



Chinatown Workshop

Northeast False Creek

Saturday April 8, 2017

Thank you!

On April 8, 2017, 23 stakeholders from the Chinatown community attended a workshop to learn about the Northeast False Creek (NEFC) Area Plan and to provide their professional and community-based input.

Attendees discussed the 3 topics related to the new neighbourhood - and how they will interface with Chinatown, including:

- Main Street blocks,
- Parks + Open Space
- Streets + Transportation

Key themes and neighbourhood-specific priorities were outlined by the attendees. Detailed workshop notes follow a summary of key points below.

Key themes that emerged from the discussion included:

- There is an acknowledgement that Chinatown is often asked to compromise - and it is important to ensure that elements within the Northeast False Creek Area Plan clearly benefit the Chinatown community.
- Acknowledging the adjacent cultural assets in Chinatown and exploring opportunities to anchor the corner of Keefer and Quebec/Columbia as the central Chiantown Cultural Precinct.
- The closure of Carrall Street is a concern - and more needs to be done to explain why the closure is necessary and how it may benefit the community.
- There is an opportunity to create multiple gateways into Chinatown; along Quebec/Columbia Street, Main Street and Gore Avenue.
- Use the NEFC Area Plan as an opportunity to reflect Chinese cultural values in the uses, places, programming, shops, restaurants and amenities in the area.



General feedback specific to Chinatown

Chinatown Feedback:

- Incorporate existing chinatown cultural assests into the Area Plan document to help illustrate the connections into the new NEFC Park and NEFC neighbourhood.
- Look for ways to activate Memorial Plaza (Keefer Street + Columbia Street) by improving connection to new NEFC Park. Opportunities include:
 - Providing space for night market along Keefer Street such as permanent booth or kiosks with electricity to animate the street. This can also happen along Quebec Street.
- Consider a new gateway to Chinatown, Main Street is still important as gateway but has lost/is losing Chinatown feeling
 - Consider Quebec Street as the new gateway as there are a number of important Civic Assets at this location (Museum, gardens, Cultural Centre, Memorial etc.)

Chinatown Engagement

- Recognize the destructive impact Viaducts had on Chinatown and the surrounding communities.
- There is a clear need for focussed discussions on Chinatown.
- Work together with Hogan's Alley Working Group on the east Main Street block





Main St. Blocks

WHAT WE HEARD

North/south Streets + Gateways

- 3 gateways - Quebec, Main, and Gore - should all be treated as gateways to Chinatown.
- Main Street gateway needs to express community values
- Extend retail High Street experience on Main upwards from Terminal
- Resting spots and benches along Main
- Quebec Street frontage will be very visible and should be designed to draw people up into Chinatown. Signal access to historic neighbourhood. Could potentially be a street market.
- Encouraging connection to (not through) Chinatown. Less of a focus on traffic flow - more on connectivity.
- Concern about impact of loss of Carrall vehicular access
- Chinatown Gateway as integration of culture, food, people, social.
- Neon Lighting should be an important aspect of a gateway to Chinatown

Built form and Character:

- Recent condos are out of character – too massive, too dense, too high
- No to 7.0, 8.0, 9.0 FSR
- Create Human scale at street, taller buildings set back
- Main Street frontage should be urban street-oriented buildings at traditional Chinatown scale – 90' max on Main with a variety of heights
- Express 25' lot pattern and fine grain
- Middle scale – campus like preferred
- Taller elements may be ok if right form and off Main. Should be thin, express 25' pattern in building form.
- Support for creating an urban Chinatown Gateway, not the park plunked down in re:Connect competition.
- Ensure buildings are designed to support the social life of the community
- Activate the alleyways. Need innovative waste system to get dumpsters out of lanes
- Concern that 25' lots may too expensive to develop



Cultural Values, Uses and Amenities:

- Reflect Chinese cultural values in the uses, places, programming, shops, restaurants and amenities
- Land uses to support Chinatown businesses
- Design as an Intergenerational place – an important Chinese value
- Marry and balance needs of youths and elders
- Need a variety of social space and places to gather – balance, cultures, learning, experiences
- Provide flexible community and social space
- Support local food interest and enterprises
- Goldstone Bakery is a good example of a business as a social gathering space
- Food is very important – should be a ‘Food Destination’ for cuisine from all parts of China
- Food + Arts + Social Fabric = Culture
- Focus on food- selling, education, growing, link to Produce Row
- Need more and bigger restaurant space on upper levels
- Need lots of parking and good connections to parkade to support visitors
- Create a vibrant bridge to other communities
- Create Community Land Trust; recognition of contributions to neighbourhood, armature for future.
- Theatre, Chinese opera
- Places for Tai Chi, indoor/outdoor, moveable cover

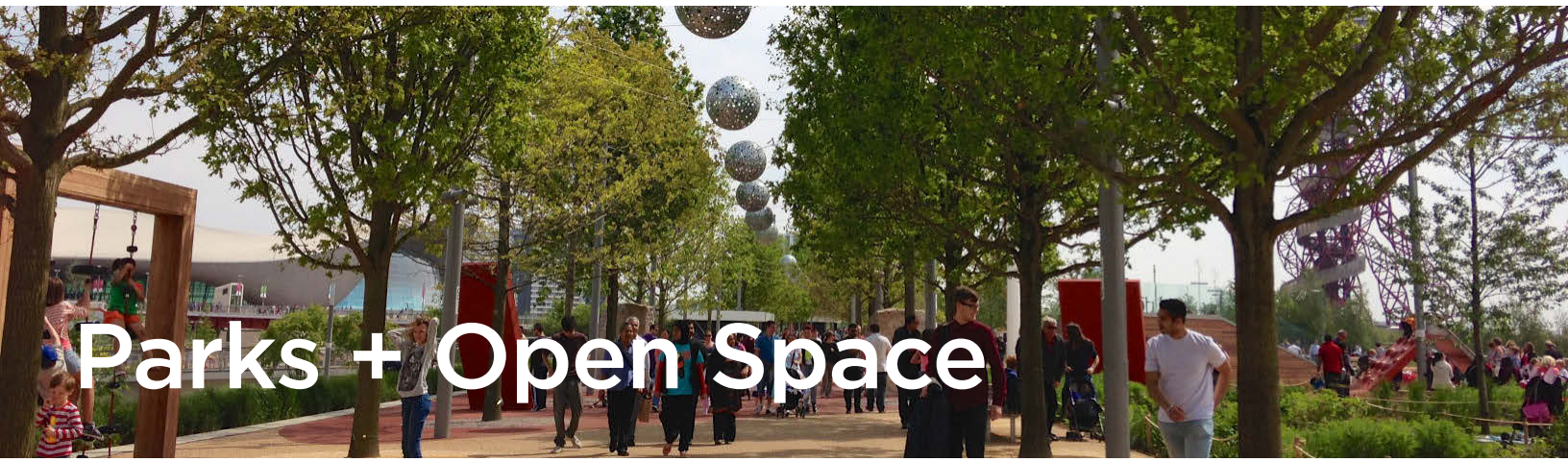
Housing and Affordability:

- Very important to improve affordability and provide housing for families
- Need housing for Chinese seniors, at a variety of levels of affordability
- An aging in place community
- Acknowledgement that the new St. Paul’s Hospital will increase demand for housing/rentals for workers and families visiting patients.

New Providence Hospital:

- Hospital will bring new people and change to the area
- Engage local residents in work at new Providence Hospital





Parks + Open Space

WHAT WE HEARD

Acknowledging the adjacent cultural assets

- Locate in plan the following important cultural assets for the Chinatown community to contribute to making a natural progression from Chinatown to the Park:

- Memorial Plaza
- Dr Sun Yat Sen Garden
- Museum Archives
- Chinese Cultural Centre (building + courtyard)
- Shanghai Alley and other historical alleyways
- Chinatown gate on Pender St
- Pender Street: National Historic site

- Particularly, seek ways to extend the Dr Sun Yat-Sen garden into the park and connect it in a natural way. Perhaps open up the Moon gate or provide a tea house as another entry to the garden from Keefer Street. Memorial plaza is the only outdoor gathering place in Chinatown. It needs to be more activated. That corner is important to the Chinese community. Carrall and Main Street Blocks connections are secondary.

Anchoring the corner at Keefer and Quebec as a gateway to Chinatown

- Current uses of the east side of Andy Livingstone Park (field sports) are perceived as a barrier and do not connect to the surrounding Chinatown community. Preference is to move the sports fields

to Creekside Park or west of Andy Livingstone to include more passive uses that relate to its surrounding community.

- There is a perception that the sports community that uses the park is not from Chinatown and they don't go to the neighbourhood before or after their game. Explore ways to create permeability into Chinatown, to invite visitors to migrate to the neighbourhood. Perhaps is a community building was located closer to the corner (such as washrooms/change rooms or community centre) would help to blend in these areas together.
- However, the sports fields also provide benefits to the park for the night experience as they increase a sense of safety with the field activities and provide lighting. Bring other activities to the street to activate the area in similar ways.

Water to Chinatown: enhance the pedestrian experience at Quebec Street

- Explore opportunities to draw people into Chinatown after the Dragon Boat Festival; for example provide great pedestrian experience to and from transit, from the water to Chinatown. Make streetscape inviting.
- Make Quebec Street a softer edge; remove the chain link fence to create a pleasant stroll along the park. Improve walking and conversation spaces.

Park program element: covered space for traditional activities

- Explore opportunities to have a flat, stable and covered area for people to practice traditional activities such as tai-chi, badminton, dragon or Chinese dancing. Hard surface and wind protection are preferred. For martial arts, soft surface is best. It would be nice to bring back the traditional noises to the area. See Queen Elisabeth Park with people practicing tai chi under the open covered structures. The size of the Chinese Cultural Centre courtyard is a good precedent for Dragon Dancing.
- Integrate Chinese cultural elements in Andy Livingstone Park, like a Chinese art gazebo, small scale pavilion. This gesture could compensate for the closure of Carrall Street.
- Amphitheater style for outdoor performance with seating space close to Chinatown. The waterfront is perceived as too far away from the community right now.

Local food + market opportunities

- Recognize the local vibrant community by providing facilities to support local food and merchants in an inclusive manner, day and night. Please don't make another Granville Island though!
- Provide space for night market along Keefer Street such as permanent booth or kiosks with electricity to animate the street. This can also happen along Quebec Street.
- Connect people to the waterfront by bringing back urban agriculture with a covered market space. Food is universal.

Connecting the park over Pacific Boulevard

- Pacific Boulevard is a large street that cuts the park in two. Crossing the street will not be pleasant and waiting for the light will be long. Consider ways to connect the two parts of the park together with a bridge over the street or overpass.
- Dr Sun Yat-Sen is recognized internationally. It is the very beginning of Chinatown and located along the original shoreline. It should be celebrated and connected directly to the water by a light foot bridge (no concrete or over designed like the High Line that gentrified the neighbourhood!)

Concerns with the closure of Carrall Street

- Need to explain why closure is needed from a transportation point of view
- Need to show the benefit in the park design and give something back to the community in return

Concerns with parking:

- Where? How much? Street or parkade? Quantity: will it be enough? Where do tourists buses park? Think about long term and responding to future needs.





Streets

WHAT WE HEARD

Chinatown – Concern over impacts from street network:

- Traffic impacts to Chinatown as a result of new street network
- How are connections to Chinatown Improved? Show how street design can improve connections
- Access to low-cost parking (Create turnover through timing limitations rather than pricing mechanisms) , goods movement and loading, Chinatown is a destination
- Chinatown tired of compromising, want a significant win (e.g. of compromises with Carrall renewal and Sun Yat-Sen access in 2010, Rezoning Policy, Carrall closure as part of new street network etc.)
- Transit access not great today, look for opportunities to improve

Quebec Street – A new gateway to Chinatown

- Connection through Keefer/Columbia is very important – access to and from Chinatown and Park/NEFC
- Allow access to parking lot from laneway between Keefer and Georgia St for short term access
- Activate Street frontage to create something special (small frontages – 10-15')
- Subsidized rents for small businesses

Carrall Street closure - A compromise for Chinatown, desire to understand how it benefits Chinatown:

- Important to create great access to Chinatown
- Concern of people still being able to access Chinatown with new street network – Abbott already busy, concern of getting busier
- Explore traffic volumes going north into Chinatown compared to going south
- Pick-up and drop-off for Tourists at Sun Yat-Sen

Space for new markets

- Dedicated infrastructure (power/water) for Chinatown night markets on street boulevards or in public space
- Covered space for night Market – Murin Substation site?

Pedestrian Crossings – Safe and designed for ageing population

- Design crossings for seniors (short crossings with long crossing times)
- Balance crossing times to ensure doesn't impact traffic efficiency
- East/west street closures to provide comfortable walking routes from east of Main to park (seniors in particular)

Street Network – How Does it Work?

- Access to shareable analytical information (simple to understand)
- Video showing Street Network
- Summary of consultant reports (2013-2015)
- Summary of completed and upcoming SIA and HIAs

Goods Movement – To and From Chinatown

- Access to Chinatown for businesses
- Concern over noise through new residential areas in NEFC

Main Street Blocks

- Provide public parking in parkade

New St. Paul's

- Concern of how these additional 5,000 new jobs impact Chinatown (also support for businesses with additional people)

Columbia Street

- Mention of desire to close portion of Columbia Street

