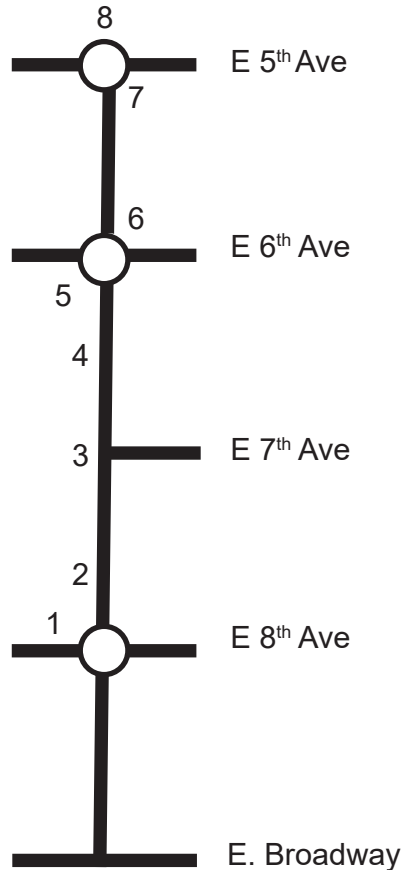
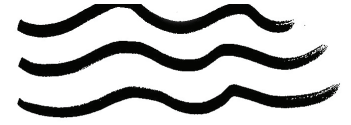


Walking with the Current

A sensorial walk along St George Street



Please accept this walk as an invitation to explore St. George Street from 8th to 5th Avenue through a series of creative exercises that you can do on your own or with your family. The walk takes about one hour, but you can also do parts of it at different times.

This self-guided walk was created by Holly Schmidt, the current **Engineering Artist-in-Residence** at the City of Vancouver, as a way for people to engage with this familiar street in new ways.

What you will need for the walk:

- * a copy of this guide
- * a sketchbook or blank paper
- * a pen or pencil
- * your phone

The walk can be completed in rain or shine. To fully enjoy your walk, remember to dress for the weather!

Before beginning, please take a moment to acknowledge with gratitude and respect that this walk takes place on the unceded, ancestral lands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

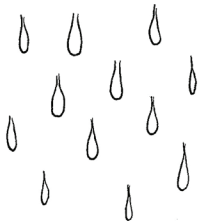
1 Water is Life

**NW corner of
8th Ave and St
George Street**

Jot down the time of day, the day of the week, and the weather.

Standing on this corner, take a moment to consider some important facts about water.

- * 65% of the human body is water.
- * 71% of the Earth's surface is water.
- * 3% of the Earth's water is fresh.



Fresh water is vital for our survival. Some of it is underground, while the rest falls as precipitation, running into streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands, and reservoirs, or being absorbed by plants and soils. Historically, Vancouver had many streams that flowed into the ocean. Your feet are placed at the edge of one of those streams. Imagine the leaves from the trees are drifting into that stream and follow the current downhill.

2 Signal to Noise

**St George Street
between 8th Ave
and 7th Ave**

Stop for a moment and look up. What do you see? Is there a tree sheltering you with its branches? Are the clouds gathering in the sky? Are raindrops wetting your face?

Keep walking until you see painted salmon on the chain link fence. Find a clearing where you can sit or comfortably lean.

Take out a pencil and a blank sheet of paper or a sketchbook. Set the timer on your phone for 10 minutes. Listen and record every sound you hear with a symbol of your own making.



For example, you might detect a bird call and use a V symbol to record it. Whenever you hear that call you mark a V. You might notice the bird call is overlaid with the sound of nearby traffic, so you make a ~ symbol. Overtime you will produce a graphic score, like a musical composition, of that moment in time. It might appear something like the drawing on the left.

Once the 10 minutes is up, continue walking in silence. How do the sounds of the street change as you move down the hill?

3 Stones to Mountains

**7th Ave and St
George Street**

Look for a small grouping of stones under a pin oak tree. Take a seat on a stone and look at what sits beneath your feet.



Pick up the rocks, leaves and sticks. Are there any creatures peering back at you? What might the world look like from the perspective of an insect, mouse or bird?

Select a leaf, stick or rock from the ground and sketch it close up. Let the object fill the entire page. The leaf becomes the world.

Stand up and bring your eyes to the horizon. Take a photo of the skyline. Looking closely and far away offers different experiences of the street. With a few notes, reflect on this shift between the micro and macro views of St George Street.



Continue your walk with the current. **As you go, look to the ground. Do you notice any puddles? What is reflected back? Make a few notes on what you can see.**

4 Dynamic Flow

**Between 7th Ave
and 6th Ave**

Approaching the crest of the hill, imagine the water as it moves.

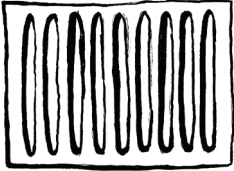
If there was no asphalt or concrete, how might the water cut a path in its journey to the ocean. Draw that path on a map. Would it zig-zag, curve, or undulate? Would it move fast or slow? Would it crash or seep?

5 Water Underground

**SW Corner of
6th Ave and
St George Street**

Nearing the corner, can you see the catch basin at the side of the road? Crouch down to get closer.

Can you hear the sound of water? How far below your feet does it sound? Where did the water come from? Where is it going? Imagine the network of pipes below.



Take a closer look at the road. Do you notice pollutants like litter, garbage, or oil stains? Where do you think those pollutants go when it rains?

How do you think plants, trees and soils can help clean rainwater and return it to the natural water cycle?

6 Seasonal Shades

**NE Corner of
6th Ave and
St George Street**

Cross the street heading north. Cross again heading east. **As you look from different directions, what colours do you see? Vancouver in winter has so much green and grey. Find a specific shade. What would you name that colour?** Record the name and how you would describe it to someone.

7 Drifting Away

**Between 6th and
5th Ave**

Water is the most significant source of natural erosion on Earth. **As you walk down the steepest part of the hill, look at the edge of the road and the way it crumbles and falls away.** The dips and curves in the road come from water rushing along the surface. The water is slowly creating a path along the road.



Looking ahead you will see some large conifers on the corner. Stand below the branches and breathe in deeply.

How would you describe the smell? Record the feelings and memories this scent stirs up for you.

Memory and emotions are deeply intertwined with the olfactory sense. A whiff of scent can be a gateway to powerful recollections.

Are you enjoying this walk with your dog? Take note of how they are guided by their nose. With a sense of smell 10,000 times more acute than humans, there is a pungent world of fragrance guiding them down the street that you can't detect.

8 Lingering Aftertaste

**5th Ave and
St George Street**



Cross 5th Avenue and stand facing the mountains. Take notice of the blackberry brambles spilling onto the sidewalk and creeping up behind the chain link fence. An invasive plant, Himalayan Blackberry seeks out disturbed soil on the edge of infrastructure. **Remember the taste of blackberries on a summer day. The warm dark juice of these sweet and tart berries is a quintessential Vancouver taste. Record some of your favourite places to collect berries.**

While you linger here, take note of the abrupt end to St George Street. Where might the current flow from here?

You are standing on what was formerly the shoreline, before False Creek flats was filled in to make way for the railyard and industrial sites. Imagine how the water from this stream tumbled down into the Ocean.

Take a final moment to reflect on this place and your experience on the walk. Thank you for taking time to drift with the current.

What's next?

Meet the artist & share your experiences with others

Join a virtual chat with Holly Schmidt on Wednesday, December 9, 2020 at 7:30 pm. Learn about Holly's work and join a guided discussion to share your experiences with this sensorial walk. Limited spaces available - register for your spot at shapeyourcity.ca/st-george-rainway.

Share your findings

We would love to see what you discovered on this walking tour! Head to [our website](#) to:

- * Add points of interest to the map feature
- * Use our "Walking toolkit submission" feature to upload your photos of any sketches or notes that you'd like to share with us

Or you can mail a copy of your guide to:
Green Infrastructure Implementation Team
Engineering Services, City of Vancouver
450 SW Marine Drive, 11th floor
Vancouver BC, V5X 0C3

Share your feedback on the proposed St George Rainway

St George Street north of Broadway will be getting rainwater management and street improvements. Learn more about the proposed rainway and have your say on shapeyourcity.ca/st-george-rainway.

Questions?

Visit shapeyourcity.ca/st-george-rainway or email us at raincity@vancouver.ca.