

5. PEDESTRIAN ACCESS / WATERFRONT WALKWAY

ISSUES

A continuous walkway would complete the link from Canada Place to Stanley Park, and thus, around Stanley Park to False Creek and beyond. This concept may override other uses at the water's edge that would interrupt the continuity, for example some businesses and institutions will want to get directly to the water's edge. Should walkway continuity at the water's edge be an absolute requirement?

The existing waterfront is not effectively accessible from the existing city to the south. It is visible but people can't easily get to it. Should north-south linkages be specially emphasized?

A variety of experience can be created along the walkway by different treatments, shoreline modifications which alter the shape and direction of the path, varying widths and adjacent activities. However, some consistency of treatment would foster continuity, a sense of publicness and ease of maintenance. Where should the balance be struck?

With new waterfront development, the distance between the existing built city and the water could be increased significantly but the ease of access to the water also can be increased dramatically. Which is most important for the southerly neighbours?

Should the continuous walkway be required up front (even with more temporary shoreline walks) to secure speedy public use of the water's edge or should the walkway happen in tandem with the final shoreline treatment and adjacent urban development?

Is a major open space of 'civic stature' appropriate or desirable at the water's edge?

FACTS

There is a steep escarpment along the Marathon site that drops up to 40 feet from the high street ends in the built area to the south, down to the waterfront level. Clear walkway continuity now exists between Cardero Street (east edge of the Westin Bayshore Hotel) to Stanley Park (approximately 2400 feet). This connects directly to the continuous Stanley Park seawall walkway.

For the Bayshore site, there is a pedestrian walkway provided along the waterfront from Denman to Cardero Street. However, the easterly one-block section of this walkway around the Westin Bayshore Hotel complex is designed in such a manner as to appear more private in character than the seawalk to the west. This discourages public use of and access to this section.

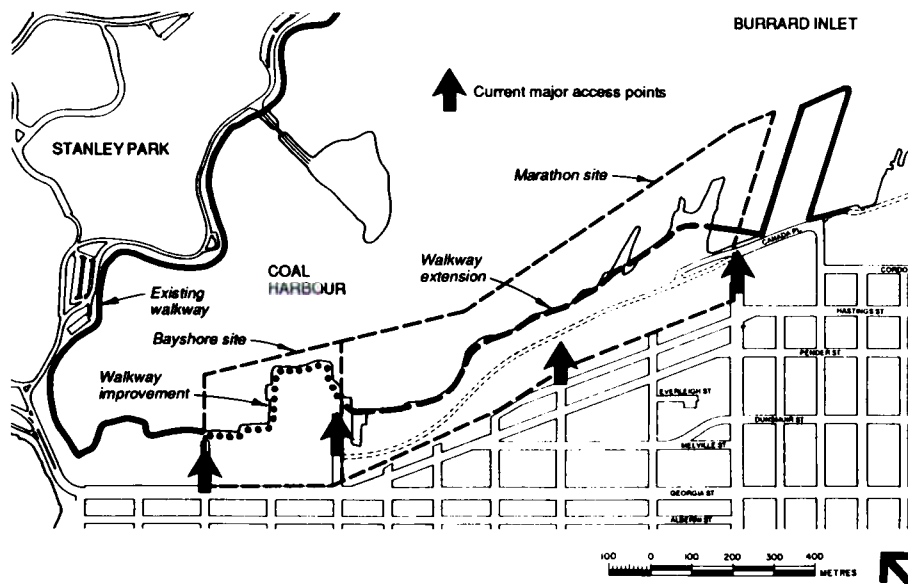


Figure 7. Coal Harbour Existing and Potential Waterfront Walkways

PAST POLICY

1976 CWD PLANNING POLICIES:

- Safe, convenient and attractive pedestrian access to the waterfront through pedestrian linkages at street ends and through new developments.
- Continuous waterfront walkway providing a variety of experiences.

1979 CWD ODP:

- As above, with primary access from Cardero, Bute and Burrard Streets.
- Ease of connection between all walkway systems and all developments.

POLICY

Ensure that a continuous public pedestrian walkway is located at, or in a position directly associated with the water's edge, with consistency of treatment and a design which separates pedestrians and cyclists.

Provide a minimum 25-foot-wide walkway and a minimum 25 feet additional landscaped and/or paved setback along the walkway. The overall width of walkway and setback may vary, but should be at least 50 feet wide, except for minor variation to achieve public interest and urban design objectives.

Ensure that the walkway in front of the Westin Bayshore Hotel is upgraded to meet the public access and quality standards planned for the rest of the Coal Harbour area.

Ensure that the waterfront is highly accessible to pedestrians from a variety of points in the downtown, generally through pedestrian linkages at street-ends and through new developments, with primary access from Cardero, Bute and Burrard Streets. (see figure 7 on page 9)

Continuity of the walkway over the short term is important and construction of temporary walkways that detour around existing but interim industrial functions on the harbour should be provided by the developers prior to completion of the entire development. (see figure 8 below)

Given that phased development of the seawall/walkway may occur, encourage continuity of the waterfront walkway and other public amenities between the Bayshore and the Marathon sites as a part of the first phase of the Marathon development.

Provide an interesting variety of waterfront walkway experiences related to the nature of adjacent uses. These experiences include active interaction with water users adjacent to the Cardero Street small boat harbour, passive quiet near waterfront park space, and connections to gathering places in the commercial precinct and urban activities adjacent to hotel/retail areas.

Provide a variety of opportunities for public access out from the waterfront walkway over the water to view marine activities.

Ensure that the treatment of the walkway reflects the overall objective of achieving a major public presence on the waterfront, incorporating a diversity of activities and opportunities and a variety of marine uses.

While commercial uses could be located along the walkway to add interest, ensure that they do not break its continuity or limit waterfront access. The design and location of waterfront plazas should enhance water-related activities.

Ensure that the waterfront walkway provides emergency vehicle access and access for people with disabilities.

Ensure that a separate, adequate sized, two-way bicycle path designed for slow speeds is provided through the Coal Harbour area on the waterfront where possible and with appropriate signage.

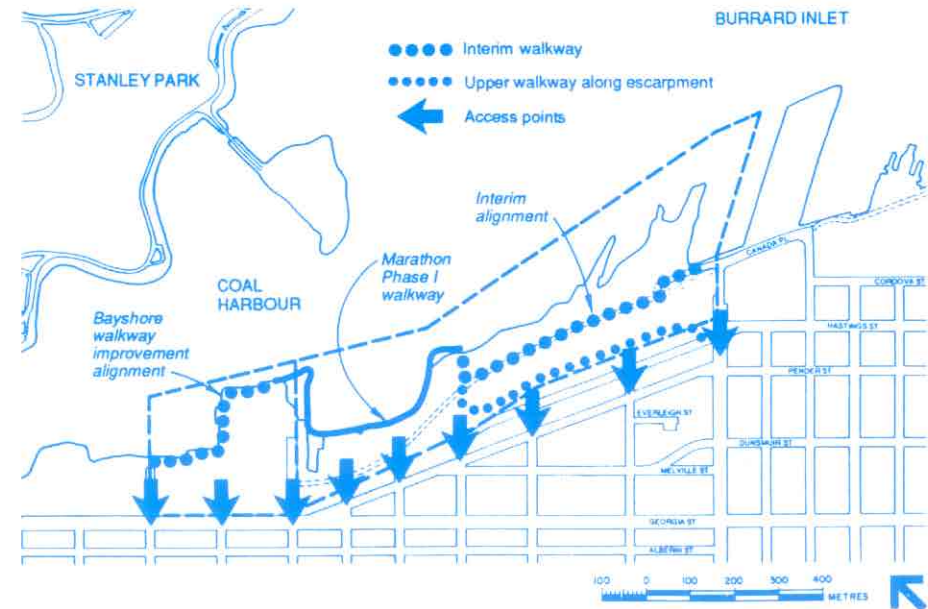


Figure 8. Coal Harbour Waterfront Walkway Phasing