



Kensington Plaza Open Space Project

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

December 2021

Project overview

Kensington Plaza is an underutilized space that could serve as a hub of community activities, enhancing the social, physical and mental well-being of residents and better supporting local businesses.

What are our goals for the design of this area?

- Better accommodate a range of passive and active recreation.
- Create a safe and comfortable space for people to gather.
- Support the needs of local businesses.

Engagement overview

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, engagement was conducted entirely online with opportunity to provide input by visiting engage.calgary.ca/kensingtonarea/kensingtonTOD or calling 311. Public feedback was accepted from August 28 until September 28.

What we asked

Public feedback focused on citizens ranking their assessment of Kensington Plaza based on perceptions of the area as a place to hang out, ease of site access and feelings of safety when at the plaza. Citizen provided feedback on

What we heard

The plaza was consistently recognized as an important landmark in the Kensington business district with potential to be an enhance and formalized gathering space. The top three themes identified for how stakeholders felt the plaza could be made to enhance this space:

- Integration of placemaking elements (e.g. lighting, public art, fire pits);
- Increase in seating areas to enable informal gathering; and
- Programming such as live performances or recreation opportunities.

Stakeholders were enthusiastic about four-season activation at the plaza, but indicated snow and ice clearance were essential to make the space usable during winter months. Firepit installation and a sheltering element were consistently commented on as features that would draw people to the plaza site..

Bike and scooter received a broad range of public feedback, with many participants indicating scooter parking should be limited and organized. There were observations that scooters were left scattered on sidewalks, presented hazards for pedestrians and people using mobility devices. Stakeholders felt that bike



Kensington Plaza Open Space Project

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

December 2021

parking was important to draw visitors to the Kensington area, but the limited plaza site should not be the site for bike parking infrastructure when there were more appropriate nearby areas.

The addition of trees was heavily supported, and stakeholders indicated increased greenery would enhance the streetscape and create a more inviting plaza area. Participants raised concerns about how the trees would be maintained and cared for, citing other planting in the City that had died in urban environments.

For a detailed summary of the input that was provided, please see the [Summary of Input](#) section.

For a verbatim listing of all the input that was provided, please see the [Verbatim Responses](#) section.

Next steps

The public feedback received during this phase of engagement will be used in conjunction with technical analysis and cost considerations to select which projects will be carried forward for implementation. Phase 3 Engagement will include the presentation of refined design drawings of the projects that were selected through the Phase 2. The public can expect the Kensington Area Improvements Project Phase 3 to launch in the winter of 2022.

Summary of Input

Question #1:

Citizens were asked to rate Kensington Plaza on a five-point Likert scale when considering if the area is a local landmark or community gathering space. Results of how citizens ranked the plaza are outlined below.

1 – No, it's pretty forgettable	2	3	4	5 – For sure, it's the heart of the community
25	40	19	51	63

After providing the above rating, citizens were asked to provide a written response to the question:

What do you like about the space, or what would you suggest to make this more of a local landmark or a better community gathering space?

Below is a summary table of the themes gathered from the qualitative input provided by participants.

Category	Response summary
Placemaking elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the volume of placemaking elements represented the most frequently made suggestion for improving the plaza. Participants were generally supportive of more programming, installation of seating/viewing areas and additional amenities that would draw residents and visitors to the area. Permanent placemaking features such as public art and year-round street furniture installations were supported over temporary pilot fixtures. Temporary installations were generally not considered to provide an upgrade or improvement to the space.
Seating Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased allocation of permanent seating and tables received positive feedback. Street furniture was correlated to the plaza being better able to serve as a community congregation point. There were a few statements regarding mitigation of homeless populations congregating and potentially sleeping on benches.
Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts and event programming at the plaza received favourable comments. Suggestions for continued program options included projecting movies on a screen and setting up a stage for live performances. Interactive amenities, such as chess boards or ping pong table, were suggested as recreational opportunities that would fit on the plaza footprint.
Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders cited arts-focused programming (e.g. painting lessons) or permanent public art could enhance the plaza as a local landmark. A few participants indicated that public art should be locally significant and specific to the Kensington area.

Kensington Plaza Open Space Project

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

December 2021

Streetscape Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants indicated support for further improvement to the physical streetscape such as wider sidewalks, improved seating areas and permanent lighting solutions.
General support of gathering space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder provided comments of support for the identification of Kensington Plaza as an important gathering place and worthy of investment. Respondents indicated that the plaza has historic been a landmark within the community, but that significance has lost vibrancy in recent years. Support and consultation with local business was cited as a critical consideration when creating changes. The container space was very by some participants as a great shelter point for people spending time at the plaza, while other felt the container increased social disorder and invited vagrancy.
Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved lighting was mentioned by many participants who felt this was a low cost, easy way to create a more aesthetically pleasing community gathering space. Projected lighting on adjacent buildings was also suggested as a technique to enhance area vibrancy with lighting.
Greenery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respondents suggested incorporating more greenery and landscaping elements into the plaza design to create a beautified space. Stakeholders indicated that the plaza had a feeling of being hardscaped and would benefit from more trees and plant life.
Pedestrian focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants indicated the plaza are was already accessed by many people on foot, so consideration of the pedestrian experience was importance. Larger sidewalks and safe crosswalk points to access the plaza were cited as important conditions for consideration.
Integration of local businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders cited the importance of creating conditions that provided support and increased foot traffic to local businesses. Local businesses were given credit for being a larger part of what makes Kensington area unique and special. Provision of extra patio space for restaurant patrons was proposed as a potential use of space at the plaza, especially considering Covid-related protocols.
Homeless population and safety concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants raised safety and vagrancy concerns particularly with reference to the container installation and potential permanent seating, as well as proximity to the LRT station.
Increase size or define space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A group of participants encouraged the City to consider ways to enlarge the plaza footprint (e.g. expanding into nearby on-street parking stalls).

Question #2:

After providing the above rating, citizens were asked to provide a written response to the question:

What could The City do to help make this a more inviting 4-season space?

Below is a summary table of the themes gathered from the qualitative input provided by participants.

Category	Response summary
Firepits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of winter firepits at the plaza were overwhelming identified as a factor in ensuring the area was well used in the winter months. Respondents indicated the importance of high quality, industrial materials in the construction of a fire pit that would be used at this location.
Shelter/warmth elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A walled shelter was recommended as a winter installation that could lessen cold conditions. Space heaters were also suggested around prospective seating areas.
Placemaking and beautification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders cited investment in elements such as raised flower beds, planters, trees and public art would draw people to the plaza year-round.
snow clearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants indicated the importance of snow clearing to ensure accessibility and a user-friendly experience. Respondents reported in past winters the area being not cleared of snow and dangerously icy.
Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site programming (e.g. arts, theatre, and recreation) was indicated as a year-round potential activity for the plaza. A few respondents suggested licensing the site to allow for businesses to serve alcohol to patrons.
Seating Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benches, tables, and seating areas were recommended as amenities that would attract year-round usage.
Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants indicated improved and increased lighting in the area would be an enhancement appreciated across four seasons. A few participants recommended soft, white lighting.
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved sidewalk surfaces were cited as a potential improvement to ensure a better user experience. A few stakeholders cited that there are too many substrates and tripping hazards in and around the plaza.
General support of gathering space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants offered general support to the objective of making the plaza a four-season destination. Respondents indicated that there is not currently a draw for people to spend time at the plaza in the winter months.
Integration of local businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders offered their support to initiatives that would increase patronage at Kensington retailers and service providers.

Question #3:

After providing the above rating, citizens were asked to provide a written response to the question:

What is important for us to know about bike and scooter parking?

Below is a summary table of the themes gathered from the qualitative input provided by participants.

Category	Response summary
Provide supportive infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants indicated proper parking facilities were required to store bikes and scooters in an organized fashion. Respondents expressed support for bike parking facilities in visible locations to address theft. Scooters received attention from respondents who felt they were often dumped in random locations or scattered across sidewalks.
Scooter parking should be more organized/tidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As referenced above, there were reports from participants that scooters created disorganized and tripping hazards on sidewalks. A group of participants indicated that scooters should not be allowed to transport on sidewalks nor through the plaza area due to potential conflict with pedestrians and people using mobility devices.
Plaza as a gathering space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders provided comments indicated that the plaza should be focused on gathering and creating a community landmark, not parking facilities for bikes and scooters. Participants indicated that there were nearby areas that could be allocated for bike parking, however the plaza should remain clear of any designated bike parking or scooter drop-off stations.
Limit scooter parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder indicated that scooter parking should be limited to specific areas and not left randomly on sidewalks or in front of businesses. A group of participants felt scooters should be banned from Kensington given the high pedestrian presence and observe conflicts between pedestrian and scooter users riding on sidewalks.
Encourage active living and visitors to Kensington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A segment of stakeholders expressed the importance of encouraging more people to visit Kensington by transit and active modes. Supportive comments were received in the spirit of encouraging more visitors to the area in modes other than vehicles. Vehicle parking was cited as a challenge in Kensington and participants felt active modes should be encouraged in the area.
Safety and user conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments in this category pertained to conflicts between scooter users and other people in the Kensington area. Participants offered support for bike facilities, but clearly stated a lack of support for scooters which were cited as dangerous and creating sidewalk hazards. Respondents indicated that bike racks throughout the community were preferable to a concentration in the plaza.
Pedestrian focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders emphasized the walking nature of Kensington and that pedestrians should be a design focus for the plaza. A group of respondents were explicit in their opinion that scooter and bike parking should not be the primary concentration of the plaza.
Prioritize Active Modes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder offered support for infrastructure that would encourage people to walk, bike or transit to the Kensington area without connecting their statement to the plaza area.
Adequate space/size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants questioned the space available to the number of proposed uses through this project. If scooter and/or bike parking was added to the area, respondents indicated the City should ensure there is adequate space for pedestrian and mobility device movement in the area.

Question #4:

After providing the above rating, citizens were asked to provide a written response to the question:

What is important for us to know about trees in this space?

Below is a summary table of the themes gathered from the qualitative input provided by participants.

Category	Response Summary
General support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trees, and the addition of trees, at the Kensington Plaza received favourable feedback. Participants attributed trees and enhanced greenery to a more vibrant and lively public space.
Beautification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants supported the preservation and addition of trees to the plaza. Respondents expressed trees would an
Adds placemaking element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders expressed enthusiasm for the warmth and character that trees, and enhanced landscaping would offer the Kensington Plaza. Participants felt additional trees could help segregate the plaza for the road and cars.
Provides shade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants indicated that if the plaza is to remain a community gathering place the tree would provide a more comfortable and shaded outdoor environment. In cold temperatures participants felt trees could mitigate severe winds.
Attracts people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders felt trees in the plaza, and along the broader Kensington Road streetscape, have the potential to attract people and visitors by virtue of supporting a pleasant and warm neighbourhood feel.
Environmentally friendly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants expressed a healthy tree canopy contributed to positive environmental outcomes and helped to manage the effect of concrete heat retention during the summer months.
Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A few participants asked how trees would be maintained and nourished to ensure their survival. A few respondents pointed to examples of trees that had died in urban environments in Calgary. Participants expressed concern that a grate surrounding new trees in the plaza would be inadequate to ensure the trees survival.



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Verbatim Comments

Verbatim comments presented here include all feedback, suggestions, comments and messages that were collected online and in-person through the engagement described in this report. All input has been reviewed and provided to Project Teams to be considered in decision making for the project.

Any personal identifying information has been removed from the verbatim comments presented here. Comments or portions of comments that contain profanity, or that are not in compliance with the [City's Respectful Workplace Policy](#) or [Online Tool Moderation Practice](#), have also been removed from participant submissions.

Wherever possible the remainder of the submissions remains. No other edits to the feedback have been made, and the verbatim comments are as received. As a result, some of the content in this verbatim record may still be considered offensive or distasteful to some readers.

What do you like about the space, or what would you suggest to make this more of a local landmark or a better community gathering space?

- Public Art
- Local artist market
- To be honest this spot is more about the businesses and the people in it. I really don't need fitness classes, etc. (I saw a sign for that)
- Removing traffic from Kensington rd would draw people to this place due to safety, less noise and less pollution
- Reduce traffic on street further to get vehicle noise out and expand the plaza... make Kensington Rd either a one-way or make accessible only to transit vehicles and bicycles.
- safer intersections and interaction opportunities between cyclists and pedestrians. There is too much garbage on the edge of the river
- All of the above
- Lighting and street furniture would help - also hosting specific events. The new plan for the Plaza Theatre would greatly enhance this area if it can be realized as described in the media information from earlier in the summer. A total must for the plaza.
- New Street furniture. Removal of the current temporary c can type structure that appears to be used for pop up shops, but is mostly a homeless crash pad.
- I like the art and music events there. Needs more of this plus street furniture
- More live music and art Institute;lations like Beakerhead!
- Vehicle traffic has no place whatsoever in pedestrian districts. This area could be converted to a pedestrian plaze, completely eliminating through-traffic and reducing single-family vehicle use.

- I would love this space to be greener and less concrete
- Something colorful, conducive to people alone or in small groups but not crowds
- I really like the colourful seating and tables. Making this a dedicated event space with more poster space for community events would be great. Local art that can be changed every so often would be great as well.
- this is a great area however it feels underutilized. Often when I walk at night, it is not a comfortable place
- requires improved affordable parking space, plants/lights/ ART/, walking space
- requires improved affordable parking space, plants/lights/ ART/, walking space
- I love the shipping container seating with beautiful flowers that have been up lately. I also love the public space in Bridgeland with hanging lights, to compare - public seating & spaces are so needed. Like going to "the plaza" in Mexico, it's the heart
- Wow Hillhurst Sunnyside gets a lot of attention. West Hillhurst, not so much. Shameful favoritism.
- It's an interesting space created by the intersection. Public art would be nice; events/activities would be great and help support the local businesses
- In summer 2021 i noticed the new furniture and events put on and am excited by that. art is always fun. concern is about homelessness around the area making it feel dirty sometimes.
- public art, seating, games and events,
- Seating with heaters, lights, flowers, banners , musicians
- I loved the extra seating and street furniture added during the pandemic - spaces for people to gather and connect. Activities like games would be neat, maybe a small outdoor performance space. The fire pits there in the past have been great too.
- larger space for gathering, more seating options and plantings. public art/ focal point/fountain like in a European square
- New street furniture
- Get rid of column for posters - an eyesore. Get rid of bollard and chain barrier for better ped access. Bookstore outdoor racks are great, encourage browsing. Would be a good spot for public art
- Trees and seating areas
- I am not even sure where you mean. Maybe put an art installation there, or have buskers?
- I think once the construction fencing for the old movie theatre is gone, the area will feel more appealing. Currently, I liked the fire pits that were out there in the colder months, and the music that's played there on weekends now in the summer.
- Events/activities would be great, especially more live music/buskers. Interactive art would be great too
- More variable seating that doesn't feel like you're sitting on display
- Busking
- It is central and in a high pedestrian traffic area. The new owners fo the theatre have plans for part of the space. Work with them.
- Need to consider negative effect of loitering on how the community will use the space



Kensington Plaza Open Space Project

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

December 2021

- Overflow patio's would be better suited to this space than the road.
- I wonder if a staging area for live performances would work?
- Its a nice size space and centrally located within the area of Kensington Road. An ideal space for shared seating for eating , or coffees from any of the surrounding food services. Take out, not serviced.
- more furniture and art
- I live in West Hillhurst and am not aware of any space called Kensington Plaza, so definitely it is not memorable.
- This space SHOULD be the heart of Kensington. Recent efforts to zip it up (the container seating area, the umbrellas in the trees), have been MOST welcome. It needs art, interactive activities (for all ages!), seating, and busker stops (END RED TAPE HERE)
- Quiet and beautiful
- Larger sidewalks with more space for pedestrians.
- I like this area because it fits the sidewalk shop/cafe vibe. The street furniture fits this vibe while being inclusive by not requiring users to make a purchase of some kind so that they can sit and enjoy.
- I think it has great potential to be something special, but the space is currently not the heart of the community.
- I feel the space gets blocked a lot because of the parked vehicles. If there was a way for the space to extend into the parked stalls, either through parkettes or patios, it may be more memorable/noticeable to people.
- Public art that is engaging, events and activities, Street furniture and other usable amenities
- More events and activities.
- Public art displays, street events (ie; live music, small markets)
- More events and activities during the year would be welcome. Your suggestions about public art, new street furniture and interactive lighting are great ideas!
- new furniture
- Yes all of the above is needed through out Kensington.
- The space has great potential. Provide a variety of seating and sponsor small concerts and busking.
- its definitely a nice place to hang out. more seating/seclusion (like reading nooks? kind of like they have at the central library) would definitely help the space.
- Art, a stage, fire pits and more trees would be nice
- better seating and more events/activities would be great.
- The pilots this year - furniture, public art, etc. have made the area SIGNIFICANTLY better. The fugly orange barriers, Plaza construction barriers, and tight feeling detour around Crowbar actively detract. It's forgettable now, but has so much potential.
- More retail toward 14th street, add bike lanes, imorove walkability, events
- Street parking for food trucks/coffee huts/ tables etc. (The fire pits in winter were a nice touch)

- This "plaza" is actually just a slightly wider than average sidewalk. Its too small for good use or becoming a community landmark. But some nice lighting and new benches could make it more welcoming.
- Allow closure of kensington rd from 12th to 10th for festivals/fairs/block parties multiple times a year.
- I like the current public art and furniture. Having interactive lighting or different interactive display now and then will be great.
- I think the Kensington business community needs to focus on attracting businesses that will remain open later than 5 or 6 pm. Also we need less banks (and similar) businesses in prime locations as they just 'kill' the soul.
- It's a little too far from the main core of shopping and dining. Isn't inviting to hang out. It would be great to make it like an outdoor patio for year round take out or picnic dining with a playground. Sheltered for weather protection.
- Furniture and lighting would be nice. Management of the trees (many need pruning)
- I want it to be something special, but it currently just isn't.
- keep it cleaner!! it collects a lot of dust, dirt and noise from the traffic and currently feels like you are standing in the middle of the road. Any design should focus on separating the space from the road (visually). More trees/furniture/art.
- The location is great and could facilitate more of a community feel
- Please invest in a long-term plan for this space, rather than "pop-up" efforts that frankly look like a yard sale. Stick with tried-and-true: green landscaping, attractive and tough furniture that can't be slept on.
- Always love public art. Furniture is always nice.
- More outdoor seating
- Very bland needs an upgrade
- The C-can and new furniture is nice but the old permanent benches are missed.
- it has no defining character. No sense of place. To be honest it's unappealing at the moment. insert some large street furniture to promote a better sense of place
- Very cool spot! Looking forward to using it more once COVID is behind us. Hoping that businesses will be able to keep their extended patios to help make this a central gathering place.
- New Street Furniture, perhaps more public art.
- Too much traffic to be useful as community space. Permanently removing 2 lanes like that done for patios in summer would help. Public art would be nice.
- Sitting areas, meeting spots, kids programs, ...?
- It's very busy and exposed to traffic. It seems like you're sitting in the middle of an intersection. Helping shelter from vehicles would make it nicer.
- Get rid of the two huge unexploded bombs on either side of the the bridge. I love rusty art, but they are VERY UNINVITING.
- It is a cool spot, but it feels like an odd gathering place right next to the road. It needs more privacy and separation from the road, in my opinion.

Kensington Plaza Open Space Project

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

December 2021

- I like the chairs, fire pits, and installation added to the trees this year. This plaza should be festive and give atmosphere to the area.
- The dead trees are not welcoming and better lighting would help
- I love the current summer Kensington activations that have been happening. I also really enjoy the gathering space - it is getting more used now!
- The Parklet is being used by the homeless do feel that safe
- Avoid making it too modern, or cluttering the space with photo ops(like the heart). Adding contemporary, trendy accessories makes kensington look like any other neighbourhood in any city. Keep what is already special, rather than sacrificing it for a fad.
- This area needs a center piece, something that will draw people in, maybe a piece of art? It should include seating!
- Finish the sidewalk repair/replacement at the corner of Kensington Road and 10th St.
- It's fine as is. Definitely, no public art is needed. It is not large enough, nor is there sufficient parking to create an events space.
- Starting to community hub with container @ parking space, programming, Plaza upgrades, but space could be much better at LOW COST.
- More street furniture to encourage people to spend time in the area
- Public art or a playground
- More trees and more permanent areas to sit. Use Tom Kins Park on 17th as a good role model.
- this area needs new seating and lighting. And it there should be no automobile traffic on kensington crescent.
- I understand that the new Plaza owners are planning on putting an patio restaurant there. That would be great. Nothing more is needed.
- It provides some great public space, but it needs to be bigger!
- The very first thing is to clean up this space.It is full of dead trees and weeds looks awful and un kept. who is responsible for this over site?
- The tall trees are nice but that's it - the rest is a grass field in which neighbours have found used needles. The space could use with some type of plaza with benches, planters and good lighting.
- Its been nice to see some art installations and street entertainers in that area lately.
- Street furniture, art and entertainment
- maybe something like a busker site with seating
- The benches and seating from this past summer are a start
- Close Kensington Road tp vehicle traffic from the plaza to 10 Street in the summer (or year round!)
- It is a beautiful and under-utilized site but it is not an appealing place to go to in the BRZ. If you want people to spend time there integrate commercial activities like a small cafe or food trucks.
- I like the idea of interactive lighting and site programming
- Okotoks has a great town plaza. It's grassed with lots of seating. They have mini concerts, hold a light up event at Christmas and shut down the street for the night and have lots of on going programming set in the plaza. Use them as a guide

- Things people can engage with. Interactivity. Locally produced art is always a safe bet
- I literally didn't know what this space was without seeing a photo and I live about 5 minutes away.
- It's a nice space, not a lot of sitting options for large groups or reason to gather.
- Define the space more. Perhaps some tiered planters, or permanent tiered seating.
- Programming seems key, and flexible places to sit with shade
- I liked the fire pits, any interesting art exhibit make it an interesting stopping area
- Keep the park let's! Fire pits, art installations and other place among activities are a must!
- Need to make this a place to be. It's the heart. Lots of cool lighting. Art pieces. The current make ship decorations look cheap and tacky. Remove the patio lights and install proper lights and design like Stephen ave. Should have music playing. Plants.
- It's alright. Mostly just a space nearby other restaurant patios. Needs more seating.
- It underutilizes a space with potential to be great.
- It adds vibrancy, and a focal community point. Helps foot traffic to local business.
- I like that it is a destination after walking along the river. Public art and performances there are nice
- Public art would help, something kids will engage with. If cinema renovation is successful the public area has more chance of success.
- Add seating options on the plaza to make it even more pedestrian friendly. Also add trees to provide shade and bring nature in this area.
- More permanent benches. Regularly scheduled events with a small permanent stage. The fire/propane pits in the winter were great.
- This is the hub of the community, for sure, but the quality of the space is poor. Needs new surface, new trees, new furniture, and public art.

What could The City do to help make this a more inviting 4-season space?

- it was there earlier this year when you had the firepits and that was a nice touch to grab a coffee and hang out. We have many days that hover around zero and it's a good temperature for walking to a coffee shop and meet up with friends.
- seating I suppose?
- Adding warmth and shelter without closing it off somehow
- Places to warm up- fire pits. Covered areas to get out of the weather/rain.
- Reduce traffic, give it some wind shelter.
- Colourful art. Seating
- This is tough to achieve as we lose greenery owing to the changing season. the teak decking is nice at repelling snow. but this area should receive priority snow clearing to keep pathways accessible for winter walks.
- Open fire was good. Again don't add loud music. Not good.
- Benches not made of metal.

- More events, art, perhaps seating with heating lamps.
- No more fire pits polluting the scarce fresh air!
- I use the area less in the winter but still frequently go there, primarily walking. Warming huts similar to those on the river walk might help. Be diligent with sidewalk snow clearing
- For the first time last winter it started to become a 4 season space. Two more container miniparks, brightly painted, brightly lit with heating in winter. Fireplace with seating was great but the form of seating needs some shelter on cold or windy days
- Regular snow maintenance in winter.
- Dedicated snow-clearing for the entire space, and seating areas with firepit(s)
- Seating and fire pits are essential
- Instal heaters that can be used during cold days and cool evenings
- lighting and evergreen trees
- Have the big triangle fire in the plaza in winter.
- Sheltered seating or heat lamps as part of events
- The firepits last year were great. Love the street lighting as well
- Shovel the sidewalks? But seriously, just put in heaters and a hot chocolate or apple cider stand.
- clear the snow
- I'm not sure this is the best use of funds at this time.
- Fire was nice last winter
- Seasonal decorations, lights, hotdog stands, fires!
- Fire pits, inventive lighting
- Make covid sized patios permanent
- warm, lively, lights
- Public Art and a Winter Fire Pit
- I think it is a thruway for the area and is therefore used all year. It is lovely in winter with the fire, hot chocolate, and sleigh rides. These things at that time of year make this area truly special.
- Fire pits and extend the plaza into the road to catch sun from the south
- Fire pit!
- Gas fire pits that could be automatically running throughout the winter or cold weather. Not self generated wood burning pits. Too much work for most people to put to use.
- Seasonal decorative lighting, benches to relax on, a spot for buskers.
- It seems to attract homeless people that use it as a meetup area.
- Eliminate all through-traffic and create a pedestrian-only plaza.
- More trees and planters and some seating
- Keep the fire pits and add vendor booths in the winter. More street performers
- use of building such as a coffee or wine bar
- bring more business/services/arts
- requires improved affordable parking space, plants/lights/ ART/, walking space. business tax incentives to bring more/new business/services

- The fire pits last year were great, perhaps warming heaters or winter activities, bike racks, lighting above, comfy & sheltered seating spaces for winter & shoulder seasons!
- Have winter warming stations. Make sure sidewalks not icy and well shovelled. Canopies.
- The fire pits along the path of the East Village encourage people to hang out. When the trees were here and lit up, that added character.
- having a kind of communal bonfire would be nice, and maybe like wintery activities, maybe carolers, or maybe more christmas lights.
- more reasons to visit despite the weather
- Outside heaters, wind barriers, accessible washrooms
- covered seating, the fireplaces wind shelters
- seating, protection from elements, ?heaters/fire pits??
- Not sure
- Not great in summer or winter, it's a nothing place. Needs a cafe or italian restaurant adjacent with all-year outdoor seating on the plaza. More twinkle lights would be good.
- Fire pits
- As mentioned above, the fire pits were great in the colder weather. I think of the plaza as a 3-season space. No matter how inviting that plaza is, I'm not going there in -30.
- Active fireplaces/heating options
- Heaters, plants, shelter from the wind and sun
- I liked the fire pits, just wrong to start these tools during the pandemic
- Firepits in the winter - good job already with the sleigh rides being here
- Ensure the snow & ice are cleared.
- Possibly have a covered over area and obviously, for winter, some sort of source of warmth... firepit.
- fire pit
- Use trees, flowers, and activities + art/light displays for all seasons. In winter, the edges are shoveled but the center is an ice/snow hazard/waste-land. Perhaps it could be shoveled entirely, or shoveled into fun patterns (maybe that's too crazy?).
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- keep up with the bonfire spots/signage on how to book them.
- Trees! A stage, fire pits

- The fire pit was a great start in trying to make this more inviting.
- Continued programming to activate the space - events like Beakerhead, film festival, etc. have made the space great but nothing until now has followed up to keep it from becoming an empty concrete plaza.
- Covered patios, fire pits, warming huts, outdoor skate area
- Pedestrian only
- Fancy colourful lighting for the dark winter, maybe some better benches.
- Is it possible to turn it into a small ice rink in the winter?
- Skating pond in winter. Fire pits.
- Furniture that can be used in the winter and some interesting lighting that would be a bright addition to the dark winter evenings.
- keep it accessible when it snows.
- Covered spaces, fire pits in winter
- Good lighting (e.g. industrial string lighting).
- Wood stove
- More outdoor seating? Coffee shops are close by so it could be cozy in the winter
- heat lamps; more string lights. (include ones that go across the road)
- shovel! the fire pits were a good addition too..
- The fires in the winter are great and this spot is still useful in the winter, especially on those sunny Chinook days. A little outdoor oasis during the winter!
- They would have to do more snow removal but because it's on the south side it doesn't get much sun in the winter.
- Design space for easy snow removal as it could collect a lot of snow.
- Heaters?
- Pretty hard to make it nice in Winter. Not sure you'll ever succeed.
- A removable dome to keep winter out.
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- I don't really want to use it in winter.
- Continue the fire pits in the winter, or put in standing heaters over some seating areas.
- Shovel the snow in the winter
- Outdoor heaters would make it more comfortable in the winter.
- I would actually say this space has been under utilized in the warmer months! In the winter this is the Center for Christmas in Kensington and there is often a fire pit set up
- Give out free down coats? Seriously - as long as the walks are clear, if people want to enjoy the space, they will be prepared. If it is miserable outside, it won't be used. Period.
- Fire pits, busker station, flexible space for community events,.. Upgraded Plaza will give this space a big lift, so build on that.



Kensington Plaza Open Space Project

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

December 2021

- permanently eliminate automobile traffic on Kensington Crescent.
- I like the restaurant idea - it could be closed in and used all year around.
- Make the space bigger and make it a priority to clear the snow so it can be used.
- Unless the City commits to snow removal, this space is not a suitable winter space.
- Is that fire pit going to be a permanent fixture. Otherwise, it's hard to imagine a reason to hang out there in the winter.
- Heat lamps, outdoor walk-up cafe, ice rink
- I think it could be. Last year there were fire pits set up, and while it was a great idea, the materials used made it seem kind of trashy
- maybe fire pits in the winter, bathrooms
- More planned activities in the space would be useful such as Christmas markets, sun and salsa type festivals for the summer etc.
- Lots of lights! Use soft white and color lights. More seating with tables not just benches. Allow drinks. Raised flower beds for color and summer flower drama.
- Anything to help keep away the cold wind coming off the river
- Have some reason why people would want to be there.
- Cold (no shelter/walls), no cover.
- Better surface. There are too many substrates, tripping hazards. More benches, tables needed. Firepit in winter?
- Maybe place some heaters around? this would match well with a more defined perimeter.
- Needs help in winter
- Soft landscaping, and places for people to congregate.
- Yes. There are lots of shoppers, offices, etc that use this area daily. Kensington has lost its vibe and needs to get back to being a unique place to enjoy.
- Fire pit
- Winter warming stations would be nice.
- Street furniture, more green, activity and programming
- The addition of fire pits for winter
- Area is not lively enough in winter to sustain activity, so I'd focus more on 3 season use
- The propane heating stations certainly helped.
- Needs a better sense of enclosure for the winter.

What is important for us to know about bike and scooter parking?

- it was there earlier this year when you had the firepits and that was a nice touch to grab a coffee and hang out. We have many days that hover around zero and it's a good temperature for walking to a coffee shop and meet up with friends.
- seating I suppose?

- Adding warmth and shelter without closing it off somehow
- Places to warm up- fire pits. Covered areas to get out of the weather/rain.
- Reduce traffic, give it some wind shelter.
- Colourful art. Seating
- This is tough to achieve as we lose greenery owing to the changing season. the teak decking is nice at repelling snow. but this area should receive priority snow clearing to keep pathways accessible for winter walks.
- Open fire was good. Again don't add loud music. Not good.
- Benches not made of metal.
- More events, art, perhaps seating with heating lamps.
- No more fire pits polluting the scarce fresh air!
- I use the area less in the winter but still frequently go there, primarily walking. Warming huts similar to those on the river walk might help. Be diligent with sidewalk snow clearing
- For the first time last winter it started to become a 4 season space. Two more container miniparks, brightly painted, brightly lit with heating in winter. Fireplace with seating was great but the form of seating needs some shelter on cold or windy days
- Regular snow maintenance in winter.
- Dedicated snow-clearing for the entire space, and seating areas with firepit(s)
- Seating and fire pits are essential
- Instal heaters that can be used during cold days and cool evenings
- lighting and evergreen trees
- Have the big triangle fire in the plaza in winter.
- Sheltered seating or heat lamps as part of events
- The firepits last year were great. Love the street lighting as well
- Shovel the sidewalks? But seriously, just put in heaters and a hot chocolate or apple cider stand.
- clear the snow
- I'm not sure this is the best use of funds at this time.
- Fire was nice last winter
- Seasonal decorations, lights, hotdog stands, fires!
- Fire pits, inventive lighting
- Make covid sized patios permanent
- warm, lively, lights
- Public Art and a Winter Fire Pit
- I think it is a thruway for the area and is therefore used all year. It is lovely in winter with the fire, hot chocolate, and sleigh rides. These things at that time of year make this area truly special.
- Fire pits and extend the plaza into the road to catch sun from the south
- Fire pit!
- Gas fire pits that could be automatically running throughout the winter or cold weather. Not self generated wood burning pits. Too much work for most people to put to use.

- Seasonal decorative lighting, benches to relax on, a spot for buskers.
- It seems to attract homeless people that use it as a meetup area.
- Eliminate all through-traffic and create a pedestrian-only plaza.
- More trees and planters and some seating
- Keep the fire pits and add vendor booths in the winter. More street performers
- use of building such as a coffee or wine bar
- bring more business/services/arts
- requires improved affordable parking space, plants/lights/ ART/, walking space. business tax incentives to bring more/new business/services
- The fire pits last year were great, perhaps warming heaters or winter activities, bike racks, lighting above, comfy & sheltered seating spaces for winter & shoulder seasons!
- Have winter warming stations. Make sure sidewalks not icy and well shovelled. Canopies.
- The fire pits along the path of the East Village encourage people to hang out. When the trees were here and lit up, that added character.
- having a kind of communal bonfire would be nice, and maybe like wintery activities, maybe carolers, or maybe more christmas lights.
- more reasons to visit despite the weather
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Kensington Plaza Open Space Project

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- Needs a better sense of enclosure for the winter.

What is important for us to know about trees in this space? Tell us why.

- iTrees, plants and planters create a more inviting space to hang out. Especially evergreens in the winter. I was recently in Bridgeland and the plaza outside the Starbucks is a great space to have a coffee and visit with neighbours and friends.
- trees offer some shade and landmark-ness
- Greenery makes a space feel alive and inviting. In winter, trees can also be decorated which adds to the ambience.
- More trees in general are needed as climate change accelerates, to shield from extreme heat and to improve air quality.
- Trees are ALWAYS important to the atmosphere of a place.
- Shade in summer and ambience and the city keeps cutting down trees.
- We need to maintain greenery in this space. Trees should be a high priority to improve the area.
- The dead trees suck. Get rid of them already!!!! Unless you plan to water new trees then don't plant them because they just die and look terrible
- Helps with shade and with a feeling of life
- Trees increase property values and sales, provide street cooling in heat waves, and contribute to attractive spaces people want to be in. We've chatted with other business about how awesome it would be to plant trees down the middle of the street. :)
- Kensington is such a beautiful old area with shops AND nature. I feel it is important to keep the trees prominent as time goes on.
- It makes the space more vibrant
- I enjoy having trees in public spaces to improve local air quality, and provide shade. They also greatly improve the aesthetics.
- Trees are essential in every public space. They are calming and beautiful in summer and are carbon sinks. They will be increasingly necessary for shade in hot spells. In all seasons they connect people with the natural world.
- For obvious environmental health and aesthetic reasons, trees are a requirement for any public space to be attractive to use.
- Greenery adds more character than any other option
- Urban forest is more important than ever. Plant trees!!
- Trees are very important!!!
- please replant some!!
- It's so nice having greenspaces wherever we can. As well as providing shade in the summer months.
- trees create a more lively and liveable atmosphere.



Kensington Plaza Open Space Project

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

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- replant
- I would like to see trees but not poplar trees.
- Nice there's would be good.
- Increased beauty and welcoming feel
- Trees in urban areas are so important. And big ones, not all these small ornamental ones. Big trees, once tall, leave a lot of room underneath and shade
- The more tree, the better!
- The trees should absolutely part of the plaza for aesthetic and environmental benefits.
- Provide shade and naturalize the space
- I think the trees make the area look good and should be kept.
- Trees remind us where we live. That this neighbourhood is not just about shopping and coffee --it is our home.
- Old world plaza feel, shade, climate resiliency
- Keep all retail visible but make it an enjoyable place to sit. Help shield traffic noise (loud buses).
- we need more trees
- Trees are always important! For a variety of reasons. Nothing feels cozy without vegetation.
- I think it's important to balance urban settings (ie. Large amounts of concrete and metal) with elements of nature.
- Natural greenery is an essential part of cultivating a healthy environment for those who live and work here. The positive mental health effects of trees are significant. Allowing elderly trees to die was gross negligence of the part of our representatives.
- See above. There's too much concrete
- They are beautiful and create a sense of peace in a very urban neighborhood. They also store carbon dioxide.
- Anchors the space and provides a break from the urban form. Provides shade for seating areas and adding more green to a plaza is always more beautiful.
- trees are nice for shade in the summer
- make it beautiful European type environment, thank you
- make it beautiful European type environment, thank you
- Trees make a city, to me. They're needed for wildlife, beauty, shelter, and wind breaks. Plant new or more trees! Maybe even blossom trees!
- If the trees died maybe that's a hint they don't grow there. But yes trees are lovely. I saw Druh's trees all die on 16 AV. So let's get an expert tree opinion
- They were the most pleasant part of the space; green in the summer, and light up through the winter.
- i love trees and greenery
- A space feels more welcoming with trees and shade is nice.
- Many areas in Hillhurst had orchards, fruit trees and they provide shelter and animal habitat.

- Helps to make the space more welcoming, less of a concrete jungle. Studies show trees in public spaces are important to mental health and social wellbeing.
- greenery and trees are beneficial to our environment and our mental health, very important in our city to maintain our trees
- Natural beauty
- Trees are desirable but surrounding them with concrete paving is a death sentence. Provide permeable surface around them, grass or clover so they have some ecosystem value.
- It is essential, it provides the 'quality of space'.
- Green spaces and foliage are extremely important to me.
- Who doesn't love trees...
- Having no trees (or small skinny trees) sucks and looks bad.
- Having some variability is important, no one wants to sit in a public space and feel on display for the entire street and adjacent patios
- No idea why the City is chopping all the trees in Kensington/Sunnyside. It's awful.
- Trees that will provide shade. why did trees die and what can be done to prevent this from happening.
- Shade make for walkable street
- Very Important to have trees - makes it feel like a more approachable space.
- More green is more better.
- Trees make the space much more appealing and provide much needed shade in the summer.
- Create character - evergreen trees would be special since they could be decorated in winter to add to the 4 season plan
- Trees and plantings make any space more enjoyable and restorative.
- SO CRITICAL!!! Important for beauty, shade, decor, personality, environment...this is just a MUST-HAVE.
- I like trees.
- It greens and shades a big concrete triangle!
- Trees are a gift - maximize the urban forest.
- I like have trees since it makes the space more inviting and keeps it cool during the summer. Trees encourage you to stick around as well, since they do offer shade and protection from the elements (to some degree).
- More trees, always
- Having large trees would improve the overall feel and aesthetic of Kensington
- Trees make for a more sustainable, natural feel to the largely urbanized area. It creates warmth and invites birds as well.
- this city needs trees - shade rocks
- Deciduous trees are necessary, to provide shade in hot weather and to beautify the plaza. Don't plant conifers though.



Kensington Plaza Open Space Project

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- I like trees, nice shade in the summer, bit of wind break in the winter. it wont kill me if they're not replaced, but I'd like it.
- Shade, shelter, beauty
- Trees ensure that the space is welcoming.
- Shade is a must.
- Microclimate, atmosphere, ambiance
- Cleans the air, provides shade and gives the area a park like feel
- Trees provide shade and improve aesthetics.
- Green us very important for a green space. Doesn't have to be trees. Shade is also good for that area.
- I am all for more trees, but only if there's actually enough space for them to thrive and not just die off. If there just isn't the space or water supplies, other sculptures and such would be a better option.
- it doesn't feel like a community space without vegetation. Also, trees provide a natural buffer from all the road dirt and traffic noise. There aren't many trees in the whole area, which makes it seem more industrial than community oriented.
- Trees are really important for shade and more of an inviting space
- Trees are trees, man
- Extremely important! They make any space more alive and inviting. Calgary doesn't have enough large trees!
- Trees are always important
- shade is good!
- If you can find large trees that will grow there then that would be good. Planting is one thing - maintaining them and providing them with the nourishment/protection to survive will be more difficult
- Trees are great
- Trees make the area 'living' as many of the buildings themselves have little character.
- Right now, it's all concrete -- we need the trees!
- More trees in the city, especially around plazas, is important for managing the effect of concrete on cities retaining heat. Also makes the area nicer. Trees helping segregate the plaza from the road would be nice.
- City trees die due to lack of water. It's happening right now on 15 St. where they were planted a few years ago. A grate is not enough. The watering need is as large in diameter as the tree is tall. (It used to be thought it was the canopy width.)
- I think it's important to have greenery, but gardens would be nice too! As long as there is more privacy from the road (somehow) I think it'd be a better space.
- I like trees for shade, greenery amongst the buildings, and to hang lights, umbrellas or fun objects
- It looks uncared for. Either replace or remove
- Trees are great on their own and have so many cascading benefits.
- The trees are what make the Kensington and West Hillhurst great
- Absolutely. Trees are so important. Please replant!

- They provide shade in the summer and add life & vibrancy to the area. As an older neighbourhood, one of the best parts of Kensington is having mature trees. Leafy trees are missing from many other Calgary neighbourhoods, they make Kensington much nicer
- This is absolutely important!!! This is a huge draw for the older neighbourhoods in this city. If you think of any other city in the world, the best areas have a mix of urban development and mature greenery.
- Green space makes an area more alive, liveable and much more enjoyable to relax in
- Improved urban aesthetics. Put the money into landscape (vegetation and hardscaping) rather than Public Art. Nature is art.
- Need more green, more nature, more shade, more interest. Trees with nearby seating needed.
- Beautiful, natural cooling. Softens the view. Invites birds into area.
- The trees made the space very welcome and lively. They're missed.
- Having a natural canopy is better.
- The trees look awful gives an appearance of an area no one cares for
- The trees are very important and add character and shade to the space.
- In my opinion, having trees on the street just reduce the space for pedestrians and makes access for people with reduced mobility more challenging. I don't think we need the trees.
- Trees create warmth and character
- if not trees, than public art
- it's like asking how important is it for you to breathe in this space. replace
- The trees are critical for shade as well as for beauty. Having lights on the trees year-round has made a huge difference. Even the umbrellas i.e. any kind of art installation with trees would be lovely
- This space will only feel good if it can create some space between the intersection.
- Maybe? Some shade is good. It's a good place to put more lights for ambiance. Add some coloured lights and make a big deal of doing a Christmas light up event.
- The more natural elements in the city the better
- I didn't know that there were trees here before. I just never noticed. So not that important to me apparently.
- Not enough greenery on Kensington Road.
- Add shade in summer, interest in winter, allow for seasonal lighting. Natural atmosphere. Environment.
- Trees add so much character and can really make a space feel 'cozy' - string lights, Xmas lights, decorations etc.
- Trees make the space feel comfortable, welcoming and offer a reprieve from the business of Kensington road
- Trees are some of the key to people liking the feel of the area
- Planting trees in a concrete box with limited soil and room for root development makes the trees very vulnerable to our extreme weather. Some soft landscaping would be a welcome addition. City planners have added too much hard landscaping to our riverwalk



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- They add to the village. Would be great to decorate them during the holidays season to make them a statement.
- Trees give a commercial space a community feeling. They are also important in sheltering for a four season space - shade rain shield wind break
- Shade in the summer. Trees nice decoration for streets. In the summer they have leaves. In the winter they can be decorated with Christmas lights.
- More trees are always great.
- Increases attractiveness and contributes to environmental needs. Breaks wind on a cool day.
- Trees help with cooling in the summer. They beautify the space
- I thought they were quite iconic in the space
- Trees make the plaza seem less like an urban desert
- Trees will bring shade to the plaza -more enjoyable to spend time on the plaza in summer when you have some shade and not 'cooking' on the asphalt.
- Essential. It helps cool and enclose the space.