

Northeast False Creek Area Planning Process
Public Engagement Plan – Phase 1
July 2016 – May 2017

In October 2015, Vancouver City Council approved a new conceptual plan for Northeast False Creek (NEFC). This included approval to move forward with the removal of the Dunsmuir and Georgia Viaducts, to be replaced by a new ground-level street network.

The Northeast False Creek area is one of the largest undeveloped areas left in the downtown peninsula. In 2009, Council approved land use policies to create a vibrant and mixed-use waterfront district. The 2015 decision to replace the viaducts with an at-grade street network is based on several factors including freeing land up for neighbourhood development, accommodating traffic and improving seismic safety of the street network.

An inter-departmental team has been created to manage and deliver a Northeast False Creek Area Plan that will guide the design of the area. The public consultation phase of this process is scheduled to begin in September 2016, with a final plan expected to be delivered by the end of 2017.

Below is an overview of the overall project timeline and the engagement process that will be used to help develop the FINAL Directions Report (*expected delivery, May 2017*).

Engagement Objectives

The overall engagement objectives are to:

- ***Ensure broad awareness of the NEFC project;***
- ***Generate timely and meaningful input from a wide range of community members and stakeholders;***
- ***Clearly and effectively weave the input into the planning and design process.***

Success for this initiative will be measured by the degree of awareness of both the NEFC project itself and of the diverse opportunities to provide input across a wide range of stakeholders and members of the general public.

In terms of range, we mean both geographically and demographically varied participants.

This overview (and accompanying workplan/timeline) will organize our team to:

1. **Build community member and stakeholder awareness** of the NEFC project and message strongly that it is moving ahead with high degrees of efficiency, transparency, innovation and responsiveness.
2. **Educate community members and stakeholders about the issues, opportunities and public benefits** the NEFC project offers, both at the neighbourhood and city-wide levels.
3. **Seek substantive input on the NEFC project and its key themes:** history, live (housing + amenities), streets, parks and open space, arts and culture, and public benefit - and on the role of the project in achieving larger civic objectives (Transportation 2040, Housing, GCAP, RCS).
4. Encourage public participation through the use of **a mix of engagement tools and techniques** including new and innovative methods.
5. Incorporate innovative **Action While Planning** projects during the process.
6. **Encourage connection between stakeholders** (public, stakeholder, NEFCSG, PDAG) to maximize opportunities for collaboration during every phase of the process.
7. **Ensure that the input we gather on the above is visibly woven into the technical work** led by the project team and its associated consultancies.
8. **Report back to citizens on how their input influenced the process** and final design/outputs.
9. **Build a large pool of interested people** who will participate in future engagement activities.

Ultimately, the successful implementation of the public engagement program should lead to a better, more innovative and clearly rationalized plan that will gain the support of the public because it is visibly responsive to their feedback and aspirations. It will also build broad community awareness and support of some of the city's existing, related policies and programs such as Transportation 2040, Renewable City Strategy, Greenest City 2020, Healthy City Strategy, and the Housing + Homelessness Strategy.

Objectives for Phase 1 – Emerging Directions (September – Feb 2017)

- Provide at least 10 opportunities for the public + stakeholders to engage in the process in-person
- Provide multiple opportunities for the public + stakeholders to engage in the process online
- Engage at least 4,000 people in-person and online
- Gather input on 6 themes:
 - Live;
 - Work + Play;
 - Streets;
 - Arts + Culture; and
 - Parks + Open Space.
- Develop Core Community Values
- Develop Emerging Directions
- Present DRAFT Directions in Q1 2017

How we are organizing engagement

What do we know already?

This information will provide the background and context for the project and will provide content for the project website, associated collateral and display materials. With this information we will be able to identify gaps in knowledge that will help shape the engagement directions/questions.

What do we need to know?

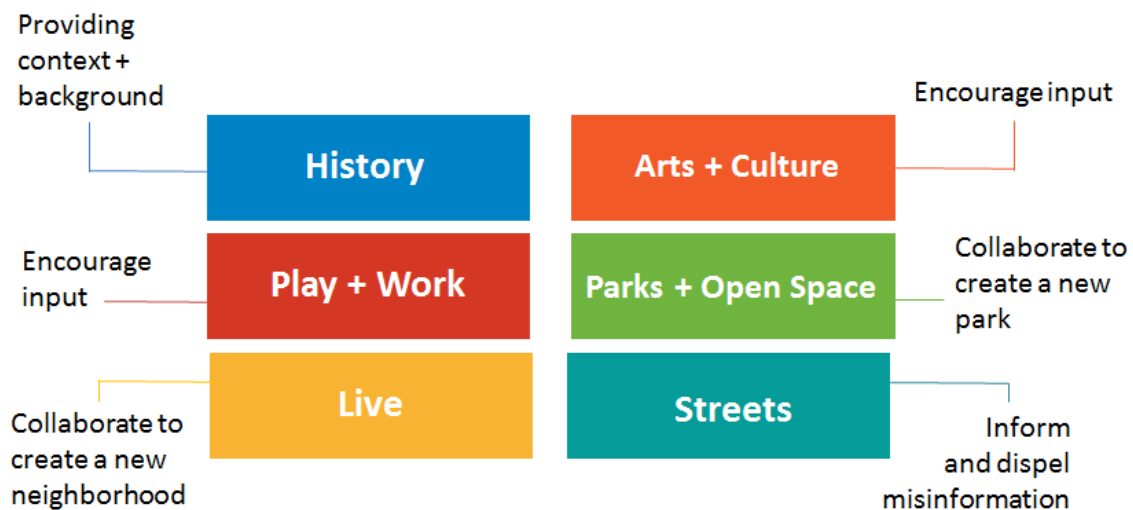
This is the information we will be gathering from the public, stakeholders, Stewardship Group and Design Studio Team. We will not be asking for input on things we already know or input we are unable to use. The information we gather here will be central to the creation of the DRAFT Directions Report.

Where will the input be used?

We need to be able to clearly articulate why we are asking the questions we are asking and explain where and how the input will be used. This connection needs to be at the front of all of the work we do – we must be able to illustrate where and how the input is used, and be able to point to deliverables to demonstrate the value of the input gathered during the engagement process.

Engagement Themes:

Public engagement will be broken into 6 themes:



By breaking the engagement process into 6 themes it will give participants the opportunity to engage in a scalable way – they can choose to engage on all of the themes or only on the theme(s) that interest them. This approach will help mitigate engagement fatigue as referenced in the guiding principles. This approach will also allow for greater flexibility in event design and will allow for greater focus from participants with particular subject area expertise and interest.

Challenges the Engagement Strategy must consider

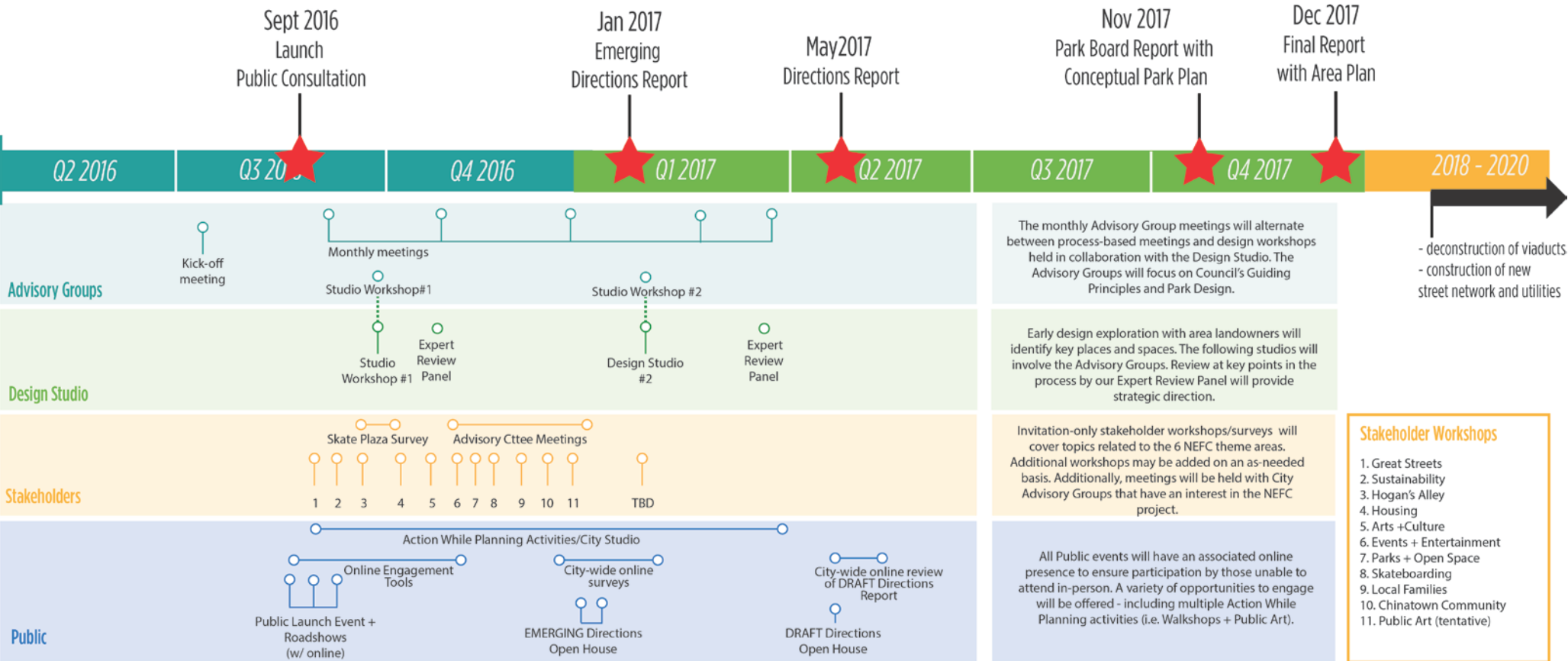
An examination of potential barriers to project success in respect to public engagement has been undertaken and corresponding mitigation actions are under development. High level considerations include:

1. That the NEFC project is a complex, multi-phased, multi-faceted undertaking involving numerous stakeholders and multiple levels of government. Consideration of all needs is important to influence the development of both the technical components of the overall project and the smooth integration of public and stakeholder input.

2. That the coordination among the three “working teams” in phase 1 of the project: Parks, Planning and Engineering, must be actively managed to maximize alignment and make the best use of available resources to achieve project deliverables on time and on budget.
3. Timing considerations and challenges e.g. land negotiations, onboarding of consultancies and the selection and onboarding of Stewardship + Park Design Advisory Groups.
4. That all City of Vancouver residents will see this project as a gateway to amenities and services that may provide benefit to them in the communities where they live, work and play.
5. The adjacent processes (e.g. Providence, E/W Connector, Flats) will have an impact on the messaging and engagement tactics used during this project.

Mitigation Actions

- Detailed (and complementary) Communications + Engagement Strategies to define key messages, target audiences and tactics
- Involving NEFC Stewardship Group in development/refinement of Engagement workplan and timeline
- Cross-departmental project team/office to ensure clear and direct communication between departments and between City and Park Board
- Regular Technical Team meetings to ensure that information is shared across departments in a timely fashion – allowing for team wide updates and check-ins.
- Designing a flexible workplan and timeline that is responsive to the unpredictable nature of land acquisition negotiations and other timing sensitivities/challenges.
- Piggy-backing on existing events and projects (leveraging other city events/processes).
- Engaging a city-wide audience as well as local stakeholders and residents through existing city outreach methods e.g. Pop-Up City Hall, Talk Vancouver etc...
- Being clear with the public about what is open for conversation / what the parameters are – and how/when their input will be used/integrated in the process.



Roles and Responsibilities

EXTERNAL GROUPS

First Nations – TBD – meeting set with 3 Local Nations – more info to follow.

NEFC Stewardship Group – citizen group appointed by City Council to provide advice on key planning and engagement approaches during the NEFC Area Planning process. The group will respond to documents and policy developed by staff – providing high-level advice and direction. The NEFC Stewardship Group members will also be asked to act as project ambassadors, and will be expected to activate social and professional networks throughout the planning process. This group falls under the ‘*Collaborate*’ column on the IAP2 Spectrum.

Park Design Advisory Group - citizen group appointed by the Park Board to provide advice and input on the NEFC Park design and engagement processes. The group will respond to documents and policy developed by staff – providing high-level advice and direction. The Park design Advisory Group members will also be asked to act as project ambassadors, and will be expected to activate social and professional networks throughout the planning process. This group falls under the ‘*Collaborate*’ column on the IAP2 Spectrum.

Area Landowners + Developers – this group includes land owners and developers, including government agencies (Province) who will be consulted during the area planning process. This group falls under the ‘*Collaborate*’ Column on the IAP2 Spectrum. [this is not a decision making entity.] This group will be provided regular updates (bi-monthly) and will be expected provide input and background information during the planning and engagement process (i.e. renderings, building info).

Stakeholders – this group consists of area residents, business owners, groups and individuals who have been identified as having, or have expressed a direct interest in the NEFC Area Planning process. This could include community and residents associations, business improvement associations and residents of NEFC and neighbouring areas. This group falls under the ‘*Involve*’ column on the IAP2 Spectrum and will be regularly informed about the process and opportunities to engage through multiple direct channels (Listserv, email, telephone) during the planning process.

City Residents – this group is comprised of all City of Vancouver Residents. It is understood the the NEFC area planning process will both communicate information out to-and seek input from-a City-wide audience. This group falls between the ‘*Consult*’ and ‘*Involve*’ columns of the IAP2 Spectrum. The interest and level of participation within this group will vary and the methods of engagement will be chosen to reflect the diverse needs of the audience.

IAP2 Spectrum (Adapted) - Approved by council Jan 2016

Inform - To provide timely, accurate, objective, and easily understood information to assist the public in understanding the details of a program, project or service.

