

# Community Input Summary Report

Public Open House 1 | March 27, 2013 | Biomass Feasibility Study

Updated April 18, 2013



**University  
of Victoria**



## EVENT OVERVIEW

### Objective

The purpose of the open house was to publicly launch the project and to begin delivering on the broader community engagement objectives for the project, which are to:

- Inform the public and stakeholders about the project, including the study process and opportunities for involvement;
- Educate about biomass, including its benefits, and the broader context of renewable energy and the energy system;
- Obtain input on priorities and aspirations for the biomass plant at the UVic Gordon Head campus, which will be considered in the development of recommendations and options;
- Explore interests, opportunities, and options with stakeholders; and
- Report back and demonstrate how community input was used in developing a preferred option.

### Participants

The event was broadly advertised and open to the general public. Approximately 85 people attended.

### Format

The event was held on Wednesday, March 27th between 3:00-7:00pm in order to capture a diverse audience (e.g. students, staff, and general public). The open house was a drop-in / come-and-go format and included the following elements: information and opportunities for providing written comments on interactive boards; comments forms; and discussions with a team of approximately 10 UVic staff and consulting team members.

## THIS SUMMARY

This document provides a summary of themes that emerged in the community input received on the interactive boards and comment forms.

The input will be considered in the development of recommended options for a potential biomass plant.

## INTERACTIVE BOARDS

The interactive boards contained project information and also provided the opportunity for participants to share comments. To view the boards, please visit the following webpage: [www.uvic.ca/biomass](http://www.uvic.ca/biomass).

Response themes included the following points:

### Welcome Board

#### **Why did you come today?**

- Concern about air quality;
- Concern about proximity to residences and/or wood waste transport;
- Interest in funding arrangement (e.g. public-private partnership); and
- General support of project and/or interest in partnership.

### Energy and the University of Victoria

#### **Which energy and climate issues or opportunities matter to you?**

- Concern about air quality and emissions;
- Interest in climate change and carbon neutrality;
- Desire for other renewable energy options; and
- Questions about source of funding.

### Precedents and Examples

#### **Which aesthetic considerations are important to you?**

- Only three responses were provided, and include interest in height, trucking routes, and plant location.

### What We Know and What We Need to Learn

#### **What would you like to learn through the study process?**

- Location of the plant;
- Emissions;
- Feasibility of other renewable technologies (e.g. geothermal, solar);
- Fuel source considerations (e.g. quantity, type, etc); and
- Trucking access/routes and traffic impacts.

### Research and Learning Benefits

#### **What other research and learning opportunities exist?**

- Only five responses were provided, and the only common theme was a focus on researching ways to manage and utilize emissions.

## Priorities and Aspirations

### **What are your other priorities and aspirations for a potential biomass plant at UVic?**

- A desire to minimize emissions and particulates, and protect air quality (including smell);
- A desire to minimize truck traffic and general impacts on residential neighbourhoods;
- An interest in fuel considerations (e.g. quantity, guaranteed/continuous supply, concern about diverting fertilizer from ecosystems);
- A desire to see more technical information;
- A desire to explore other renewable energy options; and
- Interest in ensuring that costs make sense.

## Where do you live?

All participants indicate that they live off campus, with approximately half living within 2-3 kilometers of UVic, and the other half living outside this range.

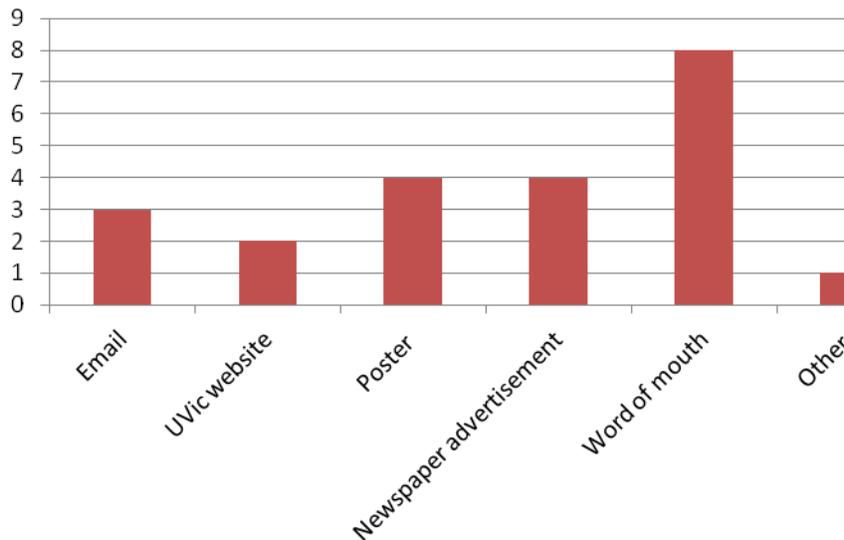


## COMMENT FORMS

Two comment forms were provided at the open house. A total of 17 comment forms were completed by participants, of which 13 focused the participant's experience at the open house itself:

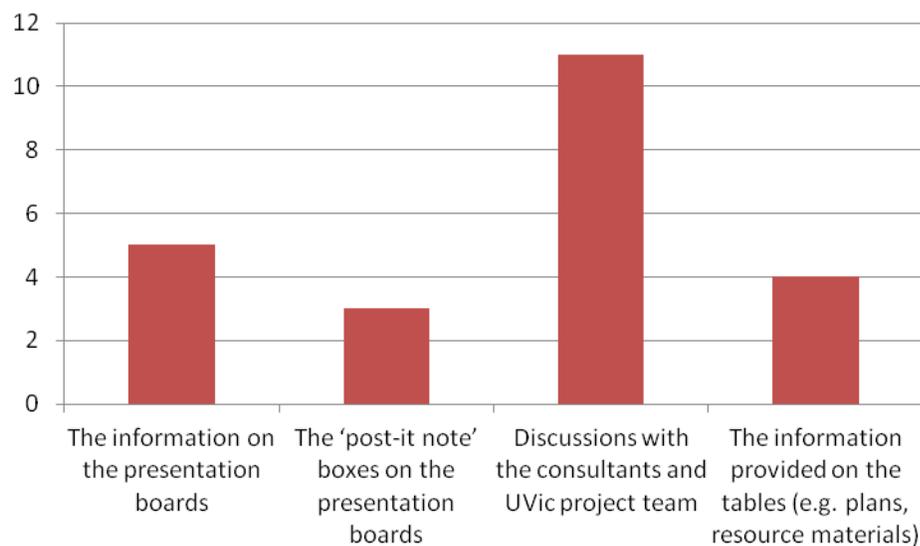
### How did you hear about the open house?

**Graph 1: Number of participants by outreach channel**



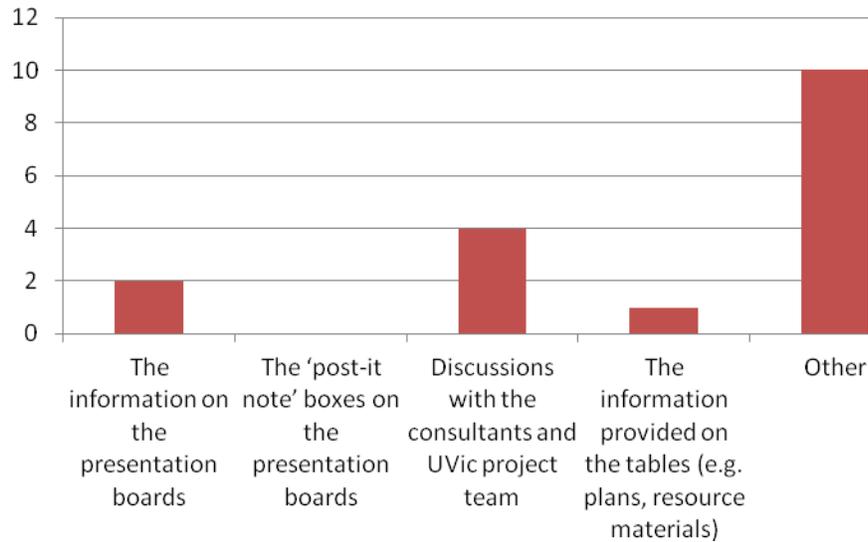
### What was the most valuable part of the open house?

**Graph 2: Number of participants by open house activity**



### Which part of the open house could have been most improved?

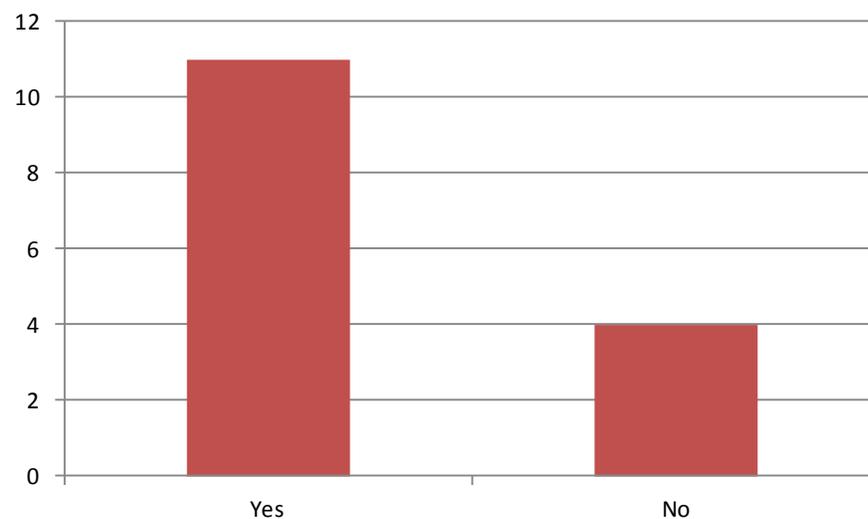
**Graph 3: Number of participants by open house activity**



Other comments included a desire for more detail and additional event outreach/advertising.

### Would you like to see more information on biomass next time?

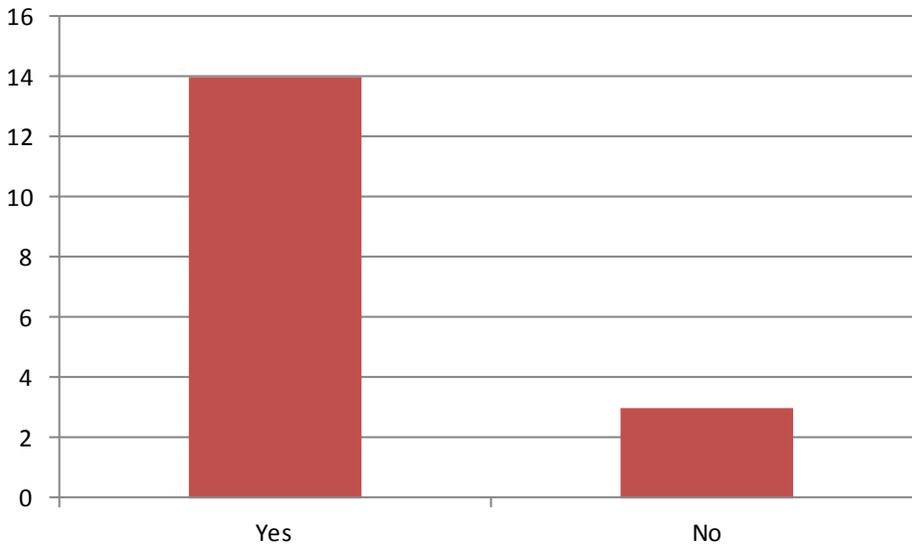
**Graph 4: Number of participants by yes/no response**



Other comments included a desire for more technical information and specific numbers.

## Do you feel that you had sufficient opportunity to provide input?

**Graph 5: Number of participants by yes/no response**



## Do you have any other comments about the open house?

The second comment form was open-ended, allowing participants to provide additional comments.

Three of the four responses focused on a desire for more detail and specific information/numbers. The other response identified a desire for a thorough analysis of other renewable energy sources, including geothermal and solar.

## DISCUSSIONS WITH UVIC STAFF AND CONSULTING TEAM

Generally speaking, conversation topics between participants and the project team (i.e. both UVic staff and consulting team members) aligned with comments on the boards.

In addition to the points already identified in this summary report, other points included:

- **Financial viability** - The carbon tax has an impact on financial viability, and there is a risk associated with repealing the carbon tax (including concern about provincial debt in paying for the plant); and
- **Workers/operators** - There are questions about who will run the plant, and what will happen to the jobs of the current plant operators.

## NEXT STEPS

During April through August 2013, technical analysis will be undertaken to: determine biomass plant system capacity; assess fuel sources, costs, and quantities; assess emissions; assess sites and building requirements; and undertake preliminary biomass plant designs.

Additional community consultation will be undertaken in the future, including two open houses. In the meantime, community members can:

- Check the project website for updates at: [www.uvic.ca/biomass](http://www.uvic.ca/biomass); and
- Sign up for the project listserv and/or send questions and comments via email to: [biomass@uvic.ca](mailto:biomass@uvic.ca).