

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION: 09/28/17

Summary of Community Feedback

UNILEVER PRECINCT
PLANNING STUDY
AND EAST HARBOUR
SmartTrack STATION

Community Consultation Summary

This report provides a high-level summary of participant feedback. This report is not intended to provide a verbatim transcript of the meeting. If you have any questions after reviewing this summary, please contact Carly Bowman, Senior Planner, Community Planning, City of Toronto, at Carly.Bowman@toronto.ca or 416-338-3788.

Event Overview

On September 28, 2017, the City of Toronto hosted the second Community Consultation Meeting for the Unilever Precinct Planning Study, including the planning of East Harbour SmartTrack station. It was held at the Ralph Thornton Community Centre at 765 Queen Street East in the 2nd floor auditorium from 6:30-9:00pm. The event structure was:

6:30-7:00pm - Informational open house: review informational project display panels and speak to project staff.

7:00-7:45pm - City Staff and First Gulf Presentations: City staff presentation on planning objectives for the Unilever Precinct and the SmartTrack station; presentation by First Gulf on their development proposal.

7:45-9:00pm - Community Priorities for Unilever Precinct: community engagement activity identifying community priorities that will help guide the planning study and development application review.

Consultation materials are available online at www.toronto.ca/unileverprecinct



Approximately 120 people attended the community consultation and over 300 individual comments were written on sticky notes and maps across 9 discussion tables during the community priorities engagement activity. The purpose of the event was to provide the community with an overview of the City's precinct planning process considerations for the Unilever Precinct, provide the community with a presentation from First Gulf on their recently re-submitted development applications, and hear from participants regarding their priorities for the area.

The City spoke about Master Planning as a tool, and specifically highlighted the following components in the Unilever Precinct Planning context:

- **Planning for Jobs:** Employment areas are crucial for providing jobs in the City, and are of limited supply. Provincial and City policy underscores their importance, and requires their preservation. First Gulf's proposal envisions the precinct as a major employment node for 50,000+ new jobs. The precinct plan will consider ways to make it a vibrant area that includes office and supporting retail, recreation and entertainment uses.
- **Infrastructure Coordination:** This area is at the intersection of major, city-serving infrastructure projects. A very significant level of infrastructure coordination has already been occurring and the precinct plan will continue to contribute to this coordination.
- **Transportation + Transit:** The City, the TTC, and Metrolinx are working together to plan new transportation infrastructure to support development in this area (e.g. East Harbour SmartTrack Station, Eastern/Broadview Relief Line Station, Broadview Streetcar extension, new streets, and improved pedestrian and cycling connections). The precinct plan will look at how people move through and within the area, coordinating with the other ongoing transportation projects.
- **Public Realm + Heritage:** The public realm includes streets and their framing rights of way, parks, Privately-Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces (POPS), and other open spaces. Planning for a connected, spectacular and generous public realm and associated opportunities to celebrate local history and culture are important elements of the precinct planning.
- **Sustainability:** Along with transportation sources, buildings are very significant carbon generators. The planning process will consider ways to incorporate sustainability into this urban employment area.
- **Built Form:** The precinct planning focus is on framing streets and open spaces, establishing where different scale buildings should go on the site, and planning for pedestrian comfort.

120
Participants

OVER
300 Comments

Across

9 Discussion
Tables



Next, First Gulf spoke about their revised Master Plan submission, and specifically highlighted the following ten (10) themes of the East Harbour application:

- Reinforcing downtown Toronto as Canada's economic engine
- Implementing the City's long-term vision for the waterfront
- Aligning city-building with major public infrastructure investments
- Establishing a highly connected commercial centre for the region east of the Don River
- Creating a significant mobility hub
- Creating and extending pedestrian networks linked to transit
- Sustainability and Resiliency: Mitigating and responding to climate change
- Expanding the City's Green Space Network: Finding our role in Don River Park
- Driving growth and development east of the Don River
- Celebrating Broadview Avenue as a major corridor through the city

Following the City and First Gulf's presentations, participants were provided an opportunity to ask any questions, clarifications, and/or further details on the presentations.

Attendees provided feedback by speaking directly with staff at table discussions that focused on the key areas above, as well as on written comment sheets, and through follow-up emails with City staff. The City appreciates the participation and involvement of the community. Thank you to all who attended!

Consultation Promotion

The consultation was promoted through mailed distribution of a notice to residents and businesses with addresses in the following geography: Queen East to the north (including addresses fronting on the north and south sides), Coxwell Avenue to the east, Commissioners to the south (again, north and south sides), and 500m west of the westerly property boundary of 21 Don Valley Parkway (approximately Tannery Road).

Interested parties list from the following applications and/or studies were also sent notice by mail:

- 21 Don Valley Parkway (applications)
- 462 Eastern Avenue (application)
- South of Eastern Strategic Direction (City Planning Study)

The meeting notice was sent electronically to all those who have provided email addresses and asked to join the Study email list. The meeting was also promoted through the City Planning Twitter account, @CityPlanTO, in a series of tweets leading up to the meeting, using the hashtag, #UnileverPrecinct.

Councillor Fletcher, Councillor Shiner, and the office of Councillor McConnell were also notified. Councillor Fletcher attended the meeting, participated in the presentation, and the community priorities activity.

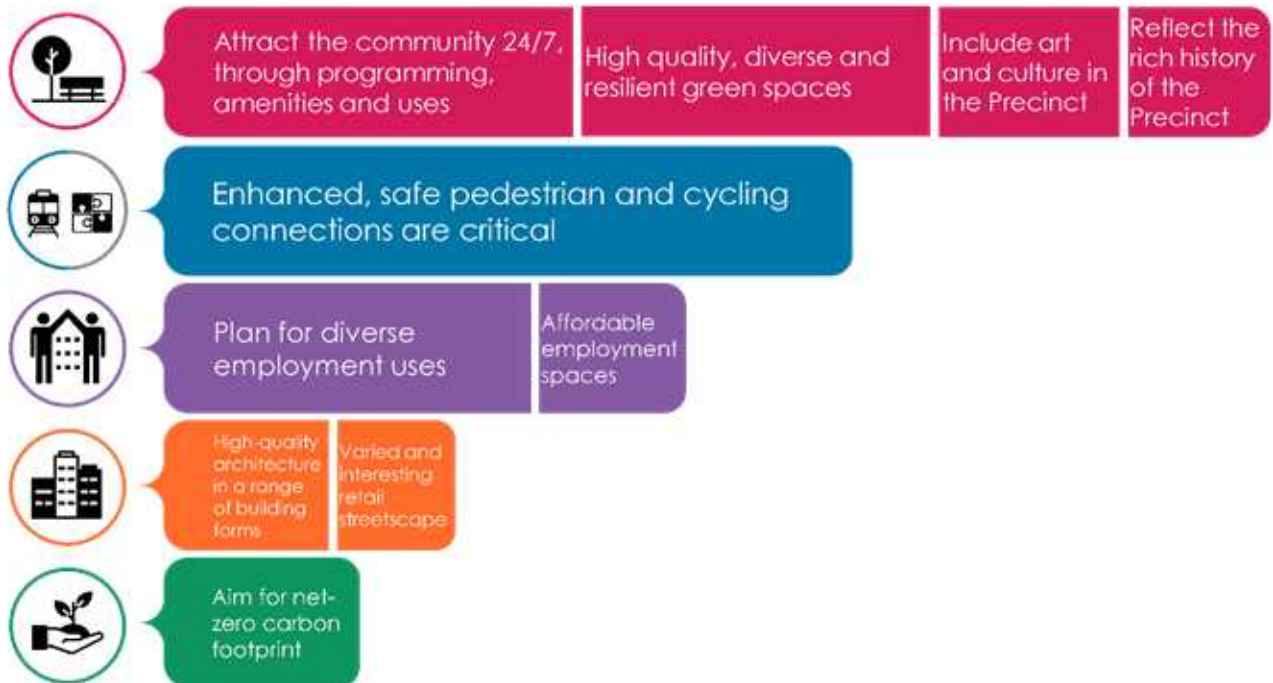
[Click here for the Community Consultation Meeting Notice.](#)

[Click here to view the Community Consultation Meeting Presentations.](#)



Summary of What We Heard

The facilitation team asked participants to provide their priorities for the Unilever Precinct. The facilitation team explained that City staff and First Gulf would consider the communities' priorities shared as they take next steps to study and plan the Unilever Precinct. Community input was collected during lively table discussions as participants noted their priorities on thematic boards, on written comment sheets, and through follow-up emails with City staff. Those priorities were later categorized by the project team through an open coding exercise. Those priority areas identified with the most interest by participants (identified at least eight separate times) are summarized and illustrated below, categorized in the overall themes described earlier. The priorities captured here represent about half of the total comments received.

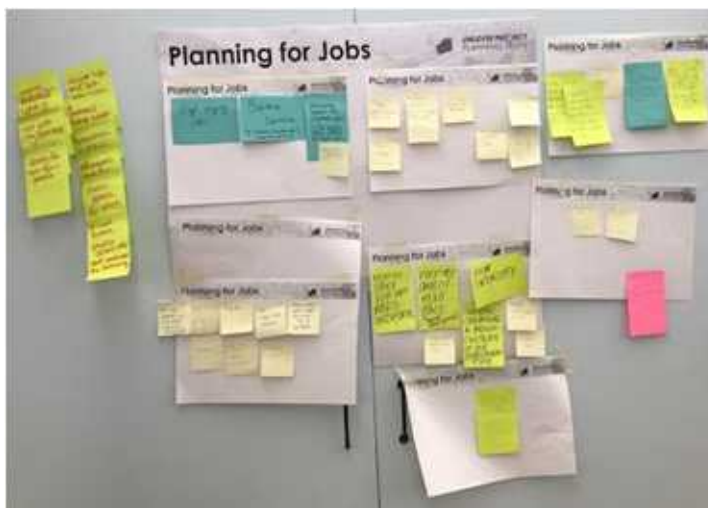


The following sections provide an overall summary of all feedback received. Priorities are shown as they were categorized by participants themselves into the themes described in the Event Overview (note that many of the priorities overlap themes).

Planning for Jobs



- There is concern about developing an employment monoculture. Plan to design space for creative jobs such as studios and flexible space for creative start-ups. Ensure the Precinct's employment uses are diverse and provide flexible employment spaces for different types of employers (i.e., tech, non-profit, arts-based, etc.).
(*'Diversity of Employment Uses' comments received: 22*)
- Affordability for small, medium and creative businesses is essential.
(*'Affordability' comments received: 8*)
- Important to offer amenities for future workers such as daycare, recreation, health care, healthy food options, and more.
(*'Amenities' comments received: 7*)
- Consider space for educational jobs through satellite post-secondary campus space (i.e. Centennial College or an adult learning centre).
(*'Education' comments received: 5*)
- With Toronto's television and film district in close proximity to the Precinct, it would be wise to include employment space for television and film services such as animation, VR, editing, etc.
(*'Television/Film' comments received: 5*)
- Capitalize on Toronto's tech industries and develop suitable employment spaces.
(*'Tech' comments received: 4*)



Infrastructure Coordination



- Enhanced pedestrian and cyclist connectivity is critical; this includes connectivity to local neighbourhoods and local destinations (e.g. Saultter neighbourhood, access to Lake Ontario over ship channel), paths, trails, as well as additional north-south/east-west cycling infrastructure. Consider including bike parking at transit stations and enhanced pedestrian connectivity between the SmartTrack and TTC.
(*'Pedestrian/Cyclist' comments received: 8*)
- Construction impacts concerns (i.e., dust, noise, power outages) and concern for phasing construction to mitigate the impacts on local residents.
(*'Construction Impacts' comments received: 5*)
- Development needs to be tied to transit approvals and development.
(*'Transit' comments received: 4*)
- Consider integration with existing community developments and local infrastructure such as a ramp connection to the Don Valley Parkway and the Gardiner Expressway.
(*'Vehicular Connectivity' comments received: 2*)



Transportation + Transit



- Safe and secure bicycle lanes are needed. Sharrows are not sufficient for personal security/safety. Develop complete streets with dedicated bike lanes on Broadview Ave. and other Precinct streets and adjacent roadways. To improve the quality of the user experience and level of safety consider intersection improvements (i.e., Don Roadway and Lake Shore Blvd. E.), pedestrian and cycling only zones, grade-separated pedestrian and cycling bridges over traffic, and other comprehensive cycling and pedestrian infrastructure.
(*'Pedestrian/Cyclist' comments received: 22*)
- Additional connections to the Precinct should be considered such as connections across the Valley, connection to Corktown Commons, and a boardwalk system from the transit stations to the Don River and Lake Ontario.
(*'Connectivity' comments received: 9*)
- Parking is limited in the area. Most homes in the neighbourhood do not have parking and rely on street parking. Mitigate parking challenges during construction of Precinct and transit/transportation infrastructure.
(*'Parking' comments received: 6*)
- Mitigate traffic impacts on surrounding neighbourhood streets (e.g., Booth Ave., Queen St. E., Eastern Ave.) and consider steps to improve local traffic management conditions (e.g., speeding traffic on Lewis St., McGee St., and Booth Ave.).
(*'Traffic' comments received: 5*)
- Transit is at capacity, develop should be contingent on implementing new transit infrastructure. Consider Lake Shore line.
(*'Transit' comments received: 5*)



- Concern for construction traffic impacts to local streets. Ensure cycling and pedestrian connections are continuously made accessible during construction.
(*'Construction Impacts' comments received: 3*)
- Consider enhancing the user experience around the Don Valley Parkway by burying the Parkway between Queen St. E and Lake Shore Blvd. E. to create more parkland adjacent the Precinct and the Don River. Also important to protect the smaller scale retail on Queen Street E.
(*'Placemaking/Urban Design' comments received: 3*)
- Connections between the Precinct and the SmartTrack station (and westerly connection to the West Don Lands) needs to be designed for accessibility.
(*'Accessibility' comments received: 2*)
- Consider the inclusion of alternative forms of transportation such as a ferry dock at the sediment basin, water taxis, or a paddleboard shop.
(*'Alternative Transportation' comments received: 2*)

East Harbour Station

The following comments were received about the East Harbour SmartTrack station:

- *Tie the timing of transit with the timing of development; have transit done before development*
 - *The transit station seemed well thought out*
 - *The transit station needs to be accessible for mobility impaired*
 - *The SmartTrack station needs to be connected to the west (Corktown Commons, West Don Lands, Distillery)*
 - *Need proper pedestrian connectivity between SmartTrack and TTC*
 - *Provide bike parking at the station*
 - *Boardwalk system from transit to river and lake*
 - *Develop a PATH system for the precinct*
 - *Mitigate construction impacts on surrounding neighbourhoods and the street, cycling and pedestrian network*
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Public Realm + Heritage



- Include art and cultural destinations for the public in the Precinct such as a major museum or art gallery (i.e. the Unilever building as museum/gallery space), a theatre, a farmers market, street festival space, public art installations, and Indigenous spaces.
(*'Art + Culture' comments received: 12*)
- Attract community to the site throughout the day, evening, night during weekdays and weekend. Attract people to the Precinct by: maintaining retail along the street edge; developing at a pedestrian-scale; improving the public realm through comprehensive streetscaping; including intimate streets with outdoor cafes.
(*'Placemaking/Urban Design' comments received: 12*)
- Incorporate high quality green spaces for employees, the public and dog-owners. Include onsite parkland that is appropriately setback back from the roadway and can accommodate many uses. Consider including publicly accessible green roofs.
(*'Green Space' comments received: 11*)
- Reflect the rich history of the Precinct. Consider the importance of the mouth of the Don River as the place of Indigenous settlement for 12,000 years and recognize Indigenous history on site. Also, consider maintaining the existing Unilever building and interpret the history of the ancient lakeshore and river mouth in the landscape plan. Consider incorporating the old Eastern Bridge, at Sunlight, as a permanent art installation on site.
(*'Heritage' comments received: 8*)
- Create fun public spaces that are suitable for all family ages, children through elderly. To create a sustainable Precinct for the future do not create another financial district. Keep the young family neighbourhood demographic in mind.
(*'Family Friendly' comments received: 6*)
- Create amenities that are four-season including winter activities such as ice skating on the sediment basin or a skating and/or curling venue.
(*'Amenities' comments received: 3*)
- Attract small independent businesses, not corporate chains, to animate the retail public realm.
(*'Diversity of businesses' comments received: 1*)



Sustainability



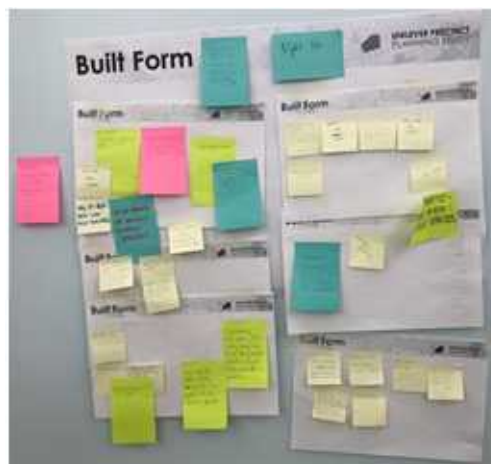
- Green space is essential and provides opportunity to be an example of resiliency through green infrastructure while providing community space through rooftop gardens, green corridors, and community farming in the Precinct.
(*'Green Space' comments received: 12*)
- Consider developing a net-zero carbon footprint Precinct that includes: carbon neutral new developments; regional transit; reduced parking; solar and green roofs; vehicle and biking sharing amenities; etc.
(*'Environmental Impact' comments received: 10*)
- The Precinct should be a best practice case study for environmental resiliency and should consider generating energy needed for the development on site (i.e. solar/wind capture for site use). Consider employing passive house design for standard energy performance (i.e., Saskatchewan Conscription House [1976]).
(*'Resiliency' comments received: 6*)
- Include dry ponds to manage extreme weather run-off and consider below-grade parking garages designed to prevent flooding.
(*'Flooding' comments received: 2*)
- The public realm should be sustainably designed and appealing for four-seasons.
(*'Placemaking/Urban Design' comments received: 2*)
- Use environmentally friendly building materials.
(*'Building Design' comments received: 1*)
- Vehicular parking should be included for those who drive.
(*'Parking' comments received: 1*)
- Design of sustainable transportation is a priority.
(*'Transportation' comments received: 1*)



Built Form



- Develop a variety in the building frontages/materiality and include diverse retail space sizes to accommodate a variety of uses. Develop a vibrant streetscape realm with a café street culture. (*'Aesthetic Appeal/Streetscape' comments received: 8*)
- Develop the right mix of low, mid and high-rise buildings that are attractive and of high-quality architecture (i.e., not all glass towers) (*'Building Design' comments received: 8*)
- Green space incorporated into built forms are important opportunities for local urban farming, can be architecturally incorporated as vertical wall gardens, and including a dog park can be a key way of animating the Precinct after business hours. (*'Green Space' comments received: 6*)
- Built form should encourage smaller enterprises similar to warehouse spaces at Carlaw Ave. and Dundas St. E. or 401 Richmond. Built forms should be flexible for different people/businesses to come up with creative uses and not just office-based businesses (i.e., art studios, axe throwing, etc.) (*'Diversity of Employment Uses' comments received: 5*)
- Ensure the built form does not support a large mall but rather that the built form could support a grocery store and daycare space for both future employees and the local community. (*'Amenities' comments received: 3*)
- Consider bike storage in each built form and consider elevated pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. (*'Pedestrian/Cyclist' comments received: 2*)
- Prioritize human scaled spaces. (*'Placemaking/Urban Design' comments received: 2*)
- Include a monument in the built form at Broadview Ave. and 'East Harbour Blvd.' (*'Art + Culture' comments received: 1*)
- Consider nightlife (i.e. after 5pm) in the built form. (*'Community Outreach' comments received: 1*)



Other Discussion Items

- The following amenities were suggested for inclusion in the development: canoe and hoverboard rental; library (x2); community centre (i.e. YMCA) (x2); daycare (x4); and, grocery store (x4)
(*'Amenities' comments received: 12*)
- Frustration and concern for lack of mixed use development. Concern for employment-only development.
(*'Mix of uses' comments received: 4*)
- Concern for development turning into an 'urban wasteland' after 5pm. Develop an evening/night/weekend strategy that includes entertainment and reception facilities. However, concern for nightclubs/all-night noise.
(*'After Hours' comments received: 4*)
- Attract tech and finance jobs to the Precinct.
(*'Diversity of Employment Uses' comments received: 3*)
- Continue community consultation and engagement today through construction completion. Once Precinct construction begins consider opening a Community Liaison Office near the site (i.e., TTC Leslie Barns Public Info Office)
(*'Community Outreach' comments received: 2*)
- Would have liked to hear more about construction phasing and implications on the surrounding neighbourhoods pre and post construction
(*'Construction Impacts' comments received: 2*)
- Include parkland with gardens managed by neighbourhood and/or with children.
(*'Green Space' comments received: 2*)
- 'East Harbour' language – is this relevant to the community and its history? It does not seem to be 'harbour-like.' Consult with Indigenous communities on site heritage.
(*'Heritage' comments received: 2*)
- Include sufficient infrastructure to support increased traffic.
(*'Traffic' comments received: 1*)



Next Steps

Further community consultations related to the Unilever Precinct Planning Study, the First Gulf application and East Harbour SmartTrack station are being organized for late fall 2017. Until then, you can continue to share your ideas and feedback with the Project here: www.toronto.ca/unileverprecinct