

Downtown Streetscape Elements Engagement Report

October 2017



Summary

Residents and businesses were invited to share their thoughts on downtown Kelowna streetscape elements from September 20 to October 8 through an online survey and question portal on the Get Involved engagement platform.

In order to establish a consistent approach to downtown streetscape elements, the engagement was designed to gather input on preferred look and feel of benches, trash receptacles, bike racks and traffic bollards, as well as possible locations.

The online survey provided examples of various street furniture styles with varying levels of ornamentation and asked which style would best suit each of downtown's four different districts: the cultural district, residential district, business district, and historic and entertainment district.

Input opportunities were promoted through the City's news bulletins, the website, social media channels and the City's Get Involved website.

This report provides a summary of the comments and questions received through the Get Involved site.

Community feedback, along with other considerations such as operational requirements and life-cycle costs will be used to finalize three groups of complementary elements called suites.

Online survey and Q&A

An open, online survey was made available from September 20 to October 8, 2017 and promoted through the City's news bulletins, the website, social media channels and the City's Get Involved website.

We received 236 survey responses of the 850 visitors to the engagement page.

Results from open surveys such as this are a collection of opinions and perceptions from interested or potentially affected residents, and not a statistically valid random sample of all Kelowna residents. This report contains results from the open survey. Due to the opt-in and open method, results are qualitative in nature and cannot be said to represent views of all Kelowna citizens.

The primary objective of the engagement was to:

- ▶ Obtain input from residents regarding preferences for look and feel of downtown streetscape elements as the City works to establish streetscaping guidelines for downtown districts

In addition to the survey responses, we had a Q&A portal on the Get Involved website where residents could ask project-related questions. Six residents asked questions through this portal.



"The city has charm and a quaintness about it. Let's make [the street furniture] functional, attractive, and unique."

– Survey respondent

What we heard

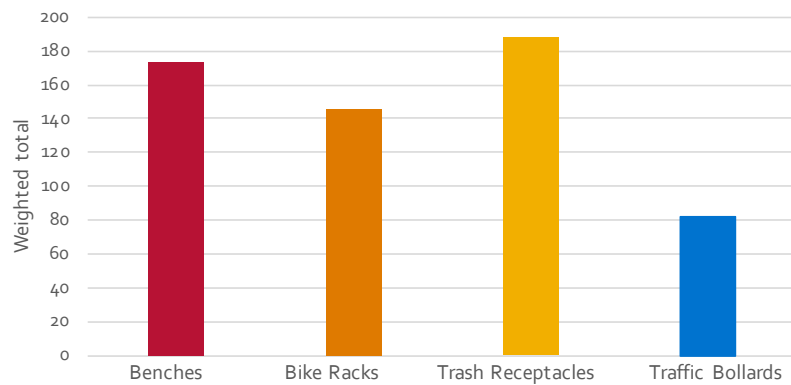
General thoughts on sidewalk elements

Survey respondents were asked to rank the sidewalk elements they think are the most important, with 1 being most important to 4 being least important. Respondents ranked trash receptacles as the most important element, followed by benches. Traffic bollards were ranked as the lowest level of importance.

"I would like to see an abundance of trash receptacles. The more the better."

– Survey respondent

Because sidewalk space is often limited, we would like to know which elements you think are most important to include. Please rank the the following four pieces of street furniture.



Respondents were then asked to rank features, such as durability, quality, character, comfort, style and cost for each piece of street furniture.

Durability to maximize resistance to weather and vandalism was ranked as the most important feature for benches and trash receptacles. For bike racks and traffic bollards, functionality was most important for respondents, followed closely by durability.

Style was ranked as the least important for trash receptacles, bike racks and bollards, whereas cost was ranked of lowest importance for benches.

"Functional, cost efficient & pleasing to the eye is what I believe is most important to keeping Kelowna the beautiful city it is!"

– Survey respondent

Preferences for suite styles

Residents were asked to compare suite styles that fall under the traditional, contemporary and transitional themes.

Traditional Suites



Respondents were fairly evenly split between the three traditional examples, with Example 2 receiving slightly less votes than the other two options. When asked about levels of ornamentation for traditional suites, the majority of respondents (51 per cent) said they prefer moderate ornamentation over little or lots of ornamentation.

"I made my selection based on aesthetics and functionality. Other selections were more transitional, more modern. I believe the first example is the best example and would fit best within the traditional community."
 – Survey respondent

Contemporary Suites



"Mixing media is a great way to modernize these items. Two tones, wood and metal. As displayed in Example 3."
 – Survey respondent

Fifty-four per cent of respondents liked the contemporary Example 3 the best and just under half said they would prefer a moderately stylized design over highly stylized and less stylized (more sleek).

Transitional Suites



The transitional examples 1 and 2 tied, each with 39 per cent of respondent preference. Fifty-seven per cent of respondents would like an even blend of traditional and contemporary when it comes to transitional style.

"A mix between old elements and new elements is a very nice design, so I think that the contemporary design could be used throughout the city to maintain continuity yet also provide a contrast between old and new, or complimentary in newer areas."
 – Survey respondent

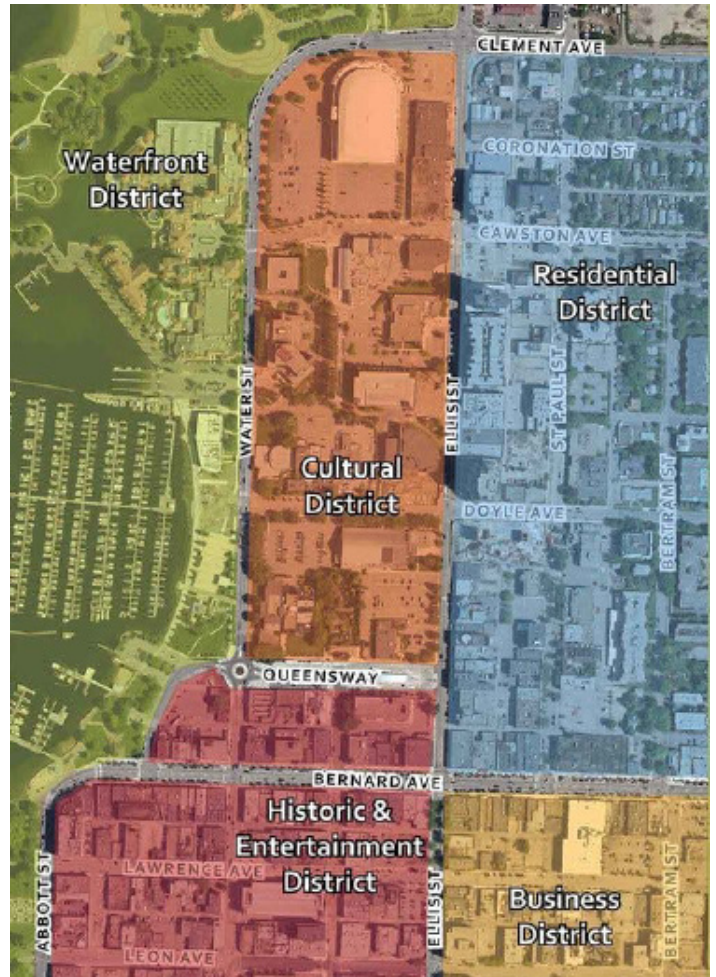
Additional comments

A number of comments throughout the survey highlighted a preference for benches without dividers, trash receptacles with a recycling component and larger openings to reduce garbage on the street and more bike racks in the downtown area.

Theme preferences for different districts

The survey asked respondents to select a theme they think best suits each of downtown’s distinct districts.

For the cultural district, 40 per cent of respondents said the transitional theme is most appropriate. Over half of respondents said the traditional theme would work best for the historic and entertainment district and selected the contemporary theme for the business district. Forty-two per cent of respondents said a transitional theme would be most appropriate for the residential district, followed closely by the contemporary theme with 38 per cent of the votes.



"I believe any kind of element that encourages welcoming people to slow down and sit down to enjoy the beauty around them is beneficial to the individual, the neighbourhood, and the community."

– Survey respondent

Q&A portal

Six questions were asked through the Q&A portal on the engagement platform. Question topics included recycling options for the garbage receptacles, sidewalk cleaning, snow removal, energy conservation, timeline for improvements in other areas and bench options with social benefits. Each question was responded to by a member of the project team.

Survey respondent demographics

The majority of survey respondents live outside of downtown Kelowna. However, over a third of them work in the area.

In a typical month, almost all respondents make either weekly or daily trips downtown. The top five reasons for visiting downtown include dining, exercise/walking, shopping, entertainment and beach front park amenities. Over 90 per cent of visits exceed one hour, with 33 per cent of visits lasting one to two hours, 32 per cent lasting two to three hours and 30 per cent lasting for more than three hours.

