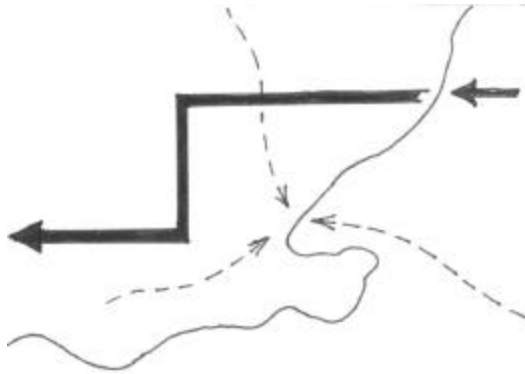
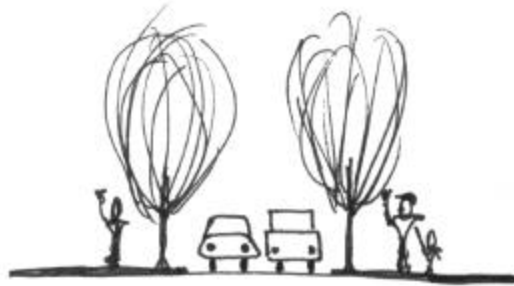


FUNDAMENTAL BUILDING BLOCKS



FAST!



SLOW

INFRASTRUCTURE

Identifiable Destination

Gibsons is the gateway to the REST of the Sunshine Coast - a stopping-off point on an automobile thoroughfare. Visitors arrive at Langdale and begin their journey on Highway 101.

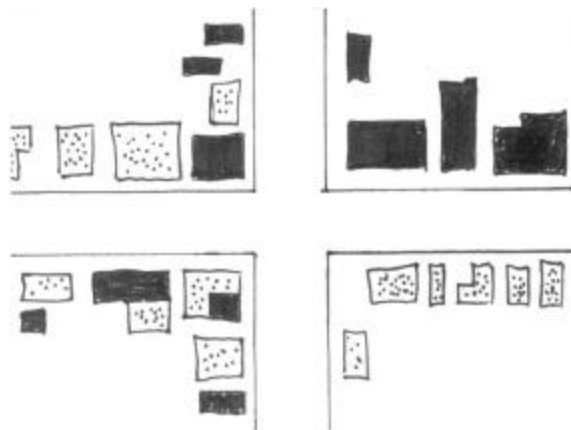
Why not make Gibsons a destination rather than a way-point? Leave the car behind, and make Gibsons the end of the line.

Slower transportation methods encourage tourists to stay a day or night before hurrying on to the next stop. Alternative transportation methods within Gibsons can make a shopping trip into an event. Getting people to linger rather than rush allows deeper connections within places as well as amongst them.

Narrow Streets

Wide streets promote speeding cars. Traffic-calming measures generally include stop signs, speed bumps and dead ends. We propose never letting the traffic get too excited. Narrow streets slow cars down.

Narrow residential streets are safer for pedestrians, drawing people and buildings closer together. They allow creative and flexible walking patterns and more social encounters with friends and neighbours. 'Narrow Streets' combined with 'Eyes on the Street' brings front doors closer together, enhancing pedestrian safety and community links.



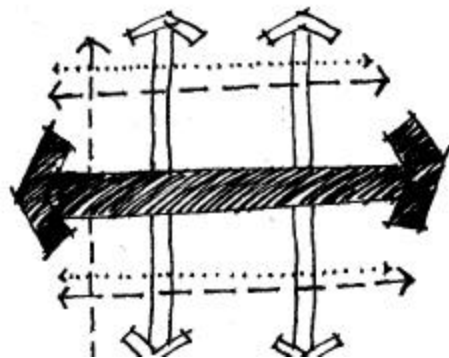
STREETS

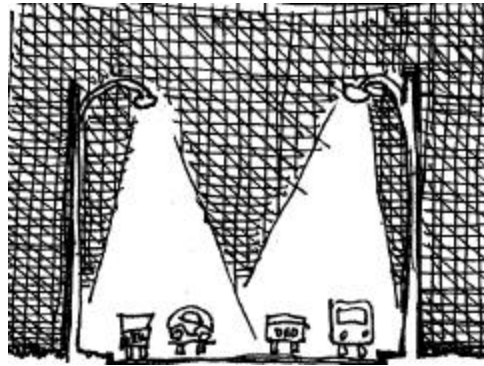
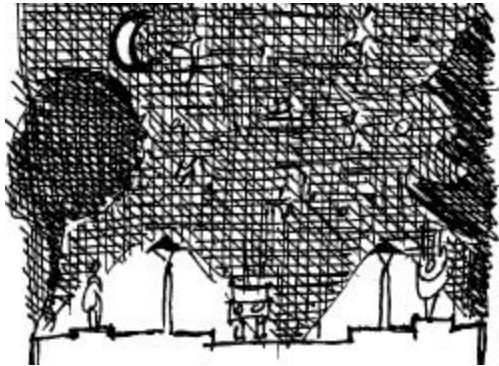
Residential/Commercial Links

Gibsons relies on big-box stores for convenience, and often on other towns for its jobs. This car-dependent separation disconnects people from their homes and neighbourhoods. Blurring the boundaries between working, living and shopping areas allows smaller, more intimate communities - the essence of small town life.

Route Hierarchy

Where a hierarchy of street scales does not exist, heavy traffic invades suburban precincts and threatens pedestrian comfort and safety. As a result, clarity of street usage is not present. By clearly defining vehicle conduits, suburban routes and pedestrian paths, a safer and more legible urban environment is created.





Starlit Streets

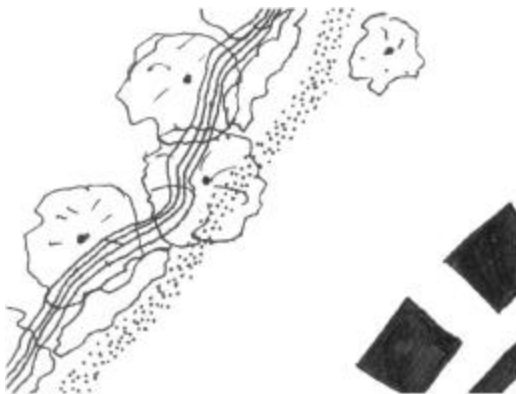
Unnecessarily high-levels of street lighting create a harsh night-time environment and glare, while disrupting circadian rhythms of plants, animals and people. Conventional standards have a light wash anywhere between 180 to 360 degrees, and are often inappropriately scaled for the volume of night street activity. Scaled lighting corresponds to the volume and frequency of traffic activity on the street.

This provides for highway standards where they are applicable, and encourages shorter standards providing an appropriate light level for pedestrians (to see and be seen by cars) – where desired. The Autobahn – for example, has very few standards outside of urban areas. Appropriate lighting scales, with less spread on paths and residential streets – if at all necessary – preserves the clarity of the night sky – which is a reason many people move to a small town. The link is between the human being and the stars, the car and its landscape, the resident and the night-street.

ECOLOGICAL

Waterways as Greenways

The people of Gibsons are losing contact with the mountain streams and fish that are so fundamental to BC nature. Also, development around creeks and streams has a detrimental effect on the water quality and salmon habitats. Permeable, low-impact trails for public access and enjoyment should be the only permissible development along local watercourses. Reclamation of previously developed creek-side areas for this purpose should be encouraged.





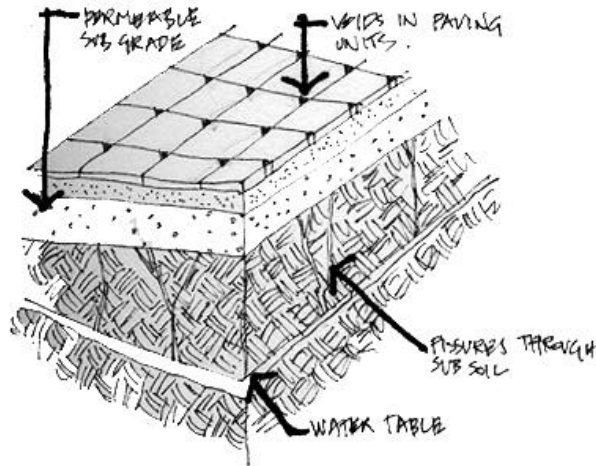
Rainwater Collection and Recycling

Even in areas of abundant rainfall, seasonal shortages increase the demand on existing supply infrastructure. Buildings that incorporate rainwater collection and re-use supplement this demand and increase infiltration potential. Potentials for grey-water usage include irrigation and car washing. The visibility of this system provides a connection between people and the hydrological cycle, and promotes awareness and education.



Visible Water

Rainwater is conventionally drained into storm sewers and culverts before being directed to an underground pipe system. The process of runoff collection should be brought to the surface, demonstrating how water travels from its point of impact to its final destination. Visibility of this process promotes increased awareness of ecological processes, alternative hydrological solutions and sustainability.



Permeable Paving

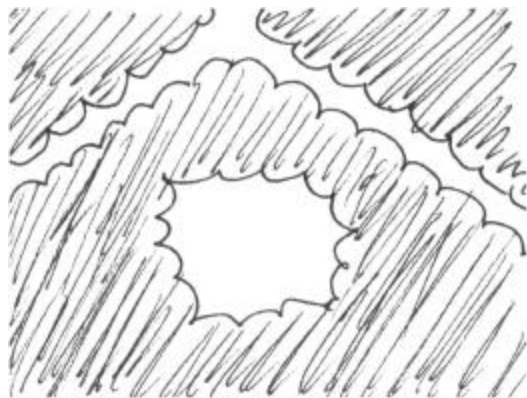
Where impermeable surfaces dominate the urban landscape, water is prevented from percolating into the water table, thereby reducing staged water supply to streams. When water is directed off impermeable surfaces into sub-surface drainage, the streams are subjected to extremely high water flows that result in erosion, and very low flows that result in siltation, stagnation, and reduced fish habitat. The construction of paved pedestrian footways and residential driveways with permeable paving techniques significantly increases water permeability to the water table. These techniques allow similar load bearing rates to that of standard paving, and consist of porous paving and gravels.

SOCIAL

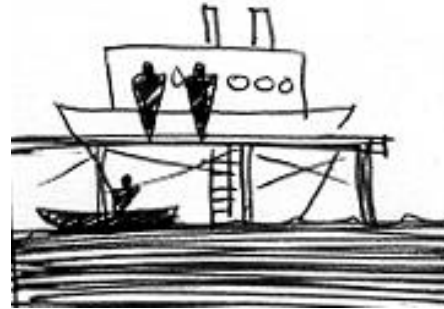
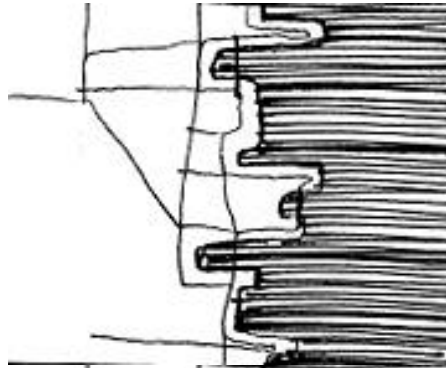
Secret Outdoor Gathering Spaces

Gibsons defines itself as distinct from the sprawling built landscape to the east. Part of the charm of non-urban places is the scattering of undeveloped lots and remnants of forests. Surprising pockets of nature remain despite human activity.

Leave unstructured and unmarked places for serendipitous discovery and unplanned use by residents and visitors. These areas can be places of refuge and communion with nature as well as places to gather for picnics or bonfires.

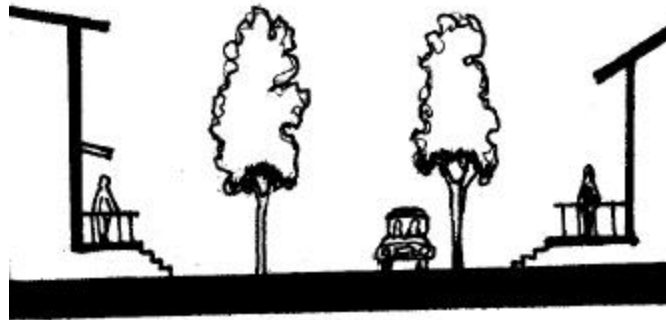


Empty lots can be full of life.



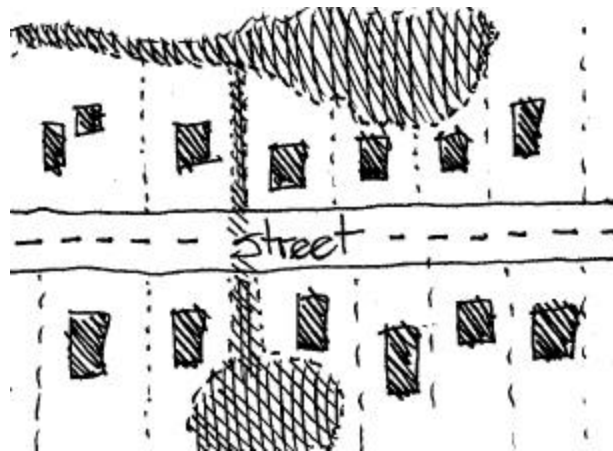
A Perforated Pedestrian Land/ Sea Interface

Limiting waterfront and water accessibility prohibits enjoyment of the sea. Providing finger-like penetrations and extensions will improve land/sea interaction. Making the boundary permeable increases exposure to and identity with waterfront activities (ie. scenic, recreation, industry, commercial, etc) and offers pedestrians the experience of the working harbour rather than just viewing it.



Eyes on the Street

Large setback distances and neglect of front yards creates barriers between residents and the street. Increasing the use of house frontages strengthens the relationship between building and street, therefore encouraging “*threshold-friendly*” communities. The front yard should act as an extension of the house, creating outdoor living spaces that provide increased visibility and neighbourhood identity.



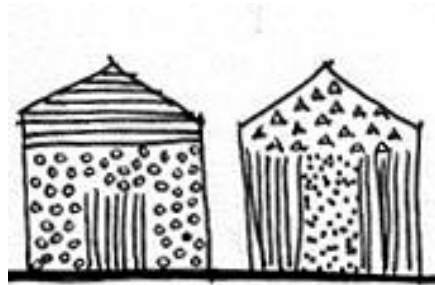
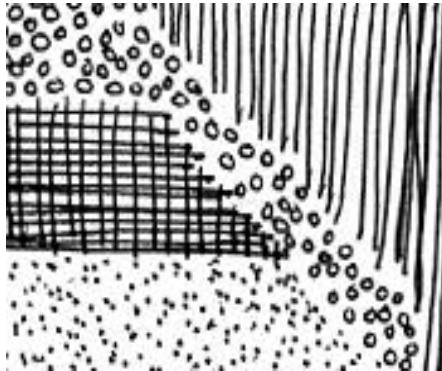
Structured Commons

Parks are peripheral or overly programmatic. Community spaces are often forged irrespective of physical limitations, and we propose that this could be facilitated by providing a greater physical possibility for community space. The structured commons would be like a stray backyard, available to all adjacent residents, public land with no programmatic expectations. It would be private insofar as only the neighborhood would know of it and use it, but it would be public in that no single neighbor would 'own' it. Access would be on the same scale as backyard access, and may lead from unlikely places, like rear-lanes, backyards, sideyards, etc. This would potentially link private and semi-private activities to build and strengthen the 'neighborhood public', and ideally, the link would be to outdoor activity (ie. bread-ovens, BBQ's, camping, etc.)

BUILDINGS

Independent Infrastructure

Conventional lot services are expensive, over-engineered systems which have huge capital costs and long amortization times. They also lead to excessive resource use and pollution – as they disconnect the user from the means of production with hidden ducts, drains, cables and wires and pipes. Safe alternative technologies are available for the production of heat and power, and the treatment of grey and blackwater. The EcoNomad (CMHC) is an example of an integrated 'off-grid' solution for a single family house. It is significantly less expensive than conventional methods, and pays for itself within 10 years. The link here is between the economy and nature, the landowner and the means of production and waste, the natural flux of energy and water on their site – and the awareness of the consequences of their patterns of resource and energy use.



Mosaic of Materials

A uniform building material does not promote diverse building types and limits unique character.

By encouraging a range of building materials these can be provided. Locally sourced materials from the region identifies Gibsons nested in the whole of the region. Use of recycled and reused materials from local industry and artisans involves the community in determining its neighbourhood character.