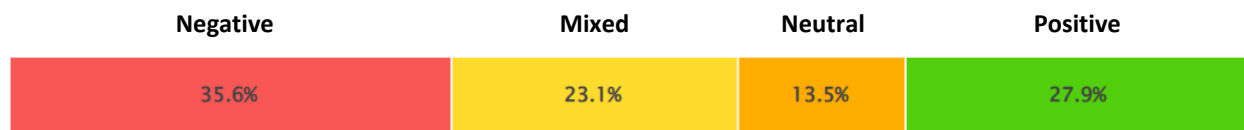


November 7, 2022

Proposed Safe Stay Community #3 – Public Comment Analysis

Participation Summary

- More than **185 community** members shared comments about the proposed Safe Stay Community via:
 - Email/phone
 - Be Heard Vancouver
 - Social media
 - Facebook, Instagram, Nextdoor and Reddit
- A total of **159 people** attended the four community information sessions held in-person and online via Zoom
- **104 community members** submitted comments via Be Heard Vancouver
 - A plurality of responses (**48.6 percent**) came from the 98660 zip code, where the proposed Safe Stay Community would be located
 - A plurality of responses (**35.6 percent**) were negative in sentiment or opposed to the proposed Safe Stay Community location
 - **27.9 percent** of responses were positive in sentiment or in support of the proposed Safe Stay Community location
 - **23.1 percent** of responses shared mixed sentiment
 - **13.5 percent** of responses were neutral; these responses typically included questions about the proposed site or the City’s homelessness response efforts



Overall Sentiment

Community members shared a wide range of attitudes and viewpoints. As a result, overall sentiment is mixed. While safety was the most common theme that came up in public feedback, community members shared differing opinions about what will make them feel safer in the neighborhood surrounding the proposed Safe Stay Community.

Some people who live and work in the area said that a Safe Stay Community would make them feel safer. These folks pointed to the benefits of 24-hour onsite service provider, the 1000-foot camping ban and increased outreach in the downtown area. Others said that a Safe Stay Community would make them feel less safe. These respondents shared concerns about possible increases in crime, vandalism, public intoxication or drug use, and potential reductions in business, visitors or property values.

A sizeable number of people also said that they support Safe Stay Communities or having a Safe Stay Community near downtown, but that they feel the proposed location is not appropriate. Many of these respondents urged the City to consider alternate locations or provided suggested locations that they feel would be more appropriate. A smaller percentage of respondents shared opposition to the City’s homeless-response efforts more broadly, suggesting that there should be no additional Safe Stay Communities in Vancouver. A more thorough analysis of feedback is included below.

Common Themes

Among those who expressed **negative sentiments**, participants mentioned:

- Opposition to the proposed location
- The opinion that a Safe Stay Community should not be located:
 - Downtown, near businesses, near multifamily housing, near senior housing, within walking distance of Esther Short Park or near the Farmers Market
- Concern that the proposed Safe Stay Community will
 - Lead to more unsanctioned camping downtown
 - Increase the number of unsheltered people in downtown
 - Encourage unhoused people from other communities to come to Vancouver
 - Discourage people from visiting downtown
 - Negatively impact businesses or property values
 - Increase crime
- Some community members shared their opposition to the City's overall homeless-response efforts, suggesting that providing services only enables people or encourages homelessness
- Some respondents also said that they feel homeless-assistance services should be provided

Among those who expressed **mixed and neutral feelings**, participants mentioned:

- Support for Safe Stay Communities or a Safe Stay Community in the downtown area, but questions or concerns about the proposed location
- Questions and concerns focused on:
 - Safety and security in all forms:
 - Safety for Safe Stay residents, neighbors, those who work in the area and those who visit downtown
 - The screening and application process for Safe Stay residents
 - Concerns about crime
 - Site selection criteria
 - How the proposed site was identified
 - Why other sites farther from downtown were not being considered
 - Cost and upkeep of a Safe Stay location
 - How the Safe Stay Community is operated by Outsiders Inn
 - What the intake process looks like for Safe Stay residents
 - Site design and aesthetics, including the look of fencing around the site and the Pallet shelters themselves
 - Why a camping ban could not be extended throughout the entire downtown area
- Many people who shared mixed sentiments also said that they support City and community efforts to:
 - Get people off the street and into permanent housing
 - Connect people to vital services
 - Treat people experiencing homelessness with dignity and respect
 - Reduce negative community impacts of unsheltered homelessness

Among those who expressed **positive sentiments**, participants mentioned:

- Support for the proposed location
- Belief that the location is well suited, given proximity to public transportation and existing community resources

- Belief that the proposed Safe Stay Community will help to address local need in downtown, which many community members described as experiencing negative impacts from unsheltered homelessness
- Belief that a location downtown would help to make Vancouver a more equitable and inclusive community
- Support for Vancouver's plan or overall approach to helping those experiencing homelessness
- A desire to provide support to the proposed community, including through volunteering or helping with site designs