



Protecting the Lands in Eagleridge

Background

The District of West Vancouver's *Planning the Upper Lands* process will transfer the development potential from the British Pacific Properties Limited (BPP) lands in Eagleridge to Cypress Village, create detailed planning policy to guide the development of Cypress Village, and protect the lands in Eagleridge for recreation and conservation purposes (i.e. so the lands could no longer be developed under the existing single family zoning or for any other urban development use).

The Eagleridge planning area includes trails, a lake, wetlands, creeks, and stands of old-growth forest. It has a total size of about 280 hectares, which is equivalent to about 690 acres. As a comparison, Stanley Park in Vancouver is about 1,000 acres.



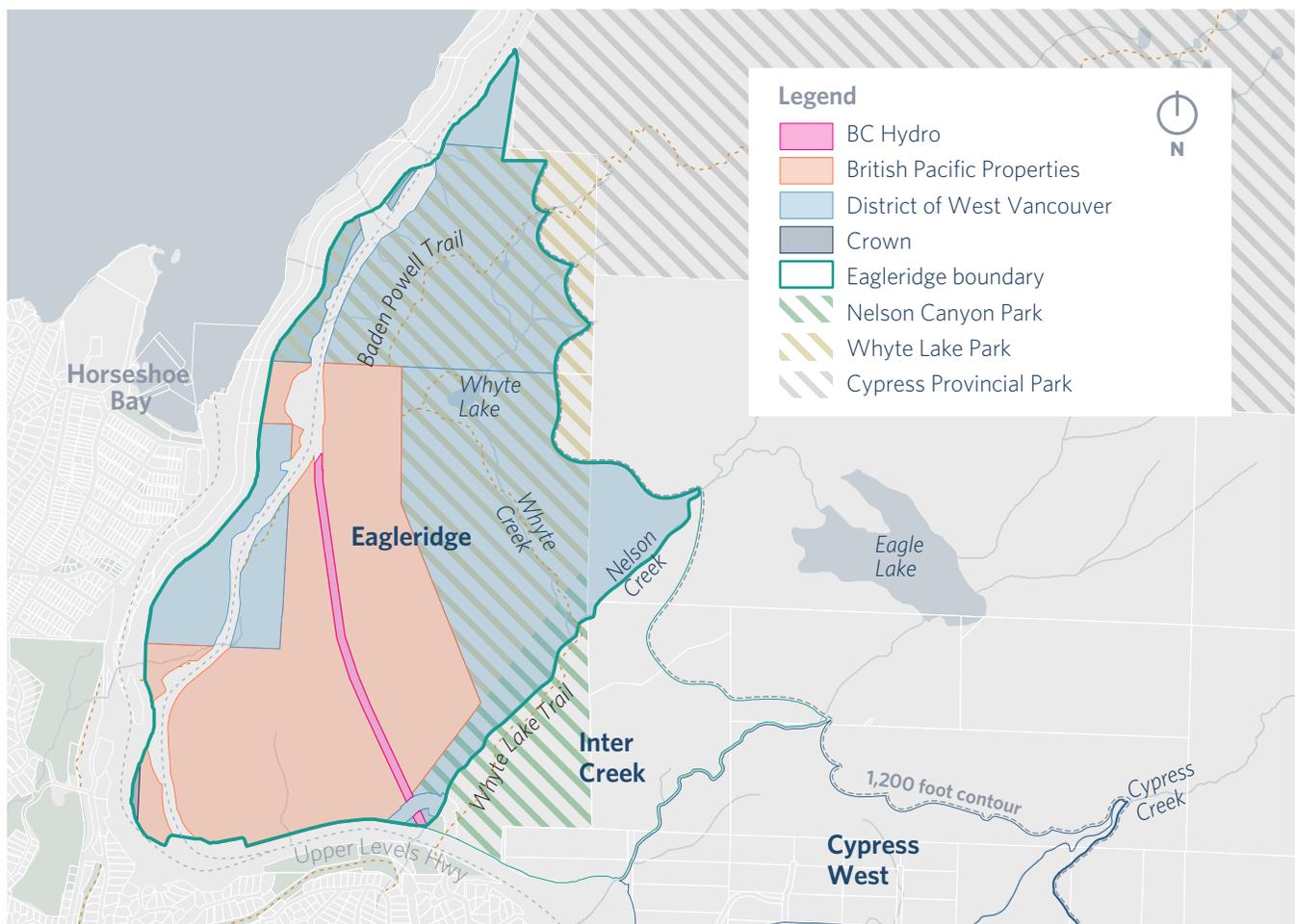
Eagleridge Context

The ownership of the land in Eagleridge is as follows:

1. About 372 acres are owned by the District of West Vancouver. Most of this land is already dedicated park as part of Whyte Lake Park or Nelson Canyon Park. There are some small portions of District-owned parcels in the Eagleridge planning area that are not yet dedicated park which the District intends to dedicate as park as part of this process (see the unhatched, blue-shaded areas in the plan below in Eagleridge).
2. BC Hydro and the Crown own small portions of the Eagleridge lands (see the grey and pink shaded areas in the plan below). The BC Hydro and Crown parcels will remain as is.
3. About 262 acres are owned by BPP (see the orange shaded areas in the plan below).¹ These are the Eagleridge lands that this planning process is seeking to protect by transferring the development potential into Cypress Village.

Portions of Whyte Lake Park and Nelson Canyon Park are adjacent to, but outside of, the Eagleridge planning area (see the tan and green hatched areas outside of the Eagleridge boundary in the image below). These lands plus the lands in Eagleridge have a combined total site size of about 780 acres.

Parks in and near the Eagleridge Planning Area



¹ Detailed information about the lands in Eagleridge (e.g. land areas, ownership, zoning, environmental information, and possible single family lot yield under the existing zoning on the BPP lands) is provided in a document called “**Information About the Lands in Eagleridge**” that was posted to the project webpage in Phase 1.



Purpose

The lands in Eagleridge are important to the community:

- The District's Official Community Plan (OCP) notes that the lands in Eagleridge "include important environmental assets and recreational opportunities that the community values" and should be permanently protected (OCP Policy 2.7.9).
- Council's Strategic Plan, 2020-2021 sets out a goal to "Protect our natural environment, reduce our impact on it, and adapt to climate change."
- As part of the 2012 Parks Master Plan, West Vancouver residents articulated the "protection and stewardship of the natural environment" as one of the community's core values.

The lands in Eagleridge are also important to the region:

- Metro Vancouver's *Regional Growth Strategy* is currently being updated, in part to "strengthen the protection and enhancement of ecologically important lands and reflect current local environmental planning priorities, both within and beyond urban areas," because "natural spaces provide many 'ecosystem services'...including capturing carbon, absorbing and cleaning floodwater, cooling cities, and protecting coastal communities. If these areas are protected and remain healthy and biodiverse, they will continue to help the region adapt to climate change."²

- Metro Vancouver's *Ecological Health Framework*³ notes that protecting natural areas helps "maintain ecological health and biodiversity while providing opportunities for people to experience the natural world."
- Metro Vancouver's recently completed *Regional Ecosystem Connectivity Study*⁴ evaluated the connectivity of greenspaces in the region by studying the habitat requirements of selected representative species. The study notes that "the connectivity of ecosystems is a key component of ecosystem function, adaptability, and resiliency" and that understanding the connectivity of green spaces "is critical for conserving biodiversity in our region." The purpose of the study is to provide "a high-level planning tool to help guide development and land acquisition by member jurisdictions throughout the region." The map below shows the ecosystem connectivity importance of lands in West Vancouver. As shown, the BPP lands in Eagleridge are rated as having very high importance in the connectivity of the region's ecosystem.

This planning process provides an extraordinary opportunity to protect a large, natural area that is environmentally and ecologically important to the West Vancouver community and the region.

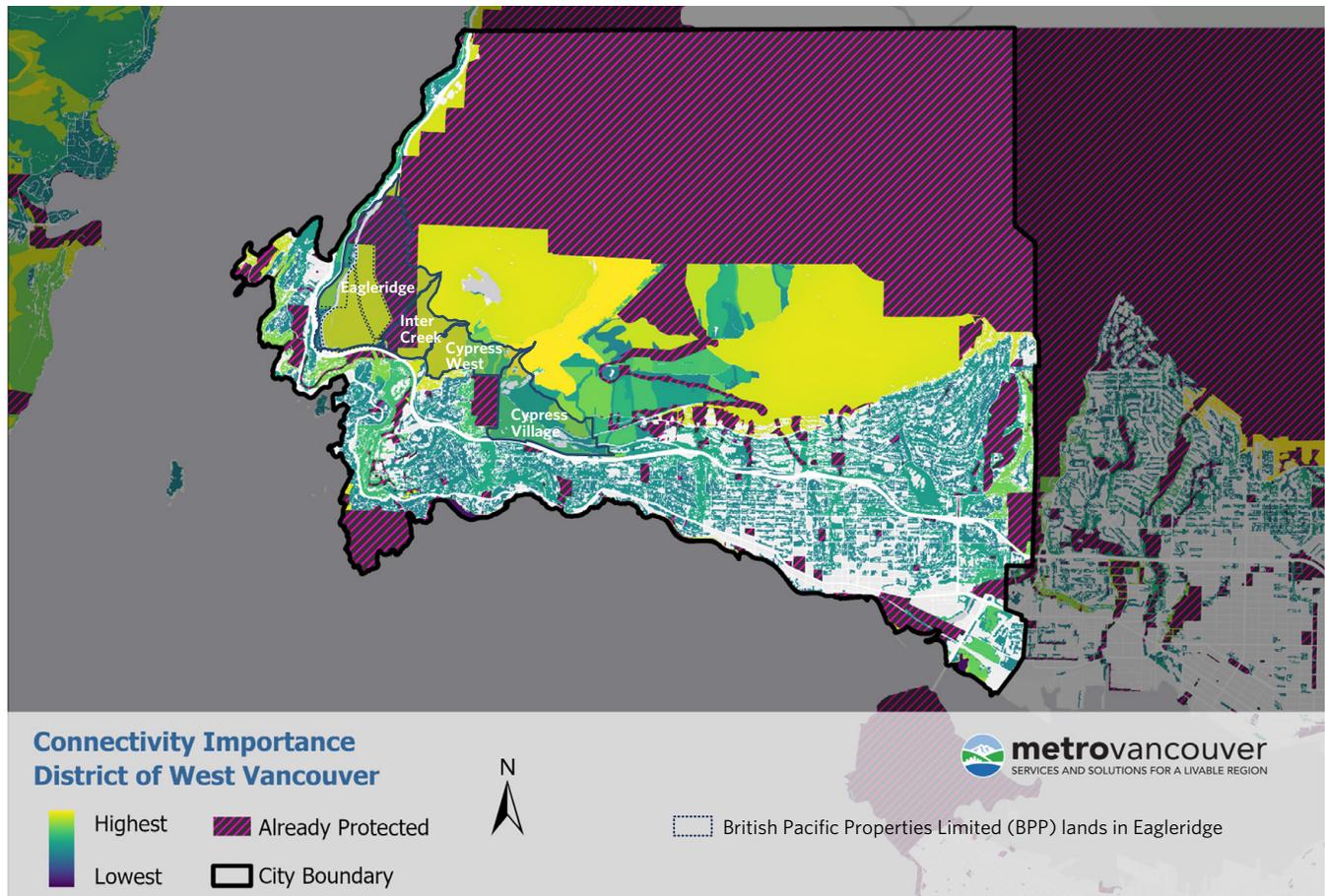
² Metro Vancouver Regional Planning, "Metro 2050: Policy Summary - Environment" document available online here:

<http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/Metro2050-PolicySummary-Environment.pdf>

³ Adopted by the Metro Vancouver Regional District Board on October 26, 2018.

⁴ Metro Vancouver staff report to the Metro Vancouver Regional District Board entitled "Evaluation of Regional Ecosystem Connectivity Study", 19 May 2021, available online here: Regional Planning Committee Agenda June 9, 2021 (metrovancouver.org)

Metro Vancouver Regional Connectivity Importance Map for West Vancouver



Mechanism for Protecting the BPP Lands in Eagleridge

There are different approaches that could be used to protect the BPP lands in Eagleridge. The intent is that after the transfer of development potential, the Eagleridge lands will be protected from any form of urban development in perpetuity and public access will be secured in perpetuity. It is expected that there will be expansion and improvement of trails to support recreation use.

The District's Official Community Plan (Policy 2.2.11) sets out the goal to "Protect lands west of Eagle Creek below 1,200 feet whose development potential has been transferred, designate these lands as Limited Use and Recreation, and dedicate them as public parkland or non-profit conservancy or similar publicly-accessible open space in perpetuity."

The OCP does not provide direction on the legal mechanism that should be used to protect the lands in Eagleridge. Options could include fee simple transfer of ownership from BPP to the District, BPP retaining ownership of the lands but registering a No Build Covenant on title along with a binding agreement to provide public access in perpetuity, or some other approach. The District is seeking fee simple transfer

of title to the lands from BPP to the District as part of this planning process.

The OCP also does not provide direction about what would happen with the existing single family zoning on the BPP lands in Eagleridge. Options could include leaving the zoning as is but with a No Build Covenant (or some other legal mechanism limiting the use of the lands) or changing the zoning to a Community Use zone. Assuming that fee simple ownership of the BPP lands in Eagleridge is transferred to the District as part of this process, the District intends to change the zoning of the lands to a Community Use zone. Dedicating the lands as park is also an option.

Management of the Lands Once Protected

The objective of *Planning the Upper Lands* is to protect the BPP lands in Eagleridge for conservation and recreation purposes. The District will explore options for managing the lands in a separate, subsequent planning process. Preliminary ideas for how the lands could be managed include management under the District's Parks department (as is the case for the lands in Whyte Lake Park and Nelson Canyon Park already), involvement of a non-profit conservancy, exploring co-management opportunities, or some other approach.