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
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

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

JUNE 2016
Engagement
• 4 Engagement Sessions
• Neighbour/ Stakeholder sessions
• Online Surveys

JULY 2016
What We Heard
Summary document of public engagements released for public review

Design Concept
For review and discussion by public

SPRING 2017
Launch of New Place
New place is launched and open to the public

FALL 2016
Site Works
Construction begins for new public place

SUMMER 2017
Public Engagement
Opportunities for ongoing public input and feedback
EXAMPLES OF GREAT PUBLIC PLACES

Copenhagen Waterfront

Verticall Village, Taipei, Taiwan

Judith Needham Playhouses, UK

Timber Play, Scotland

Village au Pied du Courant, Montreal

Paprocan Lakeshore - Tychy, Poland
Thank you to everyone who participated in the public engagement sessions for the great ideas, insights, and vision!
Appendix: Engagement Results // THEMES

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

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

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

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

What do you like best about the Halifax Waterfront?

Nice place
Uninterrupted boardwalk
Public seating
Interaction with the ocean and city
Unobstructed views
History and vibrant atmosphere
Water view and seeing visiting yachts/ships
Homemade items/crafts vendors
Walkability and diversity of things
Kiosks (Vendor village)
Easily walked end to end
Views of Harbour
Public access
Continuously accessible
Ocean views
Walkways
Lively atmosphere
Tall ships and boats and yachts
Accessibility
Promise

All of the public space along the water
Opportunities for small businesses to have space to sell their goods
Gathering place for events
People and community
Pleasant place to walk with a view
Wide sidewalks
Connection to the ocean

List ideas that you would do to improve the waterfront that could be done right away and that wouldn’t cost a lot.

Healthy lifestyle promotions
Vendor stations along the Boardwalk
Lots of bike racks.
Increased public hang out space
Plaques describing things that have happened in Halifax
Bike path
Adjust parking costs
Allow dogs on public transit (ferry)

(Berlin) and inside pubs
Use platform and book entertainment or bands for free. A roof would be required
A writer’s walk, featuring a walking route along art installations with brief passages/poetry by prominent local writers
Market space for families (not drinking)
Water stations
Shisha Cafes
Accessibility
Public water fountains and washrooms
More benches
Hot chocolate hut in the winter
Bike parking
Encourage more performers
Bicycles by the govt instead of private
Continued maintenance on boardwalk areas
Cleaning of boardwalk areas

including garbage bins
Continued security to ensure the safety of users
Busker stages
More benches with proper backs
Picnic tables and Adirondack Chairs
Free evening and weekend parking

What changes would you make in the long term that would have the biggest impact?

Encourage healthy lifestyle! ongoing focus to promote healthy eating
Greenery. Plants, flowers, trees.
More open courtyard & communal spaces
Less visibility of the parking lots (trees by Salter create nice barrier)
Build the battle of the Atlantic center
Make shops/patios/ferry dog friendly
Bike paths

Stop adding
Long Term Ideas Continued...

- Stop adding drinking/beer gardens
- Waterfront theatre
- Music venue
- Winter sports
- Small skating rink on the volleyball court
- More cultural aspects
- Islands points of interest
- Halifax’s Naval history
- Ensuring continued public access to the whole waterfront
- Ensuring adequate parking for the very important tourists who use these areas
- Covered public seating venue with washrooms
- Connecting the waterfront to an active transportation trail that circulates around the Peninsula
- Install moveable cafe tables and chairs

How might we activate this space 24 hours a day, 365 days a year? What activities would support this goal?

- Why would we want the space activated around the clock, and overnight?
- Shelter from the weather in winter, parking nearby and indoor, or sheltered sites
- Keep the boardwalk salted in winter
- A waterfront skating rink
- Areas for bikers, skateboarders, rollerbladers
- Christmas lights in winter
- More benches
- Affordable shopping
- Free parking
- Café opened late
- Free parking
- Non-Drinking related activities

- Beaver tails and hot chocolate in the winter
- Ice sculptures or snow sculptures
- Christmas tree vendors
- Anything to encourage walking, biking, physical activities
- Comedy nights
- Trivia competitions
- Art displays, book and cd launches
- Organizing a paint night
- Open mic for people that want to get into singing or performing
- Lights that come on in playful ways as we walk past

What local partnerships or local talent can you identify that could help implement some of your proposed improvements?

Community health boards
the boys & girls club
SWITCH
YMCA
bike-sharing/Citibikes
Architecture Students
Beer gardens
Halifax Cycling coalition
Battle of the Atlantic society
Maritime museum of the Atlantic
NSCAD
Writers’ Federation of Nova Scotia
Fisherman’s market
Crafters
Young people
NSCAD
Other Waterfront developments
Architects
Planners
Brewery Farmers Market