

# 4.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION



Arbutus Public Consultation Meetings

## Background

Community consultation for the redevelopment of the Arbutus Shopping Centre site began in 2006. Larco Investments Ltd., the owner of the site, and City Planning staff invited surrounding neighbours and interested community groups to provide ideas for the redevelopment of the shopping centre and to assess the level of community support for continuing with the project. Based on the positive support received during that process, Vancouver City Council. In April, 2007, directed city staff to undertake a public policy review process. That process culminated in August, 2008, with City Council approval of the Arbutus Centre Policy Statement. Based on the requirements of the Policy Statement, Larco and its architectural/technical design team proceeded to develop design concepts for the site in preparation for the submission of a rezoning application. Community consultation was an integral part of that design process and will continue through the rezoning application process.

## Overview Of Program

The consultation program provides a process that allows for community involvement and feedback that will assist with the development of the concept plans to be submitted in the rezoning application. The program is designed to involve residents, property owners in surrounding neighbourhoods, tenants of the existing Arbutus Shopping Centre, community/neighbourhood associations and resident groups, special interest groups and schools in the surrounding neighbourhoods.

## Consultation Activities

Consultation activities have included the following:

- a series of 4 workshops held in July, 2006 with residents of the Arbutus area and with members of the ARKS Community Liaison Group as part of Larco's preliminary consultation program,
- a series of open houses and workshops with the community, and meetings with the ARKS subcommittee hosted by the City of Vancouver from May, 2007 to June, 2008 during the City's policy planning program,
- from September, 2008 to the present, meetings with community groups to update them on the rezoning process and get their feedback on the design concepts. Groups consulted include Arbutus Shopping Centre tenants, Arbutus Village Strata councils, ARCCA Steering Committee, ARKS Arbutus Centre Subcommittee,
- meetings with groups that may wish to locate in Arbutus such as Kitsilano Neighbourhood House and ASK Friendship Society,
- small group work sessions on particular issues or studies undertaken during the rezoning,

- project briefings to update residents/tenants/community groups of study progress,
- one-on-one meetings with residents,
- meetings with City staff and politicians,
- newsletter with project update and written material mailed out to surrounding residents,
- project website,
- information display in the Arbutus Mall,
- comment forms at information display and open houses and
- community open houses.

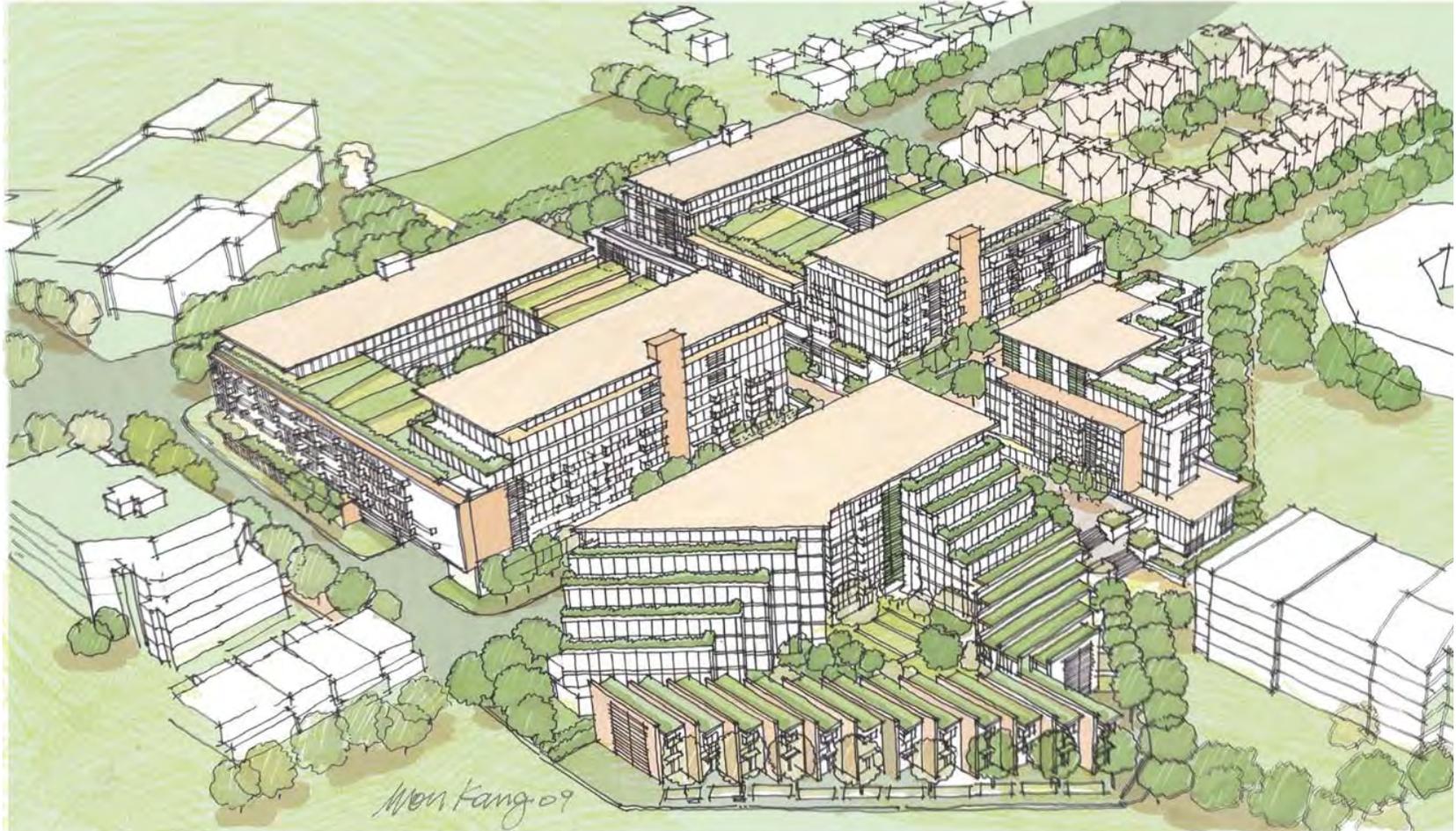
## Consultation Results

Public consultation has provided significant opportunities for residents to be involved in the planning for the redevelopment of Arbutus. Over the past three years residents and community groups have provided feedback that has helped to shape the proposed plans coming forward in the rezoning application.

Initially, through the ARKS visioning process, there was widespread agreement that the shopping centre site would be a suitable location for the development of a neighbourhood centre to replace the commercial-only shopping mall. Building on this vision, the proponent put forward the proposal for a mixed use, sustainable centre, with a community focus. Through the policy program development and currently in the rezoning process, a variety of opinions have been raised regarding the proposal. Initially questions and concerns focused on the need to redevelop the site at all, the addition of housing on the site, the loss of parking, the loss of office and retail to housing, the increase in surface runoff in the surrounding area, traffic impacts and the loss of the recreation centre. Many of those early concerns were identified in the Policy Statement and have been addressed in the rezoning application.

As the concepts have been further developed, the level of acceptance has increased. People are more supportive of the mixed use concept as a viable option for the site and consider it a welcome revitalization of the area. There are still questions raised about specific aspects of the development, but in general, concerns are now focused on height and density, effect on traffic in the area, and rain water run-off into neighbouring areas. People appreciate, in particular, the sustainable design, the elimination of the large surface parking lot, the retention of the grocery store, the addition of the neighbourhood house and the seniors drop-in centre.





Perspective rendering with Block D in the foreground

