OUR CITY. OUR FUTURE.

What We Heard

Quidi Vidi Slipway/Water Access



Prepared by Organizational Performance and Strategy
July 2024

ST. JOHN'S

Disclaimer

- This document provides a summary of what was heard from participants during this engagement process. It is not meant to reflect the specific details of each submission word-for-word, although attempts have been made to do so when possible.
- The City produces a What We Heard document for every city-led public engagement project. This collected commentary is shared with the community to ensure we heard you correctly.
- The City protects the privacy of those who provide feedback as per Access to Information and Privacy Legislation.
- The full scope of commentary is used by city staff and Council to help inform recommendations and decisions.

Context

- The City was granted the wooden slipway and portions of the surrounding land from the Government of Canada in 2013.
- An engineering assessment of the Quid Vidi slipway was completed in 2023 and it was subsequently closed due to safety concerns. While there is signage on site saying it is closed and barricaded, people continue to use the space for angling and to store their boats.
- DBA Consulting Engineers provided a report which identified deficiencies in structure overall, not just the visible boards.
- Cost to replace the entire structure is estimated at more than half a million dollars plus costs to remove existing structure.
- Council is interested in maintaining access to the water and exploring options for how to do this cost effectively.

Background

- The wooden slipway is used by residents of Quidi Vidi to store boats and tie up during recreation fishery and winter.
- Another slipway in the area between the QV Artisan Studios and the Wharves at QV was sold by the Provincial Government in 2019. At the time, the Government of NL said public access had to be maintained. That slipway now belongs to a private owner and public access is maintained.
- This slipway is used by QV residents and non-residents to launch their boats, as vehicles can back into the space.

Public Engagement Plan

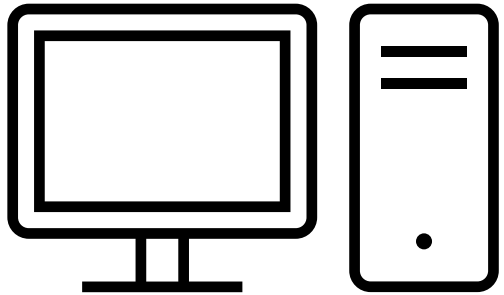
Purpose

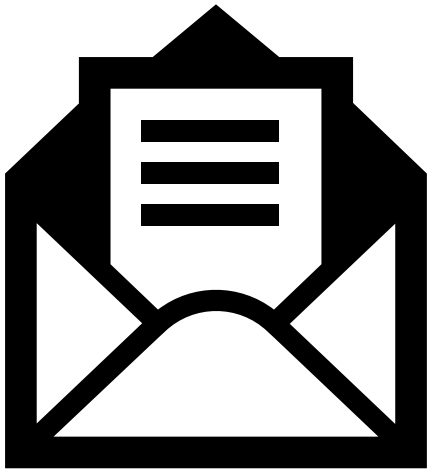
- Communicate the current safety issues, cost considerations, and ensure public awareness of City's desire to maintain access to water.
- Seek feedback/alternatives from users of the slipway about how they want to maintain water access.
- Seek feedback/alternatives from those interested in using the space to determine what they would like to do there, accessibility, rest stops, angling access, etc.
- Ensure community involvement in solutions development.

Approach

- As the slipway is well used and public access to the water is important to the residents and other users, it is important to collaborate on the development of alternatives to the current slipway.
- It was important to notify the Quidi Vidi community and meet with them ahead of any public announcements related to the project.

Communications and Notifications





- Addressed mail (160 households/businesses) sent to property owners in Quidi Vidi June 6
- Post cards delivered to properties in Quidi Vidi week of June 10 to ensure those renting were also aware of project and community meeting.
- News release issued on June 26 inviting public feedback
- Project page on EngageStJohns.ca published on June 26
- 3 newsletters to registered users and followers (4321, 4334, 4334) of EngageStJohns.ca Posts to regular City communications channels including social media, listservs, website
- Digital signage in City buildings
- Posters at QV Artisan Studio

Who Engaged



On EngageStJohns.ca

- Total Visits: 620
- Max Visitors Per Day: 145
- New Registrations: 13

- **Engaged Visitors** (People who posted questions/ comments or posted ideas): 62

- **Informed Visitors:** 227

- **Aware Visitors** (Unique visitors): 514

Ideas tools:

- 194 contributions to ideas tool
- 62 contributors

Community Meeting June 25, 2024:

- Approximately 25 people attended

Email/mail:

- 25 email submissions
- 4 letters from residents

What We Heard Highlights

- All feedback received focused on the community's desire to retain a slipway in Quidi Vidi with a preference for something wooden, similar to what is there now.
- There is a view that the slipway is a visual indicator of the fishing village and its history and an iconic landmark for tourists, visitors, photographers and others.
- People who live in Quidi Vidi feel development decisions over the years have eroded the fishing community and they are frustrated with the potential loss of the slipway.
- The slipway is well used for boat storage, launch, and tie up.
- Some people would like to see additional improvements to the slipway such as the ability to back in from Cadet Rd.

What We Heard at the Community Meeting

- People from Quidi Vidi feel frustrated with changes in their community, the potential loss of another amenity, and their lack of ability to influence decisions.
- People use the slipway for sitting, fishing, winter storage for boats, launch boat/pull up when coming into the gut. They noted there are limited options to tie up and that people from other areas also come in to use the slipway during the recreational fishery. It is used to clean fish, for weddings, repair boats, and commercial fishers use it as well. Seals use it for sunning.
- People would like to continue to do all these things and also be able to build a shed, have a place for sailboats to tie up and launch, kayaks to launch safely, etc.

What We Heard at the Community Meeting

- There is a feeling that the history of the village as a fishing village is being eroded with every new development that happens.
- There is limited area for people to tie up a boat due to development.
- Community would like to explore options to find funding/community support to contribute to project.
- The QV village community is committed to saving their slipway and created a facebook group and submitted a petition signed by 171 individuals asking the City to reconsider the decision to remove the wooden slipway.

What We Heard through EngageStJohns.ca and via e-mail/letter

- Significant support to repair/replace the slipway
- Desire to see a slipway of this type (wooden) in the community
- Concern for the overall condition of the slipway and lack of maintenance
- Significance of fishing village and there should be a visible indicator of this; slipway provides important focal point.
- Tourism, heritage, and historic elements of slipway
- Slipway still used for fishery: tie up, launch, store, repair boats
- Public access to water is important
- Improve the access overall to allow better launching options
- Disappointed with decision to remove it/potential loss to community
- Ensure it is safe for use
- Consider making it concrete or composite (this was not a common view)

What We Heard through EngageStJohn.ca and via e-mail

- Concern about lack of access to the ocean if it is removed
- Slipway is important to the cultural streetscape/landscape of the area
- Implement a permit system for users
- Slipway is a destination for photography, tourism, events.
- The area allows people to connect with nature, launch a kayak, etc., improve access for kayakers.
- Do not make this another “general public” space detracting from the needs of the residents of the area.
- Add café/other amenities, seating, but maintain slipway and improve accessibility
- People enjoy visiting the area, taking in views
- Add a permanent exhibit about the history of village, fishery

Next Steps



Release What We Heard



Staff to make recommendations to Council



Council to make decisions regarding slipway



To Stay Informed

Follow the project page or sign up to receive notifications at EngageStJohns.ca