



Vision Highlights

Dunbar Today

Dunbar is a very attractive community of quiet, tree-lined streets, single-family houses, many and varied park spaces, an active, accessible community centre, and three convenient shopping districts on Dunbar Street. Its residents greatly value its safe, green, village-like atmosphere and see this quality as what makes Dunbar special. They want to preserve this uniqueness in the face of change which is often seen as unwelcome and unneighbourly: new four-storey development on Dunbar Street lacking design sensitivity and quality; rural lanes with green edges being paved over; older character houses being replaced by out-of-scale new houses; increasing traffic concerns.



Not all change is unwelcome. People recognize that more housing choice is desirable so that residents who wish to, can live out their lives in Dunbar. Also, there are opportunities for improvements, such as Dunbar Street shopping districts to provide a community focus and a more attractive “face” for the community.

Dunbar’s Vision for the Future

Dunbar’s Vision preserves the green, village-like character of the community while focussing most changes on Dunbar Street. New developments should be better designed and Dunbar Street made more attractive and safer for pedestrians, transit users, and bicyclists. New types of low-rise housing should be focussed on Dunbar Street, 16th Avenue, and/or 41st Avenue. These changes should come about with a high level of community involvement to ensure that they enhance the community and serve residents of all ages.



Community Shopping Areas on Dunbar Street

The three shopping areas along Dunbar should be strengthened in their roles as community gathering places. The variety of small shops and services at the sidewalk edge should be continued with gaps filled in. New mixed used developments should be less bulky, of higher quality, and fit better with the surrounding neighbourhood. Pedestrian improvements should include safer crossings, benches, plantings, and a community plaza.

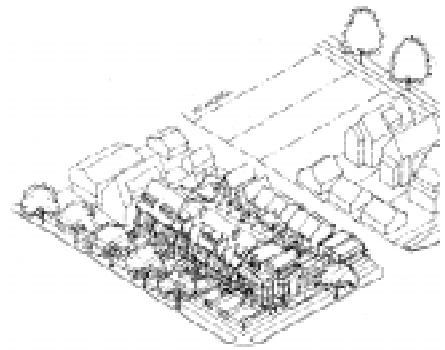


A Predominantly Single Family Community with Dunbar Character

In the future, most of Dunbar should remain primarily single-family. New houses should all receive design review to help ensure compatibility with existing homes, and greater design diversity should be permitted than now. The lush, green feel of residential streets, lanes, and yards should be kept. Rental suites should be legal in more areas and current regulatory roadblocks preventing suites in new houses should be removed, noting that many houses already have rental suites, though now officially not legal. There could also be some infill housing on larger lots if it helps save existing character houses.

New Housing Choices on Arterials

In addition to current apartments above stores in the shopping areas, new types of housing, such as rowhouses, four- and sixplexes, and duplexes should provide other affordable housing choices for young families and people wanting a smaller home in Dunbar. This new housing should be developed as small projects over time, and should fit in with the character of the adjacent single-family areas. There should be further community involvement in the detailed planning for this new housing, which should include assessing the most suitable locations on the arterials (Dunbar Street, 16th, and/or 41st Avenues). Housing for seniors could be in a variety of forms, including low-rise apartments.



Focus on Walking, Cycling, and Transit

There should be an emphasis on improving the convenience of alternatives to the private vehicle. Neighbourhood greenways should be developed with City assistance, and connected to city-wide greenways and bikeways to link important destinations within and outside the community. Traffic calming should occur where needed to slow traffic on residential streets and address safety concerns for pedestrians and cyclists. The extra width of Dunbar Street should be used to improve conditions for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users instead of for more lanes of traffic.



A Green and Environmentally Conscious Community

The green and natural landscape of the community, both public and private, should be preserved and enhanced. Trees and landscaping should be part of new developments and street improvements. Some parks should be upgraded so that they can be used for a greater variety of activities. Preserving the remaining unpaved lanes should be actively encouraged. Views of the water and mountains from Dunbar Street and public places should be protected. It should be easier to conserve, recycle, and dispose of hazardous waste. Working at home should be more actively supported.



Helping Those with Special Needs

More efforts should be made to allow seniors and others with special needs to continue to live in Dunbar if they choose, through additional volunteer support services and alternative housing options. The talents and energies of Dunbar's youth should be actively encouraged to contribute to the community, and the special needs of youth better recognized and addressed. A community policing centre should be established.



Community Involvement and Identity

Dunbar residents have a high level of community spirit and volunteerism and are keenly interested in participating in decisions that will affect them. There is great potential for building community spirit and identity which should be pursued through collaborative projects in implementing this Vision. Implementation should also involve residents in important decisions on neighbourhood change.