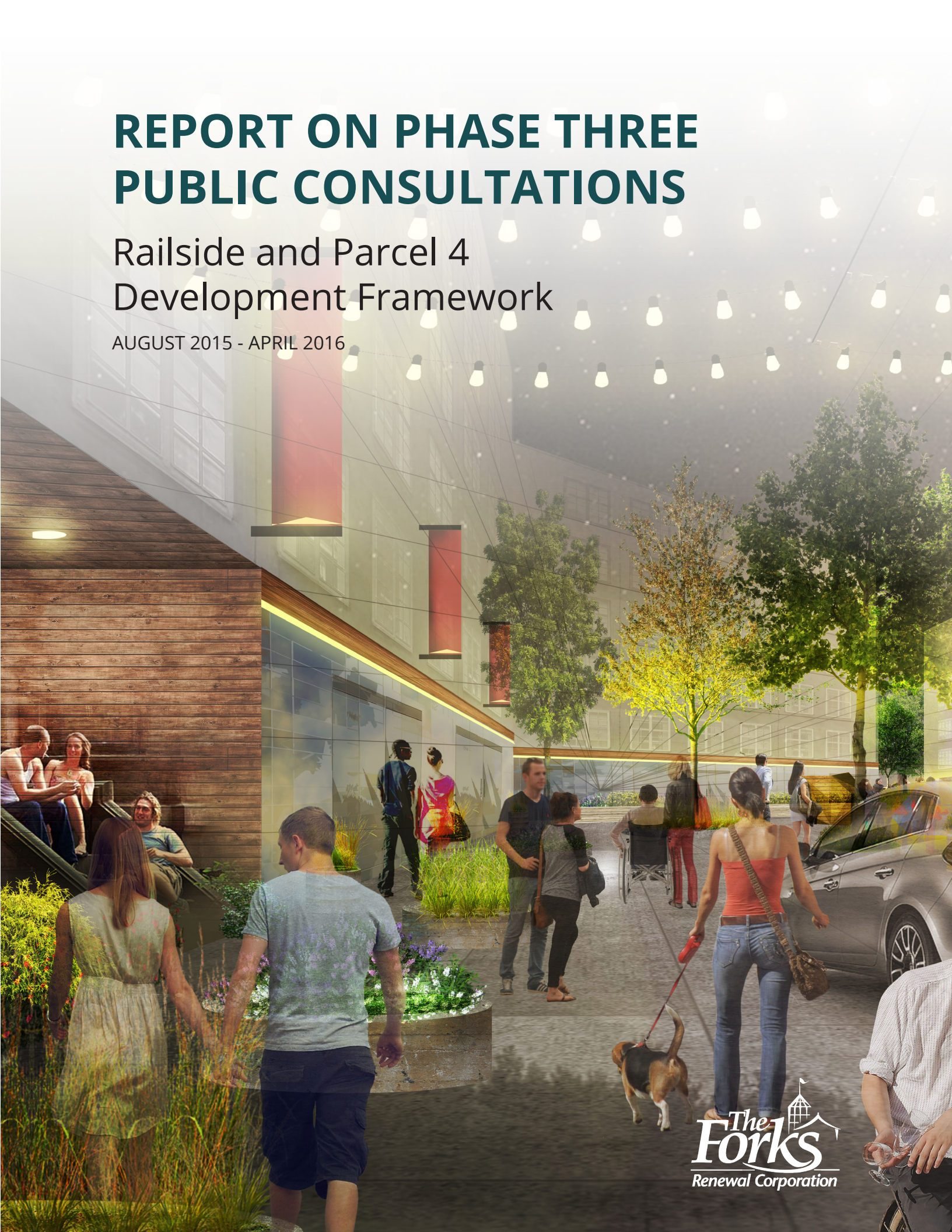


# REPORT ON PHASE THREE PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

## Railside and Parcel 4 Development Framework

AUGUST 2015 - APRIL 2016





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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Forks Renewal Corporation (FRC) kicked-off its third phase of Public and Stakeholder Consultations in August 2015 with two back-to-back Public Open Houses hosted in the Forks Market. Promoted through local print media and via the FRC's own social media accounts, the purpose of the Open Houses were to provide an update to the public on the evolving plans for the future development of the Railside and Parcel 4 lands, focusing on the guiding principles and big ideas of the planned development. Approximately 200 people participated over two days.

There were no formal presentations, however, members of The Forks' staff and consulting team were on hand to guide members of the public through a series of information boards, respond to questions/comments, and record feedback. Members of the public were also encouraged to provide their written remarks on supplied comment forms.

Following the Public Open Houses, FRC organized and presented at a series of focussed stakeholder consultation meetings and events to provide updates and seek input on the evolving Railside plans (a list of those stakeholder events is included as **Appendix A**).



## 2.0 PUBLIC FEEDBACK – KEY THEMES

The following is a thematic summary of the input and feedback collected over the Phase Three consultation process:

### 2.1 Historic/Cultural Recognition

A few respondents indicated the importance of reflecting local history and culture in the development, including features that mark local First Nations history and the site's rail/industrial heritage. Suggestions for historic/cultural commemoration included plaques, open space design, site branding, on-site multi-media, as well as the naming of public plazas, lanes and streets within the development. One respondent also noted that all signage on the site should be bilingual.

### 2.2 The Forks as a 'Destination' and 'Meeting Place'

The majority of individuals highlighted the importance and success of The Forks as a city-wide destination and meeting place. Suggestions for ensuring that this critical function continues, included (in no particular order):

- making the site and businesses more dog friendly (allowing dogs into shops/restaurants);
- designing high quality public spaces;
- integrating public art into the development;
- providing flexible lease arrangements for artists and start-up businesses; and,
- the development of public amenities, like an English garden and a year-round conservatory.

The notion of providing something for everyone and for all ages (children to seniors) was also highlighted as an important design/development objective.

### 2.3 Connections

Echoing a central principle of the evolving development framework, the majority of people emphasized the importance of improving connections between The Forks and the rest of the downtown through transit, bike paths and new pedestrian links (i.e. pedestrian/bicycle tunnel connection as an extension of St. Mary Avenue). One respondent suggested that the proposed highline connection be extended north over Pioneer to connect with Waterfront Drive and Steven Juba Park.

In terms of visual connections, respondents also noted the importance of preserving sightlines to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR).

## **2.4 Transportation**

Most of the attendees expressed support for the proposed transformation of Union Station into a Transit Hub to provide a direct connection to The Forks on the expanding BRT network.

Many of the attendees also suggested the importance of ensuring that future opportunities for enhanced transit connections to The Forks be protected.

## **2.5 Winter City**

A few respondents commended The Forks for including winter imagery in the concept drawings and precedent images. Likewise, many attendees reiterated the importance of considering winter and our City's significant climatic swings in the overall design and future site operations/programming.

## **2.6 Residential Development**

Generally speaking, attendees at the two Open Houses expressed support for residential development on these sites. In particular, attendees indicated support for the mid-rise approach being promoted in the latest concept drawings. Many respondents also highlighted the importance of developing rental housing as a way to ensure market accessibility.

## **2.7 Public Open Space**

A few of the respondents indicated their desire for more green space (less development) as part of the overall strategy for the Railside and Parcel 4 lands. However, most attendees expressed less of a concern for the quantity of green space but emphasized the importance of the quality of that green space (i.e. high quality landscape design, preservation of existing trees, etc.).

## **2.8 Recreation**

Many respondents noted the importance of providing opportunities for recreation within the development. In addition to investment in active transportation (AT) infrastructure (pedestrian and cycling facilities), some respondents highlighted the need for additional outdoor recreational amenities to be accessible to all ages and abilities. Bocce ball courts were cited as a specific example.

## **2.9 Parking**

Most respondents asked or expressed concern about how future parking needs would be met post-development, suggesting that it was important that sufficient replacement parking be integrated into the new development.



### 3.0 CONCLUSIONS

While the notion of redeveloping the subject lands into a mixed-use neighbourhood with higher density housing has received support from stakeholders and the wider public since the initial consultations in 2013, The Forks Renewal Corporation has seen that support strengthen through successive rounds of public consultation.

Undoubtedly, the opinions, ideas and reactions collected in Phase Three are critically informative as FRC advances its plans for the subject lands. Overall, the input and feedback from citizens and stakeholders through this process was positive and affirmed the core principles and key ideas that will guide the future planning and development the Railside and Parcel 4 lands.



## APPENDIX A: PHASE THREE STAKEHOLDER EVENTS

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| <b>Building Owners and Managers Association Luncheon</b><br><i>Presentation by Paul Jordan, Chief Executive Officer, FRC</i>   | September 9, 2015  |
| <b>Downtown Council</b> (including reps from CentreVenture, Economic Development Winnipeg, Downtown BIZ, Exchange District BIZ, Winnipeg Police, and Chamber of Commerce)<br><i>Presentation by Clare MacKay, Vice-President, Corporate &amp; Community Initiatives, FRC</i> | September 11, 2015 |
| <b>Manitoba Tourism Education Council (MTEC)</b><br><i>Presentation by Clare MacKay, Vice-President, Corporate &amp; Community Initiatives, FRC</i>  | September 16, 2015 |
| <b>The Forks Site Tenants Meeting</b><br><i>Presentation by Clare MacKay, Vice-President, Corporate &amp; Community Initiatives, FRC</i>   | September 23, 2015 |
| <b>The Forks Market Tenants Meeting</b><br><i>Presentation by Clare MacKay, Vice-President, Corporate &amp; Community Initiatives, FRC</i>   | October 2, 2015    |
| <b>City of Winnipeg and Province of Manitoba Staff</b><br><i>Presentation by Paul Jordan, Chief Executive Officer, FRC</i>   | October 8, 2015    |
| <b>Downtown BIZ Staff and Board</b><br><i>Presentation by Clare MacKay, Vice-President, Corporate &amp; Community Initiatives, FRC</i>   | November 12, 2015  |
| <b>Exchange District Residents Association (R:ED)</b><br><i>Open House and Presentation by Paul Jordan, Chief Executive Officer, FRC</i>   | April 12, 2016     |

## APPENDIX B: PHASE THREE PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

"Finally it is with great admiration at the slow deliberation careful overall site (development and management) that with new horizons show updating of the food court, the overall ambiance and longevity of site care and upkeep deserves a strong BRAVO to all those involved including the current CEO Mr Jordan and staff. Well done."

"The Forks is developing both from the past and into the future as THE GEM of Winnipeg magnificence and for the province. A true 'must go to' destination both for its citizens and for its tourists. SO CONGRATULATIONS & WELL DONE. I am excited for its future."

"Places for people to meet peacefully is the answer."

"Would like to see higher rental residential rather than condo sites. Reasonably priced with rental top floors rather than allocating top to pricey condos."

"Love the micro-brewery ideas! Keep bringing ppl downtown with more connections to transit and bike paths. More events at forks for families. Keep history of area represented in new development. First Nations, rail, other – would be awesome to have a display showing how the area has changed over time."

"Please, don't forget that this is 'Winterpeg' – at 4:00PM the sun goes down and downtown is dark and cold."

"More and more 'empty-esters' are now, or will be, wanting to sell their suburban homes and move downtown."

"Will there be 'security', cameras, patrols late at night along the paths and indoor bus shelters?"

"Please provide more green space and all signage should be French and English."

"Residential should be at a level that does not hamper the business side of the component, for example include seniors and lounge area for the kiddies!"

"Preserve sightlines from Main St. to the CMHR."

"I am of the opinion that if a forest of reconciliation cannot be incorporated then possibly: With 67 or 69 First Nations reserves in our province. Each First Nation could choose a tree, a plant, that could be planted along the High Line or in some areas where public space and First Nations and plants of the boreal forest are incorporated into the Meeting Place of where Canada's Heart Beats."

"Amazing Dream Big...Can't wait to see it in the Future :)"

"Some walking trails should for pedestrian use 'only'."

"Spaces for bocce ball courts with opportunity to rent a set on an hourly basis. This activity if accessible to all ages. More seniors or 40+ adults will be purchasing condos in the next few years and this is an activity for them."

English garden where people can sit, relax and feel at peace."

"Dog friendly restaurants – San Francisco, NY have many outdoor patios water dishes and menu for all – including pets."

"Make sure there is gallery space, especially in plazas."

"I like the highline concept and would really like to see a rapid transit bus @ the via station."

"After 'transformation' of parking lots...where do you park?"

"See Chicago Museum... Took a level parking lot turned it into green space with several layers of parking underground."

"I like the idea of public art and facilities for community art."

"Like the idea of the Rapid Transit Hub near the VIA station."

"Green space perhaps with some Aboriginal significance. It should be a link to / doorway to view the Human Rights Museum."

"Housing would be good if done in an attractive manner that fits in – not to high, etc."

"Play to your strengths: bonafide historical site, great meeting place, scenic, accessible."

"Concern: any residential development puts public space in private and private space. So keep it away from core of FORKS."



"Incorporate a dome of some sort."

"Where is everyone going to park? You're using up all the parking spots for more stuff."

"More green space needs to be added to the Parcel 4 development."

"Too much residential is planned close to the tracks."

"More green space, parks."

"Like everyone else you want people to come to the museum and the Forks but you want them to walk, skateboard or bike to get here."

"Mixed uses a positive approach."

For design ideas – suggest a \$50,000 architect competition for individual development pieces – individual or overall. Allow for a strong landscaping component i.e. preserve existing trees, flower pots and flower beds."

"Always have a right of way for mass transit route."

"Factor into design ideas – current building technology."

"Major key to remember – winter – winter – winter – design for it."

"Have a unique 'center of the Fork' identity symbol, location or 'monument'. Perhaps a 20' tall statue of an (First Nations) Chief i.e. an iconic symbol for centrality. The historic factor needs a strong component by plaques, or movie pictures, or audio-visual features and in name designation of promenade, lanes and/or streets."

"Good plan and concepts to start with."

"Concerns over replacement of parking spaces. Question on facilitating increased pedestrian flow. Hope parking facility near train station fits with architectural style."

"Good recognition of Wpg as a winter city."

"Artists shops viability need traffic. Consider generous and flexible shop rental arrangements for artists (monthly shows may attract buyers)."

"River edge landscaping to improve visual relationship between paths and river."

"Good presentation - 'bikes need bells' warning."

"Condo property taxes must be revived by city - incentive to move downtown / Exchange District."