

## TRANSCRIPT OF GREG CLARK'S SUMMARY OF CONVERSATIONS

### THEME 1 | LIVING BY THE WATER

We began with a frame work from New York on points and tensions to consider regarding Water edge developments:

1. Community involvement vs. citywide interests
2. Privacy vs. public access
3. Resiliency vs. retreat vs. strengthening
4. Cost and financing for both construction and maintenance (plus who is responsible for each)
5. Affordable vs. market rate housing
6. Transport to the site – waterborne and surface
7. Equity – rich neighborhoods vs. poor neighborhoods. How are each served?

Developments should know - who is the community? How do we involve them? How best to integrate housing with other use? Does transport infrastructure deliver people right to the waterfront (residential and commercial users)? What about creating waterfront developments in poorer neighbourhoods without displacement?

In the absence of this knowledge, we give rise to unintended consequences and risks - economic risk, market risk, political and social risk, bureaucratic risk, and budget risk.

A new concept of 'mixity' arose which is the frontier beyond density – creating inclusive neighbourhoods in water edge locations. This led to discussing community involvement and participation, with a kind of lexicon of tools and techniques for all of that. Indeed, these mechanisms of participation are also mirrored by mechanisms for how you get market players to participate in these public projects as well.

Almost every water edge focuses on public access, the primacy of space, the creation of public space. Who is the public space for? Not just about people who live locally, but for everyone. The water edge is a regionally enjoyed space - on the water front. There are many ways of making this work.

Talking about resilience to climate change was the connection that came from HafenCity about the link between what we might call environmental resilience, and social resilience. And the ability as a society to be resilient in the face of change - to put in place flexible arrangements that support society flourishing as it ages, and as it changes, and the relationship between that and adaption to an environment that is changing, so a species that is changing as well as an environment that is changing.

In some cities, low levels of local government self-financing induced certain kinds of behaviours that might be sub optimal for living by the water's edge –including a lack of affordability. Whereas in other environments, highly empowered local governments felt able to organise competitions for the private sector to parcel land carefully, to plan the whole development, not just the individual site but the portfolio of assets and how they are going to be used to cross finance, creating a balanced sheet for the waterfront that works.

The conversation about affordable housing had three dimensions to it, particularly about the presence of specialist affordable housing institutions, with a deep balance sheets and pockets, on the waterfront- being critical to diversity. Secondly the emphasis is on creative leadership, and visionary planning. Thirdly, particular kinds of really intelligent transactions and partnerships between public and private sector to refinance housing and to use design techniques to - as it were - disseize the mixities and create one single community. Through all the discussion was the thread of quality of place, belonging, identify and distinctiveness.

There's a conversation about transportation to and through the waterfront with varying effects on living by the water. And then the seventh point that Carl put before us, was the point about equity, and we had quite a deep conversation about that. There's a link between equity/exclusion which can be bridged in some respects by inclusive practices in democracy and participation, with tactical urbanism and citizens really taking charge. A diverse and inclusive waterfront can be supported by high external rate of returns, investment in public assets, and the creation of social value. Increasingly, public services and social infrastructures are investments in what people need in order to survive. Access to assets, amenities and services, can also be managed to contribute to greater equity.

## THEME 2 | USING THE WATER

There are lots of dimensions to 'using the water'. We discussed maybe six themes and we've got a few underpinning issues and we've also got a few things we want to follow up on.

So, the six themes have really been the inspiration and the kind of spirituality and belongingness if you like of water, and the waterfront. Auckland articulated this most clearly, but others have taken this forward.

Water is important not just for its functional value, but its spirit value, its links into generational issues, to DNA, to sense of belonging, to sense of identity, the importance of respecting the water. Not corrupting the water. And then using water that is respected to help shape urban formed land and everything else. That was a big thing.

We then had a big conversation about the health of the water and the biodiversity. We began by talking about pollution and how we stop polluting, and then how we clean up. There are examples from Glasgow. But once we use new technologies to clean up the water, we keep a record — report card for the health of water, how we continuously monitor how healthy the water is, how we use a performance management system to drive things forward.

We also talked in that part a lot about biodiversity, about fish life, about marine life, and about ways of adapting human activities to be more sensitive to the biodiversity in the marine ecology that is there, and the importance of advocacy and influence, and working with people to minimise disruption. We had examples of replenishing the corals and sea beds, reefs - things that are completely possible.

The third bit of the conversation was about animation and activities on the water, from festivals and sports and leisure and sailing, through to amazing fire displays, fireworks and everything else. We heard a lot about how the water is a “convening” place and a place of leisure for people. Particularly as people live in denser cities, there is a role for water as a decompression chamber as it were, for people. We strayed into some detail - swimming pools, floating pools, floating homes, floating markets, floating public space.

On the issue of maritime industries and ports, there were fundamental issues there about leadership and coordination, and some questions about the strategic importance of these industries. There are challenges about how we accommodate the new size of ships, and the new logistic functions. There is an important issue of the interaction between relatively dirty marine industry and the clean air and indeed the clean water that we are trying to achieve.

Some common themes emerged — about bench marking performance, aspiring to do better; there was a common theme about coordination and leadership; there was common theme about intergenerational justice and intergenerational issues; and there was a really common theme about respecting marine biodiversity and doing all we can to replenish it.

There were four specific issues for further information sharing - the indexing of water health; one was about the important influential and guiding role of traditional and indigenous people, with examples from Australia and Canada. A third issue was the beginnings of a movement between cities for clean cruise ships, and the importance of clean energy for clean cruise ships, so the possibility that that could be a theme that people take forward.

And then there was some interest I think in exploring the whole issue of what floats well on the water. And in particular, if its floating pools or its other kind of floating spaces, Perhaps a conversation to pursue there. So, those were the kinds of things I picked up from that conversation.

## THEME 3 | RECONFIGURING THE WATERFRONT

We are talking about reconfiguring the waterfront. Talking about stimulating new futures, relocating, repurposing and repatriating assets. Using things through cycles and past their time. Anticipating the impacts of disruption.

In no particular order, we talked quite a lot about catalysts. Right at the end we uncovered the idea that the real catalysts here are leaders, people who are willing to take leadership, either in the public or private sector, are willing to be bold, be visionary, do things differently, and do things at a scale where they have an impact. And around that we developed a conversation about how governance can be a catalyst. When you get three tiers of governance or when you get governance coalescing in a great organisation or through a partnership, that's key.

Alongside great leadership, public space played a role as a catalyst. Historic buildings and their repurposing were another. There are examples of clustering things together having a catalytic effect, sometimes facilities in a cluster. Different kinds of land uses have different sorts of catalytic effects and you need to know which one you want and why, and how all of that works, and might work together.

We talked about assets, about repurposing historic assets, and creating new ones. And there was quite a bit of a conversation about how you create new forms of public space, new forms of infrastructure and new forms of connectivity and how all of that related to attractiveness to people. That was the underlining theme.

We had a very helpful conversation about unintended consequences and risks, and how it is possible to flush these out. There is an internal management perspective on how you ensure the work you are doing is at least conscious of the risks and the possible circumstances. Then around this, factoring in the external environment that you are working in, and how that may play out to produce risks and or unintended consequences.

Despite the best of efforts, things that would have been seen at the time as negative, actually may have had a positive effect in the medium or the long term, and may have prevented things from happening that shouldn't have happened, or may have enabled things that it was impossible to get done in any other situation. So water edge organisations need a learning culture to adapt themselves to how things have changed.

There was a lot of discussion about the "through cycle" dynamics here and how you could put in place arrangements that might be productive over time from the point of view of financing and leadership.

Understanding the difference between gentrification verses revitalisation and the key focus on whether or not the activities have the effect of distorting, segregating or excluding the people from the opportunities arisen came next.

And then we had a broader conversation about attractiveness of places, investing in the art dimension, of place making, with many people speaking up about particular art levies that have been used, historic approaches as well as contemporary ones.

## THEME 4 | RESOLVING DILEMMAS ON THE WATER EDGE

*Greg's summary of Richard Brown's (Glasgow) conversation...*

The challenge in Glasgow is that there is a very high level of pollution and contamination.

Finally, technology is coming to your aid and in particular the advances in what we might call the circular economy and the ability to use convergence technologies to re-use land, re-use contaminated material, redevelop what's there, rather than having to simply extract and cleanse. So circular economy interventions, convergence technologies are helping you.

Secondly, there are new tools being developed and tested, particularly how and when you deploy public finance, public land, and public assets to keep standards high, effectively trying to make all of this redevelopment feasible and viable.

Great stuff. That's started us really well. We're now going to go to Taichung for some observations about these issues – resolving dilemmas on the water edge.

*Then in Taichung, some difficult issues come from two things – the railway line and the canal...*

So we've got the story of the railway line and the railway station, which of course is an iconic thing in almost every city. Living south of the tracks or north of the tracks makes a difference and the issue is creating projects that will integrate people both sides. The canal dilemma we can relate too, as well — the beautiful public investment in redeveloping the canal to suit migrant workers who come mainly from a rural background who want to have the open-air barbecue and the challenge of accommodating rural behaviours with urban form. All of this being resolved in a low trust equilibrium, where the problem is its difficult to take leadership because all those people don't want leadership, because the trust isn't there. How do you move forward on any of these kinds of projects?

*From Boston, experiences with the Big Dig...*

A major engineering dilemma in terms of whether you could simultaneously dig the tunnel and at the same time utilise the elevated highway.



At the same time, there are issues with dealing with the fallout of a very long term project – mitigating the consequences of this very, very long term construction and redevelopment and restructuring project, and of course, the benefits were supposed to be worth the journey, as it were. Long projects like these call into sharp relief the issue of short term political mandates and how they interact with medium to long term development processes. Some leaders try to pursue outcomes of a short term basis within one mandate and end up taking decisions that have distorting effects on future development in one way or another.

In Boston too, the impact of natural emergencies, disasters, environmental catastrophes etc here, waterfront leaders grapple with the importance of long term planning, flexibility and investment.

Lastly the key to short term political cycles and very long term projects in uncertain times may come back to the quality of citizen engagement, dialogue, and community participation, keeping the long term direction going.

*So, we've just been talking about dilemmas, resolving dilemmas, in particular...*

Each water edge project comes up against resolving conflicting land uses or industrial uses, balancing the ecology and the climate, business and construction. There are dilemmas between resident populations and non-resident populations. There is a push-pull between attractiveness and growth management, of nimbyism.

Transport and thoroughfares versus public spaces; many things to accommodate and balance on the water edge, the least of which being political dilemmas.