



UNIVERSITY ENDOWMENT LANDS

PLACEMAKING & IDENTITY

Area D's public and social spaces —courtyards, shop entrances and patios, front porches, parks, streets, laneways, greenways and pathways — are where public life happens and where a 'sense of place' is created. These places and spaces are where we interact on a daily basis, as we live, work, play, explore and connect with each other. Great spaces are places for people!

However, many of these spaces largely serve the growing student populations at UBC and the Village is missing important amenities for community members who live here year-round. Limited public spaces, car-oriented streets, aging infrastructure, and cold and wet weather can be challenging to create active, vibrant spaces that bring people together year-round.

HOW CAN WE CREATE VIBRANT AND MEMORABLE PLACES AND EXPERIENCES THAT STRENGTHEN THE AREA'S IDENTITY AND BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER?

TRENDS & ISSUES

- **Area D is a compact neighbourhood.** The University Marketplace and Plaza, parks, and historic buildings form strong pieces of our identity and character.
- **The neighbourhood is walkable and cyclable.** Many residents commute by walking (31%), and cycling (10%).
- **The neighbourhood is still car-oriented.** Despite the high proportion of pedestrians and cyclists, streets are still designed for cars, which can limit the look, feel and activities that occur along streets and sidewalks.
- **Recreation is limited.** While the community is surrounded by forested lands, there are limited parks and no recreation amenities (other than those at UBC) in Area D. Jim Everett Memorial Park provides space for recreation. The neighbourhood, however, has few active recreation amenities (such as fitness equipment, gazebos, playgrounds or community gardens). The **lelorn** development will provide a new Community Centre and playground but will also involve the loss of urban forest. As we grow, it will be important to plan our parks, public space and recreation amenities to meet the communities needs.
- **There are many public and private spaces.** The Area contains many public spaces that can be ‘activated’ to encourage more social interactions and gatherings (such as sidewalks and lanes where cafes and restaurants can ‘spill out’ or host pop up events). There is also potential to work with building owners to activate privately-owned, publicly accessible spaces (such as plazas, storefronts, and patios).
- **There are limited community events and gatherings.** UEL is a popular location for races and golf tournaments but the Village has few events that bring community together.
- **Fall and winter can be a challenge – and an opportunity.** Fall and winter can be wet and cold and it can be hard to get people outside during those months. However, by embracing these seasons with appropriate design (pedestrian overhangs, covered areas), we can support thriving public spaces and social opportunities year-round.
- **There are limited community initiatives.** Placemaking comes from the community and there are limited services, volunteer groups, business groups or other social networks that help people connect.
- **Area D has many spiritual centres.** The area contains many spiritual centres including Regent College, Gerard House, and nearby University Chapel and St. Anselm’s Church.

KEY FACTS

- The UEL has over 1,200 hectares (3,000 acres) of mostly-forested land.
- Area D is home to over 2,000 people with an average household size of 2.62.
- The majority of residents in Area D are university students and young families.
- The Area includes a community gathering and meeting space in the Marketplace building.
- The future development will add a variety of amenities to the area including a community centre, a daycare, playgrounds and a commercial plaza.
- Area D residents have access to nearby primary schools, health facilities, and commercial services.
- Area D residents also have access to UBC amenities including two community centres, museums, libraries, the Aquatic Centre, ice rink, gardens, food and drink, a pub, and cultural facilities.

KEY DEFINITIONS

Placemaking is a people-centered approach to place – designing places for people and not cars and thinking about how people will experience a place with all five senses. A “sense of place” is what makes certain places unique and memorable and makes people want to spend time there. This can be encouraged through planning, zoning, and design – but a key part comes from the community and the people who live there. Placemaking can also be a partnership with private, public, and non-profit organizations, working together to shape public spaces through design, infrastructure, art and culture. Sometimes places are permanent, like a public plaza or park, and other times, they may be temporary like a block party, pop up art exhibition, or community garden on a vacant lot.

RELATED POLICIES & PLANS

- University Endowment Land Act
- UEL Official Community Plan
- Land Use, Building and Community Administration Bylaw
- Community Amenity Provisions

WHAT MAKES A GREAT PLACE?

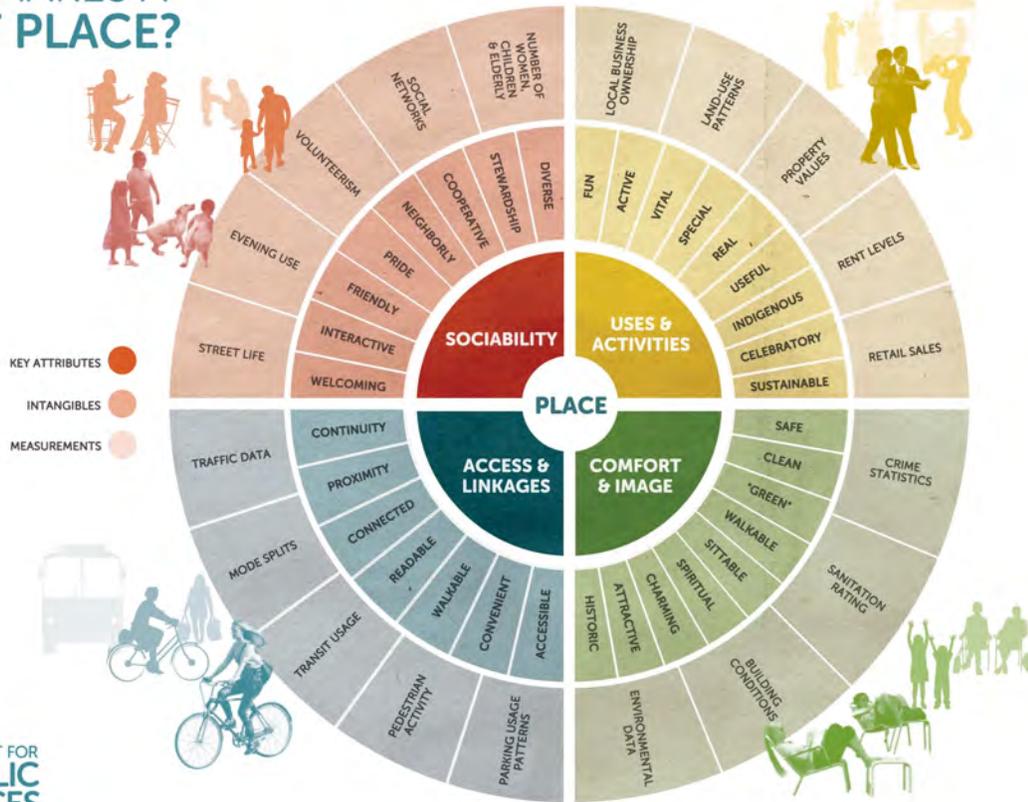


Image Credit: Project for Public Spaces

GOALS

The UEL can work towards the following goals and objectives:

Goal 1: Create and enhance a unique sense of place

- Acknowledge and maintain links to Area D's past
- Balance built and natural spaces

Goal 2: Promote safe, inclusive and vibrant places

- Design places for people rather than cars
- Activate public spaces and streets for fun, safe and inclusive gathering and social interactions
- Support a wide range of arts, culture and recreational activities, celebrations, events and festivals that are accessible and affordable

Goal 3: Foster community health and wellbeing

- Create recreational, cultural and other public spaces as 'community living rooms'
- Create passive and active recreation space for community health
- Increase access to nutritious, safe, healthy, local food

Goal 4: Support residents in aging in place

- Strengthen the Village as the walkable hub of the community
- Design accessible spaces and buildings for people of all ages and abilities
- Support entertainment activities for all stages of life throughout the year

IDEAS

To support public spaces that reflect Area D's identity, the UEL can explore a range of policies, projects and partnerships. The following provides options to spark discussion about the best way forward for Area D. It is not a complete list of options and no decisions have been made.

WE WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK!

Share your thoughts on the future of Area D by:

- Visiting us at AreaDPlan.ca
- Telling us what you think in an online survey
- Coming to one of our events

Update Design Guidelines. Update the design guidelines for Area D to support a pedestrian-friendly environment, to ensure buildings reflect the local character and are integrated with parks, to support active frontages along commercial streets and to protect view corridors.

Community Arts And Culture Strategy. Develop a strategy for arts, culture, celebrations and events in association with the new community centre. This could include design guidelines for winter safety and comfort, and identify key events and activities to bring people together year-round.

Creative Re-use Of Spaces. Encourage the creative re-use of existing spaces through direct investment, grants and tax incentives such as: activating underused public spaces, creating indoor spaces for public use, supporting multi-purpose commercial areas with pop up parks and playgrounds or initiatives to celebrate arts, culture and history (like murals and similar art forms).

Explore Pilot Projects. Pilot projects are a way to test public space ideas and to allow people to experience space in new ways. For example, an activation of the Marketplace lane, a closure of a street for an event like 'car-free day', or working with property owners to build a new public space with seating, landscaping, children's play toys and opportunities for events and entertainment.

Explore Partnerships. Explore partnerships and formalized protocols with the Vancouver School Board and UBC for the community to be able to use key school and recreation facilities not provided for at the new community centre.

Explore Design Competitions. Design competitions can unleash the creativity of people in and outside of the area to create amazing places. It is a great way to generate unique ideas to activate space.

CASE STUDIES

PUBLIC ART, NORTH VANCOUVER

The City of North Vancouver is home to numerous public artworks that mark gateways and greenways, animate streetscapes, and enhance public gathering places. The artworks reflect and express local heritage, culture and environment, contributing to the local sense of identity. The City created a Public Art Program that involves three program streams: civic projects, private sector development, and community art projects. This includes policies and procedures to guide the art selection process from site identification and artist selection to installation and maintenance.

Photo credit: City of North Vancouver



PLACES FOR PEOPLE, NEW YORK

As New York City's transportation commissioner, Janette Sadik-Khan and her team transformed the streets of New York from car-centric to dynamic spaces for pedestrians and people on bikes.

Using inexpensive tactics of painting spaces and installing bollards, seating and umbrellas, she created plazas and bike lanes for people in the most congested areas of the City. The result was reduced congestion, increase in foot traffic and improved economic returns for businesses.



LA PÉPINIÈRE SEASONAL PLACEMAKING, MONTREAL

[La Pépinière](#) is an organization which facilitates and incubates public spaces. It creates temporary installations that celebrate things that are uniquely Montreal.

These installations are hosted throughout different seasons to help to bring community together year-round and celebrate local arts and culture.



*Before and after images of Times Square, NYC
Photo credit: Julio Palleiro/NYC DOT.*