Our plan has been imagined and created to be both pragmatic and visionary. At the core of the strategy is a consideration of the highway's role and its impact on the community.

First and foremost in creating a plan of this nature is to give the concept of "vectors" meaning and context. Our vision attempts to align and harnesses the powerful and often disparate natural, social, economic, physical, and spiritual vectors at play within the Squamish valley. Innovative new ways are sought to best serve not only just local residents, but also visitors and passers by.

The vision also aims to create a place that "works", as well as a place that is distinctly Squamish.

The design concepts presented here seek to cast Squamish in a new light, in ways that both harness and align the power of vectors, and also in ways that constitute a new vision for the future.

TRANSPORTATION
Re-imagining the Highway and Streets
- Treat the highway as a "parkway" effectively controlling access onto and off of the highway.
- Develop Squamish Road for locally serving retail and connectivity between neighbourhoods.

Increasing Connections
- Use pedestrian bridges to link neighbourhoods and mitigate the divisive effects of the highway through pedestrian connectivity.
- Utilize an integrated and well-connected system of public transit based on a central transit hub.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD DESIGN
Containing Growth
- Control, concentrate, and promote new development growth along the central corridor – but not directly off of the highway.
- Establish a growth boundary surrounding the central valley core to prevent further sprawl.
- Utilize a modified grid system of streets in all new development.

OPEN SPACES AND ENVIRONMENT
Embracing the Environment
- Use a green buffer to mitigate the noise, pollution, and aesthetic effects of the highway.
- Develop green fingers and corridors linking the valley across the highway.
- Incorporate wind turbines as an alternative source of power within the valley.

VECTORS AND THE HIGHWAY
Illustrating and Expressing the Confluence of Vectors
- Create a node, a unique place that both aligns and makes use of the powerful vectors within Squamish. This is proposed in the form of a reconceptualized "rest stop"; one that is able to serve regional traffic and visitors but also in a way that, and functions for the benefit of local needs and desires in providing jobs and basic amenities.
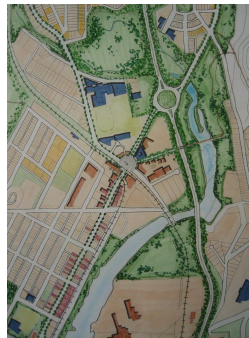
New Civic Centre

Mixed Use
Neighbourhood
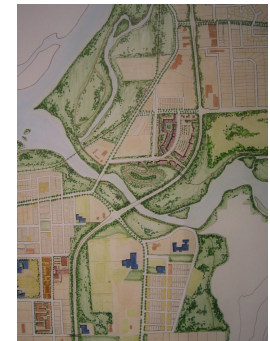
Rest Stop

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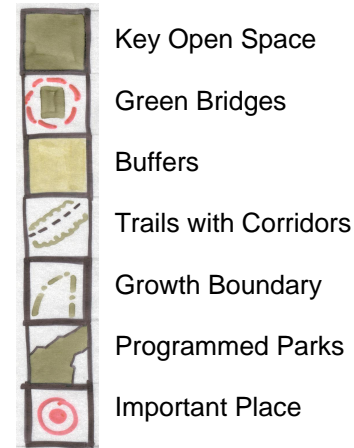
OPEN SPACE AND ENVIRONMENT

Continuous and Connected Corridors

The open space and environmental strategy recognizes the necessity to protect sensitive habitat areas and create spaces for people. The linear open space system functions as both a conduit for people and habitat. Sensitive riparian and estuary areas are protected by thick corridors, which become an integral part of the trail system. The corridors not only provide a path for the trails to follow, but are also environments for people to enjoy and respect.

The trail system creates new connections with existing trails. The looped circulation will enhance accessibility and usability of the trails. In addition, neighbourhood open spaces have been located along these circulation loops where ever possible. The community gardens and parks are places of rest and destination points along the trail network.

Key Open Space

Green Bridges

Buffers

Trails with Corridors

Growth Boundary

Programmed Parks

Important Place

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Open Space Highlights

As a means of addressing the negativity of Squamish as a rest stop, rather than a destination point, we have re-visioned the rest stop as a destination. In this area, we imagine creating a place of rest for visitors that is connected to the rest of the community. It will reflect the town's vernacular and create access to the river and trails.

In order to complete the trail system, pedestrian bridges create new connections across the valley. The bridges stretch across the parkway and complete the circulation loops. They also function as a series of entranceways into Squamish that define and enhance the character of the community. The bridges are located where green corridors stretch across the valley. This creates a series of defined "green fingers" stretching across the valley.

Large areas of open space along the Squamish River act as a means to protect sensitive river ecology. The areas are still connected through trails, and additional parks have been designated. The Judd Slough is an area that has been designated as a protected area and boardwalk park.

The Storm Water Park is an example of an open space that layers storm water management and trails into the system. It not only acts as a place of interest and recreation, but also works to mitigate the effects of the housing developments in the Little Stawamus Watershed.

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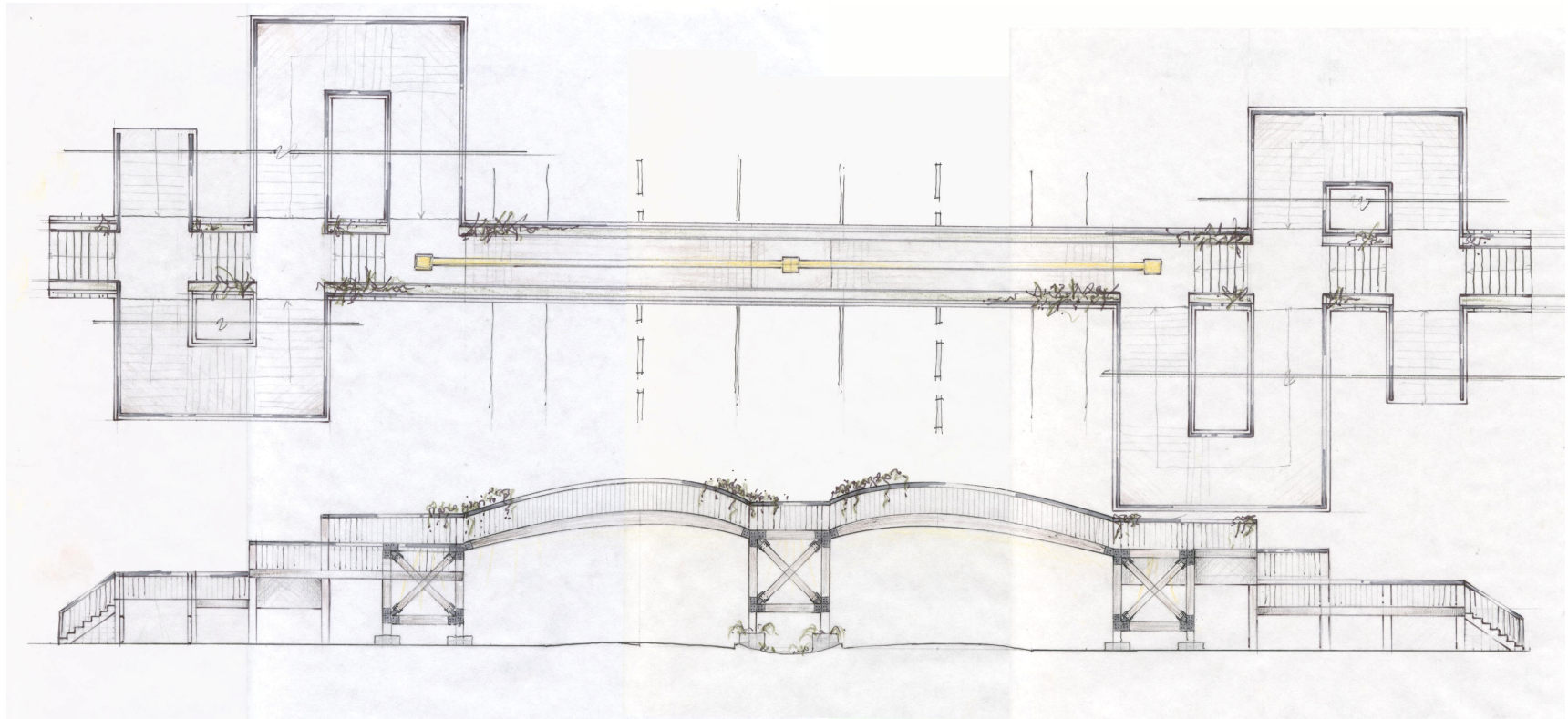
Pedestrian Bridge
Plan, Elevation
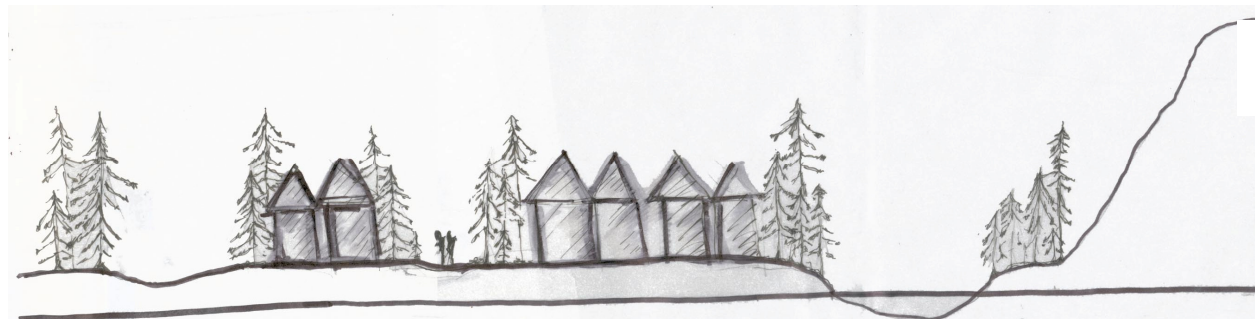
Stormwater Park
Section

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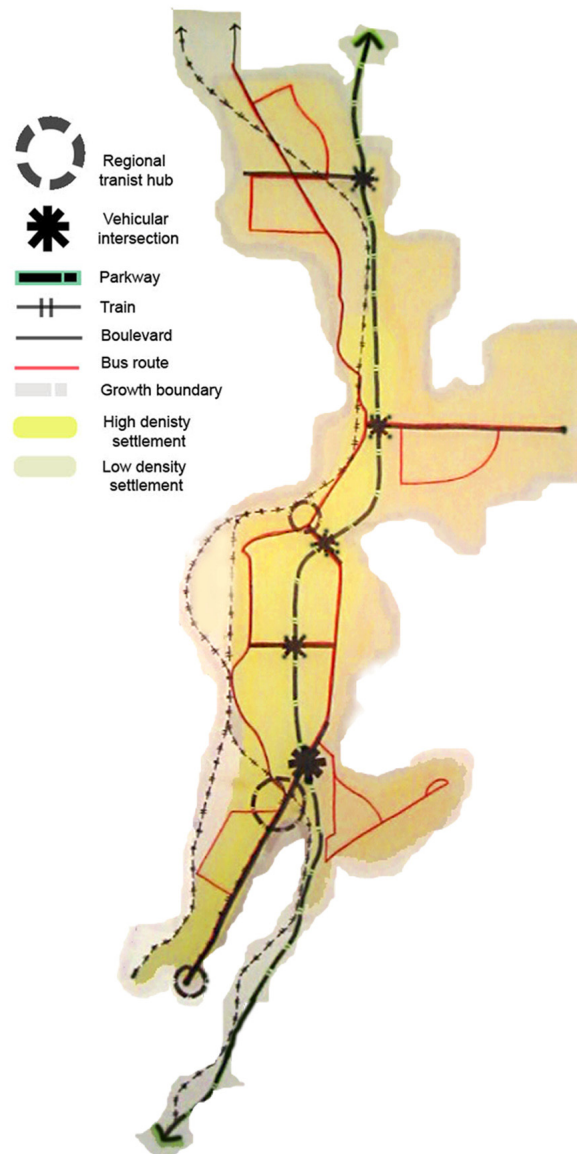
Legend:
- Regional transit hub
- Vehicular intersection
- Parkway
- Train
- Boulevard
- Bus route
- Growth boundary
- High density settlement
- Low density settlement

TRANSPORTATION

The transportation strategy of the GO Team is to connect the narrow valley of Squamish with the greater outlying regions to the north and south while simultaneously realigning the vectors of movement within Squamish itself.

This is accomplished through a water front ferry terminal, BC Rail regional transit hub, inter-connected transportation links, a clear hierarchy of streets, and an open grid structure for all new development. The tremendous force of the Sea to Sky Highway is currently a divisive element. We have embraced the vector of the highway by converting it into a heavily buffered parkway in order to establish stronger thoroughfare and limited concentration of stopping points and activities, thus less highway oriented sprawl. The wide buffer provides protection from traffic noise to bordering neighbourhoods while highlighting the essence of Squamish – natural landscape.

With the parkway as armature, we have focused on aligning other existing vectors into a system of corridors that links two overlapping planes of movement - THROUGH Squamish and WITHIN Squamish. The two systems complement and support one another; attracting people to Squamish, stopping people in Squamish, and making it easy for people to live and work in Squamish.

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The following plans and sections illustrate the network of street hierarchy: highway as parkway, east/west collector boulevards, community high streets, and north/south secondary roads. Swales and filter strips mimic natural drainage, slowing rainwater runoff by filtering and detention of the flow. Trees provide a scenic visual element, a system of organisation the street network, and an identity to the hierarchy of streets found in Squamish.
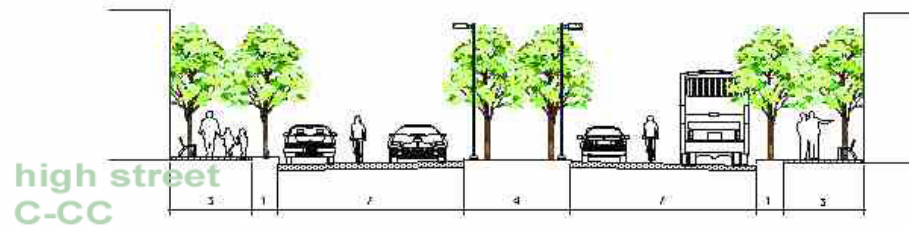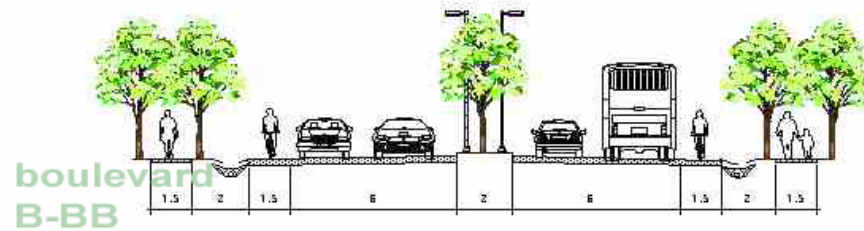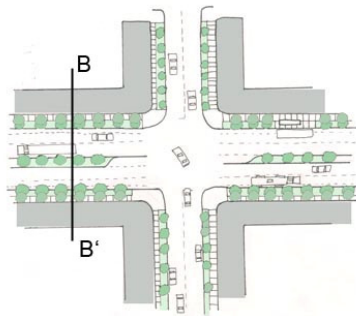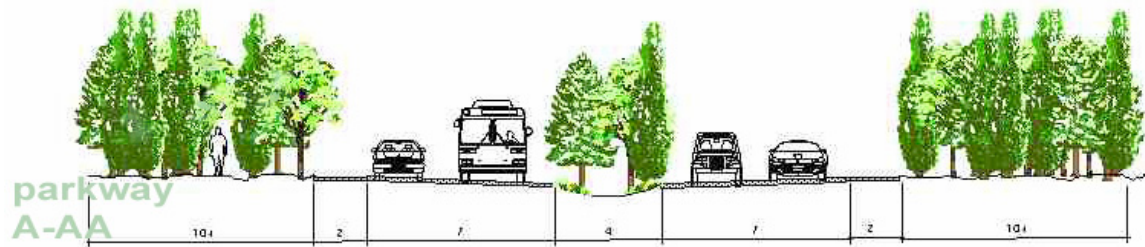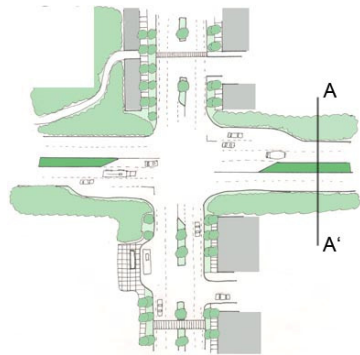
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HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD DESIGN

The focus of the housing and neighbourhood strategy was to contain growth and create more complete neighbourhoods.

Growth has been contained by controlling, concentrating, and promoting new development growth along the central corridor – but not directly on the highway. A growth boundary surrounding the central valley core and existing neighbourhoods was established to prevent further sprawl.

Anticipated population growth will be accommodated with an infill phasing policy prioritizing intensification of existing development before greenfield development occurs. The downtown area will be transformed following the Squamish 2000 plan and the Waterfront plan. Infill and some new developments will help fill out the central corridor, connecting the disparate bits of Squamish.

Complete neighbourhoods were created by providing everyday services and amenities in each of Squamish's neighbourhoods, including some combination of schools, parks, community centres, family services, and basic food and grocery access. The development of secondary suites on existing lots is a way to increase density and diversity of neighbourhoods slowly (this is most applicable to the community of Garibaldi Heights with its large lot sizes and proximity to the Sea to Sky University site).

New

Trans-
formed

Existing

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A Focus on The Public Realm

This figure shows the plan view of a proposed greenfield mixed-use neighbourhood. The modified grid system helps to mitigate the effects of the prevailing winds in Squamish while maintaining connectivity within the neighbourhood and to the rest of Squamish.

A fine grained mixture of housing types accommodates a variety of family structures and income levels. Back lane access to homes enhances the pedestrian experience on the street while short set backs and building proximity creates a sense of enclosure and encourages social connectivity.

Access to open greenspace and parks is an important design feature, with all residents within easy walking distance (0.5km maximum) of park space. Neighbourhood and housing design respects the natural environment. This is reflected in the permeable surface treatment of parking areas and the integration of stormwater management at the parcel level.

The neighbourhood is designed to focus activity patterns on the 'high street' by increasing density and providing services including retail and cafes along the street. Public green spaces bookend the 'high street' providing a pleasant environment for community gathering.

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Community with a View

This figure shows an elevation view from a park in a proposed greenfield neighbourhood. View corridors are created to capitalize on the spectacular natural surroundings of Squamish. The townhouses facing the park show the increase in housing density over existing neighbourhoods with only single family detached homes.   The townhouses present a friendly face to the street, with stairs fronting onto the public sidewalk directly, allowing for increased safety due to 'eyes on the street'. Street trees, narrow streets, and minimal building setbacks create good street enclosure, protection from the elements, and an interesting pedestrian environment.

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