

## Engagement Final Summary Report – Canada Dayyc

The City of Calgary's Events Services team hosted stakeholder engagement to collect suggestions on how to improve the Canada Dayyc event. The main stakeholders were residents/business owners north and south of the river around Princes Island Park and internal City staff. The ultimate objective was to understand better how it could be made easier for the host communities (neighbourhoods where the activities take place or spectators assemble).

### **Session One:** *City Staff/Internal Stakeholders*

**Attendees:** staff from Roads, Parks, Waste & Recycling, Bylaw Services, Fire, Calgary Parking Authority, Culture, Community & Neighbourhood Services, Calgary Transit, Calgary Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) and local Calgary Police Service officers.

These include concerns experienced or heard by City staff directly and those expressed through 311 and the Ward 7 Councillor's Office.

- not enough **public engagement**
- **parking** difficulties
- **environmental impact** (garbage and other waste)
- **disrupting behaviours** of spectators (including public drunkenness)
- **traffic** congestion (including the monitoring of traffic blockades)
- **access** to own home/neighbourhood
- **communications** (including signs about specific issues: pathway closures, no dogs on Princes Island Park and about general event or traffic details) and
- **safety** (related to emergency vehicles access and keeping people out of the fireworks 'hot zone')

Some of these concerns were already being addressed by the Canada Day planning team for 2014 event (for example: more security and planning around fireworks 'hot zone' and a Calgary Transit shuttle from a nearby NW location (TBC) to the fireworks viewing site of McHugh Bluff). Other discussions to improve the event focused on both better communication between the City staff and management of the traffic barricades.

### **Session Two(Chinese Cultural Centre):**

*South Side of River– where most of the day-time activities take place on Canada Day*

The Communities main themes were:

- City to communicate more to the community and specifically for those in China town who speak Chinese (Cantonese/Mandarin) – via Chinese Merchants Society, Chinese radio/newspapers, [www.chinatowncalgary.com](http://www.chinatowncalgary.com) and others
- the Chinese Cultural Centre's activities coordinated with the whole day's events is a good thing
- community to encourage more bilingual volunteers to help support the traffic barricades
- reserve an area for elders (with seating) for fireworks viewing

### **Session Two (Bridgeland Community Association):**

*North Side of River – where many spectators watch the fireworks*

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- major traffic congestion (with the extremes of parking across the width of streets or damaging private property) on roadways and in laneways – during and after the event
- traffic barriers did not stop non-resident cars from blocking streets – enforcement needs to be pre-emptive to prevent issues
- developing a vision or plan for the fireworks component of the Canada Day celebrations with the community so the residents/businesses can see/feel the benefit too
- questions around why this site was selected for the fireworks
- questions about how we can learn from other festivals and fireworks events to improve this one
- concerns about noise and the behaviour of the spectators/audience for the fireworks
- do a survey or evaluation with the residents after the event

There were also many specific suggestions of how to solve some of the concerns (all of which are listed in the appendix of ‘verbatim’ comments below) that included traffic management, shuttle services, trash/recycling bins and outhouse placement as well as how the community might be better involved (there was not clear agreement on how this might be done or what the ‘benefit’ to the community might look like, but a varied list of ideas was created).

The concerns that were similar to both groups were:

- more & better placed garbage/recycling cans to reduce litter and clean-up
- more notification about traffic management plan so residents and businesses can be better prepared
- access to homes/neighbourhoods by residents
- more and continued community involvement in planning and hosting the event

What The City will be doing next:

- Communications
  - Mail residents and businesses information on road closures and event details
  - Work with media partners to provide ongoing messaging to Calgarians not only about the event but how to be a responsible festival attendee (i.e. promote alternate modes of transportation through transit, cycling etc.)
  - Update information on [www.Calgary.ca](http://www.Calgary.ca) with appropriate information about the event and support services (i.e. Shuttle)
- Road Closures
  - Work with City Staff to review the citizen comments to determine what actions can be taken to mitigate concerns
  - Review of road closure plan north of the river, particularly 8 Ave
  - Work with Chinatown associations to obtain bilingual marshals for barricades in Chinatown closure zone
  - Finalize and advertise the shuttle for fireworks viewing

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- Public Behaviours
  - Instigate plans to increase garbage cans in areas north of the river in strategic locations with coordinated pick up after event
  - Add porta potties in a few strategic locations where fireworks viewing occurs
  - Increase uniformed presence in fireworks viewing areas to promote responsible behaviours
  
- Post Event
  - Follow up with Community Associations to review the 2014 event and discuss planning options for 2015 in the Fall.

Appendix: Verbatim Notes from South of River (May 5) and North of River (May 7) public sessions

**Engagement Notes: Verbatim Feedback**

**May 5, 2014 – South of River “Canada Day Community Conversation”**  
(partially sorted into “topic areas” and by Concerns/Questions/Comments)

**Concerns:**

- Garbage dumping: can we have more garbage bins are in Chinatown? Similar to China Street Festival.
- The location of the Night market are is vague?
- Concerns from business in china town: parking and road closures.
- Local access to Oik Wan Place, Bowside Mannor and Wah Ying Place?

**Questions:**

- Can we see the traffic info in newspapers? No just traffic but also the Canada day program?
- Can we see it in different language (Cantonese, mandarin and traditional Chinese)?
- Is there a designed area for seniors? For senior residents in china town? (Sien Lok Park)
- Night market area on map. Where it is exactly?
- Will there be info on the “ideal places” to go to watch fireworks?
- Can a community reserve a place for elders?
- Can marshals at the road closures have handouts with information to give to public?
- How many check stops might benefit from bilingual volunteers?
- How will the volunteers be identifiable?
- Do we need a permit to set up something in front of our building (Chinese Cultural Centre), cul de sac area?
- How do we tell bus tours that the street access is limited for Canada day?
- How do we inform business about road closures?
- Can we have “directional information” on radio? Such as at 6pm you should heat to etc. And also an opportunity to thank the community for participation etc.
- Can we use radio 947 (Chinese radio) to advertise and put a PSA through them?
- Do you allow local access to 2<sup>nd</sup> ave? More specifically to Oik Wan Place, Bowside Mannor and Wah Ying place?
- When will the “app” be going up?
- What sorts of events are happening at the Eau Claire market?

**Comments:**

- Garbage was a problem in general over the last few years.
- Teresa will work on having more garbage bins available.
- Chinese Merchants society has not defined the area of the Night market yet.
- Need to communicate clearly where will the night market be.

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- “Jody” should be contacted if the community wants to reserve an area for elders.
- Parking and road closures could/should be communicated to merchants in Chinatown in their language (info should be bilingual).
- City can tap into Calgary Chinese Merchant’s Society to advertise/let people know what is going on with Canada Day event. (in print to, Bryan Wong). Communication channel should be from city to association to businesses.
- There could be bilingual translators to assist with translation at the check stops in Chinatown.
- Volunteers will be provided with a safety vest.
- Parking on 2<sup>nd</sup> avenue will be self controlled.
- We should be talking to restaurants in the area to find out if they have arranged bus tours from their restaurants for Canada Day.
- Is there is a conduit into Chinese community? Yes, 5 newspapers, we need to translate and distribute, Jennifer to work with Danny ([www.chinatowncalgary.com](http://www.chinatowncalgary.com))
- Radio 947 is a Chinese radio, we can use it to advertise.
- Do you allow local access to 2<sup>nd</sup> ave? More specifically to Oik Wan Place, Bowside Mannor and Wah Ying place? Comment: talk to Grace Su, Davaid Lam, Christopher Yip for Ying mantion. Ask info from Kit Coon from Calgary Chinese Merchants Association. Ben to follow up.
- [www.calgary.ca/canadaday](http://www.calgary.ca/canadaday) will have all the updates

### **Engagement Notes: Verbatim Feedback**

#### **May 7, 2014 – North of River “Canada Day Community Conversation”**

(partially sorted into “topic areas” and by Concerns/Questions/Comments)

#### **Concerns:**

##### *Traffic/Congestion:*

- 7<sup>th</sup> Ave intersection closed but large vehicles still came in from 12 Ave and got stuck (could not turn around)
- On the traffic map of Crescent Heights (yellow-line) the access points/closures don’t go far enough north.
  - o Should at least cover 8 Ave
  - o Should cover up to and direct to 12<sup>th</sup> Ave as it is wider/commercial and has better capacity “is the proper connector”
  - o 8 Ave is very narrow and not a good access route\*
- Traffic counts were 20 – 30 thousand on 8<sup>th</sup> ave to Edmonton Trail (before), recent numbers have tripled. This is normal. But you’re putting on an event and asking us to make this a connector route (on special events it is that much more congested)
- This is not a wide street (8<sup>th</sup> ave) even on normal days; this is not easy for emergency or service vehicles to use.

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- Private property concerns; why was this site selected? Look at the money needed, prepare to block 8<sup>th</sup> ave or I'm prepared to canvas to stop it. This is not a closed off area; all the avenues going up there, all the way to 16<sup>th</sup> need to be closed
- Giving parking tickets doesn't work to solve safety/congestion problems
- Congestion problems (and therefore enforcement solutions) happen at different times in different areas (depending on zone/distance away from the fireworks viewing site) can be later 9:30-10:00-10:30pm
- Keep traffic out of neighbourhood. Partial closures last year didn't work.
- Lanes were a big problem. People used that because they couldn't get out because of closures
- Cars are a bigger risk than pedestrians

### *Waste/Garbage:*

- Litter/garbage (especially in specific areas) that if not cleaned up immediately gets blown around by the wind
  - o (list)
- Not enough garbage/recycling bins or outhouses

### *Other:*

- Not enough resources to manage properly
- Noisy long past 1AM
- Proper training of volunteers

## **Suggestions/Solutions:**

### *Enforcement:*

- Make sure enforcement is as visible in neighbourhoods as it is at Princes Island Park
- Visible presence of uniformed patrol (CPS, Bylaw, Security)

### *Traffic/Transportation:*

- make sure a message board about road closure is put up at 12 Ave N to ensure large vehicles don't get stuck at 7 Ave intersection
- Let attendees (public at the event) know where they can park (both at barricades and before the event)
- After the event open up the road-blocks sooner to open up traffic flow (prevent the logjam effect which is what happens when closed)
- Consider pedestrians as more 'friendly' than cars (promote people walking or cycling in rather than driving).
- Shuttle: additional service along 12 Ave (taking people to & from event)
- Shuttle: from a further distance (i.e. parking lots at Southridge, Market Mall etc.)
- Bike locks/bike racks to promote cycling to viewing-site

### *Waste/Garbage:*

- More garbage/recycling bins needed
  - o Place garbage cans all the way up/down Centre St. and at 'gathering places' (viewing site, shuttle stops, etc.)

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- Crescent Road, McEwan Bluff, Rotary Park, Crescent Park
- Properly placed and best number of garbage/recycling facilities and Port-a-Potties
  - Rotary Park: the bathrooms there are blocked and Port-a-Potties need to be set up there
- Post-event garbage pick-up needs to happen sooner after the event
- Make sure garbage/recycling and Port-a-Potties are visible so people will use them (i.e. street lights/lighting, signage/direction, etc.)

### *Communication:*

- Better/more communication on the types of barriers and road closures
- More/better general communication about the details of the event, planning and process
- More communications to participants/attendees about what to expect, where things (garbage, recycling, shuttle, Port-a-Potties, etc.) are and how to behave
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### *“Local Solutions”:*

- come up with local solutions that benefit the neighbourhood(s) make them more part of the hosting of the event (i.e. Rotary Park – band played after fireworks which calmed traffic and staggered departure times of people in the area; planning committee in the community working with the City; Local neighbourhood organizations can ‘rent’ or use their parking lots for income/fundraising; get local neighbourhood businesses on board with the event so they can benefit; community ownership/community benefit; walking-tour; BBQ fundraiser; beer garden; “what do we [community] want this event to look like?”; community volunteers; food-trucks;

### *Other:*

- Vision for and planning of the event (i.e. 2 year, 5 year, long-term plans)
- Training attendees (public at the event)
- Consider other successful events: Folk Fest, Lilac Festival
- Global Fest (how are they successful, what can we learn? Can the Canada Day fireworks take place there?)
- Distributed or de-centralized fireworks displays in multiple locations rather than from only one location
- Bird sanctuary/natural nesting area near Center St. Bridge eco-system

### **Comments/Discussion:**

- It is important to have ‘residents-only’ access in Crescent Heights
- Keep them [the fireworks] but manage it better
- Bylaw enforcement is highly visible on Princes Island Park
- Giving parking tickets/parking enforcement (not traffic or road closure enforcement) is reactive rather than pre-emptive/proactive (it does not solve the problems of congestion and traffic)
- Properly manage this event don’t cancel/move it
- There needs to be different considerations as this neighbourhood is a residential not commercial space (as compared to other locations) – it is also not an ‘enclosed site’ like Princes Island Park or a commercial district

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- Great community event! (Canada Day) There would be more repercussions to cancelling it than keeping it
- There was noise and traffic until 1:00am (or after/later)
- We have a great view (in Crescent Heights) and I am happy to share it but the collateral damage should not be part of it (damage being more drastic from cars)
- 'Economic benefits' for neighbourhood versus 'quality of life' for residents
- Many of the pedestrians are residents of the area
- Many of the pedestrians are coming in from other places (i.e. with cars parked inside or outside the area)
- Fantastic event, world class, biggest issue is crowd management, traffic management, visual management – as in bylaw and cps, uniforms present, port-a-potties, lighted port-a-potties (visible supervision)
- Fireworks should be considered separate event with separate challenges.
- Community volunteers – “security” on shirts, trained properly
- Discussion as to whether beer gardens are a viable, feasible solution
- Bought house for quietness of the community but events [like these] are changing this; this is a new event that is cumbersome upon us...you're throwing this at us.

### Questions:

- What is the risk, balance, trade-off, responsibility of/between private liability for a public event (i.e. property damage)? How is this reported and compensated?
- Why isn't our City Councillor here?
- Why was this location chosen rather than others? What was the 'study' or 'research' that happened and its results?
- Do you canvas neighbourhood after the event to assess property damage; a post mortem?
  - o City of Calgary response: use 3-1-1 feedback for that.
  - o Rebuttal: we called 3-1-1, sure it's logged but didn't get a call back
- Is it sustainable in this Area?