

## Northeast False Creek Civic Centre

### Community Engagement – Detailed Functional Program Summary of Community Work Shop Session, July 9, 2019

#### INTRODUCTION

This document summarizes the community's input into the Plaza of Nations Northeast False Creek (NEFC) Civic Centre Detailed Functional Program from an event that took place at the Harbour Event Centre location on the current Plaza of Nations site. The event began at 6:00pm and ended at 9:00pm. There were a total of 32 community members who attended the event. City staff presented an overview of the project and the process to date. The discussion portion of the session was introduced by Cornerstone Planning Group and C&E Group.

#### PROCESS AND PURPOSE

Over the course of three hours, the attendees were given the opportunity to work in small groups of 6 – 8 people and wear “different hats” to explore the details of the draft functional programming to date, ask questions, and provide feedback. Cornerstone Planning Group and C&E Group facilitated engagement, with support from the City of Vancouver. Information and feedback gathered from community members will be used to assist Cornerstone in refining facility requirements and developing design guidelines for the Civic Centre components. A Discussion Table was designated for each of the following topics. Each table had a facilitator and a note taker.

- A. Ice Rink
- B. Fitness and Change rooms
- C. Multi-purpose rooms
- D. Gymnasium
- E. Music Presentation Centre
- F. Overall and Outdoor

Attendees were initially asked to write down their thoughts on sticky notes regarding “activities” that should be accommodated at the NEFC Civic Centre and to submit the notes at the end of the session. The attendees were then invited to engage at one of the tables associated with a topic they were interested in. After a period of discussion the facilitator called a break and participants were invited to choose another table for a second round of discussion.

#### Observations:

- The attendees were clearly motivated to engage with the project team. Many ideas brought forth focused on positive aspirations for the new NEFC Civic Centre.
- All attendees engaged in discussion with table facilitators, identifying concerns, asking questions and exploring implications for spatial and functional requirements for the Civic Centre.

#### KEY FINDINGS – Emerging Themes

- **Accessibility** – The Civic Centre should go beyond standard accessibility guidelines and be designed and available for all ages and abilities within the Civic Centre.

- **Affordability** – Civic Centre needs to incorporate residents from all income levels including the Downtown East-side community.
- **Availability** – The Civic Centre should have extended hours to accommodate diverse schedules (i.e. shift workers, night workers).
- **Technology and Equipment** - appropriate technology and equipment should be integrated into each component. Should be universal and accessible (e.g. plug and play media hub, rentable sledge hockey sleds, etc.).
- **Innovation** – The Civic Centre must have an innovative approach to optimize component function, whether that is the creative adoption of emerging technologies, or simply by providing more flexible space to enable an adaption to changing conditions with respect to fitness, music, and community spaces.
- **Adaptability** – The Civic Centre should be designed to respond to new trends, conditions and ever-changing community needs.
- **User wellbeing** – Design the facility to maximize light, be friendly and welcoming, offer soft surfaces and flexible arrangements.
- **Indoor and Outdoor spaces** – provide access to spaces that are adaptable to individual and group needs, and provide many services for all ages and abilities.
- **Fostering community** – The Civic Centre should be designed to foster social and cultural spaces. It should be perceived as a “community place” that provides a focal point for the community.
- **Safety** – The facility should be designed as welcoming and provide adequate safe storage for users.
- **Connectivity** – With a multi-level facility, spaces should link easily from one level to another. As well, spaces should be transparent and provide a sense of “public-ness”. The circulation within the facility should be organized to facilitate way-finding using views of the outdoors and/or major internal features. Provision for views into activity spaces from major circulation will help with orientation and also provide users with a more comprehensive impression of the variety of activities.
- **Lines of Sight** – Major circulation in the Civic Centre should have optimal lines of sight to major components.
- **Third Place** is the community building concept where people are thought to prosper best when they have access to a comfortable social environment or “3<sup>rd</sup> Place” other than their two usual social environments of home “first place” and the workplace “second place.” Third places typically help facilitate community life and healthy social interaction. Examples of third places would be environments such as public libraries, cafes, parks, and community centres. Embodying this concept, the Civic Centre should be designed to foster community connection and relaxation, where users can safely feel a sense of ownership and belonging in the Centre.

- **Loud and Quiet** – A variety of spaces should be provided, ranging from active, high-intensity spaces to quiet places of contemplation and respite.
- **Storage** – Often forgotten or underestimated, storage plays a major role in allowing spaces to be fully utilized and flexible in meeting changing needs.
- **Formal and informal** – The Civic Centre should provide space for formal and informal meetings, presentations and events.
- **Space Activation** – All spaces should be able to be “activated” that is, provide the potential for interesting and diverse community-based activities. This is particularly important in major circulation space such as the lobbies and major corridors, which should provide places where individuals and/or small groups can sit down and have a conversation. Locating some of these spots in places that have a view into an activity space will enhance the sense of the “whole”.
- **Acoustics** – Spaces should be designed with sound transfer in mind, not only the Music Presentation Centre, but all spaces. This objective applies to managing sound transfer within the facility and the transfer of sound from outdoor activities to the surrounding neighbourhood.
- **Inclusive programming** – Events for all ages and abilities.
- **Connection to the environment** – Located on Pacific Boulevard, the NEFC Civic Centre should reflect the unique relationship to natural features, such as False Creek.
- **Architecture** – The facility as a whole should feature unique architectural expression that reflects the qualities of its surrounding environment and should stand out visually amongst other buildings. In particular, The Music Presentation Centre, should be easily identifiable from an architectural standpoint.

## COMPONENT DISCUSSION TABLES

The following section summarizes what was discussed at each discussion table. Provided in each component section is a brief summary followed by the transcribed “Most Important and Why” tables, and a word cloud illustrating key discussion points.

### TABLE A – ICE RINK:

The ice rink table was one of the more subscribed tables given its size, complexity, and passionate community members’ interest in the component. Key discussion points included parasport requirements, accessibility, the importance of warm up areas, and spectator seating. For the complete list consult the table below.

**Table 1: Ice Arena – Most Important & Why Table**

MOST IMPORTANT	WHY?
Plug ins for music access @ ice level	Figure skating routines, between plays – hockey – event/game enhancement
Green room req’d for figure skating – make-up prep. Consider using ref rooms	Make-up application for competitions
Storage for para equipment	Accessibility – look at Richmond Oval retrofit
Sledge Hockey viewing glass	Accessibility – look at Richmond Oval retrofit
Secured area for chairs/equipment	Accessibility – look at Richmond Oval retrofit
Free skate/equipment	





Outdoor space	
Teaching kitchen to go beyond sports and nutrition-related functions; provide small-scale commercial kitchens for non-profit/small business food prep and service	Food is universal, opportunity for cultural sharing (for immigrants, refugees); access to commercial kitchen is cost-prohibitive for small business owners or individuals
Support family and group ceremonies (e.g. memorials, birthdays, celebrations)	CONNECTION among people
Support seniors: automatic openers, soft surface, table games	CONNECTION among people
Small library as web and social hub, access to e-books, games, toys	Space to read quietly Sharing resources
Think about flexibility and affordability subdivide 80 person room (for example, accordion-style room dividers, preferably sound proof)	To make space more affordable Maximize use and to foster dialogue in less intimidating space
MP Rooms need lots of natural light	Take advantage of location, it is inviting/inspiring to see others dancing or learn an activity could windows be openinable? Eg – Science World’s automatic system to darken/lighten windows
Storage is really important	
Lockers are needed for personal valuables. Plug inside lockers to charge phones	Move beyond 25¢ - many of us don’t carry change (for example, in Nordstrom, they provide free lockers for shoppers with outlets for charging devices)
One MP room could have wood floor, AV system or stage for cross generations	Support community-based performances or play for children/adults/seniors
How can we welcome those who are new to neighbourhood? (eg drop in music, bridge)	Could there be programming that allows for last minute attendance?
MP rooms with lots of light, wide doors	Think of accessibility in all dimensions
24 hours open (eg child-minding during events?) or even just 6am-11pm	Think about independence of Civic centre components
“Community Living-room”	Space for all ages to enjoy a broadcast together such as sporting events without having to pay or be in a liquor-primary environment
Space for “relaxed performances” (low and even sound, low light) Ideas from Push Festival	Cater support to people who get over-stimulated easily
Use of light and temporary installations to animate spaces and spark conversation	Animate winter-time, create opportunity for people to connect and not feel alone
Media hub to plug your own devices	
Flexibility and variety of floor surfaces/flooring (e.g. sprung wood floors, which are needed for dance, and are also more comfortable to stand on for people with mobility challenges)	Variety of activities. Careful with noise!!



**TABLE D – GYMNASIUM:**

The Gymnasium table was the least-subscribed table perhaps due to the general perception that gymnasiums are “set” or “prescribed” in their design, and therefore have fewer options for the nature of the space and activities. While some limitations were acknowledged, the participants at this table dug deep into concepts that would maximize visitor enjoyment of the gymnasium and of the Civic Centre as a whole. Topics discussed included flexibility, storage and parastorage, connection to nature, the clever use of technology, and accessible viewing areas. For the complete list consult the table below.

**Table 4: Gymnasium – Most Important & Why Table**

MOST IMPORTANT	WHY?
Multi-Purpose Space	To support a variety of activities
Flexibility	Want to be able to subdivide the gym and to support a variety of activities
Storage	Athletic equipment can take up a lot of space – need to ensure sufficient storage
Parastorage	Need to have ample room for storage of sport chairs, wheels, and other parasport-related equipment
Appropriate Rigging Grid	This would allow for a greater variety of events and activities e.g. Circus arts
Connection to the outdoors – potential for gym to open up onto park/green space	Would enhance sense of publicness, and create potential for a fitness continuum or circuit that could link with the seawall via a running track
Natural light	Natural light is ideal to enhance the atmosphere of the space
Sports supported: Wheelchair badminton, wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby, handball, indoor soccer, handball	Need to ensure majority of these are supported
Activities supported: Yoga, gymnastics and ropes, artisan markets, dance, performances, zumba, tai chi,	Need to ensure majority of these are supported
Indoor or Outdoor Running Track	Would create an interesting dynamic if running track were placed indoors (raised above the gym) OR outdoor OR connecting indoor and outdoor. Could also provide more viewing spots to see activities below
Acoustics + Lighting	Want quality acoustics and lighting to allow for more diverse and quality events
Accessible Viewing Areas	Viewing areas should be optimized so that major circulation / viewing areas can have lines of sight to multiple Civic Centre components (great for parents keeping an eye on their kids during programming) – this would help from a security point of view
Hangout Zone or “3- Place”	Ideal to have the Civic Centre as a whole and gymnasium component to foster community connection – a place where people feel comfortable to “hangout”
Sheltered Public Space	While not necessarily related to the gym component, the Civic Centre should have some sheltered public space to allow for hangout spots safe from the elements – perhaps could be integrated with a skate park
Accessible drop-in for youth	Vulnerable users
Mindfulness	An important theme that would contribute to the success of the Civic Centre as a whole – provide places that stimulate mindfulness
Use of technology	Creative ways to use technology to help provide flexibility – e.g. LED floors





especially secondary space	
Provide production/recording opportunities like VPL spaces	Lack of spaces this size in Vancouver
Provide option for music appreciation, pre-show lectures, education, rehearsal, artists talks, master classes (e.g. 20-50 participants) in presentation spaces	Provides additional points of access especially for underserved communities and/or visiting artists where understanding/exposure of certain types of music is limited Creates community connection Creates other level of engagement beyond passive audience listening experience
Is a Music Centre, not just Music Presentation Centre	Need for more than just music presentation in the City – need for a music hub
Physical transparency/flexibility of space Ensure physical accessibility, and others who might not typically have access due to physical, economic, cultural limitations etc.	Can serve as a centre to build community connection through music (and is part of the civic centre, where community is core)
Avoid bad, non-welcoming design Facility led governance and management	Building should be an architectural draw Make it welcoming and beautiful, not just functional. Make it about people
Ensure larger adaptable seats	Reflect needs for mobility and access for all people
All ages venue options, i.e. ensure that programming and liquor licensing allows adults and children in venue at same when liquor served	Encourage cross-generational programming, increases accessibility and is kid friendly; also ensures better operational viability
Convenient loading required for musicians	Important for musicians, for efficiencies and access
Good funding support for operator	Ensure that access remains affordable to all
Parking required – restrict some parking for Community Centre and/or Music Presentation Centre	Required for musicians, but also audiences – underground parking could be filled up by attendees at events at Rogers Arena and/or BC Place, if not restricted and could cause disrupt musician and attendee access to Music Presentation Centre

Figure 5: Music Presentation Centre Word Cloud



### TABLE F – OVERALL & OUTDOOR:

The Overall & Outdoor table discussed the importance of connecting components in a navigable manner, the importance of creating a sense of “public-ness”, low barrier spaces, creating links to different spaces, access to technology, active outdoor spaces (e.g. splash parks), relationships to natural features, gardens, food and education, and rooftop access. For the complete list consult the tables below.

**Table 6: Overall Civic Centre – Most Important & Why Table**

MOST IMPORTANT	WHY?
Swimming pool Water elements	Inclusive, opportunity for greater equity
Access to tech (computers, phones, etc) & places for quiet respite/work & (places/spaces for everyone) not just primary users or target users	Equity – provides services that are needed
Sense of “publicness” Architectural expression Public rooms that are transparent/see people inside Links b/w spaces. Connections Feeling that you don’t have to pay to in or around the building	To make the project more public. See what is happening inside – i.e. large scale sports
Spaces for indoor/outdoor (both)	Be able to move b/w & bring elements of each into one another
Nighttime childcare	Making use of spaces not used at all times artists & others need care after DUSK
Community meeting space incl. a bar, stage, restaurant/café Comm. Building space	Places where people connect
Spaces for interaction transaction & publicness Kitchen training facility	Being able to see what is happening inside
“community centre to encompass every space” safety stewardship* low barrier spaces openness Washrooms	Community stewardship – creates a sense of ownership. Spaces to be designed to be welcoming and safe.
Outdoor covered activity space (i.e. for dancing)	

**Table 7: Outdoor Areas – Most Important & Why Table**

MOST IMPORTANT	WHY?
Spaces for everyone Active Passive Play	Adult/child silos should be avoided?! All ages Opportunity to be physical
Water/splash park Podium level/ground/roof Adaptability* & flexibility Learning opportunities Access – roof/podium	Brings people together Allows a side swath of pop. to use & enjoy the space Education & connection Important consideration for accessibility equity
Links b/w and through the building	Transparency & publicness
Relationship to the natural features (i.e. to be able to swim in False creek)	
Community gardens Public gardens	Connection to childcare – food – land – education



## Appendix A: Participant List

A total of 32 community members joined the City of Vancouver and Cornerstone for the invite only public engagement event held on Tuesday, July 9, 2019. Representation included individuals from:

- British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association
- Carnegie Community Centre Association
- Cedar Developments Corp (Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association)
- City of Vancouver
- Crosstown elementary school
- Donald Luxton & Associates
- False Creek Residents Association
- Foolish operations society
- Human Studio Architecture and Urban Design
- Kerrisdale Skating Club
- Musician/Presenter
- NEFC Stewardship
- PDAG/Adaptive Recreation
- PuSh International Performing Arts Festival
- ReConnect Vancouver
- Rogue Folk Club
- Spinal Cord Injury BC
- Vancouver Independent Music Centre Society
- Vancouver Minor Hockey Association
- Vancouver Thunderbirds Hockey
- VIM House
- 312 Main/Hogan's Alley Society/individual
- Music on Main
- NuZI
- SUCCESS
- The Roundhouse Community Arts and Recreation Centre
- Youth Collaborative for Chinatown
- Community Arts Council of Vancouver
- Hogan's Alley Society
- Vancouver Moving Theatre / DTES Heart of the City Festival
- Strathcona Community Centre
- Vancouver Female Ice Hockey
- Vancouver Ringette Association