

## Smart Growth BC



### *Growing Together* Smart Growth for a Livable Lions Bay



Ione Smith and Jason Emmert • Smart Growth BC • June 14, 2007

## Presentation Outline



- I. Who is Smart Growth BC?
- II. Smart Growth Principles
- III. Growth Context in the Sea-to-Sky
- IV. Tools for Guiding Growth
- V. Early and Ongoing Citizen Engagement
- VI. The Sea-to-Sky Greenbelt Initiative

## 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...



## II. 10 Smart Growth Principles for Healthy Communities



## 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?



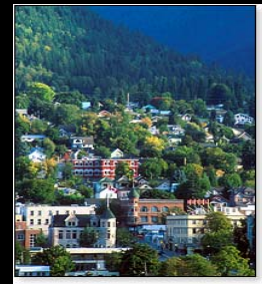
More transportation choices and less traffic	<u>Not</u> against cars and roads
Vibrant cities, suburbs and towns	<u>Not</u> anti-suburban
Wider variety of housing choices	<u>Not</u> about telling people where or how to live
Well-planned growth that improves quality of life	<u>Not</u> against growth

The "where and how" of growth

## 1. Build Compact, Complete Communities



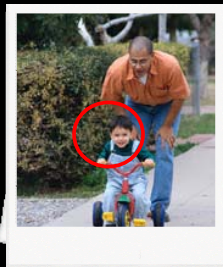
- Mix land uses through zoning by-laws
- Provide incentives for higher densities, e.g. density bonuses
- Provide incentives for infill and redevelopment projects



## 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. Protect and enhance working lands



Secure and contiguous farmland and forest lands contribute to attractive, compact and healthy settlement areas.

**Strategies**

- Conform OCP and RGS to provincial zoning
- Support local food production
- Integrate agri-tourism opportunities



### 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. Build Smarter, Greener 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. Foster a unique identity



Each community, regardless of its size, is unique, vibrant, diverse, and inclusive. Visitors respect local conditions and enjoy the opportunity to share this sense of place.

### Strategies

- Public realm
- Asset Mapping
- Heritage buildings
- Natural assets



## Neighbourhood identity



## 10. Nurture engaged citizenship



Places belong to those who live, work, and play there. Engaged citizens participate in community life and decision-making on their own terms.

### Strategies

- Community design charrettes
- OCP reviews
- Civic and public spaces



## 10. Nurture engaged citizenship



## Why is Smart Growth Better?

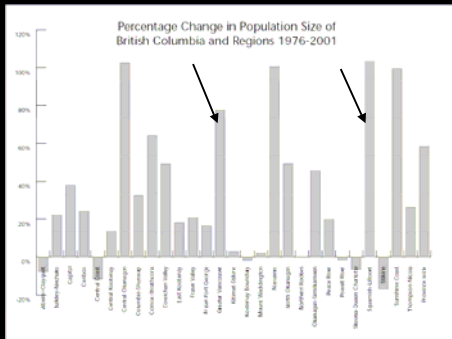


<b>E</b> nvironment	Consumes less land and water, causes less pollution, and preserves farms and wildlife habitats
<b>E</b> conomy	Succeeds economically and attracts businesses and a skilled workforce
<b>E</b> quity	Creates more choices in transportation, affordable housing, and jobs for all residents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

## III. The Sea-to-Sky Context



## BC Population Dynamics



## The Issues



- Highway 99 expansion
- 2010 Olympics
- Communities with different goals
- Aging Population
- Affordable housing
- Population growth pressures
- Limited land for dev.
- Economic disparities
- Movement of goods & services



## Impacts of the 2010 Games

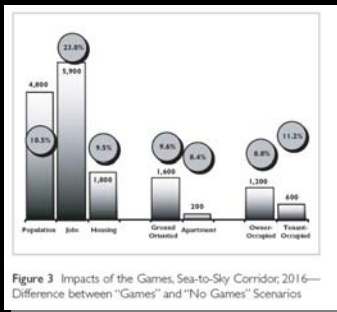


Figure 3 Impacts of the Games, Sea-to-Sky Corridor, 2016—Difference between "Games" and "No Games" Scenarios

CMHC, 2007

## Momentum in the Sea-to-Sky



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



## IV. Tools for Community Planning



- Official Community Plan
- Regional Growth Strategy
- Regional Context Statement
- Development Permit Designations
- Design Guidelines
- Neighborhood plans
- Heritage Designations



## Benefits from Community Planning and Guiding Development



- Diversification of housing and commercial development
- Preserving open space and ecosystem services
- Builds on existing assets and infrastructure
- Integrates planning at several scales
- Taxes shared more equally
- Facilitate transportation options
- Vibrant, mixed use neighbourhoods
- Opportunities for economic development
- Certainty for developers

## Official Community Plans



- A statement of objectives and policies to guide land use planning decisions
- Vision for evolution of community
- Can designate green zones
- Ensure that citizens are involved in the future of their community



## Basics of the OCP Process



Communities Guiding Principles (what we value)



Vision (what we want our community to be)

Policy Goals (specific things we hope for)

Policy Objectives (how we want to do it)

Land Use Plan Bylaw (what we do)

Zoning and Design Guidelines (doing it)

## Example OCP Planning Process



1. Background information collection and policy review
2. Ideas, Issues and Values workshops
3. Establish Citizen Advisory Committee
4. Draft guiding principles and community vision
5. Determine community goals and objectives for issue areas including indicators and targets
6. Draft policy based on principles, goals and objectives.
7. Take draft plan to public hearing, make changes, take back to public, final Council/Director approval.

## Involving Citizens Works



- Open Community Dialogue
- Transparency
- Democratic Decision-Making
- Community-Based Initiatives
- Community Support for Development
- Inclusive Community
- Less Backlash to Developments (NIMBY)

## Tools for Engagement



Community Engagement Must Have:

### ➤ The Five I's



Planning Initiatives Must Be:

### ➤ S.M.A.R.T.

## Tools for Engagement



### The Five I's

- i. Into
- ii. Interesting
- iii. Informing
- iv. Involved
- v. Inspired

### S.M.A.R.T.

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Timely

## V. Early and Ongoing Citizen Engagement



- Asset Mapping
- Community Mapping
- Issue Focus Groups
- Visioning
- Scenario building
- Surveys
- Web Forums and Blogs
- Visualization Tools
- Charrette
- Dot-mocracy



## Needs and Assets Inventory



An inventory is important to determine what we have and what we would like

Public Engagement Tools:

- Background Research
- Community Survey
- Community Fair and Open House
- Asset Mapping
- Gap analysis



## Values and Guiding Principles



- Clearly recording and articulating community values serves as the basis for the rest of OCP

Public Engagement Tools:

- Community Survey
- Community Fair and Open House
- Values inventory and grouping
- Small group writing exercise
- Dot-mocracy



## Citizen Advisory Committees



Citizen Advisory Committees play an important role in ensuring broad and meaningful public engagement

Citizen Advisory Committees:

- Most often don't determine policy directions or decisions, but ensure that consultation process reflects views of the wider community
- Facilitate positive dialogue around controversial community issues
- Serve as a liaison between the public, staff, and council



## Focus Groups



- Focus groups facilitate more in-depth discussion around specific issues sets

Focus Groups:

- 5-10 participants with some preexisting knowledge of issue being discussed

- Cover variety of issues sets ranging from housing, environmental management, transportation, waterfront development

- Recommendation feed into determination of community goals, objectives, indicators and targets



## Scenario Building



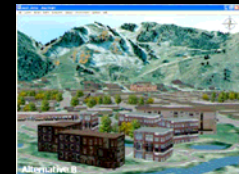
- Building future scenarios can be a useful tool to help communities visualize how potential futures might look.

Scenario building:

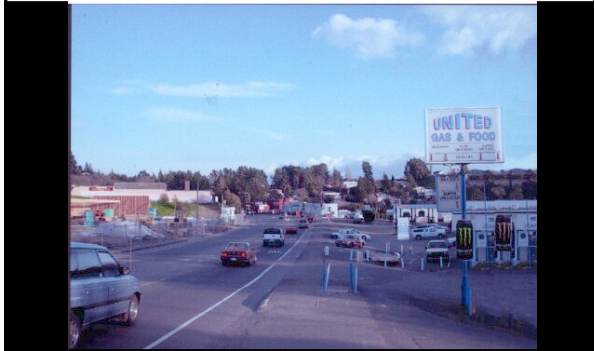
- Uses a variety of forecasting data including demographic trends, real estate assessment, environmental hazard information, zoning designations, costing projections, etc.

- Can be enhanced using computer modeling and visualization programs

- Involve comparing several possible futures



From This...



...To This.



## Community Charrette



A charrette is a community led design exercise where residents work with design and planning professionals to create a visual representation of particular area of the community

Charrettes are:

- Based on community goals, objectives, and targets
- Conducted in a short time frame (e.g. 2-3 days)
- Produce a conceptual design which guides more detailed plans



## A few final points ....



- It starts with common values
- Community engagement processes are limited by the resources available
- Community organizations play an important role in mobilizing residents
- Reshaping dialogue can create more positive outcomes and win-win solutions
- Important for elected officials to participate at the same level as other residents



## VI. 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



### • 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)

## What Can You Do?



## Summary of best practices



- A supportive local policy environment
- Public consultation to gain support for initiatives
- Link growth accommodation plans to other goals (econ. dev., affordability, downtown revitalization, transportation)
- Base planning on community vision
- Examine land use and transportation relationships
- Build relationships with other levels of govt. & com. groups

## What Can You Do?



- 1) Get involved in regional and local land use decisions, consider broad and long-term impacts.
- 2) Consider organizing a vision-building and goals-setting workshop.
- 3) Help us develop a strategy for an education and advocacy campaign in your community.
- 4) Voice your support for smart growth principles.

## Thank You!



- BC 2004 Sprawl Report
- Smart Growth BC Toolkit
- Smart Bylaws Guide
- Smart Growth on the Ground
- Smart Growth BC Advisory Services
- [www.smartgrowth.bc.ca](http://www.smartgrowth.bc.ca)
- [www.sgog.bc.ca](http://www.sgog.bc.ca)
- [www.greenbelt.bc.ca](http://www.greenbelt.bc.ca)

