

# Powell River Waterfront Plan Open House: 28 April 2005

## Summary of Public Input

### Introduction

The Powell River Regional Economic Development Society (PRREDS) is sponsoring the preparation of a plan for Powell River's waterfront, in order to create opportunities for improving the regional economy and for making the community a more enjoyable place to live.

The Waterfront Plan is being prepared by a team of consultants, working closely with PRREDS and other organizations in the community. The consultants presented a draft Waterfront Plan at a public open house in Powell River on 28 April 2005. The draft Plan was presented in the form of several large panels, with graphics and text describing proposed waterfront improvements.

This public open house was attended by more than 150 people. These people were invited to provide written comments on the draft Waterfront Plan in two different ways:

- People were asked complete a questionnaire.
- People were also invited to record their comments by writing comments on small pieces of paper that could be attached directly to parts of the display.

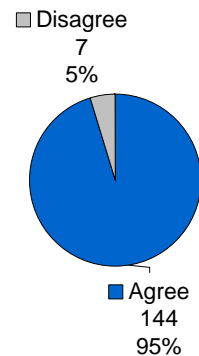
This report summarizes the input received.

### Questionnaire

The questionnaire was completed by 151 people, although not everyone answered all questions. The questionnaire results are summarized below.

1. One of the goals of the plan is to provide more public access to the waterfront and more public open space on the waterfront. Do you agree or disagree with this goal?

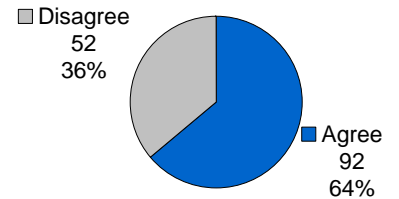
*There is almost universal support for the goal of increasing public access and public open space along the waterfront.*



2. Referring to the panel “Townsite Waterfront”, indicate whether you agree or disagree with these ideas:

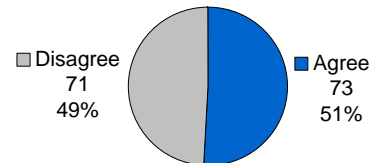
a) marine industrial and business park

*While most people support the idea of a marine industrial park, to accommodate new marine industries, there is a large group of people concerned about the impact on the existing Townsite residential neighbourhood and concerned about the industrial use of land that some consider better suited for open space.*



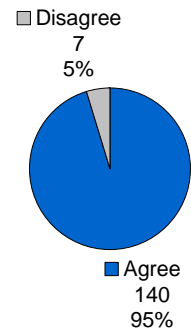
b) new low density residential south of the existing Townsite area

*Opinion is sharply divided on whether to add more housing in this area. The main concerns appear to be the development of land that some think should be open space and the creation of new housing that could affect the character of the existing Townsite area.*



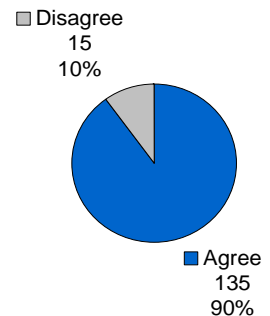
c) green buffer zones and paths linking to Millennium Park

*There is almost universal support for ensuring appropriate buffers between the Townsite neighbourhood and new marine industry and for extending trails.*



3. Referring to the panel “Millennium Park”, do you agree or disagree with designating this entire area for Public Park?

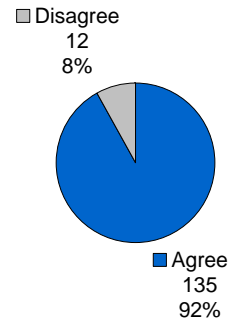
*Almost everyone agrees that this large area should be park, but a few people think some of this land should be available for development.*



4. Referring to the panel “Willingdon Cultural Focus”, do you agree or disagree with these ideas for this location:

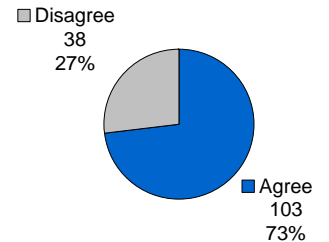
a) outdoor civic plaza for special events

*There is broad support for using the former arena site for some cultural uses, such as an outdoor space for markets, concerts, and civic events.*



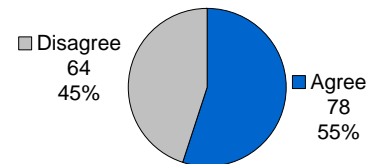
b) indoor public space for concerts, markets, art shows, and other events

*There is also strong support for an indoor space that can be used for various special events, although support is not quite as strong as for outdoor civic space.*



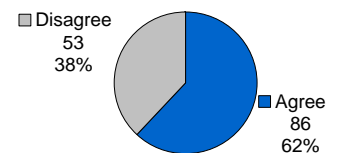
c) new civic facility such as a library

*The question of a new library is obviously a sensitive issue in the community. It is interesting to note the strength of the support for indoor arts space (see “b” above) or for a new theatre or museum (see “d” below), relative to the smaller degree of support for a new library. The intent of the draft plan is to allocate the former arena site for some key public cultural uses; the plan does not have to include a library if the community would rather meet its library needs in another location.*



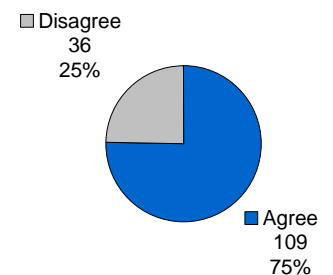
d) new cultural facility such as theatre or museum

*There is less support for a large scale community cultural use than for indoor/outdoor event space, but a clear majority would like to see an institution such as a theatre or museum acting as a focal point on the former arena site.*



e) limited commercial space such as a restaurant

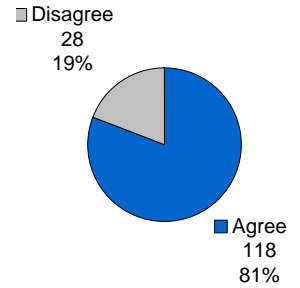
*There is clearly support for including a limited amount of commercial space that could make the area more interesting and generate some revenue.*



5. Referring to the panel “Wharf Street Focus”, do you agree or disagree with these ideas for this location:

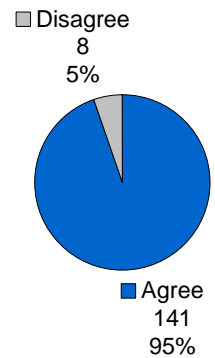
- a) additional commercial space on the "Infill Site" to allow for some restaurant, pub, and retail activity

*There is a high level of support for a small commercial character area on the Infill site. Many people in their comments referred to places such as Granville Island as examples of the kind of character they hope to see.*



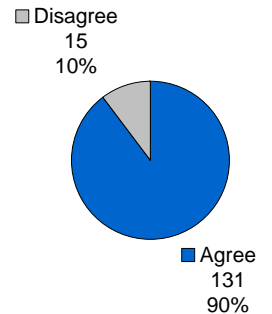
- b) public walkways and boardwalks

*This question shows the high level of support for better public access along the waterfront.*



- c) expanded floats and breakwater to provide better facilities to meet the needs of the fishing fleet and transient recreational boaters

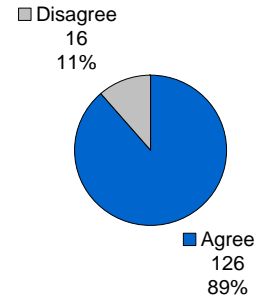
*Most people appear to agree on the value of trying to retain the fishing fleet and trying to attract more transient boaters for a visit in Powell River.*



6. Referring to the panel “Marine Services Centre”, do you agree or disagree with these ideas for this location, assuming the existing Barge Terminal could be relocated:

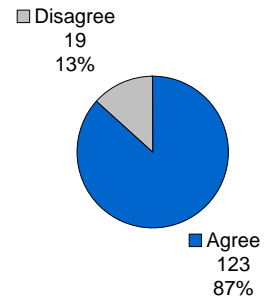
- a) facilities for transient boaters and the fishing fleet (such as berths, fuel, repair services)

*This question also shows the support for pulling in transient boaters and trying to keep Powell River an important home port for fishing boats.*



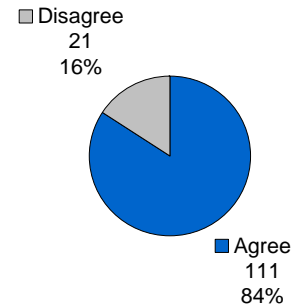
- b) facilities such as travel lift and marine ways that would provide marine services to resident boaters, transient boaters, and the fishing fleet

*There is also support for better marine facilities to meet the needs of local residents who are boaters.*



- c) more parking for resident boaters and fishing crews

*There is slightly less support for the parking component of the proposed development, probably a sign that people want to be careful about allocating waterfront land to parking.*



7. Are there any ideas for improving the waterfront that should be added to this plan?
8. What are the most important improvements that could be made to Powell River's waterfront?
9. Any other comments?

*Many people did not answer these questions, or only answered one or two of them.*

*Many of the comments offered very specific suggestions (e.g. provide public washrooms) or concerns (e.g. impacts of industrial development on the Townsite). Looking at all of the comments together, a few themes emerge:*

- *About 60 people noted the need to protect the natural environment and to provide good quality open space when planning the waterfront.*
- *About 45 people noted the importance of an attractive, comprehensive pathway/seawalk system for pedestrians and cyclists. About 30 people noted the need to make the pedestrian path system more accessible for the elderly or for people in wheelchairs.*
- *About 30 people suggested that the infill site and marine services site should have an interesting mixed use character that appeals to residents and visitors.*
- *About 30 people noted specific major concerns about new industrial development on the waterfront, citing concerns about impacts on the environment or the Townsite neighbourhood, although some people noted the need to make sure that there are places where new jobs can be created on the waterfront.*

## **Written Comments on the Display**

People were encouraged to make written comments on the display. There were many individual comments, although no way to know how many different people chose to comment.

Many people used this opportunity to emphasize their views about particular components of the plan. Some of the most frequently noted comments were:

- Concern about marine industrial development on the former golf course lands near the Townsite neighbourhood.
- Support for creating interesting character areas on the waterfront, including new commercial space and new civic uses.
- Concern that future use of the waterfront be done carefully to protect the environment.