



Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan

Engagement Summary of Feedback on Draft Plan

February 2018

The draft Fairfield neighbourhood plan was released to the community for feedback between November 8, 2017 and January 18, 2018. The draft plan, engagement events and online survey were promoted through a brochure mailed to every household, email distribution list, posters, signs, social media and local neighbourhood networks. The draft plan was launched at a breakfast presentation to community champions (as identified by the Working Group). The plan was then presented to the community at a series of open houses, pop-up displays and neighbourhood events.

- 320 online surveys completed
- 204 people attended three open houses
- 120 people attended three targeted events:
 - Cocoa and candy canes (families)
 - Renters Forums
 - Afternoon Tea (Seniors)
 - Planner & a Pint, Ross Bay Pub (planning for Ross Bay Village)
- 65 people attended four Pizza and a Planner events
- 20 people attended Sir James Douglas Parent Advisory meeting
- 15 people attended Cook Street Village Business Association meeting
- 150 people attended the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association meeting
- More than 100 submissions were received by email including community flyers and discussion papers



The following engagement survey provides an overview of the themes and comments received. A detailed feedback analysis will be presented for review at the next phase of engagement.

Overall Support

Overall support for the draft plan is moderate in the survey with 57% of survey respondents very or somewhat supportive (37% somewhat or strongly opposed) and strong at the open houses with 81% of sticky dots at the open houses rating the draft plan as very or somewhat appropriate.

“Overall, pretty good, Thanks for hearing us. Our hearts are connected to the beauty, vibe and history of our community.”

“Opposed to more growth and development which will cify villages. Densification will decrease quality of life for community. More traffic, pollution, less parking places, longer waits for services.”

Many of those who are somewhat or strongly opposed to the plan had significant concerns about both the process used to arrive at the plan and the amount of growth or change envisioned for the neighbourhood. There are concerns about erosion of the historic character of Fairfield and loss of parking and green space. We also heard from some people that the plan does not go far enough in terms of supporting affordable housing and allowing density in new developments to support redevelopment of public spaces. Others felt that the plan should go further to include green building initiatives, climate change policies, protection of the urban forest and better support for artisans.

Much of the correspondence received by email expressed concern about the engagement process and/or the growth policies of the plan. Many requested more time, more information, and more opportunities for draft plan

engagement. Some people requested town hall style engagements or more opportunity for dialogue-based events. Some expressed concerns about the type or quality of information being presented. There is tension in the community about whether growth should be directed to the village areas (as envisioned in the Official Community Plan) or spread throughout the neighbourhood with new housing types. Within the village areas, there were differing opinions about which ones are best suited to growth. There were still concerns from homeowners in areas that have been previously identified for potential Heritage Conservation Areas.

*The following support levels combine “very” and “somewhat” supportive rankings.

Northwest Area of Fairfield

Support for the overall vision for the northwest area of Fairfield ranged from 66% in the survey to 90% at the open houses. Key Initiatives for the village ranged in support from 48% to 70% in the survey (with higher levels of support at the open houses). The highest support was developing new design guidelines to require new multi-unit buildings in this area to fit in with the surrounding properties (70% support). The lowest level of support was to consider allowing additional density (within permitted height limits) if on-site affordable housing is included: 48% support, 41% against in the survey and 55% in support at the open houses. Some people were concerned about building heights in proximity to a residential neighbourhood. Others felt the heights were appropriate or could be taller. Concerns about additional density in exchange for affordable housing included: density should not be a consequence of affordable housing, subsidized housing should not be in this area where land is premium, and affordable housing should be spread throughout the neighbourhood through secondary suites, duplexes, townhouses, etc.



Cook Street Village

Support for the overall vision for Cook Street Village was 63% in the survey and 73% at the open houses. Key initiatives for the village ranged in support from 66% to 80% in the survey (with slightly higher levels of support at the open houses). The highest support was for new design guidelines to ensure good quality design of buildings, streets and public areas (80% support). The lowest level of support was to support small apartment buildings west of the village: 66% in the survey and 63% at the open houses.

Many people commented that four stories is an appropriate height for Cook Street Village and the area to the west of the village, while some felt it is too high and others felt it is not high enough. There was a mix of comments about the appropriateness of encouraging different housing types east of the village. Loss of parking, opposition to bike lanes in the village and protection of trees was also frequently cited.

Moss/May and Moss/Fairfield Road

Support for encouraging small mixed use or residential buildings up to three to four storeys was 70% in the survey and 74% at the open houses. Some people expressed concern about buildings above four stories, while others had concerns about traffic, parking and building design. There was strong support for creating attractive public spaces, 79% in the survey and 84% at the open houses.



Ross Bay Village (Fairfield Plaza)

The key initiatives for Ross Bay Village were supported by 55% in the survey and 75% at the open houses. While some people support the change from six storeys to four, many people still

expressed concern about the impact of four storeys. There were also concerns expressed about traffic, parking, soil condition of the site, building design and transitioning to the surrounding neighbourhood.

Housing

The key initiatives for housing ranged in support from 45% to 64% in the survey with higher levels of support at the open houses ranging from 78% to 91%. The highest level of support was for more “houseplexes” on lots of sufficient size, with 64% support in the survey and 91% support at the open houses. The housing type with the lowest level of support in the survey was reducing the size of lot suitable for duplexes

with 45% of survey respondents strongly or somewhat supportive (36% of respondents were somewhat or very opposed), while support for this change was strong at the open houses at 83%. Most of the concerns were about loss of green space and impacts to parking. While support for single and double rows of townhouses was moderate to strong ranging from 51% in the survey to 78% at the open houses, many emails were received from people living in Sub-area 4, near Ross Bay Village, that townhouses would change the character of the neighbourhood and impact traffic and parking, particularly double rows of townhouses.



Rental Retention Areas

64% of survey respondents and 81% of open house participants supported allowing a maximum of six storeys in the area north of Cook Street Village to discourage teardown and redevelopment. There was mixed support for directing all contributions from new development toward creating on-site affordable housing, and considering additional density: 44% of survey respondents were in support (38% opposed) and 75% of open house participants were in support. Many of the concerns were about additional density in this area. Some people commented that new development should be required to include affordable housing, not in exchange for density.

Transportation & Mobility

Support for completing walking/cycling routes and developing new routes to connect the neighbourhood ranged from 52% support in the survey to 72% support at the open houses. Some respondents were strongly opposed to bike lanes, particularly on Cook Street, while others want to see more cycling infrastructure in the neighbourhood. Support for assessing key intersections, crossings and areas for improvement was 67% in the survey and 76% at the open houses. Several people commented on the need for better public transportation through Fairfield.

Urban Forest & Green Space

Support for developing urban forest strategies was strong at 85% in the survey and 99% at the open houses. There is a strong interest in strengthening the City’s policies to protect trees in Fairfield.

Waterfront

Support for developing a long-term plan for improvements to the waterfront was also strong at 78% in the survey and 83% at the open houses. Support for a cycling route along the waterfront was moderate in the survey at 54% and strong at the open houses at 84%. The concerns included loss of character, green space and parking.