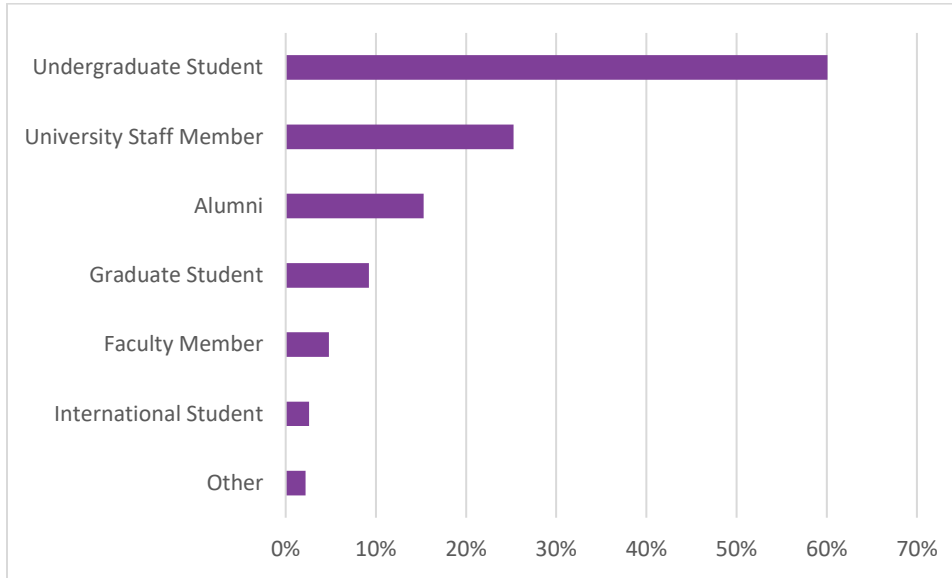
Prevailing themes throughout the feedback includes:

- More green spaces that are cognizant of both winter and summer months.
- Perceived lack of current community or reason to linger in the area and a wish for more areas to sit, socialize, and study.
- Protection from the weather in both seasons: cold/snow/ice in the winter & hot sun in the summer.
- An increase in improved/attractive lighting in the area for both safety, wayfinding, and aesthetics.
- Visual and program improvements to the area: integrated art & design, artwork, and water features.
- Increased safety and efficiency for pedestrians and cyclists and protection from vehicle traffic.

4.0 Detailed Summary

4.1 About You

Q1: Are you a(n)...?



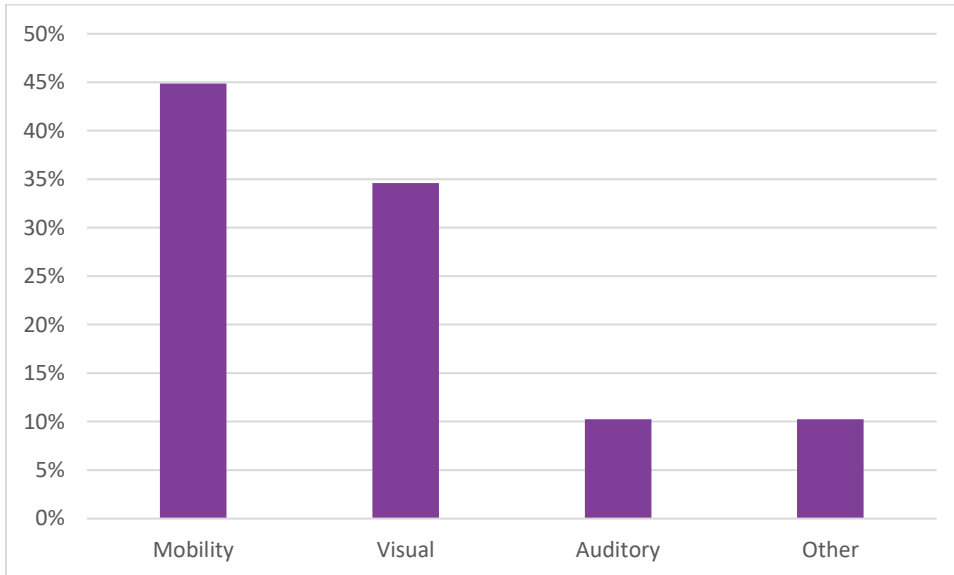
Undergraduate Student (n) ¹	University Staff Member (n)	Alumni (n)	Graduate Student (n)	Faculty member (n)	International Student (n)	Other (n)
331	137	83	50	26	13	12

Other:

- Local residents
- Student applicants
- Various local organizations staff

¹ (n) refers to number of participants.

Q2: Do you have any challenges which might influence your experience on the Students' Boulevard?

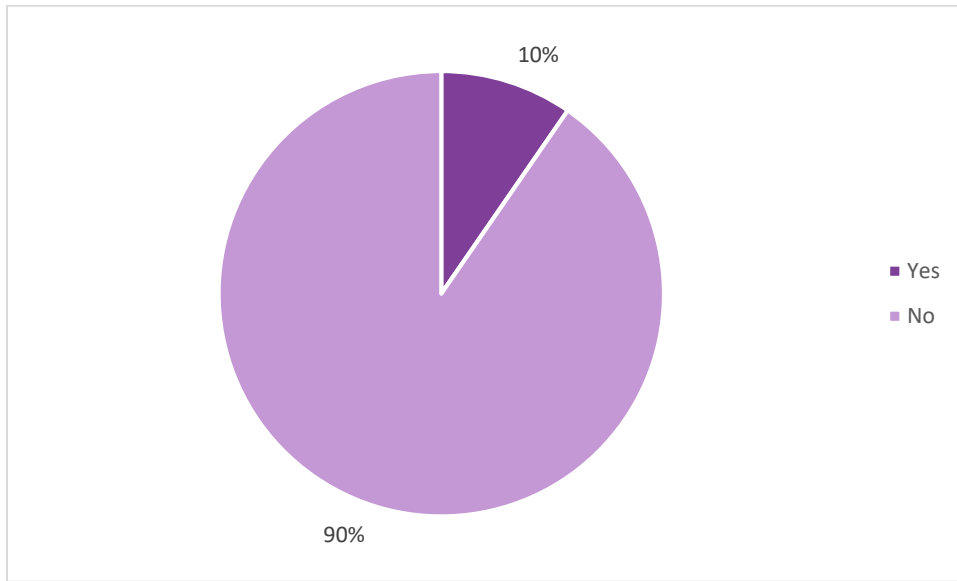


Mobility (n)	Visual (n)	Auditory (n)	Other (n)
35	27	7	8

Other:

- Olfactory
- Queer
- Anxiety
- Sensory processing disorder
- Obstacles created during construction

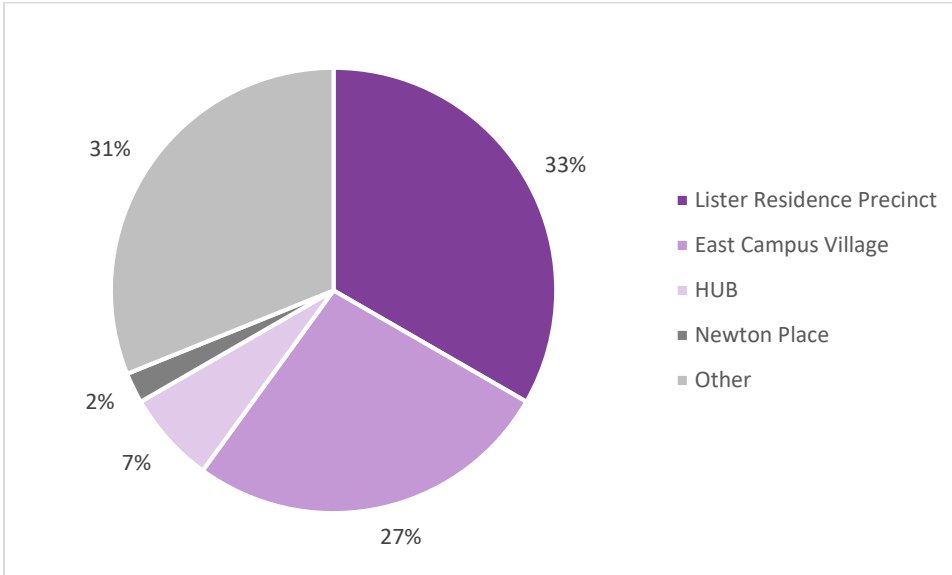
Q3: Do you live on campus?



Yes (n)	No (n)
51	470

Q4: Where on campus do you live?

*Only asked to those who indicated yes to Q3: Do you live on campus?

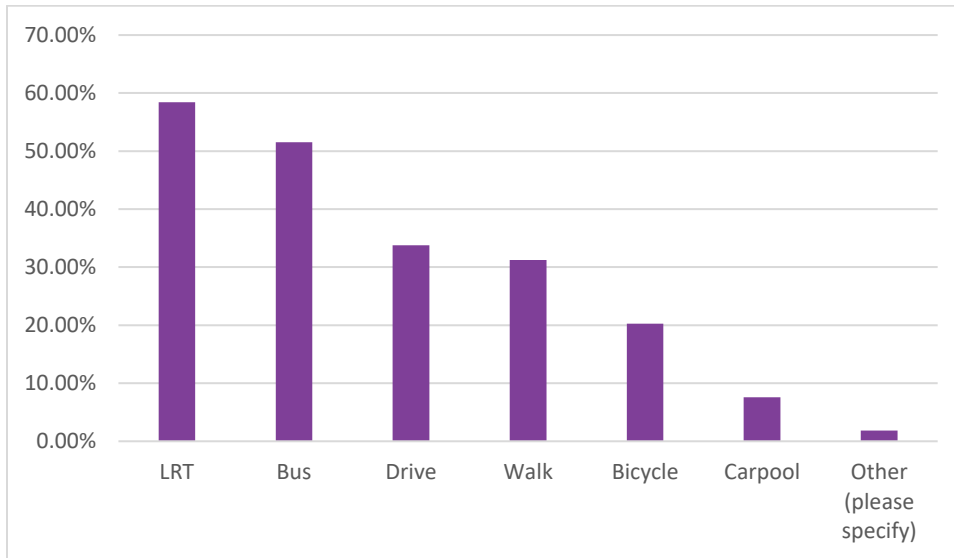


Lister Residence Precinct (n)	East Campus Village (n)	HUB (n)	Newton Place (n)	Other (n)
14	12	3	1	14

Other:

- St. Joseph’s College
- Residence/housing in the nearby neighborhoods
- Residence Saint-Jean

Q5: How do you commute to North Campus? (Select all that apply)



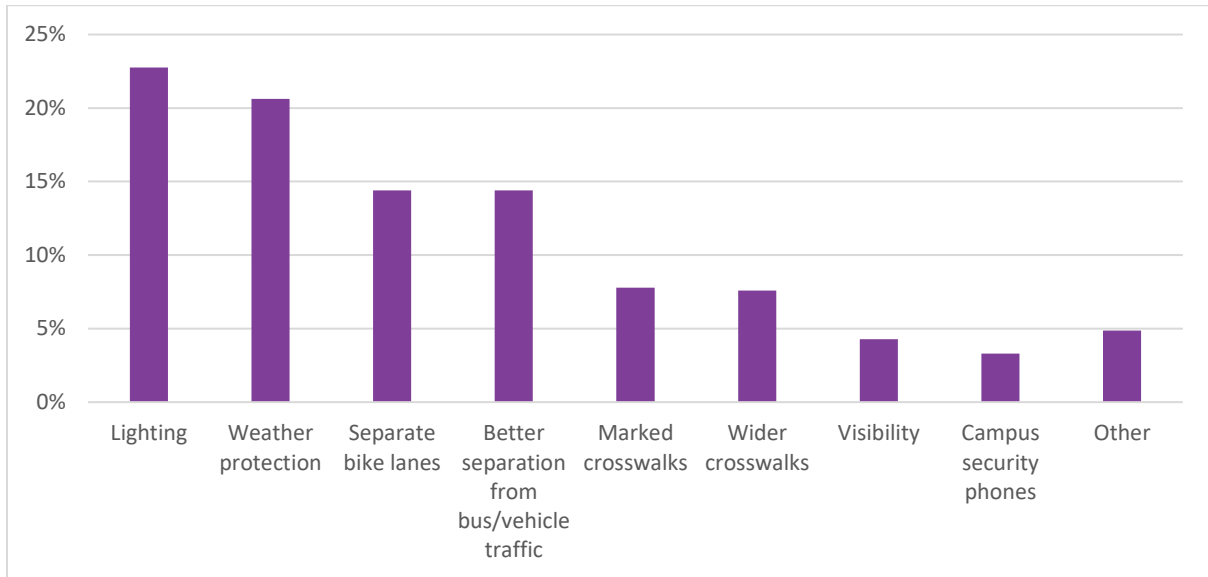
LRT (n)	Bus (n)	Walk (n)	Drive (n)	Bicycle (n)	Carpool (n)	Other (n)
346	304	185	200	130	45	11

Other:

- Skateboard
- Campus Saint-Jean bus
- Wheelchair
- Taxi/ride-share company
- Dropped off by car
- Cross country ski

4.2 Students' Boulevard – Amenities and Activities

Q6: Thinking about when you are walking, cycling, taking transit or socializing in the Students' Boulevard area, what would make you feel more comfortable and safe in the area? (Consider all times of day and all seasons)



Lighting (n)	Weather protection (n)	Separate bike lanes (n)	Better separation from bus/vehicle traffic (n)	Marked crosswalks (n)	Wider sidewalks (n)	Visibility (n)	Campus security phones (n)	Other (n)
117	106	74	74	40	38	22	17	25

Other:

- Better signage for vehicle traffic
- Better snow and ice removal
- Wheelchair/bike friendly paving material
- Straight pathways
- Green space

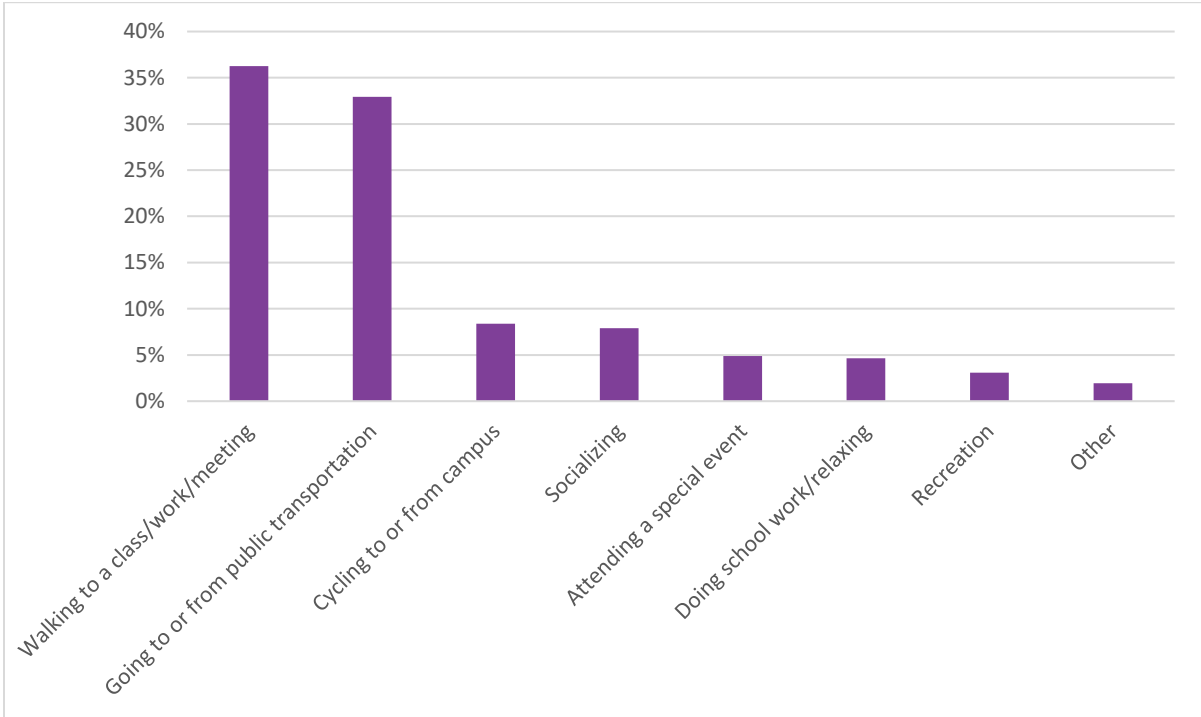


Q7: Thinking about why you use the Students' Boulevard currently, what do you need to make it more inviting or encourage you to stay in the area longer? What additional amenities or services do you wish were included on the Students' Boulevard? (Consider all times of day and all seasons)

Key Themes

- There is a strong desire for more/improved green space to enliven the area and reduce the industrial feel of the area. Some suggestions included gardens, flowers, grass, and trees.
- There were a lot of comments for more areas to sit, relax, and socialize with others.
- Many expressed the current lack of community or reason to linger in the area, and only use the area as a way to travel to other places on campus.
- There were many suggestions for more food vendors in the area. Suggestions included food trucks, coffee shops, grocers, and healthy food options.
- Improving mobility (pedestrian and cyclist) and connectivity was identified as a priority for many with efficient connections, wider sidewalks, better visibility, and a clear separation of modes of transportation desired.
- There was a concern about safety in the area, with improved lighting, enhanced security presence, and measures to reduce crime and transient usage of the area were suggested.
- Considerations for weather was a common theme. Snow and ice removal, covered areas/shelters, pedways and heating lamps were often mentioned as desired, as well as shelter from the sun and the desire for shaded areas.
- Other attractions and beautification, such as art displays, water features, integrated design/art elements, to make the area more attractive and inviting were also recommended.
- There were comments regarding the unpleasant smell and noise from the vehicle traffic in the area, and a desire for a cleaner area. There were also comments regarding sanitation facilities such as public bathrooms and garbage cans.

Q8: When you are on the Students' Boulevard, what are the main 3 activities you are doing there?



Walking to a class/work/meeting (n)	Going to or from public transportation (n)	Cycling to or from campus (n)	Socializing (n)	Attending a special event (n)	Doing school work/relaxing (n)	Recreation (n)	Other (n)
446	405	103	96	60	57	38	24

Other:

- Going to a parking lot
- Going to meet friends
- Going to a different building
- Going to a destination or neighbouring campus
- Enjoying the green space
- Going home
- Less harassment
- Vehicles inappropriately parked
- Obstacles for cyclists
- None

4.3 Concept Plan

Area A – West Portal at 116 Street/Varsity Commons

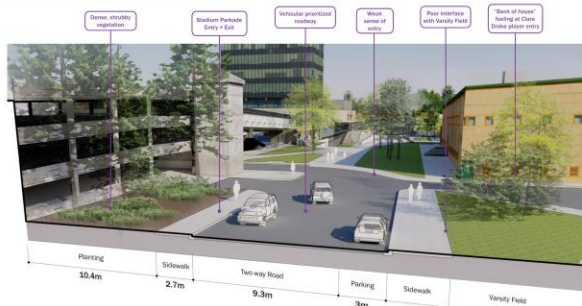
AREA 'A' • WEST PORTAL / VARSITY COMMONS



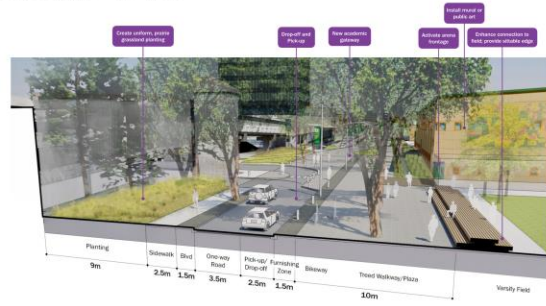
CONCEPT HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Convert roadway to one-way and reduce to one lane.
- 2 Retain on-street parking and pick-up / drop-off location.
- 3 Provide separate cycle path and widened sidewalk.
- 4 Introduce gateway signage and Students' Boulevard materials (paving, lighting, entry markers, planting, etc.) at 116 Street, signifying the entrance to campus.
- 5 Control vehicle access to Students' Boulevard (east of Stadium Car Park) using gates or bollards.
- 6 Enhanced player's entrance to Clare Drake Arena.

SECTION A.1 • BEFORE



SECTION A.1 • AFTER



Q9: What excites you about the proposed improvements made to this area?

- Design looks attractive and cleaner
- The use of public art and murals
- Design looks like it would build community in the area, be an inviting area, and unify it with the rest of campus
- Organized seating and social areas
- Clear signage to signify the entrance of campus and signage for wayfinding
- More green spaces and trees
- The addition of a bike lane
- More walkable, efficient, safe spaces for pedestrians and increased connectivity to the Clare Drake Arena and Varsity field
- Traffic reduction with the clear separation from vehicles, and the focus on pedestrian and cyclist space
- More formal drop-off and pick-up areas



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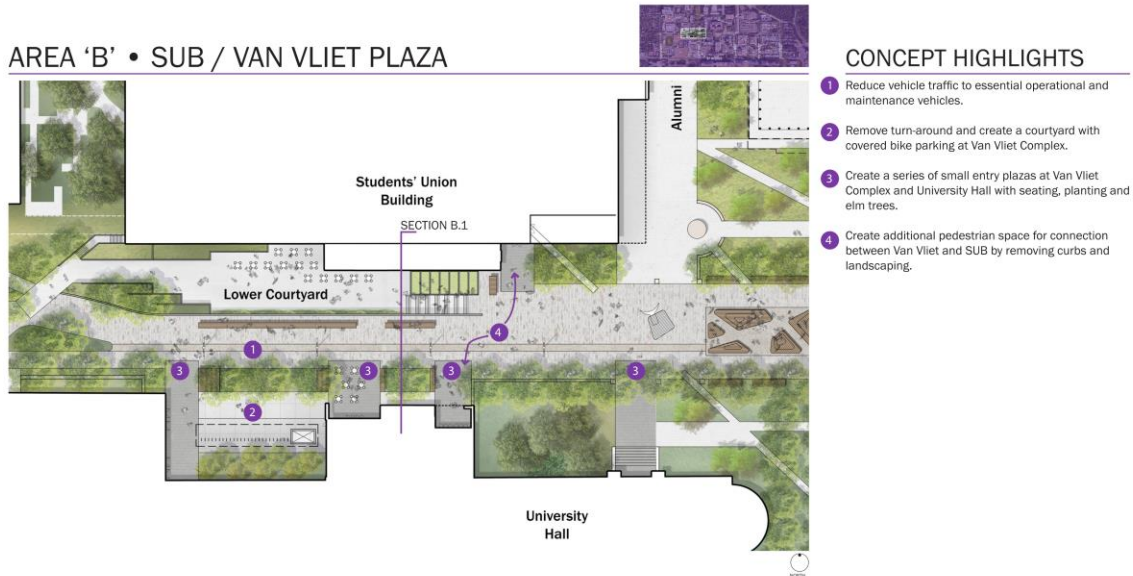
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Q10: What do you think is missing or needs to be improved?

- The proposed design is not that different than what currently exists
- Further consideration as to what the enhancements will cost and whether they are necessary in this area
- Separated cycling infrastructure from pedestrians
- Cycling infrastructure is not needed
- Consideration to green space lost/biodiversity of chosen plants
- More measures for pedestrian safety
- More areas to sit and socialize
- Negative impacts to vehicle traffic, parking/drop-off areas, service vehicle access, and vehicle access for student/external groups that use the area
- Clear signage and wayfinding for users of the surrounding buildings

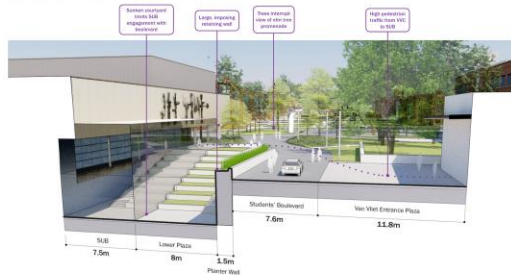
Area B – SUB / Van Vliet Plaza

AREA 'B' • SUB / VAN VLIET PLAZA

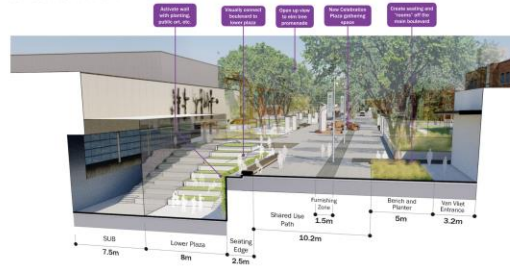


- #### CONCEPT HIGHLIGHTS
- 1 Reduce vehicle traffic to essential operational and maintenance vehicles.
 - 2 Remove turn-around and create a courtyard with covered bike parking at Van Vliet Complex.
 - 3 Create a series of small entry plazas at Van Vliet Complex and University Hall with seating, planting and elm trees.
 - 4 Create additional pedestrian space for connection between Van Vliet and SUB by removing curbs and landscaping.

SECTION B.1 • BEFORE



SECTION B.1 • AFTER



Q11: What excites you about the proposed improvements made to this area?

- Very supportive of traffic reduction
- Very supportive of the clean design, removal of the retaining wall, and beautification and increased art pieces in the area
- Concept creates a more inviting area that encourages people to linger and socialize
- Creates a better connection to SUB and Van Vliet
- Covered bike parking
- Improved green space with more trees
- A focus on pedestrian zones and less confusing design

Q12: What do you think is missing or needs to be improved?

- Concerns about DATS access being removed and more consideration for accessibility
- Concerns about the removal of the turnaround for emergency vehicles and vehicles that need to use the loading dock; university groups that use it for transportation of materials
- Concern regarding the safety of removing the retaining wall
- Concern about reducing the green space, cutting down mature trees, selection and disease resistance of the new plants
- Some concerns about what the cost of the enhancements would be
- Desire for shelter from the weather (cold in the winter and sun in the summer) and a concern about snow and ice removal

Area C – Tree-lined Students’ Boulevard

AREA ‘C’ • TREE-LINED STUDENTS’ BOULEVARD



CONCEPT HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Create a new interface with the Quad, anticipating the future removal of the Administration Building.
- 2 Create a focal point of social activity by introducing a large seating feature in Celebration Plaza.
- 3 Introduce a central third row of elm trees along the bus loop, a traffic calming approach that will improve separation between people walking, people cycling and buses.
- 4 Create a separate cycle path at the same level as the sidewalk directly adjacent to the bus lane.
- 5 Establish new entry plazas to Dentistry/Pharmacy and the future Maskwa House of Learning.
- 6 Create a 'bike hub' end-of-trip facility with secure parking, showers and change rooms.
- 7 Relocate the transit centre (bus stops) to 112 Avenue in front of Old St. Stephen's College.
- 8 Improve ground floor interface with HUB by adding an amenity space and a more welcoming entrance.
- 9 Establish new entrance to the Fine Arts building on the northwest corner.

Q13: What excites you about the proposed improvements made to this area?

- Moving/relocating the bus stop
- HUB entrance improvements are largely supported
- The cycling hub and separated bike lanes are largely supported
- The additional row of trees and additional green space was well received; however there was some concern as to the species of tree (elm) due to the susceptibility of disease and time to mature
- The concept improves the character of the area and encourages people to linger, socialize, sit, and relax
- The design improves conflict zones for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicle traffic, and provides a separation of traffic which improves safety
- A desire for more vendors, like coffee shops or food trucks

Q14: What do you think is missing or needs to be improved?

- Cycling infrastructure is unnecessary and will not be used
- Concerns about personal safety around the cycling hub and the potential for washrooms/showers to attract transient individuals
- Improved lighting
- Improved pedestrian crossings and pedestrian safety
- This will negatively impact the transit system mobility and be inconvenient for transit users, and will affect parking/drop off availability
- There needs to be more weather considerations such as shelter from harsh weather, snow and ice removal, and improving comfort for outdoor seating in winter

Area D – East Campus Village

AREA 'D' • EAST CAMPUS VILLAGE



CONCEPT HIGHLIGHTS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Plan for the redevelopment of the existing parking lots as academic buildings with amenity uses on the ground floor. 2 Establish new entrance to the Fine Arts building on the northwest corner. 3 Create a wide shared-use corridor for people walking and cycling. 4 Continue elm tree planting and lighting from the Students' Boulevard. 5 Provide seating and gathering areas adjacent to the future developments. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 Clarify the north/south connection and improve sightlines into the Fine Arts courtyard. 7 Limit vehicle traffic between 111 Street and 110 Street to loading and essential operations/maintenance activities. 8 Reinforce entry to East Campus Village north/south promenade by creating small plazas with enhanced planting and seating. 9 Continue Students' Boulevard paving treatment on roadway to 110 Street. 10 Create entry marker at 110 Street intersection, signifying the entrance to campus. |
|---|---|

Q15: What excites you about the proposed improvements made to this area?

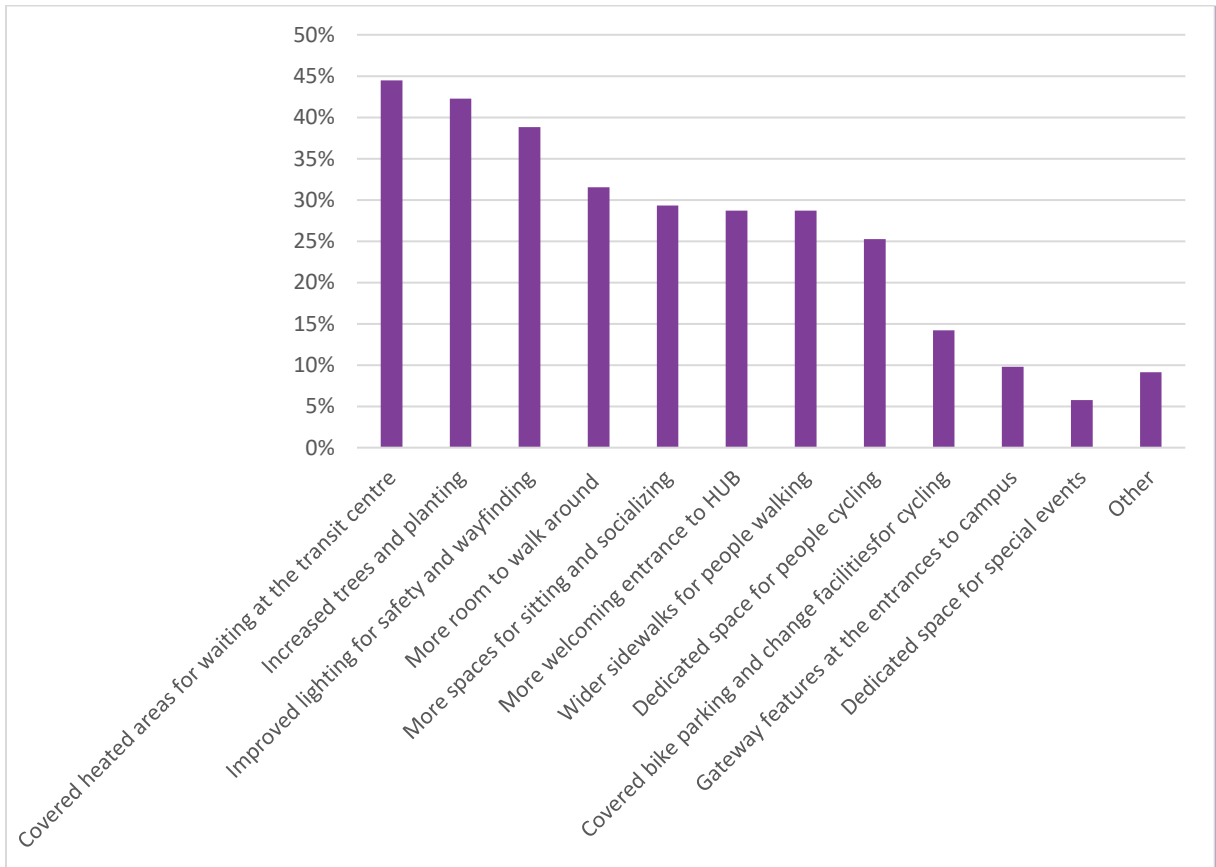
- The focus on pedestrian and cyclist connectivity and reducing traffic is supported
- Greatly improves the character of the area as the area is currently perceived as ugly and underutilized
- The concept increases the connection to campus and mobility
- There are more areas that encourage people to sit, relax, and socialize
- Additional green space is largely supported

Q16: What do you think is missing or needs to be improved?

- There is concern about the selection of foliage with the disease resistance, colourfulness, and attractiveness of the plants
- Improved lighting
- Improved pedestrian crosswalks for 111 Street
- Cost is a concern and other areas of campus should be a priority
- Reduction of parking is a big concern for many people, particularly lots U/N

4.4 Priorities

Q17: Please tell us what design elements you would prioritize when considering the future implementation of the concept. (Online Survey)



Covered heated areas for waiting at the transit centre (n)	Increased trees and planting (n)	Improved lighting for safety and wayfinding (n)	More room to walk around (n)	More spaces for sitting and socializing (n)	More welcoming entrance to HUB (n)
142	134	123	100	93	91

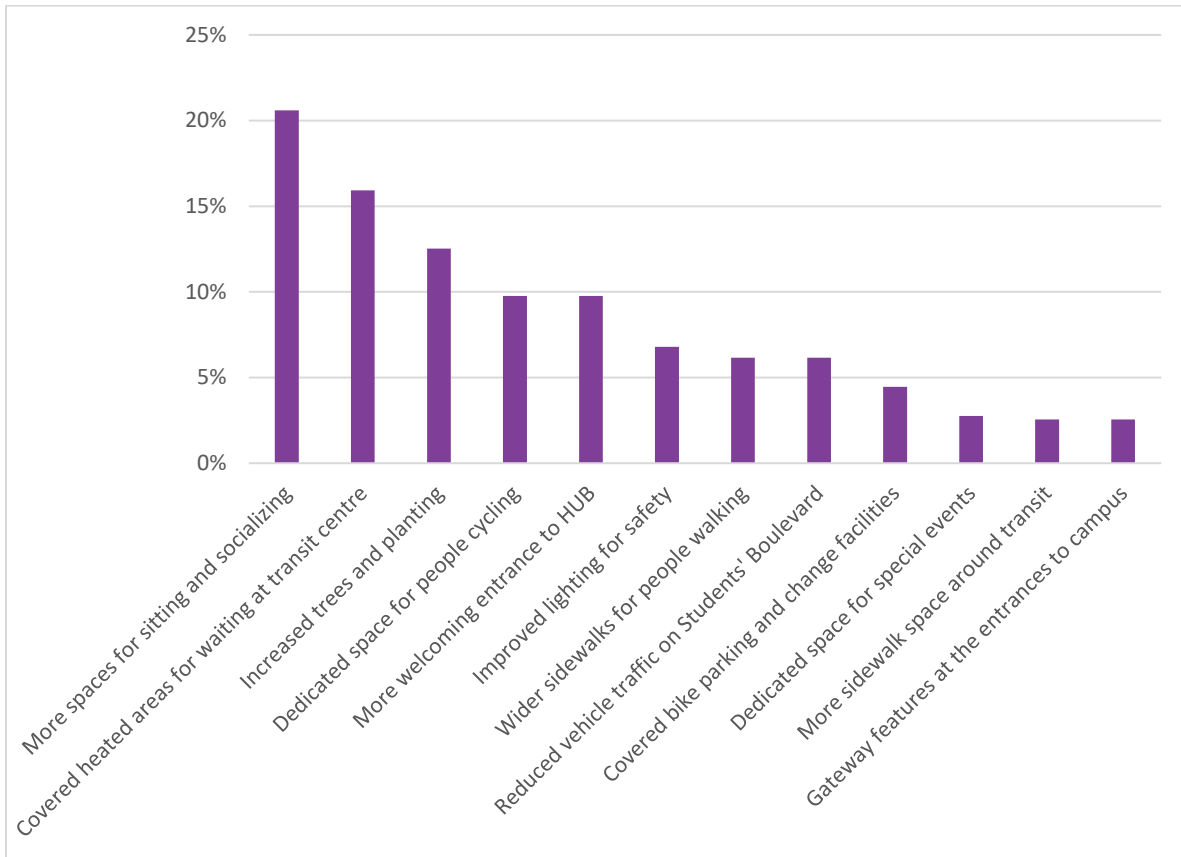
Wider sidewalks for people walking (n)	Dedicated space for people cycling (n)	Covered bike parking and change facilities for cycling (n)	Gateway features at the entrances to campus (n)	Dedicated space for special events (n)	Other (n)
91	80	45	31	19	29

Other:

- Accessibility
- Nightlife/Areas for recreational marijuana use

- Biodiversity in the green space
- Pedestrian connections
- Relocation of the bus stops
- Traffic reduction and negative impacts to traffic
- Parking

Please tell us what design elements you would prioritize when considering the future implementation of the concept. (Pop-up events)



More spaces for sitting and socializing (n)	Covered heated areas for waiting at transit centre (n)	Increased trees and planting (n)	Dedicated space for people cycling (n)	More welcoming entrance to HUB (n)	Improved lighting for safety (n)
97	75	59	46	46	32

Wider sidewalks for people walking (n)	Reduced vehicle traffic on Students' Boulevard (n)	Covered bike parking and change facilities (n)	Dedicated space for special events (n)	More sidewalk space around transit (n)	Gateway features at the entrances to campus (n)
29	29	21	13	12	12