

2.5 PUBLIC INPUT

PUBLIC INPUT MODEL

A sequential public input process was developed to meet the needs of a development program spread over ten years and to closely coordinate the timing of public consultation with construction. Three levels of planning detail were identified. Each level builds on the previous, refining proposals from general intent to specific detail and narrowing the scope of target public from the very broad general citizenry to a more local community stakeholder-user. The sequential public input process was designed to minimize the possibility that public expectation of development could be raised prematurely.

BACKGROUND

Input techniques utilized in developing the Concept Plan included review of existing data, distribution of a questionnaire to every household and ratification through open house type public meetings. Over 1500 citizens participated in the Vision Survey questionnaire. Approximately 80% of the respondents supported the Vision Statement and Basic Principles. Over 200 citizens attended the open house meetings in October 1990.

PUBLIC REVIEW OF PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN (NOVEMBER 1991)

A number of issues raised by the public during preparation of the Concept Plan were to be resolved at the Master Plan level. A chart summarizing these issues and proposed action/resolution is shown in Appendix 2.2.

A preliminary Master Plan was presented to the public in November 1991 for review and input. A series of four public meetings was conducted between November 20th and 28th, 1991. Each meeting reviewed the overall Master Plan proposal, the resource assessment process, the proposed land management planning units, and the proposed standards and guidelines for development. In addition each meeting focused on a different area of the valley and reviewed in detail the development proposed for that specific area.

An encouraging level of public interest was shown by 278 people registering attendance and 182 completing the distributed questionnaire. While the questionnaire sampling cannot be regarded as statistically sound it did provide an indication of public preference.

The respondents generally:

- supported the preliminary Master Plan, the management zoning proposal, and the trail classification/guidelines;
- preferred 10 foot asphalt surface main trails and top-of-bank trails, and 4 foot ravine and access trails.

A summary of the public response to the preliminary Master Plan presented at the November meeting is summarized in Appendix 2.3.

PUBLIC REVIEW OF REVISED MASTER PLAN (FEBRUARY 1992)

The input and comments received from the November public meetings, subsequent meetings with selected special interest groups and concerned individuals, meetings with Department staff and staff of other Departments, was considered and incorporated into a revised Master Plan. This was taken to the public for review and ratification at an Open House on February 5th and 6th, 1992.

Newspaper advertisements were placed to advertise the two day Open House and a special briefing was held to give media personnel equal access to information. In addition a letter of invitation was sent to 900 names on the existing mailing list indicating this was the last public forum opportunity to register verbal and written comments before the Master Plan was submitted to Council.

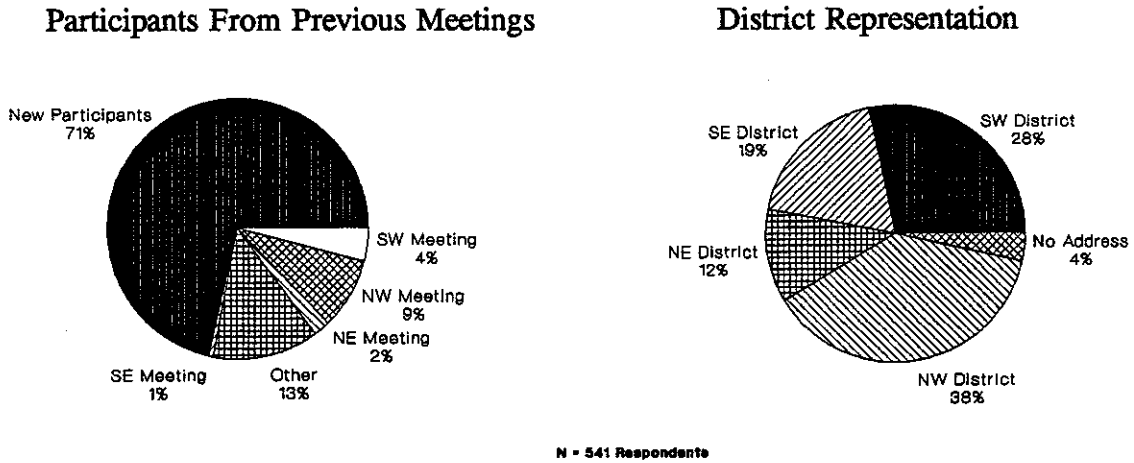
Information provided to the public included:

- feedback on information gathered at previous public meetings: questionnaire survey results and summary of planning issues for each quadrant of the river valley along with recommended resolutions.
- a revised program statement for each area.
- maps were posted indicating the previous plan and the revised plan.
- detailed site plan drawings.

Approximately 700 people attended the two day open house, of which 541 returned the distributed survey (77%). Most individuals had not attended the November public meetings. Attendees came from all parts of the city representing every district (Figure 5). This was attributed to the excellent media coverage.

Figure 5

FEBRUARY OPEN HOUSE PARTICIPATION



Attendees were heavy users of the river valley with a very high percentage indicating more than 50 visits per year. All major activities were well represented with a large proportion of respondents indicating they used the valley for several activities.

An analysis of the questionnaire distributed at the open house is found in Appendix 2.4.

SUPPORT FOR THE MASTER PLAN

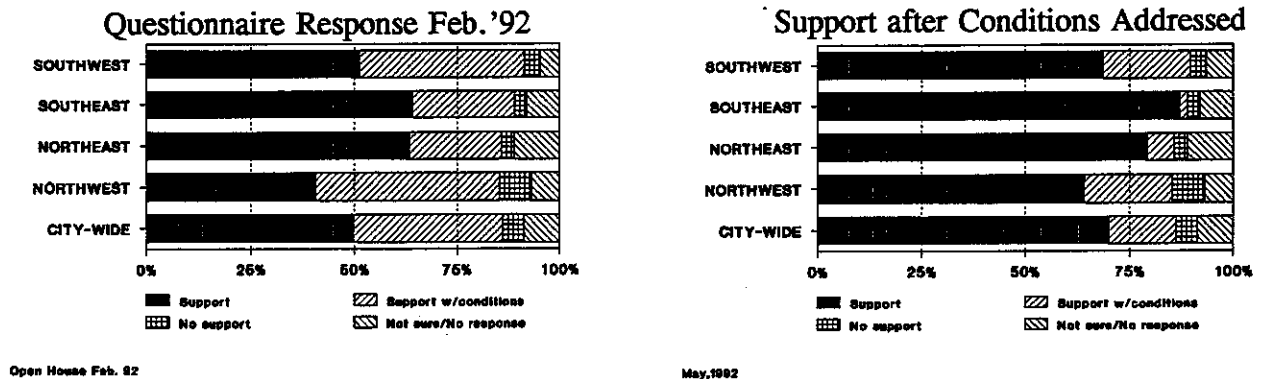
At the February Open House, respondents were asked to indicate Support, Support with Conditions or Non-Support for the revised River Valley Master Plan. The assumption made was that if the identified concern was met, that support was received. The initial tabulation indicated 50% Support and 36% Support with Conditions. Through a further analysis of each individual survey and by addressing the identified concerns, support for the revised Master Plan was increased to 70% as shown in Figure 6. A summary of the public comments, including a list of the "met" and "unmet" concerns is in Appendix 2.5.

A number of comments were site specific, but the most frequently mentioned conditions/comments were:

- concern for general trail safety,
- concern for affect on wildlife and environment,
- concern for affect on integrity of valley (don't overdevelop),
- desire bike access to dirt trails,
- opposition to development of housing in valley,
- desire for increased presence of police,
- desire for off-leash areas for dogs,
- comments regarding provision of bridge links.

Figure 6

PUBLIC VIEWS OF THE MASTER PLAN

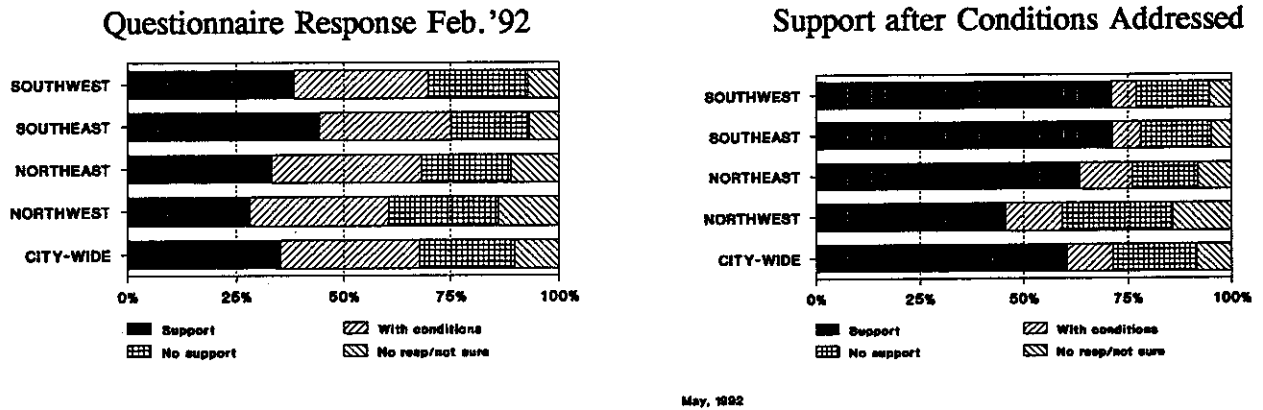


CHANGES TO THE TRAILS GUIDELINES

The greatest change from the November proposal was the concept of permitting cyclist access to selected granular trails. Response to the new trail classification proposal indicated 36% Support, 32% Conditional Support for this proposal. Much of the conditional support centered around concern for pedestrian safety, speed of non-pedestrians, desire for greater police presence, and need for an educational campaign to encourage a proper code of behaviour. By addressing many of the Conditional Support concerns, Support can be increased to 61%, as is shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7

REVISED TRAIL GUIDELINES



The Department feels confident the public is prepared to designate some granular trails as multi-purpose. Additional public input is required however before a trail is so designated. This input will be acquired at the Site Plan development level. A process is identified in Section 4.2.

As a result of the public input in February, the Master Plan was further refined before presentation to City Council.