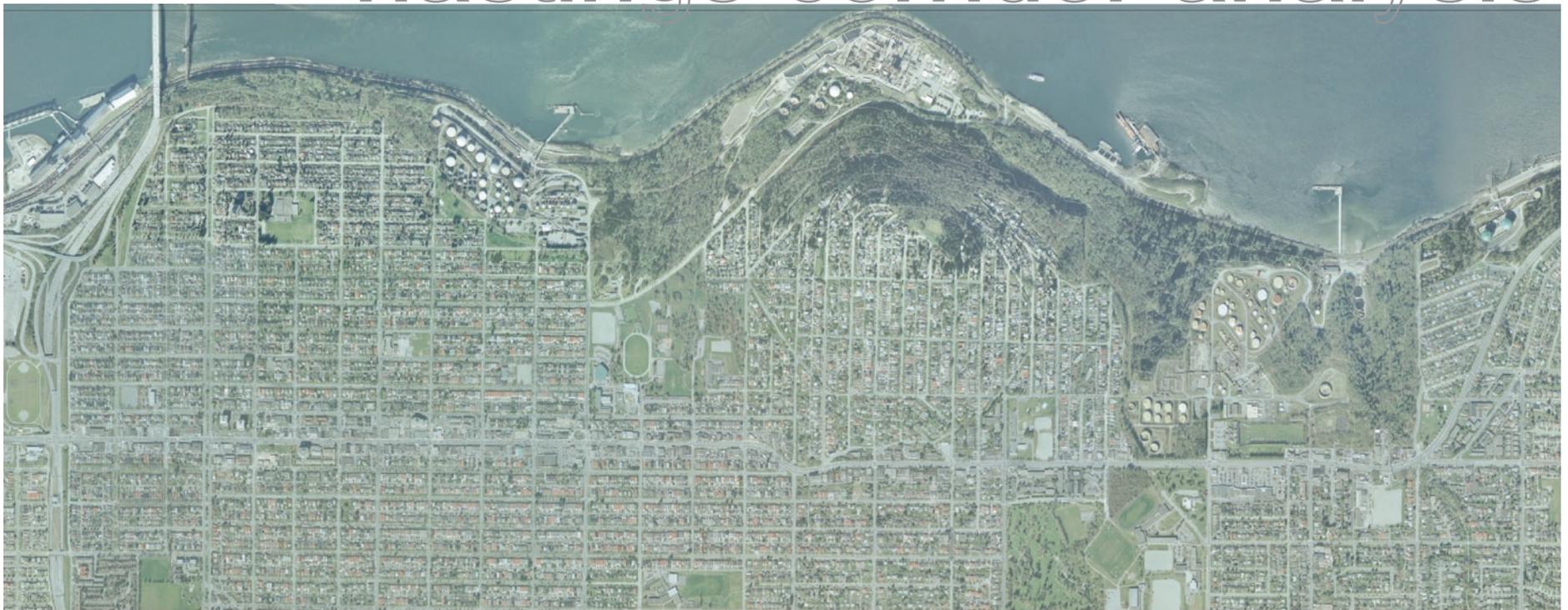


# hastings corridor analysis



history  
hastings corridor analysis

heather maxwell / gemma mcintock / christine bachinsky / elizabeth laing

sustainable urbanism : the hastings corridor

ubc urban studio : fall 2008

# introduction to a brief history of burnaby

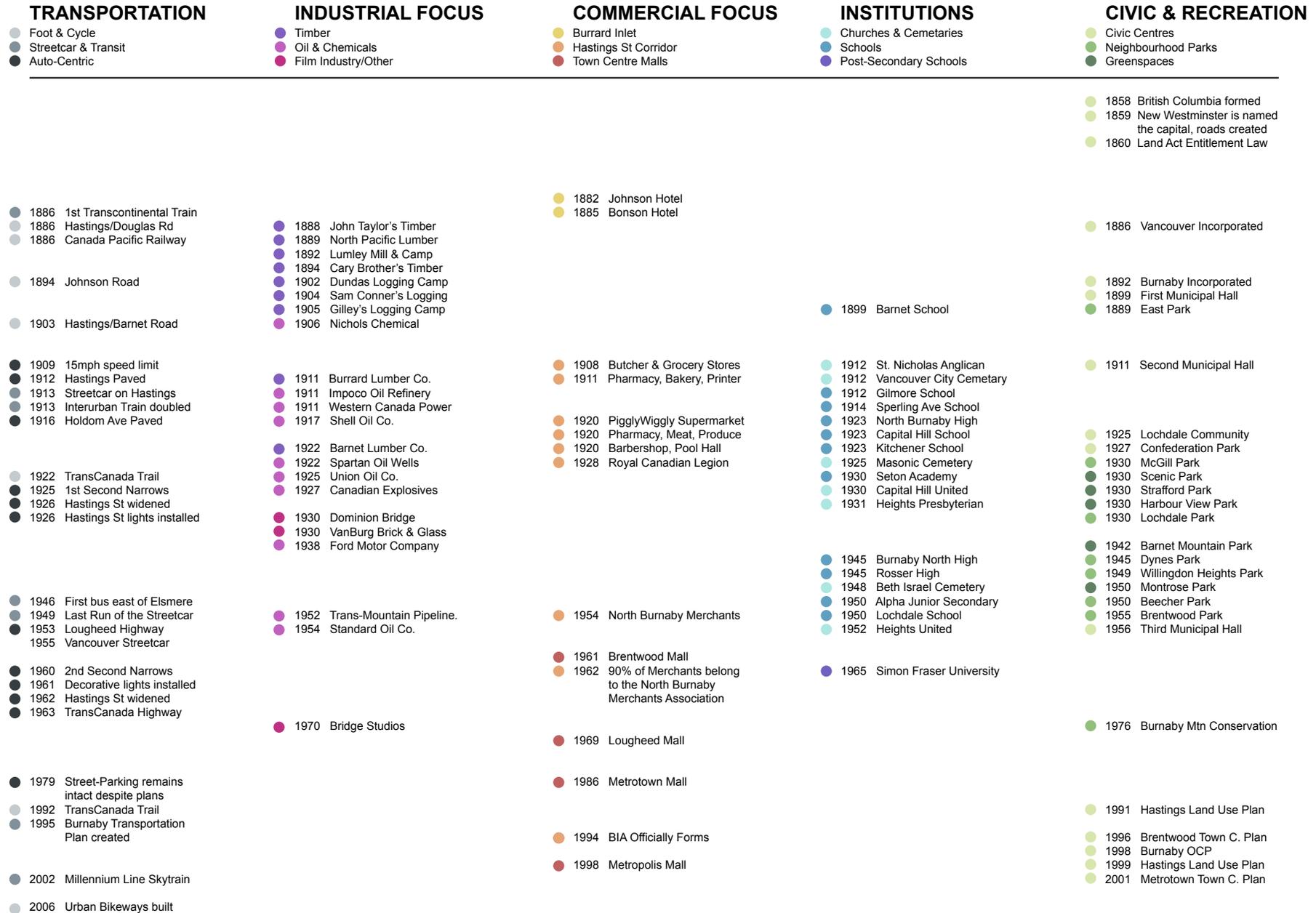
Heather Maxwell, Gemma McLintock, Christine Bachinsky, Elizabeth Laing

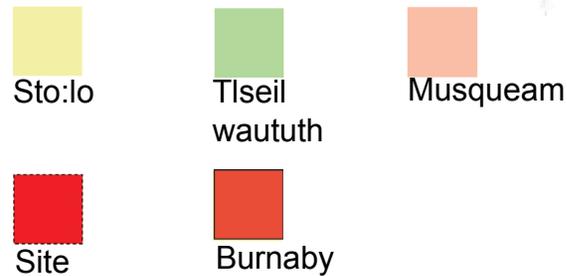
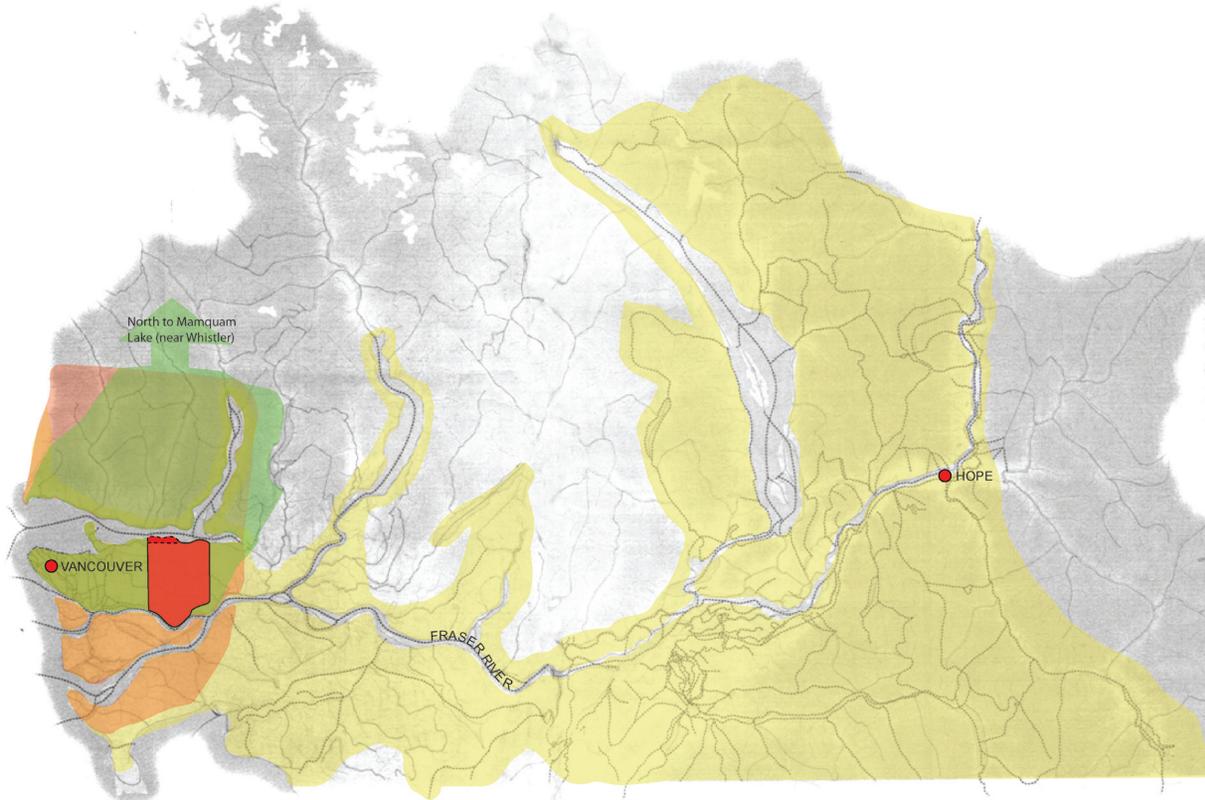
## section 1 : history

Burnaby and the surrounding area has a long history of inhabitation dating back at least 10,000 years as a part of the traditional territory of the Sto:lo First Nation. Since its surveying and subsequent incorporation by European land-owners in the late 1800s, development in Burnaby has been driven directly by resource extraction and indirectly by the development of transportation corridors, primarily the interurban rail between New Westminister and Vancouver, and the streetcar on Hastings in the early 20th century. Prior to the 1950s, Burnaby could be characterized as a typical resource-based boom and bust town. However, post WWII, Burnaby and the surrounding area have experienced constant growth, bringing with it a more resilient economy, but also heavy traffic along Hastings and other issues associated with an urban centre. Although Burnaby has a stable and hard-working population, early planning and development decisions have contributed to its struggle as a thriving community today. It remains to be seen whether current planning decisions will work to revitalize the historic vitality of this street-car city.

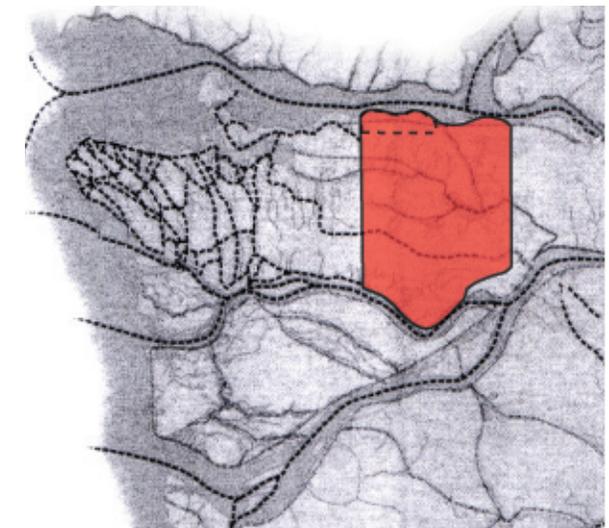


Photos from left: Hastings Street, 1919; Boundary and Hastings, circa 1944; Willingdon and Hastings, 1975.





Historically the mouth and the Fraser River and Burrard Inlet have been two natural systems that the Coast Salish peoples used throughout the year with usage increased during the spring and summer months. The whole of the Inlet was a destination for fishing as well as a busy transportation route. The shore-line of the inlet acted as locations for seasonal camps as well as locations for shell fish collection. For example the flat shores of present day Barnet Marine park was used for this reason. Because much of the south shore of Burrard inlet is steep and shaded from the sun, the north side of the inlet was a preferred spot for settlement for the Tseil Waututh. Today the Tseil Waututh first nations reserve is located on the North Shore between Deep Cove and Maplewood Flats.

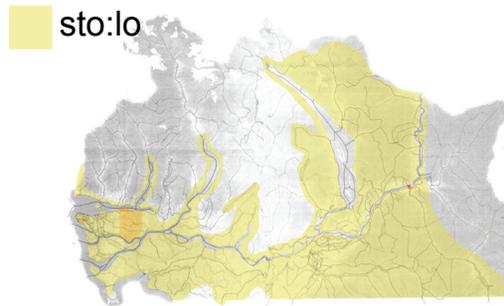


Travel patterns of the Sto:lo people  
 Dashed lines: Documented Travel Routes  
 Solid lines: Extrapolated Travel Routes

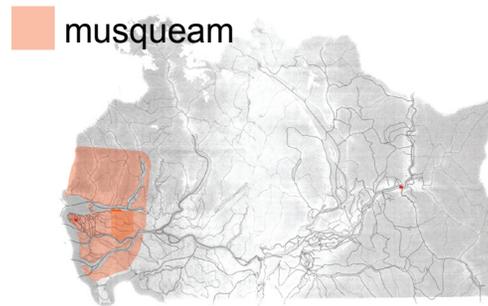
Though there is little evidence showing that permanent settlement existed on the shores of Burnaby it is well known that the Coast Salish peoples used Burnaby as a transportation thoroughfare when travelling up and down the Fraser, east and west to Vancouver Island and north and south from the mountains to the river's delta and Burrard Inlet.

# first nations

# section 1: history



The Sto:lo first nation have been in the region since that last ice age 10,000 years ago. Sto:lo are Coast Salish people and speak the upper-river dialect of the Halkomelem language. Made up of 24 different bands and 20 non-affiliated bands, the majority of B.C.'s Sto:lo population today is located in the Fraser Valley near Chilliwack. Traditional transportation routes show that throughout time the Sto:lo used Burrard inlet as a destination for fishing as well as for transportation.



The Musqueam's traditional territory is focused at the mouth of the north arm of the Fraser River and extends into the land that makes up Greater Vancouver. Like many other Coast Salish communities Burrard Inlet acted as a seasonal home for the Musqueam as well as a destination for fishing. Research shows that the Musqueam first nation has been in the area for thousands of years.



The Tlseil Waututh traditional territory stretches from Mamquam Lake near Whistler down through Burrard Inlet to the Fraser River. Prior to colonial settlement it is estimated that the Tlseil Waututh nation had a population of approximately 10,000 people. Burrard inlet throughout history has been the central anchor for the Tseil Waututh. It is a rich environment filled with the resources of land, water, flora, fauna and sea life. The Tlseil Waututh speak the down-river dialect of the Halkomelem language.

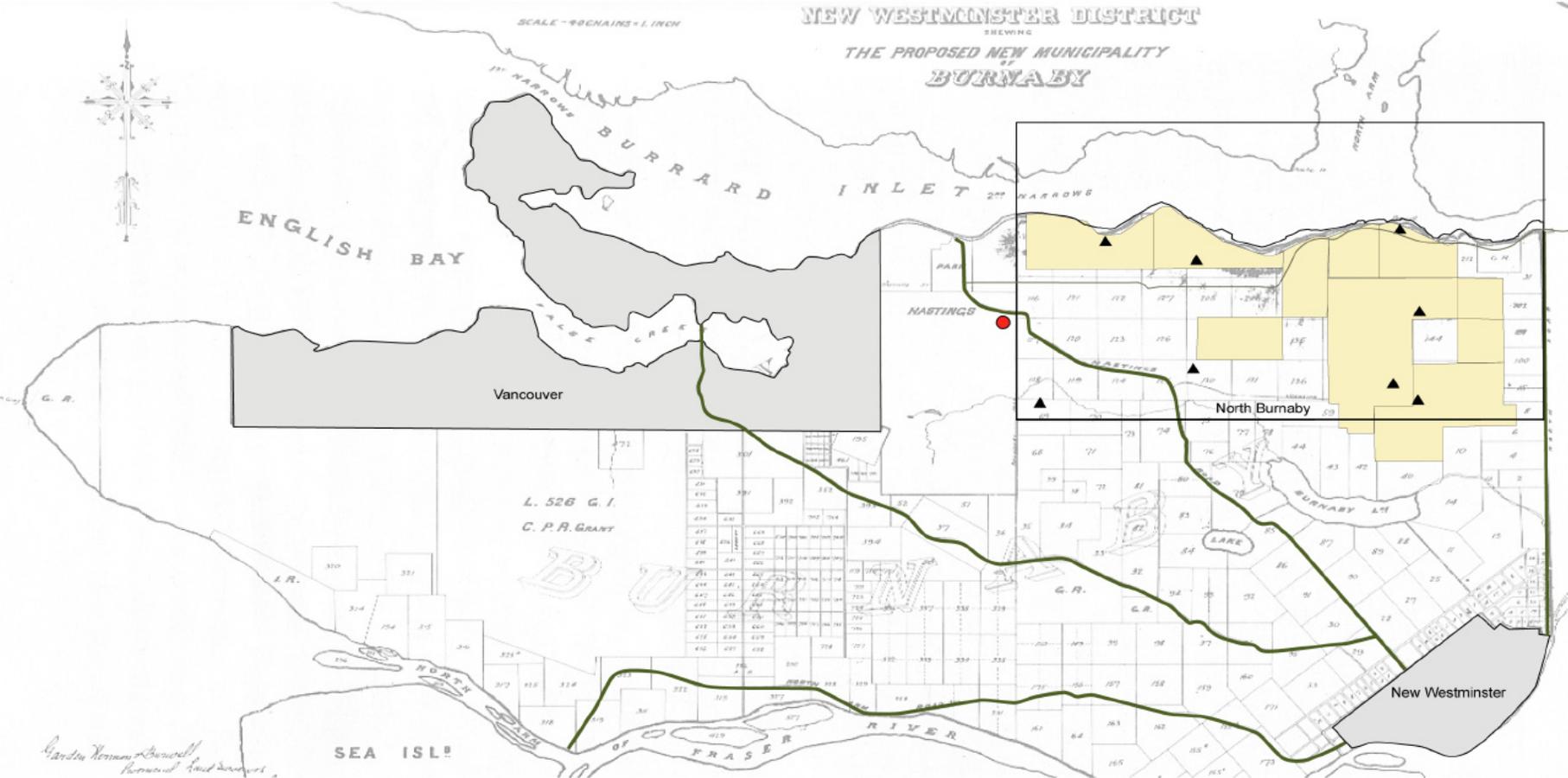


sustainable urbanism : the hastings corridor



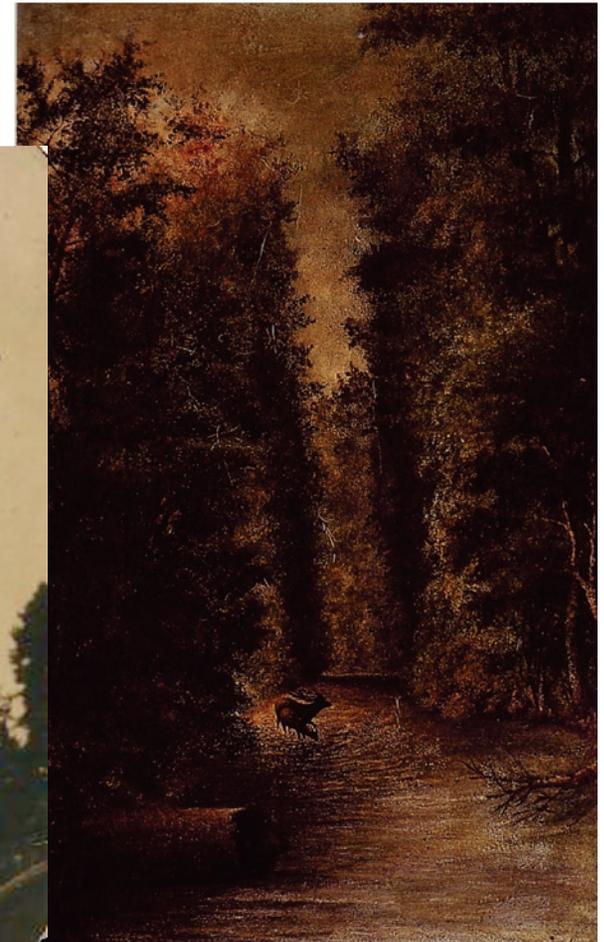
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1870 - 1905 : logging the last frontier



- Areas of logging operations
- Original Hastings town site
- Logging Camps
- Major historical roads (1859)
- Hastings /Barnet road 1903

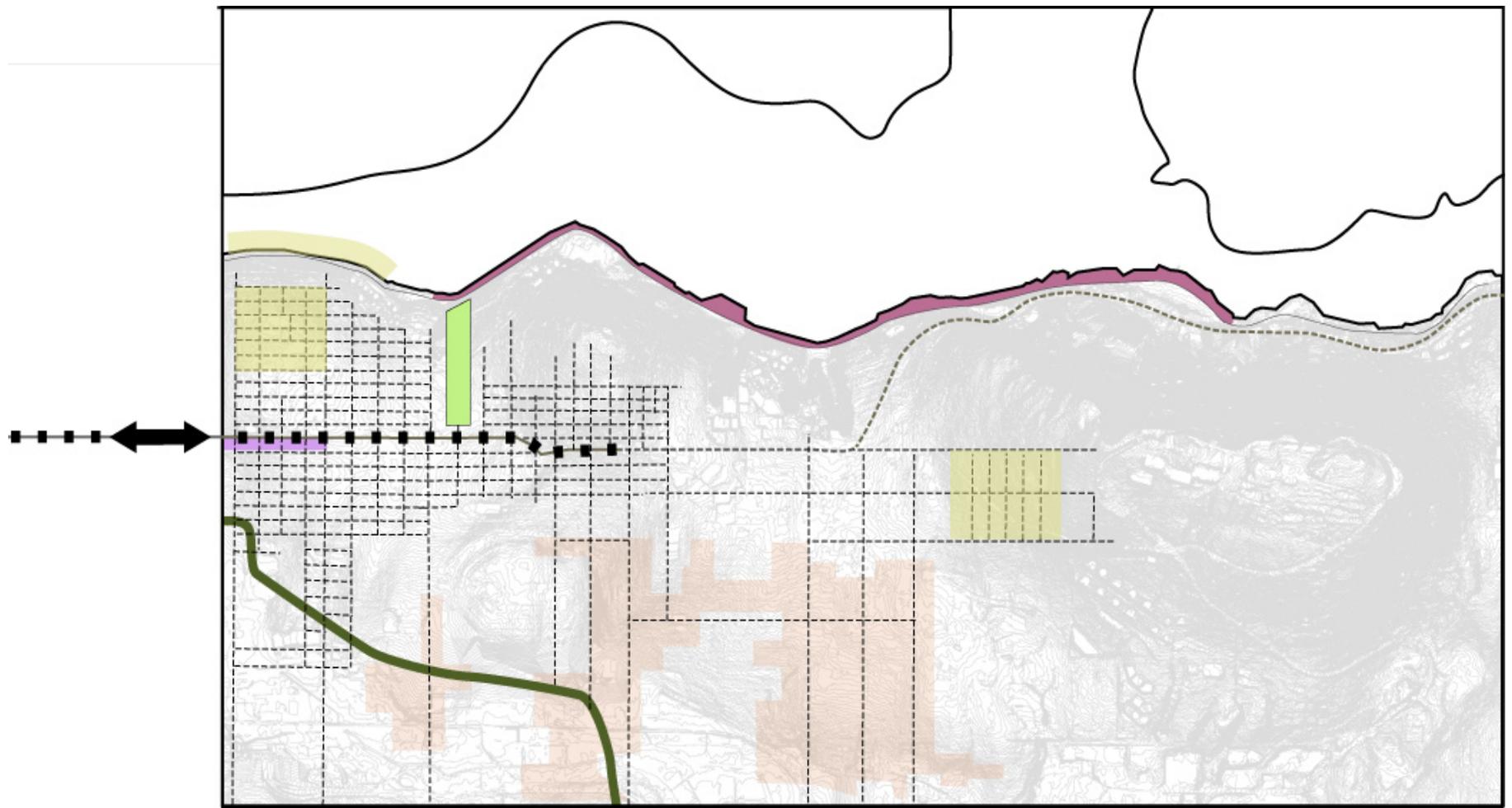
Burnaby originally developed as the thoroughfare between New Westminister and Vancouver after the interurban tram was built in 1891. Land along the line was bought up and the area, formerly characterized as a logging camp, rapidly became an established urban centre.



photos from top left clockwise: lynn valley, 1911; tree topped, 1904; painting by Alice M. Eagles shows view of Brunette River from the North Road bridge, 1901; crabtown settlement, 1912-1957.

population:

1892:	300
1905:	800



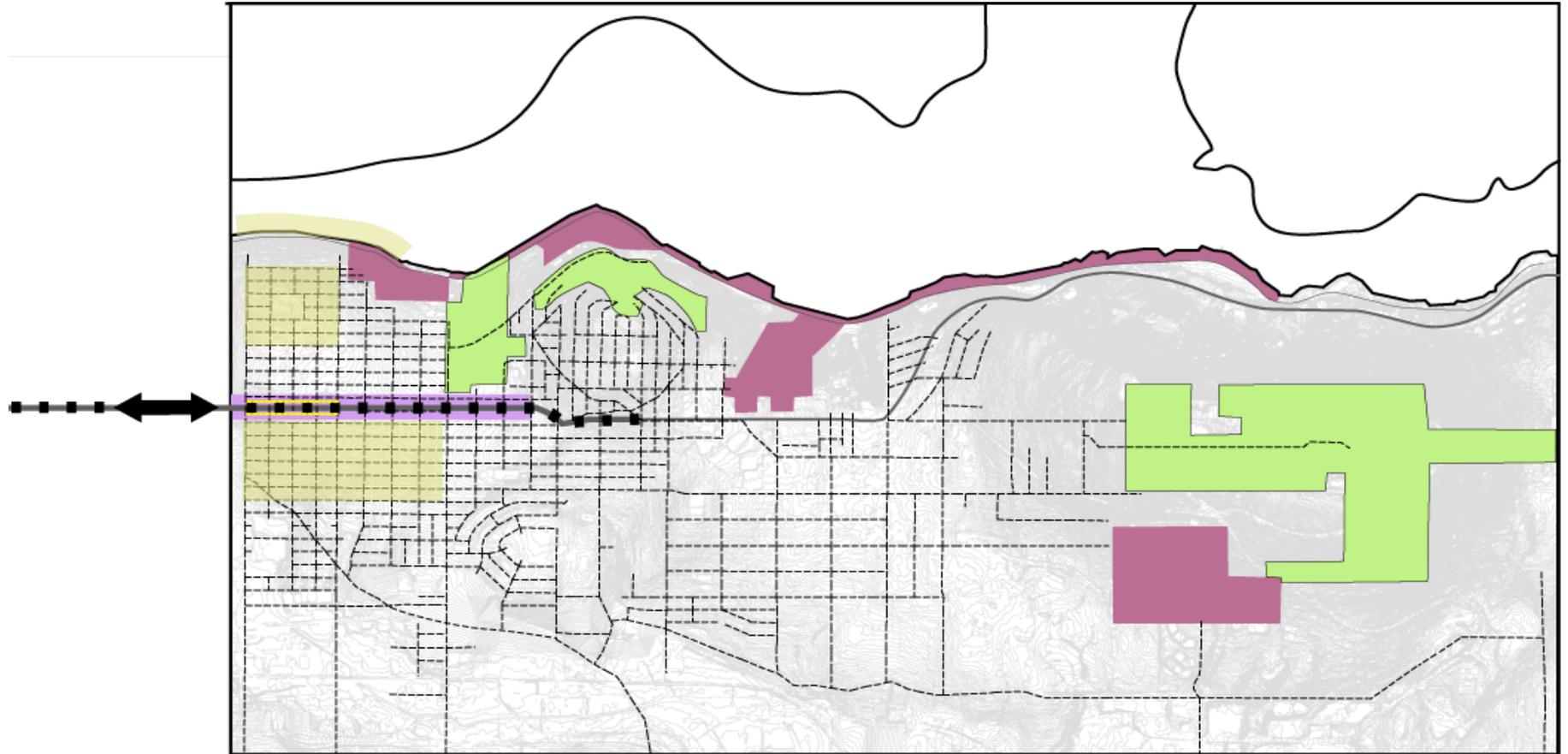
- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Subdivisions and Settlements
- Confederation Park
- Vancouver Streetcar
- Douglas Road
- Hastings/Barnet Road
- Residential Streets

The turn of the century in Burnaby was a period of rapid development. The image most illustrative of the period is that of the 'Toonerville' trolley trundling through clearcut and often not yet cut forest. Shacks hastily slapped together in logging camps soon became lofty tudor style houses with lace curtains and paved sidewalks.



photos from top left clockwise: toonerville trolley, 1913; toonerville folks comic by fontaine fox published in chicago, 1917; first house built in the kask camp with barnet road at right, 1924; ross and hastings, 1911; hastings grove store, 1912; hastings and boundary, 1915; vancouver heights, 1925; interurban tram on hastings, 1921; vancouver heights, 1918.

population 1925: 20,000



- Commercial
- Industrial
- Subdivisions and settlements
- Parks
- Vancouver Streetcar
- Hastings Widened
- Street Lighting
- Residential Streets
- Hastings/Barnet Road Paved

section 1 : history

The 1920s in Burnaby were swingin'. An influx of oil and chemical industries brought work and new development. As families settled in Burnaby, they demanded parks and recreational areas. Schools and parks opened, and the first talkie was shown in the Regent in 1930. Although Burnaby went virtually bankrupt during the great depression, many industries located there due to cheap land prices and available labour. A second zoning plan, which established 8 zones including multi-family residential and multi-use commercial, never made it off the table due to the depression.

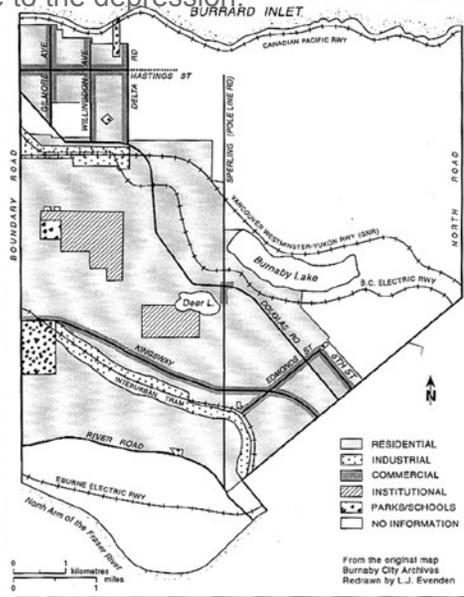


Figure 5.1  
Burnaby zoning map, 1927

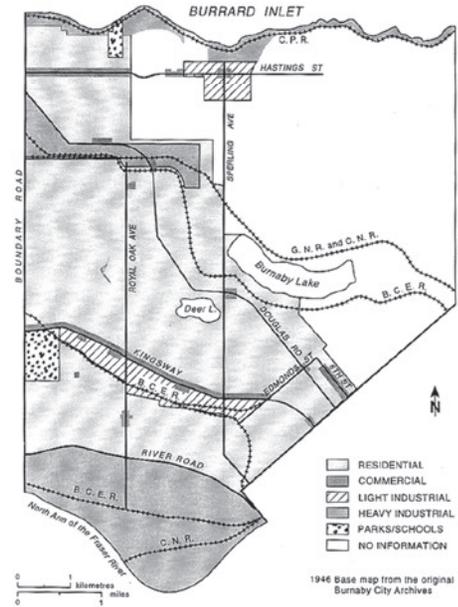
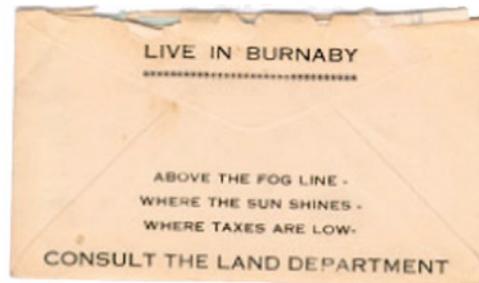


Figure 5.2  
Burnaby zoning map, 1946

1929: Burnaby Occupational Structure

Farmers and Ranchers	6%
Managerial, Proprietary & Professional Classes	10%
Supervisory & Clerical	12%
Sales & Service	10%
Labourers	23%
Manual Work	39%



**images from top right clockwise:** hastings streetcar transfer station, 1942; hastings bus, 1935-39; 4000 block hastings, 1939; municipal envelope, 1926; zoning map, 1927 - note spurs of commercial development north and south off hastings; zoning map, 1946 - note lack of commercial zoning off hastings and light industrial zoning on sperling and hastings.

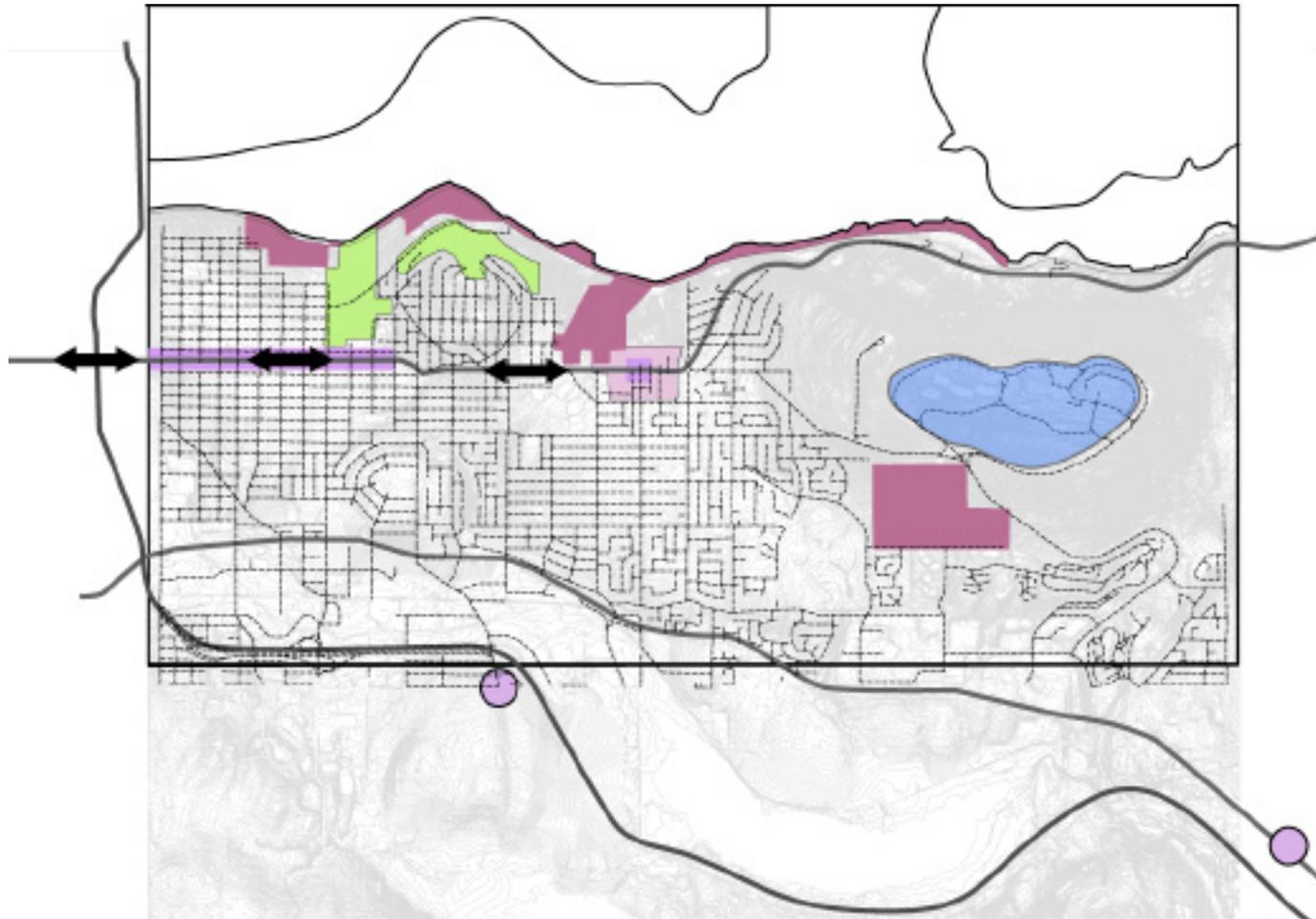
sustainable urbanism : the hastings corridor

1 : 10

population:

1941	30,000
1951	58,000

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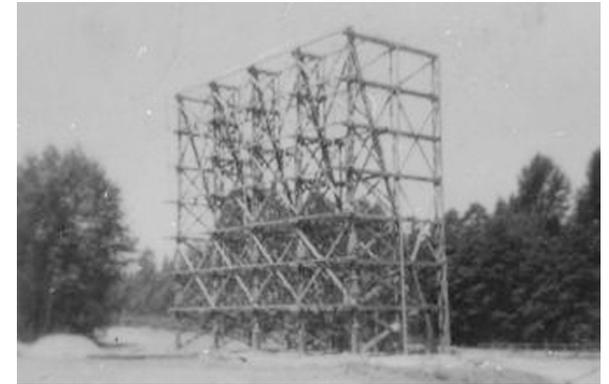


Commercial  
Industrial  
Parks

Auto-oriented/ Light Industrial  
SFU

Malls  
Major thoroughfares: Hastings/Barnet, Lougheed Hwy, TransCanada Hwy  
Residential Streets

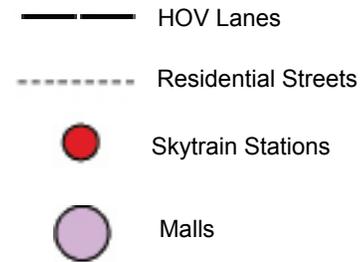
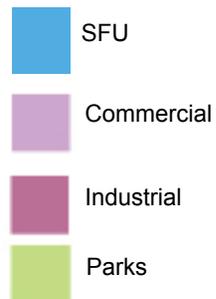
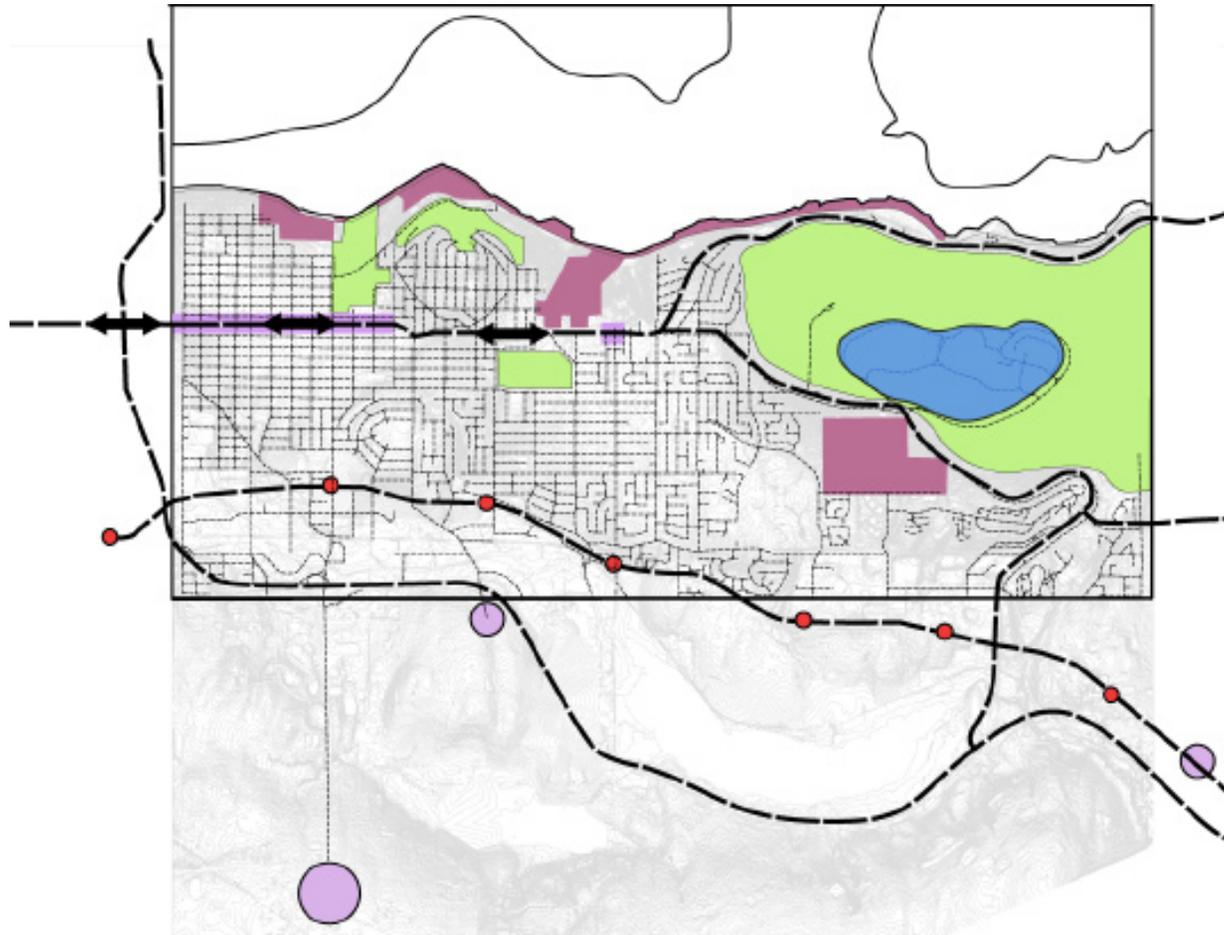
The last trolley run in Burnaby, from Capitol Hill to Boundary Road, on January 14th, 1949 marked the end of an era. The 1950s ushered in a new age of auto-oriented development and an economic boom to Burnaby and the surrounding area, increasing jobs, populations and subsequent traffic along Hastings Street.



images from top right clockwise: hastings st., 1968; oak theatre, 3506 kingsway, 1937; helen's children's wear iconic neon sign, 1956; cascade drive in, first drive-in in canada, 1948.

population:

1956	84,000
1966	112,000
1976	132,000



It is interesting to discover how planning decisions in the 1920s, 30s and 40s have influenced development today. Would the commercial centre of Burnaby and the Heights be struggling today if the decision had been made to pursue the 1927 zoning plan and develop commercial spurs off of Hastings? What if the street car had survived and been extended?



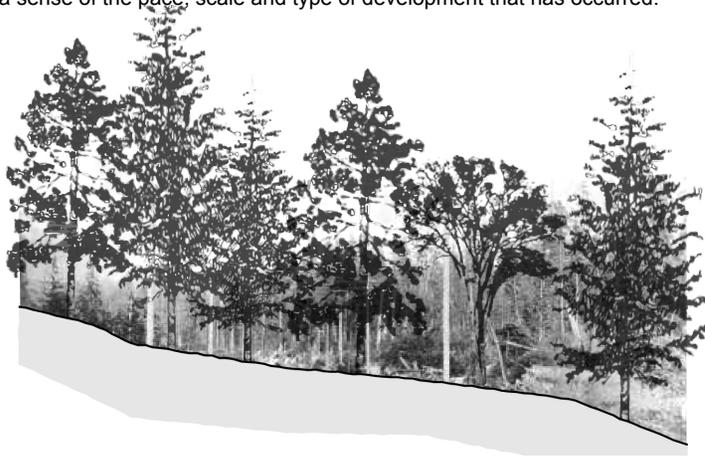
population:

1986 145,000

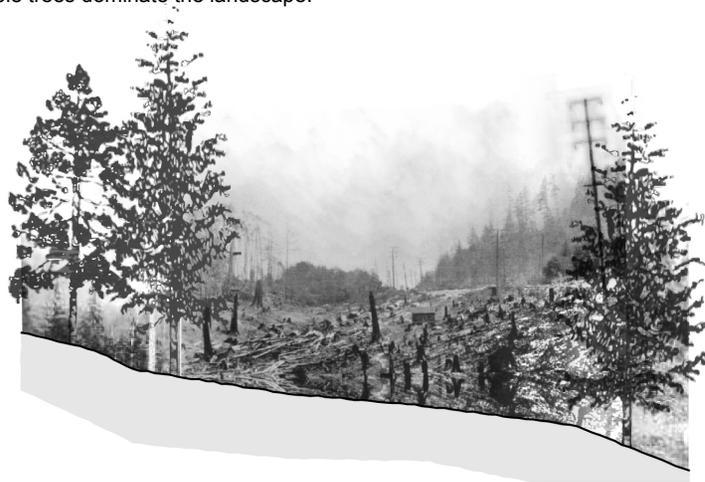
2006 203,000

## conceptual cross-sections 1 of 3

These illustrations are meant to be just that – illustrations. Although much of the source material is taken from archival photos of the area, these collages are not accurate depictions. Rather, they chronicle the evolution of Hastings in order to provide a sense of the pace, scale and type of development that has occurred.



**Pre-1870:** Prior to the 1870s, Hastings Street is non-existent. First Nations trails cut through the site from what is now New Westminster to the Burrard Inlet, but did not cross East-West along the ridge. Douglas fir, cedar, hemlock, alder, dogwood and maple trees dominate the landscape.



**1905-1910:** The corridor is primarily established as a means of connecting Vancouver to an electrical source at the Buntzen Lake Generating Station. As a secondary result, the Hastings/Barnet road is built; the road provided a permanent link between the waterfront activity of Burnaby and Vancouver.

## section 1 : history

As the corridor expands to accommodate increasing demands, it is possible to infer the relationship between government policies, transportation initiatives and industrial endeavors, all of which make Hastings what it is today.



**1870-1905:** Sections of what is to become Hastings Street exist as nothing more than glorified footpaths. Trails navigate the wild landscape between the newly cultivated logging camps that are beginning to assimilate the terrain.



**1910-1913:** Sections of Hastings are paved and the first expansion of the streetcar extends to the base of Capital Hill, opening up large tracks of land for speculators and real-estate developers. Vancouver Heights is marketed as an alternative to the upscale Shaughnessy neighbourhood. The first wave of settlers was of British, Scottish, and Irish descent.



**1913-1915:** Paving of the corridor continues past Capital Hill. The speed limit is 15mph and tickets are issued for those who exceed. Sidewalks are infrequent and made out of the wood. Commercial stores begin to appear along the length although they are mostly centred around the intersection near Boundary Rd.



**1915-1920:** The streetcar provides an essential link connecting the neighbourhoods to each other and to the outlying communities. The Interurban is nicknamed "The Colonizer" but the same name and underlying mind-set applies equally to the Hastings Streetcar. Tracts of land are opened up along the corridor, essentially turning Burnaby into a bedroom community reminiscent of English suburbs.



**1920-1925:** As sawmills and petrochemical plants go through rapid expansion, the Hastings corridor witnesses a flurry of commercial activity. Grocery stores, bakeries, butchers, pharmacies and pool halls fill the strip. The routine daily shopping trip becomes a morning-long event as ladies stroll up the street alternating between conversing with friends and business owners.



**1925-1949:** In 1926, Hastings St is widened and decorative lighting is installed from Boundary to Gilmore. In 1949, the period of the Hastings Streetcar comes to an end. Fast-moving diesel buses replace the rumbling old electric trolley, forever changing the pace and style of movement along the corridor. This decisive switch between modes of transit ushers in a new era of commuting and congestion.



**1949-1979:** The North Burnaby Merchants Association forms in 1954. The association fights for the improvement and maintenance of civic life along the corridor. By 1962, 90% of business owners belong to the group. During the 60s, they Association is unable to fight against plans to widen the street. However, in 1979 the NBMA fights plans to remove street parking and wins; Hats Off Day celebrates this victory and the patronage of local residents.



**1979-2000:** As the corridor continues to grow, a few large-scale retailers are able to amass larger sites; however, this amalgamation is hard to accomplish because of Burnaby's history of independent, stratified lots. The corridor is marred by auto-orientated businesses; gas stations are landmarks at major intersections and a sea of carwashes and drive-thru restaurants lie between. Hastings becomes a major arterial that connects to a network of local highways and the TransCanada.



**2000-2008:** Changes to local zoning spurred new forms of development. Developers are responsible for street infrastructure improvements and excessive parking requirements that necessitate large-scale development in order to be economically feasible. The finer grain of the urban fabric is replaced by developments that span entire city blocks. Outside lanes alternate between parking and designated HOV lanes during rush hour, reflecting the nature of commutes through the corridor.



**2008 & Onward:** As the corridor continues to grow it faces numerous challenges. Local residents drive further distances for their daily needs due the deteriorating atmosphere of the Hastings Corridor. Will the city encourage methods of densification and diversification along its corridors or will it fall victim to the growing popularity of nearby mall-orientated town centres?

**130 residents** were evicted from Crabtown, a small settlement of worker's homes are illegally built on federal land between the CPR Railway and the shoreline. The 114 homes were leveled in 1957 after standing for more than 40 years. Nothing remains.

**250 men** spent over 2 years clearing, grading, laying 7 miles of sidewalks and sewers and installing 5 miles of water pipes for the first real-estate development for the Galt Brothers in 1908.

**114 students** were arrested in 1967 at a protest at Simon Fraser University. The students accused the school's administration for not actively and effectively representing the interests of the students and the faculty. They demanded the board be dissolved after teachers were dismissed for encouraging interdisciplinary teaching practices.

**40,000 people** celebrate Hats Off Day each year, an event created to celebrate the fight to keep street parking along Hastings. The Department of Highways threatened to remove the parking in 1979. Every year, local businesses acknowledge the support of their patrons.



*Burnaby's Waterfront*



*Hastings Corridor*



*Metrotown Town Centre*

The history of Burnaby is unquestionably tied to the history of its industries. Logging and petrol-chemical companies spurred Burnaby's initial growth. During this time, the Hastings corridor became the lifeline of the industries and communities that grew up around it. The corridor provided an essential link to surrounding markets and laborers. The corridor also grounded a consortium of thriving independent businesses, many of which still exist today. However, these businesses now face tough competition in our auto-orientated market. The success of Burnaby's Town Centers demonstrates a decisive switch in the values of its residents. The daily life of its people is carried out less on the public streets and more in the corridors of private malls. Now Burnaby is poised on the edge of new creative and intellectual industries. Movie studios have filled the bones of the warehouses from the past. Simon Fraser University is stewarding projects to develop the sustainable communities of the future. The other often-unwritten history of Burnaby belongs to its people. Resilient students, laborers, residents, business owners and city officials have fought to shape Burnaby into what it is today.

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Heritage Burnaby. Available at: <http://www.heritageburnaby.ca/>

### Photographs

Heritage Burnaby Photographic Collection. Available at: <http://www.heritageburnaby.ca/research/Photographs/Default.aspx>