Our green vision is to weave the threads of change into a more coherent and organic whole. Building on and enhancing the unique ecological and cultural heritage that distinguish Squamish from the rest.

We envision a complete community. One that is self reliant and renewing. A rich, green tapestry of people and nature. A fabric in harmony with - though not bound by - outside influences. Whose future is woven from within. Embedding natural systems and wild places into everyday life. Creating new patterns and opportunities for home, work, play.

We imagine a community with a strong spirit of place. One which reflects the rich texture of the landscape and the people. One with a unique pattern that is understood, valued, and celebrated. That links them inextricably in both image and form.

We advocate a tightly woven community. Where social networks are knit together to create a place rich in natural wealth and diversity. Where green threads link people to the landscape, each other, the region, and the world.

Our principles:

1. Sensitivity to the natural environment is fundamental to conscious stewardship of the Earth.
Respect of the natural environment must be paramount; it is what has sustained the Squamish region spiritually, socially and economically for thousands of years. Wildlife habitat, including forests, oceans, and streams, are vulnerable to uncontrolled development and must be stewarded, restored, and conserved. Being sensitive to the environment entails being conscious of the amount of land we develop and cover, and the degree to which those lands and the natural systems they support are altered.

2. Harmonious and whole communities are intricately linked to natural systems.
Harmonious communities have a relationship with their local, regional, and global neighbours and environment that is interwoven and symbiotic. They give back as much as they receive to the earth and its beings. Harmonious communities that are whole, though not solely independent foster diversity and the acceptance of it; offer its citizens an adequate range of housing, employment, and recreational opportunities; and are uniquely bound to the natural systems upon which they depend.

3. A strong, Green Spirit of Place reinforces the ecological character of Squamish.
The totality of the physical environment in Squamish has the power to capture one's eye; it is woven into the visual image of the town. Squamish's spirit of place must be conserved and enhanced by focusing design towards the Green, natural beauty and social features of the neighbourhoods, district and region.

4. Enhanced connectivity facilitates greater interaction between people and environment.
To facilitate both movement and interaction between the natural, social, and physical realms, connectivity must be encouraged and enhanced. By developing an interconnected system in which street networks are seamlessly linked to basic services, green corridors and existing waterways, Squamish will support pedestrian activities, facilitate greater exchange between its citizens, and enable a greater connection to place.

5. Making alternatives mainstream fosters greater adoption of ecological responsibility.
Weaving alternative infrastructure, building, and design into the everyday vernacular of Squamish will be the form of development that makes Squamish a truly ecologically responsible place. The broad adoption and demonstration of 'Green' transportation, tourism, technologies, infrastructures, and building projects will transform this town into an exemplary and sustainable community.

6. Capitalizing on what is already there endorses local initiatives and resources first.
Squamish has many assets on which to build, including its diverse population, beautiful natural environment, and strategic locale. Its development should be guided by abundant and available local human and natural resources. The character of existing neighbourhoods can be enhanced and reflected in a local vernacular, inspired by the town's natural setting.

PRINCIPLE 1: *Sensitivity to the natural environment is fundamental to conscious stewardship of the earth.*
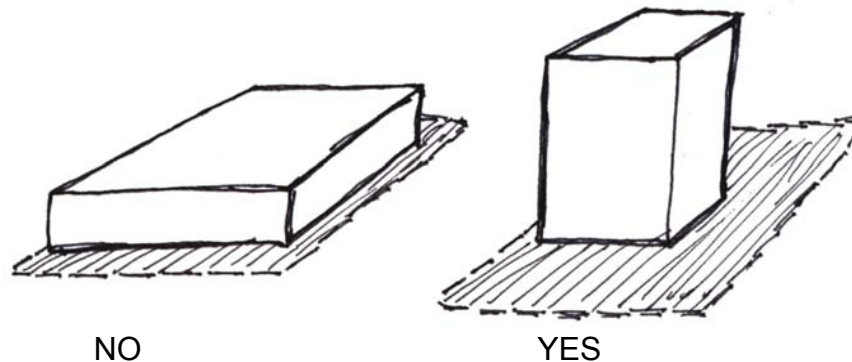
HOMES AND STREET

NO

YES

Problem:
- Structures built on slopes and in other sensitive environments risk erosion and may prove unstable and hazardous to human health.

Policy:
- Building can occur in sensitive areas only where energy forces are less intense (areas of point bar growth, within wind pocket set back from cliff edges, etc.)

HOMES AND STREETS

NO

YES

Problem:
- Parcels with proportionately large building footprints have less land available for water infiltration, which is a key component of watershed health.

Policy:
- Reduce stormwater runoff with smaller building footprints, green roofs and the use of permeable surface materials.

PLACE

NO
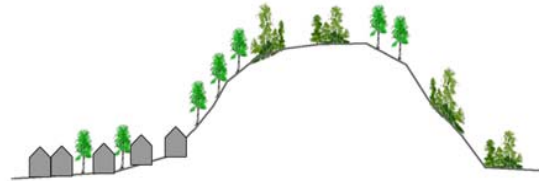
YES

Problem:
- Development pressure threatens the natural features that give Squamish its unique character.

Policy:
- Design and build with respect for natural features and topography.

PLACE
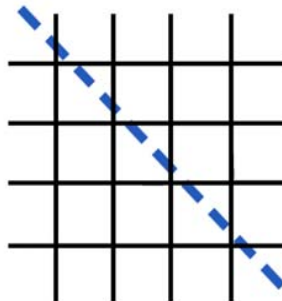
NO

YES

Problem:
- Existing natural features could be better integrated into to the community for the benefit of people and the environment.

Policy:
- Highlight natural amenities within each neighbourhood as a defining feature of each place.

Example:
- *Maintain public access to waterways and make them more visible.*

TRANSPORTATION
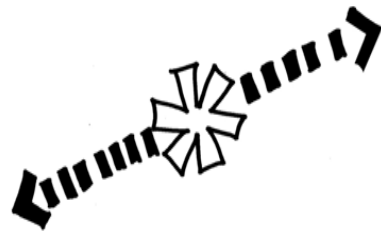
NO   YES

Problem:
- Sensitive habitat and corridors have been disrupted by development.

Policy:
- Protect and enhance sensitive habitats and corridors by developing around natural features rather than through.

**ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS AND OPEN SPACES**
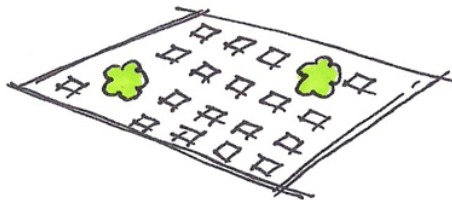
NO   YES

Problem:
- Without boundaries, development can occur unfettered, infringing on ecologically sensitive areas.

Policy:
- Establish a growth boundary to minimize development fragmentation and sprawl.

ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS AND OPEN SPACES
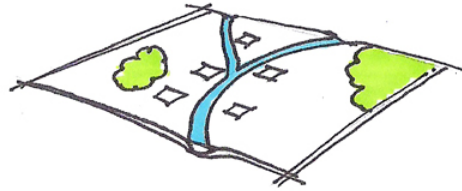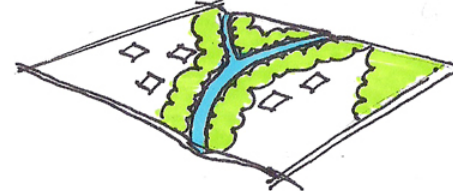
NO   YES

Problem:

- Without boundaries, development can occur unfettered, infringing on ecologically sensitive areas.

Policy:

- Respect natural systems by creating buffers around ecologically sensitive areas such as riparian zones and metastable slopes.

PRINCIPLE 2: *Harmonious and whole communities are intricately linked to natural systems.*

HOMES AND STREETS

NO

YES
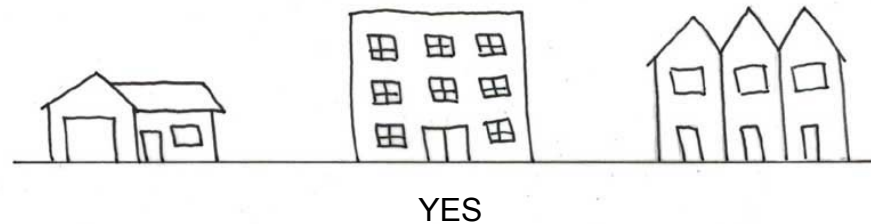
Problem:
- Squamish's diverse population is rapidly increasing. The majority of new housing caters to neither the needs nor the numbers of the town's citizenry.

Policy:
- Provide for the town's residents through the construction of more varied housing typologies.

PLACE

NO

YES
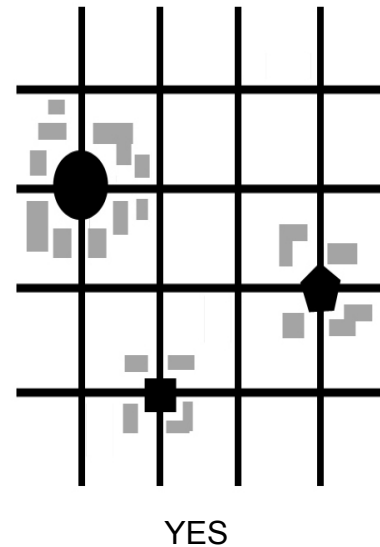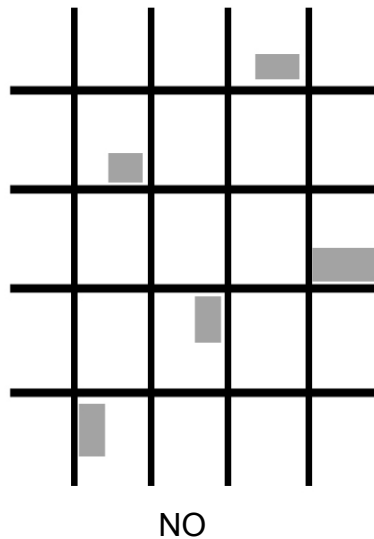
Problem:
- Separation of people and uses forces people to leave their neighbourhood to meet daily needs.

Policy:
- Direct activity to distinct nodes and the town center where residents can meet their needs and interact with neighbours.

Examples:
- Clustered uses around a central node.

TRANSPORTATION

NO   YES

Problem:
- Dispersion of services, housing and recreation is occurring, which increases dependence on the automobile.

Policy:
- Concentrate uses, services and housing into nodes to promote pedestrian activity and to foster more tightly woven neighbourhoods.

ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS AND OPEN SPACES

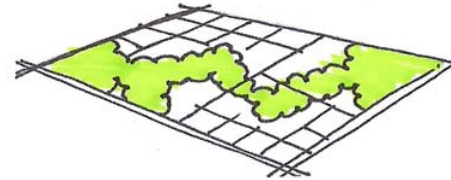NO   YES
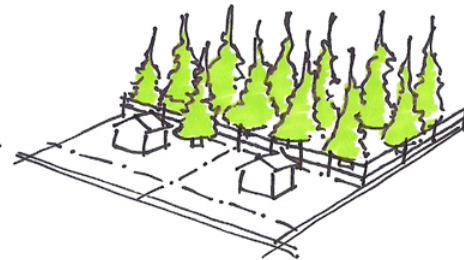
Problem:
- Open space is often unprotected.

Policy:
- Conservation covenants or land trusts, where a land area equal in size to a development area is set aside for conservation, should be encouraged for increased protection of lands.

**ENVIRONMENTAL
SYSTEMS AND
OPEN SPACES**

NO   YES

Problem:

- Open space is often disconnected from neighbourhoods.

Policy:

- In every neighbourhood, accessible open space (parks, greenways, conservation land) shall be woven throughout to provide interconnection and engagement with nature.

PRINCIPLE 3: *A strong, Green Spirit of Place reinforces the ecological character of Squamish.*

HOMES AND STREETS

NO

YES

Problem:
- Much of Squamish's new development is homogenous and does not complement the town's unique social and natural character.

Policy:
- Discourage the construction of generic suburban building typologies to foster a visible homegrown vernacular.

Example:
- Incorporate river rock and timber into building design.

PLACE
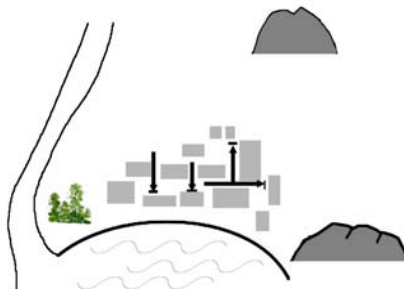
NO
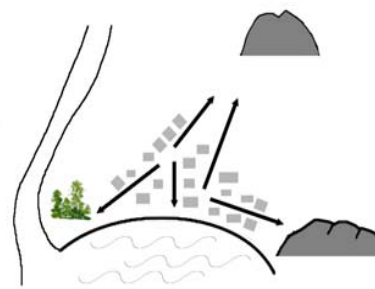
YES

Problem:
- Views of Squamish's defining natural features are obstructed by buildings and powerlines.

Policy:
- Create design guidelines that control building height and arrangement to strengthen important view corridors to the mountains, forests and waterways.

TRANSPORTATION

NO   YES
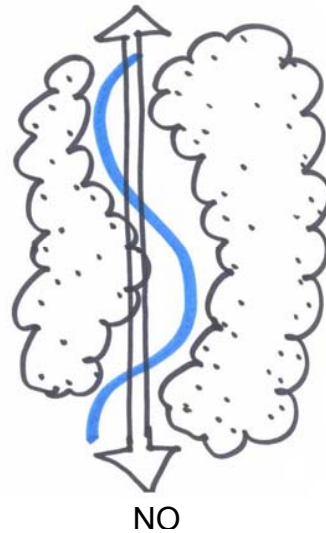
Problem:
- The experience of passing through Squamish is of passing through; there is a weak visual connection from the highway to make Squamish a destination.

Policy:
- Enhance visual and physical connections between the town and the highway to encourage passers-by to visit Squamish.

ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS AND OPEN SPACES

NO   YES
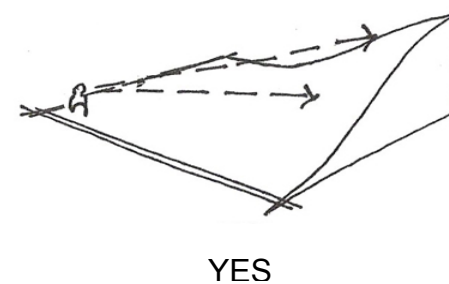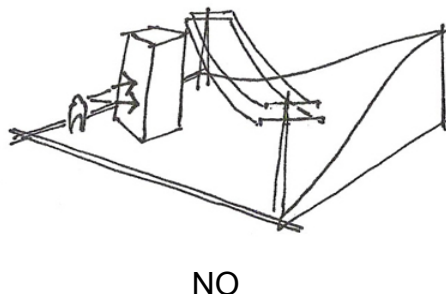
Problem:
- Appreciation of natural icons is interrupted by the built environment.

Policy:
- Maintain view corridors and protect important iconic landmarks (The Chief, Howe Sound) through removal of obstructions, increased access, and protection of surrounding lands.

Example:
- Bury powerlines.

ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS AND OPEN SPACES
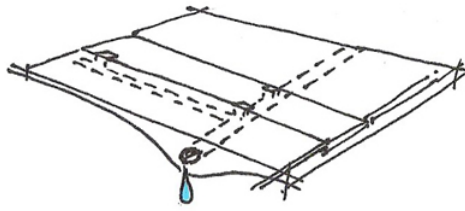
NO   YES
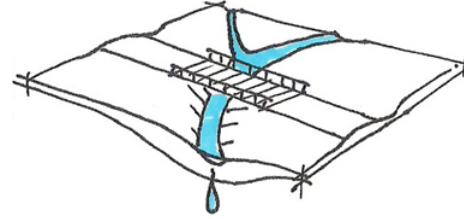
Problem:
- Appreciation of natural processes is interrupted by the built environment.

Policy:
- Reveal natural processes wherever possible to reinforce the Green spirit of place.

Example:
- Daylighting streams.

PRINCIPLE 4: *Enhanced connectivity facilitates greater interaction between people and environment.*
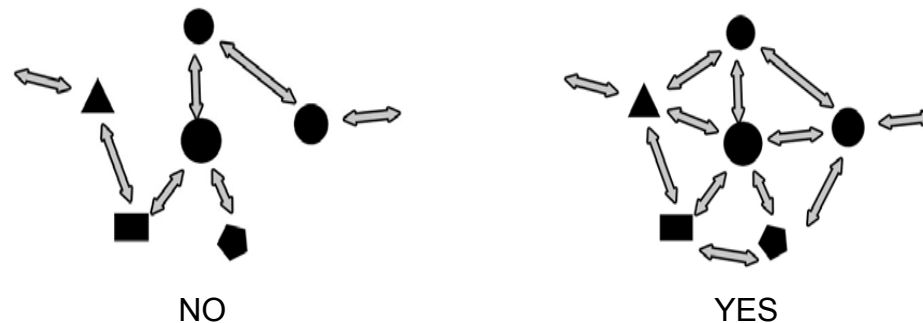
HOMES AND STREETS

NO

YES

PLACE

NO   YES
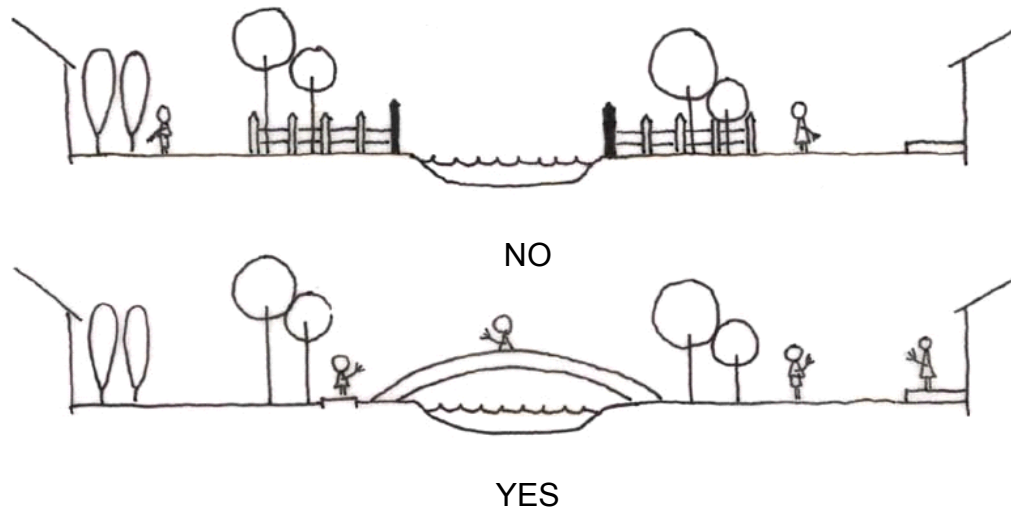
Problem:
- Most detached single family housing developments do not promote interaction with one's neighbours or the natural world, but instead foster habitat fragmentation and social isolation.

Policy:
- Connect private spaces with the natural environment.

Problem:
- Fragmentation of neighborhoods and natural areas weakens the link between the community and the environment.

Policy:
- Strengthen physical and emotional connections, among neighbors, nodes and natural areas by enhancing legibility and accessibility.

Example:
- Pedestrian bridges over the highway; hierarchy of streets that lead to the town center.

TRANSPORTATION
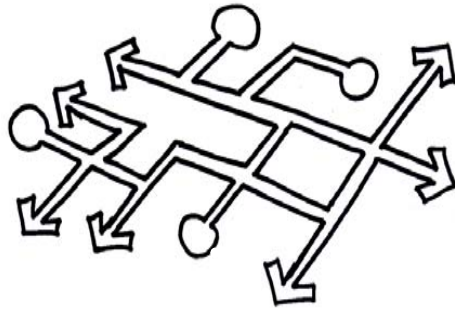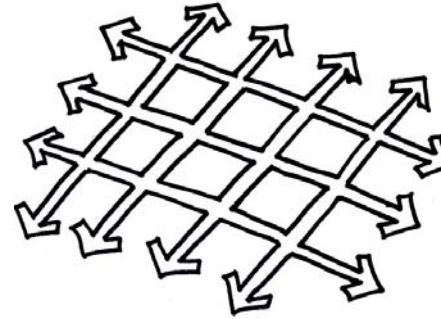
NO   YES

Problem:
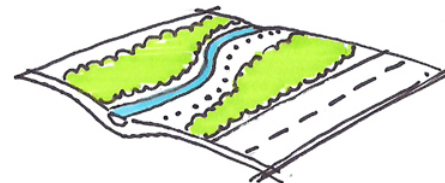- A fragmented transportation network limits movement within the community.

Policy:
- Create an interwoven network of streets, greenways and corridors to increase connectivity between neighbourhoods, community, region and the surrounding environment.
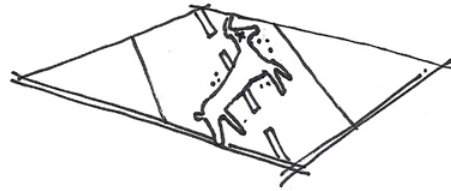
ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS AND OPEN SPACES
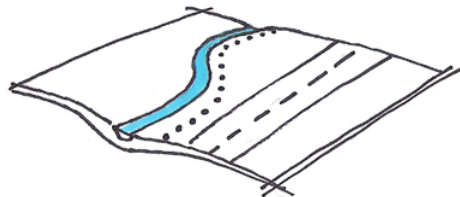
NO   YES

Problem:
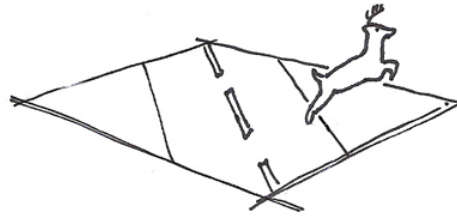- Multi-use paths and neighbouring riparian zones are threatened by the built environment.

Policy:
- Buffer non-motorized pathways, particularly parallel to stream systems, to enhance the pedestrian experience and protect fish and wildlife habitat.

**ENVIRONMENTAL
SYSTEMS AND
OPEN SPACES**

NO   YES

Problem:

- Fish and wildlife habitat is fragmented by major barriers to movement.

Policy:

- Establish slower speed limit areas in direct association with green buffers along portions of the highway for safer animal crossings.

PRINCIPLE 5: *Making alternatives mainstream fosters greater adoption of ecological responsibility.*

HOMES AND STREETS

YES

PLACE

NO   YES
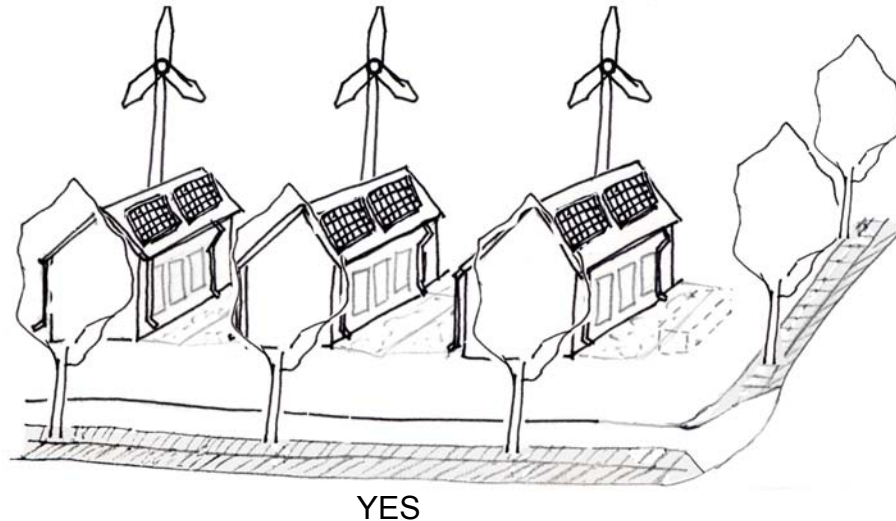
Problem:

- Houses in Squamish have been built without consideration of the functional potential that their various parts possess in terms of reducing environmental impact.
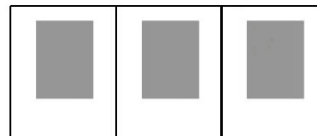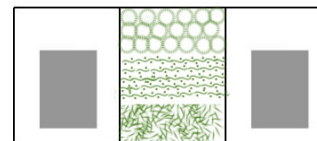
Policy:

- Design homes that capture and re-use water and energy through the use of photovoltaic cells, solar panels, disconnected downspouts, green roofs and maximum impervious surface coverage.
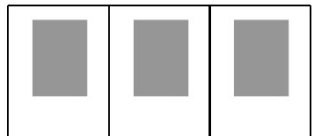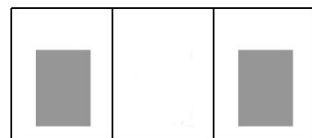
Problem:

- Squamish has not capitalized on the opportunities to become a leading example of sustainability.
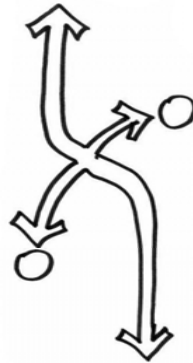
Policy:

- Create neighbourhood demonstration projects that engage residents in working together toward a common goal.
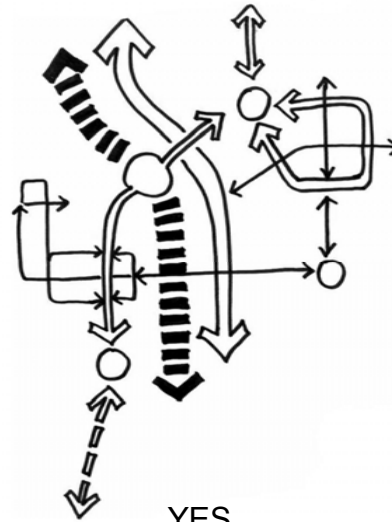
Example:

- Create programs for residents to engage in community or rooftop gardening.

TRANSPORTATION

NO   YES

Problem:
- Alternative transportation systems are not well-marked or utilized.
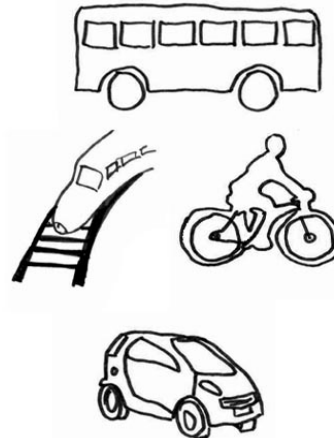
Policy:
- Layer and support multi-modal movement within the community by creating pedestrian, cyclist, and other non-motorized pathways that provide residents and visitors a variety of transportation options.
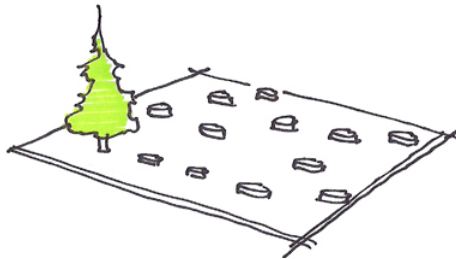
TRANSPORTATION
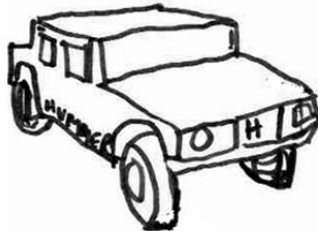
NO   YES

Problem:
- A limited number of transit modes exist to connect the community and the region.
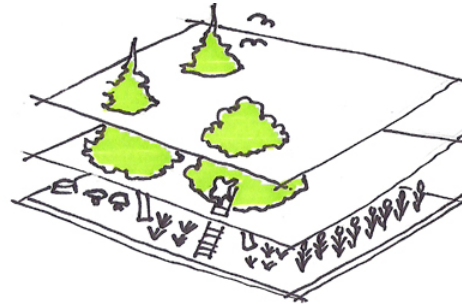
Policy:
- Provide multiple modes of transportation throughout the area by encouraging the development of transit, car pool initiatives, train, cycling routes, etc.

**ENVIRONMENTAL
SYSTEMS AND
OPEN SPACES**

NO   YES

Problem:
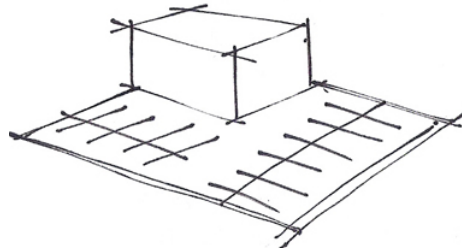- Single or one-time use of the land limits functionality.

Policy:
- Practice layering uses of the land to maximize product and function of the land by encouraging industrial ecology projects.
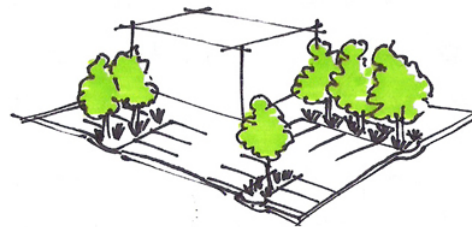
Example:
- Agro-forestry, wastewater and sewage treatment wetlands, and eco-industrial parks.

**ENVIRONMENTAL
SYSTEMS AND
OPEN SPACES**

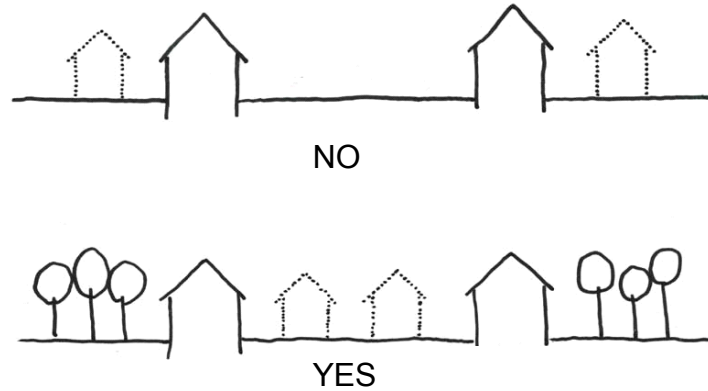NO   YES

Problem:
- Channelized run-off leads to drainage, wash-out, and flooding issues.

Policy:
- Manage rainwater onsite to slow filtration of water through the application of bioswales, planting, drainage and permeable surfaces.

PRINCIPLE 6: *Capitalizing on what is already there sanctions local initiatives and resources first.*

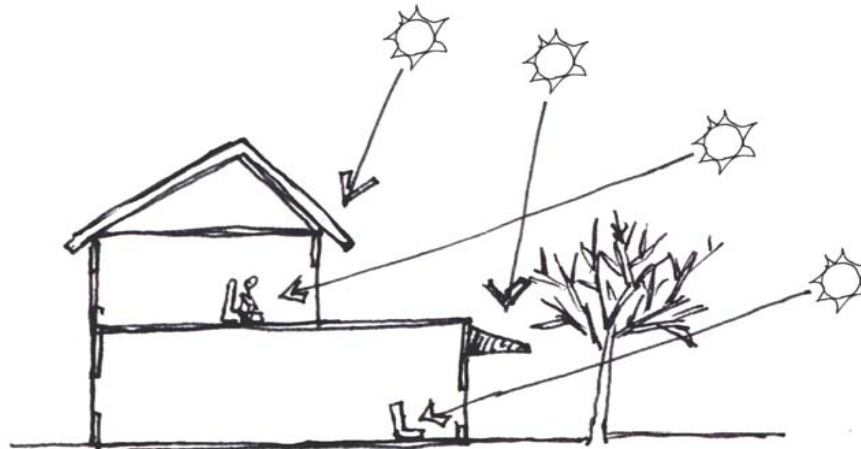**HOMES AND STREETS**

NO

YES

Problem:
- Greenfield development encourages sprawl and does not take advantage of available unbuilt urban land.

Policy:
- Build on existing vacant urban land first to densify existing neighbourhoods while maintaining open green space.

HOMES AND STREETS

Problem:
- Many buildings in Squamish are oriented with a blind eye to the energy of the sun, increasing energy consumption for heating and cooling.
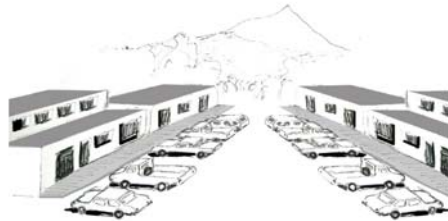
Policy:
- Orient and design buildings and landscape to provide for maximum solar capture in winter and for shade in summer.

Example:
- Residential units with articulated facades to capture winter sun and overhangs and/or tree placement to shade summer sun.
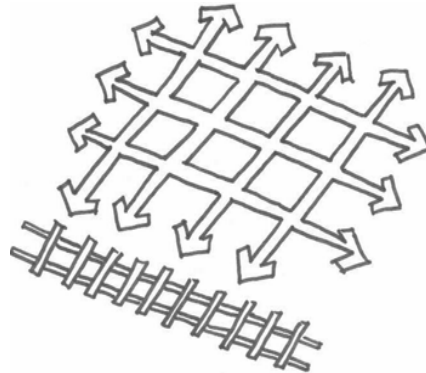
PLACE

NO   YES

Problem:

- New franchise retail along the highway corridor undermines long-standing commercial establishments in the downtown core.
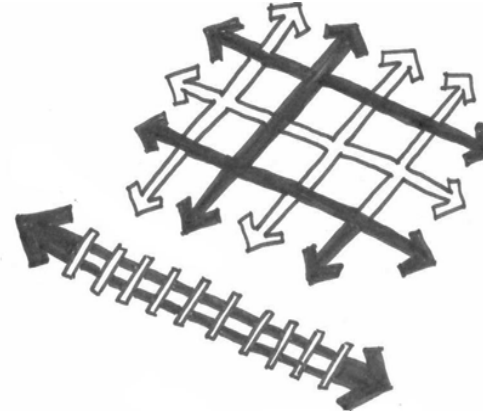
Policy:

- Enhance public realm design in the existing downtown core to create a unique and enjoyable shopping environment for residents and visitors.

TRANSPORTATION

NO   YES

Problem:

- Alternative transportation systems are not well-marked or utilized.

Policy:

- Layer and support multi-modal movement within the community by creating pedestrian, cyclist, and other non-motorized pathways that provide residents and visitors a variety of transportation options.
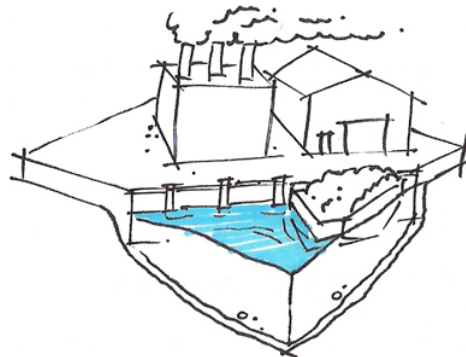
**ENVIRONMENTAL
SYSTEMS AND
OPEN SPACES**

YES

Problem:
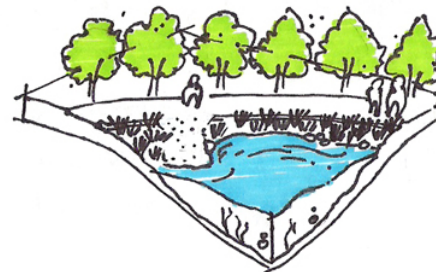- Local and regional systems are not being fully harnessed.

Policy:
- Examine the local and regional flows of materials and energy to capitalize on the natural systems at work: wind, forests, views, and water.

**ENVIRONMENTAL
SYSTEMS AND
OPEN SPACES**

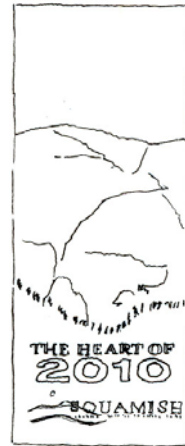
NO   YES

Problem:
- Waterfront industry is preventing access to water by people and wildlife.

Policy:
- Capitalize on the industrial waterfront by increasing access, opening view corridors, and reclaiming shoreline habitat.

**ENVIRONMENTAL
SYSTEMS AND
OPEN SPACES**

YES

Problem:
- Squamish's natural, regional draw is not being fully appreciated.

Policy:
- Capitalize on the regional location through continued marketing of ecotourism and celebration of Squamish's natural beauty.

Example:
- Heart of 2010 banner, Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada program