



# **New Recreation Centre and Upgrades to Student Union Boulevard**

## **Consultation Summary Report**

Consultation Period: February 10-24, 2020

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## Executive Summary

Supporting the health and wellbeing of the UBC community is a top priority for the university. This consultation collected feedback on the early planning for a new proposed recreation centre and a number of future proposed public realm and street upgrades to complete the vision for Student Union Boulevard. The new recreation facility would provide much needed recreation space including a state of the art fitness centre, three gymnasiums, an indoor track, and many other amenities.

Planning for a new recreation centre emerged from the UBC GamePlan: 20-year Recreation and Athletics Facilities Strategy, which involved public consultation and was approved by the Board of Governors in April 2017. The strategy supports UBC's commitment to wellbeing by meeting a growing need for recreational fitness and gymnasium space.

The public consultation was held between February 10 – 24, 2020. It offered the opportunity for the UBC community to submit input on the proposed recreation centre and public realm and street upgrades to Student Union Boulevard. Community participants submitted their input online through a survey and in person at a public open house.

This report presents a summary of feedback received on the proposed recreation centre and Student Union Boulevard upgrades. A total of 112 community members participated in the formal public consultation.

The majority of feedback expressed support for the proposed recreation centre. Supportive feedback recognized the need for expanding the capacity of recreation facilities at UBC, in addition to support for a new building design that is sustainable and supports student wellbeing. There was also feedback about the impacts of construction as well as the location being too close to existing recreation facilities.

This feedback on the proposed vision for a new recreation centre and improved Student Union Boulevard, in combination with further technical work, will now be used to inform the design of the project. The proposed improvements to Student Union Boulevard will be implemented as part of a future Public Realm improvement program. The Recreation Centre project will proceed through the standard capital approval process, pending Board 1 approval from the Board of Governors in June 2020.



realm and improve vehicular, servicing and pedestrian circulation to create a more usable, functionally efficient and welcoming “arrival” to this part of campus.

## 2. Engagement Summary

Public engagement on the the new recreation centre and Student Union Boulevard upgrades included two formal meetings with several planning and advisory committees in addition to a formal public consultation period between February 10 – 24, 2020, which included a public open house and online survey.

### Formal Neighbourhood Plan Amendment Project Meetings

Campus + Community Planning staff met with stakeholder groups and committees in February 2020, in addition to the in person and online engagement activities that took place during the consultation period, as outlined below.

Group	Meeting Date
New Building Site Selection Committee	February 10, 2020
Property and Planning Advisory Committee (PPAC)	February 18, 2020

### Public Consultation

The New Recreation Centre and Student Union Boulevard Upgrades public consultation ran from February 10 – 24, 2020. Feedback was gathered through an online survey and a public open house. All of the information provided at the open houses was also posted on the Campus + Community Planning website. Copies of the open house display boards and online survey are provided in Appendix I and II respectively.

In total:

- Approximately **44** people attended the open house, with varying levels of participation
- **68** people submitted feedback via the online survey
- **87** verbatim comments were received (**65** online and **22** in person)

### Public Open House

One public open houses was held in the UBC Life Building and was attended by a total of 44 participants.

#### Public Open House

February 13, 2020 from 11:30am to 1:30pm

UBC Life Building Concourse, 6138 Student Union Boulevard

Campus and Community Planning staff were available at the open houses to answer questions. Six display boards were set up at the open house to provide an overview of the proposed recreation centre and public realm and street upgrades. Participants were encouraged to provide feedback by writing comments on sticky notes and placing them on boards. Sticky notes were collected at the end of the

open house and transcribed. In addition, printed copies of the online survey were available for the public to fill out, and the online survey link was available on advertising and event posters.

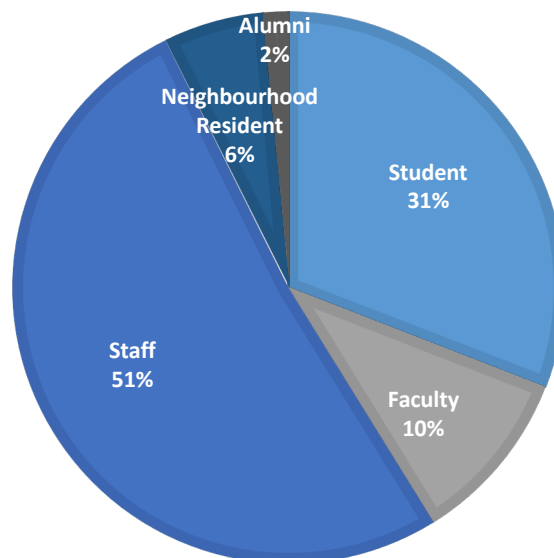
### Website and Online Survey

Public consultation materials were available on the Campus and Community Planning website and included the the same information (i.e. display boards and survey) available at the public open house. The online survey was available from February 10 – 24, 2020, and was accessible for both mobile phones and computers.

### Participant Demographics

A total of 112 students, faculty, staff, alumni, and UBC residents participated in the consultation process either online or in person. 68 people completed the online survey.

ONLINE SURVEY PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS





The pie chart above shows the demographic breakdown of who participated<sup>1</sup> in the online survey. The demographics<sup>2</sup> of total participation are broken down by percentage.

Approximately, 44 people attended the public open house. The location of the event is very heavily trafficked, with multiple entry points to the open house information, thus making it challenging to track the precise number of participants and collect information on who attended. Consequently, demographic data from the open house is limited and not included in this report.

### 3. What We Heard

Feedback was collected on the proposed addition of a new recreation centre and upgrades to the surrounding public realm and Student Union Boulevard. Feedback from both the in-person events and online survey were analysed using a qualitative theming process. This process involved reviewing individual verbatim comments from each of the questions asked and assigning theme(s) according to the sentiment expressed by each comment. Top themes are listed and described in the sections below and include themes with an occurrence rate of 5% or more of the total number of comments for each question.

Overall, the comments received suggested there was support for the proposed recreation centre, most notably highlighting a lack of adequate existing recreation facilities for the UBC community. We also heard some concern about additional construction in the area, and a number of suggested uses for the new recreation centre.

#### **Question: What do you think about the plans for a new recreation centre and upgrades to the street and public realm?**

When asked about what they thought about the new recreation centre and Student Union Boulevard upgrades, participants largely supported the addition of more recreation facilities. Comments received were mainly general support statements, or specifically related to ideas for uses of the future facility, such as a rock climbing wall, additional weights and equipment, and yoga and meditation space.

We also heard some concern related to the new recreation centre. These comments were centered around construction and development in the U Boulevard Area and ensuring future facilities are accessible and meeting the recreational needs of the entire UBC community, including UBC faculty, staff

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<sup>1</sup>Open house participation can be difficult to measure when events are held in large, open spaces with multiple points of entry and exit. Individuals counted spent varying amount of time at the open house, with engagement levels ranging from reading the boards, writing feedback on sticky notes, and asking staff members a number of detailed questions.

<sup>2</sup> To avoid double counting, respondents with multiple affiliations with UBC were counted as the first listed, for example if a person indicated they were a UBC resident and alumni, they were counted as a resident.

and residents. There was also a small amount of feedback concerned with traffic and pick-up and dropflow around the new building and along Student Union Boulevard.

See table below for more detailed information on the comment themes and frequency counts.

Top Comments	Frequency Count
<b>Support</b>	<b>57</b>
General	26
Current facilities too crowded	5
Design for sustainability, wellbeing and enhancing green space	7
Ensure integration with existing facilities and good connectivity	4
Ideas for uses	15
<b>Concern</b>	<b>19</b>
Concern about development and construction	6
Location should be farther away from existing recreation facilities	4
Consider space and programming needs for the whole UBC community	5
Proposed plans and consultation process do not represent community needs (generally)	4
<b>Student Union Boulevard</b>	<b>4</b>
Concern about arrival court, delivery access and traffic flow	4
<b>Grand Total of All Comments</b>	<b>87</b>

In addition to what was heard through formal public consultation, there was a positive response from committees, including the New Buildings Site Selection Committee and PPAC on the proposed amendments.

## 4. Next Steps

The ideas and feedback on the proposed vision for a new recreation centre and improved Student Union Boulevard, in combination with further technical work, will be used to inform the design of the project.

A summary of public feedback received during this consultation will be included in the Board 1 Report for UBC Board of Governors to consider in June 2020. The Recreation Centre project will proceed through the standard capital approval process, pending Board 1 approval from the Board of Governors in June as well.

The proposed improvements to Student Union Boulevard will be implemented as part of a future Public Realm improvement program. Funding for the proposed future public realm improvements beyond the Recreation Centre site will come from development charges from market housing development on campus.