Chapter 5: The East End fights and the end of the Gerald Sutton Brown era

Figure 5.1: Strathcona in 1966, View looking west. (Atkin, 1994) In the distance can be seen the West End and Stanley Park. In the foreground is Raymur Place, under construction.

During the twenty year span of his work for the City of Vancouver (1952-1973), Gerald Sutton Brown pursued three major development initiatives intended to help revitalize the downtown core of Vancouver: the increased densification of the West End, the revitalization of the East End through urban renewal and the introduction of an urban freeway system. While the transformation of the West End did not provoke much resistance and can be regarded as an impressive achievement that succeeded, Sutton Brown's two other major initiatives, the urban

renewal effort and the freeway effort, each provoked sustained public opposition that obstructed their full realization. The conflicts which erupted over the urban renewal scheme and the freeway effort would not only impact the urban character of the targeted areas, but would also prove to be the beginning of the undoing of Gerald Sutton Brown and the beginning of the end of the first reign of the NPA party in Vancouver.

The freeway fight and the urban renewal fight each can trace their origins to recommendations made by Harland Bartholomew, though in each case, the substance of these recommendations was either misunderstood or willfully ignored by the city. There are indications that Gerald Sutton Brown was approaching these two issues in relationship to one another and secret plans were being formulated by the city for each effort at around the same time. For purposes of explaining these events, this chapter begins with the Urban Renewal fight for the simple reason that the urban renewal process became public about seven years before the freeway effort and was partially implemented. When the freeway plans that had been kept secret were finally revealed in 1967 by the city, this provoked a city wide protest, and in sense this protest revitalized the previously unsuccessful opposition to the urban renewal process that had been trying since about 1960 to stop the urban renewal process. The urban renewal fight ended by 1969, while the freeway effort dragged on until 1972.

This chapter examines both of these fights, the freeway fight and the urban renewal fight and the reasons that Gerald Sutton Brown ultimately failed in his effort to completely reinvent the East End along modernist lines. Most of the chapter will be concerned with the urban renewal effort since this is also more directly connected to the development of architecture in Vancouver. This is followed by an examination of the freeway fight and it implications. This is then followed by a discussion of an alternative approach to planning that was introduced to Vancouver at the regional level even as the planning department at the municipal level was coming under fire. In the conclusion the significance of these developments and what this reveals about the planning activities of Gerald Sutton Brown are considered in the concluding discussion to this chapter. The freeway fight and the urban renewal fight both matter in understanding the development of Vancouverism because these events and their aftermath set the stage for what would prove to be a radical transformation of the planning culture of Vancouver with far reaching consequences that continue to inform the way planning and development is pursued in Vancouver today.
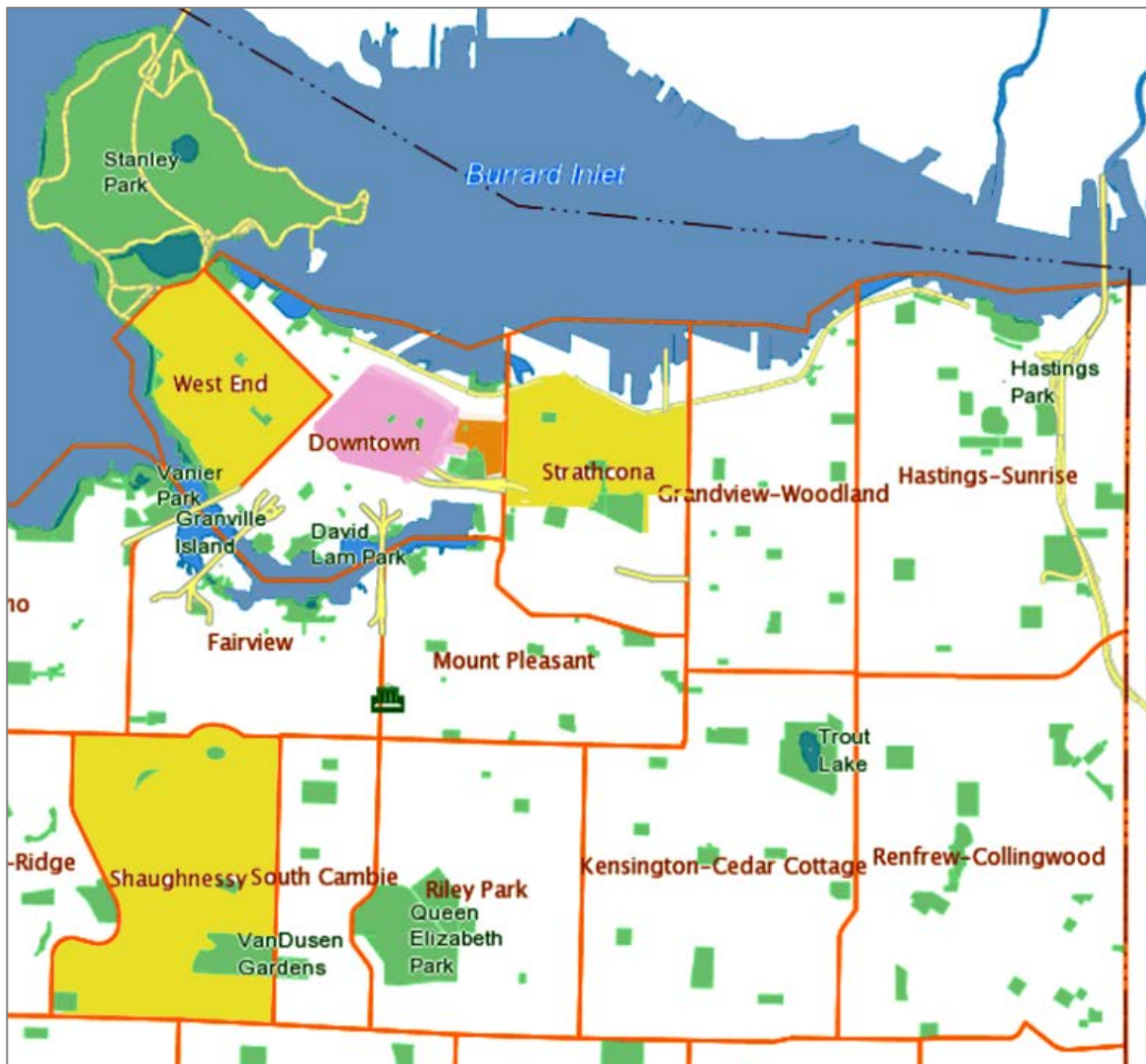
5.1 The geography of a developing conflict

Figure 5.2: Detail of map of residential districts in Vancouver BC (VanMaps, 2011). Chinatown is shown in orange. The central Business district is shown in pink. The portion of Strathcona relevant to this chapter is shown in yellow.

The issues examined in this chapter involve both urban redevelopment and freeway construction; the focus of activity which this chapter addresses is centered in the Strathcona District, in the East End, yet these events did not occur in isolation. To the south of the West End is located Shaugnessy, an affluent residential district developed early in the twentieth century by Marathon, the development arm of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR). The development of Shaugnessy prompted a mass exodus of the wealthy elite families who had previously been living in the West End. As a source of wealth and political power Shaugnessy has continued to be important in

Vancouver. Meanwhile, to the east of Strathcona lie several additional residential districts which also were directly impacted by the urban renewal and the freeway efforts. These efforts were all linked by the intense desire by the Vancouver Business community to revitalize the downtown business district. Meanwhile the Chinatown community caught between the Downtown and the Strathcona district was also directly impacted. The lingering after effects of the conflict also impacted the direction the city and the Province would take towards the question of rehabilitating False Creek Basin, but this is addressed in the next chapter (see figure 5.2).

The East End: a working class multi-ethnic neighborhood:

The East End neighborhood of Strathcona is considered to be Vancouver's oldest neighborhood (Atkin 1994). Strathcona developed as a dense, primarily residential district sandwiched between two large industrial areas, with the nearby Hastings Mill and the commercial port facilities to the North, and more timber mills to the Southeast along False Creek (see figure 5.1). Physically the neighborhood was crowded and lacking in amenities. While many of the families grew food in their own gardens, they typically lived in small wooden houses that were frequently constructed two to a single lot, on small, closely packed urban lots. The proximity of the East End to industry was made worse by lax zoning standards initially proposed by Harland Bartholomew in 1929 which permitted industrial operations to mingle with residential housing throughout the East End. Having been zoned as an industrial district, despite the presence of shops, parks, churches and schools, East End homeowners found banks reluctant to offer mortgages to finance repairs and improvements. The city for its part also neglected to maintain the roads and public park spaces in the area, contributing to a general impression of continuing deterioration (Harcourt and Cameron, 2009; Marlatt and Itter, 1979).

The East End has long held a reputation for exceptional ethnic diversity. A series of interviews with longtime East End residents published in 1979 describes in detail how the families who lived in the East End tended to congregate in different ethnic groupings that included: Jews, Slavs, Ukrainians, Blacks, Italians, Chinese, and Japanese residents. In addition, roughly 30% of the East End residents were poor white Canadians of British ancestry. Despite these divisions, the accounts of the residents portray a neighborhood in which most residents mixed freely with the other groups, with the exceptions being the Japanese and the Chinese communities which are described as tending to keep to themselves (Marlatt and Itter, 1979).

The relationship between the residents of the East End versus the rest of Vancouver was described in 1979 by some East End Residents as having been characterized by a sense of mutual unease. While Strathcona residents for instance have spoken about feeling at home in the East End and feeling free to be themselves when they are there, they contrasted this feeling with a sense of alienation experienced when venturing throughout the rest of the city. Although the East End also included poor white Canadians of British ancestry,[1] some East End residents describe the rest of Vancouver as having been the exclusive domain of Canadians of British ancestry, or White Anglo-Saxon Protestants. Conversely, they also describe being viewed with what they perceived to be a certain degree of hostility by outsiders venturing into the area, recognizing that the East End was regarded by outsiders as being unsafe due to the presence of various street gangs. Other East End residents, for perhaps similar reasons, have characterized the East End as the neighborhood one moved into upon arrival in Vancouver, and which one then worked hard to move out of as quickly as possible [2] (Marlatt and Itter, 1979).

Discrimination directed against the residents of the East End has been a recurring problem that has taken many forms, both official and informal. Prior to World War II, stories of atrocities being committed by Japanese troops against the Chinese during the 1930's, compounded by the perceived remoteness of Vancouver from the rest of Canada, provoked widespread fears of a Japanese invasion in Vancouver. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the Canadian government rounded up 22,000 west coast Japanese residents, confiscating their possessions and sending them to internment camps in the remote interior of the country, where they remained for the rest of the War.[3] This treatment however was not limited to the Japanese. The Canadian government also rounded up many of the Italian families living in the little Italy area of the East End and sent them to internment camps in the remote interior of Canada as well. Although the Japanese lost their property in the process, the Italians were able to retain some ownership. The internment of the Italians is an indication of the extent to which white Canadians identified being Canadian with being of British origin (Marlatt and Itter, 1979; Ng, 1991; Roy, 2007).

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[1] When the protests over the freeways reached their climax in 1968, somewhat ironically the Mayor of Vancouver who had been attempting to force a freeway through the East End, was Tom Campbell, a self-made millionaire developer who had originally grown up in the East End.

[2] For a lively and informative account of the multicultural diversity to be found throughout Vancouver today, see *Vancouver Special,* by Charles Demers (2009). 47.5% of the current population of Vancouver are what the Canadian government classify as visible minorities. 27.1 % of current Vancouver residents were foreign born. (Stats Canada).

[3] One archival image from this time shows a vast fleet of hundreds of confiscated fishing boats that had belonged to Japanese fishermen living in British Columbia. They never regained this property (Roy, 2007).

Chinatown in the East End:

The Chinese community has had a significant presence in Vancouver from the earliest days, with the first Chinese immigrants brought to the area in the 1850's to labor during the gold rush. When the gold fields became depleted, work by Chinese laborers then shifted to other labor, including the difficult Trans Canada Railroad construction effort, working in local timber mills and working in the fish canneries. Early in the history of Vancouver there were several anti-Chinese race riots, provoked by the lower wages given to Chinese laborers for equivalent work done by whites, and the corresponding fears that the Chinese were being brought in to replace the whites. The discriminatory pay policy that helped provoke this problem was rationalized on the basis that the Chinese workers had lower living costs even if they were providing work that was of equal value.[4] This policy was seen by some white Canadians as resulting in unfair competition, but instead of demanding that all laborers be paid equally regardless of race, anger was directed against the Chinese community. Perhaps somewhat ironically, Chinese mill workers would later play a significant role in initiating the unionizing of timber mill work, resulting in better pay and better working conditions for all local mill workers (Mar, 2007; Marlatt and Itter, 1979).

The Chinese Exclusion Act[5] passed by the Canadian Parliament in 1923 prohibited the Chinese from legally immigrating to Canada, including even spouses and family members of long term residents of Vancouver. The act did allow Chinese women to immigrate to Canada, but only if they were already married to a white Canadian. Additional local laws in Vancouver explicitly prohibited the Chinese from entering into particular professions, such as law. The Chinese responded to these conditions by forming their own intact community which included not only its own shops and businesses but also schools and newspapers that continued to use their own language of Mandarin (Mar, 2010).

Official records suggest that, during the 24 years that the Chinese Exclusion Act was in effect, only 44 Chinese individuals legally entered Canada, but this is only part of the story. While research that has relied on English language accounts portrays a system dominated by institutional racism and injustice, an alternative perspective emerges when local documents, such

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[4] In reality, many chose to live frugally to be able to send money back to families in China.
[5] Technically the bill was called the Chinese Immigration Act, but it became widely known in Vancouver as the Chinese Exclusion Act due to its obvious intention and impact.

as newspapers written in Mandarin are also considered. This insider perspective indicates that even as Chinese immigration was made officially illegal by the Federal Government, local authorities in Vancouver took a very different position. Officials in Vancouver understood the importance of Chinese labor to the local economy and saw it in the interests of the local economy to ensure the continuation of Chinese immigration to and from Vancouver, despite the laws imposed at the federal level to prevent it (Mar, 2007).

Apparently, officials in Vancouver adopted a policy of intentionally turning a blind eye to illegal Chinese immigration; in exchange for bribes a steady flow of Chinese immigrants was maintained in and out of Vancouver throughout the time that the Exclusion Act was in effect. Furthermore, steps were taken by local authorities to ensure that this traffic remained relatively unimpeded. For example, when an apparently honest, if perhaps clueless, immigration inspector was hired for a key post and would not accept bribes, as had been expected, this threatened to cut off the flow of illegal Chinese immigrants into Vancouver. This was considered unacceptable by his superiors, and an excuse was quickly contrived resulting in his replacement with a more compliant inspector. (Mar, 2007) Well placed Chinese Merchants also found ways to circumvent the immigration ban. One Vancouver based Chinese merchant, Yip On, amongst other activities secured the appointment as Canada's official immigration interpreter for Vancouver, a position he used, along with other political connections and connections he maintained with China, to facilitate illegal Chinese immigration into British Columbia. The resulting flow of Chinese immigrants to and from Vancouver during this time period is hard to document but has been estimated to number in the tens of thousands (Mar, 2007, 2010).

The Chinese responded to these challenging conditions by developing their own mutually supportive community, even when the city seemed to turn its back on them. For example, during the Great Depression, when the city established soup kitchens to serve the needs of the urban poor of Vancouver, the Chinese were excluded and left to fend for themselves. The Chinese Benevolent Association responded by setting up its own privately funded community soup kitchen (Kay, 1991).

While illegal immigration continued, this nevertheless appears to have been limited to working age men. As a result, a disproportionately large number of the residents of Chinatown were single men, or married men whose families had remained back in China. One important

consequence of this was that many members of the Chinese community saw the effort needed to learn English and assimilate as pointless, since it was assumed that they would be eventually returning to China at some unspecified point in the future. This may also have contributed to the Canadian unwillingness to give the Chinese a path to citizenship or the right to vote; then again, this denial of basic rights probably also discouraged efforts by the Chinese in Vancouver to fully assimilate (Mar, 2010; Roy, 2007).

In the aftermath of World War II circumstances began to change for Vancouver's Chinese population. During the War, though still denied citizenship, Chinese Canadians had nevertheless served for Canada in the military and their fellow Canadians began to see them in a new and more favorable light. As a people who had been victimized by Japanese aggression, the intense animosity expressed towards the Japanese in particular also helped to elevate the status of the Chinese in Vancouver. In addition to the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act, in 1947 Chinese Canadians were given the opportunity to become full citizens and finally have the right to vote. These changes in status and policy contributed to a wave of legal Chinese immigration to Vancouver, many of whom chose to live in the Strathcona area. Meanwhile, Vancouver's Chinatown began to be considered a local asset, as a tourist attraction that brought revenue into the city (Roy, 2007). It is perhaps somewhat ironic that it was during the same year that the Chinese in Vancouver were finally being extended citizenship, immigration and voting rights that the City of Vancouver began to take its first steps towards initiating urban renewal of the Strathcona district.

5.2 Urban Renewal for the East End

After World War II, the view held by the City of Vancouver of the Strathcona and Chinatown neighborhoods, and the views held by the residents of these same neighborhoods, were not at all in agreement. To the city these neighborhoods represented a menace, a source of crime and vice, two deteriorating slums that were resulting in urban blight that they believed threatened to spread to the rest of the city. To the residents of these neighborhoods these were places where many had begun to build a new life, where they owned homes and grew food in gardens, where the people helped one another get through difficult times even as the city seemed to have abandoned them. For some, their houses represented substantial financial investments that they now owned outright and which they continued to further improve as time and resources allowed. While they

213

understood that there were some properties that needed help, for many this neighborhood was also the place they felt at home (Marlatt and Itter, 1979).

The first planner to seriously wrestle with the situation confronting the East End had been Harland Bartholomew, who in the late 1940's had the advantage of having previously studied Vancouver in detail during the late 1920's. In seeking a solution to the apparent dilapidated condition of the East End, Bartholomew had initially expressed limited support for using a large scale urban renewal approach in the East End, yet by 1946 he had drastically revised his assessment. Reversing his initial stance and rejecting urban renewal as unnecessary in the case of Vancouver, he instead recommended a rehabilitation based approach that would only replace buildings that were beyond help, while focusing most effort improving and repairing the existing urban fabric. As noted in Chapter 3, however, Bartholomew was terminated abruptly before his work was collated into a new master plan, leaving the discrepancy between of his divergent recommendations unresolved. Subsequent City Officials were therefore free to draw inspiration from his prior work endorsing urban renewal, while ignoring his revised position (Bartholomew 1944, 1946, September 1947).

Although Bartholomew had finally endorsed a policy of selective rehabilitation while maintaining the neighborhood pattern, the city remained committed to tearing down, reorganizing and rebuilding the East End, modernizing it in the process. Bartholomew was abruptly terminated in 1949 before his recommendations could become part of a comprehensive plan. In 1947 the City of Vancouver had already commissioned Dr. Leonard Marsh of the University of British Columbia to conduct an independent study of the housing conditions of the East End and to recommend a redevelopment scheme. In his report, completed in 1950, Marsh leaves little room for doubt that this report was intended from the outset to support redevelopment of the entire Strathcona district (Marsh 1950).

Dr. Leonard Marsh was a recognized authority on the social conditions and economic issues surrounding the problems of urban blight and poverty. Having graduated from the London School of Economics in 1928, he had become the director of the School of Social Research in McGill University, before being hired by the government of Canada as an advisor regarding

urban reconstruction efforts in 1941.[6] In 1947 he relocated to Vancouver where he had a dual appointment at the University of British Columbia as a Professor in the School of Social Work and in the School of Architecture (Murray, 2011).

In developing recommendations for the East End, Marsh undertook a detailed analysis and survey of the area, evaluating housing conditions and deficiencies. His results reflect a neighborhood where some of the buildings are in bad repair or antiquated. His report includes a plan for replacing the densely packed, traditional wood frame single family housing typical of Strathcona, with what appears to be an updated and lower density modernist neighborhood of low rise apartment structures (see figure 5.3, 5.4). Marsh begins his official report describing his detailed study as follows:

> The section of Vancouver which is described in this "demonstration study" was not chosen as an unqualified slum area, nor as the worst example of housing conditions in the city. It was not even chosen as exhibiting a housing problem alone. There are worse pockets of derelict, unhealthy or overcrowded housing-blocks in the industrial area of East Kitsilano, the rooming-houses of the downtown business district, the scattered residential remnants northeast between Hastings and the waterfront, squatters' shacks on the edges of False Creek, patches at various spots in south and east Vancouver and Burnaby. The Strathcona district, as it is convenient to call it, is not "just a slum;" it has good features and good people, and plenty of possibilities of reclamation as a sound and flourishing neighbourhood. But by any modern standard, its housing is deplorable, its state of deterioration a menace. And because of its location, in relation to False Creek, to traffic routes and industrial areas, it is one of the critical areas for the ·whole future of town planning in Vancouver.
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> The proper perspective for this study should be a picture of the whole city (or, better still, the metropolitan region) , (a) showing how much of the residential area is liable to serious deterioration and blight, and (b) permitting a comprehensive estimate of Vancouver housing needs (of all kinds), now and in the future. This "extensive" type of survey has not yet been made for Vancouver, and until it is, a vital element is lacking from the official City Plan.
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> - Dr. Leonard Marsh. *Rebuilding a Neighborhood: Report on a Demonstration Slum Clearance and Urban Rehabilitation Project in a Key Central Area in Vancouver* 1950, iii.

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[6] The term "urban reconstruction" has come up a number of times in reference to Canadian Urbanism, particularly in reference to work taking place during and after World War II. Canada suffered no damage to its cities as a result of the war, so the use of this term seems somewhat unexpected. However, if the extent to which this term applies to Great Britain is considered and the continuing close ties that Canada continued to have to the British Empire, then perhaps it is less surprising that urban renewal efforts in Canada would adopt this terminology.

Throughout his career, Dr. Leonard Marsh was committed to urban redevelopment methods as a means to alleviating dismal living conditions in poor urban areas. (Murray 2011). His statement introducing his 1950 Vancouver study however is curiously contradictory. Whether it was his intention or not, these opening comments express a certain ambivalence that undercuts his own subsequent findings. When Marsh observes there are other neighborhoods that are actually in worse shape and which are not getting attention, this would seem to provide redevelopment opponents with grounds for arguing that Strathcona is being unfairly singled out for redevelopment. Although Marsh favors urban renewal as valid and necessary, this passage argues for making a comprehensive assessment of all the areas in question before such a conclusion can be reached. These opening comments presented a problem. City officials clearly wanted to proceed with urban renewal, but instead of receiving an unqualified endorsement Marsh had suggested that the entire undertaking was flawed from the very outset.

Later in the report, Marsh finds a new sense of conviction, supporting urban renewal for the East End. The remainder of his report presents evidence in support of this revised position, including photographs of deteriorated buildings and statistical results of a detailed survey. Marsh describes \ a widespread pattern of neglected and outdated construction, including: a lack of modern plumbing, a reliance on wood burning stoves and a pattern of building disrepair. To Marsh, the combined impact of these deficiencies is significant enough to require action. Although he makes no direct reference to Harland Bartholomew, Marsh strenuously opposes Bartholomew's claim that selective repairs were the best solution for the deteriorated conditions of the East End:

> Reconstruction is the only answer to conditions such as have been described. There is no case for patchwork, or piecemeal renovation. A careful survey was made of all the major units which it would be desirable to retain, however, and the projected plan is built around some of these (such as Strathcona School, the St. Vincent de Paul institutions, etc.). There are a few new houses, but it would be far cheaper to pay compensation permitting the rebuilding of these than to attempt a plan which would leave all of them untouched. There are strong positive reasons for a reconstruction job. The first is the vital need for planning a community, not just a series of houses. The second is the wasteful inefficiency of the grid system of streets, and the necessity of replacing this by a neighbourhood pattern. The third is the economy of a multiple-dwelling project, which alone can cut construction and operation costs, as well as meet the population requirements with more ample open space.
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> - Dr. Leonard Marsh, 1950 p 35.

The basic argument offered by March is that enough buildings are in bad condition that it will be cheaper in the long run to demolish all of the structures, good and bad alike and rebuild the entire district. Determining how many damaged buildings need to be found in a given neighborhood before this standard applies, however, is an issue he never actually addresses. Evidence is presented indicating that some of the buildings are in a state of disrepair, but no evidence is presented to support his questionable yet critically important assertion that it will be cheaper to tear down and rebuild the entire neighborhood instead of just repairing the damaged structures.
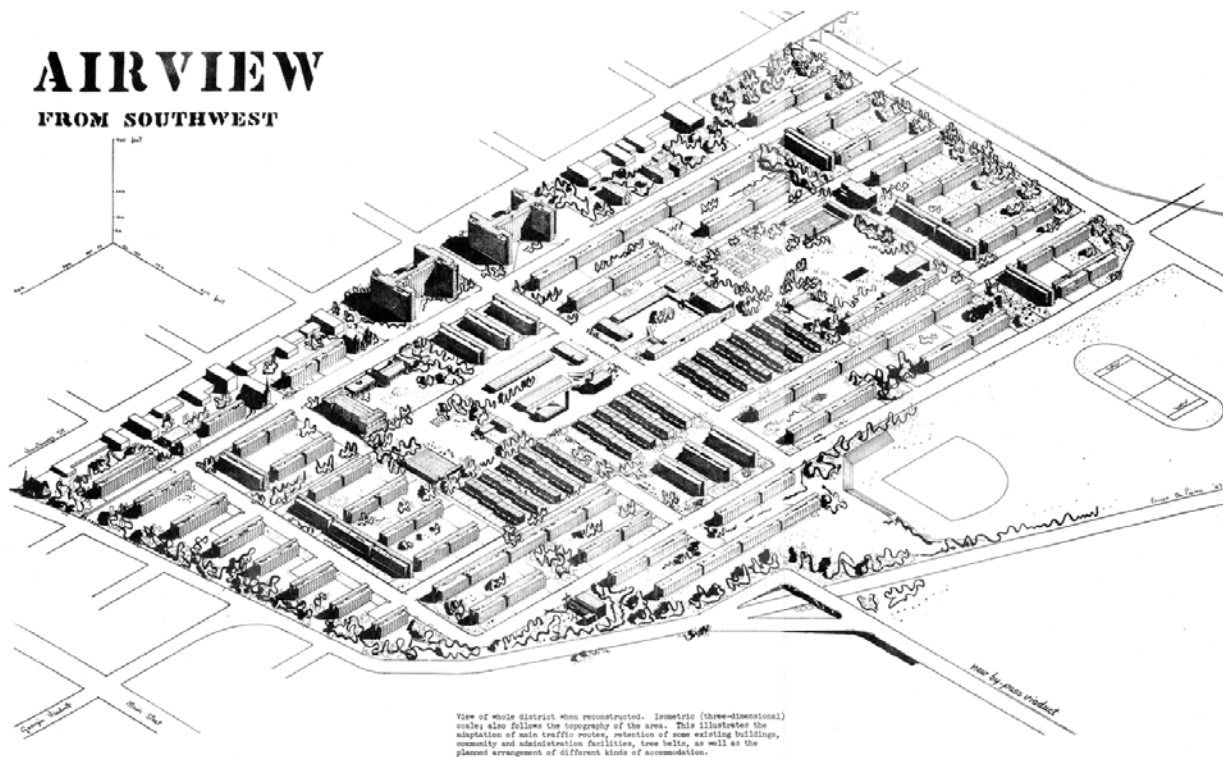

Figure 5.3: Air View of East End urban redevelopment scheme (Marsh 1950).

Marsh suggested the problem, in part, stemmed from the gridded street pattern itself, an assertion that is doubtful at best. While the streets in Strathcona are laid out in a grid pattern, it is hard to see how this can be considered harmful when the exact same grid pattern is found throughout the city, including in the West End and other more affluent neighborhoods. If these other neighborhoods were suffering no ill effects from this street configuration then to claim that this is the cause of problems in Strathcona makes little sense. Perhaps the point is to establish grounds for rejecting the entire urban configuration of the neighborhood, so that if some blocks are in completely fine shape, their demolition can still be somehow justified. In the end, despite the thoroughness of much of the information presented in his report, crucial gaps remain in

Marsh's claim that the only viable solution is to rebuild the entire neighborhood. The option of rehabilitation was dismissed without being seriously considered.
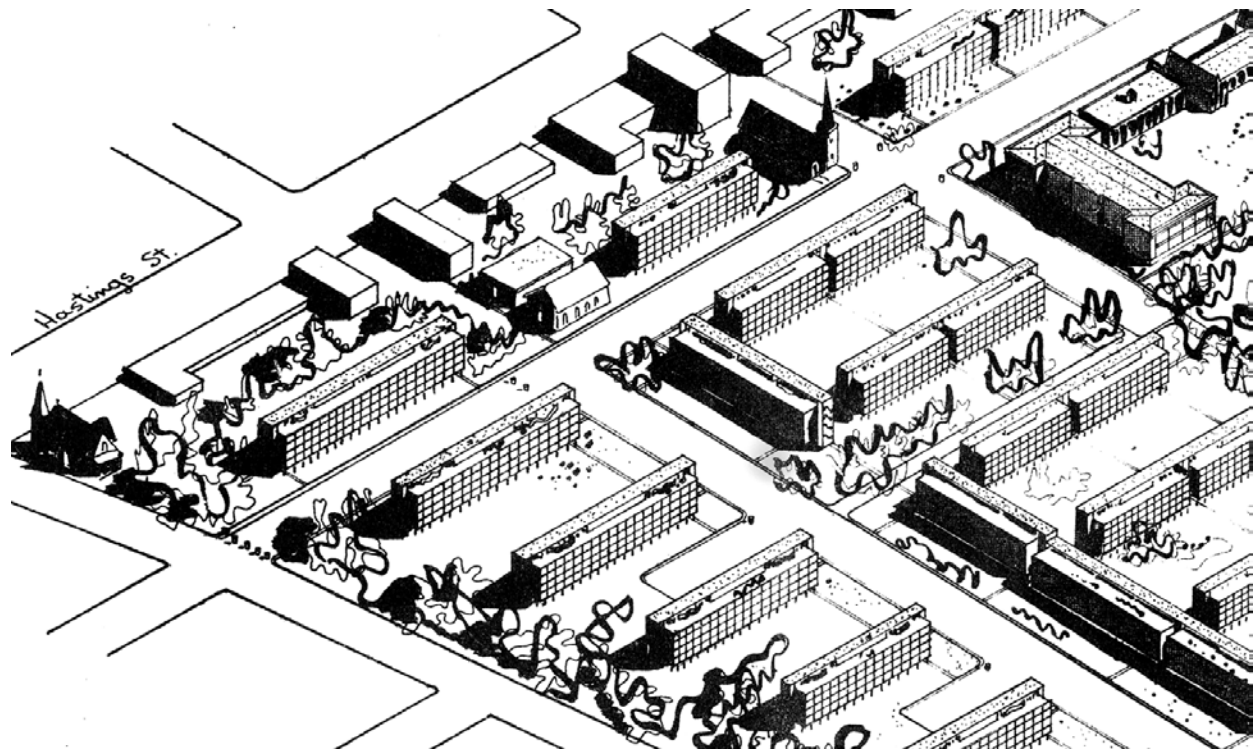

Figure 5.4 Detail: Air View of East End Urban redevelopment scheme (Marsh 1950). The plan preserves existing churches and schools even as it restructures the district.

Because the proposed project involves replacing individually owned homes, often built two to a parcel, the question of the cost of buying and tearing down these neighborhoods becomes a serious economic issue. In an attempt to reduce this concern, Marsh argues that the 40% increase that was observed in local real estate values from 1939 to 1947 could in theory be reversed[7], so it is therefore okay, Marsh argues, to rely upon a relatively low pre-war assessment when compensating the owners for the loss of their homes. Marsh admits that one of the economic consequences of such a strategy would be to force some families out of the city (Marsh, 1950).

While Marsh also argues that it would be cheaper to rebuild the torn down buildings on the outskirts of town because such work involves no demolition, he fails to apparently recognize the absurdity in this argument (Marsh, 1950). It makes no sense to discount the cost of demolition, when the buildings to be demolished are the same buildings in either scenario. Once the

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[7] To suggest that housing prices should be based upon depression era assessments instead of those during the better economic climate of the Post War era when values were expected to continue to rise seems unbelievable.

buildings are demolished, rebuilding on the ground or on the outskirts would have the same cost as rebuilding in place. What is different is the developer profits that would result if the redeveloped area near downtown is allowed to serve a more affluent community. Marsh instead appears to be making a nonsensical argument intended to provide a rationalization for the confiscation of inner city property and the displacement of the poor to outlying areas, not in the interests of serving the poor, but to serve the profit motives of developers.

The design of the new residential environment proposed by Marsh clearly is based upon contemporary modernist ideals, featuring multistory apartment blocks elevated on piloti, and what appear to be usable roof top terrace spaces. Aside from other potential faults, at least Marsh appears to have attempted to maintain a high enough density level to accommodate the existing population.[8] The buildings seem well spaced to allow for natural light and parking does not dominate the landscape (see figure 5.3 and figure 5.4).

In his report, Dr. Leonard Marsh consistently demonstrates that he understands urban renewal as an effective redevelopment approach, although his grasp of the lifestyles and community interest typical of the East End seems to be less well informed. The common practice of Chinese families living in a dwelling located over a store was described as a symptom of blight by Marsh, even if these shops were in fine shape and an important part of the culture of the local community, as well as a the main source of income for a particular family. As blight, the proposed demolition of these small family run businesses was not seen as a problem by Marsh. Similarly the Chinese practice of the extended multi-generational families living together in a house was dismissed as unimportant because it was assumed that a western lifestyle and its values would be preferred by all (Marlatt and Itter, 1979). Perhaps most important of all is the assumption people would be happy to sacrifice the homes that they had purchased and paid off mortgages on, for an opportunity to relocate to a rental apartment unit with no garden, with new neighbors who may speak a different language, with no long term security, in a neighborhood of buildings they no longer recognize. While the lack of cultural awareness in retrospect may now appear surprising,

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[8] Whether the local population could afford to reside in these structures is a separate significant question that remains unexplored by Marsh. The building type Marsh is proposing cannot be constructed in wood, which was the most commonly used and least expensive option in Vancouver. Instead he is proposing structures that would require a substantially more expensive approach, most likely involving reinforced concrete.

the recommendations offered by Marsh nevertheless established a crucial precedent that would persist in efforts by the city to implement urban renewal in the East End for the next 18 years.

The lack of a comprehensive survey of blighted areas throughout the city and the lack of graphic material defining the location and relative distribution of blighted properties weaken the case made by Marsh in his 1950 report. On the other hand his photographs and vivid written descriptions of deteriorated housing conditions and also his statistical data suggesting a generally widespread state of decline in the East End provide strong, if incomplete evidence in support of an urban renewal agenda. Accordingly, the city continued to pursue the urban renewal of the East End, and the next step involved a new study undertaken by Gerald Sutton Brown, a new study based largely upon Marsh's work.

Changes in the work of Gerald Sutton Brown

After becoming the Director of Planning in 1952 and attending to a variety of other concerns, Gerald Sutton Brown initiated an effort to conduct necessary studies needed to prepare an updated and expanded urban renewal plan for the East End. He submitted this plan to the city as the 1957 Vancouver Redevelopment Study. The City of Vancouver formally adopted the Study in 1958, and in 1959 began a multi stage process of block clearance and reconstruction intended to rebuild the East End over the next twenty years (Gutstein, 1975).

Although the approach Gerald Sutton Brown had taken in the West End had featured a planning oriented approach in which development had been left in the hands of private developers, in the freeway project and the urban renewal project he became involved in attempting to play a more direct role in realizing major urban projects. This change is a reflection of how his power and status had increased since his arrival in Vancouver. As a civil servant with a secure job, working for a mayor and City council that faced re-election every two years[9], the control of the government wielded by Sutton Brown increased over time. When Gerald Sutton Brown initially came to Vancouver in 1952 he was hired as the city's first Planning Director and he set about developing a planning department and developing a comprehensive new zoning ordinance for the city that was eventually enacted in 1956. Sutton Brown was a career bureaucrat who continually worked his way up the ladder in pursuit of administrative power and in 1960 he was promoted to

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[9] The election cycle in Vancouver has more recently been extended to a three year term.

220

a position of City Manager.[10] Planning for the freeway and urban renewal projects had begun while Sutton Brown was still the Planning Director, yet it was while he was the City Manager that attempts to implement the plans were put into motion (Langford, 2011). Perhaps the potential for these projects to expand the Planning Department through the vast infusions of federal dollars they were expected to attract was another incentive for Sutton Brown to pursue these large publicly funded projects (Lee, 2007). Upon becoming the City Manager his focus shifted from simply exerting influence through regulations and project approvals to directly attempting to get major projects built. His work shifted from focusing on regulations, to developing detailed plans, budgets and proposals for work that would involve several levels of government oversight, private contractors and large sums of public funding (Langford, 2011; Pendakur, 1972,).

The 1957 Vancouver Redevelopment Study

Although he could have proceeded with the report Leonard Marsh had made, Gerald Sutton Brown decided to begin work on a revised, more comprehensive study of the urban renewal issue, a study for which he sought federal funding.[11] This funding was awarded in July of 1956;[12] by December of the following year the 1957 Vancouver Redevelopment Study was completed (Sutton Brown, 1957).

The 1957 Vancouver Redevelopment Study took advantage of the strengths of the 1950 Marsh report, while correcting potential deficiencies. The first portion of the 1957 study consists of a comprehensive and detailed assessment of blight throughout a significant portion of the city, performed using a "Windshield Check." This survey encompasses a widely expanded area that just happens to include the areas of concern mentioned by Marsh in his earlier report (see figure 5.5) (Sutton Brown, 1957).

After having satisfied potential objections raised in the 1950 Marsh Report that East End had been prematurely targeted, the 1957 Redevelopment Study then narrows its focus once again to

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[10] Gerald Sutton Brown maintained a firm grasp of the Planning Department even after being promoted to City Manager.

[11] Redoing the study would also make sense from a tactical perspective, giving Sutton Brown greater authority and control over the entire process, as well as positioning him to take credit for the results.

[12] One cannot help but wonder if the grant application mentioned that this new study would be recycling verbatim large portions of the Marsh study, including his descriptions of the conditions of the East End.

the East End, developing the case for redevelopment of the Strathcona District. The 1957 Study features a more detailed investigation in which trained inspectors conducted a detailed survey of living conditions and preferences. This section of the 1957 Study is intended to build a compelling argument in favor of redeveloping the East End and reuses extended passages lifted directly from the earlier Marsh report, ignoring the possibility that conditions may have changed. This section also makes extensive use of statistics and photographic evidence in much the same way as these had been used by Marsh to confirm that a percentage of the buildings are in poor condition, without providing any more specific information concerning their location or identity (Sutton Brown, 1957). [13]
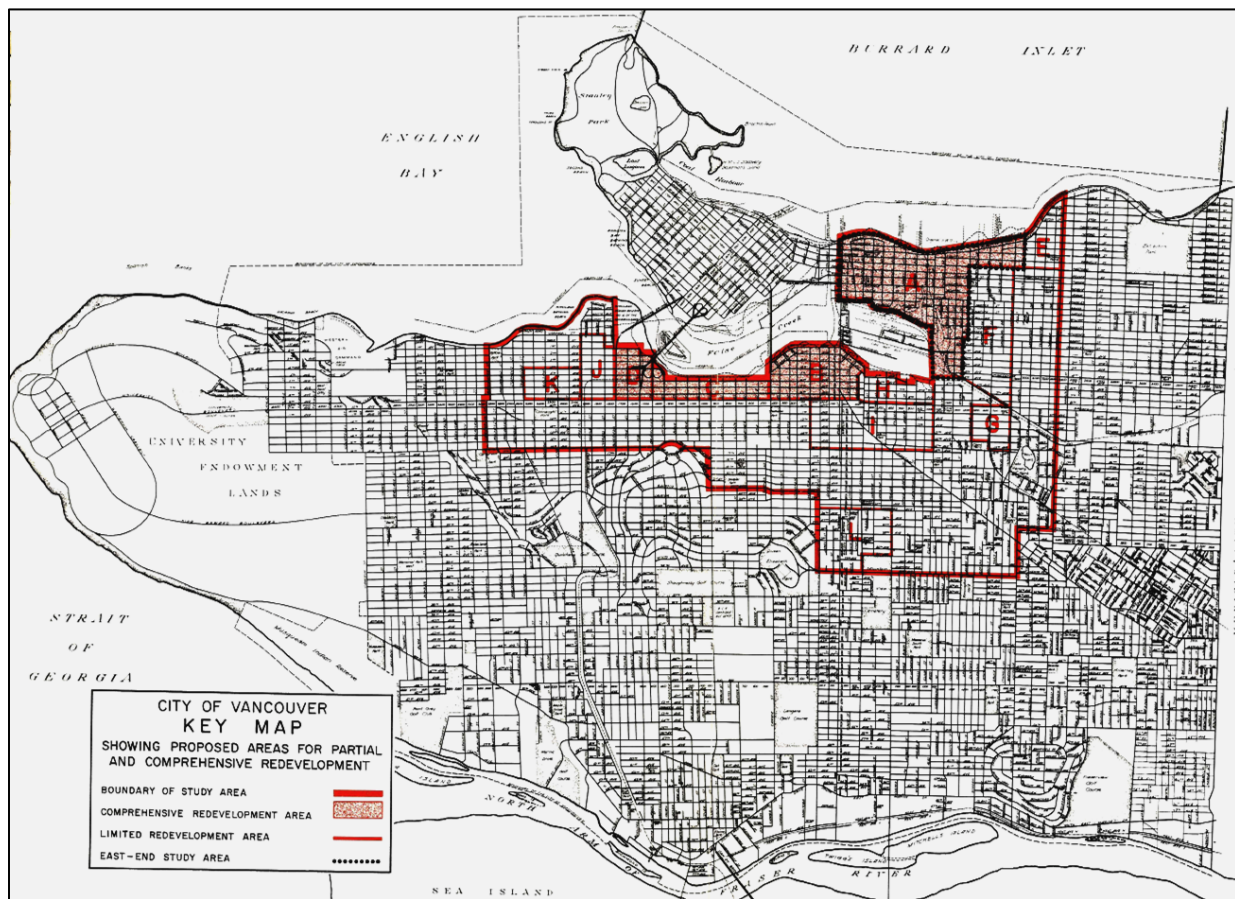

Figure 5.5: 1957 Vancouver Redevelopment Study: Areas of partial and comprehensive redevelopment, page 4 (Sutton Brown 1957). Note: uppermost red shaded zone is Strathcona.

Interpretation: Critical differences come into play when comparing the Leonard Marsh Study completed in 1950 and the Gerald Sutton Brown study that revisited the same issues seven years

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[13] Sutton Brown offers credit to Marsh for these passages, so this cannot be considered plagiarism, although the attribution is not as clear and direct as perhaps it should have been.

later. While Marsh was a recent arrival in Vancouver at the time he conducted his study, he was hired by the Vancouver Government to prepare his study; Sutton Brown however had understood that the ultimate audience for his work was not the Vancouver Government, but the Federal Government, three thousand miles away in Ottawa. It was the Federal Government that commissioned the 1957 report, and Sutton Brown clearly understood that they would need to be persuaded to fund his highway projects and redevelopment schemes if they were to be realized. These considerations may help to explain why the 1957 report goes to elaborate lengths to present a thorough evaluation of the problem, which closer scrutiny begins to repeatedly cast doubts upon. For example, Brown devises an elaborate 5 level evaluation scale for diagnosing urban decay, applied through a drive by "windshield check." and then quite casually truncates the scale, eliminating the top and bottom ranking when it comes to recording his evaluations. This is immensely important because it means that structures that may have only been in need of a fresh coat of paint were now classified as being equivalent to badly dilapidated structures beyond repair. Then after supposedly having evaluated each individual property, the evaluations are presented in a color coded map that aggregates the evaluations for each city block. The significance of this is that it gives the evaluation an appearance of thoroughness while eradicating any opportunity to challenge the evaluation of any given property (see figures 5.6 and 5.7) (Sutton Brown 1957).

The intention of Sutton Brown is clearly to construct an argument in support of his redevelopment agenda and so the contrived "windshield check" is then followed by a detailed door to door survey in which trained government representatives sat down and met with families living in Strathcona.

HOUSING ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE FIVE
QUALITY GRADES USED IN THE
WINDSHIELD SURVEY

1. Very poor.
2. Poor.
3. Fair.
4. Good.
5. Very good.

Figure 5.6 Quality of Housing Windshield Check standards (1957, Sutton Brown).

Figure 5.7: Detailed view of Strathcona area (Sutton Brown, 1957).

Figure 5.8: A Photograph taken two years after the study: East Georgia Street in Strathcona. (City of Vancouver Archives, 1959) The homes on this city block were rated in 1957 as being in Fair and Poor condition, but there is no way to tell which house was which. Notice also the television antenna on the second and third buildings from the left.

F. J. HUME
MAYOR

January, 1957.

Dear Householder:

The City is making a survey of its older districts to determine how they can be improved as places in which to work and live. We need to know more about housing conditions in your area and the number and types of households living there in order to plan properly for the future. I am writing now to let you know in advance that a representative of the City will be calling on you to collect this information.

This is an important survey and I ask for your co-operation in making it a success. You will not be required to give your name and the information received will be considered strictly confidential; it will be studied as a whole without reference to any one house or family or person.

Thank you for your help and co-operation.

Yours very truly,

Mayor

Figure 5.9: Letter to residents in Strathcona Study Area (Sutton Brown, 1957).

Figure 5.10: Frame captures from the 1964 film "To Build a Better City" (images have been brightened for improved legibility using Photoshop). These are photographs that are portrayed as representing the unacceptable living conditions to be eradicated. Also note the upright piano in the right hand image, an anomaly in a situation that is being characterized as substandard.

As it happens, this process was captured on film for a promotional film, "To Build A Better City," that the city sponsored as a propaganda piece to win support of the development process. Details of from the film and documents provided in the 1957 Vancouver Redevelopment Report present a contrasting impression that strongly suggests that Gerald Sutton Brown was not acting in a fair or ethical manner. For example, the film includes images of a seemingly happy Asian Family with a well-dressed teenager studiously working on homework while his mother is busy in the background cooking meal. In and adjoining room a grandfather figure entertains several toddlers and infants who have been corralled into a playpen, perhaps to keep them out of harm's way while the film crew is at work. An upright piano and modernist light fixtures suggest that this is a family that is not in the throes of poverty. The narrator meanwhile intones an incongruous warning that is meant to imply that what we are witnessing is not a scene of domestic tranquility but a tragedy, a disease, a threat to our way of life in the form of "overcrowding." The solution we are lead to believe is to be found in relocating into a shiny new apartment building. No mention is made of the reality that the relocation process requires that this multigenerational household be broken up and that the family will go from being homeowners to renters (see figure 5.10).

The 1957 Vancouver Redevelopment report also includes a copy of the letter that was used by the Vancouver Government to encourage participation in the evaluation survey (see figure 5.9). This letter is noteworthy because it offers no indication that the actual purpose of the evaluation

is to find out information related to the redevelopment process and that the city had already decided to expropriate and demolish all of the homes it was visiting.

While this effort succeeded in securing the government funding needed to initiate the first phase of redevelopment, understandably this also set the stage for an immense conflict. Redevelopment efforts elsewhere in North America were sparking community resistance, so this must have been expected. Had Gerald Sutton Brown realized that this conflict in the end would topple the government and cost him his job perhaps he would have reconsidered the advisability of the questionable tactics he was employing to attempt to realize his vision of a modernized East End district(see figure 5.8).

Proposed Implementation Methods:

After constructing an argument that once again concludes that the entire Strathcona district must be leveled and rebuilt, the focus of the 1957 Vancouver Redevelopment Study next turns to questions of implementation. Gerald Sutton Brown has included a new redevelopment scheme that is different from the previous design in the Marsh Report, although not necessarily better. The designs proposed by Sutton Brown appear lower in density and less urban in character. The street facing shops and markets that had characterized the old commercial areas have now been consolidated into a centralized supermarket complex with a large parking lot. While the Marsh scheme had featured five story apartment blocks facing onto public streets and framing larger outdoor green spaces, the Sutton Brown design features smaller two and three story structures that are mostly perpendicular to the street and organized to overlook parking lots, resulting in a neighborhood dominated by automobiles, asphalt and traffic (see figure 5.11).

The Sutton Brown scheme also features six residential towers based upon a curious three winged high rise tower design, deployed in three pairs around the site. To the eastern end of the site is located a group of three closely placed apartment slab towers. The regular grid of alternating streets and service alleys has been replaced with a superblock approach that discourages through traffic. The use of space and buildings in the proposed design has characteristics suggestive of a suburban office park or perhaps a military base, representing a substantial contrast from the neighborhood it has replaced, where densely packed houses together defined the public domain of the street, and occasional family run businesses served local needs.
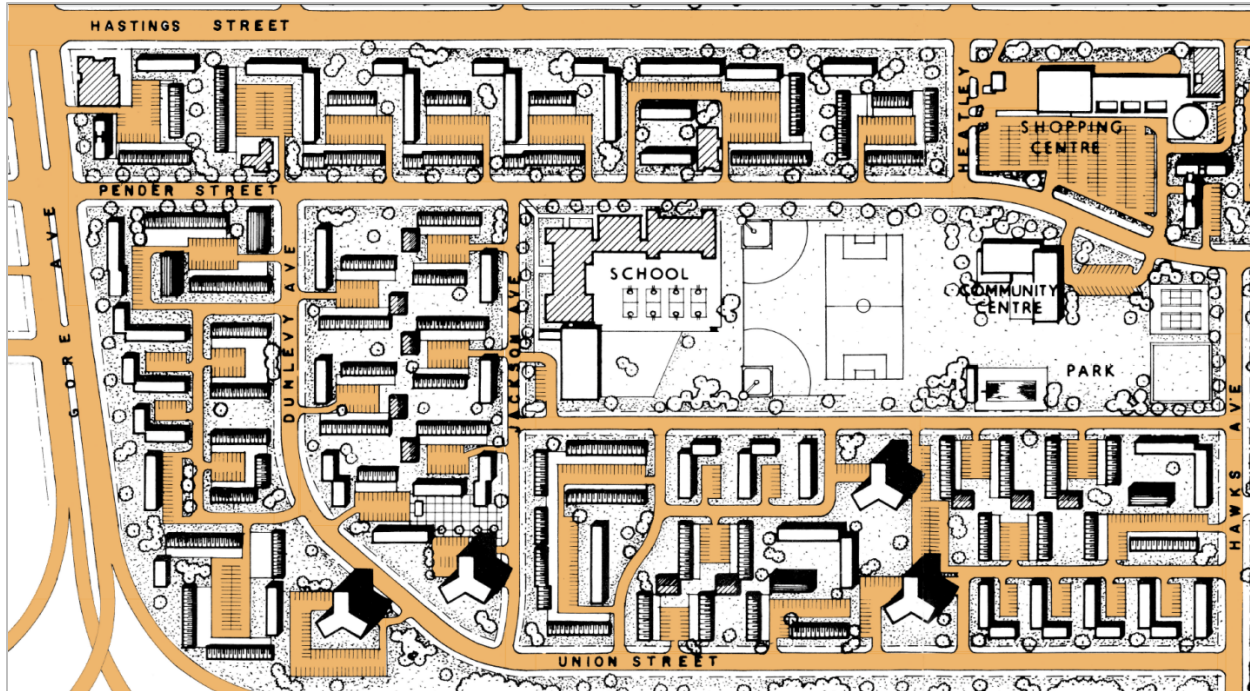
Figure 5.11: Detail: Sketch Scheme (Sutton Brown, 1957) orange tint added to show parking and roads.
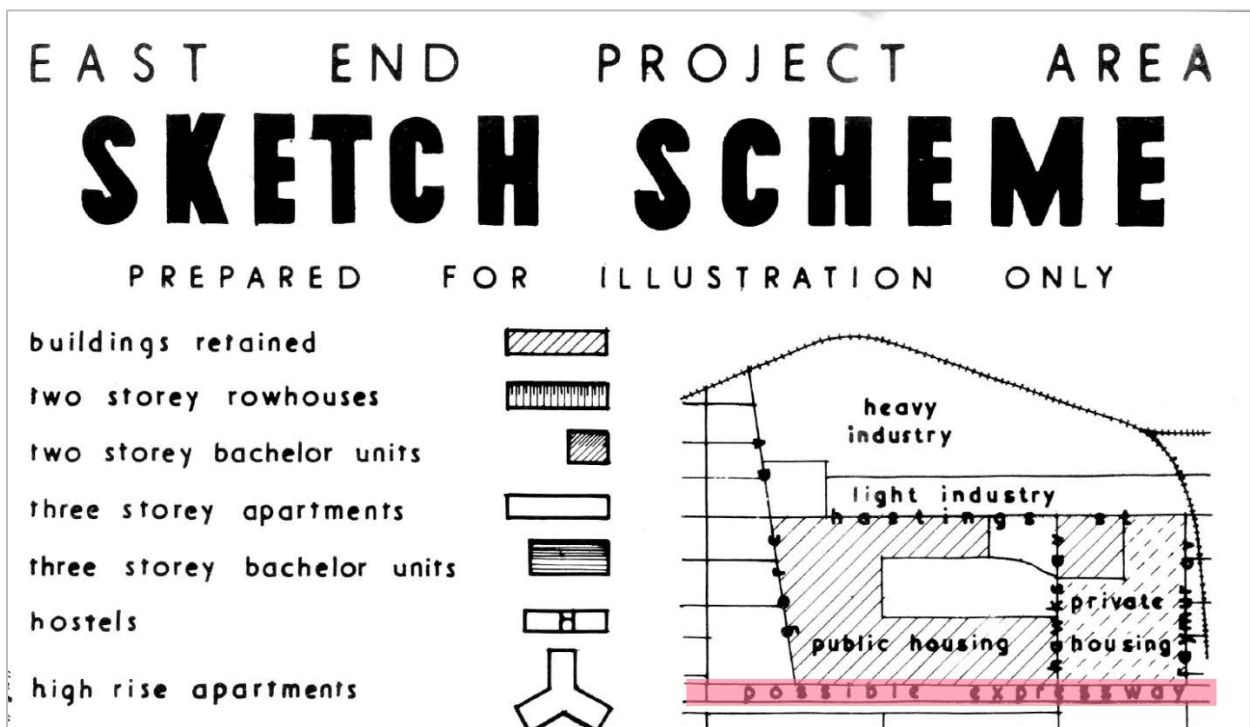

Figure 5.12: Detail: Sketch Scheme Key (Sutton Brown, 1957) Red added to highlight expressway.

EAST END PROJECT AREA
AERIAL VIEW

Figure 5.13: Aerial View of 1957 Redevelopment Scheme, and detail (Sutton Brown 1957).

Also of note in the updated 1957 plan is a freeway running through the area at the southern edge. This freeway is also included in the Key to the plan, which has been enlarged for additional clarity. Sutton Brown clearly was considering locating a freeway in this location as early as 1957. The significance of this will become more apparent when the freeway revolt is examined later in this chapter (see figures 5.12 and 5.13).
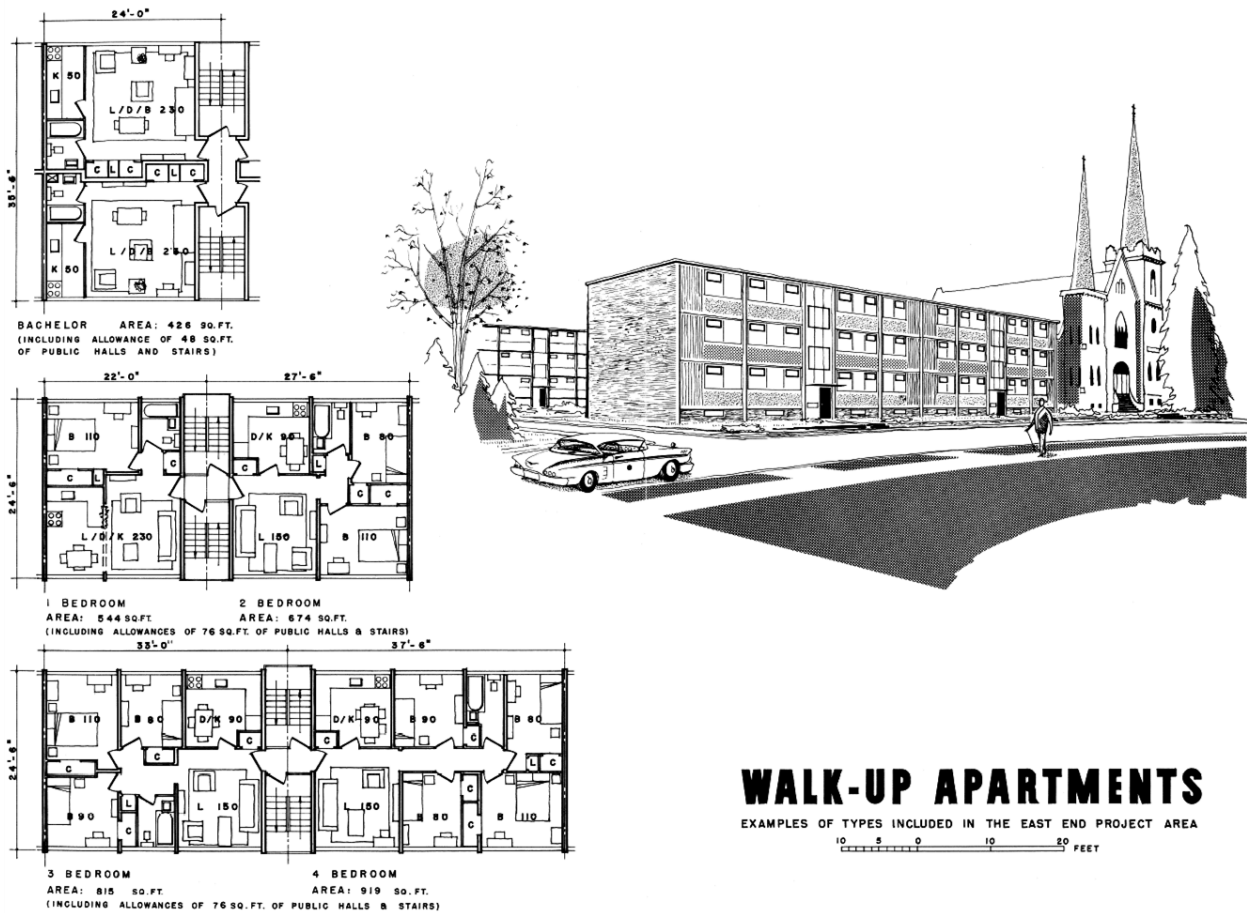
Figure 5.14: Walk up apartment design 1957 redevelopment scheme (Sutton Brown, 1957).

The 1957 Study incorporates stylishly rendered sample designs, which nevertheless reveal substantial flaws in their basic conception (see figure 5.14). The unit plans are tight, with only minimal provision of storage and yet the ground coverage is needlessly inefficient, resulting in cramped interiors in structures developed at a suburban density. The scheme also calls for windowless end walls to face out onto the street, resulting in an undesirable urban condition similar to that which had been criticized previously by Thomas Mawson in his lectures (see Chapter 2).

No balconies or patios have been included which might have made these otherwise cramped units more bearable. Although this would have just provided a view of a parking lot in most cases, still the expanded living space would be welcome.

Finally, notice the limited plumbing. Inadequate laundry facilities and a high number of people sharing bathrooms were cited in the 1957 report as evidence of overcrowding, contributing to blight. In these proposed new units these problems persist. There is no provision for laundry facilities in the new apartments. The bathrooms are one per unit regardless of size; even in the four bedroom unit intended for a family of five or more, there is still just a single bathroom. The persistence of these inadequacies calls into question either the validity of the original assessments or the capacity of the proposed solutions to result in a significantly better outcome.

Problems in the fine print: housing for displaced elderly residents

> <u>Responsibility for Rehousing Families Dispossessed by the Acquisition and Clearance of an Area under Section 23 of the National Housing Act.</u>
>
> One of the conditions of federal aid for urban redevelopment is the rehousing of families dispossessed by clearance of an area. The extent of this responsibility is summarized under paragraph (c) of Subsection (3) of Section 23 of the National Housing Act, as amended by Bill No. 215, and reads as follows:
>
> "(3) No contributions shall be paid to a municipality under this section unless…
> (c) the families to be dispossessed by the acquisition and clearance of the area are offered at , the time of their dispossession housing accommodation in a housing project constructed under Sections 16, 19 or 36, at rentals that, in the opinion of the municipality and the Minister, are fair and reasonable, having regard to the family incomes of the families to be dispossessed, except where the municipality can establish to the satisfaction of the Minister that decent, safe and sanitary housing accommodation is available to the families to be dispossessed at rentals that, in the opinion of the Minister and the municipality, are fair and reasonable, having regard to the family incomes of the families to be dispossessed."
>
> The requirements of the Act are stated in general but quite clear terms, but it is necessary to interpret the responsibility of the municipality in terms of accommodation to be provided, and its cost. First, it should be noted that the text refers to "families". The definition of "family" for the purpose of this report has been taken as two or more related persons living together.
>
> There is no responsibility under the Act to find alternative accommodation for the single boarder or lodger, no matter what their income may be. However, recommendations are

made in this report for accommodating single persons as there is such a large number of them in the redevelopment areas.

In relation to families as defined, responsibility is not easy to assess. It can be expected that if the municipality can show, by reference to advertisements in the newspapers or by other means, that accommodation is available in the city at rents which are reasonable in relation to the incomes of those dispossessed, then such families could legally be asked to find their own alternative accommodations. Clearly, time would have to be given to existing owners and tenants, whose accommodations have been purchased for demolition, to find alternative homes.

- Gerald Sutton Brown, 1957 Vancouver Redevelopment Study

CLEARANCE WITHIN THE COMPREHENSIVE REDEVELOPMENT AREAS: ACREAGE, POPULATION, STRUCTURES	
Possible area to be cleared (acres)	713
No. of people who would be displaced	23,670
No. of people whom the city would be required to rehouse	10,034
No. of households which the city would be required to rehouse	4,052
No. of premises which would be affected:	
Residential (dwelling units)	6,947
Industrial	286
Commercial	360
Storage (Industrial and Commercial)	266
Institutional (public and semi-public buildings)	45
Educational	12

Table 5.1: Total projected clearance and displacement (Sutton Brown 1957, 57).

The survey of resident households revealed that over 36% of the East End households were of single adults, and the majority of these retired seniors. The issue of rehousing these people, however, became a complex issue in part because of a peculiar semantic issue in which Canadian law required Vancouver to rehouse families displaced by the project, but never defined what a "family" consisted of. As noted in Chapter 2, Harland Bartholomew had previously picked up on this issue and recommended that the Vancouver zoning bylaw be amended specifically to define a family as one or more related persons living together. Gerald Sutton Brown however was

facing an additional problem: his new redevelopment design was going to be at a lower density than the dense urban fabric it was to replace, and as a result he could not expect to accommodate all those he would be displacing. One way to gain control of this was to reduce the number of individuals that he would be required by law to rehouse. Ignoring Bartholomew's recommendation, Sutton Brown defined a family as two or more related individuals and then made a non-binding commitment to rehouse some of the displaced singles (Bartholomew, 1946; Sutton Brown, 1957).

As table 5.1 shows, the impact of the proposed redevelopment project is quite large, involving more than an entire square mile of land, while displacing 23,670 people. Considering that the population of Vancouver at this time was 365,844 (Statistics Canada www.statcan.gc.ca) the relative impact of this proposal is immense. The table also indicates that of the large number of people who would be losing their homes, the city only expected to be rehousing less than half of those displaced.

Urban Redevelopment moves forward:

The Vancouver City Council began to review the Vancouver Redevelopment Study in 1958 but did not formally adopt the plan until 1959. In 1961 construction work began on phase I, displacing 1600 people. The first project to be developed consisted of a 159 unit Public Housing Project, a combination of low rise dwellings and a high rise tower, constructed on the grounds of what had been a public park known as MacLean Park. MacLean Park had originally covered a single city block, and the first new development kept the name, even though a neighboring city block was subsequently bulldozed to provide a replacement park which also now bears the name MacLean Park. Despite encountering objections from the Chinese community, during phase I, the urban renewal process was expanded and several more city blocks adjoining the MacLean Park development were also bulldozed, expanding the MacLean Park development to its present size (see figures 5.15, 5.16). During Phase I, several additional blocks of homes were also cleared to make room for the 376 unit Raymur Place Development (see figure 5.17, 5.18, 5.19) (Gutstein, 1975; Wai, 1998).

Raymur Place was designed by Duncan McNab and Associates, a local architecture firm that would go on to design a large number of schools and other commercial facilities in the

Vancouver region. The following rendering by the architect is somewhat suggestive in that the very different organizational characteristics of the surrounding neighborhood are hinted at but downplayed. As in MacLean Park, a substantial portion of the site is dedicated to parking and the grid of the exiting streets is disrupted by the development. In both projects a combination of high rise and low rise apartment structures are used to frame interior spaces that are not protected enough to be private but not connected to the surrounding street scape enough to enliven it. The buildings themselves do not contribute to the vitality of the street as a pedestrian environment.

Figure 5.15: Four blocks of homes demolished in Strathcona in 1968 (Marlatt and Itter, 1979, p 178). Although additional information regarding this photograph is scarce, an analysis of existing buildings, and the vantage point of this image suggests that this picture may have been taken standing on the fifth or sixth floor of the tower constructed at Maclean Park in phase I; the work shown here depicts land cleared for phase II. For a view of this area today, see figure 5.16.

Phase I was followed by Phase II, a project involving more demolitions and the displacement of 1760 people. This work included expanding the MacLean Park Development to several surrounding blocks (see figure 5.15, and 5.16). After the Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA) proved unsuccessful in its effort to stop Phase I, the Chinese community regrouped and under the banner of the Chinese Property Owners Association (CPOA) again tried to negotiate an end to the urban renewal process with the city, and again this effort was unsuccessful. Phase II was approved in 1963 and land clearance commenced in 1965. When phases I and II were complete, 57 acres of land had been cleared and redeveloped, most of which had been single family housing, resulting in the displacement of 3330 people (Gutstein, 1975; Marlatt and Itter, 1979).

Figure 5.16: MacLean Park in 2011 (Bing 3d satellite image). The red lines added to this image show the original outline of MacLean Park and the larger L-shaped expansion constructed in Phase II. Yellow arrow shows camera orientation for image in figure 5.15.
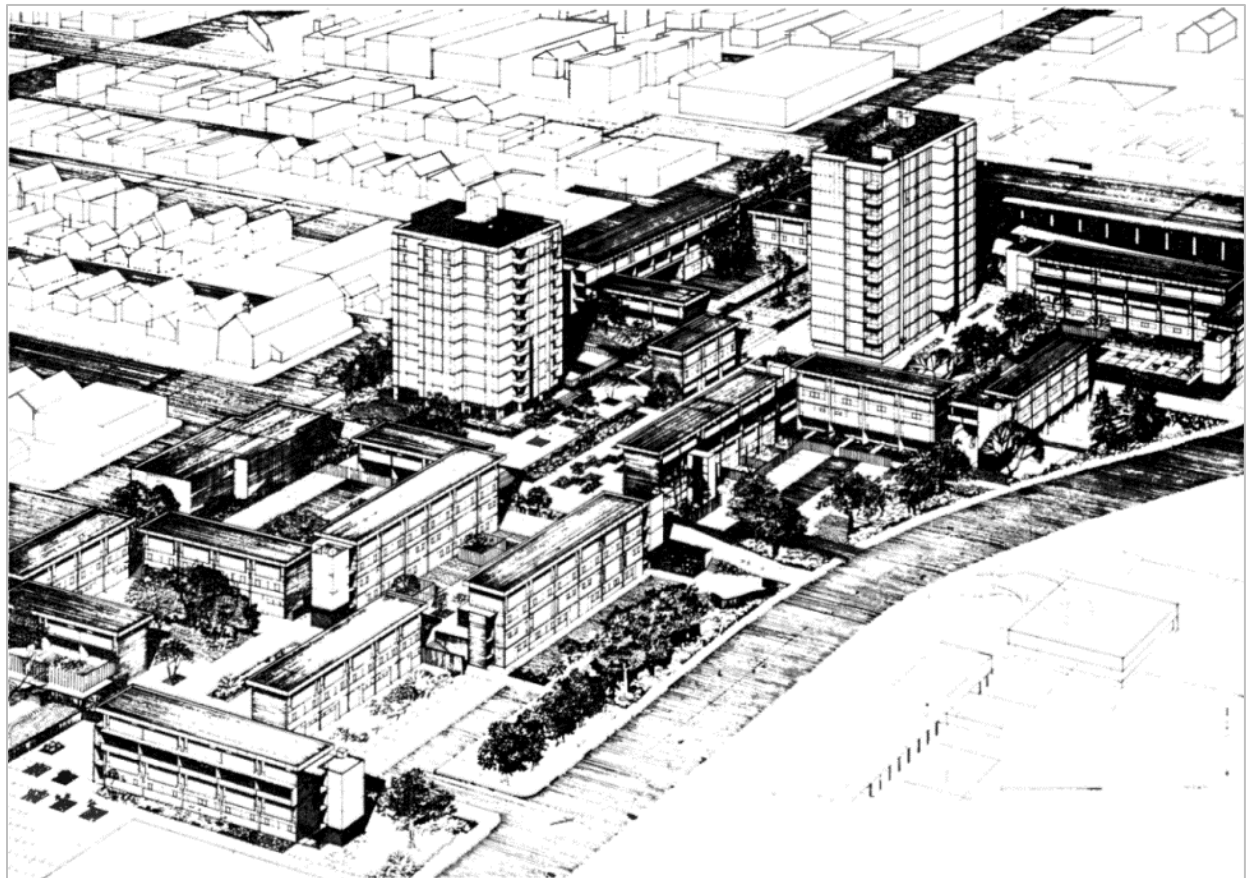

Figure 5.17: Raymur Place housing project (Batchelor, 1965, 38).

Figure 5.18: Raymur Place: preliminary site work 1966 (City of Vancouver Archives.) Note: for a sense of scale the church preserved in this image and in figure 5.19.
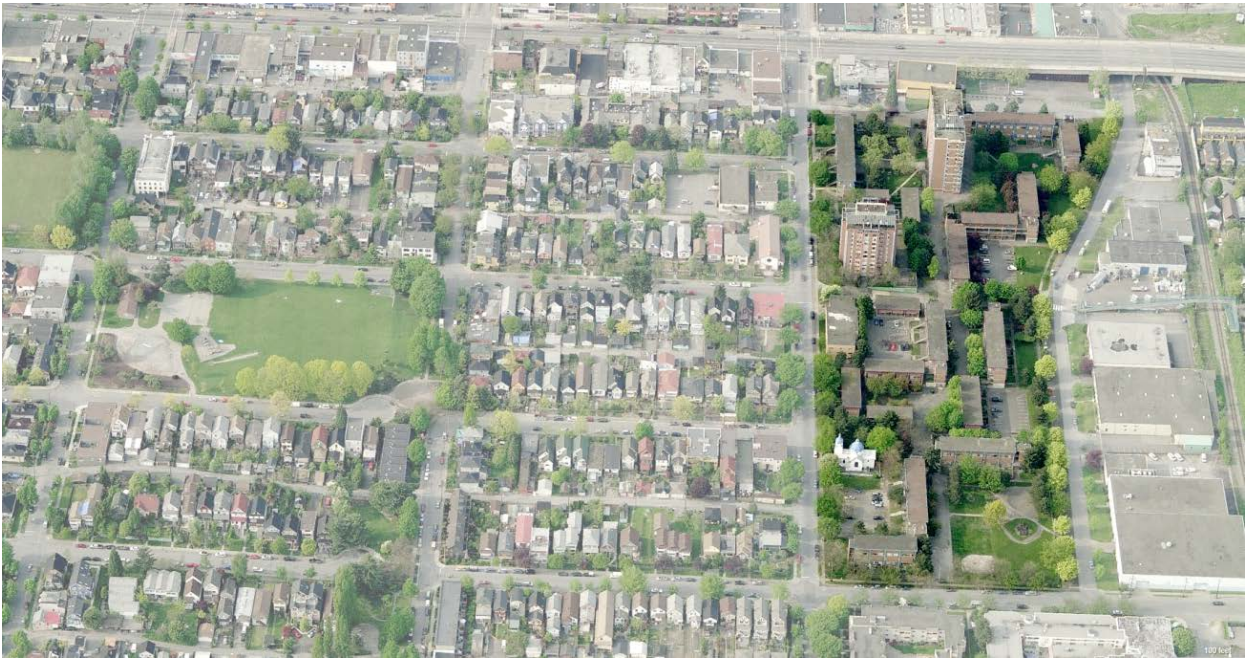

Figure 5.19: Raymur Place in 2010 (bing 3d; white shading by Robert Walsh).

Despite the opposition that these early forays into urban renewal provoked, Gerald Sutton Brown viewed these projects as a successful proof of concept and used these results to lobby the Canadian government to support a massive expansion of the urban renewal effort in Phase III. The promotional efforts used to secure government approval for this effort provide a unique glimpse into the methods and perspective of Gerald Sutton Brown that appear to suggest a curiously distorted view at odds with the conditions on the ground. While Gerald Sutton Brown was using what he saw as a success to expand his renewal program, the residents of Strathcona grew increasing desperate to stop him.

Urban Renewal as experienced by the residents

The community opposition to redevelopment was not at first effective in stopping the urban renewal process, yet word continued to spread throughout the community of the hardships and disruption the process was causing an increasing number of families. Subsequent oral histories published in 1979 describe a process at odds with the portrayal offered by the city. Residents were not provided with replacement accommodations right away, but instead had to find other places to live while they waited for their new rental units to be constructed. In some cases this meant that residents who had lost homes in the immediate vicinity of Chinatown were eventually offered housing in the distant Skeena Terrace project (see figure 5.20). For elderly Chinese residents, or those who did not have a car the remoteness of Skeena Terrace meant they were cut off from the community of which they had been long term residents (Marlatt and Itter, 1979).

In the 1957 Redevelopment Study there is no discussion of how to ensure a fair appraisal of values of the homes being seized by the city and destroyed. Sutton Brown had to be aware of this issue; it had been raised by Leonard Marsh in his 1950 report that formed the foundation for the 1957 Study. In the Marsh report he proposes compensating homeowners in Strathcona at a reduced rate that works out to roughly 46% of their assessed value, on the grounds that real estate values might possible decline, conveniently choosing to overlook the reality that they were rapidly rising elsewhere in Vancouver. Instead Marsh goes on to suggest that these properties might actually have no value at all if the city were to not embark upon their redevelopment (Marsh 1950).
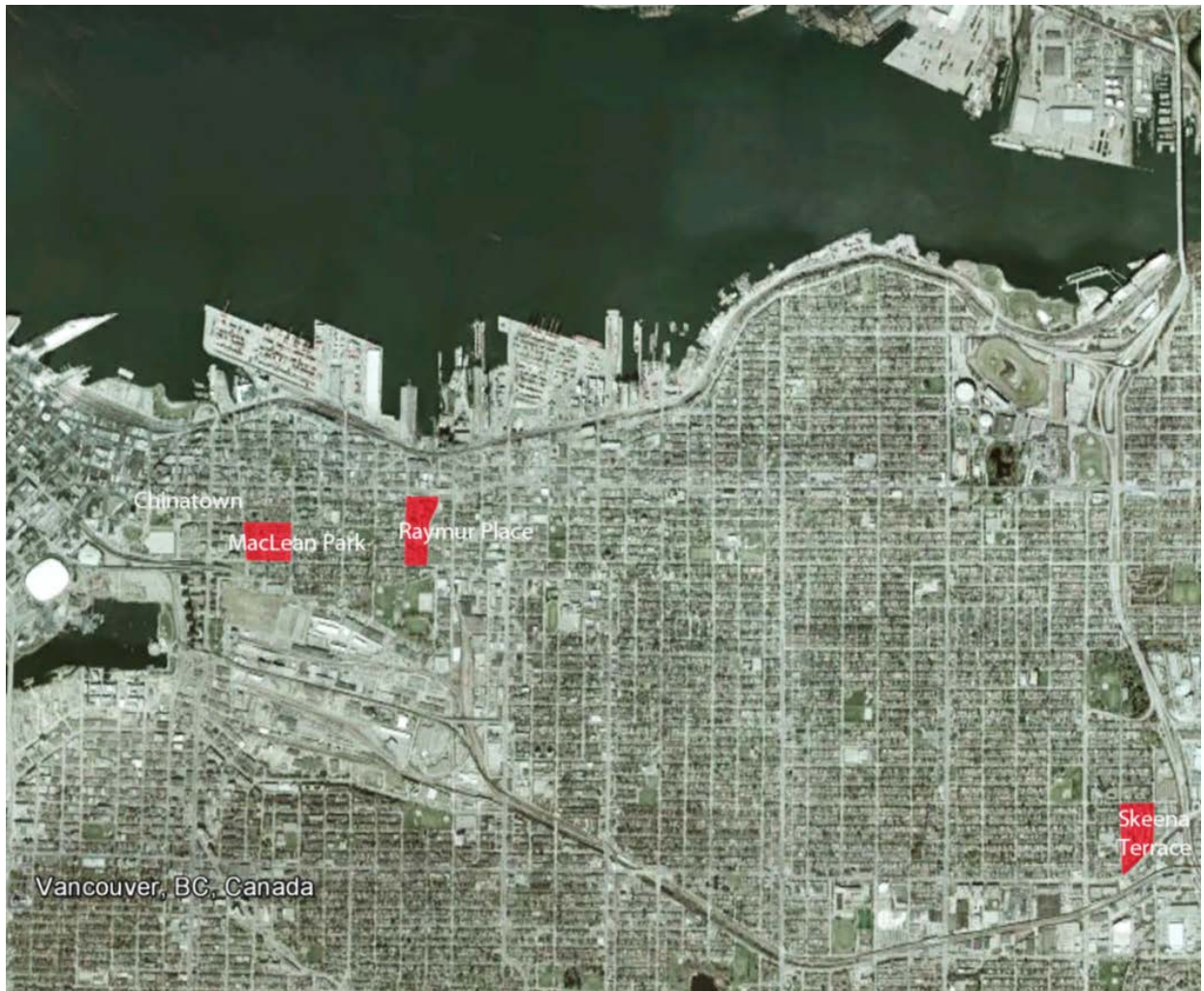
Figure 5.20: Three completed urban renewal projects in Vancouver: MacLean Park, Raymur Place, and Skeena Terrace (Google Earth; red shading and white lettering by Robert Walsh).

According to one source, the city was compensating homeowners in Strathcona $6000-8000 for homes it expropriated (Wai, 1998). Making a reasonable determination whether this was a fair rate of compensation is challenging, without knowing what other houses were selling for at the time in the city, yet consistent in the accounts of homeowners who endured this process is a sense of outrage at having been very badly cheated by the city. A revealing example of this problem, as reported by homeowner Fred Soon, describes how he tried to get a fair price from the city for the house he owned and lived in, but the city only kept making what he considered to be absurdly low offers. Meanwhile the houses near his were being condemned so he found a house for sale similar to his own that was not facing demolition; Soon asked the city if they would purchase this comparable house as a fair replacement for the house they wanted to expropriate, but this offer was turned down, so he borrowed from friends and bought the new

house and relocated his family. After hiring several lawyers in succession to help negotiate a fair price for his original house, he discovered that his house has already been bulldozed without his permission and that the city had written a check for him. After receiving the check and inquiring why it was for such a small amount, he eventually learned that the city was only willing to pay him for the value of his empty land, and nothing for the house which had until recently stood there (Marlatt and Itter, 1979, 175-177).

While it is hard to know what the condition of this house was prior to demolition, this story does call attention to the issue of how much people were to be compensated for the loss of their homes. In Gerald Sutton Brown's 1957 report, the only aspect of this issue that seemed of concern was enabling displaced residents to reside in one of the new units to be built, a living arrangement in which these displaced homeowners would be required to pay rent. While ignoring the investment and sense of security tied up in owning one's own home, Sutton Brown was also apparently oblivious to the preference many Chinese families had for living in multiple generation households, and the new units were not designed to accommodate for this. Meanwhile into this urban setting which he has criticized for its problem of overcrowding, Sutton Brown proposes that some families could perhaps make ends meet by taking in outsider lodgers and charging them rent to help offset the cost of their new living accommodations, even though these units were already too small.

Community resistance to urban renewal intensifies

From the outset there was opposition to the renewal process by the local East End community, although at first this effort proved ineffective.[14] The Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA) asked the city to be permitted to pursue an alternative course of action in which the CBA would assist in the rehabilitation of dilapidated structures. This offer was rejected and the urban renewal process proceeded, beginning with the construction of the MacLean Park, Raymur Place and Skeena Terrace. Although these projects had an impact , they were smaller than the next stages planned for urban redevelopment in the East End. The strategy of dividing the work into stages of increasing scale had both advantages and disadvantages for the city as the effort proceeded.

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[14] Some researchers have mischaracterized the situation claiming that the residents became politicized only after the first two stages of construction were completed (Murray, 2011). What actually changed, however, was that the opposition which had been there from the beginning gained additional outside allies and became more effectively organized internally, resulting in increased effectiveness.

On the one hand, the city had clearly expected that the earliest stages would demonstrate the validity of the urban renewal concept, creating support for the vastly increased scale of the later stages. On the other hand as discrepancies emerged between how the city claimed the process would work, this both enraged the East End community and gave the opposition useful ammunition to use in its fight against the government.

As time went on opposition began to grow as word spread amongst the residents of the area, and this resistance became better organized and substantially more effective as the conflict wore on. Stage three of the urban renewal process was scheduled to begin in 1969, and this was projected to be a substantially larger effort than the prior stages which had produced MacLean Park, Raymur Place and Skeena Terrace. Faced by this threat and recognizing that the prior efforts at stopping the Urban renewal process had failed, the residents of Strathcona had become better organized, forming the Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association, or (SPOTA).

SPOTA used a variety of improved tactics and strategies over the prior urban renewal opposition efforts, which ultimately enabled them to defeat the well-entrenched interests in City Hall, including Gerald Sutton Brown. First of all, by taking effort to conduct meetings and communications in a bilingual manner, the entire community was more able to participate in ongoing developments, keeping abreast of new developments and having a chance to voice their concerns. By establishing themselves as a group that represented both tenants and property owners, with a large degree of support in the neighborhood, they forced the city to respond to their demands instead of continuing to conduct business in such a secretive manner. This meant that the group was able to initiate far more effective protests and to make sure that its members were present and visible at all public hearings related to their concerns (Harcourt and Cameron, 2007; Marlatt and Itter, 1979).

SPOTA also understood that the issue was not just the individual needs of displaced families but the threatened destruction of the community which they had created and shared together. Therefore to strengthen the sense of community, SPOTA meetings became major community events typically featuring a large shared meal before getting to work. People young and old participated in the opposition to the urban renewal projects (Harcourt and Cameron, 2007).

They also sought outside help, including Mike Harcourt who as a young attorney passionate about community service. While Harcourt in his memoirs is quick to share credit with the other significant participants in the SPOTA effort, the issues involved and the urgency of the problem were obviously important to him as well (Harcourt, 1996).

The single most important tactic employed by SPOTA may have been their decision to cultivate a direct line of communication to the Canadian Secretary of Transportation Paul Hellyer, who also happened to be in charge national housing policies. In essence the members of SPOTA came to realize that the tremendous costs of the urban renewal effort required substantial sums of federal money if they were to be carried through to completion. Rather than attempting to work through the city government as might be expected, the members of SPOTA realized that this tactic would be useless and so set about establishing their own independent communications with Hellyer, regarding their situation.

In 1964 the Federal Government had made an open ended long term commitment to Vancouver in support of its urban renewal program. However, SPOTA offered a very different portrayal of their community from the picture created by the City of Vancouver in its 1957 Redevelopment Study, and its 1964 propaganda film To Build A Better City. However, in 1968 Hellyer decided to visit Vancouver along with the rest of his Task Force on Housing and Urban Development. When the members of SPOTA learned of his visit they hastily organized an impromptu tour for Hellyer and his delegation, a tour which made it apparent to him that Strathcona was a thriving and active community that was being harmed by urban renewal, but which could benefit from repairs, reinvestment and rehabilitation (Harcourt and Cameron, 2007; Wai, 1998).

Paul Hellyer went back to Ottawa, ordered an immediate moratorium on funding for urban renewal in Vancouver. Without these funds, the urban renewal effort in Vancouver collapsed, ending before Stage three could get underway. By going over the head of the City Government and taking their case directly to the responsible leader in the Federal Government, the leaders of SPOTA changed the dynamic and succeeded in terminating the urban renewal threat, but they actually accomplished even more than this. Paul Hellyer recognized that funding would still be needed if the rehabilitation of Strathcona were to have any chance of success, and so he proposed transferring the urban renewal funds into a new program focused of rehabilitation. Initially the

242

Canadian Government was slow to respond to this request, and Hellyer resigned his position in an act of protest, but his successor continued to support the proposal and eventually, in 1973, a federally funded urban rehabilitation program was set up targeting the Strathcona area. This program was the first of its kind in Canada and soon became the basis for a nationwide policy that replaced urban renewal with urban rehabilitation (Harcourt and Cameron, 2007).

SPOTA continued to remain active in this process of urban rehabilitation, encouraging the construction of clusters of new homes similar in scale and proportions to the dense urban fabric that had existed prior to the onset of urban renewal. Other projects involved the rehabilitation of deteriorated structures, resulting in updated structures that appear to have been substantially reconstructed as well as modernized (see figure 5.21). Instead of being a faceless sea of barracks like housing projects overlooking vast parking lots, and served by a centralized supermarket, Strathcona today remains a district of closely packed homes, occasionally punctuated by a small scale family run market or other local business (Atkin, 1994).

By 1968 important precedents had been already established for opposing urban renewal in various Cities in the United States, and while the residents of Strathcona may have tended to not have been so aware of this, federal officials such as Paul Hellyer certainly would have known about the well-publicized fights taking place in the United States, such as the one playing out in New York City between Jane Jacobs and Robert Moses. While Paul Hellyer may have been persuaded by the members of SPOTA of the merits of their perspective, it is also possible that Hellyer may have been searching for a test case such as this in order to find grounds for changing the federal policies.
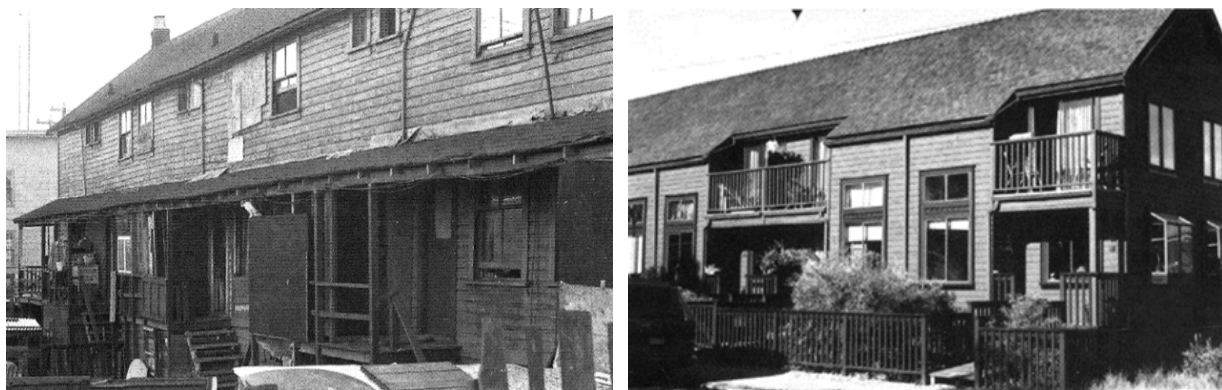

Figure 5.21: Row house before and after rehabilitation: Hawks Street, Strathcona (Atkin, 1994).

Interpretation: The hazards of failing to understand the cultural context

Despite the numerous factors that Sutton-Brown had taken into account in this influential 1957 Vancouver Redevelopment Study, he nevertheless appears to have been blind to several other basic considerations. The first of these is that the existing urban fabric of Chinatown, despite a variety of admittedly quirky characteristics was nevertheless home to a community that had worked hard for generations to make a place for itself. What began as a stigmatized ghetto, had over the years become a community where these people shopped and worshipped and sent their children to school resulting in a tight knit community that had both meaning and identity for them. Nowhere in his plan is any mention made of preserving Chinatown, its small family owned shops with housing above or any of the other institutions that make this a unique community.

Related to this general lack of awareness of the positive values of the community that already existed in Strathcona, Sutton-Brown appears to have also ignored the value and importance people associate with owning their own home. His plan called for the expropriation and wholesale demolition of thousands of single family homes, many of which could have been easily repaired. His plans for how to house those displaced in the urban renewal project are based entirely on the basis of what a family could afford to pay to live in a new rental unit, without accounting for the value of what they had lost or what this investment represented, even in cases where the home was also a shop through which a family earned its livelihood.

Expressed in economic terms, this conflict could be described as largely emerging from a conflict between use values and exchange values. The concept of use value versus exchange value is an old idea going back to Adam Smith and revisited by Karl Marx (Marx, 1867). In essence the idea is that something can have one value on the open market place and a different value for the person who makes use of it. One of the problems underpinning the urban renewal effort in Vancouver was the failure by the government to appreciate that for the families living in these dwellings, the use value was quite high even if by their own standards these dwellings and their neighboring area seemed undesirable, resulting in a low exchange value. If the city officials were evaluating these homes on the basis of what they themselves would be willing to pay, then the value could be expected to be far less than owners perceived value of their homes.

Figure 5.22: Strathcona today (Strathcona Residents Association).

The city did not want to pay families the cost of relocating to nicer neighborhoods where they would be able to once again live in a single family home with a garden. From the perspectives of the residents however, the Strathcona neighborhood had this value and the added value of being part of a neighborhood where they themselves mattered and could be at ease, a neighborhood where they would not be stigmatized to the extent that they might be elsewhere in the city, a neighborhood where their children could receive a bi-lingual education, and where the local shops catered to their particular culture. While it may be difficult to put an adequate price on the value this neighborhood had to many of its residents, when the failure to account for this use value was combined with what many apparently perceived as an undervaluing of their property even in terms of exchange value, the result was not surprisingly, anger, mistrust and resentment.

In contrast to this, the recent wave of development that transformed Vancouver, from 1990 onwards, once again featured closely-packed, privately-owned dwellings that together overlook

the street. Because these living units are largely owner occupied, as they were in Strathcona and Chinatown, in the new developments that fall under the heading of Vancouverism, it is not uncommon to see street facing units on busier streets in downtown Vancouver now being used for small businesses at ground level, while it appears that the upstairs remain dedicated to private living. Similarly, these close packed townhouses are considered highly desirable today at least in part because of their access to protected outdoor space found at the interior of the block, just as the backyard spaces in Strathcona enabled residents to relax or grow vegetables on their own tiny outdoor plots.

Although it is not reasonable to go so far as to claim that the original urban fabric of Strathcona provided a direct precedent linking it to subsequent forms now seen in Vancouverism, it is nevertheless revealing that faced with limited means the residents of Strathcona nevertheless developed strategies for shaping their environment that more recent developments have also found advantageous. It is also worth noting that these characteristics would have tended to have been wiped out in Strathcona had the urban renewal process been allowed to go forward as planned (see figure 5.22).

5.3 The freeway protests and the end of the Gerald Sutton Brown Era:

The urban renewal effort and the freeway fights overlap one another in time, with the primary difference being that the urban renewal process became public sooner and was partially implemented before it could be stopped, while the freeway effort was revealed at a later date and ran into immediate widespread opposition. Because the freeway fight began in earnest in 1967, this almost certainly helped SPOTA to turn the tide against the urban renewal effort in 1968, when prior opposition to the urban renewal effort had failed. Also the involvement of Transportation Secretary Paul Hellyer in saving Strathcona may have at least been partially motivated by question the freeway plans proposed through the same area. At the same time, however, the freeway plans remained in play until 1972, and as a city-wide issue impacting more than the East End, seem to have played a larger role in turning the citizens of Vancouver against their own government.

A variety of detailed research has examined the question of the freeway fights and the factors that prevented their construction in Vancouver. There are several different interpretations as to what went wrong and why, including some who credit the citizen opposition with successfully

preventing construction (Pendakur 1972, Harcourt 1991, Gutstein, 1974, 1983), and others who have suggested that the main reason the freeway effort collapsed was inaction and confusion arising out of conflicting priorities from the three levels of Government that had a stake in the process: Municipal, Provincial, and Federal (MacKenzie, 1984, Atkin 1994). Another perspective holds that the freeway effort failed because of its links to an outdated ideology that was more relevant a decade earlier, when Vancouver still might have been considered an industrial city (Hardwick, 1974; Langford, 2011).

Figure 5.23: Vancouver and its immediate surroundings: Mountains to the North, the US border to the South and Ocean to the West. (Google Earth).

There are three reasons that the freeway fight matters to the present question of understanding the story of Vancouverism. First of all it was through incredibly inept handling of the freeway situation by the government of Vancouver that the city managed to take what might have been a fairly contained conflict concerning the issue of urban redevelopment in Strathcona and somehow managed to sustain this conflict and enlarge it, until it ultimately toppled the local government, in a process that took nearly five years. Eventually the NPA would return to power yet this power has continued to ebb and flow and yet the NPA has never regained its absolute

dominance of affairs in Vancouver. This change in the political culture of Vancouver is a direct consequence of the freeway fight, and it was this change in the political culture that created the opening for a radically new approach to City Planning to begin to happen in Vancouver. The planning agenda pursued by Ray Spaxman, the planning director hired in 1974 would prove absolutely essential to the development of Vancouverism, but without these two fights and the changed political climate that resulted, it is unlikely that he would have been hired.

The second reason the freeway fights are important in understanding the origins of Vancouverism is that the situation provides a useful glimpse in the planning approach of Gerald Sutton Brown and the planners working under his influence. The extent to which the approach introduced by Ray Spaxman represented a radical break with the past only can be rendered apparent once this past is understood.
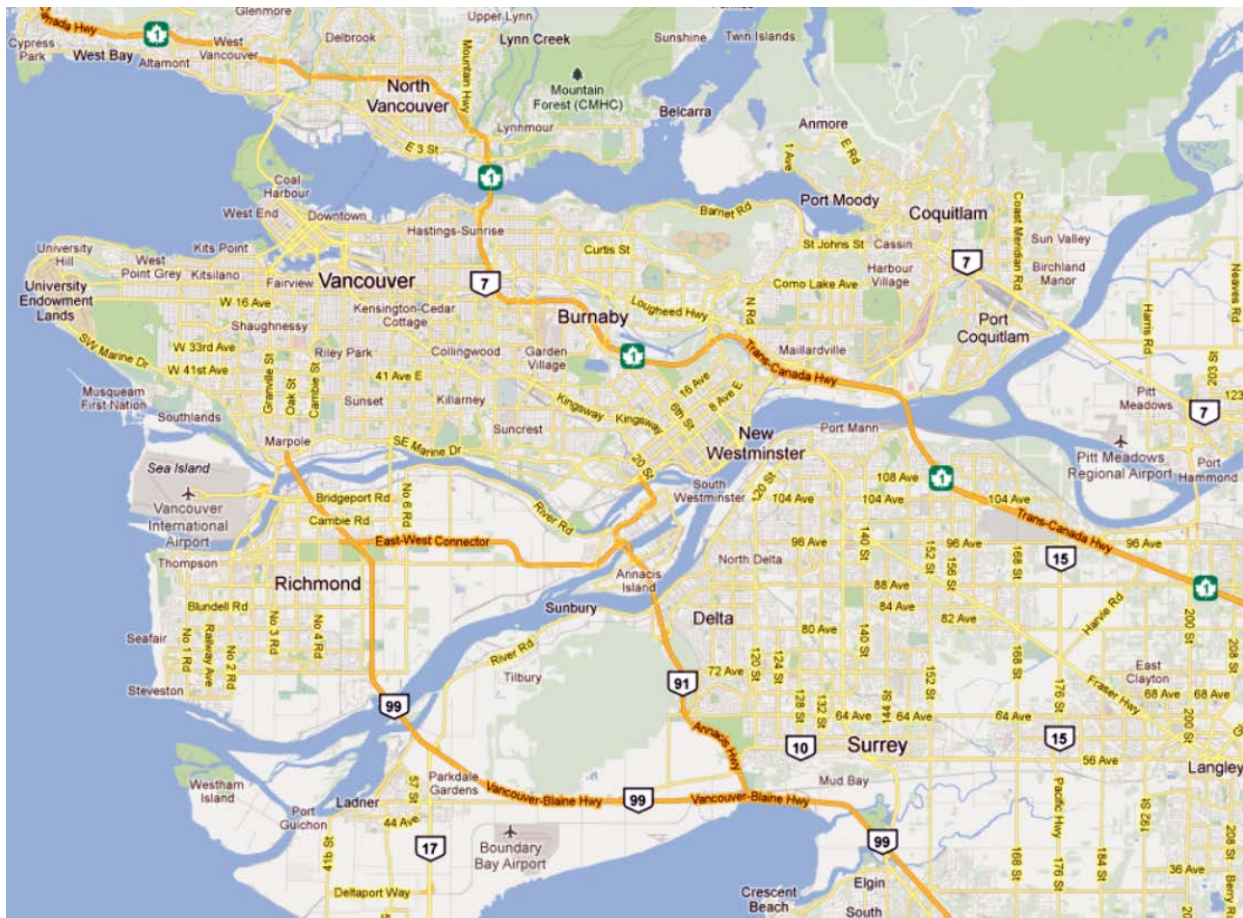

Figure 5.24: Major highway links in the immediate vicinity of Vancouver 2011. (Bing Maps).

A third additional reason for gaining some perspective on the freeway fight concerns a fairly common misconception regarding the work of Harland Bartholomew in Vancouver. While it has been observed fairly recently that Harland Bartholomew continues to enjoy a positive reputation despite his advocacy of a system of freeways in Vancouver, (MacDonald, 2008) this observation and other important research examining the freeway fight has tended not to adequately distinguish between freeway intervention Bartholomew was recommending and how this differs in fundamental ways from the multiple different freeway configurations put forward by Gerald Sutton Brown and the other experts he hired (Pendakur, 1972). Instead of seeing Harland Bartholomew as an overlooked villain who proposed bringing dreaded freeways to Vancouver and then managed to escape the blame he should have received (MacDonald, 2008), an alternative perspective is also possible that suggests that the reason the freeway effort failed was that the planners who came after Harland Bartholomew failed to heed his rather sensible advice. Looking more closely at this issue reveals that Bartholomew had recommended a significantly different strategy from that which was pursued by the city and quite possibly would have been of real benefit to Vancouver had it been applied.

The larger context of the Vancouver Freeway crisis

As contemporary maps of Vancouver and the surrounding area show, Vancouver is indeed a city that today is connected to a larger national highway system, with freeways approaching the city from the South, the East and the North (see figures 5.23. and 5.24). Route 1, the Trans-Canada Highway actually crosses the city limits for a short distance as it turns northward before crossing the Burrard Inlet, but aside from this brief incursion, the freeway network that connects Vancouver to the rest of Canada and to the United States stops just as it approaches the city limits. In a larger metropolitan region with 21 municipalities, the freeway network is important to the basic flow of people and goods throughout the area. What is peculiar about Vancouver is that this freeway system was prevented from connecting the central portions of the city, especially the downtown core, to this larger regional system. It was this effort to connect the downtown to the larger network that provoked the freeway fight.

One factor which contributed to this failure to connect to the freeways was the strange lack of an overarching authority managing the development of the freeway and establishing the route it should take into the city once it crossed city lines. Although the different levels of government

commissioned studies to support such an effort, the ultimate selection of where to route the system was left in the hands of the government of Vancouver, even though the city would require outside funds to actually complete the work. The secretive manner through which the city pursued this process meanwhile made matters substantially worse, provoking vocal citizen opposition that arose once the location of the proposed freeway system was finally revealed to the public in 1967. This immediately sparked active public opposition, and over the next five years the city put forward a succession of alternative highway proposals that continued to provoke public protests. (Gutstein, 1975)

\ Gerald Sutton Brown clearly was planning to incorporate a freeway system in his East End redevelopment effort at the time he had completed his 1957 report, as the following excerpt from the report indicates:

> **Highway Proposals and their Effect**
> Until the report of the Metropolitan Highway Planning Committee is published it will not be known to what extent the area will be affected by any future highway proposals, but from the information available at the time of writing this report it would appear that an expressway may be required in an east-west direction located somewhere to the south of the East End Project Area.
>
> For the purpose of preparing an illustrative scheme for the East End Project Area an alignment to the north of Malkin Avenue has been shown in order to indicate the effect of such a highway on the development of this area.
> The road proposals, as illustrated, clearly define the boundaries of the project area:
>
> North _____ Hastings Street.
> East _____Raymur Avenue.
> South _____ Proposed Expressway.
> West _____Gore Avenue.
>
> In the design of the road layout within the project area, the aim has been to provide access only for those vehicles with business in the area and to limit through traffic to certain major streets and, of course, to the expressway.
>
> In addition to affecting the East End Project Area, other highway construction could affect the remaining comprehensive redevelopment and limited redevelopment areas. This fact has not been taken into account in drawing the boundaries for the suggested use zones or in tabulating the areas for clearance and population displaced, because the highway stud is not yet sufficiently advanced to be a guide.
>
> New highway construction could affect the land use pattern in two ways:
> (a) By the withdrawal of land from other uses for new rights of way.

(b) By isolating small sections of residential land use, making their retention for residential purposes undesirable. The same applies to a lesser extent for commercial use.

It can be seen, therefore, that even though definite suggestions have been made for a new land use pattern, these have been based on the existing highway system.

-1957 Vancouver Redevelopment Study p 74, 75 (Sutton Brown, 1957)

The above statement reveals that Gerald Sutton Brown was not concerned with the extent to which the freeway system would impact the surrounding area, yet his next steps show a curious change of direction. In 1959 a freeway plan which came to be known as the "Sutton Brown Plan" was proposed, although remained secret. This was followed by the Wilbur Smith Plan of 1964, which reverted back to the original configuration Sutton Brown had planned for in his 1957 report. Sutton Brown then adjusted the plan further, rerouting the portion of the plan that would have traversed the more affluent West End, proposing instead a controversial third crossing of the Burrard Inlet that would have connected downtown Vancouver to the nearby city of North Vancouver (Pendakur, 1972).

 The Great Freeway Debate: Tom Campbell, Walter Hardwick and Peter Oberlander.

On June 1, 1967, the City of Vancouver announced that had decided to accept the recommendations of the private consultants it had hired to evaluate the freeway situation. The resulting recommendation included plans for an elevated freeway 120 feet wide that would have gone along the southern edge of Strathcona, before turning and cutting across Chinatown. City Council member Harry Rankin declared that the freeway if built as planned would destroy Chinatown and this observation became one of the rallying cries of the opposition that soon arose.

One reason the 1967 plan was particularly offensive to the citizens of Vancouver was when the City Council announced that it had accepted the plan, it did so without any prior public discussions at all. Although the city had been seriously exploring the different ways to route a freeway to the downtown and linking it up to the larger freeway network approaching the city, these discussions and the various routes considered had been debated and explored by the City Council without public knowledge. While the government seems to have attempted to insulate itself from the decision to build the freeway by presenting it in terms of relying upon the advice of independent experts, the terms of the agreement between the city and these consultants was so

restrictive that there was very little latitude in what they would have been likely to recommend. Setty Pendakur has argued in his extended study of the freeway fight that this reliance upon outside contractors working under narrow constraints defined by Gerald Sutton Brown is one of the ways that Sutton Brown maintained control of the situation without appearing to be involved (Pendakur 1972).

The Chinatown Property Owners Association CPOA alleged that the freeway proposal had been undertaken without their knowledge and that this represented a violation of an agreement between the city and the CPOA to consult with them before undertaking plans that would adversely impact their community. Meanwhile Walter Hardwick had studied the official reports that constituted the actual basis for the recommendations made concerning the freeway and his inquiry exposed the narrow terms of reference that had been given to the consultants, thereby casting serious doubts onto the legitimacy of the entire proposal.

Figure 5.25: 1959 Sutton Brown Freeway Plan (Pendakur, 1972).

Questions began to emerge that suggested that the City Council had not adequately considered all relevant issues and impacts of the proposed freeway, and the community began to make demands for a public meeting to discuss the situation and for interested parties to present their

side of the issue before the situation could be brought before the council for a vote. The city sat on the issue for four months perhaps hoping that the matter would simply die down. Eventually, the City Council relented and announced that there would be a public meeting on November 23, 1967 to address the freeway proposal[15] (see figures 5.25, 5.26, and 5.27) (Pendakur 1972).
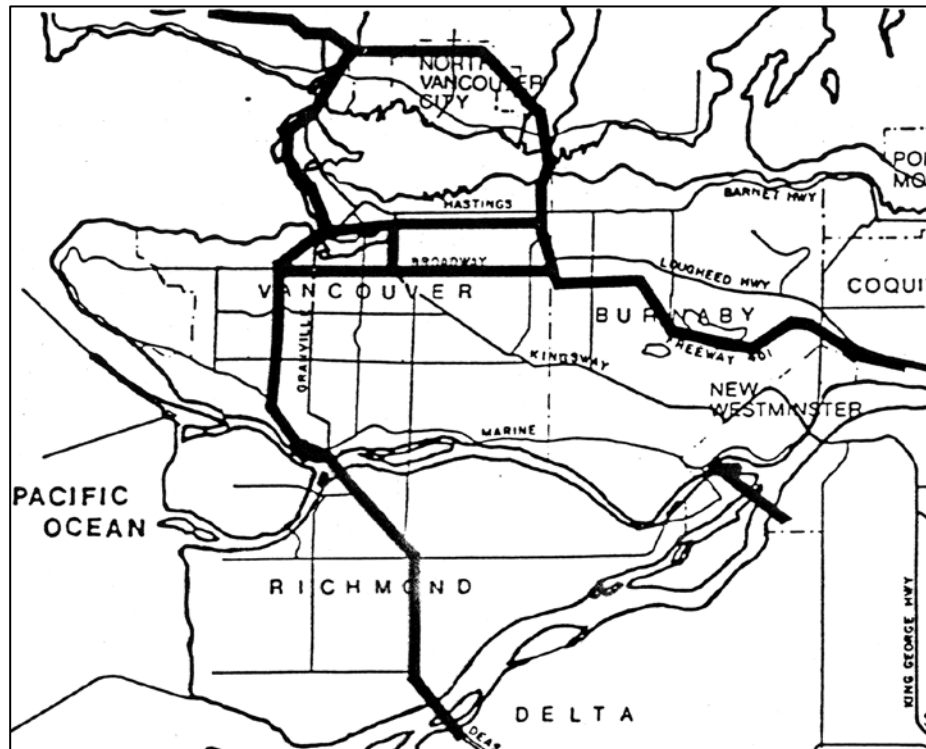
Figure 5.26: 1964 Wilbur Smith Plan (Pendakur 1972, 47).

Vancouver Mayor Tom Campbell, who served as mayor from 1966 -1972 was to play a special part in the unfolding freeway fiasco that lasted from 1967 to 1972. Walter Hardwick in his own account of these events has suggested that Campbell has been given an undeservedly large portion of the blame for the situation that unfolded because the entire freeway effort was initiated by Campbell's predecessors, and especially, the former Mayor Bill Rathie (Hardwick, 1974). Rathie was a businessman who supported redevelopment of the East End and was a staunch advocate of bringing freeways into downtown and he remerged later in the process to once again

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[15] While this was going on the business community of Vancouver was actively trying to encourage the redevelopment of False Creek for new uses focused on residential and commercial uses, and the real estate development arm of the Canadian Pacific Railway was pushing to have its large holdings in the area rezoned for this purpose, this was one of the reasons that the business community began to lose confidence in the NPA and chose instead to begin supporting a rival political party. The early proposals for false creek are examined in th next chapter.

provoke the conflict in 1972, so in a sense, Hardwick is quite correct that Rathie deserves part of the blame. At the same time however, this view seems to ignore the very significant lapses in judgment shown by Campbell throughout this process, and the role that his ill-considered statements played in turning the public against the its own government.

Tom Campbell was a polarizing political figure who came to be known by his supporters as "Tom Terrific," while his detractors referred to him as "Tom Terrible." Born and raised in the East End, Campbell had become a self-made millionaire, making a fortune in real estate development. One of his most visible projects is the Imperial Towers building, a 32 story West End apartment tower completed in 1962. When completed, this structure was allegedly the tallest building in Western Canada.

Figure 5.27: Detail of Freeway Plan for Downtown Vancouver (City of Vancouver Archive, 1968). The freeway route endorsed by Gerald Sutton Brown in 1967 as it crosses Chinatown and then meets downtown Vancouver.

When the City Council announced that there would be a public meeting to discuss the freeway proposal, Tom Campbell objected. One of the operational conceits of the NPA party had always been that the business of running the city was best left in the hands of qualified experts who were best able to determine the correct course of action, an approach that rejected the need for public involvement in the decision process. Campbell who was known for frequently being absent from city council meetings (Davis, 1997) when told about the need to hold public meetings over the

freeway plan, called this demand a *"public disgrace and a tempest in a Chinese teapot"* [16](Ley, 1992) and complained *"do we have to hire a playhouse to put on a puppet show for objectors?"* (Ley, 1992).

Despite the objections of the Mayor, the meeting went forward. As structured, the meeting would allow for the city to first make its case and present the testimony of its assembled experts, before allowing a slate of 22 different organizations to each present their own questions and objections. This meeting took place over two separate nights and came to be known as "The Great Freeway Debate" (Pendakur, 1972).

The meeting got off to a rough start. Facilities for the assembled ground were inadequate for the large turnout and gathered crowds had to be divided into separate rooms with an audio feed in order to accommodate the audience. Meanwhile, the panel of experts assembled began with lengthy yet vague presentations describing the merits of their plans without addressing any of the numerous questions and objections that had been the subject of public discussions in the intervening months since the proposal had first been unveiled. In response to these conditions, the crowd began to interrupt the speakers. These hecklers, however, were not shouting out insults, but instead were making pointed questions that targeted specific weaknesses in the work of the experts and suggesting that the audience was well informed and had come not for explanations, but for answers which they were not getting. The experts called by the city were unresponsive and continued to only speak in vague generalities. The Mayor and about half the City Council grew weary of the constant heckling during the presentations by their chosen panel of experts so they stood up and stormed out of the meeting (Pendakur 1972).

Rather than disband at this point, however Walter Hardwick took the stage and patiently addressed the remaining City Council members and the gathered crowd of 600 people. Hardwick, though not yet a member of the Vancouver Government in 1967, nevertheless played a clear role in leading and focusing the opposition to the freeway efforts. He explained what the city proposal actually meant for the city and why this was a bad idea and why it was important for people to remain involved. He explained how independent researchers from Stanford

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[16] The phrase *"tempest in a Chinese Teapot"* appears to have been intended to encourage people to disregard the freeway issue on grounds that it would only be adversely impacting the Chinese community. While this did not take hold, it does seem to suggest a certain callous or even racist attitude towards the Chinese by Tom Campbell.

University had examined the freeway study and found it deficient in terms of how the basic issues had been framed at the very outset, thereby challenging the validity of the entire effort. Hardwick then distributed to the crowd a hand out he had prepared explaining the proposal and why it should be opposed. Setty Pendakur also addressed the crowd to help explain the situation. These efforts help to calm down the crowd (Pendakur, 1972).

By storming out of the meeting Tom Campbell may have thought that he was bringing the event to a close and drawing an end to the public dissent, at least for that evening, but instead by leaving he managed to create an opportunity for Walter Hardwick to further establish himself as a public figure in the community and use this gathering to educate the public, effectively intensifying the public awareness of the freeway debates and what was at stake.

Perhaps Tom Campbell had gotten wind of what had developed and so decided to to the meeting which was still in progress, along with his delegation. The meeting got back on track, but eventually adjourned before all interested parties could speak, eventually resulting in another meeting. In the aftermath of this first meeting, Tom Campbell tried to portray the nights events to the press in terms that would discredit the opposition, describing the meeting as a "near riot." The interpretation which Setty Pendakur has given to this meeting however was that this event was the point at which the citizens of Vancouver first began to speak out and demand an active place in decisions impacting the city (Pendakur, 1972).

While this is an interesting perspective, especially given the fact that this meeting predates the establishment of SPOTA and their successful effort in 1968 to oppose the urban renewal process, this claim overlooks the much earlier efforts by the Chinese Benevolent Association and other organized groups in the Chinatown and Strathcona districts to stop the urban renewal process. The Chinese Benevolent Association and then later, the Chinese Property Owners Association were amongst the groups who had demanded that their voices be heard, and while these efforts were largely rebuffed by the city, their persistent efforts nevertheless had played a significant role in encouraging the city to hold the meetings which came to be known as the Great Freeway Debate. Pendakur is still correct to see in this event a watershed moment, however because even if prior efforts to oppose the city had been taken, this event represents a point in the process during which the concerns of the citizens began to actually register, and that the citizen protests became a citywide concern.

The follow up meeting to address the uncompleted business of November 23 took place on December 7, 1967. At this meeting 22 organizations presented their briefs regarding the freeway proposals. Out of this group only two organizations presented reports in favor of the project, one of which was an professional organization representing the traffic engineers. The other organization to come out in favor of the freeway was the Town Planning Commission, chaired by Dr. Peter Oberlander, a popular and respected planning professor at the University of British Columbia who had played a significant role in the establishment of their planning program (Pendakur, 1972).

Oberlander first addressed the gathered audience by reading a brief that came out in support of the freeway, a surprise that silenced the audience since this seemed to violate his own known planning principles, appearing to represent a radical reversal in the beliefs and values he had advocated throughout his career. However, once he completed the reading of the findings of the commission, he announced that he himself was resigning from his position on the Town Planning Commission. Facing the stunned audience he proceeded to describe, in his own view, why the freeway proposal was inadequate in terms of its planning. One issue that he appears to have been the first to raise was the basic problem of funding, that the freeway as proposed would cost $480 million dollars, yet the proposal had only accounted for a small portion of this, even though it had included the funds that the federal government would be expected to contribute. He also expressed his view that the city was going about planning in a backwards order in which it was first proposing a freeway and then trying to convince people that this is what the city needed, instead of approaching this as part of a balanced overall plan for the city that also accounted for other needs. For his stance and his remarks the crowd gave him a standing ovation (MacKenzie, 1984; Pendakur, 1972).

Following the second meeting of the Great Freeway Debate, in January of 1968 the City Council voted to reject the freeway proposal, and so the freeway issue languished but did not yet completely die. It is hard to know precisely what it was ultimately responsible for this change of heart. While there was substantial public opposition to the proposal, there is at least some reason to suggest that the issues raised by Peter Oberlander were particularly significant. While the bad feelings and finger pointing could be overlooked in Ottawa where decisions regarding funding would need to be made, the accusation that the budget was not adequate, to the tune of several

hundred million dollars, was not something which could so easily be ignored by the federal government. One indication that this issue of funding could have been the major reason the freeway proposal was defeated in 1967 is that when this question was resolved in 1972, the freeway effort came back to life. However by then, conditions were beginning to change in Vancouver.

Changing conditions between the first and second rounds of the freeway fight

The continuing conflict motivated the citizens of Vancouver to establish in 1968 two new political parties committed to challenging the NPA for control of the local government. One of these parties, the Committee Of Progressive Electors (COPE), was a far left leaning party, popular with the working class residents of Vancouver and lead by a popular local attorney, military veteran and avowed socialist, Harry Rankin. Rankin had already been elected to City Council in 1966, and the establishment of COPE can be considered an effort to expand and solidify his power base. COPE has continued to play an active role in Vancouver politics. The second party also established in 1968, called The Electors Action Movement (TEAM) consisted of a white collar mixture of local academics and professionals. While also reform minded, TEAM was also more centrist in its goals and values than COPE. TEAM secured two seats on the City Council, electing in 1968 local businessman Art Philips and local geography Professor Walter Hardwick. No seats changed during the 1970 election. Thus by 1971 when the freeway fight resumed, the NPA party of Mayor Tom Campbell was facing declining support on the City Council, making controversial development initiatives even harder to pursue (Gutstein, 1983; Tennant, 1980).

In the meantime, while the freeway proposals had been stalled for the time being, the citizen opposition also attained another crucial victory in the successful effort to finally stop the urban renewal process in the East End. By 1969, SPOTA had managed to terminate the urban renewal process, a significant event that confirmed that citizen opposition to large scale development efforts could succeed in Vancouver.

Nearby in the Gastown district, located between Chinatown and the harbor, Mayor Tom Campbell also was facing another controversy that further undermined his credibility. Tom Campbell seemed comfortable taking polarizing positions and his stance against the hippies and

the yippies who had flocked to Vancouver fits this overall pattern. Campbell encouraged police arrests of loiterers and expressed disdain for draft dodgers who were coming to Vancouver instead of serving their country. And he pledged to clean up the streets and crack down on drug use. Rumor had it that thanks to Tom Campbell one could be arrested simply for having long hair. These issues finally came to a head on the night of June 7, 1971, with the eruption of an event that has come to be known as the Gastown Riot. The riot originated from police efforts to break up a gathering of protestors who were objecting to a widespread police crackdown on illegal drugs. Complicating the situation was an ongoing tactic being used by the Vancouver police at this time of infiltrating the drug culture with undercover police officers, leaving the police open to claims that it was their own people who had provoked the riot. Police in riot gear and on horseback tried to disperse the gathered crowd of protestors and curious onlookers, estimated at around 1200 people, resulting in broken windows, broken bones, 79 arrests, lawsuits in response to police brutality, and eventually an major independent inquiry. The inquiry apportioned some blame for the incident to the two individuals who had organized the protest, but surprisingly the inquiry also assigned blame for the incident to the police department, characterizing the event as a police riot. Tom Campbell continued to take a strong stance in favor of the police department, despite news footage taken during the riot that shows numerous examples of excessive force, including a police officer smashing a car window with a police baton, followed by dragging the vehicle occupant out of his vehicle in order to arrest him (Aronsen, 2010; Davis 1997).[17]

The strong stance that Mayor Campbell took up against the hippies and yippies and the American draft dodgers did not actually seem to undermine his own political base of support in Vancouver. However the freeway debate heated back up again in 1972, in the ensuing public meetings, Campbell and the NPA majority on the City Council faced a large and active opposition. Part of the reason for this was that Campbell began to again employ polarizing tactics, now targeted at a majority of Vancouver residents.

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[17] see also video online report from cbc digital archive at http://archives.cbc.ca/lifestyle/pastimes/topics/652-3589/ This clip begins with a reporter interviewing Art Philips, a City Council Alderman who as it happens would be the next mayor of Vancouver. Philips discusses his view of how the Tom Campbell and others had been provoking an atmosphere of tension and even hatred that Phillips believed should be stopped. The footage of the riot itself seems to confirm that the police act with excessive force in some instances.

Pinkos, Commies and Hamburgers

By late in 1971 the three levels of government had finally arrived at a workable arrangement to share the immense costs of the freeway system. The freeway had become an appealing project at the federal level because of the jobs it was expected to create while the nation was mired in an economic slowdown, with an election pending. This time the city was pushing for a revised proposal that focused on a controversial third crossing: a combination viaduct and tunnel linking the downtown of Vancouver to the far shore of the Burrard Inlet. The public opposition quickly realized that while this section did not include the controversial plan to build a freeway through the East End and through Chinatown, supporting the third crossing would make the rest of a larger freeway system inevitable. Perhaps such a tactic would have succeeded in 1967, however by 1972 the dynamic was different because three of the City Council seats were held by opposition members, including now, Walter Hardwick. Meanwhile Mayor Tom Campbell was losing the support of some of his own people (see figure 5.28).

Mayor Tom Campbell of course was not eager to repeat the experience of the previous freeway debate which he had clearly lost. His first tactic was to attempt to seize the high ground by announcing on October 21, 1971 that the construction on the project would begin the following spring, this was before City Council had voted on the project. Then on November 24, the Premier of British Columbia had announced that the funding issues had been resolved. The last step was getting the City Council to sign off on the project. Walter Hardwick, now on the City Council was trying to once again arrange an open public meeting to discuss the situation; meanwhile, through a series of political and financial accounting maneuvers Tom Campbell attempted to prevent another such meeting from taking place.

It took time to resolve the issue of whether the City Council would hold another public meeting. While this was still being fought over, an informal public meeting was held on the evening of January 16, 1972, which none of the supporters of the freeway proposal attended, but which was attended by three City Council Aldermen: Art Phillips, Walter Hardwick and Harry Rankin. Approximately 700 people attended the meeting, indicating that the public opposition to the project was strong. Harry Rankin explained his concern that once the city was committed to the freeway construction process, the costs involved would be so high that the city would be unable to consider spending money on other alternatives, such as an improved public transportation

system. This became the defining issue around which the opposition united this time. Meanwhile Walter Hardwick had to wait and see how his proposal for a formal public meeting would go; the City Council Vote on this issue would be close (Gutstein, 1975).

Figure 5.28: Alternative freeway route proposed in response to Chinatown protests (Gutstein 1975) and video image of Chinatown freeways protest (City of Vancouver archives). In this scheme the freeway is diverted around Chinatown, making a big loop down through the declining industrial area overlooking False Creek before heading back north to a proposed third crossing.

As Mayor Tom Campbell tried to force the third crossing proposal through without public involvement, his situation however began to unravel. One of his allies, Alderman Ernie Broome, unexpectedly switched sides and on February 7, 1972 voted in favor of having the meeting; this one vote was enough to swing the decision in favor of holding the meeting. The City Council promptly announced that it would hold a public meeting on March 15, 1972 in which interested parties would have the opportunity to address the City Council, this time at the Eric Hamber School Auditorium which was able to accommodate an audience of 1000. Having failed to prevent the meeting from happening, Tom Campbell then tried to restrict the list of those who would be allowed to address the City Council to recognized experts, stating at a news conference, that this time, only those with a relevant expertise would be permitted to speak, that "*Rangitangs, hamburgers, pinkos, or troublemakers"* would be denied the opportunity to speak. He went on to explain that a hamburger was an individual who had not completed a college education. Campbell followed this remark with a comment that he might be overruled by the City Council, and the floor might be opened up to *"Maoist, Pinkos and Rangitangs"* (Gutstein, 1975; Pendakur, 1972).

These comments proved to be good copy for the newspapers, and a source of bad publicity for Tom Campbell. His hamburger remark hurt him in part because by his definition the hamburger label applied to the overwhelming majority of residents of the city, and people were naturally offended by the view that their own opinions did not deserve to be heard. Meanwhile the term "Hamburger" made for memorable jokes that further undermined the credibility of the Mayor. Allegedly, McDonalds Hamburgers offered Tom Campbell an honorary degree from its Hamburger University employee training program. Students at the University of British Columbia began wearing placards that read "*Hamburgers of the World Unite.*" The Vancouver Province newspaper ran a story on February 11, 1972 with the headline: *"Burgers Muster to Fry Mayor"* (Pendakur, 1972 p 135). The Vancouver Sun ran an Headline that read "*Maoists Pinkos and Hamburgers*" and then described how Mayor Tom Campbell claimed that his third crossing effort was "*being sabotaged by Maoists, Communists, pinkos, left wingers and hamburgers,*" and that he had claimed that the defeat of his proposal "*would be a victory for the Communist Party of Canada*" (Gutstein 1975, 165).

This strange apparent red baiting by Tom Campbell may have had several targets. On the one hand, one of the most outspoken critics of this latest proposal was Harry Rankin, a member of the City Council who identified himself as a socialist. It also seems plausible that the term Maoists was a crude attempt to disparage the Chinese community of Vancouver and to suggest that they somehow were outsiders who did not share the same values as the rest of the city. For whatever reason, these tactics proved not only unsuccessful, they seemed to backfire, turning the city against Campbell and his third crossing. [18]

The Federal Government intervened and suggested that it saw nothing wrong with hearing what the community had to say, an indication perhaps that they were less than impressed by Tom Terrific. The meeting went forward as planned on March 15, 1972 and in one marathon session lasting six hours the public had its say. Once again the argument was made that the tremendous expense of the freeway proposal would deprive the city from pursuing other badly needed

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[18] Perhaps the best indication of the impact of this mist step is its reach and staying power. Writing in 1996 for the British Columbia Bureau of the Globe & Mail newspaper, in an article about a how the current race for mayor had gotten out of hand, reporter Robert Matas cites the "*Maoists, pinkos and hamburger*" comments as a textbook case of how not to behave. Curiously the name of the mayor is seemingly forgotten, as are the details of the controversy, but the words he uttered are still remembered. (Matas, 1996).

objectives, such as improving mass transit. Meanwhile, over the course of the meeting it became apparent that the opposition to the third crossing had grown to include new allies who shared in these concerns. The local professional organizations of the Architecture and Planning Institutes[19] of British Columbia each presented their own findings arguing against the Third Crossing. The Downtown Business Association, a powerful organization which had previously been a strong supporter of the NPA switched sides, agreeing that the city needed better mass transit and not expensive new freeways. The tremendous outpouring of public opposition once again made an impact. (Gutstein, 1975; Hardwick, 1974; Pendakur, 1972)

The Federal government had decided that it had had enough and three weeks after the marathon public meeting, on April 4 it announced that all funding for further freeway construction in Vancouver had been withdrawn (Gutstein, 1975). In the aftermath of this defeat, Mayor Tom Campbell chose to not seek reelection in the December 1972 election. The business community in Vancouver however continued to be a powerful force in electoral politics in Vancouver. Faced with growing dissatisfaction with the performance of the NPA Party, the major business interests in Vancouver reviewed the changing political landscape and concluded that they would be better off with the more centrist TEAM in power, than the further leftward leaning COPE party, so they threw their support behind TEAM. After winning two seats on the City Council in 1968[20] and then holding onto them in 1970, TEAM managed to secure an impressive majority in the City Council in the 1972 election, winning eight out of ten seats, as well as the mayor's race, and a majority on the Parks Board. The first official act of the new government when it convened for January of 1973, was the termination of Gerald Sutton Brown (Gutstein, 1983; Ley 1980,).

Analysis: An interpretation of the meaning behind the multiple freeway proposals
In his comprehensive study of the freeway fight in Vancouver, Setty Pendakur argues that Gerald Sutton Brown was involved in the various different plans, either directly, or through his considerable power he had amassed through carefully selected appointments and developed contacts. Furthermore Pendakur argues that the multiple plans generated were all versions of the

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[19] Considering that the Planning Institute of British Columbia was first established by Gerald Sutton Brown, this rejection is particularly noteworthy.
[20] One of these first two seats won by TEAM in 1968 was won by the popular and influential Walter Hardwick.

same basic scheme (Pendakur, 1972). For the most part this view is reasonably accurate, although there are also a few key differences to a couple of the plans that warrant a closer look.

The various configurations do have a similar overall structure, and for the purposes of the issues being investigated by Pendakur, these similarities are enough to support his claims. However, I decided to look at the matter from a different perspective by taking the several key plans and comparing them by compiling them onto a single image. Using Photoshop techniques unavailable at the time Pendakur was completing his study, I was able to superimpose different proposed freeway routes on a single satellite image of Vancouver. The different plans of the various schemes have enough detail corresponding with features of Vancouver that it is possible to make fine scale adjustments and then fairly precisely compare these proposed routes; when this is done a curious pattern begins to emerge. Although the looping structure of the roads is similar in geometry, their specific location is notably different, especially as this concerns the freeway routes proposed for other portions of the city than Chinatown or Strathcona (see figures 5.25, 5.26. 5.29).

The 1959 Sutton Brown Plan proposed a route that would have gone through more affluent areas, including even the well to do Shaughnessy neighborhood. This plan however was kept secret, from the public, although it is part of the official record, which suggests that the City Council was aware of its significance. In contrast to this, the route presented to the public in 1967 proposed a series of traffic arteries cutting through the poorer parts of town, including the East End and the other areas identified in the 1957 urban renewal study as urban blight trouble spots.

Also of note is the extent to which these routes bear no relationship to the proposed expressway that had featured in the major street plan of Harland Bartholomew (Bartholomew, August 1947). In fairness to Gerald Sutton Brown it should be pointed out the Bartholomew was not responding to a highway system that approached the borders of the city, while this later development was something that Gerald Sutton Brown was required to address. Nevertheless there are advantages to the Bartholomew scheme that still are relevant to the conditions that later existed. Bartholomew chose a strategy that minimized the impact of the freeway on surrounding residential areas, first by locating as much of it as possible in the industrial area to the southeast

264

of False Creek and then by minimizing further impact further from the urban core. Had Sutton Brown employed a similar strategy this would have reduced the impact on both shores of False Creek while avoiding Strathcona and Chinatown entirely.
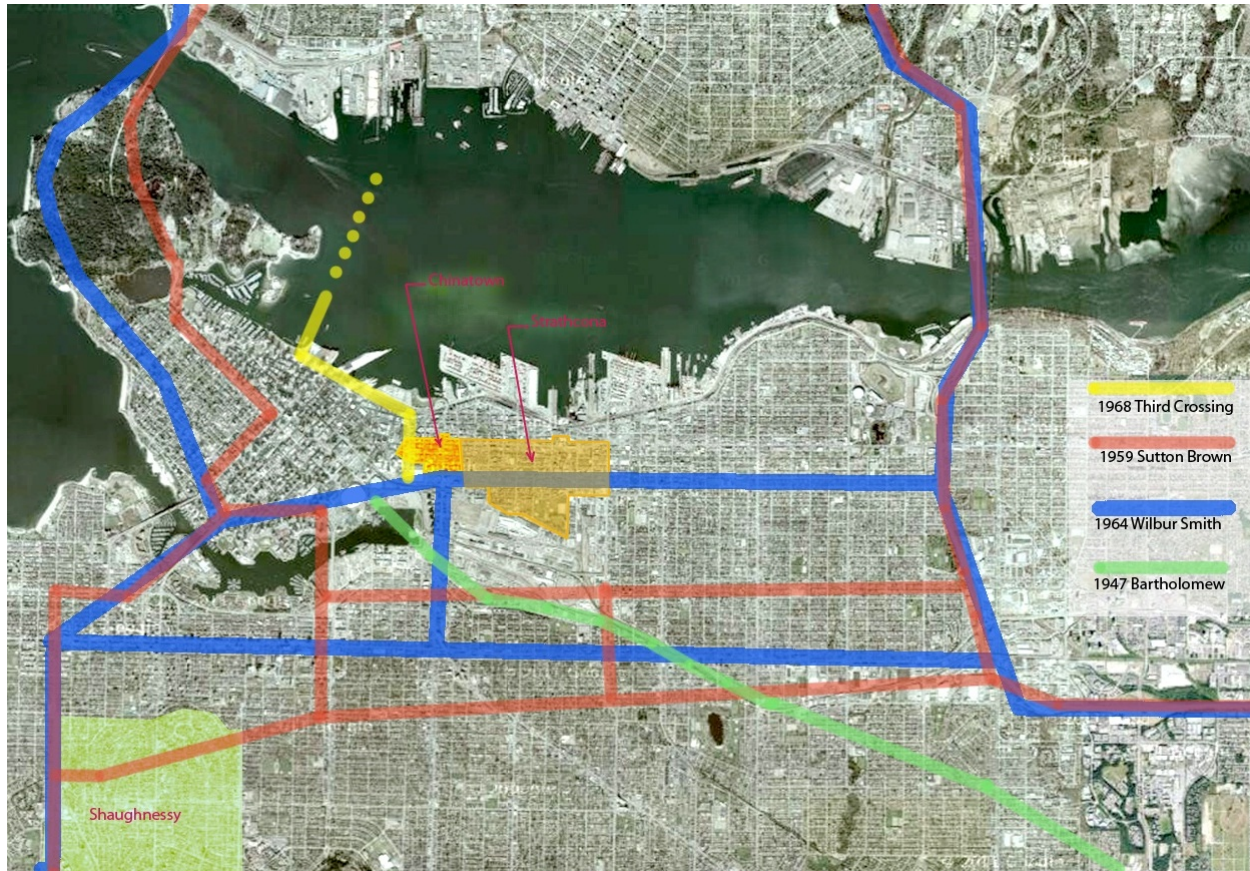
Figure 5.29: Composite image of four freeway proposals (Base map by Google Earth, color and labels by Robert Walsh). Blue shows 1964 Wilbur Smith proposal, red shows 1959 Gerald Sutton Brown Proposal, Green Shows Bartholomew proposal, and yellow shows the proposed Third Crossing, 1968.

As Bartholomew's proposed freeway moves further to the southeast the impact of the route is a bit harder to pin down, but his plans suggest that he intended the freeway to follow a route that had already been established by the railway, which in this part of Vancouver had required cutting a large trench in order to keep the tracks level. What is unclear is whether locating the freeway alongside the tracks would have been feasible under the existing conditions or whether perhaps this trench would have had to have been made wider. Either way, the impact on the surrounding

neighborhood would have been substantially less than the elevated system proposed by Sutton Brown running through the East End (Bartholomew, 1947).[21]

The issue of why the proposed routes proposed by Gerald Sutton Brown shifted repeatedly is more difficult to interpret, especially since available information surrounding these secretive plans is limited. The decision of Gerald Sutton Brown to decline to be interviewed in regard to these events after he had retired also contributes to this lack of reliable information (Langford, 2011). In confronting these issues, one interpretation has been offered that these discrepancies were the result of different branches of government failing to see eye to eye (MacKenzie, 1984) yet the available evidence and the results of the new graphic analysis of the various plans begins to suggest a viable alternative scenario that is considerably less flattering towards Sutton Brown.

In advancing his efforts to bring both highways and urban renewal to Vancouver, and the East Side in particular, Gerald Sutton Brown was following a course of action that had important precedents in the United States, yet these American precedents were also encountering public opposition of which Sutton Brown had to be aware. For example, the effort to build the Embarcadero Freeway in San Francisco was provoking strenuous public protests during 1955 and 1956 (Klemek, 2011). It therefore would have been apparent to Sutton Brown that he would be likely to encounter opposition to his freeways plans and it would not have been unreasonable for him to devise plans for addressing this very early on. Meanwhile over time, he had been amassing considerable power within the government of Vancouver, and there are indications that he did not always get along with or agree with the positions taken by the City Council (Langford, 2011; Pendakur, 1972). Sutton Brown had planned fairly early on to situate the freeway where he eventually proposed it should be built, alongside the edge of the East End urban renewal area, yet after presenting this as a likely eventuality in his 1957 Vancouver Redevelopment Study, he did not make the freeway portion of the plan a public issue for ten more years. The reason for this is unclear. Possibly Sutton Brown expected the urban renewal process to basically dismantle the local opposition to his freeway before the freeway work got started. By dispersing and reorganizing the local community living in the vicinity of the freeway he wanted to build, he

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[21] One of the adverse impacts of freeways on an urban environment is the sound produces. A freeway carved though the ground contains this sound where as an elevated freeway allows the sound to spread more easily.

could have expected any freeway opposition to be less organized or effective, which might also explain why he sought to replace the tightly knit Strathcona community with something lower density and lacking identity. Although this may also simply reflect his ideology as a modernist planner, his opposition to rehabilitation would also make sense in such a scenario, since rehabilitation would not have achieved this goal of dismantling the existing community, thereby confusing or clearing away the opposition to his pending freeway scheme

Meanwhile, the City Council was presented with the 1957 urban redevelopment study, yet this proposal was not officially endorsed by the City Council until 1959. As it happened, 1959 was also the year of the Sutton Brown secret proposal to cut a freeway through Shaugnessy and other reasonably affluent areas, a proposal that the City Council would have been aware of even though it was withheld from the public. Had this proposal been implemented instead of the East End Scheme, then the government would have been facing citizen opposition from the portions of the city that mattered to them in their own re-election efforts.[22] If his 1957 Vancouver Redevelopment Plan was being hung up over concerns having to do with the freeway route, then proposing this other alternative route through the wealthier part of town perhaps would have suddenly made the original proposal more appealing to the City Council. If something along these lines is indeed what transpired, then this would be consistent with the subsequent unwillingness of the elected City officials to back down in the face of mounting citizen opposition in both the urban renewal fight and the freeway fight, or why the idea of dropping the freeway plan entirely never seemed to have been considered by the City Council.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that this interpretation may not be correct; in the absence of more definite information these inferences cannot be confirmed with absolute certainty. One of the hazards of engaging in secretive planning and negotiations that are never fully explained to the public is that the resulting lack of full disclosure can open the door to the suggestion that the government has not been acting in good faith, whether this suggestion is fully deserved or not. Perhaps at some future date additional information will come to light that will

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[22] The election system for the city council was an at large election and to have a chance of being reelected, candidates needed the financial resources of the wealthiest families and businesses in the City. This is one of the reasons that there is comparatively little turnover in Vancouver elections, and why with the support of the business community, the NPA party was able to dominate local politics for 35 years.

establish more definitively what the underlying motivations were of Gerald Sutton Brown and the Government of Vancouver concerning these freeway fight and the urban renewal effort. If there is one firm conclusion that can be drawn from available evidence it is that the official record of these events does not tell the entire story.

Discussion: the impact of the freeway fight

> Without doubt, the most important thing that never happened to the City of Vancouver was the construction of the freeways, bridges and tunnels proposed in the 1960s. We were told then that they were necessary to handle the predicted traffic, for the health of our economy and even to preserve our way of life.
>
> By not building the freeway system, Vancouver has become one of the most livable places in the world.
> - Gordon Price, August 11, 2004.

The relationship that Vancouver has to freeways is a bit more complex than the position articulated by Gordon Price. First of all, while Vancouver is not traversed by a system of freeways, a freeway system nevertheless links Vancouver to the rest of British Columbia, and to the United States, making the city part of a larger network that approaches the city from several directions. These freeways general stop near the city limits, although a three mile stretch of the TransCanada Highway actually runs within the city limits at the eastern edge of Vancouver (see figure 5.24).

Today a prevailing view within Vancouver regarding the city's lack of urban freeways is the notion that not only is this lack of freeways a good thing, but it actually is one of the reasons that Vancouver is an appealing city. However, while the city lacks freeways, the relationship that this has to the livability of the city involves additional considerations as well. Vancouver lacks freeways today not through a lack of trying, but because the campaign to construct a freeway system across the city was based on a poorly conceived configuration and also because the secretive handling of the freeway plans by the city exacerbated public mistrust of the local government, a problem that had already become apparent during the urban renewal effort. The basic concept of livability only came to be associated with the lack of freeways in Vancouver after the freeway fights were over. While Gordon Price is correct to imply that the opposition to the freeways played an essential role in the future of Vancouver, it is important to recognize that

as important as this may have been, the challenge of transforming Vancouver into the livable city it is today also involved a staggering amount of additional effort after the freeway fights were over, work devising new strategies of residential development and the creation of a network of public parks and amenities. Possibly the lack of freeways contributed to the recent increased density of development downtown and the vitality that this has created, yet the success of the West End preceded the freeway issue, so this may not actually be related.

The impact that the freeway fights had on the development and planning of Vancouver is also complex. One difficulty in understanding the role of local politics in the development of Vancouverism is that the transition of the leadership of Gerald Sutton Brown to the new regime that followed his departure was abrupt in a political sense, but the culture of planning in Vancouver had already begun to change even before his departure. While Gerald Sutton Brown remained in a position of power until 1973, by 1968 his most significant achievements, the establishment of the Planning Department, his comprehensive zoning ordinance and the transformation of the West End, were behind him. Before his departure signs of an emerging new direction in planning were coming from several directions. One example of this that is examined later in the dissertation is a 1971 report by produced collaboration planners and local architects incorporating several emerging trends including patterns based upon the work of Christopher Alexander (False Creek Study Group, 1971). Around this time, business organizations began to issue detailed reports demanding action by the city in addressing the changing economy and the need to rehabilitate False Creek, while a new generation of architects were beginning to propose ambitious new strategies for meeting this challenge revitalizing the declining industrial area around False Creek.[23] While these important emerging developments were going on, the relationship of the public in Vancouver to the practice of planning was also evolving in response not just to the failures of Planning Department, but also due to the initiative of planners independently operating at a regional scale.

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[23] This is examined in the next chapter.

Figure 5.30: Vancouver's Chinatown today. (Downloaded from SUNN website: Sustainable Urban Neighborhood Network: http://sunnvancouver.wordpress.com/quartiers/chinatown-revitalization/

5.4 Conclusion: Architecture, Urbanism and Changing Values in Vancouver

For Mike Harcourt the fight over Strathcona would be the beginning of a lengthy career in politics; he would later serve three terms as City Alderman, then three terms as Mayor of Vancouver and finally two terms as Premier of British Columbia. During the Strathcona fight Harcourt was "a young legal-aid lawyer" (Wai, 1998), and he joined the fight after it was underway, after projects for stage one and two had been constructed. The following recollection from one of his later memoirs offers a unique perspective into the urban renewal fight:

> SPOTA [24] was a citizen's action committee formed to fight Vancouver city hall's third stage of "urban renewal"-that I960s euphemism meaning developers had convinced city council to expropriate homes, tear down old neighbourhoods, and replace them with freeways, parking garages and desolate looking housing projects.
>
> Thanks to pressure from developers and their political friends on council-Mayor Tom Campbell and the Socred-supported Non-Partisan Association councilors-the city planned to drive a six-lane freeway through the heart of what is now one of the most liveable and attractive cities on the face of the earth.
>
> Their plan would have turned Vancouver's marvelous waterfront into a concrete barrier - not unlike Toronto's ugly Gardiner Expressway - blocking public access to the water with the freeway and a wall of concrete high rise office towers. The freeway would have also

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[24] SPOTA is an abbreviation for the Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association.

wiped out about 1,200 homes in Strathcona, Chinatown and East Vancouver and erased the Gastown heritage area.

SPOTA was saying "Go to hell-you are not building that freeway through my neighbourhood!" They circulated petitions and harassed council. They bused three-to-four hundred elderly Chinese to a demonstration at city hall. Shirley Chan[25] was there, leading the effort, side-by-side with her parents. They sat in front of the bulldozers until the city backed off.

SPOTA wanted the city's development focus on "neighbourhood improvement" rather than "urban renewal." Instead of huge urban renewal housing projects, we put forward proposals for affordable housing built on a much smaller scale. We demanded citizen involvement. Our plan accommodated a diverse mixture of incomes. It called for restoration of older neighbourhoods instead of destruction. It called for renovating public areas and the preservation of heritage sites like Chinatown and Gastown. It also called for more public transit and less reliance on freeways and cars.
…
Frankly, SPOTA is the single most significant reason why Vancouver is such a profoundly liveable city today. We do not have the freeways and nobody really misses them. Instead of a single, concrete mass, we have twenty neighbourhoods that make up our city, each with a distinct identity - their own libraries, their own community centres, shopping centres, local churches, local sports and recreational sites and boys-and-girls clubs. But it all goes back to the battle over Strathcona.
        - Mike Harcourt, *A Measure of Defiance*. 1996 p 16-17

While Harcourt passionately believes in the SPOTA cause, the situation was both different and more complex than his portrayal of events would suggest. The issue was not simply that the freeway proposal threatened to destroy 1200 homes. By the time Harcourt got involved, the city had already destroyed the homes of 3300[26] people living in Strathcona; SPOTA was established in a desperate last ditch effort to prevent a much larger final stage in the urban renewal process that would have wiped out the rest of the neighborhood even without the freeway issue (Gutstein 1975; Wai, 1998,).

The section of waterfront that the city was attempting to develop as a freeway was not the site of a future waterfront park, as implied by Harcourt, but instead a site that even now continues to be

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[25] Shirley Chan was 21 years old when SPOTA was founded in 1968. A Vancouver native who had grown up in the Chinatown community, Shirley Chan and her mother Mary Chan played a pivotal role in helping to organize and mobilize the residents of Strathcona and the Chinese community. Shirley Chan acted as interpreter for many of the Chinatown residents during meetings with high ranking government officials and continues to be a civic leader.
[26] Wai (1998) cites the figure as 2000 people. The figures cited here come from Gutstein, who lists 1600 people displaced in Phase I and 1730 people displaced in Phase II, both of which preceded Harcourt's involvement (Gutstein, 1975 p 168).

occupied by train yards and a ferry terminal. The threat to Gastown came not from the freeways but from a massive private development plan called Project 200[27]. While the rest of the city has lately become known for its livability, this assessment is not based upon current conditions in Strathcona. Strathcona continues to be an acutely troubled section of the city (Christoff 2007). The claim made that the SPOTA effort increased the livability of the city is a substantially more complex question, involving outside factors as well. Certainly SPOTA and the fallout from their protests played an immense role in redefining the direction of city planning in Vancouver, yet this is only part of the reason Vancouver is now a livable city (see figure 5.30).

The case of Strathcona is an interesting counterpoint to the case of the West End High Rise Boom because both occurred at the same time and both could be considered to have been pursued through an idiom of high Modernism, yet while the transformation of the West End can be judged a success based upon the vitality that continues to flourish there fifty years later, the effort to transform the East End should be judged a failure. What then explains the difference in outcomes?

One crucial difference could be a distinction between Modernist Architecture and Modernist Urbanism. The West End effort succeeded because it employed an approach where the primary set of values and methods focused on the application of Modernist architectural principles, but without imposing a Modernist Urbanism, choosing instead to introduce modernist buildings into an existing traditional neighborhood through numerous discrete architectural acts. The existing traditional street grid of the West End meanwhile remained unaffected. In contrast to this, in the East End, the intention was to wipe the slate clean, to replace the entire urban structure with a new urban configuration based upon Modernist Urbanism, in an approach where there is little concern for architectural distinctiveness in either the new buildings or the old, and even the pattern of streets was to be reconfigured.

In the West End there was no need to conduct exhaustive surveys of resident living conditions; instead market demand was adequate motivation for developers to buy out property owners at fair market rates, before consolidating sufficient property to pursue larger projects. All that was needed to set the situation moving was a relaxation of prior height limits that had up until this

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[27] Project 200 is one of three large private development projects examined in Chapter 6 of this research.

point constrained building development. The ensuing growth was then skillful managed by Gerald Sutton Brown and his planners through a combination of fine-tuned regulations and a carefully managed approval process.

In theory a similar development approach could have yielded a gradual transformation of the East End, raising questions as to why this did not happen there as well. The issue of land acquisition appears to have played a significant part. While much of the housing throughout the West End was rental property owned by affluent individuals living elsewhere in Vancouver, the ownership pattern throughout the East End involved numerous smaller properties often occupied by the actual owners. While the residents of the West End might have wanted to stay in their homes instead of seeing them demolished and replaced by a high rise apartment tower, realistically their ability as renters to prevent this from taking place was fairly minimal.[28] In the East End, where a tight knit community of diverse individuals had developed, working together to overcome as best they could the impact of neglect by the city, racial discrimination, industrial pollution and poverty, the residents had a strong reason to stay, not because of the value of their buildings, but because of the value of their community. It was anticipated by Gerald Sutton Brown that for larger developers, acquiring properties to develop as had occurred in the West End would not be easily accomplished in the East End, and in all likelihood, he was correct. This issue alone ruled out the application of a solution operating at the scale of Modernist architecture and made it an urban scale problem. Curiously, the solution proposed by Harland Bartholomew, which also happens to be the solution that was eventually embraced, was a rehabilitation and selective infill based approach that accepted the smaller grain structure of the existing neighborhood and worked within these constraints, instead of attempting to impose larger Modernist structures where they were not wanted. Faced with these issues, however, Gerald Sutton Brown opted instead to go larger in scale, focusing on the implementation of a scheme and an ideology based upon Modernist principles of urbanism, attempting to use the power of the state to force this on an unwilling public. Instead of attempting to develop order through establishment of tightly restrictive zoning requirements as had happened in the West End, Sutton Brown instead tried to create an overall order by repossessing homes, clearing and consolidating the property acquired and then populating this with standardized apartment structures.

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[28] There are even now still pockets of single family detached homes in the West End that have refused to succumb to development pressures for this very reason.

In fairness to Gerald Sutton Brown, it should be pointed out that in the East End he was attempting to find an urban solution to what he perceived to be an urban scale problem, through the application of what were considered to be appropriate models of the time. The 1957 Vancouver Development Report was published and then adopted by the Vancouver City Council several years before the first publication of Jane Jacobs's seminal critique of Modernist planning and development, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (Jacobs, 1961). It was while his efforts over the next decade to transform the East End struggled to advance that Modernist urbanism would come under intensifying attack.

Geography Professor and influential Vancouver City Council Alderman Walter Hardwick in 1974 observed that the problem with the redevelopment effort and the freeway effort was that these came a decade too late, when the city was moving away from the industrial economy that in his view had justified the need for urban redevelopment (Hardwick, 1974). This raises the question of whether it was a mistake in the end to delay the process of urban renewal by a decade while Gerald Sutton Brown and his associates prepared an updated version of the report Marsh had completed in 1950. It seems likely that a very different outcome would have transpired had Vancouver decided to proceed on the basis of the Leonard Marsh Plan, yet whether this outcome would have served the residents of Vancouver well seems doubtful, despite the observation made by Walter Hardwick. The larger point raised by Walter Hardwick is that Gerald Sutton Brown and his planners ran into trouble because they clung to ideas of urban planning and redevelopment even after those ideas had come under attack, that the urban redevelopment approach was a decade behind the times. It was not just the City of Vancouver that had changed; it was the public perception of urban renewal as a valid approach to poverty and urban blight that had changed.

Yet to simply suggest that Gerald Sutton Brown failed in his urban renewal efforts and in his highway schemes because he was behind the times or relied on a modernist urban design ideology that had begun to be challenged runs the risk of missing a different and potentially more significant point. Fundamentally Gerald Sutton Brown failed in the East end because he relied on his own abstract conceptual framework for redevelopment while ignoring the specific social and physical context that was an important part of the equation. It may never be known whether he was intentionally misrepresenting the existing conditions of the East End in his 1957

Redevelopment Study, and the film "To Build a Better City," or whether the views portrayed reflected his actual yet limited understanding of the situation. Nevertheless, a curious pattern underlies all of his work in the East End, beginning with the windshield check and the site interview process and carrying on through to effort to implement urban renewal, and this is that he approached his work not in a manner intended to reveal a better understanding of the needs of the community, but instead in a way that kept these concerns obscure, enabling him to build an argument supporting his preconceived and abstract conceptions of modern urbanism, without regard to their potential adverse impacts. By failing to understand the context, Sutton Brown failed to understand the qualities of place that existed in the East End despite its deteriorated conditions, qualities that emerged from the street facing configuration of closely packed individually owned homes, the small family run businesses, the households with multigenerational families, and the robust web of neighborhood friendships that had enabled this community to face the acute challenges it had endured. Meanwhile the new urban reality which Sutton Brown had proposed to replace this vibrant if also derelict urban structure was a new kind of urban entity that seems curiously placeless in character, it is an environment where the streets are barren and discrete apartment blocks sit dispersed in a sea of parking lots and empty public lawns. What he has proposed is an image of modernity that comes at a terrible price: a place that no longer has a history or sense of community and perhaps no longer a soul.

In contrast to the work of Gerald Sutton Brown, it is worthwhile to revisit the change of heart demonstrated by Harland Bartholomew and his attitude towards urban renewal in the East End. Like Sutton Brown and Leonard Marsh, Bartholomew had initially supported the concept of using urban renewal to revitalize the East End. Yet of the three men, Bartholomew alone reversed his position as he came to understand the situation in greater detail. Perhaps the positive qualities of the East End that Gerald Sutton Brown never appreciated are not apparent if one relies upon a superficial drive by analysis? For whatever reason, Bartholomew saw something that made him change his mind, something that lead him to conclude that the best course of action was to work with the community on their own terms, instead of assuming that he knew better than they did how they ought to be living, or what was worth preserving even as the city adapted to changing conditions. Unfortunately his advice fell on an unreceptive audience, even though in the end he was vindicated.

This issue of the distinction between an approach to design and planning based upon abstract concepts and ideals versus an approach that emphasizes sensitive responses to the particular cultural and physical context is a thread that weaves through the entire story of the development of Vancouverism, and it continues to impact how the Vancouverism phenomena is framed, understood and applied today. The overwhelming tendency of writers and researchers wrestling with these issues today has been to try to define Vancouverism in a way that acknowledges the physical context and the unique cultural conditions while largely overlooking the role that these have had in the development of this form of urbanism, thereby supporting a conclusion that the value of Vancouverism derives from a universal principle that has merit regardless of context.[29] However, because architects are especially concerned with issues of physical and social context, ignoring these issues has tended to downplay or even exclude from examination the part played by the local architects in the extended process of evolution that resulted in Vancouverism. Following the breakdown in planning that occurred under Gerald Sutton Brown, a reversal occurred and the issues of social and physical context began to feature more prominently in the development of Vancouver and with this the role of the architects came to play a more central and significant role. This begins to suggest that the value of Vancouverism is not accounted for by universal principles, but by the way that the urban forms seen in Vancouver are especially well suited to their context. This perspective then begins to suggest that what matters here is not an abstract conception of urbanism or a new set of rules, but the process of design, development, improvement and evolution that enabled the local architects of Vancouver to formulate their own locally appropriate solutions.

The end of the Gerald Sutton Brown Planning Era therefore matters to the development of Vancouverism because a break with conventional practice based upon abstract modernist principles was needed before a context centered method of planning and architectural design could begin to thrive in Vancouver. The next chapter examines four crucial projects in which a new generation Vancouver based architects began to assert themselves, exploring a range of important new precedents even before the planning culture of Vancouver was realigned and rehabilitated under the TEAM government and Ray Spaxman. Instead of clinging to abstract ideals in the manner of Gerald Sutton Brown, the emerging architects of Vancouver began to

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[29] This issue is explored in detail in the final chapter which considers the contemporary application of Vancouverism to other cities, including: San Francisco, Dubai and Portland, Oregon .

point a new way forward by relating their work to the local social and physical context,

eventually devising a new set of locally appropriate urban and architectural strategies now

known as Vancouverism.

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Chapter 6: Mega projects efforts in the Greater Vancouver Metropolitan Area (1963-1974)

Figure 6.1: "*Towering City of the Future"* by Jasper Veerman painted for the Journal of Commerce, a Western Canada Construction Newspaper, in 1972[1] (The original painting is now in the permanent collection of the Museum of Vancouver). The view is looking north across False Creek towards the downtown peninsula. The buildings in the foreground are based upon a design proposal for the North Shore of False Creek by Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies for Marathon Realty in 1971. Visible at the far right in back are towers from Project 200, while at the upper left, with Stanley Park as a backdrop are towers from the proposed Harbour Park project.

6.1 Introduction: the importance of the unbuilt Vancouver region mega projects

Vancouver BC is particularly well known for the high end residential mega projects constructed

at False Creek and at Coal Harbor, two recent developments that have transformed the face of

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[1] This is the date of original publication, which seems correct as a date for the painting itself. The Museum of Vancouver online archive lists the date of this painting as 1969/1970, which seems doubtful since the design does not reflect the 1969 proposal for False Creek, but instead matches a proposal first published in April of 1971.

the city as it is approached from several directions. However, these were not the first mega projects pursued in these locations. This chapter examines four early megaprojects: three from Vancouver, and one from the neighboring municipality of Burnaby. These projects originated in the turbulent decade of the 1960's, while the West End was becoming a forest of high rise apartments and while the City of Vancouver was getting bogged down in the contentious issues of urban renewal and freeway development. The only one of these projects to be fully implemented as originally designed was the new campus for Simon Fraser University (SFU). The other three mega projects were high density high rise developments proposed by private developers seeking to redevelop underutilized waterfront properties in or adjacent to the downtown core of Vancouver.

The three megaprojects from Vancouver that this chapter examines are relatively obscure, despite the considerable impact they have had on subsequent waterfront developments in Vancouver. Partially this is a result of their lack of visible presence, since of the 71 new high rise towers that were proposed collectively in these three projects, only one tower was actually constructed (see figure 6.1). Additionally, these projects appear to have been neglected simply due to bad timing. Each of these three privately funded projects was first proposed while Gerald Sutton Brown was still a powerful force within the government of Vancouver. These projects, however, met their ultimate end fairly soon after the TEAM government ousted Sutton Brown from power in 1973. In terms of research and related literature, interest in these early mega projects appears to have peaked at around the time that they were brought to an end. Researchers examining the development of Vancouver prior to 1988 had no way of knowing that the ideas explored in these abandoned megaprojects were harbingers of the successful Vancouver mega projects that were yet to come, making these projects appear to have be developmental dead ends (Collier, 1974; Gutstein, 1974; Hardwick, 1974, 1994; Kennedy, 1974; David Ley, 1980; Nicol, 1978; Pendakur, 1969, 1972; Poulton, 1982). This was followed by a fifteen year period from 1974 - 1989 during which the next Planning director, Ray Spaxman[2] initiated substantial reforms (Harcourt and Cameron, 2007; Hardwick, 1994). Recent scholarship concerned with the latest transformation of Vancouver has tended to give only minimal attention to the work of Ray

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[2] Ray Spaxman was hired by the TEAM Party to be the new planning director, with his appointment beginning officially in 1974. Although the TEAM government only stayed in power until 1978, Spaxman continued to serve as Planning Director until 1989.

Spaxman, while the significant precedents established by the mega projects that preceded his arrival in Vancouver in 1973 have received even less recent attention (Berelowitz, 2005; Macdonald, 2008; Punter, 2004). The resulting gap in knowledge about the development of Vancouverism has contributed to the spread of popular misconceptions that Vancouverism originated either as a sudden recent invention (Soules, 2010) or perhaps as typology imported from Asia (Boddy, 2005). Once this gap is addressed a different picture begins to emerge, showing that Vancouverism resulted from an extended, locally based developmental process drawing from the talents of many different local contributors.

6.2 The SFU Campus and the emergence of a new generation of Vancouver Architects

In 1963, the West End district of Vancouver was a growing forest of new residential high rises, and the East End district was becoming a battleground over the issue of urban renewal. Meanwhile, 8.5 miles due east from Downtown Vancouver, on a mountain top in the nearby community of Burnaby, another drama was unfolding that would mark the emergence of a new generation of Vancouver architects, several of whom would prove important to the eventual development of Vancouverism. The event was the architecture competition for the design of a new college campus to be built on this mountain top site, and the college was the newly established Simon Fraser University (see figure 6.2).
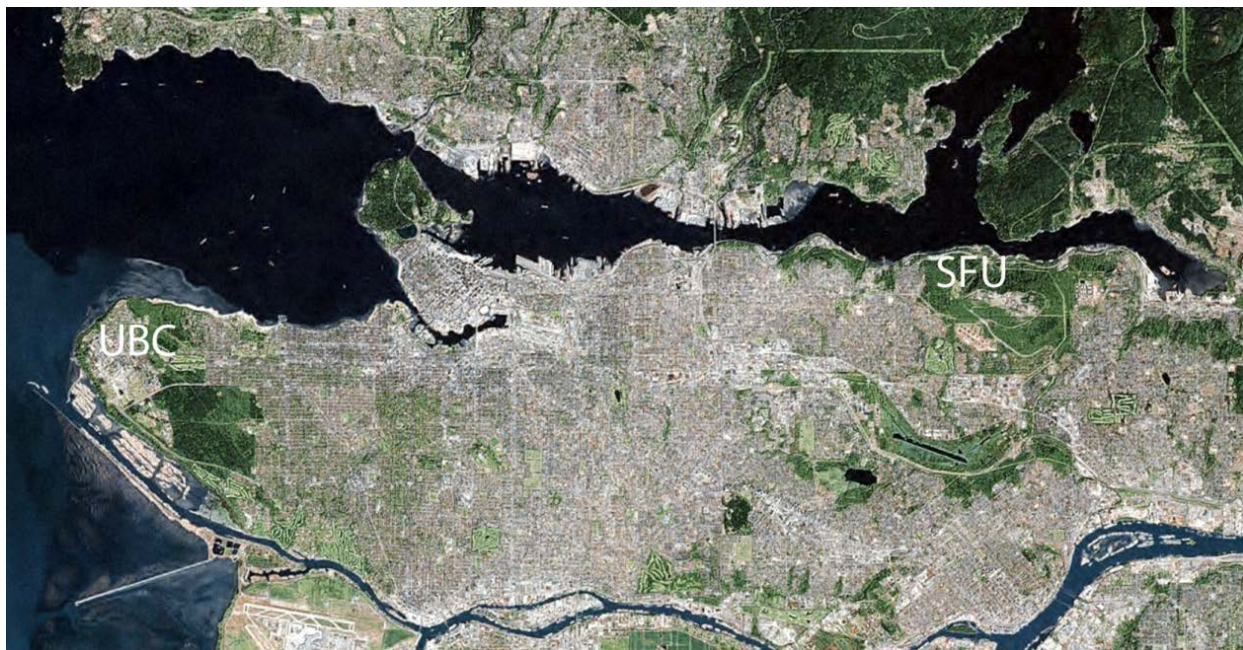

Figure 6.2: Satellite image showing Vancouver region, with SFU campus in Burnaby at right (source Google Earth, text added by Robert Walsh).

Crucial to the unfolding of the events at Simon Fraser University (SFU) was Gordon Shrum, the first Chancellor of SFU. Within the first six weeks of his appointment in 1963, Shrum had selected a site for the new campus, organized the architecture competition to design it and begun the process of recruiting key administrative personnel. A retired Physics Professor and former Dean at the nearby University of British Columbia (UBC), in 1963 Gordon Shrum was the Co-Chair of BC Hydro, the large electric utility company. Described by his colleagues as a formidable man who could be *"brusque and aggressive in meetings"* (Johnston, 2005, 9), Shrum also liked to cultivate young protégés and was known for his tremendous work ethic. Shrum attributed his tireless drive to his wartime experiences in World War II which included surviving in a battle in France in which 3,598 of his fellow Canadians perished in a single day. Weeks later Shrum was wounded in action, yet returned to active service on the front lines during the final push into Germany. By the time he got involved in the establishment of SFU, Shrum had acquired a reputation for acting decisively, and when he was offered the job it was with the full backing of the Provincial Government of British Columbia (Johnston, 2005).

When it came to the challenge of designing the new campus for SFU, Gordon Shrum relished the idea that this project might provide an opportunity for the next generation of architects in British Columbia to make an impact and gain recognition. At the time, major architectural design commissions in the Vancouver region were dominated by three major firms: 1) Thompson Berwick and Pratt, 2) McCarter and Nairn, and 3) Gardiner and Thornton.[3] Even in the case of competitions, these three major firms tended to have a considerable advantage over their competitors; the rules typically did not restrict the number of drawings to be submitted and the main firms had the resources to produce elaborate presentations that overwhelmed the efforts of smaller firms. Shrum chose to level the playing field by restricting the submissions to three drawings and limiting the design to master plan designs. He also gave the competition a short time frame of only two months from first announcement to the final judging. Furthermore, the competition results were to be determined before the identities of the winning architects would be revealed (Johnston, 2005).

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[3] My source for this information is personal correspondence with Zoltan S. Kiss, a retired architect and one of the five winners of the SFU competition.

Figure 6.3: Simon Fraser University campus in Burnaby (SFU website).

The competition itself was open to all British Columbia Architects; Gordon Shrum had expected 35 entries. Instead, there were 71 entries from individuals, teams and entire firms; half of the licensed architects of British Columbia participated in the competition. The competition brief called for the design of a master plan for the campus and the intention was to construct the school over a compressed time frame of only eighteen months. Shrum was therefore eager to establish the framework for the rapid completion of the large quantity of architectural documentation that his ambitious timetable required. Accordingly, the competition rules stipulated that the top five prize winners would each serve as architects for a substantial portion of the new campus. The firm which produced the winning entry would also be responsible for the coordination of these combined efforts and their design would guide all of the work (Johnston, 2005; Kiss, 2005).

While teaching and working at the nearby University of British Columbia, Gordon Shrum had grown disenchanted with the work that he had seen coming from the office of Thompson Berwick and Pratt, who had been the primary architects for the University for the past fifty years after winning a completion in 1912. By choosing in advance to award the commission to the top five entrants instead of just to the first place winner, Gordon Shrum also ensured that at

minimum a portion of the work would be going to someone other than one of the three dominant firms (Johnston, 2005).

Gordon Shrum wanted something bold, new and different, and something that suited the wet climate of Burnaby. He also wanted a vision for the new campus that felt complete after the first stage of construction, yet could also accommodate the subsequent expansion that was already anticipated. And he wanted a design that took advantage of the remarkable site that he had selected for the campus: 600 acres of heavily forested land at the top of a mountainous ridge with views of the ocean and the coastal mountains beyond. He would not be disappointed (see figure 6.3) (Johnston, 2005).

The competition was judged by a panel of five judges, who arrived at a unanimous decision regarding the first prize entry, but held mixed opinions regarding the other top entries. When the identity of the winning contestants was at last revealed, it turned out that four of the top five entries were from young partnerships or lone individuals, collectively representing a new generation of talented Vancouver architects. The one experienced firm, winner of the fifth place honors, was the firm of Duncan McNab and Associates, an active local practice that had only been in business since 1949 (Johnston, 2005).

The first prize honors were awarded to the partnership of Arthur Erickson and Geoffrey Massey (see figures 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, and 6.7). Erickson and Massey also collaborated on the design of several highly acclaimed single family homes in the Vancouver area, producing bold geometric forms of glass and timber that are dramatically yet sensitively related to rocky natural settings. Of the two partners, Arthur Erickson would go on to be recognized as one of Canada's most celebrated architects, completing over 450 projects in a career that was global in its reach. At the time of the competition, Erickson was an Associate Professor at UBC. His work in Vancouver prior to the SFU competition had consisted only of projects of modest scale; from this point forward however his career took off at a meteoric pace. After the campus design came commissions to design numerous significant projects, including: commercial and residential high rises, major pavilions at world fairs in Montreal and Japan, more houses, an extensive Municipal Court complex in the heart of downtown Vancouver, another college campus, the celebrated Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, a Museum of Glass in Tacoma Washington, and the Canadian Embassy in Washington DC. Over the course of his career

Erickson received many awards, including an AIA Gold Medal in 1986, making him the first Canadian architect to ever be awarded this prestigious American honor (Boddy, 2004; Erickson, 1988; Johnston, 2005).

Figure 6.4: Geoffrey Massey (left) and Arthur Erickson (right) pose with their winning entry in the Simon Fraser University Competition in 1963 (Center for Canadian Architecture, Montreal).

Arthur Erickson was an avid modernist who claimed that concrete is "the material of our time" (Ron Thom, 1983 p 27). Nevertheless, Erickson also produced exceptional work in a wide range of other materials, winning awards for projects built of timber, glass, and steel. Independent minded and well-traveled, he produced cutting edge contemporary designs rooted in a deep appreciation for great works of architecture from around the world, especially Asian architecture. Erickson credited Frank Lloyd Wright with having inspired his interest in architecture, his profound respect for nature and his efforts to integrate his designs into the surrounding context. These ideas are evident in Erickson's projects from around the world; in his native Vancouver the benign climate and dramatic scenery presented him with abundant opportunity to explore and

develop designs where the dialogue between raw natural landscape and skillfully shaped built form is a central organizing principle.
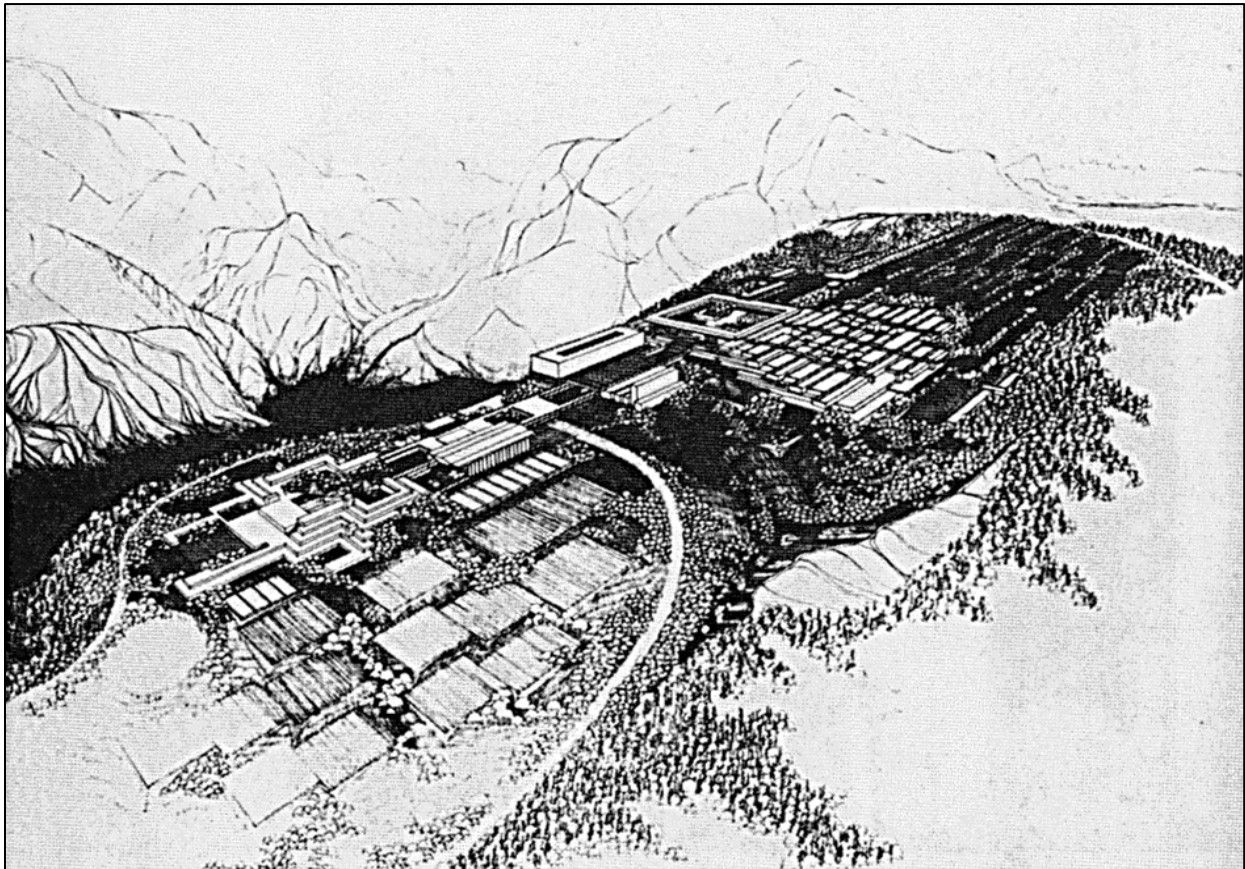
Figure 6.5: Site perspective from Erickson and Massey's prize winning entry (Center for Canadian Architecture, Montreal).

Arthur Erickson is also important to the development of architecture in Vancouver for the inspiration he provided to the next generation of architects. A number of noteworthy Vancouver architects began their careers with Erickson. In terms of the development of Vancouverism, the most important of the architects who started at Erickson's office is probably James Cheng. Cheng is now a successful Vancouver architect who has proven to be one of the most prolific architects in Vancouver over the past twenty years, which is no small accomplishment in a city with an abundance of local design talent. Cheng is the architect of several ground breaking projects that represent the fullest expression of the urban architecture that is now known as Vancouverism and his work is examined in a later chapter in this dissertation. Bing Thom and John Paktau are two other important local architects who also began successful careers after first working in Erickson's office (Boddy, 2004).

287
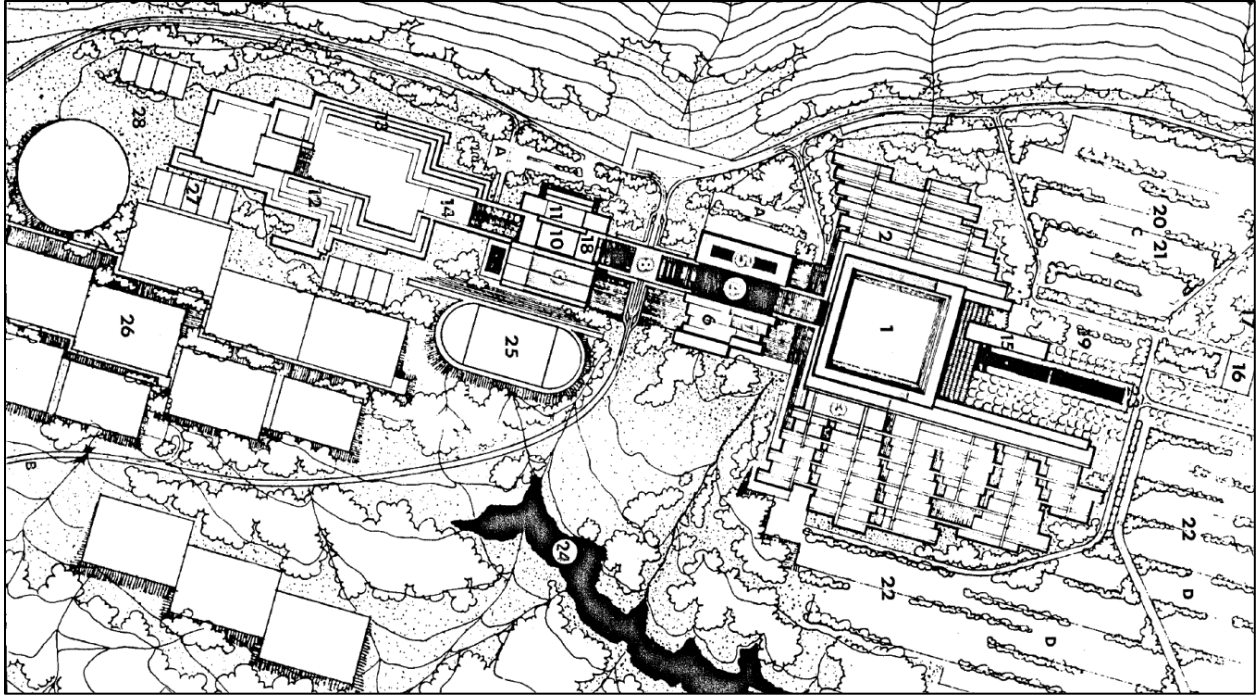
Figure 6.6: Plan of SFU Campus (Erickson, 1966).

Figure 6.7: The SFU Campus in 1965. The Academic quadrangle is large enclosed courtyard (Erickson, 1966).

The SFU competition was pivotal not just for Erickson and Massey, but also for several of the other young entrants who used their commissions as the basis for launching their own practices, practices that either would go on to play a direct role in the development of Vancouverism, or would prove to be the training grounds for future architects in Vancouver. Second place winners Rhone and Iredale would go on to develop important proposals for the City of Vancouver, for instance suggesting other viable alternatives for redeveloping the False Creek Basin. Several influential Vancouver architects also began their careers with Rhone and Iredale, including Richard Henriquez, Peter Busby and Peter Cardew. Henriquez would go on to play a decisive role in reinventing and reviving the residential point tower in the West End, producing a number of iconic projects that have helped to transform the landscape of Vancouver through their presence and through the inspiration these remarkable projects have provided.

Zoltan Kiss, who singlehandedly won the third place prize in the SFU competition would subsequently play a critically important role in the development of the first high rise megaproject schemes proposed for rehabilitating False Creek[4], establishing several crucial precedents. At the time of the competition, in 1963, Kiss was an employee of Thompson, Berwick and Pratt, one of the three firms that had long dominated the major design commissions in Vancouver. His employer encouraged its employees who were registered architects to feel free to enter the competition on their own, which Kiss did, even though he was also busily occupied as the project architect for the Vancouver international airport, which was perhaps the largest project under construction in British Columbia at the time. As the third prize winner of the SFU competition Kiss used the opportunity to go into business for himself. The value to Thompson, Berwick and Pratt in allowing its employees to enter the competition on their own however became apparent: the newly self-employed Zoltan Kiss turned around and hired his former firm to assist him in the major commission he had just landed at Simon Fraser University (Kiss, 2005).

The portion of the SFU design developed by Zoltan Kiss was the Academic Quadrangle. While the original designs of Erickson and Massey were critically important, design revisions suggested by Kiss also contributed to the finished project, such as the use of white concrete for

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[4] Ron Dies a collaborator on the False Creek work began his career working on the working drawings for Simon Fraser University (Source: private communications with Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies, 2011).

the vertical ribs instead of a gray monochrome as had been called for in the original design (see figures 6.7 and 6.8) (Johnston, 2005).

Figure 6.8: Detail of academic quadrangle (Ron Thom, 1983).

Regarding the fourth prize winner, architect Robert Harrison, I have been unable at this time to locate additional information regarding his subsequent work. Like Zoltan Kiss, Harrison had entered the competition on his own and also he worked on the completion of the SFU campus.

Rounding out the field was the architecture firm of Duncan McNab and Associates, the fifth place winner. McNab was the most experienced architect in the group of winners, having been in business since 1949. At the time of the SFU competition, McNab and Associates had already completed a variety of residential, commercial and educational projects. The firm would continue to thrive undertaking a diverse range of projects including the Raymur Place housing complex discussed in the previous chapter.

Firm	Place	SFU Campus Design Concept	Future projects (highlights)	Notable employees
Erickson and Massey	1st	Building complex running along ridge forms central armature for growing campus	Robson Place Canadian embassy Campus Macmillan-Bloedel Tower Vancouver Courthouse Archaeology museum	James Cheng Bing Thom John Paktau
Rhone and Iredale	2nd	Separate colleges grouped around a central green space, expansion through new colleges	False Creek Study Crown Life Tower Downtown Stadium Sedgwick Library False Creek townhouses Expo 86	Richard Henriquez Peter Busby Peter Cardew
Zoltan Kiss	3rd	Centralized plan at ridge low point expansion along ridge.	1969 -74 False Creek Plans Vancouver Airport	Ron Dies
Robert Harrison	4th	Centralized plan, with radial expansion		
Duncan McNab and Associates	5th	Two rings at ridge high points that overlapped and intersected	Raymur Place Housing complex Vancouver Aquatic Centre Numerous other projects, including 56 schools.	

Table 6.1: Results of the 1963 SFU Competition.

In a 2006 interview of Erickson and Massey at Simon Fraser University in which the two architects explained their designs for SFU Campus, Erickson cites two sources of inspiration for his design that came out of his thesis studies and subsequent travels focused on university campus designs: Oxbridge in England, and the enclosed central Plaza at Salamanca, Spain. He cites Oxbridge, a fusion of the terms Oxford and Cambridge, as influencing his conception of the interconnected campus as one large building. The square at Salamanca is Erickson's inspiration for the academic quadrangle. The resemblance to the Salamanca case is particularly striking in terms of form and organization. Set within a dynamic urban pattern of disparate elements, the

square produces a serene orderly sense of calm. Like Erickson's academic quadrangle the upper floors are enclosed and the ground level is defined by a continuous arcade. The two spaces have similar proportions overall and a similar feeling of a dominant horizontal order subdivided at a finer scale by vertical façade divisions. The influence of Oxford can also be discerned in the academic quadrangle; unlike the Salamanca example which is entirely paved, Oxford has many courtyards where manicured plantings a recombined with paved pathways. In Erickson's designs this has been reinterpreted, perhaps drawing inspiration from Erickson's affinity for Japanese design[5] (see figures 6.9 and 6.10).

Figure 6.9: Square at Salamanca (bing 3-d).
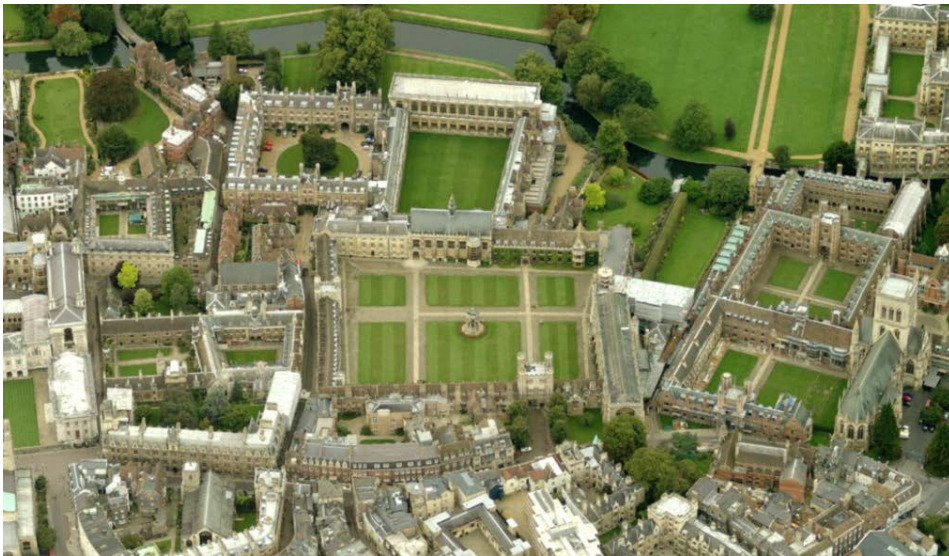
Figure 6.10: Oxford England (bing 3-d).

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[5] Erickson had lived in Japan following World War II and was fluent in Japanese.

The Impact of the SFU Campus on Vancouverism

The design that Erickson and Massey produced for the Simon Fraser Campus was widely published and appears in Reyner Banham's 1976 book: *Megastructure: Urban Features of the Recent Past*, where Banham notes that to consider the SFU campus a mega structure may not be entirely appropriate because the campus is more of a building complex than a single building (Banham, 1976). Nevertheless, the SFU campus is visually distinctive in part because of the way that this complex defines a connected series of buildings as its primary organizing strategy. In places the campus today still has elements of a more conventional North American campus design consisting of discrete buildings surrounded by well-maintained lawns, but for the most part the campus continues to adhere to the vision Erickson and Massey originally defined. By consolidating the hardscape, Erickson and Massey have intensified the relationship to the dramatic natural setting, using the built structures to frame views looking outwards and to enclose courtyards and gardens looking inwards. Organized by a continuous central spine running along the ridge, the campus features a series of outdoor spaces, anchored at one end by the academic quadrangle. Central to the composition is the extensive rectangular courtyard mall covered by a lightweight wooden trellis and glass roof.

This central mall space was considered by Erickson and Massey to be so crucial to the successful implementation of the campus that they selected this portion of the subsequent design development work that they would develop in detail themselves. The central glazed mall space was considered essential because of the complex level changes occurring at the adjoining structures, as a result of the challenging topography, as well as the central organizing role of the space. To meet these challenges and to coordinate the efforts of the other four teams, Erickson and Massey constructed a huge scale model of the campus approximately 40 feet in length. Despite its apparent utilitarian function, this central covered mall is a magnificent space that on occasion has been used to host events, including graduations (see figure 6. 11) (Erickson and Massey 2006 SFU interview; Ron Thom, 1983).

Though apparently not measuring up to the mega structure standard of Reyner Banham, the SFU campus nevertheless functions as an intact urbanized setting inspired by a singular unifying vision, a mega project if not a mega structure.

Figure 6.11: View through central mall towards academic quadrangle (Ron Thom, 1983).

In terms of influence on the development of Vancouverism, the Simon Fraser Campus is an important precedent. Architects working in Vancouver had by this point in time already begun to break away from more traditional precedents based upon European models, to explore new materials and geometries more closely related to the unique physical and social context of Vancouver, although much of this work had been done at the scale of individual houses. The Simon Fraser Campus helped set a new direction is in the expansion of this locally attuned approach, expanding it to the larger scale a comprehensive building complex. At the time that Erickson and Massey proposed their scheme, enclosed courtyards of the scale of the academic quadrangle were not part of the local vocabulary, a feature that had helped to distinguish their scheme from all others. Once this precedent was established courtyards large and small began to reappear elsewhere in Vancouver in a variety of altered forms.

In summary, the SFU campus competition was important for the design precedents it established, including an approach to Modernist design that was highly context dependent, and included the use of courtyards as part of an overall design strategy that was focused on pedestrian experience. The project marked the arrival of several important architects within the Vancouver design

community as well as serving as the breakthrough moment that launched the career of Arthur Erickson, who would go on to be regarded as one of Canada's most important architects.[6]

6.4 Three privately funded mega project attempts in or near downtown Vancouver

Despite leaving no permanent physical mark on the landscape, unbuilt projects have the potential to exert a substantial influence on the built environment, although this impact may not always be immediately apparent. An innovative design that is never completed, can nevertheless establish significant precedents that have lasting impact by introducing, testing and refining new architectural design strategies, yielding results that future designers use as inspiration. From a bureaucratic perspective unrealized projects can lead to policy reforms that encourage greater success in future efforts, especially in cases where prior policies had inhibited success. Assessing the impact of unbuilt projects is challenging, however, because lacking a built result to evaluate, these projects tend to be forgotten. Furthermore it is while they are being pursued or in

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[6] Recently claims have begun to circulate alleging that Erickson deserves credit for the invention of Vancouverism on the basis of a single sketch design produced by Erickson, now known as "Project 56" (Boddy, 2004; Boddy and Sharp, 2008; Department of Unusual Certainties, 2010). Erickson is the primary source of the information concerning this sketch; his accounts, however, have been inconsistent. Erickson published a cropped image from the sketch in 1966 claiming that this was a "schematic design for West Vancouver" (Erickson 1966). West Vancouver is a separate municipality across the water from Vancouver. Erickson did not provide a date for the project at this time, suggesting that it may have been a current project in 1966. Erickson published the cropped image again in 1975, in a book describing his body of work (Erickson, 1975). In this second publication the project was given a new setting: Vancouver, in the West End district. At this time Erickson claimed that the design dated to 1956. In 1976 Erickson donated the project sketch to the Canadian Architectural Archive in Calgary, Alberta and claimed that it was for a "discontinued" project in the West End, now dating to 1955. In 1981 Erickson published the cropped image yet again, for the first time offering an explanation: the project had supposedly been designed in 1956 after a friend of his parents had acquired the development rights to the entire West End (Inglauer, 1981). There is no evidence to substantiate this claim; the West End in 1956 was a square mile of developed urban land with privately owned single family homes and apartment buildings covering approximately 77 city blocks. In 1988 Erickson published the cropped sketch again, this time suggesting that the project was one of a number of studies he had completed over a span of two decades, without this time making any claim that this ever was an actual project. The drawing caption in 1988 maintains the claim that this project was designed in 1956 and designed for the West End; Erickson gives the sketch the name "Project 56" at this time. Erickson also appears to have discussed the project in 2004, offering yet another account, claiming this time that the project dates to 1955 and was designed for an Irish real estate promoter attempting to find investors for a large project; like many Irishmen, this one comes from Dublin, but as in other accounts, the identity of the alleged client remains otherwise unidentified (Boddy, 2004). Analysis: a careful study of a copy of the original drawing provided to me by the Canadian Architectural Archive appears to confirm that the correct account is Erickson's first account that the project originated as a schematic design for a site on the North Shore municipality of West Vancouver. The site that Erickson appears to have originally designed the project for is a 384 acre site belonging to the Squamish Nation, and now known as Capilano IR-5, located at the eastern boundary of West Vancouver, near the Lions Gate Bridge north entry. Apparently Erickson later became interested in reapplying the same design to the West End sometime after 1966 and prior to the 1975 publication of his first book describing his work. The design itself is dramatic and while it does not contain any of the essential elements of Vancouverism discussed in this dissertation, it does have some characteristics in common with other work produced by Erickson after 1966, suggesting that the project represents a significant milestone for Erickson, even though it is not related to the development of Vancouverism.

their immediate aftermath that these projects typically get attention and yet it is sometimes only much later that any lasting influence becomes apparent, as has happened in the case of Vancouverism.
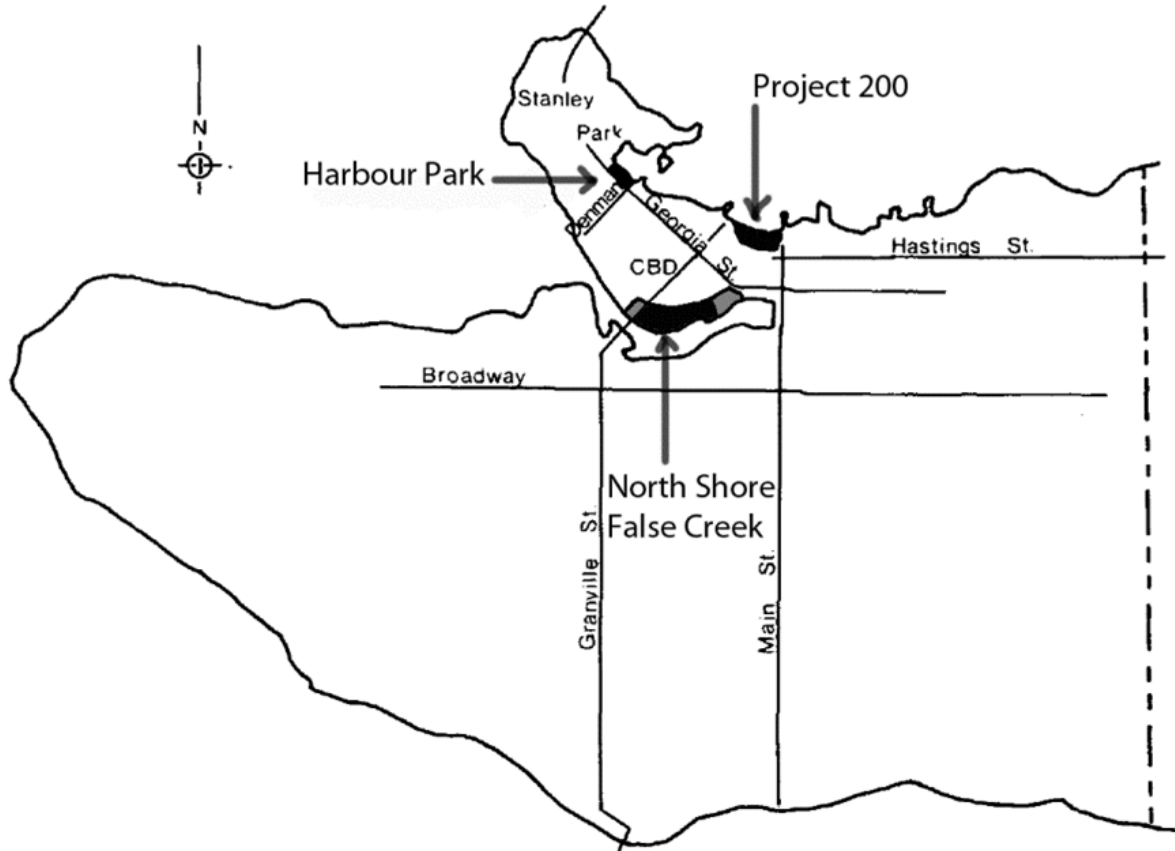
Figure 6.12: Locations of three early Vancouver mega project proposals (based on drawing from Poulton 1982, graphics added by Robert Walsh: locations of False Creek and Project 200).

The three unrealized mega projects considered below each impacted the development of Vancouverism in different ways. Although, these efforts failed to achieve their stated aims, these projects nevertheless represent key stages in the evolution of Vancouverism. These three projects were going on over roughly the same period of time. Examined first is the first of these projects to obtain an approval by the planning department, the Harbour Park project which was approved in 1965. This is followed by a discussion of Project 200 which was noteworthy for its immense scale, and for having produced a built structure that remains a visible landmark in Vancouver today. Finally and most significantly this chapter concludes with a study of the neglected, yet ground-breaking design proposals developed by two Vancouver architects for the redevelopment of the North Shore of False Creek.

Harbour Park: Vancouver's first residential point tower mega project proposal
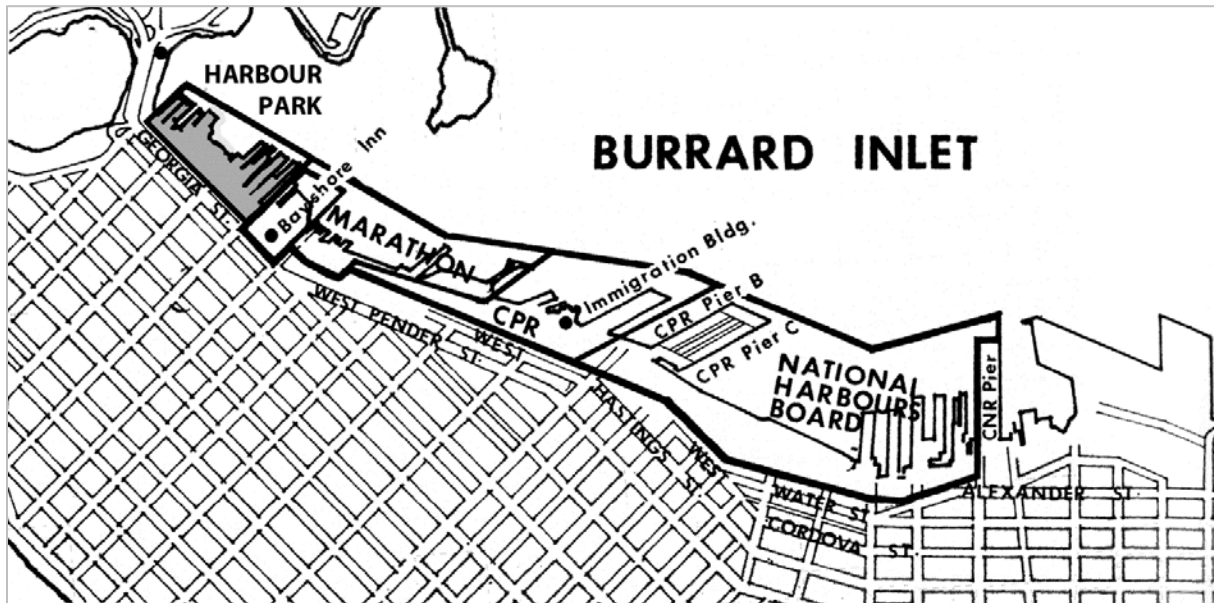
Figure 6.13: Location of Harbour Park (after a drawing by Kennedy, 1974).

The West End district of Vancouver, discussed in Chapter 4, does not extend all the way to the harbor waterfront to the north but instead stops several blocks inland from the water. A narrow wedge of land, now known as Coal Harbor, separates the West End from the Vancouver Harbor waterfront, running westward from the downtown to the entrance to Stanley Park. In 1961 the international real estate development company Webb and Knapp became interested in developing a rundown 14 acre waterfront site near the entrance to Stanley Park, converting it into a higher density residential development. The area consisted of underutilized land fill whose existing development consisted of the Bayshore Inn and scattered older structures servicing the needs of a variety of docks and small scale boating interests. The developers saw an opportunity in expanding the use of the waterfront through the development of a larger marina, and part of their real estate purchase included "water lots" that would make a larger marina possible. Due to its proximity to Stanley Park, its relative nearness to Downtown, and the availability spectacular scenic views, the area seemed a perfect opportunity for a substantial development consisting of residential high rises towers, at a time when demand for such apartments in the nearby West End remained high (see figure 6.12 and 6.13) (Collier 1974). The location of the land outside the West End meant that rules in effect there did not apply, and special accommodations would need to be made by the city if the project was to go forward. Fortunately for the developers, Gerald

Sutton Brown supported the project, greatly improving the chances of overcoming the numerous bureaucratic hurdles this approval process required.

Figure 6.14 Park Harbour proposal, 1962: Architect Ojars Kalns of CBK Van Norman (Liscombe, 1997).

Webb and Knapp hired the Vancouver architecture firm of CBK Van Norman and Associates to develop a master plan for the project, which featured a new marina, various commercial spaces at ground level and 14 residential high rise towers, varying in height between 20 and 36 stories. Architect Ojars Kalns of CBK Van Norman, who was also the project architect at the Beach Towers complex in the West End, prepared the designs for this project, which at the time was named "Park Harbour" (see figure 6.14). The publication of the first plans for this proposal in 1962 immediately provoked opposition from local property owners and also from the Parks Board. Concerns arose that the development would obstruct the views to the entrance of Stanley Park and also impact the views of nearby residents in the West End. The Parks Board argued that the area should be converted into a park. Balanced against this however were potential benefits to City of new tax revenue from the new apartments and from the expanded marina. Furthermore, the proposed project conformed to the larger objectives of the city of revitalizing

the downtown peninsula by increasing the residential density. In addition to support of the Vancouver Planning Department and the City Council, the project also had support of the Community Arts Council and two powerful local business interests: the Board of Trade, and the Downtown Business Association. At first the business interests prevailed and implementation appeared plausible (Collier, 1975).

There were three major procedural hurdles that the project needed to clear in order to move forward. One hurdle was the need to secure a major zoning adjustment that would allow the proposed high rise apartments to be built there at all. However, despite some public opposition and the concerns of the Parks Board, the city was willing to accommodate the developers, passing in 1963 Bylaw 4065 which changed the allowable uses of the property to include residential high rise apartments, townhouses, local commercial businesses and the marina (City of Vancouver, 1963; Collier, 1972).

The bylaw also referenced the methods used in calculating high rise development in terms of the FAR method, and established the FAR for the Harbour Park land at 3.0. This would mean that allowances for balconies and other details of calculation of the allowable floor area would be the same as those which were allowed in the West End. Several critical things however are also omitted from Bylaw 4065 which appear to give the Harbor Park project an opportunity to develop at a substantially higher density than had been permitted in the West End. First of all, no mention is made in Bylaw 4065 regarding other West End regulations impacting building height and volumes, such as the restrictions intended to protect daylight at street level. The argument could be made that this was not necessary since the area in question did not contain existing houses on adjacent parcels that might be adversely impacted, nevertheless this would give the architects a substantially freer hand in how densely they might want to develop the property. There are no mentions of front yard or rear setback requirements either, which would have also limited building placement. There is no mention of tower spacing requirements or other view protection measures (City of Vancouver, 1963).

Most significant of all, however is the lack of any mention of the water lots or how to interpret their potential impact on allowable density (City of Vancouver 1963). While the proportion of buildable land was subsequently expanded through the use of fill and pilings, of the 14 acres within the boundaries of the site, only four acres of the site in question were originally dry land

(Gutstein 1975). Although the developer would not be expected to build over the water, the inclusion of this underwater land in the FAR calculation would increase the allowable density of development on the property by more than three times. Including the water lots in the FAR calculation therefore substantially increases the effective density of construction for the project, and it appears from the available documents that this drastic increase in density was indeed permitted.

The second procedural hurdle the project faced concerned the ownership of the land, which in this case involved securing a long term lease under adequately favorable terms from the National Harbours Board (NHB) which was the legal owner of the property. The deal which Webb and Knapp secured was favorable, so favorable that it actually became a liability because the opposition to the project later used this as evidence that the developers were exploiting the city. Webb and Knapp secured this favorable treatment by working with the law office of Ralph Campney,[7] a former government employee who had in 1936 played a central role in the establishment of the National Harbours Board (NHB), serving as its first director. In 1949 Campney also had served as a cabinet minister and his special connections to the federal government put him in an ideal position to broker a favorable deal for Webb and Knapp. The land was secured under a 63 year lease where the developer would pay rates that varied from between 6 cents a square foot to 14 cents a square foot. This was the first time that the NHB had ever agreed to a lease in excess of 21 years and also the first lease the NHB had ever made with a private company (Collier, 1975; Gutstein, 1975).

The final administrative hurdle to be addressed concerned obtaining the building permit, the permission to proceed with the development. Opposition at this point in the process still had the possibility of delaying or preventing the project from moving forward, especially in a situation involving not just the local government but also the NHB, a federal agency. When the City of Vancouver had issued the necessary zoning changes in June of 1963, it had told Webb and Knapp that it wanted to see construction begun by that September, a clear indication that a building permit based upon the designs of CBK Van Norman would be approved, if and when this permit was applied for. Instead, however, Webb and McNabb began to run into financial

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[7] Campney and one of his partners Walter Owen were appointed to the board of directors Coal Harbour Investments, while Owen was also appointed to the board of Webb and Knapp. (Gutstein, 1975)

difficulties[8] and decided that selling the project instead of moving forward was in their own best interests. In August of 1964 entire development scheme was sold to a consortium of local Vancouver businessmen under the name of Harbour Park Development Ltd[9] (Collier, 1975).

Figure 6.15: Model of March 1965 design for Harbour Park. (City of Vancouver Archives). Note: this scheme was rejected as being too dense. Also note that the tallest towers are those closest to the water.

The new owners decided to hire a new architect, the well-established local firm of Thompson, Berwick and Pratt.[10] The new scheme, submitted to the city in March of 1965, increased the

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[8] The account of these events provided by Collier (1975) indicates that these financial difficulties originated in international properties and related liabilities. Gutstein (1975) describes in greater detail the failure of Webb and Knapp to make timely payments to local landowners from whom they had acquired property development rights for separate smaller parcels included in the deal. Both views are possibly correct.

[9] Because the plans were never submitted for approval they are not preserved in the City of Vancouver Archive, and my efforts to track them down through other means have proven unsuccessful.

[10] Collier in 1975 cites the architect hired by the new owners to take over the project as Harold Spence-Sales, which may be possible, despite a lack of evidence. The documents I have obtained from the City of Vancouver Archive

density of the project, proposing a total of 3200 apartment units distributed amongst 15 high rise towers. All of these were to be point towers with five Luxury apartment towers located closer to the water and ten semi-luxury towers located further back (see figures 6.15 and 6.16). While the project proposed a public waterfront walkway linked to Stanley Park, it also doubled the proposed commercial property to 60,000 square feet including a major shopping center and a restaurant on the water. (Collier 1975, City of Vancouver, 1965)
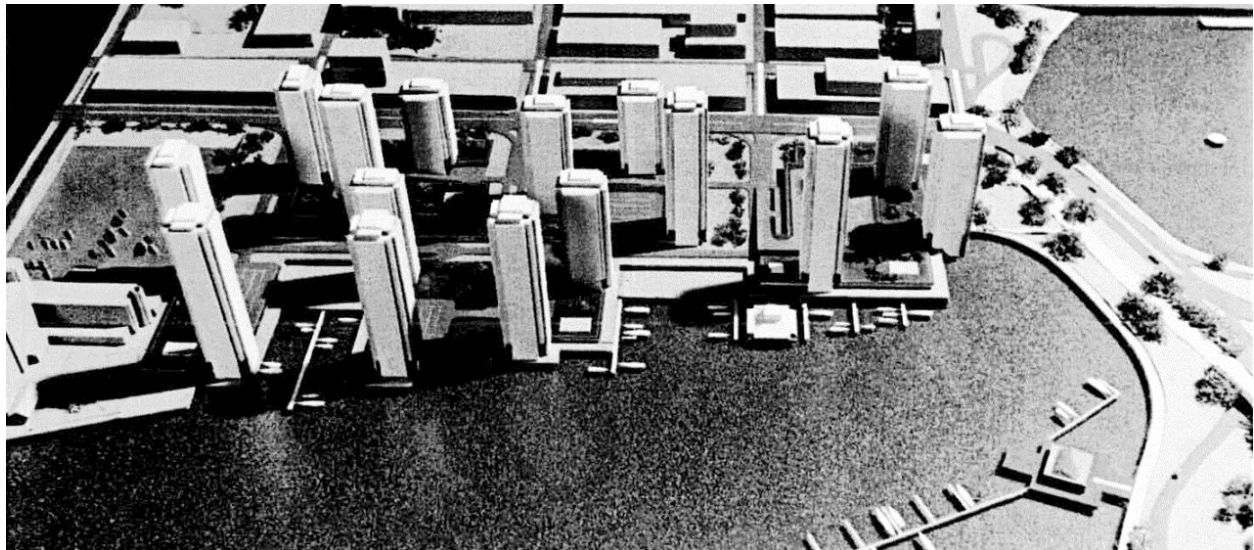
Figure 6.16: Detail: Model of March 1965 design for Harbour Park. (City of Vancouver Archives). This photograph of the original presentation model indicates more clearly the question of density and view obstruction that cause the design to be rejected. Also compare this image against figure 6.19 showing current conditions.

Having cleared the first two major hurdles, the effort began on the final hurdle: obtaining the building permit, which itself was a complex process. The project as proposed in March of 1965 by Thompson, Berwick and Pratt sailed through the first four stages of the final approval process involving the Technical Planning Board, followed by the Board of Administration, then the Standing Committee on Civic Development and then the Town Planning Commission. This was followed by a contentious public meeting on April 25, 1965, during which opposition to the project began to increase. Property owners in the West End were concerned that the special deal

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include copies of plans and model photographs, as well as a summary notation of the application permit from the official 1965 submissions and the eventually approved revisions. The documents all indicate that the local architecture firm of Thompson Berwick and Pratt were the architects of record for this development proposal and no mention is made of Spence-Sales in this context. Spence –Sales may have perhaps worked in collaboration with the architects of record. Spence-Sales was a highly regarded planning professor at McGill University and he was involved in significant work in Vancouver, including a 1951 report advising the city on establishing its planning department, in addition to other professional work (Wolfe, 2004).

that had been given to developers would profit the Harbor Park developers while harming everyone else. They also expressed concern that this type of special treatment would establish a bad precedent where existing property owners would in essence be subsidizing the competition.[11] To remedy this situation they not only opposed the development, they proposed an alternative plan that require the city to acquire the land, develop a more extensive waterfront walkway, build a museum, a community center and more modestly scaled apartment buildings specifically for senior citizens (Collier, 1975).
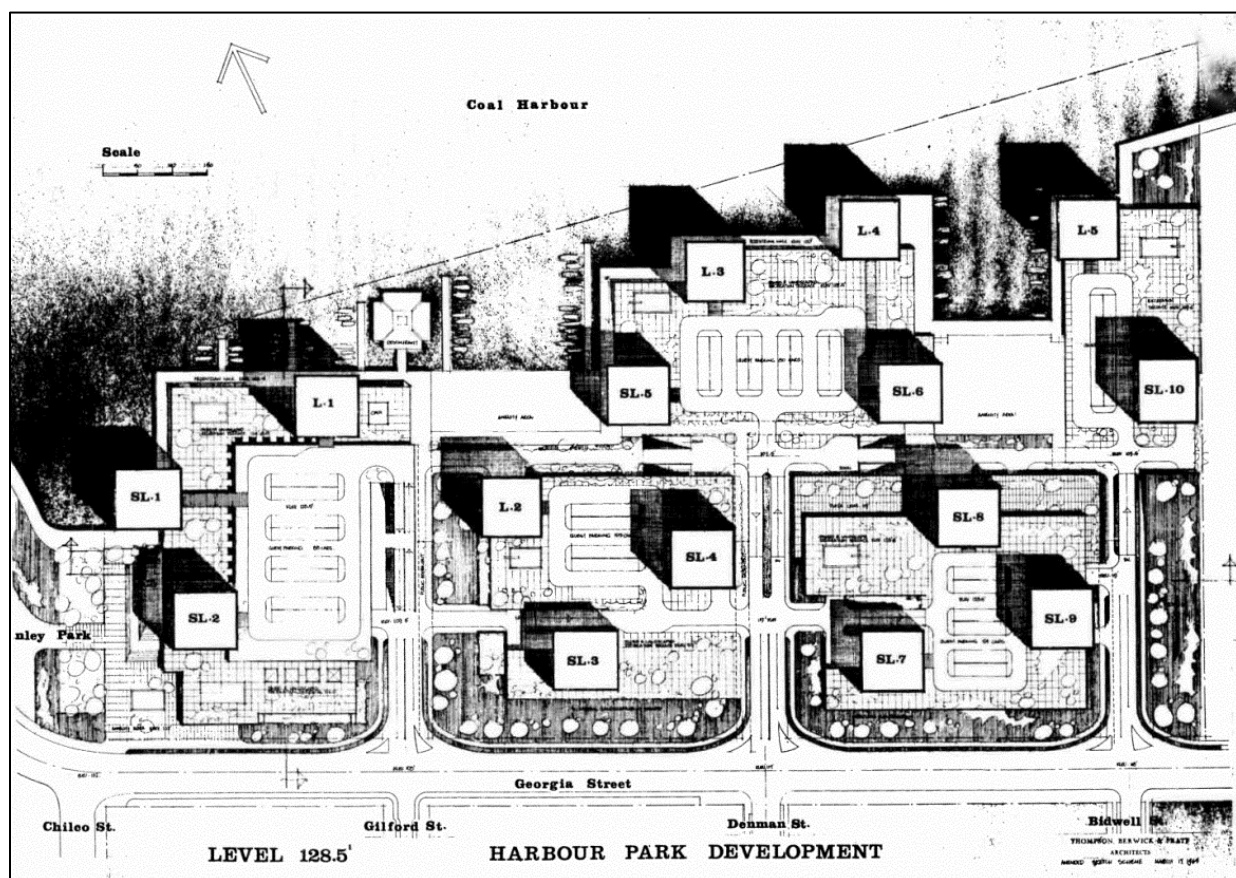
Figure 6.17: Site plan of March of 1965 design for Harbour Park (City of Vancouver Archives).

Meanwhile, before the City Council met and reached a decision, the Community Arts Council applied leverage and insisted that both the most recent proposal, by Thompson Berwick and Pratt, and also the original proposal first prepared by CBK Van Norman and Associates be

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[11] The logic behind this claim is that if land prices are dropped for the new apartment owners, then they can charge lower rents than comparable properties nearby, while making the same profits. At these lower rates the corresponding land taxes are lower, so the original property owners make less profit while paying an increased percentage of the taxes. The net result is that the existing owners wind up subsidizing the new developers.

brought before the Design Panel for their comments. The Design Panel took up the challenge and responded by criticizing both proposals, observing that they each would have effectively produced a wall of buildings obstructing the views of nearby properties and that the layout was not adequately oriented towards the water (see figure 6.14 and 6.16) (Gutstein, 1975).

The developers responded to these criticisms by agreeing to make changes. The ten semi luxury point towers became lower, longer and less numerous, transforming into seven slab towers covering a larger area, but lower in height. The luxury towers were pushed together into two groups of two, and a third lone tower. In the revised scheme an effort appears to have been made to site buildings to allow views across the property. For example, the new slabs are oriented parallel to the line of view instead of forming a wall that would have completely obstructed the view. Meanwhile a large water feature was proposed in the new design, running through the site increasing the waterfront area. On the basis of this revised plan the project was approved in June of 1965 (Collier, 1974) (see figures 6.17 and 6.18).

Despite receiving the approval it needed to proceed, Harbour Park Developments Ltd. chose not to proceed with development, selling a portion of the property back to the Bayshore in and then several years later selling the remaining land to the Four Seasons Company. As time wore on, public resistance to the development of the land intensified and developers were reluctant to proceed, with the property changing hands yet again (Collier 1974, Gutstein 1974).

Eventually, in October of 1973, the matter was brought to a public vote to decide whether the city ought to purchase the land for a park. The public was given the choice of several options, eventually resulting in an arrangement whereby half of the land was to be developed, while the half closest to Stanley Park was to be made into a public park (Gutstein, 1974). Today this new park is named Devonian Harbour Park, while the neighboring parcel was eventually developed to include four apartment towers and a parking lot (see Figure 6.19).
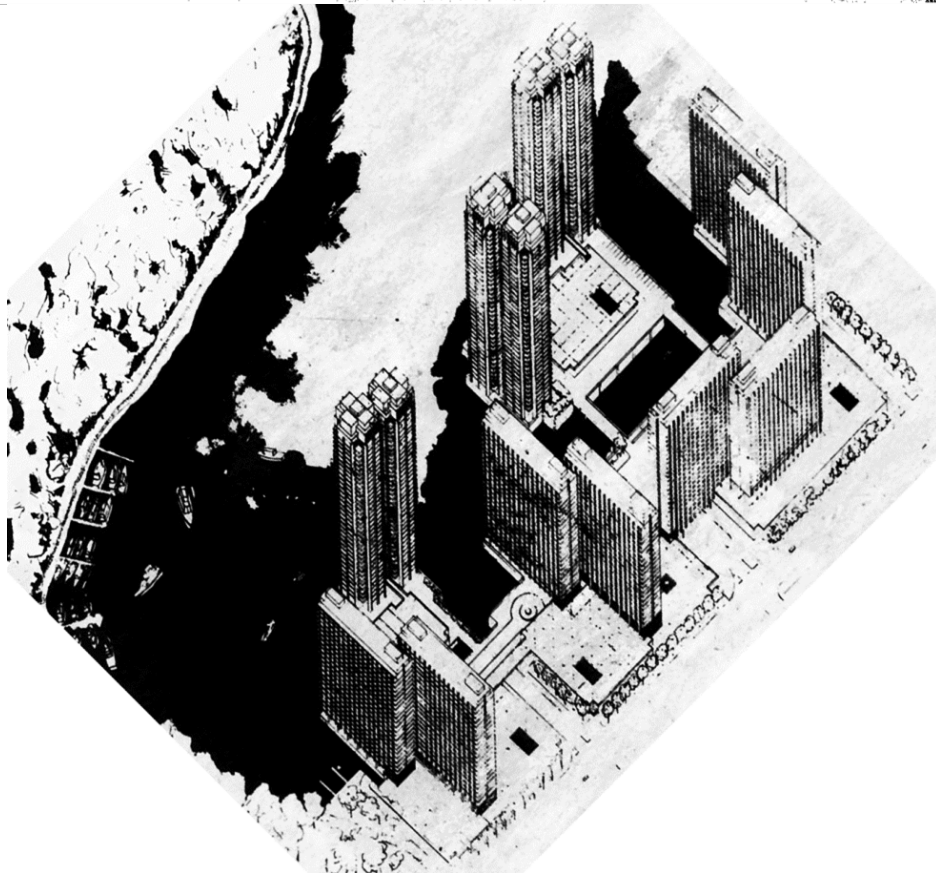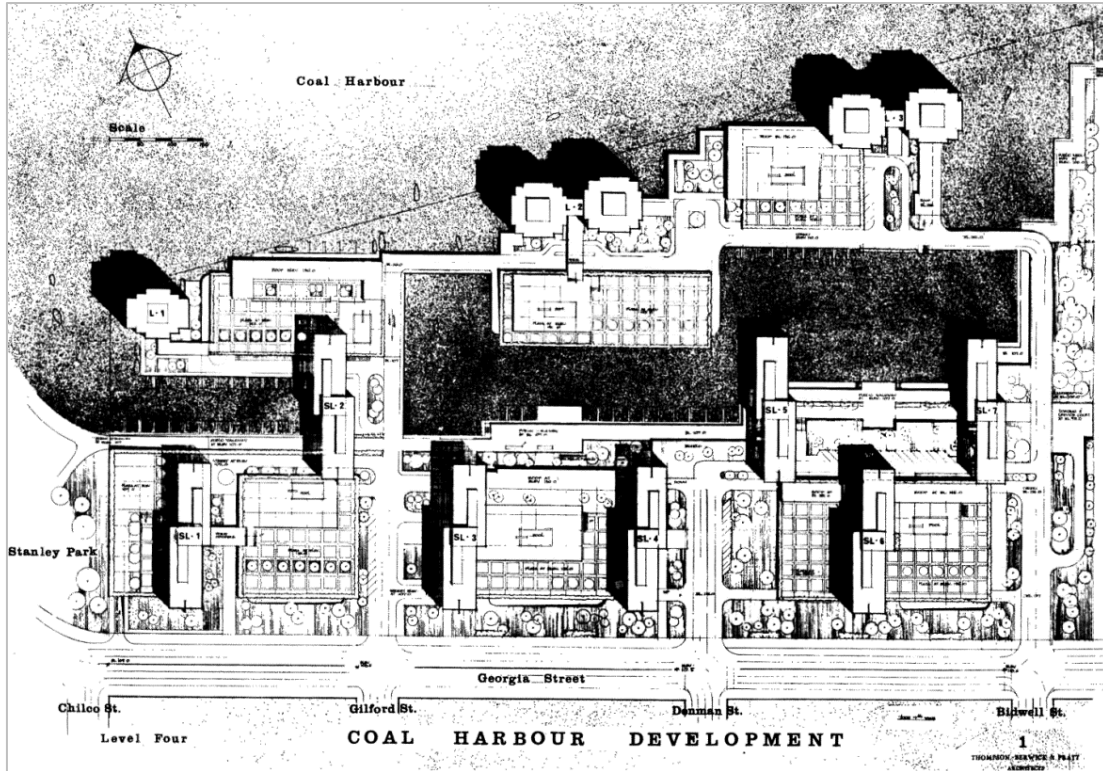
Figure 6.18: Site plan of revised design approved in June of 1965 for Harbour Park (City of Vancouver Archives; Urbanarium, 1987).

Figure 6.19: Devonian Harbor Park and neighboring developments (Bing 3-d, 2011).

Analysis: a Park by any other name

One issue largely overlooked in the literature concerning Harbour Park (Collier 1974, Gutstein 1974, Poulton 1982), is simply the question of whether the name itself, and its suggestion of a park occurring here, might have inflamed public opposition to the project? The land in question was a collection of run down shacks overlooking a small marina adjacent to the sprawling grounds of the Stanley Park. Public demand for another park here only emerged after the developer started referring to this rundown property as Harbour Park.

Certainly it can be argued that creating a park was a tactic adopted by people in the West End who had concern that the new development would impinge upon their views, but this does not explain why, when the issue was put to a larger vote, so many other people voted against development. Instead of allowing a development that would generate tax revenue for the city, the public voted to spend tax revenue to create a park it did not need.

The impression that the Harbour Park development represented an effort by developers to convert a public park into a high rise development, while erroneous, nevertheless was not unprecedented in Vancouver. In the previous chapter, the MacLean Park housing project was explored. The housing development now named MacLean Park actually had begun by eradicating the original park named MacLean Park, replacing it with a high rise, several boxy

low rise structures and wide expanses of asphalt paving. This East End development then expanded, resulting in the demolition of several additional blocks of homes to allow more new development. Under the circumstances, when the public had grown to distrust the city, naming the project Harbour Park seems at the very least to have been ill advised.[12]

In terms of the architecture proposed for Harbour Park, the plan initially submitted by Thompson Berwick and Pratt in 1965 crowded 15 residential high rise towers into a tract of land that was by West End standards three blocks long. The proportions of the towers and the clever camera angle of the model photographs downplay the apparent height and bulk of these towers, some of which would have been amongst the tallest ever built in the West End.

These were tall towers that, had they been proposed in the West End, would have been built at a density of one or two to a city block, suggesting six towers would have been more appropriate at Harbour Park. In proposing to build a collection of point towers covering a site several blocks in extent, a crucial precedent was tested, and even in the permissive planning regime of Gerald Sutton Brown, this proposal was found to be too crowded. The solution that was proposed by the architects, and then promptly accepted, replaced 10 of the 15 proposed point towers with seven slab towers, an indication that architects in Vancouver had not yet come to associate the City of Vancouver primarily with point towers. Nevertheless, this project makes perfectly clear that the concept of using multiple point towers as a development strategy is not something that arrived in Vancouver in the 1990's, but rather was one design strategy that was already being seriously explored and proposed for use in waterfront parcels several decades earlier.

Lacking in the point tower scheme proposed in 1965 at Harbour Park are several other critical elements of Vancouverism, which had not yet developed, including the use of ground level units between the towers to define the streetscape and to shape protected interior courtyard spaces. In crowding the towers close together, the issues of tower spacing and view protection came to the forefront as crucial concerns in the development of residential megaprojects in Vancouver. There is also something of a monotonous sameness to the towers as they were proposed that probably contributed to the rejection of the first 1965 scheme and the approval of the second scheme.

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[12] Perhaps this is why recent large scale developments in Vancouver, even those which incorporate large public parks, seem to avoid including "park" in their name. For Instance, the Beach Crescent at Pacific Concord Place is a cluster of residential towers around an immense centrally located park, but no beach.

Finally, there is the relatively weak way the original scheme addressed the waterfront, which the designers attempted to remedy in their later designs. These issues would all emerge in the later waterfront residential megaprojects.

The designs proposed for Harbour Park therefore represent evidence of an ongoing process of exploration and design development in which the developers and architects of Vancouver continued to explore issues of locally appropriate design and development. These designs began to go beyond the scale of the individual towers or tower pairs typical of the West End, towards a larger urban scale in which individual projects attempted to produce entire new neighborhoods and thousands of new apartments. This process of exploration and design development would continue in two other major residential mega projects pursued by developers in Vancouver around this time.

6.4.2 Project 200: a mixed use residential and commercial mega project proposal

Of the three Vancouver mega projects examined in this chapter, the Project 200 development is noteworthy for having been initially the largest, and also for resulting in at least some construction. As originally planned, the development was to have involved the construction of 36 high rise towers in the downtown, resulting in 3000 new apartment units as well as doubling the available downtown office space (Collier, 1974) [13] and adding two large hotel towers (Pendakur, 1969). The project itself was initiated by a consortium including two large corporations: Grosvenor-Laing (B.C.) Ltd., a large real estate holding company, and Marathon Realty Ltd, the real estate development arm of the Canada Pacific Railroad (CPR). The involvement of Marathon was practically required because the development was primarily intended to be situated on a series of elevated platforms to be constructed over top of an extensive railroad yard owned by CPR. To these two real estate companies, the consortium also added two large downtown department stores: Woodward's Store Limited and Simpson–Sears Ltd. The two department stores were intent upon reviving their flagging businesses in the downtown core, and saw this project as a means to that goal (Collier, 1974; Gutstein, 1974; Pendakur, 1969).

The development was given the name Project 200 because it originally had a projected budget of 200 million dollars in 1965 (see figure 6.20).

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[13] It is unclear whether this claim by Collier (1974) takes into account several large scale office projects in the immediate vicinity which had not yet been completed when Project 200 was first proposed.

Figure 6.20: Project 200: watercolor rendering (City of Vancouver Archives). Note this is an early version, drawn before the project was scaled back.

As with the other downtown mega-projects, the Project 200 development received the support of Gerald Sutton Brown and the NPA controlled municipal government, and like all other large development efforts in Vancouver during this period, this one encountered significant citizen opposition. This time the issues had to do with the potential adverse impacts on the adjacent Gastown district and the associated issue of urban freeway development. Gastown is a commercial district that has historic importance to local Vancouver residents as the site of the first permanent settlement of the city, built around a saloon established by its proprietor Gassy Jack, after whom Gastown derives its name. Although today the area has been largely restored and is now a popular tourist destination, in the early 1960's much of this area was considered run down and in disrepair, a district of warehouses and small industrial operations in need of improvement. At the time Vancouver had no mechanism in place for protecting historic structures, however the proximity of Gastown to the growing downtown core made it an attractive target for redevelopment and also for gentrification (see figures 6.21 and 6.22).

Figure 6.21: Gastown, Maple Tree Square, after restoration (SUNN website).

Figure 6.22: Pen and ink study of Gastown in 1969, looking North towards the harbor (Vancouver Illustrated website.).

Apparently it was common practice for developers in Vancouver to ask for permission to build more than they expected to build in order to gain permission to build something smaller, but in alignment with their actual expectations and there is some indication that this is what occurred at Project 200. After initially being proposed as a development incorporating 36 new high rise towers, by 1969 the project had been scaled back to 11 high-rise structures. These towers were by Vancouver standards still quite large, with one tower proposed as a 50 story tower. The site area itself was 28 acres. It is important to keep in mind that the project was only partially a

redevelopment of property in Gastown, most of the development ran over land that was occupied by the railroad tracks (see figures 6. 23 and 6.24) (Pendakur ,1969).

The connection of Project 200 to the freeway issue is more complex. The Project 200 developers were faced with the challenge of providing effective vehicle access to the site for the thousands of employees expected to work in the new office towers to be constructed. This was made more challenging by the surround context; the site was separated from the waterfront by a large railroad switching yard that served the nearby shipping interests. Expanding upon a proposal originally introduced by Harland Bartholomew back in 1929, the developers proposed to improve traffic access to the area through the construction of an elevated roadway. This was combined then with a plan to build over top of the train yard which would continue to operate beneath a combination of large commercial towers and elevated parking areas with parking for 4000 cars.

Figure 6.23: Project 200 (Project 200 Properties Ltd.) Note the lack of waterfront freeways in 1969, an important change from earlier versions of Project 200 that is sometimes ignored.
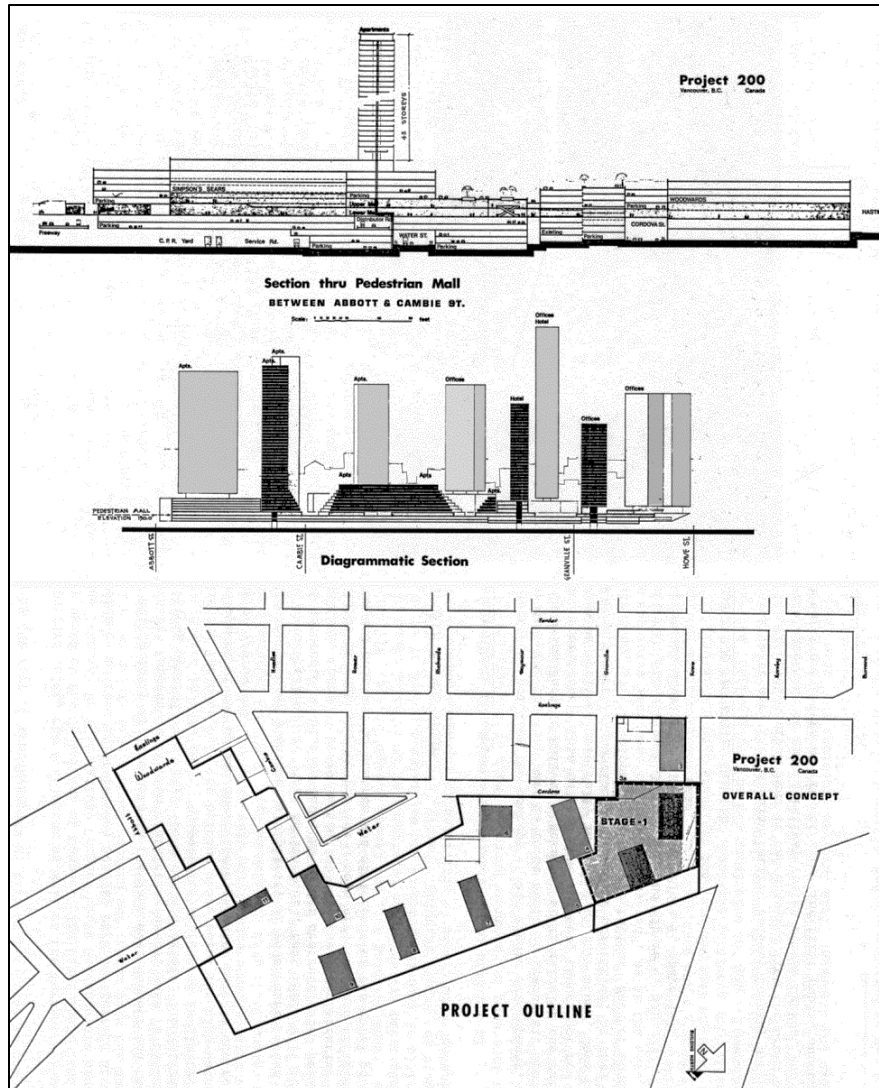
Figure 6.24: Project 200: scaled back to 11 high rise towers (Project 200 Properties Ltd, 1969).

At the regional level, proposals by the city to construct a third crossing of the Burrard inlet, linking Vancouver's Downtown, to North Vancouver on the opposite shore, also became an issue for Project 200. As discussed in the previous chapter, by 1969 the freeway effort was stalled, but the city had not yet given up on the possibility of carving a series of freeways through the fabric of Vancouver, and the third crossing was seen by Gerald Sutton Brown and his associates as a way to jump start this process. The city linked the plans for a system of ramps and parking meant to provide access to Project 200 to its updated freeway plan, perhaps trying to gain support of the business community for the freeway plan. Instead of gaining support of the business community, however, this effort backfired by provoking public opposition not just to the freeway, but to Project 200 as well (Gutstein, 1975).

Assembling the parcels, conducting traffic studies, developing designs and arranging financing for this complex and multi-faceted project all took time and the project was slow in moving forward. By 1969 the Vancouver Planning Department under Gerald Sutton Brown, adopted a stance in favor of development of Project 200, but without providing clear development standards or guidance regarding what could be built. Into this vacuum stepped the Vancouver Arts Council, which on January 3, 1969 presented Mayor Tom Campbell with an open letter offering the following principles which they asserted should regulate and inform the development of Project 200:

1. Interested organizations should have access to project drawings (rather than sketches) and in reasonable time to permit adequate comment.
2. Design consultants should be engaged in order to achieve the highest quality of architecture.
3. The whole design must maintain that integration of the city, mountains, and sea, and must not isolate the city core by creating the effect of a concrete barrier. The density, shape and positioning of buildings should be such that the view of sea and mountains is preserved.
4. No buildings whatsoever should be placed at the ends of existing north and south streets.
5. The level of all plazas should be on or below the level of Hastings Street, and northerly plazas and levels should be progressively lower so that no waterfront road or its traffic would be visible from the plazas or from Hastings Street, but only the Sea.
6. Buildings adjacent to the old town should be scaled and designed so that there is a sympathetic melding of the two eras.
7. There should be a generous and carefully planned pedestrian walkway through project 200 connecting the two main parts of the old town (Abbot and Cambie).
8. There should be inviting pedestrian access to the whole area as close to the waterfront as possible, together with planted areas and green spaces.
9. The old post office clock tower should be preserved.
10. The whole project should be devoted to mixed residential and commercial use so that it will be a living area through the hours of daylight and darkness.

Community Arts Council. *Letter to Mayor Tom Campbell*, January 3, 1969 (Collier, 1974).

There was no comment on these recommendations by the Mayor or by any other city official regarding these recommendations (Collier 1974). The nature of these suggestions however is revealing in that they address issues that have since come to be normal planning considerations within Vancouver, yet in 1969 were not a part of the normal planning approach. These comments are specific to their context and describe measures needed to be taken to improve urban space as experienced by pedestrians. The recommendations also call for measures to be taken to improve meaningful public participation and attention is given to protecting select elements of the environment such as the post office clock tower that either appealing or of historic significance. These concerns embody many of the recommendations previously made by Harland Bartholomew and they also foreshadow the very different approach to city planning that would arise after Gerald Sutton Brown was replaced.

It is also noteworthy that the recommendations themselves do not actually attempt to curtail the scale of the development or bring the mega project to a halt; to the contrary they are intended to direct the development process towards an outcome that serves the public and relates well to the surrounding context. That there was no response from the city is also revealing. The recommendations themselves seem fairly sensible and it is hard to imagine that there is much in them to which the city would object, in terms of their actual contents. Mayor Tom Campbell however was a former real estate developer who had made a fortune developing large projects. Possibly he found the entire idea that developers ought to be held accountable by the surrounding community objectionable in some way? Lacking a response from the city to the measures proposed by the Community Arts Council it is difficult to know. However, the existence of these recommendations, the fact that they did not come from the Planning Department but instead a community group, and the lack of any response by the city all suggest that the city and at least some of the public continued to have very different ideas about how the growing City of Vancouver ought to develop. Had these suggestions been embraced instead of being ignored it is possible that the outcome would have been quite different.

Progress on Project 200 was slowed by a number of related issues having to do with transportation access, property rights and project financing. As in the case of Harbour Park, some

of the waterfront property involved securing a lease on favorable terms from the National Harbour Board and this time this proved more problematic. Meanwhile, Simpson-Sears, one of the commercial partners in the project, pulled out somewhat impacting the financing of the project. Faced with this uncertainty the remaining development consortium partners further downscaled their expectations for Project 200; in 1970 they managed to secure approval for a project that had become rather ambiguous (Collier, 1974).

The importance of matching commercial development availability to market demand

One of the issues facing private for profit developers is that the pace of development needs to correlate to the demand for space. The rate at which new space becomes available is a matter not just of amount, but of timing the availability of new product to correspond to market demand. If too much new real estate becomes available in the marketplace at once, then it becomes a buyer's market, prices drop along with returns on investment. In speculative high rise developments this problem can be especially significant because of the scale of the building and the time required to plan, construct and then sell or lease property, which may easily involve five years of effort, during which time market conditions can substantially change.[14] On the other hand failing to build enough property to meet actual demand has the potential to result in lost profit making opportunities. In large scale projects in medium size cities such as Vancouver, this becomes potentially challenging, but this also matters in large cities as well.[15] In the case of Project 200, although the developers were proposing to build a very large amount of commercial and residential real estate, the expectation was that this would be gradually implemented over a 30 year period.

In an analysis of this issue as it applies to Project 200, Setty Pendakur reveals the challenges involved in making reliable forecasts for such a large project expected to be implemented over a

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[14] This is one reason why in the recent wave of high rise residential developments that has transformed downtown Vancouver, developers have found it productive to pre-sell a large portion of the units even before the actual beginning of construction. The potential downside to the developer is that values will continue to rise during construction and profit making opportunity will be missed, but this is offset by the reduced risk of the negative consequences of the market dropping over the same stretch of time, bankrupting the builder. One byproduct of this situation is that there is now a speculative market in these new condominiums in which investors buy the units before they are built and then resell them as their perceived value increases, sometimes reselling them for a profit even before the units are completed.

[15] One classic example of a large commercial building that was spectacularly unprofitable at first was the Empire State Building, which was completed in 1931, early in the Great Depression. The owner had a difficult time finding tenants for the many offices that had been designed for a much better economy. Consequently, for many years, the building was known as "the Empty State Building" (Willis, 1994).

30 year span. The total commercial, office, residential and retail space combined in the project over its entire duration adds up to 9.5 million square feet of new space at the edge of the downtown core. Out of this total, 2,335,000 square feet is dedicated to new office space. If construction proceeds at the rate projected and office demand in Vancouver follows predicted trajectories, to be successful, Project 200 would need to attract more than 25% of the new office space demand over the next 30 years, which seems challenging but not necessarily unreasonable. The problem is that a great deal can change over a 30 year span, making these projects irrelevant. In this analysis Pendakur also notes that there are advantages that also accrue at the level of state and local government in terms of the resulting tax revenue, the benefit to be gained by the local economy from the work itself and from continuing revenue that the project would generate for the downtown. Additionally Pendakur observes that there are efficiencies to be gained through the multiple purposes to be accommodated in the complex, as a business environment by day that also has a significant residential population at night (Pendakur, 1969).

In the case of Project 200, the effort faltered shortly after it was begun and the first of what was supposed to be many new towers, proved instead to be the last. Partially this was the fault of the architects and the developer and partially this was the result of changing overall conditions. Completed in 1973, the 32 story commercial office tower known as 200 Granville has a dramatic setting with unimpaired access to stunning natural views (see figure 6.39 and 6.41). Unfortunately, while its location at the waterfront gave it excellent view access, it also is sited in such a way that it partial obstructs the view which had been available to others looking down Granville Street.[16] In the context of urban development in a high density office area, this may not seem especially significant, but it was this specific issue that cost Project 200 some of its support on the Vancouver City Council, at a time when the City Council still had a significant say in which developments were permitted to go forward (Collier, 1974).

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[16] Subsequent construction of additional adjacent structures seems to have softened the intrusive impact of 200 Granville; by partially blocking the view of this building these more recent additions downplay the extent to which the original structure intruded into the view of the waterfront and mountains beyond.

Figure 6.25: 200 Granville Street (bing 3d satellite image).

A second problem with 200 Granville concerns the architecture itself. The building is a bulky towering blandly uniform grid of windows framed in precast concrete, generally lacking in articulation or expression. Possibly this is the fault of the profession of architecture itself, which was going through a phase in which Brutalism was considered the cutting-edge trend (see figure 6.25). However, another nearby example of a similar scale concrete and glass office tower suggests that something better should have been possible at 200 Granville. Working within these same constraints on a nearby site Arthur Erickson had completed in 1968 a similar large scale office tower for the Macmillan Bloedel Company, producing an iconic structure that continues to be admired. While the Macmillan Bloedel Building is also a large concrete office tower, Erickson has created an illusion of two slender slabs sliding past one another reducing the apparent bulk of the structure, while emphasizing the upwards thrust of the massing. The deep reveals in the façade meanwhile give the building a feeling of monumental solidity lacking in 200 Granville (see figure 6.26).

The final straw for Project 200 may have been the election of the TEAM government late in 1972 and the ensuing reform of city planning which soon followed. Whereas the Sutton Brown regime have been willing to accommodate developer interests with seemingly little concern for

the impact this had on pedestrian experience, these priorities were inverted in the new planning

approach established by the next Planning Director, Ray Spaxman. The adverse impacts on

pedestrian experience resulting from a poor siting decision, the lingering associations with the

failed freeway effort, and the changed planning climate ushered in by the TEAM government, all

combined to ensure that Project 200 would be limited to the one tower at 200 Granville.

Figure 6.26: The Macmillan Bloedel Building by Arthur Erickson (ArthurErickson.com).

Evaluation: the podium that might have been

The form of Project 200 and its relationship to the CPR tracks below it seems to have resulted in

a divided assessment that has been made more complicated by subsequent developments in

Vancouver. On the one hand there are those who concluded that the project would have

enhanced the pedestrian environment of this portion of the city, through its creation of large

pedestrian terraces overlooking the bay. These supporters generally seem to view the project in

relationship to the context that it replaced (Kennedy, 1974; Pendakur 1969.) In contrast to this

are those who have come down strongly in opposition to the project by associating it with

exaggerated claims that it would destroy Gastown or require a freeway cut through Chinatown

(Gutstein 1975; Harcourt, 1996; Nicol, 1978). The even handed assessment of Setty Pendakur

which attempts to find a balanced perspective in this complex situation is relevant because while he does not offer a final conclusion either in favor or in opposition to the project he seems to have developed the most thorough grasp of its challenges and also the opportunities that could have arisen had the project gone forward. This is particularly interesting when one considers that Pendakur was not hesitant to express sharply critical positions when it came to the freeway fight, in which he clearly sided with the opposition.

In terms of the architectural precedents presented by Project 200, the designs proposed in and illustrated for this immense development are substantially different from the direction buildings were to eventually take in the later, far more successful, residential mega projects in Vancouver. Meanwhile, demand for new office space found new outlets, resulting in a downtown that uses boxy high rises similar to Project 200, only with less space around them and less pedestrian space at ground level. Certainly saving Gastown should be considered a worthwhile achievement. Had the city played a more substantial role in guiding development, however, this is a goal that should have been readily attainable even as the train yard that was meant to be covered over was redeveloped. Criticisms of Project 200 tend to compare this development against the transformations that occurred in other nearby areas, but the development of Project 200 need not have required the construction of freeways, nor would it have prevented the successful developments that happened nearby at Coal Harbor.

One curious aspect of this project that seems to have persisted in the popular understanding of Vancouverism, is the idea of the podium. Built or unbuilt there is no other project in Vancouver in which the podium played a bigger role that it plays in the design proposed for Project 200. The podium at Project 200 is what makes the project work; without it, the vast emptiness of a train yard remains the defining condition in this part of the city. This part of Vancouver could have been a series of pedestrian plazas and terraces offering phenomenal views. While it is possible to worry that Project 200 would have harmed Gastown, the opposite is probably more likely because Project 200 would have finally corrected one of the lingering defects in the urban design of this area and that is that the railroad yard forms an impenetrable barrier cutting off Gastown from the waterfront and the view of the mountains beyond. While podiums are not typical of most developments built in Vancouver today, at least at Project 200 the podium had the potential to create something positive and of lasting benefit.

Figure 6.27: An aerial view of the project 200 site in 1992 (Ley, 1992).

In retrospect Project 200 can easily be mistaken for a bad idea, simply because other nearby parts of Vancouver now are occupied by well maintained and actively used waterfront parks leading down to the water. These parks along the water are only possible because the trainyards that used to be there were no longer needed and were removed. This cannot happen at Project 200 because the trainyards are still needed there. The problem in evaluating Project 200 is that this never was a choice between a park and a hard cityscape. Instead it was a choice between a terraced pedestrian cityscape that brings the water closer or a trainyard that keeps the water at a distance. Furthermore, as nice as the parks are, there was an opportunity here for a different urban experience at Project 200, an appealing contrast, some relief from the parks, allowing something different and more urban to happen. But the project was rejected, the tracks remain exposed and the waterfront continues to remain at a distance.

Perhaps at some future date the idea will be revived or the tracks will be removed. Then Gastown instead of turning its back on the views, will finally acquire the means to enjoy them (see figure 6.27).

False Creek: The first attempts at the rehabilitation 1950 – 1974
Ever since False Creek began to be used as an industrial center, the City of Vancouver has had to contend with issues associated with maintaining and altering the body of water and its surrounding land. By 1947 the continued viability of the False Creek basin as a center for industrial activity was in doubt. The response to these circumstances that had been advocated by Harland Bartholomew was to redevelop the area, updating it in a way that would attract new industries, a direction that Gerald Sutton Brown and the Planning Department of the City of Vancouver continued to cling to, despite mounting evidence that this was not a realistic long term strategy (see figure 6.28).

The evidence that something else needed to be done at False Creek came in many forms. As the effort to redevelop the West End through the construction of high rise apartments began to succeed in contributing to the revitalization of downtown and an emerging white collar economy, this growth began to increase the demand for even more housing nearby. The defeat of the highway proposals also made housing closer to the downtown more desirable, increasing demand and real estate values. Meanwhile, many of the timber processing businesses that had at

the turn of the century made False Creek a hive of industrial activity had either closed down or relocated to points further east, on cheaper land, still with waterfront access and still within easy access of the railroad (Robinson, 1973).

Figure 6.28: False Creek in 1961 (North and Hardwick, 1992, 210).

Nevertheless, progress in rehabilitating False Creek was slow, due to a combination of factors. The pattern of land ownership made the development of adequate new policies difficult; separate large tracts of land at False Creek were owned by the Federal government, the Province of British Columbia, the City of Vancouver, and the Canada Pacific Railroad (CPR). Each organization had different goals, time tables and expectations. Further complicating the pattern of ownership and land use were the long term leases offered by the CPR offered to a variety of remaining industrial operations around False Creek; changes in use needed to coordinate with the expiration of the leases (see figure 6.29).

As can be expected, the various levels of Government wanted to meet their own goals which included addressing the shortage of housing in a post-World War II economy that was thriving.

The City of Vancouver wanted to improve its own tax base, which certainly was not being helped by the underutilized land around False Creek, or by the suburban flight of affluent residents to outlying areas. Meanwhile, Canada Pacific Railroad (CPR) and its real estate division, Marathon Realty, had its own agenda; any serious effort to redevelop the land around False Creek would impact the railroad due to its train yards on both sides, but the CPR and Marathon were open to other uses if these had profit potential. The timber industry also had its own interests as well.
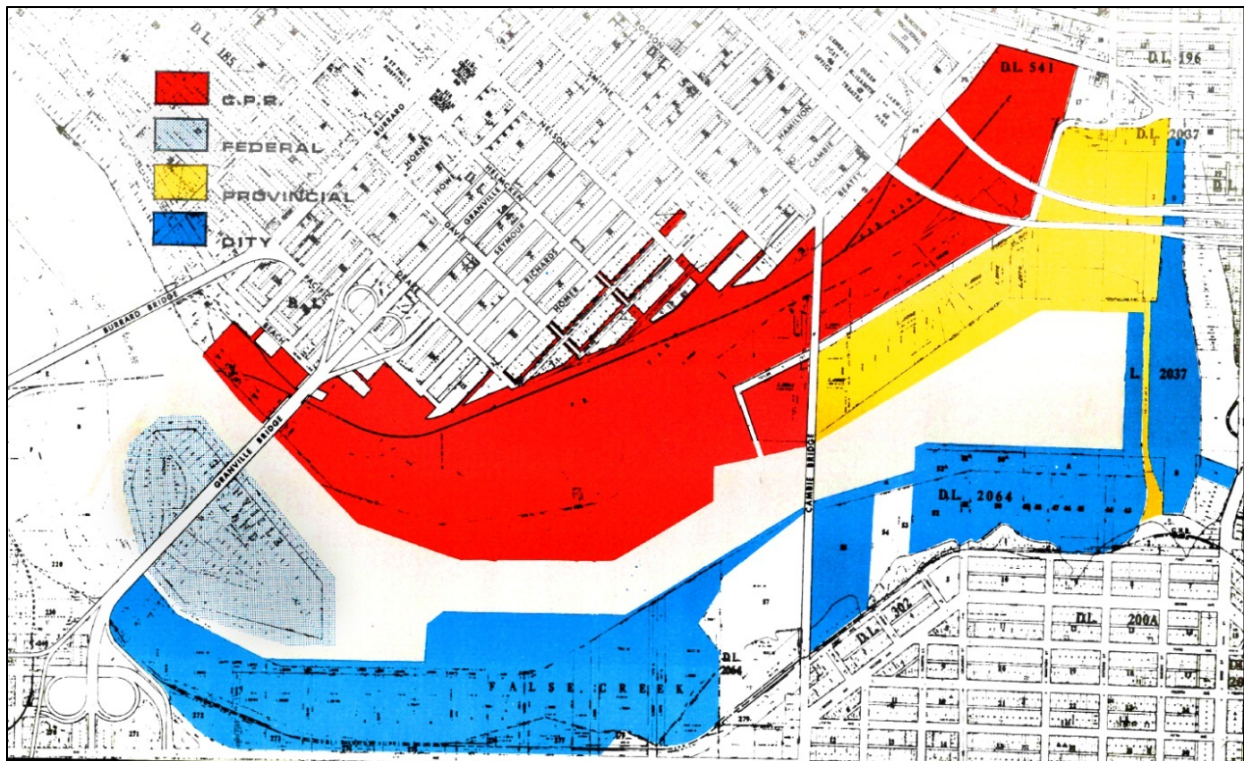
Figure 6.29: Land ownership pattern around False Creek in 1971. (Marathon 1971 False creek report) Red shows CPR (Marathon) owned property; bold blue shows City owned land; yellow shows land owned by the Province; light blue shows Federal land that would subsequently be developed as Granville Island. Note: this map can be potentially confusing because the shaded areas represent both dry land and water lots that extend into False Creek in some locations.

As this was going on, the powerful local business community in Vancouver, represented by the Board of Trade, had its own pressing concerns, and these were not entirely in agreement with the local government anymore. The governing NPA party had for a long time been closely aligned with the interests of the Board of Trade; it was the business leaders of the Board of trade who became leading politicians in Vancouver while the NPA controlled the Vancouver Government, from 1937-1972 (Tennant, 1980). The Board of Trade had a clear sense of the continuing

economic decline taking place around False Creek and it began to get concerned that City policies were inhibiting a transition to different and more profitable uses. Some saw in False Creek new opportunities for businesses serving tourism and recreational boating needs, especially if the polluted waterway could be rehabilitated and made suitable as a site for marinas. Others saw an opportunity to construct lucrative office buildings and new apartments to house those who worked there (Gutstein, 1974).

And finally, entering the fray somewhat later than the other interested groups with a stake in the outcome, came an emerging class of community activists who since 1967 had begun to exert increasingly effective opposition to efforts by the local government to carry out ambitious large scale projects elsewhere in the city. One leader in this group was the powerful City Councilor and self-described Socialist, Harry Rankin, a Vancouver lawyer who subscribed to the view that property value increases that result from changes in zoning uses by the city should belong not to the property owners, but to the city (Rankin, 1974).[17]

From 1950 onwards, as these various interested parties contended with the question of what to do with False Creek, reports and proposals were written and published, leaving behind a trail of documents that today provide glimpses into the development of urban planning goals and design ideas that would eventually give the city a new and substantially improved identity. These reports individually tell one story, but compared against one another chronologically, another story also begins to emerge, one involving an ongoing political struggle that in some cases can only be inferred. The table below (see table 6.2) summarizes in chronological order the contents and impact of 21 of the most relevant reports and proposals prepared from 1950 to 1974.

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[17] Curiously, this was an often repeated argument made by Harry Rankin in the context of larger properties suitable for large scale development, yet I have found no evidence that he ever made the same argument with regard to the urban redevelopment of Strathcona and Chinatown. In principle the same idea ought to have applied. Property values in the East End had the potential to increase thanks in part to the rezoning that took place in 1956, yet Rankin's line of argument if applied consistently should have demanded that these gains too belong to the City. How then could the City collect this surplus value? Perhaps taxes could have drastically increased, forcing the residents to take on what amounted to a second mortgage owed to the City. Or perhaps Rankin's argument could have been used to support the expropriation of homes and the forced redevelopment of the East End district, since this is a realistic way that the City could have collected the gains that Rankin argued should belong not to the homeowners, but to the City. Then again, who is to say that the City would not owe homeowners damage compensation in cases were zoning policies reduced the value of one's home. Rankin appears to have been conveniently selective in terms of deciding to whom this policy ought to apply, a policy that nevertheless has had tremendous impact. This issue would prove crucial in eventual handling of the False Creek development proposals, helping to delay the rehabilitation of this polluted area for decades.

Date		Title	Author	Contents	Comments
	1950	False Creek Development Study	City of Vancouver	survey of industries at False Creek	response to 1947 Bartholomew report
	1952	Preliminary Appreciation of the	C.D. Schultz and Co.	Prediction based upon the prior	Wood Industry to stay 20 years
		Development of Wood Converting		thirty years of industry at False Creek	use of False Creek to decline
		Industries at False Creek			
Jan	1953	Report on the Economic Study	D. M. Churchill	Conclusion: Industrial use of land	implies industrial decline in area.
		of the False Creek Industrial Area		not intensive around False Creek	
Oct	1955	Report on False Creek	E. L. Cousins	Presents multiple schemes for	complex government landownership
				industrial use	pattern impedes effective action.
Nov	1960	False Creek Development Study	Technical	Study of future uses. Suggests Harbor	implies ending heavy industry
		a Progress Report	Sub-Committee	for small craft, some light industry	Report was adopted by City Council
Oct	1963	False Creek Rehabilitation Report	Vancouver	Proposes improving roadway access to	Planning Dept wants industry
			Planning Dept.	False Creek to attract new Industries.	to remain.
Feb	1964	False Creek Rehabilitation Report	Vancouver	Proposes several small projects to	Planning Department rejecting
			Planning Dept.	attract new industries by proving	recreational uses in favor of
				City is commited to industrial uses.	continued industrial uses.
May	1964	Notes on Unified Management	W. E. Graham	attempts to begin resolving	report also asked CPR not to renew
			Director of Planning	competing interests of City	leases over pending issues.
				and CPR via unified management	Arrangement was ended in 1968
Aug	1964	Report of False Creek	Board of Trade	Supports October 23 City Report	(Board of Trade is a powerful
		Rehabilitation	Civic Bureau Commit.	but rejects piecemeal approach	business group)
March	1968	False Creek	Vancouver	recommends City Council reconsider	suggested uses include office towers
			Planning Dept.	policy of keeping False Creek an	and residential redevelopment
				industrial development	to support dowtown core.
Jan	1969	Recommendations of the Board	Board of Trade	Proposes converting area to	Response to City's 1968 report
		of Trade for the Development	Civic Affairs Commit.	housing and recreation	forward looking - anticipates end
		of False Creek		city assemble to assemble parcels,	of industry at False Creek.
				hire developers	Claims City out of touch with citizenry.
April	1969	Proposal for the Redevelopment	Zoltan Kiss and	Proposal to convert CPR lands to	First large scale design proposal in
		of the North Shore	Marathon Realty	to mixed used use, residential	City to combine point towers, low
		of False Creek		Very innovative & influential	rise housing and waterfront parks
Jan	1970	False Creek Development	Vancouver	Redevelopment of False Creek:	City attempting to regain intitative;
		Concepts	Planning Dept.	5 different but progressively better	principles in 1969 Kiss report
				Concepts. Presents many principles	applied to entire False Creek basin
				subsequently applied at alse Creek	waterfront promenade all around
April	1971	False Creek	Zoltan Kiss and	updated plan based upon 1971 report	designs more differentiated
			Marathon Realty	Marina, slabs, towers and low rises	and site specific
Sept	1971	Proposed Policies for the	Vancouver	comprehensive plan including: uses,	playing catch-up with developers
		Redevelopment	Planning Dept.	densities of 2.6 - 4.0 FAR, view corridors,	establishing policies where none
		of False Creek		water pollution issues and staged	had existed for redevelopment
				implementation. 80 foot height limit	as residential and recreational area.
Sept	1971	False Creek Proposals	False Creek Study Grp:	urban design concepts	A major precent for new
			Thompson, Berwick, Pratt	specific to False Creek based on	planning approach in Vancouver.
			Van. Planning Dept.	"Patterns" concepts of CES and	Translates conceptsfrom prior reports
			Ron Walkey	Christopher Alexander.	Ron Walkey previously worked for CES
Sept	1972	False Creek Progress Report	Vancouver	continuing rehabilitation efforts	Marathon ready to begin construction
			Planning Dept.	detailed recommendations	City to tackle some development
Dec. 13	1972	TEAM party ousts NPA party after 35 years			
Jan	1973	Gerald Sutton Brown resigns as City Manager		Planning Director W. E Graham is also terminated.	
Sept	1973	Ray Spaxman recruited as new Planning Director		Spaxman official appointed in 1974 as Planning Director, Serves from 1974-1989	
June	1974	False Creek Housing:	Zoltan Kiss Ron Dies	Master Plan for CPR land: divides site	Plan proposed very similar to plan
		a Development Proposal for	Marathon Realty	into six new neighborhoods	eventually used redevelopment
		the North Side of False Creek		to be developed in sequence	of False Creek two decades later.
Jun. 27	1974	Official Development Plan	City of Vancouver	restates the contents of Sept. 1971	recycles many of the same diagrams
		for False Creek		False Creek Proposals, without the	hard to see how this is an offical plan
				"Patterns" concept openly expressed	more of a set of design guidelines
Sept	1974	The Pedestrian Environment	Walkey/Olsen Architects	Design principles for rehabilitating	This report shows that Marathon Realty
		of the Vancouver	Marathon Realty	Coal Harbor waterfront, offering	was well appraised of the rapidly
		Waterfront	(Paul Merrick and Richard	context specific, pedestrian oriented	evolving planning values in Vancouver
			Henriquez also helped)	advice on: sunlight, views, massing.	following from the TEAM election
	1974	Inner City Living	City of Vancouver	description of ongoing City	The new City planners continue to
		- the False Creek		development effort at south shore	adopt design concepts previously
		Redevelopment Program		of False Creek on City owned land	recommended by others

Table 6.2: False Creek rehabilitation plans and studies: 1950 - 1974

A key early milestone in this process is the October 1963 report by the Vancouver Planning Department. It is important to bear in mind that the Vancouver City Council and the Vancouver Planning Department were not always in agreement about basic issues connected with planning and development. Gerald Sutton Brown came to acquire more power the longer he remained an employee of the Vancouver Government and his position was not subjected to the bi-annual elections that his opponents in the City Council were forced to endure to hold onto their posts. By 1963 Gerald Sutton Brown had been promoted to the position of City Manager, yet he maintained a firm grasp on issues related to city planning through his hand-picked replacement as Planning Director, W. E. Graham. (Langford 2011).

In the October 1963 Report, the Vancouver Planning Department stubbornly proposes to continue on the course of action recommended by Harland Bartholomew 16 years earlier, despite a report from a timber industry group and an economic projection by D. M. Churchill, both of which indicated that False Creek was in a decline as an industrial center urging that alternative uses should be explored (City of Vancouver, 1963).[18]

A February 1964 Planning Department Report proposes that the city needs to prove to various business groups that the city was still serious about industrial development around False Creek by embarking on a series of small projects, such as improvements to waterfront access roads at various points. Which business groups or particular industries this was meant to attract are however left unclear (City of Vancouver, 1964).

In August of 1964 The Board of Trade responded with a report that at first seems to support the efforts of the Planning Department, but this is just to be polite. It becomes quickly apparent that the Board of Trade is effectively rejecting the proposal, ostensibly on grounds that the report is too piecemeal and insufficiently comprehensive. The Board of Trade clearly is not pleased with the efforts of the city and wants a more comprehensive assessment of the situation. This rebuke was then followed by a pause in the report process during which presumably the debate continued off the record (Board of Trade, 1964).

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[18] Although I have tracked down a majority of the reports listed, Mr. Churchill's report from 1953 is one which I have only been able to evaluate through several secondary sources. Unfortunately I have not been able to determine if he was hired as a consultant by the City Council, or by the Planning Department; either option is possible and the distinction might be significant. If Churchill was hired by the City Council, which seems likely, given their close ties to business interests then this might explain the willingness of Gerald Sutton Brown to ignore this finding. Sutton Brown could propose new policies but the City Council had the power to adopt or reject them.

In March of 1968 the Vancouver Planning Department issued a new report, titled simply "*False Creek,*" which recommended that the city reconsider its earlier position and start exploring redevelopment options for False Creek that could include perhaps office towers or new apartment developments. The City Planners of Vancouver evidently had finally gotten the message, almost. The planners continued to be slow to respond to calls for planning guidance concerning this new development direction for False Creek. Although more than three years had elapsed since the prior rejection by the Board of Trade, the 1968 report did not propose any rules or new design guidelines that the city could approve that would actually get the redevelopment process moving (City of Vancouver, 1968).

After waiting nine months and still seeing no further progress from the city, in January of 1969 The Board of Trade issued another report that appears to be intended to continue applying pressure on the city to keep this process moving forward, this time making specific recommendations for the course of action needed to begin the rehabilitation of False Creek (see figure 6.30) (Board of Trade 1969).
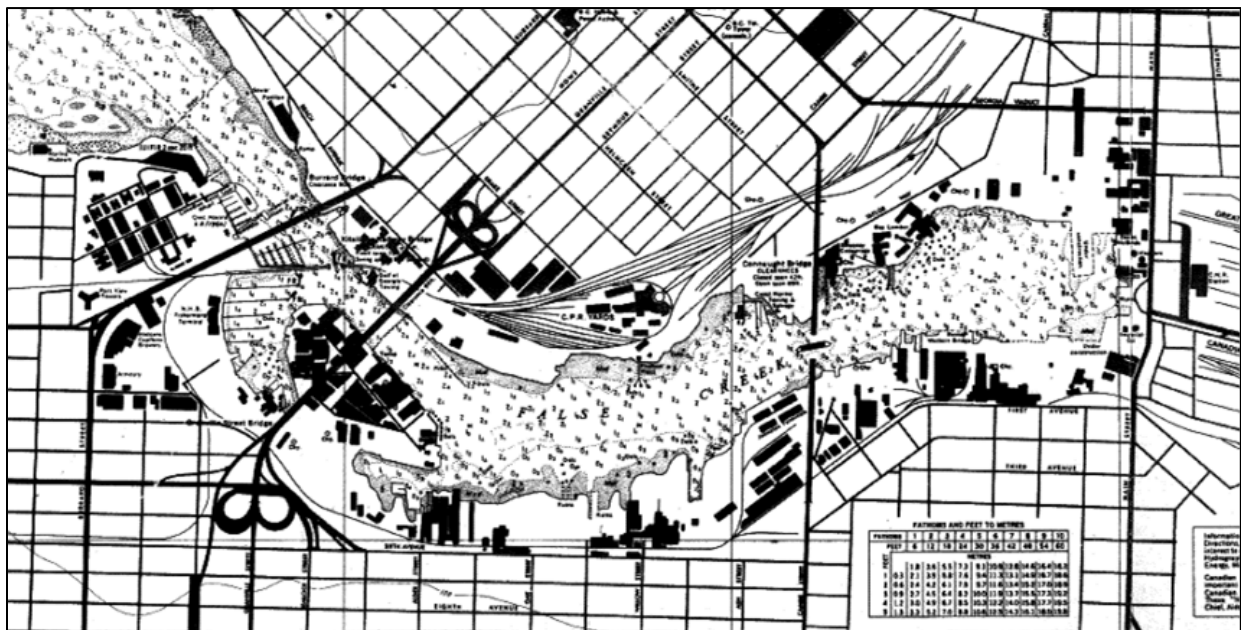
Figure 6.30: Detail of Map of industrial operations in Vancouver, showing activity at False Creek in 1969 (Board of Trade, 1969).

> It is essential in the opinion of this Committee that the future of the False Creek area be reviewed in the broad concept of Vancouver's future. The environment of the downtown core will prove an essential factor in the attraction of the decision makers, and the False Creek area must be planned as an integral part of this central core.

But what do we see in False Creek today? The area was conceived as a port, but developments in shipping soon precluded any future for it in this respect. Developed, therefore, as a fringe heavy-industrial area, it was soon by-passed by the city's growth. Now it is a derelict area, blighted almost beyond belief; yet, with its physical features and its location in the centre of the city, it has a potential for development that can make it one of our most valuable assets both in economic and in aesthetic terms.

As an under-used and uneconomic mess today, its only value is to those few industries who have found it convenient, and to those that consider it a temporary location. Their continued presence in False Creek is not essential, for those that do require a central waterfront location can be as well accommodated elsewhere and those which do not, could be as well served in other designated industrial areas.

Now that a re-assessment of False Creek is taking place, and the groundwork for re-development is being initiated, it is inconceivable that complete rehabilitation of the area should not be undertaken and put into effect at the earliest practicable date. The form that such rehabilitation should take is the subject matter of this report.

Basically, this Committee considers that False Creek must be planned as a whole to complement the downtown core and form a part of its total environment. An exciting opportunity exists to develop an area of mixed uses, incorporating high and medium density housing, suitable water oriented light industry, commercial buildings, hotels, parklands and marinas.

This comprehensive development must be tied into the regional transportation system, but the various avenues which will be provided must not be allowed to break the continuity of the environment as an integral unit.

> - Recommendations of the Board of Trade for the redevelopment of False Creek, January 1969. p 7.

Enter the architects: Zoltan Kiss, Ron Dies and the 1969 Marathon Plan for False Creek

Marathon Realty, the real estate development arm of the Canada Pacific Railway (CPR) had by the late 1960's become interested in redeveloping the vast parcel of land it owned along the northern shore of False Creek. Many of the long term leases that Marathon had given to industrial manufacturers at low cost were due to finally expire, creating an opportunity to change how this land was being used. The success of the West End high rise developments had increased the perceived real estate value for this land along False Creek, further magnifying the appeal of converting this land from industrial to higher density residential development. Marathon, like the Board of Trade expressed interest in getting this process of redevelopment underway. The City of Vancouver Planning Department however was slow to respond to this

request, offering no definitive guidance as to what it considered allowable or desirable at in terms of development at False Creek. [19]

Still lacking updated zoning standards for the area, Marathon Realty seized the initiative and began to offer their own proposals for improving their land at the north shore of False Creek. Working closely with Vancouver architects Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies, Marathon developed a series of detailed reports explaining a process and a master plan intended to convert their land into a new series of well-designed residential and commercial neighborhoods. The intention of Marathon Realty was to secure the necessary permits and approvals needed to for the project to move forward. At a time when the city was running into public opposition to its public development initiatives, Marathon chose to encourage public feedback through many public meetings, undertaken as the design developed. This work would eventually produce three detailed reports for related to this work, the first of which was presented to the City of Vancouver in April of 1969 (Kiss, 1969, 1971, 1974, 2005).

> "False creek" is an area of approximately 600 acres surrounding the shores of a saltwater estuary in the heart of Vancouver. It is an unplanned conglomeration of log blooms,[20] railyards, dilapidated buildings and congested waterways. It is the home of warehouses and industry dependent on rail and water transportation to service a complex urban structure, Vancouver. While the city grew around it with alarming speed, False Creek deteriorated.
>
> Zoltan Kiss, 1969, 2.

The Proposal
The Proposal concentrates on the 190 acres controlled by Marathon Realty Company Limited on the North side of False Creek, approximately 30% of the False Creek area.

This portion of False Creek could be developed as an independent unit. However, we studied it as an organic part of the Transportational, Commercial, Cultural and Recreational fabric of the city. The entire False Creek area, particularly the North and the South Shores facing each other should logically progress at the same time.

THE SCHEME SHOWS A CONCEPT ONLY - NOT DETAILED SOLUTIONS. IT IS A FIRST STAGE TO SHOW POSSIBILITIES, INVITE COMMENT AND HOPEFULLY, ACTION.

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[19] Perhaps this was due to the recent redevelopment debacle in the East End and the stalled but ongoing freeway fight. See Chapter 5 for more information.
[20] The term "log blooms" refers to the large floating rafts of logs which were towed for processing to the timber mills lining False Creek.

Full development would take 15 to 20 years, in stages.

Marathon Realty Company Limited intends to build parts of the scheme needed to spark the development and is prepared to lease portions of the land to other developers who would follow the intent of a master plan and a set of rules to be determined in co-operation with the city. The developers would plan their own projects with their own Architects and Contractors.

Zoltan Kiss, 1969, 8.

Having the developer construct part of the development, while at the same time sparking interest in other developers who would be encouraged to share in the opportunity is a sensible forward looking approach to the challenge of developing such a large scale project. [21] This also had the advantage of introducing a degree of variety in the design and form of the different buildings.

A RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY BETWEEN CAMBIE AND GRANVILLE BRIDGE
This portion of approximately 94 acres is the prime area of the site. The land is practically flat and using overpasses it is easy to connect it to the City Street system.

Our proposal suggests a residential community of high rise apartments, townhouses and low cost housing integrated with shops, parks, recreational and community facilities. In essence it is a suburb of 20, 000 people.

POPULATION
To determine the total population for the area we used a density similar to the West End. A floor-space ratio of 3.5 calculated according to the formula devised by the City Planning Department for large residential development gave us a maximum of 11,000 housing units or approximately 20,000 people. Detailed calculation and explanation of the formula are attached in Appendix.

To achieve this relatively high density a large proportion of the people would have to live in high rise apartments. However, contrary to the West End, we propose to house as many families with children as possible in low buildings.

The ratio shown on the plans is approximately 75% for highrise apartments, 25% for garden apartments. Areas close to Granville and Cambie Bridges would be lower income apartments and family units, while the waterfront and central portion would be more expensive housing, to create a full range of housing and a harmonious community.

THE ENVIRONMENT

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[21] This strategy is similar to the approach later used by Li Ka-Shing to eventually develop this same large tract of property, while attracting additional investors to land nearby.

To provide a pleasant environment in a large scale, high density residential area we kept the following aims in mind:
• provide as much privacy, sun and view as possible
• be close to recreational facilities, parks, theatres, restaurants
• separate high speed traffic from local traffic
• separate pedestrian traffic from cars and vehicles
• shopping should be close by to avoid constant use of the car
• transportation to the main centre of employment (downtown) should be provided by an easy public transportation system
• road connection should be direct, allowing fast distribution of traffic
• provide as much open space as possible

Zoltan Kiss, *Proposal for the redevelopment of the North Shore of False Creek*, 1969, 18.

At this early date Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies are proposing to redevelop the False Creek area as a modern residential neighborhood that has a school, accessible shopping and community oriented facilities. The plans and model photographs of these early proposals reveal, Kiss and Dies in their early proposal for False Creek are already making use of courtyards, towers and low rises apartments, in combination with a network of pedestrian waterfront parks and amenities. Only later would these ground level apartments come to be regarded by others as so called "podiums." Although the proposed low rise units have not yet been transformed into the street facing row houses, now typical of Vancouverism, the design strategy of Kiss and Dies is still motivated by a desire to make the downtown peninsula more family friendly, a goal which would continue to be important as the rehabilitation of False Creek eventually moved forward (see figure 6.31).

The 1969 proposal also deserves credit for suggesting several methods of taming the problem of automobile traffic: by concealing parking below grade, by encouraging the provision of pedestrian accessible shopping and other amenities and by proposing improvements to public transportation. Each of these would eventually be pursued by the city years later. Later in the proposal Kiss describes how the towers he and Dies have recommended are to be separated by a distance of 500 to 600 feet[22], compared to the distances of 100 feet or less that were typically seen in the West End (Kiss, 1969, 20).

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[22] Strictly speaking, however, the 1969 proposal actually suggests well-spaced pairs of high rises. This arrangement was used to help preserve public access to views while at the same time still providing individual units with excellent views. It should also be mentioned that these plans were meant to be site plans that would be further developed by subsequent architects hired to design the individual lower groups. Therefore the details of the designs

The proposal called for the construction of towers which are taller than those typical of this portion of Vancouver today, but also at a substantially lower development density from that which was later used when this area was eventually developed. The FAR of recent developments in this area of Vancouver is negotiated on a project by project basis with FAR levels of 4.5 or 6.0 being quite common. In contrast to this Zoltan Kiss had proposed a density of 3.5, a figure derived from work then taking place in the West End. However, unlike the West End which did not combine ground level units and high rises, the combination of ground level units and somewhat taller 35 story towers in the 1969 Marathon scheme means that the towers are actually more sparsely distributed, and spaced further apart. The result is that in the 1969 Marathon plan, the towers obstruct daylight and views less than structures of the West End, while still being developed at a similar density.
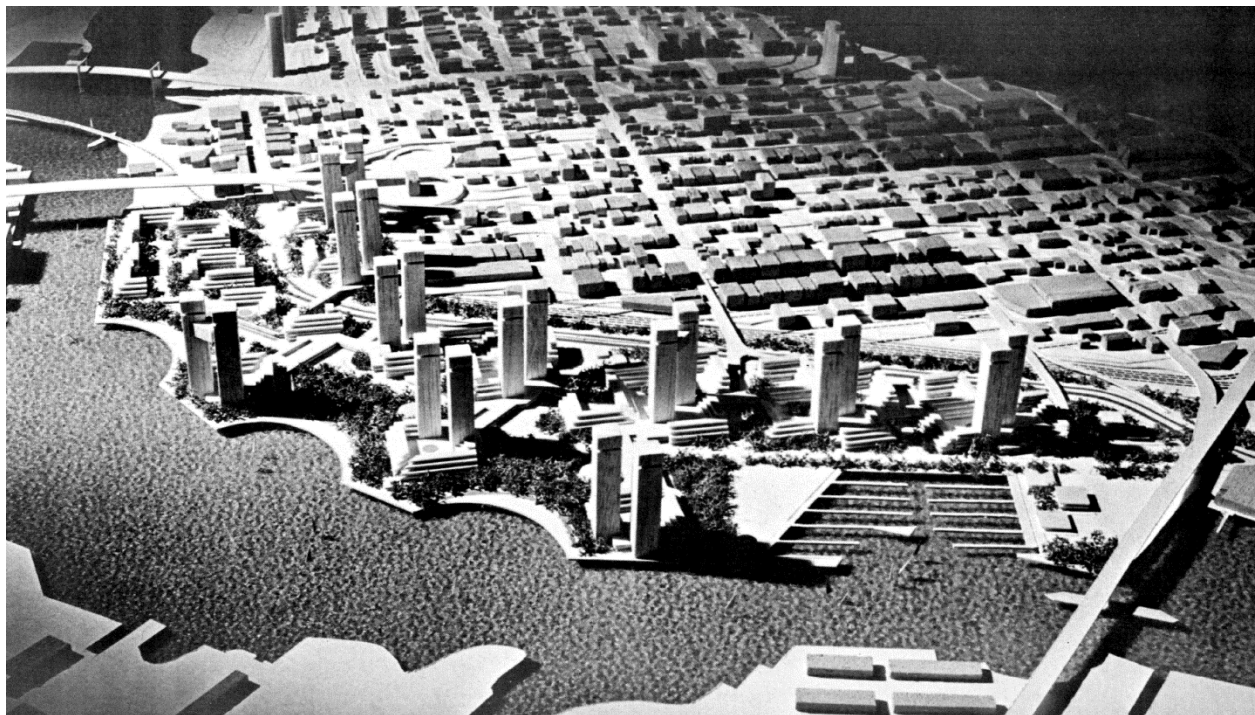
Figure 6.31: Site design model for 1969 False Creek Redevelopment Proposal. (Kiss, 1969).

Of all the many steps taken in the process of developing a new urban form language for Vancouver, the 1969 Proposal for the North Shore of False Creek is perhaps the single biggest leap forward, in a process that has unfolded over the course of the better part of a century (see figure 6. 32). In a remarkable design synthesis this project introduced to Vancouver the

were expected to evolve and it would have been possible to merge the tower pairs into single towers while maintaining their larger pattern of spacing. (Source: personal communication by the author with Ron Dies, 2011).

following combined features and characteristics that would eventual come to be regarded as essential elements of Vancouverism:

1. Point towers used in combination with blocks of low rise apartments to frame courtyard spaces at ground level.
2. A network of public waterfront parks in conjunction with higher density residential developments.
3. Spaced placement of residential towers to preserve view corridors.
4. Underground parking eliminated the dominance of the automobile on the landscape.

Figure 6.32: 1969 False Creek Plan (Zoltan Kiss, 1969). The red squares indicate the locations of point towers.

One of the factors that influenced the design of these development proposals was the expectation that development would be taking place over an extended period of time. Vancouver had not yet become a destination city for Asian immigrants on the scale that it would become during the 1980's and beyond (Gutstein, 1990). In a market expected to grow more slowly, Marathon approached development as a process which would be pursued in stages, during which the particular designs of individual high rises and low rise structures would be further refined. These

concerns also are apparent in the subsequent revisions proposed in 1971 and 1974 (Kiss, 1969, 1971, 1974).

Another challenge that the 1969 proposal attempted to reconcile was the desire to connect the existing urban fabric of Vancouver to the new development even though this meant overcoming the obstacle presented by a train yard and a projected downtown traffic artery. As a plan of the development shows, the role of the automobile has been suppressed in relationship to the needs of the pedestrian. A network of pedestrian paths traverse the site while roadways pass beneath them, the waterfront meanwhile is overwhelmingly oriented towards pedestrian experience (see figure 6.33).
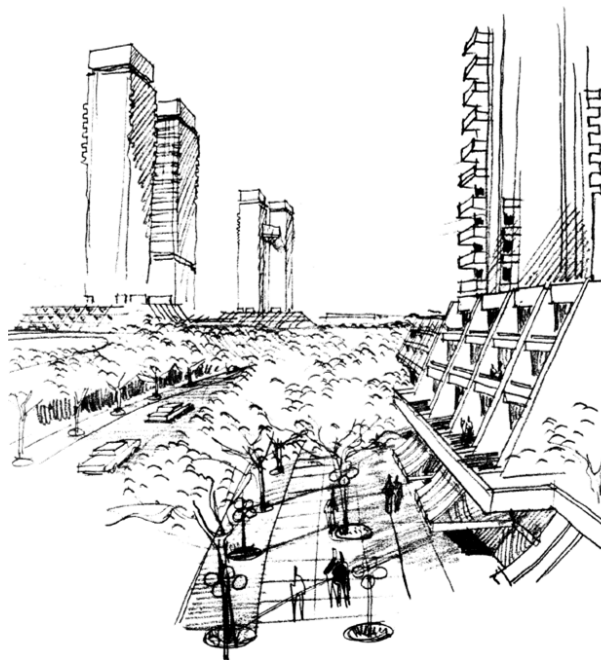
Figure 6.33: Freehand perspective sketch of street view (Kiss, 1969).

The plan also features an extensive marina in the same location where one would eventually be built 25 years later. From 1990 onwards, Vancouver has been intentionally marketed for its resort like characteristics by the city's most prominent and successful new condominium sales expert, Bob Rennie. At the same time Vancouver has been criticized for this resort like character (Boddy, 2005). For better and also for worst, part of the character of Vancouverism is the emphasis given to creating a pedestrian centered environment. The 1969 Plan represents the first time that such a pedestrian centered urban design approach was attempted in Vancouver at such a large scale, establishing a crucial precedent that remains relevant today.

The process by which the 1969 Proposal was further refined, before eventually obtaining planning approval in 1974 involved considerable additional work over the next five years, during a time when the city planning regime of the City of Vancouver was undergoing profound changes. However, one crucial change that had already become apparent in this situation was that the Architects and the Developer were no longer merely responding to conditions defined by the city, instead the city had started to follow their lead. It would be some time before this altered dynamic would be transformed into an effective process of collaboration.

The Vancouver Planning Department responds: *False Creek Development Concepts***, 1970**
In January of 1970, the City of Vancouver finally responded to the request of the Board of Trade and also the Marathon 1969 redevelopment plan by issuing its own document titled False Creek Development Concepts. Allegedly the document describes 5 different concepts for the development of False Creek, however, the first concept involving continuing to use the site as an industrial area, is only mentioned in passing and is never depicted in plan form. The remaining four concepts are presented in detail.
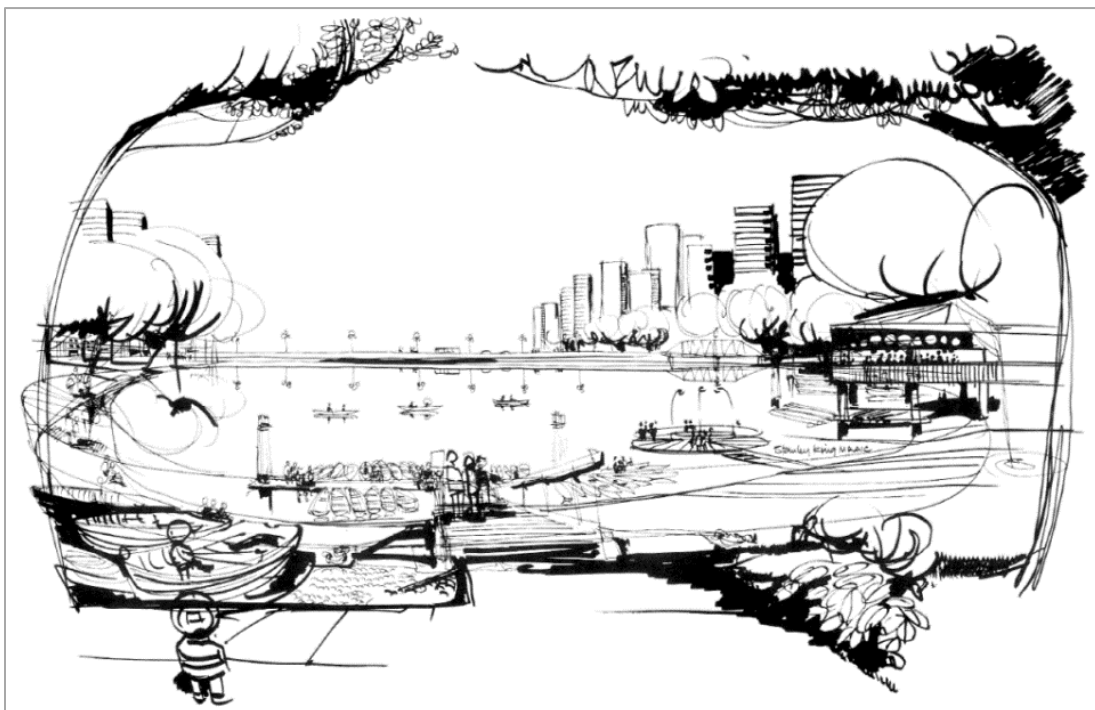
Figure 6.34: A view of False Creek suggesting high rises would be constructed on both shores (*False Creek Development Concepts*, City of Vancouver Planning Department, 1970).

The character of the document itself is somewhat peculiar compared to prior planning documents produced by the city. Instead of being decisive, or offering a clear illustration of the form and

configuration that development was expected to take, as had been done in the *1957 Redevelopment Study for the East End* (Sutton Brown, 1957), the 1970 *False Creek Development Concepts* is weak, unclear and tentative, relying on a combination of diagrammatic plans and overly stylized renderings (see figure 6.34). Perhaps this approach was the result of the city struggling to find a new method that that offered choices to the public, unfortunately the net effect this creates is a lack of direction.[23]

The report mentions in passing that Marathon is on board with the new use, implying that Marathon is in agreement with the city and following its lead, although in reality Marathon had been pushing the process forward. Meanwhile, the concept plans the city has proposed are still not providing much more than a vague outline of desired features for the new development.

There is no need to review the four proposals in detail, but a look at one of the concepts will be useful for what it omits, as much as for what it reveals.

> FALSE CREEK CONCEPT S RELATED TO DOWNTOWN PLANNING
> Concept #2:- Would encourage a single high density commercial core on the downtown peninsula. An expanded housing stock would reinforce employee preference for working in downtown. The availability of employees would encourage potential office staff employers to locate downtown. Vancouver could become the "executive city" of the Canadian west.
>
> **Concept Outline**
> Redevelopment would eventually include several distinct residential neighbourhoods. The multiple dwellings provide for a mixture of family and nonfamily households in high rise, low rise, garden apartments, and some town houses.
>
> Parks would be developed for specific neighbourhood and district needs, (City standards of about 1. 8 acres per 1,000 population). Schools and com m unity centres would be planned for integration with the neighbourhoods.
> Commercial and public marinas would be located west of the Connaught Bridge. At a later stage of development, additional marinas would be constructed east of Cambie if warranted.
>
> The entire shoreline would have a public promenade passing along or through a variety of waterfront uses, such as parks, marinas, specialty restaurants, and residential development.

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[23] This also seems to be a repeat of the strategy used by Thomas Mawson in 1912, in which multiple solutions were presented as a strategy for transforming an unappealing body of water into a civic centerpiece, surrounded by an extensive pedestrian waterfront promenade.

Buildings would be organized to protect views from and to the proposed development. The Fairview Slopes would be redeveled as a special residential project requiring land assembly.

Pedestrian overpasses would link the area with parks on the north side of 6th Avenue. Small areas of light industry, not in conflict with residential development, would be retained.

Granville Island would have light marine industry and commercial uses , and recreational developments . Redevelopment east of the Cambie Bridge would come at a later date (after 1980) and provide for: expansion of the metropolitan centre on the north side; a commercial and hotel strip along the East; and a purely residential neighbourhood on the south side.

- City of Vancouver Planning Department, *False Creek Development Concepts,* 1970, 12.

The site map for concept 2 is shown below (see figure 6.35). While it succeeds in considering the entire area as a whole, it does not provide clear guidance that would enable redevelopment to actually proceed. Curiously, all four of the concept plans insist on preserving the same three industrial areas, although in locations which are set back from the waterfront. Although the city claimed it was offering a range of choices, at least on this issue it remained stubbornly committed to maintaining some industrial uses in the vicinity of False Creek. In only one scheme, Concept #3, is any Industrial area to remain accessible to False Creek. In the remaining Concepts: 2, 4 and 5 the primary difference is the amount of land dedicated to waterfront park space. In all of the development concepts the residential use proposed by Marathon is what is proposed for the development of their land.

Beyond this general direction, which in the case of Marathon amounted to a mere confirmation of their previously stated intentions, the document provides only minimal indication of what is permissible at False Creek. No new zoning standards, building density limits, height restrictions, property line setbacks or other useful requirements are even suggested in the document, leaving the Marathon Realty Corporation to develop their own concept of what would be appropriate and worthwhile. Unfortunately, no mechanism was set in place that would allow them to proceed on this basis either, although just such an approach would eventually come to be established and widely employed in the eventual redevelopment of False Creek when this process began once again two decades later.

The single significant contribution that this document makes to the development of Vancouverism is that this is the first City Plan to call for the construction of a continuous waterfront promenade completely lining the shore of False Creek. This is a feature in all four of the Development concepts illustrated in this document. While this was a feature of the 1969 plan of Kiss and Dies that addressed their smaller portion of waterfront, the city planners in 1970 deserve credit for recognizing the value in expanding this to encompass the entire False Creek basin.
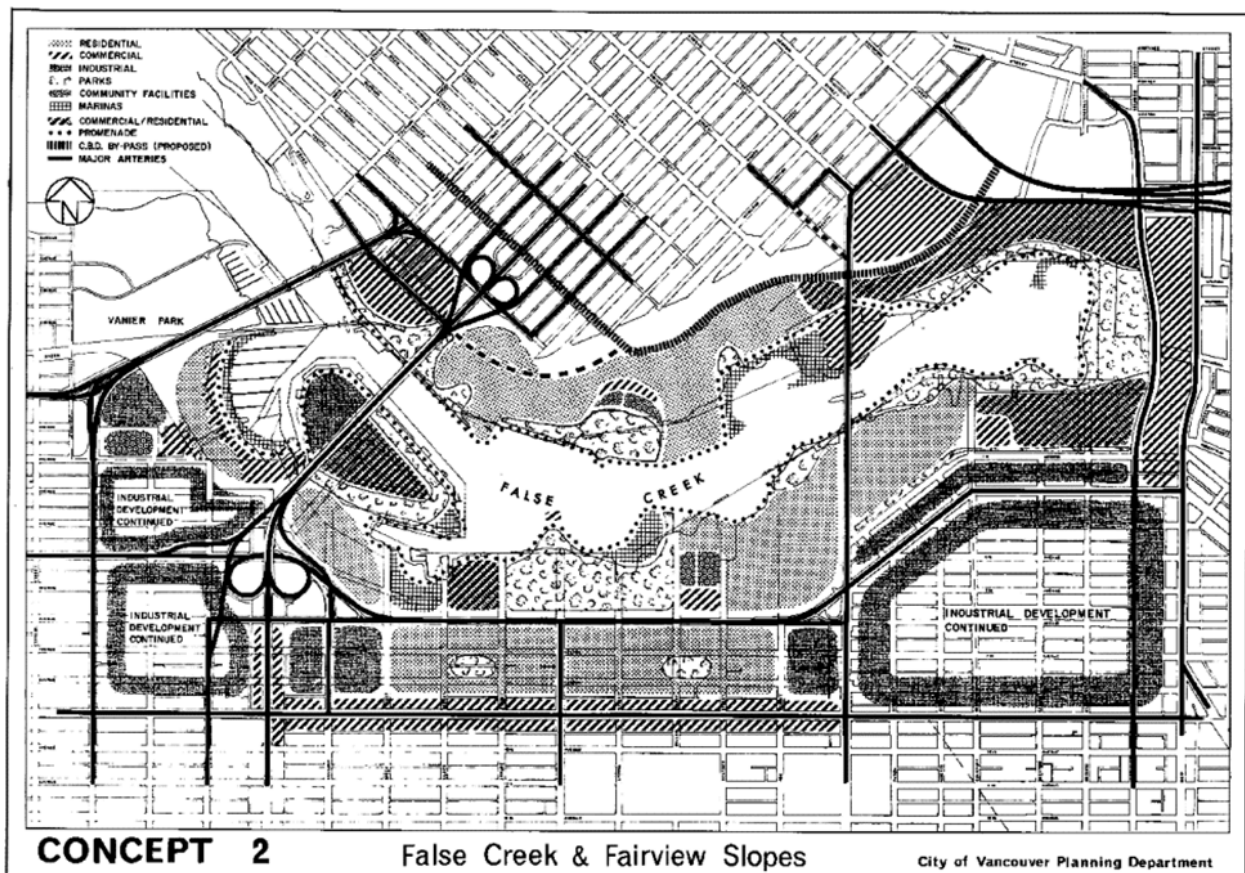
Figure 6.35: False Creek Concept 2 (City of Vancouver Planning Department, 1970, 13).

Interpretation: A Planning Department no longer guiding development

By the time the city had presented the 1970 False Creek Development Concepts, the Marathon Realty Corporation had already presented a compelling vision for False Creek that could have been embraced by the city and used as basis for proceeding with the redevelopment process. Such a course of action would have set a course that could have provided momentum and direction that would help the development of the other properties along False Creek, while establishing a track record for success that would have attracted other developers.

Instead the city lost the initiative and lost control of the process, a control of the development of Vancouver that it would never completely regain. The planners working for the city ceased to exert effective control, resulting in a new relationship where the development of Vancouver was defined by architects translating developer intentions into urban form. The results of this change were not entirely negative. One crucial reason Vancouver managed to find its own voice, defining its own variety of urbanism, was that architects came to hold a more significant role in the process. This change meant that their design instincts could play a role in defining urban configurations, instead of merely operating within the limited confines previously established by planners. This fundamental change of control also had positive impacts on planning in Vancouver. What began as a failure by the Planning Department to effectively guide development would eventually become a catalyst for finding new leaders and developing new methods. Planners in Vancouver began to get involved in issues that had previously tended to be viewed as matters of design, expanding their concerns to include not just issues of function and efficiency but also giving greater attention to the experience and enjoyment of urban places in ways that make for a thriving community. From this eventually evolved new forms of collaboration.

Had the planners working under the control of Gerald Sutton Brown gotten back on top of things and issued a clear set of guidelines and planning regulations concerning the redevelopment of False Creek, then the development of Vancouver would might have resumed a typical trajectory that continued to echo urban development in the United States and Great Britain. The failure of planner to act decisively forced Marathon to chart its own course. Ironically this set the stage for the City of Vancouver to also pursue its own urban response to its unique social and physical context under new leadership in which architects would play a more prominent role. From this point forward, following the 1969 plan of Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies, things began to change in Vancouver; architects began to influence planning, new planning methods and objectives were explored and the way that planning and design related to one another became more dynamic and in some ways more constructive.

Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies: the second Marathon False Creek Proposal: April 1971
While the Vancouver Planning Department was busy exploring a range of basic options for False Creek, Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies were leading an effort to move their project forward in a way

that would meet the needs of their clients, the Marathon Realty Corporation, creating a design intended serve the needs of the changing city. The approach taken by Kiss and Dies incorporates many of the positive features now associated with Vancouverism, the design proposal continued to evolve in response to public feedback. For example, as in the West End, this scheme includes a mixture of slab towers and point towers, however Kiss and Dies took the design further; the slab towers in this case have been grouped and oriented to preserve access to particular views across False Creek to the distant mountains to the North.

Figure 6.36: Site Plan False Creek Proposal (Kiss and Dies, False Creek Development, 1971).

Kiss and Dies also go to significant lengths to underscore the community values and the positive ways that they see this project enhancing the life of the future residents and neighbors to their proposed development. They were aware of the need for community involvement and consideration, even as the City Planning Department continued to fall short in this regard. Therefore they held numerous public meetings, soliciting feedback and adjusting their designs to produce work that would become a welcome addition to Vancouver and a valued part of the community (see figures 6.36, 6.37 and 6.38)
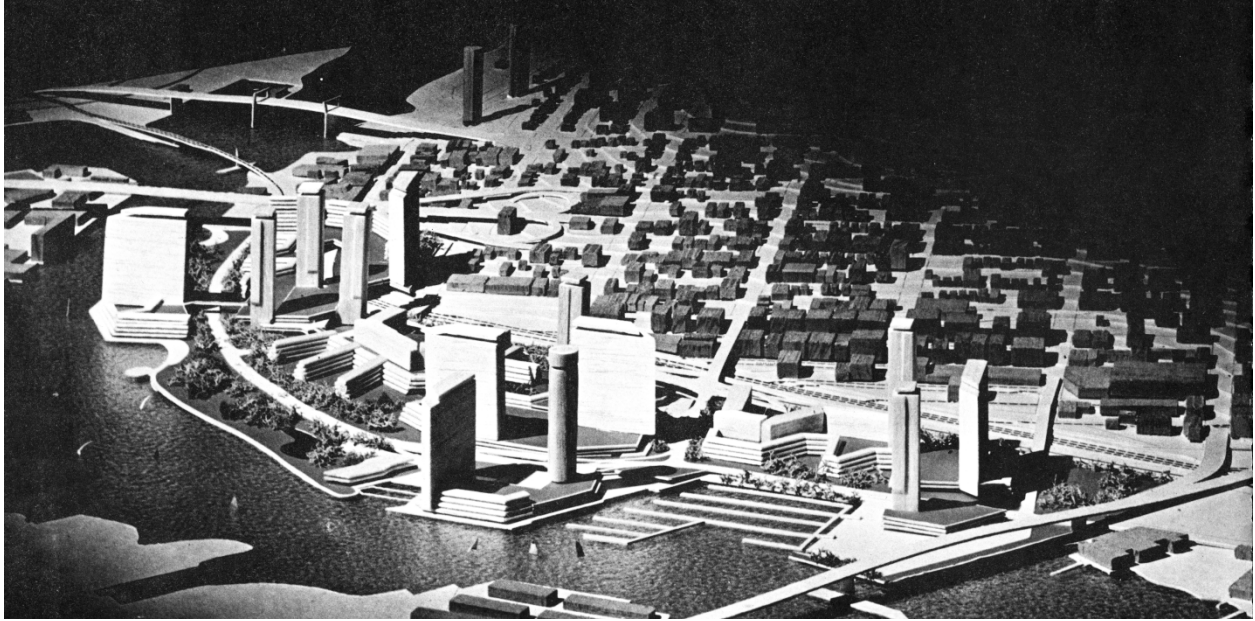
Figure 6.37: Model: False Creek Proposal (Kiss, 1971).
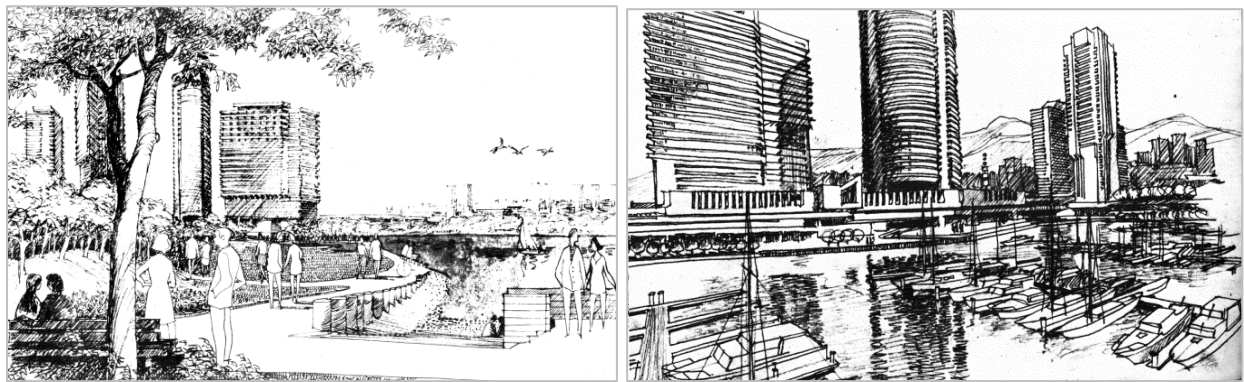
Figure 6.38: Perspective renderings False Creek Proposal (Kiss, 1971).

THE CONCEPT

Early analysis suggested a Residential-Recreational development on Marathon's False Creek site. Once this became clear, attention focused on the needs of the potential residents and on the natural advantages of the location with the goal of producing an environment that would be significantly better than competing areas today and, hopefully, in the future.

The following criteria were established to guide the decisions leading to the Development Plan as it now stands.

PEOPLE come first and a wide variety must be included in the project.

INTERACTION between people must be allowed happen easily, but not forced.

THE AESTHETICS OF THE SITE must be maximized. Access to the water is essential and protection of the potential views is critical.

OPEN SPACE must be conserved and used effectively to give light and air and occasional escape from the pressures of the urban environment.

HUMAN SCALE is very essential to consider, particularly at ground level where most outside activity takes place.

VARIETY AND CHOICE must be available in dwelling types, in activities and services. FLEXIBILITY is essential to allow for initial phasing of construction and, more importantly, to allow for future chances in life styles and the "social mix " of the residents in False Creek.

- Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies, False Creek Development, 1971.

Discussion: the architecture of the 1969 and 1971 Marathon master plans of Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies

The development of the designs for False Creek by Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies was an extensive and iterative process during which the architects solicited feedback from the public and then in response to this input continuously refined their designs. The architects made active use of scale models throughout this process as a means to explore and discuss design options, one advantage being that models are frequently easier to understand for people not trained in interpreting scale drawings. Of course, not all of these models made it into the published reports.

As in the case of the proposals for Harbour Park, the proposals for the Marathon property at False Creek began with a design incorporating uniform point towers, followed by a substantial revision using a combination of point towers and slab high rises. As was explored in Chapter 4, concerning the West End, in principle slab towers can be considered to be more economical to construct, while point towers afford better daylight and view access that could potentially translate into higher prices and somewhat higher profits. In the case of Harbor Park and False Creek the developers were trying to devise an approach that would support a more economically diverse group of residents, resulting in a combination of housing strategies that made use of both slabs and point towers. At False Creek this was taken even further through the combination of different high rise types in conjunction with low rise housing, foreshadowing the eventual strategy that would later be used there.

Figure 6.39: Composite image: Vancouver and Model of Marathon Proposal for False Creek (Ron Dies, 1970). Note: this image depicts a design development stage between the published 1969 and 1971 designs. Image provided by Ron Dies in 2011 communication with the author.

There are important distinctions between the 1969 plan and the 1971 plan proposed by Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies that indicate the designers were developing an increasingly nuanced understanding of the social and physical context as their work progressed. The 1969 design has the appearance of having been generated from the top down by first dividing the site into manageable chunks, which are divided by roadways, followed by the repetitive application of a fairly uniform strategy for taming the immense parcel. The 1969 plan hence is still somewhat diagrammatic in character reflecting its status as an initial stage in the process of design development. The strengths of this first effort are the combination of multiple housing types and also the establishment of new strategies for humanizing an environment that is still accessible to cars without being overwhelmed by them.

Although on a rough level the 1969 scheme appears to have more in common with the subsequent development of Vancouverism than the updated design presented in 1971, this

343

impression is largely a reflection of the choice to incorporate a mix of slab towers and point towers in the 1971 project, while later developments generally only used point towers. Today slab towers are less typical of new construction in Vancouver, even though these are still used on occasion. Perhaps Vancouver would be better off today if it actually included more of a mix of slab towers and point towers since this would tend to expand the market to include housing affordable in a broader range of prices, resulting in a more diverse community. Today in Vancouver the high ground belongs to the affluent.

Looking beyond the issue of tower types in the 1971 scheme, it is interesting to see how the design is responding more fully to the particular details of the specific context. The buildings proposed have ceased to appear as interchangeable blocks but instead have different orientations and configurations that better account for access to sunlight and waterfront views. Ron Dies and Zoltan Kiss seem to have realized in this refinement of their prior work that the even as the units on the upper levels would have views to the north of the Burrard Inlet and the Coastal mountains, that the best view for the ground level units is towards False Creek; therefore the closed courtyards have been reconfigured, opened up towards False Creek to afford most of these units a view of the nearby water. This also has the advantage of ensuring that the partially enclosed courts enjoy better access to sunlight.

In terms of the larger urban composition, the 1971 plan introduces some changes to the prior scheme that seem to have informed later developments in Vancouver. By choosing to group the towers in more defined clusters, Kiss and Dies create the opportunity to have a substantially larger public park space along the waterfront, an improvement over their earlier design. The shape of the waterfront itself is improved also: the seemingly redundant scalloped bays have been simplified and related more effectively to the tower groups, developing more of a spatial hierarchy as one moves across the site.

While in the 1969 design the towers were more evenly distributed in the 1971 design a more sophisticated hierarchy exists in which tower clusters begin to define new neighborhoods.

I have been in contact with both Ron Dies and Zoltan Kiss. They have indicated that one of the distinctions between the 1969 scheme and the 1971 scheme is that by 1971 they had been presenting their design in model form to the public, soliciting feedback and making substantial

refinements to their designs based upon this public input. While the 1969 scheme established a general conceptual direction, the 1971 scheme represents a stage in the process by which the design had taken into account community interests in translating the first more conceptual model into something that fit the context and the needs of the community in greater detail. The image above (see figure 6.39) is a composite photograph of one of the intervening stages of development explored by Ron Dies and Zoltan Kiss. Ron Dies informs me that the date on the model is 1969. This is consistent with the development of the designs between 1969 and 1971; the point tower pairs are still being used, as they were in the earlier scheme published in April of 1969. However, the tower pairs and the infill housing at ground level have begun to evolve in terms of their placement on the site; evidently the introduction of the slab towers and the elimination of the paired point towers was a later development.[24]

The 1971 proposal was the second of three produced by Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies for Marathon. The continuing efforts by the city to influence the development at False Creek will be examined before examining the 1974 report and the circumstances which brought the Marathon project to a close.

The False Creek Proposal and the introduction of Patterns into Vancouver Planning.

Figure 6.40: False Creek Proposals September 1971 Report 3 (False Creek Study Group, 1971).

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[24] When I first studied this image I noticed that the background included the tower at 200 Granville, which documentary photographs confirmed was still under construction in 1972. At first this puzzled me because the date provided by Ron Dies appears accurate in describing the model as representing ongoing design work taking place in 1969, which is at odds with this later date. However, I then realized that since the model photo was an unpublished image, it was entirely possible that the composite image was produced at a later date, perhaps sometime prior to the 1974 report. It is not uncommon for architects to preserve developmental study models of a project that is under development and this was still an active project.

As the city struggled to find a sense of purpose and orientation regarding the best way to rehabilitate False Creek, and the Marathon Proposals for a compelling new future for the North Shore of False creek began to take shape, a third effort to find a new approach to False Creek was also underway involving a public/private partnership that called itself "The False Creek Study Group," whose most notable work is a September 1971 document titled "False Creek Proposals, Report 3" (see figure 6.40).

Although the immediate impact of this document was limited, this report nevertheless laid the groundwork for a new approach to planning in Vancouver that was adopted by Ray Spaxman, the planning director hired by the TEAM government in 1974. Marathon Realty was apparently sufficiently impressed by this report that in 1974 they also hired Ron Walkey, a crucial participant in this report, to prepare another detailed study making recommendations relevant to the development of its holdings at Coal Harbor. Conceptually this provides a link in terms of establishing design priorities that would eventually come to be used both at False Creek and at Coal Harbor and is one of the reasons that the simultaneous development of both of these areas in the 1990's has a consistent overall feeling despite substantial differences in context and ownership. These issues are examined in subsequent chapters.

The planning approach explored in the False Creek Proposals Report 3 incorporates insights derived from several sources, including the Patterns of Christopher Alexander, and the contextually responsive, pedestrian centered approach to design advocated by Gordon Cullen in his work representing the British Townscape movement (Alexander 1968, Cullen 1949). There may have also been some influence by Lawrence Halprin as well, whose work on urban form from around this time has similar visual characteristics (Halprin, 1964).

Because this document is more relevant to the subsequent transformation of planning that took place during the Ray Spaxman Era, it is examined in more detail in the next chapter. However, even though it did not have an immediate impact on the developments around False Creek while Gerald Sutton Brown was still in power, it is revealing that the city and a team of local architects

were collaborating in a search for a new solution that could be applied at False Creek.[25] The seeds of a new approach to planning were being sown in Vancouver even before the departure of Gerald Sutton Brown; this might be interpreted either as evidence that Sutton Brown had overstayed his welcome, but it also could be a reflection of the changes overtaking the profession as a whole. Vancouver as the Canadian gateway to the Pacific with strong ties to England yet located within the sphere of influence of west coast American cities was uniquely well positioned to explore and adopt ideas drown from both cultures, including the British Townscape pioneers such as Gordon Cullen, the experiential planning methods advocated by Alan Jacobs, the former planning director of San Francisco, the new approaches to urban landscape designs being explored by Lawrence Halprin including his work in Portland Oregon, and the Pattern based research of Chris Alexander and his colleagues at the University of California at Berkeley.

Proposed Policies for the Redevelopment of False Creek: September 1971
City of Vancouver Planning Department
The same month that the False Creek Study group presented its body of recommendations embracing the use of Patterns and Townscape principles, the City of Vancouver finally issued its own set of proposed guidelines and objectives to be used in the development of False Creek. As the follow excerpt shows, the city has finally chosen to conform to the views previously articulated by Marathon and other business interests. The use of the term "liveable" also seems to suggest that the efforts of Harry Lash to make this a planning priority at the regional level were beginning to have an impact at the local level.[26]

> OBJECTIVES
> The objectives of this plan as well as stating the intent, are a reference against which policies and resulting development should be measured.
>
> The policies aim to guide redevelopment of the False Creek Plan Area in a manner compatible with development alternatives for the Downtown peninsula, the city of Vancouver and the metropolitan area.
>
> Industry, in general, should gradually relocate from the Plan Area and would be replaced with a combination of residential, recreational and commercial uses.

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[25] Discussions with retired Vancouver architect Barry Downs, now 81 years old, revealed that the architects in Vancouver were also intensely interested in work taking place in other west coast cities, including the San Francisco Bay Area, where Alan Jacobs, Chris Alexander and Lawrence Halprin were active around this time.
[26] For additional information on Harry Lash, the Greater Vancouver Regional District and his introduction of the concept of livability in regional planning see Chapter 5.

Residential uses ought to provide for a substantial cross section of households, family sizes and income groups. The density of population and buildings should relate to the "Inner City" and form part of a liveable and pleasant environment.

Redevelopment of any port ion of the Plan Area should be comprehensive, and should become part of a plan to:

(a) adequately provide future residents with housing, shopping, public and private open space, internal circulation, external circulation linkages, necessary schools and community facilities, and local and district recreation facilities; and,

(b) provide access to the amenities which may be enjoyed by both residents and visitors.

The aesthetic value of the water basin should be protected by controlling land fill to maintain adequate broadening of the water area inside the Harbour Headline and to create bays along an interesting shore line.

Increased control of water pollution should be in keeping with residential and recreational uses.

The grouping, height and bulk of structures should be regulated to preserve and create views from places outside of the plan area and from buildings, streets and open spaces within the area.

In addition to recreation requirements of future residents, significant portions of the area should be redeveloped for leisure activities which would serve the city and its visitors. These developments should relate to the existing English Bay beaches, Gastown/Chinatown, Thornton Park and Vanier Park.

Costs, which are a consequence of redevelopment should be borne by the developers.

- City of Vancouver Department of Planning and Civic Development, *Proposed Policies for the Redevelopment of False Creek,* September 1971, 2.

As the following excerpt from the general policies shows, the Planning department appears to have understood that housing for seniors, middle income and low income people is now a serious priority, suggesting that perhaps the now concluded fight over redevelopment in Strathcona may have made a lasting impression. The underlined passages (underlines present in the original) in the following remarks are taken from the original document suggesting that the city was eager for people to pay attention to this aspect of their proposed policies. This may also reflect awareness by the planners that this issue would prove a crucial sticking point in enabling the project to move forward.

A variation in dwelling units would be achieved through comprehensive zoning to include garden apartments, town-houses, and high-rise apartment buildings.

As well as providing dwelling units for single persons and households without children, a percentage of two and three bedroom units designed to accommodate families with children will be <u>required</u> in some areas. This would result in an estimated 22,000 studio and one-bedroom suites housing about 30,000 persons, and over 3,000 two -bedroom suites and about 600 three or more bedroom suites housing nearly 11,000 persons.

<u>Housing for senior citizens, low-income and middle-income families can be provided within the framework of the proposed redevelopment and should be detailed in subsequent reporting.</u>

- City of Vancouver Department of Planning and Civic Development, *Proposed Policies for the Redevelopment of False Creek,* September 1971, 2.
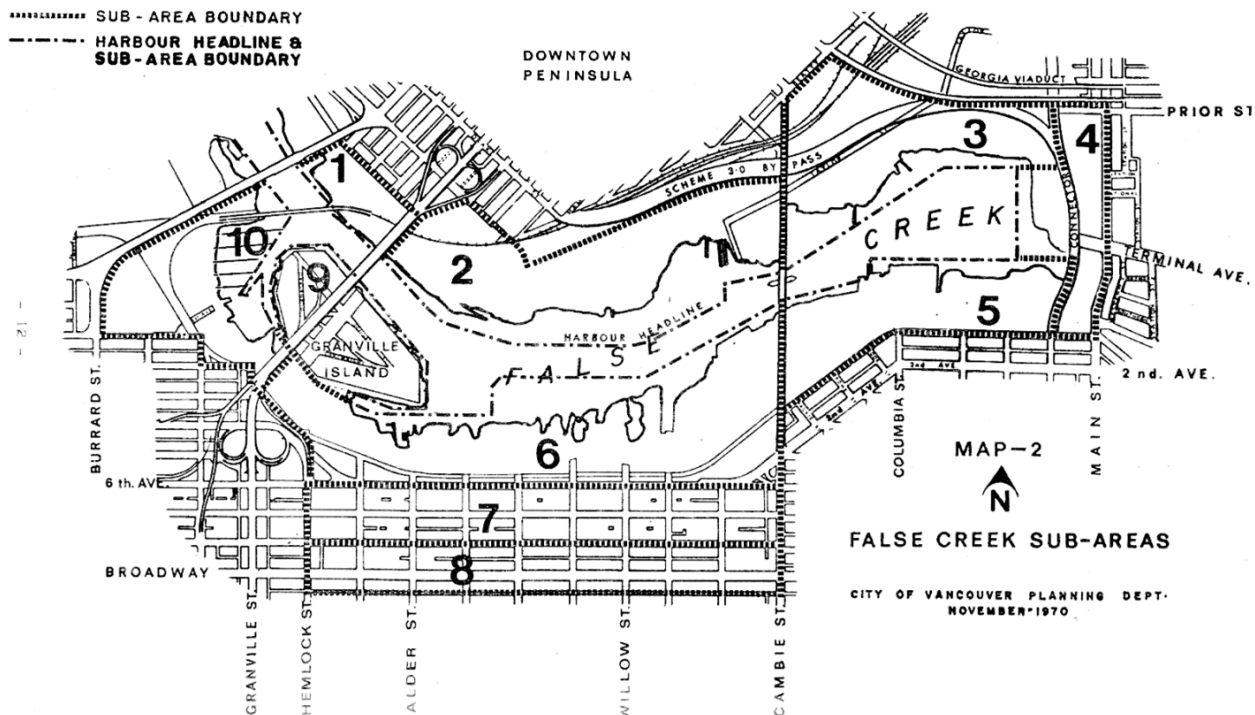
Figure 6.41: False Creek Sub-Areas (City of Vancouver, September 1971, 12).

In addition to agreeing to the position that had been advocated by Marathon and the other business interests, the city also finally began to suggest new regulations to be used in defining the development around False Creek. The proposal divides the land surrounding False Creek into ten subareas, in a pattern that roughly corresponds with the pattern of property ownership. The property owned by Marathon encompasses such a large area that it occupies sub areas 1, 2 and 3, with the Granville Bridge to the west and the Cambie Bridge to the east forming the boundary

349

lines dividing the three areas; the many area of redevelopment being investigated by Kiss and Dies is classified is sub area 2 (see figure 6.41). The following guidelines apply to sub-area 2.

Building Density
The overall building density per Net Residential/Commercial Area measured by floor space ratio may be up to 2.4 for dwellings, depending on design; this could be increased by the floor area of other permitted uses as would be set out through comprehensive development procedures, but this increase should not exceed 0. 2.

Building Height
The height of any building should not exceed 300 feet.

View Corridors
North-south View Corridors should be maintained along not less than 50% of the maximum east-west length of the Sub-area. Within the View Corridors no development should exceed 80 feet in height.

Community Facilities
An elementary school and school playfields would be required for children resident in the Sub-area. Also, there should be provision for the development of a neighbourhood centre. Through innovative design, these and other community facilities may be incorporated with other uses. The site for school and school playfields should be not less than 5 acres.

Park Sites
Community and Neighbourhood park sites should be provided. Through the course of development, Park Sites should be provided according to the population resulting from any stage of development. The location of park land should emphasize waterside development.

Staging
Redevelopment should proceed in several stages as would be set forth and approved through comprehensive development zoning procedures. The construction program could commence by 1973 with completion projected in the mid-1980's.

- City of Vancouver Department of Planning and Civic Development, *Proposed Policies for the Redevelopment of False Creek,* September 1971. p 15.

At first glance it may appear that the city has played a cruel trick on Marathon Development by waiting until they had put forward their development at a density approximating that of the West End, before proposing a lower standard of only 2.4 FAR, yet this density appears to account for the area included by water lots, which has the impact of substantially increasing the allowable FAR to a level that appears consistent with what had already been proposed by Marathon. Instead the city seems to be following the lead of Marathon and recommending that they do

precisely what they had already proposed. The remaining requirements for schools, parks and a neighborhood center, while substantial, had already factored into the proposal being put forward by Marathon for sub area 2. It also seems possible, however, that the city was attempting to reassert its general sense of authority by making demands which it had every reason to expect would be satisfied, thereby making it easier to insist on other demands of the those who wished to develop property in the remaining nine sub areas. It also is possible that in making these demands, the city was in effect acknowledging that what Marathon had proposed was seen as a fair and acceptable offer to the city, that the city saw what was being proposed as consistent with the best interest of the community.

September 1972 False Creek Progress Report, Prepared by Director of Planning and Civic Development, for City Council.

A year after finally issuing its report proposing zoning standards for the development of the Marathon proposal for the North Shore of False Creek, as well as establishing standards for the development of the other areas of the False Creek Basin, the city issued an updated report. This report was issued three months before the sweeping election Victory of the TEAM party which resulted in substantial changes to the government of Vancouver including the ouster of Gerald Sutton Browns, so this report had very little opportunity to exert an impact. The most relevant passage from this report is included below which shows that the Marathon project was at this point in time continuing to progress and there was an expectation that actual construction would be beginning in six months, three months after the election.

The tone of this excerpt conveys an almost apologetic sense that the city has been dragging its feet on addressing this situation. What goes unmentioned in the document is that throughout this process the urban renewal fight and then the freeway fight and also the fights over Project 200 were in play. These other issues had resulted in a climate of hostility towards development in general and yet the Marathon Property should have been moving forward more rapidly because it did not involve the same set of problems that plagued the other efforts; no homeowners were being displaced, no historic districts were being threatened. Instead Marathon was proposing to clean up a polluted industrial site that it already owned in order to create a new residential community that included parks, a public waterfront, and a school. Nevertheless, progress lagged.

MARATHON REALTY

Discussions have been maintained with Marathon Realty Ltd. and their comments, prepared for inclusion in this progress report are as follows: "Now that the city's goals and guidelines for the False Creek area are close to finalization,[27] Marathon is ready to review its previous research and preliminary proposals. This will be done in two phases. The first will aim at presenting overall development suggestions for the north shore of the Creek and obtaining City approval of the basic standards for density, open space, access and quality of life style. This should take approximately two months.

The second phase will result in a more detailed plan for the overall site and programme for actual construction. We hope to complete this within six months.

In the meantime, aware of the need to get development started to maintain some credibility for a major land use change in the Creek, we intend to proceed right after our first phase review with some parts of our present plan. A marina and related waterfront activity such as restaurant fit this strategy. The possible relocation of City College onto our site is also something we intend to pursue. Both of these developments can be started now and will easily fit into our longer range plans."

> September 1972 False Creek Progress Report, Prepared by Director of Planning
>
> and Civic Development, for City Council. p 6

December 13 1972: TEAM Election Victory: Mayor's race, City Council and Parks Board

In the election of December 13, 1972, Vancouver voters expressed built up dissatisfaction with their municipal government, arising from a combination of issues including: the urban renewal process in the East End, the failed freeway effort and Gastown riot of 1971. After losing the support of even the local business community, the conservative NPA party was forced from. The centrist TEAM party (The Electors Action Movement) achieved a sweeping electoral victory giving it control of the City Councils and the Parks Board, as well as winning the race for Mayor. This was the first time that the NPA had not controlled the Vancouver City Council since 1937, and with it control of planning and development in Vancouver. The 1972 election outcome resulted in comprehensive reforms that were especially significant to the way that planning and development came to be implemented in Vancouver.

Key to the TEAM victory was the shifted allegiance of the Vancouver business community, which like the general population, has also grown disenchanted with the NPA. Facing a choice between two new formed and increasingly popular rival parties, the business community chose to

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[27] The recommendations made by the Planning Department in 1971 could not take effect until they were formally adopted by the City Council, which by now had begun to be divided. That these recommendations still had not been adopted a year later is an indication of problems, possibly between the City Council and Sutton Brown.

back the more centrist of these parties, the TEAM party. The more leftward leaning COPE party (the Committee of Progressive Electors) was led by the outspoken and popular City Councilor Harry Rankin, who had been on the City Council since 1966. During the years of the freeway fight and the urban renewal fight he had proven an ally to the more moderate members of the City Council, including Walter Hardwick and Art Philips who had joined the City Council as members of the newly formed TEAM party in 1968. In 1972 Philips had won the election for Mayor, while Rankin continued to exercise a powerful role on the City Council as a vocal and popular advocate for the working class residents of Vancouver.

June 1974 False Creek Housing: A Development Proposal for the North Shore of False Creek by Marathon Realty Limited, prepared by Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies.
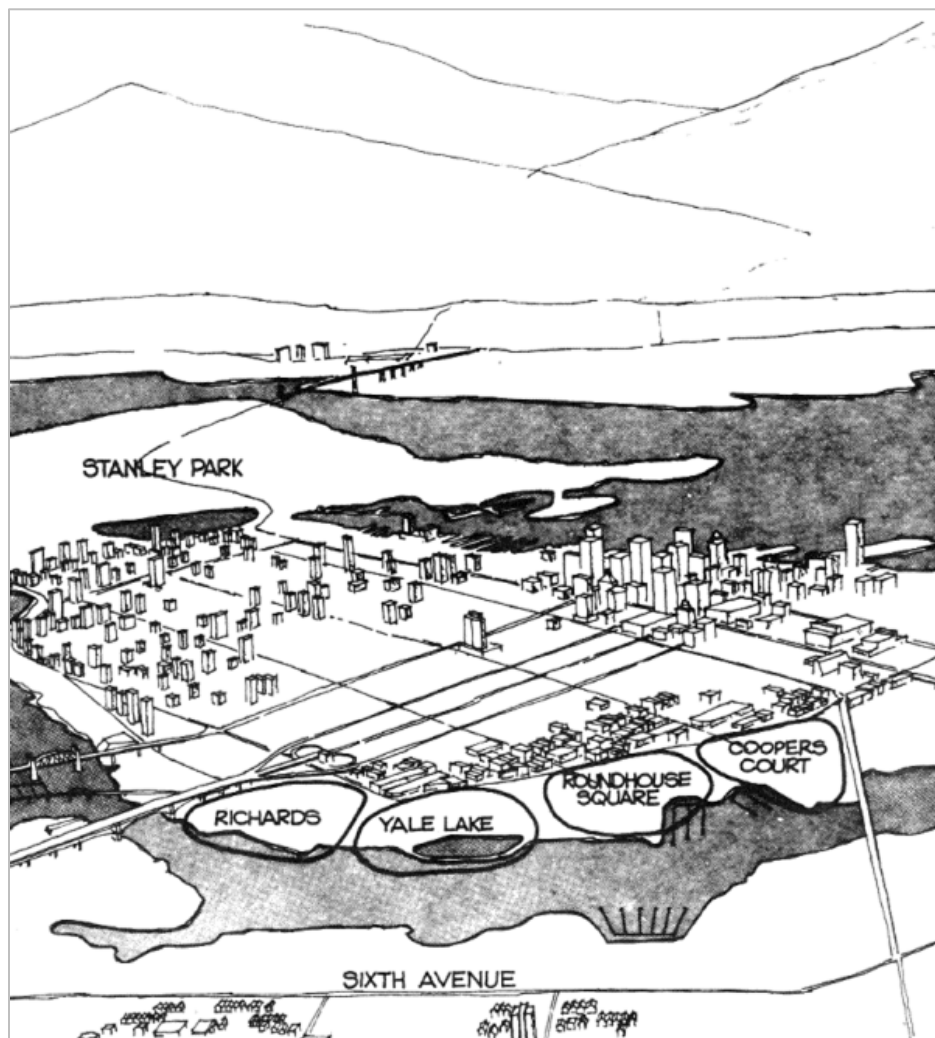
Figure 6.42: Diagram of new neighborhoods proposed in 1974 (Kiss and Dies, 1974).

The following excerpt from the 1974 plan indicates how the basic strategy surrounding the development has evolved over the five years that Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies led the effort to redefine and transform the North Shore of False Creek.

From the beginning, general goals and policies have been conceived and used in guiding more detailed work. This procedure has stood the test of time - current goals are very similar to the principles set down in 1969 and they appear to have strong public support. No filling of the creek, no downtown freeway, public access all along the creek edge, and the protection of view corridors are long standing policies. variety and choice in housing, commercial and public facilities allowing for a broad mix of people in the creek is well supported as are policies to reduce dependence on the automobile and to make pedestrian life pleasant and popular. Tying False Creek tightly into the established city has been a key planning goal from the start.

Concept Neighborhoods

The north shore of False Creek is downtown and should be developed as a residential community with the intensity and variety desired by those who choose to live downtown.

Four distinct neighbourhoods between Granville and Cambie Bridges will offer variety in scale and character. The character of each neighbourhood relates to its connection back into the existing city fabric and to the type of waterfront activity it relates to most closely.

The intensity of development relates to the form and location of the focal point in each neighbourhood and generally increases as one moves away from the waterfront.

While this community will contain waterfront and entertainment attractions with city wide appeal the design emphasis has been directed toward maximizing the quality of life of the residents. The urban plaza areas and the waterfront walk are clearly to be shared by all. The quiet, green spaces and play areas are planned to give as much feeling of openness to as many inhabitants as possible and to the adjacent built up areas.

In general, throughout the site, we are attempting to reduce the reliance of residents and visitors upon private automobiles by providing easy transit and pedestrian alternatives, reducing roadway and parking facilities and by visually and physically separating these latter two land uses from the pedestrian.

While we have settled on the overall pattern and scale of development, we remain deliberately flexible in detail so as to encourage innovative design, building and transit techniques and various mechanisms for providing a high quality environment for a broad socio-economic spectrum of Vancouver citizens. Toward these ends we are actively discussing possibilities with the public and private agencies involved in housing and transportation.

In the future, other neighbourhoods to the west and east will add to the chain of interesting places that is growing around the downtown core.

<div align="center">Zoltan Kiss, False Creek Development Proposal 1974, 4.</div>

One of the issues facing the Marathon Realthy Corporation concerning its effort to develop the immense project at False Creek involved the question of construction sequencing. Related to this but actually separate was the question of how to divide the development into increments that would be coherent and comfortable at the neighborhood scale, instead of resulting in an endless sea of development lacking in local context or identity. The 1969 proposal had proposed to address the construction staging issue by first constructing the dense infill of low rise ground level units and then introducing the highrises gradually over a span of approximately 20 years, in response to housing demand. While perhaps reasonable from an economic perspective, this was an approach also had drawbacks. One problem was that the comparatively low density of habitation that would have been developed at first might not have been sufficent to support the local shops, markets and related public oriented businesses that were seen as crucial to the success of this residential district. After all, at the time there were still no plans in effect to convert the neighboring Yaletown warehouse district into a residential district, so to be viable, shops would have had to depend upon customers from the newly developed Marathon development, and spreading this out over a wide expanse built to only a moderate density made this challenging. This was a strategy analologous to attempting to recreate the development pattern of the West End, where a residential community was first established and then upgraded and intensified through the addition of high rise strructures. Delaying the arrival of the highrises that would have introduced more affleunt residents to the False Creek development while also increasing the density, ran the risk of failing to result in a viable community. Related to this problem was a lack of differentiation that resulted from the uniform application of a standardized solution in the 1969 design. Although the 1969 design is still significant for being the first major proposal to suggest the grouped combination of low rise courtyard-facing dwellings and separated point towers, this design still suffers from a lack of differentiation distinguishing one area from the next, and a lack of adequate connection to the nearby urban fabric

The 1971 proposal addresses the weaknesses of the 1971 scheme by responding in detail to the specific context and the issues of view preservation, not just in principle but in detail, and as a result the overall pattern of development has begun to be more differentiated. This differentiation

into tower groupings and wide open spaces between them is another crucial precedent relevant to the developemt of Vancouverism. Even still, the scale of the buildings and the resulting environment still appreas to have not yet been adequately tamed. It is as if in responding to the drawbaks of a uniformly dispersed pattern of highrises and lowrises in the first scheme, the designers had perhaps overreacted by dividind the development into concentrations too separated, linked only by a fairly empty area of low rise buildings in between.

In 1974 Ron Dies and Zoltan Kiss produced their third and final proposal for the development of False Creek, this time proposing a solution that combined everything learned from the development of the first two proposals, whicile suggest an approach that more effectively addresses the concerns of construction staging and neighborhood identity. Although the subsequent development of False Creek would undergo subsequent revisions and additional design explorations before achieving its final developed form, the 1974 plan nevertheless containst the seeds of the the strategy that was eventually applied.
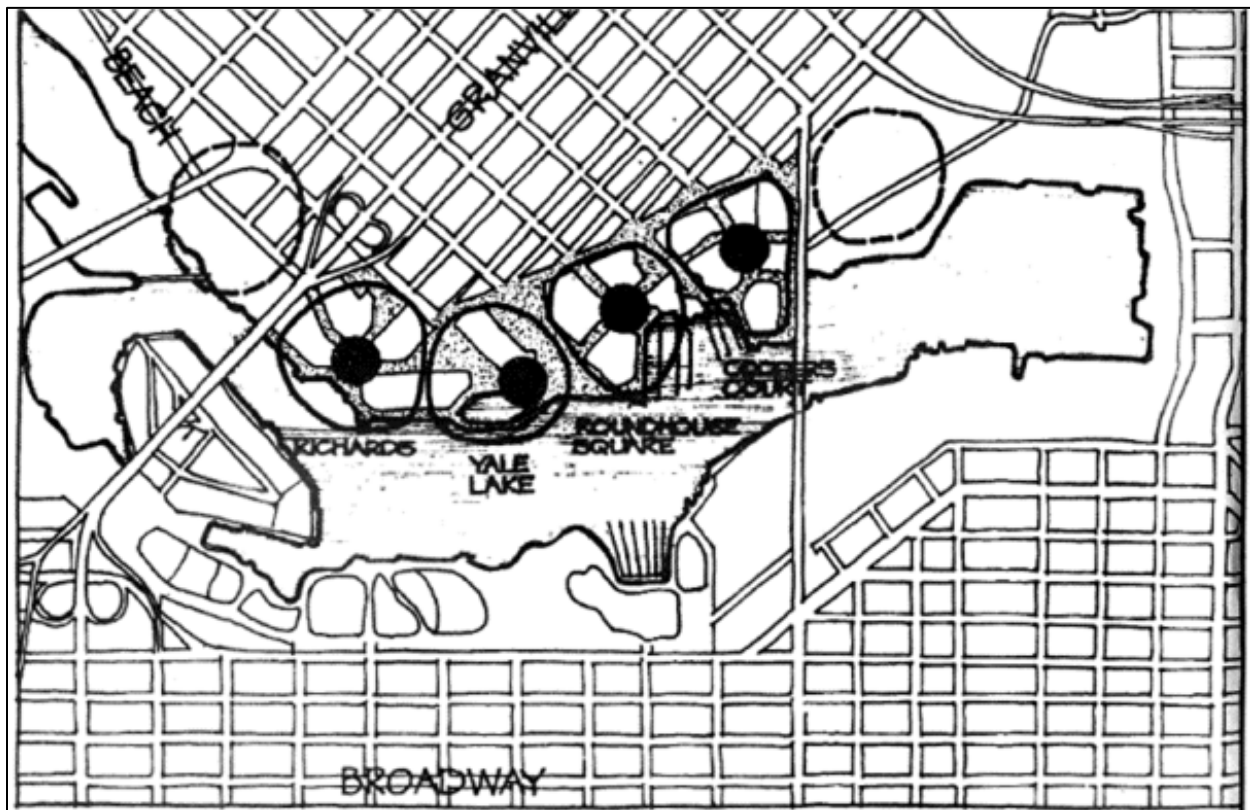
Figure 6.43: False Creek Housing 1974: plan view (Kiss and Dies, 1974).

A key design insight that is introduced in the 1974 plan is the concept of developing the vast site along the North shore of False Creek as a linked chain of new urban neighborhoods. The plan proposes to develop these neighborhods in sequence which means that each will have a suffiucent local desnity to function as an intact, healthy and vibrant community. At the same time, the different neighboirhoods are arranged so that when complete the result will be a larger urban fabric linked by system of through streets and a pedestrian oriented waterfront park (see figures 6.42 and 6.43).
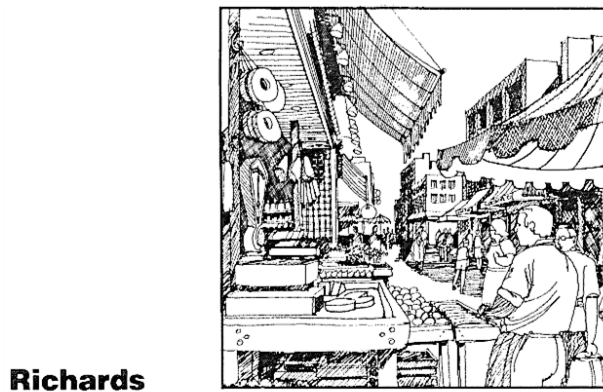
Richards

A Richards Street Marketplace with housing adjacent where residents rendezvous in cafes, kiosks, shops and markets with a creekside boardwalk and plaza and busy waterfront activities.
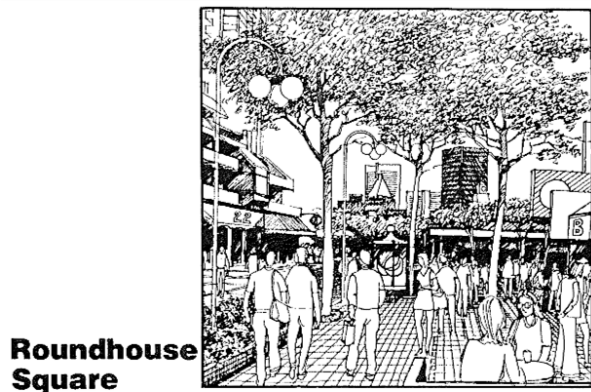
Roundhouse Square

A continuation of Davie Street with a concentration of activities at a large waterfront square overlooking the Marina. Retail, service and entertainment facilities and a hotel will serve adjacent residents and visitors to this urban area.
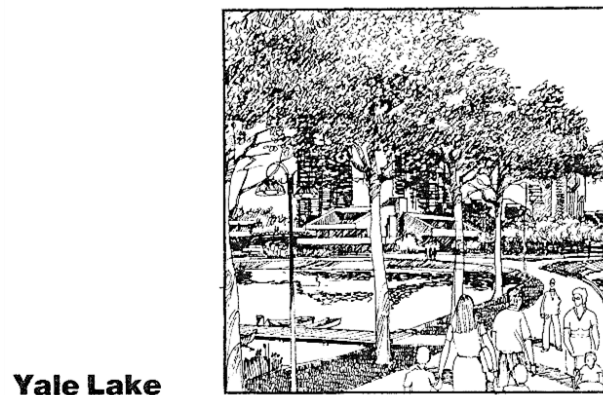
Yale Lake

A quiet family neighbourhood built around a school and community centre, a major park and large lake. The facilities are central and available to the whole community.
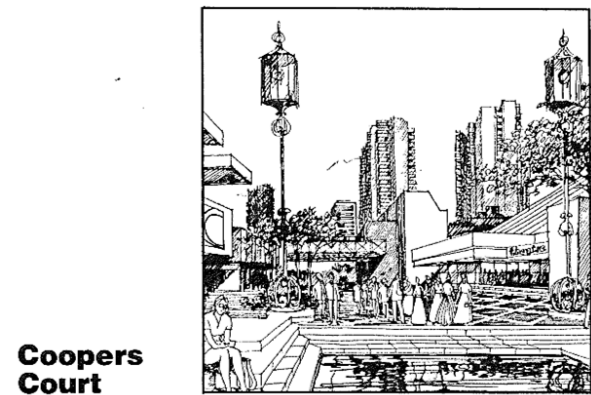
Coopers Court

The residential population, retail shops, cafes, offices and possible recreational, institutional or cultural facilities will focus on a large landscaped plaza which provides an inviting connection to the water.

Figure 6.44: Four concept neighborhoods (Ron Dies and Zoltan Kiss 1974).

The neighborhoods proposed by Ron Dies and Zoltan Kiss in 1974 would eventually return in the master plan used to redevelop False Creek in 1992 at Concord Pacific Place, although the names have been modified. Working from West to East, Richards became the Beach Cresecnet neighborhood, while Yale lake became Yaletown. Roundhouse scquare is now known as the Roundhouse neighborhood, while the location of coopers court is now occupied by the Marina Cresent. Not shown in this diagram is a newer neighborhood of Coopers Quay, which is located just east of the location that had been proposed for Coopers Court (see figure 6.44). Also of note is the extent to which the architects have begun to attempt to give each new neighborhood an identity that is defined in terms of how each place is actually experienced. This approach to planning and design grounded in pedestrian expereince would subsequently emerge as one of the crucial innovations in the success of Vancouverism.

The demise of the first effort to rehabilitate the North Shore of False Creek in 1974:
Although the first portion of the False Creek basin to be redeveloped and converted from industrial use to residential use in the end would be along the South Shore of False Creek, this only occurred because the Marathon Corporation was not allowed to proceed with its earlier plans to redevelop the North Shore as proposed by Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies. Ultimately the effort to redevelop the North Shore of False Creek would have to wait until a new generation of architects emerged in Vancouver and the reign of the TEAM party was over. [28]

Zoltan Kiss in his autobiography has described in some detail the process by which the implementation of his proposals for Marathon broke down. It is useful to bear in mind that the land in question was not public land, or land whose development would have displaced prior owners or tenants; the land on the north shore of False Creek was privately owned largely abandoned industrial land already owned by Marathon Realty. The negotiation process with the City Council to finally secure permits to proceed with this development however did not go well. As Kiss describes it:

> We spent nearly two years developing plans and holding endless public meetings to engage the community. We were so far advanced that the plan had been accepted and included officially into the Zoning Bylaws of the City. It was exhilarating work to create a plan for a modem city of nearly 20,000 people. However, the Company did not fully assess the power of one Alderman, Harry Rankin. A brilliant criminal lawyer, a reformed

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[28] Fortunately for Vancouver, Ray Spaxman remained the director of planning even after the TEAM era was over

communist, and a far left politician, he hated Canadian Pacific, its Eastern Canadian origin and everything it stood for. After the approval of the plans, he started to push the goal posts. Marathon gave the city a generous piece of land for parks. Now, Marathon had to create the park, trees and all, at its on cost. OK. Then, they had to provide a seashore walk at their cost. Again they agreed to the additional cost, hinting this was the last concession. Then Rankin demanded they build somewhere between ten to twenty percent of the project as 'social housing' meaning subsidized, while the rest of the project was for sale to individual developers. These costs, added together, of course made the project financially impossible. The bewildered eastern management finally used the 'F' word and walked away.

Later, Marathon sold the property to the Provincial Government, to be used as the site of the very successful EXPO 86. After that, the Government not knowing what to do with the land, sold it cheaply to a multi-billionaire Hong Kong entrepreneur, who managed (Harry not being present any more and Marathon not owning the property) to produce a new city, much denser than ours.

-Zoltan Kiss, Without a Blueprint. 2005, p 152.

When TEAM won a sweeping electoral victory in Vancouver, Ousting the NPA, the popular Rankin held onto his seat on the council and his views carried a great deal of weight. Having seen his power in the city grow through his support of those opposed to large scale development efforts it is not surprising that Rankin would continue to adopt this position at False Creek. Even though Gerald Sutton Brown was actually late in supporting the work proposed for the revitalization of False Creek, the 1969 Marathon report and the 1971 Marathon report had both nevertheless been submitted while he was still in charge, undermining the credibility of these efforts in the eyes of those who were members of the new TEAM lead government elected in 1972. Because Harry Rankin[29] was opposed to serving the business interests of Vancouver, he had less motivation to see the property around False Creek rehabilitated. This may therefore help explain the sense of disbelief expressed by the Marathon representatives who had previously been encouraged by the attitude taken by the city. Instead, from a political perspective, Rankin scored points with his own base of support by appearing to take a stand on behalf of the poor and downtrodden. As a result the rehabilitation of False Creek and the development of new

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[29] Upon his retirement in 1993, at the age of 73, Rankin was asked by a reporter if he had any regrets about the path he had taken. His reply conveys some sense of his personality as well as his political perspective:
"No goddamn way. I believe in socialism and I haven't changed my tune. I am an unrepentant socialist. I am quite satisfied in my beliefs. This is what I believe in and get out of my goddamn road if you intend to block me. I'm not going to die repentant. I'm going to die a socialist." (Lee, 1993).

neighborhoods along the North Shore of False Creek were delayed by nearly two decades, until a time when the NPA had reemerged, regaining control of the government of Vancouver.

In the meantime the focus shifted towards redeveloping the city-owned land along the south shore of False Creek, producing housing that has its own unique characteristics, unrelated to the issues explored by Ron Dies and Zoltan Kiss at the North Shore. This work along the south shore of False Creek was significant as the first work to succeed in rehabilitating a part of the False Creek basin, but the importance of this success has sometimes been exaggerated to suggest that the entire effort to redevelop False Creek as a residential area began there as well (Hardwick, 1994). The effort to rehabilitate False Creek originated long before Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies began developing their visionary proposals, and while their work did not lead to the construction of new buildings, the new ideas introduced in their work, including their combination of low rise and high rise housing, their inclusion of courtyards and their proposal of parks and pathways along the edge of False Creek all have had a lasting influence on Vancouver and the development of Vancouverism. Their adoption of an approach utilizing community input at a time when the city planners were disinterested in this was forward thinking as well. And finally, in realizing that the challenge they face was not just designing new buildings but planning new neighborhoods, they identified an essential strategy to planning and development that has had a profound influence on the subsequent development of Vancouverism.

Evaluation: the impact of the plans of Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies at False Creek.
The three plans produced by Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies, were essential steps in the development of Vancouverism. Partially their influence took the form of the buildings and neighborhoods that they proposed but also part of their importance derives from the degree to which they took the lead in planning the configuration of a livable new environment at a time when the city planners were reluctant to act. A common expectation is that city planners define the circumstances in which the architects are then allowed to operate; this however is not what happened at False Creek. Instead, while the planners were unable or unwilling to set a new direction or establish clear development parameters, the team of architects led by Kiss and Dies developed new strategies for responding to the changing situation.

At first these designs were somewhat abstract in character, an approach that permitted the designers to explore a range of new design strategies combining high rise and low rise structures,

resulting in a new class of solutions that were unlike anything seen thus far in Vancouver, yet which have much in common with the buildings that have since come to be celebrated as Vancouverism. This abstract design strategy was then followed by a more context specific solution incorporating nuanced responses to the specific features of the physical setting, while also seeking out and incorporating concerns raised through community feedback. At this point in time, the city belatedly offered a set of guidelines that confirmed what had been already proposed, without offering any additional insight or guidance.

Finally, after exploring and refining the architectural response to the site, the architects revisited the issue of master planning for the site and proposed a detailed and refined vision that again broke new ground, this time at the urban scale. In defiance of expectations, the architecture came first and then eventually came the planning, planning that came not from the city planners, but from the team of architects hired by the developer. It was the architects and the developers who sought feedback from the community, in an era when the city was opposed to this.

This notion that the architects were defining the planning and development of urban form is so contradictory to expectations that it may seem natural to dismiss this as an anomaly, as a lone exception to the rule. When compared against the strategies used in the West End, the East End, the freeway fight or the work of Harland Bartholomew, this seems to appear to be the case. However, as the upcoming chapters will show, the emergence of architecture-driven planning and design is part of a larger pattern that continued from this point forward in the development of Vancouver. This is not to say that planning ceased to be important; far from it. Planning by city planners in Vancouver came to take on increased importance, yet this was because the rules by which planning came to operate were radically transformed after the exit of Gerald Sutton Brown. Instead of operating within the limited restrictions defined first by planners, as the architect had in the West End, the designers from this point forward began to function not just as technicians but as leaders helping to define the new vision of Vancouver that would result in a new form of urbanism.

6.5 Conclusion: Mega-projects, Unsung heroes, and critical steps towards Vancouverism
Vancouverism is the result of a cumulative process in which numerous significant contributions have been made by many people over an extended period of time. Two of the most important yet also underappreciated figures in the saga of Vancouverism are the architects Zoltan Kiss and Ron

Dies. In subsequent chapters the contributions to the development of Vancouverism made by additional architects, planners and developers will be explored, yet the credit for taking the crucial first steps towards a new fusion in which many of the elements of Vancouverism first were brought together resulting in something new, more than anyone else, belongs to Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies.

The contribution of Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies has received to date very little attention, allowing a variety of misconceptions to gain traction in relation to Vancouverism. Perhaps this would be different had these architects hit the lecture circuit and concentrated on building a worldwide reputation, as did Arthur Erickson, but then the results of their work might also have been entirely different. Although Kiss and Dies continued to be interested in important developments in architecture at a comprehensive level, and both were well traveled, it is important that the focus of their actual work remained local. Working locally meant that their designs were informed more fully by their heightened understanding of their immediate context, enabling them to work steadily towards devising a new range of solutions that pointed the way towards something appealing, innovative and yet very well suited to its particular setting and the people of their community.

At a time when the field of architecture is focused on the scattered achievements of jet setting architects, it is encouraging to see that sometimes those who decide to stay focused on serving their chosen community can also make a real difference and produce innovative groundbreaking work. The example of Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies and their precedent setting work at False Creek begins to suggest a different kind of lesson that might be drawn from the case of Vancouver, a lesson less focused on the form of the buildings that happened to have worked well there and more to do with how people can find solutions that work well for their own specific communities. How other creative local architects and innovative developers and city planners found new ways to take this work further in Vancouver is the focus of the next chapters.

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Chapter 7: The transformation of the South Shore of False Creek (1971 – 1985)
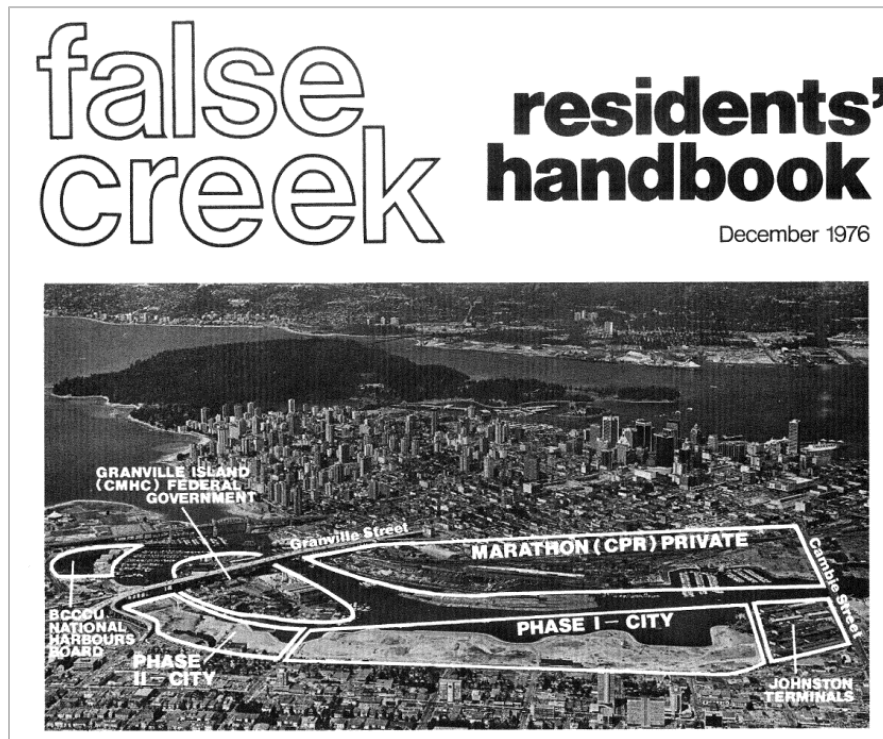
Figure 7.1: Cover page of False Creek Residents' Handbook (Rodger, 1976).

7.1: Introduction: A Changing Building Culture

The culture of building is the coordinated system of knowledge, rules, procedures and habits that surrounds the building process in a given place and time. … Within a building culture, construction is rarely a solitary act, isolated from the material, social and aesthetic world around it. A building's construction is almost always embedded in a recognizable web of human relationships between many participants: contractors, craftspeople, clients, building users, architects, building officials, bankers, material suppliers, surveyors, building appraisers, real estate brokers, manufacturers. This web of relationships, in turn, is characterized by the predictable ways people carry out their jobs and the predictable ways they deal with each other.

As in any culture, the actions of members of the building culture are guided by a relatively small number of rule systems and habits of belief and behavior. These define the culture itself.

- Howard Davis, *The Culture of Building,* (1999), 5-8.

The characteristics which eventually came to redefine the urban identity of Vancouver BC do not have a single cause or origin, but instead developed over an extended period of time under the influence of a constellation of shifting economic, cultural, technological and aesthetic factors. Some of these factors were local to Vancouver, while others were operating at a larger scale, throughout Canada, the United States and in Europe. Previous chapters have examined Vancouver at a time during which the building culture of Vancouver followed a fairly conventional pattern: city planners defined the limits in which architects and developers were permitted to operate, and the developers and architects were content to operate within these constraints. Well-entrenched conventions typical throughout the architecture profession also exerted a strong influence on the forms that new buildings took in Vancouver. Marginalized by this process however were the concerns of ordinary citizens, who were largely ignored by a government that favored developer interests, yet the emergence of new political parties in Vancouver in 1968 was a sign that conditions were changing and planners in Vancouver began to adapt to this situation by seeking new methods.

Vancouverism eventually emerged because architects and developers in Vancouver took a divergent path, independent of mainstream American and British models of urban development and architecture. Underlying the events examined in this chapter is a shift in planning activities and architectural design norms in Vancouver that had begun to evolve individually, and in relationship to one another. The result was an evolving building culture, where architects and planners came to pursue aims that defied prior expectations and while beginning to respond more fully to the local social, economic and physical context of Vancouver.

One popular interpretation of these developments holds that the collaborations between architects and planners that developed during the 1970's in Vancouver were a response to the liberal politics that had emerged in the 1960's (Hardwick, 1994; Ley, 1980, 1992). While this view has merit, it is important to understand that even though the political culture of Vancouver and also British Columbia reverted back to a conservative, business-centered focus by 1980, the planning reforms initiated in the 1970's in Vancouver nevertheless had a lasting impact, contributing eventually to a new form of urbanism, now known as Vancouverism.

This chapter concerns events that took place during this period of shifting values, when the modernist ideals that had dominated the urban development process in Vancouver were cast into doubt, and architects, planners, and community groups sought to find a new approach that would better respond to community interests. This was a time when there was a backlash against high rise construction in Vancouver, and yet some observers continued to see in the West End high rises the potential for something positive.

In 1970, Canadian historian George Woodcock characterized the widely perceived failure of Vancouver to devise a more appropriate response to its spectacular setting in the following way: *"Until recently Vancouver shamed its setting* (Woodcock, 1970, 39)." In explaining this harsh assessment, Woodcock explained that by following the typical pattern of developing through low density sprawl, thereby satisfying the desire for single family home ownership, the result in the Vancouver region had been consumption of the landscape and a failure to produce much in the way of distinctive urban space. Fortunately, in his opinion, an answer to this problem had begun to emerge in the rising forest of towers, then transforming the West End (Woodcock, 1970).[1]

Ultimately George Woodcock was correct in seeing in the West End high rises the seeds of a new Vancouver urbanism, however this also was an urbanism that had yet to be fully developed in response to its exceptional natural setting. The appeal of the West End expressed by Woodcock was that instead of blindly applying the wider cultural norms typical of other North American cities, here at least in the West End, Vancouver had begun to develop a different urban pattern where growth was accomplished without devouring more land (Woodcock, 1970). However, even if this prediction showed remarkable foresight, the ultimate path from the West End to the development of Vancouverism was neither easy nor direct. The development of the high rises that transformed the West End was not driven by a new vision of urban form, but instead reflected concerns with the local economy and the need for new housing for office workers. The result was a response to the constraints of natural typography, economics and technology, and yet the architecture of the first West End towers was still largely derivative of that already found elsewhere. The West End did not come to take on a new appearance because a

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[1] While he notes the exception of Stanley Park and the UBC campus, no mention is made of False Creek, which at this time remained a largely abandoned industrial wasteland at the center of the city.

new ideal was sought after, but rather the new form of the West End can be more accurately described as simply being the by-product of pragmatic concerns.

The view articulated by George Woodcock was shared by some, but many others in Vancouver had notably less enthusiasm for the new West End towers. As the public became more actively involved in issues of urban development, they came to increasingly associate the new towers with powerful affluent developers, a negative association made worse by several controversial large development projects that had been stopped by citizen protest (Vancouver Urban Research Group, 1972). As values began to shift in the Vancouver, architects and planners began to question if the results attained in the West End represented an ideal solution, or if some other urban strategy might not be better, specifically, a strategy that did not involve high rises (FCSG, 1972). Meanwhile, one idea that was becoming popular with some planners and architects, held that high density residential development could nevertheless be successfully attained through low rise development methods, (Lehrman, 1966), and this belief came for a time to dominate planning and development in Vancouver.

This chapter examines an effort by the City of Vancouver to implement a low rise, high density urban solution through a unique public/ private partnership, while serving as the test lab for a new approach to urban design. Although this project on the South Shore of False Creek aroused considerable interest at the time it was developed, it has since been eclipsed by the far more dramatic developments that followed on the North Shore of False Creek. The work that developed on both shores of False Creek, however, are related. One difference between the high rises built in the West End and those that would eventually be built on the North Shore of False Creek concerns how the urban fabric at ground level is developed. The West End towers stand as simple extruded shapes that generally ignore the ground plane, resulting in empty largely discussed spaces at the ground level. In contrast to this, the more recent towers at False Creek are noteworthy for their emphasis on the development of a lively pedestrian oriented streetscape. This difference in ground plane treatments can be traced to the innovations in process and design that were initiated at the South Shore of False Creek.

Chapters 8 and 9 address the process by which residential high rises came to be reintroduced and combined with a different approach to the streetscape. What is generally missing from the

existing literature, however, is an understanding of how the prior design and development work beginning in 1971 at the South Shore of False Creek redefined the way that planners developers and architects would come to approach the creation of urban streetscapes in Vancouver. By addressing this gap, a different understanding emerges concerning how Vancouverism developed and the contributions played by local planners and architects.

7.2 Ron Walkey and the introduction of Patterns as planning tools in Vancouver: 1971

In Chapter 6 the effort to rehabilitate the Marathon property at the North Shore of False Creek was examined in detail, with a special emphasis given to the master planning and architectural proposals of Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies. While this work was unfolding a separate effort by another team of local architects and related experts was also wrestling with similar issues under the name of the False Creek Study Group (FCSG).

The FCSG was organized and lead by architect Paul Merrick, an employee of Thompson Berwick and Pratt, a large well established Vancouver architecture firm which also contributed other substantial resources towards the effort.[2] At the time Merrick was forming the team for the False Creek Study Group, his friend and former co-worker, Ron Walkey, was living in Berkeley, California where he had relocated to work with Christopher Alexander and the Center for Environmental Structure (CES). Walkey had previously worked at Thompson Berwick and Pratt on the Harbour Park proposal, as well as other projects. Traveling to Berkeley to visit Walkey, Paul Merrick succeeded in recruiting Walkey away from CES in order to work on the False Creek Study.[3] The unique perspective Walkey would bring after having been involved in the development of patterns and pattern languages would prove to have a major impact on the work of the False Creek Study Group.

The early development of Patterns and Pattern Languages at CES (1967-1970)

Ron Walkey joined CES in 1968 and spent two focused years working on the development of Patterns, just as the "Pattern Language" concept was first taking shape. In 1967 CES had published a brief document explaining their emerging concepts of Patterns and Pattern

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[2] Paul Merrick would eventually go on to establish his own practice and design a number of significant new projects throughout Vancouver, a practice still in business today under the name of Merrick Architecture, with studios operating out of Victoria and Vancouver British Columbia. (http://www.merrickarch.com/)
[3] Based on personal communication with Ron Walkey, 2012.

Languages, laying the ground work for an approach to architecture and urban design that attempted to develop a systematic and comprehensive understanding derived from the study of successful precedents (Alexander 1967).[4]

In essence the Pattern Language method is based upon the claim that there exist culturally specific building blocks describing aspects of the environment that can be combined to produce effective yet locally unique outcomes. Although similar in character to the concept of types or typologies, "patterns" in this context are a bit more open ended in character and can describe not just physical elements in the built environment, but also common social and behavioral aspects, including characteristics of basic relationships between people and their surroundings. Patterns are made up of other patterns and the result is a complex web-like structure of relationships connecting the largest elements of the built environment to the smallest. As originally explained by Alexander and his colleagues, the patterns were not intended to be inventions, but rather were seen as something that each designer already individually developed and applied on their own; Alexander's original goal was to develop a working method for making these private design insights more explicit and openly available, where they could be subject to scrutiny and also shared. The goal at first was not to change these contents but to encourage the development of a culture-wide understanding of effective design principles and best practices that could be shared and improved upon. The Pattern Language concept as it was originally proposed was intended to be an open source system; it was expected that others would generate their own patterns, which would become parts of a growing public database (CES, 1967).[5]

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[4] This represented a significant departure from the position articulated in another paper by Alexander from around this time: "The City as a Mechanism for Sustaining Human Contact (Alexander, 1966, 1967)," which also happens to have been the paper that motivated Ron Walkey to first move to Berkeley, in order to work with Alexander. In this paper, Alexander attempted to solve a complex urban problem through a twelve step process in which all prior knowledge of design or design precedents was considered invalid. The results, at least from an aesthetic perspective, leave much to be desired and this paper remains therefore understandably obscure. However, this paper also represents a turning point in the development of Alexander's work because prior to this point, his work had tended to be rooted in abstract conceptualizations (Alexander, 1964, 1966, 1967), whereas afterwards successful design precedents would come to be of central importance in his work (Alexander, 1968, 1977, 1979, 2004). In some respects this shift is consistent with larger trends taking place in the field in which abstract design principles were being overtaken by interests in experiential methods, social concerns and pre-modern historical precedents.

[5] This aspect of the Pattern Language approach appears to have been largely overlooked by Alexander's critics, specifically that patterns were originally conceived of as a way of organizing and sharing existing design knowledge (Bhatt, 2010; Dovey, 1990; Protzen, 1978). Possibly this oversight may reflect a shift in emphasis in Alexander's work; when he began work on the Pattern Language approach in 1967 he was not yet an architect, however ten years later when A Pattern Language was finally published he was actively working as an architect and contractor: what

At the time that Ron Walkey was working for CES, Alexander was pursuing the development of the pattern concept in relationship to the implementation of particular projects, developing new Pattern Languages for each project as a means to improving design outcomes. For example, Alexander ad his associates devised a locally appropriate housing design and construction system for a working class urban community in Peru (Alexander, 1970). Other Patterns were devised to assist in the development of the Bay Area Rapid Transit system, or BART (Ishikawa, 2010). CES also published an extensive set of patterns for designing inner city community centers (Alexander, 1968).

The manuscript for *A Pattern Language* was submitted to the publishers in 1974 (Ishikawa, 2010). While Walkey is mentioned in the credits of *A Pattern Language* (Alexander et al, 1977) for his contributions to the development of the Pattern concepts in their early stages, he also collaborated with Murray Silverstein on the text of a CES publication *A Human City* (CES, 1970), accompanying an exhibit at the 1970 Osaka World's Fair. Ron Walkey worked on several

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began as a way of organizing design principles discovered in the work of others took on a different character as Alexander began to practice. By 1977 when *A Pattern Language* was published in book form, Alexander's agenda had apparently shifted from simply discerning, organizing and communicating the already established best practices in architectural design, to a more ambitious if also perhaps unrealistic agenda of transforming contemporary architecture and society by developing and disseminating an improved, idealized Pattern Language, developed not though studying practice but through argument and research. While this shift in emphasis gave the work, at least in theory a potentially greater significance, it also appears to have opened the work to a new range of criticisms that would have been harder to raise had the work adhered to its originally stated intention. For example, an early criticism of the book *A Pattern Language* (Alexander et al, 1977), by J P Protzen, focuses on the weakness of particular patterns, while disregarding the value that the overall pattern structure might present in actually facilitating open debates of this sort (Alexander and Protzen, 1980; Protzen, 1977). This critique called attention to the inherently subjective nature of the patterns Alexander was proposing, even as Alexander adhered to the claim that his patterns could be "proven" to be valid through argumentation supported, at least in some cases, by existing research. Regardless of whether the patterns could be shown to be improvements over present practices, by refocusing his efforts away from organizing a shared body of practice, towards his own personal vision of a better approach that he believed the entire profession ought to shift towards, the Pattern Language concept came to be viewed as a static document, an idealistic critique that could not be improved upon over time or through use, as had previously been intended. Although most if not all of the patterns are derivative of prior work explored by previous authors, this too was ignored and *a Pattern Language* for better or worse has come to be viewed as a personal vision of a single individual (Saunders, 2002), instead of representing an attempt to codify and operationalize a large body of shared cultural knowledge originally developed over generations. The problem in linking this shared body of knowledge to Alexander has been that paradoxically, it has become significantly easier to for the profession to dismiss this work as subjective. Alexander had the help of a remarkable team of people in producing *A Pattern Language*, several of whom have been recognized as co-authors. One of the *A Pattern Language* co-authors, Murray Silverstein has aptly characterized the book as being "*both serious and playful, authoritarian and tentative, open ended. ... both a bible and a first rough draft*" (Silverstein, 2010). Unfortunately the result of this dual character has been that the authoritarian tone has prevented the development of an updated version, even though many of its findings have become out of date as new information and research data has become available.

other design oriented projects for CES as well, including a design for the Berkeley City Hall, and a plan for a research institute in Southern California (Ishikawa, 2010).[6]

As work on the Patterns continued, the essential purpose of Alexander and the Center for Environmental Structure (CES) appears to have diverged from the direction that had originally interested Ron Walkey. An architect by training, Walkey continued to be interested in using the Patterns concept in urban planning initiatives and architecture projects, while Alexander and the other members of CES focused increasingly on patterns as generalized principles. What had begun as a method aspiring to make better projects was changing into a general critique of the built environment with utopian undertones, proposing an alternative to modernist design and planning. Ron Walkey was ready to return to practice, to apply what he had learned from Alexander. Therefore, when Paul Merrick traveled to Berkeley and presented Walkey with an invitation join the collaborative team he was setting up to pursue the transformation of False Creek, Walkey jumped at the chance. Walkey saw in this offer the opportunity to apply the newly developed pattern concepts to a challenging and important context that he already knew well, and on this basis agreed to return to Vancouver, becoming a key participant in the False Creek Study Group (FCSG). [7]

Patterns and Pattern Languages in context:

The shift taking place in the work of Christopher Alexander and CES reflected similar changes taking place within the larger field of architecture around this time, placing a renewed emphasis on: experiential characteristics of place, pedestrian oriented design and the appreciation of traditional urban settings. In Denmark, architect and researcher Jan Gehl was exploring these issues in his research into social interaction and urban configuration, most notably in his book *Life Between Buildings* (Gehl, 1971). Lawrence Halprin, an influential landscape designer and master planner, was actively exploring issues centered on improving the visual experience and direct contact within the built environment (Halprin, 1964). Halprin also was particularly active practicing landscape design in the Pacific Northwest developing influential public projects that included: fountain plazas in San Francisco and Portland Oregon, and the master plan for the Sea Ranch development on the Northern California Coast. Meanwhile, in England the work of the

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[6] Based on personal communication with Ron Walkey, 2012.
[7] Based on personal communication with Ron Walkey, 2012.

long running Townscape campaign was continuing to make an impact, proposing an experientially grounded design method that combined the old urban configurations with modernist buildings[8] (Cullen, 1949, 1961; de Wolfe,[9] 1963; Macarthur and Aitchison, 2004). Jane Jacobs of course also played a part in advocating for an approach to planning and design in which direct experience features prominently (Jacobs, 1958, 1961). Japanese architect and author Yoshinobu Ashihara was also exploring similar issues in his work, including his book *Exterior Design in Architecture* (Ashihara, 1962, 1970). All of these influences are apparent in the work

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[8] The Townscape campaign was the brainchild of reclusive and brilliant publisher Hubert de Cronin Hastings who in 1927, at the age of 25 became the Editor of the popular English Journal: *The Architectural Review*, and its book publishing arm: The Architectural Press (AP). He had been working there full time since the age of 16, and was the son of the joint owner of AP. An early and staunch advocate of Modernist Architecture, at a time when European Modernism was not yet popular in England, in 1927 H de C (as he was known), persuaded the owners of the AP to begin actively promoting Modernist design and architecture. At the same time, he was intensely critical of both modernist urbanism, and also the Garden City Movement, and from this critique came the Townscape campaign. The essential idea of the Townscape campaign was that by studying preindustrial urban settings from a pedestrian vantage point, it was possible to understand how these settings induce in the viewer a variety of intended emotional responses or experiences. By distilling these observations into operational principles, the intent was then to find a ways to design successful lively urban environments combining modernist architecture and existing urban fabric, resulting in a new synthesis.

It should perhaps be emphasized that the rather unfortunate choice of a name "Townscape" was meant to draw attention to the hard urban environments that was the focus of interest here, as opposed to the non-urban landscape. In English usage, the word "town" is sometimes used in to denote not scale, but simply urban character; hence it was not at all unusual for even large cities to establish "town planning commissions" in order to engage in what today would be known as urban planning. Over the course of a career that lasted until his retirement in 1972, H de C Hastings cultivated interest in the townscape concept and oversaw the publication of more than a thousand articles in his magazine associated with the Townscape campaign. The extent of his influence includes not just Gordon Cullen who was one of his most successful disciples, but also includes Robert Venturi, whose first published work was an article under the Townscape banner published in *Architectural Review*. H de C Hastings also collaborated with Nikolas Pevsner on several publications, under the pseudonym, Ivor de Wolfe. Meanwhile, Jane Jacobs also appears to have been influenced by the townscape campaign and collaborated with Gordon Cullen on "Downtown is for People" published in *The Exploding Metropolis* (Whyte, 1957).

Ray Spaxman has indicated that his own work in Vancouver was influenced by his exposure to the Townscape campaign during his formative years in England, and it seems likely that the Townscape campaign exerted a similar influence on Christopher Alexander who also grew up in England at the height of the Townscape campaign. Although Alexander eventually expanded his critique to include not just modernist urbanism, but also modernist architecture, his work nevertheless shares much in common with earlier townscape work. Illustrations lifted without attribution from the Townscape campaign have appeared in publications of CES (Alexander 1970, 1968); some of the earliest patterns appear to be unattributed restatements of concepts that had previously appeared in the Townscape material. For further information regarding this link, see also the chart of 102 FCSG Patterns and their apparent sources included in the appendix of this dissertation. Alexander, Jacobs, Venturi, Pevsner and Cullen should all be considered to have made their own unique contributions to architectural knowledge, of course, however that this work was informed by the prior work of H de C Hastings and his associates is nevertheless significant if relatively unacknowledged (Cullen, 1949, 1961; de Wolfe 1963, 1971; Lasdun, 1996; Macarthur and Aitchison, 2004).

[9]Ivor de Wolfe was a pseudonym under which Hubert de Cronin Hastings and Nikolas Pevsner published collaborative efforts (Macarthur and Aitchison, 2004)

of CES and also the work of the False Creek Study Group (FCSG).[10] Although each of these influences contributed in one way or another to the changing building culture of Vancouver, due to the involvement of Ron Walkey and his ability to translate the emerging experiential paradigm into the Pattern approach, Patterns became the unifying conceptual armature around which this entire body of work came to be introduced, applied and then further developed in Vancouver.[11]

The September 1971 False Creek Report

> The emphasis of this report we believe must be on the definition of livability, on the identification of useful guidelines, and on the translation of principles into practical physical terms. **…**
>
> This study is about the density of occupation and the quality of environment for the occupants. The concept must be a unity, not the sum of a set of unrelated 'bright ideas '. The False Creek Basin is clearly in a strategic position in every sense. It is Vancouver's last chance to encourage a development of healthy urban life in the centre of the City. It is an opportunity to order growth, and to create a showplace both for the City of Vancouver and the nation.
>
> -   False Creek Study Group, September 1971 False Creek Report, 12.

The team assembled for the False Creek Study Group was a private/public partnership, a strategy that was especially significant due to the apparent stalemate that had arisen around the redevelopment of False Creek. The city planning approach that had been previously established by Gerald Sutton Brown had continued in 1971 to attempt to serve the interests of large scale developers, letting them define policies. However, with ownership of the surrounding land divided between public and private entities the developers first needed a clear policy from the city before investing in new construction. With the City planners and the developers each looking to each other for direction, progress in the rehabilitation process remained elusive.

Facing these difficulties, the decision to pursue a joint effort which included private practitioners and a representative of the Vancouver Planning Department was a forward looking move that

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[10] It should be noted that while *A Pattern Language* is poorly annotated in terms of referencing source materials and prior influences, the work of the FCSG is somewhat better in this respect, making linkages to the wider body of work from which this material is derived more readily apparent, confirming linkages between the pattern based approach and other current developments taking place in the field, including the research of Jan Gehl, the work of Jane Jacobs, and the British Townscape campaign.

[11] It also seems potentially significant the while the Pattern concept and the Pattern Language concept emerged at the same time in 1967, Ron Walkey seems to have relied exclusively on the term *pattern*, apparently avoiding the Pattern Language while working on the FCSG material. This usage is also reflected in subsequent use in official Vancouver planning documents which use the term "pattern", but not "pattern language."

enabled the effort to proceed with the support of both the City and the professional community. In addition to able support from within Thompson, Berwick & Pratt, that included engineering partner Reg Cave, and project manager Dick Mann, Paul Merrick also brought in: programmer G. W. Brawn, and real estate expert K. H. Gillespie and Ron Walkey. Highly respected urban design expert Hans Blumenfeld also participated, but to a much more limited extent. The City meanwhile was represented by planner Harry Pickstone (FCSG, 1971).[12]

The first nineteen patterns for False Creek

The 1971 False Creek Report begins with an extended in-depth study of the many issues facing False Creek and the challenges that are raised in attempting to rehabilitate this badly polluted, semi abandoned industrial area. Topics addressed at the outset include: Water Area and Quality, Occupancy: land use and economics, Movement: pedestrian, rail, automobile and boat traffic, Other Issues: open space, pollution, bridges, marinas, slopes and flats and the North Side. After presenting the problems faced, The tone of the document shifts and the pattern concept is introduced as a framework through which this problems might be solved:

> We have taken a different approach to the resolutions of fundamental human issues; one that deals with problems and solutions. Problems in the environment arise when it is not shaped to fit human activity. We have tried to anticipate where major failures might occur in the False Creek Basin as a whole. We have isolated the conflicting tendencies and attempted to come to some resolution. This is then stated as a prescription: what to do to avoid the problem.

> We call each of these prescriptions patterns. (Webster's definition: excellent example, ideal, model from which thing is to be made). In a pattern, the problem and solution are discussed in generic terms. In this way they can give birth to a wide range of applied solutions. (This approach in dealing with the environmental problems was originally developed at the Center of Environmental Structure , Berkeley, California).

> The specific of each pattern to development in the Basin will depend on the situation, and on specific features of that locality. For example, the pattern Pedestrian Web Connects Urban Nuclei will be modified when it is applied by topography, the street system, existing land tenure and available civic funds. What is clear from the pattern is the basic objectives: that the City should strive to achieve such a network of pedestrian paths.

> By separating the generic solution from the specific recommendations we hope to offer the citizens of the City a chance for critical appraisal of the larger qualitative decisions that have gone in to our recommendations.

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[12] This information is based upon the 1971 report and supplemented by information provided by Ron Walkey.

In some cases the evidence is strong and well documented. In others we have had to be more subjective. But in either case one can begin the dialogue by asking, "Is this really a problem? Does their argument hold water? Will this solution solve the problem?"

-False Creek Study Group, 1971 False Creek Proposals, 48-49.

Category	No.	Title	Local
Community			
	3.11	Community Forum	
	3.12	Slow / Fast Gradient	**X**
	3.13	Neighborhood Enclaves	
	3.14	Workplace Ribbon	
	3.15	Neighborhood Shape	
	3.16	Bridge Shadows	**X**
	3.17	Compatible Facilities Clustered	
	3.18	Social Mix in Communities	
	3.19	Household Groups Limited	
Major Pedestrian Spaces			
	3.21	Pedestrian Web Connects Urban Nuclei	**X**
	3.22	Linear Open Space	
	3.23	Urban Free space	
	3.24	Pedestrian Paths are Expanding Loops	
Water			
	3.31	Water Area Maintained	**X**
	3.32	Large Bays Shape Water Area	**X**
	3.33	Small Bays Shape Shoreline	**X**
	3.34	Urban Reference Points	
	3.35	Small Marinas	**X**
	3.36	Marina Service Centralized	**X**

Table 7.1: List of Patterns included in the 1971 False Creek Proposals (FCSG, 1971, 47). Note: Patterns cited here as "local" patterns appear to have been derived from or specifically related to local conditions found at False Creek, as based upon the analysis of Robert Walsh.

Ron Walkey and his associates at the FCSG present a total of nineteen patterns in the 1971 False Creek Report. The patterns themselves are a mixture of local context specific principles and general design recommendations that Walkey and his colleagues concluded were particularly relevant to the conditions faced at False Creek. The patterns are grouped into three general topics: Community, Major Pedestrian Spaces and Water (see table 7.1).

In general, these first patterns utilize a combination of diagrams, photographs and argumentation, similar in character to publications produced by Alexander and his colleagues at the Center for Environmental Structure in Berkeley. Some of the patterns proposed by Ron Walkey are highly specific to the context of False Creek in Vancouver, while others are more general in character.

Patterns 3.11 - 3.19: Community Patterns:
The first group of nine patterns concern issues related to the establishment of new residential communities surrounding False Creek. The City Planners had recently come under fire for their lack of sensitivity towards the existing communities of Chinatown and Strathcona, and the FCSG wanted to set a new precedent. By beginning with a focus on community it is clear that this is the priority of the entire proposal. At the same time, this may also explain why these patterns do not actually address the issue of the architecture of new dwellings, but instead focus on improving the character and function of the public domain.

Pattern 3.12 Slow / Fast Gradient: in addressing the waterfront, the FCSG faced the challenge of how to organize different types of access, both pedestrian and vehicular. At the time, waterfronts in nearby cities including Portland Oregon, Seattle and Washington were building elevated urban freeways along their waterfront areas, and this was considered an unacceptable strategy that required a better alternative approach in Vancouver. The slow fast gradient proposed a strategy for controlling the pace of traffic and keeping the waterfront enjoyable as a center of pedestrian activity. Walkey and his colleagues suggested that the correct solution was to establish a hierarchy which places the slowest paths closest to the water and the faster paths further away, with higher speed traffic arteries the furthest back of all.

Impact: the slow/ fast gradient may be one of the most important and yet underappreciated principles behind the positive results attained today at False Creek and elsewhere along the

waterfront in Vancouver. In essence what was proposed and what was eventually implemented inverted what had been a common urban planning practice of locating high speed vehicular traffic along the urban waterfront. Instead, the approach used today in Vancouver features multiple layers of traffic separated from the waterfront according to speed, with pedestrian access being closest, followed by special lanes for roller blades and bicycles, followed by slower vehicular traffic and finally, furthest back of all, through street traffic. This strategy of taming the flow of bicycles, foot traffic and motorized vehicular traffic was also important conceptually in supporting an alternative approach to traffic development that did not rely upon freeways, by instead directing the focus of development on the local impact and the resulting pedestrian experiences that arise from the way that traffic in the city is organized (see figure 7.2).

Figure 7.2: Slow fast gradient in Vancouver today at South Shore of False Creek (Bing 3-d image). Note the pavement closest to the water is dedicated to pedestrians and strollers, the next most outer layer is for use by bicycles and roller blades. Local automobile traffic occurs behind the first row of buildings, while faster traffic is kept further back from the waterfront.

Pattern 3.13 Neighborhood enclaves: This pattern derives from a pattern originally developed by CES originally named Cells of Sub cultures, subsequently published as "Mosaic of Sub cultures"[13] in *A Pattern Language* (Alexander, 1977). The pattern proposes the development of

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[13] One distinction between the cultures of Canada and the United States is that while in the United States we profess to be a great 'melting pot' where people from diverse backgrounds immigrate and become assimilated into American culture, in Canada that commonly expressed ideal is that of a 'mosaic,' where people of diverse backgrounds maintain their original identity. Practically speaking, both mechanisms can be seen to be at work in both cultures. It is unclear whether the mosaic concept came from Canada or perhaps England.

new neighborhoods by organizing new clusters of housing into self-contained ring shaped clusters of housing that together overlook a shared semi-private common space, while the outside of the ring faces onto and defines a more public streetscape. The pattern argues that this form of development is necessary both as a way to encourage diversity from one clave to the next and also from within individual enclaves (see figure 7.3).

This pattern reads as if it is an attempt to apply principles derived from the work of Jane Jacobs, translated into physical form, stressing that neighborhoods need to be arranged so as to accommodate greater diversity of lifestyles (Jacobs, 1961).[14]

Diversity was presented by Jacobs as an essential and fairly universally desirable urban quality, portraying it as a necessary condition for healthy urban living and the members of the FCSG and the City of Vancouver not only adopted this position, they treated it as this was a proven fact which was then used in describing and arguing for particular patterns. By 1971 however, the research of Herbert Gans had called into question the claim made by Jane Jacobs that most people wanted increased diversity in their communities, suggesting instead that most people preferred to congregate in fairly homogenous communities (Gans, 1968). Gans argues, based on his own extensive field studies, that while Jane Jacobs may have been correct in observing that diversity worked well in Greenwich Village(Jacobs, 1961), in the neighborhoods studied by Gans, however, people exhibited a strong desire to live in neighborhoods notable not for their variety, but for their social and economic homogeneity.

It is likely that the FCSG knew of the criticisms of Gans, since he is quoted elsewhere in their reports, in which case they chose to ignore this information. Pursuing an agenda focused on diversity served other important needs at False Creek. This was a publicly funded project and while there was a shortage of affordable housing, the government of Vancouver wanted to produce an economically viable development that was not targeted towards one group. As in other cities, Vancouver at this point in its history was also suffering from problems connected with racial and ethnic discrimination; stressing the benefits of local fine grained diversity appears

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[14] This point is further elaborated in Pattern *3.18: Social Mix in Communities*, which makes a similar argument in favor of diversity. In the interest of brevity only select patterns are discussed here.

to have been seen as an effective step towards addressing these concerns, as a policy position as much as a planning agenda. Accordingly, the emphasis that Walkey and others placed upon diversity can be interpreted as consistent with a more inclusive attitude towards urban development and planning (FCSG, 1971).
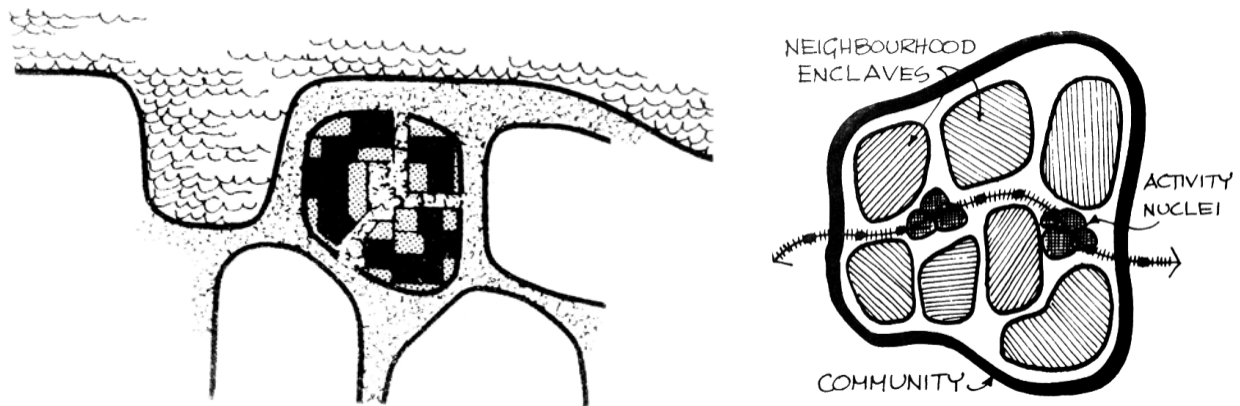
Figure 7.3: Diagrams explaining the enclave pattern (FCSG 1972, 48).

The impact that the enclave pattern would have would be substantial, at least at first, when the patterns came to be applied in the subsequent transformation of the South Shore of False Creek (see figure 7.4), however, this also resulted in unanticipated adverse consequences that required further revision of the pattern. One hazard of the diagrammatic approach used in developing and expressing patterns is that during implementation diagrams can be confused with actual plans; in the case of the enclaves this proved unfortunately to be the case. Although the loopy irregular donut character of the diagram is not necessary as a design feature, unfortunately this aspect of the pattern persisted when the first enclaves were developed. Had a more urban approach to development been used, the same pattern might have been applied while participating in the development of a larger street grid, better connected to the existing fabric of the city.

In terms of the larger issues related to the use of patterns in Vancouver, the basic sentiment of keeping new development socially and economically diverse was maintained even after the enclave pattern was rejected. This suggests one possible advantage of the adaptable version of the pattern concept pursued by Ron Walkey: by making social and economic objectives explicit and then proposing a range of hypothetical solutions, it becomes possible to test proposed solutions and then further refine or perhaps reject these, in accordance with how well satisfy explicit initial objectives.

382

Figure 7.4: Three enclaves at False Creek – viewed looking South (Bing 3-d)

<u>Pattern 3.16 Bridge Shadows:</u> False Creek is crossed at several points by elevated bridges that loom over the waterfront properties that were to be rehabilitated and converted into residential purposes. This pattern represents a detailed examining of this particular site condition and possible strategies for addressing it. What is noteworthy about this pattern in a more general sense is the extent to which it matters is purely a reflection of local circumstances. Although the tone used in communicating patterns tends to suggest that these are generalized principles, this is a particular pattern that was created to address a difficult condition found repeatedly at False Creek.

> We propose that neighbourhoods should not be located close to bridges within the bridge shadow unless they are of a sufficient scale to overcome that of the bridge. In this event, they should be oriented away from the bridge and designed to eliminate or minimize the negative consequences of the bridge shadow on the adjacent areas.

> "Most of the noise from a bridge at the ground levels occurs at a point which forms a 60 deg. angle with the top of a bridge (or from the edge of the bridge a distance equal to 1 3/4 x height of the bridge). From a point which forms a .45 deg. angle with the top of the bridge to the underside of the structure there is a rapid decrease in sound intensity. There is about a 25% dropping off of the sound level under the bridge."(2)"Soot appears to be evident up to about 75 feet from- the Bridge in this particular case. Since the Bridge is about 100 feet high at this particular point, a 'soot cone' subtending an angle of about 30 deg. from the top of a bridge should define within reason where soot will be a problem." (3) The diagram shows the total shadow area that is formed when the sound, sunlight, shadow and soot are combined. The total bridge shadow forms an angle of 60 deg. from the top of the bridge to the ground.

383

It appears that the most successful approach to overcoming the adverse effects of large bridges is to either move neighbourhoods well away from them or to make development near the bridges at a sufficient scale that the bridge itself becomes subjugated to its surroundings, rather than the reverse. This latter approach requires a continuous development next to the bridges, or noise, fumes and soot will penetrate between structures into the adjacent areas. There have been many proposals for such shielding developments but to date, no successful examples come to hand. Usually a massive expenditure is required implying a very high intensity of use. It would appear that these types of 'visionary' proposals could now begin to be planned for and implemented, as building techniques have reached a sufficient level of sophistication to enable their success.

- False Creek Study Group, 1971 False Creek Proposals. P 69.
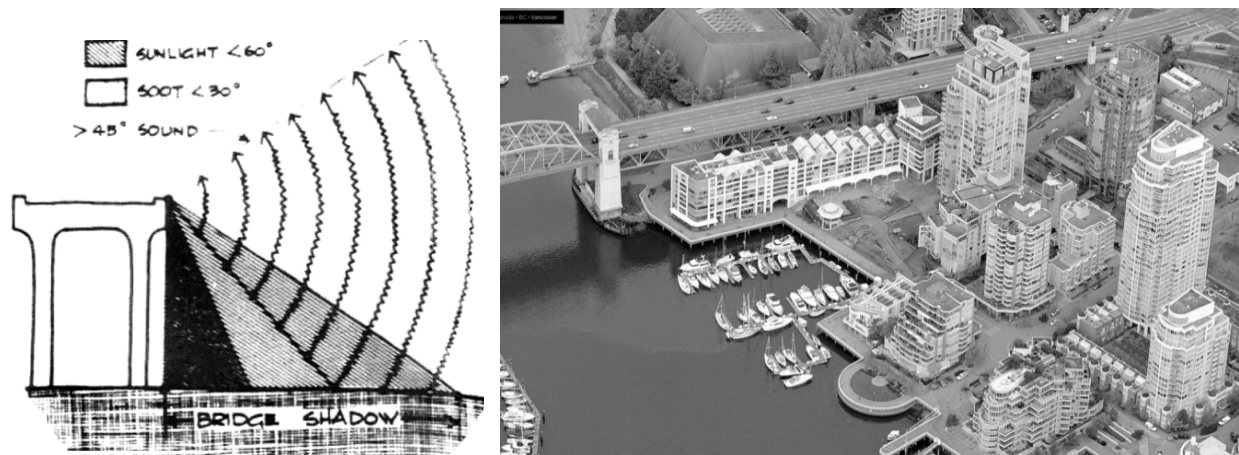
Figure 7.5: Pattern: Bridge Shadows.The image at left shows a diagram from the FCSG 1971 Report 3 (page 68), addressing two issues: shadows cast by bridges and soot falling from vehicular traffic. The image at the right shows an instance where this pattern has been recently applied at the North Shore of False Creek, based upon a design originally proposed by Vancouver architect Richard Henriquez.

Impact: The Bridge Shadows concept has proven to be significant in terms of its eventual impact on the development of False Creek. By suggesting that a wall of buildings could be constructed relatively closely to these elevated bridges, the resulting shielding of the bridge has allowed a tranquil and calm pedestrian space to develop on the opposite side. Had this pattern not been identified it is hard to say whether this overall configuration would have developed because the benefit of such a strategy represents a tradeoff in which this proximity is far from ideal for the building itself, even if the larger urban result is substantially improved. One advantage of the pattern approach is that it can make otherwise less visible relationships such as this more apparent to both planners and developers, resulting in a balanced approach that yields comfortable public spaces, even if it challenges the ingenuity of designers (see figure 7.5).

Patterns 3.21-3.24: Major Pedestrian Spaces:

While the first group of patterns focused on issues of neighborhood organization, this second group focuses on aspects of the pedestrian environment and the surrounding area. These patterns are important both in terms of their individual contents and for the emphasis they place upon pedestrian experience as a defining framework through which to view and evaluate urban form. It is also significant that this approach is encouraging design and planning to be organized around basic concepts at multiple levels of scale, operating simultaneously. The use of this approach helps to explain why Vancouver has been able to develop new neighborhoods throughout the False Creek Basin, while at the same time connecting these local acts through a larger and well developed structure of waterfront paths and parks.

Pattern 3.23 Urban Free Space: This pattern proposes that some spaces in a city ought to be set aside, for which ordinary rules do not apply. This is not meant as a space of criminal activity, but as a break from otherwise imposed restrictions on behavior. A number of examples are cited, including Hyde Park Corner in London, Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen, The Lido in Venice, and Coney Island in New York.

Impact: this pattern had a direct and substantial influence on the development of Granville Island at False Creek, which was under consideration at the time that this pattern first appeared. Granville Island is an artificial Island in False Creek owned by the Canadian federal government, which at the time was occupied by a variety of industrial facilities in varying states of disrepair. The location of the Island situated below the Granville Bridge made it somewhat less than ideal as a potential place for residential development, yet its proximity to False Creek and the downtown peninsula made this an ideal location for other potential uses including possibly office space and light industry related to small water craft and pleasure boating (see figures 7.6, 7.7).

Initially the government considered leveling the existing buildings at Granville Island and starting over with a uniform pattern of development serving a limited range of purposes. However the Urban Free Space pattern suggested a fresh approach: this could be place where the typical rules did not apply, a space for alternative activities that did not conveniently belong elsewhere in Vancouver. Local architect Norman Hotson was instrumental in getting this

approach to work, transforming Granville Island into a dynamic, unique and well used environment serving a broad yet eclectic range of functions. Today Granville Island is the home of an extensive public market, several restaurants, an arts college, a water park, a marina, artisan shops and workshops, a theater, a concrete delivery company, and a variety of specialty shops. Accessible by water taxi, by car and on foot, Granville Island is a lively public place that has been featured on the registry of great public places maintained by the Project for Public Space. (http://www.pps.org/great_public_spaces/one?public_place_id=99).

Figure 7.6: Granville Island and Granville Bridge, 2010 (source Bing 3d satellite image).

Figure 7.7: Images of Granville Island (left: Robert Walsh, right: Project for Public Space website www.pps.org)

Patterns 3.31 – 3.36 Water: Patterns addressing False Creek itself:

This group of six patterns concerns strategies for transforming False Creek itself from a polluted industrial backwater into a public asset. In retrospect many of these principles may seem rather obvious now, after having contributed to preserving and improving False Creek, reversing a long standing trend of neglect. Yet individually and collectively, these represent the first time that the City of Vancouver had established clear policies concerning how the development of False Creek could proceed without allowing further encroachment, while increasing public enjoyment of the waterfront and also the mountain views it allowed.

Pattern 3.31 Water Area Maintained: This pattern makes allowance for changing the shape of False Creek while at the same time proposing a requirement that the area of False Creek not be permitted to be further reduced. In 1971 the False Creek shoreline configuration was an accidental byproduct of its former life as a center of industry and this shoreline would need to be redefined as part of the process of converting the area to new residential uses. False Creek had already been reduced to ¼ its original size under the influence of intensive industrial activity and landfill, and there had previously even been suggestions that it ought to be filled in entirely. While it seems unimaginable today that such a public asset could be so casually abandoned, at the time the question was how to address a badly polluted body of water that was not yet the appealing site of public recreation that it has subsequently become.

In recognizing that there was something of public value to be found here, especially once the body of water was cleaned up, Ron Walkey sought to establish a basic operational principle that would prevent further encroachment. In defining this in terms of its value as a public amenity, Walkey was proposing a different planning priority in which protecting public amenities became more important. His prior experience at Harbour Park[15] would have shown him how easy it was for powerful development interests to gain permission to develop property that at the time was still underwater; when he was developing the 1971 False Creek report, it was well known that ownership rights along False Creek also extended into the water on both sides (see figure 7.8). This planning principle at the time was seen as controversial, yet in the end it came to be accepted as a fundamental planning principle that significantly informed the subsequent

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[15] For additional information on Harbour Park, see chapter 6 of this dissertation.

development of False Creek. Of the six patterns proposed by Walkey concerning the development of False Creek itself, this is the first and possible also the most essential because this finally succeeded in establishing that False Creek was an asset to the City well worth preserving; by requiring that the area of False Creek be maintained, a policy was established that permitted necessary flexibility in adapting the boundaries of False creek, while at the same time ensuring that the trend of gradual encroachment would be effectively brought to an end. This would later prove especially significant when the Province of British Columbia would get involved in development at False Creek.
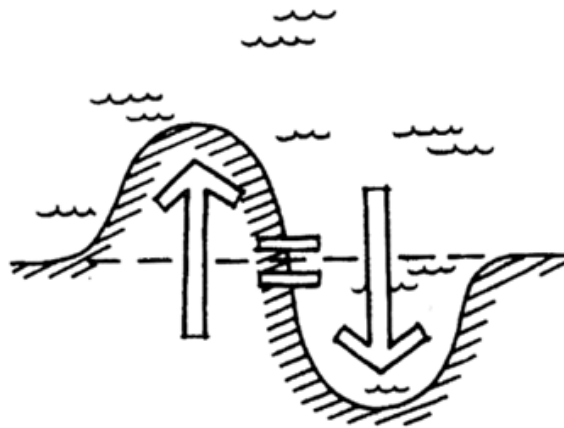
Figure 7.8: Pattern 3.31 Water area maintained (FCSG Urban Quality, 1972, p 42).

Pattern 3.32 Large Bays Define Water Area: This pattern concerns the question of how to best redefine the shape of False Creek in order to improve public enjoyment at a large scale, and in particular the impact that this has on views at a large scale. It is useful to bear in mind that as these patterns were being developed, the shore of False Creek had an irregular jagged configuration as the result of nearly a century of industrial activity and the question of how to best reconfigure this shape was by no means obvious.

> People need to identify themselves within their city at several scales, from that of their local community, through that of their neighbourhood, to the intimate scale of their home. People also seek a diversity of choice at each scale and prefer definite boundaries between scales. These boundaries work best if they are natural and provide a sense of enclosure.

> The shape of the water's edge has a critical effect on how people relate to the water. Long linear shorelines do not shape water areas but rather define the edge between land and water. Bays shape water areas and provide a sense of enclosure. They attract the majority

388

of water use activities and people like to live around them. Large bays encourage identification at the community scale and optimize the possibility of water views for those unable to live at the water's edge. Additionally, since bays increase the effective length of a shoreline, more people can relate to the water.

We propose that, wherever possible, large bays be created to optimize the use of water areas as an amenity. These bays should be scaled to the size of the community, and where the water amenity is spanned by bridges, these bays should be placed between bridge spans rather than under or close to them.

The image on page 95 of the 1971 report suggests that the greater the width of False Creek, the better the views of the distant mountains to the north will be. This drawing helped in reframing the view debate in Vancouver, as something impacted by building heights and locations, as well as the vantage point of the viewer (see figure 7.9).
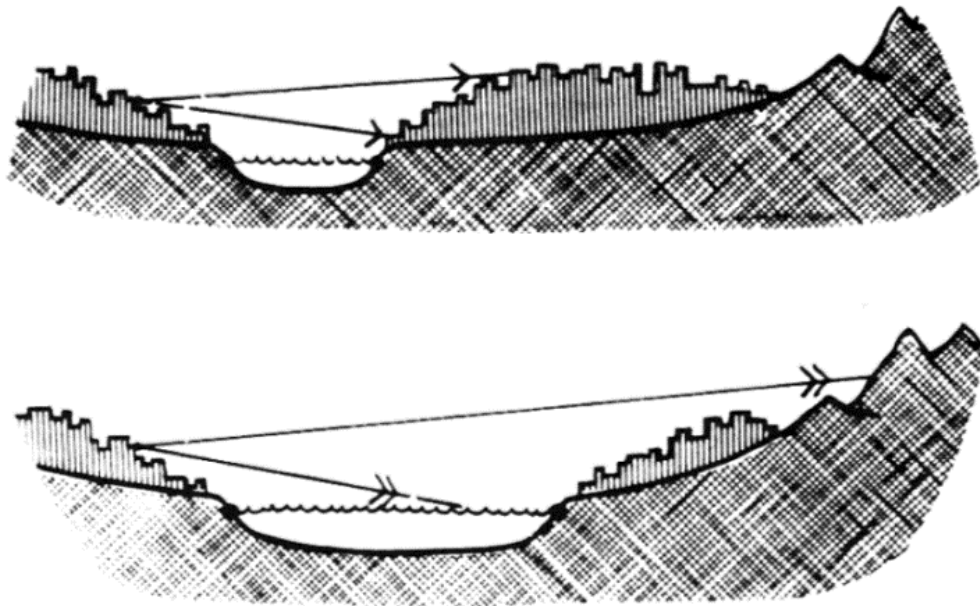
Figure 7.9: the relationship of scenic view accessibility and distance (1971 False Creek Report, False Creek Study Group, p 95).

Pattern 3.33 Small Bays Shape Shoreline: this pattern concerns the need to shape the shoreline at a finer level of scale in addition to the larger level of scale involved with larger views. In this case the pattern focuses on pedestrian experience of the immediate surroundings. This pattern is illustrated by a perspective rending that appears to be borrowed from the work of Gordon Cullen emphasizing the importance of pedestrian experience. This illustration is followed by an extended discussion and a diagram explaining in principle how the small bays recommended in

this pattern could be effectively combined with the larger bay recommended in the prior patterns (see figure 7.10).
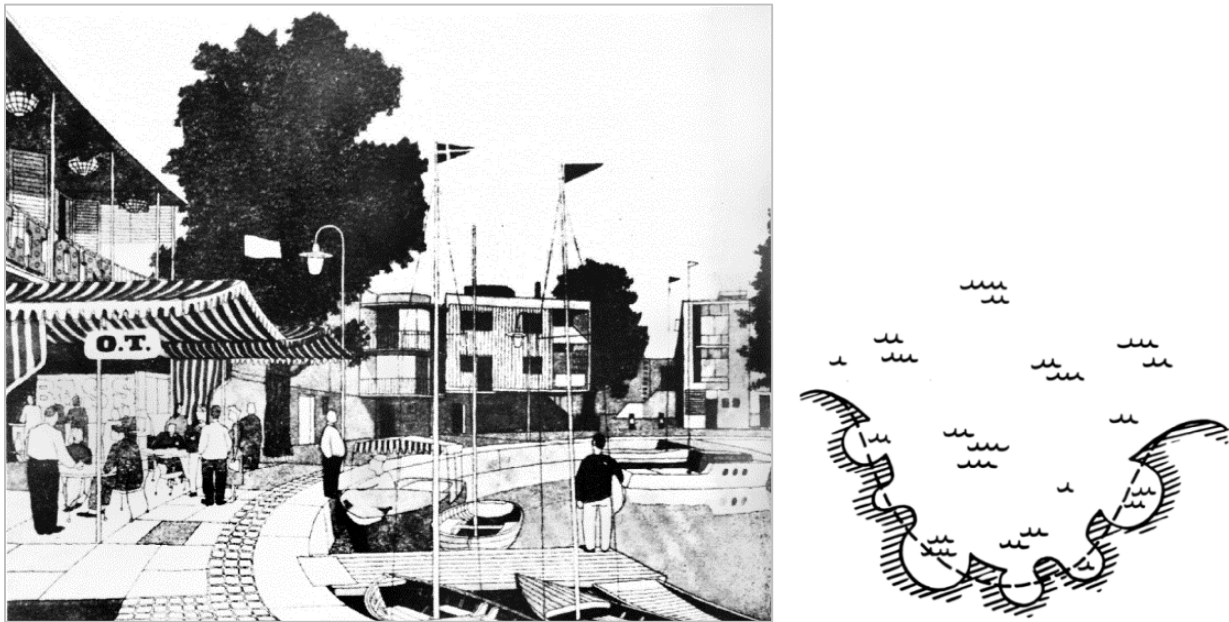
Figure 7.10: Pattern: Small Bays Shape Shorelines. The left hand image appears to be borrowed from the work of Gordon Cullen. The right hand diagram illustrates the general concept of the small bays pattern (FCSG, 1971, 98, 99).

The Pattern list expanded and reformulated: the 1972 FCSG Report: Urban Quality

The False Creek Study Group continued to explore the Pattern Format introduced to Vancouver by Ron Walkey, and in 1972 issued an updated report with an expanded list of 102 patterns (FCSG, 1972). This expanded list is noteworthy for critical refinements in both purpose and format. The original 19 patterns proposed in 1971 are presented in an argumentative fashion, somewhat similar to in character to the patterns published by CES. However the format of the expanded list of 102 patterns dispenses with the effort to prove the validity of the patterns and instead focuses on concise explanation, typically using only a few sentences to explain each pattern (For a complete listing of all 102 patterns and their precedents in prior source material, please see the chart in the appendix to this chapter). The result is a much more compressed and accessible format from which it is possible to quickly absorb a large amount of information regarding the characteristics that the FCSG considered desirable in new developments at False Creek. The tradeoff however is that without understanding the thinking behind the patterns they become harder to adjust or reinterpret.

This more compressed format coincides with a shift in purpose; in the 1972 report the False Creek Study Group decided to emphasize the use of patterns not as a design tools but as a new method of drafting planning guidelines (FCSG 1972). This distinction is critical in the eventual success of the use of these patterns in Vancouver, while at the same time representing a departure from the approach being developed by Alexander and his colleagues at CES who continued to see the patterns as controlling all aspects of urban form, from the organization of urban regions, down to the scale of window trim (Alexander 1977, 1978). Because in Vancouver the patterns were presented as a way to improve the planning process, architects did not experience this work as encroaching on their own expertise as designers, while from the planning perspective the patterns represented a highly effective tool to help planning direct development of the built environment towards desired community oriented objectives.

To illustrate the effectiveness of this updated approach, the following five patterns from 1972 are presented in their entirety (FCSG, 1972). These patterns have been chosen for their relevance to the eventual establishment of a new pattern of urban architecture in Vancouver in which emphasis on views, sunlight access and the quality of the public streetscape came to be seen as valid and significant questions of planning and architecture. Illustrations are those which accompany each pattern. Taming Tall Buildings is especially relevant to later developments which were to take place once residential high rises came back into fashion in Vancouver. The other four patterns address new attitudes to long standing issues and were introduced immediately into the building culture of Vancouver and have continued to be important.

It is also interesting that some aspects of the patterns as originally presented seem better than the work which was to follow from their first application. For example the pattern 'usable courtyards' features a higher density orthogonal form that has an clarity of orientation and intensity of use that somehow was captured in the images, but would be overlooked in implementation, at least during the first efforts.
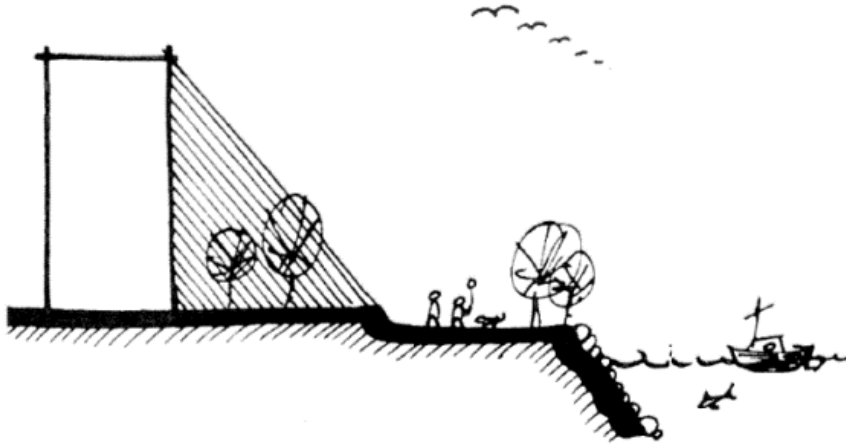
SUNLIGHT ON WATERFRONT WALK
Walking or sitting along the water's edge on a sunny day is a pastime enjoyed by many people of all ages. When buildings cast lengthy shadows over waterfront walks much of this pleasure is destroyed.

Pull back all buildings that may cast shadows over 200 feet wide from the waterfront walk. Pull them back far enough so that their mid-winter shadows fall short of the walk. Ensure that at least two-thirds of the walk is not overshadowed by buildings. At frequent intervals along the walk create sunny pockets of varying sizes where people may sit and linger in the, sun and overlook the water.
-   FCSG report: Urban Quality, 1972, 56.
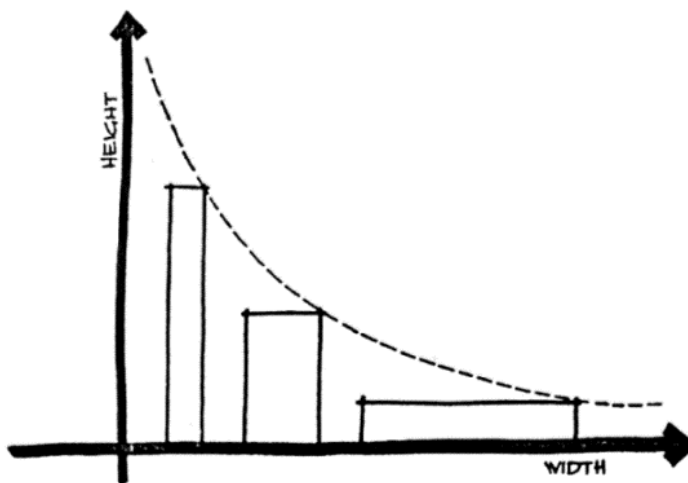
BUILDING HEIGHT/WIDTH RATIO
Large slab like high rise structures block out everyone's view and totally dominate the pedestrian below.

Allow lower building levels of less than three storeys to be relatively continuous with the ability to wrap around, and restrict higher levels to more pointal forms.
-   FCSG report: Urban Quality, 1972, 63.

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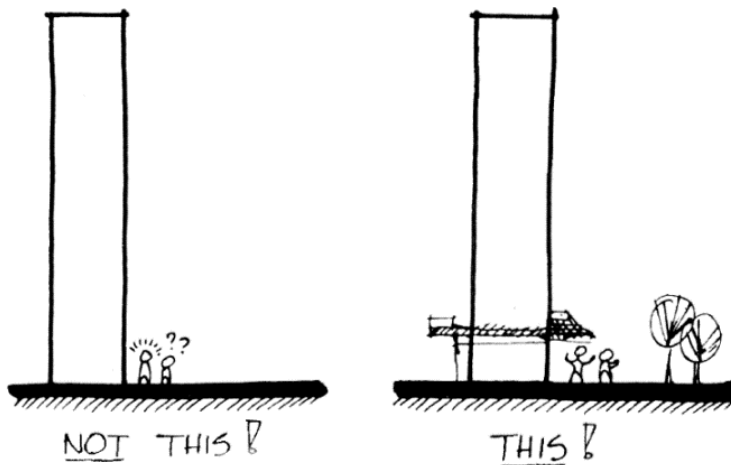
TAMING TALL BUILDINGS

Public spaces, both streets and plazas, are oppressive when they are surrounded by high, unbroken walls of buildings. People feel somehow threatened by the buildings looming over them.

In open spaces and streets to be used by the pedestrian, ensure that buildings fronting it above two storeys have the lower floors strongly articulated with canopies, signs or other means of visual interest. Treat upper floors so that they actually, or seem to, set back and recede.

- FCSG report: Urban Quality, 1972, 65.
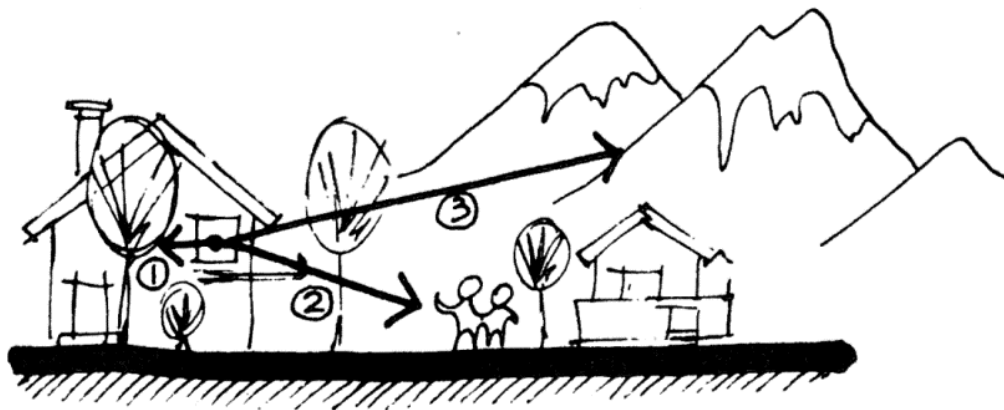
THREE KINDS OF VIEW

If, from where you live, you have little or no view of life around you, your home can be like a prison-albeit a comfortable one.

Every dwelling unit must have access to three kinds of view; an intimate view containing nature just outside the unit a neighbourhood glimpse into the life of the surrounding community -and a vista that encompasses distant natural elements that remain 'constant', such as the sea or mountains.

- FCSG report: Urban Quality, 1972, 66.

393
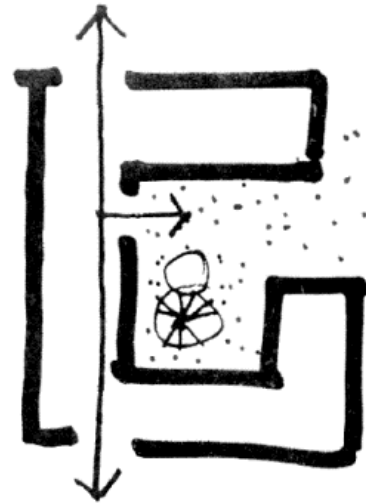
USABLE COURTYARDS
Most modern courtyards are dreary places, seldom are they pleasant places in which to pause and relax.

Shape courtyards, patios and open spaces around a building so that they are easily accessible, not totally enclosed but with an interesting view out and so that there are parts within it that cannot be overlooked - trees can accomplish this.
- FCSG report: Urban Quality, 1972, 77.

Of particular interest in terms of the future development of Vancouver are the ways that the patterns address the potentially adverse impacts of high rise buildings. While the crucial innovation of combining low rise courtyard surrounding buildings and high rise structures in the same urban block form has not yet been introduced, these two essential elements of Vancouverism are being considered at the same time, possibly for the first time, as part of a single urban design agenda. Meanwhile, by emphasizing a preference for "pointal" forms over slab towers, the patterns are calling into question the previously unchallenged assumption that either form was equally feasible in Vancouver. During the first high rise building slab towers were surprisingly common and were continuing to be proposed as a possible option at the North Shore of False Creek. Other research at this time was suggesting that slab towers were prone to negatively impacting city life at street level, through increased shadows and higher wind levels (Gehl 1971). However, in recognizing that these potentially negative impacts were reduced with point towers, the FCSG reframed the terms of the high rise debate in a way which would eventually contribute to the reintroduction of point towers in Vancouver.

Patterns and the first steps towards implementation:

When the False Creek Study Group (FCSG) first began their work, the focus of discussions was on transforming the entire False Creek basin and the land on both sides. While clearly specifying that the patterns did not represent an actual master plan, but instead a set of objectives and characteristics that the new development ought to have, the FCSG nevertheless included in the 1971 report a sketch design representing a master plan that could arise from the application of the patterns (see figure 7.11)[16]. This design has several novel characteristics, including the proposed construction of seven new Islands in False Creek, bringing the total to eight. In addition to new marina, waterfront parks and promenades, the plan also shows False Creek becoming reconnected to Chinatown, further lengthening the shoreline and restoring a portion of False Creek that had been previously filled in. Both of these features, the islands and the extension of False Creek to Chinatown would later reappear in subsequent master planning proposals by other architects.[17]

The patterns introduced by Ron Walkey impacted the building culture of Vancouver primarily in two distinctive ways: through adoption by the next generation of city planners into new planning guidelines, and through application in the construction of an extensive complex of building on city owned property along the South shore of False Creek. Before looking more closely at the particular uses that Vancouver's architects would make of these concepts, it will be useful to examine the contributions made by Ray Spaxman, the new Planning Director formally appointed in the spring of 1974. It is because of Ray Spaxman, more than anyone else, that many of the new insights offered by the False Creek Study Group in the form of patterns were formally adopted, eventually playing a crucial role in a larger reform of planning values and methods that have guided development in Vancouver ever since.

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[16] The drawing notes in the upper left hand corner: "Detail shown only to describe principle." This insistence that this does not represent an actual master plan proposal is on the face of it problematic. Clearly the reader is encouraged to visualize the plan as a possible template for development, in essences as a master plan, yet at the same time is being told that no such expectation should be accepted. This may be the result of the collaborative process used in the entire report; with several different architects involved there may have been an unwillingness of all concerned to endorse a single design.

[17] These alternative schemes are examined in chapter 9 of this dissertation.
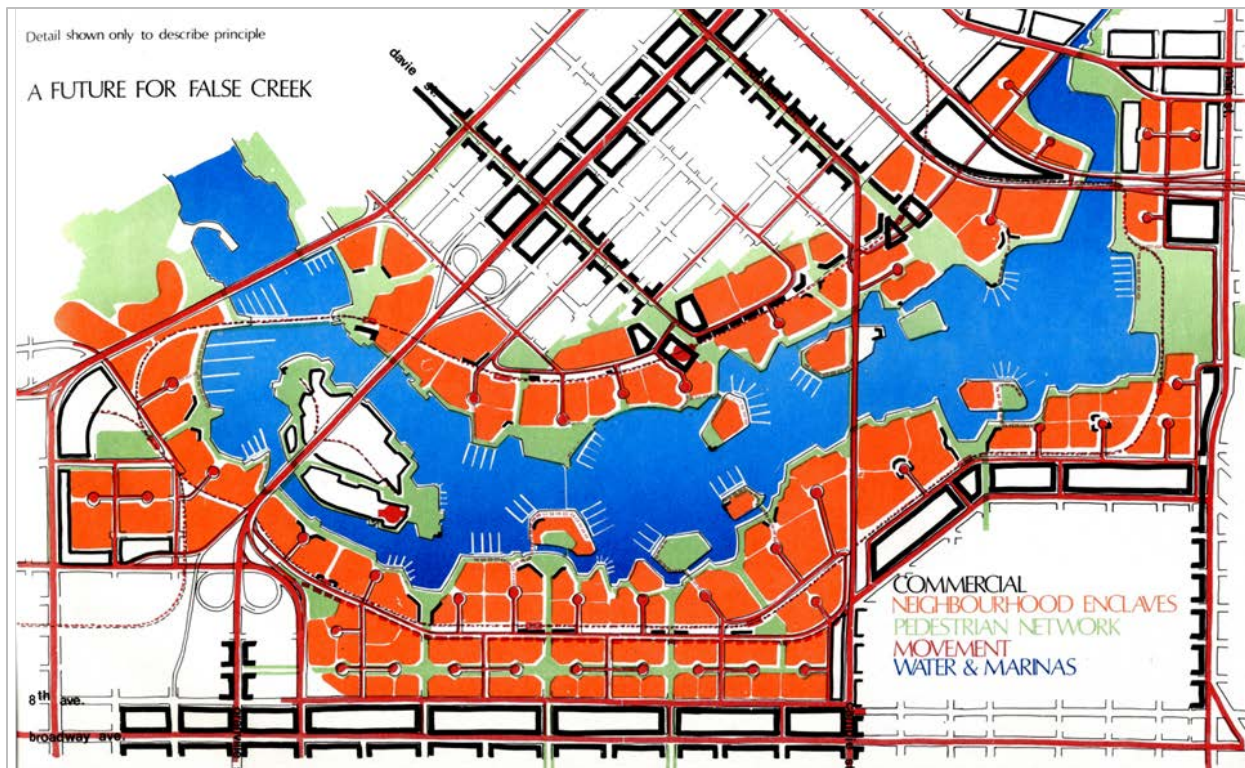
Figure 7.11: A Future for False Creek: hypothetical sketch design. (FCSG, 1971) The waterfront is shown to be directed towards residential uses, while commercial areas are several blocks further inland. New neighborhoods are shown clustered into inwardly focused enclaves. The overall focus and clear intention of this design is however to make the False Creek the central focus of continuous system of waterfront parks in the midst of a low rise yet moderate density pattern of development.

Ray Spaxman and the transformation of planning in Vancouver

While Ron Walkey was introducing the pattern based approach to urban planning and design analysis via the FCSG, the City of Vancouver was undergoing a political transformation. The faltering NPA party began losing ground to two new parties established in 1968: The Electors Action Movement (TEAM) and the Committee of Progressive Electors (COPE). This political shift reached a climax with the mid-December 1972 municipal election, when the TEAM party won a sweeping victory, gaining control of the City Council, the Mayor's office, the Parks Board and by extension the City Manager's Office and the Planning Department. Where the prior NPA government had been dominated by developers and other businessmen, the new TEAM government was dominated by academics and professionals (Leiren 1973).

By 1972, founding TEAM member and geography Professor Walter Hardwick had already been serving on the Vancouver City Council for 4 years, and he had begun to help change the climate

of planning and government in Vancouver. Concerned that the planning policies being recommended to City Council by the Vancouver Planning Department did not accurately reflect the desires of the local community, in 1971 Hardwick initiated a comprehensive survey of the local population to better understand what the community actually wanted. By 1973 the results of the study were complete, revealing \ that Vancouver residents were less concerned than expected with improving the pace of cross town traffic, and instead were interested in improving the walkability of their immediate surroundings. These findings proved helpful in permanently ending the freeway proposals (Hardwick, 1973).

Hardwick's work, along with the work of the False Creek Study Group Vancouver, reflected a cultural shift taking place in which local neighborhoods, pedestrian experience and the quality of the public domain were emerging as central planning concerns, replacing a planning agenda that had been previously focused on meeting the needs of developers and the business community. The 1972 election victory of the TEAM party accelerated the pace of reform and to help in this process, the new government eventually hired planning director Ray Spaxman after conducting an international search. Arriving in Vancouver in 1973, Spaxman would serve as Planning Director for the next fifteen years (1974 -1989), during a turbulent time in which Vancouver's urban future would be overhauled and reinvented as the City responded to changing economic, political and demographic conditions.

Ray Spaxman was recruited from Toronto where he had been working as a deputy planning director. Having originally studied architecture in England before switching to City Planning, Spaxman had an excellent understanding of design, and upon his arrival in Vancouver actively sought out leading local architects to learn how they viewed the situation and what might be done to improve the city.[18]   Spaxman also happened to have a highly developed interest in the same emerging body of work that had influenced Ron Walkey and his colleagues in the False Creek Study Group, including: Kevin Lynch, Jane Jacobs, Gordon Cullen, and Christopher Alexander. Spaxman has also cites his own experience of growing up in Kings Lynn, a British city of medieval origins, as another influence on his work.[19]

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[18] In contrast to this background in architecture, Gerald Sutton Brown was an engineer by training.
[19] This information comes from communications with Mr. Spaxman and also from a recorded interview posted online by the City Program at Simon Fraser University, hosted by Gordon Price.

(e) Large Buildings Overshadow Small — Avoid placing a tall building so close to a small building that it overshadows living areas of small buildings.

NEVER THIS

(f) Taming Tall Buildings — In open spaces and streets to be used by the pedestrian, ensure that buildings fronting it above two storeys have the lower floors strongly articulated with canopies, signs or other means of visual interest. Treat upper floors so that they actually, or seem to, set back and recede. With large structures, make sure that they are surrounded by smaller structures or canopies.

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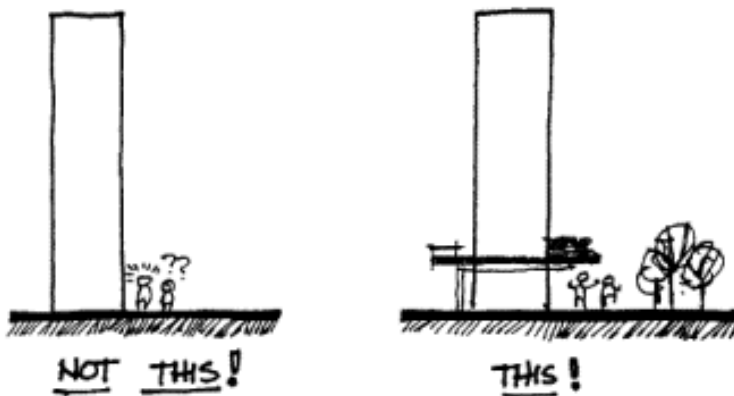
(g) Roof Tops Are for Living — Flat roofs should be accessible to people and "roof-scaped".

Figure 7.12: False Creek official development plan guidelines (City of Vancouver, 1974. 16).

In Toronto, planners had also begun to explore links between walkability, livability and neighborliness and the role that planning in shaping public places. Historic preservation was emerging as an important tool used in opposing urban renewal projects. In Toronto a backlash occurred against the use of high rise buildings for family oriented housing, which a particular emphasis on the perceived detrimental characteristics of slab towers. And as in Vancouver, in Toronto a prevalent critique at this time held that the city had consistently borrowed its architecture from elsewhere, without developing a significant local tradition (Whiteson, 1982).

Upon arriving in Vancouver, Ray Spaxman was exceptionally well qualified to help translate many of the findings explored by the False Creek Study Group (FCSG) into operational planning methods. During his first year as Planning Director, new guidelines for False Creek were being adopted that made use of the FCSG patterns, in an even more compressed format that simply identified the principle and illustrated this with a diagram or other image (see Figure 7. 12).

For example, in the pattern 'Taming Tall Buildings', which was already presented in a concise form in the 1972 report by the FCSG, Ray Spaxman has nevertheless shortened the text further still, eliminating the critique of present conditions and the claim that these are generally oppressive. The pattern "Large Buildings Overshadow Small" in the original FCSG report had a second diagram that has been omitted by Spaxman, a diagram proposing an idealized solution. Through refinements such as these Spaxman further tightened and focus the patterns, concentrating them into their essentials while at the same time taking care not to go too far towards defining standardized solutions. Refinements such as this are an indication that Ray Spaxman had acquired a sound grasp of the pattern principle early in his work in Vancouver, sufficient to enable him to further improve upon the work that had been already done.

As important as the patterns had been in clarifying planning objectives, they still lacked an explicit organizing concept around which they could be pursued, and additional planning reforms and mechanisms were also needed to make the patterns workable as part of an effective city planning system. Ray Spaxman addressed these limitations while also introducing additional insights of his own. Crucial to this effort was his adoption of the concept of "neighborliness" as the central unifying principle of planning in Vancouver during his tenure.

Over the course of the fifteen years Ray Spaxman spent as planning director, "neighborliness" found expression in numerous ways, including: the development of detailed neighborhood based planning guidelines, the improvement of public participation in city planning, the development of new historic preservation methods, the development of the first regulations intended to protect access to views as a public amenity, the establishment of a peer review based urban design board that conducted meetings in public, and the development of new regulations and initiatives intended to improve targeted characteristics of the public domain.

The extent of the impact Ray Spaxman has had on the planning process in Vancouver is not easy to appreciate, given the wide range of issues he addressed, the range of techniques he applied and the extended period of time over which he served as planning director. New policies addressing view corridors, waterfront walkways and high rise buildings, were all introduced and then further refined under his direction, substantially impacting the direction development would take. Smaller scale initiatives also made a lasting impact, such as changes made to the West End Street grid to calm the traffic, or a comprehensive awnings plan addressing the need for a unified plan for pedestrian oriented rain protection along the major shopping areas.

When Ray Spaxman discovered that the local citizens were not being made aware of pending neighborhood development proposals until after it was too late to respond to them, he introduced a new requirement that all development proposals had to post signage describing the project, on the location of the development at the time that the application was being submitted. This practice which he originated was to become a standard practice throughout Canada (see figure, 7. 13) (Punter. 2004).

Figure 7.13: On site signage announcing a development application in Vancouver (Price, 2005).

The innovations introduced by Ray Spaxman impacted: city planning, development, the relationship of planning to architecture, the relationship of planning to public service and the involvement of the community in the planning process. Additional innovations he introduced during his lengthy tenure as planning director will also be examined in the next two chapters. [20]

As these changes were taking place, as a result of the adoption of the pattern based approach introduced by Ron Walkey, a fundamental change was taking place in the relationship between the city planners, the developers and the community. The patterns introduced by Ron Walkey gave the planners an improved ability realign development towards the attainment of explicit physical outcomes and public benefits, while still leaving the design of the environment in the hands of architects and developers. Out of this changed relationship would emerge a substantial development project organized and pursued by the city, on city-owned land, and involving more than twenty different local architecture firms. This project would mark the beginning of actual construction in the effort to transform of the land facing onto False Creek from an semi-abandoned industrial wasteland into a thriving residential district.

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[20] Time and again when speaking with architects who have had a hand in the transformation of Vancouver, a refrain has emerged that Ray Spaxman in their opinion is one of the unsung heroes in this process. Other recent scholarship that has focused on the planning dimension of Vancouverism has tended to focus on the significant contributions of Larry Beasley, who in 1994 was officially promoted to the position of Co-Director of Planning for Vancouver, after having worked for many years under the direction of Ray Spaxman (Punter 2004, Berelowitz 2005, Grant 2009). Beasley, according to his colleagues, played a critical role in orchestrating and negotiating the development process that in the end has transformed Vancouver into a world class city, recognized for its livability and the appeal of its public domain. Beasley helped achieve this outcome by overseeing a process in which developers were required to improve the public domain in exchange for development rights. The touchstone of this effort was an agenda promoted by Beasley under the name of "living first" which directed development towards creating vibrant and healthy residential district on the North Shore of False Creek. However, in speaking with architects who had a long term involvement in the transformation of Vancouver, a different more complex picture came to light in which Larry Beasley is described as very effectively applying methods and insights originally developed by Ray Spaxman. Whether this adequately describes the extent of Beasley's contributions to planning in Vancouver is however doubtful; as a planner who worked for the City of Vancouver for a total of 28 years, Larry Beasley demonstrated early on an interest and understanding of the potential benefits of a more inclusive community centered approach to planning and development (Beasley, 1976). Therefore it seems probable that he also had a hand in helping to craft and implement some of the innovative reforms that took place under Ray Spaxman's leadership. While both planners are praised for their contributions to the City, the consensus appears to be that Ray Spaxman has perhaps not been adequately recognized for the transformative importance of his work. Several of the architects I spoke with also expressed admiration for the determination shown by Spaxman over the course of his lengthy tenure as planning director; when the political make-up of the city government reverted to a more business friendly, less community-centered orientation, Spaxman nevertheless continued to advocate and effectively negotiate outcomes that were of benefit to the community. Many of the reforms Spaxman introduced have persisted at least in part because he remained on the job long enough for his approach to become the established method in Vancouver, but also because he demonstrated that involving the community in a more open and inclusive process offers advantages to developers and community groups alike (Ley, 1980, Hardwick, 1994, Punter 2004, communications with Ray Spaxman and Larry Beasley).

7.3 Application: Patterns and the Transformation of the South Shore of False Creek

Figure 7.14: Land Ownership at False Creek: The yellow land shows the extent of City owned Property in 1970, with the area between the purple hash marks (added by Robert Walsh) delineate the portion of this land that was developed by the City of Vancouver from 1973-1983. Red indicates land owned by the railroad (CPR and Marathon Realty). Green indicates land owned by the Province of British Columbia, or by the Canadian Federal Government. Blue indicates Land owned by BC Hydro, while Grey indicates private ownership. Note that these ownership rights extend into False Creek itself in many instances. (Hayes, 2005,168).

In 1973, the TEAM government decided to embark upon the transformation of False Creek, on the basis of the vision presented in detail in the work of the False Creek Study Group. Walter Hardwick, who served as the chairman of a special committee set up to pursue this undertaking has been portrayed as an energetic results oriented leader who played a central role in initiating this project (Kemble, 1980). The first decision made was to concentrate the first efforts on the redevelopment of a large parcel of City owned property along the South Shore of False Creek (see figure 7.14). This would give the City the opportunity to rapidly implement the proposal, while testing the proof of concept before using the results to inform the development guidelines for the remainder of False Creek. To pursue this project, the city established the False Creek Development Group, and what was needed next was a master plan for developing the property.

Having collaborated with a select group of private architects, the City of Vancouver appears to have found itself in a bit of a bind when it came time to actually hiring the architecture firm to do

the actual master plan for the South Shore of False Creek.[21] The City wanted to appear open to any qualified architecture firm, especially since this was a project that would be seeking additional funding from Federal and Provincial sources, but at the same time, the City wanted to work with Architects already well versed in the Pattern based approach that had already been developed.

When the City announced it was seeking qualified architecture firms to compete for the right to design the master plan for the South Shore, more than thirty local firms expressed interest (Hulchanski, 1984). From this pool, the City selected three firms to compete in a closed completion. These firms were 1) Thompson Berwick and Pratt: the firm that had organized the False Creek Study Group, 2) Britannia Design: the firm that had been started by Ron Walkey and several local architects, and 3) Downs / Archambault: a local award winning firm that had recently collaborated with Britannia design on the development of the Britannia Community Center. Downs / Archambault incidentally had originally met when both were working for Thompson Berwick and Pratt in 1954. The selection of these three firms familiar with one another would set the stage for an effective collaborative process in the aftermath of the original competition.

As the plan indicates, the winning entry was intended to provide a sense of direction without precisely defining what it was that was to be built. This represented a continuation of an attitude adopted by the FCSG in developing the Pattern based approach. The concept of the pattern approach as it was developed by CES was that this was a planning method that would allow for better outcomes by stressing the importance of critical social and morphological relationships. It emphasized the use of patterns as a general method that would lead to novel outcomes as designers applied these patterns to the detailed local site constraints. Accordingly, the master plan in this context is still an approximation of results that cannot be defined until the buildings themselves have been designed in detail.

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[21] Government organizations typically have explicit requirements intended to ensure that contracts for architectural services are not awarded on the basis of personal connections. I am not versed in the details of how this works within the context of Canada. I know that in the United States it is common for government groups to use several different methods, often beginning with a request for qualifications used to screen initial applicants. From this pool a variety of qualified contenders may be invited to participate in a more limited completion for the work, as was the case of the South Shore Master Plan. One advantage this method has over an open competition is that the selection process becomes more manageable. Furthermore, with such a reduced hope of winning many top firms may choose not to participate in an open competition. The downside is that this narrowed field may also eliminate new ideas from as of yet unknown designers.
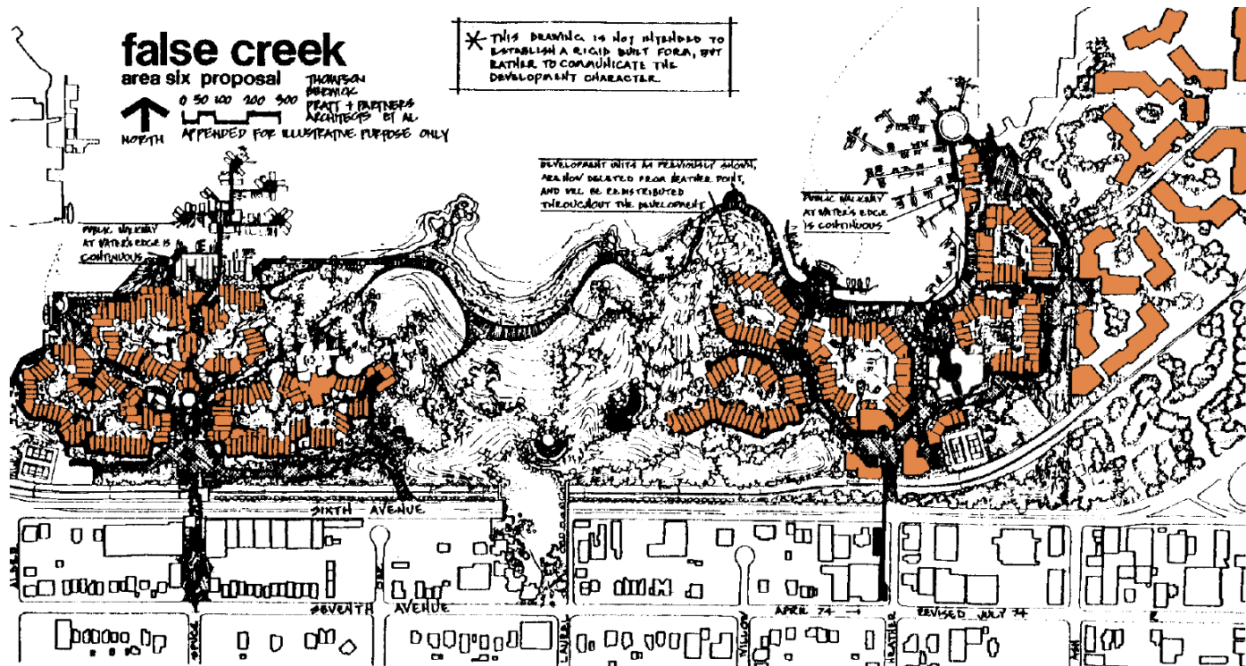
Figure 7.15: The winning master plan for the South Shore of False Creek, by Thompson Berwick and Pratt (Orange color added by Robert Walsh to improve legibility). The notation at the top center of the drawing reads as Follows: *"This drawing is not intended to establish a rigid built form, but rather to communicate the development character"* (Thompson Berwick and Pratt, 1974).

Accordingly, the entire project proceeded without an explicitly defined comprehensive plan, but instead developed through a more fluid process by which the configuration for phases 2 and 3 were radically redefined as the project moved forward. This would become more significant as the project moved towards implementation in a process involving numerous additional local architecture firms in the design of particular structures.
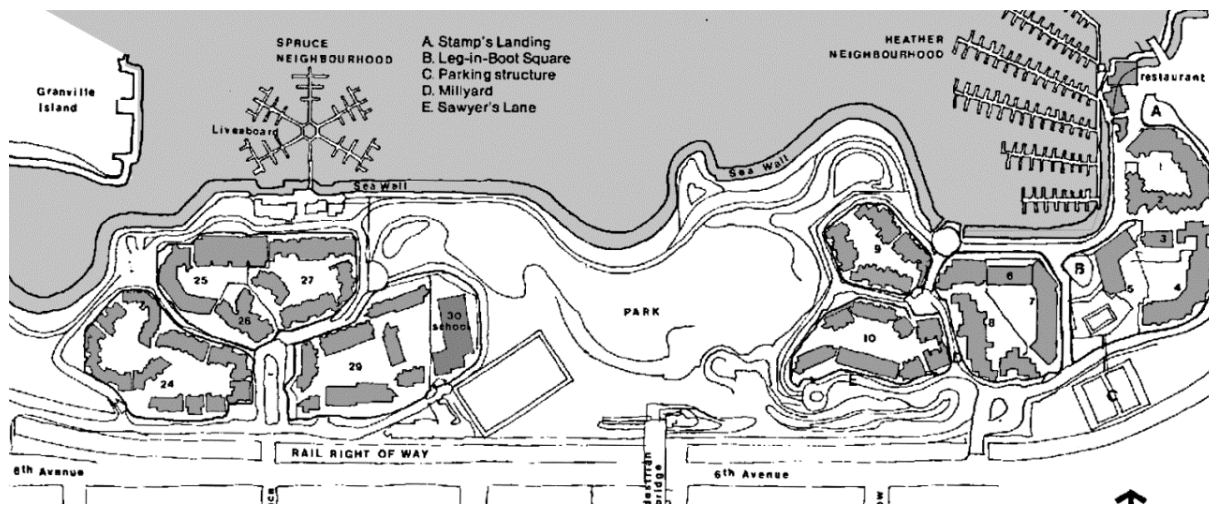
Figure 7.16: Phase 1 as it was actually developed. Spruce Neighborhood is to the left, Heather Neighborhood is to the right. (Vischer 1984, 115; gray tints added by Robert Walsh).

The winning proposal was selected in April of 1974. Of the three master plans, the design proposed by Britannia design was considered by some to be a potentially better and more inventive design (Vischer, 1984), the City however opted instead for the design proposed by Thompson Berwick and Pratt (TB&P) as the master plan for the project (see figures 7.15, 7.16).

Two months after the winning master plan was selected, the Vancouver city planners, working under the direction of Ray Spaxman, produced a 45 page report titled: *The official development plan for False Creek* (City of Vancouver, 1974). While clearly intended to advance the effort to develop the South Shore of False Creek, this document hardly can be considered a plan in the traditional sense; although profusely illustrated, it includes no actual plans delineating what is to be built at False Creek. Instead this is a statement of design principles, a translation of many of the patterns described in the False Creek Study Group reports (FCSG, 1971, 1972), updated, reorganized and revised. Although the patterns are no longer referred to as "patterns," the report nevertheless adopts 69 of the patterns from the final list of 102, and these are categorized as either "mandatory" requirements, or "interpretive" requirements. Some patterns that have seemed either too obvious, or perhaps irrelevant, have been eliminated, such as a pattern having to do with roof heights, or another requirement that "paths lead somewhere" (FCSG, 1972). Meanwhile new yet highly relevant design constraints that inexplicably had not made the earlier pattern list have been added by Spaxman, such as the requirement of the continuous seawall walkway at the waterfront. Although this feature had been incorporated by the winning plan of TB&P, it also had been included in the prior proposals developed by the City for the redevelopment of False Creek and in the work of Zoltan Kiss and Ron Dies, it is however unclear why this was not recognized as a significant pattern by the FCSG.

Having selected TB&P to guide the overall development process and then having established the official city plan needed to implement the work, under the leadership of Walter Hardwick, the project continued to rapidly move forward. All three of the original firms involved in the competition to develop the master plan remained involved in the project, designing different portions of the project along with many other firms. TB&P managed the development of Phase 1, while Downs / Archambault managed the Phase 2 of the project. The approach spelled out in the FCSG reports specified the division of the project into numerous self-contained enclaves, communal clusters built around central semi-private outdoor spaces of varying degrees of

enclosure. Each of the three original firms was responsible for at least one of these enclaves. The City also decided to expand participation by local architecture firms, dividing the work to be done in the first two phases between more than twenty different local firms (Kemble, 1980).[22] Construction began in 1975.

Architects at South Shore of False Creek	lot	phase
Hulbert and Partners	54, 56	2
Downs / Archambault - Davidson / Johnson	47, 49	2
Davidson / Johnson	52	2
Vern Del Gatty	48	2
Ron Howard	46, 51, 53	2
Jones Haave Architects	50	2
Norman Hotson	Granville Island	
Barbara Dairymple	Granville (offices)	
Downs / Archambault	25, 26	1
Henriquez & Partners	10, 29	1
George Furnadjeff	24	1
Thompson Berwick Pratt & Partners	5, 7, 9	1
Wolfgang Gerson and Hassell Griblin	8	1
Rhone & Iredale (including Peter Cardew)	6	1, 3
Romses Kwan & Associates	27	1
Bain, Burroughs, Hanson Raimet Architects	1, 2, 4, 10B	1, 3
Arnuf Petzold	3	1

Table 7.2: Architects involved at the South Shore of False Creek (Kemble, 1980).

Among those who participated in this project are many architects who would later go on to play a significant role in the subsequent development of Pacific Concord Place and Coal Harbor, the two mega projects for which Vancouver is now most widely known (see table 7.2). Noticeably missing from this process was Arthur Erickson who was not amongst those who participated in the work at the South Shore of False Creek.[23]

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[22] This figure includes two firms that worked on the development of Granville Island.

[23] Erickson was engaged in practicing architecture at a global scale at this point in his career, however there are indications that he maintained an interest in the transformation of False Creek. In 1968 he and partner Geoffrey Massey won an award for a office design proposal for the North Shire of False Creek involving a series of close packed slab buildings which would have obliterated access to distant views for anyone else. In 1974 Erickson also participated in a proposal to restore a large portion of False Creek, all the way to Chinatown, and intervention that would have dwarfed the earlier proposal of the FCSG to extend a smaller finger of water in the same direction. In this work Erickson was employed by the Province of British Columbia, despite their rather modest land holdings in the area. This may be an indication that the Province was already considering enlarging its stake in the False Creek Basin in 1974.

Figure 7.17: South Shore of False Creek development sequence: Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3. Granville Island is indicated by G. I. (Google Earth 2009; modified by Robert Walsh).

The City used a variety of creative funding opportunities to help pay for critical portions of the project, for example using an employment program to obtain some of the labor needed to construct the Seawall and waterfront pathway. By 1983 a total of 1,500 dwelling units had been completed, along with a new elementary school, a major park space, several small marinas and the seawall at False Creek along the length of the development. Even before this work was completed (Thompson, 1988), the development had become a highly popular place to live, as well as serving as the catalyst for finally beginning the process of cleaning up and transforming False Creek.

Phase 1: the donut enclaves.

Phase 1 of the development involved constructing a total of 865 Dwelling units divided into two neighborhoods, the Spruce neighborhood and the Heather neighborhood, each of which had its own Marina. The two neighborhoods together overlook a large central park space, onto which also fronts a new elementary school. Each of the new neighborhoods is made up of several ring-shaped enclaves, consisting of row houses organized around a semipublic central space. As in the original master plan by TB&P, the Spruce Neighborhood consists of three enclaves, and a school while the Heather neighborhood is made up of five enclaves (see figures 7.16, 7.17, 7.18, 7.19, 7.20, 7.21) (Rodger, 1976).

407

Figure 7.18: Spruce neighborhood in 2010 (Bing 3-d).

Because the enclaves were designed by different architects, and in some cases more than one architect worked on an individual enclave, overall the construction from phase 1 has an eclectic visual character. Also, there are some indications that the enclave approach and the commitment to low rise housing was beginning to be challenged, even in Phase 1 and the portion of this earliest development that was to adjoin the Phase 3 area at the western most end of the site began to feature buildings of increasing height, centered around the most urban portion of the entire development, at Leg-in-Boot Square (see figures 7.21, 7.22, 7.23).

Figure 7.19: Spruce townhouse, by Downs / Archambault in 1980 (Dixon, 1980).

Figure 7.20: Spruce Townhouses: an enclave central area (Dixon, 1980).

Figure 7.21: The South Shore of False Creek Phase 1 Heather neighborhood, View looking South i.e. reversed from plan views. (Bing 3-d).

Figure 7.22: Heather Neighborhood: Leg in boot square (Uploaded from real estate website).

Figure 7.23: An enclave by Richard Henriquez for Phase 1, Heather Neighborhood (Henriquez, 2006).

Phase 2 of False Creek: taller freestanding buildings replace the row house enclaves.

During Phase 2, the overall management of the South Shore development shifted to Downs / Archambault (D/A). It is clear that even though they went along with the enclave scheme in phase 1 in accordance with the sketchy master plan of Thompson Berwick and Pratt, once D/A was in control, the development pattern changed radically. Whereas the Phase 1 designs had emphasized a sense of community centered on the low rise donut forms of the enclaves, and the experience of the views and the waterfront was primarily accessed through the public waterfront walkway, in Phase 2 the design priority has shifted towards maximizing the enjoyment of the accessible views from within the individual apartment units. As a result, the semi-private enclave spaces have disappeared, and the structures have grown substantially taller.
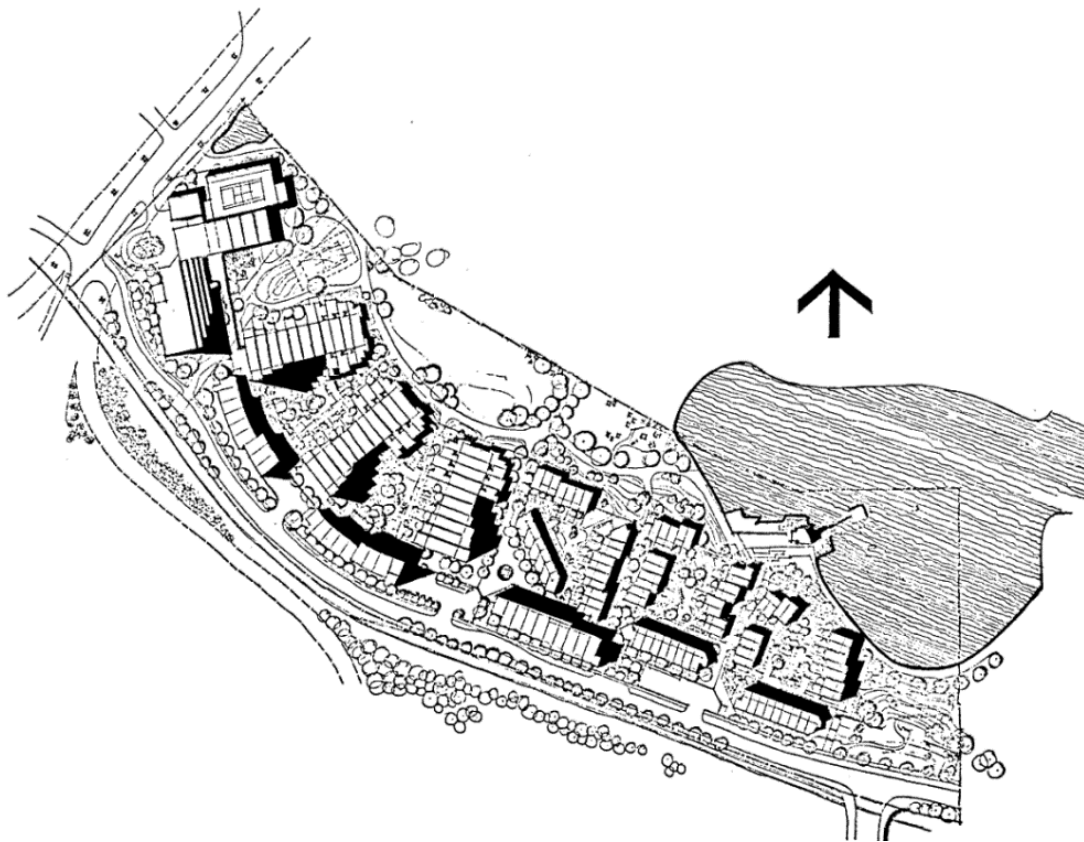
Figure 7.24: Official development plan for Phase 2 by Downs / Archambault (City of Vancouver, October 6, 1976, Appendix p 58).

This phase of the project saw the emergence of a new variety of apartment structure, a rectangular block shape that features stepping terraces descending towards the available views. This geometry appears to have been substantially influenced by the pattern "Rooftops are for

living," which was also one of the patterns incorporated into the official city guidelines for the South Shore (See figure 7.12 page 28). Although the individual buildings were once again designed by a variety of different local architecture firms, this stepped terrace apartment block originates in the master plan developed by D/A for this site (see figure 7.24). Although the original pattern as it is presented seems to suggest the use of the stepped forms is meant to take place in the context of a hillside location, the actual site in question is relatively flat, and so the architects responded by giving the buildings themselves the additional height needed to make the stepping terrace approach work. Although the advantages of this strategy appear to have completely escaped attention in subsequent analysis of the South Shore development, this innovative massing strategy would continue to play a role in urban design proposals when Vancouver's architects and planners once again redirected their attention to the challenge of redeveloping the property on the North Shore of False Creek (see figure 7.24 -7.28).
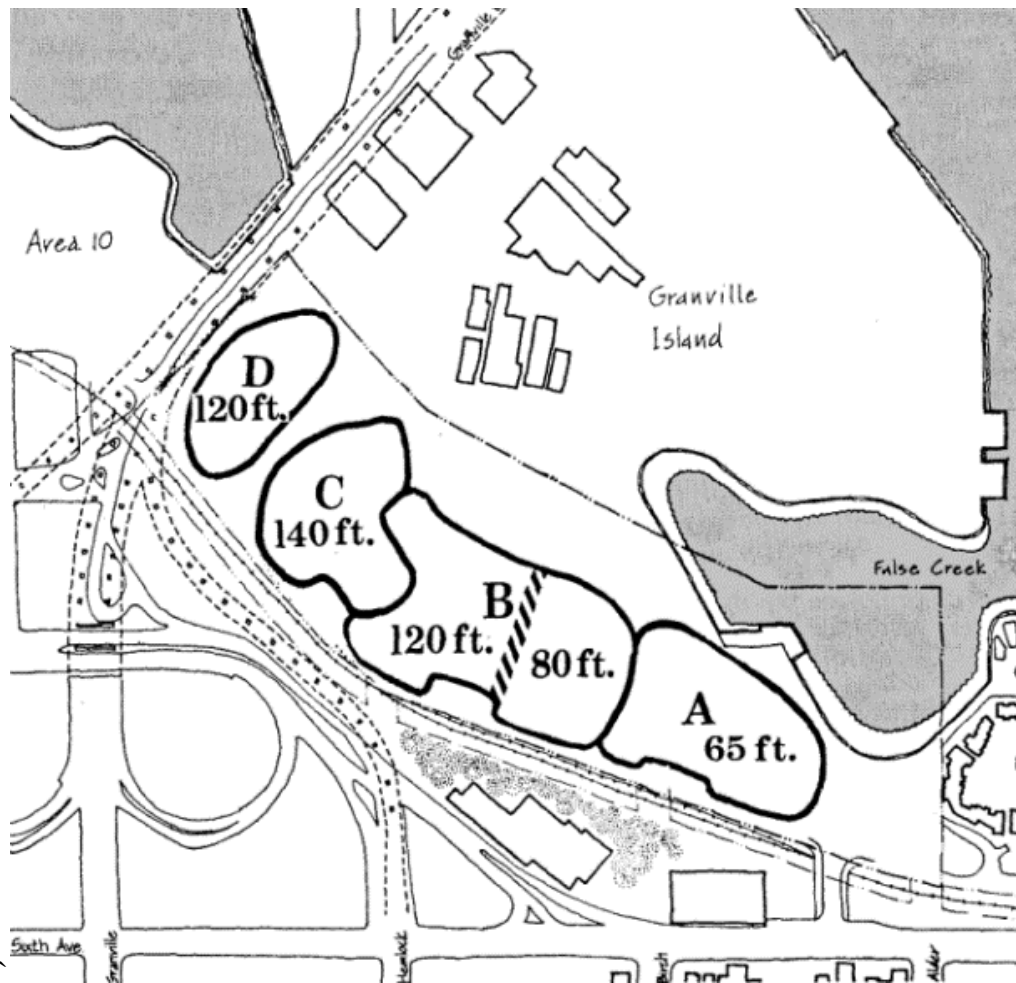
Figure 7.25: Height limits of the new structures for Phase 2, a radical increase from phase 1 (City Of Vancouver October 6, 1976, 54).
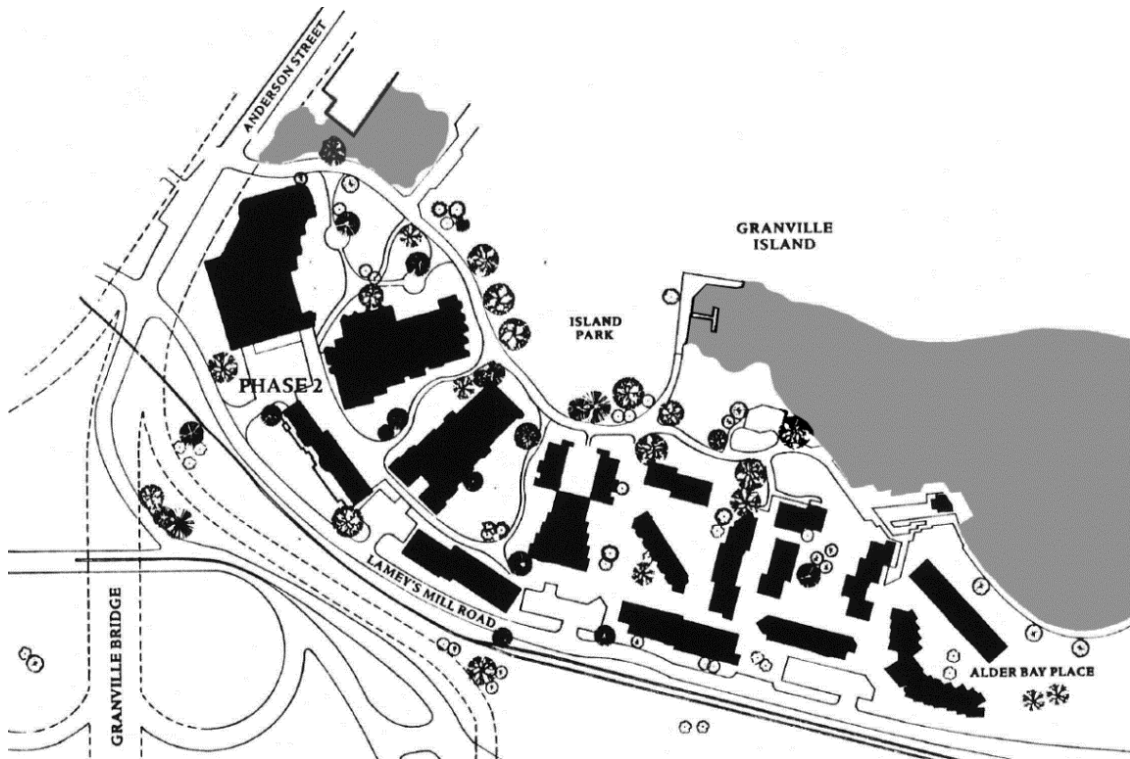
Figure 7.26: Phase 2 figure ground plan of the area as developed (Hulchanski, 1984, p 160 – original source is an earlier report by the False Creek Development Group).

Figure 7.27: A portion of the phase 2 development at Alder Bay, looking west. Note the increased height of these structures in response to the bridge ramp. (bing 3-d).

Figure 7.28: Stepped terrace blocks, detail (bing 3d).

Phase 3: Continuing experimentation in apartment morphology
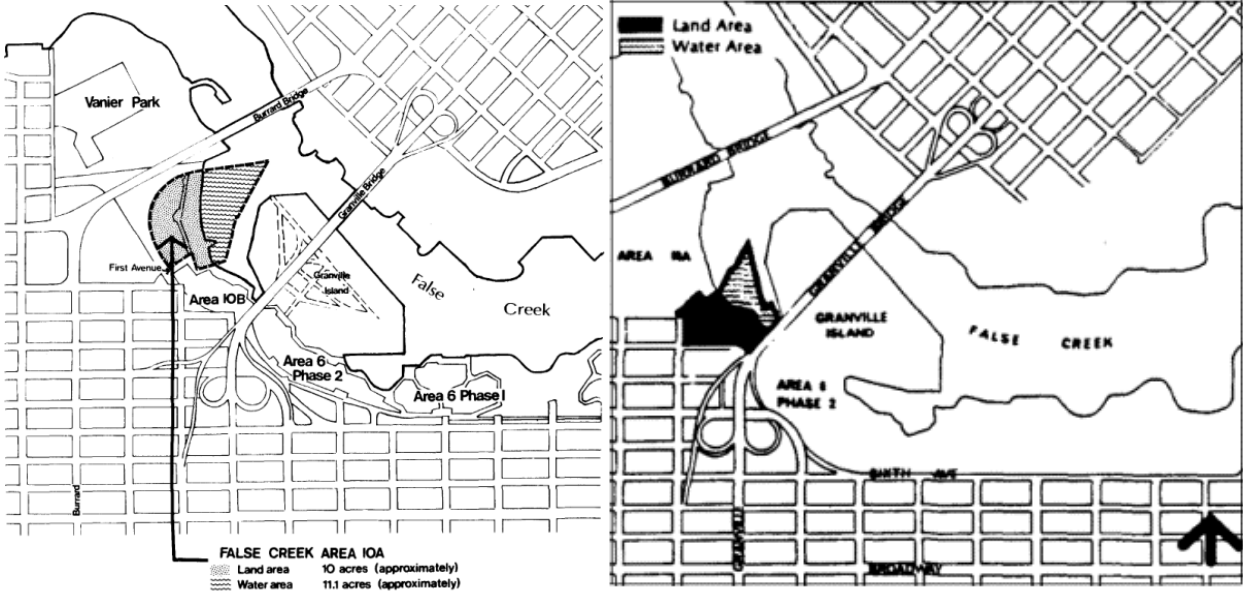
Figure 7.29: Phase 3: areas 10A and 10B (City of Vancouver: October 5, 1976, 41, 1981, 61).

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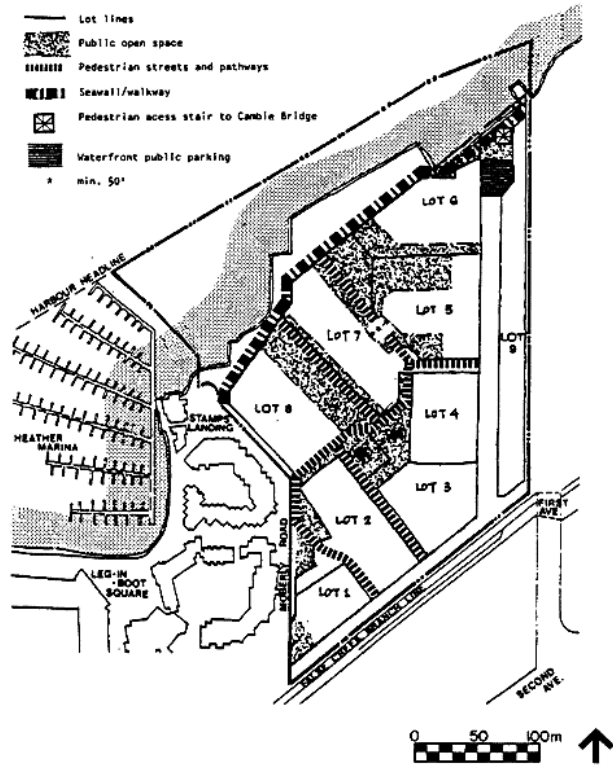
Figure 7.30: Plan of Phase 3, Area 6. This is at the far eastern extremity of the South Shore Development, adjacent to the Heather Neighborhood of Phase 1 (City of Vancouver 1982, 67).

Phase 3 at the South Shore of False Creek consists of three parcels of land bracketing the prior developments of Phases 1 and 2, two at the western end of False Creek, parcels 10A and 10B, and a third parcel at the eastern end of False Creek, a portion of parcel 6. Phase 1 had occupied the bulk of parcel 6; this additional land was acquired by the City, however, and was used to expand the development. The three areas constructed in phase 3 were planned separately; the zoning plan for 10A was approved on October 5 1976, 10B was approved on October 6, 1981 and the plan for area 6, phase 3 was approved on May 18, 1982 (see figures 7.29, 7.30).

Phase 3: Area 10A In considering uses for the land at area 10A, the City decided that the proximity of the bridges made this inappropriate as housing for families, and therefore allowed taller apartment development to take place (City of Vancouver, 1998). Also of note is the increased provision of parking, including below grade parking to serve the apartments and parking overlooking the nearby marina. Although this parking was effectively screened from view, reducing its visible impact, this is an indication that the City was responding to criticisms that had begun to emerge from phase one that not enough parking had been provided there (Vischer 1980) (See figures 7. 31, 7.32, 7.33).

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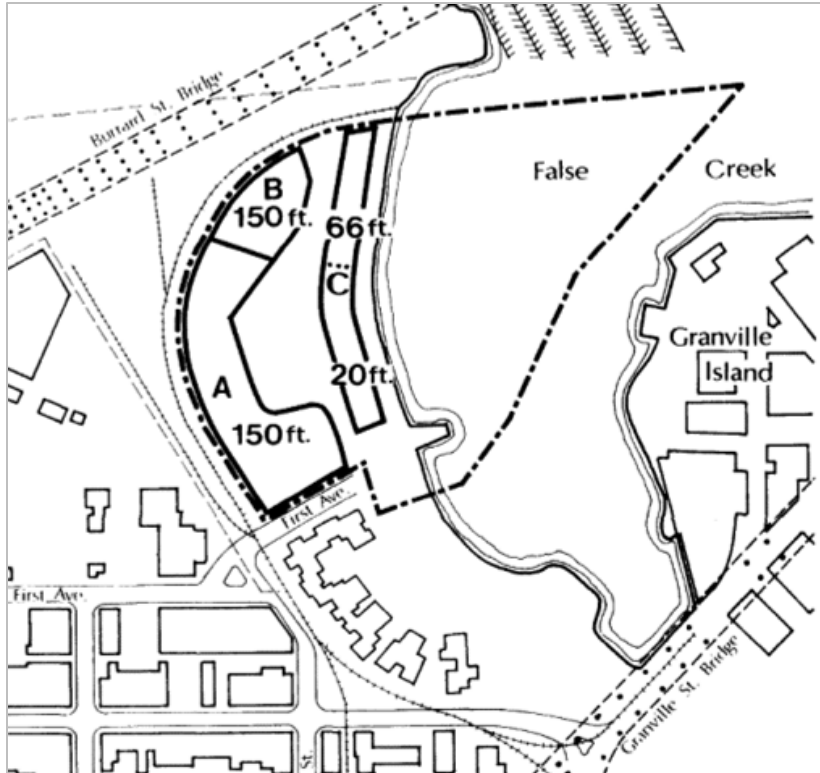
Figure 7.31: Area 10A site height limits (City of Vancouver, October 5, 1976, 48).

Figure 7.32: View East at False Creek: Phase 3 in foreground, Phase 1 in background (Google Earth).

Figure 7.33: Phase 3 Western Portion (Bing 3-d image). Note the below-grade parking levels, increased height and lack of enclosed enclaves, as compared against Phase 1.

Phase 3 area 10B: For the master plan for Phase 3 10B, the City in 1977 turned to yet another local architecture firm, Rhone and Iredale,[24] who joined forces with the Daon Corporation construction company, with the intention of overseeing the entire process. Due to an economic recession, however, Daon ran into financial difficulties in 1980, slowing down progress on the project (Hulchanski, 1984, Iredale, 2008). This master plan appears to have no relationship to the subsequent pattern of development, however. Instead of a coherent and dramatic development featuring two areas of development extending out into False Creek, the resulting pattern instead seems to be a jumbled crowded collection of various apartments crowded together (see figure 7.34 and 7.35).[25]

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[24] Rhone and Iredale had first gained public attention by placing second in the SFU Campus Competition in 1963. They also were the firm where Richard Henriquez and Peter Cardew each began their careers.

[25] I have been so far unable to determine precisely who is responsible for the master plan that replaced the one originally proposed by Rhone and Iredale. The Rhone and Iredale plan appears as the plan of record in the official city planning documents, and although these plans were part of documents updated in 1998, this plan was not updated to reflect the actual construction. Certain spatial characteristics of this portion of the development strongly resemble the approach used by Downs / Archambault to master plan Phase 2, suggesting that they may have
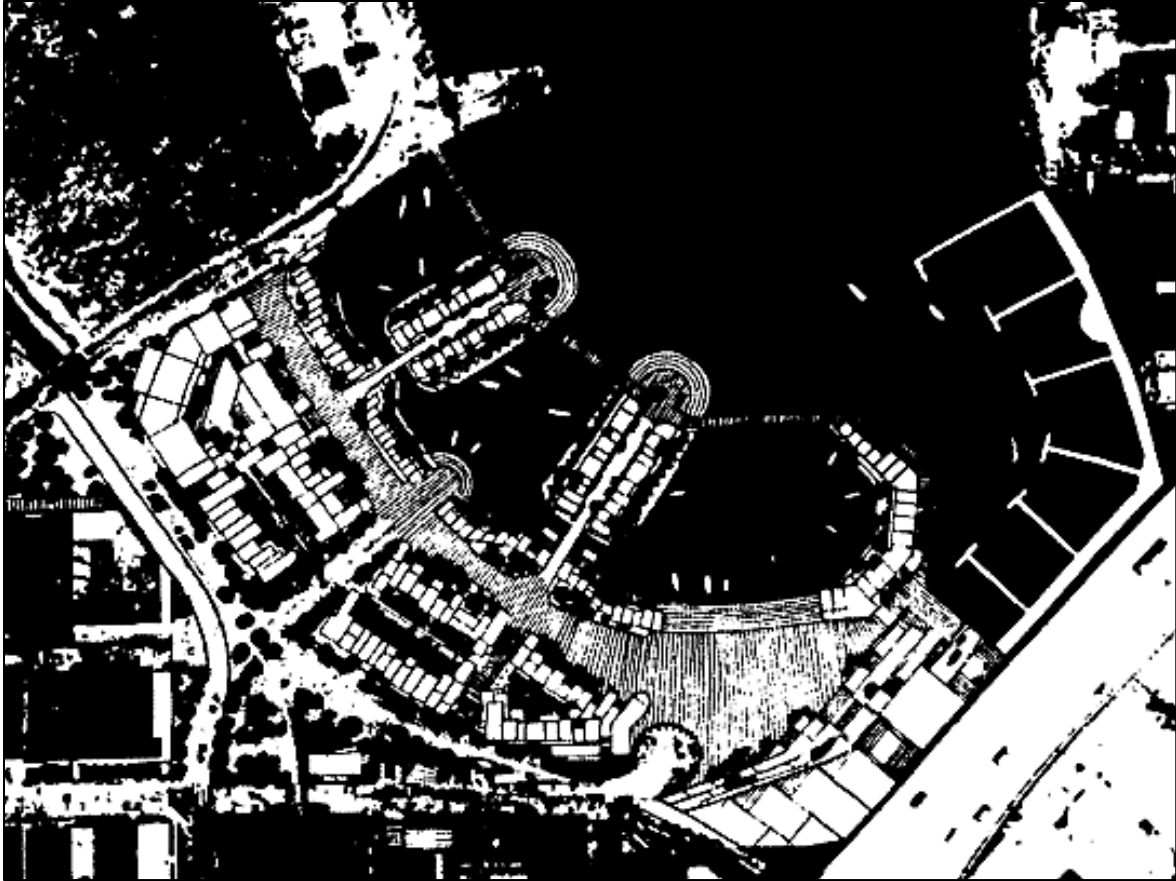
Figure 7.34: Rhone and Iredale plan for area 10B (City of Vancouver, 1998).

Figure 7.35: Phase 3 area 10B as developed, view looking south. (Bing 3d).

designed the new development or perhaps this development represents a redesign in the style of Downs / Archambault, but still developed by Rhone and Iredale, or another architect (Iredale, 2008).

Phase 3 Area 6: The final portion of the South Shore of False Creek developed by the City of Vancouver was this left over wedge of land near the elevated ramp to the Cambie Bridge. By the time that this section was approved in 1982, the TEAM party no longer remained in control of the government of Vancouver, and a resurgent NPA party was regaining strength. This shift in political control impact the developing urban form; an ideal of intentional community and forced social interactions via enclaves was supplanted here by with a more conventional and developer friendly approach. These apartments are overlook manicured public lawns and gardens, and the buildings themselves align towards scenic views of water and mountains (see figures 7.36, 7.37).

Figure 7.36: Phase 3, Area 6 in 2010 (Source Google Earth Aerial 360 Panorama 2010).

Figure 7.37: Phase 3: view of eastern section and two enclaves of the phase 1 Heather neighborhood (Bing 3d image). Note lack of interior enclave spaces, increased height and orientation towards views.

7.4 Assessment: the Post Occupancy Evaluation of the South Shore Development

Because the redevelopment of the South Shore of False Creek was both a success and a departure from other planning and development methods previously used in Vancouver, the entire project was subjected to considerable scrutiny, in the form of journal articles and also an extensive post-occupancy evaluation (POE) completed after Phase 2 had been substantially completed (Vischer 1980, 1984). The extent to which this project could be considered important in Canada is suggested by the decision of the popular journal *Canadian Architect* to devote its July 1980 issue to examining the South Shore project, its development, outcome and implications (Kemble, 1980). Meanwhile, the POE study by Vischer yielded productive insights, confirming that some aspects of this project were working well, while also calling attention to other perhaps less successful characteristics that warranted reconsideration in future efforts.

Ron Walkey and the FCSG had originally stressed the importance of the pattern Neighborhood Enclaves, with the expectation that the semi-private space in the center of each cluster would encourage social contact between the residents. However, when this concept was put into practice it proved to be problematic in unexpected ways. Residents of the enclaves found that the central space encroached upon their privacy, leading many to draw their blinds on the rooms that overlooked this central space, rather than endure the feeling that they were being watched when they ate meals. Furthermore, this sense of intrusion actually increased as the new residents became better acquainted with their neighbors (Vischer 1984). Evidently being watched by people one knows actually was more unsettling than being watched by apparent strangers.

The City had insisted that each enclave be mixed in terms of market rate and subsidized housing, and the subsidized units were generally those which were on the far side of the donut, away from the best views of the water and mountains; this arrangement may have increased the tendency of some residents to look across the central court spaces, while at the same time intensifying the sense of discomfort experienced by slightly more affluent residents who felt that they were being watched. Meanwhile, the ambiguous character of the central spaces in the middle of each enclave resulted in a variety of problems arising from a lack of clarity over who owned and hence controlled the use of the space. In some clusters the central space became a play space for children, to the annoyance of older residents who could not escape the din, while in other

enclaves the central area was left empty and abandoned. In cases where the central space became run down or neglected, residents tended to, perhaps unfairly, associate this deterioration with the lower income households amongst them. Where it seemed most successful was where it was densely planted, but in no case was it seen as encouraging the kind of social interaction that the architects had anticipated (Vischer, 1984).

Figure 7.38: Detail view of three enclaves at the Spruce neighborhood (Google earth 360).

Although these findings might tend to suggest that the view that economic and social diversity at a small scale was less beneficial than the FCSG had initially intended, this also is a reflection of the awkward hybrid between suburban wood frame housing and urban row house condominium development that was being attempted. Had the central spaces been wider between units, perhaps including a public lane adjoining private walled garden spaces, a different outcome might have been attained (see figure 7.38).

Another problem with the general plan for the South Shore was that it was too low in density to support foot traffic adequate for viable commercial activity such as shops or a supermarket.[26] In

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[26] This problem was further exacerbated by the relative isolation of the project; not only is the project bounded along its length by False Creek, but along its length on the other side it is cut off from the rest of the city by a train route and a busy traffic artery. Although Ron Walkey anticipated this problem in his visionary design proposal, these issues unfortunately were not well addressed in the scheme that was adopted by the City, prepared by Thompson

some respects this may have been interpreted as a vindication of the West End high rise strategy, where high density development revitalized the pedestrian environment by making local shops and services commercially viable without requiring automobiles (Vischer 1984). The South Shore development was constructed at a time when residential high rises had fallen out of favor in Vancouver, and the advantages that had coincided with this higher density strategy were not yet entirely appreciated. The South Shore planners had also expected that residents would not need cars as much in their new environment, while failing to grasp the connection between adequate residential density and walkable retail.

This problem with density may explain why subsequent developments in Phase 2 were pursued at a higher density, and without being organized into the enclosed enclaves of Phase 1. These adjustments appear to have been beneficial. The Post Occupancy Evaluation of the results of the South Shore in Phases 1 and 2 concluded that one of the more successful portions in terms of occupant satisfaction was the Phase 2 Alder Bay neighborhood, a development that included residential structures eight stories tall. The case of Alder Bay reveals the limits of the pattern based: the "three story limit" specified by one pattern came into conflict with the requirements of the "bridge shadows" pattern, which mandated a much taller building to contain noise and soot from the nearby Granville Bridge. Fortunately the designers chose to ignore the three story limit, resulting in an attractive and calmer protected outdoor space, overlooked by apartments that screen the bridge while enjoying access to scenic views.

Fortunately there were also substantial compensating positive attributes that made up for these unexpected deficiencies.

Sixty years before, in 1912, Thomas Mawson had suggested that well defined public spaces could help forge a stronger sense of community between Vancouver's diverse residents, and to the extent that the public spaces have succeeded at False Creek, this view seems to have been confirmed. For example, the public waterfront spaces proved to be environments where children could play while elderly residents strolled or occupied benches. This contrasted sharply with the

Berwick and Pratt. Perhaps if this issue had been identified earlier and distilled into another Pattern, this issue might have been better appreciated by all of the designers and the City as well.

results produced by the enclosed enclave spaces. Although the planners failed to grasp that this proximity could result in an oppressive condition when participation in this became compulsory, as it seemed to be with the semi-private central spaces, with the larger interconnected public spaces along the waterfront and between the enclaves, the pattern based approach appears to have succeeded in producing an environment that is widely enjoyed. Indeed it was discovered that for many residents this access to a comfortable public domain more than made up for the liabilities arising from the shared semi-private spaces. This finding confirms the anticipated value of the seawall walkway, and also the focus the planners had placed on the development of a pedestrian friendly public domain. The use of townhouses to provide a solid edge to the public domain and to give the public space an improved sense of security also seems to have been appreciated (Vischer 1984).

The South Shore development should be considered a success from an economic and social perspective. In terms of architecture, however, the results are more mixed; while most of the new buildings are adequately designed, few seem to possess much in the way of architectural distinction. Nevertheless, the ideas that had begun to be explored in this project, including the row house and courtyard, the stepped a terraced apartment block and the development of new parks and new neighborhoods in conjunction all seem to have been relatively successful as implemented and as precedents that would continue to have additional impact. It is clear that some of the architects had also begun to explore new forms in response to the unique characteristics of the local setting and this too would continue to become important in subsequent developments.

Yet despite all of these positives there also was something missing, something elusive and compelling, perhaps best described as creative vision. The different enclaves designed by different architects were well designed in and of themselves, but together they seemed to not add up to something more (Vischer, 1984). Perhaps this was the inescapable outcome of a project in which numerous different architecture firms were involved in simultaneously designing and developing different building groups. Under these conditions, the architects would have faced designing structures in relation to an ambiguous and uncertain setting, made even less clear by the tentative character of the master plan for the development. From a procedural standpoint it is

a very different matter to design a building in relationship to an existing context; the work at the South Shore was involved multiple designs taking place in parallel in which the emerging context arising out of aggregated acts of different architects could only be fully apparent after it the dust had settled and building was complete. Although this has tended to be criticized in terms of the architecture at the South Shore (Vischer, 1984) this unfortunate outcome probably more accurately reflects the lack of a potent and unifying plan guiding the entire effort.[27]

7.5 Conclusion: Patterns without a plan and the problem of creative vision:

Critical differences between the phase 1, phase 2 and phase 3 stages of development at the South Shore indicate that the pattern approach introduced by Ron Walkey was both flexible and receptive to further refinement. Although the enclave pattern would later be reinterpreted as an urban block, used extensively in more recent developments in Vancouver, after phase 1 it ceased to be a priority at the South Shore of False Creek. Instead the buildings became more outwardly focused, freestanding objects that were no longer part of a continuous intact urban structure. When considered in terms of designing and developing individual buildings designed by different architects, the approach used in phases 2 and 3 perhaps makes more sense, at least upon first consideration. Collaboration with other architects to produce a portion of an enclave cluster required coordinating materials, proportions and details, a process made more difficult by the lack of a definitive master plan. By shifting in Phase 2 to the design and construction of isolated free standing buildings the design process became simplified. However, in adopting this freestanding approach something may have been lost as well. The abandonment of the enclave strategy appears to have coincided with an oddly semi-urban strategy in which freestanding buildings fail to produce a larger urban fabric. The continuous street frontage typical of the enclave approach meant that the public space along the waterfront had a more coherent identity, where public and private are more clearly defined. In contrast to this, the individual buildings constructed in phase 2 and 3 are crowded together and yet unrelated to one another, while overlooking lawns and trees that seem neither public nor private.

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[27] For a comparison, see the SFU Campus project designed by Arthur Erickson and discussed in chapter 6. This project involved a collaborative effort of five architecture firms working together to produce a more complex project in a shorter time frame, and yet the results are coherent and unified in their execution, reflecting the clear and potent unifying vision of Arthur Erickson and Geoffrey Massey, expressed in their award winning master plan.

Ultimately, the enclave strategy as it was used at the South Shore of False Creek appears to have had two essential problems, problems which also seem to suggest significant limitations to the entire pattern based approach. The first problem concerns an inconsistent degree of variation: in some cases the building forms are so variegated as to verge on becoming amorphous, while in other cases buildings are so boringly redundant and lacking in detail that they cease to provoke interest. The second problem is that the enclaves themselves actually do not seem to have been made large enough or deep enough, resulting in interior courtyard spaces that are too cramped to serve their intended purpose. These concerns are consistent with apparent deficiencies in the pattern based approach regarding the establishment of urban order and the question of urban scale. One problem with the pattern based approach is that it is framed primarily in terms of details and variety at a fine grained scale; as it was applied in phase 1 it was a bottom up approach in which various components were assembled together producing a loose and varied order. While such an approach is consistent some views of how pre-industrial urban space was developed (Alexander 1979), in the context of a project being developed over a short length of time using modern construction materials and practices, the unwillingness to establish a well-defined master plan at the outset yield results that in the end wind up feeling haphazard.

There are at least two plausible explanations for this tentative and hesitant unwillingness to establish a hard and firm design, both of which have bearing on the future development of Vancouver, the Vancouver building culture and the relevance of the pattern based approach. The first issue concerns the nature of the patterns themselves. While patterns are strong as a means to identifying desirable spatial characteristics and framing design aspirations in a form that is vivid and expressive, they also are inevitably tentative, speculative and subject to a wide range of interpretation. While it is understandable that for the TEAM government, which was made up of academics and professionals, the concept of a rule based approach to design and development was appealing, especially a set of rules that had socialist or utopian overtones. The problem with these rules is while they initially began in the conceit that they were to represent the accumulated best practices already in use, the focus shifted instead onto proposing something better that went beyond local established norms or even local exemplars, based instead upon well intended speculation and aspirations of what a better world might look like. This in itself was not

necessarily a bad thing, as this approach seems to have also encouraged the designers and the City to reconsider the problems they were facing from a fresh perspective and develop novel strategies and solution types that have benefitted the city. However this approach ran the risk of failing to grasp the importance of aspects of the built environment commonly in use and worth continuing to employ, such as a more regular street grid or block pattern. This tendency was made more problematic due to the lack of a coherent master plan defined by a by an architect with a single, clear and effective vision. While this was less of a problem in the West End, where development was transforming the character of existing urban fabric, at the South Shore the expectation seems to have been that if the correct rules and principles could be identified, a healthy urban fabric would spontaneously emerge through the accumulated acts based on these rules.[28] Fortunately these drawbacks appear to have been realized and as the development of Vancouver continued an improved approach making use of master plans would subsequently emerge.

The development which took place along the South Shore of False Creek was eventually eclipsed by the larger and more dramatic developments which began at the North Shore of False Creek towards the end of Ray Spaxman's 15 year tenure as Planning Director. Nevertheless, the South Shore project deserves to be recognized for finally and quite successfully having begun the first steps towards rehabilitating the False Creek Basin. Crucial precedents that continue to influence the City were established in this work, including the construction of the first section of pedestrian seawall, the establishment of a collaborative process of design and development involving greater input by the city and the participation by numerous local architecture firms. Over 2000 people now live in the new neighborhoods constructed along the South Shore, and unlike the development that has taken place more recently on the opposite shore; these units have been developed to provide a wide variety of housing with a high percentage of affordable units.

The pattern concept itself seems to have continued to exert an influence on both planning and architectural design in Vancouver, although this impact may not always be apart. For instance a

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[28] This problem, it should be noted may also have stemmed from the decision of the City to hold a closed competition for the master planning of this project, limited to the three firms that were already fully committed to the pattern approach. Had other firms less familiar with the approach also been invited to develop master plans, a stronger vision might have emerged combining the patterns and more traditional master planning development. It is also possible that the City did not pick the best plan of the three it was offered.

aproject manager manual written by Rand Iredale in 1997 makes clear reference to the use of patterns in a way that indicates that patterns were continuing to play a central role in design conceptualization at his firm long after the South Shore development had been completed (Iredale, 2008). Similarly, because the principles and diagrams and values associated with the FCSG patterns were adopted by subsequent planning guidelines used by the City of Vancouver, the substance of many of the patterns remains a viable component in the official body of regulations guiding development in Vancouver. Although the term "pattern" has been dropped, the continued use of material presented originally by Ron Walkey, means that such principles as the slow fast gradient and the bridge shadows, and many others that he and his colleagues introduced into Vancouver are now a common part of how Vancouver continues to be planned and developed.

In addition to the content of particular patterns, the patterns also appear to have made a lasting impact on the building culture of Vancouver in terms of how local architects and planners came to work together. By providing a means to discussion and exploring design concepts and their social impacts very early in the process, the patterns contributed to a new attitude in planning in which planners began to work with architects towards improved development outcomes that were seen as in the best interest of the city and the developers. While this was easier to achieve in the case where the City was effectively functioning as the main developer, as they were at the South Shore of False Creek, the lessons learned from this process were to carry though to subsequent development efforts which would in the end have an even big visual impact on the development of the City. One of the most significant lessons appears to have been the realization that even as useful as patterns may be, there still is a need for an effective master plan to guide a process which might otherwise become unduly fragmented.

As the story of the development of Vancouverism concludes over the next two chapters, new architectural creative vision comes to play a crucial role in the eventual success of this new form of urban architecture, and in particular the contributions of two of Vancouver's most remarkable architects: Richard Henriquez and Arthur Erickson. The work of the South Shore of Vancouver was especially important in the way that it refocused design and planning attention towards the improvement of public space as experienced at ground level, yet it was the addition of residential

high rises, deployed in a particular manner in combination with this reinvigorated pedestrian domain that would eventually give Vancouver its unique identity. However, coinciding with the election of the TEAM party had been the emergence of a backlash against further high rise construction. The next chapter concerns how this high rise hiatus was overcome by Richard Henriquez, while at the same time he was busy reinventing the residential high rise.

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Appendix: Expanded Pattern List of Fall Creek Study Group (1972) and precedents:

Key:
19 original Patterns from *1971 False Creek Proposals* : FCSG 1971
Patterns from *Houses Generated by Patterns:* CES, 1970
Related concepts in Exterior Design in Architecture: Ashihara 1970
Related concepts in *Streets for People* : Rudofsky 1969
A Pattern Language Which Generates Multi-Service Centers : CES 1968
Related concepts in The Italian Townscape: de Wolfe, 1966
Related concepts in *The Concise Townscape* : Gordon Cullen, 1961
Related concepts in *Cities* : Lawrence Halprin, 1964
Related concepts Civic Art: Thomas Mawson 1911
Patterns applied in Official 1974 False Creek Development Plan

	Category	Patterns: (102 total)
1	Urban Areas	
		Urban Reference Points
		Urban Free Space
		Pedestrian Web Connects Urban Nuclei
2	Water	
		Water Area Maintained
		Large Bays Define Water Area
		Small Bays Shape Shoreline
3	Regional Parks	
		Linear Open Space
		Open Space Edge Scalloped
		Pocket Playfields
		Open Spaces Defined
4	Townsite	
		Community Forum
		Slow / Fast Gradient
5	Community	
		Adaptable Cities
		Communities Flow Over Traffic Arteries
		Bridge Shadows
		Intercommunity Public Transit
		Social Mix in Communities
		Bicycle Realms
6	Work / Commerical	
		Workplace Ribbon
		Marina Service Centralized
		Expansion Increments
		Local Retail Centres Nearby
		Local Shop Every 1500 Feet
		Shop on Corners
		Shop Front Diversity
		Small Marinas

#	Section	Pattern													
7	Neighborhood Enclaves														
		Neighborhood Enclaves														
		Neighborhood Shape														
8	Pedestrian Streets															
		Pedestrian Paths Are Expanding Loops														
		Pedestrian Activity Focus														
		Streets To Stay In														
		Half Levels														
		Level Streets Are Inviting														
		Pedestrians 18" Above Cars														
		Short Pedestrian Streets														
		Paths Lead Somewhere														
		Rest Stops on Hills														
		Car / Pedestrian Symbiosis														
		Variety on Waterfront Walk														
		Paths Interupt Roads														
		Inviting Night Lighting														
		Sunlight on Waterfront Walk														
		Cell Gateway														
9	Local Parks															
		Community Parks Interwoven														
		Hierarchy of Open Spaces														
		Neighborhood Park														
		Active and Passive Play														
		High and Low Play														
		Tree Places														
		Walled Gardens														
		Play Yard Dividers														
		Outdoor Seats														
10	Central Places															
		Central Place Focus														
		Nature in Every Square														
		Dish Shaped Arena														
		Activity Pockets														
		Stairs Seats														
		Pedestrian Density in Public Places														
		Small Open Spaces														
11	Housing															
		Household Groupings Limited														
		Degree of Publicness														
		Three Storey Limit for Families														
12	Built Form															
		Buildng Height / Width Ratio														
		Buildings Shaped for Light														
		Circulation Realms														
		Distance Relates to Balcony														
		Identifiable Units in Multiple Housing														
		40% of a Unit's Perimeter Suitable for Glazing														
		Roof Form Close to Ground														
		Taming Tall Buildings														
		Roof Tops are for Living														
		Large Buildings Overshadow Small														
		Three Kinds of View														
		Sunny Main Rooms														
		Light on Two Sides of Every Room														

#	Category	Pattern
13	Open Space	
		Real Ground Plane
		Connected Play Spaces
		Percentage of Private and Common Land
		Child Caves
14	Roads and Parking	
		T-Junctions
		Looped Local Roads
		Parking Integrated with Streets
		Linear Parking Lots
		Parking Entrance Position
		Quiet Activities Away from Traffic
15	Community Facilities	
		Compatible Facilities Clustered
		Community Billboard
		Community Center Location
		Building Thoroughfare
		Public Outdoor Rooms
16	Multiple Dwelling Units	
		Earth Balcony
		Six Foot Balcony
		Half-in, Half-out Balcony
		Apartment Entrance / Corridor Transition
		Entrance Transistion
		Identifiable Front Entrances
		Privacy and Street Life in the Home
		Short Corridors
		Gallery Surround
17	Private Outdoor Space	
		Useable Courtyards
		Flowers on the Street
		Half Hidden Garden

Key:

19 original Patterns from *1971 False Creek Proposals* : FCSG 1971

Patterns from *Houses Generated by Patterns*: CES, 1970

Related concepts in Exterior Design in Architecture: Ashihara 1970

Related concepts in *Streets for People* : Rudofsky 1969

A Pattern Language Which Generates Multi-Service Centers : CES 1968

Related concepts in The Italian Townscape: de Wolfe, 1966

Related concepts in *The Concise Townscape* : Gordon Cullen, 1961

Related concepts in *Cities* : Lawrence Halprin, 1964

Related concepts Civic Art: Thomas Mawson 1911

Patterns applied in Official 1974 False Creek Development Plan

Note: This appendix demonstrates that while the list of Patterns identified by the False Creek Study Group in 1972 is quite comprehensive, these patterns are typically restatements of principles attributable to earlier sources. For some patterns no prior source is cited, yet this may simply reflect an unknown source that has yet to be identified. Viewed in this way, the patterns list is significant because it has combined and presented a diverse range of design knowledge in a single accessible format.