

D. West Sechelt

West Sechelt is the largest neighbourhood in Sechelt, consisting of some 13.6 sq.km. extending from the Downtown Village to Redrooffs Road. The neighbourhood contains substantial rural areas. The ALR lands and Provincial/Community Forest account for more than 50% of the land base. Much of the neighbourhood has wide open views of Georgia Strait and Trail Bay and includes diverse landscapes, including the steep and rocky shorelines along the coastal areas, the forested hills and rocky knolls of the large properties in the far west part of the neighbourhood, and the rural/agricultural lands in the Mason Road plateau. Newer residential areas are located on the upland slopes between the Downtown and Wakefield Road. West Sechelt contains streams (Wakefield Creek and Cairns Creek), as well as localized areas with rockfall and beachfront escarpment.



West Sechelt is characterized by large areas of forest and agricultural lands, with housing near the shoreline and adjacent upland areas.

Over the past 5-10 years, parts of West Sechelt have been undergoing significant changes, with many new subdivisions and housing developments. West Sechelt now provides a wide range of housing choices from “small lot” areas through to spacious “estate” lots and rural acreages. The neighbourhood has significant potential for additional housing and population growth due to relatively large areas with gentle topography, proximity to Downtown services, and existing water and sewer infrastructure. For these reasons, West Sechelt represents the major growth area for Sechelt over the next decades. In the long-term, West Sechelt is projected to have a total population of some 8-10,000 residents. Ensuring high quality development and public amenities to serve the needs of residents are essential issues for this neighbourhood.

Issues

The West Sechelt Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in 1999 following 1 ½ years of work by the neighbourhood Plan Committee. West Sechelt has been faced with a great deal of change in recent years. Some of the issues identified for this area include:

- Previous development has not respected natural site conditions, or blended in with the character of the neighbourhood.
- With the visual and environmental changes caused by recent development activity, and the large amount of additional growth possible, ensuring new development is carried out more sustainably, with better design and protection of natural features of the lands is critical for West Sechelt.
- Ensuring the neighbourhood obtains the necessary services and amenities to meet the needs of the growing population.
- Improving the transportation system serving the neighbourhood, with improved transit and connected road, bicycle and pedestrian trails to the Downtown that provide an alternative to Highway 101.

The following neighbourhood section provides an abbreviated and updated statement of neighbourhood goals and policies.

Vision, Identity and Goals

- While accommodating future growth and respecting existing residents, West Sechelt will maintain the feeling of a West Coast community possessing enviable natural surroundings where new development is carefully blended into the environment.
- Protection of natural areas for habitat value and neighbourhood enjoyment is a high priority for any development applications.

- Recognize and protect agricultural and resource lands for long-term sustainable agricultural and forestry pursuits in accordance with the OCP Growth Management Strategy.
- Provide adequate parks and recreation opportunities for existing and future residents.

Special Policies for West Sechelt

Residential Areas

1. Lands designated as **Residential** on Schedule C will be the location of the majority of new residential development.
2. New housing will consist of a mix of housing forms and lot sizes that provide housing for a wide range of income levels, household types and age groups within the community.
3. Properties larger than 0.4 ha (1 acre) in size in the Residential designation may be considered for more intensive residential use such as small lot housing, duplex, townhouse, cluster housing and similar uses. Housing type, density and appearance will be determined through the rezoning and Development Permit process, to ensure the use is complementary to adjacent residential areas.
4. Lands designated as **Low Density Residential** provide for larger lots of at least 2000 sq.m. (approx. ½ acre) in size in areas that are not serviced by municipal sewer and/or have site constraints due to slope, streams or other features.

Special Infill Areas

5. **Special Infill Area #1** is a major future development area that will accommodate much of the new growth in Sechelt. It has potential to accommodate an integrated mix of housing forms. Some 1000-2200 housing units may be developed in the future, depending on housing types and open space/amenities provided (see OCP policies in chapter 5 regarding bonus and community amenities). Comprehensive site planning of these lands in accordance with OCP policies on conservation design and Development Permit Area

guidelines is required before any individual parcels are subdivided or developed. Key issues to be addressed are:

- (a) provision of a mix of housing types to meet future needs of residents of many income levels and housing needs;
- (b) provision of major community parkland of at least 3.0-4.0 ha size (8-10 acres);
- (c) protection of natural site features and design that is suited to the site conditions;
- (d) connectivity of roads and trails to surrounding areas and the Downtown;
- (e) design, layout and housing types that compliment and are integrate with surrounding areas.
- (f) creation of a neighbourhood centre to provide a focal point within West Sechelt.

Neighbourhood Centres

- 6.** Two **Neighbourhood Centres** are outlined on Schedule C, consisting of the existing area on Norwest Bay Road, and a potential new centre within Special Infill Area #1. Within the neighbourhood centres, a mix of local commercial uses, multiple family and public uses/community amenities are supported. Commercial uses should not compete with the Downtown but provide for convenience uses to help create more compact and walkable local neighbourhoods.

Rural Residential and Resource Lands

- 7.** The areas shown as **Resource** on Schedule C will remain outside the Urban Containment Boundary to support long-term agricultural and forestry activities, and to provide opportunities for rural residential uses.
- 8.** **Rural Residential** lands are not required for urban or residential uses during the next 10-15 years. Redevelopment to other uses will only be considered if the lands within the Urban Containment Boundary are substantially infilled and intensified.

Environmentally sensitive areas

- 9.** All sensitive natural areas will be protected for public appreciation and enhancement of habitat values. Any new development will ensure these areas are maintained or enhanced through the development approval process.

Marine shoreline

- 10.** The Trail Bay marine shoreline shall be maintained in its natural state. Any adjacent upland development shall be adequately set back to protect the shoreline qualities, and provide necessary habitat restoration in accordance with OCP chapter 4 policies and Development Permit Area guidelines.
- 11.** Public access to the shoreline shall be improved and strengthened through opening of public "road ends" and dedication of additional waterfront park with any future development.

Park, Recreation and Open Space Priorities

Although this neighbourhood has received significant residential growth in recent years, there is no major community park providing a central focal point for this area, and no major waterfront park exists, although small areas have been recently dedicated.

- 12.** Park, recreation and open space priorities for West Sechelt are:
 - (a) Protection of natural park areas and important landscape features including ravines, forests and the rocky shoreline.
 - (b) Development of recreation facilities within existing and future parks, to include walking/cycle paths, play equipment, tennis courts, jogging trails and sports fields (as needed);
 - (c) Development of pedestrian trails, sidewalks and bike routes connecting the developed residential areas and the Downtown Village is a priority for West Sechelt. Walking routes should consist of on-road and off-road trails.

- (d) Provision of a major community park and pedestrian trails with any future development of Special Infill Area #1 (Sangara/Clayton lands) as shown on Schedule C.
- (e) Community and neighbourhood level parkland should be provided as part of any rezoning application, in addition to lands protected for environmental purposes. Park and trail system links should also be obtained at the time of rezoning or subdivision.
- (f) Linear public waterfront walkway and beach access points with development of any waterfront land.
- (g) Provision of parking with beach access points, as many residents do not live within walking distance of these sites.

Transportation Priorities

- (a) Developing a connected and coordinated pedestrian and bike system is essential for West Sechelt to reduce use of Highway 101 and provide connection to the Downtown.
- (b) Development of alternative east-west and north-south collector roads within the neighbourhood is a priority.

West Sechelt and West Porpoise Bay Future Land Use

