



Pre-engagement Report



Scoping and Planning Phase: March 2021



The City of Toronto gratefully acknowledges that the area covered by the Toronto Island Master Plan is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of New Credit, the Anishinaabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat people and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. The City of Toronto also acknowledges that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of New Credit, and the Williams Treaty signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

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Overview

From November to December 2020, the City of Toronto hosted a series of pre-engagement meetings about its Toronto Island Park Master Plan. The purpose of these meetings was to introduce the Master Plan's purpose, process, and team, and to discuss key issues, existing conditions, and opportunities the City could explore through the Master Plan. The pre-engagement meetings also focused on discussing how participants would like to be engaged in the process.

Pre-engagement included focus groups and one-on-one conversations, with a focus on Indigenous audiences (including rights-holders and urban Indigenous organizations) and community-based audiences (organizations with an interest or mandate potentially related to the Master Plan's scope of influence). In pre-engagement discussions, a member of the project team provided an overview and then Swerhun Inc. or Nbisiing – consultants supporting the City's public and Indigenous engagement on the Master Plan – facilitated and documented the discussion. Representatives from DTAH, FS Strategy, and Urban Metrics – consultants leading the Master Plan and Business Strategy for the City – also attended and participated. Following each discussion, Swerhun, Nbisiing, and the City sent participants draft summaries to review before finalizing them. The final summaries are appended to this report.

Focus group audiences and dates

Audience	Date
Interim Indigenous Placemaking Advisory Circle	October 15
Toronto York Region Métis Council	November 10
2-Spirited People of the First Nations	November 12
Six Nations of the Grand River	November 12
Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council	November 17
Huron-Wendat Nation	November 19
Native Canadian Centre of Toronto	November 19
Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto	November 24
Eshkiniigjik Naandwechigegamig (ENAGB Indigenous Youth Agency)	November 25

Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation	November 30
Boating and water users	December 1
Environment and sustainability groups	December 1
Business operators	December 1
Island and waterfront community	December 1
Festival and event organizers	December 3
Immigrant, newcomer, and refugee organizations	December 3
Recreation, programming, and sports groups	December 3

One-on-one audiences and dates

Audience	Project team represented by	Date
Foodshare	City	December 7
Artscape	Swerhun Inc.	December 9
Harbourfront Centre	Swerhun Inc.	December 9
Island Bike Rental	Swerhun Inc.	December 9
The 519	Swerhun Inc.	December 16

Key themes and issues

The key themes and issues reflect a synthesis of these pre-engagement discussions. They are also consistent with two research exercises done on the City's behalf before the pre-engagement: University of Toronto student research and a social media sentiment analysis by TalkAlive. See **Appendix A** for a short overview of these two supplemental inputs and **Appendix B** for the individual summaries of the pre-engagement discussions.

1. Big picture and project framing

When describing this Toronto Island Park Master Plan process, it will be important for the City to address the following issues:

- how the Mississaugas of the New Credit land and water claims connect to and inform the work
 - what the planning horizon and timeframe for the plan and if/how this Island Park Master Plan will deal with the possibility of the airport shutting down — especially since the tripartite agreement that governs Billy Bishop Airport expires in 2033.
 - the potential for identifying Indigenous placekeeping to be a “Big Move”
-

2. Toronto Island as an Indigenous Place

Despite its significance to many Indigenous communities, the City of Toronto does not feel like an Indigenous place. Some of the specific examples shared were:

- Lack of visibility or awareness of Indigenous nations, their culture and treaties, Indigenous place names, histories, and stories, including through signage or other storytelling
- Lack of space spaces for ceremonies, traditional gatherings and pow-wows, canoe trips, carving or beadwork, Indigenous public art, and Indigenous foods
- Lack of appropriate spaces for sacred fires
- Lack of dedicated space for youth mentorship
- Lack of an Indigenous trail and planting or commemoration with white pines
- Not enough of animals on the island
- Lack of protection for the water
- The importance of drawing on knowledge from the Star World

- A need to carefully consider the degree to which placekeeping focuses on those who come from outside the traditional territory relative to rights-holders.

Another issue shared is **the absence of an Indigenous cultural centre or hub(s)**. A hub(s) could include a marketplace for Indigenous artists to showcase and/or sell their work and “go beyond the gift shop,” employing Indigenous people, raising money to flows back to communities, serving as a place for teaching and awareness, and being a place(s) for ceremony and healing. Models include the Polynesian Cultural Centre in Hawaii or, for programming, the Indian Residential Schools Survivors Legacy Event in Toronto. The old terminal building at the airport could potentially be used for this purpose.

3. Flooding

Flooding on Toronto Island Park is a big issue that affects many different park users, from event planners to visitors to island residents to boat club to sports organizations. Though the jurisdictions of different public agencies make identifying responsibility for flood protection complex, this complexity should not be a barrier to protecting all parts of the island, including beaches, residential areas, boat clubs, and others.

4. Degradation of Toronto Island's ecology and ecosystem

The island is a peaceful, natural retreat, a tourism and programming attraction, a natural environment, a residential community, an event venue, and much more. These important roles sometimes compete, producing tensions between different users and needs.

Toronto Island Park's ecology - both flora and fauna - are special and important. However, downtown's intensification has brought increased use, pressure, and ecosystem risk to the park. Its Environmentally Significant Areas and beaches are especially susceptible to degradation from heavy use. Participants identified a number of issues for the City to consider:

- The island's importance to bird migration.
- The uncertainty around the island's current carrying capacity.
- The inconsistent application of policies and regulations already in place to protect Environmentally Significant Areas and Provincially Significant Wetlands.
- The lack of separation between people and protected areas.
- Dogs and their impacts on island habitats.
- Invasive species (which negatively impact native flora and fauna)

- Effects of noisy and disruptive activities such as boating and airport operations on island wildlife and natural areas.

5. Poor access to, from, and around Toronto Island Park

It should be easier to get to, from, and around Toronto Island Park. Some challenges participants identified included:

- The need for newer, higher-quality, and higher-capacity ferries (and possibly even a new ferry dock at Hanlan's)
- Infrequent and inconsistent ferry schedules, especially during the winter.
- Congestion and long lines at ferry docks, especially for people heading back to the mainland after events.
- Immigrant and refugee communities can face access barriers. For example, many in these communities live far from the island and have to factor in additional time, transit fare, and parking costs (in addition to ferry fares) to get to the park.
- Limited transportation-supportive infrastructure on the island-side ferry docks. Without infrastructure like bike rental facilities or some kind of accessible, year-round, on-island shuttle, it is difficult to move people and goods around the island.
- There is no dedicated ferry or transportation solution for kids travelling to and from the Island School.
- Inconsistent information and wayfinding, both on the mainland side (showing people how they can get to the island, including ferry and water taxi locations and schedules) and on the island (showing destinations, amenities, and facilities). On the island, there is not enough signage explaining what kinds of activities are permitted (and not permitted) in different areas.
- Wayfinding and signing on the island are not presented in Anishinaabemowin and other Indigenous languages.

6. A park that should feel welcoming and safe for all

Toronto Island Park doesn't reflect the city's diversity and doesn't always feel safe or welcoming. Specific examples and issues included:

- Poor lighting at island-side ferry docks
- Un-safe dead zones where cellular service is unavailable or weak.

- People's inability to have autonomous control over whether they can get on and off the island (there is currently no pedestrian or cycling bridge to the island).
- The importance of protecting Hanlan's beach as an important and supportive place for LGBTQ2S+ communities.
- The lack of both indoor and outdoor spaces for people who typically do not have safe spaces dedicated to them (such as 2-Spirited people and Indigenous women).
- The need to support cookouts, family picnics, intercultural exchanges, and quadracycle rentals, all of which are activities communities of colour and immigrant communities enjoy (and for whom the island is more of an annual destination than a weekly trip).
- Crowding at Hanlan's Beach and the need for safety and emergency response plans.

7. Poor condition of facilities, lack of servicing, lackluster food options

Toronto Island Park's facilities are either out-of-date or in disrepair and the food options are limited and expensive. Participants identified the following issues to consider in the Master Plan:

- Current washrooms need updates, some areas on the island lack washrooms, and many are closed throughout the winter.
- Walking paths, boardwalks, and signage are in poor condition.
- There are few places for weather protection (both from sun and from rain), aquatic recreation (like splashpads), sports (beach volleyball and softball), and farming.
- The process for sending, receiving, and moving deliveries on and around the island is complex and time-consuming.
- Food options on the island are limited. There are no grocery stores, tuck shops, or other, more diverse, healthier food options.
- Children and others need more places on the island to get first-hand experiences of nature, through amenities like campgrounds, community gardens, and playgrounds.

8. Complexity of hosting festivals and events

Toronto Island Park is a great venue for events, but there are high costs, logistical barriers, and hurdles unique to the Island Park setting that makes pulling them off a challenge, such as:

- Transportation, both of event attendees and equipment, adds time and cost to planning island events.
- Noise associated with events and festivals can lead to noise complaints.

- Food options for events are limited because of the lack of cooking stations and water lines near venues, making it more expensive to offer more diverse food options.
- Accessing a permit for an event is troublesome: fees are high, the permit application process is complex, and the communication channels between event hosts and the City are unclear.
- Without proper storage for infrastructure to support events like port-o-potties, fencing, temporary roads, generators, fuel and tents, event hosts spend lots of time transporting materials to and from the island.
- There are no direct connections to power, so event hosts rely on generators that cause emissions and affect air quality.

9. Lack of boating infrastructure and increased recreational boating activity

There has been increased boating, canoeing, kayaking, and other marine activity on Toronto Bay, the island's lagoons, and the island's marinas and docks. This increased activity has led to less space available for recreational boaters to dock and to safety risks from crowding on the water. There has also been an uptick in illegal charters docking on the island, resulting in noise complaints. Participants identified the following issues for boating and water use which they would like to see the Master Plan address:

- The lack of dedicated space for recreational boats.
- The difficulties faced by larger commercial marine operators, many of whom have been devastated by COVID-19.
- Illegal charters and the dangerous level of activity on the water.
- The logistical challenges boat and yacht face to receive deliveries (to support things like upgrading their facilities).

10. Limited winter use

Though there has been increased use of Toronto Island Park in the winter in recent years, it's still relatively under-used. The City should consider the following issues:

- The lack of support and resources for winter programming and events
- Irregular ferry service in winter
- Lack of heated or winterized ferries
- Lack of over-night accommodation on the island

- Lack of skating rinks, paths, or infrastructure supporting other winter activities
 - Facilities on the island, such as washrooms, are not winterized
-

11. Engagement and process

The proposed engagement process is on the right track. When developing approaches to engaging Indigenous communities, the best ways to engage are through focus groups, surveys, and meeting once per phase. For both Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences, the project team should make use of agencies, Councils, participating organizations' networks, and audience-specific media to spread the word about the process.

If the City wants to engage marginalized or racialized communities, it should be specific about its ask, the relevance of this work to those communities' priorities, and provide resources to enable them to support this work.

12. Reactions to the preliminary objectives and principles

Generally, the City's preliminary principles and thinking for the Toronto Island Master Plan are on the right track. One gap is that they are rather "human-centred." The principles should include language about protecting and enhancing the island's unique landscapes, vegetation communities, and wildlife to achieve a balance between human and non-human uses. Avoid using fanciful terms like "storytelling place," especially when referring to Indigenous placekeeping.

A blue-tinted photograph of a park scene. In the foreground, there are several bare trees with intricate branch structures. In the lower right, a person is walking a dog. The word "Appendices" is written in large, white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

Appendices

Appendix A. Pre-Master Plan Supplement

Background Review and Research

Prior to the pre-engagement process, the City worked on several background research studies. The results from these studies helped inform the pre-engagement focus groups and interviews and revealed early thinking on the drivers for change, existing issues and conditions, and opportunities for the Master Plan. This research included University of Toronto student research and a TalkAltiVe sentiment analysis.

University of Toronto Student Research

As part of the University of Toronto's undergraduate seminar course, "Public Participation in Policymaking," students carried out five virtual consultations to get a preliminary sense of public awareness and opinion on Toronto Island Park. In groups of four or five, students developed a consultation plan, did outreach online and within their networks, and then delivered several public engagement activities. Their engagements often included facilitated virtual consultations and online surveys. Within two months, the students engaged hundreds of people using both synchronous and asynchronous tools. Overall, participant feedback revealed several common themes consistent with pre-engagement, including issues like: out-of-date island facilities (washrooms, docks, and other regularly-used facilities), ferry management (crowding and schedules), challenges accessing or lack of awareness of the island (too far, costs too much, have never been before), limited food and beverage service, poor wayfinding, and others.

TalkAltiVe Sentiment Analysis

Between August and September 2020, the City of Toronto worked with TalkAltiVe to understand public sentiment about Toronto Island Park. Using social media data, TalkAltiVe looked at whether social media comments about specific aspects of Toronto Island Park were positive or negative. The study revealed generally positive sentiments about beaches, organizations operating on the island, and transportation. Businesses on the island tended to

have generally positive sentiments, however the analysis revealed negative sentiments about food options on Toronto Island, such as pricing or freshness.

Appendix B. Pre-Engagement Meeting Summaries

This appendix includes summaries of pre-engagement discussion. Swerhun Inc., Nbisiing Consulting, and the City of Toronto prepared these summaries, including sharing drafts with participants for review before finalizing them.

The complete list of pre-engagement conversations is below, summarized chronologically.

Audience	Type	Date
Interim Indigenous Placemaking Advisory Circle	Focus group	October 15
Toronto York Region Métis Council	Focus group	November 10
Six Nations of the Grand River	Focus group	November 12
2-Spirited People of the First Nations	Focus group	November 12
Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council	Focus group	November 17
Huron-Wendat Nation	Focus group	November 19
Native Canadian Centre of Toronto	Focus group	November 19
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Foodshare	One-on-one	December 7
Artscape	One-on-one	December 9
Harbourfront Centre	One-on-one	December 9
Island Bike Rental	One-on-one	December 9
The 519	One-on-one	December 16



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Oct 15, 2020 with the Interim
Indigenous Place-Making Advisory Circle
(IPAC)

Participants

Interim IPAC Members (Christine Monague, Jeremie Caribou, J'Net Ayayaqwayaksheelth, Philip Cote, Suzanne Brunelle, Bryan Winters, Karyn Recollect, Jenny Blackbird)

City of Toronto (Alex Lavasidis, David O'Hara, Daniel Fusca, Lori Ellis, Jennifer Franks, Pablo Munoz, Selina Young),

Nbisiing Consulting Inc. (Bob Goulais),

Sister Circle Consulting (Leah Horzempa),

Swerhun Inc. (Ian Malczewski),

DTAH (James Roche).

Overview

The Indigenous Place-Making Advisory Circle is a group convened by the City of Toronto's Indigenous Affairs Office and Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division. The Circle — which the City has only recently created and for which it is still finalizing a Terms of Reference — will gather to provide Indigenous place-making advice to the City on a range of projects and initiatives. This meeting, that covered a number of topics, served as the first touchpoint between the Indigenous Place-Making Advisory Circle and the City's Toronto Island Master Plan team. The City of Toronto is seeking to work with the Indigenous community, including the Indigenous Place-Making Advisory Circle in the development of a Master Plan for the Toronto Islands, and sees a significant opportunity for Indigenous place-making within this Master Plan.

The meeting was facilitated by Jennifer Franks, in her role as Placemaking Coordinator for the City of Toronto's Indigenous Affairs Office. The session began with a traditional land acknowledgment by Phil Cote, followed by a round of introductions. A presentation was offered by the City of Toronto's Parks, Recreation and Forestry Division with support from the Toronto Islands Master Plan engagement team (Nbisiing Consulting and Swerhun Inc.).

This summary reflects a synthesis of key advice shared in the Oct. 15 Meeting; it is not intended to serve as a verbatim transcript. We shared a draft for participant review before finalizing it.

Key points shared in the discussion

Strategic and Clear Engagement

Initial feedback on engagement included the need for strategic engagement using an asset-based approach and to merge interests where possible to help with community engagement overload. Circle members suggested communicating clearly without use of acronyms or overly technical wording, saying we must be mindful of the use of terms and language, for example: knowledge Carrier rather than knowledge keeper; land acknowledgment rather than territorial acknowledgement; Indigenous communities rather than one Indigenous community or using fanciful terms such as “storytelling place” or “Indigenous place”.

Opportunities in Placemaking

Circle members discussed the potential for Toronto Island to be a place for Indigenous students to come and learn. This project is an opportunity for youth mentorship, including diverse relational strategies that include the voices and leadership of 2-Spirit and youth.

Indigenous place-making is also about reciprocity and wealth redistribution. It is also about rebuilding our capacity and our nations. This project should involve Indigenous architects and engineers.

Circle members shared varying opinions on considering those who come from outside the traditional territory. Some suggested Indigenous placemaking focus on those from within the traditional territory, while others said the project should balance of the rightsholders and the very diverse urban Indigenous community in Toronto.

There are also opportunities for artists to have their works featured as part of place-making and seasonal pop-up shops for arts and crafts that are authentic. Consider deeper elements of social enterprise such as an extension of “First Story”. There are opportunities for food and medicine gardens as well.

Reconciliation through Engagement

We must recognize that reconciliation needs to take place through engagement, partnership, and collaboration. Indigenous peoples are not the entertainment or a side-show. There can be opportunities for reconciliation through greater inclusion and consideration for the “best opportunities” for Indigenous place-making on Toronto Island.

Youth are particularly underrepresented in some areas, such as inclusion and storytelling, and over represented in other areas such as foster care and the justice system. Consider making space(s) to engage youth, including how we use the land, coming of age ceremonies, recognition of milestones and celebrations (i.e. graduation).

Engagement can also be by providing grants for digital storytelling and enabling youth-agency collaboration.

Signage and Storytelling

Suggestions included having signs made in Indigenous language and other interpretive means, such as plaques and commemoration which tell the story of the Toronto Islands from the perspectives of Indigenous peoples. Places and storytelling can recount the origins of Hiawatha Island, the origins of both the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabeg confederacies, commemorating the white pines that were important to the area, and that the island is sacred because it is surrounded by sacred water. The City could consider wrapping TTC vehicles with photos of Indigenous people to educate and welcome the broader public about the significance of Toronto Island to Indigenous communities.

Intersections with Colonial History

Discussion took place about the islands as part of Michi Saagiig history. While, these intersections of colonial history have been recounted or addressed, including with the settlement of the Mississaugas of the Credit land claim in 2010, this is still disputed land.

It is important to teach people about the people who are here, the Anishinaabeg and the local Indigenous history. The participants hear that the Toronto Island Master Plan project team is working directly with the Mississaugas of the Credit.

Placemaking about Living Culture

Those involved will have to bring non-Indigenous audiences to help them realize Indigenous peoples are living people, living cultures. Placemaking isn't all about the past. As one participant stated: "We are alive, well, and in your midst!" Contemporary experiences are also an important part of the story.

Rupture in Indigenous Place

The relationships between the land and Indigenous peoples has been ruptured through colonialism and violence. What does it mean to build on land where there are ruptures? This is still happening today. We must explore and examine these ruptures and the continued violence on the land. This project is an opportunity to reflect on and have these conversations that don't necessarily fit with the timeline that is imposed on us.

Star Knowledge

There is considerable sacred knowledge that comes from the Star World. The Star World and Sky World have a lot to teach us, including how we gather at this place. This can be tied to our understandings of the land, but also our understandings of inter-

connectedness in relationships. Relationships, relational ethics, practices and process are all important threads in placemaking.

Discussion took place about star constellations, the star realm, Creation and the Serpent Man, whose head and neck of the serpent is perfectly aligned with the solstice.

The participants agreed to dedicate more time to specifically discuss cosmological placemaking topics further.



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Nov 10, 2020 with Toronto York Region Métis Council

Purpose

To share and discuss key issues, opportunities, and the proposed engagement approach for the Toronto Island Master Plan.

Participants

Toronto York Region Métis Council
(Suzanne Brunelle, Mary Anne Blore)
City of Toronto (Daniel Fusca, Lori Ellis),
Nbisiing Consulting Inc. (Bob Goulais),
Sister Circle Consulting (Leah Horzempa),
DTAH (James Roche).

Record of Discussion

After a round of introductions around the Circle, Bob introduced the Toronto Islands Master Plan project and highlighted the potential opportunities for Indigenous placemaking. Bob also shared the purpose of this pre-engagement practice is an opportunity to provide overview information, answer preliminary questions, and most importantly, learn how best to engage with the TYRMC and Métis community members.

Suzanne said “it is important to know that the TYRMC is not an agency – it is a government body. We are the local government of the MNO (Métis Nation of Ontario).” Suzanne further explained that the Council members are elected but are also volunteers who are “doing our work on the side wherever we can find a little bit of space” and are “stretched to the Nth degree.” Therefore, “how we engage may be different than how other [groups] engage... that have staff and various departments supporting them.”

Bob echoed the importance of “pre-engagements with rights holders [who] hold section 35 rights” and shared an understanding that the TYRMC “definitely [doesn’t] fit with the agencies.”

Following a presentation by Lori, Daniel and Bob about the project and the engagement process, Bob reiterated the importance of giving Indigenous Peoples a central voice in the process, and how the Islands may be a place where we can gather, hold ceremonies, and “use the Land as Métis people in your way.” Bob also shared some of the preliminary input from the Interim Indigenous Placemaking Advisory Circle (IPAC) convened by the Indigenous Affairs Office, which Suzanne sits with.

Bob then asked some questions to guide the pre-engagement discussion:

How involved would you like to be in the Toronto Island Master Plan project?

Suzanne shared that “**we definitely want to be engaged**” but it is “difficult to tell you tonight how that will play out, but it is quite important for the Métis to be involved in this process and contribute our thoughts along the way.” She explained that “we will need to reach out to our community, to our people, and find out who might be interested in participating in this process.”

Mary Anne also shared that “we want to engage our community more now that we know a little bit about the process.”

Bob suggested “scheduling **one dedicated meeting** for the Council” **in each phase** of engagement as a start, and the Council can invite others to participate, and perhaps enhance

opportunities to participate from there. Bob also offered to extend invites to **all public events**, either for Council members and/or community members to attend.

Suzanne agreed that that strategy “sounds good and is doable.”

What are some best practices for working with your community?

Suzanne suggested placing an ad in “**Métis Voyageur**” as it is Ontario-wide. She explained that “one of the challenges we are trying to deal with is reaching out to our community... connecting with and engaging with them.” “Unlike a Métis settlement, like [at] Georgian Bay, when [Métis] come to an urban centre they are scattered throughout the city and easily get lost... this is one of our tasks right now... determining the best ways of reaching out to Métis and engaging them.” In addition to an ad in the Métis Voyageur, “we can **email**... use **social media**... [and use] **word of mouth**.”

Bob committed to “creating a **one-page flyer**” for all community events that the TYRMC “can send to your networks.” Suzanne said that would be “awesome.”

Are there any specific placemaking experts that we might be able to call on?

Suzanne shared that she “[doesn’t] know of any placemaking experts” but that the TYRMC “are looking at **contracting a researcher** to locate primary and secondary materials that speak to the Métis presence in the Toronto area, and the impact [of the] Settler population... and the government that was here... on the Métis’ trajectory.” “The research will probably start in January.”

Leah suggested that it may also help to connect with some of our young people in universities who may be doing relevant research. Suzanne suggested sending “materials to the **Indigenous student centres**.”

Are there any specific interests that our initial dialogue should focus on that may impact your Aboriginal or Treaty Rights? (i.e. land claims, land-based interests in the area, etc.?)

Bob mentioned that it is helpful that we grounded the discussion with the fact that the TYRMC is a “government, elected by the people.”

No Aboriginal or Treaty rights were raised in the discussion.

Lori mentioned the “Island stories campaign... a public facing campaign that [the City] did at the end of the summer... [which] invites people to tell their Island story.” “We haven’t received much Indigenous content.” The stories were “released on social media and online as well as

banners on the ferries... as the project goes on, we will be seeking and inviting [more] people to contribute.”

What should be the next steps in our dialogue on the Toronto Island Master Plan project?

Bob summarized the **next steps** that emerged through the discussion, including:

- “Setting up a meeting for phase one... in the new year” and continuing with a minimum of “one dedicated meeting in each phase” that can be “for Council only or also for the community”
- “A commitment to invite Métis to all public events and Indigenous community events” related to the project
- Ensuring TYRMC participation in the ceremonial “public launch ceremony”, and
- “Bob will also create a one-pager to share with the TYRMC to share and invite community members.”

Bob reminded participants that “we will develop a meeting record to share with you both to ensure we are accurate” in our understanding of the discussion today.

The meeting concluded with final thoughts shared around the Circle.

Suzanne said, “thank you very much for enlightening us about the project and I’m really looking forward to the next steps.” Mary Anne said, “thank you for including us, we sometimes feel we aren’t included so this is really great, and it sounds very exciting.” Leah shared a hope that “Métis youth can be involved in this process” and expressed gratitude for the discussion. James shared that “it was great to listen and I am looking forward to the new year and the next discussions.”

Daniel expressed “thank you so much for your time and I’m glad you find this to be an exciting project. I don’t know if there is another project that has the potential to bring together such a diverse group of people who care so much about this place.” Finally, Lori concluded the meeting by saying “this is going to be a two-year long relationship... we’ve got a long road ahead of us and we are thrilled to have this initial conversation. We know we won’t always get it right and we are open to learning from you and vice versa, I hope... I look forward to that kick-off celebration in January, amidst the snowflakes and the frost!”



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Nov 12, 2020 with the 2-Spirited People of the First Nations

Purpose

To share and discuss key issues, opportunities, and the proposed engagement approach for the Toronto Island Master Plan.

Participants

Two-Spirited People of the First Nations (Keith McCrady),
City of Toronto (Lori Ellis, Pablo Munoz)
DTAH (Victoria Bell),
Nbisiing Consulting Inc. (Bob Goulais),
Sister Circle Consulting (Leah Horzempa).

Record of Discussion

Bob facilitated a round of introductions around the Circle, during which Keith explained that Two-Spirited People of the First Nations “serves the Two-Spirited community and [Indigenous people] who have or are at risk of having HIV.” Keith continued to explain that “we’ve changed how we serve community since COVID-19... we’ve tripled our staff. I’m an executive director just like everyone else, but I am frontline... I run our food hamper out of our house [etc.]”

Bob provided some contextual information about the purpose of this pre-engagement practice. This is a “bit of an experiment... for land use planning [we typically do] pre-engagement with rights holders and [governance] Councils... but because the island is an important Indigenous place for our people, we recommended to the City that we do a pre-engagement with [Indigenous] groups from the city... including Two-Spirited people, women, youth, etc. But we also want to respect and understand that we are not the focus of your mandate, [and we] don’t want to add to your plate, but [we are] happy to seek your advice to the extent that you want to offer it.”

At this stage, Lori, Pablo, and Bob provided an overview presentation about the Toronto Islands Master Plan project, after which Bob turned to some of the prepared questions for the pre-engagement discussion:

How do we best reach the specific community members that you serve?

Bob said, “we recognize the Toronto islands as a place where Two-Spirited and LGBTQ [identifying people] gather. How do we make sure we are inclusive of Two-Spirited people from the Indigenous community... the members of the community you are serving?”

Keith said, “I actually don’t want to answer... I just want to think... When I think of Two-Spirited [people]... I think of **safety** as even more important than access. For example, [we have] members who don’t even use the TTC because of fear and discrimination... [so] folks cannot enjoy the outdoors in the same way. This [reality] needs to be included. The **first thing** I thought of is making a place **welcoming**... I can make myself feel welcome even when I’m not... but many community members don’t have the same experience as me... We all have different cultural understandings... and [we] differ in our literacy levels... [so] people may not be able to understand things in the same way. Especially folks who don’t speak English...”

Keith went on to explain ways to establish safety and inclusivity, “this is **bravery** to say [Indigenous People are] who this island belongs to and you are the guests. This would be a good way to help people understand that... [by] including spaces that are **only for use by Indigenous people**... this is one of the needs of the Two-Spirited community... we don’t have outdoor space. Not unique to us, and other groups will have similar experiences.”

Keith also shared thoughts about the fact that “our community scores poorly on **social determinants of health**... which impacts how folks can **access** [spaces and activities]... what will they do there... bikes that need a credit card? Even some staff don’t have this, and they are employed full-time.”

Keith suggested that “sacred medicines, gardens... [these things] will help to feel this is important. [Thinking of] when I first came to Toronto as a young gay Indigenous man... even seeing the pride flag can help us to feel welcome. [We] need **visual** Indigenous art and words and sculptures and information – this will give the **bravery** [folks will need to engage].” Also, “members need to be serviced whether they live in a home or apartment or not... still have a duty to service you. If this is Indigenous place, then we **should be able to shelter here**... [you need to] be prepared for that.”

“Also... when I was young, I saw this show, about a lawyer [Ally McBeal]... she was in a law office, Calista Flockhart... and they had a **unisex bathroom**, and as a young person on reserve I was so excited. We still aren’t even there! The message we send with these two different bathrooms means we can’t trust each other... we need to take back the power... so our community won’t have to feel uncomfortable to even just go to the bathroom. [This is an easy way to] help people who normally aren’t thought of feel that they are thought of.”

In general, what best practices can you recommend to your community?

Keith explained that members of the community “get **saturated** for this need for engagement and their time, and I **don’t feel it is honoured in a respectful way**... monetarily or otherwise.” Keith reflected on experiences where “no one showed up ... well you’re here because you’re paid to be. But these folks may have had an *intention* to show up but are dealing with all these other things that Indigenous people have to deal with at a higher rate. Even when I offer really good honorarium, people still can’t prioritize [what you’re asking of them]. It takes time and you have to do it over and over and over. If you want to work with a community like ours which is very organized... our social media is very active and responsive... it still takes time. We offer **\$75 honoraria** for things and still can’t get people [to be] responsive... and it’s not our job to tell the community how to prioritize time either... but we can share the opportunities and **ensure that their time will be honoured**. We can be part of that... [but] if there is a **flyer** that has none

of these things that we talked about, then I'm **not interested** because it's just a **gesture that won't mean anything.**"

How involved does your organization want to be in the Toronto Island Master Plan project?

Bob shared that "we welcome your participation as much as you'd like, how involved would you like to be?" Keith replied that "I think this kind of conversation demonstrates our commitment... **let us prioritize our time** and go along with it... I think I'm very connected to community... not necessarily someone who is academic... rather I listen to community and interact with them. The community knows me and understands that kind of leadership... not many leaders are like this, I am willing to do this. If you want me in the room, you have to do that **on my schedule.**"

Bob explained that we are having "this [conversation] before we have even started. [We are] probably going to have a **kickoff ceremony** at end of January... and then perhaps we can schedule a **round one conversation** with yourself and maybe a **focus group** with Two-Spirited people? We can plan collaboratively."

Keith shared "this is the first time I've been involved in a pre-engagement... usually it is retroactive, and we have no time to respond. I appreciate this and acknowledge it. I think **Two-Spirit consultation** will really be important because a lot of Two-Spirited people see themselves as very different and unique from the [broader] Indigenous community."

During the final round around the Circle, Pablo shared, "I am very appreciative for your thoughts and comments... I am thinking about 2SLGBTQ and trans folks... work has already been done about safety in these communities... and I think we need to do some of this **work in advance** before we go to the community... we can do this as a team, so we are coming to hear *new* ideas and what Two-Spirited, queer and trans folks want to see in this space."

Lori shared that "this has been really invaluable. Thank you for being willing to meet with us today... this is a long and windy road ahead of us... anticipate long lead times to give you fair notice to slot us into your schedule. I think a focus group to highlight the many voices you represent [are important]... [we are] trying to establish some new practices in the work we do at the City... the nature of the project has merited this [new approach] and we are hoping to roll this out in our other work. No guarantees we are doing everything right... We are thrilled by what you shared today... [this is] exactly what we are hoping to learn in this process... and we hope this will actually shape the outcomes. We don't have much in terms of pre-determined outcomes... **everything is open for input** [and] **prioritization**. Your community voices are paramount, and we want this to be an inclusive space that is safe for everyone."

Keith shared “I went to an engagement on boarding schools closing down and lots of community people showed up and I felt like this lone wolf person alone with my thoughts... why are we so concerned with ensuring this is welcoming to white people who [already] feel comfortable everywhere. **We need to focus on those who don't typically feel comfortable.** I don't know if that's too controversial but why don't we do this?” Bob added, “the majority is always welcome in everything we do... so why don't we focus on making this welcoming and safe for our people?” Keith also said, “this is from my experience... we like to prioritize [some Indigenous people], but when we lose the small group of the **most vulnerable people** because we have others, we don't worry about it... but we need to do the opposite... including Two-Spirited and folks with HIV. [I] appreciate Bob is leading this and [that] helps us feel safe, with the heart and experience that Bob brings.”

Lori said she is “grateful for the honesty.”



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Nov 12, 2020 with Six Nations of the Grand River

Purpose

To share and discuss key issues, opportunities, and the proposed engagement approach for the Toronto Island Master Plan.

Participants

Six Nations of the Grand River (Robin Linn, Lonny Bomberly, Jen Mt Pleasant, Dawn Russell)

City of Toronto (Daniel Fusca, Lori Ellis),
Nbisiing Consulting Inc. (Bob Goulais),
Sister Circle Consulting (Leah Horzempa),
DTAH (Victoria Bell).

Record of Discussion

Bob introduced the Toronto Islands Master Plan project and highlighted the potential opportunities for Indigenous placemaking. Bob also shared the purpose of this pre-engagement practice as an opportunity to “get ready, to brief you, and start setting the table for the engagement” with the Six Nations of the Grand River. Bob explained that as “we develop our engagement plan, [we] can be as detailed as you want... monthly meetings or something more manageable.”

Bob led introductions around the Circle, followed by a presentation by Lori, Daniel, and Bob about the project and the engagement process that will take place.

During the presentation, Lonny asked “why isn’t the airport land included?” Lori shared that “the airport actually isn’t part of the parkland designation” as it is “operated by the port authority.” Lonny inquired if this was due to “federal government control over airports” to which Lori replied that “there are various levels of government that have authority over the airport function... so we don’t have jurisdiction... [beyond the] scope of how we interface with it.”

Also during the presentation, Jen asked if “it [is] a natural island or... man-made or are parts man-made?” to which Lori explained that “it is a natural land form [created by] sediment eroding from the Scarborough bluffs and coming westward through the lake.” She further explained that the island “used to be connected to the mainland which was separated through storm” and that “marshy or low-laying [areas] have been filled.” The island “used to look like a series of fingers sweeping towards the Toronto shoreline, but parts have been filled in” and “we hope to include that story when we start with some of our public presentation materials.”

During the Indigenous engagement component of the presentation, Bob shared excitement that “the Toronto islands can be an Indigenous place” that has been sought after, given that currently Toronto “isn’t seen outwardly as an Indigenous place... this could be the opportunity and place [where we] could really highlight Indigenous placemaking... and [potential] economic development opportunities.”

Bob then asked some questions to guide the pre-engagement discussion:

How involved would you like to be in the Toronto Island Master Plan project?

Bob informed that there are “three distinct phases” in the engagement process for the Master Plan project. He suggested “scheduling a formal meeting” in “each of these phases” as base touchstones, with additional meetings or presentations as needed or desired.

Lonny shared that “we’ve always maintained our interest in and around Toronto” so though this is not “something we are going to jump in with both feet at this point,” but we would like “to **keep tabs** with what is occurring and see if we want to be involved further” along the way. He explained that “we have a lot of activities over here in the Haldimand tract that we have to attend to... but this is part of our treaty territory as well as other Nations... and we want to keep track and if there is a need for us to be **more involved**, we can do that **when needed**.”

Robin expressed that “we definitely want to be involved, but we do have some capacity issues and there is a line about being too involved... so I think your idea of **meeting** with us as **each phase** develops is a great plan to start, and if we need to have more involvement as the project proceeds we can let you know. But it is important that we have a voice around the table.”

What are some best practices for working with your community?

Bob committed to sharing “any studies, reports, etc.” that are generated through the process, and asked if there are any other best practices for working together.

Lonny said that the best practices will “depend [on] how involved we are going to get and how are we going to use the resources in our community to contribute to our involvement” and that “it’s a bit hard to be too specific at this point, but it is something we will have to be **mindful of in the future**.”

Bob asked how well the “**virtual strategy**” has been working since the COVID-19 reality set in, and Robin said “we don’t have a lot of choice... our ideal method of communication is in person... and sometimes we don’t have great connectivity which makes things more challenging... but we don’t have a lot of choice at this point.”

How can we specifically engage placemaking experts from your community?

Bob mentioned that “there is an [interim] **Indigenous Placemaking Advisory Circle**” that has recently been formed by the Indigenous Affairs Office (IAO). Bob offered to “put you in touch with the IAO” if you have any questions about participation on this body.

Bob asked “who would we engage with to get advice on design, commemoration, [and/or] cultural ideas” for the project? Robin replied that in her mind the “people who stand out as leaders in their field tend to be the people that everybody wants to talk to.” She mentioned “Phil Monture” who is “an amazing fountain of knowledge as far as our community goes but is unfortunately so busy.” She also mentioned “Rick Hill [as] another one that comes to mind... I

would imagine he is also extremely busy in having people reach out for his knowledge as well.” Robin expressed concern to recommend these people given how busy they are.

Bob suggested that perhaps “whenever we have ideas for placemaking we can provide it to you, and you can bounce it off” people such as Phil and Rick if they have time.

Lori contributed that “moving forward, once we have ideas that are starting to get off the ground and things taking shape... over the next 18-24 months... we are going to give this the time and effort that it deserves. As the]conversation takes shape, if we come back to you with specific ideas that you can comment on or the other keepers of knowledge. It may be more efficient, as right now, we have a bit of a blank page.” She elaborated that “if there is anything we would like you to take away [from this meeting, we ask you to] please be confident that we want your voices to be heard and **please reach out at any time**... this is supposed to be an open door as this is a relationship we hope to build over time.”

Are there any specific interests that our initial dialogue should focus on that may impact your Aboriginal or Treaty Rights? (i.e. land claims, land-based interests in the area, etc.?)

Robin answered that “Phil would be able to answer better than us.”

Lonny said “I don’t think at this point, Bob, other than our historical ties to it in the past. The **Seneca’s villages** that used to be there, and the old Fort York used to be a military staging area too for Six Nations – but at this point, nothing really too specific.”

Jen shared that she “took a language class in high school and our instructor taught us that the Cayuga word that we refer to that area was ‘karondoh’ which means “**the log in the water**” and “was a meeting place for the Haudenosaunee with each other or other Nations... who knew where to go by looking for that log in the water... and is where they got the word ‘Toronto’ from.”

What should be the next steps in our dialogue on the Toronto Island Master Plan project?

Bob shared that our “next steps will be planning the first phases of engagement in the new year” and suggested we “set up a **meeting in January** to talk about the vision for the project and developing a framework for the plan.” He added that he “might prompt you with questions in advance” but that it will be “more of a discussion on vision and where we are going” with the overall design of the Master Plan.

The meeting concluded with final thoughts shared around the Circle. Robin said “thank you for engaging with the Six Nations community” and that “it is important that we keep the dialogue open and we appreciate your taking the time to explain the project and to keep us informed as it goes forward.” Jen said, “thank you and I look forward to our next meeting.” Dawn said, “thank you for the information and we look forward to the new year when we can meet again and proceed with this project.”

Victoria said, “thank you for letting me be a witness here and hearing from you today.” Daniel “echoed the same sentiments that others have said and that he’s looking forward to getting to know you more over the next two years.” Leah mentioned that she is “keeping a record of discussion for your reference” which will later be sent for your validation.

Lori shared that she is “really pleased to be here” and that she “too would much prefer to meet in person, but at least most of the time we can see one another and will [be able to] recognize one another if we see each other on the street!” She also shared excitement “by the opportunities that the island will offer us” and reiterated that “the City has no predetermined outcomes”, and the project will be entirely “shaped by our discussions.”

Lonny said “I appreciate... Bob, you wanting to get us involved. We definitely have an interest, and we definitely want to be kept informed.” And closed the sharing with “until we meet again.”



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Nov 17, 2020 with TASSC

Purpose

To share and discuss key issues, opportunities, and the proposed engagement approach for the Toronto Island Master Plan.

Participants

TASSC (Lindsay Kretschmer Swooping Hawk)

City of Toronto (Daniel Fusca, Lori Ellis),

Nbisiing Consulting Inc. (Bob Goulais),

Sister Circle Consulting (Leah Horzempa).

Record of Discussion

After a round of introductions around the Circle, Bob provided some grounding information about the Toronto Islands Master Plan project, as well as the purpose of this pre-engagement practice as an opportunity to provide overview information, answer preliminary questions, and most importantly, learn how best to engage with TASSC and the community members TASSC serves.

Lori, Daniel and Bob provided an overview presentation about the project and the engagement process, during which Bob shared his view that Indigenous Peoples have an opportunity to “assert their voice in this project” and that the process is “intended to give voice to our communities” and power “to shape the vision.”

He informed that “placemaking is a priority for everyone here, including the City” and that we “want to make sure First Nations, Inuit, and Métis see their voice in the final plan.” Bob recognized that “Toronto is not seen outwardly as an Indigenous place” and that there is “incredible potential to make Toronto islands that Indigenous place” where people can “have an Indigenous experience” and a place that “Indigenous Peoples can gather and use in culturally significant ways.” Bob also reviewed some of the feedback received from initial engagement with the interim Indigenous Placemaking Council for the Indigenous Affairs Office, and asked for “any initial input or questions?”

Lindsay asked about “IPAC and if it is a replacement for the former Indigenous placemaking council?” to which Bob shared his understanding that it is a “fairly recent construct of the City’s Indigenous Affairs Office led by Jennifer Franks” that is “looking to restore some of... the legacy work that has been done” and to “create a regular, formalized place to do more of that work.” He noted that the group is “just interim at the moment” and there is intention “to go to community and develop a better sense of the make-up of the Circle and develop the terms of reference. Currently, they are getting interim advice.”

Daniel shared that “the previous committee was not a city-initiated body, so this is somewhat different as it was created to consult on City projects (planning, bylaw, etc.) where there is an Indigenous placemaking or place-keeping interest” to “sit on a regular basis and bring regular guidance.” Lindsay asked if the placemaking Circle “will mirror something like the ICIE leadership table? Will it evolve into an entity?” Daniel replied that “it is meant to be permanent” like the “program advisory bodies.”

Lindsay reflected on an experience she had “in Hawaii recently for a wedding” when she “visited the **Polynesian Cultural Centre**”. Lindsay provide a link in the chat. She shared that

“what she liked is that they employed local Indigenous people to replicate/offer cultural experiences” and this “encouraged public awareness” while “funding Indigenous people working to access education, etc.” We should look to “have a win-win situation like this kind of central cultural hub.” “In the context of this centre” it could “recognize the different Indigenous groups with replicated areas.” We would “also want to look at how this would impact future generations from an **economic view.**”

Lori replied that Lindsay brought up “a good point” which we have heard from others in this pre-engagement work as well, that “the business strategy will need to look at strategies for Indigenous employment.” She continued to say that “if we are trying to extend to a four season destination” there will be opportunities “to increase seasonal staff to all year round” with additional business opportunities as well, “including a gift shop” possibly “for Indigenous crafts, artwork and other featured artist opportunities.” Lindsay offered that we should shoot for economic and public education opportunities “far more expansive than a gift shop alone” where “funds are heading back to the community and for jobs” and thinking “about how to **support multi-generations in the future.**”

Bob explored this concept of hub further. He offered that there “could be a hub for teaching and awareness as well as a focal point for employment” such as with a “marketplace”. Lindsay shared that she was “thinking about the Council Fire **IRSS legacy events**, but year-round” and thinking about “what we did at Nathan Philips” during the Indian Residential School Survivors (IRSS) Legacy Event as a model.

Lori raised other potentials that have been suggested through pre-engagement in addition to “a cultural hub” such as “educational walks, storytelling opportunities” looking “much deeper than a gift shop” for sure.

Lindsay suggested that the project team “check out the cultural centres Hawaii has” which are “commercial in some ways” but have “value in **providing jobs** while educating folks who come to the land” about the truth. She further suggested “connecting with **grassroots organizations** who have done this work at Humber River [and] Doug Anderson’s group, Naadmaagit Ki Group (NKG). Lindsay suggested really considering “the role for Indigenous folks in that space” such as “harvest, preservation of plants and animals” etc. She also noted that “Crystal Basi may be a good person to reach out to.

Bob then turned to some of the questions prepared for the pre-engagement discussion:

How do we best reach the specific community members that you serve?

Lindsay said “what you’re doing right now is fantastic...this pre-engagement and walking through the blueprints” is a “great example, but I suspect this opportunity won’t be for everyone” so I “appreciate the contact and being informed because this is really exciting stuff.”

“How [else] do we reach people who can provide advice?”

Bob then asked, “how [else] do we reach people who can provide advice?” thinking about community members who are served through TASSC service organizations.

Lindsay suggested “going through the member agencies of TASSC” and “orchestrating a **series of community consultations**” such as promoting with the Council Fire through a community event like the IRSS Legacy Events. “I’m happy to facilitate” this connection “if that is helpful”. She further recommended going to the TASSC website to “fill out a form for **presenting to TASSC**” at a Council meeting. A robust discussion took place about the benefits of presenting to the TASSC collective.

What specific checkpoints would you like?

Lindsay said that is a “good question that I don’t think anyone has asked me before.” This is “not something that I would often be connected to as placemaking doesn’t often come up”. She advised that “this is worth tabling to the Council and certainly keeping us in the loop collectively.” Bob suggested making “an **official presentation** and getting some ideas from folks of how they would like to be involved”. He noted that they will be meeting with 2-Spirited People of the First Nations, Native Womens Resource Centre of Toronto, Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, and Council Fire Native Cultural Centre (“he hopes”). Lindsay said “**Ojibikaan and others** would be great to connect with as well”

Lori mentioned that “because we don’t have a preconceived notion of what this will become, there may likely be spin-off aspects that develop and become focal points. As a part of future study, they are looking as bringing forward some pilot projects, to test out some of the ideas brought forward during master plan development and community consultation. “There may be interest in those as well.”

Lindsay said, “it is nice to be in the loop” and asked if the project’s key contacts are solidified or if there will be opportunity to “open up to other groups to join in?” Lori replied that “as far as the Master Plan process goes, right now, it is a high-level plan.” She went on to explain that “we have already done the RFP process” which has lead to “the team composition” but “we fully expect in the remaining eighteen month to two year process that we “will identify **other projects**” and we will “go out and do more RFPs” for these. The Master Plan won’t necessarily

result in guidelines for “specific built work” but rather “this will develop over a longer period of time and inform future budget making processes and future projects.”

Lindsay noted that practically, “how the place gets utilized” such as the “aspirations for ceremony” and “opportunities for things like the moccasin project... how will you ensure that the space will be **used by diverse people** all the time in the future?” She again referenced the “Polynesian Culture Centre” as a great example.

Bob agreed that “we need to look at the implementation” in terms of “**how will it be used and governed**, etc.” noting that, “it may not just be the City of Toronto making decisions here? How will Indigenous people be involved in decision-making?

In closing, Lindsay said, “let me know if I can be helpful in connecting with the TASSC members” and Bob said, “we will connect in the new year.”



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Nov 19, 2020 with the Huron-Wendat Nation

Purpose

To share and discuss key issues, opportunities, and the proposed engagement approach for the Toronto Island Master Plan.

Participants

Huron-Wendat Nation (Maxime Picard),
City of Toronto (Daniel Fusca, Lori Ellis),
DTAH (Victoria Bell),
Nbisiing Consulting Inc. (Bob Goulais),
Sister Circle Consulting (Leah Horzempa).

Record of Discussion

During the round of introductions around the Circle, Maxime introduced himself as the “Project Manager for the Huron-Wendat Nation for all Ontario files related to our Ancestral Lands.” He explained that he is the “main point of contact” and “all will go through me first, and then I will reach out to those who will be involved from there.” Maxime said “it is a real pleasure to participate... as of right now we don't have a lot of information but we are looking forward to this call and learning more about who will be involved with you to develop the project.”

Maxime then provided background information about the Huron-Wendat Nation:

- The Huron-Wendat are in “Wendake, Quebec today, but [are] involved in projects in Toronto because we occupied those lands for centuries until we came back to Wendake.” We say came back because “we always occupied this place.”
- “Before we came back in the late 15 and 16th Centuries, we were between 30,000 to 40,000 Huron dispersed in many villages in Ontario. Because of wars and everything that happened with the arrival of the Europeans, we left southern Ontario and came back to Wendake.”
- “But we still have an important link with our ancestral lands in Ontario and have many ancestral sites and archeological sites...villages, cemeteries, ossuaries. It is still our responsibility to take care of those people and those sites.”
- These are the “treaty territories of our brother and sister Nations and we are working with them to ensure the respect of these sites and ancestors. This is why we are here today... we are still involved in many commemoration, placemaking, and historical projects.”

Maxime shared that he is “happy to learn more and here to listen.” Bob said, “you are always forward thinking and collaborative and great to work with!” Maxime returned the sentiments, and said, “I return these words with you and with everyone else around the table today.”

“To set the table,” Bob provided some grounding information about the Toronto Islands Master Plan project, as well as the purpose of this pre-engagement practice as an opportunity to provide overview information, answer preliminary questions, and most importantly, learn how best to engage with the Huron-Wendat Nation as significant rights holders. He emphasized that this project holds “many opportunities for Indigenous placemaking.”

Lori then embarked on a presentation about the master plan project and the accompanying engagement process. At the beginning of the presentation, Maxime asked, “what are the use of those lands today?” Lori replied that the islands are “largely park” including “one marina and

three yacht clubs” but that there is “no formal recreation, [rather it is] quite informal.” In addition, the islands have “two residential areas (Algonquin and Wards Island)” and “four major beaches (Wards, Centre, Gibraltar, and Hanlons.) There are eleven islands in total... many of which are connected... [and there are] seven areas identified as environmentally sensitive [as well as] a Toronto water treatment facility, which takes water in a very deep tunnel... and acts as a cooling system.”

Lori, Daniel, and Bob concluded their presentation, and Bob asked if Maxime had “any initial input or questions?”

Maxime said, “thank you for preparing this really well-done presentation [which was] really interesting and well detailed. [I have] no questions at this time because it was pretty clear.” He went on to say, “based on what I heard... it is important to know we are based in Wendake... so we don’t have any modern use of those lands and our people are here which is a different reality than the Mississaugas of the Credit and Six Nations, which still have modern use of the land and have people downtown... So our interest in this project will be clearly linked and specific to **historical placemaking, naming, telling the history** of those lands... we will want the opportunity to have our words and sides of history to be told... we have histories and some stories to tell about those lands. This is our specific interest and where we want to be involved... if you want to tell our story somewhere somehow, **we want to be the people telling this history.**”

Bob asked if Maxime had any advice for working through him to access the Wendake South population or anyone else who may be interested to participate. Maxime said that “once we have a better sense of the project, we will for sure involve some people on **staff in culture** the department, or some **consultants** in Ontario who have a good knowledge.” Maxime mentioned “**Ron Williamson**” who is “kind of a bible when it comes to our histories in Ontario.” He suggested “involv[ing] these people once we have a better sense of the project... but for sure we will answer and participate as best as we can and if there is opportunity or **opening ceremony**... our politicians are always open to travel[ing] and do[ing] events.

Bob mentioned that we are planning a “socially distanced opening ceremony in the last week of January... and we will make sure to include you and Grand Chief Sioui...” to which Maxime replied, “[he is] no longer Grand Chief... we had an election twenty days ago and have a new Grand Chief Vincent. After twelve years of great leadership from Konrad... so now it is up to **Grand Chief Remy Vincent.**” Bob said, “I would like to introduce myself and keep the doors open there... it is exciting to have a new leader and get a breath of fresh air.”

Bob committed to getting “in touch about the ceremonial opening. I might suggest we schedule **one-on-ones in each of the [engagement] phases**... and then from there we can

schedule additional meetings with others.” Maxime said, “sounds good. Bob you know pretty well... about how we work here on the Nation... yes, please go through me first and I will reach out to the right people at the right time.” Bob said, “you and I can add **further meetings** or [with] people who can advise us as we go.”

Bob went on to say that, “one of the big moves might be about a **[cultural] hub or placemaking**” which “would involve extensive discussion or additional meetings... you let us know how much contact you need (more or less).” Max said, “we will try to be involved in as many steps as we can... leave it up to us to decide whether or not we will be there, but **please extend every opportunity**.” Bob mentioned that we will likely hold a “broader Indigenous community session” and “we will extend invites for this as well if you’d like to participate or send an observer.” Maxime said, “we will be happy to answer, Bob.”

In closing, folks shared the following thoughts:

- Victoria said, “I’m excited to engage with you and learn so we can truly and authentically give you a voice in this space.”
- Daniel said, “thank you so much for your time... it’s been lovely speaking to you and for me as well this is such an intense learning opportunity and I am excited to be on this ride.”
- Lori said, “thank you. I truly do echo the same as everyone else... we are excited to engage with you on a project as exciting as this. We will put forward every opportunity to engage with us and give us your ideas and explore the opportunities this island affords... [it] will be a long and windy road and I hope there are many positive outcomes for you and your community on the other side. [This is the] beginning of a long and lasting relationship. Thank you very much for your time today... [this is] just the beginning.”
- Maxime said, “thank you very much for reaching out to us on this important and exciting initiative... you had a good reflex to engage with us and the other Nations in the pre-engagement stages. We fought for this for years, to be involved in the early phases and first phases of projects, and it is really honestly appreciated from our First Nations. [I am] looking forward to the project and [I] think the sky’s the limit here... lots of opportunities to discuss, and we will be there for that.”



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Nov 19, 2020 with the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto

Purpose

To share and discuss key issues, opportunities, and the proposed engagement approach for the Toronto Island Master Plan.

Participants

Native Canadian Centre of Toronto (Larry Frost),
City of Toronto (Daniel Fusca, Lori Ellis),
Nbisiing Consulting Inc. (Bob Goulais),
Sister Circle Consulting (Leah Horzempa).

Record of Discussion

Bob led introductions around the Circle and gave some grounding information about the Toronto Islands Master Plan project, the opportunities for Indigenous placemaking it affords, and the purpose of this pre-engagement dialogue. An overview presentation about the project and the engagement process was given by Lori, Daniel, and Bob.

During the presentation, Bob noted that regarding the prospective “Leaders Table” that “we don’t have a leader in the urban Indigenous community. With your role as chair of TASSC, would that be a place you might see for an urban Indigenous leader?” Larry mentioned he had “stepped down [as Chair]” after being in the role for “nine years,” but that he would be “open to” sitting with the Leaders. Bob mentioned that “Francis [the current chair] would be great too!”

Bob then turned to Larry for any “initial input or questions?”

Larry said “you’ve answered a lot of questions” but I have a “few extra points. “I’m envisioning a nice schematic plan” something that “when people see it, they can see it [the vision], and touch it.” It is important to “always keep the Indigenous people involved.” Larry also gave a host of ideas for the master plan, including:

- “A nice Indigenous **trail** would be great” ... or a “path that showcases the First Nations, Metis, and Inuit along the path”
- “Engage **Elders**”
- “Have **animals** there”
- “And let’s tell the **stories**” ... “let’s have some nice historical plaques or a nice big iPad explaining a lot” ... “How about tipis in a circle and tell stories.”
- “**Canoe** trips!”
- Dedicated space for “**pow wows** we want to have.”
- “Indigenous **sculptures**” and “carving spaces or **beadwork** spaces.”
- “A **cultural centre**” ... “envisioning a nice Indigenous museum where we can display our artifacts.”
- “Indigenous **food**” ... “where people say you got to go there” for the “stories, the food, the pow wows.”
- And you “may want to have a **spiritual content**” ... a sort of “flow where people get a nice ambience” ... “a **healing** journey.”

Larry continued to say it will be important to “make it with a lot of **passion**” and “bring people on who have the passion... know the purpose, and know in their spirit that this can work.” Larry

acknowledged that this kind of Indigenous involvement “is happening more and more” and “we have our meetings” such as this, and “our spirits are high” but then we “get back to our office and [we have] 500 emails.” So, we “need to keep **momentum**” and “keep the right people on board that are passionate.”

It would be great to have an “action plan” and a “**schematic drawing**, where First Nations, Metis, and Inuit can see it [the vision]” and “their passion starts to build and they say ‘I want to be part of this!’” Larry noted that “with the virtual, you have to really engage people in a different way.” Also remember not to “get too many people involved” because “nothing gets done and it can just become a political venue.”

Larry mentioned that he had “recently been [involved] with two [other development projects] the waterfront [and] the cinesphere” but thinks “this one could be a real interesting one.” You’ve got “the water [and] Mother Nature right there. My spirit and my heart really goes to that... it’s long overdue... I come here with passion and a full spirit!” Larry also warned, “but don’t leave us to the last minute.”

Bob then asked, “how do we best reach the specific community members that you serve?”

Larry suggested “check[ing] with Lindsay to see if you can be on **one of our meetings**” as “that will be the best [way] to put [you] on our next meeting.” Bob then asked “how about your members at the NCCT” to which Larry replied, “people are burnt out with the COVID... I can’t think of someone who has the passion... I want to be honest with you Bob... [you] want someone who really wants to be on [this] and has the passion. But I’m very positive... I will do some advocating.”

Bob mentioned that “we will share information as we go along” such as “**community invites** and you’re always welcome” so “please pass [these] along to people who use the centre.” Larry mentioned that “people love to see things and touch it...[it] get’s people excited and passionate to get involved.” He continued to say that an “**image [can] draw people in...** [but you] have to pull people in... [and] make it more exciting.”

Lori shared that she was “thrilled to see [Larry’s] passion and excitement... I share it! There is so much potential in this project...and I know this Indigenous storyline and it coming to fruition in a real, authentic, and meaningful way in the final plan is important, and I think it will breathe new life into the island that has been missing. Your point is well taken... it’s one things to present a flat aerial and have a discussion... in the new year we will get into the phase where we explore big ideas... and seeking input [on ideas like] the four seasons [destination], a cultural centre, museum, an experiential trail that celebrates spirituality of all Nations – I’m really excited about it! And we need energy like yours, and more energy like that. Once we are in that stage, we can

present things in a more animated way... I'm thinking about how we can **make it more exciting** in this virtual way... **walk throughs, fly throughs, animations...** [it] can't just be flat plans or lists of words... needs to be tangible and evoke emotions and spirit out of people!"

Bob said, "Leah will share the record of what you shared ... just for your purposes." And Larry's final recommendation was to **"stay away from the politics just get it done!"**



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Nov 24, 2020 with the Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto

Purpose

To share and discuss key issues, opportunities, and the proposed engagement approach for the Toronto Island Master Plan.

Participants

Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto (Dr. Pamela Hart),
City of Toronto (Daniel Fusca, Lori Ellis),
Nbisiing Consulting Inc. (Bob Goulais),
Sister Circle Consulting (Leah Horzempa),
DTAH (James Roche).

Record of Discussion

Bob facilitated a round of introductions around the Circle. Bob then gave some context about the purpose of this **pre-engagement** dialogue, following-up from a call he had with Pamela a few weeks ago. He explained that pre-engagement has been expanded to urban-based First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people, including Indigenous women specifically in the context of this Toronto Islands Master Plan Project. Bob shared that we are meeting now to explore how we can meaningfully include the important voices of Indigenous women in this process.

- Lori, Daniel, and Bob then provided an overview on the project and the accompanying engagement process with a PowerPoint presentation.
- Lori provided an overview of the study area, the Toronto Islands Park, and a number of other areas that will be integrated into the Master Plan.
- She encouraged participants to think about the Island in the context of the waterfront and the City at large.
- Parks, Forestry and Recreation intends to talk to business folks and various user groups associated with the waterfront, as well as visitors to the Island and occasional users. This is going to be an extensive engagement process that will take approximately 18-24 months.
- Lori explained the three workstreams [and teams] associated with the project – each with Indigenous expertise and professionals involved:
 - The Master Plan team, including Trophic Architect Terrence Redford,
 - The Engagement team, including Nbsiing Consulting Inc., and
 - The Business Team [which also intends to engage with Indigenous community members]
- There are three advisory committees that will advise on the project, including:
 - The [interim] Indigenous Placemaking Advisory Circle (IPAC). IPAC is a body brought together by the City's Indigenous Affairs Office to provide insight and feedback on city-wide placemaking opportunities. This circle is in its early development phase, and those currently involved are considered interim members.
- Indigenous voices may also be included in a Leaders Table if the City decides to move ahead with it.
- Lori provided an overview of the early development of Toronto Islands concepts. Various city divisions held discussion with user groups, then came together to share what they learned [at an internal summit]. Lori noted surprising similarities in input across groups, resulting in the preliminary guidelines shared during the presentation.

- One of the priorities in the Master Plan will be to create an enhanced visitor experience [by making it a year-round destination.] Currently, the Toronto Island is not a year-round experience.
- One of the principles she highlighted was that the ecological design would not be heavy-handed. They would move forward with a light-touch that will ensure a natural experience. There are three ecological sensitive areas on the Islands, including dune habitat.
- Lori commented that Parks, Forestry and Recreation really want to get the engagement process right. That's why they are beginning [the entire process] with pre-engagement with Indigenous communities.
- Lori provided an overview of the Toronto Regional Conservation Authority's (TRCA) flood mitigation work that will be moving alongside the Toronto Islands Master Plan.
- The Islands flooded back in 2017-2018 – were completely closed in 2017.
- Lori emphasized that we are working side-by-side with TRCA, and in some cases this work will overlap. The Master Plan team hopes to streamline the engagement process with them.

Bob asked Pamela if the Native Women's Resource Centre and Indigenous women may be interested in providing **input** on the **TRCA's flood mitigation work**? Given that this is an Environmental Assessment (EA), TRCA will be required to engage the Indigenous community.

Pamela stated that there **will be an interest** and that perspective will be unique. For example, their input may relate to the old ways and teachings respecting flooding, which may help shape the flood mitigation work and the plan overall. The women may be interested and consider this a value.

Lori commented that, in working with TRCA, they may hold specific meetings on the Environmental Assessment. When this happens, the Master Plan team will attend and be able to answer questions related to the Master Plan, and vice versa. She also gave the example of a flood mitigation berm that was created, and it is well-done and designed into the landscape. Future berms could be identified in the plan as a walkway or as an outlook.

Pamela responded stating that she hopes that we [Indigenous women] can help put these kinds of **things in context** with the **input from the community**.

Pamela asked about how the **Indigenous Placemaking Advisory Circle** was formed? Daniel said that they worked with the Indigenous Affairs Office to identify and bring together some interim members, the plan being to consult with the IAO and those interim members to determine what voices and expertise they want to have around the table. Bob offered to put NWRCT **in touch with Jennifer Franks**, who is coordinating IPAC for the Indigenous Affairs Office.

Lori completed her portion of the presentation by providing an overview of the work that has been completed thus far, mainly some background and research work and preparing for the public engagement process that will begin into 2021.

Then Daniel provided an overview of the public engagement process and explained the five phases:

- Scoping and planning [current stage];
- Understanding the issues/visioning;
- Testing ideas and exploring “big moves;”
- Confirming a preliminary concept and the final Master Plan;
- and a public celebration.

Daniel noted that:

- The engagement process will begin with an Indigenous kick-off ceremony, but the pandemic has created some challenges in planning. He hopes that COVID-19 may begin to resolve so that a beautiful ceremony may be held in the nice spring weather.
- He mentioned that the “big moves” will include potentially making the Toronto Islands a four-season destination, and perhaps an “Indigenous big move.” This will lead to refining concept plans.
- Daniel spoke of the potential for pilot projects to be explored next summer – an opportunity to explore some concepts and provide the team with the ability to collect information in real-time.
- Daniel outlined a number of principles that will drive the engagement process including taking COVID-19 and community safety into account. He also made the point that the engagement process needs to be accountable to the community. Their goal is to build in accountability and develop trust with all those involved.

Bob spoke of the potential of the Toronto Islands to seen, outwardly as **an Indigenous place**. In order to achieve this, engagement with the Indigenous communities has to be meaningful and reflective of the diversity of the Indigenous community. Participants should be able to see how their input is reflected in the Master Plan and that it is truly reflective of Indigenous input and perspective. Bob provide an overview of the approach to Indigenous engagement, which includes being Indigenous-led, flexible, responsive, culturally appropriate and [centered on] and reflective of Indigenous values. Bob outlined some of the early input received on Indigenous placemaking, and some of the input from the first meeting with the interim IPAC last month.

Pamela shared her initial reactions and input:

- She made it a point to acknowledge that she has been a part of the City of Toronto's Aboriginal Affairs Committee and Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC) for a long time, and of all the presentations she's seen, it is notable how integrated the Indigenous perspective will be [in this project]. It is well thought-out. This is a really important step that some have overlooked, and she stated we are on the right track and things are already looking positive.
- She reacted to a statement made by Daniel in the presentation that we are all stewards of the land – that stood out to her. No matter whether [people] are from Toronto, across Ontario, or across Canada, it's insightful to know that they are guests on Indigenous land and the Toronto Islands. But no matter where you are from, we all need to be stewards of the land.
- Pamela noted that the Toronto Islands are in the heart of the city. Sometimes this area is under-utilized. The plan might address accessibility to Indigenous women, and families with small children. There will be a lot of interest in this. How can we make this more accessible? It will be fun to explore this further.
- Water will be an important factor that will be of interest to Indigenous women. She offered to provide advice and support to the project, including connecting the project team with the community, hosting circles, putting the team in touch with Elders and women with this kind of knowledge.
- Bob acknowledged that he recently provided advice on the kick-off ceremony but neglected to include the importance of water and how Indigenous women need to lead that part of the ceremony. He will be in touch with Pamela for some advice on how to integrate this.
- Pamela mentioned the involvement of Water Walkers. If this is done well and water is acknowledged, this will be embraced by women and all Indigenous communities.
- Pamela also spoke about how Toronto is a city of diverse nations. She spoke about how she provides services to Indigenous women and families from Nunavut and British Columbia, who are sometimes in Toronto by choice, but sometimes not by their own choice. Some women are forced to relocate here. There will be a need to create a space for families from all nations – there are many views of culture.
- Pamela said she would be pleased to promote the project, arrange for activities and opportunities, and encourage participation. Engagement is always a challenge, but she is supportive.

Final thoughts were offered around the Circle:

- Daniel offered his thanks for the participation by Pamela and for her kind words and enthusiasm. He said they want to do a good job and that we still have a lot to learn. He looks forward to working with Pamela and the community over the next two years.

- Lori offered appreciation to Pamela for raising the perspective that Indigenous women come from different backgrounds and come to Toronto due to various circumstances. That's really important for the team to know. She said that before we move forward with options, it would be important to get advice from Pamela and host a focus group of Indigenous women. Lori appreciated hearing that Pamela sees the effectiveness of their engagement efforts that they've put into the plan. There is always a lot to learn and she appreciated learning moments and better understanding the nuances of Indigenous engagement.
- Pamela concluded, stating that the project team is in great hands with Bob and Leah. She also stated that she wanted to comment on a point made by Daniel about engaging the 2SLGBTQ+ community. They are a very important part of the community. Traditionally, their voice was valued and respected. It is important to hear that voice in the Master Plan and to raise that to the forefront.
- She said she welcomes the team to bounce ideas off her and she would make herself available for that. When it comes to Indigenous engagement and learning, our responsibility is to meet people partway, to liaise and educate as we move forward together.



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Nov 25, 2020 with Eshkiniigjik
Naandwechigegamig ENAGB Indigenous
Youth Agency

Purpose

To share and discuss key issues, opportunities, and the proposed engagement approach for the Toronto Island Master Plan.

Participants

Eshkiniigjik Naandwechigegamig (A place for healing our youth) Aabiish Gaa Binjibaaying? (Where did we come from?) – Youth Program (ENAGB) (Cynthia Bell-Clayton, Raven Bach),
City of Toronto (Daniel Fusca, Lori Ellis),
DTAH (James Roche),
Nbisiing Consulting Inc. (Bob Goulais),
Sister Circle Consulting (Leah Horzempa).

Record of Discussion

Bob facilitated a round of introductions around the virtual Circle, and Cynthia provided an overview of ENAGB's history and purpose:

- “ENAGB started at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto... and unfortunately there were things that happened there... I don't think people think youth can be leaders, but youth have allies such as us who know that they have a right to determine their future on the lands that we inherited and they will inherit.”
- Now “ENAGB has its own autonomy with charitable status... this is what the youth wanted. When we first started at Anderson Lake, and we created the name there with 30 youth in the collective... [the youth] came up with so many amazing ideas.”
- The “transitional housing program... is now with the centre [NCCT].
- “Now we are rebuilding from scratch... from \$0 to \$1.5 million.”
- “The youth work very hard and they maintain humility. We have had to advocate very hard for the youth to get their own programming.”
 - “Now have Early On programming serving 200 families.”
- “And now we have our own location just seconds away from Woodbine Station.”
 - “We are renovating this space... [we] hope to incorporate a social enterprise, and we have a nice back yard.”
- “We have a board and a youth council... the Board has to be 18+... but the youth council has the youth from 12-24. In the bylaws we placed that if the board ever tried to dissolve the youth council, they dissolve the whole agency.”
 - “Now we have nine youth council members and nine board members... [to make] eighteen total.”
 - We “only [have] three allies on the board, and the rest are all youth.”
- “In staff composition, we have a few adults in the staff... but we are starting to get more youth on staff, [including] Raven and Shayla.”
 - “Eventually we will hire an ED [youth] associate”.
 - “We need to make ourselves dispensable because are supposed to share our knowledge. Maybe I'll be their Elder after I sunset... to fight for their rights.”
 - We “have eleven staff and waiting for funding.”
- We also have “Land programming... last year we were supposed to have a naming ceremony on the Humber River... we carried heavy tarps down... [and we] found the lodge cut down.”
 - ‘The Humber River Collective... [told us] ‘we go through this all the time.’”

- “As the ED I stepped in... unfortunately most City leadership want to see [an] ED, [a] CEO... a “big title” to be able to listen.”
- I “sent a letter to the City saying this is disgusting what happened... [they] responded [saying] that because there was a structure with no permit, they “had” to take it down.”
- “But across the Humber River... there was still a party shack there that no one took down.”
- “About 15 of us went to sit with the City... basically maneuvering and trying to create allies... [knowing that] ultimately the place belongs to the city.”
- “Eventually we got a place by the River... [a] 15-24 Midewiwin teaching lodge.”
 - We “have had a number of ceremonies since COVID... but everything we have to do is so bureaucratic... [for instance] we want to have a shed... but there are so many hurdles.”
- “That’s what ENAGB has been up to since April 2019. We are here now, and we aren’t going anywhere!”

Raven introduced herself over the chat: “I’m Raven, my pronouns are she/her. I’m 24 and Mi’kmaq + Anishinaabe, born and raised in Toronto. My community is Kettle and Stony Point. I’m the Youth Program Supervisor with ENAGB. Nice to meet everyone and be here this morning!”

Bob then asked Cynthia to share about the name of ENAGB. Cynthia explained:

- “When we first started, we had pots of funding... [the] first [pot] was to support [youth aged] 16-24, so we created the name “Eshkiniigjik Naandwechigegamig” (a place for healing our youth).
- “Then [the second pot was] for the younger [youth aged] 12-16... we called it “Aabiish Gaa Binjibaaying?” (where did we come from?) ... [a name] about preparing them and giving [them] their self-identity.’
- “So, the total name means a place for healing our youth and where we come from.”
- “That’s how we help our people, we know where we come from, that our Ancestors kept secretly.”

Lori, Daniel and Bob then gave a PowerPoint presentation about the Toronto Island master plan project and the accompanying engagement process. After the presentation, Lori mentioned, “it is early days, and we are honoured by sharing your time and we would like to learn how you would like to engage with us moving forward.” Bob then asked Cynthia and Raven if they had any questions?

Cynthia replied that it was a “very detailed presentation, and I don’t have any questions at this point... and expressed “want[ing] to start talking about how you want us [at ENAGB] to support you in the engagement.”

Bob reiterated the significant “placemaking focus” in this project, and the opportunities for “a big move” in terms of Indigenous placemaking... so “we want to have youth voices” represented and leading. Bob turned to some of the prepared pre-engagement discussion questions:

How best can we reach out to youth?

Cynthia shared her recent experience:

- We had a collective reach out and we trustee'd some of their funding from the City to do some consultations with youth regarding the youth violence prevention funds... [it cost] about \$11,000. They needed 100 surveys and all we did was send them out and they got 80 surveys in a few hours... they told us to slow down [haha]!”
- You “need to provide honorarium for participation.”
- “They drafted a Google Form with specific questions... including “demographics [like] age, pronouns, and if they wanted to continue to sit on a collective to contribute to the final evaluation piece on the youth violence prevention fund.”
- The contact was “Lori O’Donnell” from “youth violence prevention.”
- The “Mino Collective” reached out “because they wanted a nonbiased consultation to determine where the funding will be going... they asked ENAGB to support the “consultant collective. We didn’t select 100 youth... we just sent it out.”
- This is “just an example of what it could look like... and I think that would work with us.”
- This way “gives us an opportunity to reach out to the number of youth you want us to reach out to, and [get] the questions you want answered by youth. [It] could be a consult or a survey.”
- “Once they participate... we create an excel spreadsheet on google forms that tells you who participated. Honorariums can be EMT’d and they can include this info in the form. Then Cynthia sends out the EMTs. [This] gives you individual responses and group graphics and I think it’s really handy.”

Bob mentioned that, “because we are thinking early vision and creative thoughts... we were thinking... **focus groups** might be good. A nice safe space for youth to come together online and just talk about some concepts that might be important (trails [for example, and] the placemaking council started to talk about star knowledge and the star realm... [maybe there] can be viewing platform to learn about the relationship with the stars and waters... etc.) What do you think?”

Cynthia said she “would suggest a space where you allow them to have a voice through a **survey [first]** and then an option to participate in a focus group... so we are including those voices who may be more shy or don’t want to be on camera.” Raven added, “I love the focus on **choice!**”

Bob said, “I love that... and if there are people who want to be part of a focus group... we could meet once per [engagement] phase.”

Cynthia reminded that “**compensation**” is vital; “we are all privileged and get paid... we have to make sure we compensate the youth for their input... depending on the survey... we have given \$35 for the survey, and for the focus group... \$99 (and \$1 to the transfer expense) [for a total of \$100.] And if you’re wanting to access ENAGB for this administration... it is %15 for this. But nothing under \$30 for an honorarium... \$30+ is good. For the focus group we gave them additional money to buy a meal.”

Lori asked “what **size** of a focus group” would you recommend? Cynthia replied that “up to ten” works well, “and you still have all those recommendations from their peers [from the survey] ... and can make sure they can **come into reality**. If they can’t come into reality... giving them **reasons** why they can’t. We had 18 in one of our focus groups... so it all depends on the topic too.”

Bob mentioned that “in real life [pre-COVID] we used to cater... well how do we continue the **food incentive**? Maybe a credit from uber eats or skip the dishes... maybe this is an opportunity to do this yourself.” Cynthia shared that “this is something we talked about yesterday... about per diems. If you’re having a meeting [you typically get an] allotment per meal (breakfast, lunch, and dinner). If it is a youth providing their services... [they] should be getting the **same level of City per diems** for their consultation.”

Bob asked if Cynthia or Raven had any final thoughts or additional advice?

Cynthia said “I can see the challenges you will have in the diverse groups... you are all doing great work and thank you for involving us. [We need to] flip the script... involving youth in these things... [it is] important to have **Indigenous youth involved in decision making** alongside Elders.”

Raven said over the chat, “**Follow through!!!** Too many times youth are consulted and ignored it gets disheartening. Other than that note it sounds amazing!

Bob reflected that “we are all about being respectful of your time and what you’re sharing, it [has to be] meaningful from your perspective, Raven. You are the ones who will tell us if it is

meaningful... and it has to be collaborative... you need to see yourself in the plan. We want to make sure that the feedback you give us will be included in the final plan.”

Daniel said, “we really appreciate your time today. You have provided us an immense amount of knowledge and we hope to build this relationship over the course of the next two years and beyond.”



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Nov 30, 2020 with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation

Purpose

To share and discuss key issues, opportunities, and the proposed engagement approach for the Toronto Island Master Plan.

Participants

Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation
(Fawn Sault),

City of Toronto (David O'Hara, Daniel Fusca, Lori Ellis, Pablo Muñoz),

DTAH (James Roche, Victoria Bell),

Nbsiing Consulting Inc. (Bob Goulais),

Sister Circle Consulting (Leah Horzempa)

Swerhun Inc. (Ian Malczewski).

Record of Discussion

Bob introduced the Toronto Islands Master Plan project and the purpose of this pre-engagement practice as an opportunity to provide a high level overview, and pick your brain on next steps for working together, including a kick off meeting we hope to have. Bob then facilitated a round of introductions around the Circle.

During her introduction, Fawn explained that she is a “Band Member” and the “Consultation Coordinator” for the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. She shared that her “desk gets all of the notifications in our treaty territories... [this could be] 120-180 a month, and we do a little bit of everything... [from a] farmer severing an acre of land [to a] pipeline... it’s my job to triage these and catch all the red flags.”

Lori, Daniel, and Bob led an overview presentation about the master plan project, the preliminary engagement process, and Bob’s approach to Indigenous engagement. Bob emphasized that engagement must be “respectful, meaningful... and collaborative” and reminded Fawn to “make sure to re-align us if we are going in a bad direction.”

Bob started by talking about placemaking, which is “a big priority for the City of Toronto and Parks, Forestry, and Recreation, and they really... see that we need to double our efforts in ensuring there is a sense of place where Indigenous People... Anishinaabe... are able to make use of the land as we have, [and] feel comfortable to use the land for ceremony, etc. I think the island can be that place... [where Indigenous placemaking is] front and centre.”

Bob asked if Fawn had “any questions or thoughts?” Fawn mentioned, “one thing I’d like is to **have the presentation...** to make notes on it.”

Fawn also wanted more information about the **Interim Indigenous Placemaking Council** for the Indigenous Affairs Office (IAO). Lori explained that “it is an interim group. [The City] will bring projects to the Circle for review. This interim group is convening to set up terms of reference and the design of the group.”

Fawn asked, “is it possible to have **someone from MCFN on that?**” Bob said “I’m glad you brought that up. [The Council is with] the IAO at the City. [It is run by] Jennifer Franks, [and] we are going to suggest to her to reach out to you and talk about what the Michi Saagiig input should be in their placemaking circle.”

Bob continued to say, “with our process, Fawn, perhaps you would consider a **placemaking advisory group with Mississaugas specifically** for this project. We want to make sure that we get the Mississauga story right... [we can invite] cultural folks, maybe Darren and others... but [I] wanted to ask you who should be on that group.”

Fawn recommended “**Darin [Wyebenga]** for historical [information] as well as **Caitlin [Laforme]**, **Jai [King-Green]**, and **Cathie [Jamieson]**... [this] would be a really great start... start with them for all their input.”

Bob said. “we won’t take any steps without you... I think this is a great way to do that. Hopefully IPAC also includes someone from your community, but I think we want this [additional Mississaugas placemaking group] specifically [for this project]. Fawn agreed, given that “[the Island] was considered a really sacred place for us.”

Ian suggested that “if this dedicated group comes together, and there is an appetite to have the Mississaugas on the IPAC... maybe there can be a procedural link between these two groups [so that we can] connect the conversations [and] maybe this is a way to include the voices of Mississaugas in that group as well.”

Bob continued to say that “[an]other suggestion is to have **Elder participation** on that group as well. [This is] a priority for us to get started on this project... and the advice we’ve been given is to start things off in a good way by **invoking the Spirit** and having our Elders advise us... I reached out to Gary Sault and mentioned I’d be having this conversation with you and others... we would love to have this ceremony led by Elders... of course it will have to be a **socially distant ceremonial event**, [perhaps] digital or electronic, [although] is not our way so we are going to try to be creative. [Ideally, we could] have **Chief Laforme** [and] Elders side by side with the Mayor... led by Elders. [We would] want to have a **water ceremony** led by Anishinaabekwe... [very interested] if you have advice [on who we should reach out to for this or] if I should reach out to Caitlin or Jai... [We are] planning for the week of January 25th. As we start moving closer to that date, we want to work with you and the Chief’s office and whomever else [you recommend.]” Daniel also mentioned that “January 25th would be the earliest” date for the ceremony.

Fawn [jokingly] said, “did you say a water ceremony on the island on January 25th?” Bob said, “it doesn’t have to be on the island... it may even be in front of City Hall or something like that... [we would] look to work with you on this.” Fawn suggested “talk[ing] to Kaitlyn about that. As far as Elders go, I always go to my Uncle because he’s our medicine person, our traditional person for our family. I don’t know if Gary is who the organization goes to or not... but I know they work with **Mark Sault** as well.” Bob reclaimed, “is that your Uncle? We go waaaaaay back.”

Fawn mentioned that “**Caitlin and Jai** might do the water ceremony themselves... how to coordinate that is up to them.”

Bob said, “I think I have Marks’ contact.” Fawn said, “it should be the same number from when he was in Thunder Bay... if not shoot me an email.”

Lori said, “I was going to flag that when we were thinking of having the **ceremony**... in light of COVID and the restrictions, we are trying to be flexible... we definitely want to have an opening ceremony but there may be a more meaningful, fulsome event towards the beginning of the summer (maybe June) [when] we may have turned a corner and be in a different place. So, this would be something else we would try to do at the **beginning of the summer.**” Daniel mentioned that “the closing event will also be in the summer too.”

Bob said, “it would be awesome to have Mark involved all along!”

Fawn said, “I can see them asking for **a place of our own for ceremony** whenever we need it.”

Fawn then mentioned, “the **EA process** the **TRCA** will be doing on the ground... we would expect to have equitable participation on that ... TRCA should be aware of it, but they tend to forget depending on who is there... **let them know we need to have boots on the ground for that.**” Bob said, “we will make sure we pass that along to TRCA... and we will do our best to coordinate with them and bring them along... recognizing engagement fatigue [as well].”

Lori mentioned that “we have concerns about it as well... they are two separate projects, but we want everyone to see that the two puzzle pieces are totally linked together and that includes our consultation process. Because it is an EA they have a different prescriptive process they need to follow... but we hope to make ourselves available at their engagement meetings to provide updates on the master plan process... likewise, when we have our meetings, we hope to have TRCA representatives attend our meetings to [provide] the background [information]. But we did specifically say to them that our Indigenous engagement process was fulsome for this project... they didn’t get into the details of how they are intending to engage.”

Fawn explained further that “everyone’s perspective is different on this... the TRCA has previously given lots of pushback and drawn lines about where we can participate. What I am saying is that **because you are the proponent you need to ensure that TRCA understands that we fully expect to engage in what we [determine] is engagement.**”

Bob said that “because I give my commitment to ensure this is respectful and meaningful... we need to make sure that happens.” Bob committed to “ensure that the information is shared with you Fawn... engagement meetings are one thing but to make sure you are involved in EA... class EA work is a whole other ball of wax we want to get to.”

Bob then asked, “in terms of DOCA involvement, do you want to be at the seat for all these conversations from ceremonial planning to placemaking, or do you want check-ins as we go along?... it’s up to you.” Fawn said that “as great as I think this project is... my first instinct is to be involved all the way along... but I don’t have time for it. As long as you are in touch with Kaitlyn and Mark ... I think you should touch base to **keep me informed** of what’s happening with updates and where there are **boots on the ground we expect to be there.**”

Fawn said, “the other thing I saw was the **business strategy**... [we would] want to get our Economic Development or EDC involved.” Bob said, “we will be sure to loop in the economic development folks and introduce them to our business team.” Lori mentioned that “this came up last week and I’ve passed it along to that team...[they] want to form a group to represent Indigenous people on that... they are taking it to the consultant team to determine how best to structure it... we will bring it back to you for input before anything is finalized.”

Bob asked if there are “any **new claims**? We recognize that this is your exclusive treaty territory... is there anything to flag... any updates on the water claim?” Fawn said, my understanding is that they put the water claim on hold... waiting for Saugeen Ojibway Nation to finish what they are doing.”

Bob said, “I wanted to flag that [a member on the] IPAC group... raised the importance of raising the story of the [Mississaugas] claim regarding **treaty rights [on the island]**. My answer [to them] was that we would be working with you directly... [I] just wanted to let you know that we’ve heard it is important to tell that story... even related to the claim and the treaty. [We just want to reiterate that] even though it was raised by someone else, we are coming to you for that [discussion].” Fawn said, “great that’s perfect... Darren has lots of good stories... I’ve heard different stories about... why the island is so special... [you] should be able to get those working with Darren and Kaitlyn and so on.”

Bob summarized the **next steps** in the process:

- We “will share [the] presentation... [and] will make sure you get the right copy and best information.”
- We will “move forward with a Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation Placemaking Group” and will “reach out to Darren, Jai, Kaitlyn and Kathy and reach out to Mark for ceremonial planning and even working [through] some of this stuff as we go.”
- We are “going to make sure we flag your concern with TRCA and make sure we are engaging properly with you, specifically related to boots on the ground and EA work.”
- We are “going to get your advice on the economic development team for the business strategy.”

- We will do “ongoing updates... and will schedule future meetings with you in the new year as we get to phase one, to update you about everything we’ve heard so far from the consultant teams.”

Fawn said, “looks good.”

Bob asked Fawn and Lori to offer final thoughts.

Fawn said, “miigwetch everyone... thank you for reaching out and taking time to speak with us. I look forward to working with you.”

Lori said, “miigwetch to you as well, Fawn for being willing to be at the table...we hope this will be very meaningful moving forward. The City isn’t coming to the table with a bunch of ideas already [formed]... we are being quite open in our engagement with yourselves and the public. We are excited to continue working with Bob and Leah and eventually Terrance Redford as well.”

Bob said, “we will be back [to you] with the notes from today to ensure they are accurate.”



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Dec 1, 2020 with boating and water users

Purpose

To share and discuss key issues, opportunities, and the proposed engagement approach for the Toronto Island Master Plan, with a focus on boating and water users.

Participants

Queen City Yacht Club / Council of Commodores (Ron Mazza),
York Bay Marine Services (Bill Duron),
City of Toronto (Daniel Fusca, Lori Ellis),
DTAH (Victoria Bell),
Swerhun Inc. (Ian Malczewski, Athavarn Srikantharajah).

Summary of feedback

Note: Swerhun Inc. shared a draft of this summary with participants before finalizing it.

Overall impressions

The City's preliminary thinking about the Island Master Plan is on the right track, particularly the focus on year-round use of the island.

Existing conditions and issues the Master Plan team should consider

Increased use from intensification. As more people move into new condos, there's heavier use of both the island and the water. The City should be thinking about how to manage "over tourism" and the island's carrying capacity.

The island is both a peaceful retreat and a potential tourism and programming attraction. There is a balance to strike between these two characteristics of Toronto Island Park.

Opportunities to explore through the Master Plan

Protection of the shoreline and flood mitigation, including:

- Better coordination between public agencies. Due to the varying ownerships, investment in flood protection has been inconsistent. For example, the City and TRCA have invested in the north wall along Algonquin Island, but stopped right at the Queen City Yacht Club.
- Protection of boat clubs. While the City and TRCA have been investing in protecting residents and Centreville — which is good — they have not invested in flood protection in front of boat clubs. Some clubs feel they have been left to fend for themselves because of assumption that boaters are wealthy and can endure the expenses on their own.

Ways to address or control congestion, including:

- *Boat congestion*, including sail boats, water taxis, paddle boats, kayaks and others. Boat clubs have struggled to host events in "the cut" (the area right beside Ward's Island Ferry Docks) because of too much water traffic. Toronto Bay is almost dangerous with the amount of activity on it —
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	<p>especially at pinch points — and someone might get hurt without a management plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People congestion, especially at the mainland-bound ferry docks. Also, during big events, island residents have to take the same ferry as all the event-goers, which has led to situations where residents have had to line up for 3 hours.
Improving winter access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is currently only one ferry, and it takes both cars and passengers. The City needs a better icebreaker and more service to improve winter access.
Accommodation of recreational boats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Island Marina is often 100% occupied (despite saving 20% of its slips for transitional boaters). The master plan process should try to find opportunities to expand the number of slips to meet current and future demand. The RCYC has recently expanded by adding more dockage in front of the marina in the harbour.
Promoting year round use through programming and over-night accommodation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential models could be a four-seasons eco-lodge, a destination modelled after Fogo Island Inn in Newfoundland, or low-cost accommodation for artists looking for studio space (potentially through partnership with Artscape, where artists would also help animate or program the island). While hotels might seem ambitious, they are part of the history of the island and how some of the first settlers accessed and experienced it.
Identifying different areas for different types of activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the island shouldn't be covered in fences, there should be ways for visitors to recognize that different areas have different types of activities and different expectations for how to behave. Island residents don't like to feel like they are "on display," and there have been situations where islanders have found visitors having picnics on their front yards or porches.

Ways to address support international travelers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourists come to watch sunsets on the island and view the City skyline – these visitors could be better supported with more information about amenities and what is open, where and when.
Better support for deliveries, especially for construction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to a lack of alternatives, some boat clubs have invested in barges to transport materials to support construction. Many delivery companies will not service the island since they can't afford to wait for the ferry.
Ways to manage noise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rock concerts, party boats, unlicensed charter boats, and noise from Billy Bishop Airport all affect the sense of peace on the island. Peace isn't just for island residents, it's also for visitors looking to escape city life. Noise needs to be considered from both landside sources and waterside sources. If Master Plan team is looking at the "interface" between the park and the airport, it needs to consider that that interface is not just physical, but also auditory.

Feedback about the process

The proposed engagement process looks good and thorough. It's important to include a diverse range of "marine voices" since different boaters have different issues. For the Community Advisory Group, consider inviting the three island boat clubs plus the marina — the Council of Commodores could be represented through them.



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Dec 1, 2020 with environmental and sustainability groups

Purpose

To share and discuss key issues, opportunities, and the proposed engagement approach for the Toronto Island Master Plan, with a focus on environment and sustainability.

Participants

Friends of the Spit (John Carley),
Protect Nature TO (Bob Kortright, Lenka Holubec),
Toronto Field Naturalists (Jenny Bull), **West Don Lands Committee** (Julie Beddoes),
City of Toronto (Lori Ellis, Pablo Muñoz),
DTAH (Victoria Bell),
Swerhun Inc. (Ian Malczewski, Athavarn Srikantharajah).

Summary of feedback

Note: Swerhun Inc. shared a draft of this summary with participants before finalizing it.

Overall impressions

The City needs to protect and enhance the island ecosystem, especially the most valuable and endangered ecosystems, and then balance the other priorities to safeguard those protections and enhancements.

Existing conditions and issues the Master Plan team should consider

The Island is a distinct ecological area that offers a retreat to city dwellers. The island is an urban park unlike any others. It provides a peaceful waterfront escape for city-dwellers in search of green space, but also contains unique natural areas that need enhanced protection.

Increased human use puts the island ecosystem at risk. Over the past few years, and especially during the pandemic, more and more people are heading to the island to engage with nature and seek reprieve from city life. Although this is an important activity and should continue, more should be done to protect the park ecosystem from degradation.

Opportunities to explore through the Master Plan

Ways to protect Environmentally Significant Areas (ESAs) and Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSWs) on the island.

- Although there are several legal requirements to protect ESAs and PSWs (e.g., Official Plan Amendment 262), the increased use of the park and the lack of protection efforts has put these areas, and their ecological importance, at risk of degradation and loss. Prioritize protect the ESAs and PSWs by educating visitors about the uniqueness of these areas, offering adequate signage to prevent trampling, and fencing or other barriers can help maintain and protect these areas.

Recognize the importance of the island as a central place for bird migration

- The island is an important stopover for migratory birds and should be protected considering the decline of birds in North America. Seasonal migration is an important part of many bird's life cycles and Toronto's lakeshore habitats see thousands of birds each year in the spring and fall. Given its
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legal and policy obligations (e.g., The Migratory Birds Convention Act), the City has a responsibility to ensure the island as a whole is bird friendly and supports their migration. Specific actions could include planting more shrubs and trees, leaving logs and branches, and reducing the amount of grass mowing. Planting shrubbery is a good opportunity for recruiting volunteers and fostering stewardship.

Ways to address trampling in protected areas.

- Due to the increased usage of the island and lack of signage, several natural habitats struggle with trampling. Hanlan's ESAs, the piping plover bird habitats, and the sand dunes are some examples of areas affected by trampling. Festivals and attractions that bring thousands of people to the island put these areas at additional risk. The Master Plan team should consider interventions to prevent trampling, while balancing the need to maintain access for visitors seeking to enjoy the park's natural environment. Potential suggested solutions are installing and maintaining raised boardwalks or raised trails (with or without paddleboard fencing adjacent) to keep people on-path. This infrastructure requires cyclical budgeting for maintenance and repair due to impacts from ecosystem dynamics (like shifting sands) and vandalism.
-

Mitigate the impact of invasive species.

- Native species on the island are disappearing because there is not enough protection against invasive species. Invasive species can be introduced through seeds tracked in by visitors and dogs. The Master Plan team should consider addressing this problem as early as possible since removing invasive species can become costly down the road and lead to the loss of native species.
-

Ways to improve the relationship between dogs and the island habitat.

- Dogs have a negative impact on the island habitats. For example, certain bird species that nest on the ground would not be there if dogs were common. Municipal bylaws prohibit dogs in ESAs and PSWs (e.g., Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 608), so the Master Plan team should follow those existing regulations when considering if or where dogs will
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and won't be allowed on the island. It's important to protect habitats while ensuring access to the island for all.

Improve access to the island for visitors to enjoy nature

- Improve ferry access, washroom facilities, and walking paths to ensure visitors can continue to access the island. Additional walkways and boardwalks could have signage explaining the ecological history of the island and importance of different nearby species.
-

Protecting native animals other than birds.

- The island is home to a number of diverse animal species. As part of the work to protect these habitats, the City should track and monitor the different species on the island and in the nearby waters, including whether there have been any changes in the number or behaviour of species since the island airport has reduced operations during the pandemic.
-

Consider the impact of airport traffic and boating on the island ecosystem.

- There are several sensitive areas near the airport which can be affected by noise caused by airport traffic. Boat docking and sailing near the island can also affect the surrounding ecosystems. The current closure of the airport is a good opportunity to study the effects of air traffic on bird populations.
-

Feedback about the process

The proposed engagement process looks good and thorough. It's important to ensure that environmental issues and groups are given adequate emphasis in engagement materials. In addition, there are a number of events including naturalist walks, butterfly counts, and bird counts which the project team could tap into for further engagement.

Additional points shared after the meeting

Prioritize managing the cumulative impacts of park use over time to prevent the degradation of protected natural areas. Consider doing a terrestrial biological inventory to assess major

contributors to degradation and threats to ecological functions. This inventory will ensure the public benefit of the island's natural heritage features while not undermining natural processes.

Increase education to the public on the natural heritage functions of the island. The COVID-19 pandemic highlights the need for green space in urban areas that have growing populations. Consider opportunities to educate park users about the natural heritage on the island to both deepen their connection to nature but also their responsibility to maintain protected natural areas.



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Dec 1, 2020 with island and waterfront business operators

Purpose

To share and discuss key issues, opportunities, and the proposed engagement approach for the Toronto Island Master Plan, with a focus on island and waterfront businesses.

Participants

Island Café (Zorah Freeman-McIntyre),
Pirate Taxi (Brad McLean, Priya McLean),
Toronto Island Stand Up Paddleboarding (Julian Ganton),
Waterfront BIA (Oliver Hierlihy),
City of Toronto (Lori Ellis, Pablo Muñoz, Christina Iacovino, Alex Deighan),
FS Strategy (Jeff Dover),
UrbanMetrics (Rowan Faludi),
Swerhun Inc. (Ian Malczewski, Athavarn Srikantharajah).

Summary of feedback

Note: Swerhun Inc. shared a draft of this summary with participants before finalizing it.

Overall impressions

The City's preliminary thinking about the Island Master Plan is on the right track, especially the fact that the City is thinking about the unique role businesses have in this park setting.

Existing conditions and issues the Master Plan team should consider

The island offers an enjoyable park experience for visitors. Island businesses are proud representatives of the Toronto Islands and work hard to offer positive experiences to visitors.

Businesses work to fill key gaps in the visitor experience. From long lines at the ferry, to lack of clear information about island amenities, to navigating event logistics, island businesses support visitors in navigating the island so they can have a good experience.

Flooding and rising water levels are concerning. The increased erosion is concerning, especially at Gibraltar and Hanlan's, causing issues for businesses like water taxis.

The Waterfront BIA's Strategic Framework and Tactical Plan (2017), outlines its thinking for improving the relationship between the mainland and the island (excerpts attached).

Opportunities to explore through the Master Plan

Ways to improve the process of hosting events on the island, including:

- Increase cost-savings for those wanting to host small events. Local businesses receive hundreds of requests to host events on the island such as weddings, picnics, and celebrations. High permitting costs can prohibit people from hosting events on the island, especially when the permit fees is "just grass."
- Improve communications and logistical support for event-planning. The City has very specific parameters when it comes to providing the event supports like port-a-potties or liquor licenses. Many circumvent City processes, which draws negative attention to events (and the police). The City is flexible, but these logistical barriers take time to navigate.

Consider putting something on the City's website to make it easier to navigate the process.

Improve wayfinding for the Toronto island, including:

- On the island. Regularly updating maps, providing signage along the trails, and indicating where facilities and points of interest are (including environmental features) would help visitors navigate the island. Right now, visitors have to figure it out or relying on residents and businesses for directions. The City's wayfinding strategies have very specific rules on what businesses get reflected in mapping; it may need to consider how to reflect specific island park businesses given the unique role of businesses on the island.
- To the island. Many visitors don't know how to get to the island. It would be great if the City's website mainland wayfinding pointed people to where they can access both ferries and water taxis. Improving wayfinding is beneficial both to water taxi's business and the City (since it improves visitor's perception and island experience).

Improve communications for visitors about island businesses.

- Visitors are often not sure about what is on offer on the island, how to access it, and where to go. This information changes with each season as many businesses change hours or close in the winter. Create opportunities for businesses in the mainland and the island to cross promote. Provide more regular and up-to-date information about ferry times, schedule changes, water-taxi pick-up points, and deals/offers at local businesses through strategies like adding live monitors, new maps, poster boards, and a centralized website for updates.

Making the island more accessible for business operators.

- There have been several renovations of the docks, but problems persist during peak periods. Moving equipment and supplies for businesses on and off the island requires additional effort, at times requiring staff to arrive long before the scheduled ferry departure time just to make their deliveries. Explore ways to improve access for island
-

business operators, maybe allowing staff or delivery people to have a separate line or access the City's utility gate.

Offering a positive island experience for visitors through activation.

- It is important to business operators that visitors have a memorable and positive experience. The City should consider the island not as a passive piece of land but an active park, potentially by establishing a dedicated city or third-party group to design and deliver programming.
-

Diversify the businesses on the island.

- Many areas on the island such as Hanlan's Point do not have enough amenities. Consider creating opportunities for new and different businesses that can service diverse communities that use the island.
-

Increase year-round activities, especially during winter.

- Visitors come to the island during winter and are unsure of what to do. Skating rinks or paths could support winter activities.
-

Address safety concerns around the island.

- Poor lighting on the docks and people setting up camps along trails present safety concerns — the lack of lighting is a liability concern for some water taxis. Improve safety by increasing dock lighting and improving trail maintenance.
-

Feedback about the process

The proposed engagement process looks thorough and shows a breadth of engagement. Businesses are happy to be engaged and want to continue to be involved in the process. Organizations like the Waterfront BIA can help with outreach to connect island and waterfront businesses into this process.

Attachment 1. Excerpt – Waterfront BIA Strategic Framework and Tactical Plan (2017)

District 6: The Islands

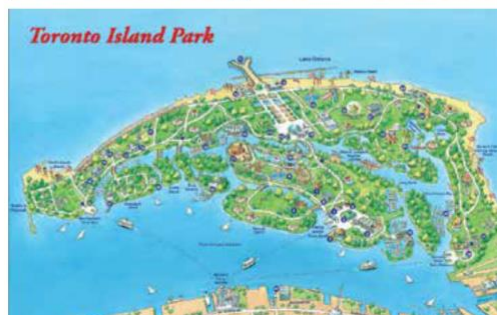


District Vision

The Islands remain the jewel of Toronto's Waterfront – the place where residents go to escape the City and disconnect in a completely natural on-the-water place. Given their size and scale, the Islands need to be responsibly stewarded through their evolution towards becoming a year-round place with new and varied things to do, but in a manner that does not upset the existing balance of nature and passivity.



Island-Wide Opportunities & Tactics



As both an urban oasis for visitors and residents, the Islands have the potential to become further integrated in Torontonians' experience of the city, by improving access to them, and offering more things to do year-round.

Approximate Size	~600 acres
Land Use Designation	Park
Landowner	City of Toronto

Tactics | 107

District 6: The Islands

Immediate

6.A

In concert with Island residents and waterfront stakeholders, advocate for the City to ensure that forthcoming planning initiatives have an economic development and cultural planning component to them

WBIA Role: Advocate

Short-Term

6.B

Work with City and Island businesses to develop a year-round programming calendar that responds to and complements waterfront programming

WBIA Role: Facilitate & Program

Example: Varied, Constantly Evolving Programming

Brooklyn Bridge Park, in New York City, has an expansive programming calendar that offers multiple organized events every day – from drop-in yoga to film screenings to community clean-ups – mostly free-of-charge, in various locations across the riverfront park's 85 acres.



Brooklyn Bridge Park – New York City, NY

Medium-Term

6.C

Suggest that the City consider improving its user ticketing/boarding experience of ferries through PRESTO fare integration or other mechanisms

WBIA Role: Advocate

Example: Integrated Ferry Fare System

The San Francisco Bay Ferry system accepts payment by Clipper Card, the coordinated fare pass used by transit agencies throughout the Bay Area.



Clipper Card – San Francisco, CA

Long-Term

6.D

Suggest that the City consider, as part of Ferry Terminal work, stretching the ferry experience across more than one slip

WBIA Role: Advocate

★ Enhanced Gathering Places: “Ferry Welcoming Experience” (at the Ferry Docks)



Every dock and landing point on the Islands should be welcoming. Visitors and residents should realize that they have landed somewhere special and instantly get into the Islands experience. These welcoming experiences can be tailored to the respective island on which they are located. For example, the Ward’s Island dock could provide more information pertaining to bike paths and passive activities, whereas the Centre Island dock should immediately signify that excitement and activities abound.

Medium-Term

6.E

Work with City and Island businesses to ensure that Island ferry docks provide a welcoming experience with sufficient retail and adequate infrastructure

WBIA Role: Advocate

Example: Animated, Lively Greeting Experience

California’s Santa Monica Pier, is a functional boating dock that capitalizes on its foot traffic with an amusement park and other entertainment, dining and shopping activities and regular entertainment programming, gathering a critical mass of people and activity that further attracts visitors.



Santa Monica Pier – Santa Monica, CA



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Dec 1, 2021 with island and waterfront community groups

Purpose

To share and discuss key issues, opportunities, and the proposed engagement approach for the Toronto Island Master Plan, with a focus on island and waterfront communities.

Participants

Bathurst-Quay Neighborhood Association (Joan Prowse),

Friends of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (David Smiley),
Toronto Island Community Association (Tony Farebrother),
TDSB Island Natural School (Amy Wilson),
Ward's Island Association (Alison Gzowski),
Waterfront for All (Anna Prodanou),
Waterfront Montessori (Kathleen Roerick),
York-Quay Neighborhood Association (Laura Cooper),
City of Toronto (Lori Ellis, Pablo Muñoz),
DTAH (James Roche),
Swerhun Inc. (Ian Malczewski, Athavarn Srikantharajah).

Summary of feedback

Note: Swerhun Inc. shared a draft of this summary with participants before finalizing it.

Overall impressions

The City's preliminary thinking about the Island Master Plan is on the right track. Try to avoid being "all things for all people." Encourage visitors but also focus on protecting the island.

Existing conditions and issues the Master Plan team should consider

The island offers a peaceful retreat from the city. With increasing intensification downtown, diverse communities that live along the waterfront and in the city rely on the island as one of the few areas they can immerse themselves in nature and the wilderness. Things that are working well now are the island maze, beaches, and low-impact activities like bird-watching, skiing, and paddling. The island should not become overly commercialized.

The island residents see themselves as stewards of the island. While some perceive island residents as having a sense of entitlement, island residents see themselves as its caretakers.

Billy Bishop Airport continues to impact the island. Waterfront planning often excludes the airport. Considering the upcoming end of the tripartite agreement in 2033, and with the aviation industry slowing down as a result of the pandemic, the City should think long-term about whether there is a role for the airport, especially if project's planning horizon goes past 2033).

An increase in visitors is causing a strain on the island's capacity. Both major beaches on the island are seeing thousands of people each day, without enough facilities/infrastructure such as washrooms, waste disposal, and ferries to handle this capacity. The amount of foot traffic and garbage alone is causing degradation of island and power boats are eroding the shoreline. Concerts and amplified events bring drinking and drugs to the island. While Centre-ville is good for small children, it shouldn't be expanded with thrill rides or Ferris wheels.

Opportunities to explore through the Master Plan

Protection of the flora and fauna.

- There are important wildlife habitats, especially the unofficial bird sanctuary near the water treatment plant. The increase in visitors in this area can reduce the number of birds that nest there. If protecting the island's wildlife is as important as

improving the visitor experience, the Master Plan team should consider which parts of the park should be open to both people and boats, and which should not. Another suggestion to protect the flora and fauna is to reduce the heights of posts and streetlights. Protection of flora and fauna seems like it's currently missing from the City's Preliminary Principles.

Prioritize engaging children and young people

- The island welcomes thousands of young people each year for various programming hosted by organizations such as the TDSB and YMCA, where many have their first experiences immersing themselves in nature. Improve young people's connection to nature by improving trails, camping facilities, amenities like community gardens, "get your hands dirty" playgrounds, greenhouses, places to interact with animals, and water play areas (similar to the upcoming Port Lands playground).
-

Consider a long-term vision for the island.

- The island faces challenges that have long-term impacts on sustainability and health of the ecosystem.
-

Ways to redistribute island traffic throughout the year.

- Focus less on attracting people in the summer, and more on extending the seasons as the park is underused in winter. Consider supporting low-impact winter activities like cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and skating.
-

Improve visitors' experiences while protecting ecological areas.

- Create natural experiences using interpretative signs and boardwalks but protect important ecological areas. Leave some areas as "view only" so nature can regenerate itself, potentially with binoculars.
-

Acknowledge and build on the Indigenous history of the island.

- Although many diverse First Nations and Métis communities have used the islands as a place for gathering and healing, the Mississaugas of the Credit were the most recent stewards of the island. Consider opportunities for an interpretive centre or other initiatives to reflect this Indigenous history of
-

the island. There is an old terminal building at the airport that could be re-purposed for this use.

Ways to mitigate the impact of rising water levels and flooding.

- With the expected rise of water levels, consider ways to protect the islands and access from the waterfront.
-

More imaginative, alternative, ethnic food from small independent entrepreneurs.

Feedback about the process

The proposed engagement process looks very good. Consider:

- Posting summaries of meetings with other groups on the website.
- Connecting with other government agencies, such as federal and provincial authorities who have jurisdiction over the island or areas surrounding it.
- Using Zoom instead of WebEx for future meetings.
- There needs to be an assessment of the Island's carrying capacity.



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Dec 3, 2020 with festival and event producers

Purpose

To share and discuss key issues, opportunities, and the proposed engagement approach for the Toronto Island Master Plan, with a focus on festivals and events.

Participants

Embrace Entertainment (Adam Gill),
GWN Events (Carolyn Lee, Mike Fulton),
City of Toronto (David, O'Hara, Lori Ellis, Pablo Muñoz),
Projects by 91 Inc. (Brad Hicks),
Level Productions (Pete Lawlor),
Plan V Productions (Vanessa Arscott)
DTAH (James Roche),
Swerhun Inc. (Ian Malczewski, Athavarn Srikantharajah).

Summary of feedback

Note: Swerhun Inc. shared a draft of this summary with participants before finalizing it.

Overall impressions

The City's preliminary thinking about the Island Master Plan is on the right track, particularly its intention to make the Toronto Island a year-round and welcoming destination.

Existing conditions and issues the Master Plan team should consider

The island is one of the best venues in the city. The island has a long history of being home to several successful festivals and events, offering a unique experience for attendees which attracts people to the island year after year.

Planning and executing events on the island is a “logistical nightmare.” Although the island is a great event venue, it has several challenges including transportation, flooding, cost, infrastructure, food and beverage access, and noise – all of which make executing events extremely difficult. This complexity has caused many events to leave the island or be cancelled last minute.

Opportunities to explore through the Master Plan

Ways to improve transportation to the island, including:

- *Transporting people to and from the island.* Limited ferry capacity can make entering and leaving events inefficient and unsafe. During concert-style events where guests leave at the same time, wait times can be several hours long and require additional resources such as security guards and fencing to maintain safety. Adding an additional dock at the Hanlan's dock could enable the Trillium ferry to land there which may help to alleviate these pressures.
- *Transporting vehicles and equipment to the island.* Due to limited ferry capacity, vehicle size limitations, and long wait times, transporting large vehicles to the island carrying equipment can take several hours. Oversized vehicles exceeding certain weight limits are required to use the

airport ferries; however, this adds additional time and cost to the process. In some cases, the wait time can be up to 12 hours, requiring event producers to begin moving equipment to the island almost a week in advance. The City has indicated that additional boats and capacity are in planning stages, but event organizers are still waiting to see them.

Ways to improve cost-savings for event producers

- Hosting events on the island is becoming increasingly expensive, and event organizers cannot alter one part of event delivery without affecting another. For example, making an event smaller can mitigate challenges with crowds at larger events, but this change means raising ticket prices to make the event financially viable, which attracts fewer people. As a result, only larger events are profitable. Each layer of event production has additional costs, from getting equipment to the island to accessing permits. If having events on the island is important to the City, the Master Plan team should consider ways to help organizers save on costs.
-

Establishing permanent infrastructure across the island.

- The gaps in infrastructure around the island force event producers to bring large amounts of equipment, like port-o-potties, fencing, generators, fuel, tents, and more. These gaps not only increase the cost and time required to host an event on the island, but they also require fuel trucks to come over to keep them running, fuel use and burning to power the event and more trucks driving on grass, which are all negative impacts in a sensitive park environment. The Master Plan team should consider introducing permanent infrastructure near key venues, including washroom pavilions, shore power, cooking stations, and water lines. Event vendors are mindful of their impacts and willing to collaborate to reduce this.
-

Space for storing temporary infrastructure.

- Several event producers have informal arrangements with island businesses to store equipment. The Master Plan should also consider reusable infrastructure that can be stored away — such as temporary roadways, fencing, and tents— to help
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	<p>reduce the number of trucks required to transport equipment for an event.</p>
<p>Protect venues and existing infrastructures from flooding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing flooding in recent years has made the island a high-risk event venue. When water levels are high, water taxi loading areas become unsafe, ferries move slower, and the grandstands are flooded. The unpredictability of the flooding makes hosting large-scale events even riskier because they are planned so far in advance and harder to relocate and/or cancel on short notice, which in turn makes securing insurance very costly.
<p>Ways to reduce noise without hindering events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Events are noisy. In recent years, producers have moved events further away from residential areas. The venue used to be Olympic Island which had supporting infrastructure and was closer to the Ferries. To minimize noise impacts and avoid the flooding risks the events have been relocated to Hanlan's where there is less infrastructure to support these events. The Master Plan team should consider ways to reduce the negative impacts of noise on island residents without creating additional logistical challenges for event producers.
<p>Improve process for food and beverage service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the time required to move cooking equipment and the cost of tickets, many food vendors will no longer support events on the island, saying they can make more money on the mainland. The City's food and beverage service contract with Beasley Inc. means event producers have to pay Beasley to offer its own vendors. Beasley Inc. is flexible and can offer food service, but event producers would prefer to source and manage their own food and beverage service to save on costs and to ensure they are able to properly service the concentrated grouping of patrons at their events.
<p>Promoting year round use through winter infrastructure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the existing challenges for events are made worse by cold weather, snow, and ice. In addition to this, there is only one ferry running in the winter. It is not cost effective to put on

small events. Heated boats and heated areas near docks for guests to wait would allow for more events in the winter.

Feedback about the process

The proposed engagement process looks good and thorough. Engaging event producers early and throughout the process is important as the island has several complex technical challenges. Participants were generally enthusiastic about remaining involved in the broader process.



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Dec 3, 2020 with newcomer, immigrant, and refugee-serving organizations

Purpose

To share and discuss key issues, opportunities, and the proposed engagement approach for the Toronto Island Master Plan, with a focus on newcomers, immigrants, and refugees.

Participants

Ryerson School of Urban and Regional Planning (Zhixi Zhuang),
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (Manolli Ekra, Soheil Baouji),
City of Toronto (David, O'Hara, Lori Ellis, Pablo Muñoz),
DTAH (Victoria Bell),
Swerhun Inc. (Ian Malczewski, Athavarn Srikantharajah).

Summary of feedback

Note: Swerhun Inc. shared a draft of this summary with participants before finalizing it.

Overall impressions

The City's preliminary thinking about the Island Master Plan is on the right track, particularly its focus on Indigenous place-keeping and winter use.

Existing conditions and issues the Master Plan team should consider

The island is beautiful destination for immigrant and refugee families to visit. At least once a summer, many likely make a trip to the island with their families as a retreat from their day-to-day lives.

Accessing the island is not easy for immigrants and refugees. Immigrants and refugees often live in lower-income, racialized communities in Toronto's outer suburbs, so it takes them longer and costs them more to get to the island, whether driving or taking transit. When you add in the cost of ferry tickets and island amenities, low-income families face a number of barriers when it comes to accessing the Toronto Island Park.

The island is not a convenient park option for many immigrant and refugees. Many are working multiple jobs and do not have the luxury of time to make the trip. Instead, many find a nearby park or beach to gather with their family closer to home.

Opportunities to explore through the Master Plan

Develop relationships between immigrant, refugee, and Indigenous communities

- There is opportunity for more awareness among immigrant and refugee communities about Indigenous histories. The Island should offer opportunities for learning about the Indigenous history of the island and create a space for dialogue between newcomer and Indigenous communities.

Create a welcoming "island for all"

- The island does not feel like it was designed to invite people in, and the residential areas especially can feel like segregated enclaves. To make the island more welcoming, consider speaking to everyone's common needs and
-

interests by offering free amenities like community gardens and offering organized tours for groups.

Include spaces for intercultural exchange.

- The island does not reflect the diversity of Toronto. The Master Plan team should aim to create/enhance common connections across cultures, such as creating opportunities for diverse food vendors to operate on the island and for immigrant and refugee artists to showcase their work. Strategies like these could facilitate intercultural exchange and support immigrant entrepreneurs.
-

Design ecological spaces for healing.

- Many immigrants and refugees have experienced trauma in their past or in their migration journeys. The City's Neighborhood Improvement Areas, where there are high densities of immigrants and refugees, also lack good public spaces. This Island Master Plan process is an opportunity to create natural spaces for healing that newcomer communities can use and support in the future as stewards through activities like seed planting.
-

Improve food service on the island.

- There is little variety in the food options on the island, and what is available tends to be expensive. To attract more newcomers to the island, consider diversifying the food options. Food transcends religious and cultural differences.
-

Prioritizing immigrant and refugee youth.

- Many immigrant and refugee youth may have never been to the Island, despite having grown up in Toronto. If young people enjoy their time on the island, they are likely to bring their whole families as well. It is important to consider them in this process.
-

Feedback about the process

Work with immigrant and refugee-serving organizations. Organizations like OCASI and other local community organizations work closely with newcomer communities and can be an entry

point for effective engagement and offered to support outreach if needed through the process. OCASI offered to share our engagement opportunities through their website and social media channels.

Ask immigrants and refugees what barriers they experience to the island. This can help the City understand what is working well for immigrants and refugees and what is not.

Address barriers to digital engagement. It is important to map out the challenges to engagement in a virtual environment. Sharing information through “ethnic media” outlets can be one way to navigate this barrier.



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Meeting Summary

Dec 3, 2020 with recreation, sports, and programming providers

Purpose

To share and discuss key issues, opportunities, and the proposed engagement approach for the Toronto Island Master Plan, with a focus on recreation, sports, and programming.

Participants

Ministry of Heritage, Tourism, Sport, and Culture (Joyce Chan, Brittney Ng),
Toronto Island Disc Golf Course (Kenneth Little)
Toronto Sport and Social Club (Will LaFrance),
YMCA (Lisa Greer)
City of Toronto (Daniel Fusca, Lori Ellis),
DTAH (Victoria Bell),
Swerhun Inc. (Ian Malczewski, Athavarn Srikantharajah).

Summary of feedback

Note: Swerhun Inc. shared a draft of this summary with participants before finalizing it.

Overall impressions

The City's preliminary thinking about the Island Master Plan looks good and sounds exciting.

Existing conditions and issues the Master Plan team should consider

The City has been a good supporter of recreation, sports, and programming on the Island. The Park Supervisor Warren Hoselton in particular has been very helpful.

Flooding has impacted recreation programming and infrastructure. The recent flooding has required some programs to move to less convenient locations and has caused infrastructure and tree damage near sports facilities like the disc-golf course. The Master Plan should consider the effects of flooding on recreation facilities and programs.

The island offers space for diverse communities to immerse themselves in nature. The island attracts diverse visitors from within Toronto and outside of the city who want to immerse themselves in nature or develop outdoor living skills, including Indigenous youth, racialized youth, LGBTQ2S+ youth, and international tourists. For many of these people — some of whom otherwise have limited access to green experiences — immersing themselves in Toronto Island's environment can be life-changing.

Opportunities to explore through the Master Plan

Improve the washroom facilities across the island

- There are not enough washrooms available evenly across the island, and those that do exist require repairs and upgrading. For example, the washrooms built on Snake Island require a code to access and do not work in the winter.

Create permanent shelters to protect people from the weather

- During major storms or even really sunny days, there are very few permanent shelter areas where people can take cover. This lack of shelter affects sports events, children waiting for the ferry, and many others. The Master Plan team should consider installing permanent shelters such as large tents or
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roofs where people can gather to seek protection from rain and sun.

The Toronto Island Disc Golf course could have a role as a kind of hub.

- The course stretches between Ward's and Centre, but there is otherwise not a lot of infrastructure on or around the course. The disc golf association has done some ad hoc work like putting up posters on and around the course and would be open to doing more, particularly anything that further promotes awareness of Indigenous partnership and involvement.
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Increasing opportunities for aquatic recreation.

- Swimming is an important part of the island experience, including swimming on the beaches, swimming lessons for children, and more. The Master Plan team should consider more opportunities to encourage aquatic recreation including a public pool, water park, or splash pad.
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Offer support to winterize buildings and programs.

- One way the Master Plan team could make the Island a year-round destination is by providing support and resources to local organizations to winterize their infrastructure and programming.
-

Improve availability of food options on the island.

- Food has long been a challenge since food service must be provided through City-approved vendors. The Master Plan team should consider ways to have more food truck and mobile concession options for sports and recreation activities, and possibly even locally grown produce through a community garden on the island.
-

Improve ferry capacity and safety

- The YMCA hosts up to 400 children for some program activities, many of whom arrive to the ferry via public transit. More ferry capacity and improving where children load on and off the ferry could help improve safety.
-

Create opportunities for more sports on the island.

- Some suggestions include establishing beach volleyball courts or softball diamonds, especially since these are outdoor sports are more “pandemic friendly” than others.
-

Feedback about the process

The proposed engagement process looks good and thorough. Consider engaging with the local church on the island and using low-threshold, digital ways to reach different island user groups.



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Discussion Summary

Dec 7, 2020 with FoodShare Toronto

Summary of feedback

Overview

Ekow Stone (FoodShare Toronto) is currently a youth engagement coordinator with FoodShare and used to lead tours at Toronto Island. Pablo Muñoz (City of Toronto) provided an overview presentation of the project including the scope of the project and preliminary engagement strategy.

Key Observations

- It is important to take into account the cultural differences in the way people recreate. Different communities have different traditions and ways of interacting with parks and nature.
- The infrastructure available in parks facilitates a particular type of engagement. A lot of the infrastructure currently available in parks, running trails, tennis courts etc. is predominantly for white middle class communities.
- The vision of recreation needs to broaden and encompass the ways in which people of colour and immigrant people use public space.

- There needs to be a balance between environmental sustainability with the needs of people to spend time at the park.
- Farming is the connection between people and nature. Human impact on the environment is always seen as bad but this can be rethought. There is an opportunity to create a space for stewardship while taking into account culture.
- Food growing and cooking can be a way for knowledge sharing, and celebration.
- The idea of “the cookout” came up several times - a big come together where the community shares food. What kind of infrastructure needs to be present for that to happen? Can it be supported as programming by the city of Toronto?
- Indigenous visions need to be incorporated in how we relate to the park.
- It would be great to have a community garden/farm.
- Host big celebrations from racialized communities. The island should be seen as a space open for hosting gatherings and celebrations.
- It was noted that there is a lack of diversity and communities of colour within the residents of Wards Island.
- Migrant communities bring large groups and pull up a BBQ and cooler and spend all day.
- People need to be engaged with the natural environment. We don’t need to separate that relationship but rather facilitate it in a way that it is informed and respectful.
- The value of the island is not just the parts that allow for human intervention and interaction.
- The four-wheel bikes are really popular with communities of colour. It is important to better understand the things that attract communities of colour in the engagement process.
- There is an opportunity for queer placemaking at Hanlan’s. The island has microcosms all throughout. Immigrant families, people in the east side for example and Hanlan’s is predominantly queer.
- There are big parts of the island that are not used that are open lawns. There is an opportunity for something to take place there.
- COVID poses challenges for engagement.
- Community centres are a place where you will find a lot of people. Pop up engagements can take place there. Rexdale Community Centre is very active. Library in Scarborough is highly used as well.
- Youth are quite saturated with social media and information that needs to be taken into account.
- Honorariums and financial incentives for YouTube to engage like free tickets for the ferry.



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Discussion Summary

Dec 9, 2020 with Artscape

Summary of feedback

Overview

On Dec. 9, 2020, Swerhun Inc. (Ian Malczewski) and Artscape (Andrew Lochhead) had a pre-engagement conversation about the City of Toronto's Toronto Island Park Master Plan. This document summarizes that discussion. Swerhun shared a draft of this summary with Artscape Centre before finalizing it.

Key issues and existing conditions

Flooding. Artscape has been affected by flooding, including having to cease operations because a portion of the road was inaccessible, making it unsafe and unsanitary. Flood mitigation is very important to Artscape.

Key opportunities to consider in the Master Plan

Improvements to public safety and security. While the Island shouldn't be over-policed, there have been issues with "creepy" people on the island, thefts, trespassing, and illegal parties. The

police marine unit cannot respond quickly enough, so it would be good to see some kind of community response angle or security initiative in the master plan. Another public safety issue is the lack of reliable cell phone and internet service. There are so many dead zones, and if a person is trapped or in trouble, they may not be able to call for help.

Improving access to and around the island:

- The Islands can be difficult to access, even more so for people with disabilities (for example, there is no wheelchair enabled van to help Artscape's guests get back and forth from their building to the ferry docks, which is an even greater barrier in the winter). It's also difficult to move goods to and from the docks. The City could consider some kind of accessible, year-round "tour train" to help people move around.
- Many people have a very real fear of getting "trapped" on the island if they miss the last ferry. Providing people with a way to manage their own access to and from the island would make it easier for them to enjoy it, such as adding pedestrian/cyclist bridge(s) that connect to the mainland at the northwest and southeast parts of the island. The City could still have the ability to close the bridge(s) if absolutely needed. Pedestrian and cyclist bridges would also help address the cost of visiting, which can be prohibitively high for a family of four.

More boats. There should be a better system to bring school kids to the island — right now, they take the public ferry, and in winter, with COVID, that forces adults to either share space with them or to go outside for a cold ride. Maybe the TDSB could have their own boat to help kids move to and from the island.

More amenities and food. It is a big pain and challenge to get food, and the options currently available are limited. It would be nice to have:

- a more diverse food offering (including healthy food options and vegan options)
- more ways to get food on the island year-round
- a small grocery store (even a tuck shop) which would help both visitors and people who live on the island, many of whom are elderly and have to travel to mainland to pick up their food.

Involvement in the Master Plan process

Artscape is keen to stay involved in the process as it unfolds.



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Discussion Summary

Dec 9, 2020 with the Harbourfront Centre

Summary of feedback

Overview

On Dec. 9, 2020, Swerhun Inc. (Ian Malczewski) and Harbourfront Centre Martin Kenneally) had a pre-engagement conversation about the City of Toronto's Toronto Island Park Master Plan. This document summarizes that discussion. Swerhun shared a draft of this summary with Harbourfront Centre before finalizing it.

Key issues and existing conditions

Harbourfront Centre's area of operations is from the foot of Bathurst to the foot of York Street, including managing boardwalks, dock walls, piers, marinas, and three car parking facilities. Harbourfront also has commercial marine operators as clients — ranging from independent water taxis to larger ships — which means it manages (among other things) these operators' permissions to dock in its area of operations.

Key issues and existing conditions for the Island Master Plan team to consider:

Water quantity, quality, and flooding. Much of the immediate waterfront is 12 - 18 inches away from a big disaster if water levels increase. In addition, the City's old failing combined storm and sanitary system drains at some locations into the lake, which affects quantity and — in cases where combined sewage outfalls are involved — quality. Both water quantity and quality can be affected by factors like wind and wave height. There is also a governance hole when it comes to managing the lake's level: different public agencies' jurisdictions or mandates consider related issues, but there is no one local or regional body whose job is to think about lake height and levels. The lake level is due, in part, to decisions made by the International Joint Commission, but it does not think about the impacts of changing lake levels at the local scale.

Complexities of adding new infrastructure to support marine uses, including: a) environmental factors to be consider if adding infrastructure (piers or docks) for marine operators, like prevailing winds, exposure, wave heights, and water currents and b) the elaborate network of overlapping jurisdictions around marine uses, including (but not limited to): Ports Toronto, the International Join Commission, the Province AGCO (which licenses alcohol on commercial passenger vessels), the City (which owns and leases land) and Transport Canada (which certifies commercial vessels and crew).

An uptick in illegal charters. Owners of some 35 - 50 foot pleasure craft have started party boats that illegally use dock walls to load "passengers" and in some cases may have loud music and parties on the lake.

Potential opportunities to explore through the Master Plan

How to support the recovery of larger commercial marine operators (like larger tour and charter ships). While water taxis have been able to survive and have done relatively well during the pandemic (in some cases even operating as unofficial tour operators), these larger operators have seen their industry devastated by COVID since public health restrictions meant they couldn't operate at all.

Involvement in the process

Harbourfront Centre would like to stay involved in the process. In particular, if any of the recommendations emerging from the Master Plan have an influence on its area of operations (such as proposals to add more piers or docks).



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Discussion Summary

Dec 9, 2020 with the Island Bike Rental

Summary of feedback

Overview

On Dec. 9, 2020, Swerhun Inc. (Ian Malczewski, Athavarn Srikantharajah) and the Island Bike Rental (Priya Rao, Gordon Chhor) had a pre-engagement conversation about the City of Toronto's Toronto Island Park Master Plan. This document summarizes that discussion. Swerhun shared a draft of this summary with the Island Bike Rental before finalizing it.

Key issues and existing conditions

The island is a great escape and offers peace. One of the great things about Toronto Island is that it offers an escape from the City and a peaceful retreat.

Poor condition of and experience on ferries. The ferries are sometimes embarrassing, with things like the floors and staff uniforms looking rundown or in poor condition. The ferries also don't adequately serve the number of people who visit the island, which each year could be

about a million people. Line-ups on the mainland to access the ferry are long, making private operators the only alternative (which can be costly and feel less safe).

Poor condition and lack of facilities. The washrooms on the island are in very poor condition, and in some cases unusable. Each year, about a million people visit the island, and there are not enough washrooms for them. There are often long lines for the washrooms, and the washrooms are not cleaned frequently enough, lack locking doors on some stalls, lack mirrors, and are otherwise in poor shape.

Limits of Island Bike Rental operations. The Island Bike Rental customers are not allowed to take quadracycles into residential communities (to prevent any potential damage to people's properties) or anywhere where quadracycles would have to climb (and descend) a tall bridge (to prevent people from getting injured). These regulations mean Island Bike Rental sometimes has to deny requests from seniors or people with mobility challenges to transport them to other areas.

Key opportunities to consider in the Master Plan:

Improving the tourist experience. The Toronto Islands are marketed as a destination for tourists outside of Ontario and Canada and as the “crown jewel” of Toronto's park system. The City should ensure that the Toronto Island Park reflects this vision, especially by improving and professionalizing the ferries, facilities, and other amenities for visitors. Island Rental sees itself as ambassadors for the Island and would like the island to offer an even better experience so it can have even more pride in that ambassador role.

Improving signage and information for visitors. There is very little signage and information available for visitors to let them know about the amenities available, where to access them, and how (such as reinforcing messaging about not taking quadracycles over bridges or into residential areas. Signage should be clearer and better.

Improving the interface between visitors and island community. City staff does a good job bridging the gap between visitors and the residents, but it could do more to improve communication. There are sometimes tensions between residents and visitors struggling to share the same space. Improving the signage and barriers indicating where visitors can and can't go could help alleviate this.

Improving access to amenities from the ferry docks. Visitors have said that the Island Bike Rental is too far from the ferry docks, making it difficult to find. Beyond improving signage, moving some kind of bike rental infrastructure closer to the docks could help improve the visitor experience.

Involvement in the process

The Island Bike Rental is keen to stay involved in the process as it unfolds.



Toronto Island Master Plan

Pre-Engagement Discussion Summary

Dec 14, 2020 with the 519

Summary of feedback

Overview

On Dec. 14, 2020, Swerhun Inc. (Ian Malczewski, Athavarn Srikantharajah) and the 519 (Curran Stikuts) had a pre-engagement conversation about the City of Toronto's Toronto Island Park Master Plan. This document summarizes that discussion. Swerhun shared a draft of this summary with the 519 before finalizing it.

Key issues and existing conditions

Hanlan's Beach plays a central role to queer and trans culture in the city. The beach has a long history for Toronto's LGBTQ2S+ community as a place to gather and exist. As a city-authorized clothing option beach, it also has historically and currently been a place for 'cruising,' which is an activity that plays an important role in the community.

Hanlan's Beach is often overcrowded. Over the years Hanlan's has attracted more and more visitors, to the point where it is reaching capacity.

Key opportunities to consider in the Master Plan:

Preserving and protecting Hanlan's Beach. Although in many design processes there is an inclination to re-design and re-program spaces, Hanlan's Beach should be preserved and maintained as it exists today to protect its role within the LGBTQ2S+ community.

Leveraging the island as an event venue. Currently, Pride activities have limited space to host events throughout the city. The Toronto Island is an ideal 'mid-size' festival venue, currently being used by some LGBTQ2S+ event hosts for Pride.

Ways to improve safety on Hanlan's Beach. Drinking and parties are common at Hanlan's, but security interventions are often limited in cases of emergency. The Master Plan team should consider ways to support those who need quick access to emergency services, such as creating emergency response plans.

Involvement in the process

The 519 is keen to stay involved in the process as it unfolds. They recommend that we also:

Host pop-up engagements at Pride. Pride festivities will likely attract members of the community who are active users of the Toronto Islands and is a great opportunity for outreach.

Speak to folks at Hanlan's Beach. Although visitors to the beach may not be everyday users, they will likely have ideas and feedback on the Toronto Island Master Plan.