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## Special Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting

Tuesday, March 11, 2025, 5:30 p.m.

Committee Room G, Lower Level & Zoom

New Westminster City Hall, 511 Royal Avenue

*We recognize and respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. We acknowledge that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. As a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.*

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Pages

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS & DELETIONS**

**Recommendation**

*THAT the Agenda of the Special Accessibility Advisory meeting held on March 11, 2025 be approved as circulated.*

3. **REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

3.1 **People, Parks and Play - Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan**

2

Presented by Nell Gasiewicz, Parks and Open Space Planner.

3.2 **City-wide Toilet Strategy**

33

Presented by Annie Sudeyko, Social Planning and Homelessness Prevention Supervisor.

3.3 **Transportation - Bus Stops and Bike Lanes**

50

Presented by Lacey Hirtle, Transportation Engineer.

4. **ADJOURNMENT**

**Recommendation**

*THAT the meeting adjourn.*

# People, Parks & Play!

## Parks and Recreation Plan

### Round 2 Engagement

Accessibility Advisory Committee

March 11, 2025



# Agenda

- Project overview
- Round 2 engagement
- Round 1 engagement findings
  - Accessibility + Inclusion
- Draft Plan
- Key questions for you

# Project overview

# Project timeline



**Engagement Input**



**Analysis**



**Community Context**



**Strategic Directions and Recommendations**

# Round 2 Engagement

# Round 2 Engagement

- Digital survey open until March 17
- Four Pop-ups
- Focused engagement
  - School District 40
  - Indigenous organizations
  - Accessibility Advisory Committee
  - Community Groups



# Round 2 Engagement Objectives

- Share back findings from Round 1 engagement
- Check that the draft strategic directions represent the diverse needs, experiences, and interests of residents
- Collect input from vulnerable, marginalized and underserved community groups
- Raise awareness about the process to update the plan

# How we'll be engaging the community

Phase 1

Phase 2

**INFORM**

Openly share  
information and updates

**CONSULT**

Welcome input on  
project direction and  
decisions

**INVOLVE**

Ensure priorities and  
concerns are heard and  
considered

**COLLABORATE**

Work closely together at  
each step and decision

**EMPOWER**

Give decision-making  
authority

# Round 1 Engagement findings

# Key accessibility strengths

- Accessibility of Westminster Quay
- Communications and outreach using both digital and traditional media
- Increase in drop-in activities
- Century House programming and support
- Accessibility of tēmәsewtx<sup>w</sup> Aquatic and Community Centre

# Key accessibility challenges

- Lack of accessible washrooms, seating, sports fields, trails, and viewing areas at sports venues
- Registration for recreation programming is too difficult
- Not enough parking near parks and recreation facilities
- Quality of pathways in and around parks
- Inclusion and accessibility are being muddled together

# Key accessibility challenges

- Maintenance/upkeep at key parks, such as Westminster Pier Park is critical (and coming up short now)
- Aging playgrounds are not accessible
- Aging recreation facilities do not accommodate all ages and abilities
- Need for additional spaces and facilities for seniors
  - Including evening programming

# Key accessibility challenges

- Limited staff understanding of diverse accessibility needs and universal accessibility
- Limited access to the Parks and Recreation Financial Assistance Program
- Administrative challenges of accessing the Parks and Recreation Financial Assistance Program

# **Draft People, Parks + Play Plan: Current**



# Draft plan: Strategic Directions

1. Protect existing and acquire additional lands for future parks and open spaces
- 2. Expand, renew, and optimize park amenities**
- 3. Expand, renew, and optimize indoor recreation facilities**
- 4. Provide inclusive and equitable opportunities for all**
5. Advance truth and reconciliation
6. Build resilience and adapt to climate change

# Draft plan: Strategic Directions

- 7. Integrate nature and nature-based solutions
- 8. Strengthen connections to and within the parks and recreation system
- 9. Improve and expand core services**
- 10. Collaborate and formalize partnerships
- 11. Plan for financial sustainability

# Current Draft

## **2. Expand, renew, and optimize park amenities**

- Regularly audit the performance and use of park amenities, and implement changes based on audit findings to improve their use.

## **3. Expand, renew, and optimize indoor recreation facilities**

- Regularly evaluate and improve recreation facilities to address user needs and enhance the community's recreational opportunities.

## **4. Provide inclusive and equitable opportunities for all**

- Increase participation of underrepresented groups by removing systemic barriers

# Current Draft

## **4. Provide inclusive and equitable opportunities for all**

- Prioritize all forms of accessibility:
  - Physical accessibility to facilities and park amenities
  - Programmatic accessibility
  - Communication accessibility
- Collect data to make data informed decisions about programs, facilities, and resource allocation.
- Review and revise existing policies and procedures to ensure they reflect priorities related to equity and inclusion
- Develop and strengthen partnerships with community organizations

# Current Draft

## **4. Provide inclusive and equitable opportunities for all**

- Implement an inclusive marketing and communication strategy
- Ensure that staff, volunteers, and leadership within the parks and recreation department reflect the diversity of the community.
- Equip parks and recreation staff with training, knowledge, and skills to create inclusive and welcoming environments for all.

# Current Draft

## 9. Improve and expand core services

- Expand and diversify programs in recreation, health/wellness, and culture, for all participants, in response to evolving needs and trends.
- Improve parks and recreation administrative services to reduce technological barriers to marketing, communication, registration, and bookings.

# **Draft People, Parks + Play Plan: Proposed accessibility revisions**

# Questions for you

- What actions listed here do you think are most important?
- Are there any other actions you would like to suggest?
- Are there any experiences in parks and recreation spaces or programs that you would like to share?



# Draft plan: Enhancing accessibility

## **2. Expand, renew, and optimize park amenities**

- Ensure all new playgrounds include accessible features. Build one new playground to universal design standards.
- Include accessible garden plots at all three new community gardens.

## **3. Expand, renew, and optimize indoor recreation facilities**

- Build new facilities to Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification Gold

# Draft plan: Enhancing accessibility

## 4. Provide inclusive and equitable opportunities for all

- Universal accessibility at facilities and park amenities (e.g. accessible washrooms; low stimulation spaces, kits and programming; universally accessible play equipment at rec facilities and playgrounds).
- Communicate accessibility features at each facility
- Ensure programs that are accessible to people with cognitive and/or physical disabilities are easily identifiable online and in the Activity Guide.
- Provide regular accessibility training for front of house to meet the needs of people with cognitive and/or physical disabilities.

# Draft plan: Enhancing accessibility

## **4. Provide inclusive and equitable opportunities for all**

- Continue to promote activities and conduct outreach using a mix of digital and traditional media.
- Ensure that accessible programs listed in the Activity Guide and online are clearly marked and detail the parts of accessibility that they fulfill.
- Ensure that online sign-up forms are accessible.
- Communicate in plain language.
- Identify and promote New Westminster's accessible trails. Detail the accessibility features offered.

# Draft plan: Enhancing accessibility

## **4. Provide inclusive and equitable opportunities for all**

- Collect data to make data informed decisions about programs, facilities, and resource allocation.
- Review and revise existing policies and procedures to ensure they reflect priorities related to equity and inclusion
- Develop and strengthen partnerships with community organizations

# Draft plan: Enhancing accessibility

## 9. Improve and expand core services

- Expand access to Parks and Recreation Financial Assistance program
- Reduce administration steps needed to apply for Parks and Recreation Financial Assistance Program

# Questions for you

- What actions listed here do you think are most important?
- Are there any other actions you would like to suggest?
- Are there any experiences in parks and recreation spaces or programs that you would like to share?

# Other ways to get involved

- Survey open on Be Heard New West until March 17

**Thank you!**





# City-wide Toilet Strategy

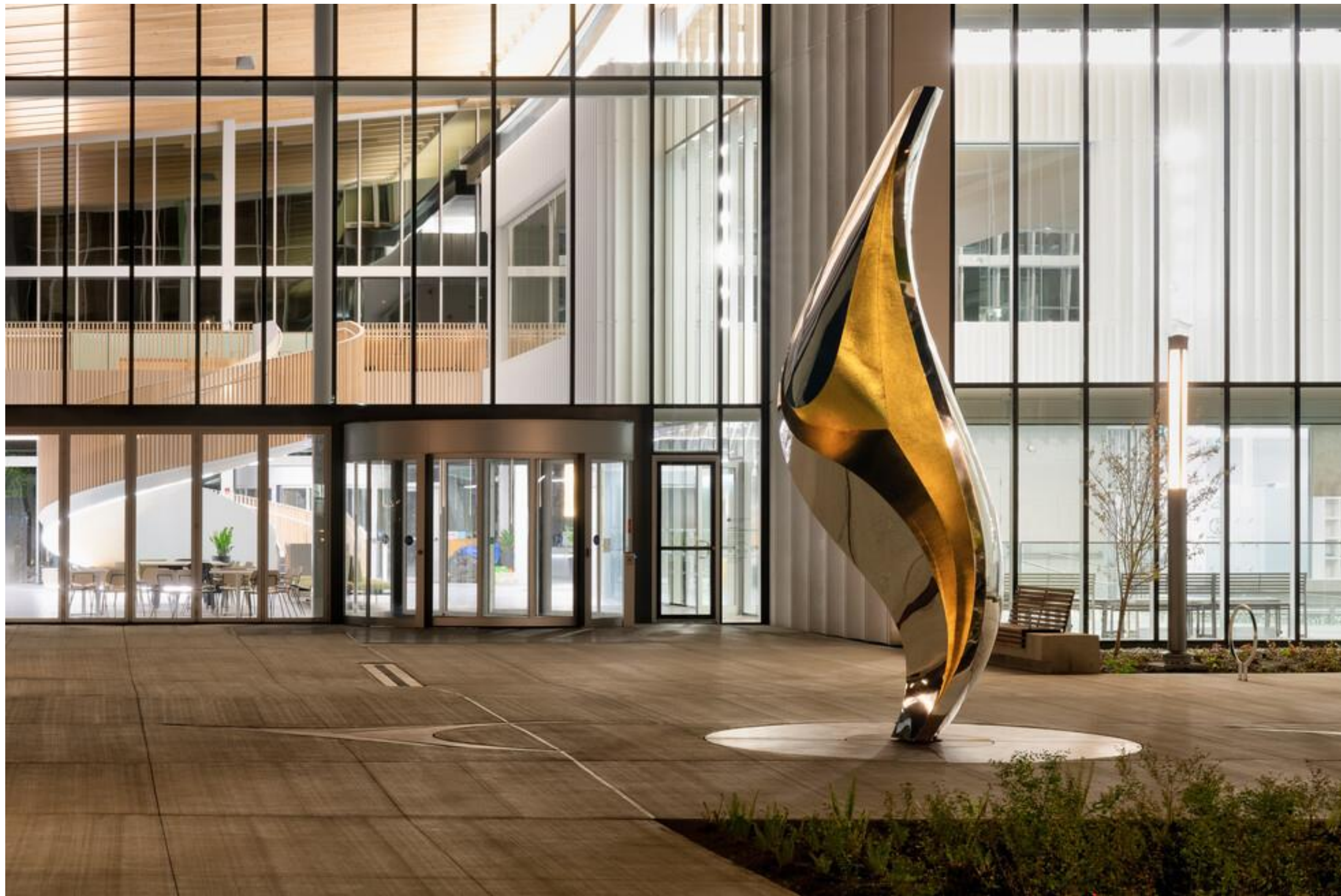
Accessibility Advisory Committee

March 11, 2025



NEW WESTMINSTER





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Image source: [Miyiwt's - Water's Edge | City of New Westminster](#)



# Agenda



**City-wide Toilet  
Strategy  
Background**



**Aims of the City-  
wide Toilet Strategy**



**Strategy  
Development Phases  
and workplan**



**Discussion**



**Next Steps**



# Background

## **Key Issues related to toilet access in New Westminster:**

### Human Rights:

- Access to toilets is vital for dignity and independence (especially for seniors, people with underlying health conditions, and people with disabilities).
- Essential for unhoused individuals who lack other options for toilets and other hygiene services; findings from the 2022 Homelessness Action Strategy confirmed this.

### COVID-19 Pandemic and Response:

- City installed portable toilets with senior government funding during the pandemic
  - Benefits: Increased access for unhoused people.
  - Challenges: High operational costs, difficult maintenance, and inadequate for all community needs (accessibility, safety, comfort).

### Gaps in existing toilet infrastructure:

- Existing toilet infrastructure not meeting the needs of certain user groups due to gaps in availability, hours, and location

*Rising presence of human waste in public/private spaces contributing to poor public health*

# City-wide Toilet Strategy: Aims



## Assess Current Landscape

Review publicly funded and semi-public toilets in New Westminster: locations, hours, maintenance, and accessibility.



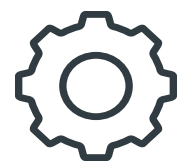
## Identify Gaps & Needs

Analyze gaps and engage with user groups to understand access issues and needs across the city.



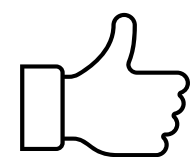
## Develop Recommendations

Synthesize findings from all research and engagement activities and develop recommendations that will inform the final strategy.



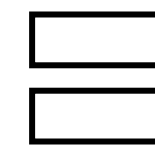
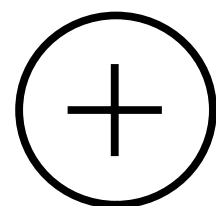
## Learn from Other Jurisdictions and Interest Groups

Identify best practices and partnerships for providing public toilets

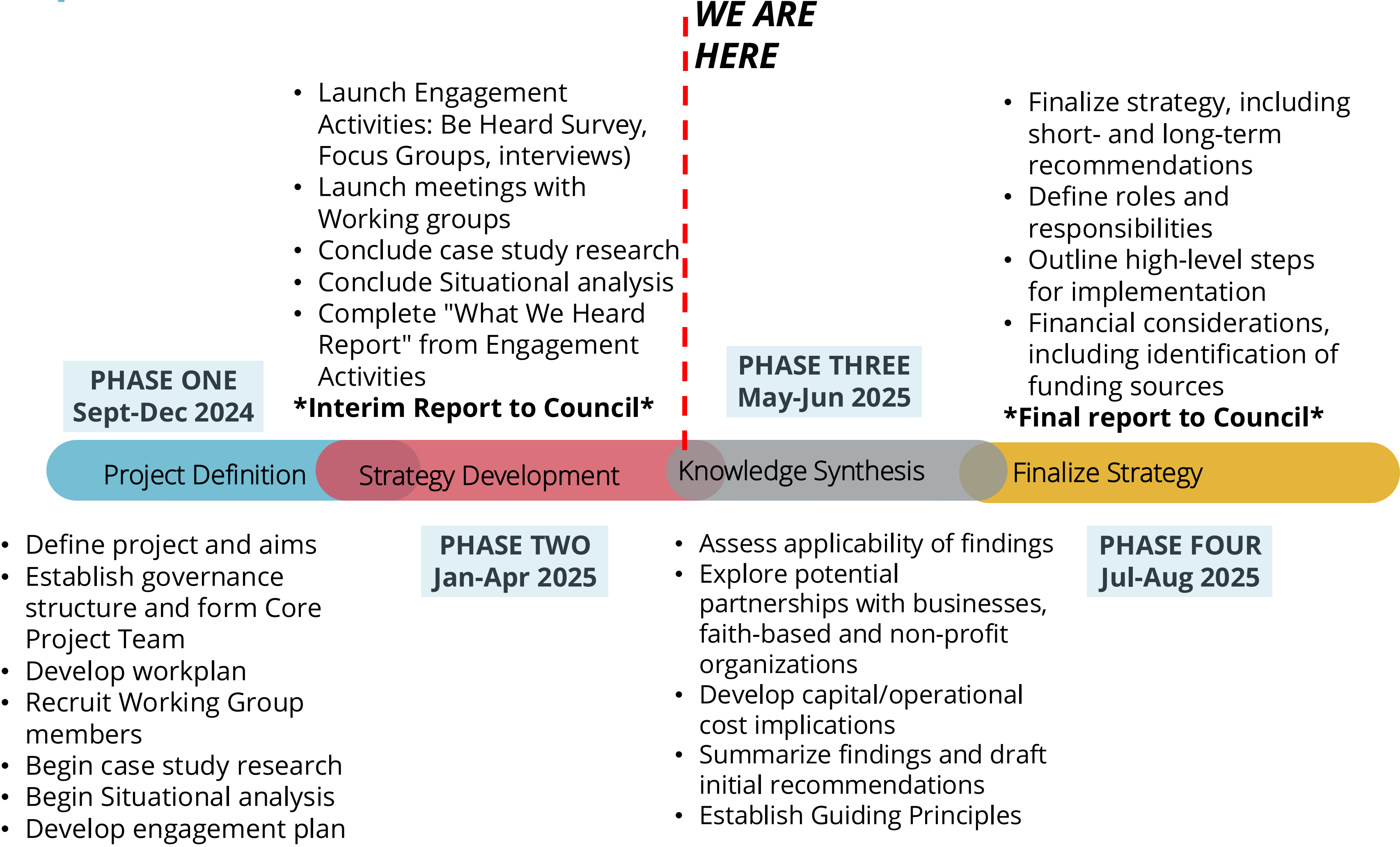


## Identify Solutions

Engage with key user groups, community service providers, businesses, and others to identify potential solutions



# City-wide Toilet Strategy: Workplan and Timeline



# Municipal Approaches to Public Toilet Provision

- Canadian municipalities experience significant challenges in implementing comprehensive toilet strategies:
  - Jurisdiction
  - Infrastructure
  - Funding



Source: City of Victoria Public Washroom Strategy Presentation, 2023

- Most municipal strategies identify key demographics that should be included in planning for the provision of public toilets.
- Partnerships with the private sector or non-profit organizations were pursued in some contexts, with varying degrees of success



# Case Study Research: Research Questions

- **How are local governments in other jurisdictions in Canada approaching the provision of public toilets?**
  - The role of municipalities
  - The role of community serving organizations
  - Examples of public-private partnerships to support increased access to toilets for underserved groups
- **What are the primary barriers faced, particularly by equity-denied groups, in accessing toilets?**
  - Are the barriers different based on who operates the toilet (public, semi-public, or private)?
  - What are some factors that are likely to make someone feel more welcome in accessing toilets?

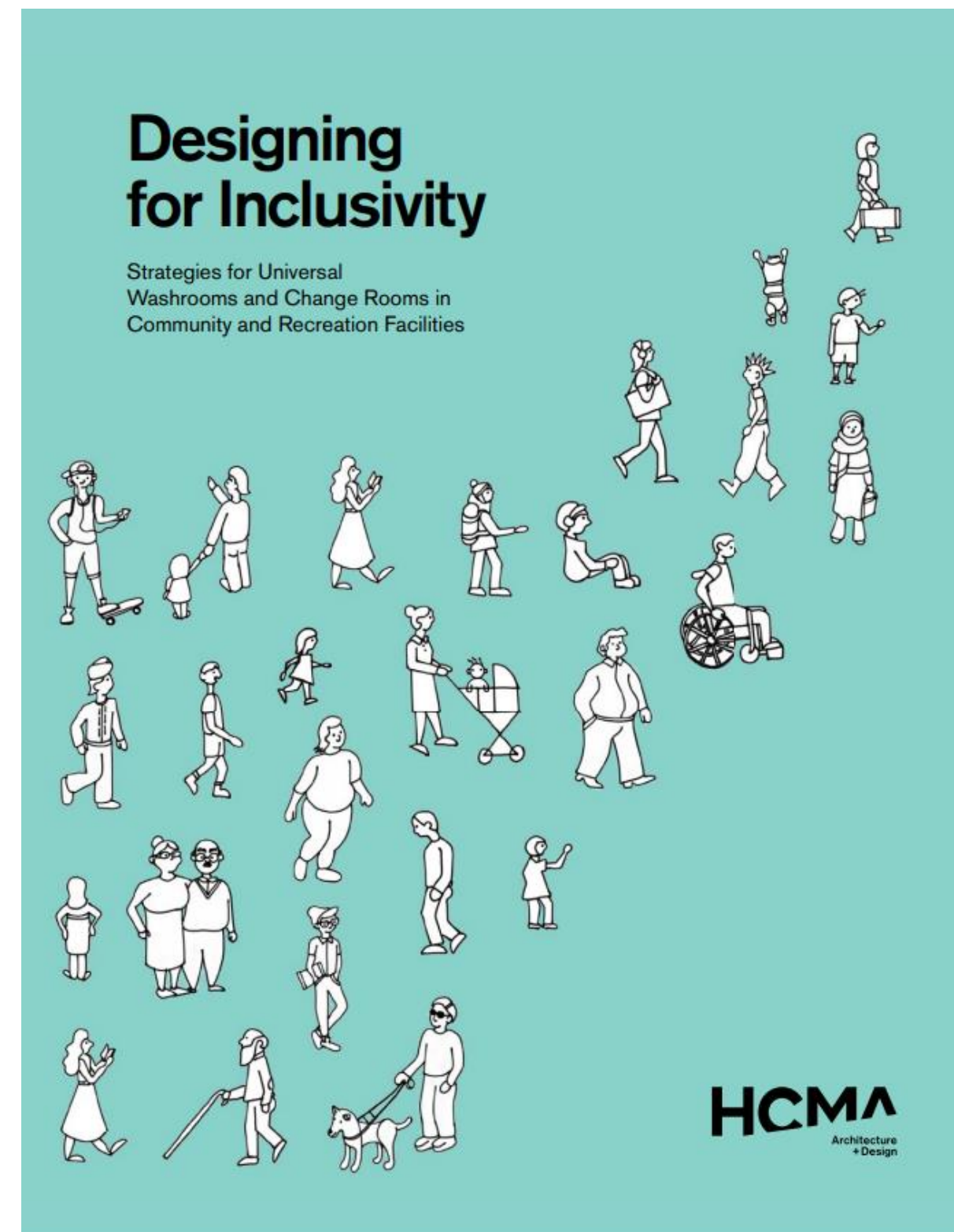


# Barriers and Welcoming Factors

Common barriers included:

- **Situational needs**
- **Accessibility beyond "wheelchair access"**
- **Inadequate or confusing signage**
- **Acceptability, privacy, cleanliness, dignity**
- **Stigma**

Welcoming factors included hygiene, cleanliness, and adequate space for caregiving, strollers, mobility aids, universal signage



Universal design principles were named as a promising practice to address the accessibility needs of multiple user groups



# The Role of Community-Serving Organizations and the Private Sector

Partnerships, including with non-profit organizations or with the private sector were explored in some settings, with varying success.

- Community Toilet Schemes
- Technological solutions (i.e. Go Here)
- Priority access "passes" ("Can't wait" cards, or "Restroom Help Pass")



Source: [Community Toilet Scheme - Royston Town Council](#)



Source: [GutsUK](#)



Source: [Crohn's and Colitis Canada](#)





# The Role of Community-Serving Organizations and the Private Sector



- Attendant and Support Services  
*Amoowigamig: More Than a Washroom*  
(Winnipeg, MB)

Source: [The Winnipeg Foundation](#)

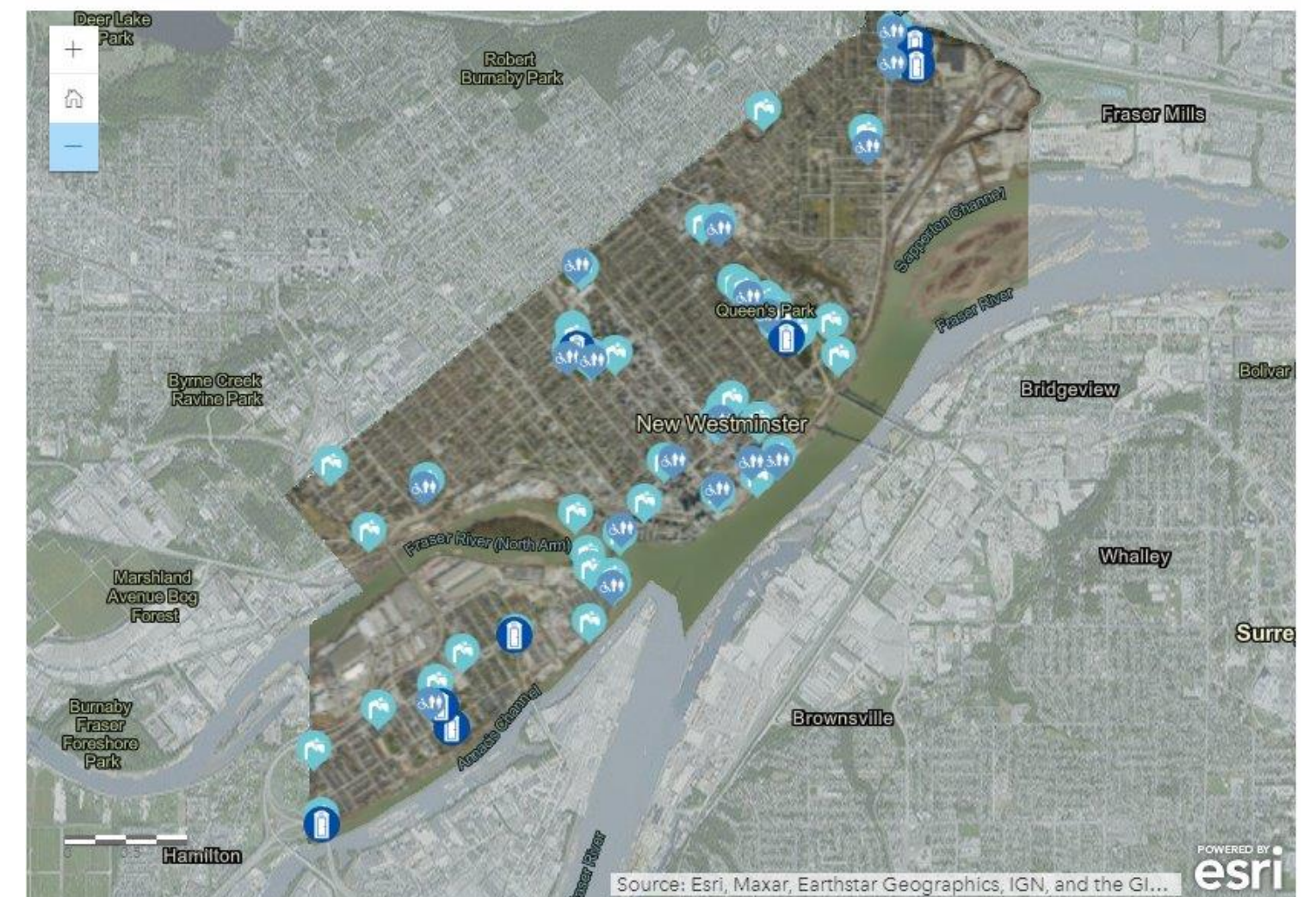




# Situational Analysis

We conducted a **situational analysis** on all *publicly available toilets* in the City to understand:

- Their geographic distribution across the City
- Gaps in seasonal availability of toilets
- Gaps in hours of operation
- Maintenance and cleaning schedules; and
- The overall accessibility and quality of publicly available toilets.



Sources included publicly available data on the City of New Westminster's website, regional data from Metro Vancouver, the *Go Here* app, and follow up conversations with City staff responsible for overseeing toilets.



# Types of Toilets examined in the Situational Analysis

## Three Toilet Categories:

### Public Toilets

- Available to all members of the public.
- No purchase or membership required.
- Includes toilets in City buildings (parks, recreation centres, library)



### Toilets in Private Settings

- Available in private buildings (businesses, restaurants).
- Open to members of the public through participation in the GoHere program.

### Toilets in Public Spaces

- Available to (some) members of the public.
- No purchase or membership required.
- Located on private property (e.g., shopping centres).



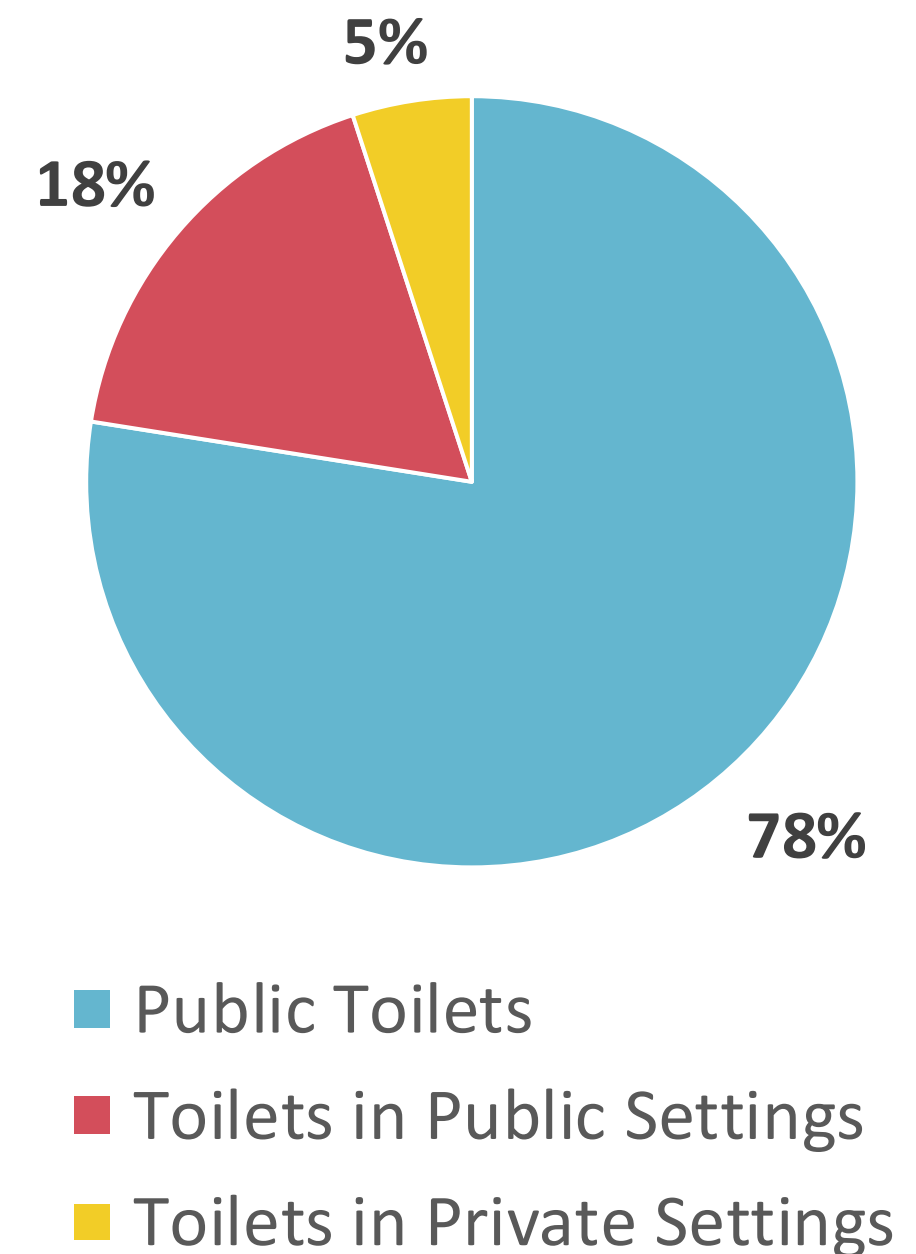


# Situational Analysis

## High-level Findings:

- Most of the toilets in the city are **public** and managed by the City. The private sector plays a much smaller role in the provision of publicly available toilets
- In general, more **densely populated areas have wider access to toilets** compared to areas that are more residential or industrial
- There are very few toilets that are available in the evening (between 6 and 9pm), and **even more limited** options overnight.
- Information on **maintenance and cleaning schedules** was limited, so the quality of all toilets was difficult to assess.
- There is **no one single information source** that provides up to date information about all toilets in the city, making wayfinding difficult.

Publicly Available Washrooms by Classification



# Situational Analysis

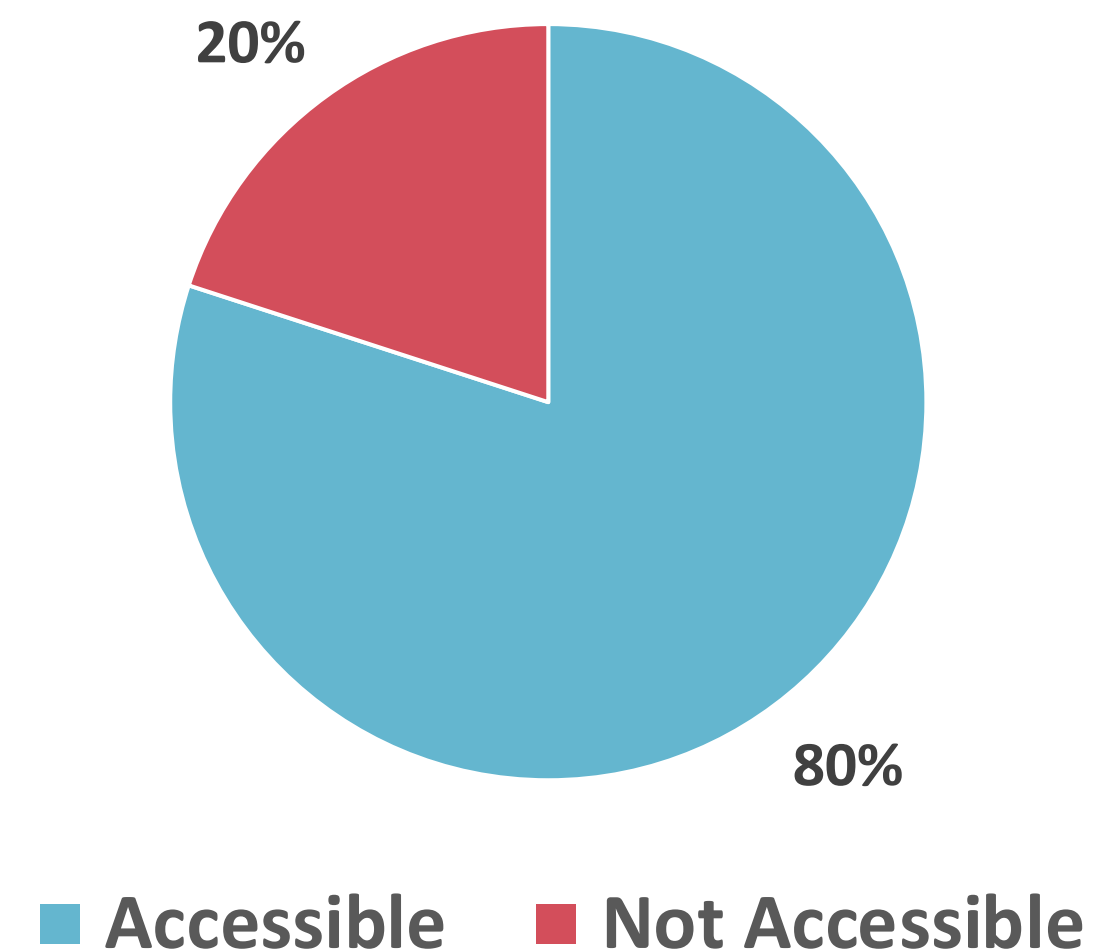
## For People Living with Disabilities:

### Accessible Toilets:

- 32 out of 40 publicly available toilets in New Westminster are **listed as accessible** in the data sources that were consulted
- Accessibility is generally considered better in **permanent structures** rather than temporary (portable) toilets. 79% of toilets in the City are permanent.



### Accessibility in Publicly Available Toilets



The **extent and range of accessibility features** in each toilet is not clear: preliminary findings from **community engagement** revealed that there are several accessibility needs that are not meeting the needs of people living with disabilities.

- Considerations for people who are visually impaired
- Sensory issues and considerations for people who are neurodivergent
- Non-slip floors and counter heights

# Community Engagement

## Completed: Be Heard Survey

Be Heard survey was held between January 9th and February 2nd, 2025.

## Completed: Focused Engagement

Focused engagement activities were held between January 10<sup>th</sup> and February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and included focus groups, interviews, and workshops with composite community groups

## In progress:

Interviews with City staff, engagement with other municipalities

## Ongoing:

## Engagement with internal and external working groups



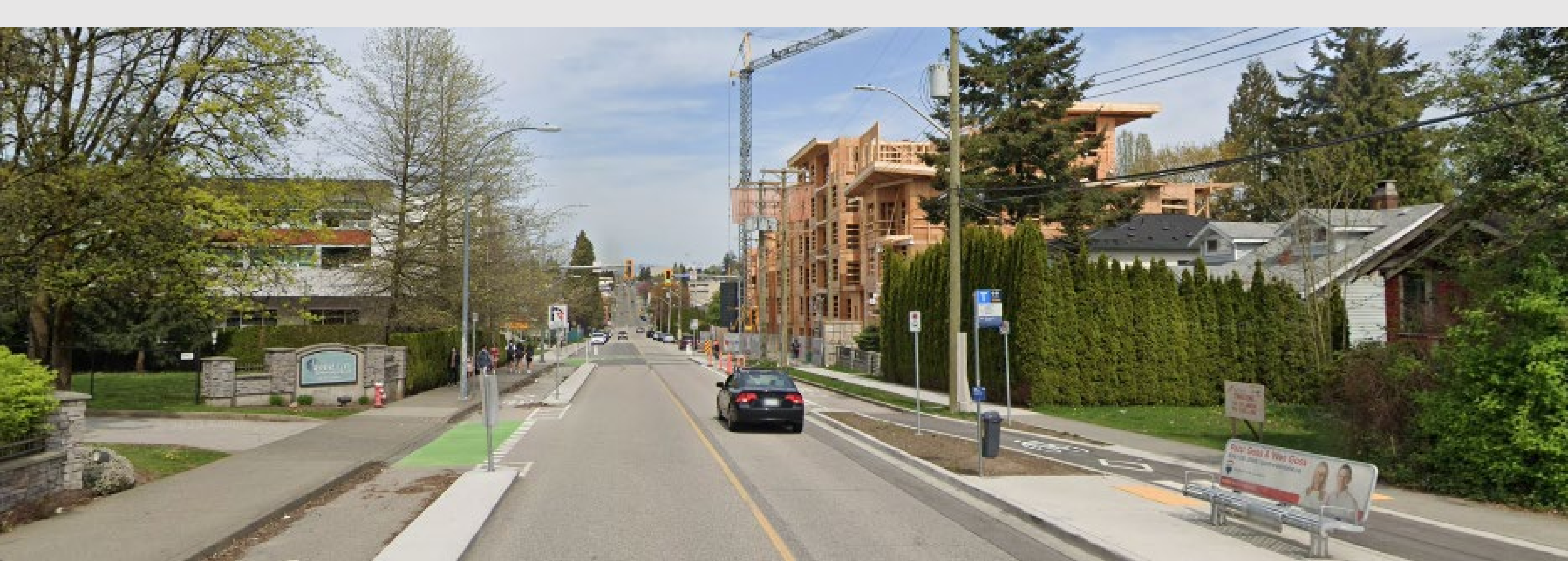
***Engagement Report will be available on the Be Heard website:***

[https://www.beheardnewwest.ca/city-wide-toilet-strategy?tool=survey\\_tool&tool\\_id=survey#tool\\_tab](https://www.beheardnewwest.ca/city-wide-toilet-strategy?tool=survey_tool&tool_id=survey#tool_tab)



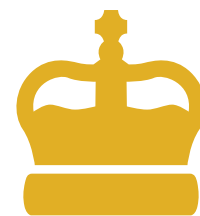
# Questions for your Consideration:

- 1. What do you think are the main challenges or barriers that people living with disabilities and their caregivers face when trying to locate and/or access public toilets?***
- 2. How do you think these barriers could be addressed in the City-wide Toilet Strategy?***
- 3. Many people rely on private businesses (such as coffee shops, or gas stations) for toilets. To increase access to toilets, other cities have developed partnership or incentive programs to support businesses and encourage them to provide access to the public. What do you think of this concept? Can you see any challenges for people living with disabilities in this approach?***
- 4. Is there anything else you'd like to share about access to toilets in New Westminster?***



# BUS STOPS AND BIKE LANES

Primer on the BC Design Guide for Bus Stops Adjacent to Cycling Infrastructure and Engaging the Accessibility Community



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# Agenda

What is a floating bus stop?

Primer on the BC Design Guide for Bus Stops Adjacent to Cycling Infrastructure

Challenges with floating bus stops

East Sixth Avenue Project

Engaging with the Accessibility Community



Sixth Street, New Westminster, British Columbia



# What is a floating bus stop?

Also known as a bus boarding island

Bus stop separated from the sidewalk by a bike lane



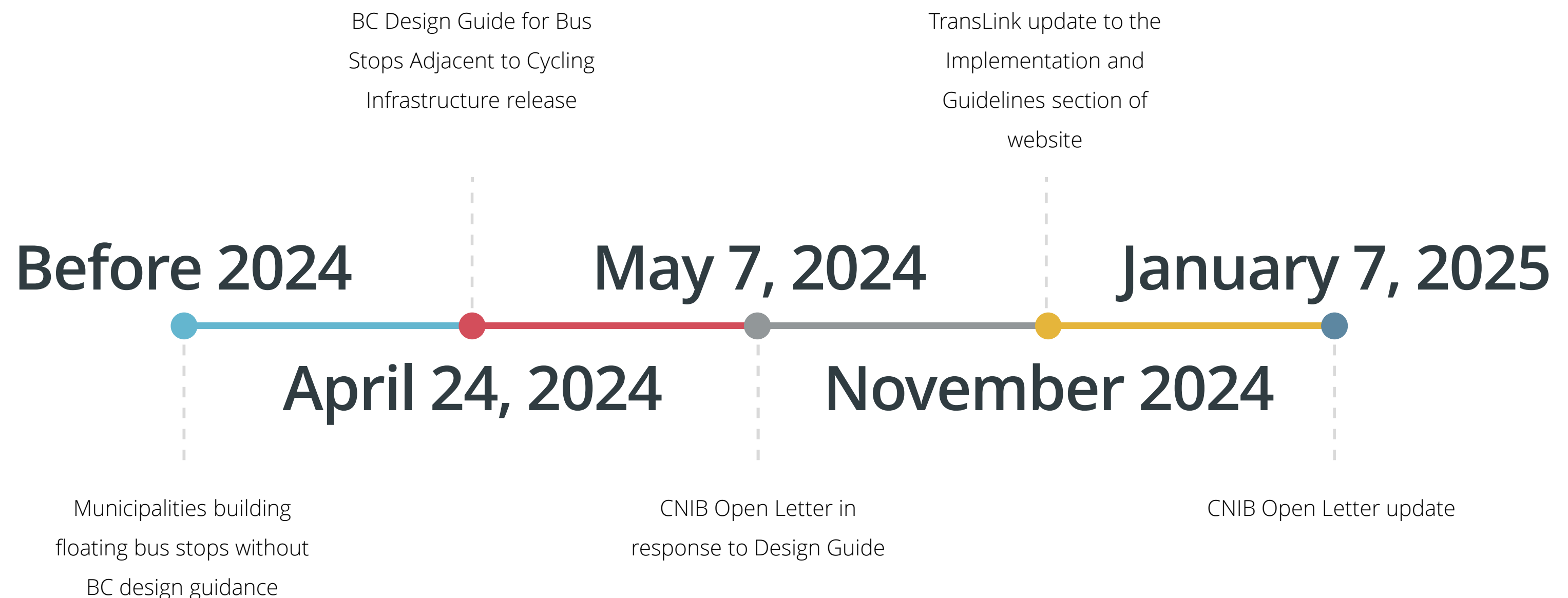
## **ACCESS FOR EVERYONE**

Every person has the right to travel safely and comfortably however they choose to do so regardless of their ability.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

Integrating sustainable forms of transportation to work together to provide a range of options for people's every day trips.

# BC Design Guide for Bus Stops Adjacent to Cycling Infrastructure



# Key bus stop elements in BC Guide

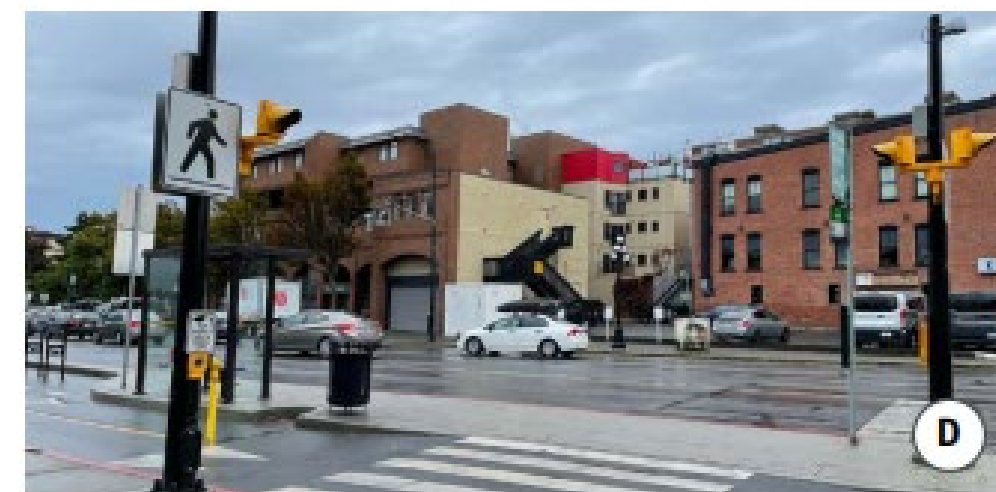


▲ **Island Platform** where transit users can wait to board and alight the bus, and which may include amenities such as a shelter, benches, bicycle parking, garbage receptacles, and other amenities.

▶ **Wheelchair Pad** to allow passengers using mobility devices to board and alight the bus via a mechanical ramp or lift that is deployed from one of the bus doors.



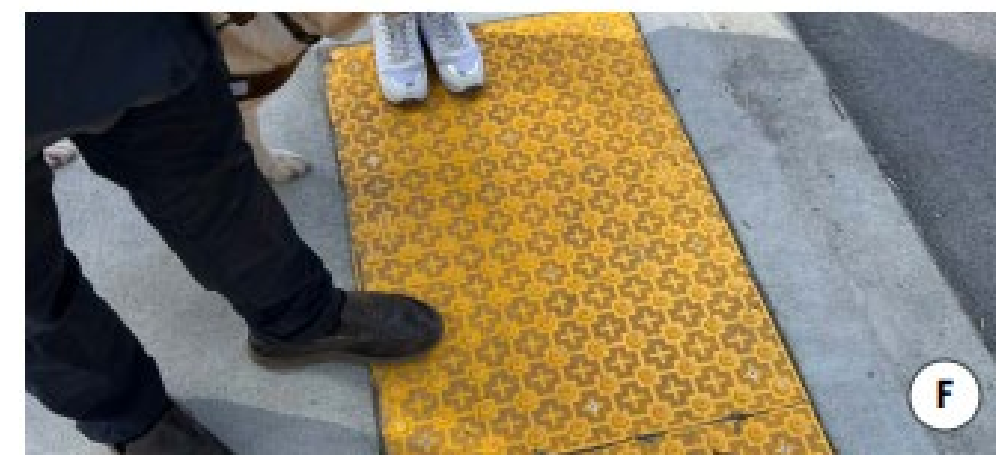
◀ **Bikeway** that is located between the island platform and the sidewalk, and which can often be raised or narrowed through the bus stop interaction zone.



◀ **Marked Pedestrian Crossings** to direct people to cross the bikeway at designated locations between the bus stop platform and the sidewalk.



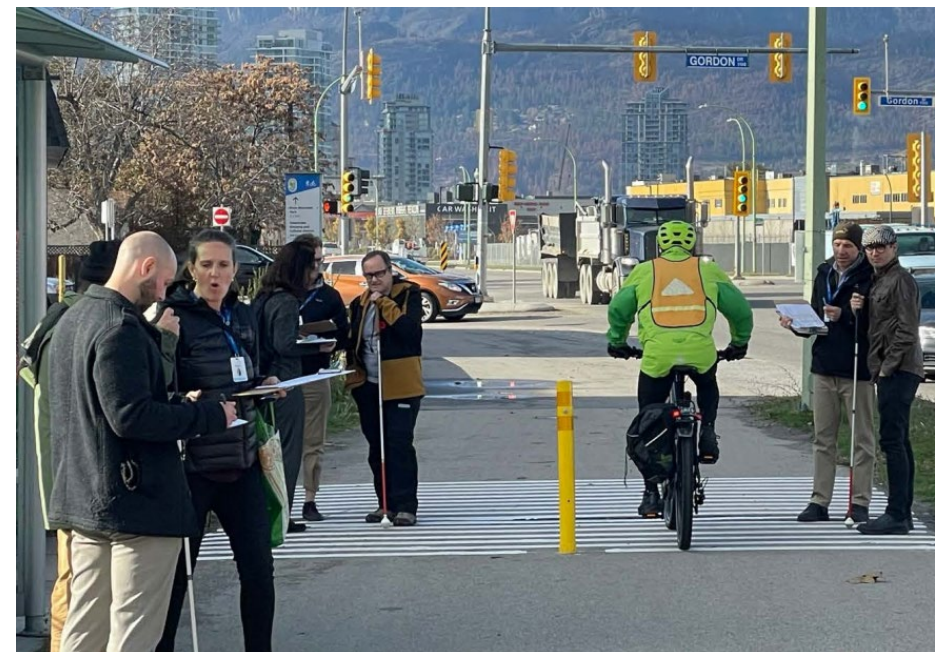
◀ **Edge Treatments** between the bicycle lane and the sidewalk and the bus stop platform that are detectable by people with sight loss.



◀ **Tactile Attention Indicators** at marked pedestrian crossings to notify people with sight loss of a crossing point.



# Challenges of floating bus stops



**PED-BIKE CONFLICT  
PARTICULARLY WHEN  
MID-BLOCK OR BI-  
DIRECTIONAL**



**RISK OF PEOPLE  
GETTING STUCK IN  
THE BIKE LANE**



**DIFFICULT TO NAVIGATE  
- PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY  
CHALLENGES AND PEOPLE  
WITH NO VISION/LOW  
VISION**

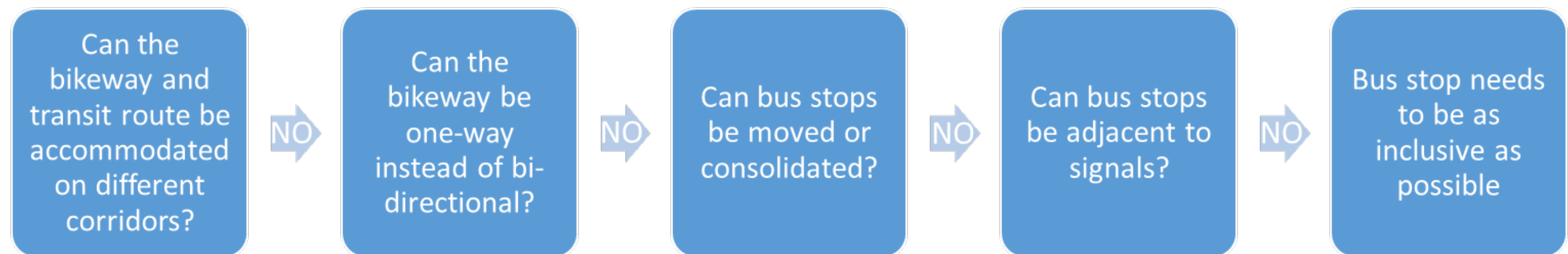


# East Sixth Avenue Project



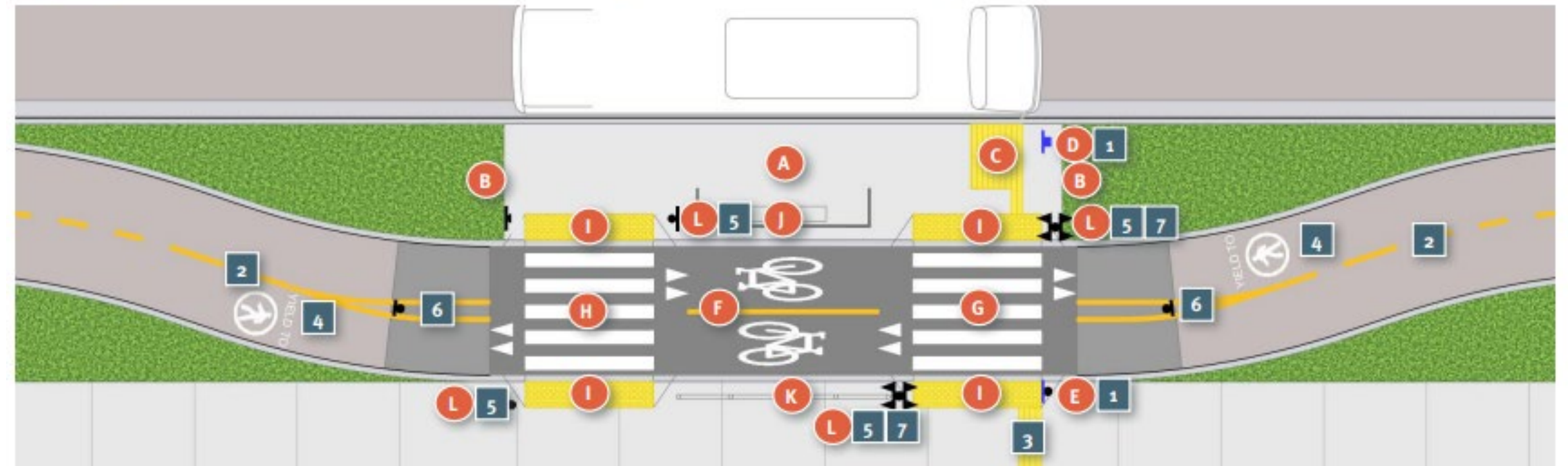


# BC Guide recommends avoid conflicts or minimize conflicts



# Consultant proposed floating bus stop as per BC Design Guide

Figure 47: Conventional Island Platform Without Crosswalk Integration (Bi-Directional Protected Bicycle Lane)



## Core Treatments

- A** Island platform with desired width of 3.0 metres (minimum 2.3 metres)
- B** Detectable 'bookends' at start and end of island platform
- C** Tactile Directional Indicator Mat and Passenger Landing Pad clear of obstructions at front door of bus
- D** Primary bus stop ID pole with enhanced braille and raised tactile letter signage at front of island platform
- E** Secondary bus stop ID pole with enhanced braille and raised tactile letter signage on sidewalk
- F** Bicycle lane raised to sidewalk level or intermediate level and/or narrowed through bus stop zone
- G** Marked pedestrian crossing at front of island platform
- H** Marked pedestrian crossing at rear of island platform
- I** Tactile Attention Indicators at all marked pedestrian crossings
- J** Bus shelter with no side panels or clear panels
- K** Fence, landscaping, and/or other continuous amenities to provide detectable edge treatments and to channelize pedestrians to marked crossings
- L** "Pedestrian Crosswalk" and/or "Bicycles Yield to Pedestrians" signage

## Optional Treatments

- 1** Enhanced sign with tactile map of bus stop layout
- 2** Horizontal deflection of bicycle lane at start and end of bus stop zone
- 3** Tactile Directional Indicators across sidewalk
- 4** "Bicycles Yield to Pedestrians" and/or "Advance Yield to Pedestrians" pavement markings
- 5** Enhanced and/or dynamic "Bicycles Yield to Pedestrians" signage
- 6** Flexible delineator posts with "Bicycles Yield to Pedestrians" signage
- 7** Actuated flashing beacons

# Engaging the accessibility community

Site constraints, project history, and partner agency requirements may require the design of a mid-block bus stop and a bi-directional protected lane



## HEAR CONCERN(S)

How can you guarantee a cyclist will stop at a floating bus stop?

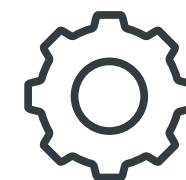
The BC Design Guide doesn't address our concern



## VISIT SITE TOGETHER

Invite people with lived experience

Hired an orientation and mobility specialist to provide safe navigation during the site visit



## TAILOR DESIGN

Based on feedback received, tailor the bus stop design to prioritize universal accessibility

Likely means departing from published BC Design guide

# Questions?