
16. URBAN DESIGN

ISSUES

- **Views:** Development could frame and preserve or obliterate views of water, landmarks and mountains from residences, public spaces, bridges and streets throughout the basin. A carefully conceived mixture of high and low building forms will achieve more views than large areas of uniform building height.
- **Sunlight:** Unless development forms are carefully conceived, sunlight on public and private open spaces and for residences could be lost.
- **Water:** Different forms of development can enhance the sense of openness of the water basin. Tall buildings closely spaced along the shoreline could reduce the apparent width of the water basin.
- **Integration:** New communities could be seen as separate entities or could be integrated into the city and be responsive to the characters of neighbouring areas.
- **Imageability:** Development can have variety without being chaotic and unity without being monotonous. Design guidelines could achieve an overall unifying theme which gives False Creek a strong image while accommodating responses to local influences.
- **Public Realm:** Standard street furniture, planting, sidewalk treatments and paving could be installed throughout the basin or alternatives could be considered to achieve areas of distinctive character.

FACTS

- Vancouver residents and tourists value views of mountains and water as evidenced by real estate values, the Goals for Vancouver survey and postcard images of the city.
- Council has instructed the Planning Department to comprehensively assess views and the development implications of their retention. This review is underway.
- The north and south shores have differing orientations to water views and the sun.
- There is a diversity of areas with distinctive characters around the developing portion of the basin. These include Southeast Granville Slopes, Downtown South, Yaletown, Beatty Street, Gastown, Chinatown, and Mount Pleasant.
- The existing street grid can be extended into the basin without promoting through-traffic.
- A sidewalk of interlocking pavers costs 70-100% more than a standard concrete walkway. A sidewalk of exposed aggregate costs 20-30% more. Maintenance costs are comparable for standard concrete and exposed aggregate. Pavers are about 50% more expensive to maintain.

PAST POLICY

- 1972-73 - general statements for views, overshadowing, relationship of high to low forms, streetscape design, walkways, open spaces, sunlight exposure and diversity in forms expressed in principles.
- 1981-82 - general statements for views, sunlight, links to adjacent areas and distinctive sub-areas.
- 1983 (Staff Response to B.C. Place) - modify proposal to improve views, sunlight access and perception of water area.
- SEGS and North Park - specific design concepts to achieve urban design objectives including views, height gradient from water, build-to lines, contained open space, weather protection, gateways and focal points.

POLICY - PRINCIPLES

- **Views:** Water, mountain and landmark views should be considered from residences, public spaces, bridges and streets when planning the False Creek Basin.
- **Sunlight:** The form of development should maximize sunlight exposure to public and private open spaces and residences.
- **Water:** The form of development should enhance the openness and presence of the water and not overwhelm the waterfront walk.
- **Imageability:** Within an overall unifying theme, distinctive character areas should be achieved to be compatible with surrounding areas, provide variety and respond to site influences such as views, parks, bridges, shopping areas and public facilities.
- **Integration:** To visually and physically integrate with the rest of the city, key elements of the street grid and pedestrian system should be extended into the basin linking the water, key public areas and surrounding built areas.
- **Integration:** The form and pattern of buildings should respond to the street grid and adjacent built areas of the city.
- **Integration:** A positive relationship should be achieved with adjacent neighbourhoods in all respects, especially resolution of negative impacts, through consultation with those communities.
- **Public Realm:** A concept should be developed for street and sidewalk treatment, street furniture, planting, and walkways which achieves areas of distinctive character within a unifying theme and is attractive, durable, cost-effective and reasonable to maintain.
- **Safety:** Ensure development patterns and guidelines foster safety and security.
- **Disabled accessibility:** Accessibility for mobility impaired in both the public and private realms is a priority.