

DEPARTURE BAY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



CITY OF NANAIMO
May 2006

DEPARTURE BAY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

**Prepared by inVision Planning
School of Community and Regional Planning
University of British Columbia
May 2006**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This plan embodies a vision for the Departure Bay neighbourhood which emerged early in the planning process:

The vision for Departure Bay is to preserve and enhance the existing sense of community, unique neighbourhood character, natural beauty, environmental quality, and accessibility of the area.

Residents of the Departure Bay planning area care deeply about maintaining the beach, the parks, and the views that combine to make Departure Bay a unique neighbourhood in Nanaimo. Building heights, the protection of views of the bay, and the inclusion of building design guidelines have been identified as priorities by the residents. Traffic safety and calming, and the continuation of recreational opportunities in the area are also priorities. The environmental health and integrity of the area is cherished by the Departure Bay community as habitat for wildlife and as a natural amenity to the neighbourhood.

All the elements of this neighbourhood plan have been designed with the vision of the long-term livability of the Departure Bay neighbourhood. The first two sections of the plan set out the context and planning process. In the third section, “Plan Recommendations”, plan objectives and actions, identified through the community consultation process, are grouped under the following section headings: Environment; Traffic, Safety & Parking; Development & Redevelopment; and Recreation. In “Action and Implementation”, the fourth section, a master table is laid out of all the objectives and actions. Each action is identified in terms of relative cost, responsibility, and implementation time frame. The overall aim of this plan is to illustrate the past and present of Departure Bay, and outline the community's vision for the future of the neighbourhood.

PLAN OBJECTIVES:

A. ENVIRONMENT

- To support a safe and healthy environment for wildlife within the neighbourhood.
- To maintain and enhance the ecological health of parks and creeks in the neighbourhood, including Wardropper and Woodstream Park.
- To maintain and enhance the ecology of the Departure Bay waterfront as habitat for local and migrating wildlife, while providing long-term benefits to residents and other beach users.

B. TRAFFIC, SAFETY & PARKING

- To provide adequate parking for beach users while maintaining and enhancing the quality of open space available for recreation.
- To maintain and improve existing parking in the area while balancing the parking needs of residents and visitors.
- To ensure maximum pedestrian accessibility and safety while balancing the need to ensure traffic flow through Departure Bay.
- To promote and enhance alternative transportation options, including cycling and transit.

C. DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT

- To preserve and enhance the character of Departure Bay through sustainable development, design guidelines, and view protection.
- To support a local commercial centre that maintains the neighbourhood character.
- To manage future residential development in the plan area surrounding the Departure Bay Village Core.

D. RECREATION

- To maintain, enhance, and improve the Departure Bay beach area for recreational activities.
- To improve walking opportunities in Departure Bay and ensure safe and pleasant pedestrian use of recreational areas.
- To enhance Departure Bay's recreational areas through landscaping and design in order to create a more positive aesthetic experience for users and passers-by.
- To ensure the Departure Bay beach, parks, and indoor facilities continue to accommodate a variety of recreational activities.
- To improve and enhance the recreational opportunities for youth in Departure Bay.
- To provide sufficient amenities and monitoring in park areas to ensure safe and enjoyable use by all.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 DEPARTURE BAY NEIGHBOURHOOD IN CONTEXT

The City of Nanaimo, located on the east coast of Vancouver Island, covers an area of over 88 square kilometers, and is home to over 77,000 residents. Comprised of 19 distinct communities, Nanaimo is considered “a city of neighbourhoods.” These neighbourhoods are identified in the City’s Mission Statement as the building blocks of the City. Amongst these, the Departure Bay neighbourhood is considered to be a “gem” because of its location and natural beauty.

Departure Bay lies in the traditional territory of Snuneymuxw First Nation. The beach and adjacent foreshore area is a provincially designated archaeological site and a number of archaeological digs have taken place along the waterfront over the years. There is a documented burial site at the northern end of the beachfront strip and recent developments have unearthed middens and skeletal remains. Among other objectives, this plan aims to facilitate on going partnerships between current and traditional users of the area by recognizing the cultural and archaeological importance of the area.



Departure Bay Neighbourhood features, from left to right: the beach at low tide; the view from a commercial site looking out to the waterfront; a view from Wardropper Park.



1.2 PLAN AREA

The Departure Bay neighbourhood is located on the shores and upland areas of Departure Bay, just north of the Departure Bay Ferry Terminal, Nanaimo, British Columbia. It is bounded by the Nanaimo Golf Club to the southwest, Linley Valley to the north, Stephenson Point to the northeast, Departure Bay waterfront to the east, and Cilaire properties to the south.

Departure Bay Plan Area Boundary



1.3 HISTORY OF DEPARTURE BAY

Departure Bay, or **Stl'i lep**, (meaning “at the base of the mountain”) was the site of a Snuneymuxw winter village and burial ground. At the time of contact, this winter village had three rows of cedar-planked longhouses built along the length of the beach. Another set of longhouses was situated close to the present day Pacific Biological Station. According to Snuneymuxw Elders there were four families that wintered at this site. A fifth family wintered on the Nanaimo Harbour at Commercial Inlet.

The archaeological record shows that the Snuneymuxw lived at this site for several thousands of years. There are several origin stories about the beginning of this village, but the most popular version tells of a man and woman living at the base of **Tetuxwtun** (Mt. Benson) and their children founding the village at Departure Bay. From this village other villages sprang up on the Nanaimo Harbour, Nanaimo River, and Gabriola Island.

The Snuneymuxw used this winter village from December to March. They performed their winter dances here and bathed in the nearby creeks. This is also the place where the annual cycle of food gathering began. In January huge runs of herring arrived. Elders say that the first man at Departure Bay created herring by stirring the water with a paddle. Following the herring runs were large flocks of ducks and fish such as spring salmon and halibut. Deer and elk were also plentiful in the area.

In the late spring the Snuneymuxw families spread out and some would move away to Gabriola Island where they fished, gathered shellfish and other foods. In the late summer months they met again at Departure Bay picking berries before setting out to the Fraser River for the sockeye season. They returned to Nanaimo in the fall for the salmon runs on the River and then back to Departure Bay for the winter months.

In the early 1870s, non-aboriginals began to arrive in Nanaimo around what is today known as Diver Lake, west of Departure Bay. This was prompted by the development of the nearby Dunsmuir Wellington Mines.



Departure Bay circa 1890.

Courtesy of Nanaimo Community Archives

In 1872, a rail line connected the mines to the coal wharves at Departure Bay. By the mid-1880s, a handful of buildings, including a store, a hotel, a post office, a saloon, offices, and



Departure Bay, circa 1939.

Courtesy of Nanaimo Community Archives

residences were clustered around the bay. Hundreds of thousands of tons of coal were shipped out of Departure Bay until mining operations ceased in 1900. Remnants of the original wharves can still be seen at low tide at the north end of the bay.

Farms were established in the area as early as the 1870s and continued to operate until large-scale land development occurred in the 1950s and 1960s. Centennial Park, developed as a 1958 Centennial project, was originally part of a much larger farm.

By the 1920s, the waterfront area, easily accessed from Nanaimo, became a popular recreational site for campers, cottagers, swimmers and boaters. Today, a few modest buildings remain as evidence of the area's earlier "cottage country" character.

The present-day beach infrastructure dates back to 1969, when the Greater Nanaimo Works Program built parking for 75 cars and a six-foot wide pedestrian seawalk. The Kin Hut, originally designed as a change house for swimmers, was built as a Centennial Project in 1967.

Over time, the farms were sold, land subdivided, and the area, especially the sections west of Departure Bay Road, gradually took on a more suburban character.

From industrial site, to farmland and recreational area, to its current mixed residential-commercial-recreational use, the Departure Bay area has undergone significant changes. As testimony to its transitions, there are still a few remnants in the landscape to suggest Departure Bay neighbourhood's historical evolution.

1.4 THE DEPARTURE BAY NEIGHBOURHOOD TODAY

The neighbourhood is a well-established community composed primarily of older, single-family homes, which enjoy views of Departure Bay and surrounding area. Along Departure Bay Road and Wingrove Street there is a mix of residential and some retail. The commercial and residential uses of the neighbourhood are separated from the beach by Departure Bay Road. This road is a major arterial linking downtown Nanaimo with neighbourhoods to the north. Approximately 13,000-15,000 cars pass through the community every day on this route. The bay itself has one of the few publicly accessible beaches in the Nanaimo area and is a popular recreational destination for both Nanaimo residents and visitors. For the local community, the beach area is a cherished place to walk, sit, socialize, and enjoy. As the neighbourhood matures it is evolving slowly, and change is occurring incrementally.

1.5 PLANNING AREA DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY AND LAND USE PROFILE¹

Covering roughly 210 hectares (520 acres), the Departure Bay Plan area has an estimated 2001 Census population of 2,606². The 2001 Canada Census Statistics for Departure Bay

1 The format and presentation of the following statistics for the Departure Bay Planning Area (Departure Bay) is similar to that used in Nanaimo's Social Development Strategy, Social Status Report (Prepared May 2003 by John Talbot & Associates). This has been done to enable easy use of the Social Status Report for comparisons and analysis of the social implications of these statistics.

2 Source: PCensus custom report using 2001 Statistics Canada and City of Nanaimo GIS data.

paints the picture of a relatively stable, affluent neighbourhood (see details in Appendix D, Tables 1-4). As a whole, residents of the neighbourhood have higher levels of home ownership (73%), education, and income, with lower unemployment and mobility rates than the City of Nanaimo as a whole.

Residents

Two-parent families make up the majority of households in Departure Bay although there are a higher proportion of two-parent families with no children at home (52%) than the rest of the city (43%). This is indicative of the trend towards 'empty nester' householders in the neighbourhood as reflected by the average population age rising from 38 to 42 between 1996 and 2001.

The percentage and number of families that were lone parents in Departure Bay increased from 13% to 15% between 1996 and 2001. Of the 2001 lone parent families in Departure Bay 65% were female headed and 35% male headed. The ratio of male to female lone parent families becomes significant when comparing the wage differences between males and females.

Between 1996 and 2001 there was a significant increase of people in Departure Bay with "university education with a bachelor degree or higher". In 1996 there were 245 people or 13% of the population in Departure Bay with "university education with a bachelor degree or higher" and by 2001 this number had increased to 481 or 23% of the population.

In Departure Bay, a lower percentage of the population changed their place of residence between 1996 and 2001, (42% or 1,071 people) than between 1991 and 2001 (48% or, 1,020 people). The trend towards decreasing mobility rates may be a sign of increasing stability for the Departure Bay neighbourhood.

Development

The majority of Departure Bay's 1,280³ residential lots are developed (96% or 1,234 lots are developed with 1 or more dwelling units). The remaining undeveloped lots (4% or 46 lots) include several lots with considerable development constraints including steep slopes and riparian (streamside) areas (see map).

There were an estimated 1,564⁴ dwelling units in Departure Bay in 2006. The 2006 residential density for the neighbourhood was calculated to be 7.7 units per hectare (3.1 units per acre).

The majority (88%) of Departure Bay's housing was built between 1946 and 1990⁵. Since 1990 the rate of residential development has slowed considerably with 7% of the housing stock being built between 1991 and 1996, and only 2% of the housing stock being built between 1996 and 2001.

3 Source: City of Nanaimo GIS and 2006 BC Assessment Data

4 Source: City of Nanaimo GIS and 2006 BC Assessment Data

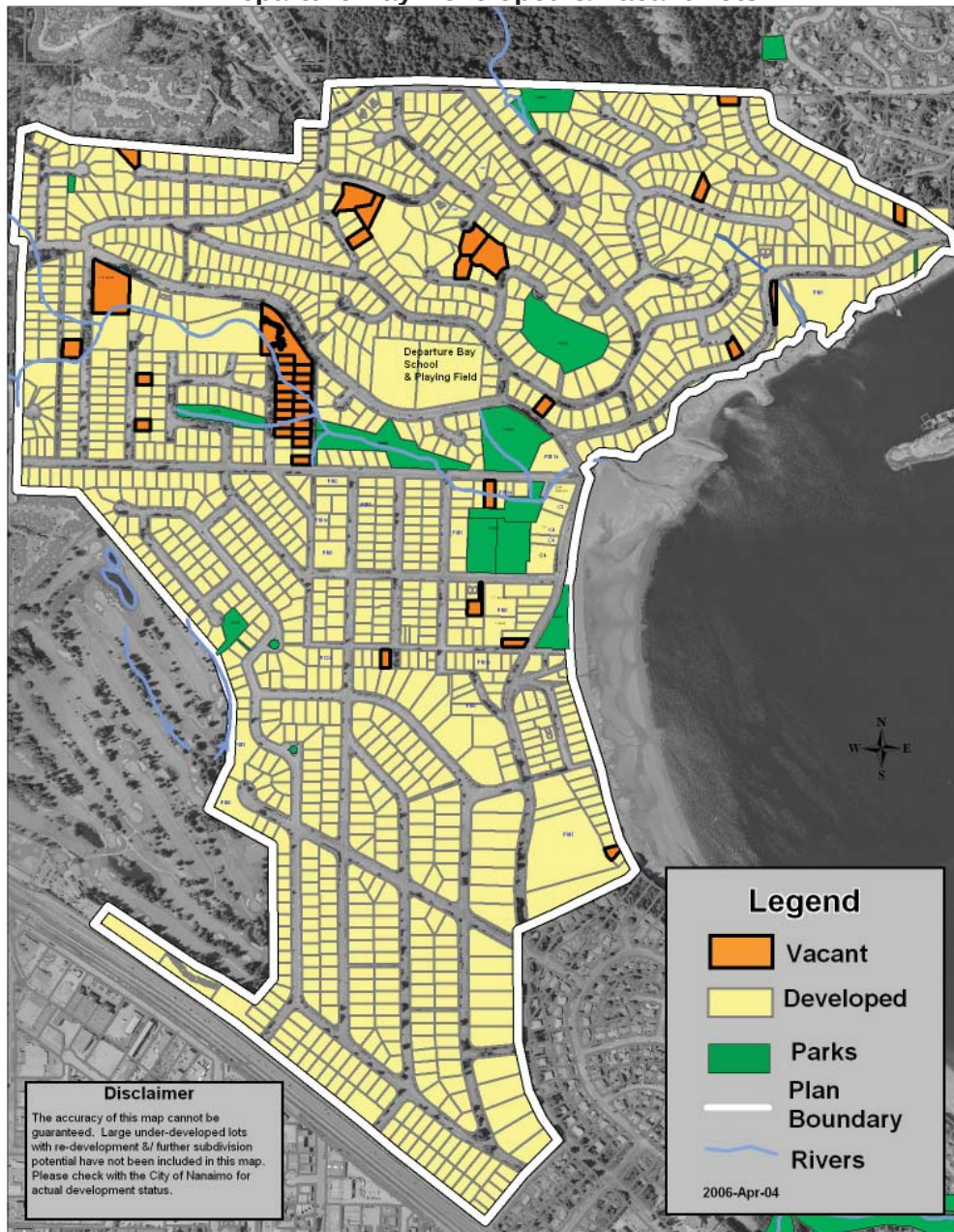
5 2001 Statistics Canada

2006 Land Use (based on zoning)

Land Use	Acres	Hectares	% of Total
Residential – Single-family	335	135	64 %
Residential – Multi-Family	33	13	6 %
Commercial	3.8	1.5	0.7 %
Public Institutional	9.7	4	1.8 %
Parks*	19.7	8	3.8 %
Remainder- including road right-of-ways	119	48.5	23.7%
Total	520	210	100%

* Parks are areas designated (not zoned) as City of Nanaimo Parkland

Departure Bay Developed & Vacant Lots



1.6 PLANNING IN THE REGION

The Regional District of Nanaimo's (RDN) Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) provides strategic guidance to community planning in the Nanaimo area. According to the RGS, community planning should consider:

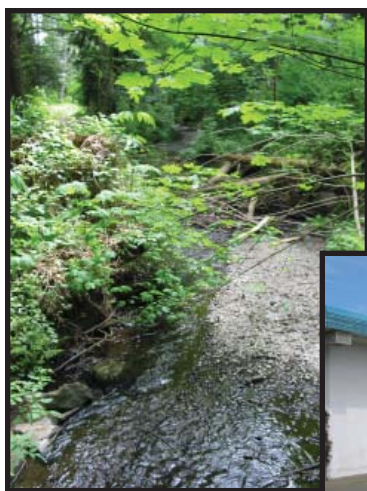
- vibrant communities and quality residential development;
- a strong and sustainable economy;
- contained urban development;
- reduced dependency on the automobile;
- high standards of environmental protection that preserves habitat, enhances ecological diversity, and maintains air and water quality; and
- efficient resource use and infrastructure.

These priorities can be used as measures to ensure that community-level planning is consistent with the broader vision of sustainable regional planning in the Regional District of Nanaimo.

1.7 PLANNING IN NANAIMO

Plan Nanaimo (1996) is the Official Community Plan for Nanaimo. It has five main goals:

1. Build complete, viable communities.
2. Protect the environment.
3. Manage urban growth.
4. Improve mobility and improve servicing efficiency.
5. Ongoing planning and community involvement.



Plan Nanaimo identifies neighbourhood planning as integral to the development of the city. The mandate for neighbourhood planning is described in Goal 5 of *Plan Nanaimo*, which states that neighbourhood plans will respond to both the needs of the neighbourhood and the needs of the community.

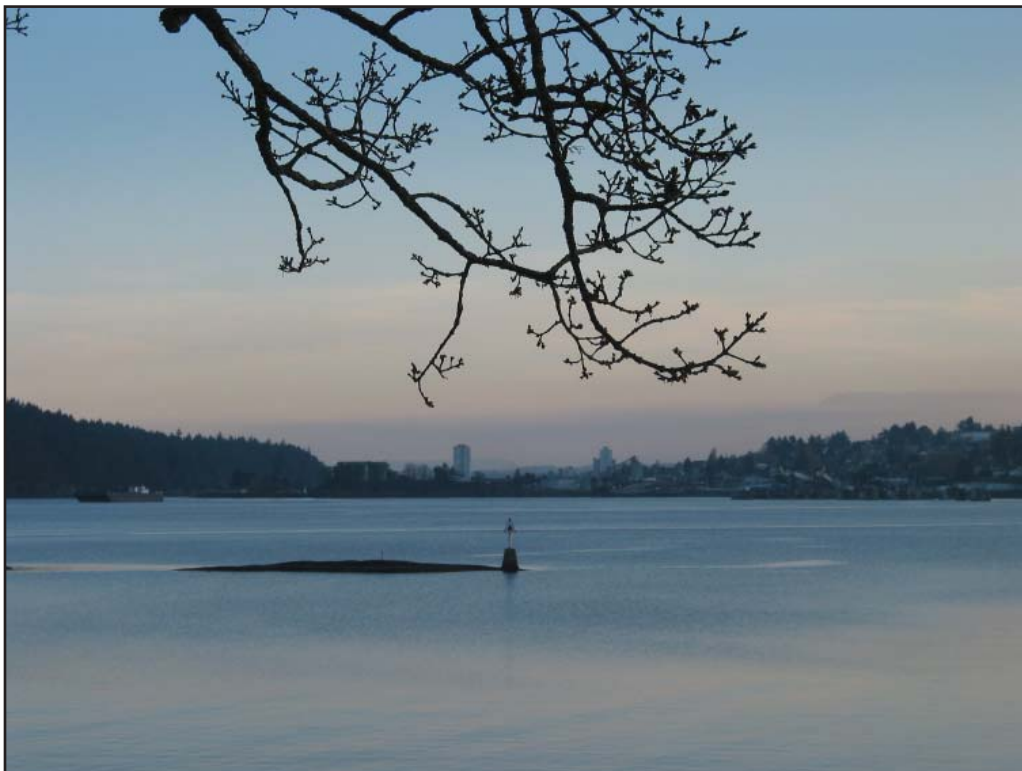
photos, left to right:
Departure Creek, Kin Hut, Woodstream Park.

1.8 PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

This plan provides both an opportunity for the Departure Bay neighbourhood to articulate its vision for Departure Bay to the City of Nanaimo, as well as an opportunity for the City to raise neighbourhood awareness about *Plan Nanaimo* and the wider context of neighbourhood planning in Nanaimo.

The purpose of this plan is to address neighbourhood issues and opportunities that were identified by residents and other stakeholders throughout the planning process, while working within the context of *Plan Nanaimo*. The plan identifies areas of common concern, articulates the community's vision for change, and provides guidelines for new developments. The over-arching goal is to provide direction to the City of Nanaimo that will help guide capital funding allocations, development permit approvals, and amenity enhancements in the plan area.

This plan identifies Departure Bay's unique features, demonstrates a community vision for Departure Bay's future, and sets a course forward for planning in the neighbourhood. Because of time limitations, the plan is oriented toward achieving clear results through action. It is an "issue based neighbourhood plan", which is a plan that is conducted over a relatively short time, focusing on a limited range of issues. While the plan focuses on the waterfront and commercial district of the Departure Bay neighbourhood, the plan also provides policies and actions for the entire plan area.



Departure Bay at Dusk

2. THE PROCESS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

2.1 PLAN INITIATION

Two years ago, an innovative partnership was formed between the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and the City of Nanaimo. Over the 2004/2005 academic year, NeighbourWorks Planning Consultants, a group of graduate planning students, examined the neighbourhood planning process in the City of Nanaimo with the aim of creating a new neighbourhood planning framework for the City.

The initial impetus for the Departure Bay neighbourhood plan came from the Departure Bay Neighbourhood Association (DBNA). The DBNA did a preliminary issue identification survey of Departure Bay before the planning process and, in Spring 2005, made a request to the City of Nanaimo for a neighbourhood planning process to be initiated in the neighbourhood. The City of Nanaimo then created the opportunity for another UBC SCARP student team to facilitate the process.

Over the 2005/2006 academic year, a UBC student planning team formed inVision Planning Group, and worked to implement the NeighbourWorks framework by collaborating with City staff, the Departure Bay Neighbourhood Plan Working Group, and the wider community to deliver an issue based neighbourhood plan for the Departure Bay neighbourhood. The official neighbourhood planning process was initiated in September 2005. The plan timeline and scope of public consultation is detailed below.

2.2 DEPARTURE BAY NEIGHBOURHOOD SITE VISIT

The planning process was launched on September 22, 2005 with an initial meeting between inVision Planning, the City of Nanaimo and the Departure Bay Neighbourhood Association. This meeting consisted of a walking tour of Departure Bay, an introduction to the issues identified as important to the DBNA, and the development of outreach strategies including the formation of a steering committee or working group.



Scene from the Open House at the Kin Hut, attended by over 150 community members.

Following this site visit, a steering committee of 12 residents and stakeholders was formed as the Working Group. The Working Group includes diverse representation from the local community, including DBNA members, youth, the Snuneymuxw First Nation, a local retailer, and staff from the City of Nanaimo. The Working Group helped guide the work of inVision Planning to create the neighbourhood plan.

2.3 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN OPEN HOUSE

The October 12th Open House was the first opportunity for the wider community to take part in the planning process. The open house was promoted through newspaper ads, flyers, television interviews, the City of Nanaimo's website, and through the DBNA's network.

On display at the event were posters depicting the neighbourhood, as well as information about *Plan Nanaimo*, neighbourhood planning, and the timeline of the process. Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire about potential areas of concern for the neighbourhood. Flip charts were also available for feedback, with inVision members facilitating public participation in the process.

2.4 ISSUES PLANNING MEETING

The first meeting between inVision Planning and the newly formed Working Group was held on November 17, 2005. At this meeting, inVision presented a summary and analysis of the public input received at the Open House, along with a draft vision statement based on this input. The draft was slightly modified, then accepted by the DBWG and, later, presented to the larger community.

The issues identified as most important to the Departure Bay community were (in order of importance):

1. Environment
2. Recreation
3. Parking, Safety and Traffic Calming
4. Development and Redevelopment

These issues provided a framework which guided the work of the Working Group and inVision throughout the remainder of the planning process.



Facilitated group discussion at the Community Solutions Workshop.

2.5 COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS WORKSHOP

A Community Solutions Workshop was held on December 17, 2005, a weekday evening and was open to the general public. The workshop was promoted through newspaper ads, flyers, television interviews, the City of Nanaimo's website, through the Departure Bay Neighbourhood Association's network, and by way of a general mail-out to Departure Bay residents.

The goal of the workshop was to obtain detailed information from the community on concerns brought up at the Issue Identification Open House, and to start working toward possible solutions. The participants were assigned to four large groups, and, within these groups, divided into smaller groups for easier discussion, with a maximum of ten people per discussion group. The planning team provided each large group with an extensive amount of visual and printed information on the community's issues and concerns. City staff and employees from the Regional District of Nanaimo were also present to provide technical information on the issues.



It was vitally important that all community participants had the information they needed to discuss viable future scenarios for the neighbourhood. Each large group addressed the four main topics at staggered intervals so that technical experts for each issue could provide information to all participants. Technical experts, members of the Working Group, and inVision Planning members all acted as facilitators on this evening. The workshop was very successful. Over 120 community members participated and their input and ideas were central to the design and content of the plan.



On the right: architects and Working Group members discuss design ideas for Departure Bay.

2.6 DESIGN WORKSHOP

Held on February 3, 2006, the Design Workshop was a day-long session where the Departure Bay Working Group and inVision Planning had the opportunity to work with architects, planners, landscape architects, community members and developers to visually depict different design scenarios for the Departure Bay Village Core.

The participants envisioned design strategies for improving pedestrian connectivity, parking and open space at the waterfront, the commercial area, and redevelopment of the Kin Hut. Some of these ideas were recorded in drawings while others were described in words only. Participants also discussed the creation of a set of design guidelines specifically for the Departure Bay Village Core.



Thinking through the options: an image from the second Open House.

2.7 DEPARTURE BAY NEIGHBOURHOOD OPTIONS OPEN HOUSE

A day-long Open House took place at the Departure Bay Elementary School on Saturday, February 25, 2006. It was promoted in the same manner as previous open houses. Over 200 people attended throughout the day.

The Open House was designed to obtain the public's feedback on some of the specific policy options that had been generated through the planning process. The drawings and ideas that resulted from the design workshop were also on display for general feedback.

Two questionnaires were distributed to get detailed input from community members. The first asked the public for their preferred options for those aspects of the plan that required clarification or further input. The second addressed the plan's proposed design guidelines. Copies of the full draft plan were also available for people to provide comment on. The results of these questionnaires have been integrated into the plan.

2.8 DEPARTURE BAY YOUTH WORKSHOP



Students identifying important features of the Departure Bay community.

Representatives from the City of Nanaimo, the Departure Bay Working Group, and inVision Planning led two outreach sessions on March 3, 2006 with Wellington High School students about the Departure Bay Neighbourhood Plan.

The sessions took place during a grade 11 Social Studies class and a grade 12 Law class. The workshop consisted of a mock open house and group discussions. During the open house, the students identified community amenities on aerial maps, located their school and prominent community features on a 3-D model, and explored the issues represented on some of the information panels. During the discussion, the students addressed topics of concern to youth and gave suggestions as to how to remedy neighbourhood issues.

On the whole, the students' concerns mirrored those of the general community. Their input and enthusiasm indicated support for involvement in future planning process (see recommendation 4.4.4 (1). For more information on this process, see Appendix C.

2.9 PRESENTATION OF THE FINAL PLAN TO THE COMMUNITY

In late April 2006, all residents of the Departure Bay Neighbourhood Plan area received a newspaper insert in their copy of the Nanaimo Bulletin newspaper which listed all the objectives and actions of the neighbourhood plan. The insert also included three scenarios for the village core area, which offered varying levels of development for mixed uses (commercial and multiple family residential) along Departure Bay Road and Wingrove Street and multiple family residential in the immediately adjacent area (along Elk and Bay Streets primarily). Residents were invited to attend the final presentation of the plan and to provide feedback on the three possible scenarios for the village core.

On April 27, 2006, the inVision Planning team presented the final plan at a public meeting in Departure Bay Elementary School gym which was attended by over 50 members of the public. City staff explained the three scenarios in greater detail and asked those in attendance to select their preferred option. Most participants completed the ballots provided to obtain feedback on the scenarios (other were mailed in by those who could not attend). Overall, the presentation was a low-key affair with discussion centering on points of clarification and thanks to all participants.

3. PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Early on in the planning process, a vision for the Departure Bay neighbourhood was identified: *to preserve and enhance the existing sense of community, unique neighbourhood character, natural beauty, environmental quality, and accessibility of the area.*

The following objectives and actions are intended to make this vision a reality. The “objectives” are broad-level goals that the community wishes to work towards. The “actions” are concrete, specific tasks or projects that can be taken to realize the goals. The objectives and actions are organized according to the four themes identified in the planning process – the Environment; Parking, Safety and Traffic Calming; Development and Redevelopment; and Recreation.

The following objectives and actions address a broad array of issues identified by the community. These are issues that were identified in the first open house, as well as issues brought up throughout the planning process. At each step of the way, the issues and concerns were brought back to the community in order to ensure that the planning was staying on track, and that the priority issues were being kept in focus. These include: the maintenance and enhancement of the beach area and the parks; the protection of views of the bay; the enrichment of neighbourhood character through building design; traffic safety and calming in areas of high pedestrian traffic; and the continuation of recreational opportunities. Also addressed are the health, integrity, and enjoyment of the area’s natural environment through preserving and rejuvenating the landscape.



Brandon & Jesse Islands

PLAN OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

3.1 ENVIRONMENT



Courtesy of Nanaimo Community Archives

From Sugarloaf Park (circa 1900)

The Departure Bay neighbourhood is located in the Coastal Douglas fir biogeoclimatic zone with representation of a range of ecosystems listed in the British Columbia Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory. Historically, the north slopes of the Departure Bay landscape accommodated a Garry oak and arbutus woodland ecosystem typical of the area. This can be seen today in the mature forest of Sugarloaf Mountain. Douglas firs, western red cedar, maple, and coastal hemlock can be found in the riparian ecosystems of Woodstream Park, Wardropper Park, and in remnant stands of mature trees on privately-owned land. The lowlands of Departure Bay are also characterized by wetland ecosystems.

In a questionnaire conducted as part of the Departure Bay Neighbourhood Planning process, the community indicated the Environment as the most important overall issue. Of specific concern is maintaining water quality to ensure the beachfront swimming area remains safe and usable. Protecting wildlife and marine habitat along the coast and creeks is also a common concern, as is the beautification of the neighbourhood through landscaping and infrastructure improvements.

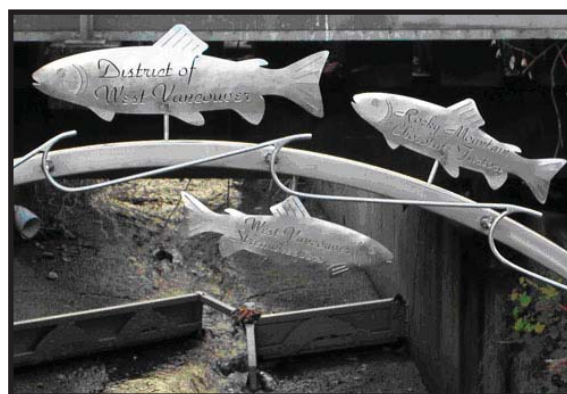
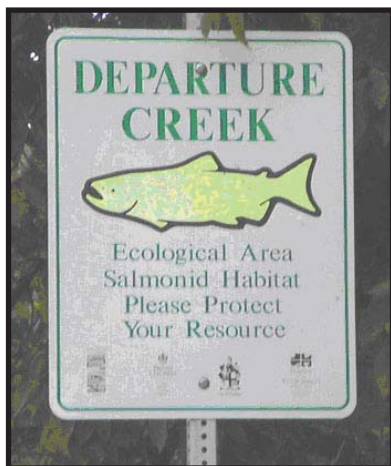
In current planning practices, environmental impact assessments are performed for development in environmentally sensitive areas of the neighbourhood. Departure Bay includes a watercourse/development permit area, which requires an environmental assessment before any development can take place adjacent to watercourses (see Plan Nanaimo 8.2.7 and schedule B).

3.1.1 *Objective: Support a safe and healthy environment for wildlife within the neighbourhood.*

ACTIONS:

1. Provide technical assistance and ongoing communications with the Shorekeepers and Streamkeepers in the Departure Bay neighbourhood to preserve and enhance existing wildlife habitat.
2. Work with the DBNA Traffic Committee to locate appropriate areas to place deer crossing signs (see the Engineering Department's "Traffic and Highway Installation Guideline #18").
3. Encourage a pesticide and herbicide free neighbourhood through education, signage and policy development (see Parks Department's Integrated Pest Management Plan).

3.1.2 *Objective: Maintain and enhance the ecological health of parks and creeks in the neighbourhood, including Wardropper and Woodstream Park.*



Above left: sign in Departure Bay educating the public about the importance of stream conservation.

Above right: West Vancouver takes an artistic approach to the same problem.

ACTIONS:

1. Ensure the planting and maintenance of sustainable landscape plants in all landscaping features, giving priority to indigenous plants where appropriate.
2. Following the preference of the majority of Departure Bay residents, it is recommended that the City refrain from using palm trees in public landscaping features or parkland.
3. Work with residents of Departure Bay to participate in the City's Invasive Species Program to remove invasive plants in park areas.
4. Create educational interpretative signs on the natural history of the area and locate signage in appropriate areas of parks, along trail routes, and other ecological sensitive areas.
5. Use permeable trail surfaces (or other ecologically appropriate alternatives) where suitable to minimize erosion and improve the absorption of excess

water (see “Trail Master Plan, City of Nanaimo”).

6. Support the creation of a household educational program for residents of Departure Bay about the environmental impacts of contaminated storm water on the creeks and the bay.
7. Explore options to improve storm water quality and reduce peak flows.
8. Enhance waterways and improve fish habitat to restore Departure Creek to a fish bearing stream.
9. Work with private landowners to restore and beautify Departure Creek behind properties at 2865 and 2875 Departure Bay Road.

3.1.3. *Objective: Maintain and enhance the ecology of the Departure Bay waterfront as habitat for local and migrating wildlife, while providing long-term benefits to residents and other beach users.*

ACTIONS:

1. Work in partnership with the Snuneymuxw First Nation and various stakeholders (such as the Pacific Biological Station) to fund an assessment of the water quality of Departure Bay, determine a baseline of water quality, and address potential pollutants into the bay.
2. Review current bylaws and improve impact assessments to ensure foreshore development does not negatively impact water circulation or water quality in the bay.
3. Consider the work of the Departure Bay Shorekeepers in environmental assessments.
4. Investigate options for managing geese populations in an ecologically sensitive manner.

3.2 TRAFFIC, SAFETY & PARKING



Departure Bay Road and adjacent waterfront parking

The Departure Bay neighbourhood is situated along one of the city's key north-south traffic routes. It is also located next to one of the few accessible ocean beaches in Nanaimo. Traffic, parking and safety were identified early on in the neighbourhood planning process as important issues to be addressed.

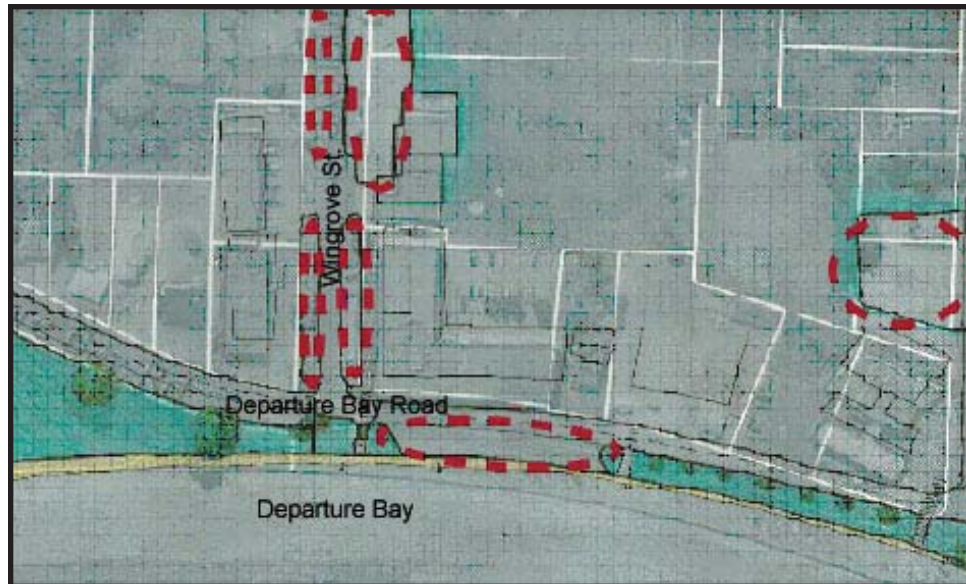
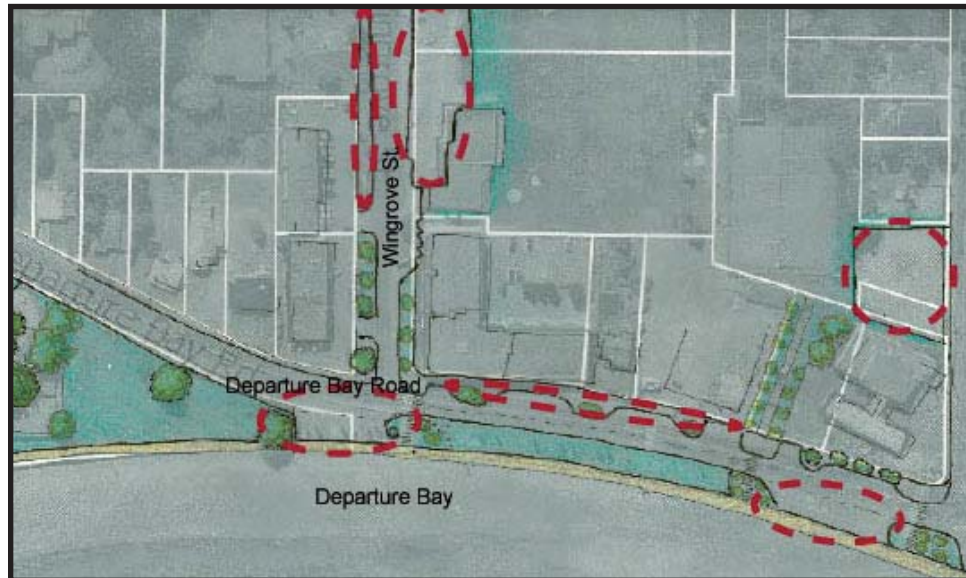
Departure Bay Road, which separates most of the neighbourhood's residential and commercial locations from the waterfront, is identified in *Plan Nanaimo* as a major arterial. The primary purpose of arterials is to allow the easy movement of vehicles through the city. At the same time, residents of the neighbourhood and the broader Nanaimo community want to be able to enjoy the natural beauty of Departure Bay. These options seek to protect and enhance the livability and recreational nature of the neighbourhood, while balancing the concerns of transit to and through Departure Bay.

3.2.1. Objective: Provide adequate parking for beach users while maintaining and enhancing the quality of open space available for recreation.

ACTIONS:

1. Work with the Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture and the Engineering Department to create a joint strategy for roads, parking, parks and open space along the beachfront.
2. Ensure adequate waterfront parking remains for winter enjoyment of the beach as well as providing space for handicapped and a pedestrian drop-off zone.
3. Enhance the reclaimed parking space with landscaping and designate it as a recreational area.

3.2.2 Objective: Maintain and improve existing parking in the area while balancing the parking needs of residents and visitors.



The sketches above indicate how the waterfront might look with some parking removed. The dotted lines indicate where parking may be relocated. The modification of waterfront parking in order to expand the recreational area received public support at the February 25th Open House.

ACTIONS:

1. Create signage for existing parking in the neighbourhood, including parking at the Activity Center, at Kin Hut, and at the Lacrosse Box.
2. Designate overflow parking areas for large community events.
3. Improve the use of existing parking at the Centennial Park tennis courts by re-surfacing the parking lot and painting parking stall lines. Investigate new technology to mitigate pollution run-off.

3.2.3 Objective: Ensure maximum pedestrian accessibility and safety while balancing the need to ensure traffic flow through Departure Bay.

ACTIONS:

1. Implement appropriate traffic calming devices on Bay Street and other neighbourhood streets where there is an identified safety issue. Such measures could include curb extensions, lower speed limits, and more signage.
2. Implement pedestrian safety on Departure Bay Road by providing a pedestrian activated crosswalk with flashing lights.
3. In consultation with neighbourhood residents, explore the long-term goal of rerouting traffic away from the waterfront.
4. Ensure that vegetation along roadsides is maintained, so as to improve traffic sightlines.
5. Review the location of signs and crosswalks along Bay Street to help ensure safe pedestrian connectivity with Departure Bay Elementary School.
6. Work with the Departure Bay Neighbourhood Association Traffic Committee to determine priorities for sidewalks in the neighbourhood, first considering Departure Bay Road and Bay Street, then Wingrove Street, Hammond Bay Road and Loat Street.
7. Where feasible, consider sidewalks on one side of the street and a low impact trail way on the other side so as to mitigate the impacts of new sidewalks on the ecological integrity of the area (see "Trail Master Plan, City of Nanaimo").
8. Work with developer to create a pathway connecting Centennial Park to the beachfront area through the new mid-block development at 2855 Departure Bay Road.

3.2.4 Objective: Promote and enhance alternative transportation options, including cycling and transit.

ACTIONS:

1. Ensure connectivity of bike facilities and routes throughout the neighbourhood and to the rest of Nanaimo.
2. Place adequate signage and stencils to increase driver awareness of cyclists (see Cycling Guidelines 2002).
3. Provide appropriate bike facilities on roads with high traffic volumes such as Departure Bay Road and Hammond Bay Road to ensure the safety of cyclists.
4. Place bike racks in all public use areas including the beach area, the Activity Centre, and at Kin Hut.
5. Place signs at bus stops to indicate routes and schedules.
6. Add shelters and benches at bus stops where lacking.
7. Ensure existing shelters and benches are maintained.
8. Work with community members and RDN Transit to identify how transit routes can be improved so as to better address neighbourhood transit needs.

3.3 DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT



Commercial Development on Wingrove Street

Due in part to its residential character, beautiful natural setting and splendid views across the water, Departure Bay is considered by many to be the “Jewel of Nanaimo.” Because it is such an attractive place to live, Departure Bay faces development pressures that could affect its future livability.

Departure Bay forms a natural bowl that offers many residents spectacular views of the bay. Due to the low rise nature of past development most residents have enjoyed unrestricted views of the bay. Protection of existing views as redevelopment occurs is an important consideration for many residents.

With this in mind future development that takes steps to minimize impacts on existing views will generally be looked upon more favorably by the community than developments that ignore these concerns. Appropriate consideration could involve building orientation and form, building height, and careful site selection, using existing topography as a means of minimizing view impacts.

The actions presented in this section seek to ensure that future growth contributes to, rather than hinders, the quality of life and character of Departure Bay. In particular, they attempt to address issues related to the establishment of design guidelines to enhance neighbourhood character, the creation of a village core that reflects the uniqueness of the area, and the management of future residential development.

Land Use/Density Policies for “Neighbourhood” Designated Areas

A majority of the objectives and actions of this plan focus on the Village Core and beachfront. However, the geographic boundary of the plan includes a significant area to the north, south and west of the Village Core and beachfront, comprised primarily of single-family residential housing with the occasional small and medium-sized multiple-family residential housing development. This area is designated as “Neighbourhood” under the Official Community Plan (OCP) and is subject to a series of objectives and policies designed to achieve the OCP’s five primary goals. Particularly relevant to this area is Goal One – “Building Complete, Viable Communities” and Goal Three – “Manage Urban Growth”.

Growth Management Strategy for Nanaimo

Nanaimo’s growth management strategy is straight forward. The OCP sets the stage to develop and infill existing areas now serviced and zoned prior to any development outside the Urban Containment Boundary. This is best illustrated by the nodal form of development emphasized in the OCP. For example, the highest residential density in the Departure Bay plan area (50 units per hectare) is reserved for the Departure Bay Village Core. However, the OCP also permits dispersed, small multiple family enclaves (25 units per hectare) to exist in the “neighbourhood” designated areas surrounding the core. This ensures over time a balance of housing form and residential density throughout the plan area.

Focusing development inward will, over the long term, create a more compact, livable and efficient city - the kind of city envisioned through the *Plan Nanaimo* process completed in the early 1990s and encapsulated in the OCP. This makes sense from a long-term planning perspective; it also makes economic sense as servicing costs are reduced.

Nanaimo is presently a very low density city. In its developed portion, on average fewer than 12 people live on every hectare (2.2 acres) of land. That is an average density equivalent to about four dwellings per hectare of land (or just a little less than two dwellings per acre). The average residential density for the Departure Bay plan area is slightly higher at 8.6 dwellings per hectare (or 3.5 dwellings per acre). The existing housing mix within the plan area is 63% single family residential, 19% semi-detached/duplex/row housing, and 17% apartment (based on 2001 Census).

This low density has been mostly the result of “patch work” development patterns throughout the city, where development has occurred on some zoned land and not on others. Some of this undeveloped land is still in large blocks, but most of it is in small infill parcels scattered throughout the existing neighbourhoods. Currently there are 46 undeveloped lots of varying size in the Departure Bay planning area.

The Official Community Plan currently contains a clear set of objectives for “Neighbourhood” designated land, with a corresponding series of policies designed to realize these objectives over time. The objectives and policies can be found in Appendix C.

3.3.1 Objective: Preserve and enhance the character of Departure Bay through sustainable development, design guidelines and view protection.

ACTIONS:

1. Encourage the use of a “Sustainability Checklist” such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards for commercial and institutional buildings⁶ to ensure that social, environmental and economic impacts of development are addressed.
2. Adopt neighbourhood-specific “Departure Bay Design Guidelines” for new developments on private and public land in the village core of Departure Bay (see Appendix A)
3. Review and update existing commercial zoning regulations to ensure compatibility with Departure Bay Design Guidelines.
4. Consider a diversity of view protection methods to help retain both public and private views.
5. Create gateway markers defining the borders of Departure Bay neighbourhood.

3.3.2 Objective: To support a local commercial centre that maintains the neighbourhood character.

ACTIONS:

1. To maintain the character of the Departure Bay neighbourhood, it is recommended that Departure Bay’s Growth Centre be downgraded from its present “Neighbourhood Village” designation in the OCP to a customized growth centre designation called “Departure Bay Village Core” which designates future land use as follows:

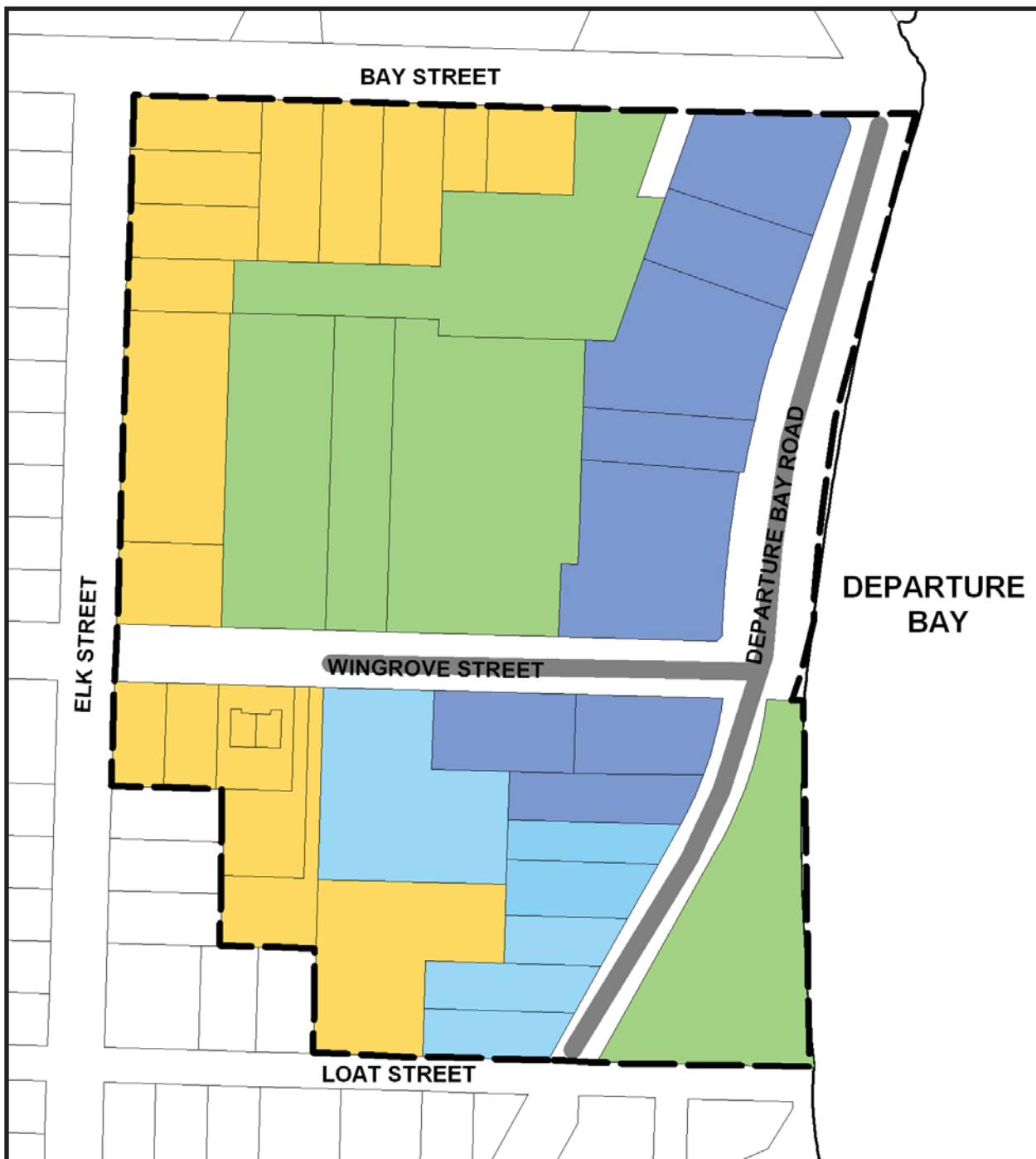
⁶ A sustainability checklist outlines some of the criteria necessary to foster socially, ecologically and economically viable development. It is intended to be a tool to help the community assess the benefits and impacts of any given development as well as a tool to help developers understand community expectations.

The LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System® is a voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings. LEED provides a complete framework for assessing building performance and meeting sustainability goals. Based on well-founded scientific standards, LEED emphasizes state of the art strategies for sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality.

For an example of a LEED checklist, based on the LEED-NC Version 2.2 Rating System which could be used in Departure Bay, visit the Canada Green Building Council web site at www.cagbc.org.

Map A

Departure Bay Village Core Land Use

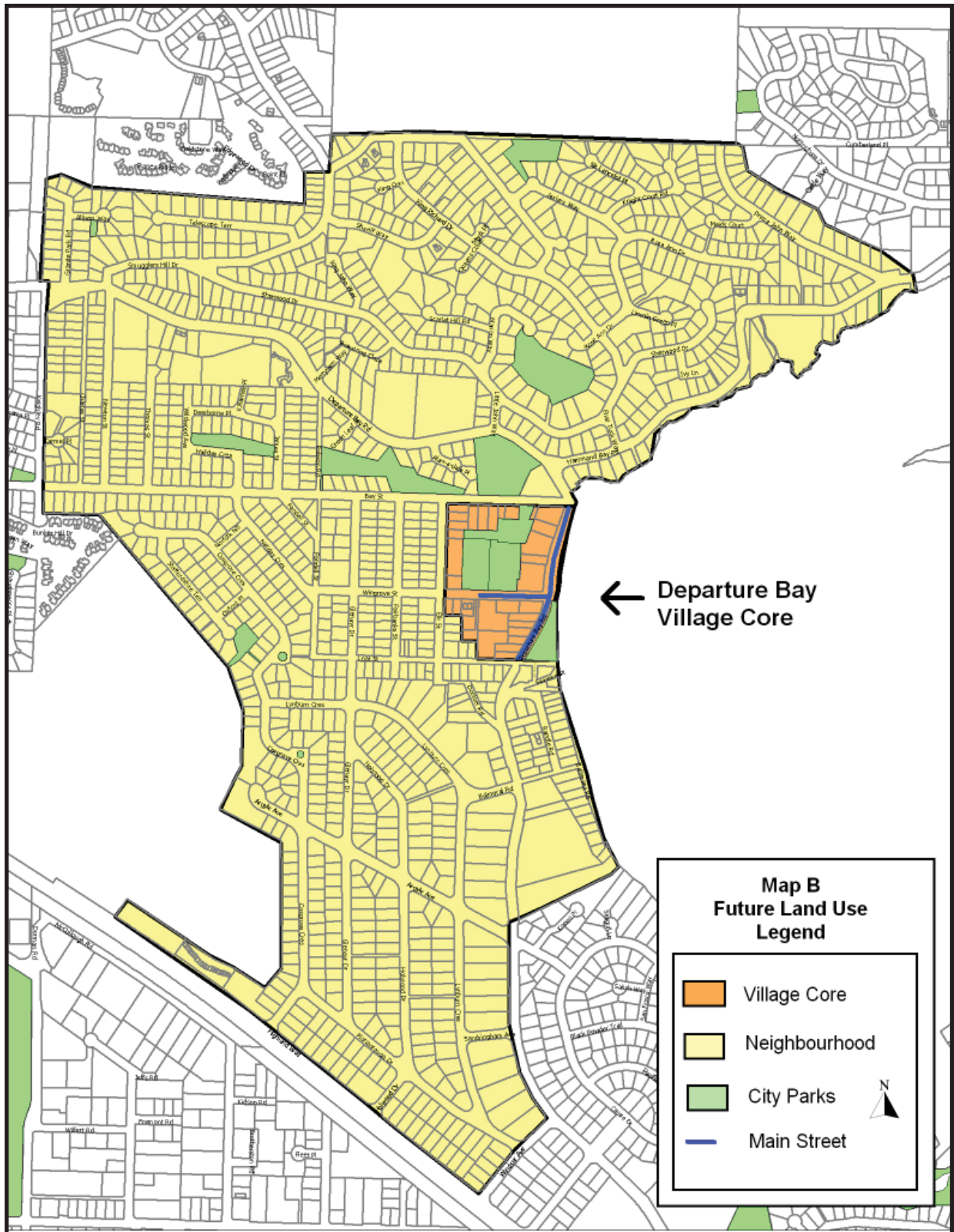


Map A Village Core Land Use Legend

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
|  3-Storey Mixed Use
(Commercial/Multi-family) |  2-Storey Multi-Family
Residential |  Main Street |  |
|  2-Storey Mixed Use
(Commercial/Multi-family) |  City Park |  Village Core Boundary | |

Map B

Departure Bay Neighbourhood Planning Area Future Land Use



2. Encourage small-scale, mixed-use development that will provide locally-appropriate retail and basic community services.
3. Development in the Village Core should seek to create mainstreet patterns that emphasize street-fronting commercial forms that are suited to pedestrian and transit access.
4. Increase public amenities and meeting areas along Wingrove Street, Departure Bay Road, and at the waterfront by providing benches and seating areas, courtyards, picnic tables, lighting, community notice boards, hanging baskets, banners and public art.



On the left are two images from Wingrove St., Departure Bay. On the right are images from a local commercial centre at Deep Cove, in the District of North Vancouver.



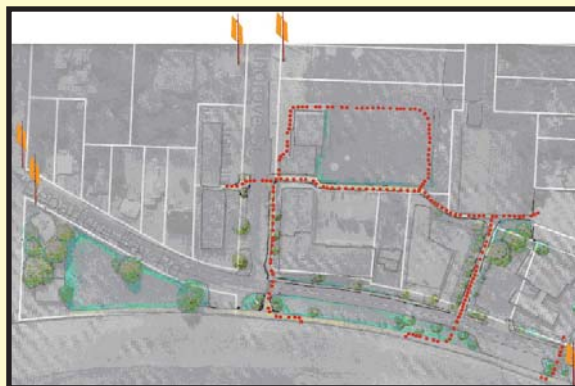
3.3.3 Objective: Manage future residential development in the plan area surrounding the Departure Bay Village Core.

ACTIONS:

1. Ensure that residential development in “Neighbourhood” designated areas continues to be regulated through the policies of the Official Community Plan.
2. Review density targets for “Neighbourhoods” during the OCP Ten Year Review to determine whether the target levels are appropriate from a neighbourhood character perspective.
3. Limit building height for multiple family dwellings located outside the Departure Bay Village Core to two storeys.

Creating a Sense of Place in Departure Bay

Departure Bay is characterized by its waterfront, parks, and strong sense of community. However, many residents have commented that it lacks a centre or focal point to bring people together. Small shops, cafés, and restaurants could serve as meeting points in the area, helping to create focus or “sense of place” in the neighbourhood. Several urban design initiatives could also be used to “define” the neighbourhood and connect its diverse elements.



In the above illustration, the dotted lines represent improved pedestrian connections, while the banners represent gateways to the neighbourhood.

Definition

The use of “visual cues” can help define Departure Bay’s Village Core as a distinctive area. They provide hints to drivers to slow down and indicate where there is parking; they suggest to people where they should shop, walk, cross the street, and gather. The waterfront and Village Core areas could be better defined by:

- Gateways entering the neighbourhood let people know they are entering a special place. Totems or street banners could be used along Departure Bay Road and Wingrove Street at Elk Road.
- Increased greening, landscaping and sidewalks along Departure Bay Road and Wingrove Street.
- Public art and architectural treatments that reflect the culture and history of Departure Bay.
- Building form that shapes and contributes to the streetscape.
- Benches and other seating areas that allow for people to congregate.

Connectivity

The Village Core and waterfront area of Departure Bay could be enhanced by linking the area’s distinct public spaces. Pedestrian routes throughout the neighbourhood would allow for accessibility to the waterfront, parks, new commercial sites, as well as parking areas. Connectivity could be highlighted in Departure Bay with the addition of:

- A pedestrian corridor from the waterfront to Centennial Park, either between 2835 and 2855 Departure Bay Road, or through 2865/2875 Departure Bay Road.
- A pedestrian corridor from Bay Street to Wingrove Street through Centennial Park.
- A crosswalk from the beach area to Wingrove Street and from the beach area to the Centennial Park pathway.

In addition to improving connectivity within the neighbourhood, Departure Bay’s connections with the rest of the city could also be improved. An extension of the City’s waterfront walkway from downtown to Departure Bay could serve this function. While the walkway has been postponed for the time being due to legal constraints, this planning process confirms the Departure Bay community’s desire to see this project completed.

3.4 RECREATION



Catching Crabs in Departure Bay - Photo by Kelly Franklin.

The ocean-side location, parks, and trails of Departure Bay make it a popular recreational destination for residents of the neighbourhood and the greater Nanaimo community. The Departure Bay beach is one of Nanaimo's few public ocean beachfronts and, as such, was identified by the neighbourhood as an area needing to balance functional and aesthetic improvements while maintaining the area's natural character.

Overall, there was a desire among the Departure Bay community to increase the accessibility, beauty and safety of the beach, trails, and parks, while at the same time respecting the ecological integrity of these areas. Pedestrian-oriented activities are a priority, including new walking opportunities and the enhancement of existing ones. In addition to issues related to outdoor recreation, there was a desire within the neighbourhood to see improvements to the two existing indoor facilities in Departure Bay — the Departure Bay Activity Centre and the Kin Hut. Departure Bay is a demographically diverse neighbourhood and, as such, it requires a diversity of both indoor and outdoor recreational activities to meet the needs of the neighbourhood.

3.4.1 Objective: Maintain, enhance, and improve the Departure Bay beach area for recreational activities.

ACTIONS:

1. Expand waterfront facilities to include improved changing rooms and better maintained toilets and showers (including lighting).
2. Work with the Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture to enhance outdoor eating facilities while protecting open space (i.e. more sheltered picnic tables).
3. Work with neighbourhood groups, such as DBNA's "Graffiti, Litter and Debris Removal" and Shorekeepers, and local residents to ensure a clean beach through regular maintenance and upkeep.
4. Work with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) to determine the feasibility and ecological impacts of expanding the beach area by adding sand to the foreshore; if feasible, enlarge beach area by adding sand in front of Kin Hut and along the beach.
5. Designate an area with signage for a kayak launch, with a temporary parking stall for unloading.
6. To maintain the character of the Departure Bay neighbourhood, the community opposes the creation of a "dive pier" development.

3.4.2 Objective: Improve walking opportunities in Departure Bay and ensure safe and pleasant pedestrian use of recreational areas.

ACTIONS:

1. Create and locate trailway maps at appropriate locations in parks and along trail routes.
2. Place signage in parks to indicate what appropriate non-motorized transportation is permitted.
3. Improve the accessibility of the existing beachfront walkway by decreasing the current cross slope, and improve access to the beach by upgrading the steps and railing from the walkway to beach.
4. Improve beachfront walkway lighting.
5. Support the City's long-range vision to extend and connect trailways throughout Nanaimo including the installation of a walkway from downtown to Departure Bay, while respecting ecological concerns and addressing riparian rights (see "Trail Master Plan, City of Nanaimo").
6. Designate a pedestrian connection from the Departure Bay neighbourhood to Linley Valley along existing routes.
7. Improve the safety and accessibility of trails in Woodstream and Wardropper Parks by adding benches, stairs, railings, and improving trail surfaces where needed.
8. Create pedestrian access to the beach via the Balmoral Street right-of-way.
9. Enhance the connectivity of recreational and retail areas by creating a north-

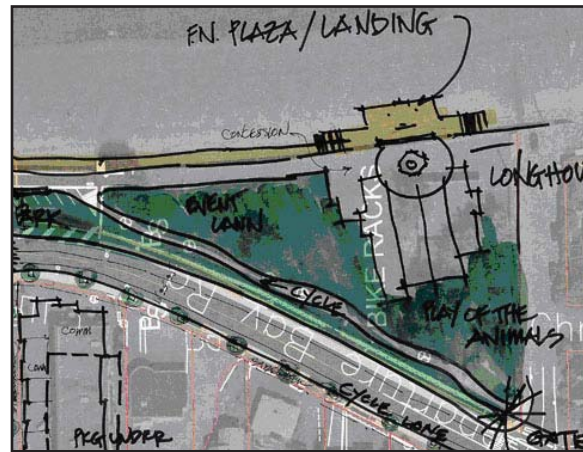
south path between Bay and Wingrove Streets through Centennial Park.

10. Develop a park plan for Wardropper Park in consultation with the community.

3.4.3 Objective: Ensure Departure Bay beach, parks, and indoor facilities continue to accommodate a variety of recreational activities.

ACTIONS:

1. Form a partnership with Snuneymuxw First Nation, the Kinsmen Association, the Departure Bay Shorekeepers, and Departure Bay residents to create a plan for the redevelopment of the Kin Hut and adjoining park area into a community centre and educational enviro-centre that is open to all and honours First Nations historic presence in the area.
2. Staff the beach and Kin Hut Park area to provide increased opportunities for organized recreation.
3. Work with Department of Parks, Recreation, and Culture, community members, and the private sector to retro-fit the Activity Centre to create a space capable of supporting a more diverse array of activities, including simultaneous multiple uses. The renovation should include an additional games/meeting room.
4. Increase infrastructure for outdoor sports activities and recreation.
5. Provide better information and signage about existing programming and activity infrastructure, such as the lacrosse box, the tennis courts, and the water park.



Above: Quick sketch of multi-use environmental and cultural interpretive centre developed during the February Design Workshop.

3.4.4 Objective: Improve and enhance the recreational opportunities for youth in Departure Bay.

ACTIONS:

1. Work with neighbourhood youth to program existing community facilities in order to meet the needs of youth.
2. Improve children's play areas by either expanding the existing area in Centennial Park or creating a new play area elsewhere.

3.4.5 Objective: Provide sufficient amenities and monitoring in park areas to ensure safe and enjoyable use by all.

ACTIONS:

1. Improve lighting at Kin Hut, the adjacent grassy area, and the beach area for safety at night.
2. Promote safety and crime prevention in parks and on trails, including Woodstream Park, Wardropper Park, Kin Hut Park and Centennial Park, using appropriate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.⁷
3. Reduce illegal activities through increased community monitoring and policing, especially at night.
4. Work with the Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture and residents to develop enhanced programming for Wardropper Park.
5. Develop a new landscape plan for Kin Hut Park in consultation with the community.

⁷ CPTED has as its basic premise that the proper design and effective use of the physical environment can lead to a reduction in the incidence and fear of crime, thereby improving the quality of life. See <http://www.cpted.net/home.html>

4. ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

DEPARTURE BAY ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan table outlines the implementation schedule for each action item in the plan. The table identifies an action item and the City department, First Nation, and/or community organization responsible for its implementation. The recommended time frame is also identified. The items are organized according to their place in the plan, either within the Environment; Traffic, Parking and Safety; Development and Redevelopment; or Recreation section.

“Timeline” refers to the time needed to implement an action item. “Short” term items should happen within 0-5 years, “Medium” term items should be addressed within 5-10 years, and “Long” should aim at a 10-15 year timeframe. “Ongoing” refers to items that need to be continually maintained.

“Resources” (Res) refers to the costs associated with each item. “\$” suggests that costs will be minimal, mostly staff time; “\$\$” represents moderate expenditure of staff time and materials; and “\$\$\$” suggests that significant funds will be required.

4.1 ENVIRONMENT

4.1.1 *Objective: Support a safe and healthy environment for wildlife within the neighbourhood.*

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Res
1. Provide technical assistance to Shorekeepers and Streamkeepers.	Parks Dept./ Environmental Planning	Short/ Ongoing	\$
2. Locate and place deer crossing signs.	DBNA Traffic Committee/ Public Works	Medium	\$
3. Encourage a pesticide and herbicide free neighbourhood.	Streamkeepers/ Volunteers / Parks Dept./ Environmental Planning	Short/ Ongoing	\$\$

4.1.2 *Objective: Maintain and enhance the ecological health of parks and creeks in the neighbourhood, including Wardropper and Woodstream Park.*

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Res
1. Plant and maintain sustainable landscape plants in all landscaping features.	Parks Dept.	Short/ Ongoing	\$\$
2. Refrain from the planting of palm trees in landscaping features or parkland.	Residents/ Parks Dept.	Ongoing	N/A
3. Support Invasive Species Program to remove invasive plants in park areas.	Volunteers in Parks (VIP)/ Parks Dept.	Short/ Ongoing	\$\$
4. Create and locate signage on the natural history of the area.	DBNA/ Parks Dept.	Short	\$
5. Construct permeable trail surfaces (or other ecologically appropriate alternatives) where suitable.	Streamkeepers/ Parks Dept.	Medium	\$\$
6. Support an educational program about stormwater management.		Medium	\$\$

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Res
7. Explore options to improve storm water quality and reduce peak flows.	Streamkeepers/ Parks Dept.		\$\$
8. Restore Departure Creek to a fish bearing stream.	Streamkeepers/ Parks Dept.	Medium	\$\$
9. Restore and beautify Departure Bay Creek behind properties at 2865 & 2875 Departure Bay Road.	Private landowners/ Streamkeepers/ Parks Dept. / Environmental Planning	Medium	\$\$

4.1.3 Objective: Maintain and enhance the ecology of the Departure Bay Waterfront as habitat for local and migrating wildlife, while providing long-term benefit to residents and other beach users.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Res
1. Build partnerships and fund assessment of water quality of Departure Bay, determine baseline of water quality, and address potential pollutants into the Bay.	Snuneymuxw FN/ Pacific Biological Station/ other key Stakeholders/ Parks Dept./ Environmental Planning	Medium	\$\$\$
2. Ensure foreshore development does not negatively impact water quality of the Bay.	Environmental Planning	Long	\$\$
3. Consider the work of Shorekeepers in environmental assessments.	Shorekeepers/ Parks Dept./ Environmental Planning/	Ongoing	\$
4. Investigate ecological options for managing geese populations.	Parks Dept./ Environmental Planning	Ongoing	\$

4.2 TRAFFIC, SAFETY AND PARKING

4.2.1 Objective: Provide adequate parking for beach users while maintaining and enhancing the quality of open space available for recreation.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Res
1. Create a joint strategy for roads, parking, parks and open space.	Residents/ Parks Dept./ Engineering Dept.	Short/ Medium	\$\$\$
2. Ensure adequate parking for winter time use and for handicapped.	Residents/ Parks Dept./ Engineering Dept.	Short/ Medium	\$\$\$
3. Enhance reclaimed parking space as recreational area.	Engineering Dept./ Parks Dept.	Short/ Medium	\$\$\$

4.2.2 Objective: Maintain and improve existing parking in the area while balancing the parking needs of residents and visitors.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Res
1. Create signage for parking.	Public Works	Medium	\$\$
2. Designate overflow parking areas.	DBNA Traffic Committee/ Engineering Dept.	Medium	\$
3. Re-surface the tennis courts parking lot.	Public Works	Medium	\$\$

4.2.3 Objective: Ensure maximum pedestrian accessibility and safety while balancing the need to ensure traffic flow through Departure Bay.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Res
1. Implement traffic calming devices on Bay and other streets.	Engineering Dept.	Medium	\$\$
2. Provide a pedestrian activated crosswalk with flashing lights.	Engineering Dept.	Medium	\$\$
3. Explore rerouting traffic away from the waterfront.	DBNA Traffic Committee/ Residents/ Engineering Dept.	Long	\$\$\$
4. Maintain vegetation along roadsides to improve traffic sightlines.	Parks Dept./ Public Works	Short/ Ongoing	\$
5. Review the location of signs and crosswalks along Bay Street to school.	DBNA Traffic Committee / Engineering Dept.	Short	\$
6. Determine priorities for sidewalks in the neighbourhood.	DBNA Traffic Committee / Engineering Dept.	Medium	\$\$
7. Consider sidewalks on one side of streets, low impact trailway on the other.	DBNA Traffic Committee / Engineering Dept.	Medium/ Ongoing	\$\$
8. Create a mid-block pathway connecting Centennial Park to the beachfront.	Private Landowner/ Engineering Dept./ Development Services	Short	\$\$

4.2.4 Objective: Promote and enhance alternative transportation options, including cycling and transit.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Res
1. Connect bike facilities and routes throughout neighbourhood and to Nanaimo.	Parks Dept.	Long	\$\$
2. Install signage and stencils to improve safety for cyclists.	Parks Dept./ Public Works	Short	\$
3. Provide appropriate bike facilities on roads with high traffic volumes.	Parks Dept./ Public Works	Short	\$\$
4. Place bike racks in all public use areas.	Parks Dept./ Public Works	Short	\$\$

5. Place signs at bus stops to indicate routes/schedules.	Public Works/ RDNT	Short	\$
6. Add shelters/benches at bus stops where lacking.	Public Works/ RDNT	Medium	\$\$
7. Ensure existing shelters/benches are maintained.	Public Works/ RDNT	Short/ Ongoing	\$
8. Identify how transit routes can be improved to address neighbourhood transit needs.	Residents/ Public Works/ RDNT	Long	\$\$

4.3 DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT

4.3.1 *Objective: Preserve and enhance the character of Departure Bay through development guidelines and view protection.*

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Res
1. Encourage the adoption of a "Sustainability Checklist". *	Development Services	Short	\$
2. Adopt design guidelines for the Village Core.	Development Services	Short	\$
3. Review and update existing commercial zoning.	Development Services/ Council	Short	\$
4. Consider a diversity of view protection methods.	Development Services	Short/ Ongoing	\$
5. Create gateway markers defining the borders of Departure Bay.	DBNA/ Parks Dept./ Engineering Dept.	Medium	\$

4.3.2 *Objective: Support a local commercial centre that maintains the neighbourhood character.*

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Res
1. Create a customized growth centre designation called "Departure Bay Village Core."	Development Services	Short	\$
2. Encourage small-scale, mixed-use development.	Development Services	Short/ Ongoing	\$
3. In the Village Core, emphasize street-front commercial forms.	Development Services	Medium/ Ongoing	\$\$
4. Increase public amenities and meeting areas in the Village Core.	Development Services/ Parks Dept.	Medium/ Ongoing	\$\$

4.3.3 *Objective: Manage future residential development in the neighbourhood.*

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Res
1. Residential development in neighbourhood designated areas will continue to be regulated by the OCP.	Development Services	Medium/ Ongoing	\$

2. Review density targets for OCP 10-year review.	Residents/ Development Services	Medium/ Ongoing	\$
3. Limit building height for multiple family dwellings outside of the Village Core to 2 storeys.	Development Services	Short/ Ongoing	\$

4.4 RECREATION

4.4.1 *Objective: Maintain, enhance, and improve the Departure Bay beach area for recreational activities.*

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Res
1. Expand waterfront facilities.	Parks Dept.	Medium	\$\$
2. Enhance outdoor eating facilities (sheltered picnic tables).	Parks Dept.	Medium	\$\$
3. Ensure a clean beach through regular maintenance and upkeep.	DBNA "Graffiti, Litter & Debris Removal" / DBNA/ Shorekeepers	Short/ Ongoing	\$
4. Determine feasibility and ecological impacts of expanding the beach area with sand; if feasible, enlarge beach area.	Dept. of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)/ Parks Dept.	Long	\$\$\$
5. Designate a kayak launch area with signed parking stall for unloading.	DBNA/ Parks Dept.	Short	\$\$
6. Oppose the creation of a "dive pier".	Residents/ Development Services	Ongoing	N/A

4.4.2 *Objective: Improve walking opportunities in Departure Bay and ensure safe and pleasant pedestrian use of recreational areas.*

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Res
1. Create and locate trailway maps at appropriate locations.	School/ DBNA/ Parks Dept.	Short	\$\$
2. Place signage in parks to indicate permitted non-motorized transportation.	Parks Dept.	Medium	\$\$
3. Decrease the current cross slope of the beachfront walkway.	Public Works	Medium	\$\$\$
4. Improve beachfront walkway lighting.	Engineering Dept./ Parks Dept.	Short	\$\$
5. Support walkway from downtown to Departure Bay.	Parks Dept.	Ongoing	\$\$\$
6. Designate a pedestrian connection to Linley Valley.	Parks Dept.	Medium	\$

7. Improve safety and accessibility of trails in Woodstream and Wardropper Parks.	Parks Dept.	Medium	\$\$
8. Create pedestrian access to beach via Balmoral St. right-of-way.	Parks Dept.	Long	\$\$
9. Create path between Bay and Wingrove Streets through Centennial Park.	Parks Dept.	Medium	\$\$
10. Develop a park plan for Wardropper Park.	Parks Dept./ Residents	Medium	\$\$

4.4.3 Objective: Ensure the Departure Bay beach, parks, and indoor facilities continue to accommodate a variety of recreational activities.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Res
1. Form a partnership and create a plan for the redevelopment of the Kin Hut into a community centre and educational enviro-centre.	Snuneymuxw FN Kinsmen DBNA/ Residents Shorekeepers, Parks Dept.	Long	\$\$\$
2. Staff beach and Kin Hut Park to increase opportunities for organized recreation.	Parks	Ongoing	\$\$
3. Retro-fit the Activity Centre.	Residents/ Private Sector/ Parks Dept.	Long	\$\$\$
4. Increase infrastructure for outdoor sports activities and recreation.	DBNA/ Parks Dept.	Medium	\$\$
5. Provide information and signage about programming.	Community Groups/ Parks Dept.	Short	\$

4.4.4 Objective: Improve and enhance the recreational opportunities for youth in Departure Bay.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Res
1. Program existing community facilities to meet the needs of youth.	Community Youth Groups/ School Parks Dept.	Medium	\$
2. Improve children's play areas.	Parks Dept.	Medium	\$\$

4.4.5 Objective: Provide sufficient amenities and monitoring in park areas to ensure safe and enjoyable use by all.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Res
1. Improve lighting at Kin Hut and beach area.	Parks Dept./ Engineering Dept.	Medium	\$\$
2. Promote safety and crime prevention in parks and on trails using CPTED principles.	Parks Dept.	Medium	\$
3. Increased community monitoring and policing.	DBNA/ Police Dept.	Medium	\$\$
4. Develop enhanced programming for Wardropper Park.	Residents/ Parks Dept.	Medium	\$
5. Develop a new landscape plan for Kin Hut Park.	Parks Dept. / Residents	Medium	\$\$

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING STRATEGY

Throughout the implementation process it is important that the City maintains open communication with neighbourhood members. The energy and initiative of residents to take an active part in the future of their neighbourhood will have significant impact on the success of the plan.

The Action Plan should be overseen and monitored by an Action Implementation and Monitoring (AIM) Committee comprised of area residents, staff and City Council representatives. The Departure Bay Working Group, which has advised throughout the planning process, may be a good starting point for the creation of this committee.

The responsibilities of the Implementation Committee will include:

- Reviewing the plan annually to keep the plan valid by identifying accomplishments as well as actions still needed.
- Assessing the impacts of current projects to ensure actions are still in line with community aspirations.
- Developing a communications plan to make sure goals and proposed action are widely known. Keeping the neighbourhood informed will help maintain support for the plan.

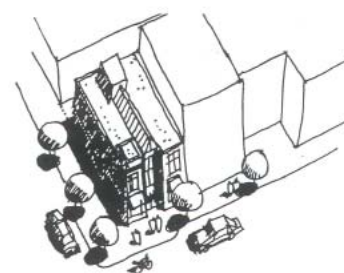
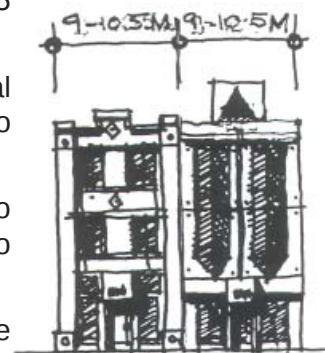


5. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. DEPARTURE BAY DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR VILLAGE CORE

Note: These guidelines are based on the Main Street Design Guidelines found in *Plan Nanaimo* and have been tailored in consultation with the community to the specific context of Departure Bay.

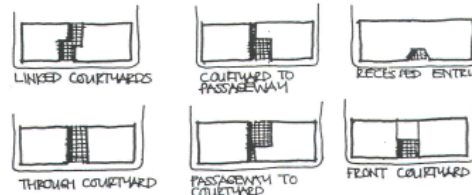
1. Mixed-use developments are encouraged along Wingrove Street and Departure Bay Road.
2. Main floors should be commercial on Wingrove Street. Main floors on Departure Bay Road may be residential if street level entrances and/or outdoor patio areas are provided in order to encourage street activity and a sense of vibrancy on the street.
3. Large areas of glazing (i.e. glass walls) should be broken up with framing in order to maintain the neighbourhood character.
4. Storefronts should be small – no greater than 10.5 metres (35 ft) in width.
5. Building frontages should be varied in architectural treatment at least every 15 metres (49 ft.) in order to maintain a diverse and aesthetically appealing street.
6. Rooflines and vertical massing should be designed to maximize views of the waterfront area and contribute to a diversity of building form.
7. Building design should maximize light and minimize shadowing on the public realm.
8. Corner sites are encouraged to have commercial exposure on both sides.
9. Corner sites are encouraged to feature landmark design or, alternatively, to provide a semi-public or public open space.
10. Public art, architectural treatments or landscaping which reduce the apparent massing or enhance the aesthetic value of visible walls are strongly encouraged.
11. Infill development should respect the vertical and horizontal rhythm, proportions and details of adjacent buildings.
12. The design of the building should reflect the change from commercial to residential through the use of balconies, bay windows, changing roof lines and other appropriate architectural detailing.
13. The exterior materials of all buildings should be brick, wood, stone, hardiplank, or architectural quality metal finishes. Other materials may be considered that fit



into the village theme and which will age well. No exposed building face should be more than 20% stucco.

14. The form and character of buildings should generally comply with the following characteristics:

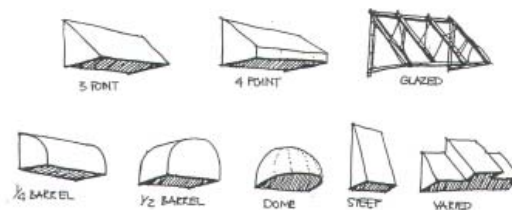
- post and beam construction;
- exposed timber structural members;
- extensive glazing and sky lights;
- integration of interior and exterior spaces;
- wood finishes;
- orientation to view or natural features;
- and
- extensive use of indigenous trees and landscaping.



15. The creation of courtyards and walkways through or beside buildings connecting Departure Bay Road and Wingrove Street to rear lanes, and Centennial Park to parking lots are strongly encouraged.

16. Residential units are encouraged to have access onto or overlook courtyards and pedestrian walkways.

17. Private, commercial open spaces, outdoor furniture and landscape materials should compliment those used in the public realm along Departure Bay Road and Wingrove Street.



18. Continuous weather protection is encouraged on Departure Bay Road and Wingrove Street.

19. Fences are encouraged to create privacy and definition between residential and other uses. Decorative transparent metal fences are encouraged to add character to courtyards.

20. Hard and soft landscaping is encouraged around service equipment like garbage bins, and shall be consistent with architectural character of the principle building.

21. Building height should not exceed 3 storeys.

22. Balconies, dormers and other architectural features are encouraged on the upper floor.

23. The sidewalk width should be 3 to 4.5 metres (9.84 – 14.76 ft.), with a total boulevard width of up to 7 metres (22.97 ft.).

24. On-site parking at grade level should be located at the rear of the property, with access from a rear lane where possible.

APPENDIX B. WELLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL OUTREACH

On March 3rd, 2006, representatives from the City of Nanaimo, the Departure Bay Working Group, and inVision Planning led two outreach sessions with Wellington High School students about the Departure Bay Neighbourhood Plan. The outreach was designed to ensure that, between the draft and final document, the planning process included the voices of young people of the area.

Methodology

The outreach took place over two hours, in a grade 11 Social Studies class and a grade 12 Law class. It was made possible by the teacher, Bliss Dodd, who had expressed a keen interest in having his students take part in the planning process. The outreach, coordinated by Lisa Bhopalsingh from the City of Nanaimo, consisted of the students taking part in a mock open house for half the class, and a group discussion for the second half. During the first half, the students identified community amenities on aerial maps, located their school and prominent community features on a 3-d model, and explored the issues represented in some of the information panels. In the second half of the class, the students were divided into two self-selecting groups to address three questions:

1. What do you like about Departure Bay?
2. What is there to do for youth in the neighbourhood? Where do you hang out?
3. How could you make Departure Bay neighbourhood better?

Issues

The students were generally keen to participate in the discussion, perhaps additionally motivated by awards of chocolates and a door prize. On the whole, the students' concerns mirrored those of the general community. Three of the four groups identified the high volume of traffic as a major issue to address as it is unsafe and detracts from the benefits of the neighbourhood. From the mapping process, the students also indicated a lack of knowledge that Wardropper was a park. Most saw it as simply an empty lot of land, used to cross through on their way to elementary school.

As part of the planning process, we were especially interested in youth perspectives on recreational issues. Here the outreach was most informative. Firstly, the grassy area by the Kin Hut was identified as the area youth use the most in the neighbourhood. However, the students also explained how young kids and their parents also use that space quite heavily, and out of respect, they like to keep separate. From this, it was identified that expanding the public green space by the beach front would be a benefit, as long as it did not eliminate all parking completely.

The issue of alcohol consumption in the area came up. The students acknowledged that alcohol was a part of students partying, but that there was a tacit agreement between the youth and the RCMP that partying would take place away from the waterfront. However, they also acknowledged that this didn't always happen, and broken glass on the beach was occasionally the result of partying by the water.

The youth of these classes, and from a survey of an earlier class, also identified the

water quality of Departure Bay as a major issue in terms of the ability to use the beach. Generally, improvements to the beachfront were commented upon, as it is seen as a rather grey and oppressive site. This included more lighting by Kin Hut and the walkway, perhaps adding a wharf to the waterfront, and adding more landscaping and greening of the area. Garbage and dog feces were also seen as an ongoing problem.

Also addressed was the issue of changes to the Kin Hut into an enviro-cultural centre where the heritage of the First Nation in the area would be featured. Interestingly enough, the students had little knowledge of this history. Generally, they were indifferent to what the centre might represent, and were more concerned with how the space would be used and for what. They wanted to be sure that washrooms would be available, and suggested having changing rooms and a shower area to make the beach more accessible. They also suggested more youth activities either at the Kin Hut or the Activity Centre, such as foosball, a pool table and video games.

The students supported expanding retail in the area, and suggested businesses for take-out food or patio dining, as well as a skim board/kayak/surf shop. They also proposed small stalls in the retail area, similar to the market area at the old Tsawwassen Ferry Terminal. They were quite adamant about the need to save the ice cream shop.

Recommendations

Specific recommendations made by the students include:

- murals and/or Native art along the beachfront walkway;
- the need for a clear pathway between the recreation centre and the beach area;
- expanding the water park for youth-oriented activities;
- sidewalks on both sides of Departure Bay Road;
- building other entertainment facilities such as a skate park or a giant chess board;
- using the space now occupied by the lacrosse box for another recreational use more needed in the community;
- a covered outdoor area with picnic tables by the Kin Hut/waterfront area;
- a romantic waterfront restaurant which might increase the number of people walking along the seawall at night;
- work parties or competitions to help maintain the cleanliness of the beach.

Finally, there was strong support for having more entertainment events in the neighbourhood, similar to the Bathtub races, or the Canada Day celebrations that currently take place downtown. The students also articulated a real interest in youth-oriented events in the neighbourhood such as an outdoor dance or concert.

The student outreach was important as it helped confirm that recommendations made in the draft plan do address the concerns of youth in the area. As well, the outreach showed that youth are interested in being a part of the planning process. Continual involvement from students in the neighbourhood could be facilitated by further outreach at the high school and at community events in the neighbourhood; see recommendation 14.1 *Work with neighbourhood youth to program existing community facilities in order to meet the needs of youth. Such programming may include activities such as community youth nights, concerts/dances.* This may be best achieved by the youth outreach coordinator at the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Culture.

APPENDIX C. PLAN NANAIMO DENSITY OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES FOR AREAS DESIGNATED NEIGHBOURHOOD IN THE OCP

Objectives:

1. To maintain the character and livability of existing neighbourhoods.
2. To maintain the viability of existing older neighbourhoods.
3. To increase housing choice.
4. To provide access to basic community services.
5. To provide access to local commercial services in neighbourhoods.
6. To build community spirit and cohesion.

Policies:

1. The target gross density for Neighbourhoods is 15 units per ha. (6 units per acre)
2. A target mix of 60% single family and 40% multi-family should be used as a guide for achieving neighbourhood densities of 15 units per hectare.
3. Residential uses on Neighbourhood designated lands will include detached and semi-detached dwelling units, secondary suites, mobile homes, duplexes, triplexes, quadruplexes and ground-oriented townhouses.
4. In detached housing areas, infill development will be designed to complement existing neighbourhood character and will maintain the ground-oriented character of existing housing.
5. Rezoning for townhouse residential forms to a maximum density (net) of 25 units per ha. (10 units per acre) will be considered in Neighbourhood areas if:
 - the site generated traffic will not impact unduly on neighbourhood streets;
 - the site, or combined sites affected, area less than 1 ha. (2.47 acres) in total area; and
 - the site is well separated from other sites and would not result in a concentration of development at higher than the Neighbourhood-wide target density of 15 units per ha. (6 units per acre).
6. Notwithstanding the above noted policies, “cluster/green space development” is permitted in “Neighbourhood” designated areas based on the following conditions:
 - where significant stands of trees and/or large blocks of open space are secured;
 - where public access to these areas, where appropriate, is secured;
 - the form of “cluster/green space development” is either small lot single-family dwellings (RS-6) or townhouses;
 - the height of dwellings does not exceed that of a standard single-family dwelling;
 - the density of the development does not exceed the density possible based on subdivision of the parcel under existing zoning, taking into account other relevant City policies and standard development requirements (i.e. net density not gross); and
 - the lot being considered for “cluster/green space development” is not so large as to negatively affect the character of the existing Neighbourhood.
 - Where Environmentally Sensitive Areas are present as defined in Schedule B of the OCP – Development Permit Areas and Sensitive Areas.

APPENDIX D. DEPARTURE BAY PLANNING AREA CENSUS INFORMATION

Table 1 - 2001 Census Summary¹

Census Summary	Departure Bay Planning Area		Nanaimo		British Columbia	
Total Population where Census Data are Available	2,606	% base	72,995	% base	3,907,740	% base
Males	1,261	48%	35,070	48%	1,919,100	49%
Females	1,346	52%	37,925	52%	1,988,640	51%
2001 Population by Age	2,606	% base	72,995	% base	3,907,740	% base
Total 0-14	412	17%	12,835	18%	706,070	18%
Total 15-24	287	11%	9,665	13%	514,345	13%
Total 25-64	1,406	56%	38,180	52%	2,154,240	54%
65 years and over	489	19%	12,300	17%	533,090	14%
Average age of population	42		39.3		37.8	
Median age	44.4		40.4		38.4	
Total Census Families	796	% base	20,585	% base	1,086,030	% base
Persons per family	2.7		2.8		2.9	
Two-parent families	675	85%	16,660	81%	917,615	84%
With no children at home	412	52%	8,925	43%	429,480	40%
With children at home	257	32%	7,740	38%	488,130	45%
Lone-parent families	121	15%	3,925	19%	168,420	16%
Total children at home	682		20,600		1,187,490	
Children per family	0.9		1		1.1	
Private Households	1,059		30,675		1,534,335	
Persons in private households	2,612		71,640		3,858,735	
Persons per household	2.3		2.3		2.5	
Occupied Dwellings where Census Data are Available	1,059	% base	30,670	% base	1,534,335	% base
Owned Dwellings	777	73%	20,850	68%	1,017,485	66%
Rented Dwellings	278	26%	9,820	32%	512,360	33%
Single detached houses	671	63%	18,630	61%	841,540	55%
Semi-detach/row/duplex	201	19%	4,200	14%	244,530	16%
Apartments	177	17%	6,665	22%	404,350	26%
Movable dwelling	0	0%	1,180	4%	43,915	3%
Dominant Building Type	Single detached houses		Single detached houses		Single detached houses	
2000 Population 15 years + with Employment Income		\$31,384		\$27,705		\$31,544
Average male income		\$40,244		\$33,541		\$38,039
Average female income		\$22,875		\$21,655		\$24,401
2001 Unemployment Rate for Population 15 years +		9.9%		11.8%		8.5%

¹ Source: City of Nanaimo PCensus custom data for the Departure Bay Plan Area using 2001 Statistics Canada 'Block' Census data. Using Block level Census data allows for a higher level of accuracy than using Dissemination Area or Census Tract data. However, Block level data was not available for the 1996 data meaning that there is a greater likelihood of both under and overestimation of 1996 figures using the Enumeration Areas. (Enumeration Areas were replaced by Dissemination Areas in 2001, further complicating the ability to accurately compare data between 1996 and 2001 Census years.)

Table 2 - Post-Secondary Education

Total Population 20 years + by Highest Level of Schooling	Departure Bay Planning Area		Nanaimo	British Columbia
	2,052	% base	% base	% base
Less than Grade 9	68	3%	5%	7%
Grades 9 to 13	468	23%	32%	30%
Trades Certificate or Diploma	233	11%	16%	13%
Other Non-university Education	532	26%	23%	24%
University	751	37%	23%	27%
Without degree	274	13%	11%	9%
Without certificate or diploma	172	8%	7%	6%
With certificate or diploma	103	5%	4%	3%
With bachelor's or higher	481	23%	13%	18%

Table 3 - Population Mobility

Total Population by 5 year Mobility Status 1996-2001	Departure Bay Planning Area		Nanaimo	British Columbia
	2,521	% base	% base	% base
Non-movers (same address 5 years ago)	1,446	57%	50%	54%
Movers	1,071	42%	50%	46%
Non-migrants	611	24%	29%	23%
Migrants	463	18%	21%	23%
Internal migrants	416	17%	19%	18%
Intraprovincial migrants	260	10%	14%	13%
Interprovincial migrants	149	6%	5%	4%
External migrants	38	1%	2%	5%

Table 4 - Housing Age

Occupied Private Dwellings by Period of Construction	Departure Bay Planning Area		Nanaimo	British Columbia
	1,059	% base	% base	% base
Before 1946	34	3%	7%	9%
1946 - 1960	180	17%	11%	12%
1961 - 1970	282	27%	14%	14%
1971 - 1980	279	26%	23%	23%
1981 - 1990	188	18%	20%	20%
1991 - 1995	74	7%	16%	13%

