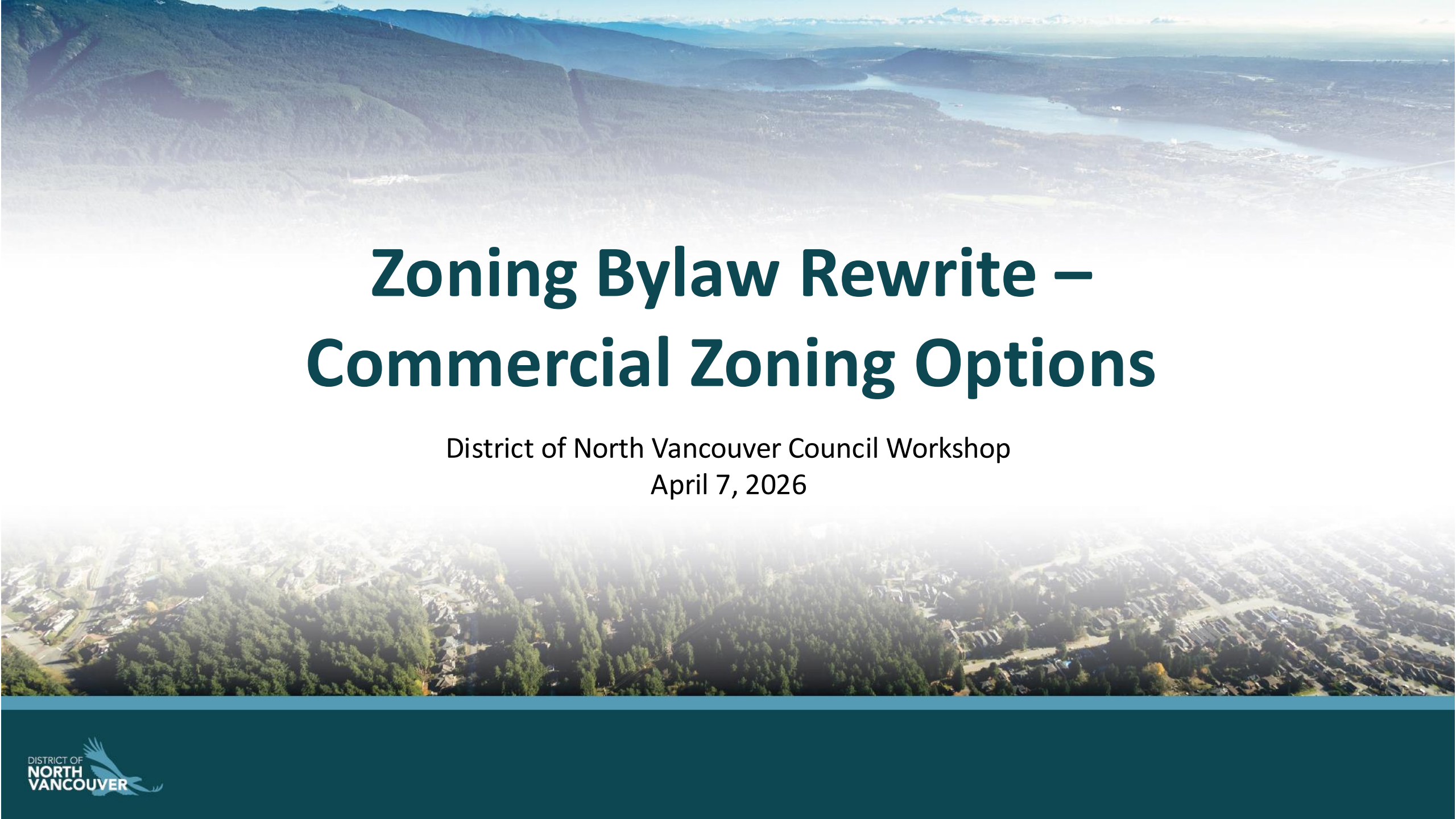


An aerial photograph of North Vancouver, showing a large body of water (False Creek) winding through a densely forested area. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a clear sky. The foreground shows a residential neighborhood with houses and trees.

Zoning Bylaw Rewrite – Commercial Zoning Options

District of North Vancouver Council Workshop
April 7, 2026

Introductions



McElhanney

Colton Kirsop

Division Manager, Planning
McElhanney



PLANNING
DESIGN
ENGAGEMENT

Adam Mattinson

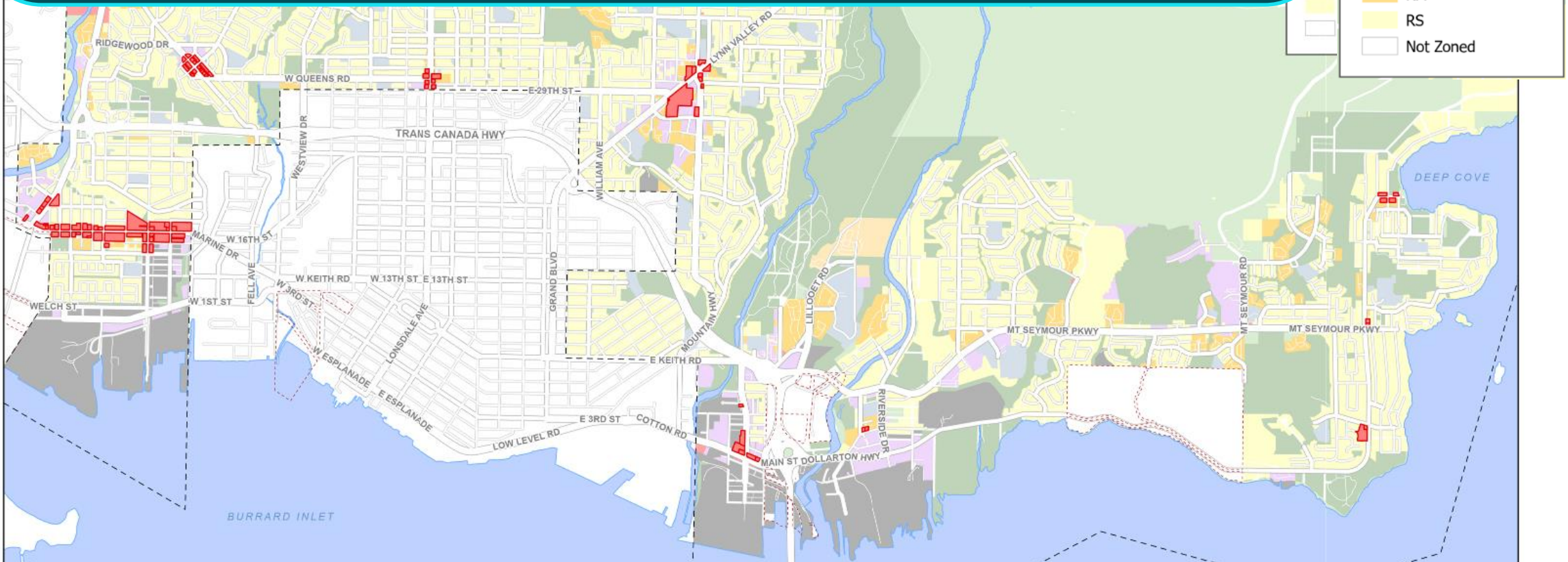
Associate, West Coast Lead
B&A Studios

Agenda

Returning with the Information Council Requested

- Overview of the District's Commercial Areas
- Information on Commercial Areas
 - Businesses in District Commercial Zones (Section 1 of the Report)
 - Uses and Where they are Permitted (Sections 2 and 4)
 - Case Studies of Vibrant Commercial Areas (Sections 3 and 5)
 - Business Perspective (Section 6)
 - Impacts of non-conformance (Section 7)
- Options for regulating Commercial Zones (Section 8)
- Next Steps

Today's discussion will shape the future commercial zones: General Commercial Zone(s) to be applied immediately; and Core (higher density) Commercial Zone(s) to be applied at time of Rezoning



General Commercial Zone(s) apply immediately at Bylaw Adoption / Enactment

Recommendations:

- Mixed Use – Commercial/ Residential
- Requires commercial uses at grade
- Permits a mix of commercial uses at grade
- Permits residential above



General Commercial

3 - 4 storeys / 1.2 - 1.75 FSR

Minimum 1 storey
Commercial

PERMISSIVE

Replaces: C1, C1A, C1L, C2, C3, C3A, C9, C10, VC-DC, VC-G

Is applied now

Core Commercial Zone(s) (higher density) apply as properties redevelop

Recommendations:

- Mixed Use – Commercial/ Residential
- Requires 2 storeys of commercial uses
- Permits residential above

Option:

- Opportunity to curate ground floor uses where upstairs or side street space is added



Core Commercial

6 + storeys / 2.5 FSR and up

Minimum 2 storeys
Commercial Uses

**RESTRICTIVE – Could restrict
ground floor commercial uses**

Replaces: Comprehensive
Development (CD) Zones

**Is applied as properties
rezone**

1. Businesses in District Commercial Zones

1540

Total Businesses

on commercially zoned
land in the District (2025)

349

Vibrant Uses

Food & Beverage (150)
and Retail (199)

1004

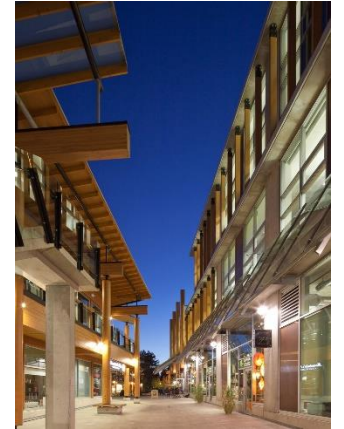
Supportive Uses

Health Care (331)
Office (332)
Personal Service (107)
and others

15% vs 6%

5-Year Growth

in Supportive vs. Vibrant Uses



Economic resilience & business diversity

Why Diversity Matters

- 2/3 of District businesses serve local residents
- They need to locate near population to be viable
- Supportive uses bring customers to shopping areas



2. Ongoing regulatory approach

* Print Out Available

- Keeping what's working - Broader use class definitions introduced in 2011

- ✓ Broader definitions allow businesses to grow and evolve
- ✓ Updated language reduces social bias

Common Term	Zoning Use Category
Doctor	Health Services
Dentist	
Physiotherapist	
Optometrist	
Massage Therapist	
Hairdresser	Personal Service
Barber Shop	
Brow and Lash Bar	
Skin Care Clinic	
Beauty Salon	

4. Where Businesses Locate

- This attachment illustrates where uses/ businesses are permitted
- Commercial areas serve as the economic heart and the centre for provision of services to the community
- Commercial Zones need to include a broad variety of businesses

	Residential Zones								Commercial Zones				Tourism Zones		Industrial Zones		
USE	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	C1	C2	C3	C4	T1	T2	E1	E2	E3
Animal Care Services																	
Arts and Culture																	
Automobile Services																	
Camping Use																	
Cemetery and Funeral Services																	
Child Care Services																	
Civic Service																	
Coach House																	
Community Centre Use																	
Conservation Use																	
Contractor Service Use																	
Elementary and Secondary Schools																	
Emergency Services																	
EV Charging Hub																	
EV Charging Stations																	
Financial Services																	
Fitness and Sport																	
Food and Beverage Services																	
Freight and Fleet Operations Use																	
Fueling Services																	
Health Care Service																	
Home Occupation																	
Hotel Use																	
Fitness and Sport																	
Instructional Services																	
Live-work																	
Lock-off Suite																	
Log Salvage																	
Manufacturing, Artisan																	
Manufacturing, Large-Scale																	
Microbrewery																	
Natural Resort Use																	
Office Use																	
On-Location Filming Use																	

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3. Drivers of Vibrancy & 5 Case Studies



- Key Destinations



- Neighbourhood Character



- Pride of Place



- Public Realm



- Building Design



- Business Mix



Key Destinations

- A critical mass of reasons to visit and linger
 - Supermarkets
 - Major pharmacies
 - Transit nodes
 - Community centres, libraries
 - Attractions, beaches, hubs of activity
 - A mix of businesses

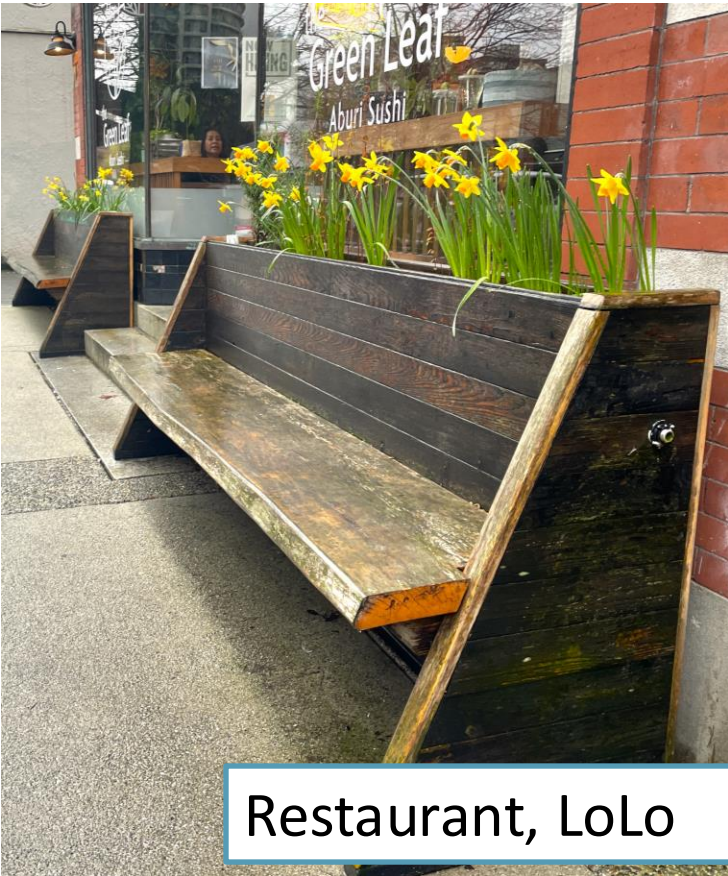


Neighbourhood Character

Design Guidelines, streetscape furniture, heritage preservation and public art are some of the ways neighbourhood character is celebrated and fostered



HA Pride of Place –Seating, Planting, Murals...



Restaurant, LoLo



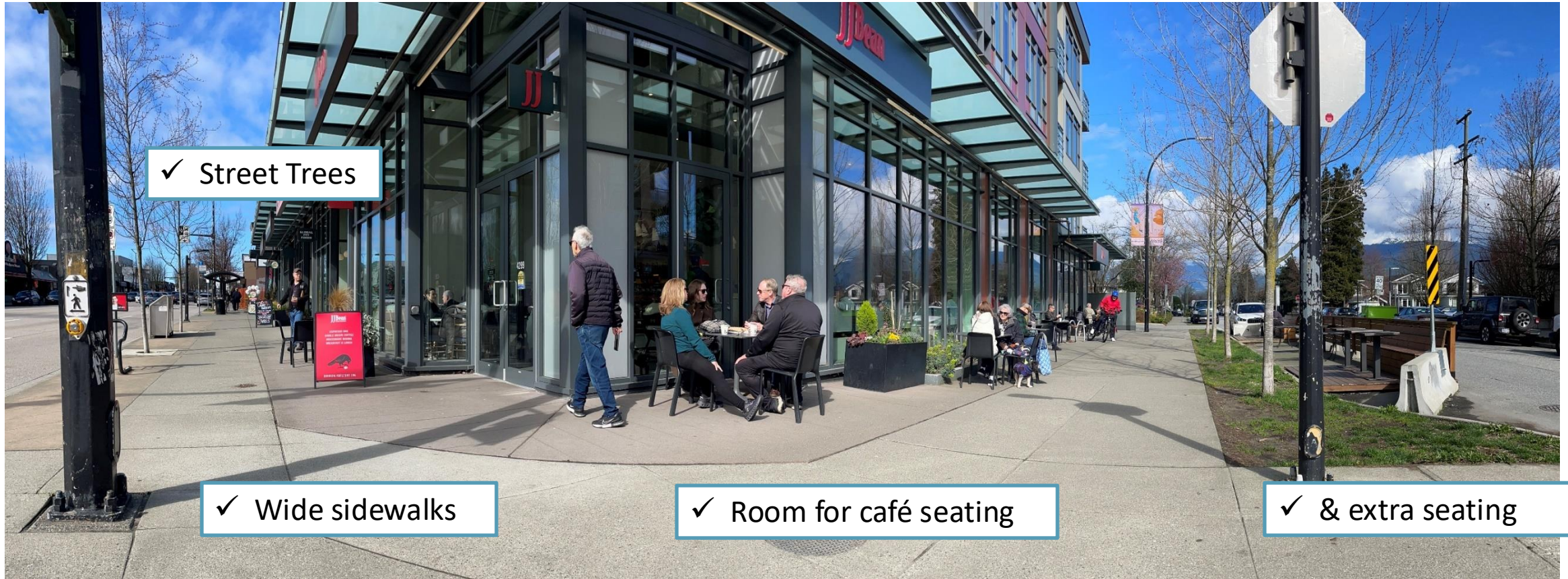
Personal Services, West 4th Ave



Health Services, Main St



Public Realm – Supports success





Public Realm – Outdoor seating areas



On street - West 4th, Vancouver



On a side street - Main Street, Vancouver



Building Design – Buildings Relate to the Street



Zoning ensures new buildings are constructed next to sidewalks (and parking is accessed from the rear)

Design Guidelines ensures buildings relate to the street and foster local character



Business Mix – All areas had a mix of uses



Financial Institutions, West 4th, Vancouver, Burnaby Heights, and Main Street

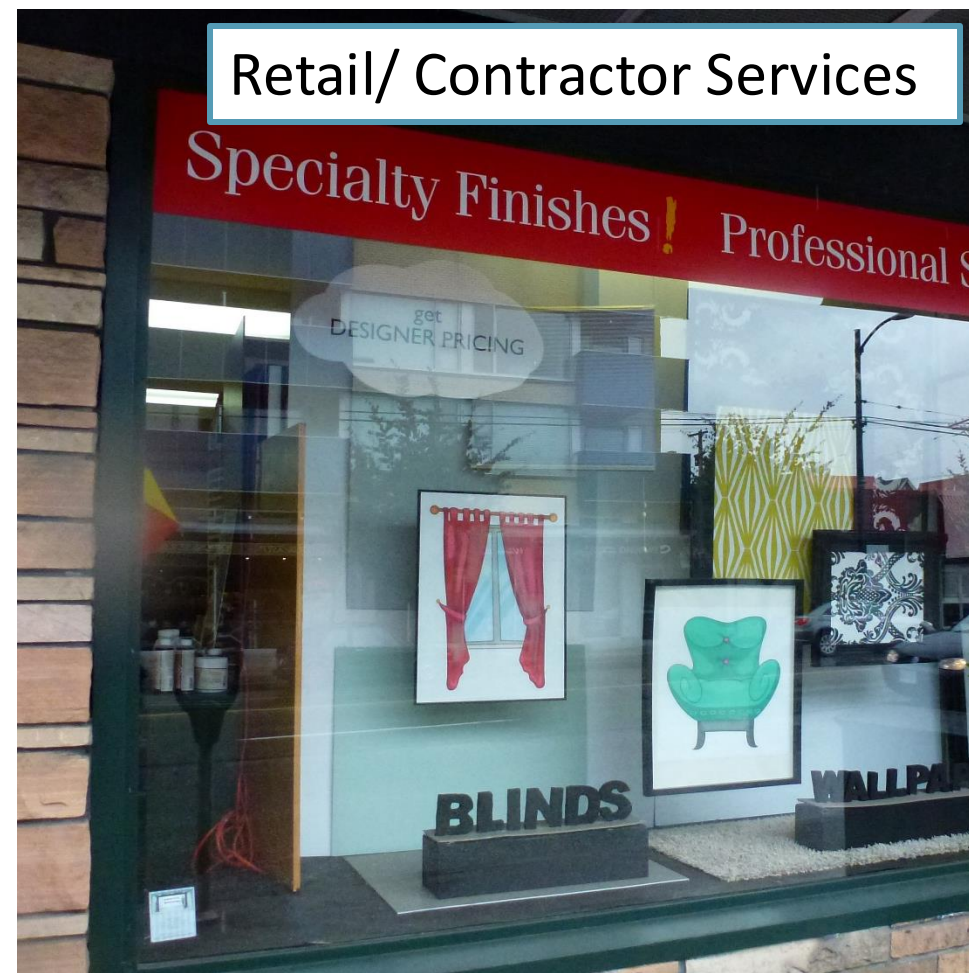
Business Mix – All areas had Dentists



Health Services, Lolo, Burnaby Heights, and Main Street



Animal Care

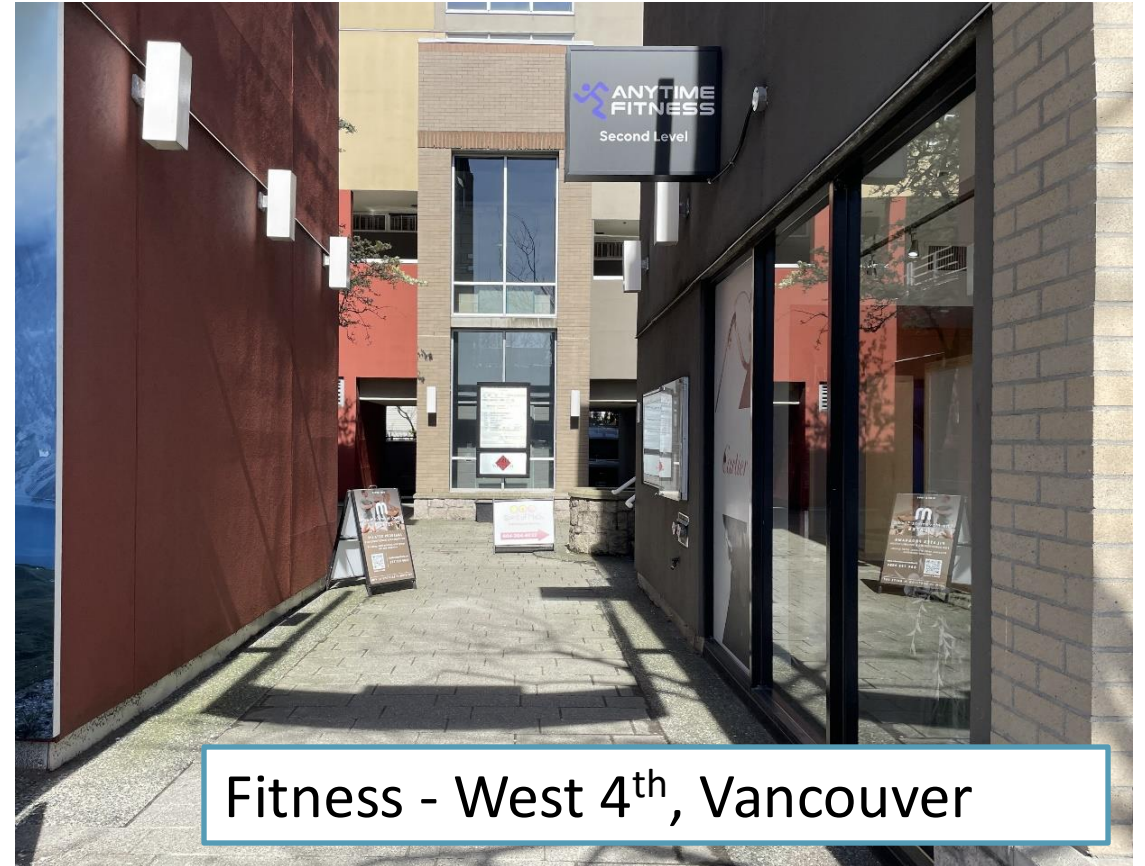


Retail/ Contractor Services

Main Street had the most diverse mix of uses aimed at serving the local community



Some businesses were more likely to locate on the side streets and in courtyards



Summary of Findings

Zoning:

- ✓ Building Location – ensure buildings frame the street
- ✓ Residential units restricted to upper floors
- ✓ Child care is restricted to rear/ side street/ upper floor locations

No direct correlation between restrictive zoning and vibrant, successful shopping areas

Other Tools

OCP

- Sets densities
- Expands commercial areas

Design Guidelines:

- Neighbourhood Character
- Store Front Size
- Streetscape furniture
- Mid block connections

Servicing Bylaw:

- Sidewalk width
- Street trees

Public Art

- Sense of Place

Public Realm Activation

- Pocket Plazas

6. Business Perspective

Protect development rights

90% of industry representatives did not support restricting permitted uses.

Expand “the Pie”

With vacancy rates sustained at **<2%**, businesses need more, not fewer, options.

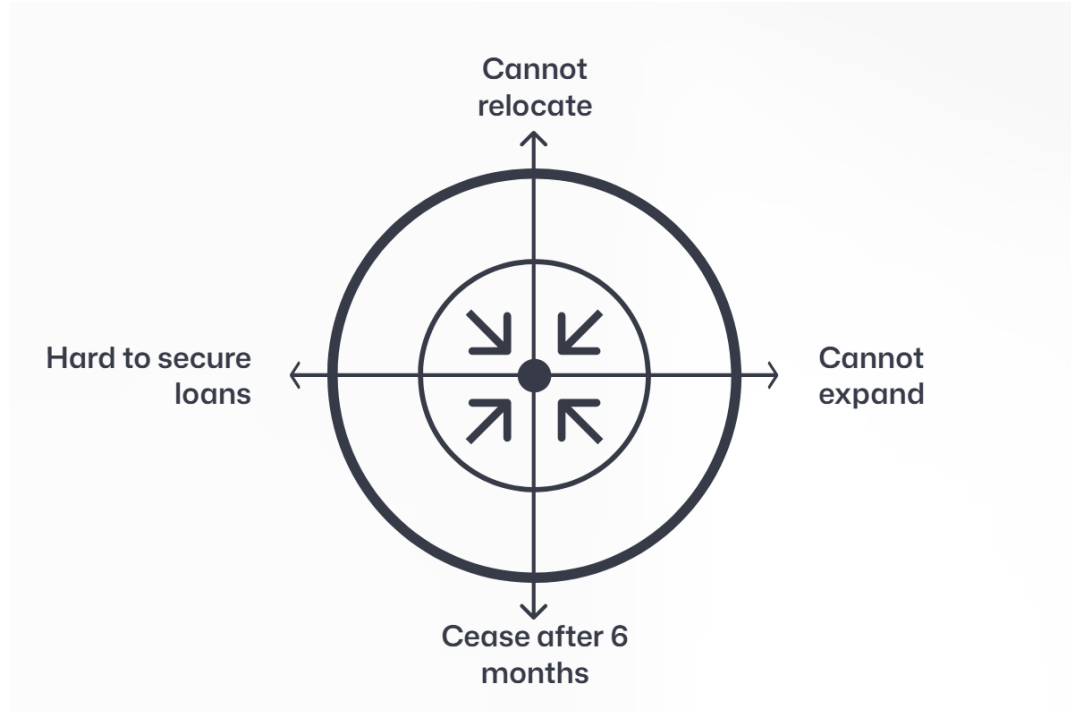
Streamlined regulations

Businesses consistently want simpler, more flexible regulations — not additional complexity.

Risk of losing businesses

Narrowing location options threatens operational viability.

7. Impacts of Becoming Non-Conforming



What Non-Conforming Means

When a use is no longer permitted under new zoning, existing businesses become legally non-conforming — they may continue operating but face significant restrictions:

- Reduced expansion and relocation opportunities
- Barriers for new businesses to open (~250/year) or existing ones to relocate (~50/year)
- Greater difficulty securing loans for tenant improvements
- Potential escalation of lease rates as tenant options shrink
- Risk of closing down or leaving the District

An aerial photograph of a valley. In the foreground, there are dense green forests. In the middle ground, a large body of water (a lake or bay) is visible, surrounded by a mix of forest and some urban development. In the background, there are large, forested mountains under a clear sky.

Questions?

8. Council Question - Regulatory Options:

Staff
Recommendation

Option 1 – Minimal Restrictions Now - Applies at bylaw enactment, low impact to existing business.



Option 2 – Restrictions at Rezoning - Restricts Child Care, Office, Health Care, and R&D to upper/side-street locations in new Core Commercial zones. Low impact on existing businesses.



Option 3 – Restrictions Now - Same restrictions as Option 2 but applied at bylaw enactment to all sites. **Renders approximately 700 businesses legally non-conforming.**



Option 4 – Strengthen Design Guidelines - Strengthens storefront design requirements: glazing, street-framing, frontage rhythm. Can combine with any option. No businesses become non-conforming.



Zoning Options

Vibrant and/or
require street
level location
(cars/ pets)

Restricted from
the main street

* **Print Out Available**

 Option One (1) Minimal Restrictions on Use Applies Immediately	 Option Two (2) Restrictions on Location of Use Applies at Rezoning	 Option Three (3) Restrictions on Location of Use to All Commercial Sites Applies Immediately
Animal Care Services	Animal Care Services	Animal Care Services
Arts and Culture	Arts and Culture	Arts and Culture
Child Care Services	Child Care Services	Child Care Services (23 existing businesses)
Civic Service	Civic Service	Civic Service
EV Charging Hub	EV Charging Hub	EV Charging Hub
Financial Services	Financial Services	Financial Services
Fitness and Recreational Use	Fitness and Recreational Use	Fitness and Recreational Use
Food and Beverage Services	Food and Beverage Services	Food and Beverage Services
Fueling Service / Gas Station	Fueling Service / Gas Station	Fueling Service / Gas Station
Health Care Service	Health Care Service	Health Care Service (331 existing businesses)
Hotel	Hotel	Hotel
Instructional Services	Instructional Services	Instructional Services
Live Work	Live Work	Live Work
Manufacturing - Artisan	Manufacturing - Artisan	Manufacturing - Artisan
Microbrewery	Microbrewery	Microbrewery
Office Use	Office Use	Office Use (332 existing businesses)
Personal Service Use	Personal Service Use	Personal Service Use
Research & Development	Research & Development	Research & Development (6 existing businesses)
Residential Use	Residential Use	Residential Use
Retail Use	Retail Use	Retail Use
Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation Use	Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation Use	Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation Use
Youth Centre Use	Youth Centre Use	Youth Centre Use
No businesses impacted	No existing businesses impacted	Total Businesses Impacted: 692

8. Project Timeline



An aerial photograph of North Vancouver, showing a dense residential area with many houses and trees. In the background, there are large, forested mountains and a body of water (False Creek) winding through the landscape. The sky is clear and blue.

Thank you