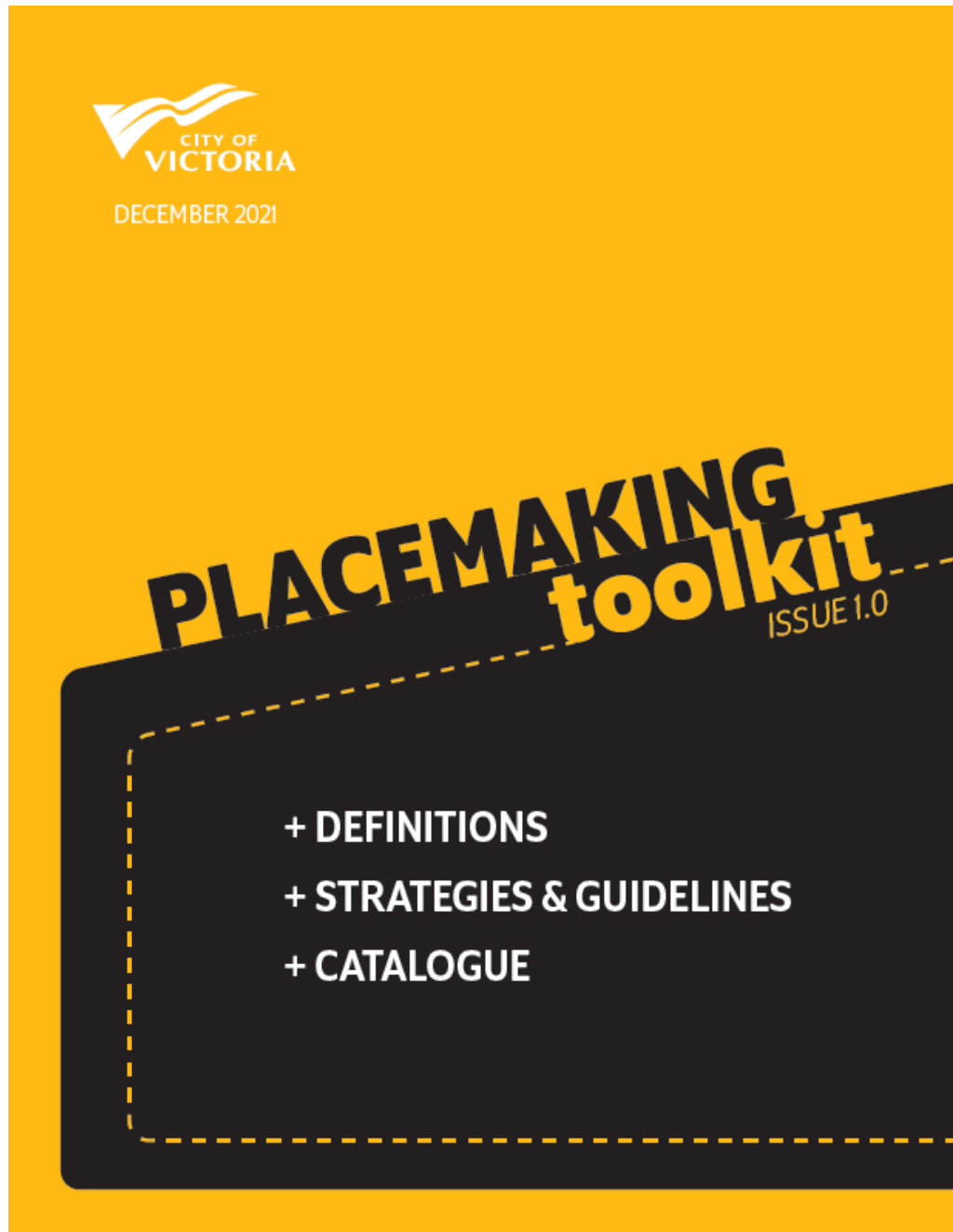


2021

CITY OF VICTORIA | Sustainable Planning & Community Development

# Placemaking Toolkit

## Engagement Summary



## Executive summary

The creation of a Placemaking Toolkit is a 2020 Action in the City's Strategic Plan:

*“Create a Placemaking guide and toolkit and host workshops to support citizens and businesses to take action to create public play spaces, parklets, and gathering places within neighbourhoods”*

Placemaking broadly refers to a collaborative process by which the community helps shape and program the public realm to infuse meaning, identity and shared value. An explicit goal of this action is to support community-led placemaking. The Placemaking Toolkit builds on the *My Great Neighbourhood Grant Program* and provides information, strategies and guidance to encourage more community-led placemaking.

The Placemaking Toolkit was created through a collaborative process that involved engagement with the public and key stakeholder groups. Several workshops were held to build awareness and support citizens in implementing placemaking in Victoria, including during the Village and Corridor planning process, and an online survey was used to receive feedback. The Toolkit was also informed by staff across City departments.

## The process

The process included 3 phases outlined below:

### Phase 1 – Research (Spring 2021)

- Best practices research for similar documents
- Spatial analysis
- Opportunities review
- Objectives
- Speakers event and workshop

### Phase 2 – Development of Draft Placemaking Toolkit (Summer 2021)

- Draft toolkit document including:
  - Placemaking catalogue
  - Implementation strategies: requirements, funding, City role, partnerships
- Consultation and engagement with community
- Engagement with the working group
- Speakers event and workshop

### Phase 3 – Adoption and Community Roll out (Winter 2021)

- Final document for Council adoption
- Community roll out

## Engagement Approach

The engagement process included public and targeted stakeholder consultation activities:

### 1. Targeted consultation

The project team established a working group of representatives from organizations involved in placemaking and urban design:

- Neighbourhood Associations
- Greater Victoria Placemaking Network
- Sidewalking Victoria
- Art in Public Places Committee
- Downtown Victoria Business Association
- Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness
- Walk-on Victoria
- Design nerds
- Business Network
- HCMA – architecture firm
- Indigenous Artist in Residence
- Youth Council

Three focus group dialogue sessions (1.5 h) were held with the group with one session per each project phase. Feedback was focused on providing inspiration and local knowledge to help shape the Toolkit as a community-led focused resource. Participants also got a chance to provide feedback on current initiatives and discuss various potential options to improve the My Great Neighbourhood Program to help facilitate more placemaking in the City.

### 2. Inspirational workshop and speaker's series

In response to the council action in the Strategic Plan, “to host workshops *to support citizens and businesses to take action*” several workshops were held to build awareness and support citizens in implementing placemaking in Victoria. These included:

- A. **Tactical Urbanism workshop** for city staff and stakeholders with New Union from UK (February 2021, during phase 1)

Tactical Urbanism is an approach to Neighbourhood building that uses short-term, low-cost and scalable pilot projects and policies to test long-term change.

New Union is a not for profit civic innovation organization based in the UK ([new-union.org](http://new-union.org)), they work with governments from all over the world to design platforms that include citizens in the decision-making process. This workshop was part of the Rethink RePlace Festival, which is

a week-long event celebrating all things tactical urbanism with talks, workshops with local government, and a hackathon, alongside exclusive content.

City staff and stakeholders involved in the process were invited to participate. The workshop was focused on “lighter-quicker-cheaper” approaches in city building with many examples of inspiring international case studies of the projects of this nature.

### **B. Community Virtual on Placemaking** for the community (May 2021, during phase 2)

Community Virtuals is a Lunch and Learn program run by the City's Neighbourhoods Team. Topics are centered around ideas to help build strong, resilient neighbourhoods, including personal connections within communities.

In May 2021, a session was focused on the topic of Placemaking. The session included City staff and community members with high interest in community building through placemaking. The discussion topics were diverse including education about placemaking in general, deeper dive into the MGNG program, boulevard gardening program and others, which allowed for participants to choose their most desired interest. The Placemaking toolkit was also presented in its draft form and well received.

YouTube link: [Community Virtuals | Victoria](#)

### **C. Participatory Budget 2021** – Neighbourhood spaces

The 2021 Participatory Budget was focused on Neighbourhood Spaces. This is very closely connected to Placemaking. City staff collaborated with the community-led Participatory Budget Steering Committee during their process to make the draft document available for the community groups participating in the submissions of their proposals. It was an excellent opportunity to test the toolkit and receive the initial feedback.

### **3. Online Survey**

The survey asked respondents to review the draft Placemaking Toolkit. It was focused on testing usability of the document as well as gathering ideas from the community for further improvements to the document.

The survey received 20 responses and 2 ideas.

The draft document was very well received.

#### 4. Engagement through Local Area Planning process (in person)

Placemaking had been discussed during all workshops and other engagement through the LAP process. Draft document was also available for viewing during the latest engagement opportunities through open houses and neighbourhood pop-ups. The initial idea of creation of the Placemaking Toolkit had received strong support in the community very early in the process.

#### Engagement steps overview

DATE	EVENT
September 2020	project initiation
December 4	Working Group meeting no 1
February 24	<i>Tactical Urbanism workshop</i> for city staff and stakeholders with New Union from UK
May 19	<i>Community Virtual on Placemaking</i>
June 24	Participatory Budget Meeting no 1 with focus on Neighbourhood Spaces
July 11	Participatory Budget Meeting no 2 with focus on Neighbourhood Spaces
August 11	Working Group meeting #2
July/ August	reach out to groups and organizations: ATAC, Youth Council, AAC, Welcoming City Task Force, APPC
August 15 – September 16 <sup>th</sup>	Online Public Survey
September 9	meeting with Greater Victoria Placemaking Network
November	LAP Open Houses and Pop Ups