



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

During the Smart Growth on the Ground learning event in Prince George on a cold November evening, I watched as Program Manager Shana Johnstone quickly rallied the local community leaders and many residents who had gathered in the room. She didn't need to spend a lot of time justifying why we were there.

It was obvious to me that Smart Growth BC has become the trusted guide in the journey towards sustainability. People recognize Smart Growth BC's credentials. We have earned them over the last decade, beating the drum and researching the evidence when few others cared. Over the years, we have become uniquely positioned as the leading NGO in Canada working at the intersection of human settlement and sustainability.

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"...Smart Growth BC has become the trusted guide in the journey towards sustainability."



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When I was invited to join the Smart Growth BC team, my enthusiasm to do so sprang from an awareness of its outstanding achievements over the last decade. Staff and Board members have partnered with peer organizations, researchers, land use professionals, funders, industry champions, government officials, and countless individual citizens to ensure that smart growth has a presence in communities throughout the province.

What impressed me most was that by engaging through a smart growth lens, Smart

Growth BC offers options instead of inflexible prescriptions. Presenting questions, tools and processes enables communities to devise solutions that meet their own specific and diverse needs. In this way, the team has been able to successfully work across a broad range of settings, from the District of Elkford with a population of less than 3,000, to the City of Vancouver with a population of over half a million.

As I learned more about the organization's accomplishments in 2008, I understood why Smart Growth BC's website attracts up to 10,000 monthly visitors in search of tools, guidance, and inspiration. I also understood why Smart Growth BC is called

upon as a trusted guide in the journey towards sustainability. In this report we provide a glimpse into some of the ways that Smart Growth BC has assisted in this journey.

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SMART GROWTH ON THE GROUND

Smart Growth on the Ground—Prince George was launched in July 2008 with a public forum. Over 140 people brought forth their hopes and concerns for downtown by mapping the places that make their neighbourhood special—shops, viewpoints, parks and public venues—and by discussing the many issues challenging the community. The forum also included a community fair, where local organizations and provincial government representatives offered resources and information aligning with Smart Growth on the Ground’s Guiding Principles.

“It is nice to be involved in something that is important and directly relevant to all of us.”

Smart Growth on the Ground workshop participant

Prince George. The events brought together leading researchers from the University of Northern BC, University of British Columbia, and Natural Resources Canada, as well as additional expert speakers, student volunteers, and 175 community participants. These events laid the groundwork for further workshops, a successful design charrette in 2009, and a sustainable vision for downtown Prince George for the year 2035.

Smart Growth on the Ground is a partnership between Smart Growth BC, the Design Centre for Sustainability at UBC, and the Real Estate Institute of BC.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 1 Each community is complete.
- 2 Options to the car are emphasized.
- 3 Work in harmony with natural systems.
- 4 Buildings and infrastructure are greener, smarter, and cheaper.
- 5 Housing serves many needs.
- 6 Jobs are close to home.
- 7 The spirit of each community is honoured.
- 8 Everyone has a voice.

In November 2008, we galvanized further support for this initiative by hosting a learning event to address the topics of climate change and housing, and a priority-setting workshop to guide the community toward its desired future for downtown

“Because Squamish is a smart growth community, people started coming to us with buckets of money.”

Cameron Chalmers, Planning Director, District of Squamish



HEALTHY COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

In 2008, Smart Growth BC collaborated with over a dozen organizations—including the BC Healthy Built Environment Alliance, the Built Environment and Active Transportation initiative and the BC Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport—in forging land-use-based solutions to address the rising tide of chronic disease.

Bobbe Wood, President and CEO of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC and Yukon, asserts the importance of well-designed communities: “Promoting healthy living through education and social marketing is a key priority. However, this vital work is often undermined by physical environments that make healthy choices difficult. We need to encourage land-use planners and local governments to design communities that make healthy choices easy choices. This will be a key tactic in the overall

strategy of reversing Canada’s alarming chronic disease burden.”

In 2009, SGBC’s work will result in the release of new research on the linkages between health and neighbourhood design, as well as tools and strategies to assist local governments and their stakeholders in building communities that make “healthy choices easy choices.”

“We need to encourage land-use planners and local governments to design communities that make healthy choices easy choices.

This will be a key tactic in the overall strategy of reversing Canada’s alarming chronic disease burden.”

*Bobbe Wood, President & CEO,
Heart and Stroke Foundation
of BC & Yukon*



SEA-TO-SKY GREENBELT

After months of mapping and consulting with stakeholders, Smart Growth BC unveiled the potential boundary for the Sea-to-Sky Greenbelt. The conservation corridor was designed to help connect and protect green spaces from West Vancouver through Pemberton. It is envisioned as a world-renowned example of what can be accomplished by respecting our natural resources while enhancing community livability. The initial round of Sea-to-Sky Greenbelt maps includes areas already designated as park, conservation, riparian, or other protected areas in existing land use plans, and takes the

additional step of identifying unprotected green space outside of settlement areas that may be added in the future. The next phase in the Greenbelt project is to work with the 2010 Olympics hosts and First Nations on furthering the greenbelt project.

SMART GROWTH ADVISORY SERVICES

2008 provided an opportunity for our Advisory Services team to take on a number of new projects, each of which offered an increased level of challenge and complexity. Key highlights include:

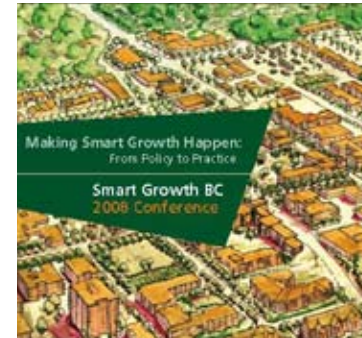
YOUMAP VANCOUVER

Smart Growth BC partnered with the Vancouver City Planning Commission to organize two separate neighbourhood festivals in the Grandview Woodland and Douglas Park neighbourhoods, each coupled with an innovative online mapping tool. Over 150 residents identified characteristics that make their communities great places to live, work and play.

DISTRICT OF ELKFORD'S INTEGRATED OCP AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION STRATEGY

We worked with industry champions, local residents and a mosaic of community groups to write an Official Community Plan (OCP) and Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (CCAS) that will provide

direction for the District for the next 15 to 20 years. The document will integrate 26 CCAS recommendations for adapting to risks posed by fire, flooding and other potential climate change effects, following smart growth principles to ensure that “‘wilderness’ remains core to what the community is and wants to be.”



CONFERENCE AND SMARTY AWARDS

Smart Growth BC's fifth annual conference, *Making Smart Growth Happen: From Policy to Practice*, was a great success, attracting over 250 attendees from local, provincial and federal governments, developers, planners, design professionals, builders, NGOs and a wide range of community organizations. This conference solidified Smart Growth BC's reputation as a leader in advocating, educating and implementing policies, plans and programs for complete communities in BC. The 2008 Conference was also the forum for the 3rd Annual Smart Growth

Smarty Awards. The winners were:

- Project Award for the “large communities” category: Newport Village, Bosa Development Corporation and Appia Development
- Project Award for the “small communities” category: Beaver Flats Employee Housing Building, Whistler Housing Authority
- People Award for the “large communities” category: Deborah Curran, Principal, Deborah Curran & Co.
- People Award for the “small communities” category: Whistler2020 Community Task Forces



“This pilot initiative is aimed at allowing citizens to define at the neighbourhood level what makes Vancouver special, so that we can plan and manage change in a way that values and builds on the strengths of Vancouver’s neighbourhoods.”

Alan Boniface, Chair, Vancouver City Planning Commission



COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Our staff and Board went the extra mile to assist British Columbians in promoting land use decisions that create more livable communities. We provided over 500 hours of free consulting to people and organizations throughout BC, and delivered 40 presentations to various levels of governments, community groups, academic institutions and professional organizations.

In May 2008, Smart Growth BC was pleased to see the Provincial

Legislative Assembly pass Bill 27, the new Local Government (Green Communities) Statutes Amendment Act. Bill 27 makes a number of provisions poised to support smart growth. In a letter to the Minister of Community Services, Smart Growth BC's Executive Director through 2008, Cheeying Ho, wrote:

"[Bill 27] is an excellent step towards climate protection, and many of the tools will assist local governments in addressing energy and greenhouse gas emissions. We are particularly pleased that the Bill has addressed a number of the issues we have raised in previous correspondence with the Province."

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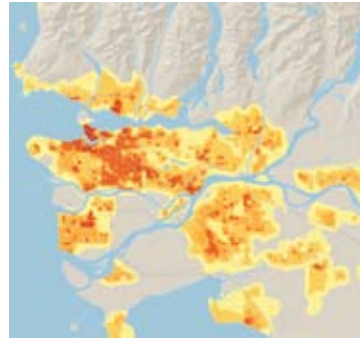
VOTER EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

For our third Voter Education Campaign, Smart Growth BC produced a new edition of the Guide to Election Issues. We joined forces with 22 groups to distribute 100,000 copies of the Guide through neighbourhood networks, local newspapers and all-candidates events throughout BC in advance of the November municipal election. Smart Growth BC also co-hosted three events, which altogether attracted 230 participants:

- An all-candidates World Café dialogue in Coquitlam, in partnership with the Coquitlam Civic League, the Canadian Cancer Society and Simon Fraser University's Semester in Dialogue.
- An all-candidates forum in Langley Township, in partnership with South Fraser on Trax.
- An all-candidates forum in Surrey, in partnership with Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

RESEARCH

In partnership with researchers, private consultants and peer organizations, we released three publications in 2008.

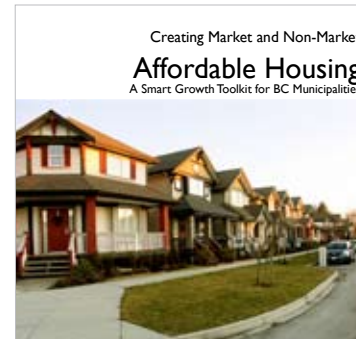


INNOVATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING MECHANISMS FOR SMART GROWTH

According to the Urban Land Institute and Ernst & Young (2007), Canada forecasts a need for \$300 billion in new infrastructure investment through 2025. How can we help BC communities meet many looming fiscal challenges while promoting smart growth? This report answers this question by examining a wide variety of financing tools that raise funds for public infrastructure while promoting cost efficient, socially responsible and environmentally sound development.

SLOWING DOWN: VANCOUVER, BC, AND SMART GROWTH

Produced in collaboration with Sightline Institute, this study maps population density trends throughout the Greater Vancouver area, using data from the last four Canadian censuses. "This report demonstrates the urgency of 'reconnecting the dots' by ensuring that local planning decisions and transportation planning and investment work together through regional growth strategies to achieve our goals of greenhouse gas reduction, livability, and sustainability," said Ken Cameron, Chief Executive Officer and Registrar of the Homeowner Protection Office and former manager of planning at Metro Vancouver.



CREATING MARKET AND NON-MARKET AFFORDABLE HOUSING: A SMART GROWTH TOOLKIT FOR BC MUNICIPALITIES

The first of its kind in British Columbia, this publication demonstrates how local governments are adapting affordable housing strategies to fit their unique needs, and addresses the gap between market rate and social housing. It provides detailed explanations of eight tools and strategies, from inclusionary zoning to land banking, and highlights examples of best practices across BC.

In 2008, Smart Growth BC's online publications received over 23,000 hits.

FUNDING AND DONORS

Smart Growth BC greatly appreciates the support of the following funders and donors this year:

BC Hydro
 BC Recreation and Parks Association
 City of Prince George
 Coast Capital Savings Credit Union
 Columbia Institute
 Cull Family Fund of the Vancity
 Community Foundation
 Endswell Fund of Tides Canada
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 Enterprising Non-Profits
 Heart & Stroke Foundation of BC &
 Yukon
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 Tides Canada Foundation
 Living Rivers Trust Fund of the Pacific
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 Council
 Mountain Equipment Co-operative
 Prince George Community
 Foundation
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 Housing Endowment Fund
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 R. Howard Webster Foundation
 Real Estate Foundation of BC
 Tides Canada Foundation
 Underdog Foundation
 Vancity Savings Credit Union
 Vancouver Coastal Health Authority
 Vancouver Foundation

1,000 FRIENDS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Smart Growth BC depends on donations from generous individuals, municipalities and businesses to provide vital funding for the programs and services that support our mission to create more livable communities in the province. Our "Friends of BC" offer monthly or annual donations that help us carry out our crucial, independent and non-partisan work as an advocate for smart growth. All donations are issued a tax receipt. Thanks go to all our 2008 Friends of BC:

MUNICIPAL FRIENDS

City of Fernie
 District of Chetwynd
 District of Squamish
 Peace River Regional District
 Resort Municipality of Whistler
 Town of Golden

ORGANIZATIONAL FRIENDS

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Smart Growth BC, the leading non-governmental organization working towards creating more livable communities in British Columbia, is a registered charitable organization under the Income Tax Act (Canada), Charitable Registration 89568-6616-RR0001.

SMART GROWTH BC'S NEW STRATEGIC DIRECTION

(CONTINUED FROM P.1)

Over the coming months, Smart Growth BC will develop its Invitation, Inspiration, and Innovation programs through broad consultation with all stakeholders, partners, and communities. In the meantime, Smart Growth BC has started to adapt its organizational structure to align with the newly-identified program areas.

“Our renewed strategic focus is an important new chapter for Smart Growth BC as it enters its second decade,” explains Bob Ransford, Smart Growth BC’s President. “Our focus areas of Invitation, Inspiration, and Innovation provide a robust framework that will ensure our relevance and success, and we look forward to collaboration and partnerships with other organizations to ensure that more British Columbians enjoy the benefits of smart growth principles.”



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

(CONTINUED FROM P.2)

For a millennia and longer, people have been gathering in urban settlements in search of sustenance, security, social interaction and the beauty that the built form once offered. Most of the planning behind human settlements responded to the personal, self-interested decisions around where we work, whom we live with, what we wish to consume, how we play, and the convenience to accomplish these personal goals.

Ironically, it is this same self-interested approach to human settlement that has created our very new and now somewhat constrained playing field. This approach is contributing to the degradation of not only our individual lifestyles but, in fact, the survival of the planet as a sustaining ecosystem.

Most British Columbians know we are at a watershed

moment in history—they want to be inspired about what is possible, they want to be invited into a conversation, and they want innovative solutions to sustainability challenges—and they are turning to Smart Growth BC.

I am pleased to assure you that Smart Growth BC will be there—ready and willing—to join forces at this critical moment in history.

Many thanks to our friends and partners. Together, we are capitalizing on the challenges and opportunities brought by these times of dramatic change. We are making the best ideas come to life, and creating more livable neighbourhoods for all British Columbians.

Sincerely,

Bob Ransford, President



THANK YOU

Thank you to all of our partners, supporters and funders for making all of our 2008 activities possible. Together, we are creating British Columbia communities that are sustainable today, restorative tomorrow, and livable always. We look forward to continuing to work together as we move into our 10th anniversary year with our compass set on a new strategic direction, and a decade of experience in our sails.

Sincerely,

Cam Brewer, Executive Director

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