

Central Waterfront Hub and Whitecaps Stadium Review

Feedback Summary (Open Houses)

March 6, 8, 10, 2007

200 feedback forms were received at the open house/by fax/online.

HUB FEEDBACK

1. Public Consultation

Most respondents were satisfied with the opportunities for giving feedback. Some respondents commented on the process taking too long and some noted concerns that the public isn't actually heard/taken into account. Additionally, some respondents noted a need for more information, and would like to see information sent out via media (tv/radio/newspaper).

2. Land Uses

There was good support for the land uses presented at the open house (office, retail, hotel, community, entertainment), with most respondents viewing the Hub as part of the downtown core and approving of downtown-related uses.

Comments also indicated:

- the importance of public space, including a substantial open space for public events (square/plaza), continuation of the seawall, and retention of Crab Park
- a feeling among some respondents that residential development would be inappropriate
- that having multiple uses/mixed use on the site is seen as important for ensuring activity throughout the day

3. Urban Design Objectives

There was general support for the objectives presented at the open house.

Comments also indicated:

- the importance of better integration of transit modes
- a desire for the area to be dynamic, mixed use, with public buildings and spaces
- some concern about new buildings having appropriate aesthetics and fitting in with the surroundings

4. Hub Facilities

- Strong support for public washrooms
- Support for :
 - all present transit modes + more ferries and expansion of West Coast Express
 - bike facilities including secure storage, overnight storage, showers, covered bike racks
 - a variety of food and beverage options
 - tourism office/information booth
 - easy movement between modes of transit
 - public space free of cars
 - continuation of seawall
 - good signage and transit information
 - office and retail space
 - Community Policing Centre
- Concerns expressed regarding parking (both there being too much and too little)

5. Other Comments

- concerns regarding the distance to the SeaBus terminal if it moves
- concerns regarding loss of views of downtown from the North Shore and of the North Shore

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- from downtown.
- concern that this is privatization of public waterfront land
- concern that the architecture will not be worthy of the prominent site
- hope that Hub can be a destination that welcomes people for a variety of reasons, not just commuting.
- remarks that it is difficult to make comments without more information regarding size/design/visual impact on views, etc.

STADIUM FEEDBACK

Public opinion regarding the stadium remains mixed, with sharply differing opinions expressed.

A large number of respondents support the stadium proposal per se, feel that the transit hub provides a strong rationale for the general location and that the revised siting is more appropriate than the previous proposal.

A smaller, but still significant proportion of respondents argue that the waterfront is the wrong location for the stadium and that its impacts on the local area would be unacceptable.

1A: Adequate street network

The majority of respondents indicated a belief that access issues can be addressed, though there are still some concerns over traffic impacts.

Some comments include:

- fear that stadium users will not use transit/that transit could not handle the loads
- need for several wide walkways to/from the stadium for pedestrians
- concerns over vehicle access and parking, interest in finding ways to prevent people from driving to stadium
- importance of direct access to public transit noted
- importance of comfortable pedestrian spaces

1B: Risk/liability of dangerous goods movement in railyard

The majority of respondents indicated a belief that this issue can be mitigated subject to more detailed study and strategy.

Some comments include:

- belief that this is not/was not a real issue
- belief that the issue is resolved now that the stadium is no longer directly over the tracks
- think it is a City/CP issue
- think it is still a concern as the stadium has not moved that far away
- think the stadium does not provide enough escape routes in case of emergency

1C: A better fit with Gastown

Most respondents indicated a belief that the new site creates opportunities to resolve this issue. Widespread recognition of the prominence of the site, the importance of a complementary relationship between the stadium and Canada Place and the necessity of high quality architecture.

Some comments include:

- some respondents found the proposal was not detailed enough to comment on this

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- many respondents find the stadium is now more associated with downtown, less with Gastown
- some respondents feel the stadium is still inappropriate for the area for a variety of reasons:
 - still too close to and out of scale with low-scale, heritage Gastown
 - views blocked
 - poor use of public waterfront
 - concern with the filling in of Burrard Inlet
 - concerns over the fit with Canada Place and blocking views of Canada Place

1D: Livability of residential areas south of the tracks

Opinion on noise, light and crowd movement impacts was mixed, with the majority feeling that the new site at least partially mitigates these issues.

Some respondents have concerns still regarding:

- noise from stadium events
- effects of large crowds exiting the stadium into the neighbourhood
- effects of large crowds on local parking and local access to transit
- blocking of views

Other Comments:

- some respondents believe the stadium will have a positive effect on the nearby area by revitalizing it.
- many respondents stated that residents of downtown areas should expect noise, especially at this location with existing noise sources (trains, heliport)

1E: Relationship with future development north of the rail tracks

A majority of respondents indicated that the new site provides greater flexibility for planning of the Port lands, however, many respondents found this difficult to gauge due to the uncertainty over the nature and timing of Port land development.

2. Other Comments

- the importance of preserving views and public access to the water
- the positive effect the stadium will have on the city and neighbourhood
- the positive effect the stadium will have on soccer in the city and in Canada
- the issue of whether this is the best use for prime waterfront land
- concerns regarding the architecture and whether the building will be worthy of its prominent location
- the stadium as an opportunity to create a new icon building for the City
- the belief that BC Place should be used to host soccer games instead of constructing a new stadium
- the transit hub provides a strong rationale for the general location