

Downtown Squamish Proposed Zoning Changes – Information Package

Stay up to date as we work towards implementing our Downtown and Active Transportation visions through zoning changes and other initiatives, by following the project webpage: <https://squamish.ca/downtown>

What

The District is proposing changes to specific Downtown commercial zones to implement the vision of the Downtown Neighbourhood and Active Transportation Plans and achieve the following:

- *Secure employment space to meet long term demand and foster local employment*
- *Enhance Downtown streetscapes by making them more green and increasing pedestrian and bike safety, while maintaining parking*

Why

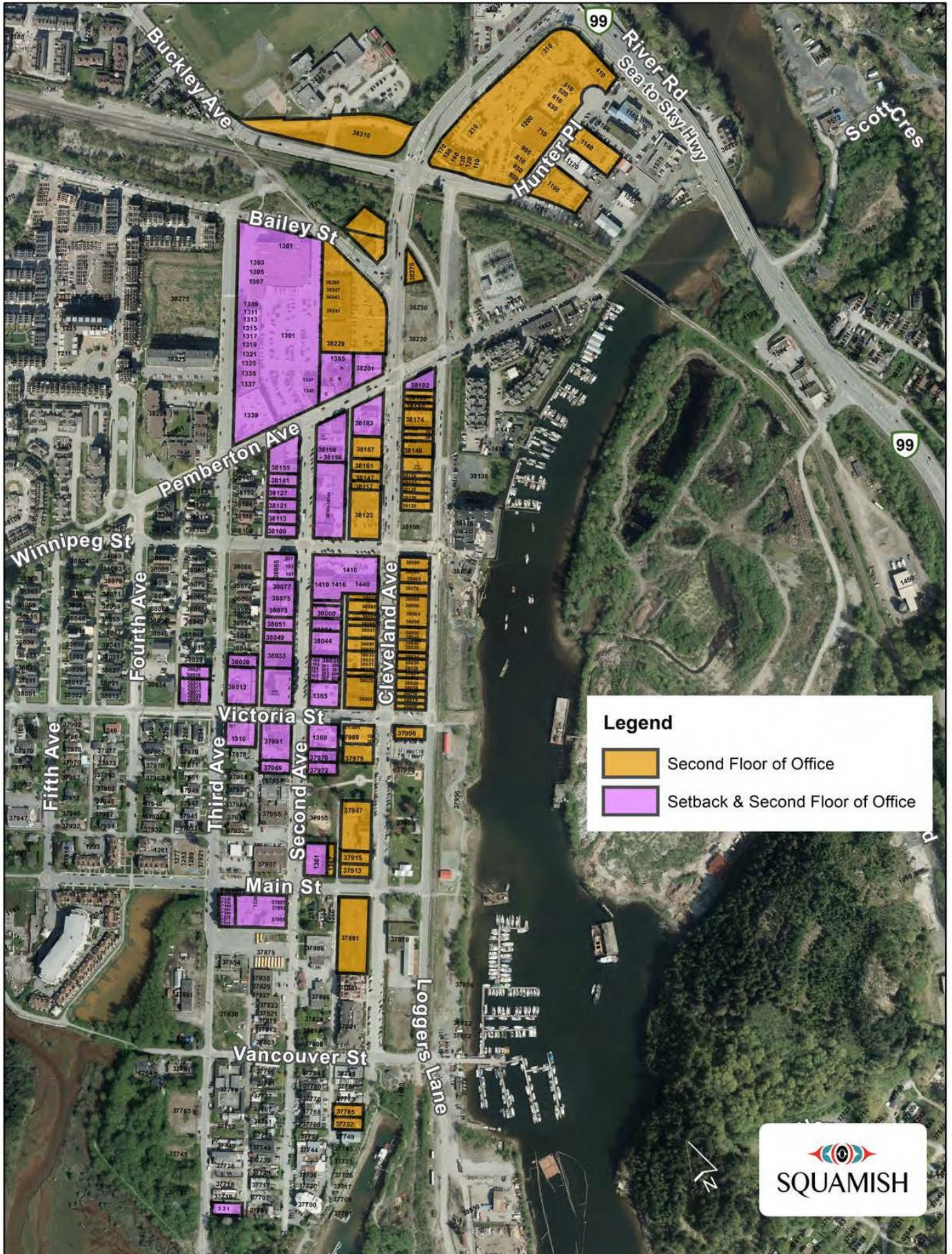
Downtown Squamish has been the focus of multiple plans, visions and strategies throughout the years. With Squamish among the fastest growing communities in Canada, and an influx of recent development concentrated Downtown, we must seize this opportunity to bring the vision and plans towards fruition.

The District recently completed a draft Downtown Neighbourhood Plan and an Active Transportation Plan; our Official Community Plan update is also moving towards completion this year. Now is our chance to ensure these new developments align with the community's Downtown vision.

Who

The District is reaching out to the community, and is working in partnership with the Downtown Squamish Business Improvement Association and Squamish Chamber of Commerce to involve as many stakeholders as possible in this Downtown engagement workshop. We will be looking for input from landowners, business owners, and tenants, as well as the wider community.

Where



Employment Space

Why create more employment space?

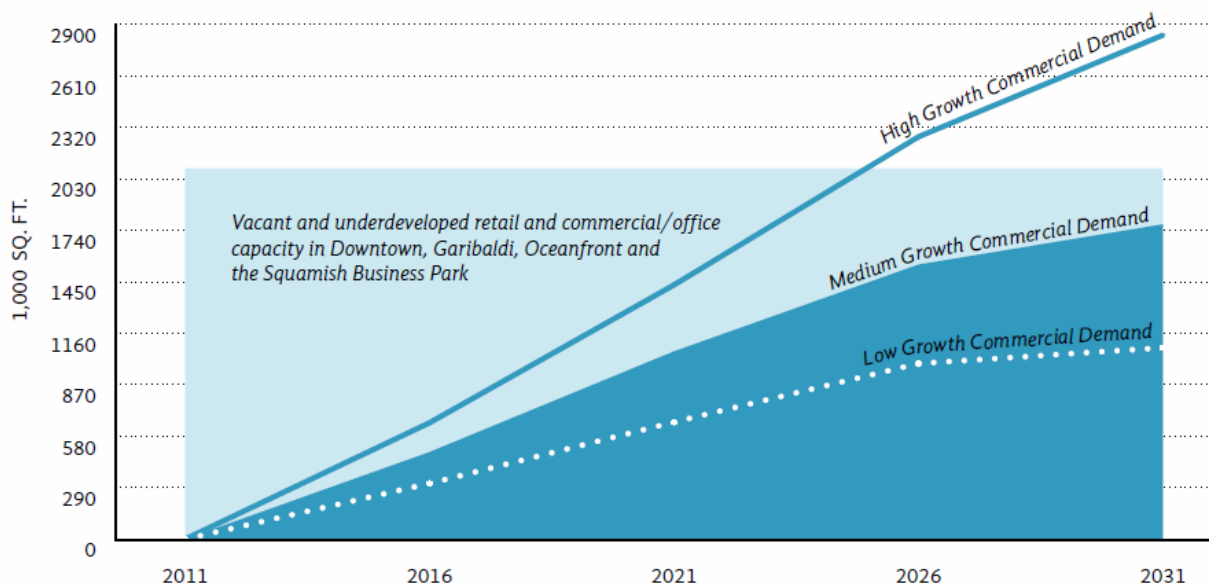
Jobs-Housing Balance and Local Jobs

A healthy jobs to housing ratio (range of 0.75 to 1.5) can reduce commuting, traffic and emissions, increase our standard of living, and re-circulate more revenue back into our local economy. The pace of residential development, in the absence of a jobs-housing balance, may result in an undersupply of commercial space or Squamish as a “bedroom community”.

Employment Growth

The Employment Lands Strategy projected an adequate supply of commercial space (medium growth scenario), but supply is dependent on build out of the Oceanfront and Downtown Neighbourhood Plans. If development doesn't materialize, employment growth may be slowed. Employment land demand projections completed in 2014 indicate a shortage of retail and office commercial space under a high growth scenario:

RETAIL AND OFFICE COMMERCIAL DEMAND – Low, Medium and High Projections (1,000 sq. ft.)



Plans and Policies that support securing employment space:

Official Community Plan Policies

18 – 13 Downtown Squamish will continue to serve as the commercial and institutional centre for the community and be a regional service centre for the southern part of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District.

18 - 14 The District encourages the concentration of commercial development in a compact commercial area within the Downtown.

18 - 15 The District encourages additional professional office uses in the Downtown.

Downtown Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Vision: *Downtown Squamish is the vibrant, thriving heart of an extraordinary seaside mountain community where people come to live, learn, work and play in harmony.*

Goal: *The community is complete: Downtown will be the commercial, residential, and institutional focus for the District, and the vibrant heart of the community, with social, cultural, civic, and employment opportunities in close proximity to each other.*

Goal: *Good jobs are close to home: Downtown will be the centre for business and employment opportunities and will be supported.*

2-A.3 Promote and encourage Downtown as a key neighbourhood in Squamish for professional services and business offices that serve the entire community and region.

2-B.1 Encourage a creative and flexible mix of employment generating uses Downtown, including artisan, retail, business office, arts and culture, civic/institutional, and light industrial uses.

2-B.2 Encourage, facilitate and support the development of a mix of retail, service, and office businesses to enhance neighbourhood ambience, convenience and business mix.

2-B.3 Pursue opportunities to support and expand professional services and business offices downtown.

2-B.15 Encourage non-profit and social service groups to locate their offices, meeting spaces and facilities Downtown.

How can we secure employment space to meet future demand?

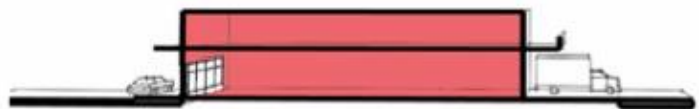
Regulatory tools (zoning changes) are proposed that would require a minimum amount of employment space for new developments. Changes to the Downtown Commercial (C-4) and Artisan Village (C-10) zones are proposed as follows:

- Employment space at grade, along all street frontages
- Employment space on one other storey, along all street frontages
- Employment space minimum unit depth of 10 meters
 - 10 m is a common standard for commercial retail units
 - 10m is 27% of the depth of an average downtown lot

CLEVELAND COMMERCIAL

Designated for:

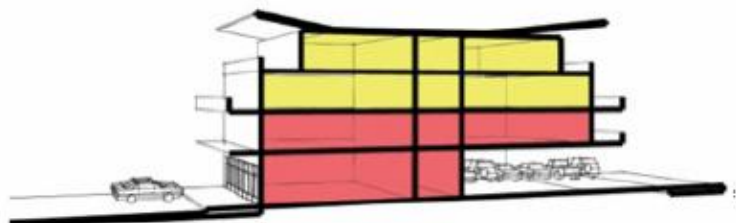
- *office, retail, restaurant at and above grade*
- *residential above grade if stepped back*



COMMERCIAL MIXED USE

Designated for:

- *office, retail, restaurant at and above grade*
- *residential above grade*
- *civic uses encouraged where appropriate*



What are other options to create employment space?

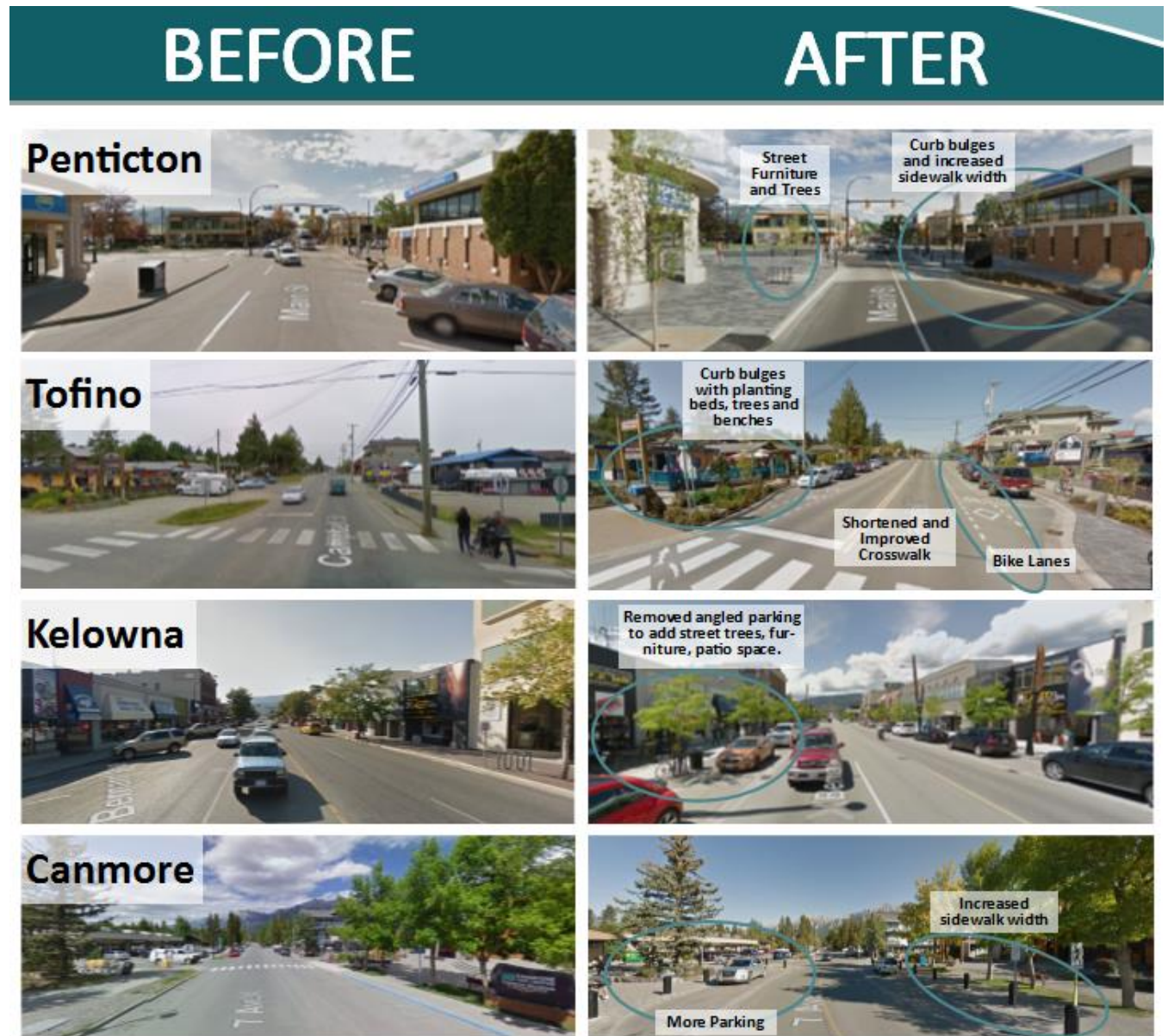
- Parking options, including:
 - Reducing parking space requirements for employment space. Requirements can include the number of parking stalls, stall sizes (i.e. small car sizes), driveway and drive aisle width reductions, etc.
 - Increasing the amount of parking that can be bought out (purchasing parking stalls, with the District collecting the funds to then construct a parkade).
 - Implementing a car share on site.
 - Designing parking lots to maximize parking on site (underground or partially sunken parkades can dramatically increase the amount of parking on site).
 - Sharing parking spaces between residential and employment uses (i.e. residential parking demand peaks in the evening/morning, while commercial uses can share and access the residential spaces during the day).
- Loading options, such as reducing the number of loading spaces or reducing the size of loading spaces.
- Incentives to encourage (not require) the creation of employment space, such as allowing more density when employment space is provided (this is also known as “density bonusing”).

Setbacks and Streetscapes

Why Enhance Downtown Streets?

Great streets are complete streets that accommodate all modes of transportation and bring life and vitality to a place. People linger at businesses with patios, sidewalk seating areas, and sidewalk displays. The streets are safe and inviting for people of all ages and abilities, and they encourage walking and biking to destinations.

Some examples of places that have enhanced their streets are shown in the figure below. Sidewalks have been widened, street trees and planting beds added, curb bulges have been created and crosswalks have been shortened to make street crossings safer.



Plans and Policies that support enhancing our streetscapes:

Official Community Plan Policies

23 - 26 The District will work toward providing a safe pedestrian realm and will incorporate traffic-calming design approaches and measures in the Downtown and other key locations in the community.

23 - 27 When possible, pedestrian-friendly design will be achieved through new development or substantial renovation to existing buildings.

23 - 24 The quality of pedestrian areas directly affects the overall image of a place, the quality of experience and the propensity for people to walk rather than drive. Recognizing this, efforts will be directed to such measures as:

- reducing travel lane widths;
- reducing street crossing distances;
- separated sidewalks;
- provision of pedestrian-scale lighting;
- soft and hard landscaping accents, and,
- street furniture.

Downtown Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Vision: *Downtown Squamish is the vibrant, thriving heart of an extraordinary seaside mountain community where people come to live, learn, work and play in harmony.*

Goal: *Alternative options to the car are emphasized: Downtown will have useful, attractive transportation choices with good connections, including improved street networks for pedestrians and cyclists.*

Public Realm: Activate Downtown streets with patios and sidewalk seating areas.

Transportation: Ensure the Downtown street network enables users of all ages, abilities and modes (e.g., pedestrians, bicycles, transit riders and motorists) to interact and move more safely and efficiently along and across Downtown streets.

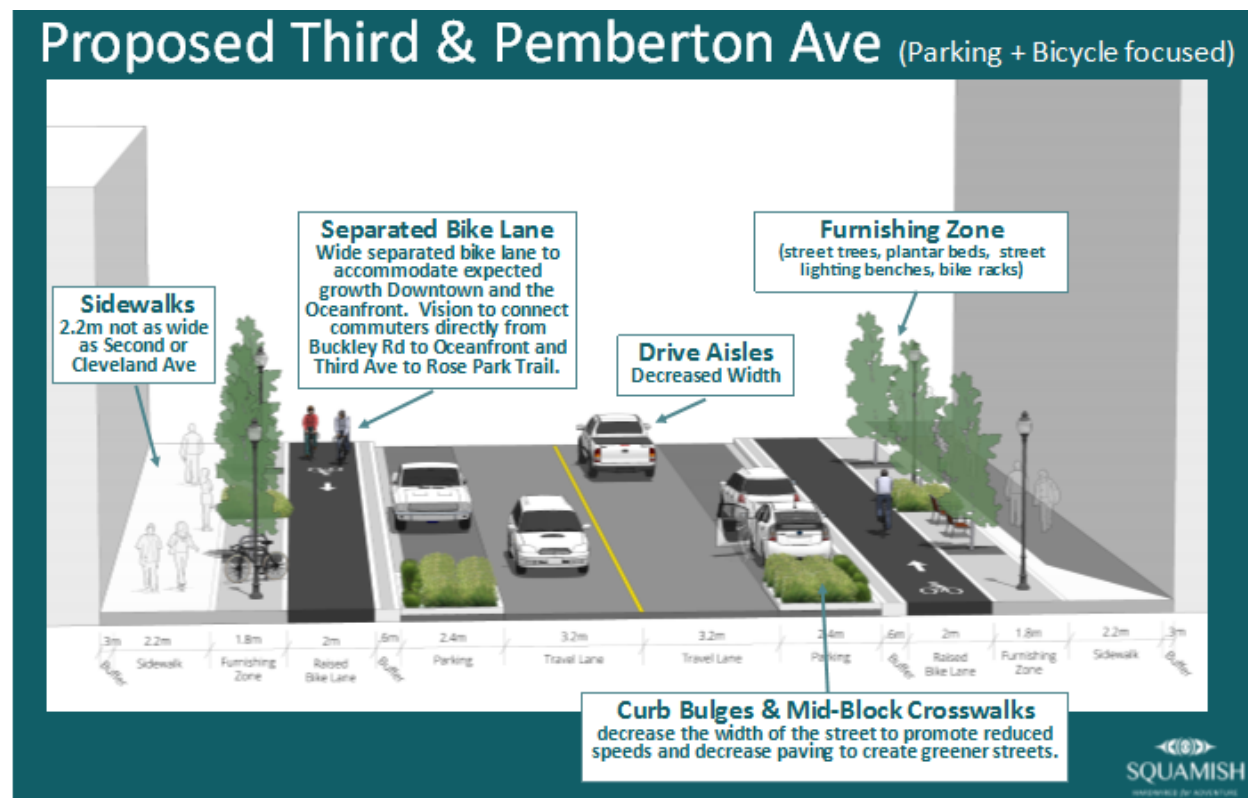
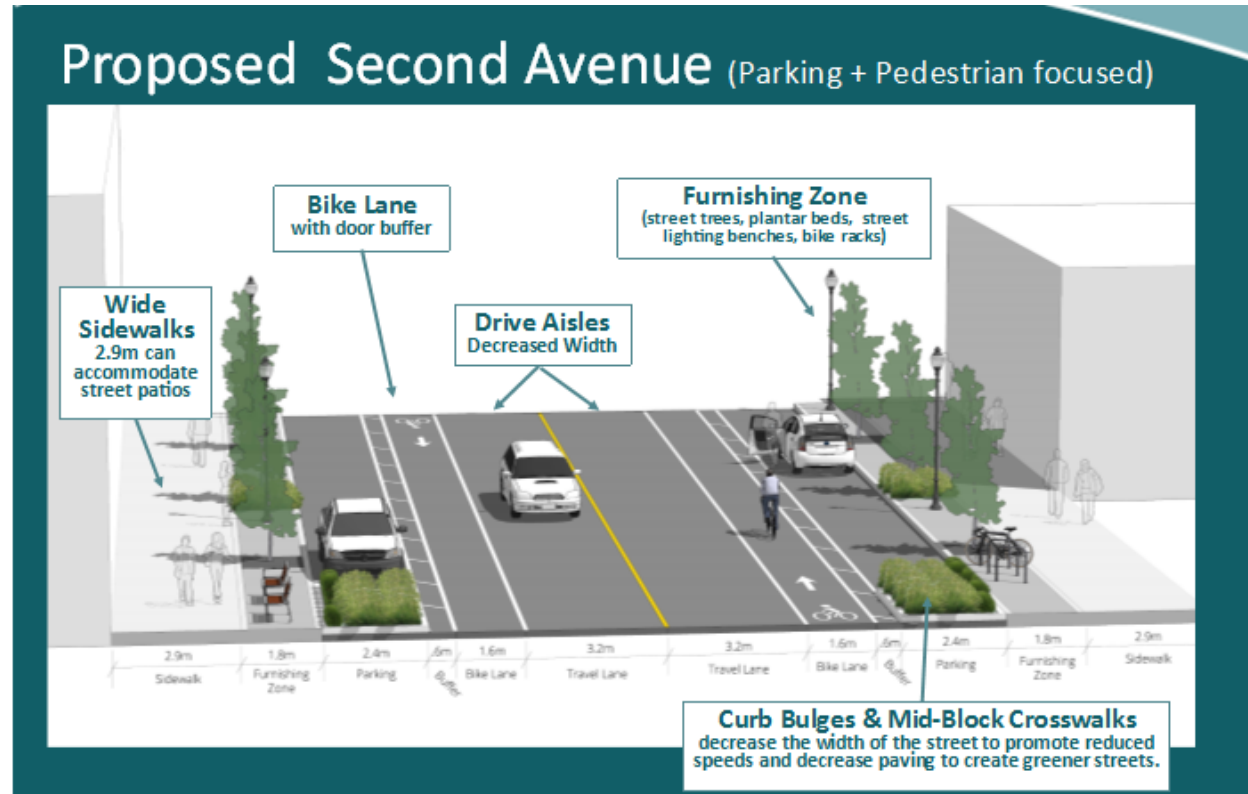
Active Transportation: Require new development projects Downtown to be designed and built in a way that facilitates active modes of transportation.

Health and Safety: Plan safe cycling and walking routes that connect residential areas with schools Downtown. Ensure Downtown pathways, and green streets maintain ecological functions and natural values.

Urban Design, Place-making & Culture: All commercial and retail development in the Downtown shall respond to the principles of compact, vibrant and pedestrian-friendly urban form. On-street parallel parking or angled parking shall be provided throughout the Downtown area to support retail uses and provide a constant buffer for pedestrians from the travel lanes

What is the Vision for our Downtown streets?

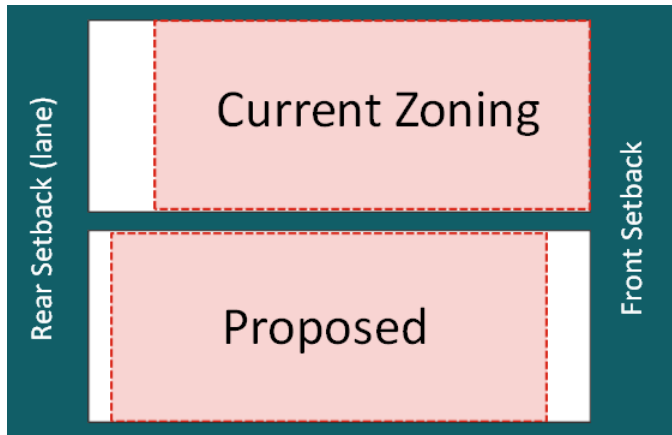
Based on the visions outlined in the Official Community Plan and the draft Downtown Neighbourhood Plan, the overall vision is for enhanced streets that accommodate active transportation objectives (safe and inviting for pedestrians and cyclists) while maintaining two lanes of on-street parking (existing parking is retained). How this is envisioned for specific Downtown streets (Second, Third and Pemberton Avenues) is outlined in the figures below:



How can we achieve enhanced streetscapes?

Regulatory tools (zoning changes) are proposed that would change building setbacks (where a building is positioned relative to its property lines) to increase the useable width of downtown streets. Changes to the Downtown Commercial (C-4) and Artisan Village (C-10) zones are proposed as follows:

- Increase front building setbacks from 0 m to 2.5 m on lots abutting Pemberton, Second and Third Avenue to allow for an enhanced streetscape
- Decrease rear laneway setback from 3.5 m to 1 m on lots abutting Pemberton, Second, and Third Avenue to ensure that the majority of properties will not lose any buildable area



What are the trade-offs that must be made if setbacks are not changed?

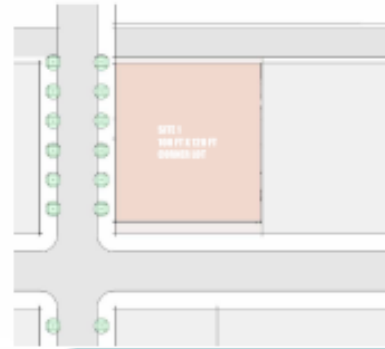
With a limited existing street width, difficult choices or trade-offs must be made. The following are some of the choices that should be considered:

1. Change building setbacks (push buildings further back from the street) to accommodate wider sidewalks, street trees and bike lanes, while maintaining two lanes of on-street parking.
2. No building setback changes, two lanes of on-street parking are maintained with no street trees and narrow sidewalks.
3. No building setback changes, on-street parking is reduced to one lane (one side) of the street to accommodate wider sidewalks, street trees and bike lanes.

Examples of various sidewalk widths in Squamish are shown in the figure below:



Example Sketch 100ft x 120ft Corner lot



Double wide ramp, 17 parking stalls



Ground Level

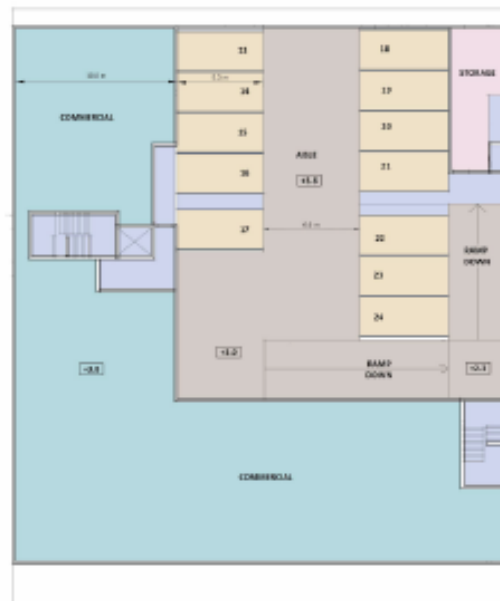


Second Level

Single car ramp, 24 parking stalls



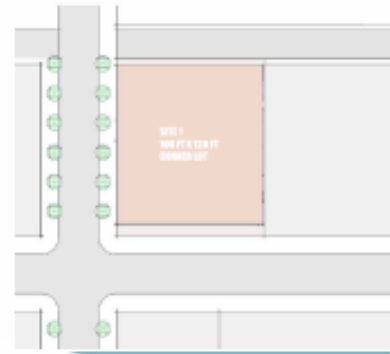
Ground Level



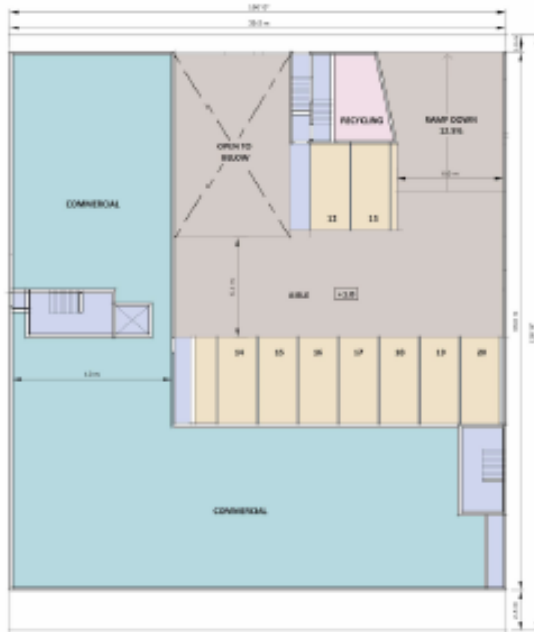
Second Level



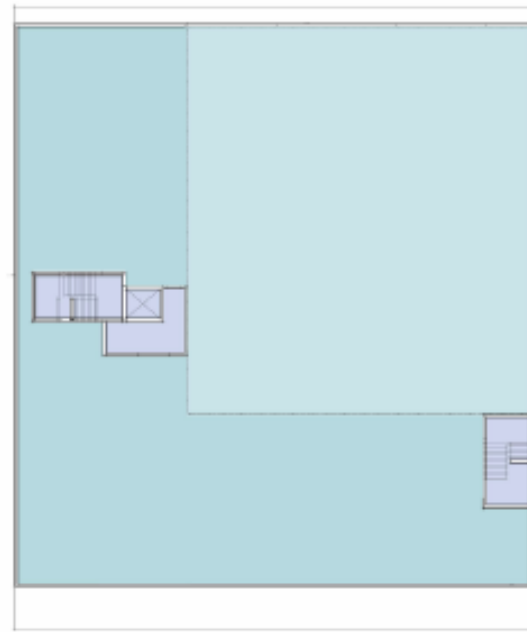
Example Sketch 100ft x 120ft Corner lot



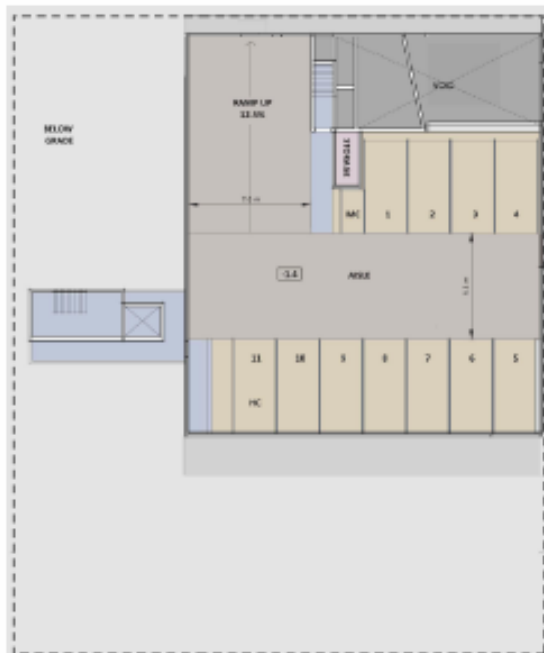
Double wide ramp, sunken parking lot, 20+ parking stalls



Ground Level



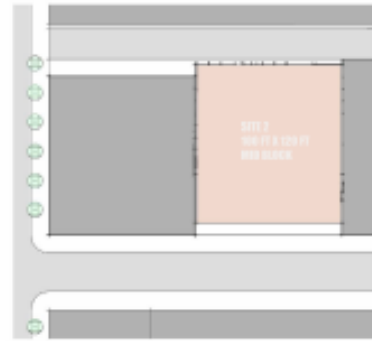
Second Level (could have parking)



Basement Level



Example Sketch 100ft x 120ft mid-block lot



Double wide ramp, 31 parking stalls



Ground Level



Second Level

Single car ramp, 34 parking stalls



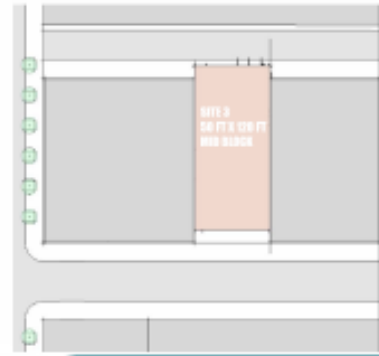
Ground Level



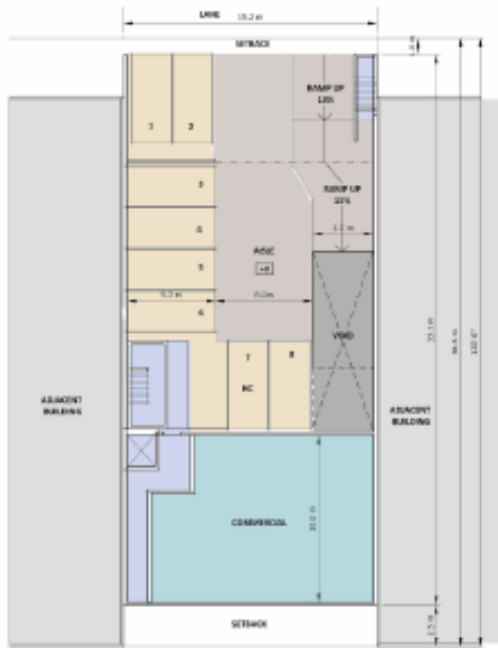
Second Level



Example Sketch 50ft x 120ft mid-block lot



Single car ramp, 15 parking stalls

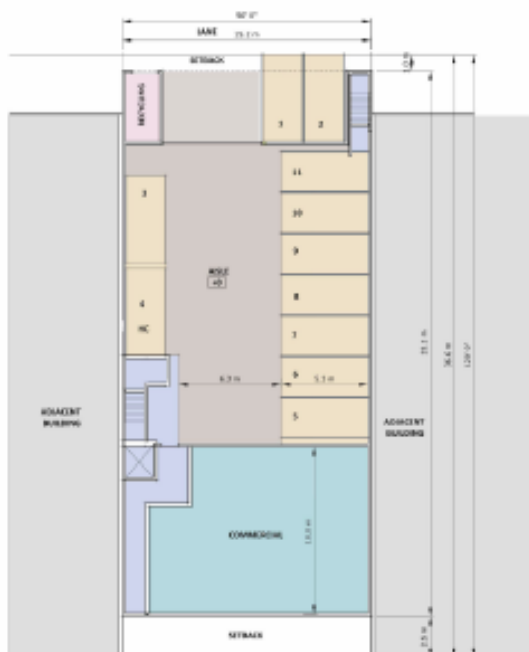


Ground Level



Second Level

No ramp, 11 parking stalls



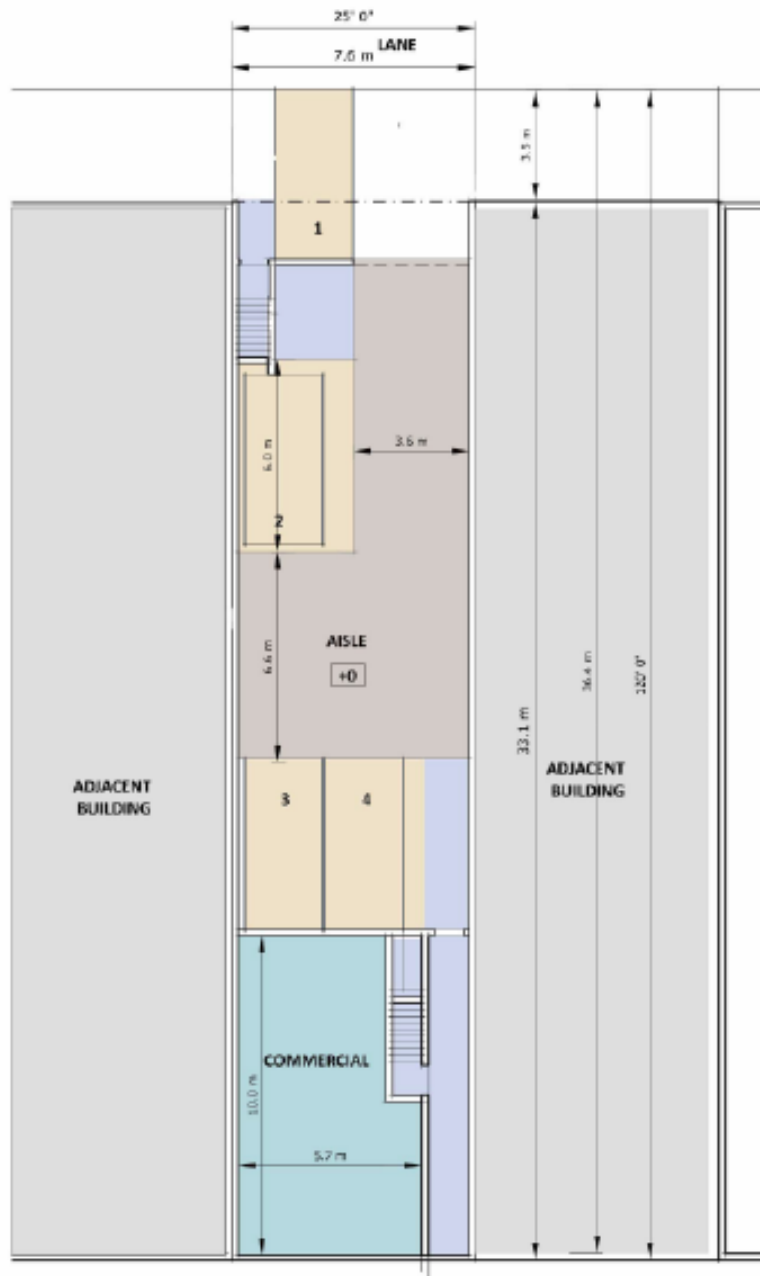
Ground Level



DVAD Inc.
DEREK VENTER ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN
P: +1.250.962.1217 | info@dvad.org
10-1040 Legacy Way, Whistler
BC, CANADA, V0N 1B1

Example Sketch 25ft x 120ft mid-block lot

No ramp, 4 parking stalls



Ground Level



DVAD Inc.
DORIS VENTER ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN
P: +1.250.962.1177 | E: info@dvad.org
10-1040 Legacy Way, Whistler
BC, CANADA, V0N 1B1