

Stories From The Archives — “The Proposed Road to Indian River”

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Prior to ‘World War One’, the Provincial government had plans to construct a six-foot (2 m) wide trail from the northern boundary of the ‘District of North Vancouver’ (see map below) to the mouth of Indian River, at Wigwam Inn, along the west shore of the North Arm (a.k.a. ‘Indian Arm’). However, that project only got as far as the planning stage.

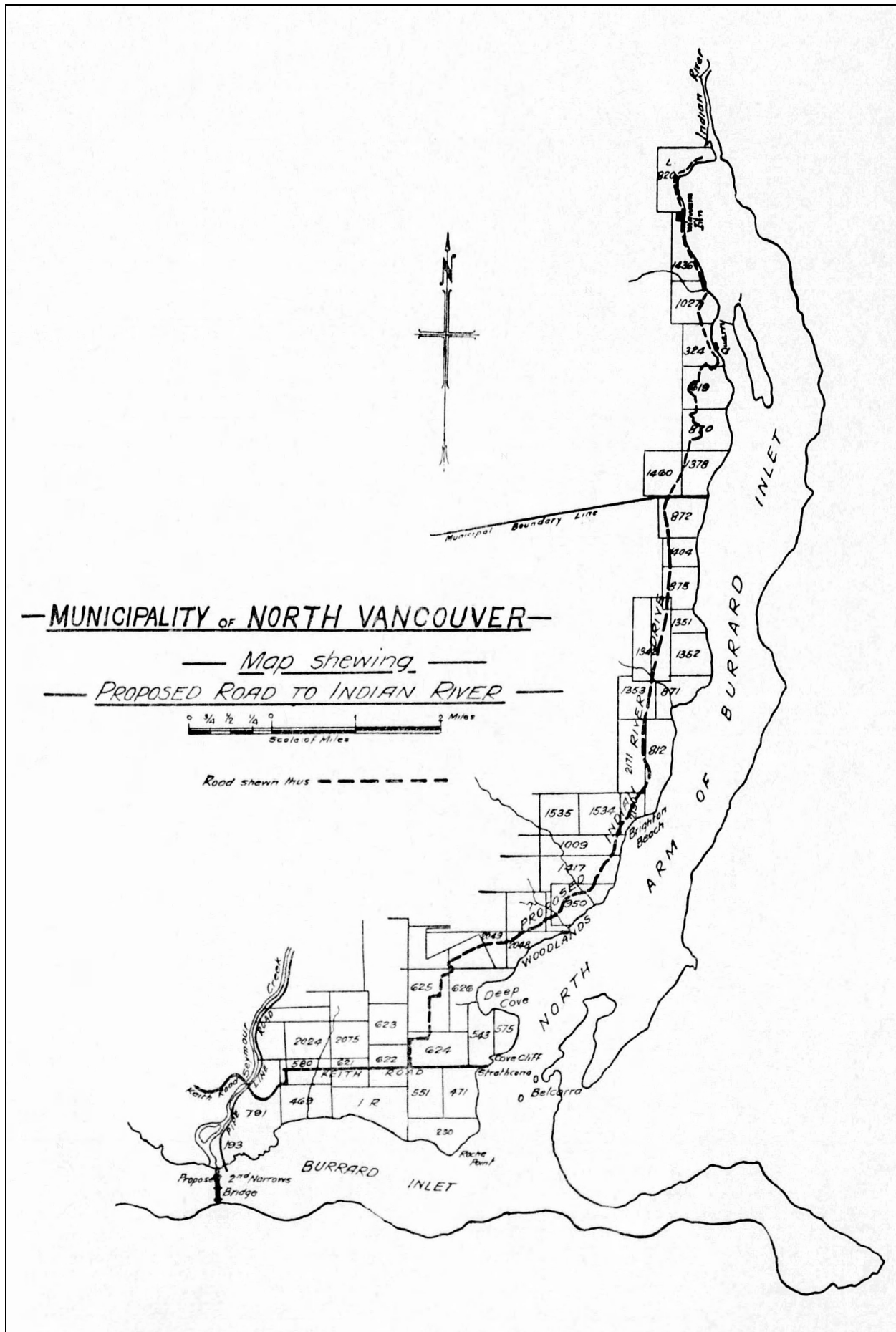
In July 1912, it was reported that the ‘District of North Vancouver’ was making rapid progress on surveying the ‘North Arm Road’ (a.k.a. ‘Indian River Drive’) from Keith Road (today known as ‘Mount Seymour Parkway’) and the engineers had reached the last district lot at the north end of the municipality ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾ (see map ⁽³⁾ below). It was anticipated that the 10-mile (16 km) road would prove a great boon to mineral exploration along the North Arm section of the district and would also prove a scenic settlement road second to none in the country.

In 1912, the District of North Vancouver’ constructed the municipal wharf at ‘Woodlands’ ⁽⁴⁾ and, in 1914, ‘Indian River Drive’ was constructed as far as ‘Woodlands’. ⁽⁵⁾ However, most ‘Woodlands’ residents depended heavily on the passenger ferry services of ‘Harbour Navigation Company’ for transportation, mail services and groceries. A pathway was kept between North and South ‘Woodlands’ so that the residents north of the wharf could pick-up their mail and fresh milk. ⁽⁶⁾

In 1916, the Provincial government built a six-foot (2 m) wide trail from the mouth of the Indian River, at Wigwam Inn, to the summit of the divide, a distance of about 16 miles (about 25 km). ⁽⁷⁾⁽⁸⁾ The objective was to make a trail of sufficient width to accommodate the transportation of supplies and mining machinery by means of sledges, and thereby reduce the cost of transporting supplies and other necessities for mineral exploration. ⁽⁹⁾⁽¹⁰⁾⁽¹¹⁾ This trail connected with the trail put through from Squamish to the mineral claims located about mid-way between Squamish and the head of Indian Arm. ⁽¹²⁾⁽¹³⁾ With the two trails linked-up, access was created from the mouth of Indian River to Squamish making a large mineral area accessible to prospecting and practicable development.

References:

- (1) [“Improvements and Works are Progressing”](#), Vancouver Daily World, Friday, July 12th, 1912, p.17.
- (2) [“Many New Roads Being Opened”](#), Vancouver Sun, Saturday, July 27th, 1912, page 5.
- (3) [“The New Vancouver Across The Inlet”](#), Vancouver Daily News-Advertiser, Sunday, October 12th, 1913, page 18.
- (4) [“Notice To Contractors”](#), Vancouver Daily World, Tuesday, April 23rd, 1912, page 21.
- (5) [“To Have Trunk Roads”](#), Vancouver Sun, Wednesday, July 29th, 1914, page 3.
- (6) [Roy J. V. Pallant](#), “Woodlands Post Office (Document No. 180980)” and “Indian Arm Post Office (Document No. 180957)”, [Museum & Archives of North Vancouver](#), [Socio-Historical Service Infrastructure](#), Chapter 2.
- (7) [“Opening Six-foot Trail Up Indian River”](#), North Shore Press, Friday, August 4th, 1916, page 1.
- (8) [“Trails Are Great Advantage”](#), Vancouver Daily News-Advertiser, Saturday, October 21st, 1916, p. 5.
- (9) [“Mining in British Columbia”](#), Vancouver Province, Saturday, August 30th, 1913, page 22.
- (10) [“Mining in British Columbia”](#), Vancouver Province, Saturday, April 25th, 1914, page 32.
- (11) [“Mining in British Columbia”](#), Vancouver Province, Friday, October 16th, 1914, page 10.
- (12) [“Government Trails to Assist Miners”](#), Vancouver Province, Thursday, July 13th, 1916, page 15.
- (13) [“Building Mining Trail”](#), Vancouver Daily World, Monday, July 31st, 1916, page 10.



1913 Map of the proposed road to Indian River. (3)