



U Boulevard Area

2018 Update

Public Consultation Summary Report

March 16 to April 8, 2018



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1. Executive Summary

This report presents a summary of feedback received during the public consultation period for the 2018 update of the U Boulevard Area Design Guidelines from March 14 to April 8, 2018. The consultation offered the opportunity for the UBC community to share input through an online survey and in person at two public open houses. A total of 264 members of the community submitted feedback through these consultation opportunities. Groups engaged with included student government and societies, faculties and departments, staff, students, neighbourhood residents, and campus advisory committees.

The feedback received fell under three main categories surrounding design considerations and plans for the U Boulevard Area: student housing, green spaces, and current and future considerations. Comments largely supported increasing student housing opportunities and supportive amenities, while some concern was voiced about increased development, especially the possibility of losing open green spaces. Pedestrian connectivity, and access to green spaces, and campus amenities were three main areas that arose as important features to consider in planning U Boulevard Area now and in the future.

Feedback gathered during this phase of consultation in combination with further technical work will be presented to the UBC Board of Governors in September 2018. Specific projects will be updated to take this consultation feedback into account, and then proceed through a standard capital approval process, subject to UBC Board of Governors approval.

2. The History and Changing Needs of the U Boulevard Area

The vision for the U Boulevard Area is to create a vibrant academic and social hub that brings people together. The area should contribute to UBC's complete community by connecting people conveniently to transit, student services, academic facilities and study spaces. The area should serve as a welcoming university gateway that acts as a symbolic entrance to the UBC Point Grey campus.

This vision was developed through a public consultation phase for the U Boulevard Area in 2015. Since then, the needs of the UBC campus community have changed significantly. As part of the next steps for this area, we are working to identify new opportunities for student housing and academic facilities that encourage teaching, learning, and research.

Despite a 43% increase in student beds since 2010, wait lists have increased and demand for student housing continues to grow. Improved access to student housing supports student engagement, experience, and satisfaction and this access is especially important for those new to Vancouver. Current plans for the U Boulevard Area identify a number of sites for housing geared towards students, and other housing for UBC students, faculty and staff. These housing projects were the main driver of this consultation phase.

The consultation surrounding the 2018 Update was designed to investigate what is important to the UBC community when discussing student housing, academic facilities and green spaces in the U Boulevard Area.

3. Engagement Summary

Public consultation activities included an online survey which ran from March 16 to April 8, 2018, two public open houses, and a pop-up information booth at Allard Hall School of Law. Copies of the open house display boards and online survey are provided in Appendix II and III respectively.

During this phase, participants were invited to share their comments on proposed planning and design concepts for:

- Student housing concepts in the Brock Commons and Walter Gage areas
- Student housing and ground floor academic uses on the D.H. Copp site
- A new Arts Student Centre siting
- Improvements to outdoor spaces

In total:

- **123** people attended the open houses, with varying levels of participation
- **141** people submitted feedback via the online survey
- **2** people submitted feedback via email correspondence
- **1,824** individual comments were received (**1,547** online and **277** in person)

Other formal and informal engagement activities included a number of project meetings with several campus planning and advisory committees, as well as discussions with student societies and neighbourhood interest committees.

Notifications

Notification for the U Boulevard Area 2018 update was emailed to 125 key stakeholders from student government and societies, faculties and departments, UBC administration, campus residents, and neighbours.

The stakeholder email included a link to the Campus and Community Planning (C+CP) website for more information. Stakeholders were encouraged to share the information with their networks.

C+CP provided notification to the general public between February 27 to April 8 through newspaper advertising, social media, email, and stakeholder outreach. Notification was provided through the following print advertisements and online channels:

- The Vancouver Courier ad in February 22 and March 1 editions (105, 229 copies each edition)
- The Ubysey newspaper ads in March 20 and 27 editions (8,000 copies distributed monthly)
- The Ubysey website ad (10,000 web impressions)
- The C+CP February monthly e-newsletter (3,042)
- Posts to C+CP Twitter accounts between April February 27 and April 8 (52 posts to 1,291 followers)

- The Campus Resident (March issue – 5,050 copies)
- UNA e-newsletter (2,475 emails)
- Campus digital signage
- C+CP website - project webpage (455 unique page views)
- UBC Events web page (exact reach unknown)
- Posters distributed
 - To neighbourhood (40 copies posted)
 - To UBC offices (400 copies posted)
 - To UBC community (50 copies posted)
 - Student residences (58 copies posted)
- Postcards sent to neighbours and stakeholders in the U Boulevard vicinity (756)

Open Houses

Two public open houses were held, attended by a total of **120** participants:

Open House #1

March 19, 2018 from 11am to 2pm

Lower Atrium of the AMS Nest, 6133 University Boulevard

83 attendees

Open House #2

March 22, 2018 from 4pm to 7pm

Irving K. Barber, 2nd floor lobby, 1961 East Mall

40 attendees

Campus and Community Planning staff were available at the open houses to answer questions from the public. A series of 11 display boards and a three-sided poster tower were set up at each open house to provide an overview of the proposed planning and design concepts. As participants viewed the boards they were encouraged to provide feedback questions by writing comments to sticky notes and placing them on boards. Sticky notes were collected at the end of the open house and transcribed. In addition, the survey was made available for the public to fill out, either through a print version or through a QR code linking to the online survey, accessible through their phones.

In response to a request from the Peter A. Allard School of Law, a smaller-scale public information session was held on March 13. Six display boards from the open house, including content on the nearby Brock Commons site, were set up and approximately 40 people dropped by to learn about the plans and share comments.

Website and Online Survey

During the public consultation period the Campus and Community Planning website hosted the same information (display boards etc.) available at the public open houses. The web content, including the

online survey, was available on March 14. The online survey included the same questions on the public open house materials and was available from March 14 to April 8, 2018.

Formal and Informal UBoulevard Project Meetings

In addition to the in person and online engagement activities that took place during the consultation period, Campus + Community Planning staff met with a number of different stakeholder groups and committees over several months in 2018. These meetings were organized either formally or informally to update and discuss the planning process for the numerous projects underway in the U Boulevard area. The table below captures the groups that were met with and their dates:

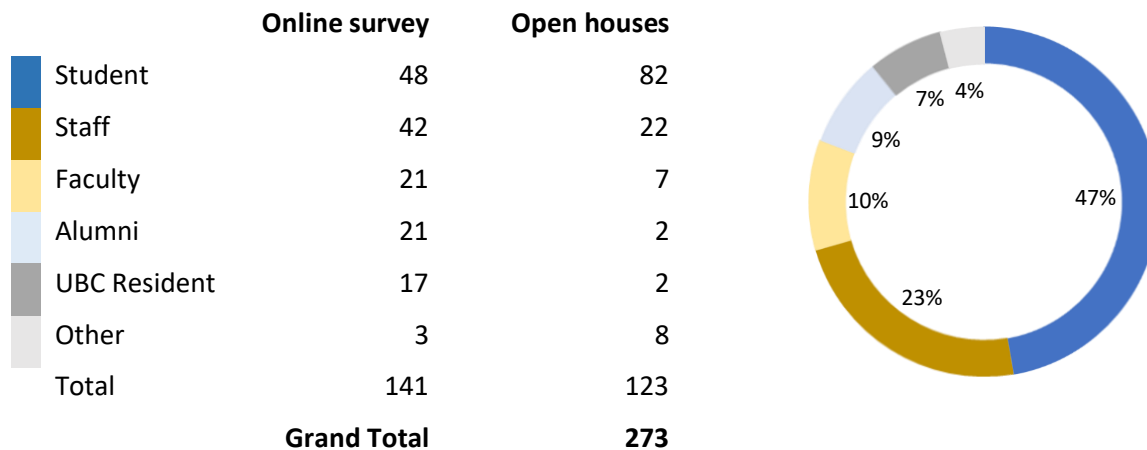
Group	Meeting Date
University Endowment Lands Community Advisory Committee	February 19, 2018
Senate Academic Building Needs Committee and Property and Planning Advisory Committee	February 20, 2018
Alma Mater Society and Student Senators Workshop	March 21, 2018
President's Advisory Council on Campus Enhancement	April 4, 2018
Property and Planning Advisory Committee	May 15, 2018

There was also a University Boulevard Design Guidelines Workshop that delved deeper into the specific considerations given to the area design guidelines and how they are being updated in 2018.

Participant Demographics

A total of 261 students, faculty, staff, alumni, and UBC residents participated in the consultation process. The following tables show who participated in the process and the differences in demographic numbers between the open house and online survey. The circle chart below shows the demographics of total participation by percentage. An important note about open house attendance is that our events are frequently in open spaces where it can be difficult to track the number of people engaged. Individuals spent varying amount of time at the open house, with engagement levels ranging from reading the boards, writing feedback on sticky notes, and asking staff members a number of detailed questions.

To avoid double counting, respondents with multiple affiliations with UBC were counted as the first listed, for example if a person indicated they were a UBC resident and alumni, they were counted as a resident.



4. What We Heard

The feedback provided during the consultation period has been divided into three main sections: Student housing; the Arts Student Centre and campus green spaces; and the U Boulevard Area now and in the future. Each of these sections summarizes the questions asked throughout the consultation period by listing the top themes in a table format. The analysis methodology followed a process where top themes were represented by the comments common to 5% or more of total participants. The detailed summary of the verbatim comments in their entirety is provided in the Appendix.

Student Housing

Feedback we received on student housing covered design concepts and considerations for the future Walter Gage residences, Brock Commons Phase II, and the D.H. Copp site as well as design considerations to ensure new student housing is successful.

Overall responses from the public consultation indicate support for expanding student housing capacity at the UBC Vancouver campus, specifically increasing the number of student beds on campus in order to promote affordability. This support was also mentioned in other stakeholder meetings with campus advisory committees where central affordable housing was connected to student wellbeing. A note here was that housing would not compromise long-term academic land capacity. Additionally, there has been some concern from University Endowment Land and Chancellor Place residents about building heights and view and noise disruptions regarding the new housing projects.

Brock Commons Phase II

Specific questions were asked about the possibility of increasing height limits at Brock Commons to meet increased student housing demands, as well as design considerations for future student housing in a mixed-use hub.

“Done in an intentional way, taller buildings can allow for more space for everyone.”

Participants generally were in support of increasing density of buildings as it would increase capacity for student housing in the area. However, a number of respondents expressed concern about the impact that extensive building in the Brock Commons site could have on the surrounding area, especially if not well-integrated into the landscape. Possible impacts included negative effects on natural light, views, green spaces, and the ability to develop a sense of community.

Question: UBC is considering asking the province to change the Land Use Plan to allow more height for student housing in the heart of campus, including this next phase of Brock Commons. What do you think?	# of comments received
Support higher buildings to promote density	41
Do not raise height limits	20
Heights will shade the area	12
Heights have a negative impact on existing views	11
Support for integrating tall buildings into the landscape	10
Concern over losing the sense of community	9

In terms of design considerations for Brock Commons, there was a clear desire to increase the amount of outdoor space in the area that could be used for relaxing outside and socializing with friends. As well participants frequently suggested preserving or creating more green space, increasing the availability of public seating and capitalizing on natural light. There was also some concern about nearby open spaces and how they would be affected by the additional development involved with Phase II of Brock Commons.

Question:	# of comments received
As we plan for this new mixed-use hub, what design considerations are important to you (e.g. outdoor furniture, informal recreation opportunities, public art)?	
Flexible outdoor spaces	30
Open green spaces	23
Public seating	22
Public art	13
Natural light and windows	12
Weather protection	11
Concern about impact on nearby spaces	10
Pedestrian connection and access	9

Future Walter Gage Residences

In reference to the proposed future expansion of student housing in the existing Walter Gage Residence area, participants responded to questions concerning student housing and wellbeing, and specific design considerations to ensure that future housing fits within the existing campus and neighbourhood context.

When asked about feedback as to how this new project could contribute to the student experience, participants responded with suggestions strongly supporting more health and wellness services, as well as fitness spaces, and increasing the amount of nearby green space. Other ideas included bike amenities, such as bike racks and dedicated bike lanes, and ensuring the new buildings are aesthetically pleasing.

Question:	# of comments received
As we add new student housing to this area, what should be considered to enhance student experience, health and wellbeing?	
Health and fitness spaces	16
Open green spaces	16
More food options (healthy and affordable)	14
Bike amenities (storage, lanes, etc.)	10
Pedestrian connections and access	10
New buildings need aesthetics and personality	10
More flexible shared spaces	9
Promoting transit over driving	8

Natural light and windows	8
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Several suggestions were prevalent when asked about specific design considerations for new Walter Gage Residences. Ensuring that development will preserve open green spaces was a strong theme, as was the idea to improve connectivity for pedestrian and bike access and building with aesthetics in mind. One common suggestion was to focus more on public art, such as murals. At other campus meetings outside of the public consultation period, advisory groups suggested that parking needs should be reviewed carefully to be cost-effective and consistent with UBC's Transportation Plan.

Question for Walter Gage Residences: What other design considerations are important to you (e.g. building form and setbacks, pedestrian connections, green space)?	# of comments received
Preserve open green spaces	40
Pedestrian connections and access	25
Bike amenities (storage, lanes, etc.)	8
Consider setbacks for greater privacy	7
New buildings need aesthetics and personality	7

D.H. Copp Site

The D.H Copp site is to be designed with academic uses on the ground floors and with the upper floors being used for student housing. Due to this combination of uses there were some specific mentions of support for an academic Innovation Hub, however the majority of comments supported nearby open green spaces, additional commercial and retail spaces on the ground floor and increasing pedestrian connectivity in the area. Other comments suggested that the site contribute to a larger number of student beds and focus on ensuring natural light access indoors.

"I would love to see great ground floor connections and green spaces. It would also be nice to see flexible space that can have multiple uses."

Question for D.H Copp site: As we consider new student housing and potential Innovation Hub uses in this area, what design considerations are important to you (e.g. visible ground floor activity, pedestrian connections, green space)?	# of comments received
Open green spaces	32
Active streetscape (social and commercial spaces)	18
Pedestrian connections and access	17
Flexible shared spaces	10
More student beds	10

Natural light and windows	8
Support for an Innovation Hub	7

General Comments

A significant number of respondents identified the need to increase amenities and services to meet the demands of a growing population in the U Boulevard Area, such as future traffic and transportation needs. Amenities most prominently mentioned include flexible, shared spaces that could be used for a range of social or academic purposes, health and fitness services (specifically gyms), study spaces, a variety of food outlets which should include healthy and affordable options (like grocery stores), and green spaces that can be used for a variety of purposes, such as recreation or simply enjoying nature. A prominent idea throughout the feedback was that these new spaces be available as public amenities, to benefit both the new student residences and the rest of the campus community.

Question: As we consider new student housing, what design considerations and student housing amenities are important to you?	# of comments received
More flexible shared spaces	23
More health and fitness spaces	21
Study spaces	20
More healthy and affordable food options (i.e. grocery store)	19
Outdoor and green spaces	16
A range of student housing options is needed	13

The Arts Student Centre and Campus Green Spaces

The Arts Student Centre and the Oak Bosque

“Connections with nature are amazing, and if the new structure would complement the Bosque, I would be in favor of placing it within the area.”

Discussion about locating the future Arts Student Centre (ASC) in the Oak Bosque centered around four main topics: green space, lighting, pedestrian pathways and additional protected public seating.

There was concern over potential loss of green space and trees, with several comments mentioning a preference for the ASC to be sited on the current Bike Kitchen location. At the same time,

many comments focused on opportunities to improve the feel and use of the Bosque. Many participants felt that lighting, such as the string lighting used this year along Main Mall, would bring life to the

Bosque. Additional pedestrian pathways and public seating coupled with weather protection were also common ideas brought forward by participants regarding the future of the Oak Bosque.

Question: What is important to you in considering the placement of the Arts Student Centre within the Oak Bosque (e.g. lighting, active ground floor uses, pedestrian pathways)?	# of comments received
Preserve green space and avoid cutting down trees	42
Lighting and natural light	29
Pedestrian connections and access	22
Public seating with weather protection	15

In meetings with student groups, such as the Alma Mater Society and Student Senators, there was strong support to locate a new Arts Student Centre if it was done in parallel with a revitalization of the Bosque to improve the ecological health and social vitality of the area. Similarly, academic advisory committees, such as the Senate Academic Building Needs Committee, echoed the caveat of including requirements for open space and replacement of green space, and communicated support for the Arts Student Centre in the Bosque as it frees up a larger academic site.

Network of Green Spaces

When talking about green spaces in general, participants had many ideas and suggestions for activities and design elements to include in future green spaces in the U Boulevard Area. The top theme that arose was for additional public seating to be made available, along with more weather protection, from both rain and sun. Another popular suggestion was for more space for informal recreation, such as frisbee, football or quiet reflection. Complementing this was the suggestion to preserve and design open and green spaces for flexible uses, such as performances, events or social gatherings.

In speaking with student groups, such as the Alma Mater Society and Student Senators, there was support for creating a welcoming gateway identity around the MacInnes Field area, that connected to and supported the broad spectrum of students passing through and using this important part of the campus core.

Questions:	# of comments received
What activities would you like to see made possible in green spaces on campus?	
What types of activities would you like to see in green spaces to enhance your UBC experience?	
Public seating with weather protection	44
Informal recreational spaces	32
Event and performance spaces	21
Open and communal green spaces	20
Landscaping and trees	18

U Boulevard now and in the future

Participants were presented with three questions concerning the U Boulevard Area as it exists today: what is working, what are some challenges and what future opportunities for the area are.

Participants felt that the area is currently successful at providing welcoming green spaces, providing a variety of food options, such as Loafe, and is accessible for pedestrians.

“[The Area has] a good mixture of academic resources, living resources (ex. stores, restaurants, student hubs) and green space.”

Question:	# of comments received
What is working well in the spaces in the U Boulevard Area right now?	
Lots of shops and food choices	40
Pedestrian connections and access	31
Versatile and welcoming green spaces	30
Transit orientation	9

Comments outlining the current challenges in the U Boulevard Area included the lack of designated bike lanes, the need for more open green space, and pedestrians feeling unsafe crossing intersections, such as University Boulevard at Wesbrook Mall.

Question:	# of comments received
What are some challenges with the spaces in the U Boulevard Area?	

Pedestrian crossings and road intersections feel unsafe	22
Inefficient vehicular traffic and transit flows	18
Lack of dedicated bike lanes	14
Construction hinders accessibility to the area	12
Not enough parking and vehicle access	9
The layout of the trolley bus loop is challenging	9

Future opportunities were identified to improve the bus loop and accessibility to bus routes outside of the bus loop itself. A common suggestion was to continue to add food, beverage and shopping spots in the area to meet the needs of the growing campus population.

Question:	# of comments received
What are some opportunities to improve spaces in the U Boulevard Area?	
Public seating with weather protection	18
More pedestrian connections and access	16
Improve parking and traffic flows	13
More open green spaces	13
More landscaping and trees	13
More inclusive buildings and spaces	9

In terms of what the consultation questions may have missed for the U Boulevard Area, participants responded that green spaces and meeting the changing needs of a growing campus population were important themes to consider. As well, the overall consultation process, sustainable design features, such as permeable pavement, and future planning for rapid transit, were mentioned as suggestions when thinking about next steps.

Question:	# of comments received
What have we missed?	
More open green spaces	10
Meeting overall needs of the growing population	10
Include relevant and nearby stakeholders in consultation	8

Sustainable process and design	6
Planning for rapid transit	5

5. Next Steps

A summary of U Boulevard Area 2018 Update public consultation will be presented to the UBC Board of Governors in June 2018 as part of the presentations surrounding future student housing and academic facilities in the area.

The specific projects outlined in this 2018 Update will be reviewed alongside the feedback outlined in this report, and specific design considerations will be considered when the projects are in the appropriate stage of planning and design.

We thank everyone who participated for providing their valuable insight to improve the future campus development in the U Boulevard Area.