

**BOWNESS FLOOD BARRIER
COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEETING 23
November 30, 2020 – 4 to 6 p.m.
Online Meeting – Microsoft Teams**

Working Group

Attendees

David Burton
Sydney Empson
Jane Kahler
Jolene Moran
Patti Peck
Josie Stiles
Hank Vrielink
Jean Woeller

Apologies

Anne Campbell
Sheila Clayden
Jacqui Esler
Rae McKenzie
Jeff Riedl
Ralph Smith

Guests

None

Working Group

Resources

Gabriela Gonzalez
Mariel Higuerey
Judy Hoad
Amy Stansky
Frances Welsh

Meeting notes

1. Triple Bottom Line Survey Update

a. Social Criteria

Argyle, the engagement consultant working with The City, presented the Triple Bottom Line survey feedback and the Working Group members provided comments.

Survey Feedback

- There were 15 respondents to the survey (fully completed) there were seven partial responses.
- The majority (9) of respondents were riverfront property owners. The rest were a mix of Bow Crescent, flood area, business and other
- On average, it took an hour to complete the survey, with times ranging from 10 minutes to 1 hour and 47 minutes.
- 73% found the guiding questions helpful in answering the Benefit/Concern matrix.
- One person confused if the Guiding Questions needed to be answered
- Still some concerns and misunderstanding about the use of the Community Equity criterion.

Provide clarity around:

- What the berm can and cannot do
- How groundwater is incorporated
- The overland barrier with and without the Upstream Reservoir

- 61% of respondents said that they would prefer answering the section about each benefits and concerns before ranking the social criteria.
- Make sure the word 'overland' should always be paired with the word 'barrier'. Ensure the benefit/concern text boxes are big enough so respondents can see their full answers and go back and edit.
- Concerns the general population might not know how to answer with a less 'in depth' understanding of the issues.

Comments from the Working Group

- Will you the City accept survey responses from people outside the community?
 - The survey will be on the City's engage website so it will be open to all Calgary residents. The purpose of asking for demographic information and postal code is so that the City can determine if the survey respondent is a riverfront property owner, community member or business.

b. Environmental and Economic Criteria

- Recommendation from the Working Group to use an additional environmental criterion to limit the retention of contaminants on private property.
 - This would fall into an emergency response plan so the City would have to understand from the river engineering team how that is being addressed in the design of the barrier or if that's something that needs to be put as a criterion. City staff will inquire with the appropriate department staff.
- What are the impacts on flood resilience across Calgary when the reservoir is in operation?
 - The reservoir protects other areas that are not quite as vulnerable as Bowness but still experience overland flooding at higher return periods.
- How will the evaluators balance opinion, where a criterion can't be measured using science-based methods? How will the sessions be facilitated? How can we get reassurance that the city's opinion on the barrier will not override citizens' opinions? Some criterion is subjective.
 - This is why we wanted to get opinions on which criteria should be included. Should we define the criteria differently so that people understand it better?
- How did the City come up with the value/ranking/choices behind the economic criteria? For example, does that exclude the cost of stormwater?
 - There are two parts to stormwater, 1) Bowness stormwater and the existing impact and 2) what the impact of the barrier will be on stormwater. The stormwater report isn't necessarily everything that's going to feed into the barrier alone.
- How much is the barrier going to cost?
 - That information will be shared

- There were some infrastructure projects done 4-5 years ago that were supposed to provide stormwater protection for many years. What kind of impact are those projects having?
 - There were two projects: 1) sanitary 2) community drainage improvement program, which looks at the level of service of the stormwater infrastructure in communities in Calgary. One of the upgrades that may be recommended by the consultant is to be included in the community drainage improvement program. But those two programs are separate from the barrier.
- An economic criterion is that controlled release rates may cause property owners to have to make significant investments in property-level mitigation. The community barrier is transferring risk and costs to property owners.
 - This has been raised before and the City is trying to determine how best to address this. The ask from the Working Group is for the City to capture that the barrier would have both positive and negative impacts, for example increased groundwater.
- Some Working Group members are having trouble seeing how “relies on flood mitigation to achieve provincial and federal flood Standard” is an economic criterion, as well as “timeliness of implementation” and “regulatory complexity”
 - This was adapted from the Sunnyside Flood Mitigation project, they had a separate implementation criterion and the feedback from this Working Group was that there shouldn't be separate implementation criteria since it's a triple bottom line not a quadruple bottom line.
- Working Group would like to better understand the “economics” behind all three criteria.
- Working Group members say that the Sunnyside Flood Mitigation project is different from Bowness and should not be used for comparison. Sunnyside meets the provincial standards without any upstream relief, which is not the same for Bowness.
 - The City will take some time to address that issue in the tracking sheet.
- The Working Group recommends that the criteria be simplified, and a Bowness and city-wide cost-benefit assessment be done separately.
 - The City is working with river engineering to determine what other information they can share.
- Recommendation from the Working Group: simplify the TBL for community members who may not be as involved in these discussions. A simple cost-benefit assessment may be sufficient. In other words, is the barrier going to reduce the risk of flooding and therefore reduce the cost to homeowners? Yes or no?
- The Working Group would like to see the results of the TBL evaluation to discuss and clarify, just as the Sunnyside Working Group reviewed their TBL.

- The City committed to right from the beginning that this Working Group would be able to review the results of the TBL evaluation.

Engagement timeline

Based on the feedback received at the November 16 Working Group and in conversation with senior management at the City, a revised timeline was presented:

- The community booklet will be mailed in early January
- One-on-one meetings with riverfront property owners are planned to begin in early January
- Online public events will take place January 14 – 21 and will be recorded and posted on the engage website so that if someone is not able to attend a session, they can watch it later
- The survey will start mid-January and will be open for six weeks
- Two Working Group meetings were added for early 2021: February and March
- The meeting with the community stakeholders will take place in early April
- Once the TBL evaluation is completed, it will be shared with the community before going to the Standing Policy Committee in April
- If someone can't attend sessions or watch the video, how can their questions be answered?
 - One of the things that's possible through the Microsoft Teams events, for example, is that there will be a phone line, so you don't have to have a computer to participate. That's when some of the ideas that the Working Group shared, for example, having copies at the library or Community Association so that residents can go in and grab a copy before the session and then call in to participate. We'll make sure that questions are tracked and can be added to the FAQs.
- Can there be two sessions for the groundwater study?
 - We want to provide sufficient opportunities for project overview. If we're finding that there is a lot of interest, the City is open to having a second session.
- What is the purpose of the project overview session?
 - The project overview session will provide a high-level summary, including an overview of the studies, engagement and next steps on the decision making.
- Can BRFM be involved in the public sessions and present?
 - The sessions will begin with an introduction, including an overview of the work completed to date and the engagement with the Working Group.

- Suggestions on how to engage people who many do not have internet access: drive in session where people stay safe in the car and listen to the presentation.
 - The City needs to be mindful of logistics and cost but having information in libraries and places where people go is a good option.

Community booklet feedback

- There was concern about not receiving the booklet before the meeting and the lack of opportunity for a thorough review
- Suggestion to include the objective of the booklet and information on the effectiveness of the barrier
- Bold the phone number so that it stands out
- There needs to be clarification provided around the level of protection that the barrier will provide. A member stated it won't protect against a 2013 flood, but the booklet leads one to believe it will.
- Include the difference between community level flood protection and property level flood protection
 - The City is going to add an explanation on the hydrograph and how they are used
- Include a note to indicate that an access plan will be further developed as the design stages progress so that residents can better understand timelines
- Suggestion to use cement copper for drainage drains.
- The Working Group noted that the length of the barrier needs to be clarified
 - The City will make that clarification
- Better define the protection provided by the barrier and what could be included as part of a community drainage program
- In page 9, there is a statement saying that the barrier that it will result in the reduction of groundwater levels and the highest number is used. That number will not be consistent across property and that range needs to be reflected
 - That information is from the KCB report and the City will look into using an average number
- A statement at the top of page ten about the reservoir operators managing the dam based on a forecast and aiming to keep the river flow rate below 800 cubic meters per second threshold for as long as possible is new information and needs confirmation
 - The City will revisit that statement and will clarify it
- Page 13 indicated that the flood barrier is being considered as feasible or not feasible, why is that the only criteria?

- The City is conducting a feasibility study which is based on a combination of technical feasibility and public acceptance.
- Why is a TBL being done if the technical question is the only consideration to recommend proceeding?
 - The assessment is a combination of technical feasibility and homeowner acceptance. The statement in the booklet will be modified to better reflect the social, environmental and technical considerations, as well the community engagement.
- Page 9 mentions that localized pockets of groundwater can be addressed by pumping wells, but that needs to be corrected to bringing localized pockets of groundwater to surface because the barrier is not addressing the distribution of groundwater flooding.
 - The City noticed the same statement during the final review of the booklet and will correct it
- Is there an opportunity to provide additional feedback?
 - The Working Group has two more days to provide additional feedback but the deadline may be extended.
- Are the proposed changes part of the community drainage improvement and are they included in the cost estimates?
 - The City is will clarify what exactly is included in the flood barrier project and what falls under community drainage improvements
- The City highlighted that the red line on the map doesn't represent the barrier alignment; it is only meant to represent properties affected.
- The City is looking for feedback on what is the best way to show the scale of the one-meter barrier. Is it better to put a person beside the barrier instead of a chair?
- The City emphasized that there will not be access to a berm for people to walk across
- A member referred to a previous discussion of an average damage cost savings of \$480K to \$530K.

Next Meeting – December 7, 2020 | 7 to 9 p.m.

Attachments

- TBL – Environmental and Economic Criteria
- Engagement update
- Updated Timeline
- November 2 Meeting Notes