



COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: July 11, 2023
Contact: Brad Badelt
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RTS No.: 15862
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: July 26, 2023
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Deputy General Manager of Planning, Urban Design & Sustainability
SUBJECT: UBCM 2023 Community Excellence Awards Submission

Recommendation

THAT Council endorse staff's submission of the Sea2City Design Challenge for a 2023 UBCM Community Excellence Award in the category of "Excellence in Sustainability".

Purpose and Executive Summary

This report provides Council with an opportunity to support the submission of an award application to UBCM as part of the 2023 UBCM Community Excellence Awards. Staff have prepared a submission for the coastal adaptation project "Sea2City: Design Challenge" in the category of "Excellence in Sustainability". To complete the submission, UBCM requires a Council resolution indicating support for the project's consideration for the 2023 Community Excellence Awards by August 18, 2023.

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

Council has previously supported several UBCM Community Excellence Award submissions.

City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

Context and Background

The Community Excellence Awards recognize and celebrate UBCM members that have implemented projects or programs that demonstrate excellence in meeting the purposes of local government in BC. The awards are designed to profile promising practices and to encourage local governments to learn from the success of other members in order to implement changes in their own communities. UBCM members may submit one application per category.

To be eligible for consideration, projects:

- Must have been initiated after January 1, 2018 and be substantially completed.
- Cannot be the subject of an application that was previously awarded a Community Excellence Award.
- May have been funded by grant programs administered by UBCM.

Staff have prepared an award submission for the Sea2City Design Challenge (Sea2City) project (see Appendix A). Sea2City was an innovative 12-month collaborative planning and design competition that reimagined the False Creek shoreline in response to rising sea levels, while accommodating urban development, fostering ecological revitalization, and addressing reconciliation with Host Nations. This was the first time in Canada that a challenge-based model was used to advance coastal adaptation planning.

Sea2City asked two multidisciplinary teams to reimagine five “challenge sites” around Vancouver’s False Creek. The project generated a positive and bold future vision for False Creek, dramatic but achievable site concepts, decolonized adaptation language and shorter-term pilot projects designed to test new ideas, increase public awareness, and support the next steps of the City’s adaptation journey.

The project ran from September 2021 to December 2022. The outcomes and outputs of the project can be found online at www.vancouver.ca/sea2city.

Discussion

Sea2City was a made-in-Vancouver adaptation design competition model; it borrowed ideas from similar challenges hosted by U.S. cities but was tailored to our local context and priorities, including environmental sustainability and reconciliation.

Guided by community values, Indigenous knowledge values, and design principles identified through earlier public and stakeholder engagement, Sea2City provided a collective learning and capacity building opportunity for the City, project partners, private sector and design teams to:

- Increase public awareness of sea level rise and coastal flooding and opportunities to address it.
- Explore and develop a coastal adaptation approach that centres reconciliation with Host Nations.
- Investigate coastal adaptation approaches that respond to the social equity, economic, and ecological challenges posed by sea level rise and coastal flooding.
- Examine options for sea level rise of at least two metres.

In terms of outcomes and outputs, the Sea2City project has positioned the City of Vancouver as provincial leader in several ways:

- Sea2City showcased Vancouver's leadership in climate change adaptation through its comprehensive and systems-oriented approach, addressing the large scale of the project and integrating systems thinking into the coastal planning process.
- The collaboration with the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations exemplified Vancouver's commitment to reconciliation and removing barriers. The project's collaboration resulted in important outcomes and outputs and fostered new relationships.
- Vancouver brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, including city staff, government representatives, youth, artists, and private sector actors. This commitment to partnership

and cooperation across multiple levels of government and sectors facilitated meaningful results.

- Sea2City showcased leadership in public engagement by involving the community early on in the design process, focusing on community values, and utilizing innovative engagement methods.
- Sea2City created innovative and flexible solutions to sea level rise. The project encouraged designers to balance climate change adaptation with enhancing public access to the shoreline, ecological restoration, and the integration of Host Nation principles and knowledge.
- Sea2City not only addressed sea level rise and coastal flooding challenges but also demonstrated financial best practices that supported long-term financial planning, value for money, financial sustainability, and economic development.

Overall, the Sea2City project demonstrates Vancouver's leadership in climate change adaptation, collaboration with the Host Nations, cross-sectoral collaboration, public engagement, and innovation. These attributes position Vancouver as a provincial leader in sustainability and adaptation planning and provide a model for other communities to follow. Staff believe that Sea2City is a strong contender for a UBCM Community Excellence Award.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report's recommendations.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report's recommendations.

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Community Excellence Awards

2023 Application Form

Please complete and return the application form by May 19, 2023. All questions are required to be answered by typing directly in this form. If you have any questions, contact awards@ubcm.ca.

SECTION 1: Applicant Information	<i>AP-only</i> (For administrative use)
Local Government or First Nation: City of Vancouver	Complete Mailing Address: 453 West 12 Ave, Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4
Contact Person: Brad Badelt	Position: Manager – Sustainability Group
Phone: 604-673-8165	E-mail: brad.badelt@vancouver.ca

SECTION 2: Category. Please select only one:
<input type="checkbox"/> Excellence in Governance. <i>Governance processes or policies that are outcomes-based and consensus oriented; support and encourage citizen participation in civic decision-making; are efficient, equitable and inclusive, open and transparent; and exemplify best practices in accountability, effectiveness, and long-term thinking.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Excellence in Service Delivery. <i>Projects/programs that provide effective services in a proactive manner and demonstrate benefit to the community.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Excellence in Asset Management. <i>Projects/programs that demonstrate a comprehensive system of asset management policies and practices, meeting and/or exceeding accepted best practices.</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellence in Sustainability. <i>Projects/programs that incorporate a long-term sustainability lens by considering cultural, social, economic and environmental issues in planning, policy and practice.</i>

SECTION 3: Project/Program Details
<p>1. Name of the Project/Program: Sea2City Design Challenge</p>

2. Project/Program Summary. Please provide a summary of your project/program in 150 words or less.

The Sea2City Design Challenge (Sea2City) was an innovative 12-month collaborative planning and design competition that reimagined the False Creek shoreline in response to rising sea levels while accommodating urban development, fostering ecological revitalization, and addressing decolonization and reconciliation with Host Nations. This was the first time in Canada that a competition model was used to conduct a planning and adaptation project.

Sea2City asked two multidisciplinary teams to reimagine five "Challenge sites" located in Vancouver's False Creek floodplain, a highly urbanized area in the heart of the city that is home to over 38,000 people, dozens of community facilities, and critical infrastructure. The project generated a positive and bold future vision for False Creek, dramatic but achievable site concepts, decolonized adaptation language and shorter-term pilot projects designed to test new ideas, build the City's collective coastal adaptation understanding, increase public awareness, and support the next steps of the City's adaptation journey.

3. Project timeline. Please indicate when the project/program was initiated and if it is now substantially complete.

The project ran from September 2021 to December 2022. The outcomes and outputs of the project can be found online at vancouver.ca/sea2city. As part of the November 2022 municipal election, \$20 million in climate adaptation funding was approved. A portion of these funds will support implementation of Sea2City next steps.

4. Demonstrating Excellence. Please describe how your project/program demonstrates excellence in meeting the purposes of local government in BC and provides promising practices for others to follow.

According to UBCM's website, the purpose of local governments in BC is to provide "good government for its community through effective decision-making, leadership and accountable local representation." UBCM also notes that local governments in BC are expected to be responsive to the needs of their communities, engage in meaningful public consultation, and work collaboratively with other levels of government and community organizations to achieve common goals.

Effective decision-making and collaboration

The Sea2City Design Challenge (Sea2City) was a collaborative competition model that sought to break the mold of conventional coastal adaptation planning for floodplain communities. The project's approach recognized that the challenge of adapting False Creek's shorelines to sea level rise extends beyond the domain of any single discipline such as planning or engineering, or any single entity. Rather, responding to sea level rise requires a range of practitioners, departments, community groups and levels of government. Led by a core team of planners and sustainability experts, Sea2City brought together a diverse range of participants, including Host Nation government representatives and Knowledge Keepers, planners, landscape architects, engineers, biologists, youth, artists, and community members to co-design a positive vision of a resilient shoreline for the benefit of the False Creek community and Vancouverites at large.

Sea2City also reflects an understanding that effective local governance requires partnership and cooperation across all levels of government. Representatives from the province, federal government, Granville Island CMHC and utilities participated in the project.

Leadership and responding to community need

At the heart of Sea2City was bold leadership. The project tested new ways of public engagement and invited a diverse range of practitioners to work on the 'wicked problem' of sea level rise. The City also tested 2 m of sea level rise on designs, which had not been done before. As climate change accelerates, so are the impacts it is generating. For coastal adaptation, the directive is clear: we must plan for two metres of sea level rise and be prepared to adjust upwards and act more quickly, if necessary. Therefore, planning decisions made today must consider how climate change and sea level rise will impact coastal development in both the near- and longer-term. The project's land use planning and infrastructure challenges required leadership that was willing to take risks and propose unconventional but pragmatic solutions. One of the project's unique outputs was the generation of flexible "adaptation pathways," (for a definition, please see Section 9 of this application) which differ from traditional single solutions, to address growing coastal flood risks, evolving community values, and economic signals in service of the long-term vision for False Creek. The project's outcomes and outputs, including policy recommendations, site concepts and shorter-term pilot projects, aim to improve flood resilience, build local capacity and public awareness, and are unique for BC.

Accountable local representation and public engagement

The involvement and guidance of Host Nation representatives, leadership, participants, and cultural advisors in Sea2City shaped and guided outcomes and supported an open, reflective, and collaborative work environment that is reflected in project outcomes. A two-eyed seeing approach to coastal adaptation was applied that integrated Host Nations' ways of knowing alongside western science, and the team's professional experience. Outcomes of this collaboration include a new future vision for the future of False Creek and a decolonized approach to coastal adaptation which includes new language and concepts for planners and engineers to use.

A multi-faceted engagement program connected with over 2,000 people across 19 events during the pandemic through a series of art based programs, youth lead events and online and in-person events to elicit feedback on the draft and final design concepts. Committed to accountability and transparency, Sea2City also reflects a commitment to meaningful community engagement, as the design concepts were based upon and evaluated against publicly derived design criteria that reflected the community's values and concerns with respect to flood hazard and adaptation designs.

Summary

Sea2City provides promising practices and outputs for other local governments to follow and use. The challenge represents a replicable, creative approach to addressing a complex issue, and it demonstrates that collaborative, cross-sectoral partnerships can achieve meaningful results. Overall, Sea2City is an excellent example of how local governments in BC can demonstrate leadership, engage with their communities, and create innovative solutions in response to pressing local issues.

5. Category Criteria.

- **A.** Please describe how your project/program meets the objectives of the category you have applied under. Refer to Section 3 of the Program & Application Guide.

The Sea2City project aligns with the definition of sustainability outlined by UBCM in several ways. First, the project took a holistic approach to coastal adaptation planning by incorporating cultural, social, economic, and environmental factors into its design decision-making processes. By considering the values and priorities of the community alongside technical and scientific information from studies, engineering practices, and assessments, Sea2City proposed policies and adaptation strategies that balance the needs of the present with the needs of the future.

Second, Sea2City used a values-based planning approach to ensure that stakeholders and community members had a voice in the planning process. By involving community members, as well as traditionally marginalized groups in decision-making, Sea2City promoted equity and inclusivity, which are critical components of sustainability. This approach allows for a better understanding of the variety of perspectives and values that are important to consider when planning for and making decisions about the future of coastal communities. The values-based planning practices can be replicated in other communities and for other subject matter.

Finally, Sea2City focused on building adaptive and resilient communities that can withstand the current and future impacts of climate change. The Sea2City project aimed to ensure that future generations will have access to the resources and infrastructure they need to thrive by testing design concepts with 2 m of sea level rise. This approach also tested economic sustainability by reducing the potential for damage and disruption caused by future flooding events, which can have significant economic consequences for coastal communities.

Overall, the Sea2City project is a strong example of how sustainability can be integrated into planning, policy, and practice. By taking a holistic approach, involving community stakeholders, and building adaptive and resilient communities, Sea2City ensures that Vancouver's coastal communities can meet their current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own.

B. In many cases projects may meet the criteria of more than one category. If applicable, please describe how your project meets the criteria of one or more other categories.

N/A

SECTION 4: Program Criteria

1. Leadership. Describe the extent to which your local government acted as a local or regional leader in the development or implementation of the project/program.

The Sea2City Design Challenge (Sea2City) was a bespoke made-in-Canada adaptation design competition model; it borrowed ideas from its American counterparts, but is designed for the Canadian context. It was also the first coastal adaptation design competition of its kind in Canada. The City of Vancouver hopes to be of service to others and that other local governments can learn from Sea2City.

Guided by community values, Indigenous knowledge values, and design principles identified through earlier engagement, Sea2City provided a collective learning and capacity building opportunity for the City, project partners, private sector and design teams to:

- Increase public awareness of sea level rise and coastal flooding and opportunities to address it.
- Explore and develop a coastal adaptation approach that centres reconciliation with Host Nations who have stewarded Vancouver's coastline since time immemorial.
- Investigate coastal adaptation approaches that respond to the social equity, economic, and ecological challenges posed by sea level rise and coastal flooding.
- Examine options for sea level rise of at least two metres.

The goals of Sea2City include traditionally sought after outcomes, e.g. creation of solutions and meaningful public engagement, as well as goals that are not typically associated with coastal adaptation projects, e.g. decolonization, public and private sector change management and planning for 2 m of sea level rise. By tackling these goals, the City demonstrates leadership by recognizing that adaptation to sea level rise is not just a technical problem; it is also a problem that challenges our values as leaders, practitioners and community members. Responding to these challenges requires leadership to try new ways of “thinking and doing” to solve problems.

In terms of outcomes and outputs, the Sea2City project has positioned the City of Vancouver as a regional leader in several ways:

- **Climate change adaptation:** the large scale of Sea2City in terms of space and time and its ability to apply systems thinking (as opposed to the traditional engineering-only approach) as part of the adaptation planning process as well as planning for 2 m of sea level rise and using adaptation pathways demonstrates Vancouver's leadership in climate change adaptation.
- **Collaboration with Host Nations:** the collaboration with the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations reflects a commitment to reconciliation and decolonization. The collaboration has built upon past relationships, created new relationships and produced important outcomes and outputs for all participants. The project also utilized a model of working with an Indigenous Cultural Advisor and Knowledge Keeper rooted in Host Nation perspectives throughout the project. Sea2City has changed the way the City does its project work.
- **Cross-sectoral collaboration:** Sea2City demonstrates Vancouver's leadership in cross-sectoral collaboration by bringing together a large and diverse group of people (approximately 60 core members and 40 constellation members from across Canada) which include city staff, Host Nation government representatives, federal and provincial government representatives, youth, artists and the private sector actors. This collaboration reflects a commitment to partnership and cooperation across many levels of government and sectors to achieve meaningful results.
- **Public Engagement:** Sea2City demonstrates leadership in public engagement by involving the community early on (pre-design) in the design process, centering the design process around community values and using unusual forms of public engagement, e.g. theatrical performance, photography and Taoist influenced art productions, to meet people where they are in the climate action conversation.
- **Innovative Solutions:** Sea2City promotes innovative and flexible solutions to sea level rise that challenge current thinking, reflecting Vancouver's leadership in creativity and innovation. The project invited designers to produce concepts that balance the need to adapt to the effects of climate change from now till 2200 while enhancing public access to the shoreline, supporting ecological restoration and upholding Host Nation principles and knowledge on the land.

Overall, the Sea2City project demonstrates Vancouver's leadership in climate change adaptation, collaboration with the Host Nations, cross-sectoral collaboration, public engagement, and innovation. These attributes position Vancouver as a regional leader in sustainability and adaptation planning and provide a model for other communities to follow.

2. Financial management and planning. Describe the degree to which the project and/or organization has implemented financial best practices that support long-term financial planning, value for money, financial sustainability and/or economic development.

In the context of False Creek, the following information was included in the project as part of the design process. This financial and asset information was also used to assess risk and the technical and financial aspect of design concepts.

- 38,000+ residents and a range of housing
- \$19 billion in assessed property value within floodplain
- 200 industrial properties
- Emergency and medical facilities
- Schools and childcare facilities
- Granville Island
- Parks, recreation, and activity centres
- Major utilities and infrastructure

Sea2City not only responded to the challenges of sea level rise and coastal flooding but also demonstrated financial best practices that support long-term financial planning, value for money, financial sustainability, and economic development of the False Creek community.

In terms of “value for money”, the project utilized community values, Indigenous knowledge, and design principles to develop a collective vision for coastal adaptation approaches that respond to social equity, economic, and ecological challenges posed by climate change. The resulting naturalized shoreline design concepts provided a greater level of service (compared to conventional flood protection schemes) to the community, accommodated higher water levels than conventional flood management design concepts, created diverse habitats, and sequestered carbon.

Importantly, the Sea2City project evaluated the design concepts against a variety of community values criteria, risk criteria and technical criteria (flood damage prevention, adaptability over time, geotechnical stability, and operation and maintenance costs) to ascertain the long-term financial implications, e.g. savings gained from avoiding damage and thus avoiding costs of repairs, of a range of design concepts. This demonstrated a commitment to ensuring long-term financial planning, and financial sustainability as well as value for money.

Moreover, the Sea2City project supported economic development by providing a diversity of resilient and adaptive economic opportunities, including new forms of retail, creative spaces, and water-based businesses as part of the design concepts. The project's commitment to economic development reflects a long-term approach to sustainability and demonstrates a willingness to invest in the community's economic well-being for generations to come.

The project's commitment to community values, Indigenous knowledge, and design principles, as well as its rigorous evaluation of adaptation approaches, reflects a responsible and sustainable approach to coastal adaptation planning.

3. Partnerships and collaboration. Describe the breadth and depth of community and/or regional partnerships that supported the project/program and the extent to which internal (e.g. inter-departmental and/or staff and elected officials) and/or external collaboration was evident.

Sea2City was organized around three rounds of advisory sessions and workshops called Collaboratoriums. The project team created the word “Collaboratorium” so as to ground workshops in collaboration across disciplines and agencies from the start of the project. The Collaboratoriums

brought together the design teams, city staff, industry technical experts, Host Nation government representatives, and youth. Alongside the Collaboratoriums, Sea2City ran decolonization workshops for project participants, and a series of public outreach events. The final round of engagement included a one-day, inter-team design charrette for a large, undeveloped City-owned site on False Creek.

At each step, Sea2City design teams collaborated closely with four advisory groups (City Advisory Team, Technical Advisory Group, Community Advisory Group and Youth Adaptation Lab) that were established to help build and mainstream coastal adaptation capacity at the City, engage residents in the area, and build agency with local partners, including youth and Host Nations. Advisory group members participated in Sea2City Collaboratoriums, decolonization workshops, Sea2City arts and engagement events, and contributed to the project's final deliverables.

- **City Advisory Team:** A 28-member group made up of staff from key departments at the City and the Park Board, Host Nations, and CMHC – Granville Island.
- **Technical Advisory Group:** A 21-person group made up of Vancouver-based experts from private firms with coastal adaptation expertise, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, and asset operators (e.g., BC Hydro, Metro Vancouver).
- **Community Advisory Group:** A 17-member committee made up of residents representing a range of community perspectives and a shared interest in coastal adaptation in False Creek.
- **Youth Adaptation Lab:** A cohort of 14 youth engaged in a 10-month partnership with CityHive, a youth-led and youth-focused civic engagement organization. This group also developed three unique projects to inform Sea2City and the future of coastal adaptation planning in Vancouver.

Sea2City co-hosted seven *Decolonization and Indigenous Perspectives* workshops and events with Host Nations in an effort to create a learning and unlearning space for settler staff. The project team's partnership with Host Nations on planning and co-hosting the decolonization events influenced Sea2City process and outputs as well as teaching City and Technical Advisory Group members about how they can implement reconciliation within their professional practices. Project staff also collaborated with two graduate students and four university classes and gave five university lectures to seek feedback on draft and final design concepts as well as provide meaningful academic work experiences. Project staff and SFU's Centre for

Dialogue, cohosted a public dialogue with four Indigenous thought leaders about what a decolonized shoreline could look like. The workshop was one of the organization's best attended sessions with 330 attendees.

Granville Island

Granville Island is a critically important site in False Creek but as a federally managed site, it fell outside the scope of the Sea2City Challenge sites. Granville Island remained involved and, as part of Sea2City, partnered with the City of Vancouver on a preliminary vulnerability scan to explore flood risks and coastal adaptation. Held at the False Creek Community Centre on Friday, May 6th, 2022, a workshop brought together Granville Island/CMHC staff, Granville Island Council members, major tenants, and subject matter experts to:

- Build awareness of sea level rise and coastal flooding risks for Granville Island.
- Learn about Vancouver's current work on coastal flood planning – Coastal Adaptation Plan and Sea2City Design Challenge.

- Identify major assets (facilities, infrastructure) on Granville Island and their sensitivity to flooding.
- Start the conversation around Granville Island flood resilience.

A total of 28 people attended the five-hour workshop. The workshop was one of the first steps taken in Granville Island's coastal flood adaptation work. CMHC-Granville Island is continuing an adaptation program informed by the project and will be working towards undertaking a planning program informed by Sea2City work including its guiding commitments.

Throughout the project, the project team collaborated with a dozen local non-governmental organizations and recreational groups, four resident associations, several community based artists (Theatre Replacement, Vancouver Youth Choir and Laiwan), and the False Creek Harbour Authority.

4. Innovation and promising practices. Describe the degree to which the project/program demonstrated creativity and innovation, and contributed to increased efficiency or effectiveness.

Value based planning approach

Sea2City used a values-based planning approach to ensure that coastal flood management concepts are in line with the community's vision. The approach – rarely used in Canada - incorporates multiple perspectives, including local knowledge, values and expertise, and is adaptive, making it well-suited for evaluating complex and dynamic issues like flood protection and climate change adaptation. The approach challenges conventional thinking. It also builds common ground, ensuring transparency in decision-making processes and incorporating non-material aspects of community well-being. The Sea2City approach enhances the equity and inclusivity of planning and provides a consistent base for evaluation while technical criteria and external factors evolve.

Decolonization

The City recognizes that norms rooted in colonial constructs, hard coastal engineering and 20th century land use planning theory must change if we are to create communities for people to thrive in. Sea2City was grounded in a commitment to decolonization from RFP to deliverables. The design process involved Host Nation government representatives, Knowledge Keepers, and cultural advisors that played key roles in the design teams and project process. Their stories, advice, and input guided the development of a powerful and positive vision for False Creek and helped shift the language and approach to coastal adaptation. The project team used specific tools and tactics to support collaboration and interrogation of settler values and colonial structures. This reframing of our approach to coastal adaptation and creation of new coastal adaptation language were some of the most significant outcomes of Sea2City. Host Nations' guidance helped Sea2City shift the language of coastal adaptation from a colonial perspective that separates water from the land to language that integrates water within the larger system:

- From “Resist” to Acknowledge – gradually retrofit or relocate spaces to improve their resilience and better care for natural systems.
- From “Accommodate” to Host – welcome and steward water, nature, and culture, including human uses that are flexible, adaptable, and leave a light-touch, and infrastructure that works with nature.

- From “Move/Avoid” to Restore – revitalize the shoreline to restore natural ecosystems, functions, and features, including improved flood protection for upland communities.

Decolonization tools and RFP language have and will be used in other City and Sea2City partner projects.

Operationalizing equity

Sea2City set specific goals, milestones and targets around equity to ensure that the project team could learn and adapt as the project was implemented, be accountable to broader City-wide equity commitments, hear from members of equity seeking groups and those that may be impacted by project decisions. The Community Advisory Group and Youth Adaptation Lab recruitment efforts utilized equity driven methods and project processes. Further, the design evaluation process also utilized techniques to operationalize equity such as creating a reflection worksheet to facilitate design team’s implementation of the Community Values and Indigenous Knowledge Value.

Sea2City arts program

To broaden the reach of Sea2City communications and engagement, the project included an arts component to tell the project’s story about sea level rise and coastal adaption and seek public input. Themed exhibitions and productions around False Creek and Vancouver took place throughout the project. One piece, “How Water Remembers” was launched to align with Chinese New Year and shared stories about the False Creek ecosystem and sea level rise through a Taoist lens. Two other pieces, “Town Choir” and an intergenerational photography exhibition, were launched during the final Sea2City showcase in mid-July that showed the teams design work. Town Choir was a choral performance piece that showcased four international artists’ thoughts on living on the coast and during a time of climate change. The piece attracted an audience of approximately 300 people. At the same time an exhibition of photographs premiered where eight pairs of intergenerational participants imagined themselves engaged in, and adapting to, activities that will be impacted by rising sea levels in and around False Creek. Art is a low barrier approach to initiating tough conversations and having a conversation on a design or a question. Further, art based engagement tactics can be delivered by a range of messengers and the public themselves. Sea2City tested these tactics with great success and will build upon this success in future projects.

Visualizations & adaptation pathways

Sea2City design teams created a range of visuals to test, communicate and confirm adaptation solutions, constraints and benefits. The creation of these visualizations provided clarity and an opportunity to consider new solutions. Sea2City visualizations will be used outside the project and have set a new bar for adaptation visualization practice.

As part of the design concepts, coastal adaptation pathways were proposed. Coastal adaptation pathways are a newer to BC planning approach that involves developing a series of adaptation options and actions to address the risks posed by coastal hazards such as sea level rise, storm surge, and erosion. These pathways typically involve identifying potential future scenarios of sea level rise and other climate-related impacts, evaluating the potential consequences of these impacts, and assessing the effectiveness and feasibility of different adaptation options to mitigate these consequences.

The coastal adaptation pathways approach is designed to be flexible and iterative, allowing for adjustments and changes to be made as new information becomes available or as conditions evolve over time. It also incorporates the consideration of community values and priorities, recognizing that

successful adaptation strategies must be tailored to the needs and interests of local stakeholders. Adaptation pathways as an approach can be used in other coastal communities across BC.

Design challenge model

Sea2City was intentionally organized as a challenge, rather than a competition. To the project team's knowledge, Sea2City is the first adaptation design challenge of its kind in Canada. Coastal adaptation is a generational project that involves a range of knowledge, multi-disciplinary expertise, and collective experience. The project facilitated inter-team collaboration and embraced a reflective learning approach. Engineers, biologists, landscape architects and planners should work together at the start of the coastal adaptation question rather at the end. The model was effective and efficient, training staff and other practitioners, building relationships and a community of practice in addition to producing design concepts and policy. It delivered more outputs than anticipated and was delivered on time and on budget.

5. Engagement and communications. Describe the extent to which internal and/or external engagement was foundational to the success of the project/program, including the use of communication tools such as social media.

Sea2City continued an engagement program started during the 2020 False Creek Coastal Adaptation Plan process. Engagement was a major success and exceeded the targets set in the Sea2City Engagement Plan. Public engagement included three rounds of online community conversations sessions, a social media communications program, and five well attended community information sessions, e.g. Inform Lecture, Herring Day, Youth Adaptation Lab pop-up, Decolonizing the Shoreline and Sea2City & Town Choir Pop-up, which were attended by approximately 2,000 people.

Public events

In addition to other events, Sea2City hosted several in-person and online events that aimed to raise awareness and seek feedback on the draft and final design concepts. In January 2022, a number of public lectures about the project and draft design concepts were held via the School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture program. In April 2022, the project team hosted an in-person event called "Herring Day". The festival brought together nine environmental non-governmental organizations and approximately 300 members of the public to Fishermen's Wharf in False Creek to celebrate the annual spawn of herring. Members of the public were invited to learn about local ecology and the Sea2City draft design concepts.

In June 2022, the Youth Adaptation Lab hosted an in-person public event, and the project team co-hosted an online event with SFU, called "Decolonizing the Shoreline". Decolonizing the Shoreline was attended by over 350 people (a record for SFU) and was moderated by Ginger Gosnell-Myers. The event brought Chief Dr. Frank Brown, Christine Smith-Martin, Joanne Nelson, and Sea2City Cultural Advisor Cory Douglas together in dialogue regarding the significant and recent initiatives Coastal First Nations have championed for shoreline health and to provide insights for the City of Vancouver to learn through Sea2City.

Sea2City Arts Program

As previously mentioned, the project included an arts component that created sea level rise and coastal adaption-themed exhibitions and productions around False Creek and Vancouver exploring sea level rise, culture, and storytelling. One piece, "How Water Remembers" was launched in early

2022, to align with Chinese New Year, and two other pieces, “Town Choir” and an intergenerational photography exhibition about sea level rise and adaptation were launched during the final Sea2City showcase in mid-July that showed the teams design work.

Social media

The Sustainability Group and City of Vancouver’s social media team supported a broad-based social media program that helped the project team to meet Sea2City engagement and communication goals of increasing public awareness of sea level rise and seeking feedback from the public about the coastal adaptation design concepts. Sea2City project posts, promotions, and communications were sent through the Greenest City (@greenestcity) Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram channels.

Sea2City social media performed well, with consistently high reach numbers throughout each phase. A combination of short video posts and engaging event graphics (Decolonizing the Shoreline, Herring Day, Town Choir) resulted in Sea2City posts contributing to a considerable amount of Greenest City’s overall performance, especially during the month of July.

During Phase 1, social media drove traffic to the community advisory group application portal and raised awareness about the project and sea level rise in Vancouver. Total impressions (the number of times posts were displayed to users) reached 55,000 across Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. Engagement (the number of times users interacted with posts) was over 1,500 across the social media platforms.

In Phase 2, social media drove traffic to Community Conversations, showcases of the early draft concepts, and other public events, as well as continuing to promote Sea2City and raise awareness of sea level rise in Vancouver. Total impressions reached 57,000 across Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. Engagement was over 1,200 across the social media platforms.

Phase 3 social media Sea2City posts drove traffic to attend Decolonizing the Shoreline, the Sea2City Town Choir pop-up event, and two final Community Conversations. There were over 40,000 total impressions through Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. During the month of July, Greenest City social media engagement increased by 86.8%, with a huge bump in engagement across all channels. The Sea2City campaign was credited as one of the two campaigns driving engagement during this period.

Media

The project was featured in over 25 local, provincial, and national media outlets across print, radio, web, and television platforms in three languages. This included coverage in the Global and Mail, CBC Vancouver, the Tyee, the Georgia Straight and CBC Radio. Approximately 150,000 views of Sea2City media materials (web and TV) were recorded. This considerable coverage helped the City to connect to citizens and gather feedback on the design concepts which contributed to robust design concepts.

6. Transferability. Describe the degree to which the process or outcomes of the project, or other learnings, could be conveyed to other UBCM members.

With the threat of sea level rise looming large for coastal communities worldwide as a result of increasing global temperatures, Sea2City has taken the initiative to develop new communication and planning tools and methods. Through a structured, values-based planning approach, Sea2City has

facilitated coastal adaptation planning and action in False Creek and throughout Vancouver. The Sea2City methodology is readily accessible for anyone to use at Vancouver.ca/sea2city.

The participatory planning processes that Sea2City has used to develop and evaluate adaptation options are structured and values-based. They can be easily adapted for various regions and critical climate resilience planning challenges, such as coastal adaptation, river flood mitigation and recovery planning, and extreme heat and weather planning. Adopting a similar framework would also ensure that community values remain at the forefront of complex floodplain land use decisions that planners will increasingly face in our current climate crisis. Furthermore, Sea2City project managers are collaborating with other departments, organizations, and cities to disseminate the Sea2City model.

The Sea2City collaborative planning approach drew from both local and global experiences, weaving a range of knowledge and technical skills. By following a similar process, communities elsewhere could arrive at equally grounded and realistic long-term concepts for their local sites and challenges.

Another key to the transferability of the project was the model of collaboration between the City and government representatives from Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh as well as collaboration with Indigenous knowledge keepers from local Host Nations who were involved as core project collaborators from project outset. Their guidance, stories, and input were transformational not only in the development of the vision and approach, but in other Sea2City outcomes including the design concepts, pilot projects, and the adaptation pathway plans. "It's extremely moving and humbling seeing this work. There are sparks of joy seeing what we've talked about in the drawings," says Charlene Aleck, a Sea2City knowledge keeper from Tsleil-Waututh Nation.

Working with design teams, project partners, and Host Nation participants, Sea2City also developed a set of coastal adaptation commitments and adaptation language for the City of Vancouver to formally endorse to reinforce the new approach and help guide future work in False Creek and other coastal areas in Vancouver. These commitments could be easily adapted to support adaptation planning across BC and beyond. In fact, Sea2City commitments and adaptation language is already being called upon by provincial and national coastal adaptation practitioners.

7. Performance measurement: Describe the extent to which the project has identified and/or utilized performance measures, benchmarks and/or standards to demonstrate benefit to the community.

Structured decision making and impact scenario planning methods were used to create performance measures and other criteria to evaluate the draft and final design concepts through the Sea2City project. A highly visual, excel based "Evaluation Tool" was created for design teams to use as part of the project. The simplest version of the tool compares flood management options for different sites against a baseline (i.e., no adaptation) and to each other based on their relative scores against three types of criteria: Values Criteria, Risk Criteria, and Technical Criteria. Evaluations were shared with all Sea2City advisory groups and Host Nation government representatives for their review and feedback. For an overview of this process, please see <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/sea2city-primer.pdf>. Sea2City also drew from other examples of coastal adaptation design like the BC Green Shores Guide, the Province of BC's design guidelines for dikes, the Province of BC's Flood Hazard Area Land Use Management Guidelines and coastal adaptation design precedents from the Fraser

Basin Council, the Collaborative for Advanced Landscape Planning, Rebuild By Design and Resilient By Design.

Evaluation Tool overview

Values Criteria included seven publicly tested criteria about what matters or concerns residents with respect to flood hazard and adaptation solutions. The scoring of design concepts against the Values Criteria used indicators developed to measure each value criterion. Direct measures, constructed scales, and proxy indicators were also used in the option evaluation to generate a simple visual scale to illustrate how an option would perform against the baseline, or no-adaptation approach (i.e., better, worse, no change).

Recognizing that all flood protection infrastructure carries some risk of failure, a description of the anticipated impacts to community values from a failure of an option's flood protection infrastructure was provided in an impact and risk of failure assessment. Risk criteria were used to assess the impact and risk of failure for each design concept option using a common scenario (e.g., 1:500/0.2% AEP storm event with 1 m sea level rise). For each option, a detailed description of the anticipated impacts to community values would be developed using a scale from Very Low to Very High.

A technical assessment of each option was also completed. The range of technical criteria included a high-level overview of the cost of implementing the option along with other technical criteria like operation and maintenance cost, seismic performance, flood damage prevention, failure consequences and adaptability. The technical criteria assessment included a summary technical overview highlighting the technical merits of each option.

SECTION 5: Additional Information

1. Please share any other information you think may help support your submission.

The story of the Sea2City Design Challenge

It is a story of how an innovative design project came to life along the shores of False Creek.

It is a story of how the project grew and changed with the gifts of the people who helped it become something special.

It is a story of a new Vision for False Creek. A vision that acknowledges our rising seas, hosts water in a good way, restores the health of False Creek, and rebuilds our connections to the Salish Sea.

It is a story of a process built on restoring relationships with the Host Nations who have stewarded the lands and waters of False Creek from time immemorial.

It is a story of a two-eyed seeing approach to coastal adaptation that integrates Host Nations' ways of knowing alongside western science, and the team's professional experience.

It is a story full of spirit that shows the value and importance of involving Host Nations whenever we plan on these lands and waters.

It is a story that belongs to everyone, but where we can see and recognize our Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh relatives in it.

Let's keep telling this story as we journey together with the transformation of False Creek.

Charlene Aleck, Knowledge Keeper, Tsleil-Waututh Nation

Cory Douglas, Cultural Advisor and Designer

Lessons learned

The following is a summary of lessons learned and recommendations developed by the project team, including design teams, project consultants, advisory groups, and City staff based on Sea2City outcomes. They are intended to ensure the valuable learning from the Sea2City Design Challenge is carried forward into future coastal adaptation planning and implementation and to help maintain the positive momentum Sea2City helped generate.

1. Host Nations involvement is foundational. The involvement and guidance of Host Nations participants and cultural advisors in Sea2City shaped and guided outcomes and supported an open, reflective, and collaborative work environment that is reflected in project outcomes.
2. Be bold and embrace uncertainty. As climate change accelerates, so are the impacts of the hazards it is generating. For coastal adaptation, the directive is clear – plan for two metres of sea level rise and be prepared to adjust upwards and act more quickly, if necessary. Planning decisions made today must consider how climate change and sea level rise will impact coastal development in both the near- and longer-term.
3. Collaborate and mainstream. Effective coastal adaptation demands a deeply collaborative response. Sea2City engaged a broad range of voices, skills, and experience in an open and reflective design competition; their collective input helped shape the outcomes. Moving forward, coastal adaptation must involve the same broad section of collaborators, while implementation must be mainstreamed across City departments, programs, policies, and plans.
4. Adaptation demands flexibility. There is no “playbook” for urban coastal adaptation or decolonizing the conventional planning processes used with Vancouver’s shoreline. As Sea2City advanced, learning and self-reflection resulted in changes to both the project process and final deliverables. Such open, safe, and adaptive process should be encouraged in future coastal adaptation projects.

SECTION 6: Required Attachments

Council, Board or Band Council resolution indicating support for the project to be considered for a 2023 Community Excellence Award. Note: UBCM will accept applications without a resolution, providing they are received by August 18, 2023. Please contact UBCM if the resolution cannot be submitted by the application deadline.

Five representative photos of the project. Photos should be submitted as JPEG files at a resolution suitable for display.

Links to any publicly available videos related to the project. **Link to video:**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uU7e1ptX2DA>

Applications should be submitted as Word or PDF files. Submit applications to Local Government Program Services, Union of BC Municipalities.

E-mail: awards@ubcm.ca

SECTION 7: Signature	
Applications are required to be signed by an authorized representative of the applicant.	
Name: Brad Badelt	Title: Manager – Sustainability Group
Signature: 	Date: May 17, 2023