

Liberty Village Public Realm and Community Services and Facilities Study – Update Report

Date: June 3, 2021

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

From: Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District

Ward: 10 - Spadina-Fort York

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the Liberty Village Public Realm and Community Services and Facilities Study. It provides a status update on the study including a Terms of Reference, Community Engagement Strategy and estimated study timelines.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council receive for information the report dated June 3, 2021 from the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The City Planning Division confirms that there are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report in the current budget year or in future years.

DECISION HISTORY

On July 16, 2020, Toronto and East York Community Council (TEYCC) adopted motion TE 16.58 with amendments, directing the Director of Community Planning, Toronto and East York District, in consultation with CreateTO, Parks, Forestry, and Recreation, Real Estate Services, Transportation Services and other necessary civic officials, to undertake a study of public space and other City-owned properties in Liberty Village. The study will assess and identify the need and opportunity to leverage City assets to improve and expand the range of open space and community services and facilities to better serve the area. The motion directed staff to report back to Toronto and East York Community Council with a Terms of Reference and a Public Consultation Strategy. The Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District was also directed to report back to Toronto and East York with recommendations resulting from the study and associated consultation.

The motion can be found here:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.TE16.58>

PLANNING STUDY UPDATE

The Liberty Village Public Realm and Community Services and Facilities Study (the Study) was initiated to address the need for more open space and community services and facilities resulting from significant residential and commercial growth in the area.

Study Area:

Liberty Village was historically an industrial/manufacturing district. The study area has two distinct areas. Over the last two decades the overall study area has transitioned away from industrial and employment uses with the construction of a number of residential buildings on the east side of Liberty Village between Hanna Avenue and Strachan Avenue, and the adaptive reuse of existing buildings as new office, creative and information technology spaces, primarily on the west side of the study area, between Dufferin Street to Hanna Avenue.

A map of the Study Area can be found on Attachment #1

West Liberty Village: Employment Area

The western portion of Liberty Village includes low to medium scale commercial and former industrial buildings, surface parking lots, and a City park containing Lamport Stadium. Numerous industrial heritage buildings within the area contribute to Liberty Village's unique built character, many with heritage structures, formerly containing industrial uses, that have been repurposed to include contemporary office and creative industry space. Recent developments in the area include a new 8-storey office building at 99 Atlantic Avenue and a 5-storey office building at 80 Atlantic Avenue.

Owing to its primarily industrial past, portions of the streets and sidewalks in Liberty Village west of Hanna Avenue often offer poor pedestrian environments, limited tree planting and street furniture and boulevard parking along Liberty Street. In recent years, the Liberty Village BIA has been making some improvements to these streetscapes.

East Liberty Village: Mixed-Use Residential Area

The lands in Liberty Village south of King Street, east of Hanna Avenue to Strachan Avenue were part of a comprehensive redevelopment of former vacant industrial lands known as the Inglis Manufacturing Lands. Over the last two decades, the former industrial lands have been redeveloped into a mixed-use community containing retail, townhouse complexes and a number of residential towers ranging in height up to approximately 29-storeys. As a result of these redevelopments, the population in the study area has increased significantly. Additional community services and facilities,

parks and open spaces, and improvements to the public realm are needed to accommodate the increasing population.

City-Owned Assets

The City of Toronto owns land and buildings within Liberty Village, including parks, road right-of-way's, parking lots, and buildings occupied by City Divisions, Agencies and Corporations.

The City-Wide Real Estate Strategy, overseen by CreateTO, strategically plans for the optimal use of real estate assets to enable City-Building opportunities and allow the City to take a coordinated approach to the use of these assets.

The following chart lists City-owned properties, excluding road right-of-way's, that have been identified within the study area and may potentially provide opportunities to improve and expand the range of open space and community services and facilities to serve the area.

Property	Use
1115 King Street West Lampport Stadium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports Field Stadium • Outdoor playground on east side • TPA operated parking lot – 269 spaces • Temporary Respite Centre • Heritage Building along King Street
9 Hanna Avenue	Toronto Police Services (fleet, traffic services, courts)
34 Hanna Avenue	Toronto Parking Authority Lot – 184 spaces
98 Atlantic Avenue	Economic Development & Culture Division collection storage and conservation
70 East Liberty Street	Vacant heritage building (formerly a prison chapel) under long term lease
1116 King Street West	Transportation Services Yard (road operations / winter maintenance facility) just north of Liberty Village
40 East Liberty Street	Gateway Park
65 Western Battery Road	Bill Johnston Dog Park

PROVINCIAL POLICY DIRECTION

Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans

Any decision of Council related to a planning matter is required to be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) (the "PPS"), and to conform with applicable Provincial Plans which, in the case of the City of Toronto, include: A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020). The PPS and all Provincial Plans may be found on the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing website.

The Growth Plan (2020), builds upon the policy foundation provided by the PPS and provides more specific land use planning policies to address issues facing the GGH region. The policies of the Growth Plan (2020) take precedence over the policies of the PPS to the extent of any conflict, except where the relevant legislation provides otherwise. In accordance with Section 3 of the Planning Act all decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall conform with the Growth Plan (2020). Comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by Council shall also conform with the Growth Plan (2020).

Planning for Major Transit Station Areas

The Growth Plan (2020) as amended contains policies pertaining to population and employment densities that should be planned for in major transit station areas (MTSAs) along priority transit corridors or subway lines. MTSAs are generally defined as the area within an approximately 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk. The Growth Plan (2020) requires that, at the time of the next Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR), the City update its Official Plan to delineate MTSA boundaries and demonstrate how the MTSAs are planned for the prescribed densities.

Toronto Official Plan Policies and Planning Studies

The City of Toronto Official Plan is a comprehensive policy document that guides development in the City, providing direction for managing the size, location, and built form compatibility of different land uses and the provision of municipal services and facilities. Authority for the Official Plan derives from The Planning Act of Ontario. The PPS recognizes the Official Plan as the most important document for its implementation. Toronto Official Plan policies related to building complete communities, including heritage preservation and environmental stewardship. Toronto Official Plan policies may be found here:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>

Official Plan Amendments 479 and 480 – Public Realm and Built Form Official Plan Policies

On September 21, 2020, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing issued Notices of Decision approving OPA 479 and OPA 480. OPA 479 (Public Realm) and OPA 480

(Built Form) were adopted as part of the Five-Year Official Plan Review. The OPAs replace Sections 3.1.1, 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 of the Official Plan with new and revised policies for the public realm, built form and built form types, which respond to Council's direction to amend the urban design policies of the Official Plan. The updated policies provide direction for expanding the network of streets, open spaces, paths and other publicly accessible spaces, while providing design criteria for parks and open spaces and new Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Spaces (POPS). The Official Plan Amendments can be found here:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.PH11.4>

Community Services and Facilities

Community Services and Facilities (CS&F) are an essential part of vibrant, strong and complete communities. CS&F are the lands, buildings and structures used for the provision of programs and services provided or subsidized by the City or other public agencies, boards and commissions. They include recreation, libraries, childcare, schools, public health, human services, cultural services and employment services, etc.

The timely provision of community services and facilities is as important to the livability of the City's neighbourhoods as "hard" services like sewer, water, roads and transit. The City's Official Plan establishes and recognizes that the provision of and investment in community services and facilities supports healthy, safe, liveable, and accessible communities. Providing for a full range of community services and facilities in areas experiencing major or incremental growth, is a responsibility shared by the City, public agencies and the development community.

STUDY DIRECTION

Toronto and East York Community Council directed City Planning Division to undertake a study of the city-owned assets and public realm within the area of Liberty Village. The study area is generally bounded by King Street West to the north, Strachan Avenue to the east, Dufferin Street to the west and the GO/Metrolinx Corridor and Exhibition Place to the South.

The study will:

- provide direction and a strategic, coordinated approach for the City-owned assets in Liberty Village to better meet the needs of the area, ensure efficient delivery of City services and programs, and achieve alignment with the City-Wide Real Estate Strategy;
- identify opportunities for public realm improvements, such as street furniture, greening and public art,
- identify areas for new parkland and open spaces;
- identify opportunities for mobility and site access improvements such as wider sidewalks, curbside management strategies, new active transportation connections, traffic management, parking management, and other street network improvements;

- undertake a Community Services and Facilities study; and
- inform and identify opportunities for parks and public realm improvements and community service and facilities that can be secured through funding or space within future developments.

Study Process and Terms of Reference

The Liberty Village Study will provide an overall strategic direction on community service and facility needs and improving and expanding parks and public realm in Liberty Village with consideration for leveraging the City-owned real estate assets. The study will develop both short-term and long-term priorities that can be implemented in consultation with the Liberty Village community including residents, businesses, property owners, employees and other key community stakeholders.

Staff have prepared a Terms of Reference that outlines how the study will be completed and what it will accomplish within a commonly understood scope of work.

See Attachment 2 for the Study Terms of Reference.

Community Engagement

A key aspect to the study will be to work with the community on the study. City Planning staff began engaging the community in the fall of 2020, and hosted introductory meetings with the Liberty Village BIA and Liberty Village Residents Association in February 2021 to discuss the scope and objectives of the study with the BIA and Residents Association. As the study progresses, a broader ongoing public consultation and engagement will be undertaken including a project website, series of community meetings, stakeholder advisory committee and online consultation initiatives such as surveys and mapping exercises. Feedback gathered through the consultation will be used to assist in developing a Public Realm and Community Services Plan for the study area.

See attachment 3 for the Public Consultation Strategy.

Estimated Timelines

The timelines will continue to be refined as the study progresses with an estimated study completion date in the third quarter of 2022.

For the estimated study timelines see Attachment 2 –Terms of Reference.

CONTACT

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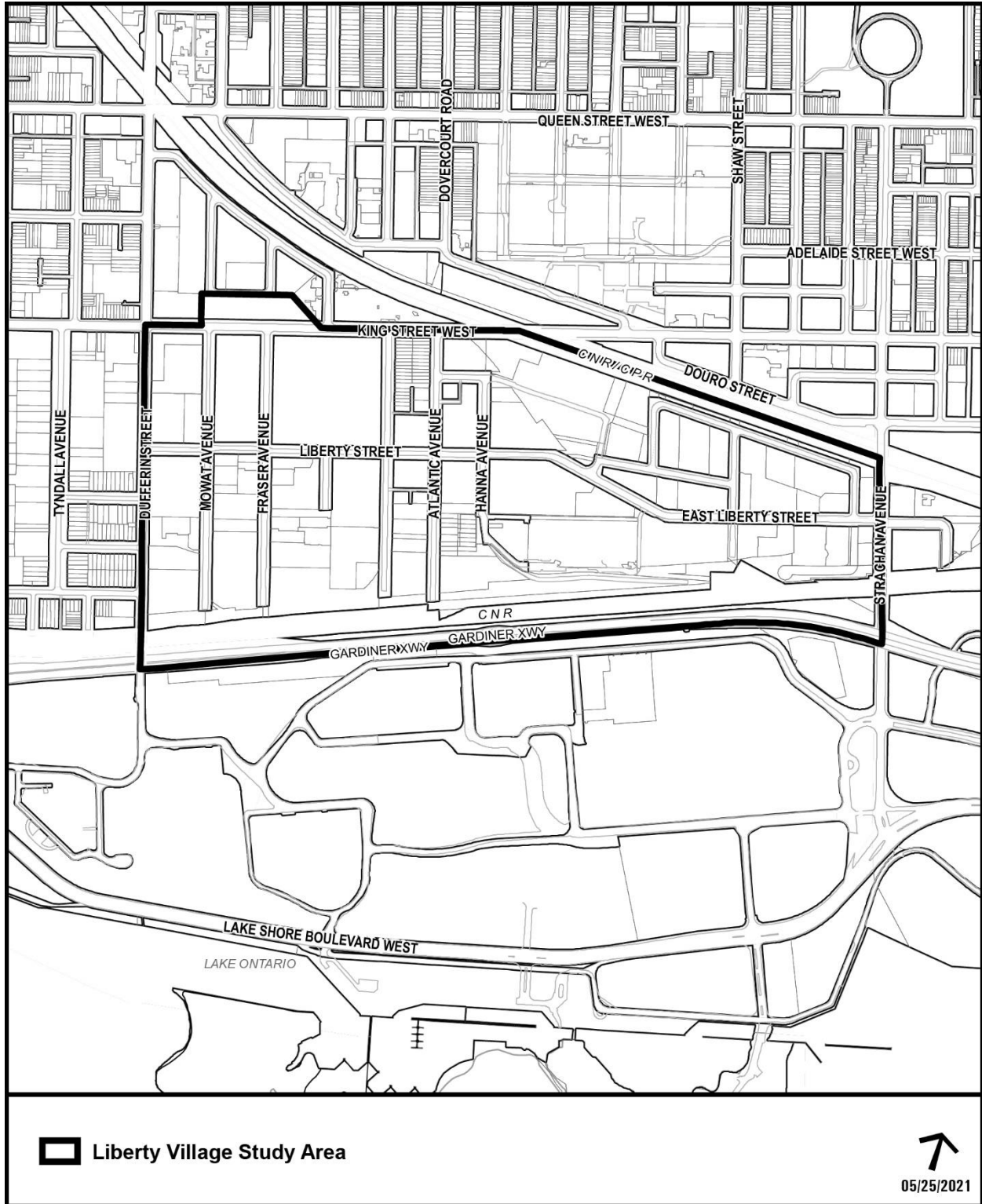
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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Study Area
Attachment 2: Terms of Reference
Attachment 3: Public Consultation Strategy

Attachment 1: Study Area



Attachment 2: Terms of Reference

Liberty Village Public Realm and Community Services and Facilities Study Terms of Reference

STUDY BACKGROUND

On July 16, 2020 Toronto and East York Community Council adopted motion TE16.58 directing the Director, Community Planning, City Planning to undertake a study in Liberty Village to assess the City-Owned Properties and Public Realm opportunities, and provide a status update report back to Toronto and East York Community Council with a Terms of Reference and a Public Consultation Strategy.

The motion can be found here:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.TE16.58>

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the study is to assess and identify the need and opportunity to leverage City assets to improve and expand the range of open space and community services and facilities to serve the area.

The Study will help formulate a Public Realm and Community Services Plan that will include principles, guidelines and an implementation strategy that can be achieved for future public realm improvements, help address the community service needs for the Liberty Village study area and provide direction for future development applications.

STUDY AREA:

The Liberty Village area (generally bounded by Dufferin Street, Strachan Avenue, King Street West, Douro Street and the Metrolinx Lakeshore West rail corridor) can be characterized by two distinct areas. The western portion of Liberty Village from Dufferin Street to the west side of Hanna Avenue is comprised of non-residential uses, which have a land use designation for employment use. The eastern portion of Liberty Village from east of Hanna Avenue to Strachan Avenue predominately consists of residential towers and townhouses closer to Strachan Avenue with commercial/retail uses throughout the area, with a mixed use areas land use designation. There is an existing rail line both to the north and south of Liberty Village.

STUDY OVERVIEW:

The Liberty Village Study will be a multi-disciplinary review of City-owned assets to identify opportunities to enhance placemaking, expand and better connect parks and the public realm and improve the provision of community services and facilities within the larger surrounding context. The study will be focused on working with City staff and agencies, the ward councillor, stakeholder groups and the local community.

The study will be led by the City Planning Division and will include staff from the following City Divisions and agencies:

- City Planning: including Community Planning, Urban Design, Heritage Planning, Strategic Initiatives, Research and Analysis, and Transportation Planning;
- CreateTO;
- Real Estate Services;
- Transportation Services;
- Parks, Forestry and Recreation;
- Economic Development and Culture;
- Engineering and Construction Services;
- Children Services;
- Housing Secretariat;
- Shelter, Support & Housing Administration;
- Toronto Parking Authority;
- Toronto Police Services;
- Toronto Public Library;
- Toronto Transit Commission;
- Metrolinx; and
- Local Councillor's office

Liberty Village Community/Stakeholders:

- Liberty Village BIA
- Liberty Village Residents Association
- Liberty Village residents, homeowners, tenants, landowners, commercial owners and commercial tenants/employees.

Scope of Work

As part of the study and developing an overall Public Realm and Community Services Plan, Staff will undertake the following scope of work:

City-owned Assets

- Undertake an inventory and analysis of existing data on City-owned properties including:
 - Location, size, tenure, age and condition of buildings and facilities;
 - Current uses and any future long term arrangements;
 - Existing and anticipated future needs of the real estate portfolios;
 - Land use and zoning permissions; and
 - Recommendations for future Feasibility Studies, including financial business cases.

Parks, Open Space and Public Realm Strategy

- Review inventory of existing parks, open spaces and streetscapes within the study area including current and future programming needs;
- Identify potential streetscape improvements in the study area;
- Identify planned mobility and site access improvements, and additional opportunities within the right-of-way such as:
 - Wider sidewalks, new active transportation connections;
 - Curbside management strategies;
 - Traffic management strategies;
 - Parking management strategies;
 - opportunities for parkettes and/or the CafeTO program
- Identify opportunities for new parkland, park improvements and open spaces; and
- Identify opportunities for short and long term public realm improvements such as:
 - street furniture, tree planting and other plantings; and public art

Community Services and Facilities

- Undertake a review and inventory of existing community services and facilities such as: recreation facilities, schools, libraries, child care centres and human and social services
- Assessment of current and projected service levels available to residents and employees of Liberty Village.
- Identify and prioritize current and projected gaps in community services
- Prepare a demographic analysis for the area
- Identify future community services and facility needs and priorities for the area based on the current population of residential and employment and future growth potential within the area.

Community Engagement:

- Initial meetings leading up to the study launch have taken place with the Liberty Village BIA, public realm committee, the Liberty Village Residents Association Board and AGM.
- The study will include a series of consultation opportunities, which may take the form of a variety of initiatives such as formal community consultation meetings, workshops, surveys and online mapping exercises, virtual office hours and information sessions, walking tours and social media outreach.
- A Local Advisory Committee (LAC) will be established to provide feedback and advice to City staff with respect to the study and the community engagement process. The LAC will be comprised of 12-15 members and include residents, property and business owners, developers, retail tenants, employees, and other community stakeholders. Members of the LAC will be selected by the City Planning Division in consultation with the local Councillor.
- There will be a project website and social media channels related to the study that will include updates, upcoming consultation meetings and reports and documents.

Consultation will include strategies to reach under represented members of the community and to provide equitable access to information.

Study Deliverables

- Analysis of City-owned assets
- Profile of community services and facilities
- Analysis of public realm constraints and opportunities
- A project charter and guiding principles to be developed through the study process
- Final Report with recommendations and a Public Realm and Community Services Strategy and Draft Implementation Plan

The study excludes Feasibility Studies or Business Cases for relocating / consolidating City programs through portfolio optimization and repurposing properties for city building opportunities

Additional phases of work may be required to develop feasibility studies and viable financial business cases for individual projects and implementation.

Estimated Timelines

Q3 2021 to Q4 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Project Charter • Conduct background research and analysis • Inventory of City real estate assets and City program needs • Launch study website and online engagement strategies • Launch Interdivisional staff technical advisory committee (TAC) and local stakeholder advisory committee (LAC) • Ongoing community consultation
Q1 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile, analyze and interpret research and feedback from consultations • Develop 'quick wins and fixes' and implementation strategies • Meetings with TAC and LAC to develop draft principles and framework for the Public Realm and Community Services Strategy and Draft Implementation Plan
Q2 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review draft framework with staff • Present draft framework to community for review
Q3 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of Final Report to Toronto and East York Community Council with a Public Realm and Community Services Strategy and Implementation Plan

Attachment 3: Public Consultation Engagement Strategy

Public Consultation Strategy

Public consultation is fundamental to the Liberty Village Public Realm and Community Services and Facilities Study. In order to have a successful outcome to the study process, it is important to integrate the ideas and feedback received from the community stakeholders during the study. Feedback from the community will help inform the study process, guide City staff and assist with the outcomes to be included in the final Public Realm and Community Services Plan document.

During the Covid-19 Pandemic, in-person consultation meetings will not be occurring and will be replaced with virtual online consultation meetings. In the event that restrictions are lifted prior to completion of the study, in-person events may be held.

Key Stakeholders:

City:

- City Planning: including Community Planning, Urban Design, Heritage Planning, Strategic Initiatives, Research and Analysis, and Transportation Planning;
- CreateTO;
- Real Estate Services;
- Transportation Services;
- Parks, Forestry and Recreation;
- Economic Development and Culture;
- Engineering and Construction Services;
- Children Services;
- Housing Secretariat;
- Shelter, Support & Housing Administration;
- Toronto Parking Authority;
- Toronto Police Services;
- Toronto Public Library;
- Toronto Transit Commission;
- Metrolinx; and
- Local Councillor's office

Liberty Village Community:

- Liberty Village BIA (LVBIA)
- Liberty Village Residents Association (LVRA)
- Liberty Village Residents, homeowners, tenants, land owners, businesses, employees, developers and other stakeholders

Community Consultation

The following is a summary of the various engagement activities that will be undertaken during the study:

Online Platform and Social Media

- Website Launch
- Social Pinpoint Mapping and Survey Exercises
- E-communication updates through email lists

Community Wide Consultation Meetings

A series of Virtual Engagement events with the community will be held using the WebEx platform. As restrictions on indoor events are lifted due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, consideration will be made for including in-person consultation meetings.

- 2-3 consultation meetings as needed
 - Initial Kick-off Meeting in September 2021 Introducing the Study and discuss scope of work
 - Meeting to present draft Public Realm and Community Services Plan
 - Meeting to present final Public Realm and Community Services Plan

Advisory Committees

- A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will be formed comprised of staff from various City Divisions
- Local Advisory Committee (LAC) or Working Groups
 - Comprised of 15-20 members of various residents, landowners, business owners and other community stakeholders
 - 4-5 focused meetings anticipated with different themes (community facilities and services, city assets, public realm, and final meetings to discuss findings, implementation and phasing)
 - Future focused meetings with LVBIA, LVRA and other community stakeholders

Additional engagement opportunities

- Host Virtual or in-person open office hours with City Planning staff
- Possible Future covid- safe environment:
 - walking tours
 - pop-up events in Liberty Village with information sessions