

First Parliament Project: Master Plan Presentation

Summary Account

Report Date: June 29, 2021

Session Date: May 18, 2021

MASSLBP

Submitted by MASS LBP Inc.
3A Gilead Place, Toronto, Ontario, M5A 3C8

Session Summary

On May 18, 2021, the CreateTO of the City of Toronto hosted an online presentation of the draft First Parliament site master plan. Approximately 230 people pre-registered, and about 208 people attended. Also, of those that pre-registered, they indicated 300 total attendees (other people sharing the screen) were expected to attend. The session was organized into two elements: 1) a formal presentation of the project and the draft master plan by project lead Peter Smith (DTAH) and an informal panel discussion lead by the Honourable David Crombie with Dima Cook (Senior Associate, EVOQ Architecture), Peter Smith (Project Lead, DTAH), and SoMei Quan (Project Manager, CreateTO) and later Toronto City Councillor Wong-Tam. In addition, paraphrased questions submitted by pre-registrants and questions from those in attendance were given to and asked by David Crombie.

Date: May 18, 2021

Time: 6:30 p.m. to 8:15 p.m.

Platform: Zoom Webinar

Registered: 230 / **Attendance:** 208 / **Max Concurrent Views:** 151

Approximately one-third of people had not attended a past project meeting.

Attended with:

Sole attendee: 131

One other attendee: 57

Two other attendees: 9

Three other attendees: 7

Total expected attendance: 300

Based on questions at registration. This does not include 16 “rush” registrants made hours prior to the event.

Local Registrant Locations (approx.):



Time in Attendance:

Average time in meeting: 76 minutes

Median time in meeting: 94 minutes

Some participants logged out and back in for the ten-minute break.

Promotion approach: emails to previous attendees, email to stakeholder list

Summary of Session Goals:

- Present the master plan to the public;
- Highlight and clarify the important elements of the master planning process

Agenda:

Welcome and Land Acknowledgement - 6:30 p.m.

Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam

Evening in Review

Chris Ellis, MASS LBP

Presentation of Master Plan

Peter Smith, DTAH

Health Break - 10 minutes

Panel Discussion - 7:25 p.m.

Hosted by David Crombie

Panelists:

Dima Cook, EVOQ

Peter Smith, DTAH

SoMei Quan, CreateTO

Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, City of Toronto

Technical Support Panelists:

David Sit, Community Planning, City of Toronto

Leesa Tossios, Toronto Public Library

Mary MacDonald, Heritage Planning, City of Toronto

Thank you - 8:00 p.m.

Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam

Chris Ellis, MASS LBP

Presentation

Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam: Welcomed the audience to the webinar and gave a land acknowledgement.

Chris Ellis: Outlined the agenda for the evening.

Peter Smith: Presented a general overview of the First Parliament site, which described the vision for First Parliament, its importance and location, and the many eras of history contained at the site. He summarized the project structure and timeline, and the comprehensive community engagement that had informed the interpretation and planning process. He then outlined the Heritage Interpretation Strategy for the site, which proposes an interpretation framework that has as its central introductory experience, that the site played a key role in the founding of Toronto (York) as a founding capital city that directly impacted the development and growth of the province of Ontario and Canada. The framework organizes the stories associated with the site and identifies their inter-connections consisting of key themes, sub-themes and cross-cutting themes. He emphasized the role of the site as a crucial public asset and the need for all built forms uses to be community-oriented.

Finally, he discussed the Master Plan, which includes a set of guiding principles and planning strategies that will guide development. A demonstration plan was used to illustrate and provide examples of the potential application of the guiding principles and planning strategies a demonstration plan. The demonstration plan includes two built-form blocks centred around an animated public square (Parliament Square) and a park at the south end (Lakeshore Park) with features and design elements that interpret the history of the site.

Key Points from the Presentation:

- The vision for First Parliament is two-fold. It will not only be protected and developed as an important historic site that faithfully reflects its stories, but will also be designed as a vital community asset that meets the needs of a rapidly growing population of residents, workers, and visitors.
- The Master Plan for the site has been based upon key guiding principles and site-specific planning strategies. Together, they lend firm direction to future planners and designers, while ensuring the site remains flexible in responding to changing circumstances.
- As a vibrant public place, the site will house community-oriented built forms that encourage public activity and socialization.
- A district library has been approved by Toronto City Council; other possibilities include affordable housing, community and social services, Indigenous services, educational opportunities, community recreation, food security options, etc.

Panel Discussion:

The panel discussion was hosted by the Honourable David Crombie, Canadian politician, professor, and consultant, that included project team members Dima Cook (Senior Associate, EVOQ Architecture), Peter Smith (Project Lead, DTAH), and SoMei Quan (Project Manager, CreateTO). The purpose of the panel discussion was to provide a less formal environment for conversation around the site's future and the next steps in implementing the Master Plan. It gave an opportunity for the audience to ask questions and for the project team members to share any observations or thoughts they had concerning the site and the overall project.

Key Points from the Discussion

- The First Parliament site is protected under the Ontario Heritage Act and is listed by the City as an Archaeologically Sensitive Area.
- Artefacts uncovered at the site are too fragile for display. Cook emphasized the need to continue to uncover and preserve them 'in situ' within the zone of archaeological significance both during and after development/construction.
- Panelists described the Heritage Interpretation Strategy as a broad framework for how to interpret the site's stories and as the foundational document on which the Master Plan is built. Both documents are crucial in creating public awareness and garnering support for protecting the site's many layers of history. Panelists were optimistic about working closely with future developers and designers to ensure bringing to fruition the vision of First Parliament as a multi-faceted space that both expresses the site's heritage and contributes to the community.
- Towards the end of the session, Councillor Wong-Tam joined the discussion to weigh in on next steps. With the Province likely to take over site development, she informed the audience that the Master Plan will be submitted for consideration and that working groups are already in progress to help ensure the Province's plans are respectful of the Master Plan and align with key guiding principles. That said, she stressed the need for the public and the City to be more vocal about what they want to see at the site as Torontonians and ensuring it supports a vibrant public realm.