

Rise and Report (Items Released from Closed Meeting)

On April 21, 2023, the Metro Vancouver Regional District (MVRD) Board of Directors authorized the following information to be released to the public:

Proposed Park at Cape Roger Curtis, Bowen Island – Options for Moving Forward

That the MVRD Board direct staff to proceed with the purchase of 97 hectares of land for a proposed regional park at Cape Roger Curtis on Bowen Island.

Released: April 21, 2023

That the MVRD Board receive for information the report dated April 4, 2023 titled “Proposed Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis – Phase One Engagement Summary”.

Released: April 25, 2023

To: Regional Parks Committee

From: Amanda McCuaig, Director of Communications, External Relations
Jeffrey Fitzpatrick, Division Manager, Regional Parks

Date: April 4, 2023 Meeting Date: April 19, 2023

Subject: **Proposed Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis – Phase One Engagement Summary**

RECOMMENDATION

That the MVRD Board receive for information the report dated April 4, 2023 titled “Proposed Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis – Phase One Engagement Summary.”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The first phase of public engagement for the proposed regional park at Cape Roger Curtis on Bowen Island ran from February 10 to March 20, 2023, with an objective to gather feedback and input from the public. Engagement opportunities during this phase included two in-person open houses (375 attendees), two online webinars (60 attendees). Additionally, 2,364 people submitted comments through the online feedback form (54% were from Bowen Island and 46% from rest of Metro Vancouver).

Overall, there was more support for the project than not, with nearly half of survey respondents indicating that they support the project (45.85% of respondents). The level of support for the proposed regional park varied between regional (85% in support) and Bowen Island residents (19% in support, 14% felt they didn’t have enough information). Key themes from engagement include concern about transportation and an interest in protecting environmentally sensitive areas. There was a preference for the use of a park shuttle as an alternative mode of transportation to the park, and support for hiker/biker/paddle-in camping and providing opportunities for walking and hiking in the park.

PURPOSE

To provide engagement results of the first phase of engagement on the proposed regional park at Cape Roger Curtis on Bowen Island to the Board to inform decision making as per the Public Engagement Policy.

BACKGROUND

Metro Vancouver has an agreement to purchase 24 parcels of land on the southwest tip of Bowen Island at Cape Roger Curtis, totaling 97 hectares for the purpose of establishing a new regional park. The proposed regional park would preserve a large area of ecologically important and sensitive ecosystems, and provide opportunities for residents of the region, including the Bowen Island community, to connect with nature.

Engagement and the development of a concept plan for the park are designed to run concurrently to an application to Bowen Island Municipality to amend the Official Community Plan and rezone

the properties from rural residential to passive park with a variance to allow for supervised overnight tent camping of up to 100 sites.

Each project phase will include engagement with First Nations, the public, stakeholders, and government agencies.

ABOUT THE ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

Following best practices in public engagement, three phases of engagement will support the development of a concept plan for the proposed park. The first phase of engagement ran from February 10 to March 20, 2023. The goal of this engagement phase was to listen and learn from Metro Vancouver residents about priorities, concerns, knowledge, and preferences to inform the development of a concept plan for a new regional park.

During the first phase of engagement, two in-person open houses were held (375 attendees), two online webinars were held (60 attendees). In addition, various stakeholder meetings were held, and a technical focus group was held (21 attendees).

Metro Vancouver uses Civil Space for online engagement which provides opportunities for qualitative and quantitative input through a range of preference ranking, open ended, and direct questions. While online engagement is an important component of a comprehensive engagement strategy, it does not provide statistically relevant data. Civil Space participation does not require registration or a password, and does not protect against multiple submissions. Online feedback form submissions included of 496 duplicate IP addresses which could indicate multiple submissions on one electronic device or network, from an individual, family, or group of people.

During the online engagement period 2,364 participants submitted 25,158 responses and comments through the online feedback form. Of people who responded, 54% were from Bowen Island and 46% represented the rest of the Metro Vancouver region.

The online engagement platform was opened for participation on February 10, 2023. 78% of feedback form responses from Bowen residents, and 63% from the rest of the region, were completed before the first public open house on March 4, 2023.

Engagement with First Nations

The proposed regional park is within the territories of the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw/Squamish Nation, xʷməθkʷəy̓əm/Musqueam Indian Band, and səlílwətaʔɫ/Tsleil-Waututh Nation. Metro Vancouver is engaging directly with local First Nations on this project.

Promotions

The engagement opportunity was promoted to all Metro Vancouverites. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn were used to deliver information about the proposed regional park and to promote the public engagement opportunity. In addition to organic social media posts, paid ads were run on Facebook and Instagram, and print ads ran in the Bowen Island Undercurrent. Posters were displayed in all regional parks and in Bowen Island community hubs, and postcards with information on the engagement opportunities were mailed to all Bowen Island residents.

A project-specific newsletter was created, generating up to 603 subscribers since announcing the project in 2022. Six updates were sent to the project newsletter during the engagement period. The engagement period was also promoted in the Metro Vancouver Update and the Metro Vancouver Regional Parks newsletters.

In addition to Metro Vancouver's promotion, several local news media outlets shared articles about the program and engagement opportunity. Promotion included a dedicated project page that highlighted information about the proposed regional park, and an engagement page with detailed information about the engagement approach and process, and how to provide feedback. It was also promoted on Metro Vancouver's home page, the community engagement webpage, and the events calendar.

What We Heard

Promotions for the engagement began on February 10, with the first public presentation to Bowen Island Municipal Council taking place on February 27 and the first open house was held on March 4. Respondents to the survey prior to engagement taking place indicated they did not have enough information to support at this time.

Overall, there was support for a proposed regional park, with nearly half of feedback form respondents indicating that they support the project (45.85% of respondents). Of the 1029 respondents who indicated they live on Bowen Island, 198 supported (19%), 590 did not support (57%), 89 were neutral (9%), and 152 indicated that they did not have enough information to decide at this time (15%). Of the 696 respondents from the rest of Metro Vancouver, 592 supported the proposed park (85%), 71 did not support (10%), 18 were neutral (3%), and 15 (2%) didn't have enough information to decide at this time. (Note, total numbers to this question were lower than total number of survey starts, due to drop offs through the survey).

Staff observed that as opportunities took place for residents to connect directly with Metro Vancouver staff, there was increasing understanding of potential solutions to concerns being raised about overnight use of the park and transportation. Additionally, support for the project, indicated in the feedback form responses, increased after the public open houses. For example, before the open houses Bowen Island residents indicated 16% support, 24% neutral/more information required, and 60% do not support. After engagement events were initiated, Bowen Island residents indicated 29% support, 22% neutral/more information required and 48% do not support.

Key themes through the first phase of engagement included:

- Concerns about transportation, particularly ferry capacity
- A preference for a park shuttle as the top choice for alternative transportation modes
- A priority to protect environmentally sensitive areas
- Concerns about overnight use and potential impacts on-island (such as wildfires, street use)
- Support for hiker/biker/paddle-in camping among the camping options
- A top activity choice to walk or hike at the proposed regional park
- A priority to improve public transit connections on Bowen Island

Transportation was the most significant concern raised by residents of Bowen Island during engagement, and interest was high in better understanding potential traffic impacts on-island as well as how Metro Vancouver would be working with BC Ferries. Options presented for alternative transportation modes were well received, with particular interest in how a park shuttle could alleviate transportation concerns.

On the topic of overnight use, differences between Bowen Island respondents and those from elsewhere in the region emerge. Regional respondents were interested in vehicle accessible (tent only) camping followed by night time nature programs. The overnight program with the most support was hiker/biker/paddle camping, and night time nature programs followed by learn to camp programs. However, the majority of Bowen Island respondents were not at all supportive of any overnight programs.

A full breakdown of what we heard and how we are responding can be found in “Proposed Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis on Bowen Island – Public Engagement Summary” (Attachment 1).

ALTERNATIVES

This is an information report to the MVRD Board. No alternatives are presented.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

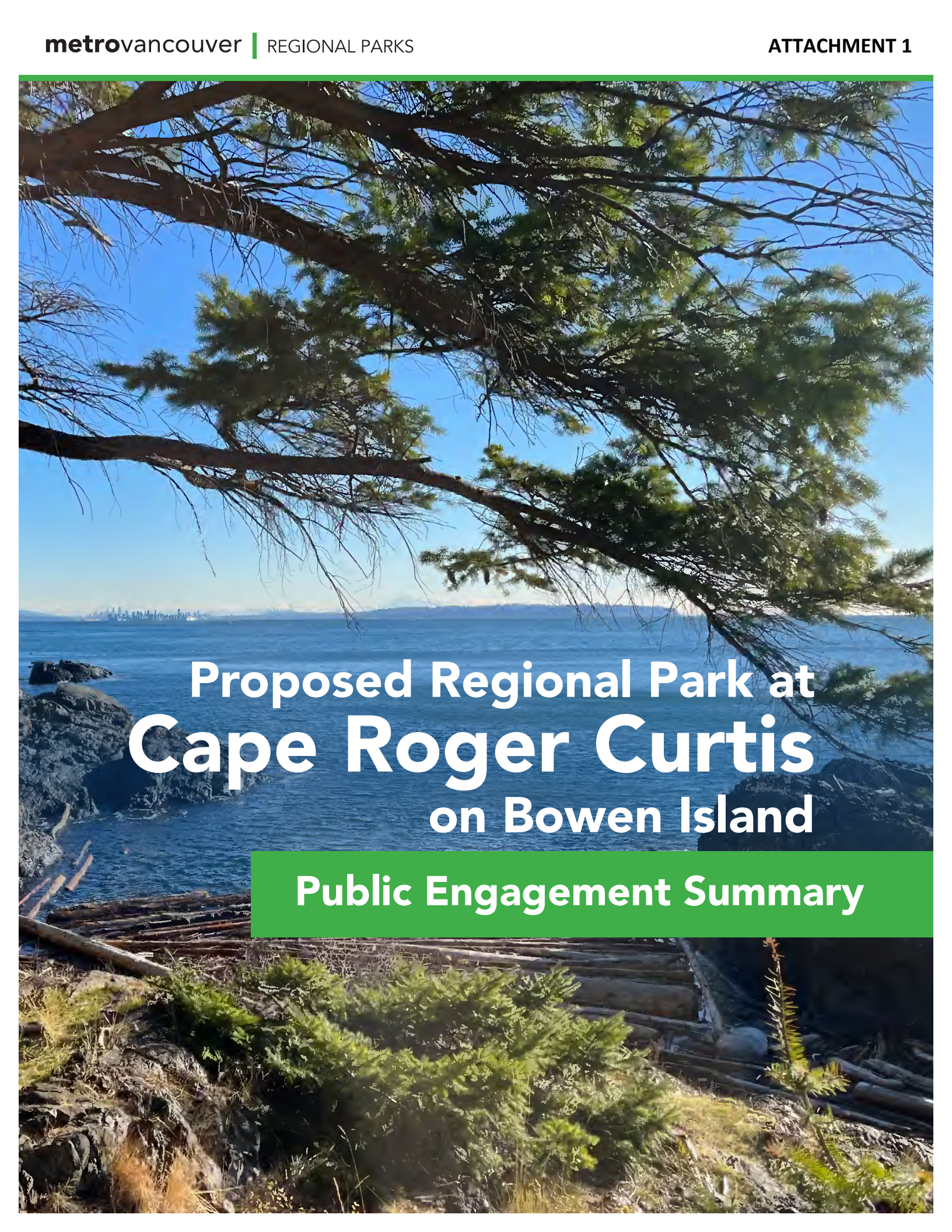
This is a report for information. There are no financial implications.

CONCLUSION

The first phase of engagement for the proposed park at Cape Roger Curtis on Bowen Island concluded on March 20 and had extensive and in-depth engagement both at a regional and local level. The biggest proportion of the 2,364 people who participated in the online feedback form supported the proposed park. The top themes during engagement included an interest in protecting sensitive ecological areas and concerns around transportation, with a preference for a shuttle as an alternative mode of transportation. Overall, there was support for hiker/biker/paddle-in camping and an interest in using the park for walking and hiking.

Attachments

1. “Proposed Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis on Bowen Island – Public Engagement Summary”
2. Formal letters sent to Metro Vancouver during the first phase of the public engagement period



Proposed Regional Park at
Cape Roger Curtis
on Bowen Island

Public Engagement Summary

Acknowledgements

Thank you to everyone who provided input on the first phase of public engagement for the proposed regional park at Cape Roger Curtis on Bowen Island. Metro Vancouver embraces collaboration and innovation to provide sustainable regional services, contributing to a livable and resilient region, and a healthy natural environment for current and future generations. The purpose of the first phase of engagement was to listen and learn from the community, and staff will use this feedback to create guiding principles and draft concepts for the proposed regional park. We appreciate your time as well as the insights and comments you shared with us in the first phase. We invite you to participate in the second phase of engagement later in 2023.

About Metro Vancouver

Metro Vancouver is a federation of 21 municipalities, one electoral area, and one treaty First Nation that collaboratively plans for and delivers regional-scale services. It delivers regional-scale drinking water, wastewater treatment, and solid waste utility services. Metro Vancouver also regulates air quality, plans for urban growth, manages a regional parks system, and provides affordable housing. The regional district is governed by a Board of Directors of elected officials from each local authority.

Cover photo:
View to East from Cape Roger Curtis on Bowen Island

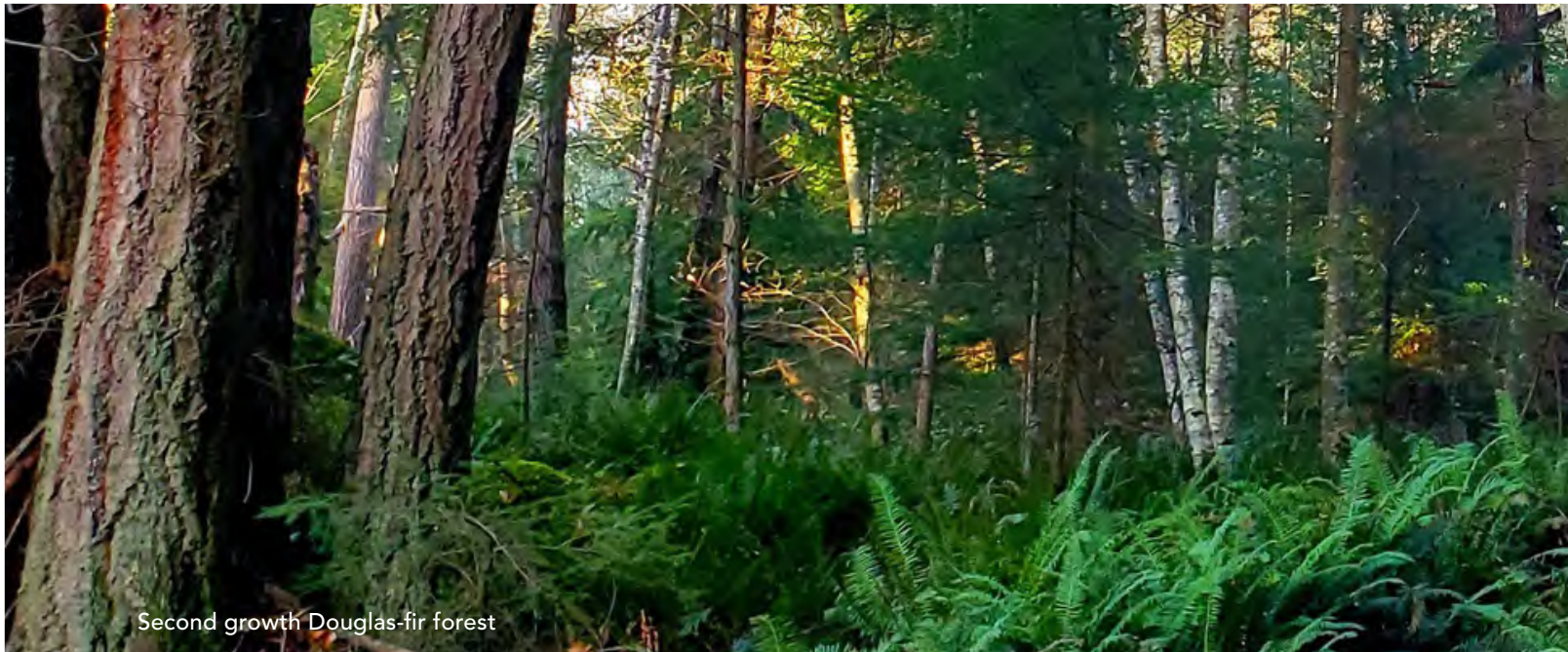
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www.metrovancouver.org

April, 2023

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Second growth Douglas-fir forest

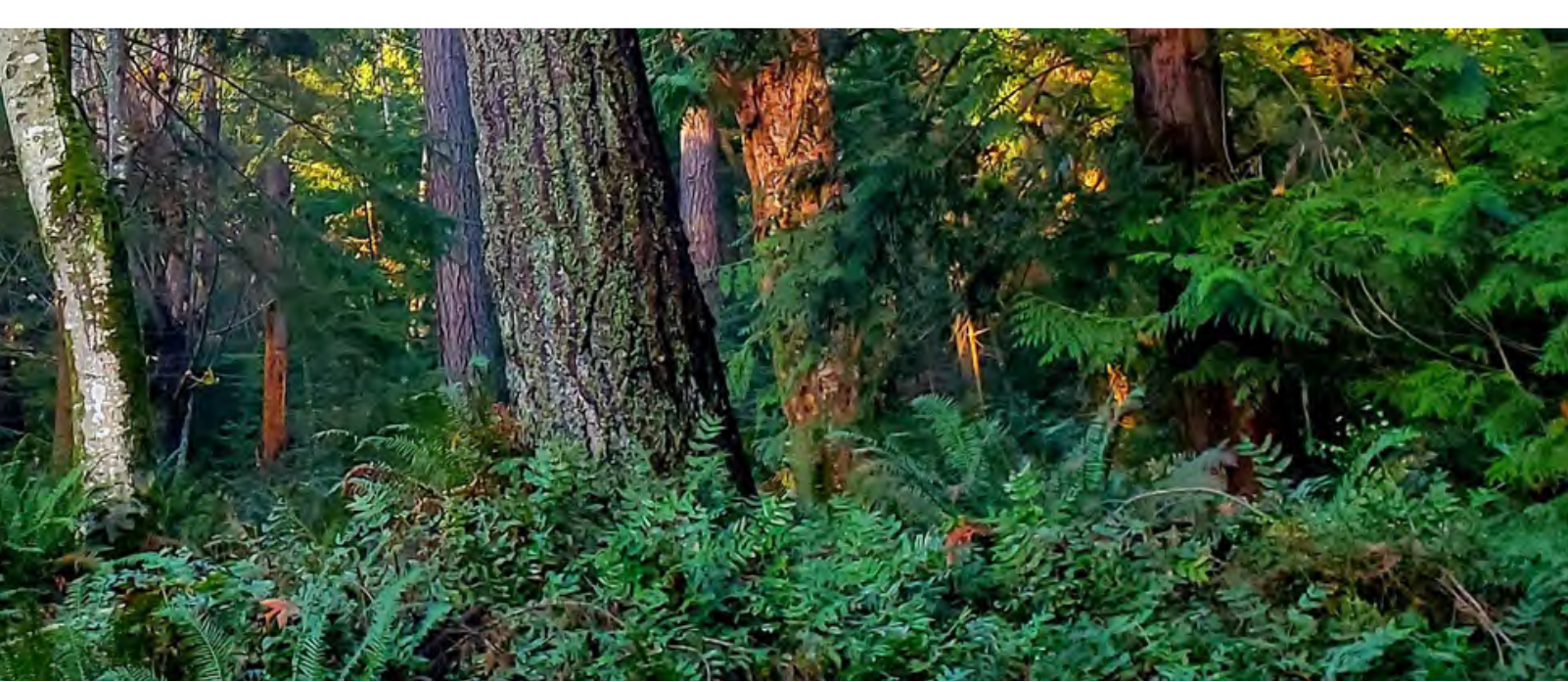
1. About the Proposed Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis on Bowen Island

The proposed regional park at Cape Roger Curtis contains 15 plant communities listed as provincially threatened or endangered. The land encompasses about 700 metres of waterfront, ranging from high bluffs to low banks and access to the water’s edge. Along the shore, the coastal bluff plant communities are dominated by arbutus, shore pine, Douglas fir, and some 400-year-old maritime juniper. Huszar Creek flows through the site. In recent years, there have been frequent sightings of both orcas and humpback whales from this site.

Metro Vancouver has an agreement to purchase 24 parcels of land on the southwest tip of Bowen Island at Cape Roger Curtis, totalling 97 hectares that Metro Vancouver aspires to turn into a new regional park. The proposed regional park would preserve a large area of ecologically important and sensitive ecosystems, and provide opportunities for residents of the region, including the Bowen Island community, to connect with nature.

Metro Vancouver has started the park planning process for the proposed regional park at Cape Roger Curtis. Developing a concept plan for the park will run concurrently with an application to Bowen Island Municipality to rezone the properties from rural residential to park, as well as an amendment to the Official Community Plan from residential to regional park use. The rezoning and OCP amendment would allow for supervised overnight tent camping.

The park planning process includes background research, inventory, and analysis. Each project phase will include engagement with First Nations, the public, stakeholders, and government agencies.



2. Executive Summary

The first phase of public engagement received significant attention and garnered a very high response rate for Metro Vancouver projects on the online engagement platform, with a large number of responses from the public who reside on Bowen Island and in the City of Vancouver. Engagement opportunities during this phase included two in-person open houses (375 attendees), two online webinars (60 attendees). Additionally, 2,364 people submitted comments through the online feedback form.

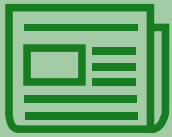
The objective of this public engagement phase was to listen and learn from the community. Metro Vancouver sought to gather feedback and input from the public to ensure that the park's design and implementation align with the community's needs and values.

Overall, there was more support for the project than not, with nearly half of feedback form respondents indicating that they support the project (45.85% of respondents). The level of support for the proposed regional park varied between regional (85% in support) and Bowen Island residents (19% in support, 14% felt they didn't have enough information).

Key themes respondents noted through the first phase of engagement included:

- Concerns about transportation, particularly ferry capacity
- A preference for a park shuttle as the top choice for alternative transportation modes
- A priority to protect environmentally sensitive areas
- Concerns about overnight use and potential impacts on-island (such as wildfires, street use)
- Support for hiker/biker/paddle-in camping among the camping options
- A top activity choice to walk or hike at the proposed regional park
- A priority to improve public transit connections on Bowen Island

The public's likes, dislikes, and priorities, alongside advice from technical experts, will be incorporated into the draft concepts, which will be shared in the second phase of public engagement for the proposed regional park.



37
media articles

Over **11 million** media reach



285,000
social media reach

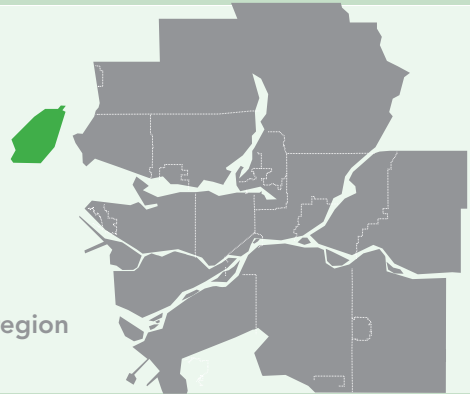


Over **2,000** social media likes, comments, and shares

Respondents from Metro Vancouver

54% Bowen Island Municipality

46% Elsewhere in the region



5,000+
Regional Parks
monthly newsletter
subscribers



25,158
feedback form questions answered



Over **350** attendees
at public open houses

2,364
feedback form starts



3. About the Engagement Program

From February 10 to March 20, 2023, Metro Vancouver invited the public to share their feedback about the proposed regional park for the first phase of engagement for the proposed regional park at Cape Roger Curtis. The goal of this engagement

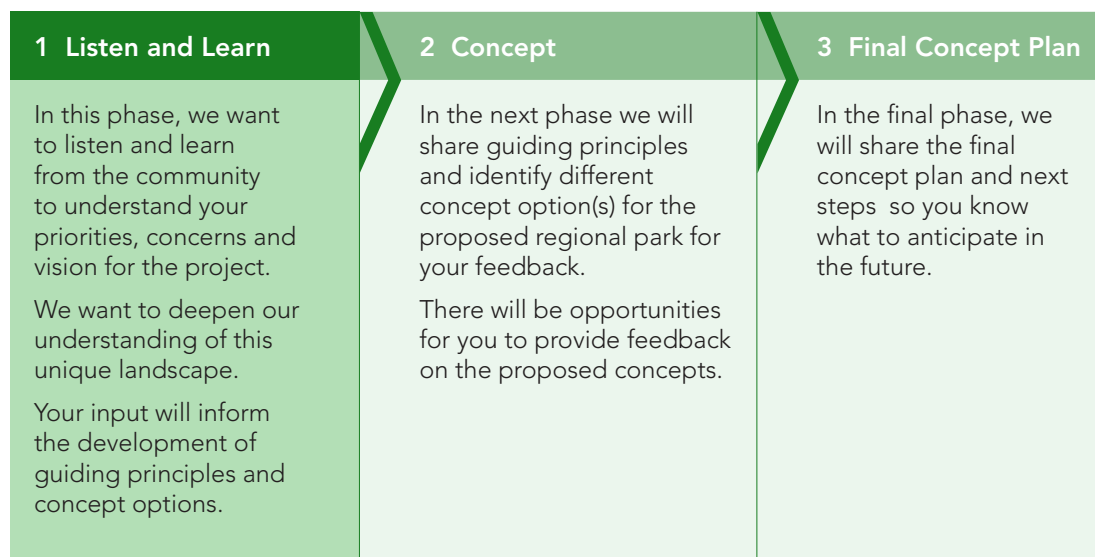
phase was to listen and learn from Metro Vancouver residents about priorities, concerns, knowledge, and preferences to inform the development of a concept plan for a new regional park.

The first phase of engagement included the following tactics:

TACTIC	DESCRIPTION	TIMING
Online Feedback Form	A public feedback form on Civil Space, an online engagement platform, to seek feedback on values, priorities, and preferences for the new proposed regional park on Bowen Island.	February 10 to March 20, 2023
Virtual Technical Focus Group	Feedback from organizations will complement the valuable input from individuals and the general public received during Phase One of the engagement on the proposed regional park.	March 1, 2023
Public Open Houses	Open house drop-in sessions with Metro Vancouver Regional Parks staff for residents of Bowen Island to learn about the proposed regional park, share their hopes and concerns, ask questions of staff, and provide place-based knowledge.	March 4 & 8, 2023
Public Webinars	Two-hour long virtual webinars to build awareness about the proposed regional park, and allow both local and regional stakeholders an opportunity to participate. Attendees had the chance to pose questions to Metro Vancouver staff and provide feedback about the proposed regional park.	March 9 & 10, 2023
Outreach at Regional Parks Events	Staff attended two events at Pacific Spirit Regional Park, Family Day Campfire and Night Quest, to raise awareness within the region about the proposed regional park on Bowen Island. Provided background information and share feedback opportunities.	February 20 & March 18, 2023
Stakeholder Meetings	Metro Vancouver meetings with stakeholders as an opportunity to hear input on the proposed regional park, and for stakeholders share their knowledge.	Ongoing

The proposed regional park at Cape Roger Curtis will have significance for interested and impacted parties and residents. The focus of Metro Vancouver’s engagement plan is to hear from a wide range of audiences, align their values with Metro Vancouver’s vision to protect natural areas while providing more opportunities for people to connect with nature, and to address their concerns and preferences in the proposed regional park design.

This was the first phase of an open, transparent, and collaborative three-phase engagement process to ensure the community is involved as the project progresses and has opportunities to provide feedback to the project team.



First Phase



4. First Nations Engagement

The proposed regional park at Cape Roger Curtis on Bowen Island is within the territories of the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw/Squamish Nation, xʷməθkʷəy̓əm/Musqueam Indian Band and sálílwətaʔ/Tsleil-Waututh Nation. We respectfully acknowledge the significance of Bowen Island and the Howe Sound for all three Nations, particularly the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw/Squamish Nation.

The proposed regional park presents an opportunity to advance collaboration and reconciliation with First Nations. Metro Vancouver is engaging local First Nations to explore opportunities to work collaboratively on this project.

5. Engagement Promotion

The public engagement opportunity was promoted to all Metro Vancouverites, which includes Bowen Island residents. In addition to Metro Vancouver’s promotion, several local news media outlets shared articles about the program and engagement opportunity.

Website

Two webpages were used during the engagement promotion: a dedicated [project page](#) that highlighted information about the proposed regional park, and an [engagement page](#) with detailed information about the engagement approach and process, and how to provide feedback. (While the project webpage was included on most of the communications materials, the main call to action drove people directly to the feedback form on Civil Space.) From February 9 to March 21, there was a total of 12,733 page views to both pages. Visitors spent an average of 1 minute 53 seconds on the project page and 3 minutes 10 seconds on the engagement page. Information about

the public engagement opportunity was also shared on Metro Vancouver’s [home page](#), overall [community engagement webpage](#), and [events calendar](#).

The majority of website traffic came from within the Metro Vancouver region, with the top locations reflecting proximity to the project and population size: Vancouver, West Vancouver (including Bowen Island), North Vancouver, Surrey, Burnaby, and Coquitlam.

Social Media

We used Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn to deliver information about the proposed regional park and to promote the public engagement opportunity. In addition to organic social media posts, we ran paid ads on Facebook and Instagram.

Social media performed strongly with over 285,000 reach, nearly 4,200 link clicks, and over 2,000 social media likes, comments, and shares.

Metro Vancouver E-newsletters

Six e-newsletters were sent to the project email list. Over the engagement period, the number of subscribers grew from 406 to 603.

DATE	SUBJECT	DELIVERED
February 10	Have Your Say – Phase One Public Engagement for the Proposed Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis is Now Open	406
February 23	Attend a Public Open House – Proposed Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis	520
March 2	Reminder! Attend a Public Open House – Proposed Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis	547
March 10	Closing Soon + What We’ve Heard – Phase One Public Engagement for the Proposed Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis	569
March 17	Share Your Feedback by March 20 – Phase One Public Engagement for the Proposed Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis	581
March 21	Thank You for Your Feedback! – Phase One Public Engagement for the Proposed Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis	603



Public Open House at Bowen Island Community School

The engagement was also featured in other Metro Vancouver newsletters, including the Metro Vancouver Update (1,104 subscribers) and the Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Newsletter (5,925 subscribers).

Mailouts to Bowen Island Residents

A postcard was mailed to all Bowen Island residents. A notification letter was mailed to residents within 500 metres of the property.

Signage

Posters were put up in Bowen Island community hubs, in Horseshoe Bay, and in all Metro Vancouver regional parks.

Print Ads

Three print ads ran in the Bowen Island Undercurrent when the engagement period launched and leading up to the public open houses on Bowen Island.

Earned Media

A media release was issued on February 9, the day before engagement opened. There were 37 media hits over the engagement period. Most were from mainstream news outlets and the Bowen Island Undercurrent, and there were also some articles in niche publications. There were a number of opinion pieces and letters to the editor from Chair McEwen, Bowen Island Councillor Gedye, and other prominent Bowen Island residents. The tone was overall balanced.

Video Presentation

A video presentation was created for open house events to provide an overview of the project, the engagement timeline, and opportunities to provide feedback. This video was available on the project webpage and had 177 views.

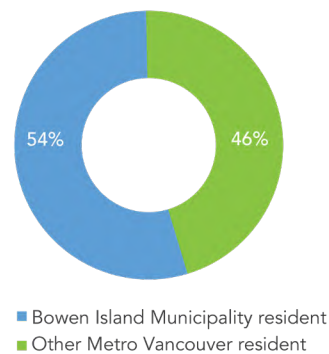
6. Engagement Participation – Feedback Form

We invited the public to provide feedback by completing a feedback form that was available online and in hard copy format. A discussion guide was created as a resource document to learn more about the history of the land, the project scope, and engagement timelines. Through the feedback form, we asked residents and visitors to share their hopes and concerns about the proposed regional park and transportation issues, in addition to knowledge on ecosystem values. During the online engagement period 2,364 participants provided feedback submitting over 25,000 responses and comments.

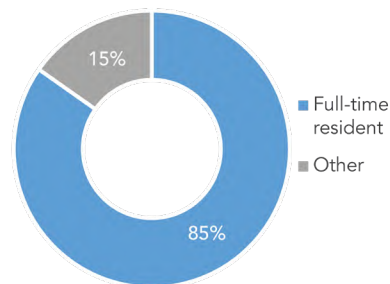
Metro Vancouver uses ZenCity for online engagement which provides opportunities for qualitative and quantitative input through a range of preference ranking, open ended and direct questions. While online engagement is an important component of a comprehensive engagement strategy, it does not provide statistically relevant data. ZenCity participation does not require registration or a password, and does not protect against multiple submissions. Online feedback form submissions included of 496 duplicate IP addresses which could indicate multiple submissions on one electronic device or network, from an individual, family, or group of people.

Of people who responded, 54% were from Bowen Island and 46% represented the rest of the Metro Vancouver region. Of the respondents from Bowen Island, 85% are full-time residents. The following graphs provide more information about respondent demographics.

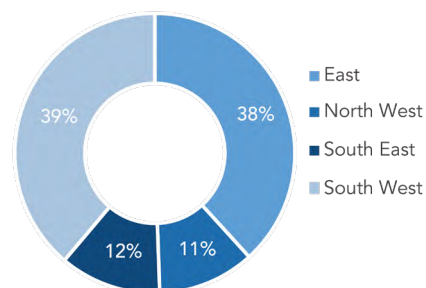
Proportion of Respondents Living on Bowen Island



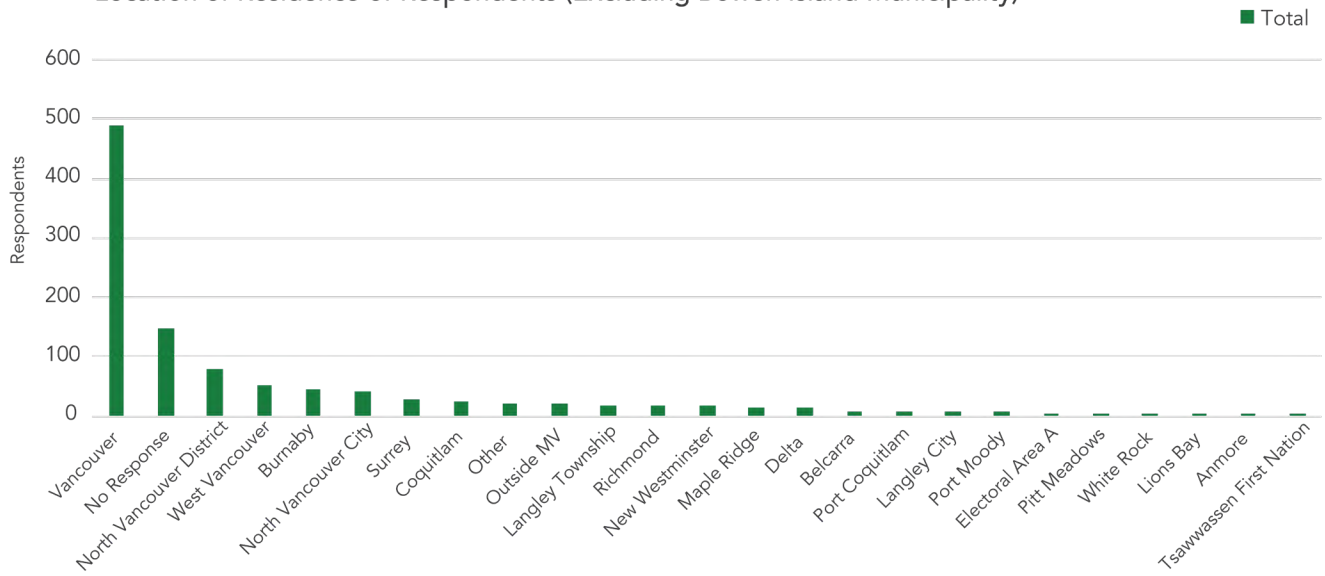
Bowen Island Residents – Status



Bowen Island Residents Where on Bowen Island do Respondents Live?



Location of Residence of Respondents (Excluding Bowen Island Municipality)

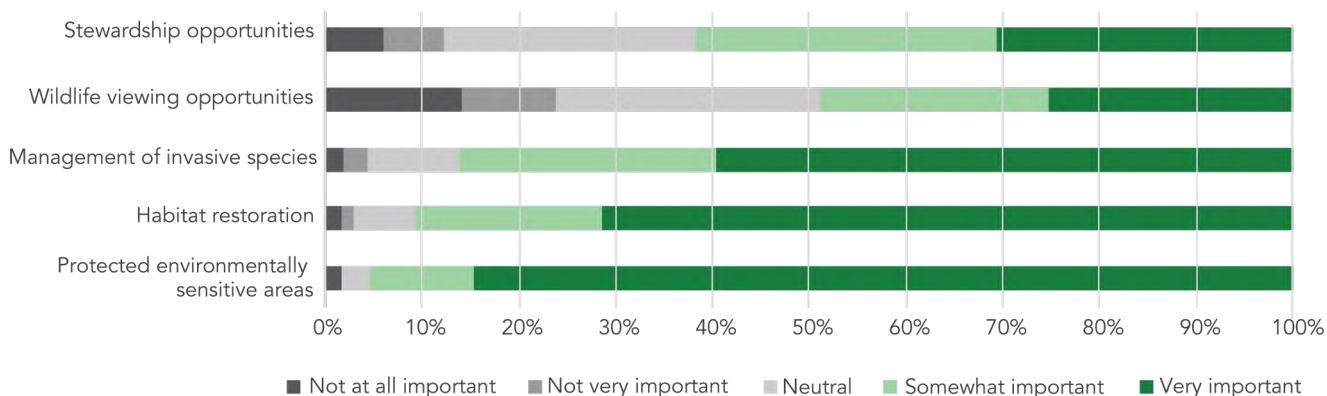


22% of regional respondents indicated they live in Vancouver, followed by 4% from District of North Vancouver.

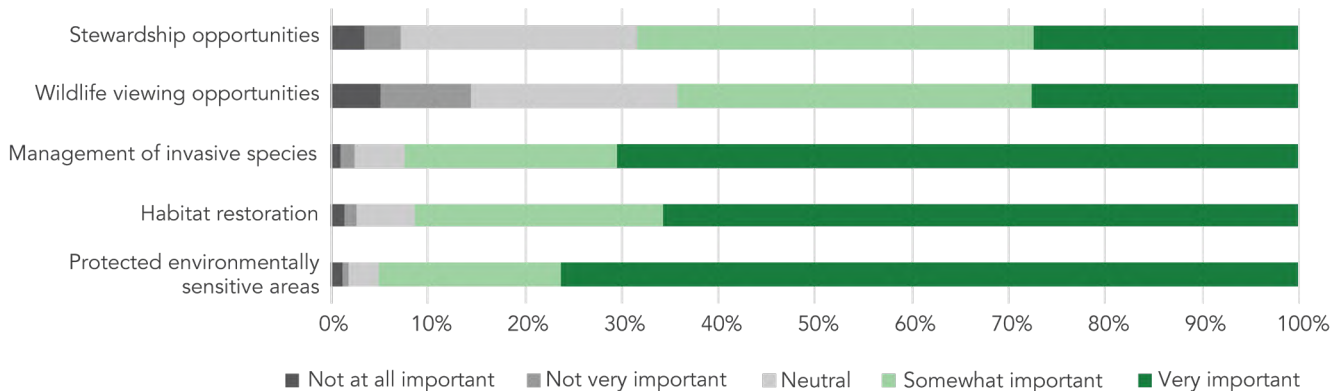


Participants at a Public Open House

Please rank the importance of the following elements to you in shaping the proposed regional park
Bowen Island Municipality residents

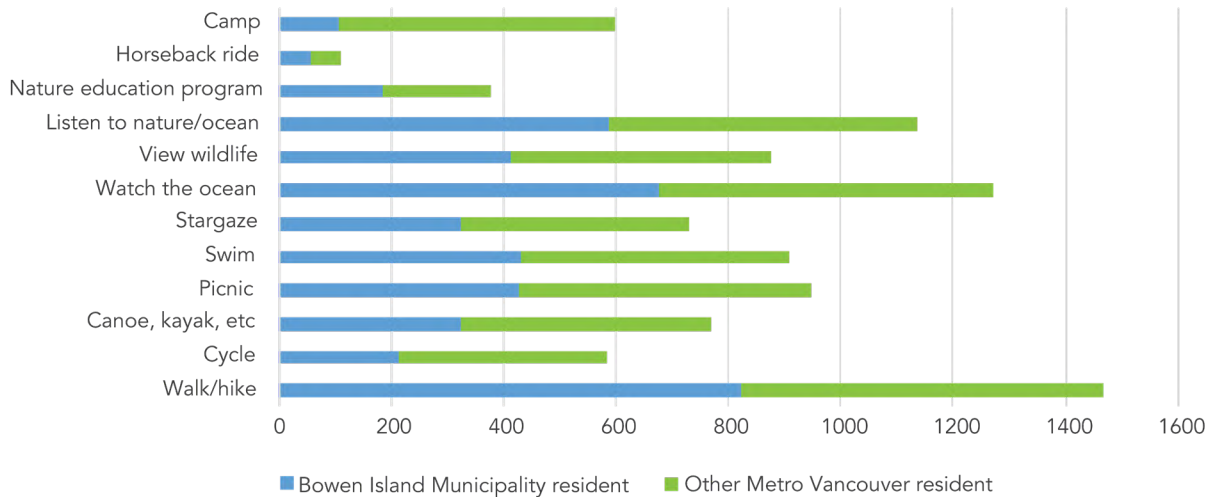


Please rank the importance of the following elements to you in shaping the proposed regional park
Other Metro Vancouver residents



The majority of respondents indicated that their top priority is the protection of environmentally sensitive areas. In terms of the next top two priorities, Bowen Island respondents indicated that habitat restoration and then management of invasive species were important. Responses from regional respondents were the same, except they switched the ranking of the second and third priorities.

What activities would you like to do at the proposed regional park at Cape Roger Curtis?

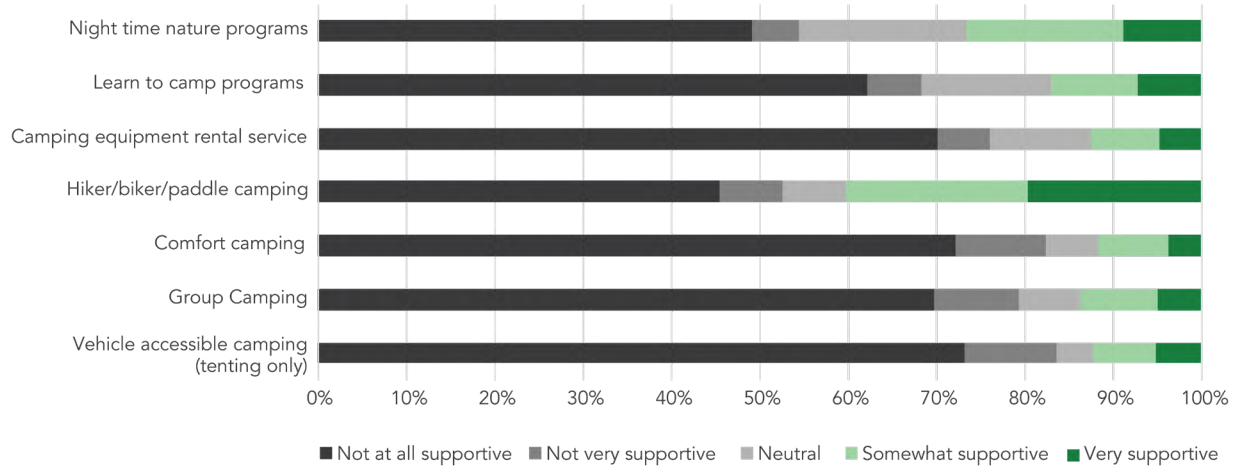


The top activity choice for all respondents is to walk or hike at the proposed regional park. Following that, the next highest activity options for respondents were to watch the ocean and listen to nature and the ocean. Many more regional respondents indicated they would like to camp at the proposed regional park than Bowen Island residents did.

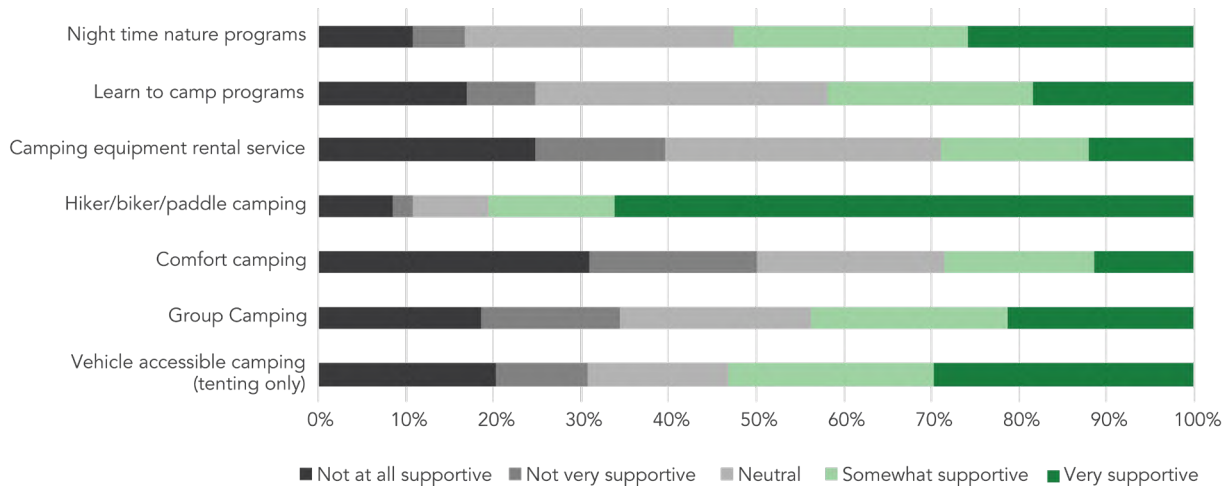


View along shore to east at Cape Roger Curtis on Bowen Island

What overnight use facilities and programs should be included in the proposed regional park?
Rate your level of support for each fo the following.
Bowen Island Municipality residents



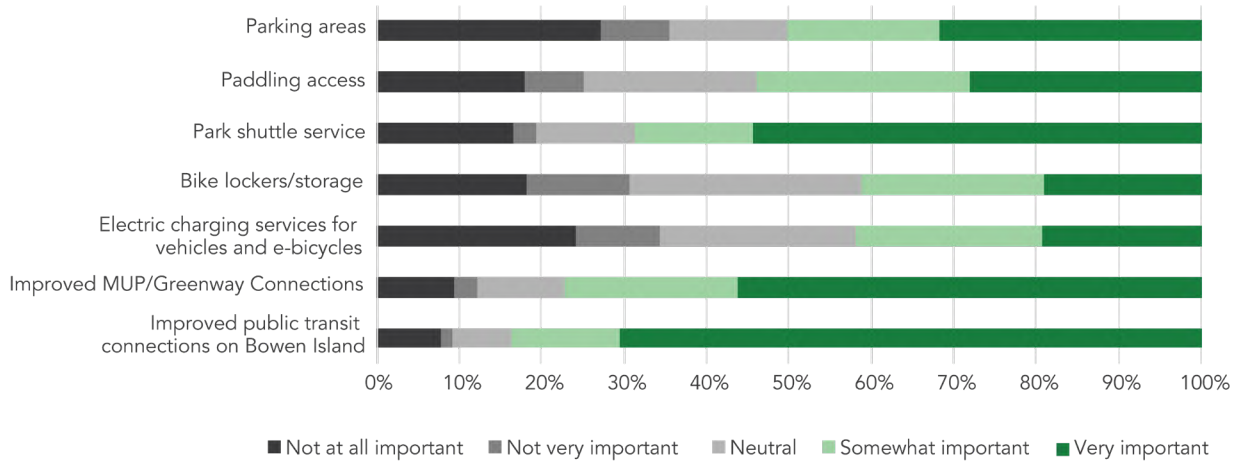
What overnight use facilities and programs should be included in the proposed regional park?
Rate your level of support for each fo the following.
Other Metro Vancouver residents



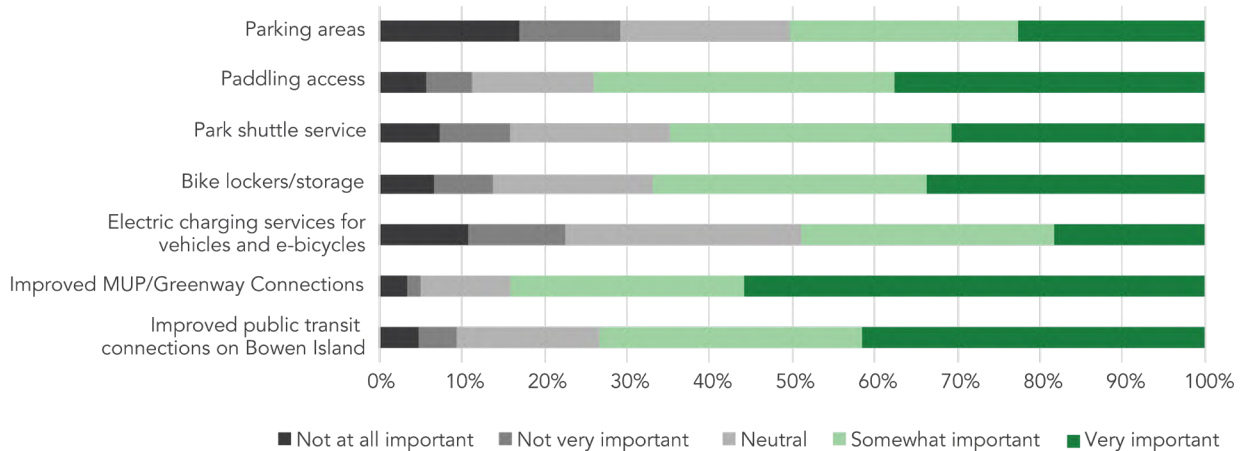
On the topic of overnight use, differences between Bowen Island respondents and those from elsewhere in the region emerge. The majority of Bowen Island respondents were not supportive of any overnight programs.

However, the overnight program with the most support from Bowen Island and regional respondents was hiker/biker/paddle camping. Subsequently, night time nature programs followed by learn to camp programs received the most support from Bowen Island respondents. Regional respondents were also interested in vehicle accessible (tent only) camping followed by night time nature programs.

Identify your priorities for accessing the proposed regional park
Bowen Island Municipality residents



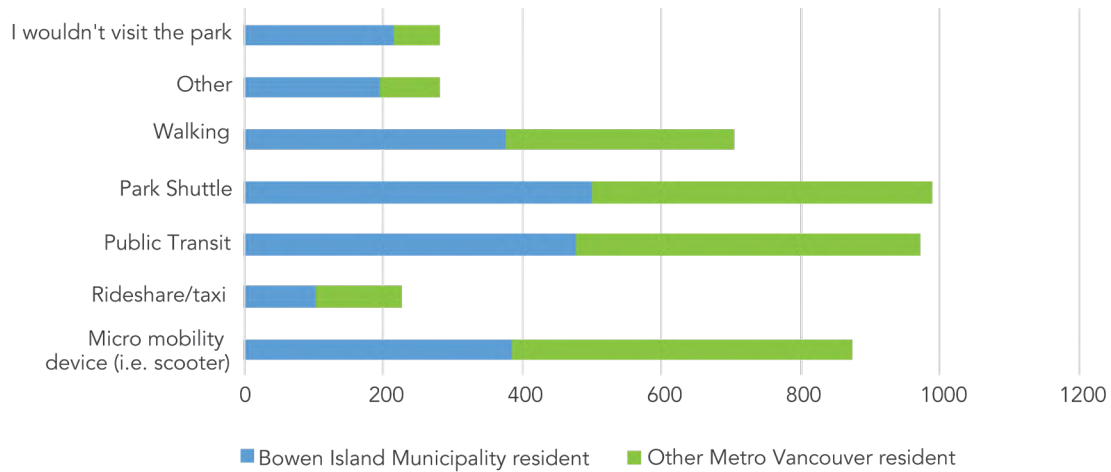
Identify your priorities for accessing the proposed regional park
Other Metro Vancouver residents



Bowen Island respondents indicated improved public transit connections on Bowen Island was their top priority. Their next two priorities were improved multi-use pathways/greenway connections followed by park shuttle service. Regional respondents indicated that improved multi-use pathways/greenway connections was their top priority. Their next two priorities were improved public transit connections on Bowen Island followed by paddling access.

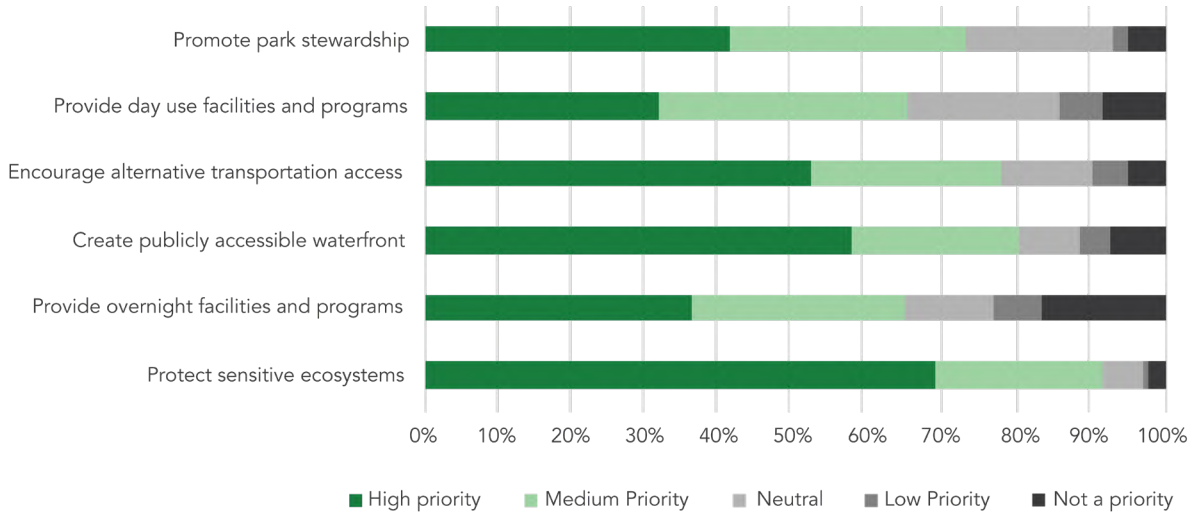


If private vehicle access was limited and alternative transportation modes were available, which of the following would you consider using to access the proposed regional park?

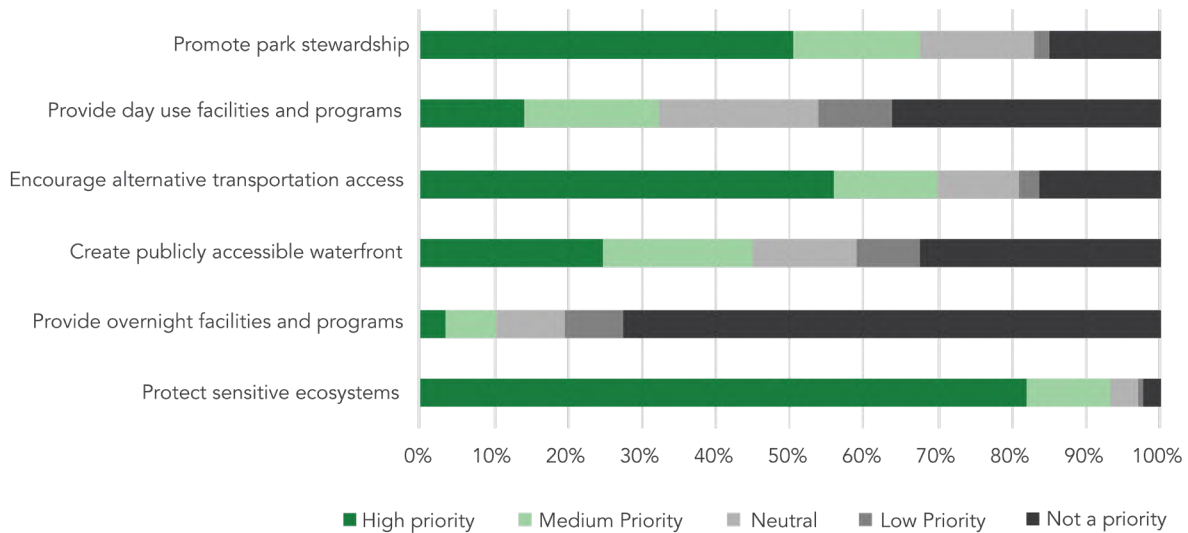


The majority of respondents indicated that a park shuttle is their top choice for alternative transportation modes followed by public transit and micro-mobility devices, such as bicycles and scooters. The top three choices for Bowen Island and regional respondents were the same.

What are your hopes for the proposed regional park?
Bowen Island Municipality residents

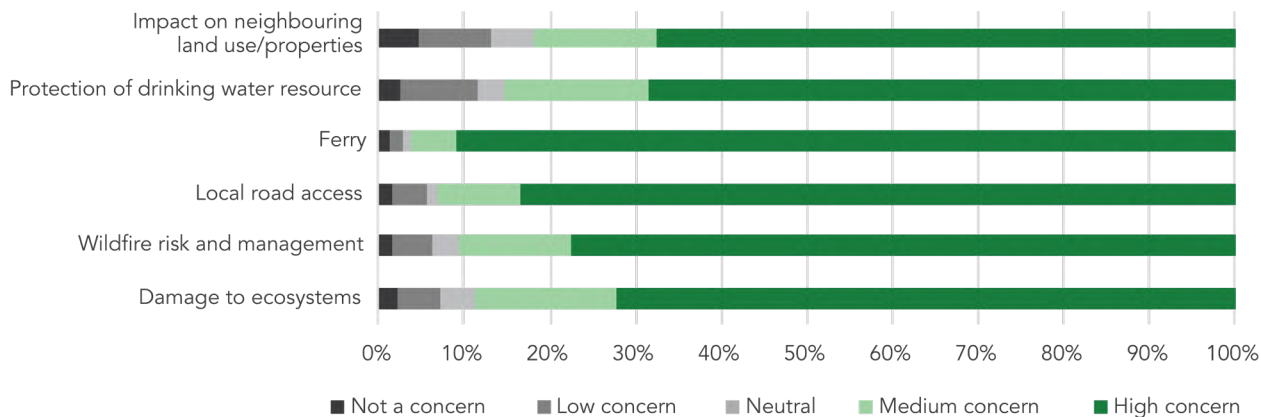


What are your hopes for the proposed regional park?
Other Metro Vancouver residents

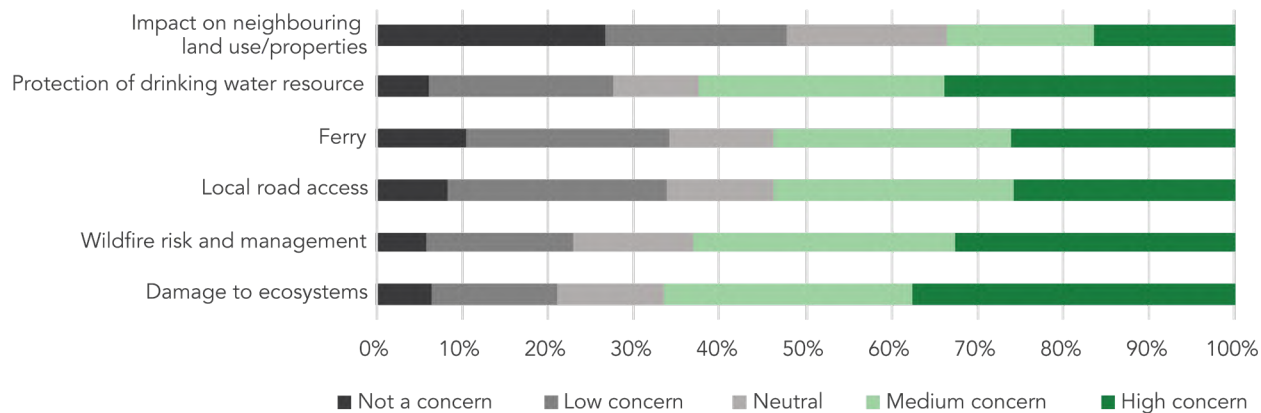


Bowen Island respondents indicated that their top three hopes for the proposed regional park were to protect sensitive ecosystems, create publicly accessible waterfront, and encourage alternative transportation access. The top three hopes of regional respondents were only slightly different; their hopes were to protect sensitive ecosystems, encourage alternative transportation access, and promote park stewardship.

What are your concerns for the proposed regional park?
Bowen Island Municipality residents

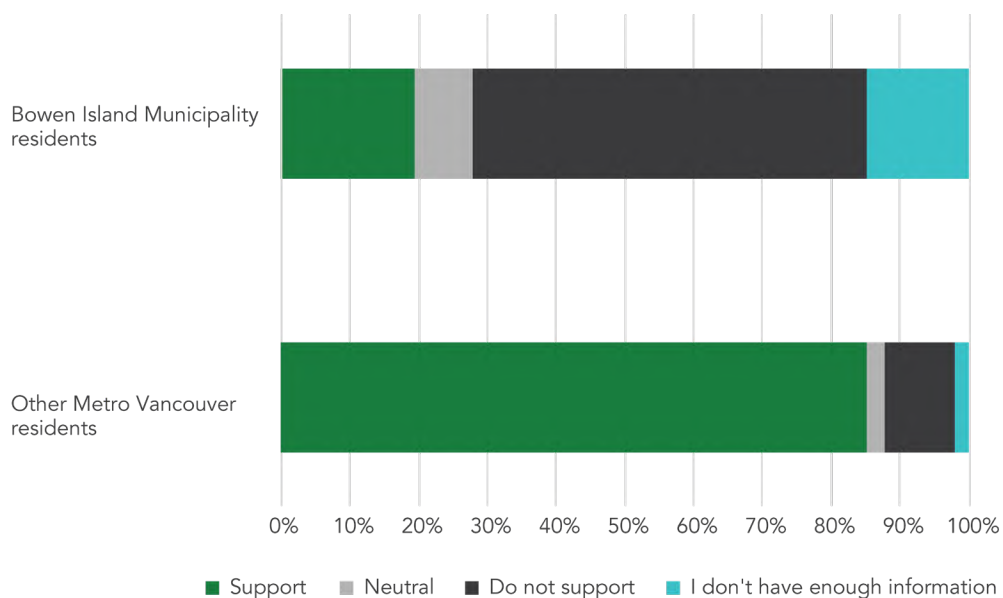


What are your concerns for the proposed regional park?
Other Metro Vancouver residents



Bowen Island respondents indicated their top three concerns for the proposed regional park is the ferry, local road access, and wildfire risk and management. Regional respondents indicated their top three concerns are damage to ecosystems, protection of drinking water resource, and wildfire risk and management.

Level of Support For Proposed Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis



Overall, there was support for a proposed regional park, with nearly half of feedback form respondents indicating that they support the project (45.85% of respondents). Of the 1029 respondents who indicated they live on Bowen Island, 198 supported (19%), 590 did not support (57%), 89 were neutral (9%), and 152 indicated that they did not have enough information to decide at this time (15%). Of the 696 respondents from the rest of Metro Vancouver, 592 supported the proposed park (85%), 71 did not support (10%), 18 were neutral (3%), and 15 (2%) didn't have enough information to decide at this time. (Note, total numbers to this question were lower than total number of feedback form starts, due to drop offs through the feedback form).

However, the level of support for the park varied between regional and Bowen Island residents. Regional respondents overwhelmingly were supportive of the proposed regional park. For Bowen Island respondents, 19% support the proposed regional park and 14% felt they didn't have enough information.

7. Engagement Participation – Public Events

During the engagement period we held four events open to the public and one technical focus group with representatives from organizations with expertise and technical knowledge important to the planning of the proposed regional park. The public events were held in-person and virtually to provide options to allow as many people to attend as possible.

These events were well attended, with the majority of participants coming from Bowen Island.

- 2 Public Open Houses (combined): 375 attendees
- 2 Public Webinars (combined): 60 attendees
- 1 Virtual Technical Focus Group: 21 attendees

Metro Vancouver staff also conducted outreach at two Regional Parks events at Pacific Spirit Regional Park: Family Day Campfire and Night Quest. Approximately 699 people attended the Family Day Campfire, and 1,699 attended Saturday night at Night Quest.

Ongoing meetings are being held with First Nations, government agencies, and interested and affected parties.



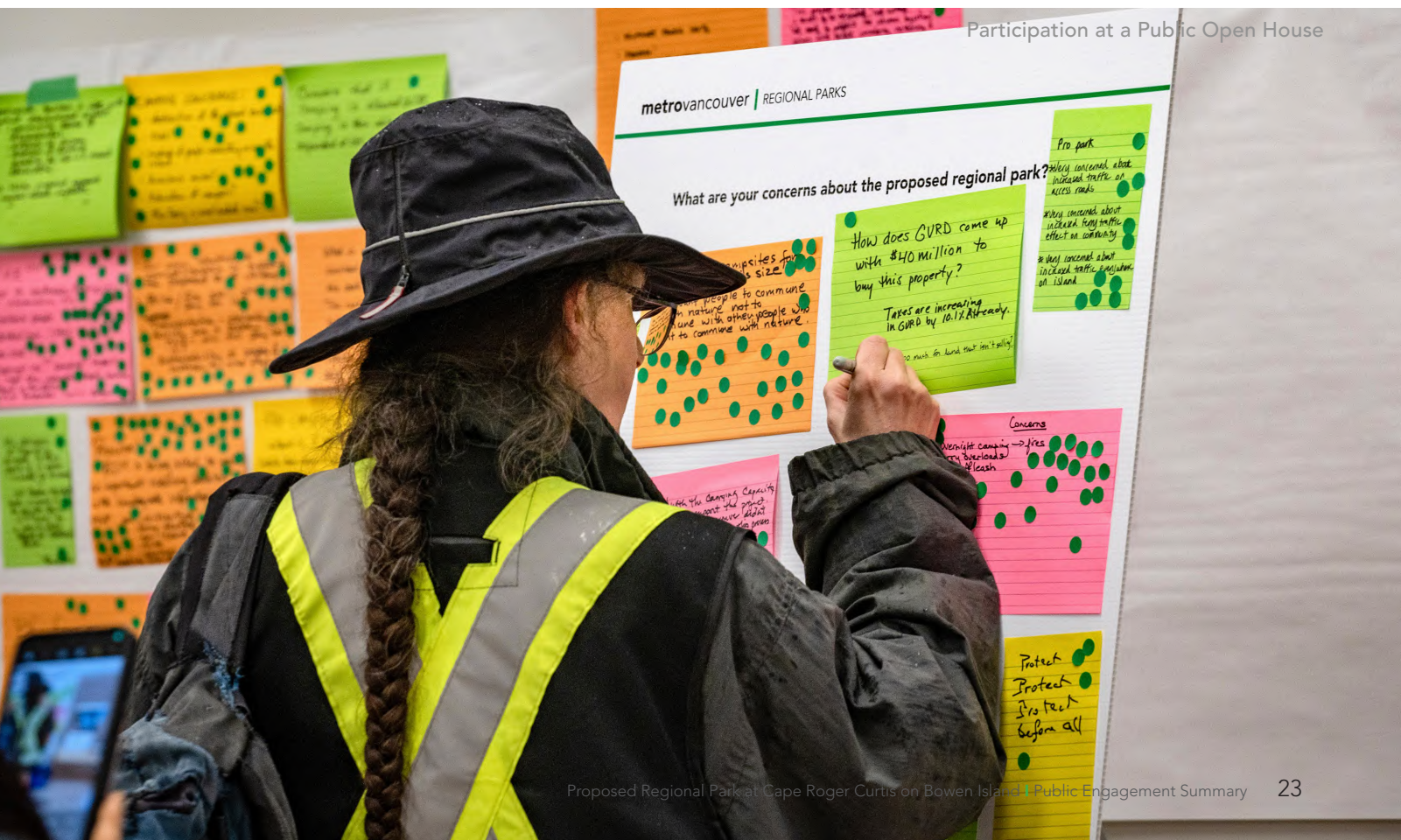
8. Engagement Participation – Letters

Throughout the engagement period, the project team received letters to the project email inbox BowenIslandParkPlanning@metrovancover.org and at Open Houses. A total of 20 letters were received.

The overall themes of these letters aligned with what we heard at public engagement events and through the online feedback form.

Overarching themes of these letters included:

- Concerns about transportation, particularly ferry capacity
- Support for the proposed regional park, and the associated ecological preservation
- Concerns about overnight use and potential impacts on-island (such as wildfires, street use)



9. What We Heard and How We're Responding

Throughout the first phase of engagement, input through events, conversations, email communication, and the public feedback form was considered by Metro Vancouver. The below table provides a high level overview of the common themes that were heard throughout the first phase of engagement. Additionally, we have provided a column of the work we are undertaking to try to address what we heard. This work will continue as the project progresses, and additional conversations and engagement will inform how we respond.

INTEREST	WHAT WE HEARD:	HOW WE'RE RESPONDING:
<p>Transportation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns regarding ferry capacity, especially during summer and peak hours: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicle and pedestrian/cyclist capacity Vehicle impacts at Snug Cove and Horseshoe Bay Comments that Bowen Island residents rely on the ferry system for medical appointments, school, and work: "The ferry system is our lifeline." Support for implementing the cross-island multi-use pathway (MUP). Concerns about cycling safety on the current route to the park, including the route, elevation, and impacts on existing travel patterns. Support for improving public transportation for the park as this would benefit the whole Island's transportation network; requests to see Transit On-Demand Pilot service reinstated. Requests to explore a passenger-only ferry or water taxi service. Request for a comprehensive transportation plan to be presented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans for the park will prioritize non-vehicular access. Integrated and sustainable transportation options to the park include a park shuttle, multi-use pathway, and other means of regional connections. Metro Vancouver will continue to engage with BC Ferries, TransLink, and other transportation service providers to understand the issues and potential for utilizing existing capacity and adding service where feasible. Metro Vancouver will work with Bowen Island Municipality to implement the cross-island multi-use path (MUP). Metro Vancouver completed a traffic trip generation analysis during the first phase of engagement, and confirmed that road traffic associated with the overnight camping program is less than what would be expected from potential development associated with the existing approved land use. A detailed traffic study is underway, which will provide specific recommendations for implementation of the park shuttle service, and demand management tools.
<p>Park Access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns about local traffic impact (Whitesails Drive). Requests to explore alternative access and connections to the proposed regional park. Concerns that visitors will not use alternative transportation modes, especially if they are camping. Support for kayak and marine access to the park. Caution on the nature of the water (can be rough) on the marine access side of the park. Support for Bowen Island residents to have vehicle access and requests to limit the impact of non-residents driving to the proposed park Requests for some parking provision primarily for seniors, young families, or people with mobility challenges. Concerns are that if parking is reduced, people will park on neighbouring streets. Concerns that accessing parkland without a personal vehicle is challenging for people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To bring pet/s; To bring equipment (i.e. kayak, tents); or Experiencing mobility challenges. Comments that a park shuttle service from Snug Cove limits on-island residents accessing the park easily. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metro Vancouver would establish a park shuttle service. In addition to service from Snug Cove to the proposed regional park, consideration will be given to connections and stops in the Metro Vancouver region. Metro Vancouver has completed an access analysis that identifies options for alternative access to the park. Preferred routing will be confirmed with further feasibility testing and engagement with Bowen Island Municipality, First Nations, impacted and affected parties, and the public. Some parking would be developed at the proposed park primarily for accessibility and local day-use access. Parking capacity would be designed as part of a holistic transportation and visitor management program. Metro Vancouver is considering implementing visitor demand strategies such as a reservation system to manage traffic and park visitation. Any day-use reservation system would be developed in consultation with the community. Metro Vancouver has considerable experience managing parking across jurisdictions in complex situations.

INTEREST	WHAT WE HEARD:	HOW WE'RE RESPONDING:
<p>Park Capacity and Visitor Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions on the projected day-use and overnight-use visitation. • Questions on how overnight uses will be made available. • Concerns that Bowen Island residents will be excluded from the park if a day-use reservation system is implemented. • Concern that park visitors will attend local beaches, which are already at capacity and subject to peak season over-crowding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro Vancouver has produced a park visitation estimate to better understand estimated levels of visitation. The estimation will be publicly available. • Metro Vancouver would implement a reservation system for all types of overnight use. No first-come-first-served campsites are proposed. Existing reservation systems used by Metro Vancouver allow the public to book facilities by phone or online. • Metro Vancouver is exploring strategies to manage day use so that visitor numbers aren't too high. One tool is a day-use reservation system. Similar systems require people using a vehicle to make a simple online reservation. Reservation systems could be used when demand is high (summer weekends). • Metro Vancouver will work with Bowen Island Municipality to understand existing capacity and issues at municipal beaches and ensure that this impact is considered as part of broader park planning and management.
<p>Land-Use/ Regional Park Creation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments that people are already visiting the area to rock climb, hike, and dog walk. • Support for the protection of the area. • Suggestions that the land should "stay the same as it currently is." • Comments in support of sharing this unique area and making it public permanently for future generations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro Vancouver would create a regional park out of what is currently private property this would protect 97 hectares of land in perpetuity. • Metro Vancouver proposes changing the land use from rural residential to park, with a variance to allow for supervised tent camping. • Only 16% of the site area is currently protected through conservation covenants—monitored and enforced by the Municipality. The remaining area can be logged and developed. Dedication as a regional park would allow for enhanced protection and management of the whole area.
<p>Overnight Use</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about overnight use and potential impacts such as noise, transportation, safety, and methods of management. • Suggestions for a lower-impact camping program include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced quantity of campsites • Reduced provision of vehicle-accessible campsites • Marine access campsites, bike/walk-in campsites only • Request to phase in camping use. • Support for affordable options for people to visit and stay on Bowen Island. • Support for camping for young families and opportunity for youth to experience nature. • Concern about how walk-in/bike-in/paddle-in sites would be enforced to prevent people from driving in and then accessing these sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If approved, park development will occur in two to three distinct phases, each taking two to three years. Full park development would happen over seven years. • Metro Vancouver will take an adaptive approach to detailed planning, design, implementation, and operation, learning and evaluating before adjusting and proceeding with the next phase. Programs such as the park shuttle and visitor reservation system will also take an adaptive approach. • Overnight uses would be supervised, additional information on potential impacts such as transportation, noise, and safety will be mitigated through planning, design and operational programs. • Camping fees would be affordable and in line with existing regional and provincial camping options. In other regional park campgrounds, discounts are available for youth groups, people with disabilities and seniors. • Metro Vancouver would undertake monitoring and ensure that overnight facilities are being used as intended, through a continuous approach of adjustment and adaptation.

INTEREST	WHAT WE HEARD:	HOW WE'RE RESPONDING:
Day-use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific requests for activities and programs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational and stewardship programming • Trails (including suggestions on design and location) • Ocean watching, solitude, wildlife viewing • "More trails to enjoy the land" • Comments that waterfront and beach access is unsafe and not desired. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A day-use program is planned. Input from engagement will inform a program including conservation areas, hiking trails, viewpoints, and picnic areas. • Detailed suggestions from engagement will be considered during the concept development phase. • During the subsequent planning phases, issues around waterfront access and management will be explored.
Wildfire Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns that the dry coastal landscape makes the area particularly vulnerable to wildfires. • Concerns that overnight uses encourage fire use (even if prohibited). • Concerns that Bowen Island has limited capacity to deal with wildfires. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro Vancouver would prohibit open campfires at the proposed regional park. • A proposed regional park would provide increased surveillance, stewardship, and maintenance of the area through dedicated onsite staff and full-time site supervision for the overnight program. • Metro Vancouver will develop a park-specific response to wildfire management grounded in an understanding of the unique wildfire risk of the land and location. • Responsibility for wildfire preparedness and response would not be placed exclusively with Bowen Island Fire Rescue. Metro Vancouver manages wildfire risk in regional parks through the Wildfire Preparedness and Response Program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every regional park has a Fire Preparedness and Response Plan and wildfire suppression equipment. • Metro Vancouver's bylaw is enforced, and risk is actively managed throughout the wildfire season. • Metro Vancouver staff are trained in fire suppression and supported by our watershed fire protection program. Together these teams include some of the most skilled crews in the Province.

View looking south at Cape Roger Curtis on Bowen Island



INTEREST	WHAT WE HEARD:	HOW WE'RE RESPONDING:
Ecosystem Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the land for future generations. "I support the park's conservation, preservation, and ecological management." • Queries related to how Metro Vancouver will manage potential environmental damage caused by significant increases in the number of visitors (i.e. trampling of vegetation). • Concerns about damage to the bluffs, and the moss/ lichen on the bluffs. • Concern that visitors won't follow the rules put in place to protect the environment (i.e. staying on trails). • Concern about the environmental impact of other elements of human activities on wildlife (noise, light pollution, dogs). • Concerns about impact on the riparian areas connected to the site including Fairy Fen, Huszar Creek, and the Huszar Creek watershed. • Concern about the environmental impact of roads, driving, and parking. • Concern about impact of developing park amenities such as roads and washrooms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro Vancouver will protect the site's most sensitive ecosystems and resources. Careful planning will ensure that people and facilities are directed away from fragile ecosystems. Designed and engineered solutions such as viewpoints or boardwalks give visitors an experience, but limit the disturbed footprint. Enforcement of the Regional Parks Bylaw, which states that people should remain on trails, will be supported through education and signage. • Metro Vancouver will ensure that vegetated buffers are retained between the proposed park and the existing surrounding land-uses. Trails and roads will not be lit, any lighting that may be associated with a key park facility such as a washroom will be minimal and designed in accordance with best practices related to maintaining dark skies. Additionally, Metro Vancouver will ensure that the park bylaw in relation to quiet times and noise is enforced. • Creation of the regional park will protect a significant portion of the Huszar Creek watershed that could be cleared. • Approximately 15% of the total area has been cleared and prepared for residential subdivision. Park development would focus on the cleared area with other areas being restored. Unused logging grades present an opportunity for creating a trail network. Across the whole regional park's system 1% of 13,500 Ha is developed.
Potential Impacts on Island Services and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about impacts on water supply on Bowen Island. • Concerns about potential effects on Bowen Island's emergency response services, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCMP (policing) • BC Ambulance Service • Consideration should be given to evacuation planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed park has over 20 drilled and registered wells. A study is underway on water supply and demands anticipated with the proposed park program. • Metro Vancouver will engage with RCMP, Bowen Fire Department, and BC Ambulance Service. • Metro Vancouver will work with Bowen Island Municipality to review, amend, and enhance the Bowen Island Municipality Evacuation Plan (2020) to provide information on how the proposed park can be evacuated.
Project Process and Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns regarding engagement, especially failure to engage Bowen Island Residents earlier and before making commitments to the camping. • Requests for more transparency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro Vancouver remains committed to an open and transparent engagement process. • Future phases of engagement will build upon lessons learned and provide opportunities for on-island community workshops and regional-scale engagement tactics.

10. Engagement Feedback

In terms of overall feedback on the engagement process, 53% of respondents said they received enough information to participate in this engagement in a meaningful way followed by 20% who indicated that they received sufficient information to “mostly” engage in a meaningful way. Over 70% of respondents would like to receive project updates and indicated that they would like to be involved in the next engagement phases.



Members of the public view engagement boards at Public Open House

11. FAQ

Is camping at Cape Roger Curtis the best location for camping in a regional park? Are there better locations in other parks, such as Crippen Regional Park?

There is camping offered at other sites in the regional parks system. The site for the proposed regional park has existing infrastructure such as cleared and levelled homesites, paved roads, driveways, underground electricity, and drilled wells. This infrastructure can be easily adapted for overnight uses.

What habitat and species at risk studies do you currently have? What additional studies on natural features will you be doing? How would Metro Vancouver plan to manage the increased pressure on natural landscapes due to increased visitorship?

Because the site has been on the naturalists' radar for more than 100 years, there is a wealth of background information available. Additionally, because the site was being prepared for development, there are studies and surveys that were required by law, e.g., ecosystem and forest cover mapping, amphibian mapping, species at risk.

Now that the landscape is being considered as a park, we have an opportunity to bring all of the existing research together and explore in greater detail the potential to improve and enhance the unique ecological values of the site. This site includes important and locally rare ecological features. This important work will be advanced through active collaboration with community groups, and through citizen engagement, research partnerships, and stewardships.

Bowen Island is a year-round destination. Will campsites be monitored year-round?

Metro Vancouver is exploring a May to October camping season, modeled on other campgrounds we operate. The campground would be supervised. All parks are controlled and managed on a year-round basis, with a dedicated park operator. The intention is for the proposed regional park to have dedicated staff to manage the park year-round.

What legal protection is the park going to have to make sure it will never be used for any other kind of development?

All Metro Vancouver parks have a purpose to protect the area in perpetuity. Through municipal rezoning, this park will be zoned appropriately, then owned and managed by Metro Vancouver as a park that will be protected moving forward.

Metro Vancouver undertakes an annual process to dedicate land acquired for regional parks purposes. Typically this is an annual process, where a dedication bylaw is approved by the Metro Vancouver Regional District Board. The dedication bylaw protects the land for regional parks purposes.

What are the expected overnight fees for reserving a campsite at the proposed regional park?

Camping fees will be nominal and in line with other regional and provincial camping options. Campsite fees in other Metro Vancouver Regional Parks currently vary from approximately \$25 per night for an individual site to \$120 - \$230 per night for a group camp site. Discounts are available for youth groups, people with disabilities, and seniors.

Metro Vancouver has an agreement to purchase the land for the proposed regional park. Will Bowen Island Municipality be required to pay the costs for the additional park infrastructure?

Metro Vancouver would be responsible for all servicing, land management, and oversight of the park including waste management, park bylaw enforcement, water servicing, development and maintenance of park facilities and infrastructure, conservation, and all other related work.

Metro Vancouver would provide an investment in the proposed regional park to transition the land from its current state to parkland. These funds will go towards the development of park amenities – trails, boardwalks, open space, washroom facilities, interpretive displays and learning areas, camping amenities, the restoration, enhancement and protection of ecologically sensitive landscapes, and safety improvements. This investment will ensure the park is safe, ecologically resilient, and accessible in perpetuity. As the park planning process moves forward, a detailed cost estimate will be developed.

The park will be staffed with full time employees who oversee park operations and maintenance. Engineers, biologist, interpreters, rangers, and other regional staff will support the management of land, natural and built infrastructure. Metro Vancouver will fund the proposed park shuttle and other improvements required to ensure sustainable access to the park. In addition, Metro Vancouver is working with Bowen Island Municipality through the rezoning process, to determine what upgrades to municipal infrastructure outside the park, are required.



12. How Feedback Will Be Used

The feedback, suggestions, and additional analysis and research in this phase of the engagement will inform the development of draft concept for the proposed regional park. It will also inform and support decision making by the Metro Vancouver Board of Directors, and will be provided to the Bowen Island Municipality for consideration.

13. Next Steps

The next phase will be concept development. During this phase we will share guiding principles and identify different concept option(s) for the proposed regional park. The second phase of engagement will focus on sharing the principles and concept plans for feedback. Feedback received in this phase of engagement will inform the final concept for the proposed park.

Janet M. Stavinga

February 13, 2023

Chair, Regional Parks Committee
 Mayor John McEwen, Anmore
 Metro Vancouver Regional District

Vice-Chair, Regional Parks Committee
 Councillor Rebecca Bligh, Vancouver
 Metro Vancouver Regional District

Metro Vancouver Regional Parks, West Area Office
BowenIslandParkPlanning@metrovancover.org

Mayor Andrew Leonard and Council of Bowen Island
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Good morning Chair and Vice Chair of the Regional Parks Committee, Metro Vancouver Regional District and Mayor and Council of Bowen Island,

Subject Roll Out of the Public Engagement Process for the Proposed Plans to Create a New Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis on Bowen Island

I am writing to inquire about the rollout of the public engagement process by Metro Vancouver and the Municipality of Bowen Island with regards to the proposed Official Community Plan amendment and rezoning application to create a new regional park at Cape Roger Curtis in Bowen Island Municipality. I understand the proposed park would include day-use activities such as picnicking, trails, viewpoints, nature viewing, and water access in addition to a supervised camping program

Although I am not currently a resident of Bowen Island, I have visited the island on a number of occasions over the last two decades and have come away each time renewed by the landscape and the surrounding ocean waters. Over this period of time, I have taken a great interest in the preservation of the cultural heritage landscape and the ecological integrity of Cape Roger Curtis, particularly given its close proximity to the City of Vancouver.

The announcement by Metro Vancouver of a conditional agreement to acquire 97 hectares of Cape Roger Curtis and propose a change to the existing zoning from residential to a Regional Park was welcome news in the summer of 2022. However, the proposal to permit supervised overnight use of up to 100 campsites, with the additional accessory uses of land, buildings, and

structures to support park visitor services, operations and supervision appears to be short sighted. It is unclear as to why consideration has not been given to designate this area with a lighter foot print, such as a park reserve or ecological conservancy. Regrettably, this appears to be a significant oversight by Metro Vancouver as these alternative visions for Cape Roger Curtis should be considered as part of the public deliberations.

As recently as yesterday, I became aware of a meeting to be held on February 15, 2022 from a resident of the Bowen Island Community, but regrettably, no information was available on its location, or who would be attending. Rather the only information provided was that it was to commence at 5 PM. Unfortunately, details of this meeting are not available on either the [Project Specific website of Metro Vancouver](#), the most recent [media release dated February 9, 2023](#) or the website of the [Bowen Island Municipality](#). The only reference to a meeting on February 15, 2023 is found on the Bowen Island Municipal website, under the title "Community engagement timeline with BIM rezoning process timeline" and noted as a "Special Interest Group engagement" – but no further details are provided.

This resident also provided me with a copy of Metro Vancouver's February 2023 Newsletter on the Regional Parks, including reference to the Proposed Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis. However, again there is no mention of this upcoming meeting. There also appears to be no reference to this February 2023 Newsletter on Metro Vancouver's Project Specific website as the latest issue available is dated December 6, 2022.

Given the importance of the proposed project to the Bowen Island Community and the shared interest to preserve the cultural heritage landscape and the ecological integrity of Cape Roger Curtis it is unfortunate that as of the date of this correspondence the details of this upcoming meeting – and the first session of the scheduled public engagement process – have not yet been made public.

There also appears to be inconsistencies about the Public Engagement Process between the [Project Specific website of Metro Vancouver](#) and the website of the [Bowen Island Municipality](#). The former states a three-phase process, whereas the latter appears to end on March 20, 2023. This inconsistency needs to be addressed as soon as possible otherwise Metro Vancouver and the Municipality of Bowen Island will be questioned on process and challenged on the absence of transparency.

Moreover, given the complexity of this project and the volume of reports to be reviewed by the community, it is unrealistic for Metro Vancouver to have established a deadline of March 20, 2023 as the end of the First Phase of Engagement. Further these reports, including appendices do not appear to be available on the Project Specific website of Metro Vancouver, but within the website of the Municipality of Bowen Island. Again, this is a significant oversight by Metro Vancouver as it creates confusion and deepens distrust within the public domain as the project documentation is not readily available on the Project Specific website.

Furthermore, despite the commendable decision by the Council of Bowen Island on [December 5, 2022](#) to disclose all of the information from Closed meetings related to Metro Vancouver's proposal for a Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis from February 28, 2022 to the present, the decisions made by the previous Council will adversely colour the public engagement process. Specifically, the in-camera decision on May 9, 2022 to contribute the Cape Roger Curtis park lands managed by the Municipality, including Pebble Beach (Roger Curtis Beach), the

waterfront trail connecting the lighthouse and the point adjacent to Collingwood Lane, and the interconnection trails across the Cape Roger Curtis lands to the proposed Regional Park – without any previous public discussion was deeply flawed. To regain public trust, the merits of this decision should be tested again within the current public engagement process.

If there is not a quick course correction these missteps, by Metro Vancouver and those of the previous Council of Bowen Island, will adversely impact the successful launch of the public engagement process and the credibility of overall planning process.


These perspectives are grounded in nearly thirty years of experiences serving in multiple roles requiring public trust. First as a municipal elected official for twelve years, beginning as a Councillor for the former Township of Goulbourn then as Mayor and, for six years, as an Ottawa City Councillor. I then had the honour to serve as Chair of the Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Committee from 2007 to 2016 – an appointment by Ontario's Minister of the Environment. You may be aware that the authority of this initiative is the *Ontario Clean Water Act, 2006*, a new piece of provincial legislation at that time, which required communities to protect current and future sources of municipal drinking water from overuse and contamination. This Act came about following the public inquiry into the E. Coli contamination of the water supply in Walkerton, Ontario and into the safety of Ontario's drinking water, established by the Government of Ontario. Lastly, for the past decade I had the privilege of serving as the Executive Director for the Algonquins of Ontario (AOO) in their continuing efforts to advance negotiations with the Governments of Ontario and Canada towards a modern-day treaty. Interestingly, one of my trips to Bowen Island in May 2007 set the course in my life that would have me eventually working with the Algonquins of Ontario. And for that, I am deeply grateful.

Through these experiences and the successes achieved, upholding public trust, and building partnerships were paramount. Regrettably, the unintentional consequences related to the scope of the proposed Regional Park, the roll out of the public engagement process, including the unreasonable timelines, will contribute to the growing cynicism amongst residents of Bowen Island.

Be assured Metro Vancouver, the Municipality of Bowen Island, the local residents, and future generations will be better served, if the two levels of government address these oversights immediately by focusing on the implementation of a more robust and integrated public engagement process. Public trust will also be rebuilt if the process is more collaborative and includes the development of a shared vision to preserve the cultural heritage landscape and the ecological integrity of Cape Roger Curtis.

I look forward to a favourable reply.

Respectfully,



Janet Stavinga

c.c. Morgan Mackenzie, Legislative Services Coordinator, Board and Information
Servicesdelegations@metrovancouver.org

My name is Rodney Neys. I am a lawyer and, along with my wife Marie, we are the owners of [REDACTED] in the Cape on Bowen subdivision. We were the first purchasers of a lot in the subdivision and first to build and move into our home as full time residents and have lived as full time residents for in excess of 9 years. We purchased in this subdivision for many reasons, including based on the representations of the Developer as set forth in their marketing material, brochures, website and published design guidelines. To this day the developer continues to represent that the Cape on Bowen encompasses 618 acres and represents the entire southwest tip of Bowen Island, wherein lies **a limited number of 10-acre nature estates**, *"within an idyllic, tight-knit island of friendly, caring neighbors who form truly intimate human connection based on shared lifestyle, passions and values."*

In the many materials the Developer provided to each potential buyer of a lot, the Developer represented (amongst other things):

- *You will feel deeply proud of being resident stewards of the environment, where there are environmental covenants to actively preserve mature growth".*
- *Truly special locations like this are what family memories are built on. The value of passing on such memories will be rivalled only by the ability to pass on such an exclusive waterfront estate to future generations."*
- *Living here, you'll be immersed in **exceptional quietude and tranquility** - at one with nature, inspired, nourished, anchored and empowered by it every day.*
- *To live at the Cape is an absolute privilege. Here is a precious ecological system, rare and diverse. This is a role model development that honors natural heritage. And here, we invite and welcome a community of **conscious residents** who cherish Mother Earth, and would be proud, proactive stewards of this unique area that is part of the Howe Sound Biosphere.*
- ***We envision a community** where the collective treads lightly on the land and its natural resources, where built structures are exemplary in green building systems and technologies, and where horticultural and agricultural practices are regenerative and organic.*
- *All of the Estates have a Forest Management Zone that ensures the natural state and balance of the ecological system is protected in perpetuity. We believe we have an absolute responsibility to act as stewards of these precious lands. We are determined to spark a paradigm shift through our conscious decisions in how we develop this property, **and how we build an intentional community by attracting and selecting those who share our values for protecting our planet.***

All of these aspirations/representations are codified in a particularly detailed, Design and Resource Guide that every purchaser of a property is obligated to comply with, as well as complying with the Statutory Building Scheme registered by the municipality against all of the residential lots in the subdivision. The Design and Resource Guide can be summarized as the Developers requirement that *"these premier set of properties retain and celebrate their distinct sense of place, from the outset of development. With nature and built form taken together, the spirit is one of sustaining and enhancing what is the 'best of Bowen.'* The Design Guidelines are intended to inspire creative development to

enhance The Cape on Bowen's sense of retreat, unspoiled nature, and close-knit community. This legacy is yours, with these guidelines as support.”

Based on all of these numerous representations of the Developer and the approvals for the development by the Municipality, as further evidenced by the imposition of detailed statutory building covenants impacting all of the lots in the Cape on Bowen, Marie and I made an informed decision to buy our lot and invest millions in constructing our home, all the while safe in the knowledge that our neighborhood would be similarly regulated and protected by virtue of the Developers assurances and the Municipalities approvals. We relied on the integrity of the Developer and Municipality and proceeded to invest in a “unique subdivision that had been created with a limited number of estate homes, all sharing the common goal of sustaining and enhancing what is the “best of Bowen” .

To now learn that the Developer is prepared to breach its representations to the owners of the existing lots and that the Metro Vancouver Park Board is actively facilitating or inducing the Developer to breach its representations is beyond reprehensible and not without legal consequence. The situation is further exacerbated by Bowen’s past municipal council acting in a capricious and arbitrary manner to contemplate changing the “rules” of development within the Cape of Bowen subdivision by changing the zoning of the lands and presumably removing the statutory building scheme covenants without any consultation with, or consideration of, the existing owners and the significant monetary investments and investment of time they have each made to date all to comply with the Municipalities requirements and the Developers requirements. These actions of the Developer, the Municipality and the Metro Vancouver Park Board paint a picture of complicity in undermining the rights and entitlements of the existing owners within the Cape of Bowen by encouraging the inducement of breach of contract with the existing owners.

While I would hope common sense will prevail with the new municipal council with the result that the rezoning request of the Metro Vancouver Park Board is definitively rejected, should it not be, this matter will be moving for resolution through the courts given the history I have outlined.

And just in case Marie and my position is not abundantly clear, we are 100% opposed to any camping being permitted, of any nature whatsoever, within the Cape on Bowen and certainly not on the lands that are the subject matter of the Metro Vancouver Park Board’s pursuit. In so far as the acquisition of the lands for a park use, until we see a definitive plan from Metro Vancouver Park Board ensuring that it will comply with all of the same development covenants (both imposed by the developer and by the Municipality) as exist for all existing owners of lots in the Cape on Bowen, along with a satisfactory transportation plan, fire management plan, water use plan, security plan and municipal infrastructure improvement plan (to Bowen’s existing roadwork), we cannot support the proposed park use.

Respectfully submitted for your consideration and common sense.


Rodney Neys, KC


Marie Neys

Dear fellow Bowen residents, Bowen Mayor and Council, and Metro Vancouver Park Board.

I am one of the owners of a 10 acre lot at Cape Roger Curtis.

I believe that having 240 acres of Cape Roger Curtis become a park is a blessing -- a wonderful gift to the island.

I understand people's concerns about having 90 campsites in the park. However, please, let's negotiate. Let us talk. Let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater. Let's have a win-win.

If done well, I think this is a wonderful opportunity to bring the Bowen Island's many communities together, rather than be polarized.

Thanks for listening. Paul Zysman.

Bobbi Parker

Bowen Island, BC

February 20, 2023

Mayor and Council
Bowen Island Municipality
981 Artisan Lane
Bowen Island, BC V0N 1G2

Dear Mayor Leonard and Council,

I am writing to express my concerns about the request for rezoning and the proposed camping at Cape Roger Curtis by Metro Vancouver. Though I believe a park is in the best interest of Bowen Island residents, I am very concerned about the idea of camping and the increase of visitorship a Regional Park could bring to the already precarious nature of tourism on Bowen Island. At this time, I do not believe the Municipality should approve any rezoning of The Cape until Metro Vancouver addresses all concerns raised by residents and our infrastructure issues are addressed.

As a full-time Bowen Island resident with a family of 5 I am concerned about the following:

- 1) **Ferry capacity:** The ferry is at capacity and in the last three months we have had several cancellations due to lack of staff.
- 2) **Ferry marshaling on Bowen Island:** Marshaling the ferry lineup down the center of our town has reached its limit. With no staff supplied by BC ferries to run the lineup it is regularly a mess with loading and unloading.
- 3) **Medical services:** We are already lacking in ambulance services. The new Health Centre was built by a non-profit organization with support from private citizens. I am concerned their resources will be directed towards increase visitorship and impact locals ability to access medical services
- 4) **Impact on Bowen's environment:** The increase of tourists in the last three years has noticeably impacted Bowen Island. There are too few toilets on Bowen for the amount of visitors with human waste regularly seen near trails. Xenia also had to stop public access due to the impact visitors have had in the last two years including peeling bark off Opa, climbing Opa and simply the amount of walking on its root system.
- 5) **Tourism in residential neighbourhoods and the impact on residents:** Visitors are everywhere on Bowen in the last two years including in residential neighbourhoods. Between having visitors in our residential neighbourhoods and local spots being overrun, Bowen residents' ability to enjoy their own community is being limited.
- 6) **Metro Vancouver history of management on Bowen:** Metro Vancouver has let Davies Orchard crumble and it still sits there years after a rejuvenation project was announced with no improvements. The reason given was inability to find a contractor. If they can't find staff for this project how do they propose to staff a new Park at the Cape?

- 7) **Increased workload for council and staff:** Our new mayor and council have very large issues to deal with. This is taking away valuable time from already overworked council and staff that need to focus on Bowen's crumbling infrastructure.
- 8) **Road access to The Cape:** The amount of road bikers, scooters, construction trucks, and speeding cars along Adams Road in the summer is already an accident waiting to happen.
- 9) **Reduced amenities for Residents:** The General Store and The Ruddy are ransacked of supplies on many weekends in the summer. How many campers/park visitors will come over expecting to get provisions on-island only to find empty shelves? What about the gas station that is closed on Sundays and has trouble finding staff? And the waits to get into restaurants can be hours.
- 10) **Reduced profit and increased expenses:** Is there a concern about losing the \$4000+ (waterfront lots being double that) in annual property taxes from each of the 24 lots at The Cape? Will the Municipality miss the \$100,000+/year in its budget? With the increase in visitorship, will there be an increase in wear on our infrastructure resulting in an increase in maintenance costs?

As a full-time resident that lives on [REDACTED] and backs onto DeeCee Road I am concerned about the following:

- 1) **Road access to the Cape in Tunstall Bay:** This is an ongoing issue that was never adequately addressed by the Municipality. There is inadequate access (namely emergency access) in and out of the Cape. DeeCee Road being the required secondary access road is still laughable.
- 2) **Speeding on Whitesails Drive and Tunstall:** The Whitesails community has raised the alarm on this issue for years with little assistance. This includes cars, bikes and scooters.
- 3) **Wear and tear on Whitesails:** Whitesails Drive is in terrible condition and the Municipality has said it was going to be repaved since 2019.

Lastly, as a property owner in the Cape I am concerned about the following:

- 1) **Noise and change to the neighbourhood:** Metro Vancouver included a map of where the proposed car accessible campsites would be in their recent online survey. I was very surprised to see that the largest site is just meters from the back of residential lots, including mine. We purchased our lot at The Cape from the developer to build our dream home with the promise of being "immersed in exceptional quietude and tranquility" (their website still reads this). Residents moved to The Cape for its serenity, privacy and closeness to nature. 100+ people camping will disrupt residents and the animals that currently live there. The deer and bald eagles that we currently enjoy as neighbours and visitors on our lot will surely move away from the noise of a car campsite drastically changing our enjoyment of our property.
- 2) **Changes to The Cape landscape/environment:** The current map with the large car accessible campsite will drastically change the landscape. Will Metro Vancouver be held to the same (rightfully) strict development covenants that Cape residents are? Will they be clearing large swaths of land and blasting bedrock to make gravel sites for cars and

hundreds of campers? This does not benefit Bowen residents or The Cape's natural landscape.

- 3) **Trespassing on private property:** How will Metro Vancouver keep campers and visitors out of residential lots? I do not want to have to fence my lot and restrict the movement of deer in The Cape. How will Metro Vancouver stop another Xenia situation at the Cape?
- 4) **Metro Vancouver's ability to manage the park:** Given the state of Davies Orchard I don't have much confidence in Metro Vancouver's ability to manage any new buildings at the Cape let alone a 90+ person campsite. Given that they could not find a contractor for the Davies Orchard improvements (not to mention how it was left to decay for so long) how will they find staff for this? And how would they be able to influence BC Ferries inability to find staff for all Bowen run shifts?
- 5) **Policing unruly campers:** We have three RCMP officers on island and no jail. How are an additional 100+ people a night doing an activity (car camping) that typically includes drinking and partying going to be managed nightly by three RCMP officers from the other side of the island?
- 6) **Parking in The Cape:** Cape Drive is narrow. The parking lot at the beach is already full most days in the summer with cars lining the side of Roger Curtis Lane making it nearly impassable. Even without camping, where are all the visitors going to park? This will directly impact the "quietude and tranquility" that residents have invested in.

I would hope that Metro Vancouver has solutions in place before the Municipality considers changing any zoning at The Cape. I believe we need the following:

- 1) Extension of the cross island trail
- 2) Completed plan to increase reliable ferry/water access to Bowen
- 3) Improve Ferry marshaling
- 4) Increased medical services on Bowen
- 5) New road into the Cape
- 6) Increased RCMP presence/funding on island
- 7) No increased costs to Bowen Island Municipality
- 8) No camping near residential lots
- 9) No car camping
- 10) Visitors processed before they get on island
- 11) encourage an alternate transportation to driving
- 12) Increased bathroom facilities in all Metro Vancouver Bowen Island parks
- 13) Metro Vancouver to work with Bowen Island Tourism on a tourism strategy that keeps tourists in the Cove and dedicated tourist spaces on island

I know I am not alone in saying that I am so relieved that we have the Mayor and council that we do right now. I have full faith that you will do what is best for Bowen Island and its residents.

Sincerely,

Bobbi Parker

February 20, 2023

To Metro Vancouver: Bowen Island Park Planning
Cc. Mayor and Council

My comments refer to the CRC Campground Development Proposal

According to press accounts, Metro Vancouver staff say the ballooning popularity of its parks over the past few years is leading to increased emergencies and public safety incidents that are stretching resources thin. Metro parks is not alone in the need to find solutions to overcrowding at popular recreation destinations. Bowen also receives increasing numbers of visitors, that weigh on ferry capacity and a limited taxpayer base to shoulder services and infrastructure. Recently, Bowen's Xenia sanctuary lamented that "... it has become a TikTok and Instagram tourist attraction bringing people every day and on weekends, by the droves...." To weigh the benefits and drawbacks of Metro's proposed camping development, it is critical that Metro to acknowledge that an island is unlike the mainland in its unique ecology and conditions for water, transportation, and access to services.

Bowen residents juggle multiple identities as a municipality within the unceded territory of the Skwxwú7mesh and within the Islands Trust, and collaborative partners in the UNESCO Átl'ka7sem/Howe Sound Biosphere and Metro Vancouver Regional District. What unites us is the common theme of "*Preserve and Protect*" - but how?

As residents on unceded territories, we have a duty to learn from Indigenous knowledges historically marginalized by Western processes. Skwxwú7mesh values described by the Xay Temíxw /Land Use Plan prescribe natural places to "heal, recover and re-connect with the land; clean air, clean water, and healthy rivers and streams; wildlife and wildlife habitat ...". Beyond place naming, early and authentic Skwxwú7mesh consultation can ensure that preservation and spiritual values are embedded in the plan.

Metro Vancouver's inspirational *2050 Vision* to "plan for compact, complete communities that are foundational to enabling low carbon solutions," emphasizes preservation, however a campground development proposal is counter-indicative. New Metro campgrounds should logically be located within its fastest growing areas in order to promote equity and reduce climate impacts.

The Islands Trust mandate to "preserve and protect" aligns with Bowen's UNESCO Biosphere status and the Municipality's Official Community Plan. Bowen's supporting Bylaw 299 identifies coastal bluff, inland bluff, mature forest, old forest, wetland and freshwater ecosystems, and critical wildlife habitat as environmentally sensitive areas. In this regard, a park affords opportunity for protection of the Cape or potential to damage unique ecology by introducing invasive species, trampling fragile organisms and disrupting wildlife. It will be important to residents to see that vision encompassed in the plan as it is fleshed out.


Recent history of the Cape can be told as a series of real estate development proposals for land that deserves to be preserved met by opposition to density and logging. Unfortunately, the proposed campground development assumes densification that prompts the question: What could possibly go wrong? Devastating fire? Water drawdown? Untenable demand on stressed

infrastructure and services? These questions need to be addressed early with viable strategies in order to foster local support as the plan unfolds.

Should there be camping? There could be, but the two strands, park and camping would be met with less of a “Say NO!” response if they were pursued flexibly. Preservation and protection are core values. Camping is an idea that should be re-envisioned for: What purpose? What type? and Where? And then field-tested until the footprint is right for the island.

I hope we give a fair hearing to plans for a new Metro park on Bowen Island. But the plan needs to be rigorously tested against Bowen’s capacity and preservation responsibilities with robust ecological impact studies and firm commitments from essential partners like BC Ferries and Translink. As currently presented, this campground development is one more in a series of proposals that represent “big ideas coloured by a ‘mainland’ context.”

Respectfully,
Betty Morton


Bowen Island

February 21, 2023

To: Bowen Island Council & Bowen Island Park Planning

With this letter I want to declare my strong support for the proposed development of the new **Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis** on Bowen Island. Our family has had property on Bowen for about 60 years – we first used it as a summer place and then my parents moved here permanently over 40 years ago. It has been a paradise for those of us who have been lucky enough to know about Bowen. The development of trails and accessible parks like Crippen Park over the more recent decades has been wonderful to allow Bowen Islanders and non-islanders to truly appreciate this magical natural space only 20 minutes from the mainland.

My own children (born in central Canada, far from rainforests!) have also had the immense privilege to explore Cape Roger Curtis with their grandparents – and we all think it is an amazing space that **must** be preserved in the regional park system. What an opportunity Bowen Island now has to preserve this area for the present and future generations to experience the amazing forest and coastline and to connect with real nature so close to major metropolitan areas!

The rezoning plans to permit some campgrounds on the site have been extremely well laid out to control the use and access. The misinformation circulating about those plans should not deter the Bowen Island Council from moving forward with the application so that the park development can proceed.

Sincerely,

Sylvia (Duffek) Yada



February 24, 2023

Dear *Mayor and Council of Bowen Island;*
Mike Redpath and Jeffrey Fitzpatrick, Division Manager of Regional Parks,
Design and Development
John McEwen, Chair of Metro Vancouver's Regional Parks Committee

By this point a number of people have written to you with concerns about the park, most of which I share—there are over 40 letters that I could have happily co-signed. I won't reiterate all the points here because, as you know, they are many.

It's a weird situation to be in: "fighting against a park." But what I want you to understand very clearly is that *none of us* are fighting against a park—we are fighting to preserve the viability of our community as a place to live, raise children and, for those who need to, commute to the city for work. We are fighting for both a natural ecosystem and a human one.

This is an island, with only one way in and one way out, funnelled by the triple-bottleneck of Horseshoe Bay, the Ferry, and our small cove. Everything that happens on this island affects us all, and we exist in extreme dependence on that little bottleneck. If it doesn't function, we don't function.

I have been reading, with interest, "Measuring and Managing Park Carrying Capacity," the UBC Report prepared for Deanne Manzer of Metro Parks in August 2020. A number of people have quoted from it in reference to problems surrounding parks. But what I took from it was quite different. It is a guidance document; one that perhaps you have adopted in its recommendations for how to proceed in park development. And I noticed something very odd: it talks a lot about visitor experience and the three "core capacities" of Environmental, Social (visitor experience) and Managerial, with a nod to "Cultural capacity" which specifically references indigenous peoples, but *nowhere* does it mention impact on the community of people who live in the area of a proposed park.

I urge you to take the many concerns you have heard very seriously and make them an integral part of your plan to save an ecosystem at the Cape, because while most of us are not indigenous, we are part of that ecosystem. Under your current plan, our way of life, our livelihoods and possibly even our lives are at stake.

Marian Bantjes
1478 Tunstall Boulevard
Bowen Island, BC
V0N 1G2 Canada

PH [REDACTED]

Bowen Island's ecosystem includes humans.

Sincerely,



Marian Bantjes

[REDACTED]
www.bantjes.com

Zoe Christina Solaris

February 26th 2023
Evergreen Hall, Bowen Island, VON 1G1

To the Esteemed Board and Staff of Metro Vancouver Regional Parks

Re: Proposed camping at Cape Roger Curtis:

My name is Zoe Christina Solaris, and I am forwarding to you here the contents of the letter I have just sent to the Bowen Island Municipal Council stating my **staunch support of a regional park at the Cape, as well as camping at the park**. I wish further to emphasize that I know that Metro Vancouver Regional Parks has been on the receiving end of a substantial amount of harsh and ungracious negative feedback. As an Islander having conversations with fellow islanders all day, I can assure you that the bitterly vocal minority who are staunchly opposed do not represent the majority who are far more deeply considered, moderate and in support of a park. There are concerns, to be sure. That does not warrant acrimony.

The moderated and considered support of the park does not, however, lend itself to quick responses and is less likely to show up in surveys canvassing those whose opinions are strong enough to warrant a rapid response. I urge you to sustain your public engagement and to reach below the reactive turbulence at the surface to the substantial genius, professional experience and collaborative spirit of the Island that largely has no time for Facebook.

As written to Bowen Island Municipal Council:

My name is Zoe Christina Solaris and I am a resident of Nexwlelexm (Bowen Island), and I am, with my family, **under contract to purchase one of the lots at Cape Roger Curtis**, just outside the boundaries of the proposed Regional Park. Having lived on islands my entire life, including in the developing world where the pace of change is breathtaking (and unregulated), **I am intimately familiar with the dynamics of small island living and their ecosystems.**

In my professional capacity as a **Spiritual Mentor**, a substantial amount of my work is to assist people in positions of leadership to succeed in their missions when they, at some point, invariably, hit a "wall" and find they can go no further. In my experience, that "wall" usually has a name. The name of that wall is "root loss."

As a colonized (and colonizer) society, we have at some point in our history lost our connection to our own ancestral land, and settled on this gem of an island in the Salish Sea. **Many of us feel very strongly about protecting this island. But there is a stark difference between the strong overtones of "keeping it for ourselves" (when it is stolen land in the first place), versus "working to be good stewards and guests, working in a good way with our Indigenous hosts."**

The world is on the verge of large scale and irreparable ecological collapse. This is due in a large part to our disconnection from nature. And social science tells us one thing for sure: that human beings protect what they LOVE. **How can we protect nature if we have lost our connection with her?** If the sum totality of our immersion is a 20 minute walk with the dog or an hour long hike a few times a year?

What we fail to consider is that the Land itself has personhood. Has a voice. Has a dream for itself. We are so busy volleying opinions, convinced of our own accuracy and that we "know best" that we fail to *actually listen to the land*.

In the last 8 months of consistent ceremony and listening to the Land at Cape Roger Curtis, both on my own and with groups of other ceremonially inclined island residents and students, **the one thing we have *consistently* and *VERY LOUDLY* heard from the spirit of the Land is that its will for its own destiny is to be *IN COMMUNION* with its people.** It wants people to come back to the land, back to the forest, and specifically, to ***SLEEP ON THE EARTH*** to become reconnected to the Spirit of Nature.

To the best of my listening ability, with 20,000 hours of professional experience working with Spirit, and 10 years as a ceremonialist teaching people to hear the earth, it is my best and clear understanding that the Spirit of the Land deeply desires people to be CAMPING.

Our connection with nature is in crisis and is in need of immediate repair. And there is nothing more effective for repairing our connection with the Earth than *sleeping on the earth*. Sleeping on the Earth synchronizes our bodies (finally outside of wifi fields and digital smog) back to organic rhythms, natural tides, and the deep dreaming of the Land itself. Humans are *animals* that belong *in nature*. Our separation from nature is what makes it conceivable that we destroy her.

What an utter catastrophe of disconnection that we have so far vilified this most essential, humanizing and reconnecting activity (sleeping on the earth) on Bowen Island. Have we so fully internalized our epigenetic trauma and root loss that sleeping on the earth is "dangerous", "dirty", and cannot be "controlled"? Are we so invested in keeping this stolen land to ourselves that we vilify city folk desperate for reconnection to nature? This reactive narrative, which I have heard from too many islanders, is a repetition of internalized trauma. The trauma of dislocation from our own ancestral lands.

I would never attempt to speak for, or to say that I represent any Indigenous Nation or group of people. I will however share what I have heard from my Indigenous Friends, Ceremonial Colleagues, and Mentors from multiple Nations, including host nation, seeing as they are so omitted from these critical spaces:

When I have asked for their feedback on *camping* at Cape Roger Curtis, they have asked the following questions:

- 1) Will there be a fire ban
- 2) Will vehicle access be limited
- 3) Will artificial light be limited

If these criteria are met, then Full blessings: human beings reconnecting to the earth is an essential part of our collective healing. Coming back into connection with the land is how we become safe to each other again.

- In light of the colossal potential we have before us to create a Regional Park at the Cape (an opportunity once lost with this same land).
- In light of the possibility not just to conserve 240 acres, but to create a contiguous zone of protection that bridges the Conservancy, the Cape, Fairy Fen and opens up the possibility of further protecting 500 acres of crown land in danger of logging. (All within a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve)

Zoe Christina Solaris

- In light of the Voice of the Land herself (and not our opinions of what is right)
- In light of the endorsement of our host nation, the Squamish Nation, supporting the Park
- And in light of the opportunity to reconnect people nature in a moment when the Earth desperately needs us to fall back in love with her, and to create a new future based on sustainable systems ...

In the strongest possible terms, with clear awareness of the logistical challenges it implies, I ask Bowen Island's Municipal Council to please approve camping at the Cape.

There are indeed logistical challenges and a need to proceed in a phased manner, with great care and attention to the impacts on our island's infrastructure and carrying capacity. But these considerations pale in comparison both to our **shared ingenuity and ability to find win-win solutions**, and in comparison, to **the colossal promise of a Legacy that can truly make a difference in a moment of critical tipping points on this Earth.**

Please, Approve camping at the Cape.

Zoe Christina Solaris

Rev. Zoe Christina Solaris,
Master of Divinity, Fellow, Harvard University (2011)
Doctor of Ministry (IP)

[REDACTED]
Bowen Island BC [REDACTED]
February 28, 2023

Recipients: Metro Public Engagement, Bowen Island Council, Charles McNeill, Undercurrent

“Getting to Yes”

I listened to Metro Vancouver’s February 27th presentation to Council. There was nothing new or expansive in the presentation despite assurances that Metro is reading the responses from their online survey. To the contrary, the presentation demonstrated that Metro’s interpretation of “Listen and Learn” is a term that applies to Bowen residents, not to be construed to mean that Metro will *actively* listen or learn from the engagement process.

I was, as always, impressed by the depth of knowledge, vision, passion, engagement, concern, and care expressed by friends and neighbours. We are a generous and wise community with diverse interests, talents and needs but we also share a common interest in ensuring that Bowen’s natural and human ecosystem remains sustainable. Islanders know intimately that our small island is an ecosystem shaped by its weather systems, the seas that surround the rock, the plant and animal life that thrives on it and the humans that coexist with nature.

Many residents demonstrated desire to preserve the natural habitat of the Cape in perpetuity but they also identified the many ways in which this intention can go sideways if not sensitively implemented. Metro stood inflexibly. Any negotiation assumes reciprocity – Islanders give up some things and the proponents give up some things in order to get to yes. So far, that isn’t happening. Metro has not demonstrated a willingness to sit at the negotiating table.

Yes, this can be construed as a “Once in a Lifetime Opportunity to save nature!” But Islanders cautioned that the current plan could also cause irreparable damage. What about a “Yes And” approach? Could we make this a “**First** in a Lifetime Opportunity” to craft a plan that respects nature by attuning it to our Ecological Footprint?

Best Regards
Betty Morton

To Bowen Island Municipal Council & Metro Parks re: Cape Roger Curtis Regional Park Application

Metro Vancouver's proposed Regional Park at Cape Roger Curtis (CRC) on Bowen Island would undoubtedly be an invaluable and unique "great place" within the Metro Regional Park system! It would also very likely be one of the most challenging additions to the park system, primarily due to the requirement for development of extensive infrastructure traversing our Island community and indigenous heritage, in order to support and sustain this "great place". Indeed, development of a Cape Roger Curtis Regional Park must achieve a complex balance of 4 main purposes. Yes, Nature Conservation + Nature Recreation! And Equally, First Nations Reconciliation + Bowen Island Community Well-Being!

IMHO, the 'opportunity' of a "great place" at Cape Roger Curtis (CRC) outweighs the 'challenge'. However, the COMPLEXITY of the 'challenge' of this project necessitates a different planning process than currently proposed by Metro Parks who seek fairly rapid approval for a "Concept", that will be refined in a matter of months into a "Final Concept" plan, with a whole number of components likely highly uncertain in their final detail until phased implementation.

Given the complexity of achieving the park project's 4 main purposes, the more prudent and effective approach would be to 'prototype'/test-out specific park use opportunities (e.g. habitat protection, picnic areas, indigenous and other interpretation sites, waterfront access, etc.), as well as potential aspects of park infrastructure (e.g. various aspects of non-vehicular access, ferry service, vehicle traffic control, parking management, etc.). This iterative approach is based on 'discovery' of 'what works', rather than on "phased implementation" of a "final concept". It is a successful and increasingly common practice in today's world of new product development or organizational change, when dealing with high levels of uncertainty and complexity.

Over time as 'prototype' components of park use and infrastructure are evaluated and either refined or curtailed, all of the park stakeholders could together learn what an *achievable* multi-purpose Cape Roger Curtis Park would look like! Another advantage of this approach is that most park components could likely be prototyped *within* the provisions of the existing OCP and Zoning, reducing some of the current project complexity. (Note: Day-use predominates in other regional parks, and a requirement of an OCP amendment and Re-Zoning for CRC would only pertain to one possible additional park use, namely, overnight camping.)

Therefore, depending upon community feedback, BIM could very well "confirm support" and willingness to collaborate in the gradual development of a CRC Regional Park, while choosing to DEFER (i.e. neither approve nor reject) any possible OCP Amendment and Re-Zoning for overnight camping use. A deferment could exist for any length of time, until it is much clearer to all stakeholders what an *achievable* multi-purpose Cape Roger Curtis Regional Park would *actually* look like, with its initial tried-tested-tuned activities and support infrastructure.

Finally, such an agile (learn by doing) approach is likely to encourage longer-term and continuously meaningful involvement and collaboration among the key Cape Roger Curtis park stakeholders--Metro Parks, First Nations, and the Bowen Island Community! We could thus effectively work towards, and together share Metro Vancouver's "Vision" that "Regional parks are protected and resilient, connecting people to nature, with benefits for all"!

Signed: Bert Painter, [REDACTED] Bowen Island, BC

March 4, 2023.

Comments arising from the CRC Open House (March 4th, 2023)

Considering that Metro Vancouver Parks has plans to establish a park with camping at Cape Roger Curtis, on Bowen Island, I have a number of questions and concerns.

I write as a full-time resident of Bowen Island to express my thoughts about the proposal for a park and campground at Cape Roger Curtis (CRC). I suspect many of my points have been raised previously by others but I believe you have an interest in understanding many individual views.

Preservation and rehabilitation - are they a priority?

At the outset, I was pleasantly surprised when park and camping plans were announced. My initial thoughts were hopeful because I believe it would be wonderful to "preserve and protect in perpetuity" at least a part of the unique environment of the Cape. My fundamental hope is that the concept of protection is uppermost in the minds of all involved as the plans are developed. I understand that "access" is also a priority but this should not come at the expense of preservation.

Related to preservation, I would like to know if consideration has been or will be given to habitat restoration. I have not seen or heard any such consideration yet; forgive me if I have missed those comments. Metro Van Parks states that they will be able to take advantage of the fact that sites have already been cleared for construction of houses. As we all well know, a great deal of the natural form of the Cape has indeed already been lost in the development to date. Will the new proposed Park serve to rehabilitate any areas and if so, how much? On the converse, does the creation of the camping areas and other park infrastructure demand the removal of even MORE natural features of the landscape at CRC? In viewing the overhead maps, it seems to me that at least some of the proposed camping areas will be placed in areas that have not yet been cleared.

What scale of camping is sustainable?

How has the proposed scale of camping been decided? The current level of visitation to CRC seems to be sustainable, but what is that current level? How will the proposed camping affect the level of visitation?

Metro Van Parks has provided estimates of the numbers of visitors who would likely come to the Cape. Those estimates do NOT fit well with my own experience of BC Parks, especially at holiday times. In my experience, drive-in sites typically are occupied by at least two visitors and often as many as six or eight. If the plan is for up to 35 drive-in sites, that could easily translate to 200 visitors in the drive-in sites alone. I am unsure if the estimates of visitors applies only to those who are camping, or if any allowance is made for day-use activities. Please explain how you come up with your estimates and why we can be confident they are reasonable.

Visitors to CRC will be "constrained" by the park boundaries

Arguably my greatest concern relates to the intensity of foot traffic over the proposed park area. To begin, has any analysis been done to gauge the impact of different levels

of visitation on the quality of such a fragile landscape? I wonder if Alpine areas of the National parks provide any guidelines - I'm sure Parks Canada staff have that kind of insight. I think we can all imagine that excessive foot traffic on delicate surfaces is potentially destructive, so how much is tolerable? Logically, the numbers of visitors allowed should be dictated by the ability of the landscape to tolerate the load.

I think it is important to keep in mind that the proposed CRC park has "hard" boundaries, including steep slopes, private housing and potentially dangerous steep cliffs to the south, with virtually no beach access. These hard boundaries mean that visitors to the park will be unusually "constrained" and I suspect this will enhance the wear and tear on the area within the park boundaries.

To try to get some idea of potential "visitor density" in other parks, it might be instructive to consider two examples. First, the MVP staff at the open house suggested I take a look at Derby Reach as another MVP facility, so I did. Derby Reach offers 38 unserviced campsites (about a third of the number proposed for CRC) and in that case, the visitors can be "diluted" away from the campground along a 9 Km loop trail system with riverside beach access for about half that linear distance.

Another example, although admittedly in a very different context, might be Green Point Campground in Pacific Rim National Park. Green Point offers a larger capacity camping with 94 drive-in sites and 20 walk-in sites. That campground, however, is located in a relatively huge area with more than 5 miles of beach access and a number of other attractions within a short driving distance. The human impact of camping at Green is therefore greatly diluted in such a large area. No comparable "dilution" of human impact is imaginable at Cape Roger Curtis and in my view means that the camping capacity at CRC must be much lower to be sustainable without irreversible damage to the ecosystems of the Cape.

Finally, it is worth considering that the effort taken to get to CRC means that it is likely the visitors will be reluctant to travel back and forth to the Cove. This will add another element to the "containment" of visitors within the park boundaries.

Please explain how camping will be "phased in" and assessed

Please define the proposed starting level of camping - 5 sites, 25 sites, 50 sites? How long do you propose it will take to reach the presumed maximum camping capacity?

Importantly, how will the impact of camping be assessed and by whom? If, in a worst case scenario, camping is found to lead to extensive damage to the natural environment, will the targets for the number of campsites be re-evaluated? My fear is that the political (and economic) pressure will make it impossible to reduce or eliminate camping in favour of more controlled visitation. Is this fear justified or not?

What area is required for camping, trails and other structures?

You provide maps to indicate the location of the camping facilities at the Cape. Please provide accurate estimates of the areas covered by the camping facilities and what percentage of the total area of the proposed park.

Similarly, how extensive will be the planned network of trails, boardwalks and other facilities to enable movement over what is, by most measures, "tricky" terrain.

The potential carbon footprint of a CRC park

What might be the impact of a Bowen Park on carbon emissions across the Lower Mainland? It seems that a primary rationale for overnight camping is that many area residents would be unable to experience the Cape because the journey time is too long and therefore not feasible in a single day. This argument can also be used to demonstrate that visitors must be generating considerable carbon emissions to get to CRC. I think it is overly idealistic to believe that most visitors would carry all their supplies on bicycles or transit and walk on the ferry.

As an aside, I would mention that as a bike rider myself, I typically record 1,000 to 1,200 feet of elevation gain when riding from the Cove across to Tunstall or the Golf Course. This means that cyclists will have, to say the least, a moderate challenge in hauling gear and food supplies across Bowen. E-bikes are a different matter, of course!

Roger Brownsey
Bowen Island
[REDACTED]

TRANSPORTATION / ACCESS

Bowen Island is currently only publicly accessible by ferry from Horseshoe Bay to Snug Cove (known on Bowen as “the Cove”).

The ferry line-up in Horseshoe Bay in the summertime is a bottleneck.

All traffic funnels from the highway into multiple lanes before the payment booth. Most of these lanes are for Nanaimo and Langdale; **one lane is for Bowen Island.** The situation has become so packed that the Bowen Island lane has been moved over to the right shoulder (not even a lane), and wait times in peak hours of the summer are usually two ferry sailings (2 hours). Because Bowen traffic loads from underneath the upper ramps (an area known as “the cave,” “the grotto,” or “the bunker,” and because only approximately one sailing’s-worth fits in the grotto, the rest of the waiting traffic backs up before the booth, sometimes right onto the highway.

The ferry terminal itself is a bottleneck.

The ferry terminal has three docks which serve three destinations. Because ferries are often late (due to overloads of passengers etc.) they often have to wait in the Bay for another ferry to come in or leave—and there seems to be a hierarchy in which the Bowen Island Ferry has the least priority. The terminal is bordered to the south by a full marina, parks and shops, and to the north by a giant rock. **There is no room to add another ferry, even a passenger one,** beyond a small boat that can go to the marina dock.

The ferry (The Queen of Capilano) is a bottleneck.

She carries approx. 100 vehicles and 462 passengers, providing she is fully staffed—if not, that number of passengers drops, which has recently been a frequent occurrence—and in the past two summers the ferry is sometimes **overloaded due to foot passengers alone.**

Snug Cove is a bottleneck.

The Cove long ago outgrew its functional use as a ferry-loading terminal, but it would take many millions—possibly a billion—dollars to fix it. So we struggle with it and with the visitors who use it, because it is confusing.

The ferry unloads onto the main road, taking the two right lanes. Pedestrians often cross in front of the ferry, halting the traffic, and busses and cars drop off and pick up people to the right (when coming off), with various cars circling, looking for spots to stop or park or friends to meet. **Note: there is no room down there for a shuttle; it’s already mayhem.** There’s also a dock to the right of the ferry which **is** accessible to cars (but not to drop off passengers), **but only if you really know what you’re doing.**

At the top of the hill, the main road points straight ahead, but is for traffic turning left, while the right-hand lane turns right and is meant to go straight, which involves veering left and hoping that the person in the left lane really is going left like they're supposed to. Visitors who want to visit the shops need to think fast and turn left to find a non-existent parking space. Shortly after the intersection, more cars will turn left into Village Square, crossing the lane for loading ferry traffic!

The traffic going on to the ferry, meanwhile, is occupying the right hand lane (but not the parking lane) with only one middle lane left for cove traffic. The ferry lane is marked, and crosshatched for areas where one is not allowed to sit and wait for the ferry, but with cars sitting on top of it it's hard to see the markings. **Every single sailing in the summer results in arguments and fights** over people butting in line, sitting in cross-hatched areas, and driving up and down, hopelessly confused.

But wait, there's more! The loading traffic goes up the hill, and then splits into two lanes, which are meant to **merge**, one from each lane regardless of who arrived first—**this always leads to more arguments**. When the ferry is overloaded by about 50 cars, the double lane and the ferry loading area runs out and gives way to the road. Anyone who comes to get on the ferry and finds the lane full must **go away somewhere**, come back later and hope to get in line. Backing up onto the road will involve more arguments and **the police**.

So it may seem no biggie to bring a few hundred extra people onto the island each day, but in addition to what we've got going on already, IT VERY MUCH IS.

Why/HOW Metro has not yet talked to BC Ferries is beyond comprehension.

CYCLING

Meanwhile, cycling in this madness and on the roads is horrible. A year or so ago Bowen was written up on a cycling website as the worst place to cycle. Many idiots evidently took this as a challenge, rather than its intended message of **extremely unpleasant**:

- ☹️ No road shoulder, let alone a cycling lane
- ☹️ Bumpy roads and gravel
- ☹️ hills
- ☹️ cars backed up behind you waiting to pass on hills and curves
- ☹️ cars often passing into oncoming traffic where **the person most likely to get killed is the cyclist**.

QUESTIONS REGARDING ACCESS

- 1) When you get around to talking to BC Ferries, be sure to ask about the management of [x-thousands] of additional people through the summer, re:
 - a) ferry overloads (even walk-ons cause ferry overloads)
 - b) Horseshoe Bay Terminal overloads (traffic)
 - c) a potential passenger ferry from HSBay

- 2) What other methods of transportation to the island that do not go through the triple-bottleneck of Horseshoe Bay, BC Ferries and The Cove has MVRP researched?
 - a) and how much money have you got?

- 3) What are the details of the proposed shuttle(s) to the park?
 - a) How big? i.e. how many people per shuttle?
 - b) How many?
 - c) How often?
 - d) Picking up where?
 - e) Who will run and maintain these shuttles?

- 4) The “Proposed Land Use Plan” posted on Feb 10, 2023 as part of the Public Engagement pages all show a access through Whitesails Blvd. The families who live in this area (a 30kph zone) vehemently oppose passage through a neighbourhood with a strong sense of community, where children, dogs, people with strollers, and others are regularly walking and playing on the road, chatting etc. There is also a school at the end of Whitesails, before Cape Drive.
 - a) Is MVRP exploring other routes?
 - b) Which routes?
 - c) How viable are the routes?

QUESTIONS ABOUT VISITORS

- 1) At the Feb. 27 BIM Committee of the Whole meeting MVRP has indicated the following about proposed camping sites:

PRELIMINARY VISITATION ESTIMATE

Camping season May 1 – Oct 31

	Number of sites		Average Visitors per site	Expected booking frequency
Walk / Bike in tent camping	40 - 50	Bike / hike / shuttle	2	• 50% weekdays • 100% weekends
Group Camping	3 - 5	Bus / van	12	• 20% weekdays • 50% weekends
Tent Cabin	10	5 - Bike / hike / shuttle 5 - vehicle access	2	• 50% weekdays • 100% weekends
Car Accessible Sites	25-35	1 vehicle per site	2.5	• 100% weekdays • 100% weekends

- Average weekday: 122 – 162 people, 29 – 39 vehicles
- Average weekend: 186 – 243 people, 32 – 43 vehicles

metrovancouver

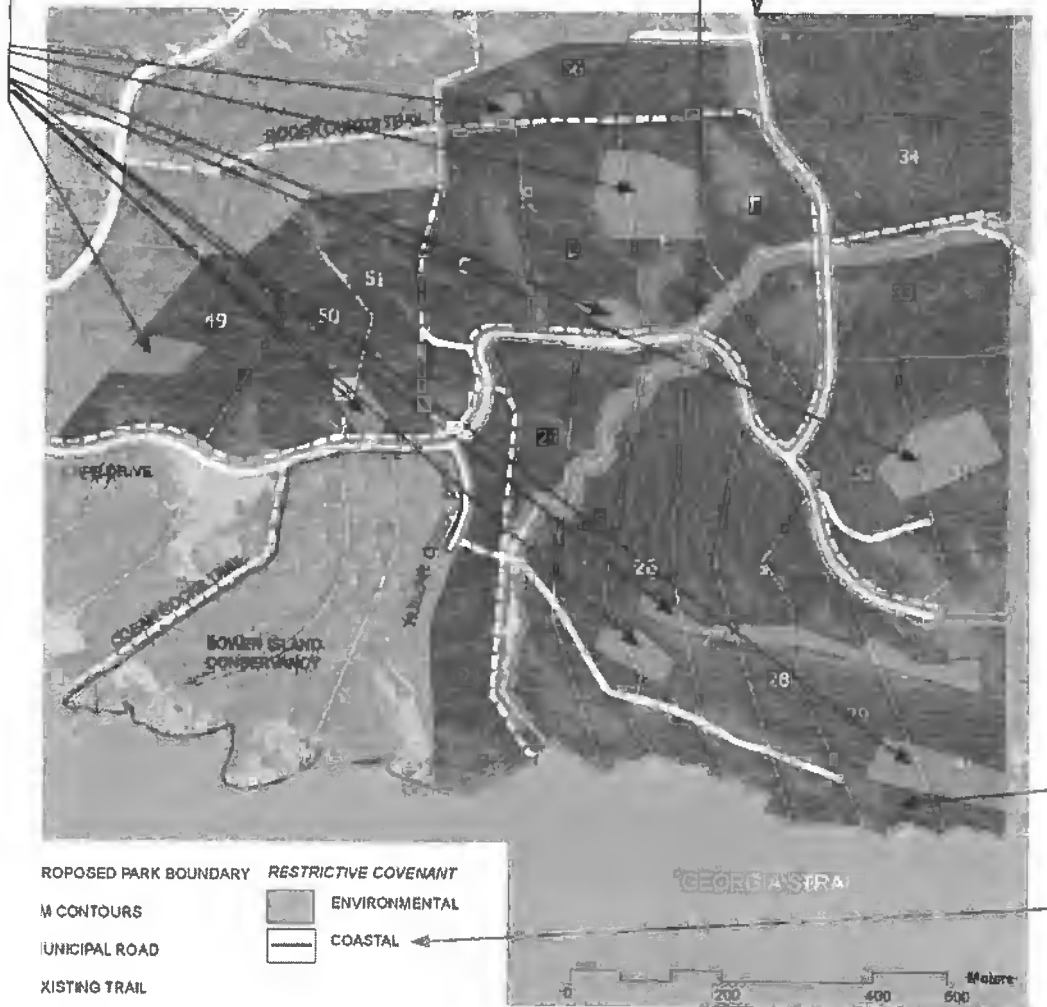
- a) What is the max # of people per Walk/bike in site?
- b) What is the max # of people per car-accessible site?
- c) What is the max # of people per Group site?
- i) Does it need to be an organized "Group" e.g. Girl Scouts, or can 8 friends band together and use a group site?
- d) What is the max # of people per Tent Cabin site?
- i) You snuck an extra 5 car-access sites here?
- 2) How many individual people are anticipated (up to max) to
- a) camp per day in the summer/winter
- b) visit (day use) per day in the summer/winter
- c) will there be a maximum number of people allowed in the park? How will this be managed?.

QUESTIONS ABOUT ECOLOGY

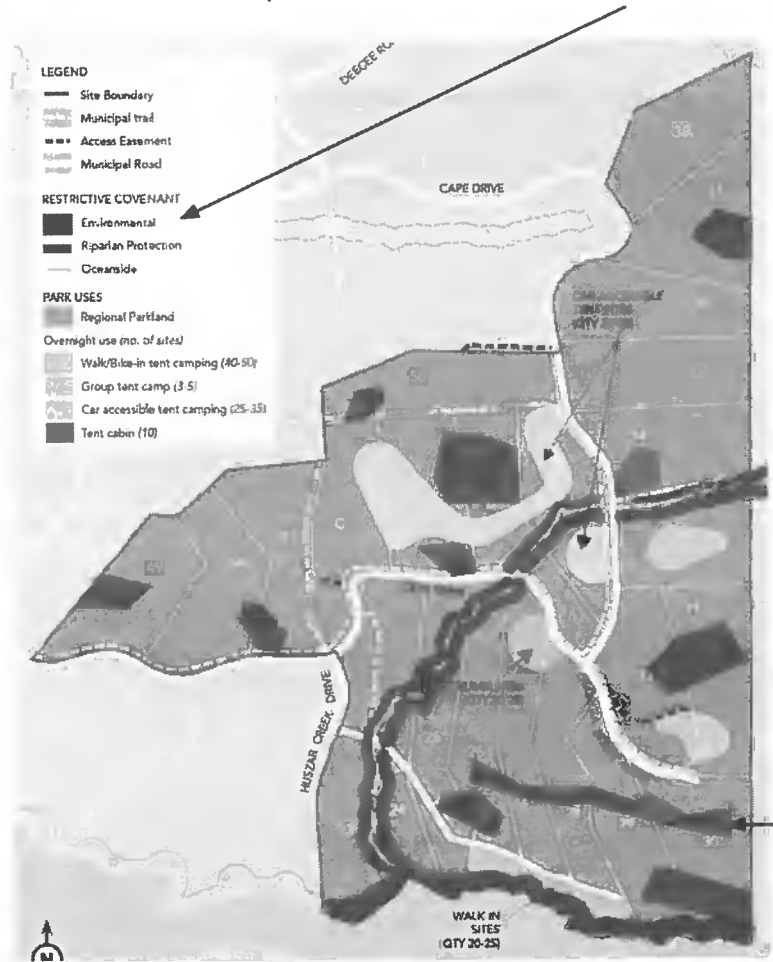
MVRP has repeatedly noted areas of environmental sensitivity in its materials, including protected covenants scattered throughout the area, and has said "The park will preserve a large area of ecologically important and sensitive dry coastal bluff ecosystem and provide opportunities for residents of the region and the Bowen Island community to connect with nature."

Restrictive Covenants

A series of restrictive covenants have been placed on the properties to protect critical natural attributes. The covenants place a series of general restrictions relating to using herbicides and pesticides together with parameters or conditions for vegetation removal. The Ocean Fronting Lands covenant places restrictions within 30m of the natural ocean boundary; this covenant allows trail clearing up to 2m wide but does not permit building structures. The Environmental Protection covenant protects threatened and endangered plant communities, primarily found on the bedrock bluffs. This covenant also restricts building structures and requires that only native vegetation is planted in these zones. The Riparian Protection covenant applies to a 15m setback from the natural boundary of the Huzsar Creek watercourse and also restricts building structures. The Forest Management Zone (Direct protection covenant) is a 50m corridor adjacent to some parts of Cape Drive. This covenant aims to maintain a forested road buffer and places requirements on the amount and density of forest cover.



1) How does MVRP plan to protect these areas from the visitors and campers located in an around them:



2) The Cape is home to a series of very steep bluffs, often covered in precious, but slippery mosses. Given that said cliffs are also very inviting, natural viewing points and picnic spots,

- How does MVRP intend to handle this? Fences?
- Does MVRP plan to keep people off the bluffs, cliffs and mossy rocks? If so, how?



A steep drop!



Beautiful, delicate, dangerous cliffs AKA "High Bluffs"

3) As well there are many dry trees, some alive, some returning to earth, all with eye-pokey bits that scratch. How does MVRP plan to balance the preservation of a living/dying/recycling ecosystem and the safety of humans?



Living, dying forest: not human-friendly

- 4) Much of the ground (eg., at the end of Georgia Strait Drive, and in the proposed tent camping area near the water) is covered in ground that is made up of dead wood and approx. brick-sized chunks of loose stone: perfect for twisting ankles on. How does Parks plan to resolve this?



- 5) What is MVRP's waste management plan?

- 6) The "Proposed Land Use Plan" map seems to show areas of camping sites that are not on the existing cleared sites.
 - a) How much additional clearing of trees, etc. does MVRP anticipate?
 - b) How much trail-making etc. does MVRP anticipate?



QUESTIONS ABOUT WATER

- 1) Based on the testing of the Cape wells, do the wells have the capacity to
 - a) shower the number of people per day expected to camp;
 - b) provide drinking and washing water for all campers plus day trippers
 - c) provide water for watering green-spaces
 - d) and have enough left over to fight fires?
- 2) If there is not enough well-water for fire-fighting, where does Parks plan to get more?

QUESTIONS ABOUT EMERGENCIES

- 1) Thanks to Metro for the fire plan, submitted Feb 27, 2023 to the BIM Committee of the Whole
 - a) Will there be fire hydrants?
(Water from where and hydrants under whose control?)
 - b) Have they consulted with Bowen Island's volunteer fire department?
- 2) What is MVRP's plan to manage medical emergencies, given that Bowen Island only has 2(?) ambulances and the ambulance service was not manned 24/7 in 2021 and 2022?
- 3) Will MVRP build a helicopter evacuation point for serious injuries?

QUESTIONS ABOUT MANAGEMENT

- 1) How many employees to manage the camp will MVRP hire?
- 2) Where does MVRP intend to house these employees?
- 3) What authority will these employees have to stop belligerent, irresponsible or illegal behaviour?
- 4) Has MVRP consulted with the RCMP about policing of campers on and off site?
- 5) Has MVRP consulted with First Nations? (at the Feb 27, 2023 BIM Committee of the Whole, Metro Parks said yes; but apparently at the next days' "Technical Meeting" they said they had not yet contacted First Nations. So which is it?)
 - a) If so, what was the result?

QUESTIONS ABOUT ADDITIONAL LANDS AND SERVICES

- 1) Is MVRP prepared not to take the existing, municipally controlled path to the beach and the lighthouse (as reported in the BIMBC May 9, 2022 Closed Council Meeting, Res. #22-331)
- 2) Does MVRP still want to “explore the opportunity to extend the park into the adjacent Crown Lands and the Fairy Fen Nature Reserve?” (as per May 9, 2022 Closed Council Meeting, Res. #22-331)
 - a) Have they made any enquiries with the appropriate government bodies so far?
 - b) Are they still expecting Bowen municipality’s help with this?
- 3) Will MVRP take over the responsibility from BIM for the financing and construction of a cross-island multi-use-path (MUP), contrary to what the former Council agreed on May 9, 2022
- 4) On Aug 10, 2022 MVRP indicated that they are seeking funding to buy the park.
 - a) Are they still seeking funding?
 - b) And if they have it, where did they get it?
 - c) How much in addition do they have, or will they seek, to solve the problems of island access and park access (water transport, new roads, etc.)

FINALLY

Why has MVRP chosen an island for it’s most extensive camping program to date?

From a climate change perspective, shouldn’t Metro be focusing its parks in the regional areas with highest growth (that would be in Area 6 South of Fraser — East: Surrey, Langley City, Langley Township, and White Rock). Since transportation is one of our highest contributors of CO₂ emissions one would imagine that parks should be accessible to population-dense locations and easily accessible by public transit?



Michelle Marie Pentz

Bowen Island, BC

Metro Vancouver Board
bowenlandparkplanning@metrovancover.org

RE: YES to the Cape Roger Curtis Bowen Island park proposal

March 10, 2023

Dear Metro Vancouver Board:

Thank you so much for all your efforts to-date to make a deal with the private land holders of Cape Roger Curtis. It is essential that you continue with the planned purchase of the 240-acre Cape Roger Curtis parkland on Bowen Island.

Why? Because it is a precious waterfront jewel and ecosystem, and by purchasing the property as public land, Metro Vancouver would be preserving it for future generations of Bowen Islanders and Metro Vancouver residents to enjoy forever. I believe—as do many, many other Bowen Islanders—that Metro Vancouver can collaboratively work through any concerns or sticking points surrounding the proposed park and its format with the Bowen Island community. Though valid, these are truly minor in comparison to the immense positive gains.

Please do not let the vocal minority dissuade you from completing this worthy project that will benefit all and preserve the land in perpetuity. A resident for nearly 20 years, I am a working mother who raised her children here, and regular ferry commuter, and my family is very much in favour of the park. We are grateful for your support and trust you will make the best decision for our broader community.

Thank you, sincerely,

Michelle Pentz

Why we all fight so hard for Bowen

Sheree Johnson & Edward Wachtman

In the fall of 2015, working with the BIM Economic Development Committee, we designed and analyzed a Bowen Island resident survey. The purpose of the survey was to discover insights about our residents: the most memorable experiences they have had on Bowen, and the emotional benefits they receive from living here. A representative number of residents responded to the survey, providing opinions and stories rich in imagery and emotion.

From the findings we were able to construct a common narrative that captures the heart of Bowen residents' experiences:

The Bowen Resident Story: The real moments in life

From the very first time we set eyes on the natural beauty of our island, we knew Bowen is where we belong. It is a special place we can truly call home; a place that provides purposeful and meaningful connections to the things that matter most in our lives. The peace and quiet of our island are valued and soothing respites from the stress and cares of everyday life. Here we can still feel the serenity of being completely alone with our thoughts, amid the joys of the natural world.

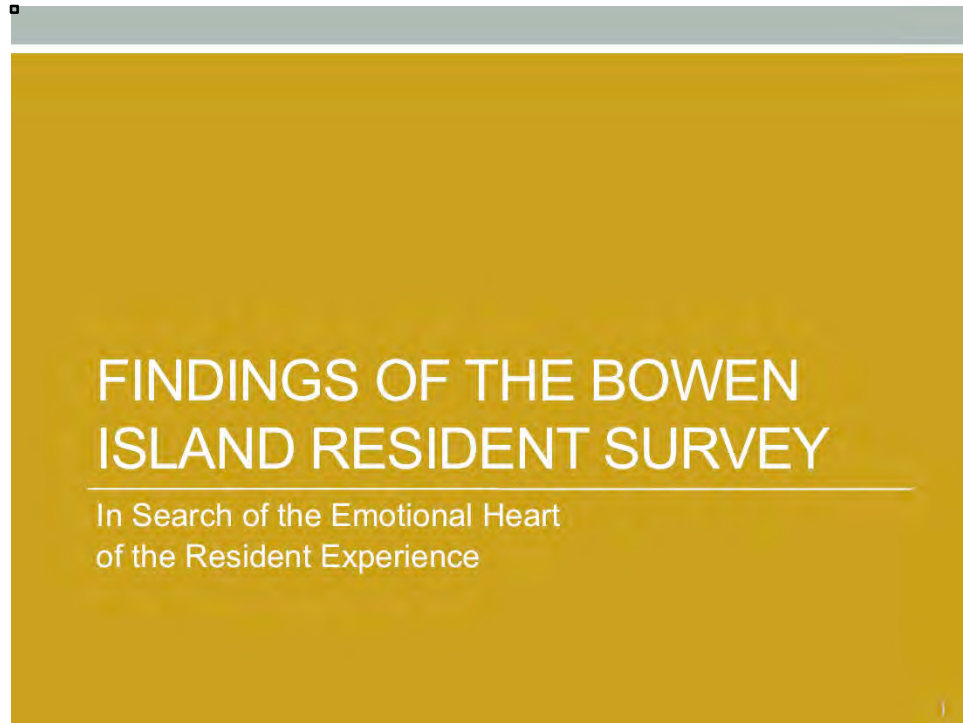
We know that choosing to live on a small island can be challenging. But we also know there is a vibrant and caring community willing to pitch in and help if we are ever in need. It is a community that gives us so much: lasting friendships, wonderful festivities, the arts, learning. We are grateful to live in this island paradise so close to a major city and we take our responsibility for its stewardship very seriously.

Bowen Island is where the real moments in life happen.

Is it any wonder when our island and our quality of life faces potential great change, we fight so hard to protect it? Islands need special care. They are unique and fragile ecosystems. Their stewardship cannot be approached using standard, cookie cutter methods that endanger the island uniqueness. We must be creative and far-sighted in our decision-making.

We encourage BIM and MVRP to envision more than a mere recreational park for the CRC lands. Partner with Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society, the Suzuki Foundation, the Bowen Island Conservancy, and other environmental and conservation organizations to restore and conserve the ecosystem at CRC.


Our Bowen Island story will surely be compromised if the currently proposed plans as a tourism destination move forward.



Background

- Purpose: To discover residents' feelings about living on Bowen
 - Memorable experiences on Bowen
 - Emotional benefits they receive from living here
- Full-time and part-time residents; 15 years of age and older
- On-line survey; printed copy on request
- Conducted: October 1 – November 2, 2015
- Communications through **Undercurrent** articles and ads, mail-drop, Facebook, Forum banner, personal invitations, ferry line-up
- 339 residents started, 214 provided stories, 197 completed entire survey
- Vast majority of the stories are positive
 - Rich in imagery and emotion

The purpose of the survey was to discover insights about our residents: the most memorable experiences they have had on Bowen, and the emotional benefits they receive from living here. The survey was conducted with full-time and part-time resident, aged 15 years or older through an on-line survey. A printed copy was available upon request for those unable to access the survey on-line. The survey was conducted from October 1-November 2. Communications and awareness of the survey was made through articles and ads in the Undercurrent, social media, personal invitations and canvassing ferry line-ups. 339 residents started the survey, 214 provided useable stories and 197 completed the entire survey including the demographics. The vast majority of the stories where positive and rich in imagery and emotion. They were very insightful.



Survey questions

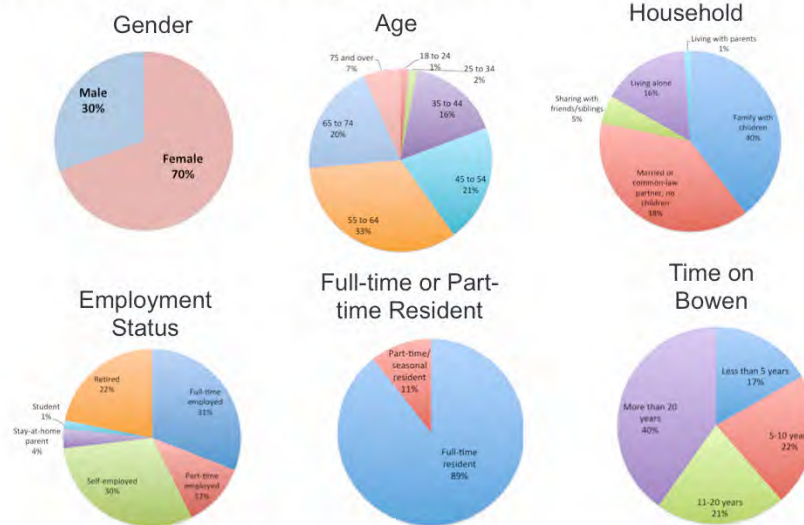
- What three words come to mind when you think of Bowen Island?
- Tell us about your most memorable experience on Bowen?
- How did that memorable experience make you feel?
- Imagine you are writing a personal story about Bowen Island. What would be the title of your story?
- What makes Bowen Island unique and truly sets the island apart from any other place in this area?

The survey consisted of five open-ended questions:

- What three words come to mind when you think of Bowen Island?
- Tell us about your most memorable experience on Bowen?
- How did that experience make you feel?
- Imagine you are writing a personal story about Bowen Island. What would be the title of your story?
- What makes Bowen Island unique; different from any other place in this area and truly sets the island apart?

These questions mirrored the visitor survey from the summer of 2014.

Respondent Demographics



For qualitative research, i.e., open-ended questions, we want to be sure that we have a cross-section of residents who are responding. We captured the demographics of respondents: gender, age, household, employment status, full-time or part-time resident, and time living on Bowen. The only demographic that is not represented is the 15-17 age group. All other demographics are represented.

- Our survey respondents were 70% female and 30% male. This is over-representative of the 2011 census which was 52/48. However, in reading the male vs. female responses we saw no substantial differences and since this is a qualitative survey, representation is more meaningful than statistics.
- We had no responses in the 15-17 age group. 1% from 18-24 year olds. 2% from 25 to 34 year olds. 16% from 35 to 44 year olds. 21% from 45 to 54 year olds. About a third of the responses from the 55-64 year-olds. 20% from 65-74. And 7% from the 75 and over category.
- We have a good representation of various household makeups: families with children, married or common-law with no children at home, living alone, etc.
- As well as from employment status: full-time employed, part-time employed, self-employed, retired, etc.
- 89% of the respondents are full-time Bowen residents and 11% are part-time/seasonal. This was another category where we compared the responses and so no

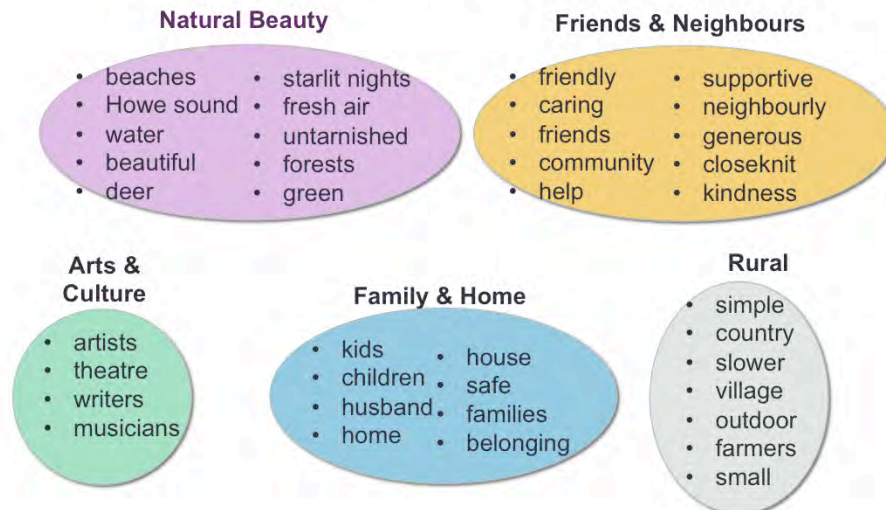


ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES

This next section provides the true insights we were seeking from this research. In the analysis of the five qualitative questions, we have two layers of analysis. We first looked at simple word counts – the frequency of words used – for each question. Then we went deeper and took a more holistic interpretation of respondent’s full responses and meanings.

Let’s first look at what we can learn from the simple word counts.

Tell us about your most memorable experience on Bowen.



In addition to the straight word counts from this question, because there are so many more words used in responding to this question (some people wrote paragraphs on their experience), we also find it useful to look at similar words that we might cluster together in categories. For example, we see many words like *beaches*, *Howe Sound*, *deer*, *fresh air*, *green* which we might categorize together as 'Natural Beauty.'

Likewise, we see many words like *artists*, *theatre*, *writers*, *musicians* which we might categorize as 'Arts & Culture.' Etc.

How did that memorable experience make you feel?



“How did that memorable experience make you feel?” Again, we see the word “community” dominate in the responses to this question. Followed by “happy,” “home,” “place,” “people,” etc.

community	44
happy	28
home	21
place	15
experience	14
people	13
life	12
good	10
sense	10
friends	10
peaceful	9
grateful	9
proud	9

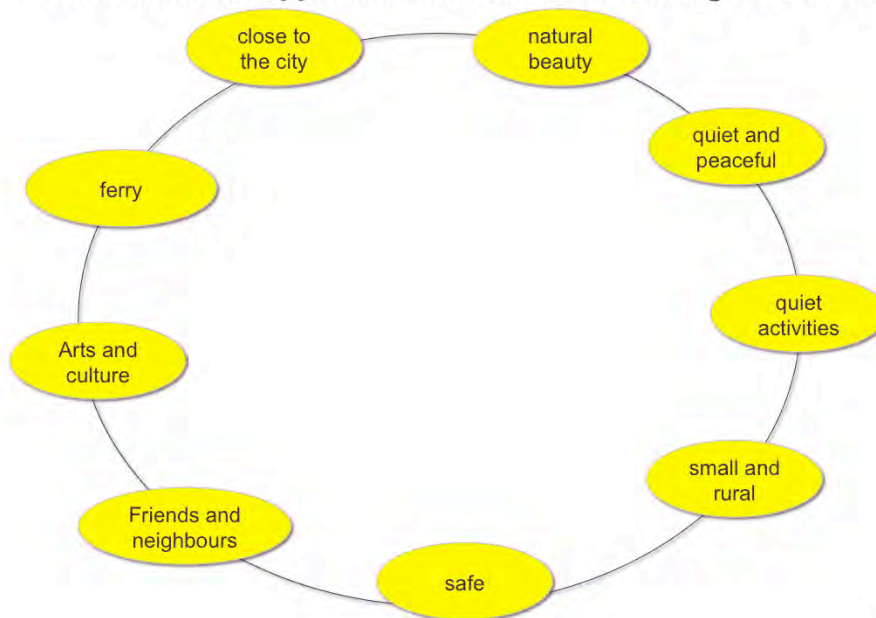
What makes Bowen Island unique?



And finally, “What makes Bowen Island unique?” Again we see “community” loud and clear. Followed by “people,” “city,” “close,” “island,” “ferry,” “proximity,” “Vancouver,” “rural,” etc.

community	45
people	32
city	26
close	25
island	24
ferry	19
proximity	15
vancouver	13
small	13
mainland	10
sense	10
rural	9

What residents appreciate and value about living on Bowen



A way to think about and summarize what we've learned from the words mentioned, are as the things that residents appreciate and value about living on Bowen.

- Natural beauty – we value our beaches, forests, views in their natural state
- Quiet and peacefulness – we appreciate the absence of city noise and the peacefulness that comes with being able to hear the birds sing and the seals flap on the water
- Quiet activities – we value our walks and hikes, our swimming and our beach picnics. For some Solitude and contemplation are important reasons for living on Bowen
- Small and rural – we value that Bowen is a small, rural community; one that is simpler and slower than the city. A place to garden and farm and be outdoors
- Safety– we value the safe environment for raising our families and a true place to call home
- Friends and neighbours– we appreciate the friendly, caring, supportive people here on Bowen; we wouldn't be a community without them
- Arts and culture – we appreciate the artists, writers, musicians, actors that have the place and space to be creative here on Bowen
- Ferry – We may have our differences with BC Ferries, but the experience of arriving on Bowen by ferry—for the first or 1000th time—can provide a sense of calm, peace, and the feeling of 'coming home.'
- Close to the city – though we value being away from the city, we appreciate the fact that we are so close and can work and play there when we want to

You'll remember that many of these same 'features' we saw in the Visitor Survey as well...natural beauty, quiet activities, safety, people, ferry crossing, arts.

While these words aptly illustrate what 'features' about Bowen we appreciate, let's go deeper

What is at the emotional core of Bowen?



Seven core themes emerged from the stories. We've used the actual words of residents to describe these core themes. They are:

Magic of everyday: The simple but incredibly fulfilling pleasures of everyday life on Bowen.
Island of peace: In a hectic, busy world, Bowen provides residents with a sense of calm, quiet, and serenity.

Got your back: We genuinely care about each other. In times of need we can count on our friends and neighbours to be there for us.

First times: First encounters with Bowen Island and our community shape residents' feelings and beliefs about the island.

Enveloped in the community: The importance of people and the sense of belonging.

Connections: The deep relationship with nature, others, community and self.

I feel blessed: The genuine gratitude and good fortune residents feel living on Bowen.

Note, how the bubbles representing each core theme overlap. Core themes are not discrete entities; they tend to bleed into each other, often sharing common characteristics. It is apparent from the clustering of the bubbles that seven core themes are highly interrelated.

When core themes are as interrelated as these, our experience strongly suggests that we have in fact captured the essence of our research. We have discovered what we've set out to find.

'Magic of everyday'

"Xmas Eve at the Little Red Church singing Silent Night under the apple tree in the moonlight with snow on the ground, Community choir concerts, house concerts, Tir-an-nog, live theatre, People plants and Places tour..."

"...sit and enjoy my coffee and muffin and watch the sunrise light up the mountains across the water."

"...how magical seeing phosphorescence...Bowen is ripe with the magic of everyday."

"...just people and friendships and music and dancing and all the foods we brought to share."

"It's the little things, and there are so many little things on Bowen to be grateful for."

No frills needed
Simple pleasures
Picnics
Beach
Hiking
Smell of the ocean
Breach of a whale
Home grown
Everything we need

"Early morning paddle on my new board on my birthday. The water was clear and still. A light misty fog was lifting. And a pod of orcas swam by 30' away. Pure bliss."

"A simpler way of life."

- Our needs are simple...for some that's why we're here
- It's the simple things—time with friends, skinny dipping at midnight, watching the sunrise, misty fog, community concerts, etc.—that matter most and give meaning to our lives

Magic of Everyday

"Bowen is ripe with the magic of everyday". Story after story describes the very simple—but very meaningful—pleasures of living on Bowen: *"It's the little things, and there are so many little things on Bowen to be grateful for."*

Our simple pleasures are homegrown, very Bowenesque: *"Xmas Eve at the Little Red Church singing Silent Night under the apple tree in the moonlight with snow on the ground, Community choir concerts, house concerts, Tir-an-nog, live theatre, People plants and Places tour..."*. And, often they are the result of living on an island and the natural beauty of land and water. *"Early morning paddle on my new board on my birthday. The water was clear and still. A light misty fog was lifting. And a pod of orcas swam by 30' away. Pure bliss."*

Most importantly, it is these simple pleasures that give meaning to our collective Bowen experience. *"...just people and friendships and music and dancing and all the foods we brought to share."*

'Island of peace'

"And I love the ferry, leaving the mainland behind and gradually entering this island of peace."

"The sounds of Bowen are silence - and bird song and chatter...such sounds of nature are drowned out by the sounds of the city."

"It was a starless night and I remember marvelling at how very very dark it was--and how very quiet.... I could almost have believed I was alone in the world."



"It was a quiet and peaceful moment of contemplation of my good fortune in living on Bowen and having places like this all to myself, at least for a brief moment."

"...all I could see was peace, calm, trees and community. I knew it was where I wanted and needed to be."

"At night, it's dark and quiet."

- 'Peace' is one of the most cited words associated with the Bowen experience
- We value peace and quiet; the difference between Bowen and the mainland
- The peace, calm, quiet are Bowen's antidotes to a more hectic world so close by
 - Mirrors—in some ways—the tone of emotional benefits: 'Haven' and 'Healing' (Visitors' Survey)

Island of peace

'Peace' and its derivatives—tranquil, quiet, etc.—is one of the most cited words associated with the Bowen experience. It is the most cited word in the Visitors' survey. The stories clearly illustrate how we value the natural peace, quiet, calm, etc. of our island. *"...all I could see was peace, calm, trees and community. I knew it was where I wanted and needed to be."*

Bowen's peacefulness, its calm, its quiet serenity are some of the reasons we live here. These are also what make us different and unique from the more hectic mainland. *"...leaving the mainland behind and gradually entering this island of peace."* And, *"The sounds of Bowen are silence - and bird song and chatter...such sounds of nature are drowned out by the sounds of the city."*

In a world where we are almost constantly assaulted with the noise of the modern world. Bowen is a quiet haven—a respite from the worries of the world—a place where one can still sit and for a brief moment feel completely alone and at peace. The stories are evidence that these *"sounds of silence"* are very near and dear to our collective heart.

This soothing, peace and quiet speak to some aspects of the emotional benefits

'Got your back'

"It made me feel overwhelmed with gratitude and I cried. ...without that community support we would not have had much of a Christmas."

"...a place where even a stranger has concern for one another, where people go out of their way to make sure you are taken care of..."

"'I seem to be out of gas', I said, hoping for a sympathetic response. 'Oh, no problem, I always have gas with me' was his response."

"I had moved somewhere special, a proper community where people look out for each other and not just for themselves."

"...the 'Bowen Way' in it's finest form. People care about each other here. Actions speak louder than words here. Someone always has someone's back here."

"You get to see the best in people when things are perhaps not going well...we rally to help each other."



"But someone is always willing to step up. I in turn reciprocate in any way I can."

- 'Got your back' is 'the 'Bowen Way'; we genuinely care for one another
 - We can count on each other for help and support
 - Being on Bowen brings out the best in us
 - Adversity brings us closer

Got your back

On a small island with a smallish population we have to be self-reliant. And that means looking out not only for ourselves but also our neighbours. As one story put it succinctly: *"Someone always has someone's back."* One resident aptly described this as: *"...the Bowen Way...people care about each other."* The 'Bowen Way' is reciprocal: *"...I in turn reciprocate in any way I can."* The Bowen Karmic wheel turns and turns.

As much as we hate it when we loose power or our roads are impassable, these events bring Bowen Islanders closer together. *"You get to see the best in people when things are perhaps not going well...we rally to help each other."*

Note: *"It made me feel overwhelmed with gratitude."* This is an example of how one core theme is closely inter-related with another. In this case the core themes are 'I feel blessed' and this one: 'Got your back.'

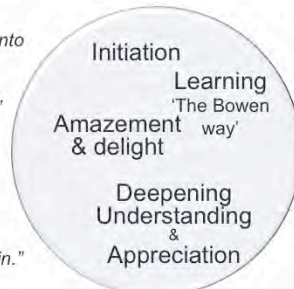
'First times'

"This was my introduction to Bowen Time. I'm learning to embrace all that it brings, although the patience it requires is not always easy for this fast-paced urban girl...But I'll get there. On Bowen Time."

"A neighbour bringing us a carafe of hot coffee during our first power outage."

"The first day I arrived off the ferry onto Bowen Island, I knew I had come home...something inside my entire being fell into deep peace and love."

"Whenever missed or overloaded ferries, grey days, or other inconveniences of island life get us down, I think of that first time we arrived, and feel revived all over again."



"We had just moved here...neighbours we just met invited us for an evening swim at Pebbly Beach. They showed us a 'secret pathway'...that late summer evening was a definite turning point in the the transition for us."

"None of us had ever heard a bird's wing in flight before. Such sounds of nature are drowned out by sounds of the city."

- First times are strong imprints and emotionally very powerful
- Amazed and delighted at first, over time, residents 'see' Bowen in a different light; discovering the nuances and subtleties of Bowen Life
 - We learn about Bowen in special 'Bowen ways'...like being initiated
 - Deeper understanding takes time

My first time

First times are strong imprints and they are emotionally very powerful. We expect to see stories of first times when we conduct StoryTellings™ sessions with our clients. However, we see many more stories about first times in the Residents' Survey than we see in other StoryTellings™ projects. And in those projects we pose an almost identical query about "your most powerful experience_____". The number of residents' stories that begin with their first Bowen experience is way beyond our normal expectation.

Many of these 'first time' stories are about being pleasantly surprised—amazed and delighted—by what residents saw and heard or who they met their first time coming to Bowen: "...first time I arrived off the ferry...something inside my entire being fell into deep peace and love." Something very special, very extraordinary happens when Bowen Island reveals itself for the first time. "None of us had ever heard a bird's wing in flight before. Such sounds of nature are drowned out by sounds of the city."

A number of these first time stories can be seen as a type of 'initiation'; being introduced to the little idiosyncracies of Bowen life, such as 'Bowen time.' Or being initiated to the neighbourly rituals of Bowen behaviour when we collectively face adversity: "A neighbor bringing us a carafe of hot coffee during our first power outage." Or, "They showed us a 'secret pathway'..." This is how we learn the "Bowen Way." It is how we become true Bowen Islanders. "...I'll get there on Bowen Time"

Over time, the first delights of these experiences deepen and our appreciation for our island and our neighbours grows. "Whenever missed or overloaded ferries, grey days, or other inconveniences of island life get us down, I think of that first time we arrived, and feel revived all over again."

'Enveloped in community'

"The diversity of people and the acceptance of that diversity and the knowledge that come celebration or tragedy, the island would join together, all differences put aside."

"I felt like I belonged in the community and I felt supported"

"I feel it is a privilege to live in such a remarkable place and to be involved with an amazingly supportive community."

"The choir seemed to represent the tapestry of a vibrant community... who together make the island BOWEN Island! and who together make a beautiful choral sound."

"...immediately welcomed...I instantly felt part of this group...less alone."

"It was that feeling of being enveloped in the community. That all these people, who don't all know each other, would gather and sing. It was uplifting and made me so glad that I was a part of it."

- 'Community'...is the most cited word (three words that come to mind...)
 - Bowen is as much about people as it is about natural beauty
 - Observed in other Bowen research (John Reid, Wolfgang Duntz)
 - A unique blend of individuals in 'one weave'; many 'tribes'= one community
- Community is about accepting, and in return feeling accepted and included, 'part of...'
 - What we do for and with each other
 - Belonging

Enveloped in community

This should not be a surprise! We learned earlier that 'Community' is the most cited word in the first question of the Residents' Survey: What three words come to mind when you think of Bowen Island?

I like the image "being enveloped in the community..." It portrays a number of feelings: comfort, peace, safety, acceptance, etc.

To reinforce this even more, several other Bowen-focused research projects (one sponsored by Wolfgang Duntz, the other by John Reid) came to the same conclusion. Bowen island is about community; a vibrant community. "The choir seemed to represent the tapestry of a vibrant community...who together make the island BOWEN Island! and who together make a beautiful choral sound." The image of a tapestry--with many different threads woven together to make a wonderful whole—is very appropriate. Our community is a joyous celebration of individuals—characters, even—from different backgrounds and with varying interests who together give Bowen its unique character. When we go to the Dock Dance, Bowfest, the Ball Tournament, an art show opening or choral presentation, a BICs or IPS fundraiser, Remembrance Day, etc. we see these different people

In fact, Bowen is as much about people as it is about the natural beauty we all love and cherish. We want and need both in our lives. "I feel it is a privilege to live in such a remarkable place and to be involved with an amazingly supportive community."

The deepest emotions associated with community are the sense of belonging, being a valued part of a larger group. We are a social species and belonging is part of our nature. And, since we are ill equipped to survive in the world completely on our own, belonging to a community activates very strong emotions. "...immediately welcomed...I instantly felt part of this group...less alone."

At the most primitive level, community and belonging are about being inside the proverbial fire circle where it is safe, warm, and light. Here we are welcomed, recognized accepted and supported. We are 'at home'. Outside is dangerous and dark and we are entirely alone; our survival is in jeopardy.

There is more to belonging than merely survival. There is the joyous dimension to it also. "It was that feeling of being enveloped in the community. That all these people, who don't all know each other, would gather and sing. It was uplifting and made me so glad that I was a part of it."

'Connections'

"... Bowen Island provided close connection with nature, scenic beauty, and space for quiet reflection."

"I can have a way of life that really resonates with who I am. One that is right in right relationship to nature, God, my family, and my community."

"I realized that this was the first place I had ever felt truly at home-- and I probably wasn't leaving anytime soon."

"Connection to nature wherever you are on Bowen, to see, hear, smell, taste, experience."

"I felt like I had found my place; I had landed on solid ground. Perhaps a place where I could plant some roots."



"They made me feel that I truly belonged here and found everything that truly matters here."

"A deep calmness over came me. I felt part of the sand and the seaweed. A part of the Owls' song was mine too. This was my Bowen."

"...the ability to be alone and connected all at once."

- About the 'deep' relationships; what matters most
- Aware we are part of something greater than ourselves... transcendence
- Strongly mirrors 'Connected' in Visitors' Survey

'Connections'

Connections is about our deep relationships. The word 'deep' is critical in understanding this core theme; it is about those things that matter most to us, on a very personal level. What matters most to Bowen Islanders emerges in the stories as a profound appreciation for everything around them. Bowen's natural beauty is more than something to look at, more than a cue to relax, more than the setting for memorable times with family and friends

There is another level, another dimension, where 'connections' has a transcendent quality. It is the awareness somehow and in some way, that we are part of something bigger, broader, more significant than our individual selves. This bigger something can pertain to nature, community, or some spiritual belief. What's important is this awareness does not negate our sense of self; instead it magnifies it and puts it into perspective: *"I felt part of the sand and the seaweed. A part of the Owls' song was mine too. This was my Bowen."* Or, *"I can have a way of life that really resonates with who I am. One that is right in relationship to nature, God, my family, and my community."*

This awareness triggers a sense of deep, purposeful connection to everything around us. It is this connection that provides meaning and fulfillment in our lives. *"They made me feel that I truly belonged here and found everything that truly matters here."* Bowen is the catalyst for these connections.

"...the first place I had ever felt truly at home." Home is symbolic of one of our deepest connections. It is where we begin our journey and where we return. Home is family. Home is our roots.

We see similar responses in both tone and content in the stories from our Visitors' Survey. In fact, the structure and tone of the stories from both visitors and residents is almost identical.

'I feel blessed'

"I felt awed by life. I felt awed by nature. I felt awed by the fact that this natural beauty, this truly magical island, is where I live. And I felt and feel so much gratitude."

"...truly grateful to live in a place where there is an essence of love almost everywhere"

"I still appreciate, every single day, the serenity Bowen provides at the end of each working day and the feeling of community which surrounds us here."

"IPS Masterworks...what a gift Bowen was to my children."

"I feel blessed every day I wake up here."

"I say a prayer of thanks everyday to be able to live amongst nature's beauty and peace."

"...we felt we were both very fortunate! The smell of the water, the warmth of the sun on the freshly fallen leaves & the pleasantries of the passers-by were all very well received."

"I have felt proud to share and introduce to family and friends. I call it home."

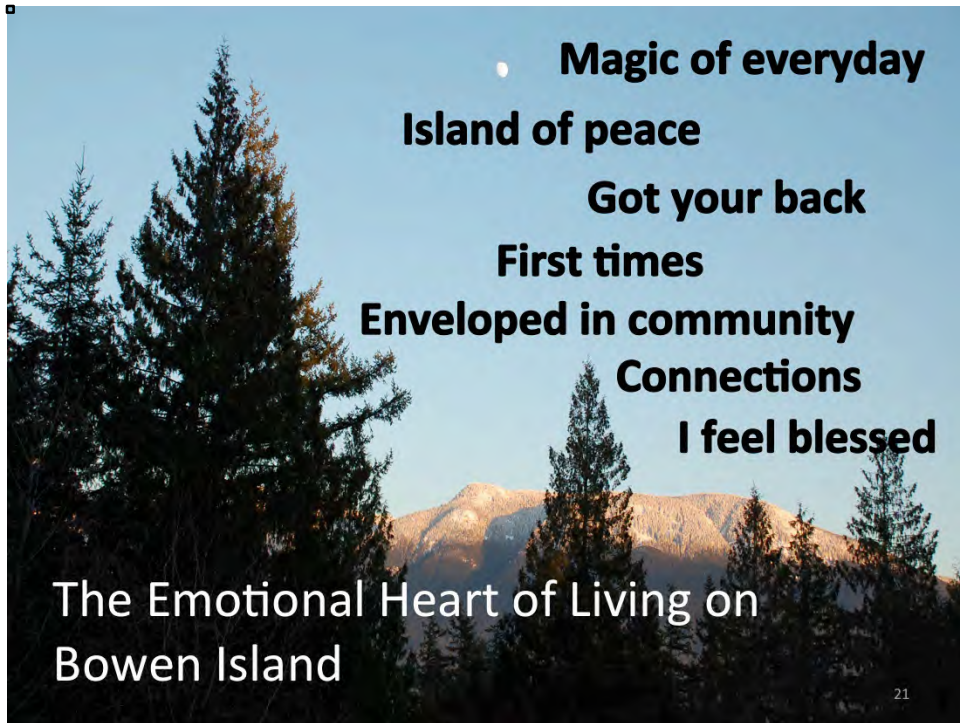


- We know and appreciate how fortunate we are to live here
- We share a sense of pride about our island and our community
- Living on Bowen is a special 'gift', a 'blessing' not found in other locales
 - We do not take this gift for granted

I feel blessed

It is clear from the residents' stories that Bowen Island is very special and we appreciate the good fortune of living here. We are proud of our island; both its natural beauty and our neighbours with whom we share it. As illustrated in a previous slide, 'Island of Peace', we see Bowen's peace and quiet as unique and very different from other places. We are deeply aware that living here is a gift, a privilege, a blessing. We appreciate our good fortune and do not take this 'gift' for granted: *"I feel blessed every day I wake up here."*

A final note: *"I felt awed by life. I felt awed by nature. I felt awed by the fact that this natural beauty, this truly magical island, is where I live. And I felt and feel so much gratitude."* This excerpt from one of the stories, is another illustration of how closely related these seven core themes are. These words would be also be an apt example for 'Connections.'



When we pull all of these emotional benefits together or reconstruct them, we discover “the resident story.” This is the emotional heart of living on Bowen Island.

The Bowen Resident Story: *The real moments in life*

From the very first time we set eyes on the natural beauty of our island, we knew Bowen is where we belong. It is a special place we can truly call home; a place that provides purposeful and meaningful connections to the things that matter most in our lives. The peace and quiet of our island is a valued and soothing respite from the stress and cares of everyday life. Here we can still feel the serenity of being completely alone with our thoughts, amid the joys of the natural world.

We know that choosing to live on a small island can be challenging. But we also know there is a vibrant and caring community willing to pitch in and help if we are ever in need. It is a community that gives us so much: lasting friendships, wonderful festivities, the arts, learning. We are grateful to live in this island paradise so close to a major city and we take our responsibility for its stewardship very seriously.

Bowen Island is where the real moments in life happen.

Here is a reconstructed, common narrative that captures the heart of the resident's Bowen experience



March 15, 2023

Dear friends,

My name is Wade Davis, and I write to add my voice to those in favour of the creation of a new Metro Vancouver park at the Cape on Bowen Island.

My wife, Gail Percy, who has a small gallery in Artisan Square, and I bought our home on Bowen in 1999, fully committed to moving to the island. Unexpectedly, I was recruited to the National Geographic Society; that and a long book project kept us from the island for over a decade during which time I travelled six months of the year and to some 90 nations.

Though witness to many wonders, I also experienced the astonishing pace of degradation of our planet, from the Amazon to Borneo, the Sahara to the American Southwest, the Middle East to India and Tibet; all of which made me that much more appreciative of what we have here in British Columbia. In 2013, offered a university professorship at UBC, I jumped at the chance to move to Bowen, where we fully expect to live out our lives.

For all my travels, I've always had deep ties to British Columbia. My grandfather, after four years as an army surgeon in WW1, ended his medical career as the town doctor in Kimberley. My father grew up in the Kootenays at a time when to reach his boarding school on Vancouver Island, he had to take a river boat to Spokane, a train to Seattle, and a ferry to Victoria. I came of age working for the parks, eight seasons altogether, culminating in 1978 when I was hired as the first park ranger in Spatsizi, our largest roadless wilderness park. I spent a year in a logging camp on Haida Gwaii, worked as hunting guide in the Stikine, and later, as a white water guide, helped pioneer the first commercial descents of the Turnagain, Taku and Raven's Throat, among other wild rivers. Since 1987 I've owned and operated a modest fishing lodge in Tahltan territory, seven hours by road north of Smithers, the nearest town.

I mention all of this only to stress my commitment to our province, and my deep appreciation of the transformative power of its natural wonders. Indeed, everything I've achieved as a writer and explorer was made possible because I was from here; what character I have was forged from opportunities and experiences placed before me as gifts by this place.

We live in a new era, and what young people want, and what's possible for them to achieve, has changed. Not all will be free to explore the far reaches of a province twice the size of California. But surely all deserve a chance simply to know and experience nature, and as elders we have the obligation to make such experiences possible. As my old friend Paul George once said, "If you want people to protect the environment, you've got to get them into it."

For this reason alone, I support the creation of a new Metro park on Bowen. It won't be a grand wilderness refuge like Spatsizi or Edziza, but it will serve as an oasis of inspiration for the tens

of thousands of young people who, by circumstances, are seldom able to escape the metropolitan sprawl of the lower mainland.

Any such community wide conversation is fraught with controversy, distorted by those most vocal, trivialized by the petty and parochial, too often drowned out by self-interest passed off as civic engagement.

The concerns of those in opposition- added traffic to roads and the ferry, questions of maintenance and policing- are certainly legitimate but they are tactical, and readily addressed. The strategic vision is what counts.

My concern lies with a disenchanting generation, perhaps two, all those who have given up hope of owning homes in the neighbourhoods where they were raised. These young men and women need to know that the real estate agents whose faces adorn the sides of every city bus are not our civic and national heroes. That decisions about zoning and land management do not always come down on the side of developers and their wealthy clients.

In making this extraordinary gift to the island, at some considerable political risk and exposure given all the other demands on its resources, Metro Vancouver is sending youth a truly exhilarating message that our wild lands are for the many, not the few, and that nature, at least occasionally, does indeed trump development, at least on this small jewel of an island.

Finally, let me share a sentiment already expressed by my good friend Ross Beaty. No park has ever come into being without opposition. The creation of protected areas has always been complicated, and never free of controversy. And yet, in the end, history only recalls the vision of the creators, never the voices of dissent. To build Central Park, the city of New York evicted 1600 poor black and Irish residents, seizing their small plots of land by eminent domain. And yet today, you would be hard pressed to find a single New Yorker who regrets the decision to set aside the land that became a natural sanctuary visited by 42 million people every year.

Happily, no one will be dislocated to create this new park on Bowen, and its trails will be walked by hundreds of visitors over a summer season, certainly not trampled by millions. The island infrastructure can be enhanced to embrace this new traffic, just as it will grow to adjust to all the new developments on the island.

Should the park go ahead, all of these minor concerns will be addressed or soon forgotten. But should the petty triumph over the visionary, the decision will hover for decades, a dark shroud of regret and recriminations. Abraham Lincoln famously quipped that politicians think of the next election, whereas statesmen look out for the next generation. This surely is a moment for all of us to embrace the long view.

With thanks and very best wishes,

Wade Davis, OC
Professor of Anthropology,
BC Leadership Chair in Cultures and Ecosystems at Risk,
University of British Columbia,
Vancouver, BC

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to you to let you know of my opposition to any rezoning that would allow the current Metro Vancouver park plans to go through at Cape Rogers Curtis. I am against a park in any manner, not just a park that included campsites.

As any of you know that use our ferry system, it simply cannot handle more tourists to arrive here daily without having a hugely negative impact on this island's residents. My family uses the ferry regularly – my husband commutes 5 days a week, and I have a child that needs specialist care at Children's Hospital. Taking my daughter in to Vancouver for a 15-30 minute appointment can take upwards of 7 hours of our time during peak tourist season.

My family has been on Bowen Island since the 1920's. Never in all of my years here has the congestion of tourists made life so difficult for the residents of Bowen Island. As a family, we frequently go to tourist destinations around BC – mainly Whistler, Osoyoos and Tofino. All of these destinations have the infrastructures needed to support thousands of visitors. Bowen Island simply does not, and we are years if not decades away that.

Bowen Island is special. A beautiful, Island on the edge of a city. A city that we are reliant upon for work, school, groceries, doctors and many other amenities we simple don't and can't have on a small island. Our residents deserve to come first when you are considering the level of visitors we can handle here. They are truly what makes this Island so special.

Best regards,
Kim Molinski

To: Bowen Island Park Planning, Metro Vancouver
Re: Proposed Regional Park on Bowen Island
Date: 19 March 2023
From: Rosemary Knight, Bowen Island

As I consider the regional park being proposed by Metro Vancouver at Cape Roger Curtis, I am struggling, as a Bowen Island resident, with the need to reconcile: 1) the commitment to preserve and protect this unique place, its nature – the beauty and fragility of island ecosystems, and its community – the small, rural, safe place I call home; and 2) the recognition that the designations and protections put in place by the Islands Trust and Metro Vancouver carry with them the expectation that Bowen will play a specific role in the Lower Mainland and province.

Bowen Island is an island in the Islands Trust. The object of the Islands Trust Act is to preserve and protect the trust area and its unique amenities and environment for the benefit of all residents of British Columbia. What a privilege it is for us on Bowen to live somewhere designated for preservation and protection. But this is not just for us; it was explicitly intended to benefit all the residents of British Columbia. That is, we are meant to share our island with others.

We are also an island within the Metro Vancouver Regional District. Within the Regional Growth Strategy for Metro, Bowen Island is shown and valued as a non-urban area, designated as conservation and recreation and as rural. Once again, we are privileged to be designated in such a way. But again, this designation is not intended to just benefit us. A place to escape the urban environment is the role we play in the Lower Mainland; we are meant to share our island with others.

This brings me to the park proposal. While I expect to share this island with others, first and foremost I believe we have the responsibility to protect the natural beauty and the rural character that draws people here in the first place. Within Metro, our conservation and recreation designation tells us that we are intended to protect significant ecological and recreation assets of this island. In considering the proposed park, an obvious question is how the park will provide that protection. What safeguards will be in place so that a regional park is compatible with our Metro designation of conservation? Will the number of visitors and camping and the park management advance a conservation agenda? Our designation as a rural area means we are intended to protect the existing character of a rural community, the landscapes, and environmental qualities. Again, what safeguards will be in place so that a new park does not damage the character of this small community?

I am happy to share my island home, but cannot share it in such a way that it negatively impacts the nature and community that I treasure, and that others are coming here to experience. This would be irresponsible - contrary to the Trust Act and contrary to the very way we are designated within the Metro planning document. The park proposal, as currently presented, is lacking in the details needed to assure me that a Yes to the park would also be a Yes to Bowen. Until I can see planning reports assessing, as examples, numbers of visitors, impact on environment, impact on transportation, impact on emergency and other community services, I am genuinely asking Metro Vancouver - how can you expect me to say Yes to this park?

Dear Mayor and Council,

We are writing in response to the proposed regional park at Cape Roger Curtis (CRC). We support protecting the natural wildness and beauty at CRC but have some reservations about the proposed park. Metro Vancouver's recent presentations to Council and the general public on Bowen were largely devoid of details on how they would address our primary areas of concern, namely transportation and traffic management, fire, water, sanitation, and protection of vulnerable species and ecosystems, especially the coastal bluff ecosystem. The most significant take-home message we got from their presentations is that Metro Vancouver's role is to connect people with natural areas. To that end, they have created numerous regional parks, park reserves, and greenways, as well as ecological conservancy areas, on the mainland. What do we know about their record in those places?

There have been traffic management problems at many of the popular regional parks (e.g., tāmīx'tān/Belcarra, Iona Beach, and Boundary Bay regional parks) which is not only frustrating for visitors but has also created problems on local roads and neighbourhoods. Metro Vancouver is still investigating and experimenting with various ways to fix this. For obvious reasons, a park at CRC would pose significantly more complicated traffic management issues for visitors and residents alike. Metro Vancouver says they will advocate for, and give priority to, non-vehicular access to the proposed park. Yet so far, no concrete measures have been put forward to ensure people travel by bus, bike, or on foot, and/or to deal with vehicular access problems. Human behavior being what it is, curbing vehicular habits is not a simple task and uptake is unlikely to be fully embraced.

According to information provided by Metro Vancouver, no open campfires would be allowed at the proposed CRC regional park. Enforcement and wildfire risk would be actively managed through the wildfire season using Parks staff who are trained in fire suppression. That said, a human-caused fire occurred in Minnekhada Regional Park in Coquitlam in October 2022 even though no camping, fires, or smoking (except in designated areas) is allowed in that park. The fire grew to 14 hectares in size and burned for weeks despite firefighting efforts. On March 16 (2023), Minnekhada Regional Park fully reopened and Metro Vancouver is urging its visitors to treat regional parks with more care, especially considering risks posed by climate change. Within the proposed park area at CRC, the south-facing slopes are very dry during summer months, making it especially vulnerable to wildfires. Increased human use of the area would markedly increase that risk.

Metro Vancouver's presentations highlight that a regional park would "...protect the very rare and sensitive landscape" at CRC. And that this unique area already contains "disturbed areas which provide an opportunity for overnight access without additional clearing or disturbances to ecosystems" (comments made by Jeff Fitzpatrick, Division Manager - Regional Parks, Design and Development, to the Committee of the Whole on February 27, 2023). Firstly, we are not aware of any environmental studies Metro Vancouver has conducted in the proposed park area. Our understanding is they have relied on previous studies conducted for the site. Secondly, up to now, CRC has experienced relatively little use by humans compared to what will occur if the proposed park comes to fruition. As reported in a recent paper about measuring and managing Metro Vancouver parks carrying (visitor) capacity, "Many regional parks are at or reaching their capacity, with a potential to affect ecological integrity of parks and the quality of visitor experiences." And that "Over the last three decades, park visitation has grown at almost twice the rate of the regional population growth." ¹

Available information about the proposed park says that Metro Vancouver is exploring visitor management systems to manage day- and overnight use. However, as people come to visit, as in parks elsewhere, they will introduce invasive non-native plant species, soil erosion and compaction, loss and damage to vegetation, noise, and increased garbage and water use, to name a few. It may be possible to control or mitigate some but virtually impossible for others, such as trampling the unique and fragile ecology of the coastal bluff habitat. Unless Metro Vancouver conducts proper environmental studies in the proposed park area to identify sensitive species and ecosystems, then institutes stringent monitoring and protection measures, they will become a casualty of the park. We also believe it is necessary for Metro Vancouver to conduct the research necessary to establish a carrying (visitor) capacity for the proposed park and to use that information to develop their park plan so that identified capacities are not exceeded.

While promises and commitments are being made by Metro Vancouver, we are feeling wary about follow-through based on examples from other regional parks and the lack of detailed information they have provided so far. For these reasons, we ask that you wait to give first reading to a bylaw or OCP amendment related to the proposed park until after Metro Vancouver has provided a clear and concrete plan on how and when they will address our concerns.

Thank you.

Holly Cleator and Tim Misko



¹ Park, Hyeone. 2020. Measuring and Managing Park Carrying Capacity, Final Report: August 2020. Prepared for Deanne Manzer, Park Planner for Metro Vancouver. 54 pp.

Dear Metro Vancouver Parks Planning Department,

I have completed Metro Vancouver's (MV) online feedback form. However, I feel it necessary to provide my comments via this letter as I felt the online form to be disingenuous in terms of allowing for genuine feedback from those who may currently oppose the idea of a large-scale campground based on the vague plans and speculative solutions provided to date.

For clarity, I am not opposed to the creation of a passive park on Bowen Island, AFTER receiving sufficient information on MV's specific plans and studies. But I AM firmly opposed to the creation of a campground on an Island Municipality that does not have the necessary infrastructure/ capacity. I am confident that you have received similar sentiments from a very large segment of the community. Park – yes; campground – NO.

Regarding process:

To my knowledge, the first public announcement of MV's proposal for the Cape Roger Curtis (CRC) lands was its Aug. 10, 2022 Media Release. Since that date, it has been revealed that confidential discussions between MV and Bowen Island Municipality (BIM) had been ongoing, without the public's knowledge, for considerable time before Aug. 2022. This included a site visit by MV and members of the (former) BIM Council on Feb. 22, 2022. I'd like to convey my sincere thanks for the transparency demonstrated by BIM's current Council for releasing [excerpts from several Closed BIM Council meetings from Feb. 28 – July 11, 2022](#) for the public's information.

While the BIM Council of the day stated on March 14, 2022: "*Council expressed its overwhelming support for the project and thanked Metro Vancouver for presenting*", it's clear that a significant segment of the Bowen Island community vehemently disagrees with this statement, as well as with the closed-door process that led us here. Even given the erroneous assurances given by the BIM Council of the day (especially in light of the absence of public disclosure), I am still dismayed that MV's process to date has been so rushed given the magnitude of what you're seeking. I also find it disheartening that MV appears largely dismissive to the many concerns brought forward, and has responded to date with what (in my opinion) are platitudes.

Case in point: the online feedback form didn't allow for support to be expressed for a passive park ONLY, nor voice opposition to the inclusion of a large-scale campground. Questions in the online form were skewed towards support for a campground, and asked for feedback about preferred components (e.g. transportation), most of which do not exist currently in this small community. Further, a recent Media Release from MV that purports to detail "What We Heard" dismissed the genuine concerns regarding transportation/access by stating: "*This project presents an opportunity to plan a park that prioritizes non-vehicular access*". This statement is gravely concerning in that it implies that MV doesn't have a plan in place; nor does it offer any solutions to the concern. Unfortunately, no matter how much you "prioritize non-vehicular access", you will still need to offer real strategies for the real eventuality of significant increase of vehicles to the island.

I trust that you are well-aware and well-informed that Bowen Island was the subject of a proposed National Park several years ago. That process – which the electorate ultimately voted against at the 2011 civic elections – encompassed over a year of information-gathering, municipal staff & volunteer-committee time, community engagement, surveys, open houses, meetings, etc. The work of the Bowen Island National Park Advisory Committee, made up of 30 volunteer members, produced its "**National Park Reserve Community Consultation Report**" dated **April 4, 2011**.

I would expect that MV has done its due diligence in extensively reviewing and learning from this comprehensive report as it considers its currently proposed park/campground at CRC; many of the serious concerns with the National Park proposal are unchanged today. Current BIM staff will be able to provide you further detailed and voluminous material, reports on the National Park proposal, including the feasibility studies from Parks Canada.

Using the 'National Park' proposal as a guide, MV's timeline is not realistic given the absence of any feasibility studies or data in regard to many issues including – but not limited to – environmental impact, transportation, consultation with external stakeholders, infrastructure, natural resources, emergency services, etc.

Following are my top (albeit not all) concerns with your CRC proposal:

- Ferry capacity:
 - Insufficient to accommodate large influx of visitors to proposed park. MV's suggestion that non-vehicular access to park will be prioritized is irrelevant - ferry capacity is determined by the number of people (a.k.a. life vests) on-board the vessel, whether they are in vehicles, on bicycles or on foot.
 - Large commuter population and students traveling to/from school on a daily basis are already adversely impacted by overloads, delays or outright sailing cancellations due to insufficient staffing of BC Ferries' crews.
 - In BC Ferries' newly released draft plan for 2024-2028, no plans mentioned for capacity expansion of the Snug Cove - Horseshoe Bay route. I invite you to read [Travis Beals' thoughtful letter to the Bowen Island Undercurrent dated March 9, 2023](#) on this subject, which also points out that the Bowen Island route barely warrants mention in this 163-page document.
- On-island access:
 - Cross-island road access insufficient and requires all traffic to pass through residential neighbourhoods;
 - Road access within CRC insufficient: single-lane roads, minimal parking, risk of cars blocking access in case of emergency;
 - Distance from Snug Cove ferry to CRC is not realistic for anything other than vehicular traffic (car or bus);
 - MV's public statements re: walking to the site are absurd (distance from ferry to CRC is approximately 8 km);
 - MV's proposal for bicycle travel to CRC via the Multi-Use Path (MUP) not realistic. MUP currently extends only as far as Artisan Square – still in sight of the ferry dock. Even with government grants, extending this MUP approximately 5 km to CRC is not financially feasible nor possible to construct to coincide with MV's rushed timeline for creation of its park/ campground;
 - Insufficient and potentially dangerous conditions for evacuation in the event of an emergency.
- Emergency and public services:
 - Unless MV commits to installing large-scale, on-island, 24-hour fire-suppression equipment & personnel at CRC, Bowen has insufficient capacity to provide adequate emergency services to a campground or park;
 - Lack of parking and therefore risk of emergency road access being blocked;
 - Insufficient capacity for additional garbage/waste removal (small staff, and the fact that all waste must be transported off-island by truck & ferry);
 - Insufficient BIM Bylaw Services to address park-overflow concerns (e.g. in Snug Cove, local beaches, residential neighbourhoods)
- Environmental impacts:
 - Comprehensive environmental impact studies need to be completed that cover ALL four seasons;
 - What specific strategies will be implemented to protect environmentally-fragile areas?
 - Where will sufficient water stores come from to address possible catastrophic fire events?
 - What further infrastructure will be constructed in order for MV to operate the park/ campground (Staff housing? Equipment? Fencing? Site-clearing?)
 - Contravention of the stated goals in the MV Regional Parks Land Acquisition 2050 document as it pertains to addressing/ mitigating climate change (carbon footprint directly related to the ferry). The results of FOI request No. 2019-005 to BC Ferries, it was discovered that the ferry produced 7,719 tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent per year, or more than one-third (36%) of Bowen Island's annual emissions. See also waste-removal comment in previous section
- Economic impacts:
 - Loss of significant property taxes on a small island whose only revenue is that generated by property taxes
 - Basic infrastructure is already strained (roads, water systems, Snug Cove sewer system, Public Works Yard, insufficient ferry-marshaling, Community Centre construction that currently does not have the necessary funds to complete
 - Unlike on the mainland, there is nowhere else for visitors to go in the event of over-capacity at the proposed park. Who will be paying the costs associated with managing park overflow outside the park borders (e.g. local beaches, residential neighbourhoods)?
 - Insufficient capacity of BIM Council and staff to take on significant work (similar to that during the "National Park" proposal);

As previously stated, I support the idea of preserving parkland for present and future generations. But Bowen Island is not a realistic location for a campground, nor should it be promoted as an easy tourist destination. I support the idea of a passive park, and encourage MV to consider the Crippen Park land they ALREADY own on Bowen Island (which IS in walking distance from the ferry) to implement a smaller-scale pilot project for camping.

Alternatively, until MV can provide a comprehensive plan and impact studies for the CRC proposal, perhaps MV could consider proceeding with a “Regional Reserve” on the CRC property, as detailed on page 15 of the [Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Land Acquisition 2050](#) document, which reads:

3.3.3 Regional Reserves

A Regional Park Reserve is an area of land which has been acquired for regional parks purposes, but is not yet formally open to the public. These areas may be managed for informal recreation and ad hoc conservation purposes. Regional parks land can be held in ‘reserve’ status until enough land has been assembled and it can be opened to the public.

While those of us opposed to a campground as currently proposed by MV find ourselves dismissed by some as “NIMBYs”, I would surmise that any individual might feel differently if their basic infrastructure/ services were pushed past the breaking point. Or repeatedly faced with routes to/from their home increasingly taken over by traffic congestion. Or (analogy to staff-related ferry cancellations) experienced total and random closures of ALL access to their community.

In closing, I appreciate and support MV’s mandate to protect natural areas and connect people to nature. But suggesting such a large-scale proposal for a small community constrained by ferry-access-only, insufficient infrastructure and limited services is neither appropriate nor feasible.

Sincerely,

Lisa Wrinch
Bowen Island, BC (full time resident)

cc: Jeffrey.Fitzpatrick@metrovancover.org
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