SmartGrowthBC

helping to create more livable communities in British Columbia

The Smart Growth Toolkit

Published by Smart Growth BC

Smart Growth BC is a non-profit society devoted to creating more livable communities in B.C.

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Foreword

A better future for our children—the smart growth option

British Columbians face an important choice that will affect the way our neighbourhoods, towns and cities develop over the next twenty to thirty years. During this period, our children and grandchildren will be looking for homes in neighbourhoods where they hope to raise their own families in the kind of environment we have come to value. Unfortunately, if our communities continue to grow in the same inefficient and uncoordinated way they have for the past fifty years, we will be leaving them a legacy of expensive and inadequate development. They will be the ones who pay for our mistakes, and they will have to live with less of the beautiful British Columbia we have come to take for granted. On the other hand, we can start planning and building their communities in smarter, more economically efficient and environmentally sensitive ways. The choice is ours.

What it comes down to is this: British Columbia's population is projected to grow from its current 4.1 million people to 5.5 million by the year 2021, and over 6 million by 2031. Most will settle in the Georgia Basin, while the rest will flow into smaller municipalities and rural areas. Few regions will remain unaffected. New residents will increase the pressure for additional development, consuming more land and resources for housing, commercial space, offices, industrial areas, and institutional facilities. They will require new infrastructure like roads, sewer and water lines, and they will put more pressure on natural green spaces and recreational areas.

Unless we act now, these demands and their associated costs will increase altering the landscape forever. The quality of our air and water, the availability of natural green spaces, forest and agricultural lands, and the health of fish and wildlife habitats will come under greater threat than it already is. Fortunately, we can choose how we accommodate all of this new growth. The right conditions now exist to face the many challenges of planning our communities using "smart growth" principles and practices.

The clock is running, new residents are arriving, our population is growing, and we cannot avoid taking real action. A strong social vision has emerged, led by active community groups prepared to work with government, planners, developers and the business community to achieve smart growth. Where the people lead, courageous and committed politicians and civil servants are sure to follow. They are already creating new policies and legislation to support smart growth. Finally, a variety of smart growth tools can help us build the kind of communities that British Columbians want to live in—prosperous, healthy, and environmentally and fiscally responsible communities. The SMART GROWTH TOOL KIT provides a timely resource for those British Columbians working to build smarter, more sustainable communities.

Patrick Condon, UBC James Taylor Chair
in Landscape and Livable Environments

What is in the TOOL KIT

There are four parts to this TOOL KIT. Each part describes a variety of tools and how to use them. Depending on individual interest and circumstances, readers can start at any of the four parts and become familiar with the information presented there.

There are many technical and complex issues involved in creating smarter communities. The TOOL KIT does not cover every single smart growth issue, nor does it cover them in great depth. Rather, it provides an overview of primary issues and refers to additional sources that are readily available.

PART I Introducing Smart Growth

PART I introduces smart growth issues, including the fundamental problem of urban sprawl. It presents smart growth principles and objectives, addresses a number of myth and facts, and introduces Smart Growth BC, producers of this TOOL KIT.

Part II Smart Growth Tools

Section II highlights important local government functions, such as land-use planning, urban design, development regulations, and the major policy development processes that support smart growth objectives. Because the Local Government Act already provides the authority to achieve many of these objectives, local government functions related to planning and land development will be referred to here as Smart Growth Tools.

Readers should understand that few municipalities or regional districts operate in exactly the same way. However, the Local Government Act does stipulate which functions and procedures are mandatory and which are voluntary. The Act also lays down minimum requirements for performing some of these and states which procedures must be enacted by bylaw and when public comment is required. With informed participation from citizens, local government can use these tools in new and innovative ways.

The specific tools addressed in Section II are grouped into five categories:

1. Growth Management Strategies
2. Land Use Planning & Urban Design
3. Economic Incentives
4. Demand Management Practices
5. Ecosystem Planning

Part II also includes a number of short "Issue Sheets' written by different authorities on related subjects and tools, including: Growth Management Policies, Urban Design, Alternative Development Standards, Affordable Housing Options, Big Box Stores and Urban Sprawl, Fiscal Incentives that Promote Smart Growth, Development Cost Charges, the Economic Benefits of Preserving Greenspace, Demand Management Practices, Integrated Storm Water and Stream Corridor Management, and Conservation Covenants.

Part III Citizen Involvement Tools

Part III highlights a number of tools to help individuals and community groups increase their effectiveness when participating in community planning activities. Part III is divided into three sections.

The first section presents a variety of Monitoring Tools and strategies for tracking the performance of local government in achieving the community's smart growth goals. These tools include:

1) Smart Growth Performance Indicators in OCP
2) Watchdog Committee
3) OCP Amendments & Re-zoning Applications
4) Local Government Advisory Committees
5) Municipal Budget Approval Procedures
6) Judicial Review

The second section presents four essential Organizing Tools for increasing the success of community-based collaboration: Consensus Building, Coalition Building Tools, Media and Communications Tool, and Lobbying Tools for Sustaining citizen action and effort.

The third section starts with a Check List of smart growth principles and associated tools. Readers can use this check list every time they are called upon to address development issues in their community.

Of course, sometimes citizens must respond quickly to development issues as they arise: some strategies listed here can also be used in quick response situations.

PART IV

The TOOL KIT contains the following supplementary publications and resources:

1. Supplementary Resources. In addition to the above, Section VI provides an extensive list of resources for those wanting additional information on specific topics. Excellent materials are now available to anyone with a home computer and Internet connection, or with access to Community Networks, public libraries, schools, or other easily accessible sources.

2. The BC Sprawl Report (2001). Written by Don Alexander and Ray Tomalty, published by Smart Growth BC. An examination of the state of sprawl impacts and costs in a number of municipalities across British Columbia. Makes general recommendations on ways local governments can create smart growth communities.
   http://www.smartgrowth.bc.ca/pdf/SpawlReport2001_cov.pdf

3. The Smart Growth Primer (1999). Written by Deborah Curran and Mae Leung, published by Smart Growth BC. A general overview of smart growth strategies and tools. A useful and portable reference booklet for those new to smart growth concepts.
   http://www.smartgrowth.bc.ca/pdf/primer.pdf

4. Environmental Stewardship & Complete Communities: A Report on Municipal Environmental Initiatives in British Columbia (1999). Written by Deborah Curran, published by Eco-Research Chair of Environmental Law and Policy, University of Victoria. Case studies of how different local governments around BC are using smart growth strategies to protect important environmental resources and design compact communities.
   http://www.smartgrowth.bc.ca/munisurvey.html

5. In addition, we recommend readers obtain a copy of the Smart Growth Guide to Local Government Law and Advocacy (2001). Written by Linda Nowlan, Chris Rolfe, and Kathy Grant, published by West Coast Environmental Law Association. Information on the legal aspects of smart growth, to help empower community groups and others to more effectively influence the pattern of growth in their neighbourhoods. Describes current laws and policies that can help or thwart smart growth.

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As Chair he organizes the Sustainable Urban Landscapes Charettes, which have become an increasingly important technique for clarifying public policy consequences and charting new directions for urban sustainability throughout the Lower Mainland Region and in other North American regions. He has published widely and lectured at many North American universities.

Deborah Curran is a lawyer specializing in smart growth, and is also a Research Associate with the Eco-Research Chair at the University of Victoria. She is currently studying smart growth solutions in California.

Kimiko Karpoff has a background in communications and has worked in the field for 15 years. She became interested in housing issues while working in that capacity for the then Ministry of Housing, Recreation and Consumer Services. Since then she has used her communications skills as an activist & supporter working for housing and other social justice issues at the community level. Kimiko writes a regular column in the *Royal City Record* newspaper on community and social issues, occasional columns for the Anglican newspaper *Topic* and has also contributed to the *Vancouver Sun* and other publications.

Bernard LaRochelle is the Community Relations Coordinator for Smart Growth BC. He has a MA from UBC in Community and Regional Planning. His fifteen years experience as a community development worker, educator, and researcher have taught him the value of working together for social change. His passion and challenge are sharing his experiences of community development with the diverse individuals and community organizations he works with in BC. As a new father, he re-dedicates his efforts to leaving behind a better world to his son, Darcy Benoit.

Maeve Lydon has been involved in local and global education and international development work for twenty years. Her MA thesis focuses on community mapping as a participatory learning vehicle to transform 'sustainability' planning. She coordinates Common Ground which is part of the GroundWorks Learning Centre shared with the LifeCycles Project Society.

Joanne Proft is Project Coordinator of the UBC James Taylor Chair in Landscape and Liveable Environments. She holds masters degrees in Planning and Landscape Architecture from the University of British Columbia. She is co-author of Sustainable Urban Landscapes: The Brentwood Design Charrette, (1999), published by the James Taylor Chair.

Kim Stephens, vice-president of CH2M Gore & Storrie Ltd., first introduced the concept of an environmental approach to master drainage planning to BC in 1991. Over the past two years, he and Bill Derry have stimulated and influenced discussion in B.C. regarding an ecosystem-based approach to stormwater management. Together they have guided a number of municipalities and influenced discussion in B.C. regarding an ecosystem-based approach to stormwater management and away from the 'big pipe' approach.

Lewis N. Villegas has sixteen years experience in revitalization and urban design in British Columbia. He has a Graduate Degree in Architecture from UBC, a Bachelor in Liberal Arts from SFU, and a Diploma in Building Technology from BCIT. Through his consultancy in architecture and town planning Lewis has completed projects in over 20 communities in BC. Recent work includes design of Chinatown Square, in Vancouver, site of the first Chinese Pagoda in North America; revitalization and infill plan for Maillardville, BC; and urban design code for downtown Parksville.

I Introducing Smart Growth

The SMART GROWTH TOOL KIT is for concerned citizens, community groups, local government, developers, business and other professionals who care about the place they live, and who want to work together to help create more livable communities.

The SMART GROWTH TOOL KIT is a concise reference manual designed to assist citizens with their questions about smart growth issues and strategies. It provides useful information about smart growth principles and practices. It also showcases a number of innovative developments and citizen initiatives, and provides a framework for increasing the effectiveness of citizen participation in local community planning processes.

The Problem With Sprawl

Uncoordinated urban development, especially wasteful and inefficient land-uses that contribute to sprawl, affects all British Columbians in many different ways: economically, socially and environmentally.

"Sprawl" is a complex land development pattern with no simple definition. The Canadian Urban Institute notes that "the main distinguishing feature of sprawl is the way in which new development consumes land at a faster rate than the rate at which the population is growing". Another way to view sprawl is as "scattered, untimely, poorly planned urban development that occurs in urban fringe and rural areas and frequently invades lands important for environmental and natural resource protection." As a result of this form of low-density invasion of large areas, the costs of sprawl are many, varied, and inter-related.

Rapid growth and uncoordinated development has taken its toll on the land. For the past 50 years, the growth of our communities generally took place in a random fashion, with new housing construction occurring on the cheapest land available, usually farm or forest lands on the outskirts of built-up areas. To service this new growth, hundreds of kilometres of roads, highways, parking lots, and other infrastructure were extended, at tax payers' expense, from the central core into outlying areas, devouring more land, covering it with pavement and underlying it with pipes leading to creeks, rivers and the ocean.

As a result…

- Our tax bill is higher than it needs to be
- Travel time to work, shopping, and other destinations is constantly increasing
- The amount of time spent with family, or on more productive pursuits, is decreasing
- Traffic congestion has significantly reduced air quality, health, work productivity, and the general quality of community life of British Columbians
- Land is being used inefficiently
- Salmon and other fish species habitat are threatened
- Open spaces and greenways are disappearing
- Farmland is threatened by urban encroachment

We've known about the negative consequences of sprawl and unplanned growth for decades. The Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board was one of the first Canadian planning agencies to raise the alarm about the increasing service costs of low-density development. Its 1956 study of road paving, road and ditch maintenance, and water supply in three Surrey neighbourhoods revealed that costs were significantly higher in lower-density areas than in the higher-density ones. In 1974, the U.S. Real Estate Research Corporation published a study called the *Costs of Sprawl,* considered one of the most significant critiques of sprawl and among one of the most influential studies ever done on this subject. Numerous other studies, each presenting similar conclusions about sprawl development, were used in preparing this Tool Kit.

For a more comprehensive review of sprawl and smart growth issues, see the *BC Sprawl Report* as well as additional references in Part IV.

The Smart Growth Alternative

Smart growth is defined as land use and development practices that enhance the quality of life in communities, preserve the natural environment, and save money over time. This is achieved through the comprehensive use of alternative development standards and strategies that reduce the impact of urban growth on the natural environment, integrate infrastructure into ecosystems, thus reducing its cost, and create more livable communities that increase our enjoyment of the places we live in.

Who is a Smart growth advocate?

Smart growth advocate refers to anybody who cares about the place they live, and who wants to help build their communities in a different way. This can include:

- Concerned citizens
- Community groups
- Local government staff and elected officials
- Business owners and other professionals
- Development industry personnel

Promoting smart growth is not about fighting against growth and development, but about presenting alternatives that are fiscally, socially, and environmentally sustainable and responsible. We can all get behind these alternatives.

Smart Growth Myths & Facts

MYTH # 1 'Smart Growth' is just another expression for 'no growth'.

FACT Smart Growth B.C. recognizes that both population growth and land development are unavoidable. Responsible planning will mitigate the worst impacts of this growth, and could even result in a better life for our children than the one we enjoy today.

CHALLENGE Decide together *how* we want to grow, and find creative ways to balance economic development with the desire to protect the natural amenities they value.

MYTH # 2 Smart growth is anti-suburb.

FACT Smart growth encourages development that meets different objectives in various locations, including suburbs, downtown, and in between.

CHALLENGE Plan suburban developments that foster social cohesion, integrate land uses, reduce car dependency, and protect rural areas and other important green spaces.

MYTH # 3 Smart growth increases red tape, slows the approval process, and increases project costs.

FACT By streamlining development regulations and permitting procedures, municipalities can reward smart growth developers with speedier approvals, and increased predictability.

CHALLENGE Ensure the success of development that protects the environment, meets community goals, and is fiscally responsible.

MYTH # 4 Smart growth does not satisfy market demand for low-density, single family development.

FACT Recent demographic and lifestyle shifts mean that 2-adult, 2.5-child, middle-class families no longer dominate housing markets. In fact, the emergence of smaller families, empty nesters, childless marriages, singles and aging boomers has created a shortfall in the availability of alternative housing options.

CHALLENGE Amend the current municipal regulatory framework that subsidizes sprawl, single-use zones, and limited transportation options. Assist as smart growth communities expand and become more profitable.

MYTH # 5 Urban growth boundaries mean higher housing prices.

FACT Concentrated growth and higher densities mean more housing options, a greater supply of dwelling units, and thus lower housing prices. Portland, Oregon has used urban containment boundaries since 1974 and housing prices still compare favourably with other U.S. cities where the availability of developable land is not regulated.

CHALLENGE Integrate urban growth boundaries with other smart growth policies that support more affordable housing options.

MYTH # 6 With so much undeveloped land, smart growth will lead to under-valued open space, with little incentive to preserve it.

FACT Open spaces are important components of a community's livability. They are valued for wildlife habitat, recreation, ecological functions, and as people places. Open spaces also increase the value of surrounding properties.

CHALLENGE Integrate open spaces into community planning processes.

MYTH # 7 Smart growth means more high rises.

FACT Smart growth supports housing options and promotes good urban design that integrates higher density with adequate open space, a pedestrian friendly environment, and traffic calmed streets. High rises are considered appropriate only in some places.

CHALLENGE Develop a community consensus on design features that successfully integrates high, medium, and low density housing options into the existing urban landscape.

MYTH # 8 Smart growth is bad for business.

FACT Compact communities increase the number of people within walking distance of shopping and transit.

CHALLENGE The business community in BC must take a leadership position in advancing smart growth policies in order to sustain productivity and competitiveness.

Introducing Smart Growth BC

Incorporated in 1999, Smart Growth BC is a non-profit organization with a mandate to create more livable communities in British Columbia.

In 1999, the Eco Research Chair of Environmental Law & Policy at the University of Victoria, and the West Coast Environmental Law Association collaborated on a project to promote smart growth practices across the province. Travelling to a number of B.C. communities and sharing information about local and regional circumstances, they soon realized the need for a provincial organization that could raise public awareness about smart growth through educational and advocacy means.

What Smart Growth BC Promotes

Smart Growth BC was thus founded to promote responsible, sustainable urban development principles and practices throughout BC, including:

- Encouraging mixed-use zones
- Promoting compact and walkable neighbourhoods and towns
- Concentrating new growth into existing areas
- Enhancing the range of housing options (more affordable, appropriate, accessible)
- Linking new development to public transit and other transportation options
- Using Demand Management techniques that reduce the amount of a service or resource used, rather than simply increasing its supply
- Integrating storm water management with stream corridor and riparian area protection strategies
- Reducing the overall amount of impervious surfaces, while maximizing the use of public open spaces as rain-water catchment areas
- Preserving and linking greenways, open spaces, farmland, and environmentally sensitive areas
- Ensuring effective citizen participation in development decisions

Programs & Activities

Community Assistance Program

Helping community groups develop their own capacity to effectively engage in the land use and development process is one of Smart Growth BC's primary goals. We tailor our assistance to the needs of the community. This may include providing more detailed answers to their questions about growth and the land development processes, facilitating partnership building, providing training for effective community involvement, etc.

Public Education

We develop and provide materials, resources and services to the general public, community groups and local government in order to raise understanding and acceptance of smart growth principles and their benefits, as well as the importance of citizen involvement in land use planning processes. We also conduct workshops, conferences, and presentations. In addition, Smart Growth BC is developing a new interactive web-site to further its educational objectives. This TOOL KIT and other important resources will be made available on the web-site.

Professional Partnerships

Smart Growth BC works in partnership with professionals, local and provincial government, business, developers, entrepreneurs, networks and associations to research and promote best practices, give joint presentations, present demonstration models of smart growth developments, etc.

Research and Publications

Smart Growth BC, on its own or in partnership with other organizations, researches and publishes information and materials on key and innovative smart growth concepts to promote sustainable land use and development.

Advancing Policy

Smart Growth BC advances smart growth policy and legislation at the local and provincial levels by:

- Participating in the provincial policy development and review process (e.g. Local Government Act, Regional Growth Strategies), supporting the integrity of policies with respect to protected areas (e.g. ALR),
- Working with local governments to adopt alternative zoning policies and alternative development standards,

- Encouraging and supporting community groups to advocate for smart growth policy changes (e.g. Official Community Plans and Regional Growth Strategies), and working with community groups to encourage and monitor implementation of RGS. In addition, Smart Growth B.C. refers legal issues to West Coast Environmental Law Environmental Dispute Resolution Fund or to the Sierra Legal Defence Fund.

Smart Growth Glossary

Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) A provincial land-use zone in which agriculture is recognized as the priority use and non-farming uses are regulated under the Agricultural Land Reserve Act. The intent of the act is to preserve agricultural land for present and future generations and to encourage the establishment and maintenance of farms as a secure source of food.

Alternative Development Standards (ADS): Reflects the evolution away from conventional development standards prevalent since World War II. A way of meeting environmental concerns, social needs, and the spiraling costs of new infrastructure. Features of ADS include grid road systems and narrower road widths, smaller lots, use of curbs and sidewalks, and car access to houses from rear lanes.

Bioregional mapping: The process of mapping by the community of places of particular cultural, ecological and economic interest and significance.

Brownfields development: Brownfield programs reclaim thousands of parcels of land in urban areas, often previous industrial sites, that stand vacant and unused in our cities and towns because of industrial contamination. Brownfield programs are redeveloping these sites; The goal is to lessen the need to build on the suburban fringe.

Building codes: A set of regulations that establish minimum standards for building construction to protect the health, safety and welfare of people. Local governments enforce standards set out in the provincial code or municipal building bylaws.

By-law: Local laws that local governments have the power to enact. The Local Government Act is the provincial legislation that gives local governments authority to deal with a full range of local issues including elections, taxation, services, regulations and planning. It recognizes "local government as an independent, responsible and accountable order of government" with the power to enact local bylaws to govern matters delegated as local government responsibility.

Cluster development: Allows groups of dwellings on small lots on one part of the site to preserve open space and/or natural features on the remainder of the site. Minimum lot and yard sizes for the clustered development are reduced from the standard.

Compact community: Describes a pattern of land-use that encourages walkable neighbourhoods, mixed-uses, proximity to transit, and a reduced need for infrastructure.

Comprehensive development zoning: Detailed zoning for a specific site, usually for larger developments.

Comprehensive stewardship bylaw: Used to protect, preserve and conserve the natural setting and ecological systems of activities within a municipality that may have adverse effects on ecological systems. Activities within the jurisdiction of the bylaw may be restricted or require a permit to proceed.

Conservation covenant: A tool for the coordinated protection and preservation of open space and private land in perpetuity by voluntary protection and preservation of private land.

Density bonus: allows a developer to build additional units (above that usually allowed) if the developer meets certain requirements—i.e.e.g. density bonuses are given in exchange for providing non-market housing, preservation of green space, provision of local amenities, etc.

Development cost charges: Charges levied by local governments on new development to pay for the infrastructure costs of that development—(i.e. sewer, water, roads)—sometimes levied for soft services such as daycare facilities.

Development fees: A levy imposed by a municipality that accompanies a development application based upon, for example, the gross floor area of the proposed building(s).

Development permit: A document that allows the applicant to use or develop property in accordance with a city's zoning regulations.

A permit application must state the property address and legal description of the site, give the purpose of the proposed development, and include the drawings, calculations and the appropriate fee.

Ecosystem: Includes all living and non-living entities in a given spatial range for the purpose of understanding the cyclic flows of energy and materials between the components. Humans are understood as part of natural systems instead of separate observers of "the environment."

Ecological Integrity: Ecosystems have integrity when they have their native components (plants, animals and other organisms) and processes (such as growth and reproduction) intact. In the context of the built environment, this includes maintaining biodiversity levels, ecological processes and structures, regional and historical context, and sustainable cultural practices.

Environmental Assessment: An information and/or recommendation making process that guides the issuance of permits or approvals for a development with the goal of minimizing environmental impacts

Estuary: The place where freshwater collected over land drains into an ocean causing fresh and salt water to mix, which creates a unique environment that is important habitat to a diverse number of species adapted to the variable conditions.

Environmentally sensitive area (ESA): Areas where the landscape, wildlife or historic interest is of national importance and/or is endangered. Areas with identified sensitive ecosystems may require special development permits that require the applicant to demonstrate that any encroachment is unavoidable due to topography, hazards, etc., and to include appropriate restoration and mitigation measures.

Forest Land Reserve (FLR) A provincial land use zone consisting of both public and private land in which priority use is given to purposes consistent with forestry and which is regulated under the Forest Land Reserve Act. The intent is to protect the commercial forest land base by minimizing the impact of urban development and rural settlement.

Fisheries Act: Federal legislation which prohibits the deposit of deleterious substances into water frequented by fish. For certain industries, regulations have been developed under the Fisheries Act to allow the deposit of certain deleterious substances into these waters.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS): An integrated computer-based system designed to capture, store, edit, analyze and display geographic information.

Grading: The process of adjusting the gradient or slope of the land for the purposes of development.

Greenfield development: Development on land where no prior building existed.

Greenway: Greenways are typically "green" paths for pedestrians and cyclists. They can be waterfront promenades, urban walkways, environmental demonstration trails, heritage walks and nature trails. Their purpose is to expand the opportunities for urban recreation, to provide alternate ways to move through the city and to enhance the experience of nature and city life.

Groundwater: Water held underground in soil or permeable rock that can be collected with wells, tunnels, or drainage galleries, or that flows naturally to the earth's surface via seeps or springs. Groundwater plays a vital role in the development of arid and semiarid zones, but can be depleted from rapid withdrawal and is susceptible to contamination.

Growth containment boundary: (or urban growth boundary. A regional growth management tool to limit urban expansion by focusing growth in existing core municipal areas to concentrate development and reduce pressure on surrounding greenspace.

Habitat: The natural conditions and environment, for example, forest, desert, or wetlands, in which a plant or animal lives.

HOV lanes: lanes designated for high occupancy vehicles only—set at a specific number of people per vehicle—used to encourage and reward carpooling and transit.

Impervious surface: Areas on the ground where the natural process of rainwater percolation through the soil is prevented, such as the application of asphalt or cement for human purposes. Large areas that lack pervious surfaces are more susceptible to flooding and water pollution.

Incentive zoning: Zoning provisions that encourage, but do not require, developers to provide certain amenities or qualities in their projects in returned for identified benefits, such as increased density or rapid processing of applications.

Infill development: The development of vacant lands within urban areas or projects to increase density.

Land trust: There is no clear legal definition of a land trust. The term was used primarily in the United States, but is increasingly used in Canada. In most cases today the term describes a community based non-governmental organization that acts to protect land so certain social, environmental or commercial objectives are met.

Infrastructure: The large-scale public systems, services, and facilities of a country or region that are necessary for economic activity, including power and water supplies, public transportation, telecommunications, roads, and schools.

Intangible Value: Non-material attributes, often difficult to define or describe clearly, that are nonetheless perceived and give worth, such as the aesthetic value of nature.

Jurisdiction: The authority to enforce laws or pronounce legal judgments, the range over which this legal authority extends.

Light Rail Transit: A metropolitan electric railway system characterized by its ability to operate single cars or short trains along exclusive rights-of-way at ground level, on aerial structures, in subways or, occasionally, in streets, and to board and discharge passengers at track or car-floor level e.g. tramways, streetcars and trolley cars.

Local area plan: A municipal plan that provides a framework for deciding city programs, priorities and actions for a period of time into the future.

Local Government Act: Provincial legislation that sets out the purpose, structure, powers and function of local governments. Formerly the Municipal Act, it was renamed in 1999 after substantial legislative reform.

Mixed-use zoning: zoning that allows more than one type of use in a building or street—usually refers to mixes of commercial and residential uses.

Neighbourhood plan: A strategic framework for managing activities and development in a municipality.

NIMBY: "Not in my backyard"

Nodal development: Focusing new development into core areas with pre-existing infrastructure to create compact settlements with a variety of land uses.

Official community plan: A bylaw adopted by a municipal council that sets out broad objectives and policies respecting the form and character of existing and future land use for a local area.

Permeable: The ability of a substance to allow another substance to penetrate through it; usually used to describe the ability of rainwater to percolate through a surface at ground level.

Planning: Informed action for directing human activity to ensure equitable and sustainable human settlements now and into the future.

Regional Growth Strategy: minimum 20 year plan adopted by partnering local governments addressing common social, economic, and environmental issues.

Riparian zone: The area of land adjacent to a flowing water body with characteristic vegetation and wildlife that is important to the overall health of the watercourse.

Rural: Describes settled areas not incorporated as a municipality, often in remote areas, that regional districts provide land use planning and services to.

Secondary suite: Living quarters installed in existing buildings, usually single family homes, for the purpose of tenant housing. Municipalities require permits or licensing for secondary suites to ensure that all suites, existing or new, meet the minimum safety standards and off-street parking requirements.

Stewardship: The responsibility of being a caretaker or custodian of the environment by managing activities with due respect for the health of the environment.

Storm water management: Measures to control rainwater run-off where urbanization has affected natural drainage systems and water quality

Sustainability: Literally, "the capability of being maintained." Applied to human activity, it requires us to live equitably within the means of nature without compromising the future of human communities.

Traffic Calming: Education, enforcement, and engineering measures that compel drivers to slow down, excluding those which use barriers to divert traffic

Urban: Relating or belonging to a city.

Utility Corridor: The right-of way designated for essential public services such as water, gas, or electricity.

Urban Growth Boundaries: designate growth areas for development and create economic incentives for development to take place within those areas. Also referred to as Growth Containment Boundaries.

Urban sprawl: Describes a pattern of residential land use dominated by low-density development with high individual land requirements, automobile dependency, segregation of land uses and high infrastructure costs.

Water metering: charging for water use per unit consumed rather than a flat rate—involves installing meters at each home.

Watershed: The area of land that catches rain and snow and drains or seeps into a marsh, stream, river, lake or groundwater. Watersheds vary in size and impacts on them can be described as up- or downstream and are connected.

Zoning: Zoning is the most widely used form of land use regulation. Zoning ordinances include written requirements and standards that define the permitted uses of land and buildings, the height and size of buildings, the size of lots and yards around buildings, the supply of parking spaces, size and type of signs and fences, and other characteristics of development. The fundamental purpose of zoning is to separate incompatible uses of land.