Daylighting Colonialism

Decolonizing Northeast False Creek Park
SPEAKERS

Rena Soutar, Reconciliation Planner, Vancouver Park Board
Camila Rivera-Tinsley, Director of Education/Director of the Frick Environmental center, Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy
Selina Young, Manager, Indigenous Affairs Office, City of Toronto
Moderator: John Hausdoerffer, Dean, School of Environment & Sustainability, Western Colorado University
CONTEXT

• Geographical
• Social
• Policy
GEOGRAPHY
SOCIAL CONTEXT
4.0 RECONCILIATION AND CULTURAL REDRESS

Introduction

The City of Vancouver is in an era of reconciliation. On July 4, 2014, City Council adopted a framework for and designated Vancouver as a City of Reconciliation. The designation and commitment followed the Year of Reconciliation in Vancouver from June 2013 to June 2014. The first four years of the City of Reconciliation focus on Indigenous peoples, to ensure that the gap in understanding and capacity can begin to be filled. The future of the City of Reconciliation is to begin strengthening relations through a reconciliation lens with other cultural communities.

Framework for City of Reconciliation

The framework for City of Reconciliation has three foundational components that further strengthen our services and ongoing relationships with the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, and Urban Indigenous communities:

• Cultural competency
• Strengthening relations
• Effective decision-making

Reconciliation is a foundational component of the Northeast False Creek Plan and engagement process. The City and Park Board are committed to seeking ways to further its Reconciliation efforts and to strengthen their relations with both local First Nations and Urban Indigenous peoples.

The Plan recognizes that Northeast False Creek is:

• Located within the traditional homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations;
• Adjacent to the Downtown Eastside and significant Urban Indigenous Community;
• Adjacent to, and previously part of, the Chinatown Community and historically the heart of Vancouver’s Black Community (formerly known as Hogan’s Alley).
STRUCTURE/ORGANIZATION

Players:
- Staff/Park Board + CoV
- Design Team: Field Operations and PWL
- NEFC Park
- Stakeholders & Public
- First Nations + Urban Indigenous
- Park Design Advisory Group (community members)
ENGAGEMENT STREAMS 2018-19

STAGE 3: EXTENDED ENGAGEMENT

Indigenous Engagement
- MST Quarterly Mtg. 3
- MST Quarterly Mtg. 4
- Musqueam Workshop #1
- Musqueam Workshop #2
- IEWG Mtg. 4

Stakeholders
- Chinatown Cultural District: Emerging Principles
- Chinatown Workshop
- Chinatown Workshops

Park Design Advisory Group (PDAG)
- *New PDAG Appointments
- PDAG Meetings
- PDAG Meetings

Terms:
- Urban Aboriginal Peoples Advisory Committee (UAPAC)
- Indigenous Engagement Working Group (IEWG)
- Musqueam, Squamish & Tsleil-waututh (MST)
- MST Cultural Heritage Committee (CHC)

STAGE 4: REVISED CONCEPT PLAN

- MST Meeting
- Workshops
- Workshops
FIRST DRAFT OF DESIGN

Good Intentions, Good Engagement
WHAT DID WE MISS

Indigenous Staff Intervention

September 3, 2016

To Sadhu Johnston and Malcolm Bromley

Dear Mr. Johnston and Mr. Bromley,

RE: Northeast False Creek Park Design
PAUSE, REFLECT
PARADIGM SHIFT LED BY INDIGENOUS STAFF

We are missing an opportunity.
Let’s give ourselves time to design this park in a good way.
WE NEED TO DECOLONIZE THE WAY WE WORK

VALUES TO GUIDE RECONCILIATION
Approved by the Park Board in April 2018

These values are your compass to help guide the way you work, interact with colleagues, external partners and the public.

PATIENCE
Colonialism didn’t happen overnight. Untangling it takes time. We will pace ourselves for the marathon, not the sprint. We will adjust deadlines to ensure things are done well and respectfully.

CLARITY
We will focus on how colonialism functions to exclude, not on how to include.

PRAGMATISM
All staff are inheriting a system not of our making. The Park Board Reconciliation Team (PBRT) are here to assist colleagues with examining the ways colonialism continues to damage others. Blame is unproductive.

LEADERSHIP
We will nurture and sustain each other, demonstrating Indigenous principles in the way we function as a team.

LEARNING
We consent to learn in public. We will make mistakes. We will sit with those mistakes, be transparent about them, and use them both to learn and to teach. Our mistakes will be diagnostic tools.

Park Board staff
Rena Soutar
Lisa Walker
COLONIAL OCCUPATION: CULTURAL CONTEXT

FIRST NATIONS OCCUPATION

1914-1923
HOGAN'S ALLEY
ESTABLISHED

1900
INDUSTRIALIZATION
OF FALSE CREEK

1960'S
FREEWAY
FIGHT

2018
NEFC
AREA PLAN
APPROVED BY
COUNCIL

1886-1920
CHINATOWN
ESTABLISHED

1886-1920

CANADIAN
PACIFIC RAILWAY

1990
FALSE CREEK
NORTH OPE

EXPO

TIMELINE CONCEPTUALIZATION
COLONIAL OCCUPATION: CULTURAL CONTEXT

6000 B.C. - PRESENT
MUSQUEAM (xʷməθkʷəy̓əm), SQUAMISH (Siḵwx̱ú7mesh Óxwaxíwíkw̓), AND TSLEIL-WAUTUTH (tsleil-waututh)

1914-1923
HOGAN'S ALLEY - ESTABLISHED

1900
INDUSTRIALIZATION OF FALSE CREEK

1960'S
FREeway Fight

2018
NEPC AREA PLAN APPROVED BY COUNCIL

1886-1920
CHINATOWN ESTABLISHED

1886
CAnADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY

1990
FALSE CREEK NORTH OBL

EXPO 86

TIMELINE CONCEPTUALIZATION
HUMAN OCCUPATION IN
WHAT IS CURRENTLY VANCOUVER
TIMELINE DRIVES THE PROCESS

STAGE 1: ANALYSIS + EARLY DIRECTIONS
STAGE 2: DRAFT CONCEPT PLAN
STAGE 3: EXTENDED ENGAGEMENT
- INDIGENOUS + STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT
- DESIGN PRINCIPLES
PARK OPERATIONS + STEWARDSHIP

PROCESS FUNDAMENTALS
WHAT WE DID - STAGE 3 EXTENDED ENGAGEMENT
(JUL 2017 - FEB 2018)

INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT WORKING GROUP
4 MEETINGS

CULTURAL TRANSLATION
GATHERING OF FEEDBACK COLLECTED INTERPRETED BY PARK BOARD RECONCILIATION PLANNER

PARK DESIGN ADVISORY GROUP
2 MEETINGS PRESENTED INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK & FEEDBACK RECEIVED

CEDAR ROSE DAY
15+ ATTENDEES AT STAFF & CONSULTANT WORKSHOP AS AN IMMERSIVE INDIGENOUS EXPERIENCE

AREA PLAN PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE & ONLINE SURVEY
1550+ OPEN HOUSE ATTENDEES 800+ SURVEY RESPONDENTS

MST QUARTERLY MEETING Q1 2018
MEETING TO PRESENT PARK IDENTITY STATEMENT

MST QUARTERLY MEETING Q4 2017
MEETING TO PRESENT FINDINGS

MUSQUEAM OPEN HOUSE
20+ ATTENDEES INTERACTIVE SESSION TO DEEPEN UNDERSTANDING OF FEEDBACK RECEIVED

INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK
DEVELOP FRAMEWORK FOR ENGAGEMENT & MEANINGFUL INTEGRATION OF MST HISTORY AND LIVING CULTURE INTO PARK DESIGN
CULTURAL TRANSLATION IS ESSENTIAL
ACCESS TO THE WATER MEANS OVERLOOK (NON-INDIGENOUS)
CULTURAL TRANSLATION IS ESSENTIAL
ACCESS TO THE WATER MEANS IMMERSION (INDIGENOUS)
THERE ARE NO ‘CULTURALLY-NEUTRAL’ PLACES

THAT HAVE BEEN TOUCHED BY HUMANS

VARGAS ISLAND
BRITISH COLUMBIA

ENGLISH BAY
VANCOUVER

SANTA CRUZ
PORTUGAL
NEW VISION
We live busy lives, we devote our energies to many things. We deplete. We need a place to replenish, to relate to the land and to the water, a way to nourish and to support ourselves and each other. We need to learn a new way to be, and a new way to belong. For millennia the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations nurtured and were nourished by the land we now call home. Their long and ongoing relationship with this land embodies goals we all have: sustainability, community, and wellness. Their gardening practices ensured food, clothing, and medicine for generation after generation. Their stewardship shaped this place.

Imagine a space for Indigenous Peoples to practice their cultures. Imagine the open arms of the people and their welcome figures that once graced these shores. Imagine returning to that space, and restoring practices that connect people to land. Imagine what it is to belong to a place, and to learn how you belong.

We need to replenish. We need to reconnect to the land. We need a place inspired by and supporting Indigenous cultural practice. We need Northeast False Creek Park.
Overview

• Background and Context: How we got here

• Foundations for Success: What exists

• Focus for the Future: What can be
City of Toronto Land Acknowledgement

The land on which we meet today is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

We acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.
"When there is no Indigenous cultural representation in space or design, Indigenous peoples do not see their identities reflected in the environment. When this happens, Indigenous peoples can feel like they don’t belong in that space whether it’s a room, a building, a neighborhood, or a city. A lack of belonging in turn limits access health, education or social services.

Dr. Suzanne Stewart
Yellowknife Dene, Director, Waakebiness-Bryce Institute for Indigenous Health, University of Toronto

"Reconciliation is only possible when we’re on equal footing, the land is a great equalizer."
Chloe Dragon Smith
Chipewyan-European-Métis contributor to the Canada Parks Council

“Green spaces can be used as a space for land-based reconciliation with Indigenous groups by incorporating their vision into modern park design.”
Janie Romoff
General Manager, Parks Forestry and Recreation, City of Toronto
City Council endorsed all Calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada report, including those that focus on art, recreation and commemoration of residential schools.

*EX10.16, December 2015*

Parks and Environment Committee requested that staff develop “a framework for applying Indigenous place-making principles to [Parks, Forestry and Recreation capital] projects.”

*PE20.3, May 2017, AA12.5, October 2017*

City Council adopted the Downtown Official Plan Amendment for TOcore, including explicit policy direction regarding Indigenous cultural heritage and consultation.

*PG29.4, May 2018*
Where Are We?
Indigenous Place-Making - July 23, 2019
Foundations for Success

Indigenous Place-Making: Inter-Divisional Kick-Off
Indigenous Place-Making Framework Goals

• Expanding and ensuring presentation and commemoration of Indigenous histories and cultures.

• Creating space – physically, and in process and policy – for ceremony, teaching and community.

• Strengthening Indigenous connections with lands and waters, both traditionally and contemporarily used.

• Building capacity for land-based indigenous engagement, and for greater cultural competency in Toronto.
Place-making Framework: Four Focus Areas

- Public Art
- Places & Naming
- Policy & Capacity
- Consultation
Art as a focus provides a focused opportunity for both short-term and long-term impact.

Murals and temporary art can move faster, creating more immediate impact, and Public Art provides more significant and permanent opportunities for creating place.

- Could we be advancing more Indigenous-specific art projects?
- Where are there parks and recreation facilities that we might initiate mural or other art?
- How can existing programs or initiatives be leveraged to achieve our place-making outcomes?
Through careful consideration of places and naming, we have an opportunity to demonstrate place-making excellence that is holistic and comprehensive.

Existing examples include the Indigenization of the City Hall precinct led by the Indian Residential School Survivor Legacy Project, the Wonscotonach Parklands, Dr. Lillian McGregor Park, and the Toronto Island Park Plan.

- How would we ensure appropriate engagement and Indigenous knowledge is part of the process?
- How do we identify future large-scale place projects?
- How do we proactively leverage naming as a place-making tool?
- Where do other opportunities exist?
Our public realm is shaped not only by the physical space, but also by the policies and people who manage and animate it. We need to build capacity for place-making and create policies that enable Indigenous engagement with the public realm.

This includes guidelines on Sacred Fires and ceremony, and growing and harvesting medicines and food in parks and gardens.

- What other policies should be changed or developed to enable place-making?
- How do we build the capacity of the sector to better engage in place-making?
The need for a more consistent, authentic and meaningful approach to consultation on place-making projects has become clear in our conversations with the Indigenous community.

What we consult on and how, does not always align with the size or impact of the project, and we do not always ensure we are compensating and honouring Indigenous time and knowledge.

- Are there ways we can better coordinate and align engagement to address overwhelming or frustrating Indigenous communities?
- How do we focus energy, resources and opportunity where it can make the greatest impact?
Marsi, Anusheek, Miigwetch, Nia:Wen

Thank you