

Sea-to-Sky Greenbelt

Sea-to-Sky Greenbelt Official Launch

Thursday November 15th, 2007

Brackendale Art Gallery

lone Smith, Smart Growth BC



Sea-to-Sky Greenbelt

Outline

- Smart Growth BC
- Greenbelts
 - definition
 - Sea-to-Sky context
 - Draft Vision
- Timeline
- Case Study
- Partners and funders
- Questions?




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



10 Smart Growth Principles



- 1 Mix land uses
- 2 Build compact neighbourhoods
- 3 Provide a variety of transportation choices
- 4 Create diverse affordable housing opportunities
- 5 Encourage growth in existing areas
- 6 Preserve natural beauty and environmentally sensitive areas
- 7 Protect and enhance agricultural land
- 8 Utilize efficient infrastructure and green building techniques
- 9 Foster a unique community identity
- 10 Nurture engaged citizens



Smart Growth BC

- "Planning for a Livable Pemberton Valley" workshop in January 2006
- SGOG Squamish – collaboration with Real Estate Foundation and UBC
- Squamish Downtown Waterfront – Smart Growth Advisory Services
- Imagine BC dialogue session in Whistler
- Lions Bay OCP review guidance






Greenbelt Definitions

"A belt of recreational parks, farmland, or uncultivated land surrounding a community" - Sustainable Management Approaches and Revitalization Tools

"A protected living system of landscapes that serve the residents, businesses, visitors, and future generations of the region by preserving and improving the health and quality of life for all." - Charleston County Comprehensive Greenbelt Plan

"A belt of parkways, parks, or farmlands that encircles a community." – Merriam Webster Dictionary






Sea-to-Sky Context

Lions Bay OCP (2002 and being revised):

- The Village is surrounded by GVRD 'green zone', a long-term boundary for urban growth and to protect parks, watersheds, and ecologically important areas.
- Promote local stewardship over the 'green zone' through the control and management of Crown Land as an undeveloped buffer zone. Consider boundary expansion, obtaining park tenure, formal designation as 'green zone' or other mechanisms.



Squamish First Nation Land Use Agreement (2007):

- Protection of Upper Elaho Valley, Sims Creek Watershed, West Side of Squamish River.
- These lands will be protected through the establishment of Conservancies, Wild Land Zones, and Cultural Management Areas.



Sea-to-Sky Context


Furry Creek (Sub area plan 2007):

- Provide community facilities and public open space as development proceeds.
- Provision of as much public access to the waterfront as possible and a trail system throughout the community, linking commercial areas, residential areas, and parks and open space.

Porteau Cove (Sub area plan 2007):

- Protect sensitive areas and key natural features, minimize negative impacts on fish habitat and water quality, wildlife habitat, old growth forest areas.
- Provide a network of green corridors and trails to connect residential areas with amenities and services, as well as provide connections with regional recreational facilities for the larger community.






Sea-to-Sky Context

Britannia (Sub area plan 2007):

- Promote the waterfront as a destination and a variety of recreational parkland to meet community needs
- Provide a trail system throughout the community and alongside environmentally sensitive areas, encourage park designs that have a BC coastal character.

Black Tusk/Pinecrest Estates (Sub area plan 2007):

- Protect and recognize resources for their ecological values and in providing character.
- Discourage development in back-country areas.
- Use Smart Growth principles in the planning and design of new communities.
- Provide parkland to meet community recreation needs and a trail system adjacent to and linking existing and proposed communities, to park sites and community facilities, and connecting with back-country trails.

Sea-to-Sky Context


District of Squamish (Draft OCP 2007):

- Encourage infill development before greenfield expansion.
- Land use designations: Parks and Ecological Reserves, Open Space and Greenway Corridors, Institutional, and Mixed Use Commercial.
- Encourage the development of recreational greenways to connect neighbourhoods.

Resort Municipality of Whistler (Protected Areas Network 2007):

Each ecosystem is classified within three overarching levels of protection :


- PAN 1: *Protection*. No development, only ecological restoration and enhancement or that no impact.
- PAN 2: *Conservation*. Can be balanced with well-planned development and appropriate uses/activities.
- PAN 3: *Review Areas*. Areas that are already significantly altered, and therefore targeted for development and other intensive uses and activities.

Sea-to-Sky Context


Village of Pemberton (OCP 1999):

- Manage growth in a sensitive manner, protect the environment, protect the village character, improve recreation, coordinate planning initiatives with the SLRD.
- The OCP must strike a balance between providing for growth and preserving/enhancing the spectacular natural environment that defines Pemberton.



Lil'wat First Nation (Land Use Plan 2006):

- Manage population growth to avoid impacts to the environment.
- Ensure that all Lil'wat Nation development is sustainable, and adheres to such concepts as smart growth and low impact design.
- Oppose sprawl, inefficient use of land, and dependency on motor vehicles.
- Develop communities that focus on mixed use, pedestrian-oriented, and attractive designs.



Sea-to-Sky Context

SLRD Regional Growth Strategy (Draft 2007):

- Compact centres and settlement boundaries: major growth within the Squamish, Whistler, Pemberton and Lillooet, and delineate settlement areas in rural areas.
- Provide for a mix of land uses in Porteau Cove, Furry Creek and Britannia Beach, for more integrated, complete communities.
- Establish a regional network of greenways for ecosystem, wildlife and recreational functions

Land Resource Management Plan (LRMP) (Draft 2006):

- Strategic direction for all provincially administered lands and resources (Crown land).
- The Frontcountry Zone: the viewshed where the vast majority of residents live. Visual landscape management is recognized as the principal objective for this zone.
- Integrated Forest Management Zone: the largest zone in the plan area. It is critically important to the forest industry and is also used for public recreation and tourism and includes considerable amounts of important wildlife habitat.
- Wildland Zone: high habitat values and natural, wilderness characteristics. Potential for backcountry tourism. No timber harvesting or IPPs are allowed.

Sea-to-Sky Context



- North Cascades & Pacific Range Ecoregional Assessment
- Squamish River Watershed Society
- Sea-to-Sky Trails Initiative
- Get Bear Smart Society
- Howe Sound Community Forum
- Squamish Environmental Conservation Society
- BC Healthy Communities
- AWARE
- Whistler Forum
- Sea-to-Sky Community Services Society



Sea-to-Sky Context




By the numbers:

- Squamish First Nation wild spirit areas:
 - +82,000 ha (26,000 ha is Garibaldi Park).
- LRMP proposed wildland areas:
 - +262,000 ha.
- Existing provincial parks and protected areas:
 - +638,000 ha.
- Wilderness Committee proposed protected areas:
 - +227,000 ha (includes some spotted owl habitat).



Vision (draft)




The Sea-to-Sky Greenbelt will be a **world-renowned** example of what can be accomplished by **respecting our spectacular natural resources while enhancing community livability**. Urban and rural settlements from West Vancouver in the South to Pemberton in the North will each **exemplify the principles of smart growth**: vibrant economies, compact communities with unique village centres, and a mixture of housing options.

Transportation in the corridor will include an **efficient public transportation system linking corridor communities** to Vancouver. Each community will be surrounded by a defined **growth boundary that will direct development inwards** and outside of which will remain pristine recreational lands, productive farming and forestry lands, and protected wilderness areas. These boundaries will be grounded in policy within each municipality's Official Community Plan and in the Regional District's Regional Growth Strategy.

Efforts will be made to **connect land parcels designated as parks, recreational areas, and wilderness zones** in order to create a contiguous Greenbelt. The Greenbelt's success will depend upon a **collaborative effort** of a coalition made up of developers, community organizations, business associations, First Nations, local and regional government, and environmental organizations.

Ultimately, the initiative will be enshrined in unique **provincial "Greenbelt" legislation** and will be recognized internationally as a model for enhancing community livability and protecting our unique natural environment in a corridor-wide context."

Up to now...



- Haven't identified exactly what could be included
- Have begun to examine current land use plans
- Haven't secured \$ to purchase any land
- Will not require more intensive public planning processes
- Will require more mapping to visualize the Greenbelt
- Will require political support from all levels


Timeline



- 2006: building relationships
- 2007: outreach (newsletter, listserv, website, launch)
- 2008: knowledge development (maps, case studies, designation options)
- 2009: effective campaigning
- 2010: enactment of Sea-to-Sky Greenbelt



Case Study




Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt on Vancouver Island:

- A vast expanse of wilderness, recreation land and marine areas running across Southern Vancouver Island from Saanich Inlet to the Sooke Basin.
- The Green Blue Belt will create a 12,000 hectare corridor of protected wilderness and parkland.
- Currently over 90% complete: includes Kapoor Regional Park, Sooke Potholes Regional Park, Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt Regional Reserve, Ayum Creek Regional Park.

Partners:

- Capital Region District,
- TLC The Land Conservancy of BC,
- Habitat Acquisition Trust,
- The Government of Canada,
- Society for the Protection of Ayum Creek,
- Province of BC





Partners and Funders

Partners:



CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY
BRITISH COLUMBIA CHAPTER



Funders:



Questions?

Resources:

- www.smartgrowth.bc.ca
- www.greenbelt.bc.ca
- FAQs
- Case studies
- E-newsletters
- Listserv



Contact:

Ione Smith
ione@smartgrowth.bc.ca
604-915-5234
314-402 W Pender
Vancouver
V6B 1T6