

Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement

Program overview

East Victoria Park is envisioned to be the cultural and entertainment district for the City of Calgary. This means, that all Calgarians have a vested interest in the proposed changes and future direction for the area. Our phased engagement strategy ensured people from across Calgary had the opportunity to learn about the project and provide meaningful input. Our approach has included a variety of in-person and online engagement opportunities that facilitate multiple touch points, ensuring inclusivity for all who want to provide input and learn about the project. CMLC and the City joined forces for a joint public engagement program.

Stakeholders identified and engaged throughout the past year. including: local community members within plan area, Calgarians (city-wide), Beltline Neighbourhoods Association, Victoria Park Business Improvement Area, land owners in the Plan Area, development industry representatives, members of Council, representatives from the Arts and Culture sector and the indigenous community (Blackfoot Confederacy, Kainai, Stoney Nakoda, the Metis Nation Region 3, the Tsuu T'inna and the Urban Indigenous community)

The Engage Spectrum level was 'Listen & Learn' which is defined as "We will listen to stakeholders and learn about their plans, views, issues, concerns, expectations and ideas."

Phase one engagement objectives:

- Inform the public about CMLC's Rivers District Master Plan, The City's planning process, the ARP amendment process and overall expected project timelines.
- Gather input from public to help confirm the community vision for the plan area
- Gather high-level understanding of current issues and future opportunities from the public that will inform the Rivers District Master Plan and the ARP amendments

Phase two engagement objectives:

- Provide an overview of phase one engagement what we heard and respond to how feedback has been incorporated into the plan or why it can't be incorporated into the plan.
- Share the draft plan and collect feedback on proposed concepts

Engagement timeline and events

Phase one engagement occurred from April 9 – July 16, 2018 and included:

- 2 open houses – one for citizens and one for landowners
- 26 pop-up events at high-traffic community destinations in each ward
- 8 targeted stakeholder workshops and meetings including Arts & Culture, Development Industry, Indigenous community and Beltline Neighbourhood Association/ Victoria Park BIA
- 1 online survey

In total, we engaged with 6,814 people and received 3,995 ideas and comments.

Phase two engagement occurred from October 1 – 21, 2018 and included:

- 2 open houses – one for citizens and one for landowners

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- 6 targeted stakeholder meetings including Indigenous community and Beltline Neighbourhood Association/ Victoria Park BIA
- 1 online survey

In total, we engaged with 2,164 people and received 273 ideas and comments.

What we heard/ what we did

Citizens provided a diversity of comments through all phases of engagement and the main themes identified by citizens across all phases have been highlighted in the chart below including a response in how this feedback was used by The City to inform the draft policy amendments.

What we heard (Issue or opportunity identified)	What changes were made
People overall shared excitement about the potential of a revitalized culture and entertainment district	The plan vision has been written to reflect the exciting potential for East Victoria Park.
People shared that a culture and entertainment district is more than just sporting and entertainment venues, and also should include a diverse variety of shops, restaurants, places to gather (like plazas and patios) and good green spaces.	We will keep the existing land use zoning in place which allows for a wide variety of shops, services, and amenities in the area.
People shared that the success of a culture and entertainment district is ensuring that it is vibrant, lively, unique and interesting. That it is a space that offers something for everyone, that it is a tourist attraction that draws people in year round and not just for episodic events	We are encouraging more street activity, live performance spaces, plazas for gathering and celebrating. In addition, new density bonus options for the development of arts and cultural spaces are being proposed. We will continue to work with the arts, cultural, and indigenous communities to ensure culture is a central component to this community.
People shared mixed opinions about the potential of a new arena site. Some think this is a critical need where others shared opinions in varying degrees of opposition to the idea. However, there was common concerns about The City's contribution to this infrastructure.	The Event Centre Assessment Committee established by Council will continue working through the process to determine the feasibility of developing a new arena. At this time, the policy could accommodate a new arena in the area.
People stated that it is important for this area to be planned with overall safety top of- mind. They feel that there are currently safety concerns and made suggestions for lighting, crime prevention measures, improved accessibility and flood prevention measures.	We are working closely with Calgary Police Services (CPS), and Calgary Emergency Management Agency (CEMA). Development applications will be reviewed by both CPS and CEMA to ensure developments are designed with public safety in mind.

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People shared the importance of this area being well-connected for all modes of transportation. They would like good transit connections (Bus and LRT), pathways and bikeways, improved road connections and adequate parking available.	New connections will be created to allow for convenient access to local transit, including the new Green Line LRT, more pedestrian and cycling connections, and new vehicular access point.
People shared that there currently are not enough amenities or attractions in the area which is a current barrier to enjoying the area.	We are encouraging the development of more plazas, shops, and spaces that provide for interactive elements such as kids play areas, seating, and interacting.
People shared that this area is currently a 'hidden-gem' with its proximity to the river. Future planning should take advantage of the rivers proximity and highlight it as a feature and make it more accessible.	We have created policies to ensure the river pathways continues to connect people from the surrounding communities, and connects people to our beautiful rivers.
People shared the importance of ensuring that there is affordable housing available in the area and ensuring there is a mix of development types so there can be a variety of population demographics and incomes living within the area.	The plan provides density bonus incentives for developing affordable housing units.
People shared the importance of ensuring that there are small, local businesses included in the area and not big-box stores or chains. Comments also highlighted the importance of ensuring affordable spaces for these types of businesses.	The land use districts in East Victoria Park allow for a variety of local businesses. Small local retailers require a local residential population to help them survive. The Plan allows for the increased residential population that will help those businesses develop in the community.
People shared a desire for complete pathway connections to the surrounding communities in the area.	Connectivity has been provided to allow better access to the river pathway system.
People shared a desire for the parks in the area to be unique and different than other parks in The City.	Ideas were generated through the indigenous engagement which could provide innovative and unique ideas applicable to parks and plazas.
People share opinions that the success of the area will be contingent upon an anchor development or a catalyst project.	The ARP supports a variety of densities and uses which could culminate in a number of different catalyst projects.

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Communications

A communications plan was developed to inform the community about the project and the engagement opportunities. The tactics used to inform the public included:

- Project specific website and engage portal page (calgary.ca/beltline)
- A project email newsletter, where interested parties could subscribe for project updates. There are 283 subscribers.
- Communication with the local area Councillor and Community Associations
- City-wide social media campaign (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter)
- 16,747 letters mailed to surrounding area residents, businesses and landowners
- Report to Calgarians, aired on CTV, CBC, Omni, Cineplex theatres, social media and on The City's Calgary-wide digital display unit network. Road signs located at high-traffic intersections sharing engagement details
- Targeted communications and posters distributed in nearby residential buildings in East Victoria Park

Indigenous Engagement

Indigenous engagement will be ongoing through Phase 2 of the Beltline ARP project. To date, there have been 6 meetings with indigenous elder's from the Treaty 7 nations. The engagement began with a meeting of all nations to introduce the project, followed by several small meetings with individual elder's both in Calgary and in the communities of Brocket, Kananaskis, and Airdrie. The themes touched on in these meetings include:

- Understanding the importance of Moh'kins'tsis
- Hearing stories from the oral histories
- Trauma of Residential schools and family separation
- Intergenerational trauma
- Importance of Ceremony
- Desire and need for a place of healing, where they can practice their culture and ceremonies
- Exploring ways of sharing indigenous culture with society

Full engagement reports

The full What We Heard Reports from each phase with verbatim comments can be found here:

- Phase one engagement: [What We Heard Report](#)
- Phase two engagement: [What We Heard Report](#)
- Final Engagement Summary: [What We Heard and What We Did](#)