

Smart Growth in the Sea-to-Sky Corridor



*Planning for a Livable Sea-to-Sky Corridor:
The Greenbelt Initiative*



Ione Smith . Special Projects Coordinator . Smart Growth BC .
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Outline



- I. Smart Growth BC
- II. Smart Growth Principles
- III. Smart Growth in the Sea-to-Sky
- IV. Sea-to-Sky Greenbelt
- V. What You Can Do

Smart Growth BC



Founded in 1999, Smart Growth BC is a charitable non-profit organization with a mandate to create more livable communities in British Columbia.



Through...

- Research
- Policy Alternatives
- Community Engagement
- Implementation



Smart Growth BC publications...



Impacts of the Current System



The Current Growth Dynamic



Anytown, BC



Why Should We Care About Boring Old Land Use?



- **Environmental**

- Climate Change, habitat, aesthetics, greenspace, community health and green services (air, water, recreation, etc)

- **Social**

- Housing, social interactions, transportation and sense of community, obesity and other health-related consequences

- **Economic**

- Implications for taxes and infrastructure spending, *natural resources and tourism.*

What is Smart Growth?



Smart growth is well-planned development that protects open space and "working lands", revitalizes communities, keeps housing affordable and provides more transportation choices.



Smart Growth in Rural Areas



Requires strategies and policies to direct growth
away from rural, "working lands"
and
towards existing, serviced areas



Ensuring livability and prosperity by
Keeping the town in the town and the country in the country...

What is Smart Growth?



More transportation choices and less traffic **Not** against cars and roads

Vibrant cities, suburbs and towns **Not** anti-suburban

Wider variety of housing choices **Not** about telling people where or how to live

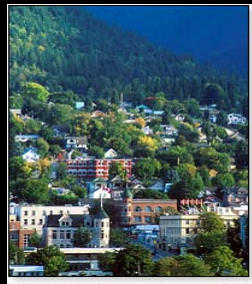
Well-planned growth that improves quality of life **Not** against growth

The "where and how" of growth

1. Build Compact, Complete Communities



- Mix land uses through zoning by-laws
- Provide incentives for higher densities, e.g. density bonuses
- Provide incentives for infill and redevelopment projects



2. Create Walkable Communities



- 5 minute walking distance from homes to transit and shops
- Traffic calming
- Pedestrian oriented street design
- Shops and homes facing the street
- Public spaces, community art



3. Transportation Choices



- Provide multi-modal facilities and infrastructure
- Zone for transit-oriented developments
- Get rid of minimum parking standards
- Make sure transportation spending reflects stated policies
- 12 is the magic number: 12 people/acre



4. Foster Community Identity



- Create public places
- Encourage preservation and retrofitting of heritage buildings
- Allow for sidewalk dining
- Enact design guidelines so that streets, buildings and public spaces work together to create a sense of place



5. Protect and Preserve Green Spaces



- Identify green zones and urban growth boundaries
- Development permit areas
- Conservation covenants
- Stewardship protection by-laws
- Use an ecosystem based planning approach



6. Provide a Range of Housing Options



- Enact inclusionary zoning by-laws
- Revise zoning by-laws and building codes to allow secondary suites, live-work space
- Provide incentives for infill development



7. Promote Energy-Efficient Infrastructure



The Drive, Pave and Pipe Approach...

Seattle Street Edge Alternatives



Before



After



- Natural drainage systems
- SEA reduced impervious surfaces to 11% less than traditional suburban street

8. Strengthen Development Towards Existing Communities



- Support economic development strategies that enhance local communities.
- DCCs - charge less for infill developments than for low-density, fringe developments



9. Ensure an Early and Ongoing Community Engagement



- OCP reviews
- Regional Growth Strategies
- Neighbourhood Concept Plans
- Local Area Plans
- Public hearings
- Advisory committees
- Design charrettes



10. Engaged Citizenry



Why is Smart Growth Better?



- E**nvironment Consumes less land and water, causes less pollution, and preserves farms and wildlife habitats
- E**conomy Succeeds economically and attracts businesses and a skilled workforce
- E**quity Creates more choices in transportation, affordable housing, and jobs for all residents
- E**ngagement Encourages greater participation in community planning and civic life

Financial Impacts



Smart
Growth
Costs Less

1. At the community level...

Roads	25% less
Utilities	15% less
Schools	5% less

2. At the household level...

Infrastructure costs per unit is:

- \$23,520 for low density development
- \$4,408 for compact development

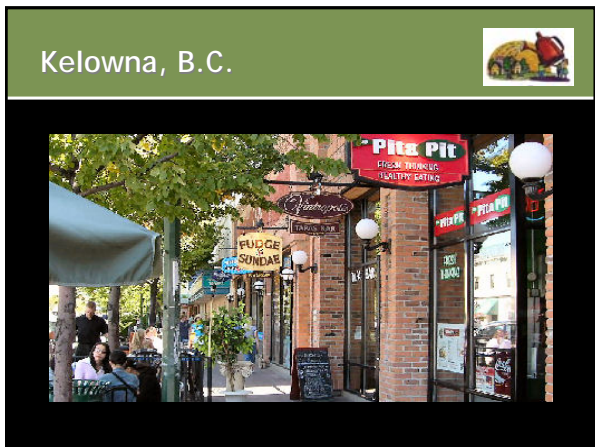
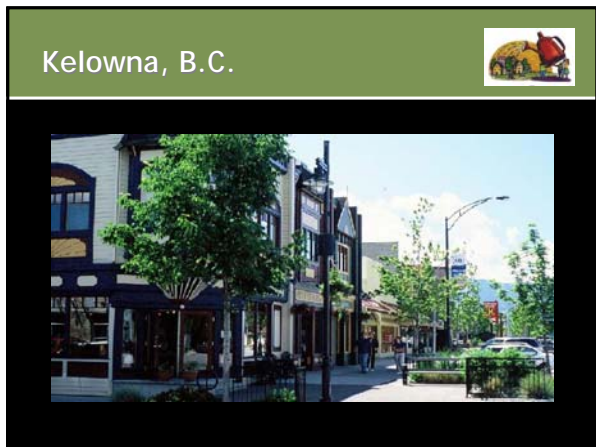
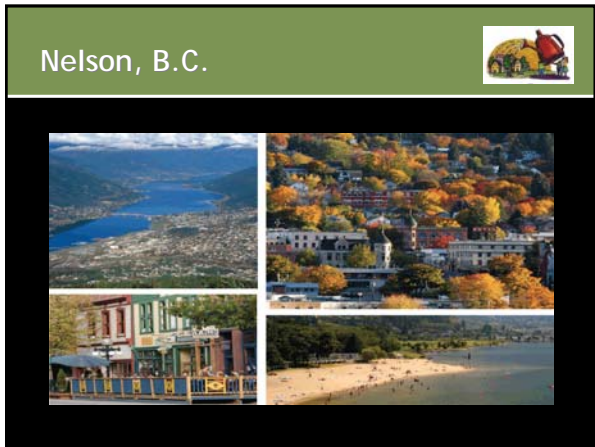
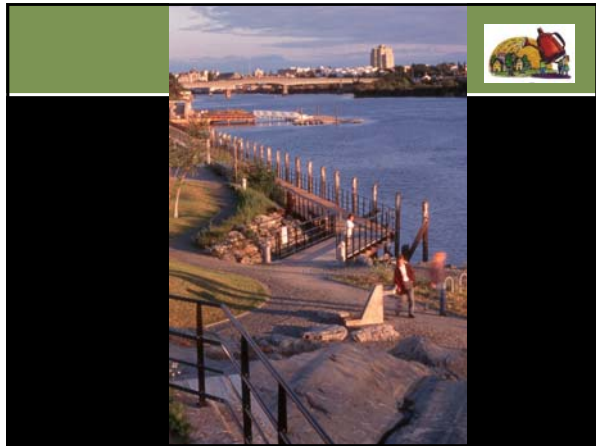
Source: 1) Economic and Fiscal Impacts of Alternative Land Use Patterns, by Robert Burchell, Rutgers University 2) CMHC, 2001.

Before and After...



Selkirk Waterfront





Kelowna, B.C.



Smart Growth in the Sea-to-Sky



The Sea-to-Sky Context



The Issues



- Highway 99 expansion
- 2010 Olympics
- Communities with different goals
- Pressure on ALR
- Affordable housing
- Population growth pressures
- Limited land for dev.
- Economic disparities



Momentum in the Sea-to-Sky



- Whistler 2020 - Moving Toward a Sustainable Future
- Sea-to-Sky Land and Resource Mgmt Plan
- Smart Growth on the Ground in Squamish, "Planning for a Livable Pemberton Valley"



What Do Citizens in the Sea-to-Sky Want?



- Quality of place, character
- Access to natural amenities
- Efficient movement of goods and services
- Coordinate economic development with transportation and affordable housing
- Protection of working lands: agriculture, forestry, recreation



Why Regional Growth?



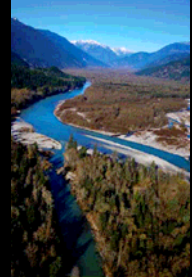
- Maximize use of existing infrastructure
- Focus on nodal development and creating vibrant neighbourhoods
- To preserve wildlife habitat (spotted owl)
- To support transportation, air pollution, and other quality of life goals
- To limit the social and environmental costs of sprawl



An Approach to Avoid



- A “race to the bottom” among municipalities to offer the most incentives for the least investment
- Lack of a clear vision for investment
- Poor use of taxes and expensive infrastructure
- Lots of industrial and business parks with no plans for people to live
- Sprawling land use patterns and associated costs



A Sea-to-Sky Greenbelt



Greenbelt Vision



To reduce pressure for urban expansion and leave a legacy of compact communities surrounded by a corridor designed using conservation biology, healthy living, and smart growth principles.

Greenbelt Objectives



- 1) Preserve endangered wildlife habitat from North Vancouver up to Pemberton.
- 2) Enhance opportunities for physical activity and outdoor recreation.
- 3) Act as a cornerstone for better land use planning and guide urban growth inwards rather than sprawling outwards.

Case Studies



• Sea-to-Sea Greenbelt

Greenbelt surrounding the Capital Region District



Case Studies



• Sierra Business Council

"Founded in 1994...the council explicitly rejects the notion that Sierra communities must choose between economic and environmental health. On the contrary, we view environmental quality as key to the Sierra Nevada's economic prosperity, and natural resource conservation as essential to building regional wealth."



Case Studies



• Bay Area Alliance for Sustainable Communities

The Bay Area Alliance for Sustainable Communities is a coalition of business, environmental, social equity and government leaders who forge collaborative solutions to improve the quality of life in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.



Support from Other NGOs



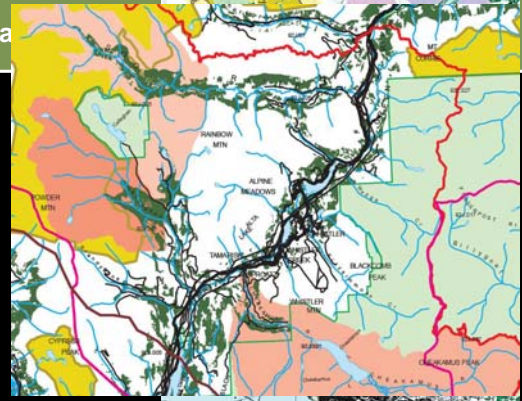
Front-country:

- The Land Conservancy

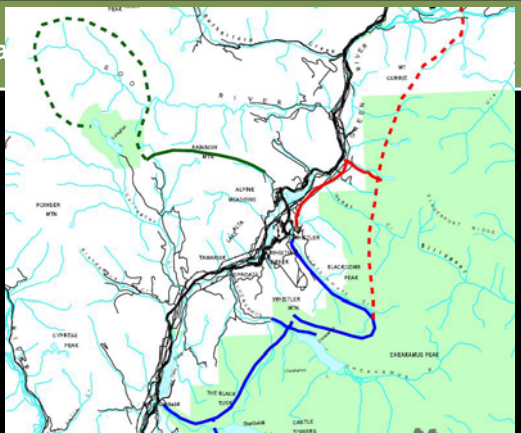
Back-country:

- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) and
- Western Canada Wilderness Committee (WCWC)

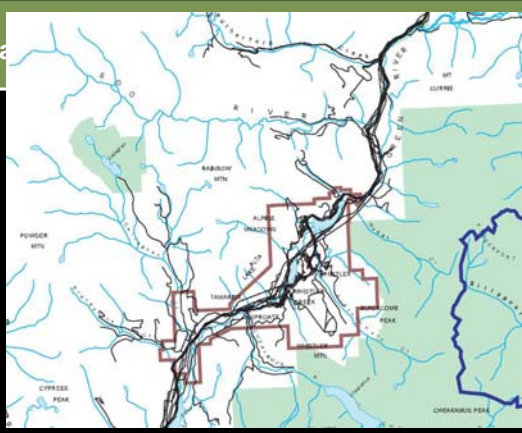
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Financial Support



- Bullitt Foundation
- Environment Canada (applied)
- MEC (applied)
- CFOW (applied)
- Patagonia (applied)



What Can You Do?



What Can You Do?



- 1) Get involved in regional and local land use decisions, consider broad and long-term impacts.
- 2) Attend our coalition-building workshop to show your support of the vision.
- 3) Help us develop a strategy for an education and advocacy campaign in your community.
- 4) Voice your support for smart growth principles.
- 5) Visit our website (www.smartgrowth.bc.ca)

Thank You!



Ione Smith, MSc
Special Projects Coordinator
ione@smartgrowth.bc.ca