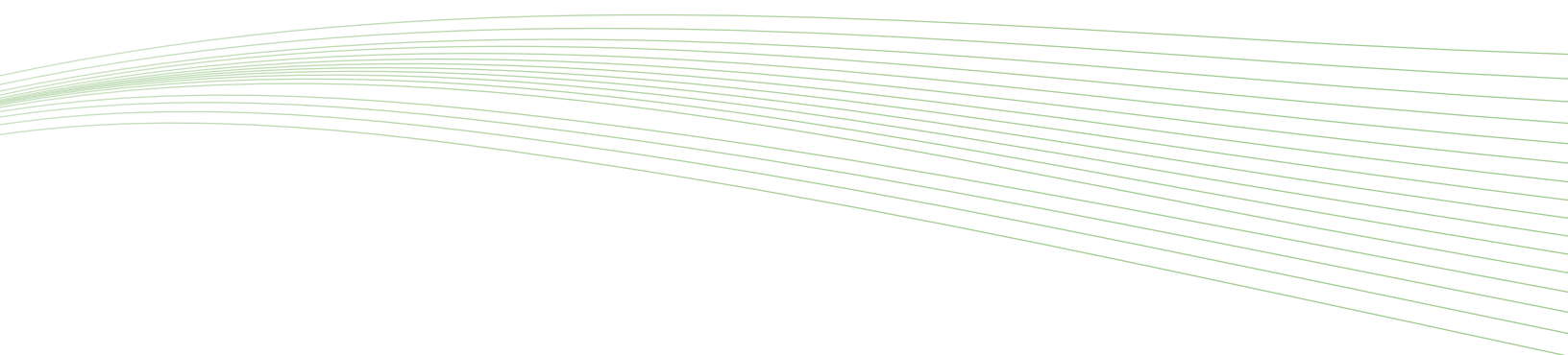


PART 2

COMMUNITY CONTEXT







4 LOCATION

The District of Squamish is located in the Sea-to-Sky corridor, midway between Vancouver and Whistler. It is situated at the northern end of Howe Sound on the Pacific Ocean at the mouth of the Squamish River. Squamish is situated within a valley of five rivers - the Squamish, Mamquam, Cheakamus, Stawamus, and Cheekeye Rivers. Much of Squamish and Howe Sound's unique physical landscape was formed during the retreat of the last glaciers approximately 10,000 years ago, and includes many glacial features such as U-shaped valleys and fjords.

The Stawamus Chief, a community landmark and one of the world's largest granite monoliths, was revealed as ice eroded the weaker rock.

Squamish is oriented in a north/south direction, stretching 26 kilometers along Highway 99 and extending 12.5 kilometers east to west at its widest point. The total land area of the District of Squamish is 11,730 hectares (29,000 acres). At Howe Sound, Squamish is at sea level and the terrain within the District boundaries rises to elevations of over 900 metres.

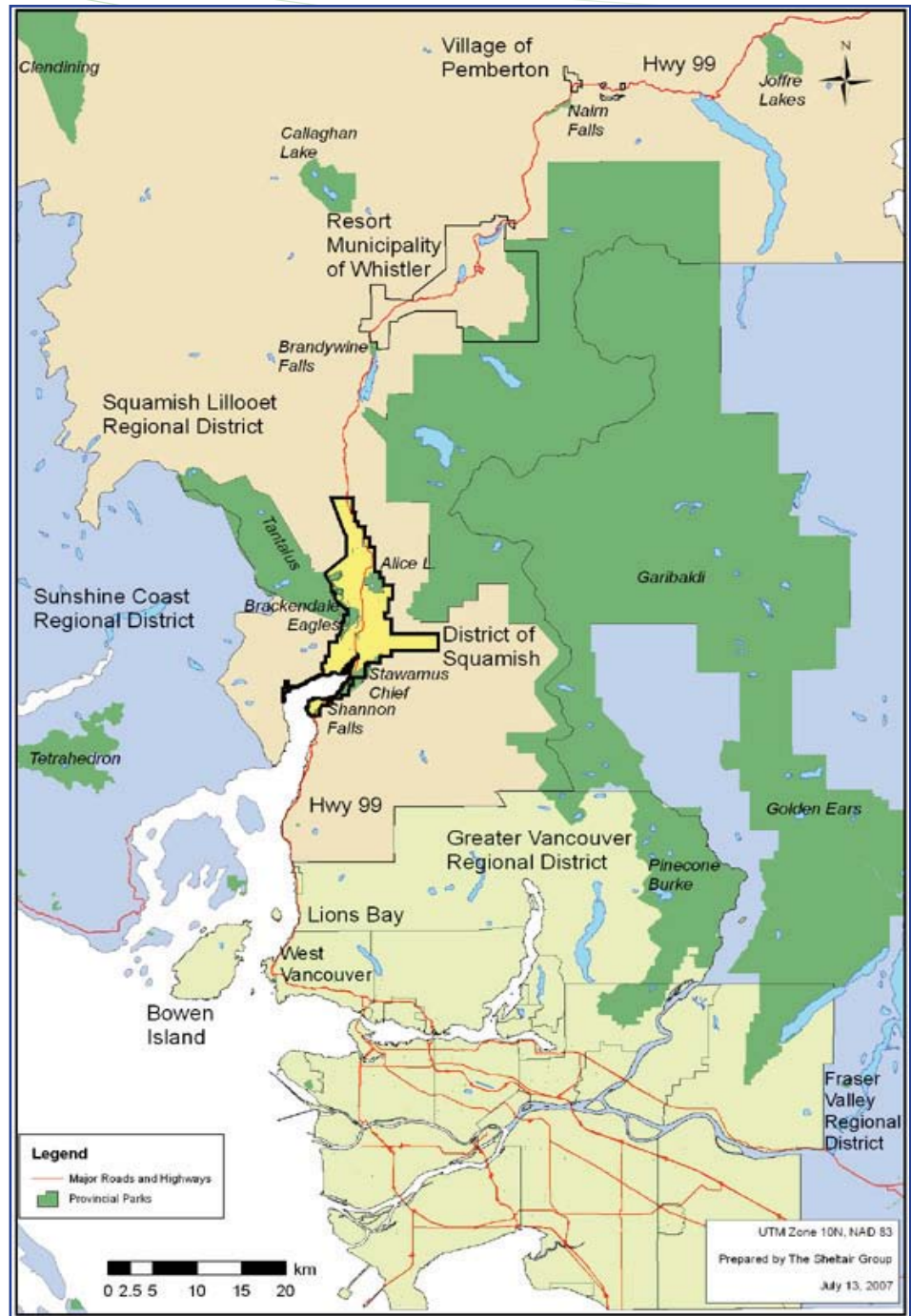


Figure 1: Regional Context Map



5 HISTORY

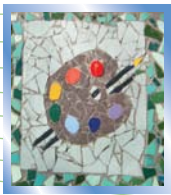
Squamish has been uniquely blessed by its abundance of natural resources and its spectacular setting. This was first recognized by the original inhabitants of Squamish - the Squamish (Sko-mish) Nation who benefited from its beauty and its bounty for thousands of years. The Sko-mish name means “strong wind” or “birthplace of the winds”.

Over the past century, many different ethnic groups and cultures have joined the original inhabitants of Squamish. The first contact between the Squamish Nation and European explorers occurred in 1772. Early traders, gold seekers and adventurers were followed by farmers in the late 1800’s, who made Squamish their permanent home. Forestry quickly surpassed farming as the foundation for the economy in Squamish. With the completion of the railway from Squamish to Vancouver in 1956, and Highway 99 a few years later, access to Squamish was opened up for development. This was further reinforced as Whistler was developed as a year-round resort starting in the 1970’s and has become an international tourist destination.

With these access improvements and a major resort attracting development and visitors, the population expanded between the 1970’s and early 1990’s with a temporary stalling of population growth during the recession of the early 1980’s. The economy was primarily driven by resource development during this period.

In 2000, Squamish has established itself as the Outdoor Recreational Capital of Canada and there has been growth in the tourism, hospitality, and service sectors. With the major Highway 99 improvements and capacity upgrades underway in conjunction with the 2010 Vancouver-Whistler Winter Olympics, population and economic growth pressures are increasing. This has also contributed to an increase in construction-related employment. In addition, employment in the education sector and related student population will be increasing with the opening of Quest University in 2007 and the potential expansion of Capilano University. These developments and changes indicate that the economy of Squamish has been becoming more diversified as it moves away from primary dependence on the resource sector.





6 COMMUNITY PROFILE

POPULATION

According to the Statistics Canada Census in 2006, the population of the District of Squamish was 14,949. This represents a 7% increase from the 13,994 people who lived in Squamish in 1996. On average, the population in Squamish is younger than the rest of the province. In 2006, the median age of the District was 35.9 years of age, compared to 40.8 years of age in BC. Approximately 20% of the District's population is under the age of 15. In contrast, only 10% of the population is aged 55 to 64 and about 9% are 65 years of age or older.

The population in Squamish also has a slightly higher proportion of males than females. This may be explained by the traditional resource-based nature of the local economy, which attracts a higher share of males in the labour force.

Another notable characteristic of the population is the District's ethnic composition. In Squamish, 36% of immigrants are from India, which is significantly higher than the BC average. Other sources of immigration include the United Kingdom, Germany, the U.S., the Philippines, and the Netherlands.

It is anticipated that Squamish's population will reach 20,300 in 2011, 26,100 in 2021 and 33,100 in 2031. It is expected that the median age will increase to 44.5 years and the percentage of the population aged 55 years of age or older will increase from 19% in 2006 to 26% by 2031.

Due to the rapid growth anticipated for Squamish and the uncertainty associated with this dynamic area along the Sea-to-Sky corridor, it is recommended that the population projection be reviewed every two years and updated at least every five years.

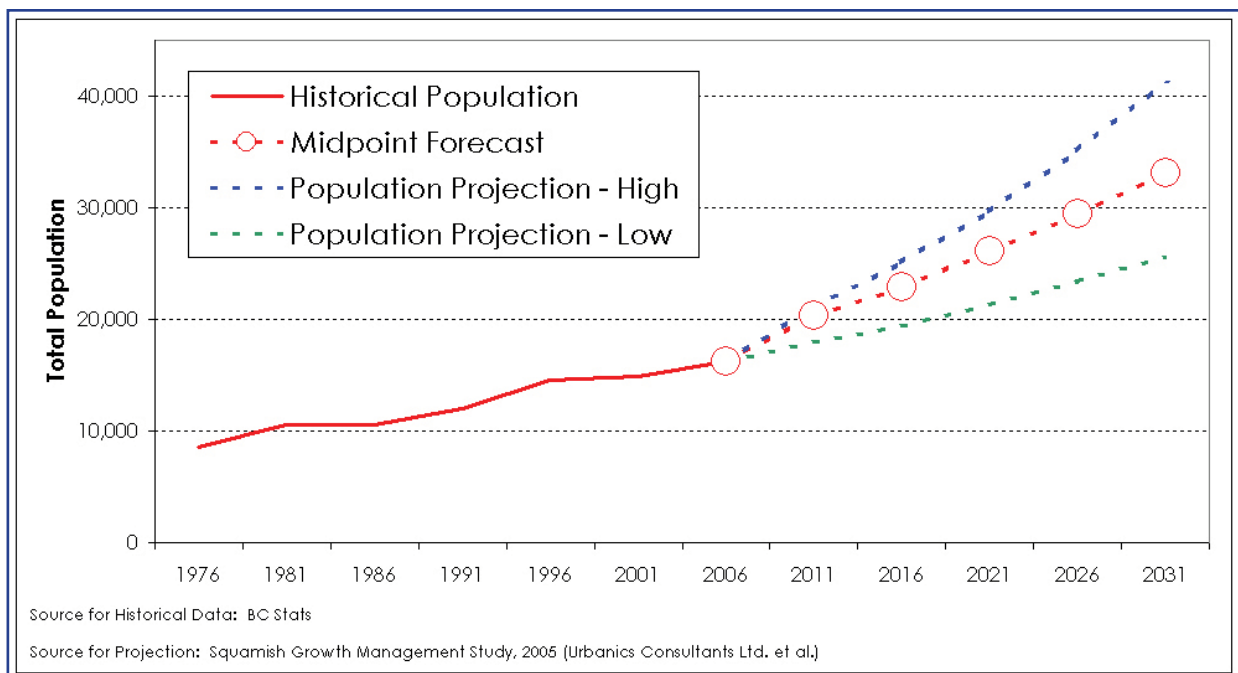


Figure 2: Historical Population and Population Projection, 1976-2031

HOUSING

In 2006, there was a count of 6,011 private dwelling units in Squamish. Based on 2001 data, the dwelling stock was primarily comprised of single-detached homes (61% of the housing stock). Row houses comprised 12% of the housing stock and apartments represented 13% of the dwellings in 2001. Duplexes, semi-detached houses, single-attached houses, and movable dwellings made up the rest of the dwelling units.

The housing stock in Squamish is expected to increase to 13,900 units in 2031, resulting in 7,900 new dwelling units. It is also projected there will be a significant increase in apartment units and ground-oriented units such as townhouses resulting from redevelopment activity in the downtown and oceanfront areas.

LABOUR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT

Like many west coast resource-based communities, the District of Squamish has not experienced any appreciable increases in Squamish-based employment between 1986 and 2001. As of 2001, the labour force in Squamish was estimated to be 7,880. Squamish is increasingly becoming a community of commuters with just under 1,000 residents commuting to Whistler for work and another 1,000 commuting to Vancouver in 2001.

However, with strong population growth, local employment is projected to grow significantly, primarily in the construction, education, knowledge-based, hospitality and retail and commercial services sectors with a proportional decline of employment in the natural resources sector.

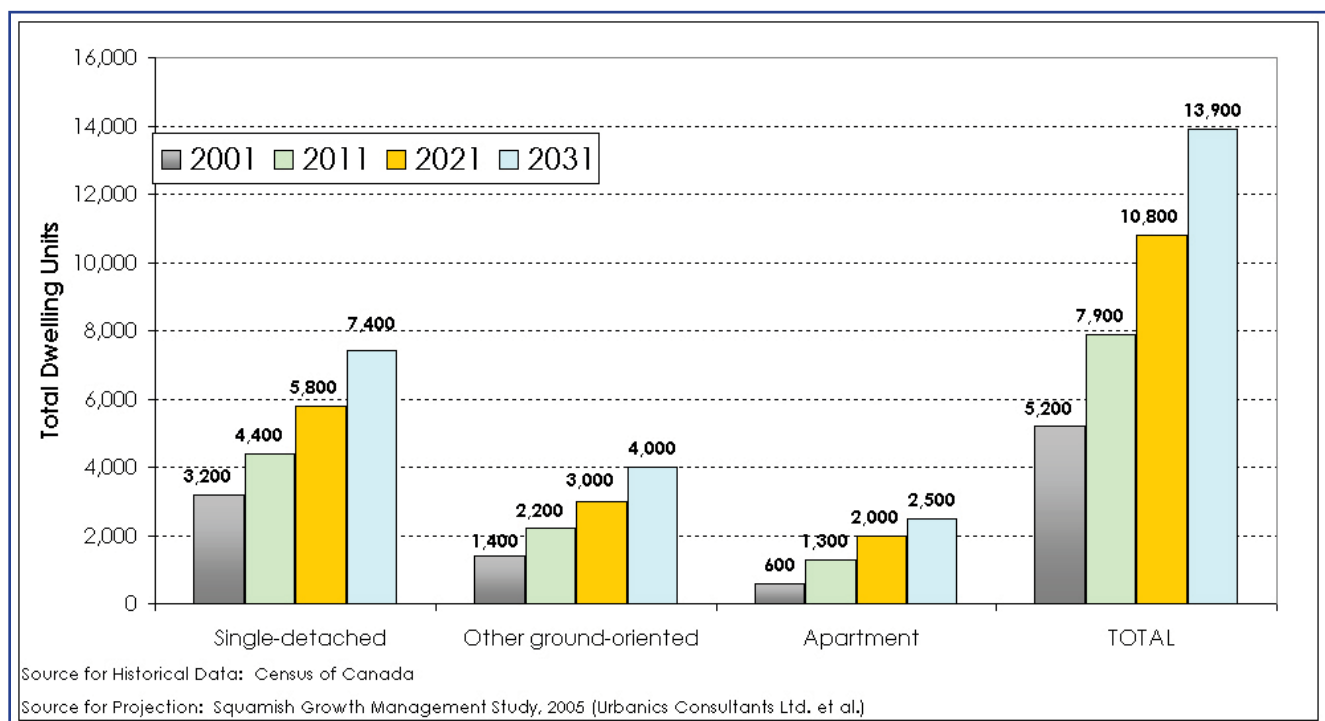
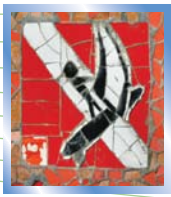


Figure 3: Projection of Total Dwelling Units by Structural Type, 2001-2031



7 REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT

The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) is in the process of preparing a Regional Growth Strategy. The purpose of the Regional Growth Strategy is to provide a strategic direction, define shared objectives at the regional scale, and establish a set of strategies for the SLRD, its member municipalities and the Province to guide growth and change in the region over the next 25 years.

A Regional Growth Strategy must be adopted by the SLRD under Part 25 of the *Local Government Act*.

A Regional Context Statement is a key part of the implementation mechanism of a Regional Growth Strategy. The *Local Government Act* requires that the Regional Context Statement identify the specific policies and actions proposed that would either affect the municipality or require action on part of the municipality.

If a Regional Growth Strategy is adopted, the District of Squamish will prepare a Regional Context Statement within 2 years of adoption of the Regional Growth Strategy by the SLRD Regional Board and will incorporate the approved Regional Context Statement into this section the Official Community Plan.

