

Shape My Waterfront

What We Heard: A summary of the public engagement for a new place on the Halifax waterfront



Brought to you by Co*Lab in partnership with Waterfront Development

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Waterfront Development

A NEW PLACE ON THE HALIFAX WATERFRONT

Waterfront Development has been collaborating with the public to build a new place on the waterfront. The vision is for it to become a place where locals feel at home with a variety of activities, programs, and amenities that cater to people of all ages, all year long.



DESIGNED BY & FOR LOCALS

When it comes to public space, the people who use it are the experts. We gathered public input through these 4 methods:

1. 4 Public Engagement Sessions - 90 Minutes each that included a walking tour of the proposed site. 100 + participants came out.
2. Public Online Survey
3. Social Media & Email
4. 1 on 1 Conversations with neighbours, local stakeholders and business owners

THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING

Public input has been a very important first step in the design process - but won't be the only opportunity to shape this new place. It wouldn't be fair to expect that we create an absolute perfect place in our first year. Waterfront Development is committed to ongoing public engagement to ensure that this new place thrives and serves the public as best as possible.

What we heard

Q The public engagement sessions, online surveys, and social media produced a lot of ideas, critiques and recommendations for this new place. Six major themes emerged:

Water

The number one piece of input we received was to protect, celebrate and increase our connection with the ocean. Specifically, participants want to increase the great views of the harbour and islands, have easier access to the water for swimming and boating, and celebrate our marine life.

A Gathering Place for All

Participants identified some essential elements of great public spaces: a free, comfortable place to relax, socialize and gather. It should be a multi-use community space. A range of programming and activities should promote use of the space by a diverse population.

Playful, Creative & Interactive

Not only do people want to gather, they want the ability to interact with and be playful in the space. Ideas included structures for climbing and viewing the ocean, a stage or venue for musicians, buskers, yoga classes and other events, water fountains, steps into the ocean and public art.

Year Round Comfort & Access

To make the place comfortable year-round participants thought that there should be protected areas from wind, rain, and snow. Natural and green elements were identified as essential, as well as a variety of seating options such as picnic tables, hammocks, reclining chairs, and grassy hills. Creative and beautiful lighting should be used to make the space attractive, accessible and comfortable in the evenings.

A Place that Supports Local Businesses, Artists, and Musicians

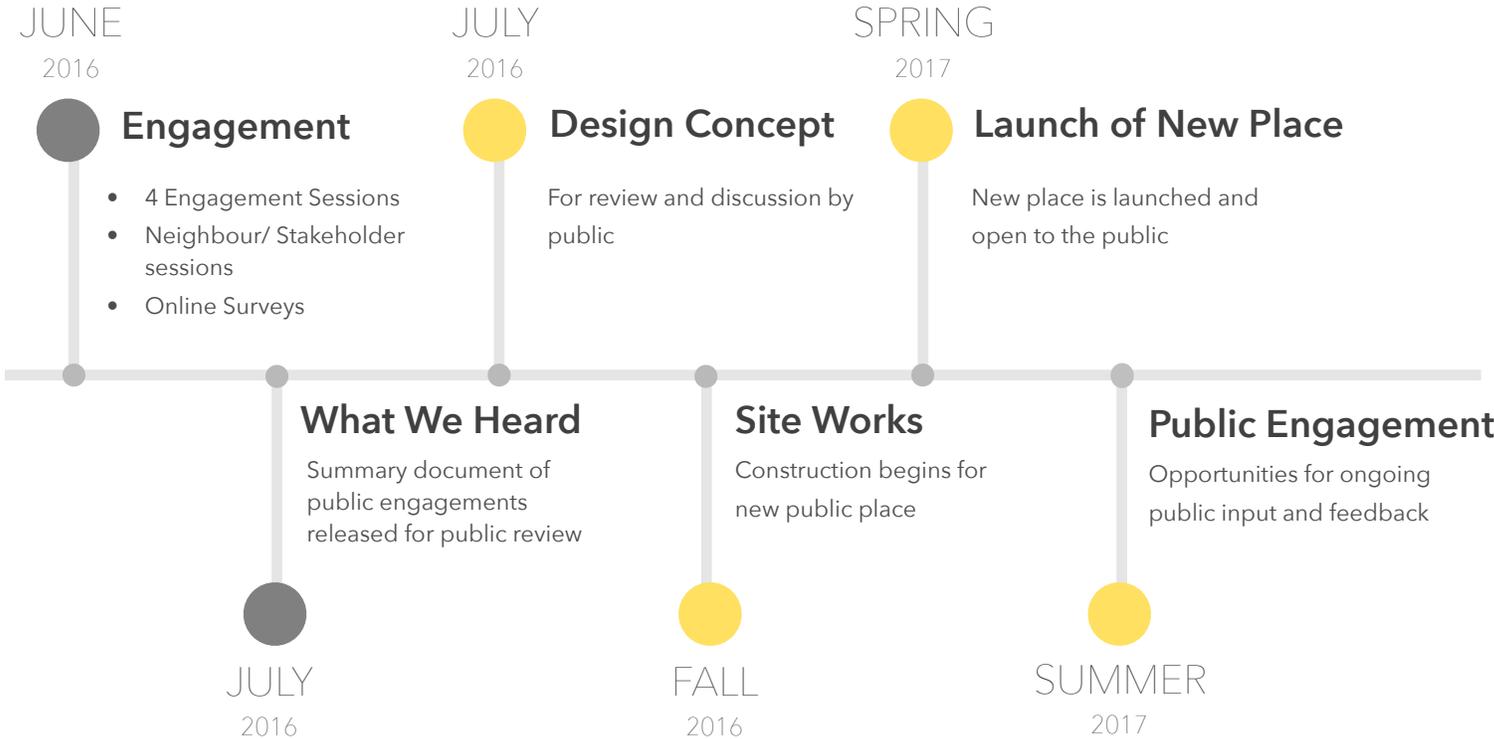
The new place should allow for a variety of local businesses, artists and musicians to be showcased. The place should have flexible infrastructure that encourages “pop-up” vendors, markets, and allows entrepreneurs and small scale businesses to try out new products. The place should have a village-like feel with a mix artisanal goods, crafters, affordable, and multicultural food options. There were several requests for a music venue.

Connectivity to Nearby Places

Participants would like to see the new place have greater connections to the rest of the waterfront through wider boardwalks. Similarly there could be greater connections to other nearby public places like Citadel Hill, Lower Water Street, and downtown shopping areas, through streetscaping and entrance ways to draw people in from the East/West streets of downtown. This new places should be accessible by bus, ferry, walking, biking, and driving.



Next Steps



TIMELINE

EXAMPLES OF GREAT PUBLIC PLACES



Village au Pied du Courant, Montreal



Copenhagen Waterfront



Village au Pied du Courant, Montreal



Vertical Village, Taipei, Taiwan



Village au Pied du Courant, Montreal



Judith Needham Playhouses, UK



Paprocany Lakeshore - Tychy, Poland



Timber Play, Scotland



Thank you to everyone who participated in the public engagement sessions for the great ideas, insights, and vision!

Appendix: Engagement Results // THEMES

Local	Openness	All seasons
Aboriginal elements	Accessibility	24 hours a day
Adventure / Recreation	Authentic feel	Visible fabrication
Family / incorporate the kids too!	Not too much commercial development (small okay, some large)	Fun
Not touristy / carnival, authentic		All Ages
Mixed Use	Need to keep people in space at all times	Play, interact, hang
Year round activities		Free
Connectivity	Critical mass of people	Locals coming to waterfront
Visibility	Strong connection all along waterfront	Multi Cultural
Accessibility for individuals with disabilities	Toddler friendly playground	Access
Walkability	Mixed-use - all day, all night	Connection to boardwalk/ downtown
Attractive	Green space	Ways for public to be engaged
Water Access & view, connection to environment	Health	Turn conduits into destinations
Meeting place creation, places to sit/eat	Inclusive (something for everybody - ages, income, interests)	Public space integrated without commerce
Local small businesses	Active	Art - turn mundane into creative art
Year-round space	Local sellers (not only, but mainly, encourage, help)	Vibrant colours
Vibrancy	Novel	Food and entertainment
Views	Stickiness - place where people want to linger and stay for awhile	Retain existing trees and plant blossoming trees
Connections	Live music	Maintain good security
Signage/wayfinding	Aboriginal/cultural components - heritage	Good washroom accessibility for the public
Authenticity	"Community" feel	Technology - virtual aquarium, virtual trees
Public art		Art
Colour - make it bright	Ocean/island connection	Places
History	Spaces to embrace nature	Accessible. Wheel chairs.
Context sensitive design	Accessibility	All seasons
Continuity and harmony	Ensure that walkways are level and not uneven like the rest of the city	History
Human scale		

Appendix: Engagement Results // *SHORT TERM IDEAS*

Improve access via public transit (+ ferry)	More Seating	Wayfinding - clarify pedestrian routes - tree line to guide separation of parking area (Lower Water St. from boardwalk)	More signage (identifying landmarks)
Create public washrooms	Keep authentic - keep walking on waterfront	Free Wifi, free public seating area picnic - bistro seating (give people a reason to sit there)	Busker Stations
Arrange kiosks/small businesses in a way that is more attractive and improves access vs current orientation	Trees (lots)	Halifax sofa - surprise people, photo opportunity	Commandeer the parking lot for public space using graphic on asphalt
Move trees and open up the space; have green spaces that are permeable pavers (green tech)	Artistic, historical, natural, info, art, statues	Clean, free, green	Safe and convenient "all year round"
Move some of the parking and create open event space	Interpretive info on ocean	"Village" kiosks with tower/lookout/lighthouse	Llght as art / public art
Diving board; areas that are sectioned off for swimming	More bathrooms	Sheltered spaces (race, cold, wind, heat)	More programming - better connections to local NGO' and organizations to help programming (fusion, Dal, etc)
Village mix (food, artisan, etc)	Art	Flower boxes with chairs, tables and umbrellas (brightly coloured!)	More transit access when parking spaces removed
Boardwalks (access)	Local business - more hutches & beer gardens - > diversity, short term leases	Small shops - not too expensive, local artisans	Flower boxes at entrance to parking lot behind summit place
Greenspace	Music space	More nighttime lighting	Benches
Ferry to Georges Island and McNabs Island	Free up views of water	Formalize the walkway through the parking lot	Add more colour! Paint the asphalt, add flowers, lighting
Removing barriers/retaining walls that isolate the area	Maintain waterfront vibrancy - don't divert traffic	Interactive Play Structures/games/art for all ages	Shuttle service - very important for accessibility
Removing the G7 archway	Maintain views to water and along waterfront	Pilot of market -> North by Night market + Crafters Fair	Planters with trees around edge of "new space"
Improved signage and public washrooms	Authentic Nova Scotia vendors (food, arts, clothing, gifts, etc.)	Comfort - various forms of seating and hangout areas, wind protection	Entrance to water is too subtle
Access to McNabs Island	More green space	Addition of Planters/physical separation to separate parking lot	Surface: plastic hexagonal grass in them with wheelchair access (pavers, pebbles, grass, garden)
More Entertainment (local celebrities)	Weather protection	Seating	Shelter: use canvas to protect folks from sun and wind
Restaurants could offer specials lobster or corn boils	Live music venues	Public Art	Amenities: bike rack, fountain, vendors, heaters and hot chocolate for winter
Separated bike lane through parking lane - no more parking	Room to move around - control the flow	Painting / Chalk station for kids	
Provide shade and protection from rain	Pop-up markets - temporary/fluid (like in North End for North by Night)	Hammocks	
	Moveable furniture on sunny side of trees (keep other side seating too for people who like shade)		
	Paint concrete (like Argyle)		
	Public washrooms		

Appendix: Engagement Results // LONG TERM IDEAS

Signage - wayfinding and good directions to mass transit	Ensure businesses and boardwalk stay connected. Don't allow people strolling to circumvent businesses	Regular shuttle/transit service to islands	Strong connection between boardwalk and lower water street
Connect to Citadel Hill - escalator / gondola / cable car	Year round operations	Steps to water	Stronger connection to _____
Connect to George's Island via ferry	Fully connected / integrated boardwalk	Public washrooms, water fountains, dog watery stations	Connect to public piers and create venue on piers
Ferry between Halifax and Boston	Having a mini neighbourhood on the waterfront	Public art - water fountains	Fill all the "missing teeth" to create continuous destinations
Look-off Tower	Better connection to Halifax, locals, and not just attract tourists	Small stage for live music - programming, free dancing, yoga	Art gallery on waterfront
Water access - steps, kayaks, NO jetskis	Sustainability - reinvesting into the community and economy	Local artists, music, culture (both heritage and others)	Remove asphalt
Mixed-use development	Improve public access to piers/water's edge	Health and relaxation places (open air spa)	Create a village with indoor and outdoor venues including picnic tables
Widen Boardwalk	Improving/expanding green space and developing it as a "meeting space" (eg, reduce industrial noise)	Water fountain to soak your feet, kids play	Old fashioned light posts, flowers, performing stages
Music Building (performance space)	How to replace parking that will be lost? (without making it unfriendly to walkers/bikers)	Musical instrument park (with use of natural elements maybe or heritage instruments)	North-South connection improved
Views to and along waterfront need to be maintained	Replace surface parking with small multi-level parking garage (make sure its not ugly)	Get rid of concrete - more natural but keep mobility/ accessibility in mind	Create a "village" feel like Bishop's landing without the parking and "pretentions"
Widen boardwalk, remove asphalt and replace with permeable surface	Keep some areas for quiet, serene moments	Piazza // Village: erratically placed, not a hallway	Designated spaces for "talent", artists, galleries without rent (tender process?)
Increase signage, knowledge (such as an interpretive centre) and wayfinding	Large foot ___ (p_ _ts?) for the small vendors when moved to new location	Water Connection: art, marine life, swimming and water access	Aquarium - Indoor and outdoor. Something historic: naval history. Free?
Signature NS piece - Iconic	Long term, well planned tree canopy	Fun free things* activities	Maintain unfettered access from downtown to waterfront.
Multi-use community space	"See" the sea - ocean education	Support for small local artists, entrepreneurs, vending stalls	Streetscaping and draw people up the hill.
Widening the Boardwalk		Prototyping festival	Climate change future high water mark
Increase parkade style parking, eliminate huge parking lots that break up public space		Sectioning off dedicated public space	
Expansion of recreational options, create a community vibe & cohesive public space		Evening lighting plan (creative lighting)	

Appendix: Engagement Results // KEY PARTNERS

Water taxi operator	Great Earth Expeditions	Nature Trust	Taste of NS
Local environmental groups	Local artists/musicians	Garden Clubs - landscaping	Music Nova Scotia
Halifax transit	Live Artistry (ex: glassblowing, crystals, etc)	Irving Shipbuilding and NSCAD	ISANS
Current vendors	HRM artisans	Military	Dalhousie Architecture Freelabs
WDCL	Dalhousie Biology and Oceanography	Use maritime equipment creatively for shops	Jazz Fest
WDCL	NS Archives	Discovery centre	MultiCultural festival
Tourism NS	Business incubators	Reimagine Atlantic Harbours	Dal Tech
Downtown Halifax Business Commission	Halifax - more management of active waterfront	Dal Urban planners	NSCAD
Downtown Halifax Business Commission	WDCL	Dal Architects	NSCC
Federal Government	Halifax	NS Crafters society	NSCAD
Event organizers	Frank Gehry	Downtown Business Development	DAI
Maritime Museum	Mr. Trudeau	Local developers	Fusion
Entrepreneurs	Artist groups - crowdfunding	Sellers - diverse but not trashy	Nocturne
Retail and local businesses	Infrastructure Canada	North by Night market	Art out loud
Non profit organizations	Nature conservation groups	Halifax Crafters	Downtown Business Association
Halifax Chamber			Buskers (consult with buskers before making "busking" spots")
Local aboriginal groups			

Appendix: Online Survey Results

What do you like best about the Halifax Waterfront?			
Nice place	All of the public space a long the water	(Berlin) and inside pubs	including garbage bins
Uninterrupted boardwalk	Opportunities for small businesses to have space to sell their goods	Use platform and book entertainment or bands for free. A roof would be required	Continued security to ensure the safety of users
Public seating	Gathering place for events	A writers' walk, featuring a walking route along art installations with brief	Busker stages
Interaction with the ocean and city	People and community	passages/poetry by prominent local writers	More benches with proper backs
Unobstructed views	Pleasant place to walk with a view	Market space for families (not drinking)	Picnic tables and Adirondack Chairs
History and vibrant atmosphere	Wide sidewalks	Water stations	Free evening and weekend parking
Water view and seeing visiting yachts/ships	Connection to the ocean	Shisha Cafes	What changes would you make in the long term that would have the biggest impact?
Homemade items/crafts vendors	List ideas that you would do to improve the waterfront that could be done right away and that wouldn't cost a lot.	Accessibility	Encourage healthy lifestyle! ongoing focus to promote healthy eating
Walkability and diversity of things	Healthy lifestyle promotions	Public water fountains and washrooms	Greenery. Plants, flowers, trees.
Kiosks (Vendor village)	Vendor stations along the Boardwalk	More benches	More open courtyard & communal spaces
Easily walked end to end	Lots of bike racks.	Hot chocolate hut in the winter	Less visibility of the parking lots (trees by Salter create nice barrier)
Views of Harbour	Increased public hang out space	Bike parking	Build the battle of the Atlantic center
Public access	Plaques describing things that have happened in Halifax	Encourage more performers	Make shops/patios/ferry dog friendly
Continuously accessible	Bike path	Bicycles by the govt instead of private	Bike paths
Ocean views	Adjust parking costs	Continued maintenance on boardwalk areas	
Walkways	Allow dogs on public transit (ferry)	Cleaning of boardwalk areas	Stop adding
Lively atmosphere			
Tall ships and boats and yachts			
Accessibility			
Promise			

Appendix: Online Survey Results

Long Term Ideas Continued...	How might we activate this space 24 hours a day, 365 days a year? What activities would support this goal?	Beaver tails and hot chocolate in the winter	Community health boards
Stop adding drinking/beer gardens	Why would we want the space activated around the clock, and overnight?	Ice sculptures or snow sculptures	the boys & girls club
Waterfront theatre	Shelter from the weather in winter, parking nearby and indoor, or sheltered sites	Christmas tree vendors	SWITCH
Music venue	Keep the boardwalk salted in winter	Anything to encourage walking, biking, physical activities	YMCA
Winter sports	A waterfront skating rink	Comedy nights	bike-sharing/Citibikes
Small skating rink on the volleyball court	Areas for bikers, skateboarders, rollerbladers	Trivia competitions	Architecture Students
More cultural aspects	Christmas lights in winter	Art displays, book and cd launches	Beer gardens
Islands points of interest	More benches	Organizing a paint night	Halifax Cycling coalition
Halifax's Naval history	Affordable shopping	Open mic for people that want to get into singing or performing	Battle of the Atlantic society
Ensuring continued public access to the whole waterfront	Free parking	Lights that come on in playful ways as we walk past	Maritime museum of the Atlantic
Ensuring adequate parking for the very important tourists who use these areas	Café opened late	What local partnerships or local talent can you identify that could help implement some of your proposed improvements?	NSCAD
Covered public seating venue with washrooms	Free parking	Market	Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia
Connecting the waterfront to an active transportation trail that circulates around the Peninsula	Non-Drinking related activities	Lights that come on in playful ways as we walk past	Fisherman's market
Install moveable cafe tables and chairs			Crafters
			Young people
			NSCAD
			Other Waterfront developments
			Architects
			Planners
			Brewery Farmers Market