



## Urban Agenda Platform

The global platform for sharing progress, action and knowledge on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda to achieve sustainable urban development.

# Northeast False Creek Plan

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Region                        | North America  |
| Award Scheme                  | Guangzhou Award  |
| Themes                        | Energy<br>Mobility<br>Planning & Design  |
| Sustainable Development Goals | Goal 2 - End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture<br>Goal 3 - Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages<br>Goal 6 - Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all<br>Goal 7 - Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all<br>Goal 8 - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all<br>Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable |
| New Urban Agenda Commitments  | Sustainable and Inclusive Urban Prosperity and Opportunities for All<br>Planning and Managing Urban Spatial Development  |

## Summary

City Council approved a conceptual plan for NEFC in 2015, including replacing the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts with a new street network. At this time Council also directed City staff to continue detailed planning and design of the area.

## Background and Objective

The result is a municipal policy document approved by Vancouver Council that will guide the build-out of the area over the next 20 years. ORIGINS The NEFC Plan presents an opportunity for community healing and repairing the urban fabric: The site is located on the unceded traditional homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. By 1900, False Creek shoreline was the city's industrial centre. During 1950s and 60s, major freeways were planned to cut through Vancouver, including the viaducts, located on an area home to much of Vancouver's Chinese and Black communities. In 1967, homes were removed to construct the viaducts, spelling the end of a distinct neighbourhood. The viaducts, the first and only piece of Vancouver's planned freeway network, were built in 1972. Expo 86, the World's Fair, put Vancouver on the world map in 1986. The World Fair site has since been redeveloped into a mixed-use waterfront extension of the downtown. The plan represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reconnect communities divided by the viaducts. The plan provides an opportunity to reconnect through reconciliation and cultural redress, replacing a physical barrier with strong cultural, social and physical linkages. As a result of this, the Plan created an opportunity to advance reconciliation and cultural redress with local First Nations, Chinatown and the (displaced) Black Community of Hogan's Alley. Through the City's Reconciliation Framework, an Indigenous Engagement Working group was formed for NEFC, and worked within the Framework and the three foundational components that further strengthen our services and ongoing relationships with the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations, and Urban indigenous community: Cultural competency Strengthening relations Effective decision-making Land owners and developers, including government agencies were consulted during the planning process, provided input and background information during the planning and engagement process (i.e. renderings, building information). Through collaboration, partnerships and comprehensive engagement, the resulting innovative policy, funding and decision making were part of the implementation strategy to achieve the goals and objectives set out in the plan.

## Outcomes and Impacts

In addition to the foundational reconciliation and cultural redress components of the plan, it also advances social, economic, environmental and cultural sustainability objectives. Through the implementation of this plan, Vancouver will create: Homes for 10,000–12,000 new residents (including social housing for approximately 3,300 people), 32 acres of new and renewed parks and open spaces, A highly pedestrian, social waterfront that will support the important special events and festival functions of our city's events and entertainment area, 6000-8000 new jobs 1.8 M sq.ft. of job space \$1.7 billion dollars in public amenities. A new resilient street network that replaces ageing, seismically vulnerable infrastructure. For the first time, the City had a Project Office with staff from Planning, Engineering and Parks departments dedicated to the project and co-located in one interdisciplinary space. A full-time engagement specialist was embedded into the planning team, who was essential in building relationships, gathering input, designing events, and liaising with community groups and advisory bodies. This integrative model was a first for the City of Vancouver, and with our tight timelines and



## Urban Agenda Platform

*The global platform for sharing progress, action and knowledge on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda to achieve sustainable urban development.*

complex objectives, it was essential in determining the success of the project. The NEFC Plan is the first plan since City Council's adoption of the City of Reconciliation Framework (2014) that embraces the framework. The Reconciliation and Cultural Redress chapter is a foundation of the Plan. The Plan recognizes that NEFC is: Located within the traditional homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations; adjacent to the Downtown Eastside and significant Urban Indigenous Community; adjacent to and previously part of the Chinatown community; and historically the heart of Vancouver's Black Community (formerly known as Hogan's Alley).

## Innovative Initiative

The NEFC Plan embodies lessons learned from international best practice for mixed-use waterfront communities, great street design and public space design. It builds on decades of successful planning initiatives in downtown Vancouver that place a high value on public life and securing public amenity and services to offset the impacts of growth by leveraging the value of private development. The design of a 'resilient roadway' in Vancouver was revolutionary. The Georgia Street extension, connecting the downtown to Northeast False Creek, is being designed to a 'Lifeline' classification for seismic design whereby the structure will be available immediately following a significant (1 in 2,450 year) seismic event. With limited national and international examples available, creating a post-disaster 'Resilient Roadway' across the rest of the area required innovative analysis and design from a number of qualified engineering professionals. To create this resilient link, two lanes of the street section were designed with increased strength to its road structure and subsurface utilities to allow for emergency operations immediately following a significant seismic event. This revolutionary design will complete an essential post-disaster link between Vancouver's Downtown and the future St Paul's Hospital. However, timing to construct this connection is challenging due to the opening of the new hospital in 2024. As part of an exciting new destination waterfront, the plan builds on the past success of Vancouver's seawall, a treasured public asset used by millions of people who ride/walk along the waterfront each year. The plan intends to leverage this success and extend the feature through the area. The NEFC waterfront will be an inclusive, culturally diverse and welcoming space that, for the first time, will strike a balance between the movement of people with an iconic waterfront gathering space focused on public life and celebration.

## Conclusion

The policies within the Plan reflect a balance between community values and City objectives. They can be applied to a range of planning scenarios and scales for new, mixed-use communities. Additionally, many elements such as specific policies, principles or strategies can be used in other jurisdictions to achieve similar objectives. The principles and design for a "Great Street" could be applied to other street designs, where cities are seeking to replace elevated infrastructure and create welcoming, accessible, people-friendly streets that promote inclusive public life, are resilient, and integrate critical infrastructure. The plan is unique in having a defined and fully costed \$1.7 billion Public Benefits Strategy, which provides direction for the public benefits that each future development will contribute. These amenities ensure communities are livable, healthy and sustainable as they continue to grow and evolve. Community facilities, childcare, parks and open spaces, affordable housing, civic facilities, transportation and utilities are all secured through the Public Benefits Strategy. Through implementation, the City of Vancouver will continue to share the knowledge learned through this complex and comprehensive planning process internationally. The City also endeavors to continue to present and participate at conferences and host talks and walking tours for visiting delegations.