

## Tsawwassen Area Plan Review

### Public Forum #1:

### *Creating a Vibrant Town Centre*

## Summary of Workshop Notes

### **GROUP #1:**

#### **Notetaker: Alex Cauduro**

- Keep any increases in density for Tsawwassen focused on the town centre
- Keep a density cap for the town centre.
- Incorporated bicycle paths and pedestrian paths and improve linkages within the town centre.
- Attract jobs to sustain economic viability and increased density in the town centre
- Expand the boundaries of the town centre
- We need a bigger population to provide retail viability to the town centre
- Improve urban design by requiring buildings to be closer to the roadway and screening cars/parking lots from sidewalks and pedestrian pathways.
- Increase density and height limits
- Improve design of developments by getting away from the strip mall concept and courtyards
- Develop buildings which establish a street presence.
- Find a way to bring ferry traffic into the town centre to boost business and visitors for retailers
- Go up with housing, not out; increase the height limits
- Reverse declining population
- Provide more and smaller housing units to increase affordability and increase housing choice
- What do we need in the town centre?
  - More density
  - More vibrancy
  - More recreational facilities
  - More diversity
  - More multi-use facilities
  - More Windsor Wood type developments
- Focus on pedestrian oriented development
- Reduce congestion
- Assess capacity of infrastructure to accommodate higher densities
- We need a transportation plan to reflect a revised land use plan

- We need a new planning paradigm focused on sustainability, not growth or consumption oriented economics
- Limit population growth
- Improve connectivity of urban form
- Improve local retail shopping opportunities
- Respect existing building forms, and views
- Everything about Tsawwassen is great except our town centre is weak

## **GROUP #2:**

### **Notetaker: Tanya Mitchner**

- The sidewalks on 56<sup>th</sup> Street are too narrow. Larger pedestrian corridors should be developed along 56<sup>th</sup> Street and throughout the Town Centre.
- Biking on 56<sup>th</sup> Street does not feel safe so cyclists use the sidewalk.
- 56<sup>th</sup> Street is a speedway that is not safe or pleasant for pedestrians or cyclists.
- Lack of continuity of pedestrian connections to and through the Town Centre. Better pedestrian linkages should be designed to encourage walking.
- Are we stuck with a strip mall? Development should be located along the streets. There should be diversity in the built environment. Design guidelines should be developed to encourage buildings that are varied, but results in a cohesive Town Centre.
- Must navigate cars. The pedestrian is not given priority. A relationship through pedestrian connections and building orientation should be developed between the existing commercial areas to make the Town Centre more cohesive, accessible and pleasant to walk around.
- Fill in the parking areas with buildings and put parking underground or in a parkade.
- More growth will bring more people – more people, more cars.
- Parking in the Town Centre is barely adequate in peak time. Otherwise there is sufficient parking.
- Current bus service is infrequent and does not easily facilitate a shopping trip to the Town Centre.
- There is a lack of mixed use development. Developers should be required to provide residential uses above ground floor commercial. The Tsawwassen Area Plan already permits this, but residential density in the Town Centre is not being maximized.
- It is not just about housing variety – the living space should be well designed.
- A variety of housing options should be available as residents' transition through different stages of life.
- Pedestrian friendly, ground entry multi-family housing (e.g. brownstone row houses) should be considered in or near the Town Centre
- What is the pressure for development? Do we want to be Richmond?

- What makes Main Street, Commercial Street and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Vancouver such interesting places for people to walk around?
- Could some of the traffic from 56<sup>th</sup> Street be redirected to alternate routes such as 52<sup>nd</sup> Street?
- There is a lack of public space in the Town Centre. Most of the area is privately owned. Consider requiring parkland dedication as properties redevelop to gain public space in the core.
- What is the history of Tsawwassen development? Why are things the way they are?
- What changes are feasible in the Town Centre? Who will pay the costs of the improvements? How can we attract developers to make improvements?
- Planning is a long term view. Thinking big vs. practicality.
- Planning for future generations. How can we engage youth in the process?
- How will technology impact/influence the importance of a Town Centre or how the core is used?
- What are the commercial rents for businesses in the Town Centre?

### **GROUP #3:**

#### **Notetaker: Thomas Leathem**

- What is the vision?
- Visual impact of malls is negative
- Amenities – movie theatre
- Traffic on 56<sup>th</sup> Avenue is too fast – look at a pedestrian overpass
- We need to recognize the fact that Tsawwassen is a peninsula
- Keep the town centre small
- There is a lack of power when it comes to making changes
- Maintain status quo
- The questionnaire is biased
- Chose community for what it is today.
- Existing TAP is fine
- Lack of affordable office space
- Keep a growth cap
- Traffic problems associated with growth
- Don't reinvent the wheel
- Make use of what we have
- Discourage the use of cars
- Live where you can walk to amenities
- Just tweak the existing plan
- Don't have to accommodate more growth
- Zero growth is not a bad word
- Create a town centre not bisected by a road
- Sidewalks are too close to the road

**GROUP #4:**

**Notetaker: Yvette Luke**

1. ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH PEDESTRIAN ROUTES AND ACCESSIBILITY IN TSAWWASSEN TOWN CENTRE?

- Not satisfied.
- Vehicle-dominated.
- Pedestrians are forced down onto 56 Street.
- Major problem at 56 Street/12 Avenue.
- Streets too wide and traffic too fast.
- No protection for pedestrians.
- Narrow sidewalk too close to street and is a safety concern especially for families with young children.
- Significant gaps in pedestrian routes even within the Town Centre mall.
- Provide satellite town centres within walking distances from homes.

2. IS THERE ADEQUATE PARKING IN THE TSAWWASSEN TOWN CENTRE?

- Provide on-street parking during non-rush hours (and turning it back to travel lane during rush hours).
- Bring shops to street.
- Provide cycling paths.
- On-street parking provides safety for pedestrians by buffering them from moving traffic and making drivers drive more carefully and slowly.
- Need more driving route choices to distribute traffic.
- Improve the option to walk without driving.

3. WHAT IMPROVEMENTS COULD WE MAKE TO THE PUBLIC SPACE IN THE TSAWWASSEN TOWN CENTRE?

- Too much asphalt.
- More outdoor seating for restaurants.
- Make it pleasant to sit outdoor, not facing 56 Street.

4. WOULD YOU SUPPORT MORE HOUSING OPTIONS IN THE TOWN CENTRE AREA? IF SO, WHAT TYPES?

- Need more density to create activities.
- Concern about traffic saturation on major roads.
- Concern about densification which does not guarantee affordability.
- Need housing choices.

- More density for empty-nesters.
- Affordable housing for young people and working population in Tsawwassen.
- To be attractive to young people, we need amenities such as movie theatre, art gallery, a nice pub and boutique shopping.
- A range of options from 300 – 400 sq ft apartments to larger apartments and townhouses.
- Direct access to street from townhouse and apartment units.
- One apartment building with some subsidized units to accommodate different income groups.
- Live-work mixed use buildings.
- 8-storey – 10-storey – 12-storey building with terraced gardens and underground parking

**GROUP #5:**

**Notetaker: Yvette Luke**

1. WHAT WE VALUE IN TSAWWASSEN?

- Clubs
- Trees
- Ocean
- Quietness
- Small community
- Amazing wildlife and flyway – We love our birds
- Taxes

2. WHAT WE NEED IN A VIBRANT TOWN CENTRE IN TSAWWASSEN

- Trees/Shades
- Prettiness
- Opportunities to see neighbours
- Less traffic/less noise
- Community based golf carts
- Community/Neighbourhood owned auto-coop and car-stops
- Free, frequent community shuttle sponsored by shop owners and businesses
- An inviting place
- Mixed use, multi-levels
- Row housing and mixed use housing with gardens/rooftop gardens
- More cultural activities
- Theatre, art gallery
- Weekly real farmers' market
- No more pubs

- Coffee shops that look at something other than a road or parking lot
- Well-lit underground or rooftop parking
- Changes to 56 Street – moving away from a highway through the town, to more pedestrian and bicycle friendly; and more coordination of lights and traffic flow
- Tree and shrub buffers between 56 Street and sidewalk to increase feeling of safety
- Better maintenance of existing greenery
- Drinking fountains
- As land becomes available, make more green space or gathering areas
- Better use of school facilities – community based schools, elders involved in schools
- Better access, exposure and transition to Highland Park
- No big box stores

**GROUP #6:**

**Notetaker: Susan Elbe**

**Summary:**

- Growth is supported but only in Town Centre
- Table had different visions about the level of growth appropriate for Town Centre and Tsawwassen generally
- Some were concerned that limiting growth would limit vibrancy of the town
- Others were concerned about increasing traffic
- Some felt that, the Town Centre could not be expanded enough to support the stores people may want most; a lot would have to continue to shop outside of Tsawwassen
- Residential expansion in the Town Centre would be acceptable but the cap of 1000 multi-family dwelling units set in the 1992 plan was not reached. There may be resistance to redevelopment and expansion in the Town Centre – more information on why is needed
- Size of Town Centre should expand so that it is not all concentrated on one small part of 56<sup>th</sup> Street; one suggestion is to expand it as far north as the power lines
- Connections between the Town Centre and the rest of Tsawwassen are not good – people feel that the cost of transit and safety issues for pedestrians and bicyclists means most people will drive to Town Centre

**Details:**

**Accessibility to Town Centre:**

- Translink is expensive; could there be a low-cost community shuttle?

- Walking or cycling may be unsafe where there are no or few sidewalks and shoulders on roads are narrow. Boundary Bay is a good example of this issue.
- Boundary Bay Park is dark at night so lack of lighting discourages anything but car travel to Town Centre

#### Town Centre:

- How can the Town Centre expand without increasing car traffic problems in the area?
- Increased density could mean more services and greater pedestrian accessibility if businesses are located in the Town Centre
- Where would additional density locate – Town Centre is already built out.
- Additional parking would be required but, to some, it doesn't seem like there is enough room for more parking; others suggested parking underground.
- Tsawwassen should have a destination point such as an institutional use.
- More mixed use in Town Centre would be desirable.
- Size of Town Centre should expand so that it is not all concentrated on one small part of 56<sup>th</sup> Street; one suggestion is to expand it as far north as the power lines
- There is concern about the school closures and limited services available in Tsawwassen

#### Growth:

- Some feel that the assumption that growth will take place or needs to take place is misguided – some like the fact that Delta is not expanding and is not like Surrey or Richmond.
- Growth will cause bigger traffic problems and result in loss of small-town character
- If growth is to take place, increasing density in certain locations is better than just continuing sprawl.
- Naïve to think we can just close the door
- Tsawwassen needs new people, new families and different levels of affordability
- If there is no growth, vibrancy of the town will be lost.

#### Housing:

- If new housing needs to be added to Tsawwassen, it should be in the Town Centre
- Residential expansion in the Town Centre would be acceptable but the cap of 1000 multi-family dwelling units set in the 1992 plan was not reached. There may be resistance to redevelopment and expansion in the Town Centre – more information on this needed.

## **Shops & Services:**

- Not very good in Tsawwassen
- May be a problem of marketing
- Some table members are willing to drive outside of Tsawwassen for better shopping if it means Tsawwassen gets to retain its character
- Can't ever get enough density within Tsawwassen to support large, popular stores

## **GROUP #7:**

### **Notetaker: Barry Konkin**

## **VISION: Tsawwassen as the best place in Delta:**

- More pedestrian-friendly – 56<sup>th</sup> / 12<sup>th</sup> – particularly for seniors
- More pedestrian plaza area (like Tim Horton's)
- Job creation in the Town Centre – increased street activity / people
- Job creation should target 'green jobs' – Corporate head office?
- Post-secondary institution – UBC agriculture program/
- Job creation needs an economic development office in Tsawwassen. The Corporation of Delta should help in this. BIA should be involved.
- Need to attract small to medium-sized businesses.
- Local business should be encouraged / developed to slow the 'leakage' of retail spending to other communities.
- Live / Work areas might be considered.
- The Corporation of Delta and the BIA should establish / develop business 'incubator' space and facilitate business networking opportunities.
- Amenities – a covered mall with better parking is desirable – the Town Centre is not really as walkable destination. Need more amenities such as a cinema.
- Need to develop a green and accessible 'social heart' to Tsawwassen. This 'social heart' should feature activities – arts centre / craft centre / places of learning.
- This must recognize and be amenable to bicycles. Better information available for tourists / bicyclists (information centre). Bicycle parking should be provided.
- Accessibility for everyone – disabled, seniors, bicycles.

## HOUSING:

- 4-storey maximum height limit
- Towers might be acceptable
- Limited growth is supportable but keep the 'small town feel' of Tsawwassen
- Keep Tsawwassen a 'safe place'.
- Shuttle bus service should be improved to ½ hour to link to Canada Line.

## **GROUP #8:**

### **Notetaker: Alex Cauduro**

- Where is the town square/entertainment area?
- It is in the wrong place
- Compare to Ladner
- There is a lack of institutional focus
- Absence of youth activities
- Vibrancy
  - People of all ages required
  - Drinking and dancing areas
  - Transportation paths and crossings
  - Introduce more visibility and free/passive activities
- Introduce development incentives
- Need to deal with an ageing population
- Reasonable rents
- Affordability in terms of housing
- 1 to 3 storey residential housing with underground parking
- Mixed-use commercial residential buildings
- Provide a town square
- No more malls, big box
- Traffic restrictions in the Tim Hortons "Town Square"
- Introduce parking metres