



Engagement Process

Official Community Plan review!

The first phase of engagement took place from November 2012 to January 2013, and consisted of a variety of events to raise public awareness about the project and engage residents in discussion about growth-related issues. Approximately 900 people have directly participated in activities, while community exposure at community events, online, and through media coverage is estimated at over 5,000. Public engagement events were promoted on:

- City website
- PlaceSpeak online discussion forum, photo/video contest
- Greenheart News
- News media
- Council Presentations
- Local Radio advertising
- Chilliwack Chiefs Hockey Game
- 2 Open House Meetings
- 4 Rural Area Meetings PlaceSpeak discussion forum, photo/video contest
- Community Survey

Current Growth Management Strategy

The following levels of support were identified for:

Preserving Agricultural Land	92%	Densifying Urban Areas - Downtown & Sardis/Vedder	74%
Hillside Development	45%		

From community discussions, residents in Yarrow and in Ryder Lake are somewhat receptive to controlled growth, but above all favour retention of their peaceful rural lifestyle, sense of community spirit, and connection to nature.

Housing affordability, infrastructure improvement, and crime were common concerns. There is a strong desire to protect Yarrow's unique character: its small shops, local artisans, eco-village, arts and culture, fresh food, and walkable design. Safe movement of trucks and traffic, greater transit options, and protection from landslides, were all concerns.

FINDINGS



COMMUNITY SURVEY

A community survey was used to solicit opinion with respect to different policy approaches.



The characteristics of the 474 respondents:

Gender	50/50 evenly represented
Age Distribution	35 - 50 yrs (34%); 51-64 yrs (34%); 19-34 yrs (16%)& 65 yrs(15%)
Length of Residency	72% have lived in Chilliwack for over 10 years
Location of Residence	29% Chilliwack; 30% Sardis/Vedder; 18% Greendale/Yarrow; 9% Promontory; remaining distributed amongst other areas
Income	Fairly even representation, with greatest number of respondents earning between \$40,000 and \$70,000



Additionally, a school outreach program was conducted with primary, middle and senior grade level students to solicit their ideas.

Survey responses suggest support for the following policy areas, in order:



- 97%** Protection of streams and drinking water
- 96%** Resident involvement in community planning
- 94%** Protection of green spaces
- 93%** Making the City accessible for all ages and abilities
- 91%** Better Air quality
- 88%** Transit use
- 84%** Downtown revitalization
- 83%** Traffic Congestion
- 82%** Economic Development
- 77%** Housing Affordability

- 73%** Heritage Preservation
- 50%** Subsidized Housing

56% Of respondents support continued design review for commercial buildings and signage.

60% Of survey respondents support a relaxation of zoning bylaws to allow rental suites in single family homes throughout Chilliwack



Residents' comments have identified the importance of:

- social issues
- planning for an aging population
- developing walkable, safe neighbourhoods with a range of affordable housing choices
- amenities that support interaction amongst residence



YOUTH OPINION SCHOOL OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Grade 2 students, through art, highlighted the importance of features in their neighbourhoods:

- sport fields
- skate parks
- pools
- trails for walking and biking
- ice rink

Grade 6 students, through art, and a short writing exercise said what they liked:

- new library
- parks
- ice rink
- skate park
- malls
- and trails in their neighbourhoods.



Middle and high school students identified public transit, playground safety, downtown revitalization, additional retail (malls), indoor & outdoor recreation, parks, trails, environmental protection, economic development and more community events as important areas of focus.

Of concern were: crime & safety, homelessness, bike lanes, prostitution, loss of agricultural land.

For more information on the Public Engagement portion of the OCP Review please see the City's website for the full report.