



DATE: September 27, 2016

RE: GIBSONS FORESHORE REDEVELOPMENT
Consultation Summary – Open House Survey
Our File 1232.024

1. Background

On June 16, 2016, the Town of Gibsons held a Public Information Meeting to provide information to the public about the planned redevelopment of the Foreshore area. Meeting attendees were invited to complete a questionnaire about their use of the foreshore and their preferences for features to include in foreshore design. This memorandum summarizes the response received on this questionnaire and will be used to inform subsequent phases of foreshore development.

2. Methodology

The questionnaire was distributed to members of the public who attended the open house, and on the Town of Gibsons website. Responses were collected in hardcopy and online submission by July 29th.

The questionnaire asked questions about respondent demographics, foreshore uses, and perceived opportunities and challenges for foreshore development under four categories:

- Environmental;
- Social/Recreation;
- Economic; and
- Aesthetic.

Respondents were also asked to indicate the number one thing that they would like to see changed along the foreshore.

3. Questionnaire Results

Completed questionnaires were received from 47 respondents, including 16 hardcopy 31 online surveys. Results have been summarized according to respondent demographics, reported foreshore uses, perceived development opportunities, and perceived development challenges.

3.1 Demographics

The majority of respondents were Gibsons residents over the age of 45 years old.

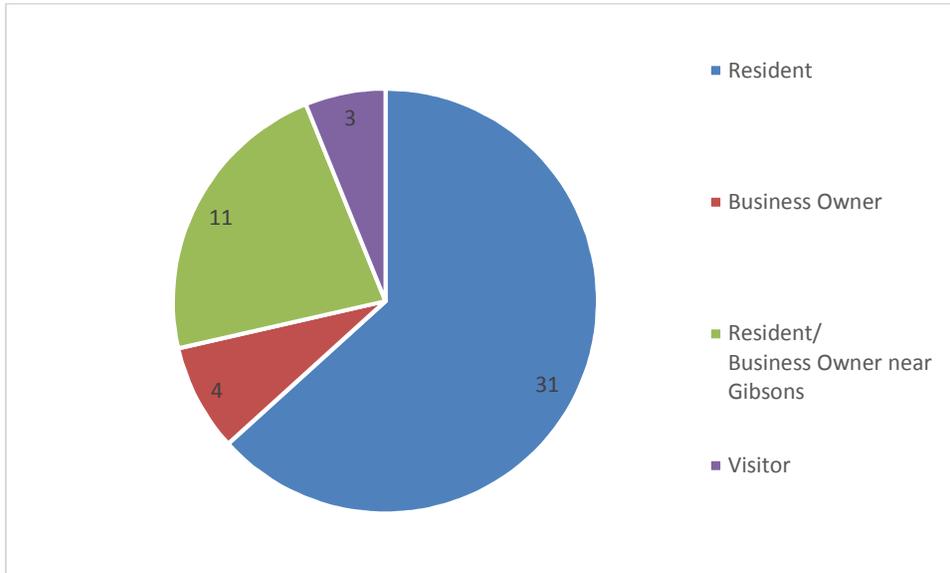


Figure 1: Respondent Identity, by number of respondents

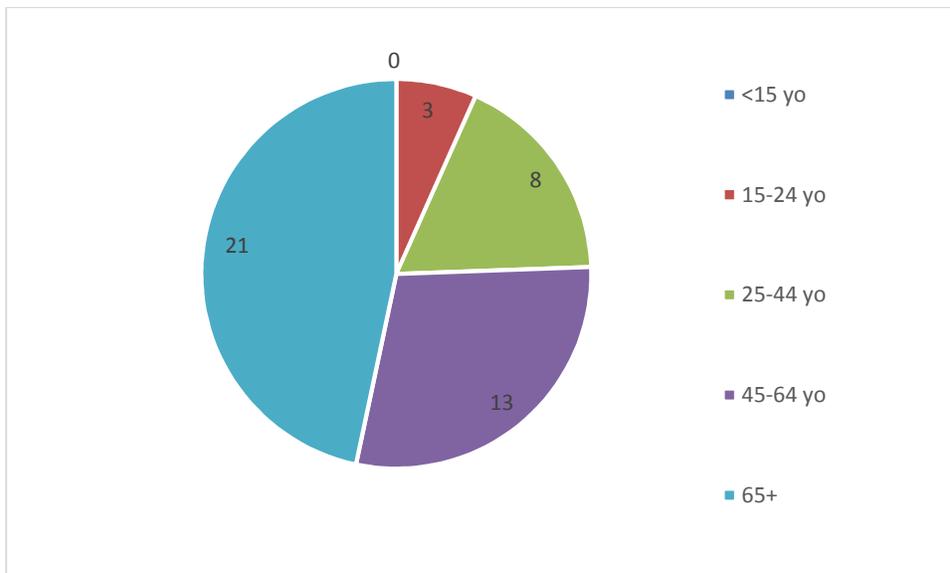


Figure 2: Respondent Age, by number of respondents

3.2 Foreshore Uses

According to respondents, the seawalk is the most frequently used feature along the foreshore, with 20 people reporting that they visit the Seawalk ten or more times per week. Armour's Beach is the next most frequently used space, with 17 respondents reporting visiting Armour's Beach each site ten or more times a week.

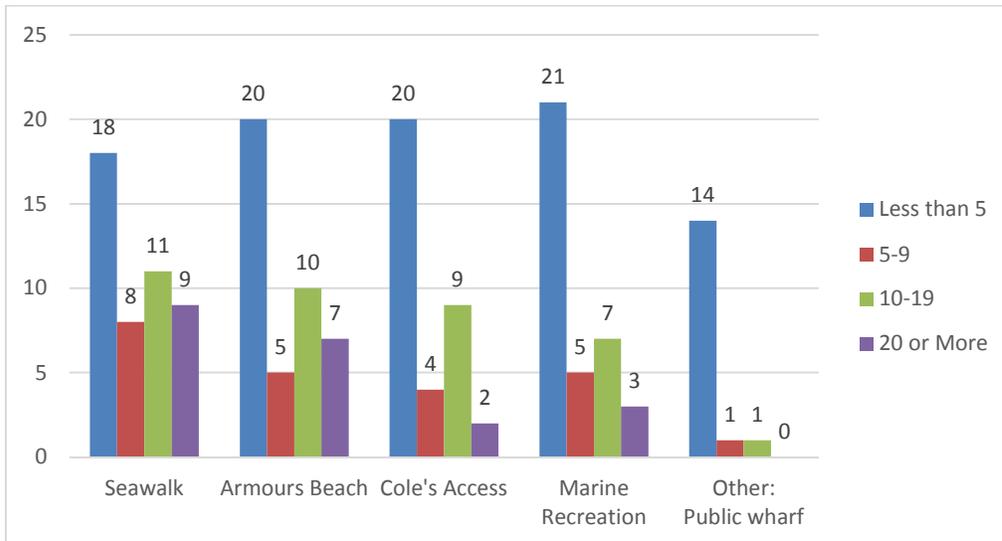


Figure 3: Foreshore Site Use Frequency, by number of respondents

The most frequently cited uses along the foreshore include:

- Recreational walking
- Dog walking
- Sitting on benches/enjoying the view
- Swimming at beach

3.3 Opportunities for Development

Respondents indicated a range of opportunities for development along the foreshore, relating to environmental, social/recreational, economic and aesthetic considerations. Overarching themes are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Recommended Opportunities for Development

Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control invasive species along the seawalk • Restore and protect wildlife habitat (fish, insects, invertebrates) • Protect eelgrass from boat anchors • Enhance biodiversity and native plants (habitat & manage erosion) • Soften the foreshore using natural assets (plants rather than concrete) • Provide better waste & toilet facilities along foreshore to protect environment (i.e. bear-proof garbage bins) • Sponsor regular shoreline cleanups with citizen volunteers; promote education
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<p>Social/ Recreational</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous, wide pathway along the seawalk for all modes of transportation • Improve path accessibility for wheelchairs & strollers • Remove logs, pot holes, and raise path to prevent flooding • More benches, seating areas & picnic tables in diverse formations (some in conversational groupings, others in quiet spaces to take in view). Picnic tables particularly at Armour's Beach and Cole's Access. • Improve swimming facilities (washrooms/change rooms), clean up beach area, test water and provide safe beach/water access points • Set up amenities such as adult fitness equipment, historic plaques, environmental signage, or a community garden
<p>Economic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage/permit small local businesses along the seawalk (i.e. coffee shops, small-scale retail integrated into sea glass on boardwalk). Set up a picnic area to encourage restaurant business. But not too close to pathway. • Promote Gibsons' natural beauty and image • Recognize and leverage the foreshore as a tourist destination • Limit high density development (traffic concerns & aesthetics); more low-height residential development • Charge for barge/vessel use at Gibsons Landing Harbour Authority; require installation of buoys beyond eelgrass; Save the water lease for public use
<p>Aesthetic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep as natural/rustic as possible (limit paving, lighting etc.) • Soften the foreshore with vegetation and landscaping with native plants • Restore slope (consider terracing), unkempt grass, and bushes; remove rock/debris from Armour's Beach • Remove/manage derelict boats and buildings along the seawalk • More seating • Install bike racks • Keep the swing under the willow tree at Cole's marina • Add simple art pieces or encourage wall art on concrete retaining wall

There was general consensus among responses that the foreshore should remain natural and with low-density or no development. Two issues received a mixed review: while some respondents recommended the addition of small-scale local businesses and restaurants, other expressly rejected the idea of commercial uses along the foreshore. There was also disagreement among respondents about the seawalk surface, with some recommending a paved surface to improve accessibility for all modes of transport, and others requesting gravel surface.



3.4 Challenges for Development

Respondents identified challenges to development, according to Environmental, Social/Recreation, Economic and Aesthetic factors. Overarching themes and unique recommendations are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Identified Challenges for Development

Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invasive plants (control via bylaw)• Impacts on marine life• Sewer infrastructure upgrades required• Sea level rise• Erosion from high tides• Boat impact on water quality (effluent, spill risk) and eelgrass (anchors)
Social/ Recreational	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inhabited by homeless in the evenings/summer months• Sharp edges in the swim area and ladder• Limited parking• Poor wheelchair accessibility
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited parking for economic uses• Area is intended for recreational use, not economic
Aesthetic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seawalk is neglected and poorly maintained• Some derelict buildings/building backs, boathouses and boats; too much concrete

4. Open House Feedback

Questionnaire results indicate that respondents were generally satisfied with the background information provided in the survey. Respondents who attended the Public Information Meeting were more likely to state that sufficiency background information had been provided. Online respondents raised a number of areas for clarification.

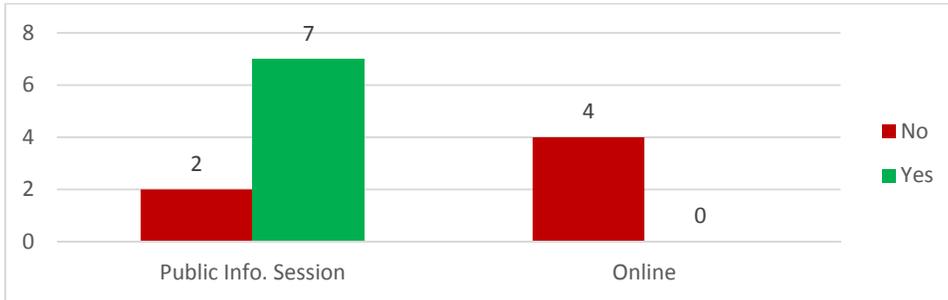


Figure 4: Was Sufficient Background Information Provided?

Some online respondents said they had trouble finding information online. Further information was requested on the following topics:

- Status of the elevated walkway by the George
- Proposed height and appearance of seawalk
- Would like slides provided in a take-away brochure
- Status of old sewage line from Armour's Beach
- Consideration of climate change risks
- Legal ownership and leases along the foreshore

The majority of respondents provided an e-mail address to receive further information about the foreshore redevelopment project. A number of respondents who attended the Public Information Meeting also indicated interest in participating in the mini-charrette, though no online respondents indicated interest.



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