

**Jane Finch Initiative:
Arts and Culture Public
Forum
August 9th, 2022, 6-8pm**



Summary Report by the Jane Finch Community and Family Centre

BACKGROUND

The [Jane Finch Initiative](#) is about planning for the future of the area and how best to leverage the investment in light rail transit (LRT) for the benefit of local communities. It is a collaborative community planning exercise in 'Neighbourhood 24 - Black Creek' and 'Neighbourhood 25 - Glenfield-Jane Heights' (see [Neighbourhood Profiles](#)), centred on the intersection of Jane Street and Finch Avenue West.

The initiative involves three integrated streams of work:

- 1) **Comprehensive engagement** (ongoing)
- 2) A **community development plan** including a local economic opportunities plan;
- 3) An update to the **land use planning framework**.

The City is working in collaboration with the Jane Finch Community and Family Centre who will support community engagement and facilitate different community consultations to collect feedback.

MEETING SUMMARY

On August 9th, 2022 from 6-8pm, the Jane Finch Initiative Arts and Culture Public Forum was hosted by the Jane Finch Community and Family (JFCF) Centre with support from the City of Toronto. This consultation is part of the Jane Finch Initiative's comprehensive engagement stream and it was held online over Zoom. The agenda can be viewed in appendix 1 on page 5.

The purpose of the event was to:

- Update members of the Artists' Collective on main outcomes from the first phase of the Jane Finch Initiative's community engagement process, and from previous meetings with the Artists' Collective.
- To determine priority areas and actionable items for the second phase of the community engagement process.

ATTENDEES:

- 3 JFCF Centre staff: Denelle Carvalho, Amadeo Ventura, Clara Stewart-Robertson
- 2 City of Toronto staff: Andrea Raymond-Wong, Lory Diaz
- 9 community members: Veronica Eastman, Vanessa Chase, Richard Marsella,

Terryl Knox Magbanua, Christina Gianellia, Cecilia Garcia, Heavy Steve, Marlene McKintosh, Mohamed Ahmed

MEETING SUMMARY

- Denelle Carvalho shared welcoming remarks and a land acknowledgement.
- Andrea Raymond-Wong shared the purpose and context of the forum.
- Attendees were asked to introduce themselves and the work they are involved in.
- Andrea Raymond-Wong shared a presentation on the status of the Jane Finch initiative and the main ideas in the Arts and Culture engagement stream from the [Ideas Report](#).
- Time was allotted for questions.
- Time was allotted for general discussion.

WHAT WE HEARD

This section includes the summaries of the feedback collected from the discussions during the Zoom meeting.

- Question: What are the short term opportunities for artists to be effectively involved in Phase 2 engagement?
 - Response from Andrea Raymond-Wong: Through this meeting and future quarterly meetings with the Artists' Collective and other stakeholders, we are building a plan for action based on the Phase 1 Ideas. These actions will directly influence the Community Development Plan.
- Question: Is there an opportunity to develop a directory of local artists and arts serving organizations through the Jane Finch Initiative?
 - Response from Clara Stewart-Robertson: Some research on this was done through the community hub and centre for the arts process and the initial feasibility study. The Jane Finch Artists' Collective also started building a spreadsheet of artists and arts organizations. There is a lot of desire to consolidate all networks and lists that have already been made.
- Comment: The York Woods library and York University's art gallery are significant assets to the arts community and should be involved with this process.
- Comment: A community theatre group has done plays on social justice issues in Jane and Finch based in the theatre at the York Woods library. This work was impactful, but is no longer able to operate out of the York Woods library theatre. There is a need for short term support and physical spaces for similar arts groups.
- Comment: Using squarespace can be a useful tool for compiling a directory of local artists in North York. This would also provide a job for web designers. This directory would also make grant applications easier for applicants and organizations offering grants, because basic information about the applicants would be easily

available on the directory.

- Question: North York Arts has begun a database like this, but it is not specific to Jane and Finch. One challenge is that artists on the database may not update their entry. How can this directory remain current and useful?
- Response from Andrea Raymond-Wong: We will need to do some investigating of the lists that already exist so that we can avoid redundancies.
- Comment: This group is not representative of most artists in the community. How can we better outreach to artists in the community? Artists should also be paid for their work and compensated for their input throughout the engagement process.
- Comment: Arts programming should be considered for all ages, not just for children.
- Comment: Since the neighbourhood boundaries have changed, the boundaries for the local arts services organisations have become unclear.
- Comment: Community members have discussed creating a rental or loaning system to rent arts equipment, such as instruments. These lending programs can be accompanied by services and workshops to train artists to use the equipment.
- Comment: Community Music Schools has built it into their funding to offer students the equipment they need. Where possible, they are open to support similar lending programs. Creating dedicated music learning and creation space is also important, and spaces can be shared between organisations.
- Comment: The York Woods library will have a music lending library.
- Comment: UrbanArts has a mobile program for media production, which can be brought into community spaces to teach the basics of music production. This has been done at PEACH. If there is a need for a mobile program, there is potential to expand or replicate this program.
- Comment: Community Music Schools has a partnership with York University, and some staff members are very interested in having equity seeking groups access opportunities at York. The professors are very interested in serving the community, and have access to grants, but don't know how to connect outside of the institution of the university. JFI should find ways to connect artists in Jane and Finch to resources at York University.
- Comment: Nobody knows about the existing resources in the community or in the wider North York area.
- Comment: There should be better ways to get information to people. For example, people trying to get out of the shelter system often lack access to the internet. This is an entire demographic that is entirely being left behind because they don't have the essential tools for receiving information about programs and services. How do we do engagement without technology in conjunction with virtual engagement?
- Comment: Some ways that people access information about programs and services include stands in the malls, schools, screens in waiting rooms (for example, doctors offices.)

APPENDIX 1: AGENDA

5:45 Pre-meeting Huddle/Tech Check (Staff)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Screenshare, mic, audio• Denelle shares co-host permissions with Clara and Amadeo
6:05 Welcome, Land Acknowledgement,(Denelle)
6:15 Purpose-setting/ Context (Andrea)
6:20 Introduction, History and context
6:35 Presentation (Andrea)
6:50 Q&A and Feedback on the A&C Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Main ideas<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Increase access to arts and culture funding opportunities○ Foster sustainable local arts and culture organizations and○ programming for community members of all ages○ Work to advance the City's ten-year Toronto Public Art Strategy and create○ opportunities for local artists to lead public art projects in the community○ and activate local spaces with festivals
7:00 Breakout room discussion
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gaps in existing resources and available funding?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ How can the process of navigating funding be made more accessible?• How can the library and its services be more accessible and affordable?• How can artists be economically empowered (for example, entrepreneurship training, peer mentorship, business and social enterprise support)
7:55 Next steps & wrap up

- Denelle to share Honorarium form Form will be open until EOD August 15th
- Denelle to share Andrea's presentation
- Denelle shared a link to Jamboard, and will remain open for comments until EOD August 15th.
- Followup email will go out only to people who registered for the meeting, if you join another way, please email Denelle directly at denellec@janefinchcentre.org