

Urban Centres and Frequent Transit Development Areas Local Implementation Case Studies

Urban Centres and FTDA Implementation Best Practice Case Study

Topic: Building Consensus on Retrofitting Suburbia into Transit-Oriented Communities

Centre/FTDA: Burquitlam Frequent Transit Development Area

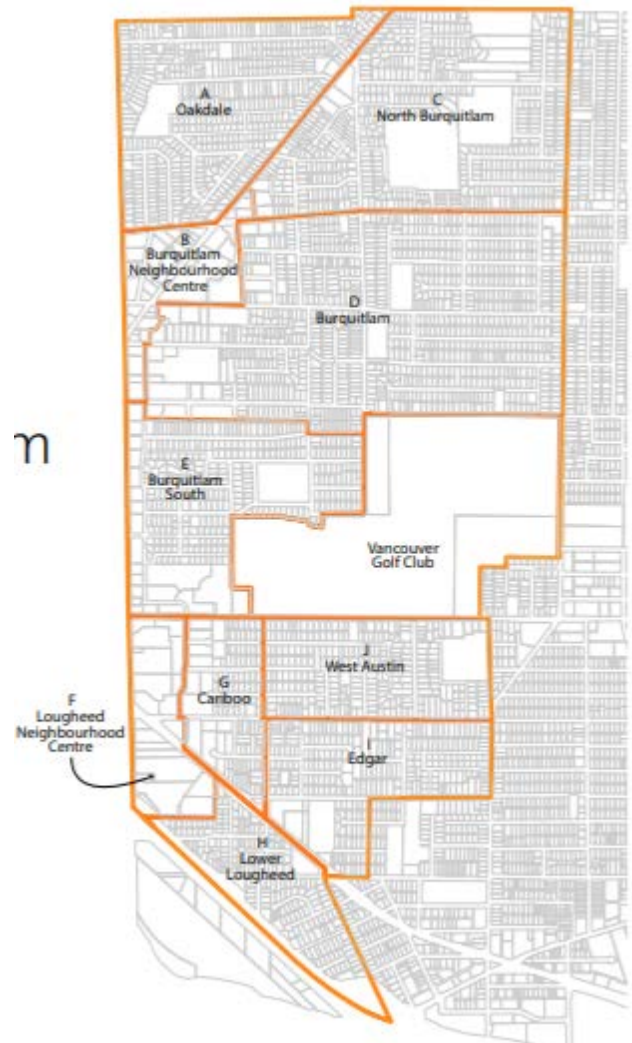
Municipality: City of Coquitlam

In 2017 Coquitlam Council adopted the [Burquitlam-Lougheed Neighbourhood Plan](#) and associated Zoning and OCP amendments. The new plan will guide growth in the neighbourhoods near North and Clarke Roads over the next 25 years, supporting a transition from a largely suburban neighbourhood to an urban community. The plan envisions walkable, complete and transit-oriented neighbourhoods that feature a mix of housing types and access to shopping, jobs, and amenities.

The plan was developed through a Neighbourhood Based Planning Approach and resulted in:

- Over 7,000 new apartment units
- 1,500 new townhouse units
- 85 acres of duplexes and triplexes
- 150 acres re-designated from single-family
- A doubling of park space
- A new recreation centre and pool
- Significant streetscape improvements

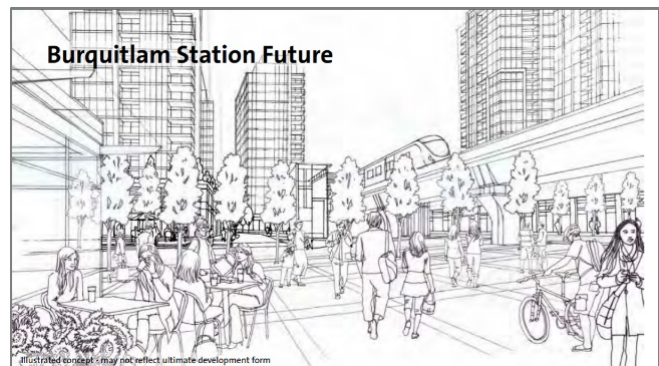
Neighbourhood resistance to growth and change is a common challenge to implementing the regional vision of a network of urban centres and corridors. In order to meet the needs of the diverse Burquitlam-Lougheed area, the neighbourhood based planning approach employed an innovative process that divided the plan area into ten neighbourhood sub-areas to recognize their unique context, range of land uses, and building forms. These ten sub-areas allowed community residents to help form the mosaic that is Burquitlam-Lougheed.



The final plan embodies the priorities and values of the area's approximately 20,000 residents and 370 businesses, captured in an extensive consultation process that included seven open houses, three online surveys, a public advisory group, stakeholder meetings, a website, video, social media, direct mail and other outreach. In all, there were more than 4,700 face-to-face contacts, throughout the plan development. Information on the process for developing the plan can be found in [this video](#).

Lessons Learned - Engagement

- Online engagement tends to enable different audiences to participate. In general, it appeared that participants who supported the plan were more likely to participate online than in-person.
- Online videos can complement more traditional engagement approaches. The [whiteboard animation introducing the Burquitlam-Lougheed neighbourhood planning process](#) received over 4,000 views in less than two weeks.
- Many members of the community were interested in opportunities for new amenities, such as recreation centres, park space, additional shops and services. The linkages between new development and communities amenities were emphasized in the planning process, which helped to build consensus around the plan. Renderings and other visuals helped to build and maintain support for the vision in the interim period between the closure of old amenities (e.g. the old Safeway and Dairy Queen) and the construction and opening of new amenities.
- The Coquitlam Youth Council provided a means of engaging youth directly in the planning process. Online engagement was also effective for engaging younger audiences.
- Dividing the Burquitlam-Lougheed Neighbourhood into separate planning areas provided an opportunity to allow more tailored neighbourhood character and design features, which encouraged more participation in the process.



- Creative mediums for interpersonal engagement can lead to better conversations. The City used a unique “jigsaw puzzle” approach that allowed tactile mixing and matching different potential neighbourhood characteristics [See Photo X].
- While some residents with an interest in staying in the neighbourhood over the longer term were more likely to be interested in lower densities, other residents, who saw a potential for selling their properties, were interested in increasing densities.



Lessons Learned – Community Planning and Urban Design

- The neighbourhood plan provided the opportunity to redesign the street network to enhance walkability, connectivity, and safety for all road users. Laneways were turned into primary streets and long “superblocks” were broken up into smaller blocks to provide options to direct local traffic off of the arterial roads, and to increase pedestrian connectivity. Developers were encouraged to assemble properties and dedicate these new roadways to the City.
- To transition from a suburban to an urban neighbourhood, the planning team needed to identify ways to integrate semi-private “3rd places” into the community. Wider sidewalks, larger parks, a future public square at the SkyTrain Station, and a new community recreation centre will create public, community gathering places for residents living at higher densities.



- Another strategy for improving walkability and public safety was the creation of a, “Street Frontage Hierarchy” which designated main streets either as: “Mandatory Commercial Street Frontage,” “Optional Commercial Street Frontage,” or “Residential Street Frontage.”
- The Tenant Relocation Strategy helps to mitigate the impact of redevelopment on existing affordable rental housing by requiring the provision of 4 months of free rent plus 1 month free rent for every 5 years of tenure and 1 month free rent for every family in a 3 bedroom unit to every tenant required to relocate.
- Developers were also required to hire a full-time on-site relocation manager and, through an incentive program, have agreed to build more rental units than existed prior.

- Since the Burquitlam FTDA and Lougheed Municipal Town Centre are adjacent, coordination with the City of Burnaby was key to ensuring that the two areas were consistent on either side of North Road (the municipal boundary).



- The City of Coquitlam uses both a Community Amenity Contribution program and a Density Bonus program to finance the growth expected in the neighbourhood.

- Many of the area homeowners were unfamiliar with the modern condominium market and, with the increased interest in the development potential of their properties by realtors and developers, the City of Coquitlam took on a new role of educating homeowners about considerations when selling their properties for redevelopment.



- The City worked with TransLink to integrate the new SkyTrain station and guideway into the neighbourhood. Effort was made to beautify the new infrastructure including an LED lighting scheme.

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