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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Seymour Local Plan was launched in 1997 with District Council's approval of a unique local plan process for Seymour. The process was designed and managed by Seymour residents and driven by public input. Dozens of Seymour residents participated in Public Input Committees and many more provided ideas throughout the process.

This resulting plan reflects the vision expressed by Seymour residents, anchored by past experience and shaped by the legal, regional and historical context of Seymour and the District. This introductory section discusses these factors as background to the goals and policies presented in the plan. The provisions of this local plan apply to the area delineated in *Map 1*.

### 1.1 Legal & Administrative Context

*Adopted by  
bylaw*

Sections 872 to 884 of the *Local Government Act* (formerly the *Municipal Act*) set out the legislative framework for and effect of Official Community Plans in planning and land use management. An Official Community Plan (OCP) is a statement of objectives and policies to guide planning and land management decisions. It is adopted by bylaw and generally includes:

*Intended to be  
comprehensive  
& flexible*

- Environmental, economic and social policy statements
- The approximate location, amount, type and density of residential development to meet current and anticipated needs
- The approximate location, amount and type of present and proposed industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational and public utility land uses
- The approximate location and phasing of any major road, sewer and water systems
- The approximate location and type of present and proposed public facilities such as schools and parks
- Restrictions on the use of land that is subject to hazardous conditions or that is environmentally sensitive to development

## DRAFT

### *The result of a consultative process*

In the development of the Plan, the *Act* also requires the municipality to provide reasonable opportunities for consultation with individuals, organizations and other authorities affected by the Plan. The Seymour Local Plan consultation program includes, for example, the Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish Nations, the Vancouver Port Authority and School District #44.

### *Linking local community & District plans*

The District Official Community Plan is the key strategic planning document for the District. It establishes community level objectives, broad social, economic and environmental policies and identifies development permit areas across the District. Local Plans, including the Seymour Local Plan are summarized, adopted by bylaw and appended to the District OCP as Schedule 'C'.

This document, the *Seymour Local Plan Planning Report*, describes the Seymour community's vision for the future through a comprehensive set of objectives, policies and implementation statements. It provides the rationale and detailed background information necessary to support the policy statements for Seymour contained within the District OCP.

### *Effect & scope*

While the Official Community Plan (including the local plans) does not commit or authorize a municipality to undertake any project specified in the plan, Council cannot enact bylaws or undertake works which are inconsistent with the adopted Plan, without amending the plan through a process including a public hearing. While the Seymour Local Plan area encompasses the Tsleil-Waututh Indian Reserve, this land is outside municipal jurisdiction and therefore beyond the authority of this Plan. To pursue the community's vision, the Plan does however, seek to account for growth and development activities on Tsleil-Waututh land.

# DRAFT

## 1.2 Seymour in a Regional and North Shore Context

### *Defining Seymour*

Natural features, major roads and jurisdictional boundaries broadly define Seymour. Seymour is framed by the Seymour River at its western boundary, Indian Arm in the east, alpine wilderness to the north and Burrard Inlet to the south. Creeks, ravines, forests and the lay of the land define Seymour's distinct neighbourhoods. Seymour's natural endowment is, in fact, a regional asset accounting for a significant portion of the Greater Vancouver Regional District's Green Zone.

These same natural features also serve to limit access to the Seymour area. Land access originates from the west via the Trans Canada Highway, with a single hub of interchanges just north of the Second Narrows crossing directing residential, commercial and recreational traffic destined for the eastern part of the District. Seymour is traversed west to east by two routes, Mount Seymour Parkway and the Dollarton Highway. Three north-south routes, Riverside Drive in the west, Ellis/Plymouth in the centre and Dollarton Highway as it travels northward into Deep Cove Road in the east, connect the Parkway and Dollarton Highway.

Seymour is the District of North Vancouver's easternmost community, comprised of several unique and active neighbourhoods. West of the Seymour Plan area is the Inter-River/Lynn timer neighbourhood. The Maplewood community is to the west and south and the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation Reserve (IR# 3) is found south of Mount Seymour Parkway between Maplewood and the Roche Point area. *Map 1* includes Seymour's neighbourhoods, illustrates access issues and puts the Local Plan area in a broader Seymour context.

## 1.3 Seymour From An Environmental Perspective

Seymour is strongly defined by its abundant physical and natural attributes. The forests, slopes, watercourses, foreshore and inlet shaping Seymour all provide habitat for fish and wildlife. At the same time, they create unparalleled vistas and contribute to the quality of life for Seymour's residents and visitors alike.

## DRAFT

### *Mountains & forests*

The upper-forested slopes of Seymour's mountains provide a part of Greater Vancouver's signature scenic backdrop. The numerous trails that criss-cross these mountain forests provide a natural, serene refuge for people escaping the pressures of urban life. As well, the vast solitude of the forest wilderness harbours many forms of wildlife no longer encountered near most large North American cities. Bear, deer, coyote and sometimes cougar have been known to frequent the forest-urban interface. Wildlife sightings and encounters are a regular feature of the Seymour lifestyle. The forests also perform a less obvious, though vital, role as a vast "carbon sink," removing thousands of tonnes of carbon from the atmosphere each year.

### *Watercourses*

The upper mountain watersheds supply Seymour's rivers, creeks and tributaries with fresh, cold, clean water. The various watercourses support all five species of salmonids -- Chum, Coho, Pink, Steelhead and Cutthroat Trout. In fall, salmon can be seen leaping from the water of the Seymour River and off Cates Park, as they begin their spawning migration up Indian Arm. Coho, Chum and Pink salmon are common in the lower reaches of many of Seymour's creeks and can be seen as fry in streams throughout the year. The watercourses serve both as habitat for fish and wildlife and as wildlife movement corridors, providing critical linkages within the urban setting.

### *Indian Arm & Burrard Inlet*

Indian Arm, carved out by the movement of the great ice sheets, provides the relatively pristine environment of a coastal fjord. Steep, rocky walls rise as high as 1600 meters above the water, with numerous mountain streams cascading into the Arm, which reaches depths of 219 meters. Along with Burrard Inlet, Indian Arm provides exceptional recreational boating, canoeing, kayaking and scuba diving experiences in a setting unlike any other in the Lower Mainland. With the foreshore parks and natural areas bordering them, these waters continue to support a vast array of marine life.

# DRAFT

## 1.4 Seymour Area History & Character

<i>First settlements</i>	Evidence indicates that human habitation in Burrard Inlet/Indian Arm dates back 2,500 years. Upper portions of Burrard Inlet were traditionally occupied by the Tsleil-Waututh, with winter villages having been reported at Seymour Creek, Burrard Inlet Indian Reserve (IR #3), Cates Park and Belcarra. The main winter village is thought to have shifted from Belcarra to the IR #3 area sometime between 1830 and 1860.
<i>Early District days</i>	European settlement east of the Seymour River began in 1865 with the pre-emption of land by Hugh Burr. When the District of North Vancouver was incorporated with a population of 600 in 1891, the area east of the Seymour River and up the North Arm of Burrard Inlet was designated as Ward 4. Logging activity began in the isolated Dollarton and Cove Cliff areas before the turn of the century, but it was the success of the Dollar Mill, established in 1916, which significantly promoted early local settlement in Roslyn, now Dollarton.
<i>Progress of development</i>	The building of Keith Road in 1902 opened western Seymour for settlement, but more intensive development required reliable roads and bridges – over the Seymour River, McCartney Creek and linking the North Shore to Vancouver over the Second Narrows. Ambitious plans for industrial and residential development served by bridge, road and rail linkages were scuttled by World War I, but even as land access continued to frustrate development, summer communities accessible from Indian Arm were thriving.
<i>...on land</i>	
<i>...by water</i>	
<i>...over bridges</i>	
	The Second Narrows Bridge was officially opened to road and railway traffic in 1925, but after collapsing in 1930, was not re-built until 1934. Travelling to Seymour was then made easier by the bridge and was also facilitated by the construction of the Dollarton Highway in 1931-32. West of Cates Park, McKenzie Barge and Marineways opened in 1930 and was joined by Matsumoto Shipyards in 1949. By 1942, pockets of homes, stores and schools could be found in Woodlands, Deep Cove, Dollarton, Northlands and Maplewood, but most of Seymour remained as wilderness. This changed as the post-war period brought an influx of families to Seymour in search of affordable land and housing in attractive subdivisions.

## DRAFT

### *Recent development*

With the completion of a new Second Narrows Bridge in 1960<sup>1</sup>, Seymour Heights and Windsor Park were developed, followed by Windsor Park South and Blueridge. Redevelopment and infill occurred in Dollarton, Cove Cliff and Deep Cove. Parkway Village, McCartney Woods, Parkgate, Indian River and Roche Point have all been developed since the 1970s.

### *Planning history*

Development plans prepared in the late 1960s and early 1970s projecting populations in Seymour upwards of 65 000 people were controversial, but also generated substantial interest in the planning process and prompted resident groups to prepare alternative plans for Seymour. In March 1975, with inadequate bridge capacity across the Seymour River and lack of an acceptable overall plan for Seymour, Council instituted a moratorium on development east of the Seymour River, which remained in force until 1983. Between 1975 and 1983 extensive research and public feedback resulted in key planning documents; *The Development of Seymour* (1977), *The Seymour Development Plan* (1983) and finally, on this foundation, the *Seymour Official Community Plan* (adopted 1986). Area plans for Deep Cove and Maplewood were adopted in 1983. Throughout this period, planned population and development was revised downward, to an estimated 50,000 people in 17,750 dwelling units in the 1986 Seymour Official Community Plan.

Since the adoption of the 1986 Seymour Plan, projections have been further reduced as a result of the elimination of proposed neighbourhoods, plan boundary changes and the building of the Northlands golf course. Revised subdivision patterns, changing demographics and housing needs, and evolving community objectives are factors that will continue to affect planning for Seymour.

## **1.5 Seymour Local Plan Process**

### *Phase I –*

Council approved the community-driven planning process for the Seymour Local Plan in October 1997. Phase One, the resident-managed initial public input phase, concluded in March 1999 with the Community Vision Statement. In this Phase, resident volunteers formed a committee system to gather information, solicit residents' input and generate ideas for a future vision of Seymour.

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<sup>1</sup> Now referred to as the Ironworkers Memorial Bridge

## DRAFT

*Ideas  
generated*

The *Plan Management Committee* facilitated this effort by providing information, liaison between committees and District staff and by fulfilling a range of administrative functions regarding meetings, communications and production of materials. Seven *Public Input Committees* (PICs) were formed to explore these areas: Managed Growth & Development, Housing & Schools, Parks, Wilderness & Environment, Transportation & Traffic, Community Services, Economic Development, Arts, Culture & Heritage. Meeting regularly and using a range of resources and tools (including surveys and a public open house), the Public Input Committees crafted guiding principles in each of their respective areas. A *Co-ordinating Committee*, comprised of representative members of the PICs, compiled this input into a consensus-based Community Vision Statement (CVS). Appendix 1 more fully describes the Seymour community approach and the people involved in this unique process.

*...a community  
vision ...*

# DRAFT

*Phase II – ...options ...input ...analysis*

Phase Two began with a staff technical team generating three planning options to reflect the diversity of ideas contained within the Community Vision Statement. Following a review by Council and committee members, these options were presented to the community and feedback solicited through a short and long community survey format. The Phase concluded with the analysis of the survey input.

*A separate Maplewood process*

At this point, Council decided to pursue a separate planning process for Maplewood. Public feedback concerning Maplewood that had been gathered through Phases I and II was referred to the new Maplewood process and an independent random sample survey of Seymour residents, excluding questions regarding Maplewood, was conducted to augment earlier feedback.

*Phase III -- Plan preparation & review*

With the Community Vision Statement and a complement of public input in place, Phase Three, draft plan preparation and review, commenced. Members of the Public Input Committees were instrumental in the review phase, ensuring that the original principles of the Community Vision Statement, while enhanced and amended by subsequent input, continued to anchor the draft plan. As part of the review, plan statements were also adjusted to reflect the separation of the Maplewood and Seymour plan areas.

The planning process is depicted in Figure 1.

**Figure 1**

