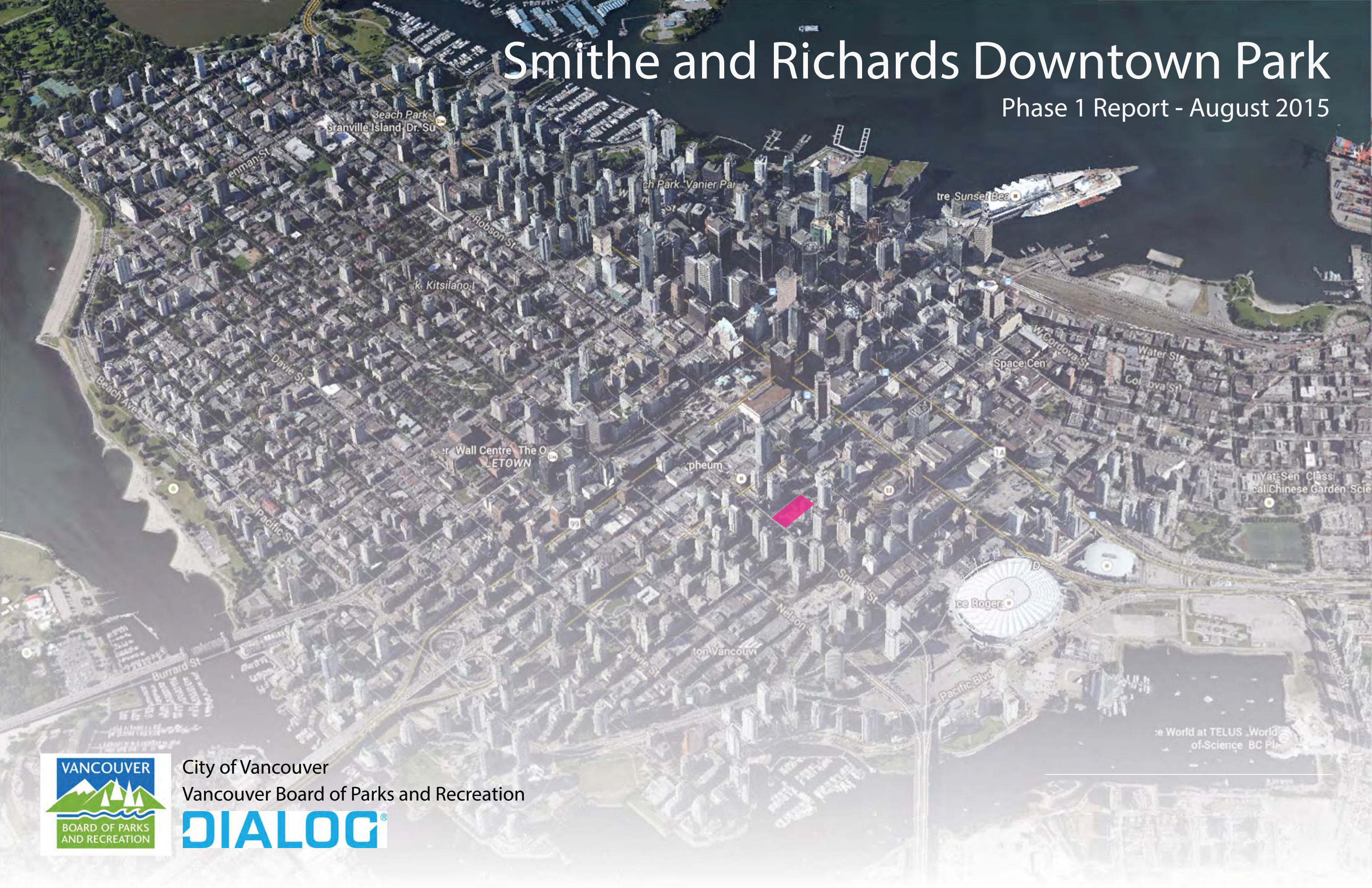


Smithe and Richards Downtown Park

Phase 1 Report - August 2015



City of Vancouver
Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

DIALOG



What are some of the expectations upon this park....

This park should...

... be green.

... stand out.

... be programmed.

... be derived from data.

... have integrated art and creative processes

... be strikingly different and have a strong identity.

... be versatile, adaptive and resilient.

... have partners and stewardship.

This Park should be for all people.



Smithe & Richards

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Introduction

The Vancouver Park Board has retained DIALOG to be the prime consultant and to lead the design team through the design process and the construction of this new Public Park. Proposed at the corner of Smithe and Richards, this Park will serve an increasingly dense residential neighbourhood and will provide a much needed public open space within the downtown core. The primary focus of this report is on front-end analysis and survey findings, which will influence a great deal of the design decisions as the project proceeds. However, it is also worth noting that other factors will have an equal degree of importance and will need to be reflected as the design develops. Such as, information shared though the three scheduled Public Open Houses and Stakeholder Workshops as well as considerations towards the technical requirements as the project advances closer to construction.

As mentioned, this report is intended to provide a summary of preliminary findings from a Site and Context Analysis Study for the Smithe and Richards Park project, as well as the findings from a Needs Assessment Study for the surrounding public parks and open space (within a 400-800 metre radius). This report is also intended to summarize a Park Precedent Study including an in-depth review and analysis of select noteworthy public spaces and parks residing beyond the boundaries of Vancouver.

The success and credibility of the design team's future endeavors through the park design process, whether it be engaging with Stakeholders or at the Public Open Houses, will be contingent on a thorough and accurate understanding of the physical, social and environmental characteristics of the site. As such, all design considerations will need to respond to current needs and trends of the residents and visitors who presently live or frequent this downtown neighbourhood. Furthermore, recognizing the City is a non-static place, these creative design responses will need to flex and adapt to accommodate the anticipated, and yet unknown, evolving patterns and future needs of this downtown demographic.

As designers and city makers we often strive to create impressive spaces or monuments by manipulating the materials and design trends of the day, while failing to recognize the key ingredient - The People, who will ultimately occupy these public spaces, their activities, lifestyles and cultural expressions that will truly make them memorable, vibrant and successful places. Through our increased understanding of the downtown community-- the residents, visitors, businesses, their developing services, amenities and transportation systems-- the design team will lead a stakeholder and public engagement process that is effective in interpreting the projects goals and a design process that strives to attain them.



Executive Summary

Summary of the process

While gathering all the relevant background information for this initial phase of the project, a number of research and analysis tasks were employed and are summarized below:

- Policy Context – Reviewing existing city plans and strategies
- Community Context – GIS Mapping of population and demographic statistics
- Site Analysis – Surveying the existing site characteristics and infrastructure
- Site Survey and Arborist Report
- Parks and Open Space Needs Assessment – Itinerary of surrounding park amenities
- Park Precedent Study – Reviewing successful national and international park procedures and precedents.

Discoveries Made

Policy Context:

1. Background Research

- This Park has key adjacencies that should be capitalized on.
- The nearest character area to the future park site is the Library Square Character Area.
- Another nearby Character Area is Robson Street.

2. Heavily Populated neighbourhood

- A significant increase in population in recent years, with the original (1992) projection of 11,000 residents for 2016 having been reached in 2002, more than 10 years sooner than expected.

3. Open Space is rare and valuable.

- Dwindling opportunity to acquire moderately sized parcels of land that would have been suitable for parks because they have already been acquired for residential development.
- Escalating land costs, having increased 600% between 1991 and 2007
- With this Park, the City will have achieved about 55% of the target set in 1992, which is 2.8 hectares (7.0 acres) of park.

4. City Goals

- By 2020, all Vancouver residents live within a 5-minute walk of a park, greenway, or other green space (also from the Greenest City Action Plan)
- By 2025, increase the percentage of Vancouver residents aged 18 and over who meet the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines by 25% over 2014 levels.
- Increase public participation and community engagement in arts and culture by 25% over 2014 levels.
- Biodiversity and toxins prevention (specific target TBD)
- Every Vancouver neighbourhood has a Walk Score of at least 70.
- Support vibrant spaces that encourage a culture of walking, cycling, and social interaction
- Enable people of all ages and abilities to get where they need to go, comfortably and safely
- Improve access to open spaces.
- Plant 150,000 new trees by 2020.

Polulation and Demographic Statistics

5. Context

- There are only two parks and four ‘other open spaces’ within a 5 minute or 400m walk-shed of the study area.
- Total impervious area (TIA) within the 5 minute walk-shed is 76%. This fraction does not include other paved surfaces, such as sidewalks or parking lots, therefore the estimated TIA is likely over 90%

6. Transportation

The park is located on the Richards Street painted bike lane, however there is currently not a bikeway connection to the northwest or southeast. (on Smithe)

- There is no direct protected bikeway to the study area, however a future connection along Comox Street (and potentially Smithe) will provide access to the area.
- There are several bus stops and one Canada Line station located within a 5 minute walk-shed from the study area.
- There are 1,029 parking spaces within 5 minute walk-shed from the study area, mostly in \$2-3 / hour range.
- There is only 1 disability parking space.
- There are a number of Car2Go stalls reserved on this site. As well as other car share programs in the vicinity

7. Cultural Places

- There are 26 cultural spaces located within a 5 minute walk shed from the study area, including 8 museums/galleries and 8 theatres or performance spaces.
- There are 18 public art locations within a 5 minute walk shed from this study area, mostly located to the north of the study area.

8. Food and Beverages

- There is a high concentration of food and beverage businesses located to the south in Yaletown and to the west along Granville Street and food trucks to the North
- There is an obvious gap in food services Southwest of the site.

9. Employment

- There are 160 business locations with 17,504 employees within a 5 minute walk shed from the study area. This represents a moderate and dispersed number of employees.
- There is a much greater number of employees north of the 5 minute walk shed.

10. Residential Population

- There are 10,861 people and 6,554 dwelling units located within the 5 minute walk shed, mostly concentrated around and south of the study area.
- The overall population density within the 5 minute walk shed is 196 people per hectare.
- The most significant age bracket of residents living within the dissemination area is 20 – 40 year olds, with a 35 % increase between 2006 and 2011. Making up almost 75% of entire population.
- Numbers of children under 5 years old have also increased by 25% between 2006 and 2011. Making up only 1% by comparison.
- Numbers of children between 5 and 14 years have decreased by 10% between 2006 – 2011
- Note: A number of development sites are under construction (such as Telus) or yet to be developed, and although within the dissemination area (400m radius) are not included in this data.

Site Analysis

11. Solar Access

- For most of the year (March – October) the site receives intermittent but good solar access from 10:00 am until 6:00 pm
- Surrounding tall buildings to the West blocks the evening sun from 6 pm onwards
- Adjacent tall building on Alley (to the east) casts a shadow that moves across the site from 9 am until 1 pm
- Winter and evening sun do not directly reach the site.

12. Slope

- The site presently slopes from the north corner on Richards to the southern corner at the lane and Smithe and drops almost 5m in elevation

13. Noise

- There is a high noise pollution emanating from 2 parkade vents situated on the back lane.
- There is also extensive traffic noise traveling from Smithe effecting the southern portion of the site.

14. Vegetation

- As per the Arborist Report (attached in appendix), the only site tree to be retained are a prominent grouping towards the Northwesterly corner of the site.
- There are some street trees on Richards and Smithe that will also be retained.
- The only trees to be removed are a number of small, newly planted trees along the western property line.

15. Vehicle Circulation and Traffic

- Richards and Smithe (the only two streets flanking the site) are both one-way streets.
- There is metered parking on both of these streets.
- Richards has a painted bike lane, Smithe presently has no bike lane but one is being considered by City staff
- 16,000 cars travel along Smithe and between 8,000 and 12,000 cars per day on Richards
- There are two parkade entryways (combined resident and public) located at the north and south ends of the service lane that flanks the eastern edge of the site.
- There are a number of loading docks on the service lane for the retail units on Homer
- There is a back-of-house area for Subeez restaurant at the south end of the lane

Needs Assessment

- At the highest level – Public Open Space of any kind is needed
- In general, almost all typical park amenities are covered-off in the park and open spaces do exist within a 400m (5 minute walk)
- One service or amenity that seems under represented at first glance, are play facilities for older children. However, when the population and demographics data is referenced, it becomes evident that this particular ‘gap or need’ is no more required over other user types.
- Programmed activities for older children and adults, such as ping-pong, don’t presently have an active presence the public spaces in proximity to the site.

Directions to be Pursued

1. Engaging Stakeholders

City staff worked with the design to team to compile a list of applicable downtown community and business representatives towards forming a Stakeholder Park Design Focus Group (PDFG). Included in this Focus group are:

- Downtown Vancouver BIA
- Yaletown BIA
- Downtown Vancouver Association
- Vancouver Public Space Network
- Vancouver City Planning Commission
- Artstarts
- The Contemporary Art Gallery
- Vancouver Police Department
- Children and Youth – Directions
- Vancouver Second Mile Society
- Roundhouse Society
- Surrounding Strata members
- Adjacent Business Owners

2. Public Engagement

The Design team has worked closely with City staff to craft a schedule and strategy that is tailored to this particular project scope and the demographics of the site. There will be 3 primary Public Open House events schedule throughout the design process

3. Integrating Public Art

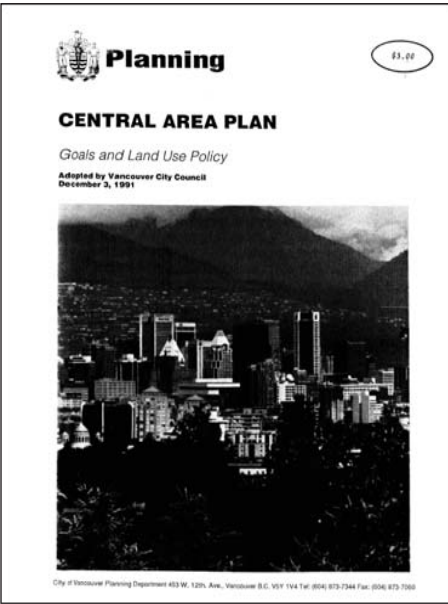
In concert with this research and analysis process, City staff and the design team undertook a selection process to invite a Public Artist to become an integral member of the design team. Gareth Moore was selected as the Project Artist and will be join the design team and be engaged throughout the entire process of this exciting project.

Project Background

Policy Context: Existing Plans and Strategies

In the early 1990s, Vancouver City Council adopted goals and policies for Downtown South to create a new high-density, livable, safe, and environmentally conscious community, with appropriate supportive services and amenities that ensure inclusiveness for a diverse range of individuals and households. The creation of a park at the Richards and Smithe site in the Central Business District (CBD), which was acquired by the Park Board in December 2013, is intended to further these goals. Directions from this and other City of Vancouver plans and strategies that influence the future of this site include:

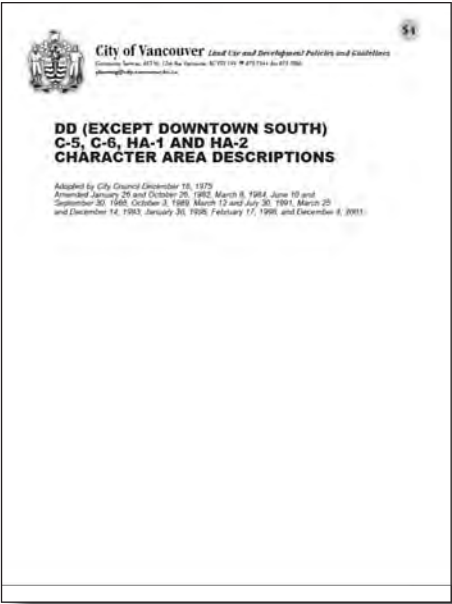
1. Central Area Plan



Adopted in 1991, this Plan is comprised of a set of goals and land use policies for the Central Area. The future park site falls within the Downtown South area, and it influenced by the following goals that continue to be relevant today:

- Economic Generator – The Central Areas is a focus for regional economic development, including head offices and their services, and tourism.
- An Alive Downtown – The Central Area is comprised of a mix of activities where public streets are the primary scene of public life.
- For All People – The Central Area is a place to live and visit for all people.
- A Spirit of Place – The Central Area strengthens skylines, heritage, character areas, livable neighbourhoods, and active public space.
- Central Area in Nature - The Central Area has strong connections to its magnificent natural setting.
- Walkable Central Area – The Central Area is a place where pedestrians move safely, easily, and comfortably on all streets and where walking is the primary means of getting around.
- Accessible Central Area – The Central Area has an enhanced accessibility that does not place an unacceptable transportation burden on streets or the environment.

2. Character Area Descriptions



Most recently amended in 2003, these Character Area Descriptions provide direction to preserve, enhance, and appropriately develop several downtown areas that give the city a sense of time, place, diversity, and individuality.

The nearest character area to the future park site is the Library Square Character Area (Character Area L), situated just one block to the northeast. This area is identified as a civic hub that generates “increased activity and development that should spread to adjoining blocks not yet developed to their potential”. While the guidelines for the Library Square Character Area deal primarily with development directly fronting the Library Square, it notes that development here is intended to create “an intense activity area which has the opportunity to become a focus of surrounding development”, with linkages to the north, south-east (toward the park), and west.

Another nearby Character Area – Robson Street – extends eastward past Richards Street, and is identified as having increasing importance as the major downtown pedestrian route to the Stadium. It notes that major pedestrian amenities should be provided that contribute to Robson’s Street livability, with particular attention given to areas with increasing pedestrian volumes on the eastern portion of Robson Street, which includes the area directly north of the future park site.

3. Downtown South Public Benefits Strategy

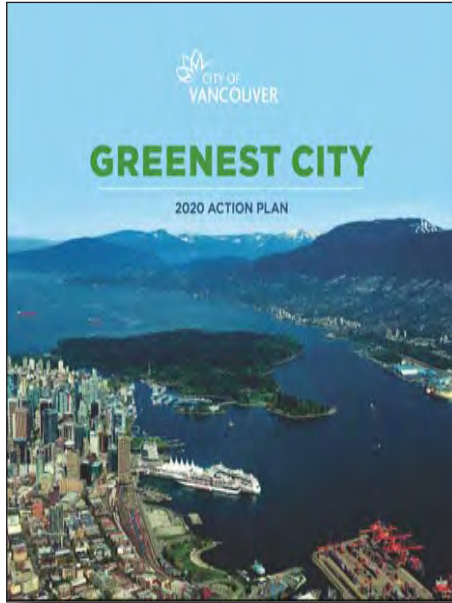


This Downtown South Benefits Strategy for 2007-2021 identifies a target to acquire and develop as park a City-owned parcel at the corner of Richards and Smithe. This park – together with Emery Barnes Park at Seymour and Davie Streets, as well as two future mini-parks in the area between Granville and Burrard Streets – means that the City will have achieved about 55% of the target set in 1992, which is 2.8 hectares (7.0 acres) of park. This would yield a neighbourhood park ratio of 0.06 hectares (0.16 acres) per 1000 residents, which is 6% of the city-wide standard of 1.1 hectares (2.75 acres) per 1000 residents.

The challenges behind this lower-than-average ratio include:

- A significant increase in population in recent years, with the original (1992) projection of 11,000 residents for 2016 having been reached in 2002, more than 10 years sooner than expected;
- Escalating land costs, having increased 600% between 1991 and 2007; and
- Dwindling opportunity to acquire moderately sized parcels of land that would have been suitable for parks because they have already been acquired for residential development.

4. Greenest City 2020 Action Plan



The Greenest City 2020 Action Plan is a strategy for Vancouver to stay on the leading edge of city sustainability. The vision is to “create opportunities today while building a strong local economy, vibrant and inclusive neighbourhoods, and an internationally recognized city that meets the needs of generations to come”.

While many targets can be conceptually linked to the future park at Richards and Smithe, the most directly applicable targets are those falling under “access to nature”:

- All Vancouver residents live within a five-minute walk of a park, greenway, or other green space by 2020; and
- Plant 150,000 new trees by 2020.

The former action includes the strategy of building new parks in park-deficient neighbourhoods. The latter action includes the strategy of planing every suitable space in a street or park with a tree.

5. Transportation 2040



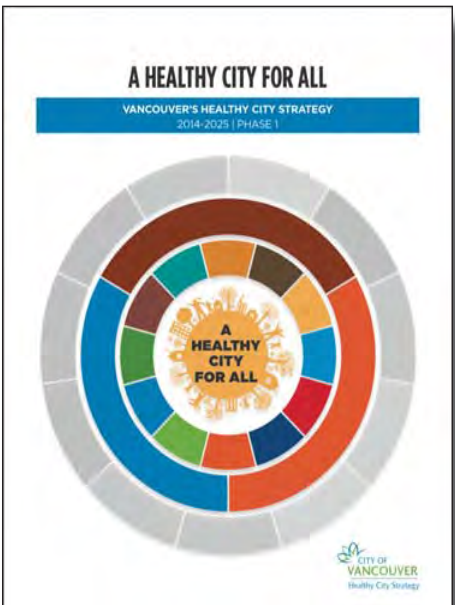
Adopted in 2012, Transportation 2040 is a long-term strategic vision that guides transportation and land use decisions, and public investments. Many of goals in this plan are relevant to the future park at Richard and Smithe, however those that are directly applicable include the following:

- Support vibrant spaces that encourage a culture of walking, cycling, and social interaction;
- Enable people of all ages and abilities to get where they need to go, comfortably and safely; and
- Improve access to open spaces.

Policies for Walking: The park is situated within 1-2 blocks of a “potential pedestrian-priority street” (Granville Street between Smithe and Georgia Streets, and extending east on Robson Street to Seymour Street), which are streets and spaces that may include “car-free or shared spaces through parts or all of the day”. Nearby Robson Square is identified as the most advanced location in this Plan.

Policies for Cycling: While Richards Street is identified on the City’s cycling map as being a painted bike lane, the Transportation 2040 Plan identifies it as a future potential 2015-2017 AAA Route. This represents significant improvement as an AAA cycling route refers to an all ages and abilities network of high standard local street bikeways and separated bicycle lanes.

6. Healthy City Strategy



Adopted in 2014, the “Healthy City for All” is based on a vision of a city where “together we are creating and continually improving the conditions that enable all of us to enjoy the highest level of health and well-being possible.” The Strategy is comprised of several goals and targets, and the ones that are most relevant to the future of the park at Richards and Smithe are:

Active Living and Getting Outside – This goal indicates that Vancouverites will be engaged in active living and have incomparable access to nature. Targets include:

- By 2020, all Vancouver residents live within a 5-minute walk of a park, greenway, or other green space (also from the Greenest City Action Plan); and
- By 2025, increase the percentage of Vancouver residents aged 18 and over who meet the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines by 25% over 2014 levels.

Expressing Ourselves – This goal indicates that Vancouver has a diverse and thriving cultural ecology that enriches the lives of all residents and visitors. The target is:

- Increase public participation and community engagement in arts and culture by 25% over 2014 levels.

Environment to Thrive In – This goal indicates that Vancouverites have the right to a healthy environment and equitable access to livable environments in which they can thrive. Targets include:

- Biodiversity and toxins prevention (specific target TBD); and
- Every Vancouver neighbourhood has a Walk Score of at least 70.

The new park will help meet the Vancouver Park Board’s vision to connect people in Vancouver to green space, active living, and community.



Elements of the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation’s Strategic Plan

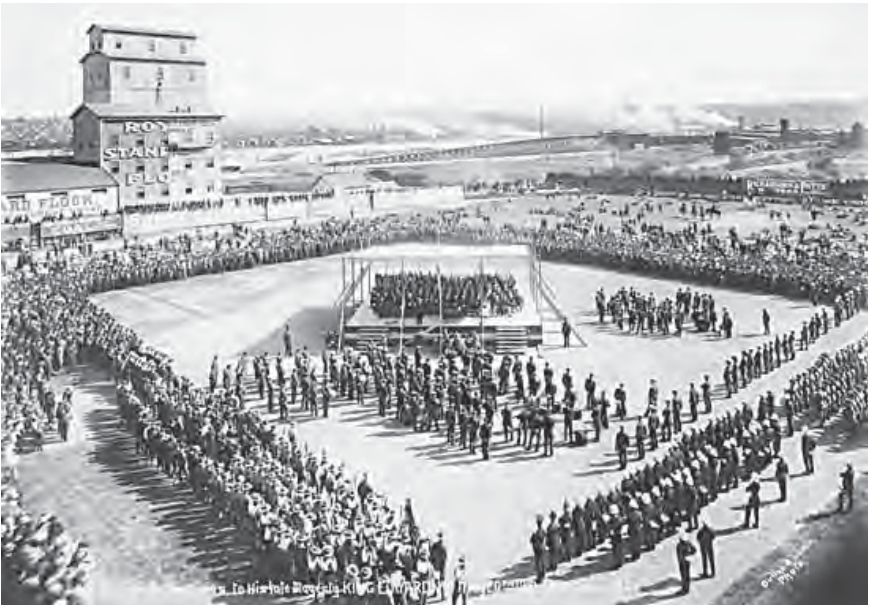
Smithe & Richards Historical Background



These images represent the park site over the past 4 or 5 decades. The image on the right captures the demolition of the 3 story walk-up building (approximately 8 years ago).

Historical Background - Recreation Park

These photos and map are from around 1900, and depict the location and types of events that took place at Recreation Park. Located at the corner of Smithe and Homer Streets, this park was just a stone's throw from the future park location.



Historic Background - Finer Grain Building Plots

There have been dramatic and rapid changes within the fabric of Vancouver's relatively short life span. This photo, although slightly further north of the park site at Smithe, is a good representation of the finer grain building plots and single family homes, common on the downtown peninsula and likely present upon the park site, as shown in the perspective illustration of the same period.



Vancouver, circa 1891, appears to have been from roof of New York block, old Holy Rosary on Richards St, St Andrew's Presbyterian, Richards & Georgia, Baptist Church, s.e. Ho Dunsmuir. Seymour St between Georgia & Dunsmuir in foreground. Street railway stables to west, slaughter house to east of Westminster Ave bridge. Forest beyond. Capl



Published by the Vancouver World Printing and Publishing Company, Limited.

PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE

CITY OF VANCOUVER

BRITISH COLUMBIA

1898.

1. Zion Church.
2. Victoria Street Methodist Church.
3. Wharfedale Block—J. G. Crawford and Co., Baker Bros. and Co., and A. B. & Macdonald, B. C. Electric Ry.
4. General Office, Crawford and Foster.
5. Fire Hall No. 2.
6. Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church.
7. Mount Pleasant Methodist Church.
8. St. Michael's Church.
9. The Arcade.
10. Oriental Hotel.
11. Carver House.
12. Gold House.
13. Bank of Montreal.
14. Imperial Bank of Canada (new building).
15. Bank of British Columbia.
16. Bank of British North America.
17. General Office.
18. Shuchan's Wholesale Furniture Warehouse.
19. Merchants' Bank of Halifax.
20. Molson's Bank (new building).
21. East End Branch.
22. 416. Merchants' Exchange, Board of Trade Rooms and Office.
23. Site for the new Canadian Bank of Commerce Building.
24. General Office.
25. Merchants' Bank of Halifax (proposed new building).
26. Post Office and Public Building.
27. Police Station.
28. Hotel Vancouver.
29. Vancouver Open House.
30. Sir William Van Horne's Block.
31. Hudson Bay Co's Warehouse and Retail Store.
32. Lord Strathcona, Lord Elphinstone, and Lord Dufferin Blocks.
33. Canadian Pacific Railway Co's Headquarters and Workshops.
34. Balmain Hotel.
35. MacLennan Hotel.
36. Yorkville Restaurant, Johnson & Burnett, Dist. and Café and Co., Robertson Bros., and Office of the Canadian Bank of Commerce.
37. Masonry Temple.
38. Dunn Hall and Fairfield Block.
39. Latent Hotel.
40. Molson's Bank and General Office.
41. Windsor Hotel.
42. Waverley Hotel.
43. Hotel.
44. Vancouver Hotel Co.
45. Commercial Hotel.
46. Vancouver Hotel.
47. Aberdeen Hotel.
48. M. J. Henry's Nursery.
49. St. George's Hotel.
50. East End Hotel.
51. St. George's Hotel.
52. Second House.
53. Dining and Restaurant's Brewery.
54. The Carpenters' Factory.
55. Vancouver Club.
56. Metropolitan Club Building, in which are located the offices of Robert Ward and Co., Ltd., Lyle, The B. C. Land Investment Agency Office, The Sun Life, Canada Life and Colonial and Co. Wholesale.
57. THE WORLD OFFICE.

58. The News Advertising Office.
59. The Press Office.
60. Electric Light and Street Railway Power House.
61. Gas Works.
62. Quarantine Room, Wholesale Grocers.
63. The Farmers' Produce Co's, W. A. Leitch and Co., and E. B. Lyle and Co's, Warehouses.
64. William Braid and Co's, Wholesale Grocers, and Green and Sons, Wholesale Dry Goods.
65. Hudson Bay Co's Gas, Office and Liquor Warehouse.
66. Martin and Robertson, Commission Agents.
67. Mount Pleasant Post Office.
68. Victoria Warehouse Co's Warehouse.
69. John Burns & Co., Hardware.
70. C. F. W. Office.
71. David Vancouver.
72. Thomas Dunn & Co., Ship Chandlers, etc.
73. Thomas Dunn and Co., Wholesale and Retail Hardware and House Furnishings.
74. Chinese Immigration Office.
75. Hastings Saw Mills and Shipping Yards.
76. H. C. Thompson Co., Ltd. and Ward.
77. Brown, Coleman and Evans, Shipping Office, Wharf and Warehouse.
78. Union Steamship Co's Office and Shipping Wharf.
79. Totten, Berton and Co., Wholesale Dry Goods.
80. Greening, Wynn, Lagers and Johnson.
81. Canadian Pacific Railway Co's. Depot and General Office.
82. Canadian Pacific Railway Co's. Local Freight Station.
83. Royal City Planning and Saw Mills.
84. Greening Works.
85. British Columbia Cattle and Horse Co.
86. Steamer Shipping Mills.
87. Standard Oil Co's, Warehouses and Shipping Yards.
88. Canadian Pacific Railway Co's. Round House and Workshops.
89. Robertson and Hackett's Saw Mills.
90. Vancouver Lumber and Coal Co.
91. Tait's Saw Mills.
92. Cannery.
93. Robertson and Hackett's Shipping Mills and Factory.
94. McMillan and Hamilton's Warehouse.
95. Breckman and Kerr's Warehouses.
96. H. C. Prior and Co's, Agricultural Implements, Wagon, Horse, and Sheep.
97. H. M. Ship, Imporium, Flagship.
98. H. M. Ship, Anytown.
99. Hastings Produce Co.
100. J. V. Griffin and Co., Park Park.
101. J. V. Griffin and Co., White Star Building.
102. W. H. Mullin and Co., Commission.
103. Douglas and Co., Wholesale.
104. George's Nursery and Horticulture.
105. Site for proposed new St. Andrew's.
106. Ames, Holden and Co., Wholesale.
107. John Larkin, Wholesale Twines, Supplies.
108. Site of Court Building, Imperial.
109. General Office.
110. Gambetta Hotel.
111. Armstrong and Harrison's Store.
112. Site for Dominion Drill Shed.
113. 120 and 121 Canadian Pacific Ry.
114. Canada Street Improvement Ground.
115. Dunsmuir Wharf and Coal Yard.
116. Coal Storage Works.
117. Kelly Institute.
118. Steel House.
119. Shuchan's Boat House and Yard.

Smithe & Richards

Community Context

Population + Demographics
Land Use + Built Form
Cultural Spaces + Community Resources
Connections: Pedestrian, Cycling + Transit
Surrounding Parks + Open Spaces

NT BAR

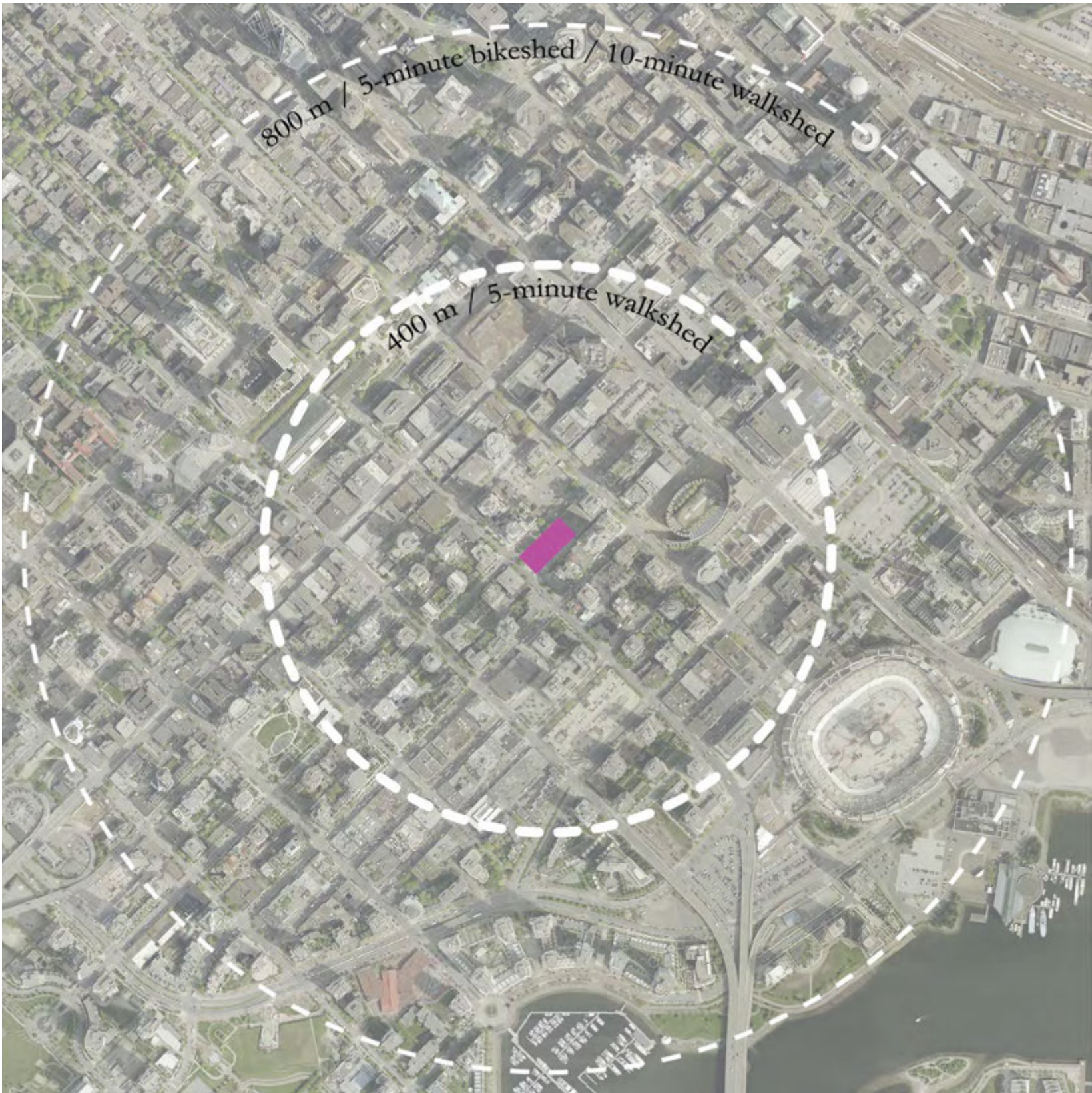
RED TRUCK BEER

Hand Built B.C. Craft

STELLA ARTOIS

Subee

Community Context



Walksheds...

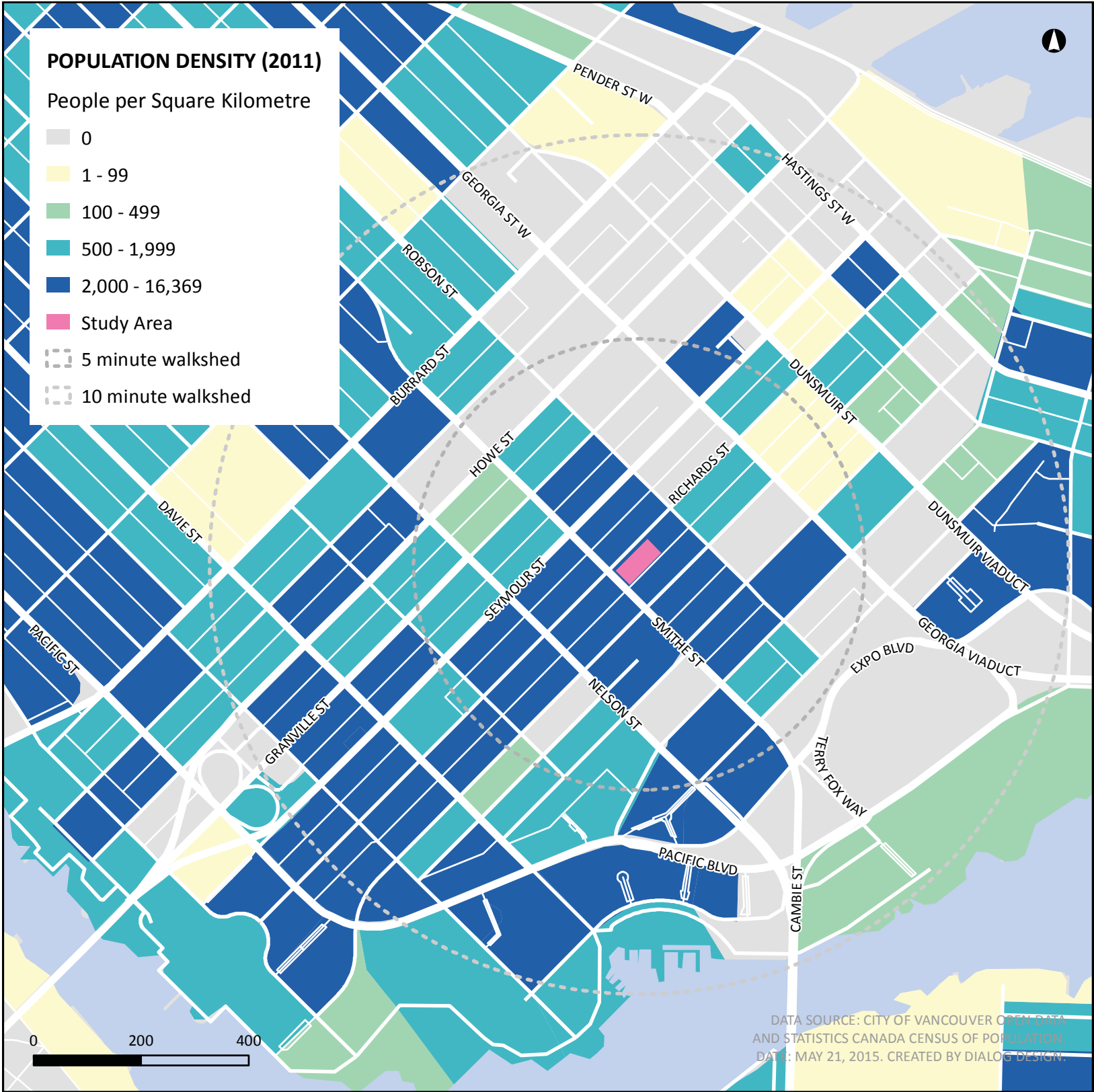
For the purpose of the demographic data calculations we created a dissemination zone that was in keeping with the proposals 5-minute walkshed or 400m radius.

However, for the park needs assessment, it became apparent that this average walking measurement might not be the best means of capturing or delineating future park usership patterns. As biking infrastructure improves, along with increased car-share services people will likely have more options and ability to move around this downtown area. The radius of the park and open space needs assessment was therefore increased to 800m, an average 10 minute walking distance or 5 minute leisurely bike ride.



Community Context

Population and Demographics



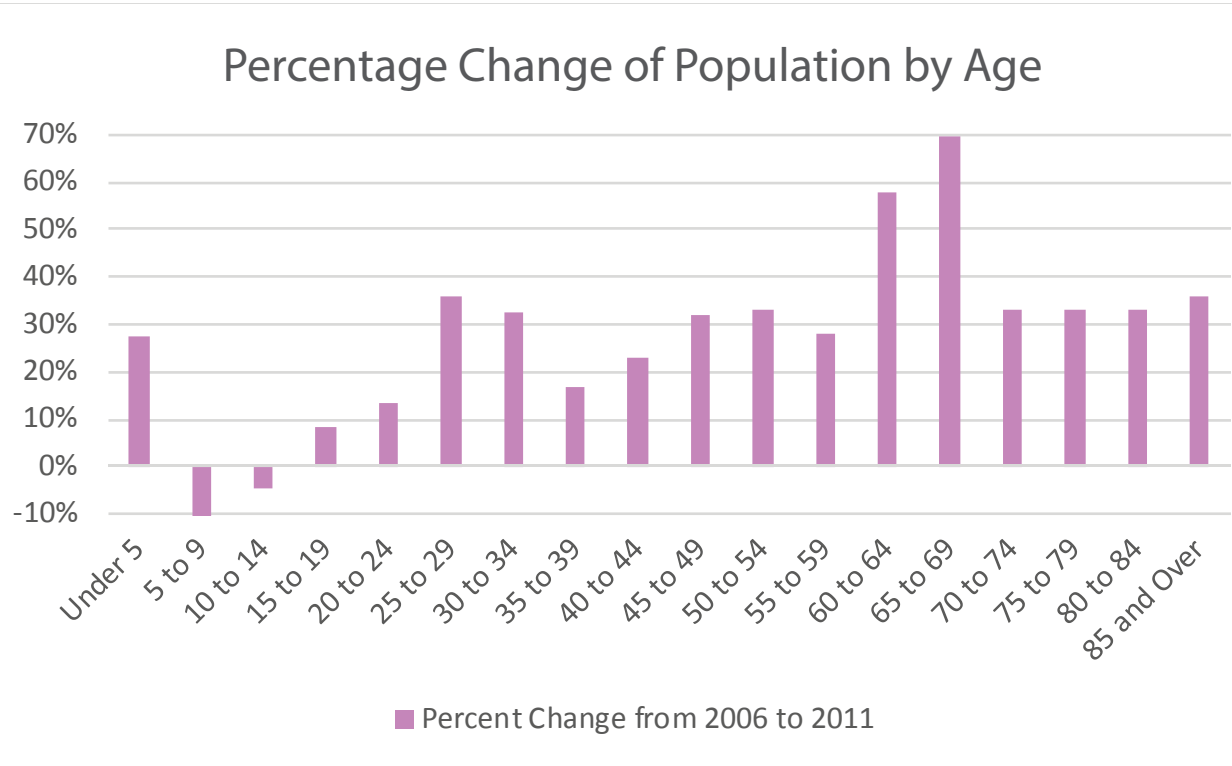
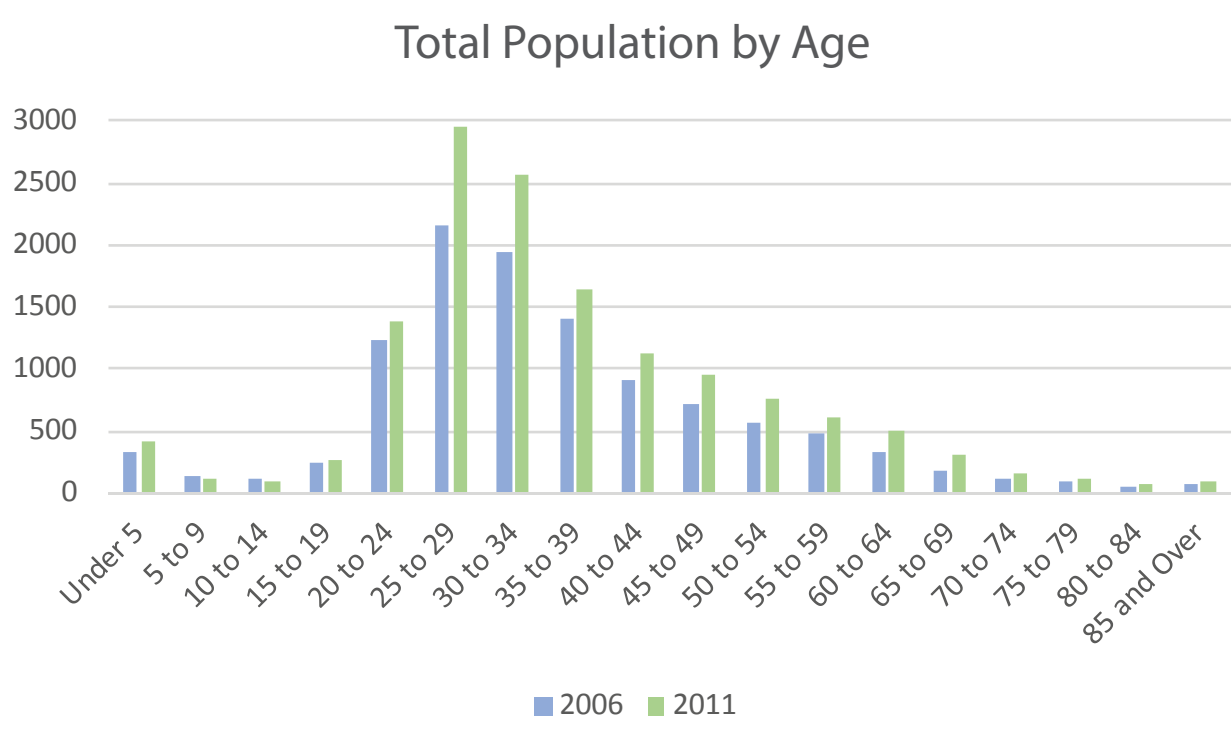
Lots of people live here...

- There are 10,861 people and 6,554 dwelling units located within the 5 minute walk shed, mostly concentrated around and south of the study area.
- The overall population density within the 5 minute walk shed is 196 people per hectare.
- The most significant age bracket of residents living within the dissemination area is 20 – 40 year olds, with a 35 % increase between 2006 and 2011. Making up almost 75% of entire population.
- Numbers of children under 5 years old have also increased by 25% between 2006 and 2011. Making up only 1% by comparison.
- Numbers of children between 5 and 14 years have decreased by 10% between 2006 – 2011

Note: A number of development sites are under construction (such as Telus) or yet to be developed, and although within the dissemination area (400m radius) are not included in this data.

Community Context

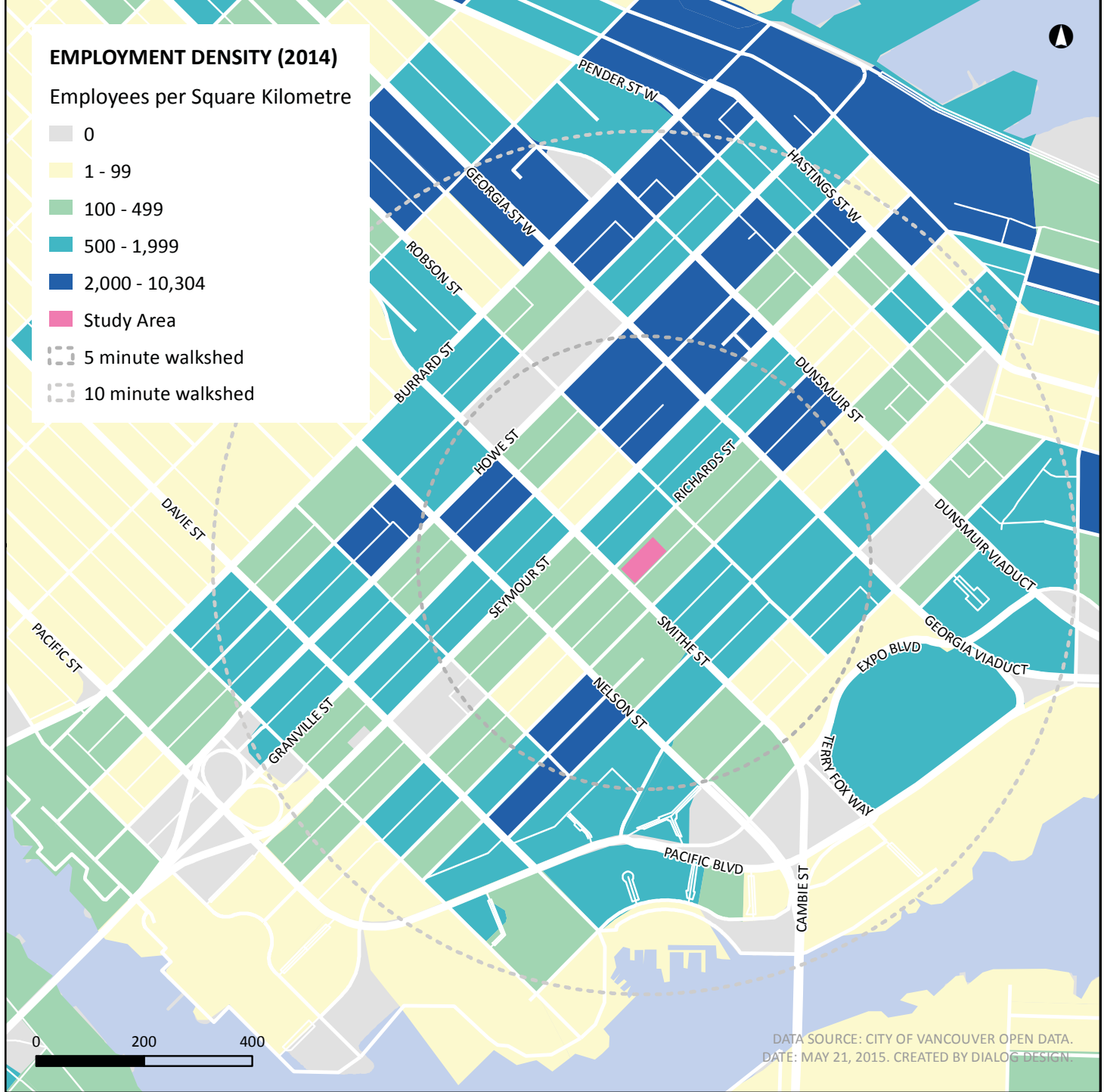
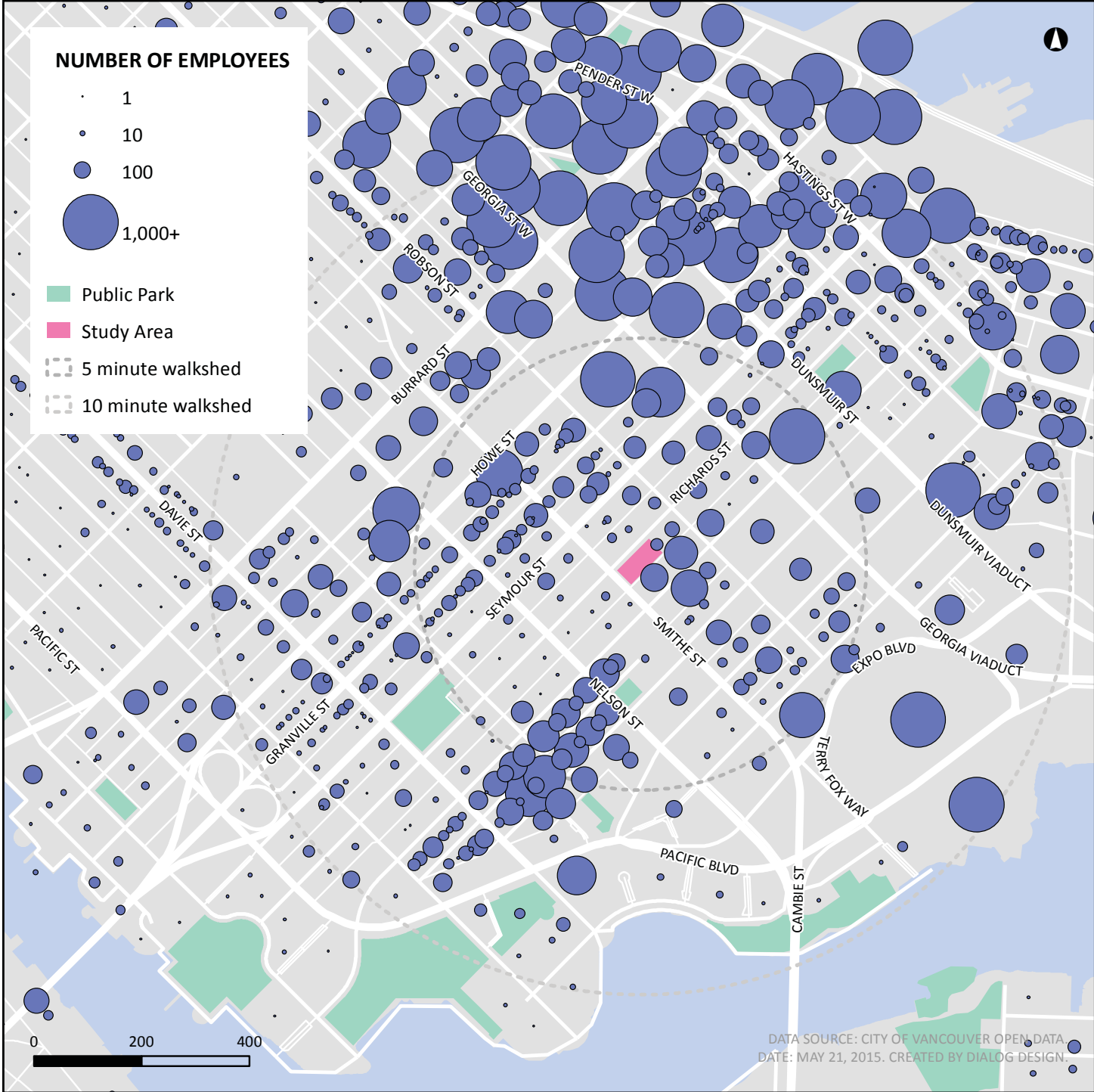
Population and Demographics



Source: City of Vancouver Open Data (May 2015) Data are based on the dissemination areas below. No data were available for the area north of the park, and other areas to the east are too large.

Community Context

Employment Density



Less people work here...

- There are 160 business locations with 17,504 employees within a 5 minute walk shed from the study area. This represents a moderate and dispersed number of employees.
- There is a much greater number of employees north of the 5 minute walk shed.

Community Context

Open Areas



Open space is rare and valuable...

- Dwindling opportunity to acquire moderately sized parcels of land that would have been suitable for parks because they have already been acquired for residential development.
- Escalating land costs, having increased 600% between 1991 and 2007.
- With this Park, the City will have achieved only 55% of the target set in 1992, which is 2.8 hectares (7.0 acres) of park.
- There are only two parks and four other 'open spaces' within a 5 minute or 400m walk-shed of the study area, and an additional 5 parks and 3 'open spaces' within the expanded 800m radius
- A number of parks and open spaces shown on this map were not included in this study as they were on or beyond the 800m boundary line.

Community Context

Total Impervious Areas (TIA)



This is a mostly impervious landscape with few parks.

- Total impervious area (TIA) within the 5 minute walk-shed is 76%.
- This fraction does not include other paved surfaces, such as sidewalks or parking lots, therefore the estimated TIA is likely over 90%

Community Context

Connections: Pedestrian, Bicycle

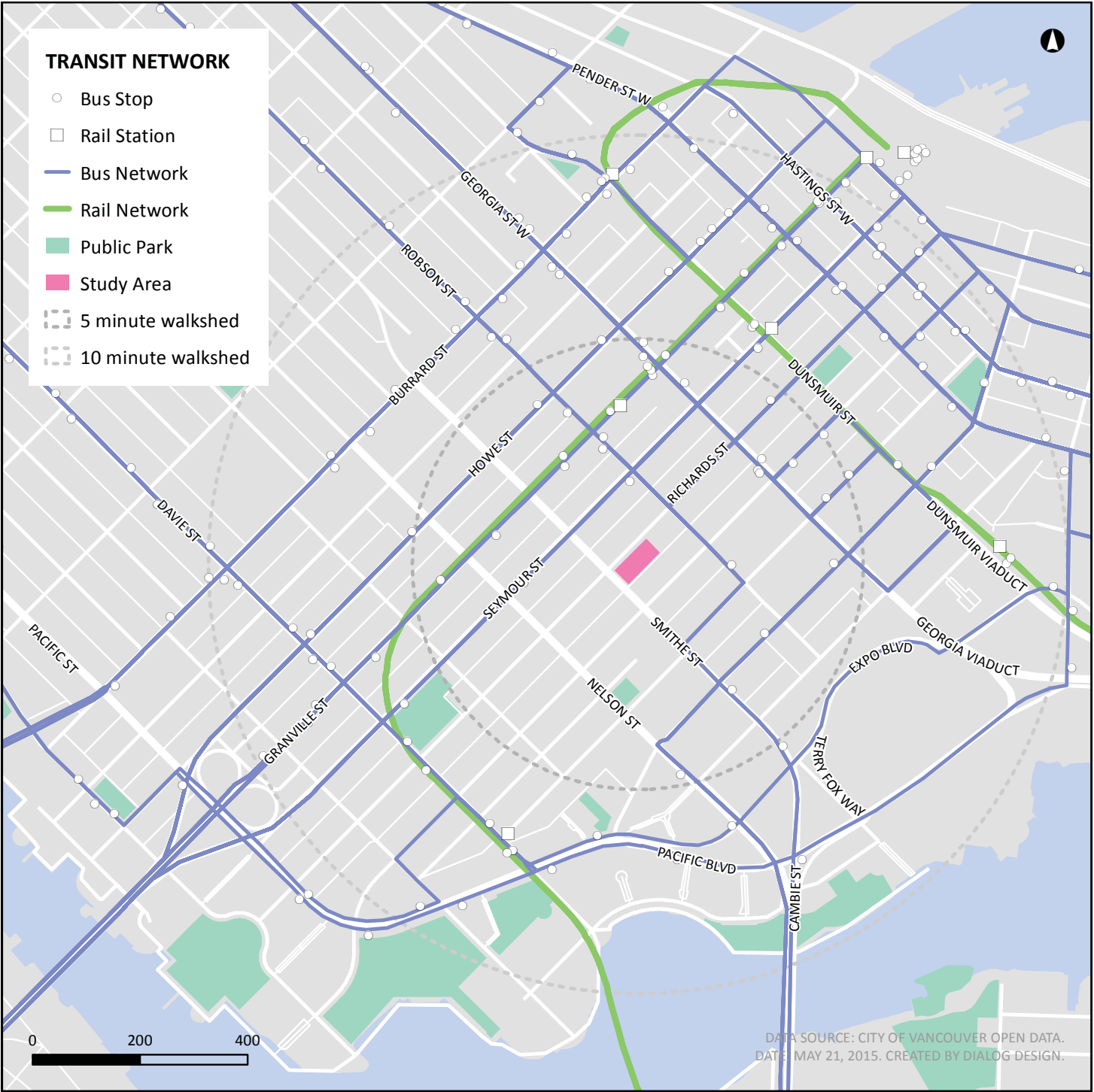


Lots of walkers and bikers come by here...

- The park is located on the Richards Street painted bike lane, however there is currently not a bikeway connection to the northwest or southeast.
- There is no direct protected bikeway to the study area, however a future connection along Comox Street will provide access to the area.
- A future protected bikeway connection on Smithe needs is under consideration.

Community Context

Connections: Transit Network



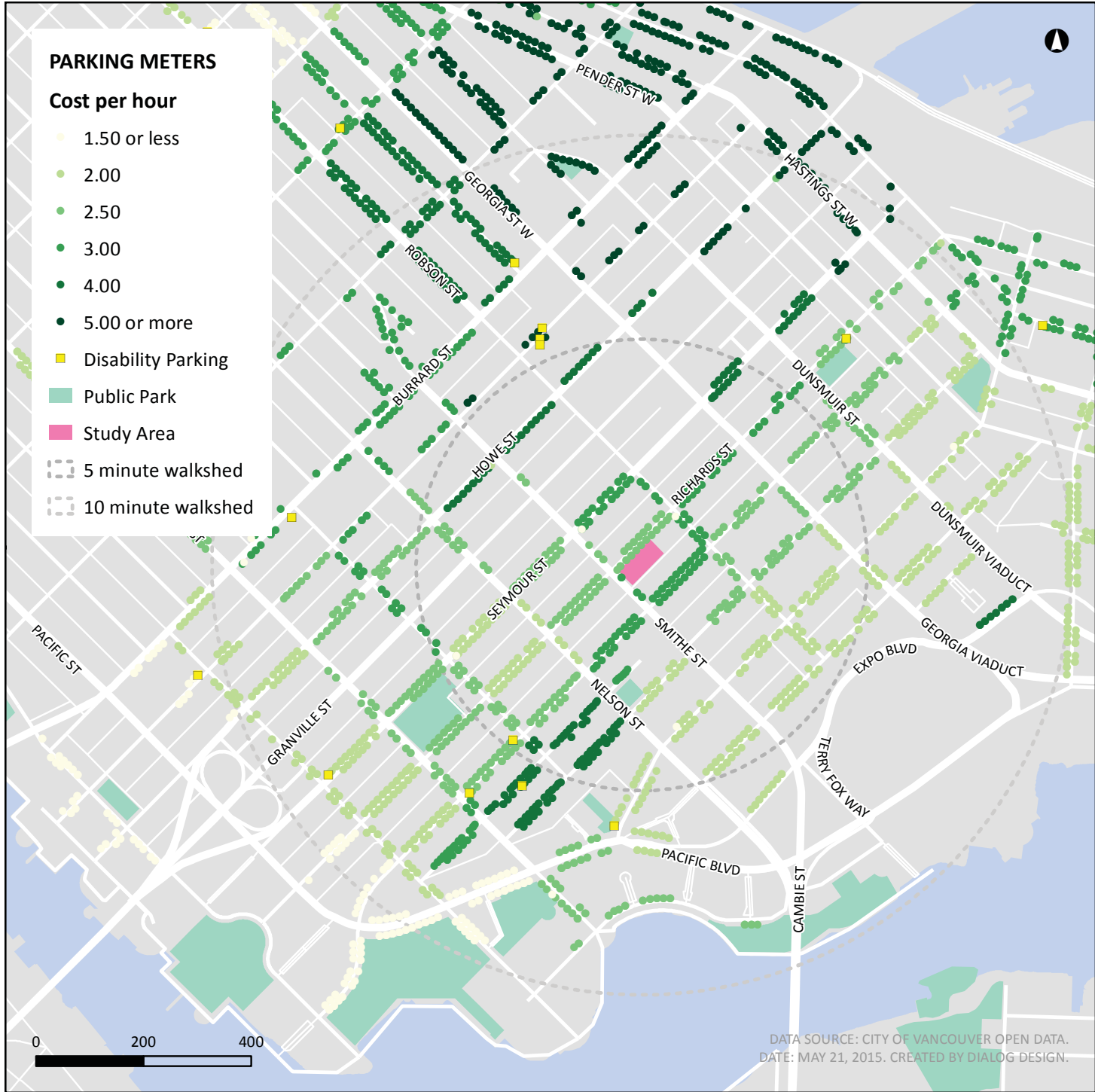
There are several bus stops and one Canada Line station located within a 5-minute walkshed from the study area. With an apparent gap or reduced transit stops immediately to the south.



The site is also well serviced by car-share options.

Community Context

Road Network and Public Parking

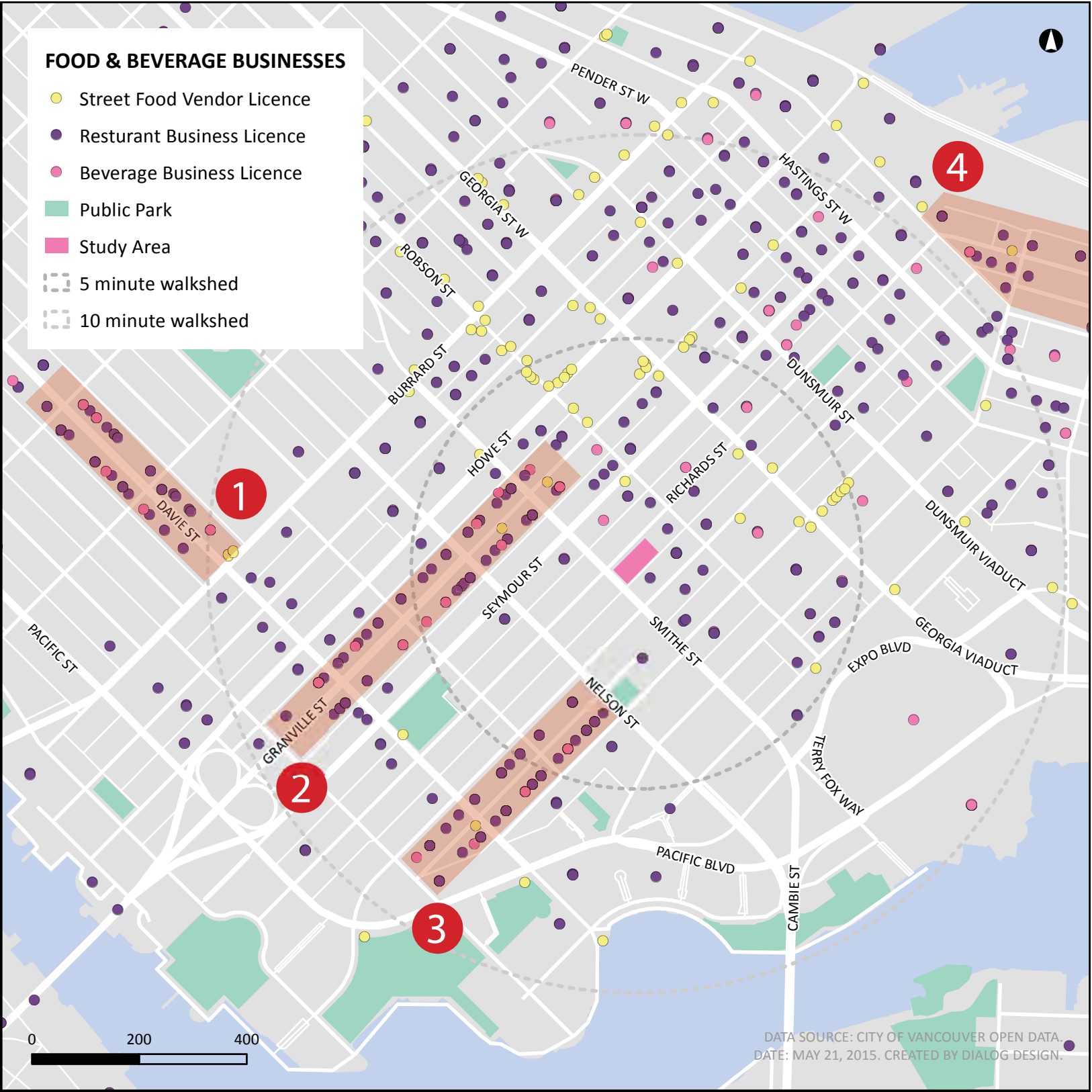


The Park is at an entry point or threshold into downtown...

- 16,000 cars per day travel past site on Smithe and between 8,000 and 12,000 cars per day on Richards
- There are 1,029 parking spaces within 5 minute walk-shed from the study area, mostly in \$2-3 / hour range.

Community Context

Surrounding Food and Beverage Businesses



Gap in food services to the southwest...

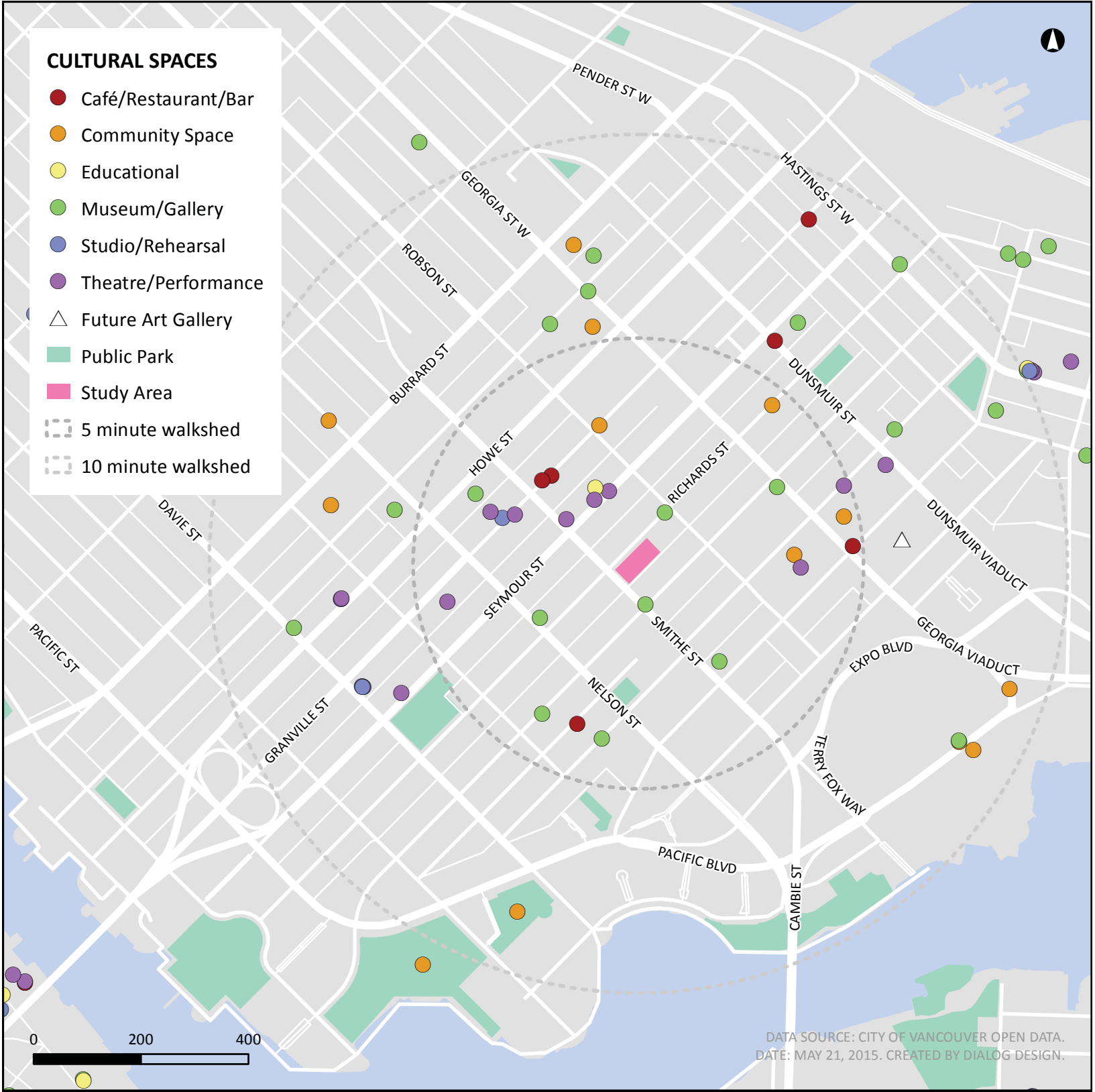
- There is a high concentration of food and beverage businesses located to the south in Yaletown and to the west along Granville Street as well as food trucks to the North.
- No food trucks presently service this block
- There is an apparent gap in food services Southwest of the site.

The site is close to night life destination areas.

- 1 Davie Street
- 2 Granville Street
- 3 Yaletown
- 4 Gastown

Community Context

Surrounding Cultural Places



Culture surrounds the site.

- There are 26 cultural spaces located within a 5 minute walk shed from the study area, including 8 museums/galleries and 8 theatres or performance spaces.
- There are 18 public art locations within a 5 minute walk shed from this study area, mostly located to the north of the study area.

Community Context

Public Art

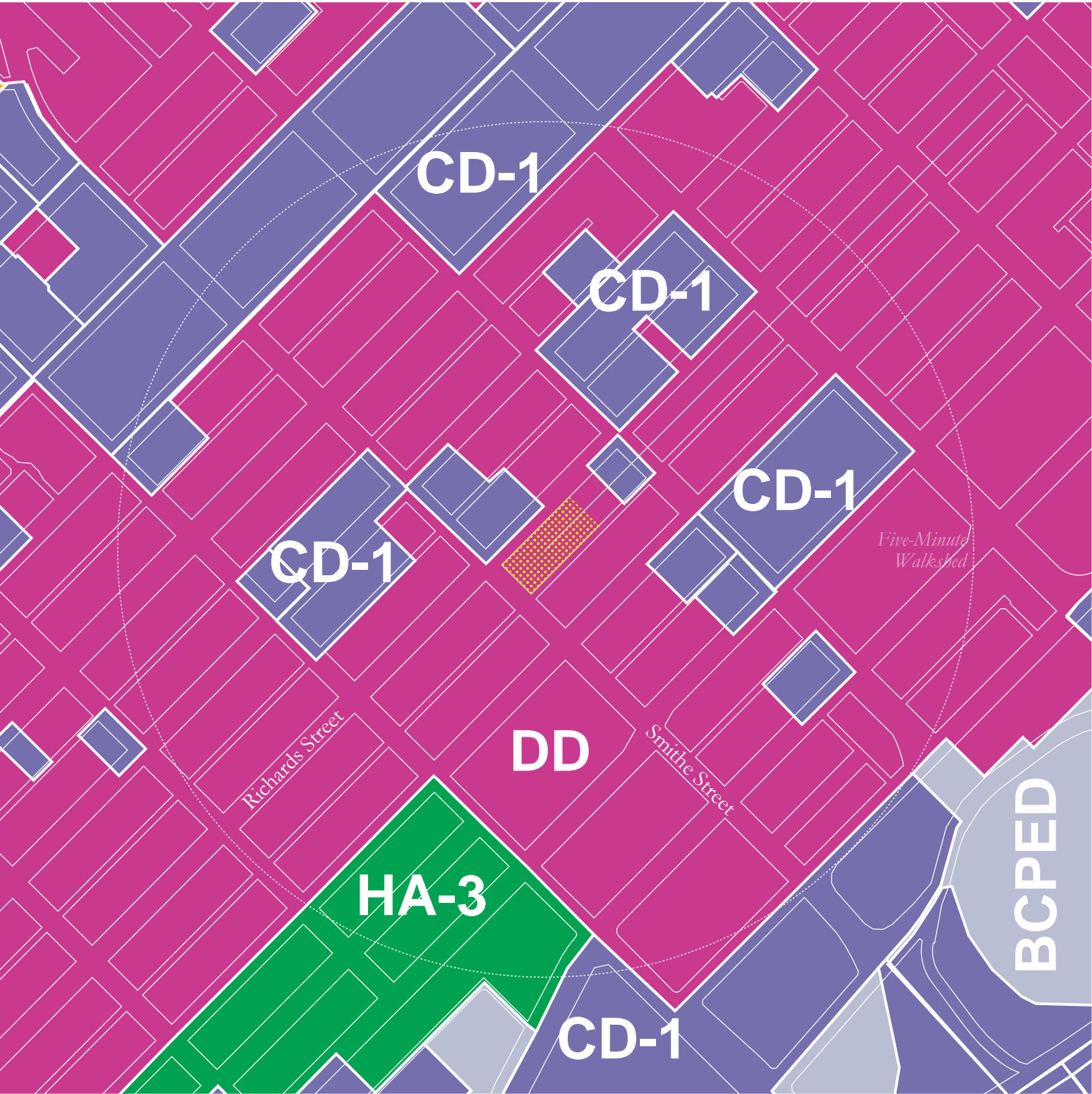


Public art is sparse near the park site.

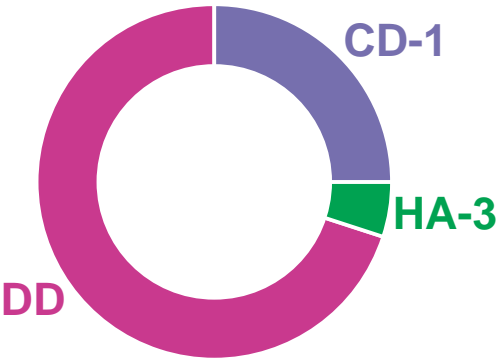
There are 18 public art locations within a 5 minute walkshed from the study area, mostly located to the north of the study area.

Community Context

Land Use and Built Form



- DD
Downtown Comprehensive Development Zone
- CD-1
Site-Specific Comprehensive Development Zoning
- HA-3
Yaletown Historic Area Yaletown Zone
- BCPED
False Creek North Comprehensive Development Zone

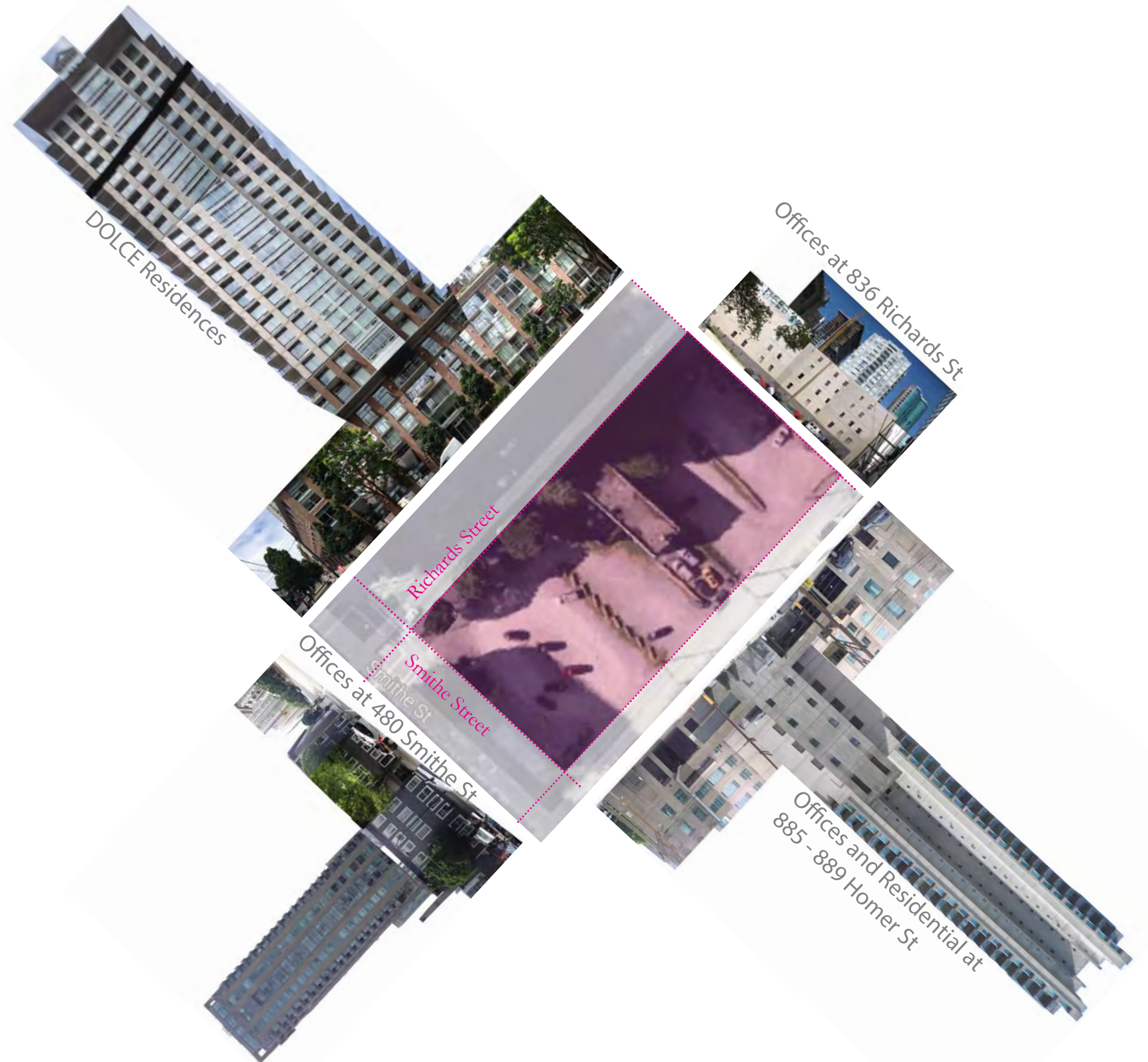




Please
No skateboarding, roller
blading, or other skating
sports.
No sitting, standing,
or sitting on the ground
or any other property
without prior permission
from the City of London.

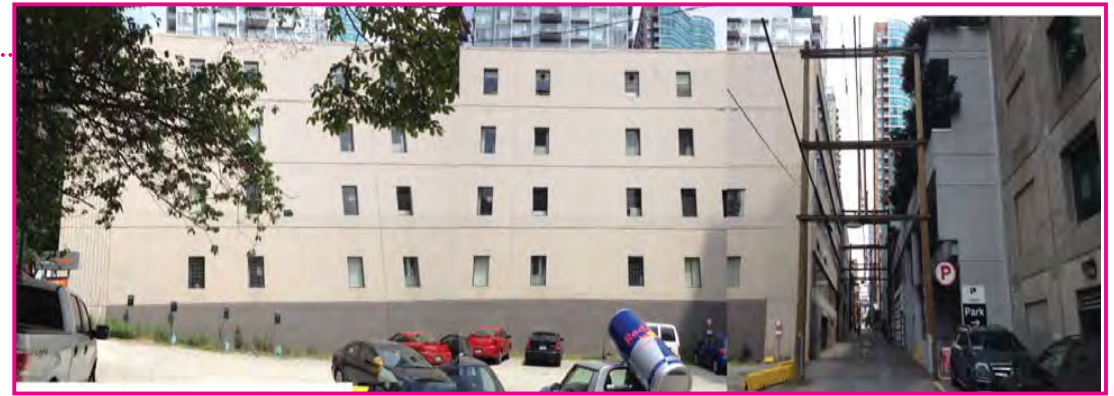
Smithe & Richards Site Analysis

Existing Built Features
Solar Access
Slope
Noise
Infrastructure + Services
Existing Trees On & Off Site
Vehicular Circulation + Traffic



Site Analysis

Existing Built Features



Site Analysis

Existing Built Features

Opportunities and Constraints

It is often the opportunities and/or constraints found on site that begin to influence and stimulate ideas, and in turn the design directions. But these clues can sometimes be elusive. Initial observations of this particular site offer few meaningful site features or characteristics with any perceived value.

At first glance this future park site, presently a gravel surfaced parking lot that flanks a typical downtown back lane service corridor, could be seen as a 'blank slate', providing a rare opportunity to implement ideas upon a site that are free and independent from any existing site specific qualities. However, on further review, certain aspects of the site begin to reveal themselves and warrant a greater degree of analysis.

The back lane is a good example of this, offering up little charm or park-like qualities, an initial design response might be to buffer or screen and turn one's back to it. But as a service corridor (and with Richards as a one way street), it could potentially provide useful access for food trucks or event staging on special occasions, and therefore might want to be considered for its potential attributes, being integrated into the fabric of the park site instead.

As illustrated in the photos, another clue appears as a small glimpse through the loading dock to the sparkling retail store beyond. This proximity to retail brings into question whether there are opportunities for this building to change its aspect towards the future park, possibly being retrofitted in some way to better engage the site with retail or food services, as exists in other back lanes in Vancouver and elsewhere.



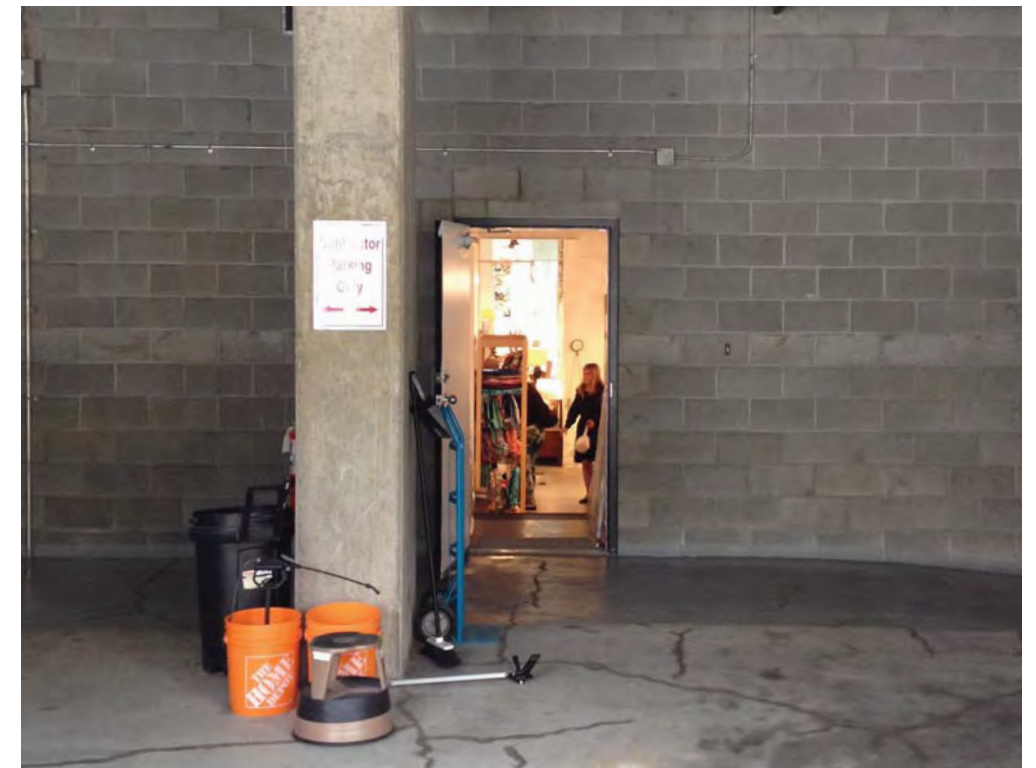
View north along back lane to Robson Street, could the park extend along the lane?



View of large cluster of mature trees, one of the few site features to be retained



View of back lane as easterly edge with loading docks and parkade entries



View through loading dock to retail store beyond

Site Analysis

Solar Access



8 am

10 am

12 pm

2 pm

4 pm

6 pm

8 pm

March 21
Spring Equinox



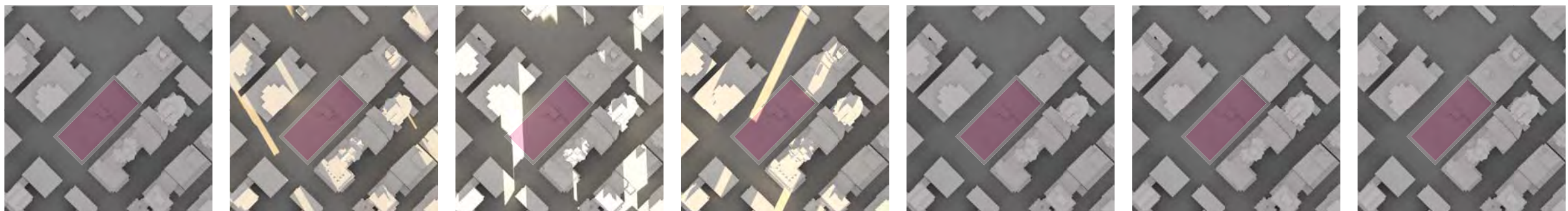
June 21
Summer Solstice



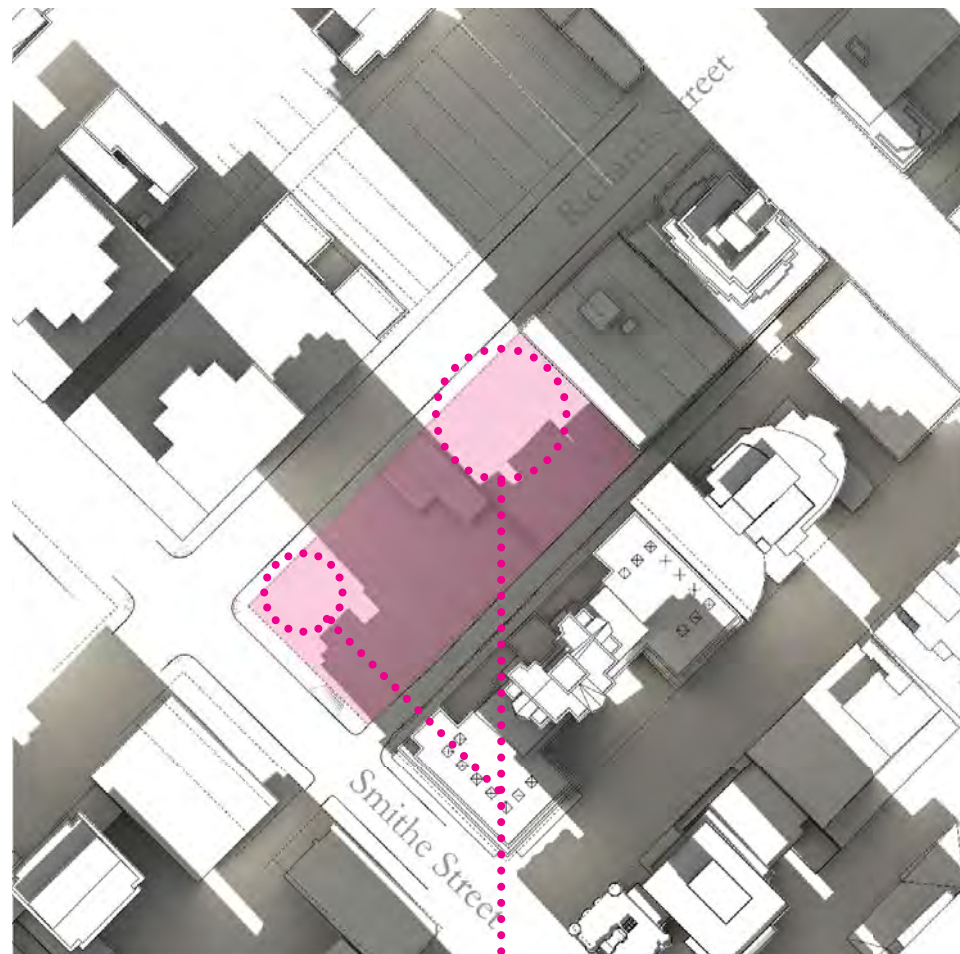
September 21
Fall Equinox



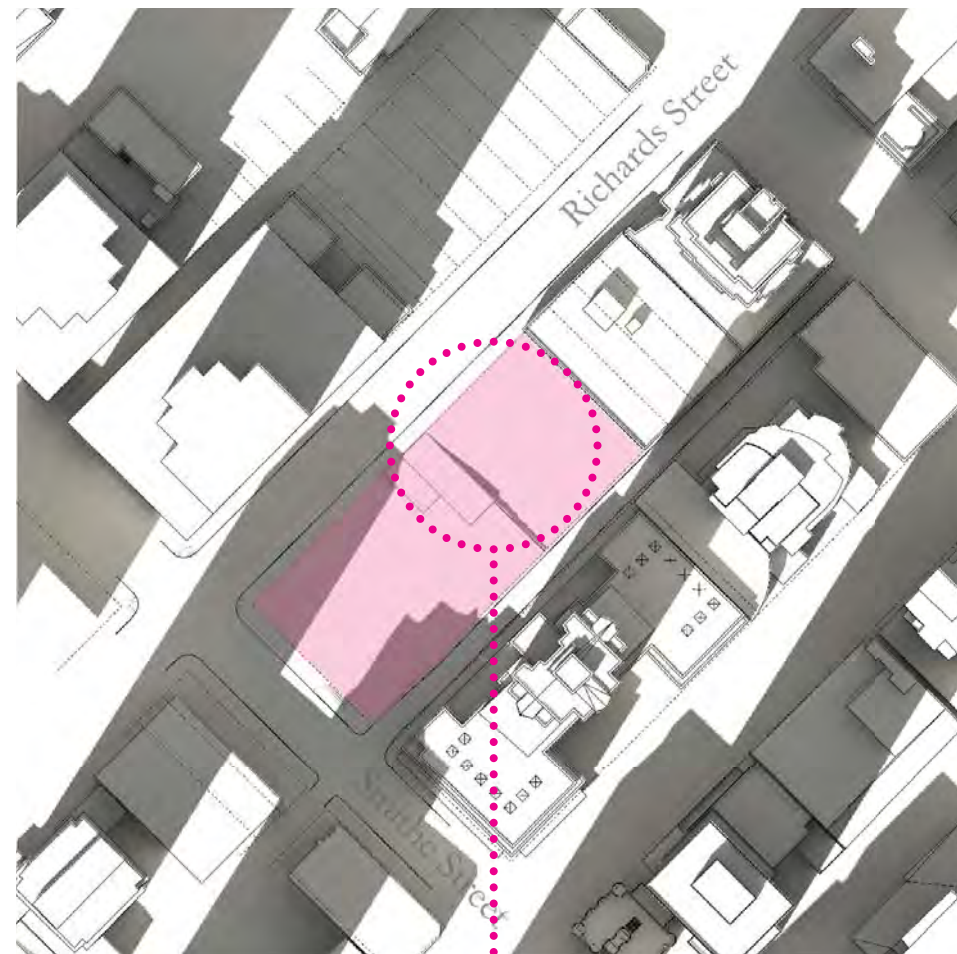
December 21
Winter Solstice



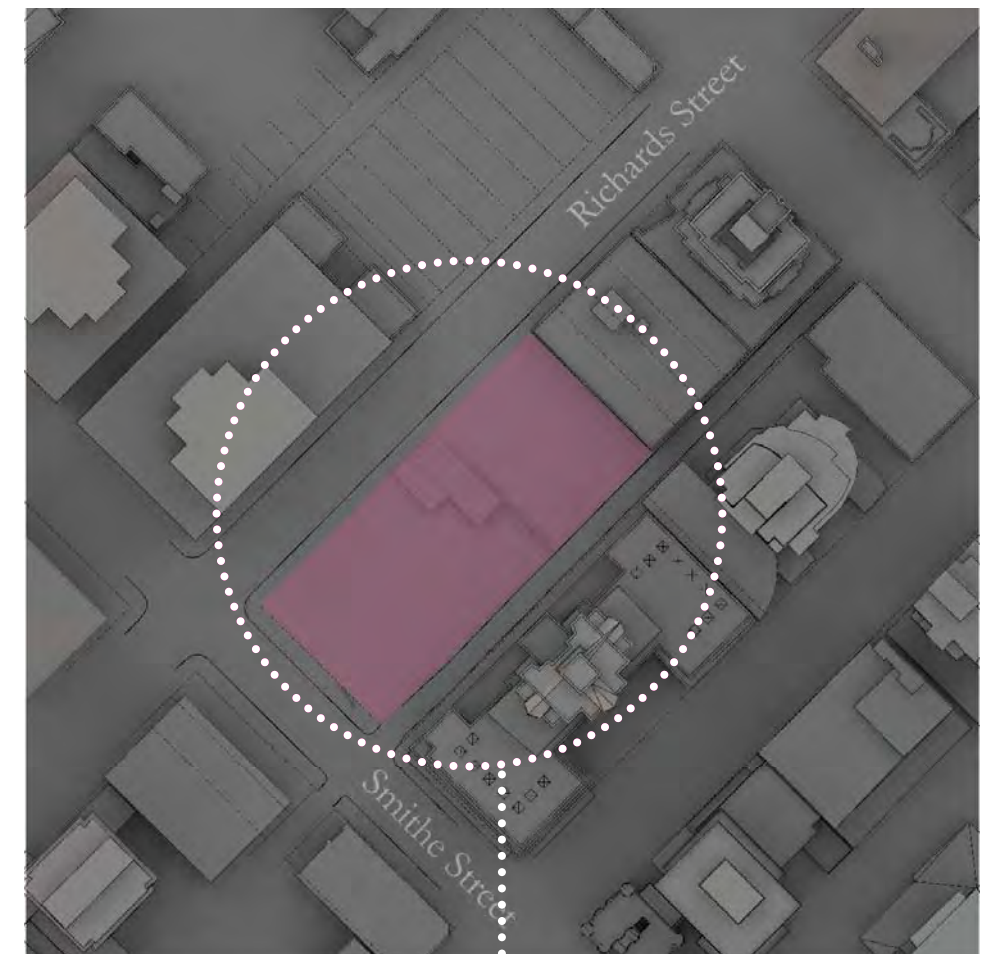
March/September 21 - 10:00 am
Equinoxes



March 21 / September 21 - 2:00 pm
Equinoxes



Evening
Year-round

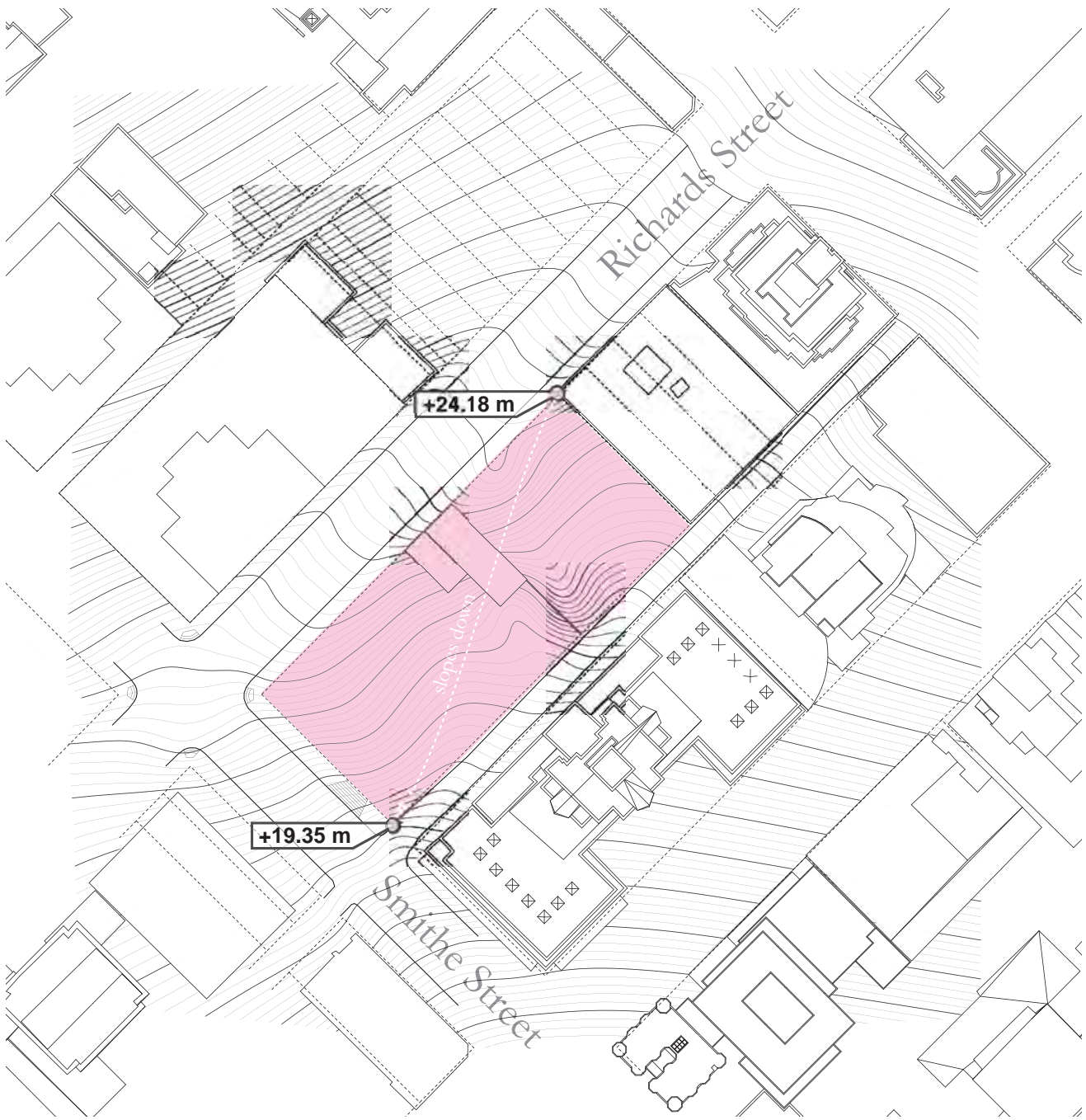
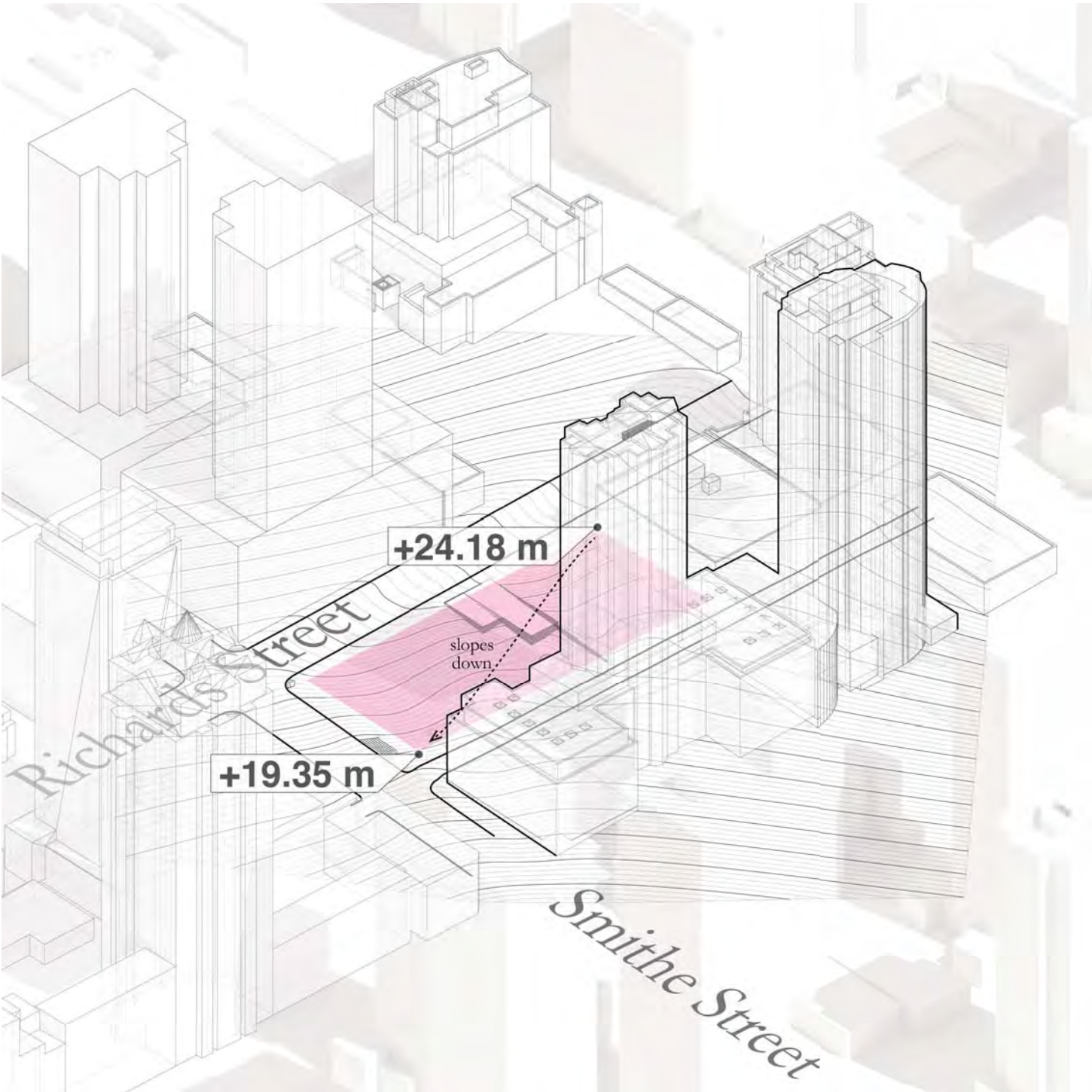


Except in winter, the site has sunny spots that move across the space throughout the day.



Site Analysis

Slope

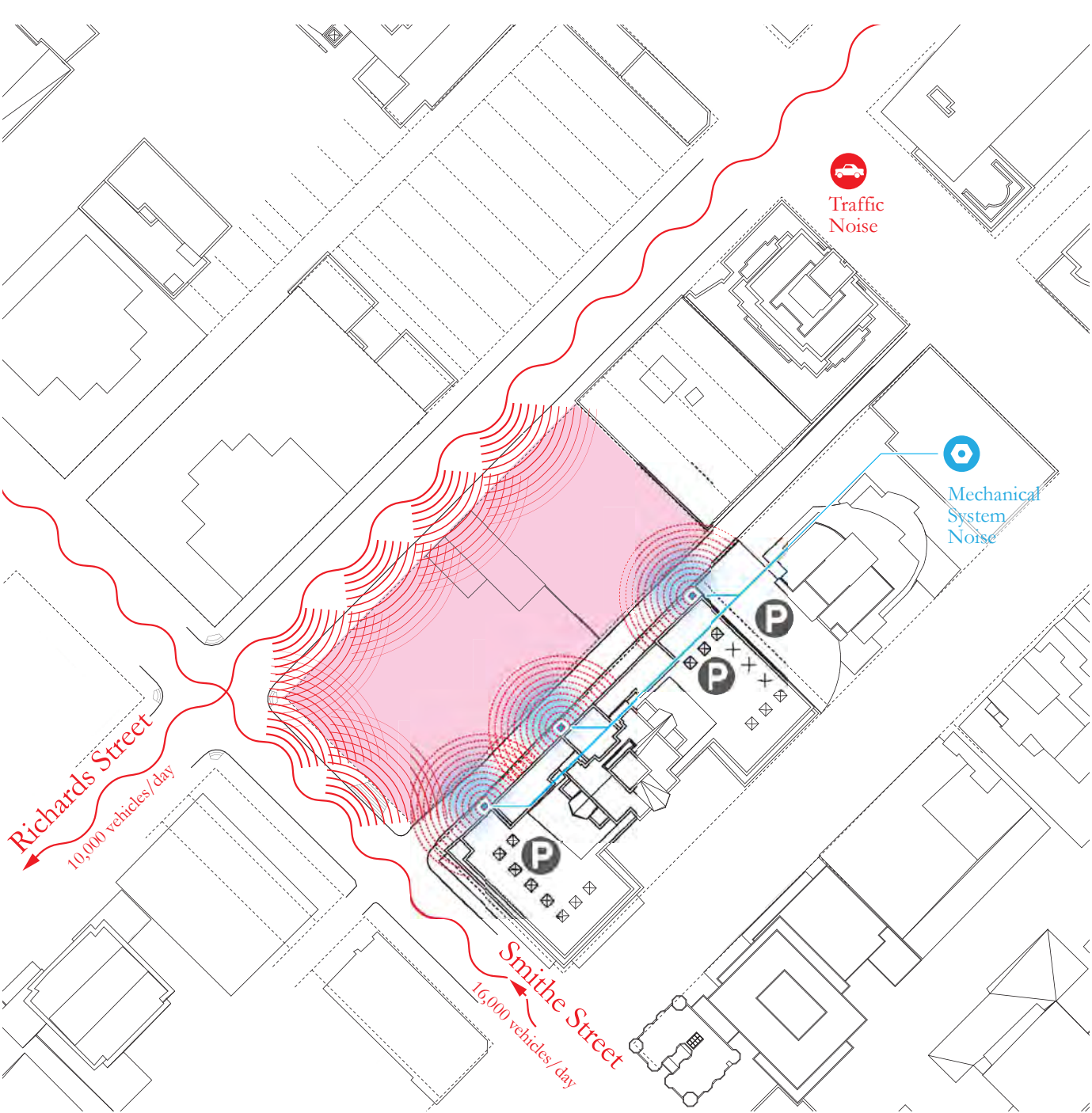


The site slopes significantly from Richards down toward the alley at Smithe.



Site Analysis

Noise



There is considerable traffic noise on the site.



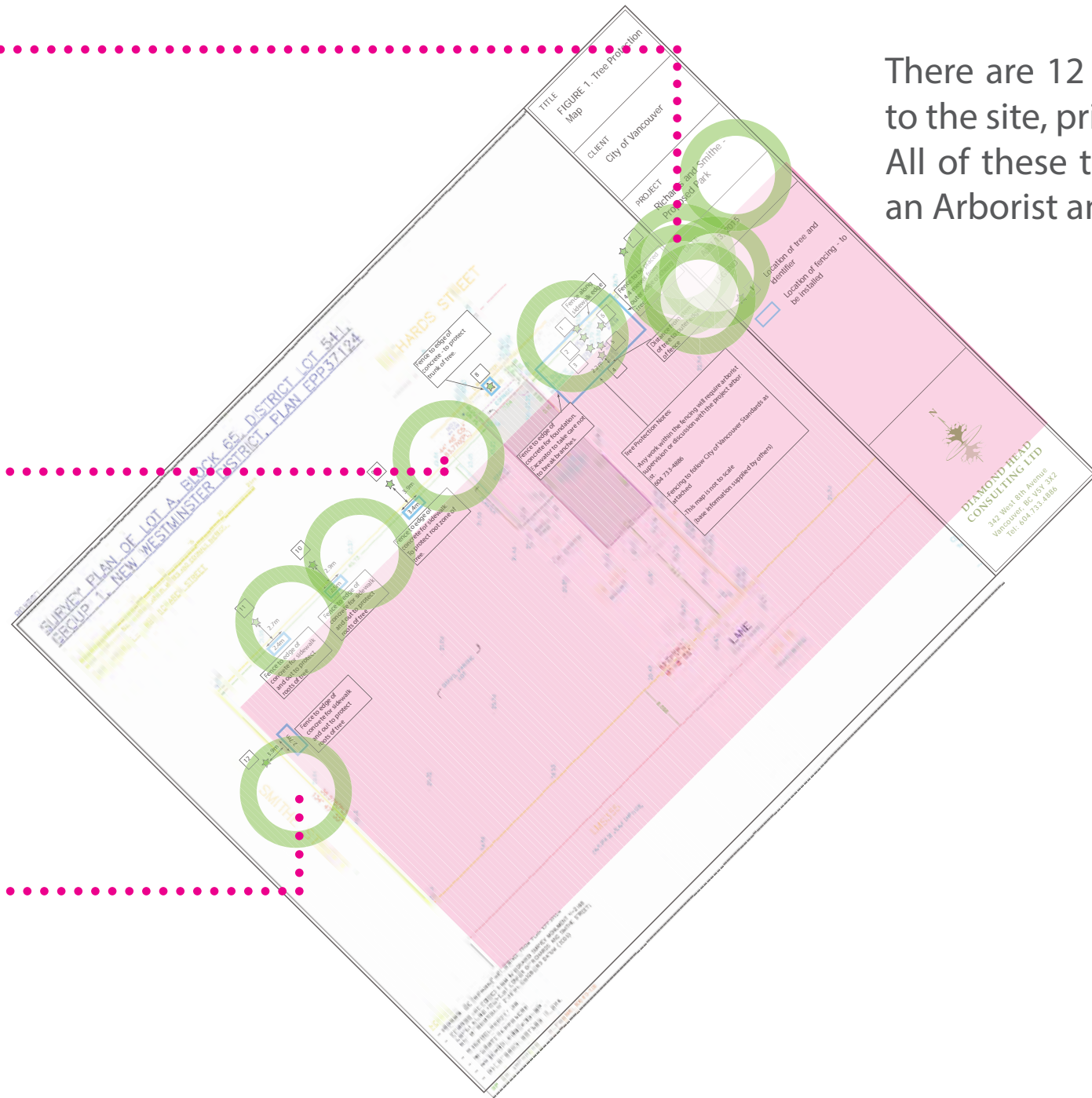
Site Analysis

Infrastructure and Services



Site Analysis

Existing Trees On and Adjacent to Site



There are 12 mature trees on or adjacent to the site, primarily along Richards Street. All of these trees have been reviewed by an Arborist and are to be retained.



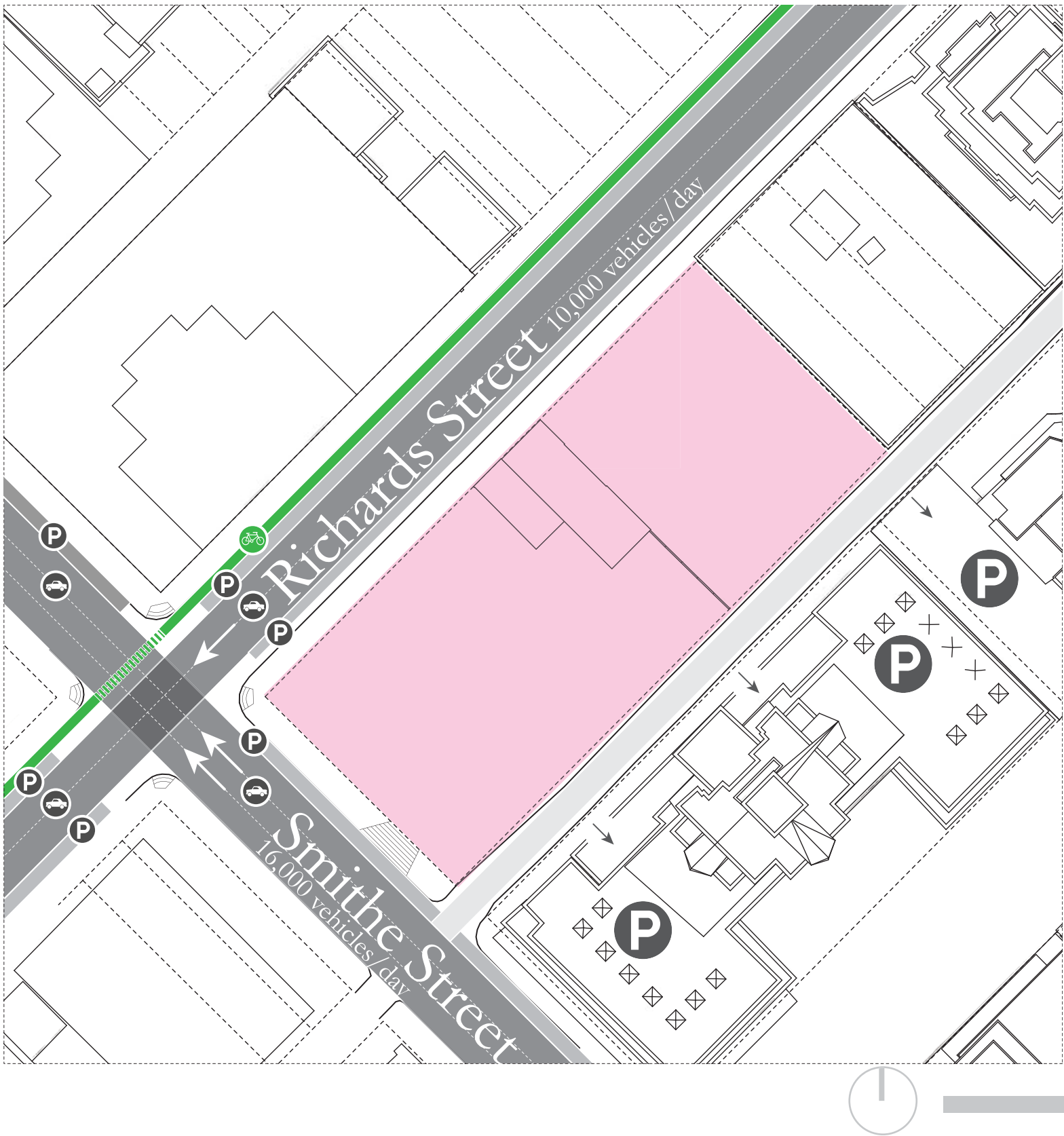
35m

70m

140m

Site Analysis

Vehicular Circulation and Traffic

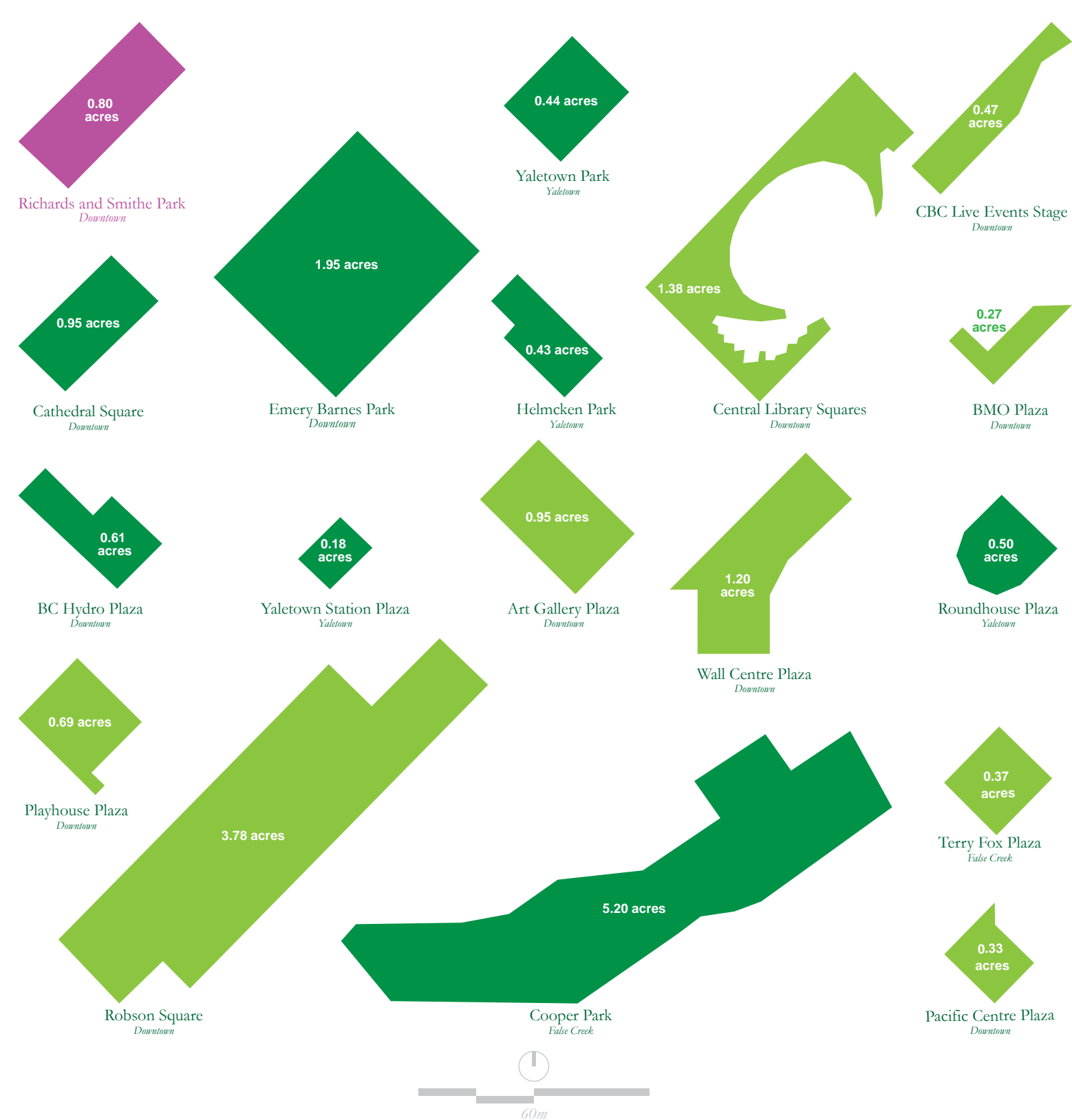


Thousands of vehicles pass by the site via Smithe and Richards Streets. Thus, this future park site, as one of primary points of entry or gateways into Downtown, offers a high degree of visibility, it also results in a constant level of traffic noise, as indicated in the previous 'Noise' diagram. It is worth noting that Richards street, as a one-way street heading south, would not facilitate food trucks engaging park users due to most trucks having windows on the non-driver side.

Smithe & Richards Open Space Needs Assessment



Open Space Needs Assessment of the Surrounding Parks and Open Spaces



Study Area

The study area was expanded beyond the 400m radius, partly because it became clear that not a great deal of parks and open spaces exist in this area, but also, as biking infrastructure and car share programs become increasingly utilized, the catchment of future park users will likely expand. An additional 800m radius was therefor selected, increasing the number of parks and open spaces that fall within this larger catchment and including them in the needs assessment list:

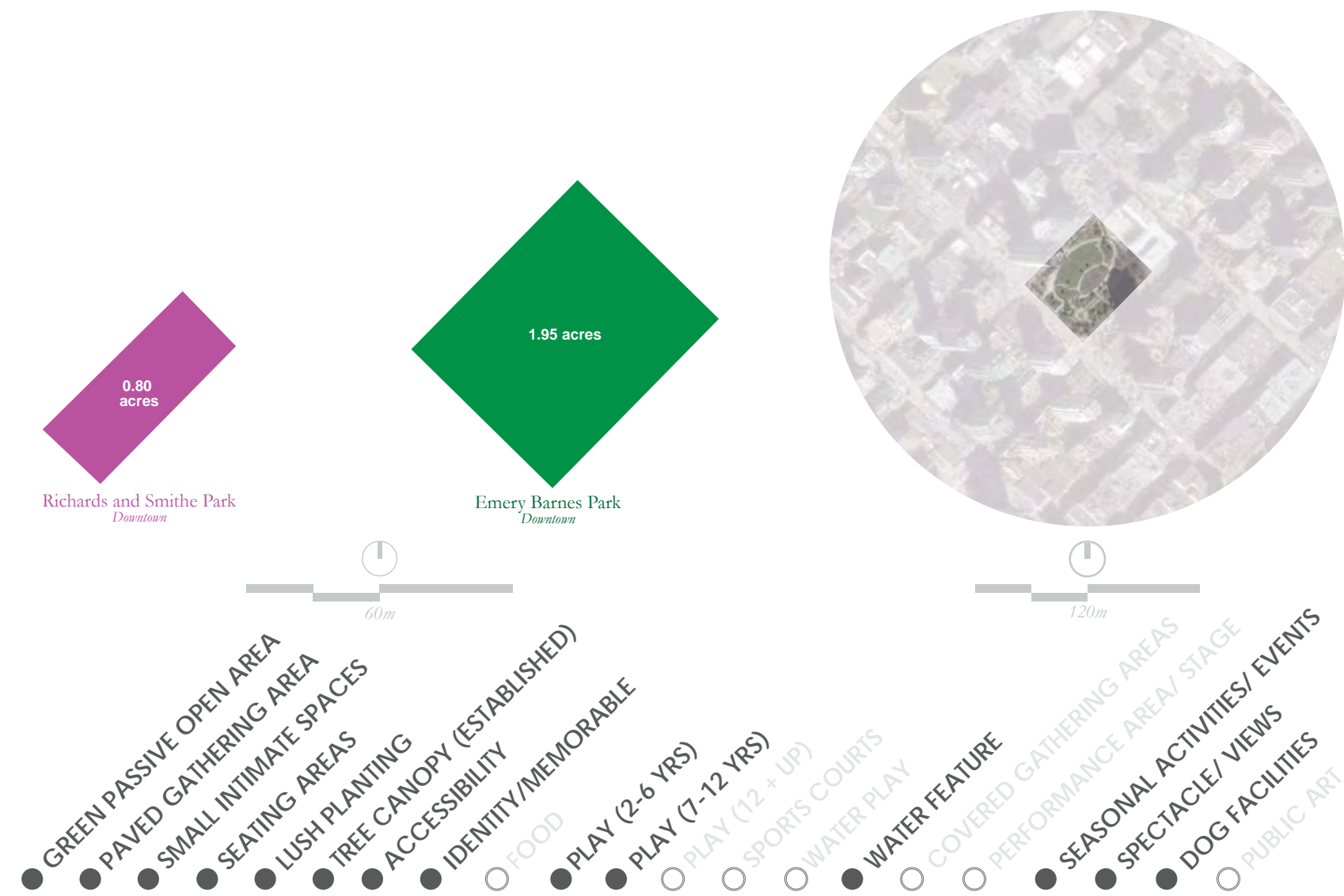
- | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Emery Barnes Park | 7. Robson Square North | 15. Roundhouse Turntable Plaza Park |
| 2. Yaletown Park | 8. Playhouse Plaza | 15. Coopers' Park |
| 3. Helmcken Park | 9. Pacific Centre Plaza | 16. BMO Plaza |
| 4. Central Library Square(s) | 10. Cathedral Square Park | 17. Terry Fox Plaza |
| 5. CBC Live Events Stage | 12. Wall Centre Plaza | |
| 6. Robson Square South | 13. Yaletown Station Plaza | |

Open Space Needs Assessment

Emery Barnes Park

Owner/Operator Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
Completion Phase 3 of park was completed in April 2012
Size Phase 1- Richard Stevenson, Phase 2 &3 Jonathan Losee
Size 1.95 acers
Context Urban
Use Passive recreation including playground, off-leash dog park, lush planting and and water feature

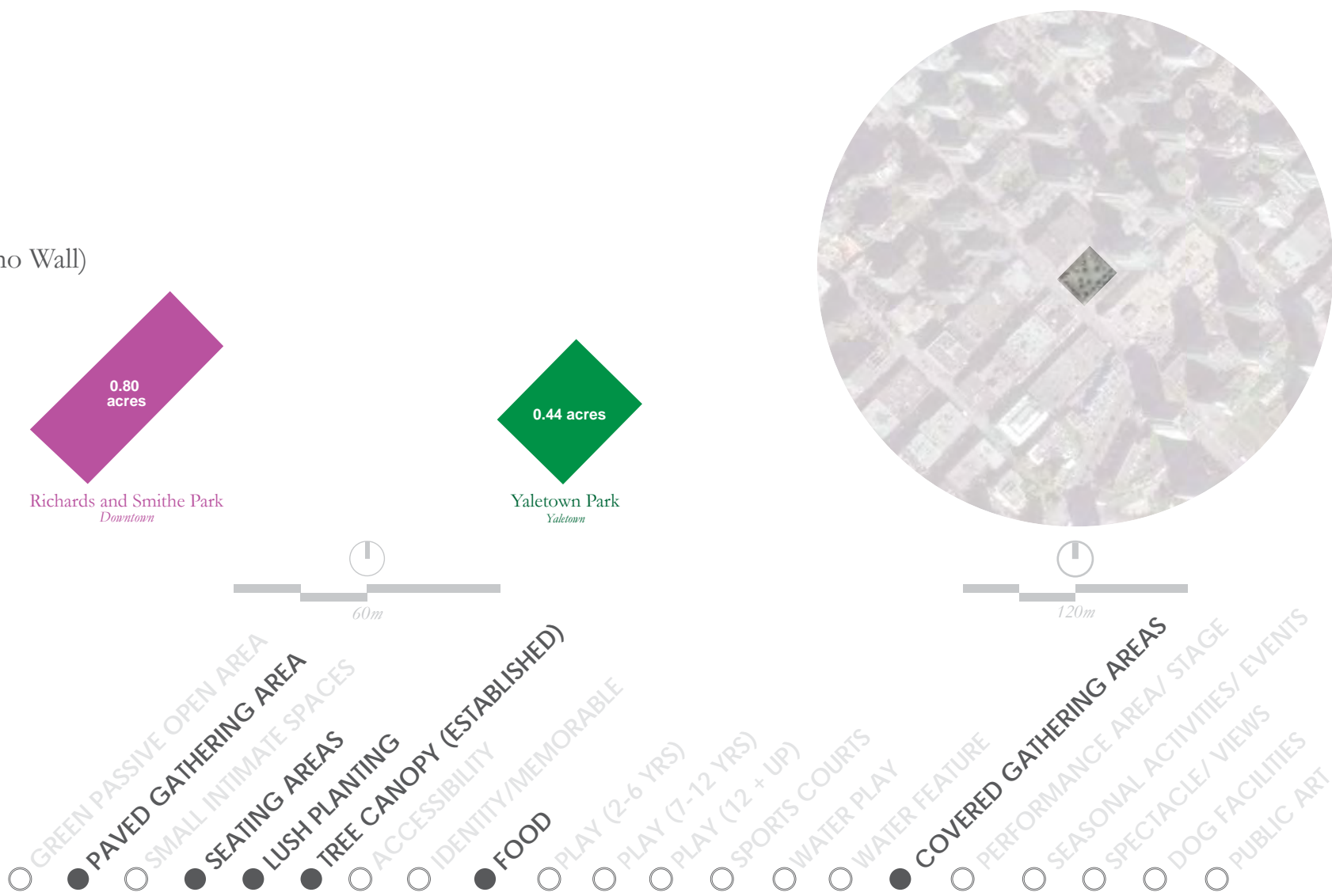
Emery Barnes, at over twice the size of the Smithe and Richards site, is a significant large open space within the downtown Area. The park, although rather traditionally styled successfully accommodates a considerable amount of program as well as pas-sive open areas. The primary defining feature of the park is a prominent water trough or runnel that stretches the length of the park and is actively enjoyed by kids and adults in the warmer months. Although a designated fenced dog area does exist, one potential user conflict are the unleashed dogs often observed doing their thing on the open lawn area and in proximity to kids playing.



Open Space Needs Assessment Yaletown Park

Owner/Operator: City of Vancouver and Yaletown Park Condominiums Properties (Bruno Wall)
Consultants: Durante and Kreuk Ltd, T. Moscone & Bros. Landscaping Ltd
Size: 0.17 hectare
Context: Urban
Use: Urban gathering space on top of underground parking

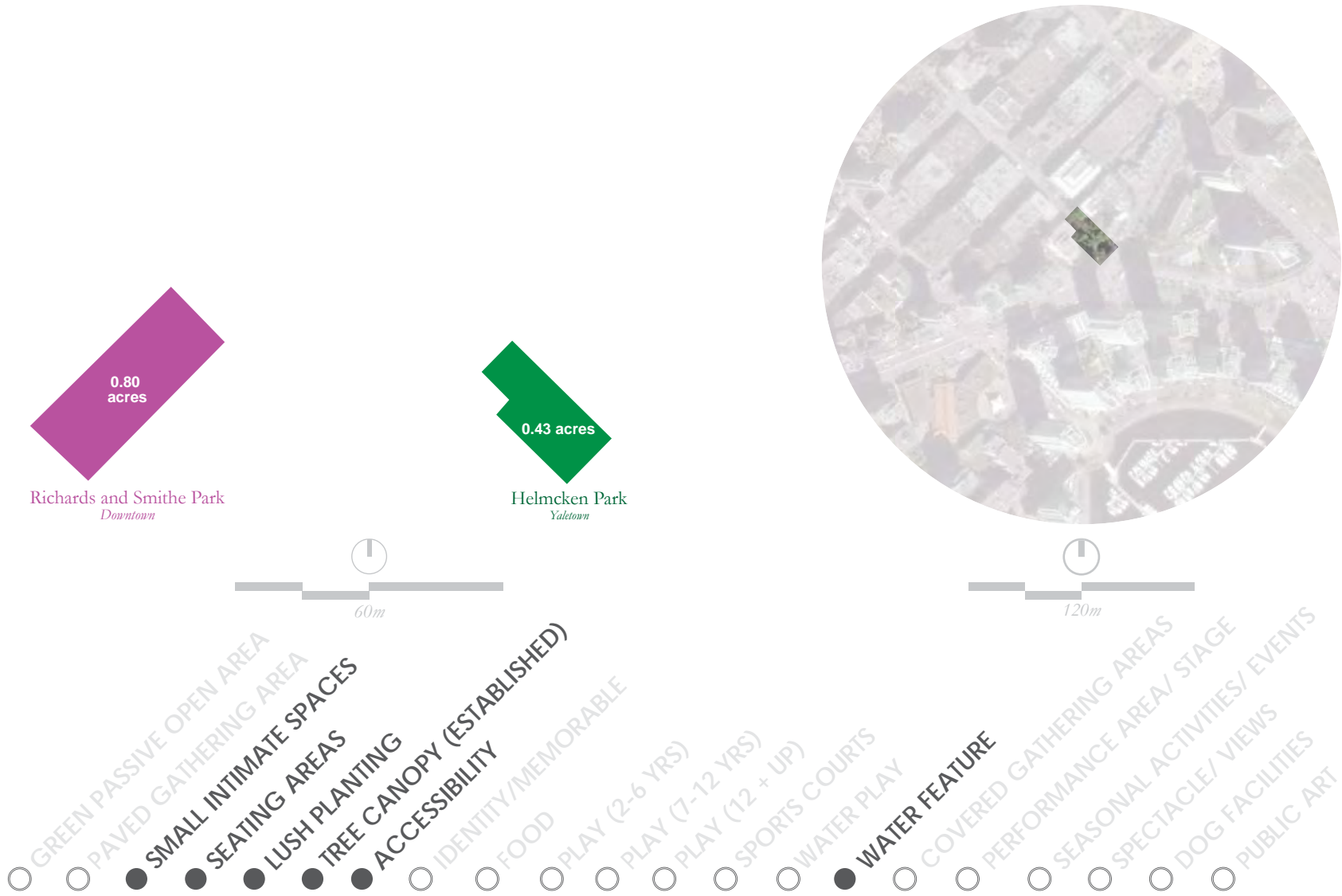
Yaletown Park is a curious space, somewhere between a plaza and a park that is more a visual amenity and a short-cut route, rather than a place to occupy. This may in part be due to this park space being built over a parkade structure, and becomes a cautionary example of how engineered functions below can have a restrictive influence upon the potential public space above. One key attribute is the south facing food and coffee outlet positioned on the northern edge of the park, However better connections to the park space with the raised eating terrace could have been developed, allowing for a more direct flow of patrons between park and terrace. Limbing the trees as they mature to increase the canopy high might also be an improvement



Open Space Needs Assessment Helmcken Park

Owner/Operator: City of Vancouver Park Board
Consultants: Perry and Associates
Completion
Size : 1,600 sqm
Context Urban

Helmcken Park is a small park connecting Yaletown with the North Falsecreek and Roundhouse area. It looks as though it will be recieving some much needed TLC in the near future.

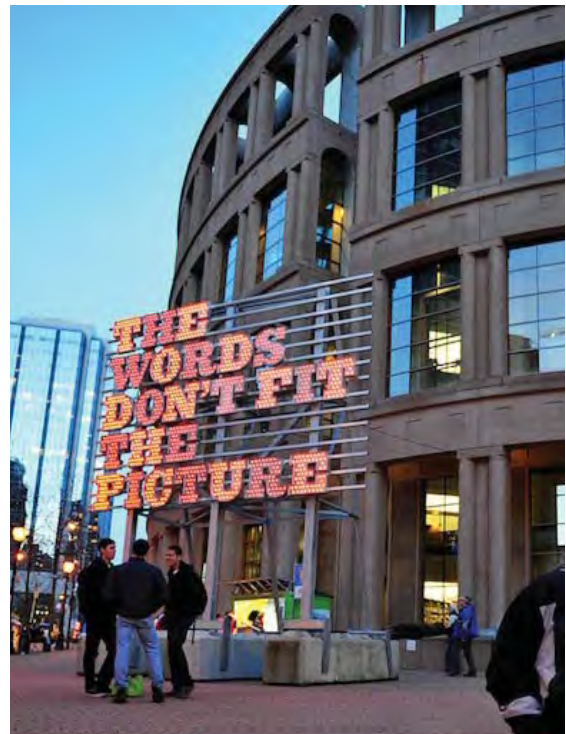
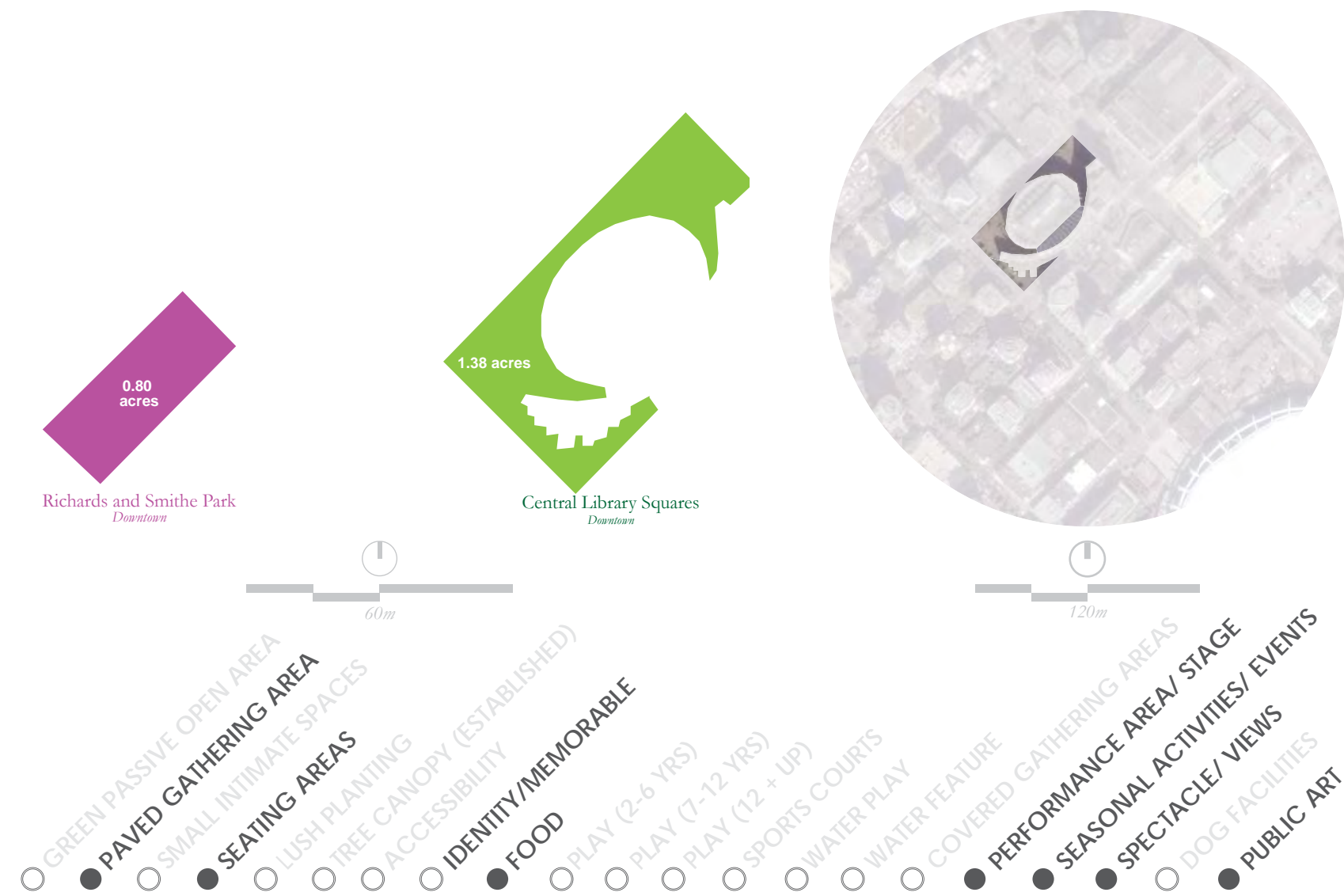


Open Space Needs Assessment

Central Library Square(s)

Owner/Operator : VPL
Consultants Cornelia Oberlander - Moshe Safdie - DA Architects
Completion Date - 1995
Size 4000 sqm (combined outdoor areas)
Context: Library (6.9 million visitors in 2013)
Use: Programmed performances, Day to day sitting, eating lunch.
Program Elements: Seating steps, Public Art, Food Court, Library
Operating Model : Vancouver Public Library
Capital Cost: \$100 million (for entire library)

Central Library’s south plaza space is often occupied with people hanging out on the steps watching the busy Robson Street shoppers or sports fans making their way to and from BC stadium. Although the design is well resolved and not overly fussy, an obvious extension from the adjacent Library building architecture, the space lacks an additional layer at the human scale, creating a somewhat exposed and uncomfortable sensation. The space benefits greatly from the stewardship of the Vancouver Public Library, with many events and gatherings utilizing this versatile south facing amphitheater styled space.

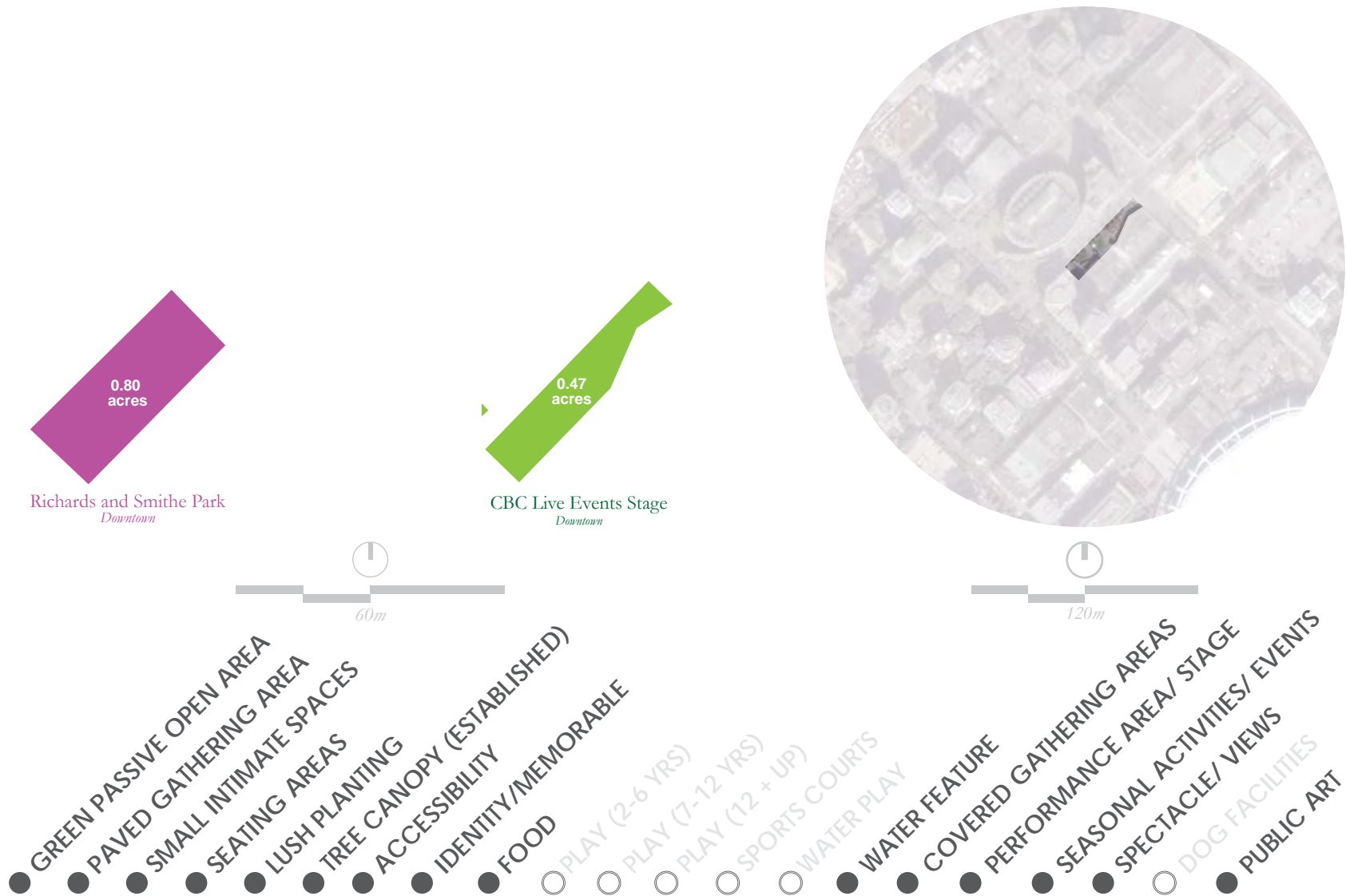


Open Space Needs Assessment

CBC Live Events Stage

Owner/Operator: CBC
Consultants: DIALOG - PWL Partnership
Completion Date - 2012
Size 2,000 sqm
Context: Urban
Use: Food court, Performances, Casual seating/coffee, Viewing/Gathering, Riots
Program Elements: Food kiosk, Covered stage, Water feature, TV monitor

It is impressive how this little space can effectively operate on a day to day level and yet effectively transforms to accommodate performances or larger special events organized by the CBC.



Open Space Needs Assessment

Art Gallery Plaza

Owner/Operator: Vancouver Park Board
Size: 0.95 acres
Context Urban
Use: Variety of Civic Events/Festivals, Organized and Spontaneous Gatherings
Program Elements: Open Gathering Area, Water Fountain

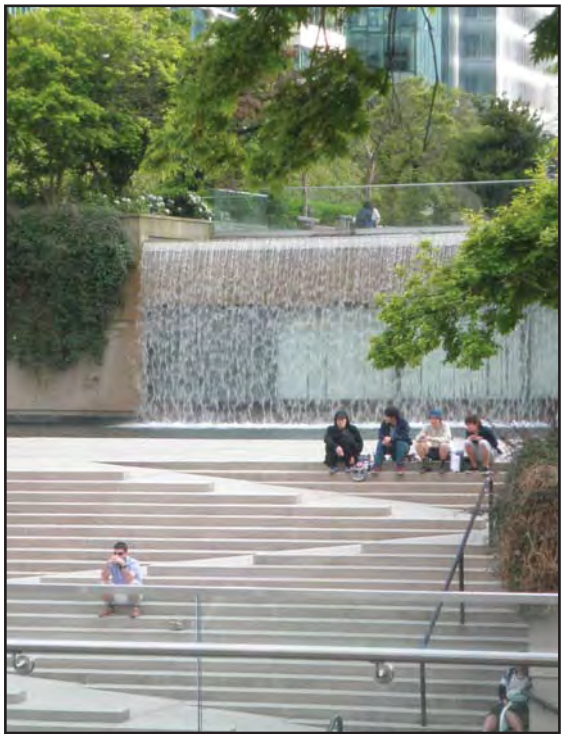
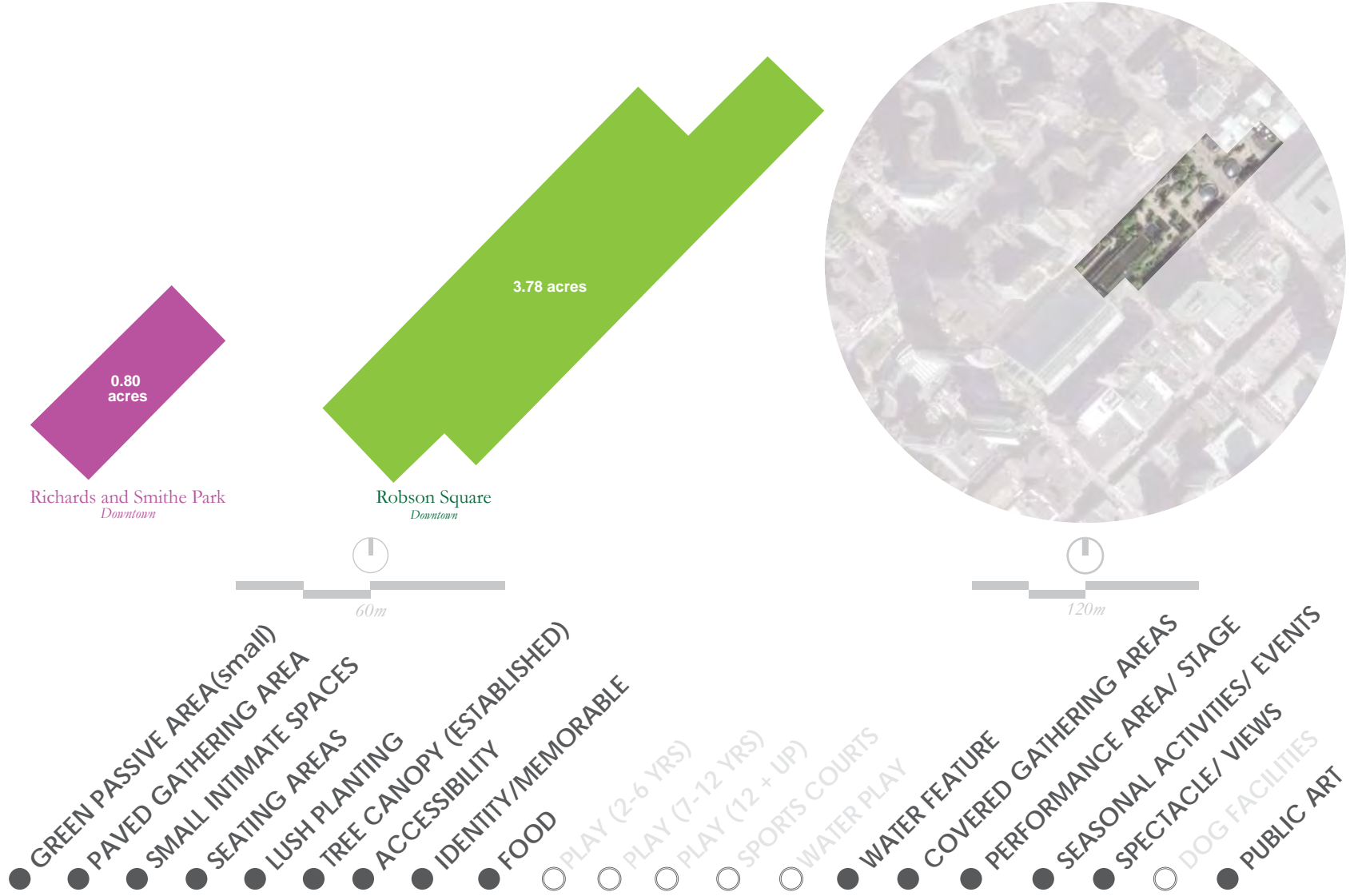
Plans are underway to renovate this important downtown civic space, largely catalyzed by the need to repair the leaky vaults below. This space is a vital and well used gathering space for large organized events and non-sanctioned ones. The grand stair, almost identical in layout, does not receive nearly the same patronage as its south facing partner. This space is somewhat challenged by the shady side/steps of the Art Gallery and the busy streets flanking the remaining three sides.



Open Space Needs Assessment Robson Square South

Owner/Operator: Provincial Government, and others
Consultants: Auther Erikson - Cornelia Obvelander
Completion Date : 1988
Size: 30,000 sqm
Context: Urban
Use: Variety of recreational uses - skating, dancing, performance, spontaneous
Program Elements: Public Art, Ice Skating, Water Feature, Park Planting

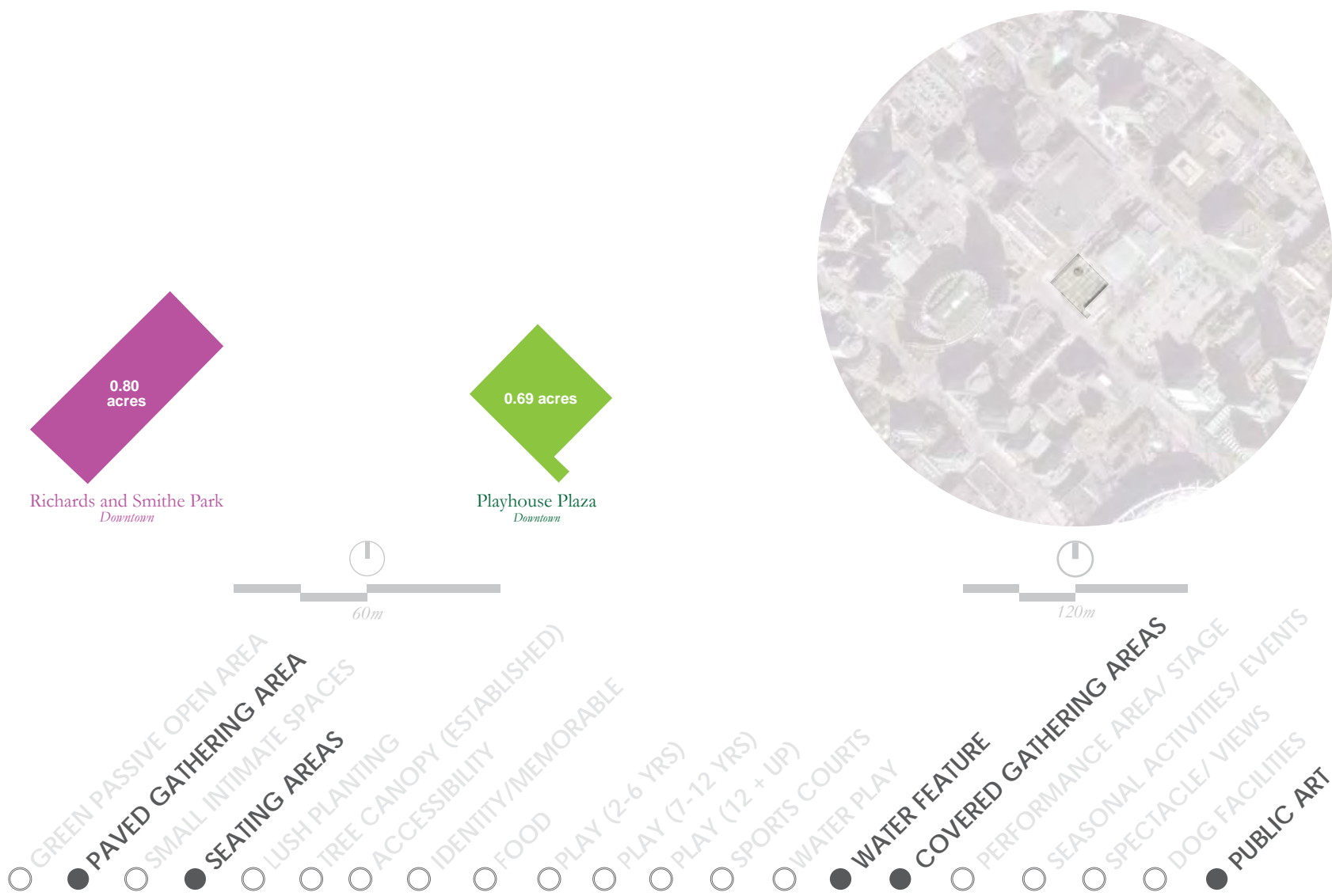
The variety of spaces, activities and experiences offered within and upon this iconic urban park is impressive. The design moves are as bold and relevant today as when first conceived almost 4 decades ago. ‘This won’t be a corporate monument. Let’s turn it on its side and let people walk all over it.’ Auther Erikson
It’s versatility and ability to accept a wide range of organized and spontaneous activities is a testament to the built-in resilience and durability integral to the success of this civic space.



Open Space Needs Assessment Playhouse Plaza

- Owner/Operator
- Consultants
- Completion
- Size
- Context
- Use
- Program Elements
- Operating Model
- Capital Cost
- Annual Operating Cost

Although utilized during larger gatherings and events in the adjacent theatre, on a daily basis this space is austere and uninviting. This downtown cultural plaza does little to inspire or engage the infrequent users, and this too becomes a reminder to how the primary function of the parkade below can restrict the potential uses and program above. Some small seating alcoves have been retrofitted at the southern edge, but not seemingly on-route to anything or able to benefit from adjacent activities.



Open Space Needs Assessment

Pacific Centre Plaza

Owner/Operator: Pacific Centre Shopping Mall
Size 750 sqm
Context Urban, Downtown Shopping
Use : Sitting, Watching the theatre of daily life.
Program Elements: Variety of Seating elements

This Privately Owned Public Space is a simple plaza situated at the busy entry to a mall. It benefits greatly from the popular past time of people watching, and although the landscape treatments and layout are not particularly engaging, the variety of seating in proximity to the constant flow of busy shoppers and access to the late afternoon sun makes this a busy and popular spot with downtown shoppers and visitors.



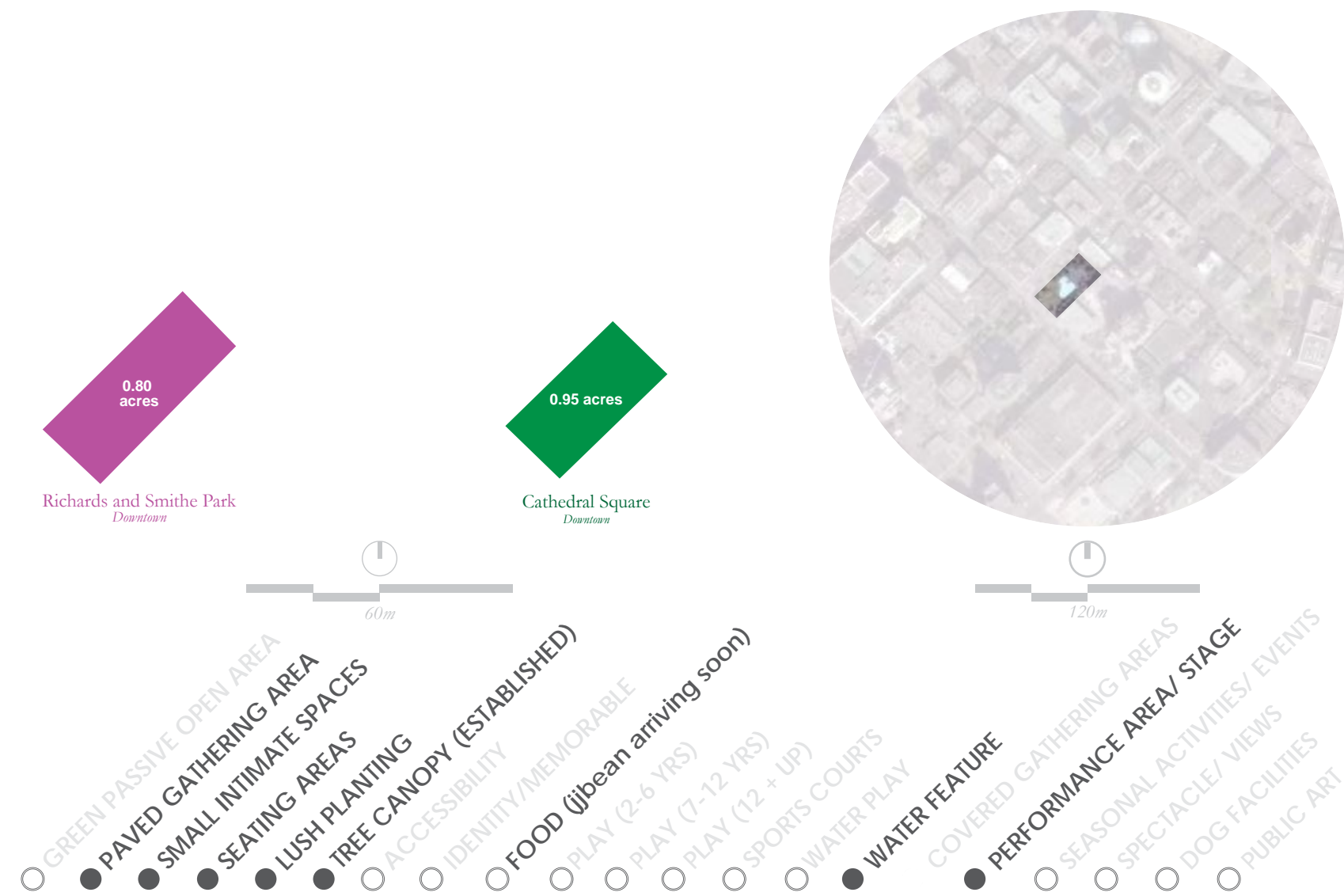
Open Space Needs Assessment

Cathedral Square Park

Owner/Operator: Vancouver Park Board
Size 30,000 sqm
Context Urban
Use: Sitting, and likely illicit activities
Program Elements: Water feature, Performance Area, Seating

“This is one of those spaces that I’ve walked by a dozen times but never stopped to go inside and explore. Despite the dramatic design of this public space, there was never any real draw to check it out. The square usually draws a cursory glance as people walk by to other things. It exists as one of those public spaces that were designed with the best intention, and then left to rot, untended”

Excerpt taken from link-
<http://deconstructedcity.blogspot.ca/2012/01/vancouver-cathedral-square.html>

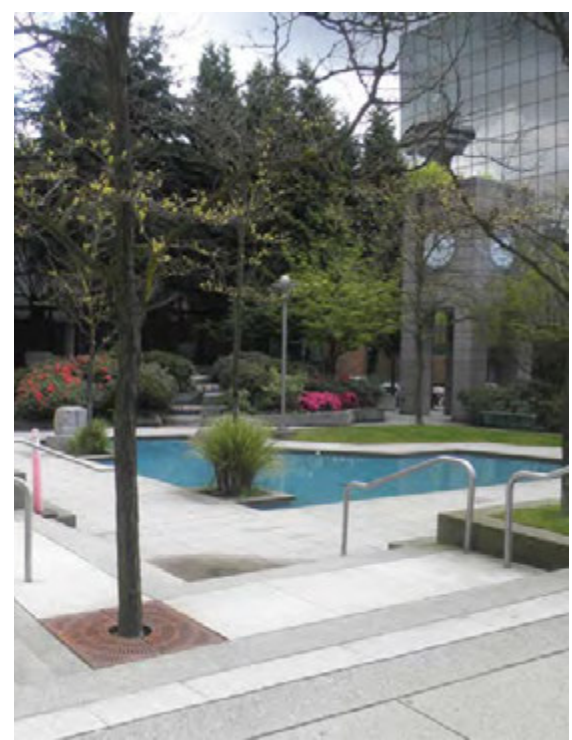
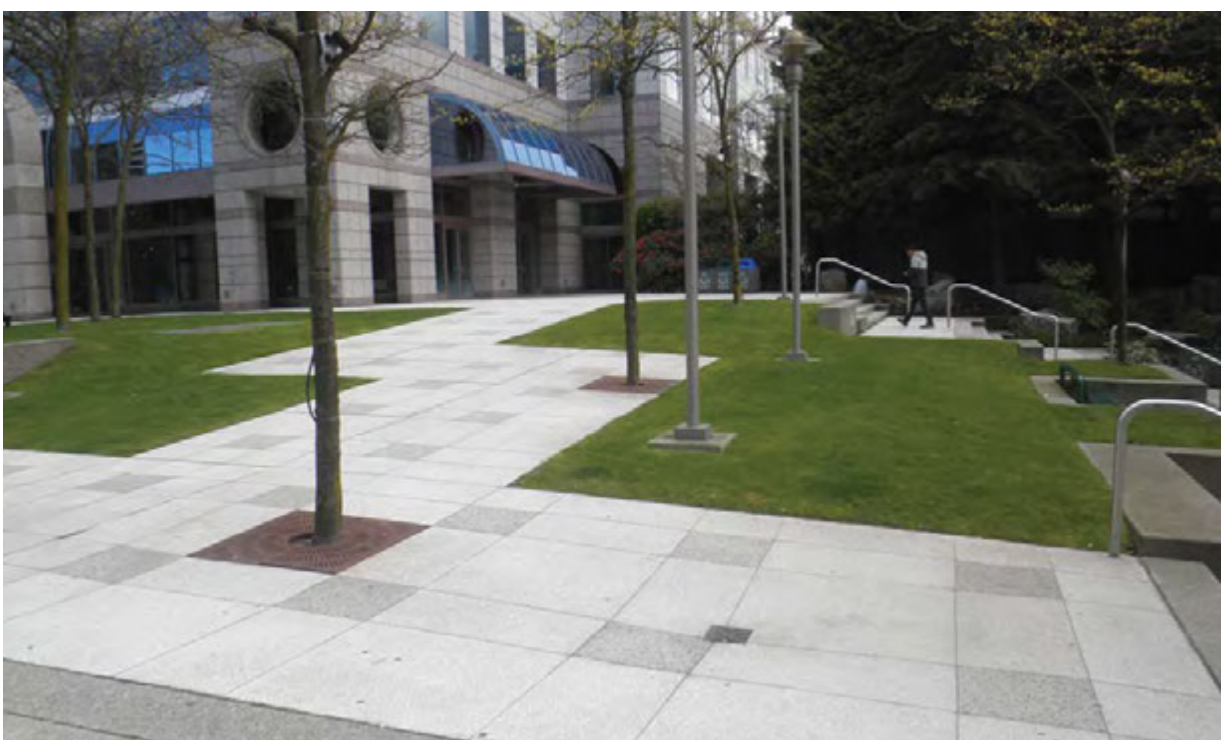


Open Space Needs Assessment

BC Hydro Plaza

Owner/Operator : BC Hydro
Consultants: Unknown
Completion Date: Unknown
Size 2,500 sqm
Context Urban
Use: Forecourt/Visual Amenity to Corporate Building
Program Elements: Clock Tower, Water Feature, Plantings and Flags
Operating Model: Private

This Privately Owned Public Space succeeds in providing a well landscaped and manicured green space for downtown employees to use during their lunch breaks. But beyond this it does little to inspire or engage any further program or user types. The trends and styles employed at the time of conception can often, seem stale or dated within a decade. The light coloured blue pool is a good example in the case of this park, and becomes a reminder to not overly define a singular use or fashionable treatment when designing a public space.

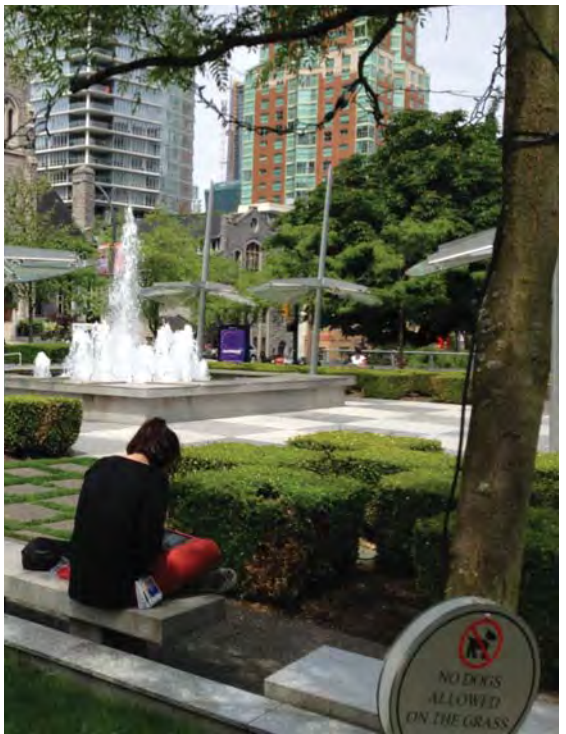
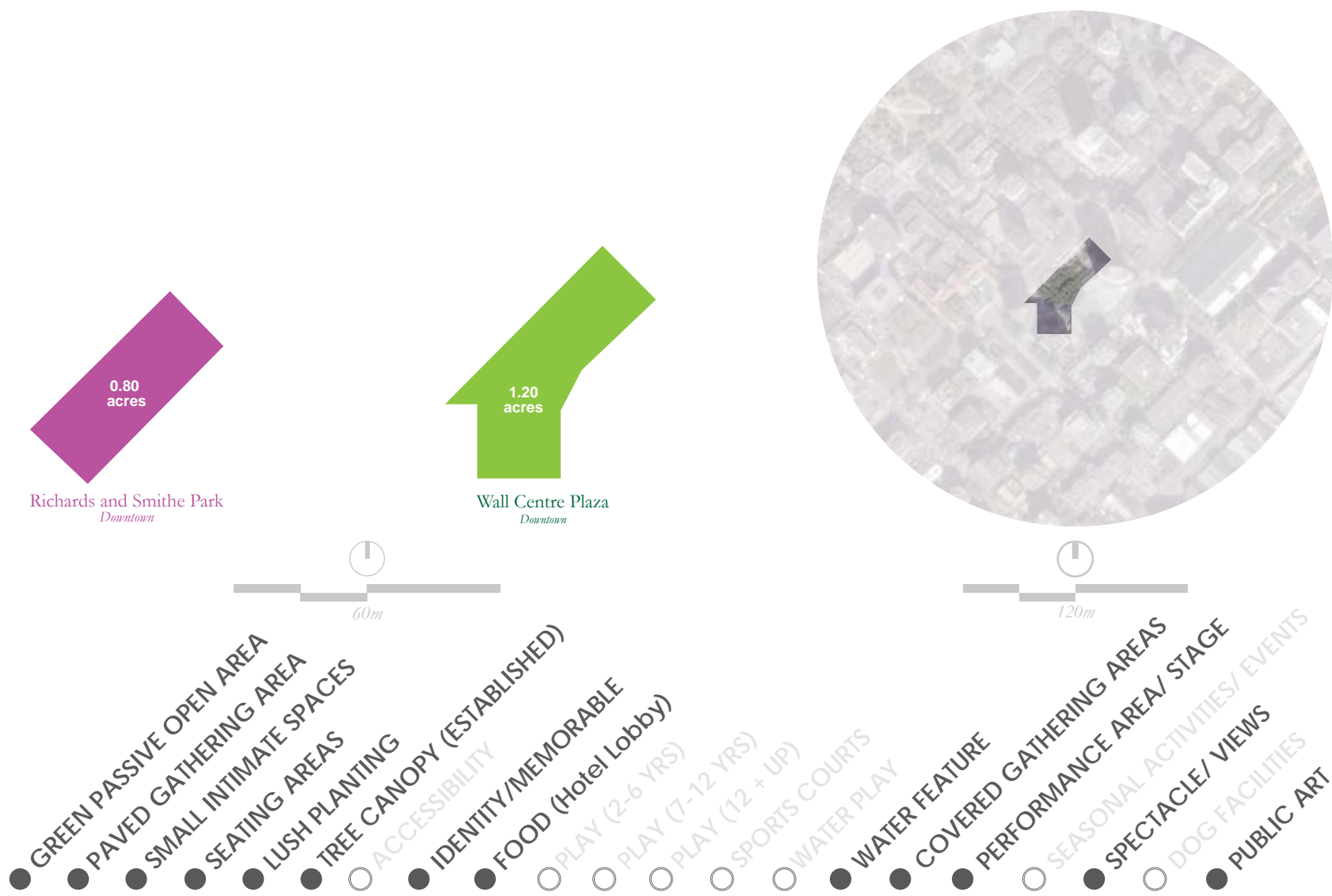


Open Space Needs Assessment

Wall Centre Plaza

Owner/Operator: Wall Centre (Sheraton hotels)
Consultants: James Cheng Architects - PFSstudio
Completion Date - 2000
Size 4,500 sqm
Context Urban/Hotel
Use: Forecourt/Entry Park to Hotel and Residencies
Program Elements: Open Lawn, Water Feature, Plantings

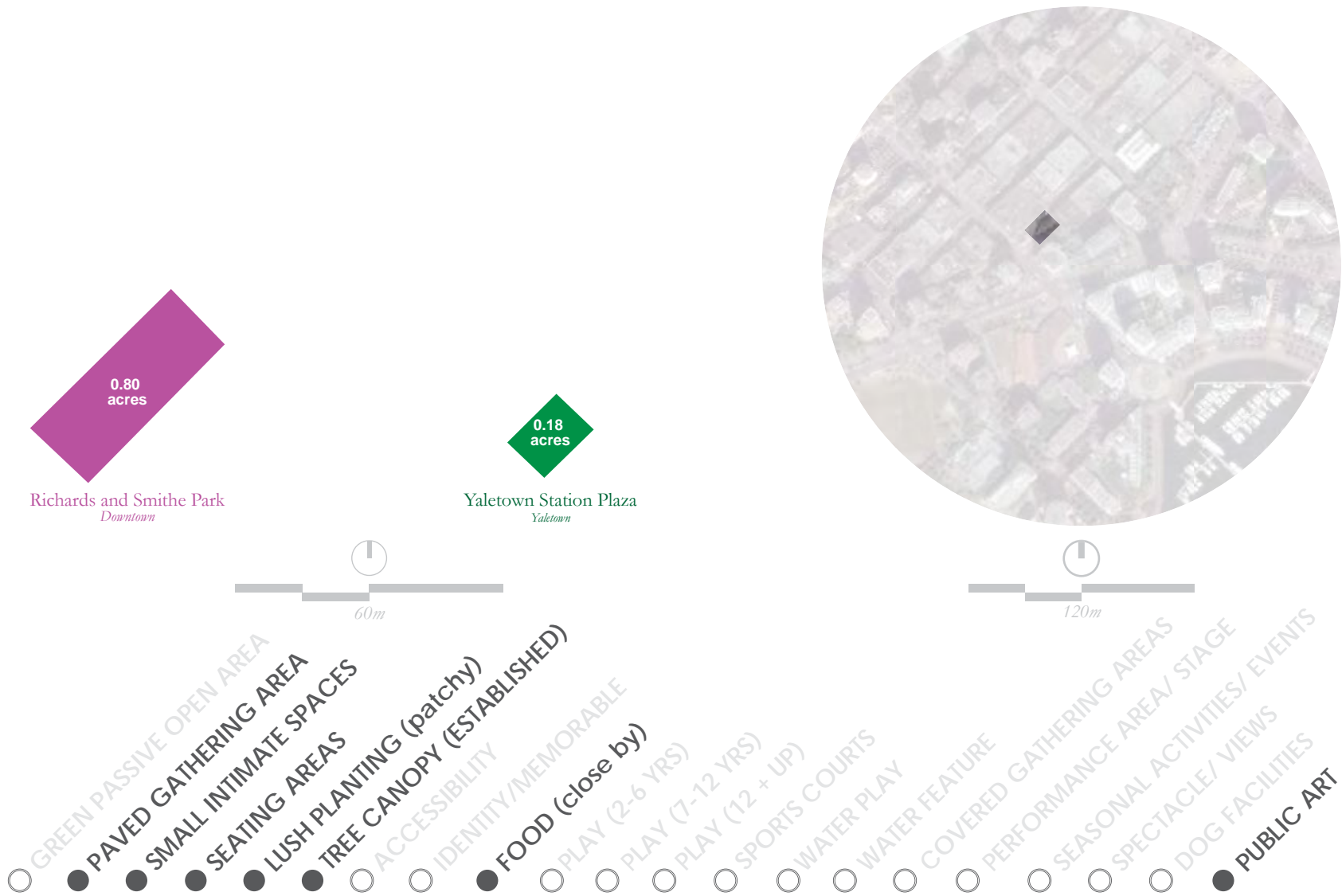
As part of the Hotel experience, this Privately Owned Public Space benefits from continued maintenance, and remains relatively contemporary because of the simple design, layout and use of high quality durable materials.
Although the slightly raised podium level of open space creates a rather non-public vibe, on any given day there can be a good number of hotel guests or city residents enjoying this space. Counting 27 no-dog signs planted around the lawn area, it would be interesting to see what signs appear after a game of croquet or lawn darts!



Open Space Needs Assessment Yaletown Station Plaza

Owner/Operator: Unknown
Completion Date - Unknown
Size 700 sqm
Context Urban/Yaletown
Use: Passive city plaza, seating eating, people watching
Program Elements: Public Art, Seating, Bike racks

This small simple pocket park/plaza is most likely associated with the construction of Yaletown station, and although not particularly memorable, this space offers a simple and rare respite from the increasingly busy Yaletown city life. There is no distinct program or amenity other than Public Art and perimeter seating, and with the mature tree canopy offering dappled shade, the simplicity seems appropriate. A number of food outlets have direct visual connection to the space from across Midland.

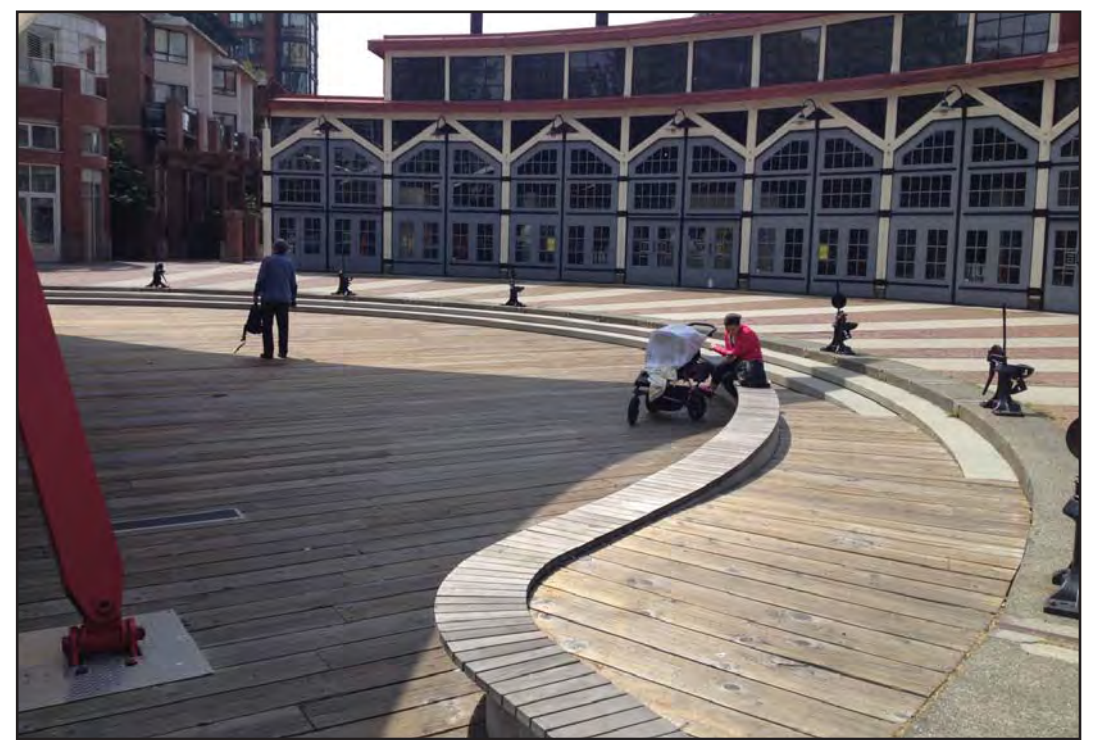
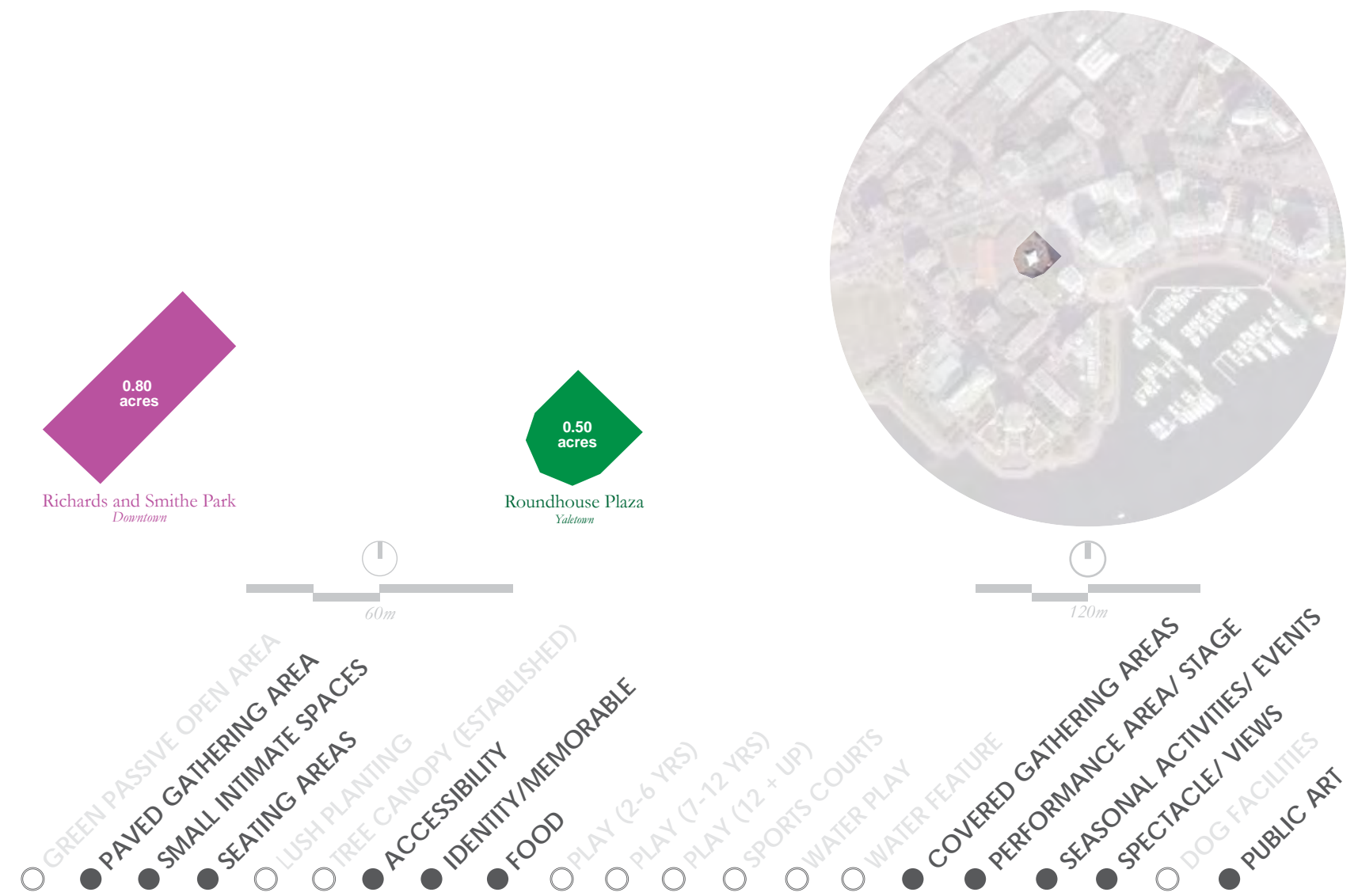


Open Space Needs Assessment

Roundhouse Turntable Plaza

Owner/Operator: Vancouver Park Board
Consultants: PFSstudio - Nick Milkovich Architects
Completion Date - 1997 - (2012 update)
Size 2000 sqm
Context : Historic Yaletown Roundhouse, Community Centre
Use: Performance space, seating/gathering area, adjacent cafes
Program Elements : Special-events Canopy/Crane, Interpretive area, Seating
Operating Model: Vancouver Park Board
Capital Cost: 2012 update cost \$1.8 million

A great example of a bold and functional contemporary intervention into a historic fabric or context. This central feature, delicately straddling the historic turntable is transformative in nature and enables the space to be utilized and engaged by a variety of performances and public events. The plaza also benefits from the adjacent Community Centre and the sunny restaurants and cafes that reside around its perimeter.



Open Space Needs Assessment

Coopers' Park

Owner/Operator: Vancouver Park Board
Completion Date - 1997 (skate park added in 2003)
Size 4.2 acres
Context: North False Creek
Use: Variety of recreational uses
Program Elements: Skate park, Sports court, Playgrounds, Off leash area
Operating Model: Park Board

On the edge of the 5 minute (800m) bike-shed, and directly linked to the proposed Park site by the Smithe Street corridor, Coopers park offers a wide degree of program and spacial diversity. At key times of the day the primary users of the green open area are dog walkers, with a variety of users types utilizing the covered sports court, urban skate park and play areas under the Cambie Bridge. Located on the seawall, this park benefits from local residents and citywide user-ship. One area that seems underuti-lized is the somewhat overly structured seating area close the north entry to the park.



Open Space Needs Assessment

BMO Plaza

Owner/Operator: Oxford
Size 1,000 sqm
Context Urban
Use: Primarily a forecourt to adjacent bank, now used as lunch spot
Program Elements: Movable chairs and tables, visiting food truck
Operating Model: privately funded and operated

Previously a small empty forecourt to a downtown bank, with a few simple adaptations, such as movable chairs and tables and a regular food truck, this ‘POPS’ has become a popular downtown lunchtime spot.
The formal bosque of trees provides the well established canopy that further defines the space while offering a much needed natural buffer to the urban edges.



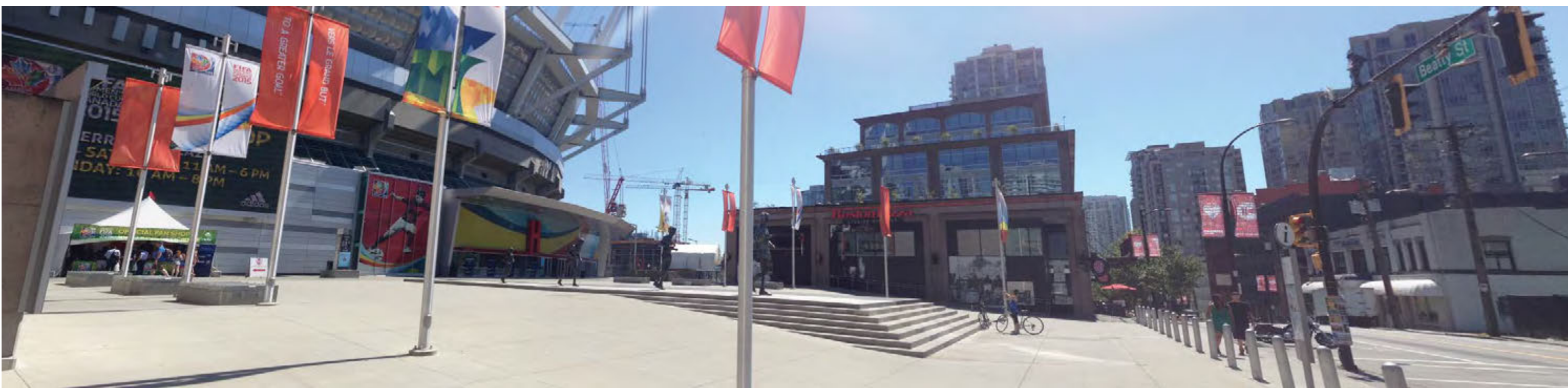
Open Space Needs Assessment

Terry Fox Plaza

Owner/Operator: Vancouver Park Board
Size: 0.37 acres
Context: Urban, Terminus of Robson Street
Use: Large Gatherings during events in BC Place, Celebrations
Program Elements: Public Art, Paved Gathering Area, Large Media Screen
Operating Model: Park Board



This urban plaza is situated at the eastern end of Robson street and is the terminus to the busy retail corridor. The primary role of this space is as capacitor or gathering point for fans and spectators during events held in the adjacent BC place stadium. During non-event times, the space is rather desolate and not appropriately scaled to the individual, with a large multi media screen at one end, and flags and banners along each edge to animate the space. A Terry Fox art or memorial piece occupies the centre as the central feature to the space.



What Are People Saying Online- ...about some of the Downtown Parks closest to this new Park location

Comments were collected from Yelp.ca



Remember when it was sunny? When the sky was blue and you left your umbrella at home? When that day comes again, you should bring your lunch out to Emery Barnes park. It's got to be one of the cutest urban parks...ever. At the north end is a waterfall that trickles into a little stream. There's nice sitting areas all along it. Pretty plants, very peaceful.

Megan S, Unites States

Such a small wonder this park is. The entire length of this park is a fountain and stream combo that is as beautifully designed aesthetically as it is practically. It's like walking through an art exhibition. If I didn't see kids enjoying the water, I would have been so hesitant to put my own feet in. However, I did, and I felt like a kid. This along with the cleanliness of the park gets 5 stars, and there is a large area for dogs to run around sans leash. And of course a playground for kids. And of course it's no ordinary playground, but also a work of art. Bravissimo, Vancouver!

Neal N. Newark, USA

Plenty of space to sit down and relax. Small green areas here and there. So far my favourite small-to-medium-sized park!

Vincente. P, Vancouver, B.C.

This is a beautiful little spot. It's surprising that it is so clean and safe considering it is so central. There is a great mix of parents and kids and everyone is friendly and willing to at least smile at you. It's almost as though the standoffish rule of Vancouver doesn't apply here. Nice. There are pigeons that my son likes to watch and count, a nice little stream and waterfall, and soft ground so kids aren't risking breaking limbs if they fall.

Dawn P, Vancouver, B.C.

EMERY BARNES PARK



Is this really a park? It's cobbled. I guess it's more of a plaza or square. There are a couple of trees too so there's not really an open enough space to play frisbee or anything like that. There are some metal (uncomfortable) backless benches too which are not very nice for reading on, and there's also very little shade because the trees are small. I'd rather sit on the Starbucks patio adjacent in a real chair. Or in a greener park like Emery Barnes.

It's usually pretty dirty with garbage littered everywhere, and it's always filled with pigeons (and their poop). People, please stop feeding the pigeons.

So basically, this park is useless. It's ugly and poorly designed. It's not nice to sit in. It's not maintained properly. And there are other nicer options nearby. I guess they were going for a European-style stone court - something different than the usual Canadian city park. And I can't believe it cost \$1million to build.

Susie S, Marina del Rey, USA

Not a real park because there is very little green, more like urban garden. There is only a few trees. Good place to sit in Yaletown on sunny day and eat lunch if you work or shop nearby.

E.C., Vancouver, B.C.

YALETOWN PARK

PARK/ OPEN SPACE		PARK/ OPEN SPACE CHARACTERISTICS											PARK/ OPEN SPACE PROGRAM + ACTIVITIES													
		SIZE	PARK/SPACE TYPE	SOLAR ACCESS	PAVED GATHERING AREA	SMALL INTIMATE SPACES	SEATING AREAS	LUSH PLANTING	GREEN PASSIVE OPEN AREA	TREE CANOPY (ESTABLISHED)	ACCESSIBILITY	IDENTITY/ MEMORABLE	WELL USED	FEELS SAFE	FOOD	PLAY (2-6 YRS)	PLAY (7-11YRS)	SPORTS COURTS	WATER PLAY	WATER FEATURE	DOG FACILITIES	COVERED GATHERING AREAS	PERFORMANCE AREA/ STAGE	SEASONAL ACTIVITIES/ EVENTS	SPECTACLE/ VIEWS	PUBLIC ART
1	EMERY BARNES PARK	1.95 acres	R	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
2	YALETOWN PARK	0.44 acres	N	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓					✓		✓				
3	HELMCKEN PARK	0.43 acres	N			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓									✓						
4	CENTRAL LIBRARY SQUARE(S)	1.38 acres	PS	✓	✓		✓				✓		✓	✓	✓								✓	✓	✓	✓
5	CBC LIVE EVENTS STAGE	0.47 acres	POPS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	ART GALLERY PLAZA	0.95 acres	PS		✓		✓			✓			✓	✓						✓				✓	✓	
7	ROBSON SQUARE	3.78 acres	PS	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	PLAYHOUSE PLAZA	0.69 acres	POPS	✓	✓		✓				✓			✓						✓				✓		✓
9	PACIFIC CENTRE PLAZA	0.10 acres	POPS	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓									✓	✓	
10	CATHEDRAL SQUARE PARK	0.75 acres	N	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓						✓				✓				✓			
11	BC HYDRO PLAZA	0.61 acres	POPS	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓						✓						
12	WALL CENTRE PLAZA	0.70 acres	POPS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓				✓		✓				✓	
13	YALETOWN STATION PLAZA	0.44 acres	POPS		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓										✓	✓
14	POUDHOUSE TURNTABLE PLAZA	0.50 acres	N	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
15	COOPERS' PARK	5.20 acres	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓
16	BMO PLAZA	0.30 acres	POPS	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓											
17	TERRY FOX PLAZA	0.37 acres	POPS	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓		✓									✓	✓		✓

Open Space Needs Assessment Summary

As Vancouver rapidly transitions from its pioneer port past to become the urban city it now is, Public Open Space of any kind is becoming increasingly valuable for the residents and visitors who live and frequent the downtown core. This specific dissemination area is one of the most densely populated residential neighbourhoods within the downtown peninsula and will benefit greatly from the introduction of this new public park space.

The objective of the Needs Assessment Study was to review the surrounding Public Parks and POPS (Privately Owned Public Spaces) towards recording what amenities, program or activities presently exist throughout the public park or open space network. By creating a list of criteria that best represents these activities, we could begin to tally these observations to help the design team form better understandings to what potential infrastructure and activities were missing and what might then be considered for the new public park. On initial review of the information gathered through this study, a favorable outlook of what presently exists in the surrounding area was discovered, with all the typical park amenities being covered-off in the existing open space and park system.

On the adjacent page this information is graphically represented as a stacked matrix enabling us to make further comparative analysis by reviewing each of the parks and open spaces in context to one another. The resulting graphic informs us towards some apparent holes or gaps in some of the criteria recorded, with a large gap (circled here) that may indicate an under-representation of a particular service or activity. In this case, it appears that play equipment & play infrastructure for children of all ages, resides within only two parks within our study area— Emery Barnes and Cooper Park. However, when arriving at the potential ‘needs’ for the future park, it is important to consider many of the additional factors that will have influence on the design decisions required to create a successful park.

1. Age Groups represented within proximity of the Park.

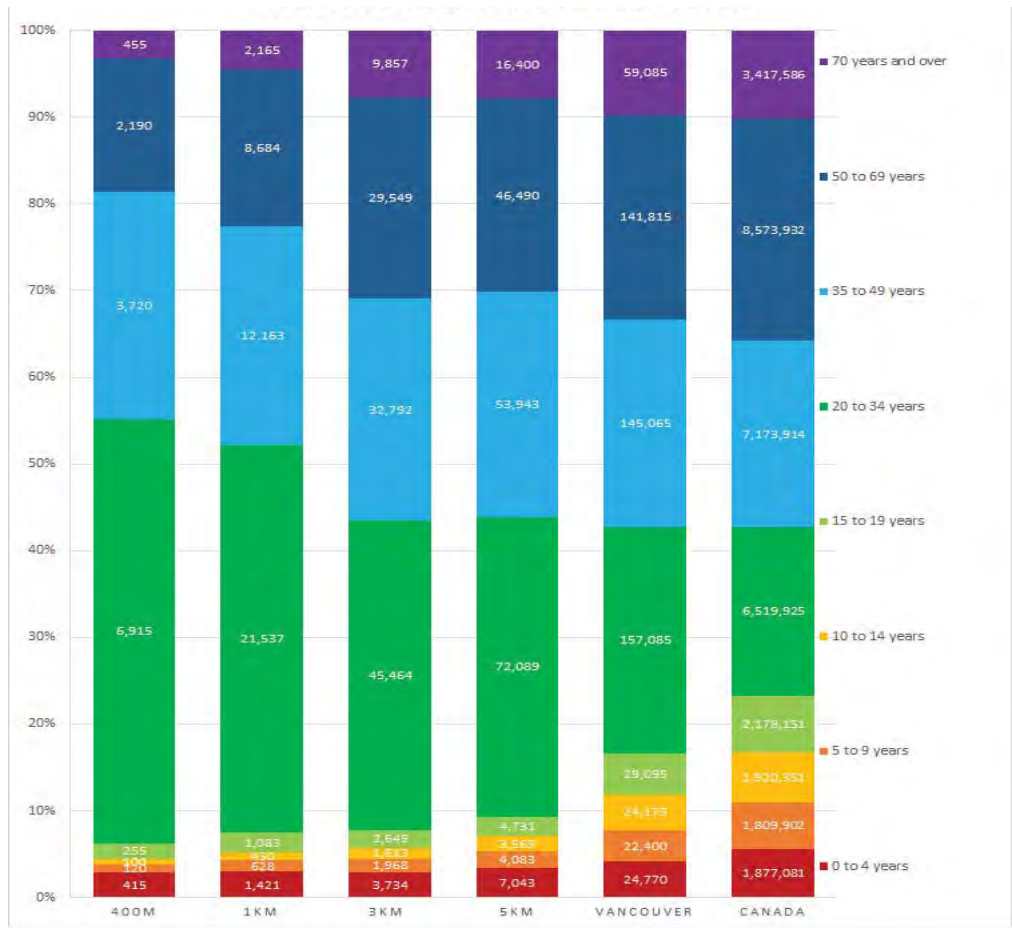
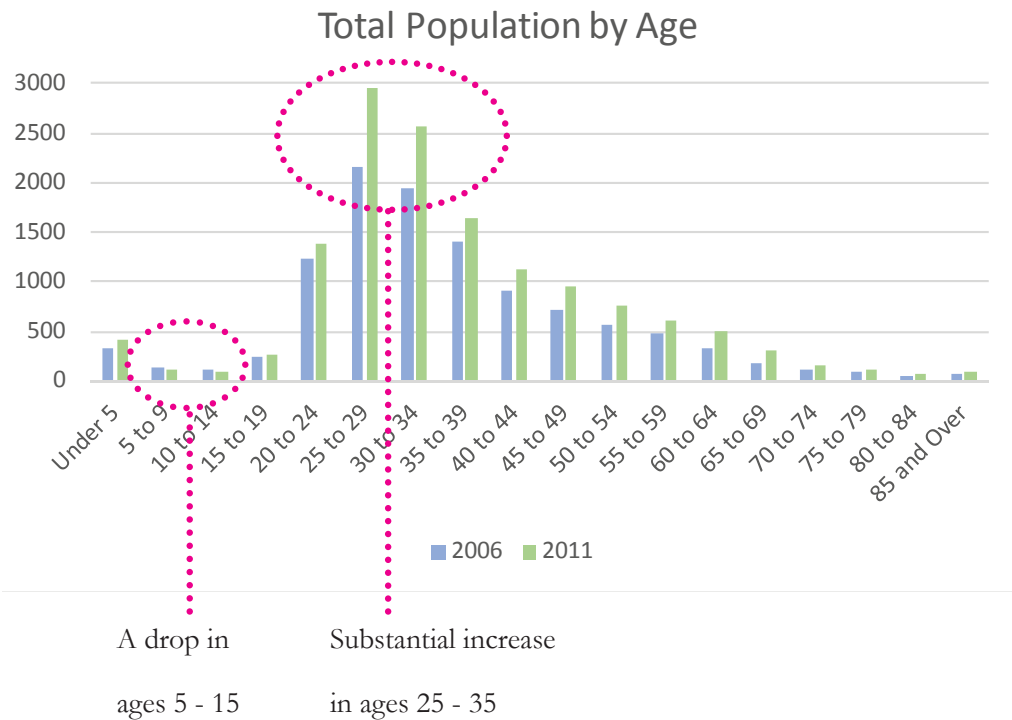
The demographic data (2011 census) provides a profile of the residential age-groups within the dissemination area of the future park. Although there are families with children in the surrounding area, (and while considering these may increase in the future) these numbers are proportionally lower, with children under 15 making up only 4% of the residential populous, compared to the primary age profile of 20 –34 year olds making up over 50% (20-49 year olds = 75%)

2. Comparable Size of Parks.

Comparing Apples to water melons. Both Emery Barnes Park (1.9 acres) and Cooper Park (5.2 acres) are considerably larger than the 0.8 acres future park site, and when basing future expectations of proposed amenities and infrastructure within the new park site, consideration of the relative size available should be factored.

3. Materiality and Durability

Having learned from previous park build-outs, such as Emery Barnes and Yaletown, technical considerations towards appropriate material choices and location of appropriate programming will further influence the practical design responses towards the landscape treatments and activities selected for the future park site.



Where do all the adults go to play?

Vancouver has built a reputation on its scenic beauty, with visitors and citizens often found preparing to leave the city, to mountain bike, ski and hike, or if staying within the city, experiencing it along the ribbon of seawall that encircles the city coastline, engaging the periphery edge of downtown and the outward vistas revealed along it.

These activities, are intrinsic to Vancouver's healthy living, but we should also consider alternate experiences, complimentary 'internal' spaces that promote activities and recreational or social events that are more intimate and that provide spontaneous civic engagement and social encounters, further building the social capacity and vibrancy of the downtown core





Smithe & Richards Park Precedent Study

OMS Stage *Winnipeg*
Bryant Park *New York*
Tear Drop Park *New York*
Serpentine Gallery *London*
Superkilen - Nørrebro *Copenhagen*
BMW Guggenheim Design Lab *New York City, Berlin, Mumbai*
Open Air Library *Magdeburg*
Miyashita Park *Tokyo*
Areana Playground - Frew Park *Brisbane*

Park Precedent Study

Scale Comparison

In many ways, The Park Precedent Study is an important first step in the ongoing conversation and sharing of ideas within the design process. And allows the client and design team to align an effective response and design attitude to a number of discoveries made in the analysis and research tasks.

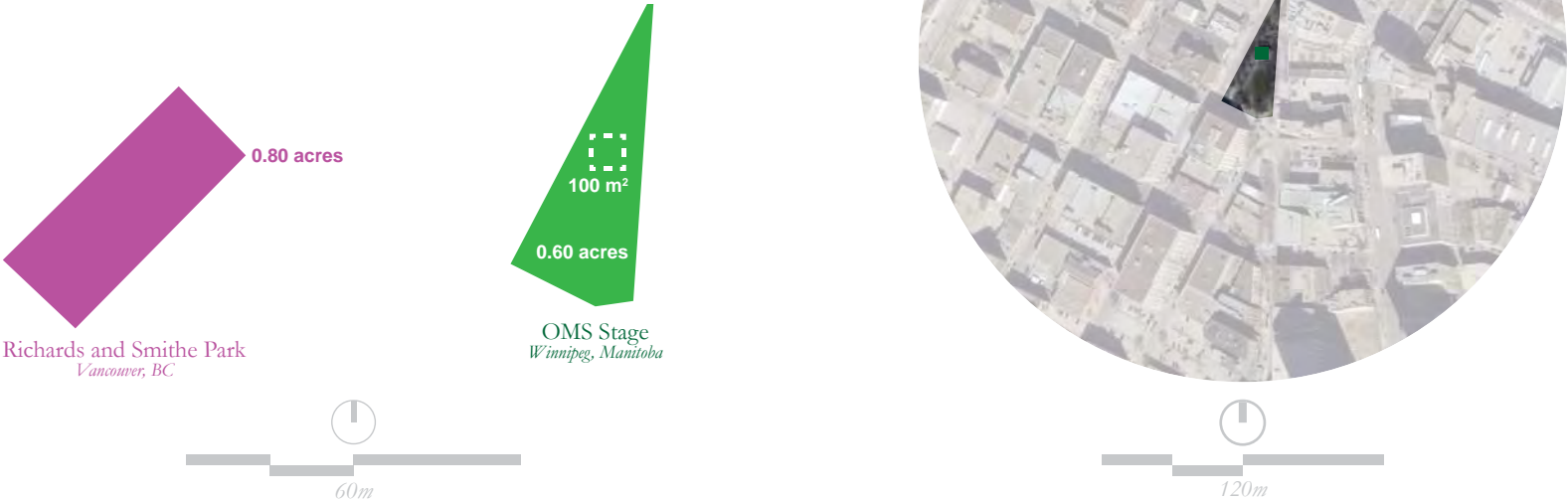
Although there are many successful parks to chose from, when applied to this site we felt that no-one park or place managed to exhibit all the required aspects. We therefor began to source and evaluate specific attributes, activities and qualities that were often only a feature or extrapolated quality of existing parks and open spaces.



Park Precedent Study

OMS Stage, Winnipeg

Client: Winnipeg Exchange District BIZ
Consultants: 5468796 Architecture Inc
Completion Date: 2010
Size: 800 sqft (stage only)
Context: Urban
Program/Elements: Performance Stage
Operating Mode: City Run
Capital Cost \$1 million (Stage Only)



TRANSFORMATION
The success of what is essentially a bandstand, can be attributed largely to the materiality and detailing of this structure. As well as the frequent programming that pushes this transformative stage well beyond the existing associations of underutilized, empty structures that often reside in parks. The walls are operable, allowing the chainmail-like shroud to be manipulated like a curtain during special events. Such that the projections originating on the inside, reflect their way as a perceivable image, to be viewed on the exterior of the structure.

- | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| Transformative | Spectacle | Invitation | Playfulness | Identity | Food | Program | |
| Comfort | Human-Scale | Edges | Ritual | Active | Varied | Adaptive | Engaging |
| Curious | Passive | Biodiverse | Iconic | Memorable | Durable | Genius Loci | Bold |
| Creative | Immersive | Peaceful | Social | Interactive | | | |



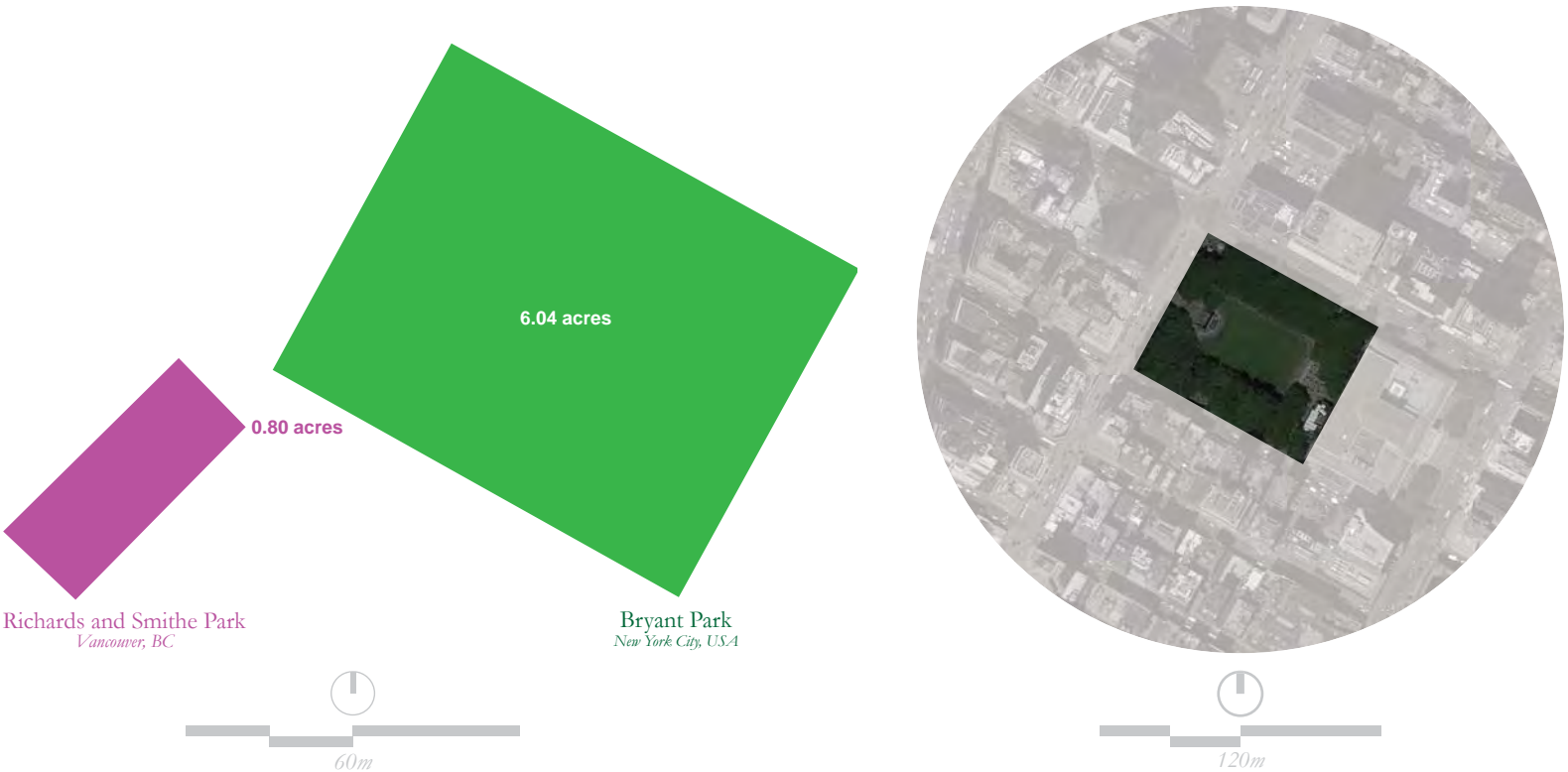
Park Precedent Study

Bryant Park, New York City

Owner/Operator: Bryant Park Corporations/ New York Department of Parks and Recreation
Consultants: Lynden Miller
Completion: 1995
Size: 8 acres
Context: Urban
Program/Elements: Multiple layers of program
Operating Model: Private management/ public ownership
Capital Cost: \$18 million
Annual Operating Cost: \$2.9 million

PROGRAM

The award-winning urban management consultant Dan Biederman, president of Biederman Redevelopment Ventures, was the driving force behind the revitalization of Bryant Park in New York City. Layers and layers of program, during all seasons have resulted in the this park becoming one of the most engaging public places in this city.



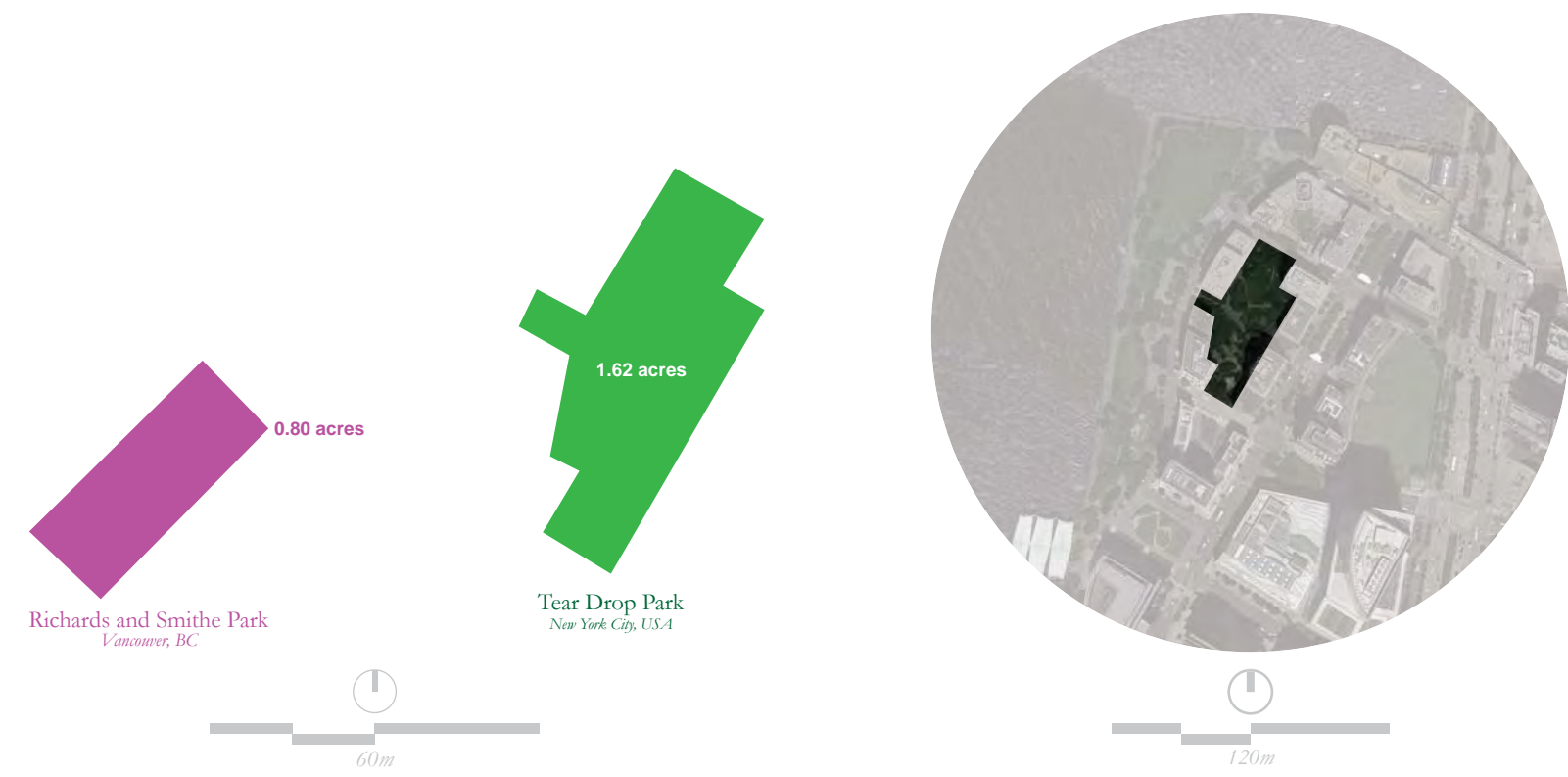
Transformative Spectacle Invitation Playfulness Identity Food Program
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Park Precedent Study

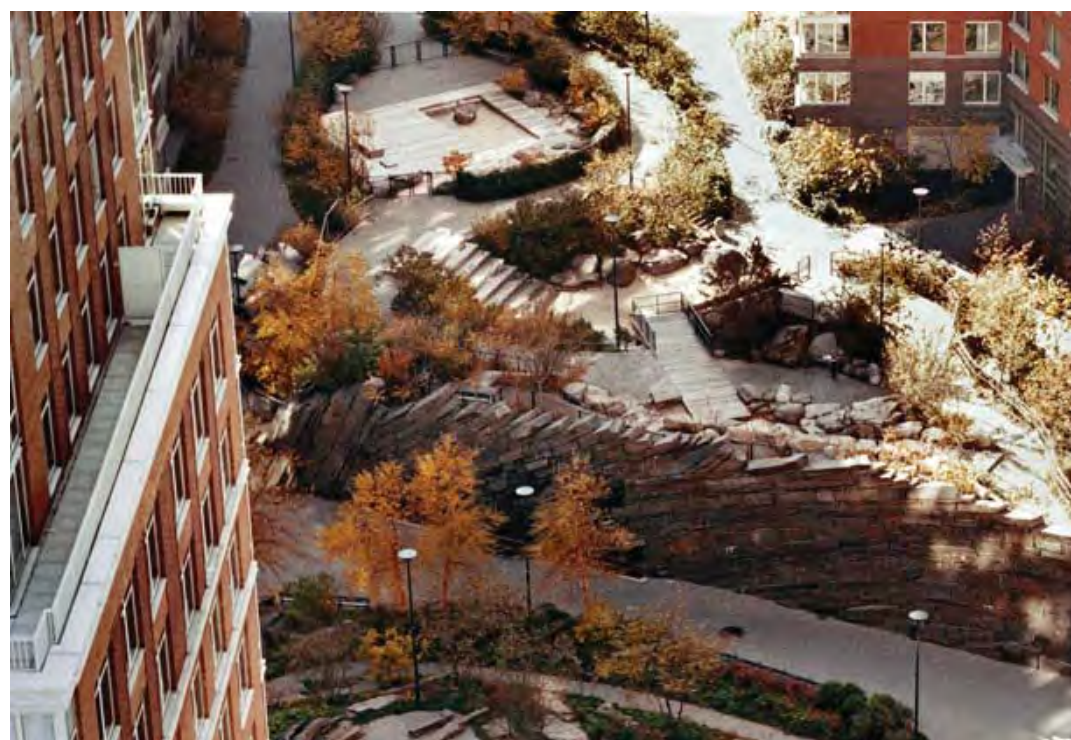
Tear Drop Park, New York City

Owner/Operator: The Hugh L. Carey Battery Park City Authority and Battery Park City Parks Conservancy
Consultants: Michael Van Valkenberg + Associates
Completion: September 2004
Size: 1.8 acre
Context: Urban/Residential
Program/Elements: Ice-water wall, marsh, water park, Lawn Bowl, play areas for small children in wind-protected areas
Capital Cost: \$17 million



BIODIVERSITY
The efforts to employ native plant material and local soil including specifics at a microbial level, resulted in high degree of biodiversity and almost no plant loss. It also boasts and impressive stormwater catchment system that goes beyond many of the token storage tanks that often utilize left over parkade space.

- Transformative
- Spectacle
- Invitation
- Playfulness
- Identity
- Food
- Program
- Comfort
- Human-Scale
- Edges
- Ritual
- Active
- Varied
- Adaptive
- Engaging
- Curious
- Passive
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- Iconic
- Memorable
- Durable
- Genius Loci
- Bold
- Creative
- Immersive
- Peaceful
- Social
- Interactive



Park Precedent Study

Serpentine Gallery, London

Owner/Operator: Serpentine Gallery
Consultants: Varies
Completion: Six months from invitation to completion, to remain on display for three months
Size: Variable
Context: Park
Program/Elements: Annual commission to architect with no previous built work in UK, variable
Operating Model: Sponsorship, gift-in-kind, sale of pavilion
Capital Cost: Variable “limited”
Annual Operating Cost: Variable - “limited”



EXPERIMENT

The Pavilions at the Serpentine Gallery not only provide an ever changing platform for art and culture to manifest, but it also celebrates young designers and architects with no previous built work by providing them the opportunity to create something experimental and often uniquely different. Resulting in new construction methods, material uses and interesting discoveries in how program and audiences might engage.

Transformative Spectacle Invitation Playfulness Identity Food Program
Comfort Human-Scale Edges Ritual Active Varied Adaptive Engaging
Curious Passive Biodiverse Iconic Memorable Durable Genius Loci Bold
Creative Immersive Peaceful Social Interactive



Park Precedent Study

Superkilen - Nørrebro, Copenhagen

Owner/Operator: Copenhagen Municipality, Realdania

Consultants: Topotek + BIG Architects + Superflex

Completion Date: 2012

Size: 2.24 acres

Context: Urban

Use: Variety of recreational, play and sport program elements for all ages

Program Elements: Boxing rings to Darth Vader helmet slide

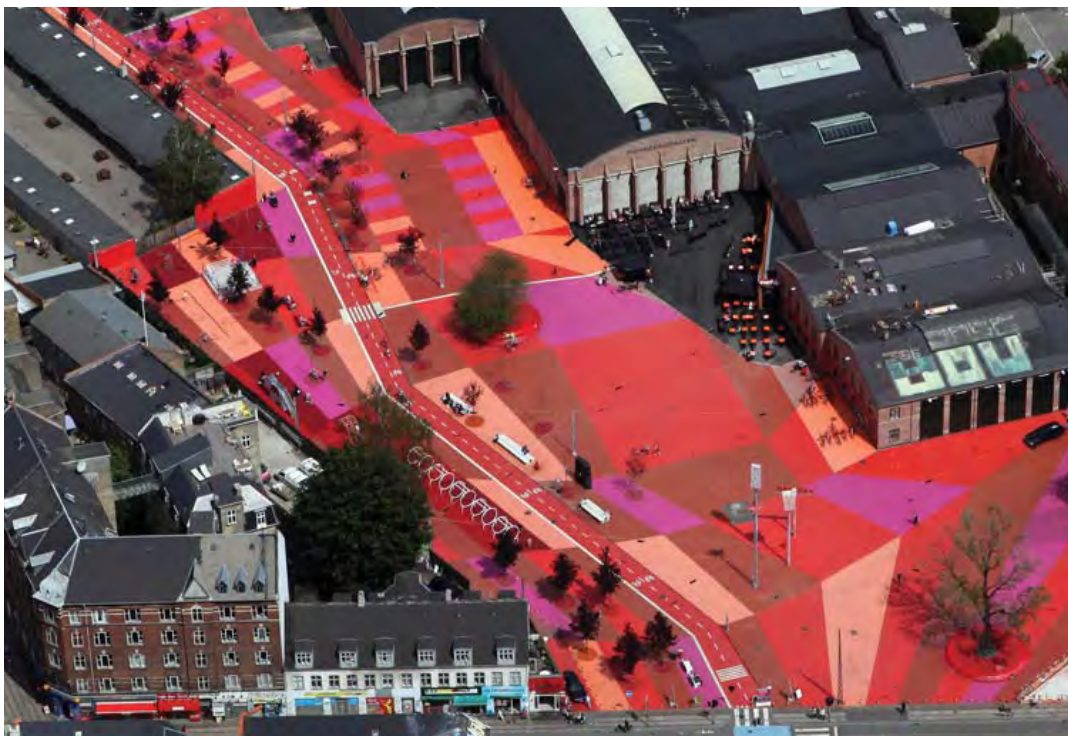
Capital Cost: \$11 million USD

BOLD USE OF COLOUR

To the extent to which this park stretches out beyond any particular site or park boundary provides a great example of how the urban fabric can be utilized in creative and dramatic ways. Blurring the realms between sometimes overly distinct recreational zones and every day city living.



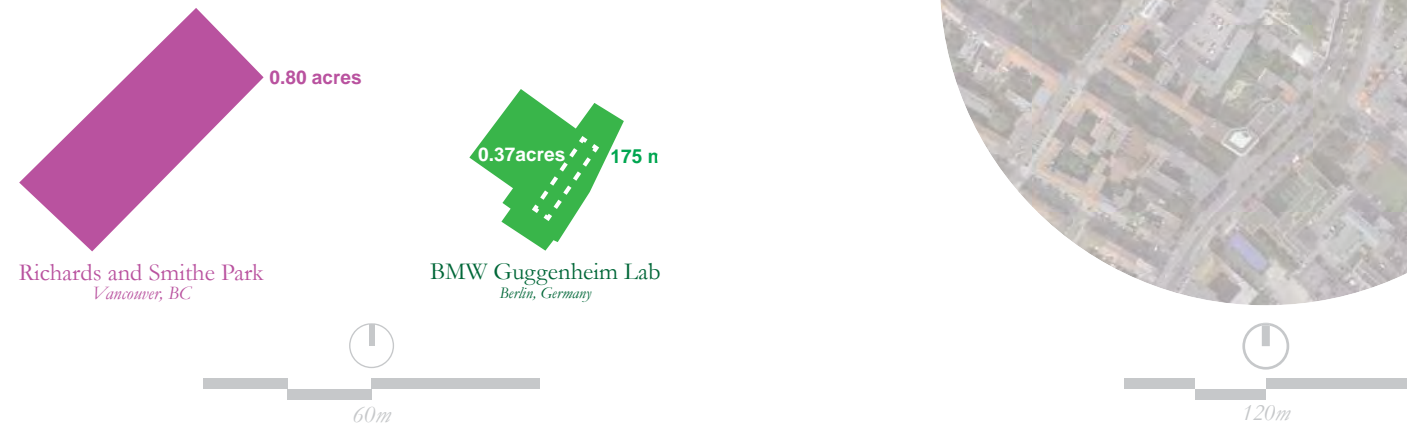
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Park Precedent Study

BMW Guggenheim Lab - New York City, Berlin, Mumbai

Owner/Operator: BMW Guggenheim - Various Cities
Completion Date : Ongoing
Consultants: Atelier Bow-Wow
Size: Varies
Context: Varies
Program/Elements: Storage, Adaptive seating and stage



VERSATILE AND ADAPTIVE
Although this structure was designed to be temporary and transient in nature, it is a great example of how an idea can be distilled down to the rudimentary parts required to fulfill a purpose. It also exemplifies a transformative or theatrical spirit that can be programmed to engage a wide range of audiences and events.

Transformative Spectacle Invitation Playfulness Identity Food Program
Comfort Human-Scale Edges Ritual Active Varied Adaptive Engaging
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Park Precedent Study

Open Air Library, Madgeburg

Client City of Madgeburg, Germany
Consultants KARO Architekten, Architectur + Netzwerk
Completion Date 2009
Size 488 sqm
Context Urban
Use Public plaza, city library
Program Elements Stage, book storage, seating
Operating Model ?
Capital Cost EUR 325,000

COMMUNITY

This design this park responded directly to the patterns of use that the community had already facilitated. A number of residents had defined a community venue with hundreds of beer crates stacked as walls, stages and seating. Over time, this project, and the existing uses gain support, receiving funding and professional design input. Staying true to its grass root origins, the design grew from a public engagement process and although primarily a community library, doubles for many other community based events.



Transformative Spectacle Invitation Playfulness Identity Food Program
Comfort Human-Scale Edges Ritual Active Varied Adaptive Engaging
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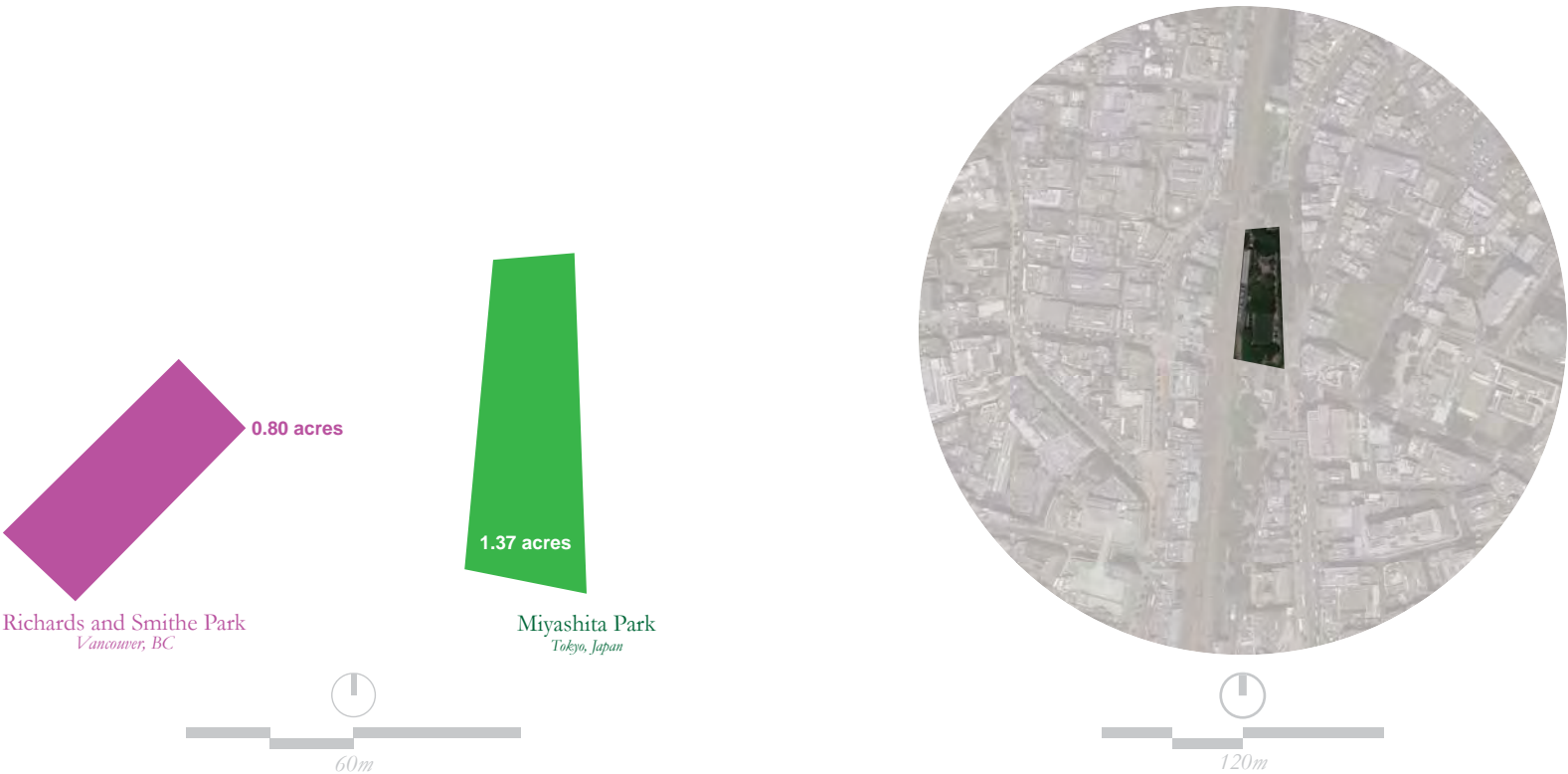


Park Precedent Study

Miyashita Park, Tokyo

Owner/Operator: Shibuya, Tokyo, Japan
Consultants: Atelier Bow-Wow
Completion Date: April 2011
Size: 14000 sq m
Context: Urban
Program Elements: Sports Facilities
Operating Model: Corporate Sponsorship
Capital Cost: 450 million yen
Annual Operating Cost: 150 million yen/year, for five years

LAYERED
Miyashita Park is a retrofitted community park built upon an existing parkade structure that required upgrading. It provides an example of how multiple experiences and activities can reside together within a busy and spatially challenged downtown context. While also offering a successful precedent to of how a parking structure can become the base platform to such a park activities.



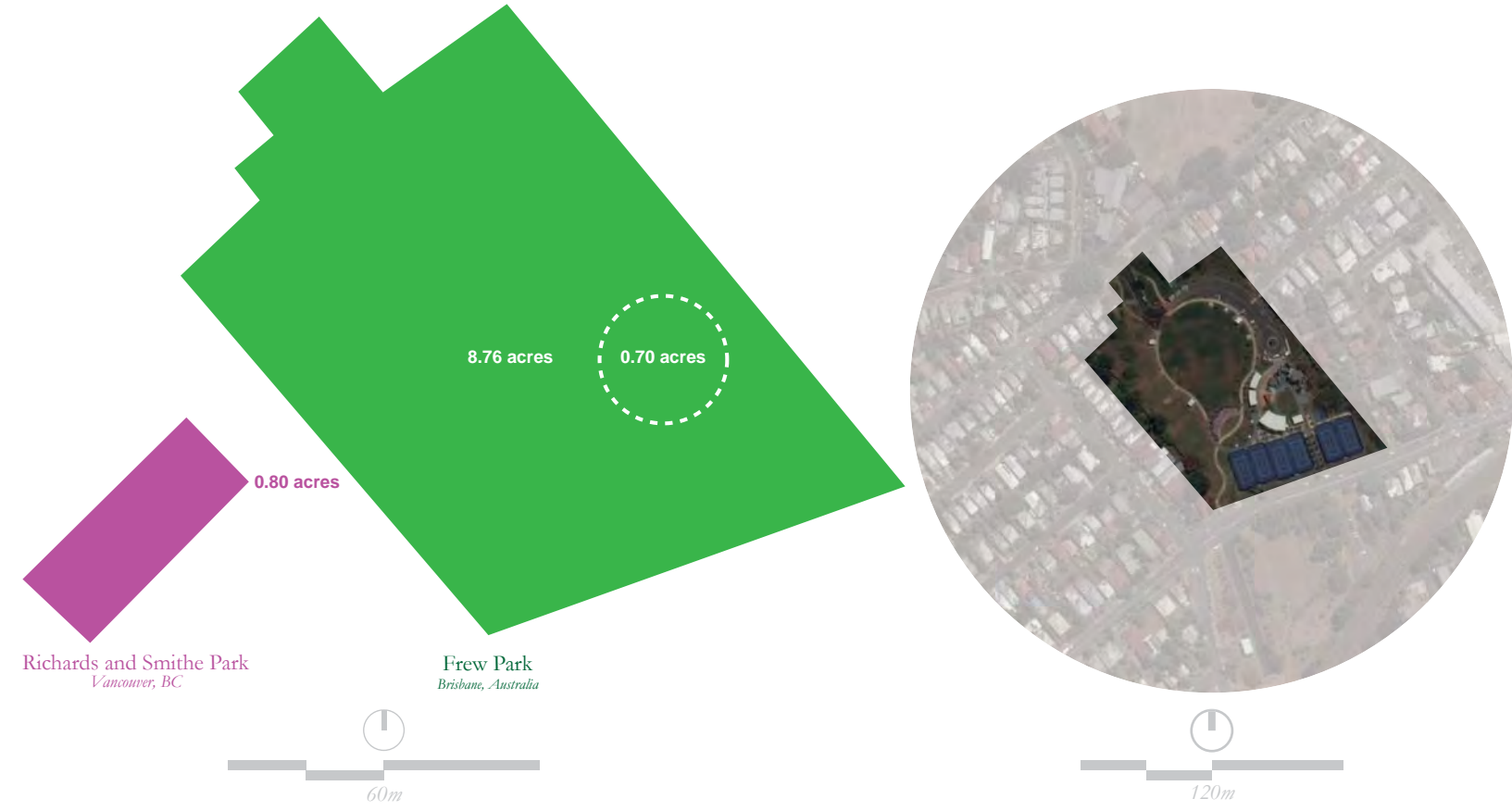
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Park Precedent Study

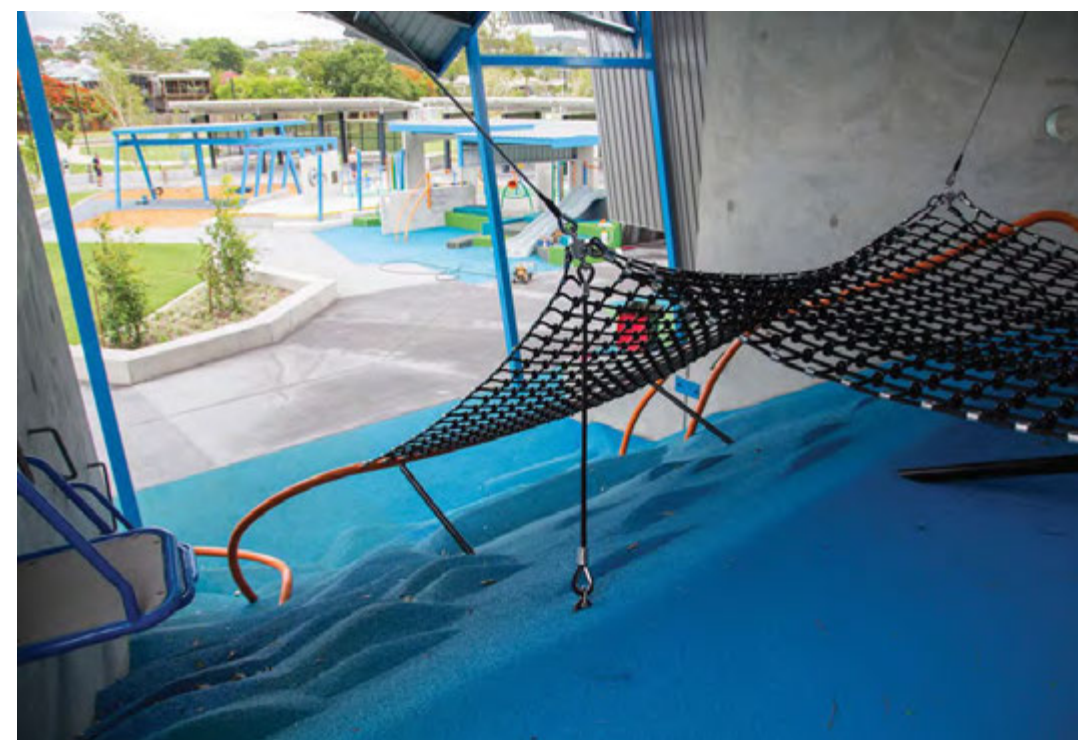
Areana Playground - Frew Park, Brisbane

Client Brisbane City Council (City Projects Office)
Consultants Guymer Bailey Architects
Completion November 2014
Size 30,000 sqm
Context Tennis/Sports facility in Regional Park
Program/Elements Variety of challenging play equipment
Operating Model City Run
Capital Cost \$1.1 Million



IMMERSIVE
Frew park exemplifies a bold and immersive play experience that provides challenges well beyond the typical catalogue play structures. Located within an existing tennis park, it benefits from the adjacent amenity users and is designed to be closed and gated at night.

- Transformative Spectacle Invitation Playfulness Identity Food Program
- Comfort Human-Scale Edges Ritual Active Varied Adaptive Engaging
- Curious Passive Biodiverse Iconic Memorable Durable Genius Loci Bold
- Creative Immersive Peaceful Social Interactive



Park Precedent Study

Crowd Sourced from Studio



Public Art Integration

Art will be an integral part of the new park. The artist Gareth Moore has been selected to collaborate with DIALOG as a key member of the design team, working together to explore ways to incorporate art into the fabric of the park in new and interesting ways. Some precedents of existing projects with other art & design collaborations are shown here.



James Turrell - Sky Chambers



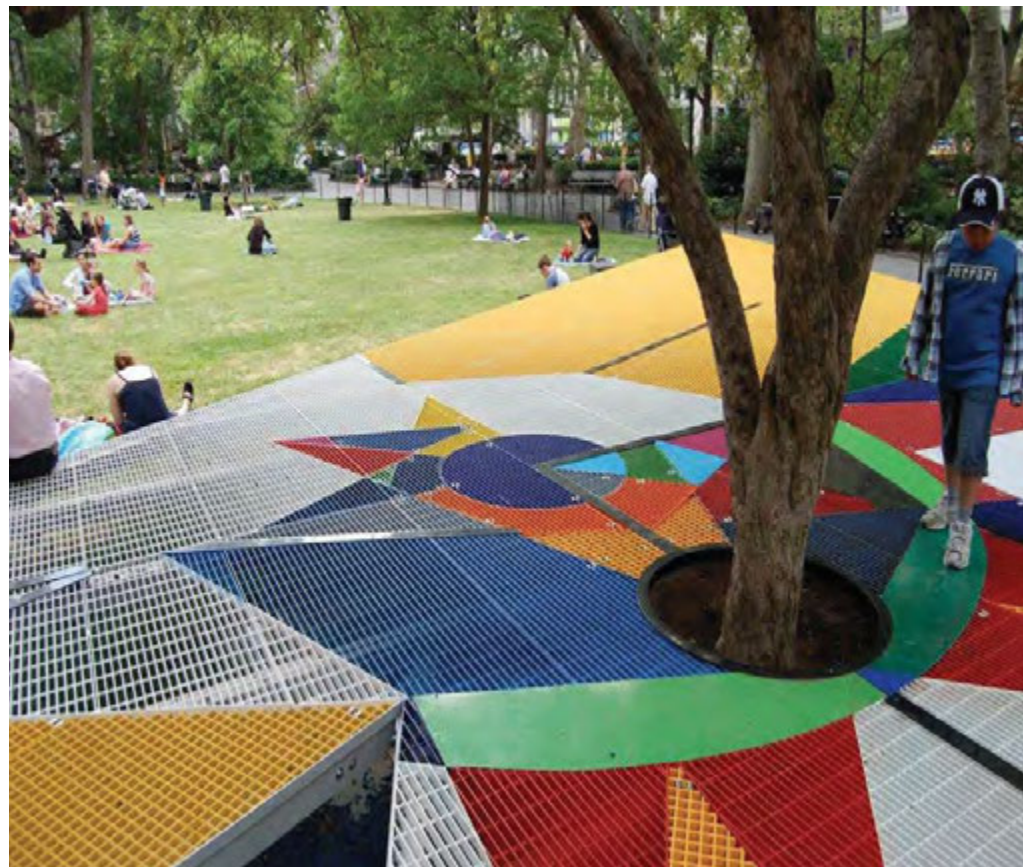
Mary Miss's interactive art installation 'CaLL' asks: by what means can we foster roles for artists and designers to shape and bring attention to the pressing environmental issues of our times?

Location: Manhattan, New York



'Black Cloud' was conceived by Heather and Ivan Morison, and designed with architect graduate Sash Reading. This temporary structure was open to the public over from July until December 2009 and hosted a number of live events.

Location: Bristol, England



'Art with Flooded Chambers Maid', a site-specific multimedia installation on and around Madison Square Park's Oval Lawn by artist Jessica Stockholder

Location: Manhattan, New York



This free annual winter festival at Cumberland Park includes ice carving demonstrations staged at key locations in the public plaza.

Location: Cumberland Park, Yorkville, Toronto



With the help of volunteers, Joseph Beuys planted 7,000 oak trees over fifteen years in the town of Kassel, Germany, each with an accompanying basalt stone.

Location: Kassel, Germany

Parkade Precedent Study

Coal Harbour Community Centre, Vancouver



Coal Harbour Community Centre

Topography

The existing topography, that currently slopes away from the sidewalk on Richards street, down to the back lane is a challenging site condition, and as we further develop program through a number of conceptual options, the limitations that this sloped site presents will likely become more evident. Without jumping too far down the design path at this point, it becomes evident just how a parkade structure could provide a more favorable profile to the park grades, and be designed in such a way as to accommodate all possible proposed park activities above.

Generating Funds towards Program

The second reason is money. The current site's car parking earns a considerable annual income. As mentioned previously in the report, there is a great deal that could be gained if a revenue stream could be established towards funding active engagement and park program.

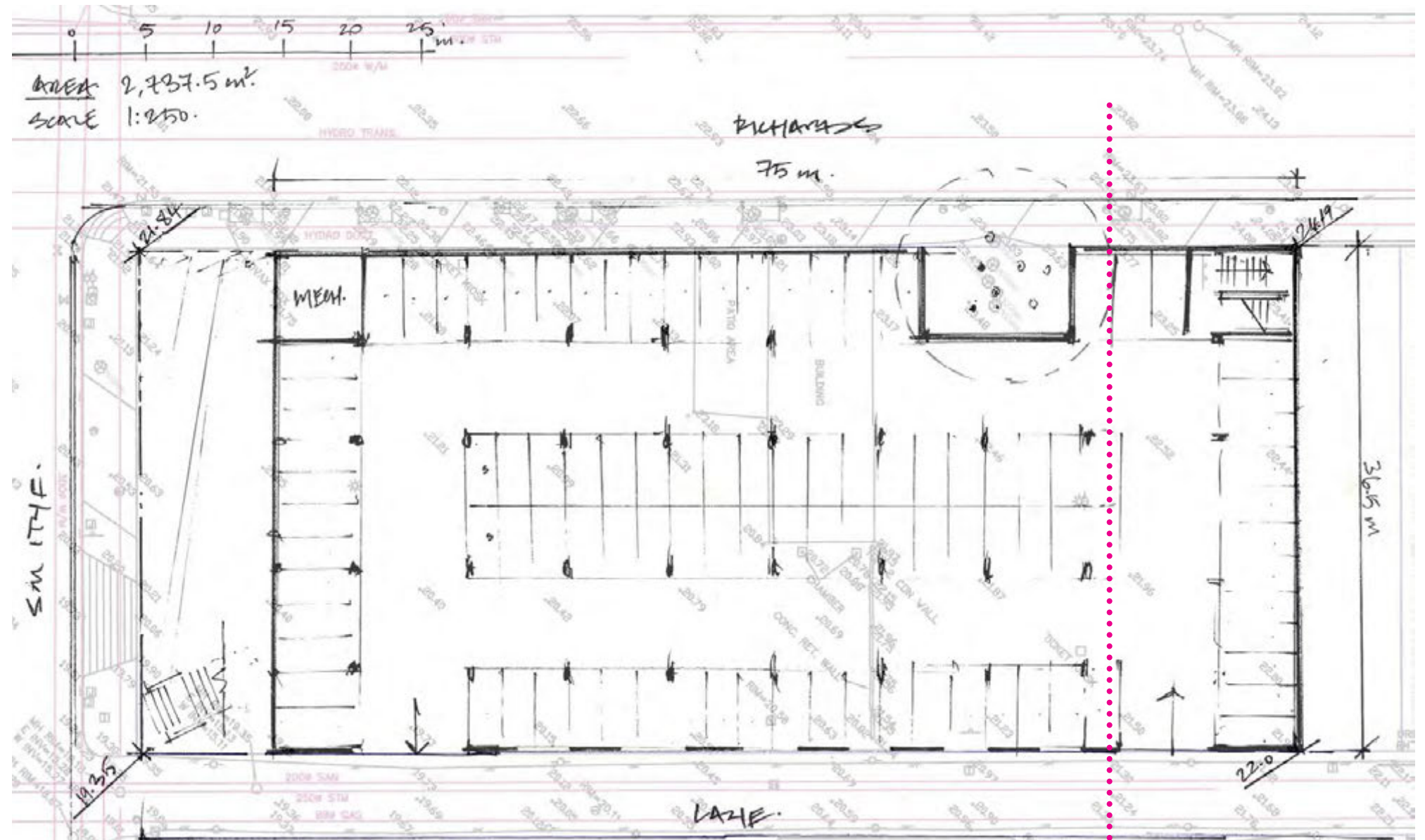
Hub

The third reason is integrating the increasingly popular and successful car share programs that have obvious merits in such an urban downtown location. Utilizing this as a parking structure to accommodate these multi-modal trends not only supports sustainable and affordable living patterns, it also helps build a critical mass around the park.



Business Case

This is an early ‘sketch’ exploration into building in a parkade structure beneath the future public park. This conceptual design manages to accommodate 100 standard stalls, roughly the same number that currently occupies the site. If we assume parking rates in this area remain the same or potentially increase, there may be a compelling case to invest in a parking structure that would, over time, generate enough revenue to pay back the capitol costs and also contribute funds towards annual programming cost for the future park.





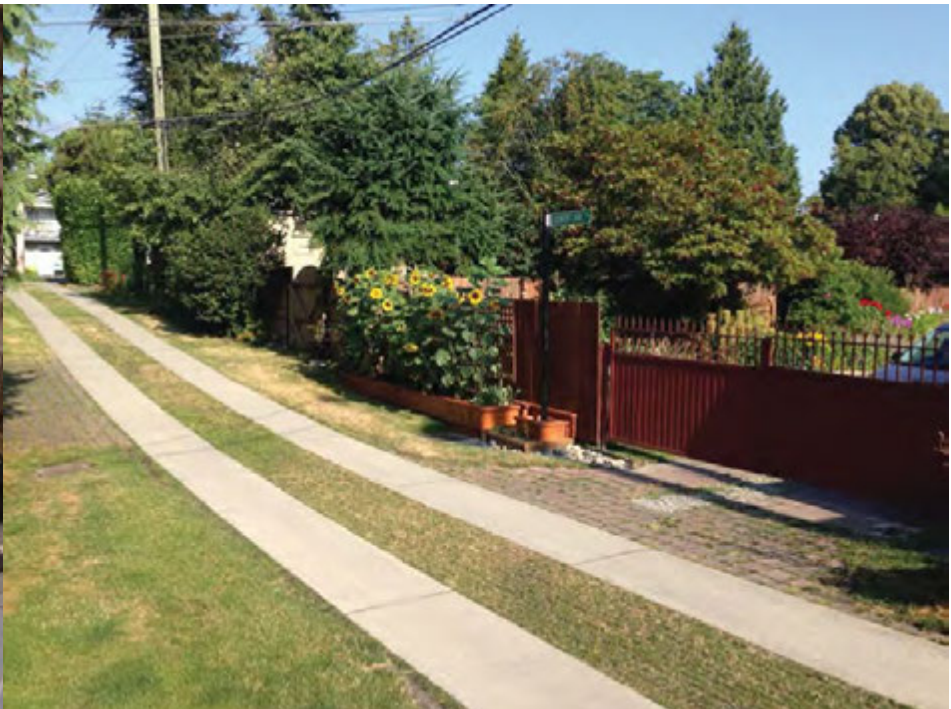
Activated City Lane Precedents

Activated & Greened City Lane

The existing city back lane that flanks the eastern edge and presently imposes a strong influence upon the future park site warrants some consideration. Possible relationships and treatments are shown in these precedents, and as mentioned earlier, subtle clues towards possible retail development could be one direction worth exploring further. This city back lane is presently used as a service corridor for the retail spaces and as an access route to the two parkade entry gates for the office and residential units. However, it is also worth noting that this lane in particular accommodates an increasing degree of pedestrian traffic and provides a tertiary route through the city that facilitates short cuts and finer-grain movement patterns from Robson street to the South.



Melbourne City Lane Rejuvenation - Jan Gehl



Vancouver Back Lane with Greening Initiative



Blood Alley, Vancouver - Back Lane Activated by Food Services



Precedent of Back Lane Activated by Feature Lighting and Art/Graphics

Smithe & Richards

Conclusion

The acquisition and consolidation of these lands is a rare and valuable opportunity to provide much needed public open space within Vancouver's dense urban downtown landscape. The site is presently used as a parking lot and offers little inspiration or clues for the design of a future park. The surrounding context is highly urban, creating constraints as well as opportunities for implementing a successful civic space. Currently, the grade of the parking lot slopes towards a back lane that extends the length of the eastern edge of the site. The interface between the site and the lane reveals unsightly parkade driveway entrances and noisy vents that contribute to both visual and acoustic pollution. The south edge of the site is highly visible by people entering the downtown. It is estimated that over 16,000 cars per day enter the downtown, via the Cambie Street Bridge, passing the site as they travel along Smithe Street. Solar access is limited within the site, due to the shadows cast by the surrounding residential towers.

To mitigate the challenges posed by the edges of the site, and its context, appropriate design measures must be implemented to create a new park that is inviting, comfortable and safe for all users. Complementary to the surrounding public amenity presently offered in adjacent parks and open spaces, the new park promises to balance settings for people, programming and activities that promote social interaction and active civic engagement.

Food is a fundamental attribute that “feeds” life and energy into a public space. Mobile food venues (i.e. food trucks) or more established venues (i.e. food kiosks) can act as a magnet by bringing people to sidewalks, alleyways, and public spaces that may otherwise go unused. The ability to create a hub of activity and interaction, with a low-investment mechanism, may be capitalized on to help activate the inhospitable edges of the future park site.

In an effort to genuinely combine public art with the park, the City has facilitated a public art process to coincide with the design process for the park. Engaging the selected artist early, as a member of the design team, truly distinguishes the public art component as ‘integrated’ rather than a late ‘intervention’. This approach offers a unique and exciting opportunity to heighten the overall experience of the Park through site-specific public art. This relationship holds further potential to foster partnerships with adjacent cultural and creative entities (i.e. The Contemporary Art Gallery or Artstarts) to engage in curatorial or programmatic activities. Such partnerships may be an effective way to maintain a continual level of interest and transformative quality to the park space into the future.

Many of the park precedents researched as part of this report benefit from financial models that are beyond the standard municipal model. Exploring viable, compatible enterprises that can successfully work within the new Park's DNA, could result in an injection of funds towards program and/or events that would activate the park daily and for special events.

Relatively recent census data (2011) informed the demographic profiles for the analysis phase of the project, however, the selected dissemination boundary encompasses an area of the downtown core that is undergoing rapid growth and transition. As the project moves into subsequent phases, it will be important to design for adaptability and versatility that can accommodate the future demographics for this Park site. Recognizing that the City is non-static – evolving, growing and changing—we can implement resilient design strategies that allow and celebrate this evolution.



