Lynn Valley Town Centre

Charrette Decision Support Framework ▪ 24 May 2007

In 2004, District of North Vancouver Council adopted sustainability objectives/principles with the goal of "becom[ing] one of the most sustainable communities in the world by 2020." Toward advancing this goal, on December 4th, 2006, Council authorized District staff to proceed with the development of the Lynn Valley Town Centre Plan. The Design Centre for Sustainability at The University of British Columbia (the DCS) is working with the District to facilitate a stakeholder-driven, multidisciplinary design charrette[1] process to develop a sustainable and imminently implementable concept plan for the Town Centre.

The Town Centre charrette process will be guided by the *Charrette Decision Support Framework*. This framework is directed at the Town Centre charrette process, and will focus on design principles, indicators and targets specific to the development of a Town Centre concept plan. This framework is being developed from existing District policy, expert opinion, and the input of District Staff, the Steering Committee, and members of the community at large.

The Lynn Valley Plan provides the vision statement for this process. The six design principles from the DCS's *Sustainability by Design* project provide a high level organizational and guiding structure for subsequent framework elements. These principles are a product of what the DCS has learned through twelve years of sustainable community design projects in the Greater Vancouver Region, and other BC communities. Each design principle is described by a statement of intent that incorporates the objectives of the Lynn Valley Plan, and is supported by the Official Community Plan community goals, and the adopted Community Sustainability Objectives. These design principles, indicators and targets will guide the decisions made by the charrette team toward generating a Town Centre concept that achieves the Lynn Valley neighbourhood vision.

Lynn Valley Neighbourhood Vision

> "Drawing on our spectacular natural forest and mountain setting and our pioneer roots, we will create a diverse community which combines the warmth of small town living with the convenience of city life. Distinct, livable neighbourhoods will surround and be linked to a vibrant attractive town centre which will include residential, commercial and mixed use buildings. With a keen sense of community identity and pride, our active, involved citizens welcome people from all walks of life supporting them through life's transitions, working in partnership to provide lifelong learning and recreation."
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> *-- Vision Statement, Lynn Valley Plan, 7 May 1998*

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1 A charrette is a collaborative planning process that engages varied stakeholder groups to incorporate disparate viewpoints into a synthesized and sustainable solution.

Design Principles & Indicators

1 | *Five minute walk*

Intent: Sustainable communities have compact neighbourhoods surrounding a higher density, vibrant and stable core. Public gathering places provide a focus for each neighbourhood, and contribute to community identity. An interconnected grid of streets and arterials connects neighbourhoods, and is designed for walking, cycling and transit access. Neighbourhoods have enough density and use mix to support transit service.[2]

Indicator	Priority	Description
Distribution		To achieve walkability, land uses must be distributed throughout the community such that the majority of residents are within a five minute walk of their most basic daily needs.
Connectivity	√	Connectivity both within and between neighbourhoods for automobile and non-automobile transportation means people are able to get quickly and easily to their destination, reducing trip travel time and encouraging non-auto trips.
Public realm	√	A safe and vibrant pedestrian environment means people have places to walk to and an enjoyable route to get there by. This means that the relationship of streets, buildings and public space create an urban form that is safe, comfortable and attractive. Within the Lynn Valley Town Centre, the new Library and public square is a keystone in creating this environment. Weather protection, bike parking and an enhanced natural environment are also key.
Safe & Accessible		Accessibility ensures that a variety of land uses – including parks and open space – are in walking-distance proximity to residents. It also means the community is universally accessible and safe.

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[2] (LVP objectives 5.3, 6.1, 7.1, 7.2, 8.2, 11.6; community sustainability objectives 1 & 3; OCP community goals 1 & 2).

2 | *Mixed use locations accessible to all*

Intent: Sustainable communities are more complete communities where residents live, work, shop and play in their local area. Land and public infrastructure are designed for multiple purposes and mixed use, and to contribute to community identity. Corridors provide both effective commuter and goods transportation, and access to multiple services and daily activities. Corridors enable diverse transportation choices, including safe, accessible, affordable and sustainable circulation for pedestrians, bicycles, transit and automobiles.[3]

Indicator	Priority	Description
Intensity	√	Intensified commercial, service and office land uses in the Town Centre – particularly along corridors – puts jobs in the community, helping to create a jobs and housing balance and a vibrant pedestrian environment. Good connectivity to the surrounding community provides residents of residential neighbourhoods access to the intense core without changing intensity in their neighbourhoods.
Mobility		Intensified uses along corridors puts housing, jobs and businesses where people can easily access them from a variety of transportation modes. A north-south and east-west grid of transit connects all neighbourhoods to the Town Centre.
Flexibility (formerly: Layering)	√	When the design of the landscape and buildings are flexible they can integrate multiple different uses at once, or over time, or can easily be adapted to new uses. Layering contributes to intensity.
NEW: Character		Complete communities include art, culture and heritage that are easily accessible and contribute to community identity.

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[3] (LVP objectives 6.1, 8.2, 10.1, 10.2, 11.7; community sustainability objectives 1 & 4; OCP community goals 4 & 6).

3 | *Good & plentiful jobs close to home*

Intent: Sustainable communities foster local economic opportunities and growth to support residents' needs. The Town Centre provides a majority of quality community facilities and services, and is key to creating a sense of community. Government policies and local infrastructure foster local businesses and individual enterprise so residents can find a variety of employment close to home, which is more sustainable and beneficial to the community's residents and businesses.[4]

Indicator	Priority	Description
Diversity	√	Job diversity means there are many different kinds of businesses and jobs within the community to suit the needs of a variety of people. Although we can't ensure residents will work where they live, we can provide more opportunities to do so, if desired.
Intensity		Job intensity means there are enough businesses and jobs within the community for residents of different age cohorts and skill sets.
NEW: Support		Supporting jobs means fostering a variety of good work environments. Locating amenities and jobs within walking distance of each other puts working people near their daily needs. Encouraging home-based businesses increases work options in the community.

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[4] (LVP objectives 6.1, 8.1, 8.2, 11.1, 11.2; community sustainnability objectives 1& 4; OCP community goal 5).

4 | *Different housing types*

Intent: Sustainable communities include a variety of housing choice in type, tenure, affordability and accessibility in the same neighbourhood, and very often on the same street. A mix of housing types allows residents to live affordably in the same community throughout their lives. High quality neighbourhood design protects and enhances the character of residential neighbourhoods while responding to current and future community needs, such as ageing populations, empty nesters, single-parent families and smaller, non-traditional households.[5]

Indicator	Priority	Description
Diversity	√	Diversity in housing types means there is enough variety in the kinds of units located in the community to meet the needs of all families, ages and abilities.
Intensity	√	Intensity of housing means there is enough housing clustered in the Town Centre to create a vibrant community and support business and transit.
Equity (formerly: Affordability)	√	Equity means there is housing to suite the needs of all family types and tenures throughout their lives.
NEW: Sustainability		Housing in sustainable communities are designed to contributes to the preservation of the environment, for example with reduced energy consumption, green roofs, &etc.
NEW: Character	√	High quality neighbourhood design protects and enhances the character of residential neighbourhoods and contributes to community identity.

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[5] (LVP objectives 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 8.2; community sustainability objective 4; OCP community goals 1 & 2).

5 | *Access to linked natural areas & parks*

Intent: Sustainable communities protect, preserve and link key natural areas, parks, urban public spaces and key features to maintain and restore ecosystem functions. Well designed communities integrate natural systems with human activities, placing high value on community access to natural systems and parks, yet recognizing their role as essential elements of the ecosystem. They protect the natural character of the community and secure opportunities for current and future active and passive recreation needs. Sustainable communities protect and preserve key natural areas and features, and maintain and restore ecosystem functions.[6]

Indicator	Priority	Description
Diversity		Diversity ensures that a full range of park and open space types are included within the community – both within the Town Centre and the peripheral areas.
Distribution		Distribution means natural areas, parks and public spaces are located equitably throughout the community.
Intensity	√	Intensity ensures there are enough parks, urban public spaces and open spaces to meet the various needs of the community.
Connectivity	√	Connectivity means that parks, urban public spaces, and open space are adequately connected to each other – so people and wildlife can easily move through the system, hydrologic systems can be restored, and the network connects all parts of the community.
Natural Environment	√	Protecting, preserving and restoring the natural environment – including forest, watercourses, and views – is key to creating a sustainable future.
NEW: Safe & Accessible		Natural areas, urban open space and parks that are designed to be safe and universally accessible are an amenity to the whole community

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[6] (LVP objectives 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 6.1, 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, 9.6; community sustainability objectives 3 & 4; OCP community goal 3).

6 | *Lighter, greener, cheaper, smarter infrastructure*

Intent: Sustainable communities optimize the economic, social and ecological impacts of buildings and infrastructure. Innovative development standards and practices – including preserving, enhancing and maximizing use of existing public facilities and other local community resources – reduces community and environmental impacts as well as private, public, and taxpayer costs of development and infrastructure. Infrastructure that is distributed, clustered, interconnected, integrated, service oriented, responsive, renewable/low-impact, well-suited, multi-purpose, and adaptable will benefit both society and the environment, *and* save money over the longer-term, ensuring the sustainability of economic growth.[7]

Indicator	Priority	Description
Efficiency	√	Efficient use of land, air, water, energy and both natural and built resources are key to reducing the community's demand on the environment and achieving a sustainable future.
Impact	√	Good design of infrastructure – such as using alternative parking, storm water infrastructure, and building standards – means a decreased impact on the environment, contributes to efficiency, and enhances the quality of life in the community.
Net productivity		Net productivity refers to amount of food-growing area, access to locally produced foods and products, canopy coverage, and waste management.
NEW: Flexibility		When the design of infrastructure is adaptable it can accommodate future changes in technology, community servicing requirements, and the development of best management practices.

[7] (LVP objectives 10.3, 11.3, 11.4, 11.5; community sustainability objectives 2 & 3; OCP community goal 6; GM pp.4-17).