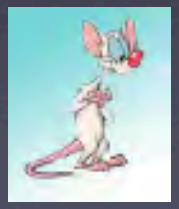
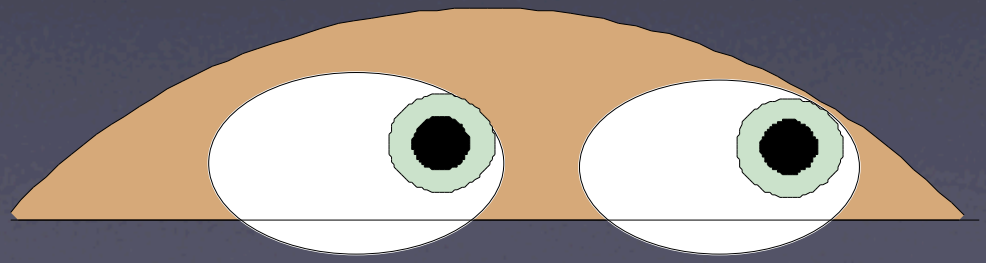
THINKING

OUTSIDE THE BOX

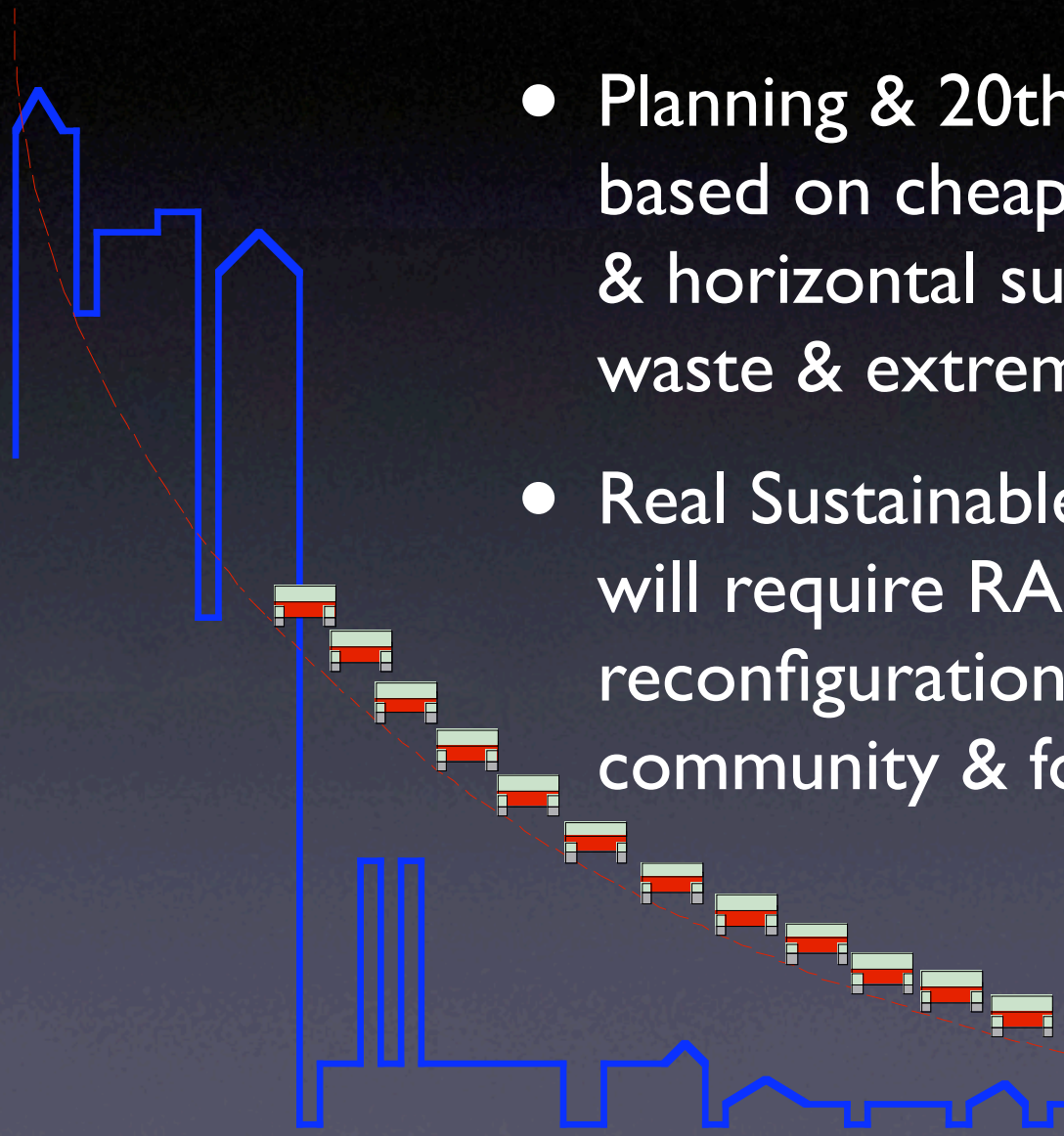


Are you pondering
What I am pondering?



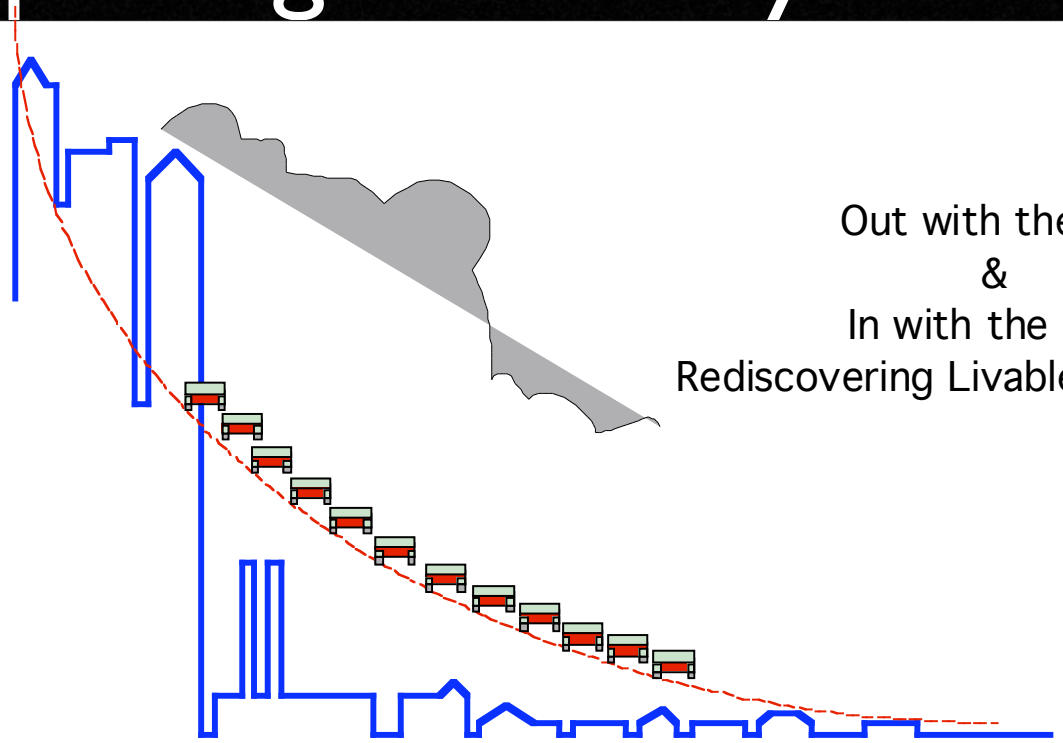
Metro Vancouver Planning Coalition
Missing Housing Quest 2006
Metro Area Housing Paper 2006
VCPC Housing Workshop 2006

The Unsustainable City



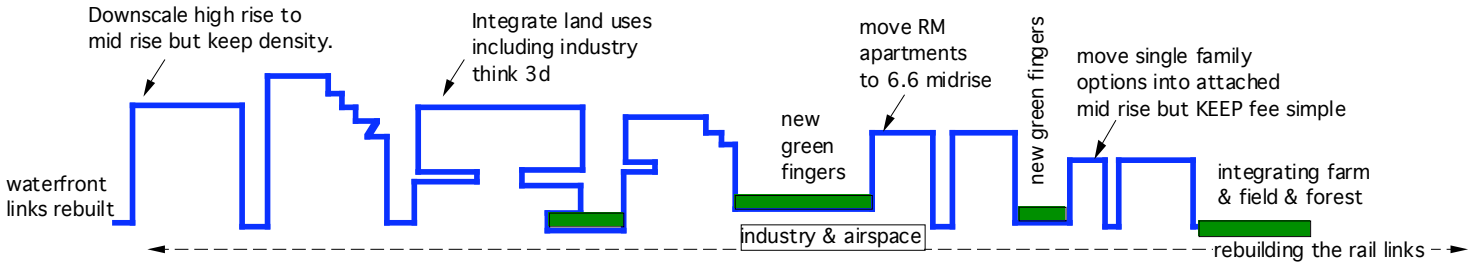
- Planning & 20th century Zoning was based on cheap oil, vertical centres & horizontal suburbs. A culture of waste & extremes.
- Real Sustainable cities & housing will require RADICAL reconfiguration of our pattern or community & forms, mixes of use.

Repairing a century of misakes



Out with the Old
&
In with the New
Rediscovering Livable City & Form

Oil & Auto Age Zoning for Unsustainable Community
The Pattern of a Prodigal Century of Waste



Reconfiguring Pattern of Community for Sustainability
-making housing affordable,livable,desirable & cutting out transporation waste
-clustering & touching but making every effort to allow freedom of ownership

MVPC 2006

Metro Vancouver Planning Coalition

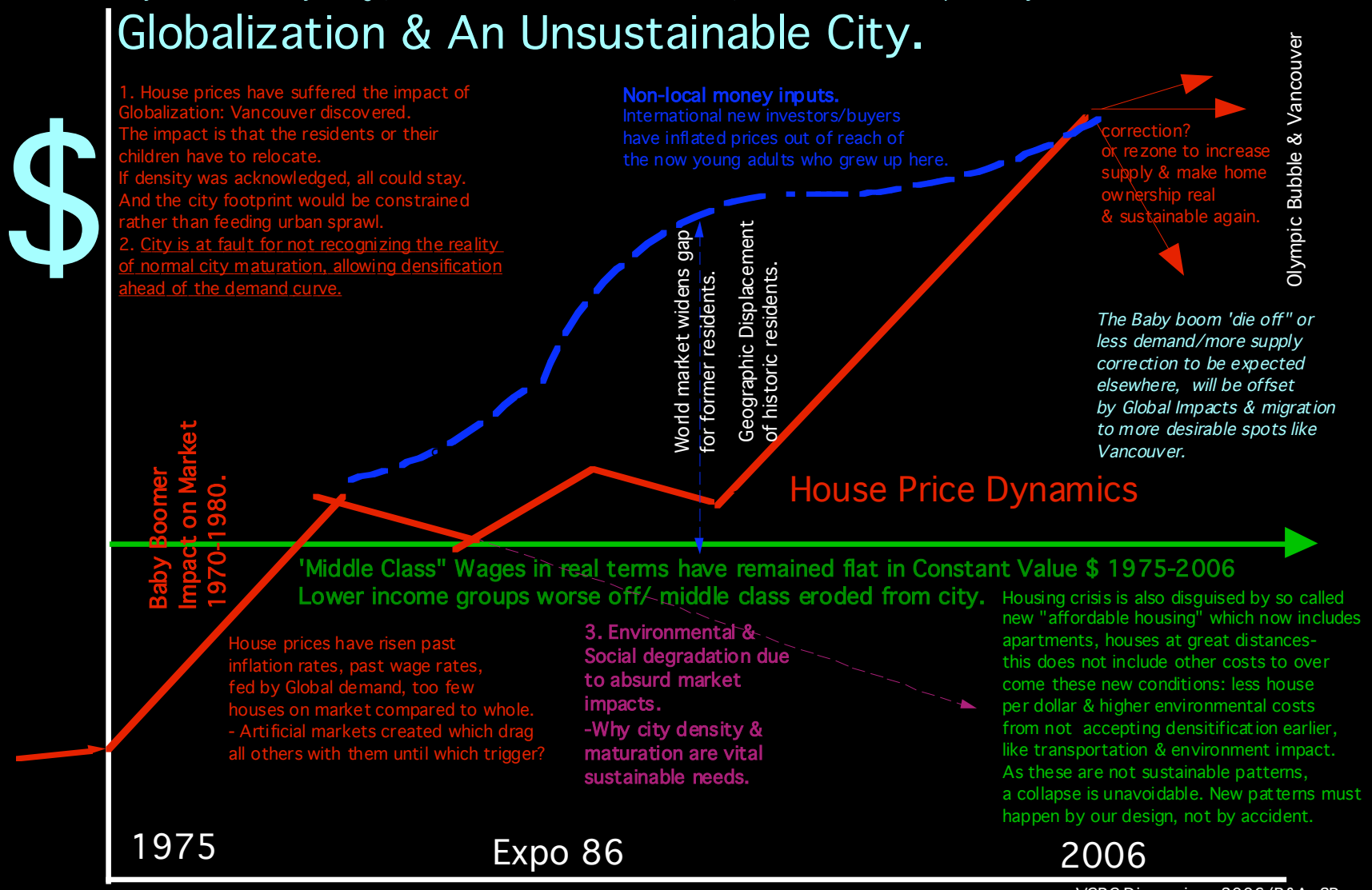
Green baby steps?

- Most of our past 100 years of development is not sustainable in the approaching age After Cheap Energy. We have to contract.
- Many of our current efforts to build Green, Plan Green are well intentioned starts but many are also not sustainable either. High rises & suburbs are at risk.
- The key for cities is land conservation in every form to reduce all secondary energy consumption spawned by cheap energy planning and built forms.

?Sustainable City?

Why we must radically change, but take control to do it on our terms, not in reaction to collapse of any kind.

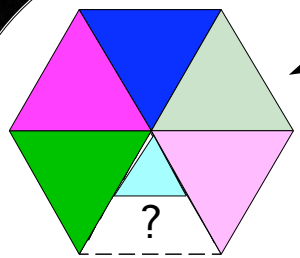
Globalization & An Unsustainable City.



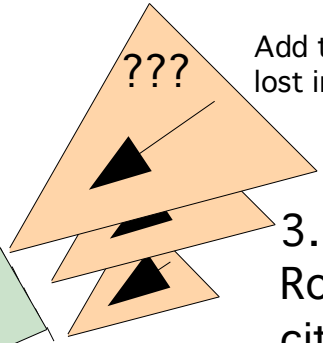
VCPC Discussions 2006/B&A•SP

Land conservation

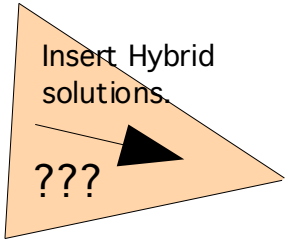
- Our cityscape is essentially undeveloped land
- Our rooftops show an untapped potential
- Our streets make up 25-40% of the city & they can serve more sustainable community functions.
- Tax reform is needed to shift attitudes in land use & conservation, end subsidies to land waste.

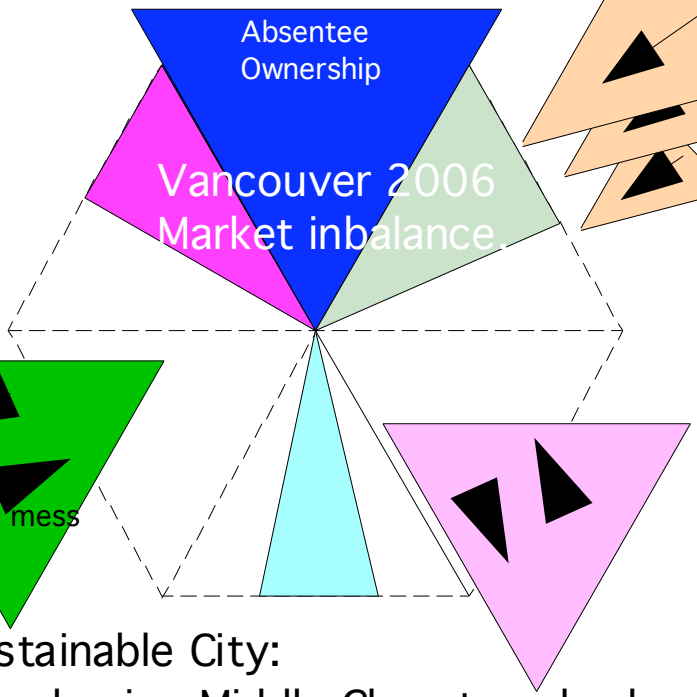


1. Old stable community: housing for all -but not at the bottom.

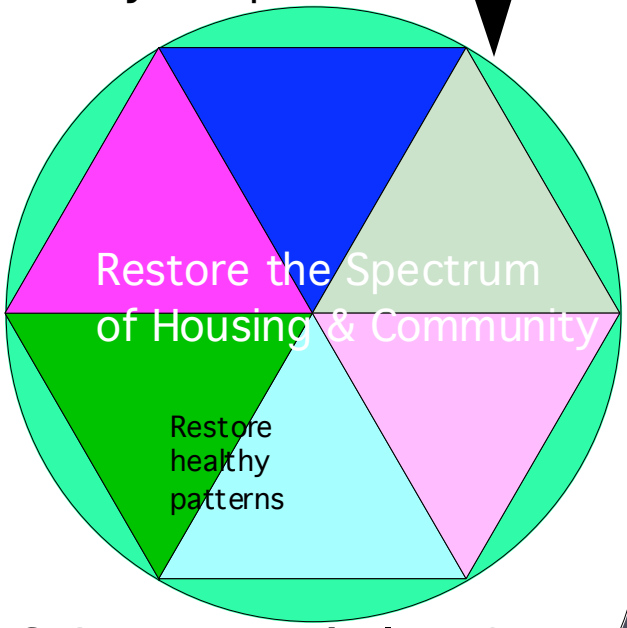


Add the **Missing Housing** lost in cheap energy era.





3. Restoring the balance, Round out housing, reduce city footprint.



Suburban sprawl:
displaced middle class=
social and environmental mess

2. Present Unsustainable City:
Housing for Rich, shoving Middle Class to suburbs,
Dwindling lower level support housing,
Time to insert new Wedges of Sustainable Housing

What are the Missing Wedges of Sustainability?

Change: pattern of the city.

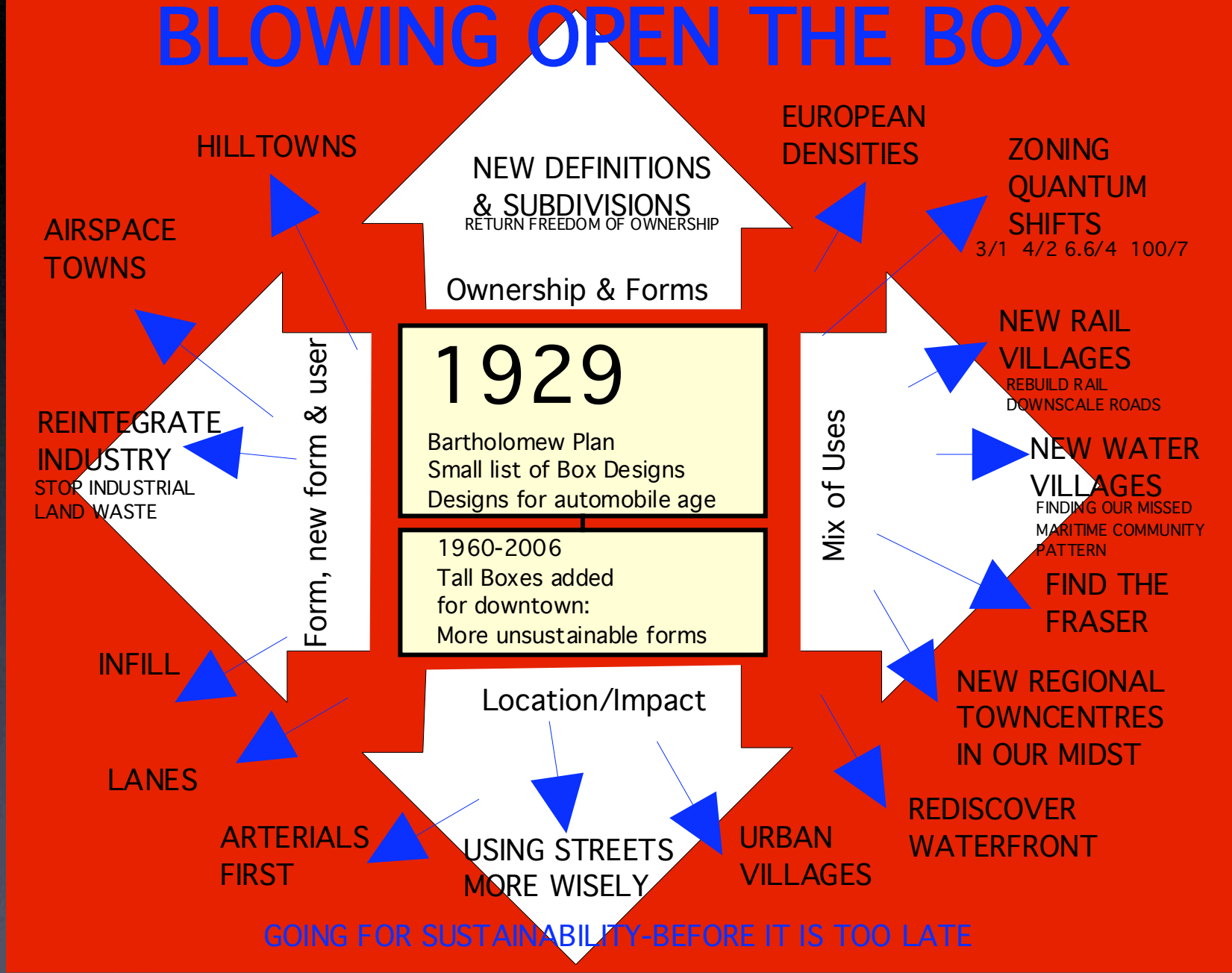
- Reduce the sprawl, claw back for rural uses
- Make industry use land efficiently & reintegrate industry into the community
- Upgrade density in urban fingers
- Reduce high rise heights but keep higher density, integrate family housing
- Invigorate "Green Fingers" at each level.

A Limited Vocabulary

- Low rise frame: short life, high maintenance, low durability, poor lifestyle options
- High rise towers: durable but high energy consumption, high envelope exposure, limited lifestyle options.

Stalingrad School of Urban Design?
Or lack of glass options in Vancouver?

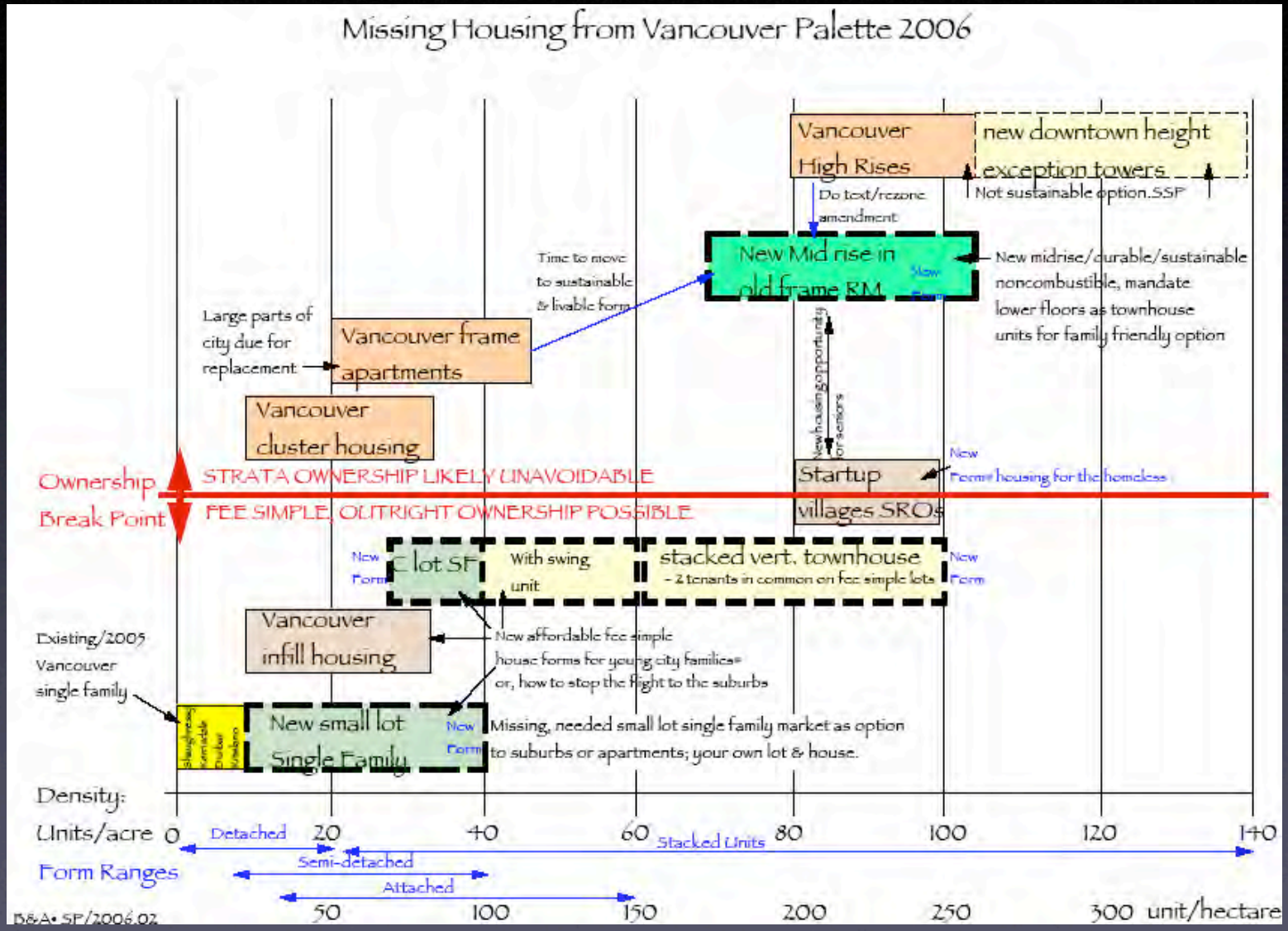
BLOWING OPEN THE BOX



GOING FOR SUSTAINABILITY-BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE

Metro Vancouver Planning Coalition

Our Missing Housing



Eco Density: the Missing Wedges.

Emergency Measures:

Text Amendments.

Fast, effective, workable & known impacts
filtered across city landscape.
Does not waste time & resources on half way solutions
Starts Land Economy Measures Now,
Makes affordability a reality again Now.

Now: 2006: **Zoning Bylaw TEXT**
change for mid rise high density
sustainable buildings: C & RM zones.
(MVPC) (Book in progress).

*Act Now!

Now: 2006: **Subdivision Bylaw**
change for small, rowhouse lots
district & arterial. (MVPC)

*Act Now!

Airspace Towns & Villages:
Land conservation applied t
forgotten potentials.
MVPC 2006.
(Book in progress).

Act Soon!

Rowhouse on Arterials:
MVPC 1992 report to Vancouver
- see also UBC 2005 Study.

Hillside Metro New Towns:
Land conservation applied to
forgotten potentials of BC's
greatest areas. MVPC 2006.
(Book in progress).

Act Soon!

*Act Now!

Startup Villages 1994
MVPC report to council on
Housing the Homeless

Looking for
other hybrids

Pilot Projects???
Not enough, do 10x more
can't wait, Act Now.

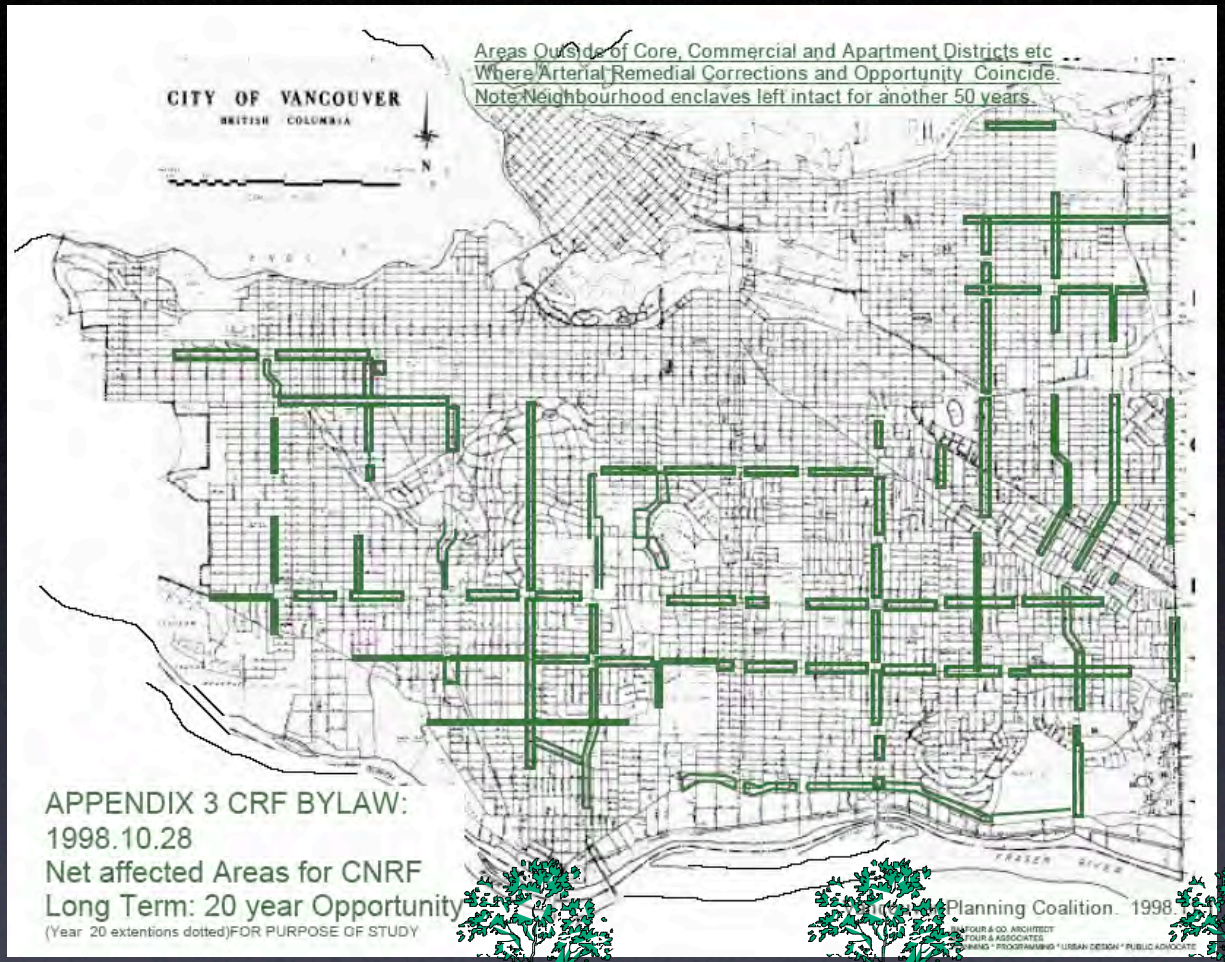
Area Plans: more fluff?
No time, new solutions
needed now. Use planning
but do not wait for planning.

Good Old Infill: 1990- 2006
Lanes, suites, subdivision
- market is ahead of planning;
play catch up & do it right!

Metro Vancouver Planning Coalition

Arterial Rowhouses

MVPC Advocacy Report
1994-98



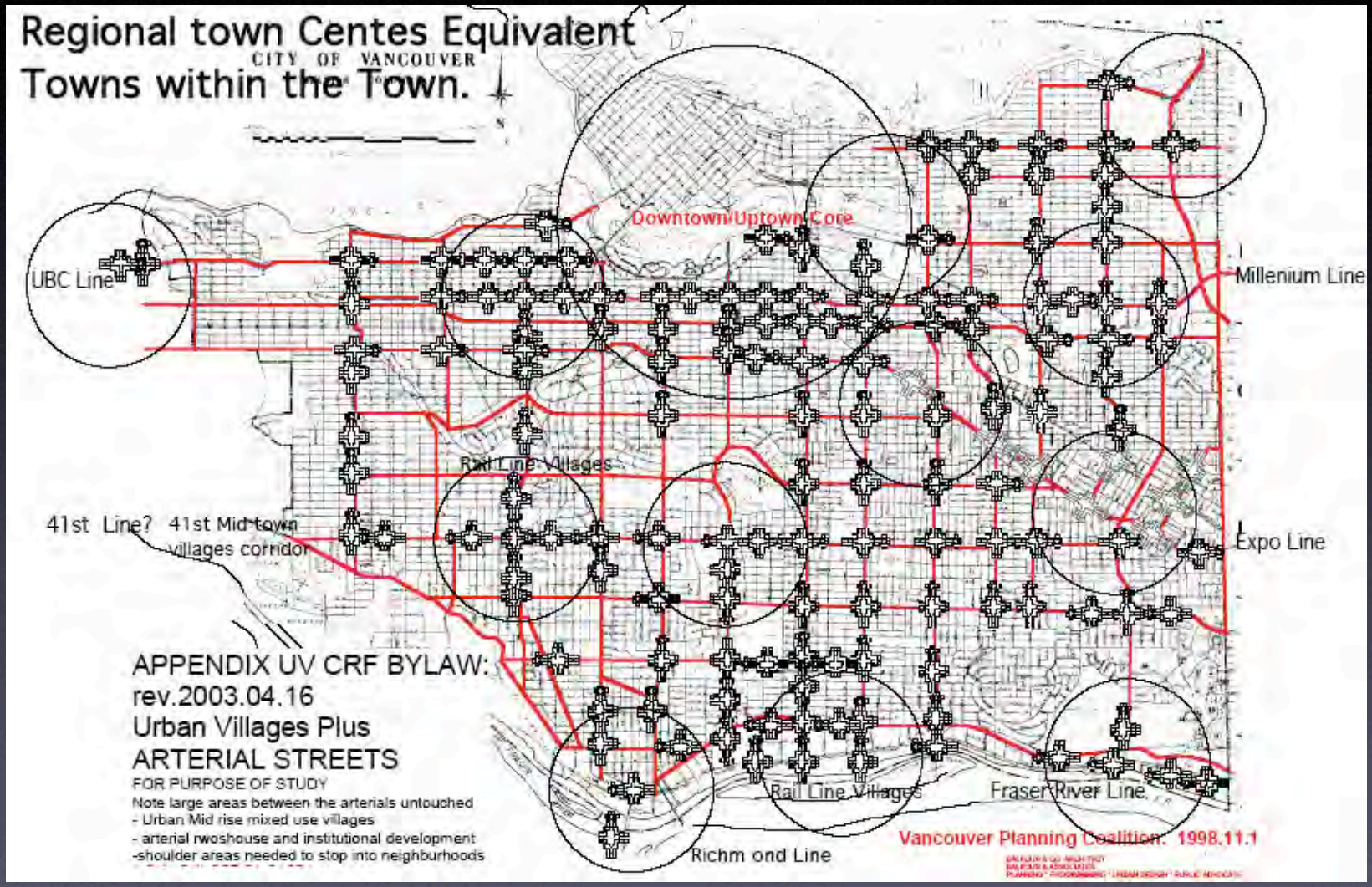
MORE TRADITIONAL 18' WIDE, 9 UNITS OF FEE SIMPLE ROWHOUSE ARCHITECTURE ALONG 41ST AVENUE

Mid Rise Optimals

- Socially preferred: 70 visual range to street, social group by floors
- Environmentally; less envelope per unit, less energy
- More lifestyle/unit type options, more garden units
- Best options for family housing, social mix overall.

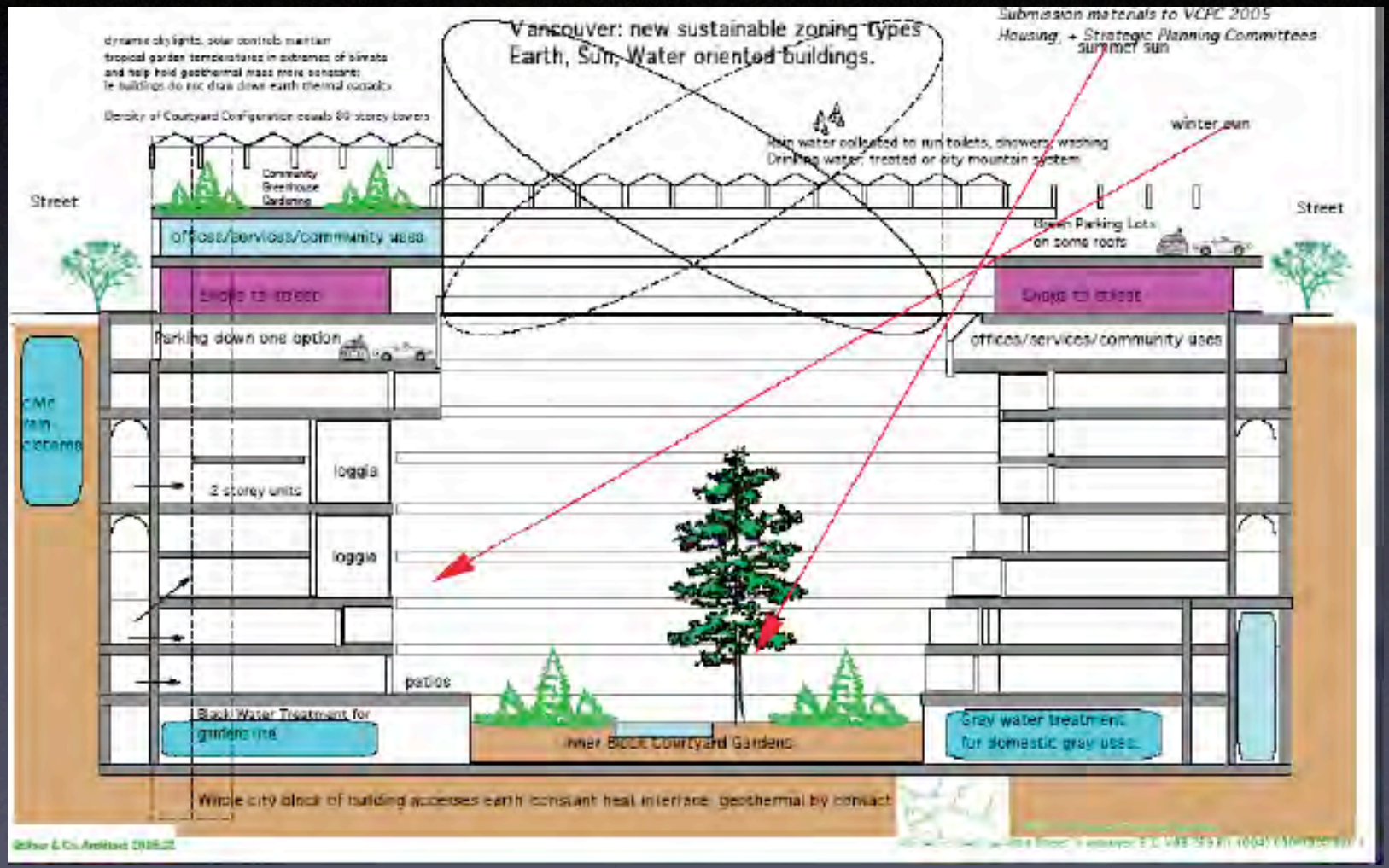
Arbutus: Molson's Site,
One of Vancouver's Success Sites

Urban Villages & Newtowns

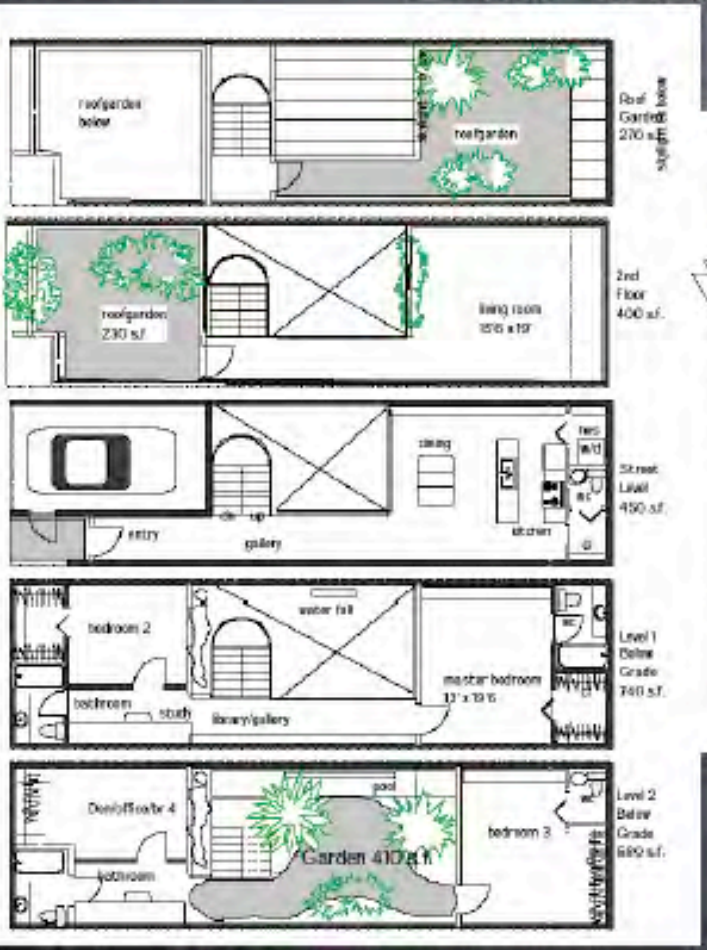


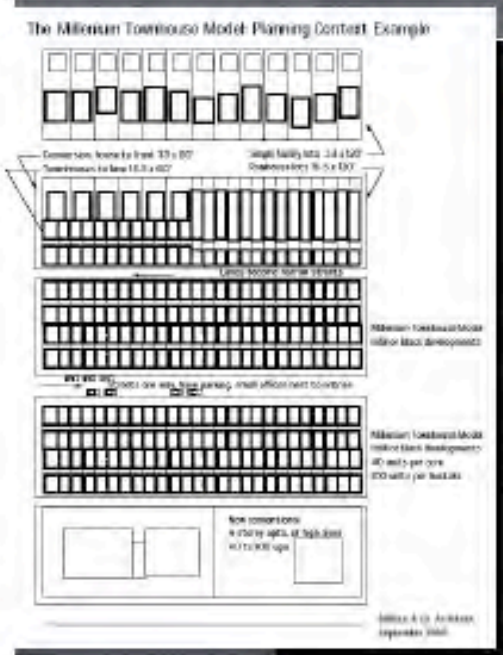
The Undeveloped City Pondering Sustainability?

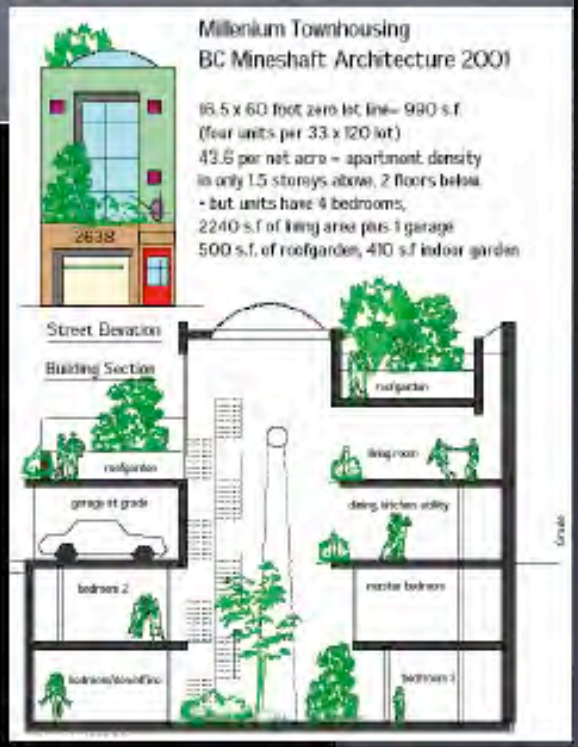
Earth sheltered city?



Alternate Directions: Earthsheltered





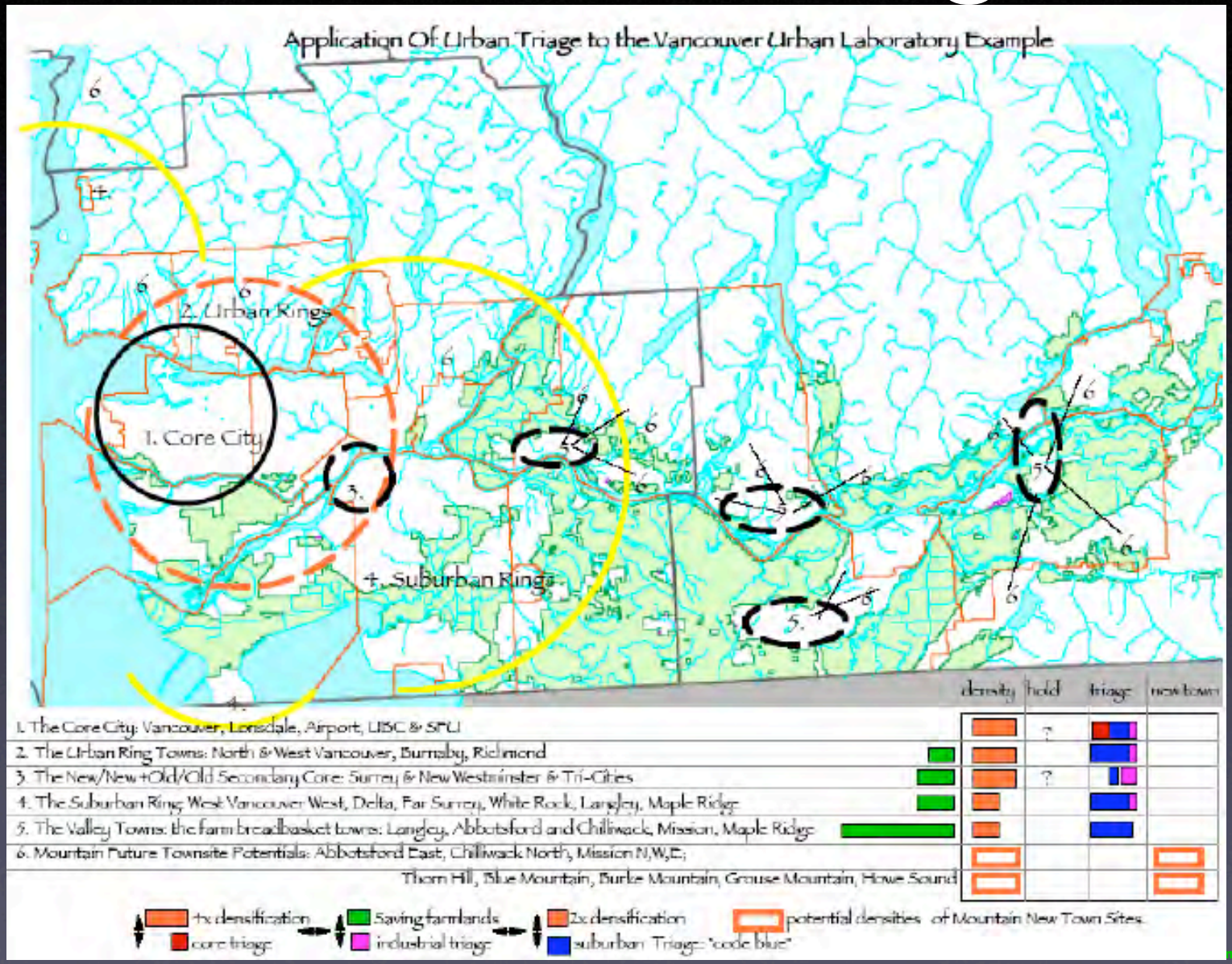


- Single Family Housing at 40 upa, earth sheltered infill fee simple subdivisions.

Result of Change?

- Urban triage areas will change to rural uses
- New Urban villages will foster sustainable living plus more options for lifestyles & increase options for outright ownership
- Modes of transportation will also radically shift, not by edict but by market choice.
- The sooner we embrace the needed changes the easier the transition or all.

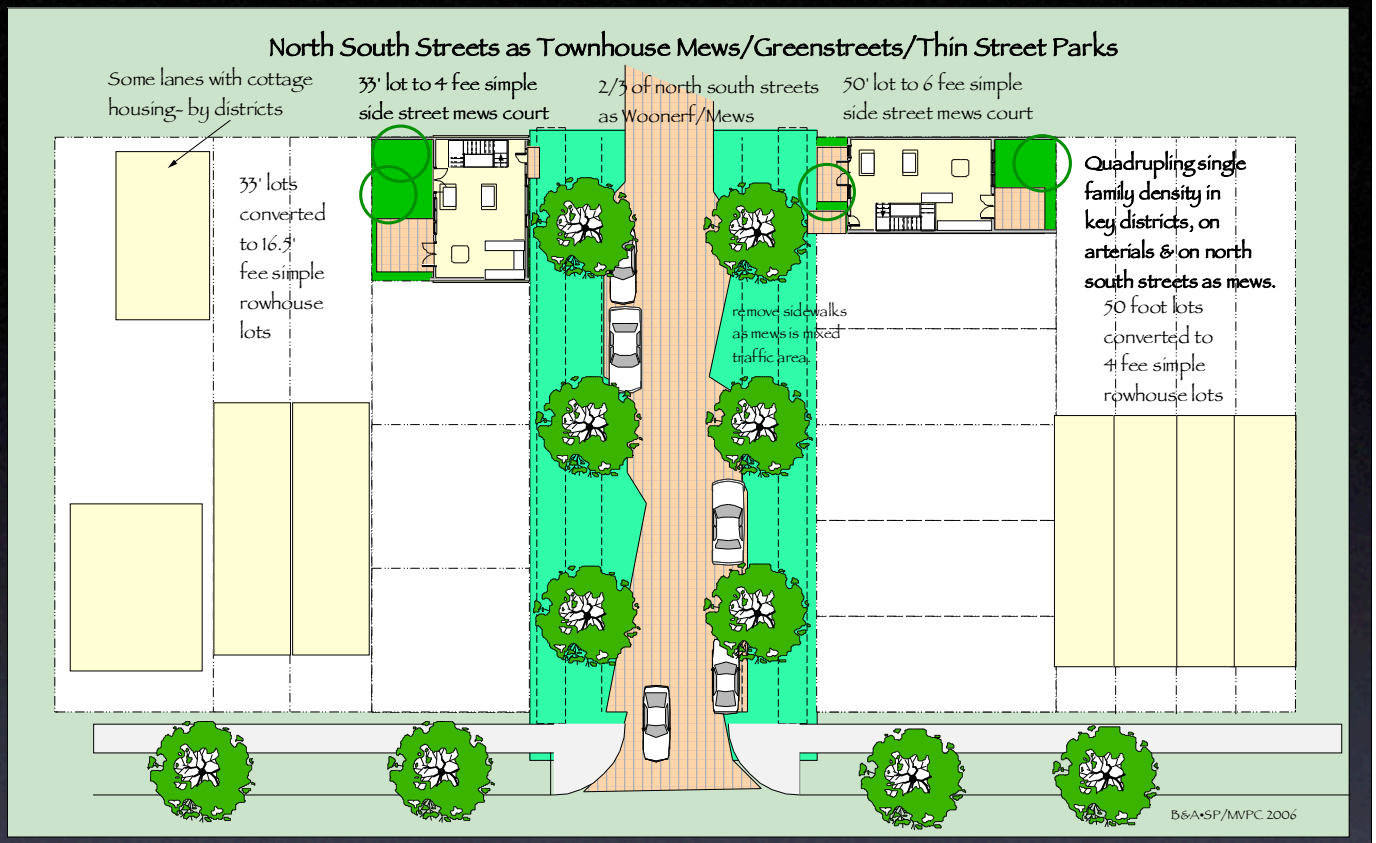
Patterns of Triage



Outright Ownership How can we ignore it?

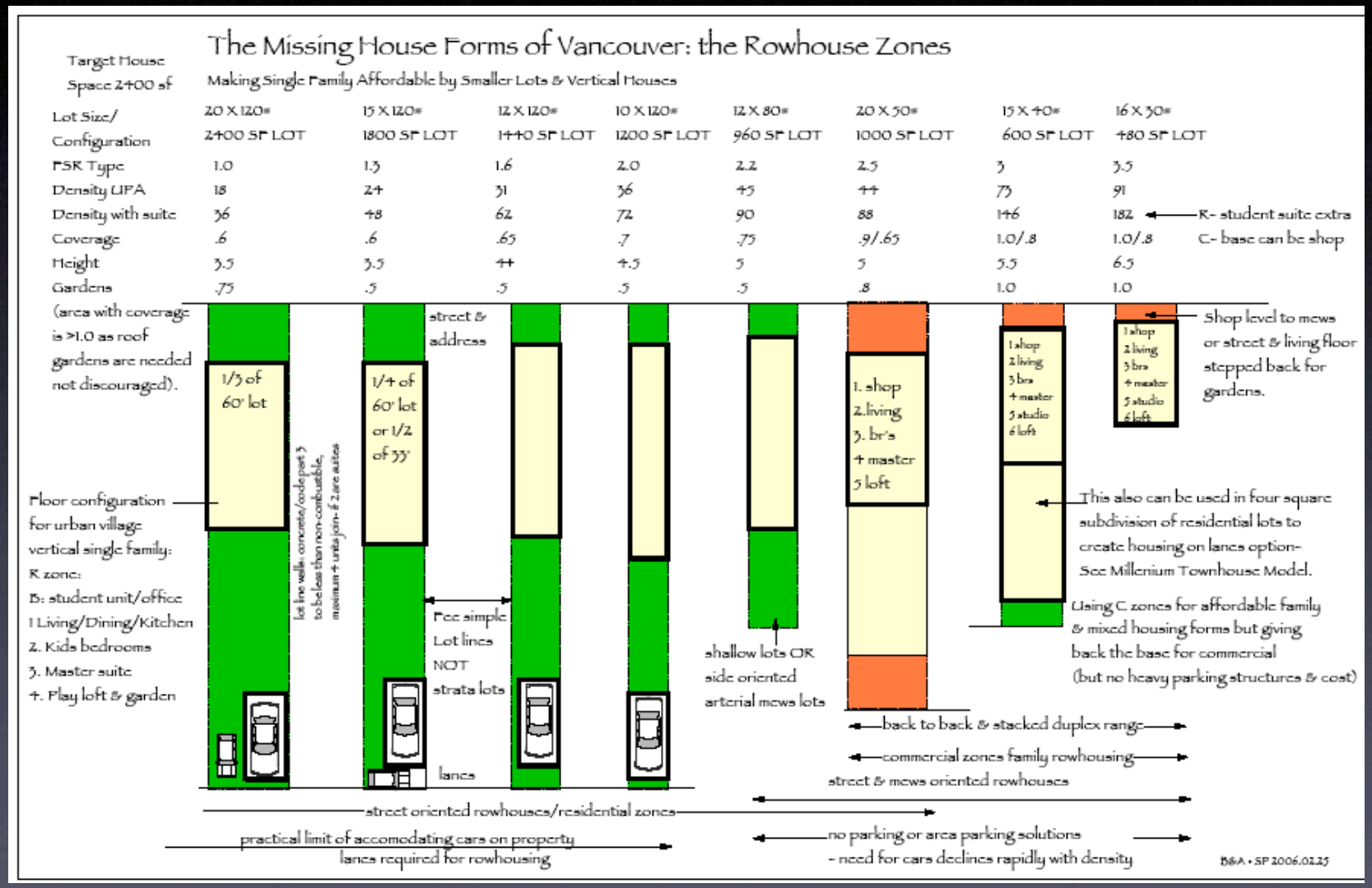
- Not addressing this properly has driven most people to suburban sprawl.
- This can be corrected but it means we have to accept change in our urban centres & tranportation corridors.
- Such basic human need is not met with needlessly complex strata controls & costs.

Families in the city.

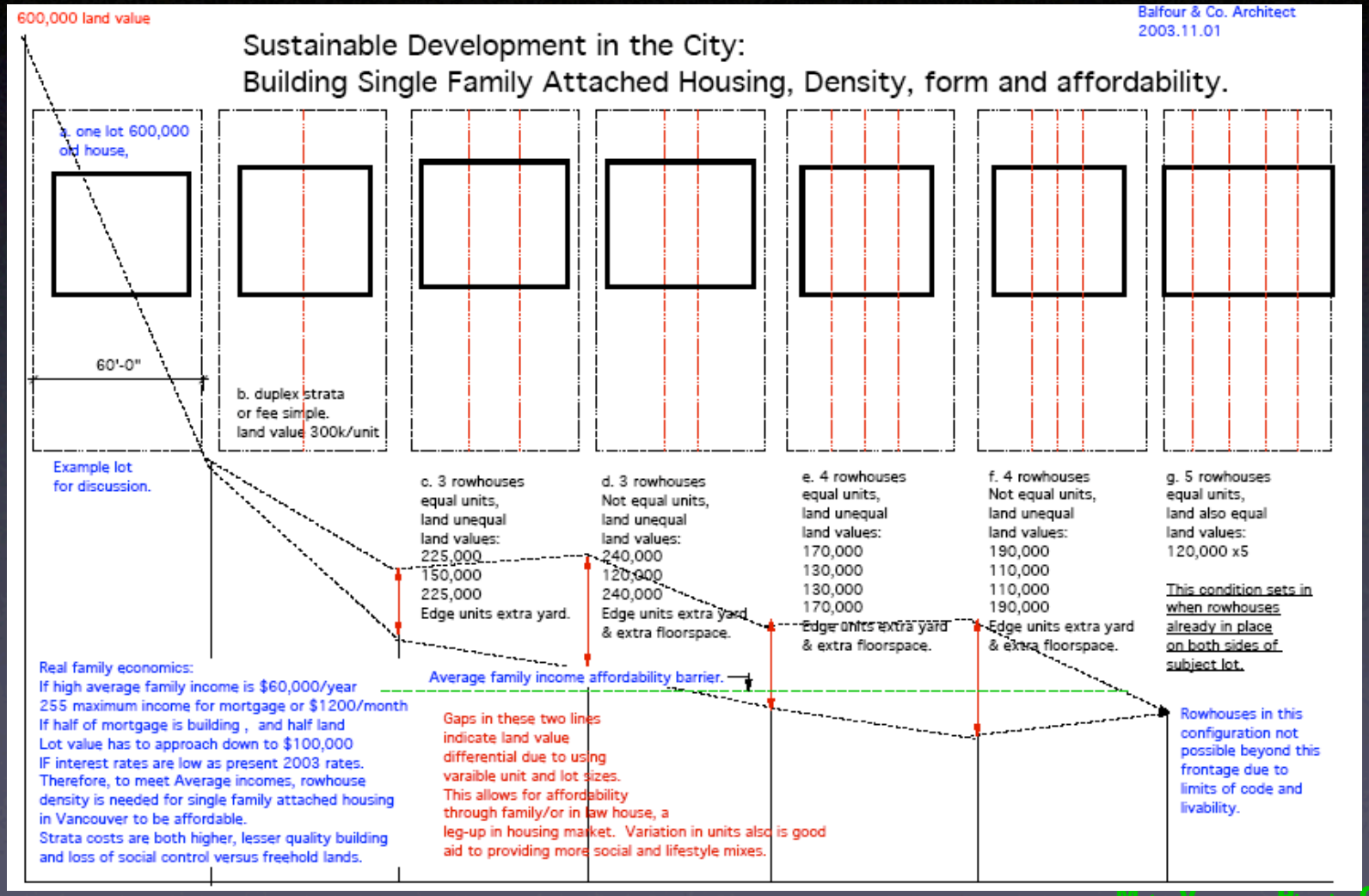


- Rowhouse, fee simple attached single family is the most common use in cities world-wide but missing from Metro Vancouver.
- Apartment base townhousing with gardens under other units increases livable options.

Ownership & Eco-density

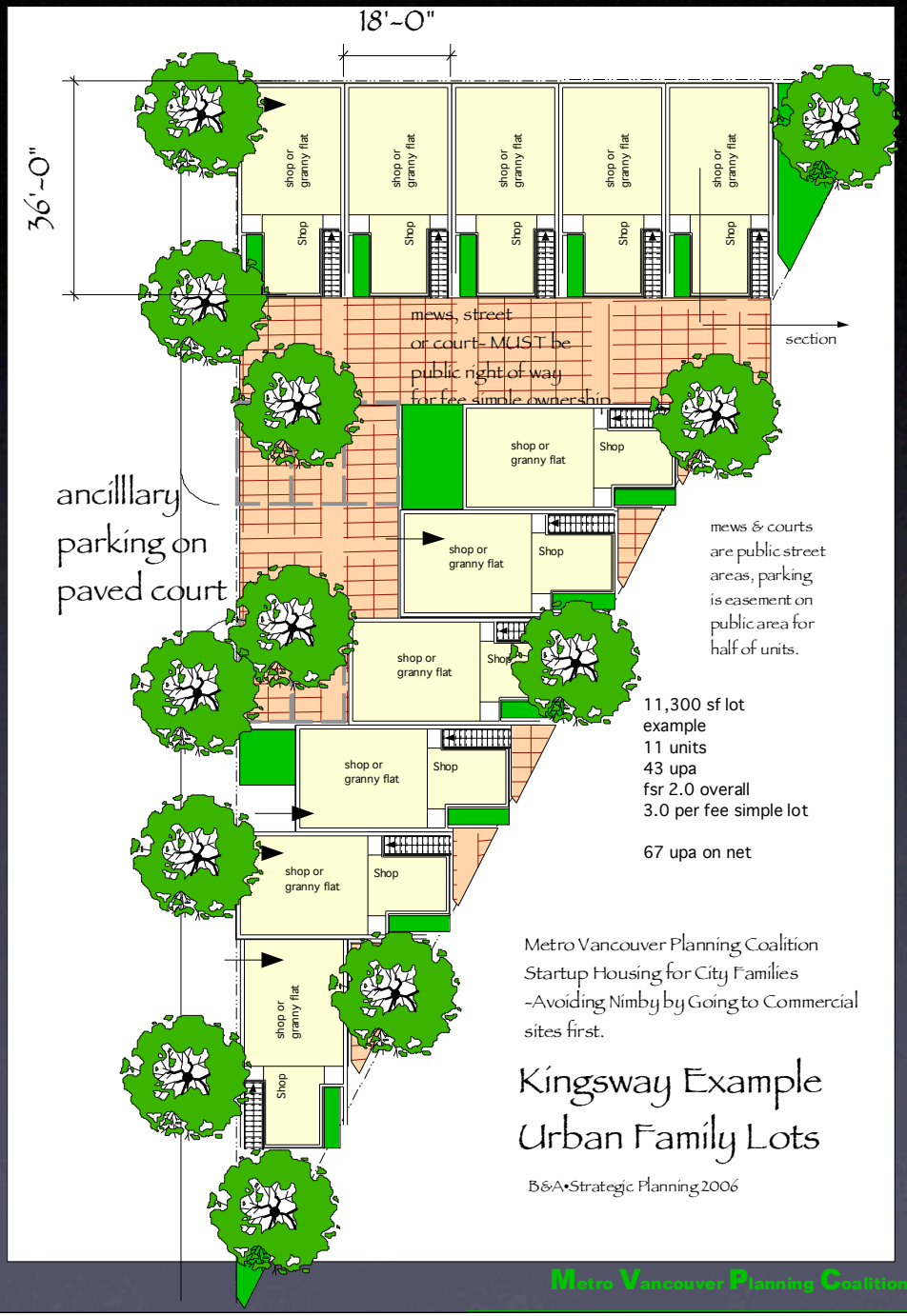


Infill & Affordability



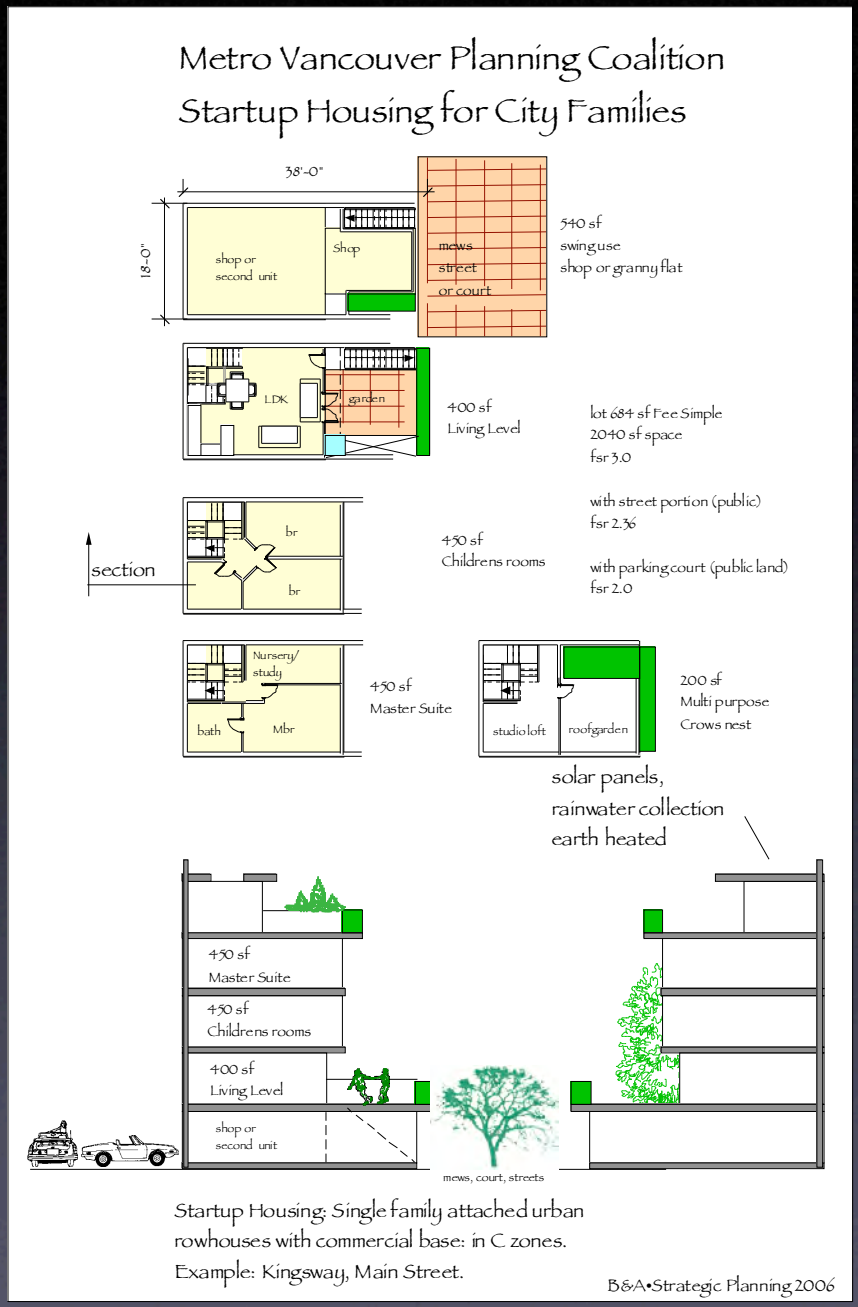
Family Small Lots in Commercial Villages

- 40 upa single family lots & commercial base on mews: fee simple lots.

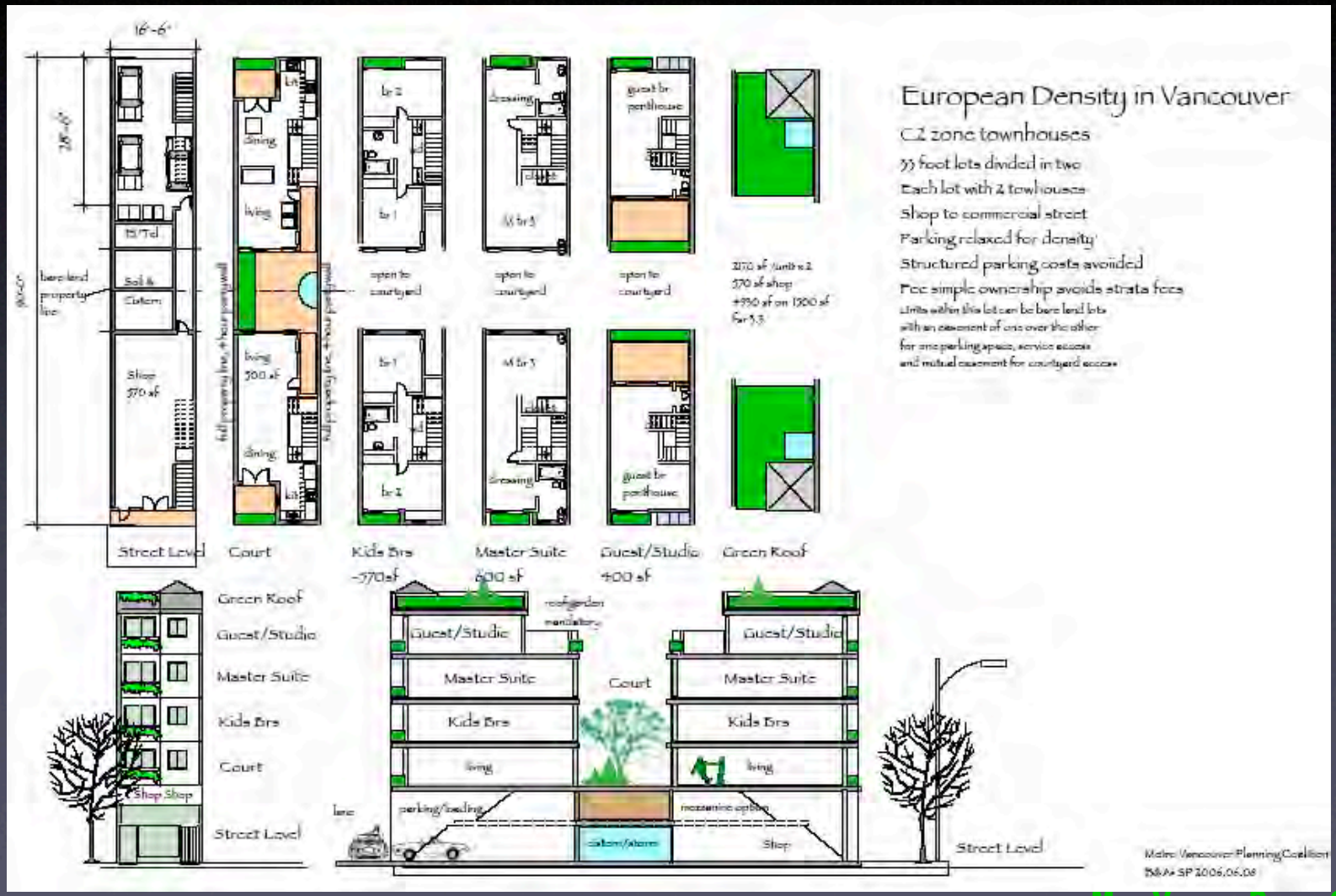


Learning from Old World Villages

- Not for everyone but why deny this kind of option?

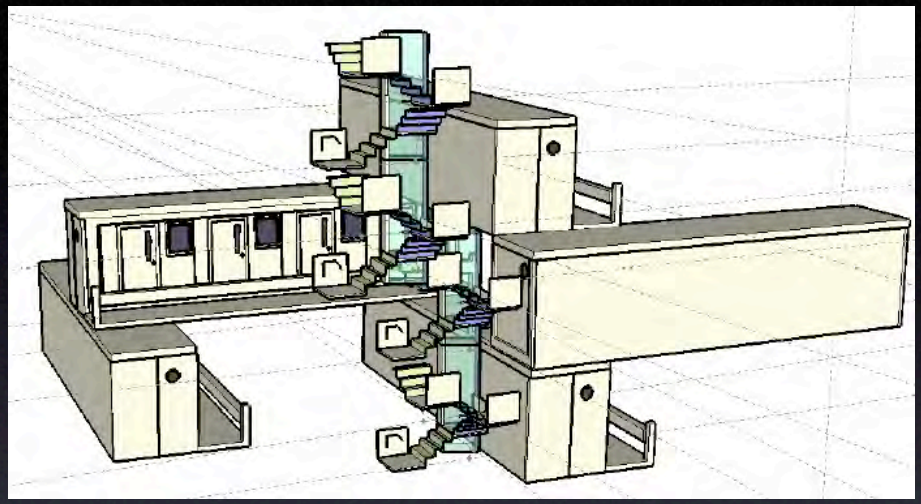


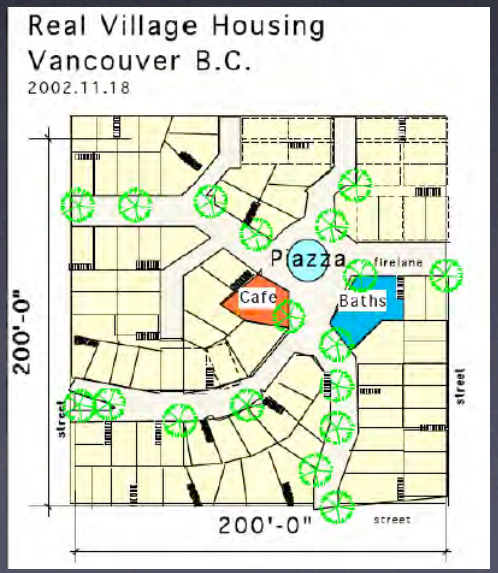
Small C lot, big house.



Urban Ranch-house

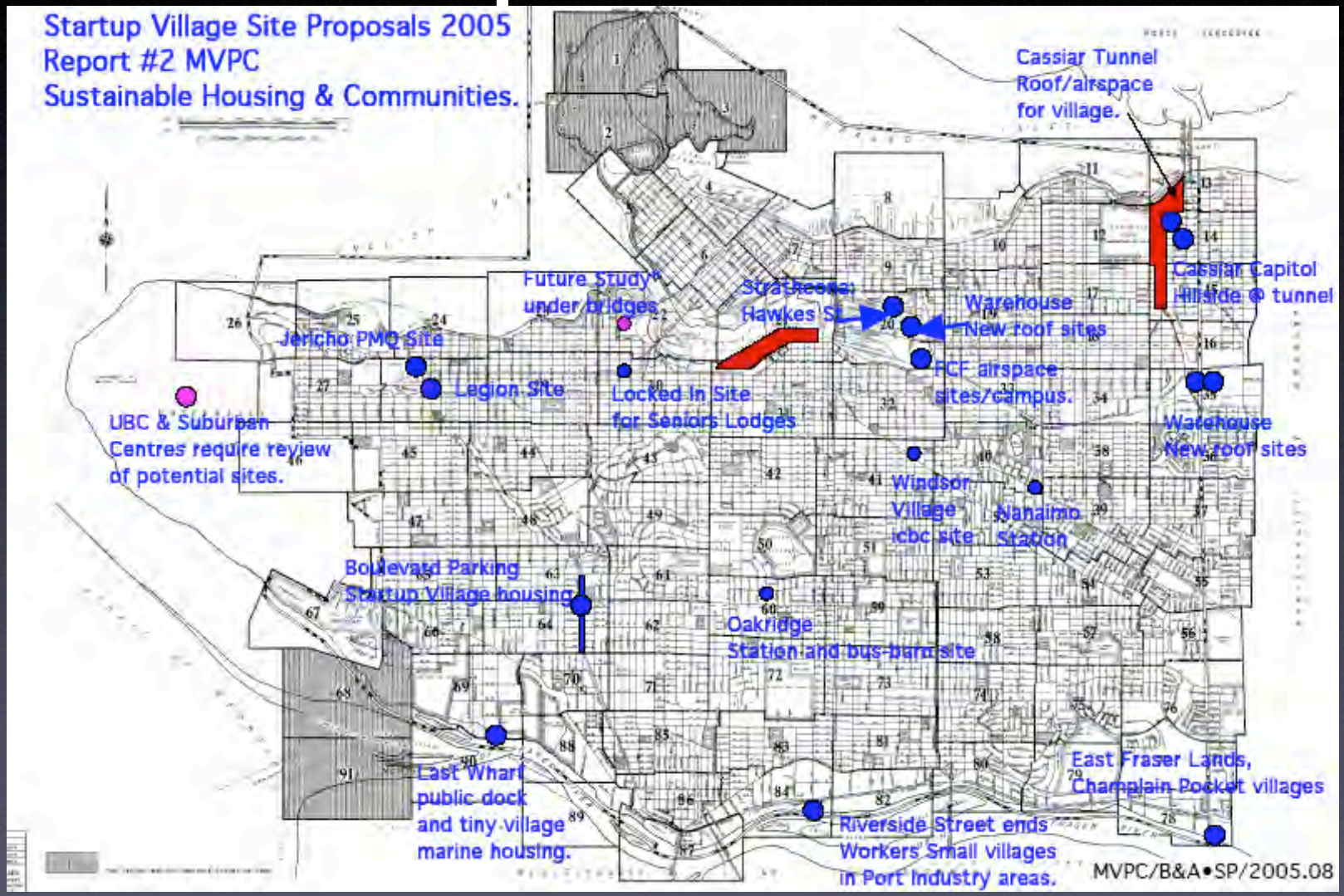
Housing the Homeless

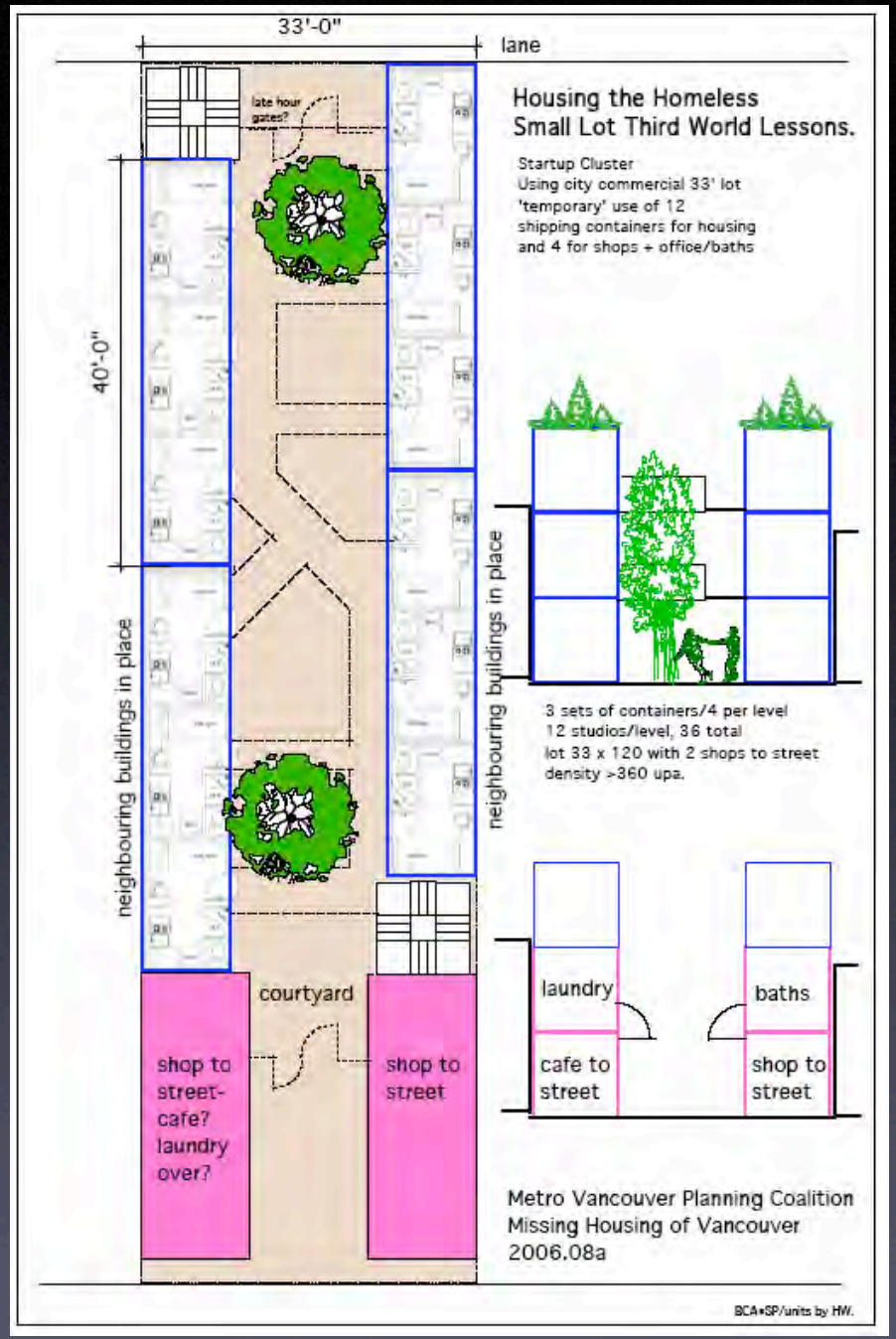




- Startup Villages at 100 units per acre but only 2 to 3 floors high, all on village streets makes housing affordable for all. (MVPC 1994)
- Reuse: such as containers now stockpiled here due to trade imbalance: an example of adaptive re-use.

Startup Candidates





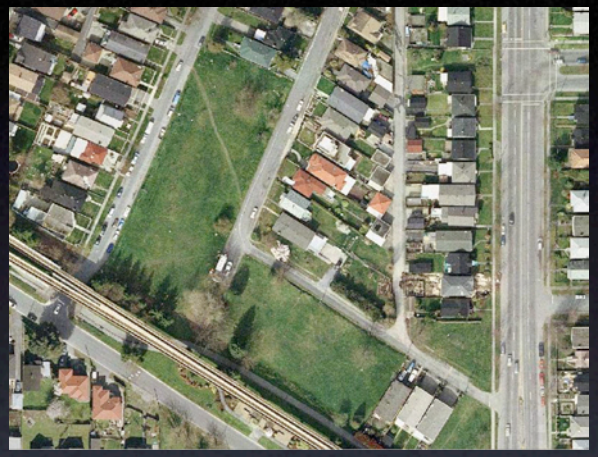
Recycling Containers+

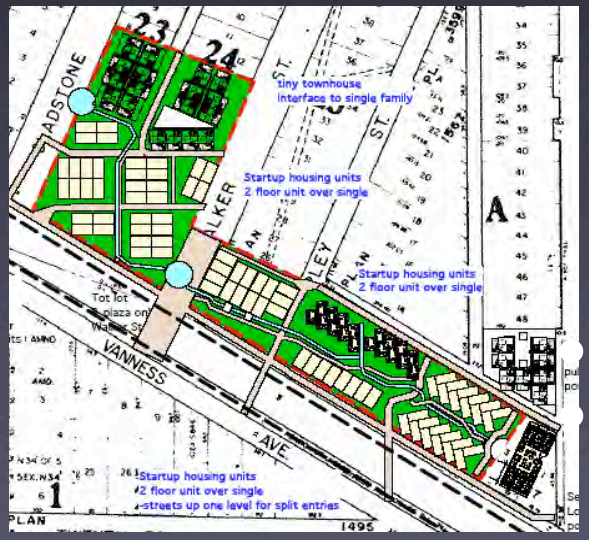
- Just one small thing to make use of idle assets.
- A major form of reuse in 3rd World
- No end to your imagination???

Public Land-Hidden Assets

- city owned lands: provide now for Startup Villages
- Integrate all level of government lands in land bank for integrated community plans
- Move new growth to hillside townsites
- Liberate airspace for new town & village developments
- Results: cut our urban footprint in half.

Example: Nanaimo Station



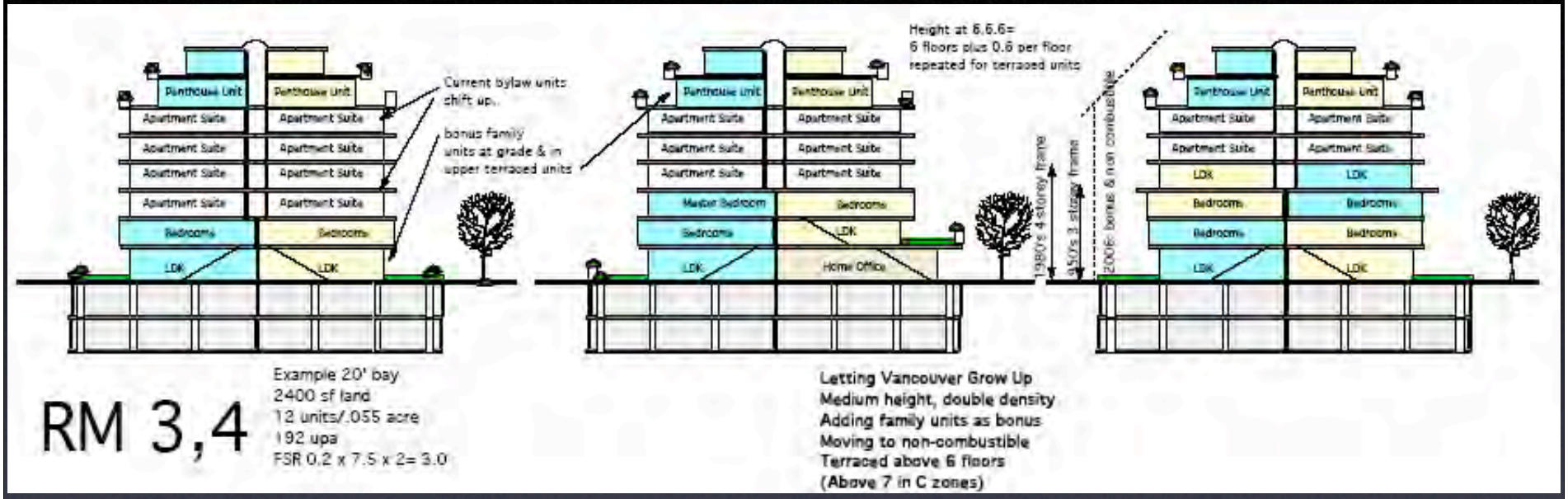


Startup Village/
Startup Housing

Where to start?

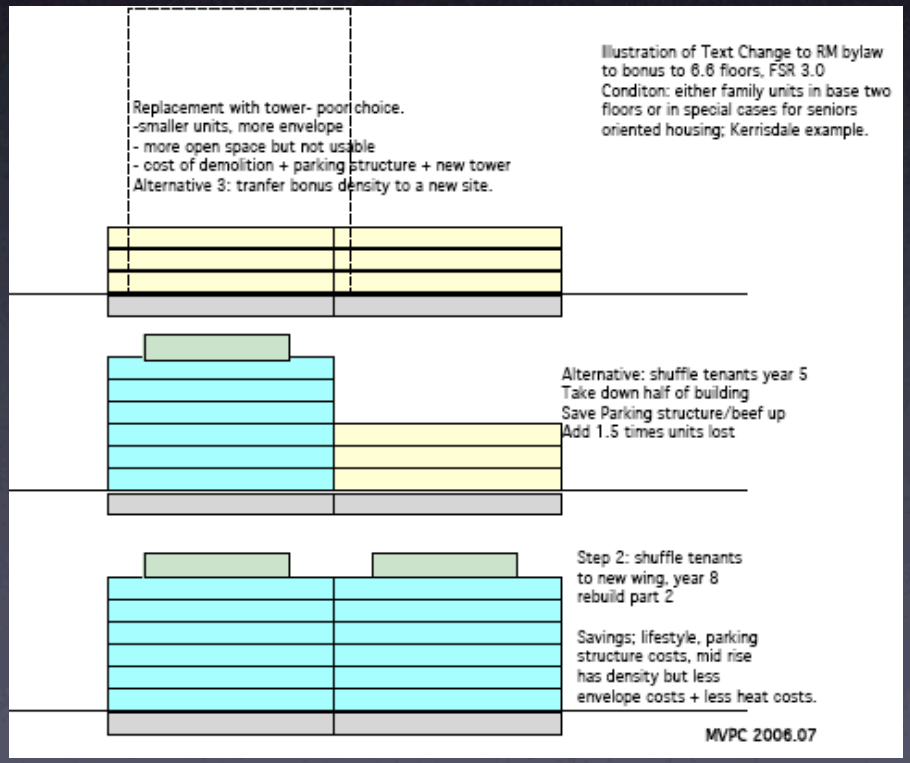
- Avoid area planning which targets areas of change & provokes unreasonable opposition.
- Use planning but don't wait for plans:
- Target bylaw amendments to make our zoning & policy papers move from land waste to Real Sustainable forms of housing & city.

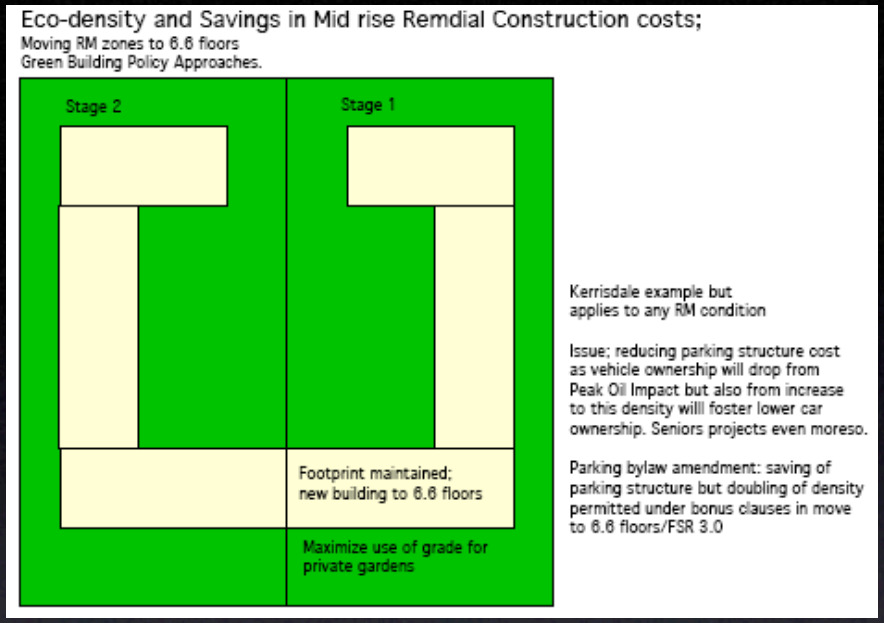
Sustainable Apartments



- Move RM zoning from 4 floors of frame to 6.6 floors in non-combustible on condition of providing the family housing at grade.

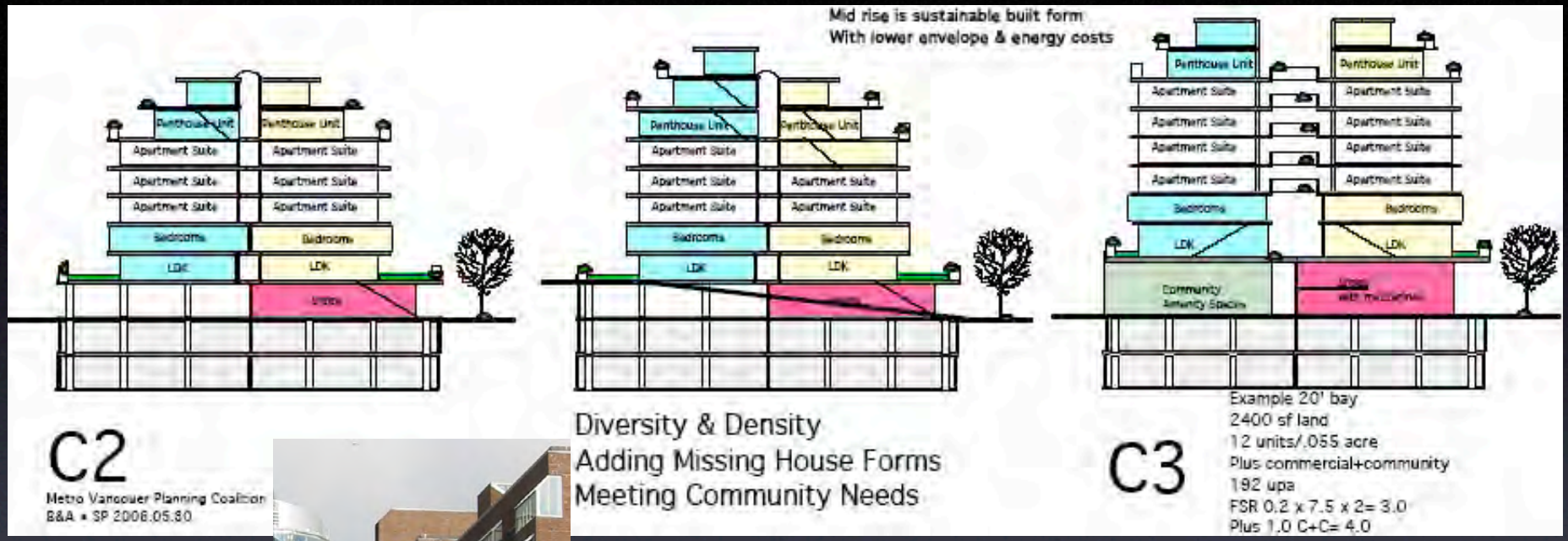
Remedial Sustainability

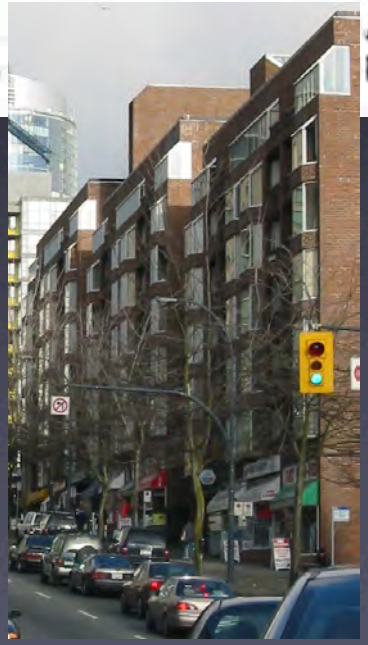




Some remedial infill in RM zones might use existing under-structure bu double density in new mid rise.

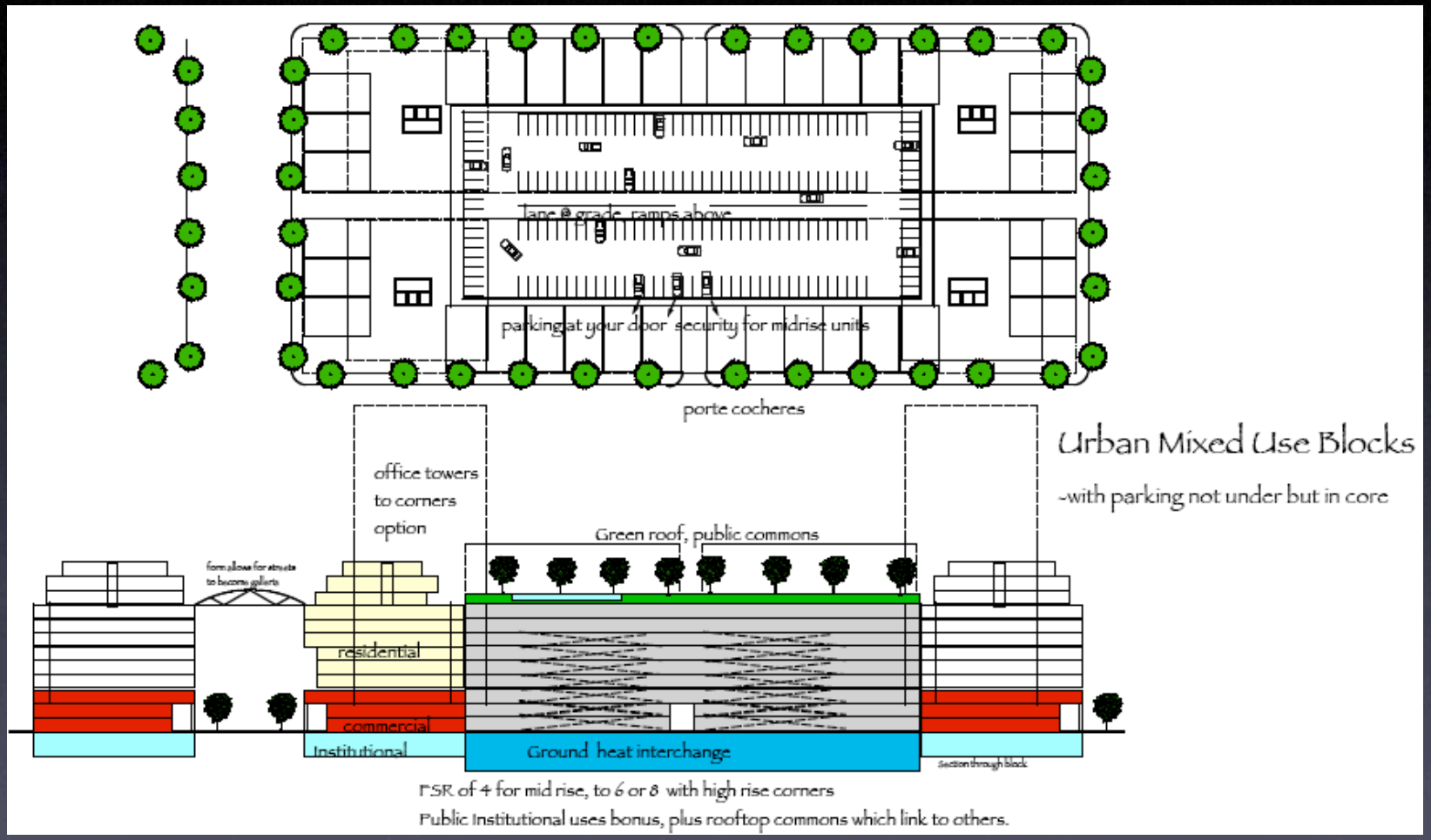
Real Urban Villages





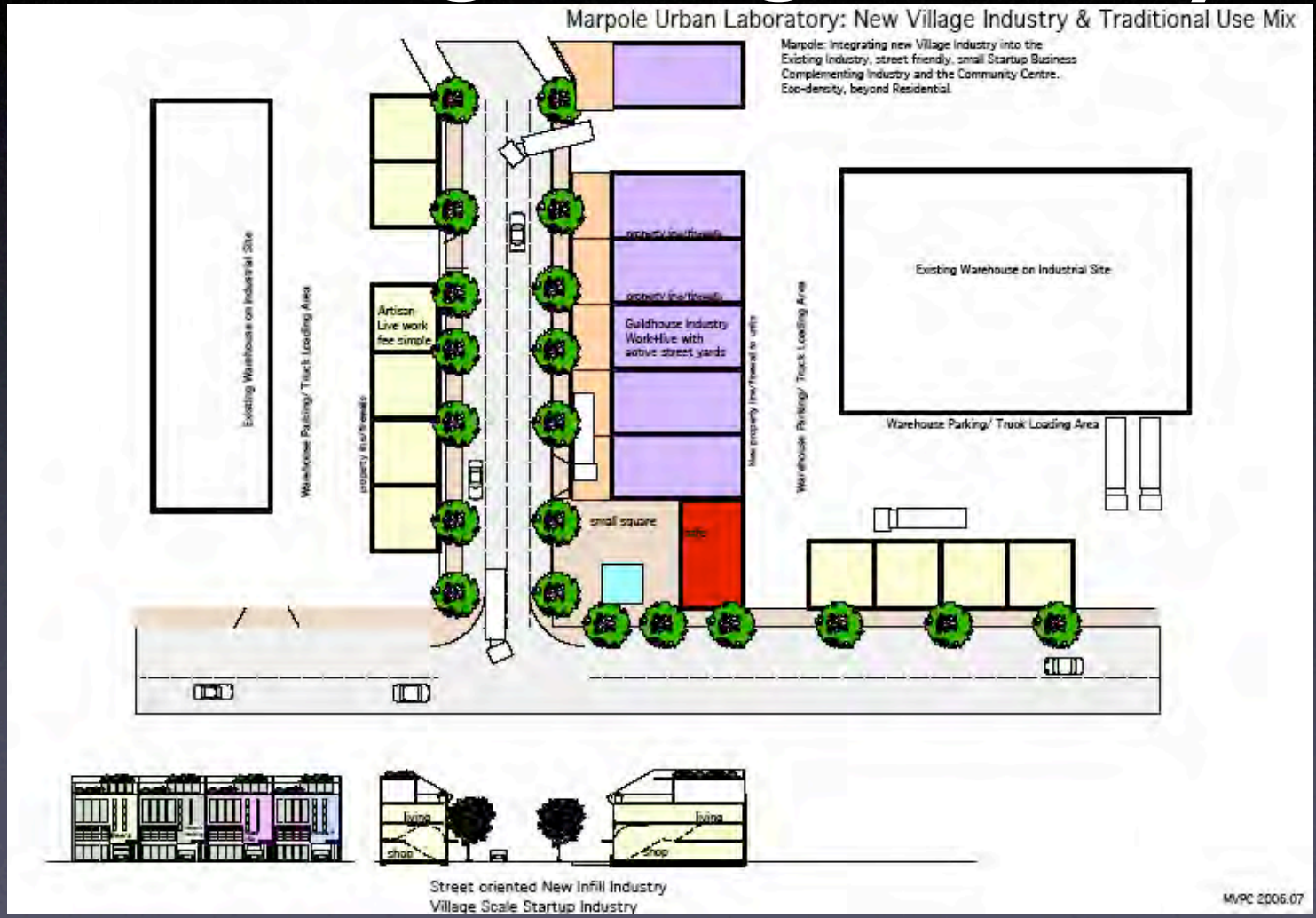
- Move Commercial zones outside core to 6.6 floors & add the missing shoulder density to make transit & village commerce work.

Housing Hiding Mess?



Example: hiding warehousing, industry, using current wasted setbacks to big boxes.

Reintegrating Industy

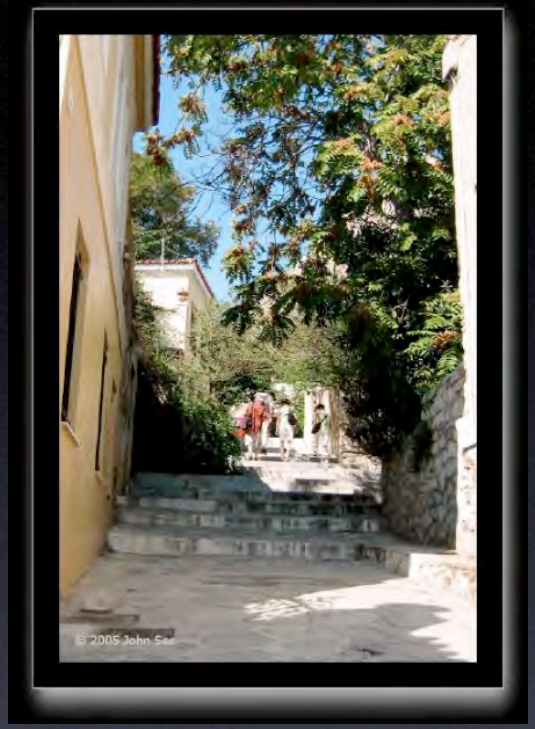


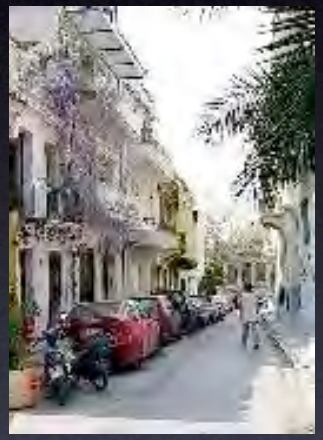
Triage: Downside Assets

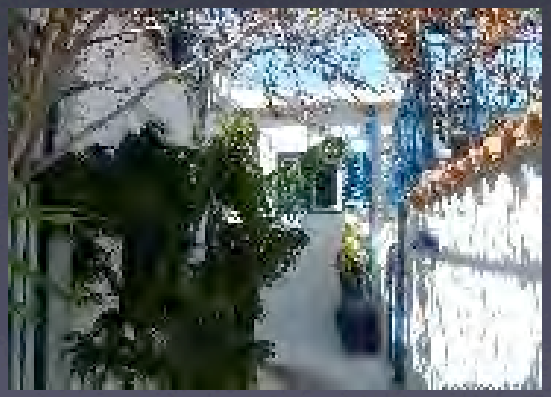
- Be prepared for areas of density reversal;
- Make these area public assets, cushion the blow to those adversely affected.
- New green use on edges will form part of the new relocalized economy.
- Look to alternate forms of ownership & communal living to protect both land & the community.
- Learn from the Third World.....this time.

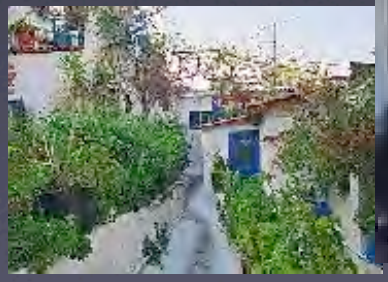
Land Conservation= Sustainable Community

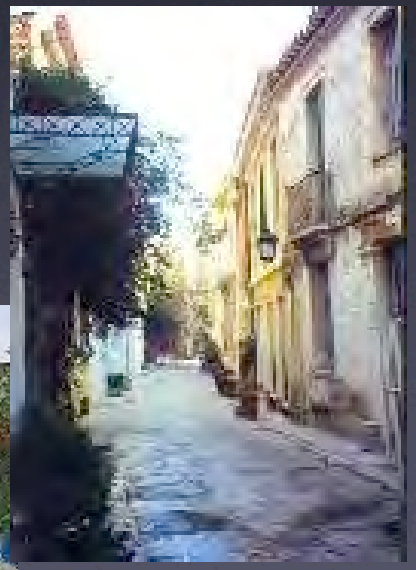
House, Garden, Street
Village in the City











OUR Social Planning

- Economic adjustment to a Lean Market economy in the Post Cheap Oil era will mean we will have 'a new poor'.
- Cooperation at every level will be absolutely necessary to maintain city and local well being.

The Quantum Shift

Rebuilding Our Cities in Sustainable Patterns

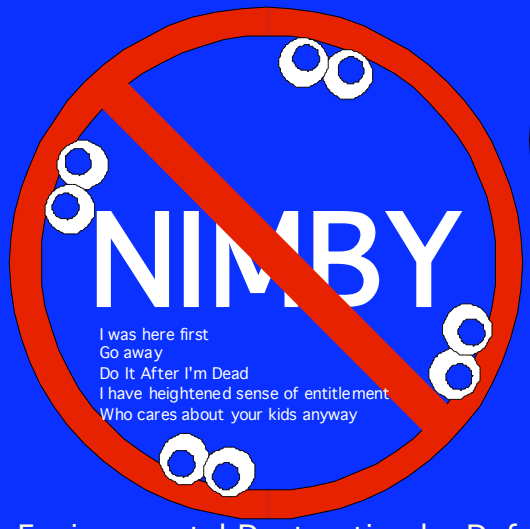
BARRIERS TO A SUSTAINABLE CITY & HOUSING

Failure- of the City Itself

Unsustainable City
Unaffordable Housing
Resource Wasting Process
The 25% Surcharge.

School Marm's Approach To Zoning

Unaffordable, Unsustainable Process



Environmental Destruction by Default

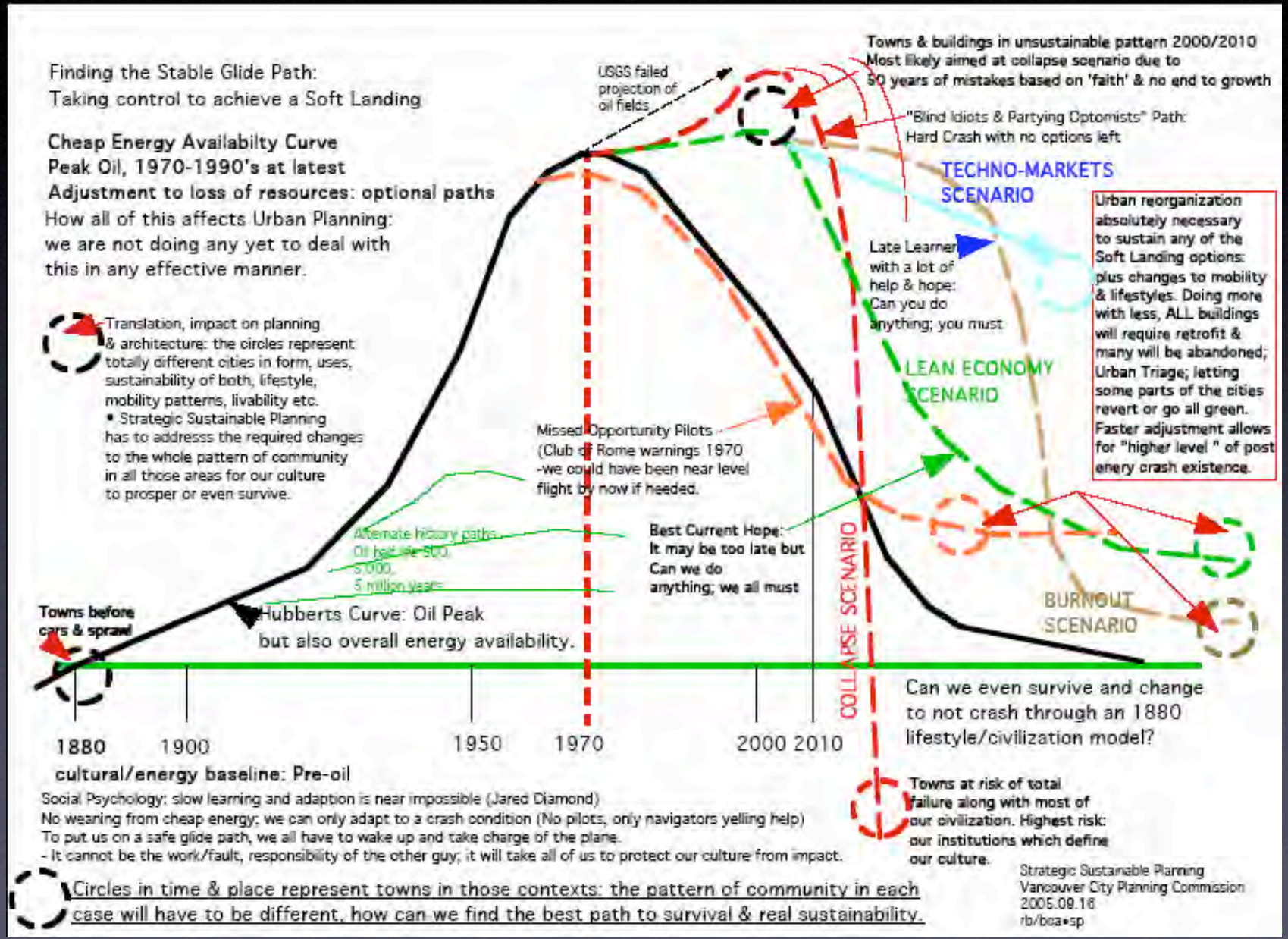
Failure of Institutions to Respond

Failure of Industry to Adapt

MVPC 2006

Metro Vancouver Planning Coalition

Reconfiguration of the City for Sustainability.



Hubbert's Curve & Cities

THE DEPLETION OF RESOURCES & THE IMPACT ON PATTERNS OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: THE NEED FOR LONG RANGE STRATEGIC SUSTAINABLE PLANNING

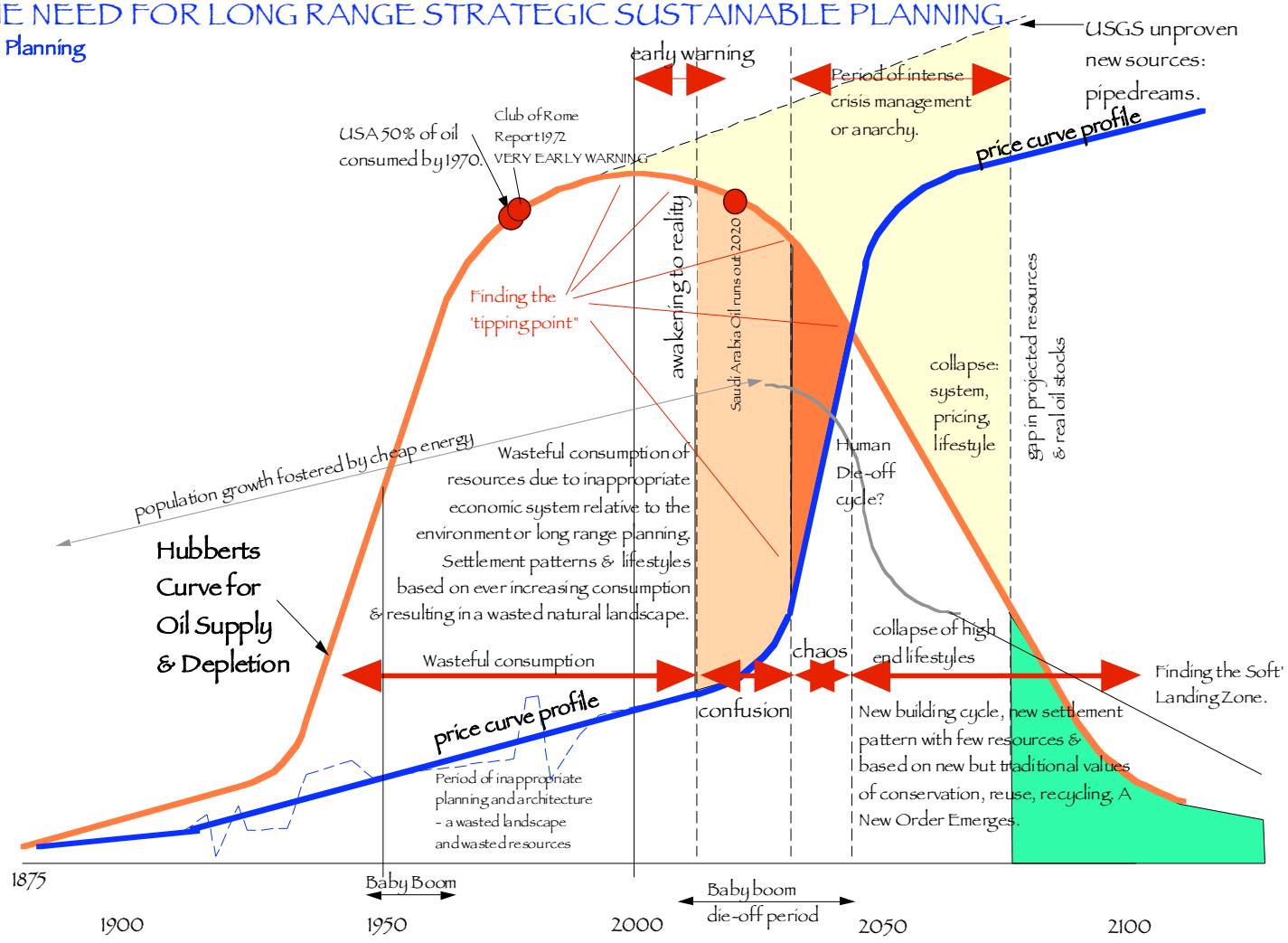
Balfour & Associates • Strategic Planning

2003.11, after Hubbert, Rees. rev 06.04

We are neglecting teh design of appropriate patterns of settlement & transportation systems for the fast approaching new reality of energy scarcity & resource depletion.

We need strategies to deal with the following new realities:

- settlements will tend to be located in temperate climate zones & on higher ground.
- large sections of our existing cities will be abandoned as they are unsustainable. New appropriate concentrations of population will emerge as physical long range interaction becomes minimal.
- food production will return to restricted smaller areas and serving local needs.
- mass transit wil be used for inter and intra city movement of people & goods.
- settlements will be compromised of smaller towns, smaller houses & narrower streets.
- localized industry, farming & market return. Proximity to food production, social networks & natural reserves will mark points of new community.



Urban Laboratory: The Marpole Example

Eco Density & the Marpole Laboratory

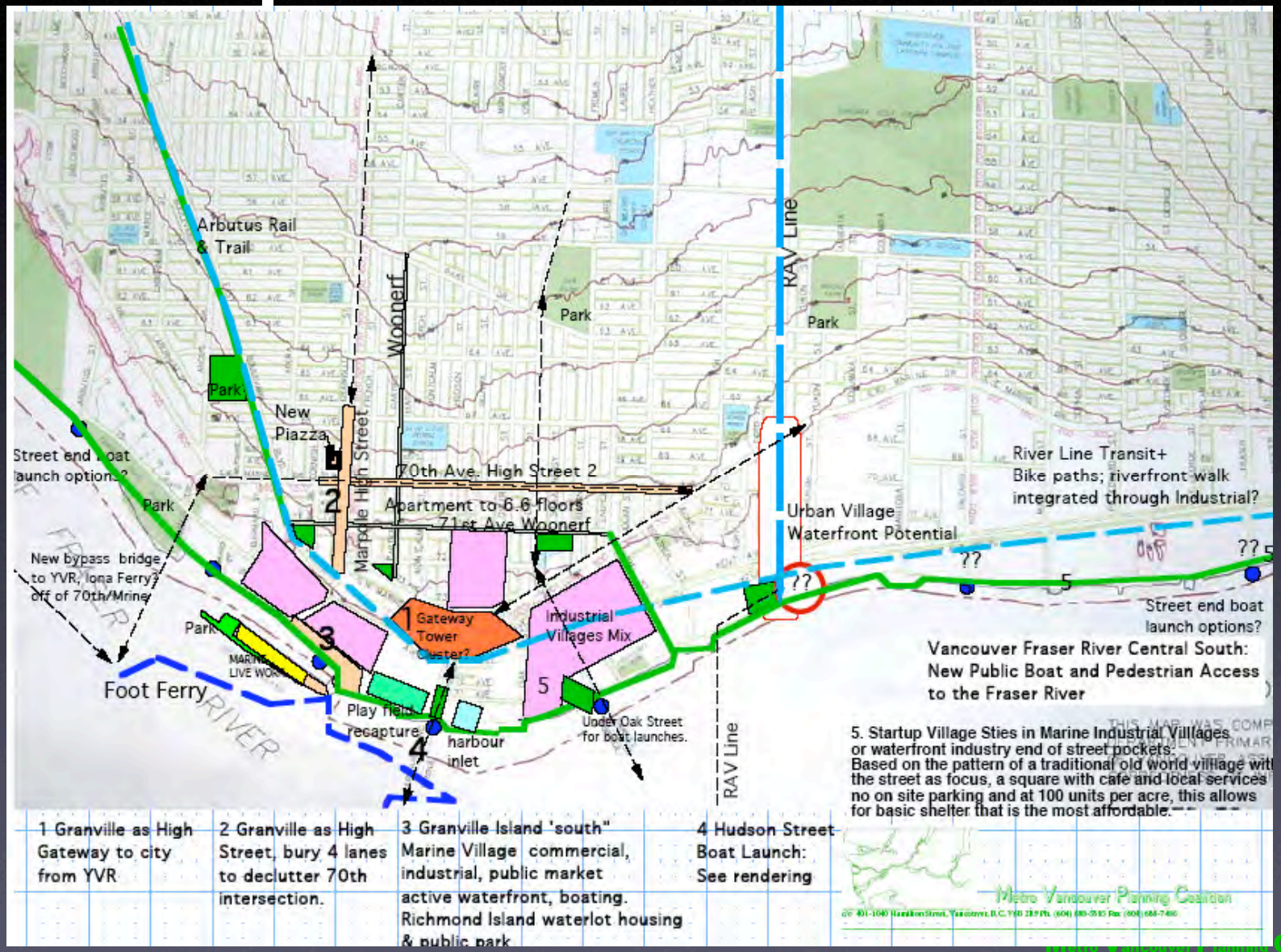
Marpole, Zoning with Text Amendments

1. Core Commercial: moving to mid rise density, mixed use; 6.6 floors
2. RM 3&4: bonus density to 3.0 FSR & 6.6 floors for adding family base level townhouse units with gardens. Non combustible, durable buildings.
3. RT converting to rowhouse with fee simple subdivisions
4. RS: subdivision bylaw amendment on smaller frontages and lot areas to densifiy but with fee simple ownership of attached single family houses --controlled through subdivision bylaw text amendment and frontage control district map; conversion of arterials first, or by sub-district. (Not zoning ∂)

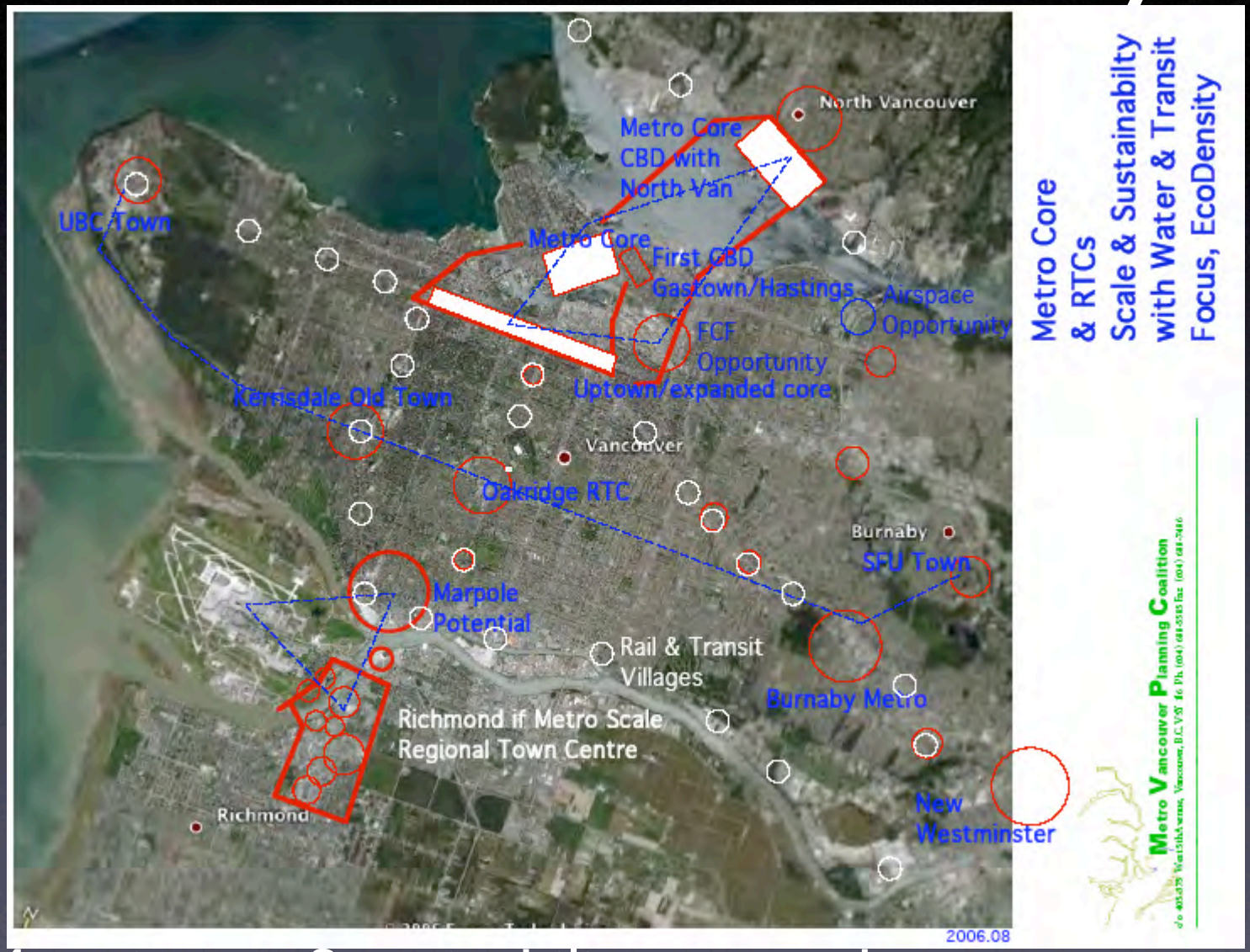
5. Richmond Island, part of Richmond; park, marine live work
6. Granville Island South Concept: mixing marine, artisan housing, retail, cultural, guild house mixed use small lot subdivision for startup industries
7. Marpole Village industry; adding smaller scale frontage and edge uses to streets for both local scale and new local industry for Marpole
8. Making the riverfront and other public realm areas integrated & livable.
9. Capturing industrial airspace for other public benefits; Translink example
10. Controlling big box & highway commercial to make them more sustainable and integrated into the community.
11. Rethinking all riverfront industry options for more traditional & community oriented scale and mix of uses.
12. Looking for integration with Richmond & YVR river functions.

MVPC 2006.07.23

Marpole OldNewTown

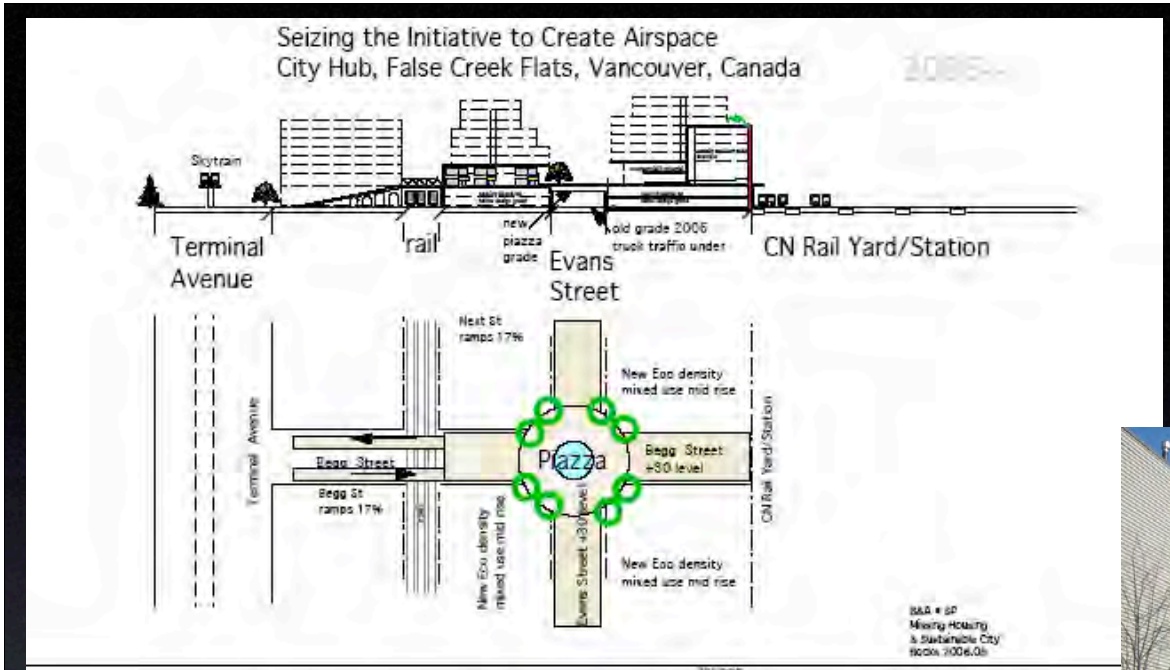


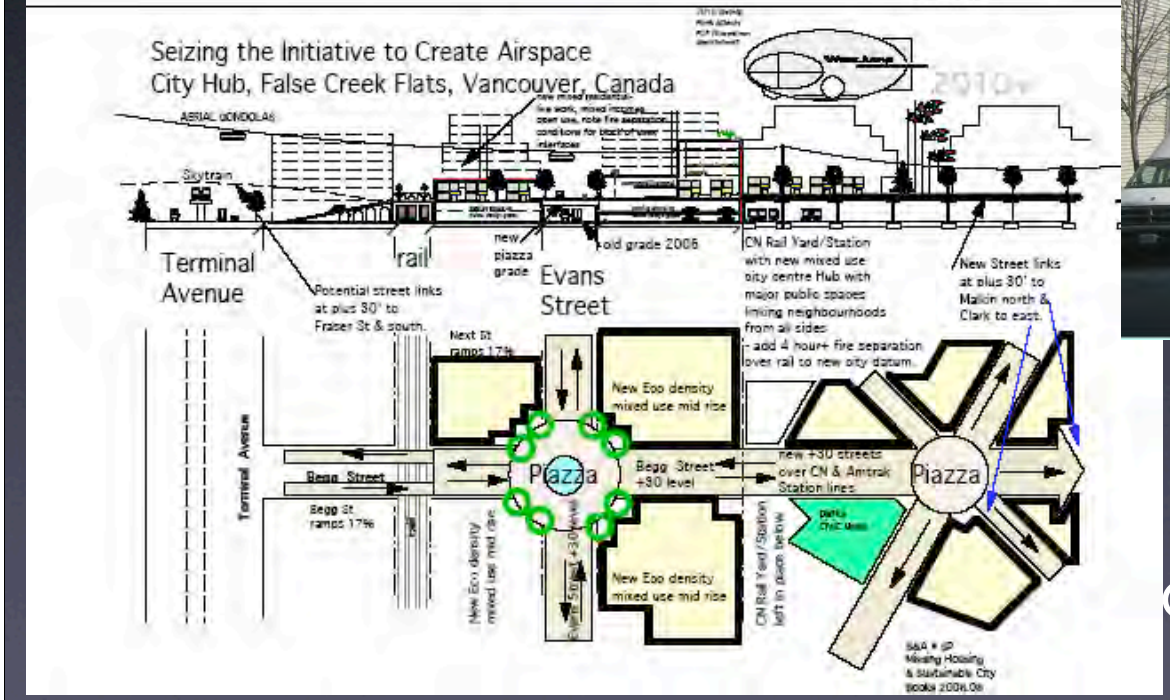
From Suburb to City



Mutation to Sustainability: new urban + new green

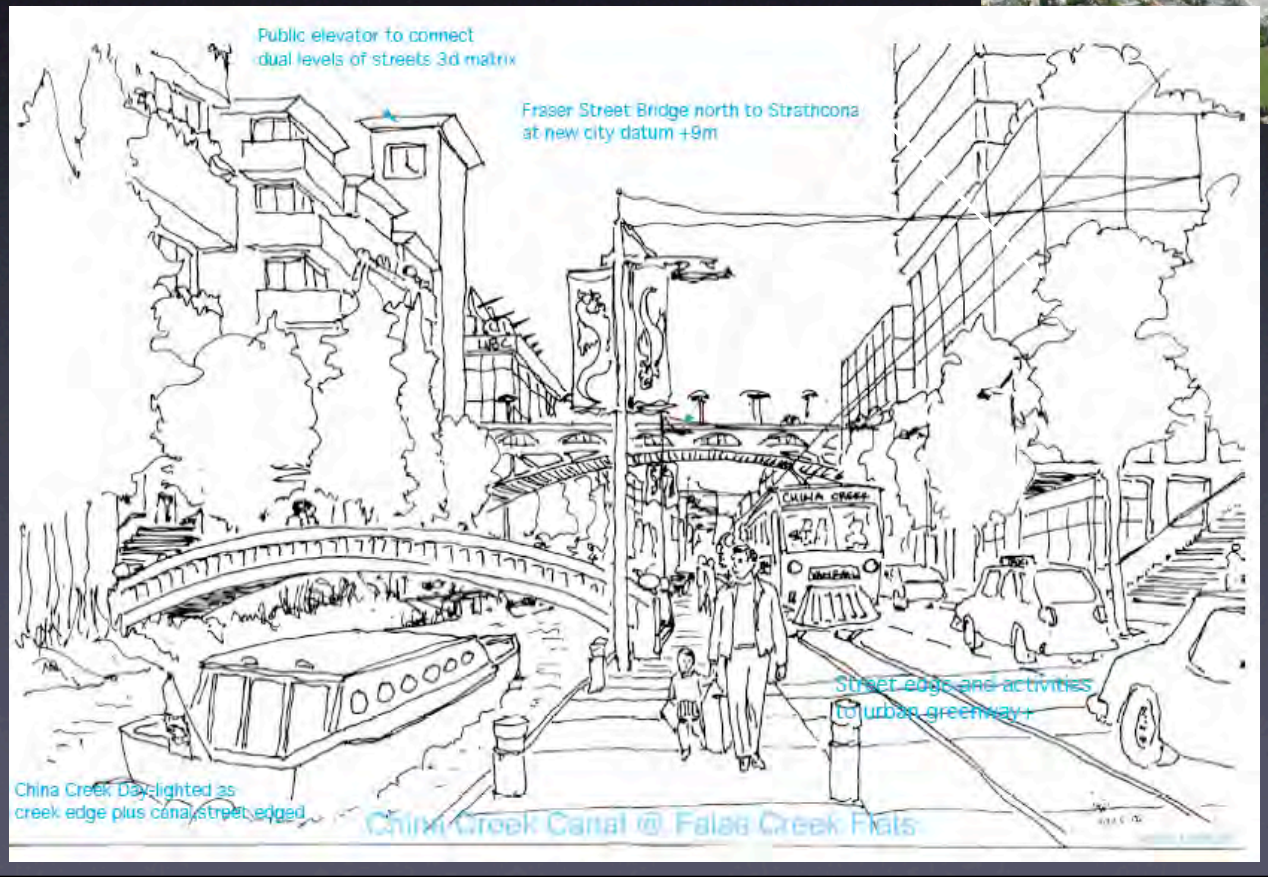
Airspace Townsites





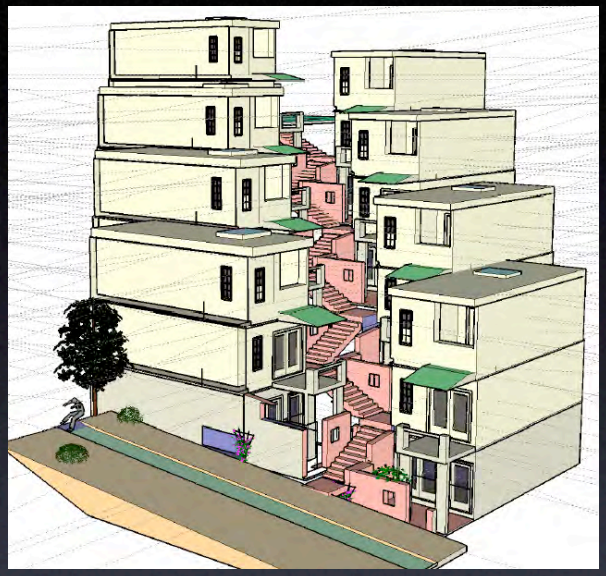
False Creek CN Example:
Others: Cassiar Interchange
Abbotsford rail corridor
Coquitlam, Mission, North Van

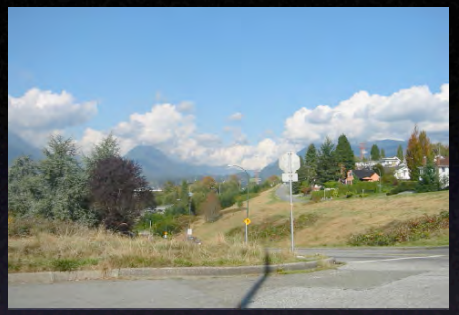
Airspace Centre?



- Hole in donut
- 160 acres+

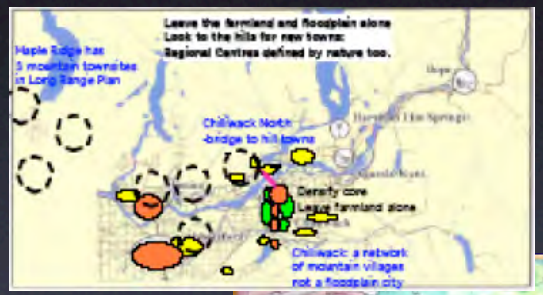
Airspace Town: Cassiar





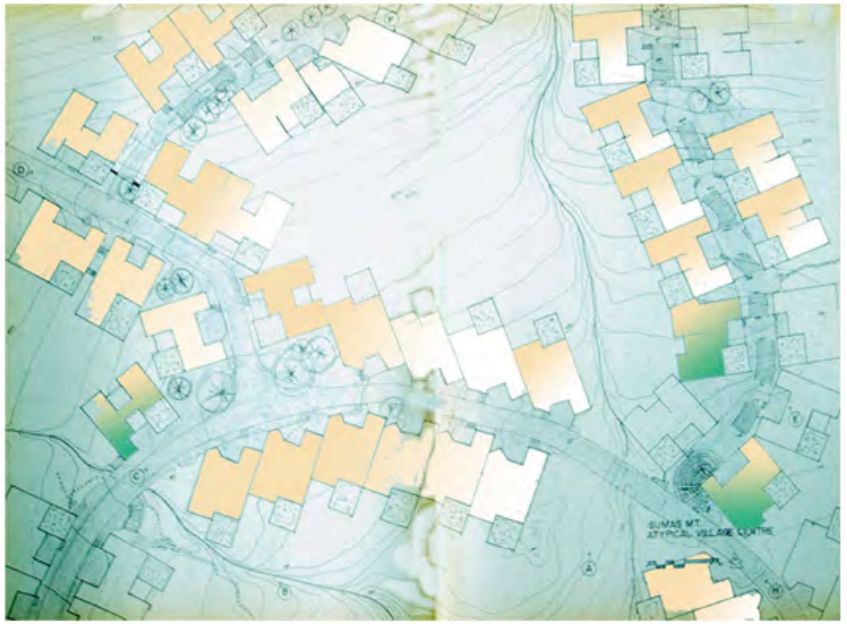
- 1.Spaces Left Over After Planning (SLOAP)
- 2. But also: whole SLOAPs consolidated.
- 3. Cassiar: 10,000 units, area equal to South East False Creek!

Airspace & Hill-towns

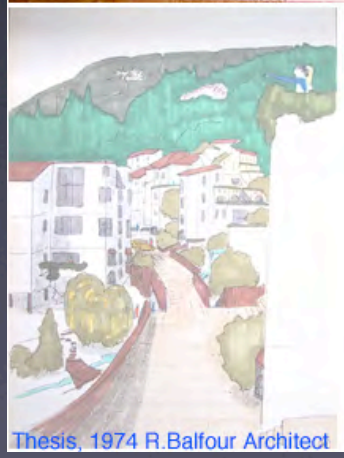


- Shift growth to North Shore & Howe Sound mountain villages and new towns.
- Hill newtowns of valley north shore; Burke mountain, Silver Valley, Thorn Hill, Mission Hills, Harrison Hills
- Hill towns of south shore: Sumas Mountain, Chilliwack mountain, Ryder Lake, Majuba & Vedder Mountain

75% of BC- hilltowns+



Sumas Mountain Newtown: Urban Villages, interlaced with Parks



Thesis, 1974 R.Balfour Architect

Vancouver North

- Mountain Villages, a B.C. New Tradition.
- What are we waiting for, a flood?

Maritime city: housing on water? Why NOT?

Maritime Service Villages for the New Maritime Nomads?

Conclusion:

- We do not have a land shortage but an imagination shortage.
- the Burrard Pennisula could comfortably contain the Metro population with room to spare and more green areas as well
- Reducing our footprint need not be painful but will yield major social & environmental benefits
- This requires new attitudes & cooperation

ECOLOGY

ECO-DENSITY

ECO-DENSITY

ECO-DENSITY

ECO-DENSITY

ECO-DENSITY

DENSITY

COMPASSION IN ARCHITECTURE, RESPECT FOR TRADITION HEALING THE WORLD SAVING THE ENVIRONMENT- WALKING SOFTLY & CARRYING A BIG RESPONSIBILITY